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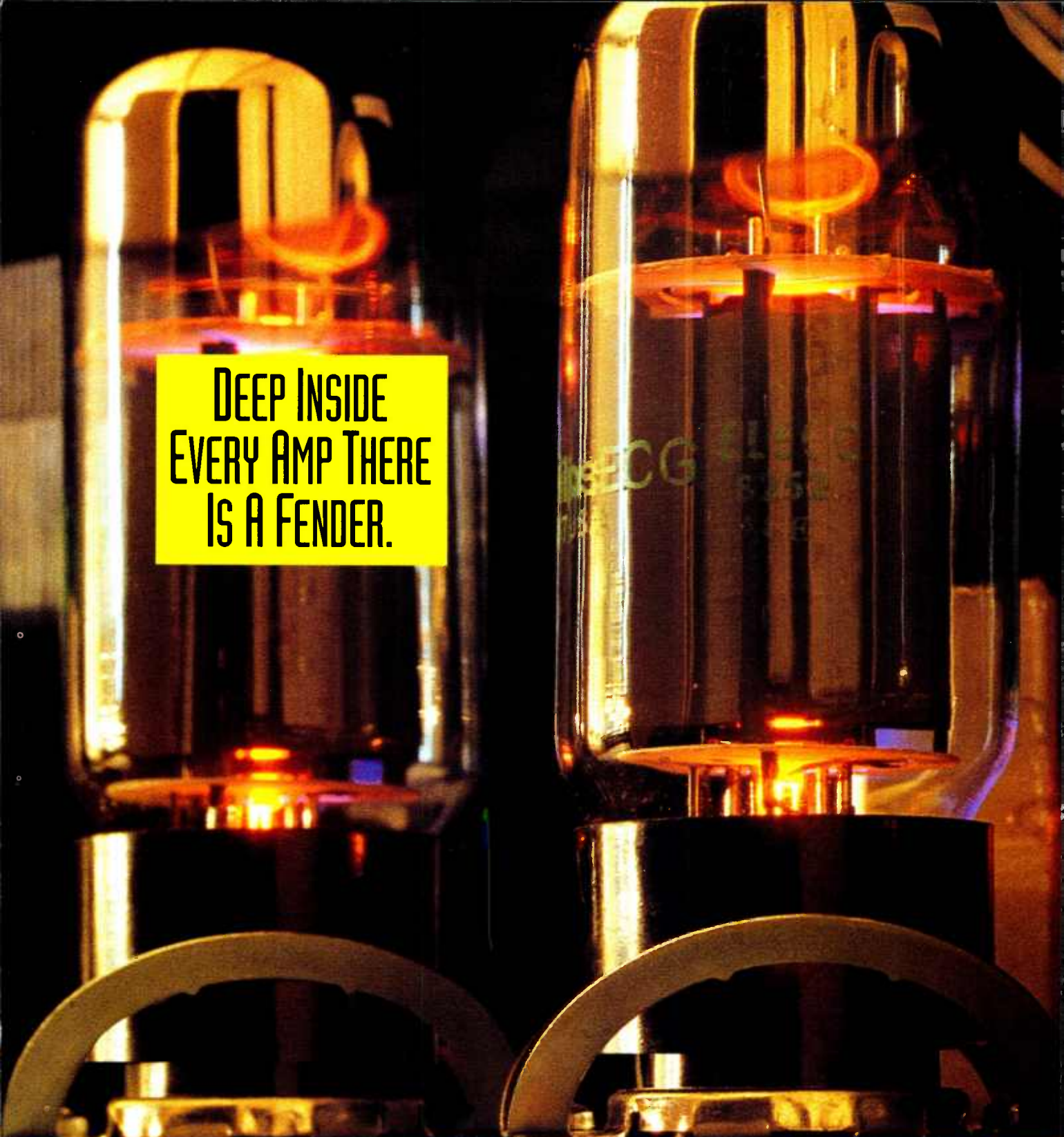
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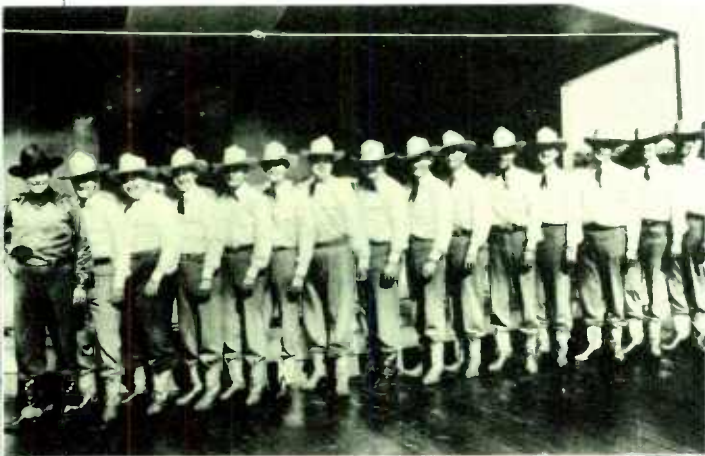
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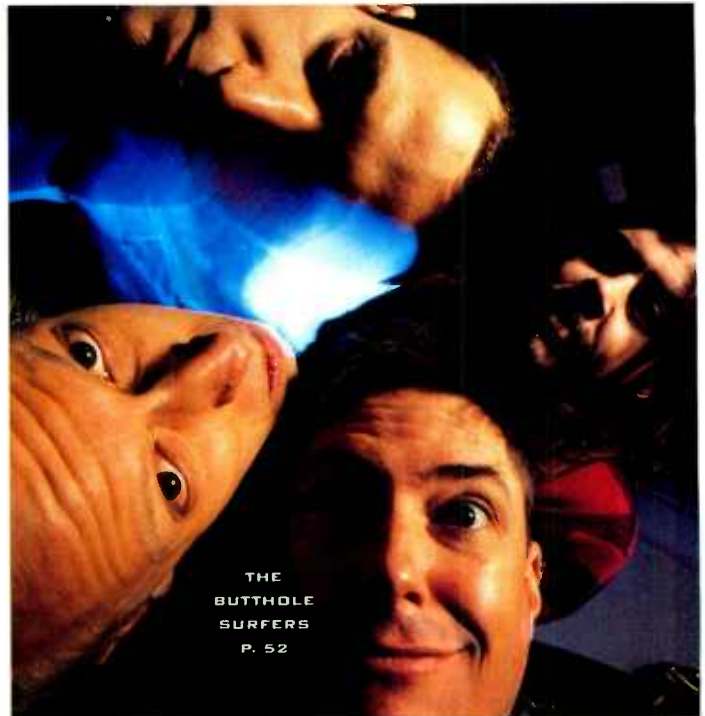
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ANNIE LENNOX

FRONT WOMAN

Congratulations on your Grammy nominations. Are you making any bets on how you'll do?

Well, I'm not a betting person. I didn't have any intention of being successful in America, and I really don't know why I have been. To be quite frank with you, before I started *Diva* I thought of telling the record company in America, "Let's not bother putting anything out there." And if they'd said, "That's fine," I would have been happy. Because I wasn't out to court the American marketplace; I haven't got a clue how to do that anyway, and writing in a formulaic way would have killed me. When I played the demos to Arista, Clive Davis told me I was very brave, which confused me and made me incredibly angry. In a funny way, that provoked me to want to show him that I was worth my salt, and so the latter part of the album is like that: "I'll show you." Ultimately, he spurred me on.

*If you hadn't released *Diva* in America, where would you have released it?*

They wouldn't have let me make that decision, probably. But I think small; I don't think about world domination. [laughs] I just thought, "Oh God, who'd want to listen to me anyway? Probably Europe, Australia, maybe somewhere in the Outer Hebrides...but definitely *not* America, so fuck them." [laughs]

Will you be at the Grammys?

I can't be there. I've got the best excuse in the world, because I'm about to give birth. I'd like to be there, but only as a fly on the wall. Usually with these things, I feel a combination of contempt and horror mixed with total fascination. It's quite a...*unique* event. [laughs]

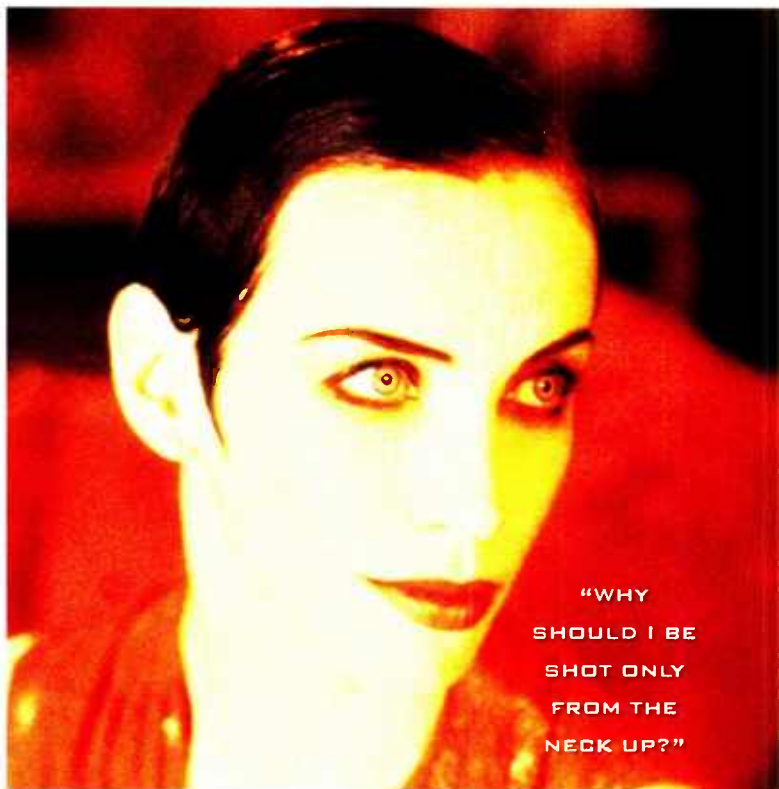
You feel it's more a business accolade than a personal award.

That's all it is to me. I'm happy to be looked on as a ballplayer, if you like, but my eyebrows are permanently raised. [laughs] Eurythmics were also awarded things in the past, but those gold discs are usually shoved away in some cupboard. I stumble upon them when I'm doing spring cleaning, and I think, "Oh, that's quite fun," then I put them away again.

Throughout your career, you've been strongly associated with video. Do you feel the need to do any more live performing, or are you more comfortable being seen primarily on TV?

I don't see the two in the same light at all. When I make a video I have no fear of it, it's under a certain degree of control; when you go out on stage, it's totally different. But for some reason I seem to be a performer. And something extraordinary does happen, this invisible bridge between a performer and an audience. At its worst it's diabolical, at its best it's amazing and almost essential. We don't have a church, the West has lost its faith, so we've got to have some space where we can lose ourselves and experience something that isn't everyday. But the fear is that you could become Spinal Tap.

I have a family now and it's hard for me to give myself a thousand percent like I did with Eurythmics. The thought of it terrifies me, and yet I did an MTV "Unplugged" in Montreux at very short notice and it was quite thrilling. I do feel that to prove to the audience that you can perform, it's necessary to do some appearances. I don't know, I'll have to play it by ear.



"WHY SHOULD I BE SHOT ONLY FROM THE NECK UP?"

Speaking of MTV, the video for "Little Bird" is fascinating. You're playing the M.C., introducing all your old video personas, who of course try to upstage one another. The catch is that you're heavily pregnant. It's a great comment on the contrast between image and reality.

Women get pregnant. I'm a working woman like any other who has children, and I thought, "Why should I be shot only from the neck up? Is this something to be ashamed of?" That video's laden with references to living with one's past mythology and how you are perceived by your audience. The fact is that I was pregnant, and there didn't seem to be anything to hide. So why not flaunt it?

Right now I'm just going to live a little. I never had the privilege of doing that in the past. I was always going from one record or tour to the next. I need to make some soup or read a book or see what the market has to offer. One of the pitfalls of being a musician, though, is that once you're established in a certain mode, that's it. That's something I always rail against; personally, I like to change.

Musicians are people too, right?

I'm not so sure, I think they're only extensions of MTV.

Is there anything you'd like to tell your devoted fans?

I don't know who they are. [laughs] I closed the fan club down, you know. Of course I love that people like the music, but any more than that and I get a bit suspicious. I don't go around thinking I have devoted fans. If there are some, I'd say, "Go and do something better with your life."

MAC RANDALL

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art director

CHARLES M. YOUNG
executive editor

MATT RESNICOFF
senior editor

MARK ROWLAND
(310) 273-7040
west coast editor

KEITH POWERS
managing editor

PETER CRONIN
developments editor

RUTH MAASSEN
typesetter

MAC RANDALL
assistant editor

JOCK BAIRD · J.D. CONSIDINE
SCOTT ISLER · JIM MACNIF · TONY SCHERMAN
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contributing editors

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administration

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circulation director

ALLIS RUNCO
assistant circulation manager

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main office/production/retail sales

1515 BROADWAY, 39TH FL.
NEW YORK, NY 10036 (212) 536-5208
advertising/editorial

GORDON BAIRD
SAM HOLDSWORTH
founders

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I feel compelled to write a short note about your Dec. '92 piece on Roger Waters. In my interview with Matt Resnicoff, I discussed at tedious lengths the history of my disputes with Roger, and I think that as everyone else must be as bored as I am by this saga, I shall try to be brief.

Matt asserts in his piece on Roger that the other people present at the now-legendary lunch with Steve Ralbovsky did not support my view that Timothy White's account of this lunch, and most of the rest of White's article, were a pack of lies; however, on checking, I find that Matt had not checked this with any of the people present. Had he extended me this small courtesy, he would have found that no one there would have corroborated this fiction, and I would not have found myself having to defend this small but significant (to me) slur on my honesty this way.

Yours without recrimination,
David Gilmour

Roger Waters claims that in 1986, Gilmour and his producer Bob Ezrin were pressured by a Columbia Records executive to improve on demos which, at the time, weren't up to Pink Floyd standards. Ezrin confirms that this lunch did occur, and my statement that those at the lunch corroborated the story was meant only to imply that the company expressed concern over the quality of the product—not that Mr. Gilmour buckled under this pressure. My apologies for the vague wording.
—Matt Resnicoff

I think I speak for a lot of Pink Floyd/Roger Waters fans out there when I say that it is a shame that these two talented individuals cannot put aside their differences and make the magic that we once knew

LETTERS

as "Pink Floyd." The legal fight over the use of the moniker is over, and both men simply agree to disagree on this particular subject. Bullying Roger to respond about what Dave said earlier not only reopens old wounds, but it brings back sad memories for those of us who had to watch our favorite band split apart. Simply put, each man has a different view. What is past should be left in the past.

Michael Confer
San Dimas, CA

The cover above Roger Waters' name read, "Pink Floyd Wars." My question is: Who forgot to drop the letter "r" from the word "wars"?

Dave Hewitt
West Long Branch, NJ

Give it a rest. Nobody gives a shit about this "story"! It's old hat. Listen to someone new for a change! Fifteen years of bickering is enough.

Bob Lester
Ardmore, PA

Two things remain perfectly clear after all the Gilmour-Waters point-counterpoint: One is that Roger Waters is a rare and extraordinary talent; the other is that Pink Floyd is a venal and abject joke without him. The very least Gilmour could do is change the name to Ersatz Pink Floyd—or perhaps Spinal Floyd.

Nathan Duin
St. Paul, MN

Roger Waters' answer to David Gilmour's criticisms in the August 1992 edition of *Musician* is an album entitled *Amused to Death*. This album not only is the "Pink Floyd sound," but the lyrics represent what Bob Dylan *ought* to be

saying instead of prattling on about Jesus. I will always buy "Gilmour-Townsend," "Gilmour-Mason-Wright," etc., because it still sets an almost unachievable standard. Indeed, it is only surpassed by "Waters."

Ron Chapman
Walton-on-Thames, Surrey
England

I admit I wanted to see Waters respond to Gilmour's accusations as much as anyone, but Waters made me realize I wanted more than that, and he gave it to me. He took the high road and took all the readers along with him.

Martha Pervin
Indialantic, FL

I have met both Gilmour and Waters, and Roger was surprisingly easy to talk to, and came across as being much more honest and sincere than Gilmour.

As far as using the name "Pink Floyd," Waters has only been trying to keep Gilmour and Nick Mason from cashing in on a name that has more market strength than either of their own. A more accurate name for Gilmour's Floyd would be "Floyd-Lite."

Marc Holden
Towson, MD

"The Last Pink Floyd Story"? Please, God, let it be true.

Steve Richardson
Sierra Vista, AZ

ELVIS SIGHTING

Thank you so much for your issue on Elvis (Oct. '92). You know I'm a fan and an amateur musician so I'll enjoy your magazine.

Bill Clinton
Little Rock, AR

Dear Mr. Flanagan: Wake up and smell the political incorrectness of your ways. Your insensitive interchanging of the terms "wimpy," "nerdy" and "gay" in your Morrissey review (Dec. '92) illustrates little more than the obvious fact that you could use a physical and emotional catharsis of your own. Hopefully this would lay to waste those wretched rock 'n' roll traditions to which you cling (and Morrissey despises), as well as exempt you from the need to frequent those male reassurance ceremonies where "men" in tight pants smack each other around.

Don Rice
Oklahoma City, OK

The terms "wimpy," "nerdy" and "gay" were not used interchangeably.—Bill Flanagan

FIT FOR A QUEEN

I just wanted to write and thank you for *not* paying tribute to Freddie Mercury. I can't believe so many people actually believe that Queen was innovative. I've always thought Queen was a lot of pretty, overblown crap, and little else. And I will probably always hate them for, if nothing else, being subjected to "We Will Rock You" at sporting events.

Russ Cole

ERADA

I enjoyed Charles M. Young's coverage of the Red Hot Chili Peppers (Jan. '93). However, he incorrectly lists Chad Smith's cymbal selection: Chad has been a Sabian endorser since 1987.

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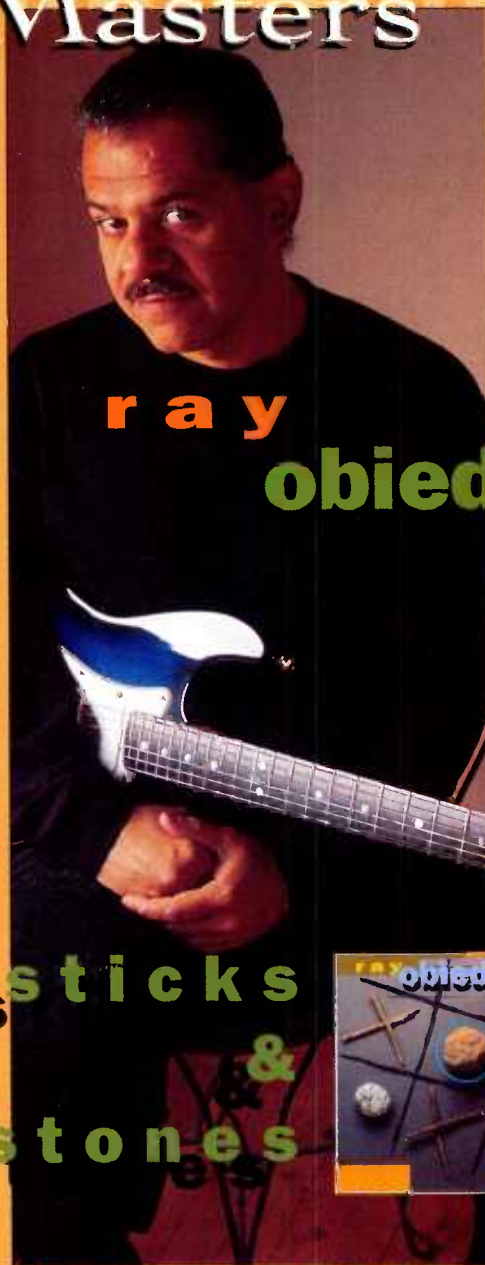
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RAYMOND SCOTT



"I found Raymond Scott on the musical scrapheap and I knew he didn't belong there," says Irwin Chusid, producer of *The Music of Raymond Scott: Reckless Nights and Turkish Twilights* (Columbia). Some 50 years after Scott composed such

zany compositions as "Powerhouse," a.k.a. the Bugs Bunny theme, the 84-year-old jazz composer/engineer is finally getting some recognition on this best-of-Looney-Tunes package.

Though Scott's music set the atmosphere in the classic Warner Bros. cartoons, and more recently for Ren & Stimpy, the composer never intended his work for animation. If anything, Scott was considered avant-garde, not commercial, and critics in the '30s regarded his quintet as ersatz jazz. Perhaps they were offended by his whimsical titles, such as "Dinner Music for a Pack of Hungry Cannibals" and "War Dance for Wooden Indians."

Scott also left quite a legacy as an engineer, pioneering multi-track recording (along with Les Paul), and inventing instruments such as the Karloff (a precursor to the analog synthesizer), the Electronium (a composing machine developed for Motown in the '70s), the Clarivox (a keyboard theremin) and even a synthesizer with Robert Moog.

By the time he retired in the late '70s, he had come up with 130 com-



positions on his computer. One piece, "Soothing Sounds for Baby," pre-dates Kraftwerk and Residents electronic pop and dance music by at least 10 years. Scott's music has been quoted by Devo, They Might Be Giants and Jim Thirwell of Foetus. Even if it's more than a decade since you watched your last episode of Road Runner, Scott's music will have that amusingly familiar feel.

"Friends I had taped Scott's music for passed it on to their friends and it quickly caught on at parties, on college radio, even through computer networks," says Chusid. "It's a musical virus. When someone catches it, they want to give it to someone else."

MARISA FOX

THE TRAGICALLY HIP

WILL THEY SELL IN BLOOMINGTON?

"Growing up in Canada, you see the road to Los Angeles littered with the corpses of bands seeking American acceptance, as if that would make you a legitimate success story back home," says Gordon Downie, dynamic lead singer for the Tragically Hip. "The lesson is that it's pointless to do anything differently to attract an American audience."

To be sure, only a fool would temper with this quintet's driving sound, which echoes everyone from the Stones to Midnight Oil to R.E.M., yet boasts its own brooding identity.

North of the border, the band enjoys headliner status and album sales in six figures. Down here, they're still bubbling under, although the group's striking third LP ought to change that. Produced by Chris Tsangarides, whose resume includes Concrete Blonde and numerous metal dudes, *Fully Completely* features enough angst to charm the alternative crowd and plenty of big beats for the mainstream.

Back in the early '80s, the Kingston, Ontario combo took its name from a Mike Nesmith video, recalls guitarist Bobby Baker,

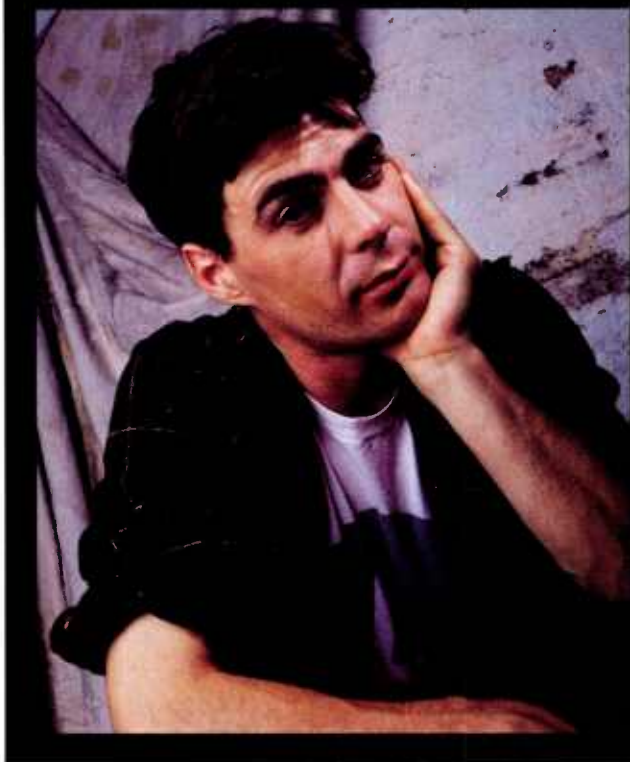
because "we thought our musical taste was far too sophisticated to be successful. In Canada, people loved the name, but when we came to the U.S., everyone hated it. 'One of the worst names in the annals of rock history,' said a critic.

"How do you measure success?" he continues, acknowledging the band's relative anonymity here. "On our second visit to America, we played to four people in Bloomington, Indiana, and it was the best date of the tour. Sometimes you put on a better show when there's a real challenge." Grins Downie, "What we lost in attendance, we gained in camaraderie. It was a little pathetic, but..."

Adds the singer, without much conviction, "The canyon seems to be growing between our popularity at home and our lack of it in the States, so maybe we should think more about the situation. But it's really pretty simple: We do well in Canada, so everything else is gravy."

JON YOUNG





LINDA COVELLO

CHRIS KOWANKO

Down and Coming Out

Chris Kowanko's world is a bummed-out place, but then low spirits are what fuel this singer/songwriter's creativity. "If you can write a song about feeling good, that's a real gift," Kowanko says. "But if you can somehow whip bad feelings into a shape, then you can exorcise them." In that case, writing songs like "Love Monster" and "Murder Girl" for his debut (*Chris Kowanko*, Morgan Creek Records) must have worked therapeutic wonders. Saving grace: Kowanko brightens his morose lyrics with vibrant melodies.

The Australian native started

writing songs a decade ago, after moving to Brooklyn. Sporadic gigs and a handful of demos finally landed Kowanko a record deal, but he's still holding on to his day job as a carpenter. "I'm a little apprehensive about how things might change in my life," he says, "but my wife and I are ready for a change." As Kowanko tiptoes on the line between stardom and obscurity, he's trying to remain calm, at least in public. "I don't usually jump up and down and click my heels until I get alone," he says. "Then I sort of clap and have a seizure."

JEREMY HELLIGAR

CHRISTINE LAKELAND

Beyond the Gale

"For me, it's always been the song within the groove. The groove's got to be there to hold up the song, and the song should sound good on its own with just a guitar. The feel is what makes it."

Christine Lakeland is as good as her word. *Reckoning*, her recent independently produced album, is loaded with clever, insightful songs that cut straight to the heart and parts south. Fans of J.J. Cale will recognize the small blonde dynamo from her longtime on/off tenure as a singer/guitarist in his band. Lakeland's also recorded with Merle Haggard, Hoyt Axton and Leon Russell. For the past five years, however, she's been on her own, packing her three-piece band

throughout the West to enthusiastic club audiences.

Tough to pigeonhole, Lakeland's songs are stories textured in blues/country/soul/pop flavorings that touch familiar themes in unfamiliar ways. Delivered in an appealing flat, dusky, unaffected vocal manner, and driven by the snaky rhythm/lead style of her Gibson 347, her tunes stick to the ribs while leaving memorable hooks floating in your head. With friends like Cale, Benmont Tench, Mike Campbell, Jim Keltner and Tim Drummond providing instrumental support, can recognition be far behind?

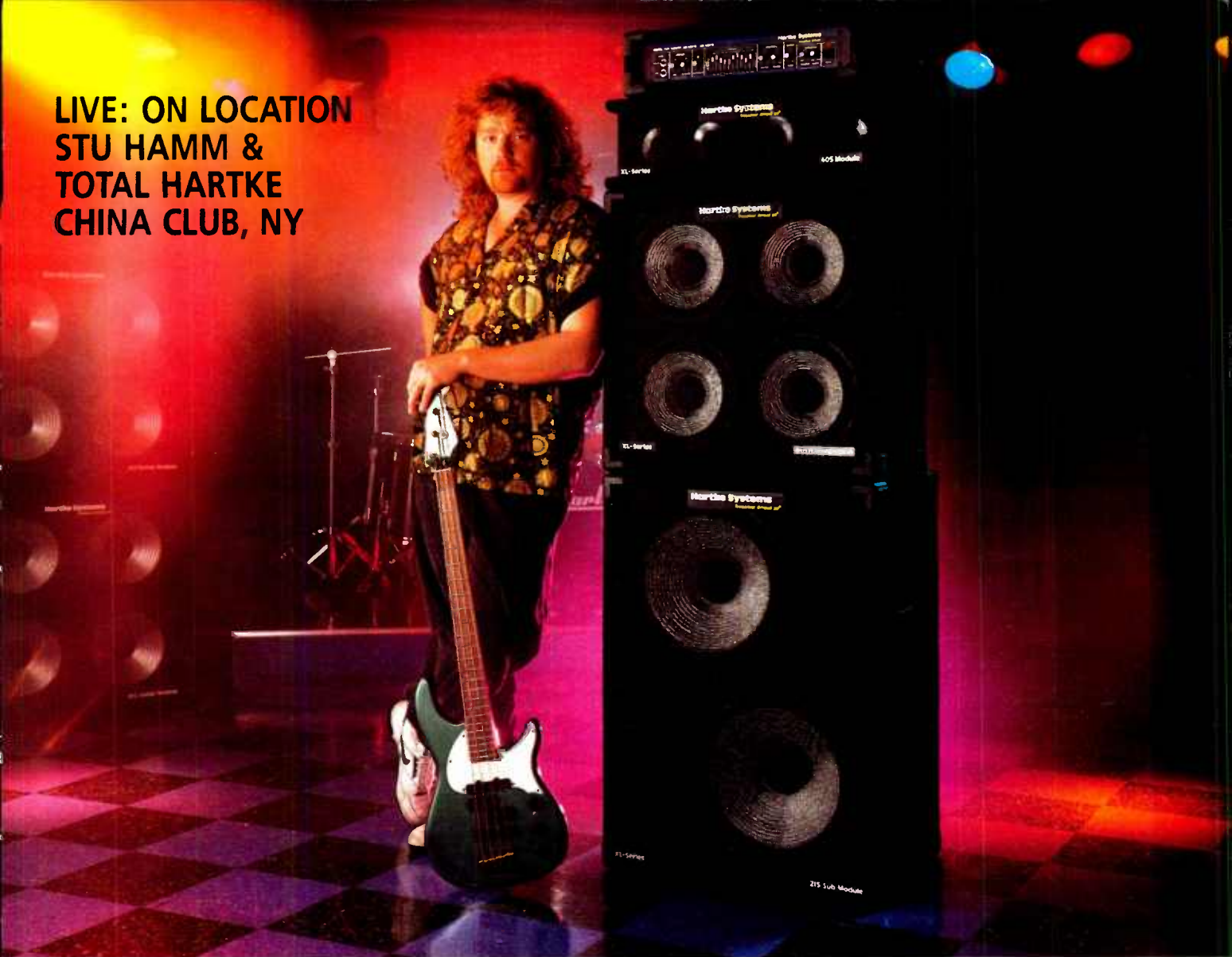
Reckoning is available directly from the artist (Box 8882, Universal City, CA 91608; \$15).

JON SIEVERT

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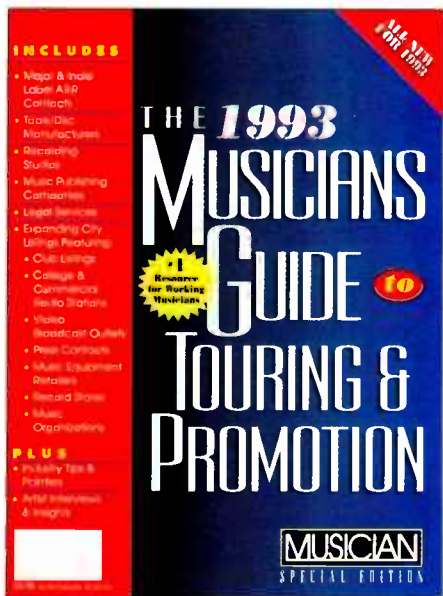
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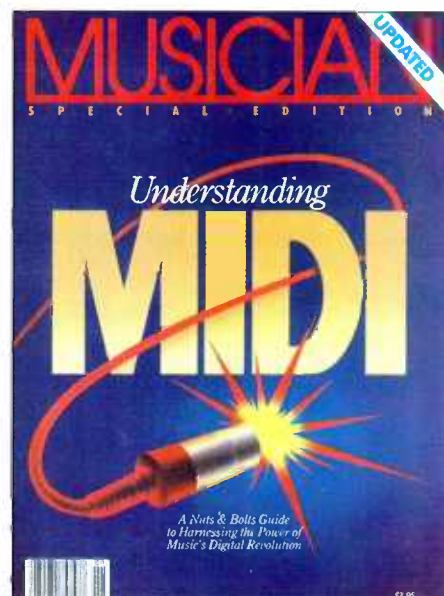
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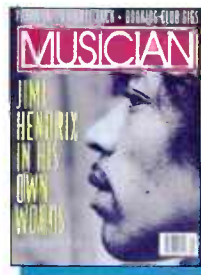
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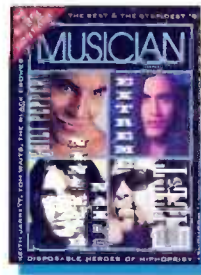
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RACHELLE FERRELL

Rachelle Ferrell is a little lady with a big voice: six octaves, to be exact. When I first heard Ferrell years ago, in a typical two-room, two-bar Philly joint, I was reminded of the classic Ella/Memorex commercial; I sat and waited for the glass to shatter. Though the glassware prevailed, and Ferrell, 29, still lives near Philadelphia, she's since become a voice to be reckoned with. *First Instrument*, released only in Japan (on Something Else/Toshiba, 1990), was her jazz debut; now Ferrell's eponymous Capitol Records release, which also showcases her writing, arrangements and keyboard skills, puts her in the enviable position of having a pop deal and a jazz deal at the same time. For Ferrell, there's no real split: "I've lived very comfortably in both worlds for a long time," she says, "and the only reason they have to be separated or delineated from each other is so the industry can accommodate or process it. I don't separate it in myself at all. It's music to me." **KAREN BENNETT**

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GRUNTRUCK

(L TO R) BEN McMILLAN,
NORMAN SCOTT, TOM
NIEMEYER AND TIM PAUL



JOE GIRON

The name may suggest a vehicle built for the conveyance of noisy boars to the slaughterhouse, but Gruntruck is, in fact, the latest sensation in a parade of bone-crushing Seattle hard rock bands. Comprised of alumni of several notable and

(partially) defunct groups—primarily Skin Yard and the Accused—Gruntruck have the potential to break commercial ground that eluded their struggling forebears.

“The crowds were getting bigger and all that good stuff,” says Skin-Yard-turned-front-Grunt Ben Mc-

Millan. “But Skin Yard was pigeonholed as alternative from the beginning, and a lot of people never opened their ears. We were flogging a dead horse, and you could smell the must setting in. Jack [Endino, former Skin Yard guitarist and famous grunge producer] said, ‘I can’t be in a band with you seven more years—I’ll go produce, you go Grunt, and I’ll meet you in the studio.’”

The band set about constructing material and recording almost casually, gradually making their side project a legitimate enterprise. “The album was written by getting together two nights a week for five months,” claims drummer Norman Scott. “No one seemed to be in any big hurry.”

Endino produced *Inside Yours*, which bore the trademark stamp of

Skin Yard’s edgy earlier work: brittle guitars building into a singular, metallic riffing machine, given fervent life through McMillan’s psychopowerful vocals. The band’s latest album, *Push* (Roadracer), hones the abrasive borders that gave *Inside* its distinctive ear-ringing grind—cleaner Tom Niemeyer guitar work frosting the exquisitely painful rhythms with an emphasis on structure that doesn’t scuttle the irresistible groove—something McMillan counts among the band’s most valuable assets.

“Tommy’s style is amazing,” McMillan swears. “I think he likes to play in Gruntruck because it’s challenging to play slower than he did in the Accused. Besides, we’re learning to practice sober now. It’s pretty scary.” **JEFF GILBERT**

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ON STAGE



PEARL JAM

DON'T LOOK FOR EDDIE Vedder to appear in a Calvin Klein advertisement anytime soon.

Pearl Jam's lead singer pretty much dashed his chances of following Marky Mark as underwear's poster child within minutes of opening the New Year's Eve show at New York nightclub The Academy. As Vedder glared into a camera that beamed the concert to the tourists in Times Square where a giant billboard of the unwrapped rapper presides, he screamed, "I want to give Marky Mark the fucking finger. Anyone can drop their

pants and get attention. Are you a fucking singer? Let's see some talent."

And with that, Vedder and the rest of the band unleashed a musical torrent that insured they will never have to resort to dropping trou to turn heads. The quintet's debut, released in September 1991, has gone triple platinum and continues to sell strongly. Pearl Jam's acclaim rests solely on their driving yet melodic music and Vedder's unrelenting intensity. As the band launched into "Why Go," a tale of a girl imprisoned in a mental hospital, Vedder gazed out over the audience with the sort of fixed maniacal stare usually reserved for serial killers, relinquishing his tight, two-handed grip on the microphone only when the crowd shouted the chorus. Like many of Vedder's lyrical [cont'd on next page]

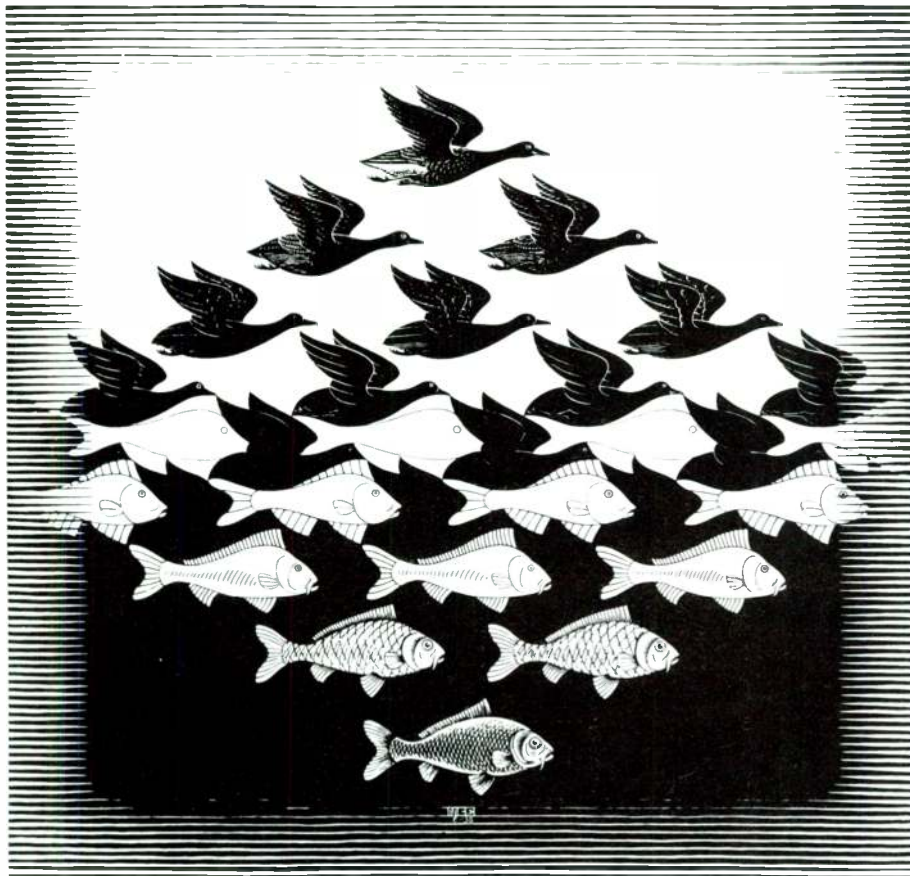
BLUES TRAVELER



FOR BLUES TRAVELER, 1992 was a year to forget. An eager, improv-hungry, neo-retro band that long ago dubbed their endless cross-country trekking "On Tour Forever," BT retreated to their New York homebase following vocalist John Popper's debilitating motorcycle accident late last summer and cheered from the sidelines as road-warrior compatriots the Spin Doctors lit up the charts.

Ironically, the layoff has served Blues Traveler well. A few months holed up in the studio producing album number three, *Save His Soul* (due mid-April), left BT eager to please the hometown crowd that crammed into the Paramount Theatre in Manhattan on New Year's Eve. Popper, confined to a wheelchair and resembling an energized Ironside, rolled out to centerstage and wasted little time in brandishing his trademark harmonica. The band was so into the groove that the official end of the year came and went without notice. Five minutes later, the band paused as their mascot, a leather-clad cool cat, drove a Harley across the stage and "recreated" Popper's crash in the wings. Keeping a promise he made earlier in the day to stand up at midnight (give or take a few clock ticks), Popper grimaced and rose out of his chair, waving to the merry-making audience as the confetti dropped and the champagne flowed—mostly onto the fans packed tight down front. [cont'd on next page]

If you think only your eyes can play tricks on you...



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Study the illustration. Are the geese becoming fish, the fish becoming geese, or perhaps both? Seasoned recording engineers will agree that your eyes *and* your ears can play tricks on you. In the studio, sometimes what you think you hear isn't there. Other times, things you don't hear at all end up on tape. And the longer you spend listening, the more likely these aural illusions will occur.

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BLUES TRAVELER

BT then charged into the rest of a 16-song, two-and-a-half-hour set that drew heavily on both familiar and new material. The key to the band's onstage magic is the intertwining of Popper's virtuosic harp blasts with guitarist Chan Kinchla's rawhide riffing. Kinchla, whose waist-length hair swayed back and forth like the cleaning flaps in a car wash, wrangled his gleaming red Strat through familiar 10-minutes-and-change marvels like "Mulling It Over" and "Crystal Flame." Other times, as on the ball-

busting "Sweet Talking Hippie," he'd fall back in the mix to let Popper scat.

While the band's established repertoire works in the improv groove department, the new material offered much tighter arrangements, ranging from the low-key "Letter to a Friend" and "Defensive Desire" to the half-beat-shy-of-reggae "Go Outside and Drive."

Hours after the 2 a.m. encore—a double-time reading of "Johnny B. Goode"—Kinchla waxed optimistic over BT's first taste of '93. "Thank God the energy level was there, because Lord knows we missed a few cues," he laughed. "Over-

all, though, the show was loose and dynamic, and I'm pumped to hit the road again for a long stretch." Now there's some good new-year's news for fellow Travelers. —MIKE METTLER

PEARL JAM

creations, "Why Go"’s protagonist is already over the edge. Others are so close to the brink that the slightest breeze will blow them into the abyss. As fragile as some of his characters seem, Vedder's voice was strong enough to yank them back to safety for another day. During the hypnotically urgent "Alive," Vedder's vocals never wavered even when sustaining long notes.

Rarely communicating with each other onstage, the band members seemed to be in their own orbits. When not singing, Vedder, whose pretty-boy brown locks were tucked underneath a black hat kept on by duct tape, roamed and rolled around stage in an off-beat dance of alienation, at one point causing roadies to dash onstage after he obviously knocked over an open bottle of champagne perched on an amp. Guitarist Stone Gossard ran around in circles, literally, while lead guitarist Mike McCready tended to stick to one spot. Bassist Jeff Ament occupied a zone bordered by Vedder and drummer Dave Abbruzzese. Despite the lack of any obvious interplay, the sounds created a united, impenetrable front that spilled out over the audience. During the pulsating "Evenflow," McCready's striking guitar solo expanded the song's eloquence far beyond what's captured on record.

The band's sense of isolation extended to the audience. Though one could hardly expect—or want—Vedder to scream, "We love you, New York" or other concert clichés, a little more exposition would have been welcome, especially when playing unfamiliar material such as the new, snarling "Drop the Leash" and "Dirty Frank," a ditty about the band's bus driver that appears as the B-side to "Jeremy."

However, the crowd forgave any transgressions during a ferocious version of "Porch." As Vedder begged for "one more chance," he dove into the mosh pit, protectively bundled in a leather jacket thrown onstage earlier by fans. Security kept a tight hold on his microphone cord as if it were his only lifeline to safety. They still had a tough time wrestling Vedder away from the clutching mob, eventually throwing him roughly back up onstage. A little dazed, he stood up and left with the rest of the band offering no goodbyes, no encore and certainly no "Auld Lang Syne," but nevertheless sending the audience deliriously into the New Year.

—MELINDA NEWMAN

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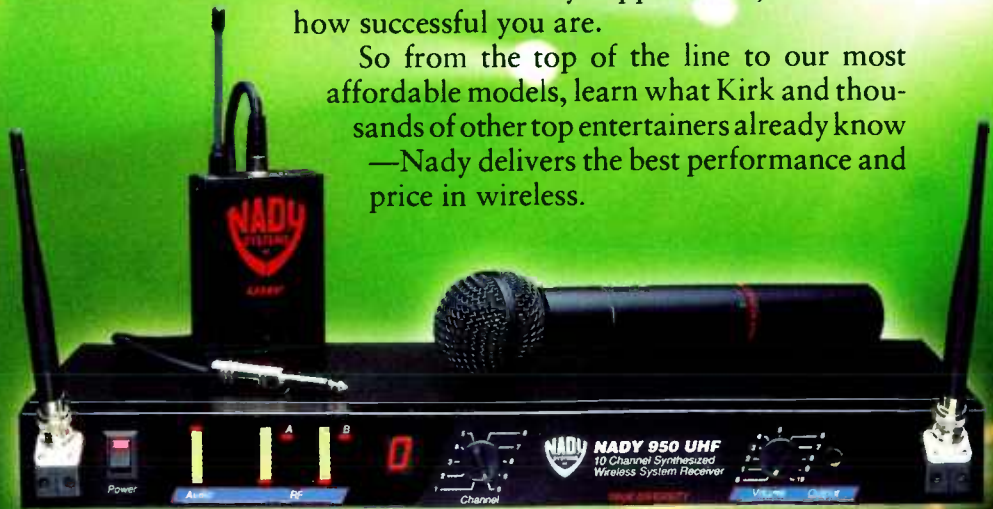


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Duke Ellington, Wes Montgomery, Milt Jackson and Jimmy Smith so great was that everything they played tells the truth."—Russell Malone



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purest expression of one's personal identity. represents traveled."

—Marlon Jordan

To me, jazz the road less



COLUMBIA JAZZ

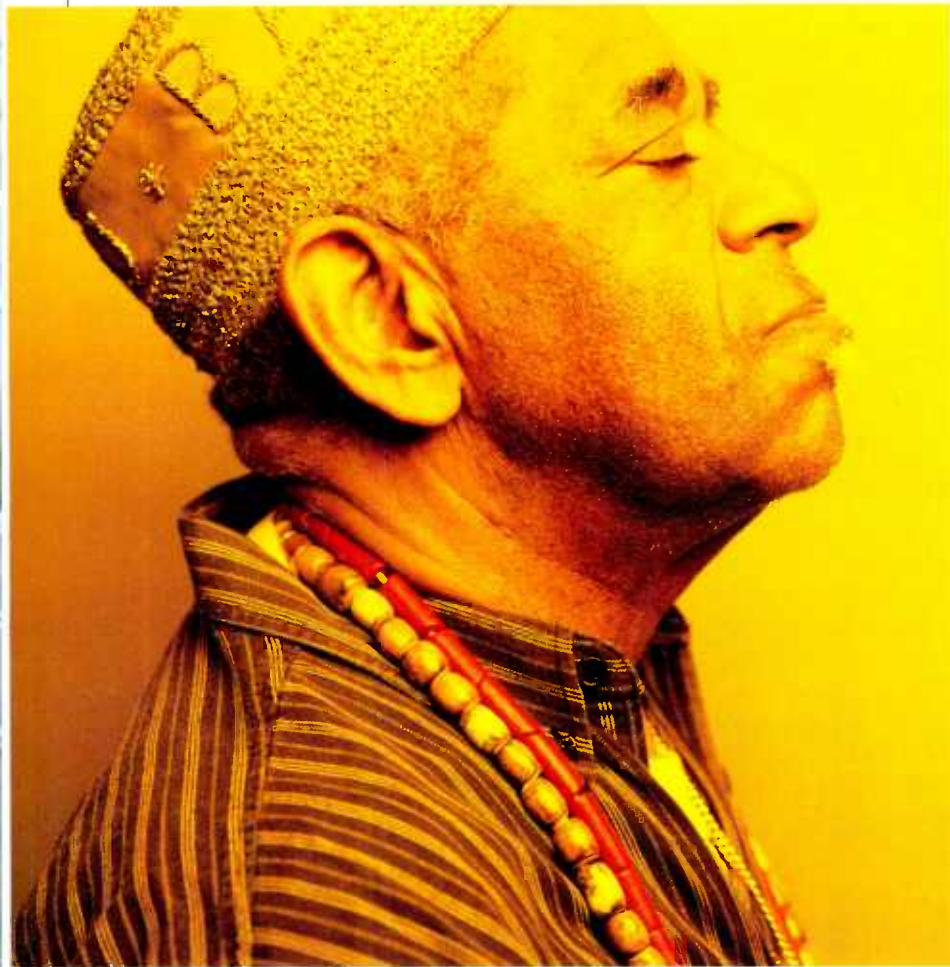
WHERE TRADITION MEETS TOMORROW

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COLUMBIA



DIZZY GILLESPIE: 1917-1993



he extended the parameters of the trumpet, and people are going to have to reckon with that for a long time.

"He was also a very original thinker, and when you look back at Dizzy's history, it's unbelievable. He ran for President—just nobody else did shit like that," he laughs. "Yet he was so humble and so accessible to everybody; his sense of humor was always there; his seriousness was always there; his harmonic perception was profound—he was one of those very special people who went out of their way to share that with all of us."

Much as Louis Armstrong revolutionized the language of jazz in the '20s, Bird and Diz transformed the American vernacular in the 1940s with a new form of expression—a new

*Love is a babe;
then might I not say so,
To give full growth to that
which still doth grow.
—Shakespeare*

style of *phrasing*—that crystallized the entire African-American tradition, as evolutionary as it was revolutionary, a natural progression of ideas from the tail-end of the Depression through the outbreak of World War II.

Bird and Diz and the youngsters who followed on their Long March were a new breed of African-American outlaws, gladiators and philosopher-kings for whom the old ways and tired excuses were no longer good enough—talking about things to come. Today the youngsters talk about sampling. Well, Bird and Diz sampled the big band tradition. They sampled the sophisticated harmonic structures of Tin Pan Alley. Their innovations set instrumentalists free, and gave each member of the ensemble a vote in the collective counterpoint with fresh melodies and harmonies, so that each player's voice carried the weight of an entire section.

And oh how they danced. The music of Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie symbolized the dynamism of post-World War II America. Its vitality and optimism. Its individuality and collective spirit. Its hope and joy. Its unfulfilled promise and the rage which festered just beneath the surface. *I'll never go back to Georgia—BOP!*

It was almost as if Bird came up with the melodies and Diz came up with the harmonies,

WHEN CHARLIE PARKER EMERGED FROM THE WILDERNESS WITH the first of his prophecies, John Birks Gillespie was there to hear him—with the heart of a child. Dizzy understood the implications of Bird's message, because it was already in the air. It's not as if the swing era's innovators were adrift looking for a savior. Their work was already bristling with a new rhythmic vibrancy, steeped in the blues, where a soloist's elisions could flow in an endless outpouring of fresh melodic ideas.

"He was always out there, in front," recalls drummer Max Roach, who was there as a teenager with his running buddy, pianist Bud Powell, to assimilate, elaborate and innovate the role of percussion in this emerging new music. "For me, Dizzy was one of the great musical minds of this century. He was a catalyst for this whole period of music. As far as instrumental virtuosity is concerned,

BY CHIP STERN

and the rhythms jes' grew and took wings, syn-copating way up off of the dance floor above the hoop to accommodate their intellectual athleticism. Like watching Magic throw the look-away pass. Rudolf Nureyev vault into the air. The Nicholas Brothers hurdle up and down a flight of steps, doin' flying splits.

"I started to figure out who I was when I first heard Charlie Parker," Dizzy told me a little over a year ago. "When I first heard Charlie Parker play, the style, *his* style, was basically there—the way that he'd get from note to note. *Nobody* never played like that. He played *tunes inside of tunes*. You were playing one tune and he would play another tune that goes right there just the same; the chords were the correct ones, too. I showed him a lotta things on the piano, you know; my training was a little more sophisticated than Charlie Parker, harmonically. But Charlie Parker had the style of gettin' those notes *out!* And the way that he got from one note to another, the way that he set 'em up—nobody'd ever done nothin' like that before. They had done things like I'd done before, harmonically, like Benny Carter, Coleman Hawkins."

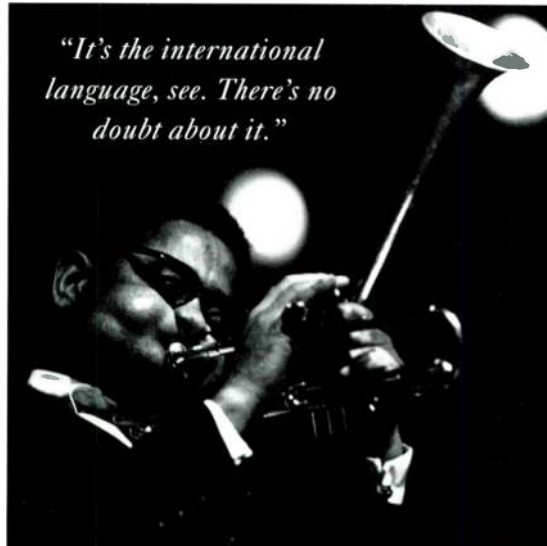
Two sides of the same heartbeat. And if Charlie Parker had the revelation, Dizzy Gillespie became the high priest, the lawgiver. He penned the song which captured the spirit of the new music, and dubbed it "Bebop." He popularized the music's onomatopoeic jive, playing Lou Costello to Bird's Bud Abbott. Was the point man for an infusion of Afro-Cuban polyrhythms and dialects with tunes like "Night in Tunisia" and "Manteca," where the bassline began to move away from the strict 4/4 of swing and play an independent melody.

Bird did not survive the Long March—he beeped when he should have bopped—but Dizzy carried the word forward for another four decades before succumbing to pancreatic cancer two months beyond his 75th birthday, on his wife Lorraine's birthday, no less, a great teacher to the end.

"Man, he was something else," Art Blakey once said. "He knew what he wanted, and he'd get it out of you one way or another. He showed all the piano players how to do the comp, you know. Showed drummers all those Afro-Cuban beats. With Billy Eckstine he used to get his face right up in my bass drum and shout out the accents—ooh-bop-sha-bam. And I thought I was such a bitch when I joined Billy Eckstine...sheeet. I was playing behind Sarah [Vaughan] one night, and I had a little shuffle

going, and Dizzy walked up to me while the band was playing a show, and he says, 'Blakey, what the hell are you doing?' And I say, 'I don't know.' And he say, 'Well, why do you do it?' 'Because I heard Cozy Cole doing it behind you on "A Chicken Ain't Nothing but a Bird.'" And Dizzy say, 'That's why that ugly, nappy-haired bastard ain't here.' Ha!"

Dizzy's infectious joy and irreverent humor



made him a living symbol of American music, a global ambassador, a larger-than-life figure with his blowfish cheeks and bent-bell horn—who helped transform bebop into an international language. "Yeah, that's right," Diz agreed. "You know how I found that out? I went to Japan with my book to play with an all-Japanese band, and so they played—played the notes—but nothin' else. They couldn't speak English. I said, 'No, no, no.'"

"So one arrangement I had on 'Lover, Come Back to Me'...we still play that arrangement and it sounds as good now as it did in the 1940s...I wrote it in 3/4 time, so it started off with the drummer, like, in 6/8 with [*demonstrates by making popping sounds with his mouth and hamboning*], 'One, two, three, one, two, three,' and it's like 'bah, bah, dah-ba, dah-ba, bah, bah, bah-da-ba-da-ba-da-bah. Bah, bah, ba-dah-ba dah-ba-dah,' one, two, three.

"So they were sayin', 'Bee, bee, bee-dih-dih, dee-dih-dih, dih-dih. Beep-bee, bi-dih-dih, dih-dih, dih-dih.' I said, 'No, no, y'all playin' the right time but you not playin' it like I want.' I said, 'I want baah-baah baah-doo-doo, wah-da wah-da. Bah-bah, bah-doo-doo, wah-da, wah-da. Bah-bah, bah-doo-doo, wah-doo-wah-da.'"

"I said, 'Say that.' They said, 'Bah-bah bah-doo-doo wah-da-wah-da,' sayin' it like it was. I said, 'Now play it.' They played it, it sounded just like that, and they played all the arrange-

ments like that. So it's the international language, see? There's no doubt about it."

I've been in awe of Dizzy since I first heard him with Monk and Charlie Parker on *Bird and Diz*. Shortly thereafter Freddie Hubbard pulled out of a Sonny Rollins gig at Carnegie Hall, and when I got up in the front row, there was Charlie Mingus and Dizzy. Wow, *Jazz at Massey Hall* all over again, Diz in an iridescent

purple suit with a bilious green shirt. They played a low, slow, churchy blues, and Dizzy soared through the changes with sweeping, dancing phrases that never came to rest. Like Bird in flight or Bach at prayer, and all I could do was stare, with a big silly grin on my face. Diz picked up on me after his solo, and gave me a wink and a nod. I was in love.

In 1991 I ran the jazz department of a large New York record store. He came by to do an in-store. We went to like 15 stores before we scored his favorite, sugar-free chocolate yogurt, and a whole spread of food to go with it. Well, it was truly comical. See, Diz is a Baha'i, and it's the middle of Ramadan, where you fast from sunup to sundown, so the man

strolls in, all these folks with their hands out and Diz glides right by them like Harpo Marx and makes for the food, a CD of his Musicraft sides providing accompaniment. Didn't even take off his hat and coat, just kept working that satchel mouth like Jabba the Hutt, chops big enough to accommodate Nat King Cole's bridgework with room to spare for a tractor trailer. Everybody's greetin', he's just eatin', handful after handful of salt peanuts, salt peanuts, in a galaxy of his own. Somewhere during one of his solos, could have been "Dizzy Atmosphere," he kind of grunted. "Damn, that was a B—I didn't realize I hit that note."

Finally he rolled his eyes, and sighed, "Whew, you saved my life." I slipped a 78 of "Things to Come" under his thumb for an autograph, and he went out to meet the folks. When he finally wandered into my department his eyes bugged out. "Is there mirrors on the wall or is that more jazz?" He spied some discs and blurted out, "Damn, I don't have no Jimi Hendrix," so I laid that and some Robert Johnson on him, as his handlers lured him towards the escalators. But a wall of monitors transfixed him with his own image. Like a child he drifted in their direction and began touching the screens, like he had never seen a TV. Earth to Dizzy.

It's not that he was so Dizzy, he just lived for music. That was his whole life, and why he never came off the road. "No, that just didn't



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...zzy, because he wanted to
 photographer Chuck Stewart
 was a player, not a stylist, and
 man's instrument, so he practiced
 that he could deal with it physi-
 in he wasn't working he told me he
 it all the time because his chops
 were going."

"He just liked to get out of the house," Roy
 Haynes laughed. "It used to drive him crazy.
 One of the last times I saw him, I was doing a
 tour in Europe, and we were both checking in
 at the same hotel, and he went right to the pool

table, started playing a game just like a little
 kid. And I said, 'Man, Dizzy, you are the most
 amazing guy—you are a beautiful person.'
 Here he was one of the greatest who ever lived;
 any place they sent him, he would just go—
 and never complain. Oh, he would complain
 in a funny way. They might put an all-star
 group together, like that thing I did with him at
 the White House. Stan Getz sort of took over a
 lot of the talking on the camera. Diz never
 spoke. Dizzy just sat there in the chair kind of
 rolling his eyes like to say, 'What the fuck is he
 talking about?'"

I visited him a number of times in Engle-
 wood, New Jersey. He never wanted any lunch,
 always wanted something sweet to drink, some
 juice, "but it can't have no sugar." I never real-
 ized he was a diabetic, and frankly, I'm not sure
 if he did either. A pint of fruit juice is a real blast,
 and you need to dilute it with water. So here we
 are rappin' away, me goin' damn, I'm hanging
 with Dizzy Gillespie, him talkin' about what
 year is this...1991, oh yeah, 1945...I remember
 Mario Bauza...them cats would show you the
 music, in fact they'd come take your hand
 and...*snoooooooooore*.

Diz's head is back, he's out like a light,
 snoozing away, never you mind. "You know,
 Diz, we can wrap up today and get together
 again when you're up for it."

"Yeah. I can go home, get something to eat
 and take a nap. I got a gig tonight."

"Great." Say something. "I'll be better pre-
 pared next time."

"You really know your stuff. Aaaaaaww-
 wwwhhhhh, no, man, that was the most relaxed
 interview I ever did."

He collapsed onstage shortly after a month
 of gigs at the Blue Note in early 1992, which
 were documented by Telarc. This past fall I got
 to missing him, and called him on the spur of
 the moment.

"Hi, Diz, it's Chip Stern."

"Who?"

"Your biographer."

"Huh?"

"The guy from the store. Gave you the Hen-
 drix and Robert Johnson CDs. Came to your
 house, set up your stereo, brought you a pair of
 Chinese cymbals. Wrote an article."

"Well, what you want?"

"Not a goddamn thing. Called to say I love
 you and see how you're feeling."

"Oh, I feel pretty good. I'm coming along,
 and fixing to go out again next month."

"Great, man, but you know it's okay to chill."

"Chill?"

"Yeah, you know. Do nothing, enjoy the
 fruits of your action."

Dizzy grunted. "What the fuck would I do
 that for?"

Die with your boots on...alright. "Yeah, I
 hear you. Look, maybe we get together soon
 and I'll buy you some lunch. In the meantime I
 just wanted to wish you a happy early birthday,
 say God bless and live to be 100, motherfucker."

Pause. That brassy growl in the back of his
 throat, the cheshire smile, a bluesy slide up the
 scale. "Hey, thank you, man."

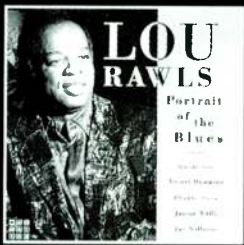
Thank you. Swing low, sweet Cadillac. Of
 thee I swing.

The Sweet Sounds of

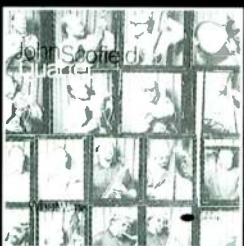
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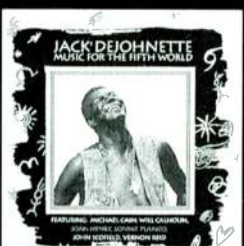
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HOTHOUSE FLOWERS



THE FLOWERS
PERFORMING AN
ACOUSTIC SET
AT CAFE SIN-É,
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become a make-or-break record for them...

"I think that's true to a certain degree in terms of the industry," Fiachna reflects with a hint of cynicism, "but at the same time, if we don't have a hit it isn't going to end us."

By now Liam is fully awake. "I don't think we make make-or-break music," he interjects. "Whatever happens, we'll still be making music. But I have no worries about this record."

"In fact, we know that the record companies world-wide are very happy with it," Fiachna adds, "to the extent that they've told us that it's their *world-priority record for the first half of next year* and all that sort of bullshit." He laughs. "Which is a lot better than the last time

"Every song is a prayer."

we were in America, when there was no record company support, and nobody going to the radio stations to get a record played. That's frustrating."

"We've got the beginning of a following there which has continued to grow even in our absence," Liam says. "I think America now is like Australia was before we went there. The second album had gone well and it was as if something was ready to pop when we got there. When we toured, the record went to number one and it was very clear that it was happening because the ground had been well prepared. I think we could find something similar in the States this time around because our previous records have been turning over very well and little things have been happening—repeats of the 'David Letterman Show' we did, or whatever—all those little things which start building up a momentum of their own, which is the mystery of music, that songs take on their own lives and you find them appearing in the oddest of places..."

THE MYSTERY OF MUSIC indeed. It's a quality in which *Songs from the Rain* is steeped, a quality which is at the very core of what Hothouse Flowers are trying to achieve. The approach is almost painterly—imagistic and impressionistic. But the Flowers stake their claim to greatness ultimately on the way these images and impressions are conveyed—on the sense of rapture with which the singing and the playing are imbued. [cont'd on page 36]

FIACHNA O'BRAONÁIN OPENS THE DOOR AND IN THE HALF-LIGHT A figure stirs. Like a shaggy cat it turns, rolls over, yawns—and then confirms that it's human by grunting.

It's a sign of recognition for the lanky Hothouse Flowers guitarist, from one of his own. "I've been doing some catching up," says Liam O'Maonlaí, who's standing now, stretching himself to his full six-foot stature and grimacing blearily. Sleep hasn't been too easy to come by in the last few weeks, as the Hothouse Flowers machine gets itself cranked up for phase three in the collective bid for world domination, and the odd cat-nap helps to keep a singer's vocal cords in good working order.

HOTHOUSE FLOWERS EXPLODED onto the Irish scene in the mid-'80s, a bunch of busking college boys who exuded soul, sex appeal and a kind of self-assurance that was highly unusual in local acts. Very soon the record company checkbooks were out and hopes went soaring that at last here was a band who might have the ability to capitalize on the international interest in Irish rock inspired by U2's vast success.

Over half a dozen years on, the progress has been steady rather than spectacular. They scored a European success with the anthemic single "Don't Go"—from their debut album *People*—which remains their finest musical achievement to date, the song by which they've been identified in Ireland, where they've registered two platinum albums. The Flowers' second album *Home* became a number one smash in Australia. They established themselves as one of the most respected major-league acts there. But there's a feeling nonetheless of early potential not yet fulfilled, with the U.S. and the U.K. failing to fall for the band's charms. *Songs from the Rain*, their third album, could

BY NIALL STOKES

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SIR GEORG SOLTI: MORE POPULAR THAN THE POPE



SIR GEORG SOLTI IS AN INTENSE AND DRIVEN MAN, ALWAYS ON THE MOVE. He guards his privacy fiercely and hates interviews because he would rather be making music than talking about it. But he turned 80 this year, and the world is taking notice in a big way. There was, for instance, the little surprise party the Prince and Princess of Wales threw at Buckingham Palace—complete with 300 guests that included the world's musical and political elite.

A more mellow Solti is evident since he retired after 22 years as Chicago Symphony music director. "It may look easy from where you are," he declares in the Green Room of Orchestra Hall, Chicago, in town for a two-week residency with the orchestra. "But I've worked very hard for everything I've accomplished. Many other people did it much easier, but I don't mind. If it's easy, you don't develop. I'm grateful for the hard road of my so-called career, which has had amazing detours."

BY DENNIS POLKOW

Born a piano prodigy with perfect pitch in Hungary, Georg Solti hated to practice, but at 13, he had a revelation. "I will remember the concert as long as I live: The Beethoven Fifth Symphony conducted by Erich Kleiber. I sat there mesmerized. I went home and said to my mother, 'I want to be a conductor.' And she said, 'Yes, all right,' and patted me on the head."

Soon Solti was studying at the Liszt Academy in Budapest under luminaries Kodály, Weiner, Dohnányi and Bartók. "He had these marvelously piercing eyes," he says of Bartók. "He spoke very slowly and softly. I worked up a famous piano piece of his, 'Allegro barbaro,' and very proudly wanted to play it for him, but he wanted no part of it. He thought, quite rightly, that it was no good for this boy to ruin his music."

"You're not making natural music if it's not connected to the human voice."

Though Solti joined the Budapest State Opera as a teenager, anti-Semitism in Hungary during the '30s kept him from conducting. "The point came, though," he recalls, "when my talent was so evident that they simply couldn't keep me down any longer." His debut was with Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, on March 11, 1938—the night Hitler marched into Austria. Solti went to Switzerland to visit the great Arturo Toscanini for help getting a visa to America. "My father took me to the train station," he recalls in a whisper, "and wept as I boarded. I was annoyed and said, 'Why are you crying? I'll be back soon.' I left with a little case full of pajamas, a toothbrush, shirts and a dark suit. The war clouds kept gathering, and I got a cable from my mother saying, 'Please don't come home.'" Solti never saw his parents again, and would not return home for 40 years.

"Toscanini saved my life," says Solti, "because I ended up stuck in Switzerland for the entire war. So I am obviously more than grateful. He had such an iron will to achieve. There is a story that he stopped a rehearsal and said, 'I hate you, because you destroy all of my dreams.' That is putting it in brutal terms. You have to have dreams, but how much can you *make* of your dreams? I know that feeling: It's not hatred, it's desperation, at the fact that the sound I'm getting is so far from the sound I hear in my imagination."

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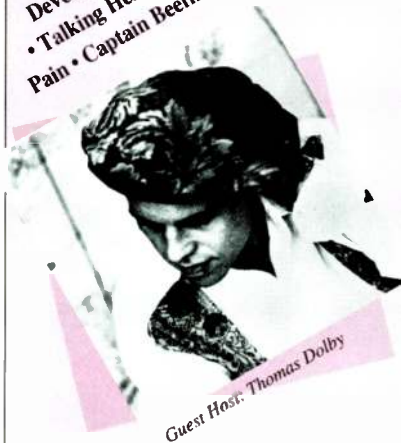
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MUSICIAN

Trapped in Switzerland, Solti turned to the piano, accompanying singers and concertizing. In 1942, he won the Geneva Piano Competition. Immediately after the Allied victory, a friend invited him to war-ravaged Munich, where the American army wanted to start up opera performances again.

After 25 years of opera in Munich, Frankfurt and Covent Garden in England—where he was knighted—Solti switched to symphonic conducting. “I knew if I didn’t make the change then, I never would, which is why I accepted the position as music director of the Chicago Symphony. I was in my mid-50s and was much too adventurous to have only been doing one thing.

“Singing is the most natural music. All major conductors have come out of the opera house. You’re not making natural music if it’s not connected to the human voice.”

The Chicago Symphony had always been a world-class orchestra, but it took Solti to bring about its national and international recognition. For the first time, the orchestra set up a regular series of spring concerts at Carnegie Hall, as well as tours of Europe, the Far East and Australia. The sold-out houses and adulation of thousands were unprecedented in “serious” music. There were screams, even a 20-minute ovation. The word had spread so far that when Pope John Paul II visited Chicago in ’79, a special concert of the Bruckner Fifth was arranged, after which the Pope went out onto State Street to thousands of cheering Chicagoans and declared, “Thank you, but I am not the Chicago Symphony, I am only the Pope.”

The key to Solti’s mystique has been recordings on London/Decca, from Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* and Handel’s *Messiah* to symphonies of Beethoven and Mahler, large works of Tchaikovsky, music of Debussy and Ravel, and three operas: Wagner’s *The Flying Dutchman*, Verdi’s *Otello* and Schoenberg’s *Moses und Aron*. With Solti’s talent for transmitting podium energy beyond the microphone, his 250 recordings have had enormous impact.

“When I started,” he muses, “we recorded for four minutes and stopped. The long-play record changed that. Then stereo. But my approach has remained the same; I was always aware I was making something that would last beyond a performance. I take it with desperate seriousness; it is not ‘just a record.’”

And no matter how much Solti hates his yearly flight from London, his relationship with the Chicago Symphony will continue as long as he’s able to keep making dazzling records there.

“Believe it or not, 50 was much harder—it sounded so old,” he says. “But I feel no different than I did 30 years ago, and I’m working as hard, perhaps harder.

“There is still so much to learn. My worst nightmare is that I will die having only done half of all the Haydn symphonies.”

HOTHOUSE FLOWERS

[cont’d from page 32] With Stuart Levine handling production duties in consummate style, it is an album of finely wrought textures and dynamics, which sets out again and again to celebrate the wonder and the power of music. Or as Liam puts it in “Isn’t It Amazing”: “*Every cry is a song, every song is a prayer and our prayers must be heard, fill the air.*”

“It’s not something that I can articulate any other way,” he confesses. “That’s why I play it. I am a musician, that’s my language, it’s how I read the world—through music. And music is the vehicle I use to articulate my belief in life. That’s what I’m trying to get across. It’s why the songs are written.

“That particular song is honoring every sound, in the sense that native American Indians look upon everything as being sacred. They venerate everything. While we were in the States I was thinking about that: I was watching these birds of prey high up in the hills and thinking, who’s to say that even an eagle’s cry isn’t a song? It’s the call of freedom—that’s what music is to me.”

FLOWER POWER

In addition to his tin whistles and bodhran, **LIAM O’MAONLAÍ** bangs on a Yamaha CP80 piano, a Hohner clavinet and an old Wuritzer electric piano. **PETER O’TOOLE**’s basses include a Music Man Stingray, a Fender Precision, an ESP and a Sherwood Modulator eight-string. He also employs a set of Moog bass pedals and an Eko mandolin. **FIACHNA O’BRAONÁIN**’s got lots of guitars. Among them are three Fenders (a Strat, a Telecaster and a Starcaster), two Gibsons (an old ES 335 and a Chet Atkins), two Lowdens (six- and 12-string versions) and a McBride Side Arm guitar. He runs through a Roland GP16 effects unit on his way to either a Vox AC30 amp or a Fender Twin. **LEO BARNES** blows through Henry Selmer alto and tenor saxes and walls on a Hammond organ. Pearl drums and Zildjian cymbals are the instruments of choice for **JERRY FEHILY**. The whole band uses D’Addario guitar, bass and mandolin strings.

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Mick Jagger's New Licks



Interview

by

Bill

Flanagan

THEIR DRUMMER'S INCREDIBLY GOOD.

In fact, I think their drummer's half of them. Because you've got all that caterwauling, you've got all those half-heard threats, that sense of sullen curses always riding in the background, you've got that sense of disarray, that sense of mama with her nerves broken looking for her fix. You've got all that. But what keeps it all together is you got this great big driving beat....Jagger has got this marvelous sense of the day in which a family breaks up. The son throws acid in the mother's face, the mother stomps the son's nuts in, and then the fat cousin comes and says, What is everybody fighting for, let's have dinner. And they sit down, the son has no nuts left, the mother's face is scarred, but they go on and, you know, British family life continues. Jagger's got that like no one else's ever had it. If he'd been a writer he would have been one of the best. But that marvelous quality isn't caught in the lyrics so much as in the ensemble of everything, sound, instruments, everything...

"Sympathy for the Devil" I felt was arch and much too self-conscious. I couldn't quite catch the words and that's one of the things about Jagger that's always been suspect to me. When you play on the edge of the articulation of words it's because you're trying to do two things at once. I did hear him at one point wailing about the Russian Revolution.... I decided Jagger must have picked up a magazine article about the Russian Revolution the day before...

Thus spoke the famous rock critic Norman Mailer after listening to the Rolling Stones in 1974. Mailer's response anticipated a common reaction to Mick Jagger in the second and third public decades of the Rolling Stones: Even those who admired the band often mistrusted its leader.



What caused this contradiction? Maybe this: Jagger never seemed to appreciate his audience, never cared to reciprocate their love. He would neither let them kiss his feet nor suffer himself to kiss their ass. When, in the high tide of '60s ambition *Rolling Stone* insisted Jagger's lyrics were poetry, he responded, "No, they're crap." When, in the high tide of '90s sophistication *Vanity Fair* gushed that Jagger liked gardening, he snappishly denied it. His pattern is unchanged. If you say to Mick Jagger, I hear you like the city, he'll say no, the country. If you say I hear you like red he'll say no, blue. In his new song "Evening Gown" Jagger sings, "People say I'm a drinker, but I'm sober half the time."

"That was sort of a joke," Jagger says. "You know how journalists, particularly the more tabloid press, always try to pin you down to being one particular kind of person. People said I was wild, then I was sober, then I was this, then I was that." Jagger wants nothing to do with whatever the popular assumption about him is.



For a well-known exhibitionist he works very hard at keeping his true face hidden, but like all real artists Jagger is naked in his work. A while back I was driving a long distance late at night alone when the original version of "Memo from Turner," Jagger's solo single from the movie *Performance*, came on the radio. There are a lot of powerful Stones songs that you can't really

**"I've heard the music so much
that I can hear it in my head. I
don't need to put the records on."**

hear anymore because you've heard them so much for so many years. "Memo from Turner" is pretty obscure, so it can still sneak up on you. That night in the car it struck me as painfully, even savagely honest. Around the time that record was made Jagger's girlfriend miscarried his first child after a series of petty persecutions by the authorities, and Jagger faced—after Altamont—the responsibility for taking control of the huge machine the Rolling Stones had become. At the end of "Memo from Turner" Jagger shouted something terrible: "The baby's dead, my lady said/You gentlemen all work for *me*." Rock 'n' roll doesn't get harder or more honest than that. Of course, when I remind Jagger of it he says, "Oh, that was the character in the movie, not *me*."

Mick Jagger waves away talk of self-revelation in his music. The special genius of the Rolling Stones is that fans can confer all their affection for the band on Keith Richards while giving Jagger the wider berth he prefers. But as the band's *fourth* decade begins, that seems a little silly. By now we've seen that Keith without Mick is a living riff, a human groove, but more the *spirit* of something great than the thing itself. On Jagger's first two solo albums he was attempting to create an escape hatch from the Rolling Stones and that made him over-cautious. Caution is the greatest enemy of Jagger's music. Now the Stones are restored, Richards and Jagger are re-bound at the hip, and their solo records can be what they should have been in the first place: opportunities to explore the side roads the Stones brush against and then roll past. On his new album, *Wandering Spirit*, Jagger opens with two of the boring Stones-by-numbers tracks his detractors expect, but then wanders off into the sort of fresh takes on old forms that are his greatest strength. He does a country ballad, a gospel number, a blues, a soul cover, even a sailor song. Jagger knows all these styles well and it's a pleasure to hear him having fun with them. Twelve years ago he sang a revealing bit of doggerel: "Ever since I was 13 years old, I always felt shy but I acted so bold." Maybe Mick Jagger was a shy kid who put on a bold mask and kept it on so long that the mask became his face. But when you listen to him singing, stretching and engaging the music he loves, I think you hear the real Mick Jagger.

We talked just before Christmas. Jagger, rushing from London to New York to the Caribbean, was loose, laughing and unusually open.

MUSICIAN: *You've sung rock, blues, country, reggae, funk—is there any style you've not been able to get a handle on?*

JAGGER: [laughs] Russian folk music! Definitely opera. There's loads of styles, yeah. Yodeling—hopeless. It was a big part of the country tradition at one point. The yodeling cowboy. I guess it was from polka music, the German influence somehow managed to get in there. As you say, most of these styles I've done at one time or another, successfully or not. I've just never done them all on one record.

MUSICIAN: *I can't think of a record you've made with or without the Stones that went in so many directions as your new one.*

JAGGER: That can be slightly worrying, if it flies off in too many directions. But when I play it in its entirety—which not too many people really do, honestly—it manages to hold together, hopefully.

MUSICIAN: *How'd you decide to end the record with "Handsome Molly," a traditional folk song?*

JAGGER: I kept putting it in the running order and it didn't really work. I found it very hard to place—you couldn't have it with an R&B tune. Then [guitarist] Jimmy Ripp said, "Well, why don't you put it at the end of the record, after a little gap, so something won't

have to come after it." I think that worked out. I think the sequence is key when you've got a lot of different styles—I'm trying to avoid using the word "eclectic."

MUSICIAN: *It seems like a shame to begin the album with "Wired All Night" and "Sweet Thing," the most familiar-sounding songs.*

JAGGER: Maybe. That was my idea. I suppose you could start it with something more unusual. But sometimes it's good to start with things that are more familiar and go off slightly, rather than starting off weird and going straight later. Which one would you have started with?

MUSICIAN: *Maybe "Out of Focus."*

JAGGER: I was going to start with that! That was the other one I almost started with. "Out of Focus" is really a gospel tune, the lyrics are kind of gospel, Billy Preston plays on it.

MUSICIAN: *I think a lot of people have underestimated your recent work, with and without the Stones, because the singles are always the most conservative tracks. Imagine if the first single from Steel Wheels had been "Continental Drift" instead of "Mixed Emotions," or if the single from Primitive Cool had been "Party Doll" rather than "Let's Work." You used to pick unusual singles—"Angie," "Miss You."*

JAGGER: Now it's much more closed and those songs are only for the aficionados and people who listen to odd cuts. I don't know how you market things like that in the climate we're living in now. It's different. I guess it's up to magazines like yours to say, "That's the one radio pushed but I prefer this one."

MUSICIAN: *Do you make any mental division between songs for a solo album and songs for a Rolling Stones album?*

JAGGER: Kind of. I don't put on any songs I've written on five-string guitar, which sounds like Keith's writing. Things like "High Wire," those kind of tunes. If I write something like that I don't include it on a solo album because I think it's too much of the Stones kind of thing, Keith's guitar style to the fore. In the writing, there were a couple of songs where I said, "Oh, that's going to sound great with the Stones, so I won't use it." I don't even develop it up anymore: I just leave it as a basic idea or one verse and chorus. I'll then play it for Keith and he'll maybe embellish it with something else.

MUSICIAN: *It's interesting that, like Keith, you play the guitar with five-string open-tuning.*

JAGGER: Yeah, well I was taught by Ry Cooder the same as Keith [laughs] in 1969. It's a difficult style to play well, like everything else, but it's not a difficult style to play a *bit* of. I played it onstage on the last tour on "Mixed Emotions" and some others. The first song I ever wrote for the Stones in that tuning was "Brown Sugar."

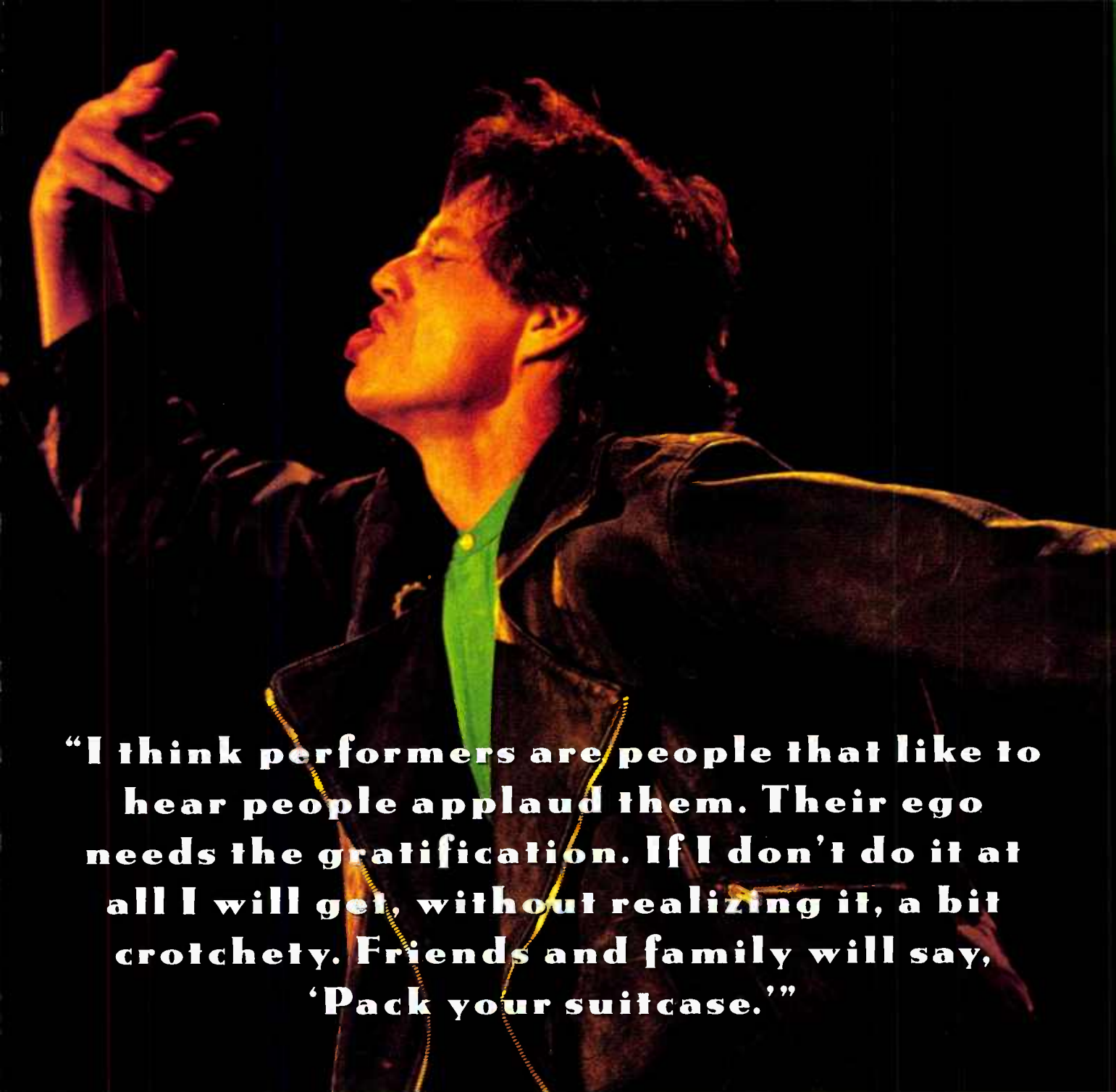
MUSICIAN: *Hell of a good one.*

JAGGER: Yeah, really good. [laughs] My first one was probably my best! But that style does come out in a particular way that's become associated very much with Keith's playing and which he's used a lot, so I just avoid doing that.

MUSICIAN: *You're in an interesting position. You were already a recording artist and had a lot of success before you started playing guitar—but now you've been playing for a long time. Do you continue to develop as a guitarist or did you reach a certain point and level off?*

JAGGER: It's not as good as it should be and I need someone to come and show me some things. [laughs] I need some new bits, I need some new licks, I need to develop more. Not just in playing but in writing, it needs a bit more technical ability. I don't rate myself very highly because I've spent a lot of time singing and not playing and I have long gaps where I don't play very much, which doesn't do anything for your technique. It's pretty bad. During this songwriting period I was

The quote that opens this article is from *Pontifications* by Norman Mailer, published by Little, Brown. Copyright 1982 by Norman Mailer.



“I think performers are people that like to hear people applaud them. Their ego needs the gratification. If I don’t do it at all I will get, without realizing it, a bit crotchety. Friends and family will say, ‘Pack your suitcase.’”

playing a lot. I also play keyboards, also very marginally. I wrote “Sweet Thing” on the keyboards. I’m playing the clavinet part on that one. I wrote “Angel in my Heart” on the keyboards. You get different kinds of songs coming from that.

MUSICIAN: *Do you have any songs that you consider too personal to put out?*

JAGGER: This is an era when everyone lets everything out—which is a very un-English thing to do. But...no. I more or less let everything come, and I’ll just get a bit indirect if I think it’s getting too close to something or it’s going to hurt somebody very much. I go off slightly or embellish it or just use my imagination.

MUSICIAN: *It seems to me that of the musicians who’ve created a large body of work and been successful for a long time, you have the least sentimental relationship with your audience. McCartney, B.B. King, Sinatra, even Keith Richards all in their own way say to the public, “Here we are again my friends, 30 years on...” You never do that.*

JAGGER: I’m very anti that. You could criticize me for it and say, “He doesn’t really show what he’s feeling.” But you do—you do it in different ways. I really don’t like sentimentality and I don’t like nostalgia. I don’t like the *coziness* of those things. I’d rather use other things. Because... I don’t know. I don’t feel drawn to it. Maybe it all comes from learning to write songs when I was a blues singer—which is a notoriously unsenti-

mental writing. The lyrics I used to listen to were very unsentimental. Perhaps they were too hard and cynical or the product of rough times or hard relationships or perhaps not very understanding relationships. Maybe that's one of the reasons I try not to descend into that particular thing. It's a complicated area you've gotten into 'cause I don't know if we're talking about songwriting or performing.

MUSICIAN: *I was thinking more of your performing and your public relationship with your audience. If you go see Eric Clapton or any number of your peers, there's a feeling of,*

"Hey old buddy, good to see you again." With you, nothing is granted. You treat every audience as if they've never seen you before.

JAGGER: Well, quite honestly, they never have! Whether it's Madison Square Garden or someplace bigger, it's a new audience. Even if they've seen you before they haven't seen you on that day and they haven't seen you with that exact group of people. They might be bringing another wife or a younger brother or it might just be 50 percent people who haven't seen you before. In other words, it's a new audience, it's a new day, it's a fresh

event. That's the thing about live performance. Although on a tour, okay, each performance is very similar, each one is different because the audience is different.

It's a fresh start for them and a fresh start for you and you don't assume anything. The first thing is when the curtains open—metaphorically—you get out there and you assess very quickly, in the first couple of songs, what kind of audience you're dealing with and what the specialties of this audience are. What makes them different? How is it influenced by the place? *Where are they?* Are a lot of them up here? Down there? Don't want to forget about these people down there! Are they very energetic or are they just sitting there wanting to be entertained? Are they happy already or are they a bit tense? Are they bored 'cause they've been kept waiting? So it is a new audience. You don't make any preconceived judgments on them.

I mean, on the last Stones tour, if you're playing to that amount of people there's no way over 50 percent of them could have ever seen you before! Mathematically.

MUSICIAN: *To take that same subject back to songwriting, if Clapton or Dylan or Springsteen came out with a song as emotional as "Don't Tear Me Up," people would assume it was autobiographical. They'd say, "Oh, he must be writing about that personal trouble I read about in the National Enquirer." With you, I don't think the audience makes that assumption. Which means you could probably get away with spilling your guts in a song if you wanted to—'cause you probably wouldn't get nailed for it.*

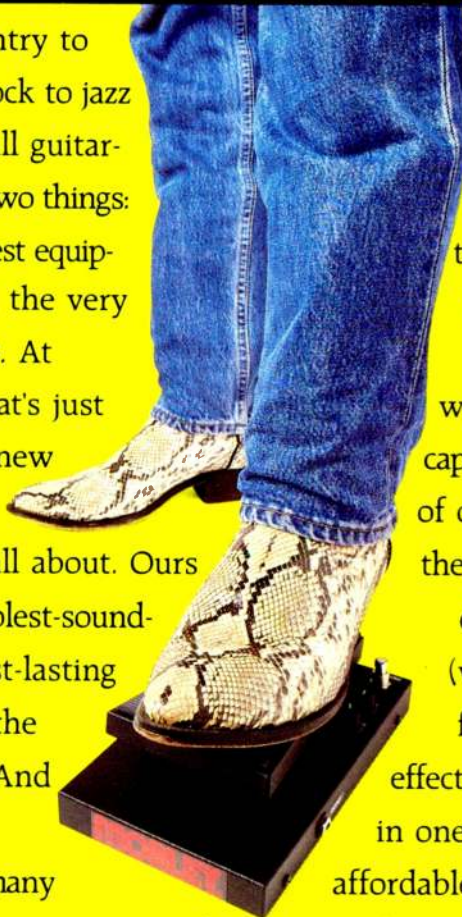
JAGGER: Yeah, I think that's true. It's good to be in that position. Of course, publicity people can use those things by leaking them out. A typical example of that would be *Rumours* by Fleetwood Mac. They would use some sort of personal problems they had to exploit the album and to hang the album on those hooks. But if you don't do that, then I think you're better off.

MUSICIAN: *Would it be fair to say this is the first time you've made a solo album while knowing for certain that there was also going to be a future for the Rolling Stones?*

JAGGER: That's not quite true, 'cause when I did the first solo album I already had a deal to do the next Stones album. In fact I was going to do it straight after. What is true is that I was much more relaxed about this album. It wasn't being done in an atmosphere of hostility. The rest of the band all made records, didn't they? Charlie made his Charlie Parker

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record, Keith made his second album and Ronnie made a record. In fact even Bill made a record. [laughs] It never got released in America but he did actually make one!

MUSICIAN: *Bill Wyman has now officially left the Stones, right?*

JAGGER: Yeah, he's unfortunately no longer playing with us. [laughs] I must be careful what I say. No, he just decided for whatever reasons, which I don't think I'm really qualified to explain, that he didn't want to do it anymore. So, yes he has and we are looking around for someone good.

MUSICIAN: *Why do the Stones need to have a permanent bass player?*

JAGGER: We don't. We want someone for the next project, which will be making an album and going on a tour, probably. After that, I'm not guaranteeing he's going to work for the next 25 years. [laughs] More like the next two years.

The resumes are definitely coming now. It's going to be quite difficult 'cause how do you know? They're all going to be good people and it's not a position which requires the finest technical brilliance. You have to play, but playing bass with the Rolling Stones is not a virtuoso show. So it's going to be kind of hard, but ultimately I think it will result in a much more kicking rhythm section. But it will be different and it won't be easy to replace someone who's been playing in the rhythm section with Charlie and Keith for a very long time. I'm not underestimating Bill nor underestimating the fact that it's going to be slightly different. But I think you've got to make a virtue out of these things. So you might find a more kick-ass rhythm section.

MUSICIAN: *Of course, Keith and Woody have both played a lot of bass on the Stones albums.*

JAGGER: Yeah, lots of people have suggested that Woody should play a bit more bass and we could get another guitar player or a bass player who plays guitar.

MUSICIAN: *I suspect Mick Taylor has suggested that first one.*

JAGGER: [laughing] I think he has! I haven't seen Mick for a while. That was a very good version of the band but that was a long time ago. And it was with Bill in it. As we talked about before with the audiences, it's never quite the same, ever. You're in a different place. It's a big decision. You could go on auditioning people forever. It's quite hard auditioning bass players. It's not like auditioning a lead guitarist. You can't audition a bass player on his own, you have to audition him with a band.

MUSICIAN: *Will you have bassists come in and play with the Stones?*

JAGGER: Yeah, that's what we'll do.

MUSICIAN: *That's going to be an intimidating audition.*

JAGGER: Yeah, I know. You can't expect to do it the first time around, you have to do more than one audition. You have to give people a chance, you can't just have them in for 10 minutes and say thanks very much. I'm making my short list.

MUSICIAN: *Fill me in on the blues concert you put on in England last summer.*

JAGGER: National Music Day is a celebration of music they have in France and other countries and we did one in England. My contribution musically was to do this blues evening, which I did with the Gary Moore Blues Band as house band. We had Pops Staples, who's not really thought of as a blues performer at all, but going way back he really was. I read some really interesting things about him in *Deep Blues* by Robert Palmer. Pops Staples was on the plantation where Muddy Waters was. He comes from that background, though he eventually ended up a gospel singer. And we had



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Buddy Guy and Jimmy Rogers who used to play with Muddy Waters, and Otis Rush. And Ronnie Wood, of course, the famous blues guitarist.

MUSICIAN: *Wouldn't be a party without him.*

JAGGER: *[laughs]* Wouldn't be a jam without him! It was quite a good evening all in all. I did a short set with Gary Moore. We did numbers by Sonny Boy Williamson, Z.Z. Hill, we did "Who Do You Love" by Bo Diddley, which is always good to end up with. It was a really good evening. I hadn't done anything like that for a while.

MUSICIAN: *Didn't you record a bunch of blues covers recently?*

JAGGER: The blues sides were cut with the Red Devils, a band signed to Def American. I used to go see them Monday nights at the King King club in L.A. and I sung with them a couple of times. We did one whole day of 14 blues sides. Some obscure, some not. We don't know if we're going to put them out. We just did them for fun.

MUSICIAN: *Here's a Merv Griffin question—Do you feel closer to the blues lately or is it pretty constant?*

JAGGER: *I always feel close to the blues, Merv. Well, you know—you go in and out of these things. I get fed up with it after a while. You think, "I know it, I've heard it, it's all in my head. I don't need to put records on." It's different when you're actually playing it or seeing it—that's something else. But listening to blues records sometimes gets to be a bit... But sometimes you go back to it and you say, "Wow, this is really great." Especially buying a new collection of something like old spiritual singers that I used to like when I was a teenager that I'd forgotten. God knows they're pretty heavy and dark. You come back to that and it gives you a bit of a chill. If you go in and buy records that you haven't heard in a very long time you can get back into it.*

Playing and singing it—especially with bands like the Red Devils who are a real blues band, they only play blues—you get a sense of, "Wow, I was there. When I was 19 that's what I used to do—just play this music. That was all I did!"

MUSICIAN: *Give me an example of a heavy and dark spiritual that would still really hit you.*

JAGGER: I was thinking of "Dark Was the Night, Cold Was the Ground" by Blind Willie Johnson off this LP called *Bottles and Knives*, which is a repackage.* He's a fabulous steel player. I had an EP of his when I was a teenager.

MUSICIAN: *You mentioned Pops Staples. Last month I made a tape of gospel songs for the car and I had the Staple Singers' "Wade in the Water" running into the Stones' "I Just Want to See His Face."*

JAGGER: "I Just Want to See His Face" was a jam with Charlie and Mick Taylor. I don't know who's playing keyboards, maybe I am. I don't even know what album it was on. That was on *Exile*? Yeah, I think it was just a trio originally, though other people might have been added eventually. It was a complete jam. I just made the song up there and then over the riff that Charlie and Mick were playing. That's how I remember it, anyway. I'd forgotten about that one. There's another gospel song on that album—"Shine a Light" with Billy Preston. When I was very friendly with Billy in the '70s I sometimes used to go to church with him in Los Angeles. It was an interesting experience because we don't have a lot of churches like that in England. I hadn't had a lot of first-hand experience of it. I think it was James Cleveland's church we used to go to. It's still there. In fact, Billy and I were going to go there on this trip, but the trouble

*Jagger is referring to *The Slide Guitar: Bottles, Knives and Steel*, Columbia #46218.



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with church is I can never get up on Sunday morning to get there. It's always a bit early for me. But I used to go. One time I saw Aretha and Erma Franklin in that church. It makes you feel a bit small sometimes when you hear these people's voices, so big and powerful.

MUSICIAN: *Did you feel like an outsider because you weren't participating on a religious level?*

JAGGER: No. I get carried away in these things, I'm not very detached. I think it's very hard to be detached in that situation. You do feel that you've heard these songs, that you know them. And though I agree with you that it's a religious experience, a lot of people who sing in church realize that it's very good practice and they learn a lot. I was in a couple of church choirs when I was a kid, I was in the school choir. I didn't always particularly like singing in those choirs, but I did realize it was a very good thing to do. I don't want to belittle it as a religious experience, because undoubtedly it can be a religious experience, but it's also a great way to learn how to sing!

MUSICIAN: *Until what age were you in choir?*

JAGGER: Until I found out about girls, I think. The usual thing. I was only in the choir till my voice broke.

MUSICIAN: *I remember talking about "Just Want to See His Face" with Mark Cutler of the Raindogs. I said, "I love that song but I don't believe Mick Jagger really longs to see Jesus," and Cutler said, "No, no—he's saying I don't want to hear Bible stories about Jesus, I don't want to hear about him from a priest—if he's real, let me see him."*

JAGGER: That's it, he's correct. That's what it is. I'm just playing the Doubting Thomas. I don't think it's a particularly rare idea. It's a bit similar to the "Wandering Spirit" tune. It's not so much tongue-in-cheek, but it's a little irreverent. It's not paint by numbers.

MUSICIAN: *You've done that a lot. A lot of your country songs are like that—if someone wants to hear it as tongue-in-cheek it can be, but if someone wants to think it's sincere, it works that way, too.*

JAGGER: Yeah, I think so. It's good if it's both things, because if it's all a parody the listener doesn't ever take it seriously, and that's not how it's intended.

MUSICIAN: *That song "Wandering Spirit" crosses through a few styles.*

JAGGER: Yeah, it's a combination. It starts out like an old rockabilly thing and then goes into a gospel chorus, which makes it

different, I guess.

MUSICIAN: *It demonstrates how little space there really is between country blues, gospel and rock 'n' roll.*

JAGGER: There's not a lot of difference. It's just the subject material, really. Divided into either personal life and woman trouble or just trouble, and talking about specific subjects to do with religion. Sometimes those two things collide a little bit. Pops Staples started in the blues plantations and then went off to gospel. Blues singers were considered not quite the right people to talk to or go and

hear. The church was the thing. And blues singers themselves faced having to choose between God and the devil. I'm not saying that literally. A lot of country singers seem to have come to this impasse in their lives. I'm thinking about Jerry Lee Lewis and so on. Little Richard. There's some kind of Puritanism that seems to haunt them if they devote too much time to one side of music and don't devote any time to gospel. Al Green's another one.

MUSICIAN: *All the early rock 'n' roll guys went through this conflict between the devil's*

JOHN CAMPBELL

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music and God's music. Presley did, too.

JAGGER: He did. He did that album—I forget what it was called, *Songs for the Mother* or something. Remember his spiritual album?

MUSICIAN: Yeah. His Hand in Mine.

JAGGER: Yeah! It was a bit of a surprise at the time for us who didn't really know about these things! It's a very interesting part of American popular music. And it goes further than popular music, it goes into the psyche of this mainly Southern thing—that you can't do both. It's either/or. If you don't spend time in church you're going to lead this riotous life and then

you're going to have to pay for it someday.

MUSICIAN: Exile on Main Street brought together a lot of that sense of the strange side of the American South. There was country, blues, gospel, a lot of lyrics about Alabama, juke joints, "Sweet Virginia." I remember reports at the time that the lyrics were written last, and it seems possible that you wrote the lyrics for that album almost like a novel, a big chunk at one time.

JAGGER: I did, but some of the tunes on there were from a previous session. I hate to puncture people's ideas. Most of them were written

in a very short space of time but a couple were done earlier. Stylistically, *Exile* being a double album, it had a lot of different styles on it. It really ran the gamut of what the Rolling Stones interest was at that point. It's funny that while you're doing it you don't realize it quite as much. I don't think that when we did *Exile* we were trying to do every different style. We all thought it was a very hard-rocking album. When you actually listen to it, it's got a lot of different things on it.

MUSICIAN: But the echo and the fact that your voice is mixed very low gives it a real unified feel.

JAGGER: Yeah, and most of it was recorded in this basement in the south of France in a very amateurish fashion.

MUSICIAN: Your early country songs—"Far Away Eyes," "Sweet Virginia," "Country Honk"—the C&W version of "Honky Tonk Women"—were pretty tongue-in-cheek. Were you self-conscious about playing country?

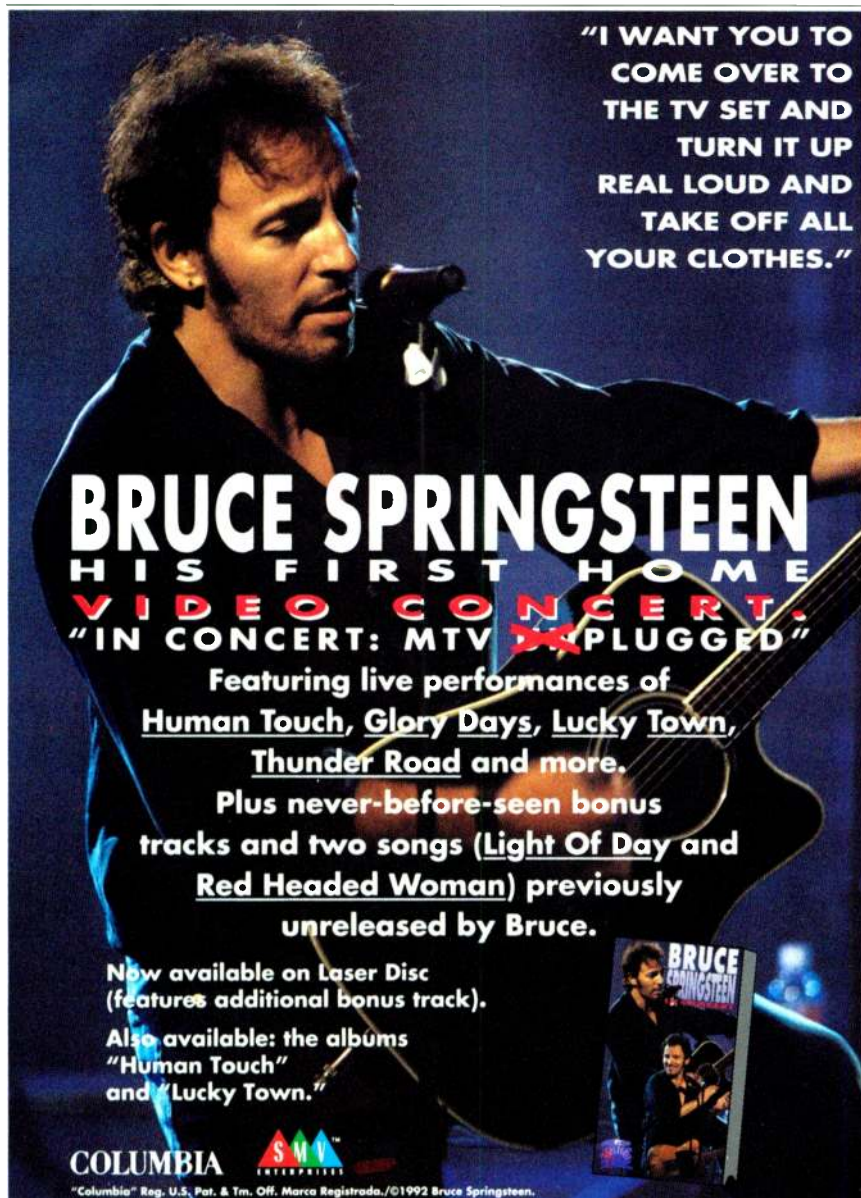
JAGGER: Yeah, I think so. I couldn't really do it straight. I couldn't take it seriously. Just in passing, "Honky Tonk Women" was a country song before it was a rock song. The "Country Honk" version is more like how Keith and I wrote the tune.

MUSICIAN: I'm glad it kept changing, then.

JAGGER: Me too!

MUSICIAN: There's the story that "Paint It, Black" was originally a comedy song and it evolved into something heavier in the studio.

JAGGER: Oh yeah, "Paint It, Black" was like



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I played less guitar on *Wandering Spirit* than I did on *Steel Wheels*," MICK JAGGER explains, trying to get out of talking about equipment. When pressed he admits, "I've got a Fender Strat I used, an old Gibson electric and acoustic, a Takamine acoustic, a Korg M1 keyboard." He brightens: "Some old Venezuelan maracas! The regular old stuff." Is that a real clavinet you play on "Sweet Thing," Mick? "A DX7 set to clavinet." Jagger's main guitar for the album was a '52 Telecaster. His main microphone was an AKG C12. Guitarist/arranger/sometime co-writer JIMMY RIPP takes more interest in his axes. Ripp played a '57 Les Paul goldtop and a '56 Les Paul Junior through a '58 Fender Twin for rhythm. He chose a '65 Gibson Firebird through a '65 Fender Deluxe for solos, and a '61 Fender Stratocaster whenever. His acoustics were a '63 Gibson Hummingbird and a '58 Gibson J-50.

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for Jewish weddings at the beginning!
MUSICIAN: *What I like about "Evening Gown" is that you don't back off from making it a pure country song. When it gets to the release you really go all the way.*

JAGGER: Yeah, that was my intention. I didn't want to do too much of a pastiche on that, I wanted it to be very straight country style. I think [producer] Rick Rubin was slightly mystified by that. [laughs] I don't think he'd ever made a country record.

MUSICIAN: *You've stretched his range!*

JAGGER: I wouldn't have Rick make my

country record, though. [laughs] I had some experience making that kind of music, he didn't have any.

MUSICIAN: *"Hang Onto Me Tonight" is almost a country song, but it has real rock drums. Did you figure that "Evening Gown" was enough country for one album?*

JAGGER: Yeah, I think that was Rick's point of view—to make the drum track quite hard on that tune and take it away from the straight country thing. We went a bit harder than we might have done in the '70s.

MUSICIAN: *I guess your first serious country*


song was "Wild Horses." There have been so many contradictory stories about that one—from people saying Gram Parsons wrote it, to saying Keith wrote it for his kids, to saying you wrote it for Marianne Faithfull.

JAGGER: Well, I don't think Gram Parsons wrote it, as far as I remember. [laughter] It was during that period. Keith wrote a lot of that tune, although I wrote a lot of the words. It was on the same session as "Brown Sugar" in Muscle Shoals. But I can't remember who it was about. It was a very long time ago.

MUSICIAN: *Let's talk about business for a minute. The climax of Bill Graham's autobiography is his obsession with getting the Steel Wheels tour and the depression he sank into when you chose another promoter. It felt as if Graham was telling the reader more than he understood himself. Between the lines it seemed to me that you kept sending him signals that there was no way he could make money if he bid as much as the other company was bidding, but he wouldn't take your hints. At one point the Stones even offered Graham what was in effect a \$500,000 gift to act as a sort of freefloating advisor. Instead of taking that for what it was—a very generous consolation prize—he insisted that it proved you really wanted him to do the tour.*

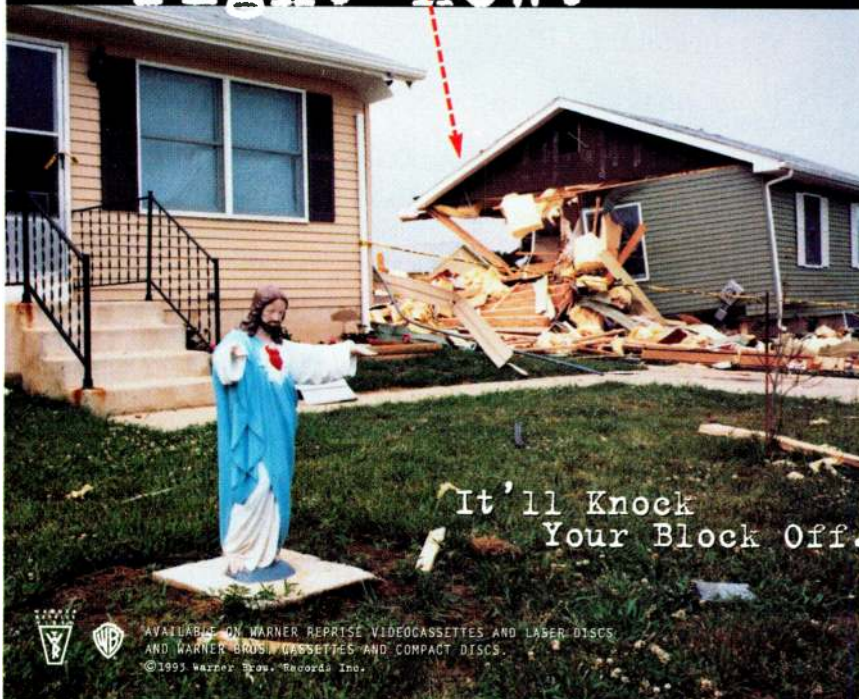
JAGGER: That was a strange situation. Basically, you don't always want to do deals with the same people you did deals with before. You might get offered a job at *Rolling Stone*. You look at the offers and you say, "Well, in all I think I'll stay with *Musician*." Whatever the reasons, you look at the offers that you get, right? So I looked at the offers for the Rolling Stones tour, and ultimately I had to make a business decision. You do a certain amount of work and you get paid a certain amount of money. There's money involved and then there's personalities involved and you have to balance all these things up. You don't always go for the most money, otherwise it would be very simple. It was a very hard decision because we'd worked with Bill before. But you know, we'd only done one big tour with Bill. That doesn't mean you have to do every tour for the rest of your life.

MUSICIAN: *Graham gave you the funniest line in his book. He'd managed to get the seat next to you on a flight from London and he said, "Come on, Mick, you'll each make 16 or 18 million, what's the difference?" And you said, "Well, two million dollars!"*

JAGGER: To me. [laughing] Divide it up and take it away! The difference was really 17 million. 17 million dollars is a lot of money! 

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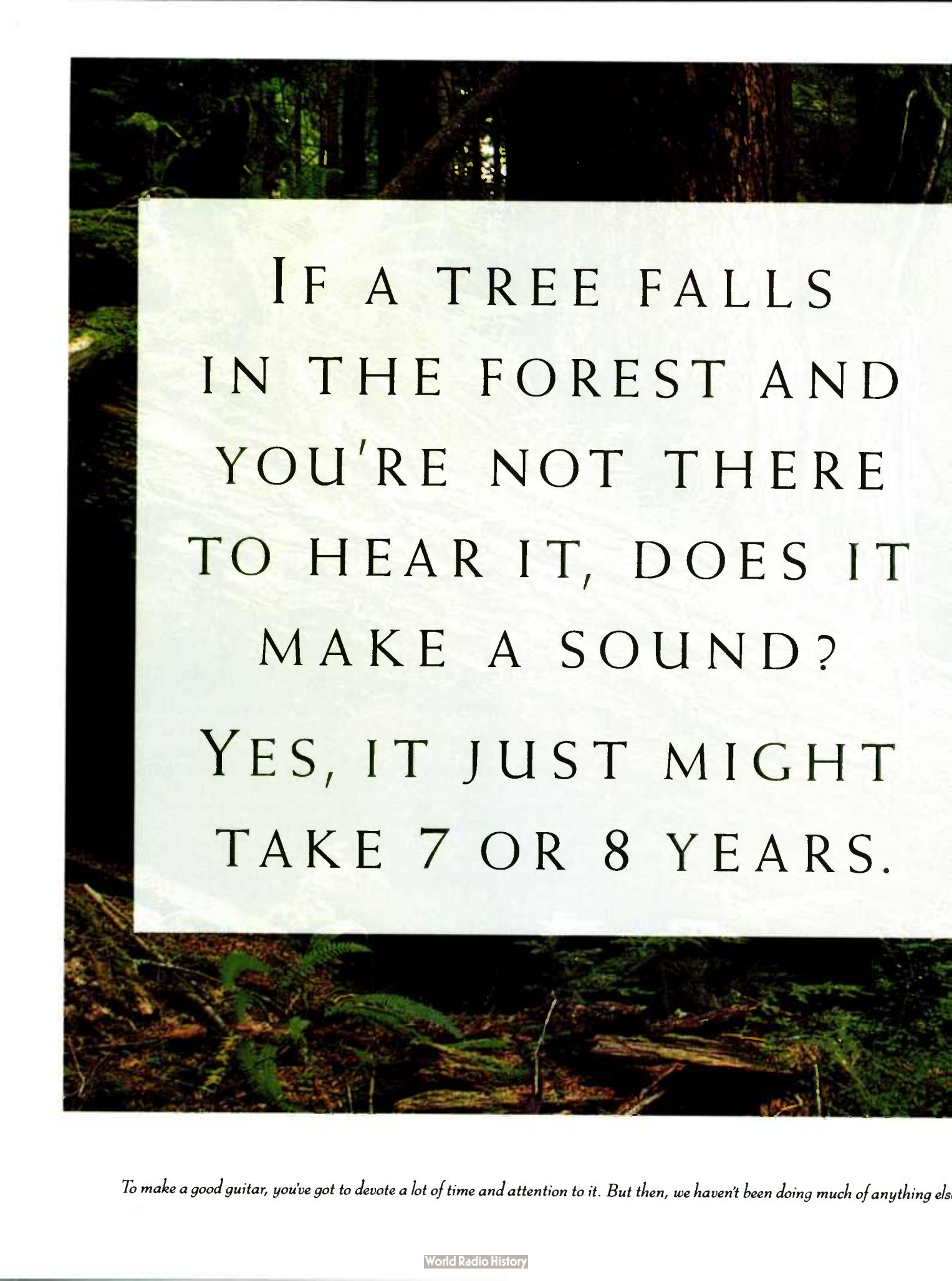
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Can the Butthole Surfers Stand Success

WHEN I THINK ABOUT THE BUTTHOLE Surfers, what comes to mind is how Gibby Haynes, the singer, and Paul Leary, the guitarist, stop their lives every 10 minutes or so to have an aesthetic experience. A few years ago, I was walking on the Lower East Side with Gibby. It was cold and raining and both of us were under-dressed for the weather as we pursued some business errand. Suddenly Gibby stopped. "What are you doing? Come on!" I said. "That rain is badass," he said, staring at a gray, shimmering sheet of water falling from a restaurant awning. No one could deny the badass beauty of that moment, and no one but Gibby could have seen it in the first place.

And I remember this strange house they all used to live in on the outskirts of Austin on Anderson Lane in 1987. The windows were boarded up, so it was perpetual night inside. The nearest neighbors lived 200 yards away, so they could make all the noise they wanted when they wanted. The delivery man would arrive every day with movies they'd purchased from medical schools to show on the backdrop of their live shows—movies of epileptic fits, eye operations and surgical repair of mangled genitalia. Their beloved pitbull Farner, a gentle orphan Paul had rescued from the pound, had worms and would periodically whine and rub her ass on the floor, leaving a streak. Where everyone else in the world, even other Butthole Surfers, would see shit on linoleum, Paul admired Farner's "brown comets." If that ain't imagery, tell me what is.

Those days are gone for the Butthole Surfers. In an industry where the few are rich and the many poor, they've achieved the unimaginable, especially unimaginable in underground music: They've entered the middle class. Three of them—Paul, Jeff Pinkus the bassist and King the drummer—live in their own houses. And the only reason Gibby doesn't is he blew all his money on hot rods. Most unimaginable of all, and a milestone of colossal heaviosity in the history of underground music: They've signed a contract with a major label, Capitol, home of the

Beatles. Capitol is betting a wad that the Buttholes can expand their audience beyond the 70–80,000 loyalists who buy their poorly distributed product and pack large clubs in every city in America. They spent \$225,000 recording their next album, *Independent Worm Saloon*, and Capitol is gearing up for a major promotion with video. Paul's been transcribing Gibby's lyrics to reassure MTV it won't inadvertently broadcast smut beneath their standards. John Paul Jones of Led Zeppelin produced.

"No, I hadn't heard them before," says Jones. "People send me an awful lot of tapes, and I've heard an awful lot of uninteresting bands. When my manager sent me the Buttholes' demo tape, I was just immediately interested. It was alive and exciting and subversive. Then Paul sent me their album *Hairway to Steven*. He didn't quite realize what he'd done when I thanked him for it. He said, 'I sent what?' They probably thought I had a more serious or sacred attitude, but *Hairway* confirmed that I wanted to work with them. I also like their version of 'Hurdy Gurdy Man,' which I arranged with Donovan. I prefer the Butthole version, actually."

Could you compare working with Led Zeppelin and the Butthole Surfers?

"They're similar in their work habits. When it came to recording, both bands got down to it and worked very hard. I insisted the songs be 80 percent finalized by the time we went in. There's nothing worse than wasting studio time at \$2000 a day. Paul was a total perfectionist. He'd produced them before and was a mine of information about how things worked amongst the band."

How would you rate his guitar playing?

"Totally original. I'd like to use him on my own projects. His imagination just soars."

Gibby seemed to have some resentment toward you.

"There's always that element between producers and singers. It depends how they're singing that day. We got on fine when things were going well. When they weren't, the

By Charles M. Young Photos by Wyatt McSpadden

“There’s nothing worse than some heavy metal guy trying to be musically proficient.”

knives were out.”

Did his drinking interfere with the creative process?

“Well, the first time we tried to do the vocal on ‘Alcohol,’ he was too drunk to sing it. That’s rather poetic.”

Think you could perform onstage with them sometime?

“If it pisses Gibby off, sure.”

Did you notice how they’re always having these aesthetic experiences? The other night, I watched Paul mesmerized and chuckling for hours over this biology book on bugs.

“Were they defecating?”

“JOHN PAUL DIDN’T show any preference to any instrument,” says Jeff Pinkus, in Atlanta where he just got married. “Kinda bummed me out, ’cause we’re both bass players and I wanted more bass, but he got real cool sounds. He and the engineer worked their butts off. He had a big line of amplifiers and a big line of guitars, and we’d try different combinations until he got what he was looking for. He also helped in the arrangements, always knew when something got too repetitive. When he played bass on ‘The Ballad of Naked Man,’ I was playing banjo and I kept thinking, ‘Who could have guessed when I was growing up and listening to Led Zeppelin that one day John Paul Jones would be playing bass with me on a song I wrote?’ It was probably my biggest thrill since joining the band.”

“JOHN PAUL JONES was the richest person I’ll ever meet,” says King over coffee in an Austin hippie restaurant. “But he came across real down to earth, kind of a nondescript English guy. He had the least attitude of any producer we interviewed. And he seemed easily amused.”

King has one of the most distinctive styles of anyone now thumping drums. In the early ’80s, he stood up and had no kick drum, compensating with a long line of toms and his little sister Theresa, who played another long line of toms. Theresa has since left the band, and King has compromised with tradition to the point of getting a kick and a stool, but he still emphasizes the toms more than anyone. “Tribal” is the description he prefers, and he cites Paul Whaley of Blue Cheer and Mitch Mitchell as influences. At 6’1”, he leans back more than sits, and he towers over his kit.

“I couldn’t get the drums low enough, so I made me high enough,” he says. “It’s just easier to play that way. Chuck Biscuits in DOA, a great punk drummer, also plays high. He feels you have better reach and can beat down more forcefully. I find it easier to move around if I’m above everything. Most drummers are taught otherwise, but

there’s no one way to play the drums. The only goal is to strike it. I just love the sound of really driving toms propelling a 4/4 beat.”

“WHEN JOHN PAUL came to town, I went to pick him up at the airport,” says Paul Leary in the backroom that serves as his home studio, sort of a cross between the Starship Enterprise and a chicken coop. “I was expecting someone with mutton-chop sideburns and bellbot-toms, and I just couldn’t find him anywhere. I had him paged and he was standing next to me. He looked so...normal.”

What did you learn from him?

“Augmenting the kick drum with a nice 30-hertz sine wave, so you get that thump in your chest.”

Seems like his name might help with your credibility, getting on commercial radio.

“Yeah, that had a lot to do with it. Mostly it was, man, if I pass up a chance to work with John Paul Jones, I don’t think I’ll ever forgive myself. Even if he had some other name, he was the coolest producer we talked to on the phone. He was fun to work with. He’d done a lot of session work in England before Led Zeppelin, and he did a lot of the cooler stuff like ‘Black Dog.’ That was his riff and he claims Page was never able to play it right. He hummed it to me, and I went, like, ‘My god, no shit he couldn’t play that. Why’d you even want to play it that way?’”

So Jones came to Austin and they did two weeks of preproduction. During the day they’d jam on “Kashmir” in the Butthole rehearsal space, and at night they’d check out local attractions like the 60-year-old yodeler Don Walsler and his Pure Texas Band. Next they moved to the Site, a beautiful studio in a bucolic Marin County setting, for seven weeks of recording. In the past, Paul has pretty much been the producer on the many Butthole LPs and EPs on several labels.

“I’m the guy who figured out how to use all that shit,” says Paul. “But it’s hard to concentrate on being a musician and on making a record at the same time. If everybody’s in the band, who’s gonna be impartial about what you end up doing? So it’s a real luxury to sit back and say, ‘Okay, here’s our songs. You nix the ones you don’t like, and we’ll focus on the ones you do like.’ To have someone else worrying about the equipment was so freeing. That’s something I hope translated in the record, that we were enjoying ourselves.”

Yeah, it does. It sounds terrific, heavy yet astonishingly varied, keeping that Butthole sense of whimsy and terror that has made them America’s greatest underground band for the past decade. Be interesting to see in this era of FCC censorship if you can even say the name of the band on commercial radio.



THE BUTTHOLE SURFERS ARE (L TO R):
JEFF PINKUS, GIBBY HAYNES, PAUL LEARY
AND KING

"I think you can. They're sending the single to both alternative and mainstream radio, putting stickers on in two ways: 'Butthole Surfers' and 'B.H. Surfers.' I hope somebody plays it. Capitol didn't seem too concerned."

Showing talent for both math and art back to his preschool years, Paul got his first guitar at the age of five. By high school, he had worked his way up to a Les Paul and a Fender Twin with an Echoplex, practicing for several hours every day. But by the time he enrolled at Trinity University in San Antonio (where his father taught economics) he was burned out. Rock had fallen into one of its dull periods and Paul sold his Les Paul to concentrate on business and sculpting. Then toward the end of '76, music started getting interesting again. All those punks making a horrible racket made the odds against a music career appear less insurmountable.

At the same time, he became friends with a 6'5" basketball player with spiky hair. His name was Gibby Haynes, and they shared an

interest in horrible racket. Son of "Mr. Peppermint," the Captain Kangaroo of Dallas television, Gibby had first attended Kilgore State on a basketball scholarship but got thrown out on a pot bust. At Trinity, a small liberal arts school loosely affiliated with the Presbyterian Church, he found a more tolerant atmosphere. Not completely tolerant, however, as he received a letter of reprimand for playing "nude tennis" on the courts just across the street from the homecoming football game.

Upon graduation, Gibby went to work for an accounting firm and Paul went for his MBA. Both found their future prospects intolerable, so Paul took the remainder of his \$15,000 student loan and bought amplifiers. In 1983, Alternative Tentacles, label of the Dead Kennedys, released the Butthole Surfers' first eponymously titled EP. Never has a band announced itself to the world with such ferocity and hilarity. "There's a time to fuck and a time to crave/But the Shah sleeps in Lee Harvey's grave," Paul shrieked on the first cut. Horrible racket.

"There's a time to shit and a time for God/The last shit I took was pretty fuckin' odd." Horrible racket.

On subsequent records—*Another Man's Sac*, *Cream Corn from the Socket of Davis*, *Hairway to Steven*, among others—they gradually mastered the horrible racket on a limited budget. Anyone who bought them for the joke stuck around for the music. If that other Texas guitarist Stevie Ray Vaughan could play Hendrix note for note, Paul Leary, more than anyone, captured his spirit of freedom. Insistently modest, he calls his style "retarded," because of his love for simple riffs.

"There's nothing worse than some heavy metal guy trying to be musically proficient," says Paul. "All I can think of is how much those suckers practice. When I practice, I just play along with the drum machine until I find something usable. Once your fingers are strong, the guitar is a remarkably easy instrument."

ALIMENTARY INSTRUMENTATION

Since companies are reluctant to associate their product with "Butthole" anything, the Surfers have received no endorsement deals, meaning they've actually paid for all of this stuff.

PAUL LEARY has assembled a home studio consisting of a Roland S770 digital sampler with complete memory expansion of 16 megabytes of internal RAM, a SyQuest 44-megabyte removable hard drive and CD ROM, an Opcode Studio 5 interface, an old Mac Plus, a Roland GM-70 guitar MIDI converter, Korg AD Wavestation, Roland R8M drum module, Roland MI12E and MI16E mixers, Marshall speaker simulation system, Panasonic SV3900 DAT recorder, Aengl digital amp, Boogie Mark IV amp, Yamaha MS 205 speakers and the following by Kurzweil: 1000 GX guitar expander, 1000 HX horn expander, 1000 SX string expander, 1000 PX Plus professional expander, 1200 Pro I expansion module, 1200 Pro III expansion module.

Paul plans to take a 20-watt MESA/Boogie amp on the road out of deference to his ringing ears. His favorite guitars right now are a Danelectro Silvertone, a '61 Les Paul Custom reissue, a G&L ASAT with an installed Floyd Rose (he finds Kahlers "unusable"), a couple of Gibson Firebirds, a restored 1955 Martin and an all-plastic Maccaferri Islander. He prefers D'Addario and Dean Markley strings strummed with paper-thin Dunlop nylon picks.

GIBBY HAYNES wishes to report that his Spectral digital audio workstation is "badass." He also likes his Lexicon PCM-42 delays, Alesis data disc, Roland Super Jupiter analog synthesizer ("bass tones from Beyond the Valley of the Lows"), his Roland drum machine and just about any effect by Korg. On the road, he'll play Paul's favorite Telecaster through a MESA/Boogie Mark IV, and sing through Digitech delays and a Yamaha SPX90.

JEFF PINKUS plays a Warwick neck-through bass with maple body and wenge fretboard. On the record he played through the board and through an Ampeg V4B, which may or may not go on the road. He uses a 4x10 cabinet built by Austin Speaker Systems (ASS). He likes GHS pressure-wound, medium-gauge, long-scale strings plucked with Dunlop .60mm nylon picks.

KING thumps a wooden Gretsch drumkit with 12", 13" and 16" toms and a piccolo snare with Zildjian and Sabian cymbals. He's figuring out how to incorporate his Drum Kat MIDI brain with Daus pads into the live show.

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 - 3/6 New Haven, CT
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Boston Garden
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Boston Garden
 - 3/20 Iowa City, IA
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 - 3/21 Fargo, ND
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Winnipeg Arena
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Saskatchewan Pl.
 - 3/28 Edmonton, Alberta
Northlands Coliseum
 - 3/30 Vancouver, BC
BC Stadium
 - 4/1 Portland, OR
Portland Coliseum
 - 4/3 Sacramento, CA
Arco Arena
 - 4/4 Sacramento, CA
Arco Arena

"I GOT A BEFF against John Paul Jones," says Gibby Haynes, his long hair stuffed under a baseball cap. One floor below on 6th Street, Austin's music strip, New Year's Eve revelers scream and honk. Inside this brick apartment, currently rented by actor Johnny Depp, for whom Gibby is housesitting, a television flickers with *Hercules Versus Moloch*.

"I think he's an amazingly cool guy for a rock star," he continues, sipping Crown Royal Canadian whiskey. "He came from an era where they pushed it to the limit. And he did. And I admire that. He's a nice guy... what's the next word?"

But?

"Yeah!" Gibby laughs. "He may not even think I'm a nice guy. But when we got to the airport in San Francisco, there was no limousine waiting for us. We had to rent a car to get to the studio. And he said, 'What kind of a manager would not arrange transportation for his band?' He wailed on that, tried to get us to ditch our manager. Well, I respect our manager. And he has a contract that would cost us hundreds of thousands of dollars to ditch him. I don't want anyone *fucking* with my income. This band has no money to throw away. And that pisses me off—how much money this record cost. We could have recorded it in Memphis for \$50,000 with better equipment and a place to live. I could use that money right now to build my dream house."

Gibby hands over a set of blueprints for a metal warehouse divided down the middle—one half for living, one half to store his hot rods. Trailing off into financial calculation of how many units they need to sell to break even, Gibby suddenly brightens. "You know what I real-

ly want to do? Make a seven-minute version of *It's a Wonderful Life* where Jimmy Stewart jumps off the bridge. What would that cost in computer animation?"

So what inspired the first single, "Who Was in My Room Last Night?"?

"This crack whore I went out with for a month and a half. She was a sweet person in one of her personalities, but the other 50 are fucked."

Let's talk about your lyrics in general. You go for this let's-dispense-with-consensus-reality approach.

"Sheer, documented confusion. The song is somehow directed, but you can't see where. I love that kind of presentation in any art form. Intense emotional reaction and you can't tell why but you know it's important. Conveying a feeling and making no sense—that's success. You wanna see my DWI tape?"

Gibby shoves a video cassette into the VCR. It shows the drunk tank at a police station at 3 a.m. on November 2, 1992. A cop is asking Gibby to do certain tests designed to demonstrate intoxication after he got pulled over in his '49 Chevy with a flame paint job.

"You're refusing to take the test?" asks the cop.

"I suppose I just have to respectfully decline your request. I truly don't think I should. From what I've been told. Is that outlandish?"

"A simple yes or no will do."

This continues for several minutes. We both watch in horrid fascination until it ends. Gibby goes to the kitchen and returns with a prize from the freezer. "This is cool," he says. "You want an ice cream bar half-eaten by Johnny Depp?"



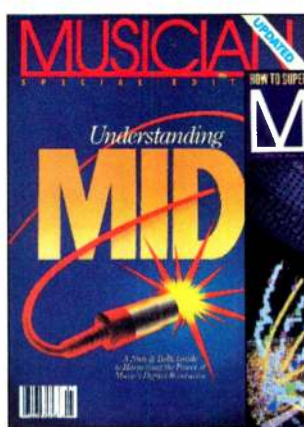
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DANCE ALL NIGHT



STAY A LITTLE LONGER

*Fifty years on, the original Texas Playboys
are still the kings of Western swing*

 by Mark Rowland 

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEITH CARTER
HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE COUNTRY MUSIC FOUNDATION



Johnny Gimble, Fiddle

*

HIGHWAY 75 NORTH OUT OF Tulsa is a burnt pancake, the kind of road that puts truck drivers to sleep in the middle of the day. After an hour you take 60 west and past Bartlesville, where the rolling fall landscapes of the Osage Hills begin to improve the view. The weather is warm for October, though the fresh breeze carries a snap you might not

like much later than that. The road curls as it approaches little Pawhuska, then flattens out again towards the fairgrounds on the far side of town.

The stage is a long flatbed truck, adorned with red, white and blue bunting, set in the soft dirt of a horse track and shaded in front by steep rows of bleachers. An hour before the afternoon show, hardly anyone's around. But as time draws near, the



Smokey Dacus, Drums



players begin to arrive. They are men with weathered faces, bolo ties and well-creased cowboy hats, toting guitars and fiddles and horns.

Then the crowd begins to swell—couples in pickups and station wagons and Winnebagos, older folks who remember the great dances at Cain's ballroom in Tulsa, and kids with video cameras and tape recorders jostling for angles along the dirt track. By the time Bob Wills' biographer, Charles R. Townsend, approaches the microphone to introduce the band, the bleachers are full.

"The Texas Playboys are on the air!"

And there they are, riding the groove of their traditional opening tune, "South"—the legendary Eldon Shamblin on rhythm guitar,

bassist and singer Joe Frank Ferguson, ancient Smokey Dacus behind the drums, three fiddlers led by the magnificent Johnny Gimble. There's drummer Johnny CuvIELLO, and pedal steel whiz Herb Remington, and singers Ramona Reed and Jimmy Widen-er and Leon Rausch, and fiddler Cotton Roberts and Bob's brother Luke Wills, perhaps the wildest Playboy of them all. As they perform, a steer-roping contest is going on in the back-ground, and the vision of bulls charging through the grass to the sprightly dance rhythms of "Stay a Little Longer" gives the scene a slightly hallucinogenic air, like a Western swing version of *Field of Dreams*. Deep in the heart of Bob Wills country, the ghost of

his band has once more been summoned to life.

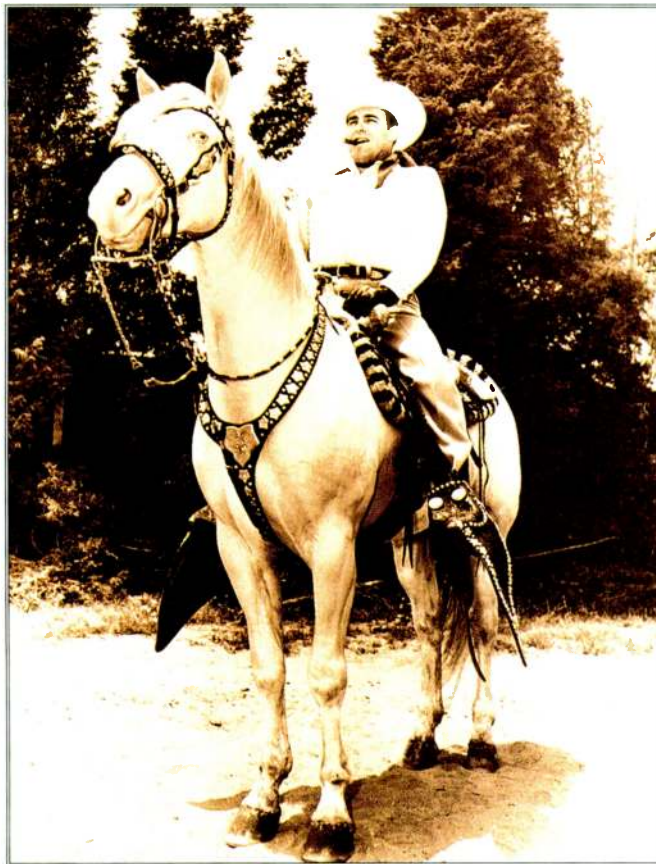
While the players change from song to song, and the tempos aren't always certain, the feeling overwhelms. When Luke Wills sings "Take Me Back to Tulsa" there are whoops and hollers, and when Glynn Duncan croons "Faded Love" as a tribute to his brother Tommy Duncan, now passed on, there are shivers of emotion. The band bangs home the classic "San Antonio Rose" and the bleachers crowd jumps up and joins in like it's the national anthem. Well, maybe it ought to be.

An hour after the show, most of the Playboys are still on their flatbed stage, surrounded by fans eager for autographs or to bask in a memory. The musicians are unfailingly gracious, though some would surely prefer to rest. These are men in their 60s and 70s; the day is warm; and by the way, they're playing an outdoor dance tonight. But you didn't work for Bob Wills if you didn't learn fast that the fans come first. And 15 years after his death, it is Bob Wills' larger-than-life presence—or perhaps, his absence—which hovers most profoundly over this autumnal tableau. The thousand or two fans who showed up this afternoon are partial testament to that. "But I'll tell you something," an older man remarks. "There'd be 15,000 here today, if Bob were on that stage."

"Oh, Bob, he was just a super salesman," observes Eldon Shamblin, who played with Wills longer than anyone. "When he walked on the bandstand, he set that thing afire. It seemed like he was the connecting link between the music and old Joe Public. Even today, his name is very potent. And the people who came to those dances, they never forget.

"But you know," Shamblin muses, "I've talked to people who've listened to records and never saw the old man—and hell, what they say, the feeling came across to them too! And you wonder—how come? Because somehow it got all came across, the kind of person he was."

IF YOU GREW UP IN MOST PARTS OF THE COUNTRY during the 1930s and '40s, you might never have heard the music of Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys. If you grew up in Texas and Oklahoma, the wonder might be if you heard anything else. And with good reason. After Duke Ellington and Count Basie, Bob Wills, "the king of Western swing," was arguably the greatest bandleader in the history of American music.



*"Deep within my heart lies a melody."
Bob Wills, 1905–1975*

Certainly his career was the stuff of myth. Born in 1905, the first child of 10 into a West Texas family of renowned frontier fiddlers, he grew up picking cotton next to black field workers, whose blues chants and hollers became the bedrock of his sound. As a teenager, he rode his horse across the hills to hear his favorite singer, Bessie Smith. After turns as a barber, farmer, salesman and preacher, among other things, he began to make his musical mark in Ft. Worth at a dance hall whose customers included Bonnie and Clyde. Later he joined the Light Crust Doughboys, catapulting that group's sponsor W. Lee O'Daniel to such prominence that O'Daniel eventually became Texas' governor and U.S. senator.

But it was with the Texas Playboys, which Wills put together in 1933 and led in one form or another for the next 40 years, that he perfected the unique sound which ultimately made him a legend, "the king of Western swing." The songs he popularized, from "Faded Love" to "Take Me Back to Tulsa," from "Bubbles in My Beer" to "San Antonio Rose," were unique amalgams of blues, country, pop, dixieland, cowboy, ranchero music and jazz. But what Wills really created was the sound of happiness—as much an antidote for the Depression-choked dustbowl of the '30s as the Hollywood glamor of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Indeed, almost from the moment Wills and the Playboys began their daily broadcasts on Tulsa's radio KVOO in 1934, they were a regional sensation, detonating a kind of mania among their followers not unlike that which would later surround the Beatles.

Like the Beatles, the Playboys made musical history by reinventing their traditions. Though Wills never considered himself a country bandleader, his influence on that music is incalculable—both Willie Nelson and Merle Haggard, for instance, cite Wills as their guiding spirit. In 1935 Wills revolutionized country by hiring its first drummer, Smokey Dacus. Leon McAuliffe joined the same year and became a model for subsequent generations of pedal steel guitarists.

Guitarist Eldon Shamblin, a contemporary of (and perhaps influence on) Charlie Christian, joined in 1937, anchoring the rhythm section and contributing sophisticated ensemble arrangements in which electric guitars and fiddles played second-line riffs the way mainstream jazz orchestras used horn sections. Ever the

alchemist, Wills eventually brought in horns as well, along with twin singers (the McKinney sisters), the raucous blues guitarist Junior Barnard and the amazing electric mandolinist Tiny Moore. By the late '40s, Wills' "Texas fiddle band" was a dead ringer for rock 'n' roll—years before its "invention." As Wills himself once put it, "Rock 'n' roll? Man, that's the same kind of music we've been playing since 1928."

Onstage Wills was a magnetic figure under a white Stetson, a fiddle in one hand, a giant stogie in the other, prone to falsetto cries of "ahh-haaaa!" when the Playboys tickled his musical fancies (which happened a lot). His passion to entertain his audience was returned by what can only be called love. Couples would leave their babies on the bandstand as they two-stepped, and at the end of the night, Wills would stand at the door to shake hands with everyone for coming. The Texas Playboys also performed at funerals for just about anyone who asked, though that often meant driving a hundred miles or more on the band's only off day. For that, Wills would accept not a penny.

His generosity of spirit extended to his band members, whom Wills regarded as family. He paid his sidemen generously, and his dream was to own a ranch on which the Playboys could live with their families, ride the range by day and jam together by night. His financial largesse extended to fans and even strangers whose hard-luck tales had touched his heart—and in the rural Southwest of the 1930s, there was rarely a shortage of hard luck.

Fifty years later, the torch those Depression survivors lit for Wills has been passed to younger generations. "I talked to George Strait," remarks Eldon Shamblin's daughter, Rita. "And I said to him, 'Thank you for keeping my father's music alive.'" Ann Baker, whose husband leads a contemporary Western swing band in the Tulsa area, confesses that a huge framed photo of the Texas Playboys hangs above the couch in their living room. "People ask us what our house looks like," she says. "I tell them it's decorated in early Bob Wills."

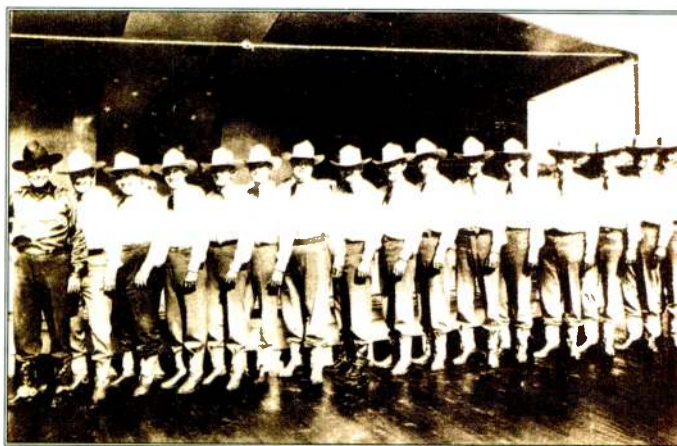
And what of the Texas Playboys themselves? Time takes its toll; many have died, and nobody's getting younger. Yet reunions like the one in Pawhuska continue to attract more fine musicians than can literally fit on a bandstand. Among them, amazingly, are three of the four rhythm section players who anchored the 1930s Texas Playboys, considered by many fans to be Wills' finest band. To watch these men perform, and to share their memories, is to bear witness to a cast of characters and musicians we'll not soon see again.

THE DAY BEFORE THE REUNION, ELDON SHAMBLIN is sitting in a small office in the music department at the state college in Claremore, about 20 miles out of Tulsa in country that's gradually turning into subur-

bia. The man once described in *Rolling Stone* as "the best rhythm guitar player in history" teaches there a few days a week, not guitar but piano-tuning. "That makes it pretty nice teaching, you see. 'Cause the only students that you have are those that likes what you do," he explains. Shamblin, 74, exudes vitality and cynical good humor. He speaks with the folksy rhythms of a natural raconteur, and the grin that frequently cracks across his broad face is warm and infectious.

All of which can be deceiving, for Shamblin, who was also Bob Wills' right-hand man and sometime road manager, was never anyone's pushover. "Johnny Gimble was riding with us on the bus—this must have been about '51 or '52," he recalls at one point. "And he said to me, 'Eldon, I've been thinking about this situation. I figure about 425 guys have been through this band. Now, that's 425 guys who hate your guts.'"

Shamblin chortles happily. "So I guess that's kind of the way it worked. That Gimble's fantastic, ain't he?"



The legendary '30s band. Bob Wills and Smokey Dacus are standing first and second from left, respectively. Eldon Shamblin and Joe Frank Ferguson are fourth and sixth from the right.

Shamblin grew up in Weatherford, about 75 miles west of Oklahoma City, the son of a construction worker. "He was one of them ol' boys who didn't make me go to school, so I quit and went to work. Electric welding—I always loved that kind of stuff. But the Depression finally shut us down, you see? So, what do you do? I accidentally started picking the guitar—and that was a bad mistake," he laughs. "I was one of them guys who, when I started, I just went the whole hog."

Six months after Shamblin started practicing, in 1933, he was playing clubs in Oklahoma City. The repertoire was pop standards with a jazz tinge. In those days the guitar was a distinctly minor ensemble instrument, not nearly as popular as the banjo. Amplifiers were built by hand, and early electric guitars were primitive, to say the least. As a result, the vaunted single-string solo style developed by Shamblin, Charlie Christian and other jazz guitar pioneers was mostly born of necessity. "You'd play on the first string 'cause that was the only one you could hear," he explains. "Then the next night, you'd have to play on the second string. Most of the time you were holding it up to the microphone."

Shamblin, who'd taught himself to sight-read, had landed a staff job with a radio quintet, playing "classics in tempo, little jazz versions—I was never what you'd call a country guitar player"—when, in 1937, Bob Wills heard him and offered him a job. Wills was already a star, but Shamblin balked, explaining that he felt some loyalty to one of the other players in his quintet. "Bring him with you!" Wills responded. "I'll hire him too!"

The other guy—who played clarinet—quit within months. Shamblin lasted 20 years, developing a relationship with "the old



Eldon Shamblin, Guitar

*

man” that transcended music. “We were very close-knitted,” Shamblin agrees, his trademark cynicism suddenly dropping away to suggest the kind of tenderness a son might feel toward a departed father. “Oh Wills, he had to be the greatest. If you had any problems, they were his problems. I he was just one of them kind of guys.

“The guys used to laugh about it, ‘cause I could correct the old man and he would take it. Most of the time if somebody would try to correct him he’d say, ‘Go to hell, you somebitch’—you know? But I think Bob knew I wasn’t trying to be smart, I was only trying to help him.”

The flip side was that Wills depended on the rhythm section. His musical instructions were curt and to the point—“pick their

feet up and put ‘em down.” Well, with a repertoire once estimated at 3600 songs, and soloists who never knew when Wills would point his bow in their direction, a beat that could rock and swing the dancers on the floor was always to the point. Other players could “fall off the bandstand,” as Shamblin put it. “But if I missed one lick, I’d get a hell of a hard look.”

Along with Leon McAuliffe, Johnny Gimble and Tiny Moore, Shamblin came up with several of the Playboys’ most memorable arrangements, like the doubled choruses on “Twin Guitar Special.” Wills, the one player in his band who never improvised, encouraged such innovation, but never talked about it. You’d play the



Joe Frank Ferguson, Bass

*

arrangement on a date and if Wills liked it he'd call the same number the next night. If he didn't, he'd never call it again. "That's the only way you had of finding out whether he liked it or not. There was no way he'd tell you what to play."

But like Merle Haggard, with whom Shamblin toured and recorded during the '70s, Wills left little doubt who was in charge. "When you walk onstage with those guys, you know who's running the show!" Shamblin exclaims. "And they were both such super people to work with. Course, the only reason I worked with Haggard was that he was such a big Wills fan. Hag told me, 'When I was about 14, I used to ride my bicycle into Bakersfield and peek

through the window and watch you play.'" Shamblin shakes his head, a little embarrassed. "What can you say?"

"Now Hag is a super nice guy, but he's moody. I kind of avoided him when we were on the road, 'cause I always felt good! I thought, hell, here I am feeling sorry for Haggard, I ought to be feeling sorry for me!" Shamblin cackles. "Now Bob wasn't what you might call a hot-shot musician. But he gave you the enthusiasm to play. And the people just loved it."

"And of course, if the old man liked something, chances are it *would* be a hit. I remember rehearsing 'San Antonio Rose' and thinking, 'That is the sorriest damn song I ever heard in my life.'

And I still feel the same way now! We'd think, oh hell, the old man, he doesn't know what's going on." Shamblin shrugs. "Well, that just shows you how stupid you can be."

Wills was extremely conscientious about his obligations to "the people," as Shamblin points out. "One of his pet peeves was, 'When you go into a cafe and eat, if you get ahold of some bad food, just keep your damn mouth shut. If it's that bad, I'll pay for it—just don't complain.' He was kind of a preacher—hell, he was a

preacher. And Bob was one of the hardest-working guys on the bandstand, he wasn't good today and bad tomorrow. You see Merle Haggard one day and it's dynamite and the next night it may be a dud!" Shamblin smiles. "But that's typical Haggard too."

In the years preceding World War II, the Texas Playboys gradually increased in size to 21 members, an orchestra equally at home in the service of urban swing or rural hoedowns. After the war, the group pared to seven or eight members, electric guitars and fiddles replacing the second-line horn sections. Through both eras, the Playboys recorded and toured virtually without respite. It was the only way to make money, and Wills, who married six times, was never much in sync with domestic life anyway. "When I was managing the band, if we'd be off three or four days he'd call me up: 'Goddam, get something booked. Let's get the hell out of here.'"

For all his success, Wills was racked by inner demons which found their release in alcoholism. He'd be straight for weeks or months, then go on a bender and disappear. "Bob told me many times he never did intend to get drunk, but if he took one drink he was gonna get drunk. That's the way it was." One time in Louisiana, Shamblin recalls, Wills was driving drunk in his Cadillac and passed out at a traffic intersection. But the cop who found him was a fan; he took Wills to the town's best hotel and put him to bed. "I always said Bob was one of the luckiest sons of bitches you'd ever run across. He never even got the damn ticket!"

Another Wills proclivity was for women, and as the handsome leader of the finest band in his territory, he was rarely without opportunities for companionship. "That was his life," Shamblin says flatly. "Women, he thought that was the greatest thing that ever was. I saw a lot of guys perform, but not like Wills. Man, when he went after one, he went after her—and he done his own promotin' too. I used to watch that S.O.B., and you could pick out the prettiest girl in the audience...but you had to watch Bob real close. 'Cause sometimes he'd just barely move his head, see," Shamblin says, demonstrating the technique. "Oh, you really had to be on your toes to catch him. But I'd watch him. First thing you know, he'd make contact—then out the back door he'd go.

"Of course he'd let anyone else disappear from the bandstand,



1944 Armed Forces Radio Services broadcast from Hollywood. Singer Laura Lee Owens is flanked by Bob Wills and Tommy Duncan.

Sounds like it kept all the guys in the band pretty happy.

"Damn right it did! But you don't find too many bandleaders like that. He's the only one I ever met."

Another quirk that kept the band happy was Wills' penchant for calling out their names before, after and during their solos. For one thing, it made them famous. With Wills at the microphone, Al Stricklin was transformed into "the ol' piano pounder"; Tiny Moore's instrument became "the biggest little mandolin in the world." Leon McAuliffe's pedal steel solos were often preceded with a "take it away, Leon, take it away," followed by Wills' signature cry of "Ah-haaaa..." Lore has it that Wills hollered for joy, but he once told Shamblin that he started doing it because his early bands were so bad the hollering helped cover up their mistakes.

Another Wills tic was performing the same song twice in a row at dances. Did you ever work on a farm, Wills would say. Well, when you plough one row, you have to plough it back. Shamblin shakes his head: "He generally had an explanation for everything."

For all his savvy on the bandstand, Wills' trust and good will toward his business associates helped empty his bank account. Eventually, Shamblin found himself arranging bookings for the band: "He'd had such bad luck with managers—none of them felt about Bob the way I did, you see. That didn't mean I was a good manager, but at least he didn't have to worry about me stealing all the money."

Shamblin moved to Tulsa in the early '50s to spend more time with his daughter. He left the Playboys in 1954 to get a CPA in accounting, then returned two years later. But at that point Wills' drinking was out of control and Shamblin quit the band for good: "I thought, I got to get out before I lose my mind."

He never became an accountant, though. "I went to school for 10 years trying to get my CPA, then threw the book away and said to hell with it," he laughs. "Well, when you find out you're wrong and that you're not going to be happy, that's the best thing you can do." One day he came across an ad in a magazine to learn piano tuning for five dollars. "I just happened to have five dollars, so I ordered the book. And I've actually made more money doing piano work than I ever did making music. That's a true story."

too," Shamblin observes. "If that was the reason. But that was the only good reason you had. By God, if you said you were sick, you better be sick!"

"I get to thinkin' about those things. We used to drive around in this seven-passenger Buick, with a trailer. Now, if you had a gal and you wanted to go out and get a little, he wouldn't let you park the car, but he'd let you get a driver to drive you around for an hour or so in the back of this limousine. Then you'd go back while somebody else rode around."

A man pokes his head in the door of the room where we've been sitting. "You working this Saturday night?"

"Yeah, Pawhuska," Shamblin answers. "This is Darrell Magee. He's in charge of the music department here at the college. That don't mean he's smart, it just means he's got a good position." Magee laughs. "I wonder why nobody called you to play up there."

"Well," Magee suggests, "it's a Texas Playboys reunion, and I was never a Texas Playboy."

"Oh, that don't impress anybody, you know," Shamblin scoffs. "Besides, you could

say you were, sometime when they were all drunk and couldn't remember anything."

Shamblin admits to mixed feelings about the next day's reunion. "It's alright as long as you just do it and get the hell out. But I think most of the good feelings came with the group just before the war, back in the '30s. Of course I still enjoy working with guys like Gimble, and Herb [Remington] is a hell of a guy. But I go back to '37, and most of 'em, boy, they're dying. I used to tell my wife years ago, what the hell is gonna happen to us when we get old—no retirement, broke, no nothin'. But

then I'd say, hell, I'll never have to worry about that, 'cause I'll never live to be 60." Shamblin chuckles. "So, my plans went haywire. But it's not so bad getting old if you can keep your mental outlook."

His wife passed away some years back, Shamblin says, but a few years ago he married again. They live in the country near Tulsa on a tributary of Lake Oologah, not far from his daughter. "Oh, it's nice. We get up in the morning and sit on the porch, got a hundred and some acres and a locked gate. So nobody can come see you unless they call." He grins devilishly. "I kind of like that. Musicians—they're hard to put up with on a consistent basis, you know what I'm saying?"

He keeps threatening to retire, but then a gig comes along, and another. The arthritis in his leg is getting worse, though, and pretty soon he thinks he'll hang it up for good. When he does, it will mark an era in which the guitar evolved from an obscure background voice to the most popular instrument in the world.

"Ain't that something? Well, I always said, once I got old, at least I picked the right instrument. When I started there wasn't anyone, and now there's a bunch of kids that are so damn good they make you look silly."

"But I don't know if they get the damn feeling, do they? That's what made the old man such a dominating figure, I think. He got the feeling in there, and for guys like me, he made you want to play! Now that's a hard thing to find, a band leader who makes you want to play." Shamblin's voice drops low. "It's a good feeling."

THE TEXAS PLAYBOYS REUNION is part of a weekend something called the Osage Hills Festival, and the morning of the show there's a parade through downtown Pawhuska, a surprising chronology of horses, tanks, girls waving from cars, a helicopter. The Playboys are there too, looking dignified in their cowboy hats and ties, seated comfortably along bales of hay as their flat-bed slowly navigates the city's streets. Following the parade they congregate dutifully on the grounds of Pawhuska's historical society building and are promptly surrounded by a gaggle of aging fans. Is this what Paul McCartney can look forward to?

One woman walks up and hugs Joe Frank Ferguson, then asks to have their picture taken together. "Remember when I sat with you and Al Stricklin?" she asks, referring to an occasion now decades past. Ferguson, a balding,

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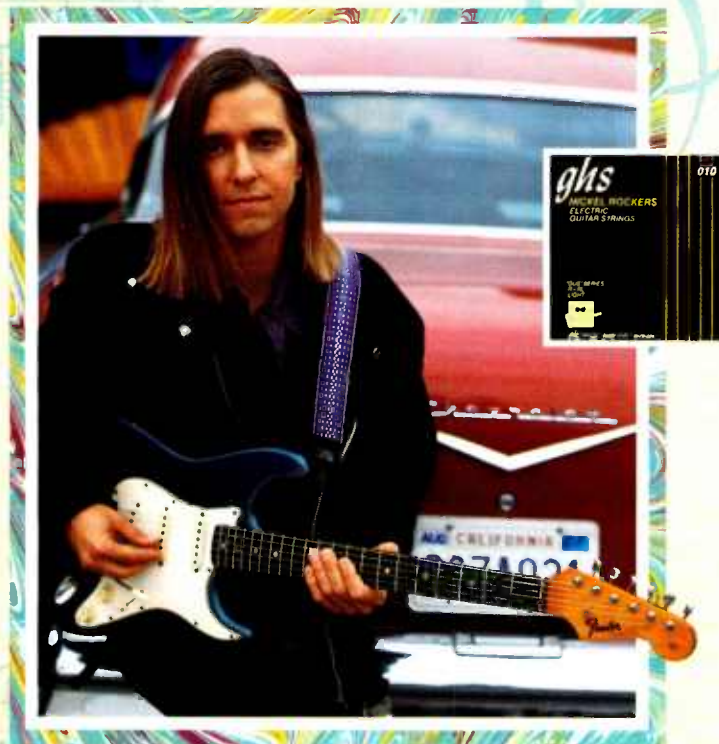


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soft-spoken man who began singing and playing upright bass with the Playboys in 1938, politely acknowledges the possibility of such an event. The Bob Wills legacy runs deep.

"Your fans sure are loyal," someone says.

"Yeah," Ferguson replies wearily. "And they're all fans."

Ferguson finally sneaks away to the local diner for a bite with his best pal and former rhythm mate, William "Smokey" Dacus. A compact man with deep lines etched into a tanned, weathered face, Dacus became the first drummer in country music when he joined the Playboys and, at age 86, he remains the eldest. Whether talking music or his real love, flying airplanes, Dacus speaks with the graveled pitch of a man whose relaxations also include chain-smoking cigarettes and drinking coffee black.

And to what might he attribute his fine health? "Oh, I would say good clean living," Dacus replies evenly. "And if you believe that, well, Joe and I have some oceanfront property in Arkansas you might be interested in."

In 1935, Dacus was playing hotel dinner music in a tuxedo band for \$15 a week when Wills asked him to join the Playboys—at \$55 a week. "These were hard times," he recalls. "You could buy a loaf of bread for a nickel." Yet at first he was hesitant. "I asked him, 'What the hell do you want with a drummer in a fiddle band?' That was the first time I ever saw his eyes flash," Dacus says, in a way that communicates their impact. "He looked at me and said, 'I want to play your kind of music and my kind of music—put it together and make it swing.'"

Actually, Dacus never made \$55 a week, because after six nights Wills raised his salary. "But my problem was, 'What the hell does a drummer in a fiddle band play?'" There was no precedent. Eventually, he settled on a 2/4 beat, beating the small end of one stick against his drum's suitcase to match the slap of the bass, and thumping the bass pedal on the one and three. Sure enough, it became known as the "suitcase rhythm."

"You can make it close together or wide enough to drive a truck through it, or just come over the hill and come down on it. Bob didn't want a drummer playing four beats all the time. He wanted dance music and the two beat was the best. Well, we called 'em two-steps."

Meanwhile, Ferguson had won an amateur singing contest which landed him a featured spot on Tulsa's KVOO. Wills heard him and hired him on the spot. When he wasn't singing, his job was to hold Son Lansford's

upright bass whenever Lansford left the bandstand. Soon he picked up that instrument as well, and when Lansford left the Playboys for a while Joe slid right in. Shortly he picked up the saxophone, and became part of the Playboys horn section. Ferguson has an ear.

Lacking the technical sophistication of Shamblin, Stricklin or Dacus, Ferguson's knack for finding the roads between them solidified the rhythm quartet's special chemistry. Their blend of finesse and pure dance adrenalin suggests a comparison with the Kansas City-based Count Basie rhythm sec-

tion, whose style they knew well. "Vized those guys," Ferguson says blur didn't figure we had the right to thin' as good as they were."

But for a bunch of white guys in cowboy hats, the Playboys could frequently impart a decidedly black sound. Part of that was attributable to Bob Wills' lifelong devotion to the blues. Another part was in the subtly attuned ears of the musicians he hired, who'd all grown up within the rich musical melting pot of an otherwise arid dust bowl.

"My hero was Sonny Greer, who played

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with Duke Ellington," says Dacus. "Anytime Duke or Basie would come to town I'd be there, and Sonny and I got to be very thick. He'd give me so much wise information. He'd say, 'You see these cats with drums all over the place? They're at a disadvantage, 'cause right away people are wondering, when is he gonna hit all that stuff?' All Sonny carried on the road was a snare, a bass, a sock and a cymbal. He never did a solo, but he could play anything." Dacus shakes his head in admiration. "They don't come no better than that. That man did not beat the drums—he played them."

Dacus played with the Playboys for six years, and in that span laid down fundamentals of style that country drummers use to this day. When he began no one knew what to make of him—to get a proper recording balance on his first studio session with the Playboys, for instance, he had to play his trap case in the bathroom. By 1941, the Playboys were riding their biggest hit, "San Antonio Rose," and preparing a trip to Hollywood for a string of motion pictures. And that's when Dacus quit the group. Excepting reunions, he never played professionally again.

"A musician is a musician at first because that's what he wants to be," Smokey explains. "It's a form of expression that satisfies him. But as he gets older it becomes a job, you see, and he no longer goes off to jam till daylight, he's ready to go home. He thinks, 'I'm gonna get out of this damn life.' So he goes uptown to find a job. And the man there says, 'What do you do?' 'Well, I play guitar.' 'Well, we don't need any guitar players—what else do you do?'"

Dacus lets the question hang in the air for a moment like stale smoke. "And from that point on," he says, patting his palm on the table, "he's a musician because he has to be. And invariably he winds up in little beer joints out on the edge of town, getting drunk and playing for whatever he can get. I saw too many of them go that route. I decided, pictures or no pictures, I'm getting out of here and learn another trade while I'm young enough to learn it."

So Dacus sold his drums and enrolled at an aeronautics school. In time he became a teacher and a pilot, and an expert on just about anything to do with flying machines. Meanwhile, Ferguson moved on to other swing bands, then returned to the Texas Playboys in the early '50s as part of a fine aggregate that included Johnny Gimble.

And after that? "I had day jobs, either building automobile engines or selling them," Ferguson says. "Hell, I welded for 17 years. Then I'd go home, wash my hands, get in my tux and go to the club."

But neither man ever really let the music go. When Dacus, Shamblin, Ferguson and Stricklin were reunited for a Wills tribute album in the late '60s, for instance, it was the first time the original Playboys rhythm section had seen each other together in nearly 30 years. They were all so rusty they merely walked into a recording studio and laid down their first nine songs on the first take. "Somebody goofed up at the end of the tenth song," Dacus notes drily. "But you see, everything we ever attempted to play, we played by feel. If I get up on a bandstand without Joe, I can't play for shit. To hell with his execution or technique. I gotta have somebody I can feel. That's what we learned from Bob."

Al Stricklin, "the ol' piano pounder," died in 1976, but a few years ago, Dacus, Shamblin and Ferguson performed with Asleep at the Wheel's pianist Floyd Domino, who'd grown up a big Stricklin fan. "It was like the original '37 section, and at the end of one tune, everyone quit except us," Dacus recalls. "That had

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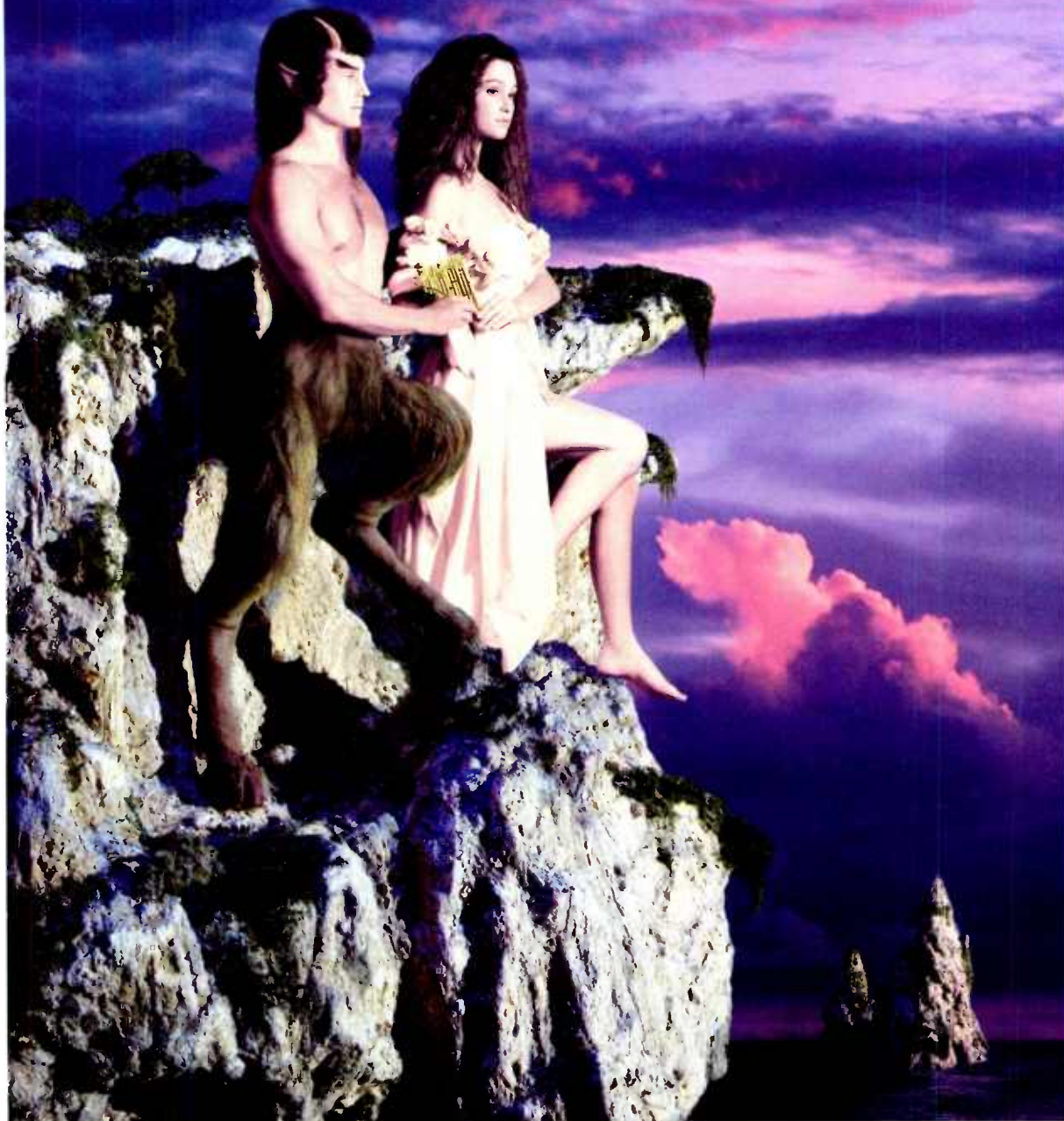
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never happened to us before—we'd never heard us by ourselves. Just nothing but rhythm, playing to each other and for each other and with each other."

Luckily for Floyd Domino that night, Dacus decided to leave out one of his favorite tricks—flipping his lit cigarette butts onto Al Stricklin's keyboard. "You see, Al had to be watching Bob in case he called for a solo, and his fingers would come down on that hot cigarette."

Came one Saturday night, though, Dacus bounced a lit cigarette off Stricklin's keyboard

and into the piano. When the Playboys returned on Monday to play a radio broadcast, all that was left of the piano was a bunch of blackened strings and wires. "Bob never could figure out why," Smokey deadpans. "Me and Al never did tell."

THE DANCE FLOOR AT THE Pawhuska fairgrounds is a square cement slab, lit by carnival strings of bulbs, and ringed by rows of chairs. As the Playboys begin the evening dance, young men in tipped cowboy

hats waltz their daisies cross the floor. Others crowd in front of the makeshift stage. The sound is ragged at first, but after a few numbers the groove thickens, and when Johnny Gimble steps to center stage to launch a solo or harmonize a three-fiddle chorus, there are shouts of appreciation and awe.

Gimble, who is probably the finest country fiddle man alive, has the handsome, silver-haired profile of a Texas senator. An apt student of swing fiddlers from Cliff Bruner to Louis Tierney and Jesse Ashlock, he proved to be their equal after joining the Playboys in 1948. Unlike most of Wills' sidemen, however, his reputation grew after leaving the band. The Playboys' jazzy ways had never been really accepted in Nashville, but in the '60s and '70s Gimble became one of that town's eminent session men, whose playing matched precision with west Texas soul.

"The musicians in Nashville all dug Bob, but I remember when I went up there some guys thought they wouldn't use me on records because I was too 'Western swing,'" Gimble says, resting in his mobile trailer after the evening's first set. "They didn't play much jazz on those records—and they still don't. Bob couldn't play jazz either, you know. But he had a way of finding musicians that appealed to him and then turning them loose."

What's this reunion like for you?

"Oh, it feels like there's a whole lot of people on the bandstand," Gimble says, not unkindly. "A lot of confusion about who is going to play. Don't get me wrong, I really enjoy getting to do this. Used to be, you could go somewhere and do it every week. But it's real unusual now."

Unlike the other ex-Playboys, Gimble is still on the road. He drove several hundred miles to get here from another gig two days before, and the next night he'll play 350 miles to the south. The morning after that he's due in Willie Nelson's studio for a recording session, another 200 miles. "Back then we had so much fun playing, you know, I didn't really think about it," he says of the traveling grind. "But I talked to Bob in his later years and he told me he'd give anything to quit. Some people thought he was always having a blast."

The older traditions of jazz and country seem to be making a comeback, though.

"I think people listen to something till it gets old, then they want something new," he says. "And then what's old will be new. But I do enjoy it." He glances out the window and gauges the time. "Well, we'll have to go to work shortly."

It's nearly midnight as the [cont'd on page 97]

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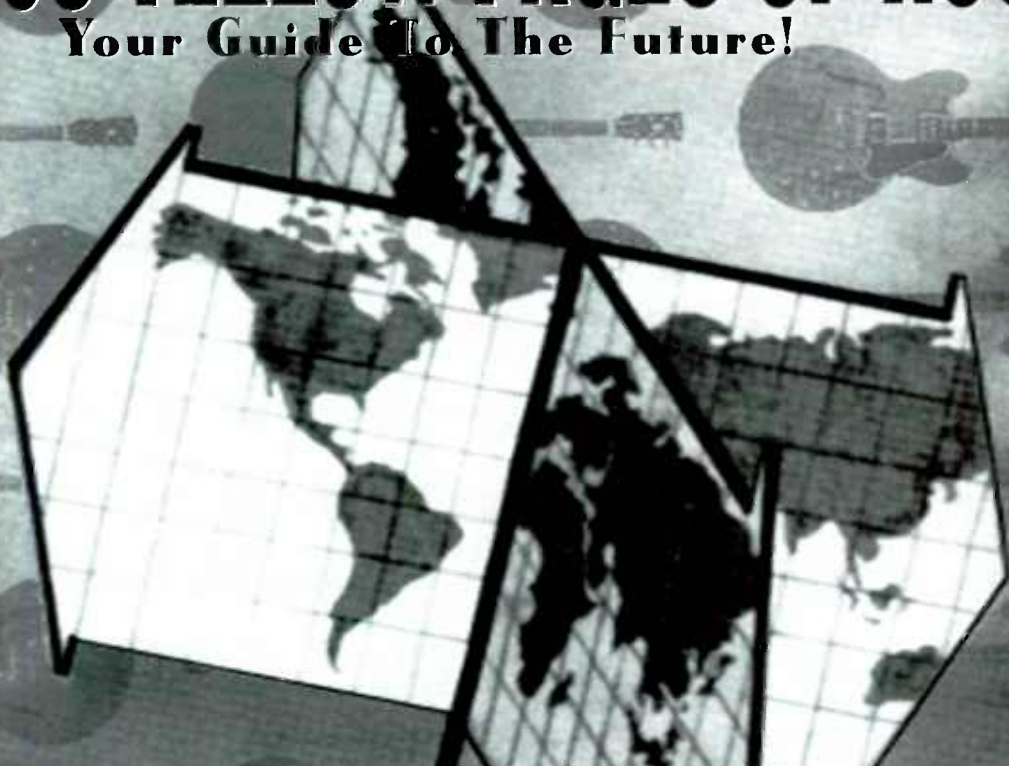
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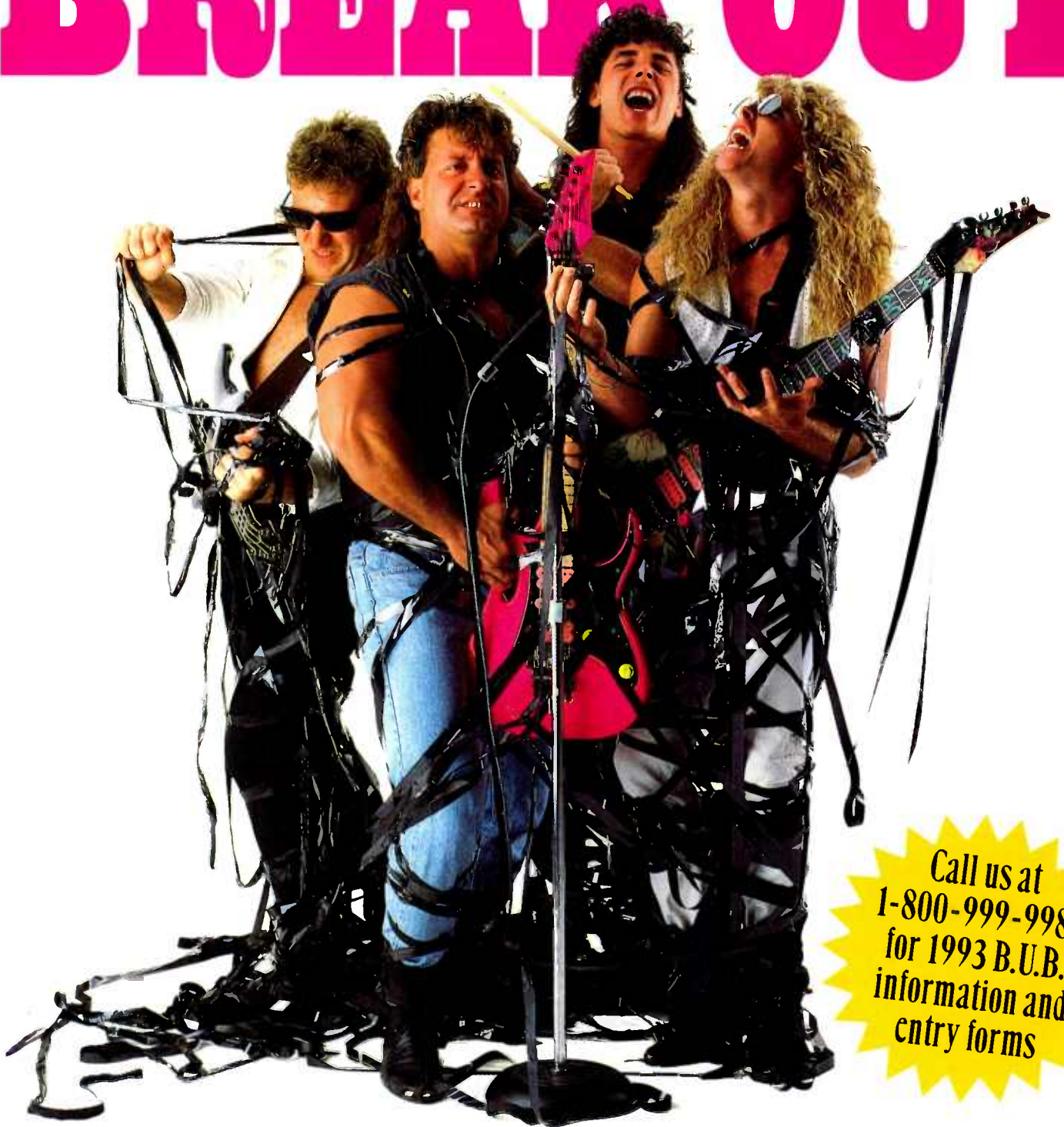
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Manu Katché's French Cooking

*A studio superstar's secret:
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by TONY SCHERMAN

butt on inspiration. All anyone can say is: It's paid off. In a half-dozen years, Katché has played himself into the elite of rock's studio drum corps: Gadd, Colaiuta, Aronoff, Keltner and maybe one or two others.

Unknown outside France, Katché caught Peter Gabriel's ear in time to whack out "Sledgehammer" and four other tracks on 1986's *So*. He joined Gabriel and *So*'s co-producer, Daniel Lanois, on Robbie Robertson's first solo album, cut Sting's *Nothing Like the Sun*, rejoined Sting and Gabriel for *The Soul Cages* and *Us* and played on recent, new or upcoming albums by Joni Mitchell, Tracy Chapman, Paul Young, saxophonist Jan Garbarek and Michael McDonald. His catlike, lithe style is beautifully coordinated; even better, it feels good. You'll rarely hear drums as cushioning, as polyrhythmically sly, as Katché's on Paul Young's version of "Stop on By."

Katché's mother is French; his father, who left when the boy was two, is from the Ivory Coast. Raised by his mother's parents, Manu started piano as a little boy and played a jury-rigged drumkit his grandfather built him. At 15 he went to a conservatory to study classical percussion; at 19 he won a first-prize scholarship to the French equivalent of Juilliard but he'd had all the school he wanted; he wanted to play jazz and rock.

"On tympani, you play five drums; you practice with five pads. The difficulty is the way you must cross your sticks without clicking them. You're going very fast." When he switched to traps, he brought a tympanist's multi-drum approach "instead of just going boom-boom-boom on the same two drums." On the seductive, repeating two-bar phrase on Robertson's "Somewhere Down the Crazy River," he sprinkles a minimum of notes over a maximum of drums: hi-hat, ride cymbal bell, snare (with the snares off), tom, floor tom and bass.

"When I was learning, I never tried to copy anyone. Sure, study rudiments, study all the technique on the snare drum, everything. And then—just play. Let your personality come out.

"I listened to lots of bebop and Coltrane, but I focused more on Coltrane than on Elvin Jones. I wanted to play like Coltrane. I tried to phrase like him, rather than just keeping the swing. I



You know, I've done a clinic in L.A. Nice kids, but they all asked the same question, this 'How did you work out that fill?' I told them, 'I don't know.' *I don't know.* I feel it, it's that particular day, who knows? You create something, and phhht"—he makes a very Gallic gesture,

roughly translatable as "On to the next gig." "They all wanted to know how I worked out the groove on 'Somewhere Down the Crazy River.' But I couldn't even remember."

Strange sentiments from a session musician, but we're not dealing with a run-of-the-mill member of the species. Manu Katché (mah-NYOO kah-CHAY), a 34-year-old Parisian, is a session drummer who considers himself an artist, who strives not for malleability but for his own identity, who goes into sessions cold, staking his

did the same with soul music, playing very close to the singer, not just sticking in a groove. And sometimes now, when I'm working on a track, on the first go everything comes into my mind—*everything*. When I listen back, there may be one bar that's interesting. That's the one I work on.

"I never sit down and work out a part before a session. Never *ever*. I like to get the demo beforehand, but only to get inspired. I try to be fresh, which is very difficult. I'm not an amazing drummer, but I know I have a style. Vinnie Colaiuta *is* an amazing drummer but it's too much for me, too busy.

"On a track like Sting's 'Soul Cages,' I play very, very simple. Anybody could do it. I did *nothing*. When I played that simple groove, I thought it was fitting the track very well. So I didn't have anything else to do! If you let your sensitivity come out, and don't try to copy a bunch of tricks and licks, you play the best accompaniment."

It's a paradox—the most sensitive accompanist is the one who strives to be himself. On *Nothing Like the Sun's* "Lazarus Heart," Katché plays his killer drum part a different way every chorus, rote consistency be damned. On *The Soul Cages'* "Island of Souls," after hitting


the downbeat on the conventional 3 and 6 for a while (the song is in 6/8), he got bored and switched to the 1 and 4, giving the song a cool little backwards tug. And his fills are rarely predictable: "If I come up with a fill nobody was expecting, it's because I don't usually play fills just before the chorus, or at the end of a verse—I'll play a fill in the middle of a verse, of a bar, anywhere." This is not a drummer you could replace with a machine. "Many producers want the same thing, chorus after chorus. All I can say

is, thank you, Daniel Lanois, thank you, Sting and Peter Gabriel, for letting me do what I want.

"Which is a scary thing. Peter helped me with this. When I started *So*, Peter said, 'Just play as Manu Katché.' I thought, 'I don't know what is Manu Katché! But I will try.' I was frightened, I thought he was going to say, 'That sounds like shit.' I've made some progress. Now I say, 'Okay, Manu, be yourself and if they don't like it, fine.' I try to feel confident, though most of the time I am not."

Nor does he enjoy listening to his work. His imagination is too restless, he always thinks of phrases he wishes he'd tried. "I'm always disappointed when I listen later." A play of "Lazarus Heart" prompts much brooding. "It's okay. But it could've been very, very good. The kick figure is too repetitive. Maybe I should have turned the bass drum around."

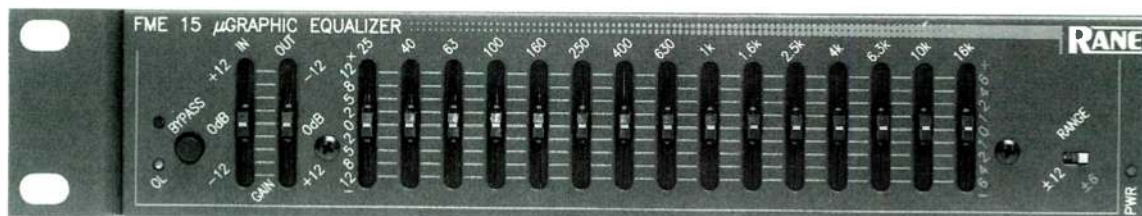
His temperament makes for strange drum clinics, too. How can you show kids the one thing they're dying to know—"Mister, how do I play that lick?"—when you don't even remember how you tossed it off? So what *did* he end up doing in L.A.?

"At the clinic? Well, I just played." The lucky little brats. 

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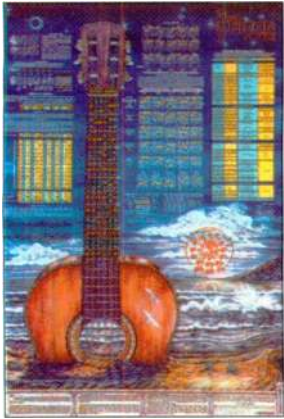
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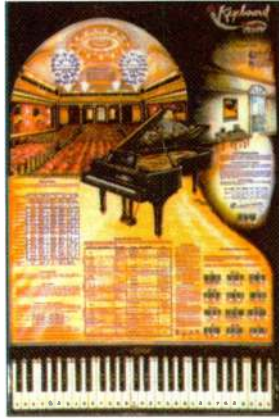
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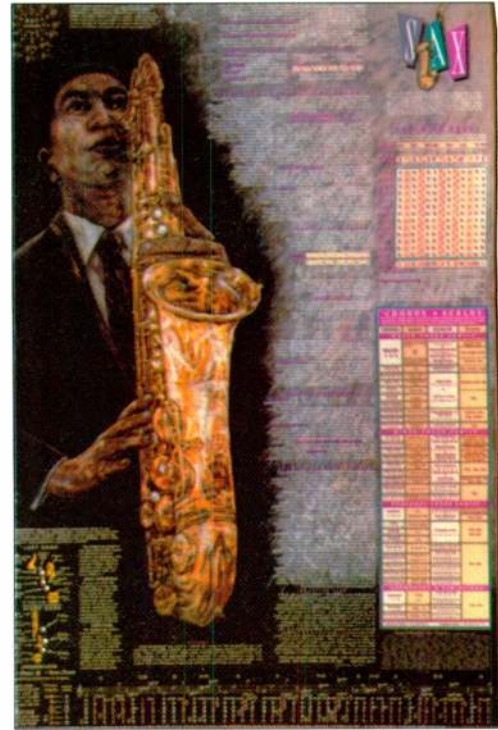
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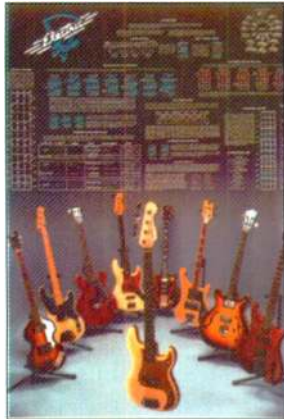


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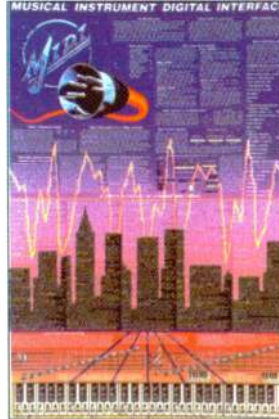


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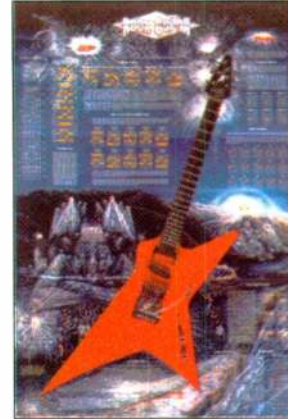
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*Be sure you're
ready to roll*

by MICHAEL COOPER

... dios allow you to rent a multitrack tape (until your project is mixed) at a substantial discount compared to buying. The drawback is that there's no chance for a remix once the tape is recorded over by the next band that rents it.

COST PER-CUSSION

... A professional recording captures every nuance of sound and performance, good or bad. Drummers should replace old heads, clean cymbals, oil all pedals and practice tuning their kits to eliminate rattles and buzzes. When toms are tuned too high, they will often cause the snare to rattle. Proper tuning is usually preferable to damping the heads with tape and tissue paper.

... Drums sound radically different through microphones than they do acoustically. A lot of times the engineer will ask the drummer to set up or play differently than he or she is accustomed to in order to get the best possible sound. This could mean cutting a hole in the kick drum's head or removing the head completely, so a microphone can be placed inside the shell. It's a good idea to practice playing with your cymbals raised as far above your toms and snare as possible. Why? If the engineer needs to boost the high end on a rack tom mike to bring out the sound of the batter head strike, any cymbal bleedthrough will also be brightened. The result can be a piercing, beady-sounding cymbal which is impossible to mellow out in the final mix. A similar problem occurs when a hi-hat is positioned too close to the snare drum or played too loudly. Play each part of your kit at the level you want to hear it on tape, and the engineer will reward you with better-sounding drums in less time.

NOISE ANNOYS

... Guitarists and bassists should make sure pickups' magnetic poles are at an appropriate height to achieve an even volume across all strings. Intonation should be checked before a session, and don't forget to bring an electronic tuner, spare strings, extra cables (with intact shielding) and picks. Don't assume the studio will have this stuff. Also, make sure instruments are grounded

Even garage bands are getting the full boxed-set treatment these days. I just picked up a three-CD compilation on the Troggs! Disc number three in this tribute to Trogg-dom consists solely of an infamous outtake of the band bickering endlessly over an arrangement. This hilarious bit of rock 'n' roll history serves as a reminder of just how *stupid* it is

to waste expensive studio time over things that should have been worked out beforehand. Preparation is the key to getting a good recording without nuking your wallet.

REEL TIME

First off, choose the number of songs you'll record. For a good-quality demo, recording more than three or four songs is a waste of time and money. Most A&R people and club managers form an opinion long before the end of the fourth tune. Recording fewer songs buys you more time to add overdubs and work out mixes. Figure out the total playing time of your songs and ask the recording engineer how much tape you'll need. Agonizing over whether or not the first take is your best possible performance eats up valuable studio time which can often exceed the cost of extra tape. Some stu-

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Pam Tillis

Guy
Clark



boats
to
build

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With *Boats to Build*, Guy Clark unveils a collection of ten new songs destined to add to his reputation as one of America's finest singer-songwriters.

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and your amp's speakers and tubes are in good shape. Clean noisy volume and tone controls with Freon spray and lubricant (Cramolin R-5 works great). If fret buzz is a problem, raise the action or investigate the need for a fret job. It's crucial that guitarists, and especially bassists, strive for a relatively even feel and consistent tone. Many bassists suffer from "strings-clacking-against-frets-or-pickups" syndrome, because they're used to playing hard. Unfortunately, boosting midrange EQ on a pillowy-sounding bass (in order to achieve a more growling tone) amplifies these obnoxious noises. Similarly, acoustic guitarists should try to avoid squeaking strings. Loud squeaks limit EQ options for both acoustic and electric guitar tracks, often resulting in muddy tone. Acoustic players should also concentrate on eliminating extraneous body noises from their performance, such as heavy breathing, humming, foot-tapping or even clothes brushing up against a guitar. These instruments are typically recorded with sensitive condenser mikes that pick up every detail. Pianists and classical harpists often reduce pedal noise by playing in their stocking feet.

CABLE READY

MIDI instrumentalists should not assume the recording engineer has studied your particular instrument's owner's manual. Don't forget extra audio and MIDI cables, a keyboard stand and manuals for unanticipated trouble-shooting. Know how to assign MIDI channels and outputs, adjust velocity and turn local control and onboard effects on and off. Also, match the levels of individual patches if you plan to switch patches mid-song. Sax players (yeah, clarinet, flute and oboe, too) get off relatively easy. Make sure your instrument is in good working order and bring extra reeds.

VOCAL EASE

Vocalists should practice microphone technique to weed out pops and sibilance (sharp-sounding s's, f's, t's). It's a good idea to get the engineer a lyric sheet to speed up overdubs and punch-ins. You don't want to dry out your vocal cords, so avoid alcohol, dairy, caffeine and nicotine for at least two days prior to the session. Before you get rolling, sit down and talk to the engineer about the way you want to proceed. Question the benefits of recording vocals simultaneously with the band versus overdubbing. Should you record straight to DAT, or multitrack the band and then mix? Evaluate your budget and quality considerations when deciding on the best approach. And above all, have your arrangements *really* together. Listening to the Troggs duke it out may be good for a laugh, but you wouldn't want to be there. ☺



PETER'S PAGE

By Peter C. Knickles, Seminar Instructor - *Doing Music & Nothing Else*

Dear Peter,

I have been working with 3 other people in a musical group for 4 years. We had a disagreement about what musical direction to go in and how much live gigging we would do. Since I held the dissenting view, I was voted out of the band. Can they do this? We don't have any type of legal agreement. Is my dismissal legal?

Josh Blue, San Diego, CA

NO! Go immediately to an entertainment lawyer. I believe you not only have the right to be reinstated as a member of the partnership but can be compensated for this hassle. You should also be able to get an injunction against the other members, preventing them from doing any business such as gigging, recording, signing agreements, etc., until the problem has been resolved.

In the future, I strongly suggest you execute a partnership agreement. This document is the only way to fully protect yourself. And don't think it's too expensive or complicated to complete!

To keep the cost down, check out *Nolo's Partnership Maker* - Call (510) 549-1976 for purchase info. It's a computer software program that walks you through almost 100 different issues that are going to be important to your future. It explains each issue and then asks you to choose one by saving it to the document. When you've gone through all the choices you simply print out your agreement and have an entertainment lawyer spend an hour reviewing it. With the lawyer's ok, have everyone sign.

You just saved yourself anywhere from \$500-1,000 in legal fees by using *Partnership Maker*, rather than having the lawyer write the agreement from scratch. And who knows how much you saved down the line if a disagreement with the partners comes up!

* TIP OF THE MONTH *

You Have A Right To A Decent Entertainment Attorney!

DO NOT sign anything without counsel. You've heard it many times but still so many sign away their careers for a song (pun intended). Don't tell me you can't afford the lawyer's fees. You can - IF you contact **The Volunteer Lawyers For The Arts** at (212) 319-2787. Even if you don't live in NYC, the VLA has set up chapters in most major cities. CALL! You have a right to a good night's sleep, too.

Dear Peter,

I am sick to death of getting screwed at the local showcase clubs. They want me to accept pennies for my fee or even worse, "Pay To Play". I heard colleges pay decent money. Is this true and if so, how do I get the gigs?

Lisa Lubin, Woodstock, NY

You need a gig poster and video brochure in your Promo Kit, and an active membership in NACA. Let me explain:

A gig poster is made up of a live action shot of your act with white space at the bottom so the college promoter may write in the details about your upcoming gig: i.e., date, time, location, ticket prices. The promoter distributes the posters around the campus as the primary means of getting the word out.

If you don't have these gig posters available how is the promoter going to effectively promote the show? Get out his crayons and draw some pretty pictures? Is he going to pay for your posters? I think not. In fact, many promoters look for the gig poster first in your promo kit as a benchmark check to qualify you as a pro. No poster - No gig!

Next, you need a video brochure - a 4-6 minute video showing highlights of your best live performance. These video brochures have taken the guesswork out of just listening to a promo kit demo. They are the "auditions" of the 90's. They allow the promoter/booking agent to see what he may hire. Most college students who book talent have become so lazy that they won't even listen to cassette demos anymore. They expect the video. No video - No gig!

National Association for Campus Activities (NACA) is your #1 resource for networking to get college gigs on a regular basis. Through their national and regional trade shows they connect the soloists and bands of all types of music to the college student talent buyers. Many big names have built their careers on an association with NACA. Check it out! Call (800) 845-2338 for a FREE information kit and tell them Peter sent you!

To see examples of Gig Posters, the correct contents of Promo Kits, and Videos as well as learning how to do a Pro Video Brochure for FREE, consider attending the next *Doing Music & Nothing Else Seminar*.

Wish I had more space - so much info I need to tell you about! If you have a music BUSINESS question, send to Peter's Page at the MBS address listed below. For a Quarterly dose of my writings, call (800) 448-3621 for a FREE Music Business Journal Subscription. Talk To Ya Later...Peter.

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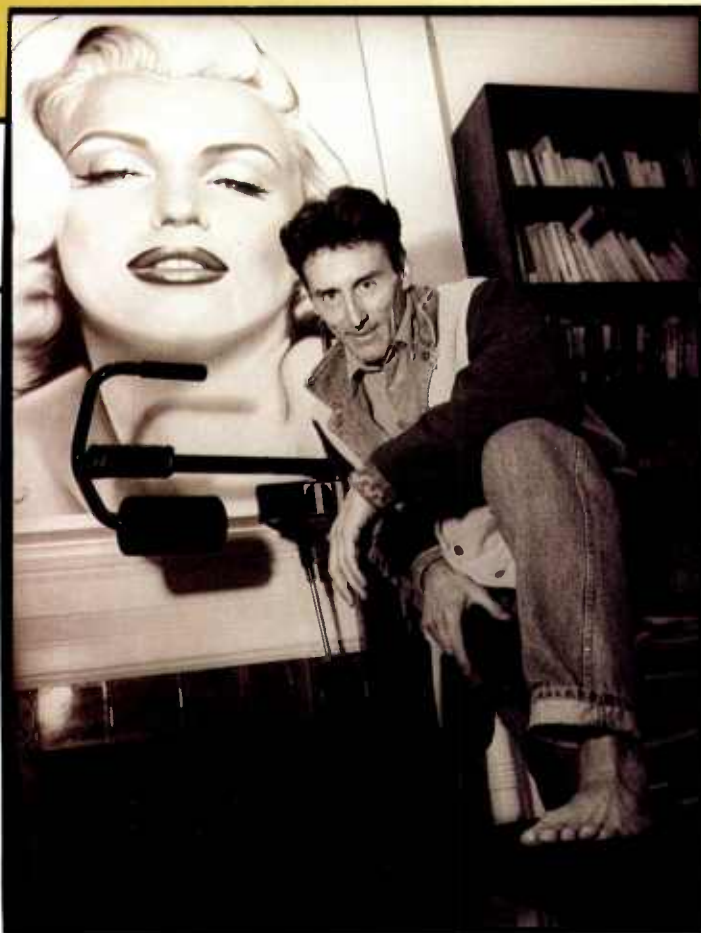
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Stay Healthy on Tour!



Tips from Gary Null
by CHARLES M. YOUNG

drunk alcohol or coffee, never smoked. And he has never been sick. He goes to bed at 2 a.m. and gets up at 4 a.m.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect to Null is that he believes this high level of energy is accessible to most people through positive attitude, regular exercise and nutrition. The implications for musicians are obvious: Anything that enhances your energy enhances your performance. And then there's the matter of the rest of your life. If you've ever seen pictures of bands before and after a long tour, they tend to appear like they've just been let out of prison camp. Your health is a high price for your art—do you really have to pay it?

“One of the myths about entertainers is that they fall into two extremes,” says Null in his Manhattan office, a forest of exercise equipment that towers over his desk piled with nine volumes of his research on herbs. “The one extreme is the superstar whose diet is an abomination. They drink, do drugs, eat a lot of sugar. They have hypoglycemia and age about twice as fast as they should. Their body chemistry is a wreck. Then at the other extreme you find the health nut. They're maybe macrobiotic or vegan and won't eat anything that isn't specially prepared. Ninety-eight percent of performers fall in the middle. They work strange hours, eat breakfast at noon, a light dinner, then their primary supper after they finish at night. That's unhealthy, mal-affecting the pineal gland, which throws off the circadian rhythms and the production of melatonin, which affects mood and sleeping patterns.”

Null recommends an organic, vegetarian diet, eating your main meal at breakfast (emphasis on fresh vegetable juice and whole grain cereal) and not eating anything for at least two hours before bed, so your intestines get a rest and have nothing putrefying while you sleep. Beyond basic vitamin supplementation, he suggests that musicians take chromium picolinate, 200 mcg. three times a day, to stabilize blood sugar so you don't get those erratic mood swings and cravings for candy. Along with pantothenic acid (B-5), vitamin C should be taken all day to boost the immune system and replenish the adrenal glands which tend to get shot very quickly between performing and normal road [cont'd on page 84]

Gary Null does a one-hour radio show on health every weekday at noon on WBAI in New York. He gives 200 lectures a year in church basements around the nation. He's designed and marketed his own line of vitamins. He writes four books a year (*No More Allergies with Ran-*

dom House is the latest), plus innumerable magazine articles. He's a nationally ranked race walker. He invents all kinds of devices and does original scientific research. He campaigns relentlessly against the Food and Drug Administration and established medicine for their attempts to monopolize health care by driving alternative therapies out of business. He holds two Ph.D.s in nutrition and public health and teaches at the graduate level. He has never taken drugs or medication, never



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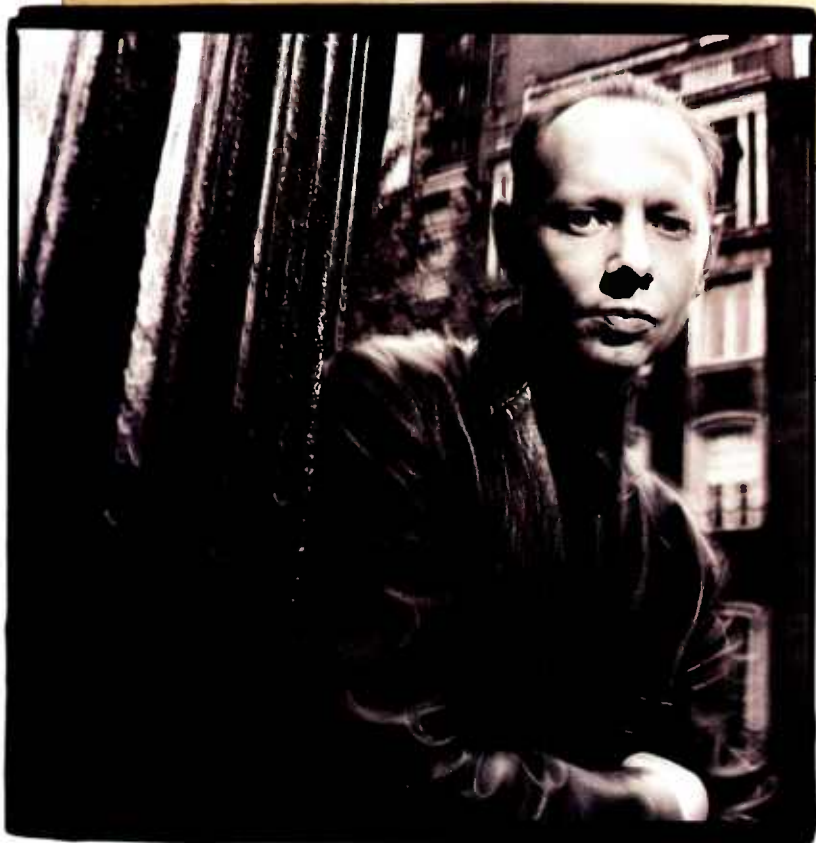
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HEARING IS BELIEVING.

Joe Jackson (Re)discovers Electronics



*A composer scores
film alternatives*
by ROB DWECK

This is the first score I've written that has no redeeming artistic merit whatsoever," Joe Jackson proudly announces. He's talking about his soundtrack for the first-ever interactive film *I'm Your Man*, for which theatergoers are prompted to select the characters' actions with remote controls attached

to their seats. "The concept seemed like playing a video game, so I thought the music should sound like video game music. You know, really electronic, but cheesy-sounding."

It's not Jackson's first score—he did Coppola's *Tucker* and an orchestral piece for a Japanese science film which reappeared on *Will Power*—but it's been the most challenging. Since every scene in *I'm Your Man* had two alternatives, the 15-minute film required 40 minutes of music—more than what you hear in most two-hour features. And Jackson's palette now incorporates loads of electronics. Computer sequencing enabled him to write, arrange and, for the first time, perform each part himself. "Normally, film is linear," he says, "there are so many reels and each reel has so many music cues. In this, there were no reels, no rules. It ended up being 36 sepa-

rate bits, and they all had to have music. Then we had to figure which ones could have the *same* music—because you'd never see those two scenes at the same time—and which ones had to be different. Even though the film is short, every time you see it, it's different. If you saw it once, you'd only hear a third of the music I wrote, which is pretty weird.

"Music functions in a film to tell you what to feel," Jackson continues. "Sometimes music is used to disguise the weaknesses of what's on film: Very often a director will say, 'We want the music to make this actor more sympathetic.' In this case we had something totally tongue-in-cheek, so right from the start the music wasn't even remotely serious."

So director Bob Bejan turned Jackson loose in a makeshift loft studio to record as he figured out the new technology and scored the dozens of parts. Using Opcode's StudioVision software on a Macintosh synced to a three-quarter-inch video deck, and a Sony 3324 digital 24-track recorder, Jackson composed and recorded without distraction—and without help. He used instruments ranging from cheapo rhythm machines and synths to state-of-the-art sequencers and samplers. Most drums came from a Dr. Beat sampled into an Akai S1100, where the sounds could be triggered directly from the sequencer. Jackson also relied on two Yamaha DX100s and a Casio CZ-101 for the electronic-sounding FM textures.

"I don't like the idea of trying to get realistic sounds electronically," he says. "I like electronic instruments to make electronic sounds. If you want great-sounding drums, get a drummer that can tune his drums properly. So that's what this score is about: being as unrealistic and artificial as possible, except in certain things like vibes and accordion, which did sound kind of realistic. I like mixing high and low tech, mixing electronic and acoustic together."

In composing, Jackson avoided playing it safe, preferring to add dimension to the action. The villainous character Richard is an odd example: "Bob wanted his music to be like Miles Davis—jazzy, with something menacing about it. In other words, 'Give the villain "villain music,"' which was too obvious.

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I thought it would be more fun to use this cheesy Muzak that just made him seem more slimy.”

It's surprising that Jackson, a pianist/composer, has only recently set up a home studio. "I resisted it for a long time," he says. "I attempted to put little studios together and ended up getting frustrated. I write in my head and on paper. I don't like recording studios, really; the thought of one in my own home was horrible. I've finally come to the point where it makes sense for me to have a setup I can use on a regular basis, especially for film scores. And the machinery is getting better, more musical, so it makes sense.

"Certain things are more important to me than they were 10 years ago," Joe reveals. "Like the ability to make a map for a composition and perform quite a lot of it myself. On *Blaze of Glory* we used sequencers a bit; a couple of songs were sequenced live and we played to a sequencer. It's a great tool for scoring. The way I scored before was so low-tech it was ridiculous. On *I'm Your Man* I used the sequencer to create tempos and put things in place, and it gave me freedom to experiment. I'm not a purist. When I first toured the States, people gave me buttons to wear on my jacket that said 'Disco Sucks' or 'No Synthesiz-

ers,' like they wanted me to be part of some ideologically pure movement. But everything is technology, and if you don't want to use synthesizers, you don't have to. It comes down to whether the person making the music has any imagination. The rest is just different tools or different clothes. I'm getting interested in high technology, and you'll see the results in the next few years." ❧

HEALTHY

[cont'd from page 80] stress. You can compensate for breathing the foul air in smoky clubs by taking the antioxidants vitamin E and pycnogenol, a pine extract. Drink a lot of liquid throughout the day (not soda). And before singing, try spraying liquid odorless garlic in the back of your throat to prevent inflammation. Zinc lozenges are also good for preventing throat infections.

"When traveling on an airplane, get the vegetarian meal," says Null. "It isn't the tastiest food, but at least it isn't loaded down with saturated fat. In a plane, one person sneezing or coughing in a closed environment like that can affect the whole cabin. So you can take a canister of what is called Air Therapy. It's made from the volatile oils of grapefruit, lemon, lime and

orange. It's not just a deodorizer, it's an air purifier. Whenever I'm in a crowded plane, I'll spritz a little Air Therapy, maybe twice a flight.

"You can do the same thing in a hotel room. The particle board is outgassing urea formaldehyde. The carpets are synthetic, the ventilation inadequate. You'll find a higher bacteria count, molds, dander, mites, mildew and chemicals. That's why when you wake up and look in the mirror, your eyes are puffy or red, and sometimes your hands and feet are swollen. Your body is in environmental shock. In a new hotel room, I'll do about 20 spritzes of Air Therapy and when I wake up, I don't feel congested."

Before a major tour, Null recommends finding a pro-vitamin doctor and getting an intravenous drip with 50,000 mg. of vitamin C plus glutathione and B-12 in a strong B complex. "That will superboost the immune system and give you real health insurance on the road."

So what's the secret formula for all that energy? "There's no secret. The reason I can do what I do is I don't waste time. Most people hold back, wondering if they're doing the right thing, because they care so much about somebody else's approval. I find that's unnecessary." ❧

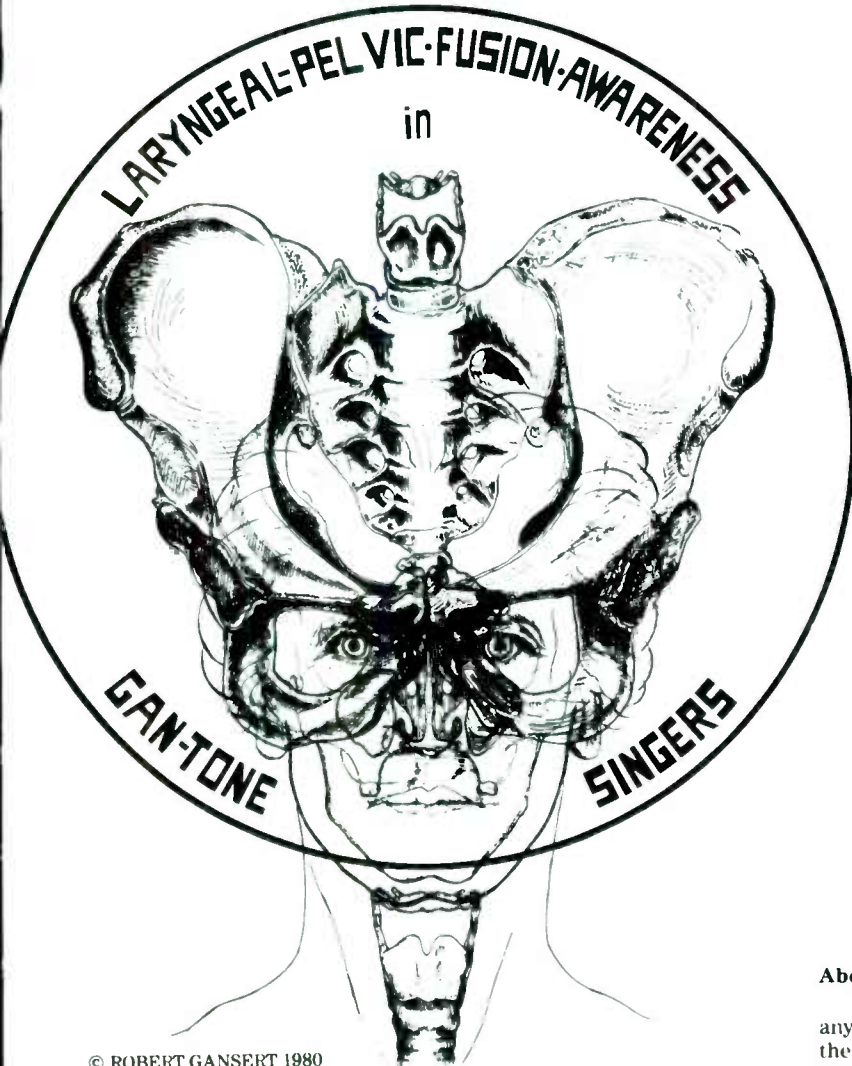


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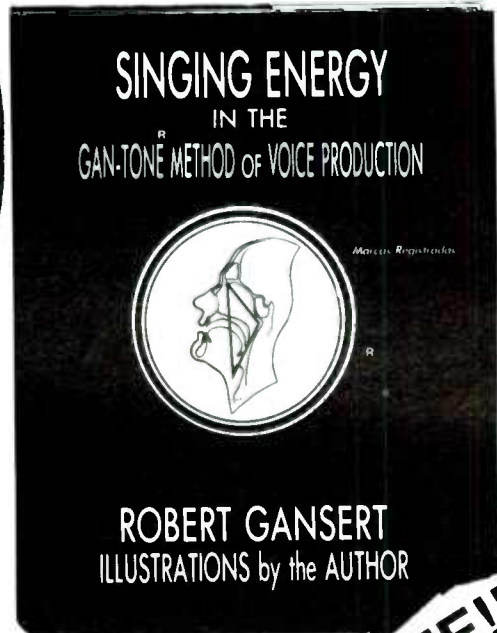
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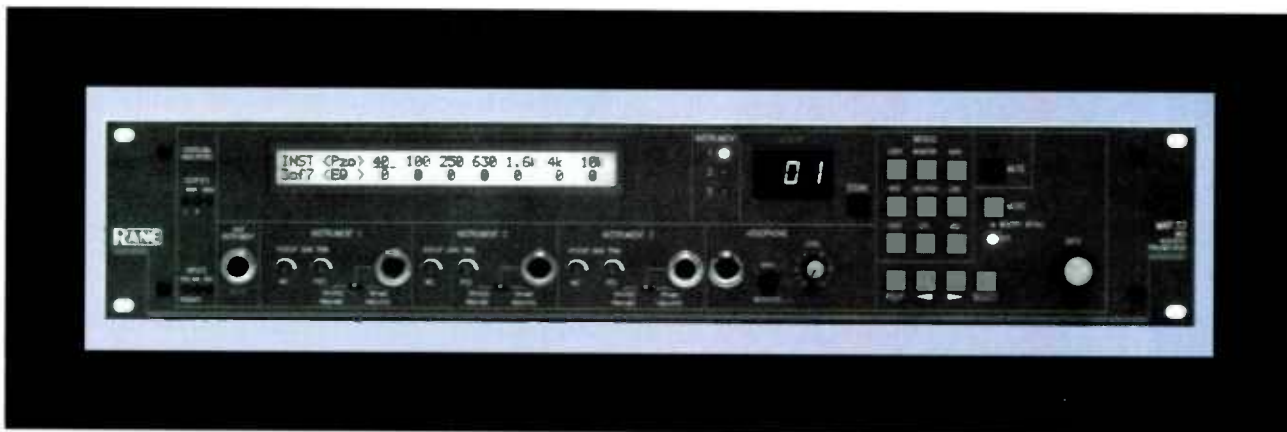
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MUCH NEEDED RANE

**RANE MAP 33**

For anyone performing onstage alone, or who shares the spotlight with just one other person, the sound system usually consists of a small, portable P.A. or amplifier, and the majority of adjustments are for thwarting feedback. So-called professional features don't mean much if you have to leave the stage to make adjustments. Rane figured that solo and duo performers deserved better, so they designed the MAP 33 (list price: \$1995), a two-space rack-mountable, MIDI-controllable mixer with just about everything a musician could need or want. At first, the MAP 33 seems rather daunting, but if you follow the manual and the unit's on-board instructions (there's a good help mode in plain English), and if you spend the time to experiment, it actually becomes relatively simple to operate.

It provides three selectable input channels, plus a mike/auxiliary channel and stereo line inputs. EQ, feedback protection and many other parameters can be set and stored in its 64 program locations for easy recall. A large, illuminated LCD window guides you as you punch the 15 soft-touch buttons and turn the data wheel to sculpt your sound. Each of the three main instrument input channels has a dual-function 1/4" jack that accepts simultaneous signals from piezo electric pickups and microphones installed in guitars or other acoustic instruments. Each input channel is also equipped with two trimpots for individually setting mike and piezo levels. Once you've set their levels, you can switch on any of the three channels. This is helpful for anyone using two or three acoustic guitars (or mandolins, banjos, etc.) onstage—all of them can be kept plugged in, ready to use.

For each input, you can adjust the following: gain, notch filter, invert (phase) switch, low filter, seven-band equalizer, balance, mute, panning, level, and direct output connections. Remember, there's one chain of these circuits for the piezo input and one for the mike input, plus the mike/aux input has its own signal-shaping chain. The data for these

parameters can be stored in any of the MAP 33's 64 memory locations for recall via a footswitch, the front panel or MIDI.

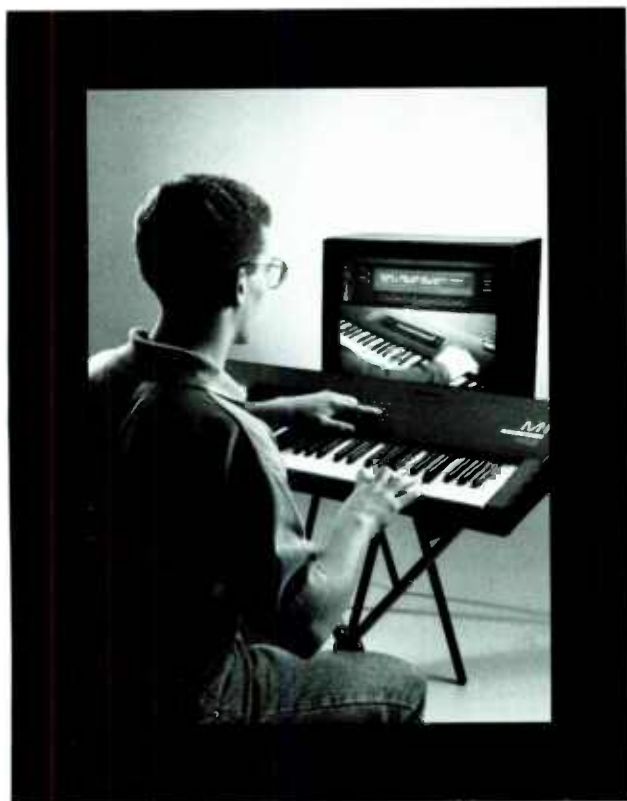
The vocal mike input has its own circuitry that's just like each instrument channel's. What's more, the monitor section has its own invert switch and seven-band EQ, which is excellent for shaping your final mixed instrument/vocal sound to match the P.A. speakers and room acoustics in different venues, without tweaking the front-end sounds.

For outboard effects, the MAP 33 has a switchable stereo effects loop for the instruments, as well as a stereo loop for the main output. There's even a separate loop for processing vocals, with a mono send and stereo return. The tuner output remains live when you hit the mute button on the front panel. The noise gate is another good feature. It would be nice if a few of the unit's more critical functions were assigned front-panel knobs. A master volume comes to mind, as well as feedback fighters such as the phase inverter, the notch selector and the low filter. You can assign these functions—and any other parameters inside the MAP 33—to be controlled by the RC 6 Remote Controller (a \$249 option, including cable), which has six knobs you can configure to control six parameters. The RC 6 has a long cord and can attach to your mike stand.

After working with the MAP 33 for about a week, I found that I could get around its parameters quite easily, erasing my initial impression that the unit was too complicated. In fact, with the RC 6 programmed to let me select which input was live and adjust instrument volume, monitor level, a few bands of EQ and the piezo's anti-feedback notch, I was able to control practically everything without punching a lot of buttons or paging through the manual. The verdict? I'm very impressed with the MAP 33 as a sophisticated tool that could benefit any acoustic player. It's extremely flexible, offers low noise and a lot of headroom, and is very compact. It probably has more features than many acoustic players foresee needing, but that's likely to change once they know how much they've been missing before the MAP 33 came along.

TOM MULHERN

TEACHING AN OLD KORG NEW TRICKS



KORG M1 VIDEO COURSE

Squeezing new sounds out of an old keyboard sure beats the hell out of springing for this year's model, especially when there's a world of undiscovered possibilities hiding in that box you already own. Take the Korg M1: a versatile keyboard with enough features to keep even the most adventurous musician busy for a long time. "M1, the Video" offers basics for the novice while highlighting powerful features that even experienced M1 users might overlook. Each two-hour video allows you to watch a close-up of the M1's LCD window and keyboard pad as you work along with the instructor. The beauty of these tapes is that you can learn a lot without having to consult a manual. Narrator-guy Dana McCurdy has over 20 years' experience (it says here) working with synthesizers and has already taught hundreds of students on the M1.

Volume 1, "The Basics," is an overview of program play mode, program edit mode, combination mode, global mode and the memory functions. McCurdy explains how to shape presets, layer sounds, get the most out of M1 cards and utilize up to 127 foot-pedal settings. He also swings through the quick edit functions and explains how to assemble a drum kit using the M1's percussion programs. Volume 2, "The Keys to the Sequencer," demonstrates the difference between real-time song recording and real-time pattern (drumkit-style) recording. Keyboard sequencers are infamous for their lack of memory, but there's good news

here. By simply wiping out the M1's song demos (who needs 'em?), you can restore 72 percent of the sequencing memory. Another way to boost memory capability is to avoid heavily layered sounds and go easy on the effects. Aftershow, for example, eats loads of memory. Volume 3 focuses on layering sounds and dressing them up with effects, and Volume 4 is all about personalizing your M1's presets.

It seems someone out there is finally getting the message: Musicians hate manuals. At \$179.80 (or \$49.95 for individual tapes), these videos are a cool idea, especially if they save you from spending money on sounds you've already got.

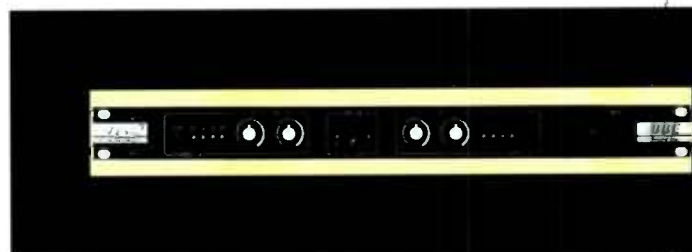
The Korg M1 Video Course is available from MasterTapes, 361-4 Post Rd. West, Ste. 316, Westport, CT, 203-454-8767.

LEIGH SILVERMAN

SONIC MUD REMOVAL

BBE MODEL 462 SONIC MAXIMIZER

It's a sad fact. There are nasty components in recording equipment that cause a phase shift in the audio signal which delays high frequencies. The result is that duller-sounding bass frequencies end up arriving at your ear before the brighter high frequencies, forming a blanket of sonic mud over your music. Yech. The BBE Sonic Maximizer does a very cool thing. This single-rack-space unit corrects this delay phenomenon and then boosts the high-frequency content of the signal, restoring the clarity of the original signal without adding noise or harmonic distortion.



The effect is *noticeable*. Mixes sound brighter, and much more "alive."

The rackmountable Model 462 is typically patched into your system either in series with other equipment or via your mixer's insert jacks. The unit accepts line level, unbalanced signals via rear panel 1/4" phone or RCA input and output jacks. Both stereo and independent two-channel operation is afforded, with separate controls and metering for each channel. Continuously variable rotary knobs provide control over the level of BBE process you want to add. Separate "lo contour" knobs allow you to boost or cut the 50 Hz content of the input signal, giving you real control over bottom-end warmth and punch. The Sonic Maximizer works great on individual tracks or an entire stereo mix. It's particularly effective on drums. Highly recommended.

MICHAEL COOPER

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CLASSIC ROCK BOX

BRYAN ADAMS
Summer of '69

THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND
Statesboro Blues (live)

JEFF BECK
Cause We've Ended As Lovers

BLUE OYSTER CULT
Don't Fear The Reaper

BON JOVI
Wanted Dead Or Alive

DAVID BOWIE
Rebel Rebel

THE CARS
Just What I Needed

ERIC CLAPTON
Let It Rain

THE CLASH
London Calling

ROBERT CRAY
Smoking Gun

CROSBY, STILLS & NASH
Suite: Judy Blue Eyes

DEEP PURPLE
Knocking At Your Back Door

DEF LEPPARD
Armageddon It

DIRE STRAITS
On Every Street

BOB DYLAN
Like A Rolling Stone

EMERSON, LAKE & PALMER
Lucky Man

MELISSA ETHERIDGE
Like The Way I Do

PETER FRAMPTON
Do You Feel Like W...o (live)

FREE
All Right Now

GRAND FUNK RAILROAD
Closer To Home/I'm Your Captain

HEART
Straight On

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Redemption Song

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Room To Move (live)

JOHN MELLENCAMP
Pink Houses (live)

FREDDIE MERCURY
My Love Is Dangerous

THE MOODY BLUES
I Know You're Out There Somewhere

NAZARETH
Love Hurts

PINK FLOYD
Comfortably Numb

THE POLICE
Message In A Bottle (live)

RED RIDER
Lunatic Fringe

LOU REED
Walk On The Wild Side

RUSH
The Spirit Of Radio

SAVOY BROWN
Tell Mama

SCORPIONS
Wind Of Change

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Because The Night

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
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I'm Not In Love

THIN LIZZY
The Boys Are Back In Town

THUNDERCLAP NEWMAN
Something In The Air

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TALKING HEADS

HENRY ROLLINS

ROLLINS
THE BOXED LIFE
(MAG)

EXCERPTS FROM
THE GREAT SPEECHES
OF MALCOLM X
(BMG)

BARRY MORROW
BILL FOR SHORT
(GANG OF SEVEN)

VARIOUS ARTISTS
FIRST WORDS
(GANG OF SEVEN)

It might be the culture. It might be me. It might be something else. Whatever it is, it feels like loud music is inadequate for the times. Since the beginning of the Reagan era, one of the most repeated messages in rock 'n' roll—from hardcore to adult contemporary—has been “Wake up! Educate yourself!” After which

rock 'n' roll has nothing to say. It can't. Rock 'n' roll expresses feeling, not facts or analysis, and it's minimal on storytelling. Vast sectors of the population have awakened to this suspicion that everything has gone wrong (give the rise in optimism for the Clinton administration about three months) and the best rock 'n' roll can

respond with is these pure, crystalline slices of dysfunction that characterize grunge at its most perceptive.

Thus the rise in coffeehouses. Poets, performance artists, street orators can hold forth, examine an idea from several angles, not worry about what the guitar player is doing, and the audience can

discuss it afterwards without going deaf. Quaint to the point of being nineteenth-century, but maybe our ancestors weren't wrong about everything.

Lately I've been listening to Henry Rollins, a star on the spoken-word circuit for a decade. On *The Boxed Life* "spoken word" means a lot of storytelling and just one poem on two CDs. When fronting Black Flag or the Rollins Band ("Henry" appears nowhere on this package), Rollins' thing was rage, rage and more rage. The surprise of his speechifying is that he goes for laughs, charm and the occasional gross-out. In this context, the jokes are about 40 percent funnier because the crowd is so relieved that he isn't denouncing them for moral turpitude. Even when he is expressing hatred, he understands that the joke is in the disproportion of his intense feeling with the comparatively puny target (e.g. Edie Brickell). When the target is big enough for his wrath, he has the sense to make himself the underdog by fighting on the target's turf: U2 in Ireland. Animal rights activists will discover ammunition in his stories about killing white rats for the NIH. I'm not sure I want to think about it again.

On *Words from the Front Lines: Excerpts from the Great Speeches of Malcolm X*, I have two thoughts: 1) Radicals make the best orators. Even when they're wrong, their honesty makes them compelling. Politicians put too much energy into lying to hold an audience. And 2) this CD serves almost as a mini-Autobiography, tracing Malcolm's thought from black nationalism to a wider vision of revolution. That's why they killed him, and now he's safe enough for a division of General Electric to market.

By far the heaviest experience I've ever had with spoken word is *Bill for Short* by Barry Morrow. In 72 minutes, he tells the story of a retarded friend. About halfway through, I started to cry and my voice wasn't right for two hours afterwards. Even now as I think about certain details, my eyes well up. A wondrous story, near perfect in the telling. Morrow's label, Gang of Seven, does spoken word exclusively and they offer a sampler called *First Words* with excerpts from 14 performers such as Spalding Gray, Lynda Barry, Nora Dunn and Wallace Shawn. A lot of it's funny, but vastly more thoughtful than the average standup routine. It's perfect to keep your brain engaged during a long drive, or during exercise sessions. Next month: I read a book.

—Charles M. Young



BILL FRISELL
Have a Little Faith
(ELEKTRA/NONESUCH)

MIKE STERN
Standards (and other songs)
(ATLANTIC JAZZ)

IF YOU LOVE THE IDEA OF REDRESSING your own nostalgia, if you can get into colorized Clark Gable, perhaps with voice dubbing by Mel Blanc, you'll be warmed right over by Bill Frisell's premise that several of the best musicians in New York can reach an epiphany interpreting a Madonna song. This collection is only Frisell's second since moving to Seattle from metro New York, and depending on your age and address, it's either the weirdest or the most front-porch thing he's done. Though Frisell's routine sound can buzz and drone as unnervingly as Guy Klucevsek's accordion does here, mostly he sticks to either a solo scream or an underwater shimmer for parlor favorites like "Just Like a Woman," "I Can't Be Satisfied" and, of course, "The 'Saint-Gaudens' in Boston Common." That humble sobriety suits "jazzier" stuff like Sonny Rollins' "No Moe," where he and clarinetist Don Byron can be as wry as they like, less so when they veer into Sousa territory, where Bill's typically batty arrangements suddenly become tailor-fit faithful (how can you outkitch music customarily heard in chase scenes from dog-food commercials?). It's not until a billowing, 20-minute Copland suite breaks into scraped noises and disfigured drumming that you're reminded how Frisell shuddered into self-actualization somewhere between ECM Records and the Knitting Factory, where irony of interpretation is as valued as the art (or likely valued *as* art). On that ticket, he may be shooting fish in a barrel or shooting himself in the foot, but he's still shooting sparks.

If Frisell is New York's happily disenfranchised poet, Stern is its prodigal son, embracing bop after a protracted tryst with seductress fusion, sluffing Miles' admonition to make like Hendrix or get off the stage. That his best record yet happens to be straight-ahead doesn't mean much more than that—you ain't gonna

see him in a suit with a fat hollowbody, as his "There Is No Greater Love" fusillades have made insistently clear to barfuls of regulars at the Dump in Greenwich Village. But with the spectacular swing of Al Foster and Jay Anderson behind him and Coltrane and Horace Silver charts in front, there isn't room for much else. Even when he does flesh out with saxist Bob Berg and slots in the sensational Ben Perowsky for Foster on "Lost Time," the focus is on delicacy, pulse and mood rather than muscle. If Stern repeats himself at times, he never drags or disappoints, and like Frisell, is at his polyphonic best in trio, even solo. These guys make me sweat, I've missed them bad, and when Bill wearies of nursing his John Hiatt fetish, I'll pick him up at the airport. You leave the city, you can go soft. —Matt Resnicoff



BASH & POP

Friday Night Is Killing Me
(REPRISE)

NOW WE KNOW: THE REPLACEMENTS were a real band. Chris Mars dropped a pointed hint to that effect last year with *Horseshoes and Hand Grenades*, the quintessential pleasant surprise. Now, Tommy Stinson's aptly named Bash & Pop proves conclusively the other guys weren't Paul Westerberg's stooges. While *Friday Night Is Killing Me* doesn't reveal many cosmic truths, its beaty grooves and friendly vibes provide plenty o' satisfaction.

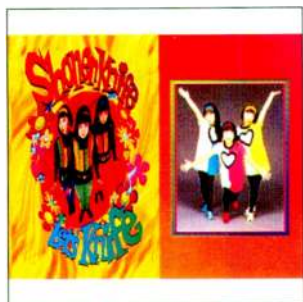
Possessed by the spirit of the garage, this fab quartet reenacts a timeless, beloved ritual, roughing up attractive melodies and striking passionate chords in the process. Although lead guitarist Steve Brantseg often seems to be on the verge of "Johnny B. Goode," his crisp licks never falter. Meanwhile, slammin' drummer Steve Foley generates a pots-and-pans clatter that makes even the lesser tunes fun. (After hearing the easy swagger of "Tickled to Tears" and "He Means It," the self-conscious raunch 'n' roll of the Black Crowes seems downright foolish.)

As for good ol' Tommy, he shoulda become a

frontman sooner. An effusive, sunny shouter, he suggests a down-home boy who understands more than he's admitting. (If the pop gig falls through, the kid should head for Nashville.) Stinson handles potentially corny songs like the mopey "Nothing" with unsentimental finesse and cheerfully rides the crest of the noisy ones. He actually gets a tad literary amid the manic swirl of "Fast N Hard," observing, "I played it fast as I could/You heard it slow," before the track crumbles into chaos. Crazy, man!

After seeing both Keith Richards and Izzy Stradlin outshine their bands of origin, it's tempting to hail Tommy Stinson as a secret hero in the same mold. Nifty though *Friday Night...* may be, he's no heavy auteur. But his combo is sharp and smart—and might prompt a more famous friend to try a little bit harder. Your turn, Paul.

—Jon Young



SHONEN KNIFE

Let's Knife
(VIRGIN)

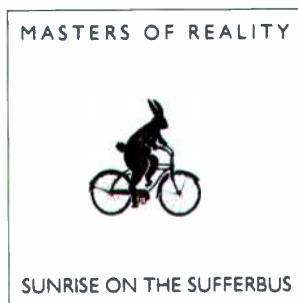
SHONEN KNIFE, THE ALL-FEMALE Japanese trio, is as irresistibly cute as that other recent Japanese invasion, the "Hello Kitty" trinkets. But while *Let's Knife*, Shonen Knife's first all-English, major-label American release, rivals the Chipmunks' collection of new wave hits for kitsch appeal, the music is more than novelty—it's sharp, exuberant pop, giddy with slashing guitars and slamming drums, Beach Boys melodies and overdriven amps, with echoes of every great three-chord band that ever screamed into a microphone.

If the music sometimes suggests a K-Tel Sampler of '70s new wave and punk, the point of view is pure Shonen Knife. Only David Byrne or Jonathan Richman could write such guileless songs about the minutiae of daily life with equal enthusiasm and sincerity. The "Pot Cleaners Themes" (1 and 2), punchy poems to "your best friend," the pot cleaner, are typical of the slightly goofy lyric content. Lines like "When she thinks about insects she is happy/

She's an insect collector" are sung with an engagingly deadpan delivery reminiscent of vintage Blondie, though Shonen Knife's naivete appears genuine. Slightly off-key vocals in accented English render several other lines unintelligible, but what matters here is the catchy melodies you'll be humming for days even if you never learn the words.

Drummer Atsuko Yamano and bassist Michie Nakatani keep it danceable, while guitarist and primary singer Naoko Yamano lay down raw rhythm tracks and squiggly leads. "Riding on the Rocket" is all Ramones-style slashing rhythm guitars topped by a surf solo; "Cycling Is Fun" calls to mind the first Talking Heads album, while "Twist Barbie" summons the ghost of Cheap Trick. "Get the Wow" is a euphoric blast of pure girl-group harmonies over semi-grunge guitars. If Godzilla wore a Walkman, this is what he would have listened to while trouncing buildings and tanks—or just dancing around.

—Chris Rubin



MASTERS OF REALITY

Sunrise on the Sufferbus
(CHRYSALIS)

ON THEIR DEBUT ALBUM A FEW YEARS back, the Masters of Reality's unrepentant hard rock/blues mysticism seemed as much a reaction against the punk snobbery of the late '70s as a tribute to their love for the dinosaur metal of Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath. Now they're back with a live dinosaur of their own—drummer Ginger Baker has joined forces with singer/songwriter Chris Goss and bassist Googe—and the results are more or less amazing. I hesitate to call this recording a masterpiece only because I don't want to hang that critical albatross on the poor bastards and set them up for the inevitable backlash, but what the hell, because *Sunrise on the Sufferbus* is the best rock album I've heard in this young decade.

Clearly, Baker deserves some of the credit. Known as much for legendary excess as rhythmic prowess, his dancing polyrhythms are like songs unto themselves, and provide a stunning

melodic focus on each tune here. His tight snare and tom-tom-inflected groove will surprise some detractors who associate him more with intricate solo playing than the good grooves of, say, Al Jackson; from the rolling thunder of "She Got Me" and the Ringo-like toms of "Rolling Green" to the roaring menace of "V.H.V." and the gospelish cakewalk of "The Moon in Your Pocket," Baker's taut interplay with Googe is the stuff of great radio hooks. (And for fans of Rapmaster Ginger, there's "T.U.S.A.," a comical missive on the travails of getting a good cup of tea.)

In frontman Goss, the Masters have a tasty, versatile guitarist and an appealing vocal presence, sort of a friendlier version of Jim Morrison. Goss moves easily from the thrashorama grunge and arena gestures of "100 Years" and "V.H.V." to McCartney tenderness on ballads like "Jody Sings" and "Madonna." His imagery is simpler, more romantic and considerably less cluttered than previously exhibited, from a narrative tale of ritual witchcraft and transformation ("J.B. Witchdance") to the bucolic release of "Rolling Green" and the yearning of "100 Years (Of Tears on the Wind)."

But the band is at its best playing with that most deceptively simple of all musical structures, the blues—here often with a countryish slant. The rollicking "Tilt-A-Whirl" is an amusement park courtship with telling tempo variations, while "Gimme Water" is a sexual eucharist of sorts. And on the haunting "Rabbit One," Goss, Baker and Googe concoct a Southwestern blues groove so deliciously slow and barren it almost sounds like a DJ's house mix—"Born Under a Bad Sign" on Percodan. When it comes time for his big solo, Goss plays only a couple of naked notes, re-emphasizing the song and the melody without compromising the mood. It is precisely this kind of purely felt, understated gesture that makes *Sunrise on the Sufferbus* so compelling. At last, a rock album for the rest of us.

—Chip Stern

JESUS JONES

Perverse
(EMI RECORDS GROUP/SBK)

THERE REALLY IS SOMETHING *PERVERSE* about this album. I mean, it is the new Jesus Jones record, and many of the band's hallmarks—jack-hammered hip-hop beats, oscillating keyboards—are here. But unlike the usual "better music through science" technique that affects technologically advanced Brit bands, Jesus Jones aren't using their gadgetry to create a new music but to camouflage [cont'd on page 95]

NEW RELEASES

JAZZ

BY JIM MACNIE

PETE JOHNSON

King of Boogie

(MILAN)

Central Avenue Breakdown

(DELMARK)

BOOGIE RIVALS BOP as a speedster's turf, and as far as vitality goes, Johnson's right at the top of the heap. Without discounting technique or inventiveness, it's largely his astonishing drive that distinguishes these pithy small ensemble pieces (Delmark) and solo tracks (Milan). His attack was surely boosted by the fact that he was foisting art music precision into the raucous realm of nightclub entertainment, bringing to a wider audience some of the most sophisticated and rousing blues ever created. And when you hear "Death Ray Boogie" you'll know what he sometimes thought of his chatty audience.

GARY BARTZ

Shadows

(TIMELESS)

LAST YEAR'S LIVE date for Candid reminded us that he's always been a charger, ever-ready to energize a session. This studio disc substantiates that Bartz's been-around alto also digs the excursionary: a long-winded version of Bobby Watson's *Present Tense*. Christian McBride lives up to his rep, Benny Green holds steady and Willie Williams plays about 30 times better than he does on his own Enja disc. The quicker the better as far as the action's concerned—I'll take the fleet arrangement of "Holiday for Strings" over both of the McCoy Tyner rambles.

FREDDIE REDD

Lonely City

(UPTOWN)

THE CURVES ARE well rounded because Don Sickler's a damn stickler for apropos bop architecture. More power to him; the crisp arrangements emphasize the wisdom of the venerable leader's tunes, giving everything from Clarence Sharp's acerbic alto timbres to George Duvivier's jogging basslines a distinction that might not otherwise be there. It's a companion piece to the new Jackie McLean record, where tart horn charts are sweetened by precision

MARCUS ROBERTS, *IF I COULD BE WITH YOU* (RCA)

HE STILL NEEDS to get more blood into his playing, but this solo recital of jazz and pop standards is attractive simply due to the way Roberts wedges his idiosyncrasies—usually rhythmic, sometimes melodic—into the tunes. Most pieces are curt, as his improvisations coincide with the thematic elements, a plus for both sides. When he does go off on a tear—watch that right hand reverie on the hyper-fanciful "Mood Indigo"—there's plenty of reason to pay attention. Combined with the stutter steps of "Preach, Reverend, Preach," it almost makes you willing to drop the second half of that neo-con designation.

playing, a modification that makes this septet date noteworthy. Plus: Clifford Jordan.

WILLIS JACKSON

Call of the Gators

(DELMARK)

NEVER BEEN TO a honkathon that I didn't dig—rudimentary wailing, especially when propelled by jumpin' R&B, can launch a party like nothing else. This collection of growls confirms that the under-heralded Miami native could raise a ruckus with the best of them. By them I mean Cobb, Prysock, Taylor, Bostic—roadhouse kings who sometimes lifted whole orchestras with their randy sensuality and dynamic might. Jackson was a bluesman who must have dug bop's animated verve; his lusty squawks gallop through some hopped-up territory on these early-'50s tracks recorded for the Apollo label. If he doesn't have the polish of, say, a Paul Gonsalves, he

does have plenty of timbral flamboyance, as well as a seductive way with legato purring.

MACHINE GUN

Pass the Ammo

(MUWDRKS)

THESE NEW YORKERS treat cacophony like a public space—Yankee Stadium, say—where everything's allowed to come and go. That's why it's somewhat surprising their rattletrap spew manages to wax coherent. What helps put musicianship into the fairly predictable fray is the way that Bill Bryant negotiates his pummel/swing exchanges. Backbeat never hurt anything in this frenzied realm, and because of rhythm, Robert Musso's blurry extrapolations clobber complacency as keenly as Tom Chapin's (Evan) Parkeresque oinking. That makes us forgive their *Pangaea* delusions. (111 4th Ave. Suite 5A, New York, NY 10003)

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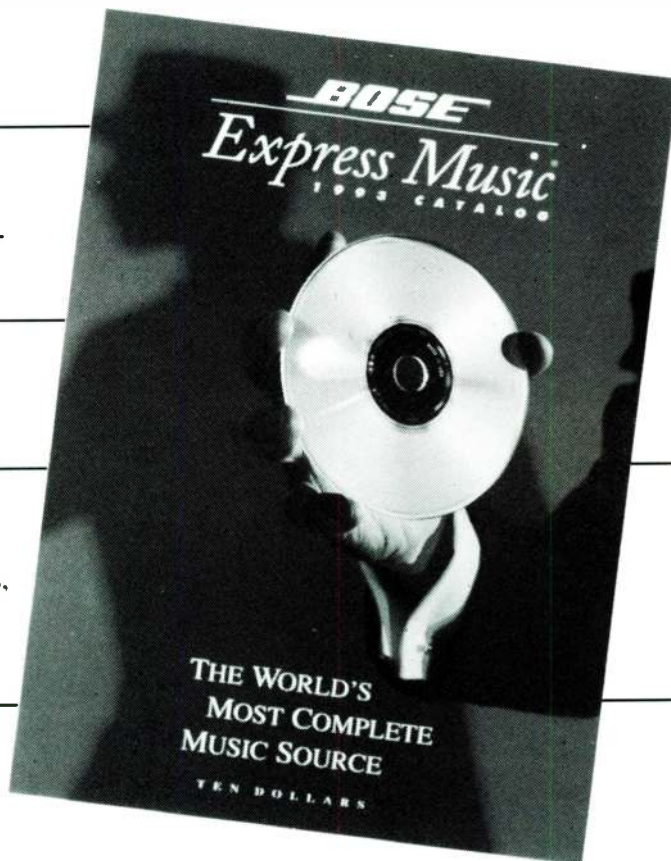
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OSCAR PETERSON
Exclusively for My Friends
(VERVE)

ALTHOUGH OFTEN GRIPPING in the design and speed departments, Peterson's fluid trickles certainly aren't known as the hardest-hitting jazz. His lilt-ing glide often sets much of the textural agenda. That's somewhat amended on these four discs of German recordings from the '60s; the daunting improves on (mostly) standard melodies are downright robust. Perhaps it's because the studio was a living room and there's virtually no gloss in the sound, or maybe it's because drummers Louis Hayes, Bobby Durham and Ed Thigpen goad him enough to bop a bit harder than usual. Whichever, the master's Tatumesque rococoisms are offset by some Bud-like oomph, and this set is all the more persuasive because of it.

ROCK

BY J D CONSIDINE

ENUFF Z'NUFF
Animals with Human Intelligence
(ARISTA)

LIKE CHEAP TRICK in its glory days, Enuff Z'Nuff knows how to mix crunchy power chords with Beatles harmonies and perky, pop-savvy choruses. But whereas the Tricksters merely sweetened their metal-edged ditties with a sprinkling of Beatleisms, Chip Z'Nuff and his crew begin with the melodic interest, and build from there. The writing isn't of Lennon-McCartney caliber, but their best comes amazingly close, from the sing-along spirit of "Right by Your Side" to the tuneful urgency of "Mary Anne Lost Her Baby."

RAYMOND SCOTT
Reckless Nights and Turkish Twilights
(COLUMBIA)

MENTION THE NAME Raymond Scott, and even the most devoted music fans will draw a blank. But cue up one of the late-'30s sides assembled here, and you'll swear you've heard that tune before. How did Scott produce such memorable music while remaining a mystery? By writing for the movies and cartoons, that's how. And if you think Tex Avery did amazing things with pen and ink, wait'll you hear the magic Scott's Quintette pulled from his scores.

311
Music
(CAPRICORN)

311 HAVE THE rap-metal groove down colder than the Beasties, and they surely play reggae more convincingly than the Chili Peppers ever have. But what puts this combo on the cutting edge isn't its

sound but its songs. And if "Feels So Good" or "My Stoney Baby" don't move you, maybe it's time to check your pacemaker.

D-INFLUENCE
Good 4 We
(ATCO/EASTWEST)

BETWEEN THE WAY Sarah Webb's sultry purr recalls the jazz-inflected sound of Sade Adu, and the ease with which Kwame Kwaten's synth bass suggests the syrup-thick thump of Soul II Soul, D-Influence seems to encapsulate the best of Britain's sophisto-soul scene. Listen past the surface similarities, and what stands out about this band is the way it invokes the past even as it pushes forward to the future. "Good Lover" might play off the brassy abandon of '70s soul, while "Sweetest Things" flirts with Chic-style sweetening, but the groove is so grounded in the here-and-now that it would be inconceivable to consider this "retro" soul.

DEBBIE GIBSON
Body Mind Soul
(ATLANTIC)

THE HIGH POINT here is "Love or Money," in which our Deb offers her Janet Jackson impression. Do you really need to know what the low point is?

GUY CLARK
Boats to Build
(ASYLUM/AMERICAN EXPLORER)

AN ESSENTIALLY UNDERSTATED singer, Clark may never enjoy the chart success others have had with his songs. But so what? Because his laconic phrasing and sly sense of swing put emphasis on the sense of the song instead of the melody, Clark can capture the jaunty optimism of "Baton Rouge" or the terse suspicion of "How'd You Get This Number" in ways a better singer never could. It may not be the stuff hits are made of, but it sure floats this *Boat*.

MILK
Tantrum
(LINK)

MILK KEEPS ITS guitars cranked, its riffs gnarled and dissonant, and its attitude set on "stun." So why is this album so much fun? Partly because of the crankage, dissonance and attitude mentioned above, a combination that comes across like a less-metallic version of Helmet. But mostly it's because these guys are such strong songwriters, whose melodies stick in your ear despite all the surface snarl.

INDIES

DEVO
Live: The Mongoloid Years
(RYKO/DISC)

ALTHOUGH DEVO ENDED up begging for the approval of the mainstream they mocked, there was a

time when Akron's spudboys pretended to know something the rest of us didn't. The proof's in this wondrous collection of low-fi club performances, circa '75-'77, a cheesy combo platter of electro-grunge, future-shock comedy and more boogie grooves than they cared to admit. At their most articulate, chasing a record contract onstage at Max's Kansas City, the poor sods were repulsive and irresistible at once: "Uncontrollable Urge" and "Gut Feeling" seem to wrestle with profound primal terrors, even though you know they're really just witty trash. Add typically wry (and snotty) liner notes by Devo theorist Gerry Casale, and the result is an essential package.—Jon Young

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Big Rock Jukebox: A Collection of Diesel Only Records
(FIRST WARNING)

PROVING AUTHENTICITY IS a state of mind, this tasty CD samples the output of a plucky Brooklyn enterprise with an endearing preference for vinyl 45s. Proudly retro, Diesel Only Records encompasses everything from clenched-fist boogie ("Why I Drink") to a dreamy lament that could be Patsy Cline, live in Heaven ("Leaving"); the swaggering "Do It for Hank" reflects the label's range, celebrating Hank Williams while quoting the Stooges and the Big Bopper in the same verse. Though the World Famous Blue Jays, Blue Chieftains, the Twanglers, Go to Blazes et al. boast their share of cool songs and hot licks, excellence isn't the point—the refreshing lack of bull is what makes 'em really special. Easy to dig, hard to resist.—Jon Young

CHARLES BROWN
Someone to Love
(BULLSEYE BLUES/ROUNDER)

SO WHAT IF Bonnie Raitt appears on two tracks and Elvis Costello coauthored a song? The real story is that Charles Brown remains a master of the cool after-hours blues, more than four decades after his R&B hitmaking heyday. The vocals have a rougher edge now, which intensifies his graceful laments, and the shimmering piano epitomizes elegant regret. Though Brown's soulful poise might baffle those accustomed to more flamboyant fare, don't be fooled: There's a world of burning emotion inside each luminous note. And *Someone to Love* may be the best advertisement for old age you'll ever hear.—Jon Young

ADAM RUDOLPH
Adam Rudolph's Moving Pictures
(FLYING FISH)

MASTER PERCUSSIONIST RUDOLPH has worked with Herbie Hancock, Yusef Lateef and Don Cherry as well as cofounding the Mandingo Griot Society with Foday Musa Suso and leading his

avant-jazz combo, *Eternal Wind*. This hour-plus set highlights Rudolph's compositional skills and features such global musicians as Indian double-violinist L. Shankar, Ugandan traditionalist James Macubya and funkster Wah Wah Watson. Tracks like "Walking the Curve," "Africa 21" and "Prayer" don't pander to ephemeral, world-beatnik dance-party tastes, but mesh varietal repetition and subtle melodicism in an attempt to share a few moments of trancelike enlightenment. (1304 W. Shubert, Chicago, IL 60614)—*Tom Cheyney*

THE YOUNG FRESH FELLOWS

It's Low Beat Time

(FRONTIER)

IN A MUSIC scene inundated with dumb-ass college joke bands, these guys hide their considerable smarts in an array of wacky titles, silly cover art (they wore pajamas last time around) and a general atmosphere of goofiness. Behind all this have been some darned impressive records, recalling (even rivaling) the Replacements (circa *Twin/Tone*) minus the cynicism. With a sound ranging from loud guitar rock to loud guitar pop, the hits here include the boffo title track, the Memphis soul nod "Monkey Say" and—for goofiness fans—the New Christy Minstrels' "Green Green" with Rufus Thomas on lead vocal. Check it out.—*Thomas Anderson*

BILL NELSON

Blue Moons and Laughing Guitars

(VENTURE)

LIKE NELSON'S LAST album, 1991's *Luminous*, this is a collection of brief song sketches; most were produced over the space of a few hours in his home studio. At the time the tracks were recorded, Nelson was talking about forming a new band called the Perfect Serpents, featuring four guitarists and two drummers, and he had planned to develop the new songs with that band. The Serpents never came to be, and their creator decided to issue the unfinished demos as they were. Although some of the 16 cuts are sketchy, others are tasty examples of Nelsonian pop. Both the trademark E-Bowed guitar lines and the magnificent (as usual) cover art leave no doubt: Nelson still has the touch. (Caroline Records, 114 West 26th St., New York, NY 10001)—*Mac Randall*

KING CRIMSON

The Great Deceiver: Live 1973-1974

(DISCIPLINE)

A FOUR-CD BOXED set of nearly 20-year-old live material by a short-lived version of an esoteric band—you can almost hear the pundits scratching their heads in bewilderment and saying: "For fanatics and cultists only." Wrong. The 1973-74 *Crimson* made some of the heaviest, meanest and most muscular rock ever heard, and they made a lot of it up spontaneously on stages throughout North America and Europe. Improvisations—sometimes searing, sometimes soaring, always memorable—are the cen-

terpiece of this set, but there's plenty of room for "real" compositions like "Fracture," "Larks' Tongues in Aspic" and, of course, "21st Century Schizoid Man." Several tunes are repeated more than once, yet moments of boredom are few; y'see, this KC never played anything the same way twice. Drummer Bill Bruford, violinist/keyboardist David Cross and bassist John Wetton all unleash hurricane-force licks, yet guitarist Robert Fripp is, as always, at the center of the storm; when he's not hammering out powerhouse riffs or conjuring devastating solos, he's engaging in background comping so outrageous that more than once the singer (Wetton) has to break out laughing. The only problem with this set is the occasional screwy soundboard mix (turn up the violin, guys!), but hey, that's live music for you. In all other respects, *The Great Deceiver* is monstrously good. (Caroline Records, 114 West 26th St., New York, NY 10001)—*Mac Randall*

PAUL BRADY

Songs & Crazy Dreams

(FONTANA)

WITH EACH SONG that's covered by Tina Turner or Bonnie Raitt, Irishman Paul Brady manages to remain as obscure as ever. This compilation (which covers most of his solo career dating back to 1981) is his second stateside release following 1991's compelling Yank introduction, *Trick or Treat*, and reveals the debt his passionate tenor owes to fellow countryman Van Morrison as it soars and whips around songs of hopes and dreams. Excellent stuff, but at times too slickly produced to match the warmth and honesty of his live acoustic shows. Too bad a relative unknown like Brady doesn't represent enough "box-office" appeal to warrant an MTV "Unplugged" appearance so he could sell a couple zillion records. He'd leave a few awestruck mouths gaping too.—*David Konjoyan*

BOB DOROUGH

This Is a Recording

(LAIBEZ FAIRE)

LEAVE IT TO Bob Dorough, that reluctant legend of jazz singing, to dredge up the beauty in the Everyday. On his latest self-generated project, subtitled "The Pop Art Songs," Dorough cheekily sets to music words from such mundane sources as a weather forecast, a draft card notice and an apple pie recipe. Dorough's shamelessly droll humor and twanged-up hipness give way to some high-flying, campy inventiveness. In so doing, he bows to the "found object" aesthetics of Marcel Duchamp and John Cage ("the whole world is a concert hall and everywhere is the best seat"). An air of gospel righteousness colors "Not Responsible for Shrink," with lyrics from a laundry ticket; a brisk, sambalined arrangement contrasts the underlying goofiness of "Should the Need Arise," based on airline passenger instructions. But the real gem of the

bunch is the bossa-fied and oddly poignant "Love," with lyrics nicked from Webster's dictionary definition of said L-word. At times, he lays on the home-studio-brand digital cheese a bit thickly, where piano and voice would have sufficed. But in the end, Dorough's curveball charm wins out. (Box 667, Stroudsburg, PA 18360)—*Josef Woodard*

DRINK ME

Drink Me

(BARNONE)

VARIOUSLY RECALLING '20S jazz, '60s coffee-house folk and African folk music, this album by the Brooklyn duo Drink Me has the intimacy and charm of an old 78. The duo sing plaintive songs to girlfriends, reference librarians, singing clams and barnacled whales, mostly in under three minutes. They accompany themselves on acoustic guitars and ukeleles, often augmented only by small percussion touches and a muted trumpet (for that old-time torch-song flavor). Mark Amft's lead vocals are plain and sincere, the recording pointedly unadorned, and the melodies and enthusiasm memorable.—*Geoffrey Welchman*

RECORDINGS

[cont'd from page 91] an old one.

For no matter how deep the well of reverb, or how baroque the arrangements (and, believe me, many of these songs are *busy*), beneath this ornate fuss rests a solid AOR band: Journey, Def Leppard, U2, Cheap Trick—especially Cheap Trick. It's the layered harmonies that give them away. From the opening cut, "Zeroes and Ones," the formula presents itself: A lone keyboard burbles, the band joins in through a synthetic soundwarp that obliterates meaning, space and time; Mike Edwards' voice emanates from a Bono-like echo chamber; thick group harmonies follow. The effect is that of a movie soundtrack simulating what a futuristic AOR radio station might sound like. Though their song titles hint that something might be happening on the lyric end, the music obscures Edwards' vocals so well, you'll have to wait until they release a closed-caption edition to figure out what's goin' on. A few of the tunes sift through the chaos with engaging pop hooks ("The Devil You Know," "The Right Decision"), while more atmospheric numbers ("From Love to War," "Spiral") tread dangerously close to AOR's "progressive" side, as in progressively boring.

Truly perverse, considering that Jesus Jones' music is an attempt to bring listeners to a previously uncharted place. While some of the stops have been given different names, there are an awful lot of landmarks here that sound mighty familiar.

—**Rob O'Connor**

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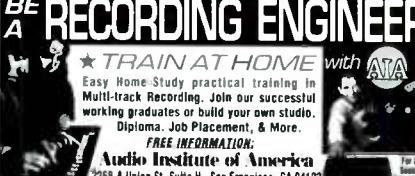


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July 93	May 6
August 93	June 3
September 93	July 1
October 93	August 5


A D I N D E X

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Bose Express Music—The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701-9323 (800) 233-6357.....	93	Pearl—549 Metroplex, Nashville, TN 37211 (615) 833-4477.....	14
B.U.B.—33 Commercial St., Gloucester, MA 01930.....	72	Peavey—711 A St., Meridian, MS 39301 (601) 483-5365.....	12-13
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JBL—8500 Balboa Blvd., Northridge, CA 91329 (818) 893-8411.....	23	Yamaha—6600 Orangethorpe Ave., Buena Park, CA 90620 (714) 522-9011.....	100
Korg—89 Frost St., Westbury, NY 11590 (516) 333-9100...9		Zoom—100 Marine Pkwy. #435, Redwood City, CA 94065 (415) 873-5885.....	21

[cont'd from page 70] Playboys reassemble for their final performance of the festival. Smokey Dacus and Joe Ferguson have gone home, but Gimble is still there and, of course, Eldon Shamblin remains rooted to his familiar spot on the far right of the bandstand, moving his '54 Fender through intricate changes as if he were slicing warm butter. At one point he even gets up and croons a song.

Shamblin's daughter Rita, who used to travel with the Playboys as a child, curling to sleep backstage against the drum suitcase, stands at the edge of the dwindling crowd and marvels at her father's tenacity. "He told me once that when he started playing, he practiced in a room every day for five years," she says. "That he played in every dive he could find from Tulsa to Oklahoma City. And he said to me, 'I've made a living ever since from those five years of work.'"

By the time the show comes to a close, a cold plains breeze is slicing across the open dance floor, and men far younger than the Playboys have decided to seek shelter elsewhere. Shamblin carefully packs away his guitar, and Rita holds his arm to help him down the rickety stairs on the side of the stage. Some of the other musicians hotfoot over to a nearby barracks where late dinners are being served, but Eldon decides to call it a night. Still arm in arm, father and daughter walk across grass matted wet with dew. Then they get in the car and motor along the fair-ground path, and the road back to Tulsa. 

ROCK WRITING RECIPE

Long-time *Musician* reader and *Car Stereo Review* editor Mike Mettler wrote to us of a conversation he had with a publicist who had set up an interview with Rock Star X for Prominent Journalist Y. X had to meet Y at the record company, to the distress of Y who wanted a restaurant. "What happens if the interview is boring?" whined Y. "If we do lunch, I can always write about the food." Unfortunately, this set Mettler to recollecting just how often he'd read about food in *Musician*. More unfortunately, he compiled a vast anthology of our greatest food references and then quantified them—186 references to eating, 165 references to drinking, 16 years of musicians talking with their mouths full. What we had seen as a technique for setting the story in physical reality (that's what they taught us in j-school, anyway) transmogrified into a large, smelly casserole of clichés. "Rock journalists love to think about eating, since they usually can't afford to feed themselves," Mettler theorized. We checked our paysheet and, by God, he's right. He won't be able to feed himself on what we're paying for all his research. Here's some of it:

"I'm a very important *bidnusman*," howls [Stevie] Wonder in mock jive tones, "and I want my croissant!" 5/88

"Where's the pickles," [Kirk Hammett] mumbles. "I'm hung over, I need pickles!" 6/92

Mingus walked over to the dirt, picked up a little and tasted it. 6/89

While I consumed some of Al's flapjacks and scrambled eggs, Tom Waits nursed a cup of tea. 11/83

During dinner at a Thai restaurant in Connecticut, Thurston Moore is sucking an ultrasugared iced coffee. 9/92

"It's all very depressing in England right now," commented Bryan Ferry, a debonair sentinel in an impeccable tuxedo, as he sipped from a sweaty, vine-stemmed glass of Bollinger. 10/85

"It was like an injection of fresh monkey blood into the temple," notes Anthony Kiedis, digging into an appetizer of fresh mozzarella cheese. 12/89

If his father's Irishness sometimes emerges in the black fatalism that underlines even his most joyous music, his mother's Italianness sure dominates Bruce's menu. 11/92

Keith nods slightly and reaches for the Jack Daniels on the desk before him. 11/83

Keith was leaning against a window, sipping Jack Daniels while the snow fell outside. 5/86

Keith, even more honest than usual due to copious consumption of Jack Daniels, ripped Jordan's drumming. 10/88

What Players Have Eaten in *Musician* 1976–1992 (By Number of References)

Food

Health food (Vegetarian, vitamins).....	25
Seafood (Lobster, fish, tuna).....	19
Poultry (Eggs, chicken, turkey).....	18
Pasta/Pizza (Spaghetti, noodles).....	16
Ethnic (Mexican, soul food).....	13
Candy & dessert (M&Ms, cookies).....	12
"[BLANK] and fries".....	12
"Dinner".....	10
Red meat.....	9
Fruit & nuts.....	8
Soup (Chowder, black bean).....	7
"Breakfast".....	7
Sandwiches.....	6
Barbecue.....	6
Anti-food (Fasting, "not hungry").....	5
"Lunch".....	4
McDonald's (Hynde-sight).....	3
Sushi.....	2
Crocks of shit.....	2
Quiche.....	1
Topsoil.....	1

Drink

Beer (Imported, domestic).....	31
Coffee (Regular, cappuccino).....	29
Hard liquor (Vodka, shots).....	26
Wine.....	15
Mixed drinks.....	14
Water (Natural, mineral).....	11
Tea (Iced, hot).....	10
Coke (No Pepsi).....	7
Champagne.....	6
Juice (Apple, orange).....	5
Milk.....	4
Jack Daniels (Keef kount).....	3
Hot chocolate.....	2
Sake.....	1
Tab.....	1



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