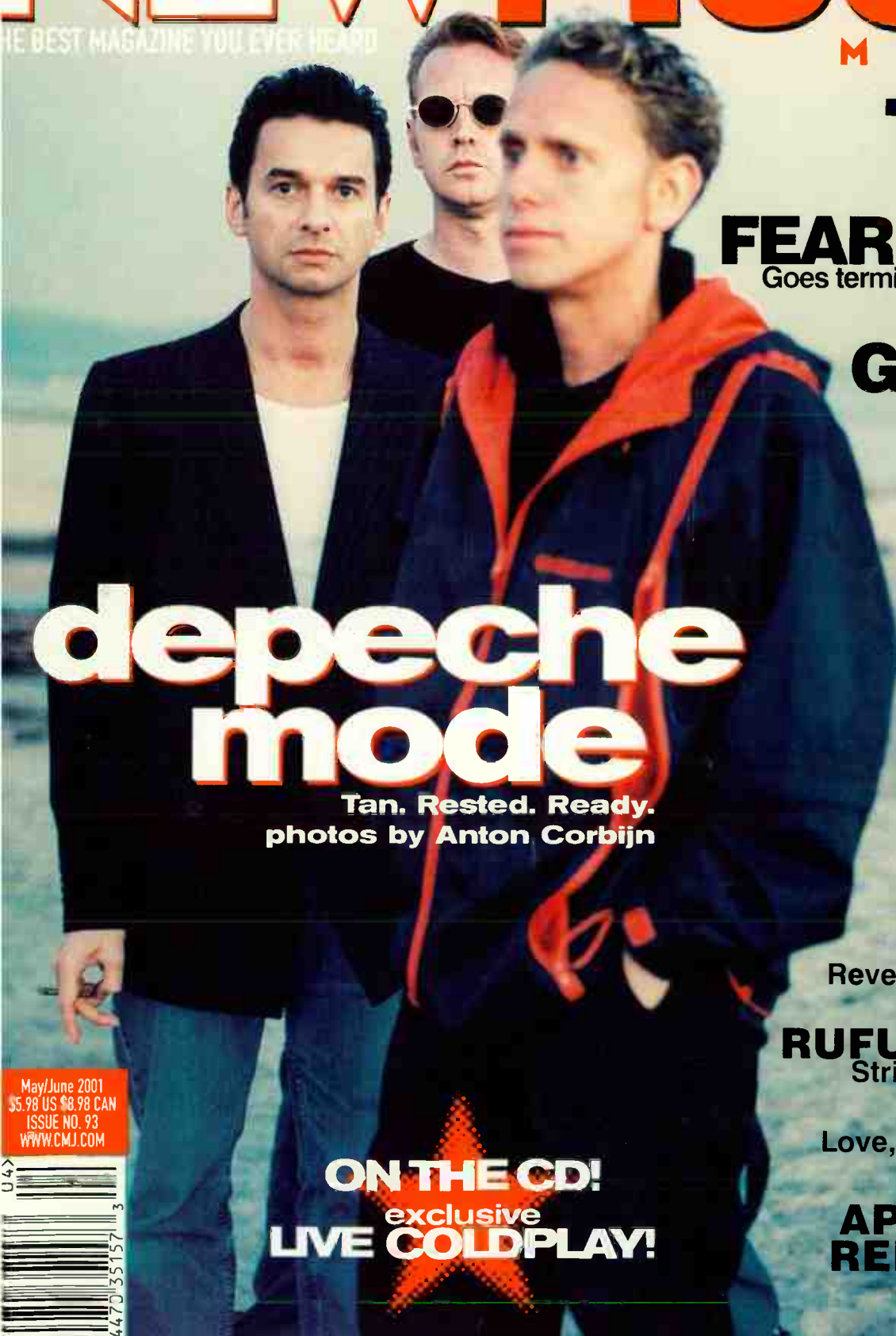


# NEW MUSIC

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MONTHLY



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by numbers

**FEAR FACTORY**  
Goes terminator on your weak ass

**GUIDED BY VOICES**  
What about Bob?

# depeche mode

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photos by Anton Corbijn

**N\*E\*R\*D**  
Revenge of the Neptunes

**RUFUS WAINRIGHT**  
Strikes curious Poses

Love, **OLD 97's** Style

**APHEX TWIN'S**  
**REPHLEX** reaction.

**ON THE CD!**  
exclusive  
**LIVE COLDPLAY!**

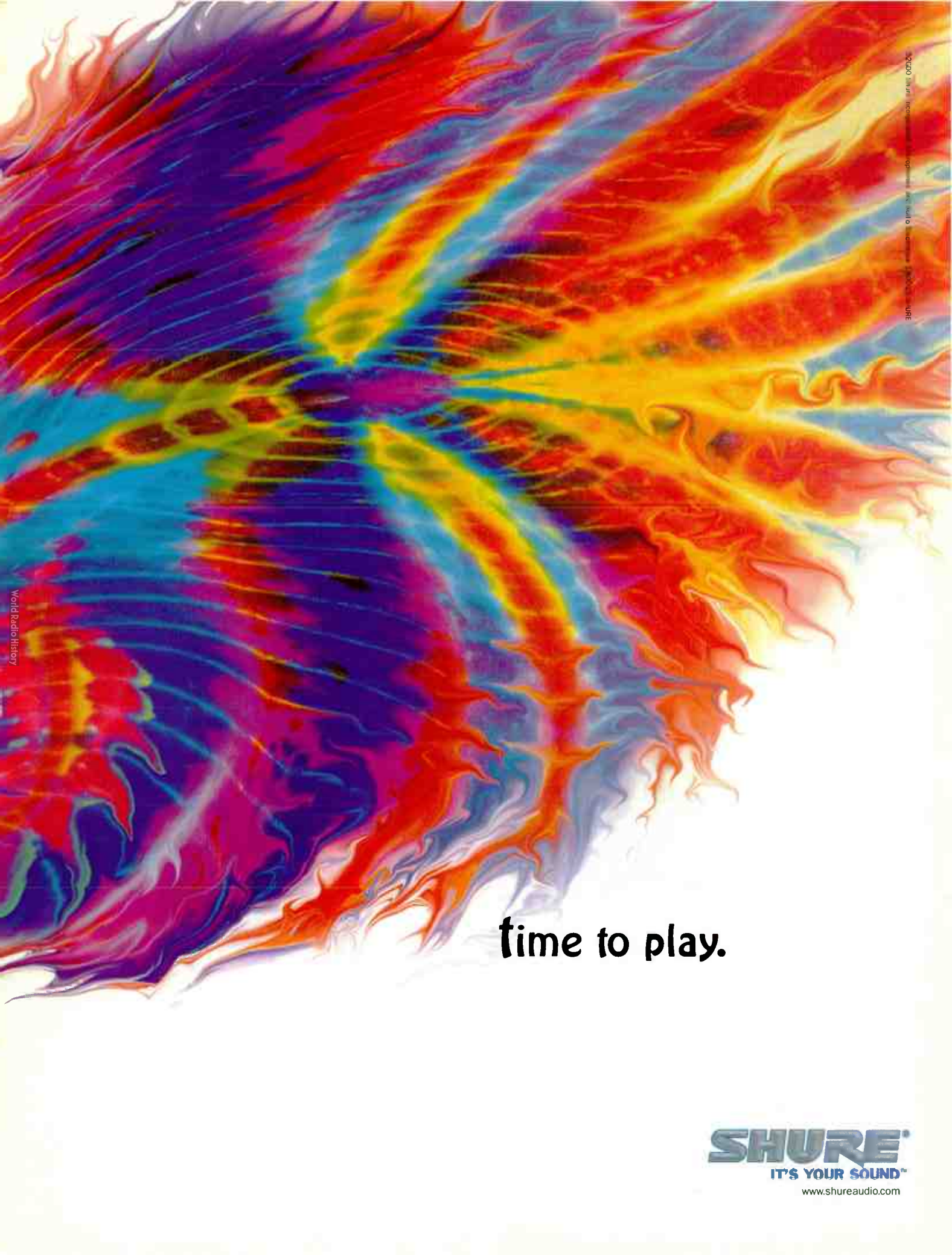
**IDLEWILD. JAY DEE. WHO'S THE BIGGER A-HOLE, DANZIG OR MUSTAINE? NEU!**

May/June 2001  
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## DEPECHE MODE 60

They've kicked smack, beaten death and lived to make peace with their synth-Goth roots, all while remaining possibly the biggest cult band in the world. So now that DJs, producers and new new wave bands are celebrating Depeche Mode as pioneers, will the trio have any use for their newfound cred? Sara Scribner tells tales of faith and devollon.

### 42 SHEILA CHANDRA

Her otherworldly voice gave her the strength to resist commercial pressures and made her a star in her native England. Then it gave out. Now, Sheila Chandra is singing again. Tad Hendrickson calls it a comeback.

### 44 NIKKA COSTA

She may be Frank Sinatra's goddaughter, but Nikka Costa's own blue-eyed soul has plenty of redhead fire. Sara Scribner gives her a little r-e-s-p-e-c-t.

### 46 IDLEWILD

The Scots of Idlewild used to draw blood in the name of rock—now they're playing *Letterman*. Nicole Keiper peeks under their kilts.

### 48 N\*E\*R\*D

Their day job is producing huge hits for ODB, Kelis and Jay-Z, Guru, Limp Bizkit and Ben Harper. But when the members of N\*E\*R\*D make an album for themselves, the freaks come out at night. Jonathan Palmer works the graveyard shift.

### 50 APHEX TWIN & REPHLEX

In the past 10 years, Rephlex has served up techno that will have you bodyrockin' and electro-groovin'. Raspberry Jones gets poppin' and lockin'.

### 52 GUIDED BY VOICES

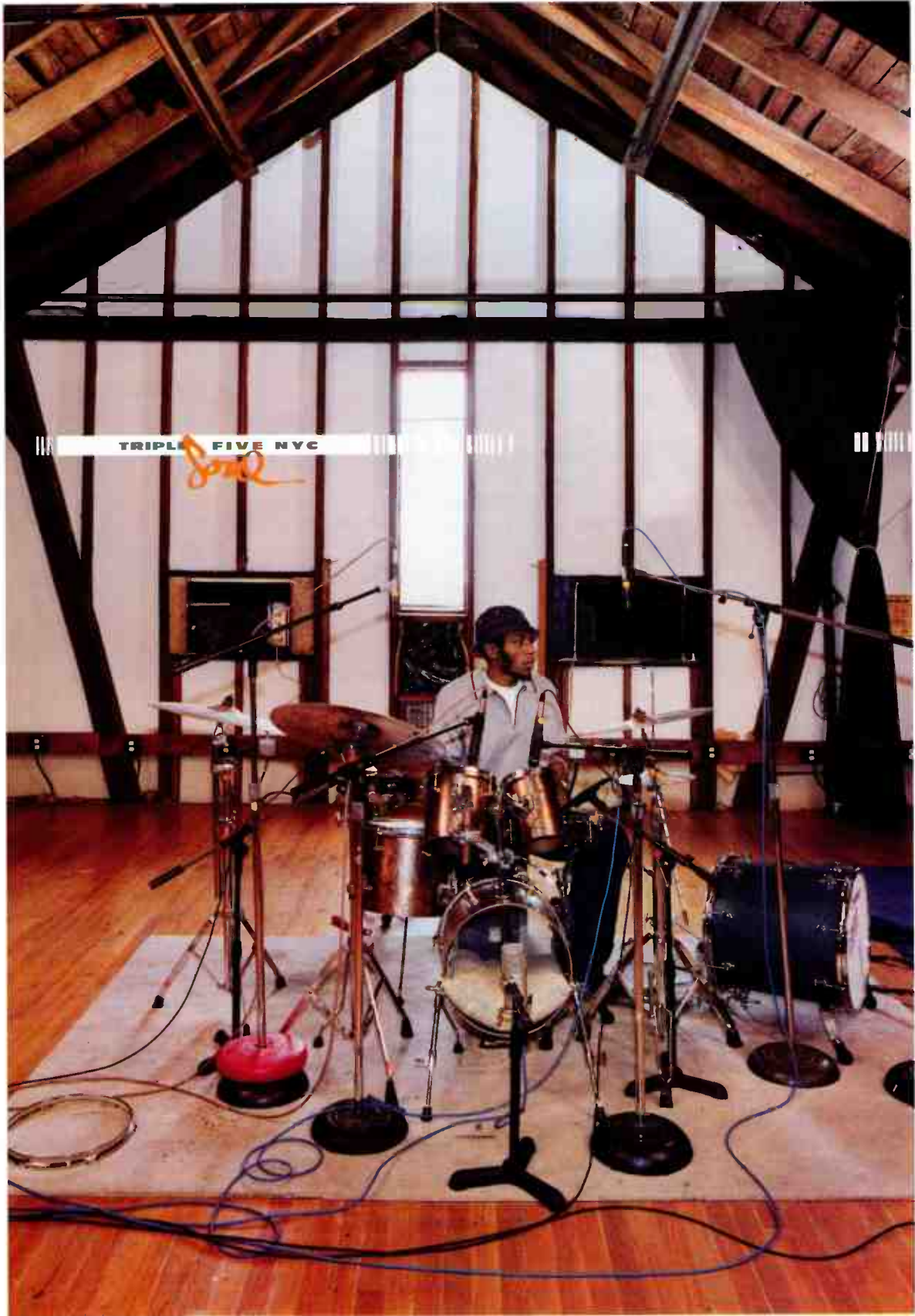
So what if his Robert Pollard's chances at the big time are gone and his marriage is over—the songs are stronger than ever. Cheryl Botchick hails the once and future king.

### 56 FEAR FACTORY

Imagine a world where souls are transported out of dying bodies into the body of a clone. The sequel to *The Matrix*? No, this is the world of Fear Factory, where humans still dominate the machines. Lorne Berhman decodes the program.

### 12 ON THE CD

May's force be with you: Coldplay, Black Rebel Motorcycle Club, Girls Against Boys, Creeper Lagoon, Skindive, Stereophonics, Ünloco, Opeth, Delinquent Habits, Peaches, Benjamins, Ani DiFranco, John Hammond, Los Super Seven, Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds, Anne Sofie Von Otter Meets Elvis Costello, Bang On A Can All-Stars, the Angel Featuring Tre Hardson.



TRIPLE FIVE NYC

*Soul*

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NEW YORK, BROOKLYN, TOKYO, OSAKA, FUKUOKA



TRIPLE FIVE NYC  
*Soul*

## 18 QUICK FIX

Coldplay plays with a cold, sorta, Dave Mustaine and Danzig square off, Jay Dee blows smoke about success, Rufus Wainwright cracks the whip on his mom, vixens strike a pose, Shuggie Otis sends the Strawberry Letter, the Old 97's teach us how to love and we get Tool's number.

## 37 ON THE VERGE

Here come the May flowers: Ünloco, Shea Seger, Karl Denson, the Angel

## 66 THE SCENE IS NEU!

Get your *motorik* beat humming with Neu!, the proto-punk group that gave Bowie and Stereolab a kick in the pants.

## 68 LOCALZINE

Minneapolis: Take a ride over the *Graffiti Bridge*.

## 98 GEEK LOVE

The cop, the cannabis and the KLF.

### REVIEWS, CHARTS, SERVICES

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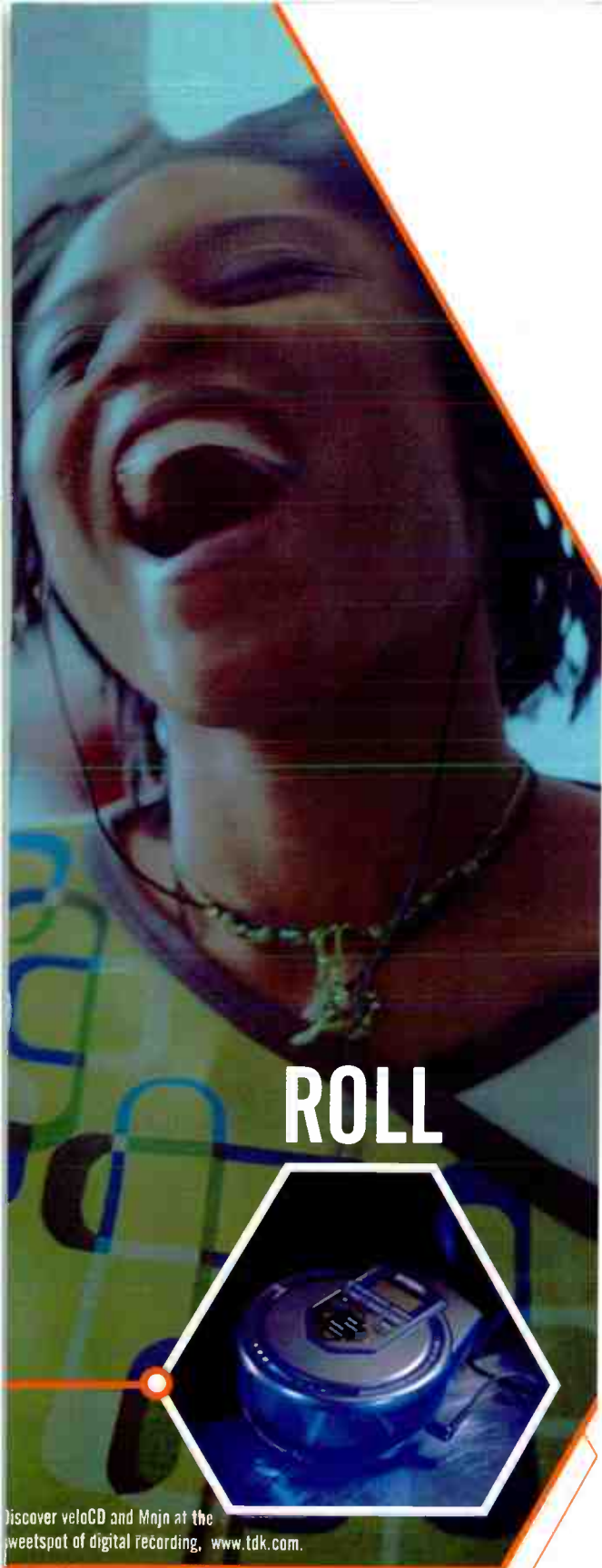
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# On<sup>the</sup> CD this month

**EXCLUSIVE LIVE COLDPLAY  
'Trouble (Live At KCRW)'**

**NEW GIRLS AGAINST BOYS**

**ANI DIFRANCO**

**CREEPER LAGOON**

**LOS SUPER SEVEN**

**Stereophonics, Skindive**

**Alterna-Latina from  
Delinquent Habits**

**Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds,  
Opeth, The Angel, Black  
Rebel Motorcycle Club**





**1 COLDPLAY "Trouble (Live At KCRW)" (Netzwerk America-Capitol)**  
British hood-rockers Coldplay showed fans a mopelessly good time on their first-ever North American tour this winter, nodding and wailing through tracks from their debut, *Parachutes* (Netzwerk America-Capitol). For the unlucky souls who were plagued by ticket sell-outs or the East Coast's cancellations, we've brought you the closest thing to being there: Throw on this live version of "Trouble" and turn to p. 20 for visual accompaniment.

**2 BLACK REBEL MOTORCYCLE CLUB "Rifles" (Virgin)**  
This San Francisco trio's self-titled debut features wistfully disaffected vocals, pop melodies that cross the Velvet Underground with '60s AM pop, and guitar distortion amped up into a squall of white noise... it essentially sounds like the Jesus & Mary Chain record that should've been the midpoint between *Psychocandy* and *Darklands*. Still lamenting the death of the Chain? Check p. 73 for more about your new favorite band.

**3 GIRLS AGAINST BOYS "One Dose Of Truth (From the Series 7 soundtrack)" (Koch)**  
Nearly three years after their last release, *Freak 'n' Tica*, the New York-by-way-of-D.C. foursome Girls Against Boys have cruised back into the house. "One Dose Of Truth" is one of the many cuts GvSB contributed to Daniel Minahan's buzz-laden film, *Series 7*, which follows six contestants on a fictional reality show gone haywire. Check the Comp Grid on p. 83 for more.

**4 CREEPER LAGOON "Wrecking Ball" (DreamWorks)**  
Three years after emerging from San Francisco as a modest bunch of indie rockers, Creeper Lagoon... [has] assembled a collection of catchy rock tracks and near-psychedelic diversions that flow together without pandering to mainstream tastes—an accomplishment (among many) that landed Creeper's *Take Back The Universe And Give Me Yesterday* in Best New Music, p. 70.

**5 SKINDIVE "Tranquilizer" (Palm)**  
Ireland's Skindive may have all the thumping assault of Korn, but its mastermind, Gerry Owens clearly prefers 007's theme music to nu-metal, and you can hear it on the band's self-titled debut. From our review of said debut in the April 2001 issue: "Every song among the baker's dozen on *Skindive* demands to be played during the opening credits of the next James Bond movie."

**6 STEREOPHONICS "Mr. Writer" (V2)**  
The Welshmen of Stereophonics have put their artful stamp on the wailing guitars and accessible rhythms of Britpop; anyone needing proof can check out their 1999 sophomore outing, *Performance And Cocktails*, which is still standing its ground on the U.K. charts. Maybe it'll step aside for the refined *Just Enough Education To Perform*, which recalls the diversity and savvy of stylistic forefathers the London Suede.

**7 UNLOCO "Facedown (Toby Wright Remix)" (Maverick)**  
Unloco singer Joey Duenas had a hell of a 25th birthday—while slumming it at his day job, salvation dropped out of the sky in the form of a phone call from Goldfinger singer Maverick A&R scout John Feldmann. "Within two days I'm in L.A., all expenses paid, riding around in limosines having the best birthday of my life," Duenas says. For more on the Texas hard rockers and their debut, *Healing*, see On The Verge p. 37.

**8 OPEETH "Harvest" (Koch-Music For Nations)**  
Swedish doomsters Opeth straddle the not-so-fine line between death metal and prog-rock, mixing acoustic prettiness and bleak thrash with ease. "The overall effect is smothering, but in a coddling and protective way, *Blackwater Park* works an elaborate magic, spreading a fog of foreboding yet willing angst that last wafted from old King Crimson..." For more, see Best New Music on p. 72.

**9 DELINQUENT HABITS "Return Of The Tres" (Ark 21)**  
L.A.-based hip-hop trio Delinquent Habits' third album, *Merry Go Round* (which contains "Return Of The Tres"), finds MCs Kemo, Ives and O.G. Styles flussing English/Spanish lyrics over beats that owe as much to funk as they do to traditional Latin sounds. According to heartmeister O.G., "It's our turn to get in there and really bring [Latin hip-hop] home."

**10 PEACHES "Set It Off" (Kitty-Yo)**  
"Peaches' Rhea Periman hair and decidedly awkward looks help her express a raw, tweaked sexuality not usually found even in the skeeziest highway strip joints. Her brash behavior set off by her uniform—pink tie-back halter top, shiny pink short-shorts, knee socks, tennis shoes, aviator glasses—is bafflingly spellbinding." For more about Berlin-via-Toronto's self-made mix, see the Feature in our April 2001 issue, p. 45.

**11 BENJAMINS "Sophia On The Stereo" (Drive-Thru)**  
A strong admiration for Superdrag led the Wisconsin four-piece Benjamins to track down and enlist Drag producer Nick Raskulinecz. The result of the collaboration is the band's debut LP, *The Art Of Disappointment*, which sports a sound the band refers to as "power pop with balls." You won't have to strain too hard to hear echoes of Weezer in the brash, Moog-enhanced "Sophia On The Stereo."



**12 ANI DIFRANCO "Heartbreak Even" (Righteous Babe)**  
Astoundingly prolific Buffalo, New York native Ani DiFranco returns with the thematically divided double album *Revealing Reckoning*. *Revealing* showcases DiFranco's upbeat side, while *Reckoning* tackles the more introspective material. "*Revealing* and *Reckoning* find DiFranco successfully charting new waters of sophistication that she's previously been too plucky to pursue," says our Review. For more see p. 76.

**13 JOHN HAMMOND "2:19" (Virgin)**  
On the new album *Wicked Grim*, one blue-eyed bluesman salutes another as old-school traditionalist John Hammond covers a set of songs by new-school traditionalist (or at least newer school) Tom Waits. "If you were to pick someone to draw the Mississippi Delta core out of Waits's songs, then Hammond, with his no-nonsense approach and truckload of blues wisdom, is the guy for the job," says our review. For more, see p. 80.

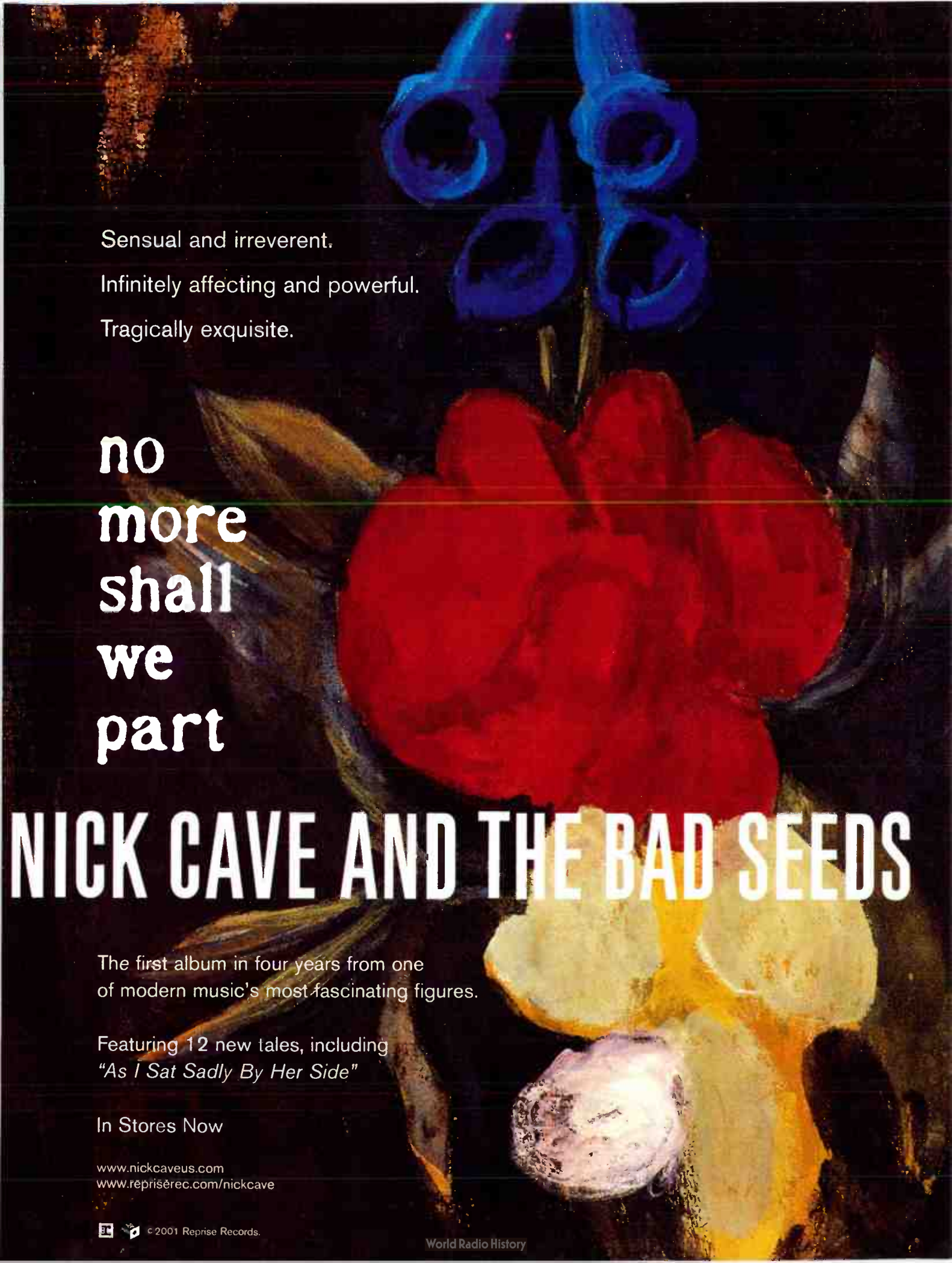
**14 LOS SUPER SEVEN "Teresa" (Columbia Legacy)**  
*Canto*, the second album from Grammy Award-winning Latin supergroup Los Super Seven, continues to integrate a hodge-podge of Latin music influences despite the fact that the band's lineup has changed some since their 1998 self-titled debut (which included Flaco Jimenez, Cesar Rosas and Los Lobos' David Hidalgo). Dig Hidalgo at the vocal helm on "Teresa" for a taste of Los Super Seven's eclecticism.

**15 NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS "As I Sat Sadly By Her Side" (Reprise)**  
Goth godfathers Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds return with another set of doom-filled tunes—only this time Cave reaches outside his subterranean vocal range and casts his gaze inward. "His lules have become more commonplace, to greater effect: fewer mythic carnies, more domestic blight... The desperate characters of *No More Shall We Part* resemble folks you'd see in line at the grocery, or in the millru." For more, see the Review on p. 74.

**16 ANNE SÖFIE VON OTTER MEETS ELVIS COSTELLO "For The Stars" (Deutsch Gramophone)**  
If it isn't the weirdest combination in pop music this year, the union of Stockholm's celebrated mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie Von Otter and Liverpool's revered cynic-wordsmith Elvis Costello comes pretty damn close. After lengthy pursuit, Costello was able to eventually meet and work with Von Otter, his opera idol. The results can be heard on "For The Stars," from *Elvis Costello Meets Anne Sofie Von Otter—A Musical Love Story*.

**17 BANG ON A CAN ALL-STARS "Escalator" (Cantaloupe)**  
Since 1987, New York's Bang On A Can Festival has been the home of musical experimentation and innovation. Six of the festival's most noted repeat participants joined together in the early '90s to form the Bang On A Can All-Stars. The tracks on the band's new *Renegade Heaven* (out on the All-Stars' own label) add accessibility to a mix of classical, jazz and rock.

**18 THE ANGEL "Make It Better (Nu Guss Version) Featuring Tre Hardson" (New Line-Supa Crucial)**  
You may have heard tracks by Los Angeles-based beat-maker the Angel in the Giovanni Ribisi film *Boiler Room*—if so, you're familiar with her smooth mix of experimental drum 'n' bass and backpacker hip-hop, which is vocally aided here by the Pharcyde's Tre Hardson. For more on the Angel and her new *No Gravity*, see On The Verge, p. 40.



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**Age of plastic**

More plastic! I could scream (and I did) when confronted by yet more plastic. You were going along so well with the mag's new format and I love the music and all the info but ditch the plastic! I don't know why you felt the need to encase the CD in plastic—the paper was just fine, easy to handle, easy to dispose of (if necessary) and easy to store. Plastic sucks! No more plastic!

**Trink  
Largo, FL**

*We're no real fans of plastic, but that's where our long search for a more durable, harder-to-steal CD case led us. If it's any consolation to our ecologically aware friends, the new CD carrier will enable us to forgo the polybag wrapper around newsstand copies of the magazine, so there's less plastic that we know people will only throw away. We're working on improvements to the new plastic case, so let us know what you do and don't like about it (and try to be specific; "sucks" doesn't really help), because that's how broke-ass companies do consumer research. —ed.*

**Safe as Milk**

I am as happy as a little girl. Imagine my happiness when I listened to my March 2001 CD and there was no rap material on it. Finally, a human being "singing" a song, and actually playing his or her instrument and coming up with original content (not sampled and stolen). I can't tell you how many previous CDs that I had thrown away after copying off the "good stuff," because it was so infested with crap... oops, typo, rap. I think the last straw was a few months ago, when I heard the "Fuck You Hoe" song [DJ Assault, Dec. '00]. Rap is such a downer, please keep it up. "RFF" Rap Free Future!

**Dave Milk  
daytray@peoplepc.com**

*Here, the response baton gets handed to our own Tom "Bunny" Mallon, who had the following to say when he read the above missive: "Dude, this guy has no taste. If he can't appreciate 'Fuck You Hoe' for the piece of subversive social commentary that it truly is, and DJ Assault for the counterculture revolutionary that he truly is, then I feel bad for him. He would do well to remember what Assault said once upon a time: 'Hoez talkin' shit get they mouf blew out!' —ed.*

**"Or in front of their spouse's Polaroid or VCR camera"**

It has been said that "the Church" is "the body" of Christ, and we Christians are "member" of that body. (Romans 6:19, 7:23, 12:4, I Corinthians 6:15, 12:12, Ephesians 4:25,

5:30) I suppose I would consider myself of those frequently hidden, questionably embarrassing and definitely crucial members who comprise the "penis" of the Holy Body. If that sounds crass or prudishly obscene or trips your irritated and fatigued treasures into prostate or uterine cancer, let me re-word that as "male member." To elaborate, the existence of human creatures (particularly the female gender, from this "red-blooded" male writer's perspective) being sometimes clothed, sometimes partly clothed, sometimes partly unclothed and sometimes totally nude fascinates me.

For what purpose(s) do (particularly female) humans appear to the opposite sex ranging the entire gamut from totally clothed (as during frigid weather when outside) to totally naked (when on the toilet, in the private pool, lake, ocean, tub, bed or in front of their spouse's Polaroid or VCR camera)? What is the color of Napoleon's white horse? What's your pleasure—chads or dimples? You want a recount? You've had ENOUGH recounts.

One of the incentives of people desiring to do whatever it takes to see and feel members of the opposite sex naked is a non-deniable and fervent, Divinely incepted, biological-drive "clock" involved with not merely the animal like *instinct* for reproductive survival but also (for human beings made in the image of God) a Scriptural command to "be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28 and Genesis 2:25)... plus experience the phenomenal pleasure of viewing, touching and describing someone else's nude body parts in the process (read the entire Song Of Solomon in the Old Testament of the HOLY BIBLE).

But not all women wear rings on the fourth finger of their left hands and even if they do or don't, who knows if they want to stay single or are already going steady with someone? Who has the audacity and rudeness to ask them? Maybe they are into lesbianism. Maybe guys prefer to be homogay effeminate sodomites in violation against (not "of") the Trinitarian Greek Text New Testament, properly translated, English-wording rendition of I Corinthians 6:9-10.

Such deviancy—stifling wholesome sexual expression, satisfaction, gratification, craving and fulfillment against sacred erotica which God the Lord and Creator intended without shame can be overcome in these fast-paced and highly competitive Internet and instant global communication, fast-food, throw-away-after-one-use, last days—by creating, maintaining, promoting, advertising and funding dating for marriage Internet services and Web

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sites which wondrously and speedily assist the sexually needy and erotically starving in quick proficiency—bringing them together with respect, dignity and honor... so that the stumbling blocks of PG-to-XXX, pseudo-sexual-substitute, porno poison can be sidestepped and ignored, eventually discarded and destroyed, for the benefit of humanity.

**Unsigned  
Christian Defense Consultant  
c/o Christian Media Network**

*For the longest time, we stopped believing in God and put our faith squarely in the NASDAQ index. But that was before we learned that there wouldn't be a loaves-and-fishes IPO, back before it started telling us to do funny things, like spend money just to prove we could and forget about things like a sustainable business. Then our God turned vengeful and we were asked to make sacrifices to prove our faith. And lo we did. So really, looking back at the past year, this guy makes as much sense as any of the craven toadies whose Aeron chairs are now forever in the left hand of the stock market God. —ed.*

**Correction:**

In the February 2001 issue, Tommy Guerrero's photo was replaced by a photo of his collaborator, Gadget. We regret the error. (But it is kinda funny, isn't it?)

# Los Super SEVEN cantos



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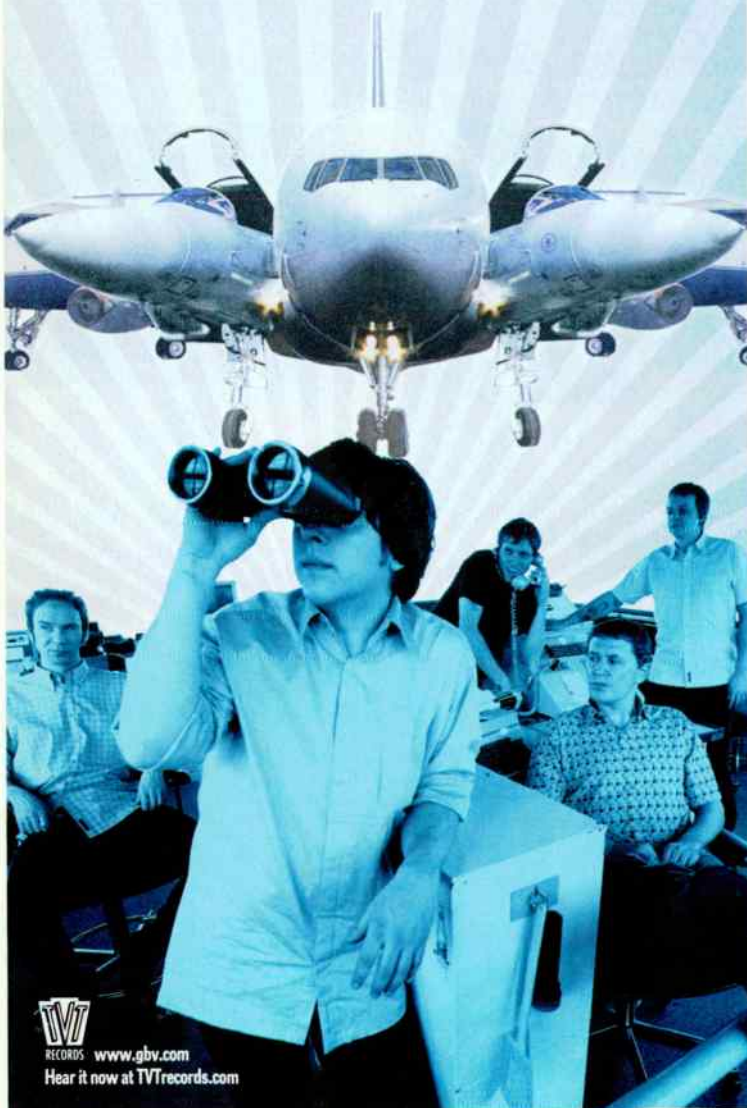
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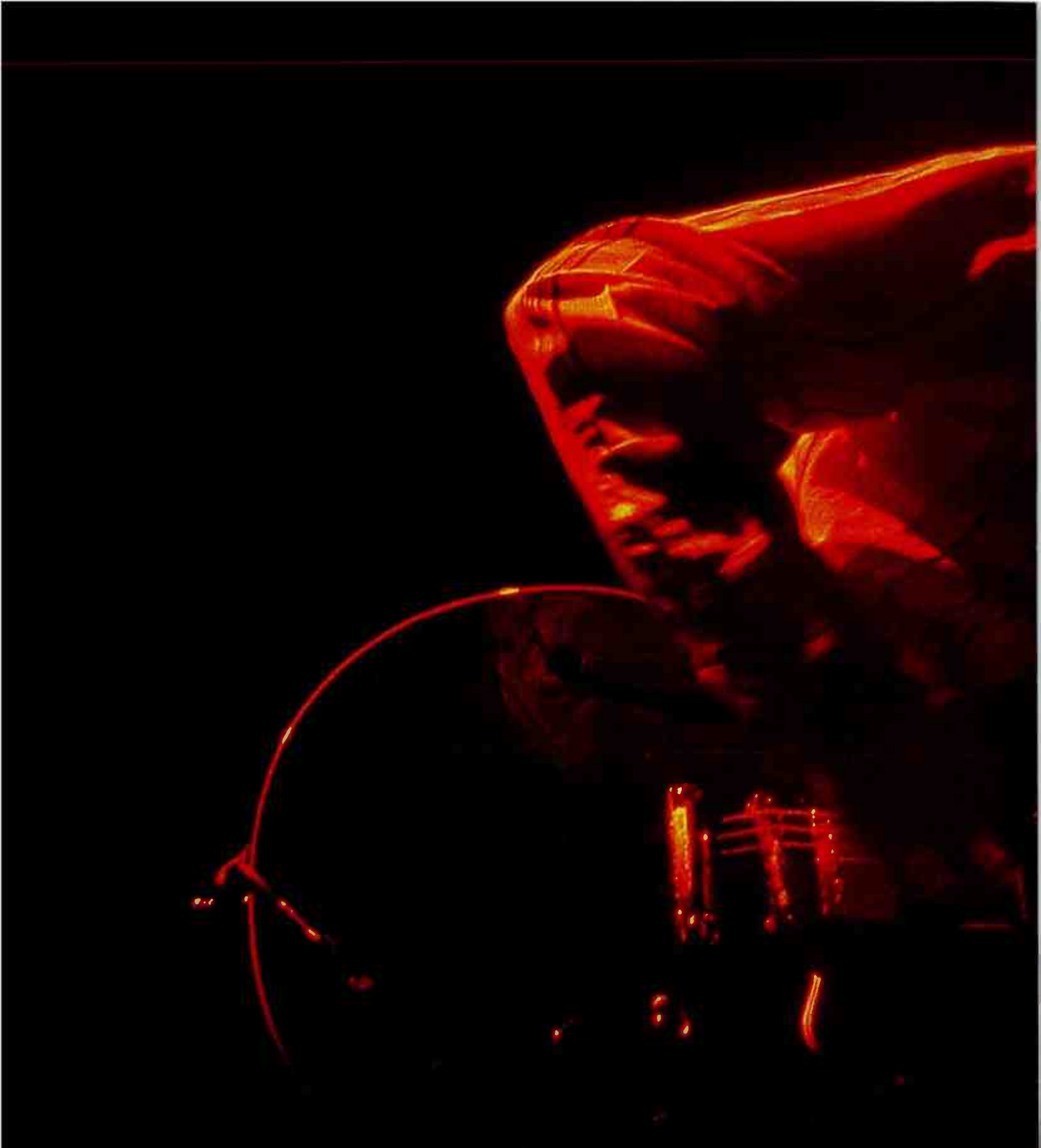
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**30**

### **I-Maximum Rock 'n' Roll**

*Jaws 3-D didn't make you this queasy*

**35**

### **JAY DEE**

*Blows smoke at success*



## COLDPLAY'S HEADCOLD

**B**ritish brood-rockers Coldplay showed Los Angeles fans a mopelessly good time (below) on their first-ever North American tour this February, nodding and wailing through tracks from their debut, *Parachutes* (Nettwerk America-Capitol). But East Coast counterparts were unfortunately audience to a phlegm-y, ily-y frontman: Singer Chris Martin sniffled through apologies at the band's New York performance before breaking into "Trouble," the only song he

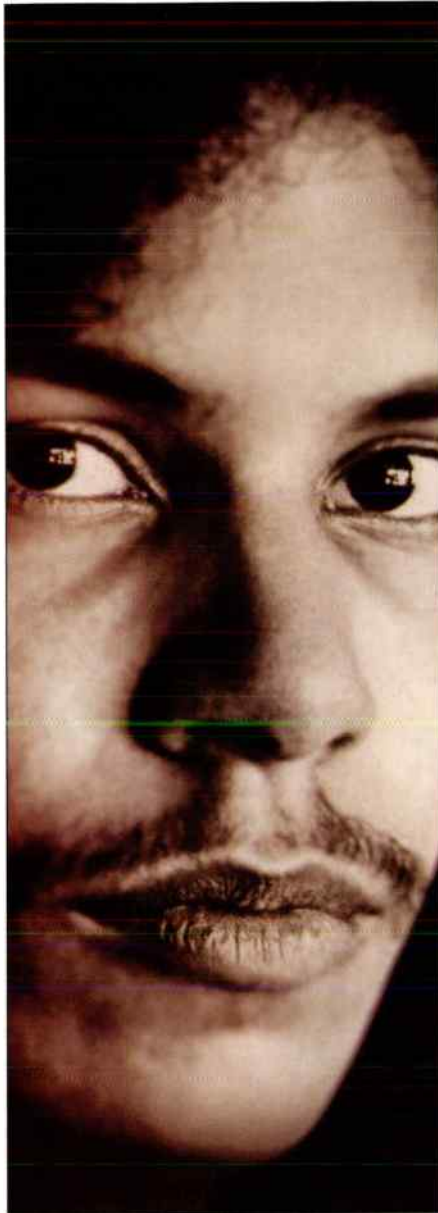
felt up to performing that night. Coldplay plucked a zealous fan from the crowd to sing their single "Yellow," but the PA was mercifully muted moments later in favor of the caterwauling audience. The band's Boston, Toronto and Miami fans were completely out of luck—but Coldplay has graciously scheduled an extensive North American tour starting in May to make up for the cancellations. "And don't give us shit," Martin told the NYC attendees, "everybody gets sick." >>>NICOLE KEIPER



DAVID GOLDMAN

# Glossary

## Of Terms



## 5 Things You Should Know About SHUGGIE OTIS

**S**huggie Otis might sound like an off-the-menu sex act or a lost member of the Fat Albert gang, but this son of famous bandleader Johnny Otis was an influential child prodigy who, as an adult, has been overlooked by fame and lucrative label deals. At 17, Shuggie produced and played virtually every instrument on his celebrated psychedelic funk-blues debut, *Here Comes Shuggie Otis*. His third album, *Inspiration Information*, was released on Columbia in 1974, when Shuggie was 21 years old. Although the record disappeared from the mainstream radar (as did Shuggie, becoming a bit of a recluse), its influence reverberated in the music of everyone from Sly Stone to Frank Zappa. It's just been re-released by Luaka Bop. >>>ADRIENNE DAY

### 1. Quincy Jones turned *Inspiration Information's* "Strawberry Letter 23," into a No. 1 R&B hit.

"It was one of the most exciting days I can remember. Quincy called my father, told him the Brothers Johnson had recorded it, and that's all I needed to know. We were thrilled—I was a fan of the first Brothers Johnson, so when I got the call, it blew my mind twice."

### 2. Shuggie was asked to join the Rolling Stones after Mick Taylor bowed out.

"Right away I couldn't picture myself as a Rolling Stone, even though I liked their music and everything. And I'd rather be the leader."

### 3. Instead of a treehouse, he had a studio in his backyard.

"[Some guys from Columbia Records] asked my father what he would like, and he said he'd like a studio built in his backyard. They gave him the money to build it. I finished *Inspiration Information* there. I didn't really know what I had back then."

### 4. Otis was one of the first producers to use the Rhythm King.

No, the Rhythm King isn't a sketchy birth-control method, but one of the first drum machines ever manufactured. "Musicians had started using it [in the early '70s] as a metronome. Then they'd take it off and record real drums—Sly Stone did some things like that. But I elected to keep it on most of the album."

### 5. Dad gave him the Carnegie blues.

"I started gigging in the early '80s with my father's band. We did a blues event at Carnegie Hall in the mid-'80s with Etta James and Dr. John. And we're talking about doing some key gigs out that way again—not just getting out there and hitting the chitterlings circuit."

**Dungeons & Dragons:** Hope we have a lot of hit points, because the three separate *D&D* references in this issue could cripple our 22nd level rock-journalist mage. Next month, *CMJ New Monster Manual*. P. 31, 34.

**IDM:** "Intelligent Dance Music." Neither exceptionally intelligent nor especially danceable. Discuss. P. 50, 86.

**Fridmann, Dave:** Following the failure of the DARE anti-drug project, the DEA is now retaining producer Dave Fridmann (Mogwai, Creeper Lagoon, the Flaming Lips, Mercury Rev) to send us on sweetly smacked-out benders without the nasty track marks and death and stuff. P. 70, 86.

**The Rockpostrophe:** With the Go-Go's, we understood their need for a blatantly incorrect apostrophe. But the Old 97's? This is a misplaced singular possessive we cannot abide. (And Rhett seemed so smart...) P. 31.

**CliffsNotes:** Forty-three years ago, Nebraskan farmboy-turned-entrepreneur Cliff Hilleagass debuted CliffsNotes so that no American music critic would ever have to use the word "introduction" again. P. 71, 84.

**Wopat, Tom:** We think that Luke Duke-turned-lounge-crooner Tom Wopat would look better with a big red pentagram on his forehead. And you? P. 33.

**Purple Rain and Graffiti Bridge:** The Artist Formerly Known As Talented appears an unprecedented amount of times in this issue. We promise it'll never happen again, you sexy MFs. P. 22, 68.

## The Graveyard

**Bling-bling:** Rappers say the darnedest things! And then pasty music writers beat those things into the ground. R.I.P., dearest bling-bling, a tired term never to be read in these pages again. After p. 27, that is.

# SIR MIX-A-LOT

**Pete Tong**, England's Pied Piper of electronic music, has made America his new beat.

**W**hen it comes to shaping the tastes of U.K. clubbers, Pete Tong just might be electronic music's answer to Dick Clark. What does Tong have in common with Mr. *American Bandstand*? Well, for the past 10 years, Tong's Friday night *Essential Selection* show on Radio 1 has helped usher in the age of club sounds to listeners around the world the way Clark fostered rock 'n' roll's growth in '50s America.

Mainstream radio may still be conservative Stateside, notes Tong, whose show is also syndicated on many U.S. college stations, "but the American club scene is in such an exciting and positive growing state [that] I'm now taking its music scene more seriously."

Tong plans to tour the States this spring in support of his new *Essential Mix* (London-Sire)—the first of his to be released on this side of the Atlantic. "I was a club DJ first and that's still my greatest passion," says Tong.

The internationally known wax-spinner has kept pace with electronic music's evolution from disco to acid house to two-step ever since he was made A&R manager in 1983 at then-new indie London

Records. In the wake of 1988's Summer Of Love acid-house revolution, Tong founded the FFRR imprint through London, as a kind of importer of American music tastes. "I was coming over to New York and Chicago and basically signing finished masters of artists like Frankie Knuckles, Salt 'N' Pepa and Run-DMC," Tong says. He also signed a little-known U.K. artist, now a famous victim of British orthodontics. "Goldie just walked into my office one day," he laughs, and the rest was drum 'n' bass history.

Might Tong, a 40-year-old father of three, ever tire of such an intense lifestyle? "The new fascination is the globalness of it all," he declares. "Everyone said [dance music in the U.S.] died in 1979 with John Travolta and Studio 54. But now, I'm suddenly taking America on for real." >>>ADRIENNE DAY



## WEIRD RECORD The World's First Indie-Rock Opera

For every *Tommy* there's a *Graffiti Bridge*, so the past decade's lack of rock 'n' roll musicals hasn't worried

too many people. Portland-based musician Chris Slusarenko (formerly of Sprinkler and Svelt) decided to deliver what the world hasn't been waiting for, anyway: the first

indie-rock opera. *Colonel Jeffrey Pumpnickel* (Off) positions Slusarenko as the deranged ringleader of a cast of collegiate rock aristocrats—Stephen Malkmus, Grandaddy and Quasi among them—who invent and perform "chapters" of the Colonel's life. From Pumpnickel's conception, as portrayed in Guided By Voices' "Titus And Strident Wet Nurse (Creating Jeffrey)," to his watery death in Macha's misleadingly cheerful "He Remembers His

Burial At Sea," the minutiae of Pumpnickel's days are detailed: Howe Gelb takes on the Colonel's penchant for prostitutes in "Hooker Instead," while the Minus 5's "The Great Divider (My Ruffled Sleeve)" suggests that our hero may actually be a robot. The variety of acts makes for a sinuous, if nonsensical, narrative; the result is a surprisingly enjoyable, zany epic thatched from slouchy, lo-fi rock. >>>RICHARD M. JUZWIAK

## SPACE TIME'S CONTINUUM



Even if you gave up hallucinogens after that unfortunate alien abduction thing, you can rekindle the spacey magic by rocking Spoon's UFO watch on your wrist. This particular model not only measures SMPTE time increments (the 1/30-second standard for editing video), but it also has an adjustable metronome that ticks off beats per minute with seven different sounds. With the gently curving lines of its brushed stainless casing and its green/black LCD display panel, the design is quintessentially retrofuturistic (\$99.95). >>>SUE CUMMINGS

## NET GAIN

If you're as bored with commercial radio as we are, you've probably wished for a way to listen to Internet stations away from your desk. Akoo's Kima is among the first generation of gadgets answering the need. Kima beams audio from any device with a sound card (such as a computer, TV or DVD player) to a stereo receiver up to 1000 feet away. The signal can waiver sometimes, and the system won't work at all when you're on the road. But it beats hearing Crazy Town for the 329th time (\$250). >>>S.C.



## VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

Our gleanings from the vaunted message boards at [www.cmj.com](http://www.cmj.com)

**Glenn, Dave, remember: It's an honor just to be nominated.**

**el\_scorcho:** Who's a bigger asshole, Glenn Danzig or Dave Mustaine?

**ElGuapo:** My brother used to work for [Danzig] managing the distribution network for his comic book interests. He is an asshole of supreme magnitude.

**the\_jackrabbit:** Dave Mustaine is just the greatest rock star in the world... of course he's an asshole,

he's a rock star... Danzig is a primadonna but Dave Mustaine is definitely a ROCK STAR!!!! (And he rules...)

**Neale:** You all suck and should be killed. Danzig will eat your heart and liver. Dave will play the national anthem on *Rock And Jock*. And suck doing it because he has no talent.

**el\_scorcho:** Danzig will not eat our hearts out, or whatever. That is exactly the kind of image he throws out that makes him

an asshole. I bet he eats shrimp salad and tofu and ice cream cones. He's not so tough.

**lgrrrl666:** A friend once asked Mustaine for his autograph and the prick's only response was, 'What for?' And my friend goes, 'OK, whatever' and went and asked for Marty Friedman's instead. He has better hair than Mustaine, anyway.

**the\_jackrabbit:** I have a nice story about Mr. Danzig... I won't use names

but the singer of a very BIG hardcore band [brought] his Misfits box set to get signed by Mr. Danzig at an in-store. He's all excited to meet one of his idols and gets to the front of the line and greets Mr. Danzig with the excitement of a 10-year-old meeting Superman. He hands the box set to Mr. Danzig and Mr. Danzig looks at it, says, "I didn't get any money from this, I'm not signing it," and hands it back to the dejected fan. If that's not an asshole for you, I don't know what is...

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO TOOL

Those Tool boys are a mystical bunch, filling their records and artwork with all manner of surely Satanic mumbo-jumbo. So mystical, in fact, that they wouldn't talk to us, but we don't hold grudges: In keeping with their otherworldly hoo-ha, we used the math-minded forecasting science/religion/whatever of numerology to

unlock the surely mindboggling mysteries that lie behind the futures of both Maynard and their third full-length, *Lateralus*. Because we're cost-conscious, we used the all-knowing, all-seeing Free Numerology Reading at [www.numberquest.com](http://www.numberquest.com) to pull back the cosmic curtain. >>>TOM MALLON.



DUNCAN BLAKE

<b>Birth name:</b> The name they were given at birth, slick.	<b>Birth Name:</b> James Herbert "Maynard" Keenan	<b>Birth Name:</b> <i>Lateralus</i>
<b>Birth date:</b> Being the day said birth took place.	<b>Birth date:</b> April 17, 1964	<b>Birth date:</b> May 15, 2001
<b>Expression:</b> "The Expression number shows us who we truly are. This is where we feel most comfortable and how we automatically act. It is the essence of our identity."	<b>Expression:</b> 3. "You bring joy and inspiration to all by your sunny outlook and creative talents." This from the guy who wrote the lyric, "I have found some kind of temporary sanity in this shit, blood and come on my hands"?	<b>Expression:</b> 1. "Your unique approach is sure to open the doors to brave new worlds and fascinating discoveries."
<b>Soul Urge:</b> "The Soul Urge number is our secret, innermost longing. It reveals what we secretly strive to be or accomplish."	<b>Soul Urge:</b> 9. "The fine arts call out to you, and you may in fact have a master artist living inside of you." Possible schizophrenia—the <i>Behind The Music</i> will be even better than we thought.	<b>Soul Urge:</b> 1. "You are intense and convicted... Many are inspired by your confidence, while others may feel irritated and view it as arrogance." <i>Kid B</i> , anyone?
<b>Persona:</b> "The Persona number describes the way we appear to the outside world, the first impression people have of us."	<b>Persona:</b> 3. "You enjoy dressing up and are very creative with accessories. You've got a style all your own, even if you don't follow fashion."	<b>Persona:</b> 9. "Many people will be attracted to you because of your romantic nature. Others will be transformed by your example." Romantic? So no "Stinkfist 2," then.
<b>Destiny:</b> "The Destiny number describes the life lessons that we have come here to learn. It reveals to us the path we must take, and the role we must play to fulfill our mission."	<b>Destiny:</b> 5. "You learn through travel and experience. Life is your teacher and the five senses your guide." One supposes the onstage fake breasts can be chalked up to "experience."	<b>Destiny:</b> 6. "Domestic responsibility, esthetic arts and fair judgment are some of the qualities you are here to express." Uh-oh, I smell rainforest benefit.
<b>Personal Day:</b> How they should occupy themselves today.	<b>Take A Personal Day :</b> 11. "Sing, dance, make people laugh! Wear yellow or orange. Today you radiate and warm like the sun. Smile and bless us all!"	<b>Take A Personal Day:</b> 6. "Buy flowers. Fill the bird feeder. Cook a delicious meal for a friend or relative. Nurse someone back to health."

## Top 7.5

Because people keep asking us, "What's good?"

THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS

- |   |   |   |   |  |  |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|
| <p><b>1</b><br/><b>The New Pornographers</b><br/><i>Mass Romantic</i> (Mint). Just think how sick into this record we'll be if we ever figure out the lyrics.</p> | <p><b>2</b><br/><b>Can You Dig It?</b><br/><i>The Warriors</i> on DVD. New York would be a better place with more mime gangs.</p>  | <p><b>3</b><br/><b>Smokin' crack.</b><br/>Nikka Costa's backstage pass.</p> | <p><b>4</b><br/><b>Whiskeytown's <i>Pneumonia</i> (Lost Highway)</b><br/>The record formerly known as <i>It's Never Ever Gonna Fuckin' Come Out</i> (aw, that Ryan Adams is such a card) finally comes out May 8th.</p> | <p><b>5</b><br/><b>Transformer food.</b> Bowl of soup morphs into ninja assassin! (<a href="http://minidisco.com/minispecs/lunch-bots.html">minidisco.com/minispecs/lunch-bots.html</a>)</p> | <p><b>6</b><br/><b>Queens Of The Stone Age <i>Rated X</i></b> (Interscope). Vinyl version of <i>Rated R</i>, but with porn in the gatefold sleeve. Grow up? Why?</p> | <p><b>7</b><br/><b>Pinkslip Panic.</b> Because humor = tragedy + time: An online game featuring a desperate dot-com exec dispatching staff <i>Doom</i>-style. (<a href="http://www.killercartoons.com">www.killercartoons.com</a>).</p> | <p><b>5</b><br/><b>Celebrity DJs.</b> Soccer star David "Mr. Posh Spice" Beckham reportedly gets £50,000 for a DJ set? Enough already. If anyone cares about your day job or wife/father/homely actress sister, they're not listening to what you spin. Go away.</p> |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|





In My Room  
Rollin' on the river with **Clutch's** Neil Fallon

**C**lutch's songs have always boasted a colorful cast of characters, from the men in black to Marlon Brando to the mummified corpse of John Wilkes Booth. Their new *Pure Rock Fury* (Atlantic) is no exception, teeming with the likes of "Winnebago women," the merry wives of Windsor and lactose-intolerant rap-rockers. To see where all that inspirato comes from, vocalist Neil Fallon gives us the lowdown on Clutch's West Virginia headquarters, on the not-so-peaceful Potomac River. >>>TOM MALLON

**Who Let The Dogs Out?**  
There's two wild packs of dogs. They run around and go through the trash. We put habanero sauce on the top of the trash, and that tends to keep them away. But they're all good dogs, except for the ones down the street—the German shepherd gang. They're really nasty.

**Cloak-And-Dagger Types**  
There's a lot of spooky people. I think there's some government-owned houses, like retreats, budget Camp Davids. Once a month, a bunch of dudes with D.C. tags will meet up at this house, then they're not to be seen for weeks. That's kind of curious.

**Cloak-And-Dagger Plate**  
We've got a kick-ass Freemasons' Order Of The Eastern Star commemorative plate. We got it at a flea market down the street. It looks real spooky. It's got a lot of little symbols that mean absolutely nothing to us but it looks cool.

**Target Practice**  
There's a firing range [across the river]. The neighbors are more of a worry. There were some college kids who thought that since there's a firing range on the Maryland side, it would be alright to shoot their guns on the West Virginia side, on their get-all-tanked-up-and-bring-out-the-revolvers [night]. They don't live there anymore.

ANNE SOFIE

ELVIS

VON OTTER **MEETS** COSTELLO



Elvis Costello and Swedish mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter, two legendary artists from musically different backgrounds come together for a truly unique album. *For The Stars* features arrangements of songs written by artists such as Lennon & McCartney, Brian Wilson, and Benny Andersson, plus two brand new compositions by Costello.

HEAR IT on [www.universalclassics.com](http://www.universalclassics.com)

PRODUCED BY ELVIS COSTELLO

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## THE 5-SPOT



Crucial listening according to London dance music jester Luke Vibert, a.k.a. **Wagon Christ**

- 1 AFX** "Flow Coma/Box Energy" (remixes) (Men)  
"Richard James [Aphex Twin, AFX] and Squarepusher decided to start a new label called Men, and this is the first release. It's just a white label right now, but it's this wicked squelchy breakbeat stuff that's over the top."
- 2 WAGON CHRIST** *Musipal* (Ninja Tune)  
"Me new LP, although it comprises lots of old stuff too!"
- 3 LUKEWARM** "Rewind Selecta" (White Label)  
"It's this whole monster bootleg thing that I probably shouldn't tell you about. Mike Paradinas [a.k.a. µ-Ziq] asked me about a year ago for a track to put on an EP of pop-music remixes, and what I did was this cheeky Cylob and Artful Dodger thing, a dual track. Check the MC Hammer B-side remixes!"
- 4 SPACEK** "Blue" (Jay Dee remix) (Island)  
"This is a fabulous hip-hop remix of a pretty trip-hop tune. I love all Jay-Dee's stuff... the R&B production and singing... He's my favorite hip-hop producer. Plus, there's all this casual talking about sex throughout the track, 'Uh-HUH, oh YEAH!'"
- 5 BLOWFELT** "Lickle Rolla" (Blowfelt)  
"It's quite out of date but I like it—phat U.K. break garage two-step business. My friend Maf passed along this weird speed-garage compilation and I hunted this track down on vinyl recently... it's wicked! Sounds like AFX crossed with rave."

Wagon Christ's *Musipal* is out now on Ninja Tune.

INTERVIEW BY HEATH K. HIGNIGHT.

## BUS BOYS

**STRING BUILDER** built a record on Greyhound.



Forget the romanticized ideal of a young band on the road, leadfooting it from one dive to the next in a crinkled van in search of free beer and disease-free groupies. Alec and Joel Thibodeau forgot it, anyway. They even forgot about booking club dates. Inspired by a Robert Johnson documentary about the legendary bluesman hitching cross-country, the brothers decided to take their folk outfit String Builder on a Greyhound tour, playing to strangers on street corners. And to make it interesting, they also asked passersby to answer the question, "What is American culture?"

Greyhound liked the idea and gave the Thibodeaus, who have been playing music together since grade school, passes for two free months of travel, no strings attached. On the first tour date in New York City, the police fined Alec and Joel \$50 each for playing in the subway. Things got better in Idaho, where a dreadlocked organic-vegetable farmer made the boys a big salad and set up a show at a local bar. In other towns, college DJs and other bands offered rides, gigs and floor space to sleep on. And

when the brothers returned to hometown Providence, Rhode Island, they had a notebook filled with responses to their question, more than 1,000 photos of people they performed for, and 75 hours of field recordings (including snippets of a homeless, drunk Vietnam vet exclaiming that it's time to "smash capitalism").

Contact Records' Yoko Sawai offered to release the recordings, and the result is the new double album *Mortar & From The Curb*. The brothers also combined the responses to "What is American culture?" (such as "It's so ugly and so beautiful, you can't help but look") with the pictures from the trip into a series of screen prints—and with a grant from the Rhode Island Council On The Arts, exhibited them at an art gallery.

What did the Thibodeaus learn about America? "Everybody is looking for something above and beyond the everyday," says Alec, 28, who adds that several pavement-pounding preachers tried to convert them along the way. "For a lot of people it's spirituality; for others it's encountering a couple of musicians on the street corner." >>>NEIL GLADSTONE



## DOWNLOAD TO THE STREET

Last year's Sony Network Walkman carried two hours of MP3s in a case the size of a cigarette lighter. While slightly larger, Sony's MZ-R700DPC Walkman packs a long-play mode that stores more than five hours of music, and it transfers almost any format of Internet audio from your computer to a MiniDisc for playback—you can even transfer CDs that have been saved to your hard drive. The Walkman has evolved quite a bit since the first model came out in 1979, but fear not, street warriors. It still excels at what a Walkman does best: helping you tune out annoying people (\$190). >>>SUE CUMMINGS



## THE FRONTLINES OF RHYME

**Freestyle** captures hip-hop's ground zero.



KEVIN FITZGERALD

Pundits and politicians still attract attention with claims that hip-hop is destroying our culture, but what about the ways our culture destroys hip-hop? Capitalist Darwinism distilled hip-hop to easily digestible bits and divorced the mainstream from the art-form's most vital and least marketable practice: improvised, freestyle rapping. In his scrappy and energetic documentary, *Freestyle*, director Kevin Fitzgerald uncovers an off-the-dome rhyming underground completely removed from Puff Daddy's bling-bling Benzes.

To Fitzgerald, freestyle is pure, uncompromised expression, elevated to Zen-like stature with a circle of freestylers, known as the cipher, as the temple. "Freestyling is a gift because it happens in the moment," says Fitzgerald. "When you're not thinking outside the present, time stands still. It's a really beautiful thing. If you were able to

capture the energy of a John Coltrane live solo, that's what being in a cipher is like. It's a holy place."

Drawing from 130 hours of footage featuring the best rhymers on both coasts and incorporating archival footage of influences such as Muhammad Ali, *Freestyle* is a hip-hop film pieced together like a hip-hop track. While notables such as Pharoahe Monch and Mos Def appear, the real stars are the spontaneous busters with frightening skills and no recording contract—including Supernatural, the rhyming dictionary-addicted freestyle champ. As a longtime observer of the scene around L.A.'s Good Life Cafe, Fitzgerald was inspired to uncover hip-hop's shiny underbelly. "People are afraid of hip-hop, but that's not the reality of it. It's really about loving yourself and the people in your community." For more info, e-mail [ima@soca.com](mailto:ima@soca.com). >>>RONI SARIG

ANSWER ME



BOB GREEN

RUFUS WAINWRIGHT

Strikes Curious Poses

If Rufus Wainwright got his musical talent from his parents, folk/country standbys Loudon Wainwright III and Kate McGarrigle, it's a mystery to the Montreal native where exactly he got his coy charm. On *Poses* (DreamWorks), his second full-length, Wainwright revels in his hammy, life-of-the-party panache with a wily blend of über-melodic Elvis Costello hooks and cabaret-style arrangements, all the while questioning his own motives with dusky vocal turns that bring the drama, while in no way recalling the slow jams in *Rent*. >>>DYLAN SIEGLER

Are you as self-destructive as "Cigarettes And Chocolate Milk," the first song on your new record, seems to say?

After living in L.A., I realized our cosmopolitan centers of the Western world are pretty riddled with destructive possibilities. Especially singing in nightclubs and traveling from town to town—everybody wants to show you a good time. I have to contend with a lot. But I wouldn't have it any other way. I mean, I don't think my next record is going to be about going to the gym.

Joni Mitchell has a song called "California," and so do you. What is it with you Canadians?

Basically, I never expected to live in Los Angeles, or spend any time there, and I was bowled over when I first arrived, like, "What the hell is this about?" Everything looked like a movie set and everyone was working out and everyone had these nice little butts and stuff, and I was like, "God, this is real living! This is great!" But going to California is like doing speed—there's this huge rush and then you plummet. It's kind of traumatic.

So I take it you left?

Right now I'm living with my mother up in Montreal, because it's free. We have our own separate apartments but—you know, I'm completely incapable of cooking or cleaning or doing my laundry. And she's basically my slave when I'm there. But then of course there's always a payoff for that too—it's like, if she's my slave then I'm her boyfriend. It's pretty sick.

You were one step away from being a child celeb, singing with your parents and your sister growing up. When did you first realize you were a total drama queen?

There's been a long history of me and Celine Dion living in parallel universes. I grew up in Montreal, and at one point the Pope came to town. There's this song, "Une Colombe": "Une colombe est partie en voyage"—"A dove has gone on a voyage"—and she sang it, and it was a huge hit when the Pope came. I was in fifth grade, and we did a show where I got to sing the song for the whole school. And everyone was like, "Oh, you're better than Celine"—that was when it really struck. You know, the one time I met Celine, I was at the Juno Awards in Canada, and I was wearing this pale green shirt, and she just walked up to me and said (in a French accent), "Your shirt looks yellow on TV." And then walked away. That's all she had to say to me. I was like, that's okay, I sing "Une Colombe" better than you.

# VIXENS OF VINYL



BOB GREEN

**W**orking at a used record store called Cheap Thrills, I developed two things: calluses on my first two fingers from flipping through stacks of used and cut-out vinyl, and a knowledge of my customers. Charlie came in twice a week on his lunch hour to buy country records and anything—anything—with a woman on the cover. For the latter, I always put a small stack of '60s instrumental records near the front of the used bins, knowing he'd buy them for a couple of dollars more than

they were worth. But then I started pulling a few aside for myself. It started with *How To Strip For Your Husband*, and by the time it spread to *Music For Pussycats*, I was hooked on their post-Pill, pre-eating disorder sexuality. Benjamin Darling celebrates these heavy-lidded, full-figured gals and the esthetic that brought us the College Girl, the Bad Girl and the Smiling Buxom Barmaid in *Vixens Of Vinyl* (Chronicle Books), an appropriately cocktail napkin-sized compendium of retro leering. >>>SCOTI FRAMPTON



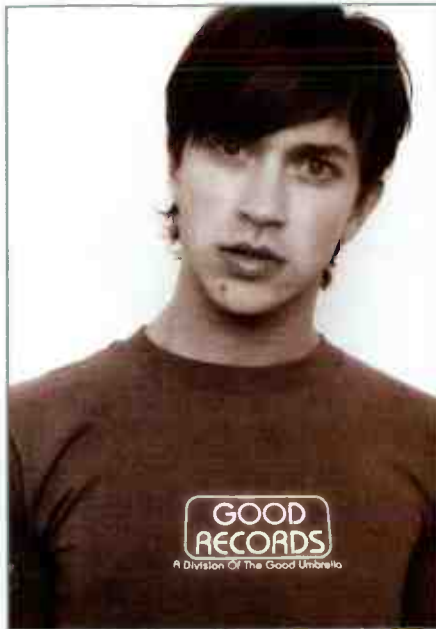
## MOBY... IN SHOCKING 3D!

➔ It's a blimp! It's a plane! No, it's Sting's head! Some of today's top-shelf musicians get larger-than-life treatment in the latest 3D IMAX extravaganza, **All Access** (IMAX Entertainment), a spectacle that promises front-row access to Kid Rock, Moby and Sting, among others. However, only two of the nine performances were shot at actual concerts—because of the unwieldy large-format IMAX cameras, the other seven were filmed in a staged environment that offers all the spontaneity of a *TRL* episode. Forget the vapid talking-head quotes ("Music is like a heartbeat; you just can't stop it!" blathers Dave Matthews) and just wait for the highlights, like Kid Rock's "Bawitdaba."

➔ **Beautiful Creatures** (Universal Focus)  
Dubbed *Lock, Stock And Two Smoking Bitches*, this deliciously malevolent Scottish thriller-cum-black-comedy puts a gender-bending spin on the bloody, gun-toting formula ransacked by Tarantino and Ritchie in recent years. *Beautiful Creatures* pairs Dorothy (Susan Lynch) and Petula (Rachel Weisz), who meet and realize they're blessed with similarly fiendish boyfriends. The new friends then hatch a scheme to permanently rid themselves of these brutal galoots. Nice to see the women, for once, chew on some punchy pulp fiction.



← **The Princess & The Warrior**  
(Sony Pictures Classics)  
Tom Tykwer, the German filmmaker best known for *Run Lola Run*, slows down his zoom-zooming pace to tell the story of Sissi (Franka Potente, who played Lola), a shy nurse working in a psychiatric ward. After recovering from a nasty accident—the best truck-pedestrian collision we've seen—Sissi looks for the mystery man who saved her life. While agonizingly unhurried in spots, *The Princess & The Warrior* remains a chill-inducing look at fate and the power of love.



## TELL IT TO MY HEART

Rhett Miller of Old 97's tunes up your lovelife.

Any guy who's penned lyrics like "My name's Stewart Ransom Miller, I'm a serial lady-killer" clearly knows a thing or two about love. Singer/guitarist Rhett Miller shares such tender prose about his own love life with the Old 97's, but we think counseling other lovesick souls may be the man's real calling. Below, Rhett graciously dissects the woes of some of our readers with the same insight he applies to his band's new *Satellite Rides* (Elektra)—the fifth in a line of infectious alt-country LPs that relate sordid tales of his breaking, broken and mended heart.

**In need of rock star-penned love advice? Send your questions to [lovelorn@cmj.com](mailto:lovelorn@cmj.com).**

**I'm 18 and a sophomore in college—and I'm sleeping with one of my professors, who's young, cute and super smart. I'm afraid of getting him in trouble, but I don't want to give him up. What should I do? —Jaime, New York**

Dear Jaime,  
So you're sleeping with one of your professors? During my own (semester-long) college adventure, I pondered a career in teaching. Apparently the perks are similar to those offered in the profession I eventually chose. In the world of rock 'n' roll, the guys who capitalize on the opportunities afforded them by 18-year-old girls aren't so much super smart as they are super sketchy. Beware, babe.

**I think me and that girl Liz on *Roswell* could really hit it off. I read an article about her in my sister's *Seventeen*, and we have all these things in common. I can't stop thinking about her. Do regular people ever have a chance with**

**celebrities? What's my first step? —Will, Ohio**

Dear Will,  
First step, move out of Ohio. Outside of a rare Devo homecoming gig or a Hall Of Fame induction ceremony, celebrities don't hang out in Ohio. Say you wind up in L.A., you're at Erewhon grocery store on Beverly, you and that girl Liz on *Roswell* reach for the same wheat-free peanut butter cookie, you take her to lunch, you sit at a patio table at the Authentic Café, you talk to her for half an hour. The chances of her being the same Liz as the one her publicist and the *Seventeen* writer conjured up are slimmer than a WB starlet.

**Okay, here's the situation. Last summer, my girlfriend and I lived together. She was drunk one night and, well, you know, got together with an old friend of hers from high school. I forgave her, against my better judgment. Then just recently I found out from the other guy's current girlfriend that the thing with my girlfriend**

**wasn't an isolated incident. I got really pissed and confronted her about it, but she insists it really only happened once. I don't really believe her, but it's his word against hers. What do I do? —Mark, Florida**

Dear Mark,  
I'm assuming that by "got together with" you mean "had sex with." I'd be out of there faster than a WB starlet getting hassled by some stalker at Erewhon.

**I like this girl in my chemistry class, but I'm considered a big dork in school. I don't want to quit *D&D* or change the way I dress, but she's in a different crowd and doesn't even know I exist. Help! —Joe, New Jersey**

Dear Joe,  
Don't quit *D&D*. Keep dressing like a freak. Learn to play guitar. Develop an aura of mystery. If this tactic works (it did for me), and you win her heart, hide your nerd status for 90 days. By the time you confess that your third-

level halfling rogue is mired in a thrilling campaign to save the Princess Of Greyhawk, she'll have learned to love you anyway.

**I can't seem to just be friends with my male friends—for some reason we always end up in bed, then they get upset, it ends badly, and we stop speaking. How do I end this cycle of madness? —Erin, New York**

Dear Erin,  
Quit drinking.

**All my friends seem to be having sex. I'm 21. Am I the last living virgin? —Amy, Pennsylvania**

Dear Amy,  
Yes. No, I'm only kidding. Well, probably. Listen, you should be true to your heart. And safe. And careful. And someday you're going to discover why all of your friends are having sex.

Love,  
Rhett

BOOKS

BY NEIL GLADSTONE



SATO LABO  
Satoshi Matsuzawa  
Japan



Remixes For Your Retina

Dance-party flyer designers remix vintage visuals almost as well as a DJ spins classic wax. In his work for the underground music conglomerate Cat Cellular Collaborations ([www.catcellular.com](http://www.catcellular.com)), illustrator Satoshi Matsuzawa imagines the towering afros and revealing hot pants of '70s America with a fine line akin to Japanese anime. Matsuzawa's work is included in **Clubspotting** (Happy Books), a new survey of electronic artists such as Goldie and Howie B and the graphic designers and video directors who morph their music into glimmering posters, album covers and advertisements.



The Devil Went To North Dakota

The '90s were tough for Chuck Klosterman. While pop culture celebrated Seattle grunge and hip-hop grooves, he longed for the glam metal, lukewarm Budweiser and stringy, bleached hairdos that made the '80s so bitchin'. In the new book, **Fargo Rock City** (Scribner), Klosterman gets sentimental with the Devil, attempting to explain the cultural impact of all that Satan worship and acid-washed jeans on a group of Chicken McNugget-loving Midwesterners. "I'm not claiming that the metal genre was intellectually underrated," he writes, "but I feel compelled to insist that it's been unjustifiably ignored."



Have You No Fame?

Fame! Baby, remember my name. Whether your idea of well-known is Britney or Lou Barlow, you have to admit to a fascination with fame. An understanding of that preoccupation drives two new books. In **Walk Of Fame** (St. Martin's Press), nice-guy nobody Tom Webster is offered \$100,000 if he can make himself famous in 30 days. Wouldn't it be easier to suck up to Regis than to take a slimy slide through Hollywood, replete with B-list actresses and cheesy agents? Marco Perella's hilariously hapless memoir **Adventures Of A No Name Actor** (Bloomsbury) should be required reading for anyone heading west to become a Name.



## EASY ACCESS

Looks to give you spring fever

Ah, spring—the trees are budding, and so is your desire. Who needs subtlety? Use snaps, zippers, slits and mesh to show a little skin this spring. And remember: It's not what you wear, but how long it takes to get off. >>>JESSICA DAVIES



## MESH AND MINGLE

As any pimple-faced jock from your high school would attest, it's hard to be sporty and sexy at the same time. Try Triple Five Soul's see-through separates, like this ladies' orange jacket (\$120) and men's black jacket (\$68).

## BEYOND DAISY DUKE

There's just something about a '69 Dodge Charger, hot pants and Tom Wopat that really gets us going. To relive those days of Duke, we recommend these snap-fly denim bikini shorts by Diesel (\$59) for the ladies, and these white lace-up numbers by Tripp (\$40) for the gentlemen.



## PEEK A BOO

It might seem obvious to waltz around in zippered and holed-up shirts that leave little to the imagination, but Tripp's red zip muscle shirt and white tank, both \$24, are perfect for those days when you want to pick up a truck driver. (Wait, that's every day.)

## COUCH DANCING

Viva La Dance Dance Revolution



When you consider that most people play video games while lying on the couch, the idea of a game where you, the player, actually have to dance seems like it would be about as popular as invasive surgery. But **Dance Dance Revolution** (\$29.99), a booty-shaking game from Konami

that's available for PlayStation and compatible with PlayStation 2, might actually make gamers want to get on up. As in the arcade game that's taken over Korea and Japan (and parts of New York) in the last few years, *DDR* players follow a series of colored arrows representing steps forward, back and side to side. At home, you can play using hand-held controllers, but it actually works better (and has higher comic value) when you use the Twister-esque *DDR* dance pad (sold separately for \$49.99, or with the game for \$59.99), which makes everyone look like they're stepping on bugs in time with the music. >>>PAUL SEMEL

### Oni (Gathering Of Developers) PC/PS2

Lost in a world where the fascist World Coalition Government has annexed 80 percent of the world's nations and tracks every move you make, you're fighting to save humanity Japanimation-style with a successful mix of hand-to-hand combat and traditional shoot-'em-up action. Rather than hoarding weapons and ammo, however, the trick here is to travel light, kick an opponent down, pick up his weapon and use it against him. The eye candy will pull you in; the fantastic plot and cut scenes will keep you going through the rather long missions. >>>AARON CLOW



### Phantasy Star Online

(Sega) Dreamcast  
What happened to the scouts sent on a reconnaissance mission to the planet Ragol? Sega Dreamcast's latest role-playing game allows online gamers from all over the world to track them down. Characters from several different classes

fight monsters with spells or weapons, and the "universal translator" allows players who don't even speak the same language to communicate with each other. It's not quite *Everquest*, but it's a bold first step in console gaming. >>>A.C.

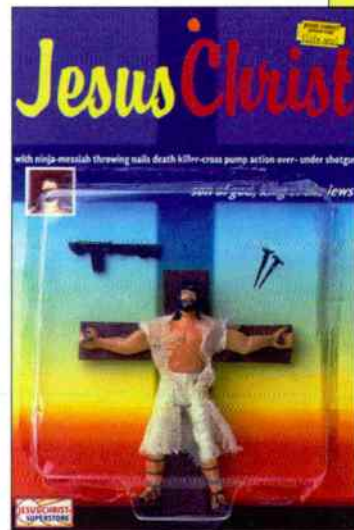
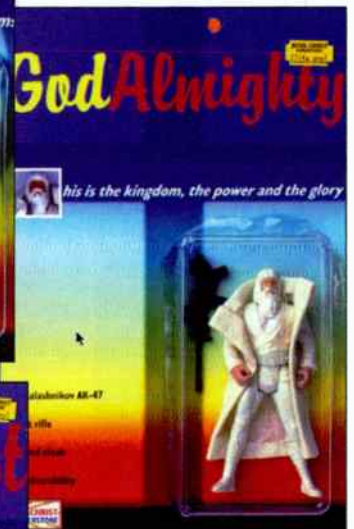
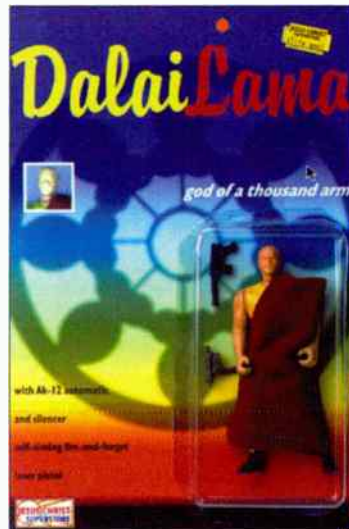
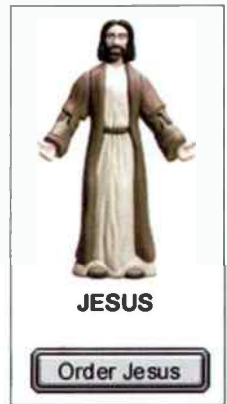


## WORD OF MOUSE Cross Purposes



You've seen them in public restrooms, fast-food restaurants or anywhere unsuspecting young people might pick them up: The pocket-sized black and white Jesus comics known as Chick Tracts are to Christian ministry what "Fire Your Boss!" e-mail spam is to career planning. Go to **Chick Publications** ([www.chick.com](http://www.chick.com)) for the real thing, or get your geek on at **Chyx Publications** ([delusion.smart.net/chyx](http://delusion.smart.net/chyx)), which pits the Chick Tract *Dark Dungeons* ("I used my mind bondage spell on my father. He was trying to stop me from playing *D&D*.") against the Chix parody *Dork Dungeons*.

Religion and child's play meet with **Train Up A Child Bible Action Figures** ([www.trainupachild.com](http://www.trainupachild.com)). Available in both an African and a Caucasian Heritage series, these David and Goliath, Jesus and Mary and Adam and Eve figures are fully poseable and ready to save.



And why turn the other cheek when you can kick some sectarian ass? **Jesus Christ Superstore** ([www.jesuschristsuperstore.net](http://www.jesuschristsuperstore.net)) features a series of armed-and-ready action figures—even the Dalai Lama packs a gat.



## THE STALE SMELL OF SUCCESS

**JAY DEE's** beats are everywhere, but he wants to go somewhere else.

**M**ost rap producers bang away at their drum machines for years in search of a signature sound. Now that Jay Dee has one, he's starting to feel suffocated. Chances are you heard his beat signature on Q-Tip's 1999 album *Amplified*, Common's *Like Water For Chocolate* or Erykah Badu's *Mama's Gun*. When I mention that the simple bounce of "Makin' It Blend" from the *Lyricist Lounge Vol. II* album sounds like his handiwork, he groans.

"People are used to the Jay Dee sound, they're used to hearing some kind of smooth Rhodes and drum and snares loud," says the 26-year-old producer/rapper, who just began work on the new Common album in Detroit. "I want to just break the rules."

He's also written a few of the rules along the way, crafting classics with the Pharcyde and De La Soul. And, of course, there's the critically acclaimed Slum Village album, *Fantastic Vol. II*, for which Jay Dee provided all the tracks and many of the raps. But

then, that's another sore spot. "I was upset with the label because it took so long to come out," he says. "It's outdated." Jay Dee won't be on the next SV album.

Regardless of what project you associate him with, the restless artist has probably already moved beyond it. This spring, BBE releases a Jay Dee compilation entitled *Welcome To Detroit*. Although the record is the first in the *Beat Generation* series, which also includes such luminaries as Pete Rock and Marley Marl, Jay Dee dismisses his contribution as "sat-on" songs and works-in-progress stitched together: "Really, it's just a compilation featuring the cats that are unsigned from Detroit."

He is already looking beyond to the 2002 release of his own solo debut. "You're not going to hear what you heard before. Meaning, you won't hear Rhodes in my beats. You won't hear pretty pianos. You won't hear a snappy snare. I'm just taking it anywhere else." >>>NEIL DRUMMING

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## ÜNLOCO

Last summer, Ünloco singer Joey Duenas spent his 25th birthday at his day job in Austin, Texas, drafting for an engineering firm and grappling with what he'd do with the rest of his life. That same day, he got the phone call of his dreams: "This guy says to me, 'I'm the singer from Goldfinger and I really like your band,'" explains Duenas. "Within two days I'm in L.A., all expenses paid, riding around in limousines having the best birthday of my life." Turns out Ünloco guitarist Brian Arthur had hand-delivered a demo to Goldfinger guitarist Charlie Paulson, who passed it on to singer John Feldmann, who moonlights as a Maverick A&R scout. The trip West for Duenas,

Arthur, bassist Victor Escareno and drummer Peter Navarrete yielded a deal to record their debut full-length, *Healing* (Maverick), and the track "Nothing" for the *Little Nicky* soundtrack. Toiling for six weeks with producer Johnny K, the two-year-old metal outfit hammered out 12 chunky tracks soaked with moody reflections and melodic anger. "The whole record is about closure," Duenas says of his lyrical content, which calls out people who've screwed Ünloco over, from girls who broke his heart to enemies who sold his band out. "With this kind of success, it's a good form of revenge," he figures. "I don't want to be that way, but it's true." —DYLAN W. BACINO



ARTIST APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD

[www.fox.com](http://www.fox.com) 31



NICOLE NODLAND

## SHEA SEGER

There are plenty of reasons why Shea Seger left America for England. During her childhood in Quitman, Texas, a broken-down old school bus sometimes served as her family home and her father, a Vietnam vet, regularly pulled Seger out of class for some home schooling. "It was really sad [in Quitman], just generation after generation, going to the same beautician, going to the same café every Sunday afternoon," sighs the 21-year-old. In London, where she moved two years ago, Seger's husky, corn-fed delivery and sinewy R&B-meets-trip-hop confessionals have been welcomed with open arms. On her

debut album, *The May Street Project* (RCA), she details her upbringing on, of course, May Street. Not surprisingly, Seger, an ardent Democrat, has formed some strong opinions about the country she grew up in: "It's more the mentality of this country that pisses me off, that frustrated me so much I had to separate myself from it." However, she's often gone her own way: When Seger set out to combine classic soul with Southern rock, English techno and lyrical folk, friends told her she was nuts: "But this album was just something I had to do," she says, "something I needed to do." >>>TOM LANIAM



BOB GREEN

## KARL DENSON

**A**round 1990, saxophonist Karl Denson was working on a "straight-ahead" jazz record when he realized something very important: "The jazz audience is dying—literally." Aging fans of the genre didn't go out to shows anymore and didn't want to hear new music. "So I began tailoring my thing toward more of a kid audience. Looking at it like, jazz is really just dance music." In the 10 years since that revelation, he's toured with Lenny Kravitz and helped found the Greyboy Allstars, who regularly trip out jam-band fans with their very sweaty brand of acid jazz. Now

Denson has made his star-studded Blue Note debut, *Dance Lesson #2*, tearing a page out of the Maceo Parker stylebook in the process. The saxophonist's playing hits hard on the one with a forceful yet round tenor, giving his solos bounce and a little abrasiveness. Surrounded by the Greyboy cast (and aided by none other than Charlie Hunter) *Dance Lesson #2* funks up the ante with rump-shaking tunes clearly designed for ravers and rockers, jazzboes and jam-band freaks. Thankfully, these music fans have many dancing years ahead of them. >>>TAD HENDRICKSON

## THE ANGEL

**T**he Angel is reluctant to discuss her world outside of music. Even her real name, age and Brooklyn upbringing are verboten. But as one of only a handful of recognized female producers in her field—that is, electronic music—she has her reasons: “I play my life down ‘cause people always assume things,” the Angel says, exasperated. “They say, ‘What did you do on this remix? You sat in the background with a fucking pom-pom and jumped up and down like a cheerleader?’ If I don’t get specific about my skills, then it’s just a media hype thing.” The Los Angeles-based artist is doing anything but flapping her wings. Under her 60 Channels moniker, she explored the experimental side of drum ‘n’ bass, but her solo debut, *No Gravity* (New Line-Supa Crucial), adds a trippy, playful edge to smooth sensuality. She laughs: “It’s me when I’m not being too cerebral.” Bliethly turning hip-hop’s patriarchal model on its head, she recruits some top-notch male underground talent—Divine Styler and the Pharcyde’s Tre Hardson among them—to float the rhymes. “I think when people hear my work for what it is, the gender issue ceases to exist,” she explains. “I just do what I do, and don’t give a fuck what anybody thinks.” >>> ADRIENNE DAY

ARTIST APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD



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RODDY WOOMBLE, BOB FAIRFOULL

## THE WILD BUNCH

STORY: NICOLE KEIPER PHOTO: TOM SHEEHAN

**B**andmembers head-butting their instruments, beating themselves bloody and knocking out their own teeth: That's what fans came out for when the four Scots in Idlewild hit the road in support of 1999's *Hope Is Important*. Just two years later, though, the punk-rockers longtime fans once considered Least Likely To Cross Over are making studio audiences' heads bob at *The Late Show With David Letterman* and the U.K.'s *Top Of The Pops* with the radio-friendly new *100 Broken Windows* (Food-Odeon/Capitol). It seems Idlewild's feral teenage angst has been channeled into a rowdy version of Green-era R.E.M. So what happened?

"*Windows* was like the surprise album," singer Roddy

Woomble offers in an erudite Scottish burr. "People thought, 'Wait a minute, they're not rolling about on the floor playing out of time with each other. They actually write some really great songs.'" From its radio-ready pop arrangements to lyrics referencing post-modernism and Gertrude Stein, *100 Broken Windows* beckons to the mainstream while retaining the grit of bands that influenced Idlewild's snarly days, like Fugazi and Black Flag. "It's been an album that's convinced people that we're not, you know, crap, really," shrugs Woomble.

Idlewild surely wasn't the most accessible band, but "crap" wasn't an insult they heard all that often—press on both sides of the Atlantic praised their take on snotty post-punk, and the



ROD JONES, COLIN NEWTON

## Idlewild's gone from knocking out their own teeth to knocking out great pop songs.

Manic Street Preachers, Blur and Placebo invited them to open tours. Still, Woomble wasn't happy with their flailing, screeching reputation: "People thought we were pretty good, but didn't have any substance... it was kind of thrills-for-the-moment," he explains. "And to be honest, I agreed with them. So we developed our songwriting by listening to records and playing a lot. It doesn't sound radical—it's not radical—but it did work for us." (Woomble's already touting the follow-up to *Windows* that the band is currently working on: "The first definitive Idlewild album," he gushes.)

Was the metamorphosis worth the risk? Absolutely. In an improbable turn, most of Idlewild's punkier constituents have

remained loyal despite Idlewild's newfound accessibility, and the band's gained an equally devoted indie-rock fanbase—American devotees of both factions will finally get to see the band on their first U.S. tour this spring. "I like the fact that half the audience just came along to hear some of our more rockin' tunes and push their friends about, and that there's people at the back who are sort of 35, reading H.G. Wells and scratching their chin and wondering what the lyrics is about," Woomble laughs. What about the kids who miss the band's former rage, blood and gore? "[The punk fans we lost] maybe felt that we were trying to *mature*, which is a lot of rubbish really—we just basically wanted to be a better band," he asserts. "And I think we are now." **NMM**



SHAY, PHARRELL WILLIAMS, CHAD HUGO

## REVENGE OF THE N\*E\*R\*D

After conquering urban music, the self-admitted nerds of the **Neptunes** make a concept album. STORY: JONATHAN PALMER PHOTO: TERRY RICHARDSON

**O**n the night of the Grammys, Pharrell Williams and Chad Hugo—the production team known as the Neptunes—are, not surprisingly, in the studio. After building a résumé of massive hit records for Mystikal (“Shake Ya Ass”), Ol’ Dirty Bastard (“Got Your Money,” featuring Kelis) and Jay-Z (“I Wanna Love U”), they’re now set to work with a veritable who’s who of the *TRL* set: No Doubt, Eve, Foxy Brown and Marilyn Manson. Tonight, they’re taking a breather from their current session at Los Angeles’s Record Plant with Usher (“Usher’s bold, Usher’s talented, Usher’s the stuff,” Williams effuses). Not bad for a couple of self-proclaimed “nerds” from Virginia Beach who look young enough to slip comfortably into the cast of your average WB show.

It wouldn’t seem like they’d have time for their own project, let alone a concept album. But under the guise of N\*E\*R\*D, the Neptunes have recorded *In Search Of...* (Virgin), a feverish pastiche of left-field soul that plays as the soundtrack to a quest for love—or at least a good time. Instrumentally, the N\*E\*R\*D record hits you with the duo’s trademark sounds: ultra-funky, Escalade-ready syncopated drumbeats that are as playful as they are boomtastic, old-school keyboards that would sound right at home on an early Prince or Thomas Dolby album, and cooing background vocals. The arrangements also bring many elements you won’t find on your average DMX record: acoustic guitar, analog synths galore and Williams’s alternately smooth and silly vocal stylings.

When Teddy Riley “discovered” the Neptunes while they were still in high school, the duo considered themselves artists, not producers. “Stuff kind of dragged on,” Hugo says. “But we got production work on the side [including assisting Riley on the first Blackstreet album]. We just put the group aside and started producing, so that was our niche.”

When that niche brought interest in the Neptunes as artists, Williams and Hugo enlisted childhood friend Shay to round out N\*E\*R\*D, and then set about creating something that wouldn’t just fall in with the rest of their catalog. “We decided, whether it works or doesn’t work, we were going to do something that’s not being done,” says Williams of the album, “and hopefully when we work with different artists, those artists will be able to do those things as well.”

“Lapdance,” the ambitious leadoff single from *In Search Of...*, makes a political statement out of the strip-club staple. “We wanted to show you how politicians act,” Williams says. “They shake their ass a little bit, i.e. make a few statements that you want to hear. After the money’s gone, so’s the stripper. After the money’s gone, so’s the politician.”

Judging from the asstastic video for “Lapdance,” they’re speaking from some experience here, but the duo isn’t afraid to let a sensitive side show. In “Provider,” Williams portrays an ordinary man doing what he has to do to keep his girl.

“If I find a woman, I will quickly get out of this game,” Williams promises. “This game is not more important to me than my own life.” For now, that life will consist of promoting the album in between the production gigs—like a current project with Michael Jackson—that will keep them from touring. If they keep at it, maybe they’ll get a chance to work with Hugo’s dream client, Stevie Wonder. But Williams has a different vision. His ultimate project? Bonnie Raitt.

“I love her soul,” he says. “I think it’s gonna happen. I can’t wait. I haven’t even spoken to her yet, I just feel it in my bones.” **NMM**



GRANT WILSON-CLARIDGE

## THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON REPHLEX

Ten years of **Aphex Twin**'s Rephlex Records has reshaped the techno experience.

STORY: RASPBERRY JONES PHOTOS: MANUEL

Where do people listen to the techno that Rephlex releases? Ask label co-founder Grant Wilson-Claridge and his stuttered laughter gives way to an acknowledgment of the catalog's nerdy classification. "In the head," he jokes. But those who fear Rephlex's high-IQ reputation should shelve their misconceptions. Even though fans often liken the label to the music of its other founder, Richard "Aphex Twin" James, the releases defy any single stylistic description, occupying an intellectual sound-space that is as accessible (it is pop) as it is difficult (it's also IDM, after all).

Even Wilson-Claridge augments his initial answer with less cerebral listening scenarios: "Sometimes it's in a club, sometimes your car, sometimes your bath. We've released records that are for very particular situations I assume do not happen very often; you will enjoy them upon one occasion but on another, I can't guarantee it."

Wilson-Claridge and James have knowingly titled the label's new 10th anniversary compilation *Braindance*

Coincidence. Consider the 16 tracks a primer of a label as interested in the most up-to-date electronic sounds (their history includes releasing the debuts of Mike "µ-Ziq" Paradinas, Luke "Wagon Christ" Vibert and Tom "Squarepusher" Jenkinson) as it is in pushing the sonic envelope.

In typical understatement, James dismisses the question of Rephlex artists' accessibility in Ellingtonian terms: "I just think of music as either good or bad, pretty simple really."

Still, there's no way to skirt around the heady modernist composer tendencies exhibited by AFX, µ-Ziq, Vibert and Squarepusher. But Rephlex's other sounds—the lounge-y lushness of the Gentle People, the melodic almost post-rock analog beats of Global Goon (a.k.a. Johnny Hawk), the retro-fried electropop of DMX Krew (a.k.a. Ed Upton) or the continental ambient romanticism of Bochum Welt (a.k.a. Gianluigi Di Costanzo), for instance—are as open-armed as experimental music gets, well worth stopping and smelling the flowers for.



RICHARD JAMES

Wilson-Claridge further underscores the importance of a diverse head-trip for Rephlex. "I think it's a shame when people get over-intellectual. Music to me is there to stimulate or accompany feelings. And if you don't really express your feelings or you don't really explore them, you probably only like trance. But if you're into keeping an open mind and taking stock of your experiences then you need lots of different things. The more different emotions you're able to express, the more musics you will need to survive."

The way the label chooses artists to expand electronica's emotional palette is tedious: "I go through 200 tapes," says Wilson-Claridge. "Ten of them will sound like interesting music that's already been done, and one will sound like it needs further listening." While doing his part, James tries to separate his artist and A&R responsibilities: "I have to do my music as well, so I can't overdo it—it's a bit weakening to listen to all these tracks, you get totally bat-

tered." The final choices are influenced by a variety of factors. "Some [of Rephlex's tracks are chosen] based on nostalgic feelings of the past—some on how you think you might feel in the future," explains Wilson-Claridge.

The label founders met in the late '80s, when they were attending separate schools in the English seaside town of Cornwall and DJing in the same club. "Richard used to play his own tracks instead of records, and every time he did, I used to walk up to check it out," offers Wilson-Claridge. Adds James, "Grant was the first person I met who

**"If you don't really express your feelings or you don't really explore them, you probably only like trance."**

wanted to put out my tracks before I had released any records." to which Wilson-Claridge offers a selfish explanation: "I wanted to press up some vinyl because I wanted them myself."

Before long, a post office box printed on the label of the first release brought the desired results. James sums it up: "Put out some good tunes, you'll get some back. And we did." **NMM**



FROM LEFT: BOB POLLARD, DOUG GILLARD, JON MCCANN, NATE FARLEY, TIM TOBIAS





## TEENAGE WASTELAND

At age 43, Bob Pollard is still an adolescent—and not without cost. But it's made for the best **Guided By Voices** album ever.

STORY: CHERYL BOTCHICK PHOTOS: CLAY PATRICK MCBRIDE

**It's Valentine's Day in New York City and there's plenty of love in the air at the Bowery Ballroom. But it's not quite the kind of love normally associated with Cupid's holiday. It's that special kind of love that can only exist between an indie-rock king and his minions. There's a warm fuzz electrifying the hovering cloud of smoke and sweat as Bob Pollard leads Guided By Voices through all the band's "hits" dating back a decade, punctuating accents with exuberant high-kicks and vigorous mic twirls. And the crowd of disciples hollers along with the words to every song like it's a reunion show of a long-lost cult band. This, however, is what a Guided By Voices gig is like almost any night of the week.**



**“You think I might wanna grow up one of these days? No!”**

Like any member of a royal family, the Midwestern hooligan that fronts this band holds court before the show at the club bar. He may be middle-aged, but he still relishes long swigs from his bottle of beer and chews the fat with fans. Asked about his age, he retorts: “I’m 43! You think I might wanna grow up one of these days?” He pauses for effect. “No!” He rattles off bandnames he thought up the other night as he sat drunk in the tour van (Radio Shack O’Neill, Jesus And The Beatles, Marshmallow Linebacker, Bumblebee Contract, to name just a few), and reminisces about

the lo-fi days—“We wanted to make records that sounded like Beatles bootlegs.”

The 13th Guided By Voices full-length, *Isolation Drills* (TVT), is no kids’ rec-room project. In fact, coming from a band that’s let its biggest shots at mainstream stardom pass it by, it’s surprisingly their most cohesive and accessible offering to date. But the GBV on this album isn’t all fraternal boozing and carefree rocking. In fact, even the first listen to *Isolation Drills* will leave you with a sense of solitude and loss. “Twilight Campfighter” starts by

sketching the struggle to find one's way amidst confusion; "The Brides Have Hit Glass" confesses a fear of impermanence ("You know it just won't last/ To be on top of your own world/ With no guard rails to cling to/ You fall so very fast"); and the stark "How's My Drinking?" (the title itself is telling) stubbornly laments, "I don't care about being sober/ But I sure get around... And leave me die/ With you/ I won't change."

*Isolation Drills* certainly isn't about the zoo pies and cut-out witches of yesteryear. Coming from someone so admittedly immature, the lyrics are startlingly serious and forthcoming about real-life sorrow. Would Pollard agree? "Um, well..." he stammers, hedging a bit. "I wanna talk about what it's really about, but I can't. People read things, you know, and they might have their feelings hurt..." He only offers: "It's just about us being separated. About [the band] being gone all the time. Which doesn't make for a healthy, um... It's just that when you go back, no one knows who the fuck you are. We didn't used to tour as much. We tour a lot more now."

A source close to the band acknowledges that the last year of Pollard's life has been a difficult one, with the end of his marriage taking its toll on the clown prince of the underground. The former schoolteacher's hair gets a touch grayer with every record, and his face has rounded considerably under the wrinkles.

Pollard may not want to dish the gory details, but even *Isolation Drills'* sparse song titles carry a certain solitude. "I wanted to change 'em and make the titles kind of wilder, but I thought, 'No, that's not what it is. It's not what they are,'" he figures. And he offers a lesson on the album's title that's a deeper look into his soul than he's ever allowed before: "It's about isolation drills. The things that you do that cause isolation. It's a vicious cycle. The things that you've done that cause you to feel isolated and separated and then how we remedied that was by drinking and doing it more—doing those things more... But 'isolation drills' is also, like, examining things at a closer perspective. Looking at your life."

**"I wanna talk about what the album's really about, but I can't. People read things, you know, and they might have their feelings hurt."**



Regardless of (or perhaps even in spite of) these wounded, introspective themes, *Isolation Drills* is nonetheless Pollard's most anthemic klatch of melodies yet, making it an astounding exercise in extremes. As bass player Tim Tobias notes, "There's a line in 'The Brides Have Hit Glass' that says, 'There's a better road ahead of me, but I just don't know how to make it there.' And that, to me, is a very hopeful statement. I appreciate that line a lot."

Pollard focuses on another particular lyric: "The last line of the first song on the album ['Fair Touching'] goes, 'And now at last the song you sing will have meaning.' It's maybe some kind of prophetic line. It does have meaning, but I still don't think that it's totally straightforward. It's not an obvious record, but you can tell it's a more personal record. It's more about people relationships. I mean, I used to make fun of people who did that. I don't wanna hear about how you fuckin' miss your baby and you're coming home soon! I don't wanna hear that shit!" He unleashes a raspy belly laugh to relieve the tension.

Onstage later that night, the band cranks out a goosebump-inducing cover of the Who's "Baba O'Riley." And though the audience of postal blowfish (as

crazed GBV fans call themselves these days) goes nuts simply hearing their hero deliver such a classic cut, Pete Townshend's lyrics seem rife with meaning: "Out here in the fields/ I fight for my meals/ I get my back into my living/ I don't need to fight/ To prove I'm right/ I don't need to be forgiven." Perhaps he's creeping toward adulthood more than he realizes, but he still raises a ruckus every time he hits the stage. "Don't cry/ Don't raise your eye/ It's only teenage wasteland." **MM**



# WELCOME TO THE MACHINE

STORY: LORNE BEHRMAN PHOTOS: BOB GREEN



FROM LEFT: RAYMOND HERRERA, DINO CAZARES, BURTON C. BELL, CHRISTIAN OLDE WOLBERS

**Fear Factory**'s cyber-metal heralds a dark, foreboding future. And not just the one where they take over the pop charts.



It's 2364 and Earth looks almost the same as it did back around the turn of the millennium—this is nothing like the *Jetsons* cartoon existence you imagined. One notable change is that well-to-dos can afford to have themselves cloned. When a potential cloning customer is about to kick the bucket, their memories are put into "cyber purgatory" and upon physical death, downloaded into an awaiting clone body. (Britney Spears has lived for 382 years this way. The horror.) Welcome to the world of digital mortality, a concept industrial-metal pioneers Fear Factory advance on their fourth studio full-length, *Digimortal* (Roadrunner).

"The question is: Is that still you? Do your memories and experiences constitute your soul?" wonders Fear Factory vocalist Burton C. Bell, arms folded and sturdy legs extended so far out they look like tree branches. Bell has a California lumberjack presence to him, imposing yet disarming.

This evening's performance at New York's Roseland Ballroom is about a different type of future, though—the future prospects of an L.A. band that's been working the hard-rock underground for almost 10 years and senses its time has come.

"We've made our popularity and success through touring," Bell affirms, sitting in the decaying yellow dressing room at the Roseland. With a maximum capacity of 3000, the club is one of those not-quite-a-club, not-quite-an-arena venues many large bands play. "We're ready to take it even further," says Bell—platinum records and packed arenas. When you consider the band's early contemporaries, that doesn't seem too much to ask. Ministry and Nine Inch Nails, who also marry crunching guitars with programmable percussion, have gone on to legend status, while Fear Factory remains a cult act. Arguing in favor of Burton's confidence is that even though the band remains under

the mainstream radar, its template—a combination of electronic ambience, hip-hop and drum machines—is rife among the nu-metal legions. Still, Fear Factory hasn't really had hit singles or buzz videos, and the bandmembers' long hair and leather reek of old metal.

So perhaps it's fortunate that with every record, Fear Factory constructs its own future. Exploring the clashes between man and machine, systemically furthering the saga so that together their four studio discs have a narrative flow. *Digimortal* represents the climax of the epic—humanity and technology united through cloning.

**"For Fear Factory, the concept has always been that man has to overcome the machine. You must not conform to the machine. You can work within it and still can be a free-thinking person."**

"I thought *The Terminator* was a great concept of a machine taking over the whole world as we know it and man becoming extinct," Bell says, good-naturedly agreeing that Fear Factory often addresses similar concerns. "What would happen if the machine became smarter than us?" he asks, adding that for Fear Factory, "the concept has always been that man has to overcome the machine. You must not conform to the machine. You can work within it and still

be a free-thinking person."

Bell, who writes all of Fear Factory's lyrics, finds inspiration in bits and pieces of Jung and Nietzsche's philosophies and then develops them into sweeping B-movie lyrical thrillers. "Acres Of Skin" deals with the disposability of the human body now that it is electronically run—we can junk malfunctioning bodies and sell off the working limbs. "Invisible Wounds (Dark Bodies)" has a gothic chiminess recalling that dark, silver spot of *Disintegration*-era Cure; the record concludes with the slow, ease-you-out-of-the-experience creeping heft of "(Memory Imprints) Never End."



Besides the grand philosophical debate the disc excites, there are smaller, more immediate questions it proposes. For Fear Factory, "the machine" also represents society, the media and big business. Fame and success are machines of immortality. Man's struggle with machines manifests itself musically through the fusion of live and electronic instrumentation.

"The idea of humanity is so prevalent in our music. We manipulate the machines we're talking about. We're in control of this machine—look how smooth this works," says Bell. The first five tracks on *Digimortal* present a tight march of drum machines and acoustic drums, a combination that hasn't always fared well. For most Fear Factory fans, the 1997 remix record *Remanufacture* was too canned, and for most diehard industrial fans, the band's more organic releases seem like dinosaurs. With *Digimortal*, Fear Factory has found a more accessible blend. Normally, pop chord changes and melodies beckon warmly; here they possess a haunted detachment that alienates as it intrigues.

Even if fans have wavered in their appraisals, each successive Fear Factory disc has proved more successful than the one prior. The band's 1995 sophomore effort, *Demanufacture*, almost doubled the 120,000-plus mark of its 1992 debut, *Soul Of A New Machine*. The band's most recent release, 1998's *Obsolete*, went gold, and *Digimortal* is a vast improvement over it (with none of those android-harmonizing-at-the-opera chorus vocals). The question now is this: Will Fear Factory be able to ease themselves into the mainstream machine without totally alienating their following from back in the day?

Tonight is perfect for road-testing the new material against the old. Bell cracks, "O.G. fans say yeah," and elicits a collective and frightening choking noise from the elated crowd before

launching into "Scapegoat," from Fear Factory's 1992 debut. And guitarist Dino Cazares riles them up just introducing the more recent "Edgecrusher."

The assembled throng comprises mostly prickly goth-metal types in Slipknot tees, pierced eyebrows, eyeliner and baggy pants. The band opens with *Digimortal*'s "Acres Of Skin," a perfect introduction to the new material. The bell-like guitars and echo-drenched vocals don't enter until two and a half minutes in, by which time pit inertia is at such a high velocity that the dip in dynamics doesn't interfere. The kids probably don't even notice Cazares exploring dark, glittery new-wave passages, or that in addition to his trusty death-metal croak, Bell himself is discovering the fairer timbres of his vocals. He often sits on a monitor, head cocked, slowly teasing out tortured but ultimately hummable vocal lines.

Four out of the 11 songs Fear Factory plays are new, and the most striking thing about them is their sparse thunder. The bulk of the tunes rest on bassist Christian Olde Wolbers and drummer Raymond Herrera, with Cazares letting chords ring,

playing skeletal plucked passages or simply lumbering around the stage, one hand in the air, mouthing the words. In contrast, the old tunes seem cluttered.

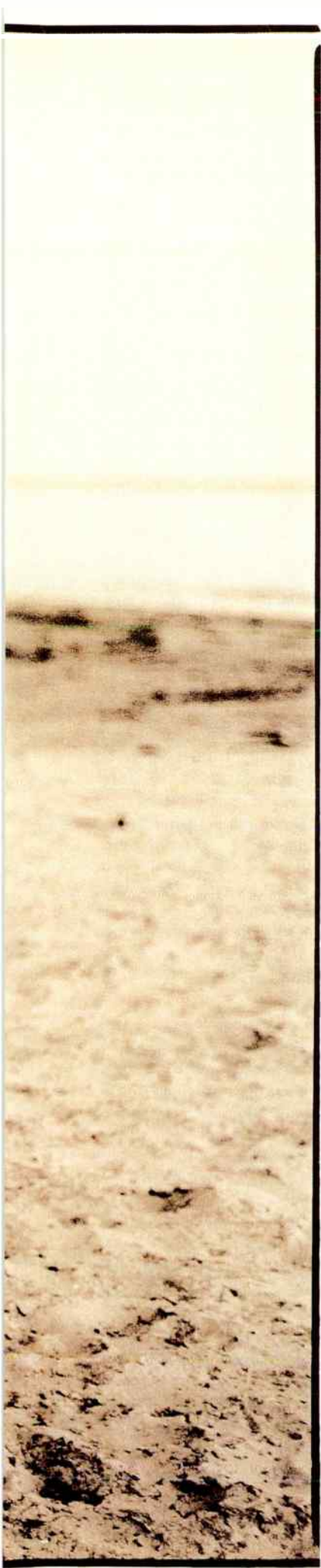
Not too long before the band took the stage this evening, the folks at Roadrunner (Fear Factory's longtime label) surprised the guys with their first gold record. The bandmembers looked perplexed when they filed in and came face to face with the beaming Roadrunner staff. Each was presented with a gold plaque for *Obsolete*. After plenty of backslapping, the most telling statement came from Bell, who was, as usual, looking towards the future. He simply said: "First of many." **MMH**





World Radio History





# Still Can't Get Enough

Synth-goth laughingstocks or venerable electronic forefathers? The world's biggest cult band, **Depeche Mode**, returns with *Exciter*—and a chance to prove their legacy.

STORY: SARA SCRIBNER PHOTOS: ANTON CORBIJN

**For many, Depeche Mode will always be a relic encased in gravity-defying hairdos, cheesy synthesizer chirps and high-school melodrama fleshed out with gothic loneliness and S&M fantasies. But with the demise of the Grateful Dead and with Phish currently on hiatus, the trio may be the biggest cult band in the world. Fifteen years ago, these British synth-pop survivors tapped into an existential ache especially familiar to suburban teenagers. Those fans—at whatever age—haven't stopped aching yet.**



DAVE GAHAN

**“Even when we played stadiums, somehow there was some kind of intimate, personal feeling going on there, which was always an odd experience.”**

“We can go to any country and there’ll be hordes of people,” says songwriter Martin Gore, “mainly dressed in black.” Singer Dave Gahan and keyboardist Andy Fletcher chuckle as they contemplate his comment. Sitting in a bright Beverly Hills hotel room to discuss their new album, *Exciter* (Reprise), they look like vacationers who’ve been hijacked by the press.

“I always thought, even when we played stadiums, that somehow there was some kind of intimate, personal feeling going on there, which was always an odd experience,” continues Gore. “I don’t know quite how that happened, so many people there with a common bond.”

“Singing Martin’s songs,” Gahan explains, “I go to a visual place and it feels pretty personal. I don’t know what that is and where it comes from, but I think other people pick up on that. It’s just a feeling.”

Bolstered by relentless fans and the widespread acceptance of electronic music, Depeche Mode is enjoying something of a renaissance. Recently, the band has been remixed by Kruder & Dorfmeister and DJ Shadow. The *Music For The Masses* tribute album included covers by rock bands like Monster Magnet and Smashing Pumpkins. And Liverpool new-wave outfit Ladytron is one of several young bands to declare faith and devotion to Depeche Mode.

“They’re a great singles band,” says Ladytron’s Daniel Hunt. “Lots of their singles sound like they could be the last song they ever sing. I love that. ‘Enjoy The Silence’ is possibly their finest moment. It’s approaching perfection, lyrically, musically and emotionally. Their songs have a low-voltage emotional activity—they sound important.”

Even if you’ve avoided the band, you probably know their fans tend to be angst-riddenly in love. (Like Beatles fans, they tend to choose their crushes—introspective songwriter Gore or extroverted bad-boy Gahan.) Although DM finds these people somewhat, well, scary at times, they are, after all, the reason the band is still around 20 years after it shot up from the low-rent quarters of Basildon, England—even after years of well-publicized drug jags and infighting. Depeche Mode fans might get older, but they don’t forget.

“It’s quite an interesting way that they’ve gone,” says Brian Molko, singer and guitarist for U.K. glam-punk band Placebo. “They started off very political, and then going more into a sleazy place, and then ending up in a spiritual place. Charting that change of focus in some-

body's soul, I think that's really interesting." He adds that the bandmembers' ability to reinvent themselves is why "they're still around and still significant and why they're so fantastic."

"Obviously there are many contributing factors," explains Gore of the band's devout following, "but I would think that the songs are so vague that people actually can see themselves in the songs, and really relate to them. I think that's one of the [main] reasons."

As all three sip coffee and Gahan and Fletcher smoke, they laugh a lot, which might mean that they have fewer skeletons in the closet these days, not to mention that they're liking each other more. They're proud of *Exciter*, the cool, calm older sister to their 1997 album *Ultra*. Where *Ultra* worked out the cranky kinks of new technology and Gahan's fresh-from-rehab woe (more on this later), *Exciter* is a fully realized settling-down for the band. On *Ultra*, Tim Simonon's lavish production obscured some of the songs, but Mark Bell of LFO (the early '90s Sheffield electronic outfit known for its ultra-low bass tones, not the teen-pop staple), who has produced Björk, masterfully designed a dirty netherworld of electronics. For *Exciter*, the band has commissioned remixes from electronic underground sweathearts Kid 606 and Vladislav Delay.

With clean-living setting in and, no doubt, a feeling of justification as electronic music finally gets its props, the quintessential '80s band has served up its most confident offering in over a decade.

The main question about Depeche Mode these days is whether the band will be remembered by the mainstream as influential electro-innovators or an '80s relic that's outlived its usefulness. When *Rolling Stone* published a feature on the group in 1993, the story was not exactly the kind of respectful nod fans would have hoped. "Revenge Of The Euroweenies," read the headline. Elsewhere, words like "hokey," "half-baked" and "corny" have been employed by critics to describe their sound. And, in a recent concert review in *The New York Times*, Ann Powers almost seems to be giving them a break when she writes "[Gahan's] voice is deep but a bit wild, with a vulnerable edge," but then finishes it off with this: "To hear this voice emanate from a tattooed goofball makes it all the more unsettling." Ouch.

Fletcher notes that support comes from other quarters in droves. Years ago, he says, when *The Los Angeles Times* published a bad review of the band, the paper's office was flooded with "thousands of let-



ANDY FLETCHER

ters." (Ask any critic who has written negatively about the group, and they will probably tell you that they received more angry letters about that one review than anything they had ever written: After writing a slightly negative review of *Ultra* for that same newspaper, I was promptly pelted with more hate mail than I've ever received.) The band laughs about the lengths some of their fans will go, but the tactics ring of a Scientology campaign. All this for the group whose calling card was "Just Can't Get Enough"?

Even Gore seems slightly confused by some of his admirers. "A lot of them, they're not young anymore," says Gore. "They're all getting on and a lot of them are intelligent people, you'd just think they'd have better things to do with their lives. A lot of it is quite complimentary, but..."

Asked how they feel about their fans growing old with them, Gahan, the chatty wild-card of the group, says: "It's kind of a natural thing... we've been able to

evolve and grow up and the songs have changed and the melodies have changed. It's real slow and people have stuck with that."

Gore and Fletcher, the keyboardist and business-minded member, wear tasteful, grown-up sweaters and snug pants in shades of black and gray. They look sedate, but a sparkly cuff on Gore's right wrist hints at something outré beneath the surface. Gore, who's recently moved to Santa Barbara and sports a discordant California tan beneath his trademark blonde curls, is an artist who attempts to divulge nothing, yet gives it away in spite of himself.

Gahan is dressed in pinstriped pants and a white long-sleeved shirt worn skater-style under a black T-shirt, his black hair brushed back into a restrained Elvis. A former teenager-in-trouble, Gahan—now a father of two—still has a hint of that deadly charming bad kid to him. Today, he's got two



charms on a chain, and one is a cross—which makes sense. DM's always smacked of Catholic repression.

*Exciter* departs slightly from that world of repression and gloom unbound—the Goth numbers are fun and a little campy. Gore's lyrics are lush with romantic sensory details: painted skies, silver moons, angels in white, and “getting lost in the folds of your skirt.” (Ahem, paging Dr. Freud.)

It even starts with Gahan intoning, a cappella: “Can you feel a little love?” but then quickly moves into the line, “Death becomes me.” How much cheer can you really expect?

“I can't gauge how I feel different now from five years ago,” says Gahan. “It's been a whole gradual process and you can't see it happening. All I know is that, for every record that we've been making for the last 10 years, I say in interviews it's more optimistic. I don't know if I'm imagining that, but I say it every time.”

To the outside observer, optimism is not their calling card. For them, the outsiders, Depeche Mode's story goes like this: A little British band hobs onto the post-new wave MTV scene with a silly, charming number called “Just Can't Get Enough.” Singer Gahan looks like a sprite, but his rich baritone sounds

like it's emanating from an underground echo chamber. The main songwriter, Vince Clarke, promptly quits to form Yazoo (and later became half of Erasure).

Things don't look good until Martin Gore, the fragile-looking one, surprisingly takes over. The group comes back shrouded in gloom, delivering *Some Great Reward*, a dark album about religion and sexual power. Through the mid-'80s many fans decamp to follow the more intellectual (but similarly depressive) Smiths. Against the odds, the group finds its greatest support in California (thanks to DM-booster KROQ), where they sell out the enormous Rose Bowl in Pasadena and make tons of money with *Violator*, a mixed bag with one great single, “Enjoy The Silence.” DM sinks further into depression, pretension and solipsism. They peak (or bottom out, depending) with *Songs Of Faith And Devotion*, a nod to Nine Inch Nails and Soundgarden and an obvious attempt at a little image overhaul.

When keyboardist/drummer Alan Wilder departs citing intra-band turmoil and Gahan makes headlines with his O.D., Mode seems headed toward inevitable breakup. Despite the odds, they come back with *Ultra*, a record that doesn't quite win them a full free-pass in the press, but grants them temporary cool points for staying power and relative subtlety.

Moments of *Exciter* definitely smack of pandering to the Goth crowd, and that's when the music feels the most disingenuous. “Comatose,” with its narcotic-love-equals-death silliness, is only saved by its visceral music. But the subtle truck of the bluesy “Dream On” makes it the best single the band has put out in years, regardless of the vampiric grave-

yard musings. And “I Feel Loved,” which chucks much of the dopey pretense of some of the record's lesser songs, is simply a great, unshackled dance track.

If *Ultra* presented

Depeche Mode thrashing out its demons, then *Exciter* finds the group getting comfortable with its legacy after a very rough decade. Wilder left the group in '95, and in the early- and mid-'90s, Gahan was living in L.A. and over his head in drug addiction. The battle became very public when he attempted suicide and, later, was rescued after taking a near-fatal

“For every record that we've been making for the last 10 years, I say in interviews it's more optimistic.”



MARTIN GORE

overdose of cocaine and heroin. It was a problem that had been whispered about ever since the troubled tour for *Songs Of Faith And Devotion* and it was finally getting aired in headlines.

Does he regret that his breakdown, arrest and mandatory rehab made headlines? "That was all my own doing," he says. "In retrospect, I was too naïve to have the sense to keep it to myself, or get support from people who would understand. But at the same time there was a feeling, I guess, that I needed to purge myself somehow, really put it out there so that people *did* know, so that I couldn't hide anymore. I needed to blurt it out everywhere that I was kind of in trouble and needed help."

Although *Ultra* was considered their comeback record, it was not a triumphant return. "For the first half of that record, I still wasn't doing very well," Gahan says. "I was struggling with some problems—I basically had problems even singing, you know. Emotionally, I couldn't step up to the plate. It was just too much for me—I couldn't do it."

Nevertheless, *Ultra* was the record on which much of the band's angst was worked out, especially for Gahan. "It took a while during the recording of that album to sort of get healthy enough to carry on," he says. "It really did help me at the time. It helped me when I did start singing better; I got some confidence again. It took a little while and I went to a vocal coach and got myself in better shape physically. And suddenly, I was like, 'Yeah, wow, it's going to be okay.' Making *Ultra* was very important."

Living in L.A. was not working either; it was too much the scene of the crime. Now he's fled to New York, where he has a new baby and a newish wife (his third). Inspired by the city, he says he's digging jazz, which he'd always hated. He says his vocal coach is helping him learn to use his voice more as an instrument.

"Things are really different today," he says. "It sounds very weird, but I don't regret any of it at all. I needed to do all that, to go through that experience to get where I am now and that's really clear to me today. Of course, there probably was an easier route.

"Over the past two years I just feel a lot more settled in my life," he continues, "and a lot happier about it. I try to take care of myself. I have a lot more to give and it was kind of trapped down there, stuffed down there with all the crap on top of it. I feel like it's coming out of me now in a good way. I felt very spiritually linked with a lot of the songs and stuff. I wanted to get that across. It's hit or miss, but sometimes I got there."

These days, the band is being graced with a little leeway in the press, verging on enthusiasm. It's not something they cherish—or really give a damn about. In fact, Fletcher says that he misses some of the old tension. It was hard pushing synthesizers to a rock guitar world and being dismissed by critics as Euro foppery and made-to-order misery. "In the '80s, if you were different, you were fighting the world, and it's quite good," Fletcher remembers. "Now we seem to be respected and it's hard for us to lose that sort of us-against-the-world thing."

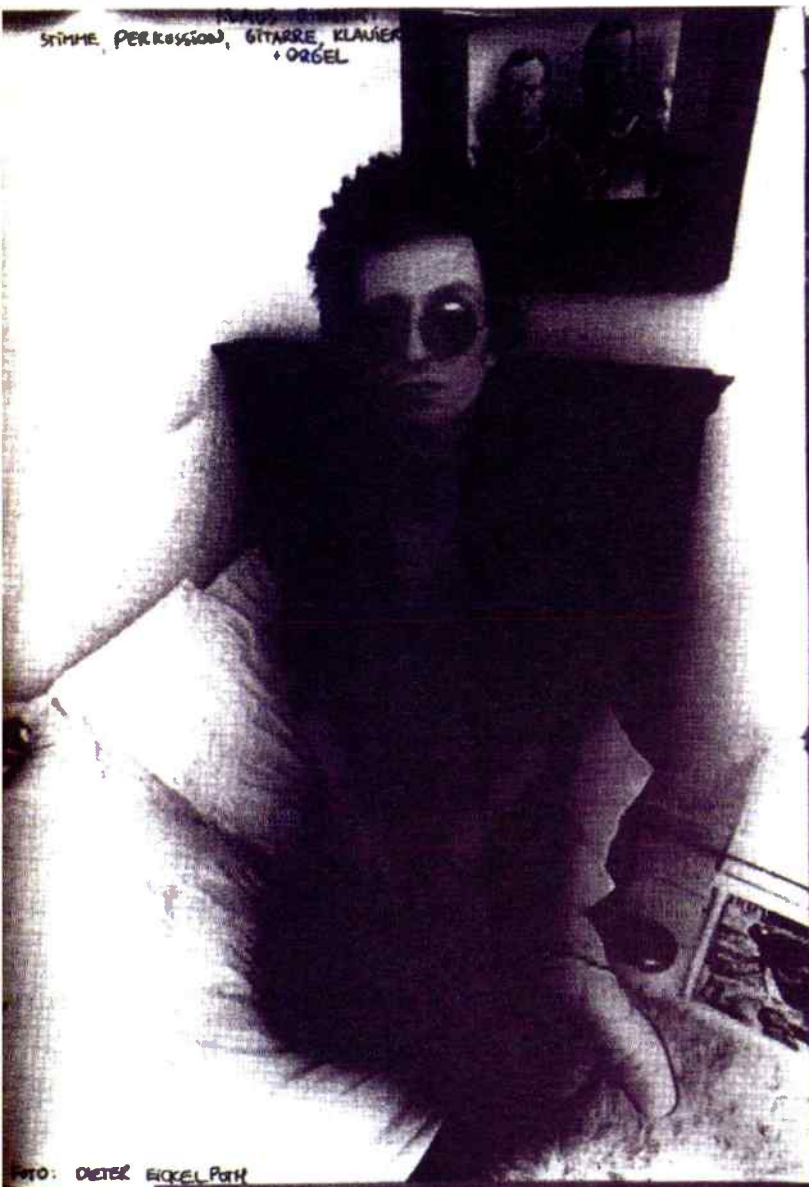
For Depeche Mode, the biggest challenge these days is an upcoming tour (a short five months to keep a reasonable cap on things) and wooing a new generation. In fact, the band's sheer longevity is a sign that what seemed like artifice might have been honesty. If they were just faking the heartbreaking pathos, pandering to tearful teenage notebook scribbles, could they still be at it? Now that things have come full circle and we're bracing for a full-blown '80s revival, Depeche Mode is discovering the benefits of merely hanging in there.

Gahan seems ready for another strong infusion of devotion: "It's like a celebration of some kind, like a rally," Gahan says about their shows. "Depeche Mode concerts have always been like that, as far as I can remember. You know, I can't remember the last time I walked onstage and felt intimidated by an audience, felt like they weren't rallying with us." Then Gahan pauses, thinking back to a time when the cult was still strewn with a few disbelievers. In fact, he says, "I can't even remember the old hecklers." **NMM**

**"A lot of the fans, they're not young anymore. You'd just think they'd have better things to do with their lives."**



# THE SCENE IS NEU!



KLAUS DINGER

*To me they sound like joy. Like endless lines stretching on forever in parallel.*

—Thom Yorke, Radiohead



## Krauting the conventional groove

BY PIOTR ORLOV

Forget for a minute that folk tale you learned about the mighty river of rock, the one with tributaries and sources deep in the outback of America. The quiet saga of Neu! sprouted from European soil, a story of rock as modern art at its most glorious and life-inspiring. A tale of a sound that defined musical invention as completely as composer Steve Reich, but did so from squarely inside pop's boundaries.

Today, you need only to pay close attention to artsy rock to hear Neu!'s influence in action. Just listen to the motorik beat that propels much of pre-'96 Stereolab to see why Labber Tim Gane (in the book *The Secret History Of Rock* called Neu! "the main proto-influence [on us] because it was completely primitive and simplistic on the surface." Or compare the last three songs of Neu! 75 with much of *Nevermind The Bollocks* to understand Julian Cope's rant (in his book, *Krautrock sampler*) that Neu! was "punk as fuck and two years ahead," and that "it was really the Neu!-driven sound of the Sex Pistols that turned on the young punks." Or heed the lip service that the U.K.'s most experimental hit-makers continuously pile upon them—Radiohead guitarist Ed O'Brien told an Australian magazine about the recording of *Kid A*: "[Neu!] were the one thing we could all agree on... We love all those things Neu! did, like that effect of sound disappearing down a hole." Negativland copped their name from a tune on Neu!. Legend has it that Neu! co-conspirator Michael Rother turned down David Bowie's request to produce what would become *Station To Station*. And DJs name-check them as one of the original electronic bands.



STEREOLAB



DAVID BOWIE

These days, discovering Neu! begins in the record-store section forever dubbed Krautrock. Do not fear that ill-regarded bastion of rock critics and collectors. This so-called dawn of the German music scene, dated to the late '60s and early '70s, is a diverse basket that carries some of rock's funkier (Can), technologically progressive (Kraftwerk), ethereal (Cluster, Popol Vuh) and experimental (Faust) treats.

Even amidst this company of heralded titans of—say it proudly—art rock, the sonic glory that sprung whole from the multi-instrumental hallucinations of Michael Rother (pronounced "Rotta") and Klaus Dinger deserve special mention. Neu! built a trip-laden collage out of warm keyboard/piano ambience, guitars that by turn shake with post-V.U. propulsion and psyche meditation, and a metronomic rhythm that's at once linear and swinging, almost in spite of itself. So hot with pre-no-wave funk, it hurt. Over the course of three albums between 1972 and 1975, they perfected a most unique sonic kaleidoscope that has been at the heart of much of the progressive, experimental and post-punk pop to come in its wake. That Neu! is German for "new" seems now to have been just the first part of the master plan.



*There were three great beats in the '70s: Fela Kuti's Afrobeat, James Brown's funk and Klaus Dinger's Neu!-beat.*

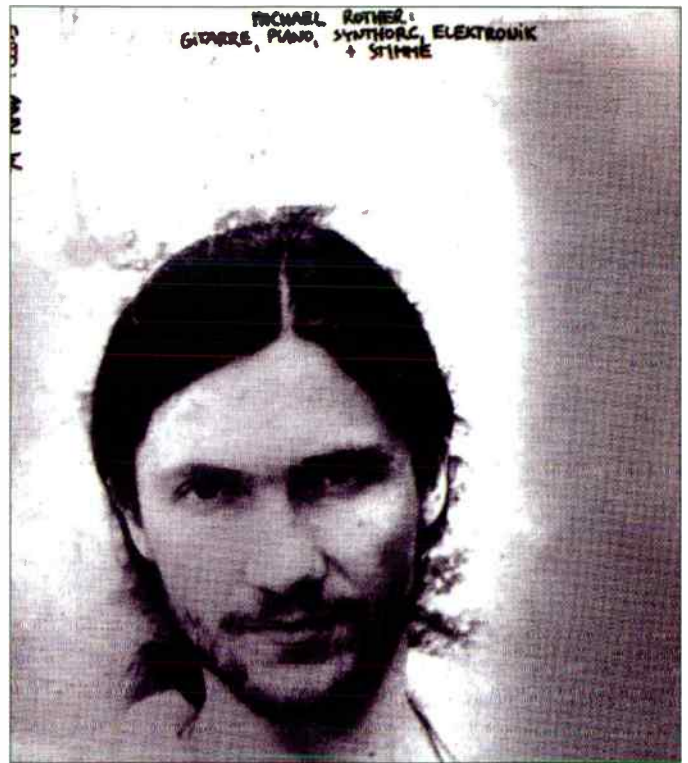
—Brian Eno

Guitarist/keyboardist Rother and drummer Dinger were school friends who first made music together as members of Kraftwerk, augmenting founders Ralf Hütter and Florian Schneider for a very short period in 1971, when the musicians sounded less like German techno pioneers and more like psychedelic extremists.

The artistic difference between the two halves was almost instant. Rother and Dinger left to pursue a far less crowded sound, recording with the noted engineer/producer Conny Plank (Eno, Tourists, Killing Joke, Ultravox, Devo) who'd help shape the sound of much of the Neu! wave. The finished debut, titled simply *Neu!*, didn't resemble anything that had preceded it in either the pop or art realms.

Neu!'s blueprint was set: bubblegum hook instrumentals stacked on Dinger's precise, steady and yet underpowering beat. These minimalist bubbles were then blown long-form over a psychedelic meadow. In between such crystalline visions appear dark, ambient pasticcios of sound effects and nature recordings. The opening "Hallogallo" is the sonic embodiment of a future that in Thom Yorke's words "looked bright and clean [where] we'd know what to do if there was a problem." Few "new" musics make so much instant sense. As the duo had no way of recreating their layered landscapes in person, there were no concerts or tours, but famed BBC DJ John Peel played it constantly on the radio, paving Neu!'s influence on U.K. artists for years to come.

*Neu! 2*, the hastily produced followup to the critically and commercially successful debut was both a miserable failure and further proof of Rother and Dinger's visionary foresight. The group ran out of money after only finishing two songs—the 11-minute panorama "Für Immer (Forever)" and the metallic depth-charge hum-along "Lila Engel (Lilac Angel)" only remotely resembled the album they wanted to make. Yet that failure was also lined with



MICHAEL ROTHER

genius as Rother and Dinger used the studio to improvise a cheap and quick end to their recording sessions: Taking master tapes of already recorded songs, they manipulated tape speeds and the volume of various parts into new recordings until they had enough musical dementia to fill up the album. Here, Neu! became future-dub soldiers, superstar remixers and pop-art sound collagists when these occupations hardly existed in pop.

Hurting from the self-perceived artistic failures of the record, the members split up for a year, pursuing different musical lines. Rother's work with members of Cluster, under the name Harmonia, accentuated his fascination with ambient chord voicings and nature sounds. Dinger pursued harder and faster rhythmic mind-races with the twin-drum garage thunder of La Dusseldorf.

When they reconvened for the planned finale, the epochal *Neu! 75*, their musical personalities were more focused and easier to separate and define. This power resulted in sheer magnificence, a pop-music phenomenon akin to a collision of two recently discovered universes.

Rother's galaxy of ambient swells was side A, co-birthing Eno and setting free the new age; Dinger's (and La Dusseldorf's) proto-punk roar was side B, with Johnny Rotten across the Channel paying attention to Dinger's newfound vocal sneer and rhythm running away all possible musical foundations. It is among the most underappreciated rock albums of all time.

The only evidence worth pursuing in the quest for Neu!'s greatness is the three proper albums themselves—a fourth, recorded in the '80s, is highly inferior, and bootleg "live" and out-take compilations are less than essential—finally being released domestically by Astralwerks. No greater proof exists. Neu!'s music is so immediate, it detonates on impact. Apply it in regular doses and if you have any affinity for punk or ambient music; the stars in your eyes are likely to remain permanent. **NMM**

*Aural visionary minimalist icons  
in a wilderness of psychedelia  
and beyond inspired us with  
their heroic beats and flat-out  
grooves on the expressway to our  
collective skulls.*

—Lee Ranaldo, *Sonic Youth*

# minneapolis



THE OILLINGER FOUR

**M**inneapolisans are laid-back people. Blame it on the weather—rushing anywhere is self-defeating, as roads are either snow-covered or clogged by repair crews. We're forced to survive the cold September-to-April months by dressing for warmth, not style. And summers? Let's just say the hormonal rush of seeing flesh after months of coats, hats and thermals is a tangible sociological force.

Despite the seasonal extremes, there is comfort to be found in Minneapolis's easygoing ways, and the city's informality extends to its music scene. Sit back and think about it: With the exception of Prince, has Minneapolis ever produced a true rock star? Sure, the Replacements wrecked a few dressing rooms in their day, but they didn't become legendary until after breaking up. As for Bob Dylan, he found New York before he found success—maybe that's because in New York, as opposed to Minneapolis, the bars stay open past 1 a.m.

Tower Records, HMV and Virgin Megastore have all deemed Minneapolis too unhip to bother expanding here—instead, we buy

our music at places like **Electric Fetus** (2000 Fourth Ave. S., 870-9300), **Treehouse** (2557 Lyndale Ave. S., 872-7400, formerly Oar Folkjokeopus) and **Let It Be** (1001 Nicollet Mall, 339-7439, our source for imports and DJ vinyl).

While our local sound is hard to pin down, Minneapolisans welcome musical innovators. On a given night, virtuoso instrumental trio Happy Apple pours out three hours of urban-inflected jazz; rocker Mark Mallman returns destruction to its rightful place in rock 'n' roll; Plastic Constellations spew post-high school punk; and rapper Slug rolls off the hot rhymes.

And as you shell out your cover at places like the **400 Bar** (400 Cedar Ave. S., 332-2903) or **Lee's Liquor Lounge** (101 Glenwood Ave., 338-9491), just remember that you may get more than you pay for. That's likely a member of Semisonic, the Jayhawks or the Honeydogs standing next to you at the bar, and it's always just a short hop from the bar to the stage. If only the natives would realize that soda is a beverage and pop is music, this would truly be a great place to live.



## LOCAL LOGIC

### MINNEAPOLIS'S BEST:

**STREET FOR FOOD FROM AROUND THE WORLD:** Eat Street (Nicollet Ave. between 14th St. and 28th St.), 17 blocks with more than 50 restaurants and markets

**WAY TO GET HOME AFTER MIDNIGHT:** Rainbow Cab (729-4243)

**DOCUMENT OF LOCAL MUSIC HISTORY:** Suicide Commandos, *The Commandos Commit Suicide Dance Concert* (Garage D'or)

**COLLECTION OF PROSTATE WARMERS:** Museum Of Questionable Medical Devices (201 Mainstreet S.E., 379-4046)

**ORGANIC BREAKFAST COOKED BY GUTTER PUNKS:** Seward Community Café (2129 E. Franklin Ave., 332-1011)

**VENUE TO SEE UNDISCOVERED MUSICAL TALENT:** Terminal Bar (409 Hennepin Ave. E., 623-4545)

**BAR TO SPOT MEMBERS OF DILLINGER FOUR:** Triple Rock Social Club (629 Cedar Ave. S., 333-7399), which is partly owned by the bandmembers

**GIANT CHERRY IN SPOON:** Walker Sculpture Garden (adjacent to the Walker Art Center, 725 Vineland Pl., 375-7622)

**TIRAMISU:** Figlio Restaurant & Bar (3001 Hennepin Ave., 822-1688)

**CHEAP MEAL:** Vietnamese restaurants (along University Ave., east of Hamline)

**SLEDDING HILL:** Lyndale Park

**PURPLE RAIN RELIC THAT'S ALSO A SET OF HIP CLUBS:** First Avenue and its adjoining Seventh Street Entry (701 First Ave. N., 338-8388).

**ACOUSTICS:** Fine Line Music Café (318 First Ave., 338-8100)

**JAZZ VENUE (Oh, alright, it's actually in St. Paul):** Artists Quarter, 366 Jackson St., St. Paul, (651) 292-1359.

All phone numbers are in the 612 area code. Additional reporting provided by Stephen Burt, Keith Little, Sara Logan and Adam Sekuler.



MGD STANDS FOR "MINNEAPOLIS GETS DRUNK"



LOW (WHO CARES IF THEY'RE FROM DULUTH)

## POST-WITCHING HOUR BLUES

### MINNEAPOLIS AFTER 1 A.M.

Between the 1 a.m. bar-closing mandate and obnoxious zoning procedures, most of Minneapolis shuts down by 1:01. Here's what you'll need to navigate the late-night scene.

**Hard Times Café**, (1821 Riverside Ave.) Within staggering distance of the 400 Bar and the Cedar Cultural Centre, this dirt-cheap vegetarian and vegan haven doesn't close until 3 a.m.—4 a.m. on weekends. PhD candidates, artists and homeless people are all welcome.

**The Saloon**, (830 Hennepin Ave., 332-0835) This gay bar plays home to some of the city's finest DJs 'til 3 a.m. on weekends.

**Little Tijuana**, (17 E. 26th St., 872-0578) Little T's good, cheap Mexican food is the ideal post-bar meal, and they serve a very fine (ice cream) malt.

**First Avenue**, (701 First Ave. N., 338-8388) DJs spin in two rooms until 2 or 3 a.m. depending on the day; if you're there for an early evening show, the afterparty is free.

**Pizza Lucé**, (119 N. Fourth St., 333-7359) Just a few blocks from First Avenue, Lucé serves its full menu (with the best pizza in town) 'til 3 a.m.

## DAYTRIPPIN'

### Exploring St. Paul with Sean Tillmann of Sean Na Na and Har Mar Superstar

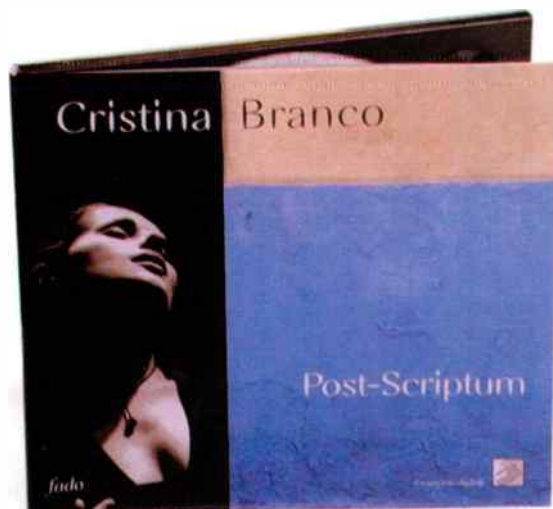
The first stop in any sojourn to the "Other City"—St. Paul, of course—should be the just-over-a-year-old **Eclipse Records** (1692 Grand Ave.) which boasts CDs and records as well as video games (think *Frogger* and *Joust*), and has hosted a free all-ages show every night since its doors opened. When hunger pangs strike, you'll want to take a walk to **Coffee News Cafe** (1662 Grand Ave.) for a cup of coffee and one of their cheap, award-winning soups, sandwiches or quiches. If you're in for something spicier, try **Taste Of Thailand** (1669 Selby Ave.) for the freshest Tom Yum soup in the Midwest. A few blocks east lies a little jewel called **Lula** (1587 Selby Ave.), a vintage clothing store whose owner, Hayley Bush, has an uncanny knack for making you feel at home while making you look your most individually dapper. Next, you should venture to the corner of University and Snelling Avenues to drift through the three levels of new and used rare books, magazines and comics at **Midway Books**. By now you're undoubtedly ready for a drink; take your well-dressed, newly cultured self to the most unassumingly hip live music venue in the Twin Cities, the **Turf Club** (1601 University Ave. W.). This remnant of the '40s offers live bands—like local stalwarts Grant Hart, the Busy Signals, Dillinger Four or Tulip Sweet—on the main stage Tuesday through Saturday. And if the aforementioned artists aren't performing, you'll find them soaking up the atmosphere. Make friends, then sneak down to the basement bar, the **Clown Lounge**, for quiet pop, jazz or Staraoke (karaoke hosted by Selby Tigers' Arzu D2).

Sean Na Na's *Return Of The Unicorn* is out now on Troubleman Unlimited.

## CRISTINA BRANCO

Post-Scriptum

L'imprunte Digitale



The Portuguese music called fado comes by its effusive melancholy honestly. As perhaps the past millennium's greatest explorers, the Portuguese revealed much of the world to the West. But they failed to conquer it, and through the centuries, fado singers in Lisbon have channeled the anguish of separated lovers, mourners and disappointed adventurers. Fado got a big boost when Branco, a monstrously talented young singer raised on jazz and pop, turned to the style with a vengeance. We may miss the modernist nuances in what is plainly still old-world music, but it's hard to miss the power of Branco's voice. Rich and fluid as fresh blood, it pours forth in exquisite melodies, rising to near-operatic crescendos and falling with the pained grace of a wounded butterfly. Branco's spare, mostly plucked-string accompaniment, featuring principle composer Custódio Castelo on Portuguese guitar, is elegant throughout. Songs like "Post-Scriptum," "Abalara" and "Lisboa De Paixões" have unforgettable melodies that sink the hook of Branco's performances that much deeper. The rhythms range from lightly chunking barrelhouse to a sensuous undertow that Branco attributes to an African input. Could be. Branco's soulful fados certainly shed light on the genre's African cousin, the Cape Verdean morna, made popular internationally thanks to Cesaria Evora. And just like Evora, Branco is poised to conquer foreign hearts, if not foreign lands. >>>BANNING EYRE

Link

[www.rudhar.com/musica/crstbmc.htm](http://www.rudhar.com/musica/crstbmc.htm)

File Under

Smoky Portuguese folk-jazz

R.I.Y.L.

Cesaria Evora, Amália Rodrigues,  
Virginia Rodrigues

## CREEPER LAGOON ★

Take Back The Universe And Give Me Yesterday

DreamWorks

Three years after emerging from San Francisco as a modest bunch of indie rockers, Creeper Lagoon is finally ready for the major leagues. It didn't come easy. To complete *Take Back The Universe*, Creeper reportedly wrote more than 100 songs, recorded in several cities with a number of producers (including Jerry Harrison and Dave Fridmann) and stalled for time by releasing a six-song EP (*Watering Ghost Garden* on SpinART). So you'd assume that the ensuing full-length would sound strained, maybe even cobbled together. Not so. Songwriters Ian Sefchick and Sharky Laguana have assembled a collection of catchy rock tracks and near-psychedelic diversions that flow together without pandering to mainstream tastes. "Up All Night" and "Wrecking Ball" are typical Creeper Lagoon, at once anthemic and laconic—satisfaction guaranteed. Exemplary guitars are sprawled across the disc, whether unaccompanied (the brief acoustic reverie "She Loves Me Not"), amid a laid-back vibe (the power ballad "Naked Days") or sliding around a Bowie Stardust mood (the freaky, distorted "Lover's Leap"). Even overproduced fare like "Under The Tracks," all radio-ready guitar solos and bouncy piano figure, fits the overall complexion. That Creeper managed to stay true to itself is an achievement in its own right, but to simultaneously crank out a disc with this much spark and general appeal is almost a miracle. >>>RICHARD A. MARTIN



Link

[www.creeperlagoon.com](http://www.creeperlagoon.com)

File Under

Major-label debut  
construction delays

R.I.Y.L.

Supergrass, the Boo Radleys,  
the Flaming Lips

## DAFT PUNK

Discovery

Virgin

There's no denying that the French have a flair for culture most of us only experience in the form of baked goods. And so it goes with house music. Although it's only fair to credit Chicago with the post-disco dance style's paternal rights, the French have (at the very least) earned coveted weekend privileges. Leading this fray français is Daft Punk, the masked duo whose 1997 debut, *Homework*, full of long climaxes and filtered loops with all the subtlety of a woolly mammoth, tested booty-shaking limits on both sides of the Atlantic. But now, in a most anti-Darwinian fashion, we have *Discovery*, an album that carries us back to the dawn of dance music. With Romanthony wailing his heart out on the melancholy-disco single "One More Time" (think Prince on "Sometimes It Snows In April"), an Eddie Van Halen-like guitar breakdown (on "Aerodynamic") and syncopated snares dotting lush swooping synth washes, it's a bittersweet yearning for a second chance at the eighth grade. Cutting back on the beats per minute, *Discovery* brims with twinkly jags of jewelry-box melody, and dreamy robospeak vocals that separate the four-to-the-floor hits from the slow dances. Vocoders may mask them, but no CliffsNotes are needed to decipher these lyrics. This is ephemeral, feel-good music with character and variety—enough to keep the party going until the principal turns the gym lights back on. >>>ADRIENNE DAY



Link

[www.daftpunk.com](http://www.daftpunk.com)

File Under

Stardust memories

R.I.Y.L.

Basement Jaxx, Romanthony,

DJ Sneak

## GORKY'S ZYGOTIC MYNCI

The Blue Trees

Mantra



Link

[www.gorkys.com](http://www.gorkys.com)

File Under

Back-porch dream folk

R.I.Y.L.

Neutral Milk Hotel,

Fairport Convention,

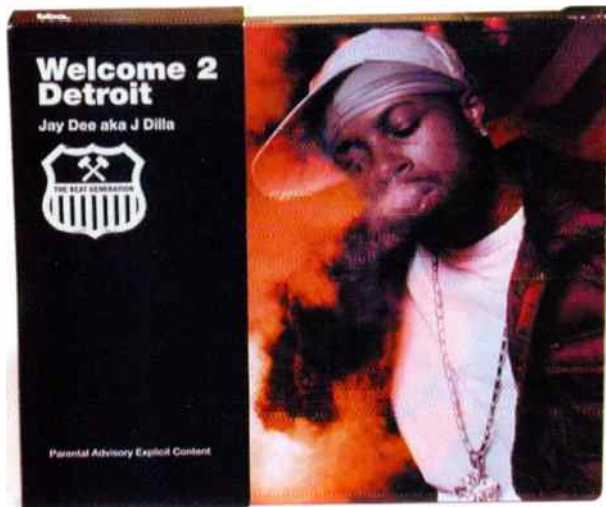
Rolling Stones' *Beggars Banquet*

Anyone familiar with the handful of records Gorky's Zygotic Myncci has released in America knows that the Welsh band bounces all over the musical map—sometimes in a single song. Which is why *The Blue Trees* is such a lovely, leftfield surprise. Euros Childs and his group of pop miscreants recorded this eight-song acoustic disc in a week after touring diligently behind 1999's Zappa-esque *Spanish Dance Troupe*, and the genius of immediacy glows throughout. The highlight is a rare cover of a song by swinging London one-hit wonders the Honeybus: "Fresher Than The Sweetness In Water" bounds along amiably, with careening fiddle, charmingly strummed guitar and bright, sunny vocals. Elsewhere, Gorky's seesaws between melancholia and a joyful mess, sounding wistful on the harpsichord-backed "Face Like Summer" and carefree on the singsong "This Summer's Been Good From The Start." The album's sole track sung in the band's native tongue, "Sbia Ar Y Seren," splits the difference, rolling along on a placid melody but building to a contented conclusion amid Childs's humming. This dichotomy is extended to the album's three instrumentals, which ebb and flow, creating tidal mood shifts in the process. When push comes to shove though, *The Blue Trees* is an upbeat affair, filled with beautiful-sounding music, exquisite detail and a timeless sense of something deeper gained in a kaleidoscopic forest. >>>RICHARD A. MARTIN

## JAY DEE

### Welcome 2 Detroit

BBE



Whether you know it or not, Jay Dee's been rocking you for years. Probably best known as a member of the Ummah production team (who worked with A Tribe Called Quest) and the underground crew Slum Village, he's produced tracks for heavyweights like Busta, Common, Erykah and De La. *Welcome 2 Detroit*, dedicated to the Jay Dee stomping ground more famous for its brushed-metal techno than wood-grained hip-hop, echoes the subtle, soulful vibe of all the above. It's as understated as Slum Village's *Fantastic Vol. 2*, trading in its rosy glow for a blunter, darker feel. The real action creeps in the background, with beats skulking like alley cats around the perimeter of a streetlight. On "Y'all Ain't Ready," a fidgety typewriter balances the breakbeat, as an insistent staccato pings faintly in the distance. And who'd have thought that the Clapper theme (that's right, as seen on TV) could be turned into a grindingly funky jam? Jay Dee's also got a knack for finding MCs to balance the tenor of his tracks—on "Beej-N-Dem Pt. 2," Beej's nasal style plays perfectly off the hollowed bass and compressed soul sample. And his cover of Donald Byrd's "Think Twice" exemplifies the producer's respect for his soul roots. Welcome to Jay Dee's Detroit: Get comfy, you may want to stay a while. >>>PHILIP SHERBURNE

Link

[www.bbemusic.com/home\\_page/beatgeneration/jaydee.htm](http://www.bbemusic.com/home_page/beatgeneration/jaydee.htm)

File Under

Soul hip-hop futurism

R.I.Y.L.

Slum Village, DJ Krush, the Neptunes

## OPETH ★

### Blackwater Park

Koch

Sweden's Opeth are the finest of a small circle of bands to have methodically evolved from doomy death-metal roots into a nearly uncategorizable concoction of progressive rock and cold, morose Goth. Band mastermind Mikael Åkerfeldt is a prog extremist (he works in Sweden's top prog shop, and named this album after an obscure art-rock band from the early '70s), and his obsession shows on exploratory escapes like "Bleak" and the panoramic album opener "The Leper Affinity." Both of those tracks stake cogent claims for Opeth as the (*Physical Graffiti*-era) Led Zeppelin of extreme metal. As he did on '99's mesmerizing *Still Life*, Åkerfeldt mixes clean, clear, near-sensitive vocals with blackish death caws. Meanwhile the band executes elaborate structures that drift from retro riff-mad mid-metal, to pensive John Renbourn-style acoustic moments and smatterings of blackest doom and Gothenburg-based thrash. The overall effect is smothering, but in a coddling and protective way. *Blackwater Park* works an elaborate magic, spreading a fog of foreboding yet inviting existential angst that last wafted from old King Crimson, creepy and heavy Italian and German prog, U.K. bleaksters Van Der Graaf Generator and Quebec cyber-thrashers Voivod. >>>MARTIN POPOFF



Link

[www.opeth.com](http://www.opeth.com)

File Under

Frosty Northern progressive doom

R.I.Y.L.

Amorphis, Katatonia,

King Crimson



**The long awaited and anticipated US debut of the popular British pop/rock band BOA has finally arrived.**

**Having already sold thousands of units in the U.K. and Japan, their critically acclaimed album "Twilight" invades America on March 27, 2001.**

**Featuring the hit single "DUVET"**

- Impacting radio March 15th!
- Already ADDED at WLPW Lake Placid, NY @ 10 spins!
- Already 45,000 units of "DUVET" sold in Japan!
- Already featured as the theme song for the famous Japanese sci-fi animation video series LAIN, which has sold over 100,000 units worldwide.



**BOA "twilight" IN STORES MARCH 27, 2001**

(BOA will be performing live throughout Southern California April 2nd - April 9th.  
Check your favorite music magazines for dates and venues.)

<http://i.am/boaweb>

**Pioneer**  
World Radio History

[www.pioneermusic.com](http://www.pioneermusic.com)

# REVIEWS



## THE BIGGER LOVERS

How I Learned To Stop Worrying **Black Dog**

The debut from Philadelphia's the Bigger Lovers is proof that delusions of indie-pop grandeur needn't be frontloaded with heaps of self-absorption. A credit to the veiled '60s nostalgia of its title, *How I Learned To Stop Worrying* is a finely crafted communion of the classic era's pop-rock touchstones: the pre-Tommy Who, Brian Wilson, the Zombies, Phil Spector's wall of sound, Chris Bell-era Big Star. The best thing that can be said about this quartet of pop-rock classicists is they're always careful to place melody before malady. "Catch & Release," "Threadbare" and "Summer (Of Our First Hello)" are as lush as they

are brawny, steered in the latter direction by dual six-string storm swells and the pummeling, precise drumming of Pat Berkery (think of every black-and-white Keith Moon highlight VHL's ever shown you). At times, a pleasing lo-fi disposition ambles to the fore, most clearly manifested in the sexually repressed boy-next-door vocals of Bret Tobias (guitar) and Scott Jefferson (bass). And with the Lovers' uncanny ability to mold seemingly unrelated current events to fit their own slightly bent personal agenda ("With the super funds and the come-stained dress/ What a mess/ No wonder I'm drinking"), rarely has bald-faced nostalgia sounded so bracingly here and now. Today, the '60s powerpop underground—tomorrow, the world? >>>HOBART ROWLAND

Link

[www.thebiggerlovers.com](http://www.thebiggerlovers.com)

File Under

Economic power pop with high aspirations

R.I.Y.L.

Big Star, Velvet Crush, Superdrag



## BLACK REBEL MOTORCYCLE CLUB

B.R.M.C. **Virgin** ★

Wistfully disaffected vocals, pop melodies that cross the Velvet Underground with '60s AM pop, and guitar distortion amped up into a squall of white noise—Black Rebel Motorcycle Club even shares a four-word name with Jesus & Mary Chain. So let's not mince words: *B.R.M.C.* essentially sounds like the record that should've been the midpoint between *Psychocandy* and *Darklands*. This is not a bad thing. As slavish devotion goes, *B.R.M.C.* is well done and pretty creative. (Luckily, this Bay Area band also

comes inoculated with praise from the Chain's Jim Reid, along with similar kind words from Noel Gallagher and Johnny Marr.) The hummable yet opaque melodies can stand up to any on the current commerciAlt field—anything weaker wouldn't be able to punch through the supersaturated mix. The sound is remarkably textural, overloaded with serrated chunks of guitar or fat, fuzzy basslines crashing around vocals that never seem to rise above a volume you'd use to ask your spouse to dim the light. No one would think to describe these as anything other than pop songs, but they still sound like romanticized heavy weather. Of course, modeling yourself very closely on a highly original sound isn't the same as originality, but somebody call me when sounding like the Beatles does Oasis some harm. *B.R.M.C.* is good stuff. >>>FRANK MANSFIELD

Link

[www.blackrebelmotorcycleclub.com](http://www.blackrebelmotorcycleclub.com)

File Under

White-noise pop

R.I.Y.L.

The Jesus & Mary Chain, Oasis, My Bloody Valentine



## BREAKESTRA

The Live Mix Part 2 Stones Throw

Crate-digging—burrowing through dusty, forgotten record bins for tasty funk and soul nuggets—has blossomed into a full-blown subculture on the West Coast, mingling and merging with hip-hop like nowhere else on the continent. The People Under The Stairs counted off their favorite jazz sides on “43 Labels 1 Like.” Quasimoto rhymed about record-hunting throughout *The Unseen*, and Cut Chemist and DJ Shadow built battle collages out of unknown 45s on *Brainfreeze*. And now Breakestra, a Los Angeles-based group of self-proclaimed “cultural preservationists” led by

Link

[www.breakestra.com](http://www.breakestra.com)

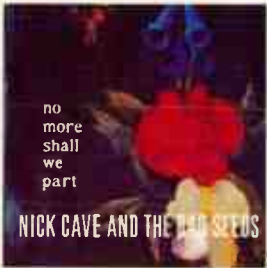
File Under

Crusty, forgotten funk

R.I.Y.L.

Jurassic-5, James Brown,  
*Roots Of Funk* compilations

bassist/producer Miles Tackett, have delivered an album that reduces classic funk and soul tracks to their bare funk-tionalist essence. Stringing together 29 cuts in 40 minutes, Breakestra blaze through songs by funk acts famous (Sly Stone, James Brown) and obscure (Laura Lee, Eddio Bo), recreating the raw drum breaks, fuzzy basslines and tart horn lines that became the base of songs by A Tribe Called Quest, Boogie Down Productions and Busta Rhymes. Like the Roots, Breakestra practice a sort of retro-revisionism; this nine-piece band imitates what used to be the work of one DJ, looping, cutting and pasting together the choicest elements of a record into a high-stepping set for restless groove fiends. Awkward in concept—irresistible in practice. >>>MICHAEL ENDELMAN



## NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS

No More Shall We Part Mute-Reprise

Nick Cave has always been a fantastic storyteller—in both senses of the phrase. Gradually, his tales have become more commonplace, to greater effect: fewer mythic carnies, more domestic blight. Cave's dominant theme remains chaos of the soul, but the desperate characters of *No More Shall We Part* resemble folks you'd see in line at the grocery, or the mirror, which is why “It's late, but it ain't never,” sung on “Sweetheart Come” in a quiet, descending everyman's moan, echoes through this record like the thunderclap at the

Link

[www.nickcave.com](http://www.nickcave.com)

File Under

Cave canem

R.I.Y.L.

Leonard Cohen, PJ Harvey,  
Tindersticks

beginning of Cave's first solo benchmark, “Tupelo.” Or maybe that pregnant instant comes at the end of the previous song, “Oh My Lord,” where a husband and father on an evening stroll rants, “Someone cries, ‘What are you looking for?’/ I screamed ‘The plot! The plot!’” as the stripped-down Bad Seeds build to one of their barely contained crescendos. That moment—the point where a heart is flayed open and its torment courses through Cave's imperfect instrument of a voice—is what makes a Nick Cave record, whether it be in a plinking piano ballad, a sea chantey, or as the sound of feedback, car crashes and thunder. “Fingers down the throat of love” went a lyric Cave wrote in the Birthday Party. Somebody's got to keep playing the part. >>>SCOTT FRAMPTON



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## CALLA

**Scavengers** Young God

At first blush, Calla doesn't sound much different from any number of careerist 'lute-rockers passing off apathy as minimalist longing—all husky, half-lidded vocals, woozy rhythms and faint guitar. What this Brooklyn-based trio has over its peers is a much deeper understanding of both cinematic space and experimental abstraction, and where these organically intersect. On *Scavengers*, Calla moves its weighty song-clouds over various terrains, with guitarist Aurelio Valle weaving strung-out, ghost-of-Morricone lines ("Traffic Sound"), dropping lazy skronk ("Slum Creeper") and chugging noise-blues ("The Swarm"), and percussionist/programmer Wayne Magruder deploying maracas, found-sound clangs and a simple kit to float them onward. When Sean Donovan introduces uncommonly deep basslines to the narcotic crawl, the music's explorations take on a darker demeanor. Alternating between forlorn ruminations like "Love Of Ivah," based almost entirely around Valle's nod-off vocals and a patiently circular guitar line, and quiet, eerie mood-tracks like "Mayzelle" (featuring scraped guitar strings, looped tone fragments and distantly thumping bass drum), *Scavengers* sustains a pre-twilight unease, balancing Valle's amorphous emotional foreground with suggestive ambient imagery. Even the closing slo-mo cover of U2's "Promenade" evokes creeping anxiety through its open-spaced beauty, underscored by Valle's aching half-whisper. >>>COLIN HELMS

Link

[www.younggodrecords.com/](http://www.younggodrecords.com/)

Artists/Calla

File Under

Between darkness and light

R.I.Y.L.

Godspeed You Black Emperor!

Paul Schütze, Low, Mogwai

noise-blues ("The Swarm"), and percussionist/programmer Wayne Magruder deploying maracas, found-sound clangs and a simple kit to float them onward. When Sean Donovan introduces uncommonly deep basslines to the narcotic crawl, the music's explorations take on a darker demeanor. Alternating between forlorn ruminations like "Love Of Ivah," based almost entirely around Valle's nod-off vocals and a patiently circular guitar line, and quiet, eerie mood-tracks like "Mayzelle" (featuring scraped guitar strings, looped tone fragments and distantly thumping bass drum), *Scavengers* sustains a pre-twilight unease, balancing Valle's amorphous emotional foreground with suggestive ambient imagery. Even the closing slo-mo cover of U2's "Promenade" evokes creeping anxiety through its open-spaced beauty, underscored by Valle's aching half-whisper. >>>COLIN HELMS



## LLOYD COLE

**The Negatives** March

Nobody needs another Lloyd Cole record—at least not the kind he's been making lately. Doused in syrupy strings and strolling-on-the-beach woe, the former king of brilliant, bitter college rock has been making music more suitable for lounges where the prematurely middle-aged go to drown their dreams in spirits. Thankfully, *The Negatives* isn't a Lloyd Cole record—well, not really. When Cole turned in his most recent (and still unreleased) solo effort to Rykodisc, the label said they'd decided to put out a retrospective instead and asked him to write a couple of

Link

[www.lloydcole.com](http://www.lloydcole.com)

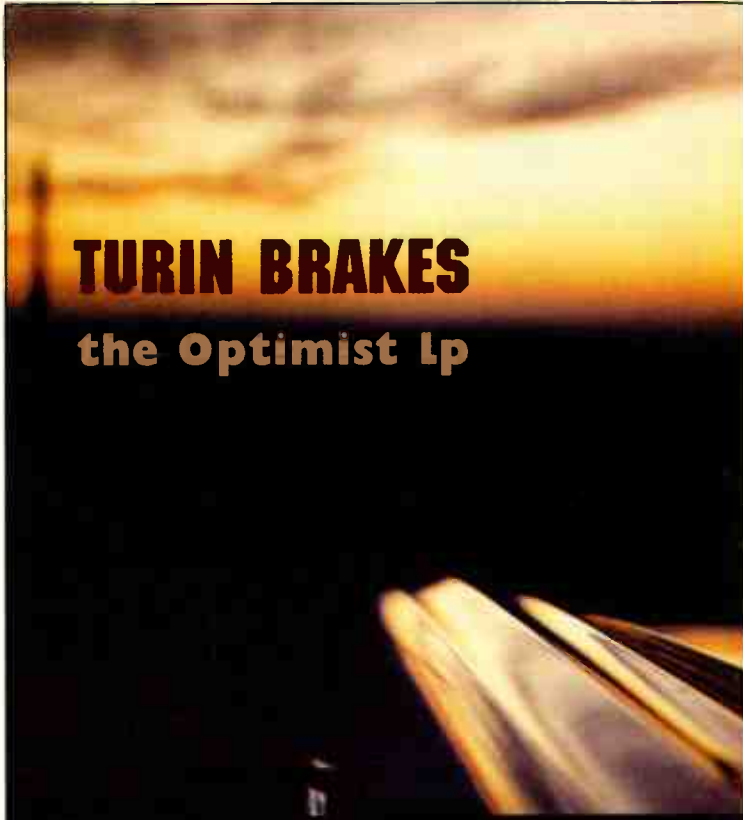
File Under

Return of the café-rock king

R.I.Y.L.

Leonard Cohen, Blur, the Smiths

"hits" to round out the selection. Fed up and searching for inspiration, Cole put together a group, the Negatives (including Jill Sobule on guitar), and started playing gigs for the hell of it. The recorded result is full of chiming guitar refrains, crisp snare hits and Cole's dour yet resilient baritone, immediately recalling his classic mid-'80s work with the Commotions. Listening to the pensive remembrance of "Past Imperfect," the opening track peppered with references to early cuts such as "Brand New Friend," it sounds like after years of trying to be the next Bobby Darin, Cole has accepted what he does best: wistful, twangy café rock. If lines like "another boy against the world," from "Impossible Girl," make some moments seem stale, there are still enough analog synths and chipper violins to remind you of that old magic. >>>NEIL GLADSTONE



# TURIN BRAKES

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## JACK COSTANZO

Back From Havana *CuBop-Ubiquity*

Jack "Mr. Bongo" Costanzo was one of the main catalysts for the Afro-Cuban music craze of the '40s and '50s, not because he gave bongo lessons to Marlon Brando and James Dean (which he did), but because he played with the likes of Miles Davis, Frank Sinatra, Cal Tjader and Nat King Cole. Costanzo even did a little film work, appearing alongside Elvis Presley and Jerry Lewis, and played on the theme for the TV series *Mission: Impossible*. In the '50s, Costanzo recorded and released a handful of successful albums as a bandleader, and then simply disap-

peared. His first album in 25 years, the positively slammin' *Back From Havana*, is Latin jazz at its best, full of driving rhythms that provide an undulating foundation for snappy horn charts and smart arrangements executed with crack precision. As tunes like "Descarga.com" and "Mantequilla" push the energy level through the roof with their insistent pulse, the mambo/samba/soul/jazz stew that is Costanzo's stock in trade broadens the musical palette—only occasionally do you have a chance to catch your breath. Singer Marilu's electrifying appearances on "La La La" and "Quimbara" add yet another dimension to the proceedings. Whichever direction the music flows in, it's always spot-on, making *Back From Havana* one of the best Latin jazz albums in recent memory. >>>TAD HENDRICKSON

Link

[www.jackcostanzo.com](http://www.jackcostanzo.com)

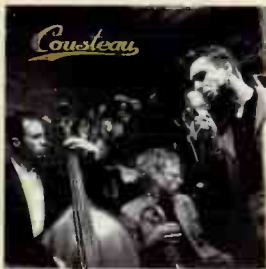
File Under

Smoldering Afro-Cuban jams

R.I.Y.L.

Mongo Santamaria, Snowboy,

Buena Vista Social Club



## COUSTEAU

Cousteau *Palm*

The debut of England's Cousteau seems tailor-made for fans of the brandy-and-smoking-jacket sophistication of 1998's Elvis Costello/Burt Bacharach collaboration *Painted From Memory* who desire a more underground gestalt. The sophisticated songcraft of Davey Ray Moor is full of nods to Bacharach, most explicitly on "The Last Good Day Of The Year," its tart horn line and pop-bossa groove screaming vintage Dionne Warwick. Liam McKahey's deep, rich voice inhabits Moor's wistful tunes like a cigar-puffing lounge lizard emerging from some late-night sinning just long enough to realize

he can croon like an angel. McKahey's vocals echo both Scott Walker and Tindersticks singer Stuart Staples, but without the avant-cabaret eccentricities. While many of the group's postmodern contemporaries give in to kitsch or affectation when mining the depths of mid-'60s pop, Cousteau plays it straight. Their classy image and approach might seem a bit studied (they come across like a jury of Bryan Ferry's peers), but Cousteau performs with an earnestness that suits their carefully constructed melodies and seductive arrangements. Nearly every tune here sparkles with a luster that reminds the listener that this is pop first and foremost, even if it is redolent of another era. But the darkness inherent in McKahey's singing and the songs' haunting major-to-minor harmonic shifts add a sinister undercurrent that gives Cousteau a creepy, film-noir quality. >>>JIM ALLEN

Link

[www.cousteau.tv](http://www.cousteau.tv)

File Under

Moody Brits do Bacharach

R.I.Y.L.

Scott Walker, Tindersticks, early Bowie, Bryan Ferry



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SANTOS INCENTES "Desaparecida" ★  
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O RAPPA "Ale Datta" ★ ORIXA "2011" ★  
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## VARIOUS ARTISTS Escena Alterlatina: The Future Sound In Español Ark 21-Universal

Whether through ignorance or the language barrier, the mainstream can't seem to figure out how to approach the burgeoning Latin alternative wave. While nearly all the up-and-coming artists on *Escena Alterlatina* take cues from decidedly American genres of music, melding rock, hip-hop and metal with Latin ska, samba and norteño, the resulting hybrids defy easy categorization. Listening to Hechos Contra El Decoro's "Voz Of Babilon," which sounds like Baha Men backed by the Mighty Mighty Bosstones, or Orixá's "2-0-1-2,"

Link

[www.ark21.com](http://www.ark21.com)

File Under

Ñ Alternative 101

R.I.Y.L.

**Amores Perros** soundtrack,  
**Price Of Glory** soundtrack,  
**Fuerza!**

whose rap-rock power surpasses anything on Limp Bizkit's resumé, it's absolutely confounding that Anglo audiences haven't further embraced Latin alternative. If an entry point is needed, *Escena Alterlatina* can be that gateway. Artists such as Julieta Venegas, who recalls a more singer/songwriter-ish Björk on her engaging "Me Van A Matar," and the group Kinky, which occupies a sonic space somewhere between the Beastie Boys and *Bitches Brew*-era Miles Davis on the irresistible "El Pato," create music unique to their Latin heritage that should please even the most casual alternative music fan. As added incentive for curious listeners willing to take the leap, *Escena Alterlatina* has a mail-order money-back guarantee, meaning the future can be heard without risking any fundage. Memo to the mainstream: What are you waiting for? >>>DANA BUONICONTI



## ALÈMAYÈHU ESHÈTÈ Éthiopiques Vol. 9 Buda

It seems Alèmayèhu Eshètè had but one goal: to be Ethiopia's version of James Brown and Elvis rolled into a single entity. On the ninth installment of Buda's exceptional reissue program of Ethiopian pop, Eshètè gets the chance to break a cold sweat and shake his pelvis across 22 tracks recorded between 1969-74. One of the most popular singers to emerge from the golden age of music in the capital of Addis Ababa, Eshètè and his rock 'n' funk stylings outraged parents, as all pop stars should. Eshètè certainly wore his Western influences on his sleeve: Soul Brother Number One is there in the

Link

[www.budamusique.com](http://www.budamusique.com)

File Under

Ethiopian rock 'n' soul

R.I.Y.L.

**James Brown,**  
**Booker T. and the MGs,**  
**post-Army, pre-comeback Elvis**

whoops and growls of his voice on wild tracks like "My Delicious Honey," while his various bands chomp on grooves like pitbulls chewing on a burglar's calf. And they can get down and funky too, as on "If You Could See Into My Heart," with wah-wah frills matching anything that emerged from Memphis and Muscle Shoals around the same time. Things veer into the bizarre when Eshètè moves into Elvis mode, however. Songs like "Philosophising" have the surreal quality of early Japanese rock 'n' roll: the musicians know the chords, but the feel is out of reach. Luckily, Eshètè is far more Godfather than King—he makes getting down old-school Ethiopian-style an experience that has aged as perfectly as Papa's once brand-new bag. >>>CHRIS NICKSON

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## FAITHLESS Back To Mine Ultra

The *Back To Mine* mix-CD series has made its name on successfully translating fabled DJs from their club element to mix form. In the vein of Danny Tenaglia and Groove Armada's after-hours sets, this Rollo and Sister Bliss mix gives an intimate peek into what the Faithless boys listen to in their private chill-out room at the end of the night—and my, what eclectic taste they have. Best known for high-energy house, the duo slides a remix of Chicago house giant Marshall Jefferson vs. Noosa Heads' "Mushrooms" beside Aaron Neville and Mazzy Star with such elegant and sophisticated style you'd think they never knew how to make a dancefloor sweat. So don't expect any elongated fades or turntable trickery—you won't miss it after recognizing the subtle genius in the track list. This is pure next-level lounge: mellow, feel-good tracks that move mind and soul without forgetting to percolate the hips with cuts like Ben Chapman's stunning remix of Adamski's funky vocal house groove "Never Goin' Down." Couple it with the Tindersticks' haunting, string-laced "Another Night In," a moment of Faithless's own mellow "Sunday 8PM," the enchanting highlight of Rollo's sister Dido's "My Life" and the addictive Shinehead bump 'n' dub interpretation of the M.J. classic "Billie Jean," and you're left with essential listening. >>>KYLE ALLEN

Link

[www.faithless.co.uk](http://www.faithless.co.uk)

File Under

Chilling Out, eclectic stylee

R.I.Y.L.

**Gilles Peterson's Worldwide,**  
**Thievery Corporation remixes,**  
**Rae & Christian**



## VARIOUS ARTISTS

Funk Spectrum III BBE

Mothership commander George Clinton once declared, "the funk is its own reward," a none-too-roundabout way of saying you either get it or you don't. BBE's Keb Darge-curated *Funk Spectrum* series is by and for people who live and breathe that maxim to the fullest, soul kids who search through dusty crates for funk's lesser-known creative outbursts the way prospectors pan for gold—thoroughly and ultra-competitively. Having previously co-compiled volumes with fellow funk crazies Josh "DJ Shadow" Davis and Kenny "Dope" Gonzalez, Brit

collector Darge now enlists hip-hop producer Pete Rock to help dig up rarities and album gems for the consumption of the born funky. For the so inclined, *Spectrum III* is the muthaload. Where Darge's choices are the rarer breeds, Pete Rock will rock your funky joints by any means necessary. This includes enlisting the services of unlikely vets like B.B. King and (yikes!) Grand Funk Railroad. Far more often though, he uncovers late-'60s/early-'70s burners from long-forgotten indies made by people whose names probably won't ever be invoked in mixed company. Of course, it doesn't matter whether, say, the Stark Reality recorded any music besides the Afro-funk bumper "Prelude To Say Brother" or If Soulsingers' dirty-ass "Ca'-Ba-Dab" is funky rock or vice-versa—this isn't *High Fidelity*. The true reward is far more valuable. >>>PIOTR ORLOV

Link

[www.bbemusic.com](http://www.bbemusic.com)

File Under

Boogaloo upside your head, revisited

R.I.Y.L.

The Meters, Joe Tex, Lyn Collins, Lou Donaldson



## G. LOVE & SPECIAL SAUCE

Electric Mile Epic-Okeh

In their early days, it seemed cute when G. Love (a.k.a. Garrett Dutton) and his funk-soul brothers created the multi-hued smorgasbord of acoustic blues, hip-hop, reggae and who knows what else that became their self-titled major-label debut. Seven years, five records and one unfortunate detour into jam-happy H.O.R.D.E. territory later, the group is still doing much the same thing, neither badly nor particularly well. The woozy, alt-bluesy *Electric Mile* features Dutton's typically tongue-tripping vocals, though they no

longer exert the pull they once did. Not only does G. Love sound more like Dave Matthews with every passing day, but after years of singing the blues, he sounds, if this is possible, whiter than ever. (Where, oh where is the Philly native's soul?) And lyrically, *Mile* feels lazy, with endlessly repeated phrases substituting for actual songwriting. The first track and lead-off single, "Unfied," is the actualization of radio-ready mediocrity, a boilerplate plea for racial unity that sounds like a mid-'90s ska track re-envisioned by Sugar Ray. By the time *Special Sauce* (who can also be found these days as the house band on Comedy Central's *Turn Ben Stein On*) get around to the loping, country-esque "Sarah's Song" it's already too late. >>>ALLISON STEWART

Link

[www.g-love.com](http://www.g-love.com)

File Under

Stale cheesesteak neo-blues

R.I.Y.L.

Dave Matthews Band, Everlast, Sugar Ray

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## GRAND AGENT

*By Design* Superrappin-Groove Attack

When you listen to Grand Agent's *By Design*, you're listening to the voice of God. So goes the conceptual framework the Philly rapper sketches out in the album's liner notes. Using first-person narratives and a little theosophy, Grand Agent (a.k.a. Jared Taylor) channels the Great Spirit in the sky to address issues he considers relevant to the rap world, such as self-actualization, misogyny, egotism and love. But ye sinners should have no fear—*By Design* doesn't come off like a weekend retreat with a creepy priest. If you didn't read the booklet, you might just think this was another chill-

out rhymer who's spiritually minded one moment ("the pope of North Philly"), arrogantly boasting the next (he fucks his "black bitch" and his "white bitch" the same way—wouldn't St. Peter be proud?), but self-chastising and hyper-aware throughout ("When we were kings we used to rhyme without contracts/ Now we're just a bunch of Linda Ronstadts"). Too bad *Design's* ambitious and concept theme isn't enough to transcend the album's solid yet unimaginative production. The tracks (made mostly by the Mountain Brothers' Chops and Kutmasta Kurt) rely on instrumental chestnuts. Ominous flutes, buzzing two-note guitar stabs and gooey bass thump along unobtrusively, keeping the flow but adding little to the neck-popping motion, making it likely you'll hear not the voice of God on this album, but the proclamations of a minor angel. >>>NEIL GLADSTONE

[Link](#)

[www.grooveattack.com](http://www.grooveattack.com)

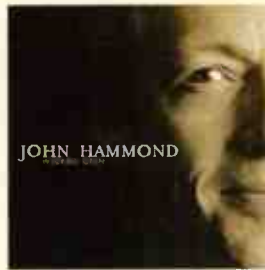
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Paradise flossed

R.I.Y.L.

Common, Kutmasta Kurt,

Diamond D



## JOHN HAMMOND

*Wicked Grin* PointBlank Virgin

Mutual admiration fuels *Wicked Grin*, John Hammond's set of Tom Waits covers; the legendary songwriter goes so far as to produce the album, compose one new tune ("Fannin Street") and guest on the only track he didn't write, the spiritual "I Know I've Been Changed." Some people listen to Waits's music and wonder what would happen if his songs didn't sound like a beaten dog singing in a condemned junkyard. Here's their answer. If you were to pick someone to draw the Mississippi Delta core out of Waits's songs, then Hammond, with his no-

nonsense approach and truckload of blues wisdom, is the guy for the job. Compared to most contemporary blues albums, *Wicked Grin* is rugged and vital. But if you're a fan of Waits's garbage-can-grime esthetic, Hammond's takes will no doubt sound unnecessary. After all, covering Tom Waits isn't like covering, say Cole Porter. Waits's tunes are far less neutral, the frames for his songs are often as important as what is inside them. Look at it this way: Imagine it's the '60s and you're about to see Lenny Bruce's act, and then at the last minute, George Carlin fills in to do Lenny's material. Still hip, still funny, even slightly controversial... but somehow, not quite right. >>>FRANCIS ESTEBAN

[Link](#)

[www.rosebudus.com/hammond](http://www.rosebudus.com/hammond)

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Old moonshine, new bottles

R.I.Y.L.

Charlie Musselwhite,

Taj Mahal, the bluesy side of

Van Morrison



## SKINDIVE

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## KRISTIN HERSH

*Sunny Border Blue* 4AD

The dizzy labyrinth of a Kristin Hersh album begs for a decoder ring, some sort of tool to give even the most enchanted listener access to the singer's brisk assumptions and heady daydreams. What does she mean, for instance, when she mentions a "cherry neck sea"? Sometimes, even she doesn't seem to know. The furious batting of Hersh's pinned-back wings is palpable on *Sunny Border Blue*, a record that both puzzles and intrigues, illustrating one reason why the former Throwing Muses leader has easily survived her early-'90s peers. Set to a

[Link](#)

[www.throwingmusic.com](http://www.throwingmusic.com)

[File Under](#)

The girl with kaleidoscope lines

R.I.Y.L.

Throwing Muses, Tarnation,

Sylvia Plath

more engaging backbeat than some previous solo efforts, Hersh's new songs dance in a jaunty display of mirth. The careening melody of "Silica" is buttressed by her coy vibrato, while the bare-bones cover of Cat Stevens's "Trouble" shows that Hersh can parlay the claustrophobia of a remake into a cinematic moment. Elsewhere, she adopts a crisp, commanding tone to balance her kitenish chords: "It's not my fault you don't love me when I'm drunk," she reminds the boy in "Your Dirty Answer." Without the heavy poet's shawl of her past, Hersh has learned to electrify her mood swings a bit, to become joyously cruel with that childlike voice. When she proudly declares, "I swallowed some bad voodoo," it's hard not to wish you could get some of your own. >>>KRISTY MARTIN



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## VARIOUS ARTISTS

**I Am Fearless Funky & Five** *Tummy Touch*

Link  
www.tummytouch.com  
File Under  
Child's play for mature audiences  
R.I.Y.L.  
Groove Armada,  
Tim "Love" Lee, Faze Action,  
the Idjut Boys

How can it be that Tummy Touch is just turning five? International heartthrob Tim "Love" Lee's boutique label always seemed so mature for its age, offering up sun-kissed, adults-only packaging and sensual grooves that eschew the relentless 4/4 kick the youngsters deem mandatory for club fare. The 11-cut back-catalog romp *I Am Fearless Funky & Five* gets off to a relaxed start with the subtle bump of "M 2 Many" by Groove Armada. But as the festivities progress, the excitement builds—the frisky, Latin brass-flecked "Chicharrons N Boogaloo" by Los Chicharrons cozies up to the thousand-fingers orgy of percussion and wah-wah guitar that is Lee's classic "Again Son..." and soon the filtered disco and primal grunts of Organic Audio's "Good To Go" have all the guests dancing ecstatically and wondering why it's been ages since they dug out Eddy Grant's "Timewarp." As the celebration wears on, events start getting blurry with the quizzical, cool cooing of Crackpot's "Tippy Tippy Toe," and the dream-sequence-gone-awry "Go Down Dixie," another Lee masterpiece, rippling with incessant wind chimes and vocals that sounds like Glenn Campbell at a taffy pull. Finally, Patrick Dawes pushes everyone out the door with the jazzy oom-pahs and talking drums of his tropical-scented "Circus Train." Who knew you could get this turned-on by a five-year-old's birthday party without risking incarceration? >>>KURT B. REIGHLEY



## LAPTOP

**Opening Credits** *Trust Me Parasol*

Link  
www.trustmerecords.com/laptop  
File Under  
Playa-hatin' new new wave  
R.I.Y.L.  
Magnetic Fields, Gary Numan,  
Ladytron

Is it Passover? Because I think I've found the bitter herb. From Neil Tennant to Momus and Stephin Merritt, synth-pop has long been the preferred medium for messages of the droll and bitter, and it perfectly suits the sour mien of Laptop's Jesse Hartman as well. Very little on *Opening Credits* suggests it was made after 1986, a rare occasion in the resurgent synth-pop nation, where this is an unqualified good thing. Hartman's vocals are in the dry, new-wave baritone style of Human League's Phil Oakey, only more detached. This makes one desperately want to hear his take

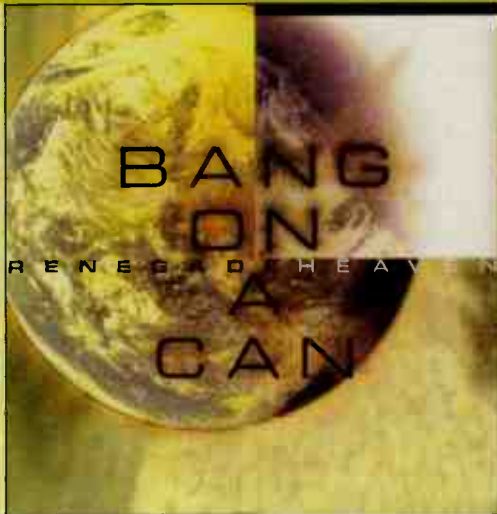
on "Don't You Want Me," because a man who writes lyrics like "your misery makes me smile" really can believe it when he hears that you won't see him. While it's easy to get caught up in the new-wave nostalgia and giddy cruelty of tracks like "I'm So Happy You Failed"—the chorus is the title sung by a children's choir, for Christ's sake—it's worth noting that the always tuneful, well-arranged music takes advantage of the machines' possibilities rather than celebrating their limitations. In a genre known for high-IQ insult merchants, Hartman assays former and soon-to-be-former lovers smartly and knowingly, balancing japes with lyrics like "I can't write... another story of love gone wrong"—when you know damn well that's what he's been doing all along. >>>SCOTT FRAMPTON

## THE COMP PILE (Our guide to compilation CDs) BY CAMRON DAVIS AND BRANDE-JOE GREEN

					
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>A Nod To Bob</b> (Red House)	<b>Shoe Fetish: A Tribute To Shoes</b> (Parasol)	<b>Series 7 Soundtrack</b> (Koch)	<b>Fresno Smooth Soundtrack</b> (Spitfire)	<b>Café Del Mar Volume Seven</b> (MCA)
<b>CONCEPT</b>	A barrelful of folkies pay tribute to Bob Dylan on his 60th birthday.	Disappointingly, this means to honor <i>the band</i> Shoes, not footwear in general.	Raucous and moody rock written for a flick based on reality TV.	Hot metal to accompany a film that mixes rock, porn and extreme sports.	Chill electronics taken straight from Ibiza's hottest nightclub.
<b>TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC</b>	Bob-lovers, young and old	Pure power-poppers	Indie kids who are too cool for <i>Temptation Island</i>	People who think porn is an extreme sport	The six people who aren't sick of Ibiza yet
<b>NAMES TO DROP</b>	Greg Brown, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, John Gorka	Matthew Sweet, Sparkle*Jets U.K., the Shazam	Girls Against Boys, Joy Division, MenKing	Motörhead, Dio, Sixty Watt Shaman	Bedrock, Afterlife, Lux
<b>SUMS IT UP</b>	"A Sweetheart Like You" (Guy Davis)	"Too Late" (DM3)	"Surveillance Full" (Girls Against Boys)	"Shout At The Devil" (Mötley Crüe)	"Whispering Wind" (Moby)
<b>VERDICT</b>	Save a frightening French translation of "With God On Our Side," this is the rare tribute that won't embarrass the artist.	Put this disc on and reenact the library-dancing scene in <i>The Breakfast Club</i> . It's that kind of fun.	We'll take new material from GVSB—who did the bulk of the work here—any way we can get it.	Who cares if the movie's any good—it's fuckin' Dio, man!	This actually makes for pretty good mood music, if there's still no real Mediterranean island in your future.

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## MOGWAI

Rock Action *Matador*

Mogwai has always understood the chemical nature of music better than most bands, eschewing lyrics in order to more fully realize the ethereal quality of their compositions. And so it comes that on the magnificent *Rock Action*, the Mogwai men have found themselves in their most expansively languid musical atmosphere yet. Producer Dave Fridmann's orchestral prowess, which helped make Mercury Rev's *Deserter's Songs* and the Flaming Lips' *The Soft Bulletin* such sparkling examples of dream pop, is used to its full advantage, freeing the band from the loud-soft-loud formula. Guitarist Stuart Braithwaite even sings on the hushed "Take Me Somewhere Nice," a palimpsest of squiggly synths and gauzy instrumentation set over the bedrock bass, drums and guitar. "Dial:Revenge," which begins with thoughtful, Arab Strap-y acoustic guitar and Welsh vocals by Super Furry Animal Gruff Rhys, develops into a speaker-bursting crescendo of symphonic proportion. The spaciousness of the über-Mogwai jam "2 Rights Make 1 Wrong" and the Mogwai-goes-IDM "Sine Wave" belie the band's painstaking precision of pacing and arrangement—if songs seem like they're about to spin out of orbit at any moment, they never do. Instead, they twist in unexpected directions that turn out ecstatically correct by accidental synchronicity. *Rock Action* is bewitching and volatile, and filled to the brim with rapturous sonic drug vibe. >>>MAYA SINGER

[Link](#)

[www.abandonedmogwai.com](http://www.abandonedmogwai.com)

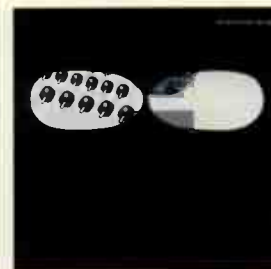
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Scottish postmodern psych-noise masterpieces

R.I.Y.L.

Sonic Youth, Tortoise's "Gamera,"

Flying Saucer Attack



## MOUSE ON MARS

Idiology *Song+Thrill Jockey*

If reigning IDM kings Autechre took some ecstasy instead of gobbling all that acid, they might sound like Mouse On Mars. Not that Andi Toma and Jan St. Werner haven't been tripping quite fantastically since their 1994 debut *Vulvaland* melted time and space into a liquid sound environment of synthetic pop, dubbed-out ambient wombs and inner-space oddities. Ever since then, the land of IDM they helped map out has been pillaged by countless soggy laptop noodlers, again forcing MOM into uncharted territory. Last year's *Niun Niggung* marked the end of Mouse On Mars's cute and cuddly period. *Idiology* goes a step further, employing a new sonic palette that's only tinged with the computer gurgles, motorik rhythms and digital farts that have become their trademark—so long, Stuart Little. Among the new colors are a glob of live instrumentation, including a smattering of horns and violins, plus Matthew Herbert's piano-playing on the oom-pah dubby "Subsequence"; a dash of, er, techno-ska on the hilarious but brilliant "Doit"; and even a smidgeon of vitriol on the aggressive opener, "Actionist Respoke," which includes menacing lyrics from MOM tour drummer Dodo Nkishi. A couple of songs, "First Break" and "Introduce," mix in a bit too much epilepsy, but they're balanced by the negative space of the digital lullaby "Paradical" and the country-techno twang of surreal closer "Fantastic Analysis." So, are we peaking yet? >>>ERIC DEMBY

[Link](#)

[www.mouseonmars.com](http://www.mouseonmars.com)

[File Under](#)

Electro-organic bubble bath

R.I.Y.L.

Autechre, Bogdan Raczynski,

World Standard



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## PERET

**Rey De La Rumba** Narada

In the '60s and '70s, Pubill "Peret" Calaf went from life as a Barcelona *gitano* selling fabrics in street markets with his itinerant-merchant father to the Elvis-sideburned architect of the rumba catalana sound. Peret took the *palmera* hand-claps and soul-scraping throat cries of his native Mataró gypsy songs and re-tooled them on an electric guitar, infusing them with enough buoyant rock, jazz and mambo flavors to make him into an icon of flamenco crossover. *Rey De La Rumba*, a joyous and triumphant multilingual celebration of a mestizo Spain (African, Arabic, gypsy) that rarely gets exported to U.S. ears, revisits some of Peret's biggest gypsy-

pop hits in a series of salsa-to-dub duets with the best and brightest members of Spain's next generation of hybrid-makers. Stylee composer and producer Nacho Mastretta and Italiano crooner Tonino Carotone laugh as much as they swing on "Es Preferible," Basque alternative king Fermin Muguruza drops Euskera verses over crackling jungle militancy on "Voy, Voy," and trading crown for colony, even Mexican norteño hip-hoppers El Gran Silencio stop by to give the already shuffling "Borriquito" a freestyled cumbia facelift. The passing of the torch rarely sounds this good. >>>JOSH KUN

Link

[www.mundofree.com/](http://www.mundofree.com/)

[javier\\_ortiz/diskos/peret.htm](http://javier_ortiz/diskos/peret.htm)

File Under

21st century gypsy pop

R.I.Y.L.

Jarabe de Palo,

Martires del Compas,

Brigadistak Sound System



## POWDERFINGER

**Odyssey Number Five** Republic-Universal

It always happens in rockdom: When music is at its most creatively desolate, some artist creeps out from under the floorboards to remind us all how great music can be. Aussie outfit Powderfinger is this season's sucker punch. Recent stadium-filling superstars in their homeland, they combine the sonic power of Pearl Jam with the quirky-hook craftsmanship of Crowded House for irresistible, Bic-flicking anthems. The band's previous, third effort, *Internationalist*, was its commercial breakthrough, and honey-throated crooner/songwriter Bernard Fanning spends much of *Odyssey* dealing with the psychological fallout from overnight success. "So I landed on my feet, the steadiness is bittersweet," he mourns over trellis-climbing guitar on "Up & Down & Back Again," compounding it in "My Kind Of Scene" ("Move out of sight and onto some life I'm dreaming of/ For everything you thought you had has gone from worse to bad"). Regrets? He's had a few. But that's an intrinsic part of Powderfinger's charm—discontentment trumps woofing out aggression on your eardrums, or whining about being overlooked, every time. Fanning, whose voice sounds better with every listen, doesn't shy away from sentimentality, but actually celebrates basic emotions, from the plush opener "Waiting For The Sun" to the gentle coda "Whatever Makes You Happy." His singing encapsulates *Odyssey's* simple message of brains over brawn. >>>TOM LANHAM

Link

[www.powderfinger.net](http://www.powderfinger.net)

File Under

Neil Finn buys his first flannel

R.I.Y.L.

Crowded House, Midnight Oil,

Matthew Sweet

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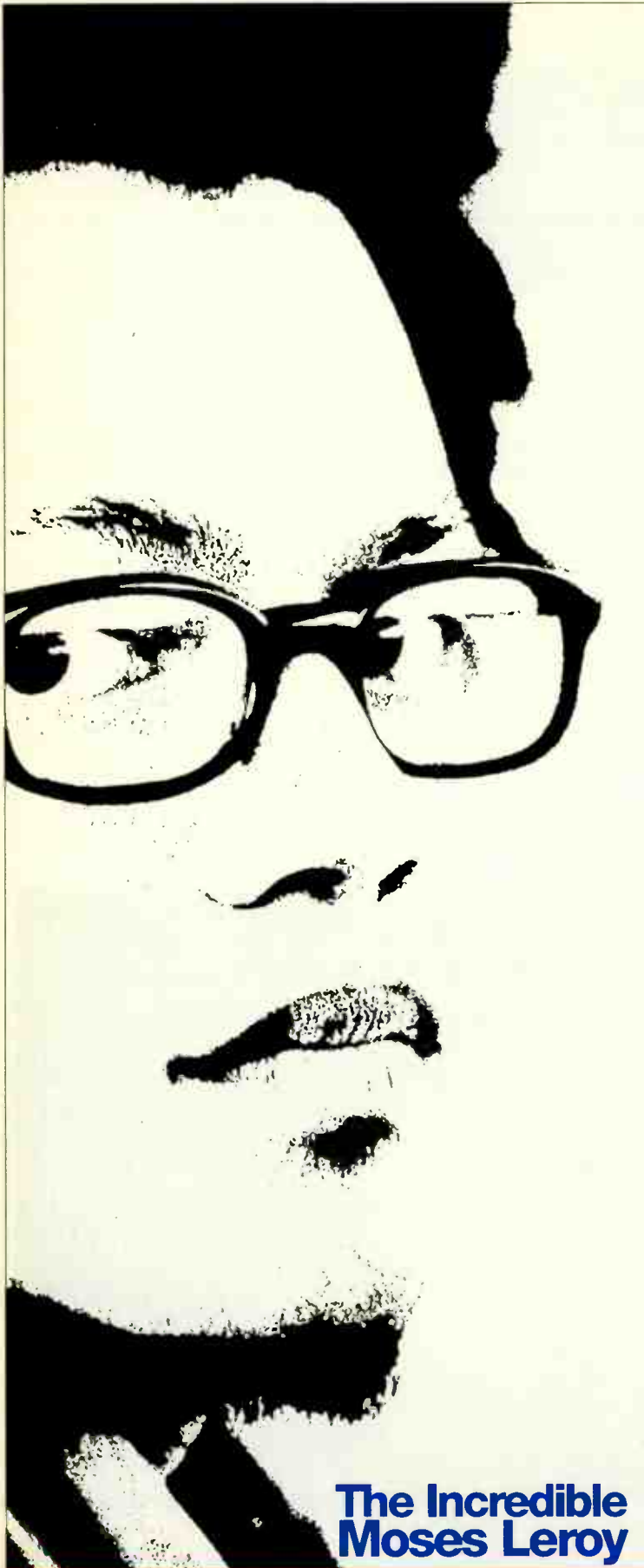


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LOS FABULOSOS CADILLACS

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File Under

Soccer stadium Latin rock

R.I.Y.L.

Fishbone, Mano Negra, Ruben Blades, ¡Cubanismo!

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File Under

Soccer stadium Latin rock

R.I.Y.L.

Los Autenticos Decadentes, Sergent García

## LOS FABULOSOS CADILLACS

Hola BMG U.S. Latin

## LOS FABULOSOS CADILLACS

Chau BMG U.S. Latin

At about the same time that Argentina and England played *Battleship* over the Falkland/Malvinas islands in the early '80s, nine Buenos Aires teenage boys came together to share in their fascination of Britain's then-ongoing Two-Tone ska revival. The Brits put the Argentine military dictatorship to shame, helping ignite social reforms in the beleaguered birthplace of tango and Che Guevara, while the kids, drunk with Madness, the Specials and the Clash, were soon at a pub playing their first gig. With raspy-voiced singer Vicentico and brawny bassist Flavio Cianciarulo writing most of the songs, the band named itself Los Cadillacs 57, after the classic luxury car. But when they came back to play their second show, the excited bar owner placed on his pub's tiny marquee "Los Fabulosos Cadillacs," and the group never argued.

By the time soccer great Maradona led Argentina's national team to glory for a second World Cup title in 1986, Los Fabulosos Cadillacs were releasing their Latin-style ska-rock debut album *Bares Y Fondas* ("Bars And Eateries"). Now, to celebrate their 15-year anniversary—a time during which they helped define Argentina's rock movement—Los Fabulos Cadillacs recorded a series of live stadium shows to catalog their greatest Latin American hits on two albums, *Hola* and *Chau*.

Like all bands as highly regarded for their live performances as for their studio work, LFC is a jam band first, and these albums capture the feeling of their tightrope performances. About a decade into their career, LFC moved away from their overtly reggae/ska foundation in favor of Latin jazz, Brazilian dance and salsa-laden rhythms, around which they built exhaustive jams. So most of the songs that originate prior to LFC's 1997 masterpiece *Fabuloso Calavera* are rearranged here to work more smoothly with salsa's syncopated clave than they could with the skanking beat. Lyrically, the group switches comfortably between Clash-inspired political rants and beer-in-hand, punter philosophy, with humor and irony accompanying both approaches. Tiny glitches in the sound production shrink next to the way the recordings preserve the spontaneity of thousands of fans singing along to several choruses. And so, these live best-of compendiums cascade with irresistible, hip-shaking cuts that roll from ska to samba to salsa.

The two albums are sold separately (presumably to fulfill contractual obligations to BMG), and it's hard to choose between LFC's greatest single, the percussive Brazilian batucada-rock "Matador" on *Chau*, and "La Marcha Del Golazo Solitario" on *Hola*. Still, in the long run, these format logistics are the only negative points of a career overview that truly altered an international landscape. >>>ENRIQUE LAVIN



ARTIST APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD • R.I.Y.L. - RECOMMENDED IF YOU LIKE



**VARIOUS ARTISTS****Project Unison Soundtrack** Hydrogen Dukebox

Long before the American music business co-opted the "electronica" moniker and turned it into a blanket term for all modern electronic beat-based music, there actually existed a proper, culturally rooted meaning of the word. Less a concrete description and more a reference point for artists as diverse as Aphex Twin, Oval and Richie Hawtin, electronica loosely referred to overtly synthesized and melody-savvy abstractions from the techno norm. That said, Project Unison is a superb collection of lush modern electronica highlighting the work of

Brit knob-twiddling composers Lee Anthony Norris (under both his Metamatics and Norken guises) and Clatterbox. It doubles as the soundtrack to Norris's unfinished indie film of the same name, about a futuristic society of genetically computer-matched lovers. As befits a twisted sci-fi tale, the music here veers toward the more cerebral side of chill-out, ranging from the dubby electro of Lecy Men's "Window Shade Dust" to Circus Mind's bright, folk-tinged "Her Face In The Autumn Sun." Norris himself pops up on four tracks, and the deep, fractured beatscape "Modems Of Lust" clearly stands out from the pack. Like much of the electronica underground, *Project Unison's* less a revelation than a comfortable norm—think pristine Detroit techno with a quirky rhythmic component and you're already there. >>>ROY DANK

Link

[www.hydrogendukebox.com](http://www.hydrogendukebox.com)

File Under

Abstract melodies made by ambient techno geeks

R.I.Y.L.

Boards Of Canada, Plaid, Morr Music



Link

[www.sma.co.jp/artist/puffy](http://www.sma.co.jp/artist/puffy)

File Under

J-pop, American style

R.I.Y.L.

Cornelius, Jellyfish, Cardigans

**PUFFY AMIYUMI****Spike** Sony Music Imports-Sony Japan

To get a sense of just how disposable Japanese pop can get, consider that Puffy AmiYumi—a top-selling female duo on a sugary sweet tour through four decades of American pop—is viewed at home as unusually substantial and organic, at least compared to the Land Of The Iron Chef's ultra-flashy, throw-away dance-pop idols. In fact, Puffy—name appended for its U.S. debut with the singers' first names, Ami and Yumi, to avoid confusion with Mr. Combs—even seems musically hearty when compared to Japanese acts who've earned indie cred Stateside with a mod pop that's heavier on style than substance (Pizzicato Five, Fantastic Plastic Machine). Like the Cardigans' internationalist crossover, Puffy's *Spike* rocks more consistently, carried by a generalized pop classicism that, Beach Boys-isms and "Cool Jerk" riffery aside, makes trainspotting difficult but keeps songs accessible and familiar. No doubt Puffy's centrist balance of Japanese hyper-pop and American classic rock encouraged Sony to place them among the first Japanese groups released through the label's U.S. operation. Still, with only one English-language song on *Spike*, written by American retro-pop guru and frequent collaborator Andy Sturmer (of Jellyfish semi-fame), Puffy are unlikely to blow up à la Ricky Martin anytime soon. Thankfully though, their music offers far more. >>>RONI SARIG

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## ROACHPOWDER

Atomic Church *The Music Cartel*

Roachpowder is a Chilean/Swedish/Canadian band of psychedelic rockers whose second, forward-looking/backward-thinking record proves why they've become Dave Wyndorf's favorite new gang of reefer bandits. Roachpowder is a fictional injectable drug found in William Burroughs's *Naked Lunch*, an idea that perfectly matches vocalist Francisco Rencoret's characterization of the band as purveyors of "paranoia music." Thus, *Atomic Church* contains an almost uncomfortable level of activity—little itchy sound details swirl and dart in and out of the

band's authentic retro-Stooges vibe. Rencoret's vocals are distant and echoey, and his brother George Bravo possesses a guitar sound filled with a backhoe of dirt, wallowing in a buzzing grunge zone that turns generalized '70s-style tracks into something much heavier than that description may lead you to believe. It's a good ploy, making much of *Atomic Church* memorable, dissectible and discernable, even if pretty much all of it weaves a drowsy volume-drenched spell. When the regular rock experience of the thing wears off, strap on a pair of headphones: You'll notice the band has massaged in all sorts of phreak flag sounds to keep you well inside their vortex of shiftless ennui. >>>MARTIN POPOFF

Link

[www.roachpowder.com](http://www.roachpowder.com)

File Under

Pan-world woofertwapping psychedelia

R.I.Y.L.

COC, Hellacopters, Kyuss



## ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT

Group Sounds *Vagrant*

There's been a hell of a lot going on in Rocket From The Crypt's garage of late, even if little of it actually had anything to do with the making of Group Sounds. Last year alone, lead singer/guitarist Speedo released albums with his side projects Back Off Cupids and the Hot Snakes, drummer Atom quit and the band was dropped by Interscope. Yet with all that action, there was never any doubt that the hardest working band in punk rock would return with a new album eventually. The real question was, would it be worth it? Well, honestly, yes. Up-and-coming indie Vagrant won the band's trust, Black Heart Procession's Mario Rubalcaba won the seat behind the skins, and a legion of tattooed fans are winners in the shadow of *Group Sounds*. It's not the most intense piece of work from RFTC, but it's certainly no snore: "Heart Of A Rat" and "This Bad Check Is Gonna Stick" are fueled by a sunny vocal bounce and characteristically driving horn bursts. "White Belt," "Return Of The Liar" and "Spitting" capture the rough-and-tumble snarl fans romanticize. And songs like "Venom Venom," "S.O.S" and "Dead Seed" are the most unusual and thus the most enjoyable—dramatic, deliberate, this is the closest to ballads these boys get. It might seem cliché, but *Group Sounds* proves punk's truest troubadours are far from washed up. >>>KELSO JACKS

Link

[www.rftc.com](http://www.rftc.com)

File Under

Harmonies, horns and studded leather jackets

R.I.Y.L.

The Ramones, New Bomb Turks,

Jon Spencer Blues Explosion

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## SOFT BOYS

Underwater Moonlight *Matador*

Thirty-six songs full, this second CD re-issue of the Soft Boys' 1980 psychedelic post-punk pop landmark offers similar bonus tracks and outtakes to those found on Rykodisc's 1992 version—but Matador takes it one further. Full of hidden charms, a second disc of previously unreleased studio recordings subtitled *...And How It Got There*, peers deeply into the looking glass to explain the raw motives behind one of the most thrilling rock albums of all time. Living in London and feasting on Beefheart, Burroughs and Barrett (and God knows what else), Robyn Hitchcock, Kimberly Rew and

Link

[www.flash.net/~mmoore72/softboys.htm](http://www.flash.net/~mmoore72/softboys.htm)

File Under

A trip upon a magic swirling ship

R.I.Y.L.

Syd Barrett, Julian Cope, Television

company went beyond the one-note eff-you of punk, adding lyrical lunacy and a harmonic sensibility that was courageously out of time, if not ahead of it. "We were the wrong ship on the wrong planet," notes Hitchcock in the extensive booklet—but that misfit sound, driven by a new-wave pulse, a nervy guitar jangle and lyrics of sexual alienation (and alien sexuality) turned out to be timeless. In retrospect, the equation is very, very simple. Just add the schizoid rumble of "Alien" from the bonus disc to the blissful roar of the opener "I Wanna Destroy You," and you've got the indie-rock blueprint used by R.E.M., Yo La Tengo and countless others. See how it shines! >>>STEVE CIABATTONI



## TIGA

### Mixed Emotions: Montreal Mix Sessions Vol. 5 Turbo

Bored by mix CDs yet? Same here. So, apparently, is TIGA, a veteran of Montreal's hopping underground who co-founded the house and techno label Turbo Recordings in 1998. Clearly wary of the pitfalls of the typical mix—monotonous tempo, repetitive rhythm, shameless promotion—on *Mixed Emotions*, TIGA dives deep into his bottomless pool of records and comes up with a crateful of treasures. Enough gems, in fact, for two full discs. If convention is a mother, then TIGA is a fucker, as he blazes past the full spectrum of dancefloor styles in the first

mix's 17 cuts, blowing kisses along the way to Stewart Walker's minimal techno, Samuel L. Sessions' tribal thump and Grain's fiendish microhouse, all the while teaching a lesson in how to maintain a boogie. Like the best DJ sets, the names are irrelevant, a maxim that carries over to the second, succulent mix. The clearest proof of TIGA's prowess is found here, in his ability to capture the essence of the sprawling new-electro scene in 22 tracks that effortlessly embody the sound's dark, cavernous beauty, exemplified by the spare spook of I-F's "Energy Vampire" clear through to the Moroder-style stark sweetness of Johannes Heil's "Bittersuss." TIGA proves that not only can he jack all the trades, but master a slew of them. >>>ERIC DEMBY

Link

[www.turborecords.ca/splash/tiga.html](http://www.turborecords.ca/splash/tiga.html)

File Under

Schizophrenic underground  
techno  
R.I.Y.L.

I-F, Abe Duque, Stewart Walker



## ANDY VOTEL

### Styles Of The Unexpected Twisted Nerve-XL

Best known as the founder of Badly Drawn Boy's label home, Twisted Nerve, Manchester, England native Andy Votel is a longtime hip-hop head with a penchant for psychedelic rock. So when he finally sat down to make his own record (he's been remixing others' for years), it wasn't a huge surprise that an organ-drenched bit of left-field downtempo resulted. Predominantly vocal-free (lone exception: the quintessentially '60s, Bond-girl paeon "Girl On A GoPed," featuring singer Jane Weaver), *Styles Of The Unexpected* is such a cohesive piece of ambience, it's apt to slip by unnoticed

like something on the sound system at Urban Outfitters. But listen a little closer: Votel juxtaposes gothy piano dips with driving, surf-inflected guitar parts, sewing these together with *Star Trek* synth runs. Then on the next few tracks, he goes all space-age bachelorpad, with wedding-reception electric piano, bloopy underwater noises that pan from left to right, and head-nodding beats that careen towards drum 'n' bass but never quite make impact. On second thought, step away from the speaker. Because the closer you get, the thinner—and more dated—these tracks sound. Instead, turn it up and do something else, because the real value of these *Styles* is in their atmosphere. >>>DYLAN SIEGLER

Link

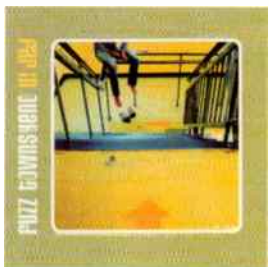
[www.twistednerve.co.uk/andyvotel](http://www.twistednerve.co.uk/andyvotel)

andyvotel

File Under

Ambient ambience  
R.I.Y.L.

Andrea Parker,  $\mu$ -ziq,  
Tommy Guerrero



## FUZZ TOWNSHEND

### Far In Fruition

Too many people dismiss the artistry of Norman "Fatboy Slim" Cook's big-beat hits as simplistic beats-plus-samples, frat-boy 'lectronica. But if they're so damn easy, how come no one's been able to match his consistency at fashioning the hooky good-time rave-ups, eh? Well, actually someone finally has. Fuzz Townshend is best known as a member of the momentarily spell-binding Bentley Rhythm Ace and Pop Will Eat Itself, but with *Far In*, he's made the fun record that Cook actively avoided when compiling his serious-minded *Halfway Between The Gutter*

and *The Stars*. A cornucopia of hyped-up breakbeats, keyboard squiggles, surf grooves, dancehall stylee, dumb loops and much atonal shouting along, *Far In* dares you not to smile. Nothing abstract here—if you don't get the joyful intent in the first 30 seconds of any given track, get the hell off the dancefloor (or as the repetitive sample on "Boogie Too" clearly states: "I want your body, don't want your mind"). But it's far from an idiot box—it's so dumb, it's smart. "Original Boom," which features the English Beat's Ranking Roger's toasty drawl, is a wonderfully druggy raga downbeat; "Smash It" is the finest breakbeat surf-rock tune since, yes, "The Rockafeller Skank"; and "Summertime" is the pulse-laden bit of melodic ambience for watching sunsets with your high-school sweetheart. This is happy, innocent noise for which feeling good is not optional. >>>RASPBERRY JONES

Link

[www.fuzztownshend.co.uk](http://www.fuzztownshend.co.uk)

File Under

Meaty, big beaty and bouncy  
R.I.Y.L.

Lo Fidelity Allstars, Hardknox,  
Skint Records catalog

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# TOP 75



**STEPHEN MALKMUS**  
STEPHEN MALKMUS  
(MATADOR)

#1

## 5 YEARS AGO

**CIBO MATTO**  
VIVA! LA WOMAN (WARNER BROS.)

**POSSUM DIXON**  
STAR MAPS (INTERSCOPE)

**FRANK BLACK**  
THE CULT OF RAY (AMERICAN)

**TORI AMOS**  
BOYS FOR PELE (ATLANTIC)

**THE GRIFTERS**  
AIN'T MY LOOKOUT (SUB POP)

## 10 YEARS AGO

**JESUS JONES**  
DOUBT (FOOO-SBK)

**SCREAMING TREES**  
UNCLE ANESTHESIA (EPIC)

**KITCHENS OF DISTINCTION**  
STRANGE FREE WORLD (A&M)

**DANIEL ASH**  
COMING DOWN (BEGGARS BANQUET-RCA)

**POP WILL EAT ITSELF**  
CURE FOR SANITY (RCA)

	ARTIST/ALBUM	LABEL
1	STEPHEN MALKMUS Stephen Malkmus	Matador
2	TORTOISE Standards	Thrill Jockey
3	LADYTRDN 604	Emperor Norton
4	RAINER MARIA A Better Version Of Me	Polyvinyl
5	SPDON Girls Can Tell	Merge
6	MINUS 5 VS. YOUNG FRESH FELLOWS Let The War Against Music Begin	Mammoth
7	LOW Things We Lost In The Fire	Kranky
8	TRAM Frequently Asked Questions	Jetset
9	DROPKICK MURPHYS Sing Loud, Sing Proud	Hellcat-Epitaph
10	THE DDNNAS Turn 21	Lookout!
11	FRANK BLACK & THE CATHOLICS Dog In The Sand	W.A.R.?
12	THE LIVING END Roll On	EMI-Reprise
13	BS2000 Simply Mortified	Grand Royal
14	LE TIGRE From The Desk Of Mr. Lady	Mr. Lady
15	PROPAGHANDI Today's Empires, Tomorrow's Ashes	Fat Wreck Chords
16	DEATH BY CHOCOLATE Death By Chocolate	Jetset
17	KRISTIN HERSH Sunny Border Blue	4AD-Beggars Group
18	BRASSY Got It Made	Wiiiija-Beggars Group
19	LUNA Live!	Arena Rock
20	DLD 97'S Turn The Power On College Sampler	Elektra
21	BOB SCHNEIDER Lonelyland	Universal
22	THE NEW YEAR Newness End	Touch And Go
23	ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT Group Sounds	Vagrant
24	GWENMARS Driving A Million	SeeThru Broadcasting
25	MATTHEW GOOD BAND Beautiful Midnight	Atlantic
26	HOT WATER MUSIC Never Ender	No Idea
27	JOHN FRUSCIANTE To Record Only Water For Ten Days	Warner Bros.
28	ARAB STRAP The Red Thread	Matador
29	THE HONEYDOGS Here's Luck	Palm
30	VARIOUS ARTISTS Japan For Sale	Sony
31	NORTEC COLLECTIVE The Tijuana Sessions Vol. 1	Mil-Palm
32	ORANGE PEELS So Far	spinART
33	THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS College Sampler 2001	Restless
34	SOUNDTRACK O Brother, Where Art Thou?	Mercury Nashville
35	JOSH JOPLIN GROUP Useful Music	Artemis
36	CROOKED FINGERS Bring On The Snakes	Warm
37	GUIDED BY VOICES Songs From Isolation Drills (EP)	TVT
38	ARLO Up High In The Night	Sub Pop
39	THE ATARIS End Is Forever	Kung Fu
40	U2 All That You Can't Leave Behind	Interscope
41	BARE JR. Brainwasher	Virgin
42	DRUMS & TUBA Vinyl Killer	Righteous Babe
43	TINFED Tried + True	Third Rail-Hollywood
44	HOPE SANDOVAL At The Doorway Again (EP)	Rough Trade
45	JIM WHITE No Such Place	Luaka Bop
46	JAPANCAKES The Sleepy Strange	Kindercore
47	THE GOSSIP That's Not What I Heard	Kill Rock Stars
48	FACE TO FACE Standards & Practices	LadyLuck-Vagrant
49	IDLEWILD 100 Broken Windows	Food-Odeon-Capitol
50	SILVER SCOOTER The Blue Law	Peek-A-Boo
51	BLUE STATES Nothing Changes Under The Sun	ESL
52	MELLOW Another Mellow Spring	CyberOctave
53	MOE. Dither	Fatboy
54	SEÑOR CDCONUT El Gran Baile	Emperor Norton
55	WILLARD GRANT CONSPIRACY Everything's Fine	Slow River-Rykodisc
56	COLDPLAY Parachutes	Netwerk-Capitol
57	TRICKY Mission Accomplished (EP)	Epitaph
58	BIS Music For A Stranger World	Lookout!
59	THE CAUSEY WAY Causey Vs. Everything	Alternative Tentacles
60	VARIOUS ARTISTS Rarewerks	Astralwerks
61	GOB The World According To Gob	Netwerk
62	RODNEY CROWELL The Houston Kid	Sugar Hill
63	BOY HITS CAR Boy Hits Car	Wend-Up
64	THE GENTLE WAVES Swansong For You	Jeepster-Never
65	INTERNAL/EXTERNAL Inside Out (EP)	K
66	BLAD ASTRONAUT Acrophobe	Honest Oun's
67	DIFFUSER Injury Loves Melody	Hollywood
68	ORBIT Xlr8r	Lunch
69	PJ HARVEY Stories From The City Stories From The Sea	Island
70	HALF JAPANESE Hello	Alternative Tentacles
71	EKOVA Space Lullabies And Other Fantasmagore	Six Degree
72	DAVE MATTHEWS BAND I Did It (CD5)	RCA
73	THE SHIPPING NEWS Very Soon, And In Pleasant Company	Quarterstick
74	TERIYAKIS Pre-Literate: Post-Necessary	Terciopelo
75	OLEANOER Unwind	Republic-Universal

Chart data culled from C/M New Music Report's weekly Top 200 radio chart, based on combined airplay of approximately 500 college, non-commercial and commercial radio stations reporting their top 30 most played releases that week. Nicole Keiper's ass stole the show!

# METAL TOP25

1	<b>DIECAST</b> Day Of Reckoning	NOW OR NEVER
2	<b>CHILDREN OF BODOM</b> Follow The Reaper	NUCLEAR BLAST AMERICA
3	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b> Contaminated 3.0	RELAPSE
		
4	<b>OPETH</b> Blackwater Park	MUSIC FOR NATIONS-KOCH
5	<b>SOILWORK</b> A Predator's Portrait	NUCLEAR BLAST AMERICA
6	<b>CLUTCH</b> Pure Rock Fury (EP)	ATLANTIC
7	<b>RHAPSODY</b> Dawn Of Victory	LIMB
8	<b>FLYBANGER</b> Headtrip To Nowhere	COLUMBIA
9	<b>EARTH CRISIS</b> Last Of The Sane	VICTORY
10	<b>UNEARTH</b> The Stings Of Conscience	EULOGY
11	<b>DOWNER</b> Downer	ROADRUNNER
12	<b>LIVING SACRIFICE</b> The Hammering Process	SOLID STATE
13	<b>RAMMSTEIN</b> Selections From Mutter	REPUBLIC-UNIVERSAL
14	<b>HAUNTED</b> Made Me Do It	EARACHE
15	<b>CATASTROPHIC</b> The Cleansing	METAL BLADE
16	<b>ANNIHILATOR</b> Carnival Diablos	METAL-IS-SANCTUARY
17	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b> Dracula 2000	COLUMBIA
18	<b>SKRAPE</b> New Killer America	RCA
19	<b>HOPE CONSPIRACY</b> Coldblue	EQUAL VISION
20	<b>GODHEAD</b> 2000 Years Of Human Error	POSTHUMAN-PRIORITY
21	<b>PRIMAL FEAR</b> Nuclear Fire	NUCLEAR BLAST AMERICA
22	<b>RED HARVEST</b> Cold Dark Matter	RELAPSE
23	<b>FORSAKEN</b> Manifest Of Hate	CENTURY MEDIA
24	<b>BOY HITS CAR</b> Boy Hits Car	WIND-UP
25	<b>THIS DAY FORWARD</b> The Transient Effects...	EULOGY


Compiled from CMJ New Music Report's weekly Loud Rock charts, collected from CMJ's pool of progressive radio reporters.

# RPM TOP25

1	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b> Barwerk	ASTORRETT
2	<b>BLUE STATES</b> Nothing Changes...	ESL
3	<b>JOHN DIGWEED</b> Global Underground: Los Angeles	BOXED
4	<b>NORTEC COLLECTIVE</b> The Tijuana Session Vol. 1	MIL-PALM
5	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b> Artistsars Antigua	ATMOCANDY
6	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b> Motion	SIX DEGREES
7	<b>FUNKSTAR DE LUXE</b> Keep On Moving	HYPNOTIC
8	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b> Environments	DM
9	<b>FUNKER VOGT</b> T	METROPOLIS
10	<b>P'TAAH</b> DeCompressed	UBIQUITY
11	<b>FAUNA FLASH</b> Fusion	COMPOST
12	<b>JACK DANGERS</b> !Hello Friends!	SHADOW
13	<b>SCANNERFUNK</b> Wave Of Light	SULPHUR-BEGGARS BANQUET
14	<b>ORB</b> Cydonia	MCA
15	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b> Too Good For Radio	A DIFFERENT DRUM
16	<b>PAN SONIC</b> Aaltopiiri	MUTE
17	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b> Transit	SUNSHINE-NAVARRE-STRICTLY HYPE
		
18	<b>DAFT PUNK</b> One More Time(CD5)	VIRGIN
19	<b>DELERIUM</b> Poem	NETTWERK
20	<b>DIVERJE</b> On Skin	DSBP
21	<b>LADYTRON</b> 604	EMPEROR NORTON
22	<b>SHADOW: HARD SESSIONS</b> ony Part 1	SCHEMATIC
23	<b>SUPA DJ DMITRY</b> Scream Of Consciousness	WAX TRAXI-TVY
24	<b>AGHAST VIEW</b> Phaseknox	GASHEDI
25	<b>NCC</b> Seven Steps Of Nervousness	GASHEDI

Compiled from CMJ New Music Report's weekly RPM charts, collected from CMJ's pool of progressive radio reporters.

# HIP-HOP TOP25

1	<b>LARGE PROFESSOR</b> "Blaze Rhymes"	MATADOR
2	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b> Solesides Greatest Bumps	QUANNUM
3	<b>M-BOOGIE</b> Different Design	ILL BOOGIE
4	<b>TALIB KWELI AND HI-TEK</b> Reflection Eternal	RAWKUS
5	<b>PHOENIX ORION AND TEAM ELOHEEM</b> "Music Is"	ATMOCANDY
		
6	<b>BEATNUTS</b> "No Escapin' This"	LOUD
7	<b>ACEYALONE</b> Accepted Eclectic	GROUND CONTROL-NU GRUV
8	<b>OUTKAST</b> Stankonia	LAFACE-ARISTA
9	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b> Lyricist Lounge Vol. 2	RAWKUS
10	<b>DJ CLUE</b> The Professional Vol. II	DEF JAM
11	<b>SELF SCIENTIFIC</b> "Three Kings"	LANDSPEED
12	<b>BLACK EYED PEAS</b> Bridging The Gap/Request Line	INTERSCOPE
13	<b>JAY-Z</b> The Dynasty Roc La Familia	ROC-A-FELLA-DEF JAM
14	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b> QB Finest	COLUMBIA
15	<b>MYSTIC</b> "Current Events"	GODDVIPE
16	<b>GURU'S JAZZMATAZZ</b> Vol. 3: Streetsoul	VIRGIN
17	<b>DECLAIME</b> "Move It"	LANDSPEED-SUPERRAPPIN'
18	<b>JA RULE</b> Rule 3:36	MURDER INC.-DEF JAM
19	<b>KHROMZOMES PROJEKT</b> Phase One: Building Blocks	DZOZNE
20	<b>DELTRON 3030</b> Deltron 3030	75 ARK
21	<b>G-DEP</b> "Let's Get It"	BAD BOY-ARISTA
22	<b>KRS-ONE</b> "Hot"	KOCH
23	<b>WU-TANG CLAN</b> The W	LOUD-COLUMBIA
24	<b>TRICK DADDY</b> "Take It To Da House"	ATLANTIC
25	<b>LUDACRIS</b> Back For The First Time	DEF JAM SOUTH

Compiled from CMJ New Music Report's weekly Beat Box charts, collected from CMJ's pool of progressive radio reporters.

# THE KLF & TAMMY WYNETTE

STORY: PIOTR ORLOV ILLUSTRATION: NICHOLAS MEOLA

It was while I was contemplating a left turn off Connecticut onto Tilden Street that I first caught the female-sung chorus cooing those strange words over the speakers of my beat-up Corolla: "All bound for mu-mu land." A beautiful day in Washington, D.C., spring of '92; an irresponsible era of my youth when driving under, ahem, herbal influence, seemed a lust-for-life kick, when my fear of D.C.'s finest bordered on paranoia (also, some said, herbal influenced) and stood at odds with my disregard for the town's schizophrenic traffic regulations.

The mysterious vocalist was a woman from a universe obviously separate from the one that spawned the ambient acid-house backing track, and the waves of her leisurely delivery seemed to drift out of a how-to-live-peacefully handbook. "They're justified and they're ancient, and they drive an ice cream van." Whoa... And then, the point of contextual invocation: "They called me up in Tennessee, they said Tammy, 'Stand by the jams'"—holy shit, it's Tammy Wynette. What is this? I uttered to myself in awe.

Having shaken my groove thing to M/A/R/R/S, Technotronic and the sounds of Madchester in the previous few years, I had some vague notion of this strange song's source. I wasn't too disoriented by the beats. But the more I listened to them, the more her words transformed themselves into a whole other matter. These weren't lyrics as much as absurd hallucinations

(from the get-go it was apparent that Tammy had no hand in 'em) written by someone who seemed to believe every utterance of the mythic trip they were weaving. "Roaming the land" in "ice cream vans," "with still no master plans"—my peaceful musical guide seemed to be mutating into the opening salvos of an infectious pop revolution, declared by LSD-chomping nomad diabetics and espoused by the Queen Of Country Music. My state of mind was somehow further deteriorating and spiritually soaring with every passing moment.

This wasn't quite conducive to functioning behind the wheel of a small automobile while stoned out of my head. Nor to the sudden recognition that, having focused for more than a minute on the sounds of the radio, I had guided the vehicle into position to make a smooth left-hand turn onto Tilden Street, a no-no between the hours of 4:00 and 6:30 p.m., or that, judging from the silent siren lights that were now



flashing in my rearview, a waiting member of D.C.'s finest was about to call me on my mistake. On the radio, Tammy had stopped singing, and an obviously English MC delivered a rhythmically versatile rap that grooved only well enough to convey the depth of the imagery: "Fishing in the rivers of life. Hey! Fishing in the rivers of life. Hey." Oh shit, said my inner lit student, they're also up on Christian symbolism. How cool are they?

When the officer came to my window, he found me in the throes of pop glee. The hook-infested outro played feverishly and I danced with my hands on the steering wheel—"mu-mu land, mu-mu land, all bound for mu-mu land..." The moment had even conquered my pot-induced paranoia, and the usually tense ticket-writing confrontation went off without a hitch. I thought I even saw Johnny Law snap a smile behind his storm-trooper exterior, amused by my pop being. As the DJ announced the songs in that last set (and I

thought, who the hell are the KLF, and why's Tammy Wynette performing with them?), I drove away with a \$55 ticket in hand, and the feeling that I'd made out like a bandit. Don't ask me what else I heard that day.

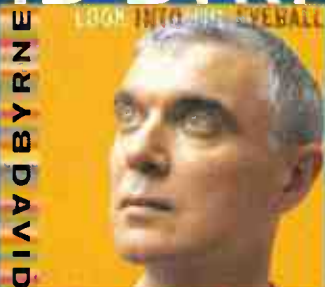
## This was an infectious pop revolution, declared by LSD-chomping nomad diabetics and espoused by the Queen Of Country Music.

Since then, I have given over my pop heart at the rate of a semi-active town floozy. Some of these relationships have blossomed, some disappeared without a trace. Subsequent days of easy listening have bathed my spirit in dear departed Tammy's heart-shattering voice, which can cleanse even the muddiest soul, while nights of beat-heavy revolutionary fervor have found me mainlining the KLF's acid-house art-pop terrorist manuals (try 45, by the KLF's Bill Drummond) like a junkie Samson looking to pull down mass culture's profane temple, just as the duo tried to do by burning a million British quid in '94. But even in my outward-bound consciousness streams, the KLF and Tammy Wynette have seldom overlapped again. Sometimes, though, when I'm in D.C., driving some shite rental, stoned out of my head (some habits are hard to break) on a sun-splashed day, I can't help but gaze back upon that short momentary pop flash, the one that has forever tied the KLF and Tammy Wynette umbilically in my memory.

*Piotr Orlov boarded an ice-cream van to mu-mu land, only to be dropped off at CMJ New*

you need music  
we have music  
case closed

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