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ON THE COVER

FOO FIGHTERS 40

Say goodbye to Hollywood: Dave Grohl drops out of the LA scene and heads back to his roots, a basement in the Virginia suburbs. He gains peace of mind but loses another bandmate. Want to guess why the new record is called *Nothing Left To Lose*? Story by David Daley.

1999 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE 47

Bif Naked, who knows who's been naughty and nice, helps us whip things into shape this yuletide season. Tee Fields may be left holding the bag, but this very funky Santa has plenty of goodies to help rock your stocking. Sing along with our tuneful suggestions for good giving.

ON THE COVER AND HERE: Foo Fighters photographed by Chapman Baehler

FEATURES

SUPERSUCKERS 26

When a guy named Eddie Spaghetti says "Our album is about all the good things about rock 'n' roll. It'll make you want to kill, fuck and do drugs." what more do you need to know? Story by Peter Atkinson.

KRUST VS. APHRODITE 30

If it were a real fight between these drum 'n' bass heavyweights, it wouldn't be a contest. Krust is like 6'5" and would crush Aphrodite like a bug. But we got the two to sit down in the middle of a storm named Floyd and wrestle with the past, present and future of the music. Bill Werde asks the questions and stays out of the way.

LONG BEACH DUB ALLSTARS 36

The Dubbies are 'hood rats hanging out and playing rock, reggae, hip-hop, ska and whatever else makes the party flow. But how will their So-Cal collage play in the Bowery? Story by Dylan Siegler.

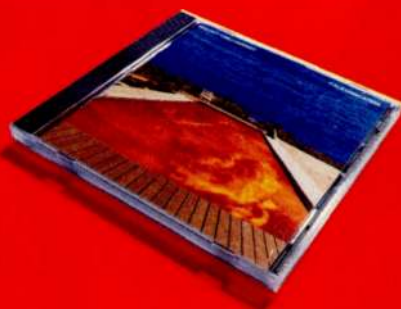
ON THE CD 91

The Foo Fighters, Supersuckers, at.the.drive.in, Isley Brothers, Lo Fidelity Allstars, Supreme Beings Of Leisure, Justin Clayton, the Divine Comedy, Luna, Save Ferris, Mindless Self Indulgence, Primus, Les Savy Fav, Mario C., The Frank & Walters, the Smithereens, Archer Prewitt, Goldie, Triumph 2000.



Merry Foo-kin Christmas

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contents

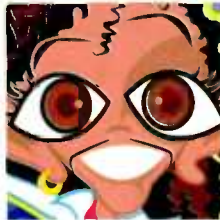
(continued)



18 Quick Fix—Sukpatch



47 '99 Holiday Gift Guide



74 Geek Love—El DeBarge



81 Life/Style—Spike Jonze



36 Long Beach Dub Allstars



21 On the Verge—Shivaree

DEPARTMENTS

LETTERS 08

QUICK FIX 13

Arsonists, Thee Michelle Gun Elephant, Sukpatch, DJ Logic and Polkapalooza

ON THE VERGE 20

Shivaree, Hardknox and at.the.drive.in.

THE SCENE IS NOW 72

Afrika Bambaataa

GEEK LOVE 74

El DeBarge

TOP 75 80

LIFE/STYLE

THE MTV PEDIGREE 81

Directors Spike Jonze and Floria Sigismondi jump to the big screen.

FILM 82

Who's that Girl? Kimberly Peirce on the gender wars of *Boys Don't Cry*.

BOOKS 83

Cuban *Outcast* José Latour.

LIGHT READING 84

The Sandman cometh

ELECTROMEDIA 85

Dear Diary

STAR GAZING 87

Stalking the jet set with Gary Boas.

GAMING 88

System Shock 2—the best role-playing meets shooter game ever?

IN MY LIFE 89

Blowing shit up with Atomic Fireball John Bunkley.

DIRECTORY/INDEX 85

JUST OUT 86

LOCALZINE 90

Cheap Trick's Bun E. Carlos goes back to Rockford, IL.



26 Raisin' Hell with the SuperSuckers.
Photographed by Chapman Baehler.

CMJ NEW MUSIC MONTHLY (ISSN 1074-6978) is published monthly by College Media Inc. with offices at 11 Middle Neck Road, Suite 400, Great Neck, NY 11021-2301. Subscription rates are \$39.95 per year. Subscription offices: P.O. Box 57414, Boulder, CO 80322-7414 / Phone (800) 414-4CMJ. Periodicals postage paid at Great Neck, NY and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to CMJ New Music Monthly, Membership Office, P.O. Box 57414, Boulder, CO 80328-7414. CMJ New Music Monthly is copyright 1999 by College Media Inc. All rights reserved; nothing may be reproduced without consent of publisher. Unless indicated otherwise, all letters sent to CMJ are eligible for publication and copyright purposes, and are subject to CMJ's right to edit and comment editorially. And to all... A good night.



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I USED UP ALL MY RAP PUNS ON THE DJ RAP LETTERS

I have been a subscriber for a couple years now, and I have to give you some feedback about the September 1999 issue, particularly the disc. It is horrible. The beautiful thing about *New Music Monthly* is the wide variety of reviews and sampled music on the disc each month. In September, you guys went way, way too far, with well over 75% of the music on the disc devoted to rap and related genres. Please revert to the focus on variety.

Mark Bradshaw (Plymouth, MI)

The rule of thumb is that people exaggerate the amount of something they dislike by about double. It's human nature—I'm the same way with onions in my food. For the record, 19 tracks divided by seven hip-hop ones works out to be roughly 37% of the September disc.—ed.

HIP-HOP, YOU PLEASE STOP

The September CMJ CD is the most grating, unlistenable collection of worthless garbage you've put out in the five years I've been a subscriber. If you're going hip-hop, which seems to be the inescapable conclusion of the groups you've been covering/including on the CD in the past year, I'm outta here. Congratulations on selling out *New Music Monthly's* unique niche to become the next *The Source*.

Dave Voelker (davidvoelker@hotmail.com)

To see if the conclusion that we're "going hip-hop" is escapable or not, I went back and counted the number of hip-hop tracks going back to the Sept. '98 issue. My total, not counting the seven in the Sept. '99 issue, is six. I'll throw in another half dozen tracks that I wouldn't classify as straight hip-hop but include turntablists like DJ Q*Bert and hybrids of hip-hop and other electronic sounds like Asian Dub Foundation, Deejay Punk-Roc, etc. The grand total over 13 issues? 19. You can maybe add those rock bands with prominent hip-hop influences, but even then you're stretching to make ten percent of the total number of tracks. So the question is, does Dave's syllogism point toward a discernable direction for the magazine, or is this simple intolerance rooted in the fear that letting a couple hip-hop artists on the disc is going to, as they say, ruin the neighborhood? —ed.

ZULU DAWN

I am a member of the Universal Zulu Nation and also a commentator for PhaTLiP 4.2, a radio talk show that is geared towards keeping the youth informed of the world around them. I purchased the September issue of your publication and was delighted to see Mos Def on your cover. Your coverage on the hip-hop underground was substantial. Seeing that your magazine covers different genres of music, your coverage was satisfying. Especially since

Time magazine did a terrible job of covering hip-hop anyway.

However, I (as well as members of my Zulu Nation chapter in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia) found a major discrepancy in your timeline. On page 40, where your time line begins, you forgot to mention that Afrika Bambaattaa started the Universal Zulu Nation in 1973. This is a very important date in hip-hop culture because the Universal Zulu Nation planted so many seeds. The Native Tongues would not have happened if it were not for the Universal Zulu Nation. If De La Soul did not come about because of their influences from the Jungle Brothers (actually Afrika Baby Bam derived his named from Bambaattaa), we would not have skits in hip-hop music. The Universal Zulu Nation also help to spread Hip-Hop culture all over the world (we do have 30,000 members throughout Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia).

I can go on and on about how the Universal Zulu Nation helped to influence hip-hop culture. I just wanted to point out that discrepancy. We would like to see a correction made so that your readers who may or may not be informed of that fact, can learn of it.

Danny J Rodriguez (LoopGaroo@collegeclub.com)

Check out *The Scene Is Now on Bambaattaa's* continued influence on page 72—ed.

HEROES ON THE HALF SHELL

I think your CD reviewers listen to too much Tortoise, because they get mentioned in what seems like every other review.

Steve Forstner (forstneg@students.uiuc.edu)

Tortoise had the novel idea of dispensing with vocals and lyrics and taking rock instruments to places they'd seldom been before, leading to the coining of the term "post-rock," which makes them perhaps the most influential current band that's not famous. Their sound is also really tough to describe in a review, so if you're faced with something else that's similarly hard to describe, it's easier to just drop the name and go back to listening to the Clash live album. Oh, and for the record, it's every 2.45 reviews.—ed.

CORRECTION:

The October issue misidentified the new album by Death In Vegas as "The Casino Sessions," leading to things like coming up with a wholly inappropriate title for the story. The name of the record is in fact *The Contino Sessions*. Our sincerest apologies to the band, its label, Timebomb, and all those who expect better of us. As punishment, the guilty party has been banished from New York City and cast into the briarpatch of the Pacific Northwest.—ed.

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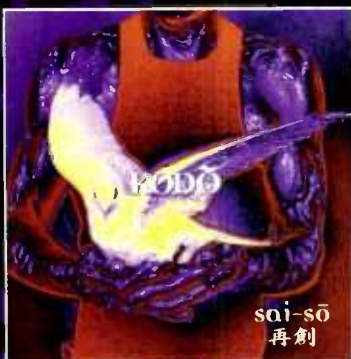
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"Hannon's lyrics, drizzling with metaphorical bluster and plain-spoken lust, are bathed in melodramatic crescendos and melodic swoons..." -Rolling Stone
Check out the track on this month's sampler.

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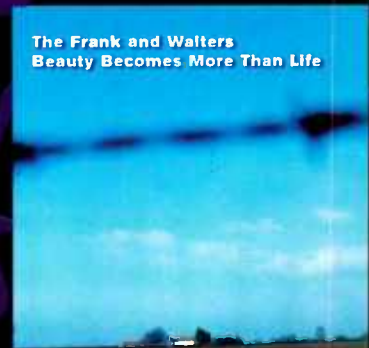


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Beauty Becomes More Than Life



TIME OUT NEW YORK says the Franks make "the best kind of music there is." New Musical Express (NME), calls Beauty, "A Lost Classic For The 21st Century" Check out the track on this month's sampler.

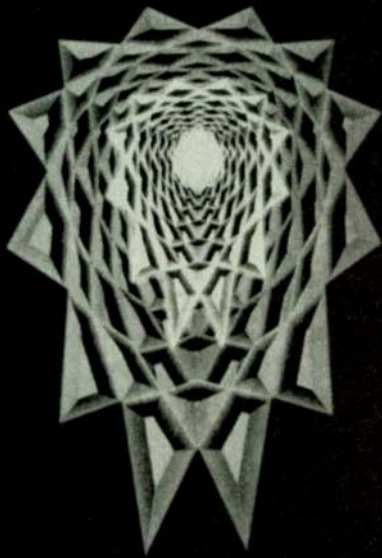
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BAUHAUS cut a fresh swath through the wasteland of contemporary music and reached a pinnacle of cultural and popular acclaim...the fact is that BAUHAUS tonight are bigger than they ever were, and the dark intensity of their music has never been so powerfully delivered...this oasis of intensity seems so fresh...before and since BAUHAUS, there's been so little music built on a knife edge tension...these classics have not been matched...but their reincarnation may serve as standard-setting for the future...this isn't nostalgia; this is new, and this is now.

MTV Online, July 1998

The band wove a dark spell with hits from the canon...in the crowd, older fans got back in black and greeted a massive new crop of sullen teens fresh from sulking in their bedrooms.

Rolling Stone, August 1998

Even now, with a whole raft of their 1980's peers on the comeback trail, BAUHAUS still look and sound impressively ageless and original. Their tribal beats and abrasively detuned guitars may have been absorbed into the common grammar of pop, but there was little evidence of Post-Modern nostalgia...their electrifying 90 minute set provided a suitably histrionic climax to a triumphant evening of designer darkness.

The London Times, November 10th, 1998

It was spooky how Kick-ass contemporary BAUHAUS were in the deliciously cold flesh...every moment of the space guitar cacophony, dub-inspired bass, and the primal drum thump that re-animated such BAUHAUS classics as "Terror Couple Kill Colonel" and "The Passion of Lovers" could have been conceived today, and their ability to sound simultaneously bored, enraged, lecherous, ethereal, drugged out, and clear-headed, is so 1998. Guitar ghouls from Marilyn Manson to Billy Corgan (who joined them for a Chicago encore) bear their influence.

Village Voice, September 15th, 1998.

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World Radio History

CMJ
NEW MUSIC
MONTHLY
ISSUE 76 DECEMBER 1999

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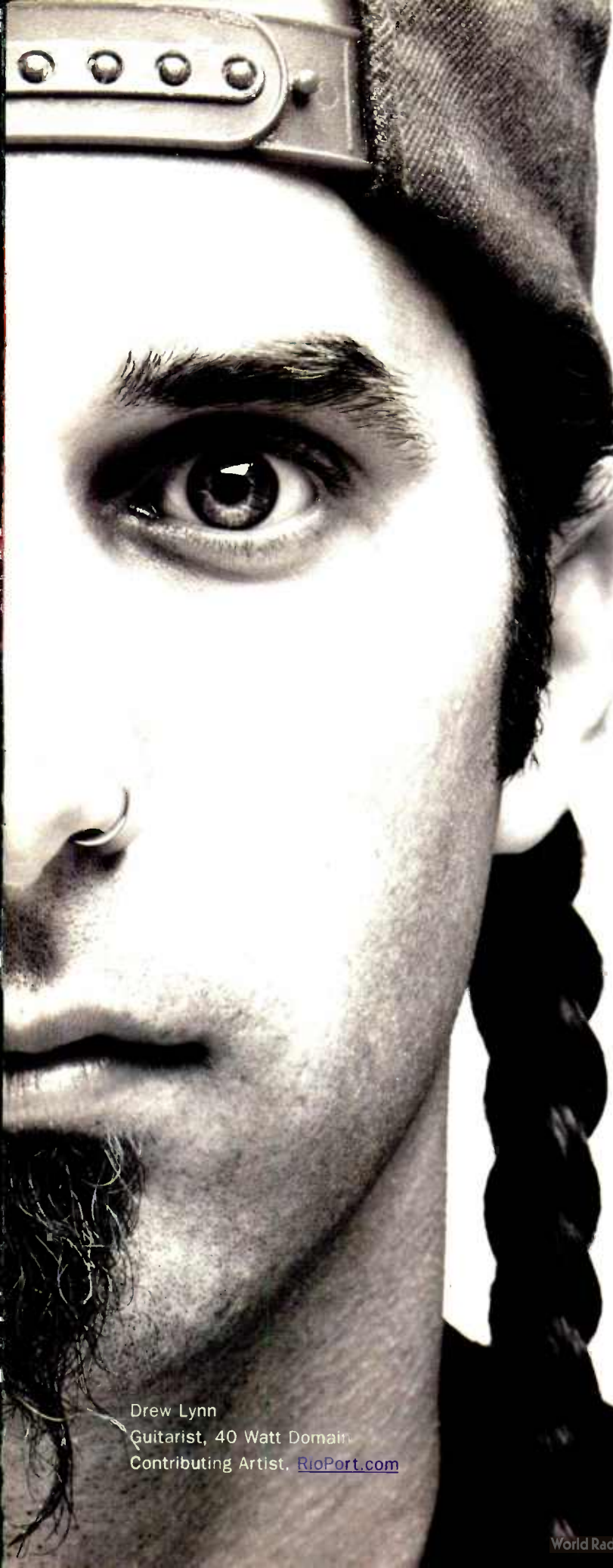
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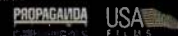
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SPECIAL ENGAGEMENTS START OCTOBER 29TH

BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE: **The Arsonists'** hip-hop gets Matador hot.

story: NEIL DRUMMING photo: KAREEM BLACK

The dreadlocked delivery man in the elevator outside Matador Records' Lower East Side office immediately identified the two young Latinos in baggy jeans and sweats as fellow hip-hop heads.

"What rappers come through here?" he wondered aloud, after seeing the duo exit the record label known for launching the alterna-rock careers of Liz Phair and Pavement.

"The Arsonists," responded the two Latinos.

"Never heard of them," replied the deliveryman.

"Go to Tower Records," advised one.

"Arsonists' shit just came out," added the other.

Satisfied with their self-promotion, the Arsonists' Q-Unique and D-Stroy made their way onto the streets of New York City.

Fortunately for the group, which also includes Swel Boogie, Jise-One, and Freestyle, the folks at Matador were quicker to spot talent than the delivery man. One

(continued on page 18)



CHAPMAN BAEHLER

L-R: Yusuke Chiba, Futoshi Abe, Koji Ueno, Kazuyuki Kuhara

BUDOKAN BLITZ:

Japanese superstars **Thee Michelle Gun Elephant** take the Bowery by storm.

Something very unusual is afoot tonight at New York City's tiny punk institution CBGB's. The line for admission snakes out the rickety front door and down the block while crowds of people chatter excitedly on the dilapidated sidewalk outside. Wide-eyed young girls clutch CDs and band photos, and eagerly eye every arriving car with anticipation. There's a television news crew here, for chrissakes.

Welcome to the world of Japanese rock stars Thee Michelle Gun Elephant (TMGE). It's the band's first U.S. appearance, and the anticipation hangs in the air as heavily as the August humidity. Not only have a few hundred stateside Japanese fans flocked downtown to catch a little taste of home, but diehards have traveled halfway around the world for the chance to catch one of Japan's biggest bands in a club 100 times more intimate than it would ever play at home.

Meanwhile, the band is relaxing in a nearby hotel, at the center of a small entourage that includes two interpreters/assistants, a press agent, a road manager, the stealthy presence of wiry band manager Mr. Nono, and a variety of other unnamed handlers efficiently tending to the business of the evening. And as you'd expect from a quartet of sharp-dressed Japanese garage ragers, the band exudes a deadly cool so thick you could cut it with a switchblade. Lazily taking drags off of Lucky Strikes, the band members are nonplussed by all the fuss—they are multi-platinum in Japan, after all—and fiercely business-like about their plans for their debut U.S. tour.

"We aren't here to see things," drummer Kazuyuki Kuhara declares through a cumbersome language barrier when asked about any plans for U.S. sightseeing. "We are here only to play."

And boy, can they play. A few hours later, Thee Michelle Gun Elephant takes the CBGBs stage and blows the joint to bits. Though borne of influences as unimpeachable as Australian punk, The Who, British pub rockers Dr. Feelgood, and American Motor City rock 'n' rollers like the MC5, TMGE is a force to be reckoned with on its own merits, and CBGBs is shaken to its foundations by both the band's white-hot maximum R&B and the crowd's frenetic, riotous reaction. Screw love—rock 'n' roll is the international language, and there's not a sweaty, exhausted clubgoer stumbling out onto the street that doesn't understand exactly what Thee Michelle Gun Elephant had to say.

>>> Cheryl Botchick

IN MY ROOM

Tom Gray of Gomez hasn't had his own room for quite some time. But if he did, here's what he'd be finding a spot for.



A Matter Of Life And Death

"A surreal movie. The story is bollocks, but stylistically, it's where *The Truman Show* got its ideas."

Henry Mancini—*The Best of Henry Mancini*

"Especially 'The Peter Gunn Theme.'"

Chet Baker—*Chet Baker Sings*

"The way he sings is like the way he plays his trumpet: blistering."

***The Master And Margarita* by Mikhail Afanasevich Bulgakov**

"Fantastically funny. It was written in the early 20th century in Communist Russia."

Sirius Quasi midi synthesizer

"It makes weird and nasty techno noises."

Sasha, who rocks

Manhattan every month with DJ partner Digweed, just moved from the city to a forest on the outskirts of London. When he's not jet-setting around the globe, here's what he sees in his new living room.



Beach Boys—*Pet Sounds*

"I hadn't had a copy for years. I misplaced my childhood copy."

Beatles—*Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*

Two fat, sleepy cats

"Biff and Hattie—they came with the house. They're my best buddies now."

Photo album

"I didn't have any photographs from when I was a kid. So for my birthday present, my father and brother scanned in a bunch, and gave me this leather-bound book with all these pictures from when I was a kid. I was in tears when they gave it to me."

Black and white prints

"They're photos of all these farmhouses in Spain. The photographer gets up at like 3 a.m., so he gets this crazy lighting."

wish they could play
reindeer games



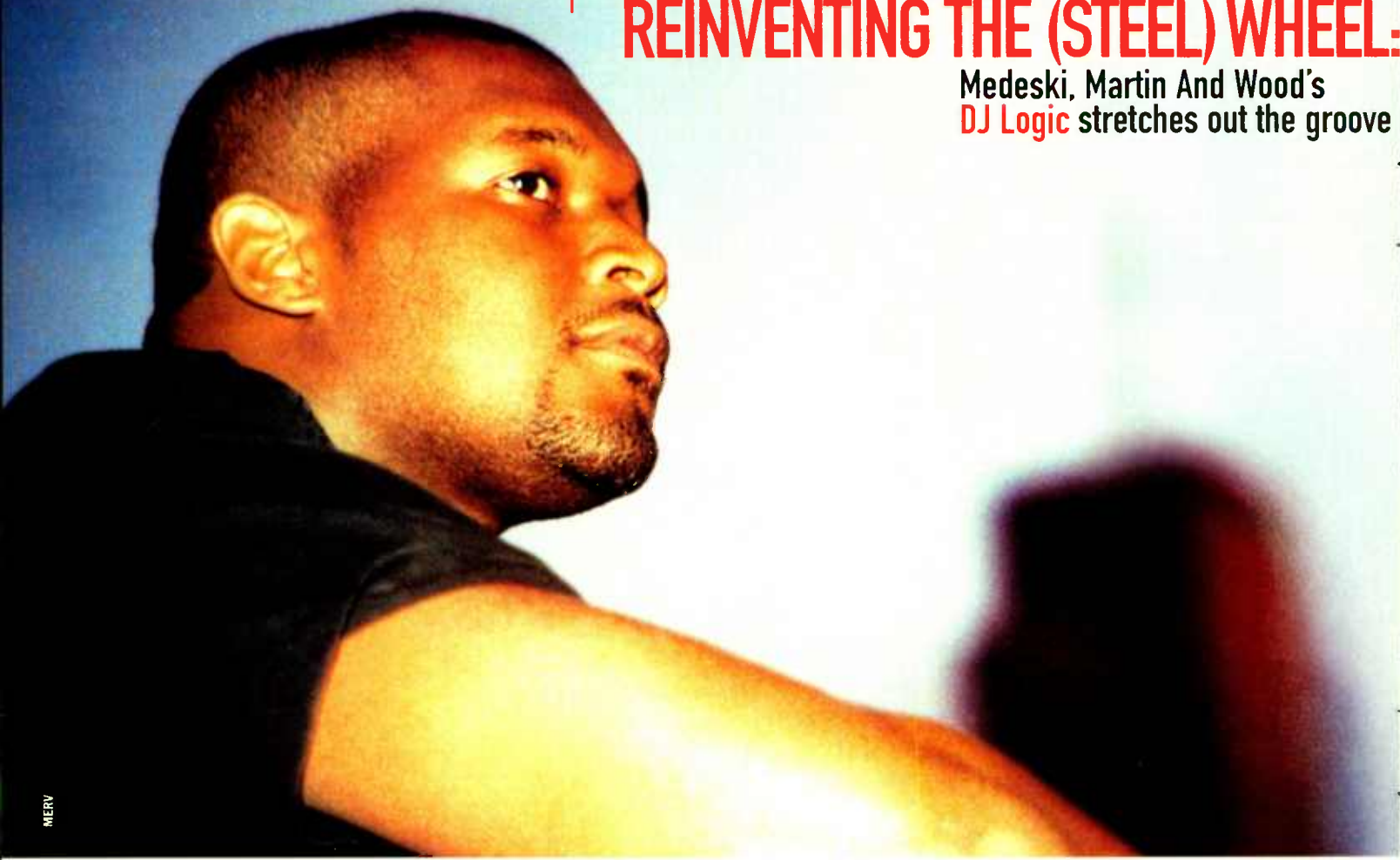
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MERV

The Arsonists (continued from page 12)

of the label's co-owners heard the street buzz on the Arsonists, bought all three of the group's independent releases, and soon called the guys up with an offer. The group is aware of their responsibility as the first rappers signed to the label.

According to the group members, they provide the "best representation of the hip-hop culture" for fans of the label because they include all aspects of hip-hop—rapping, DJing, b-boying, and graf writing—in their presentation.

Q-Unique is careful not to let their purism be interpreted as gimmicky proselytizing. "We're not on an old school mission. We're not on a pro hip-hop mission. This is just the music we do. We love the music we do. We're not trying to change the world and say, 'You're doing the wrong hip-hop.'"

Gimmick or not, the Arsonists are a marketing dream for a label like Matador. They are the perfect alternative to the lucrative, yet critically panned mainstream rap. The Arsonists stay true to all of the principles of hip-hop as an artistic movement while still maintaining accessibility through their colorful personalities and dynamic stage show. At a time when most live rap shows aren't worth the price of admission, the Arsonist's ability to energize any audience with their performance is already legendary.

At the recent Matador 10th anniversary party, the Arsonists constructed a human time machine on stage and traveled back to "1990 Rhyme," capturing the imagination of an audience of too-hip alternative scenesters and electronica buzzards. This was, of course, after this furious five had shed their not-so-mild mannered alter egos, and shirts, to become Batman, Superman, Daredevil, Flash, and the Punisher.

Who better to change the world than five super-rappin' heroes? At least, as Q-Unique put it, "It's better than watching a couple of idiots running around yelling, 'throw my DAT on.'"

Mouth Music

Now that Courtney is appearing on the cover of *Marie Claire* and no one cares whom Kathleen Hannah is sleeping with, who can the fashionably angry young women of America turn to for guidance? Well, uh, the Girls Who Rock: DJ Rap, Blaque, Frogpond, Michal and Jessica Simpson. Each of the five colors in Urban Decay's new Girls Who Rock lip gunk set corresponds to one of the artists in this league of superheroes: "Midnight Cowboy" for Frogpond, "Big Bang" for Michal, etc. "The musicians involved in the Girls Who Rock project are committed to using their influence in a positive way to motivate and inspire their fans," reads the accompanying inspirational pamphlet. Was it Madeline Albright or Gloria Steinem who said "Your words will be valued much more when your lips look damn kissable?"



DJ's have long been regarded as superlative technicians when it comes to their cutting and scratching wax, but DJ Logic aims to take the art of turntablism to a more musical level. On his upcoming release, *Project Logic* (Rope A Dope), he enlists a small orchestra of instruments, including guitars and organs, tablas, sitars and even a Theremin.

Considered a "DJ's DJ", the Bronx-based Logic (a.k.a. Jason Kibler) was one of the first wax masters to play with live bands. While many DJs merely serve as a backdrop for the band, Logic, with his decks, effects modules and samplers, takes center stage.

"I could just spin records, but I choose to blend with the music, the beats, the sounds," says Logic. "I play with space sounds, Moog sounds, instruments like the sitar and the tamita, stuff like that... I work with the musicians [in the band]. There's no stopping and starting, only different textures."

Logic's musical resume is as diverse as his current sound. He's collaborated with Living Colour's Vernon Reid and becomes an honorary member of groove jazzmasters Medeski, Martin & Wood. "I had never heard of Medeski, Martin & Wood. They wanted to experiment with different DJs. Me, Prince Paul and a lot of other DJs tried out ... I did my thing, and it was some good shit. I just jammed with the guys."

On *Project Logic*, the contributions of veteran Miles Davis producer Teo Macero plays to Logic's eclectic taste. "*Project Logic* is a collage of different things. I essentially made this as a record that you can groove to. I just love all music" he explains. "People try to categorize me as just a hip-hop DJ, but I'm a hip-hop-jazz-junglist-trip-hopper!" >>> June Joseph

Weird Record:



In an age of Prozac-induced happiness, the joy of polka might be a little hard to understand. But in the world of Jimmy Sturr—champion polka band leader, recorder of 101 albums and winner of ten Grammys—happiness and in particular, happy feet are all in day's work. On **Polkapalooza**, Sturr makes the "roots" music of Polish immigrants (that's the Rounder Records liner notes talking, not me) sound positively lush—a music full of oom-pah that's as stolid as kielbasa. Know what's kinda creepy, though, aside from Sturr's velvet fog warble? On each of the 12 tracks, "Miles Of Smiles" and "O Susannah" among them, pulses of trumpets, woodwinds, and accordion create a force field of cheer that seems impervious to irony—or at least deep-seated, congenital grumpiness. The music suggests that an old Allen Ginsberg aphorism might need rethinking: If the pure products of America do go crazy, that may explain why *Polkapalooza* makes sincerity sound an awful lot like lunacy.

>>>Carlene Bauer

Label Profile: 1500 Records

In the early 90s, 1500 Records owner Gary Richards promoted and DJed at West Coast raves under the name Destructo. One of these parties was attended by Def Jam co-founder Rick Rubin who liked what he heard so much, he hired Richards to start the electronic imprint White Label, which later released singles by acts such as Lords of Acid, and God Lives Underwater (now on 1500). Over the years, Richards learned much about the rave scene and the music industry. Today, 1500 boasts several notable acts including Roni Size's jungle-pop project, Breakbeat Era, the big beat of Dub Pistols, David Holmes' moody adult downtempo, and Ugly Duckling's bohemian rap. "Our game plan is to stay away from the mainstream for a while," says Richards. He still manages to tear himself away from the desk to the decks: "To me that makes everything worthwhile, 'cause I come in here everyday and work, work, work behind a desk and [I'm] always talking about music and this and that, but to be able to go out and play and have people dance to what you're playing, that's appreciated. That's the best feeling, you know."

>>>Tricia Romano



THE COMP PILE (Our guide to compilation CDs) **THIS MONTH: EMBRACING THE INNER YUPPIE.**

TITLE: Bob Marley: A Rebel's Dream (Island)	Wallpaper Mach 1.5: The Sound That Surrounds You (Sweet Nothing)	Saturday Night Live: The Musical Performances Vols. 1 & 2 (DreamWorks)	Never Give In: A Tribute To Bad Brains (Century Media)	KCRW: Morning Becomes Eclectic (Mammoth)	Buffy The Vampire Slayer (TVT Records)	Further Funk: Newer Skool Electro Breaks (Shadow)
CONCEPT: All the artists who love Marley so much, singing over, with, or through his songs.	"[It] helps us coordinate our Nike with Barbara Bui or our Vuitton with our H&M." (Their words, not ours!) Think Phil Hartman: Yuppilicious!	30 different acts sing the song that Lorne Michaels told them to sing.	Groups whose many genres all end in "core" assay the classic rasta hardcore.	Selected on-air performances from Santa Monica public radio station KCRW.	Music that has been or will be used in the television series of the same name.	Electro, electro and more electro.
TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC: The rasta-yuppie (L'Occitane incense masks the BMW clambake.)	The ironic yuppie—that capitalist hipster who blows all of their cash on kitsch.	Yuppie Classic.	The young, loud and hard and the "dude-I-taped-this-in-college" yuppies.	The yuppie-in-denial who supports NPR in hopes of salvation.	Yuppie puppies (a.k.a. children of the Reagan revolution).	Electro-yuppies (Sure it sounds ridiculous. C'mon, it's a theme grid.)
NAMES TO DROP: Erykah Badu, Guru, Lauryn Hill, Roots, Steven Tyler	Thievery Corporation, Air, Ryuichi Sakamoto, Jazzanova	A range of star power, from Beck and the Beastie Boys to Jewel and Alanis Morissette	Will Haven, Snapcase, Moby, Downset	Beth Orton, Freestylers, PJ Harvey, Morcheeba	Garbage, Guided By Voices, The Sundays	Si Begg, Girl Eats Boy, Bionic Dog, Chamber
SUMS IT UP: "Jammin' (with MC Lyte)"	"Casanova 70" (Air)	"Been There, Done That" (Dr. Dre.)	"Pay To Cum" (Igntie)	"All I Need" (Air)	"Virgin State of Mind" (K's Choice)	"B-Boy Of Tomorrow" (Si Begg)
VERDICT: A tribute that doesn't suck; great artists re-working classic Marley tunes. And Steven Tyler sounds so much like Bob he could be his bastard child.	Fantastic selection of international beats and chill vibes—they may be being a yuppie ain't so bad after all!	A compilation that smells worse than the current cast. Get on your cell phone and warn someone you know.	Uneven but inspired—especially Moby's piano ballad reading of "Sailing On"—versions of some of the most ferocious music ever recorded.	KCRW succeeds where SNL fails: <i>Morning</i> features the right artists singing the right songs, as when gravely voiced John Martyn croons a cover of Portishead's "Glory Box." Why can't all radio be this good?	Shouldn't the Sunday's version of "Wild Horses" be banned from any more compilations or mixtapes? Funny how things sound better when you're wishing you were biting Sarah Michelle Geller.	Banging beats bring in the 21st century of hip-hop; Bambaataa would be proud.

Quotable

"What can I say about jail? It is one of the travesties of mankind to lose one's freedom, to be locked and bound behind bars of steel, but if the wheels of a man's mind are free to turn and the wings of his spirit cannot be clipped, then is a man truly in chains? And is any man truly free? Are you free? Free to shop at the 7-11, I suppose, or free to fill your car with gasoline, ever a slave to the oil companies that dangle inflation and deflation in front of your nose like a carrot."

—Stone Temple Pilot frontman Scott Weiland, claiming to be free, to do what he wants, any ol' time.



"He's one of the great showmen of the 20th century. I told him this and he picked up my wraparound shades and put them on. He's great, such grace and humanity. The first funky Pontiff."

—U2's Bono on the Pope being funkier than thou.



"You look at us and we just looked like these little cutie-pies, but shit, man, it was still really revolutionary for 1980."

—Go-Go's Jane Wiedlin, on blazing trails for Britney Spears.



NO DRUMMER, NO CRY:

Sukpatch survives the taunts of soundmen to become Grand Royal soldiers

Onstage at New York's Bowery Ballroom, the two members of Sukpatch are a curious sight. With hilarious stock footage of motorcycle races flickering behind them, singer Stephen Cruze and keyboardist Chris Heidman perform earnestly despite their lineup's limitations. It's a challenge, but they're almost giddy; the longtime friends and musical partners are playing their first show as members of the respected Grand Royal roster.

The Minneapolis duo's live shows, which date back to the early '80s, haven't always been so energized.

"Our third show in Minneapolis, the sound guy got on the PA," Heidman begins. Then Cruze picks up the story, snickering: "He announced to the crowd that we should really have a drummer."

"Then one of us said something nasty back," Heidman continues, "and he said, 'Do you wanna get off the stage right now?'"

Sukpatch's status has improved considerably since the recent release of their Grand Royal debut, the tasty five-song appetizer *Tie Down That Shiny Wave*. Over a warm, analog buzz, the two work up pillily memorable melodies to accompany Cruze's adenoidal vocals. They use samples, loops, beats and mellifluous synthesizer runs to sculpt a witty sort of electronic pop, and it works to great effect in the bubbling midtempo track "Stuck on Me" and the funk-flavored "Daline Hey." They even conjure an old-fashioned R&B groove on the hazy "Burnt Buy."

The songs were recorded in Sukpatch's primitive home studio, which Heidman says includes "microphones that cost less than what most people spend for lunch in the big city."

Heidman and Cruze became friends while at the University of Colorado in the late '80s. Their college clique included Alan Sutherland, now known as Land Of The Loops, and Steven Nereo, who went on to form Volume All-Star and founded Siaboo, the label that released Sukpatch's early cassettes and CDs. The four pals began hoarding synthesizers and equipment, and developed their own sound based on samples of television shows and their crude instrumentation.

"We were bored with the common sensibility about music, so we just sort of invented one," Heidman says.

The clique's peculiar brand of electronic pop has almost unintentionally become hip. Land Of The Loops last year had one of its songs used in a Miller beer commercial, and Sukpatch has found its way onto a label with the likes of Sean Lennon and Luscious Jackson. Now that they've had a taste of success, Cruze and Heidman want to make their Grand Royal full-length debut a more realized effort. "It'll be a hi-fi album with a lot of people sitting in and blending beats and doing a lot of strange remix formats," Cruze predicts.

But will it retain the buoyant Sukpatch charm?

Heidman confirms: "We're still all about melody."

—by Richard Martin



DENNIS KLEIMAN



Q&A?:ERNIE ISLEY

PICTURED: FAR LEFT

They've influenced the Beatles, they once featured a little-known guitarist named Jimi Hendrix, and next to James Brown, they're probably *the* most sampled group in hip-hop. Recently, the Isley Brothers' 40 years of soul, R&B, funk and pop was compiled into the box set, *It's Your Thing: The Story Of The Isley Brothers* (Sony Legacy). I climbed on board the caravan of love and spoke to Brother Ernie about the collection and his family's musical legacy. >>> Glen Sansone

What do you think about the new Isleys retrospective?

I think [Sony] did an excellent job at compiling the music, [especially since] some of it is relatively obscure. I was walking through Tower Records 3-4 weeks ago and I saw this silver/platinum package and thought, 'Oh! It's out!' So, I bought one.

Did the family think "Twist And Shout" was a hit at the time it was recorded?

Well, in those days the recording studios were more conscious of time, so it turned out that they only got one vocal take to do "Twist And Shout." When they got to the part (singing), 'Ahh, ahh, ahh, ahhh (screaming) aaaaahhhh! Shake it up baby now!' Well, [my brother Ronny's] voice cracked, and he said that he *hated* it. When the session was over, he left the studio ticked off thinking that our career was over. After a few weeks, somebody called from Philly saying, 'Hey man, you guys got a *smash!*' We were like, 'Huh?'

Can you even measure its influence on rock and roll?

I think "Shout (Parts 1 & 2)" and "Twist And Shout" are easily the one-two punch of rock and roll. Everybody has sung those songs. I took my daughter to a Dodger game here in LA and about the fourth inning the Dodgers scored a run and somebody said, (singing) 'Weeeeeeeeeeell...you know you make me wanna shout!' She looked up at me with her eyes so big, I said, 'I told you, we're everywhere.'

What do you recall about Hendrix?

I don't know Jimi Hendrix from the legendary part. I know Jimi Hendrix as Clark Kent — the world knows him as Superman. Jimi came by the house before Monterey Pop to visit and my brother Marvin was like, 'Is that Jimi?!' He had rings on every finger, and a hat, scarf, sash, belt buckle—he was jingling like Shane. We [wanted] him to play Yankee Stadium in 1969 and he wanted to, but he couldn't because there was this art and music fair in August up in New York [better known as Woodstock, dude.—ed.] that he was going to play. The promoters wouldn't allow him.

Did you keep your old outfits?

The [Rock And Roll] Hall Of Fame has them. I got a computer recently and I was looking at Isley Brothers stuff on the 'Net. I saw some stuff from 1969, 1973, 1974, and I was like, 'Yeah, those were the days.'

How did you react the first time you heard your music sampled in hip-hop?

When Public Enemy first did "Fight The Power," [I] was like, 'Wait a minute! Get Flavor Flav, or get Chuck D. on the phone.' I [said], 'What are you guys doing!?' The ground rules [for sample use] hadn't been established. But then the sampling thing started to pick up, and we noticed that our catalog was getting sampled more than anybody else. Quite frankly, we're flattered that our catalog is so heavily sampled. Why? These guys and girls had parents, and the kids were [raised] on our stuff. We must've left some positive influence on them.

★ "FIGHT THE POWER" BY THE ISLEY BROTHERS APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD.

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- High & Mighty (feat. Mos Def and Mad Skillz)
- B-Bo, Document '99
- Peanut Butter Wolf (feat. Rasco and DJ Q-Bert)
- Run The Line (Lord Finesse Mix)
- DJ Vadim (feat. El-P, BMS, and DJ Primecuts)
- Viagra
- DJ Krush (feat. C.L. Smooth)
- Only The Strong Survive
- Souls Of Mischief
- That's When Ya Lost
- DJ Q-Bert
- Inner Space Dental Commander
- Radar
- Radar Frees Tibet (Gasho Mix)
- DJ Spooky (feat. Kool Keith and Sir Menelik)
- Object Unknown

SIDE TWO:

- Latrix
- Storm Warning
- DJ Shadow And Divine Styler
- Divine Intervention
- DJ Vadim (feat. Swollen Members)
- English Breakfast
- Mark B & Blade
- Nobody Relates
- Mark B & Blade
- We'll Survive...
- DJ Vadim (feat. Iriscience and DJ Primecuts)
- Friction
- Eric B & Rakim
- Lyrics Of Fury
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HARDKNOX

Today, thanks to the rampant success of Fatboy Slim and his bubbly parade of copycats, "big beat" means radio-ready melodies and happy-go-lucky hip-hop techniques. Then there's Hardknox, a British duo prepared to crash the party and spike the punch...with arsenic. "There is a darker side to us," explains Lindy Layton, half of the group (Steve P is the other) and one of the genre's few female voices. "A lot of big beat is kind of formulaic...turntable scratches and very jolly beats. But we've always worked on a more driving, moodier edge. We're at the opposite end of the spectrum." Since 1996, the industrial-minded twosome's migraine-inducing breakbeats have produced several crowd-slaying 12" releases for the UK Skint label. Now, the ruthless rave 'n' roll sound of the group's self-titled debut (*Live Electro*) cranks the volume on Hardknox's growing U.S. buzz. "It felt right [to come to] America now because we think there's a lot of kids who will get into it," she says. "We have a lot of rock vibes in our music as well, and I'm sure the young people here are ready to move on from the straight electronica thing." >>> **M. Tye Comer**



KIM PHOENIX



TRAVIS KELIC

at.the.drive.in ★

at.the.drive.in is finding that it's a hazardous time to be playing hardcore—especially the graceful, intelligent variety. "I spend a lot of time saying, 'No, we're not emo!'" says guitarist Jim Ward. "We have emotions, like anyone who's not a robot. We also have a Chicano singer Cedric Bixler, which doesn't make us Rage Against The Machine," he says. As the first signing to the Digital Entertainment Network (DEN) label, helmed by prominent managers John Silva and Gary Gersh, the El Paso, TX, quintet has been busy introducing itself with the recent seven-song EP *Vaya* (Fearless). The demanding, melodic set, which manages Albini-esque fastidiousness even on tracks recorded live, follows the 1998 full length *In/Casino/Out*. Watch for more electronic elements on the act's upcoming DEN debut—just don't call them a "rock-electronica hybrid." "We're five skinny guys who play rock," says surname Ward, "which probably means they'll be calling us 'thin rock' any day now." >>> **Dylan Siegel**



SHIVAREE

The first thing Ambrosia Parsley does over lunch at a posh New York nosherie is whip out three valid forms of ID to prove that yes, that is her real name. Next, the natural-born yarn spinner delves into the tale of how the West Virginia-bred Parsley clan arrived in Southern California: Grandpa snuck off to Reseda with some young trollop; Grandma tracked him down, moved the five kids into a house around the corner from his, and... "And walked over one night, knocked on his door, stabbed him in the neck with a steak knife, drove him to emergency, had him stitched up, and brought him home where he belonged," their granddaughter chirps, matter-of-factly. Then she goes on to whisper eerie stories of the haunted house she occupied while piecing together her trio Shivaree's spooky, Joe Henry-produced debut *I Oughtta Give You A Shot In The Head For Making Me Live In This Dump* (Odeon-Capitol). "Music has always been a very introverted, private thing for me," she explains of cool, cryptic confessionals like "Arlington Girl," "Ash Wednesday," and the self-explanatory "Daring Lousy Guy." Not anymore. >>> [Tom Lanham](#)

The West Coast's best kept secret

five o'clock people

emerge from under the radar with
their debut national release,
"The Nothing Venture."

"I've been offered a lot of great things. . .
When I heard (five o'clock people's)
independent release I knew this was a
band that needed to be heard. . . Their
honest and intense lyrics will make this
band appeal to a variety of audiences."

Joe Chicarelli, producer/engineer -
"The Nothing Venture"
(Beck, U2, Tori Amos, Shawn Colvin)



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"five o'clock people may be the most talented band you haven't heard yet. Each member of the quintet plays more than one instrument, and at least three sing lead vocals. All this talent is evenly blended into a sound that showcases smart song craft and profound folk-rock that grabs your ear with soaring melodicism and keeps it with tight harmonies and diversified instrumental voicings. Their new CD should get plenty of attention from radio stations and major labels."

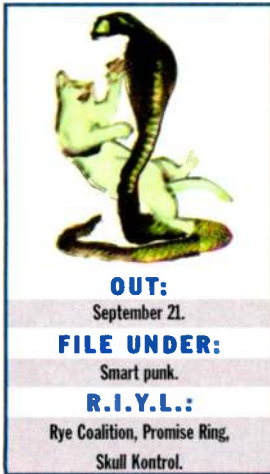
Kyle O'Brien, The Oregonian

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LES SAVY FAV

The Cat And The Cobra
French Kiss

Strange things are happening on Les Savy Fav's second full length. The band, who met at the Rhode Island School of Design, refashion angular, Dischord-type punk, giving it a subtlety and literacy that the hardcore genre has often forsaken. *The Cat And The Cobra* has the jutting guitars and loping bass lines associated with bands like Fugazi, but it shapes each song anew rather than coasting on formula. The rough blasting "Who Rocks The Party" describes the band crashing a posh soiree ("Fuck the champagne! We want gin!") and obliterating the gathering with their bad behavior. "Roadside Memorial" is a hazy, pastoral song that touches on the nostalgia of childhood travel: As the scenery flashes past, singer Tim Harrington evokes memories of the horses, barns, roads and car pile-ups that he has seen along the way. Les Savy Fav, taking cues from art rock, pumps new life into punk by investing it with more intelligence, better laughs and greater narrative detail. Their scrapbook approach makes *The Cat And The Cobra* a chronicle of several competing storylines, rather than following a lone tributary of woe, depression or self-congratulation. Rock isn't always neatly written, but what a satisfying surprise to come across some whose words and ideas are as exultant as the slashing chords that deliver them to us. >>> [Lois Maffeo](#)



ARTO LINDSAY

Prize
Righteous Babe

Guitarist/singer/composer Arto Lindsay, who has traveled from the hardcore thrash of art-punk to the softly-woven delicacies of Brazilian pop and partway back again, has said that after such low-keyed efforts as '96's *Subtle Body* he's ready to put a little "noise" back into his music. But "noise" is too crude a word for what he's concocted here, for the way that the lashes of dissonance and the aggressive clank of starchy, alienated percussion are integrated into his vision of essential quietude. Things may fall apart, but Lindsay stays calm and cool, sounding, as he sings on "Ex-Preguiça," "too weak to wake up/too lazy to sleep." His co-conspirators here, who include Melvin Gibbs (from the Rollins Band) on bass and keyboards and drummer Skoota Warner, move in and out of the sonic shadows while Lindsay croons his songs of love and cosmic disorientation. The most subtly avant-garde of these, "Resemblances," features a guest appearance by Brian Eno and a gallery of uneasy sounds, first heard peripherally and then building to a near-apocalyptic pitch. All in all, this is Lindsay's strongest effort since '84s *Envy*, and the most felicitous mix yet of the yin-yang of his musical sensibility. >>> [Richard C. Walls](#)



LOS FABULOSOS CADILLACS

La Marcha Del Golazo Solitario
BMG Latin

All that is fab about Argentina's Latin fusion pioneers Los Fabulosos Cadillacs is revealed in the brilliant video for the uptempo new single "La Vida," where a gringo media consultant is hired to coach the group on how to better appeal to an English-speaking audience. The Latin reggaepunkyparty band then train for the big crossover, examining lackluster album sales reports (a self-conscious gibe at their own 1998 Grammy-winning release *Fabulosos Calavera*), enrolling in water aerobics classes and practicing gymnastics. The sweet payback comes when the gaucho veterans saunter in highly choreographed fashion across an airport runway, accompanied by dozens of models and low-flying jets in true Puff Daddy-esque grandeur. The Cadillacs have been thumbing their noses at the Latin pop industry since 1985, but the band's refusal to cave into commercial expectations is more apparent than ever on *La Marcha Del Golazo Solitario*. Still, it's one the most accessible Cadillacs albums in years. "La Vida" is a big beat romp that will bring smiles to the faces of longtime fans who were first enchanted with hits like "Matador" and "Mal Bicho." "Los Condenaditos" finds the band's horn section still in stellar form while "Cebolla" continues the experimentation with reggae, punk and jazz found on *Fabulosos Calavera*. >>> [Josh Worek](#)

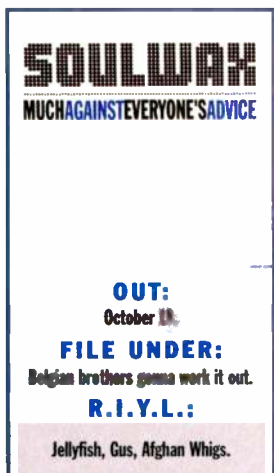


RICHMOND FONTAINE

Lost Son
Cavity Search

OUT:
October 8.
FILE UNDER:
America's Most Wanted, romanticized.
R.I.Y.L.:
Uncle Tupelo, Minutemen, Gus Van Sant, Hubert Selby Jr.

On its album *Lost Son*, Richmond Fontaine mines the same *sturm und twang* that Uncle Tupelo did nearly a decade ago on *No Depression* and *Still Feel Gone*, mingling Minutemen-like guitar and drum bursts with electric hillbilly stomp, pedal steel and mandolin. Singer/songwriter Willy Vlautin's scratchy voice so closely resembles Jay Farrar's big bluesy whine and phrasing on those early Tupelo albums that at moments you may forget what year it is. But *Lost Son* balances punk rage and atmospheric Americana effectively, and Vlautin's hard-boiled narratives, reveling in the broke-down cheapness of lost lives, make it worth the trip. The disc is populated by marginal men and tragic women who drift from city to city, taking odd jobs and miserable cold-water flats. Some are murderous criminals, some suicidal souls, some just suckers who stumble into the path of the others. When Vlautin's guitar echoes their ire, it approaches the howling intensity of Sonic Youth, but when the dust settles, Paul Brainard's pedal steel sounds lost in the distance, like a winding, misty road out of hell that they can dream of, but never reach. >>> Meredith Ochs



SOULWAX

Much Against Everyone's Advice
Almo

OUT:
October 11.
FILE UNDER:
Belgian brothers gonna work it out.
R.I.Y.L.:
Jellyfish, Gus, Afghan Whigs.

Known in their native Belgium and throughout Europe as the DJ duo the Flying Dewaele Brothers, siblings David and Stephen scratch their pop songwriting itch in Soulwax. On their second album overall and U.S. debut, the freres Dewaele revel in the sound of the acoustic guitar, whether it's accompanying their naturally pretty voices or juxtaposed against a string section (arranged by none other than LA singer-songwriter Jason Falkner). *Much Against Everyone's Advice* embraces pop melodicism and generally seems like the work of musicians who've never set eyes on a Roland 808 or a pair of Technics decks. Two- to three-minute tracks prevail, with standouts like "Temptingly Yours" and "When Logics Die" establishing unusual patterns and progressions that the Dewaeles wrangle in nicely. On the creeping, string and piano-laced "Scream," Soulwax set up an Elvis Costello-like ballad before twisting it into a nearly psychedelic rave-up. They put their electronic backgrounds to good use, infusing several of the album's standout tracks with mechanical pushbeats and hypnotizing loops. There's a touch of XTC to the meandering "Proverbial Pants," while a disconcerting beatbox puts the punch behind the more explosive but still poppy "Too Many DJs," in which the brothers seem to proclaim their multi-faceted prowess. Judging from this deftly made, often enrapturing disc, they've got every right to strut. >>> Richard Martin



VARIOUS ARTISTS

Poor Little Knitter On The Road
Bloodshot

OUT:
October 5.
FILE UNDER:
Chicken-fried roots punk.
R.I.Y.L.:
Robbie Fulks, Old 97's, X.

Just as X took part in the first wave of U.S. punk rock, the X side-project the Knitters (John Doe, Exene Cervenka and DJ Bonebrake along with the Blasters' Dave Alvin) beat the rush on the *No Depression* movement, releasing a quirky alt-country album several years before the craze hit full stride. It was country music, true, but its rough-hewn history mirrored the anti-establishment fervency that had fueled punk rock. In this tribute to the Knitters, "insurgent country" label Bloodshot Records has gathered a congregation of admirers that includes the slick Whiskeytown, the surly Robbie Fulks and the frisky Devil In A Woodpile to give strong hearted renditions of the Knitters' handful of recorded songs. The Sadies' "Walkin' Cane," with its snake oil salesman charm, twines the traditional ballad's fiddle squall with the black humor that the Knitters reveled in. And alt-country diva Kelly Hogan might not have Exene's blaring voice, but she gives a reverential performance on Cervenka's tearjerker "Someone Like You." The Knitters proved that change was relevant to punk rock, and these admirers give them thanks in song for doing the one thing that was braver than being trailblazing punks: being hicks. >>> Lois Maffeo

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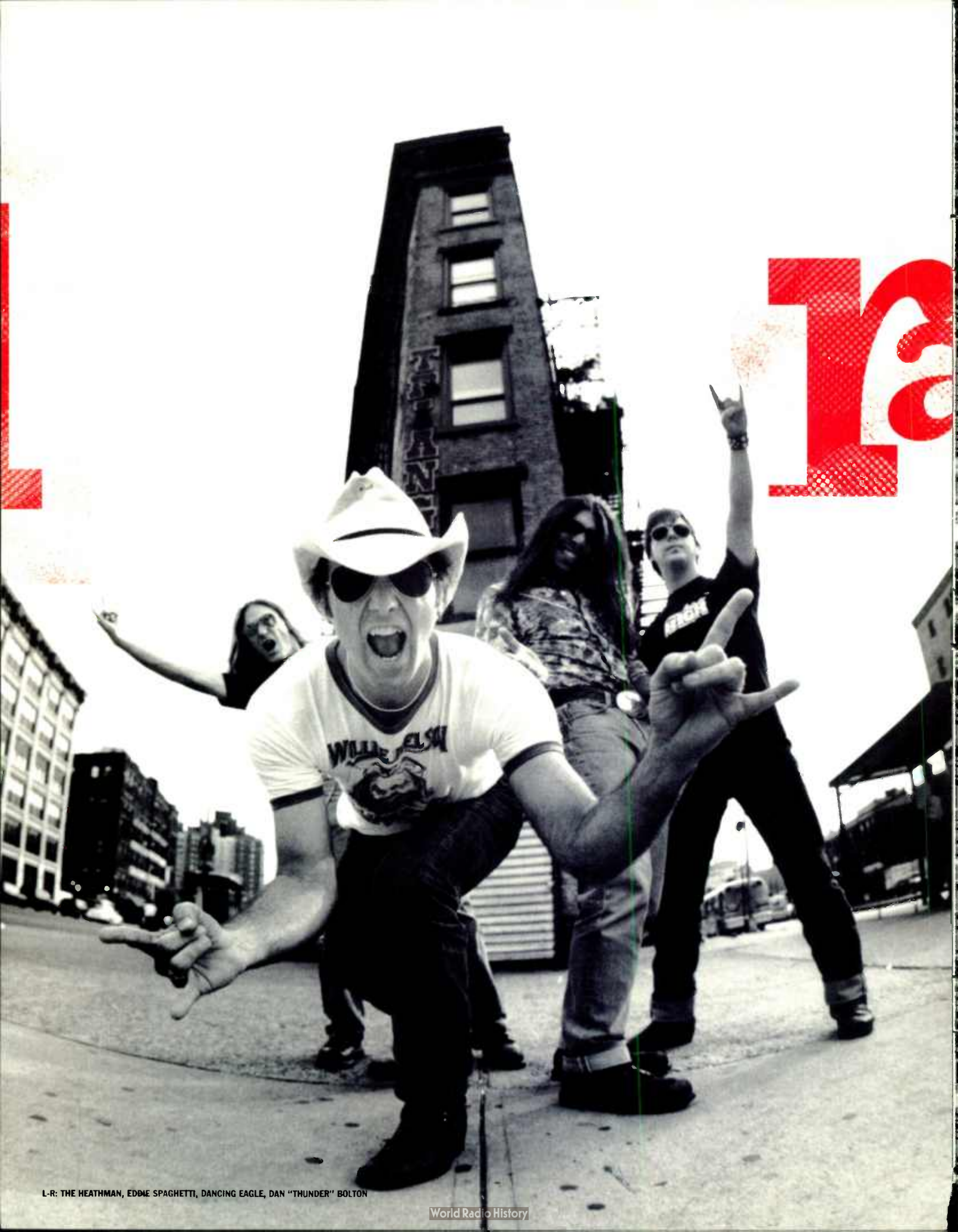
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WHEN IN DOUBT, raise the hell!

TRAILER TRASH ROCK REPROBATES TESTIFYING TO
THE EVIL POWERS OF ROCK 'N' ROLL?
THE SUPERSUCKERS ARE BACK IN THE SADDLE AGAIN!

STORY: PETER ATKINSON PHOTOS: CHAPMAN BAEHLER

It might not exactly be Madison Square Garden, but the panhandler begging change in front of Baltimore's Eight By Ten seems mighty impressed by the line stretching down a rainy Cross Street waiting to see The Supersuckers. "In my five years here I've never seen anything like this," he says to no one in particular, before shuffling down the line to hit up the next would-be contributor.

"We've been selling out everywhere we go, not that that's saying much when it's at a place like this," shrugs 'Suckers frontman Eddie Spaghètti several hours earlier in the band's graffiti-scarred dressing room at the Eight By Ten, a squalid club carved out of a narrow, two-story rowhouse that barely fits 300 people. "But it's a good feeling anyway." The Arizona-based trailer trash hellblazers are in town with the freewheeling late summer tour they've been headlining, featuring Sweden's abrasive The

"Our album is about all the good things about rock 'n' roll. It'll make you want to kill, fuck and do drugs."

Hellcopters and San Francisco-by-way-of-Delaware band Zen Guerrilla. "This bill has been killing," Spaghètti enthuses.

Not bad for a six-week trek that began with a thankless performance at the Woodstock 30th Anniversary debacle, where the 'Suckers spent two days in the heat and filth to play on a secondary stage for hardly anyone and sing a couple songs with their buddy Willie Nelson.



"It was depressing," says Spaghetti, with a Bud dangling from one hand. Slouching in a purple chair, he looks every bit the trailer trash layabout, wearing tight black jeans, motorcycle boots and a faded, Judas Priest Turbo Lover T-shirt. "We didn't realize how little we needed to be there." And while the band got out of Dodge before it all degenerated into an orgy of pillaging and fire, they knew trouble was afoot. "There was a sense of desperation and anxiety in the air so thick and people just thinking they had to do something and not knowing what the something really was," he says. "So when in doubt, raise hell."

The Supersuckers were on the road to get back in the rock 'n' roll swing of things after a three-year stretch where label troubles intruded and their only new music was the straight-up country album *Must've Been High*. *Must've Been High* actually went over pretty well with 'Suckers fans, despite its laid-back twang and earnest lyrics.

"It seems like the punkers like country. They go straight to Hank Williams because it's like the Ramones," he drawls. "He's got all these songs that kind of sound the same, but they're all good. It's basically three chords, some good words, the guy means what he's saying. That's what we wanted to point out with our record, just how similar it could be. And we squeaked it by, and the fans still seem to be there for us, so that's pretty cool. It's funny how the one thing we do where we go in real off the cuff, unprepared, it comes out great. Every

"Accepting your place in rock 'n' roll is a hard lesson to learn, but it's good."

time we don't care or don't try it seems to work pretty good."

Supersuckers' brief stint of caring didn't work out so well. After four albums, the band left Sub Pop for major label juggernaut Interscope, but the deal fell apart when Interscope refused to release the album the band recorded, which according to Spaghetti, was something of a blessing.

"I'm glad it didn't come out. It just sounded real safe and kind of planned. I think it's a good record, we did a good job, but there's something about it—it's just not quite there," he says. "So we went and re-recorded and it's spirited and live and there's some mistakes, and it's got a lot of character and color and it's probably the best record that we've made. So that was our major label experience and I hope to never have another one. I can't say that we didn't have a certain amount of responsibility in that, we sound a certain way and it's just not the flavor of the year. And that's fine with me. Accepting your place in rock and roll is a hard lesson to learn, but it's good."

The revamped, feisty new album, *The Evil Powers of Rock 'N' Roll* bristles with raw, unbridled and unwashed spirit of the earlier *Sacrilegious* or *La Mano Cornuda*. Buoyed by Dan "Thunder" Bolton and Ron Heathman's chugging riffs, Dancing Eagle's propulsive tempos and Spaghetti's irreverent lyrics and wisecracking delivery, *Evil Powers* is, as the frontman notes, "about all the good things about rock 'n' roll. It'll make you want to kill, fuck and do drugs."

On this rainy night in Charm City, The Supersuckers serenade the tightly packed throng with a gritty rock assault that lasts for over an hour and fills the room with whoops and hollers. The show is a killer, even if Zen Guerrilla bowed out because of frontman Marcus Durant's throat problems. This irks Spaghetti.

"I'm not much into canceling a rock show because your voice blows out," comments Spaghetti, rolling his eyes. "Just bite the bullet, give it a shot. It ain't fucking Mariah Carey—we're yelling and screaming. It's not like there's an aria to sing."



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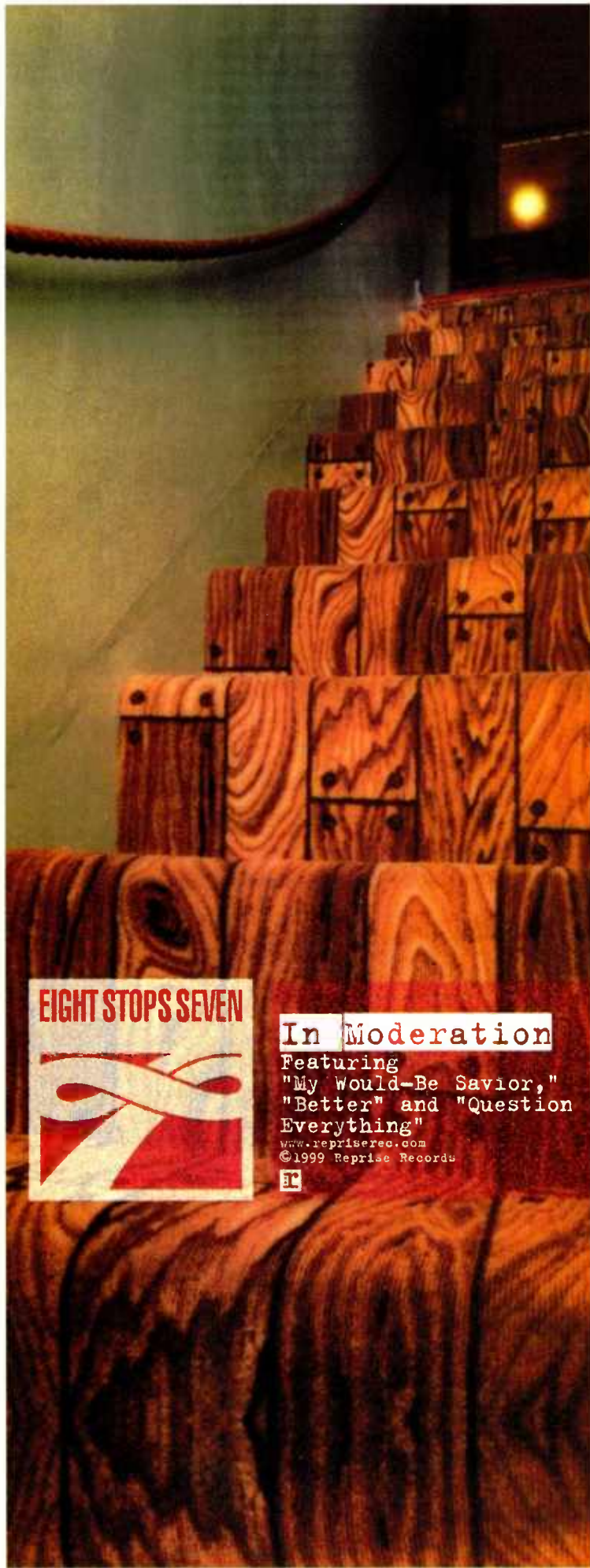
The American mainstream only just realized that a dancefloor revolution is happening at all, awakening to the big, rock 'n' roll-ish beats of the Chemical Brothers and Fatboy Slim. Trendier music fans have perhaps heard the terms "drum 'n' bass" or "jungle" bandied about in conjunction with Roni Size's heralded *Raprazent* project, or the much-hyped more recent releases by Grooverider and Goldie that failed to resonate with the larger public. For many of these music fans, splitting subgenres of electronica is still akin to splitting hairs. As a last indignity, fickle critics have already pronounced cradle-side eulogies for this underground sound.

But the drum 'n' bass scene—and it is decidedly its own scene, as distinct as punk was from rock—seems unconcerned with naysayers or hype machines. The artists and scenesters consider themselves at the tip of a cultural iceberg, a giant convergence where reggae and dub and hip-hop and house converge and sound like the future of music. Jungle tracks shun predictable dance grooves for an often-times frantic concoction of eighth and sixteenth notes skittering above and around stretched-out basslines and MCs who "drop science," praising the skills of the DJ and urging the dancing crowd to keep moving.

If you're not already in the know, fear not: the drum 'n' bass community is producing some of its finest music to date. Krust—Size's partner in *Reprazent* and the Full Cycle label—and Aphrodite, two of jungle's top ambassadors, are releasing stateside, major label debuts. Fans of *Reprazent* will appreciate Krust's *Coded Language*, which defies categorization as it traverses a dark terrain of spastic beats, insistent MCs and breathy female vocals. Aphrodite's self-titled album (V2) is the epitome of "jump-up"; with its hip-hop samples and happy, G-funk bounce, it's a sound that extends an inviting hand to the uninitiated.

In the midst of Hurricane Floyd, we sat down with the two DJs in the backroom of Breakbeat Science, NYC's top drum 'n' bass record shop, to get the insider's perspective on hip-hop roots, rifts in the small, familial scene, and all tomorrow's parties.

APHRODITE



Some critics are saying drum 'n' bass has exhausted itself. At the same time, the Breakbeat Era record [Roni Size's latest project] has been warmly received, which might lead people to talk about jungle selling out.

Krust: That's bullocks, you know what I mean? First of all, let's talk about how drum 'n' bass is supposed to be dead. All music does the same thing. You have good periods and you have bad periods.

Aphrodite: It goes in waves, man. Everyone in the media will jump on a certain style and it's like 'Everything else is dead.' And then it's like six months later and they want another style and everything else is dead.

K: It's getting interesting again. For me, I think the introduction of vocals is another aspect to the music. You know, I gauge our scene by hip-hop. It's the same thing. It started off in the grassroots. Started off by [artists] inventing their own industry, starting their own labels. Hip-hop took 15 years to develop into a viable product that people could sell. There will always be an underground. That's where we live, you know what I mean? OK, we do these albums, and now we're doing the work on [the commercial] side. But 90 percent of the clubs we play are underground clubs. I tested out all my stuff in the clubs before I finished them off. It wasn't like I took it to the majors and said 'What do you think of this?'"

Does it puzzle you guys that jungle hasn't caught on much in America?

A: No. The American jungle scene is not full of people relying on that scene. I mean, if you take the jungle away from us... I don't know what I'm going to do. I don't know how I'm going to make a living. You kind of launch yourself into the music, because it's your life.

K: Drum 'n' bass is a part of me. But I'm more of a musician. This is a new scene. Five or six years. We've only just started doing albums. We are being pushed by an industry that is hungry for the next big thing, and all of a sudden it's supposed to be drum 'n' bass. And when it doesn't live up to other people's expectations, then it's a failure in music. And it's not.

I've been through the Reprazent thing. I've got my own label. I've been involved in the industry before. I know how record companies work. I've been lucky enough to do the whole Reprazent thing and do a world tour and to come back now with that experience and knowledge and sit down and know what's going on.

Did the lack of mainstream interest in the Goldie and Grooverider records have any effect on the drum 'n' bass community?

A: The way I see it, drum 'n' bass is a really small community. If I go off to Timbuktu and I do a great set and I convert a lot of people to drum 'n' bass, then I've helped the whole scene grow.

K: Small victories, man. Grooverider's album was a small victory. Goldie's album was a small victory.

So you didn't see the records as a setback?



K: I'm not a director of a major company, saying 'We're not going to back any more drum 'n' bass.' I'm one of the soldiers. We're the guys in the trenches laying the groundwork still. Record companies might have moved on already. But for us, this is our industry, our livelihood. This is what we spent the last ten years working on. We can see the potential in it. My album might not be all that successful. His album might not be successful. The next ten albums might not be all that successful. But I guarantee the next ten after that are going to be. And that's what we're heading for. I might not make them. But I guarantee Full Cycle will be around.

A: Look at the music I was into ten years ago. It's mainstream now.

"I gauge our scene by hip-hop. Hip-hop took 15 years to develop into a viable product that people could sell."

You mean, with groups like Chemical Brothers and Fatboy Slim hitting the charts?

A: There you go. Madonna is making electronic music. In six year's time she could be on our cases to produce some drum 'n' bass.

What do you say to the kids in the clubs, who don't want to see the scene go mainstream?

A: It's always been that way. Look at the hip-hop scene. The people at the top are always being chastised for being commercial.

K: I can't see where the line is anymore. I can't even understand the concept of being commercial. Fatboy Slim, commercial? Prodigy, commercial? I mean, come on. Prodigy was number one in America, for fuck's sake. Is that commercial music?

A: Look at the Chemical Brothers last night [they played to a packed house at NYC's Hammerstein Ballroom]. You had several thousand people in the room going off to a pure acid thing with a breakbeat over it. The whole idea of that happening six years ago, it was just like 'Oh, this will never happen. It's just too underground.' But people do like hard sounds. They do like deep bass. They do like breakbeats.... The most amazing thing about Prodigy is that their music came through. He stuck to his sound.

K: Something happened with that group. The last two albums they started to find out what their sound was about, and they went for it. That's what drum 'n' bass is doing. It's working out the formula. It's going through the motions.

A: There was a time years ago where you'd look at the shelf and 90 percent of the records would be sounding pretty similar. Now you've got variety out there. You've got jazzy drum 'n' bass. You've got mellow drum 'n' bass. You've got weird, experimental sounds. Then you've got the hip-hop flavor. You've got the funky stuff. It's all there. It's great.

Do you think there's a lot of bad drum 'n' bass being made now?

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A: Look at the underground scene in Britain. How many records come out a week? Hundreds? How many of those are you going to remember? How many records of mine do you know? One or two? I've been involved in 60 or 70 tunes. It's not like all of mine have struck a chord.

K: There are two types of music, man: good and bad. It's simple.

A: I totally disagree. You can have music that's really memorable.

K: And that's good.

A: But music is down to taste. What is your poison could be my beauty, and vice-versa.

K: So there's only two types of music. The other day I got sent over 20 test presses, and they're still at my house now. They sound exactly the same. Everyone's just latched onto a formula. There's only a few drum 'n' bass producers in England. Everybody else just covers what they're doing. You have a successful formula, it filters through....

Is the drum 'n' bass community in the UK fragmented? I mean, it's fragmented in a creative sense, clearly, with different styles. But is there a lot of personal division?

K: Why did you ask that question?

"We are being pushed by an industry hungry for the next big thing, and all of a sudden it's supposed to be drum 'n' bass. And when it doesn't live up to other people's expectations, then it's a failure in music. And it's not."

Why? Because it has a reputation.

K: But you're on the outside. You're a reporter.

But that's why I ask it. I don't often get the chance to sit down and talk to two people from such a distinct scene.

K: You don't hear about riffs in the music world, or certain people fighting all the time, do you?

You do, I think.

A: It happens in the hip-hop scene. They shoot each other. [Laughs] People have different tastes, and people may not like what some people have done musically.

But there's a lot of respect?

A: There is only respect.



K: I think that since I've been here, it's been nothing but love. And since we've had a few tragedies, it's brought it even closer together. I just went to Metalheadz (Goldie's seminal London drum 'n' bass night), and everyone was there. It was great to see everyone again. Listen, I know what you're saying. We've had a bad reputation. But that's always a criticism that comes from outside the scene. We're like a family. If anything is going on, it gets dealt with. I think the way that we hold ourselves and the way that we carry ourselves, people can see that. Drum 'n' bass people, we're droppin' it different. We got a totally different attitude. The way we view the music, the way we dress, the way we come across.

It is different. That's what's interesting. I mean, like hip-hop has definite personalities....

K: You've got to understand, we're coming from those cultures. Drum 'n' bass is coming from all those cultures. From hip-hop, from house, from rave. From all of that. I come from hip-hop, where you used to walk into a club and if you stepped on someone's toe, it was on! I had enough of that! I was like 'fucking hell, this is stupid.' And when I started to rave, I saw a whole new attitude. I saw total strangers come up to you and say 'Hey, how are you doing?'

What are you most interested in hearing from drum 'n' bass in the coming year?

A: There's this big feeling at the moment of coming out with new ideas. I can't wait to see [the next] six to eight months. All these producers suddenly have this thing where it's like 'I want to make something new. My album is going to make a milestone.' I'm really interested to hear what people come out with. Be it vocally, sounds, tunes, melodies, or if there's a variation in speed, tempo....

K: I think he's right. It's a very exciting time right now. It's very frustrating to be on the road when you want to be in the studio. It's exciting. I think the music has changed. I think from where the public sees it, they still hear music that was made maybe a year or two ago and is coming out on vinyl. My point of view: we're actually making the music and talking to people that are making it; we're hearing the freshest stuff. I've got a tune in my bag that was made yesterday. And I'm hearing something new again. Everything is changing. It's tough to be consistent all the time. We're normal people, man. We've got other lives as well. You can't be in the studio every single day. You've got to go pay the bills. You've got to fucking go do the girl thing.

A: This girl emailed me the other day, and accused me of being a fat cat running a big, fat record label. And I should give all my music away for free with MP3 downloads on the Web, and I shouldn't be allowed to get richer and richer with all the other fat cats from record labels.

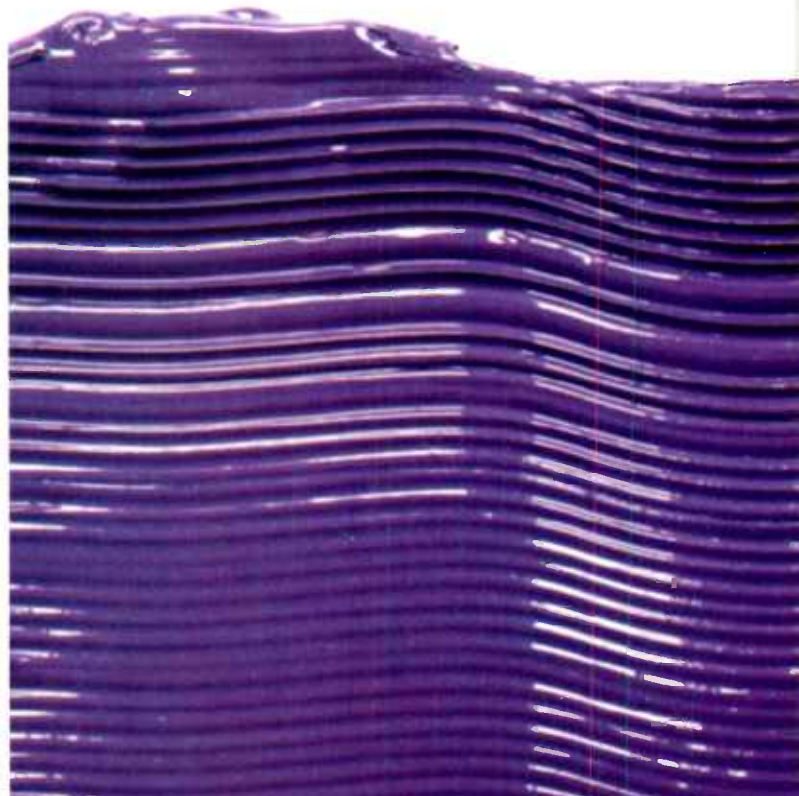
Hello!? I sent her the rudest fucking email. It was just being really dumb. But some people have different opinions of what it actually is. We're normal people. Drum 'n' bass isn't a huge multi-million dollar industry.

K: Yet.

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*Our apologies to T-Rex and Brewer And Shipley. But not Power Station. Fuck them.



OPIE ORTIZ, RAS-1, JACK MANESS, BUD GAUGH, ERIC WILSON, HALF PINT, "FIELD" MARSHALL GOODMAN, TIM WU

"Playing the Sublime songs is an homage to that time, that music."

STORY: DYLAN SIEGLER PHOTOS: DENNIS KLEIMAN

If California were evil, the Long Beach Dub Allstars' tour bus might be Pandora's Box. The seven-piece ensemble spills onto New York's Delancey Street in a cloud of pot smoke like a convention of Southern California subcultural ambassadors—or perhaps, judging from the awed looks on the faces of the kids waiting outside the concert venue, more like a gaggle of Martians. It's not so much the blur of tattoos, goatees, and big pants as the street team starts distributing posters and skateboard wheels clack against the curb—we have ink and extra denim on the East Coast, too. It's that these guys are rocking about a dozen shticks at once, exuding a hippie-cum-punk-meets-reggae-via-surfer-hip-hop-skater-raver-ska ethos that never quite took New York. The kids look skeptical.

Musically, however, there's no issue. Ever since Sublime's "What I Got" (the single with the borrowed reggae hook that conquered both your teenage brother's headphones and your dentist's PA system, and went on to help sell a multi-platinum album for the band), the musical hybrid created by the abovementioned clique meltdown has been A-OK with the mainstream on both coasts. To wit: No Doubt built an empire on it. But Sublime never had a chance to capitalize; the singer of that blithe song, Brad Nowell, died of a heroin overdose three and a half years ago, soon after the trio's eponymous third record dropped.

Enter the Dub Allstars, a band proud enough of its West Coast subcultural patchwork to tack Long Beach to its name. Comprising Bud Gaugh and Eric Wilson (the remaining two members of Sublime), and a



"We have a responsibility to know where the music comes from if we're going to use it as a channel to make money."

few musically pedigreed California friends, the group formed to play Sublime tunes at a benefit following Nowell's death. The response—part grieving fan catharsis, part enthusiastic rubbernecking—was encouraging. So the group grabbed a few more friends and went on tour, playing more Sublime songs, some covers, and a growing collection of originals. Kids thwarted by Rancid's refusal to play Operation Ivy tunes were psyched when the Dub Allstars launched into "What I Got," and stuck around for the rest of the show. "Playing the Sublime songs is an homage to that time, that music," says drummer Bud Gaugh. "Eric and me, and Marshall [Goodman] too, we helped create it originally, and it's cool for the kids who didn't get to see those songs live."

While watered-down Doors reunions come to mind, the Long Beach Dub Allstars stay legit by walking the fine line between Sublime and something new. Careful to keep reminding us of the Sublime tie-in, the band has increasingly incorporated new tunes, live horns, turntables, and cameos by real-life reggae greats like Barrington Levy. And the more elements the Allstars have included, the more kids they've attracted with their subcultural patchwork—even in self-conscious New York. The band gets a lot of love from New York, notes saxophonist Tim Wu, "But the other night in Virginia Beach, they had to turn about 300 kids away from the venue, because the place was already packed. That's how we know our formula is working."

Like a pot smoking, reggae sound system version of the Spice Girls, each member of the Dubs brings a distinct part of the band's musical mix. Marshall Goodman, on percussion and turntables, is Hip-Hop Spice. "I'm the one who's representing hip-hop," he says uneasily. "Kids think, 'He's got the hair, he wears the gear, he's behind that turntable.' But I hope people don't think too far into that." It's a lot of pressure, sure. But that's not Goodman's concern. "I don't want anyone to feel we're exploiting hip-hop, or reggae, or punk, or any of the other cultures we work in as we take it to the mainstream. All due respect to 311 and Limp Bizkit, but this is real, it's all the styles of music the seven of us grew up liking. We have a responsibility to know where the music comes from if we're going to use it as a channel to make money."

From the looks of it, the same kids buying the Long Beach Dub Allstars' recent longplayer debut, *Right Back* (DreamWorks), probably also own albums by 311 and Limp Bizkit. But they'll nod their heads to the Dub Allstars' Grateful Dead cover, and pick up a Pharcyde album when Goodman gives a shout-out to the group on stage. Maybe, after hearing the band's album track "Saw Red," the same kids will go to Tower in search of dancehall. And perhaps the next time the Long Beach Dub Allstars' tour bus hits New York, the kids will be prepared. "It's like the mixing of races creating beautiful people," says Goodman. "It takes time, but eventually new cultures come around."

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STORY: **DAVID DALEY** PHOTOS: **CHAPMAN BAEHLER**

FOO KING DAVE GROHL

It's Thursday late night at Junior's Sky Bar, high atop Hollywood's Sunset Marquis hotel, and Dave Grohl has just ordered his sixth Patron tequila. It's the only way to handle the scene. At a table in the corner, Elliott Smith and Foo Fighters drummer Taylor Hawkins are battling for the attention of Minnie Driver. Charlize Theron and Third Eye Blind's Stephan Jenkins are engaging in a way-too-conspicuous display of public affection at the bar, as Winona Ryder looks on enviously. Grohl rolls his eyes, lights a cigarette, and calls for another drink. He mumbles something to himself about getting out of Los Angeles, about returning home to Virginia, where maybe he belongs.

Now with apologies to Ronald Reagan biographer Edmund Morris, who bizarrely inserted himself into the former president's Hollywood days to understand decisions made when he wasn't there, that scene's part fact and part speculation. What's true is this: After almost two years in Los Angeles, after too many enjoyable lost evenings led to tired, dark nights of the heart, Grohl felt himself immersed in Hollywood celebrity and losing the thread of his soul.

So Grohl traded the Viper Room for Chili's. He swapped movie-star hideaways for backyard barbecues. He moved from Los Angeles back home to Alexandria, Virginia, bought a house in a tree-lined suburban subdivision not far from historical Old Town and installed a basement studio. There, amidst the cul-de-sacs and chain restaurants, the Foo Fighters spent the cold months of early 1999 losing a bandmate, searching for a new record deal, and finding themselves again.

Then they documented those difficult months, and ultimately, broke through with what Grohl sees as his most prolonged period of creativity and clarity yet, the Foo Fighters aptly-named third album, *There Is Nothing Left To Lose*. Indeed, Grohl admits over brunch at New York's SoHo Grand hotel, had he stayed in LA any longer, there might not have been anything worthwhile left to lose.

"I could see myself losing the point," Grohl says. "I went through my tequila phase. I had friends who worked at the Viper Room, so I could drink for free there. When we were mixing the *Verbena* record, we stayed at the Sunset Marquis and Junior's Sky Bar—there is the biggest scene. I went down there a couple nights and got pretty hammered. But there's something about that kind of bar where famous people feel safe that makes me sad. It makes me angry that someone would consider themselves so wanted that they feel they need refuge at a celebrity bar. It's gross."

"This album has so much to do with my disdain of Hollywood, and the glorification of California's glamorous life. I did enjoy it," Grohl admits, with a slight grin. "But I thought it was fucking disgusting. Now I'm sure everybody there is very nice. But everybody who lives there also says, 'I hate Los Angeles. I'm getting out as soon as fill-in-the-blank.' Only, most people who move there stay because they want to do Hollywood things, which you can't do in Virginia, or other normal places. I wanted normalcy. I just felt like I had to go back to Virginia."

Grohl thought about buying a farm. He had dreams of growing Christmas trees that he could sell at gas stations throughout Virginia. Then he decided farming might be too much responsibility, and started shopping for a house in the suburbs of Washington, DC, not far

from where he spent his childhood, and where he learned about punk rock from the straight-edge, DC hardcore scene based around Dischord, Minor Threat, and all-ages matinee shows.

It seemed like the natural place to start over. Grohl had only moved to Los Angeles after a painful divorce from his wife, Jennifer,

"I went through my tequila phase. I could see myself losing the point."

made Seattle seem way too small, but he didn't find any of his answers under the warm California sun. The Foo Fighters no longer had a record deal, as a key-man clause in their contract with Capitol allowed the band out of the agreement if then head honcho Gary Gersh were to leave the label. So when Gersh departed, Grohl decided to walk as well. Alone and label-less, Grohl and pal Adam Kasper started building a basement studio.

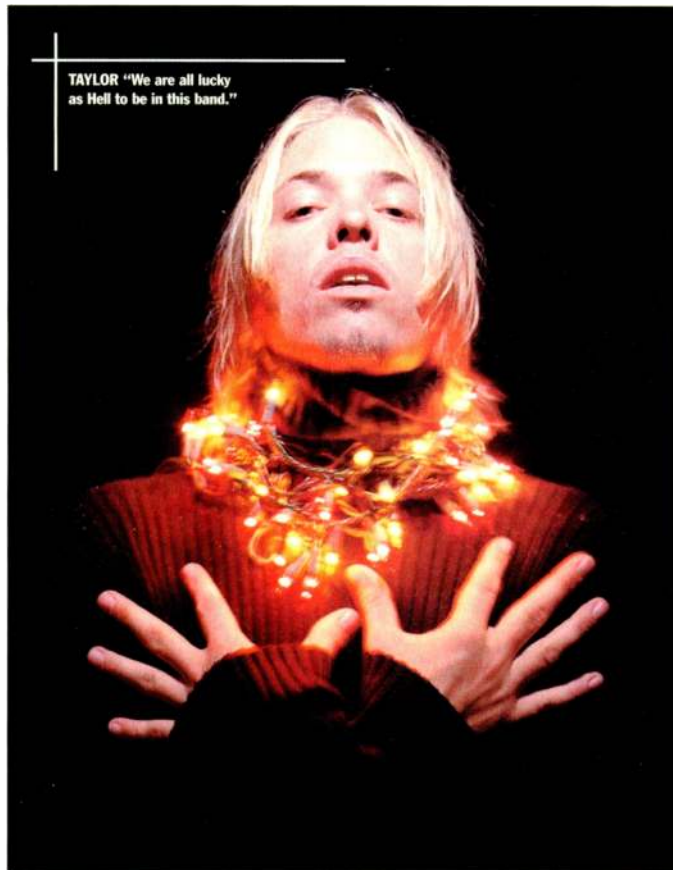
"That was the whole point: having no label, having your own studio, and not negotiating with anyone. We wanted to do it ourselves," says Grohl. "The whole time we were making the record, it was just the three of us and Kasper in the basement for four months. It was great. It was so much fun."

Grohl hadn't recorded so simply and freely since making demos under the name Pocketwatch in 1989 that, ironically, formed the basis of the first Foo Fighters album. But before that freedom was possible, the band had to experience some turmoil. Grohl's longtime friend Franz Stahl, his *Scream* bandmate as a punk rock DC teen more than a decade before, joined the band in 1997 when Pat Smear quit on the heels of a major European tour. Except when the four of them tried to demo songs together in Grohl's basement starting last February, things were not clicking as a four-piece with Stahl.

"We were just going in two different directions musically, and the three of us had made a connection that we had never done before," says Grohl. "It sucked. I love Franz, and I miss him. But the three of us were moving at pace and doing something we've never done. Nate and I were making this connection where he was complementing everything that I came up with. Taylor was so amped to go that he was playing like a madman. Our enthusiasm was really huge, and it seemed like most of the creative energy was coming from right here."

It was, Grohl says, an entirely different experience than making any other Foo Fighters record. The first one was essentially just Grohl and producer-pal Barrett Jones. The second album coincided with drummer William Goldsmith's meltdown and turmoil in Grohl's personal life. There were also major issues with Pat Smear, even though, at the time, Grohl credited Smear's guitar work for opening up his songs in ways he could never have imagined.

"[Grohl] was just kissing his ass so he'd stay in the band," Hawkins says of the Smear situation. "Now we're glad he's gone. Hey, how're you doing, Patty?"



"Oops," says Grohl. "We were between a rock and a hard place then. We were under his thumb. There are some songs he didn't even play on on that record."

More bothersome were pressures, both internal and external, to make a perfect-sounding record that would produce radio hits.

"The last album was the conventional rock recording method. Find a producer. Play the demos. Do pre-production. Go into the studio. Perfect everything. Go to mix. Make it perfect," says Grohl. "This record was: Try to build a studio in your basement. Try to make it as perfect as you can before you get tired of trying to make it perfect. Settle for the best you can do. There's no way that you could have a more relaxed recording environment. There's no label. There's no clock. We had no deadline. Once we finished our record, we said to labels, 'Here it is. Do you want it?' We had nothing left to lose. That's what you're getting on this album."

Grohl, who worries that his lyrics were too love letter-esque and emotionally obvious on the slick sounding *The Colour And The Shape*, revels in the imperfections of *Nothing Left To Lose*.

"We made it a point to stay away from computers or ProTools," says Grohl. "It was important to me to make sure we got performances that were flawed in order to give them more personality. We spent time trying to get these songs right, but not just right. ProTools has become such a huge part of making an album and it seems to suck the life and soul out of songs, especially on drums. It's awful."

"The legendary drummers—Keith Moon, John Bonham—were people who didn't have metronome time. You can hear in the songs that they didn't necessarily understand the arrangements as they were recording them. Bonham was famous for that. He would move into a chorus before it was there, and end up in the middle of it one bar later. It was great. Those performances are so memorable because they're human. They're not mechanical. Records sounded bigger because there were so many glitches, warts and imperfections that they were believable. Nowadays, radio has such a hard time with imperfection that we have to present the rock in its perfect form, and it just doesn't seem believable."

That's hardly an issue on *Nothing Left To Lose*, which neatly blends the strengths of both records: the raw immediacy of Grohl's one-man-band debut, and the catchiness and emotionality of *Colour And The Shape*. "Stacked Actors" rages viscerally against LA's platinum blondes. But "Aurora" is perfectly formed pop with heart-tugging lines like "I kinda died for you/You just kind of stood there." "Headwires" offers a psychedelic reminiscence of acid, while "Ain't It The Life" broods somberly, and the album-ending "M.I.A." rages against all things superficial, all the while sounding like a rehearsal captured on tape. The freedom to experiment came from the freedom of the suburbs.

"It had everything to do with getting away from the industry, building a studio on our own, and making an album on our own," says Grohl. "We wanted to prove to ourselves that we could do it, so that we could feel like what we are doing is real. There are times when it doesn't feel like it was real. And that had everything to do with moving back to Virginia."

"When we were young, in the mid-'80s, we were singing and screaming about our hate for superficial things, right? I'm angrier now."

Grohl gets up to grab a smoke, which seems like a good time to ask Hawkins and Mendel how they enjoyed the wonders of the Virginia suburbs.

"Virginia is as boring as you could ever fucking want it to be," says Hawkins. "We went out twice the whole time we were there because there wasn't much to do. It was comfortable there, but there wasn't anything happening."

"The area where Dave lives is just all strip malls and residential areas. It's all Chili's and Black Eyed Peas," adds Mendel. "It was weird. It didn't feel like we were making a record to me. It was so casual. The studio was a shambles. The equipment all worked fine, but it never really got put together. Those guys did so much work to get to the point where it was operational that making it look like a studio was secondary."

For Mendel, the key to the *Nothing Much To Lose* wasn't so much swapping LA for Alexandria as it was losing Stahl.

"Franz leaving the band was a really traumatic experience for me. I cried after it happened," he said. "But we all went through it together, and I feel like it made us closer. Right before we went in to record we had this traumatic bonding experience that gave us cohesion. It sounds dorky, but there was a lot of hugging going on before we made this record."

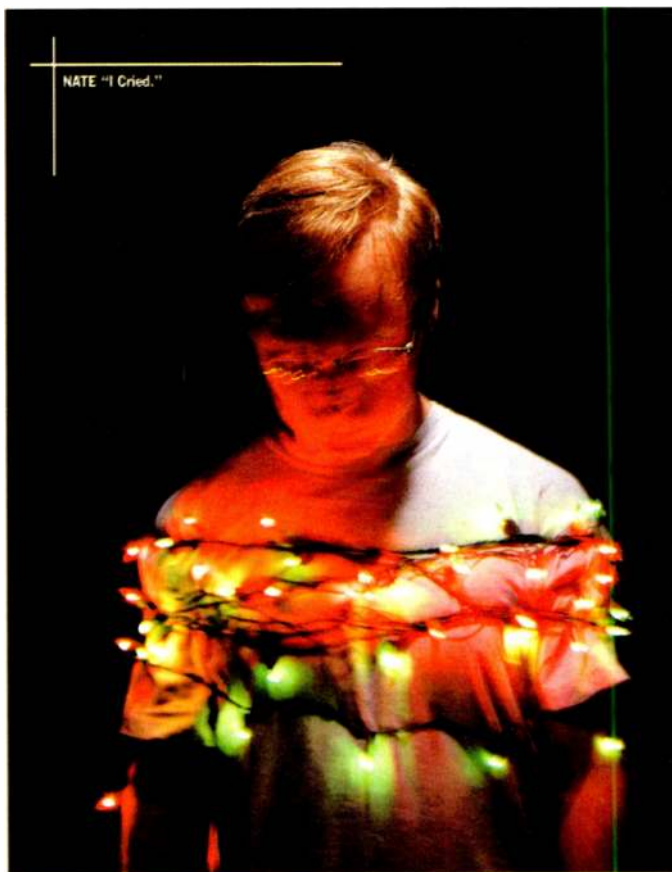
Mendel's been through many of those group-affirmation hugs as the last remaining original Foo Fighter. First his pal and Sunny Day Real Estate bandmate William Goldsmith cracked under the pressure of playing drums in Dave Grohl's band. Then Pat Smear took his brightly hued hair and bad attitude and went home, only to be replaced by the since-departed Stahl. Stahl's replacement, just in time for tour, is No Use for a Name and Me First and the Gimme Gimmes guitarist Chris Shiflett.

"With other bands, there's drug addiction and rehab. We just have people go," says Mendel.

"This band didn't have the luxury of not growing up in the public eye," Hawkins explains. "This band has been totally growing up in public, and growing up, and growing up."

"I don't know if people realize that when they make comments like, 'Why can't you guys keep any members?' It just doesn't come across people's minds," adds Mendel.

"Let it be known that it's not Dave putting that pressure on anyone," says Hawkins. "It's the kind of pressure anybody puts on themselves when they're up against something that's going to be



hard. We all are lucky as hell to be in this band."

Grohl returns, curious about what's been discussed in his absence.

"Oh, you know," says Hawkins, in a teasing, singsong voice. "That Dave, he sure can't keep a band together."

"Well," cracks Grohl, "neither could Prince. He lost a band member every single."

"That's because he was probably a dick," Hawkins retorts.

Grohl scratches his chin with a mock-ponderous pose. "Hmmm."

Perhaps the only thing Grohl's less concerned about than public perception that he can't control is the reception the latest Foo Fighters album will receive from modern rock radio programmers whose jobs, ultimately, were created by the Nirvana revolution.

"If we were concerned about that kind of thing we probably would have made a slicker record, with computers, machines and two turntables and a microphone," Grohl says. "But we're not, so we didn't. I think what's going on, and one of the reasons why we don't necessarily fit into a lot of what's happening on the radio, is there's an absence of melody. It's more about the sounds than the songs. It's more about the dynamics than the arrangements. It's more about how huge a song can get rather than if it can go from point a to point b.

"A lot of songs nowadays are just built on super-basic caveman dynamics. Quiet. Creepy. Grrr! Loud. Quiet. Creepy. Grrr! Loud. Some of it's interesting, but it doesn't seem to challenge anything. No one seems to be challenging the listener anymore."

Grohl doesn't blame lazy programmers, novelty one-hit wonders or lame Nirvana rip-offs, as much as he does those artists who should know better. The problem, he suggests, springs from alt-rockers who have betrayed the roots of the '80s DIY scene that spawned '90s alt-rock by believing that they can become cartoonish rock stars capable of being rock-and-roll saviors. He's well aware that the Foo Fighters anti-California glamour album will be compared to Hole's *Celebrity Skin*, the in-love-with-it-all take on falling in love with Malibu and Fleetwood Mac that Cobain's widow Courtney Love released last year. "Yeah," Grohl agrees, then seems to address Love without ever mentioning her by name.

"Things have gotten so desperate that all these artists have claimed that they're coming to save rock 'n' roll. That the world needs rock stars to save rock 'n' roll. When in reality, the world needs music to save rock 'n' roll. Everyone was kind of missing the point."

"It sounds dorky, but there was a lot of hugging going on before we made this record."

"What these people were saying is, 'Kids need a super-hero fucking rock star to look up to and worship like a fucking cartoon character, because that's what rock is all about.' Sure, in the '70s you had rock stars who were cartoon characters. Steven Tyler's lips. Mick Jagger's lips. Robert Plant's crotch. But they had music to back it up.

"I'm surprised that a lot of the people who seem to have come from maybe the same punk rock background somewhere got it blurred. The rock star was more important than the music. The image was more important than the music. The sound was more important than the song. I don't want to come off sounding like a songwriting genius, because I'm not. All I do is make songs we're capable of making. But all our focus is on that—not on anything else. People don't know what to believe in because they don't think anything's believable."

Indeed, what Grohl's identified is all part of the post-Nirvana fallout, part of the old boss/new boss cultural shift that put a modern rock station in every town but ensured that they'd play nothing but Third Eye Blind and the Goo Goo Dolls, and that allowed millions to hear Johnny Marr's scintillating guitar riff that opens the Smiths' "How Soon Is Now?" only as a Nissan ad.

If Nirvana and Cobain kicked down that door, Cobain didn't like what he saw inside. His death presaged the mainstreaming of alternative but left the new youth culture Nirvana created leaderless, and with an authenticity void exceedingly vulnerable to being hijacked by whining one-hit dullards or superstar hype machines like Love. Would these issues exist if Cobain had lived to provide a different example?

"If he were around? I don't know. That's a weird question to answer," Grohl says. "But I still feel the same, if not angrier. I mean, when we were young, in the mid-'80s, we were singing and screaming about our hate for superficial things, right? I'm angrier now, probably more so than I was then. I don't think I could ever do the rock star thing. It would just be too strange. It seems like that movie *Sybil*. How on earth could you walk on stage and be someone else and not lose your fucking mind? How could you look in the mirror and see someone else?"

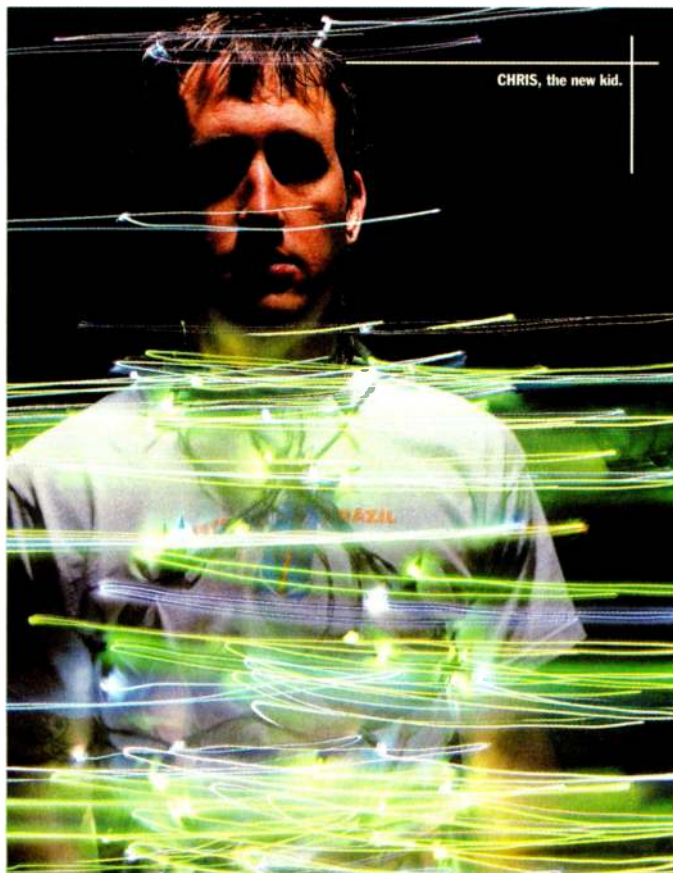
Now, looking at himself as a single suburbanite, with his acre-and-a-half Alexandria home, Grohl looks and the mirror and, for once, likes what he sees. He's a songwriter secure enough with himself to believe in his experiments, whose insecurities keep him humble and unassuming, and who draws out his

thoughtful, introspective side simply without thinking about it too much.

"I think with the last record we were scared to do something like this because we still felt like we were supposed to be a hardcore band or a punk-rock band, or loud and crazy. At least I did. I wasn't comfortable enough as a vocalist or guitarist to dive into that yet," Grohl says. "One of the things about this record that I hear is we're comfortable doing those things. Before they might have sounded forced. They may have sounded like a garage band or a punk-rock band trying to write ballads and trying to pull them off.

"Now, it's just, 'Fuck it.' I don't give a shit. I know we can do it. The three of us can do fucking anything we want. We really can. We can do fucking Yes covers, or we can do an Angry Samoans cover. And that's what's wrong with rock 'n' roll. No one has that range anymore. I really believe we can make any kind of record that we want. We could go out and make a drum 'n' bass record. We could go make a metal record. For sure we could make a metal record! We could make a record way poppier than this if we wanted to. It's up to us to decide which direction we want to go in."

MMM





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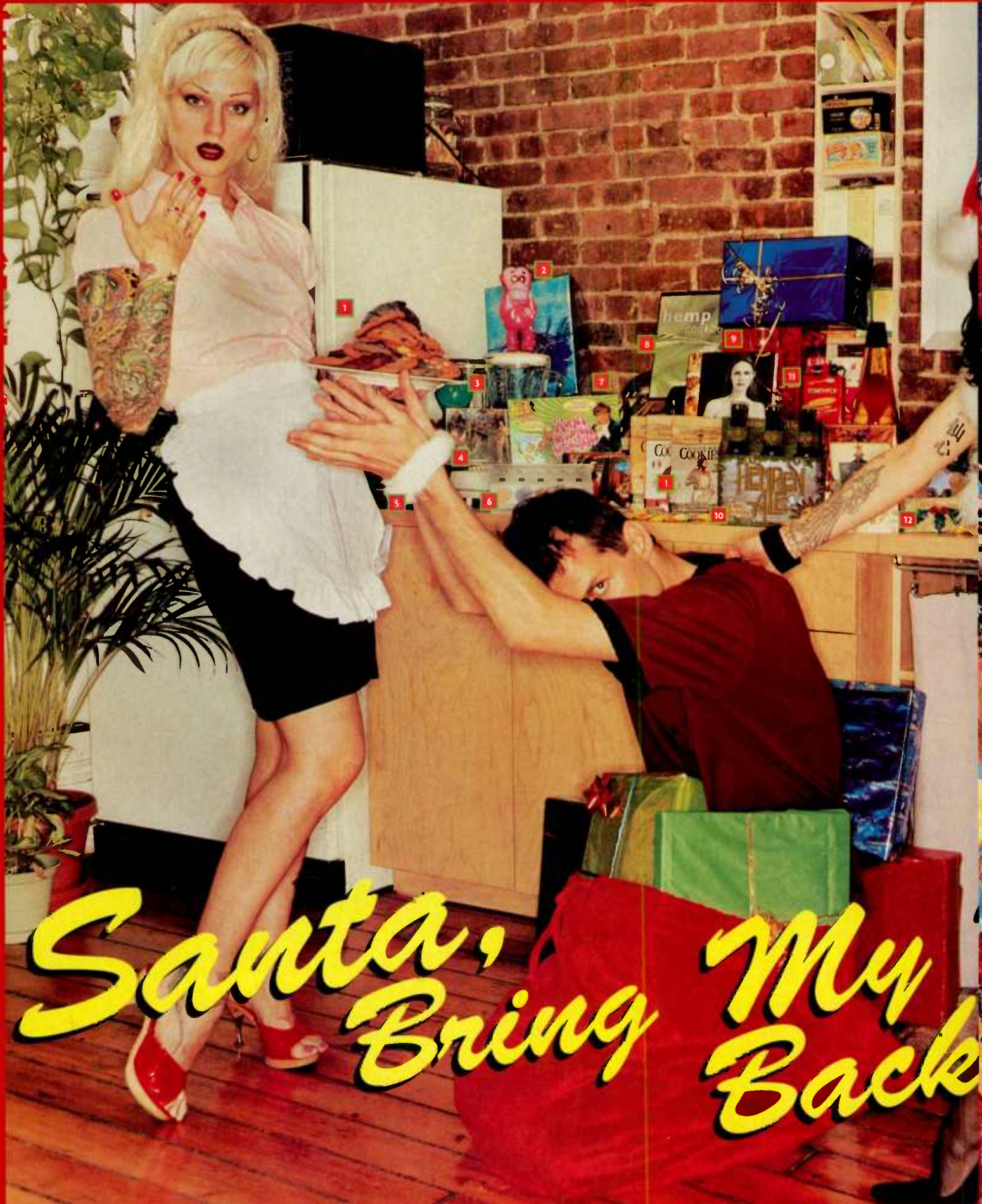
100 HOLIDAY GUESSING



Christmas is a time for charity, so please buy into our concept of bringing four holiday songs to life.

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What would you like for your holiday gift? Bill Barbot (Jawbox): A date with the "Pippa Longstocking" blond from the "Dress You Up In My Love" Gap commercial. If only to save



Santa, Bring My Back

her from all those pretty boys she's been palling around with **Jim O'Rourke**: A T1 line and an original theatrical poster for *Greaser's Palace*. **Mike Patton (M)**; **Bungle**: A



Baby
To Me!

1. Cougar Mountain Gourmet Cookies (\$3 per bag of eight)—Okay, you know you want to say “John Cougar Mountain cookies.” Now that you’ve said it, dig these chewy delicacies available in flavors such as triple chocolate pecan, white chocolate raspberry and chunky peanut butter (available for delivery from Cougar Mountain, 877-328-2622 or www.cougar-mountain.com).

2. Frankenberry Figurine Replica (\$15)—The original version of this premium will run you well over a hundred bucks, but this new one is a bargain—at least for cereal fanatics (available from Octopus Kingdom, 212-941-8380).

3. Gino Zucchini Sugar Shaker (\$19)—With a big smile on his face and a head full of sugar, Gino Zucchini pours the white powder that makes everyone smile (Kar’ikter, 212-274-1966 or www.karikter.com).

4. Betty Page, *Jungle Girl Exotique Music* (\$28.99)—This disc full of tiki-bar tunes is really just a rationalization for the 20-page booklet of vintage smut that comes with it, but Betty Page in a leopard get-up sure warms a winter’s night (Q.D.K. Media).

5. Furry Handcuffs (\$35)—Sometimes bringing your baby back home requires some restraint. If so, nothing says “I care” like a little furr on the cuffs so no wrists are chaffed (Religious Sex, 212-966-8677).

6. Perfumers Paintbox (\$40)—When you think Calvin or Tommy just don’t understand the way you want to smell, pick up the Perfumers Paintbox which allows you to combine the elements of musk, citrus, herbal, floral and wood into a scent that’s right for you (Primal Elements, 800-434-8277 or www.primalelements.com).

7. Austin Powers World’s Grooviest Chocolates (\$29.95)—Want to get your tongue all over that shagacious cat? I bet you do. You’re sick and it makes me horny! (Available from Li-lac Chocolates, 800-624-4874.)

8. *The Hemp Cookbook* (\$29.95)—Yeah, you know about using hash in brownies, but do you know how to make hemp-buttermilk pancakes with pear and blueberry compote, hemp and sage polenta with pan-roasted bell peppers or honey-crust duck breast with hemp-seed sauce? Hemp oil, hemp meal and hemp seeds all factor into the recipes in *The Hemp Cookbook*. Did you ever think you’d hear anyone say “Dude, that’s some rad carpaccio” (published by Ten Speed Press)?

10. Hemen Ale—What better to wash down your hemp-tomato crostini than with a hemp-brewed beer? Hemen ale, a classic brown ale won’t get you stoned, but you can still get you plenty blotto (price varies from state to state; for a list of distributors, contact Frederick Brewing Company at 888-258-7434 or www.fredbrew.com).

9. *Naturally Beautiful: Earth’s Secrets and Recipes for Skin, Body and Bath* (\$29.95)—With the coming apocalypse everyone, including the beauty conscious, will have to depend on mother nature’s resources. Luckily, model Dawn Gallagher has collected tips from around the world to keep our skin luminescent well into the 21st century (published by Universe/Rizzoli).

11. StartMeUp Battery Charger (\$29.95)—Can’t get your honey’s motor running? Well, at least you’ll be able to get your car going with the palm-sized jump-starter which enables you to get things moving without jumper cables (1-800-925-1530 or www.startmeup.com).

12. Handmade Glycerin Soap (\$9)—After you’ve worked up a sweat hauling in the tree, you’ll want to freshen up a bit. These 6.8 ounce soaps come in a variety of designs, including special holiday ones like poinsettia, the star of David and even one that resembles fruit cake (available from Primal Elements, 800-434-8277 or www.primalelements.com).

13. Red Leather Cat-o-nine Tails (\$50)—For those who’ve been naughty (Pleasure Chest, 212-242-2158).

14. Red Velvet “Santa” Outfit (\$159)—For those who’ve been nice (Religious Sex).



good hard working band for my new label and a Chinese good luck charm against bloodsucking scumbags **Bill Rieflin** (ex-Ministry): Omniscience. Omnipotence. What the hell.

1. Le Petit Prince Messenger Bag (\$45)—Because there's no way better way to show you're a badass than by carrying around a bag with that little French guy who's been lost in space (available from Kar'ikter, 1-888-4-TINTIN or www.karikter.com).

2. Chat Noir Cat Poster (\$12.80)—As much as you hate to admit it, someone you know lives in a dorm room that's in desperate need of a poster (available from www.barewalls.com).

3. Panthalassa: The Remixes (\$13.99)—Well, Bill Laswell's got a beard like Santa, but he let the elves do most of the work on these further remixes of classic Miles Davis tracks, tapping producers like DJ Cam and DJ Krush to throw beats into the trumpeter's heralded compositions (Columbia).

4. Yak Pak Zip Holster (\$27.50)—Theoretically, a fanny pack is a fine idea. Yet most make you look like you have a goiter growing on your liver. The Zip Holster is the stylin' alternative (available from Yak Pak, 800-292-5725 or www.yakpak.com).

5. The Black Chord...Visions Of A Groove: Connections Between Afrobeats, Rhythm & Blues, Hip-Hop and More (\$29.95)—A book that searches for the common thread between Curtis Mayfield, Missy Elliott, Ornette Coleman and many more. Solid! (Published by Universe/Rizzoli).

6. Lee Fields Let's Get A Groove On (\$13.99) Soul Brother #2 Lee introduces this record best on its first track: "This is Lee Fields coming at you with my new, super heavy funk record, *Let's Get A Groove On*... The Soul Providers and I have put this record together to remind some of you of how soul music used to be back in the day, before synthesizers and samplers and drum machines. I'm talkin' about way back before disco, when it was all *rough*. Yeah, and nasty. And genuine." (Desco)

7. Le Petit Prince Cardboard Lunchbox (\$14.50)—True, the condensation on your milk carton might soak through the cardboard in two days, but you'll be the envy of all the other kids in the cafeteria before then (Kar'ikter).

8. Strip To The Bone DVD (\$19.95)—Wondering what to get your pubescent brother? On *Strip to the Bone*, several of LA's most notable strippers wiggle to Sly and Robbie's hypnotic electronic dub as mixed by Howie B. Convince your mom it's just a long music video (available from www.islandlife.com).

9. Burton DJ Bag (\$89.95)—Big enough to pack 12 inches of steaming vinyl plus plenty of pockets for your cords, headphones, and a place to put yer weed (available from Burton, 800-881-3138 or www.burton.com).

10. Herbalizer Very Mercenary (\$14.99)—Underground hip-hop from the sort of folks whose bags generally come nickle-and dime-sized, *Very Mercenary* scrapes the resin from B-movie samples and downtempo beats (Ninja Tune).

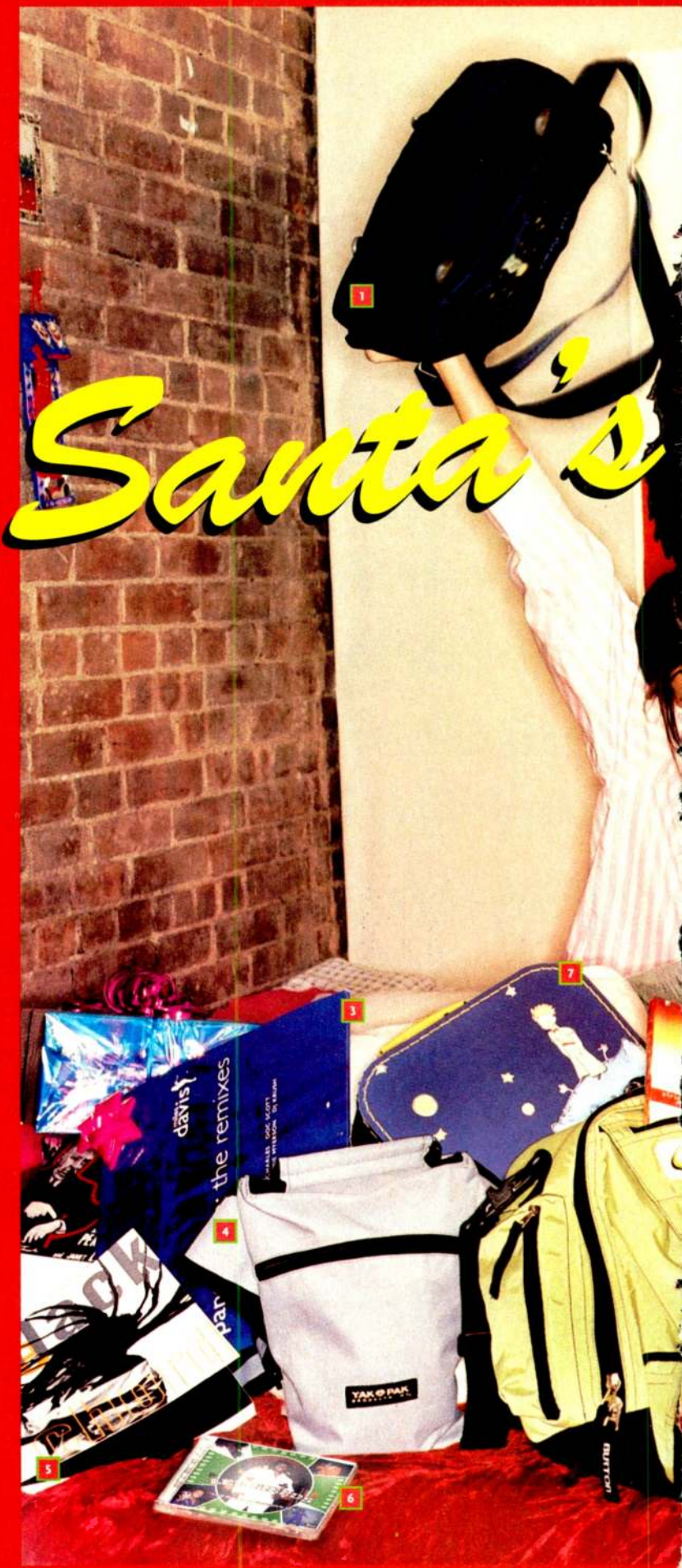
11. Tintin School Bag (\$98)—Of course, the real tough guys prefer a backpack with that cartoon Belgian adventurer on it (Kar'ikter).

12. Transparent Clock (\$19.95)—Perfect for those who view time as transparent societal convention. (Available at Dom, 212-334-5580 or)

13. Sparkle Blue Sunglasses (\$12)—How many shades will protect you from the winter sun and nicely match a glittering snowscape? (Six Eleven Records, 215-413-9100 or www.611records.com)

14. The Mutter Museum 2000 Calendar (\$14.95)—What better way to start the next millenium than with a calendar that looks back at some of medicine's creepiest moments in the past millenium: Gangrenous ulcerations, dried skeletons and miscarriages are all pictured here (published by The College Of Physicians Of Philadelphia, 215-563-3737).

15. 611 Red Coach Jacket (\$45)—More eye-catching than Rudolph's nose (Six Eleven Records, 215-413-9100 or www.611records.com)



...ise is there? Wayne Static (Static-X): a comb Jarid Del Deo (Unbunny): Cocaine and four buses. Unbunny Parton: All I wait for Christmas is a large double-barreled shotgun



Got a Brand New Bag!

Prehancement

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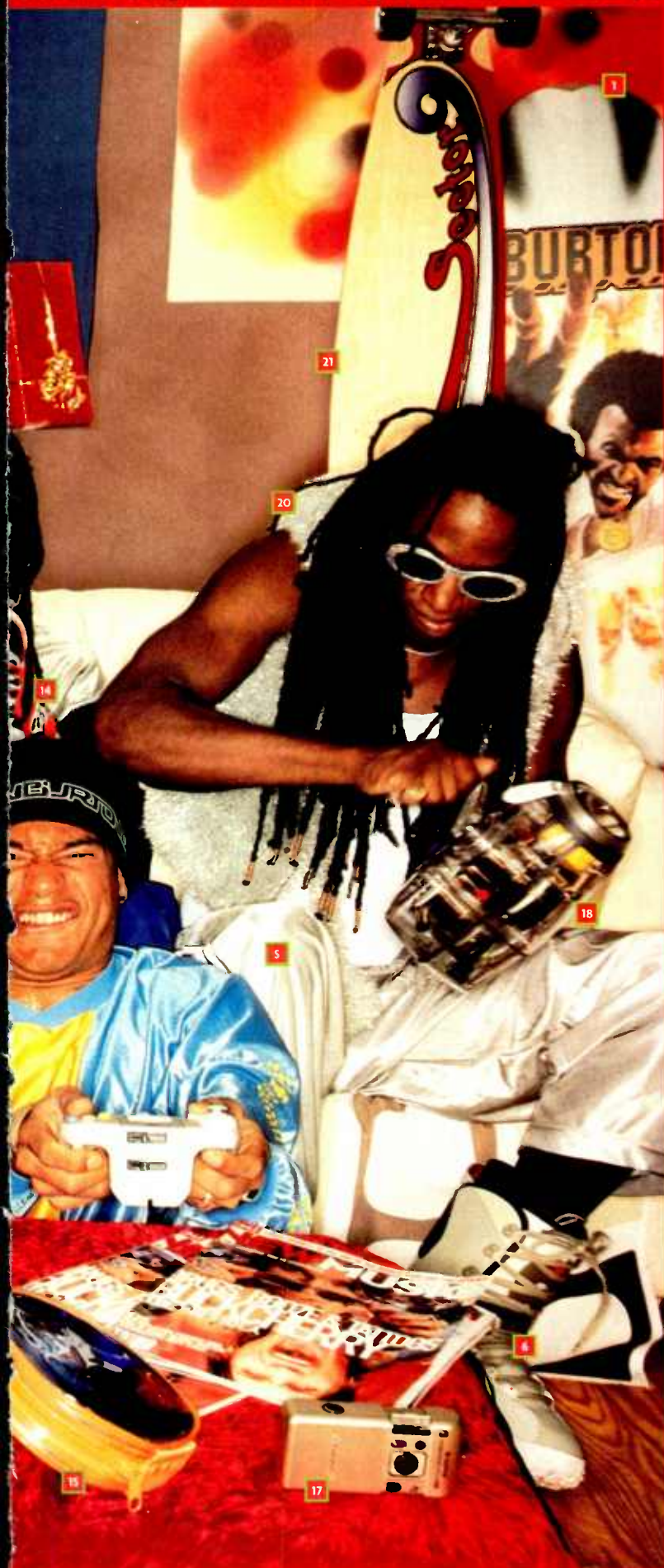
10

with which to kill the bear that attacked and maimed my dog last month Nicholas Harmer (Death Cab for Cutie): A box set of every *Behind the Music* to date (I have an extra



Sleigh Ride

52 **newmusic** The members of Groove Collective groove with Peggen (second from the left) and Akine Atoms aka Alpha K aka Byzar (third from left, uh, the dude with the silver face paint).
World Radio History



- 1. Burton Custom Snowboards** (\$449.95)—Boards shouldn't be boring. When you fall on your ass, make sure something looks cool (available from Burton Snowboards, 800-881-3138 or www.burton.com).
- 2. Hewlett Packard CD Writer** (\$299)—Burn some of your music budget with a CD writer (www.hp.com to find your local dealers).
- 3. BC Ethic Golf Shredder Blue Mesh Shirt** (\$39.99)—When you want your holiday look to be suave, but not stiff (available from Agent Aloha, 215-238-5880).
- 4. I Love Fast Cars** (\$40)—Photographer Craig McDean takes on the world of smoking tires, gleaming chrome and souped-up hot rods (published by Powerhouse Books).
- 5. Redballs on Fire Sweatpants** (\$26)—With racing stripes to get you moving (611 Records).
- 6. Viking Boots** (\$259.95)—When you want to ride your board into the space age (Burton).
- 7. Bio-Lite A.L.S. Hooded Jacket** (\$159.95)—Lightweight and weather-resistant to keep you warm and dry when you're tumbling through the snow (Burton).
- 8. Peggen My Fluffy Period** (\$10.99)—This bubbly Money Mark-like pop disappoints only because it doesn't end in "morph, morph, morph." Hey, I kid the Swedes. And a little nationalist humor is what the Holidays are all about (Primal Music).
- 9. The Freeplay Radio** (\$79.95)—When Y2K brings modern society to a crashing halt, be prepared to listen to all of those emergency updates (and replays of "1999") with the Freeplay Radio that runs on a combination of solar and hand-cranking power (contact Freeplay Energy at 800-WIND-234).
- 10. The Convertible** (\$29.95)—An illustrated look at life with the top down (published by Chronicle Books).
- 11. 611 Warm-Up Jersey** (\$30)—Shine on! (Six Eleven Records, 215-413-9100 or www.611records.com)
- 12. Sega Dreamcast** (\$199.99)—The console on every hardcore gamers wish list this season (for more information, see www.sega.com).
- 13. Polaroid I-Zone Camera** (\$24.99)—Finally, an instant camera you can fit in your pocket that takes stamp-sized photos you can fit in your wallet (for stores that sell the I-Zone, contact Polaroid at 1-800-343-5000 or www.polaroid.com).
- 14. Moto Pipe Gloves** (\$44.95)—Warm and sticky, to help you get a grip on life (available from Burton 800-881-3138 or www.burton.com).
- 15. Lava and Bubble CD Wallets** (\$12.50 and \$10)—Two happening holders for your grooviest CDs (available from Computer Expressions, 800-443-8278 or www.computerexpressions.com).
- 16. Groove Collective Declassified** (\$16.99)—The "Collective" is the dozen-odd revolving members of this New York group. The "Groove" is a self-explanatory soulful stew, and all-essential for today's active lifestyles. (Shanachie)
- 17. Fujifilm Tiara 1000 IX** (\$479.95)—Little. Titanium. Better? Look sharp with this palm-sized auto-focus camera (see www.fujifilm.com for local vendors).
- 18. The Freeplay Self-Powered Lantern** (\$69.95)—Of course, after the millennial apocalypse, you won't want to depend on batteries, so get a flashlight that you can rev up with one hand (Freeplay Energy).
- 19. Fred Worm Thermos** (\$55)—Yes, it's a thermos and it's ribbed for your pleasure (available from Kar'ikter, 212-274-1966 or www.karikter.com).
- 20. Lucky Wang Silver Hooded Vest** (\$109.99)—Okay, so this vest won't exactly keep you warm, but it's much more eye-catching than a down one (available from Guacamole, 215-923-6174).
- 21. Sector 9 Longboard** (\$150)—Is it the 46 inches of maple board, the 70mm-ball wheels or the pivot trucks that makes this skateboard such a smooth ride? A riddle for the Ouija board (Sector 9, 619-552-1296 or www.Sector9.com)



1. Your Action World: Winners Are Losers With A New Attitude (\$29.95)—David Byrne takes on the world where gold rules the day with a sarcastic, artistic send-up of corporate sales material.

3. Talking Heads Stop Making Sense (\$17.99)—Gnostic texts suggest that myrrh was offered to by the Three Kings because they didn't have the technology to record concerts by men in big suits. Digitally remastered and including seven previously unreleased live tracks, the Special New Edition of this landmark concert movie proves it's still great ten years after—even if you're not a fan (Warner Bros.).

3. Chocolate Gelt (69¢ a bag)—Money you can eat, yes, dreams can come true.

4. Critter (\$12.95)—Somewhere between a Mexican Jumping bean and metallic bug is the Critter. Wind it up and it'll shake like its back ain't got no bone (Dom).

5. The Chess Blues Rock Songbook It's not really a book; it's a kick-ass double CD of classic rumpshakers from Muddy Waters to Chuck Berry. What every self-respecting hoochi-coochie man will be listening to this holiday. (MCA) \$23.99

6. Aluminum Data Address Book (\$29)—Who needs a little black book when you can get a big metallic one? (Dom, 212-334-5580 or www.dom-ck.com)

7. Fujifilm MX2000 Digital Camera (\$899)—Take it to the Net! Digitize your memories with this Fuji digicam, then upload them to your computer. Just three words of caution: Pam and Tommy (check www.fujifilm.com for local vendors).

8. Starlight Bracelet (\$35) Perfect for a starry night, this sterling silver rolo bracelet features the Starlight Murano Glass Stars, imported from Italy. Available in 6 colors. (For info: www.janetjewelry.com)

9. Electro Harmonix Frequency Analyzer (\$165)—Made famous by Devo, the reissue of this classic '70s ring modulator creates tune-able harmonics above and below the tone played into it, often creating a mind-bending maelstrom (DiPinto Guitars).

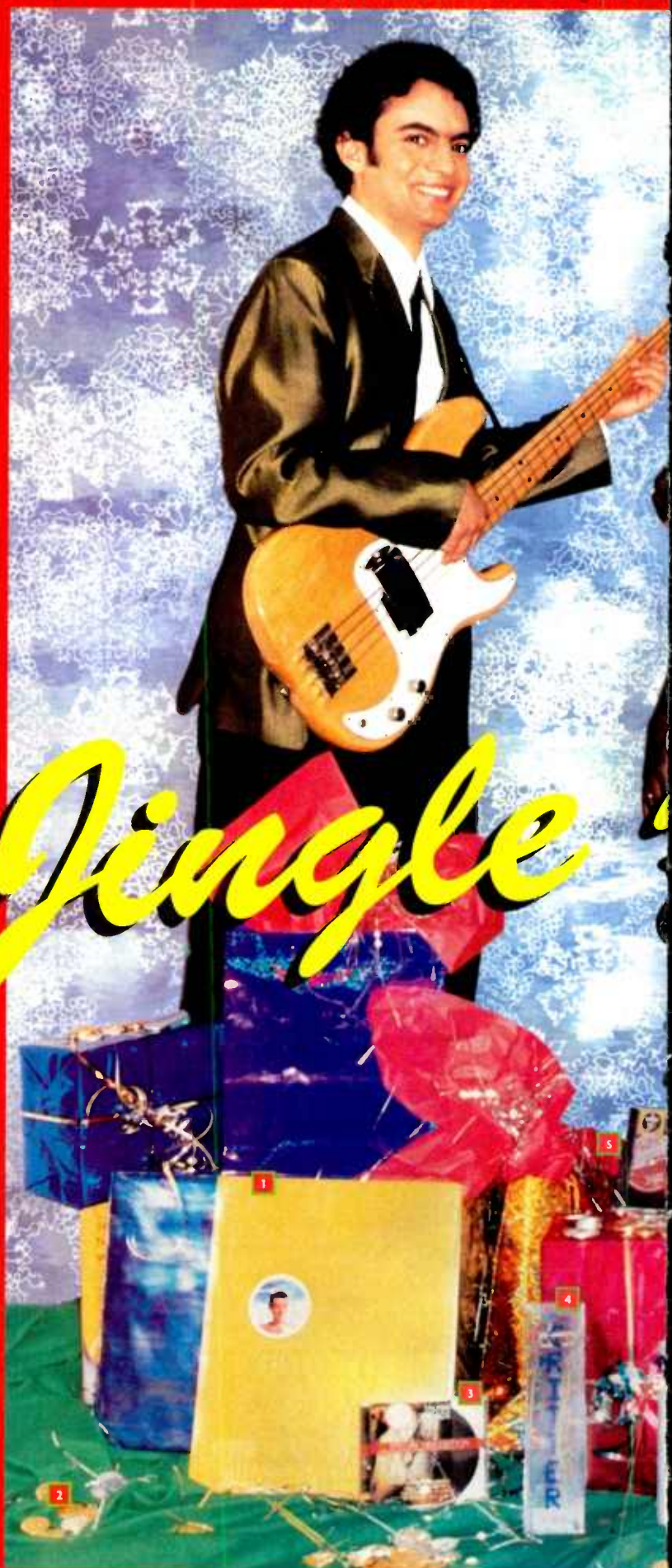
10. Smokey Amp (\$30)—Believe it or not, a red-hot amp built into a recycled cigarette pack (available from DiPinto Guitars, 215-923-2353 or . For more info, check out).

11. Zvex Seek-Wah (\$275)—A mixture of a tremolo and wah-wah, this homemade, hand-painted pedal makes your guitar sound like it's being processed through an ethereal analog sequencer (Di Pinto Guitars).

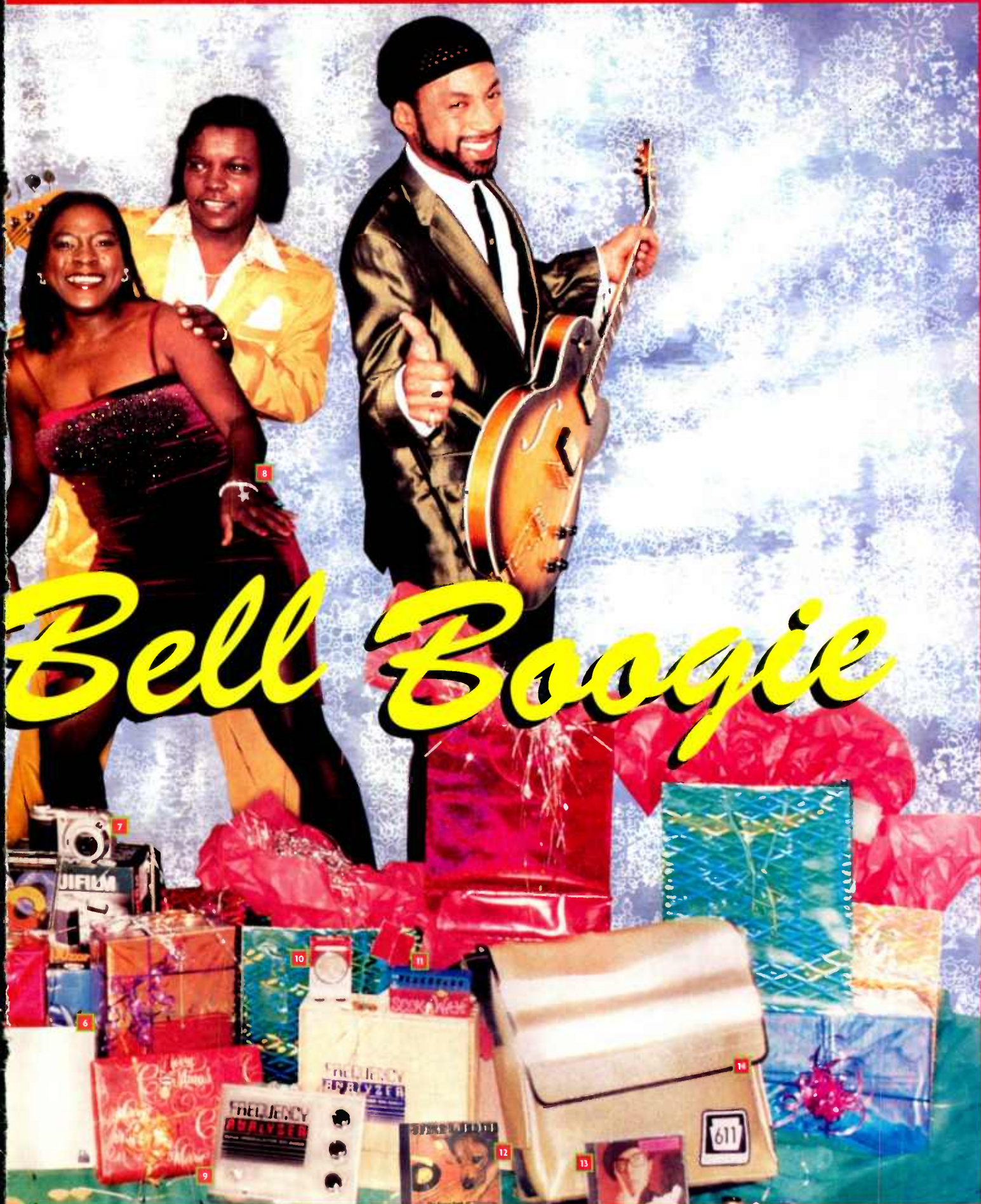
12. Spike's Choice (\$13.99)—Spike is a dog with a taste for old-school funk. The various limited edition 45s he's gnawed on are compiled on this disc chronicling the Desco Funk story. Lee Fields, Sharon Jones, Soul Providers and the sitar funk of Ravi Harris are ready to party like it's 1969. Coming soon, *Volume 2* (Desco).

13. Towa Tei Future Listening (\$14.99)—When it came out in '95, critics called this mix of bossa nova and techno weirdness the pop of the next century. Be the first on your block to test out that prediction. (Elektra)

14. 611 Gold Glitter DJ Bag (\$50)—If you're playing gold records, you might as well have a bag to match (Six Eleven Records, 215-413-9100 or www.611records.com)



Burning Airlines: I could use a surround sound system to accompany the DVD player I got for my birthday! You weren't expecting me to wish for world peace, were you?



Bell Boogie



311
Soundsystem Capricorn

Five albums into their career, the members of 311 finally sound like they're having fun in the studio. The LA-by-way-of-Omaha fivesome built its rep on the road, playing show after energetic show and accruing a dedicated legion of fans. The band's boundless spirit first truly translated to record on its self-titled third release; the singles "Down" and "All Mixed Up" combined rock and rocksteady into a winning radio formula, propelling the album to sales of three million. After an almost-as-successful follow-up and last year's live album, 311 returned to the

OUT:
 October 12.
FILE UNDER:
 Upbeat modern rock fusion.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Rage Against the Machine, Sublime, Fishbone.

studio and came up with a baker's dozen of ska-tinged, funk-driven, roiling rock tunes, and a few potential singles to boot. Mind you, this stuff ain't meant to be critically scrutinized. "Come Original" would sound perfect as the soundtrack for a blue jeans commercial, with SA Martinez dropping a singsong rap over a succession of pointed guitar hooks and P-Nut's slap bass. "Freeze Time" jumps out of the box amid a torrent of fuzzed-out guitar, turntable scratches and metallic drumming. Elsewhere, 311 bounces from lite ska-funk ("Strong All Along") to edgy rock ("Eons") to dubbed-out reggae ("Leaving Babylon"). The one constant is the mood: It's a party-ready, unobtrusive disc filled with positive messages like those in the most aesthetically appealing of this album's songs, the jazzy pop rambler, "Life's Not A Race." >>> Richard Martin



...AND YOU WILL KNOW US BY THE TRAIL OF DEAD
Madonna Merge

Like those granddaddy (and grandmommy) art-punks of them all, Sonic Youth, . . . And You Will Know Us by the Trail Of Dead summons a sonic maelstrom that socks you in the solar plexus even as it caresses your brain stem. The beauty of this Austin, Texas quartet is in the way it manages to employ each tactic—cacophonous punishment and melodious reward—in a manner that feels equally sublime. *Madonna*, the group's sophomore effort, finds the guys wreaking havoc with just

OUT:
 October 19.
FILE UNDER:
 Moody, avant-noise rawk.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Sonic Youth, Mogwai, Come.

about every aspect of their songs—the melodies, the structures, the half-formed choruses. And they do so with an apocalyptic aplomb that's almost always arresting. The titles of the tracks capture the bleak majesty of Trail Of Dead's nihilism ("Mistakes & Regrets," "Blight Takes All," "Flood Of Red") while the moods and settings for the songs are similarly epic and dynamic. The disc's quieter, piano-embroidered pieces like "Claire De Lune" conceal some of the more unsettling sentiments: "What good are promises if nobody honors them?" the singer queries before the song builds to a sustained fury. On *Madonna*, claustrophobic desperation gives way to tranquil reflection, then morphs back into a state of turmoil. It's beautiful and scary all at once—a daydream nation of nightmares. >>> Jonathan Perry



TORI AMOS
To Venus And Back Atlantic

Pop's reigning faerie princess checks in with a two-CD set, full of her usual oblique communications from the Muse. The first disc's dozen new songs will satisfy fans and leave the unconvinced still scratching their heads over the turns of Amos' stream-of-consciousness lyrics. Phrases like "trancing the sauce" (in "Concertina") and "You burn your pagoda through the Congo" (in "Riot Proof") do, however, possess a distance from reality that's appropriate to these numbers, which draw heavily on drum loops and the otherworldly soundscapes of guitarist

OUT:
 September 21.
FILE UNDER:
 Lithic fairies.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Sarah McLachlan, Paula Cole, Kate Bush.

Steve Caton and programmer Andy Gray. When she's not bathed in a river of reverb, Amos is still building Gothic spires with her voice to marvelous effect amidst the industrial crunch of "Juárez." "Glory Of The '80s" is an amusing and cogent tale of Amos' dark journey through her hair-metal Y Kant Tori Read incarnation—a moment of clarity in the otherwise purposefully fog-misted dreamworld she's created for her sixth album. The second disc is a live set full of her more familiar shimmer and grace, featuring the concert crowd-pleasers "Precious Things," "Waitress," "Cornflake Girl," "Little Earthquakes" and nine others. Here her piano clearly defines the sound, with the band's textures as backdrop. Yet Amos—as always—is ethereal enough on her own to keep her private fantasy island afloat. >>> Ted Drozdowski



ANIMALS ON WHEELS
Nuvo! I Cadira Ntone-Ninja Tune

Drum 'n' bass, when it's really clocking, is some of the most musicianly electronic music around—a speed-freaking study of the space between rhythm and texture. But when junglists slow their high-speed sampler pranksterism to try and reproduce the touch of "spontaneous" human players, the keepin'-it-real results tend toward the irretrievably clunky. Every sound on *Animals On Wheels*' *Nuvo! I Cadira* strains to emote, but the kick-the-can beats poke along like the most wallflowerish post-rock. The keyboards

OUT:
 November 9.
FILE UNDER:
 Pushbutton jazz.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Squarepusher, Tortoise, Cold Cut.

boil the electric-piano sprawl and transistor zing of '70s jazz down to doleful dorm-room drone, leaving the songs stalled in a fuzak fog, un-frisky to a fault. The perky female voice sampled at the album's halfway point scrambles some bright-eyed charm into the disc's stone-faced ebb and flow—she asks questions like "What is your name?" and "What is your telephone number?," struggling bravely against digital beatmaking's slippery approach to identity and context. Everything else merely meanders. Looping the stately strums of Yo La Tengo's country suicide note "Don't Say A Word" is clever, but it gets tossed against a butterfingers Krautrock backdrop, "complete" with thin, ill-synced drums. There oughta be a copyright law. >>> Alex Pappademas



APPLIANCE

Manual

Mute

OUT:

October 19.

FILE UNDER:

Krautrock-girded space rock.

R.I.Y.L.:

Can, Jessamine, Blonde Redhead, Spacemen 3.

What Appliance lacks in originality it makes up for with concision. It sounds as though this three-piece from Exeter, England, is swimming in the wake of Spacemen 3's last trip, fishing out floating bits of sonic detritus and reassembling them into swirling, grinding tracks that rarely surpass the five-minute mark. Given the predilection of many similar groups—from space rock mainstay Spiritualized to more recent purveyors such as 7% Solution or Jessamine—to fire off a riff and groove on it for ten minutes or more, Appliance's

brevity is refreshing. The band's debut album clocks in under 40 minutes, but in that time the trio makes clear just where it's coming from and where it's headed. The measured rhythms, squelchy Moogs, and flanged guitar leads have roots in Krautrock, as do song titles like "Soft Landing" and "Pre-Rock Science." The results are nicely stated, but the disc doesn't do much to distinguish itself from other space-rockers, past and present. The CD's final number, "Pacifica," which is sprinkled with nimble guitar leads, achieves a delicacy that approaches Yo La Tengo's more trippy moments, which is a welcome change of pace on this otherwise droning album. *Manual* introduces Appliance with startling clarity: the next step will be to produce something truly illuminating.

>>> Lydia Vanderloo



BICYCLE THIEF

You Come And Go Like A Pop Song

Goldenvoice

OUT:

September 28.

FILE UNDER:

VH-1 Storytellers, the post-punk generation.

R.I.Y.L.:

Paul Westerberg, Martin Zellar, Warren Zevon.

Like the central figure in the classic Italian film his new band is named for, singer/songwriter Bob Forrest has always been something of a tragic hero, a victim of circumstances of his own making. Formerly the frontman of Thelonious Monster, an infamous band of drunk punks who emerged as LA's answer to the Replacements in the mid-'80s, he's spent the years since the Monster's aptly titled 1992 swan song *Beautiful Mess* (Capitol) wrestling with three depressing D's—drinking,

drugging, and, to pay the rent, dishwashing. As he puts it in "Cereal Song," one of a dozen bluntly confessional tunes on *You Come And Go Like A Pop Song*, "Heroin and cocaine/I loved them both/But they took my life/They took my friends/They won't give 'em back." Forrest has more than enough first-hand experience with trouble to draw on for inspiration, and he likes to keep things personal. But he knows better than to wallow in his own misery: His wry, self-deprecating sense of humor ("I woke up this morning feeling pretty good/And pretty good is really good for me") buoys the disc's darkest moods. The arrangements are refreshingly simple. Forrest's songs could use a bit more development in the hooks and melody department, but his is the kind of comeback best taken one step at a time.

>>> Matt Ashare



ATOM AND HIS PACKAGE

Making Love

No Idea

OUT:

October 25.

FILE UNDER:

Intensely silly punk-rock twerpdom.

R.I.Y.L.:

Mr. T Experience, "Weird Al" Yankovic, early Dead Milkmen.

The "package," praise God, is nothing more than the programmable Yamaha synth that accompanies singer/guitarist Atom, the contemporary punk scene's own class clown. Atom's voice is possibly the weediest sound ever committed to tape, trumped by the unbelievably dweeby new wave tones of the Package. And when they take on hardcore's innate pretentiousness, as on the passionate demand for the world to convert to the metric system that opens *Making Love*, they can be pretty hilarious. On the other hand, that one's followed by a painfully

earnest Dead Milkmen cover. As you might guess, this stuff is best in small doses, and in fact most of *Making Love* was originally released as compilation tracks and EPs, including one credited to Atom And His Rockage and recorded with a full band—Jenn Schumow steals the show as Atom's titular duet partner in "Head (She's Just A . . .)." AIHP's best jokes, in fact, sneak up on you: a cover of the Beatles' "Polythene Pam" with an extra verse that goes "look out, look out, Paull!"; a song that explains what Jews do on Christmas (a movie and Chinese food, of course); "Pumping (Fe) For Enya" ("There's only one word difference in 'new age' and 'new wave'"). And his offhanded references to the Philly scene, his friends, and the serious punk world he loves temper his goofiness.

>>> Douglas Wolk



BUTCHIES

Population 1975

Mr. Lady

OUT:

October 11.

FILE UNDER:

Sensitive queercore.

R.I.Y.L.:

Sleater-Kinney, Sarah Dougher, Team Dresch.

The Butchies' debut, 1998's *Are We Not Femme?*, was a wildly uneven affair that, unfortunately, wasn't half as good as its title. On it, the band seemed to be asking themselves "Are we not punk?"; "Are we not folk?"; "Are we not disco?" And despite the earnest tone of the album, it really didn't provide any satisfying answers. *Population 1975* might not be quite as clever a title, but musically, it's a vast improvement that finds the band settling comfortably into a style that marries the early '90s grunge with the folk-rock of '70s women's music. Singer/guitarist Kaia

Wilson and drummer Melissa York are both veterans of Team Dresch, the Northwestern band that put what they dubbed "lesbionic" rock on the map during the Riot Grrrl days. Now based in North Carolina, and joined by bassist Alison Martlew, Wilson and York have left their dues-paying days behind them and seem to have reached a point where they don't feel they have quite so much to prove to themselves or the rest of the world. That's reflected in the lyrics, which eschew the kind of in-your-face sloganeering that lesbian-punk outfits like Tribe 8 rely on so heavily in favor of personal songs. There's no ambiguous "you" in these songs: Wilson sings passionately about "her hands" or "her kiss," and the result is both tender and fierce. *Population 1975* is life affirming and proud: it's the sound of queercore growing up.

>>> Elisabeth Vincentelli



LORI CARSON

Stars

Restless

OUT:

September 7.

FILE UNDER:

Hushed, humbled and heart-broken.

R.I.Y.L.:

Lisa Germano, Kristin Hersh,
Chris Isaak.

A few songs into her fourth album, Lori Carson asks a troubling question: "When all the oxygen is used up, how will you breathe?" Delivering the line with cool precision, she provokes you into considering the scenario. Carson's also an ace arranger, and she infuses the song, "Breathe," with a rhythmic give-and-take and roiling acoustic guitar riff that abet the sense of suffocation to which she coyly alludes. A more interactive record than her brazenly personal and widely acclaimed 1997 disc *Everything I Touch Runs Wild*, *Stars*

twinkles with pulsing passages that seesaw between urgency and restraint. A gifted singer who lent her talents to the Golden Palominos in the early '90s, Carson has never been one to rely on the expressive, succulently quavering sound of her singing. For example, "Head In A Box" uses a string section, gentle acoustic guitar, and even a touch of morbid humor to convey the pain of forced separation. With a slightly more arched tempo, she explores the paradox of having an ex-lover who understands her better than anyone, though the two can barely stand each other. Even when Carson sneaks in a mechanical groove, the music retains warmth, and a sophisticated sadness that'll sound eerily familiar to anyone who's been forced to keep on breathing even after the oxygen's all gone.

>>> Richard Martin



COUNTING CROWS

This Desert Life

Geffen

OUT:

October 26.

FILE UNDER:

Neoclassic jangle pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

R.E.M., Cracker, Wallflowers.

When *Rock Stars Complain* is one prime-time special of human disaster footage that Fox hasn't gotten around to airing yet. But should they ever want to, Counting Crows singer Adam Duritz would make a fine host. After all, the last Crows studio disc, 1996's *Recovering The Satellites*, was very nearly a concept album about the woes of being rich and famous—ironic considering how passionately Duritz sang about wanting to be a rock star on the band's multiplatinum debut, *August and Everything After*. But Duritz seems to

have gained some perspective over the past few years: *This Desert Life* finds him describing himself as "an idiot walking a tightrope of fortune and fame." It's a welcome development, one that reflects a shift away from the overwrought density and serious tone of *Satellites* and back to the looser, more playful feel of *August*. More than ever, the band brings to mind the pre-Green R.E.M. of jangle 'n' drone guitars and melancholy moods. And as Duritz's piano takes on a more prominent role, he's become a more relaxed vocalist with a better sense of when to reach for those emotive peaks, and when not to. He hasn't lost his penchant for earnest melodrama, but in a decade in which smug ironists have usually gotten the last word, a good dose of Duritz's heart-on-sleeve romanticism is refreshing.

>>> Matt Ashare



THE CHARLATANS U.K.

Us And Us Only

Beggars Banquet-MCA

OUT:

October 19

FILE UNDER:

Recovering shoe-gazers.

R.I.Y.L.:

Primal Scream, Stone Roses,
Hawks-era Dylan.

Seems like it's been a lifetime since Charlatans U.K. singer Tim Burgess bragged that his band was the best on the bloody planet. Even if you actually happen to be the best band on the planet (and the Charlatans weren't), that's a tough claim to live up to. What the Northwich quintet are after all this time, however, is one of the few outfits still with us nearly a decade after the dissolution of the Madchester rave scene. Given that keyboardist Rob Collins—crucial to the Charlatans' sound—was killed in a car crash in

1996, the group's resilience is no small feat. Neither is this album. After a string of mediocre efforts, the band's groovy, Hammond-drenched *Us And Us Only* sounds remarkably vital. A phased organ and pulsing bass kicks off the opening track, "Forever," but the band also incorporates a wider palette of acoustic colors into their familiar approach, and nods to a few fave raves along the way: *Exile*-era Stones on "Senses" (a harmonica intro bleeds into the dead-giveaway lyric, "You're my sweet black angel") and Dylan on "A House Is Not A Home" (both the guitar riff and Burgess's sneer are lifted straight from "I Don't Believe You"). The Charlatans still aren't the best band on the bloody planet, but they could be doing far worse.

>>> Jonathan Perry



DUB NARCOTIC SOUND SYSTEM MEETS THE JON SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION IN A DANCEHALL STYLE!

Sideways Soul

K

OUT:

September 14.

FILE UNDER:

Overcrowded, half-baked jams.

R.I.Y.L.:

JSBX's Extra Acme, encores where the opening band joins the headliner on stage.

It seemed like such a good idea on paper: bringing together the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, the hottest groove band in indie-rock, with Calvin Johnson of Dub Narcotic Sound System, whose google-eyed dub-inspired-but-not-Jamaican-style mixing improves with the strength of the grooves behind him. Spencer's trio had covered Dub Narc's "Fuck Shit Up" to fine effect, and Johnson had done a memorable remix of the Explosion's "Soul Typecast"; bits of these sessions ended up as a couple

of swell tracks on the Blues Explosion's *Acme*. But DNSSMTJSBEIADS! sounds like two bands playing at the same time, and pulling in different directions, which makes *Sideways Soul* annoyingly inchoate. The JSBX jams loosely on some riffs, most of which turned up on *Acme* as more finished songs, and Johnson tunelessly drawls out non-sequiturs until they break down. Sometimes he's pretty funny ("Your standing tall makes me wanna crawl between your woolly socks/like a woolly mammoth on the rocks"), but he almost never gives the Blues Explosion room, and the ten-minute noodle "Fudgy The Whale," complete with inept tambourine, gets tedious fast. The album could have been an interesting curio, a look into two bands' sketchbooks, but overlaid on each other, they just make a mess.

>>> Douglas Walk

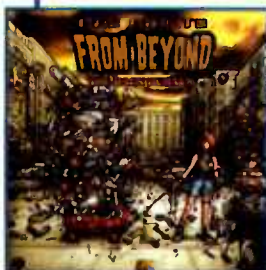
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GAS GIANTS
From Beyond The Back Burner
 Atomic Pop

The Gin Blossoms dropped off rock's radar when they broke up in early 1997. But any band with the tenacity to catapult themselves from an indistinguishable Tempe, Arizona college rock act to internationally known jangle-popsters swimming upstream in a river of grunge wouldn't just disappear. Gas Giants, formed by ex-Blossoms frontman Robin Wilson and drummer Philip Rhodes, pick up where the last Gin Blossoms CD, *Congratulations I'm Sorry*, left off, with the band attempting to

OUT:
 October 12.
FILE UNDER:
 Post-graduate rock, class of '89.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Gin Blossoms, the Connells, Velvet Crush.

toughen their power pop by adding less jangle and more stadium-rock guitar. Not that Wilson seems to be distancing himself too much from the Gin Blossoms' sound on the Gas Giants' debut; he hired his old band's producer, John Hampton, to work on *From Beyond The Back Burner*. Guitarist Daniel Hezerling even cops a riff or two from the Blossoms, enough for continuity's sake, and borrows the rest from the Aerosmith catalog. Wilson's still an obtuse lyricist, but thankfully, he has outgrown his hyperactive vibrato; it shows up occasionally here, but it's much less obtrusive than it used to be. The chord progressions are sophomoric at times, and although Wilson's melodies pull the songs together, the hooks don't really stick without great lyrics to hang on.

>>> Meredith Ochs



GET UP KIDS
Something To Write Home About Vagrant

If you arranged the current crop of punk/emo bands on a scale from the arty (Joan Of Arc) to the poppy (Samiam), the Get Up Kids would appear about three-quarters of the way toward the latter. They're not strictly verse-chorus-verse, but there's barely a touch of studio fragmentation or time-signature fussiness on this sophomore effort. (Exception: "I'm A Loner Dottie: A Rebel," whose bass-ackward rhythm recalls Braid.) Within their genre, their main oddity is the inclusion of keyboardist James Dewees as a full member,

OUT:
 September 28.
FILE UNDER:
 Pop-punk, anthemic and sensitive.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Superchunk, Promise Ring, Green Day.

supplying organ textures on "Action & Action" and edging "10 Minutes" into new wave territory. Beyond that, the band often resembles Superchunk, both in frontman Matt Pryor's underdog yawp and in the way they seize upon catchy choruses and run with them. But while it took the 'Chunk several albums to start downshifting, this crew already breaks up their anthems with power ballads ("Long Goodnight") and acoustic numbers ("Out Of Reach," which is more Paul Westerberg than Gastr Del Sol). The constant backing vocals are too uniformly sweet, and the guitars aren't the crispest ever recorded, but the up-front exuberance of "Holiday" and "My Apology" prove that there's still room for one more band "old enough to keep routine," but "child enough to scream."

>>> Franklin Bruno



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GORKY'S ZYGOTIC MYNCI
Spanish Dance Troupe *Beggars Banquet*

For a nanosecond in 1996, Gorky's Zygotic MynCI was trumpeted as an alternapop contender, frontrunners in a supposedly burgeoning Welsh scene. The arbiters of cool have since moved on, as has Gorky's big-time record label, yet the quartet continues to pursue a muse largely unchanged from the one that colored its earliest efforts in 1993. Which is to say, they occasionally catch lightning in a bottle amid waves of kitchen sink playfulness and willful obscurantism. In their more ebullient moments, Gorky's could pass for a demented overseas

offshoot of the Elephant 6 collective. On *Spanish Dance Troupe*, however, the band seldom aims for pop euphoria, opting instead for meandering mood pieces reminiscent of the '60s British hippie folkie set. Euros Childs's distinctively reedy voice (Robert Wyatt is a clear antecedent) meshes nicely with the gentle instrumentation to deliver several Medieval-tinged lullabies and, on "Faraway Eyes," an unlikely Eagles country-rock knockoff. Unfortunately, most of the 15 tracks flutter by without making an impression, as the CD comes across as four or five reasonably baked melodies interspersed with a series of musical interludes. *Spanish Dance Troupe* is a pleasant but unremarkable effort that is unlikely to win Gorky's Zygotic MynCI many fans beyond its cult base.

>>> Glen Sarvady



ICE-T
The Seventh Deadly Sin *Atomic Pop*

Hip-hop's comeback trail has, for the time being, been re-opened, and thanks to an apparent Grandfather clause in the gangsta contract, guest speakers outnumber non-"interlude" tracks on this program by nearly 2-1. But not even Jay-Z and a release on a pioneering Internet label can save the Iceberg here. Remember that HBO special a couple years back where Ice T showed up as the guest of honor at a pimp conference? Where he declared that if the hip-hop game ever fell through he could always go back to hustling? Well,

OUT:
October 12.

FILE UNDER:
Bargain bin hip-hop.

R.I.Y.L.:
Ice T's appearance in *Breakin', COPS*.

it might be time to go shopping for a pair of aquarium platform heels—or something equally questionable, like an acting career. Less a rapper than a monologist, Ice cops plot points that'll feel worn out to anyone familiar with his namesake, Iceberg Slim, and his skills are so innocuous that he often sounds like a guest on his own joint. The beats and sub-Wu Tang 101 hip-gothic productions fall flat, and the obligatory Biggie/Tupac memorial would've been dated last year. As Ice puts it, "Don't hate the player, hate the game." OK, then, I hate the game. But most of all, I hate this record.

>>> Carly Carioli



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reviews



OUT:

September 28.

FILE UNDER:

Late-night bedroom folk implosion.

R.I.Y.L.:

John Davis, Smog, Tobin Sprout.

JOHN STUART MILL

Forget Everything See Thru Broadcasting

Brainiac first blazed a red-hot trail through the rock club circuit nearly seven years ago, playing hyper-kinetic shows that re-imagined new wave and glam as percolating under-layers of stomping, boundless punk. Then, one night in 1997, stylish and subtly charismatic frontman Tim Taylor fatally crashed his car, leaving a gaping hole in the indie-rock community and effectively halting Brainiac's run. Guitarist John Schmersal has now re-emerged as John Stuart Mill, doing an abrupt musical about-face in the process. On *Forget Everything*, the

Ohio player sings 'n' strums, mostly in solitude, while ruminating on tangential topics or simply stringing together non-sequiturs. It's a terse album, clocking in at only 26 minutes, but even at that length, Schmersal comes up short on ideas. A few of the melodies repeat, and his wordplay strains at times; in one song, he drones on about a "love receptacle" to the point of overkill. Yet it's still a commendable debut, with a range that encompasses gloomy minimalism and rollicking indie-pop. The peppier tunes vary between solo guitar numbers and full-band arrangements, the latter of which will remind listeners of John Stuart Mill's Dayton neighbors, Guided By Voices. It's not quite what you'd expect from a former Brainiac, and that adds to the pleasant surprise.

>>> Richard Martin



OUT:

October 26.

FILE UNDER:

Morphine-drip singer-songwriters.

R.I.Y.L.:

Leonard Cohen, early Palace Bros.,
Bob Dylan's "Desolation Row."

SIMON JOYNER

The Lousy Dance

Truckstop

Omaha, Nebraska's Simon Joyner has been recording for over a decade, maturing into a songwriter whose turf is the soul's murkiest levels. On his last couple of albums, he's joined forces with Chicago producer Michel Krassner, who offsets Joyner's cracking, straining voice with cushions of tender instrumentation, this time an 11-piece ensemble of warmly recorded folk-rock instruments, strings and horns. Last year's double album *Yesterday Tomorrow And In Between* was hugely ambitious. *The Lousy Dance* is simply resigned—eight long, deliberate

songs about despair and ways to mask it temporarily. Joyner's words slowly stagger out of his mouth: It's as if they're blinking at daylight after a long dark night in a bar, forming into Dylanish flurries of bad-dream images. "The lonely boarder complains of being buried in his bed/The fortune teller nods and smiles as she unravels him some thread." Ultimately, most of these songs are somehow hopeful—even "Long Dark Night," turns out to be a paean to a lover who stays around until the morning. But pleasure, like everything else, is never uncomplicated for Joyner. And his all-too-human voice lets him get away with gestures that are bigger than they seem: he can sing "The streets of heaven are clean/But everything you'll ever touch is dirty" not as a fantasy or an accusation, but as a sad appraisal of fact.

>>> Douglas Wolk



KAHIMI KARIE

K.K.K.K.K.

Le Grand Magistry

Last year's eponymous domestic debut made a persuasive case for Kahimi Karie as Beck's feminine doppelgänger, capable of stealing sounds from just about anywhere and blending them for giddy pleasure. By compiling assorted Japanese tracks, *Kahimi Karie* provided a best-of for the uninitiated American. Now comes *K.K.K.K.K.*, a proper album, and it pales slightly if only because it's not cherry-picked highlights. The witty style-hopping introduced on *Kahimi Karie* continues, but *K.K.K.K.K.* is less intensely fun and, unavoidably, less alluringly new. It's only a

question of a few degrees of fabulousness, though. The album's hybrid of Shibuya-pop appropriation and '60s-inflected French pop neatly mirrors Karie's cross-cultural background, and her songwriter/producers—Scotland's Momus, France's Katrine, and the German/French band Stereo Total—provide eclectic but comparatively uncluttered settings for Karie's pillowtalk voice. Karie plays postmodern identity games amid the jazzy vaudeville of "Kahimi Karie Et Moi," and delivers a quirky Bananarama-esque version of "The Harder They Come." She's also a vehicle for Momus's infamous allusive wit: "One Thousand 20th Century Chairs," the album's best track, has Karie listening to *Odelay* while shredding a photobook of chairs. All of which give *K.K.K.K.K.* its own kitschy pleasures.

>>> Steve Kline

OUT:

October 26.

FILE UNDER:

Kitschy global synth-pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Pizzicato Five, Momus, Stereo Total, Beck.

Junior Kimbrough

Meet Me in the City

OUT:

September 21.

FILE UNDER:

Mississippi hill country blues.

R.I.Y.L.:

R.L. Burnside, Honeyboy Edwards, Clarence Brewer.

JUNIOR KIMBROUGH

Meet Me In The City

Fat Possum

For many years, the blues world seemed to forget that the heart of its musical tradition—raw, intense guitar playing and corresponding vocals from denizens of the Deep South—is still a living thing. So it was a mind-blower when Junior Kimbrough and Fat Possum labelmate R.L. Burnside were drawn out of their rural Mississippi obscurity to prove to outside ears that their blues were as hard, beautiful and lasting as a big old oak tree. Kimbrough, 62 years old when his first CD was issued and 67 when he died in 1998, ran a juke joint in the hill

country town of Holly Springs, playing and singing in an impossibly hypnotic, rough style. The title cut of *Meet Me In The City*, the second posthumous release of Kimbrough material and sixth overall, is a swaying, plaintive country moan, while other cuts are churning, raw-boned grooves—the rare meat of which rock 'n' roll is made. Half of the eight cuts are solos recorded by Kimbrough at home, while the rest include his basic two-man rhythm set-up—son Kenny Malone on drums and bassist Gary Burnside—in live settings. Despite generally miserable audio quality, this disc fully captures Kimbrough's passionate blues in its bare-knuckled glory.

>>> Bill Kistiuk

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KNOXVILLE GIRLS

Knoxville Girls

In The Red

You can trace the sound of NYC's Knoxville Girls back to the Cramps and Gun Club, who in turn borrowed from various late-'50s rockabilly bands and early '60s R&B artists, all of whom lifted licks from country and blues acts before them. That chain is continued with the Knoxville Girls, a NYC-based band made up of five guys who were part of the whole late-'70s/early-'80s garage-punk scene. Kid Congo Powers, who did time in Gun Club, Cramps and the Bad Seeds, and fellow guitarist Jack Martin, turn up the reverb and distortion, employ some

slide, and flat-out wail on the band's self-titled debut. Jerry Teel, late of the Honeymoon Killers and Chrome Cranks, squeals on harmonica and handles the workmanlike vocals. And Bob Bert, a former member of Sonic Youth and Pussy Galore, keeps things moving with his pounding backbeats while Barry London rounds things out with some farfisa organ. Standup bass (courtesy of Jerry O'Brien) enters the equation on "Warm And Tender Love," and "I Feel Better All Over" and helps lend some depth to the otherwise trebly mix. And, fittingly, Knoxville Girls bolster their own retro-roots compositions with a couple of well-chosen covers—Charlie Feathers' "Have You Ever" and George Jones' "He Stopped Loving Her Today"—as if to acknowledge their debt to the past.

>>> James Oliver Cury



OUT:

September 21.

FILE UNDER:

Twangy cowpunk-garage.

R.I.Y.L.:

Gun Club, Cramps, Chrome Cranks, Dura-Delinquent.

JOHN LINNELL

State Songs

Zöe-Rounder

Leave it to John Linnell—one half of They Might Be Giants—to write new anthems for 15 of the United States. Not that any of these wacky tunes would ever be considered for official acceptance. But with more than 16 years of experience playing eclectic post-punk pop bordering on avant-garde already under his belt, he's managed to craft yet another intriguing collection of quirky pop tunes—assuming you can get past the schticky theme and Linnell's unselfconsciously nerdy vocals (which grow on you). Of course, it seems like he's

chosen to honor the least hip states on purpose—Utah, Arkansas, South Carolina, and so on—avoiding music meccas like New York and California. Each state gets its own unique and irreverent treatment, lyrically and musically: "West Virginia" starts with sputtering organ and somehow works in the word "Rhododendron." "Idaho" could be an exotic lounge staple with its maraca-like percussion, and "Pennsylvania" plays vaguely abrasive violins and la-la-la-las off one another for about a minute. Even more impressive, Linnell's learned how to write music for those annoyingly loud merry-go-round instruments known as "band organs" and included the eerie carnival-esque results in four songs. All over the map, to be sure, but quite a fun ride nonetheless.

>>> James Oliver Cury



OUT:

October 26.

FILE UNDER:

Avant-pop for geography students.

R.I.Y.L.:

They Might Be Giants, Elvis Costello, "Weird Al" Yankovic.



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BOB LOG III

Trike

Fat Possum



OUT:

October 5.

FILE UNDER:

Blue balls.

R.I.Y.L.:

20 Miles, Cash Money, Porn To Rock

rusty dobro slide more or less intact. On *Trike*, though, Log's apparently fallen off his rocker. It's a concept disc whose central conceit is that he got women to play percussion by, ahem, clapping their tits together. Six of the disc's 17 tracks are taken up by "field recordings" of said breast slapping, which also figure prominently in "Clap Your Tits," "Booby Trap #1," and "Booby Trap #2." On "Show Time" and "You Wanna What?," Log hits a flatulent rut of burly de-tuned country slide interrupted by fits of drum-machine pique and vintage 808 handclaps. A couple of songs later he reverses the formula and goes for speed-blues and wipes out. *Trike* is infuriatingly awful.

>>> Carly Carioli

**OUT:**

October 26.

FILE UNDER:

Droll, languorous guitar shimmer.

R.I.Y.L.:

Velvet Underground, Yo La Tengo, Eels.

LUNA ★**The Days Of Our Nights**

Jericho

Poor Dean Wareham. Since his days fronting mope rockers Galaxie 500, he's been labelled as a sad sack. Yet he's always had a sly sense of humor, and with Luna's fifth album, he's not afraid to show his most playful side (evidenced by a song titled "U.S. Out Of My Pants!"). But Luna isn't just goofing off; the quartet shows a balance of playfulness and restraint. The soothing chorus and languid tempo of "Hello Little One" make it sound like an outtake from 1997's *Penthouse* (that's a good thing). Generally, the lyrics here are more

direct (and sadly a little less poetic) than we've come to expect from Wareham. Yet Luna grows more adventurous with its continuing experimentation with instrumentation. These songs are richly textured with keyboards, strings and exotic percussion, yet Luna's always crucial guitars don't get neglected either. There are some real gems here, like "Dear Diary," "Math Wiz" and "Superfreaky Memories," but *The Days Of Our Nights* unfortunately ends with two weak notes: "The Slow Song" is pretentiously sung in German, and Luna's cover of Guns N' Roses' "Sweet Child O' Mine" may seem like an interesting idea, but the novelty wears off quickly. Luna should be commended for playing around with new directions—some just work better than others.

>>> Wendy Mitchell

**OUT:**

October 26.

FILE UNDER:

Stoned soul psyche-rock picnic.

R.I.Y.L.:

Sonics, Monks, Makers, Dub Narcotic Sound System.

MAKE-UP**Save Yourself**

K

Up until now, the Make-Up have been known, roughly, as D.C. post-hardcore's long-awaited art-school answer to the Sonics: a faux-garage band masquerading as swishy French bicycle thieves who've OD'd on Monterey Pop. Listeners are encouraged to look beyond the official-sounding disinformation manifestos—anyone who buys the band's assertion about being a "gospel" group deserves to get a Swan Silvertones 78 implanted in their kiester—and skip to this year's double-LP singles comp, *I Want Some*, for an intro. And then to this disc,

wherein the Make-Up, adhering to a historically accurate development curve, enter their acid-folk/psych-rock phase, complete with a savage rave-up of the traditional "Hey Joe," here modified so that the unfaithful dead girl places a collect call to Joe from beyond the grave. Beefheartian soul surrealisms abound as Doctor Frankenstein appears to reanimate Ian Svenonius's eunuch screech. A few songs later, the procreational plot flips and Svenonius turns up preppers; the band plays "spot the 'Paint It Black' riff" and other proto-punk Stooze games; and in the disc's finest and most revealing moment, a horn section joins in as Ian yowls "I wanna be a big fish in a small pond—sock it to me baby!" then squeezes the metaphor until its sexual, consumerist, and music-biz connotations leak down his leg.

>>> Carly Carioli

I am the Antipop, the man you will not stop.

PRIMUS

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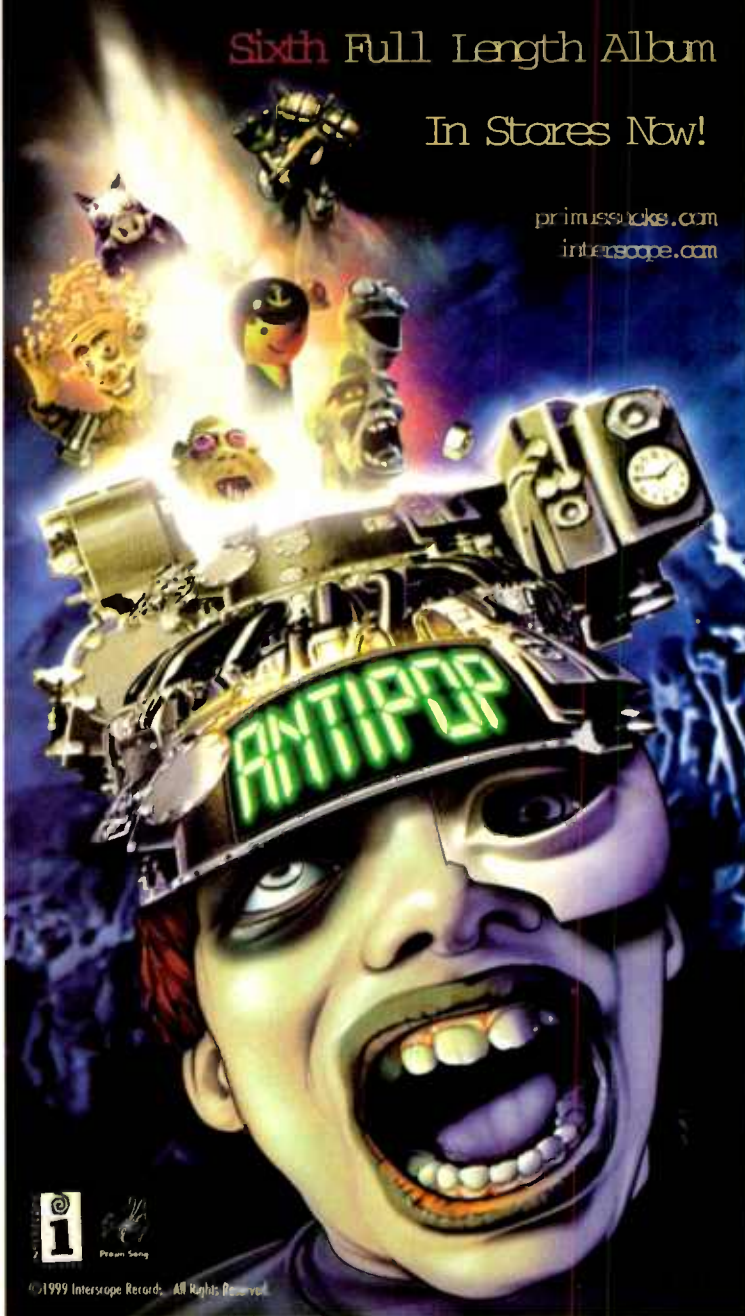
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ARCHER PREWITT 
White Sky Carrot Top

With *White Sky*, Archer Prewitt proves he's still a talented composer and a skillful arranger. That's the good news. The bad news for anyone hoping that Prewitt has cheered up since his last solo outing is that *White Sky* finds the former Coctails singer and Sea And Cake mainstay maintaining a wistful mood. In other words, those Nick Drake comparisons are here to stay. Prewitt strikes a heavy chord of melancholy, delivering downcast lyrics in compositions that wed breezy folk with sprightly jazz. Accordingly, *White Sky*

houses material that could serve as companion pieces to some of Drake's *Bryter Layter* work. For instance, the rollicking triplets that propel Prewitt's "Raise On High" seem to answer the delicate waves of Drake's "One Of These Things First." The album also showcases Prewitt's orchestral sensibilities at every turn. Horns punctuate "Shake," giving the song its white-boy soul. String swells give "Final Season" a lush grandeur. The rhythm section of drummer Steve Goulding, borrowed from the Mekons, and bassist Mark Greenberg, Prewitt's former Coctails pal, provides a firm anchor for the arrangements. The only disappointment is that Prewitt is so sparing in his use of Edith Frost's alluring voice—the hint of her that surfaces in "I'll Be Waiting" and "Last Summer Days" is a lovely tease. >>> Steve Gdula



PET SHOP BOYS
Nightlife Sire

It's their own fault: if Neil Tennant and Chris Lowe hadn't combined groove, wit, and warmth so perfectly on *Very* and *Bilingual*, *Nightlife* might seem like a refreshingly smart dance-pop album, not a moderate disappointment. There's no lack of musical variety here, from galloping house tracks and classic disco string crescendos (the overlong "New York City Boy") to "Boy Strange," a stew of bossa rhythms, acoustic (!) strumming, and sweeping, prog-rock synths. "For Your Own Good" and "I Don't Know What You Want But I Can't Give It Any

More" are typically athletic club fodder—too simplistic, harmonically and lyrically, to compete with the Boys' best. It's not that they've lost it: Tennant has described these songs as being intentionally less personal than previous material. Universal sentiments are fine, but it's dispiriting to hear the man behind "Red Letter Day" using "You're breaking my heart" and "I'm falling in love" as hooks. It's not all dire: "You Only Tell Me You Love Me When You're Drunk" is a very Stephin Merritt country-electropop hybrid, and the slinky "Vampires" is satisfyingly malevolent. But the duo aims low this time, and fans spoiled by their greatest work, which stimulates brain and booty simultaneously, may ask: What have we done to deserve this? >>> Franklin Bruno

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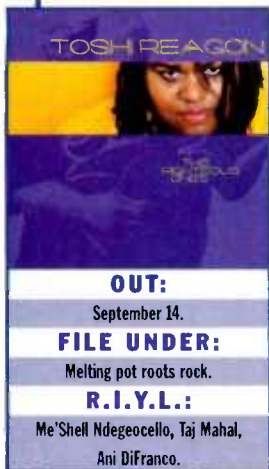
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RADAR BROS.
The Singing Hatchet See Thru Broadcasting

Recorded entirely in singer/guitarist Jim Putnam's garage, the latest from L.A.'s Radar Bros. is a marked step forward from the pleasant, but derivative, sad-core of earlier releases. Bassist Senon Williams and drummer Steve Goodfriend make solid contributions, but this is less a band album than Putnam's showcase, with nearly every song built up around his guitar (or piano). Everyday details ("Sleep with your pants on") jostle for space with several references to demons and "faceless creatures". Fortunately, Putnam's delicate melodic sense and

open, untheatrical singing keeps the stream-of-consciousness approach (and uniformly sedate tempos) safely clear of Will Oldham/Palace-style catatonia. Putnam also makes canny use of the home-studio format. We've heard the background of radio interference that begins "Tar The Roofs" on innumerable lo-fi projects, but soon, layers of synth-strings and casually executed harmonies (a signature element) make for a stranger, richer texture. The whole album works the same way: the first few songs skimp on variety, setting up the unexpected elements that creep in later, as on the dramatic "You're On An Island," or the (relatively) loud closer "Gas Station Down." Played next to a more traditionally produced album, these might not sound like much; in this controlled environment, they're nearly cathartic. >>> Franklin Bruno



TOSHI REAGON

The Righteous Ones

Razor & Tie

New Yorker Toshi Reagon has built a formidable reputation on the strength of her blistering live performances and her total disregard for musical boundaries. Her third CD suggests a myriad of reference points spanning genre, gender, race and era. The opening track, "Real Love," recalls the harmonies of Sweet Honey In The Rock, the legendary gospel group headed by Toshi's mother, Bernice Johnson Reagon, building from a soul chant into a shout-out guitar jam crescendo. Reagon returns to the funk vibe of "Real Love" later on *The*

Righteous One. From the straight-ahead barroom rocker "Like It That Way," to the reggae-tinged romance of "Darling," to the Living Color-esque hyper metal of "I'm Just An Egg Don't Mind Me" (the latter of which seems too much of a stylistic stretch), she's mixed things up with plenty of everything. Despite top-drawer ingredients, though, these recordings sound uncomfortably formal, as Reagon struggles to harness the fire that comes so easily to her on stage. Her passion audibly strains to burst free—and at times nearly does. But veterans of Reagon's club dates will have to rely on sweat-drenched memories to provide the spark missing on *The Righteous Ones*, and newcomers must settle for a somewhat stilted facsimile of her talents.

>>> Glen Savady



OUMOU SANGARE

Moussolou

World Circuit-Nonesuch

While *Moussolou* might seem new to most people in the States, it's actually a reissue of Sangare's 1989 debut album—the one that made her a star in her native Mali, long before Worotan introduced her to American audiences. Even a decade after the fact, it still stands as a remarkably powerful statement. Deeply rooted in the traditional music of the Wassoulou people of Southern Mali, both musically and instrumentally, the songs are layered over with contemporary touches of electric guitar and bass, and then

topped with Sangare's remarkable voice, which at times is reminiscent of the young Aretha Franklin. There's a lot of soul here — soul that comes through hard and loud, especially on "Diaraby Nene" ("Love Fever"), which just oozes sensuality. And there's history too: *Moussolou* (which means "Women") helped usher in a new era of consciousness for Malian women by presenting Sangare as a young woman who wasn't afraid to speak out and be heard. Rootsy without being bound to the past, it comes across as a glorious celebration as well as a declaration of independence—an inspiration for the women of Mali, as well as the first stirrings of the tremendous voice that would make Sangare the international star she's since become.

>>> Chris Nickson



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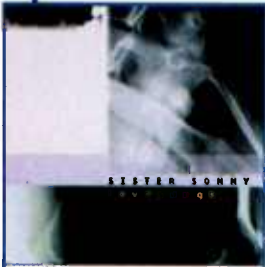
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SISTER SONNY
Lovesongs

Jetset

Sad songs say so much. At least that's what this New Jersey band is banking on with their debut album, *Lovesongs*. Each of the ten studied songs here maintains a deliberately slow pace. The lumbering rhythms are barely enough to induce a head nod, the echoed guitar notes express more flourish than melody, and Pedro Carmona-Alvarez's disaffected vocals sound purposely void of expression. Only the plush keyboard tones and occasional percussive bells add color to this otherwise bleak landscape. In the hands of bands like Codeine and Low, sustained tension,

carefully wrought, can speak volumes more than amps-to-11 rocking out. But while Sister Sonny captures the sound of slow-rock, that crucial tension proves elusive. The delicate guitar and percussive sounds of "Telephone" give it a Cocteau Twins-like feel, but never digs any deeper. On "M. Singalong," the band balances effects-laden vocals with a prettier-than-average guitar line, and the soporific result recalls the downer moments of Pink Floyd's *The Wall*. The next track, "Bossa Drug," has a hint of Floyd too, while its droning organ tones bring to mind more recent soft-psych explorers like Jessamine. The descriptive title "A Girl Is There, Her Boyfriend's There, And She Says" is attached to an instrumental that winds up being smothered in static, an apt metaphor for an album of sad songs that could have said a little more. >>> Lydia Vanderloo



OUT:

November 2.

FILE UNDER:

Coolly detached slo-core.

R.I.Y.L.:

Low, Idaho, Bedhead.

SMITHEREENS
God Save The Smithereens

Koch



OUT:

October 19.

FILE UNDER:

Classic guitar pop.

R.I.Y.L.:

Marshall Crenshaw, Elliott Smith, Elliott Murphy.

These courageous classic-pop troopers from New Jersey raise their flag on the genre-torn Iwo Jima of the current music scene, plying the same Beatles, Beach Boys and Mersey Beat influenced sound they've delivered faithfully for 20 years. It's the sound of innocence—all hooks and heart—echoing the pre-Vietnam-era bliss of the early '60s. The Smithereens only concession to the present—besides their slash 'n' snarl guitar attack—is a dark worldview that rises in the hopelessness of the heartbreak that remains a favorite

theme of their ballads. Songs like the single "She's Got A Way," "Flowers In The Blood," and "Everything Changes" erase the five years since their last effort with the bright-eyed zeal of ringing guitar intros and the gently swinging feel of circular chord progressions. The flourishes of sax and trumpet that singer Pat DiNizio experimented with on his 1997 solo CD *Songs And Sounds* reappear, adding flesh to a soulful cover of Billie Holiday's "Gloomy Sunday" and the woefully sad "Try." Although all four bandmates had a hand in writing these 13 numbers, it's DiNizio's hopelessly romantic pessimism and supple vocal melodies that are the band's spirit. He's a reincarnation of Buddy Holly, with a kiss of strychnine in his veins. >>> Ted Drozdowski

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STONE TEMPLE PILOTS

STONE TEMPLE PILOTS
No. 4

Atlantic



No. 4

OUT:

October 28.

FILE UNDER:

Grunge glam.

R.I.Y.L.:

Alice In Chains, Chris Cornell, Creed.

For all the shit they took for being Seattle soundalikes on their first album, Stone Temple Pilots had developed a distinctive classic glam-rock sound by their third album, 1996's *Tiny Music*, just before singer Weiland's heroin problem put the band on a temporary hiatus. Which is why the Alice In Chains and Jane's Addiction knockoffs on *No. 4*—do call it a comeback—are so disappointing. "Heaven And Hot Rods" does Alice's "Dam That River" to the bone, and if the nasal-sounding vocal smears on "Pruno" and "No Way Out" aren't Perry Farrell cops,

then I'm Dave Navarro. STP are so much better when they chuck the riff-rock: the "Interstate Love Song" update "Church On Tuesday" is truly artful, and "Sour Girl" is an imaginative, brisk piece of harmony-laden folk-rock—Harry Nilsson meets Zeppelin?—that really plays to their strengths. Appropriately, it's a Gram Parsons feel that shapes the addiction tale "I Got You," and a spot-on Jim Morrison imitation by Weiland that gives the orchestrated "Atlanta" its *Soft Parade* buoyancy. A Tom Verlaine-approved guitar gaggle opens "Glide," an epic art-rock opus that's easily one of the band's finest moments. It's frustrating: stripped of their grunge affectations, STP are a talented band who write great, sometimes even brilliant, classic rock music. So why are they still struggling to get out of their own way? >>> James Rotondi



DJ T-ROCK
Who's Your Daddy Bomb Hip-Hop

The latest scratching scion to gain the blessing of San Francisco's Bomb Hip-Hop label is DJ T-Rock. Like many of his peers, T-Rock matches tongue-in-cheek irreverence with deft technical skills. However, now that turntablism is no longer just the next big thing, DJs face a tougher challenge in trying to push their cutting-edge craft in new directions. While T-Rock's acumen on the crossfader is impressive, these recordings never rise above the mean in the realm of contemporary turntablism. The true challenge for a DJ is mastering the

OUT:
October 5.
FILE UNDER:
Scratch turntablism.
R.I.Y.L.:
DJ Craze, DJ Faust, DJ Q-Bert.

musical and rhythmic language of scratching, not just learning the wicky-wicky DJ skills that are easily attained by anyone who's willing to put in the time. T-Rock does admirably on playful cuts like "Doo Doo On Yourself" and "The Stupid Def Message." He has a knack for stacking layers of sound that give the tracks a dynamic quality of constant movement and friction. Elsewhere, in "Annihilator Robot," "The Constancy of Speed" and "B-Boyin' On the Beat," he simply uses the same combinations of multi-tracked layering, self-produced beats, sci-fi snippets and swift scratches—impressive, no doubt, but not quite innovative enough, and too repetitive. With similar techniques being flexed by his turntablist peers like DJ Craze and Q-Bert, T-Rock's needle doesn't really burn, it merely smolders.

>>> Oliver Wang



MICK TURNER
Marlan Rosa Drag City

Where '70s drone rockers Hawkwind were warriors on the edge of time, Dirty Three guitarist Mick Turner is a warrior on the edge of song. Or drone. Or jam. Or tune. Or starting the day. His music is everything but something playing Stratego with the tentative tune-ups, shimmery wind-downs and one-minute vignettes that Hawkwind used to get between space jams. So the only way he sounds anything like how people remember Hawkwind is that his name recalls their vocalist Nik Turner. That's because Mick steadfastly eschews

OUT:
September 28.
FILE UNDER:
Post-rockin' pre-songs.
R.I.Y.L.:
John Fahey, Jim O'Rourke,
Dirty Three.

collective pop music memory in favor of a personal preoccupation with parts, maybe even individual notes of songs past (the first note of "Borracho Sol I" sounds like the first note of M's "Pop Muzik"). With nine of the 15 tracks clocking in under 2:45 (some of which abruptly fall off the edge rather than meet a timely end), it's not as if his improvisations (too loose to be called études) take these preoccupations anywhere in particular. They simply follow an emotional logic known only to Turner and the few shut-ins who will buy this record. The rest of us can proceed directly to the song "El Arbol," where all the blissed out tricks (textual disruptions, harmonicas in the belly of the whale, why-are-you-sad piano tinkles) come together to cry on your shoulder.

>>> Kevin John

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VERMONT
Living Together Kindercore

Two Promise Ringers get all Simon and Garfunkely on unplugged side-project distraction; Generation Why wonders why, for instance, "The stars at night and the things you say...never go away." Sweet kids, really, even if they occasionally sound like they've borrowed their deep thoughts from a Hallmark card. Vermont rule number one: Play word games while the object of your affection plays hard to get. Example: The guy waiting for the girl who won't come around ("Bee, Leave Me Be," which finds the Ringers flipping

OUT:
September 28.
FILE UNDER:
Emo-lite.
R.I.Y.L.:
Promise Ring, Promise Ring,
Promise Ring.

their trademark lyrical pseudo-palindromes). Rule two: Remember to phrase your answers in the form of a question, such as "Where will it go?" (Simon, or perhaps Garfunkel, wondering about the fate of his long-distance relationship in "Where Planes Come Down"); "How do I explain?" (Garfunkel, or is it Simon?, at a loss for words in "Tiny White Crosses"); or, perhaps most importantly, "I wonder if any Indiana Jones movies come on tonight?" ("Indiana Jones"). Tinkly acoustic guitars sound like Promise Ring hooks transcribed for beginners—linear type prog-indie progressions that turn verses into choruses, or choruses into Verse, which is not to say vice versa—with occasional piano lessons given in background.

>>> Carly Carioli



While many of his Parisian counterparts search for the next funky, filtered, disco-tech-house anthem, **Kid Loco** is taking up, chilling out, and taking your mind on a voyage into a more serene and sedated realm of electronic dance music. He's France's answer to Austria's Kruder & Dorfmeister and America's Thievery Corporation—a DJ and producer whose affections

for blissful downtempo tunes has made him one of the figureheads for a new breed of chill out music that takes its cues from ambient, hip-hop, jazz, bossa nova and breakbeat. His own productions continue to impress, and his first DJ mix, the latest in Studio K7's outstanding **DJ Kicks** series, gives listeners an overview of Kid's current inspirations and influences. As far as DJ mixes go, Loco's set is an erratic one, travelling through the ambient dub of Cinematic Orchestra, the symphonic hip-hop of DJ Vadim and the psychedelic breakbeat of Tongue. While Loco's deck skills make the journey a smooth one, his obvious focus is content over seamless consistency. The energy lies not in his aptitude for ingenious mixes, but in his rare ability to create a mood that simultaneously soothes and stimulates the cranium. A wonderful addition to *DJ Kicks* and a perfect after-party mix.... Having risen to prominence in underground New York clubs soon after the fiery demise of disco, "house" sits as the Methuselah of current dance music genres. But while the style has existed for two decades, its relatively simple formula—soulful overtones, throbbing backbeats and electronic inspiration—gives enterprising artists plenty of opportunity to teach the old dog some fresh new tricks on a consistent basis. Germany's **Terry Lee Brown Jr.**, for example (along with contemporaries such as Timewriter and Terry Francis), has championed the bastard breed known as tech-house, a recent incarnation that marries the warm, endearing hues of house with the cold, synthetic crunch of techno (old-school vibes with a futuristic flair). TLB (real name, Norman Feller) is most lauded in the camp for his work as a remixer and producer, but

Terry's Café 2 (Plastic City), his second domestically-available DJ mix, proves him to be a master of all his trades. Inside the 16-track mix, TLB takes your body on a tour of melodies that drift higher than Everest and grooves that run deeper than the Dead Sea, coloring the landscapes with jubilant disco swirls and dark techno shadows throughout. Original cuts and remixes from like-minded artists including



Danny Tenaglia, Junior Sanchez, and Terry Francis are the main attractions on TLB's funky aural exploration.... On the other extreme of the genre resides DJ **Mark Farina**, a San Francisco treat famous for his barnstorming brand of funky, disco-influenced house. Farina is a stickler for tradition and holds a deep affinity for music that embraces "live" instrumentation and a synergy of synthetic and organic sound. **San Francisco Sessions Vol. 1** (Om), his newest offering, is a smooth and sensual set that finds a flurry of guitar funk, flute serenades, brass melodies and vocal croons riding high over a sizzling concoction of soulful bass and beats. Juicy grooves and positive vibes only grown on the West Coast.

RICHIE HAWTIN

DECKS, EFX & 909



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FATHER AFRIKKA BAMBAATAA

"Most people in music make interesting records, and you like or dislike them. But then there are a very few people that come along, and completely and utterly change everything. They alter the way you think, and culturally effect us in the deepest sense. John Lennon is one of those people. John Lydon. Sun Ra. And Afrika Bambaataa is as well."

— Neil Barnes, Leftfield

The next time the United Nations taps a pop musician to play cultural attaché, they'd be hard pressed to find a more suitable candidate than Afrika Bambaataa. A DJ and producer with a knack for fusing genres, the hip-hop pioneer may not fill out a Union Jack bustier with the flair of Ginger Spice, but for a quarter century he's packed floors with dancers of all races. His accomplishments for 1999 alone—collaborations with artists from Germany, England, Brazil, and the US—read like a casting call for the electro-funk version of "It's A Small World."

Along with Kool DJ Herc and Grandmaster Flash, Bambaataa was among the vanguard of turntable innovators that emerged at the dawn of rap music in the South Bronx in the mid-'70s. While Flash was renown for his flamboyant cutting and scratching, Bambaataa's sets were defined by unsurpassed eclecticism and an unwavering dedication to preserving funk—even during the heyday of disco.

"I've got to give props to my mother," says Bambaataa humbly today. In addition to James Brown, Motown and Stax, her record collection included "the Rolling Stones, the Beatles, Edith Piaf and Barbra Streisand, Miriam Makeba, Harry Belafonte, and Mighty Sparrow." These slabs of wax provided the foundation for the library that earned Bambaataa the title "The Master of Records." "She bought the first 200," he chuckles, "and then I started collecting billions of things."

"According to Bambaataa, hip-hop was a universal experience from the beginning," says DJ Soul Slinger, who recently paired with him for "FIRE" on *Funk: This Is Jungle Sky Vol. 6* (Liquid Sky Music). "Hip-hop was made by Puerto Ricans, Africans, a mix up of [ghetto] people." Bambaataa's programming in the playgrounds and parks reflected this melting-pot consciousness. And as the leader of the Zulu Nation (founded in 1975), he harnessed hip-hop culture as a force for political and social change, offering a peaceful alternative to the violence of gang life. His adopted moniker, borrowed from a 19th century Zulu chief, translates roughly as "affectionate leader," and today the Zulu Nation's members include not only the likes of Soul Slinger and WestBam, but also members of the influential Native Tongues posse.

When hip-hop began to infiltrate downtown New York in the '80s, Bambaataa was there, too, rocking a cross-section of b-boys, distaff new wavers, disgruntled punks and coked-out socialites at the Roxy's Friday night Wheels of Steel parties. "People that came to hear Afrika Bambaataa had to be progressive minded," he insists. "They knew they were going to hear a lot of weird shit." One minute, he might drop a Coca-Cola jingle, then revisit the roots of rap with "The Clapping Song" by Shirley Ellis or "Here Comes the Judge" by Pigmeat Markham. "I had a vision, trying to build up the universal Zulu Nation, and keep people aware as well as having fun and partying."

Although the only surviving document of this period in Bambaataa's career is a semi-legit bootleg entitled *Death Mix*, his influence as a DJ is still felt to this day. (A fresh Bambaataa mix compilation is due soon from DMC's *United DJs of America* series.) "Death Mix was an absolutely visionary record for me," gushes Maximilian Lenz; his performing alias, WestBam, is a contraction of Bambaataa and Westphalia (his German hometown). Listening to the way Bambaataa cut up snippets of James Brown or Yellow Magic Orchestra into impromptu compositions on the decks, Lenz realized the full potential of the DJ's art.

"Although it seems like two different worlds, I saw the relationship between the hip-hop culture and techno and house culture," says the man responsible for the international rave holidays Love Parade and May Day. "It goes back to people like Bam." That connection was further reinforced on WestBam's domestic debut *We'll Never Stop Living This Way* (Low Spirit-Mute), which features two Bam/Bam collaborations: "Agharta, The City of Shamballa" and "Beatbox Rocker."

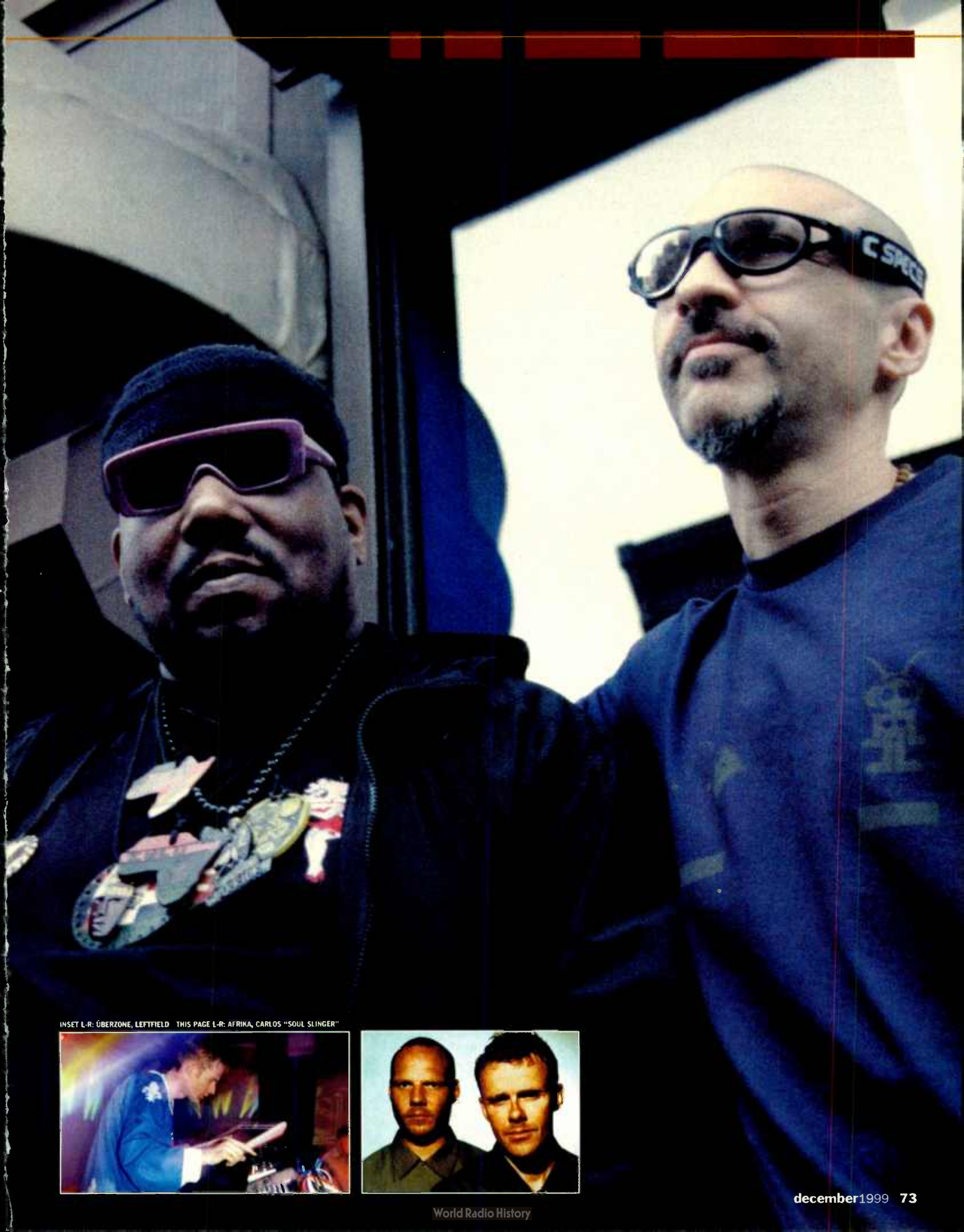
In 1982, Bambaataa was catapulted out of the underground by the Arthur Baker-produced hit "Planet Rock." This groundbreaking fusion of hip-hop breaks with icy synthesizer lines lifted from Kraftwerk classics laid the blueprint for the genre dubbed "electro," which later influenced Miami bass and Detroit techno. "Looking back at my record collection, I can't come up with a better example of a more direct influence on what I'm doing now than 'Planet Rock,'" says Q from Uberzone, who scored a club hit ("2 kool 4 skool" on City of Angels) last summer with Bambaataa and the Soul Sonic Force. "He was utilizing electronic technology, but still concentrating on the funkiness."

Although he acknowledges a debt to the German quartet, Bambaataa frets that history over-emphasized the contributions of Kraftwerk to his aesthetic. "Kraftwerk was one part of a sound," says Bam, who also gives props to Gary Numan and Yellow Magic Orchestra. "I looked around electronic music and said 'Wait a minute—there ain't no black people doin' this!' I wanted to get an electronic sound with a lot of funk and heavy bass. My main influence is James Brown, Sly & The Family Stone, and Uncle George Clinton's Parliament/Funkadelic."

Throughout the '80s and '90s, he continued to work with a wide array of collaborators: James Brown, Bill Laswell, George Clinton, Bootsy Collins, Nona Hendryx, UB40, Yellowman, even Boy George. "Bam is someone who has an enormous output," remarks Neil Barnes of Leftfield, who roped in the Master of Records for the pre-millennial tension of "Afrika Shox" on their new *Rhythm And Stealth* (Hard Hands-Columbia). "He's worked with all types of people, all over the world." And who could forget "World Destruction" by Time Zone, the rapper's 1984 square-off with John Lydon of Public Image Ltd.? "That was a revolutionary thing...so far ahead of its time that I think it went over people's heads," says Barnes.

"The man is completely, utterly unfazed by any musical trends. And you've got to give people like that real respect, because they're aren't that many of them around."

Kurt B. Reighley is missed greatly in our office.



INSET L-R: ÜBERZONE, LEFTFIELD THIS PAGE L-R: AFRIKA, CARLOS "SOUL SLINGER"



EL DeBARGE

A FALSETTO FROM OUTER SPACE AND A JHERI CURL FROM HELL

Like many other hopefuls who wished to turn their geekiness into a career, I began to read music critic Robert Christgau obsessively. Reading his '80s roundup in an early 1990 *Village Voice*, I discovered his seventh favorite record of the decade was DeBarge's *In A Special Way* (Gordy, '83).

Hmmm. I bought a copy of it for about two bucks and found it revolting. It sounded like the cheesiest, most characterless product imaginable. But the best way to learn about pop music is simply to find out what people liked and figure out why they liked it.

So I listened hard. Maybe they were gladly imprisoning themselves in the Motown tradition like mad formalists. Maybe the lyrics were actually a subversive "something else" that the pop sheen managed to smuggle onto the charts. All bullshit. And then it happened.

I unhooked my grip on meaning and let myself float up into the zero gravity chamber that is the DeBarge sound. Here's what Eno's *Another Green World* might have sounded like had he broken off from The Stylistics instead of Roxy Music to obey his ambient muse. Oh god, those falsetto harmonies! Where The Kinks reached their apotheosis with the high-pitched contrapuntal singing of "Waterloo Sunset," DeBarge blanketed everything in a similar vocalese. They

Such genius arouses the suspicion that you've been had, that you're reading too deep, that you're Christgau's puppet.

did their best work ad-libbing nonsense in the codas and fade-outs, billowing up incomprehensibilities into the stratosphere and fashioning a sort of flustered Fantasyland out of the ether. These people had dreams; there were clouds in their cheese.

As lovely as all this was, it was next to impossible trying to share this music with others. The easiest route, of course, is invocations of genius. If DeBarge had one, it was El (né Eldra). He wrote most of the songs, played keyboards and his falsetto made you die. But genius is easier to gauge empirically when it's self-conscious and El rarely showed any such signs. What kind of self-conscious genius would portion out some of the songwriting to hacks like Diane Warren, or allow session men to play the rest of the instruments? Write nothing beyond "I love you" lyrics, use old songs on new albums or wear such ridiculous clothes on album covers?

Sister Bunny deserved the genius label just as much as El. She wrote and sang their best ever song, "A Dream," a song so gut-wrenchingly gorgeous that Mary J. Blige needed a gospel choir to approximate its majesty when she covered it on the *Money Talks* soundtrack. It's the most beautiful song in the history of popular music.

Such genius arouses the suspicion that you've been had, that you're reading too deep, that you're Christgau's puppet. But this is what it's like being a fan of '80s music. What made the best of it so unique was that there seemed to be no necessary relation between how the music made you cry or dance or think and the very techniques that elicited those responses. At the center was a sometimes carefully cultivated anonymity, a simultaneously edifying and terrifying void epitomized by New Order but definitely at play in DeBarge. We can't hear what Eldra thinks (and thus how we're supposed to think) about his music because for him, placing a swell here or a break there is as coldly logical as the constant



reframing in Otto Preminger's films. If we feel that it's anything but cold, well that's our problem. Of course, it didn't help that my generation (the generation that came of age in the '80s and early '90s) was constantly being told that our culture was derivative, nothing we could call our own. Depriving us of our voice made it all the more difficult to uphold, say, rap or new wave as something unique. In the case of DeBarge, I couldn't even convince my peers.

All of this is easier to accept today in the ego-obliterating age of electronica and the soulscapes of Maxwell and D'Angelo. But the question still nags: does Eldra know he's a genius? In 1994, he released *Heart, Mind & Soul* and for once, there was that air of unspecified dread in "I'll Be There" and a soaring smoochscape in "Special Lady" and a tangential listening experience in "You Are My Dream." Can't you hear it?

Okay, you probably can't. But if we're to think of sampling as a form of post-modern criticism, then indeed DeBarge have finally gotten their due. Biggie Smalls, Da Brat, Mase, Tupac and Blackstreet have all sampled my beloveds, the latter two sampling "A Dream" itself. So okay, Generation X sucked. We mourned our division between lines of race, class, gender, genre, sexuality, whatever else ya got, but were too apathetic to do anything about it. And I still can't think for myself, scamming copies of every CD in Christgau's Consumer Guide. But when I hear those samples, I know I've found my point where I exhale.

When Kevin John isn't dancing to the "Rhythm of the Night" he's writing in Milwaukee.



METAL REVIEW OF THE MONTH

MORTIIS

The Stargate

Earache

Metal has evolved to a certain level of maturity and security that allows the movement to embrace an artist who embodies its ideals with almost none of the structural trappings. Mortuus, the exiled former bassist of Emperor, has created a cult following so large he is now the paramount shining hope of Earache Records (also home to Napalm Death and Morbid Angel). Never mind that he's an electronic ambient musician with an eye-popping back catalog utterly devoid of guitar, drums, or any vocals other than the occasional meditative drone. The key is Mr. Mortuus' image and bubbling lyrical concepts, which began with Emperor's "I Am The Black Wizards" and now continue through Tolkein-inspired realms to the outer dimensions of *The Stargate*. The kicker is that for all this context, *The Stargate* isn't even a very heavy record—it's a fantastical and heroic volume of chants and medieval heraldry. This is where to come looting if Hercules or Xena ever need big-screen soundtracks. Earlier Mortuus volumes like *Ånden Som Gjorde Opprør* would creep slowly across 20-minute songs, holding court with rich atmosphere and cheesy surprises. *The Stargate* soars lightly through eight numbers, all dancing on synthesizers and imagination. I would gladly run out and buy this for my non-existent children, pausing only to prepare an explanation for the oddly-titled "(Passing By) An Old and Raped Village." *The Stargate's* storyline even supports this impulse by making its protagonist a "child of curiosity" who seeks the council of a withered old geezer. Whatever effect the mass success of this deeply engrossing pointy-nosed Norwegian will have on American culture can only be good. Best to stock up on 12-sided dice.

METAL TOP 25

	band	album	label
1	SEVENDUST	Home	TVT
2	TYPE O NEGATIVE	World Coming Down	Roadrunner
3	MACHINE HEAD	The Burning Red	Roadrunner
4	COAL CHAMBER	Chamber Music	Roadrunner
5	SLIPKNOT	Slipknot	Roadrunner
6	VISION OF DISORDER	For The Bleeders	Go Kart
7	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Never Give In: A Tribute To Bad Brains	Century Media
8	TRIAL	Are These Our Lives?	Equal Vision
9	CANDIRIA	Process Of Self Development	MIA
10	SIX FEET UNDER	Maximum Violence	Metal Blade
11	CODESEVEN	Division Of Labor	The Music Cartel
12	FILTER	Title Of Record	Reprise
13	SAMAEI	Eternal	Century Media
14	MEGADETH	Risk	Capitol
15	ANGELCORPSE	The Inexorable	Olympic-Slipdisc
16	POWERMAN 5000	Tonight The Stars Revolt!	DreamWorks
17	AMEN	Amen	Roadrunner
18	ZAO	Liberate Te Ex Inferis	Solid State-Tooth & Nail
19	UNIDA	Coping With The Urban Coyote	Man's Ruin
20	MORTICIAN	Chainsaw Dismemberment	Relapse
21	ICED EARTH	Alive In Athens	Century Media
22	IN FLAMES	Colony	Nuclear Blast America
23	HYPOCRISY	Hypocrisy	Nuclear Blast America
24	P.O.D.	The Fundamental Elements of Sex	Atlantic
25	DOPE	Felons And Revolutionaries	Flip-Epic

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

METAL LIVE

>>> If you're gorging on a tubercular diet of death metal, it's refreshing to taste a dose of something catchy once in a while without letting loose the three-tined specialty fork of Blood, Death and Satan. For easy access, nothing beats **Cannibal Corpse**. On *Bloodthirst* (Metal Blade) the reliable crew has again managed to formulate a lo-cal version of supreme churning heaviness. C'mon, this is Jim Carrey's favorite death metal band, after all; it's utterly convincing without being challenging. These compliments are not entirely back-handed, either: I want to hear real metal in airport terminals as much as the rest of you, and right now this is our best bet... While the last vestiges of Neurosis and Unsane still exist in tour vans somewhere in middle America, both bands have been waiting for a few years to be blown away by someone like **Will Haven**. While the California quartet shows every sign of wanting to metamorphosize into a shitty commercial groove metal outfit

once shown the first flicker of money, in the present tense it is a thorny dissonant metal mess that recalls Fear Factory as recreated in a Sacramento snuff shack. **WHVN** (Revelation) has the slamming death boogie of Buzzoven, the pull of early Die Kreuzen, and a real asset in the glass-spitting vocals of Grady Avenell. Plus they seem to have girls as friends... With metal crossing over with both legs into the kinky scenes of power electronics and harsh noise, it would do many a banger good to fetch *Bananafish #13* (\$10 to Bananafish, Box 424762, San Francisco, CA 94142-4762). There are stray copies of this "thinking man's Slayer mag" left in the "lucky" dryer of most every important Laundromat in America. If the 154 pages of meticulous nonsense don't shine your spikes, the accompanying CD drives the point home like a nail through a Norwegian forehead: chaos rules! Listen here to treachery by Ilhan Mimaroglu, AZ and William Winant. Hey, he plays in Mr. Bungle!

DANCE REVIEW OF THE MONTH

Stewart Walker
Stables

STEWART WALKER

Stables (CD/LP) (Force Inc./Mille Plateaux/Tektite)

Art forms never dwell in isolation, and electronic music is no exception. Often though, it inhabits a temporary autonomous zone. This is where the delicate, crystalline music of Stewart Walker thrives. Having released a number of singles on his own label, Tektite Recordings, his first full length is a wondrous, hypnotic adventure into electronic movement. Basing *Stables* on the motion of sculptor Alexander Calder's giant mobiles, Walker has fashioned one of the most compelling minimalist electronic records of the year. "Missing Winter" opens the album with kick drums as soft as raindrops and a battery of muffled handclaps disappearing into the horizon. Walker understands that he's got to at least induce a head nod if he wants to keep your attention, and the expertly tweaked "Losing Form" does that with a style that is wholly unique. Here, he uses a snippet from Hashim's electro-funk classic "Al-Naayfish (The Soul)" by Hashim and stretches it across a canyon of bubbling analog funk. Walker has an unusual ability to change the scale of his tracks from the microscopic to the gargantuan with one fell swoop. "Classic Science Fiction" opens with a flattened, rounded kick drum, compressed as thin as a paper cut, then suddenly opens upon a wide vista, with metallic, but never harsh, synth chords that seem to stretch beyond the vanishing point. There is a calculated precision in these tracks, yet they never sound mechanized or robotic. Walker does for minimalist electronics what Brian Eno did for ambient music, only he fashions his complete sound environments with nothing but drums and percussion.

DANCE NOW

>>> **ELSEWHERE** - One label keeping drum 'n' bass alive is Paul Arnold's critically acclaimed Certificate 18, which gave birth to the careers of Photek and Source Direct among others. The label's new Electronic Projects imprint kicks off with this writer's EP of the year: *Tonic* by **Pilote**. Pilote is one Stuart Cullen, who's recorded a mesmerizing, beautiful gem of a record. Situated halfway between the techno pastorals of Boards of Canada and the live free jazz-inspired drums of Fourtet and Fridge, Pilote's music is centered around heart-rending minor-key chord changes, skeletal percussion, and drums that sound as if they were recorded in an empty opera house. "Up Or Down" is this three-track EP's centerpiece, an aching, desolate jewel with some gently simmering organ chords filling in the empty spaces between the drum strikes. The title track opens with a crackling, buzz-saw synth, buffered by a tough, deferred breakbeat before the sweeping, angelic synth chords arrive, entering the mix like ghosts who've returned with plaintive

DANCE TOP 25

	band	album	label
1	BASEMENT JAXX	Remedy	XL-Astralwerks
2	BREAKBEAT ERA	Ultra-Obscene	XL/1500/A&M-Interscope
3	JOSH WINK	Profound Sounds Vol. 1	Ovum/Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRG
4	µ-ZIQ	Royal Astronomy	Astralwerks
5	TRICKY WITH DJ MURRS AND GREASE	Juxtapose	Island-IDJMG
6	LAMB	Fear Of Fours	Fontana/Mercury-IDJMG
7	AUTECHRE	EP7	Nothing-Interscope
8	CHEMICAL BROTHERS	Surrender	Astralwerks
9	AIR	Premiers Symptomes (EP)	Source-Astralwerks
10	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Unknown Words	Astralwerks
11	MOBY	Play	V2
12	DECODED FEEDBACK	Evolution	Metropolis
13	FRESHMAKA	I Am The Freshmaka	Moonshine
14	URSULA 1000	The Now Sound Of Ursula 1000	Eighteenth Street Lounge
15	INNERZONE ORCHESTRA	Programmed	Planet E-Astralwerks
16	MING & FS	Hell's Kitchen	Om
17	SQUAREPUSHER	Maximum Priest (EP)	Warp/Nothing-Interscope
18	WISEGUYS	The Antidote	Wall Of Sound/Ideal-Mammoth
19	SNOG	Third Malt From The Sun	Metropolis
20	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Cybonøtix 1999	OSBP
21	CARL COX	Phuture 2000	Moonshine
22	VELVET ACIO CHRIST	Fun With Knives	Metropolis
23	TARWATER	Silur	Mute
24	PLATEAU	Spacecake	Metropolis
25	PLAID	Rest Proof Clockwork	Nothing-Interscope

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

voices. Reminiscent of both early Black Dog singles and New Order circa *Ceremony*, this wondrous track won't leave your head easily. Hyperbole aside, this is a blueprint for where compositional electronic dance music should be heading. The forthcoming Pilote full-length, *Antenna*, promises to be an auspicious album debut... At the risk of boring the reader, I must again emphasize the extraordinary amount of electronic musical activity taking place in Cologne, Germany in the present moment. With such a renaissance underway, it is impossible to keep track of all that emerges from the city. So one of Cologne's most influential labels, Kompakt, has released a collection of tracks by some of the city's most innovative artists. *Total 1* moves from the hard tech-house strains of **Dettinger's** "Infarkt" and "Blond" (from his highly recommended *Intershop* full-length) to the angular, spiky textures of **T. Raumschmiere's** "Ost-Strom" and **Mathias Schaffhauser's** "Some Kind Of." There's never a dull moment with the Kompakt crew, who navigate the ultra-minimalist electric funk terrain with a remarkable dexterity.



HIP-HOP REVIEW OF THE MONTH

SWOLLEN MEMBERS

Balance Battle Axe

Although the Swollen Members (rappers Madchild and Prevail and producer Zodak) hail from Vancouver, they hold more stylistic and geographic allegiance to San Francisco and Los Angeles than to more logical locales like Seattle and Olympia. After several singles on their own Battle Axe label, they now unleash *Balance*, a great overview of what this crew (and their highly talented friends) is all about. Probably the best work on the album is done with help from the Bay Area, with production by NYC transplant Paul Nice (the keyboard-drenched, abstract and mysterious "Lady Venom" and the catchy strut of "Sinful Bliss") and Oakland's finest, Del, who freaks a distorted, tweaked bass and raps on the excellent "Left Field" (with crazy cuts by Mixmaster Mike). Los Angeles is also in the house: Dilated Peoples' Evidence and Iriscience appear on "Counter Parts" and "Bottle Rocket" (albeit with less-dope-than-usual music by producer Evidence) and Kemo (with rap help by Saafir, Thirdrail, Big Nous and Funkdoobiest's Son Doobie) gives them the excellent "Valentine's Day Massacre" and "Committed." Not to be overshadowed themselves, "Bless And Destroy" and "Battle Axe Experiment" (produced by Zodak) are all up there with the rest of it. A defiantly independent aesthetic pervading every track, *Balance* is just that—a mix of great lyricism and music.

HIP-HOP NEWS

>>>Back from a brief respite comes San Francisco's golden-throated **Rasco** with a new EP, *The Birth*, released on the UK imprint Copasetik. Continuing where he left off on last year's "Time Waits For No Man" (Stone's Throw), Rasco's still the same ultra-serious MC, unwaveringly impressive and lyrically unchallengable. His-Panik (of Chicago's Molemen) puts in some very nice work with "Back On The Scene" and "Return of the MC," both clearly influenced by the work of DJ Premier but nonetheless appropriate for Rasco's stoic, strong style, with notably punchy, upfront drum tracks. Rasco's right-



DJ VADIM

hand man (and a great solo artist on his own) Planet Asia can be heard on two tracks, "Blood Brothaz" and "Final Destination" (produced by Protest and Richness, respectively). Look for a full-length by early next year... Russian-born **DJ Vadim** has been dabbling on hip-hop's outer

edges for years now, and now he's finally come out of the closet as a straight-up hip-hop producer with *USSR: Life From The Other Side* (Ninja Tune). This party on wax is as good as underground

HIP-HOP TOP 25

	band	album	label
1	GANG STARR	"Discipline"	Noo Trybe-Virgin
2	KOOL KEITH	"Livin' Astro"	Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRG
3	PUBLIC ENEMY	"Do You Wanna Go Our Way???"	Atomic Pop
4	STYLES OF BEYOND	2000 Fold (LP)	Ideal-Mammoth
5	PHAROAHE MONCH	"Simon Says"	Rainus
6	Q-TIP	"Vivrant Thing"	Def Jam-IDJMG
7	JAY-Z	"Girl's Best Friend"	Epic
8	METHOD MAN AND REDMAN	"Tear It Off"	Def Jam-IDJMG
9	MOBB DEEP FEAT. LIL' KIM	"Quiet Storm (Remix)"	Loud
10	GZA/GENIUS	"Hip Hop Fury"	MCA
11	DEL THA FUNKEE HOMOSAPIEN	"Phony Phranchise"	Hieroglyphics
12	EPMD	"Right Now"	Def Jam-IDJMG
13	SEVERE FEAT. D.C.	"If Words Could Kill"	Landspeed
14	ARSONISTS	"Pyromaniac"	Matador
15	JURASSIC 5	"Improvise"	Interscope
16	BLAHZAY BLAHZAY	"FRNz"	Game
17	OUTFIT	"Beauty Of The Week"	Oblique
18	RAHZEL FEAT. ERYKAH BADU	"Southern Girl"	MCA
19	TRICK ODDY	"Sweatin' Me"	Slip N Slide
20	EVE	"Gotta Man"	Ruff Ryders-Interscope
21	NOREAGA	"Oh No"	Penalty-Tommy Boy
22	UNSPOKEN HEARD	"Jamboree"	7 Headz
23	QUANNUM MC'S FEAT. SOULS OF MISCHIEF	"Extravaganza"	Quannum
24	GHOSTFACE KILLAH FEAT. RAEIN WITHM	"Apollo Kids"	Razor Sharp-Epic
25	MOUNTAIN BROTHERS	"Thoroughbred"	Pimpstrut

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

hip-hop gets, and Vadim has lined up an incredible guest list: **El-P** and **BMS** from **Company Flow**, the UK's **Scratch Perverts** DJ squad, DC's **Blu Rum 13**, LA's amazing **MoshunMan**, England's **Blade** and **Toastie Taylor**, and Vancouver's **Swollen Members**. This amazing album is full of dramatic, big beats, freaky electronic canvases, captivating interludes, incredible turntable work and absolutely top-flight rapping... Ex-Downtown Science rapper **Bosco Money** brings an interesting concept to his self-produced *Secret Agent* (Rare). A self-proclaimed "rap opera," the album is based around a Hip Hop 007 character, out to save real rap from the greed and exploitation of the music industry. Cool idea, but as a concept album it falls short of being both consistent and compelling. But don't sleep on *Secret Agent*, because there are some gems buried within it. Bosco raps in an interesting early '80s DJ Hollywood-style timewarp, and while other old-schoolers fall flat when they try to rock it in the modern age, Bosco somehow makes it work. "Da Plan," "Rock On," "Midnight Ride" and "Catch 22" are all cool-ass party rhymes, even if the music and plot don't back it up.

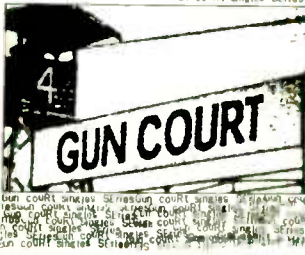
SINGLES REVIEW OF THE MONTH

FAT DAY

Gun Court

Wabana

Fat Day

Gun court singles Series
Gun court singles Series
Gun court singles Series
Gun court singles Series

The best hardcore band around right now, Fat Day keeps writing faster, harder, smarter and twistier songs: At this point, they rarely keep to a single meter for more than a couple of seconds. Their nine-song, five-minute contribution to Wabana's Gun Court singles series is their roughest-sounding material ever—but their kamikaze blurts can't be mistaken for anybody else's, even though the record starts with a half-howl, half-vomit of "If you've heard the right records nothing is original." Fat Day has mastered the art of lyrics so telegraphic they need some thought to piece together, but the pieces eventually fit. The 19-second "This," for instance, is an appraisal of U.S. foreign policy distilled down to pure resin. "What does it take to break this sticky sweet doo-dee-doo we'll be in and out in a week" is the first of its four lines; Matt Pakulski babbles them with the desperation and speed of somebody so panicked he can't get in enough words to explain himself. Even so, you can sense the band's delight in pulling off their triple-axes, and epiphanic moments burst through the stuttering roar, like Pakulski's triumphant bellow in "Mow": "I may be old but I can SWIIIIIM!"

SINGLES

>>> How long, exactly, does it take for everything old to become new again? Well, it's been about 20 years since Gang Of Four



made *Entertainment!*, and now **Radio 4**—a New York band featuring former Garden Variety singer Anthony Roman, and named after a Public Image Ltd. song—has released its first single, "Beat Around The Bush" (Gern Blandsten), on which they appear to sing "We're so *Entertainment!*," and imitate early GO4's stylistic quirks to the letter: The lock-step bass/drum grooves with spindly guitar bursts flying across them dubwise, the mock-bored unison chants on the choruses, the feebler-sounding chants before the final refrain, all of it—just in time to sell to young emo kids who don't know what they're referencing. For all that they're the male Elastica, though, Radio 4 does rock, and "The Program Repeats," on the B-side, is worthy of their models.

The Softies' Jen Sbragia is sometimes overshadowed by her better-known bandmate Rose Melberg, but she's a charming songwriter, and her own group **All Girl Summer Fun Band** has released a very cute four-song 7", "Drawbridge" (Magic Marker)—"cute" being the operative word all the way down to the watermelon-Jolly Rancher-colored vinyl it's pressed on. This is a record that makes a point of decorating its arrangements with a dinky little glockenspiel, and whose highlight is a song about the joys of wearing a grass skirt to a luau party. But the songs are wistful rather than simply sweet, and when the AGSFB harmonize in their unsteady voices, the sound is all the more touching for its imperfections.

The debut single by Nottingham, England's **Savoy Grand**, "Millions Of People" (Pickled Egg), is so slow and calm that it becomes perversely exciting. "We sit and watch the..." the singer croons like a young Alex Chilton against lightly brushed cymbals, then pauses for a moment as guitar (articulated string by string) and harmonium glide into the mix, and finishes his thought: "stars come out." The B-side is exceptionally promising; it's called "The Moving Air," and it's accompanied by a delicately scored string quartet, and sung with similar intimate, lavish care for each syllable. In a single stroke, Savoy Grand have reached for the mantle of Scott Walker, and if they haven't quite snatched

it yet, they're certainly patient enough to wait until they do.

>>> A few quick drops of the needle: The a cappella straightedge hardcore duo **Jud Jud**, whose first single was reviewed here in the July issue, has returned with a nine-song 7" called *No Tolerance For Instruments* (Schematics). You could argue that a second Jud Jud record is kind of unnecessary, and you'd be right, but it's still pretty hysterical to hear them working through every instrumental cliché of hardcore in sequence: track titles include "Bass In The Beginning Song," "Tune Down Song" and "Hammer-On Song"... Pavement batted it out of the park on their first try: "Box Elder," from their first single, was covered by the Wedding Present a few years ago, and now **Holly Golightly** (of Thee Headcoatees) has essayed it on the B-side of her slinky mod-blues single "You Shine" (Damaged Goods). Her version brings out the song's garage-rock roots, with feral lead guitar by Thee Headcoats' Bruce Brand and a trash-can backbeat... If the surfeit of **Jon Spencer Blues Explosion** outtakes and remixes on *Xtra Acme USA* didn't sate your appetite, Mute UK has issued its remix of "Heavy" as a single. The seven-inch version has a startlingly new wave version of the album's "Give Ya Some Hell," heavy on the tambourine and synth, but the really fun stuff is on the CD-single version: a spectacular Duck Rock remix of "2 Kindsa Love" that isolates its riffs and recontextualizes them Chemical Brothers-style, a smudgy revision of "Attack" remixed by the Gories' Mick Collins, and a classic JSBX throwaway, "Blues Power"... You wouldn't guess that **Autechre** had any influences, or even points of reference, from before the '90s electronic boom. Nonetheless, a Neu! tribute album released briefly last year included the IDM duo's drastically altered medley of "Weissensee" and "Im Glück" from the early-'70s German progressive band's first album. That track has now resurfaced on a 12-inch single called "SPLITRMX12," backed by the pointedly titled "Drowning In A Sea Of Indiependance," a more straight-ahead 4/4 kicker than Ae have tried in a while, with synths drunkenly weaving around the beat. It's only available online, from www.warprerecords.co.uk.



FLASHBACK REVIEW OF THE MONTH

WOODY GUTHRIE

The Asch Recordings Vol. 1-4

(Smithsonian Folkways)



Amazing as it seems, most people tend to overlook the fact that Woodie Guthrie's early work—most of which was recorded in the '40s and '50s—was eerily postmodern, so much so that he wouldn't be entirely out of place today. While many think of him as simply a purveyor of folk tunes, or a crusty relic singing quaint hobo songs, the guy was actually a bitterly accurate social commentator, a sharp razor wit, and the ultimate cynic. His mostly liberal views on life and how to live it are grounded in good, hard sense. No matter what the issue or topic, you can't argue with him—Guthrie's *always* right. While the first half of the century is now considered to be a naïve and innocent time, Guthrie saw through that veneer with a keen understanding. Listening to this four-CD box set retrospective recorded for folklorist Moses Asch, one wishes he were here today. It'd be great to flip on cable TV one Sunday morning and see Guthrie holding forth on one of the news talk shows, or hear his opinion on the inane fare the mainstream music world peddles to the masses. Of course, Guthrie was a phenomenal formative influence on the young Bob Dylan. In a sense, one could say that the revolutionary spirit of the '60s grew both directly and indirectly from Guthrie's insightful commentary. Guthrie's immortal tune "This Land Is Your Land," is heard here in its original version. The song initially contained several extra verses that are not as widely known. In these extra stanzas, Guthrie addresses the rampant greed that is part of the ugly underside of America. It's a sweet look at the wickedness that threatens freedom; Guthrie casts a sidelong glance at the contradictions between the haves and the have-nots that are such an inherent part of American life.

FLASHBACK IN THE BINS

>>> **Raymond Scott** was an unlikely hero in American musical history. He was a jazz bandleader and composer in the '20s and '30s whose zany, wigged-out music somehow found its way into scores of animated cartoons, stretching from the very beginnings of animation (Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck) to current stuff like Ren & Stimpy. As a result of this, many of the songs on his recently remastered Columbia CD *Reckless Nights And Turkish Twilights* have an eerily familiar quality to them. Scott was years ahead of his time; mixing classical, jazz and styles of his own invention, he's perfectly suited for the channel-flipping, multi-culti, everything all-at-once world in which we now live.



>>> Like Woody Guthrie, **Hank Williams, Sr.** was a true American icon. Mercury has just released Hank's *Live At The Grand Ole Opry*, a collection of rare on-air recordings culled from the Ryman Auditorium, that fabled Nashville mecca. Williams walked the walk and talked the talk, and anybody who could write an immortal little ditty like "Hey Good Lookin'" deserves his place as an American hero.

>>> Another top-notch reissue is the classic album **Lefty Frizzell Sings the Songs Of Jimmie Rodgers** (Koch International). It's a grizzled country singer's heartfelt tribute to one of the earliest pioneers of country music, full of songs about railroading, trailblazing and hard living. **Jimmie Rodgers**, of course, was the immortal singing brakeman, the famous yodeling country star who helped bring that music into the mainstream.

>>> A little known side-faction of psychedelia is the so-called Canterbury sound, a vaguely medieval, folkish sect of prog-rock from the late '60s. While I'm not generally one to go about quaffing mead and playing my lute for the maidens at ye olde Renaissance Fayre, there is something delightful about a recent Sundazed reissue of the 1969 self-titled album from the **Canterbury Fair**. It's a sweet, gentle, breezy slice of progressive psychedelia, with harpischords, fuzz guitars, and a certain naiveite about it all that is genuinely heartwarming.

>>> OK fellas, if you're contemplating going for that '70s retro facial hair look, I recommend that you check out *What Is Hip*, Rhino's new **Tower Of Power** anthology. Inside the lavish booklet, you'll find all kinds of photos of '70s face-fur: the mutton moustache, the white afro, the Sideburns That Ate Oakland, even the Haight-Ashbury furry freak brothers look. The music is great too, some juicy, horn-heavy white-boy funk and blue-eyed hippie soul from the days when the San Francisco Bay Area was at its grooviest.

>>> Following the hallowed ranks of grizzled bluesmen such as Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf is **Sleepy John Estes**. While Waters and Howlin' Wolf pretty much wrote the book on blues, Estes was more of an endearing idiosyncrasy, a true iconoclastic bluesman—there simply wasn't anyone else in the world who sounded like him. Estes' signature style combined loping, drunken-sounding guitar riffs with warbling, caterwauling vocals. Delmark has released an album called *In Europe*, a live 1964 recording that teams him with jug legend Hammie Nixon. It's the real wailing, sloppy, moaning stuff, a record that seems to literally be baying at the moon and pleading on its knees.



>>> And lastly, a review that's couched in something of a curmudgeonly post-modern rant. I'll be the first to point out that **Nat "King" Cole** has pretty much been co-opted and taken over by the ludicrously mainstream success of his ghoulish post-death duet hit "Unforgettable." It's a shame, because long before Cole was a digitized ghost singing with his daughter on a screen, and even before he was a master of the schlockmeister pop ballads that marked his later career, he was a stunning jazz pianist, arranger and bandleader who knew how to give audiences a fine night out. Capitol has just released the *Nat King Cole Trio Live At The Circle Room*, a sweet little 1946 recording that spotlights Cole's sophisticated piano work in a small group, without the schmaltz and digital glitz that most people associate with him.

1	STEREOLAB	Cobra And Phases Group Play...	Elektra
2	FOLK IMPLOSION	One Part Lullaby	Interscope
3	MACHA	See It Another Way	Jetset
4	DOT ALLISON	Afterglow	Heavenly-Arista
5	BEN HARPER	Burn To Shine	Virgin
6	PROMISE RING	Very Emergency	Jade Tree
7	GUIDED BY VOICES	Do The Collapse	TVT
8	QUASI	Field Studies	Up
9	TRICKY WITH DJ MUGGS AND GREASE	Juxtapose	Island
10	GET UP KIDS	Red Letter Day (EP)	Doghouse
11	BIS	Social Dancing	Grand Royal-Capitol
12	KOOL KEITH	Black Elvis/Lost In Space	Ruffhouse-Columbia
13	SUPERCHUNK	Come Pick Me Up	Merge
14	MOMUS	Stars Forever	Le Grand Magistery
15	G. LOVE & SPECIAL SAUCE	Philadelphonic	Okeh/550-Epic
16	BASEMENT JAXX	Remedy	XL-Astralwerks
17	IGGY POP	Avenue B	Virgin
18	HIPPOS	Heads Are Gonna Roll	Interscope
19	LAMB	Fear Of Fours	Fontana/Mercury-IDJMG
20	GAY DAD	Leisure Noise	London
21	HOT WATER MUSIC	No Division	Some
22	BELLE AND SEBASTIAN	Tigermilk	Matador
23	ASH	Nu-Clear Sounds	DreamWorks
24	MADDER ROSE	Hello June Fool	Thirsty Ear
25	HEFNER	The Fidelity Wars	Beggars Banquet
26	AIR	Premiers Symptomes (EP)	Source-Astralwerks
27	AMERICAN ANALOG SET	The Golden Band	Emperor Jones
28	SELF	Breakfast With Girls	Spongebath-DreamWorks
29	DANCE HALL CRASHERS	Purr	Pink & Black
30	KRISTIN HERSH	Sky Motel	4AD
31	MARINE RESEARCH	Sounds From The Gulf Stream	K
32	BREAKBEAT ERA	Ultra-Obscene	XL/1500/A&M-Interscope
33	CHEMICAL BROTHERS	Surrender	Astralwerks
34	SHEILA DIVINE	New Parade	Roadrunner
35	MOBY	Play	V2
36	FLAMING LIPS	The Soft Bulletin	Warner Bros.
37	JUDE	You're So Hot I Love You (EP)	Maverick-WB
38	LOS LOBOS	This Time	Hollywood
39	SUPER FURRY ANIMALS	Guerilla	Flydaddy
40	ISOTOPE 217	Utonian_Automatic	Thrill Jockey
41	SUPERSUCKERS	The Evil Powers Of Rock 'N' Roll	Twenty14.com-Koch
42	LUSCIOUS JACKSON	Electric Honey	Grand Royal-Capitol
43	TARWATER	Silur	Mute
44	PIETASTERS	Awesome Mix Tape #6	Hellcat-Epithaph
45	TILT	Viewers Like You	Fat Wreck Chords
46	MINDERS	Cul-De-Sacs & Dead Ends	Elephant 6-SpinART
47	WIDESPREAD PANIC	'Til The Medicine Takes	Capricorn
48	RICHARD THOMPSON	Mock Tudor	Capitol
49	MAGNETIC FIELDS	69 Love Songs Vols. 1-3	Merge
50	NINE INCH NAILS	The Fragile	Nothing-Interscope
51	L7	Slap Happy	Wax Tadpole-Bong Load
52	WISEGUYS	The Antidote	Wall Of Sound/Ideal-Mammoth
53	FILTER	Title Of Record	Reprise
54	BETA BAND	The Beta Band	Regal-Astralwerks
55	SOUNDTRACK	Soul Ecstasy	Emperor Norton
56	ALUMINUM GROUP	Pedals	Minty Fresh
57	MUSE	Showbiz	Maverick-Taste Media
58	GUSTER	Lost And Gone Forever	Hybrid-Sire
59	SIVE STYLE	Miniature Portraits	Sub Pop
60	BRUCE COCKBURN	Breakfast In New Orleans...	Rykodisk
61	ROYAL TRUX	Veterans Of Disorder	Drag City
62	PUBLIC ENEMY	There's A Poison Goin On...	Atomic Pop
63	MR. BUNGLE	California	Warner Bros.
64	BARDO POND	Set And Setting	Matador
65	CIBO MATTO	Stereo Type A	Warner Bros.
66	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Onda Sonora: Red Hot & Lisbon	Bar/None
67	VERMONT	Living Together	Kindercore
68	BLACK BOX RECORDER	England Made Me	Jetset
69	AUTECHRE	EP7	Nothing-Interscope
70	ROBYN HITCHCOCK	Jewels For Sophia	Warner Bros.
71	MESHELL NDEGEOCELLO	Bitter	Maverick-WB
72	LOS STRAITJACKETS	The Velvet Touch Of...	Yep Roc
73	BUCKETHEAD	Monsters And Robots	Cyberoctave-Higher Octave
74	MOXY FRUVOUS	Thornhill	Razor & Tie
75	MR. T EXPERIENCE	Alcatraz	Lookout!



#1 STEREOLAB

COBRA AND PHASES GROUP PLAY
VOLTAGE IN THE MILKY NIGHT

FIVE YEARS AGO

1. SEBADON

BAKESALE (SUB POP)

2. SUGAR

FILE UNDER: EASY LISTENING (RYKODISC)

3. DINOSAUR JR.

WITHOUT A SOUND (SIRE-REPRISE)

4. LUSCIOUS JACKSON

NATURAL INGREDIENTS (GRAND ROYAL-CAPITOL)

5. JESUS AND MARY CHAIN

STONED & DETHRONED (AMERICAN)

TEN YEARS AGO

1. RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS

MOTHER'S MILK (EMI)

2. HOODOO GURUS

MAGNUM CUM LOUDER (RCA)

3. POGUES

PEACE AND LOVE (ISLAND)

4. VARIOUS ARTISTS

THE BRIDGE: A TRIBUTE TO NEIL YOUNG (NO. 6-CAROLINE)

5. B-52'S

COSMIC THING (REPRISE)

Chart data culled from CMJ 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. Bald men really are better lovers...

THE MTV PEDIGREE

Video directors **Spike Jonze** and **Floria Sigismondi** head for the big screen.



ABOVE: CHIMP FRIENDLY IN *BEING JOHN MALKOVICH*. RIGHT: JONZE

JOHN ELSASSER PHOTOGRAPHY **BRENDAN MORAN**

In a way, first-time feature filmmaker Spike Jonze has been making little movies for years. He turned the Beatles boys into action-loving cops for their video of "Sabotage." His video for Ween's "Spirit Of '76" cast the duo as guerrilla warriors of early America freedom fighters who abscond with the Liberty Bell. Though celebrated for his unique sense of humor and whiz-bang visual style, making a Hollywood movie has long eluded him.

Perhaps that's because unlike other young directors, his proving ground wasn't NYU or USC, but MTV.

For quite some time, there has been talk about Jonze making the move to the big screen. Last year, he was set to direct an adaptation of *Harold And The Purple Crayon* for Tri-Star. Eventually, though, the movie based on the Crockett Johnson children's book was scrapped.

"It was crazy how far the studio let us go with it and how much money they let us spend," says Jonze. "It made me want to stay away from big movies. You know, the bigger the movie, the more difficult it is to control it and do things the way you want to."

Jonze's feature directorial debut, *Being John Malkovich*, is a bizarre, brilliant tale about a failed puppeteer (John Cusack) who discovers a portal in a Manhattan office that leads directly to Malkovich's brain. For 15 minutes, lucky visitors experience a slice of Malkovich's life without the actor ever knowing.

(continued on page 78)

BRIEFS



RIDE WITH THE DEVIL

(USA Films)

Ang Lee (*The Ice Storm*) details the bloody battles that erupted on the Kansas-Missouri border between rebellious pro-Southern Bushwackers and the Union Army in his sweeping new Civil War drama, *Ride With The Devil*. But there's romance underneath all the bloodshed. The young widow played by pop songstress Jewel in her feature film debut, falls for (sigh) Bushwacker Tobey Maguire. Despite impressive turns by Maguire and Jeffrey Wright (who plays a former slave) and several ripsnorting battle scenes, too many things make *Ride With The Devil* unintentionally humorous. Just try not to giggle at the horrendously fake wigs and cornpone dialogue. When Jewel asks Maguire, "Have you ever bedded a woman?" he responds, "Girl, I've killed 15 men." Good enough for her! Jewel, dressed in her best peasant duds, remains credible, even when she has to plow a field, breast-feed her baby (shown twice) and say things like "I brung you some supper."



DOGMA

(Lions Gate Films)

Arriving with plenty of oh-so-predictable baggage for mocking the Catholic Church, the latest from Kevin Smith (*Clerks*) is surprisingly feeble. Described by Smith as a "comic fantasia," *Dogma* follows two fallen angels (Ben Affleck and Matt Damon, the best things hereabouts) trying to get back into heaven. Had they been banished to hell? "Worse," says one character. "Wisconsin."

Meanwhile, Linda Fiorentino, an abortion clinic worker, and Chris Rock, playing the 13th apostle, Rufus, try to stop the renegade angels from succeeding in their mission. Alanis Morissette briefly appears as God, albeit one who does handstands, wears boxers and plays Skee-Ball. Moldy, pop-culture references to John Hughes and *The Six Million Dollar Man* fall flat and few jokes make an impact, like when Rock says Jesus is black—"Nigga owes me 12 bucks."

At least part of the title is accurate: Dog.



THE LIMEY

(Artisan)

In 1967, Terence Stamp portrayed a working-class thief named Wilson in *Poor Cow*, an under-appreciated British drama directed by Ken Loach. In a very post-modern rethinking, Steven Soderbergh (*Out Of Sight*), bought the rights to *Poor Cow* and resurrects the character for this contemporary thriller in which a freshly paroled Wilson (Stamp) travels to Los Angeles to avenge his daughter's "accidental" death.

The prime target: A shady record producer, played to smarmy perfection by Peter Fonda, who was having an affair with Wilson's daughter. Soderbergh, working with Lem Dobb's terrific script, uses a refreshing nonlinear narrative that includes flashbacks from *Poor Cow*, and flash-forwards. While the supporting cast, including Lesley Ann Warren, Barry Newman and Warhol fave Joe Dallessandro, adds some sting to the proceedings, nothing gets in the way of Stamp and Fonda's commanding performances.



WHO'S THAT GIRL: TEENA BRANDON GOT KILLED FOR NOT BEING A BOY.

Like many of us, Brandon Teena just wanted to fit in. And why shouldn't he? Women loved his timid innocence and pretty-boy looks. Guys appreciated his easy-going demeanor and ready-to-party attitude. It's hardly surprising that the charming young man had a group of friends in Falls City, Nebraska.

Then it was uncovered that Brandon Teena was in fact Teena Brandon, a transsexual lesbian from nearby Lincoln, NE. Former friends turned violent and the young woman was raped and murdered.

Director Kimberly Peirce remembers the day in early 1994 when she picked up the *Village Voice* and first read about Brandon Teena.

"I immediately felt this kinship with Brandon," remembers Peirce, who at the time was getting her MFA in film from Columbia University. "So I started reading everything about the case."

This interest led Peirce to co-write and direct her first feature, *Boys Don't Cry* (Fox Searchlight), a powerful fictionalized account of Brandon's life, starring Chloe Sevigny, Brendan Sexton III, and Hilary Swank in the lead role. "This is an epic tragedy, yet I found that nobody knew how to tell the story," Peirce says. "They didn't love him the way I did, because I identified with him." While much has been written about Brandon, Peirce wanted to create a rich portrait of Brandon beyond issues of sexual identity.

"I wanted to know what he did for fun. I wanted to know what a night with [Brandon's friends] was like." Five years in the making, Peirce immersed herself in Brandon's life, by attending the murder trial and partying with his peers outside the Falls City Qwik Stop. "Because I was young—I was 27 at the time—they were nice to me and accepted me," she says. "They invited me to get high, chase bats—just do what they do."

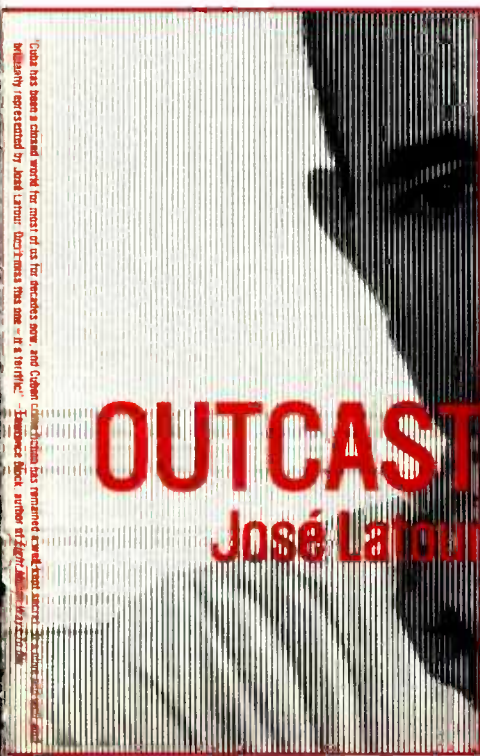
As it turns out, the research was the easy part. Four weeks before principal photography, Peirce didn't have a suitable Brandon. "We looked at every butch lesbian interested in the role," she says.

Enter Hilary Swank, best known for playing Carly, the single mother who fancied Steve Sanders on *Beverly Hills, 90210*.

To prepare, Swank spent each day attempting to pass as a young man in public. "If she failed, she'd have to go home and figure out what gave her away," Peirce says. "Was it her voice? Did she not bind her tits right?" The end result is a memorable portrayal and a stirring movie.

DARK AND LOVELY: FOR JOSÉ LATOUR, CUBA IS A WORLD OF CORRUPTION, UNDER- HANDED DEALS AND STUNNING BEAUTY.

Cuba has been a central world for most of us for decades now, and Cuban author José Latour has remained a world-class writer. His new novel, *Outcast*, is a masterpiece of contemporary Cuban literature. —Jackie McCarthy



These days, most Americans view Cuba with glasses colored by Buena Vista Social Club records and *Cigar Aficionado* articles, both of which encourage nostalgia for the country's pre-Castro past. Seen through these lenses, Cuba is a picturesque ruin; Havana, a specter of its former incarnation as the world's prototypical adult playground.

For a more nuanced view of Cuba's cultural landscape, track down *Outcast* (Akashic), the seventh novel by Havana-born writer José Latour and his first to be published in the U.S. This potboiler ripples with family secrets and murder while also offering a clear-eyed glimpse into the natural beauty of Cuba, its seedy black market, as well as the complex situation of the Cuban diaspora.

Latour's "outcast," alcoholic womanizer Elliot Steil, is an English teacher resigned to the bureaucratic hypocrisy of a country where there's "no such thing as a 90 percent revolutionary."

Steil's half-hearted attempts to tow the political line diminish his chances for promotions at work and material comforts at home. When an American appears at his dilapidated door claiming to be an old friend of his father's, Steil accepts the offer of escape to the U.S. This supposed benefactor dumps Steil in the middle of the ocean, and only the chance appearance of fellow Cubans on a raft saves him. Seeking revenge, the former teacher winds up embroiled in Miami's underworld amid the complex hierarchy of Cuban expatriates.

Outcast came to the attention of Akashic books when its publisher, Girls Against Boys' bass player Johnny Temple, visited Cuba last year. Temple contacted Latour at the suggestion of a mutual friend and wound up with a floppy disc containing two of the author's English-language novels. Temple wanted to publish *Outcast* as soon as he read it. Predictably, the logistics of working across the embargo proved difficult, but not insurmountable.

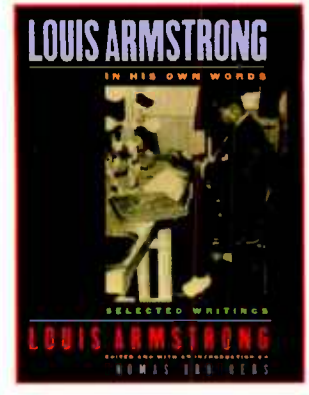
"I just had to figure out what the laws were on publishing Cuban writers and work with them in mind," Temple says. For Latour's part, he was happy to reach a wider audience without compromising his work. Latour explains: "Cuban publishing houses, when choosing fictional titles rooted in our island's contemporary reality, tend to prefer an apologetic literature that either falsifies reality or provides justification to all our social problems. I am not willing to write that kind of book."

>>>Jackie McCarthy

LOUIS ARMSTRONG IN HIS OWN WORDS: SELECTED WRITINGS

By Louis Armstrong (Oxford University Press)
Louis Armstrong claimed he was born on the Fourth of July, 1900. You can do your homework for his centennial birthday celebration by reading *Louis Armstrong In His Own Words*, which includes magazine articles, letters, and previously unpublished autobiographical sketches. While Armstrong's advocacy of laxatives and marijuana and his views on race and women may raise eyebrows, his eccentric writing style provides half the attraction here. Armstrong improvised on his typewriter as he did on his horn, and his sentences bounce and startle with idiosyncratic punctuation, capitalization and syntax. You can't expect the great trumpeter's words to equal his music, but this collection displays another remarkable facet of Louis Armstrong's ebullient creativity.

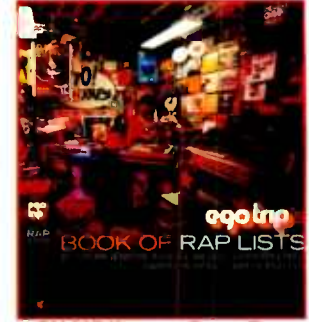
>>>Steve Klinge



EGO TRIP'S BOOK OF RAP LISTS

By Sacha Jenkins, Elliott Wilson, Chairman Mao, Gabriel Alvarez, and Brent Rollins (St. Martin's Press)
If you ever wondered whether hip-hop heads can be as geeky as rock nerds, check out *Ego Trip's Book Of Rap Lists*. The selections range from scholarly ("20 Classic James Brown Productions & The Rap Songs That Made Them Famous Again") to celebrity ("Sir Mix-A-Lot's 10 Signs That You're Being Player Hated") and silly ("10 MC Hammer Songs You Can't Dance To"). Sure, charts such as the "Greatest Emcees Of All-Time" will undoubtedly start arguments and other ones seem more than just a tad picayune ("Freddie Foxxx's 10 Tips for Playing Ceelo"?), but the *Ego Trip* folks manage to drop quite a bit of science while not taking anything too seriously. Who needs to pore over another academic discourse on the cultural relevance of gangsta rap when you can giggle about "Kool Keith's Favorite Places To Pleasure Himself In Public"?

>>>Neil Gladstone



FOTOGRAFIKS

By David Carson, text by Philip B. Meggs (Ginkgo Press)

Go through your boxes of old photos and pick out all the shots you originally considered mistakes. Pictures half-exposed, out of focus, and unnaturally cropped by the inside of your pant's pocket. Now flip though that stack and you'll get an idea of what David Carson's *Fotografiks* looks like at first glance. Yet, his impressionistic images capture a moment, a feeling, and sometimes nothing but the barest of textures. Carson's collage style of layout (originally made famous in the pages of *Ray Gun*) turns these previously unpublished works into sublime art. For example, one page features 11 overlapping shots of airplane wings shot from inside a plane combined with shots of a tropical island during a rainstorm. The only negative aspect of *Fotografiks* is a narrative by Philip B. Meggs that attempts to justify the artfulness of Carson's work. But if Carson's work means anything, it's that the images and layout are enough.

>>>Merv





ENTER SANDMAN

This winter marks the 10th anniversary of *The Sandman*, writer Neil Gaiman's revolutionary fantasy comic book series about seven godlike siblings who shape the unconscious life of the world. A handful of special projects will mark the occasion. One is **The Dream Hunters** (Vertigo), a new hardcover graphic novel of sorts, or rather, a shortish prose Sandman piece by Gaiman illustrated by painter Yoshitaka Amano in a style loosely inspired by traditional Japanese artwork. (Gaiman has mostly retired from writing word-balloons-and-panels comics.) Vertigo will also be publishing **Midnight Days**, a compilation of previously uncollected Gaiman comics. And Gaiman's crowning achievement as a comic-book writer, **The Kindly Ones** has just come back into print, his longest, darkest and most intricate Sandman story. Designed and mostly drawn by Marc Hempel, the bold, cartoonish faces and bodies are reduced halfway to raw geometry and nicely complement the story's mythic grandeur and dream iconography.

For all the soap opera chattiness of its huge cast of characters, the Sandman tale has deepened with time, growing grim, powerful and mythological roots. The tragic conclusion of this story bears down with classical solemnity and force.

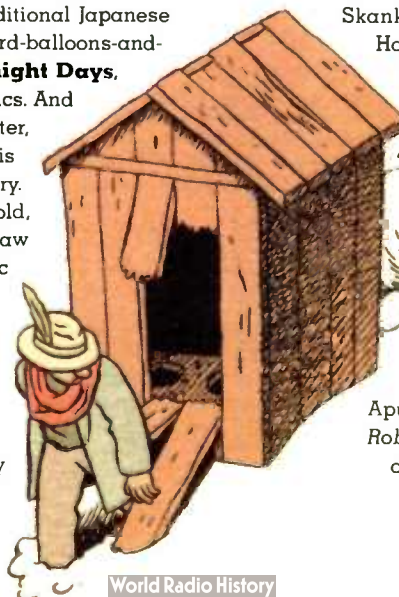
Anyone who thinks they're going to get rich by

keeping any of those comics in storage, though, should have a look at the other new Gaiman release **Gods & Tulips**, a one-shot published by Westhampton House for the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund. It collects three of Gaiman's speeches, the most notorious of them: "Good Comics And Why You Should Sell Them." Delivered in 1993, the oration warned the comics industry, then at a commercial apex fueled by collector stockpiling, that it risked going the way of the 17th-century Holland tulip market: spiraling into ludicrous over-inflation and crashing ruinously. (Which, of course, the comics industry proceeded to do.) The book also includes Gaiman's more recent delivery on the craft of writing for comics as opposed to the other media (television, prose fiction) to which he's been turning his attention lately. "On Signings," is a gently riotous series of suggestions for book stores arranging an author's or artist's signing, with some excellent illustrations by Yummy Fur artist Chester Brown.

Speaking of Brown, he seems to have abandoned **Underwater**, his peculiar, slow-moving but wonderfully *sui generis* series about babies' acquisition of language, mid-story. He's now taken up a new project, **Louis Riel**, an illustrated biography of the man who led the 19th century revolt of the Métis "half-breeds" of the Red River settlement against the Canadian government. Brown draws it in the same six-panels-to-the-page style used for his adaptation of the **Gospel Of Matthew**. The subdued approach doesn't make anything more visually exciting for the sake of drama, and doesn't have to. The story is compelling enough, though the deadpan dialogue is sometimes funny because it's so far away from the conventions of historical drama ("I guess we'll surrender then").

Brown is hardly a visual realist—most of his characters have button eyes, huge cartoon noses and broad gestures—but his strong compositional choice (like showing Métis prisoner Norbert Parisien escaping through the back of a snow-covered outhouse) beats action shots every time.

Dan Wu's **Oriental Whatever** (\$3.00 from Box 24, 520 Frederick St., San Francisco, CA 94117) is a scattered yet entertaining 'zine of West Coast Asian-American alterna-culture. Its seventh issue includes a few longer interviews with Mike Park, ex-Skankin' Pickle and the Chinkees, and artist Nancy Horn. Still, it's mostly devoted to short, charming features such as a chart comparing Yoda and Mr. Miyagi from the *Karate Kid* movies. There are also reviews of movies with Asian themes (including a piece on the documentary *Genghis Blues*) and a meditation on ramen noodles. The layout nicely crosses punk-zine cut 'n' paste and more organized desktop publishing. The tone is light, but remains pointed and smart. *Oriental Whatever* earns extra points for the first image you see when you open it: The Simpsons' Apu saying "I'm afraid we are all sold out of *Giant Robot*, perhaps I can interest you in the new issue of *American Fetishes*?"



World Radio History

>>> by douglas wolk <<<

DEAR DIARY

The Web has changed a lot of ideas about privacy, including the function of a diary or journal. Once a distinctly private way of keeping track of one's life, or notes to perhaps be published years later, diaries and journals have opened up to the possibility of being a very public way of recording and presenting everything a person does. Reading web journals is an oddly engrossing, voyeuristic experience—you're not just getting the juicy bits of the author's life, you're getting the ordinary parts—the chats with friends, the decent-but-not-great parties, the small medical problems.

Justin Hall (www.justin.org) is the god-emperor of online diaries—displaying his entire life across the Web for almost six years. His home page even has a little Yahoo-style directory of links to types of pages he's composed about himself ("HEALTH: Computer Injuries, Drugs, Appendectomy, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Fitness...").

Most online diarists aim smaller, and haven't been keeping track of themselves in public quite as long. The problem, though, is finding them, since they don't tend to advertise and aren't linked to big sites. Their solitary pursuits form a social bond, though, and lots of personal diaries are connected by webrings. Sites that share a particular focus will form a ring, where you can easily jump from any one of them to another in the same group. And a single site can be part of a whole lot of rings.

Dori Mondon's excellent site (www.saranwarp.com) can be found through several rings, including Fusion (www.moderngypsy.com/fusion/) for online journals with a focus on experimental writing; Drama Queens (www.bluesilver.org/dramaqueens/)—the title may be obvious, but "no angst," warns the moderator—and the Toy Camera Ring (www.obscurasite.com/toy_home/toy_ring.html) for, well, toy camera enthusiasts.

The biggest fountain of journals may be (www.diarist.net), which has links to over 1,700 online diarists' sites, organized by age, sex, author's name, title and location. It also contains reviews of a bunch of sites, and notes about especially interesting events in journalers' lives. Of course, that can lead to a bunch more surfing.

Diarist Melyssa Royersmith has recently given birth to a daughter, Brenna, and has been keeping track of the pregnancy on a site called **Made From Scratch** (www.melyssa.com/brenna).

If you don't want to have children just yet (and speaking of solitary pursuits), there's always the **I Love Masturbation** webring (www.angelfire.com/hi/ssstreakk/masturbate.html). Despite the cringe-inducing name, it's got links to 150 sites that are generally excellent—the ring's organizer is really only interested in nicely designed personal journals, usually more masturbatory in the metaphorical sense than literal.



made from scratch

www.melyssa.com/brenna/index.html

TOY

CAMERA

RING

explore the world of toy camera photography

Join the toy camera ring!

www.obscurasite.com/toy_home/toy_ring.html

Glenn McDonald's weekly journal, **The War Against Silence** (www.furia.com/twas/index.html), is a journal of listening, a music review column in which he goes on at enormous and fascinating length about whatever's passed by his ears.

Guided By Voices' *Do The Collapse* is the subject of a 2000-word essay on the band's evolution and the meaning of "selling out" in both the good and the bad sense. "A part of me believes that [Robert Pollard would] be a new David Bowie already if he didn't insist on gnawing his own liver, like an eagle-abandoned Prometheus afraid that if he let himself heal they'd pry him off his comfortable mountain," writes McDonald. On the other hand, an additional 2000 words tearing apart Vitamin C's debut album is a little mindboggling. Still, McDonald is unfailingly incisive and funny, with a unique and fully formed aesthetic. There are no more entertaining columnists who get paid to write about music, and he does it for free.

Finally, www.mouchette.org looks like the clunkily designed journal of a young artist named Mouchette. It's not, but to give away what it is would spoil the fun.

www.angelfire.com/hi/ssstreakk/masturbate.html

THE MTV PEDIGREE



FLORIA SIGISMONDI



MARILYN MANSON BY SIGISMONDI

THE VID KIDS: Music video directors coming soon to a theater near you.

Jake Scott (R.E.M., U2) - *Plunkett & Maclean*
 Michel Gondry (Foo Fighters, Chemical Brothers) - *Human Nature*
 McG (Smash Mouth, Barenaked Ladies) - *Charlie's Angels: The Movie*
 Steve Carr (Jay-Z) - *Next Friday*
 Paul Hunter ("Puffy" Combs, Lauryn Hill) - *Constantine, Comic Dog*
 Mark Romanek (Beck, Fiona Apple) - *As-yet-Untitled Diane Arbus biopic*

Afterwards, the impersonator is safely deposited alongside the New Jersey Turnpike. To add to the meta-realism, John Malkovich is played by... John Malkovich.

While the dark comedy is consistent with Jonze's off-the-wall sensibility, the movie is also a smart financial gamble. With a modest \$10 million budget, there's no need for Jonze to worry about doing big numbers at the box office to see a return. Then there's the ingenious *Malkovich* script, written by Charlie Kaufman.

"You don't read scripts this often that are so original and smart," praises Jonze.

Great script or not, the video veteran needed to be innovative for nearly 100 minutes—about 95 minutes longer than his previous work.

"I knew that it was going to be much more difficult than a video shoot. There was so much more to take in," he says. "I had a lot more time to think about it, to do pre-production work."

Jonze has often approached his video shoots as little movies with the band members as actors.

"I always loved taking my characters really seriously in videos. We'd talk about their motivation. We'd always take things further than necessary," he says. "It was stuff that you'd never see in a video, but it made it fun for us."

Certainly, Jonze isn't the first video director to make the leap to the features, but those ranks are growing exponentially. Former video directors Alex Proyas (*The Crow*), David Fincher (*Seven*, *Fight Club*) and Michael Bay (*Armageddon*) have all enjoyed box office success. Now a new generation of video directors, including Jonze, Hype Williams (TLC, Busta Rhymes) and Wayne Isham (Ricky Martin, Will Smith), are hoping to join them.

"Contrary to what people may think, Hollywood is looking for new blood, but because of the budgets involved, they are often reluctant to use directors unless they already have experience," says Alex S. Garcia, editor of VideoZone, an online music video directory. "That's why music video directors are getting so much attention—they're a perfect middle ground."

Whatever type of street cred and tight-budget savvy these directors bring to features, they're often criticized for their lack of originality and quick-cut editing, a.k.a. "frame-fucking."

"Music video directors have to go for maximum visceral impact in a three-minute clip," explains Rod Dreher, chief movie critic for the *New York Post*. "What works in that short form doesn't always translate to the feature-length form, and that can be exhausting over the length of a feature film."

While many video directors like Jonze have made shorts, TV commercials and documentaries, others jump into feature filmmaking without much experience beyond creating a four-minute clip.

"There's a big difference between shooting a music video on your Super 8 and making a feature," notes Michael Galinsky, who, along with his wife Suki Hawley, filmed two low-budget independent pictures, *Half-Cocked* and *Radiation*.

"A lot depends on the video being made. For example, someone like Spike Jonze, whose videos are essentially brilliant short narrative films, making videos seems to be a great way to develop storytelling skills. However, if the video director is someone like Hype

Williams, whose videos are groundbreaking for their visual language rather than their structural sensibilities, it seems that the work would translate less directly."

Galinsky was a production assistant for several years before producing *Half-Cocked* in 1996. Hawley attended Wesleyan University, worked for B-movie maestro Roger Corman and was the assistant director on *Party Girl*.

"Making music videos can be a great part of the process of preparing to make a larger film," figures Galinsky. "However, it also depends on what kind of team comes together to make the film."

Surprisingly, Billy Poveda, co-founder and co-president of LA-based Oil Factory Films, a premier music video production company that has more than 700 high-profile videos to its credit, discourages people from making videos as a stepping stone into Hollywood.

"If your goal is to direct feature films, then make films. Don't make music videos," he says. "Music videos are like crack. If you become successful, you're constantly looking for the next hit and not focusing on your abilities."

For example, Poveda cites Mark and Michael Polish, the brothers who created last summer's art-house sensation *Twin Falls, Idaho*. The brothers directed one music video and enjoyed the process. They wanted to do more.

"I told them 'No, finish your friggin' script,'" Poveda recalls. "They would not have made that movie had they concentrated on trying to be successful with music videos first."

Floria Sigismondi, whose haunting videos for Marilyn Manson and David Bowie have drawn favorable comparisons to Tim Burton, put aside her extensive video work to co-write a screenplay based on the infamous Black Dahlia murder in the 1940s. She hopes the project will become her feature film directorial debut—all she needs is financing.

Why are music video directors in demand by the studios?

"It's a very free medium," she says. "For the most part, the directors come up with the ideas by themselves. That gives you a sense of that person as an artist."

Sigismondi's work, with its creepy imagery, has a cinematic quality. She's concerned, however, about the industry stereotyping her approach: "I've had offers to do horror and vampire films. I purposefully stayed away from those types of film projects. I wanted to do something that was more challenging for me."

Jonze, meanwhile, is looking for his next project. He's producing the big-screen debut of Michel Gondry's *Human Nature* (see sidebar) and keeping his options open. As for directing the long-rumored feature-film debut of the Beastie Boys, Jonze demurs, "We've talked about it. Maybe we'll do something some day."

As for that other rampant Internet rumor that Jonze spoke with George Lucas about making the next *Star Wars* prequel, the young director responds: "I don't know where that came from. I read that too and thought, 'Oh, wow.'"

Not that Jonze would object to making a big-budget movie if it were offered to him. "If it was something I wanted to do, I would."

Like a *Star Wars* prequel?

"I'd love to do that."

STAR GAZING



MICHAEL JACKSON

"There are times when I literally went to take a piss and missed the star."



MASON REESE

CHARO



BARRY MANILOW AND FRIEND



GLADYS KNIGHT



JULIE CHRISTIE AND GARY BOAS



SOPHIA LOREN



SONNY BOND



BILLY PRESTON



CHRISTOPHER WALKEN

"I guess today you would call it stalking," says Gary Boas about his early years hanging out to take a celebrity's picture. His lifelong passion for catching up with the jet set began in 1966 at age 15 when the unnaturally shy teenager from Lancaster, PA witnessed a crowd gathered around Robert Goulet visiting at a local hospital. "I saw everyone else was taking pictures so I ran home and got my camera," recalls Boas, now 48. Over the years, this pastime bordered on obsession. Boas camped outside of hotspots such as Studio 54, Sardi's and the 21 Club for as long as 12 hours just get his lens on a beautiful person. "There are times when I literally went to take a piss and missed the star." He's also followed Greta Garbo through Saks Fifth Avenue, snuck backstage at the Kennedy Center Awards to get near Katharine Hepburn and been repeatedly cursed out by Jerry Lewis. ("He uses the 'F' word like other people use the word 'the.'")

About 500 images from Boas's snapshot collection (culled from a total of 80,000) are featured in the new book *Starstruck! Photographs From A Fan* (Dilettante Press/D.A.P.).

Boas takes star photos for a living now, but many of these shots of notable such as Charlie Chaplin, Barry Manilow and Vivian Vance date back to the '60s and '70s when the amateur paparazzi was clicking shots with a Brownie Instamatic and able to chat with the person behind the personality. "A lot of them talked to me about their problems, their drug habit or who they were screwing and I would never think of running to a tabloid with that information. Things were different then." Although Boas is now pro, splitting his time between L.A. and PA, he still refrains from snapping shots of celebrities who don't want their picture taken. "I think from living in Lancaster, I have a great respect for the Amish, who don't like to be photographed and, well, I don't like to be photographed."

>>> Neil Gladstone

BRIEFS



BLUE STINGER

(Activision) Dreamcast

The year is 2017 and a meteor has crashed on Dinosaur Island, where you're taking a few days off from work. It has destroyed almost all life on the island, except for—you guessed it—a bunch of monsters and a few other unsavory characters. You were hoping to get away from it all—

maybe catch some fish and sling back a few beers. Isn't it funny how Armageddon always happens when you're on vacation? *Blue Stinger's* plot line is nothing to write home about, but the action will keep you captive right up until the game's end (which comes fairly quickly). The tried-and-true, though less than ideal *Resident Evil*-style camera works very well for the most part, but get in your first tight room and it'll be a little frustrating trying to see your way around. That quirk aside, *Blue Stinger* is a solid, action-adventure title from start to finish.

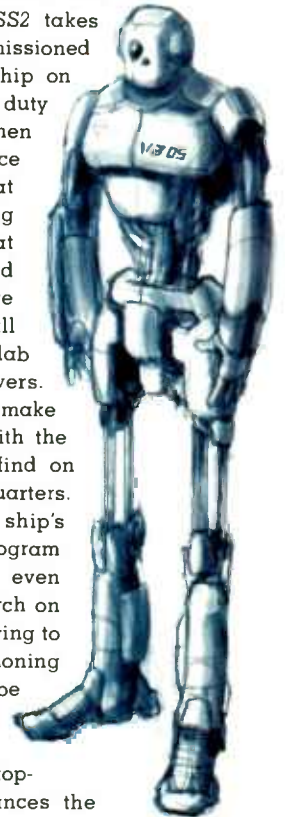


SYSTEM SHOCK 2

(Looking Glass-Electronic Arts) PC

While games like *Half-Life* and *Thief* showed us what is possible when developers treat their players like people instead of killing machines, *System Shock 2* (SS2) takes the concept to another level by setting new standards in player involvement and immersion. The majority of SS2 takes place aboard the newly commissioned Von Braun, a first-class starship on which you're serving a tour of duty as a military support officer. When you awaken from deep-space slumber, you find that something's seriously wrong with the ship's computer, that horribly mutated creatures and cybernetic assassins are wandering about, and that all the monkeys from the scientific lab have developed psionic powers.

The only way you're going to make sense of what happened is with the help of voice/data logs you find on corpses and in the crew's quarters. Eventually you'll get the ship's generators working again, reprogram a few computers, and maybe even find a lab and do some research on some of the mutants that are trying to stop you. Spend too much time honing your hacking skills and you'll be wondering why you didn't learn how to repair all the weapons lying around. Some top-notch voice-over further enhances the already excellent sound design and adds another creepy dimension to the ship's atmosphere. Hands down, this is the most gripping and perfectly balanced role-playing-meets-shooter game released to date.



SOUL CALIBUR

(Namco) Dreamcast

Within a week of its release in Japan, *Soul Calibur* was helping the Dreamcast outsell the Nintendo 64 2-1 on Asian shores, and there's little doubt it will do the same for North American sales. The overall concept is pretty basic—it's the same kill-or-be-killed martial arts fest that has been around for years. With *Soul Calibur* though, home users will finally get a taste of true arcade-like responsiveness and graphics in their own living room. The added "Mission Mode" allows you to actually learn the background of each character by purchasing Art Cards, which

also open up additional features and missions. The game also enables you to explore and study your player's moves through training sessions. There are a couple of fighting games now available for the Dreamcast, but with player responsiveness and spectacular graphics like those found in *Soul Calibur*, gamers will have little reason to look anywhere else.



TOKYO XTREME RACER

(Crave Entertainment) Dreamcast

If you're tired of reading the 40-page manuals that seem to accompany every racing game released in the past year or so, the simplicity behind *Tokyo Xtreme Racing* will sound welcome. Cruise the highway, check out the other guy's car and challenge him to a race by moving up behind him and flashing him your high beams. If you win, you get some cash to buy some cool stuff for your car. If you lose, you pay the other guy. Simple, right? Well, maybe too simple. *Tokyo Xtreme Racing* is a decent enough title if it's only a few road races you're after, but the lack of tracks (there are only two) will leave you wanting more in the end.

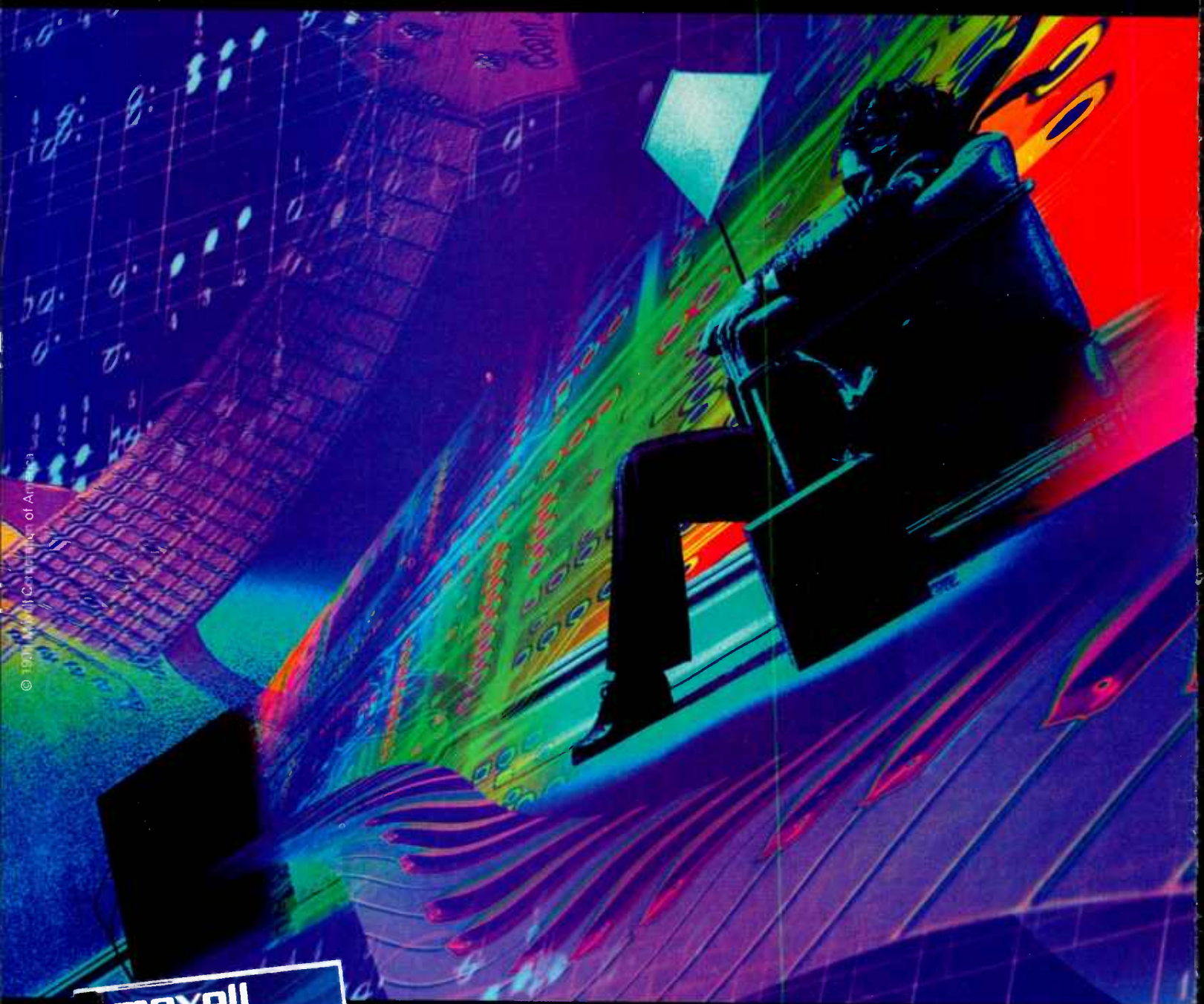


HEART OF GLASS

"I think a good glass blower has to have a sense of rhythm and timing," explains Atomic Fireballs singer John Bunkley. When the explosive frontman isn't leaping, hooting and scating into a mic, you can often find him in a glass studio with his mouth wrapped around the end of a metal pipe. "It's like a little dance," he continues, "you have to keep the pipe turning to keep the glass balanced." Inspired by a television documentary, Bunkley started blowing glass four years ago and developed his skills sculpting early American style candle holders and bowls at historic Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan. Earlier this year, Bunkley vacated his 18th century post to his focus more time on the Atomic Fireballs' 20th century swing. His glasswork, however, remains rooted in early American and classic Italian design. Unlike the Atomic Fireballs exuberant live shows, blowing glass, for the singer, is "totally relaxing." Does having such strong lungs help when it comes to blowing glass. "Actually, no," laughs Bunkley, "when the glass is 2300 degrees, pretty much anyone can do it." >>> [Neil Gindoff.com](#)

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THE FRANK & WALTERS



ARCHER PREWITT



TRIUMPH 2000

15 Cork, Ireland native Paul Linehan—bassist and vocalist for THE FRANK AND WALTERS—didn't start out wanting to play music. "When I heard music on the radio, nothing ever touched me," he says. After finding inspiration in a 1985 Prefab Sprout song, he changed his tune. Now on their third full length *Beauty Becomes More Than Life*, which houses "Plenty Times," he and his bandmates are continually evolving. "I'm going to try to change the music a bit," Linehan says. "I don't want to do music the conventional way anymore."

16 "It's one of the most ear-pleasing records I've ever heard sonically," says SMITHEREENS' bassist Mike Mesaros of the band's new record *God Save the Smithereens* (Koch). "It has a warmth to it and it captures an element that my favorite records and my favorite bands have always had. It rocks and has balls and is raw and at the same time it's beautiful and melodic. All the bands we love, the Kinks, the Who, the Move, have done that." For a sampling of the band's newest release, check out "She's Got A Way." (See Reviews p. 68.)

17 ARCHER PREWITT is a busy man. He's just released his second record, (*White Sky*, featuring "Raise On High" on Carrot Top); he tours and records as the guitarist and keyboard player in both the Sea and Cake and the Sam Prekop Band, and he's a visual artist who writes his own comic book, *Sof Boy*—which may explain why he's letting his solo work become less, well, solo. "This record draws its strength from a full band feel. The dynamics and refinements were well honed after playing these songs on tour, and the basics, which included horns, were recorded live with much band input," he says. (See Reviews p. 66.)

18 "Some people might call what I do 'drum 'n' bass.' But I'm not going to narrow it down to what [the industry] thinks is commercially viable. I'm not really into narrow thinking," says jungle don GOLDIE. The golden one first garnered attention with the track featured here, "Terminator" (Columbia) which utilized his signature technique of stretching a sample over several bars without losing its original pitch. Says Goldie: "Making this music is like poker. You begin with five cards. You don't play poker with two cards. That's just the rule of the game. Once you learn how to play, you can bend the rules."

19 "My girlfriend's an artist and she says a lot of my work is conceptual in many ways—playing with the medium," says Richard Formby, TRIUMPH 2000's writer and producer. "I'm quite happy to have it filed under rock/pop for all I care, but I'd rather it wasn't marginalised like that." Triumph just released *Phazed & Confused* (Derailed) on which you'll find "Baris (Overseer Remix)." "I'm a fan of a lot of different styles of music. A friend described my early stuff as being referential—you can hear references to all sorts of stuff."

1 Dave Grohl says his band the FOO FIGHTERS is finally coming into its own. "The last album we did sounds to me like a hardcore band trying to be a melodic rock band," explained Grohl in a recent interview. "And I think the new record sounds a lot more comfortable, like we've finally gotten comfortable with writing songs that sound good and we're not scared of it. And I always used to feel like I was trying to sing, and now I kinda feel like I can." You can hear him kinda feeling that way on "Stacked Actors," from their new album *There Is Nothing Left to Lose* (RCA). (See cover story p. 40.)

2 THE SUPERSUCKERS hail from Arizona, and have just released their latest *The Evil Powers Of Rock 'N' Roll* (Koch-Aces&Eights) the title track of which is heard here. But it appears evil really is in the eye of the beer holder: "When we started the band, the whole idea was to get free beer," says guitarist Ron Heathman. "And maybe some girls. But it's gone way beyond our expectations. Of course, the longer you're in it, the greater your expectations become. So, you've got to keep it all in perspective. If you don't, you're not going to have any fun, and that's the point of being in a band." (See feature p. 26.)

3 at.the.drive.in. incorporates a wide array of musical influences, ranging from dub to death metal. But they know where their heart is: "We consider ourselves a punk band by ethic," says drummer Tony Hajjar. "We tour in a van, with a loft, and respect the scene that is supportive and keeps us alive in the hard times of touring. Hopefully our music will grow in time and they will have a harder time classifying us musically." "Rascuache" comes from their new EP, *Vaya* (Fearless). (See On the Verge p. 20.)

4 "We have been very blessed with the opportunity of making music for many years, but the truth is, we haven't even scratched the surface yet with all the things we want to do," says Ronald Isley. Which is staggering when you consider the more than 40-year span of his ISLEY BROTHERS's career. Their latest box set, *It's Your Thing: The Story Of The Isley Brothers* (Epic-Legacy) has a ton of material from the Brothers, both new and old—including "Fight The Power (Parts 1 & 2)." (See Q&A p. 19.)



FOO FIGHTERS



SUPERSUCKERS



ISLEY BROTHERS

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PRIMUS



LES SAVY FAV



LUNA

10 "You have to develop, but you want to still sound like yourself," says Brian Mashburn, guitarist of Orange County ska-pop-swing band **SAVE FERRIS** about the trying task of creating a follow-up to their 1997 major label debut, *It Means Everything*. "We wanted to make a record that we were happy with as far as doing new things and keeping it interesting for ourselves, but also keeping it interesting to people that were really into our first record." "Mistaken" comes from their sophomore record, *Modified* (Epic/Daylight-Starpool).

11 New York City upstarts, **MINDLESS SELF INDULGENCE** fill their debut album *Frankenstein Girls Will Seem Strangely Sexy* (Elektra) with very un-PC material, but that's part of its charm. Fans who've been following the band will already be familiar with MSI through the band's self-released debut *Tight*. "Before this, we were all just sitting at home playing 'Megaman,'" singer James "Little Urine" Euringer told *Spin*. "I don't really like musicians. I wanted to play with friends." Euringer and friends, Stephen Wright, Vanessa V.T. and drummer Kitty join forces for the band's single "Bitches."

12 **PRIMUS'** new *AntiPop* (Interscope-Universal Music Group), which includes "Electric Uncle Sam," shows a heavier side of the band, boasting guest appearances from Tom Morello (Rage Against The Machine), Fred Durst (Limp Bizkit), Jim Martin (Faith No More) and James Hetfield (Metallica). Where'd the change come from? Explains bassist/frontman Les Claypool: "There's all this young, male-driven music coming back now. The reason: We had almost four years of really syrupy crap on the radio. And along come Korn, Limp Bizkit, Deftones and other bands, so guys have another option besides Lilith Fair."

13 The members of **LES SAVY FAV** met at the Rhode Island School Of Design. On their latest effort, *The Cat And The Cobra* (frenchkiss)—where you'll find "Dishonest Don Part II"—they make use of "bratty guitars," "spastic vocals," and "disco drumming" to bring out a version of pop that they call "deceptively simple and deceptively complex." And they're nothing, if not, confident. Says bassist Syd Butler: "All American music will become our willing hostages in a kinky little game we've devised where they commit crimes against the politics of post-rock under the guise of being the helpless puppets of Les Savy Fav." (See Best New Music p. 23.)

14 **MARIO C.** is perhaps best known as a producer for the Beastie Boys. "Malkovich Masterpiece Remix" (USA Films) showcases his studio talents; director Spike Jonze (of Beastie Boys' "Sabotage" video fame) asked Mario to work his magic with some vocal snippets from Jonze's feature-length directorial debut, *Being John Malkovich*. The film boasts a cast of John Cusack, Cameron Diaz and John Malkovich himself; there may or may not be a soundtrack released, so enjoy this gem. (See "The MTV Pedigree" p. 86.)



LO FIDELITY ALLSTARS



SUPREME BEINGS OF LEISURE



JUSTIN CLAYTON

5 The winner of the NME Brat award for Best New Band in 1998, Horsham, England's **LO FIDELITY ALLSTARS** operate within both the dance and the rock realms of music. "To us, rock 'n' roll is all about an attitude," DJ Phil Ward a.k.a. "The Albino Priest" said in a recent interview. "We like putting on a show. We like ending songs with a wall of noise, and having distortion, things like that." "Many Tentacles Pimping On The Keys" is from their latest, *How to Operate With a Blown Mind* (Columbia).

6 "Our sound has a lot to do with who we are and where we come from," says **SUPREME BEINGS OF LEISURE** vocalist Geri Soriano-Lightwood. "We were all raised white, upper-middle class, but we weren't white. We didn't fit into our respective situations and that's what has become the bond between us." Bringing together influences as disparate as Massive Attack, Pink Floyd and Mozart, their music isn't an easy fit either. Guitarist Rick Torres has a pretty good idea of where their core audience is though. "Basically, anybody who has an orgasm likes our music." "Strangelove Addiction" comes from their self-titled debut (Palm Pictures).

7 "I never meant to make a solo record. It just happened," claims singer-songwriter, **JUSTIN CLAYTON**, whose new album *Limb* is out on Ultimatum Music. That "accidental" recording session began "Tragic." Says Clayton: "I respond musically to anything that moves me, regardless of who or what it is. It's the desire to write a melody which vibrates inside me, like how a bass or a drum does. I can only sing my own lyrics. If it ends up sounding familiar, that's purely unintentional."

8 Neil Hannon of **DIVINE COMEDY** fame, heard here on "The Pop Singer's Fear Of The Pollen Count," from *The Divine Comedy: A Secret History—The Best of...* (Setanta-Red Ink) sent an autobiographical letter to the press, excerpted here: "My teachers were at once amused by my free-thinking and appalled by my laziness, for by then there was only one thing I wanted to do—write songs. The oversized piano, permanently ensconced in our under-sized drawing room was the one thing I never got tired of hammering.... I might have been a famous avant-garde composer had my eldest brother not stepped in with the entire works of the Electric Light Orchestra."

9 "There's a great deal of restraint in our music," says Justin Harwood, **LUNA's** bassist. "We end up being more subtle than surprising." "Dear Diary" is from *The Days of Our Nights* (Jericho), the band's fifth album and first after being dropped by a major label. "The truth is that I am glad to be gone from Elektra, to escape from our mountain of phony record company debt," says vocalist and ex-Galaxie 500 frontman Dean Wareham. "I also view it as a small miracle that we lasted at Elektra for four whole albums without ever having a hit." (See Reviews p. 65.)

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Bosco Money (Rare) Hip-Hop p. 77
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Justin Clayton (Ultimatum Music) On The CD p. 91
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DJ T-Rock (Bomb) Reviews p. 70
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Gorky's Zygotic Mynci (Beggars Banquet) Reviews p. 61 listen.to/gorkys
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John Stuart Mill (See Thru) Reviews p. 62
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Archer Prewitt (Carrot Top) Reviews p. 66 On The CD p. 91
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Radio 4 (Gern Blandsten) Singles p. 78
Rasco (Copasetik) Hip-Hop p. 77
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Screwball (Hydra-Tommy Boy) Hip-Hop p. 77
Shivaree (Capitol) On The Verge p. 21
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Sleepy John Estes (Delmark) Flashback p. 79
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Mick Turner (Drag City) Reviews p. 70
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THE ROOTS The Roots Come Alive MCA—Live album recorded at the Hammerstein Ballroom in New York City in the summer of 1999; also includes some previously unreleased studio tracks
FRANK SINATRA Concepts Capitol—16-CD box set
SIMPLY RED Love And The Russian Winter Elektra
SISTER SONNY Love Songs Jetset
SOUNDTRACK Ally McBeal II 550-Epic—Second soundtrack to the hit series featuring music by Vonda Shepard, with both new and previously released material mixed in with a few cover songs from Al Green, Jennifer Holiday and others
SOUNDTRACK End Of Days Geffen—Both new and previously released tracks from Guns N' Roses, Limp Bizkit, Everlast, Stroke and more
SOUNDTRACK King Of The Hill Elektra—Companion to the acclaimed animated TV series on Fox, featuring compelling country and rock artists like Travis Tritt and George Thorogood, Barenaked Ladies, the Mavericks, Sheryl Crow, Brooks & Dunn, Tonic and many others
SOUNDTRACK The Simpsons: Go Simpsonic With The Simpsons Rhino—A follow-up to the first soundtrack, Songs In The Key Of Springfield, it features original songs, themes, and underscore music with the voices of Dan Castellaneta (Homer), Julie Kavner (Marge), Nancy Cartwright (Bart), Yeardley Smith (Lisa), Hank Azaria (Apu), and Harry Shearer (Mr. Burns), and also includes performances by celebrities who have appeared on the show, including Sonic Youth, the Ramones, Linda Ronstadt, Tito Puente, Jackie Mason, Kelsey Grammer, and Tim Conway
SPACE RAIDERS Don't Be Daft Skint-Medicine
STARLET Stay On My Side Parasol
STEELEY DAN Two Against Nature Reprise
JOE STRUMMIER & THE MESCALEROS Rock, Art & The X-Ray Style Helicat
SUPER COLLIDER Head On Skint-Medicine
THRONES White Rabbit (12" EP) Kill Rock Stars
MEL TORME California Suite Bethlehem-Avenue Jazz
JASON TRAEGER Mailorder Freaks (7") Kill Rock Stars
VARIOUS ARTISTS Chicken Soup For The Soul: 5 CD Collection Rhino—CD box set inspired by the hugely popular book series of the same name; re-issues of artists from Aretha Franklin to Otis Redding
VARIOUS ARTISTS Luv N' Haight: The Definitive Collection Luv N' Haight-Ubiqity—Compiling the best of their archive series, featuring funk, rare groove, soul and jazz
VARIOUS ARTISTS MTV: The First 1000 Years—New Wave Rhino—Part of a four-disc series featuring music from the dawn of the channel in the early '80s to the present. This collection features 16 tracks from the likes of Culture Club, Human League, A-Ha, the B-52's, the Cars, Howard Jones, Duran Duran and more
VARIOUS ARTISTS MTV: The First 1000 Years—Hip Hop Rhino—This installment boasts hits from Dr. Dre, Coolio, Snoop Doggy Dogg, House Of Pain, Master P, Ice Cube, Tone Loc and more
VARIOUS ARTISTS MTV: The First 1000 Years—R&B Rhino—This one houses top ten hits from Boys II Men, R. Kelly, Bobby Brown, En Vogue, Brandy, Johnny Gill, Tina Turner and more
VARIOUS ARTISTS MTV: The First 1000 Years—Rock Rhino—The rock disc features tracks from INXS, Faith No More, Garbage, Foo Fighters, R.E.M., Jane's Addiction, the Breeders, Beck and more
VARIOUS ARTISTS My Christmas Album MCA—MCA's new Christmas compilation includes standards like "The First Noel" and "O Come All Ye Faithful" as well as some original holiday songs from the likes of K-Ci & JoJo, Patti LaBelle, Mary J. Blige, Rahsaan Patterson and many more
VARIOUS ARTISTS Soul Train: The Dance Years (1976) Rhino—Series of compilations containing many of the songs Don Cornelius spotlighted on the Soul Train series from 1976-1979. The 1976 disc features tracks from the Miracles, Ohio Players, Wild Cherry, Lu Rawls, the Sylvers and more
VARIOUS ARTISTS Soul Train: The Dance Years (1977) Rhino—1977's CD contains tracks

from the Commodores, Earth, Wind & Fire, Thelma Houston, Slave, Heatwave and others
VEGA Life On Earth Capitol
YOLITION Guilty Pleasures Hamster
ZAP MAMA Am A Zone Luaka Bop

NOVEMBER 3

DUSTER 1975 Up
TAMI HERT Hert So Good Epic

NOVEMBER 8

BEANFIELD The Season/Altica Blues Remix (12") Compost
PACHINKO Splendor In The Ass II: Electric Boogaloo Alternative Tentacles

NOVEMBER 9

AIR Eating, Sleeping, Waiting, And Playing Astralwerks—An hour-long documentary of Air's hugely successful world tour in 1998 plus the three acclaimed video clips from their Moon Safari album, available on DVD and VHS. In addition, the DVD version will feature an audio bonus track: the rare David Whitaker orchestral version of "Remember" recorded at the legendary Abbey Road studios in London.
ANIMALS ON WHEELS Nuvol I Cadira Ninja Tune—Second full-length from Animals On Wheels, a.k.a. Andy Coleman
FIONA APPLE When The Pawn Hits The Conflicts He Thinks Like A King What He Knows Throws The Blows When He Goes To The Fight And He'll Win The Whole Thing 'Fore He Enters The Ring There's No Body To Batter When Your Mind Is Your Might So When You Go Solo, You Hold Your Own Hand And Remember That Depth Is The Greatest Of Heights And If You Know Where You Stand, Then You Know Where To Land And If You Fall It Won't Matter, 'Cuz You'll Know That You're Right Work—Fiona follows up her debut; yes, that's really the title.
A TEENS The Abba Generation MCA
SIL AUSTIN Swingstation Swingstation—Selected by Bob Porter
AUX 88 Electro Boogie Studio K7
BABYFACE Lovers Sony Legacy—Newly re-mastered expanded edition with live bonus tracks
BABYFACE The Day Sony Legacy—Another newly re-mastered expanded edition with live bonus tracks
BABYFACE For The Cool In You Sony Legacy—Yep, you guessed it, a newly expanded edition with five bonus tracks
BABYFACE Tender Lover Sony Legacy—Could it be a newly re-mastered expanded edition with five bonus tracks?
BAUHAUS Gotham Metropolis—Double live LP taken from their recent tour.
BEANFIELD Human Patterns Compost
DIZZY GILLESPIE An Electrifying Evening With The Dizzy Gillespie Quintet Verve
THE DOORS The Complete Studio Recordings And Essential Rareties Elektra—A seven-CD box set that contains completely re-mastered versions of each of the group's six original studio albums, plus a bonus disc of rarities culled from the unreleased material contained in their 1997 box set. Also included in the 15-track Essential Rareties disc is a never before heard original Doors song, "Woman Is A Devil"
GUY MCA—Reunion Album
HOME GROWN EP Phone Home (EP) Fueled By Ramen
JAPANESE TELECOM Japanese Telecom Intuit-Solar—Old unreleased Detroit electro
MONTELL JORDAN Get It On... Tonite Def Soul
KHAN Passport Matador
L'IL KIMI The Notorious K.I.M., Atlantic
MAHAVISHU ORCHESTRA Birds Of Fire Sony Legacy—Reissue
NATALIE MERCHANT Live In Concert Elektra—The ex-10,000 Maniac's first live release
WES MONTGOMERY Tequila Verve—Reissue
MR. LEN FEATURING JIGGAKNOTS (12") Matador
OSCAR PETERSON TRIO WITH MILT JACKSON Very Tall Verve
RED PRYSOCK Swingstation Swingstation—Selected by Bob Porter
SO PLUSH 550
SOUNDTRACK James Bond: The World Is Not Enough MCA—Includes the score of Bond's latest escapade, as well as an original title track from Garage
SOUNDTRACK Ghost Dogs Razorsharp Epic—Previously unreleased material from Wu-Tang Clan and others, entirely produced by RZA
SOUNDTRACK Light It Up Elektra—New music from Master P's No Limit All Stars, including Outkast, DMX, Ja Rule and N'Sync
SOUNDTRACK Pokemon Atlantic—Vertible teen-o-rama featuring new and previously released tracks from all the dreamy pop icons you can imagine
SOUNDTRACK Three To Tango Atlantic—Features both new and previously released material from Brian Setzer Orchestra, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, Squirrel Nut Zippers, Duncan Sheik, Atomic Fireballs and more. Sadly, there's no Yo La Tengo...
SAM TAYLOR Swingstation Swingstation—Selected by Bob Porter
DANNY TENAGLIA Back To Mine Ultra
LUTHER VANDROSS Greatest Hits Sony Legacy
VARIOUS ARTISTS New World Party Putumayo—Worldly tracks from new and established artists with R&B and hip-hop beats, including Wyclef Jean, Miriam Makeba, Los Mocosos, Dissidenten, Chico Cesar and many more
VARIOUS ARTISTS Priceless Jazz: Voices Of The Century GRP—Three-CD release featuring Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday and Carmen McGray and others
VARIOUS ARTISTS Touched By An Angel 550—Christmas music from Keb Mo, Della Reese, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Donna Summer and more
VARIOUS ARTISTS What The Funk You Waitin' For? V2—Electronica compilation featuring both new and previously released tracks from artists like Moby, Alex Gopher, Jungle Brothers, N'Dea Davenport and others
DINAH WASHINGTON Sings Bessie Smith Verve—Reissue

NOVEMBER 14

NO OUBT Artificial Sweetener A&M/Geffen-Interscope
ROB ZOMBIE Hellbilly Deluxe Remix A&M/Geffen-Interscope

NOVEMBER 16

VARIOUS ARTISTS 720 Album 720—720 is a subsidiary label of Good Looking records, and the compilation features Good Looking tracks by artists Blame, Panah, and others.
BEASTIE BOYS The Sound Of Science Capitol
BECK Midnite Vultures Interscope
BOBBYTEENS Fast Livin' And Rock 'N' Roll Estrus—Previously released only on vinyl, this full-length also includes both tracks from the Bobbyteens' out-of-print Estrus Club 77, "Rock 'N' Roll Show" and "Backseat Lover" as bonus cuts
BOLSHOI A Way Beggars Banquet—The best of Bolshoi
JOHN CORBETT & HEAVY FRIENDS I'm Sick About My Hat Atavistic
COYLE & SHARPE Audio Visionaries Thirsty Ear
CELINE DION Hits 550

DJ ME DJ You Simplemachinerock (EP) Emperor Norton—EP from the duo behind Sukia
DRAGS Mailorder Freaks (7") Kill Rock Stars
ESTRELLA 2020 Afro Mexicana (EP) Estrus—Japanese soul/punk
PABLO FLORES Epic
GHETTO FABULOUS Epic
GOVT MULE Live...With A Little Help From Our Friends Island
WOODY HERMAN AND THE HERD Live at Carnegie Hall 1946 Verve—Double-CD reissue
IDJUT BOYS Live In The Mix Nuphonic
JAZZANOVA 3rd EP Compost-Studio K7
KORIN Epic
LAND OF THE LOOPS Hurry Up And Wait Up—CD Single
LLAMA FARMERS Dead Letter Chorus Beggars Banquet
MARY LOU LORDYSEAN NA-NA (EP) Kill Rock Stars
MAD RAPPER Tell Em Why U Madd Crazy Cat Catalogue-Columbia
BOB MARLEY Bob Marley: Chant Down Babylon Island—Bob's sons produced this all-star tribute, a collaboration incorporating Bob's songs and the talent of other artists who have been inspired by his music and message. Those participating include Erykah Badu, Guru, Steven Tyler, Lauryn Hill, Busta Rhymes, MC Lyte and more
METALLICA S&M Elektra—Metallica re-records old standards with the San Francisco Symphony, plus two new songs.

METHODS OF MAYHEM Methods Of Mayhem MCA—Tommy Lee featuring Lil' Kim, Kid Rock and Dave Navarro
ROGER MILLER'S BINARY SYSTEM From The Epicenter Atavistic
MANDY MOORE So Real 550
NERVES Midnight Sun (7") Estrus—Limited edition of 1,000 copies
VARIOUS ARTISTS The New Latinaires Vol. 2 Ubiqity—Compiling recent vinyl-only releases and showcasing exclusive tracks, this is the second in the Latinaires compilation series; features mixes and music by Joe Claussell, Kirk Degroigo, Catalyst, Calm, P'taah, and more
GARY NUMAN Dance Beggars Banquet
GARY NUMAN The Plan Beggars Banquet
PERE UBU Art Of Walking Thirsty Ear
PERE UBU Song Of The Bailing Man Thirsty Ear
PTAAH The EP (12") Ubiqity—First EP release for P'taah, a.k.a. Chris Brann (Wamide), underground producer from Atlanta who fuses free jazz with rolling beats, contemporary club music production with organic percussion.
RAINER MARIA Atlantic (EP) Polyvinyl
LINDA RONSTADT (box set) Elektra
BEANIE SIGAL The Truth Rockefeller—Def Jam
SOLEAD BROS. The Gospel According To John (7") Estrus
SOUNDTRACK Backstage... Hard Knock Life Mercury—A mix of both new and previously released tracks from Lil' Cease, Da Brat, T-Boz, Prodigy and more
RONNIE SPECTOR (7") Kill Rock Stars
ST-37 I Like To Talk, If There's Anything To Talk About Emperor Jones—A double-length CD
WHARTON TIERS ENSEMBLE Twilight Of The Computer Age Atavistic
TOTO Mind Fields Sony Legacy
VARIOUS ARTISTS Botchit Breaks 3 Botchit—Features Botchit & Scarper artists such as FreQ Nasty, BLIM, T-Power and more
VARIOUS ARTISTS Moshi Moshi: Pop International Style March—Sequel to the Pop American Style comp, it features 40 international pop bands including Wolfte, Secret Goldfish, Aden, Le Mans, Spring and more
VARIOUS ARTISTS Psyched! Beggars Banquet—Garage-psych compilation featuring Mercury Rev, Rollerz, Skunk, Loop and others
VARIOUS ARTISTS The Ultimate Grammy Box Sony Legacy—Four-CD box set is comprised entirely of musical performances that have either won a Grammy Award since its inception in 1958, or have been voted into the Recording Academy's Hall Of Fame established in 1973. The set includes more than 70 musical selections representing a wide range of music including tracks from Elvis Presley, Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Billy Joel, Whitney Houston, Marvin Gaye, John Lennon, Bonnie Raitt and many more
VARIOUS ARTISTS VH1: That's Rock 'N' Roll Rhino—Collection of 16 movie rock hits from the '50s, '60s, '70s and '80s with tracks from Paul Simon, the Ramones, Blues Brothers, Commitments, Los Lobos, Aretha Franklin and more
VARIOUS ARTISTS Who Hoo Bank, Volume 1 Yawn
THE WHO BBC Sessions MCA

NOVEMBER 23

AGORAPHOBIC NOSEBLEED/CONVERGE Poacher Diaries Relapse
DAVID BENIOFF American Landscape GRP—DVD
COALESC D12: Revolution in Just Listening Relapse
GHOSTFACE KILLAH Supreme Clientele Epic
KROM This Primal Music
KRUST Coded Language Mercury
LL COOL J G.O.A.T. Island
NOFX The Decline (EP) Fat Wreck Chords
THIRD EYE BLIND Elektra
VARIOUS ARTISTS Gve 'Em The Boot II Helicat
VARIOUS ARTISTS Nipper's G. H. Vol. 1 RCA
VARIOUS ARTISTS Nipper's G. H. Vol. 2 RCA
YOGA Yoga Primal Music

NOVEMBER 30

BUKEM Rhodes To Freedom (12") Good Looking
DJ GODFATHER Via Satellite From Detroit Intuit-Solar
SISQO Unleash The Dragon Def Soul

DECEMBER 6

NOAM CHOMSKY Free Market Fantasies: Capitalism In The Real World Alternative Tentacles—Spoken-word CD
ANGELA DAVIS The Prison Industrial Complex Alternative Tentacles—Spoken-word CD

DECEMBER 7

BLACK HEART PROCESSION Up—CD Single
BONE THUGS Epic
DJ CLUE Island
DINA MARTINA Up
FRANK SINATRA Swingin' With Sinatra Reprise—Previously released material
METHOO MAN Black Out Island
TRUBY TRIO A Go-Go/Carajillo (12") Compost

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Jan '95 | Throwing Muses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mar '95 | Belly |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> May '95 | Juliana Hatfield |
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AND CIRCULATION OF CMJ NEW MUSIC MONTHLY, published
monthly at 11 Middle Neck Road, Suite 400, Great Neck, NY
11021.

The names and addresses of the Publisher, Editor, and
Managing Editor are: Publisher, Robert K. Haber, 11 Middle
Neck Road, Suite 400, Great Neck, NY 11021; Editor, Scott
Frampton, 11 Middle Neck Road, Suite 400, Great Neck, NY
11021; Managing Editor, Neil Gladstone, 11 Middle Neck
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The owner is College Media, Inc.
The names and addresses of stockholders owning 1% or
more of the stock of College Media, Inc. are as follows:
Joanne Haber, 11 Middle Neck Road, Suite 400, Great Neck,
NY 11021; Lee Haber, 11 Middle Neck Road, Suite 400,
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Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months

a. Total number of copies (net press run)	107,586
b. 1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions	22,322
2) Paid In-County Subscriptions	0
3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution	41,721
4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	400
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation	64,443
d. 1) Outside-County	704
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3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	200
e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail	3,722
f. Total Free Distribution	4,626
g. Total Distribution	69,069
h. Copies not Distributed	38,517
i. Total	107,586
j. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation	93.3%

No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date

a. Total number of copies (net press run)	104,582
b. 1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions	22,884
2) Paid In-County Subscriptions	0
3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution	37,674
4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	350
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation	60,908
d. 1) Outside-County	817
2) In-County	0
3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	200
e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail	6,646
f. Total Free Distribution	7,663
g. Total Distribution	68,571
h. Copies not Distributed	36,011
i. Total	104,582
j. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation	88.8%

(continued from page 98)

with some outstanding Fields memorabilia. "I go there for burgers and 8-ball. But for bumper pool, which is really my game, I go to the **North Main Tavern**" (1419 N. Main St. 962-9573) "Bobby, the owner, will take care of you. [He's] an old guy and he'll cuss up a blue streak, too. He's real good at that." Bun E. should know. He's legendary at the table. "They've got the best bumper pool table in town. Occasionally, I'll play for beers, but usually, I don't because everybody wants to play me for beer because I'm 'The Guy From Cheap Trick,' and I end up with about ten extra beers...."

"For a good piece of fish, I come to the **Singapore Grill** (6390 E. Riverside Blvd. 636-1888). "Frank Buscemi is the bartender. He used to be the bartender at The Uptown on N. Main, which is now Bourbon Street, and we go in there to see bands sometimes. There's a lot of good places in Rockford for fish. There's a place around the corner from Maria's that's a good little café called **El Greco**." "And also for real good fish, downtown is **Paragon On State**." (205 W. State St. 963-1660). The hot new restaurant, it's more on the "up" end of the down/up scale. The top of the other side of that particular scale would have to be the hot dogs, Italian Beef and—especially—the gyros at the seemingly always open **Uncle Nick's** (918 E. State St. 962-4444). People have been known to kill (albeit, usually after 3 AM for one. Watch out, though—the grease actually soaks through foil.

"There's a lot of great new independently owned restaurants opening up like **Louis Cooper's Restaurant**," he says. (Also downtown, 405 N. Church St. 968-5719).

We were going to go there tonight, but instead I'm going fishing at Bun. E. Lake. (A private, secret location "two miles that a-way.")

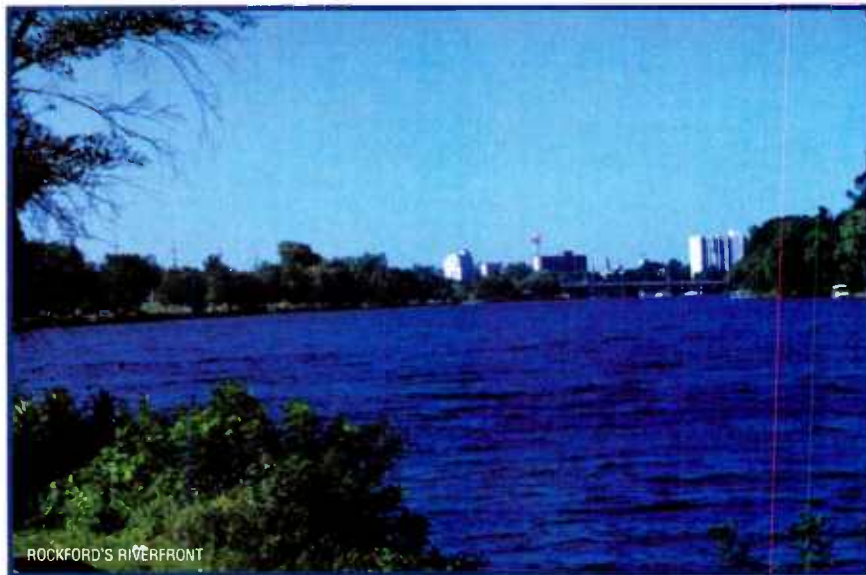
Also, when downtown, don't miss Rockford's shining riverfront. "They cleaned up the river. Now it's real nice for boating, walking and stuff." That's where you'll find "Symbol," Alexander Lieberman's sculpture—"the big dick aiming north," says Bun E. And Labor Day brings us the **On The Waterfront** festival: Chick Corea, Joan Jett, John Scofield, and the Kingsmen, among many others played just this year.

For finding buried treasures, Bun E. recommends "those two antique malls on State Street." (**East State Street Antique Malls #1 & #2**. 5411 and 5301 E. State St. 229-4004 and 226-1566). "That's where I go junkin'." And of course, if anyone ever wants to buy antiques from Bun E.'s mother, there's **Vie's Antiques** (6120 E. Riverside Blvd. 636-8815). "My mom's shop. It's closed in the winter, so if there's snow on the ground, don't bother."

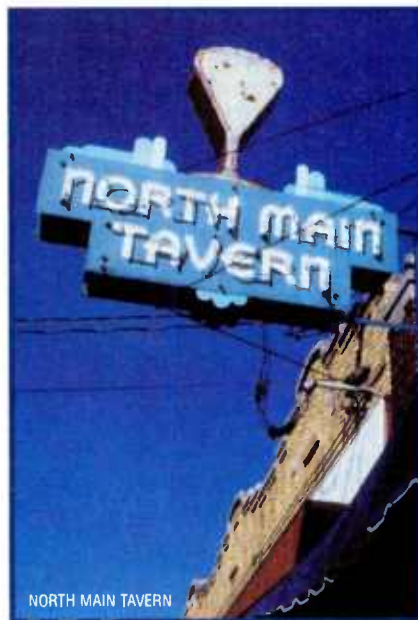
Ask Bun E. What's the best thing about Rockford? and his reply is what you'd expect of a rock luminary: "Rockford's a great place to go to gigs from. You're 90 minutes away from Milwaukee or downtown Chicago, and you're only 60 minutes from downtown Madison." And you can't beat all that!

All phone numbers are in the 815 area code.

Scott Morrow likes Big Daddy Roth, chocolatey Yoo-Hoo, dogs of all ages, and while he has lived in both Rockford and Los Angeles—much to his chagrin—he can't decide where he wants to stay.



ROCKFORD'S RIVERFRONT



NORTH MAIN TAVERN



"SYMBOL" BY ALEXANDER LIEBERMAN



VIE'S ANTIQUES (BUN E.'S MOM, VIE CARLSON)



BUN E. CARLOS IN FRONT OF BEEF-A-ROO

Germanicus Kent first settled Rockford, Illinois in 1834. The second largest city in Illinois, it's an industrial town that sometimes seems to bear an uncanny resemblance to *The Simpsons'* Springfield. (Actually, Matt Groening did grow up in Evanston, some 60 miles away.) In addition to being the home of the dominant All American Girls Professional Baseball League team of the '40s and '50s, The Peaches (see *A League Of Their Own*), Rockford's other claim to fame is that rock 'n' roll pop juggernaut, Cheap Trick.

The story goes that back in 1963, Cheap Trick mastermind Rick Nielsen—whose dad owned Ralph Nielsen Music House—threw rocks at Bun E. Carlos's sister. The two boys have been friends ever since. Now famous for his six-foot drumsticks, cool onstage demeanor, his constant lip-dangling ciggies (though he recently quit cold turkey), Bun E. probably said it best when he told *Rolling Stone* back when *Live at Budokan* came out: "We're just a bunch of jerks from Rockford."

"A lot of people weren't too happy with my choice of the word 'jerk,'" says Bun E., relaxing below the Cheap Trick Shrine (a collection of memorabilia donated by the band) in a booth at Rockford's '50s-style **Beef-A-Roo** (6380 E. Riverside Blvd. 877-5610). Beef-A-Roo is part of a small local chain known for its superb fresh

burgers and frightening theme song. But there's no doubt he's from Rockford: "I've lived here 48 years. It's home."

Cheap Trick have apparently played "every school and berg in town," but nowadays it's a little tougher for a working band who still wants to play rock 'n' roll with guitars and drums. Yet Rockford still has a bonafide scene, with some fine bands including the Beat Merchants, Angie Crown, Lily White, and the recently signed Goodyear Pimps (now, due to legal nightmares, called the Pimps). And on just about any given night you can find live music.

In the Main and Auburn area, you'll feel welcome amidst various thrill seekers at **The Barn** (1428 N. Main St. 965-8069), where Bun E. can occasionally be found hanging out. Just across the street is **Bourbon Street** (1407 N. Main St. 963-4062), which also sports live music on occasion. Bun E. is also known to haunt the tables at **Leisure Time Billiards and Sports Bar** (1434 N. Main St. 962-0989).

Downtown in the Riverfront District, bohemians swarm to the jewel of the area, the **Irish Rose Saloon** (519 E. State St. 964-0480). Featuring over 100 different types of beer, live music on weekends, and a great sidewalk café, you really can't go wrong. Some of the best and most adventurous live music can be heard at the up-and-coming **Club 505** (505 E. State St. 963-0099), and the revived **State And Madison** (downstairs, at the corner of State St. and Madison). And for those who don't need live music, but "like to watch," there's the more "exotic" **Surf Lounge** (326 E. State St. 968-9061), where it's rumored Bun E. went on occasion before he got married. It actually has an excellent sound and light system, and in some twisted way, it's become a sort of neighborhood bar.

For buying music, there are the usual chains, plus a couple of used CD stores like **15 Minutes Compact Discs** (1662 N. Alpine Rd. 395-8061), and **Spin City** (5301 E. State St. 399-0093). 15 Minutes' honorable owner Jeff seems to live by the slogan "Punk's not dead," and if that's your cuppa, he's your man. And men don't come any better than Spin City's owners Nate and Dan, whose combined knowledge (alternative is a specialty) and ability to find most anything—used or new, as they also do special orders—makes that the place to shop. (Website: www.spincityrecords.com).

In Rockford and need some drums? Try **Randy Rainwater** ("Don't call after 9 p.m.," advises Bun E. 967-0260). "If you've got drums in Rockford, and you want to sell them, or your looking for a drum set and you're in Rockford, call Randy. He's the guy on the ball if you need drum parts in Rockford." Bun E. Carlos would know.

Ask Bun E. what gives Rockford its local flavor and his first thought is "The restaurants! The best Italian food is of course **Maria's Italian Café!**" (828 Cunningham Rd. 968-6781). Considering Rockford's large Italian population and wealth of Italian restaurants, that's quite a compliment, but one hard to argue with. George Bush, whose picture is on the wall, apparently agrees. Personally—and not to rain on the Bun-Bush ticket—I'd add that **Lino's** (5611 E. State St. 397-2077) has the best pizza in the world. And to be fair to Rockford's equally large Swedish population, Carlos reminds us that there's the **Stockholm Inn** (2420 Charles St. 397-3534), for "The best Swedish pancakes in the world," as well as excellent and inexpensive home-style lunches and dinners.

"For a good fat burger, I go to **Souse's Lounge**" (5855 Forest Hill Rd. 282-2818). Named after a W.C. Fields character, it's decorated

(continued on page 97)

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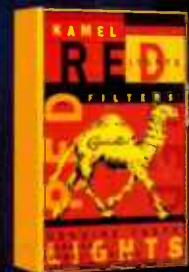
Hive: Eddie Haddad

"THE ENEMY GAVE HIM A LIGHT. LANCE GAVE HIM SOME
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