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MONTHLY

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DICKY BARRETT, AMY RAY, STEVE EARLE...

PLUS:

A NEW START FOR PERRY FARRELL.
ZAP MAMA. THE MAKE UP. ARMAGEDDON RISING.

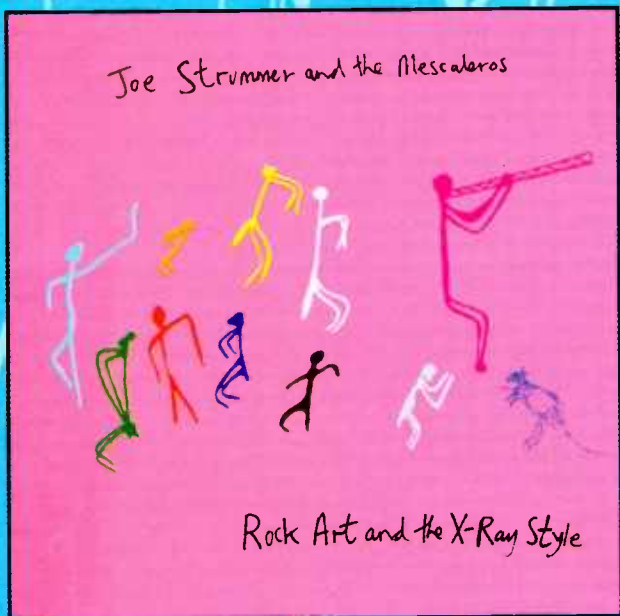
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Joe Strummer and the Mescaleros



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CONTENTS

ON THE COVER

DOES MUSIC MATTER ANYMORE? 36

Pop music was once a defining cultural and political force. Between Madison Ave. and MTV, is it now just another commodity? Michael Azerrad ruminates. Plus Steve Earle, David Crosby and the next generation of activist musicians.

FEATURES

PERRY FARRELL 24

With a new recording contract and a newfound love for Jewish spirituality, it's time for Perry's Jubilee. John Regardie joins the party.

ZAP MAMA 28

Marie Daulne goes from jungle to jungle, bringing end-of-the-century beats to the music of the Central African forest. Interview by Steve Ciabattoni.

THE MAKE UP 30

This D.C. mod-soul-garage-punk band tears it up in the name of the "Gospel Yeh-Yeh." Explication by Jon Dugan.

ON THE CD 79

Depending on when you usually pick up a copy of the magazine, the world may have ended before you were able to listen to the fine artists listed below. We regret any inconvenience: Zap Mama, Ani DiFranco, Joe Strummer And The Mescaleros, Idlewild, Kittie, Methods Of Mayhem, On, 8stops7, American Girls, The Make Up, Smith & Mighty, Eszter Balint, Cobra Killer, Slipknot, Nebula, Charlatans UK, Arto Lindsay, The Hand, Le Tigre, No. 2.

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Partying With Kid Rock May Cause Lung Cancer, Heart Disease, Emphysema, And May Complicate Pregnancy.

ON THE COVER AND HERE: Kid Rock photographed by Chapman Baehler

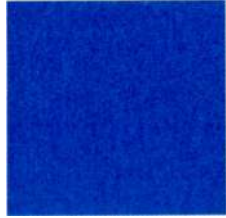
CMJ JANUARY 2000 • ISSUE 77
NEW MUSIC
MONTHLY



40 Perry



40 Farrell



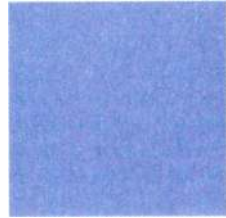
11 Quick Fix



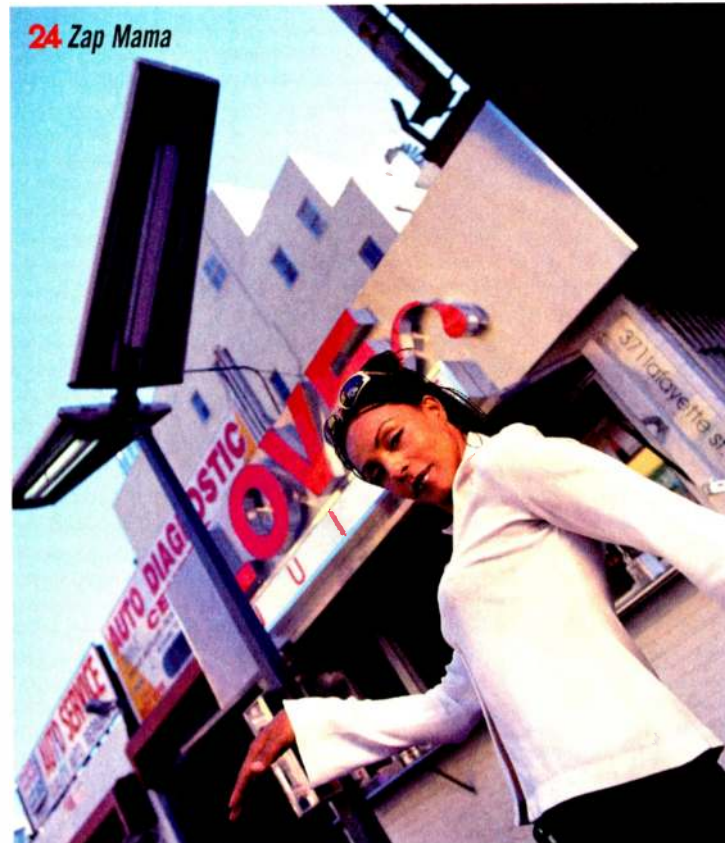
65 Life/Style



28 The Make Up



68 Life/Style Fashion



24 Zap Mama

CONTENTS (continued)

DEPARTMENTS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 06

QUICK FIX 11

Tricky gets down to business; Joe Strummer is one happy old punk; smoke gets in the eyes of Cypress Hill; and the women of Kittie: young, loud, fast and Canadian.

ON THE VERGE 18

Currently contributing to our Cassandra complex: Jurassic Five, Ken Vandermark and Idlewild.

THE SCENE IS NOW 56

Mexican hip-hop, puto!

LIFE/STYLE

RAGE AMONGST THE MACHINES 65

A bunch of engineers, 500-pound remote-controlled robots and a lot of destruction. Any Questions?

IN MY LIFE 67

Dimitri From Paris and his army of automatons.

FALLOUT FASHION 68

You'll still want to look great after the apocalypse. Armand Van Helden, Reid Speed and Jackie Christie show us how.

FILM 72

Speed, smack and salvation: The less-than-holy odyssey of *Jesus' Son*.

BOOKS 73

Poetry for outlaws.

LIGHTREADING 74

20th century man (and Superman).

GAMING 75

Playing for the world—when you're saving humanity, it ought to be fun.

ELECTROMEDIA 76

Web2K

LOCALZINE 84

Millennial fever getting ya down? Get away to big sky country.

Missoula, Montana.

GEEK LOVE 86

Hail, hail *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

REVIEWS, CHARTS AND SERVICES

BEST NEW MUSIC 21

REVIEWS 44

TOP 75 58

METAL 59

HIP-HOP 60

DANCE 61

SINGLES 61

FLASHBACK 63

JUST OUT 64

FEEDBACK 80

DIRECTORY/INDEX 81

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FUTURE'S HERE...

TOTEMS / BRAVE OLD WORLD / FOUR HORSEMEN

VERIGO

PULP FANTASTIC / I DIE AT MIDNIGHT

comics for mature readers

DC COMICS

VERIGO

START SCREAMING.

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IT ALL STARTS IN DECEMBER

BECK BRICKBATS

Your article on Beck was an insult not only to Beck, but also to your readers. Instead of reviewing his new album, you tried to squeeze into the article the names of as many "cool" and obscure bands as possible. I counted 44 names in the article which have little or nothing to do with Beck's music. You make it seem as though Beck does nothing original, that he only steals the sounds of other artists. The worst part is that your blatant name-dropping was apparently an attempt to cover your ignorance about where Beck is coming from. You didn't deem Johnny Cash cool enough to mention, even though Beck can be heard singing the refrain from Cash's "I Walk The Line" on the sampler disc that came with the magazine. You quote a line, "yellow turns to black" from Beck's album, but you fail to note that this is borrowed from Captain Beefheart's "Brickbats." It's true that Beck uses other people's ideas, but only when they fit his own. Don't treat him like a walking record collection.

[RunPaint@aol.com]

The logic here is that using other people's ideas is not unoriginal when they're used to fit your own? Expect an e-mail from Puffy Combs' publicist. Our story, on the other hand, pretty much follows the hoary strategy of describing difficult-to-describe sounds by invoking the music of other bands. Look at it this way: unoriginal music is easy to describe unoriginally with all those genre names that we rock writers are so fond of making up, but a song that brings to mind Curtis Mayfield, the Beatles and T-Rex? That's original. —ed.

WHERE IT'S AT

Put simply: I'm hooked. I had never heard of *CMJ New Music Monthly* before I went to Warehouse Music to look for a Beck CD. What did I find? A fabulous magazine with Beck on the cover. Which also contained a wonderful CD with great bands, especially Rich Creamy Paint and Guster. Well, I'm sure I do not need to tell you that Beck is such a fabulous artist who doesn't by any means get the credit he really deserves. I'm glad such a great magazine took notice of such a supremely talented artist.

Leslie Wicksted [Dragonfog8@aol.com]

SCHUR THING

In your November issue, Flip label owner Dave Schur says he breaks in bands "not through MTV or commercial radio, but by developing a fan base through relentless touring." But in your August issue you talk about Flip records paying off KUFO \$5,000 to play some Limp Bizkit song. Whattup with that? Is KUFO not a commercial radio station, or is Schur just trying to sell records

by saying he's a "hands-on label owner and music fan?"

Ian Gillies (Chalk Records-Mesa, AZ)

I don't think I've ever known anyone to buy a record because of a label owner's philosophy on breaking bands. But hey, what would you tell a band who's been on the road for two years? "Thanks for the effort boys, those 200 dates you played, plus greasing some radio schmuck to play the record is really paying off. No pun intended, har har har." —ed.

EATING PATE DE FOIS GRAS TO THE SOUND OF TRUMPETS

I've been purchasing every issue of *CMJ New Music Monthly* since the March 1999, the Day The Music Died, issue. Ever since, my musical interests have not been the same. I have relied on your magazine and CD to bring me the skinny on the new music scene, and you have come through every month with great selections. My interest in writing you is to tell all of the people that were upset at the DJ Rap cover and the Limp Bizkit issue to lighten up. The point of the magazine is to bring the readers new music, and the magazine will do just that, like it or not. Putting out a magazine that everyone likes is not easy and if you think it is, maybe you should give it a try. Your opinion is not as valuable as the opinion of the other readers who receive the magazine to learn about new music and appreciate what they may not have given a try otherwise. Shut up! Enjoy what you have bought and experience some new bands. There is more in the magazine than the cover story.

Ryan Smith (Geneva, NY) [r420@juno.com]

Why am I not comforted by the phrase "like it or not"? —ed.

I was pleased to see the Beastie Boys' sophomore effort *Paul's Boutique* held in such high regard. Just when I couldn't take "You Gotta Fight For Your Right To Party" anymore, *Paul's Boutique* came along, and the 80's went out on a high note. It is still their best album to date, although their newer material kicks ass as well. Kudos.

Jeff (Westminster, CO)

Jeff, the phrase "sophomore effort" indicates that you've been reading too much rock criticism and may even be contemplating writing it yourself. If you begin to exhibit other warning signs—using words like "eponymous," thinking that a publicist has invited you to dinner because she likes you—please seek help while there's still time and unwrinkled shirts in your closet. —ed.



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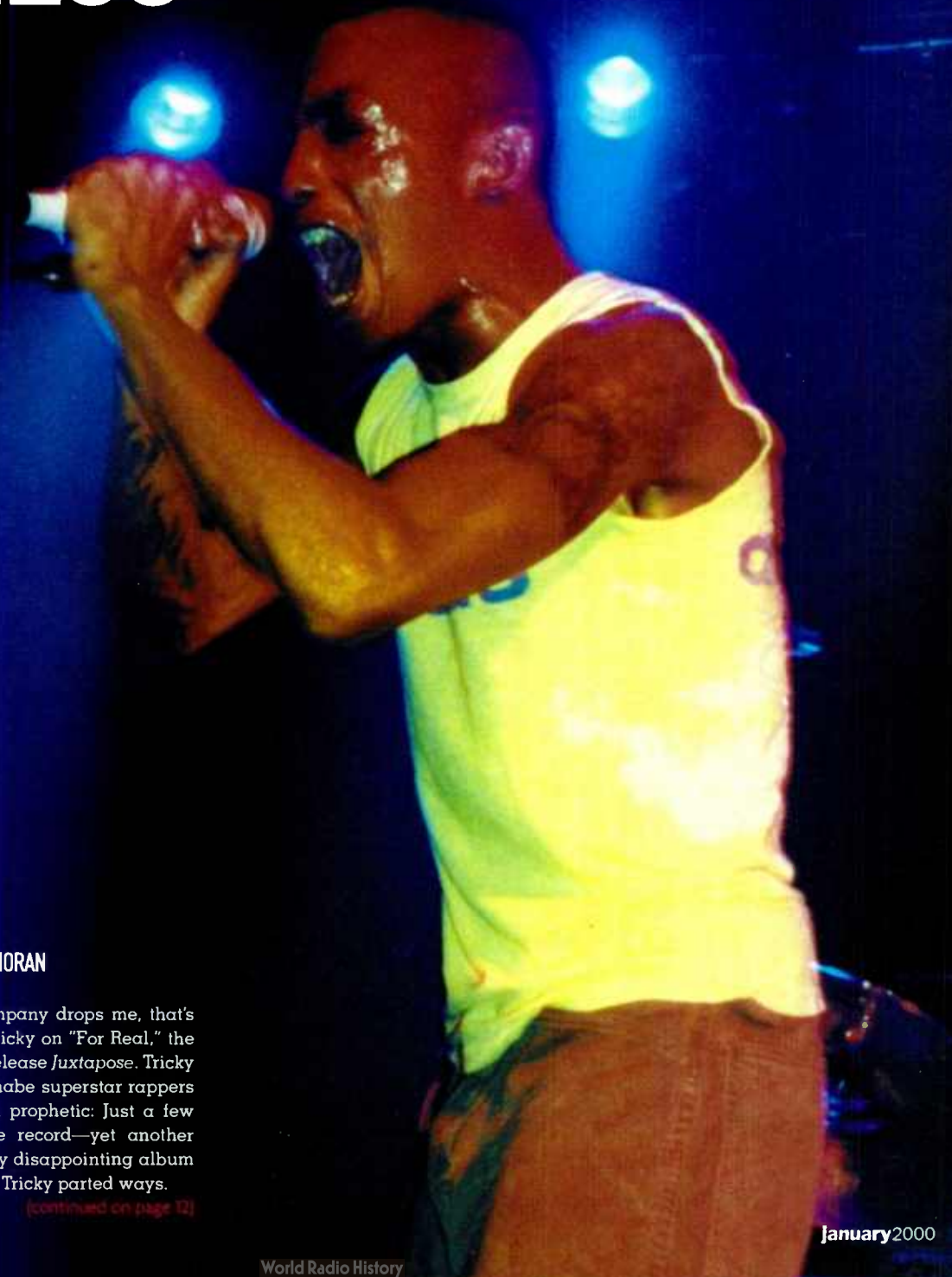
HITTING THE TRAIL IN DECEMBER

GLEN
FABRY
'99

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TRICKY BUSINESS

Splitting from Island, the Dark Prince readies the world for a dose of Durban Poison.



story: BILL WERDE photo: BRENDAN MORAN

"And when the record company drops me, that's when I learn," rasped Tricky on "For Real," the opening track to his most recent release *Juxtapose*. Tricky may have been referring to wannabe superstar rappers at the time, but the lyric proved prophetic: Just a few months after the release of the record—yet another critically lauded but commercially disappointing album from the Dark Prince—Island and Tricky parted ways.

(continued on page 12)

TRICKY BUSINESS (continued from page 11)

"It's been a wicked, wicked relationship, and I feel sad leaving them," says Tricky, on the phone from his New Jersey home. "But I knew I had to leave for like a year now." Tricky says changes in management and ownership at Island were key reasons for his change of heart. And he says he understands that Island has a business to run. "My music is not easy to market," acknowledges Tricky. "There ain't no use trying to market me to black people. There ain't no use trying to market me to white people. You just put my music out, and it's a process thing. I think they've tried every marketing plan in the world with me, apart from changing my music."

If it's true that Tricky hasn't fully realized the path to stardom that seemed imminent after 1995's simmering *Maxinquaye*, perhaps it's because he's been distracted by business. He's wanted to start a label since releasing *Maxinquaye*, and the project has gone through many mutations. A cooperative deal with DreamWorks Records fell through after several years of negotiations. "I think they thought they were going to have a label of me's, like little Trickys running around everywhere, and that's no point. I don't want a label with my music."

Instead, Tricky decided to release artists on his Durban Poison label (named for the good South African weed he smoked as a kid) through various distributors. The first release, Genaside 2's *Ad Finite*, a frenetic swirl of breakbeats and dark dub, came out last September.

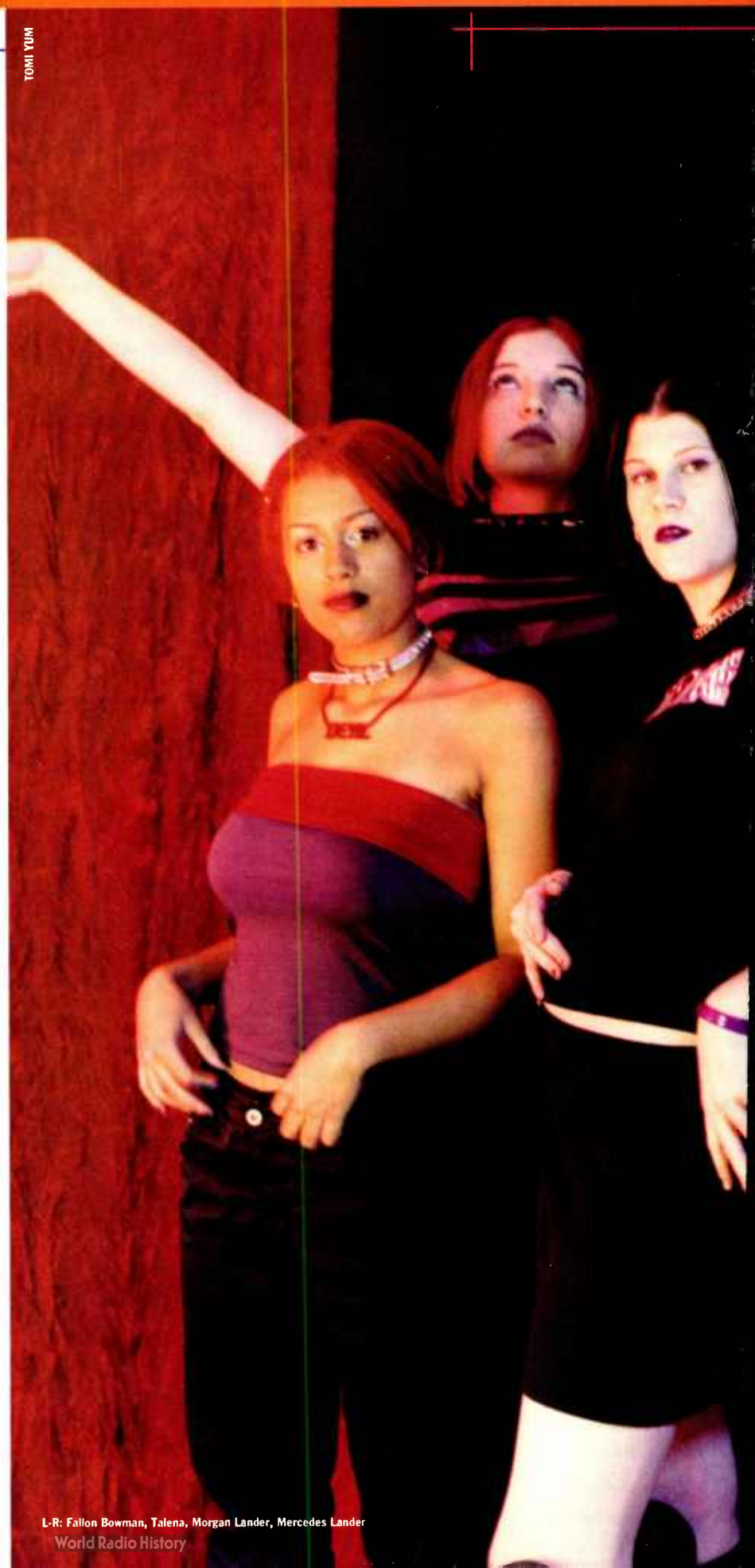
Durban Poison also boasts rapper Mad Dog and siren Kioka, who made appearances on *Juxtapose*; the Baby Namboos, whose dub-heavy (dare we say *trip-hop*?) sound will be heard on its debut album, to be released in February through Palm Pictures; and other hip-hop, breakbeat and dub-oriented projects including Product Of The Environment and Subtech. Most of these groups are slated to release albums in 2000.

"*Juxtapose* really was used as a sellout album for Durban," admits Tricky. "That was for me to try and gain pop success to make money to put back into the label. Anybody who really knows my music, there's too much of my voice on it. I don't like half the songs. That was for Mad Dog. That was for Kioka. That was for Durban, which is basically for me at the end."

With his label situation somewhat resolved, he says he's back in the mind space to do great things. "It's a new beginning for me. I've got two albums finished and a new sound again—my own sound. It makes you feel different than [past releases] *Angels* and *Pre-Millennium* and *Nearly God*. People think I'm the prince of darkness, but it's very positive."

"A couple of years ago I was just obsessed with me and my music," continues Tricky. "I don't think that's healthy. Now I'm making music again like the old days—like when I made *Maxinquaye*. It was just something that I had the opportunity to do, and then I'd make it, and put it down and not do anything for two months. But I got a bit too obsessed with it—a bit too close to it. Now, I've started having fun again."

TOMI YUIM



MORE PURR, LESS GRRR

Canada's **Kittie** wants to rock, not riot. **CD**

How many heavy metal bands originate in gymnastics class?

If they do, few let on. However, the four fishnet-and-studded-collar-clad teen-age ingenues comprising Ontario, Canada's answer to new metal are as up front about their balance beam inception as they are about what pisses them off. That list includes ignorance, hate, bias and people who insist on calling them "female musicians." As indicated by song titles such as "Get Off (You Can Eat A Dick)" and "Do You Think I'm A Whore," the lyrical themes and attitude emanating from the Kittie camp are obviously a far cry from Disneyfied peers who churn out baby-one-more-time numbers. "'Get Off' is about discrimination because of your gender," explains 17-year-old frontwoman Morgan Lander. "If you look deeper into the lyrics, it's worth getting past that initial shock."

Thinking riot grrrl? Think again. "There's a lot of riot grrrls who come to our shows, but there's also a lot of people who are into death metal, new metal, everything," explains 15-year-old drummer Mercedes Lander (Morgan's sister). "The riot grrrl scene came in the early '90s, out of Seattle. And it's kind of not going on right now, let alone in London, Ontario," she says. Morgan is quick to deny any related allegiances: "I think equality is a good thing and should be stressed a little more, but we're not feminists." Perhaps by virtue of their hormone levels and subject matter, grrrls definitely come to mind on a spin through the band's debut *Spit* (Ng-Artemis). Still, Morgan's disarmingly capable metal roar, which also crops up occasionally, conjures up a riot more akin to Cradle Of Filth than Bikini Kill.

The Lander sisters, along with guitarist 16-year-old Fallon Bowman, and single-monikered bassist Talena, also 16, hooked up with producer GGGarth (Rage Against The Machine, Red Hot Chili Peppers) through a hometown connection last year. "He's a genius," praises Bowman. Recording the album took nine days, from after school until one or two in the morning, and then the band members would go to school the next day. "But it was so worth it," says Morgan. *Spit* is a surprisingly melodic affair that belies its authors' years without sounding too slick. "We had worked with another producer on our demo, but that had more of a freshman sort of feel," summarizes Mercedes. "I would say *Spit* is definitely sophomore." >>> Dylan Siegler

IN MY ROOM

STEPHEN DUFFY leads the Litac

Time, whose latest album is *Looking For A Day In The Night* (spinART). "I've just painted this room at home something like Wild Orchid [his mother argues that it's mauve] where I sort of lie around and don't do anything, as I have for the last 40 years."

Truffaut: A Biography.

"It's appalling after enjoying his films so much to find out that he was this completely insane person."

David Bowie

"I leapt headlong into a David Bowie fad and just went out and bought \$264 worth of his back catalog."

Belle And Sebastian

"Belle And Sebastian's *Tiger Milk* is on CD for the first time, so that's an exciting thing."

The Rutles [Monty Python man Eric Idle spoofs the Beatles]

"I'm writing now, so I try not to listen too much because you start to write like that. But I listened to *The Rutles* the other day, so I thought that might be safe."

Burberry Trilby

"A Burberry Trilby hat. I lie in my room naked listening to David Bowie wearing this Burberry Trilby."

SLIPKNOT ★ rocked Ozzfest this

summer, touring behind their self-titled debut (Roadrunner). Percussionist SHAWN (a.k.a. Number 6, or "The Clown") is a self-confessed collector. "My wife hates it," he says. He keeps "all the clown shit" and other keepsakes in his basement. "If it's got a demented feel to it, I own it. I can't stand the alter-ego happy clown."

Pirahna named Pogo

"One Pirahna named Pogo. John Wayne Gacy for short. It's solo because it's too aggressive to be with another fish."

An extensive collection of masks

Everything that either has been worn or is going to be considered for the future. Anything that I feel has Slipknot on it. Demented."

Five hundred CDs

The most recent being the new Nine Inch Nails. I love it. I had an awakening with it the other day. I'm glad he took the hiatus. It was worth the wait. Also, [bands like] Neurosis, Tribes Of Neurot... stuff that's hard to find. "Cause I hate new music, the stuff that's coming out today."

Spawn

"Tons of Spawn creatures. My kids and I share a room together. We collect Spawn creatures, and just creatures in general. With my girls, we collect Fisher Price people, the old fashioned wood ones."

Speculums

"An extensive medical equipment collection. I'm a welder, 'cause I think metal is the most beautiful of all. All the stuff I collect is polished surgical stainless steel, the older the better. I have a lot of speculums. It's usually female-oriented, but I have a lot of other stuff. Heart spreaders, things used for specialty surgery."

Weird Record:



Dana Plato, the former queen of an Arizona swingers' club (the members of which painted a mural of her on the edifice's walls) was once bailed out of jail by Wayne Newton. She also had a tattoo of a fairy on her "right inguinal area." Now that you know this, you've minimal reason to purchase *Dana Plato's Last Breath*, the "bio" and CD set that comprises the *Mike Hunt Monitor #2* Vol. 1 (Michael Hunt Publishing; ha-ha). This depressing curio details the life, aborted comeback and vaguely mysterious death of the child star-turned-infamous burnout who portrayed Kimberly Drummond on the '80s sitcom *Diff'rent Strokes*. The 72-minute disc consists of her manager Shane Bugbee's phone conversations with Plato, taped throughout the days leading up to her fatal May 8, 1999 overdose. Unless you get off on sad, prescription-addled confessionals interspersed with cheesy sound effects, avoid this audio tabloid; ditto the poorly edited booklet of dirty laundry, autopsy reports and Internet-pirated nude photos. Apparently, *Dana Plato: The E! True Hollywood Story* has entered production, so wait for the movie and donate this trash to a deserving kiddie porn buff or bogus snuff film aficionados.

»»Jordan N. Mamone



He would try to make his foot size bigger by wearing double socks. It actually worked.
—from *What You Wanna Know: Backstreet Boys Secrets Only A Girlfriend Can Tell* by Samantha Stonebraker.

GREEN DAY:

Cypress Hill Smokes High Times' 25th Anniversary Party

BRENDAN MORAN



A young man blazed a trail through New York's packed Irving Plaza, pausing every 10 feet to hand out another index-finger-sized joint of the good stuff. Not that it was necessary, really. The dank, heavy smoke above the crowd gathered for the 25th anniversary of *High Times* magazine revealed folks were already in the spirit of the evening.

It was hard not to be. In addition to the smoke-as-bord, there was a *High Times* documentary film, a wall of *High Times* past covers, a buffet table of hemp delights (to try, or not to try the brownies...) and throngs of cheery, red-eyed souls that ran the gamut from '60s burnouts to '90s hipsters. And of course, the evening's entertainment, champions of the green, Cypress Hill.

"We've been reading *High Times* since we were kids," says Cypress frontman, B-Real. The hip-hop group has long participated in rallies and speeches advocating the decriminalization of marijuana and invite NORML (National Organization For The Reform Of Marijuana Laws) to tour with them. Let's be blunt: with past songs such as "Hits From The Bong," and "Stoned Is The Way Of The Walk," the Hill were the obvious headliners.

The group has just released a Spanish album, *Los Grandes Exitos*

En Español, and plans its fifth English language release, *Skull And Bones*, for March. They peppered the responsive (no word on actual reaction times, though) crowd with anthems such as "How I Could Just Kill A Man" and "Insane In The Brain," pausing throughout to accept smoking paraphernalia from the crowd. The crew closed with "Dr. Greenthumb," during which frontman B-Real paused to smoke something (doubtlessly tobacco) from a water pipe, blowing out a huge cloud of smoke which quickly disappeared into the even bigger cloud of smoke lingering in the venue.

"We knew a lot of people who smoked as well as ourselves, and we knew a lot of people were getting in serious trouble for that shit," says B-Real. "It just didn't make sense that people were losing careers and stuff just because maybe they got caught smoking marijuana. Whenever we can enlighten people on any information that might be available, we try to do so. That way people aren't fighting the fight without knowing what they're fighting for and what the purpose of it is."

B recommends contacting local chapters of NORML or CAN (Cannabis Action Network) for more information, or going to the *High Times* Web site (www.hightimes.com) for links to more information.

»»Bill Werde

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"Mortiis, you are so sexy."

If we mated in the forest, would we have fat little goblin babies with pig noses and human genitals? I think we would. **Then you would eat them and write a song about it while you were smoking weed. I love you Mortiiis... this dark day will come.**

—**Samantha** (from former Emperor bassist - turned solo dark ambient producer Mortiiis' Web site guestbook, www.mortiis.com).

Step In The Arena



Coming soon to a pay-per-view near you: *Celebrity Deathmatch* takes on *WCW Mayhem, The Music* in a battle of nad-crushing compilations for the hearts of those who love body-slaming, bone-breaking, cauliflower-ear, swinging-neckbreaker tunage. In the *Celebrity Deathmatch* corner, we have the likes of Marilyn Manson, Rob Zombie and Eminem. Wearing the *WCW Mayhem* colors are Kid Rock (Joe C. take note: midget wrestling is making a comeback), Limp Bizkit and the Ruff Ryders mixing it up with wrestlers' themes, like Goldberg's "Invasion" and "Rap Is Crap" by Curt Hennig And The West Texas Rednecks.

Best two out of three falls, the match has to go to *WCW*, because let's face it, Goldberg's taken craps bigger than Fred Durst. But don't count out *Celebrity Deathmatch*—The Wondergirls' backup singer Scott Weiland does have a familiarity with steel cages.

Label Profile



Carl Craig, the Detroit techno producer and label owner of Planet E has some strange ambitions for his 10-year-old eclectic independent label. He plans to make "space age dance music" and turn the new offices into "something out of *Dr. No*." Then he adds, half-kidding: "I'm going to launch a missile and start a musical war and try and take over." Joking aside, Craig does plan to take over the world with his label's brand of far-out techno, which includes himself, his jazz workout, Innerzone Orchestra, plus recent signings, Reclouse, Jason Hogans and Common Factor. For the uninitiated, the recently released *Geology* offers a quick Planet E history lesson with tracks by Moodymann, Innerzone Orchestra, and others. With *Geology 2*, albums from Reclouse and Common Factor, and some yet-to-revealed new acts slated for release in the first half of 2000, world domination is imminent. "My vision is just reinventing Planet E...[to] push towards our artists getting better all the time, kind of like an athlete. So that we can keep evolving, so that we can be better every time, with every release."

>>>Tricia Romano

ROCK OF SAGES: The 10 Most Rocking Moments of the Millenium



G.G. Allin

Everyone knows the history of rock 'n' roll is littered with rip-offs. Elvis stole from Hounddog Taylor. The Rolling Stones nicked its style from Muddy Waters. But it goes much deeper than that. A quick study of the past millenium proves rock 'n' rollers have been ripping off the great legends of history. Here we salute the 10 great rock 'n' roll moments of the last millenium and connect them with their knockoffs. >>>Brian Howard and Patrick Rapa

1054: The schism between the Papacy and the Greek Christian church is mended.
1991: Public Enemy and Anthrax unite to re-record "Bring Tha Noize," mending the schism between rap and metal.

Circa 1200: A young Genghis Khan, trapped in a cave, eats his own flesh to stay alive, proving there's no length he won't go to win over rival civilizations.

Circa 1980: G.G. Allin shits on stage, proving there's no length he won't go to win over punk rock fans.

Early 1400s: Mop-topped French woman Joan of Arc disguises herself as a man and kicks the asses of many of her male English counterparts.

1980: The Pretenders, led by Chrissie Hynde, release its first album.

1455: The British ruling houses of York and Lancaster split irrevocably, then duke it out in the War of the Roses.

1990-91: Steven Adler and Izzy Stradlin duke it out with Axl and Slash over drug use and irrevocable artistic differences, then split from Guns N' Roses.

1585: English settlers, led by Sir Walter Raleigh, found the popular Roanoke Colony in what is now North Carolina. By 1591, it had mysteriously vanished without a trace.

1979: The Knack release "My Sharona."

1692: Young girls suspected of witchcraft start a scare in Salem, MA, leading to the burning of suspected witches.

1984: Years before he's suspected of pedophilia, Michael Jackson's hair catches fire during the filming of a Pepsi commercial.

Late 1800s-early 1900s: Freud determines the root of sexual dysfunction to be in parental relationships, establishing the theory of the "Oedipus complex."

1991: Natalie Cole records "Unforgettable" with her dead father.

Mid 1940s: Mussolini and Italy change sides in WWII from axis to allies.

1997: Pat Boone changes his own axis by recording *In A Metal Mood: No More Mr. Nice Guy*, an album of heavy metal covers.

1848: Prospectors head West wearing jeans and flannels to find their fortunes in the Gold Rush.

1991: Record execs head Northwest to find their fortunes in jeans and flannels.

1517: Martin Luther nails 95 theses to the door of Wittenberg Castle Church, starting Protestantism and predicting modern protest culture.

1999: Kids at Woodstock '99 protest high bottled water prices by breaking shit up.

?&A: JOE STRUMMER CO



Joe Strummer and Mick Jones of The Clash were the Lennon and McCartney of punk. Marked by politically charged lyrics and a furious wall of sound, The Clash were, for many people in the late '70s and early '80s, the only band that mattered. After the group disintegrated in the mid-'80s, guitarist Jones went on to front the middling funk-pop group Big Audio Dynamite (B.A.D.), and former frontman Strummer strayed from the limelight. Some 15 years later he's back with a band named The Mescaleros, and the new record *Rock Art & The X-Ray Style* (Hellcat). by Judy McGuire

What've you been doing for the past few years?

I'm a lazy sod is the truth. I had to wait out a contract, which took some years. So there was no way forward for awhile. But I quite appreciated the break that gave me because I had a wild five years with The Clash. Part of me felt it was time to shut up for a bit. And then other parts felt, "Let someone else have a go." And also, I wanted to see my kids grow up, ya know?

How do your kids feel about having a punk rock icon for a dad?

They feel it's slightly embarrassing.

I could see that.

I could see it too. Hey, kids today—*oy vey*, what can you do?

When I saw The Mescaleros, you played several Clash songs. You're not trying to divorce yourself from that history.

You see, it suddenly occurred to me that the songs aren't just stuff that's written on a bit of paper or put on a record. What if a song is like a person? It might have a store of kinetic energy of a kind we haven't managed to quantify or identify. Occasionally, I'll wake up in the night and I'll think of a song that I've forgotten all about. It's almost like people ringing you up. I know it sounds ridiculous, but I feel that they demand to be played. And I'm more than happy to play them.

How do you keep sane on the road?

Keep your mind on the job, always think about tomorrow's set today. That's the kicker. Writing a set—I wrote all the set lists for The Clash—which might not seem like much, but I decided which songs we were gonna play and in what order every night. And I would wait for the inspiration. It's almost like writing a poem. When I arrive in the town and see the venue, I go out in the street and I clock people hanging about or pick up a newspaper or the local rag and get into the vibe of the city.

What's it like working with these Mescaleros youngsters? They're so young and cute.

They are cute, aren't they? Anthony Genn is my co-collaborator on this. On equal footing we collaborate—it's not me giving orders. I like to work with someone.

You seem to have maintained this sense of idealism or naivete.

Yeah, absolutely. You got it there. You've gotta be slightly stupid.

You think that's stupidity?

Yeah, I mean that. Cause I sometimes look at myself, I'm sitting with a Biro and a cigarette packet and I'm desperately scrawling dribble on it. And sometimes I put down my fag pack, I think, "What am I, a grown man, doing at this hour of the night?" Then I banish that thought, pick the fag pack up again.

I've heard you say that The Clash will not re-form.

Um, Cleveland, Rock 'N' Roll Hall of Fame, 2017. 1-2-3-4.

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IDLEWILD CD

"When we first began, our performances were based on our lack of ability disguised by us going crazy," admits Idlewild's tousle-haired and quick-tongued singer/lyricist Roddy Woomble. "It was more about getting drunk and jumping about." Formed in Edinburgh, Scotland in late 1995 by four college mates, Idlewild gigged around for a couple of years and released the underground EP *Captain* before signing to the UK's prestigious Food Records in 1997. Their stateside debut, *Hope Is Important* (Odeon-Capitol), is a visceral collection of jagged punk anthems shot through with unconventionally appealing hooks and strikingly direct lyrics. "I like the title, because it can be either the most positive thing you could ever say or the vaguest statement you could ever make," laughs Woomble, vibing on the band's flair for the incongruous. Add the contradiction-in-self moniker (nicknamed from Anne of Green Gables' playhouse) to the seismic shifts between frantic furies and charming calms, and Idlewild's stab at the art of noise is as inscrutable as it is stirring. —*Neve Martin*



KEN VANDERMARK

Being at the center of the Chicago jazz renaissance keeps Ken Vandermark a busy man. The fiery reedist plays several shows a week, gigging with old and new-school jazz folk, visiting European improvisers and occasionally sitting in with bands in the city's post-rock and garage scenes; the end of 1999 also saw four Vandermark albums released on three different labels (Atavistic, Delmark and Wobbly Rail). His tireless work has attracted a sizable mix of college rockers and serious jazz heads, as well as the attention of the MacArthur Foundation, which awarded him a "genius grant" fellowship in recognition of his contributions to the jazz community. The fellowship—a no-strings-attached grant of \$265,000—will fund a Peter Brotzmann Large Band tour and album, as well as other Vandermark-led recording projects. "The thing is, it's hard to turn stuff down," says the 34 year-old. "The projects have turned out so well, but it's hard to balance the time that it takes to get the logistics happening. I'm working on it though." >>> *Tad Hendrickson*

OTR

JURASSIC 5

"Magazines, clothing companies... everyone is coming to us now. It's almost scary," laughs Dan Dalton, Jurassic 5 manager, nervously. "It feels like the birth of the Jacksons or something." It's a lot of attention for a group that almost wasn't: J5 first formed in '93 as a union between two Bay Area crews, Rebels And Rhythm and Unity Committee, for the release of one track, "Unified RebeLution." "People came up afterwards, and were just like 'That was so dope,'" says MC Zaakir. "We figured we were on to something." The crew cut an eight-track EP on its own, picked up some European distribution, and were quickly playing before large crowds overseas. This spring, Interscope will release *Quality Control*, the band's Stateside full-length debut. Clearly influenced by East Coast Native Tongue-style hip-hop (read: positivity), DJs Cut Chemist and Nu-Mark provide the ample beats and fluid groove that back the smooth, lyrical ebb and flow of MCs Chali 2NA, Zaakir, Akil and Marc 7. "It's not just rhyming, or looking hard and having all the jewelry," explains Zaakir of the J5 sound and sensibility. "It's entertainment. There's nothing wrong with being proud of the material stuff. But you got that Rolex 'cause somebody bought that album. You might as well get another Rolex by putting on a good show!" >>>Bill Werde



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FOO FIGHTERS

There Is Nothing Left To Lose

Roswell-RCA

OUT:

November 2.

FILE UNDER:

Stayin' alive.

R.I.Y.L.:

Nirvana, Evan Dando, Posies.

Four years after the Foo Fighters' debut, the questions still linger: Would we have heard songs like "This Is A Call" and "I'll Stick Around" differently if they weren't coming out of the mouth of Dave Grohl? Would we ever be able to separate who he is from what he plays? The questions would never have come up if the songs had sucked. Now, two albums later, the ex-Nirvana drummer's songwriting is as crafty and wide-ranging as ever, and the tunes still carry the necessary emotional urgency. On the opening "Stacked Actors," the layered and textured wall of guitars, the deep kick drum sound that Grohl helped invent, and the perfectly deployed hiccup of feedback constitute a vintage Nirvana-esque hook. But what's with that moody, Curtis Mayfield-like talking blues verse? It's the kind of surprise that Grohl supplies in tune after tune. "Gimme Stitches" is built on a satisfyingly stoopid riff-rock lick but melds with a sweet power pop chorus. And there's that Beatles thing, too—the up-and-down "Hello, Goodbye" bassline of "Next Year"; the hint, not only of the John Lennon "Across The Universe" vocal line in "Ain't It The Life," but also of some weepy George Harrison slide guitar. Even better, when Grohl sings "I'm looking to the sky to save me/Looking for a sign of life," he still provides the necessary affirmation. >>> Jon Garelick



RICHIE HAWTIN

Decks, EFX & 909

Minus/Novamute-Mute

OUT:

November 2.

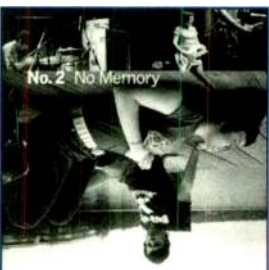
FILE UNDER:

Less-is-more techno.

R.I.Y.L.:

Plastikman, Jeff Mills, the Basic Channel label.

Pigeonholing *Decks, EFX & 909* as just a techno mix holds as little water as dismissing Richie Hawtin—a.k.a. Plastikman, FUSE, etc.—as merely a DJ. Thanks to well over a decade of experience manning the wheels of steel, Detroit's favorite Canadian knows that the DJ's art doesn't end with packing your crate: how you manipulate the records playing can be just as important as the tunes you choose. Already a master of EQ manipulation, on his recent club tour Hawtin augmented his arsenal with a Roland TR-909 drum machine and an effects processor, the better to customize sets to reflect each audience's unique energy. For raw data, here Hawtin favors tracks that straddle the gray area between stripped-down house and sexy techno; the subtle percussion touches on several cuts by Richard Harvey prove especially engrossing. The maestro's rapid-fire cuts and protracted segues (often three tracks spin simultaneously) are punctuated by a couple of impeccably timed surprises, too, like when several variations of Hawtin's own Yello-inspired "Orange" suddenly erupt into "Let Your Body Learn," the mid-'80s "electronic body music" classic by Nitzer Ebb (a staple, however uncool, of the early Detroit sound). While this studio souvenir doesn't afford Hawtin the essential feedback mechanism of a pumping crowd, it still encapsulates his mercurial magic superlatively. >>> Kurt B. Reighley



NO. 2 ★

No Memory

Chainsaw

OUT:

October 18.

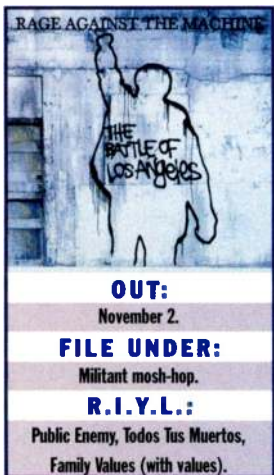
FILE UNDER:

Sparkling indie-pop for lonelyhearts.

R.I.Y.L.:

Elliott Smith, Heatmiser, Quasi.

On *No Memory*, No. 2's Neil Gust scraps the abrasive punk textures of his old band Heatmiser in favor of the woolly pop that's brought semi-fame to his old Heatmiser bandmate, Elliot Smith. That Smith (with whom No. 2 toured last year) mixed nine of the 10 tracks might have something to do with the decidedly Smithian bent of this Portland trio, which also includes bassist Gilly Ann Hanner (ex-Calamity Jane) and drummer Paul Pulvirenti (ex-Jr. High). Though issued on Donna Dresch's riot-grrrl-associated label (Chainsaw released the first two Sleater-Kinney records), a glance at *No Memory's* song titles—"Pop in C," "Pop in A Minor"—gives you a pretty good idea of Gust's new agenda. This is an album packed with crisp, concise hooks ("Practicing Your Moves"), lots of cascading, crushed velvet melodies ("Move It Along"), and Gust's sly, slightly heartbroken takes on lust and love ("Nobody's Satisfied"). With cameos by Quasi's Sam Coomes and Smith (who added celestial background vocals to the superb Stones-y riff-rockers "Critical Mass" and "So Long"), No. 2 delivers a debut that sounds like a vibrant synthesis of a new Northwest pop underground. >>> Jonathan Perry

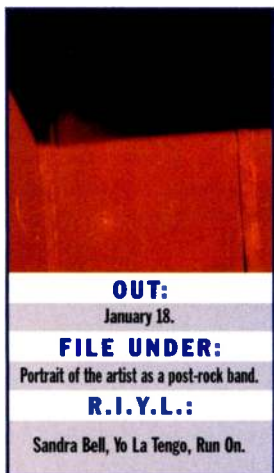


RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

The Battle Of Los Angeles

Epic

Flip it one way and *The Battle Of Los Angeles* is just more of the same old Rage: track after track of churning and minimalist mosh-hop on a heavy-handed political bumrush against CEO wage swindlers, pigs in blue and media anesthesiologists. But flip it another way, and you hear Rage's re-wired '70s protest pounces shaking off a much-needed post-funk hangover. Word militant Zack de la Rocha's brief involvement with the Lyricist Lounge seems to have served him well. His patented blitzkrieg yells and talking metal blues have been reinvigorated by nuanced mic tricks pawed from hip-hop MCs and growling ragga chatters. Between rounds of guitar shrapnel on "Guerrilla Radio," "Calm Like A Bomb," and "Mic Check," he wraps almost groove-literate, cipher-worthy flows around bookworm rhymes such as "My word war returns to burn/Like Baldwin from Paris." But this time around, it's axe industrialist Tom Morello—the fret flaming Terminator X to de la Rocha's Zapatista Chuck D—who proves to be the most dangerous weapon in the Rage sound arsenal. He imitates whining car alarms and falling bombs, turns *Psycho* shower stabs into DOA flat-lines, and more than once morphs his guitar into a stringed turntable, scratching and cutting between the pissed off, picket line breaks. >>> Josh Kun

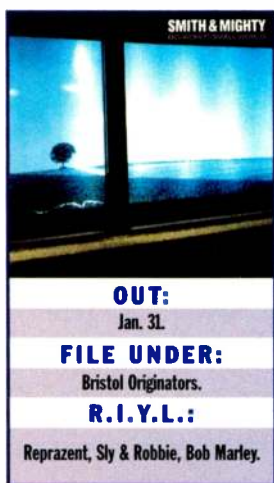


SUE GARNER AND RICK BROWN

Still

Thrill Jockey

Almost brashly, New York art-musicians/happy couple Sue Garner and Rick Brown infuse American jazz and African rhythmic elements into what could be called their debut record. Not that they're novices; leaving out their side projects, the two had a respectable run in the experimental rock band Fish & Roses and in Run On, which reached its creative peak in 1997 and abruptly disbanded. On *Still*, the multi-instrumentalists flaunt their strengths, writing whimsical arrangements and highlighting Garner's amiably detached voice. "Swimmingly" slithers along like a spaghetti western soundtrack tune that's lost its way and wound up in the big city, with Garner sounding disconsolate as Tortoise's Douglas McCombs evinces macabre tones from a steel guitar. With McCombs on bass and the dB's Chris Stamey on cello, Garner and Brown gently subvert pop formula—really, what they do best—on the mournful, lovely "I Like The Name Alice." And with its peppy beat and marimba-led melody, "Asphalt Road" resembles something out of the Run On songbook, with Brown's vocals nudged up in the mix. But it's the studio skulduggery that makes or breaks this project. Where Garner's solo disc from last year kept the experimentation to a minimum, *Still* basks in the unsettling sounds of an echoed drum loop or a scratchy sample—usually with electrifying results. >>> Richard Martin



SMITH & MIGHTY ★

Big World Small World

Stu!o K7

Smith and Mighty (Rob and Ray, respectively) predated the early '90s Bristol musical explosion, co-producing Massive Attack's first single, and working on Krust's debut single (with the Fresh 4), "Wishing On A Star." They signed with FFRR, who wanted to make the group more MTV-friendly—the next Soul II Soul. Unwilling to give in to the demands of the label, the duo languished in a contract netherworld for almost six years, unable to record for anyone. Finally, there is *Big World Small World*, and if you think Smith & Mighty's story has its twists and turns, wait till you hear their proper, full-length debut. The disc opens with a slow ragga beat before bursting into "No Justice," an uptempo protest chant that channels the spirit of the Wailers with the energy and resonance of '90s breakbeat. The stylistic shifts continue as Rapper L.D.'s deep baritone slows it down for a Jamaican-styled riff on "Year 2000." The congo drums trickle in on "That Woman," threaded above atmospheric strings and a minimal percussive loop and below the soulful croon of Tammy Payne. The record continues on this way, stealing judiciously from—and all the while mocking the genre constraints of—hip-hop, rap, reggae, dub, house, ambient, drum 'n' bass and R&B, often on the same track. It might not make the next easily marketable friendly face of urban music, but it makes for a damn fine album. >>> Bill Werde



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**S·U·B
P·O·P**



THE HELLAOPTERS "Payin' The Dues"

Arguably the best Hellacopters record, released domestically for the first time and paired with a limited edition bonus live show disc, recorded in Seattle and Vancouver on May 27 and 28, 1999.



Llama Farmers

LLAMA FARMERS "Dead Letter Chorus"

Four English alt-rockers barely old enough to see an R-rated movie. The band NME claims is "quite possibly the best teenage punk band in the world". Melody Maker insists, "In short, Llama Farmers are the future of rock 'n' roll." Any fan of The Pixies, Hüsker Dü, or Foo Fighters would be proud.

**S·U·B
P·O·P**



NEBULA "To The Center"

Southern California trio Nebula make their Sub Pop debut, produced by famed Jack Endino (Nirvana, Madhoney, Murder City Devils). Heavy blues with driving guitars. Influences you may hear include Hendrix, MC5, and Blue Cheer.

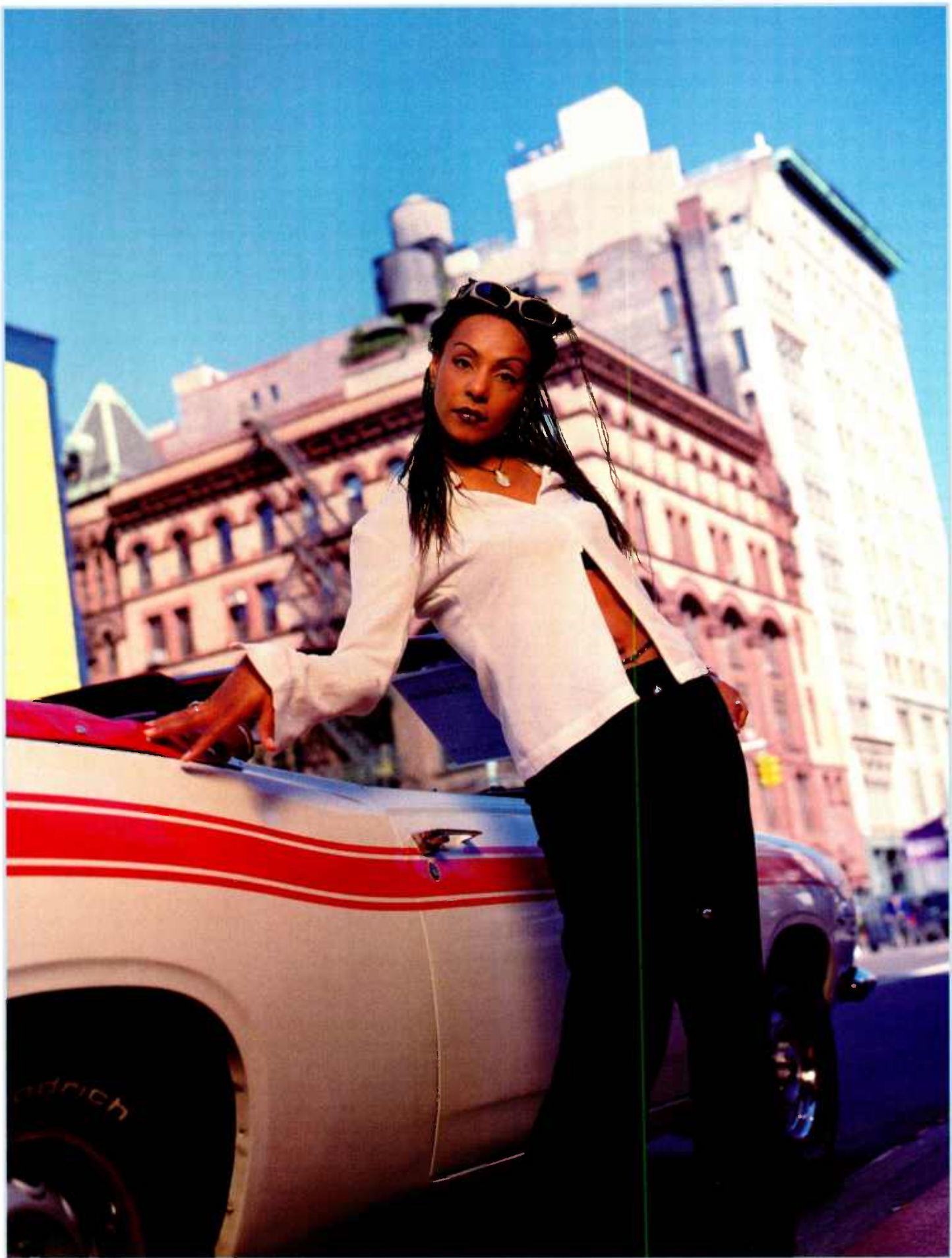
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TONGUE 'N' BASS

WITH A TING, BAP AND EEEOOOAY,
ZAP MAMA BRINGS TRIBAL SOUNDS
TO THE CONCRETE JUNGLE.

STORY: STEVE CIABATTONI PHOTOS: CHAPMAN BAEHLER

This is power," Marie Daulne says, tapping a photo of the lush central African forest in a book on pygmy music.

"I remember being in the middle of that. The oxygen makes you like *whooo, whooo*," she explains, rendering a recent trip back to her native Zaire in the giddy onomatopoeic patois she weaves in between French and English. The six-foot-plus singer walked for hours and hours in the jungle, tracking down a tribe she was attempting to rejoin. "I am so tall and I was looking at the ground, following in the feet of the pygmy guide and suddenly, with the air making me like that, I take a branch like *bing!* And then *fwop!* And the pygmies laugh at me and say 'Ah, look at that big, tall woman!'"

Born to a Bantu mother and Belgian father, Daulne learned to respect the power of nature long before getting knocked to the ground by



ARTIST APPEARS ON THIS MONTH'S CD

january 2000 25



“With techno and drum ‘n’ bass, it’s exactly the same beats as the tribe of my mother.”

a branch to the head. The earth is a driving inspiration for the statuesque doyenne of the ethno female vocal group Zap Mama.

“In the modern world with computers and with the cellular phone, you don’t have a lot of human contact,” she says. “You forget we are an element of this nature and we need that contact to feel comfortable and to keep the vitality of life. We are the urban Amazon,” she says, invoking the play on words that is in the title of Zap Mama’s latest, *A Ma Zone*, where the group’s vocal designs intermarry with drum ‘n’ bass, hip-hop and other funky-drummer grooves.

Daulne’s mother couldn’t afford instruments for her children. Jean Louis, Daulne’s drumming brother, who also appears on the album, made due without a kit in his early years.

“He made the sounds of the drum himself, *ttsssk, tik tak, boom*. So I would imitate him and make a sound of another drum,” she says, showing off her beatboxing skills. Her percolating performance displays the influence of hip-hop and electronic music on her formative grooves. On stage, Daulne busts spits, spurts and scratches into the mic like a Belgian-Bantu Rahzel, shuffling her hand back and forth to the beat as if she were working the turntables herself.

Zap Mama’s largely a cappella early records are masterful vocal workouts, featuring non-traditional takes on traditional African music and other ethnic styles. 1997’s *Seven* featured collaborations with Spearhead’s Michael Franti, and showed Zap Mama taking its first steps towards joining ancestral roots with current trends.

“During my first albums, I experimented with voice and I wanted to bring that and meet another creator to make an explosion in music,” Daulne says. “And this experience with the Roots makes me say ‘Wow!’” she boasts, referring to Philadelphia’s organic hip-hop crew whose Black Thought and Scratch guest on *A Ma Zone*. Daulne also seems to get a charge out of her other collaborators like DJ This Kid Named Miles who adds twists to the Afropop-meets-James Brown flavor of “Kemake.” On *A Ma Zone*, the metal and plastic clicks flirt with the beats made from tongue and lips.

“With techno and drum ‘n’ bass, it’s exactly the same beats as the tribe of my mother,” she explains. “When I took this [techno] music to my mother and played it for her, she said ‘Wow, that’s good,’ and she started to sing old songs with my aunt and grandma like this, ‘Oooooeay, eeeeeey, beeeey,’ over the beats,” she demonstrates. “Now that people accept these beats, maybe we can bring our sounds to them and make that connection.”

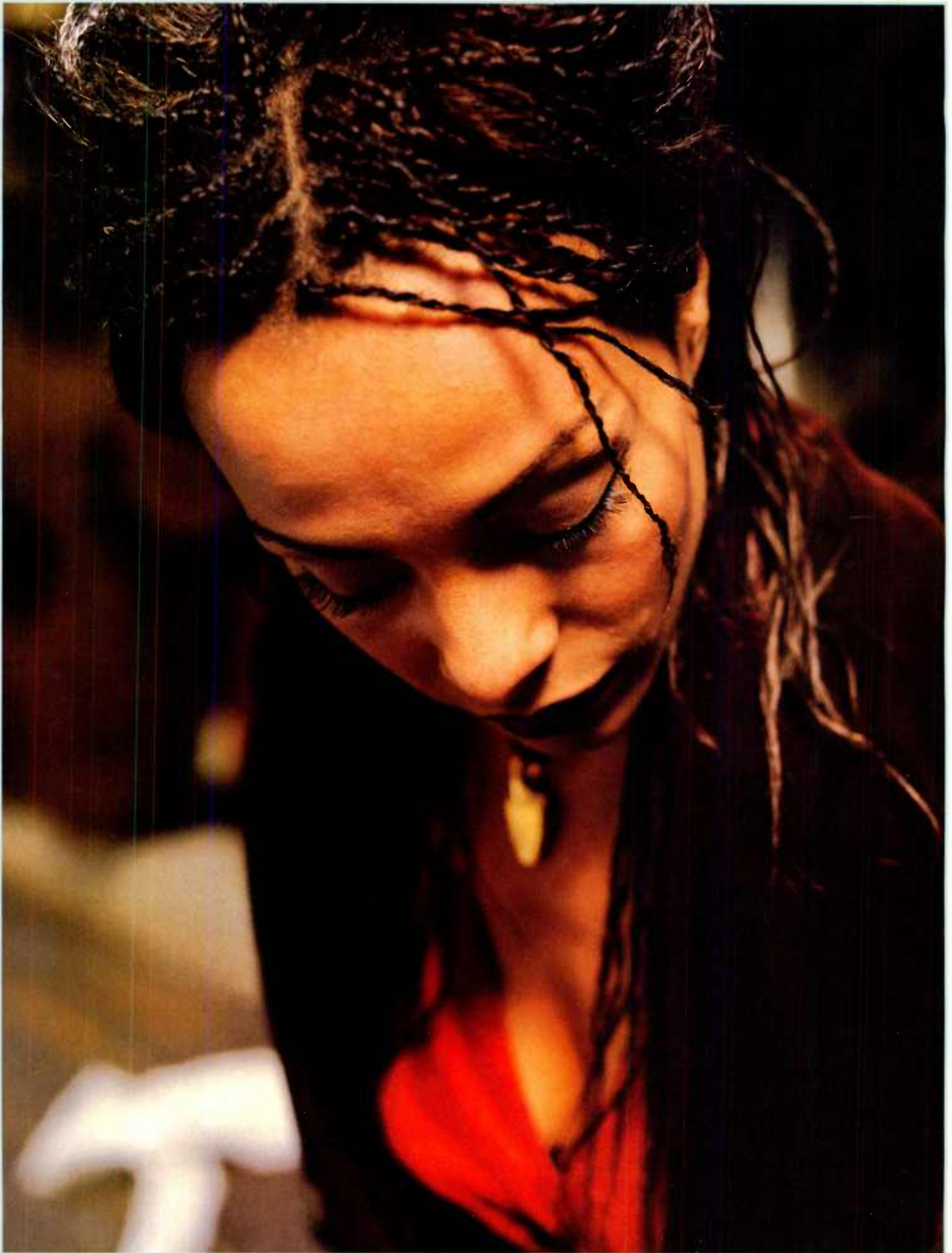
Daulne sees little difference between being in the forest for a midnight pygmy ritual or hanging out at a dance club into the wee hours. “I remember when I was with the pygmies and it was a big party because it was a full moon. They start with beats and each person of the party does a sound eeeeeoay, and it makes the music. That oxygen makes you prrrrr,” she trills, spinning her head and rolling her eyes. “And the people singing makes you brrrrr, and then with all the beats you’re like ‘What’s happening here?’ It was so wild, so savage. And when I go out to a techno club it’s the same. The only difference is they don’t sing and they close their eyes,” she says, nodding her head to an imaginary digital beat. “The pygmies don’t close their eyes—they look at each other like *this*,” she blurts, face jutting forward with eyes bulging and darting from side to side.

Even though Daulne opens her concerts by invoking the spirits of nature and reminding the crowd that they are the “urban Amazon,” the message of Zap Mama’s music is more inviting than didactic. “In some songs, the message is very clear,” she says. “Go out and have contact with nature. But in some songs, [the message] is just to have the pleasure of listening to the sound and to have the pleasure of listening to how these sounds can be good for the ears and for the body.”

Daulne is thinking seriously about leaving Brussels for the ultimate urban jungle, New York City. “This town talks to me,” she beams like a teenager from a small town setting foot in the metropolis for the first time. “Here, it’s a good time,” she says of the city’s fast pace and cultural hum. “A lot of things are happening all the time and your imagination is going *bing, zing, bing!*”

Let’s just hope she doesn’t trade pygmy chants for Bronx cheers.

NMM



RED DRESS - MONTGOMERY NYC; CAMOUFLAGE PINKIE - CLAUDE SASSIBAH

THE GOSPEL TO MAKE UP

DC'S FAVORITE MOD EXPLOSION
SAVES POP'S SOUL.



STORY: JON DUGAN PHOTOS: PAT GRAHAM

Preaching punk, calling you “baby,” preening for a camera eye and knocking out basement soul-psychedelic vamps is all in a day’s work for Make Up. Provocative stylists of a detail-minded, retro cool aesthetic filtered through a home-grown punk attitude complete with its own “Gospel Yeh-Yeh” liberation theology, Make Up is Washington, DC’s finest hi-concept garage-soul band. But Make Up is also a hardworking live band that’s earned a reputation for putting on a thrilling gig.

On *Save Yourself* (K), the photogenic foursome (singer Ian Svenonius, guitarist/keyboardist James Canty, bassist Michelle Mae and drummer Steve Gamboa) move beyond its original no-wave soul to an assured blend of crucial ‘60s ingredients: garage punk grit, psych rock weirdness and direct funk riffs. The band’s sixth album was recorded over several sessions this spring and summer by Fugazi drummer Brendan Canty (James’ older brother) in the same basement where they’ve recorded most of their platters.



ACCORDING



L-R: MAE, GAMBOA, CANTY, SVENONIUS

The band's early seven-inches, released on their own Black Gemini label (which were compiled earlier this year on the singles collection CD *I Want Some*) were noted mainly for the unadulterated one-take sound contained in their sharp, decidedly generic sleeves.

On *Save Yourself*, the songs are less frantic and more musically realized. Svenonius' vocal style comes closer to singing than the recitation and squeal he's known for live. The band was trying to "get a swampy warm Louisiana feeling as per Dr. John" with "psychedelic

flourishes," the singer explains, sitting in a northwest DC rowhouse. "We wanted things sprouting out in the sonic landscape." The elder Canty's production on *Save Yourself* is by no means lush, yet suits these explorations. *Save Yourself* may seem digestibly brief by today's CD standards—nine songs in 35 minutes. Svenonius says this decision is an aversion to letting technology dictate art, a cardinal sin for the Make Up gang.

While mouthpiece Svenonius often speaks like a leader of a Paris

student strike, onstage he gyrates, wiggles and sweats like the minister-gone-bad from a '60s R&B revue. And he's got a heavy theory for everything. In Svenonius' theories, his art is really pop and therefore should be entertaining: "I see the American underground as analogous to the folk movement of the '60s. There was this idea that pop music is somehow false."

Make Up certainly isn't about the refutation of pop forms; it exploits them. In the band's seemingly unstudied sound is a serious mining of the past—Prince, James Brown, the Seeds, Hendrix, Dexy's Midnight Runners and any number of more obscure icons are referenced throughout both Make Up's manifesto and music. The opening admonition "Save Yourself" has a bassline that nods to Love's "My Little Red Book." And the disc ends with "Hey Joe," a cover that every good '60s garage band had in its repertoire. This version of "Hey Joe," however, twists the blues tale of the vengeful cuckold, adding a collect call from the doomed betrothed from beyond the grave to the slight return of an

acid guitar freakout. But this, in turn, is drawing on another pop tradition. Svenonius mentions The Who's "Pictures Of Lily" and says of the Beatles and James Brown, "There's liberal uses of absurdity."

The band was conceived provocatively as a "Gospel" group, in Svenonius' words, when the four members became "bored to distraction with the lifeless artifice which rock 'n' roll had become." At the time, Svenonius, James Canty and Steve Gamboa were in the polemical Nation Of Ulysses, where they mythologized themselves as '50s gangster-suited thugs playing revolutionary jazz. Not interested in the typical loud Marshall amps and increasingly abstract lyrics that post-punk was hammering out, Make Up acted on "a desire to communicate beyond the conventional mode of expression."

In a propagandistic burst, Svenonius says the band sought to "use showbiz devices and humanize the rock 'n' roll aquarium." Initially, the quartet seemed to be rediscovering African American roots music and giving it a frantic treatment that was at least part James Brown and part



"I see the American underground as analogous to the folk movement of the '60s."

"We were bored to distraction with the lifeless artifice which rock 'n' roll had become."



Prince. Comparisons to another mid-'90s "punk rock-done-black" band the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion came rolling in.

Those early days weren't always rosy. Then as now, Make Up was an easy target for naysayers. For some, the band members' amateurish playing and its vision of making transcendent, classicist music preposterous was offensive. The harshest critics questioned the band's authority to play "black music." In the mostly black city of Washington, DC (a "colonized" city according to Svenonius), they might have wondered how the band could get up and perform the music. Is this some kind of post-mod minstrel show?

Svenonius quips: "There's no reason for the Beastie Boys to be playing traditional Klezmer music." Rock 'n' roll, he points out, has its seed in blues music and the '60s "was an archaeological moment," a moment of discovery. Black music, he claims, has always informed rock

'n' roll, so why should anyone take offense at a more self-conscious portrayal? Soon, the band was absorbing other genres that it found irresistible. It became a "Gospel Yeh-Yeh" group when the band tapped the verve of a French mod beat. And now, '60s psychedelia and New Orleans soul swamp boogie are the current Make Up obsessions.

While Svenonius claims with a chuckle that the band is "steadily climbing down the ladder of success," it shows no signs of going away. *Save Yourself* proves that the group is more than a novel live experience. In the nearly five years since the debut single "Blue Is Beautiful," Make Up has distilled an obsession with style, pop theorizing and high-concept presentation into a distinct take on the conundrum of making modern music. But very simply, they don't need to be legit. This band is real, funny, and ultimately quite daring. And that's why Make Up counts.

MM

DOES MUSIC MATTER ANYMORE?

KID ROCK, KIDDIE POP, WOODSTOCK. AS THE YEAR TURNS TO DOUBLE ZERO, THE DEFINING VOICES OF OUR TIME MIGHT HAVE NOTHING TO SAY.

STORY: MICHAEL AZERRAD KID ROCK PICS: CHAPMAN BAEHLER

"My name is K-I-I-I-I-I-I-D ROCK!"

Kid Rock is chanting his name, and so are several thousand kids in New York's Hammerstein Ballroom who toss the hedonistic Michiganard an enthusiastic forest of devil's horn signs with one hand and clutch plastic cups of overpriced beers with the other. A pair of silicone-augmented dancing girls, dressed in postage stamp-sized bikinis, writhe above the stage, which is framed by two huge American flags. What is this all about? The answer would appear to be simple: "My name is K-I-I-I-I-I-I-D ROCK!"

And then again, maybe it's not that simple.

It was 30 years and three Woodstocks ago that pop music came out as a political, cultural and consumer force. Politicized by a war they didn't support, and more importantly, didn't want to fight in, kids rose up to be counted. It meant something. And the Baby Boomers have been reminding us ever since. Post-'60s rock has been accorded only second-class citizen status—throughout their lives, kids have been told that their music can never be as good as rock music was in the '60s. It's enough to give anyone an inferiority complex.



"I think people, especially in this country, are just really sick of getting lied to, getting manipulated, getting the shades pulled down over their eyes." —Kid Rock.



But there are a lot of other reasons why music hasn't made much of a cultural impact since then, and especially lately.

Somewhere in the mid-'80s, music went boom—the mega-success of musicians such as Madonna, Prince and Bruce Springsteen ushered in a blockbuster mentality which has pervaded the music business at every level. "Music does mean something, but I don't think that most people think that anymore, even the bands," says Guided By Voices leader Robert Pollard. "It's like big business now, or something. The art has kind of been lost."

Since we live in a highly commercial, materialistic culture, music as "big business" is very significant. But do people identify with music less for how it moves them than for its meaning as a consumer decision? What does rock mean in a world where we are confronted with vastly more consumer choices—especially records—than ever before?

In our culture of individualism, the consumer choices we make say a lot about who we are—someone who buys organic and takes the bus probably has little to say to someone who eats at Arby's and uses a leaf blower instead of a rake. Blazing a unique path for oneself through the dense forest of options is fast becoming the defining act of our time. Did you know there's a search engine that searches only for search engines (www.finderseeker.com)?

Even as music becomes just another commodity, tens of millions of kids still cling to their favorite bands as a valid form of personal identification. Music can still scare older generations: community pressure has forced the cancellation of concerts by everyone from Marilyn Manson to the Indigo Girls. At the moment, though, it's not like there is any reasonably popular band out there that represents even the slightest threat to the social order. Rock music *per se* doesn't mean very much—the sound of a distorted electric guitar and loud, aggressive drums does not herald subversive statements anymore; it is a fully mainstreamed musical gambit used for things like car commercials and baseball park chants. In other words, it's just a tool of The Man. If you're under 21, it's been that way ever since before you were born. Young people typically propel societal evolution, and if youth culture is also adult culture, then nothing changes.

"Times are too good," Pollard says. "And when times are good, art's not so good, is it? When there's complacency, there's no struggle." Yes, there remain huge problems in this country, but the white middle class—traditionally the engine for social change since at least the '60s—is fat and happy. And if they're content, nothing happens.

Kids today, unlike their parents, have no issue, like a war, to rally around. But in a nation traumatized by one horrific racially motivated killing after another, music's power to unify could mean a lot. "Maybe they can just rally together—would that be so bad?" says Kid Rock. "Maybe having nothing to rally about and just being able to rally together and have a good time and enjoy music and enjoy each other's company would be nice."

And that's where Kid Rock comes in. "I've become the core, I've become the center for everybody to come to and get together," he says. "I feel I'm the one that can break down half those walls. Even though I don't really have any agenda, it just kind of happened."

While this might sound arrogant, bear in mind that the guy has, according to SoundScan, sold 3.1 million records as of this writing and collaborated with both Run-D.M.C. and the Jesus of redneck, Hank Williams, Jr.

As Kid Rock himself says in "Roving Gangster (Rollin')": "I'm a razor blade slittin' through a wrist of hate/ I'm a contradiction, I'm a twist of fate."

Meaning in music is not only confronted with racial barriers but generational ones, as well. Baby Boomers, with their superior numbers

PEOPLE POWER IN THE DISCO HOUR: THE NEXT GENERATION OF OUTSPOKEN MUSICIANS



JEFF GUNTZEL

While drumming on tour with the Freedom Fighters, Jeff Guntzel came across an article about Voices In The Wilderness, an organization fighting America's sanctions against Iraq. At a point in his life when he "wanted to do more than hold a picket sign," he began working as a co-coordinator for the group and has since led several delegations to Iraq, defying U.S. law by bringing medicine and toys for needy children.

Do musicians make good activists?

Well, everything I learned in punk rock has turned over cleanly into grass roots organizing. Just the whole idea of doing things yourself is what this grass roots campaign is all about—I've found it a really smooth transition. When I first told the organizers about my punk rock background, they kind of snickered at it. I tried to explain how well punk rock prepared me for this, doing all of our business, booking our own tours, being responsible for our own actions—that's what this whole organization is about.

Do audiences want to hear what musicians have to say about causes?

When I was in high school, I got the first Rage Against The Machine record and it turned me onto a lot of things. Say, they fill a stadium and only 300 people get their message, that's still 300 people that wouldn't have gotten it otherwise.

FIFTEEN'S JEFF OTT

Since his early teens, Jeff Ott has struggled with substance abuse and being homeless. As a frontman for the punk band Fifteen, he writes lyrics about environmental issues, activism and race, penning titles such as "World Starvation," "Food Not Bombs" and "Kill Whitey." Ott's song introductions, which usually discuss these issues, are met with cheers and heckles ("I get told to shut up quite a bit"), yet he's hardly slowing down. In his spare time, the singer raises money for activist organizations and runs a needle exchange.



As singer for Fifteen, you've been talking about politics to audiences for a good portion of the '80s and '90s, have you noticed a change in the response?

I've noticed two things that may seem contradictory, but they're not: One, when the band started [in the late '80s], punkers had more of an idea that the punk rock was political and about politics and they were a lot less active. Nowadays, punk rock isn't seen as about anything in particular, but many more people are actually active.

Why the shift?

I think that a lot of people have come to the conclusion, getting up into their middle 20s, that talking about something for the rest of your life and never doing anything about it is kind of dumb.



LIVING SACRIFICE'S BRUCE FITZHUGH

In his early teens, singer Bruce Fitzhugh was drinking and listening to a lot of Black Sabbath, Judas Priest and Iron Maiden. In his late teens, he stopped drinking, became a Christian and co-founded a badass, big riff band that spreads the good word. Though he refrains from discussing political issues, plenty of fans come up after the show to

talk about religion and several write to the band members about the important role Living Sacrifice's music has played to their spiritual life.

Do you think audiences care about what musicians have to say?

The majority of music magazines don't interview musicians to talk about chord progressions, they talk about what the guys are drinking, what they're doing after the show or what their lifestyle is or what their philosophy on life is. Magazines such as *Spin*, *Rolling Stone* and *CMJ New Music Monthly* wouldn't be popular if they didn't.

Are musicians role models?

Not self-proclaimed, but they are. If it weren't for Eddie Van Halen, I wouldn't be playing guitar. When I was 12, there wasn't any clear space on my bedroom walls—it was all concert posters. I just loved the image and the whole macho cool. It's the same with sports figures. They can deny it, but fact of the matter is, they are. I don't think every kid looks up to me, but I've got kids coming up to me every show asking me this or that, saying how much they appreciate the band. They're impressionable. Whether we talk about loving the music or where we go to church, they want to know.



THE BUTCHIES' KAIA WILSON

As a member of Team Dresch, Kaia Wilson was a leading light of the Pacific Northwest's early '90s queer rock movement. Although she's since relocated to North Carolina, Wilson continues to rock out as a solo artist and one-third of lesbianic pop-punk trio The Butchies. The band has played several benefits, including ones for gay youth groups, Mumia-Abu Jamal, and women's groups.

Is pop music an effective medium for political messages?

Most people don't take advantage of it, in terms of what you can say in your songs, as well as doing benefit concerts.... When you get to a bigger level and can actually afford to do benefit concerts. And album artwork can be just as powerful as the music. There are so many mediums for being political and active, whether it be grassroots organizing or writing books or making 'zines or taking photographs—however you feel you're talented.

LOS MARIJUANOS' PONYBOY

Ponyboy, founding member of Chicago's Los Marijuanos, first became interested in cheeba at age 10, when he discovered a roach his uncle had placed in an ashtray. Some 20 years later, he's not only a practitioner, but also a preacher, writing raps such as "Time 2 Get High" and "Smoke Out" about the beauty of the bud. Los Marijuanos often participates in pro-hemp and cannabis activities such as Weedstock and the Minnesota Tea Party. Los Marijuanos' web page [www.wickedentertainment.com] features a Pac-Man-like game in which Ponyboy munches ganga while being chased by cops.



web page [www.wickedentertainment.com] features a Pac-Man-like game in which Ponyboy munches ganga while being chased by cops.

Do you see yourself as a role model?

No, well, kind of a role model for the adults. I'm just saying what I want to say. People can't take from that and say 'Damn, this guy's raw' or 'I'm going to speak up like this dude,' or 'I'm going to do a song like this, fuck it.'"

Should musicians be role models?

Yeah, I think they should, especially if they smoke... they shouldn't keep silent.

»»» compiled by Neil Gladstone and Kurt Reighley

and financial firepower, now completely dominate political discourse. Is it any wonder that social protest seems futile?

Punk is the most politically active musical genre, yet punks largely distrust ex-hippie Baby Boomers, who sold out their ideals as soon as it was financially feasible to do so. As Boys Against Girls' Johnny Temple pointed out in his recent *Nation* article "Noise From Underground": "The left must stop ignoring the extensive political efforts of the punk community, while punks need to stop romanticizing isolation, or they may find their political endeavors, along with their music, doomed to perpetual obscurity." As for the right wing, well, they stopped paying attention to the youth vote after MTV's Tabitha Soren had the temerity to ask '92 presidential candidate George Bush a few challenging questions.

Still, at least one hip Baby Boomer is willing to give today's music a little bit of slack. "We experience things very differently when we're young, when there's no historical context and we simply take everything in directly," says MTV News anchor Kurt Loder. "Thus, I suppose, it's always a little dodgy to complain that today's pop stars aren't as significant as we remember The Beatles (or whomever) being, back when we were young and without context ourselves."

Yet even Loder can't avoid the awful truth—"Look at the *Billboard* album chart right now," he says. "It's positively dismal."

In the late '60s and early '70s, great albums were also popular albums. "Back then, music was the domain of the counterculture," Moby says. "Now, that's just not the case—there is no more counterculture." Moby pins this change on the early '90s alternative

boom. "After Nirvana, suddenly everyone expected bands to sell millions of records," he says. "And in order to sell millions of records, you either have to get really lucky or really compromise your art and pander to the marketplace."

The result: bands these days are either overtly commercial (Creed, Offspring) or highly specialized (Tortoise, Emperor). There's nothing in the middle, which is where the most meaningful stuff lies. "That marriage of art and commerce is so interesting, and when it delves too far in one direction—if there's too much art or there's too much commerce—it's boring," Moby says. "The reason why, from my perspective, Public Enemy or Led Zeppelin or Elvis Presley were so wonderful is because they embraced art and commerce equally."

For Moby, the endless stream of kiddie and fluff-pop acts at the 1999 MTV Video Music Awards show provided an epiphany. "Seeing them all next to each other suddenly made me realize just how far things have gone in that direction and how distasteful it all is," Moby says. "There's nothing wrong with having a healthy balance of interesting music and pop music. But the balance has shifted to crassly materialistic, cynical, market-driven music. And it seems like that's all there is now."

The blame, however, can't all lie with the suits at the major labels. The current generation of musicians and fans have a lot to answer for. "There's this cloud hanging over our head, like 'What is going on?'" says the Mighty Mighty Bosstones' Dicky Barrett. "We're having a tough time living up to the Kurt Cobain handbook. I think it's a lot more easy

"Look at the *Billboard* album chart right now," says MTV News Anchor Kurt Loder. "It's positively dismal."

TOUGH MAN WALKING: STEVE EARLE TAKES IT TO THE STREETS.

"Until a few years ago when I got out of jail, I was merely an involved artist," Steve Earle says of the changes following his three-week stint in 1995 for narcotics possession. "Now, I am an activist, and I'm proud to call myself that."

He's not above writing the occasional song about girls, but his transformation has inspired songs like "Ellis Unit One," *Dead Man Walking's* chillingly realistic song about death row, and "Christmas in Washington," a plea for the return of activist leaders such as Woody Guthrie, Emma Goldman and Malcolm X. Earle is also putting his ideals into action. Last October, he joined the Kensington Welfare Rights Union for several days during "The March of the Americas," which started in Washington, D.C. and ended at the United Nations in New York. During that time, the 44-year-old spoke at a rally for drug and alcohol recovery welfare rights, and organized a benefit concert for the march's Philadelphia stop.

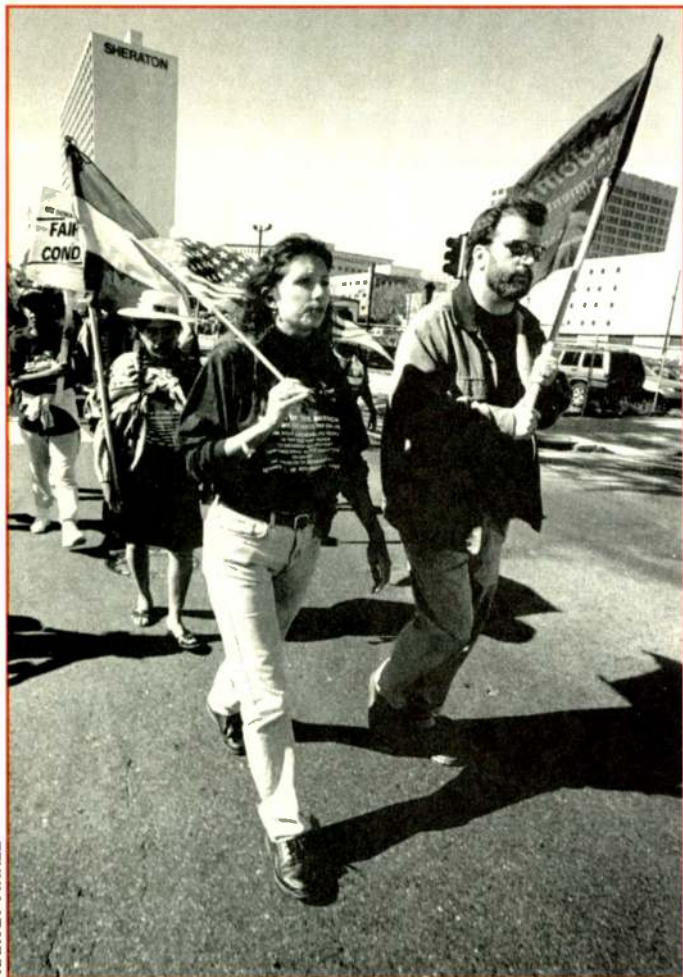
Earle concentrates much of his activist efforts fighting the death penalty as well as working with The Campaign For A Landmine-free World. He's also particularly passionate about the Kensington Welfare Rights Union (KWRU), a Philadelphia-based organization fighting poverty.

"It's the real revolution," considers Earle, "poor people literally rising up and demanding their God-given rights to a safe, warm place to sleep, enough to eat, decent medical care and an education for themselves and their children."

Earle is joined in his support of the KWRU by fellow musicians like Jackson Browne, Dar Williams and Bruce Springsteen. Musicians "add legitimacy" to the organization, says KWRU representative James Pfluecke. "[They] have access to different peoples, of different cultures and different socio-economic backgrounds [from the ones we might otherwise reach]."

As Earle sings in "Christmas in Washington," "To listen to the radio, you'd think that all was well/ but you and me and Cisco know, it's going straight to hell."

»»Steve Klinge



HARVEY FINKLE

for people to be into Blink 182 and say, 'Show us your tits.' That's a lot easier than 'Show us your brain.'"

Barrett points out that just as the original Woodstock was a chance for the hippie generation to redeem itself after the nightmare of the Manson murders, Woodstock '99 was a chance for today's youth to live down the Columbine massacre. "This was the perfect opportunity, Woodstock '99, and fuckin', they blew it," says Barrett. "They went there and acted just like everyone suspected. And the music was mediocre at best."

Barrett has nothing but contempt for both the bands and the audience. "The lack of concern that a guy like Fred Durst showed for the audience that he claims to think are his people," says Barrett. "He stood on top of their heads on this giant piece of dangerous wood, his fat ass up there, begging to be surfed across the crowd, the only problem was the fuckin' goateed date-rapers in the audience were too stupid to figure out how to do it."

Add to all this the overwhelming irony that has hobbled the work of a generation's finest musicians. "I don't get it—I think they're actually trying too hard," says Kid Rock. "I'm not trying too hard to be anything... I don't need to play out that I'm wacky and weird and listen to Cuban music."

Prime offenders include Pavement and Beck, who barely say anything that isn't surrounded with quotation marks or obscured by a wall of opaque doggerel. Even Beck admitted to *Spin* in January of 1997: "There's not a lot of direct, inspired stuff. Sure, music always feeds off itself and its past, but there's not a lot of commitment. There's always this snatch of 'We're just kidding, we don't really mean this.' It's this continual need to goof on something our parents did or that we did 10 years ago."

"To write songs that are exclusively ironic seems very cowardly," says Moby. "And especially when it comes to a lot of alternative culture, it's very uncourageous. It's people making records that are really only designed for 10 or 20 people to hear. Whether it's alternative rock or post rock or electronic music, it's just very conservative, safe, uncourageous music."

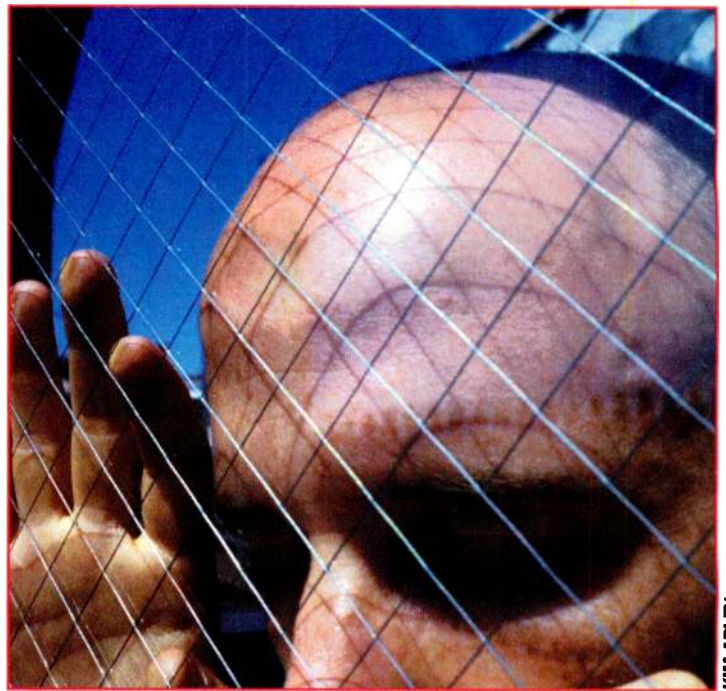
And now to drop a little science: According to the United States Census, the percentage of the population between the ages of 15 and 19 in 1970 was a whopping 9.4 percent by this year, it dropped to 7.2 percent of the total population—a huge 25 percent. Youth culture sprang to the fore in the '60s simply because there were so many youths. Their sheer numbers (and the distinct possibility that they would be drafted) made them a force and musicians tapped into that power to help drive social change. Youth, in turn, derived a sense of empowerment from that.

Now that the population is far less youthful and there are not many political issues that confront youth so directly as the Vietnam War did, youth culture doesn't mean so much anymore, at least in political terms. And as Sonic Youth's Kim Gordon points out, in the '60s, youth culture was about people of college age. "Now, youth culture starts younger," she says. "It's bound to mean something different." Like Britney Spears instead of Joan Baez.

By and by, that will change. The so-called Echo Boomers, the sons and daughters of the Baby Boomers, are coming up on their teen years. As with most teens, they will be rebellious, and there will be a lot of them. But what will there be for them to rebel against? Maybe nothing. Or maybe they'll rebel against the acquisitiveness of their boom-economy parents, who are gobbling up Coach bags and gas-guzzling SUV's as fast as their skyrocketing credit limits will let them. Or maybe they'll rebel against their parents' politically correct attitudes.

This, of course, is already happening.

Take Kid Rock for example. Take his very name: you couldn't ask for a more pure distillation of the component parts of pop stardom. No baggage there. And yet Kid has come right out and declared that he would like to see the unionization of the porn industry, a comically rockist burlesque of the right-on p.c. leanings of his musical peers. His redneck variations on Run-D.M.C.'s "Rock Box" are the ultimate statement about how white suburban kids accept hip-hop as a given, rather than some



KIM APLEY

"There's nothing wrong with having a healthy balance of interesting music and pop music," says Moby. "But the balance has shifted to crassly materialistic, cynical, market-driven music."

exotic new black music coming out of the inner city. But do audiences come away with anything other than the certain knowledge that his name is indeed Kid?

They come away with one of the best shows they've ever seen," says Kid Rock. "They come away going, 'Wow.'"

Aw, c'mon Rock—is that all there is?

"I play for working class people, I'd like to think," he says. "It's kind of a release—you work hard all week, you spend like 100 bucks by the time you go to a show, I want to make sure you're having a good time. It takes your mind off everything. It gives you something to talk about all week." By draping his stage in the stars 'n' stripes and playing songs like Grand Funk's "We're An American Band" and Creedence's working class anthem "Fortunate Son," Kid Rock makes a play to that audience—the working people who have missed the gravy train to Wall Street.

The new crop of kiddie pop currently befouling the charts with chirpy swill, may be a reason to take heart for the future. "I remember those fuckin' New Kids On The Block and that really kind of sucked—now, we've got nine or 10 different New Kids On The Block," says Barrett. "The only thing that keeps me going on is that the backlash is going to be hard and heavy—and I can't wait."

What fate will befall that inevitable backlash? While all eyes were on the New Kids, the grunge movement sneaked up on the music industry, and made its mark on the larger culture. But its quick ascent and even quicker extinction, persuasively demonstrated the speed and efficiency with which emerging cultural movements are commodified. It's down to a science for the music industry: As soon as something cool

appears on the media radar screen, it's snatched and injected straight into the mainstream—today's techno is tomorrow's BMW commercial.

Somehow, this wormhole straight from obscurity to ubiquity bypasses the mainstream music media. "The cover of *Rolling Stone* always has to be someone who's commercially successful in a mainstream way rather than interesting, cutting edge coverage of who's really making things happen," says Indigo Girl Amy Ray, referring to an approach propagated by many entertainment magazines. "And [then] they talk about how there's nothing going on anymore. But they're helping to create nothing going on by not telling people that there is something going on."

There are plenty of ignored scenes that speak directly to specific audiences, like the Christian rock underground, with bands like P.O.D., the Nordic black metal scene and the huge and vibrant bedroom rave community, where participants trade homemade CD's of often brilliant digital creations. And maybe you've never heard of this stuff, but then insularity seems to be the most common defense against swift cultural absorption. Dicky Barrett recalls Boston's close-knit garage rock and hardcore scenes of the '80s with fondness. "I didn't need anything past that it wasn't like the whole world should know about this, and if they did, that would suck," says Barrett. "And they don't know about it because they're idiots and I hope they stay that way because I don't want them to come to the shows!"

Much of the music that matters, then, has made itself invisible. "Maybe it disguises itself so it can't be marketed," says Gordon, "so it can't be exploited, so it can't be made into this other thing that it is not." So some new movements are zealously guarded secrets. It's no accident that rave culture, for instance, is incomprehensible to outsiders. Its

events are mostly advertised via e-mail lists, phone hotline numbers and fliers; most of its foremost practitioners retain a studied anonymity.

Yet, does rave music mean anything, or is it just an excuse to ingest a lot of complicated chemicals and wear really big clothes? It's been said many times before, but there's no getting around the idea of rave culture as a quasi-religious experience—a simulation, abetted by drugs and blinking lights, of the sensation of getting swept up in an actual movement. Rave culture, with its drug-induced sense of well-being, ego-annihilating music and transportive non-stop dancing, could be construed as a rejection of society, but it's not a very cogent or productive one. For instance, most rave music is instrumental. But what does music that has no lyrics actually say?

"The people who are going to mean something in electronic music are people who aren't afraid to sing," says Moby, who sings on his new record *Play*. "A lot of it is just people being afraid. And I'm not saying that only great music has to have vocals on it. I just think that in order to make great music, there has to be a combination of passionate enthusiasm and a degree of stupidity and a degree of courage."

"The bands in the '60s that were changing things, like The Beatles and the Stones, there was a positive message behind their music." —Guided By Voices' Robert Pollard

The foremost cultural icons of the '60s—The Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan—didn't speak in specific terms for anyone, like women or gay people or racial minorities. These days, there are bands who speak for all those groups, and even specialized subsets of those groups. Maybe that's a realization of the punk ideal of community-based music, a demolition of the star system. Maybe it's a manifestation of the decentralization of the media. Or is it just a marketing coup?

Back in the '70s, the Powers That Be knew that to conquer the

A CHANGE IS GONNA COME: ACTIVIST ORGANIZATIONS ON THE BEAT

Coalition To End Primate Experimentation

(www.enviroweb.org/cepe/) Campaigning against the needless torture of monkeys and apes in labs across the country, CEPE recently organized a benefit tour featuring Citizen Fish, Oi Palloi, Aus Rotten and more (www.primatelifreedomtour.org) to raise awareness and funds.

Global Trade Watch

(<http://www.tradewatch.org/>) This is the division of Ralph Nader's Public Citizen organization that focuses on questionable dealings of international businesses and governments. Through lobbying and public education, Global Trade Watch tackles issues pertaining to corporations and workers, the environment, trade agreements and more. When the World Trade Organization met in Seattle this past November, plenty of musicians (including K Records' Calvin Johnson) came out to protest.

International Concerned Friends & Family Of Mumia Abu-Jamal

(www.mumia.org) Depending on who you speak with, journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal either murdered a police officer or was framed by a corrupt system in a kangaroo court. A warrant for Abu-Jamal's death has been signed and Rage Against The Machine is one of many artists none too happy about it.

Joint Artists and Music Promotions Political Action Committee

(www.jampac.com) Founded by former Nirvana bassist Krist Novoselic, JAMPAC rallies against censorship legislation and strict noise ordinances in Seattle. It also fosters voting among young music fans and communication between the arts

community and politicians. Pearl Jam's Stone Gossard is on the organization's advisory board.

The Microradio Empowerment Coalition

(www.nlgcdc.org/mec/index.html) Jenny Toomey is just one of many musicians working to make low-power radio legal so that more voices can have access to the airwaves.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

(www.peta-online.org) Chrissie Hynde, Paul McCartney and the Beasties' Ad-Rock all work for this group that deals with issues of vivisection, vegetarianism, animal testing and more.

Rock For Choice

(www.feminist.org/rock4c/1_rock4c.html) Founded by L7, music journalist Sue Cummings and the Feminist Majority Foundation, Rock For Choice taps the resources of the music industry to help protect abortion rights. Artists who've come out in support of the organization or played benefits include Liz Phair, Laurie Anderson and the Foo Fighters—to name just a few.

Voices in the Wilderness

(www.nonviolence.org/vitw/) Fighting U.S. sanctions against Iraq, which it views as unjust siege, this organization regularly dispatches delegations with medical supplies for children to the Middle Eastern country. Boys Against Girls and Cat Power are just a couple of the artists who have helped raise funds for the organization.



ILLUSTRATION BY JEREMY EATON

lucrative rock audience, they had to divide it. Radio programmers like the notorious Lee Abrams demolished free-form FM radio and began carving up the pop audience into ever-smaller chunks to target advertising dollars more effectively. Today, the music radio audience is broken up into finely delineated micro-demographics, ensuring that a given band will not reach anybody but its predetermined audience. So the diluted and divided audience can never unite in a meaningful enough way to make a serious impact on the culture.

With all these musical niches, there is no meaningful artist around right now who has significant, across-the-board appeal. "That's what's meaningful—when it appeals to everyone," says Pollard. "The bands in the '60s that were changing things, like The Beatles and the Stones, there was a positive message behind their music—to do something collectively as a people—and the music was the main driving force behind that. Whereas now, it's either really good-timey or it's even evil."

Perhaps it has become impossible in this widely polarized culture for an artist to appeal to several distinct groups and still be meaningful. Partly because of the pigeonholing of the music audience and partly because of most bands' relatively short careers, the odds are slim that any band will ever become big enough to fill a stadium, or that a large amount of people will ever rally around one voice.

Meanwhile, disposable income and distractions like cable TV, the Internet and video games eat up people's time. "When I was a kid, when a concert was coming, that was it," says Barrett. "I didn't even think twice—it wasn't like, 'Well, I'd rather stay home and play this video game.'"

In another, wonderful way, pigeonholing allows musicians to have a very powerful impact, if only on a very specific group of people.

Music, Ray feels, means something when it celebrates some aspect of your community. "I think music means something because of that," she says, "because it still is that to a lot of people. I don't think music means much when we're talking about the massive scale of hype and stuff, when it gets lost completely in consumerism and image and it's all about profit and selling and there's not much there for people to hang on to."

When music doesn't try to please all of the people all of the time, it seems to matter a lot more. "There's this kind of family of kids that the shit means a lot to—the punk bands in Boston and New York City and the scenes in California. We could use a lot more of that," Barrett says. "When a 100 turns to 200 turns to 500 kids, without any help from any magazines, without any help from radio, and puts together this fuckin' community that's based solely on the bands and the times we have together, that means something."

Who knows what adjective history will append to the '90s, but "wishy-washy" might be a good choice. The leading Presidential candidates seem unwilling to take controversial stands, and so do our musicians. Who's going to argue with Wyclef Jean when he boldly declares that underprivileged children should have musical instruments?

Beastie Boy Adam Yauch has been crusading for the liberation of Tibet from the bloody hands of the Chinese government, but Adam Horowitz arguably showed more bravery than his bandmate when he took a stand at the 1999 MTV Video Music Awards against sexual assaults at rock concerts, stunning the audience into silence. "The whole night [was] about tits and ass, basically—when some presenter didn't know what to say, they'd turn and make some comment about their co-presenter's breasts," says Gordon. "Nobody wanted to hear that at all."

"People have to learn how to use the influence they have or the money that they have, the resources, if they really want to do good," says Ray. "And have some courage about it—and not be afraid of what your audience is going to think of you if you do this and that."

But could it be that rock has become such big business that it is just too risky a career move for major artists to take controversial stands?

Well, not unless that's your schtick—Rage Against the Machine being the foremost example. Sure, the band's outspoken left wing

(continued on Page 77)

FIND THE COST OF FREEDOM: DAVID CROSBY MAKES A HISTORY OF MUSICIANS WHO MADE HISTORY.



"If you have nothing that you would be willing to lay yourself down for and die, you have an empty life," states David Crosby, author of the soon to be released book *Stand And Be Counted: Making Music, Making History—The Dramatic Story of the Artists And Causes That Changed America* (HarperSanFrancisco). Yes, this is that same David Crosby famously known for his life-threatening bouts with a laundry list of illicit substances and resulting run-ins with the law. The former member of The Byrds, on-again, off-again member of Crosby, Stills, Nash (and Young) and new member of CPR may not have always taken his addictions seriously (he's been in recovery for several years), yet he firmly believes in the power of music for political purposes, deeming it "One of the great social forces of the latter half of this century."

For *Stand And Be Counted*, he interviewed many of America's most activist-minded musicians such as Pete Seeger ("a national fucking treasure"), Harry Belafonte ("the man should run for president") and Joan Baez (the object of a huge Crosby crush). Beginning with Woody Guthrie's union songs, Crosby traces the use of music by Civil Rights activists, anti-war protesters and benefit boosters, up to the Beastie Boys' struggle to raise awareness about the plight of Tibetans.

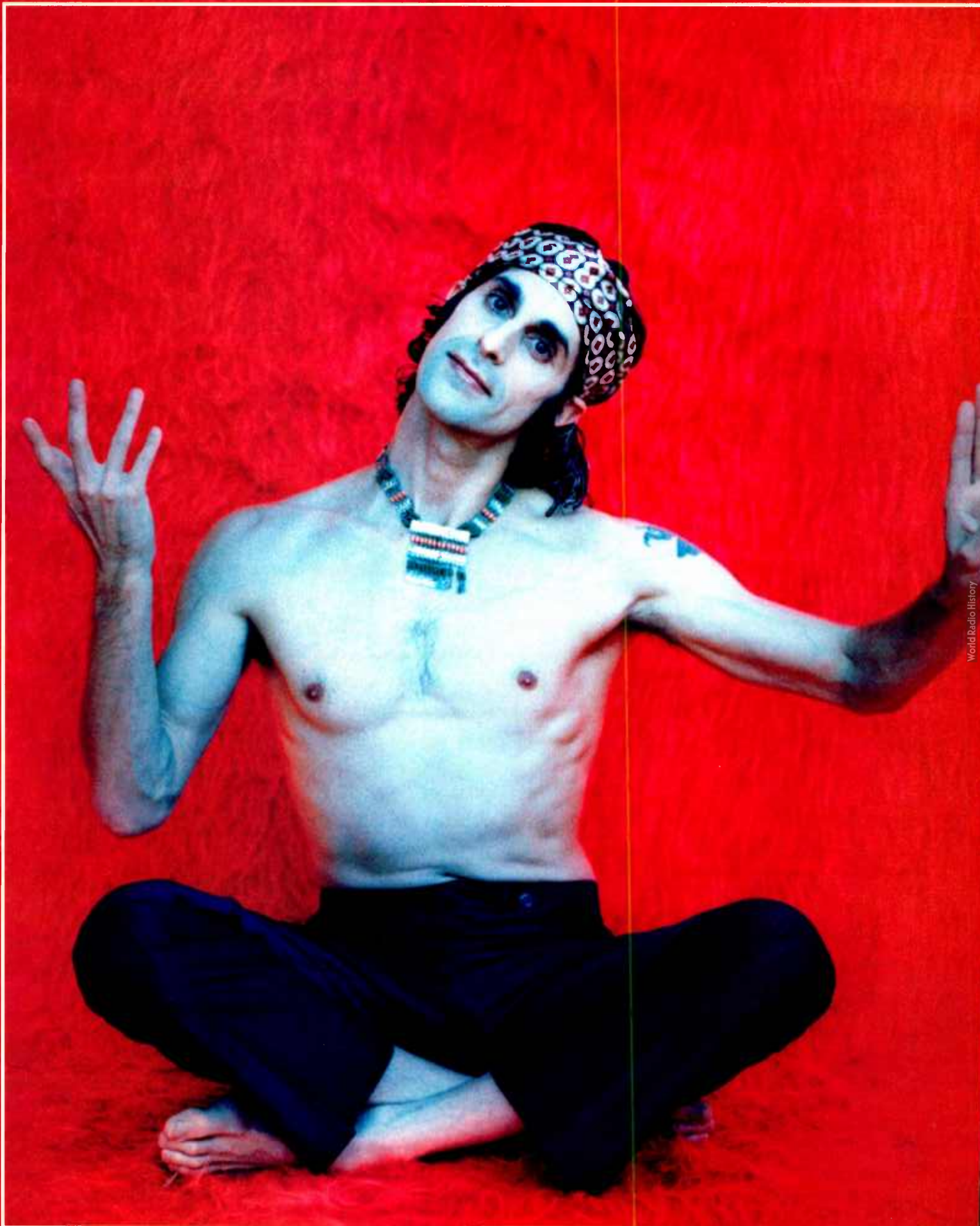
"Without anybody telling these kids how to it, they knew how to stick up for what they believe in," he praises Adam Yauch and the other musicians working on the Tibetan Freedom Festival. The 58-year old Baby Boomer views today's politically minded musician as having the same motivations as his generation, even though the cultural climate changed.

"Politics were so clearly polarized in my day. You looked at Nixon and you knew he was wrong. You knew which side you were on and there wasn't any question. Now, it's trickier. The same villains are at work, but they're a lot subtler. They managed the Gulf War so you never saw an American casualty. That was a PR triumph on their part. The same inhumanity to man is still being perpetrated. The same harm is being done to the planet. I think there are tons of young people willing to stick up for what they believe in."

Stand And Be Counted brims with such a hell-yeah optimism, rarely questioning motives or challenging those who refrain from playing benefits.

Still, don't think this chipper hippie is living in a vacuum or hasn't been confronted along the way: "I was at a demonstration for Tibet on the Capitol steps and one assaultive member of the press came up to me and said 'What do you think you're doing? You're not going to get China out of Tibet. Get real.' I said 'Well, you're right, I'm not. But I'm not so constructed to sit idly by and let it happen without me saying or doing anything... It matters that we stand up here. It doesn't matter if we win or not, it's who we are. It defines us as human beings that we stand up for these things.' The reporter was a little baffled by that reply."

»»Neil Gladstone



World Radio History

PERRY'S JUBILEE

HE GAVE UP HARD LIVING FOR THE TORAH, NOW CAN PERRY FARRELL UNITE THE WORLD IN A CHALLAPALOOZA?

STORY: JON REGARDIE PHOTOS: RALF STRATHMANN

There is no way to say the seemingly inconceivable except just to say it: Perry Farrell is working for the Lord.

Yes Perry Farrell, who sang about being caught stealing, now studies the Torah every morning and night. Perry Farrell, who begat the tribal gathering Lollapalooza and sired Jane's Addiction and Porno For Pyros, reads Hebrew and enthuses about King David and the Psalms. Farrell, who more than a decade ago warbled about coming down the mountain, has descended from a symbolic Mount Sinai, though instead of bearing stone tablets with 10 commandments, he offers drum 'n' bass and a vision of world unity.

There are other changes in Farrell's world. He has a one-year-old son and has shifted record labels. A solo album is due in the spring, demonstrating a musical style far removed from the punk-cum-Zeppelin licks that first gained him mainstream attention.

He also has a new, well, it can only be termed a fixation.

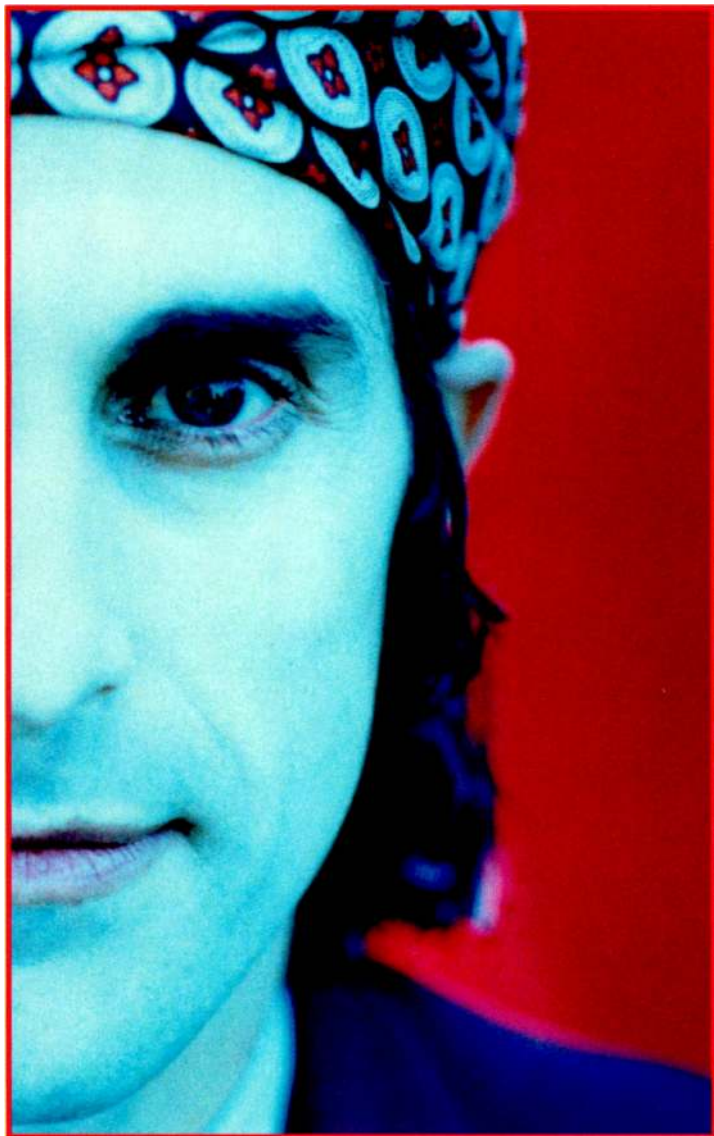
"I'm building for a time to come called Jubilee," gushes Farrell. "This time is so awesome, and it's just ahead of all of us. It has to do with the redemption of mankind and the land."

Farrell is garrulous when discussing Jubilee, which he happily explains is delineated in Leviticus 25, and also mentioned in Genesis 4, Jeremiah 34 and Isaiah 61. Farrell is nearly single-minded about this barely known Hebrew concept of redemption, veering conversation towards it whenever possible. Jubilee, he intones in ways both charismatic and enigmatic, calls for a worldwide celebration every 50 years, for liberty around the globe and wiping away the debt owed by third-world countries to the developed nations. Farrell's own role, he says, is musical.

"The Lord through the Torah, his form of declaration for this time and event is to say let us have a musical celebration," says Farrell. "They are asking for wonderful music, and I can be a great help here."

Just as Farrell's current foci may throw some longtime fans, so too will his new musical foray likely raise the alterna-set's pierced eyebrows. Farrell, now 40, has outgrown rock,

“Imagine if King David had the electronics we have now, what he could have done with the Psalms.”



veering instead to electronic strains and percussion-fueled world music. His recent album *Rev* (Warner Bros.), essentially a Jane's and Porno greatest hits disc with a few covers and rarities, contains a baffling drum 'n' bass version of Led Zeppelin's "Whole Lotta Love."

"Alternative rock, there are only so many sounds you can incorporate with guitar, bass, drums and voice," remarks Farrell. "Yeah, a person can play it differently, but they can't play it that different from me. Drum 'n' bass, jungle, breakbeat—it's fresh to my ear. Imagine if King David had the electronics we have now, what he could have done with the Psalms."

Farrell was born Perry Bernstein on March 29, 1959 in Queens, New York, the son of a jeweler father and a mother who committed suicide when he was four. He dropped out of college, danced in a private club and formed an artsy goth band called Psi Com. Jane's Addiction emerged in 1986, released an album on independent label XXX, and first tasted success with 1988's *Nothing's Shocking*. The band broke through with *Ritual de lo Habitual* two years later, and in 1991 Farrell founded Lollapalooza, building bridges to a place where rock, rap, metal, dance and goth fans could come together at a time when few artists crossed genre boundaries.

Jane's gave way to Porno For Pyros and as Lollapalooza foundered, Farrell tried to replicate his success with a traveling rock/dance tour called Enit. Though he was accepted as a visionary, Porno and Enit proved that all visions do not materialize equally. Porno dissolved, and after a brief Jane's "relapse," so did Farrell's relationship with Warner Brothers, his home for over a decade. His new album, tentatively titled *The Diamond Jubilee* and set for an April/May release, comes out on Virgin.

"Obviously, I parted from Warner Brothers. We're adults here, we know there was a problem," Farrell says, deliberately choosing his words. "You never can tell why love blooms or wilts. I have questioned that many times in my life."

Also new was Farrell's participation in fall's spoken-word Spitfire Tour, in which Spearhead's Michael Franti, Jello Biafra, Exene Cervenka and others took the stage to wax political, humorous or some combination of the two. In addition, Farrell, along with Bono, Radiohead's Thom Yorke, Live Aid's Bob Geldof and others, recently flew to the G-8 summit in Cologne, Germany to ask the leaders of the world's economic powers to ease third-world debt. Yet despite all the new spokes extending from Farrell, his friends insist he remains the same.

"Perry is the same Perry he has always been," remarks Aaron Cohen, a friend of 12 years and Farrell's partner in Torah studies. "What is different about him now is that he was involved with the spirits in such an intimate way through drugs and, I don't want to say sorcery or black magic, but he was involved in a lot of things that were taboo to a lot of people. It was a journey where he descended to a point, and he realized that was not where he belonged, so he decided to awaken. At that point you become useful to the Lord."

"He humbled himself and took on studying with the same passion he had for descending. Now he has made that journey and returned, now he has woken up and is not doing drugs on a daily basis. He takes care of himself, he is a great father, he really has a wonderful relationship with his son."

Farrell appears peaceful with his position in life. Nestled in a compact, arty house in Venice, California, adorned in a blue Adidas track suit and with barrettes in his hair, he talks about "globetrotting" during Jubilee 2000, taking a performance and musical presentation on the road for a year or more. Invoking Hebrew mysticism and musical exuberance, he observes the past and balances it against the future.

"Let's talk about the past 10 years," he says. "I'll see I was wasting my time just f-ing off the whole world, because I see that I am becoming the parent. I'm no longer the kid who is cursing my father. I am actually now the father, and my kid is starting to raise his finger, saying 'What's going on with this world?' And guess what? The guys who messed it up are not around, they're dead."

"So it's my turn to stand up and take action. There is only so much time and there is so much work to do. So this I keep, music. It's healthy. Here kid, rock out."

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100 WATT SMILE

And Reason Flew Thirsty Ear

A former member of the folk-punk band Ed's Redeeming Qualities, Carrie Bradley will also be familiar to many as the violinist who's served as an adjunct member of the Breeders for much of the '90s. 100 Watt Smile is her newest vehicle, a San Francisco-based foursome who sound like they'd have been right at home jamming with bands like the Breeders and Guided By Voices in Dayton at the height of that scene. For starters, Bradley's voice possesses the same raspy-yet-dainty quality that Kim Deal favors. And 100 Watt Smile shares a penchant for the kind of ragged arena-

OUT:
November 2.
FILE UNDER:
Grad school smarts in an arena rock wrapper.
R.I.Y.L.:
Breeders, Lisa Germano, R.E.M.'s *Monster*, Ed's Redeeming Qualities.

rock moves that helped define the sound of the Breeders and GBV, minus the lo-fi trappings. *And Reason Flew* sounds both slick and homespun, with booming drums and blaring guitars mixing it up with Bradley's creaky violin embellishments. Add a good dose of cryptic/clever lyrics—"It's a new sensation/it's a new surgery," Bradley sings on the chorus of "Birthmark"—and you've got something along the lines of what violinist/songwriter Lisa Germano might sound like if she spent a year working out at Gold's Gym. And at its best, in a song like "Birthmark," *And Reason Flew* is catchy enough to support a leftfield radio hit along the lines of the Breeders' "Cannonball."

>>> Glen Sarvady



AFRO-CUBAN ALL STARS

Distinto, Diferente Nonesuch

When Juan de Marcos Gonzalez formed this Cuban big band dedicated to reviving the sounds of old Havana, he could hardly have guessed that an offshoot project born of the same sessions—the Buena Vista Social Club—was going to blow open a whole new market for classic Cuban pop. Perhaps the first Afro-Cuban All Stars release got overshadowed by the Buena Vista hubbub, but this one seems poised to reap the whirlwind. The sound is big, the melodies unforgettable, the arrangements and textures crisp and timeless. When the small army of horns pulls aside to make room for a dizzying

OUT:
November 23.
FILE UNDER:
Cuba Libre.
R.I.Y.L.:
Buena Vista Social Club, Cubanismo, Ibrahim Ferrer, Ruben González.

tres solo, you feel a little bump, like a semi-truck changing gears—such is the staggering unity of this ensemble. Even at slow tempos, the band has elemental momentum, and when it revs to high gear, as on the son montuna "Huellas del Pasado," fierce discipline and easy charm join forces and soar. The vocal soloists here—Buena Vista luminaries Ibrahim Ferrer and Manuel "Puntillita" Licea—possess a remarkable expressive clarity, and the backing choruses here are even more lush, but in this group's jam-oriented arranging, equal billing goes to pianist Rubén González and trumpeter Manuel "El Guajiro" Mirabal. And the two numbers built around deep roots Afro-Cuban percussion offer a welcome change of pace.

>>> Banning Eyre



AFRO-MYSTIK

Future Tropic Om

Chris Smith, a.k.a. DJ Fluid, has issued several singles and remixes under the moniker Fluid Motion. But with his new project, aFRO-mYSTIK, he incorporates a live three-piece rhythm section to create an organic groove. The name, however, is somewhat misleading: Thumb piano and talking drums briefly grace the mix, but the focus is squarely on Latin, not African, rhythms. The two opening tracks set the tone, combining for over 15 minutes of hypnotic maracas, congas, and Brazilian-styled flute overlaid with futuristic techno washes and the occasional vocal sample. Smith varies

OUT:
December 7.
FILE UNDER:
World techno.
R.I.Y.L.:
Roni Size, DJ Shadow, Smith & Mighty.

the proceedings by enlisting a pair of vocalists to contribute two tracks apiece, stalking more conventional terrain. Liana Young's efforts are straightforward soulful dancefloor workouts, while rapper Ismail Azeem combines rapid-fire wordplay with a cerebral and political bent. On "Trivial Terrorism" Azeem does an impressive slow burn atop a sparse rhythmic bed akin to "The Message." But *Future Tropic* inevitably returns to its Caribbean vibe and Smith's upbeat, yet trance-inducing, grooves. Perhaps inevitably, many of the percussion tracks begin to sound interchangeable over the course of the disc's 73 minutes. Still, *Future Tropic* has a good share of high points and fresh ideas.

>>> Glen Sarvady



FIONA APPLE

When the Pawn... Clean Slate-Epic

Fiona Apple seems to get all the wrong kinds of attention: for the anorexic kiddie-porn look of her "Criminal" video, for her acceptance-speech rant, and for her very persona, crossing the beatnik princess-ness of Rickie Lee Jones, the delicate piano stomp of Tori Amos, and the self-exploiting Lolita air of Britney Spears. The Guinness Book-worthy title (90 words!) of her sophomore release threatens to bring her additional ridicule and puzzlement, which is unfortunate, since the music on *When the Pawn...* deserves to be heard. For a 22-year-old, Apple has a scarily ancient voice, one

OUT:
November 9.
FILE UNDER:
The Ophelia files.
R.I.Y.L.:
Tori Amos, Nina Simone, Beth Orton.

whose worldly-wise bluesiness, throaty and deep, is complemented well by her rumbling piano and shuffling rhythms. Then there are the mature arrangements, which, though they offer passing nods to drum 'n' bass and veer into oddly carnivalesque corners, will not overwhelm any of the old-timers catching her act on VH1. Yet she still writes like a kid, demanding the right to make her own mistakes ("Mistake") and railing with creepy, masochistic anger at faithless boys ("I Know") and abusive men ("Limp"). That she carries off such a volatile, unwieldy mix is a credit to her gift for soaring melody and her utter conviction. She'll stare you down, and you'll blink first.

>>> Gary Susman



THE A*TEENS

The Abba Generation

MCA

OUT:

February 8.

FILE UNDER:

Euro-disco Junior Justice League.

R.I.Y.L.:

Ace Of Base, Aqua, Robyn.

Though it's been 25 years since ABBA's "Waterloo," the Swedish superstars remain a cultural force to be reckoned with. The foursome's sugary craftsmanship has inspired tribute albums, kitschy live acts like Björn Again, and the film *Muriel's Wedding*. ABBA-ites Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus even wrote a hit London stage show based on their old group's music. And now, a marketing VP's fever dream has come to life in the form of the A*Teens—four Swedish teenagers so gorgeous they make Britney Spears look like a deformed circus freak. Unlike Björn Again, this two boys/two girls-team don't

write originals "in the style of" ABBA or copy ABBA's hairstyles and wardrobe; nor do they offer a uniquely personal vision of ABBA's oeuvre, à la Erasure's giddy cover album *ABBA-esque*. The A*Teens simply don puffy silver vests and sing high-velocity versions of ABBA hits. Pumped up synthetic beats lend a frantic, aerobics class air to the proceedings, particularly on their Chipmunks-like "Take A Chance On Me." The A*Teens' rendition of "Dancing Queen"—pancake-flat and larded with random, echoey synth blips—will have you searching for some tiny gleam of humor or emotion. And the opener, a cover of "Mamma Mia" that was number one for eight weeks on the Swedish charts, ditches the original's lush harmonies in favor of vocals that bring to mind a helium-filled hyperbaric chamber.

»» Jackie McCarthy



BIG BAD VOODOO DADDY

This Beautiful Life

Coolsville-Interscope

OUT:

November 19.

FILE UNDER:

Swinging jump blues.

R.I.Y.L.:

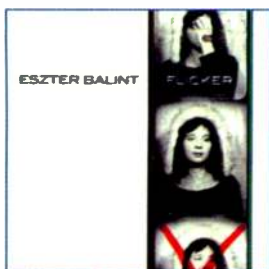
Royal Crown Revue, Lavay Smith And Her Red

Hot Skillet Lickers, Johnny Nocturne Band.

From the thumping big beat intro to Big Bad Voodoo Daddy's *This Beautiful Life*, it's clear that audio-only CD is not the perfect format for this million-selling, horn-heavy ensemble from Los Angeles. Covering danceable territory from retro swing to the big orchestra arrangements of Frank Sinatra's heyday, Voodoo Daddy's hard-charging sound is theatrical, sometimes cartoonish, and seemingly designed for the soundtrack to a neo-noir movie or a Broadway production. That said, the musicianship is crisp and flawless, with the three-man horn section painting colorful backdrops

for guitarist/leader Scotty Morris' rich—though a little bit plain vanilla—vocals. Daddy's Latin take on "I Wanna Be Like You" out-Disneys the Disney version that Louis Prima recorded for the 1966 animated film *Jungle Book*. Excepting that cut and the fun ode to Sinatra-style camp "Old McDonald," all the tunes were written in the old ways by young Mr. Morris. Daddy's razzle-dazzle works best on "Big Time Operator," an R&B flag-waver with high-voltage honking from tenor player Karl Hunter and some very smart horn charts. But what captures the Voodoo Daddy vibe best is the disc's funhouse cover art, because *This Beautiful Life* is not a serious-minded excavation of the blues underneath the swing revolution, but light-hearted, finger-snapping exotica to swing by.

»» Bill Kistliuk



ESZTER BALINT

Flicker

Scratchie

OUT:

October 19.

FILE UNDER:

Charmingly dour art folk.

R.I.Y.L.:

Marianne Faithfull's *Broken English*,

Tom Waits, *The Need*.

15 years ago Eszter Balint appeared as Eva, a disaffected Eastern European teenager, in Jim Jarmusch's *Stranger Than Paradise*. Playing the grumbling cousin of John Lurie's proto-slacker Everyman, her world-weary singing of Screaming Jay Hawkins' "I Put A Spell On You" was the eccentric film's perfect deadpan moment. In the intervening years Balint has begun a second career as a singer-songwriter, finding a home within New York's art rock milieu. With encouragement from scene capos John Zorn and Marc Ribot, she's succeeded in giving a female spin on the dark visions of downtown with her

carefully scripted mini-dramas. Like Tom Waits, Balint writes songs that sound like lost scenes from a rag tag production of a Samuel Beckett play. Her sparely rhymed, densely descriptive repertoire combines storytelling, European philosophy and whiskey-stained romance. The slow guitar ballad "Amsterdam Crown" manages to capture the feeling of a traveler's blissful anonymity by musing, "This table is my cradle/I'm happy as can be/Though I can't smell your tulips/And I can't taste this tea." With a low register delivery that gives even her lighter songs a cynical gravity, Balint's downbeat songwriting even manages to defy the folk and bluegrass touches that producer J.D. Foster uses to enliven the mood. With *Flicker*, Balint succeeds as a new model troubadour, bypassing love songs to deliver moody and ironic snapshots of a life detached.

»» Lois Maffeo



BLUE MOUNTAIN

Tales Of A Traveler

Roadrunner

OUT:

October 5.

FILE UNDER:

Southern roots rock.

R.I.Y.L.:

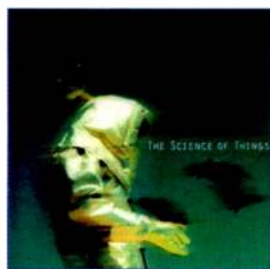
The Bottle Rockets, Wilco, Marah,

The Long Ryders.

Ah, the road. *Tales Of A Traveler*, the third album from Oxford, Mississippi's Blue Mountain, is inspired by the wear and tear of road life. It mixes electric roots rock 'n' roll release with a few wistfully nostalgic acoustic songs, as the energy of the stage vies with the exhaustion of the hotel room—"Another day, another city," as "Sleepin' In My Shoes" begins. But while 1997's *Homegrown* featured banjos-in-overdrive and Southern rock overtones in a perfect alt-country blend, *Traveler* often skids into simply solid rock territory. By expanding to a four-piece

and allowing Laurie Stirratt, sister to Wilco bassist John Stirratt, to switch from bass to guitar, the band ends up relying on its generic guitar-band configuration. And with former Georgia Satellite Dan Baird in the producer's seat, all parties seem content to stick to straightforward, driving rock. When Blue Mountain plays to its strengths, by tweaking the arrangements to add a Moog to "Lakeside" or by getting old-timey with "Just Passing Through," *Tales Of A Traveler* transcends the roots-rock rut. And, while the road-fueled rockers will no doubt sound perfect in the bars of their genesis, Blue Mountain are still at their best when they mess around with their Southern roots, instead of coasting on them.

»» Steve Klinge



BUSH
The Science Of Things Trauma-Interscope

Science is good for some things, like creating the technocratic guitars that put their searing brand on Bush leader Gavin Rossdale's dozen latest songs. But it takes a full range of human emotions to bring an album to life. Rossdale's unremittingly dour lyrics—he's confused, he's afraid, he's drowning himself, he's living in a cage—push all the angst-for-sale buttons, unleavened by the irony or playful turns of vocal phrase employed by, say, King of Pain Kurt Cobain, in whose shadow Rossdale seems doomed to labor. Without these humanizing touches, *The Science Of Things* is

OUT:
October 26.
FILE UNDER:
Alt-rock 101.
R.I.Y.L.:
Nirvana, R.E.M., Orbit.

cheerless. Even a backing vocal turn by Rossdale's girlfriend, No Doubt's Gwen Stefani, on the 1984-ish paranoid fantasy "Space Travel" can't snap him out of it. That said, Rossdale makes the most of his monochromatic vocalizing, investing damn near everything that comes out of his mouth with a sense of urgency. What's exciting is Bush's sonic bouillabaisse. The first single "The Chemicals Between Us" is more fun than a barrel full of pheromones, juggling dynamics, sizzling guitars, treated vocals and electronica-friendly beats. Throughout the album guitar harmonics and peals of noise slash the mix. If Rossdale becomes as complete a lyricist as he is a musician, Bush might prove more than an entry in rock-chart history.

>>> Ted Drozdowski



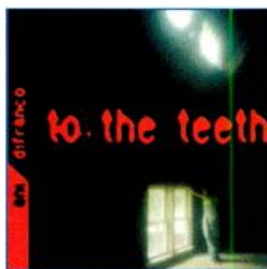
COBRA KILLER ★
Cobra Killer Digital Hardcore

Sometimes the revolution sounds like rock 'n' roll, and sometimes it's just confusing. *Cobra Killer* is firmly in the latter camp. Ec8or's Gina D'Orio and Shizuo's Annika produce the high-pitched screeches at the heart of a lot of Digital Hardcore records. And here, over mangled, muted, superimposed samples of easy-listening and funk records, hacked into seemingly random pieces and shoved together ad lib with overamplified drum machines, the two yell unsettling non-sequiturs. Their voices sound like the tape has been

OUT:
November 2.
FILE UNDER:
Creepy ultra-low-fi cut-and-paste.
R.I.Y.L.:
Atari Teenage Riot, Mark Stewart + Maffia, Shizuo.

dropped in a swamp and then microwaved for a few minutes, and are usually formally inappropriate for the words: "Going on the merry-go-round" sounds like a horrified plea for mercy; "Bitter salt burns my dumb away" like a sports cheer. Their source material is usually so garbled it's unrecognizable. (Though "Sic Secs" loops a random snatch of Don Covay's soul obscurity "Sookie Sookie" along with a little-girlish chant inspired by it, a James Brown grunt, and a handful of other samples that have nothing to do with its pitch or rhythm.) Spend enough time with *Cobra Killer*, though, and it takes on a chaotic, calamitous charm, like kids getting themselves muddy in rituals that nobody else is supposed to understand.

>>> Douglas Wolk



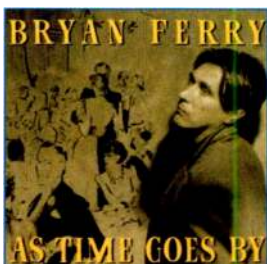
ANI DIFRANCO ★
To The Teeth Righteous Babe

Scattered across a dozen albums in under a decade, Ani DiFranco's songs feel like pages torn out of a journal—intimate and immediate, with a touch of goofiness that allows her to be candid without sounding lurid. At the center of her funky folk is her acoustic guitar, tuned down so low it sometimes sounds like a bass. On *To The Teeth*, she augments her fingerpicking and heavily rhythmic strum with added instrumentation: legendary James Brown saxophonist Maceo Parker satisfies DiFranco's old school funk jones, and trumpets add smoky jazz club

OUT:
November 16.
FILE UNDER:
Folk.
R.I.Y.L.:
Joni Mitchell, World Standard, Moby's Play.

ambience to several tracks. On "The Arrivals Gate," DiFranco lays raw banjo picking over programmed beats. It's not the first time rural instruments have been melded with synthesized sounds, but it's still exciting. Despite ethereal harmonies by The Artist on "Providence," the end of the album drags. Still, DiFranco's ability to personalize politics is as moving as ever on "Hello Birmingham," a sad ode to a murdered abortion doctor in her hometown of Buffalo ("I was once escorted to the doors of a clinic/by a man in a bullet-proof vest"), and her self-deprecation is still humorous on "Swing" ("the nagging voice that follows me to bed and fills my head with 'You suck!'").

>>> Meredith Ochs



BRYAN FERRY
As Time Goes By Virgin

There's nothing unusual about Bryan Ferry doing other people's songs—a big portion of his non-Roxy Music output has been covers—but the hook here is that he's reaching way back, mainly to the '30s, and mainly playing it straight. He still has a strange voice, but it's deepened and coarsened over the years and acquired an expressive hoarseness that makes him sound less remote without actually being warm. This new gravitas thickens his signature vibrato and renders it less campy, though at times, when goosed by a particularly jaunty melody (e.g., "You Do Something To Me"), he sounds a little like

OUT:
October 19.
FILE UNDER:
Remembrance of things past.
R.I.Y.L.:
Bobby Short, Teddy Wilson, Marlene Dietrich.

Tiny Tim might have if Tim had been, well, a more masculine-sounding singer. Oddly, it's the songs that one would think best fit his persona that are the least successful. On "Miss Otis Regrets (She's Unable To Have Lunch Today)," a song Cole Porter clearly meant to be sung tongue in cheek, Ferry laments as if he weren't in on the joke, while "Falling In Love Again" loses its boozy, Weimar edge and comes close to schmalz. He's best on the uptempo cuts, especially those given a swing-era, small combo treatment. Not that he swings, exactly, but riding along the classic changes of "The Way You Look Tonight" or "Lover Come Back To Me" he resists the ever-present temptation of irony and croons with throaty sincerity. Or so it seems.

>>> Richard C. Walls

THE LIVING DEAD

LISA GERRARD AND PIETER BOURKE

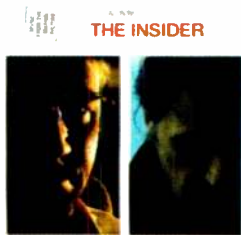
The Insider: Music From The Motion Picture

Columbia

BRENDAN PERRY

Eye Of The Hunter

4AD



OUT:

Lisa Gerrard & Pieter Bourke, Oct. 26

Brendan Perry, October 5.

FILE UNDER:

Ethno-inspired mood musics.

R.I.Y.L.:

Dead Can Dance, Fairport

Convention.

bleak, ominous, otherworldly, percussive instrumentals. Tracks like "Tempest," "Dawn Of Truth," and "Liquid Moon" are fraught with tension, yet subtle enough not to draw attention away from Al Pacino's barking. Still, they're almost upstaged themselves by the handful of flashier tracks by others, including *The Crow* composer Graeme Revell, Gustavo Santaolalla, Jan Garbarek, and particularly Massive Attack's propulsive "Safe From Harm." But Gerrard and Bourke pull off a save with the final track, the aptly simmering "Meltdown."

Meanwhile, Gerrard's erstwhile partner Brendan Perry makes his solo debut with *Eye Of The Hunter*. The disc retains DCD's lush production and air of voluptuous gloom, but with a more austere palette (a sprinkling of acoustic guitar and mandolin, string-like keyboards, gentle upright bass and drums, and mournful pedal steel) and more traditional singer/songwriter folk-ballad compositions. (All the songs are Perry originals, save the cover of cursed '60s folkie Tim Buckley's "I Must Have Been Blind.") Front and center is Perry's sometimes raw baritone, channeling such cheery folks as Ian McCulloch and ol' Lizard King Jim. He sings from the same deep well of loneliness that has marked eerie Celtic musical mystics from Fairport Convention to Sinéad O'Connor and beyond. The results are sometimes derivative or even trite (see "Death Will Be My Bride" or the blatant U2 cop on "Archangel"), but they're still haunting, muscular and lovely.

>>> Gary Susman



LISA GERARD AND PIETER BOURKE IN STUDIO



Foo Fighters

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HIM
Sworn Eyes

Perishable

Doug Scharin is one of the best drummers of his generation, as anyone who has seen him roll back his eyes, put his sticks to the skins and jump-start songs for the bands Rex or June Of 44 will attest. He generates otherworldly rhythms that don't so much slow down or speed up as hop into a parallel musical universe that's variously jittery and hypnotic. Back in 1996, Scharin took a break from his band efforts to experiment with dub and noise textures in the solo project Him, and it's turned into a steady side gig. Scharin once said that Him aimed to emulate the sounds of the streets outside his Brooklyn apartment,

OUT:
November 2.
FILE UNDER:
Dub-jazz for the new prog jet-set.
R.I.Y.L.:
Tortoise, Out In Worship,
Aerial-M remixes.

and early efforts reflected the two-dimensional din. But now Scharin's peers recognize his talent, which explains why his latest album as Him features a who's-who of post-rock side players, including Tortoise's Jeff Parker, Pullman's Bundy K. Brown and Chicago Underground Duo's Rob Mazurek. These friends co-wrote four of the five lengthy tracks for *Sworn Eyes*, including the 20-minute opening stunner "A Verdict Of Science," which allows a series of repetitive coronet phrases and basslines to intermingle and blossom into a free exploration of ambient, dub and jazz soundscapes. Scharin's one self-credited track "Trace Elements" works up a modest funk vamp, and it's a lighthearted distraction from the headier, more textural workouts on this pristine, lovingly made recording.

>>> Richard Martin



LE TIGRE
Le Tigre

Mr. Lady

In earlier generations of punk, if you had interesting enough ideas, you didn't need instrumental proficiency. In the new generation, if you have interesting enough ideas, the computers will take care of the proficiency part for you. Bikini Kill's flag-waver Kathleen Hanna took a stab at applying samplers to ideology with last year's *Julie Ruin* project. Her new band brings her together with two ideagrrrls from outside the music world (zine writer Johanna Fateman and the amazing video artist Sadie Benning), and a whole lot of digital technology—and it's way more confident and fun, even danceable.

OUT:
October 25.
FILE UNDER:
Electro-punk grrrl style now!
R.I.Y.L.:
Bikini Kill, Atari Teenage Riot, Devo.

Le Tigre is constructed from snappy loops, rudimentary fuzz-tone guitar and bits of vocals cut and pasted into the mix—sometimes their own, sometimes politically apropos voices they've found elsewhere. Among the exuberant adaptations of punk song-forms to synthy trappings ("Phanta" is worthy of early Devo), there are a lot more conceptual pieces here than on anything Hanna's done before. Some of the songier songs, in fact, seem underwritten or obvious, but the band's comfortable enough with its territory that they construct one of the best tracks on the disc, "Hot Topic," out of namedropping the (queer activist/radical/female-and-famous) likes of Vaginal Creme Davis, Mia X and Julie Doucet. And at its best, *Le Tigre* is as giddy with discovery as it is angry.

>>> Douglas Wolk



LAUREN HOFFMAN
From The Blue House

Free Union

First thing first: Lauren Hoffman's debut disc was a dud. Recorded for a major-label when she was 19, *Megiddo* (Virgin) showcased a sharp young songwriter buried under a mound of production and expectations. Freed from her contract with Virgin, she returns three years later with a self-released follow-up that attempts to revive her career. *From The Blue House* sounds assured all around, from Hoffman's earthy yet practiced vocals to her buoyant guitar playing (and that of a crack rhythm section featuring bassist Scot Fitzsimmons and ex-Sparklehorse/Cracker drummer Johnny

OUT:
January 11.
FILE UNDER:
Genre-hopping singer-songwriter.
R.I.Y.L.:
Liz Phair, Ani DiFranco, Lisa Germano.

Hott). This is to Hoffman's credit, but also to her detriment: She's talented enough to croon over a jazz ballad, tap her Virginia roots in a banjo-led nod to bluegrass, snarl over an angry rambler, or spitshine a radio-ready pop tune, but the result is more impressive than it is listenable from beginning to end. Yet there's at least a half-dozen praiseworthy songs here, and some absolute gems. "Dust Off Your Dreams" has the type of spunk mixed with easy charm that's been AWOL from Liz Phair's musical persona for years, and "Song For A Boy" combines a jaunty melody with a gothic narrative worthy of a Flannery O'Connor story. Tracks like these suggest that Hoffman knows she's heading toward a destination, though she hasn't committed to any of the routes.

>>> Richard Martin



LLAMA FARMERS
Dead Letter Chorus

Beggars Banquet

Back home in England, Llama Farmers appear to have been classified as a "teenage punk" band, which says more about the U.K.'s charmingly wide definition of punk than it does about the sound of *Dead Letter Chorus*. Sure, Llama Farmers play punchy, guitar-driven music. And the band—launched in algebra class—was chartered when the members were in their teens. But *Dead Letter Chorus* is a much more varied rock album than the word "punk" would suggest, and the playing itself is never less than absolutely competent. No dilettantes, primary writers/siblings

OUT:
November 16.
FILE UNDER:
Punchy Brit-rock.
R.I.Y.L.:
Gay Dad, Foo Fighters, Pixies.

Bernie and Jenni Simpson have honed two song modes: crashing, grungy-but-catchy rock ("Jessica," "Get The Keys And Go"), and languid, acoustic-based tunes ("Yellow," "Forgot To Breathe"). Often, though, you're not sure which variety you're getting: "Pornaco" changes tempos twice before the chorus, getting harder and more Pixies-esque with each bar, and somehow it coheres, finishing with a simple bass solo by Jenni that would do Kim Deal proud. This is a band who still seem to be searching for their sound, and that's half the fun of *Dead Letter Chorus*. And, no matter how you slice it, this is an album that most Yanks would file under British rock: helplessly melodic, a tad contrived and very smart.

>>> Chris Molanphy



THE MADD RAPPER

Tell 'Em Why U Madd Crazy Cat-Columbia

OUT:

January 11.

FILE UNDER:

Player-hating 101.

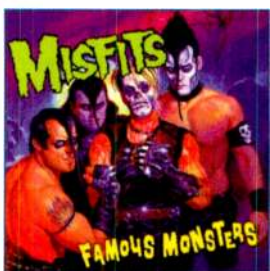
R.I.Y.L.:

Mase, Puff Daddy.

So it's come to this: the guy who's best known for a fairly memorable skit on the Notorious B.I.G.'s 1997 album *Life After Death* is releasing his debut CD, adding his name to the long list of coattail-riders who have been clogging the new release bins in the two and a half years since Biggie's death. Okay, so that's not quite fair. After all, as the producer of Biggie's masterful single "Hypnotize" and Puff Daddy's mesmerizing "It's All About The Benjamins," Deric "D-Dot" Angelettie helped create the Bedford-Stuyvesant juggernaut in the first place, before

going solo as The Madd Rapper. Problem is, none of this makes The Madd Rapper's whiny, one-note player hating much fun to listen to. His catchphrase seems to be, "I'm-a tell you why I'm mad"—a threat that's funnier in theory than in practice. Along with plenty of skits, his album contains the usual guest appearances, from superstars (Puffy, Busta Rhymes) and also-rans (Lil' Cease, Nature) alike, and the obligatory bits and pieces of R&B. Yeah, yeah, the production is varied, and consistently pleasant. But so what? It's time to move on.

»» Kelefa Sanneh



MISFITS

Famous Monsters

Roadrunner

OUT:

October 5.

FILE UNDER:

Late-late show tunes.

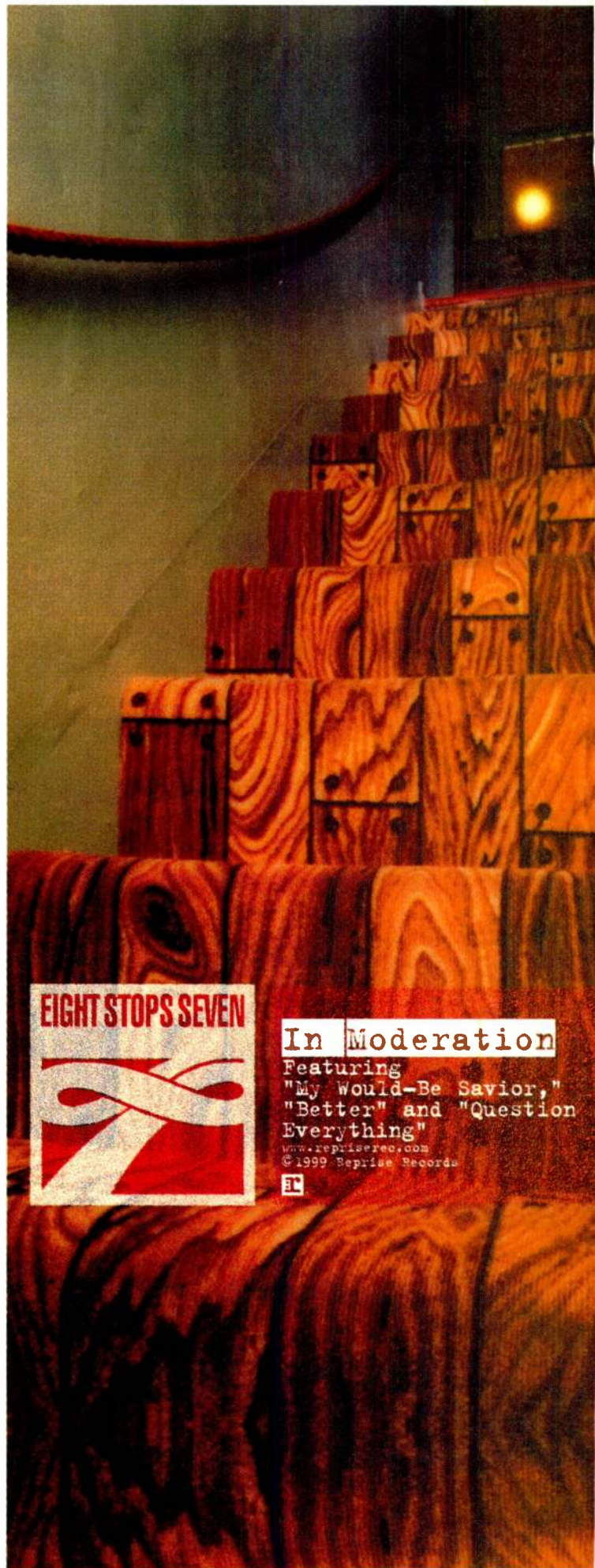
R.I.Y.L.:

The Groovie Ghouies, Hedwig And The Angry Inch, Ramones.

Most folks who were fans of the Misfits before the band reformed sans original singer Glen Danzig have been understandably disappointed with the new version—like Judas Priest in the Ripper days, the '90s Misfits are essentially a brand-name-endorsed tribute/cover band. Singer Michael Graves can't match the dulcet-toned howl that made Danzig the Sinatra of the early punk years, and the band's songs no longer work as B-movie metaphors for tortured adolescence. Unlike the original Misfits and the Cramps, the new Misfits are a strictly

camp appreciation, more *Rocky Horror Picture Show* than *Teenagers From Outer Space*. Which means they're geekier—closer to toy collectors than punks. And they're a bit off-message: *Famous Monsters* has songs about movies like *Planet Of The Apes* and *Pumpkinhead*, whereas Danzig used to dig up real bizarro obscurities like Ted V. Mikels' *Astro-Zombies*. If you can get past all the trimmings, though, the new Misfits are a passable light-hearted pop-punk outfit, a cemetery-plot Sha Na Na with just enough juice and facepaint to sneak street-corner doo-wop harmonies past the kids as junk food.

»» Carly Carioti



In Moderation

Featuring "My Would-Be Savior," "Better" and "Question Everything"

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GOT LIVE IF YOU WANT IT

There are two basic kinds of live albums: the archival retrospective, which may or may not be taken from a single legendary event or tour like, say 1996's *The Who's Live at the Isle of Wight Festival 1970* (Columbia/Legacy), but always reaches back farther than the most recent tour; and, the keepsakes rushed into production shortly after or even during a successful tour to squeeze just a bit more revenue out of it.

The Clash's *From Here to Eternity* (Epic) is a perfect example of the former. Timed to coincide with Joe Strummers



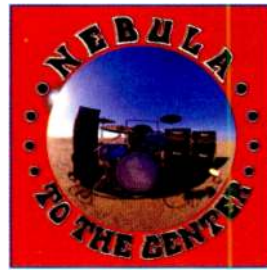
BLONDIE

first solo album in a decade—as well as the release of Don Letts's Clash rockumentary *Westway to the World*—the 17-track disc sports material that spans the band's career, from a furious 1981 "Complete Control" and arousing 1978 rendition of "I Fought the Law," to a dub heavy "Armageddon Time," with guest vocals by Mikey Dread, and seven tracks recorded during a two-night stand at Boston's Orpheum in 1982. All in all, a timely reminder that on a given night, the Clash really were the only group that mattered.

Joy Division were once the only group that mattered to their fanatic fans—they were rumored to be the most bootlegged band in its day. The new haunting and addictive *Preston 28 February 1980* (NMC), recorded just a few months before singer Ian Curtis hung himself, is the equivalent of a high quality bootleg of one exceptionally intense gig—one that goes much further toward demonstrating the importance of the short-lived band than the 1997 greatest "hits" retrospective *Permanent* (Warner Bros.). Because here you can hear strains not only of what Trent Reznor would fashion his Nine Inch Nails out of, but of the fragmented tuneful dissonance that would become Sonic Youth's calling card a few years later.

In contrast, offerings like Blondie's *Live (Beyond)*, Violent Femmes *Viva Wisconsin* (Beyond), and Bauhaus's two-disc *Gotham* (Label TK), can't help but pale, even though all three capture top-notch performances. Blondie's *Live* provides the biggest revelations both in terms of how good the band sound 15 years after their heyday (Deborah Harry's voice has aged incredibly well, and guitarist Chris Stein tears into classics like "Dreaming" with authority and abandon), and in terms of how well new tunes like "Maria" fit into the mix. *Viva Wisconsin* comes from a back-to-basics acoustic tour the Femmes pulled off in late '98 and, indeed, sounds an awful lot like some of the Femmes sets I saw a dozen or so years ago, replete with all those early favorites ("Blister in the Sun," "Gimme the Car," "Prove My Love," "Country Death Song" etc.). And *Gotham*, a souvenir from the 1998 tour that reunited the original line-up of the proto-goth band, finds singer Peter Murphy sounding even more like a cross between David Bowie and Jim Morrison than he used to. There's one new track here, but as it was back the day, the band's at their best doing a spot-on cover of Bowie's "Ziggy Stardust."

»» Matt Ashare



NEBULA ★ To The Center

Sub Pop

Since the rhythm section of the original Fu Manchu line-up took off on its own as Nebula, neither group has consistently made essential music. Up 'til now, they've both made like Mastadons and gone plodding into the void left by the breakup of Kyuss, but no one's been able to recapture that band's desert-sandblasted, cone-bursting brontosaurus-sized rumble. The search for a successor, resulting in a beanbag-boogie-metal explosion, has kept poster artist Frank Kozik in paintbrushes for going on five years now. On *To The Center*, Nebula shifts gears abruptly and winds its

OUT:

November 2.

FILE UNDER:

Stoned and dethroned.

R.I.Y.L.:

Mudhoney, Queens Of The Stone Age, Kyuss, Blue Oyster Cult.

internal clocks sideways from *Sabbath Bloody Sabbath* to *Raw Power*; the centerpiece is, in fact, a note-for-note rendition of The Stooges' "I Need Somebody," with Mudhoney's Mark Arm reprising his impeccable Iggy impersonation. Elsewhere, Nebula twiddles knobs back and forth between blunted Tony Iommi benders and funhouse death trips, with singer/guitarist Eddie Glass doing his best Mark Arm impersonation. The profusion of dual acoustic/sludge guitars will come as a refreshing change of pace only to those who've been subsisting entirely on a diet of 60 Watt Shaman and *Desert Sessions* discs, and the sitar licks are straight outta *That '70s Show*. On the upside, it's the best Mudhoney disc anyone's made in a while.

»» Carly Carioli



MIKE NESS Under The Influences

Time Bomb

Covers have been a good friend to Mike Ness ever since he started leading Social Distortion away from class-of-'77 British punk and toward his American roots on 1988's *Prison Bound*. Ness left his sneering mark on Johnny Cash's "Ring Of Fire" on *Social Distortion* and tackled Willie Dixon's "Pretty Thing" and Ersel Hickey's "Shame On Me" in 1990. It was Bob Dylan's "Don't Think Twice" that got Ness's first solo album, *Cheating At Solitaire*, on the radio. Of course, even Ness originals have a tendency to sound oddly familiar in their use of 1-4-5 chordings and hard-luck clichés, so it's

OUT:

November 9.

FILE UNDER:

Cash-meets-Clash roots punk.

R.I.Y.L.:

Social Distortion, Waco Brothers, Janson & The Scorchers.

no surprise to find the singer/guitarist throwing himself into a collection of other people's tunes. *Under The Influences*, Ness's second solo outing in well under a year, is just that: It's Ness and his touring foursome tearing into a baker's dozen of golden oldies, including his own "Ball And Chain." If there's a weak link, it's the set list, which leans a bit too heavily toward obscurities by the likes of Wayne Walker ("All I Can Do Is Cry") and Marvin Rainwater ("Gamblin' Man")—a very minor quibble. Using past experience as a guide, though, Ness redeems himself by tearing into a fitting standard—a version of "I Fought The Law" that owes at least as much to The Clash as it does to Bobby Fuller.

»» Matt Ashare

RAUCOUS BEATS



MOS DEF
Black On Both Sides Rawkus



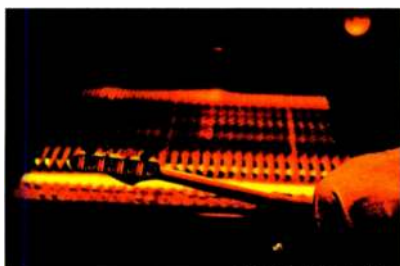
PHAROAE MONCH
Internal Affairs Rawkus

As passionate a lobbyist for hip-hop's expressive potential as you're likely to find in '99, Mos Def has already enjoyed a storied minor-league career. He's stolen scenes from De La Soul and Q-Tip, lively'd up the studious beats of DJs Krush and Honda, and loomed large as half of Black Star, the only hip-hop duo that owns its own Africana bookstore. And while singles like the almost Ellingtonian "Travellin' Man" are a tough act to follow, his solo debut *Black On Both Sides* is a stunner, cultivating a surprisingly hard edge (on tracks like the darkly trenchant "Hip-Hop"), while stepping knee-deep into the sumptuous soul-jazz Black Star only flirted with. The problem with *Both Sides* is that its sweep can feel a little preordained. Mos is clearly out to craft a hip-hop classic, as epochal as A Tribe Called Quest's *The Low End Theory* or Eric B & Rakim's *Follow The Leader*. But those albums

OUT:
 Mos Def, Oct. 9
 Pharoahe Monch, Oct. 16.
FILE UNDER:
 Underground hip-hop intelligentsia.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Black Star, Organized Konfusion,
 Company Flow.

defined eras only in retrospect. By comparison, the self-referential gravitas of *Both Sides*, especially coming from the once gloriously-casual Mos, make it feel like a compelling novel that's already (to quote Mr. Def) "a screenplay sold to Miramax." Still, for a fresh-faced MC's coming-out jam, this set is as front-to-back stacked as the love object in Mos's "Ms. Fat Booty." And if the man behind it quits striving for timelessness, the prospects are tantalizing. (Besides, you gotta love an MC who takes time out to put Limp Bizkit in their place.)

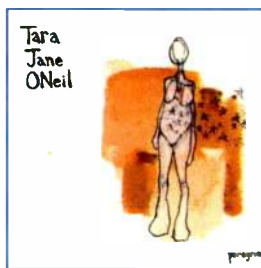
On future-shocked cuts like "Releasing Hypnotical Gases," Organized Konfusion's Prince Poetry and Pharoahe Monch drafted the blueprint for today's densely-knotted underground verse; poetry-slammers and Company Flow-jocking backpack kids alike owe them a pound and a Heineken. Still, they never exactly mastered that whole moving-units thing. As Monch good-naturedly acknowledges on his solo debut, *Internal Affairs*,



MOS DEF IN STUDIO

"You sold platinum 'round the world, I sold wood in the 'hood." That explains the decidedly less-prog-hoppy *Affairs*, on which Monch melds his always-impressive wordplay ("That night, rockin' Nikes, eatin' Mike & Ikes, slapboxin' with a dyke on a bike too small") to a surprisingly direct suite of songs. I dig "Queens," which squeezes its pathos from a sample of Maxwell's "Till The Cops Come Knockin'." But the mix-tape hit "Simon Says" wins, with the hook those dancin'-averse backpackers need to heed: "Get the fuck up! . . . If you're holdin' up the wall, then you're missin' the point!" Queens logic at its finest.

»»Alex Pappademas



TARA JANE O'NEIL
Peregrine Quarterstick

You've got a new pen pal and her name is Tara Jane O'Neil. You may have made her acquaintance while she was playing with Rodan, the Sonora Pine or Retsin—she's a fiery bassist/guitarist with a sweet voice and a way with an angsty melody. But with *Peregrine*, her solo debut, she's made a homey, insular album. Maybe the album's just-between-you-and-me vibe stems from the way O'Neil made it: Enconced in her Manhattan studio apartment, she played most of the instruments herself and taught herself how to record her music as she went along. Occasionally, she

OUT:
 January 18.
FILE UNDER:
 Home taper confessionals.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Retsin, Shannon Wright, Elliott Smith,
 Spinanes.

invited some friends over to play along, including Ida guitarist Dan Littleton, Sonora Pine violinist Samara Lubelski and jazz drummer Andrew Barker. But mostly you'll hear O'Neil's crafty guitar work, which suggests Nick Drake or Elliott Smith, and her sweet, even-toned vocals are often layered in harmonies. Although folksy, these songs won't be confused with the winsome verse-chorus-verses laid down by a songwriter like Smith. More in keeping with the arty rock of Sonora Pine or Rodan, O'Neil's songs meander, exploring the space around a melody rather than plowing right through it. Like a keeper letter from a dear friend, *Peregrine* may take time to seep into your psyche, but it's got staying power.

»» Lydia Vanderloo



ANDREA PARKER
Kiss My Arp Mo Wax-Beggars Banquet

Following a string of wildly divergent, yet consistently top-notch singles, the debut full length from Andrea Parker finds the British DJ/producer moving through a variety of musical zones—dark electro for "In Two Minds," dissonant electronica à la Aphex Twin on "Breaking The Code"—without compromising cohesiveness or impact. In a world of factory presets and square rhythms, Parker prefers to coax new noises from antique analog synthesizers, stitch in curious sound effects, and write in unconventional time signatures. Her string arrangements recall Massive Attack alumnus Craig Armstrong, albeit minus the

OUT:
 November 2.
FILE UNDER:
 Songs that go bump in the night.
R.I.Y.L.:
 Autechre, Massive Attack, Drexciya,
 Portishead.

saccharine. And Parker loves penetrating bass: the low blows of "Going Nowhere" and "Some Other Level" will leave you fearing for your speakers' safety. But although "Clutching At Straws" conjures up memories of John Carpenter film scores, in general the cumulative effect of these ingredients isn't exactly scary, just extremely unnerving. Her sporadic, detached vocal turns, and lyrics about an "other self" that's drawn to "forbidden doors" ("The Unknown") and "constantly changing" identities further heighten the album's other-worldly vibe. Lighter moments of shuffling percussion, and even sonic chicanery reminiscent of *Construction Time Again*-era Depeche Mode occasionally surface, but overall *Kiss My Arp* is a dense, challenging, and remarkably rewarding disc.

»» Kurt B. Reighley

PEACE ORCHESTRA

Peace Orchestra G-Stone-Studio K!7

"Domination," the fourth cut on Peace Orchestra's eponymous debut, opens with a bong being sparked, followed by a long, gurgling inhalation. But while you'd have to be high to justify repeated spins of many downtempo (the genre formerly known as trip-hop) full-lengths, that's hardly the case with this solo outing from Peter Kruder of celebrated production and remix team Kruder & Dorfmeister. His expertise lies not in piling on odd sounds and samples, but in selectively juxtaposing tone colors, then sweetening them with effects, creating woozy sonic trails that shimmer and pulsate with echo and

reverb. The minimalist results prove remarkably absorbing: there's little more to "Shining" than a muted synthesizer arpeggio, Chilli Bukasa's deadpan vocal, and a huge, booming kettle drum. "Meister Petz" recalls an outtake from Wendy Carlos' soundtrack to *A Clockwork Orange*, complete with disembodied vocoder sighs and evaporating oboes, while "Double Drums" peppers a mellow drum 'n' bass foundation with *Starsky & Hutch* horn stabs. Castanets, flutes, Balinese gamelan, and a Nina Simone-esque vocal refrain ("Who Am I") also bubble up between beats that are quite literally blunted, their sharp edges sanded down via mixing board trickery. Multiple listens to *Peace Orchestra* can prove addictive, but mercifully the only ravenous late-night craving it may inspire is one for the long-awaited K&D studio album.

>>> Kurt B. Reighley

PINBACK

Pinback Ace Fu

Heavy Pilot? Three Mile Vegetable? Call this meeting of Heavy Vegetable's Rob Crow and Three Mile Pilot's Armistead B. Smith what you will, but these San Diego indie-rock vets distinguish themselves as Pinback. Unerringly subtle, this self-titled debut slips into a mid-tempo groove early on and builds colorful, varied songs around it. The structures are kept fairly simple, as when an elliptical bass and drum rhythm backs a tag team organ and guitar riff, then gives way to the sinister, yet catchy, chorus of "push the little baby down the spiral stairs." "Tripoli" develops methodically around a buried drum loop,

then delivers a pithy hook in the chorus. Crow's many records as a solo artist and in his enigmatic projects—spanning punk to ambient—provide some clues to Pinback's angle. He's a vocalist who hugs his melodies, and a fidgety guitarist whether he's playing a breakneck punk tune or a meditative hymn; he's also adept at writing either poetically or economically. Smith is malleable enough to work with Crow, and brings the focus and consistency that sometimes elude Crow's post-Heavy Vegetable projects. Together, the two musicians click like a \$50 pen, smoothly transitioning between segments and always succeeding with their snappy harmonies. Some fans of their earlier bands might find this "lite" coming from Crow and Smith, but their restraint yields surprising rewards.

>>> Richard Martin

RICK RIZZO AND TARA KEY

Dark Edison Tiger Thrill Jockey

Rick Rizzo and Tara Key are best known as lead guitarists for Eleventh Dream Day and Antietam, respectively, bands that have earned reputations as fiery live outfits. So what may surprise fans of their ear-splitting, soul-shifting levels of ragged glory is Rizzo's and Key's ear for subtlety: *Dark Edison Tiger* is much more about tone than blowing the amps out. Most of the instrumental album's recording was a result of New Yorker Key and Chicagoan Rizzo (Key has toured as second guitarist with Eleventh Dream Day, so the two have a history) trading

tapes via the mail, each building upon the other's sound sketches until a song emerged. A couple of real recording sessions with some musician pals help flesh out some tracks, but this remains a solitary affair that achieves a definitive mood: introspective yet conversational, deep yet accessible. "Good Evening Mr. Peckinpah," for example, is all translucent washes of guitars, electric and acoustic, backed by the droning thrum of a bass, while "Duo" builds gradually—one guitar line of many entering the fray at a time—developing into a dense arrangement that is still somehow airy. "We talked about Pollock and Winslow Homer and J.M.W. Turner more than we ever talked about the tunes," Key said of the album's sessions, and her painterly, rather than rockist, interest is what shines through.

>>> Lydia Vanderloo

SAVE FERRIS

Modified Epic

On *Modified*, Save Ferris prove it's come a long way in the two years since *It Means Everything*. Not just in the slightly slicker, fatter sound (though there's nothing wrong in being radio-friendly), but also in the depth of the band's songwriting. Detractors have condemned Save Ferris as ska sellouts, but the band is one of the few commercial outfits to have ska as a big part of its sound, even as Save Ferris delves into reggae ("No Love") and even soul ("Let Me In"). And it's obvious on *Modified* that long periods on the road have tightened Save Ferris up a great deal. Singer Monique Powell

continues to improve by leaps and bounds. She's always possessed a very womanly voice (as opposed to a horrible little-girl squeak), but now there's a bluesy smokiness to it. The band hasn't lost sight of the punk-poppiness that helped define it, which is quite evident in "Turn It Up" and "Your Friend," but this is the work of a band that's steadily growing, and has already reached that elusive, but gratifying, next artistic level. No sophomore jinx here.

>>> Chris Nickson

OUT:
October 22.
FILE UNDER:
Downtempo, but not out of it.
R.I.Y.L.:
Kruder & Dorfmeister, Fila Brazzilia, Theivery Corporation, Morcheeba.

OUT:
January 18.
FILE UNDER:
Instrumental conversations.
R.I.Y.L.:
Flying Saucer Attack, Brokeback, Roy Montgomery.

OUT:
October 4.
FILE UNDER:
Sun-baked indie-pop goodness.
R.I.Y.L.:
Bedhead, Rex, Death Cab For Cutie.

OUT:
October 26.
FILE UNDER:
Ska-pop.
R.I.Y.L.:
Reel Big Fish, No Doubt, Goldfinger.



SNARES & KITES

Tricks Of Trapping

Innerstate

Guitarist Chris Brokaw has been keeping busy lately. Beyond his duties as Thalia Zedek's partner in Come, his edgy solos were the highlight of Steve Wynn's *My Midnight*. *Tricks Of Trapping* finds Brokaw collaborating with a figure even more cultish than Wynn: Mitchell Rasor of the long-defunct Absolute Grey. Rasor has released several solo albums in the '90s, but this one is no singer-songwriter-meets-hired-string-slinger affair. *Snares & Kites* is clearly a band; Rasor's tunes and Brokaw's cautious dissonance are mutually supportive, and the songs themselves are often skeletally simple,

leaving ample room for moments like the whammy-bar breakdown of "F-150." The push-and-pull intro of "Rockland Redemption" is redolent of Television's *Marquee Moon*, but the real standouts are the swirling "Snareland" and "Bachelor Machine," which recall early, darker Velvet Crush (before they went all West Coast). This is by no means a perfect album: Rasor's vocals are fairly pedestrian, and bassist Peter Bloom and drummer Matt Maloney are solid but unimaginative, rarely pushing the guitar interplay into uncharted territory: they catch fire only on the metallic instrumental "Helmet, Oh Helmet." *Tricks Of Trapping* may lack the high drama of *Come's* best work, but it's far too well-wrought and musically able to be dismissed as a mere side project.

>>> Franklin Bruno

OUT:

September 20.

FILE UNDER:

Two-guitar rock, late-'80s model.

R.I.Y.L.:

Come, Absolute Grey, Dumptruck.



SONIC YOUTH

Goodbye 20th Century

SYR

Sonic Youth have always had one foot in the experimental-music world, and with this double-CD set they're leaping all the way in. Rather than songs, or the exploratory jams of their earlier SYR label releases, *Goodbye* consists of pieces by 20th century composers including John Cage, James Tenney and Christian Wolff. Some of them are basically just appreciative gestures: They do a George Maciunas piece that instructs its performers to drive nails into piano keys, and Kim Gordon and Thurston Moore's daughter Coco delivers a 12-second screech labeled as Yoko Ono's "Voice

Piece For Soprano." For the most part, though, these works' scores describe not *what* is to be played but *how*, and for a group so accustomed to working with each other and this gung-ho about collective improvisation, such scores become new frameworks for trademark timbres. You can identify it as a Sonic Youth record from almost any few seconds, even in the middle of a half-hour Cage piece. Steve Reich's early process piece "Pendulum Music," written for three or more microphones, amplifiers and loudspeakers, seems custom-made for a band that's made a high art of feedback. It's a small but impressive marker for the end of a century that divided "popular" and "serious" music, and a sign that that division could disappear again.

>>> Douglas Volk

OUT:

January 18.

FILE UNDER:

Art music, rock instruments.

R.I.Y.L.:

Sonic Youth's "The Diamond Sea,"

Deep Listening Band, early Yoko Ono.

animal (an • i • mal) n.
a living being capable of feeling.

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JOE STRUMMER & THE MESCALEROS

Rock Art & The X-Ray Style Hellcat -Epitaph

There's a certain symmetry in Rancid's label signing Joe Strummer: He is, after all, one of their musical heroes. But if you're expecting a Clash redux from the man, it's time to think again. While it's impossible for him to completely escape his past, he's kept his ears open for the last 15 years (10 since his last solo album), embracing techno, world music and even taking strides into ballads. Like his old band, Strummer doesn't live within limits, and so you can have the ambivalent ode to suburbia, "Willesden To Cricklewood," nestled next to the

loops and beats of "Yalla Yalla," and its Middle Eastern influences. Inevitably there's a touch of reggae, as well as the things Latin that have long seemed to fascinate Strummer, and surface in the percussion of "X-Ray Style." His anger remains intact, if a little more in check, and his appreciation of the roots of his music has deepened. It's easy to forget how acute a lyricist he's always been, and if anything his powers there have developed. The sheer unsentimentality of the words to the love song (yes, Strummer has written a love song) "Nitcomb" gives it its power. Artists have seen entire careers begin and end in the time Strummer has been inactive. But from this it's obvious that he not content to live in the past.

>>> Chris Nickson

OUT:

November 2.

FILE UNDER:

Real punk for grown ups.

R.I.Y.L.:

The Clash, Billy Bragg, Tom Waits.



SUB DEBS

She's So Control

K

Flipping the script on the suburban feminine ideal, the Sub Debs revel in the contrast of wearing mascara and dresses while shouting sarcastically, "I can learn to shut down/I can learn to shut up." On *She's So Control*, the Seattle/Olympia band's debut, guitarist Brooke, bass player Star, and drummer James build catchy, rebellious anthems with a minimal set of tools. James and Star provide a clean rhythmic backbone, while Brooke switches off on vocals and bends three chords to do her bidding. "I can write a song using two notes," Star croons gleefully. This DIY enthusiasm is

OUT:

December 12.

FILE UNDER:

Cut-de-sac-core.

R.I.Y.L.:

Heavens To Betsy, Sleater-Kinney, Longstocking.

infectious, particularly on "Don't Mess With Us," which appropriates the guitar riff from Iggy Pop's "Lust For Life." The trio hits its irascible stride in the disc's second half, as the swinging dynamics of "Overtime" and "No Good Man" turn heavy for "Man With The Golden Arm," its sludgy beat lacerated by gritty, garage-rock guitar. Then the trio turns 180 degrees for "Into The Night," a chiming lullaby straight out of '80s Brit-pop. There are some throwaways ("Give It Up," "Let's Go") where the music's ramshackle charm dissipates into formlessness, or Brooke's pouty, high-pitched voice morphs into a whine. Mostly though, the Sub Debs promulgate a version of girl power that sacrifices neither charm nor aggression to make its point.

>>> Jackie McCarthy

THE COMP PILE (Our guide to compilation CDs)



TITLE: Go Simpsonic With The Simpsons (Rhino).

Re-Rooted (City Of Tribes).

Party O' The Times (Cleopatra).

Little Darla Has A Treat For You V. 13 (Darla).

End of Days (Geffen).

In Their Own Voices: A Century Of Recorded Poetry (Word Beat-Rhino).

CONCEPT: Fulfill marketplace demand for digitally mastered versions of the Chief Wiggum, P.I. theme.

Dancefloor fusions of the indigenous and the electronic, licensed from South African label Fresh Music.

Industrial-tinged remixes and reinterpretations of Prince classics.

Next in a series of pretty, melodic, experimental pop songs that Darla Records decides they like, sold for \$5.98.

Aggro soundtrack for aggro film featuring that aggro Austrian, Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Revered poets read their own work on four discs, including a nifty hard cover "poets on poets" book.

TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC: You know the name of Selma'a Iguana (JubJub).

You got your shots before going to Africa, but not for boogie fever!

Music fans formerly known as discriminating.

You still wonder why the Breeder's "Cannonball" didn't revolutionize mainstream music forever.

You rooted for Arnold in both Terminator movies.

Coffee shop intellectuals and literary obsessives.

NAMES TO DROP: Guest spots from the Ramones, Hank Williams Jr., Sonic Youth.

Ga'inja. (You can't pronounce it, but show off that tongue piercing trying.)

Gary Numan, Dead Or Alive, DJ Keoki.

Junior Varsity KM is the most established name here (and that's the joy).

Korn, Limp Bizkit, Guns N'-fuckin'-Roses!

Walt Whitman, Maya Angelou, Charles Bukowski, Langston Hughes.

SUMS IT UP: "Simpsoncalifragilisticexpiala(annoyed grunt)cious."

"Funky 'n' Loose" (The Original Evergreen).

"I Could Never Take The Place Of Your Man" (Sigue Sigue Sputnik).

"Clouds Of Summer."

"Bad Influence" (Eminem).

"The Greatest Poem In the World" (David Ray).

VERDICT: When will Alf Clausen win a Grammy? The song parodies and production numbers are genius. Okileedokilee!

Think globally, dance locally. Awesome, fun stuff.

This is what it sounds like when discs suck: The visual inspired by Rebecca Romjin Stamos's cover of "Darling Nikki" is the only thing keeping TAFKNAP from driving his purple motorcycle into Lake Minnetonka.

Sometimes lazy-but-comfortable, sometimes weird and wacky, but always engaging and fun.

Heavy bass, huge riffs and even hardened criminals will learn some new profanity. Blowed up real good!

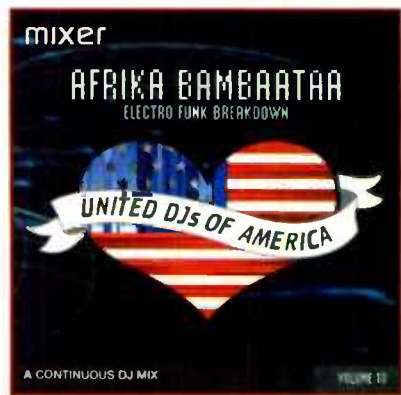
Once you quell the suspicion that these poems were actually read by Phil Hartman and Dan Castalanetta in an all-night drinking session, the set is enthralling for any fan of words, written or spoken.

For years, DJ Paul Oakenfold has claimed that he would one day conquer the American dance scene. He accomplished his goal in 1998 with the release of his first U.S. mix CD, *Tranceport*. The mix—an enthralling set featuring some of the top trance/prog-house tunes in Oakie's record box—has gone on to sell close to 100,000 units in America (small potatoes next to multi-platinum pop acts, but a staggering success in the world of DJ culture). *Tranceport* became the highest selling DJ mix of the year and established both trance and Oakenfold as strong, viable forces in U.S. dance culture. *Tranceport II* (Kinetic) is a sequel CD that's



geared not only to continue the forward momentum of the progressive trance movement, but also to introduce the talents of DJ Dave Ralph to the scene's newcomers. Ralph has toured the country for the past two years as Oakenfold's opening act, and is no stranger to trance aficionados; his penchant for euphoric melodies, ethereal atmospherics and driving dance rhythms makes his mix a perfect compliment to the original. But Ralph also emerges as a distinguished artist in his own right, forgoing Oakie's trademark anthemic overtures in favor of a deeper and darker vibe that relies on subtle fluctuations of mood and melody to hypnotize listeners into submission throughout the two-CD set. Showcasing a collection of recent and familiar dancefloor staples—including tracks and remixes by Sasha, Luke Slater, Oliver Lieb, Nalin & Kane, Jam & Spoon and many

others—Ralph makes smooth and calculated transitions between breakbeat, house, and techno-flavored trance tunes, allowing the energy of the experience to rise at a pace consistent with his live DJ sets.... New York City's **AFRIKA BAMBAATAA** is most known as the man who, in 1982, reconstructed Kraftwerk's momentous "Planet Rock," a track which continues to influence techno, house and breakbeat music. The godfather of electro has stayed active throughout the '90s by collaborating with a wide range of musical entities (**Uberzone**, **Leftfield**, **DJ Soul Slinger**, et. al.) and by continuing a three-decade old DJ career, presenting his 21st century B-boy beats to new generations of dancefloor revelers. Bambaataa's *United DJs Of America: Electro Funk Breakdown* (DMC) is exactly what his fans expect—a relentlessly funky mix constructed from robotic breakbeats, computer-precise grooves and synthetic musical attributes that marries modern day technologies with the bad attitude of the Bronx. Rather than revisiting old territories, Bambaataa uses his mix to highlight the new crew of electro artists—producers such as Uberzone, Tony Faline, and Motion Unit. He can't help but to drop one of his own gems, 1986's "Bambaataa's Theme," but the similarities of the classic and the contemporary only demonstrate the timeless effect of Bambaataa's influence on the still-flourishing electro scene.



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World Radio History



EL GRAN SILENCIO

MEXICAN HIP-HOP: WHERE THE BEAT MEETS THE BORDER

New York's Roseland Ballroom is packed for a triple bill that includes alt-metal stars the Deftones and quirkily abrasive hard rock/electronic act Pitchshifter. Opening the show is Molotov, Mexico's political, bilingual answer to the Beastie Boys. The crowd, comprised largely of white, seemingly suburban teenagers, also contains a heavy Hispanic contingent. As Molotov takes to the stage, a moshpit quickly forms at the front of the ballroom. Mexican flags and (Mexican-American fans) fly through the air as Molotov—a band that includes two bassists and a gringo MC who is the Mexico City-raised son of an American DEA agent—proceed through a blistering set in support of their Grammy-nominated debut *¿Dónde Jugaron Las Niñas?* (Universal Latino). By the end of their brief performance, Molotov has hundreds of Anglo kids without the faintest knowledge of Spanish screaming obscenities such as *puto* and *culero* against the Mexican government.

In a time when Ricky Martin and Jennifer Lopez stand atop the pop charts, Molotov represents a very different spectrum of the Latin crossover wave. The controversial group belongs to a rapidly growing subgenre coming to be known as *Rap en Español*, or Spanish rap. With American sales of over 150,000 units for their debut album, Molotov is at the forefront of an increasingly viable alternative movement that is led almost exclusively by Mexican artists. In addition to Molotov, Mexico-based hip-hop acts with albums commercially available in the U.S. include Control Machete, Plastilina Mosh, Titan, El Gran Silencio and Resorte.

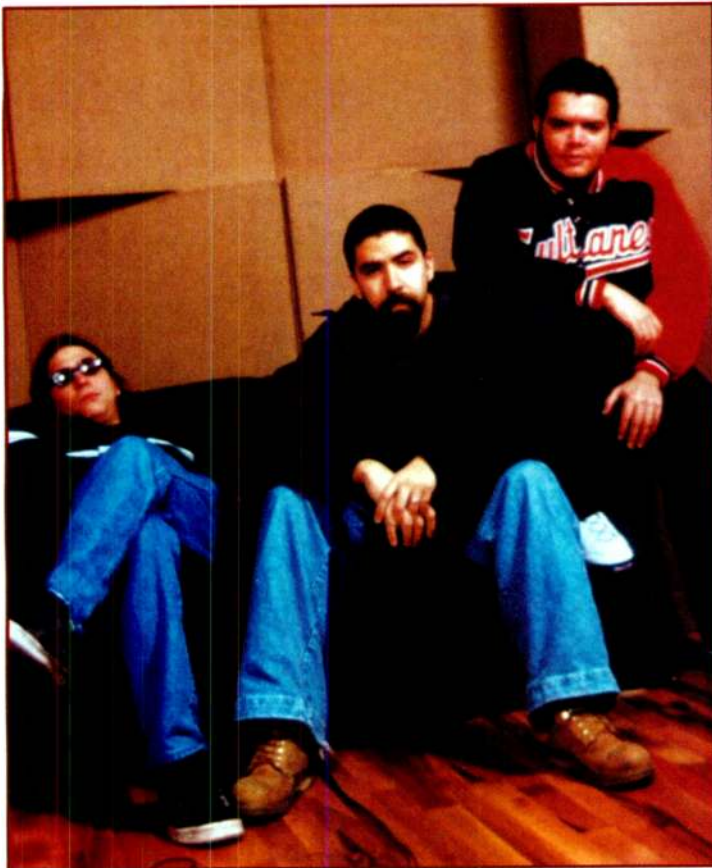
"We've definitely seen a steady increase of interest in our Mexican hip-hop acts in the United States," says Universal Latino VP of Artists Marketing Carol Wright, whose label boasts heavyweights Molotov, Control Machete and Resorte. "When you see the album sales reports, you see bands like Molotov now selling in places like Iowa and Kentucky. That's a new phenomenon. It's happening because we're making a concerted effort to reach non-Hispanics, and because Anglo kids are tired of listening to the same thing all the time."

Mexican hip-hop's instrumentation often sets it apart from its American counterparts. Much of this can be attributed to the basic socio-

economic situations of the '80s and early '90s: many aspiring Mexican rappers simply could not afford the prerequisite imported turntables and samplers that were more readily available to artists in the United States. Even the most gangsta-leaning Mexican rap groups, such as Control Machete, are well-versed musicians. "We come from a more musical scene," says Control Machete DJ Tono Hernandez, whose group specializes in bass-heavy romps that would appeal to fans of early Cypress Hill. "We originally didn't have money for samplers and drum machines. Lots of bands use guitar because they can't afford a sampler. I started working at age 10 in order to buy my first sampler." Mexican rap 'n' roll act Resorte sought an intense live sound, so it snagged former Living Colour guitarist Vernon Reid to collaborate with and produce its debut album *Republica de Ciegos* (Universal Latino). The result is a politically-charged platter full of hardcore rhymes and even harder guitar riffs, as evidenced on the track "Opina O Muere" ("Choose Or Die").

Mexican rap act El Gran Silencio, a band hailing from the city of Monterrey, proudly features an accordionist, and brazenly meshes northern Mexican *norteño*, Colombian cumbia, mariachi, and polka with hard-hitting rock and hip-hop on *Libres y Locos* (Ark 21). "We don't like to categorize our music," asserts drummer Eszequiel Alvarado. "But we're jokingly come to describe it as *estilo libre norteño popular*, or 'the people's freestyle *norteño*.'" What makes El Gran Silencio potentially appealing to Anglo listeners is a sense of urgency that is conveyed even without an understanding of Spanish. On "Contra Reloj" ("Against the Watch"), the portrayal of a man's race against time is backed by a chugging acoustic guitar line that confronts fast-paced horn samples, blurred vinyl scratches, and rapidly escalating chord progressions. The effect is one of organic confusion, as if 1988-era Public Enemy was being channeled through a mariachi band.

"We heard Run-DMC and De La Soul in the early stages, and breakdancing arrived in Monterrey back in '84," says El Gran Silencio's Alvarado. "It was underground at first. But as more and more Mexicans left to get work in the United States, they'd return with increasing amounts of American music and clothes. This definitely affected us, and



DROPPIN' THE CHALUPA: (CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE) CONTROL MACHETE, MOLOTOV, TITAN

hip-hop probably arrived in northern Mexico cities like Monterrey earlier than it came to southern Mexico." Indeed, Monterrey is unofficially acknowledged as Mexico's hip-hop capital. Besides El Gran Silencio, the industrial city is also home to both Plastilina Mosh and Control Machete. Plastilina drew a big Stateside buzz last year when they released their debut album *Aquamosh* on Capitol Records, rather than through a Latin label. The duo fuses hip-hop, funk and lounge music in a manner that will instantly appeal to fans of Beck (in fact, Beck and Plastilina Mosh both share producer Tom Rothrock).

Monterrey's Control Machete tackles gangster rap and traditional Cuban son music with equal dexterity on their sophomore release,

Elevator will be issued on the Beasties' Grand Royal label. With a sound too broad to be pigeonholed as Latin music, Titan collaborated with Michael Franti (Spearhead) and Dust Brothers protégés Sukia on the record. As the first Mexican electronic-oriented act to be signed by a major label, the group was dealt a bad hand when an inept BMG Mexico released their first EP back in 1995. In the ensuing years, the band continued recording and performing in Mexico City's underground scene. Titan later caught the attention of the folks at EMI and Grand Royal, who have just released a series of remixes of the single "Corazon." Explaining his group's international sound, guitarist Julian Lede describes it as being a mix of "electronic, breakdance and go-go

"If you can dig Rammstein gargling in German, you can sure as hell enjoy us."

Artilleria Pesada: Presenta (Universal Latino). The surprisingly successful experiment of "Danzon" pairs the *Rap en Español* posse with none other than Ruben Gonzales of Buena Vista Social Club fame. Another highlight of the album is the first single, "Si, Señor," an aggressive cut with a stomping bassline that compliments the scruffy vocals.

Molotov just released *Apocolyphshit*, its second studio album. Featuring production from Beastie Boy engineer Mario Caldato, Jr., the record's single "Parasito" is full of thick grooves, chugging syncopated vocals and moshpit-friendly guitar hooks. No strangers to controversy, Molotov's irreverent humor landed them a lawsuit in Spain when a gay rights group misinterpreted the lyrics to the hit "Puto" in 1998. *Puto* is a derogatory Mexican street slang term for homosexual, but the word is also commonly used to mean coward. While Molotov use the word to refer to political cowards, they had to do their fair share of explaining to the gay community. After meetings between Molotov, the national gay rights association of Argentina and noted Mexican homosexual intellectual Carlos Monsivais (who praises the band), the gay community embraced "Puto" and made it a club hit in gay Latin discos.

Another Mexican act sharing a Beastie Boy connection is electro-lounge instrumentalists Titan, whose forthcoming enhanced CD

rhythms that you can dance to." While Titan has not yet crossed over with Mexico's huge rock fanbase like Molotov or Control Machete, it has earned the respect of many of the rock scene's leading musicians. "You won't see that many rockeros at our shows, but you'll frequently see the members of platinum rock bands like Caifanes or Fobia," says Lede. "I guess we appeal to musicians and others who appreciate our different approach to making music."

The cross-genre pollination of Mexican hip-hop has allowed many of the leading acts to find success not just with rap fans, but also in the heavy metal and alternative scenes—often far outside the Western Hemisphere. "We've been written about in hip-hop publications such as *Vibe* and in hard rock mags like *Metal Maniacs*," says Molotov guitarist Tito Fuentes, who has seen his band's albums get released in such territories as Israel, Australia, Japan and Switzerland. "We have Hispanic fans, Danish fans, Chinese fans, black fans. There is no reason to be closed-minded. You don't have to speak Spanish to enjoy *Rap en Español*. America is a multiracial society, and it's only natural that people should want to open their ears and listen to something more original than what's littering the airwaves today. If you can dig Rammstein gargling in German, you can sure as hell enjoy us." **NMM**

1	STEREOLAB	Cobra And Phases Group	Elektra
2	FOLK IMPLOSION	One Part Lullaby	Interscope
3	BEN HARPER	Burn To Shine	Virgin
4	GET UP KIDS	Something To Write Home About	Vagrant
5	NINE INCH NAILS	The Fragile	Nothing-Interscope
6	LUNA	The Days Of Our Nights	Jericho-Sire
7	PROMISE RING	Very Emergency	Jade Tree
8	DAVID BOWIE	Hours...	Virgin
9	GOMEZ	Liquid Skin	Virgin
10	QUASI	Field Studies	Up
11	LEFTFIELD	Rhythm And Stealth	Columbia-CRG
12	HANDSOME BOY MODELING SCHOOL	So...How's Your Girl?	Tommy Boy
13	MUSE	Showbiz	Maverick-Taste Media
14	MAGNETIC FIELDS	69 Love Songs Vols. 1-3	Merge
15	TRAM	Heavy Black Frame	Jetset
16	JON SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION	Xtra Acme USA	Matador
17	FEEDER	Yesterday Went Too Soon	Echo-Elektra
18	PILFERS	Chawalaleng	Mojo
19	UNWOUND	A Single History	Kill Rock Stars
20	DJ KRUSH	Kakusei	Red Ink
21	BREAKBEAT ERA	Ultra-Obscene	XL/1500/A&M-Interscope
22	HEFNER	The Fidelity Wars	Beggars Banquet
23	ASH	Nu-Clear Sounds	DreamWorks
24	PRIMUS	Antipop	Interscope
25	CHARLATANS UK	Us And Us Only	MCA
26	GUSTER	Lost And Gone Forever	Hybrid-Sire
27	DOT ALLISON	Afterglow	Heavenly-Arista
28	DEATH IN VEGAS	The Contino Sessions	Time Bomb
29	DANCE HALL CRASHERS	Purr	Pink & Black
30	TILT	Viewers Like You	Fat Wreck Chords
31	TORI AMOS	To Venus And Back	Atlantic
32	AMERICAN FOOTBALL	American Football	Polyvinyl
33	AIR	Premiers Symptomes (EP)	Source-Astralwerks
34	SLOAN	Between The Bridges	Murder-Never
35	BECK	"Sexxlaws" (CD5)	DGC-Interscope
36	LIVE	The Distance To Here	Radioactive
37	IGGY POP	Avenue B	Virgin
38	ARCHER PREWITT	White Sky	Carrot Top
39	SOLEX	Pick Up	Matador
40	RONDELLES	The Fox	Teenbeat
41	HIPPOS	Heads Are Gonna Roll	Interscope
42	WHEAT	Hope And Adams	Sugar Free
43	CHRIS CORNELL	Euphoria Morning	A&M-Interscope
44	WEDDING PRESENT	Singles 1995-97	spinART
45	LES SAVY FAV	The Cat And The Cobra	French Kiss
46	VARIOUS ARTISTS	The Funky Precedent	No Mayo-Loosegroove
47	BASEMENT JAXX	Remedy	XL-Astralwerks
48	311	Soundssystem	Capricorn
49	WISEGUYS	The Antidote	Wall Of Sound/Ideal-Mammoth
50	OUR LADY PEACE	Happiness...Is Not A Fish	Columbia
51	FILTER	Title Of Record	Reprise
52	RICH CREAMY PAINT	Rich Creamy Paint	Hollywood
53	FLIN FLON	Boo-Boo	Teenbeat
54	JIMMIE'S CHICKEN SHACK	Bring Your Own Stereo	Island
55	G. LOVE & SPECIAL SAUCE	Philadelphonic	OKeh/550-Epic
56	PIETASTERS	Awesome Mix Tape #6	Helicat-Epitaph
57	FRESHMAKA	I Am The Freshmaka	Moonshine
58	MACHA	See It Another Way	Jetset
59	KOOL KEITH	Black Elvis/Lost In Space	Ruffhouse-Columbia
60	FREAKWATER	End Time	Thrill Jockey
61	RADAR BROS.	The Singing Hatchet	See Thru Broadcasting
62	MICK TURNER	Marian Rosa	Drag City
63	BEVIS FROND	Live At The Great American Music Hall	Flydaddy
64	BUFFALO DAUGHTER	WXBD (EP)	Grand Royal
65	DUB NARCOTIC SOUND SYSTEM JSBX	Sideways Soul	K
66	TRICKY WITH DJ MUGGS AND GREASE	Juxtapose	Island
67	HOT WATER MUSIC	No Division	Some
68	LONG BEACH DUB ALLSTARS	Right Back	DreamWorks
69	SUPERCHUNK	Come Pick Me Up	Merge
70	BLUE MOUNTAIN	Tales Of A Traveler	Roadrunner
71	MOMUS	Stars Forever	Le Grand Magistry
72	BUCKETHEAD	Monsters And Robots	Cyberoctave-Higher Octave
73	JOHN PRINE	In Spite Of Ourselves	Oh Boy
74	DJ ME DJ YOU	Simplemachinerock	Emperor Norton
75	HIGH LLAMAS	Snowbug	V2



#1 STEREOLAB
COBRA AND PHASES GROUP PLAY
VOLTAGE IN THE MILKY NIGHT

FIVE YEARS AGO

1. LIZ PHAIR

WHIP-SMART (MATADOR-ATLANTIC)

2. R.E.M.

MONSTER (WARNER BROS.)

3. SEBADOH

BAKESALE (SUB POP)

4. SUGAR

FILE UNDER: EASY LISTENING (RYKODISC)

5. DINOSAUR JR.

WITHOUT A SOUND (SIRE-REPRISE)

TEN YEARS AGO

1. CAMPER VAN BEETHOVEN

KEY LIME PIE (VIRGIN)

2. RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS

MOTHER'S MILK (ENVI)

3. SUGARCUBES

HERE TODAY TOMORROW NEXT WEEK (ELEKTRA)

4. BIG AUDIO DYNAMITE

MEGATOP PHOENIX (COLUMBIA)

5. MIGHTY LEMON DROPS

LAUGHTER (SIRE-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. Show us your man-bits, send photos to bill.werde@cmj.



DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN

Calculating Infinity

Relapse

If the idea of grindcore virtuosos playing Jesus Lizard at triple-speed with Al DiMeola breaks doesn't sound appealing, it's time you reevaluated your relationship with the near-impossible. Sucking the same mutant sludge as their former neighbors from Human Remains, the New Jersey quintet Dillinger Escape Plan has concocted a music school metal masterpiece. Its fingers are magnetically locked to leaping unusual scales, and the conductor's baton is frayed. This showy recital works because the hungry din subsumes all its augmented chords, illogical rhythms and dropped beats in a raging miasma of emotion and energy. Formidable technique takes a back seat to flow and tension, resulting in arguably the best progressive metal album since Voivod's *Dimension Hatross*. Dillinger has picked up the experimental ethic from the high-water mark left by Brutal Truth, only the Dillinger plan is fully charted and unambiguous overachieving chaos. The band is even more fluid and genre-busting than Candiria, whose very name defines experimental East Coast hardcore rap metal jazz. The single complaint would be the band's monochromatic vocals, but against such a glimmering orchestra, to complain would be an act of ingratitude.

METAL SHAVINGS

>>>Speaking of **Brutal Truth**, the band has dropped off a live CD, *Goodbye Cruel World* (Relapse) from the 1998 Australia/New Zealand tour which served as the band's farewell. Two discs capture these scenesters' loose, disintegrated groove. Included are scads of back catalog—like the mighty "Godplayer"—plus copious cover song reference points from **Black Sabbath**, **Agathocles**, **the Melvins**, **Germs**, **Celtic Frost**, **S.O.B.** and **Sun Ra**.... The latest ferocity from **Immolation** of a couple months back has been quickly bested by **Hate Eternal's** blistering *Conquering The Throne* (Earache-Wicked World). While both bands play a similar breed of blazing Satanic death metal, Hate Eternal vents with more spectacular staggering waves of heat. Frontman Erik Rutan plots a cultivated anti-dogmatic fury; Hate Eternal jitters at a respectable 430 bpm, but allows various undulating polyrhythms to crest and crash in the background. It's very satisfying. In his day job, Rutan plays the part of understudy to Trey Azagthoth in **Morbid Angel**; drummer Tim Yeung apparently took lessons from Morbid basher Pete Sandoval; and guitarist Doug Cerrito worked for **Suffocation**. With apprenticeships like that, these grasshoppers are the cream of the new crop, expressing themselves wildly at crazy speeds.... I was on my way to sell the fuck out of the new **A.C.** record, *It Just Gets Worse* (Earache), until,

TOP 25

band	album	label
1 WILL HAVEN	WHVN	Revelation
2 CANNIBAL CORPSE	Bloodthirst	Metal Blade
3 TYPE O NEGATIVE	World Coming Down	Roadrunner
4 COAL CHAMBER	Chamber Music	Roadrunner
5 SEVENDUST	Home	TVT
6 MISFITS	Famous Monsters	Roadrunner
7 DANZIG	6:66: Satan's Child	Evilive-E-Magine
8 VISION OF DISORDER	For The Bleeders	Go Kart
9 AMEN	Amen	Roadrunner
10 DVERKILL	Coverkill	CMC International
11 STUCK MOJD	"Reborn" (CD5)	Century Media
12 DOPE	Felons And Revolutionaries	Flip-Epic
13 GRADE	Under The Radar	Victory
14 MACHINE HEAD	The Burning Red	Roadrunner
15 IRON MAIDEN	Ed Hunter	Columbia-CRG
16 SLIPKNOT	Slipknot	Roadrunner
17 SAMAEL	Eternal	Century Media
18 NOVEMBER 17	Defy Everything	Millenium-Slipdisc
19 AGNDSTIC FRONT	Riot Riot Upstart	Epitaph
20 SIX FEET UNDER	Maximum Violence	Metal Blade
21 NINE INCH NAILS	The Fragile	Nothing-Interscope
22 KREATOR	Endorama	Pavement
23 ANGELCORPSE	The Inexorable	Olympic-Slipdisc
24 CANDIRIA	Process Of Self Development	MIA
25 BRUTAL TRUTH	Goodbye Cruel World	Relapse

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

not for the first time, the lyrics sucker-punched me. No gigaflop-capable supercomputer can tabulate and synthesize a more wretched and unfortunate list of slurs and outrage than Seth Putnam and his dumb cohorts. The excess of songs like "I Made Fun Of You Because Your Kid Just Died," and "Sweatshops Are Cool" slowly turns funny en route to the 39th track, "I Got An Office Job For The Sole Purpose Of Sexually Harassing Women." The record-long competition between sarcasm and sadism tips towards humor when you consider "I'm Really Excited About The Upcoming David Buskin Concert" and the song set at an **Upsidedowncross** show. Ultimately, this is the new best A.C. record, and I'll sell the fuck out of last year's piece of crap instead.... The fifth issue of *Descent* zine is a whoa-beautiful metal artifact, wrapped in samples of Fritz Lang's silver columns of the damned as they file into an abyss of azure. Inside: Plenty of revelatory doom and unpopular values espoused by **Bethlehem**, **Marduk**, **Enslaved Sleep**, **Der Blutharsh** and that hokey sensationalist **Boyd Rice**. Lots of elevated morbidity is here to mull over at your leisure, antique magnifying glass not included. [\$6 to Tyler Davis, POB 11741, Olympia, WA 98508]



PILOTE

Antenna (Certificate 18 Electronic Projects)

At a moment when mediocre electronic music fills the bins of your local music retailer, and its ubiquity within L'Oreal and Lexus commercials makes the whole "revolution" feel fully televised, it's good to know that a record can still knock the wind out of your chest. Pilote is one Stuart Cullen, who, working with impossibly limited equipment, has fashioned an album of extraordinary depth and feeling. *Antenna* reminds you that you're not as jaded as you thought; it's like first hearing early New Order, early Black Dog, or perhaps more recently, Boards Of Canada. (Pilote sounds like none of those groups, but the profound emotional impact is undeniable.) The opening track, "Turtle," captures a vocal snippet of a man intoning banal facts about the turtle's movements above a dragging, crunchy breakbeat and a whisper-jet analog melody. And that's only the beginning. The album's stunning, concluding track, "Up Or Down," is quite simply one of the most beautifully melodic, orchestrated pieces of electronic music in the history of the genre, and I do not say that lightly. One gets the sense when listening to *Antenna* that one is hearing music from someone who's been sheltered from the exponential growth of electronic music, making tracks on their own for the past 15 years—only to emerge with a record that changes all the rules. Ignore this record at your peril.

EXTREME

>>> When four titans of analog chicanery are crammed into the tiny white cube of the home studio, detonations of the imaginative faculties are bound to occur. *Symbiotics*, the collaboration between **Porter Ricks** and **Techno Animal**, is more akin to the distant rumble of underground nuclear testing. Thomas Koner and Andy Mellwig of Porter Ricks (named, incidentally after the chief ranger on the '60s television show, *Flipper*) have carefully honed their strip-mining approach to electronics on such albums as *Biokinetics*, in which the steady kick drum anchors scant melodies and decaying sonar pulses to beautiful effect. Kevin Martin and Justin Broadrick of Techno Animal emerge from a quite different tradition. Broadrick is a former member of the legendary grindcore outfit **Godflesh**, while Martin, under names like **Ice**, **The Bug**, and **Sidewinder** released records with illegal sub-bass frequencies and muddy, tractor-pull breakbeats, over-modulated to the extreme. Surprisingly, the collaboration sounds like neither of these groups. Rather, it combines the delicacy of Porter Ricks' aquatic minor-key chord changes with the distant thunder of Techno Animal's low-end excesses in a subtle and refined manner. Which is not to say that this is a pretty album. Far from it: listening repeatedly to *Symbiotics*, one is struck with the sensation that there is at once nothing and

TOP 25

	band	album	label
1	LEFTFIELD	Rhythm And Stealth	Columbia-CRG
2	BREAKBEAT ERA	Ultra-Obscene	XL/1500/A&M-Interscope
3	DJ KRUSH	Kakusei	Red Ink
4	FRESHMAKA	I Am The Freshmaka	Moonshine
5	BASEMENT JAXX	Remedy	XL-Astralwerks
6	HANDSOME BOY MODELING SCHOOL	So...How's Your Girl?	Tommy Boy
7	INNERZONE ORCHESTRA	Programmed	Planet E-Astralwerks
8	MING & FS	Hell's Kitchen	Om
9	SASHA	Xpander (EP)	Deconstruction-Ultra
10	BIOPSY	Third Stroke	DSBP
11	KEVORKIAN DEATH CYCLE	A + 0 [m]	Metropolis
12	BOOMISH	Boomish	Kinetic Surge
13	AIR	Premiers Symptomes (EP)	Source-Astralwerks
14	PHUNKY DATA	Fashion Or Not?	Edel
15	YELLOW NOTE	Yellow Note Vs. The Daleks	Liquid Sky
16	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Sacrilege: A Tribute To Front 242	Cleopatra
17	PULSE LEGION	One Thing	Metropolis
18	LES RYTHMES DIGITALES	Darkdancer	Wall Of Sound-Astralwerks
19	DJ VADIM	USSR: Live From The Other Side	Ninja Tune
20	LUKE SLATER	Wireless	NovaMute-Mute
21	μ-ZIQ	Royal Astronomy	Astralwerks
22	SOUNDTRACK	Fight Club	Restless
23	FLESH FIELD	Viral Extinction	Inception (Canada)
24	T-CISCO	The Destructive Edit	Ubiquity
25	MEDICINE DRUM	Talking Stick	Higher Octave

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

everything going on in these tracks. Like the Pilote record, it's going to force a legion of producers back to the drawing board wondering where to proceed... From the fertile Miami underground comes a sweltering four-track release from **The Beta Bodega Coalition**. Simply titled *b-2*, this EP brings together some of the most important, emerging talent in North America for a record that refuses to relent one iota of energy until the very last note. **TPM** is the pseudonym of Edgar Farinas, who has released a number of EPs (for the Warp, Schematic and Chocolate Industries labels) under the name **Push Button Objects**. His brand of digital funk is not to be taken lightly. Imagine a soundclash between **Autechre** and **Raekwon**, and you'll get an idea of what Farinas is up to. **Hamijama** is the nom de guerre for Jake Mandell and Junko Asanuma, and their dexterity with tough electro drum programs is quite apparent here. Atlajala is the well-guarded secret weapon of the coalition, a producer whose finely etched, thumping, monotone, tech house grooves make this record indispensable for anyone interested in where electronic music has come from and where it is going.



DJ FAUST

Inward Journeys

DJ SHORTEE

The Dreamer

VARIOUS ARTISTS

*Return Of The DJ Vol. III
(Bomb Hip Hop)*

It's a great day in the world of turntablism when two up-and-comers can upstage the most consistently interesting DJ-based compilation series ever. Of course, the new *Return Of The DJ Volume III* is great. We've come to expect it. It's got some old stalwarts (Mr. Dibbs, Z-Trip), but

most of the artists on it are newer: International's "Deedz In Da Mix," Eddie Def and Extrakd's "Brain Confusion" and DJ T-Rock's "Doo Doo On Yourself" are particularly notable. But alongside *Volume III* are two new full lengths that continue Bomb's never-ending mission to take Technics freaking to the next level. Atlanta's DJ Faust may very well be the most original turntablist to put tracks on wax in years, and his *Inward Journeys* turns the ascent that he began with his debut, last year's *Man Or Myth*. The tracks are shorter than before, but each is as fascinating as the next, as he builds layer upon layer of vocal snippets and freaky, funky sounds, with heavy, accomplished cutting. "Elevation," "So Deep," "Competition Is None" and his cut-up Hendrix tribute "If Nine Was Six" are all as good as it gets. Faust's partner in crime, DJ Shortee also comes very strong with her debut, *The Dreamer*. More of a conceptualist and producer than a battle DJ, she has created a unique sound world with this record, one that emphasizes drums over everything (she's a drummer herself, and seemingly played live on several cuts), blending jazzy, funky and dubbed-out sounds together in a very forward-thinking way.

BONUS BEATS

>>> If any group is entitled to put out a live album to strut its stuff, it is most certainly **The Roots**. On *Come Alive* (MCA) they do just that, showing those not fortunate enough to have caught them on stage just what they've been missing. Recorded in Europe and the U.S., the set is chock full of oldies and newer joints, recorded perfectly (a great mix of the band sound and the crowd vibe), so that you feel like you're right in front of the stage. "The Ultimate," "Step Into The Realm" and "The Next Movement" all sound amazing, soaked in Rhodes piano and matured from hundreds of shows logged over the years. Also of note is a nine-minute version of "You Got Me" (with vocalist **Jill Scott** handily replacing **Erykah Badu**, who was featured on the original) and one new, aggressive and uncharacteristically up-front studio cut, "What You Want." Probably the best live rap album since the *Wild Style* soundtrack from 1983... England's **New Flesh For Old** would be dope without any vocalists. Producer Part 2 is one of the most engaging sound stylists on the planet right now. His beats are sparse and raw, usually slow, and unlike anyone else's out there, which is reason enough for praise. But he's got talented MC friends. On *Equilibrium* (Big Dada-Ninja Tune) everyone shows up and throws down, as the group (including main conspirators **Toastie Tailor** and **Juice Aleem**)

TOP 25

	band	album	label
1	PHAROAE MONCH	"Simon Says"	Rawkus
2	JURASSIC 5	"Improvise"	Interscope
3	MOS DEF	"Ms. Fat Booty"	Rawkus
4	OL' DIRTY BASTARD	"Got Your Money"	Elektra-EEG
5	AKROBATIK	"Say Yes Say Word"	Detonator-Landspeed
6	HANDSOME BOY MOEING SCHOOL	"Magnetizing"	Tommy Boy
7	METHOO MAN/REDMAN	"Tear It Off"	Def Jam-IDJMG
8	SUPERNATURAL	"Another Lovesong"	Exceptional-Landspeed
9	AFU-RA	"Defeat"	D&D/Gez Street-V2
10	GANG STARR	"All 4 Tha Ca\$h"	Nwo Trybe-Virgin
11	GENIUS/GZA	"Beneath The Surface"	MCA
12	DR. DRE FEAT. SNOOP DOGG	"Still D.R.E."	Aftermath-Interscope
13	QUANNUM MCS FEAT. SOULS OF MISCHIEF	"Extravaganza"	Quannum Projects
14	Q-TIP	"Vivrant Thing"	Def Jam-IDJMG
15	KOOL KEITH	"Livin' Astro"	Ruffhouse/Columbia-CRG
16	INSPECTAH DECK	"Show And Prove"	Loud
17	STYLES OF BEYOND	"Spies Like Us"	Ideal-Mammoth
18	ALCHEMIST FEAT. MR. EON & EVIDENCE	"E=MC2"	Landspeed
19	RASCALZ	"Gunfinger"	Figure IV
20	ROOTS FEAT. JAGUAR	"What You Want"	Columbia-CRG
21	DEL THA FUNKEE HOMDSAPIEN	"Phoney Phanchise"	Hiero Imperium
22	MDBB DEEP FEAT. NAS	"It's Mine"	Loud
23	NAS	"Nastradamus"	Columbia-CRG
24	MOUNTAIN BROTHERS	"Thoroughbred"	Pimpstrut
25	SCOTTI POITRI FEAT. MOS DEF & LEE MATEURS	"From Tinseltown..."	Virgin

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

creates their own brand of Space Hop. Tailor is a wildly versatile vocalist, delivering styles across the entire spectrum, from too-many-cigarettes gruff to ragga to darting high-register. Juice Aleem, although more steady in his persona, shows serious skills as well. "Ego Evident," "Invisible Ink" and "Mutatis" are some of the coolest and most unique hip-hop tracks you'll hear this year.... In case you're wondering what's going on up in the Northern lands, two new Canadian offerings from the very consistent Beat Factory Label, **Madlocks'** *Nothing To Lose Much To Gain* and **Mathematik's** *Ecology (Beat Factory)*, will update you. Toronto's Madlocks is, for all intents and purposes, a New York MC. He sounds like one and his assured, self-produced beats sound like they just came out of D&D Studios (**Nas**, **Gang Starr**, **Notorius B.I.G.**). This is good and bad. Yes, he's talented, but his subject matter is thuggish and generally unremarkable. Mathematik, on the other hand, rocks it on the Native Tongues/Guru axis, and his unique voice and solid flow, coupled with intelligent, heartfelt and positive lyrics, make him a talent to watch. From the smooth and groovy "Everyday Movement" to the electro, cut-n-scratch of "Strive On," he delivers the goods all throughout *Ecology*.



BJÖRK

"All Is Full Of Love"

(Elektra)

Björk's *Homogenic* came out over two years ago. The album's closing doodle "All Is Full Of Love" was hardly the most striking piece at the time—but the tune turns out to have been something of a sleeper. Chris Cunningham's magnificent new video for the song, a slo-mo robotic/erotic fantasy brings out the beauty of the song. Cunningham's gorgeous vision, which took two years to realize, is the ostensible reason why "All Is Full Of Love" is a single now, and the video appears as a CD-ROM bonus on the disc; You won't be seeing much of it on TV, so have a look here. The five remixes that augment it are worthwhile, too. Funkstörung comes up with a flipped-out insectoid rhythm track that recalls Cunningham's other collaborator Aphex Twin, then buries Björk far beneath it, so she sounds like a voice of reason—distant and ignored. The "strings" version turns the song into a pixie-dust orchestral call to arms, and the "video version" augments that mix with extra beats and piles of contrapuntal vocals. Plaid pulls away as much as it can, then re-jiggers the remaining minimal beats to imply drum 'n' bass's spasmodic emphases. Finally, Guy Sigsworth recasts synths as squiggly jazz horns, tooting breathily in interlocking patterns around Björk's tender, slow melody.

A FEW QUICK DROPS OF THE NEEDLE

>>> Bizarro single of the month honors go to **The Jones Machine**, whose "You're The One (Part Two)" (Rephlex) is named after a 30-year-old soul semi-hit by Little Sister which it resembles not a whit. The A-side of the record is labeled "Rock," and indeed includes a little electric guitar riff that goes nowhere in particular. The B-side "Dance" is where the real fun is: a song called "(I'm The) Disco Dancing," constructed of Space Invaders synthesizers, one of the stupidest basslines of all time, rudimentary shuffle-beat drums and somebody with a tremulous German accent gasping "I'm the disco dahncing and I'm dahncing! Dahncing!" Kills brain cells on contact.

>>> You probably don't know **Camille Yarbrough** by name, but you've certainly heard her voice: Fatboy Slim's "Praise You" is built on an extended sample from her 1975 soul simmer "Take Yo' Praise." The patched-together but entertaining EP *Yo' Praise* (Vanguard) includes her lovely original version of the song, as well as two remixes. Greg Doyle's rework naturally draws out the vowel when she sings the word *should*, and another by

Ethnicrobot that drowns her voice in a shallow pool of surface noise and drones. Fatboy Slim gets in on the fun, too—not with one of her songs, but with a remix of Jean Jacques Perrey's "E.V.A." also represented here in its original version, which augments its Gainsbourgian groove with a boom-bap percussion shove.

>>> Halloween has come and gone, but the World/Inferno Friendship Society's **It's Pumpkin Time** seven inch (Gern Blandsten) isn't just a holiday record. "The Great Pumpkin" is, in fact, an oompah-band rock 'n' roll revue homage to Linus's favorite quasi-religious symbol ("Down by the pumpkin patch, it gets so cold, it gets so queer, while I'm sitting here waiting for you to be sincere"), with lyrics connecting his vigil to ancient harvest/fertility rituals. The stage-crowding ensemble really hits its mark on the B-side's "I Remember The Weimar," though. W/IFS's

singer looks a lot like Joel Grey in *Cabaret* (he's about twice as tall), so perhaps it's not so surprising that the band borrows from the German cabaret scene just before the rise of the Third Reich to churn out some very black humor: "You think your scene's dead?"

>>> It's time for the every-five-years **Yaz** revival, and therefore another set of remixes—this time a single with new mixes of "Don't Go" and "Situation" (Reprise). Todd Terry's take on "Don't Go" mostly consists of grafting on his usual high-end swing and playing with the atonal drum-break at the end of the song. Club 69 makes "Situation" bubble hedonistically, but the only mixer to successfully re-conceive one of these songs is Richard "Humpty" Vission, who zeros in on the two-note bass heartbeat that drives most of "Situation," realizes that even the chorus Alison Moyet sings would work over it, and runs with it....



>>> **Dump** (a.k.a. James McNew of Yo La Tengo) and **Lambchop** share a new single, recently released on Third Gear. Even though Lambchop's Lee Hazlewood-ish "Up With People" is baited with some tart wordplay ("We are doing/And we are screwing/Up our lives today"), Dump comes out on top with a shaky, personalized reading of the Go-Betweens' "Dive For Your Memory," which sounds like he's been living in it for a while.... The Underscore label has started a seven-inch singles series, cleverly called Shift Minus. The first installment is a **CEX VS. COLONGIB** single, with a couple of residents of the U.S. electronic underworld having a go at each other. Cex's "At Least One Unwilling Passenger On Keith's Ego Trip" gets remixed to the point where it's unrecognizable, and the new tune "Blearily Wonky Rock Lad" sounds like a genuine sound-clash, with springy clear-toned tunelets and distorted frizzles of percussion butting up against each other.... **Tourist Record** (Lucky Kitchen) is a seven-inch compilation of even freakier electronic nuggets. Aerospace Soundwise, Tom Steinle, Alejandra & Underwood, Suetsu and Jansky Noise all do tortuous things to other people's recordings (a certain Bruce Hornsby hit will never be the same), and then all five of them play chicken with their favorite samples for one full side.

GRATEFUL DEAD



SO MANY ROADS
(1965-1995)

GRATEFUL DEAD

So Many Roads (1965-1995)

(Arista)

Whatever one's opinion of the Grateful Dead's music, when you add up all the years and miles and consider what it all meant, it's kind of hard not to be somewhat in awe of the band. For one thing, the Dead was never content to live in the past or rest on its laurels: Jerry and co. stayed on the road, bringing new and ever-evolving music to the fans night after night. And the band kept on when other acts from that era were either burnt-out recluses or content to live as fossilized and formulaic high-budget touring packages cranking out the hits and relying more on lasers and smoke machines than actually playing music. Sometimes the Dead danced and explored amid the upper ether of the musical stratosphere, and other nights I'm sure it was probably just a bunch of zonked-out dudes in headbands and ratty T-shirts meandering their way aimlessly through eternally boring solos. With the exception of the Rolling Stones, whose concerts still turn towns inside out with anticipation, the Dead achieved something greater than virtually any musical group of the '60s. (Though one lightning chord from Keith Richards' guitar can still send a crowd into apoplexy.) For this five-CD, six-hour box set, the band's beloved recordist and archivist Dick Latvala sifted through billions of notes in a zillion guitar solos, journeying through the labyrinth of archival Dead tapes, creating the definitive Dead set. (Sadly, Latvala passed away earlier this year; this box was apparently his last work for the band.) The work spans from 1966 right up to the very end of the line, all of it previously unreleased (the last studio recording, "Eternity," is basically an eerie blues jam with Willie Dixon, recorded shortly before both Jerry and Willie departed). For fans of their music, this box set is one big bomber, the ultimate ride. For those on the cusp, it's a good way to look inside and understand a bit of what the Dead was all about.

IN THE BINS

>>> Give me the Willies: Two of my favorite Bills have just had essential albums reissued from the vaults. First up, there's **Willie Nelson**, whose legendary album *Stardust* has just been reissued by Sony Legacy, complete with a couple of wonderful, to-die-for bonus tracks. One of the most un-country country albums ever made, *Stardust* presents Willie singing a program of standards, chestnuts and classic songs, with none other than **Booker T. & The MGs** as a backing band. When

Willie sings "Someone To Watch Over Me," you'll swear he's wearing angel's wings in a field of poppies while butterflies, bluebirds and turtle doves go sailing overhead. Another great Willie—**Willie Mitchell**—is the subject of *Soul Serenade: The Best Of Willie Mitchell*. The trumpeter/writer/arranger/producer won his fame by producing a whole slew of soulful records for folks on the legendary Hi Records label out of Memphis in the '60s and '70s, including **Al Green**, **Ann Peebles**, **Otis Clay** and others. *Soul Serenade* collects the cream of Mitchell's own slightly bluesier work that was issued along the way under his own name, a brilliant brew of Memphis soul and blues. Remember the little horn punches that zip in and out of Al Green's "Let's Stay Together" and make the whole thing sound so darn catchy? Well, meet their maker.

>>> There's no denying that **David "Junior" Kimbrough** was one of the most important bluesmen of the modern era, and his death was a devastating blow to fans of the deep blues. His longtime label, Fat Possum, has posthumously released *Meet Me In The City*, an awe-inspiring if sometimes ragged collection of outtakes, live tapes and even home recordings made in Junior's house out in Coahoma County, Mississippi. While they don't pack the rumble and roar of his more polished studio work, this is an amazing lo-fi disc of high-power blues mojo at work.

>>> He hung out at the same coffeehouses, folk hoots and Greenwich Village beat bars as the young **Bob Dylan**, he was stunningly handsome and married to Joan Baez's sister, he was glimpsed hanging around in the edge of the picture during a lot of scenes in Bob Dylan's movie *Don't Look*

Back, and if he hadn't died in motorcycle crash in 1966, **Richard Farina** just might have been as important to the '60s landscape as **Leonard Cohen**, **Neil Young** or even **Nick Drake**. Vanguard has just released a CD of recordings he made with his wife, Mimi; they're somewhat dark, a little bit like Nick Drake or early Dylan with an Appalachian bent. While it's not something for everyone, it's nonetheless a strangely compelling little record. Farina also wrote a novel, *Been Down So Long It Feels Like Up To Me*, which is considered by many to be one of those books that gives a quintessential glimpse into the heart of the '60s experience.

>>> For deep jazz buffs, the folks at KOCH International continue to find rare gems and forgotten wonders to reissue from the voluminous catalog of Atlantic Records. Most recently they gave us a wonderful little 1958 album by **Julius Watkins** and **Charlie Rouse**, released under the name **The Jazz Modes**. French horns are extremely rare in jazz, and Julius Watkins played his with an unusual melancholy tone that was pensive and plaintive, and his music still sounds strikingly contemporary today. On the other end of the spectrum, see *The Legendary Buster Smith*. He's not very well known, to be sure, but back in the '50s, this guy walked the jazz walk as well as talked the talk: He gave pointers to a young Charlie Parker, he lived to play his music high and wild, and he practically blew his brains out his ears every time he played a solo on his alto sax. This is howling, crazy, brawling, strutting, barhopping music—closer to blues or rock than jazz, in a sense—and as such, it's the perfect disc to throw on before going out for a rowdy night on the town.

>>> Aww, who loves you, baby? Up 'til now, no record company has proven themselves hearty enough to reissue the voluminous catalog of recordings left to us by fabled Rat-Packer **Sammy Davis Jr.**: Rhino has finally proven itself up to the task by issuing the four-CD set, *Yes I Can*, capturing the One-Eyed Wonder's wiggled-out work in all its irrepressible wonderfulness. Don't know why, but for some strange reason, it's the tinted glasses, love-beads and Nehru jackets of Sammy's '60s and early '70s output that most set my toes a-tapping and that are the most endearing. Love ya, man....

NOVEMBER 23

AGORAPHOBIC NOSEBLEED/CONVERGE

Poacher Diaries *Relapse*

BEASTIE BOYS The Sounds Of Science *Grand Royal—Capitol*

—A career-spanning two-disc, 42-track anthology. Aside from hits from Hello Nasty, III Communication, Check Your Head, Paul's Boutique and Licensed To Ill, the collection features rare and unreleased material, including the all-new "Alive," hard-to-find B-side "Skills To Pay The Bills," the original version of "Jimmy James," video-only remixes and live takes on "Body Movin'" and "3 MCs and 1 DJ," and even a few numbers from the never-released Country Mike sessions.

BECK Midnite Vultures *DGC*

BLONDIE Blondie Live Beyond

—Captures the band's most well-known songs recorded at various cities on the group's "No Exit" world tour including "Dreaming," "Rapture," "Call Me," "The Tide Is High," "One Way Or Another," "Maria," "Heart Of Glass" and many more.

COALESCE 012: Revolution In Just Listening *Relapse*

ENRIQUE IGLESIAS *DGC-Interscope*

KELIS Kaleidoscope *Virgin*

LED ZEPPELIN Early Days: The Best Of Led Zepplin Volume 1 *Atlantic*

—The legendary rock quartet's first greatest hits compilation contains 13 classics from its first four albums. The disc is also enhanced and features a never-before seen 1969 performance of "Communication Breakdown."

LITHOPS Sequenced Twinset/Fi (12") *Thrill Jockey*

LL COOL J G.O.A.T. *Def Jam-IDJMG*

DAVE MATTHEWS BAND Listener Supported *RCA*

—A double-disc live album featuring all 18 songs performed at the September 11, 1999 concert recorded for PBS, including hits like "Crash Into Me," "Don't Drink The Water" and "Too Much." A long-form video will be released in conjunction as well.

METALLICA S&M *Elektra*

—Metallica re-records old standards with The San Francisco Symphony, plus two new songs.

MILLENCOLIN Millencolin & The Hi-8 Adventures (VHS) *Burning Heart*

ALANIS MORISSETTE Alanis Unplugged *Maverick*

—Acoustic set features hits, three unreleased tracks, and a cover of The Police's "King Of Pain."

MOTLEY CRUE Live *Motley-Beyond*

NAS Nastradamus *Track Masters-Columbia/CRG*

NOFX The Decline (EP) *Fat Wreck Chords*

ONE LAST WISH 1986 *Dischord*

—Re-released material from an early project of Fugazi's Guy Picciotto and Brendan Canty.

PHISH Hampton Comes Alive *Elektra*

—Six-CD box set encompassing back-to-back performances by the band at the Hampton Coliseum in Virginia in November of 1998. The featured tracks include a wide range of Phish material, from previously released songs, to covers and several unreleased tracks. It's also their first live, completely uncut release.

SOUNDTRACK Man On The Moon *Warner Bros.*

—The soundtrack to the Jim Carrey film is performed by R.E.M.

STEELY DAN Aja (reissue) *MCA*

STEELY DAN Royal Scam (reissue) *MCA*

THIRD EYE BLIND *Blue Elektra*

VARIOUS ARTISTS Give 'Em The Boot II *Hellcat*

VARIOUS ARTISTS Moods (box set) *Virgin*

VARIOUS ARTISTS Nipper's Greatest Hits—The '60s Vol. 1 *RCA*

—Compilation of 20 reissued tracks from Elvis

Presley, The Tokens, Floyd Cramer, Paul Anka, Neil Sedaka, Henry Mancini And His Orchestra and others.

VARIOUS ARTISTS Nipper's Greatest Hits—The '60s Vol. 2 *RCA*

—This volume features reissued tracks from the likes of Jimmy Elledge, Duane Eddy, Bobby Bare, Skeeter Davis, Ed Ames, Harry Nilsson and more.

STEVIE WONDER The Wonder Years: The Close Of A Century *Motown*

—Four-CD box set that includes hits and album tracks spanning his whole career, from Little Stevie to today. Also included is his original version of "Until You Come Back To Me," which was available only briefly in the '70s as part of an anthology (The song was later recorded by Aretha Franklin.)

YOGA Yoga *Primal Music*

NOVEMBER 30

BUKEM Rhodes To Freedom (12") *Good Looking*

DJ GODFATHER Via Satellite From Detroit *Intuit-Solar*

GUNS N' ROSES Live Era '87-'93 *Geffen*

—Guns N' Fuckin' Roses! Their first release since 1993, this double-disc set features tracks recorded at performances in London, Paris, Las Vegas, New York, Budokan, Mexico City and Tokyo. Included are songs originally recorded for Appetite For Destruction, GN'R Lies and both Use Your Illusion albums. The set will also include one previously unreleased song, a cover of Black Sabbath's "It's Alright" presented in Axl-at-the-piano style.

MYSTIKAL Let's Get Ready To Rumble *No Limit*

Q-TIP Amplified *Arista*

SISQO Unleash The Dragon *Def Soul*

TRIN-I-TEE 5:7 *Spiritual Love Gospo Centric*

DECEMBER 6

ALABAMA THUNDER PUSSY Constellation *Man's Ruin*

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*

DRUNK HORSE Drunk Horse *Man's Ruin*

DECEMBER 7

BLACK HEART PROCESSION (CD single, 12") *Up*

BLUE MAN GROUP *Virgin*

SHERYL CROW Sheryl Crow And Friends Live *DGC-Interscope*

CYPRESS HILL Los Grandes Exitos En Español *Columbia-Ruffhouse*

—An all-Spanish release from the band who brought us "Stoned Is The Way Of The Walk."

ELLIOTT If They Do (CD single, 7") *Initial*

GHETTO FABULOUS Ghetto Fabulous *Epic*

HELLCOPTERS (7") *Sub Pop*

—Two brand new tracks: "Slow Down, Take A Look," and "16 With A Bullet."

FILTER (DVD) *Reprise*

FUNKMASTER FLEX *Island-Def Jam*

DINA MARTINA *Up*

FRANK SINATRA Swingin' With Sinatra *Reprise*

METHODS OF MAYHEM Methods Of Mayhem *MCA*

—Tommy Lee featuring Lil' Kim, Kid Rock, and Dave Navarro

METHOD MAN *Island*

ONE STAR The Jelly Is Set! (CD single) *March*

ROBERT SCHIMMEL Unprotected *Warner Bros.*

SOUNDTRACK Magnolia *Reprise*

SPRING Baby Blue (CD single) *March*

TRUBY TRIO A Go-Go/Carajillo (12") *Compost*

VARIOUS ARTISTS Moshi Moshi: Pop

International Style March

—Sequel to the Pop American Style comp, it features 40 international pop bands including Wolfie, Secret Goldfish, Aden, Le Mans, Cinnamon, Spring and more.

YELLOWJACKETS The Best Of *Warner Bros.*

DECEMBER 8

ENTOMBED Black Juju *Man's Ruin*

DECEMBER 14

GHOSTFACE KILLAH Supreme Clientele *Razor Sharp-Epic*

KRUST Coded Language *Mercury*

MCCLURKIN PROJECT McClurkin Project *Interscope*

SEAN NA NA/MARY LOU LORD Split EP *Kill Rock Stars*

SOUNDTRACK Hurricane *MCA*

DAVID TALBERT Mister Right Now *Gospo Centric*

DECEMBER 15

DARUCKUS/PARADIME/D12 High *Intuit-Solar*

—12" single and a track on an upcoming compilation CD performed by all three of these groups (made up of seven different artists).

DECEMBER 21

DMX The Dog, The Man, The God *Def Jam*

DECEMBER 28

DJ CLUE TBD *Def Jam*

JAY-Z Volume 3... The Life And Times Of Shawn Carter *Rockefeller-Def Jam*

JANUARY 4

MANDY MOORE So Real *550*

JANUARY 11

ARLING & CAMERON Music For Imaginary Films *Emperor Norton*

JENNIFER BROWN Vera *RCA*

ERROR TYPE: 11 Amplified To Rock *Some*

LAUREN HOFFMAN From The Blue House *Free Union*

LUCY NATION On *Maverick*

'NSYNC *RCA*

ONE STAR *Triangulum March*

—Debut CD by Japanese turntable club-lounge-pop trio, along the lines of Takako Minekawa.

P.Y.T. Something More Beautiful *Epic*

SOUNDTRACK Ain't Nothin' But The Blues *MCA*

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.

SOUNDTRACK The Big Tease *Virgin-meanwhile...*

—Compiled and produced by Nellee Hooper (Romeo + Juliet), featuring tracks from Blondie, Ruff Driverz, Groove Armada, Day One, Fantastic Plastic Machine, Dean Martin and Julie London and more.

SPRING The Last Goodbye *March*

ZEN MAFIA *RCA*



THE MACHINES

STEP INTO A RING WHERE ROBOTS COMPETE TO THE DEATH.

WORDS: ANDREA MOED ILLUSTRATION: JACK MORTENSBAK

Each November, the computer industry convention Comdex turns Las Vegas into a feudal court for the new business order. The lords of high-tech proclaim news of the chips and gizmos their companies will grace us with in the coming year. This time around, BattleBots producers Trey Roski and Greg Munson offered entertainment for these kings and courtiers, staging a remote-controlled, robotic jousting match.

The contenders in BattleBots are home-crafted machines sporting axes, spikes, spinning blades and other deadly implements. Controlled with radio joysticks, pairs of robots go head-to-head until one is the champion and the other is an immobilized scrap heap.

Roski and his partner Munson are charter members of a small, but obsessed, fight club that has been building these robots for years. Crafting a fighting robot is like building the Mars Rover, says Roski, only more challenging. "[The NASA engineers] could practice," he explains. "They knew what obstacles they would face. Here, you never know what the other person is going to put up against you."

Roski is a "born competitor" who played ice hockey until bad knees forced him into retirement. The design and rules of BattleBots reflect his competitive nature. There's no pro-wrestling-type staging of fights here—all first-round matchups are determined at random. The arena is a steel floor with trap doors that open to disgorge sawblades

RAGE AMONGST THE MACHINES



AUTOBOTS OR DECEPTICONS: YOU DECIDE.

and other hazards. The robots move around it, assaulting each other by crashing, ramming each other with their weapons, flipping each other over, and forcing opponents into hazards. According to one builder, any functional, agile robot can usually win its first round match. As the single-elimination rounds progress, the robots and their weapons get increasingly nasty. Heavyweight and super-heavyweight bouts are the toughest of the tough, with gladiators weighing in at up to 488 pounds.

Roski and Munson have a talent for building things: "Ever since we figured out how to turn a toy firetruck into a blowtorch." In the mid-'90s, they joined the mostly West Coast engineers who built fighting machines and faced off with them at the original, large-scale fighting robot event, Robot Wars, originated in '94 by Bay Area artist and movie model builder Marc Thorpe. For four years, Robot Wars was the biggest show going for the nascent international community of combat robot builders, and its battles drew thousands of fans. Then legal problems began to plague the event. Disputes between Thorpe and his business partner, Profile Records head Steve Plotnicki, landed them in court. When Thorpe went bankrupt, the robot community became distrustful of Robot Wars. From 1997 to 1999, Robot Wars only occurred on a U.K.

diverse group of robots, says Roski.

"Everyone brings their specialty to it and does what they're good at. You get a builder who's a programmer, he uses lots of automation. Some are garage mechanics—they're into the tires and gas-powered engines. Hydraulic specialists build walking legs."

For the most experienced and tech-savvy builders, BattleBots provokes the question that so many contenders for high-tech glory must ask themselves: Are you an engineer at heart, or are you an entertainer?

One guy who comes down on the engineer side is Carlo Bertocchini, builder of Biohazard, the reigning heavyweight champion. The 200-plus pound, four-inch high Biohazard is unassuming on the surface, flat and low-slung as a Lamborghini. Nested inside is an unusual arm that can fold out and flip an opponent over on its back. The robot took five months to build and years to tweak and improve, with rarely a nod to looks.

"I never did anything to make it look cool, that would make it less likely to win," says Bertocchini.

On the showbiz side is Christian Carlberg, who created his two-wheeled, sawblade-toothed robots (named things like "Little Slice Of

The robots assault each other by crashing, ramming each other with their weapons, flipping each other over, and forcing opponents into hazards.

television show that had licensed the name. Meanwhile, Plotnicki was quick to sue anyone who tried to mount another major robot fight.

Along came Roski, scion of an L.A. real estate family that owns the Lakers basketball and Kings hockey teams. Along with deep pockets, Roski had two missions: to get robot battles going again, and to make his robot-building friends the heroes of every kid in America, earning them get more money and fame than even the parties to the lawsuit could have envisioned. He announced plans for BattleBots early this year, and in August, after fending off a court challenge from Plotnicki and Robot Wars, he produced the first big robot combat event in two years, featuring the old guard and some new players as well. As captured on digital video, the battles were fast, loud, and as heavy on the demolition as they were on the metal.

The November event further raised the stakes. It was the first to take advantage of a major gathering like Comdex, which brought 200,000 spectacle-hungry computer geeks to Vegas.

"Comdex is our market," says Roski, noting that both robot builders and fans tend to work in high-tech industries. It was also the debut of BattleBots on pay-per-view, a form of exposure for which the promoters have high hopes.

"The big rush was to get this to TV," says Bob Pitzer, one of the BattleBots judges and the organizer of BotBash, a smaller-scale robot competition in Phoenix. "There's only a small crowd of people who even know about it yet," he adds. Munson estimates there are 500 builders in America, and about as many in the UK.

Roski thinks youth of America could stand to get into robot fighting, given its "educational" value and its non-violent carnage. He's proud of the diversity of BattleBots teams, from Web programmers to garage mechanics, a grandfather and his two grandchildren, and an 11-year-old girl, Lisa Winter, who made it to the August finals with a robotic ladybug. This makes for an equally

Hell") with gas-powered engines because people really dig the noise. Carlberg prides himself on robots that "look really cool," and go down gloriously even when they lose.

"The crowd loves big movements," says Carlberg, a Disney Imagineer who designs rides as a day job. But even Carlberg gets a bit humble when he talks about the work of Mark Setrakian, a Hollywood monster builder whose robots have closely captured the chrome-edged biomorphism of *The Matrix*, *Alien* and other recent Hollywood science fiction. It should be noted, though, that Setrakian's robots rarely win more than accolades.

What all the most active participants have in common is a drive to build this into a big business. At the least, they'd like to recoup their expenses. Bertocchini estimates that the current Biohazard robot contains about \$30,000 worth of parts, and that's not counting all the metal and circuitry that's been spattered on the battle floor over the years. Both Bertocchini and Carlberg have sponsors and operate e-business Web sites (robotbooks.com and coolrobots.com). They're carefully anticipating Roski's efforts to make toy deals that could turn their robots into mass-produced action figures. They make it sound like a techie's chance at rock stardom.

Meanwhile, a following for the sport is growing around the country among builders who are less hardcore, but just as competitive as the Battlebots crew. They include electronics hobbyists, high school students and younger kids. Wielding smaller robots only a few pounds or so, they gather at events like Critter Crunch in Denver and Pitzer's BotBash, which he calls the Little League to BattleBots' majors.

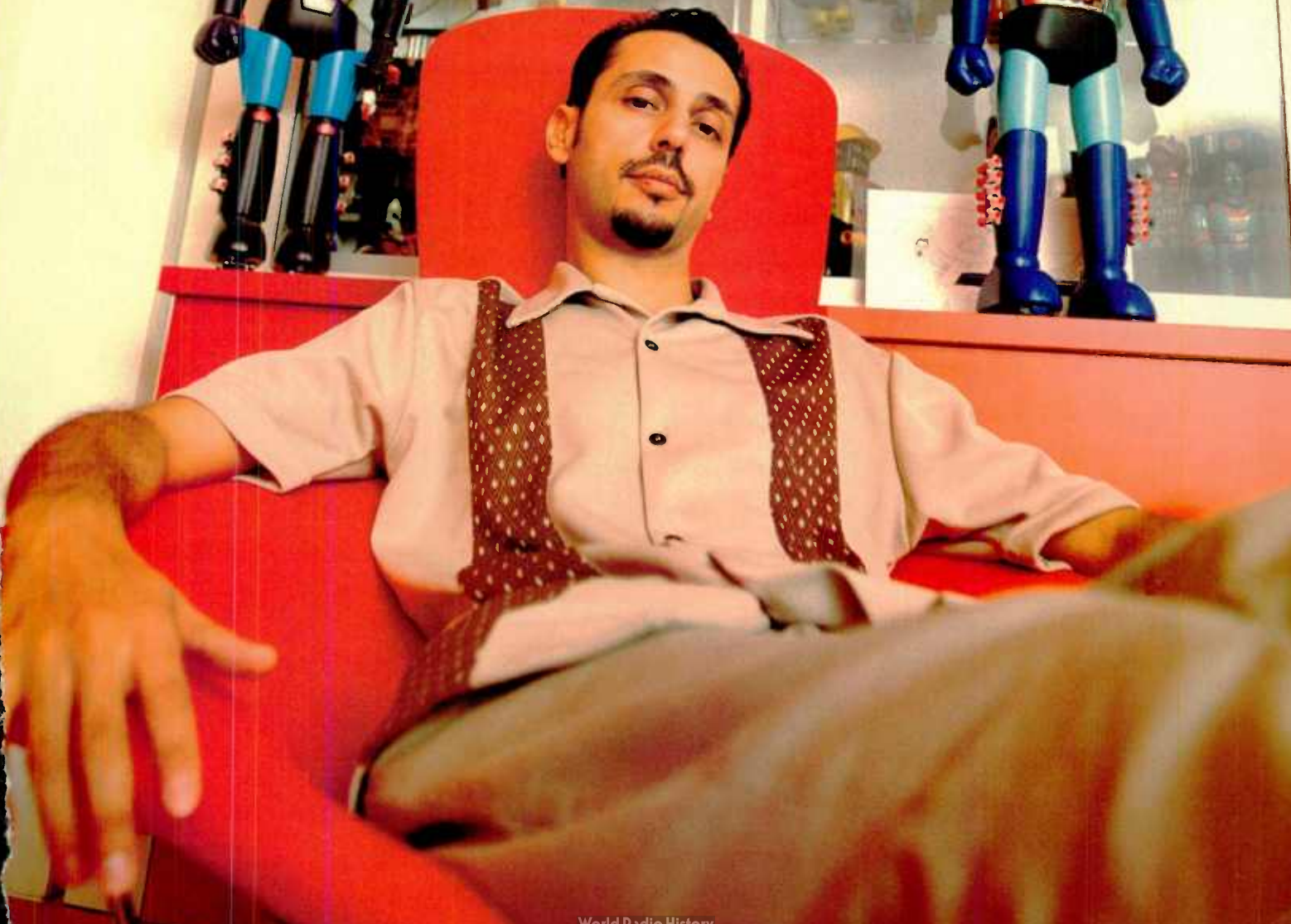
Pitzer, who builds more practical robots as an engineer for Intel, says that the smaller events allow for the play and innovation that is vital to the sport. Still, he figures events like BattleBots will provide the inspiration. "As we become a more technical society, I think it can catch on. It may get bigger than the WWF!"

NMM

>>> photo by paul chantrel <<<

METAL MACHINE MUSIC

The symphonic swells and bouncy organ lines on **Dimitri from Paris's** debut album *SACREBLEU* suggest a space age where chiseled astronauts and snappy robots frug away in a go-go somewhere on the other side of the galaxy. The Japanese version of the album cover even features a technical drawing of a steel android. Growing up, Dimitri surrounded himself with images of automatons. Based on the "Invincible Guardians Of World Freedom" from the '70s Japanese show *Grendizer* (known in America as *Shogun Warriors*), these flying, marching, stomping machines were manufactured by Popy as pint-sized figurines. Dimitri started buying the robots at age 14, and at age 36, has over 400 of them, only a few short of the complete collection. "They are a really heavy, good quality toy," explains Dimitri. Available only as an import product in France, the French teen displayed that hunter-gatherer sensibility found in many great DJs and snatched up these cyborgs while traveling with his parents in Italy and Germany. Dimitri isn't the only one fascinated with the *Shogun Warriors* these days; certain rare figurines can command as much as \$3000 each (Dimitri shelled out \$2000 to get *Combatra*). On his next album (tentatively due next fall), Dimitri plans to re-record a famous janimation theme song, but won't say which one. Care to wager a guess? [»»Neil Gladstone](#)



FALLOUT FASHION

PHOTOS: DENNIS KLEIMAN STYLING: NATALIE COULTER
GROOMING: LORAINÉ ABELES

You don't need to read Nostradamus to realize that the probability of World War III or a good old-fashioned terrorist attack increases with every passing minute—just turn on the evening news. When the bombs drop, the siege begins and the ozone layer fizzles into oblivion, be prepared to look your best. You may be starving, incontinent from radiation poisoning and on the run from aliens, but as long as you look good, what else matters?

MAKEOVER FOR THE TAKEOVER:

(left to right) Jackie Christie lays low in Cubika's hooded, brown waxed coat (\$285), and brown waxed pants (\$84) with an Illig plastic utility belt (\$40); (front) Samantha Gee wears a Cubika turquoise bullet vest halter shell (\$102) and rose-colored sunglasses (\$25) along with a U.F.O. combat skullcap (\$6).



HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING AND LOVE THE ARMAGEDDON:

(left to right) Samantha Gee is ready for attack by land or sea with a U.F.O. Flight Suit (\$80), an Illig anti-gravity storage unit (\$40) and Air Market goggles (\$32) and mask (\$158) to block out the elements; Reid Speed shelters herself in Cubika's black waxed hooded jacket (\$285) and vintage fingerless gloves (\$10). Armand Van Helden doesn't have to worry about those toxic fumes in Tyvek Deluxe Coveralls (\$5.10). For those medical emergencies, the syringe bag from Air Market (\$118), makes first aid fun.



CLOAK AND SWAGGER:

(left to right) Samantha Gee stays under wraps in Cubika's orange hooded top (\$56) and Illig's Invasion of the Bee Girls top (\$30) and black zip lap pants (\$60); Reid's reconnaissance gear includes a grey utility skirt (\$40), vintage WWII ski goggles (\$65) and little army backpack (\$20) by U.F.O. and a green hooded top (\$56) by Cubika; Armand Van Helden keeps a grip on things with Air Market's silver bottle holder (\$12).

FALLOUT FASHION

- 1. **Elton John**, the king of the jazzlines, just dropped a full-length arsenal of tracks on *Killing Purmons* (Armed Records).
 - 2. **Ellie Simmonds**, NYC's queen of the jungle, is set to release her debut mix CD on Smile in February.
 - 3. House diva **Janet** (*Illig*)'s latest mix CD compilation *Of Jackie Christie Present Hard Taste Seats* is out now on Nervous records.
 - 4. We've never seen it, but supposedly **Samuel** *has* some wicked Discs.
- Contact: CUBIKA 718-302-2020, Illig www.illig.com, U.F.O. 212-575-0663, AIR MARKET 212-985-5888
Tyvek coveralls can be purchased from Safety Direct at www.safetydirect.com.

IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT (AND YOU LOOK FINE):
(Front) Reid Speed keeps it simple in Illig's Good Girls Gone Bad T-shirt (\$20) and green min-skirt (\$45) and U.F.O.'s neo-life vest (\$16); (left) Samantha keeps an eye on things in the U.F.O. army ammunition vest (\$50), Cubika green hip pants (\$92) and Crypto yellow belt bag (\$40).

BRIEFS

THE WAR ZONE

[Lot 47 Films]

Given the showy movies that Tim Roth has starred in—*Reservoir Dogs*, *Pulp Fiction*, *Rob Roy*—you'd figure he'd pick some hipster project for his directorial debut. Surprise! There's nothing glamorous about *The War Zone*.

Alexander Stuart adapted the script from his novel. Zit-faced 15-year-old Tom (Freddie Cunliffe) wallows in misery after moving with his family from London to a seaside town. He uncovers an incestuous relationship between his father and sister, fueling his adolescent anger and disgust. Roth creates a grim atmosphere

filled with unnerving sexual tension. (Gary Oldman, Roth's buddy, covered similar subject matter in his directing debut, *Nil By Mouth*. What's more, Ray Winstone plays the monstrous father in both movies.) However shockingly blunt, Roth leaves room for tender insights into a hellish teen-age experience.

HELL'S KITCHEN

[Cowboy Booking International]

Despite an impressive cast that sports Rosanna Arquette, William Forsythe and hottie Angelina Jolie, *Hell's Kitchen* is truly hellish. A farrago of B-movie

clichés, this ugly drama follows the aftermath of a drug deal gone bad. (When can we see a movie where a drug deal turns out OK?) After his release from prison, fledgling boxer Mekhi Phifer (*Clockers*) vows to start fresh and turns to an ex-champ (Forsythe) for guidance. There's plenty more hooey in the unnecessarily convoluted story where every character has a bad habit or accent. Writer-

director Tony Cinciripini forgot to add those little things, like say, energy, tension and credibility, which make movies worth watching.

TOPSY-TURVY

[October Films]

A colleague once wrote there are two kinds of directors working today: Mike Leigh and everybody else. Leigh, the venerable British filmmaker behind

Naked and *Secrets And Lies*, creates biting examinations of the lives of seemingly ordinary people in contemporary London. With *Topsy-Turvy*, Leigh visits the 19th century to take a humorous look at the relationship between W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan—you know, Gilbert and Sullivan, those opera guys who created *The Pirates of Penzance*—during a trying

period in their career. Everything is top quality here. The sets. The costumes. The music. And we haven't even mentioned the stellar cast or snappy narrative. Although it clocks in at 156 minutes, it zips by.



SPEED, SMACK AND SALVATION: THE LESS-THAN-HOLY ODYSSEY OF JESUS' SON.

Jesus' Son (Lions Gate Films) is the story of a Fuckhead, or actually a character named Fuckhead—FH for short. The poetic tragicomedy based on Denis Johnson's book of short stories is set in the Midwest during the 1970s, and follows the misadventures of the aimless young Fuckhead (Billy Crudup). Along the way, narrator FH spins yarns about his whacked, drug-fueled escapades with the audience. One of the best moments comes when he's working at a hospital with a half-crazed speed freak orderly and they have to admit a man who calmly walked into the ER with a knife sticking out of his right eye. The road to redemption is lined with an array of oddballs played by Denis Leary, Dennis Hopper and Holly Hunter, among others.

Although FH pops pills and shoots heroin, *Jesus' Son* is more than a junkie's tale.

"It just didn't interest me to make a film about drugs," says Alison Maclean, best known for the dandy thriller *Crush* (1992) about a woman who assumes the identity of her friend. As evident in *Crush* and *Jesus' Son*, Maclean has a knack for combining powerful moments and dark humor.

"FH is the kind of character who's very curious. If something comes along, he'll try it. And he wants to experience the extremes—even be close to death. It's part of a larger search he's going through in his life."

It's hard to believe that Maclean was considering changing careers just a few years back after the long dry spell that followed the positively received *Crush*. "I've gone through times where I've been so demoralized, I thought about working on a smaller scale as an artist," she admits. "But I don't really know what else I'd do. That's part of the problem."

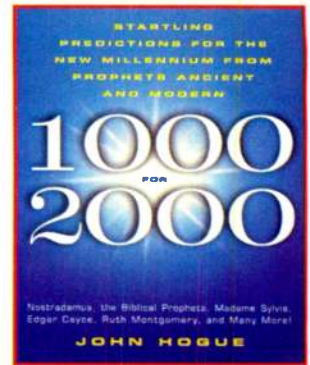


BRIEFS

1000 FOR 2000: PREDICTIONS FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

by John Hogue
(HarperSanFrancisco)

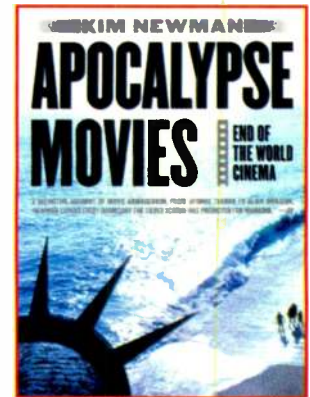
Kind of an "Armageddon for Beginners," this easy access reference guide to the end of the world is apocalyptic sound bite heaven, dropping all the arithmetic and dreary prologues and dipping straight into the future-juice. From Nostradamus to Edgar Cayce, Madame Blavatsky to the Bible, here's all the greatest hits of all the best prophets. And the format makes it easy to skip the dull global warming section (ozone, schmozone) and leap straight to the Rapture and spontaneous combustion of human flesh. If you're looking to plan that vacation in Iraq in the year 2004, check this book out first, to be safe. Prophecy is still a flawed science and dates can be off—so watch out if the rivers turn red! >>Kristin Keith



APOCALYPSE MOVIES: END OF THE WORLD CINEMA

by Kim Newman (St. Martin's Griffin)

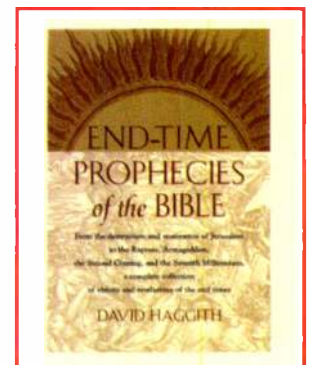
Neither a wacky guide nor scholarly text, *Apocalypse Movies* recaps many of the notable moments from great cinematic works and B-movie schlock with themes such as nuclear holocaust, alien invasions and surviving in the post-apocalyptic world. The obvious candidates, such as *Mad Max* and *Dr. Strangelove*, are placed into context with lesser-known flicks such as Roger Corman's *Gas-s-s-s* and Ray Milland's *Panic In Year Zero*. Unfortunately, there isn't enough historical theorizing or gossipy tidbits to make *Apocalypse Movies* a compelling read. >>>Neil Gladstone



END-TIME PROPHECIES OF THE BIBLE

by David Haggith (Putnam)

This is the Bible of biblical prophetic passages—from Revelations to Ezekiel, Isaiah to Luke, and even old Deuteronomy (not the cat). It is, in other words, a wet dream for the millennial hysteric. No stone is unturned, no shroud is left behind—this is the definitive reference to our impending death. Will you meet the Messiah? Will the Anti-Christ come? How will you die? And what is the Rapture? No one knows havoc like the authors of the Good Book, and it is mostly a vengeful God who is laid out here. A little Heaven is mixed in with the Hell, but God's wrath is mighty—it could be enough to make a churchgoer of you. >>>Kristin Keith



TOP: William S. Burroughs 70th Birthday Party, 1984. L-R: John Giorno, Jim Carroll, Burroughs, Lydia Lunch, David Johansen. BOTTOM: Michael McClure and Richard Brautigan on Haight St., 1968

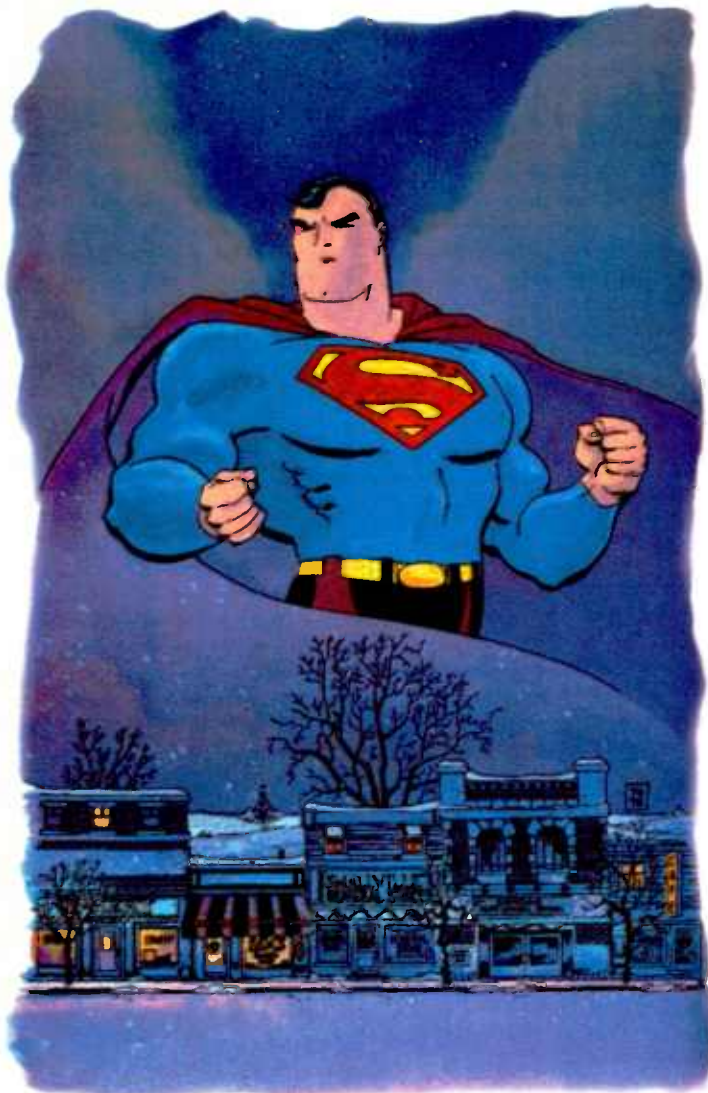
THE OUTLAW TRAIL: AN ANTHOLOGY FOR POETS WHO HATE POETRY.

"I thought that only your in-laws would get you here," quips poet Steve Dalachinsky, eyeing the capacity crowd that has congregated outside St. Mark's Poetry Project on Manhattan's Lower East Side to celebrate the release of *The Outlaw Bible Of American Poetry* (Thunder's Mouth Press). "But it turns out your outlaws get you here."

The Outlaw Bible Of American Poetry, edited by Alan Kaufman, presents a disparate, dissonant chorus of voices, all somehow attuned to an alternative vision of versification. That vision is perhaps epitomized by the life of San Francisco street poet Jack Micheline, who died last winter. Micheline, likened to both Johnny Appleseed and Peter Pan, serves as the patron saint of this volume. The book, Kaufman explains, "was born out of Jack's ashes."

Despite such specific inspiration, the *Outlaw Bible* encompasses a wide swath of territory. The shadow of the Beats looms large; the anthology includes entries from the well-thumbed catalogs of Ginsberg, Kerouac and Burroughs, et al. The New York School is represented by such progenitors as poet Frank O'Hara and painters Larry Rivers and Jackson Pollock. There's also verse by iconoclastic songsters (Dylan, Joplin, Lou Reed); black arts leaders (Amiri Baraka, Sonia Sanchez, Gil-Scott Heron); '60s counter-culturalists (Abbie Hoffman, d.a. levy); "queers" (Eileen Myles, Sini Anderson); poetry slammers (Maggie Estep, Tracie Morris); and such outsider cliques as The Carma Bums and The Unbearables. There's a dizzying sense of freedom in such a melting-pot selection; what other poetry collection can boast contributions from both Patricia Smith ("Queen of Slam") and Patti Smith (avant-rock heroine)?

But there's a paradox here, as well. Kaufman contends that these outlaw poets regard poetic tradition "with the bristling wariness of a street hustler getting frisked by a cop." Why, then, does his collection include so many established ringers, at the expense of the unsung? It's telling that the first and last poems in the book are by Walt Whitman; they parenthesize the volume like antique bookends. Uncle Walt's endorsement underscores a point—these renegade poets, in allowing themselves to be canonized, have made a fatal concession. In this way, *The Outlaw Bible* inevitably defeats itself. >>>Nate Chinen



20TH CENTURY MAN (AND SUPERMAN)

There's no better way to reflect on the 20th century than to read the words of the people who experienced it. For 20 years, David Greenberger has been publishing **The Duplex Planet**: transcripts of interviews he's conducted with nursing home residents (\$2.50 an issue from P.O. Box 1230, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866). It offers fascinating



perspectives from people who have lived a very long time. Issue 152 and 153, released earlier this year, recapitulate interviews Greenberger did back in 1979: men reminiscing about their jobs, their favorite music and their old cars, or just cracking mild jokes in that old-people way. The latest issue, 154, features more recent interviews with trickier questions: "Did the future turn out the way you thought it would?" Greenberger asks a group of people. "It turned out alright, I got along alright," one Angie Matz answers. "I saved some money and I spent some by movin' and gettin' a different apartment."

>>> The passage of time is also the great theme of **Superman For All Seasons** (DC), originally published as a mini-series and now collected in a single, nicely packaged book. It's a gorgeously conceived take on Superman, and how he became the person he is: the years he spent growing up in the Midwest, and his eventual move to two huge coastal cities, Smallville and Metropolis, respectively. Here, more than ever, those names serve only as stand-ins for ideal versions of agricultural expanse and urban glory. Written by screenwriter Jeph Loeb, drawn by Tim Sale with an eye for Norman Rockwell-style tableaux that never quite gets cloying (a sunset, a family and their adorable dog at the table, a general store), and exquisitely colored by Bjarne Hansen in hues that reflect the changing seasons nearly page-by-page. The story has visual and conceptual allusions to virtually every incarnation of Superman—from the earliest, crude Joe Shuster drawings to the recent animated series. The book captures the sense of grandeur and power at the heart of the Superman myth as nothing else has in years.

>>> There are a lot of other myths bopping around the 20th century's collective consciousness, and they're the subject of **Planetary** (Wildstorm), a series written by Warren Ellis of *Transmetropolitan* fame and scheduled to run until the end of next year. The mysterious Mulder-and-Scully-ish trio at the center of the series is its lens, not its subject. The focus bounces between different characters following city-eating monsters; the bronze man who's hiding in the center of the world; the superhero adventurers who have technology that could transform the world, but keep it to themselves; the ghosts of Japanese mafiosi who are eternally firing shots at each other with both hands, and many others. *Planetary* radically changes its cover design every issue to fit its subject, and artist John Cassaday inventively evokes each fragment of 20th century design style, from Winsor McKay's imaginary Rococo cities to John Woo's exploding urban boxes. Like the design, the writing can change drastically in a hurry—even from a piece's initial conception to its final execution.



>>> The literary magazine **Lungfull!** (\$6.95 from 126 E. 4th St. Ste. #2, New York, NY 10003) ruminates on process as much as product: beside every poem it prints is a copy of that poem's first draft, handwritten, typed or scrawled in blood on a napkin, word-for-word identical or vastly different. Experimental poetry focuses its eye more on the power of unmediated language than on craft, and occasional illustrations echoing those themes. The seventh and most recent issue, though, also includes a couple of ringers: rough drafts and finished copy by Emily Dickinson (whose matchless vocabulary and sense of rhythm admit nary a single change), William Blake and Walt Whitman.

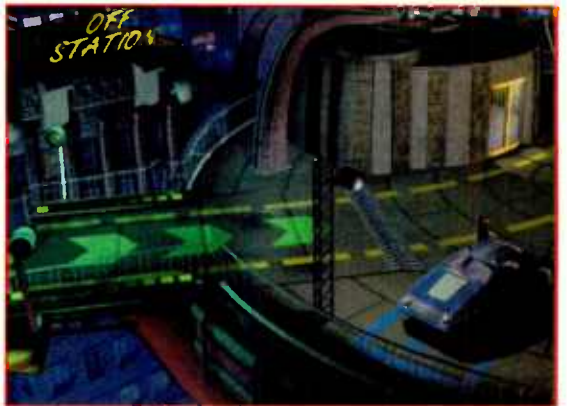


BRIEFS



TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX (Red Storm)

With the United States emerging as the last true superpower, the potential threat of a major nuclear exchange is constantly shrinking. Replacing that former stronghold of fear very quickly in the hearts and minds of the global community is the ongoing threat of so-called "suitcase" terrorism—nuclear devices and objects of bio-warfare that can quickly be detonated or released in major cities. Gaming developers, always eager to turn a frightful scenario into an addictive game, have been quick to capitalize on that fear. **Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six** has recently been released in a "gold" edition, which includes a mission pack and a much-welcomed strategy guide. *Rainbow Six* is a true first-person strategy game that allows you to commandeer a group of military personnel through specific rescue missions. You might be called upon to infiltrate a building and recover hostages or save the world from terrorists. The level of control is almost infinite—you choose your party members, equip them, then decide the best routes for entry based upon intelligence gathering. Don't forget the training missions. Placing explosives can be tricky, and you don't want to be the reason the world ended, now do you?



NIGHTLONG

(Dreamcatcher Interactive)

Nightlong takes the terrorist theme and explores it in an entirely different manner. Set 100 years in the future, *Nightlong* is a classic graphic adventure where the gamer—playing private investigator Joshua Reeve—has been called upon to investigate a series of terrorist attacks on the dark and murky Union City. The noir-ish settings and full-motion-video sequences are top-notch and the puzzles are difficult, but not impossible. If you're a fan of no-win situations, both these titles demand a second look.



APOCALYPSE WOVES

By the time you read this, the fallout from the much-ballyhooed Y2K bug will be apparent. A power outage cut short the New Year's Eve celebration in Times Square and the military was called in to contain the mass hysteria, looting and pillaging. Perhaps not, but reality will never stop people from dreaming about a great disaster story. With that in mind, now is a good time for a look back at the top five armageddon-themed video games of the past century: A few years before Ronald Reagan announced his "Strategic Defense Initiative," gamers had the opportunity to intercept city-bound ICBM's with Atari's **Missile Command** (recently re-released by Hasbro Interactive for the PC). Rumor has it that the game was almost titled "Armageddon," but the top brass at Atari decided kids would not know what the name meant. Regardless, people of all ages dropped massive quantities of quarters into the game's coin slots, ensuring its status as a necessary fixture in any arcade. A few short years later, most gaming companies, still shell-shocked from the great home video gaming system crash of 1984, had moved their development efforts over to the emerging home computer market. The advent of floppy disk storage (anyone remember eight-inch floppies?) encouraged developers to create more involved games such as the immense role-player, **Wasteland**, which took place in nuclear war-ravaged America. Although it was eventually ported to the PC, it's not easy to find today. You'll do better to search the Net for an Apple II emulator and use the original *Wasteland* disk "images," both of which are freely available on the Net. *Wasteland* was a hybrid graphic-and-text role-playing game that gave players the opportunity to control up to seven characters on a mission to investigate skirmishes in the desert. Despite the game's enormous popularity, it took almost 10 years for a sequel to arrive. **Fallout** (currently available on Interplay's 15th Anniversary CD-ROM collection) was almost a retro-styled release by the time it emerged in 1997. Eschewing the exploding first-person shooter genre in favor of a traditional point-and-click RPG interface, *Fallout* sent players on a search-and-rescue mission through a desolate and still-toxic planet earth. By the time *Fallout* became a gamer favorite, the Cold War had long since ended and other developers had started looking once again to the stars in search of new threats to world peace. 3DRealms' **Duke Nukem 3D** broke new ground on a technological level by making almost every item in the player environment fully interactive. The game's tough-talking hero ensured not only the survival of the human race against the alien menace, but also solidified Duke Nukem as a franchise. More recently, Sierra's **Half-Life** snagged many "Game Of The Year" awards for 1998 and pushed the player-interaction envelope even further by allowing the use of real-time non-player characters. It seems there will never be a shortage of races or events that threaten the planet on a global level. Where will the next threat come from? Perhaps the next great challenge for gaming developers is to create a way for gamers to stage a violent war against global warming.

WEB2K

>>> As the Big Odometer prepares to turn over, it's evoking all kinds of responses in people, and as everyone knows, the most appropriate way to deal with anything you're feeling or thinking is to put up a Web page. There aren't just thousands of millennium-based sites, there are scores of indexes to millennium-based sites. The most useful clearinghouse we've found is probably **Everything 2000** (www.everything2000.com). It's regularly updated with millennium and New Year's Eve-based news, and includes a comprehensive index of big events happening everywhere



from Kiribati (the first place to see 2000's dawn, where the locals are having a songwriting competition to greet it) to the South Pole (the destination of the top-to-bottom "Pole To Pole 2000" trek). There are also sections devoted to Y2K and "Millenni-Moms"—the race to have the first baby of the year,

which will be rewarded by cash, prizes and widespread loathing from everybody whose Lamaze skills weren't quite up to the challenge. Regrettably, Everything 2000 is only one of many sites that have decided it would be funny to have cartoons about a little insect called the "Millennium Bug." At least that joke doesn't have much longer to run.

y2kculture.com



>>> The Y2K problem has become a genuine cultural touch-point, whether or not you think there's any truth to the paranoia. That's where **Y2K Culture** (www.y2kculture.com) comes in. It's cynical, snappy and appropriately harsh (sample headline: "Art Buchwald Bores, Annoys"), and it offers a "daily" e-mail update on Y2K information—which doesn't seem to be all that daily. Site editor Declan McCullagh, a bureau chief for *Wired News*, links the site to all of the articles he writes on the topic. The rest of its content is typically humor of one stripe or another. (The blues parody is pretty dopey, but the article on how to make sure your cat is Y2K compliant is very good.) There's also an entertaining series of reviews of the slew of recent novels about Y2K catastrophe ("If you like the idea of society collapsing, you'll love *Patriots*") and a few rudimentary cartoons. Thankfully, they don't involve a Millennium Bug. Unfortunately, they star a character called "Chip'n Little."



CLICK HERE TO ENTER

>>> If you think millennial machine panic is overblown, there's a site for you too: **Y2K Is Okay** (www.y2kisok.com), "The premier site on the web dedicated to a positive outlook for the Year 2000!" The idea behind it is that since nobody knows exactly what's going to happen, everybody should just assume that everything will be okay, since assuming otherwise would lead to panic. That's what they'd like to project, anyway, but the general fuzziness of the site's rhetoric is enough to send one screaming to a hermetically sealed shelter in Utah. A sample: "Haley's Comet [sic] visits us more frequently than a new century, so only some of us are fortunate to be around to welcome in a new century." Fortunately, it's also part of some Web-rings that link it to sites like www.y2kbodyarmor.com, www.y2kdenial.com (home of the great big "I Told You So!!!") and [The Survival Warehouse](http://www.shoalstrading.com/surv.htm) (www.shoalstrading.com/surv.htm).

>>> Finally, French artist Charles Guy has come up with a nutty but pretty neat way of celebrating the beginning of 2000. "**Millions Of Balloons**" (www.ballons-par-millions.com) will, he hopes, consist of releasing exactly that into the atmosphere—each biodegradable balloon attached to an envelope with the sender's name and address, message-in-a-bottle style. People who find them will be encouraged

to send the sender's message and a beautiful stamp of their own to a central address, and the 2001 best will be selected and published in a book. The organizers' enthusiasm sometimes overwhelms their care for facts or command of English ("Jule Verne [sic], Ray Bradbury, Stanley Kubric [sic] and many others have developed this universal myth by their exciting novels or films"), but the project is one of the best metaphors for bringing people together on a personal level that anyone's invented for the New Year. Millennium Bugs need not apply.



hectoring has illuminated a lot of young minds and filled worthy petitions with long lists of names. But however sincere the band's political stance is, in practical terms, it functions as a schtick.

For people who became politically conscious during the Reagan '80s and Clinton '90s, it's no wonder that they're cynical about the political process itself. And for people whose earliest memories of politics and rock are the Band Aid record and the Live Aid concert, it's no wonder there is a certain amount of cynicism about the sincerity and dedication of rock musicians to political causes. Indeed, to a notoriously media savvy generation, virtually every political cause effectively functions as promotion for the artists involved, no matter how sincere their intentions.

"Activism and political thought and even feminism sort of got commodified in the last 20 years.... It's all about demographics and sales," says Ray. "So that ends up making it look like there's these fragmented populations of people that are being spoken for. But they're really just being sold to."

The way Amy Ray sees it, most fans see Rage for its unrelentingly aggressive music and couldn't give a fig about its politics. "They don't know what the fuck they're talkin' about," says Ray. "It's this guy standing beside you, one minute he's talking about

**"When a hundred turns to two hundred turns to five hundred kids, without any help from any magazines, without any help from radio, and puts together this fuckin' community that's based solely on the bands and the times we have together, that means something."
—Mighty Mighty Bosstones' Dicky Barrett.**



CENTER: DICKY BARRETT

disenfranchisement and he's screaming these lyrics but he's going to go home and... He's into the band for a different reason." Mattering in a political sense, then, has become just another way that a band can distinguish itself in a crowded marketplace.

Rage Against The Machine aside, the way most music politically functions these days is not as propaganda, but as a fundraising engine for feel-good causes (and, of course, for the music industry itself). We're talking about the phenomenon of the benefit show.

Young people tend to find politics boring—unless an issue has direct relevance to them, their political involvement will be minimal. Noting this, well-meaning musicians coax young people to attend benefit shows, where the star power of the lineup supersedes any political motivations for attending. These shows are intended to raise awareness, but the audience will often boo the guest speakers, who are usually trotted out between sets with the house lights up, the P.A. turned down and roadies busily moving equipment behind them.

And what use is awareness if people don't vote? Less than a third of people 18 to 20 voted in the 1996 elections. Instead, the audience's political participation is limited to the act of forking over some cash. The real message is that the best way to change things is throw money around, which seems to be how things really get done anyway.

Sidestepping the issue entirely, there's no political content in Kid Rock's lyrics or in virtually anything he does. "No, there isn't," says Rock. "I try not to. I don't want to spend my five minutes, if I win an award, talking about how we can save the country."

Of course, political content isn't the only way music can have meaning. Spirituality—the feeling of being profoundly moved—has been the province of meaningful artists from Jimi Hendrix to Nirvana. And lately, spirituality seems to be lacking in music. "It's just not going to be found at a Limp Bizkit gig," says Gordon. "But that's OK, it's just different—it's more like it's a sport. It's fun for that visceral, physical feel, but it's not spiritual."

Perhaps music matters, but in a completely different way than the sociopolitical model left over from the '60s. It's been said over and over again that there will never be another Beatles. But there will never be another Beatles not because they were a great band, but because the unique collision of contexts which fostered the Beatles phenomenon will never occur again. But something else that is phenomenal in a completely different way will surely happen, and perhaps is happening at this very moment, just not like The Beatles, who endure as the *ne plus ultra* of sociocultural significance.

"It's not going to look the same way, whatever rebellion's supposed to look like," says Gordon. "It's going to take some other form. And it may not be a big thing now but it might appear a bigger thing in three or four years."

As it stands, however, the demise of the '60s paradigm has left a lot of people baffled about the significance of today's music. "Maybe it means something else," says Pollard. "But I don't know what that is. I've not figured out what it means. It still makes kids happy. Music's for kids and it still makes them happy. As long as kids can dance to it and have a good time, I guess that's important."

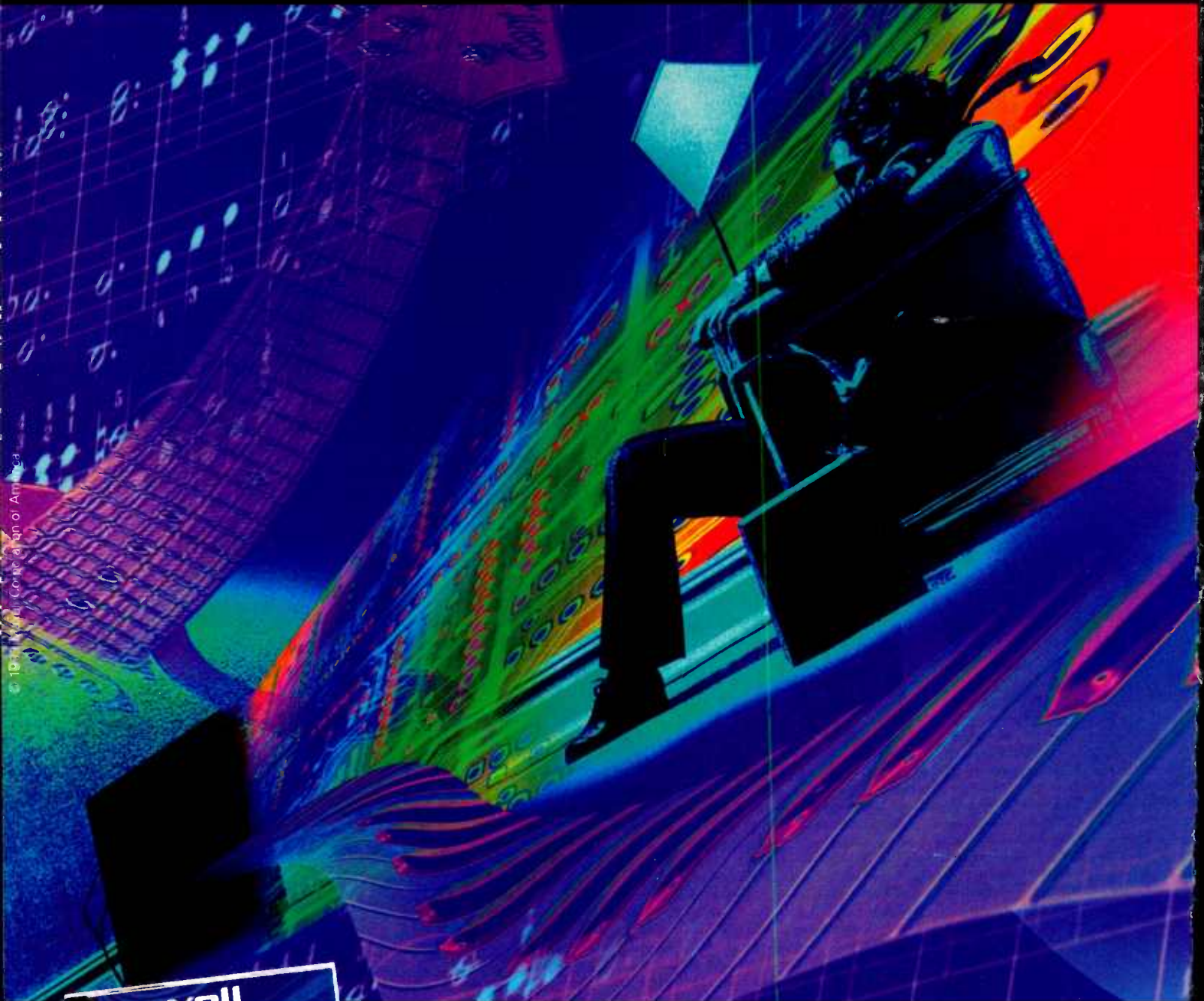
As for Kid Rock, he feels he's got the situation sized up pretty well. "I think people, especially in this country, are just really sick of getting lied to, getting manipulated, getting the shades pulled down over their eyes," he says, adding that people feel conned by things like junk mail, the Internet, long-distance phone companies. "Nobody's up front and honest about what they do anymore. It's always a fuckin' plot, a ploy to fuckin' trick people. And I think people are sick of getting tricked and lied to. You say something to me, just mean it. I think that's all anybody wants."

So maybe that's the meaning of Kid Rock: In this lyin'-ass day and age, there's a lot of significance to a guy who promises a big, exciting show and delivers it. "It's pretty face value, yeah," says Kid Rock. "Maybe it makes other people want to be like that, so if that does something good then hey, I did something positive, believe it or not."

NMM

TO THE POWER OF MAXELL

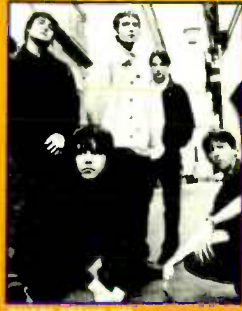
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CHARLATANS UK

15 "You Mean Nothing" is culled from NEBULA's debut *To The Center* (Sub Pop). Adding unconventional instruments such as a Moog synthesizer and sitars to different tracks gives Nebula an edge. Guitarist Eddie Glass told *Westword*: "I have a lot of influences... I've been listening to a lot of Captain Beefheart, and the Deviants, too. And Pink Floyd's *Relic* is on my turntable right now. But I'm also really into the new Hellacopters record." (See Reviews p. 50.)

16 Surviving a tumultuous reign at the top, and the loss of keyboardist Rob Collins to a car accident in 1996, the CHARLATANS UK return with a new album *Us And Us Only* (MCA), and a rejuvenated sound. "I've been pretty selfish on this one—writing about myself," singer Tim Burgess recently told the *Allstar* website. "At the time [of recording], we were sort of anti-flag waving choruses. That was the only real initial thought we had. We are usually the type of group that just does what comes naturally." Hear the band's new direction with "My Beautiful Friend." (See review, p. 58, Dec. 99 issue.)

17 Although *Prize* marks his debut on Ani DiFranco's Righteous Babe Records (and is the first release on the label that doesn't feature its owner), ARTO LINDSAY has recorded several albums both as a solo artist and as a member of bands like *Ambitious Lovers*. Says DiFranco of the newest addition to the Righteous Babe family: "I've been a huge fan, especially of his last three releases, and the new one is part of that series, sonically and conceptually." Lindsay describes his latest melding of avant garde, pop and Brazilian influences as "an extension of the earlier ones, but I'm also trying to do something new." "Prs Feeling" is the result. (See Best New Music, p. 23, Dec. 99 Issue.)

18 New York's THE HAND managed to agree enough to produce a 19-song debut, *Mule Me* (Messenger), from which "Wouldn't It Be Beautiful" is taken. (The song is also available on a compilation of the same name.) They don't seem to agree at all, however, when it comes to the meaning of the album's name. "Mule Me was the original plan for the Manhattan bridge," says singer/guitarist Kenny Siegal. Drummer Brian Geltner says "Some people consider it a dance." According to Bassist Chris Rael though, "Mule Me means sex with a donkey. I don't know if the other guys would agree, but then again I've taken a lot of drugs and been through a lot of therapy."

19 Formed by Kathleen Hanna (Bikini Kill, Julie Ruin) with filmmaker Sadie Benning and Johanna Faleman (who ran the zine *My Need To Speak On The Subject Of Jackson Pollock*), LE TIGRE's lineup reads like a who's-who of riot grtldom. And the trio's new self-titled album, from which "Deceptacon" is taken, was released on Kaia's (from Team Dresch) label, Mr. Lady. The outspoken Ms. Hanna told *Pandemonium* online recently: "We have to sit through so much music about being in love or breaking up and that is some of the most irrelevant shit out there. Not having health care and having a bladder infection I couldn't get treatment for, I think I cried over that more than I cried over any guy. Where are the songs about being broke or our friends being broke?" (See Reviews p. 48.)

20 With Heatmiser alums Elliott Smith, who mixed the record and recorded vocals for "Critical Mass," and Sam Coomes (now with Quasi) contributing to ex-bandmate Neil Gust's debut as NO. 2, *No Memory* (Chainsaw) is something of a family reunion. Gust told *Willametta Week*: "We want to get better, and we want to have fun and keep playing music and survive off of it. I could spend the rest of my life trying to get better and be happy." (See Best New Music p. 21.)

CMJ NEW MUSIC

ISSUE 77 JANUARY 2000

1 "I want to show the rest of the world the power, the human capacity, through the voices and the sounds that people forgot—the sounds people made during the day, every day," Marie Daune says of ZAP MAMA's mix of hip-hop, drum 'n' bass and African-influenced vocal phrasings. "All the sounds made by humans, instinctually, the sounds can relax people, can give energy," she says. "Harmonies can make you cry." "Rafiki," from the Belgian-African band's fourth album, *Am A Zone* (Luaka Bop) features guest appearances from members of The Roots. (See Feature p. 28.)

2 "Most people like to write the story of the young entrepreneur or something, which is a little distasteful to me, but whatever makes a good story. But it very rarely comes down to what I actually do," says ANI DIFRANCO of the media's focus on her Righteous Babe label—as opposed to her accomplishments as an artist. What she actually does is make records like *To The Teeth*, which features "Wish I May." "There's a whole lot of people in there who work really hard and I don't know what they do," she says about her company. "People sort of perceive me as being the brilliant business mastermind behind it all, but it's a bit of a fallacy." (See Reviews p. 46)

3 "I was intuitive enough to understand: 'You've had your say, now it's time to shut up for a while,'" says JOE STRUMMER of his hiatus following the demise of The Clash. "I realized I could cool it. Many performers don't realize the public gets sick of you; they could do with a rest from some of these seriously ambitious people." Strummer's ambitions have resurfaced though, and he's put together a new band called The Mescaleros. Their debut full length, *Rock Art And The X-Ray Style* (Epitaph) features "Tony Adams (Radio Edit)." (See Reviews p. 54, Q&A p.17.)

4 "I think it kind of spoils things, everyone has their own meaning for a song and when you've told it's something completely different it kind of spoils it," says Roddy Woomble, IOLEWILD's singer, about his policy of not explaining the meaning of his lyrics. "Obviously, it should mean something, I think it's better for people to get the basic gist of it and work it out for themselves." The Edinburgh, Scotland quartet's second full-length album *Hope Is Important* (Odeon-Capitol) features "Film For The Future." (See On The Verge p.18.)



ZAP MAMA



ANI DIFRANCO



JOE STRUMMER

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MAKE UP



SMITH & MIGHTY



SLIPKNOT

10 "MAKE UP's desire is to turn all of the consumers into producers, and to include every person at the show into the group," says singer Ian Sveinlius, who in punker days was frontman to Nation Of Ulysses. "Now this doesn't mean they'll be holding the base of the drum kit, but rather they'll be helping to sermonize a chant, and in turn become just as viable a part of the show as the band on stage." The Washington, DC band's sixth release, *Save Yourself* (K) features "White Belts." (See Feature p. 32.)

11 The godfathers of the Bristol music scene SMITH & MIGHTY have turned in a long-awaited full length, *Big World, Small World* (Studio K7). Rob Smith and Ray Mighty's dub-influenced sound, heard here with "Move You Run," is revered by artists such as Portishead, Roni Size, Massive Attack and Krust. "Dub is still our biggest influence, but we like vocals a great deal." Smith recently told *Urb* magazine. "So, we wanted to make a record in the classic reggae tradition where you have a song and then the version, which is the dub." (See Best New Music p. 22.)

12 "I think what makes the song work for me and for a lot of people is that it's about something very specific, and it has a real focal point, but it also has room for a lot of mystery," says Manhattan-raised, Hungarian-born singer/songwriter ESZTER BALINT of the track "Amsterdam Crown," which can be found on her debut album, *Flicker* (Scratchie). "It has a real simplicity, and when you can be crystal simple, but still leave room for imagination, that's one of the best results." (See Reviews p. 45.)

13 Gina D'Orio of EGBOR and Annika Trost of COBRA KILLER follow in the tradition of Alec Empire: reveling in anarchy, both musical and political. As well they should—"Merry-Go Round," from the duo's self-titled debut, is on Empire's label, Digital Hardcore. D'Orio and Trost describe their sound with a definite air of their self-described "total blind confidence." Trost and D'Orio explain: "Cobra Killer is a vibrator of broken garage rock sounds that doesn't let you stop. It's hysteria all over right into a kick for more!" (See Reviews p. 46.)

14 SLIPKNOT's appearance often gets them noticed (see photo), but drummer Joey Jordison stresses that the look isn't for publicity. "We never put on the shit we wear to try and get people into us. We did it because, after being degraded constantly for trying to play music or do something in Des Moines, it just came to be like we were an anonymous entity. So we just put it on and it started gettin' people, and it just started to turn into this big thing. The music's the most important though." "Wait And Bleed (Radio Mix)" comes from *Slipknot* (Roadrunner). (See In My Room, p. 13.)



KITTIE



ON



8STOPS7

5 "If people are expecting The Spice Girls, they're not going to get it," says Mercedes Lander, drummer of the Canadian teen quartet KITTIE, whose debut full length, *Spir* (Artemis-Ng), includes "Brackish." The high school rockers describe their sound as something between "glam-goth" and "metal-glitter." "We're intense, and a lot of people just don't expect it... People expect us to suck, then we get on stage and blow them away. One minute they're just standing there, then their mouths drop open and their dicks feel small." (See Quick Fix p. 12.)

6 "I was going on 20 years with Motley Crue," says Tommy Lee, who sings, drums and plays guitar in his new outfit, METHODS OF MAYHEM. "I mean, fuck! I started with them when I was 17, just a little puppy. I did it all and I felt like it had run its course. I was into funk, pop, techno, all these different flavors of music and I realized, 'Fuck, I'm unhappy. I'm creatively dying.'" His new band's self-titled debut (MCA) houses "Get Naked (Filthy Version)," which touches on some personal subjects, like his unexpected film career.

7 "The key to making this record was capturing ideas in the moment, taking snapshots of moods and textures before they slipped away," says ON's Ken Andrews of *Shifting Skin* (Epic), the debut album that marks his first release since disbanding the critically acclaimed Failure in 1997. Though Andrews recorded most of the record himself, he did enlist the help of some noteworthy friends, including Blinker The Star's Jordan Zadorozny and Jeff Turzo of God Lives Underwater, among others. To get a glimpse of life after Failure, check out "Soluble Words."

8 At first glance, 8STOPS7's name seems somewhere between cryptic and meaningless. "Adam [Powell, bass] originally came up with the name 8 Stops Nowhere," says singer/guitarist Evan Sula-Goff, "because the symbol 8, turned on its side represents infinity. Then we changed it to 8STOPS7. I really liked the sound of it at the time. Then a week later I just started thinking about a thing like seven days a week, seven years of bad luck, seven years of plague. The '7' symbolizes completion, while the '8' symbolizes new hope." "Better" comes from the California quartet's major label debut, *In Moderation* (Reprise).

9 Five guys form a band after a chance meeting six years before and decide to call themselves AMERICAN GIRLS. That's all the band's label, Trauma, will divulge about this band, whose single "Heavy And Struck" is featured on this month's CD. The only other known fact about this mysterious band (rumored to be from the Pacific Northwest) is that they feature a trumpet player, Gus Baum. Says vocalist Higgins (full name): "It made everything sound so fresh. We can write great pop songs, but it adds so much more that there's this unique instrument playing. Having a catchy horn like that defines us."

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8Stops7 (Warner Bros.) On The CD p. 79
www.repriserec.com/8stops7

100 Watt Smile (Thirsty Ear) Reviews p. 44
www.100wattsmile.com

Afrika Bambaataa Mixed Signals p. 55
caction.users.netlink.co.uk/bambaataa

Afro-Cuban Allstars (Nonesuch) Reviews p. 44

Afro-Mystik (Om) Reviews p. 44

American Girls (Trauma) On The CD p. 79
www.theamericangirls.com

Anal Cut (Earache) Metal p. 59

Fiona Apple (Clean Slate-Epic) Reviews p. 44
members.aol.com/FionaAD/Fiona.html

A*Teens (MCA) Reviews p. 45 www.a-teens.com

Eszter Balint (Scratchie) Reviews p. 45, On The CD p. 79

Bauhaus (Metropolis) Got Live p. 50 bauhausmusik.com

Beta Bodega Coalition (Beta Bodega) Dance p. 61

Big Bad Voodoo Daddy (Interscope) Reviews p. 45
www.bbvd.com

Björk (Elektra) Singles p. 62
cafe.rapidus.net/evailan/english.htm

Blondie (Beyond) Got Live p. 50 www.blondie.net

Blue Mountain (Roadrunner) Reviews p. 45
www.roadrun.com/artists/BlueMountain

Rick Brown (Thrill Jockey) Best New Music p. 22

Brutal Truth (Relapse) Metal p. 59
www.brutaltruth.com/brutal_truth

Bush (Interscope) Reviews p. 46 www.fanasyllum.com/bush

The Butchies (Mr. Lady) Cover Story p. 36
www.mrlady.com/bands/butchies/butchies.html

Cex (Underscore) Singles p. 62

Charlatans UK (MCA) On The CD p. 79
www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~zap/charlatans/tsthtml/headquarters-main.htm

Jackie Christie (Nervous) Life/Style p. 68

Clash (Epic) Got Live p. 50
www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Palladium/1028/

Cobra Killer (Digital Hardcore) Reviews p. 46, On The CD p. 79

Colongib (Underscore) Singles p. 62

Control Machete (Universal Latino) The Scene Is Now p. 56

Sammy Davis Jr. (Rhino) Flashback p. 63 www.sammydavis-jr.com

Ani DiFranco (Righteous Babe) Reviews p. 46, On The CD p. 79
anidifranco.org

Dillinger Escape Plan (Relapse) Metal p. 59
www.dillingerescapeplan.com

Dimitri from Paris (Atlantic) In My Life p. 67

DJ Faust (Bomb) Hip-Hop p. 60

DJ Paul Oakenfold (Kinetic) Mixed Signals p. 55
www.kineticrecords.com/kineticrecords/djxi.html

DJ Shortee (Bomb) Hip-Hop p. 60

Dump (Third Gear) Singles p. 62

El Gran Silencio (Ark 21) The Scene Is Now p. 56

Richard Farina (Vanguard) Flashback p. 63

Perry Farrell (Virgin) Feature p. 24

Bryan Ferry (Virgin) Reviews p. 46
www.its.caltch.edu/~bryan/roxy

Fifteen (Sub City) Cover Story p. 36 www.skatedork.org/fifteen

Foo Fighters (RCA) Best New Music p. 21 www.foofighters.com

Sue Garner (Thrill Jockey) Best New Music p. 22

Lisa Gerrard (Columbia) Reviews p. 47 www.lisa-gerrard.com

Grand Titan (Grand Royal) The Scene Is Now p. 56

Grateful Dead (Arista) Flashback p. 63 www.dead.net

Guided by Voices (TVT) Cover Story p. 36 www.gbv.com

The Hand (Messenger) On The CD p. 79

Hate Eternal (Wicked World) Metal p. 59 www.hateeternal.com

Richie Hawtin (Novamute) Best New Music p. 21
www.geocities.com/SoHo/2187

Him (Perishable) Reviews p. 48

Lauren Hoffman (Free Union) Reviews p. 48 www.forlauren.com

Idewild (Odeon-Capitol) On The Verge p. 18, On The CD p. 79
www.mboasis.freereserve.co.uk/idewild

Indigo Girls (Sony) Cover Story p. 36 www.indigogirls.com

The Jazz Modes (Koch) Flashback p. 63

The Jones Machine (Rephlex) Singles p. 62

Joy Division (NMC) Got Live p. 50
www.warren.org.uk/music/joyd.html

Jurassic-5 (Interscope) On The Verge p. 19 www.jurassic5.com

David "Junior" Kimbrough (Fat Possum) Flashback p. 63

Kittie (Artemis-Ng) Quick Fix p. 13, On The CD p. 79
www.kittie.net

Lambchop (Third Gear) Singles p. 62
www.landlocked.net/lambchop

Le Tigre (Mr. Lady) Reviews p. 48, On The CD p. 79

Arto Lindsay (Righteous Babe) On The CD p. 79

Living Sacrifice (Tooth & Nail) Cover Story p. 36
www.livingsacrifice.com

Llama Farmers (Beggars Banquet) Reviews p. 48
www.papereye.co.uk/bigwheels.htm

Los Marijuanos (Wicked Entertainment) Cover Story p. 36
www.wickedentertainment.com

The Madd Rapper (Columbia) Reviews p. 49

Madlocks (Beat Factory) Hip-Hop p. 60

Make Up (K) Feature p. 32, On The CD p. 79
www.kpunk.com/makeup/index.html

Mathematik (Beat Factory) Hip-Hop p. 60

Methods Of Mayhem (MCA) On The CD p. 79

Mighty Mighty Bosstones (Mercury) Cover Story p. 36
www.bigfoot.com/~mmbosstones

Misfits (Roadrunner) Reviews p. 49 www.cgocable.net/~misfits1

Willie Mitchell (The Right Stuff) Flashback p. 63

Moby (V2) Cover Story p. 36 www.moby.org

Molotov (Universal Latino) The Scene Is Now p. 56

Mortis (Earache) Quick Fix p. 16 www.mortis.com

Mos Def (Rawkus) Reviews p. 51
mason.gmu.edu/~dtursan/ramm/

Nebula (Sub Pop) Reviews p. 50, On The CD p. 79
www.nebulamusic.com

Willie Nelson (Sony Legacy) Flashback p. 63
www.willienelson.com

Mike Ness (Time Bomb) Reviews p. 50 www.mikeness.com

New Flesh For Old (Big Oada-Ninja Tune) Hip-Hop p. 60

No. 2 (Chainsaw) Best New Music p. 21, On The CD p. 79
www.ben2.ucla.edu/~emowuss/no2.html

On (Epic) On The CD p. 79

Tara Jane O'Neil (Touch and Go) Reviews p. 51

Andrea Parker (Mo Wax-XL) Reviews p. 51
www.id.net/~escape/astron/andreaparker/index.html

Peace Orchestra (G-Stone Records-Stud!o K7) Reviews p. 52

Brendan Perry (4AD) Reviews p. 47

Pharoahe Monch (Rawkus) Reviews p. 51

Pilote (Certificate 18 Electronic Projects) Dance p. 61

Pinback (Ace Fu) Reviews p. 52 members.home.com/zach36

Iggy Rock (Virgin) Cover Story p. 36
www.virginrecords.com/iggy_pop

Porter Ricks Vs. Techno Animal (Position Chrome-Force Inc.) Dance p. 61

Rage Against The Machine (Epic) Best New Music p. 22
www.ratm.com

Rick Rizzo and Tara Key (Thrill Jockey) Reviews p. 52

Roots (MCA) Hip-Hop p. 60
www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/4549/index.html

Save Ferris (Epic) Reviews p. 52 www.saveferris.com

Slipknot (Roadrunner) On The CD p. 79
www.slipknot2.com/main.htm

Smith & Mighty (Stud!o K7) Best New Music p. 22, On The CD p. 79

Snares And Kites (Innerstate) Reviews p. 53

Sonic Youth (SYR) Cover Story p. 36, Reviews p. 53
members.tripod.com/syonline

Reid Speed (Sm:)e Life/Style p. 68

Joe Strummer And The Mescaleros (Epitaph) Reviews p. 54, Q&A p. 17, On The CD p. 79

Sub Debs (K) Reviews p. 54

Tricky (Island) Quick Fix p. 11 www.trickyonline.com

Armand Van Helden (Armed) Life/Style p. 68

Violent Femmes (Beyond) Got Live p. 50 www.vfemmes.com

World/Inferno Friendship Society (Gern Blandsten) Singles p. 62

Camille Yarbrough (Vanguard) Singles p. 62

Zap Mama (Luaka Bop-Virgin) Feature p. 28, On The CD p. 79
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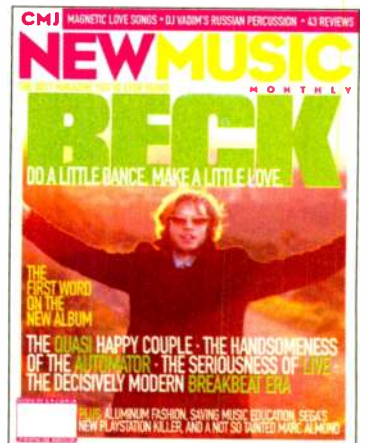
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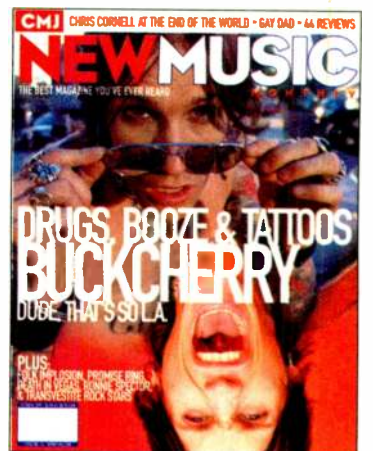
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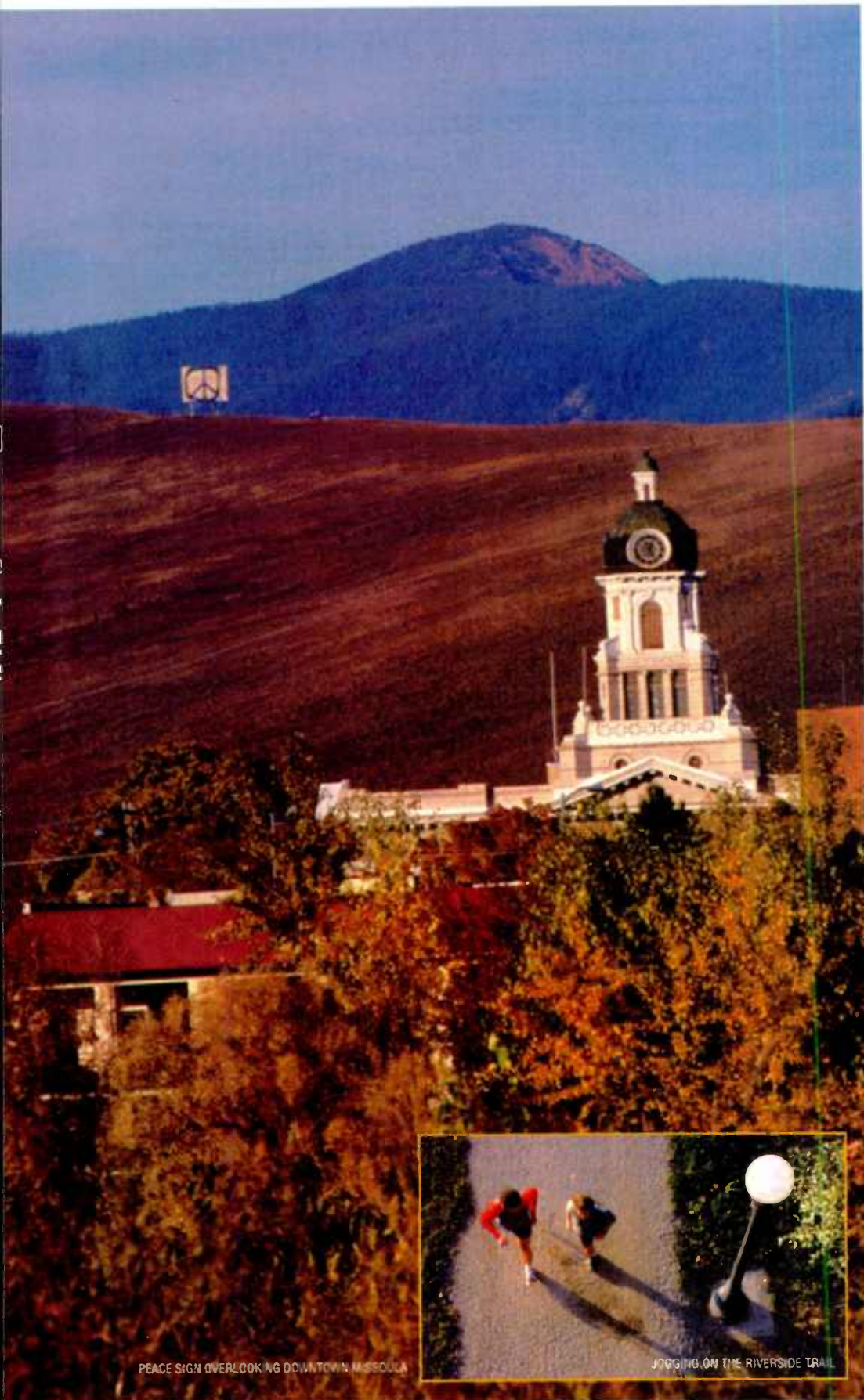
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PEACE SIGN OVERLOOKING DOWNTOWN MISSOULA



JOGGING ON THE RIVERSIDE TRAIL

The Paris of the West: that's what one magazine dubbed Missoula a few years back, and the title's not far off the mark. Culture—along with scenery and recreational opportunities—is a major reason why Missoula, pop. 50,000, keeps making top 10 lists of places to live in the U.S.

Home to the University of Montana, the city boasts plenty of creative characters, including Pearl Jam bass player Jeff Ament, Silkworm lead guitarist Andy Cohen, crime novelists James Lee Burke and James Crumley and authors William Kittredge and James Welch. The late poet Richard Hugo and Pulitzer Prize winner Richard Ford also lived here for a spell.

Keep in mind, this is Montana, and some 20 miles south of Missoula is the Bitterroot Valley, home to plenty of militias, right-wingers and survivalists who are more than a tad concerned about Y2K.

Still, the city remains a free-thinking oasis in a conservative state and when you elbow up to the **Mo Club Bar** (139 W. Main, 728-3740), you'll find everyone from Union tradesmen to artists, dreadlocked students, skaterats, New Party activists and doctors.

What you do for a living matters little to these folks and hardly anyone has any money, anyway. Housing costs are ever rising as telecommuters discover Missoula's fishing, skiing, fresh air and temperate climate.

Listen To The Music

Looking for a show? You're in luck here almost any night of the week with many on-the-road acts such as Chick Corea or Primus stopping in between gigs in Seattle and Minneapolis, or Denver or Salt Lake.

"I don't think there's ever been a more vibrant music scene in Missoula," says Tom Webster, who's been promoting concerts here for 20 years. Today he manages UM's **University Theatre** (on the University of Montana campus), venue for artists including the Long Beach Dub All-Stars, Henry Rollins and They Might Be Giants. When the superstars play, it's in UM's **Adams Event Center**, recently expanded to hold 6,500, or, in the summer, in **Grizzly Stadium**, also on campus—where Pearl Jam opened its 1998 world tour. (For ticket info on all university shows, call 243-4999.)

With summers so short, Montanans spend as much of the long days outside, and concert organizers do what they can to accommodate the urge. Outdoor music festivals sprout 'til the snow flies

at places like the **Marshall Mountain Ski Area** east of town (5250 Marshall Canyon Road, 258-6000) and the **Go-West Drive-In** (U.S. Hwy. 10 West, 549-0502).

Winters can last nine months here, so Missoula has plenty of clubs hosting shows for dancing and listening. The best dancefloor in town, with 1,000 square feet, is the **Cowboy Bar** (1100 Strand Ave., 543-7436), which offers local country music on weekends but hosts a variety of touring bands during the week, mostly swing and rockabilly (Kim Lenz And The Jaguars, Andrew Bird's Bowl Of Fire). Thursday nights find local alt-country favorites Cash For Junkers singing those old cowboy songs to fiddle, guitar, upright bass and drums—with no cover charge. People in Missoula save their precious dollars for special occasions, so promoters keep ticket prices down to \$5 or so for the best club shows, and let the world in for a dollar or two to the rest.

The heart of the nightlife scene beats in downtown Missoula, where a dozen clubs host concerts within walking distance of one another. Alternative bands, local and regional, play everything from punk to hip-hop to swamp rock at **Jay's Upstairs** (119 W. Main St., 728-9915), which plays host to regional and national alternative bands including Nashville Pussy, Mike Watt and the Blue Meanies. Blues fans go to **Sean Kelly's Pub** (130 W. Pine St., 542-1471), a comfortable, carpeted Irish bar with a small dancefloor, and home to concerts by Susan Tedeschi or the larger **Top Hat** (134 W. Front St., 728-9865). **The Ritz** (208 Ryman St., 721-6731) offers nightly music heavy on the psychedelic groove (ekoostik hookah) and funk (Portland's Rubberneck).

Big Eats Country

Late-night nibblers go to the **Dinosaur Cafe** in **Charlie B's** bar for cheap, delicious gumbo, jambalaya and, a favorite, shrimp etouffee, until 11 p.m. (Look for Charlie's, the anonymous hangout of local authors and musicians, next to **Zimorino's Restaurant**, 424 N. Higgins Ave. The bar has no sign and its phone number is unlisted.)

Get the best pizza in town until 11 p.m. at the **Bridge Bistro** (515 S. Higgins Ave., 542-0638), whose downstairs shares the lobby with the **New Crystal Theatre** (728-5748), Missoula's art-movie house. The Missoula ("Mo") Club is famous for its fresh, cheap, no-frills burgers; open all night is the **Oxford** (337 N. Higgins Ave., 549-0117) a dive bar by day and grease-fix for the bleary by early a.m. A tip: Steer clear of the brains and eggs, which literally taste offal.

Coffee Tawk

We love our coffee and baked goods here, and support almost as many coffee shops as taverns. The best: **Break Espresso** (432 N. Higgins Ave., 728-7300), famous for its pies, and **Butterfly Herbs** (232 N. Higgins Ave., 728-8780), selling incense, bulk teas and spices, candles and gifts as well as coffee and sandwiches. **The Raven Café** (130 E. Broadway, 829-8188), sells coffee, baked goods and focaccia sandwiches in an airy space that doubles as art gallery, reading room—complete with sofas and an aquarium—and pool hall.

Bringing It All Back Home...

Music buyers head to **Rockin Rudy's** (237 Blaine St., 542-0077), for its large and diverse selection of CDs and tapes; the store offers bluegrass, classical and jazz sections as well as a "Made In Montana" area, in addition to rock, country and children's music. The store also boasts a listening library and rooms selling toys, soap, jewelry, candles and greeting cards. Up the street, **Ear Candy Music** (736 S. Higgins Ave., 542-5029), specializes in vinyl and obscure alternative sounds.

On The Radio

"**Morning Free Forms**" on public radio station **KUFM** (89.1 FM) offers music at the whims of local personalities from 10 a.m. to noon daily; **College** station **KBGA** (89.9 FM) plays everything from rockabilly to rap to '80s glam rock.



BICYCLIST BRAVING STAIRS IN DOWNTOWN MISSOULA

For The Fun Of It...

People come to Montana for the mountains, and Missoula is no exception. **The Rattlesnake Wilderness Area**, a few miles northeast of town, offers miles and miles of hiking and biking trails, and numerous downhill ski areas wait within an hour's drive. Gearheads on a budget go to the roomy **Army & Navy Economy Store** or, upstairs, **Shamrock Sports** (both at 322 N. Higgins Ave., 721-1315). Secondhand stores abound, including the funky **Carlo's One Night Stand**, (204 S. 3rd St. W., 543-6350), so named because everything in the store is always for rent: plush, bejeweled crowns; feather boas; sequined evening dresses; vampire costumes; costume jewelry. The store does brisk business at Halloween, arguably Missoula's biggest holiday. Playful types must stop in the **Joint Effort** (311 N. Higgins Ave., 543-5627), a combination head shop and toy store.



CHICK COREA AT THE UNIVERSITY THEATER

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Sherry Jones, arts & entertainment reporter for the *Missoulian*, always parties like it's Y2K.

**SIR ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER'S
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STORY: STEVE GDULA ILLUSTRATION: NICHOLAS MEOLA

Beaverdale, Pennsylvania is a long way from Broadway. It's even farther from London. But one cold winter day in 1973, the stars aligned, maps converged, and the recorded by-product of those cultural meccas, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, came to my hometown.

I first got turned on to *Superstar* while visiting my Uncle Andy. Having raised his daughters—my cousins Pat, Mary, Suzie and Tina—through that dangerous brink of cultural destruction of the late '60s to the early '70s, my uncle had all but given up on parental impositions in his home. My cousins wore hip-huggers with groovy appliques, listened to Alice Cooper and even swore in front of their parents! Meanwhile I wore Sears Tough Skins, sang along with Disney characters and got in trouble for saying "Oh my God!" My cousins were cool. I was not. One afternoon, a strange and mystifying sound emanated from Suzie's stereo. Guitars and violins traded riffs. There was an angelic choir, yet there was also someone singing, belting like they did on that hard rock station my parents didn't like. This was music like nothing I'd heard before. My older sister and brother listened to The Monkees, while my parents were hot on polkas and Jim Reeves.

Mary handed me the album, and I stared at it in awe. The cover read *Jesus Christ Superstar*. The book inside the jacket explained it was "A Rock Opera" by two guys named Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice. I was hooked. I obsessed about the record for days, pestering my parents until they finally caved in.

All I talked about was *Jesus Christ Superstar*. I raced home from school to commandeer the stereo. I acted out each song, taking liberties in the process. For instance, even though Murray Head sang the part of Judas on my record, I knew Ben Vereen had originated the role. I'd seen enough variety shows to have all of Ben's moves down. As Judas, I would sing, shimmy and slide like no boy in Beaverdale ever had before.

I was big on the Jesus tip, too. Having an 8-year-old boy's near-soprano voice, I could wail and screech like a banshee. When I learned that Ian Gillan was not only the voice of Jesus, he was also the voice of Deep Purple, I added a strut and swagger to shame Robert Plant.

My best moments under the lights of the living room were saved for "Damned For All Time." As the wah-wah-ed guitar intro echoed through the room, I'd writhe on the floor, acting out the pain and anguish I knew Judas must have felt. When the beat kicked in, I'd leap in the air and flail myself around the room in an all-out interpretative jam. Sometimes in

"As King Herod, I'm pretty sure I brought down the house with my fey hip sways. And when I died on the cross, there wasn't a dry eye in the crowd."

my whirling frenzy, I'd lose my bearings and crack my forehead against the molding in the doorframe. No problem, I kept going. My parents ignored most of this until I started adding a seductive edge to "I Don't Know How To Love Him." I guess they figured having their son bust out a Twyla Tharp routine was one thing. Having him moan like the Whore of Babylon was something else.



This went on for about a year. That summer I coaxed my friends to come over under the pretense of playing wiffle ball and then, instead of assigning field positions, I handed out roles. My mini-productions didn't last for long, though. Sherry, tired of being cast as The Old Maid By The Fire rather than the coveted Mary Magdalene (what can I say, I played the part with more feeling), turned the gang against me.

"No fair. You get to be Jesus, Judas, Mary and King Herod!" she accused.

"Yeah, plus you always hog the libretto!" Greg shouted.

They were both right. After they stormed out of the house, I staged one final, glorious performance all on my own. As King Herod, I'm pretty sure I brought down the house with my campy Charleston and fey hip sways. And when I died on the cross, there wasn't a dry eye in the crowd.

These days, I'm not so concerned about hiding my unabashed devotion to Sir Webber's masterpiece. My devotion gets validated in unexpected ways. It's comforting to go to an Afghan Whigs show and hear them open with "Heaven On Their Minds." After that show, I got this image in my head of a young Greg Dulli, somewhere in a suburban living room, circa 1973. *Superstar* is on the turntable, and Gregg is wailing and thrashing around like the star he'd one day become.

And that's the beauty of Andrew Lloyd Webber's greatest work: You didn't need the boards of Broadway to step into the spotlight. You could be a superstar right in your very own home.

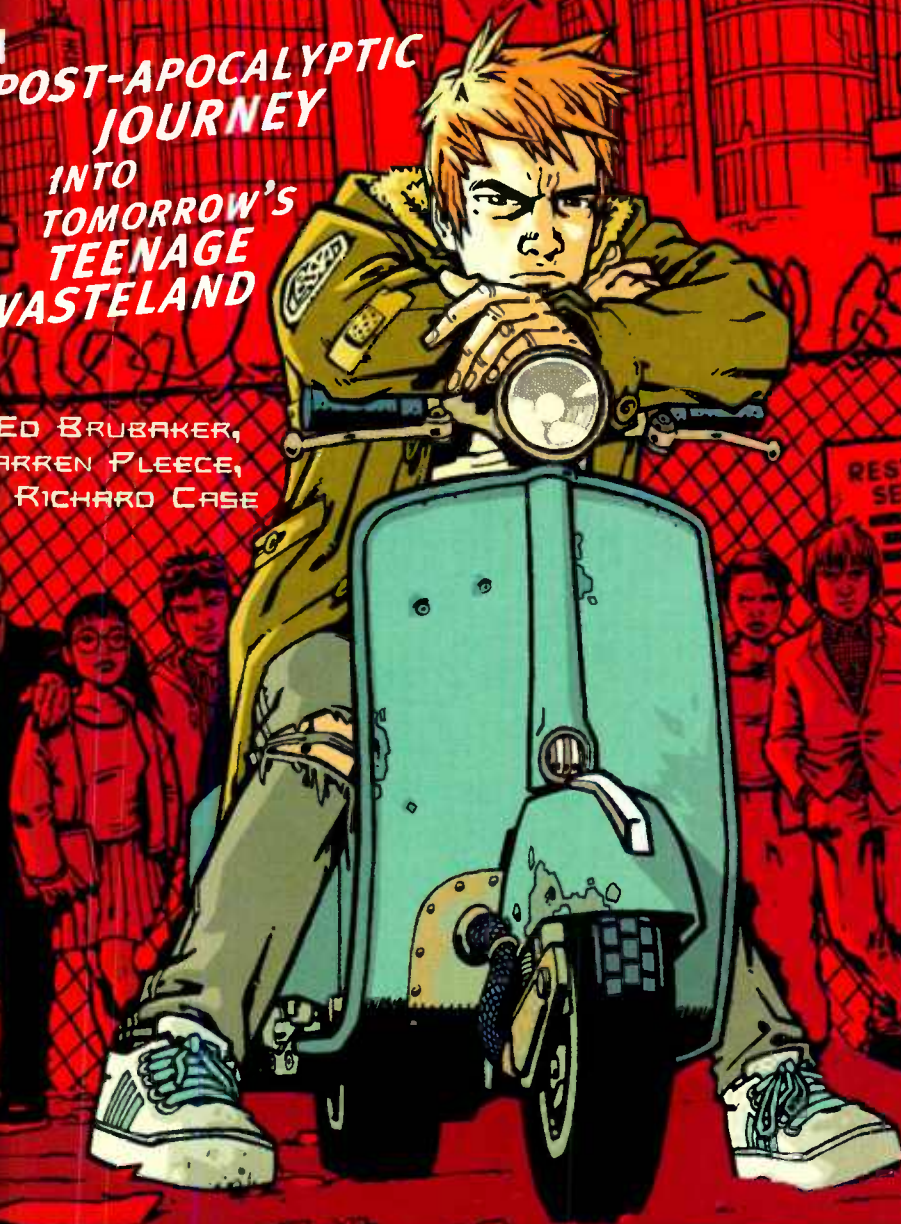
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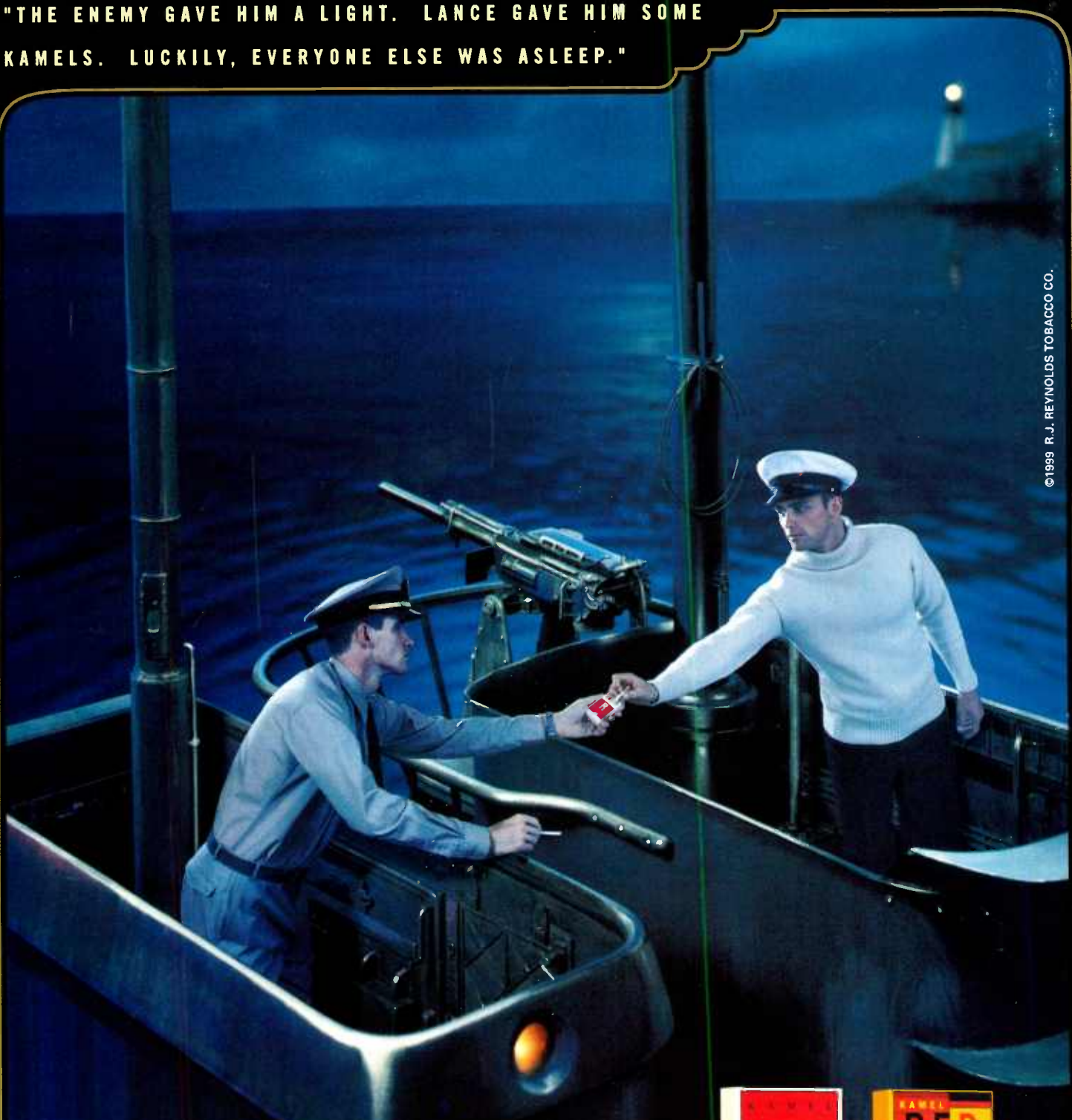
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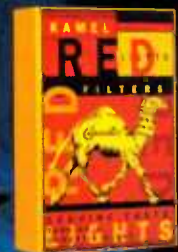
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