

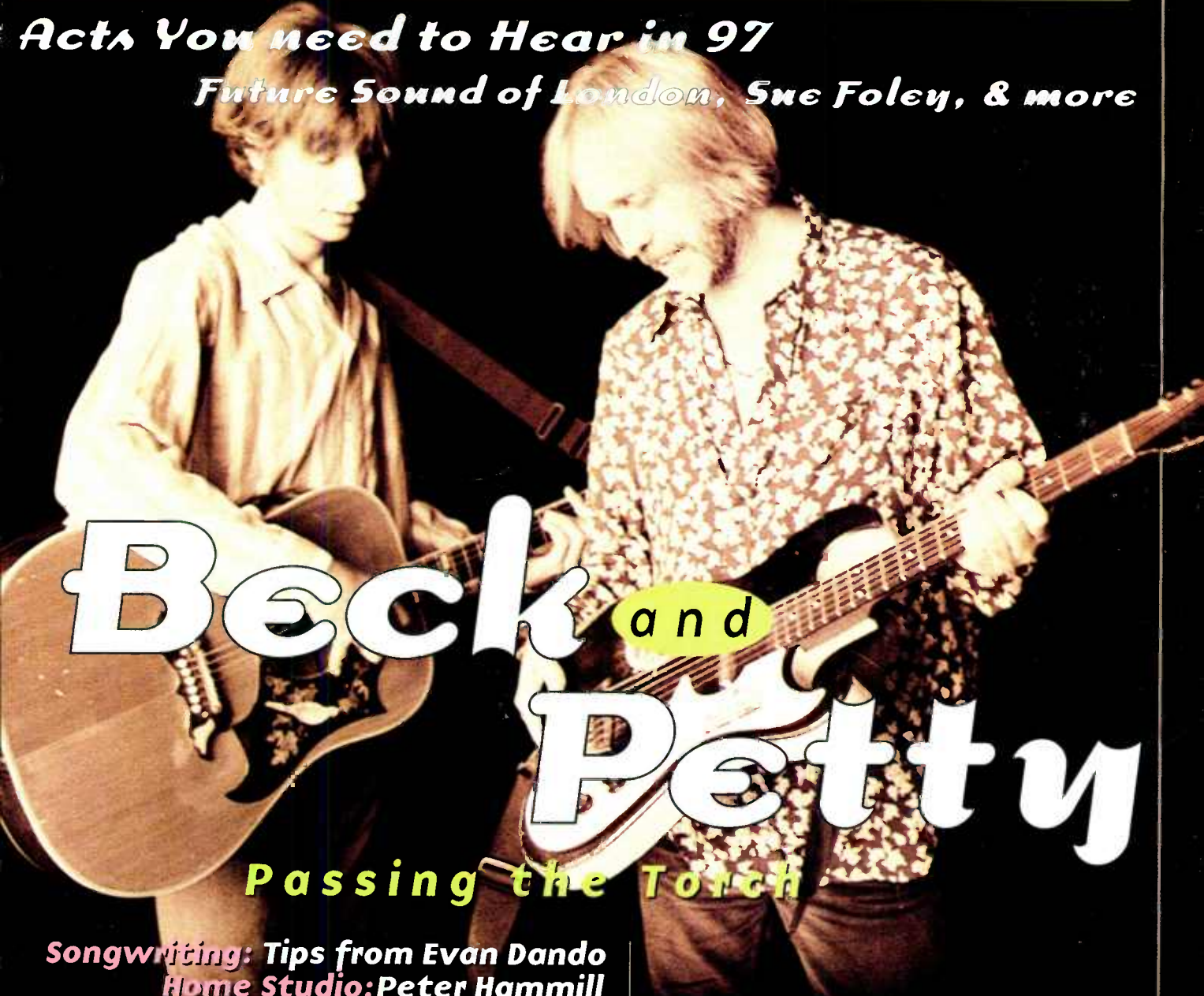
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# MUSICIAN



*Acts You need to Hear in 97*

*Future Sound of London, Sue Foley, & more*



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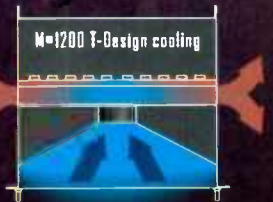
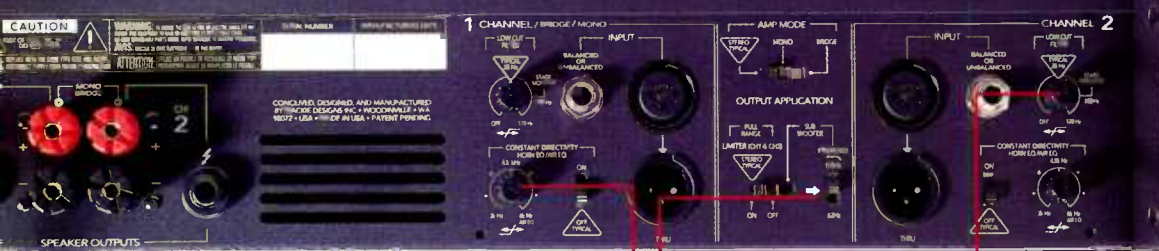
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## it was a very good month

Bravo for a terrific issue (Nov. '96). It was great to see Eric Johnson hangin' out with Joe Satriani and Steve Vai. These guys really kick ass. And your article "'Tain't Nobody's Business But Your Own" was incredible. It really sucked the glamour out of the music business, but the truth can hurt and you do what you have to do. Thanks for listening.

**mike labriola new york, NY**

"'Tain't Nobody's Business But Your Own" did nothing less than to reconfirm myself as an artist. My compliments to you and to author Deborah Frost for an excellent job.

**barry d. waddell seasons of the wolf  
bradenton, FL**

Deborah Frost's advice for dealing with the press rings more than true for me. It's tough to get coverage even in the local media. The reasons why are obvious: Plenty of musicians are playing gigs and, to be honest about it, many of them deserve as much exposure as I do. What makes the difference when all things are equal? It's not just initiative; as often as not, it's also knowing when to back off and give your targeted member of the press a break. I had my first writeup when I invited a writer to a show with specific instructions—not a request, more of an order—not to review the performance. "Just have a good time and a drink or two on me," I insisted. And damned if I didn't see my name in print for the first time a few days after that.

**taylor young sunnyvale, CA**

## church-approved distortion

Reeves Gabrels' use of a variable-speed vibrator for unconventional tone generation ("Brave New Guitar," Nov. '96) probably deserves some kind of award for creativity. The hard part will be finding an organization with the guts to give it to him. The fact that he made a logical jump from a refrigerator to the vibrator is quite amazing.

I'm surprised there was no mention of one of my personal favorites for producing variable-speed tones: a cordless electric drill. I prefer the Black & Decker models for their variable-speed trigger and a tone so distinctive that no distortion is needed to make it cut through a mix.

Another kind of unusual tone can be produced by our upcoming Sustainiac R Sustainier for Strat-style guitars. Of course it provides gobs

of sustain by propelling string vibrations. It can also provide howling feedback with precise control. With a specially made pick you can upset the sustainer's balance while playing the guitar. Pick motions are converted to varying amounts of feedback. Though less extravagant than a vibrator, this technique probably won't get you kicked out of a religious revival gig.

**gary osborne maniac music  
indianapolis, IN**

## tim skold

Turning to page 16 in your Nov. '96 issue made subscribing to *Musician* one of my best decisions ever. I can't believe you gave Tim Skold the exposure he deserves. I've followed his work since the early days of Shotgun Mes-

maintain an appreciation for a good lyric, an inspired chord substitution, or a melodic twist that both defies expectation and sticks in the listener's head, while struggling to keep our ears above the racket of backbeats, I-IV-V variations, and simplistic vocal "hooks"? Why am I not surprised that after milking his creative resources dry Mellencamp now turns to a "non-musician" techno-oriented producer? Maybe he thinks he's seeking inspiration, but it seems to me that he's upturning every rock within reach in hopes of finding that modest competence he wore out way back in the "Jack and Diane" era. Oh, well. Life goes on.

**alex hancock seattle, WA**

## buffalo tom

As a producer in the Boston area, I love your monthly Home Studio spread. Your feature of Buffalo Tom's two studios (Nov. '96) was especially worthy of praise for two important reasons: (1) It makes the point that the creativity and enthusiasm of the artist is what really matters in helping to produce great music, regardless of what technical level the studio itself is on; and (2) it helps you understand that in getting your musical ideas across, what matters is how effectively you utilize the equipment that you have at hand to the fullest, no matter how low-tech. I admire *Musician* and Buffalo Tom for pointing this out.

**jim baby somerset, MA**

## in review

I must congratulate you on the excellent standard of your magazine, particularly your wide-ranging and eclectic album reviews. I have bought copies of *A Night in Amnesia* by David Tronzo and Reeves Gabrels, *Colossal Head* by Los Lobos, *Down on the Upside* by Soundgarden, and *High Tension Wires* by Steve Morse, all based entirely on the strength of your reviews, and have found each album to be very good indeed.

I hope you continue to focus on bands and artists who make unusual, interesting, and influential music, and pass up the trendy, flavor-of-the-month merchants who have nothing to say.

**rehan fernando colombo, sri lanka**

## To the Readers:

With this issue we launch Power Users, a new regular feature designed to bring three of the most important ingredients in the musical recipe—the player, the equipment, and you—closer together. Each month in Power Users a respected artist will go into detail about he or she uses a particular piece of gear. On occasion we'll also have a player test and compare a selection of equipment. It's not a review; it's a real-world player sharing thoughts and tips with you. This month we kick it off with one of the hottest player/producers on the planet—George Duke. Look in future issues for other pros, from studio veterans to stage headliners, to share tips and opinions, pro and con, about instruments they're using.

—Robert L. Doerschuk

siah, loving every minute of it. What a great mind this guy has. Skold is my pick for artist of the year. Thank you, RCA, for taking a chance on him, and thanks, *Musician*, for the insightful article on his approach to home recording.

P.S.: If anyone has any info on the whereabouts or activities of ex-Shotgun Messiah Harry Cody, please contact me at the address below.

**natedog c/o ameridawn  
3535 central lake station, IN 46405**

## john mellencamp

It's no wonder that the quality of songwriting has fallen so precipitously these past few years. John Mellencamp's suggestion that "anybody who opens themselves to the idea can write songs" (Frontman, Nov. '96) is dead wrong. To be fair, most people can probably write awful or plagiarized songs, but what's the point? There's already enough crap on the radio. How can we



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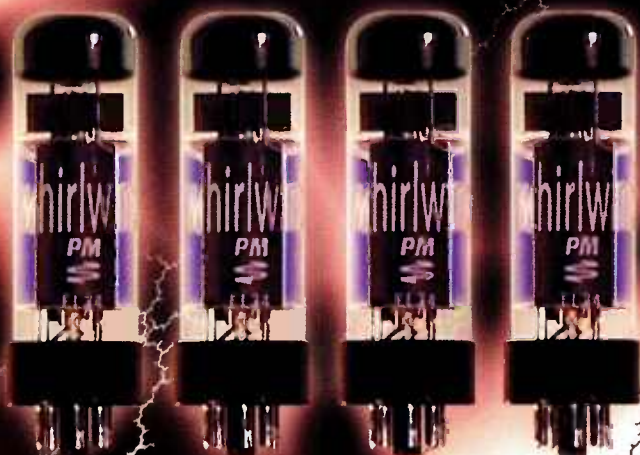
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# whirlwind

**Y**our last record, *My Life*, was centered around the death of your father and felt very introspective. On *The Way I Should*, you address themes that are overtly social or political as well.

When I finished *My Life*, I felt that I'd exhausted certain topics, and I wanted to find other things to write about. In fact I spent about a year where I didn't write but tried to figure out what was important to me. But I didn't sit down and think, "Oh, my next record will be politically oriented." That's just what I stumbled into that mattered.

You address issues that are difficult for people to resolve, such as searching for spirituality in an age when it's more difficult to accept the historical claims of organized religion.

That's something I've been trying to sort out since I was 16 and I left the church. My family went to Pentecostal churches where there was a lot of emotional expressionism. My dad would feel safe to cry in church listening to a song, and my mom would suddenly throw her hands up and clap and find a different side of herself. So from the time I was little, even though I didn't understand the word 'spirituality,' I understood there was a connection between music and something inside people that you couldn't see, that struck me as pretty important.

You played piano with Merle Haggard & the Strangers for awhile last year. How did that come about?



# Iris DeMent

Merle recorded "No Time To Cry" and I played piano on that. One night he kind of mentioned, "Iris, why don't you and [DeMent's husband] Elmer get a motor home and follow along behind us; you can play the piano." Well, I play piano a lot on this record, but I'm certainly not a Strangers-quality player. So the agreement was that I would just keep the vol-

**"I, too, have a right to be honest."**

been a lesson. To what extent does music itself contribute to your own sense of purpose? Well, [laughs] I think it contributes in a big way. Not to say the songs are gonna last forever, but whatever impact you have on a person that hears your songs lasts forever. They may forget they ever heard you, but in some way—and everything is like this—you live on forever through your actions, the same way my dad had an understanding of living his life and raising his kids right. That that's how you live on.—**Mark Rowland**

ume down really low. I didn't contribute anything to the sound quality. But it was an opportunity to observe this legendary person that I idealized and this fantastic group of musicians in action.

*"Wasteland of the Free" reminded me of one of Merle's impassioned rants, though he might not voice your sentiments.*

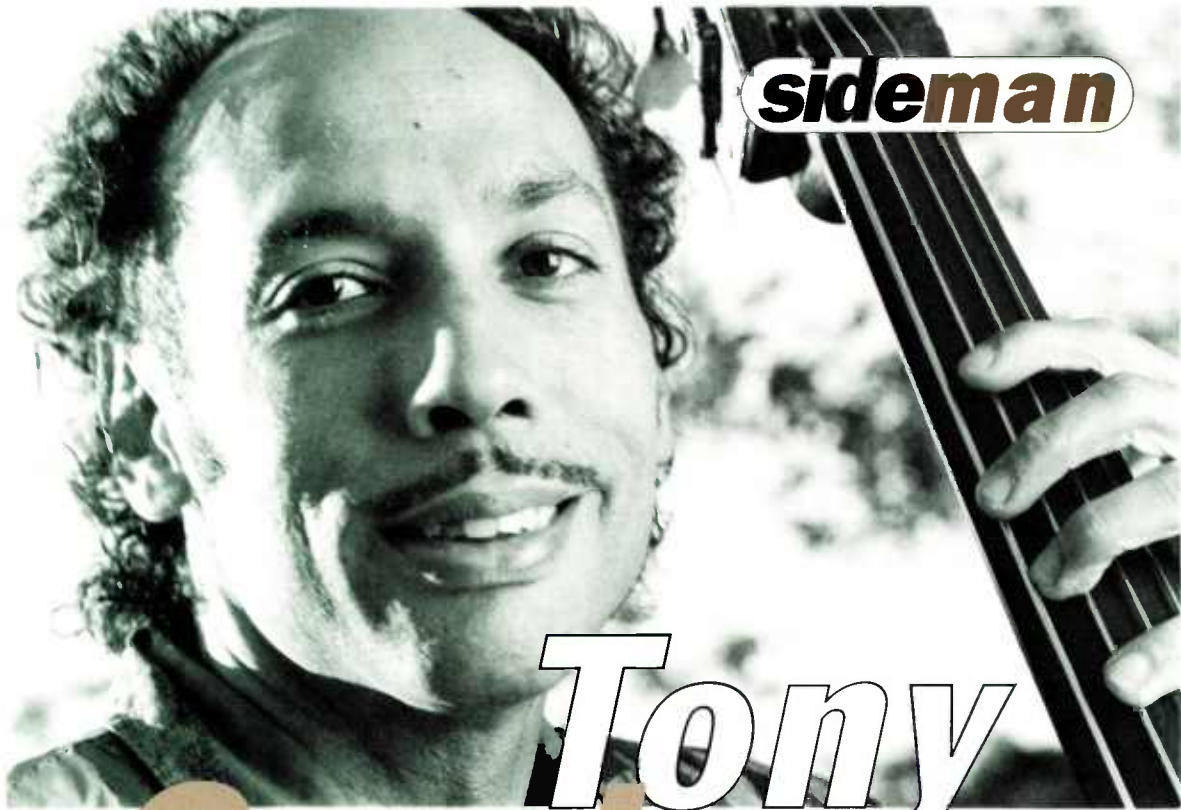
I really like Merle's willingness to just come out and say what he thinks and feels. I don't think he wastes a whole lot of time worrying about being approved of. Having appreciated his music so much, it gave me that extra bit of courage in my music to go to the next place and feel that I, too, have a right to be honest. And it feels good. You run a risk when you do that. He probably lost a lot of fans with some of the things that he did. But so what, you know? Whose life are you living?

Do you ever write songs that seem too personal to put out?

Sure. I felt that with "Momma's Opry," and with "No Time To Cry," and

on this record with "The Way I Should" and with "Keep Me God." But I've never written a song that I thought was good that I haven't recorded for that reason. And those songs I just mentioned seem to be the songs that people grab hold of, so that's

**“You increase your chances by being everywhere at once.”**



**sideman**

# Tony Garnier

**Y**ou left *Asleep At The Wheel* in '78 and moved to New York with no gig awaiting you. How did you break in?  
 The same way I did anywhere. You just try to be everywhere at once. People say you have to have a lot of luck, but you kind of increase your chances of luck by being everywhere, meeting as many people as you can, going to jam sessions. I went there to play jazz, but about three months after I got there I got a call from Robert Gordon. At that point I was about down to my last dollar. He got my name from Garry Tallent. I didn't know who Garry was, but he already had a gig for me. Then I started playing with the Lounge Lizards, which led to soundtracks like *Down By Law*, *Mystery Train*, and *Get Shorty*. A lot of gigs resulted from being able to play electric and upright, and learning jazz and country at the same time made me really flexible. I met T-Bone Wolk doing country gigs where he was playing guitar or accordian. I'd sub for him on bass gigs, including *SNL*. Then G. E. Smith got me the gig with Bob Dylan in '89.

*Did your training help you get a foothold in New York's session world?*

Yeah, doing jingles where they throw charts at you and give you a minute to look it over before they count it off. And on *Saturday Night Live* there was a lot of reading.

*You've played some pretty sophisticated gigs. Did that experience prove helpful in doing Dylan's straightforward tunes?*

Definitely. Playing with Bob, you really have to have big ears, because he'll never sing or play a song the same way from night to night. He might start the same, but from the first verse on you've got to be on your toes. He'll set up some riff on guitar and you'll have to play off that. Or he'll sing a different melody; you're not going to change the chords, but you might change something to accommodate him more sympathetically. Knowing the lyrics is important; he might emphasize different words or verses from one night to the next. Sometimes in session work they'll have you do the rhythm track before you know what the words are. I hate doing that.

*How do you amplify the upright for large stages?*

I was using a Hawkes upright, but I found a French bass at David Gage Instrument Repair, the shop in New York that does all my work. It's about an 80-year-old flatback bass with no name. I like kind of a dark, Ray Brown type of sound. My action isn't really high, but it's higher than most uprights. I use a Hausge pickup, made in Germany, and go through a Fishman preamp. As far as the stage, I use a subwoofer for a monitor, so you've got this huge bottom end, and a wedge for the high end. I was using a '64 Precision, but now I'm using a '68 Rickenbacker 4001S and a '57 Precision with roundwound LaBellas, about a .045 to a .105. I've got two SWR Goliath cabinets, a Demeter pre-amp, and a Crest 7001 power amp.

*Has playing with Dylan affected your approach to jazz?*

I play fewer notes now; it helped eliminate a lot of unnecessary stuff. That also comes from just getting older as a player.

**—Dan Forte**

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# talents

**H**ow refreshing, in the wake of Britpop, to discover an English band who would rather be the next Grateful Dead than the next Beatles. "A friend called us the Grateful Dead of the '90s and I thought it was classic," enthuses Andy Frank, lead singer for the London sextet Pusherman. "The Dead were amazing—I'd love to be as good as them."

Yet, even though their songs consist of musical ideas culled from lengthy jam sessions in their dirty (yet homey) practice space and Frank's "stream of consciousness" lyrics, the end result is likely to overwhelm the average Dead fan. Their debut, *Floored* (Epic), combines the sonic power of Jane's Addiction, Led Zeppelin's heavy blues, and the spacy drug-rock of the Verve. Not coincidentally, it was produced and mixed with help from Owen Morris (Oasis, the

## pusherman



Verve) and *Ritual de lo Habitual* engineer Ronnie S. Champagne. ("He was great," notes guitarist Martin Hoyland. "He was quick and he got really great guitar sounds.")

The Oasis connection goes further, but Pusherman are clearly more interested in plowing their own furrow. "It would be so easy for us to go and tour with Oasis and play to a quarter-million people, just because we have the same manager, but there's no way we're going to do that," assures Frank. "Not only would I not feel comfortable with it, but I don't even think our music is compatible. We're going to do it our own way."

That means going out instead with hippie-rockers the Levellers, playing to an open-minded crowd that would probably even let them get away with some indulgent free-form jams if they so chose. The very suggestion makes Hoyland smile but Frank turns dead serious. "I'll never let that happen—the moment I hear a bit of widdly-widdly, then I'm right back on the fuckin' mic," insists the singer. "I'm having none of that Eric Clapton shit." —**Dev Sherlock**

**D**espite the repetitive phrases played on grand piano, viola, and cello, the Rachel's deliver with a passion that has more to do with the conviction of rock riffing than with the reserve of classical minimalism. But the absence of wall-of-sound, amplified aggression puts their music more in your soul than in your face.

"Our band is the way we are as people," says pianist/composer Rachel Grimes. "We're pretty friendly and responsive. It's not in our nature to be distant. Audiences are unabashedly into emotional music. It's a release from having to be so cool all the time."

**L**abels aren't in the business of developing talent anymore," says Charles Nieland. "They basically wait until they can see something that registers as a blip on their radar screen: 'Somebody's selling records!'" Together with his wife Nance, his singing/songwriting/guitar-playing equal in fronting New York's Her Vanished Grace, Charles intends to be a pretty big blip.

The recent independent release of *Soon* (Athame Music), their first full-length CD, is merely the beginning. A dense, multi-layered mix of enveloping guitars, Goth pop tendencies, and lush romanticism, it's only a snapshot of where the band has been, and not necessarily an accurate indication of where it's headed. "It's weird," says Nance, doing her best Alicia Silverstone. "It's like we're so over this album."

Charles agrees: "We're already trying to work on the next version of our music."

Part of that project has involved the duo performing songs from *Soon* in a stripped-down acoustic setting, without their regular bassist Kris Jefferson and drummer Rod Ledbetter. Another has led to the release of "Monitor," the album's moody Siouxsie & the Banshees cover, in a radical industrial-meets-jungle remix by Charlie Clouser, a current member of Nine Inch Nails. Says Nance, "It's totally possible to add and subtract other elements, and I think the base stays the same." Adds

Charles, "The qual-

ity and the character of our music is improved with other influences.

"I was trying to make 'Sink or Swim' sound like a Burt Bacharach song," Charles enthuses—something he does a lot, "with all those playfully shifting time signatures, where the melody floats just over the top. People's sphere of influence is so narrow now. Everything bleeds into everything else, so you might as well open up to it." —**Chris Smets**



## her vanished grace

The group's third album, *The Sea and the Bells*, was recently released on the Quarterstick label. Its wide array of musicians and instruments more resembles the makeup of their debut album, *Rachel's Handwriting*, than the starkness of their second release, *Music for Egon Schiele*, which featured only three players. Some of the melancholy that characterized *Egon* is evident in spots on the

only pieces, large ensemble passages, and various industrial and environmental sounds was pieced together from recordings made over a nine-month period—some recorded as a group, some done by individuals. "We record incessantly," says bassist/composer Jason Noble. "On the new album, three or four of the pieces were recorded in our homes. In the basement by yourself at three in



Brad Smith

## rachel's

new album, while other

sections range from violent to downright romantic and sentimental.

*The Sea and the Bells'* collage-like mix of solo sections, strings-

the morning it's a whole different atmosphere than when you're surrounded by other people. It's nice to mix that in with the full-group stuff."

—Rick Mattingly

If marriage is looming in your future, and you've got some bucks to spend and a willingness to book a band none of your guests will ever forget, consider Firewater, an intriguing gang of high-profile rock misfits and closet klezmer freaks. On their debut disc, *Get Off the Cross (We Need the Wood for the Fire)*, released in October on the Jetset label, they pretty much do to Balkan wedding music what the Pogues did to Irish folk ballads.

The joyful noise made by these guys on *Get Off* draws from the styles of their "day job" bands—guitarist Duane Dennison plays with the Jesus Lizard, bassist and singer Tod A. with Cop Shoot Cop, drum-

mer Yuval Gabay with Soul Coughing, etc.—but with the exception of one cut, the straight-ahead (and relatively restrained) rocker "I Am the Rain," they chase an Eastern European muse. Even the industri-

## firewater



Richard Kern

al racket of "Refinery" evokes rainy Prague alleyways, dingy basement cafés, and rows of line-dancing peasants. On songs like "Balalaika" and "The Drunken Jew," the atmosphere is thicker still.

"I've had a taste for this music for quite a while," admits Tod A. "It's a natural outgrowth of listening to a lot of gypsy and klezmer stuff. And the emotional content—melodramatic, but with a sense of humor—appeals to me. Also, working with musicians I admire was what it was all about. When I was playing with Cop Shoot Cop and we were opening for the Jesus Lizard, watching Duane onstage every night never got boring. That's how you know that somebody has got it: They can make it exciting in a different way each night. I feel really privileged to work with the people on this record." —Robert L. Doerschuk

Where many indie rock trios still stick to Seattle formulas, New Jersey natives Ditch Croaker go navel-hopping for true inspiration. You might call it oddcore.

"The interaction between bass and guitar is a little different with us," says the bassist known simply as Floyd. "What sounds like a guitar might actually be a bass, or the drums might be coming through a set of Radio Shack speakers."

On *Secrets of the Mule* (In Bloom/Reprise), Ditch Croaker create a jarring, unpredictable sound. Grunge ingredients seem the key, but quickly fall out of focus. Guitars surge to the front of the mix initially, soon replaced by a muddy bass or wash of feedback that threatens to destroy the song altogether.

## ditch croaker

"We want totally different textural changes on our instruments," explains drummer Tim Barnes. "Not subtlety. We want to knock you down. Boom!"

Diversely influenced by Robyn Hitchcock, Big Black, and Echo & the Bunnymen, Ditch Croaker built their rumble on home turf. Releasing two EPs on their own Fine Corinthian label before signing to Reprise, the group became a Jersey club staple, handling all their own distribution and booking. That DIY dedication filtered into the Ditch Croaker aesthetic. "We want to express individual personalities through the band," says Floyd. "Part of defining yourself is understanding what it is that defines yourself."

With songs about bitter widows, Frank Sinatra, and meat grinders, Ditch Croaker's indie toil has paid off. "The care we take in running our own label carries over into the music," concludes Barnes. "We wanted to make music on our own terms. That way, we have only ourselves to blame." —Ken Micallef



Marina Chavez

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dealer," replies Gruff, lead singer/guitarist for the Welsh band Super Furry Animals, matter-of-factly. An above-board arms dealer? "Yeah, yeah," assures drummer Dafydd. "Well, above-board as far as arms dealers go."

The Furies outfitted their tank with turntables and a massive 6-1/2 kilowatt sound system in order to outwit police. "With the new anti-rave laws in Britain, the police can just arrest you, confiscate your records and your equipment, and send you to jail," Gruff explains. "But it's pretty difficult to confiscate a tank."

It is precisely this sort of imagination and creativity that endeared the Furies to Creation Records in the U.K. (home to Oasis, the Boo Radleys, Primal Scream, and others) and Epic Records in the

U.S. "They're very imaginative. I mean, they wanted a *tank*," laughs Mark Bowen, Creation A&R. "No other band has ever come to us and asked, 'Would you buy us a tank, please?'" So we bought 'em a tank. Instead of us suggesting, 'Hey, guys, what about this?,' the band is coming to you with ideas all the time. We're grateful for that."

Musically, the Furies are just as off-the-wall. They create guitar-based, Moog-enhanced pop songs, drawing equally from modern techno and classic prog-rock like Soft Machine. But while their music is unusual, their path to a recording deal was not: They were spotted by music journalists. Bowen received a call from two writers at the U.K. weekly *New Musical Express* who had seen the Furies opening for another band. "You'd love this band, you gotta see them," they told Bowen. It so happened that Bowen knew and trusted these two journalists. So

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the next time the Furries played London (at a tiny 100-person-capacity pub), Bowen and Alan McGee, Creation's MD—what we'd call a label president here—went to check it out.

"The show was great, but the sound was appalling," says Bowen. "At this point, all we knew about them was that they were from Wales, their singles were in Welsh, and their

indie label, Angst, was a Welsh-language label. The sound was so bad, we'd just assumed everything was in Welsh. So we asked them if they would ever consider singing anything in English. They said, 'The whole set was in English!' It wasn't the best start."

Luckily, Bowen, whose career began as a member of the Boo Radleys' road crew and

included an A&R stint at Rough Trade, is also Welsh and was able to smooth things out. Creation paid for the Furries to demo some tracks, kept an eye on their gigs, and were very happy with what they heard. Then, because Creation has an international licensing deal with Sony, David Massey, senior VP of Epic in the U.S., was introduced to the band.

"Creation tend to involve me before they sign a band," he explains, "and I met the Furries at a stage when they were very enthusiastic about signing them. My role strictly involves the North American marketplace."

But, taking a cue from the teamwork that made Oasis a success, Creation and Epic are working the Furries simultaneously in both countries. "Compared to a lot of young U.K. bands, they're being released in an extremely timely way," says Massey, referring to the common practice of delaying British bands' album releases in America. "They are coming out very early here, because I was involved early on."

Still, it was a brave signing for both labels. "Welsh music hasn't been taken that seriously, which is probably all the fault of the Alarm," Bowen laughs. "People were like, 'You're going to sign a Welsh band? You're crazy!' But it was obvious that the Britpop thing was going to be dead by the time the Furries record came out. We were looking for something different."

Has this spawned a wave of new Welsh upstarts? "Absolutely," says Bowen. "It's amazing. The amount of tapes we get from Wales has increased a hundredfold this year."

With the recent successes of Manic Street Preachers, Catatonia, and Gorky's Zygotic Mynci, the press is quick to call this Welsh proliferation a "scene." But Bowen insists, "This is nothing more than a few good bands who happen to be Welsh. It's just one of those coincidental things, like what happened in Manchester or Seattle or Detroit in the past. It just takes a band to bring some attention to it, I suppose."

What sets the Furries apart? Says Bowen. "Their growth has been very organic. A lot of the bands who've become big in England this year have done so on the back of massive radio play, television, Noel Gallagher's patronage, or whatever. The Furries are one of the only bands to come through totally separate from all of that, and that's going to stand them in good stead for years to come." —**Dev Sherlock**

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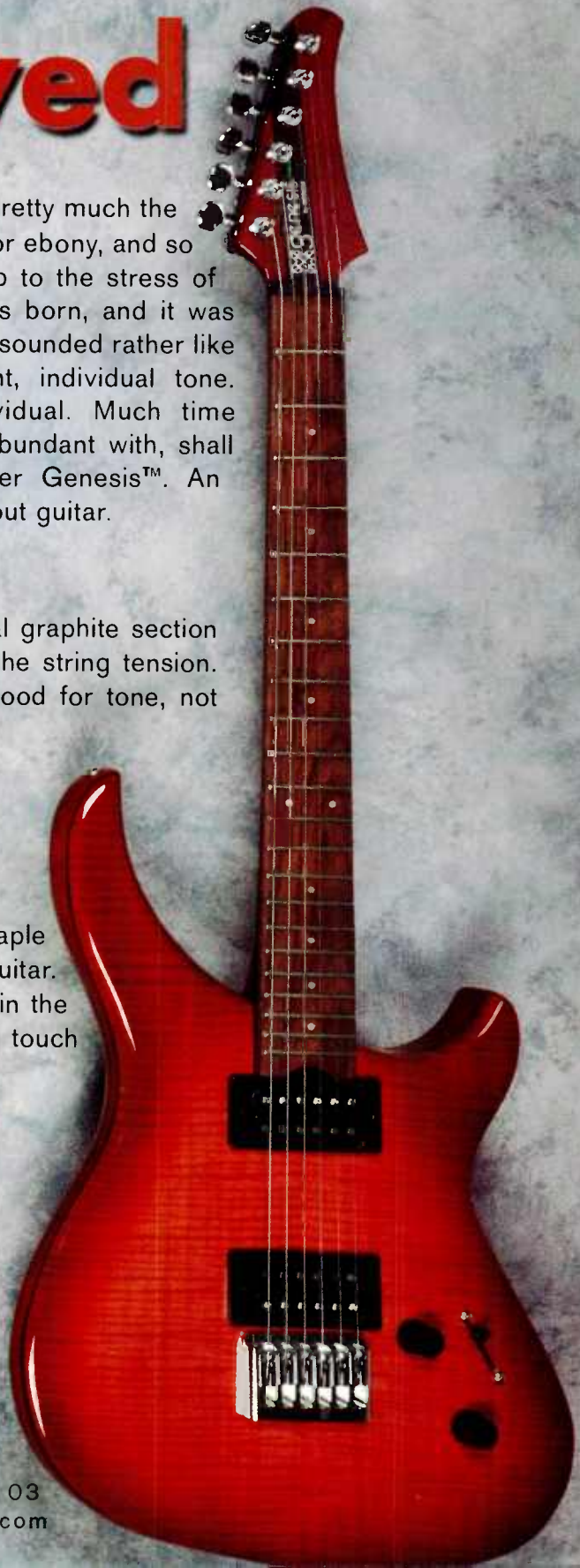
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# Evan Dando's New Traditionalism



It's a shame. Even after seven albums and over a decade in action (most of which they've spent playing original material), Evan Dando and the Lemonheads are still best known for playing other people's songs. Sure, Paul Simon's "Mrs. Robinson," Suzanne Vega's "Luka," and Gram Parsons'

## A Lemonhead's Personal History of Song

By Mac Randall

"Brass Buttons" were all excellent cover choices, and the 'Heads treated them well, in their goofy, shambolic way. But the attention they got may have kept some people from discovering that Dando's a fine tunesmith in his own right, with a knack for finding that obvious hook that everyone's somehow overlooked all these years. He's had that knack right from the start; the expansive chorus of "Don't Tell Yourself It's OK," from the Lemonheads' 1986 debut *Hate Your Friends*, is just as compelling as the dramatic intro of "Break Me," off their latest, *Car Button Cloth*. Sooner or later, the folks'll figure it out.

On the other hand, the choice of covers does say something about Evan's style, and his attitude toward composition. The only training he's had in nailing a tune together comes from listening to far more than his share of music, from every era and in every genre.

Dando's highly conscious of working in a pop songwriting tradition, investigating the territory charted by icons like Simon, Vega, Parsons, and many more (including a certain Mr. Charles Manson, whose "Your Home Is Where You're Happy" got a loving rendition from Evan on *Creator*).

The Stooges and Black Flag are by no means excluded from the list, but it should be pointed out that even in the Lemonheads' early punk days, Dando had more than three crunchy chords in his head.

Evan's traditional views of songwriting came out recently during a long conversation over dinner in New York. He was taking a break from rehearsals with the latest version of the Lemonheads—featuring ex-Dinosaur Jr drummer Murph, guitarist (and former Lemonheads drummer) John Strohm, and bassist Bill Gibson—and facing the

question every veteran encounters on the eve of a tour: How deep do we dig into the back catalog? "It's a horrible job to make these decisions," he says, "but there are a few songs we feel like we have to play. Not 'Mrs. Robinson,' of course."

*I heard you had a touch of writer's block for a while.*

At first, it was conscious. I needed a break from the whole situation of touring, doing inter-

views, being in the public eye, and I thought that the world had had enough of me too. So the best thing was to be quiet for a while. Then later, all I wanted to do was make more music, but it wasn't coming to me. I did write a fair amount of riffs in the summer of '95, but it was all bits and pieces. By the time the winter came along, I'd migrated back down to Australia for a month and a half, and that's when I started putting everything together. I still have tons of

riffs that I never used, so I'm looking forward to making another record. This one's a bit light on riffs, actually; I should have used more. I've just got cardboard boxes full of tapes of myself playing guitar and making up riffs. That's the way I do it, on simple cassettes—I don't even know how to use a four-track.

*What made the difference in Australia? Did you try harder to write, or stop trying?*

I'm going to sound like Yoda now, but... there is no try. [laughs] It either happens or it doesn't. All of a sudden, I pick up the guitar and boom, it's like Newton's apple. My parents would say things like, "You should sit down at a desk for two hours a day and try to write." Even people like [director] John Waters said the same thing. And when you're writing a screenplay, you really have to do that. But songs are so transient—you just have to keep the shop open. Make sure that you've got a guitar around all the time. I have several. [chuckles]

*What's the story behind the song you cowrote with Oasis' Noel Gallagher, "Purple Parallelogram," which was originally supposed to be on Car Button Cloth?*

That was just a case of me trying to salvage part of a song that we'd started writing a while back. The record company wanted to make it a single, but I wasn't sure of it; my take was it sounded a little like "Achy Breaky Heart."

*How so?*

The bassline was very prosaic rock and roll—more like a cross between "Achy Breaky Heart" and "Roll With It." Anyway, the whole thing was out of control, a case of miscommunication. The people from Oasis' management company were saying, "Oh yeah, it's cool," but no one had ever actually played it for Noel. And I didn't want to put it out if he wasn't completely into it. He didn't like it. So I'm glad it's gone. And now copies of it are trading for like \$300. At this point, it's pretty funny.

*Does collaborating with people like Noel, Epic Soundtracks, and Eugenius' Eugene Kelly give you insights into different songwriting methods?*

Sure. The trick when you're writing a song with another person is to never use two guitars. You always have to have just one guitar that you pass back and forth, and when one guy gets stuck, the other guy says, "Oh no no, it should go here." If you have two guitars, you end up doing dumb stuff, just soloing all the time. So just one guitar, and you absolutely wrest it from

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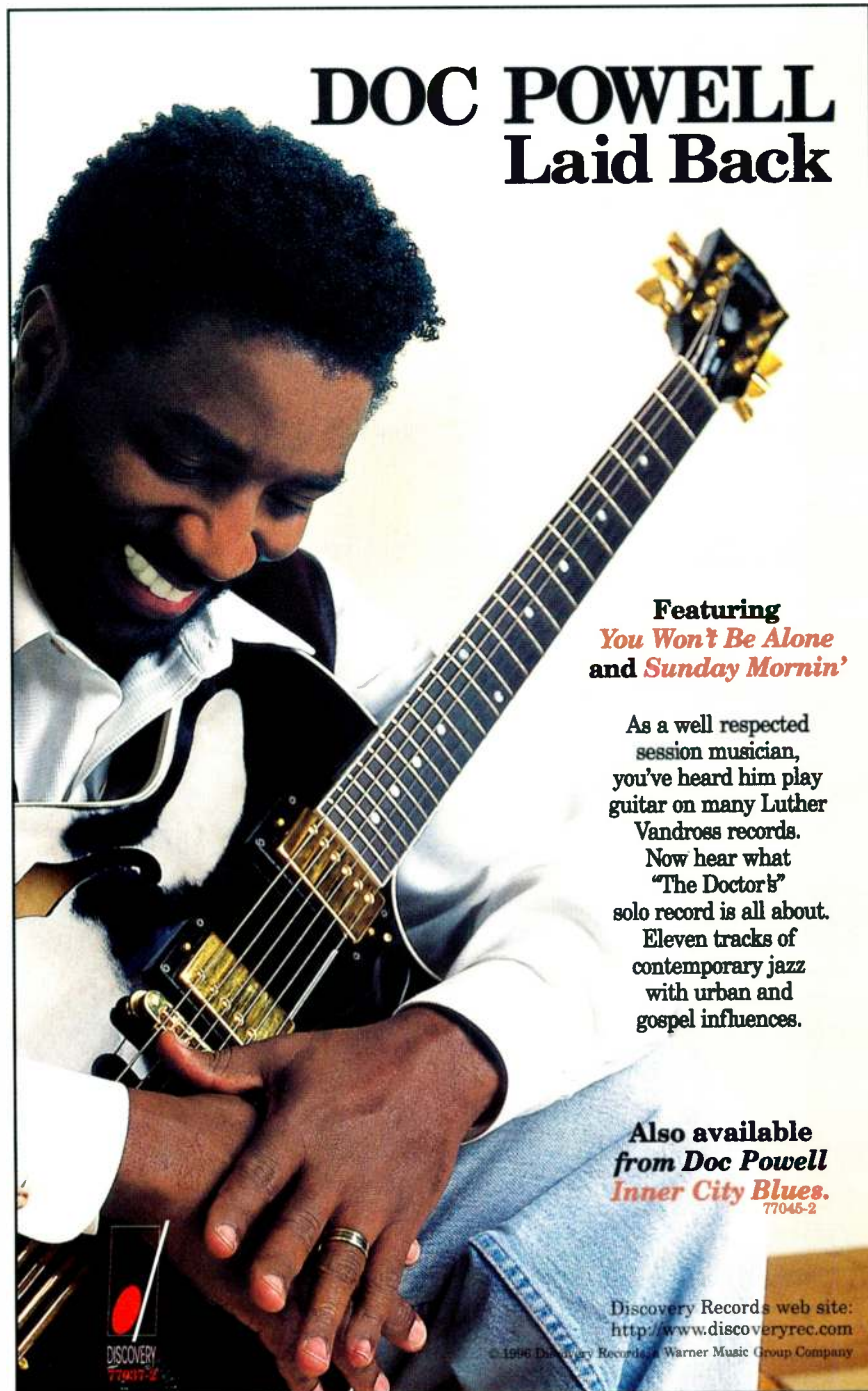
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each other's hands when the time comes. It's like a battle. It works best when you've got that weird feeling of being up too long and your brain's all crowded up with weirdness. Stay up all night, write from five in the morning till 3:30 in the afternoon, then sleep for a couple days.

*Speaking of sleeping, "One More Time," on the new album, allegedly came to you in a dream.*

That's true. I was playing drums in this little

bar to this song that just kept repeating: "One more time, one more time." It reminds me of a song by the Creation called "Same Old Song." Do you know that one? [sings] "Why do we have to carry on, always singing the same old song?" It's funny, because when I was on tour with Oasis, they had the Creation open up for them in Manchester. They'd reformed, with Andy Bell from Ride playing guitar. And I sang "Same Old Song" with Kenny Pickett. So I guess it was

Creation-influenced. It's real simple, typical chord progression. The minor part I made up when I was awake. When we were recording, I said, "Hold on, we need one more part to this song," so I came up with the chords right away. That's a great way to work, I find, when something's missing from a song, I write my bridges in rehearsal with the band. I just go, "Hold on," and do it on the fly. That way you're not thinking about it too much.

*I imagine that it's unusual for you to hear new songs in dreams.*

No. What's unusual is remembering them in the morning.

*Do you feel songs always need a certain number of parts? Is there a basic required structure?*

I've definitely defied standard forms on a couple of songs, but I do like to have three verses and a bridge. It's a cool way to write songs, and it seems to work: A verse or two, then a chorus, then another verse, another chorus, bridge, another verse, then the chorus twice, a fade or whatever. I'm a Cole Porter fanatic, you know? I love the *Ella Fitzgerald Cole Porter Songbook*. I'm a huge fan of standards, Duke Ellington and people like that. When it comes to music, I'm a bit of a traditionalist. I actually quit listening to rock for a whole year when I was 16. I listened to a lot of Brahms, I had about 75 jazz records that I listened to—Bill Evans, Miles, Coltrane, Archie Shepp—and I discovered Robert Johnson and Hank Williams. Then I realized again that rock was a viable form of music. It was just a period of youthful idealism.

*You've been writing songs since your early teens. Have you discovered over the years any formula that works more or less consistently when you want to flesh out an idea?*

I don't have a very good answer to that question. All the songs are different. They all come from some sort of inner hum that produces chords. Then the chords dictate a melody and subject matter. You've just got to work out a melody that's a little different. I basically follow the hum inside, and try to mean it. I haven't quite figured it all out yet.

*You probably don't want to work it out too much for fear of jinxing it.*

No, I do. I'm trying every record to get it, but I'm still nowhere near where I want it to be. I'm still working toward something. Somewhere in a galaxy far, far away, I will have written a really great song.

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# McCoy Tyner

## Stridin' Down the Avenue

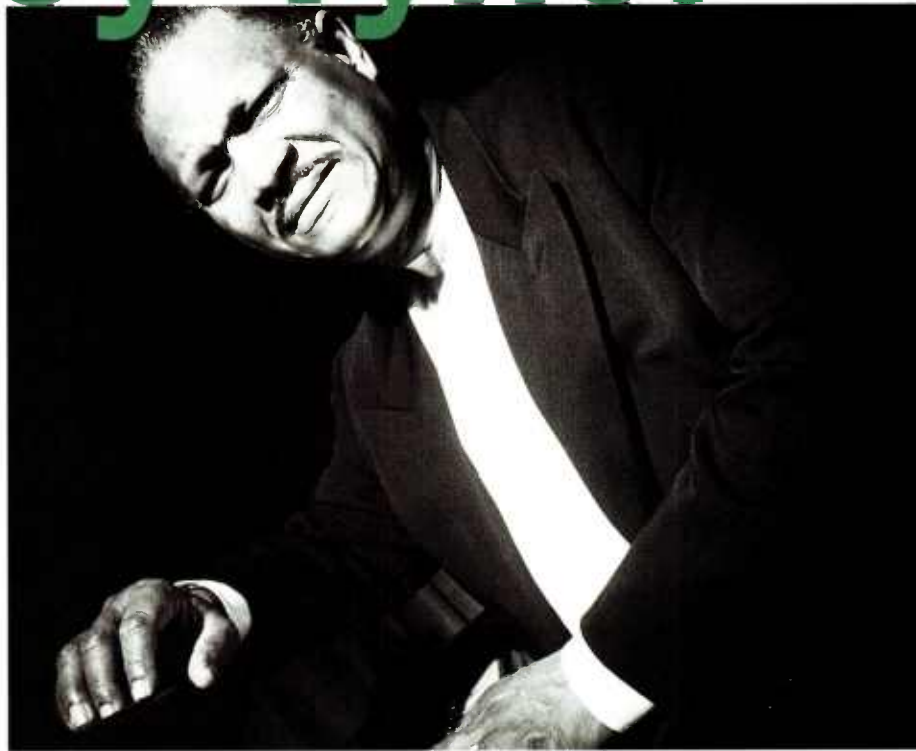
by **robert I. doerschuk**

**W**e saw history walking down 57th Street: McCoy Tyner, the last great innovator in the noble line of jazz pianists, was easing our way, taking his time in measured step. His long coat swept above the pavement, his shoes were smooth and shined.

His stroll ended with a handshake in the lobby at Steinway Hall. Beneath portraits of stern European virtuosos, Tyner seemed right at home—as he should be, for few masters of the 88s can match his impact on music. After John Coltrane plucked him from the Benny Golson/Art Farmer group in the early '60s, he immediately made himself heard. His impact was as shattering as Tatum's, even while he was still working primarily as a sideman. And his influence is apparently even more enduring, for while Tatum set the standard for technique, Tyner launched a revolution in jazz harmonic concepts that rages to this day.

For Tyner, triadic voicings weren't enough anymore. When working with as galvanic a leader as Coltrane, one had to find a way to make more room for solos that bashed against the old changes and progressions.

Fortunately for Coltrane, Tyner was up to the challenge: He created a language that extended—and *inspired*—Coltrane's ideas into voicings with even intervals of fourths. Chords suddenly opened up; there's more room between a C and an F than between a C and an E, and the elimination of the third from



the accompaniment gave the soloist room to play more fully with bluesy nuances and their harmonic implications.

"That's why I like open voicings," Tyner says. We're sitting now in a rehearsal room upstairs at Steinway. "The great thing about it is that once you've set up a tone center and you know what key you're playing in, all those notes in that scale and the relative scales can work. The whole keyboard is open to you; you can use anything. Knowing where your ideas are coming from and how to resolve them to the next step—that's what defines what you do."

He plays a simple open fifth and octave. "That could be anything. It could be an F7, an F minor, or part of some other chord. But because it's open, you're not limited. You can play different scales on top of it."

Now Tyner offers a series of chords, transcribed in Example 2. By moving a bass line through what are essentially variations on a non-triadic voicing, he shows that harmonic

innovation doesn't just give piano players and soloists more options: They also give bass players an escape from the kind of walking lines Pops Foster wore out eighty years ago.

"That's what I tell young bass players," he agrees. "It's not just a chromatic line. From that perspective, it makes a lot of sense to avoid playing chords that limit you. Some tunes lend themselves to a more open sound, especially if you're playing with a guy who has a good harmonic ear. That's what part of my role was [with Coltrane]. I freed up not only myself but the guys I played with. That's the kind of environment I grew up in, of pursuing individual paths. You couldn't make it in those days if you sounded like somebody. You wouldn't get recognized."

So the lesson is to avoid the old ways of doing things, right? Tyner shakes his head.

"Sometimes the older things can be good! It's very important to clean the slate every now and then. In fact, I've been playing some stride styles lately. Of course, when I play it I

Elisa Haber

don't sound like Eubie Blake or James P. Johnson. But I do things that draw from that source."

This is a revelation from Tyner, whose left-hand tremolos are as indispensable to his sound as stride patterns are to Fats Waller. "That's rhythm section playing," he explains. "Tremolos develop a maze of sound; you don't know what's gonna come out of it. But when I do solo gigs I might try something like this."

Tyner's improvisation on "You Taught My Heart to Sing," an original composition, includes plenty of stride references, as seen in Example 1. Yet there's no mistaking his identity. From the first left-hand leap to the final cadence, this is the real McCoy.

"I don't abandon who I am," he insists. "I just try to add things. I try to be flexible, not locked into something. Anything you learn can be utilized to express what you want. I don't

like to hear people using stuff just because they learned it in school: 'I'll throw in a little bit of this guy, a little bit of that guy.' Yeah, but what about *you*? Give yourself a chance. That's what I tell people. I love Bud Powell and Thelonious Monk. There were times I listened and picked up a few things. But ultimately I never tried to be either one of those guys.

"The point is, give yourself a chance."

—Robert L. Doerschuk

**Ex. 1**

Chord progressions for Ex. 1:

- G+ E B7 A7 A<sup>b</sup>m7 D<sup>b</sup>9#11
- Gm11 C7sus4 C7+ F/A Gm7 Dm/A<sup>b</sup> Am7
- Dm11 D/A A<sup>b</sup>6 Gadd9/D Em F#m7<sup>b</sup>5 B11
- Fm9/C B<sup>b</sup>9#11 8va Fm7 B<sup>b</sup>m11
- A<sup>b</sup>add9 15ma

**Ex. 2 Freetime**

Chord progressions for Ex. 2:

- A7sus4 E7sus4 F#sus2 Gsus2 A7sus2

"You Taught My Heart to Sing" Music by McCoy Tyner. (c) 1995 McCoy Tyner Music. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

# Beck

Rockin', W

meets

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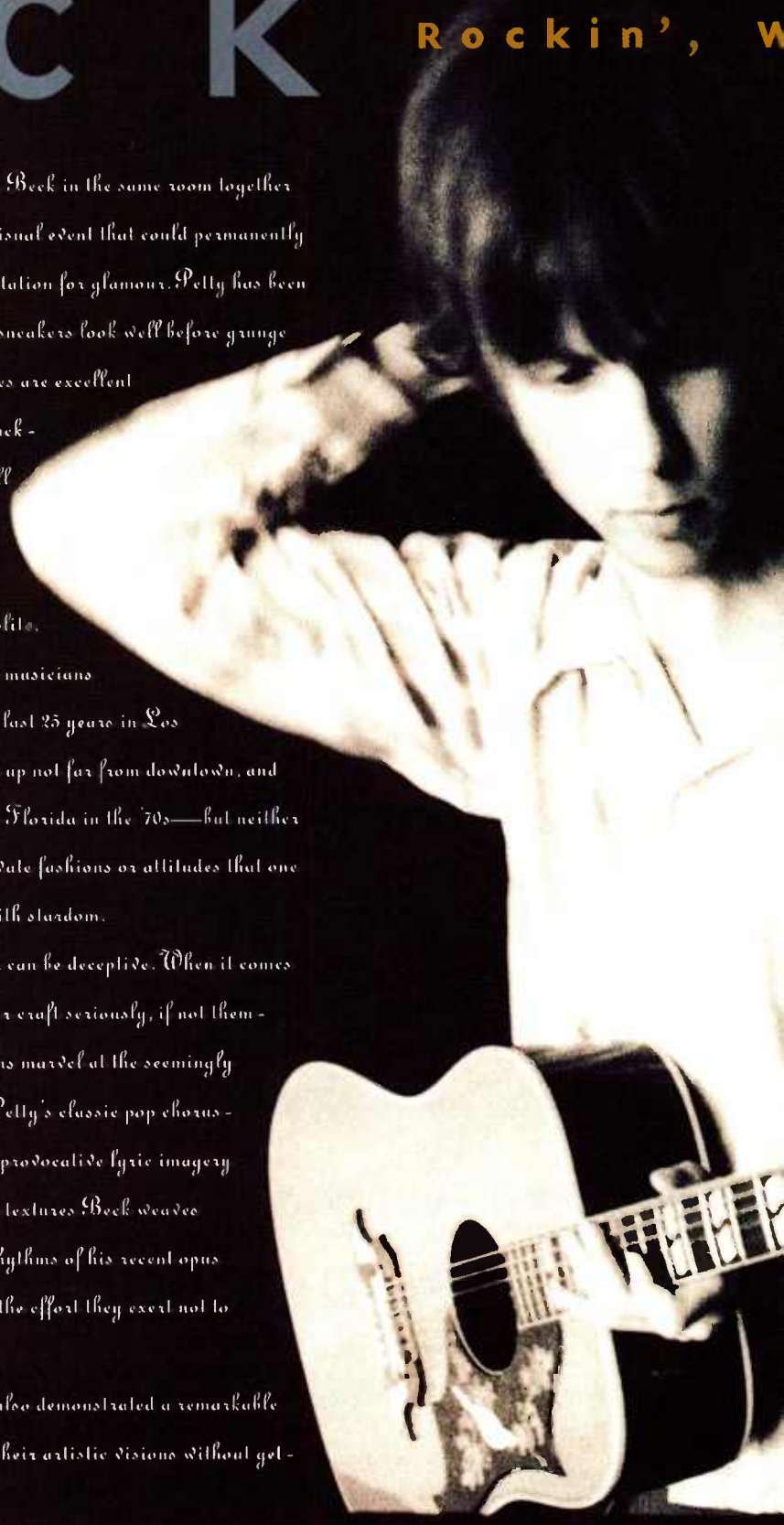
t

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Getting Tom Petty and Beck in the same room together makes for the kind of visual event that could permanently sink Hollywood's reputation for glamour. Petty has been favoring a flannels 'n' sneakers look well before grunge turned it trendy; chances are excellent that Beck's off-the-rack-from-Sears outfits will remain a mostly individual taste. In conversation they're polite, articulate, droll. Both musicians have spent much of the last 25 years in Los Angeles—Beck grew up not far from downtown, and Petty moved here from Florida in the '70s—but neither has done much to cultivate fashions or attitudes that one generally associates with stardom.

But that casual air can be deceiving. When it comes to music, they take their craft seriously, if not themselves. And if musicians marvel at the seemingly tossed-off quality of Petty's classic pop choruses, for instance, or the provocative lyric imagery and "accidental" sonic textures Beck weaves through the hip-hop rhythms of his recent opus *Odelay*, chalk it up to the effort they exert not to let the seams show.

Both artists have also demonstrated a remarkable ability to stay true to their artistic visions without get-



in', Survivin' in L.A.

World Radio History

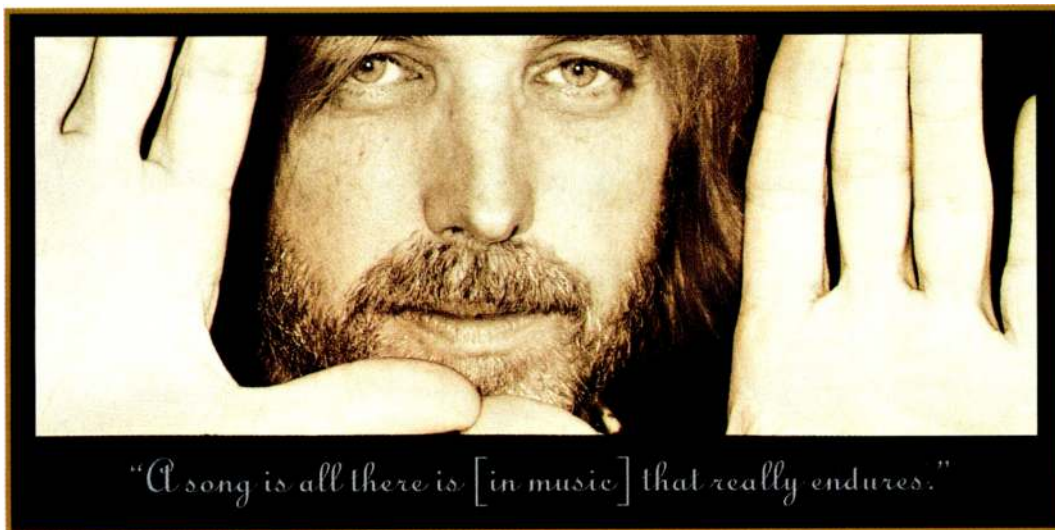
By Mark Rowland  
Photographs  
by Cynthia Lovine

ting crimped by the corporate trappings of success. Petty's battles for independence over the years with his record companies have been well-documented. And the initial phenomenon of "Loser" as a radio hit a couple of years gave Beck the clout to sign a deal with Geffen Records that allows him

people's songs, and still do it if they're songs I like, that I can feel something in there and get ahold of it. When we started out in bars, you had to play the hits of the day, which were really a lot better than they are today. You could play the Animals and the Rolling Stones. But you start to learn

business. Then right away I was amazed at how they would give you records. I'd take them home and listen to every cut on every lousy record they gave me. But then I started realizing that it's better to go buy 'em, because they never sound right if they're given to you; not the same as if you went down and bought it. But it is a luxury to have access to all that music. For a long time we would learn songs from the radio where we're trying to write the lyric as it goes by—you take the first line, I'll take the second, and we'll get it down.

**Beck:** I didn't really get turned on to playing music until I heard Woody Guthrie, Mississippi John Hurt, because at the point where I started getting interested in



to release other albums on independent labels. The song "Asshole," from one of those indie albums, caught the ear of Petty, who recorded a version of it with the Heartbreakers for his most recent album, a soundtrack for the Edward Burns movie *She's The One*. The Heartbreakers also played behind Johnny Cash's cover of Beck's "Rowboat" on Cash's new album.

Despite those connections and an admiration for each other's work, Petty and Beck hadn't really spoken much together until sitting down with *MUSICIAN* for the following interview. The humor and restless intelligence of their music naturally found its place in the conversation. But inevitably the train of thought circled back to surprisingly sober musings of songs and songwriting—of traditions, of process and its place in the world.

*It must be kind of a trip hearing your song covered and re-arranged by someone else.*

**Petty:** If they do it worth a shit.

**Beck:** I think it's great, because I always thought the songs were more important than the person who sings them. That's not really the way it goes these days. A song these days is just an appendage to a personality or a trend or something.

**Petty:** I've always enjoyed singing other

that maybe this one is good because the song is good. So when you start to write, you try to do something of the caliber of the music you've been listening to.

*And at that time you didn't have much access to music beyond what was on the radio.*

**Petty:** No, I never had the dough to buy a lot of records until I was in the record

music, the things that were on the radio, you couldn't figure it out. It was like the music couldn't be made by humans, really.

**Petty:** I know what you mean. The radio today is just intimidating. And it's formatted to a point where, if you're on this number of the dial this is all you're going to hear all day. It was much better when they didn't have as many stations and

**L**  
**A**  
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**C**  
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**E**  
**R**  
**S**

**T**OM PETTY has recently added a pair of **Epiphone** electric guitars to his arsenal, a turquoise Casino and a Riviera, but his other main axes remain familiar to fans: a Telecaster clone called the California Classic from **L.A. Guitar Works**, a red **Rickenbacker** six-string (a prototype of the 1990 Tom Petty model), and a yellow **Rickenbacker** 360-12 twelve-string ("I don't know what I'd do without that"). In the studio, he relies on a **Martin** D-41 six-string and D12-28 twelve-string for acoustic sound. The guitars are powered through a blonde mid-'60s **Fender** Bassman and an early-'70s **Vox** AC30—"the Bassman's for distortion, Vox has the power"—using **Ernie Ball** Medium Slinky strings (**Martin Marquis** for the acoustics) and few effects beyond a **Boss** chorus, a **Red Llama** gain boost pedal, and an **Ibanez** Tube Screamer for an overdrive sound. "I used to be very self-conscious on stage, but I'm getting to the point where they're letting me use these things," he explains.

BECK's main electric guitar—until recently his only one—is a mid-'60s solidbody **Silvertone**, but the neck is starting to crack. He doesn't want to talk much about it for fear he'll help promote their increasing trendiness and he won't be able to find any more of them. The **Peavey** Classic 50 is his amp of choice, and he plugs into it by way of four pedals: **Electro-Harmonix's** Soul Preacher and Electric Mistress, **DOD's** Death Metal, and a **Hogsfoot** for random noise. He also employs a **Novation** Bass Station synth and various **Hohner** harmonicas. Beck generally gets his D'Addario strings from his bassist, Justin "Showboat" Meldal-Johnsen, who has an endorsement deal with the company.



they had to play everything. Not that some things don't come on now and then that are good. But it confuses me.

**Beck:** I enjoy it. I mean, just living in L.A., when you spend so much time in the car, I love turning on to the hard beat station and that whole culture is so fully going the way it's going—this whole rise of R&B soul settings to gangsta lyrics. And then all the Mexican stations.

**Petty:** R&B videos are very interesting now. I notice that there's a lot of people with ski lodges.

**Beck:** Ski lodge and a barbeque. Well, it's all fantasy. That's what you get when you win the lottery or something.

**Petty:** Yeah, you get a ski lodge with twenty girls in bikinis.

*The musical formats have become narrowed, but at the same time the access to a wide variety of music has never been greater.*

**Petty:** It confuses me that there's so much access. It's more than I can take in.

**Beck:** I can't imagine dealing with the blues now. I remember when I was younger you really had to search and dig the stuff up. It was all kind of obscure—you even had to find 78s. They didn't have the 3-CD Son House reissue box set. Now I'd probably run the other way.

**Petty:** I was going to buy some blues when I was in Tower Records the other day and I walked around to the sign that says "blues" and then I really didn't have the energy to go through all the blues that was there. There was so much, which I guess is good, but I didn't buy anything. I didn't feel like going through all of that. You start looking, and even under one artist you can see the same titles appear on four or five albums and you get kind of edgy about which one is the real one. Even if you're a teen getting into rock, there are so many rock bands. There was a time when you felt like you knew who all of them were. Now there's so many. Maybe it's just my age.

**Beck:** No, I think it's true. We were playing these festival shows that they do every year with all the currently popular bands. We played a bunch two years ago and there were probably four or five names that I knew, and a couple that I might have been a fan of. This time I'd never heard of any of them and there might have been 12 or 13 bands. They were all very popular but it

happened in about six months.

**Petty:** These days if you can get across to the public more than once with a song it's really an accomplishment. Say you have a big song and it's a hit; you're still very disposable. They're not particularly interested in hearing another song from you. Some friends of mine were talking last night about people that make records and then the record company doesn't even put 'em

out, because it's too expensive, I guess. But if you're an act coming along, imagine that! They really are encouraged to fall in line with what's popular at the moment. For awhile it was the Guns N' Roses thing and you had all kinds of bands pointed that way, and then Kurt Cobain came in and I think a lot of bands were encouraged to, you know: "If you want to get signed up and get your record out you better get on

The advertisement features a large, stylized 'XL' logo in the background, with a globe above it and the text 'E-SERIES' in a small box. In the foreground, John McLaughlin is shown from the waist up, wearing a brown suit jacket over a blue shirt and tie, and playing a red hollow-body electric guitar. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a blue and white abstract design. At the bottom of the advertisement, there is contact information for J. D'Addario & Company, Inc.

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this thing." Which isn't healthy.

**Beck:** *you circumvented the problem by negotiating a deal with Geffen that allows you to release records with other labels at the same time.*

**Beck:** Yeah, I was pretty aware of the music industry treadmill, the revolving door. I've been playing music for a lot of years, so I was always very reticent about having some business people dictate to me

what I should be doing. It seemed way too foreign to me. I always did music for my own amusement, which is how anybody starts playing music.

**Petty:** It's a pretty good rule to stick to.

**Beck:** It's easy to be seduced by all that stuff. But I didn't start writing music because I wanted money or needed to be successful. But the thing with "Loser," it sort of took on a life of its own and was a

hit before I was on a record label. So I was lucky in having some leverage. It's pretty rare that a song comes out of nowhere.

**Petty:** But that goes back to songs. Song power has never changed—if you've got songs, you're happening. A song is all there is that endures out of the whole thing. These days songwriting is not taken as seriously.

**Beck:** Yeah, at some point it turned over into the personality. The performer had to write the song, otherwise it wasn't genuine or something. I guess in maybe the R&B world or the country world they still have that thing separated. It makes sense in a way. We were just talking together about the grind of touring and how exhausting it is: You put out a record and you have to tour for a year and a half, and then you come back and you're expected to put another record together for another tour. The songwriter just stays home and gets to live his life. Musicians travel around and try to get some sleep.

**Petty:** And if you go on tours all the time there's very little to write about. All your songs come out like Foghat. Not that there's anything wrong with that, but just writing about being on tour—that's a short book.

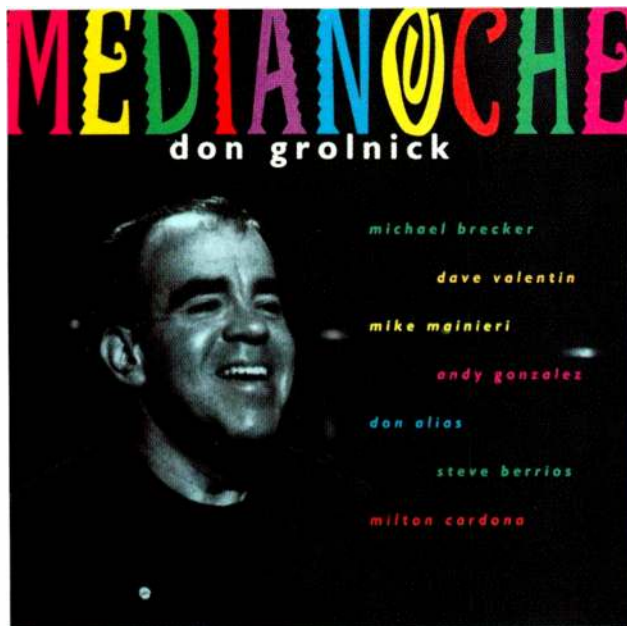
*You've addressed the problem in different ways on your latest records; Odelay was put together on each side of a concert tour, while She's the One had the deadline of a film production schedule.*

**Beck:** You just place your faith in something and go. A lot of times I go into the studio, I don't even have songs. I write them while I'm there. So you don't know what's going to come up—that's where it comes alive.

**Petty:** It is if you can afford it. It's expensive if you don't have your own stuff. If you're clever enough you can have your own stuff without too much money.

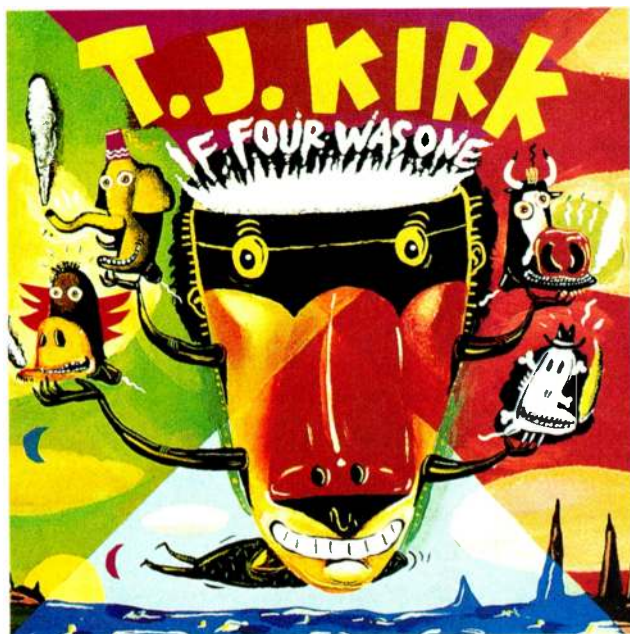
**Beck:** Oh, you mean the recording equipment? I record in houses. I can't go into those big studios. It's too much like a laboratory or something. Too scientific.

**Petty:** Yeah, I recorded in houses a lot. There's something about houses that sounds good too. You know, people don't listen to records in a room that's all sound-proofed and baffled up and set for stereo dynamics. So if you can make one in a house, it's a luxury. And you don't have to



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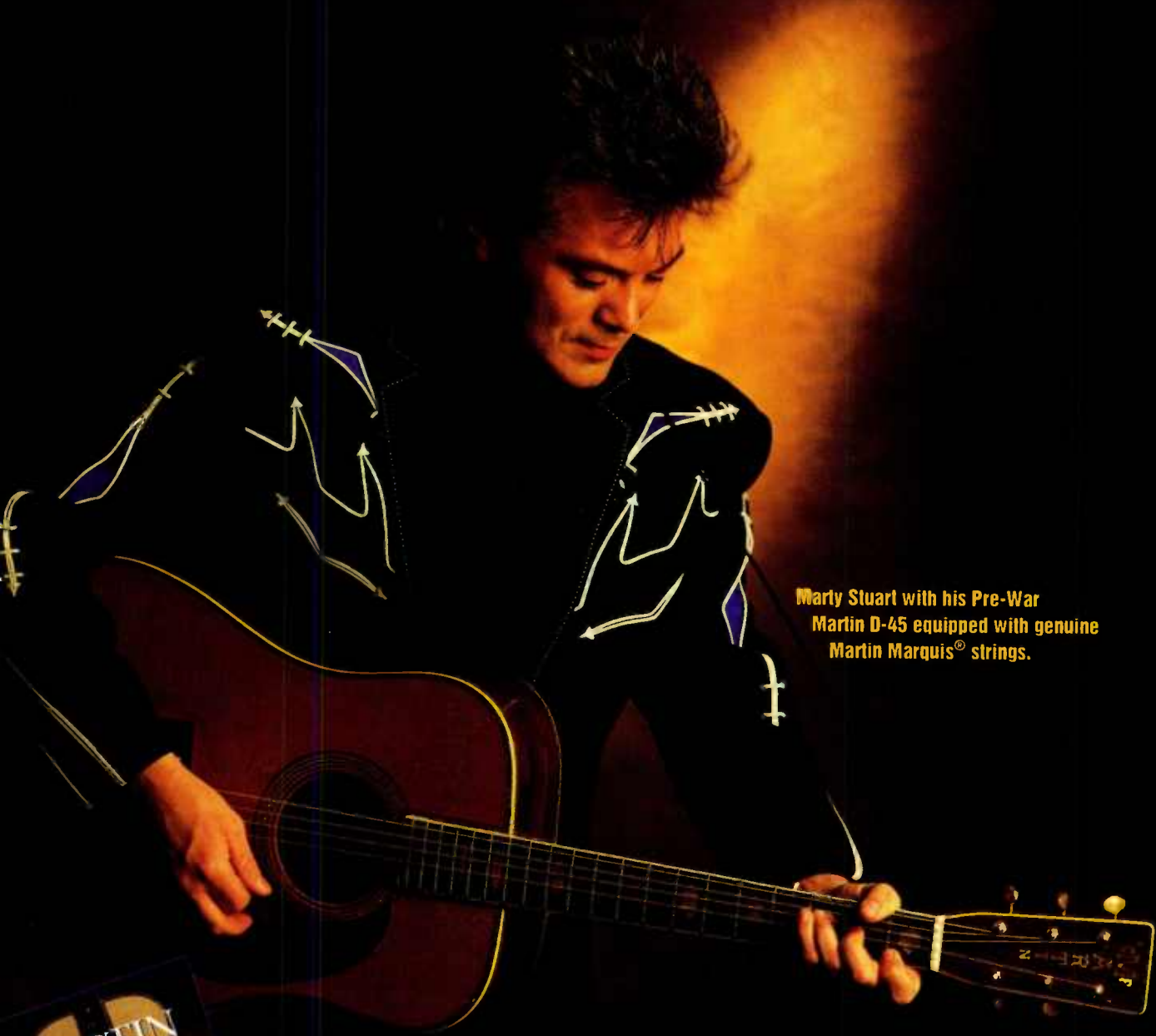
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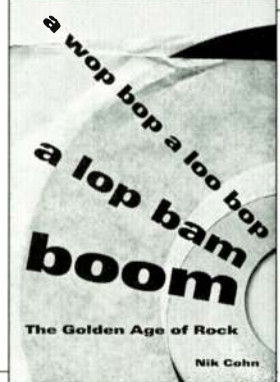
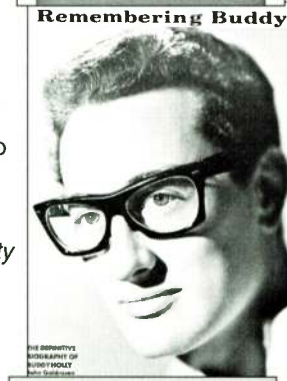
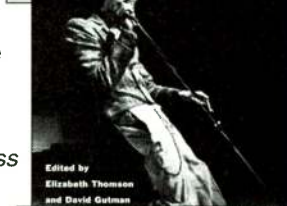
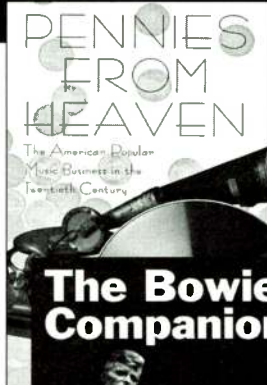
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*What atmosphere is most conducive to songwriting?*

**Beck:** Really mundane. Doing the same thing every day. Not too much on the plate. Being between places is good.

**Petty:** I tend to write songs when I'm least aware of it. You start playing in the studio or listening to tapes: "Oh, that's kind of good." I don't have any formula for it or anything.

**Beck:** A good drum sound can inspire a whole song. Every song has its own logic, it's own government, its own everything. There's not even two or three rules for a song in general.

**Petty:** Playing with my tape decks at home, I just love to make some music up and listen to. You've made something that wasn't there a while ago.

*You don't worry much about hitting a dry patch?*

**Petty:** No. Probably at some point I've had that worry drilled into me, but I never took it real seriously because that's just insecurity. More are gonna come along. Songs are just out there in the air, kinda.

**Beck:** After a while it becomes a bodily function. Though you can get taken away from it by traveling, touring, and all the other things.

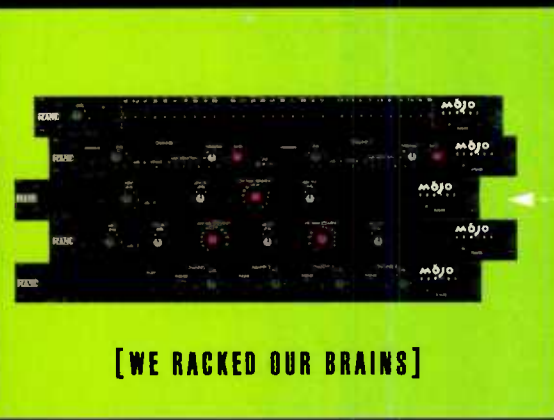
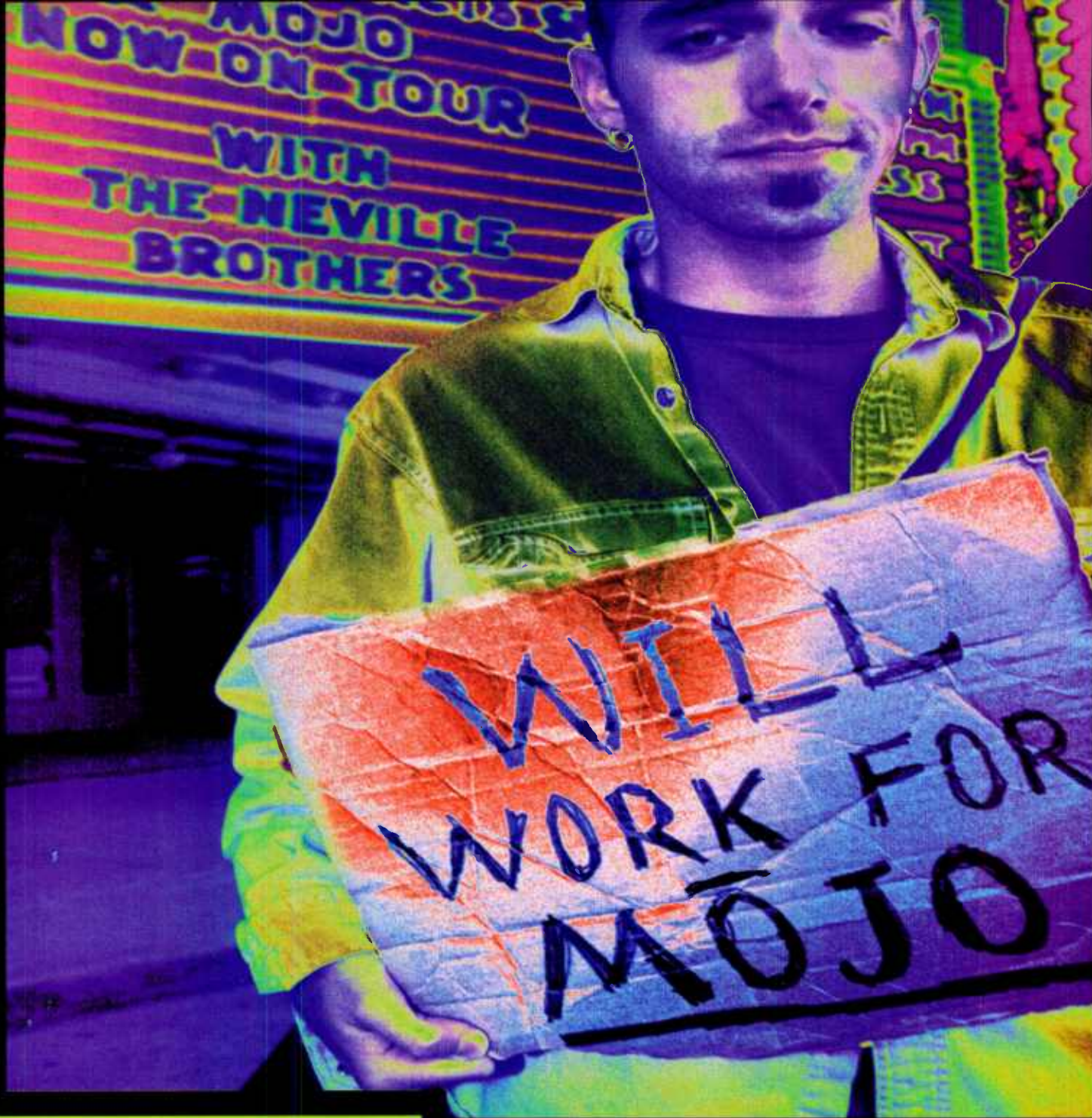
**Petty:** I've never written a song touring, ever. That just stamps it dead for me. I don't feel like playing the guitar. Some people go back to their room or carry portable studios on the road. I couldn't possibly do that. It's always after you come back from the tour and you feel like a civilian.

**Beck:** There's no way. It's all-consuming. You're more on a basic level of existence and survival. It's about trying to get five or six hours of sleep somehow, getting at least one decent meal so you don't just wither away, and dealing with going to the radio station and all this other glamorous stuff [laughter]. Trying to find a shirt that you haven't sweated profusely in five nights in a row.

Then you go into the studio, it always seems like you're running from scratch again. Everything you thought you had all worked out getting to the next place, you're clueless. It seems like every year you're at a different place. You're not going to be able to make the song you made four years ago.



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**Petty:** That's even true when you give an interview. You feel strongly about something and then a year later you may have a different view.

*Are there any lessons about songwriting you've picked up over the years?*

**Petty:** One thing Jeff Lynne taught me—a great lesson—was, if you don't have a great middle eight, don't have a middle eight. So many songs are ruined by a not-so-good middle eight. If it isn't as strong as the chorus and the verse you're working with, you really shouldn't go there.

And I think as I've gone on I've learned to work a bit wider. The best songs, it seems, have a heaviness and a lightness at the same time, a lot of air in it, you know? I don't know if this makes sense, but usually when they're very narrow point of view, really tied down, they're usually not as universally accepted. So I try to keep it wide. But even that sounds like my bullshit quota is going over [laughs]. I find that the less I think about them, the better they are. When I really bear down and think about writing a song, it usually sounds like a labored sort of thing. So I try to deal in things that will keep my interest but not overly labor me. I don't want to feel like I just dug a ditch.

**Beck:** I never approached it in any academic way. It was pretty accidental, so the learning was just an afterthought, you know. Playing folk songs, "Gypsy Davey," "Buffalo Gals," whatever, just all those songs, just having all those songs lodged in there, you get

an innate sense of how a melody is supposed to be. Those melodies are so balanced, they're like old trees. Hopefully they rubbed off somehow.

Rhythmically I've learned so much from Delta blues. That's where funk starts, you know? That sense of sparseness and something plain; the openness is a really important element. You have to have space in songs. They're pretty basic, logical con-

cepts. But they're all examples within the traditions of folk, country blues, that kind of music. I recommend it to anybody who wants to get a sense of just a song being a human expression, in the sense that it's this natural thing, like a physical function.

**Petty:** Rhythm is what it's about. I worked with Carl Perkins recently and he was telling how he used to listen to the Grand Ole Opry, Roy Acuff, "Great Speckled Bird," and he would kinda jam it out on his guitar with a little more rhythm.



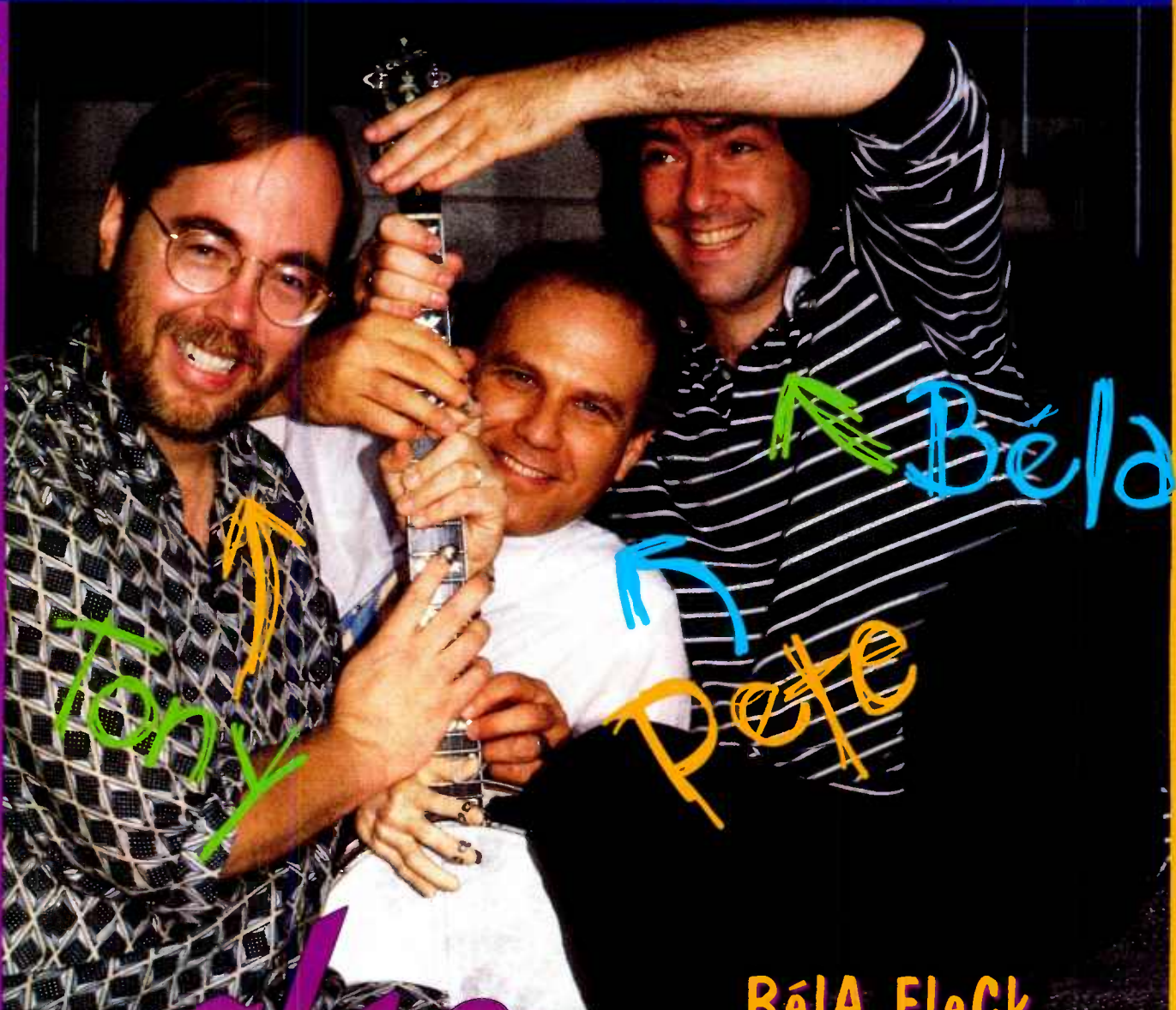
*"If you go on tours all the time, all your songs come out [sounding] like Foghat."*

His father would get really angry with him, saying, "That ain't the way it goes." And just that little slanting of the beat was "rock," I guess. He said he'd be picking cotton and the black guy next to him might sing an Opry song with a completely different slant. So he adapted that to his guitar. I imagine that's what's been going on for a long time: The source somehow gets mutated and becomes another virus.

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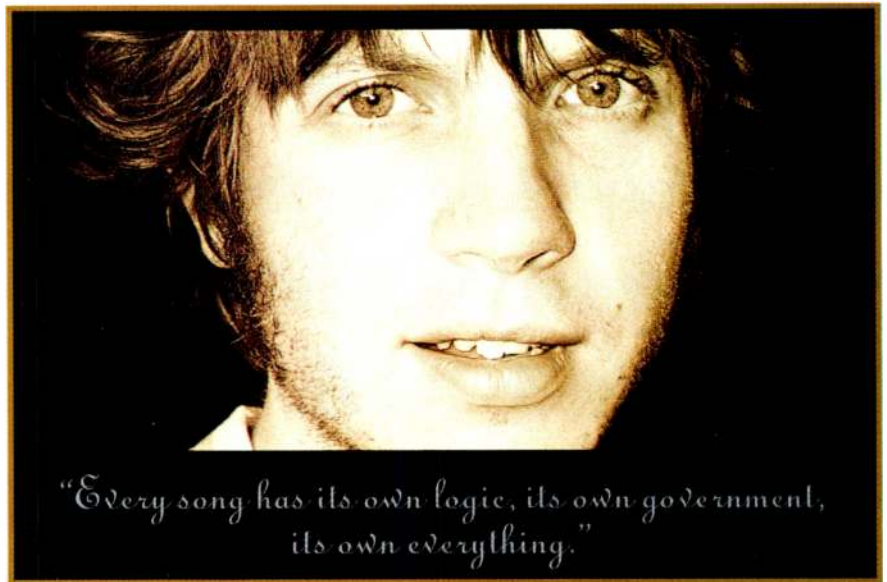
PHOTO: SHOOTING STAR

It seemed to me that the MTV "Unplugged" phenomenon suggested a desire on the part of fans to reconnect with some of those roots, to the essence of popular songs.

**Petty:** I was really disturbed by the "Unplugged" thing. I can't put my finger on why, but I never felt good about it. I mean, acoustic music has been going on for a long time and there are a lot of people who can take an acoustic guitar and play it, and they seemed so marveled by that idea. Like Aerosmith could take a song that they played real, real loud, and they could play the same thing on an acoustic guitar. To me it just sounded like they were playing the song wrong. There is a novelty, just playing the songs. But that has been going on for some time before MTV got a point for it.

**Beck:** The only time it's really unplugged is when the cable falls off the mic and nobody can hear you.

**Petty:** I would rather see it if they were really going to do it in the spirit of embracing folk music or blues that are played that way. There is a lot of music that can be



exposed that way that would really be more entertaining than hearing you play your hit song on an acoustic guitar. "Unplugged"—that term just bothered me.

**Beck:** It's sort of demeaning to people who appreciate that music. It's sort of like, "We're going to step down from our elec-

tric pedestal here."

**Petty:** We ought to have a "Plugged-In" show where they take people who only play acoustic and give 'em all Marshalls and have 'em play really loud. James Taylor, give him a Marshall and an electric guitar. Or people who never play with drummers, give them a drummer. It would make for an interesting show.

*You both express a lot of admiration for older forms of country and folk and blues, but your music pulls together a lot of different strains, which in a way parallels the way of the world, as more sophisticated means of communication gradually shrink the planet.*

**Beck:** Well, I grew up around here and I can't help it. I can't do this straight country because walking down the street growing up I hear hip-hop music, mariachi, and I just pick it up. It's there. Maybe it's just urban music.

**Petty:** I got all my music completely backwards, like blues and stuff. I'm like a preacher of the suburbs. Where I grew up we never heard the blues or even Chuck Berry until the Rolling Stones started to do it—then you would trace it back and say, "Who's Chuck Berry?" When I heard Howlin' Wolf I was just beaned on the forehead: "No wonder they're covering this guy!" What was cool about the British Invasion was how much of your own stuff, as an American, was made available to you that you hadn't necessarily even heard of. *What's interesting is that you both had to move from your home towns to find the*

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scene that really nurtured your careers—Tom moving here from Florida, and Beck getting into the New York “anti-folk” scene of the late ‘80s.

**Petty:** In the Biblical sense. When we came to L.A. there were two clubs, the Whisky and the Starwood. We started to play there, and Blondie would come out from New York to play, and Elvis Costello, but within weeks it was completely polluted and overrun. It had caught on with “We’ll just get into these clothes and do it too.” Some of them were good and some of them weren’t. But that’s the way it goes.

I always wished that I had a folk base. I kind of learned the folk music thing backwards, through the Byrds and Dylan and stuff like that. Where McGuinn and Dylan are really folk performers who evolved into this other thing, Johnny Cash is to me a folk artist. Folk music has a real respect for the song and I always wished that I had learned that first. But I was just enticed by the electric guitar and the whole excitement of being in a rock

and roll band.

I do remember being about ten years old and the Kingston Trio being around, and Peter, Paul and Mary. But that seemed kind of glossy to me; it didn’t take hold. When you hear “Blowin’ in the Wind” by Peter, Paul and Mary for a long time and then finally you hear Bob do it, you go, “Ohhhh, [laughter] now I see.” So I was always working backward, trying to find where this came from; I’m still looking backward. I guess ‘cause I’m too confused to be looking forward.

**Beck:** I think I was the opposite, ‘cause I wasn’t really turned on to something until I heard the original and it made sense. I’d go, “Oh, okay.”

**Petty:** It’s a much better way. I always wished I could be a folk singer, but I’ve never had the nerve to do it. I could never do it now, because people have too much of a preconceived notion of what is gonna go down, and you just can’t fill that role. I mean, people go to McCabe’s and play alone, but...

**Beck:** Any of your folk artists, now,

they’d all be playing with drum machines. Woody Guthrie, he’d play rock.

**Petty:** Oh yeah, Leadbelly, he would have been rappin’.

**Beck:** Folk music essentially becomes what’s available to you—using what you have. All they had was acoustic guitars.

**Petty:** What I love about folk singers is that a lot of them have this great knowledge of tunes. You know, Dylan would know, like, a hundred songs by somebody, and they would go back to God knows where, to some kind of sea chantey or something. When Bob first showed up in New York, he told me he heard “Blowin’ in the Wind” by some other folk singer. And he said, “Wow, where’d you get that?” And the guy said, “There’s a guy down the street who’s singing it.” They would just pick ‘em out. It just seemed like a real interesting scene to me. But that’s gone. And it won’t be back.

**Beck:** I spent a lot of years looking for it. I couldn’t find it.

*Where is music heading now?*

**Petty:** I have no idea. It’s up to people much younger than me. I do think it’s in very good hands though, which I didn’t think ten years ago. Back then I thought it was in very poor hands. [laughs]

**Beck:** I think it’s going somewhere more intuitive. I feel like so much of music has been exhausted—most of what we hear on the radio, we’ve heard it a million times. The “rock band sound” was perfected in 1968. But I don’t see the future being in the direction of mindless dance music. The main thing that’s going to change is the technology, the way people go about it. And its references will be a little more diverse, ‘cause that’s just our consciousness now.

Our lifestyles now, we don’t get to escape to a beautiful meadow, or some lakeside beautiful spot. We need music or movies to get out of the drudgery or the pressure, the stress of our environment. We live in these incredibly unnatural environments—unnatural in the sense that they’re completely different than what’s preceded it for the last ten thousand years. So music is important. It’s a physical thing. Music is escapist, in the sense of anything that’s beautiful. ☺

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EIGHT ACTS YOU NEED TO HEAR

## The Cardigans

**Y**ou wouldn't expect the Cardigans to have much in common with Spinal Tap. The Cardigans play classy, '60s-influenced Europop with vintage guitars, keyboards, and the occasional flute. Spinal Tap play rock. Cardigans singer Nina Persson glides her cuddly voice across addictive rising and tumbling choruses. Spinal Tap rock. The Cardigans record in the cozy analog surroundings of Tambourine Studios back home in Sweden. ("We could never record anywhere else," Nina insists.) Spinal Tap do not. But, except for Nina, the Cardigans each have a past in hard rock and heavy metal bands. (Guitarist Peter's current side project is a "Pantera-like supergroup.")

Perhaps this is why Magnus, their tall, dry-witted bassist, is slightly embarrassed today. "I'm buying two more bass guitars tomorrow to take on tour," he admits sheepishly. "Two of them in one day is a bit too over-the-top, but I have to do it—we're leaving on Friday."

It's very rock 'n' roll, isn't it?

"Yeah, but our drummer Bengt, he bought four drum kits in Los Angeles in the same day!" he defends. "So that's even more rock 'n' roll."

Evidently, Bengt collects vintage kits almost as obsessively as Peter collects vintage guitars. This splurge was the result of "a small shopping contest" the Cardigans held during their brief U.S. tour last summer. It was one way for the band members to keep their sanity during a period when they hadn't had a break in over a year,

low-up called *First Band on the Moon* (Mercury)—and the band are embarking on a new world tour that should see them Stateside in early '97. Significantly, where the songwriting was handled solely by Peter and Magnus in the past, this time Nina contributes some of the lyrics. This, she explains, will make the words easier to get behind when she's singing them night after night. Magnus describes it as an extremely healthy growth period for the band. "Last year, we were kind of tired of each

other," he admits. "It's far more pleasant company right now."

But they also know that with this new release—and a new U.S. label—bigger things are expected from them. Nina, at home nursing a cold just two days before the tour's start, isn't entirely convincing. "We're ready for it this time," she sniffs. "I think we can take it."

Magnus, meanwhile, promises that even though a lot of the new songs will sound heavier in concert, they're keeping [cont'd on page 53]



Peter Gehrike

didn't have a manager and, most trying, had to stay enthusiastic about performing songs that were then more than two years old to them, even though they already had a new album in the can. Still, those live shows, including an acoustic set at New York's Virgin Megastore and a series of electric club gigs, found the band's chops and spirits intact.

Now, the new album is out—a delightful fol-

## Future Sound Of London



**W**hat separates the duo of Garry Cobain and Brian Dougans—a.k.a. the Future Sound of London—from the rest of the ambient pack is their vision. Since they began making music a little more than ten years ago, they've kept a step ahead of convention. Where their colleagues have trouble resisting the temptation of the archaic nonstop 4/4 rhythm, Cobain and Dougans segue easily to 6/8 or fragmented meters,

or leave meters totally behind. Their work offers open spaces in which the listener's imagination can freely roam. There is structure, but it's more blueprint than barrier.

Characteristically, Cobain accepts this analysis guardedly; he'd rather not be confined by the idea that his music lacks confinement. "The only thing I can say is that I'm not interested in rules. Most innovative things end up being sets of rules, with people earning good livings off those rules. I'd rather risk my career by going outside of that. That's what music always was to me."

From their debut indie single "Papa New Guinea" to their masterful current album on Astralwerks/Caroline, *Dead Cities, FSOL* challenge themselves like few other artists in modern music. With setups built around a core of six Akai samplers and an old Creator program humming in an Atari 1040, they paint aural pictures as vivid as anything we've heard pumped from clubs or wafted over Glastonbury plain.

Their search for new media is even a surer sign of restless creativity. Without leaving their studio, they embarked on a "3D Headphone Tour" that transported their extended jams with Robert Fripp across England via Radio 1 and to selected American territories after that.

Why rely on an old tool—radio—rather than the 'Net as a concert medium? "Why not?" Cobain shrugs. "These old media have been abused so much that we've become dead to them. But that doesn't mean they need to be permanently dead. We can build up something exciting again on radio or TV. We can create a demand for an interactive world on television and radio that's far deeper than if I just plaster my face all over the Web. By building up the aesthetic on these media so that people begin to want to interact, I know we're going in the right direction."—Robert L. Doerschuk

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For that matter, forget MTV; BR5-49 has had to battle the odds in its own hometown. "We played our first gigs on lower Broadway in Nashville because it was as far away from Music Row as possible," guitarist Chuck Mead explains. "We wanted to play real hillbilly music. When the business doesn't include people like us and the

## BR5-49

Derrallers and Wayne Hancock and Dale Watson, that doesn't make country music stronger."

Nashville is still a strong enough magnet to have drawn all these guys from points far afield: Mead and drummer Shaw Wilson from Kansas City, Missouri, lead singer/guitarist



Gary Bennett from Cougar, Washington, acoustic bassist Jay McDowell from Lafayette, Indiana, and multi-instrumentalist Don Herron from Moundsville, West Virginia. But the attraction wasn't the glitz and glamor; it was something deeper in the history and soul of the city.

"I always went to lower Broadway," Mead says, "right by Robert's Western World, where we still play every night when we're in town, near the old Ryman Auditorium. Lots of ghosts down there. Matter of fact, that's why we recorded 'Honky Tonk Song.' Mel Tillis wrote that tune right across the street from Robert's, in the old Merchant Hotel."

In addition to Tillis' meditation, Moon Mullican's "Cherokee Boogie," Ralph Mooney's "Crazy Arms," and Gram Parsons' "Hickory Wind," the band's eponymous debut album for Arista/Nashville includes original tunes that stick pretty close to the conventions of classic country titles. "Our originals come out sounding like the old ones but with more of a contemporary slant," Mead points out. "Face it, there's not that many trains anymore; you can't write about that. You gotta write about stuff that you know. Fortunately, there's poetry everywhere, and that's the secret of folk music—telling a profound story in everyday language. That's what we're trying to do." —Robert L. Doerschuk

**K**urt Heasley hates SSL mix bus compression with a passion most people reserve for ex-lovers, sleazy lawyers, and particularly obnoxious next-door neighbors. "I can tell you the day the first SSL console tracked an album," he says between puffs on a strange-looking imported Indian cigarette in the courtyard of the Boston Public Library. "That was the day the sound of records became so unlistenable that I went back to all my old records."

Heasley, who's spent the past six years as the

lone permanent member of a constantly evolving, nomadic pop project called the Lilys, didn't just listen to old records. The tall and lanky 25-year-old singer/songwriter/guitarist studied, from the inside out, music that was made during what he refers to as "the golden age of recording," 1955 to 1970. He released three discs of promising, lo-fi, strum-and-drone pop on the indie spinART label, which put him in league with an emerging scene of Denver-based bands centered around the Apples In

Stereo and Neutral Milk Hotel. But it wasn't until he

hooked up with Hartford producer/engineer Michael Demming, drummer Thom Monahan, and bassist Aaron Sperske that Heasley finally got the sound he'd been looking for. (He's since added guitarist Torben Pastore and keyboardist Timothy Foote to the Boston-based Lilys line-up.)

The result was *Better Can't Make Your Life Better* (Che/Primary), a brisk, hook-driven collection of tunes that fuses highlights of the pre-'67 Who, *Revolver*-era Beatles, and the early Kinks into something that sounds like it might have been recorded before Heasley was even conceived, much less born. Imagine a cheerier Oasis propelled by a meaty, beaty, big, and bouncy rhythm section and produced by George Martin on vintage equipment.

It's not surprising that Heasley, whom producer Eli Janney (Girls Against Boys) once warned to "remember what continent you're on" ("I think that was his version of saying we were too English"), ended up signing to the British label Che. But even Heasley was mildly shocked to find that *Better Can't Make Your Life Better* would be coming out in the U.S. on Che's new American partner, the young Elektra imprint Primary. It's a development that may put the Lilys in a position to do like the Beatles and push beyond psychedelic pop



to, as Heasley eagerly puts it, "a more orchestrated and composed approach." Not that he's ever likely to lose sight of the little things that sparked his love for '60s pop in the first place. "I have nothing but the greatest amount of respect," Heasley emphasizes, "for anyone who will patiently move a microphone around a drum set to get the right sound." —Matt Ashare

## The Lilys



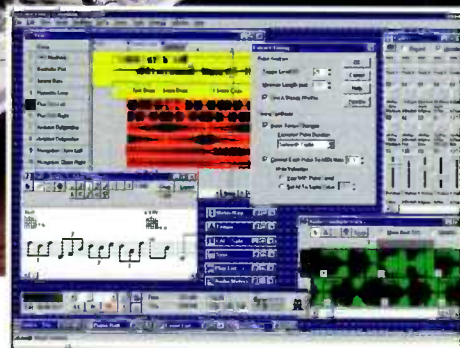
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## Brendan Benson

The most arresting guitar sound heard at New York's CMJ Music Marathon in September blared out of an Epiphone Casino and two classic paragons of cheap amplifierdom, a Sears Silvertone and a Supro. They were wielded by a 25-year-old Californian (originally from Detroit) named Brendan Benson, and in his hands they barked and bit, with a fuzzy low end and highs full of transistory scunge. Once the tunes started, they matched the monster sound perfectly: brief snatches of sparkling, retro-inflected pop, mostly from Benson's remarkable debut album *One Mississippi* (Virgin).

"I'm Blessed" and "How 'Bout You" are two of the most exciting songs this writer's heard in a while, and Benson and his two-man rhythm crew lay into them like the Attractions of 1978. All these tunes had their beginnings in simple demos that Benson claims he "had no intention of shopping to anyone." Instead, friends passed the tapes on to other friends, and in the end, three major labels came calling.

When Benson entered the studio to record *One Mississippi* with producer Ethan Johns, he found himself up against three problems. First, many of the songs they were working on were several years old, making it tough to conjure up the same feeling they had when they were written. "I don't think we ever achieved that," Brendan says, "but playing with different musicians [drummer Woody Saunders and bassist Michael Andrews] gave it a new vibe, which was good, because I didn't want to be just mouthing

old words." Second, Benson was used to his lo-fi 4-track sound, and he wanted everything ultra-processed; Johns fought against this inclination, and Benson's now happy he did. Third, this guy writes really short songs. "My attention span's not that big," he explains. "I can easily justify not finishing songs by saying that's how long the feeling lasted, but that's foolish." Solution: Three tunes are tied together in an ear-grabbing medley. An audacious move, perhaps, but that's Brendan Benson for you.

—Mac Randall



Marina Chavez

## Duncan Sheik

Don't call Duncan Sheik a singer/songwriter. Okay, he crafts sensitive, articulate studies of relationships. And yes, on his self-titled debut album, he delivers these accounts in a dusky voice that seems custom-made for intimate clubs and coffee houses. Sheik even fits the post-hippie minstrel cliché physically, with his limp, longish-in-the-back hair and softly brooding eyes. Still, the 26-year-old Brown University graduate says he's wary of the s-word. "I did hear James Taylor and Jim Croce while I was growing up," Sheik admits. "But my most obvious influences are a little more esoteric."

Sheik credits his ability to stay focused on his work to Buddhism, which he says provided a "spiritual thread" for the songs on his self-titled debut (Atlantic) album. "I became a Buddhist when I was nineteen. I'd been playing music since I was a little kid, and at that point I was feeling really blocked and very anxious about a lot of things. I started using Buddhism as a way to calm my mind and get some of that creative energy back in my life. Since then I've realized there's more

to it than just that, but it still helps me feel fresh about music on a day-to-day basis, which can be difficult."

Where his career goals are concerned, this young artist exhibits a Zen-like mix of patience and pragmatism. "It's 1996, and there's this huge sea of compact discs out there," Sheik muses. "You generally have to work hard over a fairly long period of time to let people know who you are and to get them to know your music. But I would rather have eleven records that sell one million copies each than sell eleven million my first time out. Once you're that big, it's like, been there, done that—you're not interesting anymore. I don't envy Alanis Morissette, you know?" —Elysa Gardner





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World Radio History

## Blinker the Star

**W**ho says signing a major label deal changes your life? Jordon Zadorozny, the brains behind Blinker the Star, for one. "The last couple of months have been about getting new gear, getting a new manager, getting new rehearsal space, moving to new apartments, getting new girlfriends. . ." He takes a deep breath and finishes, "Replacing everyone."

And while nearly everything around him has changed, Zadorozny's spin on what we'll call astral rock and roll has grown by leaps and bounds. Take a listen to Blinker's raging A&M debut, *A Bourgeois Kitten*, and you'll understand.

Ask Jordon about his world view and he'll

laugh in your face, but get him talking about guitars and guitarists and he'll spill everything. Zadorozny guitar influence fact number one: "I know where certain parts of my guitar playing come from—Prince, Lindsey Buckingham and Jimmy Page." Zadorozny guitar influence clarification: "Sort of the wilder nature of Prince and that almost sheened-over madness. He was crazy, but he wasn't like Black Flag crazy. And I really love the subtleties of Lindsey Buckingham, but he could let loose too. Then really, really let-loose stuff like Black Flag. They all come into play in a weird way."

Which pretty much explains what you're getting yourself into when you spin a Blinker the Star platter. Zadorozny says the Blinker sound springs from "largely a love of the chorus pedal and the moodiness that the early Cure records evoke. They mined one sound for a long time and it's a pretty easy thing to spring off of—just sort of a warbly sound. As long as you can buy some half-shitty pedals, you can add on that pretty easily and sit in your basement and come up with fun stuff."

That's basically how Zadorozny wrote and recorded the first Blinker the Star album, a one-man production put out by indie label Treat and Release in 1995; at the time, Jordon was also playing with another Montreal-based band named Tinker. "I recorded my own kind of stuff on weekends at my mother's house and eventually put it out while I was still in that band," he says. "After that, things kinda got busy real fast, so I had to quit, and I ended up doing this on my own."

John Dunne



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## Sue Foley

**M**en, women—it doesn't matter, says Ottawa-born, Austin-polished guitar slinger Sue Foley. The blues treats 'em all the same. And she should know. Foley's muscular new roadhouse rocker *Walk In The Sun* on Antone's/Discovery (her fourth album overall) is only the tip of the creative iceberg; she regularly logs over 200 shows a year backing up those records, which puts her "through the same hardships that any guy goes through out here—this lifestyle takes its toll on all of us."

When her Canadian schoolmates were attending freshman mixers, Foley was sneaking into blues clubs and jamming with hometown heroes. By 18, she was already headed down the concert trail, where she soon met Texas growler Angela Strehli, who recommended the kid for a contract with Austin-based Antone's. "And when you're on the road, when you decide to do this for a living, you make a conscious decision that you have to take this road," explains Foley, now a wise



old 28. "And in order to take it, you pretty much give up everything. Road musicians, we give up our security, we give up our homes, our families and lovers, even our health. It's all sacrificed. And the biggest reward for us is something that happens spiritually when you're connecting with the audience—it's that great, it's worth giving all that up."

Arriving in Austin six years ago with one suitcase and her pink paisley Fender, Foley immediately knew the road had led her home. Her first week in town, she sat in with Katie Webster and shot dice with Albert Collins. Has this slinger ever questioned her vagabond existence? Foley chuckles. "Well, maybe on my more reflective days I have. But jeez, what else would I do? I would feel a lot weirder in an office or doing what other people do." Straight jobs? She snorts. "I've never been able to even try 'em!"

—Tom Lanham

Ursula Coyote

A new backing band (bassist Pete Frolander and drummer Colin Wylie) and the deal with A&M were quick to follow. Now, after the bevy of changes, a van tour through the States, and the recording and release of *A Bourgeois Kitten*, Zadorozny finds himself exactly where he's always wanted to end up. "When I was 12 I had a crisis. I didn't know if I wanted to be Darryl Sittler and play for the Toronto Maple Leafs or replace Eddie Van Halen. I decided that the latter made a lot more sense." Sure seems like it now.

—David Farinella

### Cardigans

[cont'd from page 46] the Spinal Tapisms in check: "Peter now has even more effects pedals to pay attention to, so I guess we have to be a bit calmer. It's very, very difficult, because we like to rock. But it went a bit over the top during a couple of concerts this past year.

"Believe it or not," Magnus laughs, "we start our U.S. tour in Cleveland. Nina is working on her phrasing, practicing the right way of saying 'Hello, Cleveland!' so it sounds real. And we're opening now with 'Iron Man,' so that should work out well. Yes, we're looking forward to touring America again." —Dev Sherlock

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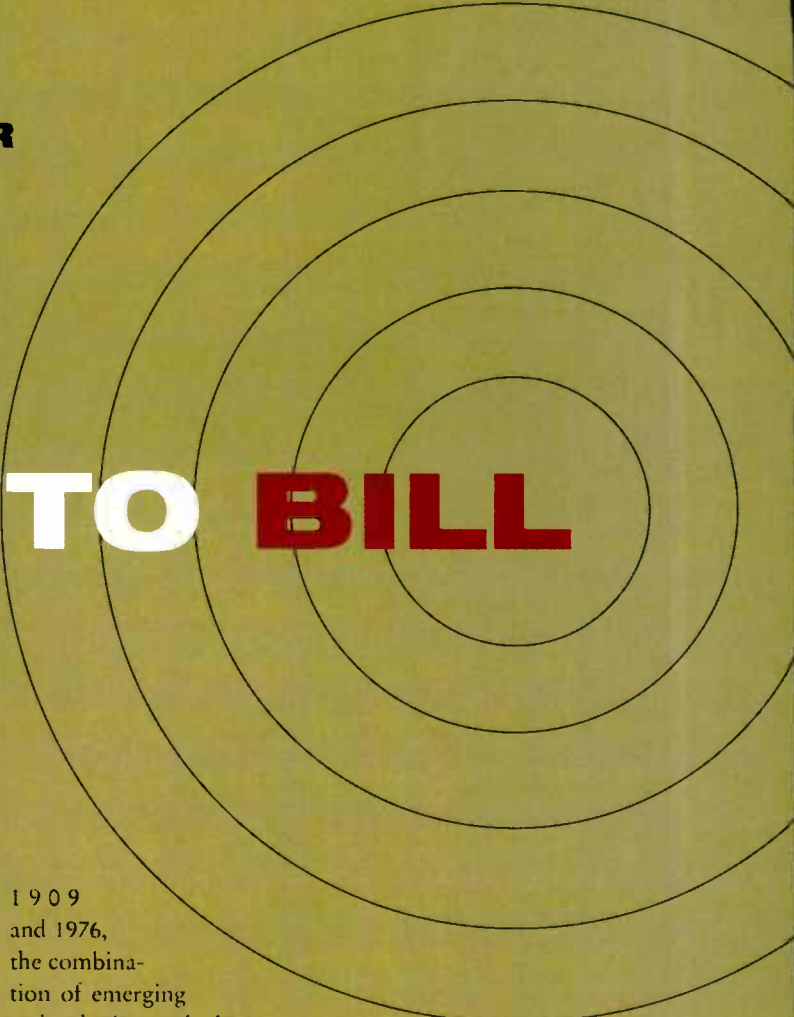
# LICENSE TO **BILL**

**I**t was the biggest PR gaffe since Dan Quayle misspelled "potato" or Bob Dole learned the Los Angeles Dodgers no longer played in Brooklyn. Last August, in an article dubbed "The Birds May Sing, But Campers Can't Unless They Pay Up," the *Wall Street Journal* reported the story of a Girl Scout troop attending a summer day camp in Lafayette, California, outside Oakland, who were learning to dance the Macarena without music because ASCAP threatened to sue if they didn't pay license fees to use any of the society's four million copyrighted songs written or published by their 68,000 members.

And so the music industry was once more portrayed as greedy, amoral hustlers, trying to squeeze even more money out of a public which had made pop superstars like Michael Jackson and the Rolling Stones rich beyond the ordinary person's wildest dreams.

But what the story really represented was the latest salvo in a war that has been going on since at least 1917, when Oliver Wendell Holmes, then a justice for the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, ruled that a New York restaurant had to pay a licensing fee for hiring singers to perform copyrighted pieces from a comic opera called *Sweethearts* without a royalty arrangement. The owners had argued, since they didn't charge admission for the musical performance, they shouldn't have to pay anything. Holmes ruled in favor of songwriters and copyright holders when he said: "If music did not pay, it would be given up. Whether it pays or not, the purpose of employing it is profit and that is enough."

Although U.S. copyright laws have been amended in both



1909 and 1976, the combination of emerging technologies and the explosion of the music industry into a \$12-billion global industry has once again tossed copyright combatants into the fray, pitting performance rights giants like ASCAP and BMI against a crazy-quilt coalition headed by trade organizations like the National Restaurant Association and the National Religious Broadcasters.

At issue are the so-called performing rights or public performance rights, the licensed permission each user needs to play the right-holder's song on the radio, on television, at live concerts or in amusement parks. Restaurant owners (as well as a variety of retailers, from dentists to Gap stores) have once again begun to rear their heads about the amount of money they are paying to ASCAP, BMI and SESAC for music heard over radios and TVs playing during business hours in their establishments. This argument strikes at the very core of the existence of agencies like ASCAP and BMI. These performing rights societies were formed

**BY ROY TRAKIN ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTIAN CLAYTON**

in the early part of the 20th century particularly to administer blanket and per-program licenses, not just to radio and TV networks themselves but to the multitude of retail venues that use music to enhance their ambience and hopefully increase traffic, business and profit. As non-profit organizations (unlike the privately owned SESAC), ASCAP and BMI collect the performance rights fees and divvy them up among their members according to use.

Last year, according to the *Washington Post*, ASCAP collected \$320 million in licensing fees in the U.S. alone and returned \$254 million to its members, a return of 83 cents on every dollar, using the rest for overhead. According to the organization, about 14 cents of every dollar earned by an ASCAP song comes from licensing to bars, restaurants and other venues, with 32 cents coming from TV broadcasters and 25 cents from radio. That means ASCAP collects

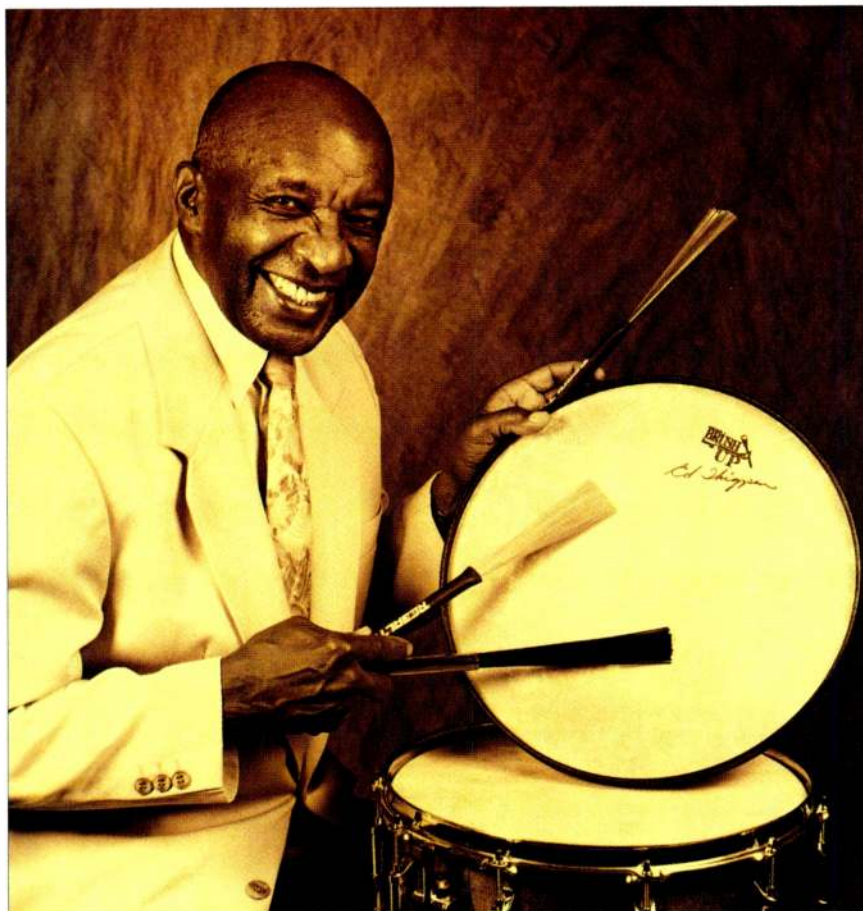
approximately \$60 million annually from retail establishments which play music over their TVs and radios, in addition to the monies they already collect from TV and radio broadcasters themselves. That's too much for some people.

"How many times does the same song have to be paid for?" asks Katy McGregor, a Washington, D.C.-based lobbyist for the National Restaurant Association. "Take the example of someone watching a football game on TV in a bar where the band comes on at halftime. By the time the music hits your ear, it's been paid for five times over: Once by the stadium, once by the broadcasting network, another time by the cable operator, another by the local affiliate and finally, by the restaurant owner. Four times ought to be enough for any song."

To that end, a number of bills have been introduced in both houses of Congress, starting with Wisconsin Republican Rep. James Sensenbrenner's HR 789, *The Fairness in Music Licensing Act of 1995*, and Wyoming Republican Senator Craig Thomas' almost identical Senate bill S 1137, which both exempt business establishments from paying license fees for any non-dramatic public performance of music via radio and TV sets. Other bills have been introduced in their wake, including a compromise measure by Utah Republican Senator Orrin Hatch (S 1619) seeking to "regularize commercial relations between performing rights organizations and its licensees," which is supported by the music industry, and a bill in response by Colorado Republican Senator Hank Brown (S 1628), which is not.

"When ASCAP signed its first contract with the radio industry, broadcasters said they would not be responsible for revenue streams which occurred outside their station," says ASCAP Exec. VP John LoFrumento. "We were told to collect from the commercial establishments themselves. We feel this is a revenue stream being used for commercial gain to which we're entitled to our fair share."

"Music is like the peanuts at the bar, the flowers on the table, or the painting on the wall," says ASCAP President Marilyn Berman, an award-winning songwriter in her own right, with husband Alan, of such standards as "The Windmills of Your Mind" and "The Way We Were." "It cre-



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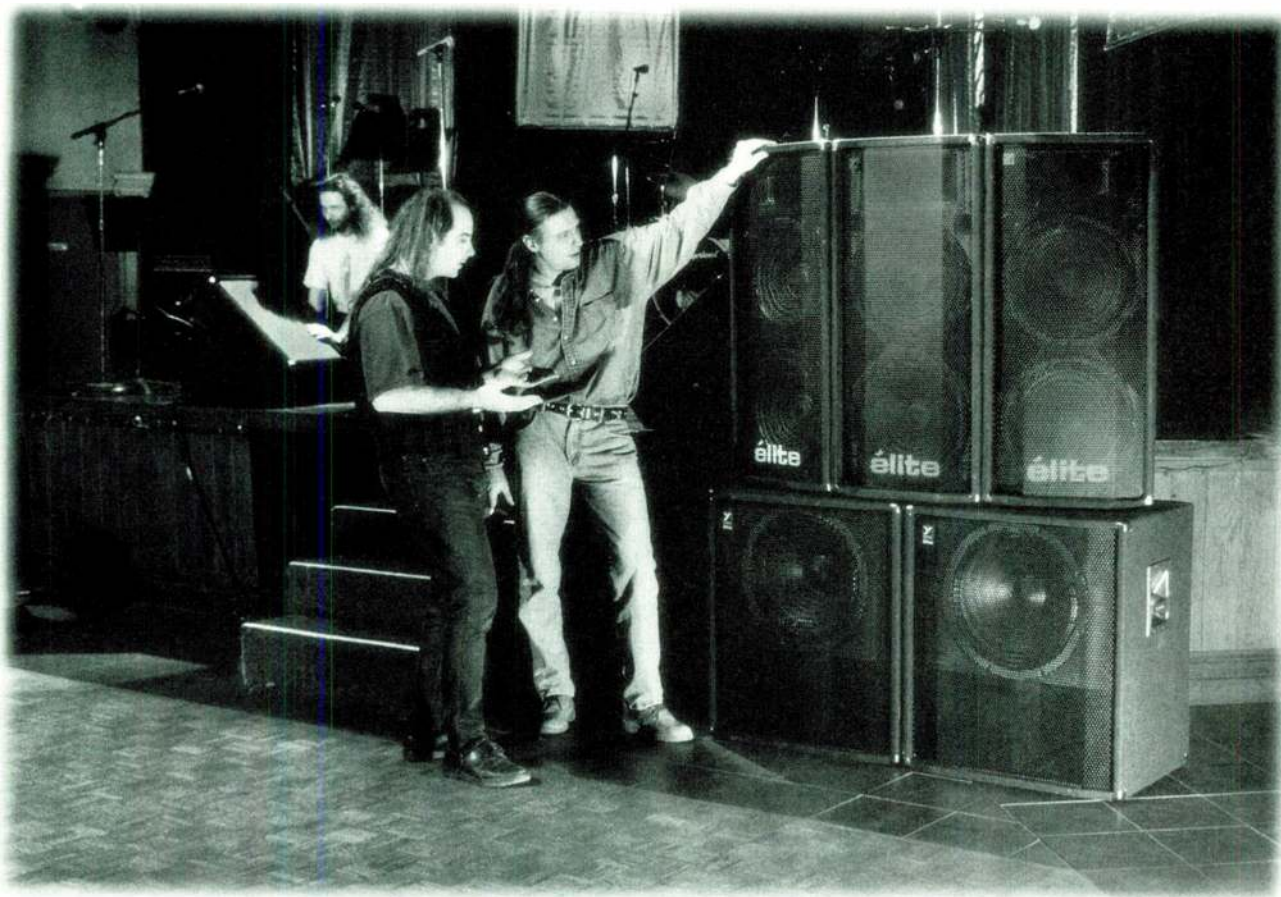
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ates an atmosphere conducive to bringing in customers and getting them to spend money. There is copyright law involved here. And copyright law could not be clearer about the fact that when music is performed for profit, the creators of the copyright deserve to be compensated.

"But there's a broader issue at stake here. This goes to the heart of the issue of intellectual property and the understanding of the fact we are indeed talking about

property, whether it comes from the factory of your hands or your mind. This is much more understood in other parts of the world than it is here. It's an educational process that must start early on."

Reacting to complaints their fees are excessive for small, mom-and-pop businesses, ASCAP has even worked out a compromise, already accepted by the National Licensed Beverage Association, to exempt any retail businesses under 1500

square feet and any restaurants under 3500 square feet from paying for any radio or TV use, which, according to the organization, would include 70% of the affected establishments.

Perhaps thinking they have enough support in Congress to get their way legislatively, the National Restaurant Association has held firm in its demands, which now involve the areas of arbitration (they want disputes ruled on locally, rather than requiring those with complaints to spend the money to travel to New York for a hearing) and access to repertoire (they feel there aren't any comprehensive lists of covered copyrights, even though both ASCAP and BMI have made their catalogs available on the Internet). The NRA routinely sends out literature detailing horror stories of jack-booted ASCAP and BMI thugs demanding exorbitant fees from small restaurant and retail owners under the threat of filing \$20,000 copyright infringement law suits.

MCA Music Publishing President David Renzer says the industry is in danger of losing the war of public opinion: "The message that has reached the consumer and the Congress is that the music industry is onerous and has been using strong-arm tactics to beat up on restaurant owners and Girl Scouts alike. The problem is one of perception."

NRA lobbyist McGregor reveals the true bottom line for the restaurant and retail industries she represents when she says, "This proposed agreement only applies to radio and television broadcasts. A lot of our folks who use tapes, CDs, and live music would still be subject to the rate court."

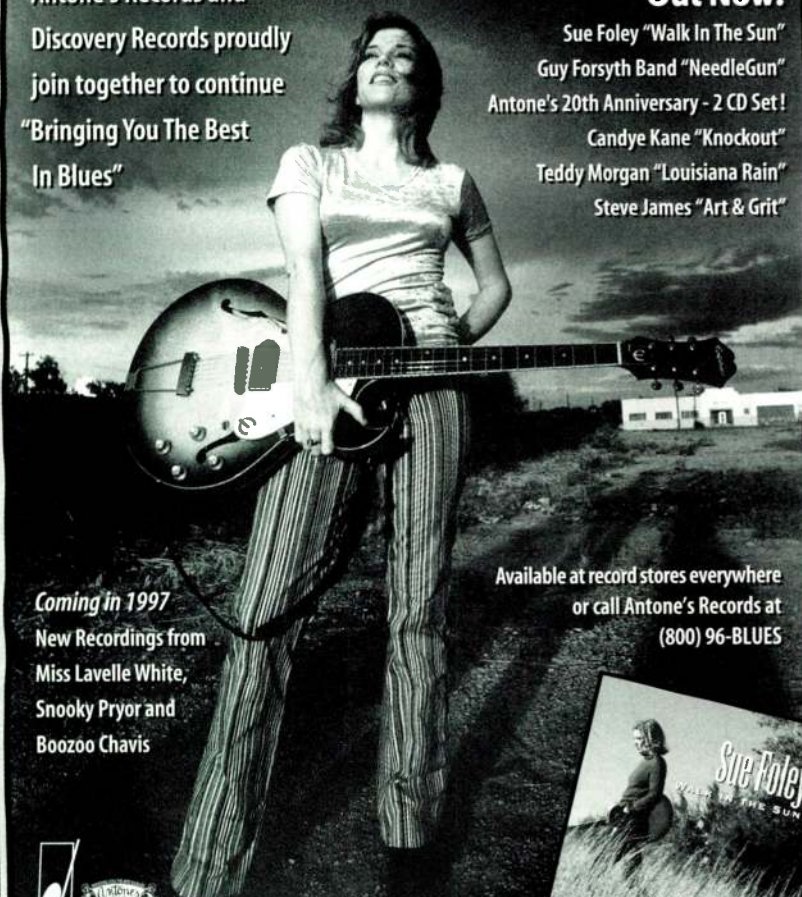
Which is just what Marilyn Bergman feared in the first place, pointing out that the fee for a restaurant license would amount to an average of \$1.58 a day, less than a bottle of beer. "That's what's so shocking about all of this. At a time when copyright is in danger and seems to be threatened, the government, which should be looking at ways to strengthen the copyright law and the idea of intellectual property, is proposing bills that would erode copyright. Isn't it ironic that a right-leaning Congress dedicated to the concept of the sanctity of private property is opposing us? What's next?"

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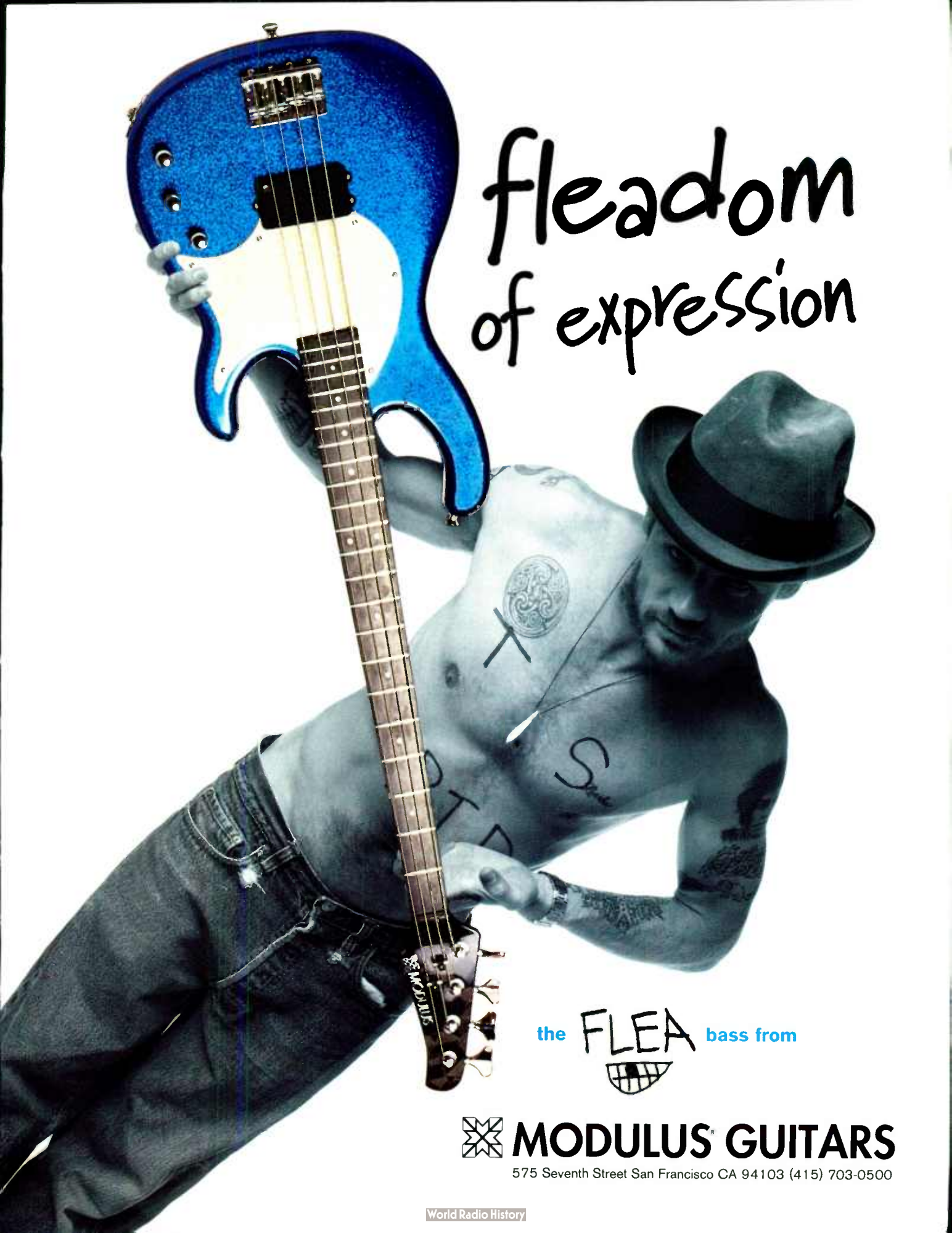
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ASCAP member Pat Alger, head of the 4500-member Nashville Songwriter's Association International, whose songs have been covered by the likes of Nanci Griffith, the Everly Brothers, and Dolly Parton, indicates the bill would cost him approximately 20% of his annual song-writing income: "The only thing we have to make a living from is the licensing of our songs. I own my own copyright, so I know what the issues are and what that copyright

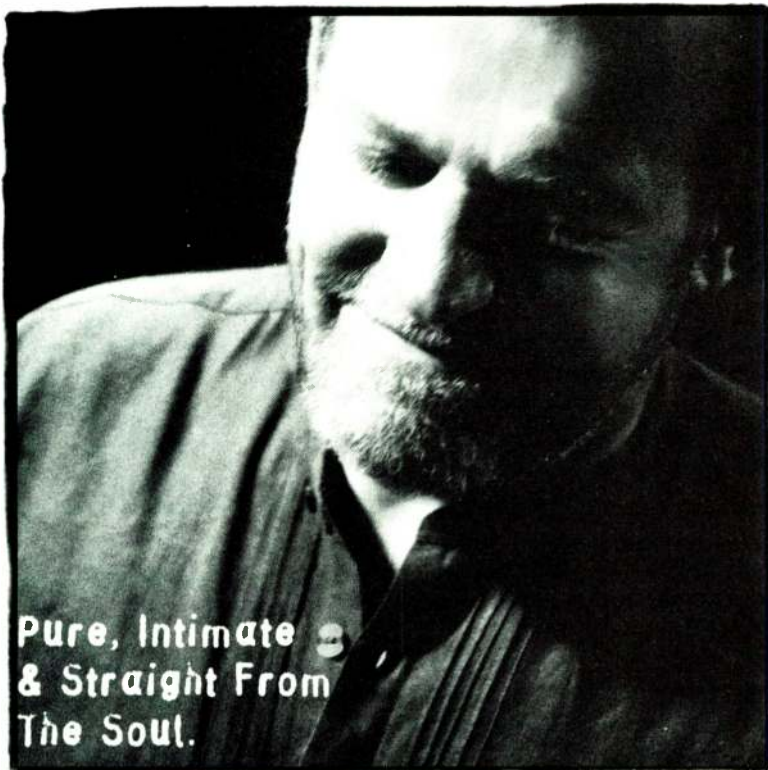
is worth. If somebody said tomorrow they were going to pass a law that takes away a fifth of your income, you'd have an interest in that legislation as well. The National Restaurant Association keeps yelling they're protecting small businesses, but you have to believe the money being poured into this isn't coming from mom-and-pop hair salons. ASCAP is no corporate monolith. It's made up of small songwriters like me, who get lost in all the

rhetoric."

Much to the frustration of the music industry, last April California Republican Rep. Carlos Moorhead, in an attempt to clear the logjam, created a new one by introducing an Omnibus bill in the House attaching music licensing to one of the performing rights society's dearest issues, a copyright term extension law that would expand the current "lifetime plus 50" year copyright protection for posthumous creators to the European Berne Convention standard of "lifetime plus 70." While the two bills aren't physically joined in the Senate, lobbyists for both the National Restaurant Association and the National Religious Broadcasters are telling supporters of their bill not to vote in favor of copyright extension unless the music licensing bill passes, too.

"It's our only way of getting music licensing passed and getting it signed by the President," insists Mark Gorman, a legislative consultant for the National Religious Broadcasters' Music Licensing Committee. "It would be absolutely unconscionable for Congress to pass legislation deepening the pockets of ASCAP and BMI at the same time as they're being so obstinate about fairness in the music licensing area. Unless this music licensing reform issue is attached to something the entertainment industry is interested in, it has no chance of getting passed, nor signed, considering President Clinton's ties with the entertainment industry."

The National Religious Broadcasters (or, as Marilyn Berman refers to them, the Broadcasters of Religious Music—"They're not religious") have put together their own coalition in their efforts to amend music licensing practices. Arguing that the limited use of copyrighted music on religious and classical music stations as well as talk outlets is not fairly represented by either blanket or per-program licenses, they're seeking a complete overhaul of the way ASCAP and BMI figure out their fees, which involves a percentage of a station's gross revenues based on either an overall (blanket) or individual (per-) program pact. The matter was going to court at press time, so both parties were reluctant to talk about specifics, but in this age of BDS, which automatically monitors radio airplay, Gorman's request for a more equi-



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table payment schedule seems almost reasonable.

"If you're only playing one song in a given hour, why pay for an hour's worth of music?" he asks. "ASCAP and BMI are abusing their competitive advantage. They're operating as government-sanctioned monopolies. We go through sham negotiations every five years and always end up in the same place. Our position is, we want to pay for the music we use, not for four times the music we use, which is the current situation."

For fear of alienating contemporary Christian songwriters, the NRB has stepped back from its previous demands for an exemption from licensing fees for music used in religious broadcasts without commercial sponsors. But ironically, the right-leaning organization is in the rare position of seeking legislative redress for a matter that should be settled within a free-market economy. And that's not the only way politics make strange bedfellows, as the so-called Religious Broadcasters find themselves lying down with owners of liquor establishments on this issue. But it's clear that the involvement of the NRB and their potent bully pulpit has members of ASCAP and BMI feeling more than a little paranoid about what they really want.

"As long as they're agreeing to the fact they have to pay for the music they do use," says MCA Music's Renzer, "I think that's the proper approach."

Seems simple enough: Put the pot of money on the table and divide it up accordingly. But the bigger issue is the one of intellectual property in a rapidly changing, digitally fueled distribution environment against a backdrop of a public that increasingly feels musicians already make enough from their works.

It's an issue that will gain even more urgency in the very near future when the Internet begins to replicate music, art, and words at a dizzying pace. Some cybertech experts even propose that material posted on the Internet should be free to all comers as an advertisement for the individual creators themselves, somewhat the way songs

played on Top 40 radio or videos aired on MTV promote the singles and albums on which they appear.

BMI's President/CEO Frances Preston, a member of the NII (National Information Infrastructure) Advisory Council, recently made a number of recommendations concerning proposed legislation in this area, chiefly the NII Copyright Protection Act of 1995, which calls for amended definitions of "transmission" and "publication."

Under current U.S. copyright law, the public performance right depends on the definition of the word "transmit" to cover broadcasting, cablecasting and other online transmissions, all of which are considered public performances. The performance rights organizations' fear is that the bill's proposed change to the definition of "transmit" could encourage the courts to conclude that transmissions are "distributions" and no longer "performances," and thereby not subject to licensing fees. BMI supports an amendment which clarifies that a transmission which qualifies as a public performance can also be a "distribution." In a cyber-universe growing by the day, that is no small distinction.

At the time of this writing, Congress had adjourned for the summer without taking up any of these bills, so they remain in flux, with both sides continuing to fight their war in the media. Unfortunately, the public receives its information only after it has been put through the spin of the opposing forces, as in the story of the Girl Scouts, where ASCAP was played up as the bad guys, even though the *Wall Street Journal* ended up acknowledging the importance of copyright laws.

For MCA Music's Renzer, the work of performing rights societies, songwriters and publishers has just begun. "It is imperative we focus our efforts on letter-writing campaigns to Congress," he says. "We must be vocal in our support of the efforts of the copyright extension and the music licensing bills. How do we win the PR battle? That's a good question. We're being beaten in that one."

That's a good question. We're being beaten in that one."

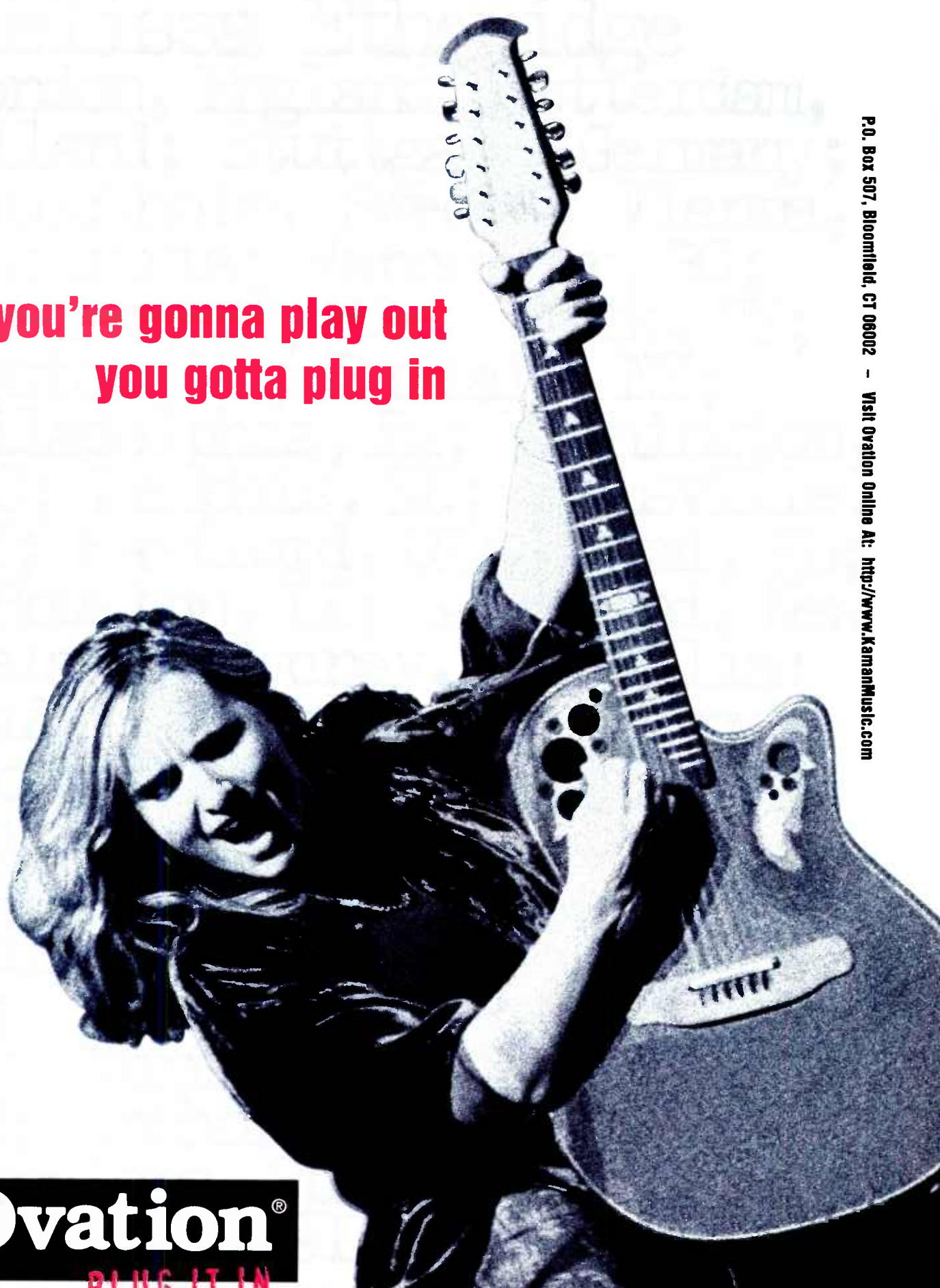
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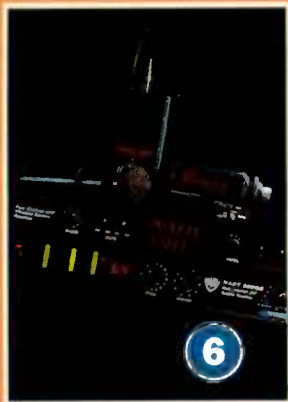
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Ovation's celebrating 30 years of making round-back acoustic guitars with an upgrade to its Elite Standard model. From this point on, the Elite Standard (\$1,259) will feature five-piece spaulds of maple, walnut, poplar and teak; a new finish, black cherryburst (pictured here), is also making its debut. The two-piece mahogany neck with rosewood fingerboard, walnut-faced headstock, and six-crystal bridge pickup system with built-in preamp remain the same, thankfully. ▶ **Ovation, c/o Kaman Music Corporation, P.O. Box 507, Bloomfield, CT 06002; voice (860) 509-8888, fax (860) 509-8891.**

## 2 pearl export

Moving with the times, the specs of Pearl's best-selling export five-piece drum set (\$1,299) have been upgraded. The Export's new shells feature a new, denser inner ply for improved brightness, while new transparent batter heads give longer sustain. Kay rods, lugs and other hardware are also newly designed. Colors include jet black, pure white, silver flash, cardinal red, and red wine. ▶ **Pearl, 549 Metroplex Dr., Nashville, TN 37211; voice (615) 833-4477, fax (615) 833-6242.**

## 3 mesa/boogie heartbreaker

The Mesa/Boogie Mark III is not only regarded as a 33-year-old classic, and in commemoration of the model, Mesa's put out a two-channel, switchable version called the Heartbreaker (\$1,599). Roughly speaking, channel one's clean and channel two's dirty, but the lead ramp can be boosted on one—increasing the distortion possibilities—and a Bright/Fat switch messes with the frequency of both. Four EL8s and two 12" Celestions add to the appeal. The Heartbreaker's also available as a head for \$1,399. ▶ **Mesa/Boogie, 1317 Ross St., Petaluma, CA 94954; voice (707) 778-6565, fax (707) 765-1503.**

World Radio History



## 4 ATI 8MX2 preamp/mixer

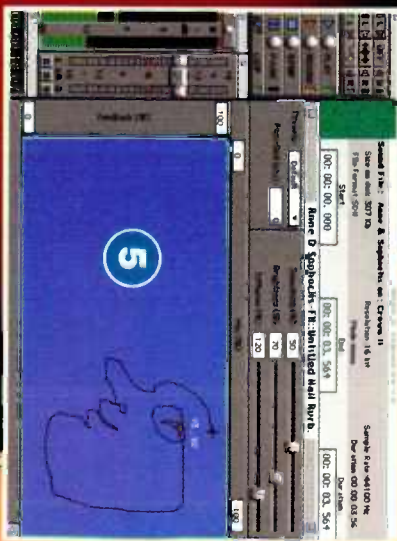
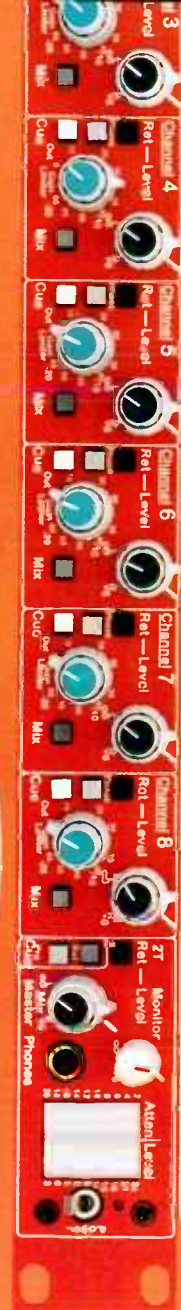
Designed as an ideal digital recording companion, the ATI 8MX2 (\$1699) combines eight high-voltage mic preamps with an 8x2 mixer in a cozy one-rack-space chassis. Each of the eight XLR inputs have 41-position trim and threshold control, and each can directly feed the balanced outputs of any format of digital recorder. A comprehensive cue system selects the input or return to be monitored by phones or monitors, while audio level and gain reduction is shown on two LEDs. ▶ **Audio Toys Inc., 9017-C Mendenhall Ct., Columbia, MD 21045; voice (410) 381-7879, fax (410) 381-8025.**

## 5 arboretum hyperprism-PPC software

It's already gotten the nod from no less an innovator than Brian Eno, and now Arboretum's Hyperprism sound processing software is available for Apple's Performa, PowerMac, PowerBook and compatible computers. Hyperprism PPC (\$279) offers 21 effects, from reverb and delay to sweepable resonant filters, without requiring any additional soundcards. All effects can be fiddled with in real time, thanks to Hyperprism's unique Blue Window interface, which approximates an analog synth's filter section. ▶ **Arboretum Systems, 915 Cole St., Suite 387, San Francisco, CA 94117; voice (415) 626-4440, fax (415) 626-4439.**

## 6 nady 950GS wireless

Wanna roam stages wildly with no restrictive cables? Check out Nady's latest 950GS UHF wireless system. Along with the usual companding noise reduction and 120-dB dynamic range, you'll be pleased to note that selectivity now allows operation of 10 receivers within 20 MHz bandwidth—we're talking 40 receivers in one location. If that weren't enough, an improved third order intercept provides more headroom, less interference, and lower distortion. Complete wireless systems start in the \$2995 area. ▶ **Nady Systems, 6701 Bay St., Emeryville, CA 94608; voice (510) 652-2411, fax (510) 652-8075.**



# editor's pick

## Mackie's CR1604-VLZ revolutionizes the mixing world—again.

**W**hen the Beatles entered Abbey Road studios to work on their first records, the engineers wore white coats and kept the musicians firmly on the other side of the control room glass. The Fab Four soon changed that relationship and started twirling knobs themselves—in the process, forever changing the way the rest of us think of and use a recording studio.

The tremendous popularity of high-end "project studio" equipment has led to a new and equally exciting musical revolution. No longer at the mercy of the studio clock representing hundreds of dollars per hour, we can now take our time creating uncompromising masters in our own homes with equipment that is in some cases superior to anything the masters of the past had to work with—but at a fraction of the cost.

The mixer, of course, is at the heart of these personal studios. Enter the CR1604-VLZ, the latest dazzler from those wizards of the Northwest—Mackie. (The VLZ stands for Very Low Impedance, a design feature of the circuitry that promises low cross-talk and a minimum of other nasties—more on this shortly.) Mackie deserves praise for not resting on their laurels with a monster success like the original

CR1604, long the staple analog mixer in many project studios—the new model is absolutely packed with improvements. The combination of

these upgrades plus an amazingly low price tag (just \$1199 suggested retail) makes the CR1604-VLZ an instant winner.

I've used a Mackie Micro Series ("MS") 1202 as a small but essential part of my home studio for years, so I was excited about the opportunity to put this new 16-channel, 4-bus model through its paces. But before getting into details of the new features, it's worth talking about the "Mackie experience." It's generally agreed that Mackie mixers use the highest quality materials, Swiss watch craftsmanship, and built-for-abuse engineering. On top of that, they possess—plain and simple—a sound quality that far exceeds expectations for this price range.

Of equal importance to me is the fact that Mackie keeps musicians

(not the guys in white coats) in mind at every turn. I know I'm not alone when I say that poor documentation has made me feel like trashing more than one expensive studio device. The Mackie manual is actually fun to read; it's not only clear, well organized, and very informative, it's also written with a sense of humor. The documentation for the CR1604-VLZ includes a quick-start section and step-by-step details of all features. Also included is a glossary of audio terms (i.e., shelving, noise floor, etc.) and a section called

"Arcane mysteries illuminated," which sheds light on balanced lines, phantom powering, and other terms. It's all laid out very clearly and actually seems to be written by and for musicians, not rocket scientists. An excellent start to a new relationship.

Out of the box, the unit sets up very quickly. While it only weighs 20 pounds and measures 17.4" by 17.9" in its standard configuration (the input/output jackfield "pod" can be rotated in three different directions, allowing for various table-top or rack-mount applications), a solid steel chassis and attention to durability make the unit feel very solid. Ears are provided for standard 19" rack mounting. After perusing the "quick start" page in the manual, I had music pumping through the 1604-VLZ in a matter of minutes.

Each of the 16 channels provides a slew of features. Topping the list are individual mic/line inputs with excellent high-headroom/low-noise 60 dB mic pre-amps. Spec-wise, you're looking at 0.005% THD and -129.5 dBm input noise, so the signal is very clean with absolutely minimal distortion and hiss. In some ways, these pre-amps are the company's real claim to fame—they are so highly regarded that some engineers supplement their very



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by Robert Raines



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expensive mixers with a Mackie. The good news is that there are 16 of them, as opposed to the 6 provided by the original CR1604. Having preamps on all 16 channels was formerly possible only by adding the optional XLR10 mic preamp expander to the old 1604, a combination that actually costs more than the current list price for the CR1604-VLZ.

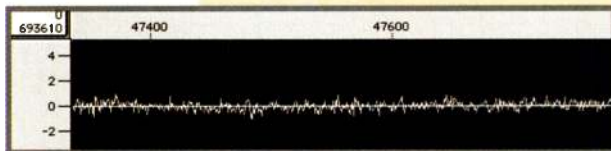
The CR1604-VLZ has a ton of features that make it a real workhorse for live as well as recording applications. There are a gaggle of new options available, including aux send 1&2 master controls, effects to monitor and tape to main mix routing, a tape input level control, a level set LED (used for setting unity gain throughout the mixer's various gain stages), a global AFL/PFL solo switch, a discrete mono output with dedicated volume control (good for onstage monitoring or for sending signal to video, for example), and a flexible control room/headphones section that accommodates pretty much all monitoring needs.

Also new are individual inserts on all 16 channels, as well as LEDs for solo/signal present and mute. Added to the EQ area are two major new features: a sweepable midrange and a low-cut filter. The sweepable midrange offers a much larger palette of audio colors for mixing sounds. The low-cut filter can be a handy "secret weapon," especially for live sound where, for instance, you might want to reduce the mic stand rumble caused by the lead singer's jumping around on the stage.

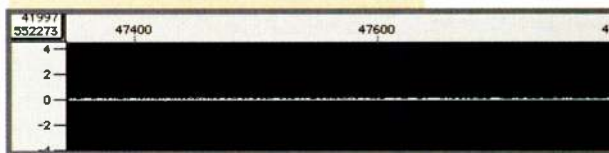
The combination of possible setups for monitoring and managing effects returns can be pretty staggering, and more complex situations may require donning a thinking cap. Novices will have no problems because standard operation is pretty intuitive, but more seasoned pros will enjoy the benefits of complex routing options. For instance, Aux return 4 has an option to send the return signal to the control room/phones, but not to the main L-R mix outputs. Though not normally the way you'd use the control room/phones output, it does provide a way to send onstage musicians a separate monitor mix.

New to the jackfield pod are RCA tape ins and outs and a separate control room output.

Inputs are of super solid construction and it doesn't feel like you have to worry about one of the inputs snapping off if you handle it a little roughly. Here again, attention to detail is very impressive. Besides the rugged construction, special circuitry has been added to deal with radio frequency interference—that



▲ **Mackie MS1202**



▲ **Yamaha ProMix01**



▲ **Mackie CR1604-VLZ**

means fewer cellular phone calls breaking into your mix at a touching moment in the song.

I asked a friend who owns the original 1604 to take a look at the new model. He was particularly envious of the new bus design. (There are bus assignment switches for buses 1-2, 3-4 or L-R on each channel.) In his view, this new four-bus architecture takes the new model light years ahead of the previous effort, since sophisticated sub mixes are now possible.

Now about that VLZ stuff. I decided to run a couple of tests to compare the noise floor of the CR1604-VLZ with that of the other two mixers in my studio, a Yamaha ProMix 01 digital mixer and the aforementioned Mackie MS1202. The first test was run with all preamp trims and faders (including the master) fully down and just the control room output full up. The second test was the same, but with all preamp trims and faders fully up (control room output still full up). In both cases, I recorded the mixer output to my hard disk and took a look (and a listen) at the waveform produced.

The results were illuminating. In the first test both the CR1604-VLZ and the MS1202 demonstrated some very negligible noise, and the ProMix 01 came in even a bit quieter with almost no signal at all. In the second test, the ProMix 01 was still very quiet but the MS1202 showed a noticeable bit of noise. The CR 1604-VLZ, however, came through with flying colors here. It was clearly quieter than its little cousin, the MS1202, though not quite as noiseless as the digital ProMix 01—but the difference was negligible. In general listening tests, however, I found the CR1604-VLZ to have a slightly warmer sound than the ProMix

01—a factor that, for me, more than makes up for the very slight difference in noise level.

My only real complaint with the CR1604-VLZ is the unusually small size of the knobs (actually smaller than those on the MS1202) and the generally dense configuration of buttons and faders. I found that I had to rotate my hand to be able to access the bus assignment buttons on each channel—my fingers wouldn't fit between the faders otherwise. I thought the tight layout is a small drawback, however it might become a problem in live sound reinforcement where you need to grab controls quickly and in limited lighting.

Overall, I found all of the options suddenly at my disposal actually made me a little spoiled. At times, I found myself thinking, "What? I can't have this or that feature on all channels at the same time?" But, hey, I spent years drooling over mixing consoles that I would never be able to afford—many of which are challenged by the CR1604-VLZ in both audio quality and versatility. I often had to do a reality check and remind myself that this is not a \$100,000+ mixing console; it just starts to feel that way after using it for a couple of days. The compact design does require some getting used to, but once I got into the rhythm of using this delightful tool, I was hooked for good. The Mackie CR1604-VLZ is truly a testament to the value of quality design.

*Robert Raines (rrcreative@aol.com) is a composer and Web site designer. Special thanks to Greg Mackie, Diane Gershuny at Mackie and to Thor Jonsson for their assistance.*

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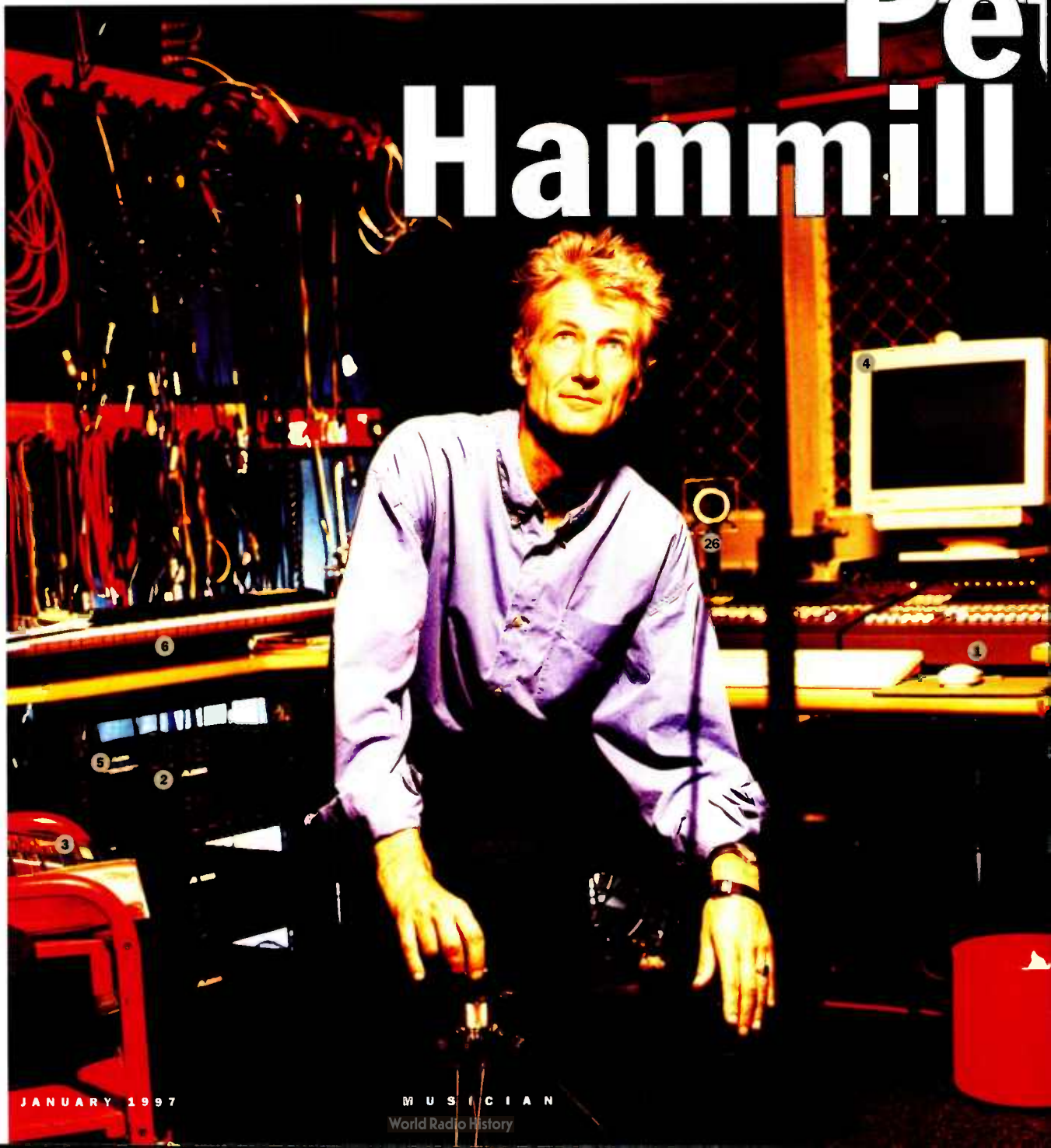
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er

**D**espite his many legendary and often brutal live performances on his own and with that most left-field of '70s prog groups, Van Der Graaf Generator, Peter Hammill has always placed studio experimentation at the heart of his musical universe. A pioneer in home studio recording, he cut his first home-brew albums, *The Future Now* and *ph7*, in the late '70s on four- and eight-track recorders. Since 1989, together with producer David Lord, he has done all his projects in the former Crescent Studios in Bath, now christened Terra Incognita, including his latest album, *X My Heart*, for his own Fie! label, distributed in the U.S. by Robert Fripp's Discipline Records.

Terra Incognita is built around two **Yamaha**

**ProMix 01** digital automated mixers **1**, three eight-track **Alesis ADAT** recorders **2** with **BRC** **3**, and a **PowerMac 7100** **4**. "I spread all the elements of each song over six to seven ADAT tapes. I'll submix to stereo pairs, like stereo drums and stereo guitars. If there's a problem, I can always redo them instantly because I store the mix details in the Pro 1 or the Mac."

Hammill shifted from his Atari ST 1040 to the Mac about two years ago; his current software includes **Digidesign Sound Designer II** and **MasterList CD**, and **Steinberg Cubase Score**—"shortly to be upgraded to Cubase Audio." Additions to his Mac system include an AudioMedia II card, a Jaz 1 Gigabyte removable hard drive, Yamaha CD writer, Opcode Studio 3

by  
**Paul Tingen**

photographs  
by **Julia Maloof**



SMPTÉ/MIDI processor, and Akai ME30P MIDI patchbay. "The AM card is fundamentally a four-track hard disk for recording and editing, which is the limit as far as my interest in hard disk recording goes."

From Hammill's seat in front of his Pro 1 desks and Mac screen, his three ADATs, BRC, and **Alesis AI-1** digital interface are within easy reach on his left, with a couple of DAT recorders—an **Aiwa XC-S1100** and an

**HNB/Aiwa** portable—below. MIDI-related gear on his right includes a **Bit 01** analog synth, **Roland D-110** sound module, **Roland MKS-20** digital piano, and **Yamaha TX812** module. Further to the right are an **E-mu E-max** digital sampling keyboard and **Yamaha DX7**, with an **E-mu Proteus** Master Performance System to his left—Hammill's temporary master keyboard while his **Yamaha KX88** was undergoing repairs.

Hammill's rack-mounted gear includes two **EAR 288Q** valve equalizers, **TC Electronic 2240** and **Rebis RA402** stereo parametric equalizers, **Klark-Teknik DN27** graphic EQ, two **Drawmer DS201** dual gates, and a **Drawmer DL221** dual limiter/compressor. To the right of this rack are one of Hammill's favorite effects, a **Klark-Teknik DN780** digital reverb, along with two **Yamaha SPX90s**, a **Roland SRV-2000** digital reverb, a **Roland SDE-2000** digital delay, a **BEL BD-80S** stereo delay/sampler, **Ursa Major Space Station** reverb/delay, **Eventide H910 Harmonizer**, **Aphex B Aural Exciter**, **Roland SDD-320 Dimension D**, and a **Rebis** rack (gates and delay). "In terms of outboard stuff," says Hammill, "the first things I go for are the Klark-Teknik, the BEL, and the Ursa Major, which has a character all its own—very clunky and clanky, quite noisy, but very functional."

Hammill's guitars lean against the back wall. "There's an **Ibanez**; it's a nice chunky rhythm guitar. Next to it is a **Baldwin Double Six** 12-string—nice green body, good fun, but I don't use it much. Then there's an old **Yamaha** acoustic with an almost impossibly low action. My main acoustic is a semi-acoustic Washburn, which I have at home. The bass is a **CSI**—a Japanese Gibson Grabber copy, very cheap and basic. Then there's the Guild, or what I call Meurglys III, which is still in good shape. I seldom use the Hohner semi-acoustic Spanish guitar, but the **Casio PG390** next to it is a real favorite: It has a great whammy bar and a great sound. My amp is a **Peavey Studio Chorus 210**, which is loud enough for my purposes, and my main guitar effects unit is the **Alesis Quadraverb GT**."

In front of Hammill's workspace is the old and bizarre-looking microphone that graced the cover of 1993's *The Noise*. According to Hammill, it was Crescent's old **Grampian MCR** foldback mic, "not known for its good sound quality." But who knows? Hammill might end up using it anyway: "I'd like to get into the murkier territories of my analog days again," he says, a tad wistfully. "I've gone back to doing loops on my old **Revox A77** two-track. A crucial difference between analog and digital is that you can muck around with analog not knowing what you're doing and still get musical results. With digital, you have to learn to work the gear before you can get results at all."

Photo by J. Bernall

Ronnie Earl  
"Blues & Ballads"

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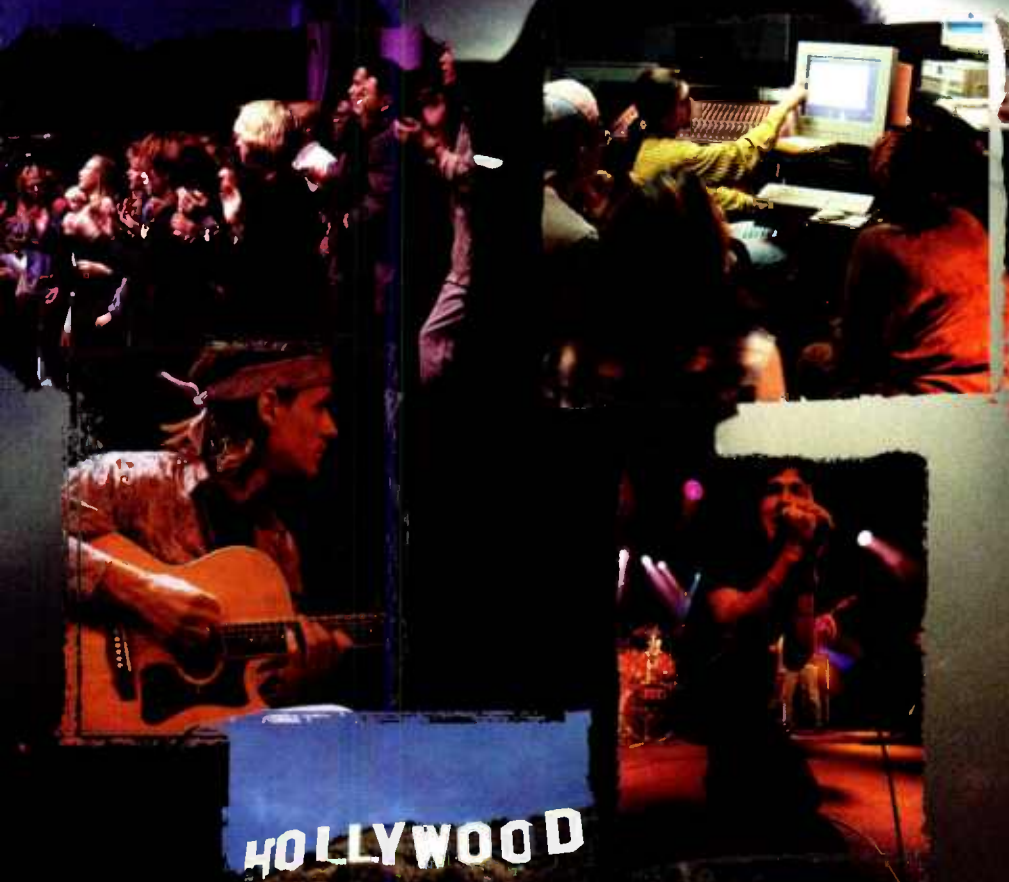
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**White Zombie  
and many others!**



# The Unbearable *Lightness* of Enhancement

**Do CDs and multimedia really belong together?**

by **Steph Paynes**

**S**ome are calling it "CD Plus," some "CD Extra," some "Enhanced CD." And naturally, since all these titles suggest something more than just a plain old CD with plain old music, some are calling its bluff.

Part of the problem is that like much of the technology we're seeing on the Internet or even in many of the more comprehensive CD-ROM programs, this multimedia sounds a lot more exciting than it is. It's slow: Even with a high-speed Power Mac or Pentium system you have to wait for screens to load. It's visually flat, so that you still feel like you're looking at a cartoon screen most of the time. And animated functions, such as video and 3-D imaging, eat lots of memory, leaving less room for audio.

Anyone with a new computer or CD-ROM drive should be able to play multisession discs, but older CD-ROM drives may not recognize the presence of multimedia information. As a result, most of the enhanced CDs you buy will include updated driver software in the form of an extra Corel Driver CD disc, files with compressed software, or

links to a Web page where the driver software can be downloaded.

In theory, the mixed media CD presents artists with an incredibly exciting opportunity. After all, here's your most open-minded audience, pinned to the computer screen, all eyes and ears. For Pete's sake, do something cool!

Unfortunately, "cool" is not the word I would use to describe most of what I've seen so far. "Enhanced" seems to mean a hoi polloi of lyrics, biographies, and rather mundane soundbites from interviews. More often than not, the audio portion consists of something less than a full album's worth of material—and when you do get more music, chances are the multimedia is lacking. Finally, it's a



bit disappointing that most artists use enhanced discs as a means to deliver fan club fluff. At an average cost of \$21.99—about six bucks more than the list price of a regular CD—these discs force each individual to decide whether he or she is enough of a fan to offset this extra cost.

So what might make this format more interesting? How about:

**Cross-reference with online Web pages.** Some bands, like Bush, include a mock online connection to the Internet on their enhanced CDs. An interactive Web extension that links enhanced CD graphics to a Web page suggests another dimension: change.

There's already a tool available on the Internet which lets anybody make Web pages that can control regular audio CDs. Called CDLink and developed by the multimedia publisher Voyager Co., it allows the customized Web page to trigger specific passages of music from a regular audio CD when you play it in your CD-ROM drive. For example, if you already have Elvis Costello's *Imperial Bedroom* or Frank Zappa's *Hot Rats*—for which CDLink interactive Web pages have been created—you can access "enhanced" material directly from the Internet by putting the regular audio CD in your CD-ROM drive and calling up the Costello or Zappa CDLink Web page on the Internet. The software you need to make it work is free and may be downloaded from the 'Net.

According to Malcolm Hume, a Berkeley-based developer who was instrumental in helping to create and test CDLink, "Using standard audio CDs, which deliver audiophile-quality audio but are controlled by remote Web pages with tiny control files, seems like an interesting solution.

The Web is increasingly ruled by college students making cool pages. In six months there will be thousands of pages that just

◀ **Main menu layouts from Bob Dylan and George Clinton enhanced CD.**

play standard audio CDs."

**Have something to say.** It feels like we're living in the age of silents on the eve of the release of *The Jazz Singer*. Chances are, multimedia will take its toll on those artists that have a "lousy voice." Will a band like the Cranberries, who are so dull in multimedia, become outmoded by more versatile or charismatic groups? Even if enhanced CDs are displayed by some grander technology and we ascend toward that Bill Gates vision in which our computers are linked to our big-screen entertainment centers, the problem of the multifaceted entertainment experience won't disappear.

**Adopt a game-oriented approach.** To make the musical journey more interactive, why not incorporate a story or quest? Clicking on a bunch of lyrics is definitely devoid of anything resembling goal, strategy, or plot.

At first glance it seems that all an interactive program needs to be compelling is enough groovy technology. On second glance we decide that content is what's really important. But we should take a third glance, according to programmer F. Randall Farmer, now of Electric Communities, who spent many years creating and administering online virtual worlds for Lucasfilms, among others. While talking to a group of budding new programmers and cyberheads at Stanford University, Farmer said that "the person interacting needs to feel that there is some inherent value in the interactivity."

If there is to be an inherent value in interacting with musical media, what's it going to be? What could take the place of sitting in front of the loudspeakers with the album cover and a bottle of beer?

Consider the riddle now, for soon the masses will be hardware-ready and waiting to engage the Pied Piper on a trail of infinite clicks.

**Contributors:** *Steph Paynes plays guitar and sings with Lollipop Blue, a multimedia band in San Francisco.*

## ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS:

### *What You Need to Run Enhanced CDs*

**Macintosh:** Mac LCIII or better, 25mHz 68030, 8mB RAM, System 7.1 or later, 256 color display monitor, double-speed multi-session CD-ROM drive.

**Windows:** Windows 3.1, 4mB free RAM, 16-bit sound card, 13" VGA or SVGA color monitor, double-speed CD-ROM drive.

## GOOD, BAD, UGLY:

### *High & Low Points in the Enhanced CD Catalog*

#### **MOBY**

*Disk (Elektra)*

Moby's three-song single contains about thirteen minutes of music but loads of multimedia surprises. You are greeted by a menu of moving icons, mostly Moby heads and bodies, which take you to a different place each time. You could land in an interview, a video, or a piece of performance footage. The feel is techno-kaleidoscope, and the visuals are appropriately rave-like. The big bonus, however, is on the way out. As you go to the exit screen, you can click on a dozen or so moving Moby heads. One of them will take you to a "U-R in the Mix" section, which lets you create your own cacophony with a very ample array of clickable soundbites and visual gestures. Beware, though. Another of the heads takes you to some text pages containing Moby's political diatribe on the evils of eating meat, messing up the environment, and Christian fundamentalists.

#### **EBN**

*Telecommunication Breakdown (TVT)*

If any band is in its element with this stuff, it's EBN. Their full-length enhanced CD is presented as a TV/video wall, very much like their live presentation, which continually flashes with imagery. You can access information on the group's handmade technology, watch videos, or simply sample the songs. The best part is you can control effects on the video wall in real time, which gives you a reason to sit in front of your computer as you click from song to song or take in a video. A simple controller on the bottom right-hand side allows you to adjust volume, change effects, alter the size of the video screen, and move smoothly through menus.

#### **MONSTER MAGNET**

*I Talk to Planets (A&M)*

Here we have a bunch of full-screen-size videos as well as a customized video "Astrogator" hidden inside a virtual Chevy Camaro, which lets you choose some of the imagery you'll see as part of a random montage. The disc has a cosmic, space-age, monster-movie feel, complete with an amusing lab scene where you can devolve the lead singer into a primordial soup. The cursor doesn't always signal hot spots, which makes you wonder whether you're missing an opportunity. Also the liner notes claim I can "groove to tunes as I abolish asteroids and destroy space junk," but despite several attempts I never managed to find this area.

#### **2 MINUTES HATE**

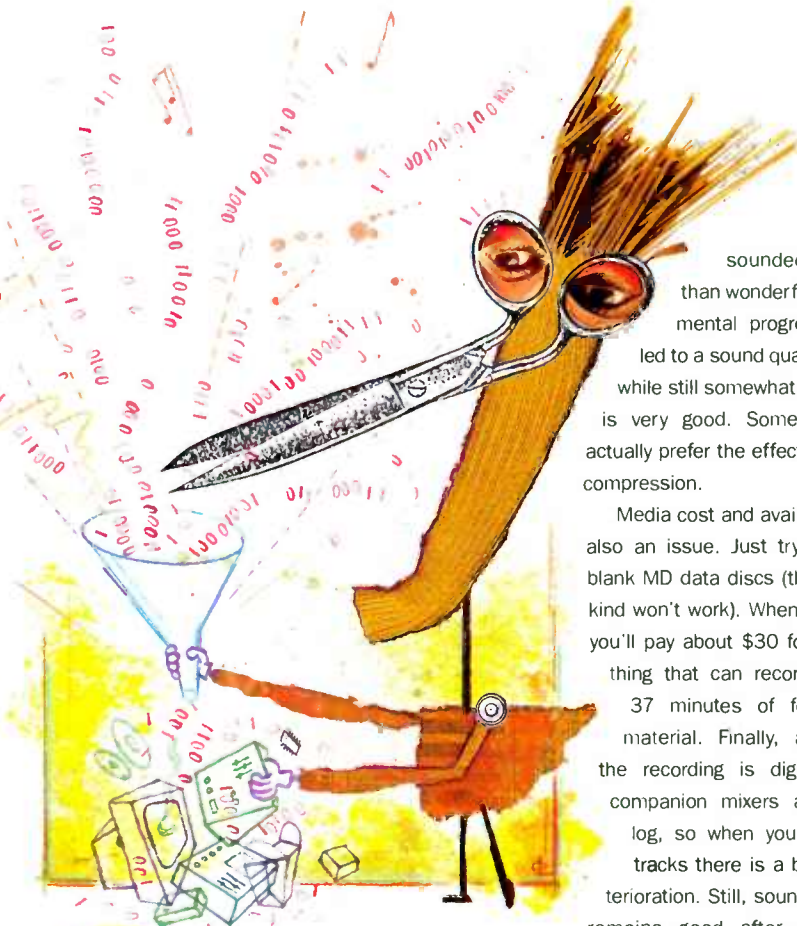
*Worm (Ardent)*

I had technical trouble with this disc when the installer appeared on the desktop while the start-up icon was whisked away to the hard drive. At first, I seemed to have no choice but to keep reinstalling Quicktime software. Aside from the fairly pleasant psychedelic drip screens, there's nothing to do except click on the fast-forward button to simulate the chipmunk effect while watching videos. This group sounds much more interesting than it looks and talks. And the horrendously stupid fan interviews, which feature accolades from people who sound lobotomized. Stick to audio, boys.

by craig anderton

**W**ay back in December '93 *Musician* covered the best bets at the time for digital recording—digital multi-track tape and hard disk recording. Now, approximately 18 computer years later (1 human year=5 dog years=6 computer years), we find ourselves with not just some new challenges to the digital audio recording crown, but a mature perspective on some relatively mature technologies. Did tape and hard disk deliver on their promises? Will the MiniDisc bury the cassette for project studios? With RAM prices declining once more, will sampler-based recording flourish? And what about the Mac or PC-based "studio in a box"?

Welcome to the wacky world of digital recording, where option overload isn't just a concept—it's a way of life.



sounded less than wonderful, incremental progress has led to a sound quality that, while still somewhat colored, is very good. Some people actually prefer the effect of data compression.

Media cost and availability is also an issue. Just try to find blank MD data discs (the audio kind won't work). When you do, you'll pay about \$30 for something that can record about 37 minutes of four-track material. Finally, although the recording is digital, the companion mixers are analog, so when you bounce tracks there is a bit of deterioration. Still, sound quality remains good after multiple bounces.

The bottom line: If you have \$1200-\$1500 of disposable income, want to record simply to a removable medium that won't self-destruct, and don't

## Option Overload

### Which digital recording format is best for you?

#### MiniDisc Multitracks

**A**lthough the MiniDisc (an optical-based recordable medium touted as a replacement for the analog cassette) has so far failed to sway the American buying public, it has been born again as a data storage medium for computers. **Yamaha**, **Tascam**, and **Sony** have adapted this technology for multitrack recording.

The initial product offerings integrate a multitrack recorder with a mixer—just add mics and headphones. Compared to cassettes, MD-based devices sound bet-

ter, work faster, allow for editing (including undo), and, because MD reads data before it writes, can even bounce tracks into themselves—for example, bounce four tracks of rhythm section into two tracks. You can also place markers in a tune and create a "playlist" that can play sections of the tune in various orders—a trick borrowed from hard disk recording. Further, MDs are durable.

What's not to like? Data compression, for one, the result of squeezing lots of audio into a limited amount of memory; as a result, parts of the audio deemed irrelevant are discarded. While early data compression algorithms

mind the extremely subtle coloration that data compression adds, this could be your best choice.

#### The Computer Studio-In-A-Box

**P**owerMacs have onboard digital audio capabilities, and just about all PCs include at least some kind of Sound Blaster-type card that can add a couple tracks of hard disk audio recording. All you need is software that tells your computer to be a multitrack, hard disk-based digital recorder.

It used to cost hundreds of dollars to add decent sound to a Mac, but that changed with the [con't'd on page 80]


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# powerusers

## DIGITAL

# DUKE

by **andrea rotondo hospido**

**I**f you want to get ahead, surround yourself with talented people and quality gear. So says George Duke, whose record as a solo artist, producer, and sideman with the likes of Frank Zappa, Anita Baker, Stanley Clarke, and dozens of other diverse acts lends weight to his words.

At the moment, Otari's RADAR tops Duke's list of resources. He had been looking for a digital system to add to his studio, and this multitrack hard disk recording sys-

tem seemed to fit the bill. Ease of operation was one big plus. RADAR's RE-8 controller includes buttons for track arming and soloing, a jog/shuttle wheel, traditional tape recorder-style transport controls, and dedicated keys—as well as features you won't find on analog decks, such as cut, copy, paste, slip, loop, move, slide, erase, and undo.

For Duke's engineer, Wayne Holmes, there's a flip side to this user-friendliness. "Some things you can do

easily on [Digidesign] Pro Tools and [Emagic] Logic are much harder to do with RADAR," he insists. "That's because you can't actually see the

waveforms on RADAR's graphic interface: all you see is the track information itself. Now, if I'm doing a single edit and it's even on the barline, I don't necessarily want to see it on the screen, so I'll do edits like that on RADAR. For example, there's a song on Natalie Cole's next record where the orchestra played a wrong chord. It was really ugly, so I sent the two-track mix into RADAR, cut that section out, found the right chord in another part of the song, and dropped it in there. I thought it would be a great way to do it, to not see it, because I just wanted to do it like a tape cut. But in retrospect I wonder if it might have been easier to do in Logic or Pro Tools."

"In terms of flexibility and really detailed editing I prefer working with Pro Tools," Duke agrees. "But I prefer the sound of RADAR. I A/B'ed it against my Mitsubishi X-850 [digital tape deck] with Apogee filters, and it stood up really well. Only the very top end was a little different, which you would probably expect from a hard-disk system. Maybe some other D-to-A and A-to-D converters will change how Pro Tools sounds in the future, but for now there's no doubt that RADAR sounds better."

Duke claims to have done just about every kind of work with RADAR. "We've done live tracking

with drums, but we mostly use it for keyboard and vocal overdubs. If a singer is too ahead of the beat, I can pull him back with RADAR. I can tell someone, 'I like what you played and I'll take care of [positioning] it later.' That's the strength of RADAR."

Morgan B. Azim

## option overload

[cont'd from page 76] PowerMac, which includes onboard analog-to-digital and digital-to-analog conversion. For many applications the onboard quality is sufficient, and packages such as **Macromedia's** Deck and **Digidesign's** Pro Tools DAE exploit the PowerMac's audio power. For thoroughly pro specs, Digidesign continues to offer several reasonably priced audio boards that provide excellent sound quality; most pro audio programs can work with these boards. Traditional PC sound cards (à la Sound Blaster) usually fall far short of pro specs, but you can add high-fidelity sound cards with analog and/or digital I/O, such as **Digital Audio Labs'** CardD, **AdB's** MultiWav Pro, and **Digidesign's** Audiomedia III.

Musically speaking, hard disk recording is ideal for perfectionists not just because you can undo, but for the editing, from surgically removing one note to shifting a verse to where a chorus used to be. (There's a reason why

dance music remixers are such devotees of hard disk recording.) Most programs even allow for processing, such as EQ, delay, and panning. But while many predict the demise of digital tape due to computers, it hasn't happened yet. Undoubtedly some of this is because of the need for huge amounts of computer power (read: expense). As computer capabilities increase, programs push the envelope so far they can't run without the baddest machine you can buy—and updated programs often need an upgraded computer too.

One consolation is the ever-decreasing price of mass storage, which makes it possible to afford a separate, fast, A/V type hard disk just for recording music and not have to mix long audio files in with the applications on your main hard drive. (Audio prefers large, contiguous blocks for recording, so any disk containing other data needs to be periodically "de-fragmented" to reclaim as much empty space as possible.) Also, A/V drives are specifically designed for continuous, sustained throughput.

Non-A/V drives sometimes recalibrate the unit in the middle of a recording, and while this is a very short process—you'd never notice it if running a word processor—it can be long enough to crash a digital audio program, especially ones that write from disk to recordable CDs.

You also need to back up all the data you create. Eight tracks at 44.1kHz gobble up 40MB per minute, so you can't keep adding tunes to your hard disk forever. The current darling of the backup set is **Imega's** Jaz, a 1-gigabyte removable hard drive. Most of the time you can also back up any digital audio to a digital tape recorder, such as DAT or ADAT. Multi-session CD-Rs are becoming popular for backup, but they're hindered functionally by not being erasable and reusable. And even if there was a standard backup format, there's no standard file format, so you couldn't swap files between different systems.

The studio-in-a-box concept extends beyond pure audio. Sequencers such as **Opcode's** StudioVision, **Steinberg's** Cubase Audio, **Emagic's** Logic Audio, and **Mark of the Unicorn's** Digital Performer (all for the Mac) provide not just MIDI sequencing but digital audio hard disk recording. **Cubase** Audio VST even includes sophisticated signal processing, creating a complete studio environment. Another common option is audio-to-MIDI and MIDI-to-audio conversion; Digital Performer even provides great-sounding audio transposition without "chipmunk" or "Darth Vader" effects. Modern Windows sequencers invariably accommodate at least two tracks of digital audio; not surprisingly, more power often equals more tracks.

Computer-based programs, with or without MIDI, are not a panacea. You must be computer-literate and willing to interface with the muse through a cathode-ray tube and a mouse. The programs can be somewhat arcane, and many people still prefer the tactile response of buttons and switches, especially for mixing. Yet there's something convenient about having an entire music-making system in a box, from rhythm tracks up to the final mix.

Think that's all? Tune in next month, when we look at still more options in digital recording, including digital tape multitracks and RAM recording.

**Contributors:** *Craig Anderton is the author of Home Recording for Musicians, published by AMSCO, and host of the Sound Studio and Stage site on AOL (keyword: SSS).*

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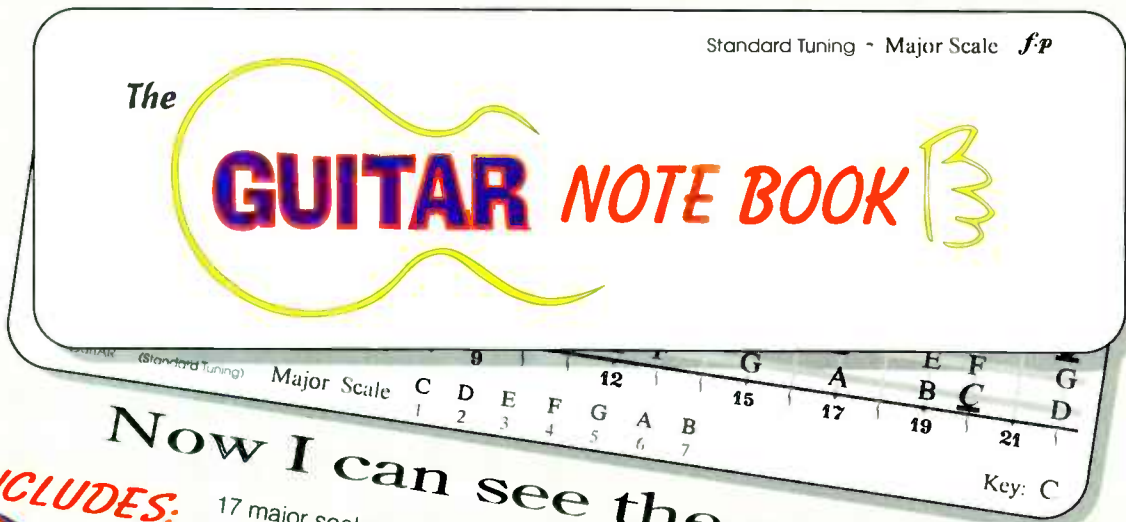
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## Quiet Storms

**John Scofield**  
*Quiet (Verve)*

**Kevin Eubanks**  
*Live at Bradley's (Blue Note)*

In the long, lingering aftermath of fusion, jazz guitar has entered a state of confusion—and that's a good thing. Exhibits A and B:

John Scofield and Kevin Eubanks, two of the instrument's most solid, mid-career players, whose paths have crossed over and under jazz and rock and funk.

Scofield's brilliant *Quiet* is his first strictly on acoustic guitar, lined with inventive horn charts. With *Live At Bradley's*, Eubanks puts out the closest thing he's had to a mainstream jazz record, recorded in a Big Apple jazz club, no less.

As the title might suggest, Scofield's new one, his first for Verve, kills with kindness. He goes unplugged, yet remains instantly identifiable by his distinctive way with a pick and his deceptively relaxed phrasing. He still leaps across registers and thinks musically rather than guitaristically. Another odd phenom-

enon: On acoustic, he leans in closer, texturally, to the sound of longtime cohort Steve Swallow's plectrum electric bass. Chords and melodic lines take unexpected turns, without losing sight of emotional momentum. Wayne Shorter brings his tenor eloquence to bear on "Away with Words" and on the hooky quasi-bossa "Door #3"—some of the skewed horn lines recall his work on *High Life*—and offers breathy, arid lyricism on the ballad "But For Love," which deserves status as a new Real Book entry.

An important subplot here is the horn writing. Some of Scofield's ideas about voicing are reminiscent of Bob Moses' Gramavision albums from the '80s. But somehow his relative inexperience with orchestration translates into a voice all his own.

Eubanks continues to avoid predictability on his albums for Blue Note. Following projects that were long on atmospheric of an almost ECMish quality, *Live at Bradley's* presents him in a straightahead context. It's a drummerless trio that puts an ample spotlight on pianist James Williams and bassist Robert Hurst. Eubanks' fingerpicked, flesh-on-steel sound sometimes evokes a Wes Montgomery approach, but he's happy to bow to the gods of bluesy string-bending on "Red Top." His time is the opposite of Scofield's, verging on the frenetic instead of the laconic. While short of a musical revelation, this is an album that adds another solid piece of the puzzle for a guitarist who, like Scofield, ultimately eludes category.—**Josef Woodard**



**luscious jackson**

**Luscious Jackson**

**Fever In Fever Out (Grand Royal/Capitol)**

**L**uscious Jackson seems like a great idea on paper: a bunch of New Yawk gals who hung out in all the de rigueur downtown clubs in the '70s, listening to the hippest punk and New Wave acts and befriending the future Beastie Boys, who shared their precocious interest in rap. Unfortunately, most people don't want bands with good taste—they want bands that sound good. And the Luscious ladies, for all their urban-slacker chic, don't provide the goods.

Technical skill isn't the issue here; it rarely is in pop music, particularly alternative rock and hip-hop, the two genres Luscious Jackson straddle. Rather, it's a lack of artistic intuition and, more surprisingly, attitude. For their new album, *Fever In Fever Out*, the group enlisted Daniel Lanois to work with longtime producer Tony Mangurian, but even Lanois' savvy can't rescue most of the material here from the listlessness of the band's delivery.

Jill Cunniff's singing is a particular problem. With a thin voice and little sense of pitch or phrasing, she goes for a laid-back jazzy feel but winds up sounding like Liz Phair on valium. On the gently trippy "Why Do I Lie," her vocals fade into the mix rather than providing the energetic foil that the arrangement demands. The more buoyant "Under Your Skin" finds her drowning in a sea of shimmering distortion (one of several seductive flourishes attesting to Lanois' presence on the album). The band's playing is similarly anemic, dominated by Gabrielle Glaser's color-by-numbers guitar and Cunniff's sturdy but stiff bass lines.

Perhaps these shortcomings would be less glaring if the members of Luscious Jackson wrote great songs. No such luck. The tracks on *Fever In*

*Fever Out* offer repeated riffs in lieu of melodies, so that while some shorter numbers have a modest charm, other tunes such as "Don't Look Back" and the psychedelic bolero "Take A Ride" linger

on insufferably. It seems ironic that a group of women who have fit so much art into their lives can't put more life into their art.—*Elysa Gardner*

**Chavez**

**Ride The Fader (Matador)**

**H**as Chavez guitarist Matt Sweeney fallen in love with some fair-haired lass who has inspired him to sing honeyed sonnets over hardcore mayhem? With buckling rhythms and sweetly dissonant melodies, Chavez's latest blends Come with Badfinger, Helmet with Shudder to Think. And we haven't even gotten to the lyrics.

Born of seminal hardcore bands Bullet LaVolta, Skunk, and Bitch Magnet, Chavez delivered a compelling debut on last year's *Gone Glimmering*. As hardcore goes, Chavez were smart and sassy, meshing brainpower with brute force. James Lo's inventive drumming and the manically spiraling guitars of Sweeney and Clay Tarver created bludgeoning bombast, but with edges sharp and sticky.

With *Ride The Fader*, the players stay but the song does not remain the same; it's altogether lighter and leaner. Lo drops off-kilter beats and pops bare cymbal crashes with witty aplomb; "Top Pocket Man" begins with Lo's slamming assault as Sweeney croons over the din. "Tight Around the Jaws" is all mutating drums and tur-

Melanie Weiner

**Full-Contact Mics & Other Necessities**

The squirrely, self-titled debut from Seattle fuzz-pop trio the Presidents Of The United States Of America clarifies their zany intent in its liner notes: Chris Ballew is credited with vocals and two-string basitar, Dave Dederer plays three-string guitbass, and Jason Finn handles "no-string drums." The album was recorded for \$4,000 in Conrad Uno's basement, then snatched up for distribution by Columbia from Uno's indie Pop Liama imprint; goofy alterna-hits like "Lump," "Kitty," and "Peaches" would soon catapult it past the double-platinum milestone, one of last year's most surprising and refreshing success stories.



planning its second assault, it has certain unusual studio demands. For their sophomore release, 2, the Presidents chose Stone Gossard's

Studio Litho, a Seattle hideaway that differs from its competitors in one major respect: It has windows. Tons of 'em.

"This place is like heaven on earth," praises Dederer from the Litho sun-deck. "It's got natural light in every room, so you always know what time of day it is. A lot of bands record at night, so they don't care. But we record during the day, so for us it's like being in your living room."

Ballew adds that the group felt "zero pressure" for the followup, "although we *did* branch out: Dave

Naturally, when such a playful outfit starts played some six-string guitar and I played some

bulent guitars. But "New Room" steers a new direction: Like Joni Mitchell sitting in with Live Skull, the group wraps gurgling guitars and harmony vocals into a subtle electric storm. "Our Boys" veers from brawny rock to '60s-styled vocal harmonizing, and "Memorize this Face" whimpers like sad pop till Lo kicks it with punchy toms.

Perhaps influenced by Lou Barlow and his ilk, Chavez prove their hardcore hearts are capable of deep thoughts too. If music be the fruit of love, give Chavez a watermelon. —Ken Micallef

### The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion

Now I Got Worry (Matador/Capitol)

**A**rmored with a grenade in one hand and a big ol' greasy barbecue sandwich in the other, Jon Spencer aims to teach us all how to do the "Chicken Dog." This new step is originated by Spencer's New York-based trio and guest vocalist Rufus Thomas on the Blues Explosion's latest affront to purist sensibilities; like the album itself, it's a piece of fancy footwork.

The Blues Explosion—guitarist/vocalist Spencer, guitarist Judah Bauer, and drummer Russell Simins—continues to smash funk backbeats, blues clichés, and sleazy slide guitar work against a wall of (literally) screaming punk mania, flavored with Spencer's burlesque mock-Elvis vocalizing. *Now I Got Worry* is even tougher and

more direct than its immediate predecessor, 1994's *Orange*, perhaps reflecting the impact of the band's protracted touring and recording work with Mississippi bluesman R.L. Burnside (with whom the band cut the zanyly improvised Matador album *A Ass Pocket of Whiskey*). With a couple of guest primitives—the Beastie Boys' keyboardist "Money Mark" Ramos-Nishita and percussionist Thermos Malling of the Arizona blues-cretin duo Doo Rag—the band careens its pickled, pixillated way through some swerving, high-temperature new tunes.

Ludicrous and excessive, the style works—mainly because it just plain rocks, dammit. The best tunes here—"Wail," "2 Kindsa Love," "Dynamite Lover," "Can't Stop," "Get Over Here," the instrumental salute "R.L. Got Soul," and the aforementioned "Chicken Dog"—exhibit a fearless dementia that sacrifices sense in the service of pure entertainment value. Only when the group essays such woozy material as Dub Narcotic Sound System's "Fuck Shit Up" and the set-closing "Sticky" does the feverish energy level dip.

Rackety, impolite, compulsively rhythmic, and funny as hell, *Now I Got Worry* should brighten the festivities at any local post-punk juke joint.

—Chris Morris

### Graham Parker

Acid Bubblegum (Razor & Tie)

**N**ever a mellow fellow, Graham Parker finally achieves grouch nirvana on *Acid Bubblegum*, a gripping diatribe against the stupidity and crassness of modern life. If he's attacking easy targets, no matter—Parker brings wit, tenderness and surprising subtlety to what might have been a one-note performance. He's become the poet laureate of pessimism.

While Parker's glowering persona has sometimes overwhelmed his material in the past, this time he's fashioned a diverse, sturdy array of tunes to convey bad tidings, while singing as passionately as ever. "Turn It Into Hate" opens the album on a jaunty note, as GP watches the news and recoils in disgust. Things grow progressively grimmer as he falls to a rampaging mob in the haunting "Impenetrable," and trips over mountains of clutter, both physical and psychic, in the reggaefied "Baggage." Armageddon time!

Parker's high intensity may have its roots in the 1979 album *Squeezing Out Sparks* (just reissued with the agreeably ragged *Live Sparks* set added for extra measure). This acclaimed opus found him moving away from less demanding soul grooves for a harsher, more ambitious attack that still cuts deep, but sorely needs a joke or two. Today, he's

four-string acoustic and Fender Rhodes."

Whenever possible, the lads refused to overdub the lead vocals on eccentric new offerings such as "Bug City," "Tiki God," and "Puffy Little Shoes." Plus, notes Dederer, "We did most of the vocal takes at Litho with live vocal mics. We didn't use fancy studio mics, just the same ones we used on the road. It was a Crown condenser, and that works for us. It gets a nice, warm, up-front kinda sound, and you don't get psyched out by the pop-screen, four-million-dollar mic that you're totally afraid of." Ballew wholeheartedly agrees. "I hate those things!" he snaps. "You can't put your lips on 'em! How are you supposed to sing without putting your lips on the mic? But I also bought a drive-in speaker at an antique store for twenty bucks, wired it up, and made that into a mic—ran it through a distortion pedal and an amplifier."

Additionally, the Presidents set up shop in the same room, with a wheeled drum partition surrounding Finn. Explains Dederer, "Chris had monitors set up. So did I, so you could have monitors or headphones, and just to hell with bleeding. Who cares? The wall around the drum kit lessened the bleed just enough to make it workable."

The main difference between 2 and the debut? Dederer grins mischievously. "We really took our time this time," he deadpans. "We took two-and-a-half weeks to record, so we were really stretching out and getting crazy. And next time we're gonna take three weeks!" —Tom Lanham

Lance Mercer

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# chuck's cuts

by charles m. young

## Tool

### *Aenima* (Zoo)

A collection of songs do not necessarily an album make. Seventy-seven minutes of atmospheric metal, with the songs gradually ascending from and descending into a fever swamp of weirdness, might also an album make. Imagine Rage Against The Machine if they had studied Aleister Crowley instead of Marx. Yeah, it's that old '60s dilemma: revolution or LSD? My reading of history says you can't hallucinate and fight the power simultaneously, so I don't buy the Timothy Leary-inspired crud about "futants" leading us into the future any more than I buy Clinton's "bridge to the 21st century." But if futants inspire Tool, I shall refrain from criticism, because this is some powerful shit.

## Various Artists

### *Message to Love:*

*The Isle of Wight Festival 1970*  
(Columbia/Legacy)  
*The Who*

*Live at the Isle of Wight Festival 1970*  
(Columbia/Legacy)

Terrific "All Right Now" by Free, lame "My Sunday Feeling" by Jethro Tull, cool change-of-pace "Suzanne" by Leonard Cohen, Hendrix giving no hint of his impending death on "Foxy Lady" although "Voodoo Chile" is kinda average for him, Ten Years After showing a lot more inventiveness than they ever got credit for on "Can't Keep From Cryin'," touching "Me and Bobby McGhee" by Kris Kristofferson, hilarious plea for crowd control by Joni Mitchell before "Big Yellow Taxi," obligatory festival drum solo by Carl Palmer, not-over-the-top "When the Music's Over" by the Doors, and so it goes for eleven more acts, ranging from Miles Davis to Tiny Tim. If this had come out at the time in a big box, it would have been just another attempt to cash

in on Woodstock. Now it's a charming time capsule.

If *Live at Leeds* is one of the greatest live albums ever, then *Isle of Wight* has to be ranked right up there too. I'd rate *Leeds* (in the complete re-release) as more intimate and the song selection more whimsical. *Isle* feels more intense, the larger crowd perhaps inspiring Townshend's elbow to ever more devastating slash-and-burn attacks on his SG. My only quibble is that they didn't know how to record drums that well in 1970, and there's only so much enhancement they could manage even in the digital '90s. Poor Keith, we'll never know his like again. That's a small quibble, though. This is the Who at their peak, with a nearly complete *Tommy* and three songs of roaring intro-

songs like the progeny of a drunken one-nighter between Captain Beefheart and Big Mama Thornton. When he groans "I can't stand bein' ugly anymore," you just know Willie Dixon is looking down from his cloud and thinking, "This dude gets the joke." Low-down, swingin' band manages to blend in the horns without sounding like a bunch of nerds from the high school marching band. Songs have actual hooks, not just reiterations of blues clichés. Hope Blind Pig figures out a way to break this guy.

## Utah Phillips & Ani DiFranco

### *The Past Didn't Go Anywhere* (Righteous Babe)

When was the last time you saw somebody old do something with

tapes and provided an ambient dub backing. The result grabs you both intellectually and musically. It might even inspire you to go out and change the world instead of sleazing your way up the corporation.

## Allen Ginsberg

### *Ballad of the Skeletons* (Mouth Almighty/Mercury)

With its iambic backbeat, rock is the best music for poetry that seeks to declaim with rhythm. Here Ginsberg declaims about a vast panorama of evil, concentrating on the multinationals, the CIA, and the political hacks who do their bidding. "He's already denounced those guys," you object. To which I say, "Those guys are still doing really horrible things, so the serious artist will seek new ways to denounce them until enough people wake up." Ginsberg makes his points with the help of a simple, catchy chord progression played by Paul McCartney and Philip Glass. Now that this dreadful election is over, you can take it to the streets.

## 24-7 Spyz

### *Heavy Metal Soul by the Pound* (What Are Records?)

Melding metal and funk seems to mean taking the guitar settings from metal and the scales from funk and jazz, with no Led Zep-style blues references to ease the disso-

nance. It's pretty mind-blowing if you just go with it, but you almost have to be in a mosh pit, twisting your spine at odd angles and breathing a fine mist of male sweat droplets for full appreciation. When I listen to the Spyz, I smell the mosh mist, even in my living room. Lyrics tend toward the surreal and introspective, but they do lash out at the lame demographics of music appreciation: "No hope for niggaz who play rock guitar."



spection from the unreleased *Lifeline* project. Anyone with even a moderate interest in the Who needs it bad.

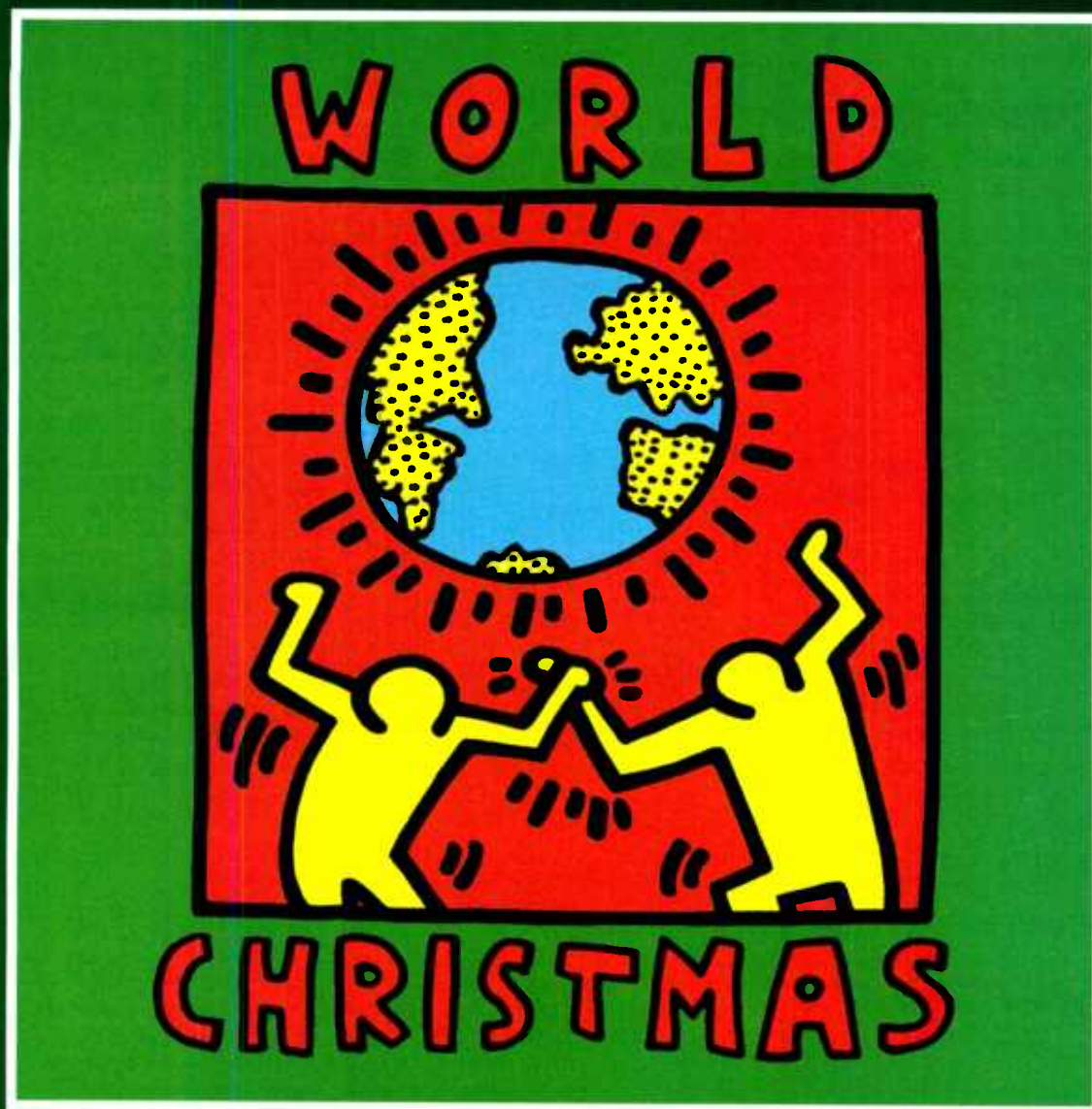
## Preacher Boy

### *Gutters and Pews* (Blind Pig)

The '60s and '70s were a period of blues innovation. The '80s and '90s have been a period of virtuoso traditionalism. Who will make the blues new again? I nominate Preacher Boy, who growls his

somebody young? An oatmeal commercial, right? Well, here we have two smart, energetic people reaching across the decades, and they've come up with something that is not only new under the sun, it's moral. Phillips gave DiFranco master tapes of him explaining why folk songs are boring, telling stories about his evolution into pacifist anarchism, philosophizing about the stupidity of greed. DiFranco unobtrusively chopped up the

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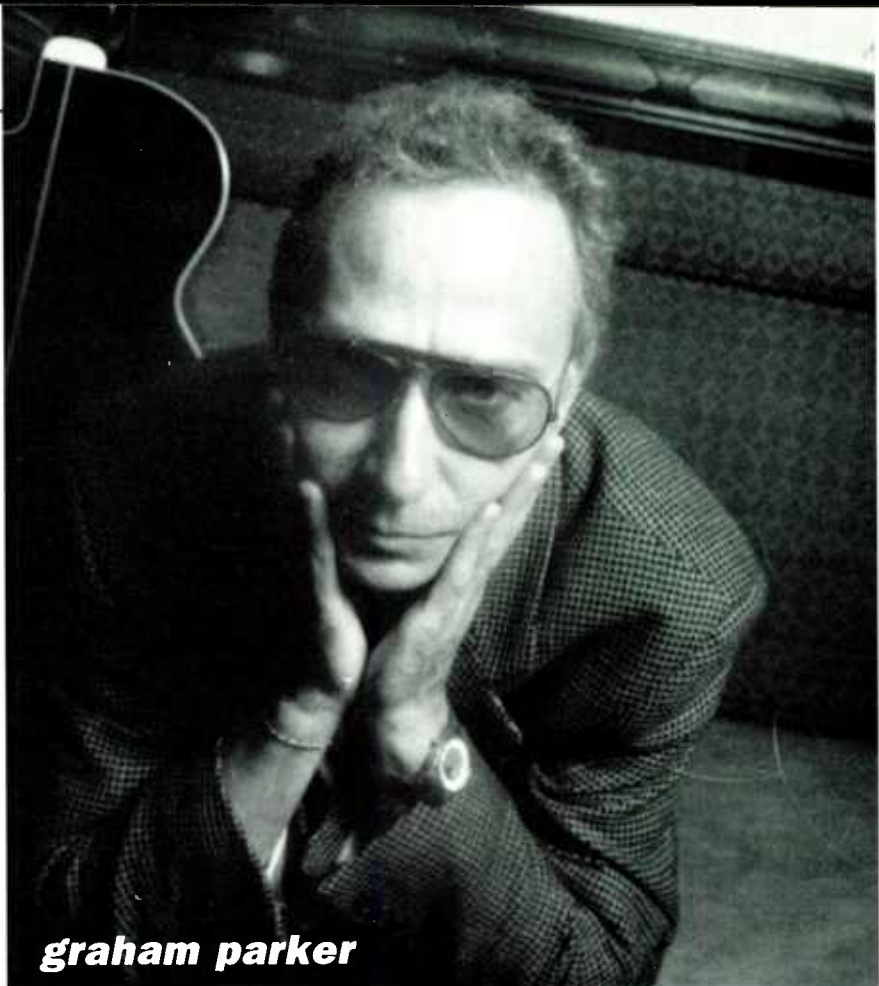
more balanced, and funnier. The most outrageous new track is the rollicking "Obsessed with Aretha," where Parker disses young pretenders and then considers the latter-day Lady Soul herself, with her commercial endorsements and fancy clothes. Deciding that she's still got soul, he adds slyly, "but not that much." Only someone who can still deliver the goods would have the nerve to make such an impertinent statement. On the strength of *Acid Bubblegum*, Parker's entitled to say what he wants.

— Jon Young

### Bruno Walter

**Bruno Walter: The Edition (Sony Classical)**

**M**uch like the drummer in a jazz or rock combo, the conductor sets the pace for an entire orchestra, and depending upon his or her perspective, the music can proceed with Dionysian fervor or Apollonian rigor. To find both points of view represented in one musician is all too rare a phenomenon, and yet Bruno Walter (1876-1962) managed, over the course of a long and distinguished career, to satisfy the demands of Romanticists and Classicists alike. Spanning the turn of the century to the dawn of stereo sound in the late '50s and early '60s, Walter championed the work of both Brahms and Wagner (refusing to



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### graham parker

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choose the aesthetic of one over the other), all the while pursuing an artistic ideal of fidelity to the composer's original intentions—a tricky proposition under the best of circumstances.

The extent to which he succeeded may be gauged from a random sampling of the elegant 20-bit digital remasterings of his autumnal output—*The Bruno Walter Edition*—that Sony Classical has issued as mid-priced CDs over the past year. Many of these recordings feature the Columbia Symphony Orchestra, a West Coast studio ensemble created expressly for Walter's recordings at the American Legion Hall in Hollywood, a dark, resonant acoustic space. Now why should any of you taking your first dip into the classical repertoire invest in analog recordings which are 35-40 years old? Because they sound better, and for me the old guard of conductors were a special breed of cat—for them, many of these musical giants were not old masters, but contemporary composers.

I grew up on Walter's early-'60s cycle of Brahms symphonies, and to me they remain old friends. Walter didn't have Toscanini's relentless rhythmic intensity or Wilhelm Furtwängler's giddy interpretive gumption, but he managed in his own unassuming way to convey dramatic rigor and romantic urgency. The *First* and *Fourth* are elemental minor-key epics, but the *Second* and *Third* (packaged here as a single CD) are more lyrical major-key works, and Walter brings a sweetness and warmth to them that eludes the more fiery Toscanini, displaying a special gift for clarifying complex harmonic and textural details, and rendering them with a serene transparency that

is all his own. Walter was also a protégé of Mahler's, and upon his mentor's death the young conductor introduced the elder composer's final masterpiece, the *Ninth Symphony*, reprised here in a colossal performance that illustrates the conductor's assertion that "Mahler's whole life through was seeking God—Bruckner had found God."

Of the many symphonic works in this vast collection, there's an exceptional Beethoven cycle and a fine sampling of Mozarts that are perhaps more Romantic than Classical in Walter's interpretation. *Wagner: Orchestral Music* illustrates the conductor's enormous reverence for the prince of the German new school, but for the transcendentalists among you, I recommend the chorale works, where Walter's luminous ear for complex textures and colors shines through: His famous 1954 mono rendition of *Brahms: A German Requiem* and a devotional *Bruckner: Te Deum/Mozart: Requiem*. Bruno Walter remains a giant in twentieth-century music and a portal of consciousness for seekers of truth everywhere.—Chip Stern

## shorts

### Poundcake

**Aloha Via Satellite (QDivision)**

don't mean to be the pigeonholing critic, but there really is a Boston sound, and it has nothing to do with Orpheus or Ultimate Spinach. It's a special brand of alternapop, with a certain production sparkle, lotsa crunchy guitars, plenty of left-



turn chord changes, extra-literate lyrics, and a beat that doesn't stop driving. All are offered in abundance on this debut by a trio of Boston vets (the best known being ex-Cavedog Mark Rivers). Tunes like "Statue of Liberty," "(The Not-So-Incredible) Shrinking Man," and "Marian P. Hammer Day" pile on the wit, the hooks, and Clayton Scoble's searing guitar. Vocals are a tad one-dimensional, but the transcendent choruses of "Big Brother Dandeline" and "Kick the Can" more than make up. Bad name, good band.—**Mac Randall**

**Clive Gregson**

*I Love This Town*  
(Compass)

**H**e writes songs as melodious and witty as Elvis Costello's (without the excess bile and literary pretensions), he plays guitar with all the power and virtuosity of Richard Thompson (minus the wacky moments), and he sings in an unassuming baritone. For all this, Clive Gregson, the English veteran tunesmith now living in Nashville, remains a perennially underrecognized talent. It's unclear whether *I Love This Town* will make much difference in his commercial status, but one thing is certain: Gregson's latest is yet another classy outing. The tunes are more pop and less folk than usual, particularly "Jericho Junction," with its gleefully descending piano chords and backwards intro. Yet the best is reserved for the sad ballads "Things I Didn't Do" and "Ramshackle

Road," which manage to be insightful without getting maudlin. If you like your music warm, friendly and smart, this *Town's* for you.—**Mac Randall**

**Scenic**

*Acquatica (World Domination)*

**W**hatever you do, don't call it ambient. Sure, parts of *Acquatica* are all high shimmer and long dissolve (see "The Tones of Pello-

ponnesus" or the title track), but *Scenic* is at its best on the louder, more harmonically involved numbers. Selections like "Ionia," "Angelica" and "Dronia" (detect a certain vowel-oriented theme here?) are still indebted to the likes of Eno and Can. *Scenic* are in the anthem business, and anthems without words are infinitely more timeless and therefore better than those with. Bonus points for canny use of flugelhorn, harmonica, clarinet, and bouzouki.—**Mac Randall**

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[See page 94 for more Classifieds.]

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# ARE YOU THE BEST UNSIGNED BAND?

**M**usician magazine, in association with JBL Professional, Lexicon and Atlantic Records, is proud to announce the 1997 Best Unsigned Band Competition. Open to all unsigned artists and bands of every genre,

## ENTER THE MUSICIAN BEST UNSIGNED BAND COMPETITION

this competition seeks to link the world's greatest undiscovered talent with music industry professionals and established artists. To get connected, just read the rules, fill out the entry form and send us your best tunes today!



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### ENTRY FORM

Band/Artist Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

1. Entry Form
2. 2-Song Cassette (original material only)
3. Name/address of each musician in your band or who plays on the tape
4. Processing fee of \$17.50 (check/money order — US funds only)

Send to: Musician/B.U.B., 1515 Broadway, 15th Floor, New York, NY, 10036

**DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES IS DECEMBER 31, 1996**

**Judging**  
The first round of judging will be carried out by editors and writers of major music publications. 12 winners will be chosen by our panel of artist-judges featuring Tori Amos, Joe Satriani, Bob Mould, Vince Gill, and Buddy Guy.

**Prizes**  
Semi-finalists will be announced in Musician magazine throughout 1997. The winners will receive extended coverage in Musician upon completion of the competition. The winners will also be featured on Musician's "Best of the B.U.B.s" CD manufactured by Atlantic Records and serviced to all indie- and major-label A&R departments and major media outlets. Winners will receive copies of the CD for their own promotional purposes. The top-placing winner will receive advertised equipment from JBL Professional and Lexicon.

**Rules**  
No purchase necessary. All entries must be received by December 31, 1996. Entrants must not be signed to a recording contract by an established independent or major label. Artists retain all rights to their material. However, tapes cannot be returned. If selected as a winner, artists are responsible for final mix and photographs appearing on "Best of the B.U.B.s" CD. Inclusion on the "Best of the B.U.B.s" CD does not demonstrate any contractual relationship with Atlantic Records. "Best of the B.U.B.s" CD is not for sale and will not generate any royalties. All decisions are final. Employees of Musician magazine, JBL Professional, Lexicon, and Atlantic Records are not eligible. Void where prohibited.



# dealersindex

## You Can Now Buy Musician in More Stores Near You!

**MUSICIAN keeps on growing!** In the last few months we have added over 700 new dealers that sell MUSICIAN and/or MUSICIAN's Guide to Touring and Promotion. This month we are proud to announce the addition of the following musical instrument and record stores. We invite you to check out these quality stores for the next issues of MUSICIAN and other great products. This is of course just a partial list, so keep looking for this page in future issues for more new stores in your area as we continue to expand.

### ALABAMA

**D & D RECORDS** UNION SPRINGS, AL  
**BIG BEAT RECORDS** AUBURN, AL  
**RANEY'S MUSIC** WASILLA, AK

### ARIZONA

**ZIA RECORDS EXCHANGE** TUCSON, AZ

### ARKANSAS

**MUSIC COMPLEX** JONESBORO, AR

### CALIFORNIA

**MAGIC LIGHT & SOUND** MANTECA, CA  
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**MUSIC CENTER OF STOCKTON** STOCKTON, CA  
**SION WORLD MUSIC CENTER** WESTMINSTER, CA  
**VIRGIN MEGASTORE** COSTA MESA, CA  
**MONTH HIGH RECORDS** SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, CA  
**STEF-JEN INC** HOLLYWOOD, CA  
**NEW LIFE GOSPEL RECORDS** LOS ANGELES, CA  
**MOUNT HIGH RECORDS** SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, CA

### COLORADO

**PRO SOUND MUSIC** COLORADO SPRINGS, CO  
**AFFORDABLE MUSIC** SILVERTHORNE, CO  
**UPTOWN MUSIC & VIDEO** LA JUNTE, CO  
**ROCKY MOUNTAIN ONE** ST CORTEZ, CO

### CONNECTICUT

**KANES MUSIC** DANBURY, CT  
**MUSIC GUILD** DANBURY, CT

### DELAWARE

**ACCENT MUSIC** WILMINGTON, DE  
**BERTS COMPACT DISCS** WILMINGTON, DE

### FLORIDA

**CARLTON MUSIC CENTER** WINTER HAVEN, FL  
**MUSIC CENTRE** DAVIE, FL  
**BRASS & REED MUSIC** MERRITT ISLAND, FL  
**D-CREW RECORDS & TAPES** OPA LOCKA, FL  
**WAX TREE RECORDS** WINTER PARK, FL  
**ALOBAR BOOKS & MUSIC** ORLANDO, FL  
**MET ORADERS 4** MIAMI, FL  
**BOUJOLY RECORDS INC** MIAMI, FL

### GEORGIA

**ATTINAS MUSIC STORE** FOREST PARK, GA  
**CMC MUSIC** COLUMBUS, GA  
**YOUNG AMERICAN MUSIC** MACON, GA  
**BILL HARDIN MUSIC** MACON, GA

### IDAHO

**RECORD EXCHANGE** BOISE, ID

### IOWA

**RONDINELLI MUSIC AUDIO** DUBUQUE, IA  
**16TH AVENUE MUSIC** CEDAR RAPIDS, IA  
**WEIRD HAROLD'S** BURLINGTON, IA  
**UNCLE JOHNS RECORDS** SIOUX CITY, IA

### ILLINOIS

**SOUND POST** SKOKIE, IL

**B J'S MUSIC** GALESBURG, IL  
**CHICAGO GUITAR** CHICAGO, IL  
**WORLD RECORDS** CHICAGO, IL  
**DOG EAR MUSIC & MOVIES** WILMETTE, IL  
**SOUND POST** SKOKIE, IL  
**WORLD RECORDS** CHICAGO, IL

### INDIANA

**ROXY MUSIC SHOP** LA PORTE, IN  
**VON'S BOOK SHOP** WEST LAFAYETTE, IN  
**SIDE 1 MUSIC** RICHMOND, IN  
**TRACKS** BLOOMINGTON, IN  
**INDEPENDENT RECORD** INDIANAPOLIS, IN

### KANSAS

**STICK IT IN YOUR EAR** PITTSBURGH, KS

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**MUSIC NOOK INC** MILFORD, MA  
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**BOOMTOWN SOUND & VIDEO** HASTINGS, MI

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**CAPPS MUSIC CO INC** MO  
**MAIN STREET RECORDS** FESTUS, MO

### MONTANA

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**BASS MUSIC INC** FAYETTEVILLE, NC  
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- 201 8/95 In the Studio with U2, Steve Earle/Townes Van Zandt, Buddy Guy
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- 203 10/95 Collective Soul, Dionne Farris, Frank Zappa, Les Claypool
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- 205 12/95 Sonic Youth, Pony, Clarke & DiMeola, Alanis Morissette
- 206 1/96 Melissa Etheridge, Cypress Hill, Garbage
- 208 3/96 100 Years of Recording, Women Producers, Keith Jarrett
- 209 4/96 Gin Blossoms, Luscious Jackson, Masters/Slide Blues Guitar
- 210 5/96 Tori Amos, Dwight Yoakam & Willie Nelson, Joan Osborne
- 211 6/96 Hootie & the Blowfish, Rage Against the Machine, D'Angelo
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- 214 9/96 Duane Allman, Vernon Reid & Junior Brown, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Def Leppard, Cracker, October Project
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- 216 11/96 Guitar Trio: Steve Vai, Joe Satriani, Eric Johnson, John Mellencamp, Reggie Young, Marcus Roberts
- 217 12/96 Phish, Sting, Graham Maby, Leah Andreone, Burt Bacharach



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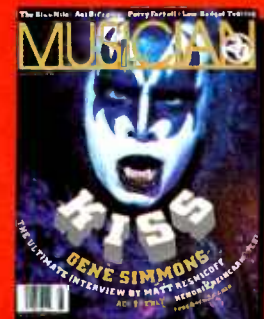
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# MUSICIAN CLASSIFIED HOTLINE

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 In NY State (212) 536-5008  
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Publisher has the right to refuse all mail order retailer ads that might conflict with Musician dealers.

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**BOSS**, 7200 Dominion Cir., Los Angeles, CA, 90040, (213) 685-5141: chorus, **32**  
**CREST AUDIO**, 100 Eisenhower Dr., Paramus, NJ, 07652, (201) 909-8700: 7001 power amp, **12**  
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**KLARK-TEKNIK**, 448 Post Rd., Buchanan, MI, 49107, (800) 695-1010: DN780, **72**  
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**Bill Monroe**



**Jeffrey Lee Pierce**



**Ella Fitzgerald**



**Johnny "Guitar" Watson**



**Gerry Mulligan**



**Brownie McGhee**

# the passing parade

**A**s the new year nears, we take a moment to remember those artists whose passing in '96 leaves us with legacies to build on and appreciate in the years to come. In addition to those pictured here, these musicians will be missed:

**Chas Chandler** (bassist with the Animals)

**Marcel Dadi** (solo guitarist)

**Bernard Edwards** (bassist/producer with Chic)

**Mercer Ellington**

(bandleader/trumpeter/arranger)

**Morton Gould** (composer)

**Don Grolnick** (songwriter/producer/session keyboardist)

**Walter Hyatt** (Uncle Walt's Band)

**Sergei Kuryokhin** (avant-garde keyboardist)

**Shane Laffen** (keyboardist, Electric Hellfire Orchestra)

**John Kahn** (bassist with Old & In The Way)

**Jonathan Melvojn** (road keyboardist with Smashing Pumpkins)

**John Panozzo** (drummer with Styx)

**Bob Thiele** (prolific producer)

**Mel Taylor** (drummer with the Ventures)



**Tupac Shakur**

Tupac by michael o'neill/outline, brownie mcghee by jon sievert/michael ochs archives, all others from michael ochs archives

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