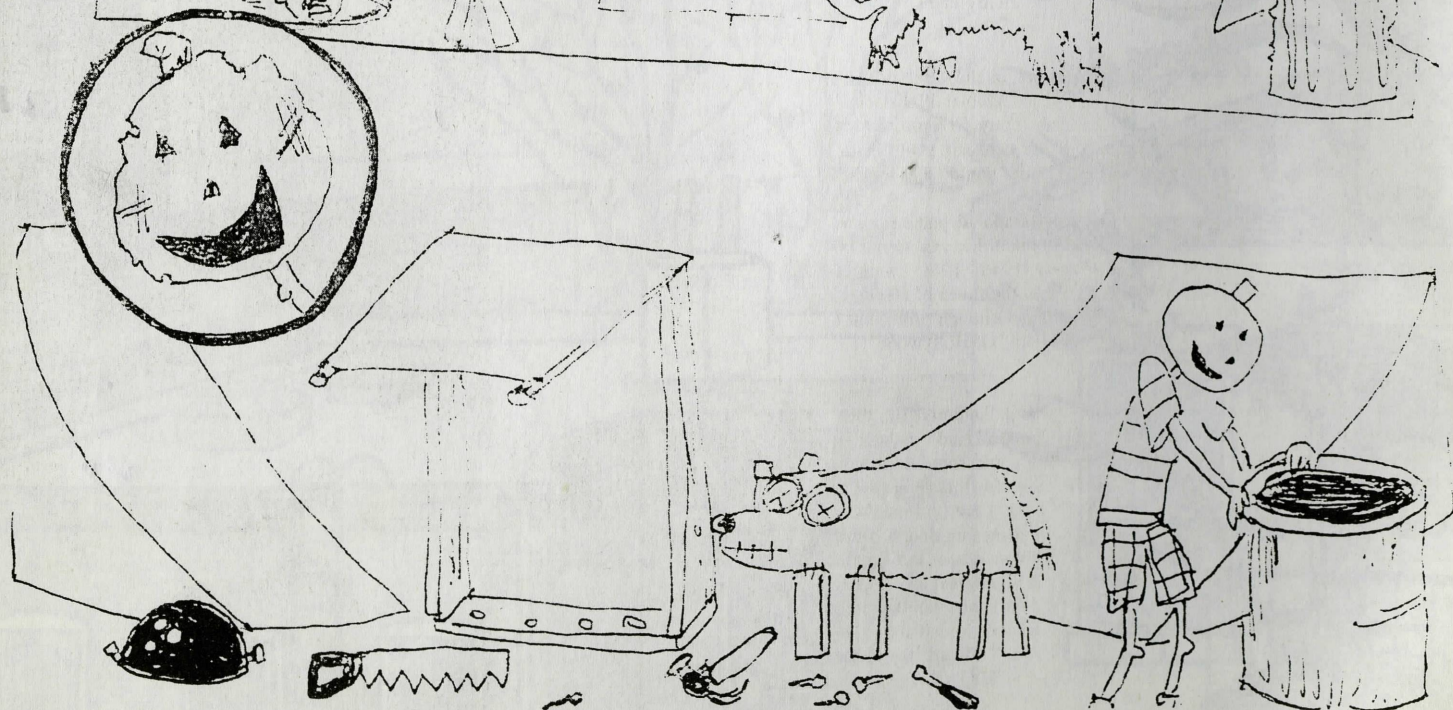
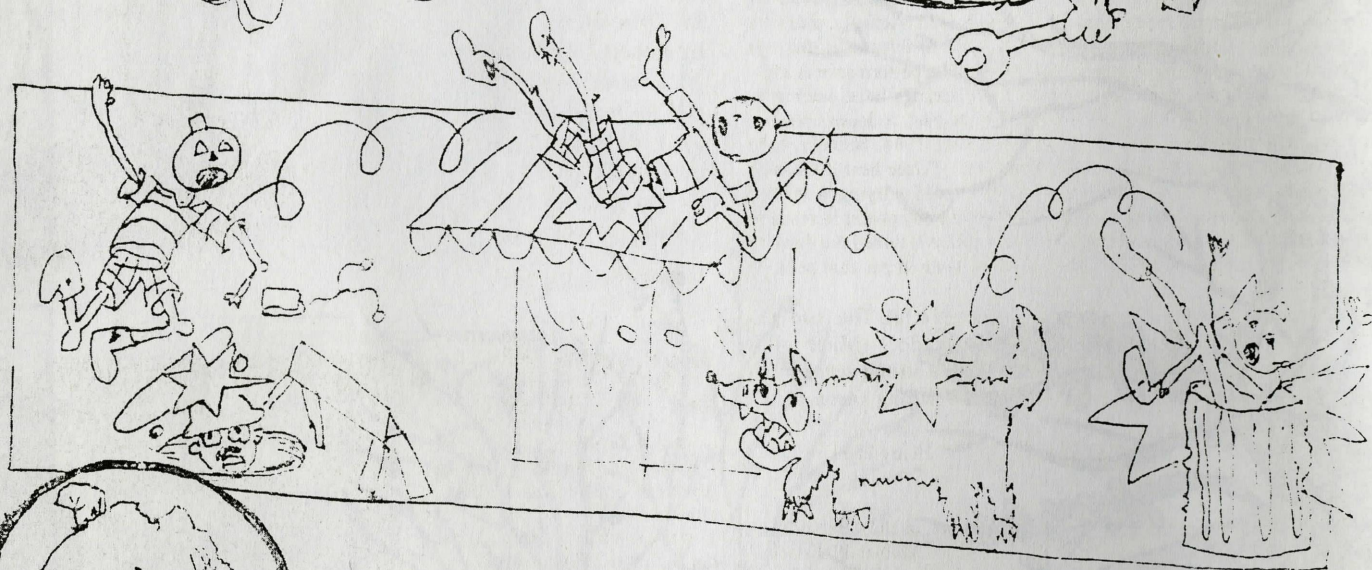
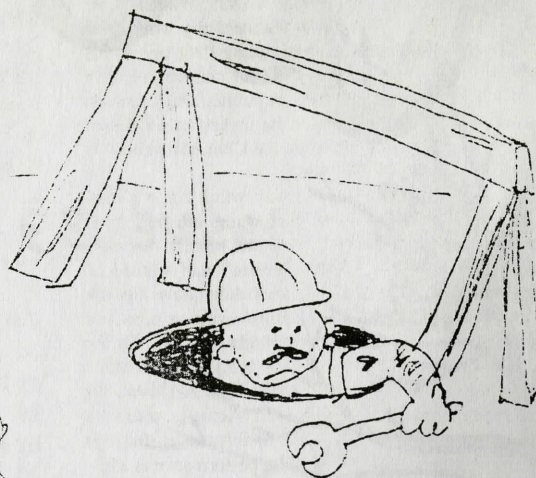


Roctober

ISSUE 39 • FOUR DOLLARS







WE
LOVE
ROCK



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WEB OF MYSTERY

haggis_buffet.blogspot.com
ruthlessreviews.com/top10/
10blackmetal.html
SteveMandich.com/
evelincarnate/kneivelrock
www.sillydaddy.net

Dear Editor,

Thank you for that generous review of (my album) "I Don't Wanna." One point, a lot of reviewers think that I perversely withheld my work from the public when I was playing. It's not so, without telling the story in this letter (it's a long story and there would be a different chapter for each phase I went through) I did form bands and play in public, and I couldn't get any traction. I went through a period of offering myself as a sideman on violin in 1975, played with an R&B singer at the Club Martinique in August 1975, he couldn't get it going commercially.

The public and the backup have to lift you the way wind lifts a glider, otherwise nothing happens. I suppose many performers are in a good equilibrium with the subculture and don't face the barren response problem, but I could not overcome it. "I Don't Wanna" was worked up with a view to an actual sectarian Marxist group; they didn't have any use for it. I was not shrewd enough to handle the capital expense aspect of forming a band and that may have cost me an overnight success. By the mid-Seventies, I could handle that problem, but the music itself couldn't seem to find a fitting venue. I played at Anthology Film Archives, the Kitchen, Experimental Intermedia, it never took hold. Actually, there are some striking rock-band songs and such I hope to release in the near future, I find it remarkable that they received a public performance at all. Many reviews compare me to acts which are decades later, seemingly without understanding that the future follows the past, it doesn't precede it. (I wish I did know how to be in 1964 after 1984, actually, time dislocation is an open problem in my other "career" (see henryflynt.org), but I don't have a ghost of an idea for a solution yet.) I'm trying to say that work of mine which is found acceptable today had no context to relate to when I did it. CBGB (do you know what that means?) turned me down to play at the beginning of 1975. They were one hundred per cent punk by then, probably.

Don't want to give the impression that I'm regretful. The road was blocked and so I found something else to do. (Much of it represented on the web site.) But I do have a strong sense of an opportunity foregone because I was in the wrong place at the wrong time

Best wishes,

Henry Flynt

Dear Editor,

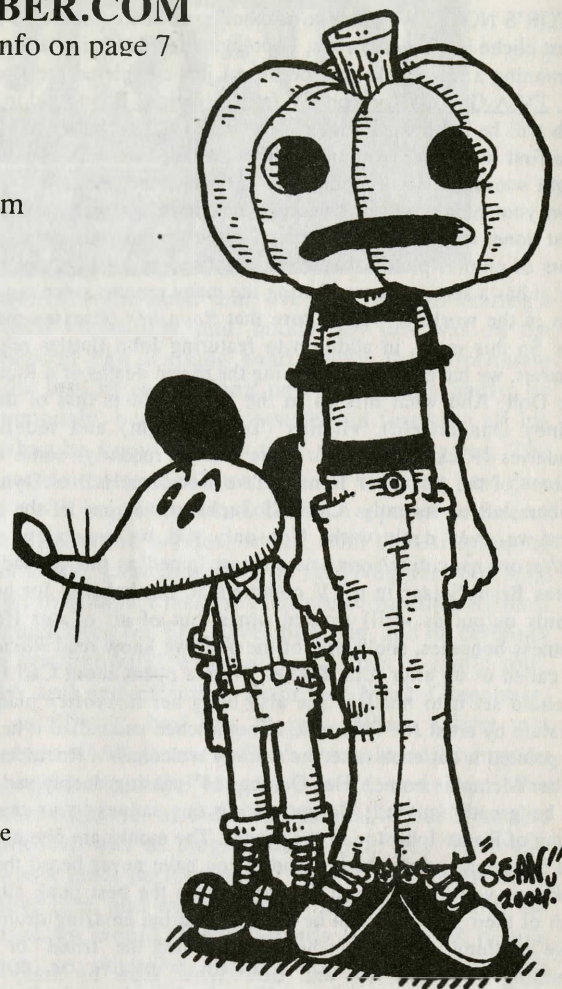
I'm sure you select your reviewers carefully, but in the "Behind The Music" article I think you slipped. Your writer "JA" adamantly distanced his- or herself from unhip acts -- John Denver, Tony Orlando, David Cassidy, Harry Chapin to name a few. His or her neurosis about being considered "square" takes up space where the reader could have learned more about the subject.

And he or she dropped this shallowness in the Jefferson Airplane review: "If you're a Baby Boomer, this is your band." In his or her zeal to not be considered unhip, he or she denigrates an 18-year (1946 - 1964) swath of humans that he or she supposes marched solely to the tunes of Hendrix, the Doors and the beloved Jeff Airplane. This is not enough proof, but I suspect that JA is secretly a "rock critic." - Art Fein "Of Hollywood"

Dear Editor,

If you haven't already heard, the latest CD by NRBQ "Dummy" (on their own Edison label) has a great track called "Hey Punkin Head", as well as a cover of a popular song-poem "Little Rug Bug", and some cool new originals like the title track (there's a hilarious video for this song that is destined to be seen nowhere). "Do the Primal Thing" (nearly a monkey-rock song) and "My Imaginary Radio". I'm a longtime fan of the band, and I just attended their pair of 35th anniversary concerts at the Calvin Theater in Northampton, Mass. They were really brilliant, magical special shows where NRBQ got together with all their past band members and some guests for a couple of big celebrations of the bands long history. Do you accept suggestions of nominations for the Hall of Dynamic Greatness? If so, then I humbly nominate "the boys"-NRBQ.

-- Scott Cornish



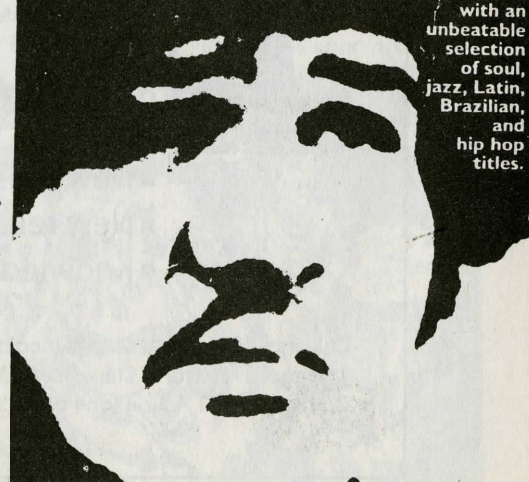
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EDITOR'S NOTE: Welcome to another issue of *Roctober*. To demonstrate the biggest cliché in zine editorials, I apologize for this being a few months late. It was running a few weeks late because I just completed the *Roctober* inspired book, TV-A-Go-Go: Rock on TV from American Bandstand to American Idol, which will be out next Summer. Then a few delays out of my hands pushed it to the first week in November, which provided us with election results that I thought warranted some updates to the magazine. Hopefully you are holding this in your hands within calendar year 2004, and our next issue is already almost done, and will ship February. The theme of this issue was supposed to be lots of comix, plus a themeless potpourri of all kinds of goofy stuff, but sadly, it has a sort of theme. During the many months since our last issue many greats in the world of pop culture that *Roctober* obsesses over have passed away. So this issue, in addition to featuring John Battles regular column of obituaries, we have articles mourning the recent deaths of a Ramone and a New York Doll. And what hits us in the heart most is that of the many heroes (Rodney Dangerfield), villains (Terry Knight) and redefiners of moral boundaries (Rick James) that have left us recently, some have been true members of the *Roctober* family. Two *Roctober* Hall of Dynamic Greatness members left us recently. **Cordell Jackson** was one of the most wonderful ladies we ever dealt with. Not only did we interview the Rockabilly artist/record executive/songwriter (most famed as the old lady guitarist who smokes Brian Setzer in a TV commercial, but beloved for her 1950s Moon Records output as well) several times, but of all of our Hall of Dynamic Greatness honorees, she is one of the ones we know read *Roctober* religiously (she called us up after John Battles wrote a poem about Carl Perkins to ask if she could set it to music). She also hung her *Roctober* plaque, featuring a caricature by artist Joe Fullerton, in her kitchen and called it her favorite award (she pointed it out each time she warmly welcomed a *Roctober* writer member into her Memphis home). Her October 14th passing deeply saddens us and she will be greatly missed. Compounding our sadness was the November 8th passing of Roger Johnston of the monks. The monks are one of the greatest and most legendary garage bands, and if you have never heard their album *black monk time* you have missed out on perhaps the best punk album ever made. Much of their greatness can be attributed to the amazing drumming of Roger, unlike anything you've ever heard. Pre-dating the "tribal" or "Burundi Beat" drumming of Adam Ant and Bow Wow Wow by many years, Roger's ominous, primal floor tom-heavy beats were hypnotizing and fear-inducing. Counter that with his humorous vocals on the song "Cuckoo," and you have an

artist whose spare but powerful output really covers all the emotional bases. When I absurdly and miraculously was invited to a monks reunion at singer Gary Burger's home years ago Roger had been through some rough times but was warmly embraced by the brotherhood of monks and the complicated, but genuine and profound, relationships between these men was wonderful to observe, and Roger truly appreciated their support. And despite having survived the rough times, he still displayed tremendous humor. The boys had been messing around with some recordings but Roger was not physically up to playing. Amazingly, when the band had their official reunion a few years later in New York in front of a packed house of monk-maniacs, Roger (as I mentioned in my review) was by far the strongest link in the monks chain, expertly demonstrating the powerful drumming that made their record so amazing. When the monks played again earlier this year Roger could not perform as he had recently had a lung removed. He was paid a full member's share and was there in spirit at what was a triumphant concert, but he was missed. Many folks survive with a single lung (Link Wray has lived about 100 years one-lunging it) so I didn't expect to hear the sad news early this November. He will truly, truly live on forever through his magical music. Finally, a man who was indirectly responsible for *Roctober*, and all contemporary history-minded pop music mags, also passed recently. James Porter will memorialize him below. Enjoy the issue and be thankful all these greats blessed us with their creativity.

-Jake Austen, editor



Greg Shaw died on October 19 at age 55 of heart failure. He wasn't the first indie-label owner or fanzine publisher, yet all the garage-rock e-groups were buzzing about the great man's death. By the following Monday, the only thing bigger was Ashlee Simpson's lip-synch gaffe on *Saturday Night Live*. Both topics were ripe for discussion that weekend, but only one was discussed with any kind of respect. And it sure wasn't Ashlee Simpson.

When rock magazines were still new in the mid-late sixties, Shaw was one of

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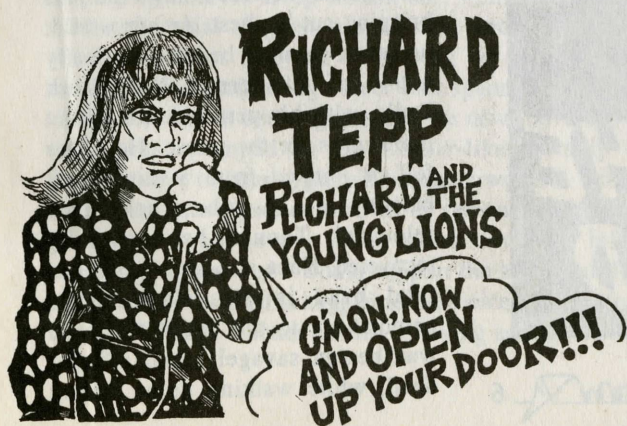
THE FINAL CURTAIN

Gentleman John Battles is a great fan of all and a good friend to many of the legends of Rock & Roll. Here he pays final respects to some of his favorite artists who have recently made the transition from mortal to immortal

Richard Tepp (nee Howard/Howie Tepp) lead singer and multi-instrumentalist, of the legendary 60s Garage band, Richard and The Young Lions, passed away in June, after a courageous battle with Leukemia. Tepp, who was besieged with physical problems (brought on, in no small part, from having been shot three times) for much of his life, pulled a surprise move in 1999 by reuniting with the original Young Lions (seven members strong!), resulting in a triumphant return to the stage at The 2000 Cavestomp! Festival. I was there, and I can still scarcely believe what I heard. These guys could not be touched for pure Garage Punk Power, but what impressed me the most was the cameraderie between the band members. It was so genuine, you'd have sworn that they were still the same teenagers who'd met and started playing Rock n' Roll together some 35 years before....and who's to say they weren't? Theirs is a success story that doesn't translate into dollars and cents as much as getting a shot at immortality by doing what they loved the most, and then getting to do it all over again! Richard was admittedly brought into the position of frontman for his unbelievably long hair, somewhere between Prince Valiant and Conan The Barbarian (that is, IF Conan had actually combed his hair!). With the exception of Moulty, Augie Meyers, and a few other brave souls, no one was sporting hair like that in early 1966. Tepp backed that profile with some of the snarliest, snottiest Punk vocals yet, though he was equally at ease with a moody, Folk-oriented ballad. The band's debut, "Open Up Your Door", one of the finest Garage Punk singles ever, made inroads into several markets, notably in Detroit, where the fuzz driven fury of the guitars, a wild, stompin' beat (African drums were employed to beef up the sound), plus Richard's unhinged vocals made it a huge hit with the local kids, and quite possibly made a big impression on a young MC5, who had yet to release their first recordings. Two excellent singles followed, "Nasty" and "You Can Make It" (which was, intentionally conceived in the "Open Up Your Door" mode, but was made even more interesting with the addition of chimes). The band did not originally have a very long run, but they made up for lost time, upon their reforming, with an endless stream of writing, recording and performing. They'd been just as hard at work putting together killer cover versions of 60s Garage classics as they had been

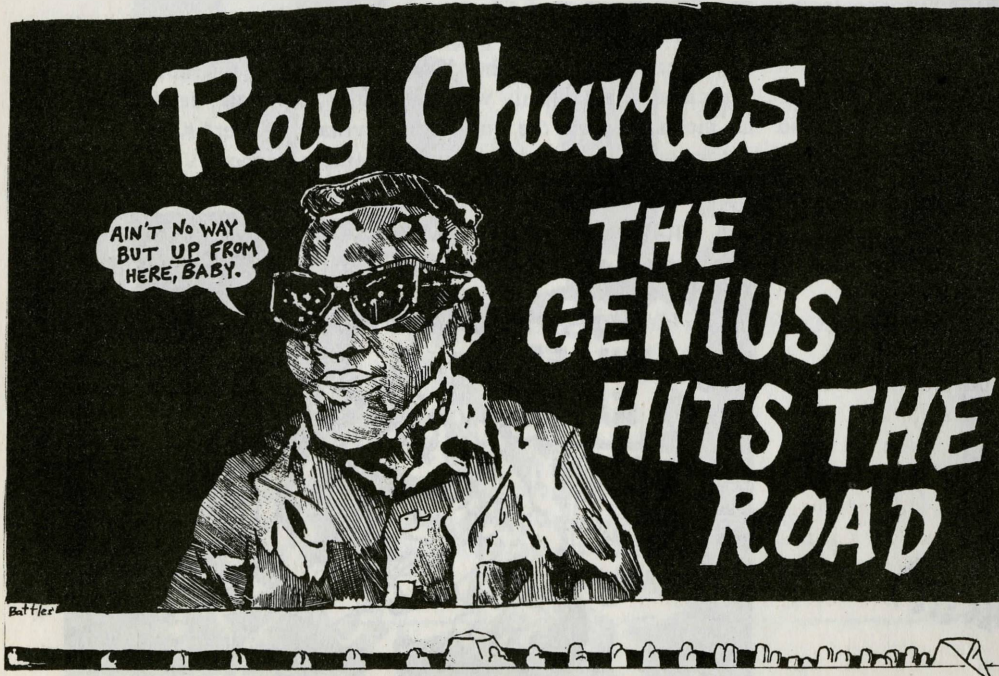
writing new material in the same vein. I've been privy to hearing a few of their latest recordings, and, buddy, my jaw was on the floor! They sounded like a young band, minus the unfortunate influences of the last 30 years. Their new album will, sadly, be released posthumously, but Richard insisted on finishing all his vocals, even when he knew that his time was running out. The album will feature new material, a couple of remakes, and just one cover, and it will hopefully coincide with a separate release of all six original singles and b-sides, which, with the exception of "Open Up Your Door" (which appears on the "Nuggets" box set), are now difficult to obtain. I had the pleasure of meeting Richard at the band's soundcheck for The Cavestomp gig, and he certainly lived up to the description given by all his friends, a gentle soul, polite, friendly, and self-effacing. Drummer Mark Greenburg, better known as "Twig", had this to say: "When I first met Richard, I'd just turned 18. It was at Don's Drive-In, in Livingston (New Jersey), and he had the longest hair I'd ever seen! We laughed from that night on, in 1966, for the rest of our lives. He was just a fun-loving ball of laughs, and a great guy. I'll really miss him, he was a great performer and a great friend. The band and I, we all love him, and we will go on. We promised him on his deathbed that we would. We've already had several people offer to audition, so, whatever changes do take place, we will carry on. He will always be there with us. I know he's looking down on us now, laughing and saying, "You schmucks! What are you gonna do, now?!" The Young Lions will rise to the task, and make King Richard proud. What sets them apart from so many other bands is that they're truly a brotherhood, just like Robin Hood's Merry Men, King Arthur's Knights of The Round Table, or Ralph Kramden's Raccoon Lodge. The King is dead, long live The King. *Note: I was just informed that a successor has been named, Richard's son.*

Arthur Kane - In a life plagued with so many near-fatal mishaps and career setbacks, Arthur Kane weathered an unrelenting storm that came to a halt only with his sudden, untimely, death. Taking his nickname from the Buck Rogers villain, "Killer" Kane, Arthur got in on the ground floor of the emerging post-Velvets New York underground music scene by joining a short-lived (but



undeniably seminal) band called Actress, which also included drummer Billy Murcia, guitarist Rick Rivets (later in The Brats), and singer/guitarist Johnny Volume (a stage name he'd soon change to Thunders). Singer David Johanson would eventually round out the lineup that, by early 1971, would briefly play out as The New York Dolls. Before long, however, Rivets would get the sack, with Sylvain Sylvain, a close associate and friend of the band (AND the guy who came up with the name in the first place!), stepping into the picture. Of course, The Dolls, despite two great LPs and an incendiary live show, never lived up to their full potential. They were the "Next Big Thing" that should have been. The Rolling Stones even contemplated signing the group to their new label, but quickly wrote them off, Mick Taylor informing them that they had six months to straighten out, to which David Johanson replied, "Go screw." The worst was yet to come, after a series of runarounds comparable to the later, label-hopping Sex Pistols' dilemma, they finally got signed to Columbia, who didn't know how to market a band with a group image that horrified Middle America, becoming the butt of countless homophobic remarks (no pun intended). Even John Lennon called them "a bunch of fucking faggots!" In truth, they were straight as an arrow, but, by no means, narrow. While they were on good terms with the post-Stonewall Gay and Transvestite sets, it was understood that they'd willingly oblige the many beautiful women who'd come around, looking for a kiss...and THEN some! The real stumbling block, insiders will tell you, was the group's more than casual dalliances with drugs and alcohol, though the roller coaster didn't really slide off the tracks until late in the Doll's career. Still, Arthur was definitely the hardest hit, predating Thunders' and (second drummer) Jerry Nolan's later heroin habits with a severe drinking problem that often rendered him unable to play (roadie Peter Jordan frequently subbed for Arthur on the road), and a run of unbelievably bad luck that followed him for most of his life. His girlfriend, Connie, cut off the tip of his thumb (a rumor that she'd cut off the entire thumb probably persists to this very day), forcing him to sit out The Dolls' L.A. debut, though he appeared, sitting on stage anyway, while Peter Jordan subbed on bass. The wound healed, but Connie's reign of terror was far from over. She'd later take a broken beer bottle to her then-boyfriend, Dee Dee Ramone's, ass (The Ramones would soon immortalize her, upon her inevitable death, with the scathing "Glad To See You Go"). Meanwhile,

back in the jungle, a lack of hit material, the inability to get a third album out, plus a reputation for unreliability, sealed The Dolls' fate. A rescue attempt came in the form of a new manager (though it's been argued that he wasn't their manager at all), Malcolm McLaren, who thought it would be "chic" to drape a Chinese Communist flag behind the band, and encourage them to espouse Maoist rhetoric at a time when a fake Commie screamed "BEAT MY ASS!!!" even louder than a fake Transvestite. In the midst of a quickie tour of Florida in 1975, The New York Dolls split up, with Thunders and Nolan forming The Heartbreakers with Richard Hell (and, almost, John Felice, of The Modern Lovers and Real Kids), Johanson and Sylvain sticking it out a while longer under The New York Dolls' banner (or under several variations of said name), and Kane (would you believe?) staying on in Florida, forming the band, Killer Kane, with Blackie Goozeman, who'd go on to fame as Blackie Lawless with "Shock" Metal purveyors, W.A.S.P. Goozeman was a fan who subbed for Thunders, who'd already returned to New York, on guitar for the remainder of the Floridian tour. He got a LOT of mileage out of the New York Dolls connection, telling interviewers that he was actually a member of the group, and downplaying the fact that he only played (at most) a few gigs with them. Still, the one release by Killer Kane, a three-song e.p. released in 1976, isn't bad, at that. It's not unlike the better tracks recorded at the time by (Ron Asheton's) New Order. In other words, it sounds like what those later L.A. Metal bands should have sounded like, but never did, in a word, RAW! Kane returned to New York and formed The Corpse Grinders (great name, and years before Hardcore!) with, of all people, Rick Rivets. They released one 45 (I can't tell you how it sounds, I don't have it). The band wore boiler suits with plain black armbands, and "Night of The Living Dead"-style makeup. In an unexpected turn of events (that would've made McLaren jump for joy!), the band was accused of flirting with Fascism for wearing common mourning armbands (just as I had been, once, when I wore one for one of my professors who'd passed away). Eventually, Arthur would be reunited with Jerry Nolan in The Idols, which also featured Barry Jones, the Black Johnny Thunders. Unfortunately, they too only released one single, which successfully combined The Dolls' sound with the current Punk rhythms they directly inspired. The Idols, along with Mick Jones from The Clash, would also go on to play in the backing band for Sid Vicious' disastrous engagement at Max's



Kansas City. Documented evidence that even an all-star band couldn't save a sinking ship is still readily available on CD. Later, in 1986, The Idols did some shows with Johnny Thunders, one of which was released on video (apparently by Arthur himself), and recently on CD. It's a great performance, Johnny's old pals bringing out his best. Arthur would, however, go on to be least musically active of the former New York Dolls, with his personal life taking more turns for the worse. He either fell or jumped from a third story balcony in L.A., where he'd since relocated. Though he eventually recovered, Kane also sustained near-fatal head injuries (including a hemorrhage to the brain) when he was beaten savagely, and left for dead, while walking home during

the L.A. riots. Though, remarkably, Kane did survive, his future prospects looked grim, his only musical project of note being an excellent reworking of "In Cold Blood" on a Thunders tribute disc. Sylvain waxed euphoric to me about the track, in an interview for *Bad Trip*, in which he also expressed a desire to get Arthur back in the studio. Meanwhile, the surviving New York Dolls were still getting offers to reform and tour. One strange rumor implied that a review might be put together around Arthur, with help from Mike Monroe of Hanoi Rocks and Gilby Clarke from Guns n' Roses, but, the chances of the three remaining members (Kane, Sylvain, and Johanson) ever performing together were down to (REALLY) slim and none, until, an unlikely offer by Morrissey (I say "unlikely", because he'd been an early advocate of the band, even releasing a well-meaning, but error-laden, fan book in The 70s, but he later went on to renounce them) to appear at a festival he was assembling in Manchester, England. This, accompanied by an offer to appear at Little Steven's Underground Garage Festival in New York, found the revamped group getting ready for their first shows together in nearly 30 years (though various ex-Dolls had shared stages many times in the past, they were never actually billed as The New York Dolls). Arthur, who'd reportedly cleaned up, and was doing much better than he'd been in some time, must have found it life-affirming to walk on that stage in Manchester to a standing ovation. He would have surely seen the same reception in New York, but the worst that could have possibly happened, did. Arthur had suddenly taken ill, and was given the shocking facts: He was in the advanced stages of Leukemia, and was not expected to live much longer. He only lived for another week. The band has decided to fulfill the New York date, which will have happened by the time you read this. Whether or not the latter day Dolls decide to perform together again, Arthur himself put it best: "After our assassins are dead and gone, The New York Dolls will live on and on and on..." You can bemoan the rotten luck, or you can rejoice that Arthur Kane is free, and that he can't be hurt anymore by the cruelties of circumstance, and the indifference rendered upon him for the pain he suffered as a result. I never met Arthur myself, and he's one of only two members of the classic Dolls lineup that I never got to see perform, but I'm sure that those who knew him well would agree, he went out doing what he loved, and, now, he's back with Johnny, Jerry and Billy, doing it all over again. *NOTE: Since writing this, I've been informed that the revamped Dolls destroyed at Little Steven's Festival in New York, and that another show, in L.A., is in the works.*

Ray Charles-There are a lot of things that I could tell you about the great Ray Charles, but, they'd all be things you've heard or read somewhere else...how he lost his sight as a child, grew up in the segregation-era Deep South, and went on to be one of the most influential singers, songwriters, and musical stylists the world has ever known, sustaining an immensely popular recording and performing career that spanned half a century. Of course, none of us could ignore that the news coverage of Charles' death was swamped by the Caesar-like worship of Ronald Reagan, who, of course, passed the same week. A wiser man than I said that future generations will be remembered by their art, so there's no doubt in my mind which man has left the more endearing legacy, and I would support the bid to put Ray Charles on the ten dollar bill, as suggested on a recent New Yorker cover. I realize I'd have a better chance of laying an egg than ever seeing

that day, but, a more fitting accolade is due the man who wore the title "Genius" like no other. Charles' loss is, of course, one that will be felt around the world, a world that is so much the richer for the legacy he left behind, for great music, yes, but also for perseverance in the face of overwhelming adversity. Ray Charles decided, at an early age, that he was going to be self-supporting and perfectly able to adapt in a sighted world. It's important to note that, in his day, the color of his skin may have assured him second class citizenship in the eyes of the law and much of "decent" society, but his lack of sight, too, was then regarded as another social, as well as physical, debilitation. We all know that Ray Charles wasn't having any of THAT shit, don't we? I only speak the truth, friends. As Chuck Berry put it, Ray Charles had the ability to reach all of us, whether it be through Soul, Jazz, County, Gospel, R n' B, you name it. If he wasn't single-handedly creating a genre, he was busy elevating it to the next level. James Brown may have invented Soul music, but he was following the example of The Master. Rock 'n' Roll might have happened without Charles' influence, but no 50s rocker, Black or white, worth his salt, would have denied the importance of his music to the development of Rock 'n' Roll. Many artists tried, but none could attain the plateaus that Ray Charles seemed to reach almost effortlessly ("They tried to make me sing like Ray Charles when I first went to Specialty", said Little Richard, "It was like to have KILLED me!"). His own inroads into Country music might have seemed contradictory, but Country was just another style of music he'd grown up loving, and when he put his own spin on it, it stuck. Arguably, only Johnny Cash demanded the same high standards from himself and those around him, and could reach as phenomenal a range of people, cutting through barriers of race, class, age and sensibility like a chainsaw through so much wheat. Hey, I just call 'em like I see 'em, and now that Ray Charles CAN see, I'm sure he'd be pleased at the harvest he's left behind, and that the world is that much better off for it.

Richie Cordell - Though best known for his writing and production work with the still-underrated Tommy James and The Shondells, as well as being a staff hitmaker for the mighty Buddah label, Cordell's influence spread beyond the classic Bubblegum era. In The 80s, Cordell would go on to produce The Ramones and Joan Jett, two acts that definitely knew the value of The Gum. Of course, Jett went on to have a hit with Tommy James' post-Cordell classic, "Crimson and Clover", while Tiffany and Billy Idol were later pukin', I mean, dakin' it out in the charts with their respective versions of Cordell's best known tunes, "I Think We're Alone Now" and "Mony, Mony" (which Idol had released many years earlier on an e.p., along with "Dancing With Myself", a Generation X song that would also take years to chart, under his own name, in The U.S.). The Ramones didn't score any hits under Cordell's tutelage, but the resulting LP, "Subterranean Jungle", probably their best album since "Road To Ruin", found the band reclaiming their musical turf, Punk AND Bubblegum. One reviewer called it "The perfect blend of "Sugar, Sugar" and Heavy Metal." Another said, "If The Clash can make The U.S. Top Ten with their worst album, so can The Ramones." "Mony, Mony," the Bubblegum jewel in Cordell's crown, has an undeserved bad rap today, due to it's oversaturation via weddings, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, etc, but I wouldn't know. When my Brother got married, a D.J. was hired with the understanding that "Mony, Mony" was not to be played. Two of my cousins are M.O.T.s, but I was unable to attend their Bar Mitzvahs. I don't know why some

people don't dig it, it's got everything-Garage Punk minimalism and pure Bubblegum charm. It WAS Pop-Punk before Pop-Punk (A damn sight more tolerable, too). A few years back, The Pretty Things (with Ronnie Spector riding shotgun), saved Cordell's work from the clutches of squares by doing a boss cover of Mony X 2. Bubblegum continues to be an influential factor in musics both underground and mainstream, even as the classic B.G. period fades from view (a cultural oversight that the book Bubblegum Music is the Naked Truth has sought to rectify, and, by Gum, they've succeeded). Cordell came from a time when the producer was arguably the real star, which I guess holds true today, even as production values become more and more sanitized and imminently predictable, many a successful modern producer has learned a few tricks from Cordell's example, but who raised their glasses in his time of passing? We do.

Tony Randall - Of course, most people know Randall for his whining, neurotic, obsessively clean, not to mention, hilarious, characterization as Felix Unger on *The Odd Couple*, one of the greatest sitcoms of The 70s (Arguably in the Top Three, along with "All in The Family" and "Sanford and Son"), but his comic genius was not limited to that one, undeniably great, role He gave the performance of his life in *Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?* (Frank Tashlin's equally great follow-up to *The Girl Can't Help It*), in which Randall plays a T.V. ad man who secures a contract with Jayne Mansfield to endorse his client's product, "Stay Put Lipstick", but things go awry, and Randall inadvertently becomes a sex symbol himself, known as "Lover Doll" to his hordes of female admirers, all due to a simple misunderstanding (Randall is mistaken for Mansfield's new beau, when, in reality, her true love, GROUCHO MARX, returns to cool her jets). In *The Seven Faces of Dr. Lao* an outstanding Fantasy film directed by George Pal, Randall shines as an elderly Chinese magician who can transform himself into a Yeti, a Gorgon, Pan, Apollonius, a (sort of) human headed serpent, anything but an American actor with a passable Asian accent, I grant you, but this is a truly offbeat role that Randall seemed to relish (though, as Michael Weldon points out in *The Psychotronic Encyclopedia of Film*, the opposite was true). In *Hello, Down There*, Randall plays a man living in an experimental house at the bottom of the ocean. Richard Dreyfuss, as his teenage son, leads a Garage combo that sings a pretty cool song to a dolphin called "Hey Little Goldfish." In *Love, Sidney*, which aired in the early 80s, Randall really broke convention (for the time) by playing, as he did on "The Odd Couple", a divorced man with a daughter that he dearly loves, but, this time, his character turns out to be gay [editor's note: and Felix wasn't?] or, perhaps, bisexual. I haven't seen the show since it originally aired, and I don't recall the issue of the man's sexuality really being pushed too hard, but it was groundbreaking stuff, whether the makers of any modern sitcoms that have benefited from token gay characters have acknowledged this or not. It certainly wasn't on par with "The Odd Couple", or more people would remember it today (I can scarcely remember the show Ted Knight starred in as a cartoonist in, either, but you're damn right I watched it). Of course, Randall's impeccable timing was the perfect foil for Jack Klugman's meticulously cultivated "Slob" act. The two had a rare chemistry onscreen. Offscreen, their friendship was really touching. When Klugman emerged from cancer treatments, alive, but with a raspy, almost unintelligible, voice, Randall arranged to have the two of them perform a short dramatic vignette on T.V. as soon as Klugman

was well enough to perform with him. That gesture, I think, gave Klugman the confidence to stay in the game. The two also hosted a "Nick at Nite" *Odd Couple* marathon shortly thereafter, featuring "The Odd Couple on Ice" with skaters actually dressed as Felix and Oscar, with giant Mardi-Gras style whole head masks in the comic likenesses of Randall and Klugman. There's no putting the real "Odd Couple" on ice, though, theirs is a brand of comedy that will hold up in years to come as surely as it does, now.

Russ Meyer-Russ Meyer has already been spoken of highly by his peers and the press, but whether he really got his just due in his lifetime is open to question. Like a lot of people, the first Meyer film I ever saw was the amazing *Faster, Pussycat, Kill! Kill!* and it remains one of my favorite films of all time. Presumably, like a lot of people, I expected an unintentionally hilarious feature with B-grade production values. What I got, of course, was a swiftly directed, engaging action picture (and, I don't even LIKE action pictures as a rule) with gorgeous cinematography and, of course, even more gorgeous women. When Meyer's masterpiece did opt for laughs, you GOT it - "Lady, you sure got a funny sense of humor," "TRY ME! I GET FUNNIER!" I quickly became a fan of Meyer's work, and, later, had the pleasure of meeting the man in person. Later, still, I briefly dated a woman who actually hated *Faster, Pussycat*. Normally, I wouldn't let stuff like that get in the way, but, it kind of disturbed me that anyone would respond so negatively to such a great film with such far-reaching appeal. Even though Meyer's work is highly regarded by women with strong self-images, he would, on occasion, be accused of exploiting women, usually by people unfamiliar with his work. The many incredibly beautiful women that have graced his films, Tura Satana, Raven De La Croix, Kitten Natividad, Haji, Uschi Digart, and his wife at the time Eve Myers, to name a few (it bears noting that the stunning Ms. Myers was not as top heavy as many of her peers, proving Russ was no mere fetishist with a one-track mind), are presented as goddesses, bolder and stronger than the men who wish to conquer them, and always getting the upper hand, too. The men in Russ Meyer's films are usually handsome and virile in appearance, but, more often than not, unable to "measure" up to the ladies, and they almost always seem to have the words "Kick me" burned on their ass. Charles Napier, whom Meyer predicted would be a big mainstream "He-man" star upon leaving his employ (and he should have been, but he lacked the humorlessness of an Eastwood or a Bronson. Fortunately, he's put in great performances in *The Blues Brothers*, and more recently, the *Austin Powers* series). Obviously, Meyer loved women. He had his preferences, but, Hell, who could fault him? Women of Meyerian proportions still stop traffic today. I've seen it happen. "When you got power, baby, use it for a while."-Joe Jackson. About 15 years ago (give or take a year or two.), Russ Meyer appeared at Facets Multimedia for a screening of what many consider to be his magnum opus, *Beyond The Valley of The Dolls*. His comments were rather telling. He said that 20th Century Fox refused to release just two of their pictures on home video, one being *Beyond The Valley of The Dolls*, the other, *Myra Breckenridge*. Both films, of course, are now easy to find, though *Myra* was only released on DVD several months ago. He also announced plans to make a new movie (Meyer dropped out of filmmaking when pressured to depict hardcore sex.) with some of his original stars, noting that Haji hasn't aged (he was right.), and

neither had John LaZar (best known as "Z-Man" in *Valley*), stating that he STILL looks like Z-Man (the most recent photo I've seen confirms this somewhat, though not to the extent that he frequents the mod haberdashery.). The film, tentatively titled *The Breast of Russ Meyer*, was never made. *Valley*, of course, was co-written by Roger Ebert, who noted what a great time the two had assembling crazily hip quotations (that emerged from the cast members like so many comic strip balloons), in his eulogy to Meyer in *The Chicago Sun-Times*. Of course, some were so good, like, "I'd like to strap you on sometime!" or "You will drink the black sperm of my vengeance," that they turned up in later Meyer classics, such as *Supervixens* and *Beneath The Valley of The Ultra Vixens*. Ebert himself could barely conceal his pride when calling out Michael Meyers on T.V. for using his best line, "This is my happening and it freaks me out! Meyer struck me as a satisfied individual (understandably so), with a sense of humor that was just as keen as it had ever been. He mentioned going to a fertility clinic, and the attendant, who knew him, saying, "You know what you have to do, Russ..." "Oh, Christ!! I haven't jerked off in years!!!" Russ Meyer believed in living large, but was quick to point out that anyone can if they put their minds to it. I consider it an honor and an inspiration to have met Mr. Meyer, and found him to be about as nice a man as you could wish to meet. Please, friends, keep the dream alive.

Johnny Ramone - Since last issue, we've heard the shocking news about Johnny Ramone's lengthy battle with prostate cancer, and as we went to press we heard the news that he finally succumbed to the disease. Those who would like to make a donation, in Johnny's honor, to Prostate Cancer research, can do so at www.ProstateCancerFoundation.org.

Lest we forget: Marlon Brando, Fay Wray, Curtis Gordon, Robert Quine, Ray Condo, Carl Wayne (*The Move*).

Get Well, Dave Davies, Mike Smith, Soupy Sales, Forrest J. Ackerman

Special Dedication to Paige Howell. Paige Howell was best friend and wife to my good friend, Bruce Ciero, the former editor of *Bad Trip*. I got involved with *Bad Trip* around the same time as *Roctober*, and found Bruce and his bride-to-be, Paige, to be great people, and a lot of fun to work with. Paige brought a lot of great ideas to the magazine, and was one of the primary reasons it became (in my humble opinion) such a fine zine. I spent Thanksgiving weekend with Bruce and Paige several years ago, and, while I was grateful for their hospitality, I was especially touched by the genuine love the two of them had for each other. It didn't have to be mentioned, you felt it just the same. A lot of people were closer to Paige than I was, but I could always tell her about my troubles, and she helped me put things into perspective. I'm sure she did that for a lot of people, as I've learned, though to no surprise of my own, that Paige had many friends, from her students (Paige's primary gig was teaching) to the extended *Bad Trip* family, and the many area bands Ciero and Howell had befriended. When Paige had been diagnosed with cancer, she fought hard, and the possibility of a recovery seemed good. I really believed that she would pull through, as I think many people did. We were wrong, and, for that, I'm very, very sorry. My condolences, and those of the entire *Roctober* staff, go out to Bruce, Paige's family, and the many friends of Bruce and Paige.

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"The %\$#@!! Dirty Wurds!"

By John Battles.

Justin Pomeroy and Mike Peterson were the original rhythm and lead guitarists and founding members of The Dirty Wurds, a Chicago-based Garage band that made the jump to more traditional Chicago Blues *à la* Paul Butterfield. The Wurds have gone on to legendary status on the strength of their first single, "Why," one of the most insane punk screamers ever, via it's inclusion on *Pebble Vol.5*. Little other recorded evidence of the band's punk/Blues power exists. There was an extremely rare single on Chess which (to my knowledge) has only been reissued on a retrospective CD focusing on the late Mark Hannon, a former Dirty Wurds singer and harmonica player, (good luck finding that). There was also an excellent 45 on Caped Crusader a few years back with two unreleased tracks. As fine as those other sides are, "Why" is the kind of record cults are built around. It's been widely covered, and based on that single's infamy there was even an all-girl Garage group in The U.K. that named itself The Dirty Burds (which included Lois Tozer from The Embrooks - - while we're on the subject of rockin' gals, Justin's sister, Debbie Pomeroy, played drums with The Daughters of Eve, profiled last issue, and has recently accepted a gig drumming with The Cadillac Angels, an ace Rockabilly outfit that's toured and recorded with Wanda Jackson!). This piece is an attempt to tell The Dirty Wurds' real story, and the only way to do that is to let them tell it in their own words...



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(Clockwise from noon): Jim Savage, Al Miller, Mark Hannon, Mike Peterson (center) Justin Pomeroy. Photo by Don Bronstein

Preface by Mike Peterson: "I learned to play the guitar early on, yet it took four years until I got into a musical combo. I played rhythm guitar in a band called The Esquires. Then, after that, I played in a different musical combo, where I was called upon to play lead guitar. After two years of early 60s Rock 'n' Roll, I joined a band in 1965 with a bunch of fellas on my block who had the idea to blend Folk music with Blues. This band had no name, but soon became The Dirty Wurds Blues Band. We all lived in Chicago, so we'd all go down to Old Town, at North Avenue and Wells Street, to see and hear the Blues played by Junior Wells and Buddy Guy. We soon visited a club called Big John's to hear Muddy Waters. Every time we went to see Muddy, he would have all kinds of different musicians sitting in and backing him up as he sang and played his slide guitar. It was exciting to feel the raw volume jumping out of their old Magnavox amps with one 12" speaker and rattley old reverb units over thick, old guitar strings that seemed, at first, somehow, slightly out of tune. Yet, that whole song sounded just right. I remember seeing the amps and drums and musicians slightly vibrating a few inches off the worn wooden floors, as if they were some sort of spiritual, musical beings that could never be torn or separated from each other, ever again. Chicago was shaking with sounds of many colors.

**INTERVIEW WITH JUSTIN POMEROY AND MIKE PETERSON
BY JOHN BATTLES**

JOHN: I think it's fascinating that you were able to go down to Old Town, while still in your teens, and see Muddy Waters, Junior Wells and Buddy Guy. What were some of the places you played at in Old Town that some of these Blues musicians would have played at, too?

JUSTIN: We played at a place called "Like, Young, but the #1 place on Wells Street at the time was Mother Blues. Also, Big John's, which Mike already mentioned. On Sunday, they would have "No Liquor Day," and, during the day, Muddy Waters would play, with James Cotton on the harmonica, and all the teenyboppers from the area would come in, and the place was just packed. We had just come out with that record, "Why," and our lead singer, Mick McAleese, he was a pretty wild guy, so he jumped up on stage with Muddy Waters! Were you there that day, Mike?

MIKE: How come I don't remember that? It was the 60s, that's why! (laughs) Did Muddy kick him or anything?

JUSTIN: No, they let me play guitar, and they let Mick sing, and he did splits on stage, and Jim Savage (Dirty Wurds' bassist) was there. Mick sang one of Muddy Waters' songs, and Muddy Waters just stood by, pulling his chin, kind of grinning, looking at him like, "Wow, could this be happening?" Mick had absolutely no timidity. He was just up there, grabbed the mike, took over the stage. It was like, "Hey, I'm in this great band, The Dirty Wurds, and we're influenced by Muddy Waters, this is a great honor, and I'm gonna do my best job," that was his attitude. There was a great amount of excitement in Old Town at the time. I was taking lessons at The Old Town School of Folk Music in 1962, maybe '63-'64, and there was another guitar player there, a little bit older than me, that I really looked up to, his name was Lowell Shyette, and he later went on to be the guy that founded The Little Boy Blues. He had real long hair, and I was hanging out with Lowell, and going to the coffee houses where he played. And Fred Holstein was running the folklore center downstairs. John Brown's Leather Store was across the street, and *The Seed*, the underground newspaper, was also there about a year later. I used to walk into John Brown's Leather Store, and Peter, Paul and Mary would be sitting in there. One time, I walked in, and John Brown was sewing suede pants on Mary Travers for her concert that night. He was sewing the pants on her! We used to sit down and jam, and Bob Gibson would come in, and when The Byrds did their first Chicago concert, they were hanging out at the folklore center, and they were hanging out with John Brown, and that's how I met Roger McGuinn and David Crosby. That was before The Dirty Wurds got together, but, then, about a year later, we opened for The Byrds at The Civic Opera House. You hear a lot of stuff about The 60s, how it was so exciting and wonderful...people got so tired of hearing that, it became politically correct not to talk about it. So, Hollywood doesn't talk about it anymore, MTV doesn't talk about it anymore. Really! I hardly hear anything, it's like it's completely washed away. When they do retrospectives on TV, now, they talk about the 80s music, the 90s music, sometimes the 70s, but, they're like, "Oh, no, no, no! We're not gonna talk about The 60s, because that's already been talked about."

JOHN: But, this is a period that hasn't been covered enough, it was like 60s Rock n' Roll Ground Zero, when bands like yours were discovering that they could do it for themselves. I think the interest is coming back, though.

JUSTIN: You think so?

JOHN: Yeah, you've got Little Steven's Underground Garage radio show playing this stuff all over the country, and programs like it on the internet. There's been a few documentaries, but if they can't put a label on it, they won't touch it. We call it "Garage," but people aren't sure what that means anymore.

JUSTIN: There was a feeling in the air at that time that if you wanted to get a band together, you just had to send out a thought, like, "Hey, we need a drummer," and, all of a sudden, you had a drummer! Nowadays, it's so hard, not just because I'm a lot older, but, a lot of the younger people, the music today is so variegated right now, that, let's say you need a drummer, the drummer might say, "No, no, I only do Hip Hop," or, "No, no, I only do R & B, I don't do that kind of music." Everybody's on a different trip, but, at that time, everybody was on the same trip, it seemed. Like, when I first heard Mike, Mike was going to high school with me, and when I first heard him playing with this band, I just thought, "Hey, I want that guy in The Dirty Wurds," and I said, "Hey, Mike! Come over to my basement, listen to this band I put together!" Mike says, "Okay," he comes down, and, after our rehearsal, he says, "Yeah, sure, I'll join your band!"

MIKE: It was more alive than what my band did! We did Beatles songs, it was just a pure Rock band that wore silver jackets.

JUSTIN: He had a real "greaser" band with sharkskin suits, but they were great, they were like The Ventures, but, all of a sudden, Mike says, "Yeah, sure, I'll join your band, and, then, his band says to him, "Are you crazy? What are you joining this band for?" and Mike says, I don't know, I just like this band," and, so, he joined our band, and, before you know it, we were kind of a mini-hit, y'know? This was in late '65, and we were together 'til '67. Now, Lowell Shyette, who I mentioned earlier, I saw Lowell start The Little Boy Blues, and I went and heard them for the first time at The Centaur, this coffee house on Wells Street that was opened by John Brown, the leather maker. He made all The Dirty Wurds their guitar straps, he made The Beatles their guitar straps, too, and he made The Byrds their suede capes. David Crosby wore this beautiful Robin Hood suede cape with the high collar. I have one, too, that John Brown made for me. It's a blue one, David Crosby had a brown one. John Brown had a great leather store, and he was a big influence on me. He was kind of a guru, musically, he helped me become more "beat" at that time. It was an exciting time, Lowell started The Little Boy Blues, and I was a Folk purist, I couldn't believe that he was going to play electric. Jim Savage was a banjo player that I was starting a little group with, we were doing Bluegrass, we were doing Folk music, and singing double harmony. Then, when The Byrds came out, I couldn't believe it. At first, I didn't like it. Then, I couldn't put that record down, "Mr. Tambourine Man," cos Dylan was my ultimate idol, I just loved Dylan. So, the combination of The Little Boy Blues getting together, Lowell Shyette, Jim Boyce, Ray Levin, Paul Ostroff, and hearing The Shadows of Knight opening for The Byrds' first Chicago concert, at McCormick place, on the rising stage, and hearing The Byrds, I thought, "Wow!" I had a Fender Stratocaster that my Uncle willed me when he died, so, I thought Jim and I would try playing some electric music. We were doing it just for kicks. The Dirty Wurds started out as part of a joke, even the name. Jim and I were doing a lot of gigs, and we were offered a gig playing for a "Sweet Sixteen" party, and this was before even Mike had joined the group, at a restaurant in Evanston called The Tally-Ho Restaurant. We went up and auditioned, we were always auditioning, and Jim and I wore those suede boots that were real baggy, all the Folkies on Wells Street wore them at the time. We were the only ones in Senn High school who wore those boots, and we had tight pants, we dressed real "Beat," we had those big, thick belts, and I had a belt made by John Brown with a big, round buckle...anyway, we went down there and did this great audition, and we really sounded great. We did a lot of Flatt and Scruggs type music, and we did some funky old Blues, some Robert Johnson songs. This lady said, "You guys are great, you're hired! But...could you do some Rock n' Roll, too?" Jim looked at me, and went, "Oh, my God...", and I looked back at her, and I said, "Sure, we'll play some Rock, too..." She said, "Great! You've got the job." The

gig was in three, four weeks, and Jim said to me, "Why did you say that? How can we play ROCK, man?!" I said, "Look, she's paying us \$150 to play for this party!," and that was a lot of money, back then! So, I said, "Look, here's what we'll do, we'll play Chicago Blues. We'll play some Muddy Waters, We'll do Chuck Berry, we'll do like The Rolling Stones are doing," and Jim says, "Look, we're selling out, man, we can't play Rock, we're Folk musicians, man!" But, I said, "Well, look, if we play Electric Blues, we're not selling out, we're playing music that's indigenous to where we're from. I've got the Fender Strat from my Uncle Art, you can borrow an electric bass," and, he said, "But, I play banjo and guitar!" Anyway, we found a drummer real fast. My sister knew a guy named Marc Bringman, got him in. Jim finally agreed to play electric bass, so he borrowed the bass from Rick Cohn, who later became our manager for a short time. He had an old semi-hollow bass, an EB3, and actually the first gig we did was me on guitar, and I wanted Mike in the group, and Mick McAleese was hanging out with me at that time, he had dropped out of High School, tall guy, with long, black hair, and he said, "Hey, man, I sing the Blues, I can sing all that stuff." He had collected 45s of Muddy Waters... and I had 'em, too, I had all these Chess and Checker 45s, we had Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, Junior Wells, Buddy Guy, Lightnin' Hopkins, and I had a pretty good Blues record collection, so we sat down in my basement. Mick McAleese started singing the Blues, Jim was playing bass, I was playing guitar, we had a drummer. Then, we needed a name for the band, so, here's how we got the name, I knew we were only going to have one gig as an electric band, so, I thought, "How about blowing everybody's fucking mind?!" (laughs) Now, Blues is dirty music, it's roots music, so, I stayed up all night one night, I'm thinking, "Muddy Waters...muddy, muddy, dirty, roots..." I even thought of the name "Grass Roots" before that band came out, and I thought, "Chicago Blues are dirty Blues...dirty...what's a good name?" My father was really into Lenny Bruce, and his autobiography had just come out, called, How To Talk Dirty and Influence People, and, he gave me that book to read, and I had it on the floor, next to my bed, and I'm sitting there thinking, and I see that book, and I go, "Dirty words, that's it! Dirty words!" The next day, I went up to my dad, who was a Lutheran Minister, and I go, "Dad, you know that gig we're doing at the Tally-Ho Restaurant, we're gonna do it electric, I've got a name for that gig, you wanna hear it?" And I was afraid he was gonna go, "You've gotta be kidding!" I told him, "We're gonna call ourselves The Dirty Wurds, playing the Blues," and my Dad says, "GREAT," with his fist in the air, "Great! Oh, that's a great name!" We played a few gigs at The Tally-Ho, but Mike joined right after that first gig. And, when he played, oh, God, was he good...

MIKE: I was just learning it, though! How could I be good?

JUSTIN: I'd give him a record, he'd take it home, he'd come back, he'd know it. He'd play it right on the spot. We weren't planning to stay together after the first gig, but, then, the girls were screaming, and they all wanted our cards. We didn't have cards, so we gave them our phone numbers, and, out of that one gig, we got all these other gigs, so, then, Jim said to me, "Should we stay together?," and Mick McAleese said, "Yeah, man, of course! We've got a BAND, man." So we did all these gigs, then Mike joined, and then, gradually, we got a much better drummer. We had a fan club in Evanston High School, we had one at Senn High School, little, mini-fan clubs, just for fun, and we were doing some gigs at a place called The Pink Phynque on Sheridan Road, right near Lunt (*Note: the club, which was located near where I live now, was on Sheridan, between Columbia and Pratt streets, a few blocks from Lunt. It's now a dry cleaners. I've seen it spelled as "Pfink" in the past, but a flyer that Justin showed me had it spelled "Phynque" However, one of the other bands was listed on the flyer as The IDS of March!!!-JOHN*). It was a very exciting time, Mike and Jim and I were growing our hair really long, and we were learning all these cool Chicago Blues songs, plus a few Rolling Stones songs, but I told the guys in the group, "If we're gonna stay together, why should we copy British bands? They're copying us! They're copying the Blues. Why don't we just develop our own sound?" And, I really liked that harmonica sound that James Cotton had with Muddy Waters, and I said, "We've gotta have that THICK harmonica sound," because, I remember, when I was a kid, my mother was sick a lot back in The 50s. My father was sending me down to the Southside of Chicago to my grandmother's. My grandmother was somebody I couldn't stand, and she'd say, "Don't play

with those colored kids," but I used to play with the Black kids, and, I remember, this one kid, his name was Oliver, I think. He used to take me over to this basement where this band played. I was only 8 or 9 years old, and I don't know who the band was, all I remember was these Black musicians playing the Blues, there was smoke all over the basement, and I was the only White kid, and we'd sit in the window, listening to this music, and this one guy was playing the harmonica, and he was making his harmonica sound like a car horn. He said, "Watch this, I can make it sound like a Cadillac!-"HONK, HONK, HAHHNNK"-Okay, here's a Buick-"HAAHNNK, HAHNNK, HAAHNNK." He said, to play harmonica properly, you've got to sound like a car! Then, I realized that the real Chicago Blues musicians like Paul Butterfield, his harmonica sound, James Cotton, even Lowell Shyette, were getting that thick, Southside Chicago harp sound, not the thin sound that you heard on The Yardbirds records, Keith Relf, or even Brian Jones with The Rolling Stones, which I loved. But it was this real, gutsy, dirty Chicago harmonica sound. So, I wanted to audition harmonica players. I'd put the word out through our fan club, and we got all these calls, and this one guy called up named Marion Kriczka, who now teaches painting at The Art Institute of Chicago. He said, "Hey, I play the Chicago Blues, I'm from the west side, and I play Blues harp." I said, "Do you have that thick sound or the thin sound?" "The THICK sound, the car horn sound." Then I said, "Can you play like Paul Butterfield, or Lowell Shyette of The Little Boy Blues?" He said, "Oh, are you kidding? Those are white guy sounds," but, Marion Kriczka was White, too, so I said, "Come on over, I'll audition you." So, he came on over, and he wore this black leather, Southside of Chicago jacket, and he had this blonde pompadour, he looked like James Cagney, he was really a tough guy. He pulled out his harps, and, oh, did he play well. He was on that *Caped Crusader 45* (on "Mellow Down Easy"). It has a picture of Alex Wald on there, but, Alex Wald came later, when Marion had to quit, to go to The Art Institute. But, that's how we started to develop more of a Bluesy sound. We were really influenced by The Paul Butterfield Blues Band, I have to tell ya, we used to go down to Big John's and hear them play from outside, because we couldn't get in. One night, Eric Clapton was in town to play with John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, and he came to Big John's that night, and I saw him walk in the door, and I was outside, maybe with Jim Savage, trying to hear Paul Butterfield, and then, later, Eric Clapton came out, and said, "Oh, my God...that guy puts me to shame..." meaning Mike Bloomfield. Mike Peterson was only 16, 17 years old, but damn it, he could play very close to Michael Bloomfield's style. He had incredible talent at that time, and sometimes Mike would take a Paul Butterfield record, take it home, come back the next day, and he knew every solo, note-by-note, plus, he could elaborate on that, improvise even beyond that. That's how we went from kind of a wild punk/Blues to a little bit more of a Southside Chicago Blues sound, that's what we were trying to get, and, then, Marion Kriczka left, and that's how Alex Wald came in. Marion Kriczka joined the group around the same time as Mark Hannon (vocals, harmonica-also featured on the *Caped Crusader 45*-John), and we played together all that summer of '66, I think, and into the fall, and then, either late '66 or early '67, Marion had to leave, so we got Alex Wald, who played with us through part of '67, and then he quit for some reason, and then we also got a new drummer, we went from Bob Curtis (who still plays regularly in Chicago. He played in the original *Mighty Blue Kings*, as well as a version of *The Rockin' Johnny Blues Band*, along with Mike Peterson) to Eric Long, and Al Miller, our last harmonica player, came in at the same time, and, then, we played the rest of the spring of '67, through the Summer of Love, when we played on North Avenue Beach every weekend. That was a really exciting time. '67 was a magical time for Rock...

JOHN: Did you flirt with Psychedelia at all during that time?

JUSTIN: Well, when The Dirty Wurds played first, with Mick McAleese, we did The Byrds show, and the Sonny and Cher show, we were doing more psychedelic stuff. We had a light show at the time. We would play a song, and, in the middle of the song, all of a sudden, our drummer would start to go double time, and Mike would just go crazy on the guitar, and click in that fuzztone. He was real influenced by Jeff Beck and The Yardbirds, so I would say our "Psychedelic" period happened early, and then, we tried to get more pure Blues. In our attempt to make pure Blues, we were sounding pretty psychedelic anyway. When Eric Long joined the group, we were playing at Like,

Young, there were light shows. Wherever we played, the place was packed, and we had Cliff and Henrietta and Dorothy. We had these Black dancers dancing with us (*There's some great recollections about them in the Caped Crusader 45 liner notes*.-JOHN) We had a lot of young, Black people following us at the time, which was cool.

JOHN: That is cool that you sustained such a large Black following, which was unusual back then.

JUSTIN: It was, because most of the Black people in those days had moved to Soul music and the Detroit sound. They didn't want the Blues, because they thought of The Blues as slave music, old-fashioned music, but there were others who didn't feel that way, and liked what we were doing.

JOHN: Who were some of the other bands you played with, and did you ever play The Cellar in Arlington Heights, or any other clubs outside of Chicago?

JUSTIN: The Dirty Wurds never played at The Cellar, but I played The Cellar with Bob Carter in another group that I was in for the few years after The Dirty Wurds broke up. I'd been to The Cellar before that, too, but, The Dirty Wurds never played there for some reason, isn't that weird? Now, Paul Sampson was the guy who ran The Cellar and managed The Shadows of Knight, and Carl Bonafede ran The Holiday Ballroom. We played The Holiday Ballroom, which was on the Westside of Chicago, it was a greaser club, and they pelted us with pennies. There was a big fight, a big riot, where the Police had to come. We were on stage with our long hair, playing for this greaser club. The chicks in the audience had these big, bouffant, 60s, hairsprayed do's.

MIKE: They wanted The Del-Vettes!

JUSTIN: They wanted The Del-Vettes. We were playing this wild music, and it was really good music, but, they just really didn't understand it, like, "Who are these sissies with long hair?" So they were throwing pennies at us onstage, and, I'll tell you a funny story....when we were opening for The Byrds at The Civic Opera House about a month earlier, there was a big riot, okay, because we played "Why," and the girls were all screaming, and then, The Byrds came out and played their new song, "Turn, Turn, Turn," and then, the girls jumped into the orchestra pit at The Civic Opera House, and started climbing up, onto the stage, and they couldn't control them, so, then, they closed the curtains on The Byrds. The Byrds kept playing, as if nothing happened, and the girls were screaming and, very aggressively, climbing up on the stage, and the stagehands were grabbing the girls' fingers as they were making their way up to the stage, and throwing them down into the orchestra pit, which was really dangerous, and this one guy started pulling out all the guitar plugs on The Byrds, and David Crosby punched the guy. John Brown, from the leather store, was driving the limousine for The Byrds, he was backstage, and he punched out a few guys, and, then, David Crosby got real mad, got real red in the face, walked right by me, and he looked at me, and he said, "No one does this to a Byrd." I thought it was so cool, that he had such self-esteem. They got into their limousine, all The Byrds did, and Mrs. Friedman, a little Jewish lady who ran Rock Productions, who had hired The Byrds, ran up to The



MIKE: Yeah. I don't remember the breakup, though.

JUSTIN: You don't remember that?

MIKE: I just don't, I was just too far gone. All I did was play guitar, and there was nothing else for my whole friggin' life, it was weird...

JUSTIN: Do you remember joining The Little Boy Blues?

MIKE: Yeah! (All laugh) I don't know why I did it! It was terrible! I didn't even like them. We were playing Motown music.

JOHN: This was a little later? (The Little Boy Blues started out much like The Dirty Wurds, but later became more of a "horn band," as did many Chicago Garage bands. Later, still, they put out a moderately psychedelic Pop/Rock LP on Fontana.- JOHN)

MIKE: It was in '67. I quit The Dirty Wurds for about 6 months, and I played with The Little Boy Blues, because their guitarist, Paul Ostroff, left.

JUSTIN: And, remember how you came back? At Mother Blues! You hopped right back up on stage, and Carmie, our substitute guitarist, jumped off the stage. Carmie was this little Jewish guy, he wore a derby, smokin' this cigar, he did a lot of acid. We were onstage doing this great gig, Muddy Waters was in the audience, and Otis Rush would come and hear us play every Monday night, August and September of '67, at Mother Blues...

MIKE: I remember Siegel-Schwall, they came in, and we had that good drummer, Eric Long, and the band sounded so nice...I was up on stage, and I remember those two Blues guys that were getting albums coming in on 'em, and, they just looked at us, and their jaws dropped. They were hearing something that was really mellow and nice, and it made me feel good, 'cause we were looking up to them!

JUSTIN: I was playing Blues piano on a Wurlitzer at the time, and, Corky Siegel, that's what he played, too. Corky came up to me, and said, "Hey, man, I like your playing."

MIKE: I heard him say something to you like that. It's good to get pat on the back once in a while, when you're getting beat on the streets!

JUSTIN: But, the girls would come to Mother Blues, but they couldn't get in, because it was an adult place, and they were serving liquor, and they had a high window, so, the girls were on top of each others' shoulders, jumping up and trying to see us. My girlfriend, Trish, was out there, and, they wouldn't let her in. But, the first gig we did at Mother Blues, Mike came, and he was still in The Little Boy Blues, and I saw him in the back, watching us, and you had that look in your eyes, Mike, like, "Boy, do I wish I was back in The Dirty Wurds!"

MIKE: "Do I want some of THAT candy!"

JUSTIN: The guitar player completely comprehended it, and he looked at me and he said, "Hey, you know, I'm just doing this temporarily. If you want Mike to jump up on stage, go ahead," and, I said, "Is that O.K. with you?" And he said, "Sure, man," and I looked at Mike, and I said, "Mike! Do you wanna play?" and he said, "Yes," and you came up, and you were back in the band! You were right there, against the wall at Mother Blues, and you looked really sad, it's like, you wanted to come back into The Dirty Wurds! (Both laugh)

MIKE: I had the puppy dog eyes, it got me back in the group, so, it's O.K. Right after that, the group broke up or something. I don't know, it might have been that it took a little longer.

JUSTIN: Yeah, we played the complete gig at Mother Blues, and then, right after that, we had the big schism, and then we broke up. Then, in 1969, when I was at Roosevelt University, I put together another Dirty Wurds for political rallies, anti-war rallies. What happened was, Roosevelt University was a very liberal, left-wing school with a lot of musicians, they had a good music program there, and they came up to me, some of the political people, like the S.D.S. You see, the students had taken over the University, and I had run for Senate, and I won, and, at one point, the students carried me into The Dean's office, and they shooed The Dean out, and they plopped me down, right in his seat, because I had real long hair. I didn't want to do it...

JOHN: But, they put you in that position...

JUSTIN: Right, but, they wanted The Dirty Wurds. They said, "Can't you get The Dirty Wurds together to play for these big events?" And I said, "Okay," so I got another lead singer, John Dinghart, I got Bob Carter back on drums, and we called ourselves The Dirty Wurds just for about 2 months, and we were on all the big posters that'd say, "Anti-War Rally-Musical Guests: The Dirty Wurds," you know, and it was really good, and that was really good for publicity, it brought a lot of people. But, Mike wasn't part of that. Mike had sort of disappeared for a while, I don't know what happened to you, Mike, but it was about a year later, and then, slowly, you started coming back, and we started jamming again, stuff like that, but, I started a three piece group after that, called Pop, with Bob Carter on drums and vocals, and my girlfriend, Lauren, played bass and sang. She had a lower voice than me! I played a Fender 12-string. We were sort of like The Byrds, sort of Psychedelic Folk-Rock, it was an experimental group. We did all originals. That group played at The Cellar, and The Kinetic Playground, too. Did you ever go there?

JOHN: No, I would've just been a little kid.

JUSTIN: It was the coolest club that I've ever been to in my life, so well-designed...

MIKE: It was real earthy looking, with a wall behind the stage, and these moving amoebas, Y'know?

JUSTIN: Well, they had a 360° screen, it was 360° all around, with a control room hanging from the ceiling that looked like a flying saucer. In there, they had three or four guys, real busy, I never saw such energetic guys in my life. You'd look up there, and they were setting up all the light shows and showing movies. It was amazing. It was called The Electric Theatre originally, but, they changed the name because they were getting sued by The Electric Circus in New York. I heard Albert King there, B.B. King, The Byrds, The Who. You know, The Who played there a few times. That was the biggest place at the time, except The Aragon (which still functions today, though the acoustics are horrendous!-JOHN). The Dirty Wurds played at a club on the Southside a few times a week, deep Southside, Stony Island and 80th street. For a while, I had the poster from it, but I can't find it! But, it was a cool poster, kind of a psychedelic poster, and it said "Stony Island...The Dirty Wurds, with go-go girls, LaVern and Linda," or something like that.

(Laughs)

JOHN: So, it was a Black club?

JUSTIN: Yeah, it was a Black club. We never played at The Regal...we almost got a gig at The Regal. We had people who tried to get us a gig there, but they thought it would be too much to have a white group. White groups didn't play there at all. This club on Stony Island was white and Black. Most of the white kids were really tough, greaser-type kids, but they liked the music. They liked us better than they did at The Holiday Ballroom on the Westside, where we got in that big riot. You know, Carl Bonafede, who was managing The Buckinghams, my Sister's group, The Daughters of Eve, and some other bands, he was pretty big,



Byrds and said, "Boys, you've got a contract to play another 45 minutes." They said, "Lady, we're outta here! We're splitting! We don't like being treated this way, you closed the curtain on us." Then she freaked out, went up to my dad, cos he was a Minister, you know, and she said, "Reverend, do you think you can help me talk The Byrds into coming back on stage?" So, my Dad said, "Sure," so, he went up to the limousine, there's John, John Brown knew my Dad, too, and he said, "Hi, John, Hi Roger, Hi David Crosby...listen, why don't you guys get back out and play?" And, David Crosby looked back at my dad, and said, "Fuck you, Father." My mother was standing there, and my mother had a temper, and she looked at him, and she said, "Fuck YOU, asshole." And David Crosby got real contrite and embarrassed (*He should have! You don't call a Protestant minister "Father" unless you're his kid! - JOHN*). And he looked at my Dad, and he was wearing his clerical suit with the white collar and the cross, and he says to my dad, "Please forgive me, Father." My Dad said, "It's okay, it's cool. Come on guys, play a few more songs, I'll make a deal with you. I'll go out there, I'll get the girls to settle down. If I get them to settle down, will you come on?" They said, "YES." He goes out on stage in front of thousands of teenagers, and says, "Hello! Let me get your attention! Hey, hey, settle down, settle down...do you want The Byrds to come back on?" ("YEEEEHHH!!!") Listen! They might not! ("BOOOOOO!!!") BUT, if everybody gets *reeeeal* quiet, settles down, and goes back to your seats, I can promise we'll bring The Byrds back on, but you've got to do this for me, we've got to have total silence...." Everybody goes back to their seat. There's absolute silence in the whole Civic Opera House. My dad looks at the curtain, and goes, "Okay, you guys ready?" (*Mike laughs*) Don't you remember this, Mike? This was the same concert where we played a Psychedelic version of "Louie, Louie," and I was using feedback out of my amp, and I got blood all over my Stratocaster because I was strumming so hard. Anyway, it was a great concert, really exciting. So, The Byrds came out, and the first song they did was "Roll Over Beethoven," Folk-Rock style, with the 12-string guitar, it was really cool. So, anyway, I remembered David Crosby saying "No one does this to a Byrd," when The Dirty Wurds were playing at The Holiday Ballroom, there were all these greasers out there, these were tough guys, they were throwing pennies at our guitars, and we were getting mad, so I went up to the microphone, and said, "No one treats The Dirty Wurds this way!" and these guys started jumping up on the stage, and Marion Kriczka started unscrewing the microphone stands, and he gave us each a microphone stand.

MIKE: Rod Todoravich, who was one of our road managers, was there, and he was a big guy. He had a hammer, one time, on somebody.

JUSTIN: He looked like one of the Hell's Angels. But, these guys, they jumped up on stage, and we were pushing 'em off the stage, and, all of a sudden, all these police cars appeared in front of The Holiday Ballroom, and they separated us, and we got paid and everything, but, they wouldn't have us back. That was a club that we played at, though. We also played at The New Place in Algonquin...

MIKE: Where Mark got attacked in the hamburger store?

JUSTIN: YES!

MIKE: Mark got punched out and he flew across a table, and, my friend, he had a hammer in his hand, and he was going to go after these four guys, there might have been more than that, but it was all The Dirty Wurds, we were hungry, we stopped after the gig, the Pastor was with us at the time. What'd he do? He held up his hands!

JUSTIN: Yeah! He said, "Guys! Settle down! Settle down!"

MIKE: But, you see, in those days, there weren't many people with long hair. Long hair didn't really make the scene in Chicago until around the end of '68, or '69, really, so, to be a band in '66 with long hair down your shoulders, you couldn't walk down the streets in Chicago without somebody pulling up and saying, "HEY, HIPSHIT! GET A HAIRCUT," or, "HEY, FAGGOT," so, it was really hard. Sometimes we'd get into fights...

JOHN: So, you were really some of the first longhairs in Chicago, then.

MIKE: Right. The Paul Butterfield Blues Band didn't have long hair.

JUSTIN: To have that kind of hair, then, you were asking for a lot of trouble, but, you know what? After The Dirty Wurds kind of hit it big, we could wear our hair long in Senn High School. I remembered right after the Evanston High School show...we were supposed to play four

half hour sets. The third set, half way through, we were stopped by the principal and the other teachers. My dad got very upset about this, and one of the newspapers called my dad, cos he was there. (Reads): "The Reverend Pomeroy took issue with the principal. "This is really a humiliation. These boys have played at 26 places since last summer, including churches and restaurants, and no one has been offended." The Reverend Mr. Pomeroy said the performance was interrupted as the group played a slow number, "As Tears Go By." He added, "It's a very slow song. It's like interrupting "Silent Night," he said "(All laugh). Can you imagine, people reading this? A Reverend, a Lutheran Minister...indignant about what happened to his son's Dirty Wurds band? "They were so disgusting and obscene, we were going to pull them off the stage if the faculty hadn't stepped in." That isn't true! They got somebody to say that, because the kids loved us! The Principal was quoted in the paper as saying, "It was a vulgar display, the music was unusually loud, the combo was obnoxious, and they were also disreputable-looking." Those lines made us very big, because every teenager said, "Hey! I wanna go hear this band play!" I like this one, too, the title reads, "The Dirty Wurds are For The Burds!," written by this NURD! (Both laugh), but, I love this article. Stuff like this was really good for us. It was right in January, we came back for our next semester at Senn High, and I had my long hair, and I went to my new classes, and I'd sit down, and our new teacher would say, "Guess what? One of those boys was in my homeroom this morning, you know what I'm talking about, one of those Dirty Wurds was in my homeroom" and, I'm sitting in the back of the room, and everybody's laughing, and she goes, "Gasp! Another one!" A few years ago, Mark Hannon was interviewed by this magazine in England called *Shindig!* (*Note: Mark Hannon replaced Mick McAleese on vocals and harmonica. Both Hannon and McAleese are now deceased.- JOHN*). Because they did this interview with him, Mark called me up about three years ago, and said, "Hey, since this came out in England, in a sense, we've kinda hit it big in England (*laughs*) 30 years later! Why don't we put The Dirty Wurds back together, do a few gigs, and capitalize on that?" So, I said, "Great idea!," then I called you, Mike, and then, we got Bob Carter, and we got that bass player, and we practiced a few times, but, then Mark found out that his lung cancer had come back, so we never ended up doing it. But, I got a little upset with Mark, when I read this article, because he changed the history a little bit...So I wrote him a very literate, long letter with the corrections, not because it was such a big thing, but, I used a little humor, I wasn't pissed, but, he called me back up, and was real contrite, said, "Justin, I'm so sorry, you're absolutely right. I've been telling the wrong story." You know how, sometimes when you're telling the wrong story, all of the sudden, you start believing it. But, he was telling them, the reason we broke up was because he wanted to play the real Blues, and Justin and Mike Peterson only wanted to do Psychedelic music. There was some truth to that, I was more progressive. I wanted our music to be Blues, but, more progressive. The real reason we broke up was because Mark wanted to change the name of the band. He said, "It's a screwy name. We're so tight, we're so good, people love us, we should call it The Mark Hannon Blues Band," and I said, "Mark, listen. You are a great singer, you're a great showman, you've gotten great on the harmonica, I love you, and I wish we could change the name, too, but, you know what? The Beatles is a stupid name, there's a lot of stupid names, but, it's too late, people know us by this name, we've got to keep it." And, he said, "Look, if you're not gonna change the name, I'm just gonna break away," and, at a certain point, after this big gig we did at Mother Blues, he and Al Miller and Eric Long got together, and there was a schism within the group, and he said, "Hey, I wanna start my own Blues band, and that left Mike and me, and Jim Savage. At that point, I was at Roosevelt University, and I was so worried about getting drafted, I was very happy with the group stopping at that point. I didn't feel bad that it broke up, but, that was the real reason. It had nothing to do with me not wanting to play Blues, and I got that across to Mark, and he finally admitted it to me, and said, "Hey, man, you're right. You're the one that wanted The Blues, you're the one that insisted on The Blues, even when I wanted to do other songs, you stayed with Blues, you stayed with that harmonica sound."

MIKE: That's what I thought.

JUSTIN: Yeah, do you remember?

he was a disc jockey, he was called "The Screaming Wildman." He used to come over and hear our band practice. I saw him about 4 or 5 years ago, and he came up to me and said, "I just want you to know, you guys were fabulous. I came this close to asking if I can be your manager, and I know I could have pushed you, but, I just had so much on my plate at the time, but, you guys were really tight, you guys were hip, you were cutting edge, and I wanted to manage you, I really did. I agonized about it a lot, and I finally decided, I can't take you on right now, but I just want you to know that I would have managed you." I thought that was pretty cool, cause he was big. He had all these other bands he was pushing, but they were all Buckinghams facsimiles, they had horns, they had a lot of help in the recording studio. I always felt that The Buckinghams were not totally authentic, because, when they recorded, they used a lot of studio musicians, this is what I've heard. When we recorded, we just rolled our crummy old amps in ourselves. When we recorded "Why," Stu Black, the sound engineer, said, "Why don't you guys go home and learn how to play your instruments and come back and see me later?" (*Laughs*) Later on, we recorded "Mellow Down Easy" with Stu Black as our engineer, again, and he ran up to us and said, "Hey, you guys! This could be a hit!" because of Mike's guitar solo. He was real excited, so, he changed his tune in six months. So, we really progressed fast, even though, when I hear "Why" now, I dig it. But, at the time, I didn't like it, because I thought it was too raunchy, but, I love it, now.

JOHN: Tell me about the rivalry you had with The Little Boy Blues, and about some of the other Chicago-area bands you might have been associated with...

MIKE: Well, when we were on the lake, near Old Town, that big, grassy area, Paul Butterfield's bass player sat in with us one time.

JUSTIN: Yeah, and Elvin Bishop, who was also in Butterfield's band at the time, sat in with us, too. All the bands that played in the Summer of Love at North Avenue Beach used our sound system. A band would call my dad and say, "Hey, we're gonna be playing on North Avenue Beach, can we use your sound system?" And my dad would say, "Sure." There was a band called The Yellow Brick Road, they were a Psychedelic band. There was a band called Saturday's Children, this guy named Buzz Dommers was in that group (*Looks at the track listing on a "Pebbles" CD*)....no, wait...was it Yesterday's Children? Or Thursday's Children? All these groups about Children...The Foggy Notions, I knew those guys, they were influenced by us. One of those guys went to Senn High School with me...there it is, Nobody's Children, that's the group, Nobody's Children (*Not to be confused with the Texas band, "Nobody's Children" of "Good Times" infamy-JOHN*), we knew them. The Little Boy Blues, we had a rivalry going with them, because we were both doing that punk/Blues thing, but we were friends with those guys, we liked 'em a lot. We were friends with The Knaves, too, they were a hot group. I hear Howie Berkman is up in Colorado, now. The big bands at the time, besides The Dirty Wurds and The Little Boy Blues were The Shadows of Knight, The Buckinghams, Ides of March, The Cryan' Shames, The Mauds, remember The Mauds?

JOHN: They're playing next week at Halsted Street Market Days!

JUSTIN: Is that right?

MIKE: The Flock.

JUSTIN: THE FLOCK!

MIKE: Remember Snake? That long, white hair on Snake, the lead singer? (*I think he 's referring to Flock frontman, Fred Glickstein, whom, incidentally, I recently met at a Dr. Wax record store, one day after meeting the keyboard player from Michael and The Messengers on a CTA bus-JOHN*).

JOHN: All these bands that are still around are doing the fair circuit these days, The Buckinghams, The Shadows of Knight, Cryan' Shames, New Colony Six (*The Flock recently played, minus Goldstein, at the legendary Gateway Theatre, and at Peace Fest, for all you trainspotters.-JOHN*).

JUSTIN: Maybe we should do this, Mike. Maybe we should get The Dirty Wurds back together, get Bob Carter...we could do it...the thing is, the music just seemed to get better and better, and it was at that high level, and, I thought, by '67, that we'd have a pot-smoking President in The White House! Everybody did! We just thought the music was going to go on and on and on. We didn't know it was going to end!

MIKE: We didn't have Clinton back then. If we would have, it would have been better. The Police wouldn't have been allowed to beat down on us. What was that all about? Let's beat up on other human beings, I mean, how sick.

JOHN: It happened a lot, right here in Chicago .

JUSTIN: It was a hard city to be, like, a Hippie at that time, to be an individual, just to be yourself, and dress any way you want to dress. Now, people can get away with it much more. If somebody wants to be punk, you can punk out, or, if you want to be Goth, go Goth.

JOHN: It doesn't mean they're not going to have trouble, but, not like there was before

JUSTIN: Right.

JOHN: I was looking at these local magazines like *Psyche Pscene* in '68, and almost none of the guys in these pictures have got long hair, and you guys had REAL long hair, I mean, that was like Pretty Things long hair! That was outrageous at the time. It looked so cool, but, it just wasn't done!

JUSTIN: Right.

JOHN: People have this revisionist version of the 60s where, as soon as "Louie, Louie" fell from the charts, and The Beatles came in, suddenly, all the men had long hair, and of course, that's not how it happened. It's not just about hair, but, I'm sure, for you guys that meant something, it was asserting your individuality in a hostile world.

MIKE: What about that time on Lake Shore Drive when those guys attacked us? Two Black friends of ours were in the car with us, and they took over, and they beat 'em all up? (*Laughs*) Henrietta and Cliff. Cliff goes up to the van's glove compartment, and says, "I need something! Anything! Oh, there's a hammer, good!"

JUSTIN: Two guys in a car were following us because we had long hair, and they were like big football player kinds of guys, and they were throwing beer cans at our car, and, when we got to a red light, they were yelling out, "Hey, you faggots!" And, all of a sudden, the two Black girls and the Black guy, Cliff, with his motorcycle jacket, jump out of our car, and jump into THEIR car, and start beating these guys up, because they wanted to beat US up.

JOHN: What's the story with those Chess sessions?

JUSTIN: No one can find them. We cut the equivalent of a whole album, or maybe two albums, worth of Blues at Chess Studios. We've tried real hard to find those tapes. Somebody has 'em, somewhere, but we sounded so good. I was playing piano and slide guitar, Mike was playing lead guitar, but, sometimes, he was playing with The Little Boy Blues, so we had Carmie playing. We also had Jim Savage, Al Miller on trumpet and harmonica, Mark Hannon singing, and, also, playing harmonica, and we had Eric Long on drums. We did have a single on Chess ("*Born in Chicago*" b/w an outstanding punk version of "*In The Midnight Hour*," one of the most overdone covers of the era.- JOHN), from another session. They changed our name to "The Wurds" for that single, which I didn't like at all. Alan Miller, by the way, took the place of Alex Wald, and he later became a stockbroker, made a lot of money, and now he's retired, and he lives on Lake Shore Drive, and guess what he does now ? He has a Blues band! They're called The Al Miller Blues Band. He's got two CDs out!

R. Mike playing recently with Rockin' Johnny. Facing page: Shot behind Don Bronstein's studio, same wall as on Shadows of Knight "Back Door Man" LP cover, (L-R): Mike Peterson, Mark Hannon, Alex Wald, Jim Savage, Bob Cyrtis (seated): Justin Pomeroy. P. 18: At the Rolling Stone Rock Club (L-R): Mike Peterson, Mark Hannon, Justin Pomeroy, Marion Kryvza (original harmonica player), Jim Savage, Bob Curtis



MIKE: You can get his CDs at Tower Records.

JUSTIN: That's where I got mine. He came back into my life after Mark Hannon died. The amazing thing about Mike was that he was such a good guitar player, and all the guys in the group were really good, but we never thought, "Hey, we're so young and so talented." We never did. We always thought, "We're not as good as our idols," we were always looking up to somebody, trying so hard to sound better, and, that helped us get better. We were changing drummers, changing singers, and, we were really, really good that last year. I wish we had those outtakes at Chess...

MIKE: Eric Long was on that stuff. He was the coolest drummer.

JUSTIN: Our drummer, Eric Long, studied with Elvin Jones, who was John Coltrane's drummer. He went to New York at one point, he said, "I'd like to take a break for a few weeks," and he went to New York, and he hung out with John Coltrane and Elvin Jones. Coltrane was amazed at how this seventeen year old was such a great drummer. He was a timpanist in The Youth Symphony Orchestra, too. But, he died...it was '70, maybe '71, it was a few years after the band broke up. He jumped out of a window on acid. The freaky thing about it was, while he was in the band, in The 60s, he had a girlfriend who also jumped out of a window on acid. It made the headlines of the newspapers. It happened down in Old Town, she jumped out of a window of an apartment building above Midas Touch.

MIKE: Was it Susie Chess (Marshall Chess' daughter)?

JUSTIN: It wasn't Susie Chess, it was right before he went out with Susie Chess. A lot of people think that The Dirty Wurds got the contract with Chess because Eric was going out with Susie, but, it's not true. It was my Dad who went down there, to Chess records. He showed the Chess people that first Marina record, and said, "What do you think of this?" And, they said, "Cool, man." It was a big thing for us, to get on Chess, it was, like, "Whoa!" You know, The Rolling Stones wanted to be on Chess so bad that they got permission from their record company to record their second album at Chess. Do you know about that piece the *Illinois Entertainer* did on us in 1981? It was about a 3000, 4000 word article, called "Dirty Wurd Blues Born on The Streets of Chicago," written by Jeff Lind. He interviewed Willie Dixon, he said, "Did you know about this group that recorded at Chess, this White group? He said, "Oh, those young White guys played some of the coolest Blues I ever heard!" I thought that was cool. We loved Willie Dixon, and, apparently, he knew about us, maybe through Muddy Waters or something, maybe he was down there, listening to us at Mother Blues. Anyway, we'd like to get The Dirty Wurds back together, but we'd need a drummer and a bassist. I think Bob Carter would do it, he's one of the best drummers in the city. There were a few Dirty Wurds reunions he did play with, and then he played with Hannon a few times. Hannon, who didn't like the name "Dirty Wurds," later became famous for playing with a group called The Fabulous Fishheads!

MIKE: I saw them. I sat in with them. They came out to De Kalb, and I showed up with my camera, I hadn't seen Mark in years, and, I took some pictures of us.

JUSTIN: Did you jam with them?

MIKE: Yeah, it was O.K, I hadn't been on a stage for so long. There was a fight there and everything. I guess, when I play, it causes fights. I get on the stage, and I'm playing, and, all of a sudden, there's a fist fight! BIG guys. College town, y'know, and these guys are super drunk, and some guy touches some other guy's girl...

JUSTIN: Hey, I've got a good memory! We played at Notre Dame University, and they had just won a big football game, and The Dirty Wurds were playing, and everybody's just wild, everybody's drunk and smoking pot, and there was this other Rock group called The Shags, that were from that school, and they were wilder than The Dirty Wurds, and they were so drunk and so high, that they started climbing up on top of our sound system, and they were knocking over our speakers, and, yet, one of the guys gave me their card! I still have it here, it says, "The Shags: An Orgy of Sound By a Pack of Animals" (All laugh). Those guys were wilder than us, we were pretty wild, too, but we were wilder when we had McAleese with us. He was very wild, he would take off his shirt, throw it out into the audience, then he'd jump from one to another amp, over and over. Sometimes we wondered, "What the Hell is he doing, now?!" One time, Mike was playing a guitar solo in front of thousands of people at The Civic Opera House, and the light was supposed to be on

Mike, right? He's playing a great solo, but, the light is following Mick, over on the side of the stage, totally full of energy, we didn't know what he was doing. But, you know, he died.

(McAleese, reportedly, didn't slow down in later years, and the ongoing cycle of substance abuse finally took it's toll... it's sad that he's not here to witness the rebirth of interest in The Dirty Wurds, I'm pretty sure he'd be glad to see it.- in fact I'm sure he can. - JOHN)

INTERVIEW WITH ALEX WALD

BY JOHN BATTLES

Alex Wald should be no stranger to Roctober readers, his comics have appeared in these pages, and he did the cover for Roctober #18 ("Chicago Rock n' Soul Tour"), and the now-controversial "Alfred E. Neuman mask" cover that graced issue # 23 (I presented legendary MAD man, Alice Cooper, with one. He really dug the cover). Estrus Records have used his artwork on releases by Southern Culture on The Skids, The Volcanos, SwitchTrout, The Apemen, Flaming Sideburns, The Mants, Supersnazz, and Sugar Shack. Wald also illustrated The Goblins' "Giant Robot Rock n' Roll" 45 on It Won't Go Flat Records, which led to our mutual friend, Brad Warner, bringing Wald's work to (his employer) Tsuburaya Productions in Japan. Tsuburaya have called upon Wald numerous times to illustrate their most legendary superhero, Ultraman. While he's no "Gai-jin" (Foreigner) to the comic art world, he also blows a pretty mean Blues harp. He did a stint playing harmonica with The Dirty Wurds. Here are his recollections:

JOHN: Did you know the guys in The Dirty Wurds when they were starting out?

ALEX: I just remember reading about the infamous Evanston High School incident, where the singer took off his belt or something like that, and they shut down the show! (Both laugh) I read about this, in the paper, long before I knew who the band was, and you wouldn't have guessed that, eventually, this would be the type of band that I might be interested in. I was very much into the Blues, maybe moreso than the Rock scene, at the time. There was no mention, in the article, about the kind of music that they played. I'm not sure that there were any convenient terms to describe it, then, but, a year or so later, I was starting school at The Art Institute, just Saturday classes, because I was still in High School, and I met a guy there who was playing harmonica for The Dirty Wurds. His name was Marion Kriczka, and, since I was a harmonica player, we had a lot in common, but, he told me that he wanted me to come by the Pomeroy's church where they rehearsed because he couldn't stand being in the band He didn't really much care for being in the band, I don't know how many play dates he did with them, but, somewhere along the line, he actually did do a recording session with them, which, ultimately, ended up on the Chess 45, even though, by the time the deal with Chess has been cut, I had been in the band for quite a while, but, they ended up using the earlier tracks.





DIRTY WURDS

UNIVERSAL SOUND RECORDING
POMEROY PRODUCTIONS

JOHN: Right. So, the recording at Chess came later?

ALEX: Well, nobody ever recorded at Chess. They were done at Outside Studios. I know that they did meet with people at Chess, and, I think the Rev was dealing with either Leonard or Marshall Chess...

JOHN: It might have been Marshall, since Eric Long (*then the band's drummer*) was dating his daughter.

ALEX: Logically, it could have been Marshall. Ron Bass was kind of the staff recording engineer at Chess, but, I don't think he ever had anything to do with it. His name never came up, to the best of my recollection. I think that, since they were taking a chance on them, it wasn't like they were going to take them on and groom them to whatever extent that they had done for other artists around that time. The Pomeroy's were paying for all the recording time out of their own pocket, so they were going to whatever places were available. I did do one recording session with them, when they had the contract with Chess. We went to a place called Universal Sound Recording on Michigan Avenue, north of Randolph. The building is still there. We did a recording session there, I was there, I think it was one evening, or it might have been two. The recording engineer was Stu Black, the guy who recorded the Delmark "Hoodoo Man Blues" album for Junior Wells. When I heard that he was the engineer, I said, "Great, he knows exactly the kind of sound I want with MY instrument, at least," but, I think he was kind of annoyed at having to work with some kind of punk Rock n' Roll band in the first place. His idea, which didn't make sense to any of the other people in the band, was that all the amps should be turned down as low as possible, and they were gonna mike everything and adjust everything on the board. When we heard the tapes, in playback, everything sounded wrong. It was really flat, there was just no resonance, and he goes, "Yeah, yeah, I'll fix it!" And we're going, "The sound comes from the speaker, you're not letting the speaker do it's thing," and he said, "No, no, I'll take care of it!" And, the recordings were just useless, they were just no good, which is why they went with the earlier session, with Marion, cos those were done in another studio with someone else. The songs they were concentrating on, when I was in the studio, were the same two that turned up on the single, "Born in Chicago" and "Midnight Hour," which were both from the earlier session. Those were big numbers in their repertoire, they had recorded them previously, and, here we were doing them again! In retrospect, The Wurz had precious little original material, almost everything was covers, and there was really nobody supplying that kind of stuff. Numbers like "Why" weren't in their repertoire when I was with them. It wasn't until years after I left the band that I'd even heard the song. It's a fairly rare record, you know, and the *Pebbles* anthology hadn't come out til, what? The 80s? (1979, going on into the 80s.-JOHN). I didn't hear it for years after that, even. People actually said, "Oh, you were in that band that's on *Pebbles*!" And I didn't even know that the thing existed. They were getting into more of a Blues-based thing by the time I joined the band. They started out heavily into Blues, by way of Paul Butterfield. The first Butterfield album was, like, their template. It seems to me that we did songs that The Stones did, but only because The

Stones had already covered songs by Muddy or Wolf. There were things that were trotted out for a while, where we would rehearse something like, let's say, "Little Red Rooster," we would try that for a period of weeks, and sometimes, we would keep it in the playlist, and sometimes, it would just go, because somebody didn't like it, or, at some point, it just wasn't coming together. This was all in light of the fact that they were so focused on creating that Chicago Blues sound, and bringing a more Rock n' Roll element to it, that nobody was writing original stuff. I remember, we would just play records, and I was bringing stuff from my collection of 45s, saying, "We should do this." One of the new songs that we did get into the repertoire was "Messin' With The Kid." I had the first version, by Junior Wells, on 45, which was on Chief, I think. I brought that in, saying, "This is good. We should be doing this, it's really catchy, it's distinctive sounding, it's got a more modern sound," meaning anything that didn't sound like another Jimmy Reed-type song, we would pretty much steer clear of that, we wanted stuff that had a more urban sound.

JOHN: Were there many songs that you did outside of the Chicago Blues realm itself?

ALEX: Well, "Midnight Hour," of course, is an example of something coming out of Stax/Volt, as opposed to Chicago Blues.

JOHN: But, I mean, were there any other regional Blues songs that you did that were not necessarily Chess Records or Chicago Blues?

ALEX: No, there might have been, but, right now, it's kind of hard for me to remember.

JOHN: What's interesting about that version of "Midnight Hour" is, that's a song that's been done to death. It already had been done to death in the 60s! There's a handful of versions that I still like, and that's one of the better versions I've heard, it sounds real "punk" compared to a lot of the others.

ALEX: At the time, as far as I knew, there was just Wilson Pickett's version. The deluge of covers hadn't really begun. We might have been among the earliest bands to cover that. In my mind, it was just kind of a bastardized thing. By not having a horn section, and by not having the sophistication of that band, it was weird, I felt like it was an uneasy mix of styles.

JOHN: But, a lot of people were experimenting with different styles, particularly Soul music. At least, The Dirty Wurz kind of jumped ship before they became a horn band like so many other bands in Chicago did!

ALEX: Yeah, I remember seeing The Flock when I was in my early years of High School, they played a tiny club in Skokie. I used to see them there, and in a couple of other places, like, in Rogers Park...What was the place on Sheridan?

JOHN: Pink Phynque?

ALEX: Pink Phynque, exactly! That was so easy to get to, and I was there probably every week for a period of time, and I thought The Flock was just one of the great bands, because they seemed to be able to handle so many different kinds of music. They always had the guy who played saxophone, Rick Canoff, but, by the time they became a real horn band with a full horn section, I thought, "Oh, God, this really doesn't interest me anymore."

JOHN: The Flock seems like one of those bands that started out in the right direction. I like those Destination 45s, but, like a lot of groups, even The Little Boy Blues, who, it seems, started out very much like The Dirty Wurz, went in that kind of direction, too, like a more horn-driven, Soul-oriented direction. (Though, The Flock leaned more toward Jazz-Rock later on, but with horns at the fore.-JOHN.)

ALEX: You mentioned The Little Boy Blues. Lowell Shyette was the guy who taught me the rudiments of the harmonica. I used to go to his house, he was a few years older. I probably met him when I was 14 or 15, and I think he was maybe, like, 20 But, I used to see them, I used to see The Flock, The Del-Vettes also played this area alot, but, I knew guys in The Knaves Too, and I used to see them fairly often. Howard Berkman (*Knaves' singer-guitarist*), who's a couple of years older than me, graduated from the same high school. In fact, his family lived not more than four blocks from where we lived, so, I got to know him fairly well, especially later on, I used to hang out with him alot. Howard and I used to actually play coffee shops as a duo, but, that was post-Knaves. I was in a band called Privy Consul, with one guy I had been in high

school with, but, I was probably already 19 or 20 when that came along. I'm pretty sure I did a recording session with them, too, but that was kind of an odd mix of Blues Rock and Psychedelic "Acid Rock." They had a keyboard player named Mark, who was possibly classically trained. He was extremely talented, kind of the nucleus of that group. I knew the bass player quite well, he and I had been in high school together, and we were both Science Fiction fans.

JOHN: Was this around the time that The Kinetic Playground and The Aragon were happening?

ALEX: Yeah, I'm guessing this would be, like, '68-'69.

JOHN: Did you play some of those places?

ALEX: Well, with the bands that we've been mentioning, it was always the teen clubs. I remember going to The Kinetic Playground to see B.B. King and Johnny Winter, and Albert King might have been on the bill, too, but, somehow, I got backstage, into the artist's area. People I was with were saying, "Oh, he's a musician, he needs to talk to Johnny." Johnny Winter had given an interview saying he'd like to do another album that's more Blues, and get a real harp player, and I said, "I heard you're looking for a harp player," and, he goes, "Whattya got?" So we played for a while, backstage, kind of an acoustic jam, and he said, "Well, I'm not making enough money on this tour, and I've got Edgar with me, and he's my brother, and I shouldn't have to pay him!" (Laughs), and I said, "Okay, nice meeting you." But, for the most part, the bands I was in, up to that point, played The Pink Phynque, The Purple Penguin, all the color-coded teen nightclubs. I thought it was cool, it wasn't the be-all and the end-all, the ultimate goal, but, you felt kind of special, like, I'm not part of the crowd, I'm up on stage, so, there's that thing that really setting you apart, like, if you're 15, 16 years old, that really goes to your head.

JOHN: Roughly, how long were you with The Dirty Wurdz?

ALEX: I think it was about a year and a half. Ultimately, I had to leave, because I got sick and I couldn't attend classes because I was so sick. I was laid up about 6 to 8 weeks, which, in the grand scheme of things, is not terribly long, but, it meant missing a lot of dates, so, they just found a replacement for me. Mark Hannon had felt that if there was any harmonica playing to be done in the band, then, he should be the one to do it. I would play my stuff, I would be just one of the sidemen, and he would be very much out in front. There were tunes where he would play an intro, and a couple of bars to add to the song. I remember, there was a song called "Not This One," I think it was a Willie Cobb number, maybe with Mark's lyrics, I can't be sure, but I used to sit out certain numbers like that, because those were Mark's numbers that he would play. On the other hand, late into my tenure with the band, this guy came around from the Musician's Union, and he wanted to make sure that everybody was in the union. Well, the drummer was, and all the guitar players were, and he said, "Well, what about this other guy?" So, the Reverend says, "No, he's a singer," And he said, "Well, I don't see him singing," so, right away, they had to get me some songs. I mentioned that I brought in "Messin' With The Kid," that was one of the songs that I performed as a vocalist, cos they said, "Well, you're gonna have to do this one," and even though I was used to being up there and playing in front of large crowds, the idea of singing absolutely freaked me out. I think it was kind of rough for me, getting started, I can't imagine what that even sounded like.

JOHN: So, you started singing more songs just to appease the union?

ALEX: Oh, yeah! They would make sure that, everyset, I had at least one song. Usually, it was "Messin' With The Kid," and, I think I did "Blues With a Feeling" and "Mellow Down Easy," we did record that, at some point, with Mark Hannon singing, but, I think that was originally one of the ones that I sang. I think we gave up the vocal thing to him when we did the recording.

JOHN: Did the union stipulate that you had to be in the union to play certain places in Chicago? I mean, there were other venues that were non-union, right?

ALEX: That may have been the case, but I'm really not sure. I think any place where they were advertising that music would be played was something that the union would take an interest in. I don't know how that would work, what the loopholes would be.

JOHN: Even though it's kind of degrading to say that if you're singing, you're not a musician, it was a technical thing, I take it, to keep out of trouble.

ALEX: Yeah, and I remember looking at union papers at the time and it said that the leader of a band always gets double what any sidemen make. I had no idea about stuff like that (Laughs). I'm pretty sure that there were classes of instruments where you did not have to be a musician to play, like a triangle or a tambourine (John laughs), and I think the harmonica might have been the same to them. That's kind of been the history of the harmonica, is that no one takes it seriously.

JOHN: Right, and, of course, the way some people play, you could understand that.

ALEX: Exactly!

JOHN: But, in Chicago, where so much of the foundation for the Blues is built on the harmonica, of course, it's regarded as an instrument, now, but, I guess it's taken that long.

ALEX: For my part, early on, I think I discovered, ironically, The Beatles came out in '64, and then, The Rolling Stones' first album was later that year, but, I already had the first Muddy Waters album before I had the Stones' first album. I was kind of learning all this material simultaneously, and, to me, in my mind, there was no comparison between what The Stones were doing and what Muddy and Little Walter were doing, so I came under the spell of all the Chess records, and I quickly put together a library of whatever was available on Chess. The Jazz Record Mart hadn't opened yet, and I remember reading about that, at one point, in the paper, that there was a place downtown that specialized in these records, and, it was like Heaven or something that there would be a store devoted to this kind of music. I may have been late to discover it, it may have been there for a while, but, at any rate, I started going there, filling in as many as the gaps as I could. Of all the early things that I was exposed to, for me, it was the sound of The Muddy Waters Band, circa 1955, though, actually, Little Walter was already out of the band by 1954. In retrospect, you think, well, geez, it's only, like, 12 years before, but, to me, it seemed like an eternity! When I was a kid, I was hearing these things, and I thought, "This must have been recorded back in The 20s or something," I had no idea that it was as recent as it was. It seemed like we were discovering it, and not something like, "Dummy! It's been sitting here all along." So, for me, it was Little Walter, he was the King. There really hasn't been any other King of the harmonica except Little Walter, any intelligent person will tell you that. I did my best to learn what he did, and emulate that sound, and, in situations where you had to play something else, something new, all my thinking was wrapped around that theory, that's how you played it.

JOHN: When you did start hearing some of the English, Blues-based bands, did you start to think, "Well, I can appreciate what they're doing, this is something that I could do my own way," because, obviously, you're not going to get that original sound, you could get close to it, you could interpret it your own way, the way bands like The Stones, The Animals, Them, and The Pretty Things did?



ALEX: Yeah, all of them. Every one that you named, as soon as the records would appear, I would get them. The Pretty Things, especially. I was very impressed with The Pretty Things. They sounded more like a Blues band than The Stones did. I gave them a lot of credit. Their harmonica guy (*the feared and revered Phil May.-JOHN*), too, I mean, Jagger was obviously not a harmonica player. Brian Jones could kind of, like, fake his way through songs. The guy in The Pretty Things actually knew what he was doing, but they just didn't make it in America, they weren't on *Ed Sullivan*, and that was kind of the single determinant of acceptance or status in The U.S, so, in a way, I thought, well, yeah, what they're doing is different, yet, as a Blues fan, I had developed this real attitude that there's the real Blues, and, then, there's everything else, and, it just didn't measure up. Even though I was one of those players, a teenage, white player from the suburbs, I knew I didn't measure up, but I was determined that I would learn it the best that I possibly could. Ultimately, what happened is that, by the time I was 19, I was starting to go to clubs where I saw Black performers, and I would always have a harmonica in my pocket, and, if I thought the time was right, or, if I had the nerve, I would ask if I could play with whoever was up, fronting the gig. So, kind of quickly, I'd met Lefty Dizz, Luther Allison, Johnny Young, Sunnyland Slim, and Roosevelt Taylor, these were guys that I played with for the next few years. I wasn't in any punk/Psych bands anymore after that point, I was just playing in Black clubs, and, often, I was the only white player there. In fact, I was the only white person in the room.

JOHN: Would this have been all on the Southside, or on the Westside, too?

ALEX: Westside, too. On the Westside, I used to play with Little Sonny Wimberly, who was a bass player. I think he had been with Muddy for a short time in the late 60s or early 70s. I was with him, like, in the mid-70s. I was fairly close to Johnny Young, who played an amazing guitar, a real boxey old National guitar with the Danelectro-styled pickups, like the lipstick tube pickups. He was a fat, sweaty, little man, and he had a really great voice, and a ton of energy, and he was just a really fine guitar player, and, beyond that, he played mandolin with a pickup, and nobody did that. He'd come up from Mississippi, where he learned to play with the older Country Blues guys. There was a band called the Mississippi Sheiks, and, that was a string band, jugband kind of thing, but, of course, they played The Blues. The history of that band probably goes back to The 20's. The descendents of the people that were in that band played in Chicago, years later, as Martin, Bogen, and Armstrong. The lineup was guitar, violin, and mandolin. They had stuff on either Rounder or Nonesuch Records, possibly both, in the 70s.

JOHN: The way Justin described it, The Dirty Wurds were meeting quite a few of the real Blues artists, too, when they'd do all ages Blues shows, and, eventually, they were coming out to their gigs, as well.

ALEX: I don't know if Justin mentioned this, but, there was a Jazz club on Wells Street called Mother Blues, and they had a Sunday matinee program that was all ages, and that was the first place that I saw Muddy and Otis Spann and Howlin' Wolf, it was just great. The owner knew that here was this resurgence of interest in Blues, but among young white kids, and he goes, "Who's serving these kids? I'm going to do it!" Because, he figured, these kids don't know how to find these clubs on the Southside, or they were just terrified. There was still all this craziness going on, I mean, yes, we were living in the Civil Rights era, but, people just still had a lot of paranoia over crossing ethnic neighborhood lines.

JOHN: It seems to me, that when you guys started playing your Blues based material, and the actual Bluesmen, the ones that might have inspired you, got a chance to hear it, that they were actually very encouraging.

ALEX: They were. I never got anything but welcoming and positive responses from the Black audiences. I was enough of a curiosity where people would remark upon it, but then they were the most hospitable people that you could imagine.

JOHN: That's so cool, cos I don't think Muddy Waters was a dummy at all. He could see what The Rolling Stones and people like that were doing, and realize that's what was going to carry it over when he was reaching retirement age (*not that he did, sadly.-JOHN*), and keep him working, which it did, even though The Stones got out

of that Blues thing, my thinking of it, now, is, the fact that they actually recorded at Chess Studio had to be a very humbling experience for them, and they must have thought, "We'd better get into our own thing" (*a lot of that also had to do with Brian Jones' being usurped as leader of the band.- JOHN*). They maintained that Blues base to some degree, but they started doing fewer and fewer Blues covers, early on. When you're in the presence of the real thing, it's like, "Well, we can only milk this cow for so long."

ALEX: But, Muddy's public statements about it, in interviews, were always very supportive. Muddy even wrote the liner notes to Sky Saxon's Blues album! (*laughs*) At the time, it blew my mind. It felt like, not a betrayal, but "What is he thinking? Why did he do this for?" Years later, I thought, "Well, no, that makes sense. It was the right thing to do."

JOHN: Yeah, I think so, too, but at that time, it must have looked very strange. That's an album that has a bad rap that it does n't deserve.

ALEX: It's funny, because, I love The Seeds, but I think, back then, as a young Blues fan, I had this attitude about anybody trying to do The Blues, you know, falling short of the mark.

JOHN: The Seeds had something of a Blues base, but, they quickly got into their own thing, then, later, they did that Blues LP, but, today, people still that they were "Stones copyists." Anybody who plays that kind of music, if it's sort of Blues-oriented, yet steeped in the garage, people think, "Oh, Stones copyists...." These young American bands couldn't help being influenced by The Stones. They heard The Stones, and thought, "I could do something like that," but, it didn't come out the same.

ALEX: Right.

JOHN: I guess the early Dirty Wurds were more Stones-oriented, from all the stories I've heard about the Mick McAleese days, but, still, it seems, their goal was to get into a more straight Chicago Blues sort of thing.

ALEX: You know, I never met Mick McAleese at all, but I used to go down to Wells street, in the Old Town area, cos there was this teen hangout place...

JOHN: Like, Young?

ALEX: Yeah, Like, Young. But, also, on the weekends, you'd go down there on a Saturday just to hang out and see what was happening. That's where all the Hipsters, you know, the Hippies and stuff, were. They weren't even called "Hippies" yet, but, that's where all the long-haired people were, and, I remember seeing this guy plowing down the street, just kind of loud and boisterous, and kind of flamboyant, and had this entourage following him, and, someone told me, "Oh, that's the singer from The Dirty Wurds." Again, this was prior to my involvement with the band, and I literally had to step out of the way, cos this PARTY was coming down the street, with him in the center!

JOHN: But, there's nothing like what Old Town used to be, anymore. The kids don't have an area to go to, that's kind of a convergence point, where young people are encouraged to go to. You probably heard that The Fireside Bowl just closed, or they're only doing "X" amount of shows. When I was 18, there were no all-ages venues where I lived (*Except for one all-Hardcore venue, in an un-airconditioned garage, which was about 95° on a good night, with no running water and not even anybody selling Cokes. It made The Fireside Bowl look like Paradise.-JOHN*)

ALEX: It's almost like the Powers That Be decided, "We're never going to let this happen again!" Then again, let's not underestimate the '68 Democratic Convention. I think that was the writing on the wall. It's unfortunate, too, that the democratic process had to kill free assembly. They didn't really pass a law against free assembly, but, if you fit that profile, there was just no place for you to go anymore, and it WAS very discriminatory.

JOHN: It was happening all over the place. In fact, *Riot on Sunset Strip*, which is considered the Holy Grail of 60s teen-punk exploitation movies, dealt with the same thing that was going on in L.A, kids being told to disperse, riots breaking out, their clubs get trashed. Kids were under such intense scrutiny, especially if they had long hair, but, I couldn't even imagine having a venue to go to when I was in High School, or my first year in College, that I could say, "This is ours."

ALEX: I had no sense, at the time, that this was some kind of privileged moment in history, but I think that, in retrospect, it does kind of feel that way.

JOHN: It's easy not to see that, when you're there. Now, to myself, hearing about you and Justin and Mike getting to see Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf in a club situation when you were in your teens, that's incredible. I saw Muddy Waters once at Chicagofest, but, I was never able to see him in a club. I even had a ticket for an all-ages show that got switched to a bar because they couldn't sell enough tickets.

ALEX: The thing that's changed now is that commercialization has increased a millionfold. So, for some young person that wants to see a Jazz or Blues or Rock icon, you can do it, but you've gotta come up with fifty bucks or more for a concert ticket, and, this was the kind of thing where I could go down, and admission was two dollars, MAYBE, and, then, you just had to buy a Coke when you went inside, and there's certainly no comparison for that. This was a club that held barely a hundred people, so this was a very intimate setting, and you're seeing these groundbreaking musicians working their craft in an authentic situation, I mean, its stunning. What could you possibly compare that to, now?

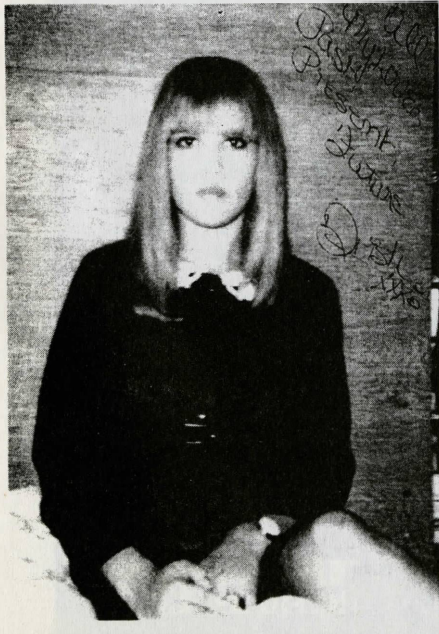
JOHN: You can't. I guess, maybe, that's why so many young bands came out of Chicago, they always seemed to have a place to play. You've got to go through all this rigamarole to even get a crappy gig, or one that doesn't even pay, now. You've got to have a lot of business savvy, or have somebody representing you who does, to get anywhere. Tastes are very fickle, now, and club owners will look at you like, "Well? What's in it for me?" Well, you never know until you try, do you? But, they don't want to hear that. They want to hear how many heads you can get into the place.

ALEX: Every aspect of the music industry has changed, in that sense.

JOHN: Yeah, it's really too bad, but I think there will always be pockets of younger people, here and there, that might want to try something of their own. But, what everyone's been talking about, "The Return of Garage Rock," it's got nothing to do with Garage Rock. There are bands playing it, but not the ones they're talking about. If you try too hard at anything, like, if you try too hard to play The Blues, it's not going to come out right, if you don't put your own spin on it, and relate your own feelings and experience of what you're going through, because, I think a lot of teenagers have, and have always had, The Blues. It's never been an easy job, being a teenager.

ALEX: No, never will be

For Mick McAleese, Mark Hannon, Eric Long, and, especially, The Rev. Ralph J. Pomeroy. Shoutouts to : James Boyce, Gayle Silverman ("You and your Rolling Stones and your Dirty Wurds!" - Gayle's Dad), Gary Davis, Steve Levin, John D, and Mort) Long Live The Dirty Wurds.!



BONUS STORY: Trish Follett (L) was president of the Rolling Stones Fan Club, and after things didn't work out with Brian Jones she became Justin's girlfriend. According to Justin, after both were accepted at the University of California, Justin upset her when he decided not to go because he wanted to keep playing with the band. Justin believes a vengeful Trish then went on a campaign to break up the band that included dating disc jockeys so they would stop playing Wurds singles.

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They're Singing the Blues

A pageboy-coiffed teen-age combo called the Dirty Wurds has been singing the blues since it was ordered out of Evanston Township High School Thursday while performing at a student assembly. The group consists of (left to right) Jim Savage,

Mike Peterson, Mick McAleese, Mark Bringman and Justin Pomeroy. It was ordered out by the school's assistant principal, Robert Bauer, "because their music, appearance and gyrations were most inappropriate."

Evanston Ruckus Over Teen Combo

'Dirty Words' Get the Gate

A teen-age combo, "The Dirty Words," was ousted from Evanston Twp. High School Thursday during a performance at a student assembly.

Robert Bauer, an assistant principal, said he asked the long-haired group to stop playing and leave "because their music and their actions were most inappropriate."

"A lot of the students were complaining, so I finally stopped it," Bauer added. "The Dirty Words" were in the middle of the second of four scheduled performances when they were asked to leave.

THE REV. Ralph Pomeroy, father of one of the six Chicago youths in the combo, was indignant about the action.

"This is a serious group, not a frivolous group," the Rev. Mr. Pomeroy, pastor of Bethany Lutheran Church, 1244 W. Thorndale, said. "I realize they have a funny name, but just because they have long hair is no reason to complain."

"The Dirty Words" play such popular music as "Down the Road a Piece," "Satisfaction," and "Feel a Whole Lot Better Now."

BAUER described the youths as "slovenly."

"There is a point at which good taste is exceeded," he said. "They passed that point. I hope no one will think Evanston is snobbish for this."

The Rev. Mr. Pomeroy said "The Dirty Words" have played for parties and school dances all over Chicago "and

have never had any complaints."

"The Dirty Words" combo is composed of Justin Pomeroy, 17, of 5950 N. Magnolia; Jim Savage, 16, of 3100 N. Sheridan; Mike Peterson, 16, of 1358 W. Thorndale; Mark Bringman, 16, of 6030 N. Sheridan; Mick McAleese, 17, of 1050 W. Winona, and manager Rich Kahn of 3400 N. Lake Shore.

"Their appearance here was properly authorized," Bauer said sadly. "But somebody should have been suspicious from the name."

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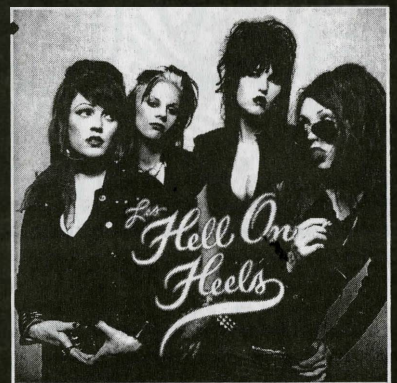


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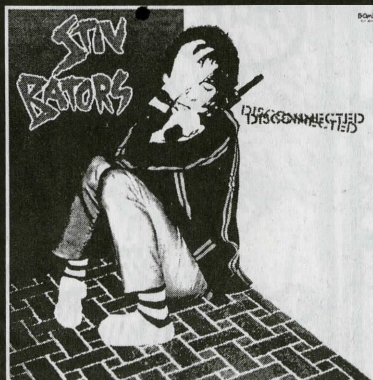
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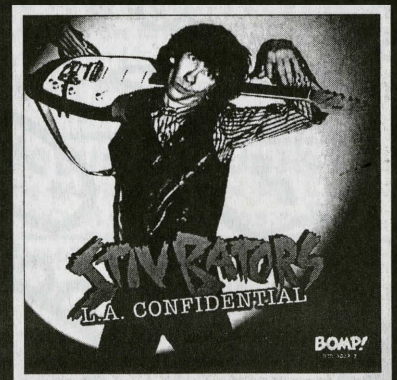
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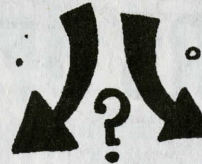
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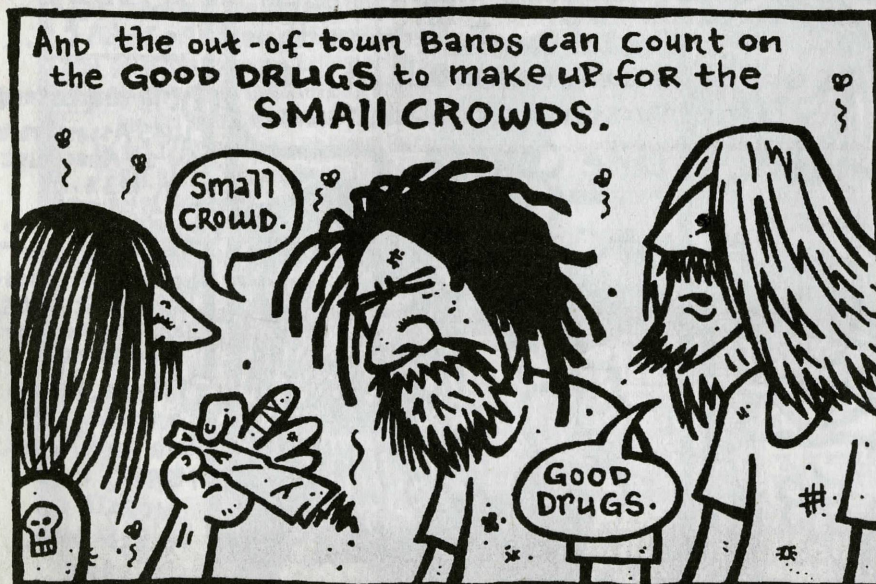
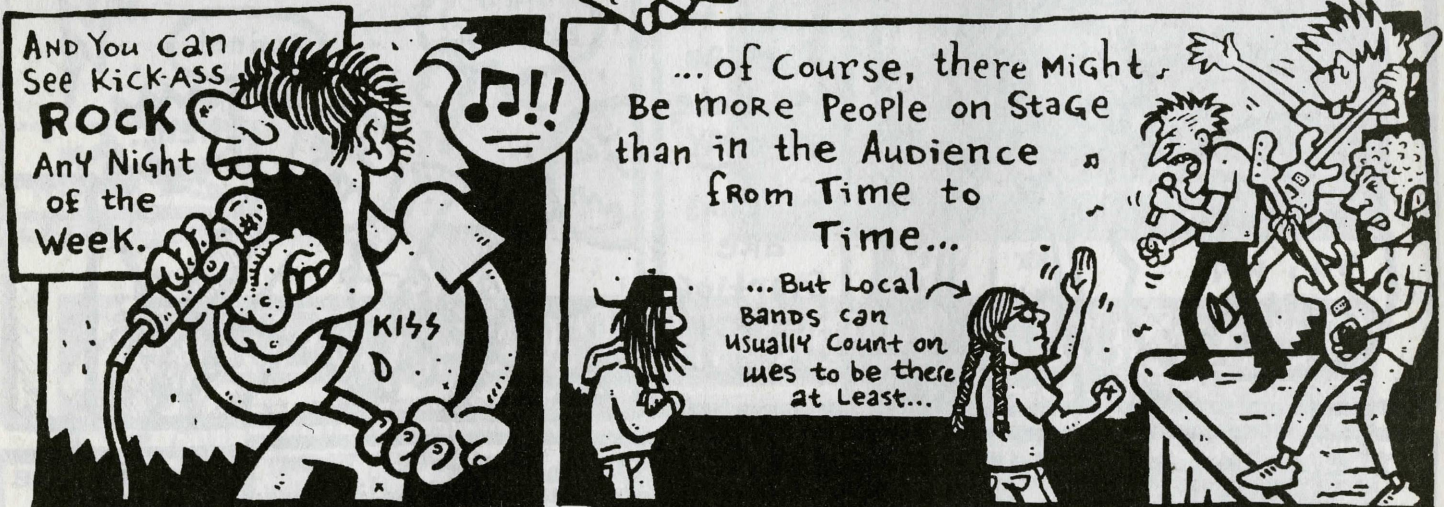
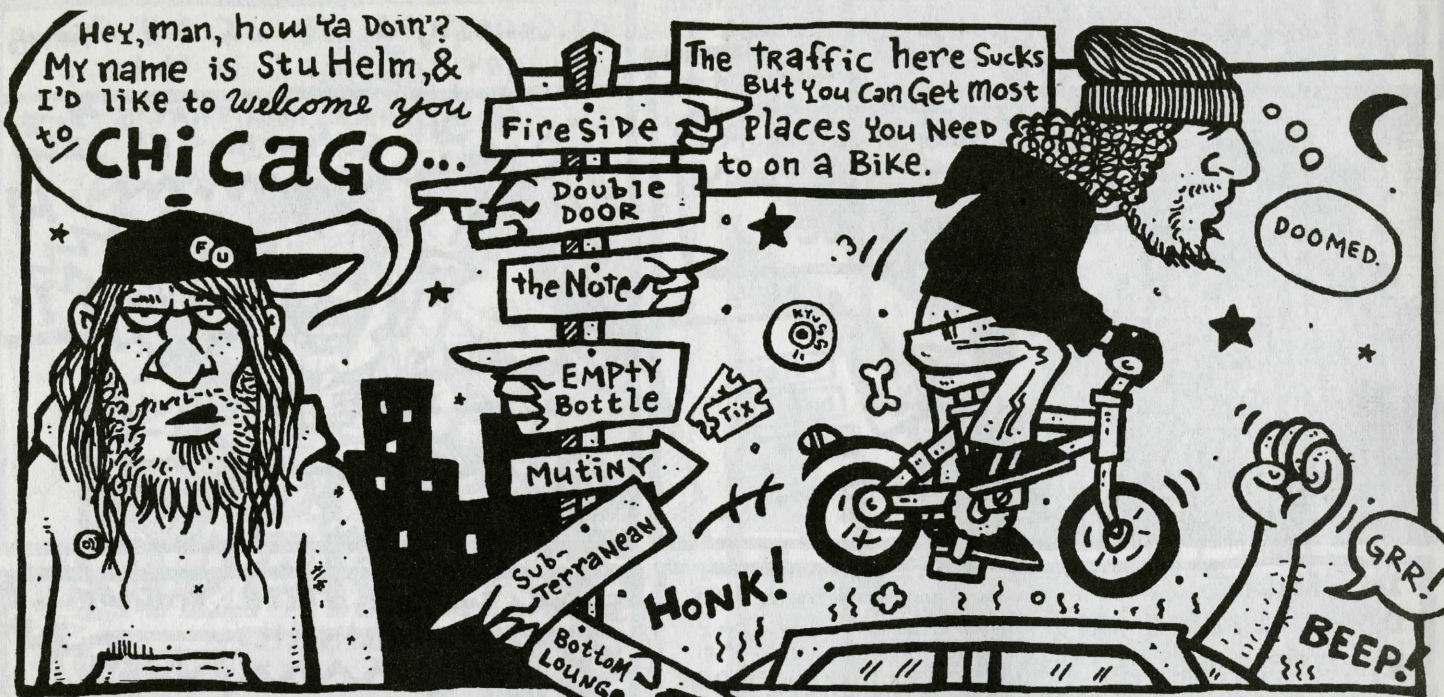


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by Stu Helm
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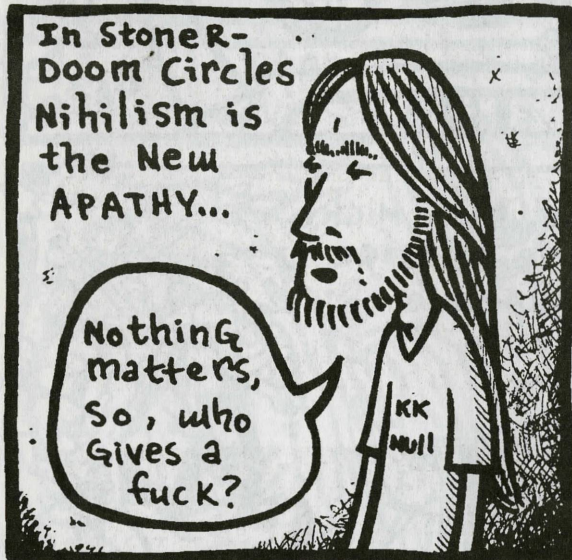
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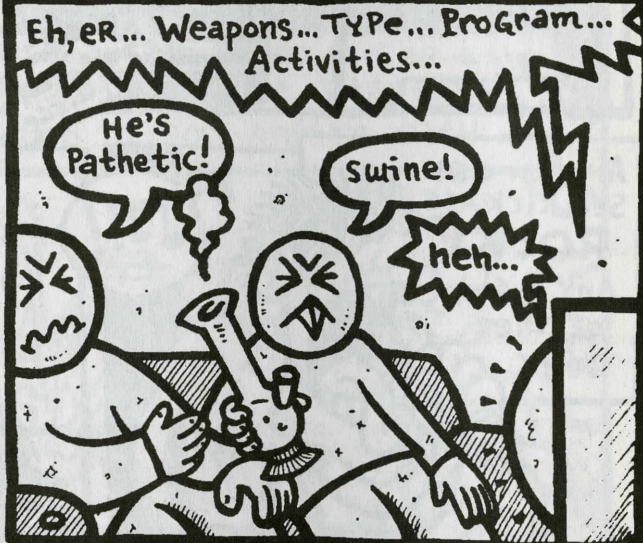
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I'M FROM HEAVEN

AN INTERVIEW WITH HUGH PHUKOVSKY ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GATHERING FOR ANDY KAUFMAN

by Robert Dayton



Robert: For the readers who don't know who you are, that's probably most of the readers, you are funnyman Hugh Phukovsky. You just got back from L.A.? Why?

Hugh: I went to Los Angeles because of the big Andy Kaufman show. It was twenty years since he died. He said that he was gonna fake his own death and come back twenty years later to the day. To the day. This show was called "Andy Kaufman: Dead Or Alive?"

R: And it was put on by Bob Zmuda, Andy Kaufman's best friend and co-writer. How'd it start?

H: The show really started for me outside talking to fans, most people were there by themselves, we made friends and talked about what we thought was going to happen, the mystique was enough for it to be worthwhile.

R: Did people think that Andy Kaufman was going to come back?

H: I think the general feeling was, "He's probably dead but what happens if he isn't?" If anyone could pull it off it could have been him. The show starts off with this radio D.J. in a cock rock voice. I was shocked. He announces Bob Zmuda who tells some stories any fan has heard a million times before. Then he brought up people to tell their stories, like a drunk Andy Dick.

R: I thought he was in rehab?

H: Yeah, he's out now. Then Zmuda brought up a bunch of hack comics who thought they were being cutting edge because they were dirty. Then Bob Odenkirk came on and put all those comics to shame with a hilarious piece about how Andy Kaufman never swore. Then Zmuda introduced the "never before seen footage" of Andy Kaufman. The film is Jim Carrey behind the scenes making "Man On the Moon." Audience members started standing up yelling, "Jim Carrey isn't Andy Kaufman! We want our money back!" And then Tony Clifton came out which was great. Zmuda played Clifton for years.

R: He and Kaufman would switch off.

H: Yeah. He sang a bunch of old classics and a medley.

R: You can't go wrong with a medley.

H: He abused people and grabbed his dancers in the privates. He ended with "Man On the Moon" and kept on forgetting the

words. And then he took us all out for milk and cookies across the street. You go outside and there was circus performers and stilt walkers blocking off traffic.

R: Nobody knew this was going to happen, all these extra surprises?

H: No. Then they herded us into the backroom to watch amateur Mexican tag team wrestlers who were just great. One of the teams was dressed up like chickens. Then Jerry Lawlor came out and beat them up. You think that's the end of that but then Tony Clifton comes out with Ron Jeremy and Dennis Hof who runs the world famous Bunny Ranch, Andy Kaufman's favourite bordello. He says, "You've been really good. The show continues tomorrow night in Carson City, Nevada at The Moonlight Bunny Ranch where your ticket stub entitles you to one hot hooker." So we just had to get up there, which is about an 8 hour drive from Los Angeles: it's legal in Nevada. As I'm wandering around looking for a ride I got to talk to Kaufman's girlfriend Lynn Margulies. I talked to Little Wendy about Andy Kaufman's personal meditation practice. Then we're walking outside and we got handed these candles. There's maybe sixty people gathered outside, everyone else went home, and Tony Clifton just said, "Follow me." We started walking with these candles about six or seven blocks. Tony Clifton tells us that we are going to one of Andy Kaufman's old apartments. It had original costumes, scripts, personal pictures. Only six or ten people could go up at a time as Tony Clifton told stories outside. He would answer everything. That was my favorite part. It was about four thirty in the morning when the tour ended.

R: And Andy Dick showed up drunk?

H: He said he wasn't waiting in line, he was too loud and got kicked out. Everyone told him, "Come back when you're funny."

R: Then the next day rolls around-

H: This guy gave me a place to crash and after four hours sleep we drove to Nevada.

R: You get there and-?

H: First of all, I had this idea that it'd be like The Playboy Mansion. We drive up and it just looks like a massive trailer and all my hopes of a high class evening went out the window. We ring the little bell and walk in and all the girls are lined up. You got some blondes, brunettes, one black girl, no Asians - anyways, that was a problem for some people. But there was about thirty people from the show. Mostly all guys, two or three brought their girlfriends to watch them have sex with hookers. Tony Clifton was there and the bar was on him. "I'm picking up the tab! Drink up!" You see a girl you like you're suppose to say, "Can we talk?" I wasn't going for the sex, I was there for the comedy.

R: Yeah, yeah, sure.

H: I refrained from the free sex but I did take advantage of a prostitute.

R: What made you choose your prostitute?

H: Basically it was the end of the night and Tony Clifton made the announcement, "You only got ten more minutes, so find a lady and screw!" I just grabbed this girl and we wrestled topless and I made her play "I'm a little teapot." And we jumped on the bed. It was all very innocent. She had a bunch of stuffed animals, I think she was playing the little girl prostitute. At one point she started talking about her three kids, that was a little depressing.

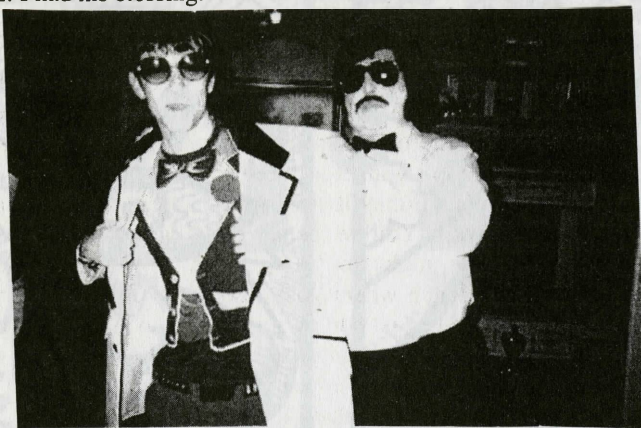
R: What about Clifton's tuxedo jacket?

H: He had it off because it was very hot and people wanted to try it on. He said, "No! Get your dirty little hands off my jacket!"

then he felt inspired to put the jacket on my shoulders. I felt like he was passing on the jacket to the next generation.

R: Let's be humble here...

H: I had his blessing.



DRAC-MAN by Robert Dayton

I remember the year, it wasn't that long ago. Like all years, in that year resided months. It was a pathetic month when it happened, I've had a few, but this one month was particularly pathetic, not awful by any means, I was getting my shit together and getting ready for some unpathetic months.

There I was browsing intently through some old comic books in one of those stores. You know how it is when you're just looking for something to buy, something to make time pass a little easier, to fill a hole. When I saw it! And then I got excited! Too excited. I orgasmed over a comic book. It wasn't really worth any money or anything, money just doesn't thrill me that way. I go for the newsprint smell of a difficult catch. This was my biggest sexual experience of that month. I sit down at the end of each month and do a tally. This must have been in March of that year because the January and the February were pretty decent by all standards (the months before them were wretched bleak, headspace pathetic, we're talking medication worthy) and from April on it was all pretty gosh darn good! It'd be March then.

Hey, I'm not one of those guys that puts his interests of comics and girls into two separate spots, I'm a mixer. I wear my interests on my sleeve; that's why I carry kleenex: never wipe your nose on obsessions. So just what was this comic book in question? It was an issue of *Dracula*. But not just any *Dracula*.

Throughout The Sixties Dell was primarily known as a comic book publisher of TV and movie adaptations. They were not known for being one of the great comic publishers, they weren't there to further the medium, that's for sure. About four years after they did their adaptations of the *Dracula*, *Wolfman*, and *Frankenstein* movies someone in their offices must have said, "Hey! Superheroes are popular right now! Let's catch that gravy train and turn those old monsters into superheroes!" So, they did, numbering each comic as issue two after the movie issues that came out long previous. By severely transforming them into super heroes the only thing left monstrous about these characters was their names. They were declawed, or, in *Dracula's* case, rendered fangless, bloodless. Nobody signed their names to these comics but some sources speculate that these rushed looking, plothole filled works were written by Don Segall, who co-wrote D.C.'s Silver age gem *The Creeper*, and drawn by Tony Tallarico, who was known for his "How To Draw..." books whose impact ruined the world of art for a couple of generations.

The movie adaptations were better drawn yet considerably stiffer than their hackneyed, hamfisted follow ups. Yes, these superheroes were fascinating in their wrongheadedness! *Dracula*, Batman-like with his purple outfit and cute little ears, was more harmless than Count Chocula (General Mills was having their own field day with the classic movie monsters as well). How did he come to be? This particular *Dracula* invented a serum derived from bat brains to heal brain damage. He was hoping to use this serum to clear the bad reputation that his family name bears. Through some laboratory blunder he accidentally drank it and

turned into a bat! His other powers included a super sensitive brain, radar hearing, and the ability to see in the dark. Since he wasn't given super strength, he spent his spare hours at his home gym. This prepared him to fight such villains as Boris Eval who is of Russian descent. *Dracula* and a bunch of bats defeated Eval and his batch of nuclear weapons.

In issue three (the second super hero issue) *Dracula* left Transylvania for America, the land of opportunity. En route he had to defeat Admiral Maltemps, a bald fella with a monocle and thin moustache (sure signs of a villain). Maltemps had a fleet of weather disturbing dirigibles. He was also French.

Dracula met a somewhat pretty lady. Her name was B.B. Beebe. They met through her snooping around and getting into things, even so much as stalking *Dracula* and figuring out his secret identity. Instead of killing her, he swore her to secrecy, and she found him a Bat-I mean-a secret cave for him to do his bat work. In issue four in this cave she took it upon herself to drink the serum behind *Drac's* back. *Dracula* looked at her and said, "There's no turning back now. That serum is permanent! With it you have the same powers as I. You can turn into a *fliedermaus*, a bat, just as I can."

To which she replied, "Fliedermaus,...Flieder...**Fleeta!** I shall call myself **Fleeta!** Together we will fight all of the Evil Pipers (note: evil piper was the villain whose power was the ability to control children) and their kind in this world. **Dracula and Fleeta!**" When the two of them realized that the superhero *Frankenstein* was perfectly capable of holding the peace himself they switched their efforts to "...fight the purveyors of fear!" ie. fake ghosts. This new mission statement lasted for several pages for this was the last issue.

And what of *Frankenstein*? Somehow a billion volts found its way to an abandoned castle to give a strange figure life after a hundred years of dormancy. A figure with a green head and white hair clad in a red jumpsuit. He was super strong and fought villains like the bald headed Mr. Freek and a mad computer. His secret identity was Frank Stone, a millionaire with a butler. I know, I know, it made little sense. These series took many of the basic Silver Age conventions to absurd levels riding slipshod with little regard for any true linear sensibility. And that is its charm.

I know nothing of the super hero called *The Wolfman* but I sure would love to (comics make for great presents, I will also pay cash for copies of issues two, three, and four of *The Wolfman*, contact me through this fine publication).

It was Robin Bougie and Rebecca Dart that first hipped me to these miswrought Dell gems and I thank them. Robin puts out *Cinema Sewer* which, considering its name and lurid subject matter (gore, porn, exploitation, esoterica written in an engaging and enthusiastic manner), is painstakingly hand lettered and drawn. This obsessively beautiful quality makes it my fave movie mag. He puts his love into it. Love and comics do go together.

moustachedpainless@yahoo.com

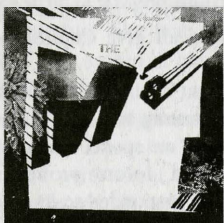




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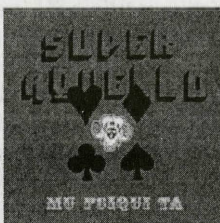


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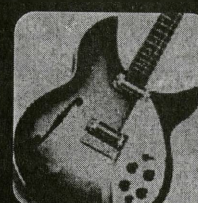
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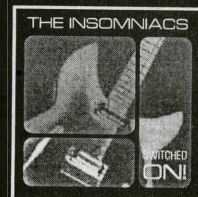
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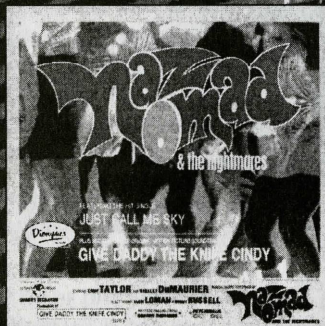


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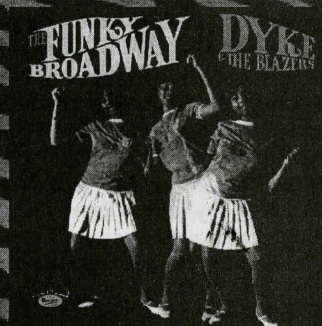
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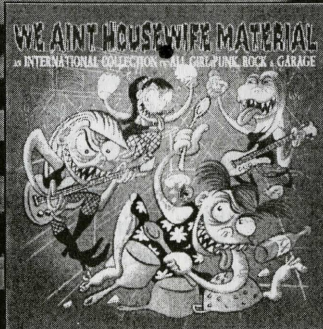
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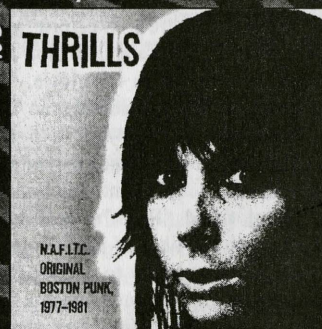
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Unknown Hinson

Hillbilly Vampire or King of Country-Western Troubadours?

By Ken Burke

Part late-night horror-movie host, part novelty act with a death row attitude, Unknown Hinson appears to be the living embodiment of the 1966 B-movie *Dracula Meets Billy The Kid*. The most unique performer on the outskirts of country music today, Hinson is an edgy, funny singer-songwriter, not to mention a top-flight guitarist equally at home playing traditional acoustic country and hard-assed rock. Moreover, he draws a decidedly unusual audience - rockabilies, honky tonkers, goths, barely reformed juvenile delinquents, and classic guitar rockers. This fact was not lost on Capitol Records, who released the artist's first major label album "The Future Is Unknown."

Best described as a country & western performance artist, Hinson employs the same type of inspired role-playing Andy Kaufman indulged in when he took on the Tony Clifton character. However, whereas Clifton was designed to be an aggressive no-talent boor (which is why the bit was funny), Hinson's character is a crowd-pleaser with a gift for deliberately provocative cornpone patter. Indeed, his working vocabulary is larded with pure backwoods pronunciations such as "womerns" for "women," "rawk" for "rock," and "rakkerds" for "records." Further, he punctuates his gab with little self-encouraging asides of "yeh-yeh," and refers to anything having to do with him or his music as "chart-toppin'."

Although he makes many claims that can't easily be proved or disproved, Hinson's true identity isn't too hard to discover. Two clippings in his press kit and one article link from his official website mention that he is the alter-ego of a Charlotte-area music teacher and studio musician named Danny Baker. Further, his Capitol CD's songwriter credit reads: "All songs written by Unknown Hinson (sdb Music, SESAC/Pacific Winds Music, SESAC)." A trip to the SESAC website quickly reveals that all the songs listed were written by one Stuart Daniel Baker.

That said, Hinson won't admit that he and Danny Baker are the same person. Why should he? Besides, it's much more fun to hear his version of the chart-toppin' truth, much of which sounds like something drawn from a Harlan Ellison novel. Indeed, the Unknown Hinson mythos includes allegations that he gained a following singing country music as a carnival sideshow attraction until a 30-year jail sentence waylaid his career.

This writer could find no evidence of a jail record for either Hinson or Danny Baker. Suffice it to say the character of Unknown Hinson was probably created in 1993, the year the singer-songwriter claims to have left incarceration. The jail sentence scenario provides a wonderful explanation for why most of the performer's attitudes and references are stuck in a 60s time warp. He writes about "hippies," still rails against "womern's lib," and disdainfully covers Jimi Hendrix and "the Led Zeppelins."

Donning an embroidered Western gambler's outfit, exaggerated eyebrows, sideburns, and fangs. Hinson first burst into prominence via a cable access show aired in Charlotte, North Carolina called the *The Wild, Wild South Show*. Creating an indelible image as a "hillbilly vampire," he quickly followed with his own regular cable access program of comedic vignettes, all while working the local club scene. Recordings for the independent Uniphone label eventually led to a 2002 EP for Capitol titled "Rock'n'Roll Is Straight From Hell," which resulted tours with the likes of Rev. Horton Heat and Hank Williams III. On stage, he is just as likely to chew out an audience member as play a blissed hard-rocker or demented country ballad.

As a result, his first full major label album, "The Future Is Unknown," while a triumph of character-based satire, has got to be something of a challenge for a mainstream label like Capitol to promote. Not that Hinson lacks talent. In both conception and execution he proves to be a supremely gifted craftsman. His best songs simultaneously threaten and

tickle the listener *a la* the heavy-breathing stalker in "Foggy Windows," the romancer of rubber sex dolls in "Polly Urethane," the recalcitrant adulterer of "I Ain't Afraid of Your Husband," and the sex-changed divorcee addressed in "Man To Man." It's funny stuff, indeed. It's just that country music, even with its massive influx of Northern middle-class female listeners, doesn't have much of a taste for politically incorrect humor. (Which is why we should all give Capitol credit for taking a chance on him.)

Right now, Hinson, who can count such Hollywood hotshots as Billy Bob Thornton and Tim Robbins among his fans, didn't seem worried about his act being a tough sell when we spoke. Calling from an unspecified location, the bottom-fanged felon proved utterly charismatic, funny, and yes a bit scary, as he responded to questions and laid out his life story.



KB: In the CD jacket all your songs are listed as being written by Unknown Hinson at SDB Music for Sesac. Well, Sesac's website lists Stuart Daniel Baker as the author.

UH: No, Unknown Hinson wrote 'em. That's my name.

KB: Do you know Danny Baker?

UH: No. I take that back. I met him. When I got out of the joint - I'll come back to this later about my stint in prison. But after I got out, as part of my duties - community service - I went around and entertained people at various rest homes and certain institutions. I met his'n and he was a patient - I won't name the exact hospital but it was a hospital somewhere in North Carolina - and he got a little bit too overzealous when he heard my music and he kindly got obsessed with me. He's been stalking me ever since. I can't help the boy. He's got a problem. He needs to get his life together.

KB: There have been some articles, sir, that say that Danny Baker is your alter-ego, and that he is a music teacher and a very fine studio musician in the Charlotte, North Carolina area. Do you know that to be true?

UH: I don't know a lot about him other than he does show up on my doorstep from time to time. I had to call the law...you know.

KB: Do you treat him with any kindness or do you try to get him away from you as soon as possible?

UH: Well, man, all I do is - when I'm home, which ain't very often, he

comes to the door. I'll greet him and say, "Hey, Hoss, you need to think about it. You need to get yourself together and be somebody and quit trying to live vicariously through me - The King of Country Western Troubadours."

KB: How does he respond to that?

UH: He'll hang around and then he'll leave. He ain't never become violent or nothin' like that. He knows what would happen if he does. Yeh-yeh, I ain't scared of him. Don't make no mistake about that. I ain't a-scared of him.

KB: So, you're a dangerous person in your own right?

UH: No, no - I wouldn't say that. I'm a man of *love*! Yeh-yeh. Everything I write about, Ken is about real life experiences that I have experienced in my life. Or, at least situations that I have witnessed with my chart-toppin' eyes. I write about it and put it in country-western music form. It's all real life experiences about the nuclear family unit and the Heartland of the U.S.A.

KB: We'll work up to talking about many of the songs on your album, but first tell us a little something about yourself. How old of an individual are you, sir?

UH: How old? Well, how old do I look to you?

KB: Well, you look about 35 to me.

UH: That'll work.

KB: Are you from North Carolina?

UH: I'm from what they call the foothills - halfway in between the mountains and the beach in the fine state of North Carolina.

KB: Your press kit says that "Unknown" is actually your first name and that you got it from your dad.

UH: Yeah. You know, people gets that wrong. They call me "The" Unknown Hinson. My first name ain't "The," Ken. It's Unknown. Hinson - yeh-yeh- Unknown Hinson.

KB: Let's talk a bit about your image. To the uninitiated, you would appear to look like a vampire. Would that be a correct assessment?

UH: You know, I was hoping you wouldn't mention that. I get that all the time. That was something that was started by - pardon the expression - the evil, wicked press. Which I ain't associating you with - don't get me wrong. Yeh-yeh. They call me that. Youngerns who sees me, these young folks who listens to the rawk music - that gothic mess - they think I'm dark. They say, "Oh dude, you dark. You've got the black hair and the black show day clothes, you've got a chauffeur dressed in black and he drives you around in your black Cadillac. You must be a vampire." No, nom that don't work. Because a vampire's fangs is on the top rack, right? That's it. And my fangs or my teeths, if they was fangs, they're on the bottom. So, the physics of me biting somebody on the neck is pert near impossible unless I stood on my head. That throws the vampire theory right out of the window.

KB: I know that you're King of the Country Western Troubadours, but please tell us how your look evolved.

UH: Yeh. Number one: I'm in a class all my own. You pretty much gathered that when you put my record on and first seen my picture, right? Yeh-yeh. I don't wear no cowboy hat, no no. I ain't like the steroid-eatin' pretty boys who wears them black cowboy hats and tight designer jeans, and ain't playing nothin', just tushy-pushin' around the stage with a McDonald's microphone in front of them. That ain't me, Hoss. I play the guitar and sing country & western chart-toppers to the folks. The reason I don't wear a cowboy hat is - I ain't bald! They all bald. I got a full head of chart-toppin' jet black hair that drives the womerns wild! That's right. If you had hair like mine, you wouldn't want to show it to the womerns?

KB: Absolutely. I also admire your sideburns.

UH: Yeh-yeh, they a gift.

KB: Why did you decide to get into country music as we call it?

UH: Well, when I was a youngern, my momma picked guitar and sang for me when I was in the crib. I remember that.

KB: What type of songs did she sing to you?

UH: Mainly old western folk songs. Yeh-yeh. When I got to be about

five, she said, "Look here, you wanna play the guitar?" I said, "Yeah, momma. I want to play." She showed me one chord and then handed the guitar to me and said, "Look here, Unknown, if you want to do this, you'll figure it out yourself." That's all she showed me was that one chord. I think it was a G-chord. The rest is history. She know'd that if I wanted to do it in my heart, she wouldn't have to beg me.

KB: When did you first start playing with the idea to make country music your living?

UH: When I growed up, my momma sung country and western music.

KB: Professionally?

UH: No, no, I reckon the sound of her voice, the way she sang those songs to me it endeared me to the genre as they say. That was my quest in life. It still is, to be a chart-topping country-western troubadour. I think that country music has done got off the path, yeh-yeh. It needs to be steered back between the ditches and the Unknown Hinson phenomenon is happening right now as we speak, Ken.

KB: You know, there's not enough outhouse in today's country music experience and that's why you're so different.

UH: Well, people say, "Unknown, we appreciate you because you're bringing it back. You ain't like all this formula pretty boy mess that the rakkerd labels turn out by the mass." Every week there's a brand new pretty boy in tight jeans, all pumped up on his Nordic-Track, in a black cowboy hat.

KB: Your press kit mentions that you worked in a carnival working with snakes and biting the heads off certain domestic fowl.

UH: I done it.

KB: I don't want to use this word incorrectly, but were you what is known as a carnival geek?

UH: (Accent drops slightly) That's a little strong, Ken. For the sake of your magazine, we won't get real graphic. They's a new trend where we got to watch what we say. I will say that I left home when I was 14 year-old and I hooked up with a six truck carnny that run around the deep south working country fairs, yeh-yeh. It was my job, I worked there in the midway at a 10-in-1 show. To the laymen, they would call that a sideshow and I did work with various wildlife including snakes and chickens and a few others.

KB: Did you mesmerize these animals to keep them from attacking you?

UH: Well, I've always been an animal lover, yeh-yeh. I never got hurt, never got hurt. Can't say the same for some of the animals. It was purely unintentional if they did. Anyway, the evolution of the chart-topping hits started right there on the midway. The owner of the carnival, he let me sing a few of my chart-topping songs that I had wrote, to the audiences. In a matter of weeks, the gate receipts for the fair was up because they was coming to see me. At the time I was billed as: Troubadour Boy. Yeh-yeh. In betweenst working with the animals, I would sing to the crowd three or four country-western songs that I had wrote myself.

KB: Tell me what era this was during American history.

UH: We'll just say that it's before 1960, yeh-yeh. Them Beatles hadn't come out so it was the early 60s, maybe '61, '62, right in there.

KB: And you were singing pure country music, the Unknown Hinson way?

UH: That's it - right from my chart-topping heart. I was offered a rakkerd contract back then, right there. One night a fella from a rakkerd label come up. They seen my act and he wanted to sign me right there.

KB: What label was that, sir?

UH: I can't mention it right now because it is what they call a subsidiary of somebody else. Yeh-yeh. One of them big conglomerates - one of them big raider companies that buys up everything. Anyhow, they was some boys in the audience. The history books refer to them as the "pioneers of country western music." What they was jealous cowboy hat wearing mens who seen my act and was kicking themselves for not doing it first. So, what the done was they conspired to have me set-up, framed, and put away. So, they had me arrested and they's too many charges to remember.

KB: What was the worst of those charges?

UH: Well, let's just the ultimate crime - murder one. You might not want to print that. Yeh-yeh-yeh. I think that sounds more poetic, don't you? It's more gripping. But they had me set-up. I went to trial. I was charged, convicted, and sentenced to 20 years. There weren't nothing I could do, you know, I was done. Career was over with. So I was mad. Any man who gets slapped with 20 years, they're gonna get mad, right? So, there in the courtroom, I jumped up and screamed at the judge, "Look here judge, when I get out I just might find you and whup your butt! How about that?" So he banged his hammer and said, "Aw right, this is what happened, another 10 years for communicating a threat." Which 20 and 10, that makes 30. What man wouldn't try and defend himself by raising his voice?

KB: Which prison did you serve your time in, sir?

UH: Well, I can't get real specific with the details. Let's just say that it was in the great state of Illinois.

KB: Did you get any time off for good behavior?

UH: No. I done a lot of solitary.

KB: Did you get a chance to formulate more of your musical ideas in prison?

UH: I wrote, for sure. I wrote hundreds of chart-topping hits. One of 'em is on this new record right now that goes back to them days. "I Ain't Afraid of Your Husband" was wrote in the joint.

KB: That's a wonderful song. It's got that true country feel.

UH: Womerns likes a man to display his courage, right?

KB: You have a strong feel for married women in your songs. Is that intentional or just the way it works out?

UH: Womerns makes the rakkerd business work. They's the ones who buys the rakkerds. Mans don't appreciate the arts like a womern. My job, as King of Country Western Troubadours, is to hip the womerns to the sitch. It's like the song "Your Man," I'm trying to hip the womern to the sitch that maybe her man is maybe, you know...(cough). It ain't a put-down. I'm just saying, "Hey darlin', look here. Here's what happenin'." I'm trying to do the womern a favor." Could happen to anybody.

KB: I find the song "Your Man is Gay" to be incredibly funny but in a way it's also kind of sweet. It seems you're identifying with her problem and trying to offer a possible solution.

UH: Like I said, I don't want to see her made a monkey of.

KB: So, harkening back to something you said earlier, are songs like that based on true experiences?

UH: Yeh-yeh. Hey Ken, the Unknown Hinson phenomenon is happening right now because inside my head, my brain, there's a bottomless pit of creative wealth oozing with country-western thought matter. That's it. I'm a troubadour, Hoss.

KB: Did anything happen in prison that inspired you even further to become a country troubadour?

UH: Well, the thing that drove me the whole time was the fact that I was wrongfully incarcerated, number one. My whole entire country-western career was stoled from me. They stole thirty years of my life and all the possibilities of a brilliant career was took right from me. So, any man is going to have vengeance in his mind. That's what motivated me, kept me going until the day I got out was the thought that, "When I got out, I'm going to reclaim, yeh-yeh, my crown, my throne as the King of Country Western Troubadours and I'm going to get it all back." That's been my quest.

KB: How long have you been out of jail?

UH: It'll be eleven years this August.

KB: Do you remember the first public appearance you made after leaving prison?

UH: Like I said, I had to do nie on a year of community service just to go through the motions. Because anytime they let a con out after that much time, they're going to keep an eye on him. They're going to make sure he don't slip up. So, I had to do a lot of charity stuff - hospitals, rest homes. I think the first show date was the week I got out. I played for a

VFW dance one night and I recall a fight broke out and I near got in some trouble that night, but they was witnesses there that said I did not start the fight. So, I got off with that - but there weren't no trouble, nobody got hurt.

KB: Was your demeanor and impact the same as it is now?

UH: Yeh-yeh. Or you might say the Hinson phenomena spans all demographics.

KB: I think that's why the punk kids and the goth kids like you.

UH: Yeh-yeh, and the factory workers. Blue collar man, womerns, young punks that's infatuated with the extra-natural. They's doctors, lawyers, engineers, nurses, all types. Unknown Hinson is like a color? Right? You might find a nuclear physicist that's likes the color red. You might find a doctor whose favorite color is red. You might find a factory worker, his favorite color happens to be red. It's like a color, it ain't bound by no age group, sex, nor gender, nor creed, no nothin'. Certain people get snagged on a certain color, red, blue, whatever it is - but they like it when they might not have a thing in common. They might not be nowhere near the same age as each other, see? That's what country-western music needs, Ken. A revolution. The Hinson phenomenon is happenin' raht now as we speak.

KB: Let's step back and talk a bit about the roots of that phenomenon. Who are some of the country performers who inspired you?

UH: I think Faron Young is an equal. I think in no way did he receive the recognition or credit that he deserved. I'd have to say that he's my all-time favorite.

KB: I think you are one kick-ass guitar player.

UH: Well, thank you. I consider that a compliment coming from Music City.

KB: I know that you don't particularly like rock music, but you do it very well.

UH: I do it as a disclaimer. The reason I play occasional rawk in my show dates and concerts is just to show the youngerns that it don't take no talent to play that mess. Any idiot can make that racket. Country-Western, that takes talent. I play my hippie mess, I sing that hippie mess, and I sing four or five country-western ballads, then I go back and do another hippie mess song, just to show the youngerns, "Hey, they ain't nothin' to this mess."

KB: Yet, despite the disclaimer, they enjoy it.

UH: They do. But somebody got to stand up and guide 'em, tell 'em what's wrong, and show 'em there ain't no value in it. Country-western music is on the rise thanks to Unknown Hinson. Them Beatles ain't making no new rawk rekkards. Them Led Zepplins ain't making no new rawk rekkards. How many times can you listen to that mess?

KB: Some of your look would suggest that you came from the same era as Elyis Presley and I was wondering if you enjoyed rockabilly music.

UH: Yeh-yeh. I don't see no comparison with Elvis, all right?

KB: Did any of the guitarists of that era, say Link Wray or Merle Travis, and from a later era Junior Brown, have an effect on you?

UH: Well, I'll put it like this: I done told you Faron's my favorite country-western singer - he's a fellow troubadour and I rate him as my equal. On the guitar, I'd have to say one of the biggest influences of my life was a fellow from overseas called Django Reinhart. Yeh-yeh.

KB: So, when you're playing just for pleasure, you like that swing and jazz feel?

UH: Well, he put the fire in the guitar, yknow? That's what I try to do, Ken. If you don't put the fire in the guitar, it ain't going to get hot. You've got to have fire in your playing.

KB: I hate to belabor the point, but are there any rock guitarists you admire? Because you do some hard grungey things that I really admire coming out of you.

UH: Well, I sure appreciate that. But don't forget that the only reason that I do it is to show folks that it don't take no talent to do it.

KB: I've also noticed in your songs "Venus Bound" and the

UH: I like 'em fine. Hank's a good boy. Me and him drunk a lot of liquor together, chased a lot of womerns. He's a good boy. And, Rev. Horton Heat? Fine fella, wonderful guitar player. The youngerns that you're talking about - the gothics, the greasers, they come around. The womerns look good. The mens, I can't say much for them, but the womerns look good. Some of them look like the Bettie Page type. They realize their femininity and they show it off. I like that. I like to see a womern dress up, don't you? You can go into any store in American and see womerns in sweatsuits, tennis shoes, no make-up, and hair all messed up. But when you see a woman who's put on a dress, made her face up perty, fix her hair, put on some spiked heels and carry a pocket book - you know that's a womern! And she is in touch with her feminine side- which mans likes.

KB: What about men who are in touch with their feminine sides. Do a lot of them turn up at your shows?

UH: No, no, no.

KB: Besides great music and the undiluted personality of Unknown Hinson, what type of wild stuff can people expect to see at one of your shows?

UH: I do some gun tricks. Yeh-yeh. I carry a piece, it's .38. Like I said, womern likes mans that shoots guns and sings country western. It's a fact.

KB: Why a .38? Why not a Magnum which is more popular in these times?

UH: Well, when you got a guitar strapped on and you reach for your piece and fire, the recoil is a little too much with a Magnum while you're playing a solo. Sometimes I'll play a solo with my left hand and fire my piece with my right. It's a recoil factor.

KB: Being that you're an ex-convict with a gun, do club owners think twice before they stiff you at paycheck time?

UH: No and I don't get paid with no checks. You ever try to cash a check made out to "Unknown?"

KB: Do you vote? Do you carry a driver's licence or any other form of identification?

UH: No. My rakkerd contract has my name on it, but I can't get no driver's licence because of my past. I can't vote because of my past.

KB: Is there a time when you think you'll be given a pardon so you can enjoy some civil liberties?

UH: I'm free to roam, but they're going to keep their eye on me for the rest of my life, Ken.

KB: Well, they'll know where to find you, they just have to follow the crowd, right?

UH: That's it! And I ain't done nothin' - they ain't got nothin' on me.

KB: Is the album out on Capitol right now substantially different than the one released by Uniphone in 2000?

UH: First, I'd like to say, the brand new release by Unknown Hinson - *The Future is Unknown* - on the Capitol label, they's a couple of songs that was on the previously released indie release, but they's about 5 or 6 brand new songs on this one that no other Hinson rakkerd has ever had. So, I guess you could say it's the Capitol manifest of Unknown Hinson's chart-topping wrath. To the present anyhow.

KB: How did someone with your image and your very country style - which is totally contrary to modern country music - get on a major label like Capitol?

UH: Yeh-yeh. They was the first rakkerd label to meet my demands. I was offered rakkerd deals.

KB: What were your demands?

UH: Number one, at the time I really needed a brand new power brake booster for my Cadillac, and they got that fixed up immediately. And, they gave me some spending moneys. I was kindly scared to be on that label because of them Beatles. I thought, "Them Beatles - what would Faron Young think?" You know Faron, he was on that label.

KB: So was Buck Owens, Hank Thompson, and a lot of great people.

UH: That's right. Merle Haggard too - all fellow troubadours. That's

what cinched it for me. But I was worried about them Beatles and them Beach Boys, but they had had enough Faron to cinch it for me. I figured, "They need some help - they lost their ass on them Beatles and Beach Boys, maybe I can help 'em out and sell some rakkerds."

KB: There is a story in your press kit that is intimated but not exactly spelled out. During contract negotiations, did you at some point pull out your .38?

UH: Yeah. I'll just generalize and say yes. But it was not a hostile act. It was something I do, Ken when I'm sittin' in the radio station, or sittin' in the back seat of my car. Some people, when they get stressed out or they're concentrating, they'll squeeze on a little tennis ball or something to relieve stress. I like to squeeze on the trigger of my .38. That's a stress reliever for me.

KB: And a stress inducer for others I might imagine.

UH: Well, I ain't never pulled a trigger on nobody. I never have dome that.

KB: How do you feel about the concept of gun control?

UH: Guns is a part of our American Heritage.

KB: Do you think everybody ought to carry one just to even things up?

UH: No I don't. I don't carry a gun because I'm out here trying to threaten nobody. I carry a gun because I like the feel of a pistol. It helps me concentrate. It relieves stress - it works for me.

KB: Have you ever relieved stress in this manner inside a club?

UH: Oh yeah - on stage.

KB: Are there blanks or real bullets in the gun when you do that?

UH: They's loud. The gun is loud.

KB: What is the craziest thing you've done on stage that you laugh about today?

UH: I used to do a ventriloquist act. (The author laughs.) No, I'm serious. I've got a ventriloquist dummy that was built in the image of me. His name was Little Bit Hinson - he got chart-topping hair, sideburns, teeth, show day clothes just like me. He's got a gun in his hand too. We done a ventriloquist act and little skits. But some of the dope-taking hippie types that was taking them psycho drugs and hallucinigizing got right scared of Little Bit Hinson. "Freaked out" is what they call it. So I kind of nixed the ventriloquist act for a while.

KB: Do you ever inspire harsh criticism from members of your audience?

UH: Like I said, I'm every womerns dream and every jealous husband's nightmare. It don't matter where I go, Ken, them jealous husband's are going to be there.

KB: Tell me about your song, "I Make Faces When I Make Love."

UH: Well, I do.

KB: (Laughs.) How do you know?

UH: Well man, I'm aware of what my face is doing.

KB: There's really something sweet about "Polly Urethane," the rubber sex doll ballad. Which you sing with a lot of feeling. Do you think you could ever sing like that to a living breathing women?

UH: I do all the time. I'm a man of love and I appreciate beauty. All beauty. It's all love, whether it be a beautiful, well-endowed buxom womern or a brand new black shiny new Cadillac car. There's still beauty in everything.

KB: Do some women get angry with you for singing songs like "Pregnant Again," where you basically sing that you don't believe the child is yours?

UH: Yeh that's happened to most mans. It's happened to me several times and I won't get into it that much. I'll back up on something I said earlier. That's one of the very few songs that I sing to the mans in the audience. Because they's a lot of fellers who might've found themselves in a similar dilemma to that - paying for the womerns mistakes. Yeh-yeh. The good womerns will realize that it is their fault. I mean, I'm a firm believe in the safe sex. I ain't ashamed to suit up before I make love. That don't bother me none. You might not want to print that.

KB: Is there still a lot of opportunity on the road for that type of

"Unknown Hinson Theme," there is a little bit of what we call exotica.

UH: Well, when I was a boy, I liked robots. I collected robots until my family like fell apart. I always liked the science fiction movies, I think that might've influenced me to write that one about going to another world. I think I understand what you're saying is there's like a bachelor pad influence or cocktail music. I can see why you'd say that, but that's just where my head was at the time. My head's in a different place now and it will be tomorrow.

KB: There seems to be a little bit of soul music and blues running through things like "Peace, Love, and Hard Liquor."

UH: Well, "Peace, Love, and Hard Liquor" is what it is. It's an anthem. It's an anti-drug song of sorts. I talk about drinkin'. Drinkin' is legal, drugs ain't. So, it's an anthem. Once again, I try to show young folks that there is danger ahead. What they need to do is, if they take a drink, use they head, and use good judgement when they drink. In my opinion, they're ain't no reason to buy that expensive mess, because the effect is the same with the cheap stuff. So, you gotta use your head when you drink.

KB: I'm not sure the big label alcohol companies would want that known.

UH: It would help their sales if I'm advertising certain brand names. To get Unknown Hinson to yell out the name of their liquor could help.

KB: Do you have an endorsement deal with any liquor company at this time?

UH: No. They's a couple of 'em vying for me, but I ain't signed no papers yet.

KB: Do you have any endorsement deals with any musical companies?

UH: Yeh-yeh, I do. The greatest guitar company in the world, Gibson guitars. Faron Young played Gibson. If it's good enough for him, it's good enough for Unknown Hinson.

KB: Was there a particular moment when it all came together for you? A time when you said, "This is it. This is how I want to look, how I want to play, and the type of appeal I want to cultivate?"

UH: It started when I was a kid in the carnival, Ken. I look like I look. Some people have blonde hair, some people have red hair. I got black hair. I was blessed with some striking facial hair as well. Piercing eyes, chart-toppin' teeth. Womern likes my movie star good looks. When I was down there in my snake pits, singing my chart-toppers for the first time, I seen the womerns go wild! Some of them fainted. I know'd right then, right there, that's what I wanted. Give me more. I was *addicted*. I ain't looked back since. Well...briefly for 30 years I was in the pen, but I'm out now. I ain't goin' back. I swear I ain't going back.

KB: According to your press kit your first public impact came via a television show in the Charlotte area. What can you tell us about that?

UH: You know, I done my own television show, a cable access television show called *The Unknown Hinson Show* - aptly named - and it was a half hour weekly show. What it was, was various vingettes of the days in the life of Unknown Hinson.

KB: Did you get a chance to sing?

UH: Oh yeah. In between the little vingettes we would have music videos. I'd get up and sing a chart topper. We'd have guests on the show, go on location, shoot some mess. It's an award-winning show. It received four awards.

KB: Which awards were those, sir?

UH: Best Locally Produced Television Show of 1999, 2000, and I got Best Local Television Personality, yeh-yeh, in '94. And I got another award for Best Cable Access Show a year after it went off the air. But you can't buy those tapes nowhere.

KB: Who gave you those awards?

UH: Local entertainment publications in the Charlotte area.

KB: That show more or less broke you in with your local public?

UH: Yeah, and peoples was recording the shows off the television set

and trading 'em around and saying, "Hey watch this and you'll see this." Some of 'em ended up out west. You never know whose got 'em. They's on a lot of tour busses, I know that.

KB: You were playing clubs during this time?

UH: Oh yeah.

KB: Have you ever done anybody's songs other than your own?

UH: Only in the raw disclaimer portion of my show or concert. I have played a song by them Who, Jimi Hendrix, Paul Revere and the Raiders, I done one of them - that's an old number called "Steppin' Out." Yeh-yeh, it's about cheatin'.

KB: Which anyone who likes country music could relate to?

UH: Yeh-yeh, of course I doctor up the words. I kindly take certain liberties with the words as they say. I do 'em up my own way to tell a chart-topping story.

KB: Were you surprised when you started drawing all the goth rockers an psychobillies to your shows?

UH: Well, fans is fans. Every fan you got is very important. I've seen youngerns come up to me, buy my rakkerd, and want to shake my hand - they'd covered in tattoos, nose rings, got chains from their lips running to their ears. I think, "I hope maybe you have received a blessing from my music, Hoss." My main objective is that I hope my music does enrich people's lives and I would like to think that every time they hear an Unknown Hinson rakkerd or seen an Unknown Hinson show that it might help them change their life in a way. Maybe help save a marriage, help prevent a car accident, something like that. I think that's worthwhile, don't you?

KB: Absolutely. Tell me a little bit about touring with some of these people like Rev. Horton Heat and Hank Williams III.

UH: Yeh-yeh, they's good boys.

KB: Do they like what you do?

UH: Yeah, we all got along real good.

KB: They're not intimidated by your talent or your stage presence?

UH: No, no. They's fellow troubadours - they the real deal. They good boys.

KB: What do you think of what they do?



behavior?

UH: Oh yes, they's womerns everywhere. Betweenst the party liquor and the womerns, the Unknown Hinson show date tours is unbelievable son. You got to see it to believe it.

KB: How is the album doing saleswise?

UH: As far as I can tell, it's doing real good. Yeh-yeh.

KB: Has there ever been anybody from a way of life so strange that you couldn't understand why they'd like your music?

UH: They's some actors out in Hollywood that I wouldn't have figured to be Unknown Hinson fans. I'm glad they are, don't get me wrong. Every fan is valuable to me.

KB: Billy Bob Thornton likes your stuff.

UH: Yeah he does. Tim Robbins, I was on a show with him out at Sundance.

KB: How did you end up at Sundance, did you have a film entered there?

UH: No, they just wanted me to play. [Thornton] said that he was a fan and would like for me to play the show, so I done it. It was cold out there.

KB: How did it go over?

UH: Real good, real good. Standing room only.

KB: Are any radio stations playing your stuff?

UH: I think they are, because I've been doing a lot of radio interviews in the morning. I do two or three hours of radio in the morning, obviously phoned in.

KB: What type of stations are you getting - college? Alternative?

UH: I get a little bit of all of 'em. They's rawk, classic rawk - the ones that plays the Led Zepplins and Aerosmiths, and I also get what they call the mainstream country, which in my opinion is just rehashed rawk. Real country western, that's my quest in life, Hoss.

KB: Have you had a chance to hear some of your records being played on the air?

UH: Every now and then I hear one, yeah.

KB: What was it like the first time your heard one of your records being played?

UH: Well, I'd have to say it was about time!

KB: (Laughs.) How are you planning on promoting this LP. Do you have a lot of big TV shots coming up or are you better served by the media in an underground sense?

UH: Well, one on one is the best. You can't beat live performance. It's a marriage between the performer and the fans and that's what makes it go 'round. But yeah, they is various TV show appearances in the works. Until something is confirmed, I can't really say.

KB: Have you received any offers for movies?

UH: I have, but I ain't took one because I'm holding out for them to make *The Unknown Hinson Story*. Yeh-yeh.

KB: I saw something on LikeTelevision.Com - the "Venus Bound" video. Will you be doing more videos?

UH: Probably, yeah. Still, the best way to witness the Unknown Hinson phenomenon is in person.

KB: One year from now, how far will the phenomenon shave spread?

UH: Well, a year from now, I expect that the next rakkerd will be out after this one has done gone platinum.

KB: Do you have more than a one record deal with Capitol?

UH: Well, yeah, I'm one of their artists. I've got hundreds of songs in the can and I write more every day. Oh yeah. I've been working on a few this week. I always write. That's what I do.

KB: Have you ever thought about pitching some of your songs to other artists?

UH: No, no. They'd just mess 'em up. I don't have to do that because I've got a rakkerd deal with the biggest, baddest rakkerd label on the planet.

KB: You've got the final word. What would like our readers to know about the Life & Times of Unknown Hinson?

UH: Just that it's for real. It's the real thing. It's from the heart and mind of Unknown Hinson. I can back up everything that I write about. Yeh-yeh. I wrote it myself and I produce my own rakkerds and I call the shots. It's all Unknown Hinson all the time. Ain't nobody standing over me in the corporate boardrooms saying "Look here, you got to do this." No, I don't do it like that. I call the shots. I choose the songs, the ones I think should go on the rakkerd. Turn 'em in and they press 'em up. Real country-western music coming from the heart. I would like to say something to all the young wannabe songwriters, singers, and guitar players. If Unknown Hinson could give them any advice, I'd have to say: Practice your guitar, piana or whatever, at least a half hour a day. Don't give up because you never know. But most of all - try to avoid a prison sentence if humanly possible. Because your rakkerd sales will drop off if you go into the joint for 30 years like I done. Will you be putting a picture of me in there?

KB: Yes, your publicist sent us a couple of excellent shots.

UH: If you put my picture on the cover, it'll sell more copies. I guarantee you.

Our thanks to Jeff Lysyczyn at Tenacious Entertainment for providing photos. Folks, I heartily recommend that you pick up Hinson's Capitol album. If you can't find it in stores, check out his website Tell 'em Roctober sent ya.

Ken Burke's first book, *Country Music Change My Life: Tales of Tough Times and Triumph from Country's Legends* is in store right now. He can be reached at DrIguanai@msn.com

Booze is the Only Answer.....By Merinuk



IT'S ROCK N' ROLL WITH LIPSTICK ON!

Remembering The New York Dolls – With Love

by Madeline Bocaro

"It's ten o'clock...Do you know where your children are?" Yeah - they're just sneaking out of the house to hear some rock n' roll! I despised that TV message introducing the Ten O' Clock News - because it would trigger mom's thoughts about my possible whereabouts. I was either in my room listening to the same song or album over and over again in ecstasy, or illicitly out at a rock concert in New York City! When I should have been playing with dolls, I was rockin' out with the New York Dolls!

It was a rare privilege to see the New York Dolls in their glory days - in February 1974. An older neighbor offered to baby-sit a friend and myself, and took us to the show. His name was Michael, and he was very cool. He had long hair, was into Lou Reed and Alice Cooper, and he had a car!



The Dolls concert - billed as *The St. Valentines Day Massacre* - was a wonderful treat for me in New York City at the *Academy of Music* (before it was called the *Palladium*). The lobby was filled with beautiful glittery young boys in drag, glam rags and glitter on their naked, hairless chests, stardust running down their cheeks - a patent leather paradise! Those were the days when transvestites were actually attractive, not the botched up mess they are today (bearing God only knows what strange combination of anatomy). I loved the Dolls' look; so outrageous, camp and trashy in their Glam parody, but mostly because they were still just adorable mischievous boys in makeup. And can we talk about the hair? The ozone layer's first hole appeared in the early 70's, all to keep some really spunky, high hairdos in place. We left our 'babysitter' Michael to his misery with his annoying girlfriend, and us kids ran down the aisle right to the front of the stage just as the lights went down.

After a newsreel of Hitler's army invading France, Bob Gruen's black & white film *Lipstick Killers* came on the screen, featuring the Dolls as glam gangsters applying lipstick in preparation for their next crime. An usher told us to move aside because the band was coming down the aisle. We didn't believe it, but soon we had the Doll boys pushing right by us as they approached the stage and leapt onto it! My most vivid memory is being airborne - jumping on the seats in time to "Jet Boy", the unmistakable pink Dolls drum set, Jerry Nolan's machine-gun rhythms, the simplistic yet heart-wrenching guitar solos by Johnny Thunders in his tight yellow pants and gigantic hair, and the camp, raspy vocals of David Jo pulled it all together. Tres chic! An audience member handed Johansen a sheer black blouse, and he wore it during the show. Three encores later, we were severely transformed, and our ears rang all the way home!

Besides "Personality Crisis" and "Frankenstein", "Puss In Boots" was always my favourite Dolls song. I always envisioned it being about a rhinestone cowboy in high- heeled boots, because of the lines, 'And now you're walkin' just like you're ten foot tall / Don't 'cha know the shoes are makin' him lame...' Can you picture it?! A glammed up drunken cowboy trippin' on his shiny platform boots while some guy shoots at him!!! I love Johnny's intoxicated, wobbly guitar solos. It sounds like he's tipping over on his platform shoes like the cowboy in the song - as he bends the

strings just out of reach of 'in tune'! It's so ridiculous and beautiful at once! Johnny was such a doll! *Creem* magazine's readers voted the Dolls simultaneously as the best AND worst new band of 1973. The band proudly declared this fact in their tour advertisement!

The debate on who inspired punk rock rages on, but the Dolls must have unwittingly been mainly responsible. After all, Malcolm McLaren literally molded the Sex Pistols after them. And just like the Dolls, the world wasn't ready for the Pistols either! Todd Rundgren's production of the Dolls' debut LP gave it a slightly polished garage sound. It was exactly like John Lennon described Glam Rock; *"It's Rock n' roll with lipstick on!"* It's a shame that the band only made two studio albums. Their red patent leather Commie look was stunning, and a third Dolls album would have been red-hot!

How wonderful that the New York Dolls re-united in June of 2004 for Morrissey's Meltdown Festival in London. Thirty years on, and only three remaining original members, but it was still a blast. They performed "You Can't Put Your Arms Around A Memory" for their lost loved ones, not knowing that another would be gone in only a few weeks. – just short of a scheduled gig in New York.

"Time, inquaaludes and red wine, demanding Billy Dolls and other friends of mine. Take your time..." Billy Murcia was the first to go. Then Johnny, Jerry, and now Arthur (Killer) Kane. Die young, stay pretty.

It's amazing that Johnny had nine lives and lived as long as he did, but when he died in April, 1991 at age 38 it was still a shock and no less tragic. I attended Johnny's wake, and he looked so beautiful lying there, like a porcelain Japanese doll with his spiked jet-black hair. His face looked flawless, angelic, serene. Sure, they had to put so much makeup on him to hide the scars (and he was damned proud of those scars – he rocked hard for them)! The multitude of guitar-shaped floral arrangements, banners which read, *"You Can't Put Your Arms Around A Memory"*, and Aerosmith's Steven Tyler crying with his head in his hands sobbing, *"This could have been me!"* were poignant reminders of what a waste this really was and how sad. Poor Johnny survived New York City and London, but met his fate in New Orleans. Heartbreaker.

When visiting Rome in October of 1993, I saw some interesting graffiti. Spray-painted on the wall of an ancient marble ruin, were the words, *"New York Dolls!"* The Elvis graffiti all over Europe didn't impress me at all, but this really spoke volumes.

The New York Dolls are reunited every night, whenever I need to hear them, in my headphones, on my iPod, in the photo in front of Gem-Spa wearing tight shiny pants and boots that's etched into my mind forever. And it is pure elation having them with me always – from my childhood to forever. Rock on David and Sylvain! Rest in peace Billy, Johnny, Jerry and Arthur. Take good care of each other.

"Perhaps you're smiling now – smiling through this darkness, but all I have to give is guilt for dreaming. We should be on by now." – *"Time"* (David Bowie)

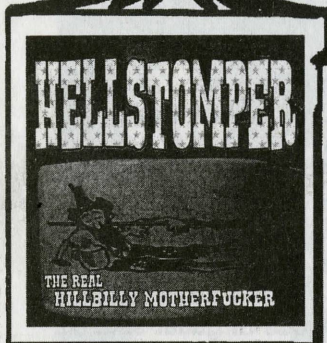
P.S. – Love to Cyrinda Foxe – another beautiful doll who left us too much too soon.

Booze is the Only Answer.....By Merinuk





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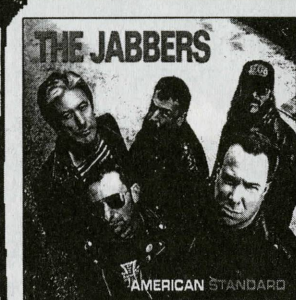
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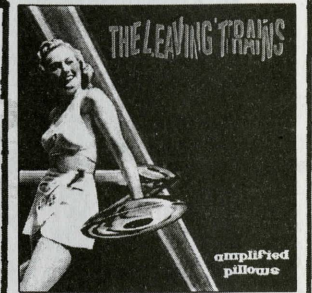
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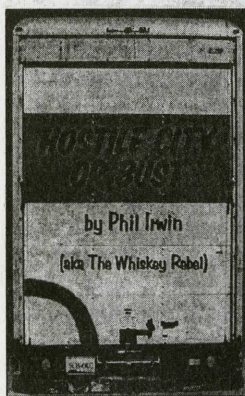
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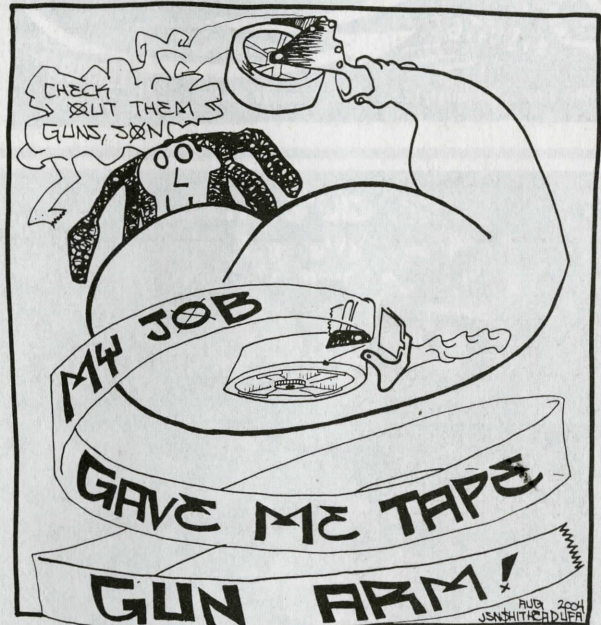
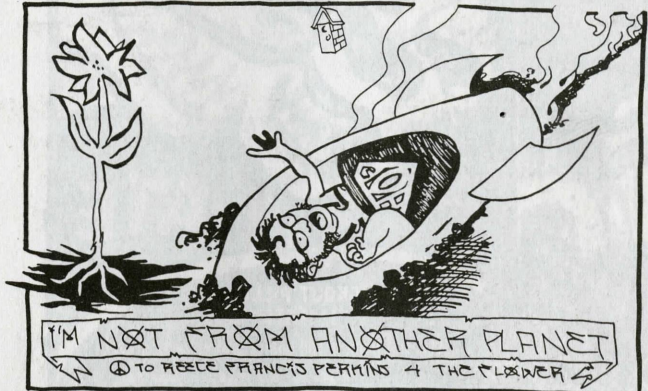
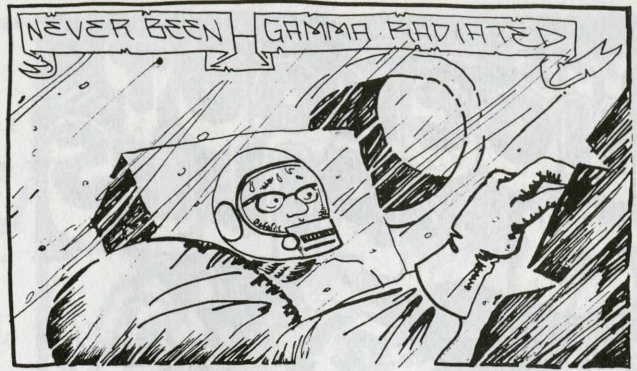
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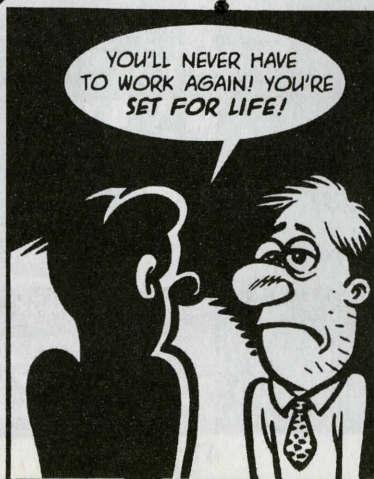
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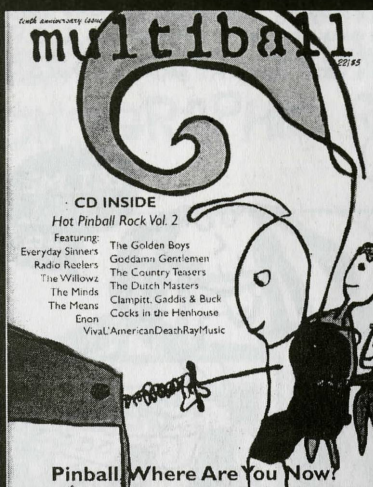
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The songs are hypnotic in their simplicity and sorrow, and when I get to the end I press play again, convinced I've missed a crucial detail. Like a further stripped-down version of the Smiths and Joy Division, the Organ invoke a feeling that dwells on misery but searches for passion. -THE FADER

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Gary Pig Gold meets THE MAN WHO INVENTED THE SIXTIES

"I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight."
(Martin Luther King, Jr., Washington D.C., August 28, 1963)

"From Dallas, Texas, the flash - apparently official - President Kennedy died at 1:00 p.m. Central standard time, 2 p.m. Eastern standard time, some thirty-eight minutes ago."

(Walter Cronkite, CBS Television, November 22, 1963)

"Houston, this is Tranquility Base. The Eagle has landed."

(Neil A. Armstrong, Apollo 11, July 20, 1969)

"There are SEVEN LEVELS."

(Paul McCartney discovers "the Message of the Universe," August 28, 1964)

Now, if veteran rabble-rousing, uber-networking, visionary ("Blacklisted") journalist Al Aronowitz's lifetime of achievements may be remembered for but one solitary event, may I posit it be for what he managed to pull off in the immediate hours following The Beatles' concert debut at Forest Hills Tennis Stadium, Queens, New York, one dreamy midsummer 1964's night.

For it was within mere minutes after the final shrieks of and around "Long Tall Sally" wafted skyward that our story begins, with the Fab Four safely ensconced back upon the sixth floor of Manhattan's grande olde Hotel Delmonico as a greenroom full of various folkies and followers (including the Kingston Trio, Peter Paul and Mary, plus the ubiquitous Murray the K) sat all but ignored down the hall. Somehow though, into that inner sanctum high atop the Beatle-maniac corner of Park and 59th was snuck none other than Bob Dylan, a bottle of cheap wine, and a fateful envelope's worth of herbal libation.

Ladies and gentlemen, life as we knew it was about to abruptly cut from stark black and white to rich, fully-dimensional stereophonic day-glo from that momentous moment hence.

You see it seems Bob, misreading a certain "I Want To Hold Your Hand" refrain as "I get high" as opposed to "I can't hide," had been convinced to confront those four lyrical Liverpudlians he'd previously dismissed with that cruelest of epithets -- "Bubblegum!" -- and in the process, to break the trans-oceanic ice as it were, he decided to introduce his fabulous new pals to the hitherto non-rockin' accoutrement known as, yep, Marijuana.

Following introductions quickly if not exactly politely proffered between America's greatest living songwriter and the World's most Fabulous Band, Ringo (designated "Royal taster" for his comrades) went first and, oblivious to the proper pot-etiquette, proceeded to inhale the entire inaugural joint himself. Watching with sheer wonder as their drummer slowly melted onto the carpet in fits of laughter, John and manager Brian excitedly lit themselves up next, only to be followed by Paul and George who, interestingly enough, proceeded to follow one another throughout their maze of Beatlesuites for the remainder of this most historic of evenings. That is, until a typically profound McCartney suddenly called forth for pen and paper as he announced to all left standing around him, "I have discovered the Meaning of Life!" Something to do with the Universe, it seems, and Seven Levels.....

Suffice to say it wasn't just the Cute Beatle's consciousness which was forever altered that night, but the very course of rock and roll, the music business as a whole soon enough after, and as a result just maybe Western Civilization itself, dammit! And it is in my wisened opinion that the singular man we all have to thank for that, for "Rubber Soul," for "folk-rock" in the process and, really, for loading Dylan into his station wagon and dragging him towards the Delmonico to set all of these historic balls into

motion in the first place, is none other than a dear, sweet man I've recently had the pleasure to have known named Al Aronowitz.

FACT: With all apologies due Ralph J. Gleason, Al Aronowitz was the first widely-published man to ever take what we now regrettably take for granted as rock and roll "seriously." His Pop Scene columns four decades ago in the *New York Post*, not to mention a litany of legendary *Village Voice* and *Saturday Evening Post* features, brought to widespread attention such figures as the fledgling Brill Building songsmiths, teen tycoon Phil Spector, and of course Bob and those Beatles to boot (i.e.: the best-selling Aronowitz Summer of 64 *Saturday Evening Post* cover story of JPG&R I still fondly recall as the first living-color magazine on the band to ever penetrate my previously rock-free household ...because the boys looked so handsome in their top-hats and walking sticks on the cover, I can still hear my mother swoon). Even prior to that above-mentioned hot August night at the Delmonico though, Al was busy forging crucial artistic bridges between hitherto insurmountable cliques and cultural divides. To cite but one cataclysmic example, it is SO plain to see how Al's introducing Allen Ginsberg to a fresh-from-Minnesota Dylan eventually helped Beat meet Beatles, as it were, and in all the most ingeniously genre-busting of ways.

Aronowitz was also right there on hand at the post-premiere party for "A Hard Day's Night" in London, as a wickedly soused Lennon motioned a very young, green Keith Richard(s) and Brian Jones over to his table ...only to conspiratorially sneer that "there's something wrong with yez, isn't there? There's one of ya in the group that isn't as good as the others. Who is it? Find out, tell yourselves, and get rid uv 'im." Keith glanced uneasily over at Brian. John, as it turns out, was as right -- not to mention prescient -- as ever.

And you bet, Al captured it all. For unsuspecting *Saturday Evening Post* readers the world over.

Yet long after the Stones, not to mention the Sixties, began burning themselves inside out, Aronowitz continued to prowl the sidewalks of Greenwich Village, keeping eyes and especially ears wide open as he hung and howled amongst the veterans (Johnny Cash), the recently established (John B. Sebastian), the new kids down the block (a young Richard X. Heyman, who Al once commissioned to assemble an opening act for Sly and the Family Stone) and of course all the contritely contrary-as-ever who were shamelessly being ignored by the *Rolling Stones* -- I'm speaking Jann as opposed to Jagger -- of the day (I refer most notably to that once-promising Vanguard recording artist Patrick Sky, who Aronowitz bravely helped find a home for that still-incendiary 1973 "Songs That Made America Famous" album, one of your humble columnist's favorite American recordings EVER). Al also somehow found time to keep his Beatle bonds alive as well, taking our sweet George bowling on Broadway late one night, then conveniently stepping into fresh doggie-do just before crossing the threshold into John and Yoko's West Village walk-up for the very first time (John responded by taking an utterly appropriate Polaroid double-exposure of Al as he apologetically stunk up the room. "Look at this," cried the photogenic ex-Beatle Chief. "The two different faces of Al Aronowitz!")

Then suddenly our hero seemed to vanish altogether off the very face of the Earth -- not to mention the pages of rock's hepper periodicals -- as "folk" sorrowfully gave way to "singer/songwriter," Nixon rued the airwaves, Patrick Sky accepted a grant from the Irish government to become an Aeolian pipe maker and, perhaps not so coincidentally, Al's old pal Bob dissolved altogether into the bit parts of big-budget Peckinpah westerns.

But why? "I was driven crazy by my unjust firing from the *Post* when my column was one of the most popular features in the paper," Aronowitz recalls, "by the treachery of the American Newspaper Guild and by my colleagues whom I had helped so

much." The death of his wife and subsequent plunge into the clutches of non-recreational drug use followed and, he says today, "so began a long period of time when editors stopped taking me seriously, a fact that continues until this day. In other words, my writing got a little crazy and even when it wasn't, editors still refused to print me. Why? Ask THEM!"

Then, thank God or Al Gore or whomsoever, along came the Internet at just about the same time Our Al was getting his life, not to mention his voluminous-and-then-some archives, back in order. Duly invigorated and in no small part inspired by the liberating autonomy of the www, Aronowitz was promptly reborn as The Blacklisted Journalist and, domain name duly secured, began posting his vast wealth of work in monthly installments right up there at www.bigmagic.com/pages/blackj "It was only when I could do an end run around the blacklisting that editors had imposed on me by putting my material on the Internet that I discovered I could get readers, something all writers crave," the man proudly relates. "It was my achievement of a reading audience that brought me back to sanity."

Today, after a decade spent defiantly republishing his gems on the web, when he was afraid his good words would otherwise languish unread or, worse still, disappear altogether (it was through a tiny backpage ad in the *New York Press* circa 1996 that I first became reacquainted with that entity henceforth known as The Blacklisted Journalist), Al has now compiled his Greatest Hits, so to speak, across the 615 history-packed pages of "Bob Dylan and The Beatles: Volume One of The Best of the Blacklisted Journalist." The result is, without a solitary doubt, Required Reading for anyone and everyone who considers themselves fans, followers, students, or those just plain curious of the Golden Age of Popular Music, and how the players – Dylan and the Fabs especially – met, influenced, and eventually actually interacted with one another during those halcyon-indeed daze. Thanks in no small part whatsoever to the Herculean efforts of the

man who, in his very own only slightly jocular words, may try to pass it all off by claiming "I was just a proud and happy *shadchen*, a Jewish matchmaker, dancing at the princely wedding I arranged."

"I recognized Dylan and The Beatles as immortals, and I wanted to cop some immortality for myself," Aronowitz now admits. "I knew that bringing Dylan and The Beatles together would have exactly the result that it had. The result is that contemporary popular music changed for the better. Otherwise, every generation creates its own heroes."

"Whether subsequent heroes will enjoy the same immortality that Bob and The Beatles attained, I am unqualified to predict. All I know is that Bob Dylan and The Beatles are hard acts to follow."

Oh, and by the way, if the gala Bowery Poetry Club launch party for "Volume One of The Best of the Blacklisted Journalist" is any indication whatsoever, the master *shadchen's* talents are alive and very very well: Entertainment was provided by a band comprised of David Amram's wholly Kerouac-worthy "spontaneous bop prose" backed by Hayes Greenfield's Coltrane'd sax and, to top it all with that classic decorum-bearnd Aronowitz touch, Babukishan Das, the Bengali Baul who's become one bonafide Indian pop star. The ears truly boggled!

So then, for your own numbered and signed edition of Al Aronowitz's book -- including, right there on Page 395, that priceless Lennon double-exposure of the author himself -- simply send a United States Postal Money Order for \$17 plus \$3 shipping and handling to:

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THE STORY SO FAR...

Riff Randall, his Dr. Philip Lazar, alive, the old Red and Riff stolen from him by who wants the head for himself!! We Join Mr. Club, speaking to the Godfather Gordon Prospro...

Gumballhead the cat is decapitated while joyriding with Cheerleader Squad zero rescue Riff and keep Gumballhead's body Then takes Gumball's body while Cheerleader Who is angry because Gumball's head was from under the nose of Mr. Boathitch at The West Mens

Boathitch the Old Witch McCain.

THE HEAD in the Jar PART THREE



THE CULT OF THE OBOBOBOBO

Boathitch the Old Witch McCain.

This Celic, he is BAD NEWS, very bad news. Drop you beef with him and stay away



That was our score. My score



The mansion of Dr. Celic...



Thank you Hill, for that extraordinary Bit of news! I Feared the body was lost for good! now, collect young Sturm, he shall help me Free the cat from the witch!



Later cheerleader Red, her sister Riff and an angry Dr. Lazar approach the mysterious mansion of Dr. Celic...

I don't see any bats, do you hear any were-wolves Riff?

haha, nope!

...While Dr. Celic and Sturm are on their way to the western woods, just beyond Fairland Park, to the cave of the old witch McCain

Ah, beautiful night for a drive!

Celic! open up you Pompous Fake!

KNOCK KNOCK!

Be Polite!

May I... my word!

Where is he?!

Dr. Lazar Please!

As cheerleader Red and Riff try to calm the ranting Dr. Lazar, Hill makes a phone call for help...

Mr. Shippen... hello sir,

...Sir, Dr. Lazar and two teenage girls have broken into the mansion!

the master is away on business...

I understand, Hill. I'll take care of the situation.

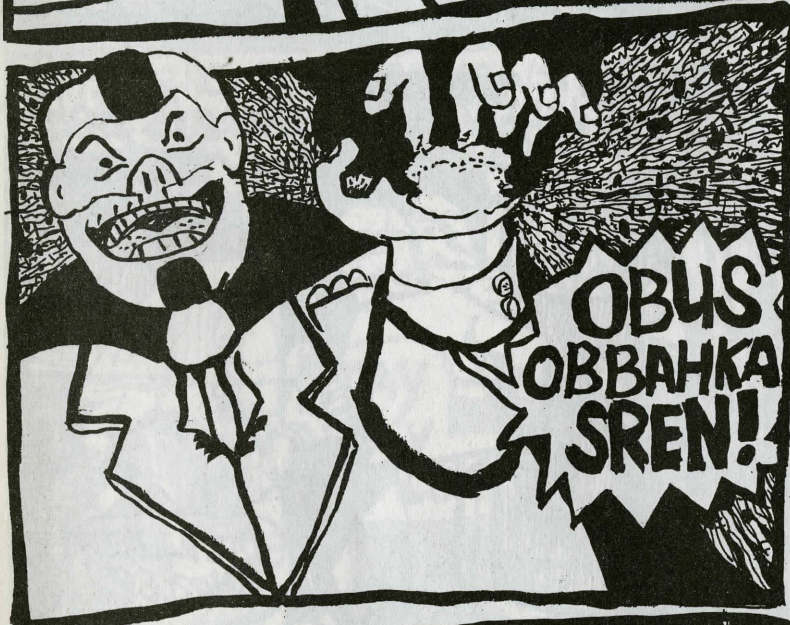
Teenage Girls? hmmm...

you foul Feline, you hatefull little
beast, you stupid tantrum throwing...

Witch
!!!

Who? Hello

Cellic!! Leave this
place, I warn you!



Sturm, use your...
magic, to make
sure she stays
quiet.

Now, what's
behind the curtain!



Oh gumballhead, what has she
done to you?



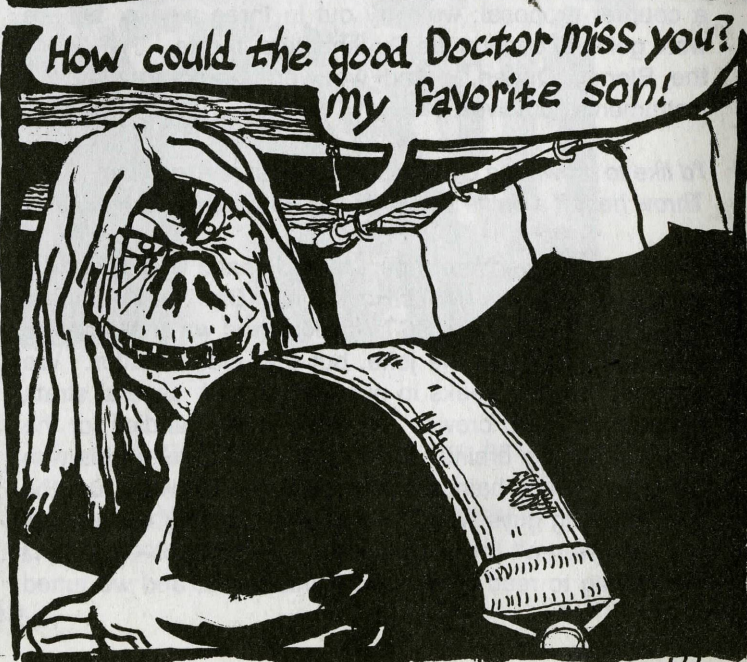
Owen Shippen arrives at the Celic Mansion

What on Earth is
going on here!?!?



I'm no lawyer, but I do represent
Dr. Celic's best interests, I must
insist you leave
at once!

Sir, I apologise for
Dr. Lazar. I've tried
to calm
him!



I WAS A TEENAGE QUEENHATER

By Mike Faloon

*I've always had a dream/I'd like to meet the Queen
I'd punch her in the face/Yeah, that would make me laugh
--The Queenhatters*

Dan didn't want to do it. He was cool with trying out for our high school talent show, but he didn't want to lip synch. Dan was right. Lip synching was lame. Lip synching was for Bon Jovi, Whitesnake, and all of the other hair metal bands that we hated so much. It was 1987 and we were into R.E.M. They didn't lip synch, so why should we?

Our friend Dave wanted to be in the upcoming talent show. He loved being the center of attention and we agreed that he would be a great frontman, but we disagreed with his choice of ideas. Dave had proposed dressing up as the Blues Brothers and doing "Soul Man," a chance for him to do his John Belushi in the spotlight. The crux of Dave's "lip synching isn't just for David Coverdale" argument was that, aside from Dan, who played guitar, none of us knew how to play an instrument and try outs were in three weeks.

But Dan was adamant, he wasn't going to lip synch and I followed his lead. He was smart, too, so he came up with a counter proposal: we'd try out in three weeks, but we were going to perform the Queenhatters "I Hate the Bloody Queen." And we were going to play the instruments ourselves.

*I'd like to drown the Queen/Off the coast of Argentine
Throw her off a battle ship/With her Faulkland war machine*

The Queenhatters were a punk parody band who appeared on the SCTV show "Mel's Rock Pile." Dan, Dave and the rest of my friends were SCTV junkies and we knew that no one else would get the joke, but that didn't matter. We were the biggest geeks in our high school, several strata beneath the D&D crowd. We weren't the bandies, or the burnouts, or the brains, or the bops (the popular girls with the short, boppy haircuts) or the jocks. We were just the goofy looking guys who were always cracking themselves up. We weren't the smartest kids the school—we didn't like having to read Crime and Punishment, and we tuned

out during our English teacher's attempts to spark existentialist discussions—but we thought we were the funniest, and SCTV was the only TV show that made sense to us.

The local PBS station was airing re-runs at 11:00 every weekday night and we all watched; we taped every episode too. We had no use for 80s icons like Don Johnson or Phil Mike Tom. Our celebrities were Bobby Bitman, Sammy Maudlin, and Lola Heatherton—fake celebrities created in order to make fun of real celebrities—and SCTV was the show we wished we'd written. It was perfect for guys like us who'd watched a lot of TV as kids, guys who liked TV and pop culture, but couldn't stomach most of what aired; guys who didn't want to remember that Tony Dow played Wally on *Leave It to Beaver* but found such trivia stuck in our heads like a bad cold. SCTV made fun of television (without succumbing to the cynicism that often marred *Saturday Night Live*) and made references that we felt no one else would get. I'll never forget the first time I saw their *Ocean's 11* parody, "Maudlin's 11." In the parody the character Bill Needle is married to a stripper who used the stage name Honey Pie Traynor. In real life Harold "Pie" Traynor played a Hall of Fame third base for the Pittsburgh Pirates back in the 20s and 30s. I assumed that naming a character Honey Pie Traynor was merely a coincidence, that there was no connection between the fictional stripper and Pirates third baseman. Then I read that SCTV's Joe Flaherty was from Pittsburgh and a huge baseball fan. The Honey Pie Traynor joke was by design and I couldn't believe that such a joke was being beamed into my living room. (And to heighten the reference, I think the "Honey" part of the character's name is a nod to Lenny Bruce's ex-stripper wife.)

*She taxes me to death/I can't afford me dope
I'd like to get her high/Yeah, that would make me laugh*

So the Queenhatters it was. I borrowed a hi-hat and snare drum from a neighbor. I got my little brother's Casio for my friend Pete to play and our buddy Steve bought a \$25 bass. We had a band.

Our first attempt at the song was as graceful as a toddler's first steps, lasting about 10 seconds before falling face first to the floor. The fourth time we made it to the break in the middle of the song. By the end of practice we could plod through all 2:01 of "I Hate the Bloody Queen" almost in unison. Dan was the only who could look up while playing, so he emerged as the band leader. He got Pete and Steve to follow his rhythm while they hammered out the song's two notes. He got me to hear the difference between playing on the one and three beats, which I did by nature, and playing on the two and four. I think he's also the one who suggested recruiting our other friend Dan to play trombone.

We decided not to practice the day before try outs because

we knew were ready—we had practiced the same song for three weeks. After school we went to Burger King for fuel, and when we came back we found a classroom where we could hang out. Our friend Kate greased up Dave's mohawk. We were ready to rock the West Genesee Senior High auditorium.

"Good afternoon, Camillus, New York!", Dave screeched, "We are the Queenhaters...AND WE HATE THE BLOODY QUEEN!" Being on stage was awesome. We were used to being crammed in Pete's basement, squeezed in among his dad's sprawling electric train set up. Now we had acres of space, and we were on a roll, veritable monsters of two-chord rock. Having an audience was cool too, even if there were only eight people there, and all of them were there to judge you, and three of them were among the cutest girls in the school. We sailed to the break without any mistakes. Pete nailed his one-note triangle solo, and then it got quiet. Painfully quiet. Oppressively quiet. Everyone in the band looked at Dan, waiting for him to hit the chord that signaled us to come back in. But he got stage fright, he didn't move. We froze too. The auditorium was sealed tomb silent. Dave scanned the band, looking for a signs of life. Seeing none, he turned toward the judges sitting in the second row.

"Thanks, good night. We're done...AND WE STILL HATE THE BLOODY QUEEN!"

It was a perfect choice of songs, a spot-on punk parody that was so well done you could confuse it for a sincere tribute. In the *SCTV* version of the Queenhaters, John Candy and Joe Flaherty, drums and bass, respectively, played motionlessly, staring straight ahead, mimicking the "we're so bored with pop music and Americans and whatever else you have" attitude of the best British punk rockers. Eugene Levy, flailing at a flying V guitar, wore an "Eat the Rich" t-shirt and Andrea Martin, on bass, sneered, just sneered in a way that would have made Wendy O. Williams proud. (Note: The Plasmatics were once on *SCTV*). Finally, Martin Short played the frontman, equal parts nihilist and idealist, ready to demolish the world with his words, not far removed from Rick on *The Young Ones*. The lyrics to "I Hate the Bloody Queen" touch on drugs and war and hatred and, of course, Lady Di. It's a kick ass punk song, and it's better than most of the punk bands the Queenhaters were making fun of. In fact, I heard the Queenhaters before I heard the Sex Pistols, and the Queenhaters, being the wittier and funnier of the two bands, were the band that made me want to hear more punk rock.

Back to the talent show. After freezing up on stage, we sulked back to our classroom/dressing room, trying to figure out why we'd locked up, certain that we failed the try out. Then our friend Kate came back to the classroom where we were hanging out.

"They thought it was a joke," she said, "the part where you all stopped playing, the judges thought you did that on purpose. You guys are in the talent show. You made it."

Naturally, we thought that Kate had misunderstood, that we'd certainly been cut. And that if we had made the talent show it was only because everyone had made the show. Then we heard that other acts, people with conventional talent, hadn't made the cut, including Rich Griffith and his group the Piano Men, who did a cappella Billy Joel medleys.

I feel sorry for you Lady Di/Havin' a mother-in-law like that

The crowning touch of the Queenhaters appearance on "Mel's Rock Pile," a bland *American Bandstand*-type show, is that the Queenhaters play before an indifferent audience. We got to enjoy that part of the punk experience during the actual talent show, which was a week after the try outs. We played, we laughed at ourselves, and no one else took notice. We got through the song without any major mishaps, but we were neither so good that kids started asking us to play their parties nor so bad that anyone booed us. Half of the band took that as a sign to call it a day. The other half, Dan #1, Dave, and I, took it as a sign that there was still work to be done, so we formed another band, King Otter and the Electric Flem.

I've heard that Mudhoney covered the Queenhaters, too. Someday I'll have to check out their version of "I Hate the Bloody Queen."



(If you dig *SCTV*, my zine, Go Metric, has started a series of *SCTV* appreciation articles. Email me at: gogometric@yahoo.com if you're interested in a copy or perhaps contributing.)

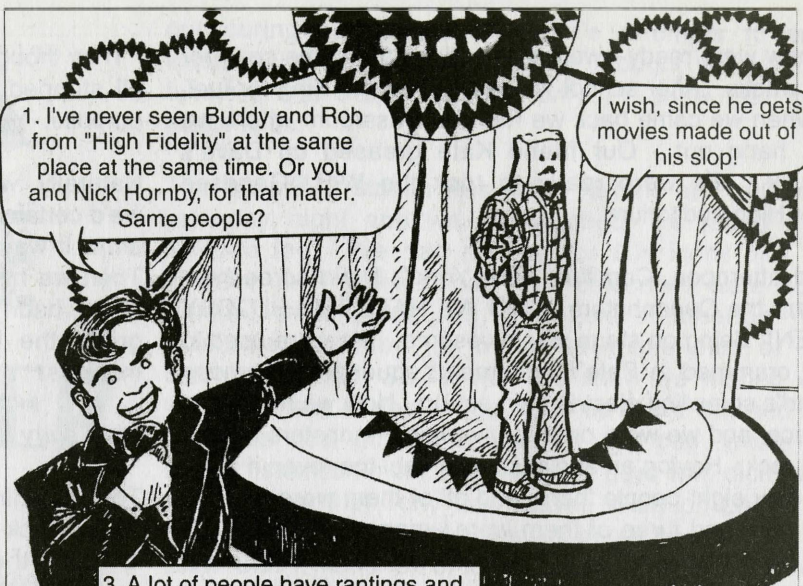


10 QUICK & DIRTY ONES

with
PETER BAGGE

Interview & Layout: Ken Texas
True Fine Artwork: Britta Dennison

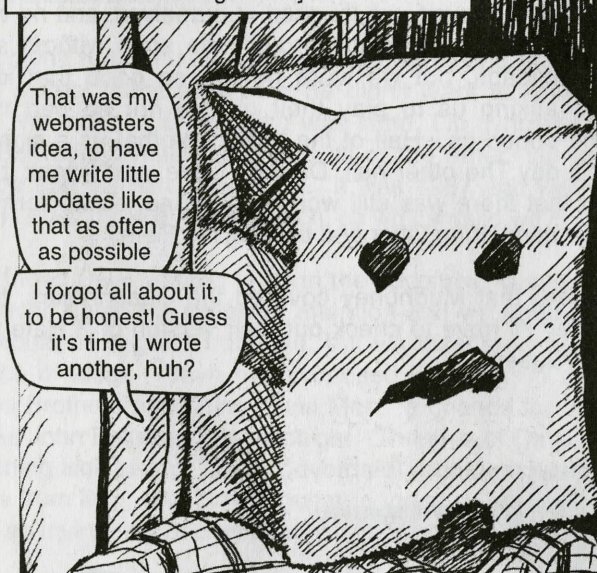
www.evilempirerecords.com



1. I've never seen Buddy and Rob from "High Fidelity" at the same place at the same time. Or you and Nick Hornby, for that matter. Same people?

I wish, since he gets movies made out of his slop!

2. So on your website you have a link for Rants. Plural. But there's only one rant from 1999. Life been that good to you?

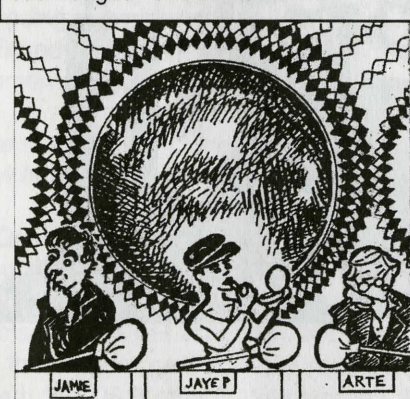


3. A lot of people have rantings and ravings on their websites. Don't you think it kind of undermines one's credibility to be ranting all the time?

Yes, it does, assuming one really IS "ranting." But to some - MOST people these days "ranting" is synonymous with "having an opinion."



4. Hell with your credibility. Can you give me a brief tirade about doing crappy interviews for bush league newsletters?



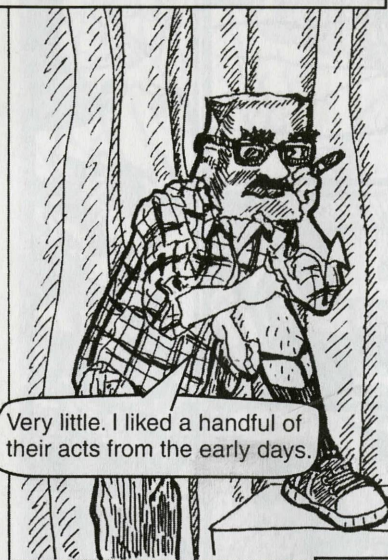
All I'll say is you're luck you sent me funny questions (except this one, that is) or I would have ignored you. Someone once told me about another cartoonist who, when hit up to give an interview, would ask the interviewer: "what's your circ (i.e.:cir-culation)?" If the answer was less than 50,000 she would just hang up on them. I should do that!

5. Did the Hellacopters ask you to do the art for their single a few years back, or vice versa?

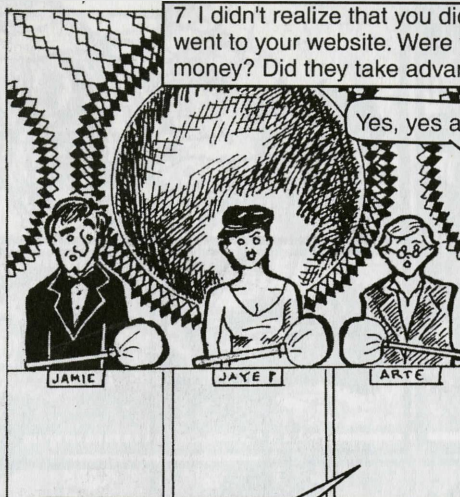


The label, Sub Pop asked, though the band seemed all for it, since they asked to meet me when they came to town. Once I found out they were from Sweden I asked them about all the Swedish pop music acts that I liked, and they were horrified.

6. How much of the Sub Pop catalog do you actually like? Be honest.



7. I didn't realize that you did cartoons in dirty magazines until I went to your website. Were you young? Did you need the money? Did they take advantage of you?



I liked working for them, especially SCREW and HUSTLER. I'd still gladly do stuff for the latter if they'd call me. They pay well. From my experience, most pornographers are very honest and easy to deal with.

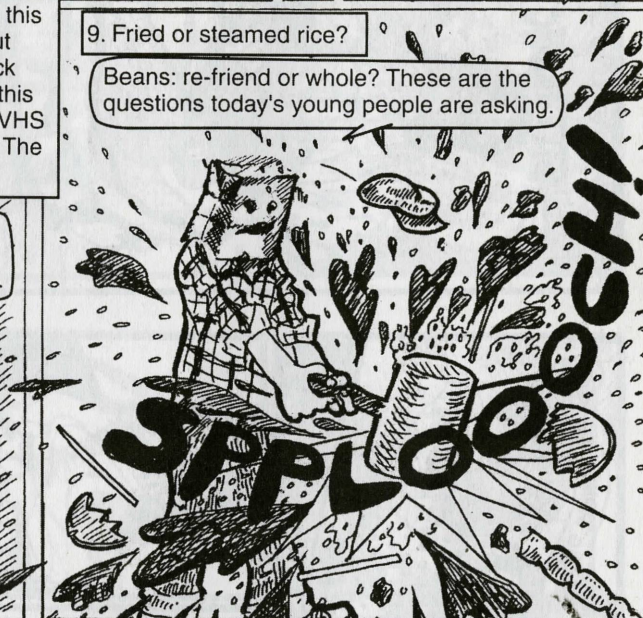
8. I know you normally do this sort of thing for money, but would you draw me a quick dirty cartoon to post with this interview? I'll trade you a VHS copy of Pervirella. C'mon. The Diaboliks are nekkid in it.



I have no idea who or what you're talking about, so no.

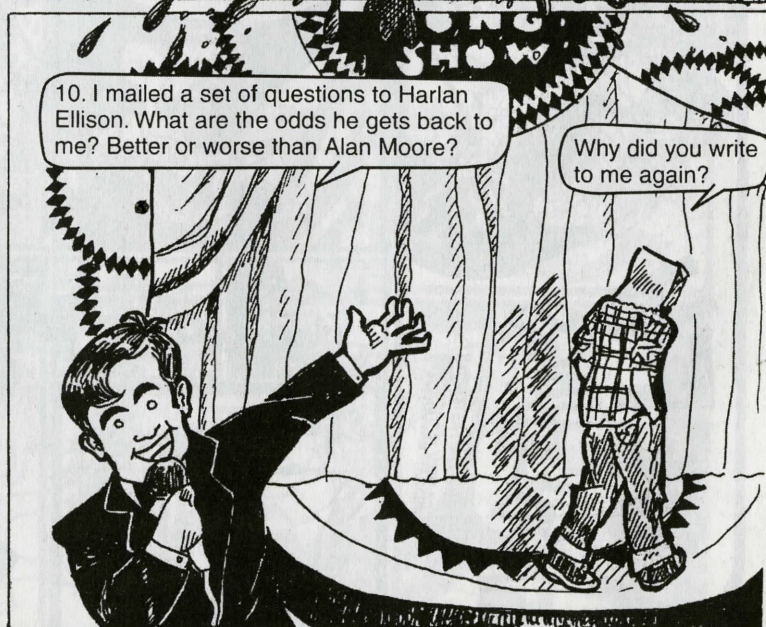
9. Fried or steamed rice?

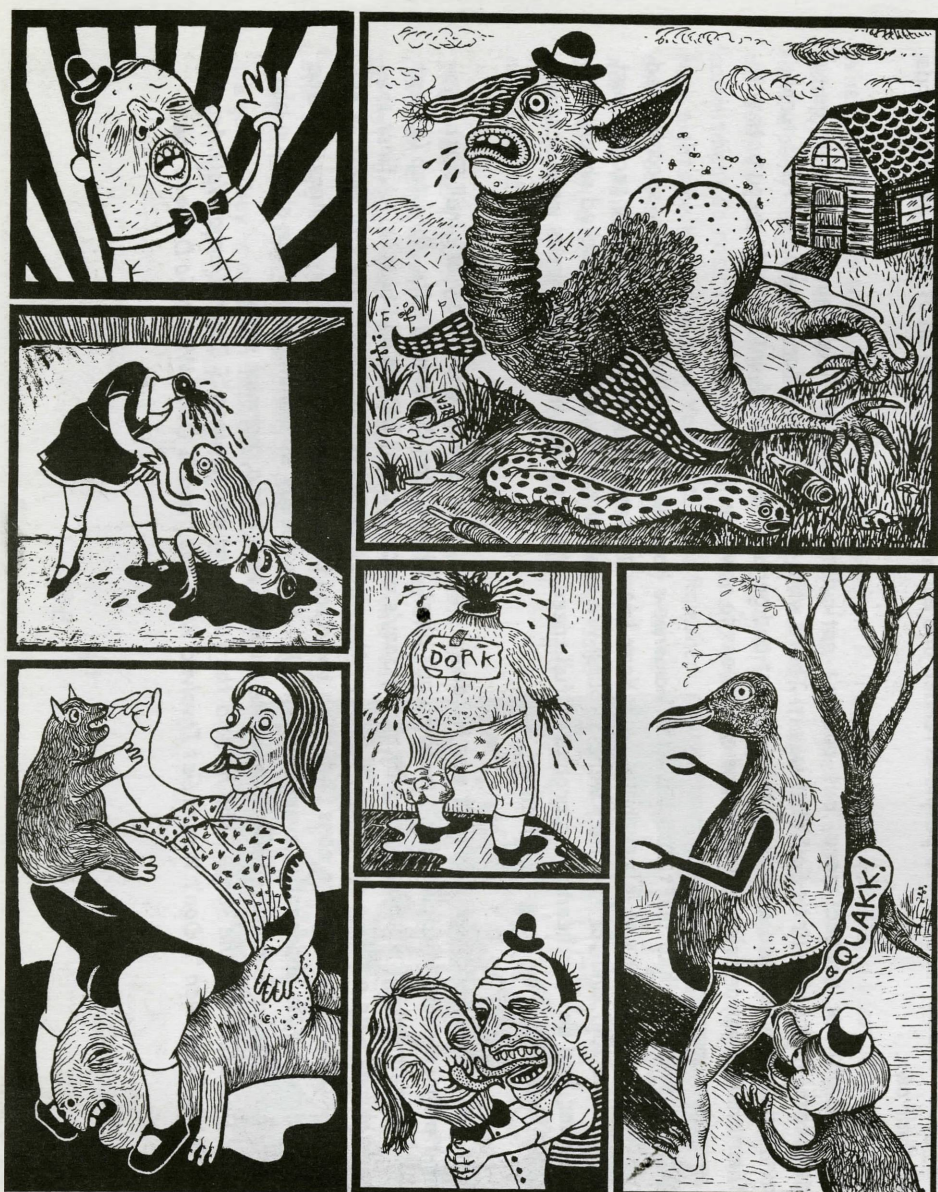
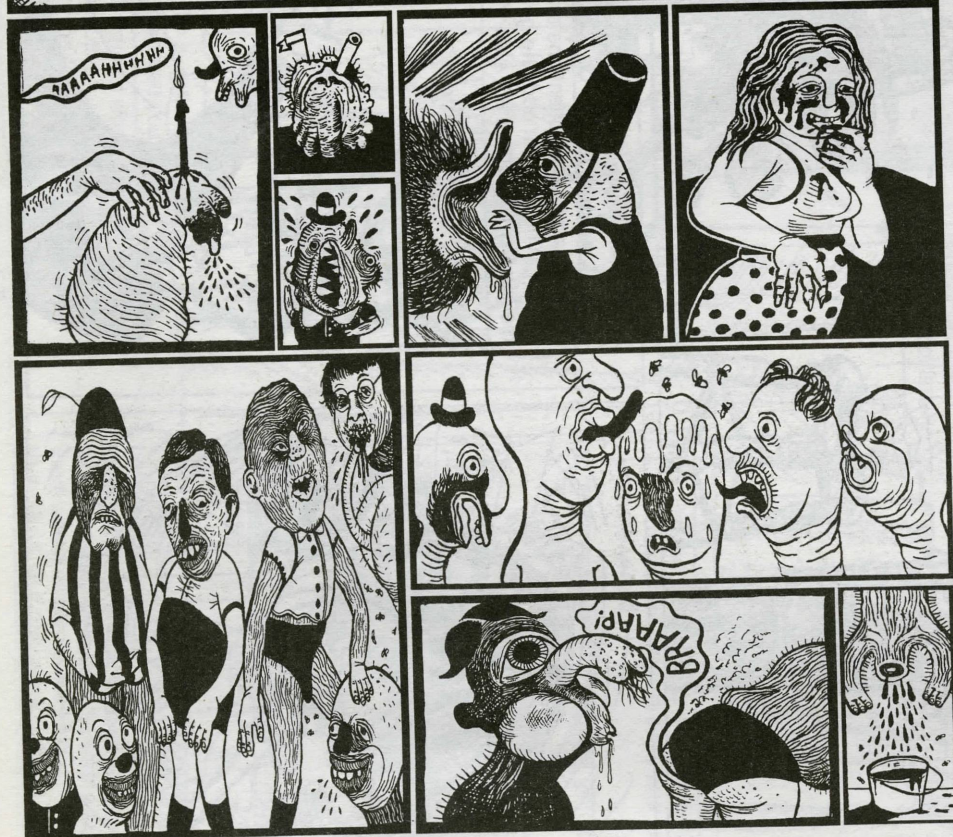
Beans: re-friend or whole? These are the questions today's young people are asking.



10. I mailed a set of questions to Harlan Ellison. What are the odds he gets back to me? Better or worse than Alan Moore?

Why did you write to me again?

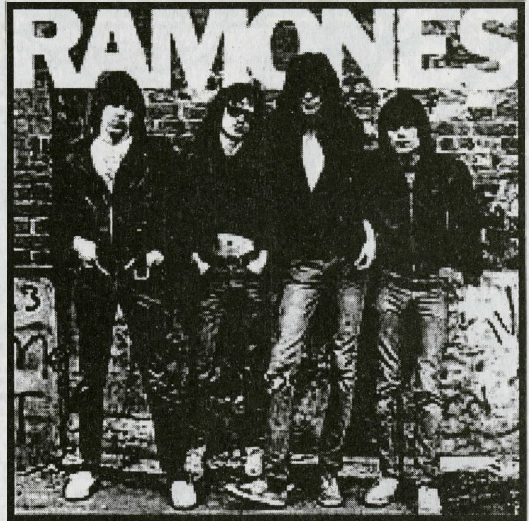




I JUST WANNA SAY THANK YOU... TO THE RAMONES!

by Madeline Bocaro

They were like brothers - brothers to each other - and crazy, loveable big brothers to legions of rock n' roll kids. It was 1976. Coming out of the Glam era and into oblivion, what was out there for us discerning kids in a desolate world of Prog-rock, bordering on Disco? The New York Dolls were silenced by their own outrage. The Sex Pistols were yet to be unleashed in England - anarchy was bubbling underground in a parallel universe, waiting for a kick-start. In New York we were left staring in the darkness at absolutely nothing. All dressed up with nowhere to go...



Then, just as if they heard our cries of despair - up from the subways of Queens, New York (not so far away) came a gangly gang of four guys wearing leather jackets and sneakers who would bring back the fun in rock n' roll, and blast the future wide open! They certainly weren't pretty or particularly talented, but they had a certain weird charm! They showed us that we could take over. We didn't need heroes or idols - we had the power to do it ourselves! The Ramones were a band of approachable big kids...for the kids. They actually spoke to us and were happy to see us. We'd hang out with them at *Trash & Vaudeville* and all over *Greenwich Village*. It is said that only 10 people attended one early Ramones gig, and all of them formed bands of their own.

We thought we needed more, but couldn't articulate it exactly. The Ramones said it quite eloquently, "*Hey Ho - Let's Go!*" That was it! That's what we were pining for - simplicity! As it turned out, we actually wanted *less!* Something honest and genuine in an era of untouchable mega acts with their endless guitar solos and keyboard excursions to nowhere.

CBGB's - the Cavern of our time - gave the Ramones a home in New York City, and they spearheaded a whole new music scene. Everyone in New York knew this was the world's best-kept secret, just about to be told, and for now they were all ours! We could see them every week, packed shoulder to shoulder, and get our heads spun around at full speed. When we got home, our heads were screwed on backwards, and we never felt better!

This was no teeny-bopper stuff. It was hardcore - loud, fast, simple and purely original! Each two-minute three-chord song was like a machine gun blast. They'd play 20-minute sets, non-stop (except for arguments about which song to play next!) Joey's voice just got better and better. At first they were clumsy - an amusing spectacle, but soon they were ready for blastoff. We saw them at the launch pad, and now they are eons away with their tail blazing light across the sky. Johnny and Dee Dee's virtuosity is apparent in every photograph - their speedy strumming hands are always a blur. The journalists were confused, yet passionate. Richard Hell told a charming story;

"Dee Dee explained the songs... and he said the first song written was "I Don't Wanna Walk Around With You," and then "I Don't Wanna Get Involved With You," and "I Don't Wanna Go Down to the

Basement"... I Don't Wanna this and I Don't Wanna that...and Dee Dee goes, "We didn't write a positive song until "Now I Wanna Sniff Some Glue."

It was as if Dr. Frankenstein had created mutant Beatles clones with a colossal lightning bolt, adding far more power, angst and fervor. People were scared of the Ramones as if they were monsters, yet they had heart and soul and only wanted to be loved. Their heads were too big and their jackets too small - just like the poor monster immortalized in the New York Dolls song "Frankenstein"!

As 'brothers', the Ramones took one surname and united for life...for the cause. They at first intimidated, then captivated the Clash and the Sex Pistols with their live UK debut at the Roundhouse on July 4, 1976. Joe Strummer admitted that the Clash were apprehensive about being good enough to play live, but the Ramones told him, "Wait until you hear us! We stink!" They spun the Roundhouse into a frenzy, and Punk got the kick-start it needed.

Although Johnny, the group's steadfast commander kept the ball rolling, the Ramones eventually came apart like most dysfunctional families, yet they persevered for some resolute, irreverent reason...probably a higher calling. Their records didn't sell millions, but they survived financially and instinctively on their sure-fire gigs, and influenced innumerable other bands. Drummers came and went, and came again (Tommy finally returned). CJ replaced Dee Dee on bass for awhile, but throughout, Joey and Johnny kept plugging away although they later despised each other (ever since Johnny married Joey's girlfriend). It was their mission to see this thing through, and they did - for 2,263 gigs, 21 albums and 22 years. Their final show was in August of 1996 at L.A.'s Palace. Their earthy mission was then complete. Tommy Ramone wrote in the liner notes to the *Hey Ho Let's Go!* compilation, "This is art. Sometimes it doesn't sell at first. Sometimes it takes awhile for the world to catch on."

When the Ramones were inducted into the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame in 2002, a year after Joey's death, nobody thanked him. Tommy said, "The Ramones meant everything to Joey." Dee Dee humourously congratulated and thanked himself, Johnny thanked President Bush and America. But our dear Joey is to be thanked above all for his loyalty and sincerity, his sensitivity, his resolve and commitment to rock n' roll, and for all the fun and precious memories he gave us. (And for all the rock nights he hosted in New York after the Ramones ended.) Joey so much embodied New York City that he was like a walking sky-scraper. Now he is a part of the city forever, with a street named *Joey Ramone Place* on the corner of East 2nd St. and the Bowery - right near CBGBs!

The greatest gifts a band can give their fans are devotion, empowerment and a good laugh. Some things do last forever...and the pure spirit of the Ramones will live on in the hearts of rock kids, young and old!! It's strange - we still have Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis & Little Richard, but Johnny, Joey and Dee Dee are gone. They're probably all beating each other up in heaven right now, not wasting any time!



The Night Dee Dee Ramone Nearly Died in the Land Where Comic Books Were Born

by Brian Cremins

Waterbury, Connecticut is the birthplace of comic books and punk rock. That the two can trace their history back to a small city in Connecticut is one of those strange but telling twists in American popular culture which reveal depths of secret knowledge ignored by all but the most devoted (and perhaps compulsive) junk culture archaeologists. Perhaps Waterbury's bizarre gravitational pull is a consequence of the brass companies which once polluted the Naugatuck River Valley. Cynics have sometimes referred to the city as the "Center of the Universe." Waterbury isn't a real city so much as a dream city, a living blueprint, split in half by concrete interstate overpasses and littered by abandoned factories, shopping plazas, and turn-of-the-century Victorian mansions built by the wealthy families who once controlled the city's factories and its political fortunes. It's a place which makes punk rock and comic books necessary as means of dreaming away the reality of things: the civic corruption, the racial segregation, the loneliness of a downtown strangled by suburban sprawl. In dream cities like Waterbury, comic books and punk rock (and hip-hop) are not leisure-time activities; they are necessary tools for survival.

Only two hours from New York City and three hours from Boston, Waterbury could just as well be four dimensions away from reality. At least, it can seem that way to those who grow up there. The four-color, angular beauty of superheroes and the boisterous, ugly shout of punkers dialing in the nastiest sounds possible from a Mosrite guitar pushed through an old MXR Distortion make perfect sense here to those who tune their radios to the correct frequency. Of course comic books and punk rock should have been born in a place like Waterbury. What else can a dreaming city do but invent dreams for desperate, landlocked folks all over the world?

The Brass City

Waterbury, Connecticut, once famous as the brass manufacturing capital of the world, is a diverse city of 125,000 nestled in the Naugatuck River Valley. Those who have traveled the Interstate-84 corridor from Hartford to border of New York State no doubt are familiar with the large glowing cross which stands on a hill overlooking the city. The cross marks the site of Holyland, USA, an abandoned Catholic shrine which has been neglected for decades. Its weathered relics now resemble treasures from the real Holyland across the world. Connecticut's recently disgraced Republican governor, John G. Rowland, is a native of Waterbury and began his political career in the city. His attempts to revitalize his hometown by initiating a series of construction projects inspired waves of political pundits to dub Waterbury Rowland's "Center of the Universe." Its last three mayors are have served or are in the process of serving jail sentences for a variety of crimes. It is the home of Frankie's hotdogs and one of the best comic book shops in the state, Legends of Superheroes. Arthur Miller's Willy Loman talks about the city's clocktower in the opening scene of *Death of a Salesman* and actress Rosalind Russell was born there in June, 1907. African American filmmaker and novelist Oscar Micheaux passed through town in the late 1940s and autographed one of his books to a Dr. T.R.

Lovelace. And if you've ever watched Woody Allen's *Broadway Danny Rose* and wondered why Lou Canova doesn't really sound like he's from New York, that's because actor and singer Nick Apollo Forte is from Waterbury, where the local accent is a little flatter, a little harsher, a little more Massachusettises or, "one, two, tree, fourh." If Waterbury is the center of the universe, its gravitational pull is equal parts the beauty of Rosalind Russell, the colors of the annual Puerto Rican pride parade, and the chemicals which still pollute the ground from the brass factories which closed their doors in the early 1980s in an early fit of outsourcing madness. In the 1920s, Lithuanian immigrant women went on strike against the factory owners wearing babushkas and packing pistols. Their ghosts did not rest easy when the factories closed twenty years ago.

Anyway, what's more punk rock than a bunch of Lithuanian women with guns and broad shoulders?

Famous Funnies

First, the Eastern Color Printing Company. Academics and cartoonists will be debating the origin of the comic book for decades to come. Cave paintings? Egyptian hieroglyphics? Rodolphe Topffer's comic narratives? Frans Masereel's or Lynd Ward's woodcut novels? These are all possible sources, each of which provide us with sources for endless speculation and argument. Let's leave those arguments aside and imagine the workers of the Eastern Color Printing company in Waterbury, Connecticut in 1933. The story has become part of the mythology of the Brass City. Francis Brennan, now the director of the University of Connecticut's Waterbury campus, has vivid boyhood memories of workers from Eastern Color wearing caps made from folded, full-color Sunday comic strip sections which had been printed at the factory. Imagine a diner in the 1940s filled with men wearing crowns covered with images of Superman, Batman, Flash Gordon, and Little Orphan Annie. Max Gaines, the founder of E.C. Comics, has a role to play in this story as well. According to Bradford W. Wright's historical survey of American comic books, *Comic Book Nation*, the New York-based Gaines and one of his fellow Eastern Color employees, Harry Wildenburg, had an epiphany in 1933. The company was already churning out the full-color, lurid covers of the pulp magazines so popular throughout the Depression, not to mention the Sunday comics pages which the workers took to wearing on their heads. Why not fold those Sunday comic strip pages differently to create a small pamphlet? Wildenburg and Gaines "discovered that the standard seven-by-nine-inch printing plates, used to print Sunday comics pages about twice that size, could also print two reduced comics pages side-by-side on a tabloid-sized page." As Wright describes, Wildenburg and Gaines imagined that the "economical eight-by-eleven-inch pulp magazine of color comics" which resulted from this new printing and folding process might be pitched to "manufacturers who could use them as advertising premiums and giveaways."

In 1934, Gaines took the next step by publishing a comic-book sized collection of popular newspaper comic strips called *Famous Funnies*. With the arrival of Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster's Superman in 1938, comic books, which had been rising steadily in popularity since their introduction at the height of the Depression, introduced an urban dreamscape in which circus strong-men dolled-up like space-age dandies waltzed across rooftops and dropped villains in pots of churning acid. The comics and their creators invented a vital, four-color vocabulary which explored the crude, brutal poetry of the slow, certain decay

of American industry. If the gods and captains of American business died in 1929, the comic book artists would have to reinvent them in the shape of bipolar millionaire playboys like Bruce Wayne, broken heroes who feel better when they play dress-up. They made readers feel better, too, and by the early 1940s comics were selling in the millions to kids and adults alike. These events in 1933 and 1934 would not be the first time Waterbury and New York City would unite in order to create a new mythology for the world.

The Palace Theater

In June 1975, less than a year after the resignation of Richard Nixon and weeks after the final evacuation of American troops from Vietnam, The Ramones take the stage at the Palace Theater in downtown Waterbury. This is their first major concert outside of New York City. Are The Ramones the world's first punk band? Those academics not spending their time tracing the secret origin of the comic book will find this question just as daunting and controversial. There are those who will argue that the first true punk band is Howlin' Wolf's original Memphis combo, or the Who, The Velvet Underground, The Stooges, or even the Electric Eels. Lester Bangs made several convincing arguments for the significance of Count Five and their psychedelic anthem, "Psychotic Reaction." No one with an ear and a heart for good music will deny, however, that The Ramones are perhaps the most endearing and most durable of the bands associated with the early punk movements of the late 1960s and 1970s. The verse of "Beat on the Brat" is a punk haiku, a master lesson in brevity and lyrical economy. What *can* you do with a brat like that, after all?

Beat on the brat/Beat on the brat/Beat on the brat with a baseball bat/Oh yeah oh yeah oh-ho/Oh yeah oh yeah oh-ho

When the Ramones ventured forth into the world beyond the confines of New York City, they found themselves facing an audience of Johnny Winter fans who pelted them with bottles and managed to terrify the steadfast Dee Dee Ramone. On the Ramones' official website (www.officialramones.com), Johnny, Dee Dee, and Tommy all share their memories of the show. "First song there were mild cheers, y'know?" recalled Johnny. "Then 'Let's Dance' drove them nuts." Dee Dee closed his eyes and tried to ignore the irate Johnny Winter fans tossing bottles at him. "I was dodgin' a lot of them bottles—I saw some kid get up and he had a bottle!" All he could think was, "LET'S GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE!"

Clearly, the young music fans of Waterbury were not as open to the pleasures of The Ramones unique form of pop music as their parents had been to the comic books of the 1930s. The antagonistic spirit of this evening would live on, however, in the early performances of the Sex Pistols and the chaotic musical tantrums of Darby Crash and the Germs. The bottle-wielding music fans of Waterbury, Connecticut, gave birth to punk at the very moment they struggled to blot it out of existence. The Ramones sang love songs spiked with amphetamines, but the audience was not prepared to accept these gestures of love. Exhausted by war and conflict, it would take them years to embrace The Ramones. The Palace Theater would host a wide variety of acts well into the 1980s until being left to moulder and decay as strip malls and other forms of suburban sprawl grew up like weeds to strangle downtown Waterbury. The Palace will reopen in November 2004 with a concert by Tony Bennett. Joey Ramone (Jeffrey Hyman) passed away in 2001 while Dee Dee

(Douglas Colvin) followed in 2002. A Ramones musical called *Gabba Gabba Hey!* recently premiered in Perth, Australia.

Legends of Superheroes

In the early 1990s, Waterbury was home to three comic book stores and two independent record stores. It was almost as though the city itself recognized the role it had played in bringing these two pop culture phenomena to life and willed these merchants into being. (Another essay should be devoted to the city's hip-hop scene and its soul and R&B record shops). Jim's Comic Shop on East Main Street, a few miles distant from the Palace Theater, housed a wide variety of independent comic books and back issues in the 1980s. The building where it once stood now houses a real estate office in its place. Twenty years ago, however, one could locate any number of back issues and all of the fine independent comics of the miniature comics "Renaissance" of the 1980s. Its windows were covered in posters advertising Matt Wagner's first *Mage* series and Alan Moore's forgotten masterpiece, *Miracleman*. Those obsessed with Doctor Who also found safe haven there. The store's clerk, a young man named Carl with short black hair and work boots, was himself a devoted Doctor Who fan. It would not have been impossible to find a replica TARDIS key in his shop. Jim himself, the store's owner, rarely made an appearance. His absence added to the mystery of the shop.

Across town, Brass City Records once played host to a number of up-and-coming independent bands. In the early 1990s, the Danbury, Connecticut-based Monsterland played a show on a flatbed truck in the shop's parking lot, next door to Doc's Motorcycle Parts. Even the bikers seemed to enjoy the band's unique and underrated fusion of Husker Du, Sonic Youth, and My Bloody Valentine. It was shoegazing music with louder drums, better vocals, and a Big Muff. Unlike Jim's Comic Book Shop, Brass City still exists, even if Monsterland does not. By the early 1990s, the city had come to love what The Ramones had offered in 1975. In dreaming cities, things sometimes happen in slow motion, but things do happen, at least eventually. With the death of Jim's shop in the early 1990s, a store called Legends of Superheroes came into being and continues to serve customers from the Naugatuck River Valley.

Though it is difficult to speculate in the absence of any oral histories, it must have been thrilling and terrifying to have worked at the Eastern Color Printing Company in Waterbury in the 1930s. Imagine the pulp covers which came in a rush off the presses: an endless series of scantily-clad young women menaced by Orientalist villains like Shivan Khan, the Shadow's nemesis; the erotic, pastel masterpieces of artists such as Margaret Brundage; and golden-eyed super-scientists like Lester Dent's hero Doc Savage. The workers must have come home with very strange dreams. Forty years later, their children might have come home from a Johnny Winter concert with the same mixture of exhilaration and dread after experiencing the sonic assault of early Ramones. Both moments were outbreaks of peculiarly modern phenomena which, once released, could not be contained. It's tempting to think that somewhere, perhaps on Thomaston Avenue (where, according to Francis Brennan, Eastern Color Printing once stood) or East Main Street, the ghosts of Batman and Joey Ramone might be found wandering. They would not look out of place with the other members of this dreaming city and its eerie white cross which still glows like a nightlight (or a bug zapper) over Holyland, USA.

Continued from page 4

the first wave of writers that included Dave Marsh, Robert Christgau, Lester Bangs and others. But Shaw was no mere "critic" - his byline appeared in many of the important rock magazines of the time (including his own *Mojo Navigator*, which in 1966 was arguably one of the first). What separates a hack "critic" from a writer? Vision. In that way, Shaw could be considered one of the first people to make this world safe for punk and roots-rock. These days, it's almost taken for granted that surf and garage-rock were two of the sixties' most influential music movements, but in the early seventies, these two genres were dead and overlooked. Shaw was one of the first people in print to treat these two sub-categories with the respect they deserved, not only in his own *Who Put The Bomp* fanzine (later shortened to *Bomp*), but in major-market magazines like *Phonograph Record* and *Creem*. If Shaw decided to do, say, a story on Texas music in 1974, he didn't just center around Johnny Winter, Willie Nelson and Z.Z. Top like most writers - he went into great detail about relative unknowns like Mouse & the Traps or the Thirteenth Floor Elevators (who were not the icons they are today). In his long-running "Juke Box Jury" column (first in *Creem*, later in *Phonograph Record*), not only did he champion 45 RPM records, but he was a tireless supporter of power-pop/glam/roots bands like the Raspberries, the Sweet, and the Flamin' Groovies. It was the Groovies who inspired him to start the Bomp record label in 1974; *Bomp* the magazine is sadly defunct, but the label lives on (and the spirit lives through a couple of different Bomp e-group lists). When the punk revolution finally hit in the middle of the 70's, Bomp was right there on the Strip, recording many newer bands in that vein.

The obituaries credit him for being a pioneer in the punk and power-pop movements, but the extent of his knowledge was surprisingly wide-ranging. As

quiet as it was kept, Shaw had a huge passion for New Orleans R&B - again, long before Popeye's Chicken and the Neville Brothers spread the legend of Louisiana culture at large. When he profiled Dr. John for *Phonograph Record* in 1973, he went well out of his way to list the obscure N.O. R&B sessions that the good Doctor played on. He didn't come off as a record-collector showoff, just a man sharing and spreading the knowledge. He co-wrote (with Michael Ochs) the liner notes to an amazing Fats Domino compilation in 1971, as part of United Artists' Legendary Masters Series. Speaking of which - these days, we're used to top-flight reissues of older rock & roll, from labels like Rhino, Sundazed and others. However, in the early seventies the typical "rock reissue" was either some compilation of a star's early work (like all those cheesy Small Faces reissues that cashed in on the Faces' later fame), or OLDIES BUT GOODIES, VOLUME 178. Shaw's "Vintage Years" series on Sire made sure that the best tracks by the Troggs, Duane Eddy, the Pretty Things, and others were treated with the utmost respect that jazz reissues did. Just before that, Shaw revived Liberty/UA's Legendary Masters Series, and released five classy packages on Jan & Dean, Ricky Nelson, Eddie Cochran, Bob Wills, and the aforementioned Domino. These twofers were so good that they should have been reissued as was, when the CD boom hit. And every now and then, his tastes went in odd directions - when he was still employed by United Artists, he wrote the liner notes to a UA promo-only "middle-of-the-road" comp (hipsters call it "lounge music" now). He was possibly the sole person back then to write about Ferrante & Teicher or Bobby Goldsboro with any intelligence!!

On the evening of October 23rd, while Ashlee Simpson was dancing a jig on *Saturday Night Live* because her lipsynch track crapped out, I went to a Cramps concert. Lux Interior dedicated the final song of the night to Greg Shaw. While this probably would have gotten huge applause in L.A. (where he was more of a presence), no one really reacted in Chicago. I later told Gentleman John Battles: "That applause you heard at the mention of Shaw's name was me..."

John said: "I couldn't hear you. I was too busy applauding myself."

ROCTOBER HALL OF DYNAMIC GREATNESS 2004



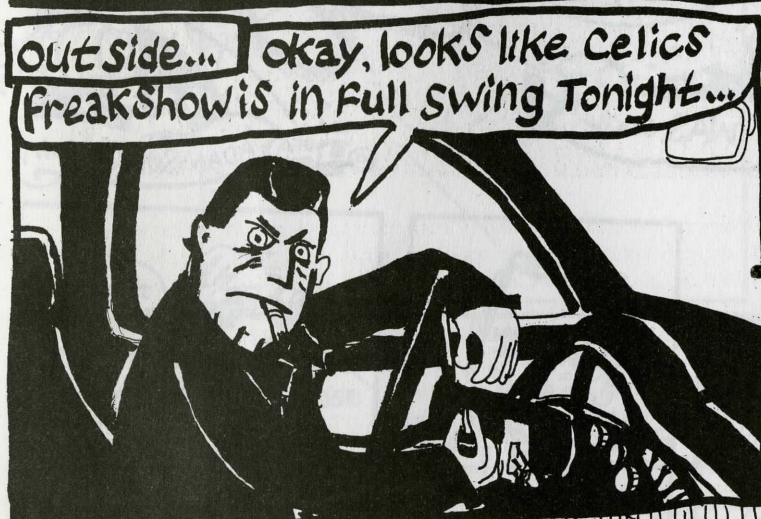
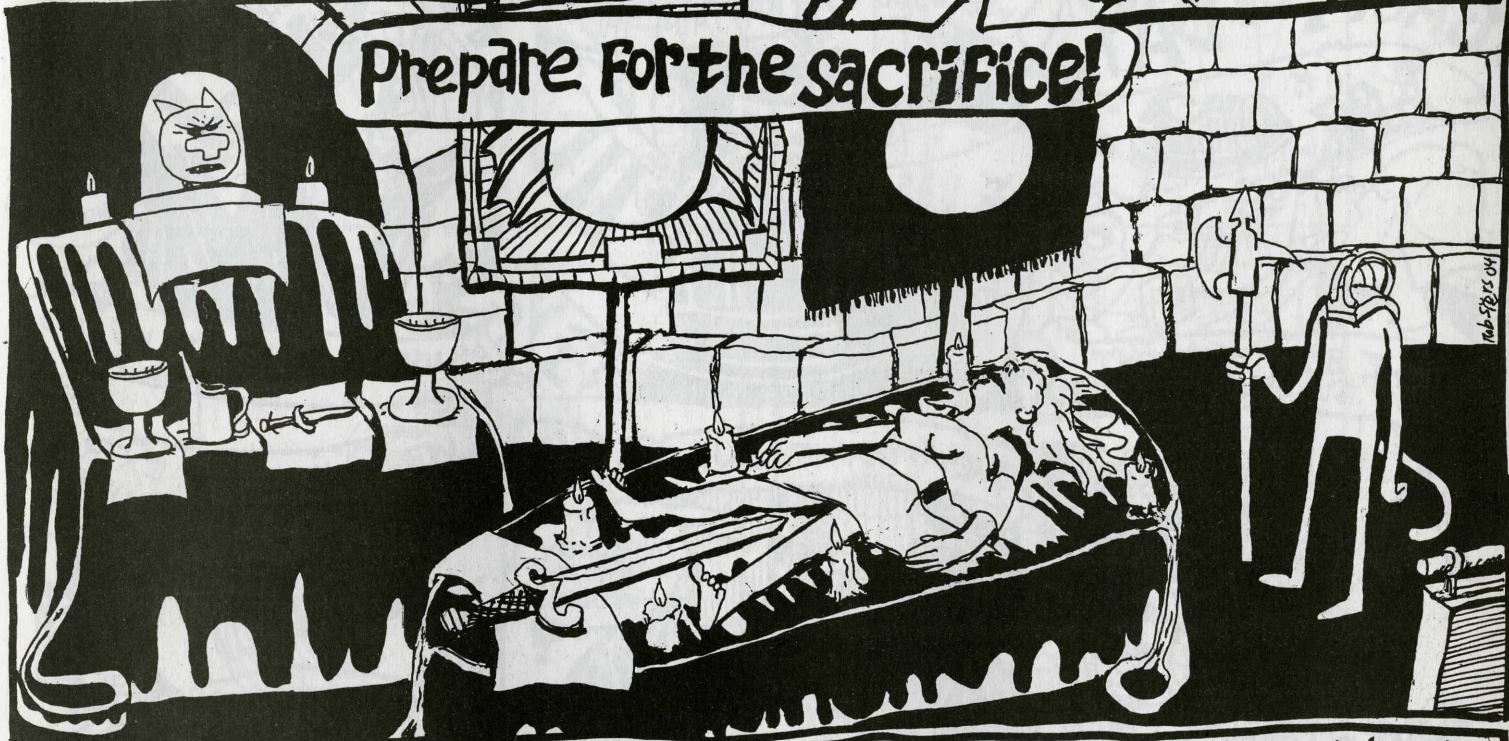
SWAMP DOGG

JIMMY CASTOR

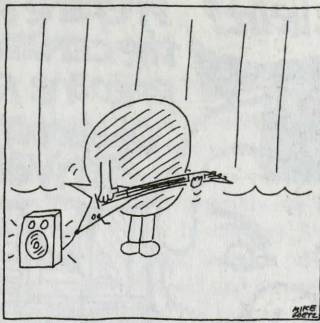
RUDY RAY MOORE

Our 2004 inductees into the Roctober Hall of Dynamic Greatness are pioneers whose potent combination of funky and funny blazed trails that helped lead pop culture into the Hip Hop era. **Swamp Dogg** is a visionary music maker/songwriter/record producer/genius who made some downright revolutionary music that fearlessly tackled racism and injustice. His songs could be hilarious and harrowing at the same time, and he knew how to keep the groove going. From Blues to R&B to Calypso, the Dogg has proved his bark and bite and both potent. **Jimmy Castor** began his career fusing Latin music and Soul music, but reached his apex by becoming one of the truest architects of Funk. The Jimmy Castor Bunch created records that made absurdity danceable, and though he worked with many greats, never forget that the Everything Man could do it all himself. **Rudy Ray Moore** had already established himself as an fine R&B singer when he decided to shift gears and bring the street tradition of "toasts" (bawdy rhyming epics) to vinyl and celluloid. His XXX-rated party records were shocking comedy milestones and his "Dolemite" movies were the purest examples of Blaxploitation as a genuine grassroots African American cinema. All three of these icons helped lay the foundation for rap music, as evidenced by ample sampling over the last two decades. But despite the royalties they may garner for said samples, they are not the beneficiaries of modern music throwing them bones, modern musicians owe them for making what they do possible. Read more at www.roctober.com.

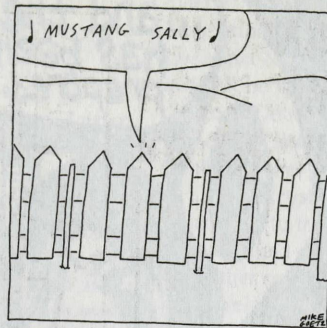
Since 1994, The Roctober Hall of Dynamic Greatness has honored artists who personify unique variations on the quality Roctober most admires: Total dedication to entertainment! Past inductees are AC/DC, Hasil Adkins, Oscar Brown, Jr., Jerry "The Iceman" Butler, The Chipmunks, Doug Clark & the Hot Nuts, Wayne Cochran, David Allan Coe, Dick Dale, Sammy Davis, Jr., Sugar Pie Desanto, Divine, The Equals, The Fat Boys, Fela, Redd Foxx, Serge Gainsbourg, Gary Glitter, Cordell Jackson, Wanda Jackson, Joan Jett, KISS, Sid Laverents, Jerry Lewis, Joe Hill Louis, Janis Martin, Dean Martin, the monks, Klaus Nomi, Dolly Parton, P-Funk, ? and the Mysterians, Billy Lee Riley, RuPaul, Sam The Sham, Selena, Sylvester, The Treniers, Ike and Tina Turner, Vanilla Ice, X-Ray Spex, and The Zone Brothers



NEXT: ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE!



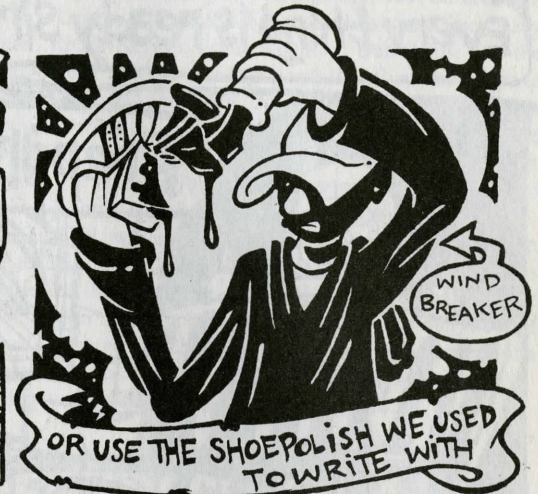
PET ROCK



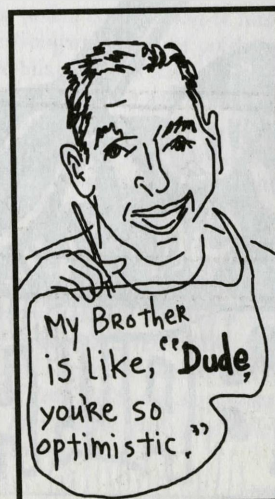
WILSON PICKETT FENCE

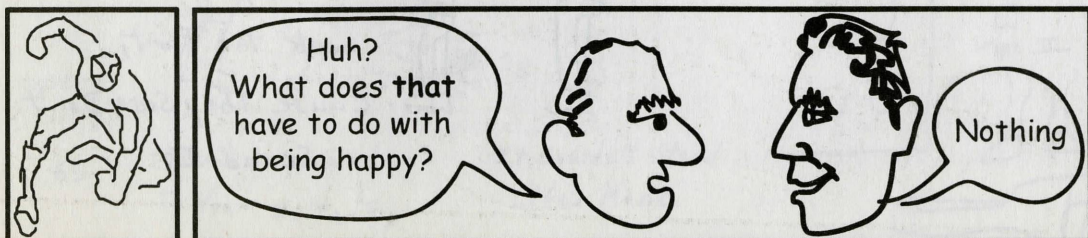
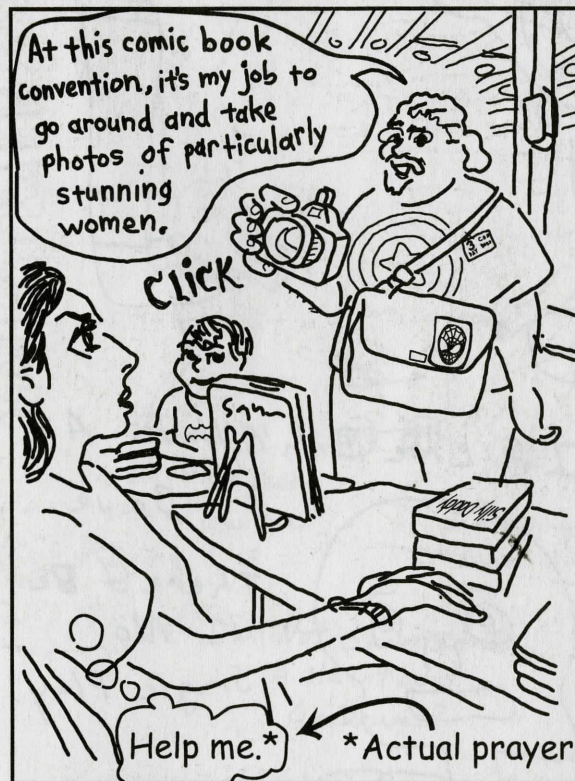


EMIN "END"



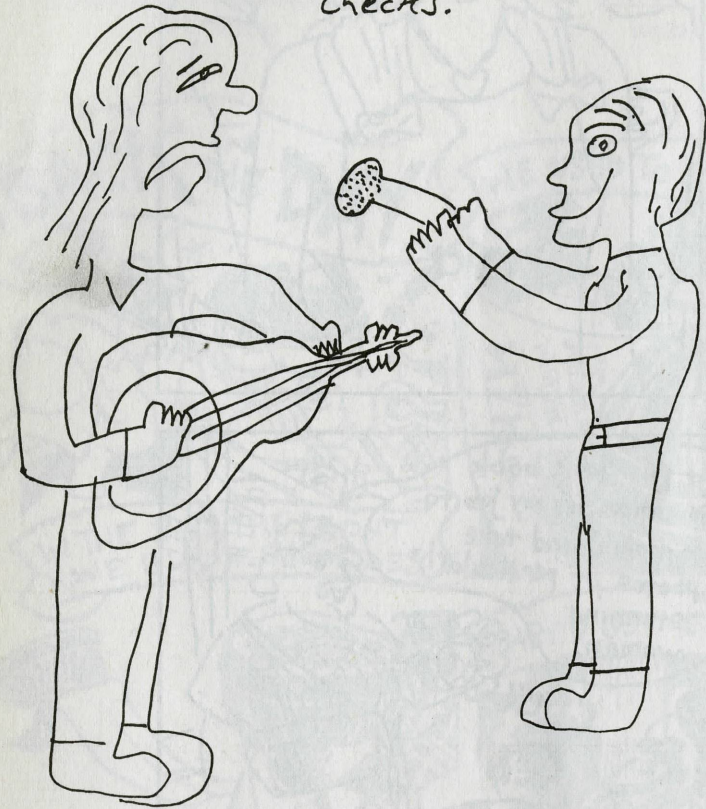
Tom Talkalotta in...
HAPPINESS





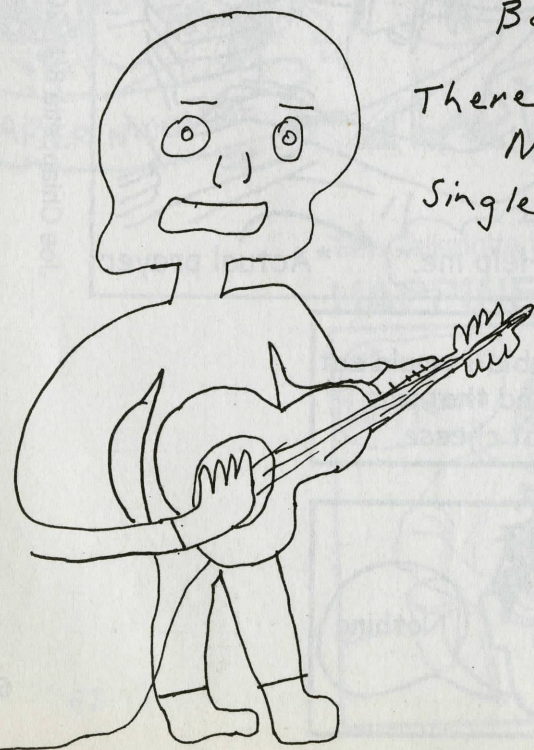
ROCK IS FUNNY by Dan Buck

It Only Hunts,
When I sign The Small
checks.

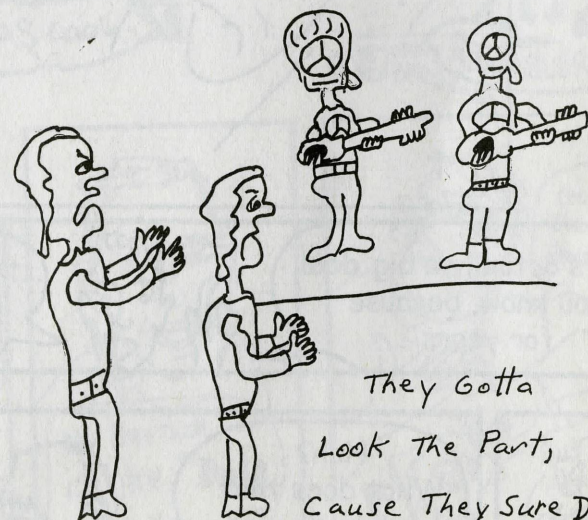


They Only Do It,
For All My Money
I'm Given.

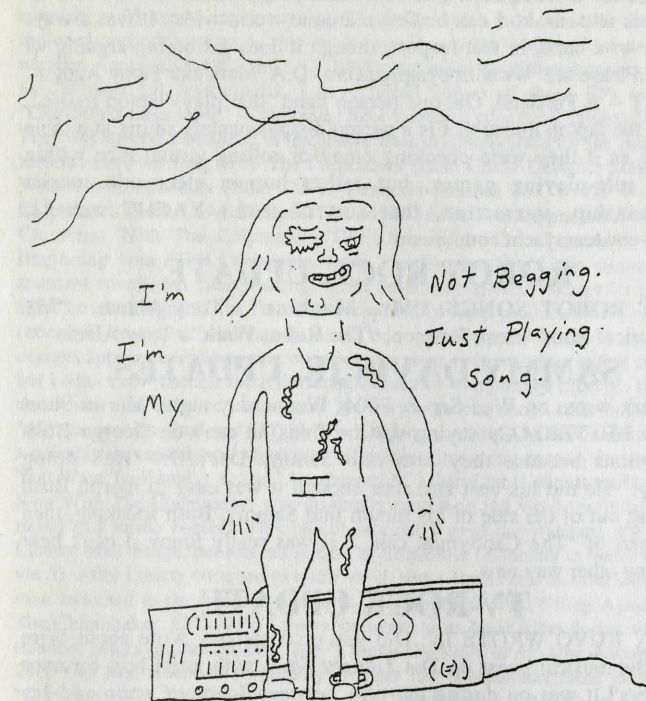
If Life Didn't Have A
Base...



There'd Be
No
Single Play.

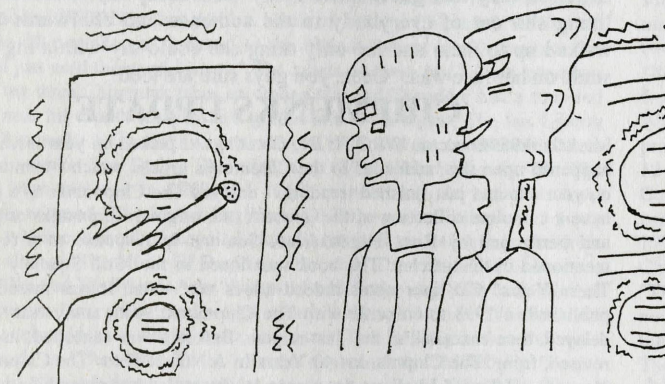


They Gotta
Look The Part,
Cause They Sure Don't
Sound It.



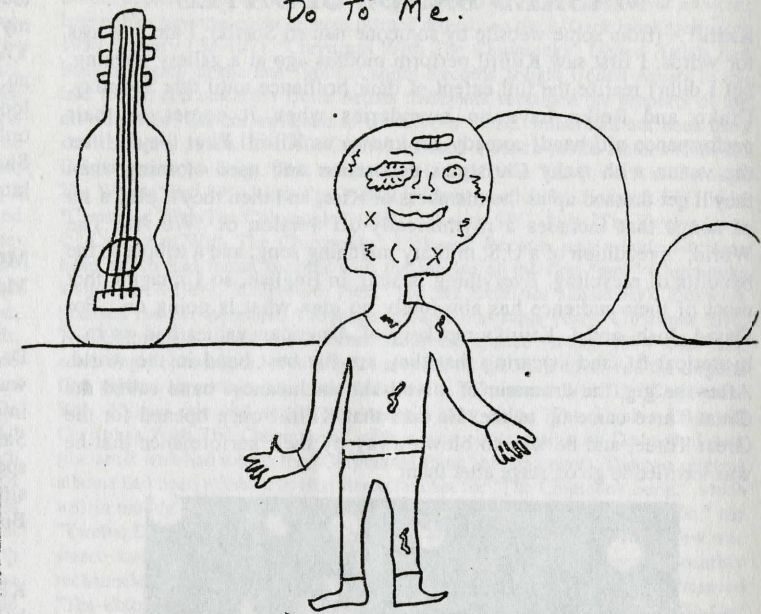
I'm
I'm
My

Not Begging.
Just Playing
Song.

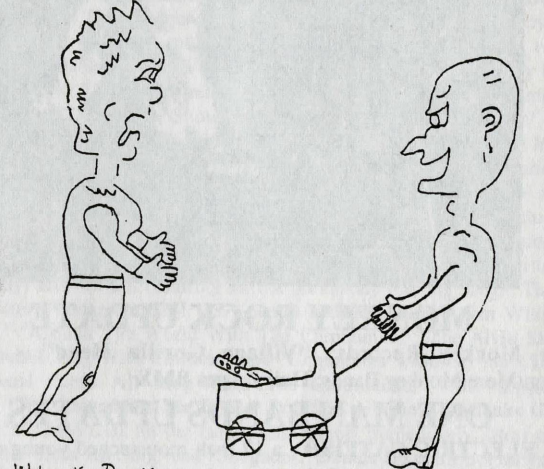


What's The
Best Thing That's
Happened To You?

Our Mothers Told
Us Not To Play
So Loud.



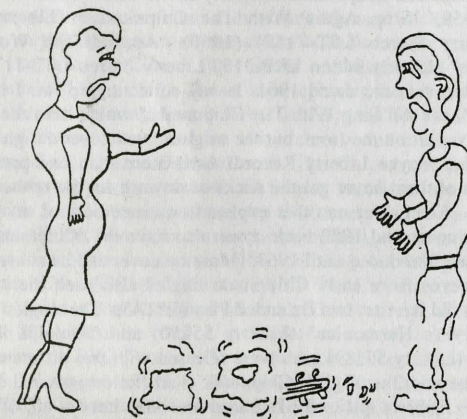
I Love What
They
Do To Me.



What Do You
Think You Are
Doing?

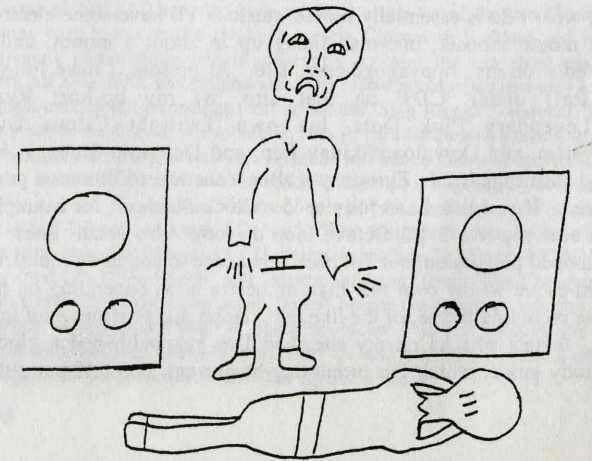
I'm Giving
It Some Air.

I'm Not Sure If It's
A Heartbeat
Or Drums?



What Happened
To Your Guitar?

It Couldn't Stand
Life's Music.



UPDATES

MASKED BANDS UPDATES

Kiiiiiii! – (from some website by someone named Sheila): I am at a loss for words. I first saw Kiiiiiii! perform months ago at a gallery opening, but I didn't realize the full extent of their brilliance until this Saturday. Utako and Reiko have no boundaries when it comes to their performance art/ band/ comedy act known as Kiiiiiii! First they'll litter the venue with tacky Christmas decoration and used clothing, then they'll get dressed up as the members of Kiss, and then they'll play a set of songs that includes a rhythmically-off version of "We Are The World," a rendition of a U.S. military marching song, and a tribute to the benefits of recycling. Everything is sung in English, so I imagine that most of their audience has absolutely no idea what is going on. For David, Josh, and I, Kiiiiiii!'s mockery of American values had us in a hysterical fit, and swearing that they are the best band in the world. After the gig, the drummer of a well-known Japanese band called the Great Three came up to me. He said that Kiiiiiii! once opened for the Great Three, and he was so blown away by their performance that he was terrified to go on stage after them.



MONKEY ROCK UPDATE

More Monkey Records: "Village Gorilla Head" - Tommy Stinson/More Monkey Bands: **Hairy Apes BMX**

ONE MAN BANDS UPDATES

THE ELECTRIC CATFISH - a 12 inch moustached young man and a surreal solo improviser of theater and music using a mini-drumset, named the "mini-jig," a saxophone with primitive wireless mic, a theremin, a broken guitar, a leaf blower, various invented instruments, "the trombeener," a loop station, a sampler, video projection, various props and costumes. Winner of the 2002 Uno-Go-Go Battle of the One Man Bands. Read the manifesto at www.theelectriccatfish.com

TIPPY AGOGO, THE 'ONE-MAN ORCHESTRA - Tippy: I'm one of those one-man bands, and for 20 yrs now, although some of my groups were well over 20, I've paired it down to just me (and occasionally a guest, banjo, sitar, of the like) as I can do a vocal bass lines, and all the perc and sounds outta me mouth., Carlos del Junco, harmonica player said that what I do is essentially mouth music... I'll have some electro-acoustic mouth moosik, one-man thang up in about a month, under Multi Media' on my tippyagogo.com site. At present, I have full-on 'band' stuff under 'CDs' on that site, w/ my co-hort Ryan Moore (Legendary Pink Dots, his own Twilight Circus Dub SoundSystem, and Download/Skinny Pup, and Delirium fame...) He and I did stuff together in Europa, yrs after Vancouver/Edmonton punk rock daze... If you listen carefully to '5 o'Clock Shadow', for example, you can hear my live 3 1/2 Octave loop da loop Afro vocal lines, as well as looped percussion, but I'm back nowadaze to sounding industrial Fela Kuti-esque w/ my own one-man orchestra now, depending on the event, the recording theme, of the like, etc. Hope this provides enuf info for you., there's whacks on my site, and I've just published a global music study guide, which I'm promoting at present, before I put out a

series of 3 albums, one will be one-man oriented. I think one of the main reasons for becoming a one-man (tho I still play in other outfits) was for economic reasons, so I can be flown around world-wide., It was always tougher w/ a band, in that respect, though it does get boring arguing w/ my self. Please see: www.tippyagogo.com -D.A. Mark aka Tippy Agogo.

YACHT - A Portland, OR one person band that plays laptop music... no, not the laptop music that is a person dispassionately sitting at a table looking as if they were checking email or rolling virtual dice within online role-playing games, but rather human electronic music. Showmanship, interaction, that sort of deal.) YACHT website: <http://www.teamyacht.com/music/>

ROBOT ROCK UPDATE

MORE ROBOT SONGS: "Mr. Machine" - Tony Alamo, "My Mechanical Man" - Leah Dawson, "The Robot Walk" - Tony Alamo

SAMMY DAVIS JR. UPDATES

Dr. Mark wrote on Wed Sep 8, 2004: Wednesday night, Martin Short was on *LETTERMAN* saying that he finds he can't do George Bush impressions because they turn into Sammy Davis Jr. "He's doing Sammy!" He did his best and sure enough it was easy to morph Bush speaking out of the side of his mouth into Sammy. Bush speaking, then sings part of "The Candyman can..." It was really funny. I can't hear Bush any other way now

TV ROCK UPDATE

KELLY KUVU WROTE IN: Did you or somebody write about Wire being the musical guest on *The Tonight Show* with guest host Susanne Summers? It was on during the time between Johnny Carson and Jay Leno, so they had guest hosts every week. Anyway, Wire scared the living shit out of everybody in the audience and afterwards Susanne walked up to them and the only thing she could say with a big stunned smile on her face was, "Geez, you guys sure are loud!"

CHIPMUNKS UPDATE

Markshark989@cs.com **WROTE IN:** Greetings...I picked up your issue #37 and happened upon the "addenda" to the Chipmunks article, which I then looked up on your site and just finished reading. I enjoyed The Chipmunks as a child and have a complete collection of the records (the original Chipmunks as produced and performed by Ross Bagdasarian, Senior). In response to a few things mentioned in the articles: The book mentioned in the "Still Squeaky After All These Years" CD liner notes indeed *does not* exist. It was intended to be published in 1998 to coincide with The Chipmunks' 40th anniversary, but was delayed, then cancelled at the last minute. Before it was cancelled, its title was revised, from "The Chipmunks: 40 Years In A Nutshell" to "The Chipmunks: 40 Years On Helium." I believe the reason it was pulled had something to do with the legal business going on between Ross Bagdasarian, Jr. and Universal. Hopefully, it will someday be published; I found Bagdasarian Jr.'s liner notes in the CD booklet (said to be extracted from the unpublished book) quite enjoyable.

Regarding "The Realistic Chipmunks" Vs. "The Cartoon Chipmunks": The first *three* Chipmunk albums feature the "potentially rabies-inducing realistic animal" character designs in their original pressings. The characters were redesigned in '1961 for the TV series "The Alvin Show." These albums are: "Let's All Sing With The Chipmunks" (Liberty Mono LRP-3132/Liberty Stereo LST-7132) (1959) "Sing Again With The Chipmunks" (Liberty Mono LRP-3159/Liberty Stereo LST-7159) (1960) "Around The World With The Chipmunks" (Liberty Mono LRP-3170/Liberty Stereo LST-7170) (1960) The redesigned covers are dated 1961. In my collecting so far, I have found two copies of "Let's All Sing With The Chipmunks" which have the redesigned TV cartoon cover art on the front, but the original back cover design from 1959. My guess is that maybe Liberty Records used more than one pressing plant and maybe one of them never got the slicks or artwork for the revised back cover of that album. I can offer no other explanation, since both of my copies with the 1961 front cover and 1959 back cover also have the "Chipmunks faces" label, which wasn't introduced until 1963. (More on cover and label variations shortly.) Picture sleeves from early Chipmunk singles also used the earlier character designs, as did the first two Extended Play (EP) 45s. The singles "The Chipmunk Song"/"Alvin's Harmonica" (Liberty 55250) and "Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer" (Liberty 55289) each were released with two different sleeve artwork designs, one with the original Chipmunk character designs and one with the TV Chipmunks. Liberty released EPs based on some, but not all, of the Chipmunks albums: LSX-1007 "Let's All Sing With The Chipmunks" LSX-1008 "Sing Again With The Chipmunks" LSX-1015 "The Chipmunk Songbook" LSX-1016 "Christmas With The Chipmunks" LSX-1017 "Christmas With The Chipmunks Vol. 2" LST-7388 "The Chipmunks Sing The Beatles Hits" The last one ("The

Chipmunks Sing The Beatles Hits") was not commercially released, but was issued for jukebox use only, containing 6 songs (compared to the usual 4), running at 33 speed and in stereo. The back cover is blank, title strips are included and oddly enough, the catalog number is the same as the stereo LP number. Again, LSX-1007 and LSX-1008 came with two different cover designs, as did their LP counterparts. I have found copies of these EPs with the "Chipmunks faces label," so they must have stayed in print for a number of years. The "foil covers" mentioned in the article were originally used for the first seven albums: Let's All Sing With The Chipmunks (Both Cover Designs) Sing Again With The Chipmunks (Both Cover Designs) Around The World With The Chipmunks (Both Cover Designs) The Alvin Show, The Chipmunk Songbook, Christmas With The Chipmunks, Christmas With The Chipmunks Vol. 2 Beginning with "The Chipmunks Sing The Beatles Hits," the albums used standard covers, but later pressings of all the earlier albums (except for the pre-1961 cover designs of the first three) apparently were produced with standard (non-foil) covers as well (again, some odd combinations of cover and label designs appears to indicate that one pressing plant switched over before another, but I don't know enough about the technicalities of who pressed Liberty's records, and where and when, to really know the answer to that one). Later copies (and *all* reissues on vinyl and CD) of "The Chipmunks Sing The Beatles Hits" have a splice in the master tape which cuts off the opening guitar note on the song "Do You Want To Know A Secret." A summary of Liberty label variations: "Let's All Sing With The Chipmunks" was originally issued on red vinyl (definitely both mono and stereo copies). This album originally used the standard late 1950s Liberty label design, but was red instead of turquoise (evidently to match the red vinyl). After Liberty switched to black vinyl, some copies still had red labels, but then switched to the standard turquoise. Beginning in 1960 ("Sing Again With The Chipmunks," LST-7159) Liberty switched to its black label design with the rainbow colors on the left side. The "Chipmunks faces label" was introduced in 1963 (the first album to *originally* feature the "Chipmunks faces label" was "Christmas With The Chipmunks Vol. 2"). Subsequently, later copies of all the earlier albums had the "faces label." Stereo copies usually had the phrase "...visual sound STEREO," but the last batch of Liberty Chipmunk labels (just before The Chipmunks got demoted to the budget Sunset label) dropped that phrase and just used the word "stereo." The labels on these last Liberty pressings also gave the three Chipmunk faces an orange hue and Theodore had a stray red ink mark near his mouth (maybe he'd gotten into a bar fight). The last Liberty album ("Chipmunks 'a-Go-Go") was released in 1965, and the two Sunset albums ("The Chipmunks See Doctor Dolittle" and "The Chipmunks Go To The Movies") were released in 1968 and 1969, respectively. In between, Ross Bagdasarian released "The Mixed-Up World Of Bagdasarian" album on Liberty (in 1966), which consisted of recycled material (several tracks are repeated from his earlier albums "The Music Of David Seville" and "The Witch Doctor Presents David Seville And His Friends," the lineups of which also duplicate each other to some extent; in fact, a few tracks appear on all three albums). "Yeah, Yeah" (originally released as a single under the name The Bedbugs) uses the same backing track as "The Alvin Twist." Stereo copies of the "Mixed-Up World" album are in *fake electronic stereo* (as are stereo copies of "The Alvin Show" soundtrack album). One oddity also emerged in this period: a single, "Sorry About That, Herb" (flip side: "Apple Picker"), released on the Dot label and produced by Bagdasarian and Liberty labelmate Snuff Garrett. The A-side is a variation on "Alvin's All-Star Chipmunk Band," but musically similar to Herb Alpert & The Tijuana Brass's "A Taste Of Honey." The B-side is pretty much a semi-straight novelty love song sung by David Seville with The Chipmunks quietly harmonizing in the background. Somewhere around this time, The Chipmunks were dumped onto Liberty's budget label, Sunset. Later pressings of most of the Liberty albums can be found with a black "Sunset" sticker stuck over the Liberty logo on the front cover; if the album is sealed, there's no way to know; usually, the label is Liberty, but often a Sunset label (the same "Chipmunks faces label," but with the Sunset logo replacing the Liberty logo). In most cases, the Sunset pressings are inferior and appear to be pressed on polystyrene instead of vinyl; they are quite noisy, crackly and brittle. However, copies I have found of "Doctor Dolittle" and "The Chipmunks Go To The Movies" (which originally were released on Sunset itself) do not have this problem, and I think Sunset pressings of the two Christmas albums are okay too. The two Christmas albums have been reissued and repackaged numerous times, and trying to keep track of the variations can be confusing, but let's give it a try. 1974: United Artists UA-LA352-E "Christmas With The Chipmunks" (2-LP set in a single pocket, includes both Christmas albums in their entirety, with the front cover of *Volume 2*--without the "Vol. 2" reference--on the front cover, and the front cover art from the 1962 "Volume 1" on the back cover). (Confused yet? Stay tuned.) 1975: Mistletoe MLP-1216 "Christmas With The Chipmunks" 1975: Mistletoe MLP-1217 "Christmas With The Chipmunks Vol. 2" The UA set was still available, but the following year, UA licensed both albums to a small budget reissue label, which released them individually. The "Vol. 2" cover art appears to be copied from the UA 2-LP set, since the title is moved over to the center and a small "Vol. 2" is squeezed back in over on the top right. Mistletoe first released

these albums with flimsy cardstock covers (with the back covers colored red). Later on, copies were pressed on higher-quality cardboard covers with black and white back covers. Both Mistletoe reissue albums also came out on 8-Track. Earlier copies of the 8-Tracks had custom sleeves with the album cover artwork; later copies have the cover artwork printed directly on the 8-Track label itself. 1980: Liberty LM-1071 "Christmas With The Chipmunks" United Artists had bought Liberty in the late 1960s. Capitol Records bought United Artists in the late 1970s, and since the United Artists trademark remained the property of the movie studio, Capitol switched to the Liberty name, which had not been used since the early 1970s. In 1980, Capitol reissued a bunch of old albums from the United Artists holdings. This reissue is missing "Over The River And Through The Woods" and "We Wish You A Merry Christmas." 1980: Pickwick SPC-1034 "Christmas With The Chipmunks" 1980: Pickwick SPC-1035: "The Twelve Days Of Christmas With The Chipmunks" Pickwick Records was a budget reissue label which had found success with the release of the first "new" Chipmunks album since 1969, "Chipmunk Punk" (on the Excelsior subsidiary). Pickwick licensed the two perennial Christmas albums that same year. "Christmas With The Chipmunks" used the artwork from the United Artists 1974 2-LP set, confusingly showing the *Volume 2* artwork on the front cover and the original first volume artwork on the back. Meanwhile, "Christmas With The Chipmunks Vol. 2" was reissued separately under a new title, "The Twelve Days Of Christmas With The Chipmunks," with a new cover design by Doug Oudekirk (the artist who had drawn the "Chipmunk Punk" album cover). The two original albums had been released in true stereo (except for "The Chipmunk Song," which was in muddy rechanneled stereo). Now, both reissues were labeled "stereo," but "Twelve Days" was mono, and "Christmas With The Chipmunks" had a few true stereo cuts, a few mono cuts, and a few oddly remixed songs, possibly rechanneled or maybe just very badly remixed. The "new" Liberty also reissued "The Chipmunks Sing The Beatles Hits" (LN-10177) and "Chipmunks 'a-Go-Go" (LN-10178) in 1982. The previous year, "Beatles Hits" had been reissued by EMI in England (on the EMI Nut subsidiary label) in mono, containing all twelve songs (widely available in the US as an import album and still frequently found on eBay). The 1982 US Liberty reissues were all true stereo, but were missing two songs each ("Twist And Shout" and "I Saw Her Standing There" from "Beatles Hits" and "Sunshine, Lollipops And Rainbows" and "The Race Is On" from "Chipmunks 'a-Go-Go"). In 1986, the "new" Liberty reissued "Christmas With The Chipmunks Vol. 2" (with the words "Vol. 2" missing from the cover, probably yet another remnant of the 1974 US reissue), but this one did include all 12 songs. Three of the four reissued Liberty albums (excluding "Chipmunks 'a-Go-Go") were released on CD in the late 1980s (on the EMI Manhattan label), using the vinyl artwork but restoring all the previously missing songs. Then in 1990, EMI (now under the EMI USA name) reissued "Sing Again With The Chipmunks," "Around The World With The Chipmunks," "The Alvin Show," "The Chipmunks Sing With Children" and "Chipmunks 'a-Go-Go" on CD (but never reissued "Let's All Sing With The Chipmunks," "The Chipmunk Songbook," "The Chipmunks See Doctor Dolittle" or "The Chipmunks Go To The Movies"). These CDs hit the cutout bins almost immediately. Most of the songs from the "Let's All Sing" and "Songbook" albums did come out on various compilation CDs, two of which were called "The Chipmunk Songbook" (actually, one was called "The Chipmunk Songbook" and one was called "The Chipmunks Songbook"), neither of which was a straight reissue of the 1962 album. The second of these (released through mail-order by CEMA Special Products in 1996) used several tracks from a previously released CD collection, "The Chipmunks Sing Along," which used the mono soundtracks of "The Alvin Show" TV episodes as source material, with added instruments and voices performed by Ross Bagdasarian Jr. and Janice Karman. The overdubbing on these tracks is terrible, sticks out like a sore thumb (paw?) and does not gel with the original tracks at all. More recently, EMI in Japan released three CDs: one is a reissue of the two Christmas albums (again), but unlike recent US releases, this contains the entire contents of both of the original albums as well as the Canned Heat "Chipmunk Song." They also have released a two-fer of the two David Seville albums with bonus tracks (including early Chipmunk B-sides) and a general Chipmunk compilation, which apparently contains the few stray tracks from "Let's All Sing With The Chipmunks," but I have not verified that they are all the original undoctored recordings (that is, not the "Sing Alongs" versions). There are many subtle (and some not so subtle, like Alvin's harmonica playing in "Alvin's Harmonica") differences between the mono and stereo mixes of many Chipmunks tracks, especially the earlier ones which involve a lot of interplay between David Seville and The Chipmunks. The mono mix of "Alvin's Harmonica" is on the Pair Records 2-LP set (and one CD "set") "The Chipmunk Songbook." (It's quite laughable how this *16-song* CD claims to include "2 LPs on 1 CD!" Yeah, 2 very short LPs.) "Do-Re-Mi" and "Mister Sandman" (from "The Chipmunks Sing With Children") have extra piano "cues" before the songs on cassette and CD reissues. "Chipmunk Punk" is being re-released on CD through the official Chipmunks website. There is more stuff I could mention, but that's more than enough... Have a great day, Mark "The Shark" Yurkiw

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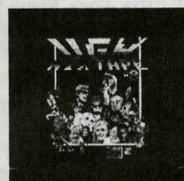
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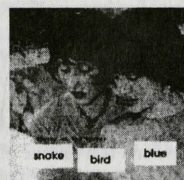


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ROCKIN' DVD REVIEWZ

Bob Luman At Town Hall Party (Bear Family) What do Europeans know that most Americans don't? Well, that there were rockabilly performers who were almost as good as Elvis Presley that never really made it, that's what. Case in point - Bob Luman. The Texas-born rockabilly had actually been the *Louisiana Hayride's* choice to replace Elvis Presley when the rock king went on to national fame. Further, his ability to incorporate Presleyesque rock with Johnny Cash type country won him many fans. Yet, although he recorded for solid labels (Imperial, Capitol), appeared in a teen movie (Carnival Rock), Luman had trouble scoring with anything bigger than a regional hit.

These eight segments from 1958 and 1959 simultaneously show what rock audiences of the time missed out on and why Luman had trouble registering with them.

Clearly Luman could rock as evidenced by the screams elicited from jubilant remakes Carl Perkins' "Blue Suede Shoes," Big Joe Turner's "Shake, Rattle, and Roll," and especially Bobby Day's "Rockin' Robin." Backed by some stunning personnel like guitar legend Merle Travis, piano slammer Jimmy Pruitt, and Joe Maphis - who employed his double-necked guitar mastery on Ricky Nelson's records before the TV star appropriated James Burton from Luman's band - the singer also delivers rock renditions of original material ala "Svengali" and "Itchy Twitchy Feeling." Moreover, the inclusion in his set of Lloyd Price's "Stagger Lee," Clyde McPhatter's "A Lover's Question," and Buddy Holly's "Early in the Morning" shows that Luman knew what songs 50s bopcats dug. Professional and stylish to the bone, the singer's problem resided elsewhere.

Although he reveled in the same influences that drove Presley and Cash, Luman shared none of their sense of utter abandon. When he does Presley's remake of Ray Charles' "I Got a Woman," he seems to be goofin' whereas the Memphis Flash intended wild, salacious business. During his catchy Cash styled mini-hit "My Baby Walks All Over Me," he exhibits none of the Man in Black's rueful damned-if-I-do-damned-if-I-don't irony. As a result, while consistently entertaining, Luman's work doesn't resonate with the intangibles that makes even the lowest of Presley and Cash offerings seem absolutely vital.

Near the disc's end, host Jay Stewart announces that Luman has a new record out on Warner Brothers, where he would finally score a country-crossover hit with the clever hook song "Let's Think About Living." That said, his greatest success came during the late 60s and early 70s when his Epic recordings of "When You Say Love" and "Lonely Women Make Good Lovers" made him a country star. An entertainer's entertainer, Bob Luman did a bit of Presley style rock'n'roll at all his concerts until his death in 1977. His life, along with this DVD, paint a portrait of a talented performer who loved, but could never live, the rock'n'roll dream. (Ken Burke)

The Collins Kids At Town Hall Party (Bear Family) Youth. It's what rock'n'roll and rockabilly was all about. Unfortunately, most tales of young people actually making the music turned out rather sadly. This is true of Larry & Lorrie Collins - The Collins Kids. Featuring young Larry on double-necked guitar and pretty Lorrie as chief vocalist, they had a recording contract with Columbia, plenty of support, and seemed on track for stardom, when it all just fell apart. Ever since, the duo has been lionized by rockabilly cultists, who felt wider acclaim was just a hit record away.

However, this 25-song disc culled from six 1958 telecasts provides ample evidence that the brother-sister team had essentially gone just as far as their talents would allow. A veritable jumping jack, younger brother Larry - who was coached by guitar virtuoso Joe Maphis - proves to be a wonderful rockabilly guitarist with an affection for low-down garage rock rhythms. Older sister Lorrie, a sparkling beauty, possessed an expressive voice, great rhythmic timing, and effectively employed a slow comic burn in dealing with her brother's hyper on-stage antics.

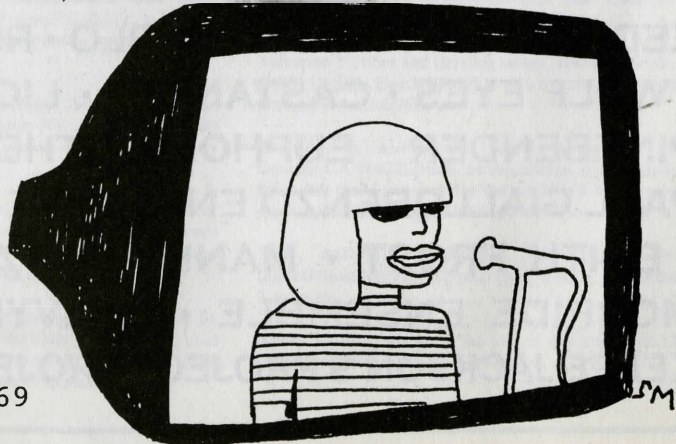
The Collins Kids were one of those rare acts that had cross generational appeal, but in the DVD format, with several performances strung together, a little of Larry Collins goes a long way. Audiences laughed at his bratty interjections during covers of the Big Bopper's "Chantilly Lace," Jerry Lee Lewis "Great Balls of Fire" and the Everly Brothers' "Bird Dog," but the kid really couldn't sing and too often one wishes he would get some Ritalin and stick strictly to guitar playing.

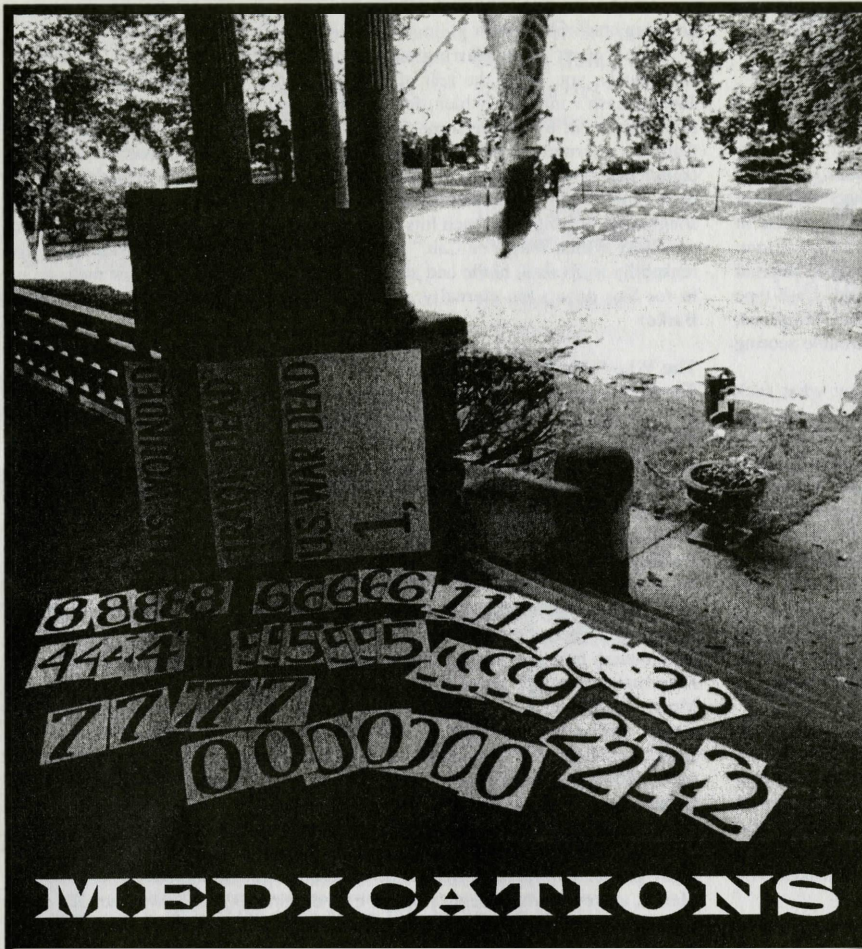
Occasionally, as in the case of Big Joe Turner's "Shake, Rattle and Roll," the Everly Brothers' "Problems," and their own "Make Him Behave," the duo strikes just the right balance of youthful rockabilly energy and professionalism. However, in her rare solo spots, Lorrie offers proof that she is a major talent blessed with genuine rock command. Indeed, she imbues their "Blues Medley" and Ed Bruce's "Rock Boppin' Baby" with yearning sensuality unmatched even by experienced rockabilly sexpots like Wanda Jackson and Janis Martin. So, if

anything, the brother-sister gimmick was holding Lorrie Collins back.

If you've seen Beth Harrington's excellent documentary *The Women of Rockabilly*, you know the rest of their story. Out of the blue, Lorrie married Johnny Cash's manager which, for all intents and purposes, broke up the act. A few years went by before some familial hard feelings were sorted out and the Collins' returned to the club circuit, but by then their novelty value had completely dissipated. They stopped recording as a team in 1962, but there have been some bright spots since then. Larry grew up to become an award winning songwriter, helping craft such hits as "You're the Reason God Made Oklahoma" and "Any Which Way You Can." Occasionally, he reunites with sister Lorrie for rockabilly festivals at home and abroad where they have to somehow measure up to (or live down) the eternally youthful images captured on this DVD. (Ken Burke)

The Who "The Kids Are Alright" DVD - You know, it's a funny thing, when *The Kids Are Alright* (one of the only coherent Rock films of it's kind) came out in 1979, my cousin, Joe, then about 11, said, "You like The Who? They're WEIRD! They smash their instruments!" A couple of years ago, Joe's band opened for The Who in Indianapolis. Wacky world, innit? This much-anticipated release delivers on it's initial promise, making an already great Rock film (a bit of a rarity at the time) that much easier on the eyes and ears with a print that's a drastic improvement over the original video release, and several sound options. It's easy to forget how great some of these clips are if you haven't seen this movie in a while, but, if you have seen it lately, this is the same thing, only much cooler. The highlights are many, from the opening appearance on "The Smothers Bros.," in which Townsend segues immediately into a comic bit with Tommy Smothers, even though he'd just had his hair set on fire and his eardrums perforated by an abnormal amount of gunpowder blasting too close to his head (Quoth Keith Moon: "Heh, heh, heh..."), to a great early clip a still very Mod early Who doing a killer version of James Brown's "Shout and Shimmy" on *Ready Steady Go!*, the band's now-legendary appearance on "The Rolling Stones' Rock 'n' Roll Circus" (now readily available, but a minor revelation at the time), sundry concert footage (mostly early to mid 70s) and some of the most hilarious interview footage in Rock history. Of course, Keith Moon takes the cake, being "interviewed" by drinking buddy, Ringo Starr (Moon does an incredibly effective impersonation of a gay gentleman, here), as well as by a then-up and coming comic named Steve Martin, and even whilst being flogged by a dominatrix, but Townsend tells some pretty insane stories (like not believing that the venue he was playing at had caught fire, and kicking a Fire Marshall in the balls, or blatantly ripping off music shops to supplement his guitar-smashing habit). Things are not presented in chronological order, which keeps the viewer on his toes, concerning the many twists and turns the classic Who lineup went through in just under 15 years. A lot of care was taking to restoring this movie, though the second disc doesn't live up to the hype that surrounded it upon release. If you were, like me, hoping to see some pre-Tommy live footage, more rare T.V. performances, or even the big guitar showdown between Townsend and Abbie Hoffman at Woodstock (Hoffman didn't have a guitar), you'll be disappointed. The extras on the second disc are not without merit, but I found the film itself, in all it's restored glory, far more exciting to watch. The extras read largely like a big interactive game. There's a section that shows the differences between the original release and the DVD edition in terms of quality, live footage of "Baba O' Riley" and "Won't Get Fooled Again" (admittedly ace performances, though *Who's Next*, much like *Tommy*, has been spread as thin as margarine) is doctored to let you hear only John Entwistle's bass, or see the band from different camera angles not previously seen. There's also a tour of London with stops relevant to the group's history and a recent interview with Roger Daltrey that's frequently as candid and as funny as the interview footage in the movie. Still, it left me wanting. I think most of us wanted to see more rare clips, with or without special embellishments, though the two live clips are taken, undubbed, directly from the masters, tuneups and all. Still, the new, improved document of the celebrated cinematic document of "The 'Orrible 'Oo, the worst Rock n' Roll band in the world" (Daltrey's words, not mine) delivers on all levels. (John Battles)





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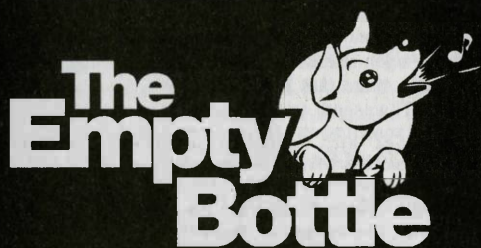
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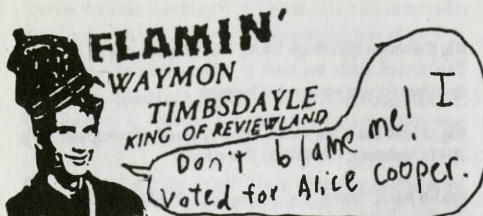


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The Accidents "All Time High" (bootlegbooze.com) This Euro-trashabilly is so hard and fast I think it penetrated me., if you know what I mean

Aaron Ackerson "The Sexiest Man on Earth" (www.aaronackerson.com) The new Acker-monster makes Andrew W.K. seem like Andrew W. Gay!

"Abacus - Your New Favorite Label" sampler (Abacusrecordings.com) Abacus' roster ranges from extreme to extremely extreme. Glass Casket, Bleeding Through and Heaven Shall Burn will collectively eviscerate you.

Action Toolbelt "s/t" (Fast Music, Yale Station, PO Box 206512, New Haven, CT, 06520) The less action I get in this case the better. Dull poppy indie schlock.

Keith John Adams "this is a six track ep" (kabukikore.net) This is halfway between Soft Cell and Haircut 100, making this wholesomely decadent. Perhaps that formula equals...genius!

Adam West "Hi-Balls Are Rolling" (I Used to Fuck People Like You In Prison Records) Sludgy stoner rock with Misfits hooks and Dead Boys dumbness.

C.C. Adcock "Lafayette Marquis" (Yep Roc POB 4821 Chapel Hill, NC 27515) Adcock has invented Insurgent Swamprock! Funky, soulful, creepy, bold music that is as bluesy and as murky as it wants to be. It's a gas...a swamp gas!

The Aeffect "Secrets and Lies" (Hitchhiker 254 S.C.R. 427 Suite 229 Longwood FL 32750) The Cure with conservative-er haircuts, metaphorically as well as in the Supercuts way.

The A-Frames "Complications" b/w "Frankenstein" (S-S Records) They make No-Wave feel like Yes-Wave!

"African Underground Vol. 1 - Hip-Hop Senegal" (Nomadic Wax) Hopefully this really is the first in a series as it takes "underground" to a new level and really challenges hip hop heads to appreciate work on its merits alone, with the knowledge that it is doubtful they will ever see the artists live and that there likely won't be tons of collectable releases and remixes by these rappers. Not merely a compilation of the best of Senegalese rap, this is an example of overly interactive ethnography that may be bad scholarship but is awesome hip hop. The Nomadic Wax crew, after studying the country's rap scene for a dissertation, brought in a makeshift recording studio and documented many of the best acts. Unlike a Folkways archivist of yore hitting the South with a tape recorder to capture raw blues, gospel and field hollers, this actually involves bringing beats and production, so this isn't about purity, it's about letting hot, important MC's have a chance at recorded immortality and increase their range of impact. In fact, these recordings were apparently released in Senegal a few years back as a cassette compilation and many of the tracks became radio staples. There's a lot of borrowing from American rap, not only stylistically but also in direct quotes (BMG 44, the most distinct act here, features a monster-voiced rapper who sounds like a very angry Busta Rhymes with vocal chord damage, who occasionally screams "MURDER" in a *too Ja Rule* manner). But, of course, the motherland of funky music borrowing from her offspring is nothing new. Fela didn't become Fela until he embraced James Brown's music. But what is special here are the aspects that are unique to African Hip Hop. The political convictions expressed here are more intense than their mostly posturing American counterparts. The African patois (whether rapping in Wolof, English, French or a combination) stands as an obvious ancestor of Dancehall style delivery, and the storytelling is original and masterful. Standout artists include Omzo, Yat Fu and Shiffai. A must get CD.

Against Me! "We're Never Going Home" DVD (Fat) A lot of drunkenness and rock make up this tour documentary that won't win over new fans but for fans of the band is better than you would expect.

Ahleuchatistas "the same and the other" (Northeast Failed Industries) I think their name is pronounced "awesome-ass-kickers." Post-post-rock scrambles and skronks that made me convulse joyously while thinking deeply.

Air Conditioning "Weakness" (level-plane POB 7926 Charlottesville VA 22906) This isn't air, its sonic poison chaos gas, and upon breathing it into my ears my head blew up and amazingly my neck then smiled in appreciation of this glorious nightmare music explosion.

A Is Jump "My Ice-Fingered Ghost" (futureappletree POB 191 Davenport Iowa 52808) Should be called "A+ is Jump!"

Alec K. Redfeard & The Eyesores "Every Man For Himself & God Against All" (Corleonerecords.com) Minimalist slices of strangeness featuring fragile, slight vocals, precious compositions, and subtly bold experimentation with different aspects of rock, rawk, folk, ethnic music and scary sounds, all sprinkled rather than shoveled on. It might make the eyes sore, but it's easy on the ears.

Alexonfire "Watch Out!" (Equal Vision Records, PO Box 14, Hudson, NY, 12534) A blender full of hardcore, sensitiveness and the chants from 80s KISS records.

All Else Failed "This Never Happened" (Abacus Recordings) This hit me in the head like a bowling ball. If they were trying to rock my fucking ass off, all else succeeded!

Alleycats "Nothing Means Nothing Anymore" b/w "Give Me A Little Pain" (LOM) 1978 slightly poppy cat punk that is awesome for featuring a member who has a 1970s porn star moustache, haircut, shirt and chest hair. Plus, they have a bass player prettier than any 1970s porn star.

Allhandson - A The2ndhand Reader, edited by Todd Dills (pob 479045 Chicago IL 60647) Part of the appeal of the literary magazine *The2ndhand* is the 4 page format that aesthetically satisfies while promising, without the room to break the promise, brevity in its many works that appear in each issue. Collecting the writing in a real live book threatened to betray the perfect format, but thankfully the quality of writing makes this work. I like short stories and this book is jammed packed with stories so short as to be literary slaps and punches. Also, *2ndhand* is really about writing and the format shifts from fiction to semi-fiction to seemingly non-fiction and all that matters is a snappy, youthful style of wordplay. This is in many ways better than *McSweeney's* and in many more ways better than *McDonalds*.

All Hours "Box Office Stud" (Hybrid) This is actual rock n' roll that manages to capture glam energy without all the posing and posturing.

All Parallels "Formulate A Tragedy" (On The Rise POBox 2471 Westfield, NJ 07091) Para-hell.

All True Sometimes, Catholic School Funnies comix (Mary Jessica Hammes, POB 8 Athens, GA 30603) Mary Jessica Hammes' low fi comix (not the best art, but lots of heart) observe and educate (I learned how to make sweet tea). Her biographical stuff about Catholic school is interesting and touching, but I am a sucker for tea recipes so keep the info-comix coming.

AM "Francophiles and Skinny Ties" (American Laundromat POB 1514 Huntington NY 11743) Makes most other power pop sound like power poop! This am very awesome!

Amanda Woodward "La Decadence de la Decadence" (level-plane) French desperation hardcore music that sounds like it must feel to be beaten to unconsciousness by a band of hooligans hitting you with stale baguettes.

Amplified Heart "In For Sin" (arcflight 1403 Grande St. Austin, TX 78701) Nasty, gigantic blues punk that is so vital and anxious and NOW that it makes this dusty music seem new. This power trio would make Cream curdle.

Amps II Eleven (Smog Veil, smogveil.com) Genuine rock that isn't garage or Metal or Stoner or retro, yet has the juice to invoke the MCS, Motorhead and UFO. Actually, what they most remind me of is Grand Funk trying to pretend they are badass and coming off as joyfully funny instead of unpleasantly threatening. This rock explodes and smokes and inhales.

An Albatross "Eat Lightning, Shit Thunder" (Bloodlink) This is so intense it made me orgasm backwards (previous ejaculations somehow reentered my urethra). This is the music of 10,000 geniuses each doing something different, and doing it really fast, played back backwards. This tastes like albatross.

Aluminum Knot Eye "Trunk Lunker" (Trick Knee POB 12714 Green Bay, WI 54307-2714) Ridiculous music that sounds like Eugene Chadbourne leading a 70s Cleveland prog punk band. When Wisconsin musicians combine cheese, hard rock and butter burgers this is what you get - wicked, nasty, strangeness that makes your heart unhealthy but your soul elevated.

An Angle "...And Take It With A Grain of Salt" (Drive Thru) The second best "An" band of the issue. Painfully honest and naked singer-songwriter stuff.

The Answer Lies/Ten Seconds to Liftoff split 7" (Dirt Culture POB 4513 Las Cruces NM 88003) Both bands here actually rock the fuck out of their 7 inches of black vinyl. Ten Seconds opens their side with a tune graciously inviting the listener to flip the record over and enjoy their labelmates, but that's ironic, as they were the slightly more enjoyable band. Answer Lies' 77 punk awesomeness lost a close fight to Ten Seconds' pummeling trash rock.

ANTISEEN "The 20 Year Anniversary Show" DVD (TKO) The greatest scum rocking, wrasslin' worshipping, blood spurting band of all time celebrated two decades of mayhem with a massive hometown concert that featured numerous ex-members joining the current lineup to accurately play songs they originally played on. I can't imagine surviving the actual concert, because this ridiculously well shot (there must have been a dozen cameras, or at least it feels like it) DVD wore me the fuck out. If you like gruffly sung songs about headlocks, whores, drugs and mental illness you will dig this. And if you don't dig that stuff you are a mentally ill person in need of wrestling, whores and drugs.

Antler (Tortuga POB 291430 LA, CA 90029) Cant-ler

The Apostasy Sessions "Famous Monsters" (Enzo Sonic Records) Should be called the Awesomepostasy Sessions!

Arch Visceral Parlor "Wilis" (no label) Dreamy, in a fever dream way. Whachu singing about, Wilis?

The Arsons "Bridges Down" (Mad At The World POB 20227 Tompkins Square Station NYC 10009) Should be called the Arseholes. Because nice people don't make me listen to music that sounds like this.

Askeleton "Angry Album - or- Psychic Songs" (Goodnight Records) Called Askeleton because this weird pop music is so good you will want to "bone" it!

Ass-End Offend "character assassins" (Wantage POB 8681 Missoula MT 59807) This sounds like a train hitting a plane hitting a bus hitting an elephant! Best "ass" record of the year!

Astropop 3 "allies and stepping stones" (Planting Seeds pob 64665 Virginia Beach 23467) Here's the astropoop on these astropoppers...I LOVE 'em!

Asunder "a clarion call" (Life Is Abuse POB 20524 Oakland CA 94620) Bleak, barren, sludgy, mammoth dirge-epics that make you feel like the world is a massive pit. In other words, the feel good hit of the season!

The Atlantic Manor "Special Is Dead" (atlanticmanor@yahoo.com) Neil Young + Jandek = Youngdek.

Audio Fiction "songs in the key of ORANGE ALERT" (audiofictionband.com) Audio torture.

Authority Zero "Andiamo" (Lava) As a certified record reviewer I have the authority to give this record a zero.

Autumndivers (onlinerock) Awfuldivers.

The Autumns (Pseudopod, theautumns.com) Autumnal.

Babyhead compilation (S-S- Records) I know every issue I say some records is the best compilation ever, but this actually is the best compilation ever. A mix of Free Jazz, nasty punk, free punk, nasty Jazz and evil genius, this features Country Teasers, Blutt, Crash Normal, Blowtops, A Frames and other stellar worldwide sound destroyers. And babyheads are cool.

Baby Woodrose "Dropout!" (Bad Afro Sandbjerggade 11, st. th.,m, DK-2200 Copenhagen N, Denmark) My wood rose when I heard this! All your favorite 60s and early 70s psyche band punk covers made psyche-ier as only the Danes can do.

Bakelite (Sound Document) Primitive futurism that was apparently recorded using a 1979 electronic football game as an instrument (and maybe one of those 1975 electric football fields as a rhythm section). Though their name might imply that they are playing an EasyBake Oven, I really can't hear that.

Bambix "What's in a frame" (Daemon POB 1207 Decatur, GA 30031) A British punk band that, much like the original wave of British punk bands, is really just making their own intense version of radio pop. Willia van Houdt has a great voice, as raw as Joan Jett's but with more melodic expressiveness. This is an easy to dig record.

The Bamboo Kids (Get Hip) Trashy, spare rock 'n' roll that made me shake my bam-booty.

Bangalore "Wanderlust" (Vivacious 24 Pettee Newton MA 02464) Bangin'! Funky jams for funky jammers.

The Banned "Little Girl" (Cherry Red Records, Unit 17 Elysium Gate West, 126-128 New Kings Road, London, SW6 4LZ) Least essential late 70s pop punk reissue ever, as this act (and related bands featured here) were apparently dull, silly cover bands that were likely fun to see at a pub but recorded nothing that was interesting.

Baraka and Black Magic in Morocco by Rick Smith (Alternative Comics) This travelogue comic book has the author and his wife enjoying a relatively uneventful trip to Morocco where they get high, buy souvenirs and negotiate with local merchants/guides/characters. While not exactly an Indiana Jones adventure, Smith's work flows well visually, and the low key nature of most of the book actually gives a better feel for foreign travel than a more hyperbolic, dramatic telling would.

Barbary Coasters "the libertine philosophy of the..." (Hillsdale 4200 Park Blvd. #158 Oakland, CA 94602) I like this record because it's the best record I heard this decade so far. It's just silly, fun, sexy, and danceable. It encouraged me to twist, wear a bikini and surf. If you can't have fun listening to this record your fun is broke.

Stiv Bators "Disconnected" (Bomp) This is twenty-fifth anniversary reissue of an album that in some ways held the remarkably bold goal of making a hit rock n roll album with the punkest singer of all time, without making said singer change in any way. And it totally works. In a voice that sounds like there may be a gallon of vomit half-way down his throat anxious to make it out, Bators sings sweet ballads and gooey pop. And while it's a little reminiscent of Joey Ramone's sensitive song singing, Joey's affected voice made a more sensible transition to the material, and with Stiv's vox things are much more bold and promising (and challenging). The cover of "I Had Too Much to Dream Last Night" is one of the more memorable tracks as the arrangement looks back to the 60s instead of the way many other tracks unwittingly were looking forward to bad 80s radio pop. Bonuses on this CD include an alternate take of "Evil Boy" with lush, layered vocals, a live track, an instrumental and a Minstrel show comedy bit. Overall the original album as it is presented here is an impressive artifact of a bold experiment that worked on tape but didn't make Stiv the superstar he should have been. But it stands a testament to the late Stiv and the recently late Greg Shaw that they tried.

Bats & Mice "A Person Carrying a Handmade Paper Bag is Considered As a Royal Person." (Lovitt Records, PO Box 100248, Arlington, VT, 22210) The best rodent band since Shirley, Squirrely and Melvin.

Bedlam "Anthology" (majesticrock.com) Due to a member's death and the band's dissolution long before the 80s' ugly head crowned, this British band never became Spinal Tap. But hearing their power metal version of the "1812 Overture," their super funky track "Funky Woman" ("I was walking down the street just trying to mind my business/When a certain holy woman came up and showed some interest"), the relentless drum solos and the unfocused, hilarious interview with a New York DJ, you can tell they were on their way to Tapitude. This is a really fun package, with a disc of mostly 60s studio songs you've never heard and a live radio concert from 1974, bringing to life rock clichés that were old and funny even back then.

Bekay "The Future of Hip Hop Is Now" (TSOB) Tastes better than a BK double. A white rapper that semi-apologizes/defends himself for sounding like Eminem on the opening track. This is OK, but even with the late ODB guest rapping, it is just OK.

Madeline Bell "Bell's A Poppin' (RPM) Bell, an American who moved to Swingin' London on the 60s and became a top session singer, originally released this album in 1967. Bell's voice is soulful and emotional, and the productions here are pretty lush and amazing, but I would have loved to hear her on actual Soul records instead of British pop (not that she wouldn't have went the smooth Dionne/Jerry Butler route in the U.S.; she has an awesome Butler cover here). The only flat track here is a fake Soul song called "Soul Time." The best tune here is her cover of the American sweet soul record, lushed up for London, "I'm Gonna Make You Love Me." Bell's voice has a lot of texture, personality and style, and if you don't know her, this is a good chance to get familiar.

The Bellrays "The Red, White and Black" (Vital Gesture/Alternative Tentacles) Lisa's voice has become richer and more expressive and this soulful rock n roll unit delivers a truly solid collection of 60s-style power rock that calls for a revolution, and pretty damn near delivers one.

Tony Benn "Tony Benn's Greatest Hits" (CBM International, www.cbm-international.co.uk) Benn is a British politician who is so respected by the funky Left that this album has his best (mostly anti-war) speeches set to ambient dance grooves. As good as the Malcolm X rap record from the 80s.

Best of Seven "Everything is new again" (Hellkat) A 4 at best.

betty goes a go-go "jetagelove" (Molten Universe) Simple garage-y rock is hard to get wrong. But apparently it's not impossible.

Jello Biafra with the Melvins "Never Breath What You Can't See" (alternativetentacles.com) C'mon, you have to give it up for this. Heavy sludge rock with super drumming supplemented by Ethel Merman vocals. Basically, it is exactly what a Jello/Melvin record is supposed to sound like.

Big Bertha "Live in Hamburg 1970" (majesticrock.com) This is as prime an injection of classic power trio as you will ever hear. The singing is a little too Jim Morrison-y, when this would be a more impressive set of powerful instrumentals (and as if I need to be more insulting to the singer, this record would be better by far without his long boring introductions to each song). Hearing the ZSmbies' "She's Not There" played in 1970 Metal excess mode is awesome and like the Bedlam double CD (also recently issued, the bands shared mutual members) there is a nod to the classics, as they do a power metal version of "Rhapsody in Blue."

Big Buildings "Hang Together for All Time" (Stars/No Stars) Sounds more like Big Barn. Pseudo twangs and great guitar sounds make Uncle Tupelo seem like your fancy Aunt.

Big Business (Wantage USA) The business end of RAWK! This record made me want to sit on a bass amp and enjoy the vibes (if you know what I mean).

Big D and the Kids Table "How It Goes" (Springman POB 2043 Cupertino, CA 95015) Ska-rific!

Bikini Atoll "Moratoria" (Allegro) Didn't like this at all.

Bilge Pump "Let Me Breathe" (gringo records) Bilge-arific! If strange post-hardcore gets you pumped than you will pump to this.

Black Cat Music "October November" (Lookout Records, www.lookoutrecords.com) My CD player feels lucky this black cat crossed its path! Meow!

Black Eyes "Cough" (Dischord Records, 3819 Beecher Street NW, Washington, DC, 20007) A musical headache that made me throw away the aspirin and indulge in the pulsing pressure.

Blackfield (Snapper) Borefield.

Blacklight Chameleons "A Field Guide to Blacklight Chameleons" (Tripwave Records) I was not a fan of the 80s revival of 60s garage via Midnight and Voxx records, with their joyless dress up bands that didn't get the spirit or the sound. If you dug it, though, this is a thorough reissue.

the blackouts "living in blue" (lucid 665 timber hill rd, Deerfield, IL 60015) They are called the blackouts because this cliché-free, dark garage band out blacks their less-dark garage contemporaries.

Bleeding Through "This is Live, This is Murderous" (Kung Fu Records, PO Box 38009, Hollywood, CA, 90038) This is one of the best DVDs in this series because the editing, lighting and camerawork really adjust to reflect the intensity of the horror-thrash the band is playing. This is shot so well I'm sure this video is actually better than the live show.

Blinding Edge "Fulcrum" (bob@blindingedgeband.com) Can't see it.

Blood for Blood "Serenity" (Thorp Records) This band beats the shit out of you with rock

Bloodshot Bill "Rockabilly Trash" (bloodshotbill.com) Rockabilly one man band walking bassline nutty silly Halloween music that sounds better than any English rockabilly record ever made.

blueprint car crash "rhetoric of a marionette" (The Militia Group) Pretty yet chaotic, thus, pretty chaotic.

Blue Suede News magazine (bluesuedenews.com) This newly-slick zine made me silly for Rockabilly!

The Bobbleheads "Automatic Fun" (POB 314440 SF, CA 94131) Bobble-licious!

Maya Bond "Pink Drums and Purple Lights" (Business Deal Records) Maya is a child rock prodigy who sings and screams and howls like an angel (if angels in fact sing, scream and howl).

Bonk "Western Soul" (racingjunior.com) A sexy rock explosion of fuckededness.

The Book of Knots "s/t" (Arclight Records) Knot bad at all. Scary Siren calls to seaman and those who love seamen, this off kilter music is disturbingly nautical.

boulevard "signal" (boulevardrock.con) Bullshitvarid.

Boxer Rebellion (Creep pmb 220, 252 East Market St. West Chester PA 19382) Made me rebel out of my box. No car was involved. Driving anthem punk that isn't Oi but still consists of nothing but fist-pumping music.

Boyracer "Happenstance" (HHBTM) Sweet melodic candy nuggets that gave me pop cavities.

BP zine (POB A1412, Sydney South, NSW, 1235 Australia) This awesome porn and wrestling zine just released its best issue, which features an encyclopedia

covering the history of wrestling comics plus lots of stuff on masks in wrestling.

Brandston "Send Us A Signal" (The Militia Group 1215 N. Red Gum Ste L Anaheim CA 92806) Emo superstars who wouldn't go over too big in Branson.

The Break-Up "She Went Black (Break-upmusic.com) Should be called The Break Outs because this band will be America's sweethearts by May 3, 2005.

Breezy Porticos "keep it crisp (Best Friends POB 48214 Denver, CO 80204) This pop CD is fucking über-breezy! I challenge you to get breezier!

The Briefs "Sex Objects" (BYO Records, PO Box 67809 Los Angeles CA 90067) The Briefs are the best underwear named band ever! Bubblegum punk perfection with a lot of awesome imperfection thrown in.

Paul Brill "new pagan love song" (Scarlet Shame Records, PO Box 20680, Park West Station, NYC, 10025) Brilliant Brill ain't.

Brother JT "Off Blue" (Birdman POB 50777, LA, CA 90050) It'll be OK, brother, don't let your sad songs get you down.

Brute Force "Extemporaneous" (Cherry Red) Brute Force is infamous for his release "The King of Fuh," which combined pretty songwriting with sub juvenile humor ("The Fuh king..."), which was inevitably pulled from release, making it the rarest record in the Beatles' Apple Records catalogue. This CD features a live 1969 concert that has Brute playing a host of remarkable, strange, funny songs, with an audience laughing along in that subdued, silly way that marks white comedy albums from the 60s. That doesn't mean Brute was making subdued, silly white comedy, he was doing something strange and special and the creativity and seeming improvisation on these tracks makes that clear. He was too clever and intentional to be an outsider artist, but there is something genuinely odd going on here. This CD also contains reissues of the Apple tracks (the "B" side to "Fuh" actually rocked) and a reprint of a handwritten letter from George Harrison (who wrote like a girl, or had a girl write it). Brutal!

Bugs Eat Books "ghosts of leaves" (HHBTM) These bugs must have been eating books about how to make awesome songs!

Built Like Alaska "Autumnland" (Future Farmer) I'd have to be baked like Alaska to enjoy this.

Burden Brothers (live, Schuba's, Chicago) The Burden Brothers' performance at Schuba's dripped with such stereotypical hard rock tomfoolery that their set seemed more suited for an arena than the small pub they played. By the end of the first song, the front man had unbuttoned his shirt. By the end of the second song, the shirt was off completely, revealing the state of Texas tattooed on his stomach. By the end of the third, the roadie was crouched down, weaving around the stage, handing opened beers to the band members who, during the drummer's solo, sprayed their drinks on the audience. At one point in his mediocre solo, the drummer threw his sticks into the crowd and continued by batting the drums with his hands - a distinct move that I concede was quite amusing. When the roadie handed him a new set of sticks, I thought to myself 'that was great, here comes the next song.' But no, the solo continued. While this jaunt didn't fly with me, the audience was absorbed. And they remained absorbed enough after the twelve song set to cheer for an encore - which, to me seemed to drag on interminably. Despite the stage antics, the Burden Brothers were instrumentally sharp, with congruent guitar licks, tight transitions and harmonious back-up singing. While the set felt overzealous to me, the rest of the audience went home truly satisfied. As the crowd trickled out of the neighborhood bar they seemed to be buzzing with the euphoria of a stadium crowd basking in the privilege of having witnessed something epic. And I was left wondering what was wrong with me.

Gary Burger/Jim Miller split single (Nodak) I know what you're asking: Is that Burger, the lead singer of the iconic, brilliant 60s garage band the monks, and is that Miller, one of the worst Bears starting quarterbacks in recent memory? Well, the answers are yes and no (though this Miller likely

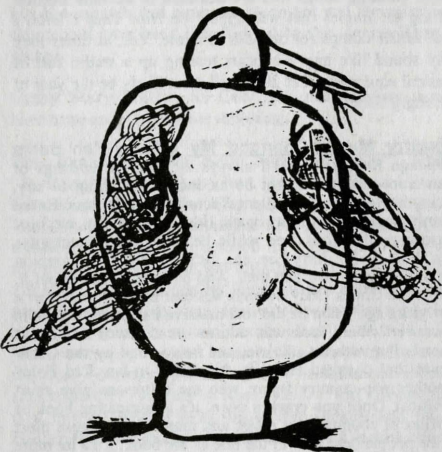
would have been a pretty bad starting quarterback, as I'm pretty sure he never played pro ball). Burger's singing on his Reggae influenced ode to nature and screed against water pollution is as expressive as you'd expect. Miller, a Bluesman from up in Gary's neck of Northern Minnesota, continues the aquatic theme by singing an upbeat number about river travel in an impressive gruff and rocking voice.

Burmese "Men" (Load) This was so scary it made me shit on myself. And then it was so good I didn't get up and clean myself because I didn't want to miss anything. I always forget about the "pause" button.

Burning Image "1983-1987" (Alternative Tentacles) This is a reissue/original release of an album's worth of material by a spooky, Goth punk band from California (think T.S.O.L.'s "Dance with Me" LP, but these guys weren't joking). Certainly this is scary and creepy and good enough to hear, and to be able to experience a band you've likely never heard before doing this genre of music before it got "industrialized" is a treat.

Brandon L. Butler "Killer on the Road" (Gern Blandsten POB 356 River Edge, NJ 07661) This butler serves up sensitivity.

Caliban "The Opposite From Within" (Abacus 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd. Hawthorne CA 90250) Calibad.



Call Me Lightning "The Trouble We're In" (Revelation) Call me impressed!

Cab Calloway "Swing Era" DVD, **Nat "King" Cole** "Swing Era" DVD, **Duke Ellington** "Swing Era" DVD, **Dizzy Gillespie** "Swing Era" DVD, **Louis Jordan** "Swing Era" DVD, **Stan Kenton** "Swing Era" DVD, **Peggy Lee** "Swing Era" DVD, **Sarah Vaughn** "Swing Era" DVD, **Dinah Washington** "Swing Era" DVD (idem/MVD) These DVDs collect musical performances by superstars mostly from Soundies, Snader Telescriptions and short musical films, the music videos of the pre-rock era. There were literally thousands and thousands of these musical shorts shot, though the bulk of them didn't feature superstars, but rather b-list acts, sexy ladies or novelty acts (the Peggy Lee and Sarah Vaughn DVDs also feature footage of all girl big bands the International Sweethearts of Rhythm and the Melodears, who were documented because of their novelty appeal, though they are more appreciated musically now). Seeing all these performances compiled is fantastic, though I'm disappointed with some of the omissions of the movie excerpts. Most of the Louis Jordan numbers are taken from his movies, which is awesome, but the most disappointing DVD is the Dizzy Gillespie because it is all from one source, a concert film from 1947, but they cut out the titles and emcee portions of the film, ruining the context, as if contemporary viewers couldn't appreciate this if we saw the other six minutes of the movie.

Joey Cape/Tony Sly "Acoustic" split CD (Fat) Lagwagon and No Use for a Name songs done acoustic. If you actually know songs be these bands this may be of interest to you - perhaps of great interest.

The Capstan Shafts "her chapbook called 'tiny grey radio'" (Ladder the Christmas Monkey records) Absolutely lovely quiet pop songs...these are shafts you'd be glad to get!

Carbon 14 magazine (www.c14.com) Elevates drinking, sleaze and porn to fine artforms and lowers fine art to drunk, sleazy porn-form!

Cari Clara "miniature amaerican model society" (Tiberius Records 4280 Catalpa Dr. Independence KY 41051) The best outer space music since the "Riddick" soundtrack.

The Carnival (Rev-Ola) This is a reissue of 1969 material by a pseudo-Brazilian band from L.A. featuring ex-Sergio Mendes band members. This combines some of the best sounds and elements of Brazilian pop with some of the slickest L.A. studio musicians and some of the most dated, hokey trends of the late 60s (this starts sounding like a cast recording of *Hair* with better percussion every other minute). The English tracks that forego Brazilian percussion are pretty dull, but the stuff that is schizo is pretty interesting.

Casaverde "Looking God In The Eye" (Radioactive Bodega 687 Park Place Brooklyn NY 11216) *Awesome* tambourine playing!

Cashiers du Cinemart zine (\$5, POB 2401 Riverview MI 48192) I love Mike White's film zine, not only for the good coverage of obscure cinema but also because he makes enemies and acknowledges it constantly. But in the world of zinedom and silly video trading there's no way it will ever bite you in the ass that you burned bridges, is there? Aha! This issue reveals a dramatic tale of White getting booted from a film geek reality show because of his longtime feud with the dude from *Film Threat*. There's also (too short) interviews with the star and director of White's favorite film, *Black Shampoo* (a movie many would dismiss as a mediocre middle-of-the-pack Blaxploitation flick, but White's loyalty to that flick is part of this mighty mag's charm).

Casper and the Cookies "OH!" (Happy Happy Birthday to Me Records) Forget Oreos eat Casper & the Cookies!

Cast Aside "The Struggle" (Deathwish, deathwishinc.com) Dudes, calm down, it's gonna be OK.

Caustic Soul "An Absence of Warmth" (Gestalt 3650 Osage St. Denver, CO 80211) Chilling.

Chainsaw "We Are Not Very Nice" (Dionysus/Bacchus Archives) This reissues a single and issues for the first time in America a whole bunch of other tracks from this 1977 L.A. punk band. Not exactly a lost treasure, this features a lot of attitude and personality but on the tracks from the single there is not much energy in the playing and the recording techniques seemed to deaden the sound more. This is still great because it sounds like what punk was supposed to sound like according to T.V. news reporters, nasty and scummy and full of piss, but also totally easy to understand so old folks could follow the words and be shocked. There's a little more pop to the live recordings but still a muted murkiness and it is obvious that they were really "punk" in the sense of not being too good at instrument playing. But I'm a big believer in the value of archiving history and these obscurities are definitely worth hearing.

The Channel (C-Side) If you love the Flaming Lips then change the channel to the Channel as they channel whatever that other band does.

!!! (chk chk chk) "Louden Up Now" (Touch and Go Records, PO Box 25510, Chicago, IL, 60625) This will make you dance revolutionarily! This deserves six exclamation marks! Sometimes this sounds like Jamaican gangster dub and sometimes like ABC.

Lou Christie "Original Sinner" (RPM) Not as much of a revelation as last year's Christie/Tammys CD that compiled Lou's weirder earlier work (not because the material here isn't weird or awesome, but because we've heard these hits before), this is still a fascinating document partly because it is the tale of two men. There is the ruggedly handsome, sexy scar bearing, falsetto singing, poodle yelp appreciating pop star Lou Christie. Then there is his historian Harry Young, a *Roctober* contributor, who compiled this CD. Young has done numerous Christie comps, many containing similar material to this (this CD covers the "Lightning Strikes" years) but never has he had the chance to do them for as

indulgent a label as RPM. This English label features massive fold out CD booklet/posters with copious amounts of photos and long, exhaustive liner notes. Given the room to gush Young is able to express his passion for Christie, and in addition to the excellent sequencing, song choices and rarities that convince the listener that Christie is actually a fascinating, progressive artist, we also get to experience Young's excitement for his hero, which lets us know Christie is someone worth getting worked up about.

Wanda Chrome & The Leather Pharaohs "More" (Cargo Records, www.cargo-records.de) This rocks so hard it made me strain my rock bone. I think I saw this band play at least 15 years ago and they are 15 years better.

Chrome Pistola "Belly of the Beast (Mindless) Rap-tastic!"

Chronicles of the Junior M.A.F.I.A. DVD (ground-zero) Wow. Basically this is Lil' Cease and his crew giving their side of the Biggie/Puffy/Tupac/Lil' Kim/Junior M.A.F.I.A sagas, but all told through hazes of weed clouds, semi-audible mumbblings and ridiculously clever framing devices (lots of fake headlines declare the groundbreaking goings on of the Juniors). I liked this despite not being able to follow everything, and my favorite part was the actual footage of some tour shenanigans made possible by bands always having handycams with them in the 90s.

The Cinch "shake it if you got it" (ZZZ) Cinch-sational!

Clambake "Gator in the Pool" (gringo records) A glorious "Link Wray on 70s drugs" garage mess that reminds me of the Beasts of Bourbon and of a girl that gave me crabs.

Clann Zu "Black Coats and Bandages" (G7 Welcoming Committee POB 27006, C-360 Main St. Winnipeg, MB, R3C 4T3 Canada) This record made me feel sad and dreary in a very satisfying way.

Classical Ass "After Lunch We Kill Tony" (Diaphragm POB 10388 Columbus OH 43201) Best band name this issue. Music as smelly and nasty as the name.

The Claudia Malibu "Star" (claudiamalibusic.com) Better than the Beach Boys.

Clouseaux "Lagoon!" (Dionysus POB 1975 Burbank CA 91507) Exotica music that is so erotic I just went and had sex with my bamboo furniture (the splinters were worth it).

Clyde Federal "Sensitive Skin" (Contraphonic) Should be called Clyde FERAL because these guys make me want to howl like a wolf. AwOOOOO!

Cocopiazo comix (Slave Labor) This stylish fantasy comic combines Rat Pack cool with On the Road literary romanticism (that is, romanticizing being a writer, rather than writing romantic stuff). Daniel Warner's character John Victory is the sexiest writer/scam artist in the universe and royalty, deities and even Death obsess over him. This is a promising start to a new series.

The Code "Rhetoric of Reason" (Jumpstart Records, PO Box 10296, State College, PA, 16805) Anthems of punk revolution that combine Oi, street punk, power pop and ska to make things get revolting!

Coldhandsdeadheart, How To be A Freedom Fighter, 10 Voice of Land Factoids (MikeTwohig.artconspiracy.com) Mike Twohig is an artist who draws expressive, strained figures with a magnificently invocative linework. This makes the political content of his illustrations and comix very moving and convincing and important-seeming.

The Color Guard "Dark Pop" (thecolorguard.com, Suziblade 47-26 39th Pl 2nd Fl. Sunnyside NY 11104) Pleasantly creepy pop that has got a little bit of funky in it.

Color Wall "the view from above" (Lazy Susan Records) Brings to mind a wall the color of that sawdust the elementary school janitor throws on vomit.

Comets on Fire "Blue Cathedral" (Sub Pop POB 20367 Seattle WA 98102) On fire is an understatement - - - these guys are HOT! Contains the best bagpipe solo on an indie record all year.

Communiqué "Poison Arrows" (Lookout Records) Here's a lesson for bands: this record is really good because all the songs are really good and the singer is talented and the production is super-impressive. So all you other bands, just make good songs, have talent and record it good.

Complicated Shirt "Strigine" (www.complicatedshirt.com) The angriest garment in the closet. They are pissed off at Ted Nugent, drug abusers and Pictionary! That's pissed off!

Concubine Forming "The Guilt Will Kill" (Big Neck Records, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA, 20195) The Billy Squires of ugly rock!

conshafter "fear the underdog" (Dork Epiphany Recordings, 13602 Pebble Creek Court, Midlothian, VA, 23112) Get the shaft! Bubbly youthfulness!

Corporate MF "The Royal We" (Omega Point Records, 3921 N. Claremont, 2F Chicago, IL, 60618) Corporate rock still sucks but Corporate MF electronica just started sucking!

Couchwhips "Peanut Butter and Jelly Live at the Ginger Minge" (Narnack 281 Broadway 4th fl. #3 NYC 10013) Led by either Pink or Brown from Pink and Brown, the Couchwhips take the radical intensity of the Providence damaged rock scene and somehow maintain the damage while creating songs that are destined to become million selling hit singles that will appear on *Now That's What I Call Music* comps for decades to come. Yes, at times they may sound like angry bobcats tearing up a studio full of musical equipment, but 2005 will most likely be the year of the angry bobcat.

Country Music Changed My Life by Ken Burke (Chicago Review Press) I always did like the writings of Ken Burke (which might be an incestuous thing to say, seeing as how he's a frequent *Roctober* contributor). Burke mainly writes about roots music (blues, rockabilly, etc.) for various publications, and while he's into the correct guys like Hank, Lefty, Jerry Lee, etc., he's not afraid to champion the unhyp every now and then. And he's not a snob about it, like when Chuck Eddy defends 80s hair metal. Remember a few years ago when he did that massive Pat Boone article in *Roctober*? Well, look who adorns the cover of this book! There's Pat with his ukulele, and he's joined by the C&W figure that changed HIS life, his father-in-law Red Foley (another pop-country figure who the historians give short shrift to). Once you crack it open, it's a fascinating book of profiles of country stars major and minor, but because most of the people here answer the title of the book, it's a lot more personal than most tomes of this vein. Radio DJ Dr. Demento tells about being the token hippie at a Bob Wills show in L.A. (in '65!). Deke Dickerson lets us know that a couple of his country idols (Rose Maddox and Hank Thompson) were total hardasses to work for. Johnny Legend gets off some great stories about living up the street from a former Son of the Pioneers. And the actual country stars get their say, too: Wanda Jackson, Big Al Downing, Bobby Bare, Little Jimmy Dickens, Kitty Wells, and her husband Johnny Wright (who is actually quoted here, in passing, using the term "darkie" for "African-American"). There's a great section about former pop-rock stars who pursued country careers eventually, like Joe Stampley, Jerry Lee Lewis, and ex-Raider Freddy Weller (who contends that he was one of the first longhaired singers to make it in country, six months or so before Waylon Jennings stopped going to the barbershop). The icing on the cake is the author's own touching tale of how the music changed his teenage life in Detroit in the 70s, to the astonishment of his friends, girlfriends, and even his own father (who grew up on the C&W sound himself). One of the better books out on the market right now.

Coyote "Insides" (Birdman) Howls with damaged soulfulness.

Coyote Shivers "Gives It to Ya Twice" (Foodchain Records, 6525 Sunset Blvd., 4th Floor, Hollywood, CA, 90028) One CD of full-on rock complemented with one CD of acoustic tunes. And they both are fucking terrible.

Hal Cragin "Wet Grassy Ground" (Catvalley) Bass-alicious! Jazzy pop compositions that will leave you beginn for more Cragin!

The Cramps "How To Make a Monster" (Vengeance, www.vengeancerecords.com) What is your name? (Your name here) What is your quest? To search for The Holy Grail? Look no further, pards, it's ret'chere. Rare Cramps recordings have always been coveted among collectors, but a comprehensive collection of unbelievably scarce live and

studio gems like these has never been available legitimately...until NOW. And, if you realize that everything you have ever experienced in your entire life has brought you to this very point, the very nowness of being, you'll know exactly what to do upon hearing this crampified crampylnitrate crampule: GO FUCKIN' HOG-MAD APESHIT!!! You may think you've seen it all, heard it all, but there are more psychotic psounds from below the gutter than are dreamed of in your philosophy, baby. It's been known for some time that Lux and Ivy have "Baby pictures" (rare recordings) that even the most insidious of bootleggers never got their meathooks on. It was also reported, some years back, that a compilation of corrosive coolities from the crypt was in the works. Well, being a fan for going on 25 years now, I've learned to not set my watch by Cramps release dates. The five-year gap between "Psychedelic Jungle" and "A Date With Elvis" was a nasty cold turkey, indeed, only eclipsed by the 6-year withdrawal between the last two studio releases. The band wasn't to blame, though. Unsympathetic record labels, which have necessitated the reinstatement of The Cramps' own label, can pat themselves on the back (with a mace) for previous delays, and monies owed the band being held in a Swiss (FULL OF HOLES!) bank account. Much like sex, though, if it's worth having, it's worth waiting for, even if you don't want much, just a teenie weenie bit, just an itty-bitty bit...well, gore-mands, this is the big-ass poo-poo platter to make your bladder splatter, your liver quiver, your knees freeze and your big toe shoot up in your boot! Among the many weird and wonderful delights that await you are the very first practice tapes ever made by The Cramps in The Summer of Hate, 1976 (featuring Bryan Gregory's sister, Pam Balam, on drums), opening with, you guessed it (well, some of you did, anyway), "Quick Joey Small," the Bubblegum Punk masterpiece that's often been referred to as the first song The Cramps ever (lovingly) took a mallet to. Until now, I had no concrete evidence of this, but I was wishin' and hopin' and prayin' and layin' eggs, hoping it would, one day, prove to be true. For a band that was still teaching themselves how to play, the embryonic Cramps handle the Kasenetz-Katz Klassic with remarkable confidence and teenage rage, like they knew, someday, they'd be big stars (and, in our fucked-up world, of course, they are). Incidentally, Lux does both the male and female voices, here, though not doing the girly parts in a high voice, but doing the whole thing with plenty of the Punk bravado that's still his stock in trade today. "Lux's Blues" features the song's namesake, for the first and only time, on guitar. It sounds like the original Red Krayola making a Blues record with a drunk, electrified, Lightnin' Hopkins at International Artists (we're told the mk 1 Cramps played-along with Red Krayola's Psych classic, "Hurricane Fighter Plane," which has been previously bootied, but doesn't turn up, here...their own all-out assaults on Peanuts Wilson's "Cast-Iron Arm," The Ramones' "Beat on The Brat" (!) and Roky Erickson's "Two-Headed Dog" (!!!), but who knows if these, or the reported (but not confirmed) 13th Floor Elevators covers from that period have survived on tape). "Sunglasses After Dark" has plenty of Link Wrawness from Ivy, but the feedback-slash-fuzztone of a still-hesitant Bryan Gregory has yet to rise to the top like so much green slime (a situation remedied by a much heavier version, also included here). No matter, Lux's Question Mark meets Joey Ramone vocal cool make this an early classic, comparable to some of the '74-early '75 Ramones recordings, in which Joey was still finding his style, with remarkable results. Lux also puts in a great, mumbly Rockabilly vocal on "T.V. Set" (for which, we're told, he'd just written the lyrics, and they've changed very little in 28 years), and you can hear the band finding their sound very quickly, Pam Balam proving a pretty steady Rockabilly/Instrumental Rock-styled drummer for someone who'd never played before (and, I guess, never would again), but, Miriam Linna (Also a novice at the time, but with plenty of wherewithal and an unabiding love for coffee) was more than ready to take it to the next phase, making an already fully-formed band sound that much fuller on "I Was a Teenage Werewolf" and a remarkably faithful "I Can't Hardly Stand It" (I'm sure Charlie Feathers, "Up yonder," would say, "That sumbitch has got FILLIN'!"). The Miriam-era Cramps can also be heard, here, in the third Cramps gig EVER, in January '77, at Max's Kansas City. The audience becomes as much a part of the proceedings, some are ravenous fans, others, clueless cretins whose hecklings make about as much sense as Spike Lee's vision of '77 NYC Punks as 80s styled Brit Hardcore types ala The Exploited/GBH, (when many people in the CBGB and Max's crowds still had long hair, even beards...well, not the women. Too much). Here's a sampling: "I LIKE YA HAT!"

"WHY DON'T YOU LET HIM WEAR YOUR HAT?," "THAT DRUMMER IS DYNAMITE...IF SHE ONLY KNEW HOW TO PLAY!," "SOUTH BRONX!," "BLUE CHEER!," (So, put, together, is that like Bronx Cheer?), "GET A JOB!" (yeah, whatever, wonder what corner of the Bowery HE's working?!), and, when introducing "Strychnine," Lux asks the audience to guess which lethal liqueur The Cramps hold the sole patent to, he's barraged with answers, all wrong - "PAINT FLUID!," "CARBONA!," "EX-LAX," "GIVES YOU THE RUNS, SON!," "LOVE POTION #9!," "DRINKING THE TOPS OF PAINT CANS!," and so on, but it doesn't stop there. You can actually hear a dope deal transpire between tunes (well, one joint, not much of a dope deal, but further proof that Punk didn't wipe out all the old standbys from the Hippie days). It is, in all, a telling performance from a band that obviously didn't give a shit if the already-jaded hipsters understood them or not (my Sister-in-Law told me it was no big Studio 54 scene trying to get into the main music room at Max's, but, even Patti Smith used to be denied entrance just a couple of years earlier), they were gonna make it on their own, with their big, bad, beautiful selves. How many other CBGBs/Max's-era band will be celebrating 30 years without a breakup by the time (let's hope) our first ex-Garage Band Prez is midway through his first term, though. The Cramps will be the first to tell you, politics have no place in Rock n' Roll. It's ruff n' raw, but it goes down so smooth. The classic Cramps lineup appear, live at CBGB's (it boggles the mind to think their bathrooms were once a hotbed of sexual activity, but for those who witnessed this show, what else could it be?) exactly one year later (barring a single day) in 1978. By that time, The Cramps are a solid headliner, though earlier engagements supporting The Ramones and The Dead Boys helped them acquire a following that'd embrace their sound for being the rot in the Big Apple, an E.C. comic come to life, with or without Bryan Gregory's obvious resemblance to The Crypt-Keeper. But the real Horror came from within, moreso than the Monster Movies they obviously loved. "Well, I'll show you who are The Frankensins, The Frankensteins are us all!" -The New York Dolls. The mad lab sounds of Gregory's fractured fretwork have, by now, proven the perfect foil to Ivy's vastly improved Rockabilly stylings, and Nick Knox, who'd go on to be the longest standing drummer in the band (Harry Drummini came close to beating this record, but, was recently sacked. Reportedly, Bill Bateman, of The Blasters and The Flesheaters, is drumming with the band for the time being. I hope so, anyway!) had come a long way from The Electric Eels (a great band, to be sure, but Knox was nowhere near the prowess he'd later attain. "Nick was no metronome, OK?" -Brian McMahon). Anyway, this is a great performance that WAS briefly available legally as an extremely limited edition giveaway at a special gig the band did for CBGB's 20th anniversary in 1993 (I'm the son of a bitch that owns one of 'em). There's some real rarities, here, like a live version of "Uranium Rock," "I Can't Hardly Stand It," and "Baby Blue Rock," an hilarious early draft of "Twist and Shout"/"Drug Train," plus, most of your early Cramps faves in, arguably, their definitive live versions. Other blasts from the past, that will affect YOU in the future include (but are not limited to): "Sweet Woman Blues," a variation on Eddie Bruce's Sun Rockabilly classic that starts with a wild instrumental interlude that wouldn't be out of place on "Ventures on Peyote." The aforementioned, as well as several takes of an also-unreleased "Rumble Blues," feature Gregory's replacement, Kid Congo Powers. "Rumble Blues," natch, is an homage du fromage to Lux and Ivy's (and yours, if you have any sense) fave axe-murderer, Link Wray's signature toon, with Lux raving semi-coherently, like a cross between "The Crusher" and Howlin' Wolf. Capping this session is a radically different version of "Lonesome Town" with the addition of some lovely, tear-inducing (because it SOUNDS like tears!) slide guitar, which, seemingly, served as the template for the later live version brought out on the "Date with Elvis" tour, in memory of the recently deceased Nelson. Another demo session, cut at the insistence of one-time band manager and Roctoberfraynt, Art Fein, wielded strange, but, wondrous, fruit, indeed. "I'm Five Years Ahead Of My Time," the outstanding Psych-Punk anthem, takes on a new life in The Cramps' hands, while retaining the sounds of The Psychedelic Jungle, where they found it in the first place. A stomp n' shout workout of "Hanky Panky" relies heavily on Tommy James' hit version (which, even after thousands of listens, STILL sounds readymade for a Cramps overhaul), but it'll have you jumping around the floor, or, into your bed, like a raving lunatic, which you probably are if you've followed me this far. These sessions are noted for

their rarity, because it was the only time (that you or I know of) that a substitute drummer was used for Nick Knox. Terry Graham from the Gun Club sat in on these recordings, as Knox was being treated for a rare eye infection that later rendered him sightless in one eye, making it necessary for him to wear dark shades, which made him resemble a much handsomer, young, Roy Orbison. But whereas some people thought Roy WAS blind, Nick's own optical condition was far more severe than that of Orbison's. Radically different early workouts include "Call of The Wighat" (from the aforementioned session), "Journey To The Center of a Girl" (with a great intro that sounds like The Third Bardo doing "Sloop John B.," "Jackyard Backoff," "Everything Goes," which sounds as much like a forerunner to the band's only near-hit, "Bikini Girls With Machine Guns" as it does the song in question. All these feature the band's first steady bass player, the lovely, and, I've got to say, really super nice, Candy Del Mar. But, then, I've had the pleasure of meeting MANY of those who've served, past and present, and I don't want to burst anybody's bubble, but, they were ALL super nice, as evidenced by this very cool gift from The Cramps to their fans (and I don't mean the Bloodthirsty Fratboys who turned their last Chicago gig into Altamont on The River, they can all get fucked). "This stuff'll kill ya, it's loaded with fun!"

Crash Normal "Heavy Listening" (S-S 1114 21" St. Sacramento, CA 95814, www.s-srecords.com) I've heard of computer hard drives getting fried, but the computers and hip hop grooves and punk noise damage and Devo-tion on this record have been French-fried by this genius Franco-group!

Crazy Mary "Thirsty for Cool" (Humsting) Mary would have to be crazy to listen to this thing.

The Creation "Red with Purple Flashes" DVD, "Psychedelic Rose" (Cherry Red, Unit 17, 1st Floor, Elysium Gate West, 126-128 New King's Road, London SW6 4L7) The Creation made some of the best singles ever in their mid-60s heyday and are beloved for a reason, so their 90s re-forming was welcome and rewarding. The DVD features 1993 and 1995 concerts by the band that were both shot pretty amateurishly but are noteworthy because key personnel would leave this earthly plane in the following years, making subsequent reunions less complete. Fans will dig this. You may need to be more of a diehard to fully appreciate the "Psychedelic Rose" CD. A "lost" album, this is a mid-80s studio work by Kenny Pickett and Eddie Phillips that they intended on releasing as a Creation album. The songs are good and fun, but they are definitely 80s cheese...not terrible 80s cheese, but still tainted with the whiff of *fromage*. One song opens with a riff that sounds just like "Owner of a Lonely Heart," then morphs into a Slade-type tune, with a bit of the "Ghostbusters" hook and the line "I'm still makin' time..." The next track is a too crisp remake of "Makin' Time" that sounds like a Joan Jett cover version. I love Slade, Joan Jett covers and the "Ghostbusters" hook, so I'm not complaining, but this record definitely had its eyes on the arena, with a few stabs at nostalgia thrown in, so it's not a lost masterpiece. But if any of these songs had made it to the radio in the 80s (and they could have) you would get pumped when they got played in the supermarket or on a "rock of the 80s" show.

Crimson Sweet "Boulevard" ep (Shake It 4156 Hamilton Ave Cincinnati, OH 45223) If everyone in NYC was a s cool and rocking as Crimson Sweet I would move there and live in the subway (or sewers). This record rocks more than a bag of rocks!

Crossfade "s/t" (Columbia Records) Worst record this century so far.

The C*nts "Eat My Nuts" (Disturbing) Fucking awesome, Chicago's first punk band might as well be Chicago's last punk band. Stupid fucking songs that are funny and involve rocking.

Carolyn Currie "Kiss of Ghosts" (Etherean Music, carolyncurrie.com) Singer-songwriter music that has a bit of a wood elf vibe, mostly because of the timbre of Currie's voice, but the production is a little too elfy.

Cut Copy "Bright Like Neon Love" (Modular Recordings) The tomorrow-est record ever. 80s visions of the pop future are defrosted and cloned.

Cuts "s/t" (Birdman Records, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA, 90050) Genuinely 60s sounding psyche that doesn't seem retro at all. Direct, unpretentious, raw garage punk with pixie dust scattered on it.

"Damaged Goods -The Cheap Sampler Volume 3" (POB 45854 London E11 1YX) This British label is so good and powerful that you need this sampler just so you can be seduced by Fabienne Delsol, knocked around by the Armitage Shanks and have your wallet lifted by the Headcoatees.

The Damnwells "Bastards of the Beat" (Epic Records) Well well well, you fell in a well. Damn. Well...

Dark Tranquillity ""one thought, bringing it down" (Century Media) Aggressively tranquil and enlighteningly dark, this is audio wickedness that reveals Satan's thoughtful side.

Darlington "Euthanize Me" (Disaster POB 7112 Burbank CA 91510) If you like pop punk this is better than the band you like.

The Datsuns "Outta Sight/Outta Mind" (V2) I'm told this rocks, and I concur.

Daver "Not the New Daver CD" (Modern Relic Records, PO Box 637, Joliet, IL, 60434-0637) Dave-alicious! This is bar band magic not seen since Wizzo fronted a Kinks cover band.

Ethan Daniel Davidson "Better Living through Creative Selling" (Times Beach) Righteous political music that operates on an almost mystical level that combines roots music with the postmodern audio collage (think Beck or Beck-copying Butthole Surfers) in a way that doesn't sound like Beck or Beck-copying Butthole Surfers.

Dead Boys "Live! At CBGB 1977" (MVD) This was shot with multi cameras at the legendary dive club in the year of holy punk starring the band that, as proven here, was **b a s i c a l l y** **T H E** perfect/quintessential/stereotypical/ultimate/realest/fakest/best/worst/purest punk band ever. Just seeing Stiv be so fucking Stiv and look and sing and move like he does in such a primary source document: quite simply the video dictionary definition of punk. I can't believe I've never seen this and this exists. Rod Swenson who shot this apparently has a bunch of footage of bands that likely is all in as good a shape (as good as videotape ignored for a quarter century can be expected to be). Can't wait to see what other treasures he has hidden.

Dead Brothers "Flammend' Herz" (Voodoo Rhythm) This is so brilliant I don't know what the hell it is. Ostensibly the soundtrack to a movie about a tattoo parlor in Germany this combines gypsy music, the Godfather soundtrack, 30s Jazz, haunted house music and silent film accompaniment sounds. Genius and confounding and delightful.

The Deep Eynde "Shadowland" (Disaster) Monster horror punk that scared my dog and stabbed my cat. Then they used my pets skulls for decorations.

Deep Purple "Live in Paris 1975," "New Live & Rare" (Purple Records, Aizlewood Mill, Nursery Street, Sheffield, S3, 8GG, UK) **Smoke on the Water: The Deep Purple Story** by Dave Thompson (ECW) Deep Purple, in their heyday, was in my opinion the one band that should have been allowed to indulge in endless guitar and drum solos in concert. Their musicianship and the flavor of their "jams" was something the Phish's of this world will never capture or understand. Both of these live CDs are awesome, with the "New Live & Rare" being the lesser of the two, in part because of the insanely long "Space Trucking" jam that makes the Paris show (the band's last concert with Ritchie Blackmore before he went solo) an awesome event. The book that was recently published should help convince any skeptics, or suckers who consider the band one hit wonders on the basis of the book's title tune ("Hush" was a better song to be One Hit Wonders to, anyhow). Thompson is a solid writer and the band's story flows pretty smoothly through his interpretation. While it is certainly for fans (it includes a 60+ page discography), the many trials, tribulations, tensions and silliness in Purple's history make this pretty universal for anyone who has been in or who is interested in bands.

Del Psychos "The Fajita Monologues" (Lightning Bug 3149 W. Argyle St. #1 Chicago IL 60625-42250) Everyone wants to be the Byrds these days it seems but few actually have the right wing flap and these guys are psycho enough to jump and see if they can fly. I don't know what that meant, but this is a really good pop record with the pleasant psychhe patina of that one record you like.

Fabienne Delsol "no time for sorrows" (Damaged Goods damagedgoods.co.uk) A remarkable pop album in which Delsol's sexy French vocals are produced and processed by Toe Rag studio guru Liam Watson until they recreate the obsessive, seductive magic of Joe Meek's best work. The fact that Watson has become Meek-like is an awesome achievement and since Meek lived such a rewarding, happy life this bodes well for him and those around him.

Denim and Diamonds "Street Medics Unite!" (Bloodlink 4434 Ludlow St. Phila PA 19104) Futuristic bleep blurps that make you want to enter a Tron machine and dance with Tron.

Derringer "a rock and roll tragedy" (Zero Velocity, zerovelocityrecords.com) Sadly, Rick Derringer is apparently not involved. On a more positive note, Rick Derringer probably couldn't play wild assed hardcore music like this.

Wanda de Sah "Softly!" (Rev-Ola) de Sah has become a respected Brazilian Jazz vocalist over the decades, but this early reissue of a 1966 LP represents an interesting form of half-assism. She has a serious, seductive voice that sings in a style heard on many of the best Brazilian records (including crossover Gilberto/Getz stuff as well as legit Braz-Pop). But the arrangements here are pure Hollywood - classy Hollywood, mind you, but weepy strings and peppy percussion out of a TV commercial. When they make the music minimal, and pay lip service to Brazil, the warmth of her voice shines through, but overall this is more interesting than amazing.

Destination: Oblivion "shock therapy" (destinationoblivion.net, POB 56641 Portland OR 97238) I've never been more scared yet so compelled to dance in my life. Dark industrial gothtronica that is inspirationally dreary.

Destruction Unit "The Destruction of a Man" (Empty Records, PO Box 12301, Portland, OR, 97211) This record can cure disease by killing the subatomic bad virus molecules in your body by pounding them with pure awesome rock magic blasts. This record makes ugly beautiful.

Detonations "Static Vision" (Alive) Trash garage with super-organic sleaze and power oozing from the spare music. New ground is not broken, yet this will make you want to shake around and dance until something on you is broken. The drumming on here is perfect rock n roll pounding and the guitar keeps spitting out riffage that is so pure in its rawk that this record should be sent into outer space so that aliens can know that we don't fuck around.

Devilinside "Volume One" (Abacus) Extreme, pummeling post-Metal willing to structure songs on actual experimental noise constructions, making this ten times better from the jump than most contemporary hard rock. Devilishly awesome.

The Devil Worships Me zine (POB 3026 Chicago IL 60654) Hella good. Best zine ever.

Devo "Live In The Land of the Rising Sun" DVD (Sick/MVD) Hmmm. This is a 2003 Japanese Devo concert. On the one hand it is weird that Devo is totally acting like an oldies act despite being such twisted, perennially creative geniuses. On the other hand, a stadium full of bouncing smiling Japanese teens who only want to hear "Mongoloid," "Girl You Want," "Whip it!," and "Jocko Homo" seems reason enough to deliver what they want. The show is fun and great, and the energy, showmanship and joyfulness of Devo is intact. My trepidation is not at all about what is here - I love it! I am just torn about what isn't here. This is not a dangerous concert.

"DFA Compilation #2" (DFA) Thirty tracks of dance music so futuristic it is hard to dance to. The Rapture,

Liquid Liquid, LCD Soundsystem, and Black Dice are amongst the magic mushrooms here, and listening to this will put you inside your favorite 80s videogame with 2005 computer graphic updates.

Digital Underground "Raw Uncut" DVD (Equity) This is certainly not good - it's a mish mash of digital effects, cheap computer animation, plainly shot talking heads and live footage that is rarely identified by year, venue, or anything. But overall the band is so funny and lively and original that I still dug watching it, and getting a feel for how they came together and how they have evolved, devolved and revolved over the years. While most of the live footage is from contemporary concerts to all white frat crowds (lots of "Girls Gone Wild" titte flashing) there is some good archival concert footage as well, and some of the Tupac footage of him fucking around and having fun with D.U. back in the day is pretty vital. To quote Humpty, allow this DVD to bump thee.

Dimlaia "s/t" (Life is Abuse Records, PO Box 20524, Oakland, CA, 94620) If Godzilla was an orchestra conductor instead of a marauding monster he would lead a rock-estra in compositions similar to these, and those symphonies would level Tokyo as surely as his giant tail.

Diplomat "od trnja I zaoka" (Slusaj Najasnije) I'll be diplomatic and just say this ROCKS!



Dissent "Swap Meet Seers" (Wide Hive) Acid soul jazzexperimental music with occasional super-sexy French vocals. More than decent, Dissent is de sound!

District "Don't Mess With the Hard Punx" (I Used to Fuck People Like You in Prison Records) Youthful 70s stylepunk that's so snotty that I sent the singer a case of Clarijn.

DJ Nu-Mark "Blend Crafters volume 1" (Up Above 130 Pine Ave. suite #200 Long Beach, CA 90802) Damn, it's funky in here.

DKT/MC5-Live, Metro, Chicago, July 11, 2004, *Sonic Reunion: A Celebration of The MC5* DVD (Image Entertainment 9333 Oso Avenue, Chatsworth, California 91322 www.image-entertainment.com www.dvdinformation.com) The sound and the spirit of The MC5 is still alive and well, but couldn't they have chosen some better guest singers? Mark Arm connected with the audience pretty well (unlike when I saw Mudhoney at the same venue in 1989...only the bass player had his eyes opened, though even he wasn't looking at the audience), and he carried most of the tunes off pretty well (but let's face it, many of them were out of his range). His singing was nothing to write home about, still, he did make a conscious effort. Evan Dando, however, was a train wreck! He acted like a total spazz, and offered absolutely nothing in the vocals department, blowing his cues and forgetting lyrics, even though they had gigantic lyric sheets set up on the stage. It's hard to believe that Scott Morgan, Mick Farren, Sonny Vincent, Chris D, Jeff Dahl, Bootsey X, Handsome Dick Manitoba, The Artist Formerly Known as Nazi Dog (Steve Leckie, who did three great MC5 covers on The

Viletones' comeback CD), and about a thousand others who'd have given their left nut for the chance, weren't brought in. That out of the way, it was FANTASTIC hearing Wayne Kramer playing such a varied and tastefully chosen selection of tunes from their three great albums, and play them with a vengeance, he did. Michael Davis and Dennis Thompson kept it lean and mean and fulla caffeine. Best of all, the three wailed away on nothing more than one amplifier each (Kramer eschewing a line of Marshalls for a Fender. Nicely done), and in Thompson's case, a single (as opposed to a double) drumset, like a true Garage band. If you could have tuned out the others, the MC3 (If you will) were so close to the original sound, it was scary. Guest guitarist, Marshall Crenshaw would've also been far from my first draft pick, but he played rhythm guitar with a hard n' fastness I didn't think him capable of (especially after having recently seen his acoustic set), and he took just a couple of short, hot solos, as Wayne played nearly all the leads. Kramer was also right on the money when he chose to sing, which, unfortunately, wasn't very often. The show went on for at least two hours, maybe longer, and DKT were DTK (That's "Down To Kill", an abbreviation they should have appropriated from Wayne's former bandmate, Johnny Thunders, the way Wayne did with another Thunders slogan on his recent live CD), and The MC5's memory was served with real class. This was no nostalgia trip, however. It was a quick reminder of what made The Five so great in the first place. The Stooges have already burned brilliantly in their comeback bid, and the surviving ex-New York Dolls are in the process of doing the same - sans Arthur Kane sadly. What might have seemed like a bad idea to some is blowing up in their faces as we speak. On this night, former MC5 manager, John Sinclair, opened the show with a storefront preacher-worthy series of Rural Blues rants and tributes, while his Blues Scholars broke the sound barrier like Hound Dog Taylor had control of their every move. Newcomers, Suffrajett, also delivered the Motor City Rock 'n' Roll goods, without conceding to The Von Bondies, Detroit Cobras or The White Stripes. Their lead singer is also one drop dead gorgeous soul sister, with the looks and the 'tude to be the Pam Grier of Rock 'n' Roll, backed by a solid Rock 'n' Soul voice. Now, while I can't help waxing enthusiastic about what the main event WAS, having later viewed the DVD of their first "comeback" appearance in England at the fabled 100 Club, I find myself contemplating what it could have been...a far more solid support cast can be found in Nickie Royale (Hellacopters), who played Fred Smith's parts with real passion, and guest singers, Dave Vanian from The Damned (who handled three selections from "Back In The U.S.A.," not surprisingly, with great taste and skill), Lemmy, shooting from the hip with a savage reading of "Sister Ann" (Scott Ian only had it half right. Lemmy DOES have the world's biggest middle finger, literally as well as figuratively, and the proof is here!), and even Ian Astbury surprised the SHIT out of me with a balls out, over the top, "Kick Out The Jams." Better still, Wayne Kramer and Michael Davis each do a good deal more lead vocals than when they played here recently (Kramer did about three, and Davis, also possessed of a fine, growly, Rock voice, did none, at the Chicago gig), and though it's their first time out in over ten years (the four then-surviving MC5 members regrouped just once at a memorial show for lead singer, Robin Tyner), this DVD is chock full of strong performances. Plus, it's shot beautifully, and the sound is also exceptional. But, IF that ain't enuff to defoliate yer jaded sensibilities, this DVD also contains plenty of archival footage of The MC5, including a 1967 T.V. performance of "Black To Comm", John Sinclair's original color "Kick Out The Jams" film (Shot at The Grande Ballroom), "Looking At You" and "The American Ruse" from a 1970 appearance on Robin Seymour's "Lively Spot" show (In which they actually preceded Ann Murray!!!), plus footage from a "Love-In" gone awry when Detroit cops start swinging sticks at The MC5's fans (a friend of mine once saw The Five getting the shit beat out of them on stage by the Cincinnati Police, but, they did the gig anyway!), not to mention actual (silent) Police footage of the band playing at The 1968 Democratic Convention protests. (Would you believe...a bit of this same footage turned up not too long ago in one of those hippie-dippy "Sounds of The Sixties" CD commercials on late night T.V.?). Plus, the surviving band members get a chance to tell the story of The MC5, as it happened, in an informative documentary (also littered with stunning archival footage). With our heroes dropping like flies all around us, it's good to see Brothers Wayne, Dennis, and Michael, alive and well, rockin' on, carrying on, and keepin' on. Incidentally, if it took a sponsorship from Levi's to get them up and running again, I don't have a

problem with that, all us Rock 'n' Roll schmucks wear blue (or black) jeans, fer chrissakes, and, who knows?, maybe this "vintage" line will start producing jeans that actually FIT again !!! As for Jennifer Anniston wearing an MCS shirt on T.V. WHO CARES?!? She looked great in it, and it would have looked great on my floor.

DOA "Live Free or Die" "Let's Start The Action - An Electronic Tribute to DOA" (Sudden Death Cascades P.O. Box 43001 Burnabe BC Canada V5G 3H0) No surprises on the latest DOA, and no masterpieces, but I will always be a big fan and there are some great moments here (and some horns). It's a good time to be a political band, and a good time to not be American, and Joey and Co. are capitalizing on both fronts. I don't even know what to say about the international electronic tribute to a band whose melodies aren't that distinctive except to say...I LOVE IT!

Charles Douglas "Statecraft" (Enabler, 300 Elizabeth Street, NYC 10012) Lou Reed meets everything that college radio likes (lush pop, insurgent country, exotica, 17 other genres). Weird and eclectic.

The Dragons "Rocknroll Kamikaze" (Gearhead POB 421219 SF, CA 94142) The Dragons play real rawk that isn't retro garage 60s or retro stoner 70s or retro 90s versions of retro 60s or 70s. They just rock really rockin'-like, with good songs and an approach halfway between high energy and appropriate world-weariness. This is a deluxe reissue of an album from a few years back that was poorly distributed, with some bonus tracks from the original session that were possibly not used because they are way Motorhead/ACDC/G'n'R, but when has that been a crime?

dreamend "as if by ghosts" (Graveface Records, PO Box 57308, Chicago, IL, 60657) If something can be dynamically dreary than this is.

Driver of the Year "static" (future appletree pob 191 Davenport, IA 52805) Drove me to bliss! Better than the Beatles. Well, at least better than Linda McCartney.

Dropbox "s/t" (Universal) You can't imagine how bad this is.

Drowningman "Learn To Let It Go" (Lawofinertia.com) I think if you are musically rended apart and then run through a meat grinder and then thrown in the lake that technically is not "drowning."

Dry Kill Logic "The Dead and Dreaming" (Repossession) This is the pummeling-est music I've ever heard!

Dub Trio "Exploring the dangers of" (ROIR POB 501 Prince St. Station NYC 10012) I danced so hard to this dub music that I broke my shoes. Big and powerful despite the sparseness that is dub's nature.

Dufus "Ball of Design" (ROIR) It's like Zappa leading a contemporary jam band.

The Dukes of Hillsborough/Altaira split CD "Sometimes You Eat the Bar, Sometimes the Bar Eats You" (ADD Records, PO Box 8240 Tampa, FL, 33674) These bands sort of rock, but they are fucking terrible. If it was a battle of the bands between these two whoever decided to not go to the show would be the winner.

Duplex Planet zine (POB 1230 Saratoga Springs, NY 12866) THIS IS OFFICIALLY THE BEST ZINE EVER BECAUSE THIS IS HIS 25TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE AND IT IS NOT SIGNIFICANTLY BETTER OR WORSE THAN THE ZINES I SAW OF HIS IN THE EARLY 80s (I never saw the 1979 issues)

Dutch Elms "Music For Happiness" (Jigsaw 757 N. 65th St. Seattle WA 98103) This actually made me have happiness. This is Byrds/Banana Splits/early 90s band that put out colored 7" records music.

Dutchess of Saigon "hootenanny" ep (Plastic Idol, plasticidolrecords.com) This sounds like the Beach Boys if Brian Wilson was sane but everyone else was fucking crazy

Neven Duzevic "Plaza prema nebu," "Ne spavaj mala moja novi val dok svira" (slusaj najglasnije! Teskovec 27c 10090 Zagreb Croatia) The first record is a Duzy! And the second is Neven Heaven!

Terry Eason "Bees Will Bumble" (Jam 3424 Wedgewood Dr. Portage, MI 49024) Yecch.

egg story by J. Mark Schmidt (Slave Labor Graphics pob 26427 San Jose, CA 95113) A minimalist comic about some eggs that get laid, get fried and crack up. These grocery items are surprisingly human, and for a comic with modest visuals that is an impressive writing feat.

The '89 Cubs "There Are Giants in the Earth" (Slowdance POB 11223 Portland OR 97211) I don't even remember what was supposed to be special about the Cubs in '89. Did they win the division? I guess Andre Dawson and Ryne Sandberg and Mark Grace were on the team. Was that the year that Satanist/John Birch guy Eric Show beamed Dawson? As far as this CD goes it is atmospheric, wicked indie art with tinges of the craziest Brian Wilson composition stuff here or there. Was Dave Martinez on the Cubs that year?

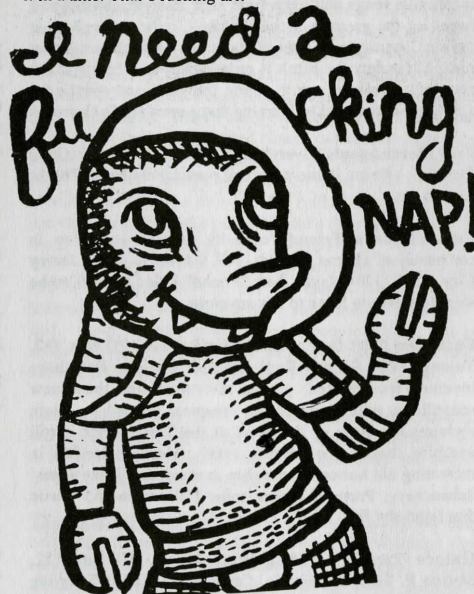
Electric (electrictheband.com) Electr-ick.

The Electric "Degenerotic Doses" (Pro-Vel, the-electric.com) This puts the OCK in ROCK!

Electric Frankenstein "We Will Bury You! (TKO), **Electric Frankenstein/Muddy Frankenstein** "Twins of Evil" (Myrmecoleo) On their double CD for TKO this monstrous trash rocking monolith serves up over thirty slabs of nasty audio, all cover songs (some obscure, some obvious, but all rawkin) that eventually deadens your brain until you feel like Abby Normal. But in small doses this is potent poison. On the split CD with Japan's Muddy Frankenstein EF deliver their usual pummeling punk trash but the silly, nasty guitar sounds of MF seem to prevail, as they don't know not to play Rockabilly and not to use whistles.

Electric Frankenstein/Strap Ons/Fux/Moral Minority split 7" (Valiant Death 22543 James River Dr. Carrollton, VA 23314) If you love terrible rock this is for you!

Elk zine (195 Powers St. zBrooklyn NY 11211, elkzine.com) People send in a page of whatever - a cool drawing, a found picture, a clipping, a map, an old ad, a ticket stub, ancient porn, a diagram - and the Elk-masters put it in a zine. That's fucking art!



George Elliot "I am temporarily working for ETERNITY," "Taint Love" (Heliocentric heliocd.com) The versatile Elliot flexes his creepy muscles and his sensitive muscles and his lush pop craftsman muscles and his weird Sparks-ian muscles and he is one hell of a flexer.

The Ends "Concrete Disappointment" (Dirtnap) The be all and ends all. Sounds like heroin rock made by aging straight edge kids.

Engine Down (Lookout 3264 Adeline St. Berkeley CA 94703) Reved my engine up! I mean, down.

The Envy Corps "Soviet Reunion" (Bi-Fi POB 1327 Ames IA 50014) New sounds + Shoegazer = Nhougazer!

Erasure "Nightbird" (Mute) Why?

Ibon Errazkin "Escuela de Arte" (Elefant Records, PO Box 331, Las Rozas 28230, Madrid, Spain) This album will make you fall in love with music and then impregnate it.

The Escaped "Rose City Hard Core" (Blackout Box 610 Hoboken NJ 07030) There's no escaping this gloriously ugly hardcore with ragged drumming and monster vocals.

Estee Louder "Ohio's Finest" (Diaphragm) No frills, all thrills bar punk that is so Midwestern (meaning full of heart and shitty beer) that it makes this Illinoisian proud. And it also made me audio drunk.

etat it "icount" (Northern Liberties 3819 Beecher St. N.W. WDC 20007) So minimal that if you only listen to every other note it disappears. Spare, strange incantations that made my black cat practice witchcraft.

Even The Odd "Popular Among Van Owners" (Wrong Records, 378 Third Avenue, PH New York, NY, 10016) ETO are the new BTO!

The Everyones (Noise Idol/Shock) The Everyones' self titled release is a feel-good collection of light and airy songs. With intimate vocals, and lofty flute work, the band creates an atmosphere of bliss and freedom very similar to The Beatles. This is a *great* summer album. The only problem with this release comes when the band speeds up and tries to break away from their mellow vibes. Its then, on such tracks as "Green Cats Eye," or "Trans Highway One" that the Everyones lose their distinction and join the monotonous crowd of garagey, aggressive rock acts. "Here We Are" and "Rubin" are examples of the good that comes when the band keeps it slow. While the Everyones need some refinement, these rock songs make the album something everyone should hear.

The Exit "Home for an Island" (Some Records) Ex(it)cellent!

The Exploited "Beat 'Em All" DVD (Dream Catcher) Nothing says "Fuck the System" like a mohawk made of butt-length red braids that look they were purchased at a discount Korean hair shop in a Chicago ghetto. Wattie is also wearing a shirt of his own band which is always an awesome move.

Jay Farrar "Stone, Steel & Bright Lights" (Artemis Records, 130 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10011) I'm sure this is great for people who like this, but I walked out on Uncle Tupelo every time I saw them, so don't ask me.

Fat Day "Unf! Unf!" (Load) This music sounds like a car crash but only if one of the cars is a clown car with 40 mirthmakers shoved in and the other is one of those mini cars that those fez-wearing lodge guys wear in parades.

Faux Fox "Black Glove or White Glove," "Cusp of the Precipice" (Fauxfox.com) The FFs manage to isolate the electronic notes that make me nauseous and play them over and over again.

The Feminine Complex "Livin' Love" (Rev-Ola) This reissues the material that was expertly reissued in the states in the 90s by this self-contained late 60s all-girl band from the South that played both dreamy hippie pop and fun rocking rock. Not girly at all, these tracks feature a deep womanly voice (despite the band's youthfulness) singing about the ways of the world and the kind of ace production available in Nashville even to non-stars. If you are a fan of the band the liner notes make this a worthy addition to even someone with both the reissues and original records, as it features interviews with the band and their engineer, plus some awesome photos.

The Fiction "I told her that I like living in a box" (level-plane) Scrambled and fried me and served me with wheat toast.

"F.I.M.P. Comp 2: Ohio 2" (F.I.M.P. 610 Philip Avenue Akron, OH 44305) This looked like it was going to suck but it was awesome. All the bands were fast and ugly and dumb

and great. Eric Wrong and the Do-Rights, Kill The Hippies, the Professional Againsters, and Lords of the Highway are collective my new favorite band.

Fishbone *Critical Times: Fishbone's Hen House Sessions* (MVD) The legendary L.A. black rock ska/funk/freakout band is invited to a weird, free community recording complex (which looks like an apartment). They are video taped and we see the process which demonstrates their genuine talent but also the weird chemistry. To make this video more special, Angelo, the charismatic lead singer, brings us to his humble abode which is as humble as he promised, and shows off his unsettling tattoo work.

Fishboy "Zipbangboom" (Business Deal) Sounds like fish smell.

Steve Fister "Between a Rock and a Blues Place" (Provogue) This is that guy that sucks who gets up in the Blues club to show off his solo and thinks he is blowing the real blues guys away.

five fifty "get clean" (Exhaust POB 43246 Detroit MI 48243) I'd pay about three seventy-five, tops.

The Flaming Stars "Named and Shamed" (Alternative Tentacles) Max, the decadent, dramatic personality who sets these stars a-flaming, is stickier and creepier than ever in these garage rock takes on pre-War Berlin cabaret wickedness music. This record may make you seduce an animal. Just warning you.

Flashlight Arcade "The Art of Blacking Out" (On The Rise) POB 2471 Westfield NJ 07091) Nauseating.

The Fleshes "Gung Ho!" (Life Is Abuse) Rare rarities from this band that makes music that sounds like rare, as in nearly raw, meat. Hard rocking chaos theory mess music vomited up on an ugly carpet of sound.

Floorian "what the buzzing" (Bomp POB 7112 Burbank, CA 91510) Floored me with atmospheric psyche-scapes.

Foetus "Love" (Birdman 441 Victory Blvd. Suite C South SF, CA 94080) This ep features a track of orchestral industrial, some sputtering minimalism made maximal by absurdist violins, some genuine drariness and a track that sounds like surf and dragstrip music for lawnmower races. Quite a foet!

Food For Animals "Scavengers" (Muckamuck, 79 Brighton Ave #1 Allston MA 02134) This isn't just underground hip hop, this is so subterranean that the mole men in the magma mines have it on their ipods and are planning a revolution based on these frenetic, non-linear preachings laid over maniac genius tracks.

Forever Is Forgotten "Dying Beautiful" (Thorp Records, PO Box 6786, Toledo, OH 43612) Scramble-core metallic messes that will make you fear the future.

fort rile dog "étoile" (onpurpose records, PO Box 220053, Chicago, IL, 60622) Moody but not limited to one mood, this is the kind of intricate guitar indie music that makes people that love contemplative, interesting music happy and will make drunk garage rockers so pissed off they rock harder, so it's a winner any way you slice it.

The Forty-Fives "High Life High Volume" (Yep Roc) There are a lot of rock 'n' roll bands out there in this hip garage rockin' era, but few are as good as the Forty-Fives at bridging the gap between actual drunken dancing party rock and rootsy r&b based music that actual grown-ups can dig. On a scale of 1 to 10 I'd give this a 4.5.

Josephine Foster and the Supposed "All the Leaves are Gone" (Locust POB 220426 Chicago IL 60622) Foster sings like a detached, strange siren, seductively luring sailors to their death but not particularly enjoying it. The music here is also strange, minimal, and at times borders on ambient as it lays groundwork for Foster's spellcasting. This is a highly unusual and genuinely weird record.

The Four Eyes "Rock & Role Playing" (Plastic Idol) Contains the best spelling bee punk song I've heard yet.

Four Square "Three Chords...One Capo" (Bad Taste) Should be called Four Go, because I am going to forego ever listening to this again.

The Fourth World War DVD (bignoisify.com) Unlike the many (justifiably) smug left wing features that attacked Bush and Fox News and the religious and corporate and corrupt right in 2004, this is one movie that was not invalidated, or made to seem like a failure, after the election. This documentary takes us around the world to countries devastated by war, racism, NAFTA, and injustice and introduces us, without talking heads or documentary conventions, to both the real people adversely affected and also the activists (both from within and outside) that often protest to deaf ears, but sometimes sway the tides of history. This is an honest, painful, world tour of South Africa, China, the Middle East, Mexico, Iraq, South Korea and elsewhere, with every disparate land a home for both devastation and hope. This is a powerful, important movie.

Four Volts "Triple Your Workforce" (Kanine) Destined to become great or to become a woefully underappreciated act, this is a big, important, joyous, funny exploration of lots of the more raucous, thoughtful, good sounding, moments in the last forty years of rock and pop. I'd give this four volts out of four

Fran Magazine (511 N. Kenmore Ave. Ste. 103 LA, CA 90004) A lot of this humor and music zine is pretty funny, sometimes in that harsh, sort of nasty *Vice* manner, but sometimes by being actually funny. It's got an original visual look that is kind of ugly, which is cute.

David Francis "Fake Valentine" (POB 811 Village Station NYC 10014) Better than all the Beatles put together.

Frankenixon "Amorphous," "sweaty from your uselessness" b/w "Hello? Hello?" (Bi-Fi, bi-fi records.com, POB 1327 Ames, IA 50014) Frankenboring.

Fraudots "Couture, Couture, Couture" (Sub Pop) This would only be considered shoegazer music if you gazed at your shoes and they were KISS dragon platform boots. Not that this sounds like KISS, but more that it adds levels of sparkle and gleam to the dreamy rock model.

The Freak Accident (Alternative Tentacles) Cohesively incohesive songs that jump from style to style, abusing and tweaking the greatest clichés of punk, indie, college rock, "genius" music (a la Tom Waits or Nick Cave), and stoner rock. Ultimately the result is more clever than brilliant, but certainly clever enough to charm the jaded and seduce the youngster enraptured by learning that genres aren't chains.

Free Moral Agents "Everybody's Favorite Weapon" (GSL) Colorful, vibrant, dense jazz funk poetical coolness. This is easy to dig.

Funeral for a Friend "casually dressed and deep in conversation" (Ferret Records, 167 Wayne St., #409, Jersey City, NJ, 07320) Maybe their "Friend" killed himself so he wouldn't have to listen to this anymore.

Fuzztones "Salt for Zombies" (Sin Records, PO Box 782, Tujunga, CA 91043) Rudi Protrudi and his Fuzztones invented (re-invented) garage revivalism and these new recordings, with some of the creepiest penned by Rudi, reclaims his stake in the heart of the Trashy rock n roll vampire that is the current scene. More interested in recreating old horror movies than in recreating Brian Jones' debauchery, Protrudi makes some Halloween-365 music that lights my fire.

Galore "Paradar" (Fading Ways Music, PO Box 122, Station F, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M4Y 2L4) They are called galore because they rock and roll so good that they must get much *poosay*! Power glam heavy on the jams and light on the flam.

Gays In The Military "Meat Gazers" (SNSE POB 51021 Kalamazoo, MI 49005), "godspunk volume two" comp (www.pumf.net) Gays in the Military makes hypnotic marching music for Morlocks. They are the only good band on the "godspunk" comp and their debut CD is the kind of mess that you don't want to touch because it seems infectious, yet somehow you end up with it all over you.

GFK "If Liberty Isn't Given It Should Be Taken" (G7) Absolutely brutal righteous hardcore that unleashes the fury of monsters against evil government and societal ills. This is realistic horror music.

The Ghost "This Pen is a Weapon" (Some Records, 345 Seventh Avenue, 24 FL, New York, NY 10001) Scary but not in a "boo" way. More in an urgent, sincere, desperate way.

The Ghosts of Ready Reference (3 stamps, Love Bunni press, 2622 Princeton Rd Cleveland Heights, OH 44118) This is like a poetic prank call zine about reference librarians and their challenges.

Giant Sand "Is All Over the Map" (Thrill Jockey Records) After 100 years or so of being a band they have finally made their sandiest record yet! Fragile and dreary yet bold and bouncy...just like sand.

The Girls (Dirtnap POB 21249 Seattle, WA 98111) Not to be confused with Andre Cymone's 1980s Vanity 6 ripoff group, this is in fact an all male band (who are not to be confused with the 80s Motown all-Muslim kiddie bubblegum group the Boys, who are now a conscious act based in Africa, called Suns of Light, by the way). This is, in fact, another punk new wave 70s throwback band from the upper left hand corner of America along the lines of the Spits and the Briefs. The vocals on this thing are so Max's Kansas City 1978 and the recording is so classic that I have to give this two thumbs up, Fonzie style.

"Girls Go Zonk" compilation (RPM Records, Unit 17, Elysium Gate West, 1260128 New Kings Road, London) I'm not telling you this comp is actually great, I'm just saying you need to have it. 22 tracks of girl vocal records that aren't necessarily great or cohesive, but many are so weird, wonderful or twisted that they need to be heard. The vocal version of the *Mission: Impossible* theme by the Kane Triplets, the Starlets doing tough R&B rock in a triumphantly incongruous harmony vocal style, and speaking of which, Traffic's "Paper Sun" done by Kim Fowley's protégées the Murmaids with light-rock vocals and tepid fuzz guitar - what the heck is that? This ends with an alternative version of my favorite girl vocal track ever, "Egyptian Shumba" by the Tammys. Overall, if you like weird pop, women, music, being confused, or any combination thereof, you need this CD comp.

Girlyman "remember who i am" (Daemon Records) Nice design and album cover and the musicians are all nice looking. I'd rather not discuss the music.

Glitterbest "UK Glam with Attitude 1971-1976" (RPM) Ironically, this is the Glitterworst. Numerous obscure glam tracks that are not good at all. Yet, the photos of the bands are so good I still think you should buy this.

God Save My Queen, God Save My Queen II by Daniel Nester (Soft Skull 71 Bond St. Brooklyn NY 11217) These two books are absolutely fantastic, as Nester's poetic odes to the band Queen raises the profile of obsessive record collectors from nerd to *artiste* while simultaneously creating a genre of poetry where a new word for ultra-nerd needs to be created to describe the authorship. The first volume features one short poem for every track on every major Queen LP. As the book explores sexuality, humanity and vulnerability the lyrical text confusingly shifts from Nester's personal biography to the exploits of Mercury and May in a haze of poetics where it doesn't matter what or who he's talking about. Like the oversaturation of data in the novels of Robert Coover (or the repetition of names in *100 Years of Solitude*), the Queen trivia, and onslaught of pop culture footnotes, becomes an abstract song of its own that is more about cadence and overloading circuits than about content. To bring this point home the second volume of poems is a track by track series of poems covering obscure Queen albums, solo work and hidden CD tracks, thus, even the fellow fans who were able to recall every Queen track and perhaps relate them to the poems in book one is left headscratching by this volume. These books are as beautiful as fat bottomed girls on bicycles.

The Golden Age of Chicago Children's Television by Ted Okuda and Jack Mulqueen (Lake Claremont) Any Chicagoan over 30, who remembers Bozo the Clown, Garfield Goose, BJ and Dirty Dragon (a/k/a *Gigglesnort Hotel*) and Ray Rayner, and anyone over 40 who was

around for the glory days of Kukla, Fran and olie, *Kiddie-A-Go-Go, Ding Dong School*, needs this book that succinctly tells the stories behind the stories. Not simply a nostalgic romp (Okuda is best known to me as a fact-monger whose work features relentless research instead of merely sentimental fluff, and Mulqueen was a foot soldier in Chicago's kiddie TV trenches, working with Mr. The Clown and on his own kiddie and teen shows) this really answers questions you had in your vague memories. And it's also a fun nostalgic romp. Incredibly satisfying and joyous, this is something you should read.

Goldenboy "right kind of wrong" (Fastmusic/Coldfront) Silence is golden.

Go Metric! zine (801 Eagle Ridge Road Brewster, NY 10509) Funnier than the lesser SCTV skits!

Alex Gomez "Always Never" (Deltaelectric, Postal Annex 258, 910-K E. Reed Rd. #146, El Paso, TX, 79912) Absurd Bloozey blues that mixes the just right swampy, nasty southern guitar sound with lyrics about cocaine, bacon and wine that are awesome if they are funny and almost as awesome if they are sad.

Gone Without Trace "s/t" (Thorp Records, PO Box 6786, Toledo OH, 43612) Hardcore metal that pummels with sincerity. Real gone!

Gonga (Tee Pee) This Stoner Rock is so huge it doesn't rock, it boulders!

a. graham & the moment band "this tyrant is free" (Sonic Unyon POB 57347 Jackson Station Hamilton Ontario Canada 18P 4X2) graham is grand, or at least this pop concoction is (in a low-key kind of grandiosity), and if you like your music raggedly mighty this is for you.

Granian "On My Own Two Feet" (granian.com) Gra(ting)ian

Gravy Train!!! "Ghost Boobs EP," *Stame The Batch* DVD (Retard Disco) If you can't bounce your boobies to this bands sleazy dance magic you have had boobies. The DVD is the Citizen Kane of peep-booth sticky floor-core music video.

Great Plains Gypsies "Stare Into the Sea" (Sunny Smedley) Great!

Great Redneck Hope "Behold the Fuck Thunder" (Thinker Thought 1002 Devonshire Road Wachington, IL 61571) Totally fucking really great. This is the sound of music turned inside out and played at 78 rpm.

The Great Unknowns "Presenting..." (Daemon) This is really, really great! A singer with an excellent (but subdued and dignified) voice sings some solid country pop rock in a way that makes me love her.

David Greenberger and 3 Leg Torso "Legibly Speaking" (Meester/Pel) 3 Leg Torso makes wholesomely decadent music that brings to mind a talented church play of *Three Penny Opera*, so with that weird musical backing Greenberger's readings of his interviews with elderly, poignant folks is especially seductive. For all you long distance commuters, this is better than a book on tape any day of the week.

Greenlawn Abbey (Diaphragm POB 10388 Columbus OH 43201) This lawnwork is landscaped with rock awesomeness. Better than the Beatles.

The Gremlins "The Coming Generation" (Rev-Ola Records, Elysium Gate West, 126/8 New Kings Road, London) Apparently the Gremlins were the Byrds, the Troggs, the Manfred Mann, the Hollies and even the Montyn Pythons (based on one odd novelty track) of New Zealand rock. Except they weren't too successful or prolific. Making these 22 tracks all the more enjoyable to 60s pop fans, is the fact that they are high quality but totally fresh to most of the ears of the world. Not quite wicked enough for their awesome band name (not such a good car name, but for a band I'm impressed) these gents embraced the English sound, with sprinklings of Country Rock, expertly and impressively. Between 1965 and 1969 they explored a little but never strayed too far from pleasant pop, and to quote Gidget, this is totally gremmy!

The Gris Gris (Birdman) This redefines "eerie." This sounds like Jandek trying to make pretty music to woo someone, but getting interference from space aliens that jumbles the whole thing up. This delivers twice the Gris.

Grizzly Bear "Horn of Plenty" (Kaninerecords.com) Grizzlies but rarely sizzles. The quietest bear ever.

David Grubbs "A Guess at the Riddle" (Drag City Records, PO Box 476867, Chicago, IL, 60647) Grubbs is making little ditties here with perky beats and snappy cadences being applied to weird lyrics. I've certainly heard him sing before, but never quite like this...his voice sounds like what I'd imagine Linus from *Peanuts* sounding like. Sure, you eventually get some challenging noises and spare, mournful instrumentation, but it's the peppy jingles that I found most jarring and intriguing.

Hanoi Rocks "A Day Late, A Dollar Short" (www.hanoirocks.com) I called my friend, Mark, recently, and told him, "Hell has frozen over...I just read in Mojo that Hanoi Rocks is reforming." He informed me that Hell had nothing to do with it, and that money can make all kinds of things happen. Either way, I was pretty psyched to hear that the revamped lineup are playing out in Europe, and have already released a full length CD (which I haven't seen yet). From what little I'd read in the Eurock press, I assumed the original surviving lineup (Razzle, their beloved drummer, was killed in a car crash with a drunk Vince Neil at the wheel), but only lead singer, Michael Monroe, and guitarist, Andy McCoy (who, I'm told, has a hit "Osbourne"-style "Reality T.V" show with his own family in Finland), remain from the classic lineup. They were the band's acknowledged frontmen, though bassist Sam Yaffa and guitarist Nasty Suicide, added greatly to the band's distinctive sound, and the two worked with Monroe and McCoy in subsequent, post break-up, projects. I can't tell you why they're not involved, but, this year's model, if taken on it's own terms, is certainly better than nothing at all. The production is a good bit cleaner than before, and, as I'd been warned, and it does have a bit of a "Metal" edge. Hanoi Rocks were unfairly lumped in with the Metal scene in the 80s, a faux pas that kept a LOT of potential fans in The U.S. from even giving them a chance. H.R. stood almost completely alone in upholding The New York Dolls' tradition in the 80s, though L.A. bands like Faster Pussycat and Guns n' Roses, in all their Aerosmith-rehashing glory, took most of the credit. Go figure. G n' R did re-release Hanoi Rocks' back catalogue several years ago, a commendable move, though said reissues hit the bargain bins almost as quickly as the originals. The three songs included here are not without their bright spots. There's not a "Malibu Beach Nightmare" to be found here, though "Bad News" (would you believe, a Moon Martin cover?!) is sort of a "Taxi Driver" revisited. It rocks along fine, though, yes, it's a bit more subtle than their classic LPs. Still, if a non-SNAFU ridden tour of the states can be arranged (apathy probably broke their spirit nearly as much as tragedy during their abortive U.S. tour in late '84...Reportedly, only about 30 people attended their Chicago debut at Cabaret Metro, but the band's American cult following has grown considerably since then), I'll be there, and, I think it's safe to say, a lot of people will be just as ready to give them the chance they never had the first time around. Hanoi Rocks, Finnish, yes. Finished ?, Hell, no!

Hanzel and Gretel "Sheissmessiah" (Metropolis) An evil Industrial Metal rock opera based on Dante's writings, this is a glorious explosion of absurdity that made me sheiss myself in either fear or laughter.

The Haunted Hillbilly by Derek McCormack (ECW) This brisk novella tells a Faustian tale of Hank Williams (reimagined as a Billy Ray Cyrus type) being bamboozled/seduced/drowned by Nudie the Tailor, seen here a vampiric, Satanic, sideshow man with probing habits that would make an alien abductor proud. Throw in Dr. Frederic Wertham as an evil surgeon and Ernest Tubb as Yosemite Sam and you have a spooky tale of the grand Ole Opry that is surreal and bizarre. McCormack is a clever wordsmith who loves constructing paragraphs that allow him to include ridiculous sentences, and make them make sense, such as "Buttons devil." (That refers to the discomfort of the upholstery on the couch, not Beelzebub's elevator operator) When the book ends with a line implying that the entire thing was a setup for an absurd pun there is a tinge of "have I been hoodwinked," but the short but satisfying experience

of reading this nasty horror story is reward enough to satiate any reader's remorse.

Hayden "Elk-Lake Serenade" (Badman Recording, 134 West 26th St., #607, NYC, 10001) Hatin'.

Headache City "Knee Jerk Reaction" EP (Shit Snadwich 3107 N. Rockwell Chicago, IL 60618) Gave me ass ache from shaking mine so hard to this rocking record!

Heart Full of Dirt "American Road" (heartfulofdirt.com) These guys have to actually be bikers because all the songs are about being the cowboys of the open road, slapping down SUV drivers and quitting their jobs to give in to that seductress we call "the road." Ride on!

"Heart So Cold! The North Colony 60's Scene" (Dionysus, POB 1975 Burbank, CA 91507) This is a comp of 60s garage gems from upstate New York. That range from the wicked, serious rock attack of "Wild" Bill Kennedy & the Twilighters (which is a little mellower when they try to Beatles it up) to the nerdy-pop-vocals-meet-Ventures-guitars of Mike and the Ravens to the fuzztastic Blues-garage of the Falcons (sadly only a single track...where's the b-side!). Unlike most regional comps these are mostly originals, covers are spare, and there's a few raucous live tracks in addition to studio stuff. I don't see how any garage -head could pass this up.

Heaven is A Hotel (Quartz, Inc) Hell is my CD player right now.

The Heavenly States (Bariarecords.com) Heavenly is an understatement. This tastes like ambrosia (and I mean the marshmallow kind).

Heaven Shall Burn "Antigone" (Century Media Records, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd., Hawthorne, CA, 90250) Burnt me to a crisp.

HelloGoodbye (Drive Thru) Synthational!

Les Hell on Heels (Bomp) Yes, this all lady rock n roll combo exploits every bad girl cliché, but let's be honest...who doesn't love every bad girl cliché! Leather. Lace, lipstick, big hair, cleavage and cigarettes on the cover, and nasty, trashy, simple, stoopid garage rawk on the disc makes for a combo that had me as soon as the laser hit the plastic (needle hit the groove sounds so much cooler). Best of all, their minimal rock theme song where they cool-y don't say their band name until the end of the song and sing "ain't no thing but a chicken wing" is a classic of trashy rock. I would totally let these ladies beat me up and steal my wallet just to get a whiff of their no doubt fruity smelling perfume.

Hellstomper "Fine...Forget It" (Steel Cage) Going out with a scum bang, this is the alleged farewell album from these nasty Southern rockers, and it's a triumphant smear of ugliness on the windshield of the pickup truck of rock. Rather than a tired album by twenty year vets this sounds like they have just been warming up for two decades getting ready to play this ugly awesome mess.

David Hemmings "Happens" (Rev-Ola) Hemmings is an iconic actor (*Blowup*, *Camelot*, *Barberella*) who apparently recorded a trippy half psyche/half country rock album in 1967. There are definitely some tracks here worth hearing (the weird sax on "Talkin' L.A." complimented by Hemmings' Grace Slick impersonation is pleasantly jarring) but this album is really for Byrds watchers, as it is produced by Byrds boss Jim Dickson and features Gene Clark, Roger McGuinn and the boys as session musicians, writers and arrangers.

Hellstomper "The Real Hillbilly Motherfucker" (Steel Cage Records, PO Box 9042, East Ridge, TN, 37412) Reissue of a Man's Ruin record by this nasty bar band that has extra tracks about killing women, drinking beer and taking pills. Scummy and funny so buy it, dummy!

Jimi Hendrix "Live at Stockholm" and "Live at the Monterey Pop Festival," "Stockholm Concert" (Purple Haze Records, www.purplehazerecords.com) Awesome. The Monterey is familiar from the movie, but holds up exceptionally well without the visible pyrotechnics. But it's the disc I got called "Live at Stockholm" (as opposed to the also excellent, double disc "Stockholm Concert," which are

different shows) that is a revelation. Opening with a Hendrixized "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Heart Club Band" cover and then a quick, efficient half hour set of all his best hits. Not the greatest thing you ever heard (vocal mix is a little high) but it is just so telling how the best soloist ever kept all these songs at a pop radio 3 minutes, while still keeping them lively and vibrant. Hendrix had the super charisma and this shows it.

The Hentchmen "Form Follows Function" (Times Beach) Forget what you've been told – the kings of Detroit rock n roll are these goofy kids (rapidly aging, the first line of this record is "I just turned thirty") who make every gathering a party and every stereo that plays their records a party machine and every person infected by their music a party person and every dog that belongs to one of those people a party animal. This is not a garage cliché collection but a real fun rock n roll album that made me actually dance.

Hickey & Boggs DVD (AIP) Recasting the smooth, slick spys from TV's *I Spy* as scummy, loser private detectives, this 1971 film had Bill Cosby and Robert Culp negotiating a far realer Los Angeles than seen on TV (unless you count the beautiful *Columbo* exteriors. A low rent version of 70s New Hollywood or a high end take on exploitation drive in flicks, this is worth watching just to see the Cos be street.

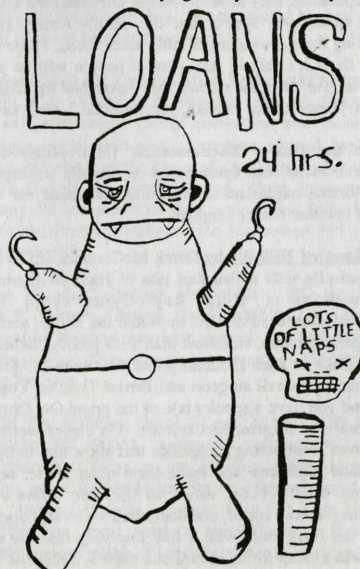
Bill Hicks "Satirist, Social Critic, Stand Up Comedian Live" DVD (Rykodisc), *Love All The People* by Bill Hicks (Soft Skull) Though he was a tremendously hard worker, and his success was reaching an apex at the end of his life due to number of odd convergences, it could be argued that comedian Bill Hicks has had a posthumous career that has eclipsed his actual career. It seems that dozens of performance CDs have been released, there have been a few TV documentaries about him, and we are now blessed with two deluxe testaments to his legacy; a DVD compiling his TV specials and a book that gathers his writings, routines and interviews. Raised in a conservative, religious home Hicks became interested in rock 'n' roll and comedy as a teen and quickly became an outstanding stand up comic while still in high school. The 80s comedy boom provided ample opportunity to hone his craft, and by the end of the decade he was one of the sharpest comics working, combining intelligent, angry rants against hypocrisy and mediocrity with dark, shocking explorations into the human psyche that seemed more jarring considering his nerdy looks and gentle eyes. He worked his way up to what he considered the top of the game: cable stand up specials and appearances on David Letterman's show. His career was boosted when an outstanding comedy festival performance led to John Lahr writing a *New Yorker* profile on him that raised his profile amongst the lefty, erudite audience that would appreciate his point of view (although his angry rant style was designed so that he could perform to hostile, conservative audiences, which may have helped fuel his work). As Lahr was penning the article Hicks got an unwelcome but ultimately important break when he became a censored martyr when the Letterman show absurdly censored his entire act at the last minute, based most likely on a relatively tame joke about Pro-lifers having ugly, negative faces. Also, his anti-Bush/Iraq War (90s version) stance, and his reputation as an angry comic too hot for prudish Americans, quickly made him a huge star in England. Just as he developed his dark, outlaw comic persona to perfection he was suddenly and surprisingly declared terminally ill and was gone at the apex of his powers. Hicks' death helped make him a legend, but there are reasons he has been canonized that have little to do with mortality. Hicks peaked in an era when the glamour of pure standup was gone – success was measured by having a sitcom or turning your standup jokes into a semi-literate bestselling book. Hicks' colleagues admired him for his purity – he was dedicated to his particular craft and not to achieving success in another forum. As one routine makes clear (and variations appear throughout the DVD and book) he considered Jay Leno's Doritos commercial one of the lowest depths a comic had ever sunk to. He was ideological and a consummate pro and for that other comics recognized he was special (as made clear in an unimpressive British documentary included as a bonus on the DVD – a much better documentary showed on the Trio channel focusing more on his triumphs as a living artist rather than his deification as a dead icon). Not everyone finds Hicks' work hilarious, but these two releases really give an open-minded viewer a chance to decide. The DVD contains the low-key festival performance that launched his late rise. The audience seems rather sedate and not particularly enthralled,

but his conviction and thick skin and knowledge that his dark, angry content would eventually get some kind of reaction had him deliver his set with confidence and conviction, and peaking with a dramatization of a pornographic metaphor for mediocrity (he loved to act out, with disturbing clarity, pop stars like Vanilla Ice sucking Satan's massive, spiked cock as their end of a Faustian bargain). When this was followed by the aside that he is available for kids parties, no one was unaffected. The DVD also features a more high profile cable special but then crests with his crowning glory: a massive rock concert-style performance in England, complete with pyrotechnics, a cowboy outfit and some of the darkest, most politically angry material of his career. While it's hard for a book to compete with a filmed standup routine, its amazing how well Hicks' work works in print, especially if one has seen him perform. More importantly, the book features Lahr's convincing *New Yorker* piece and an equally compelling follow up essay. Besting that, the book reprints Hicks' thick letter to Lahr explaining the Letterman fiasco, which is incredibly revealing and gives genuine insight into the nuts and bolts of the world of the industry. Though I realize not everyone is a student of comedy, these documents are also pretty amazing studies in bravery and despite the tragic ending, are really a success story: Hicks made it to the rock star status (his dream) without selling out 9his nightmare). Having these twin documents is an amazing resource and a great way to appreciate a lost talent. It's also a good way to get ready for a kids party.

Daniel Higgs "Magic Alphabet" (Northern Liberties, 3819 Beecher St. N.W., Washington D.C., 20007) Just fucking brilliant! Minimalist prog played with Jew's harp and spit and maybe a tambourine thrown in here or there. This record is as thick and vital as a bloody 4 inch steak,

Hipbone Slim and the Knee Tremblers "What Do You Look Like?" b/w "I'm Gonna Give You Everything" (Voodoo Rhythm) Voodoo Rhythm has a lot of good and bad bands – some so good they skip rock n roll altogether and make hybrid roots music and some so gloriously bad that they make the ultimate trash music. But the act that seems to be right in the middle is this one, creating absolutely perfect 1950s jukebox rumble sock hop music that is just right in every way. Ms. Holly Golightly guest sings on one of these scorchers and she really heats it up moreso. This is a delight and its oh so hip.

Hip Hop Time Capsule – The Best of RETV 1992 (MVD) 1992 was a good year for hip hop, as videos by KRS One, Public Enemy, A Tribe Called Quest and Brand Nubian attest to. However, it wasn't the best year, as the fact that these are far from those artists' signature songs attests yto (only Das-EFX is represented by their biggest tune). But this year was chosen because it was the year that RETV (some hip hop show, maybe cable access?) was producing shows, interviewing rap stars and videotaping live concerts (nice raw footage of acts like Naughty by Nature and the fun and silly Kriss Kross). Overall this is a pretty fun package, and will be fun reminder of days gone by when everyone was high.



Hirax "The new Age of Terror" (Mausoleum) This is the Metalest Metal record I've heard in 7 years! This is so Metal that if you listened to it while you were pregnant your baby would be born with only the fingers necessary to make the sign of the beast. This is so metal it made me break out in leather. This is wicked hella Metal!

Hiroshi Hasagawa's Poontang Wranglers (demo) The Poontang Wranglers are a relatively new musical aggregation based in San Francisco. They play imitatively innocent Jug Band music, more akin to Mungo Jerry or The Purple Gang's virtually guitar-free (and completely drum-free) Skiffle-based excursions than the electric Jug Band stylings of early Flamin' Groovies or prime time Lovin' Spoonful. In other words, it dares to be stupid. But, P.C. killjoys who might disapprove of their name (even though both genders fall neatly into their ranks, as do just about every age and more race groups than Billy Jack could stack on an ice cream cone) would probably not have seen the beauty in this. Well, dummies they're not. The P.W.'s are the most portable of musical units, with a penchant for only performing on the street and in other public places, something not as easy to get arrested for in California as it is in Chicago, I take it. In fact, the group recently did a "Tour" of Los Angeles, in which no "gigs" were prearranged, they just played wherever they could, the highlight of which was performing in front of Mann's Chinese Theatre. Founding member, Hasagawa, has since left the group, on good terms, and it's a pretty good bet the "open door policy" will hit somebody in the ass, but, it's all about a good time. Employing a few stringed instruments (acoustic guitar, ukelele) and anything else handy (a jug and a kazoo, of course, whistles, jew's harp and even a 7-11 Slurpee straw), which, surprisingly doesn't teeter off into "Familiar Ugly" chaos. In and amongst warped takes on standards like "I'm Going Down The Road Feeling Bad," "My Darling Clementine" (Hm..forgot it was a death song), and "Cabbage Head" (popularized by The Treniers), one is treated to the authentic street corner preaching prowess of The Rev. P.W. McMoon, and an assortment of jokes and one-liners by group spokesman, The Commodore, who delivers his lines, somewhat hesitatingly, like someone doing a bad impersonation of Apu on "The Simpsons." His jokes would be sure to offend if they weren't so damned old, but, it's funnier that way. He even does his own take on "Hey, Joe" as "Hey, Commodore"-"Hey, Commodore, where you goin' with that gun in your hand?" "I'm going to a Star Trek convention, I caught my old lady messing around with a Romulan!" Then, there's zingers like, "A lady asked me, do I want a blowjob? She sucked my dick like it was corn on the cob." So, if you should find yourself on The Haight in San Francisco, and you come across this band of merry minstrels, get a towel and wipe it up! Uh, I mean, throw 'em a dollar, or at least some snack cakes. At least they won't be the ones holding up a sign that says "We need money for pot!"

Hognose "Long Handle" (Arclight Records, 1403 Rio Grande, Austin TX, 78701) Stoner boogie metal...also known as god's music.

Home Grown "When It All Comes Down" (Drive Thru) Made me grab a bottle of Emo-dium AD.

"Hopelessly Devoted to You Vol. 5" compilation (Hopeless Records) Avenged Sevenfold is so awesomely awesome a kickass rock band that this comp is a success just because it has a bonus video by them. Compare their brutality with Atom and His Package's goofiness and this label runs an amazing gamut in "A" bands alone.

The Horror "insobriety & insubordination" (signal path POB 14747 Gainesville FL 32604) Street punk from a pleasant boulevard.

Hot Chick Stoner BBQ DVD (Stroker) This video has rock chicks giving barbecue advice while stoner rock plays in the background. Surprisingly this isn't sexist (or particularly sexy) and most impressive is that the bbq tips and recipes are legit. However, if you are an avid griller there aren't too many revelations here, and the stoner jokes aren't too funny unless you are super-baked and have a bad sense of humor.

Hot Damn! "The Girl Can't Help It" (Stell Cage, steelcagerecords.com) I honestly believe that real trash rock garage schlock should teeter between triumphant and terrible during every note and this totally achieves that. This

is either the best or worst record I've heard this week. Or it's both.

The Hunches "Fuck Disco Beats" (In The Red) A hurricane of rock damage!

A Hundred Dollars and a T-Shirt DVD (microcosm 5307 N. Minnesota Ave., Portland OR 97217) This is a talking head documentary about the politics, history, mechanics and community of zines and their makers. Somewhat zinelike in nature (while pretty slick in many ways it also isn't afraid of using shitty footage or sub-perfect audio that captures the vibe of a faded Xerox) this is a solid piece. It could be tighter (it has countless eloquent, charming zinesters comment on every aspect of zinedom, and eventually it becomes a little too much), but overall this is important, especially since it documents the current zine scene and not the 90s one that was documented in the media (though inaccurately for the most part).

Hurricane Party "Get This" (BMG) This Hurricane doesn't blow! Really funny RAWK rock that's really serious.

I Am Spam by Larry O. Dean (Fractal Edge Press, POB 220586 Chicago IL 60622) Dean has composed a book of poems based on the message lines of spam e-mails he received ("Online Cheating Wives," "I Thought You Might Like This," "I Ate Chocolate and Lost 20 Lbs."). If he were merely being clever or funny this would still be amusing, but remarkably Dean crafts sympathetic, poignant, dare I say poetic, narratives for these bizarre come ons, and while the gimmick still is a functioning gimmick (a hook that draws you in) the payoff is totally satisfying.

I Can Make A Mess Like Nobody's Business (Drive-Thru) You can make a boring assed record like there's no tomorrow.

Impact Press magazine (PMB 361, 10151 University Blvd. Orlando FL 32817) Angry political coherent texts at a time when those are the best ones to propagate.

In Fervor "Anatomy of a Memory" (infervor.com) Dullest fervor ever.

Inouk "No Danger" (Say Hey) Mixing cleverness with brilliance and almost fey pop with jamming blues-based music, this brother act got all up in my oak.

The Insomniacs "Switched On!" (Estrus, POB 2125 Bellingham WA 98227) This is subtle power pop that makes the Beatles sound like beagles. Fuzzy and powerful, the Insomniac make guitar rock that sounds Midwestern and genuine. Don't sleep on this one!

Internal Bleeding "Onward to Mecca" (Century) Brutally brutal.

"Introvenous Records Volume 1: L.A.'s Rising Scene 2004" compilation (Intravenous/Aeronaut) This features a crop of L.A. bands that are looking to the 60s and 70s psyche, rock and punk scenes without giving in to any of the sloppy, nasty Sunset Strip clichés that made the lucrative 80s glam metal revival so silly and funny. Not to say these bands aren't fun; Sky Parade finds joy in the often gloomy space psyche sound and Lily and the Ladies' update of "Rock Lobster" is pogo-rific. A better than average sampler and if you want to hear a bunch of good new bands this will get a rise out of you.

Iron Guts Kelly (PU Records) Gutsy!

"It Was 40 Years Ago Today - A Tribute To The Beatles" (Bullseye) 50 tracks of mostly Canadian power pop bands covering Beatles tunes - with no fears of obscurity covering. Some of my faves - The Kings, Phil Angotti, Al Kooper, Dave Rave, Jim Basnight - show up, but there are some real gems from bands I never heard of, including the Dons' majestic "Savoy Truffle," Frank Soda's ominously joyful "I Feel Fine" and the Pozers' psychedelicious "She Said, She Said." It seems the Beatles were actually pretty good songwriters.

The Jabbers "American Standard" (Steel Cage POB 29247 Philadelphia PA 19125) This is such motorcycle riding, bar fighting, rocking rock that I think they are playing the guitars with wrenches instead of picks.

Jandek "Shadow of Leaves," "The End of it All," "The Door Behind" (Corwood Industries, PO Box 15375, Houston, TX, 77220) **Jandek on Corwood** DVD (jandekoncorwood.com) In some ways Jandek's Blues music on his most recent CDs is rawer and more amateurish than ever, but it has also been honed and diluted to it's most Jandeky. "Shadow" opens with a thirty minute piece in which the sparest, loneliest Jandek guitar "noodling" (it seems you shouldn't use that word to describe less than 20 notes a minute) accompanies the Jandekiest stream of consciousness oration imaginable (in case you were confused about what he was doing, at one point he drones, "this is...a stream of consciousness..."). There was speculation that the title of the second CD released in 2004, "The End of it All," meant that this was to be the last release by the reclusive figure, but it turned out that it was actually the end of decades of hermit-ness. Jandek made his first public appearance ever not long after the CD came out at a European music festival, which is a staggering development. Then, to make everything more clear or more confusing, he released a third 2004 CD after the live show (a show that, incidentally, may come out as a Corwood DVD if rumors come to fruition, which is rarely the case with Jandek), this one with another title implying finality. While I think decoding Jandek lyrics is fruitless (though "The Door Behind" does contain a gem about getting rid of the squirrels in his head) I didn't really hear anything implying this would be his last record. All this is especially confusing to those who had seen the recent documentary *Jandek on Corwood*. In this fine film the reclusive "king of the underground" is profiled, which is a feat as he had never been seen and only granted a couple of interviews in his extremely prolific quarter-century career. Obviously he wouldn't be interviewed for the film, but to interview the maker of such odd, dire outsider music would perhaps be anticlimactic. So instead the film is about not Jandek the man or even Jandek the artist but more Jandek the enigma, the cult, the concept. Numerous middle-aged, long-haired, record-collecting geeks (a.k.a., this magazine's reading audience) articulately pontificate on the meanings and magic that this man's music and non-biography represent. My favorite subtext of the film is the tiny possibility that this is somehow a prank or art project, and that even the interviews he does grant (the film ends with one, which reveals some rather mundane truths) were pranks...maybe "Jandek" had someone else do these interviews. Ultimately I wonder if Jandek's recent three-dimensional appearance (perhaps another prank, was that really him?) hurts or harms this film. Certainly this recent attention of the documentary, a tribute album and a lot of press generated by this likely is what nudged him into the real world (where he made, it should be noted, only one brief unannounced appearance before disappearing again). Does this development provide a perfect postscript or does it hurt DVD sales by making the enigma-concept moot? Let the squirrels in your head figure that out.

Jesu (Hydra Head) More boring than going to church, with worse organ playing.

Jet Motor Crash "personalspace" (Mastadon Infantry) Rocks harder than Jet Screamer.

Johnnyreliable "enough is enough" (no label) Johnnymediocre.

J.O.Y "Sunplus" (dfa) A strange Japanese No Wave/ultra wave slice of weirdness that has plenty of flavor unremixed, but becomes a funky chunk of dance candy in DFA's remix hands.

Joy Electric "Hello, Mannequin" (Tooth and Nail Records) A lot of this sounds like that Peter Gabriel song "Games Without Frontiers," but here you can sense the frontiers.

Juliette and the Licks "...Like a Lightning Bolt" (Fiddlerrecords.com) This is a more than competent garage trash bar rock record from actress Juliette Lewis. However, after being forced to see that Sean Penn movie where he plays a retarded Beatles fan I pledged to never support any project by any actor who played a retarded person in a movie, and I once saw Lewis and the guy who plays the dumb girl's brother on *Friends* in a retarded romance movie, so I can't support this record.

Karate "Pockets" (Southern) Damn, it's jazzy in here.

Kiba "Bluz Sansona" (Listen Loudest!) Bob Dylan look out!

Jimmy Keith and his Shocky Horrors "Old, Loud & Snotty" (Plastic Bomb/Cargo Records) Garage rock punk from Germany that manages to sound like barfright music while maintaining an almost-glam patina of pop catchiness (and not in an Oi anthem way, but in a power-pop way). Shocky and rock-y!

The Kicks "Hello Hong Kong" (TVT 23 E. 4th St. NYC 10003) Very limp.

Killradio "Off With His Head" (www.killradiorevolution.com) Killer!

Kill Yourself "Soft Touch of Man E.P." (gringo records, PO Box 7546, nottingham, ng2, 4wt, uk) Killed me with greatness.

King-Cat Comics & Stories (POB 170535 SF, CA 94117) John Porcellino makes comics with such quiet dignity and such a lovely musicality that he is, in fact, the king of the cats.

King Radio "Are You the Sick Passenger?" (SpiritHouse) Genius alert!

Kingston Signals Volumes 1-3 DVD (DSR) If you have seen a lot of videos of contemporary reggae and dancehall you know that a lot of commercial releases are absolutely awful with terrible amateurish photography and no sense of the texture and excitement of being a part of a Jamaican concert. This series suffers from none of those shortcomings, as each beautifully shot documentary (following the artist and his people before, after and during the performances) provides all kinds of context. Not only do you see the beauty (and shortcomings) of Jamaica, but also the process and details involved with being a performer. Sometimes the audio during the concert footage is suspect, but even then the vibe of the event is captured (the Elephant Man concert sounds like shit but gives a good feel of what it is like to be on stage during a crazed dancehall performance). Volume one features a strange but intriguing piece on Yellowman, as well as Josey Wales and the aforementioned Elephant Man footage. Volume 2 has lots of behind the scenes dub production footage, including scenes with Buju Banton. Volume three has a wild party vibe with Sean Paul, Ninja Man and many others.

Kites/Prurient split CD (Load) This features five Kite tracks of minimal broken electronics that jolts you then two mighty Prurient blasts of jarring noise that shake you, then a collaboration between the band that seduces with soothing loveliness, maintaining that soft caress even when the song explodes into a hellstorm of static-destructo fury.

Kittie Live, House of Blues, Chicago, "Until The End" (Artemis) To the pumping fists of the crowd, the ladies of Kittie took the stage and performed a hair raising, soul slamming set. During the show, the bass player contorted her body wildly, the lead singer spit all over the stage, and the rhythm section was rock solid, keeping the band's well of havoc contained. Kittie churned out heavy hitting classics like "In Winter," and "What I Always Wanted" electrifying the audience, which had more teenage girls than I'd ever seen at a metal show (which is understandable, Kittie makes for some powerful, authoritative role models). They also played material from their new album, "Until The End," which is some of the best written stuff they've ever done. Originally the band's youth was a novelty, but it is becoming clear that they will persevere for a long time on the strength of their talent.

Klang "no sound is heard" (klang.org.uk) Kreepy.

The Knockout Pills "I+I+Ate" (Estrus) Intense and immediate garage punk that feels like every year of rock 'n' roll smashed with a mortar and pestle and jammed into a pink gelcap.

KnowMassive "MoodSwingSet" (Mood Swing 3172 East Ponce de Leon Ave Atlanta, GA 30079, moodswingrecords.com) This isn't backpack hip hop, it's straight up briefcase, because this guy goes to work! Smart stuff.

Krachimacher by Jim Campbell (angryjim.com) Campbell's thick lines and warm, sedate colors create a comic that is equally expressive and subdued, making this semi-surreal tale of high-school mundanity/magical realism/fantasy incredibly intriguing. While I'm a little disappointed that a high-end, lush, squarebound book is a serial rather than a self-contained story, I am intrigued enough to come back for more.

Krackheadz "That Wasn't Chicken" (Cargo Records, www.cargo-records.de) Super awesome trash rock that made me want to fight! This is so punk is shits razorblades. On stage, as part of the act.

Burton L. "Spy Life" (Omega Point omegapointrecords.com) "L" stands for L'genius!

la pieta "summer" (Contraphonic POB 2203 Chicago IL 60690) In Spanish I think their name means Lovely Pie. Or at least, it should.

Larsen "MUSM" (Larsen.to.it) This is so "art" I hung it on the wall instead of playing it.

Bill Laswell "Version 2 Version: A Dub Transmission" (ROIR) Surprisingly Laswell delivers thick ambient dubtronica again. I really thought he was going to go polka on this one. If you take the right drugs to make this music a good soundtrack than this new record will be an good excuse to buy some more of those drugs.

The Latest (Peer Pressure for Zombies Records POB 410325 SF, CA 94141-0325) Usually rootsy music seems kind of wholesome but this is totally creepy and decadent without seeming like they are trying to go low. The Latest are the greatest!

L.A. Tool and Die "Fashion for the Evildoer" (AAJ POB 241595 Charlotte NC 28224-1595) Comical quirky indie-bassoon rock that is for Dementoids and band geeks the world over.

Laughing Sky "Free Inside" (Tripwave Records 615 E. 6th St. #6 NYC, NY 10009) The sky isn't actually laughing, it is the army of flying, chuckling psychedelic gnomes that make it seem that way. And what are those gnomes playing on their ipods? This trippy, spooky CD!

Keith Lawrence and the Purple Circle "figures" (I Said!) I am the writing equivalent of speechless. Better than Elton John.

Leaving Trains "amplified pillows" (Steel Cage) A live album (drawing from several different performances) spanning the long, long career of this moody roots/trash band. Leaving Trains always reminded me of an upbeat Beasts of Bourbon and the nearly twenty years of concerts heard here confirm that they have always been a clever, soulful, messy crew. This is a great way to present a greatest hits record of a band with no hits, by showcasing them live and energetic in front of the few fans that were smart enough to dig them over the years.

Ted Leo + the Pharmacists "Shake the Sheets" (Lookout) I hope Leos are compatible with Aries, because after hearing this dreamy record I'm in love!

Leftover Crack "Fuck World Trade" (Alternative Tentacles Records, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA, 94141-9092) I agree with everything they are saying but they sound terrible saying it.

Le Force "Le Fortress" (Wantage) Le Fuck Yeah!

The Legendary Pink Dots "The Whispering Wall" (ROIR) This would be rejected by the Muzak company as too boring.

Le Scrawl "Eager To Please" (Life Is Abuse POB 20524 Oakland CA 94620) This is the funniest, strangest, most fucked up band, mixing ska with deathmetal vocals and Oi choruses one minute and hardcore with spaghetti western soundtracks another. Le Asskicking!

Le Tigre "The Island" (Universal), "Le Tigre," "From The Desk of Mr. Lady," "Feminist Sweepstakes," "Remix" (Le Tigre Records) Le Tigre make party musical for both a political party and a funky pajama dance party. Their new

record makes powerful, dire, political and social statements that you can hop around to. In addition to the new album, Le Tigre is reissuing on their own label all their previous releases, including scant, but fun bonus material (a remix here, some video footage there). I really dug all these records when they came out, and while it is legit to lament to loss of the rawness of the earliest stuff, there clearly is a coherence to everything in their body of work, from lo fi to major label.

Nick Leyton "From the Brighter Side of her Midnight Sun" (Scratch, scratchrecords.com) Ridiculous!

Life Is Bonkers "And Your Parents Don't Care" (WAD) Bonkerific!

The Lil' Hospital "I Wanna Believe" (Lost Friends Records, PO Box 48214, Denver, CO, 80204) This Lil' Hospital made me feel all better in a BIG way! Minimal but bringer of maximal smiles

Liquid Visions "From the Cube" (Funfundvierzig) Hard rocking German psychedelia that can trip out with the best but also bring you to earth to open your terrestrial perception.

Little Brazil "You And Me" (Mt. Fji POB 17855 Seattle WA 98127) Little Awful.

Living The Rock 'N' Roll Dream by Buzz Cason (Hal Leonard). Cason is a better musician than writer. He's got some great stories to tell, but you have to plow through his awkward sentence constructions to get to them. That said, this book is still recommended. Buzz Cason is a longtime fixture on the Nashville music scene, old enough to remember a time when it really was Music City and not just the Country & Western Capital Of The Universe. He wrote "Everlasting Love" (originally a hit in 1967 for Robert Knight, but probably better known through Carl Carlton's 1974 remake). In addition to being a successful songwriter, he's been consistently active as a musician, producer, and song publisher, rubbing elbows with everybody from Elvis Presley to Jimmy Buffett. Great late-night reading, but he does kinda gloss over one thing that I really wanted to know about - his retro-rockabilly band, B.C. & the Dartzz. The way I figure, any neo-rockabilly band with at least one member old enough to remember it has to be good...

LMP "Love Conquers Alda" (Polyholiday POB 305 Evanston IL 60204) The most beautiful music ever recorded.

The Local Division "pure electric light" (Aeronaut) Do the math - this Division multiplies the vibe of British 80s psyche, adds American shoe-gazer aesthetics, subtracts the shoe polish, and equals awesome.

The Locomotions "Teacher" ep (Big Neck) Made me dance with motions that were indeed loco! This rock n roll sounds so teenage it gave me acne!

Logh "The contractor and the assassin" (Bad Taste Records, Box 1243, 221 05 Lund, Sweden) Logh on to these lovely tunes that will make you happy to be sad.

Longwave "Life of the Party" (RCA) Darkly bright!

Lost Sounds "Future Touch," "Lost Sounds" (In The Red) Very interplanetary. Sounds like a punk-rock, dirty Memphis ELO, with synths all over. If we'd had something like this in '78, then new wave woulda broke in the States earlier than it did. Every Lost Sounds record is a spooky almost-rock opera.



Love Equals Death "4 Notes on a Dying Scale" (Pop Smear 2269 Chestnut St., #970 San Francisco CA 94123) This record is almost good. But it's not. It sort of rocks but then doesn't. The snotty singing just misses and the elements are all rocking but they don't come together. But I would listen to their next thing.

The Love Songs "All Branches No Trunks" (New Disorder) I hate these songs.

Love Story in Blood Red/Stanley Ross split 7" (Nodak POB 478885 Chicago IL 60647) Two pleasant but somewhat dull tunes from apparently two different acts.

The Lowbrow Reader magazine (243 W. 15th St. #3RW NYC 10011) This smart journal of comedy is awesome because it makes even the plague-fully unfunny (the TV show *Wings*, contemporary Jackie Mason) fascinating.

Lowlite "The Long Haul" (Mercy Seat) Should be called Lowdark because listening to this bummed me out.

The Low Skies "I Have Been To Beautiful Places" (Flameshovel 1658 N. Milwaukee #276 Chicago IL 60647) Made me sleepy.

Ludicra "Another Great Love Song" (Alternative Tentacles) This is actually emo-Black Metal?!!

Luke "Luke's Music Videos" DVD (MVD) Finally, a video for fans of big, giant asses who don't want to see all that distracting anal sex the porno videos are littered with. Apparently there is some music on this too, but I watched with the sound off.

Kenny Lynch "Nothing But the Real Thing - The Best of 1960-1969" (RPM) British pop singer Kenny Lynch is unknown in the U.S., and the bland 60s songs on here, sub-Bacharachian in every way, make it clear why. Shoots for the middle and hits.

The Mad Caddies "Songs In the key of Eh" (Fat) Super funtime party music! Whooo!

The Mad Violets "The Season of the Mad Violets" (Tripwave Records, tripwave@earthlink.net) Psychedulic.

The Mae Shi "zerrorbird" (SRC Records, PO Box 1190, Olympia, WA, 98507) This is the Mae Shi! Crazy fucking people music that burbles and burps and explodes like the Tasmanian Devil in his little hurricane funnel. Groovy but also anti-groovy, this is a must for fans of Load Records, chaotic sounds and appreciated headaches.

Maganpop "Mouthfeel" (Daemon) This is a record with good parts - flavorful guitar, tight drumming and distinct, impressive vocals. I hope I didn't just piss off the bass player.

Mahi Mahi "Wa No He" (Corleone POB 65 Providence RI 02901) Nothing fishy here - this is robot sex music that you don't have to be a robot to enjoy.

The Makers "Stripped" (Kill Rock Stars) This struts like a rooster and pulsates like a cock and squawks like a chicken.

Malkovich "A Criminal Record" (Reflections, reflectionsrecords.com) Stupid name, boring band.

Manda and the Marbles "angels with dirty faces" (Sick House) You'll lose your marbles dancing to this femme-fronted pop rock that recalls some of the best 80s New Wave pop/rock n roll vibes. One interesting note: they credit the Fast (actually they credit Fast Cars, a mistake from a KBD-type comp that bootlegged a Fast song) for writing "Kid's Just Wanna Dance," even though they just took the phrase and wrote a song around it. That interesting because they also use another Fast title, "Boys Will Be Boys," but don't credit it as a songwriting lift.

Mandarin "fast>future>present" (54 40 or Fight) Mandarinnovative! This is dreamy!

Mangina "At War with Black Metal" (Jeth Row 4739 Magazine, N.O. LA 70115) The musical smegma/discharge from this mangina has early Crüe cowbell and 80s hardcore insanity combining for a mongoloid-metallic massacre.

Manhandlers "s/t" (Criminal IQ) This nasty slurred-delivery, 1.5 chord all-woman punk gave me a rock 'n' roll castration - and I liked it!

Marah "20,000 Streets Under the Sky" (Yep Roc) Marah-velous!

Marked Men "On The Outside" (Dirtnap) Power pop meets frat rock and drinks it under the table.

The Marlboro Chorus "Entangled," "Youth Medium" (Future Appletree, PO Box 191, Davenport, IA, 52805-0191) "Entangled" is pop-tastic! And "Youth Medium" is pop-tastic-er!

Maserati/Cinememica/We Versus the Shark split CD (Hello Sir) Three bands that might as well be one band as far as I'm concerned; they are all a little good in a scramble, experimental, edgy way, but none are intense enough that I would care to remember which band was which.

The Matches "The Show Must Go Off" DVD (Kung Fu) I have a match for you...your music and my ass.

Cerys Matthews "Cockahoop" (Rough Trade) I would jump through cocka-hoops for her!

MDC "Magnus Dominus Corpus (Sudden Death) Well, one positive about eight years of Bush/Cheney is hardcore can return to its days of glory. MDC is arguably more focused and disgusted on this record than ever. Certainly angry hardcore from a middle-aged man should be uncomfortable and weird but the fact is that even grown ups are so disgusted with the state of the nation that the the Mr. Dictors of the world, instead of spending their aging years shaking fists at those damn kids, can make anti-Bush, anti-cop, anti-Nazi, anti-corporate screeds as potent as a 14 year old. This also features a musical salute to Tim Yo that becomes a diatribe against corporate punk a little too quickly (not that making fun of Rancid for working with Pink isn't valid, I just wanted Tim to get more props).

The Meanwhiles "the nights rewind" (Duct Tape Productions, www.meanwhiles.com) Don't wanna be MEAN but I hope it's a long WHILE before I even have to listen to this boring shit again.

Measure - The Year In Music (216 Columbia St. #2A Brooklyn NY 11231) This compiles writing about indie-rock from zines and websites into one thick giant book, and though it's not the most irreverent or funny look at 2003 music, it also isn't pure rock critic, as it features some of the goofier voices in rock journalism (Jim Testa, the *Scram!Garage* and *Beat* family, and even Frankie Chan, who does his band interviews in comic form).

Medications (Dischord) Better than a bootleg flu shot.

Me First and the Gimme Gimmes "Ruin Johnny's Bar Mitzvah" (Fat) I will never be too amused by the sthick of covering unlikely tunes (Styx, Tanya Tucker) as pop punk, but playing at a Bar Mitzvah is kind of funny. My yarmulka is off to them.

Men In Fur (hhbttm) Ostensibly these are all songs about animals, and the Casio-keyboard sound is pretty good, but some of the songs are only pretty tangential in their animalcentricity. But it's better than a record that doesn't even try to be all about animals, that's for sure.

Menomena "I Am The Fun Blame Monster!" (menomena.com) Man oh man is this boring.

The Mentally III "Gacy's Place: The Undiscovered Corpses" (Alternative Tentacles) American punk and hardcore in the late 70s/early 80s was really about community, as little d.i.y. societies popped up and participants theoretically supported the scenes across regions in the country. But it was also about freedom of expression and fun and outrageousness and that sometimes precluded community. For all I know the Mentally III were guys who were at every punk show and traded zines and looked out for the scene. But I don't know, because as far as I knew nobody knew who they were and they never played out live and no one even knew their real names. They released the title track to this CD in 1979 and that became one of the legendary Chicago punk singles, with its primitive, overmodulated, messy production and more

importantly, with its absolutely offensive subject matter (Gacy was a local clown who raped and murdered young boys and then stored their bodies under his house). The record had years of life, playing on the college radio punk shows and becoming *the* punk record in town (the first pressing was apparently ultra-rare but for a while there were tons of copies of what must have been a second pressing flooding stores). As reviewed a few issues back they reformed and recorded a few years ago and obscurely released that material (as well as playing "live" on *Chic-A-Go-Go*, *Roctober's* local cable access kids dance show). But this CD is track after track of vicious, bloody, absurd punk recorded around the time of the original single, some in a studio and some in a basement with vocals recently added (and amazingly recorded as shitty and magically as the original batch). Awesomely, nearly every track maintains the theme that the band is made up of mental ward patients in a "Padded Cell," wearing a "Split-Crotch Straight Jacket" and having sex with dogs. There's a lot of (believe it or not) playful anti-Semitism and incredibly offensive imagery. In other words, this is the reissue of the millennium (despite mostly never being issued). Personally I never really laughed at serial killer jokes, but this stuff is far from a joke. May they never be cured!

Metalux "Waiting for Armadillo" (Load Records, PO Box 35, Providence, RI, 02901) Richly sonic and seductively disturbing, this is the music that the bad girls at an all robot high school would play in their garage band.

Midlake "bamnan and slivercork" (Bella Union, 14 Church Street, Twickenham, UK) The music is so grand and layered that the musicians sound exhausted and spent.

Midnight Thunder Express "s/t" (Cargo Records, www.cargo-records.de) This is a near perfect trashrock car crash. If you were making a Hollywood movie and you wanted to portray a post-Estrus garage/Metal rock band this is exactly how you would make them sound, and the uptight people in the movie would be like, "Oh my...." but Rodney Dangerfield, if he wasn't dead, would start dancing and say something like, "Loosen up grandma."

Million Dollar Marxists "Give it a Name" (Gearhead) Like the Pagans or the Dead Boys with some dumb KISS and funny Hives thrown in, this is as perfect an example of the bands on this label as I could imagine.

Mindflayer "It's Always 1999" (Load) Should be called Mindfucker, 'cause this fucked with my head, man! An oscillating, eviscerating explosion of the future pod people.

Ming & Ping "Mingping.com" (Omega Point) Should be called King and King, because these beautiful Chinese brothers rule over the kingdom of absurdist robo-synth lush dance music

The Minor Times "Making Enemies" (Level-Plane) Should be called "The Major Asskickers!"

Mirrors "Another Nail in the remodeled coffin" (ROIR) Absurdist lost Cleveland power pop from decades past reissued (though few knew it was ever issued) with tons of bonus material. These songs are twisted filets of comical, absurdist, ridiculously catchy punk-iest dance songs with vocals that sound like a little kid teasing his sister. Cleveland may not have the cleanest water but it sure seems to imbue its drinkers with rockitis.

Missouri Compromise "Creation of Maine" (Roydale) Why do they think anyone would want to listen to this? I can feel bad all by myself.

Miss TK and the Revenge "XOXO" (Gern Blandsten, gern blandsten.com) Sexy in a way that makes a man feel gay even as he is being sonically caressed by a woman. But disco punk can do that to you.

The Misunderstood (UT Records/Ugly Things Magazine - 3707 Fifth Avenue #145, San Diego, California, 92103 www.ugly-things.com) If you want to know the EXHAUSTIVE, leave no stone unturned, story, consult Ugly Things, issues # 20 and # 21. Mad Mike Stax will put you straight. Me, I'm a little slow, so, excuse me, if you will. The Misunderstood were a hot little Garage band from California who took a notion to relocate to London, where they released some amazing singles (I'm the complete bastard wot owns one of 'em), became a popular live

attraction, and, eventually, took on English members. The Draft Board came-a-knockin', so the remaining Americans had to hightail it back to the states, or risk being sent to other exciting foreign locations (Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam...). In the meantime, the band recorded some fuckin' genius moody, bluesey Garage Punk in the Animals/Them mode, eventually going Psychedelic, with group member, Glenn Campbell (No, not THAT one, but I'm sure he would have been proud to call such a prodigious steel guitar player kin) raising the bar for Yardbirds-influenced Psychedelic excursions. Their career was cut unmercifully short, and what little material that existed has been largely unavailable (barring the odd UK reissue) for decades. This comp, the first release from Ugly Things' own label, U.T., rectifies that situation, and at a price you can afford (used copies of earlier reissues will not come cheap). The listener can witness their evolution from an American Garage band, enamored with the tuff R'n'B sounds laid down by their Brit counterparts (while they knew, of course, it all sprang from American music) to actually going over to London and influencing the burgeoning Psych scene over there! As the title suggests, these tracks were taken directly from original surviving acetates, but don't be put off by that. The sound quality is still surprisingly clear and full. Besides, if you collect this stuff, you already know most of these bands didn't frequent the Capital Tower. These aren't just the germs of an idea, either. Each track sounds release-ready (O.K., so it took almost 40 years to do so, but it's not like they were giving away free copies of these acetates with every purchase of "Whipped Cream and Other Delights," is it?), from the Ray Charles via The Animals "Bury My Body" with the full Garage treatment (Gospel Punk?) to the unbridled lust of "She Got Me," as dirty and dangerous a ditty as Van Morrison never wrote, to great Blues-Punk (And other things Jon Spencer and Jack White are NOT) takes on "Got Love if You Want It" and "Who's Been Talking," and the early rumblings of British Psychedelia, by way of a bloodless coup by The Yanks, armed with guitars instead of guns (Hendrix, you'll recall, had already done military service, so he had nothing to lose by relocating to England at the very same time). "Children of The Sun," which appeared on *Nuggets #2* (Another brilliant collection all you Garage Nazis should thank Mr. Stax for his part in creating, instead of moaning "But, I have most of this stuff!") appears here in its raw stage, which, surprisingly, isn't that different from the better known version. The phoenix was building its own fiery nest by then, but how brilliant did she blaze! "My Mind" has an ANGRY Eastern flair (The East was, and is, pretty pissed off, too, y'know), somewhere between "Eight Miles High" and The Chocolate Watchband at their most psychedelic, while "Find The Hidden Door" is a savage fuzztone and steel guitar driven nightmare Dynamic, driven and catchy as all get out. The extremities of echoes and effects, that nearly killed many a great record in the day, only serve to enhance The Misunderstood's talents. Though they were still quite young, they'd already learned to harness what would have been utter chaos in lesser hands. This is HARD Psych, and there's no room for navel gazing on their agenda. "I Unseen" is a mournful take on themes established on Yardbirds classics like "Still, I'm Sad" and "Happenings Ten Years Time Ago," not unlike "Lay Down and Die, Goodbye" by the early Alice Cooper Group (during their brief tenure as "The Nazz"), singer, Rick Brown (soon to be drafted, necessitating the groups' split) actually singing about being dead and looking out from beyond the grave. Brown, band, and listener alike embark on a very scary journey that'd bum out the average trippers, but surely would've done Keith Relf proud. Buy this, and watch out for more releases, cut from the same cloth of the coat of many colors that is Ugly Things magazine itself, on The U.T. label (Trademark of Quality).

Mob Stereo "Other Stepped In," "Too Young to Go Steady" (Dollar Record Records) I hated these records in 1991 when they were released as 10,000 different indie 7" girl band singles.

The Mockers "The Emperor Strikes Out" (POB 25812 Virginia Beach, VA 23450) If a video single by a power pop band about Bush's evil ways didn't win the election for Kerry I don't know what could have?

Model A "Transmission Lost" (www.modelamusic.com) I'd give this model a B-.

Mofo! zine (Apdo, 22004, 08080 Barcelona, Spain) A gloriously sleazy trash culture magazine that is so awesome that it didn't bother me that I can't read Spanish. Comic

books, rock 'n' roll, motorcycles, detective books and all the other shit that makes life worth living get the ace treatment, with nice layouts and, if the editor's tastes are any indication, good writing.

momentum impakto "hyvä bändi liveinä" (Konnex Records, Mauschbacher Steig 35 a, D-13437, Berlin) Sexually deviant.

Monkey Power Trio "Hacking Through the Tentacles of Despair" (monkeypowertrio.com) The Monkees meet Cream.

The Monorail "a whole new city" (Milquetoast) Forget the "Mo" and the "rail," this record is all about the "no," as in NO!!!! Don't play that record again.

Monoshock "Running Ape-like from the Backwards Superman: 1989-1995" (S-S) During 90s Pacific Northwest Nuevo Garage (plus that grunge stuff) days Monoshock made records that rocked hard but looked past the post-hardcore guitar rock of many of the Estrus bands. They created tough loud music that felt like a cloud of psycho-noise surrounding you rather than a bar band rocking you. This is an excellent comp, serving as a primer/best of/rarity/unreleased/requiem.

"Moose on the Loose - Finnishgaraoke" compilation (Myrmecoleo) The Mutants, the Flaming Sideburns and the awesomely named Festermen are the highlights of this Japanese compilation of Finnish Garage/Surf/Punk. You'll dig it from start to Finnish!

Morning 40 Federation (morning40.com) Eclectic prank party music that is genre-less and naughty and fun.

Motel Creeps "Pleasanties In The Parlor" I sure disliked that Echo and the Bunnymen euro dress up music in the 80s. I'm so glad its back.

The Mother's Anger (Dionysus POB 1975 Burbank CA 91507) Strange, desperate rock that yearns and damages and disturbs.

MOTO "Spiritual Slouch (Shit Sandwich) MOTO is the go-to mofol!

Mouserocket (Empty POB 12301 Portland OR 97212) Rodent pop with rough, beautiful edges and nasty, powerful roots. This sounds like T Rex trying to make 90s underground rock yet somehow failing to be boring in any way.

MTV2 Presents: Shortlist 2004 Nominees compilation (Razor and Tie) Now That's What I Call Hipster Music!

Mudville "the glory of man is not in vogue" (Slurry) So named because there is no joy in their music. They are not actually dreary, they merely simulate dreariness with slow grooves and electronic music that sounds like funeral marches with beats. However the groove and the spooky vocals become enchanting once you brain slows down to this music's pace.

Adam Mugavero "Breath" (adamugavero.com) Adam is a songwriter who has the voodoo to make me misty eyed.

Munly (Alternative Tentacles) Triumphantlly dreary.

My Fat Irish Ass! zine (POB 65391 WDC 20035) Fuck! If anti-Bush pornographic altered *Family Circus* comics couldn't turn the election towards the Democrats than I don't know what would have.

Lisa Mychols "Sweet Sinsations" (Rev-Ola) 60s girl pop meets 80s bubblegum meets high gloss 2004 production sheen. Lisa sings about boys, listening to the radio and mildly rocking (at one point she even says "oi. oi." with periods instead of exclamation marks). This is a real joy.

My Revenge! "Less Plot, More Blood" (Thorp Records, PO Box 6786, Toledo OH 43612) Hardcore that bleeds not only from pit wars but from skate park wounds and from angry band practices.

Nagg (Dollar Record Records) Riffing, rocking rock 'n' roll that sounds like AC/DC if they formed in Cleveland in 1974 with a girl singing. Absolutely exce-fucking-lent.

"the nail vol. 2" compilation (Tooth and Nail Records) Label sampler from Tooth and Nail, and you have to admit, love 'em or hate 'em, this label has a diverse lineup, from super hard to super swooshy.

Name Taken "Hold On" (Fiddlerrecords.com) Take the rest, too!

Napalm Death "Leaders Not Followers" Part 2" (Century) A covers album of mostly 80s Metal gods and punk legends, Barney's vocals are a little less Cookie Monster when covering this material, but it's still a very Napalm Death record, and it's good to hear them tackle Kreator, Hellhammer, and even Dayglo Abortions.

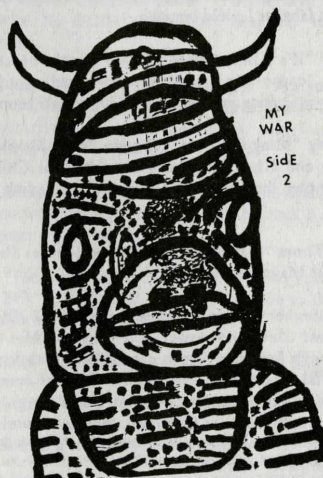
Napuknuti dj zdena "zadnja luknja na svirali" (Slusaj Najasnije) Napuknuti made me bust a nut! Dub-balicious!

Narc! Zine (10824 SE Oak #217 Milwaukie OR 97222) You know a humor zine isn't too funny when it feels clever for putting down William Hung.

The Narrows "Alligator" (Wantage) Life is too short for music this slow.

Nautical Almanac "Rooting For the Microbes" (Load) The Alvin and the Chipmunks of the contemporary noisecore scene

Necro "the pre-Fix for Death" (Psycho-Logical) Obviously all rocking white rap is absurd, even moreso than black rap which is usually pretty ridiculous no matter how good it is. Compared to most Nu-Metal raprock this is a masterpiece - Necro is old enough to rap like an 80s emcee (a badass mean rapper from the late 80s, not a fun party rapper from the early 80s) and his formula for adding Metal to Hip Hop is more natural than the awfulness of all those screaming, jumping up and down Limp Biz-kids. He also manages to work in Kosher butchering laws into his insult rap, and he has some anti gay lyrics to show that he's down with the brothers. This is his high-end crossover record, with metal guest stars from Slipknot and Hatebreed, as well as awesome cover art from the guy who did Death's "Scream Bloody Gore" LP cover.



nedette and thom "summerland" (kill rock stars, pmb 418, 120 ne state avenue, olympia, washington, 98501) Lovelier than lovely. Perhaps the lovelier-est.

the needles "s/t" (?) So much rock it hurt my cock. If this was the bar band at your bar you bar would intoxicate you with RAWK!

Need New Body "UFO" (File 13 Records POB 804868 Chicago IL 60680) I need a new booty because I broke mine shaking it to this fucked artschool jazzpunkdiscofolk music album. This is from outer space.

Never Ending Summer by Allison Cole (Alternative Comics) Cole's lovely comic tells a tale of college age romance and heartbreak and drama that has the distance to recognize the mundane, unimportant nature of such inner conflicts but also the closeness to realize the poetic magnitude of such matters at that odd juncture between

pretend-adulthood and real adulthood. Cole's characters are visually faceless, ghostlike creatures, which allows the reader to feel that there is a universality to this even though the story is so specific and rings so true with a very distinct voice. Of course, that Summer would end, as it did or will for all of us, but this is the kind of documentation that makes it immortal.

Casey Neill "Memory Against Forgetting" (Daemon) Inspiring spare coffeehouse music that confidently draws on Irish Folk tradition and features a clear, impressive voice and stellar production. This may not be everyone's cup of Irish coffee, but few could dismiss the quality and talent this showcases.

new blind nationals "bury the pattern" (Sparkler Records, PO Box 11226, Milwaukee, WI, 53211) This record is so aching with intense, rocking desperation (intentionally, not pathetically) that if it asked me for a dollar I would give one to it.

9 on Bali "Gist ep" (Wanted Records, 9onbali@earthlink.net) A lot of bali-hoo - fun even when it's tragic!

Nine Pound Hammer "Kentucky Breakdown" (Acetate 1221 S. Burnside Ave. LA, CA 90019) It's been a long time since we heard the damaged hillbilly redneck punk of Nine Pound Hammer, the evil version of Southern Culture on the Skids. The last time I saw them play live (almost ten years ago) they Dixie fried me and this new record keeps the grease boiling. This is downright ugly and is good for humans and critters.

Ninja Gun "Smooth Transitions" (Barracuda Sound POB 11994 Gainesville, FL 32604) Ninja Gunk.

924 Gilman compiled by Brian Edge (MRR POB 460760 SF, CA 94146-0760) This brick of a book documents the history of Gilman Street, the all ages venue associated with *Maximumrockroll* zine and its movers and shakers. As an aging hardcore snob I'm required to point out that since this book begins in the mid-80s everything within these pages occurs in my estimation after all good punk was over. That said, this collection of photos, essays, and archival documents is an impressive, comprehensive achievement. Also nice is the inclusion of old *MRR* columns by Tim Yo, the Hugh Hefner of the magazine who passed away a few years back but still has a voice in this book. Creating an idealistic address in San Francisco to serve as a performance space/youth center/library/whatever, and still keep a punk edge (as opposed to becoming a hippie commune) is impressive, and here a number of disparate, often cynical, voices contribute to explaining how this has gone down, and changed, over the years. Because it doesn't have a single voice or a rigid structure this book doesn't stand as one of the great punk books, but because of the inclusion of so much archival, primary source material (newsletters, flyers, legal documents) this is an important historical tome about a fascinating place.

No Doctors "E.R.P. Saints" (No Sides), "Hunting Season" (LP, Cock of the Rock POB 14132 Chicago, IL 60614, CD, Go Johnny Go, gojohnnygo.com) These guys are such fucking geniuses that one time I was at a battle of the bands and they lost so I trashed the place. In my mind, with Wolf Eyes oddly (but gloriously) getting semi-mainstream attention No Doctors is now crowned (by me) the Kings of the Noisy Rocking Underground.

Naz Nomad & the Nightmares (Dionysus) This reissue of a historical rarity is a must have and a don't need. The awesomely good news is that this obscure 1984 LP being reissued here is actually by the Damned under a fake garage rock name and features covers of Garage/psyche/frat classics made famous by Paul Revere and the Raiders, Electric Prunes, Human Beinz, the Troggs and Kim Fowley. The bad news is that if you remember the 1980s garage revival you remember how bad all the records sounded, with clean production and everything done kinda wrong no matter how much the hearts were in the right places. Captain Sensible's dance record was more garage than this.

None More Black "Lousd About Loathing" (Sabot POB 28 Gainesville FL 32602) Few More White. To be fair, this rocks harder at times than most Fat Records bands, due in part to impressively damaged vocal chords and big guitar sounds.

Nonpoint "Recoil" (Lava) Nonlistenable.

Noodle Muffin "Regime Change" (POB 25697 LA, CA 90025) Amazingly an anti-Bush indie rock album didn't tilt the election. That said, this has some pretty funny and funky tracks and I'm definitely not going to vote for Bush in 2008 after hearing this.

North Side Kings "Organizing Our Neighborhood" (Thorp Record) There's a video online of a guy from NSK punching out Danzig, which makes it hard to listen to this and not think about punching the littlest Misfit. That said, this is awesome music for beating up short body builders. It also recognizes the absurdity of itself, as this music while hard and pummeling also seems to know it is being meatheaded and finds that funny. I would not fight this band.

No Woman No Cry by Rita Marley with Hettie Jones (Hyperion) There have been many books, documentaries and other media about the life of Bob Marley, some awful, some brilliant, and most solid but unsatisfying. One reason the King of Reggae has his tale told poorly too often is the lack of perspective, especially of those around him with profound investment. This book fills in many gaps, as we hear Mrs. Marley's side of the story, in which she certainly wants to lionize her Lion, she also is willing to tell it like it is about shortcomings. And more importantly, she wants to tell the story of *herself* (as she says in the introduction, when she hears a Marley song on the radio she not only hears him, but because she was a member of the I-Threes, his backup singers, she hears her own voice). Co-written with a woman who knows what it is like to be married to an iconic, difficult black man (Jones was the wife of LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka), the voice Mrs. Marley expresses here is warm, strong and real.

Noxagt "The Iron Point" (Load) Nox my sox off! Strangely pummeling Norwegian weird rock that saws your brain in half.

NRBQ "One In A Million DVD (MVD) Shot at some Canadian festival in the late 80s this showcases a band that was perhaps a decade removed from their most amazing creative days, but the fact that this band has never lost any spirit, heart or soul means that this show was as good as one ten years in the past or in the future. Terry Adams is well documented here as the frontman behind the keyboards, calling off songs and jumping around like a Mexican bean, even though he rarely sings lead. This is certainly not a brilliant concert film - the audience is not palpable, the editing is rudimentary and the there's not a real feel of the concert - but it is a great document of a band that always has fun playing. I once saw them play between the Replacements, who were disgusted with rock and were doing their last show, and a Chicago band that still thought they were on their way to the top, but were starting to wear after a few setbacks. And between them was this band, older and more wizened than either act sandwiching them, that still got joy from making music for the people.

Oakley Hall "s/t" (Bulb Records, 4609 Hunt Rd, Adrian, MI 49221) There's a few bands out there combining folk and country with psychedelic tints and bold ideas, but they usually are pretty fucking serious and dreary. This is just a fun assed hootenanny with wacky energy and joyful noises.

Ogner Stump's One Thousand Sorrows by A. Goldfarb (Wonderella.com) Strange lyrical comics that I predict will become a new bible for worshippers of the future.

The Old-Timerz "demonstration mini-cd" (Business Deal) Toilet sand titties and fucking rock n roll...and that's only the first three songs. By the time I finished listening to this I was dumber, scummier, and happier.

"Old Tyme Lemonade" compilation (Hospital Productions, 9 Carol Court, Providence, RI, 02909) Providence is now the capitol of fucked genius bands and this comp captures Dropdead, Meerk Puffy, Mindflayer, Lightning Bolt and other visionary chaos bringers in a very pretty package. This record will improve your life.

A One Man Band Extravaganza VHS (Launchpad Incident) Lo-fi video of three wild one man bands (Lowebow, Rocket Craig, a teenage Tennessee newcomer Jeffrey Novak) making some glorious noise in Memphis.

One man bandism is about bare bones innovation and the technical shortcomings of this video don't take away from the genius of these gentlemen. This has as much soul as Memphis bbq and as much nasty as Elvis' Umatic video porn collection.

Only Crime "To the Nines" (Fat Wreck Chords) So good it should be a crime. If only.

Only In Dreams "under the burning sky" (Pop Smear) Only as a drink coaster.

On Subbing The First Four Years by Dave (Microcosm 5307 N Minnesota Ave Portland OR 97217-4551) This book collects several years of diary entries that Dave previously collected in a zine. In his mid-twenties, frustrated with his life in low-end retail and ready for an "adult" job, Dave becomes a substitute teacher in the Portland public school system. Due to his lack of training and credentials he is deemed only qualified to handle the students that one would assume require the most training and credentials: students with learning disabilities, severe behavior problems and "special" needs. Dave's diary entries, like his stints in the various classrooms, are short and rarely profound. He is unable to spend enough time to make any big difference in any young person's education, but with his intelligence, attitude, humor and heart he is usually able to make some of the kids have positive experiences with the "cool" short-term teacher. Of course there are tales of totally fucked up situations, caused by both the faulty wiring in the students' heads and the faulty bureaucracy in the Portland school system, but most of the entries are really about tiny moments of triumph or failure, smaller than most would deem notable. Had this been originally written as a book it would have more of an arc and some entries would be extrapolated, but for a journal of a job it seems very appropriate that there is an element of repetitive monotony to the structure.

Operation S (Broken POB 460402 SF, CA 94146-9402) Punky French new wave revivalists playing desperate, naughty music in the language of love. The operation was a success but they left a scalpel in my tract.

"Organelle" compilation (Save Your Servant/Tiberius/State Bird) All these bands can't be bad, but it's funny how a poorly organized comp can make it seem that way. Hover emerged as the best of the bunch, but not easily.

Orso (Perishable POB 57-8804 Chicago IL 60657-8804) The resonating musical heart of this creates music that sounds like it could almost be played on a new age mellow radio station despite having a spirit of genuine oddness, borne of weird ethnic jazz directions and years of indie experimentation. But seriously, this sounds new agey, and that's a hard bar to hurdle and still be diggable.

Merrill Osmond "Back In Black" DVD (Wienerworld) The big-headed Osmond brother is looking tough in leather and long hair as he rocks out for a mostly elderly and family crowd, clapping along land digging the show. Merrill has a great, gritty rock voice, does a few moves from his bubblegum heyday and has sexy girl backup singers, yet maintains a wholesome vibe through this greatest hits concert. You, like I, will dig his takes on "Down by the Lazy River," "Yo Yo," "One Bad Apple," "Crazy Horses" and even a medley from the Osmonds Mormon concept LP "The Plan" (for which the crowd goes as nuts as older Mormons go).

Osnova Skola "Sulud III" (Listen Loudest!) A rock wolf tearing off my skin!

Otep "House of Secrets" (Capitol) Oh. Tepid.

Outrageous Cherry "Our Love Will Change the World" (Rainbow Quartz) Outrageously Awful.

Ova/Happy Mothers Day I Can't Read split CD (Freedom From POB 582391 Mpls MN 55458) Two chaotic apeshit bands. The crazier motherfuckers of the two are certainly HMDICR, as their music actually sounds like devils or mole people torturing subterranean slaves. But Ova's nutty sound explosions, a slightly ROCK-er version of the Providence drum and guitar art-freakout movement, is also genius and jarring.

Oval-Teen "Yorkville, IL" (Bi Fi) This is a rarities compilation of about 600 short pleasant pop tunes from this prolific band. You are guaranteed to find some of this spare, flat-sung, amiable music pretty charming. A must grab for pop-anistas.

Overlord "The World Takes" (Storm Tower POB 15791 Philadelphia PA 19103) Undergood.

Pain In The Big Neck compilation (Big Neck) New tracks from the trashiest bands on earth including a nuclear explosion from Jack Jimmy Hoodlums, a nasty slice of scum rock pie from the Moo Rat Fingers, some real live rock n roll from the Baseball Furies and some haunted house soundtrack material from Lost Sounds. As far as I'm concerned, Big Neck is Big Leggy!

PAL "Elmhurst 12/14/03" (www.palpalpal.net), "Audio Peace Treaty" (Carterco POB 13031 Chicago, IL 60613) They should be called PAK, because these innovative, challenging, somewhat pretty, dire songs are Personal Ass Kickers!

Jeff Parker "The Relatives" (Thrill Jockey, box 08038 Chicago, IL 60608) Sure this CD is awesome, but when a dude can do this much different stuff isn't he being a bit of a showoff - OK, you're a super music genius, we get it.

The Patsys "Beneath You" w/ "Gone," "In and Out with You" b/w "Teenage Kicks" (Umbrella Records, 2410 Summit St. Columbus, OH, 43202) These are so garage I stored my lawn mower and ladder in them.

Pattern is Movement "the (im)possibility of longing" (Noreaster, 2406 Phillips Dr. Alexandria, VA 22306) Dramatic and dynamic, this Movement moved me.

The Paybacks "Harder and Harder" (Get Hip Recordings, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA, 15317) Wendy Case's Paybacks are one of Detroit's nastiest garage bands and I have always been impressed by them, but it wasn't until this album that I realized that Ms. Case can get Joan Jett-esque grit-soul in to her vocals. Everyone in this band is so good at what they do that this aches with rocks.

The Peelers "The Get Down Syndrome" (Orange Records) Zesty! That's a culinary pun - "zest" is made out of citrus peels, and "zest" also means...ah fuck it. This fucking rocks and rockin' funks!

Peepshow III DVD (Fat) Videos are cool! The best one on this DVD is Nerf Herder being super nerds about *Star Trek* and some crazy animation, including a NOFX anti-Bush cartoon.

Pelican (Cock of the Rock) Mighty atmosphere rock that sounds like the noise various inhabitants of Monster Island have made just before attacking Godzilla. Especially if, say, Mothra could play guitar.

People Chasing People "the dayglow light of sleep" (miquetostrecords.com) People annoying at least one person.

Perverso by Rich Tommaso (Alternative Comics) I have praised Tommaso in these pages before, and I really think he is emerging as one of my favorite storytellers in the comix not only because of his boldness of narrative but also because of his efficiency and thrift. While the tales he tells certainly represent a vision of the comix as a literary medium that exists in the wake of the post 80s alternative comix movement, but he also appreciates the length, shape and size of real, live old horror and romance comic books. This story is about a seemingly good guy who works, not exactly happily but certainly with a personal investment, in the world of Irving Klaw-era porn. While certainly filthy the story is never distasteful in an Abu Ghraib way. Tommaso makes obvious visual quotes of Dan Clowes, but his real nod to the "Eightball" writer is the way he believes comix is a perfect short story medium. But he isn't a Clowes-clone. Compared to the poignant "Caricature" (the most similar Clowes piece to this) here we have a downright action packed, X-rated, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode.

The Phoenix Foundation "We Need to Make Some Changes" (Newest Industry) Instead of rising again this is one dully burning bird that I wish would just lay down.

Phonocaptors "Call It What You Want" (Pro-Vel POB 5182 St. Louis MO 63139) Glamalicious rawk that goes "woo woo" and means it.

Phosphorescent "The Weight of Flight" (Warm Supercomputer Records, PO Box 1423, Athens, GA, 30603) Mildly psychedelic singer-songwriter stuff that at times is so sensitive as to be downright creepy.

Piano Drag "Possessions and Positions" (One Cell POB 5332 Fullerton CA 92838) The greatness of this weird, all-over-the-fucking-place, delicate/damaging record gave me heart palpitations.

"Pick A Winner" CD/DVD compilation (Load POB 35 Providence RI 02901) If you think making godawful (or godglorious) noise is easy than check out the Load roster who make insane fucking rackets by utilizing incredible skills and dexterity. This CD compilation features gods of apeshit audio Lightning Bolt, Wolf Eyes and Pink & Brown as well as many other geniuses, who then prove their homogeneity by collaborating on crazy fucking videos on the DVD.

Pidgeon "from gutter w/love" (Absolutely Kosher 1412 10th St. Berkeley CA 94710) If the singer didn't sound like my timid, elderly Aunt Frieda this would be awesome. Really good music -dynamic, intense and strange - is compromised by nasal vocals made possible by those goddamn emo kids. Even when he starts screaming he sounds like Aunt Frieda yelling at Uncle George, which isn't exactly intimidating.

The Pilgrims "Telling Youth...The Truth" (LRL Records) The compiles 21 tracks from an early 60s Christian rock band, playing beat/garage and even Shadows type stuff, all with straightforward preachy gospel lyrics. The sound on these is pretty hollow (apparently the good recording studios were reserved for sinners) but the songs are solid and catchy, and I didn't know there was Christian rock in 1961. If you dig rocking teens that liked R&B and Jesus you can keep their mission alive by seeking out this righteous document.

Pinback "Sunner In Abaddon" (Touch and Go) For some reason this sounds a lot like Pat Benatar to me, does anyone else hear that?

Pines "s/t" (Grey Flight Records, 16458 Bolsa Chica St. #409, Huntington Beach, CA, 92649) This is so heavy it gave me a hernia!

Pinkeye d'gekko "Dry Clothes for the Drowning" (Force MP) This isn't a CD...it's a honky tonk party burned into plastic! Woo!

Pinkie "Sharon fussy" (Planting Seeds POB 64665 Virginia Beach, VA 23467) If this was any more boring you would need a prescription to buy it.

The Piranhas "Piscis Clangor" (In The Red) This record made me feel like a pinball that just got the high score on a machine with broken glass on all the bumpers. This ate my flesh in seconds, and my skeleton appreciated how it sounded. This is scarier than when I saw *Phantasm* on late night TV when I was seven

Pirx the Pilot "Famous in 47 States" (New Disorder 115 Bartlett SF, CA 94110) It's time for the Pirx-olators! This is weirdly wonderful; punk music that doesn't sound particular punk, yet invokes all your favorite 70s and 80s weirdo bands. Getting to hear good CDs like this is one of the best pirx to my job!

Pistol Grip "Tear It All Down" (BYO POB 67609 LA, CA 90067) Shot me and gripped me with punk awesomeness!

Pitty Sing "demons, you are the stars in cars 'til I die" (Or 37 W. 17th St. suite 5W NYC 10011) There are a lot of bands out now making retro-John Hughes teen movie soundtrack music but this is the most sincere, realest English 80s recreationist project I've heard yet. This is actually good.

Pixeltan "Get Up" ep (DFA) This made me dance like I was in a downtown New York City club pretending to be a woman in 1982.

Pläns Pläns "Plays Herman Melville's Moby Dick" (See, seerecords.com) Genuinely strange music that evokes more of a special ed class than a high school literature whale reading experience. Strange, challenging, tasty blurps and doo dahs make for a record that sounds like a séance to bring back the ghost of your craziest uncle.

Plush "Underfed" (Sea Note/Drag City) This music would even make Hitler love.

P-Nissarna "Flumpungar" (Swedish Punk Classics) This career retrospective opens with standard, but fun, punk songs from 1979. In 1981 they try to be more experimental, and gain some urgency despite keeping it spare and not particularly loud. In 1982 they have managed to avoid hardcore kind of, and even have a sensitive tune. The 1999 reunion material is pretty rocking and youthful and is certainly harder and louder and faster than the original stuff (but not quite as flavorful. Live tracks from 1981 are the highlights here, as they demonstrate the more unique aspects of this bands restrained but distinct punk.

The Poet & the Dragon "Live...Somewhere In This World" (Cargo/Rock Treasures) I hate poetry but dig dragons so I'm a bit torn over this, I mean, it sounds fucking awful, but then again, I really like dragons.

Point Lime Plane "Shhhh Boom" b/w "Curse Chorus Curse" (S-S), "Smoke Signals" (Skin Graft. Skingraftrecords.com) Point Line Music play keyboard and drums and are scary. This is the music the four horseman will be playing on their ipods when they gallop us into the apocalypse.

The Poison Arrows (File 13 POB 804868 Chicago IL 60680) Primitive electronics and futuristic art brains combine to make a time machine flux.

The Power and the Glory "Call Me Armageddon" (Deathwish) A metal punk karate explosion!

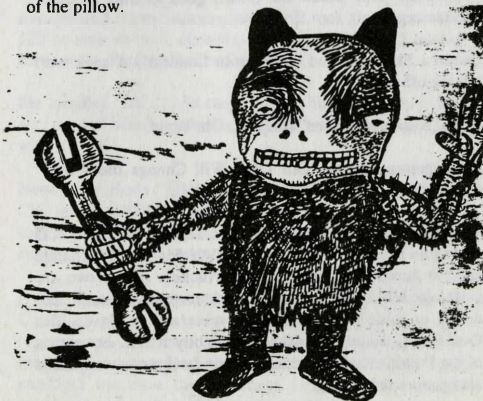
Sam Prekop "Who's Your New Professor" (Thrill Jockey) This sexy gent sings smoothly in a rich whisper of love, writes music that is seductively cool and throws in some happening bossa nova beats. So if you put this on the hi fi and you still don't get lucky it's time to find a new girlfriend or to start bathing more. Unfortunately I listened to this alone so no romance for me tonight, but in an ironic twist, this guy's name is Prekop and after I listen to this I'm going to watch *Cops*.

The Priests "Tall Tales" (Get Hip) These priests touched me inappropriately with rock and I am now singing in their choir of praisesingers. Not just nasty and fuzzy like most evil garage rock, this is also creepy, scary and disconcerting.

Lou Profa "Prava Dama" (Listen Loudest!) Parties like it's 1989! This is Blues Rock from the golden age of big hair and the Croatian lyrics just make it better. Lou's best CD yet!

Propeller "Argento" (Scratch) Far out soundscapes that propelled me to a higher consciousness and made me hungry.

Prankstar "One" (Secret Progress Music, 232 W. 16th St. 5R NYC 10011, www.prankstarmusic.net) Funky, mellow grooviness that is no prank, Hank. Cool like the other side of the pillow.



Project 86 "Songs to Burn Your Bridges By" (Tooth and Nail) Made me projectile vomit 86 times.

Psychatrone Rhonedakk with Cotton Casino "Baron Von Rhonedakk and the Crystal Sun" (Black Plastic Sound/Summerseps POB 447 Moscow, PA 18444) This is the music of the Mole People. And it makes me love the Mole People more than ever.

Puffy AmiYumi "Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi" (Epic) The new Banana Splits! After failing to break through in America at least ten times over the last ten years these Japanese frantic pop cartoonish gals are returning as cartoons and will conquer kids as sure as Captain Crunch conquers teeth.

"Punk Rock is Your Friend 5" compilation (kung fu records, PO Box 38009, Hollywood, CA, 90038) Music, video and rock joke comp with decades of acts still doing their thing, including Adolescents, Vandalz, SLF, Ozma and the Matches (one of my fave newer acts).

Puppets Who Kill DVD (VSC) This is the complete first season of a Canadian puppet comedy Tv show. The jokes are awkward and not too funny, most of the humor is second rate, the writing sucks. No *The Office* here.

Pushing Red Buttons "Foreign Film or Tango Dance?" (Blockchord 29-07 31st Ave. suite 3C NYC 11106) Pushing the "stop" button.

Q and Not U "Power" (Dischord, dischord.com) Someone's been listening to Bobby Conn! This opens with some super funky falsetto dance music and works its way into some scambitious awesome rock, with so many different flavors and tempos that this is like a 15 foot salad bar of awesome music.

Quintron "The Frog Tape" (Rhinstone/Skingraft POB 257546 Chicago IL 60625) Absolutely brilliant because this audio treasure not only recreates sounds made by frogs but also creates sounds inspired by frogs. I will play this in my haunted house's maze of darkness every Halloween. Riveting and ribbit-ing.

Racetrack "City Lights" (skrockirecords.com) More annoying than that TV show *Full House*.

Rah Bras "EPS" (Lovitt POB 248 Arlington VA 22210) Collects the bands three rare eps and collects your brain in a bag and shakes it around. Strange, wonderful, dynamic music that is unclassifiable and obviously from the future.

The Ramones - The End of The Century (A film by Michael Graglia and John Fields) This film is both a celebration of The Ramones (their music and their vast influence) and a chronicle of what went terribly wrong. It is the true story of one of the world's most beloved Rock 'n' Roll groups, but, every true story ends in death. Through interviews, incredible early footage, and a guided tour of their old stomping grounds (Forest Hills, Queens) we get to view the evolution of the band, via humble beginnings (Johnny and Tommy actually forming a Garage band ca. '66-7, called Tangerine Puppets; Joey becoming the flamboyant singer in Sniper, an otherwise forgotten Glam band in the early 70s). By 1974, with their heroes, The Stooges and The New York Dolls, on their way out, four friends from the neighborhood (whose relationships had been unsteady since childhood, particularly with known bully Johnny, who had a rep for kicking asses and taking names, even though some of those names would be changed to "Ramone") found themselves in the unlikely position of saving Rock 'n' Roll. The group is seen in very early performance footage, circa 1974. The buzzsaw guitar attack was already firmly in place, but, even then, you can see dissension in their ranks. One priceless bit shows Joey getting into a shouting match with Dee Dee and Johnny over which song to do. Tommy, ever the voice of reason, declares, "FUCK ALL OF YA!" (there was a fifth Ramone, lurking in the shadows, very early on. He eventually left New York and formed The Nuns). In the face of much adversity, the band eventually became leaders in the burgeoning CBGB scene. Owner Hilly Kristal famously telling them, "Nobody's gonna like you, but, we'll have you back." Danny Fields, who'd worked with the group's idols, The MC5 and The Stooges, could barely conceal his adoration of their inherent "Cuteness," and became their manager, getting them signed to Sire records. The record promptly goes nowhere, but, over in England, the early

rumblings of punk can be heard, and the group is held in the highest regard as progenitors for their own movement, still being sorted out. In a telling interview (apparently, his last), Joe Strummer recalls how The Ramones presented inexperienced English musicians with a call to arms: Just do it! He also takes great humor in recalling the way The Ramones snuck members of the nascent Clash and Sex Pistols into the show through a busted backstage window, seemingly symbolizing the unity between the new American Royalty and their English subjects. The Ramones would remain wildly popular, but would find themselves low on food, money, gigs, and, in some cases, with dope habits. The film points out that drug abuse would prove to be a central factor in the breakdown of the band's interpersonal relationship. Dee Dee being the hardest hit with a heroin habit that preceded his joining the group. Surprisingly, Dee Dee comes on as perhaps the most likeable of the bunch, in some of his last interviews. He's able to laugh in the face of his own demons, those of the other band members, and those bestowed upon them all by fate. While the band becomes a moderately successful touring outfit in The States (And there's plenty of exciting live footage to prove that point), the hit they seem to want so badly is nowhere to be found. Even an unlikely hookup with Phil Spector only puts another nail in the band's coffin. But, the worst is yet to come. Through various interviews with ex-Ramones (Joey died, sadly, just before consenting to a series of interviews) and contemporaries like Clem Burke (who almost took over from an AWOL Richie Ramone—who looks like he works on Wall St.) and Walter Lure (who DOES work on Wall St., and still looks cool), we get a real understanding about a band who can't seem to win for losing, but are loved, just the same, by their fans worldwide. I wasn't aware, however, that Johnny "stole" his now-wife from Joey. The two never spoke again, unless, I guess, they absolutely had to. Johnny talks about never making peace with Joey, figuring that Joey wouldn't have wanted to talk to somebody he hated on his deathbed. Ironically, Johnny must have known about his own fatal illness by then. This film pulls no punches, but it's fast paced, with editing that admirably keeps the pace, some great footage of The Dolls and The Stooges, a lot of humor, and, best of all, a heart. The Ramones' success has proven to be posthumous, a fact not lost on the filmmakers. It's my sincere hope that they will be successful, in our time.

Rancid Vat "We Hate You All The Way From Texas" (Steel Cage) Relocated to the Lone Star State, the Whiskey Rebel and his amorphous band proves they can make ugly, shitty, flat, pummeling, stupid, awesome music no matter where they are. Wrestling, the Sonics, the Ramones and Hillbilly trash culture are all paid tribute to the only way Whiskey knows how: with drunken musical toasts that end in bar fights.

Raw Power "The Hit List" (Sudden Death Records, Cascades PO Box 430001, Burnaby, BC, Canada, V5G 3H0) I don't even know what to call what Raw Power plays, I just know they are one of the best hard bands ever, beloved by punks, metal heads and extreme music fans the globe over. This career retrospective is the audio equivalent of a vicious cockfight.

The Real Bad News "Black and White and Red All Over" (Hillsdale) This is an awesome record by a frat/garage/rockin' band that Deke Dickerson discovered and took under his wing. Hands down this has the best tambourine of any garage record in years! It's no wonder Dickerson dug these dudes. — they know how to make you shake (he also probably liked the way the band's lead singer obviously has modeled his vocal style on Deke's). Saxxy sax and organ organ make this a real winner!

Really Red "Teaching You the Fear" (Empty) This is a reissue of a 1980 Texas punk record, though you couldn't tell that by listening to it. There are some passages of apeshit hardcore drumming/song construction, but most of this sounds timeless and contemporary. I wouldn't call this one of the greatest h/c bands ever (I read that in some press material) but I will say that the most intense stuff here is most intense!

The Rebel "Exciting New Venue for Soccer and Execution of Women E.P." (SDZco. N. Mugnir 12 Av. Du Parc 92170 Vanves France) The weirdest member of the strangest band ever (Country Teasers) unleashes several tracks of musical mischief that are (like most Teasers related material) unclassifiable. That said, I will classify it all as

seductively chaotic and brilliantly fucked. In fact I feel as if this record fucked me with quite a bit of brilliance.

Rebuiltthangartheory "with hurricane blows" (Plays-Rite) Ouch.

Red Eyed Legends "Mutual Insignificance" (File 13) Should be called Red Eyed Awesome Motherfuckers, because this is motherfucking AWESOME!

The Red Krayola "singles 1968-2002" (Drag City) This singles compilation is a career retrospective of Mayo Thompson's unique (to say the least) career. Three tracks from 1970 are genuinely weird but not psychedelic or challenging, just pleasant. In 1976 Mayo has been No Wave damaged and the two unreleased live tracks are stunning, gloriously odd, and almost chilling. The 80s tracks, with Epic Soundtracks, Lara Logic and others contributing, are quirky, strange, slices of art rock that maintain a groove and a populist vibe that allows the audience to actually enjoy the music despite the indulgences of the music makers. Then it's the 90s, the Drag City Krayola with a "K" years. In this era, perhaps one where the art rock scene is freed by understanding the limited audience (in 1981 progressive bands had the possibility to gain genuine mainstream exposure and distribution) so Mayo becomes a genuine poet of rock music, carrying not only the genius badge of that role but also the baggage of self-indulgence and the burden of total freedom (every track here is a world apart from the previous one, from low tech to robotic). This compilation gloriously explores the difference between a singles comp and a greatest hits collection, and you don't even miss "Hurricane Fighter. Plane."

Red Planet "We Know How It Goes" (Gearhead POB 421219 SF, CA 94142) A genuinely joyful noise! They sound like Cheap Trick if all four of the Tricksters were nerds instead of just two. And if there were only three of them. And without the guitar solos. OK, not exactly like Cheap Trick, but they are great.

Red Swan "After the Barn Goes" (Isoxys Records, 227 North Magnolia, Lansing, MI, 48912) Crazy music about crazy people who burn things and lend out their faces. Crazy good!

Rege Rege (Listen Loudest!) Regerific!

Reglar Wiglar zine (reglarwiglar.com) Wiglar-er than ever!

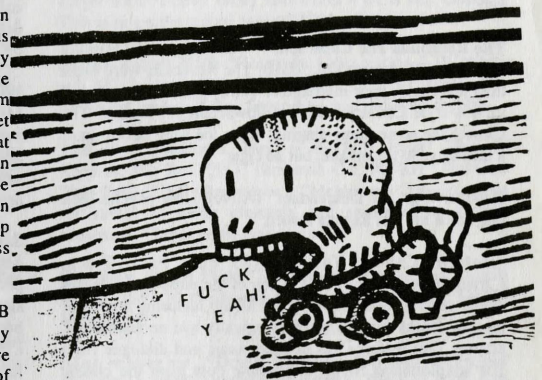
Regress "Look Who's Pulling the Strings" (Hi-Fi Records, 2568 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL, 60614) This hardcore supergroup (featuring ex-Life Sentence, Rights of the Accused and Negative Element) deliver a masterpiece that is both the most nostalgic and relevant punk release of the year. Drawing upon all that was excellent and none of what was awful about early 80s h/c the band attacks the government, the clergy, the war machine, the man, and even the scene, all by balancing the joyful, dumb humor found in the best early American punk with the unyielding, dire seriousness that made kids think while they skated. Some of the songs border on hardcore haiku (like "Sellout" which posits "You're a fucking sellout/You're a fucking sellout/You're a fucking sellout/FUCK YOU!"), others are note-perfect homages ("Nuclear Bomb," a song Regress must have moved to a British crusty squat to write) and some are just genius, like "We Gotta Protect the Scene" which takes posers, crooked promoters, and MTV to task and laments the cruel blows fate dealt Jello and Tim. If all hardcore records sounded like this then the scene really would be worth protecting.

Replicator "You Are Under Surveillance" (Substandard Records, PO Box 310, Berkeley, CA 94701) Should be called RepliGREATer!

Rhythm of Black Lines "Human Hand, Animal Band" (Gold Standard Labs, PO Box 65091, Los Angeles, CA, 90065) If I make it to heaven I expect this will be playing in the waiting room.

Rise - The Story of Rave Outlaw Disco Donnie DVD (MVD) Well, to get the negative criticisms out of the way first, this documentary has a terrible title, or at least subtitle, as this is not the story of Donnie (a party promoter in New Orleans whose rising profile has made him a fairly mainstream businessman - making the "Outlaw" title moot as well). While Disco Donnie is presented as moderately

charming guy who has achieved a remarkable level of success, he is not the focus nor the most interesting part of this largely successful piece. The movie is really about the contemporary rave scene in New Orleans and its attendees. By far the most compelling moments of the film are the interviews with a pair of clean cut, average, quiet high school kids who have found a real home at these parties that clearly has not turned them into ecstasy damaged club kid self-parodies, but rather balanced young people who genuinely know how to appreciate the fun of dancing, community and "the underground." Also featured in this are a number of DJ superstars, including Qbert who is not interviewed but who demonstrates some blazing dexterity, Paul Van Dyk, who is treated like (and seems to consider himself) a god amongst men, and Tommie Sunshine who blatantly pines for massive mainstream success. The way the film opens with the DJs being shuttled from the airport in a luxury stretch limousine stocked with the finest hooch makes those dreams seem possible.



Tommy Rivers "Fountain of Youth" (notlame.com) An embarrassment of embarrassing rock clichés.

river's edge - the weezer story by John D. Luerssen (ECW, ECWpress.com) I'm not enough of a fan to really invest myself in this book, but I have to say, I think it's probably pretty disappointing to fans who want a real portrait of the reclusive Rivers Cuomo. Too much of this book is industry gossip stuff (the band was mad at the label for this or that) or obsessive stuff that didn't catch my interest. However, the exploration into Cuomo's glumy hair metal (sorta) roots is pretty choice.

Riverwurst Comix (POB 511553 Milwaukee WI 53203) Since Wisconsin only went for Kerry by a sliver I will attribute that to this anti-Bush underground comix anthology. Also, this is the best issue ever of this mag, so I guess their anti-Bushitude inspired them.

Rob K "The End of the Earth" (Orange Recordings, www.orangerecordings.com) This is so bad that I'm actually impressed by its achievements in suckiness.

Robotnicka "Spectre En Vue" (Bloodlink) This is a robot built to help us take our little speckled pills and dance. This is a far sexier robot than any steel-breasted automaton that graced the cover of nearly every issue of *Heavy Metal* (or should I say *Metal Hurlant*, as this is a French robotess). This is the robot that understands that electronics were made to synth rock out and not to do math or science.

"Rock Against Bush" Vol 1 and 2 (Fat) I can't believe this didn't work. A zillion bands, (most pop punk Fat-style acts, but some surprising additions like Ministry, Dwarves, Foo Fighters, Billy Bragg) donate songs, many very specifically anti-Bush. Of course, most kids at a Sum 41 or NOFX show are 17 or younger, but some have to be of voting age, and I guess anything that raised money against the Bush war chest was worthwhile. Volume 2 was impressive because it featured a DVD with actual articulate explanations of anti-Bushism, including part of the Greg Palast/BBC documentary that was like a more tempered, more statistic based *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Also, Will Farrell appeared in an anti-Bush film, which impressed me. I always thought SNL was kind of pro-Republican.

Rocket Science "Eternal Holiday" (Modular) Should be called "Rockin' Myass."

Rock Goddess (Cherry Red) Fucking awesome! This sounds exactly like Heart trying to be a Motley Crüe cover band!

Rock Star Club "Bienvenidos a Grand Y Western" (GDR, rockstarclub.com) These guys have been plugging along for a long time and I have always admired their sincerity and refusal to compromise themselves. This album is a nice slab of even-tempered, smart rock that clubbed me!

omar a. rodriguez-lopez "'a manual dexterity' soundtrack volume one" (Gold Standard Laboratories, PO Box 65091, LA, CA, 90065) Soundtrack-tastic! This will modify your world.

Das Rosa Rauschen "II" (Konnex Records) Mellow heroin jazz.

The Rosebuds/The Close split 7" (Goodnight 690 Murphy Ave SW #B8 Atlanta GA 30310) The Rosebuds were more than just rosey, their marriage of quirky indie rock and sped up 60s-style Country rock was downright enchanting. The Close have some funny singing, and the song builds up to a nice drive in the middle, but no cigar.

Rosetta West "X Descendant" (Alive) Slow psyche rock that made me feel Rosetta stoned.

"Rotten Candy Vol. 1" (\$5 ppd, Fuck Truck, f_truck@hotmail.com) This is one of the most vital releases of the year: a bootleg soundtrack album featuring droves of musical tracks from films that tragically had no soundtrack albums. This features lots of blue music and dialogue from 70s exploitation flicks, and ample cuts from the classic *Skidoo*, but the gems here are from the film which gave this comp its title. Ron Howard's directorial debut was a made for TV movie called *Cotton Candy* about a high school battle of the bands. The band Cotton Candy's chief rival is Rapid Fire, and if you've seen this movie you likely can't believe their relentless faux-metal version of "I Shot the Sheriff" was really as bad as you remember. Well, here's the proof!

Routineers (Dischord) Great angry feline vocals and some rocking rock music make for a routinely awesome record.

RSO "I Wanna Fuck" b/w "Space Commander" (RSR) Rocks Shit Out!

The Ruby Lee ('cuda) Rubylicious!

"Rue Morgue presents Nightmare Picture Theatre" (RMR) I don't know exactly what this is but it made me pee my pants in fear.

Rupaul "Red Hot" (RuCo) Absolutely fantastic - I really liked all of RuPaul's previous work (including his/her early underground stuff). One overlooked aspect of RuPaul's work is the he has a pretty good voice for dance music, and really knows how to use it to make an impression (the one time I saw his act live a girl I went with fainted). But what makes this record better than some of the previous releases is the boldness of the gay content, both proud and nasty. With all the fuss over African American men on the "down low," this features Ru as a brash bitch shamelessly stealing women's men and being as nasty as she wants to be. The best songs are the declaration "Coming Out of Hiding," the Pilates-ready "Workout" and "Looking Good, Feeling Gorgorous," a throwback to the Tommy Boy hits. This is self-released and may not have the commercial impact of the earlier records, but I hope it sells enough to keep RuRu working. I would hate to lose her.

Rutabaga "These Knotty Lines" (Patsy Presents/Johann's Face) The best vegetable-named singer songwriter nerdy pop album ever (excluding Christian stuff, of course, because those Veggie-tales solo records are pretty good). This brings the love.

"Sacramento Scene Report" compilation (TKO) I like this comp structurally because instead of featuring 20 middle of the pack Sacto bands it features multiple tracks from five bands they clearly consider standouts. The Secretions are the most interesting band here, making punk that is both dumb and punky, but also rootsy and Southern. I've heard Pressure Point before, and I think these are more solid punk tunes than what I remember. Whiskey Rebels, not to be

confused with the writer/singer of the same name, are nasty street rock punkers, and the Roustabouts make skinhead pubrock anthems without the hate. The only band on here I didn't dig was Killing the Dream, too contemporary soulless hardcore for me.

the sadies "favourite colours" (Yep Roc Records, 1130 Cherry Lane, Graham, NC) The Sadies have gone to the Byrds! And they are really flying!

The Safes "Boogie Woogie Rumble" (Pro-Vel Records, PO Box 5182, St. Louis, MO, 63139) Super garage punk with all the dumbness of MC5 licks and New Bomb Turks savagery and bar band rockiness combining for music unsafe at any speed (though its all fast).

Sandy Salisbury "Everything for You" (Rev-Ola) Part 117 in Rev-Ola's series of CDs relating to the revered but obscure super-session act the Millennium. This is a collection of SS's unreleased, simple, pleasant, gentle pop demos from the 60s. If you have the first 116 CDs you need this one.

Mickey Saunders/Dan Susnara "Aware" w/ "Future on the Move," cassette single, **Smirking Herbert** "Pappose" (\$2 for single, \$5 for full length, or trade, 7806 S. Kilpatrick Ave. Chicago, IL 60652) The S/S single is pretty dreamy, in a weird dream way. Smirking Herbert is a straight up fever dream, with circus sounds and Bukowski-worthy recitations.

Scene Creamers "Las Historias Mas Sexy Del Mundo!" comic book (Planeria POB 21340 WDC 20009) Fans of the punk fumetti comics form *Punk* magazine (photo comix starring the Ramones and other NYC scenesters) will be bored and disappointed by this. I like the Scene Creamers/Weird War but this book captures nothing except Ian's interesting bone structure.

Scissor Girls "Are Dead! Long Live the SGs" DVD (<http://trak.to.sg>) This is actually an amazing DVD and I'm surprised to be watching it on a DIY CD-R. I would expect that a dozen labels would be scratching each other's eyes out to release this DVD. The SGs were one of the most dynamic, important, thrilling bands that lead the way into the dissonant, noise no wave scene that now is so widely embraced by the underground a decade after the Scissor reign. This contains live shows at Chicago clubs (many defunct), experimental videos and appearances on local TV shows. Despite to lo-fi/no budget nature of this footage, the visually dynamic, frighteningly sexy/asexual, ultra-art school nature of the band and the people with video cameras they knew makes this never boring and always hypnotic.

S'cool Girls (Intravenous/Aeronaut POB 361432 LA CA 90036) These gents take glitter and glam strut and mix the slickness and perfection of bubblegum with raw amateurism of low-budget drag lip synch shows. There is no true super-Glam magic here, but there is also nothing that won't make you smile.

Scram! magazine (POB 461626 Hollywood CA 90046) Scram-tastic! The zine for people who love to love music even if they never heard of half the obscure icons being celebrated.

The Screemers "Live in San Francisco Sept. 2nd 1978" (MVD) This continues MVD's series of reissues of famed Target videos from the 80s. The Screemers, a band that never had records and I don't think played outside of Southern California, are legendary based on their live shows and pretty much this video which demonstrates their angular, intense punk/new wave sound and their remarkably intense, cartoonish frontman Tomata du Plenty. By virtue of never having real recordings or a real career (and having an awesome logo that made their flyers as well known as some bands LPs) this band is held up as the great lost American punk hope. This video has always made that claim seem feasible.

Scribble Monster and his Pals "Chocolate Milk" (scribblebooks.com) Delicious kiddie music that has calcium and chocolatey goodness.

Scum of the Earth "Blah...Blah...Blah...Love Songs for the New Millennium" (Eclipse) Way worse than the band of the same name from *WKRP in Cincinnati* in 1978.

sedaced "s/t" (Newest Industries, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Road, Cardiff, CF24 3DG, UK) Sedactive!

The Seeds "Tripmaker" (Bootleg), **Sky Sunlight Saxon and The Seeds** "Red Planet" (Rogue Records, 6701 W.87th Pl. Los Angeles, California 90045, www.skysaxonandtheseeds.com) The Seeds remain one of the most underrated bands of their day, callously written off as Stones wannabes and seldom given credit for their unique, influential sound. With bands like Love and The Electric Prunes getting hipster cred from *Mojo* magazine (don't get me wrong, I like *Mojo*, too) some ten years after *Bad Trip* and *Here 'Tis* were doing the old one hand clapping bit about said bands to the few who could be bothered with it, I have to agree with my friend, Henry (an associate of both Arthur Lee and Sky Saxon), a Seeds revival is in order! Knowing this to be true, Sky Saxon put together a new version of the band, which briefly included original guitarist, Jan Savage, and all reports so far have been very positive. The first part of this CD was taken from the last performance by the reformed Seeds (with only Savage missing from the classic lineup) in L.A., we're told, in 1989, but I think it was actually '86, as I remember reading and hearing about it at that time. In any case, the band regrouped briefly for an "Oldies" tour, with Love, The Music Machine and The Strawberry Alarm Clock (even the weakest link had something to offer!). They open their set up, surprisingly enough, with "Evil Hoodoo," The Seeds' finest moment (in my humble opinion). The insane fuzz bass of the original (which made Larry Graham sound positively genteel) is missing, but the band does a faithful reading of the song, and Sky manages to remember lyrics that brought unintelligibility to a new level, when not rapping at length about attendees, The Pandoras, The Bangles, Rodney Bingenheimer, Ian Astbury and "The spirit of Elvis Presley." "Mr. Farmer" builds up a frothy head of steam, just like the original, and Sky's (surprisingly on the mark) vocals are accentuated beautifully by master Rock drummer, Rick Andridge, and keyboardist extraordinaire, Daryl Hooper, from the original group, plus an unidentified guitarist who's not Savage, yet, he IS savage. "Pushin' Too Hard" still sounds like a big, flying "Fuck You" (but a good natured one) to society and cheatin' girlfriends. This set (five songs, surely not the whole show?) sounds great, like a soundboard tape or a radio broadcast. The 1968 recordings, not surprisingly, can't boast such sound quality, as it was recorded by a fan with a hand-held mike (you can even hear it click on and off between songs!). Someone buy that guy a drink, anyway, for having the cranial bone capacity to tape The Seeds in their commercial twilight, but also, arguably, their artistic zenith. This set is similar to the one performed on "Raw and Alive," which was actually recorded in the studio with dubbed-in applause, and, as all the songs that debuted on that album are some of the group's finest (proof positive they did not "Jump The Shark" with their Blues LP), it's great to hear them, and several early Seeds classics, TRULY "Raw and Alive." There's many, many rare treats in store for you (the kind that Kim Fowley might accuse you of wanting to go "jack off and smoke a joint" upon hearing), like the amazing "Satisfy You," the prematurely Lydonesque "Gypsy Plays The Drums" (a friend once correctly told me that it sounded like PIL's "Flowers of Romance"), "Night Time Girl," with the same bizarre early guitar/keyboard hybrid sound (Via an unsuccessful Vox prototype) on the "live" LP, and two great early "Slow Jams" (Okay, they're not THAT slow, but they're both long songs just MADE for sex), "Up in Her Room" and "900 Million People Daily All Making Love." All these versions are arguably superior to the ones on "Raw and Alive," they're just not recorded nearly as well (well, duh! The "live" LP was, after all, recorded in a studio!). Besides that, there's a great version of "Tripmaker" (Whistling noises intact), an ace "Pushin' Too Hard," plus a great unreleased song, listed here (no doubt incorrectly) as "Ride With Me," and more. Suddenly, without warning, Sky Saxon and his latter-day Seeds have released a full length 12 inch (Norton has also announced a 45 to be released soon), and, DAMN, IS IT GOOD! It doesn't sound so much like the classic Seeds' sound of yore (though, sometimes it does), as a wall of fuzz, tremolo, and Farfisa that SHOULD have jet-propelled Sky's (often difficult to contain) musical vision all this time. The Seeds of The 21st Century are THEE band for Sky Saxon, giving him a challenge, yet remaining sympathetic. Sky is in fine voice, here, and has great command of the songs, all of which are lean n' mean, even when dealing with topics like the environment, spirituality, animal rights, and that old favorite, unrequited love. Some of the songs take some unexpected twists and turns, but he's

always right on top of it. All the material here is new, barring a cool redux of the obscure Seeds' classic, "She's Wrong," done here as "Let Her Sting." It retains the cool Don and Dewey twang, thankfully. "Fools on Capital Hill" is as good as its title (and opens with Sky's impersonation of a political impresario: "Yada, yada, yada!"). It should have been on the *Fahrenheit 9-11* soundtrack. "Violet Ray" is a fast paced, organ-heavy punker with lyrics pertaining to visitors from space (another topic Sky's real keen on, lately-in fact, the LP sleeve has a beautiful silkscreen image of a spaceship landing on Mars, apparently inhabited by Sky Saxon and his Seeds!). The production is super-raw, but not 90s Garage-crappy. "Coming Home" summons up a bit of early Elvis Presley's spirit, and Sky tells his old lady that he sold all his records so he could get on a flight to go see her (THAT'S LOVE...the kind I've never known) "Sweet Fragrant Melodies" sounds like a coming together of both extremes on The Seeds' "Future" album (Somewhere between "Painted Doll" and "Out of The Question?"). "101 Colorized Bottles" and "Cracking Ice" are both aggressive, fuzz-soaked Garage Punkers. Sky's definitely not mellowing with age, but just like Arthur Lee, he had to find a band worthy of his talents. This time around, he's done just that.

Seger Liberation Army "2+2=?" b/w "east side story" (Big Neck POB 8144 Reston, VA 20195) These cuts are totally genuinely "Nuggets" sounding, without being retro at all.

The Sermon "Volume" (Alternative Tentacles) I hear they are an awesome live band but this is just decent, semi-minstrel Garage Blues nastiness that gets some garage power at its best but is just OK most of the disc.

The Shakedown (Morphius POB 13474 Baltimore, MD 21203) This is super good. I actually shook down under this record's influence. Snotty, danceable rock 'n' roll with the kind of hypnotizing attitude and the hooks that made major label execs stupidly sign bands like The Dolls and Dead Boys and Dickies to major label contracts.

The Shakin' Apostles featuring **Freddie Steady Krc** (Live at the Old Quarter Acoustic Cafe, Galveston, Texas. CABIN MUSIC P.O.Box 92375 Austin, Texas 78709-2375/Freddie Steady Krc c/o Shakin' Apostles 1712 E. Riverside Drive # 172 Austin, Texas 78741) Freddie Krc is probably better known today as the man with the big beat behind The Explosives, the popular Austin Power Pop unit who went on to become one of Roky Erickson's most consistent, and best-loved, backing bands. He's proven equally as adept on the guitar, fronting the Burrito n' Grape flavored Shakin' Apostles, who appear here as a two piece with Krc and Cam King, his longtime musical partner since the days of The Explosives (who're back in the studio, by the way). The two also played behind Roky at his last full length concert, in 1987, around which time King also did a stint with Chris D.'s Divine Horsemen. This is an all-acoustic set, and, even if the music's not entirely rowdy, the crowd still is! Many (mostly Texan) traditions prevail here, from Tex-Mex to Gulf Coast/Cajun themes, 30s Deep Ellum Blues, Buddy Holly and Gram Parsons stylings, all in the form of an intimate evening of "unplugged" (a catchphrase that, it bears repeating, has been done to death. Besides, Roky was doing it 30 years ago!) music, before a respectful (though VERY enthusiastic) crowd. Krc has a lilting, laid back voice, and King does some fine harmonies here, and both are well-versed in the six-string schematics. Cam King is one of the great, criminally overlooked, Texas guitar heroes. I saw Cam and Freddie perform at a Gene Clark tribute recently, and Cam took a solo on "Eight Miles High" that blew my ever-lovin' mind. Admittedly, this is far more restrained stuff than you might have heard them play behind Roky (a Roky/Explosives "Best of" is in the works, by the way), but, if you'd like to hear some acoustic music that's neither marijuana nor Grateful Dead-addled (Rogers Park Folk scene, anyone?), you just might be able to sink your teeth into this. Incidentally, if you should find yourself in Austin, ignore those trendy bands and look out for The 13th Floor Elevators tribute band, featuring Krc, King, Sumner Erickson (Roky's Bro), Greg Forest (from the revamped '84 Elevators lineup) and Ronnie Leatherman (from the original Elevators!). They probably won't be featured at SXSW anytime soon, but, your best bet in Austin is usually whatever slips through the cracks.

"Shakin' In My Boots: A Texas Rock n' Roll Compilation" (Licorice Tree POB 92783 Austin, TX 78709) Contemporary Texas punk/garage/trash rock from the awesome Stepbrothers, the surf/drag of the Dragstrip

Bros. And the dramatic danger of the Ka-Nives (who may or may not be brothers). Good old Texas...queers, steers, the president and garage punk.

Shikari "1999-2003" (level-plane) Crazy assed, super intense *Shir* + 10,000 hours playing *Atari* = Shikari. (Sorry, I don't know where the "k" comes from)

Shithead Does Tough Crowd/Dudley Does Black Sabbath minicomp by Jason Shithead (UFA 335 Court St. #16 Brooklyn NY 11231) He's called Shithead because this is the shit!

Shoplifting "Hegemony Enemy b/w "Talk of the Town" (Kill Rock Stars) Futuristic caveintergendered person music (you thought I was going to say *caveman* didn't you) that is post everything!

Shortstack (Planeriainc.com) Strange scary country music that combines spooky rootsy sounds with ghost stories and prairie diseases. Basically Mad Cow Cowboy Music.

Sick Fits "Mirror Creeps" ep (Big Neck) Not slick, no tricks, just super sick and getting the chicks. This is punk-garage-wave music with the power to actually corrupt kids, and for that I thank them.

Sick of It All "Outtakes for the Outcast" (Fat) Holy shit...this is a rarities comp of 1992 to 2001 SOIA music? "Essential" has just been redefined!

Sightings "Arrived in Gold" (Load) A wist of noise, a whisper of groove, a flutter of skronk. But even a butterfly flapping its wings can cause a hurricane a zillion miles away.

Silkworm "It'll Be Cool" (Touch and Go Records) Smoother than silk...they should be called butterworm! This is an ultra-impressive collection of sounds and vibes and ideas and incantations that somehow all becomes pretty music. They may have a Midgett in the band, but they are giants in my ears.

Silvertide "Show and Tell" (J) Man these guys are a real throwback to the glory days of classic rock...you know, back when the Black Crowes were bringin' it!

Simple Plan "Still Not Getting Any..." (Lava) I want to like what the kids like but this fucking sucks.

Sincebyman "A Love Hate Relationship" (revelation POB 5232 Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232) OK, I get it, you're screaming.

Six Organs of Admittance "school of the flower" (Drag City) This is psychedelic folk only if you consider herbal tea a hallucinogenic.

Six Parts Seven "Everywhere and Right Here" (Suicide Squeeze POB 80511 Seattle WA 98108) Snooze Part Snoozens.

63 Crayons "Good People" (Happy Happy Birthday to Me Records, PO Box 1035, Panama City, FL 32402) Apparently you can get high smoking Crayolas. Poptastic!

66 Thousand Miles Per Hour comix (True Believers POB 974 New Brunswick NJ 08903) This comic looks great but it relies too much on stereotypes about New Jersey: mobsters, teens with dead end dreams, sleazy carnivals, fruity politicians, alien invasions, Joan of Arc sightings, living mummies, cute girls and shitty rock bands.

Skewwhiff "Taedium Vitae" (Life is Abuse Records) Crazy hard Belgian hardcore that sounds apeshit, evil and awesome. This is what early 80s Metallica seemed like they were going to sound like if they got better.

Skillet "Collide" (Lava) Kill it!

Skincrawl "Emotional Suspended Animation" ep (skincrawl.com) This actually made my skin bubble, not crawl.

Skindred "Babylon" (Lava) How can Lava Records have a band called Skillet and a band called Skindred? They will be out of business very soon. As far as this sounds it is scary Nu Metal with crazy Jamaican-guy vocals, which makes it a

lot better than if it didn't have those vocals but doesn't make it good.

The Slackers "International War Criminal" (Thought Squad PO Box 40016, Pasadena, CA, 91114) These ska vets have been around for well over a decade but this release finds them looking back farther than that, capturing some of the vibe of original ska and early dub, with some rich noises supplemented with some righteous political commentary.

Sleepykid "monday morning smile" (Get Hip) Nuanced, gentle, quiet, lush melancholy pop - you know, the stuff Get Hip is known for.

Sleepytime Gorilla Museum of Natural History "Aiming to Answer Common Questions (Web of Mimicry) Epic!

Slim Cessna's Auto Club "The Bloody Tenent Truh Peace" (Alternative Tentacles Records) Slim is such an alt-country insurgent icon that his big glasses have made everyone forget about Buddy Holly and Urkel - he is Mr. Glasses! This is as good a record as your 9th favorite record ever!

Slomo Rabbit Kick "Hortatory Examinations" (Kittybox pob 30712 Seattle WA 98113) Sounds like your favorite 80s hit import records if they became wicked indie 90s records.

The Slow Poisoners "Days of the Soft Break" (Heyday Records, PO Box 2557, Temecula CA, 92593) "The God That Failed" EP (Rocktopus!) "Melodrama" (Rocktopus!) As subtle as bitter almonds and as sweet as carbon monoxide. This is pretty poison music.

The Slow Signal Fade "Through the Opaque Air" (Stroll Music, 1851 N. Gramercy Pl., Los Angeles, CA, 90028) Fade faster!

Slug magazine, "Death By Salt: A Slug Magazine Compilation" "Death By Salt" (2225 S. 500 East #206, Salt Lake City, UT, 84106) To celebrate 15 years Salt Lake Under Ground magazine released a compilation of 60 Utah bands. I can't believe there are 60 Utah bands. Best tracks are by Brownham, Stilleto, Fantazmic 4, Red Bennies, Le Force and the amazing Chinese Stars. The magazine itself is a good read - definitely a local mag with lots of coverage of the scene - and definitely a general rock audience magazine (as opposed to an underground punk zine). But the interviews with national artists are pretty solid and the review section is hearty and hefty.

Small Press Review (POB 100, Paradisje, CA 95967) This does a fine job reviewing small press.

smelling trees zine (2133 Hwy 317 suite 14-239 Suwanee, GA 30024) At first I was a little put off by Sun's use of circles to dot the letter "i" in his handwriting (this offset personal zine uses a variety of layouts, mixing handwriting with small, legible font for an effective visual mix). But once I got past that I really was swept up in his world and his sensitivities. Unlike a lot of personal zines this isn't merely a journal but almost a literary exercise, as this is definitely about the art of writing as much as the means of expression.

David Smith "fastest machine" (Are You Listening) As exciting as his name. Thus, slightly better than if he was named Joe Smith.

Smut Peddlers "Coming Out" (TKO) Smut-tastic!

The Snake Pit Book by Ben Snakepit (Gorsky Press POB 42024 LA, CA 90042) Ben draws a comic a day describing his slacker record store clerk girlfriend wanting drunk/high, punk rock show attending, vomiting, music-listening-to life and it is a triumph of redundancy. And that is meant as a compliment, reading a few of these strips might romanticize drunken punkishness, but hundreds of repetitive pages really lets you know that being broke and semi-aimless isn't too fun. But conversely, we see that getting joy from little things (favorite records, occasional good food, ganja) makes life worth living.

Snax "From the Rocking Chair to the Stage" (Mental Groove) This dance music CD is so funky he makes me stink pheromones that attract time traveling disco divas. Futuristic and delicious!

So L'il "Revolution Thumpin'" (Goodbye Better) So so.

Something About Vampires and Sluts "We Break Our Own Hearts" (Morphius POB 13474 Baltimore, MD 21203) More vampiric than slutty, this nonetheless is sinfully synthful and kind of peep-booth floor sticky. Delightfully creepy.



Sonic Love Affair "Something To Believe In" ep (Dollar Record Records) This is the kind of sonic love affair that will require penicillin shots in your ears.

Soundrifter (soundrifter.com) Sounds like a winner. Should be called Soundwinner. Slow, pleasantly melancholy atmospheres that make you listen...and make you think!

Sour Deluxe "White Noise" (www.sourdeluxe.com) Sweet!

South Holes "Warhole" (southholes.com) Music you can really feel in your hole.

Soviettes "LP II" (Adeline 5245 Collwge Ave. #318 Oakland CA 94618) This band is so good they make my teeth tingle. Edgy joy-pop that sounds like a Japanese bubblegum pop act filtered through the best 80s underground new wave. SoviGET this! In a side note, they reprinted my review of their debut in the press kit, and there were like fifty typos in a three line review that would have been awesomely written if it wasn't so damaged by bad editing...EDITOR - don't fuck me over, I will crush you!

Ronnie Spector "Unfinished Business" (Lemon Recordings, Elysium Gate West, 126-128 New King's Road, London) I love Ronnie Spector, but I think she is served poorly by reissuing this absolutely horrifying mid-80s album that is so mid-80s it hurt my bones. The production and studio hackery is painful and her singing comes down to the level of the shitty songwriting. Ouch.

The Spits "19 Million A.C. ep" (Dirtnap) I like that this is an E.P. despite having about a million songs on it. The Spits expectorate brilliantly stupid little punk songs that remind me of what the Toy Dolls might have sounded like if they were good. This is actually fun to listen to, which is a rarity amongst the 800 or so CDs I masochistically listened to for this issue.

Stalkers "Sun's Coming Up" b/w "I Can't Wait To Get Home" (Dollar Record Records) Trash rock that sounds trashed.

The Stand-Ins "Clean Slate" (Medium Build POB 574 Athens GA 30603) Should be called the Stand-Outs!

The Starvations "Get Well Soon" (Gold Standard Laboratories) Sound like the Clash with all the good filtered out.

Stavely Makepeace "The Scrap Iron Rhythm Revue" (RPM Records) This is an obscure UK 70s band that made pop/rock n roll/showtune/hillbilly/skiffle/vaudeville music, seemingly to amuse themselves. And apparently to amuse me as well, as this is one of the funnest, strangest lost records I've ever heard (lost records actually, as this collects cuts from 1969- the early 80s.

The Steepwater Band "dharmakaya" (Funazlo Records) Bluesy rock that would turn your juke joint, frat house or corner of hell into a boogie shack. Steep water rocks deep!

Stencil Pirates by Josh MacPhee (Soft Skull) This book is fantastic, one of the best graffiti books ever produced. While there was an early 70s book called the *Encyclopedia of Graffiti* (compiling text written in bathrooms and the like) and while the 80s book *Subway Art* was the most influential, this really feels like the most comprehensive thing ever produced about the artform. Obviously there have been an infinite amount of stencil and spraypaint graffiti works done in history, but this really feels like, in the hundreds of reproductions, it covers EVERYTHING. From montages of animal stencils (or skulls, or Bush or "Post No Bills" riffs) this shows so much you really understand the power and the scope and the politics possible in this quick hit method of dissent/expresssion. The book covers then history, including highlights of cleverness, corporate incorporation and the stories of some of the figures who did the work. It also includes "how to" and a few stencils to cut out yourself. This is a truly important book.

Stiff Little Fingers "Guitar and Drum" (Kung Fu POB 38009 Hollywood CA 90038) I don't know what to say. This doesn't sound like an old band but it sounds like a very mediocre contemporary young pop punk band. This is a disappointment.

Stimulator "s/t" (Stimulator Records, www.stimulatorband.com) For all you retro-New Wave bands, it's stimuLATER than you think.

Tim Storm "Street Empathy" (Myrmecoleo) A Japanese compo of late 80s to late 90s tracks with a bunch of garage-y bands ranging from the Gargoyle's spooky garage music to the Whyos' spooky garage music to the Reclusives not particularly spooky punky garage music. Man, the 90s ruled!

Story of my Scab zine (wmccurtin@yahoo.com) Better than Picasso!

Strychnine "Born in a Bar" (TKO 8941 Atlanta Ave. #505 Huntington Beach CA 92646) Explosive streetpunk that's hits like that boxing kangaroo in the cartoon.

Submission Hold "what holds back the elephant." (G7 POB 21533-1424 Commercial Dr. Vancouver BC V5L 5G2 Canada) Unique political underground music that would be wicked rad if the singer didn't sound like an indie punk version of a beatnik from a 50s sitcom.

Suckerstarz "[(27+42)x36+540] : 7+234" (Myrmecoleo Records, www.geocities.com/suckerstarz) Should be called the suckerSUPERSstarz! Doesn't suck!

Super Aquello "Mu Psiqui Ta" (Brillante POB 578780 Chciago IL 60657-8780) This is a Puerto Rican band that makes absolutely beautiful art pop music that features lovely vocals, guitar that seems as versed in American indie pop and post-rock as it is in traditional Latin stylings and a wonderful balance between spare traditional music and spare futuristic pop. Despite the many differences between P.R. and Brazil one wants to compare this to Tropicalia, or at least some of its more interesting offshoots (with spare electronics here simulating *cuiça* and with similar explorations of the beauty of their root language transcending the differences between each Country's Spanish). But that is too simple. This is truly original and enchanting music that is its own creature. This may be one of the most promising bands around.

Survival Research Laboratories "Ten Years of Robotic Mayhem" DVD (MVD) Punk fans in the 80s will recall that whenever someone would have awesome hardcore footage they would also have these weird videos of SRL, in which science fiction robots would be built in the real world to destroy, be chaotic, burn, maraud, damage for no reason other than art. This DVD compiles years and years of video documentation of these ingenious automatons that eventually became fodder for boring cable programming about fighting robots. The story of this futuristic/primitive San Francisco art collective is fascinating, and you also really get backstory and explanation here, something missing from those confusing 10" generation VHS tapes you saw in 1983.

Sweatmaster "Song With No Words" (Bad Afro Records, www.badafro.dk) An ep with lots of punk and garage covers plus two triumphant originals by a band that manages to use a lot of words in the title cut but also a lot of grooves and funny singing and "whooh whoohs" and rock magic..

Swingin' Utters "Live in a Dive" CD & comic (Fat Wreck Chords) As far as interchangeable pop punk goes Swingin' Utters are as good as any of them, so this live record is fine. But the comic that comes with it (a Scooby Doo parody) is actually pretty awesome. The fat Darby Crash ghost who haunts the guys really made me laugh.

Switchblade (Icarus/Deathwish) Switchoff.

Bert Switzer "Second Chance" DVD (bertswitzer.com) Switzer is a Boston drummer who recorded some punk records in the 70s in a band with twisted guitar hero Henry Kaiser and over the last couple of years began recording and playing again. This purports to be a documentary about his return. But it is more a series of rudimentarily shot, poorly miked interviews punctuated by a series of out of this world, insane drum solos, shot straight on, one camera, no edits. The solos last between 40 seconds and five minutes and are surreal to watch on a big TV. This is what makes Switzer special - he really has a gift for unusual, out there beautiful drum violence and though this may not tell his story expertly (though I love his thick Boston accent) this DVD sure shows his powers. Bonus highlight: a split screen "duet" between Switzer and Kaiser shot separately, Kaiser in his bedroom. Also, note that Switzer has changed from a White Sox hat to his native Red Sox hat just in time for a championship.

Sympathizers "Jolly Rancher" b/w "Highway Cleaner" (744 S. 18th St. #2 Philadelphia PA 19146) The A-side is an intensely minimal (yet oddly lush in its minimalism) indie electro folk song. The b-side is some kind of ultra stripped down robot remix that is so futuristic that I got old and turned to dust while listening.

Gabor Szabo "Bachanal & 1969" (Cherry Red) Two solo albums by an obscure but respected guitar god are issued here. It is extremely easy to see what makes Szabo special; he fuses Eastern sounds with American jazz and pop licks and can really get some human emotions to sing from his amp. That said, it's also hard to see how a real rock fan can dig this stuff. His unique sound elevates these cover tunes above elevator music, but not profoundly. That said, his "Some Velvet Morning" has some outstanding passages that fans of psychedelia and instrumental rock and soundtrack mood music will dig. The "1969" album is far more trippy, but that doesn't mean it's particularly trippy, but he does get some sounds out of his instrument that are unusual to say the least.

Tangiers "Never Bring You Pleasure" (Sonic Unyon Recording Company, PO Box 57347 Jackson Station, Hamilton, On, Canada) Happy, spare garage pop that is highly infectious, yet is simultaneously the cure for ho-hum-ism.

Liz Tansey "what I want" (www.liztansey.com) Liz can sing some blues with grit and bar rock grace. Fans of Bonnie Raitt, and I mean fans of 70s Raitt as well as contemporary, and even fans of 80s ballad Heart should seek this out.

Tarantula Hawk (Life Is Abuse) This sounds like your three favorite prog records playing at the same time. Dense, intense and beyond making sense, this spider brings the venom.

John Tchicai, O.O. Jorgens, Peter Friss Niwelsen, Laura Toxvaerd & Christian Kyhl "On Top of your Head" Ninth World Music) I wasn't crazy about the spoken passages, but the bubbling experimental jazz on this CD is flavorful and challenging. Very heady.

The Telephone Company "The King's Surprise?" (Business Deal Records, www.businessdealrecords.com, POB 8062 Austin TX 78713) Children's music that combines the absurdity of Canned Hamm with the disconcerting power of New Zoo Revue. This makes the Wiggles seem like Australian poofters! What, they are. Oh, well it makes Barney seem like a big magenta crossdresser. What, he is? Well this makes my inner child feel naughty and happy.

temporary by Damon Hurd and Rick Smith (Origin Comics 1430 Route 300, suite 2, Newburgh NY 12550) This excellent comic is about a temp worker who enters fascinating little worlds each issue in her role as a transient fill in, thus allowing her, and us the readers, to experience some delicious strangeness that can be celebrated as atmospheres (as real stories and action are unnecessary). If the first issue, which features a nice, clever critique of both mental health care and office culture (it could have been called "Dilbert Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest") is any indication, this could be like a *Twilight Zone* with Rod Serling entering the stories (and being a pretty blonde).

The Thanes "evolver" (Rev-Ola) For the last few decades there have been numerous 60s revivalist bands emerging, most disappearing soon after realizing that there isn't much glory in playing for record collector historians and releasing singles more obscure than the self-released teenage records of the actual 60s. Of the bands that emerged in the 80s and still exist you either have pummeling dunderheads to stubborn to stop or a few soulful, worthy practitioners who keep it up because the gods of fuzz and funny haircuts deem them necessary. The Thanes are in the latter group, as attested to by this career retrospective. The silly songs are silly, the ponderous pop-psychodelia ponders convincingly and the overall sound represents an understanding of the music they are recreating without mimeographing old records. Overall this is an incredibly impressive body of work, representing heart, dedication, and best of all, an ability to write good 60s-style pop in the same spirit as the originals.

These Fine Lines (Licorice Tree Records PO Box 9278, Austin, TX 78709) This is some straight-ahead rawk garage and I suppose it has been done before, over and over, but Billy Childish fans will dig.

Mike Therieau "Fly Away" b/w "Midnight Apt. #9 Blues" (Dollar Record Records) Damn, it's bloozey in here.

These Arms Are Snakes "The Lion Sleeps When Its Antelope Go Home" or "Oxeneers" (Jade Tree Records, 2310 Kennwynn Rd., Wilmington, DE, 19810) These Songs Are Kickass! Arty, but knows how to party.

The Thin Man "H.M.S. Mondegreen" (Skin and Bone POB 2203 Chicago IL 60690) Triumphant dreaary sea shanties that made me both sweetly melancholy and slightly seasick. Buy a bag of oranges with this CD lest you get scurvy.

"This is Bad Taste, Vol 5." compilation (Bad Taste Records) I don't dig all these bands, but the Hard-Ons and Danko Jones had me hard and Jonesing.

This Moment In Black History "Midwesterncuttalistick" (Version City POB 22183 Brooklyn NY 11201) Momentous! Desperate, sexy rock n roll that hits you with the rock stick.

This Radiant Boy "Shakedown at the Russian Disco" (Extracurricular) Genuinely radiates with boy-ness.

David Thomas and two pale boys "18 Monkeys On A Dead Man's Chest" (Smog Veil, smogveil.com) Thomas's reunions and history is great, but for a weird motherfucker like him you want him to be progressively strange rather than nostalgically fucked, so this odd, rocking, bordering-on-bizarre, electronics meet caveman/alien logic album is a treat. Thomas also gets to sing like a tertiary character in a Popeye cartoon. On a scale of one to ten I would give this 18 monkeys.

Throw Rag "Live at the House of Blues" DVD (Kung Fu) This concert video brings you there so realistically that you can almost smell the washboard!

Johnny Thunders and Wayne Kramer "Gang War!" (Jungle) Around '79-'80, as Punk started losing steam, or just mutating into various hybrids, depending on how you look at it, a potentially extraordinary alliance took place between two of the Founding Fathers of Punk guitar. Former MC5 guitarist Wayne Kramer saw in his new acquaintance and reverent admirer Johnny Thunders, ex-guitarist with The New York Dolls and Heartbreakers (though The Heartbreakers would reform sporadically up to the point of Johnny's death), the catalyst for an unbeatable new supergroup...if only Thunders' erratic behavior on stage could be kept in check. You can guess what happened next.

Thunders jumped at the chance to be in a band with one of his personal guitar heroes, but drug and marriage problems caused him to become even more surly and disoriented than fans and bandmates had been used to, and his relationship with both, as well as his guitar playing, suffered. Still, Gang War, though arguably never reaching it's full potential, had some great rockin' moments, as evidenced on various live recordings that have turned up. This CD, I'm glad to say, is the best document of probably the most unsteady alliance since The Hitler/Stalin non-aggression pact (Not to compare these two All-American boys with those those assholes). The sound is very good, and the performances beat anything released to date. Some of these recordings have turned up before, on the "Live in Boston" CD, which contained, up to that point, the best sounding live Gang War material (And, with it, some Johnny's most mean-spirited stage patter), but the song selection left me wanting, a situation that's cleared up, here, with the addition of several little-known gems from another show, performed in Toronto. "Ramblin' Rose" sets fire to the joint with Kramer's beyond-intense guitar work, and capped off by his most outrageous Ted Taylor falsetto (Kramer has often been known to sing the tune straight, as he did when I saw him recently on The D.K.T/MC5 tour). Johnny matches Wayne's fury with a savage "You ain't no punk, you PUNK!!" reading of "London Boys", tho' bonus points go out to the piledriver rhythm section of John Morgan (Scott's brother) on drums and (I think?) Ron Cooke, late of the excellent Detroit with Mitch Ryder, on bass, though it could be later bassist, Bobby Thomas (no musicians' credits). "These Boots are Made For Walking" gets a sloppy, almost Stonesy workout. The Dolls semirarity, "Endless Party", appears here, too, and it's one of the best versions I've heard (save for Johnny's own studio version, done years later), and features (I think) Patti Paladin on backing vocals (again, no credits, just a very nice essay by Nina Antonia). Other seldom heard tracks include a great, tho' brief, "Courageous Cat", the cartoon theme of the same name that became a staple of The New York Dolls' set. "Hey, Thanks" is a great chick send-off penned by Wayne Kramer with an arrangement that's somewhere between The Ramones and Bo Diddley. I've never heard Wayne do this'un live (can't fault me for hopin', tho'), but he did perform it a few years later with a briefly revamped Deviants lineup. The band also does a killer version of Chuck Berry's "Around and Around", leaning heavily on The Stones' version (good thing), but giving it plenty of piss n' vinegar Punk energy. Other highlights include James Brown's "I'll Go Crazy", with a Robert Quine-ish solo by Kramer, and two fine performances of his then-current single version of "The Harder They Come." The more I think about it, Gang War WAS a good idea, but, I guess timing is everything. Here's a chance to hear them at their best, pulling no punches and taking no prisoners. *Rock Scene* compared 'em to 'nardo of The Sharks (Thunders) and Riff from The Jets (Kramer) starting a band together. In other words, volatile, potentially combustible Punk'll go down, and when he's hollered "Uncle", we'll tear up the town. Tonight... Tonight... We're gonna rock it toooooo-niiiiite."

Time in Malta "Alone with the Alone" (Equal Vision Records, PO Box 14, Hudson, NY, 12534) Contemporary hardcore that plays by the numbers but still manages to channel the righteous, angry indignation of their great hardcore forebearers.

Sally Timms "in the world of him" (Touch and Go) Timms, over some genuinely weird and wonderful tracks, manages to deliver vocals in a manner halfway between Julie London torch singing and crazy old man on the mountain legend-telling. This record seems fairly urgent.

Tiny Steps (Rhythmitus 340 W. Chesterfield Ferndale, MI 48220, Rhythmitus.com) Gleelessly nerdy and sincere pop that made giant strides towards awesomeness.

Todd "s/t" (Bulb Records, 4609 Hunt Dr. Adrian, MI, 49221) Should be called Godd. This rocks like a rock quarry.

Tones & Notes zine (\$1 or trade, POB 190-tn, Philomath, OR 97370) This teaches you how to play guitar in a manner both rigidly practical and eccentrically loony.

Tony C. and the Truth "Demonophonic Blues" (Lava) Either the new Sly Stone or the new Frank Stallone, I can't quite figure it out.

Too Negative comix (\$1, Jenny GonzalezPOB 22477 Brooklyn NY 11202-2477) Jenny makes nasty, naughty narratives about devils, angels, slackers and sex maniacs that draw from Vaughn Bode, Goth and fun drugs. Interesting here is that she included a 24-hour comic that she knocked out in a day as a project, and it flows better visually and narratively than her dense comics she labors over. The lesson here - trust your instincts, kids, and let it flow.

Top 40's Swingin' Soft Drink Spots of the 60s Vol. 2 (X-Static Records, Xstaticdirect@excite.com) This is an amazing compilation of 60s DJ airchecks and soda pop commercials from all your favorite pop and soul singers of the era. Ray Charles actually recorded one of his best songs as a Coke-shill in the 60s (putting his 80s Pepsi ads to shame). What makes this release so odd and wonderful is that it has no tracks, you have to listen to this as one long art piece, not a series of historical snippets.

The Tough and Lovely "Born of the Stars" (Spoonful, 1511 Northstar Road Columbus, OH 43212, Spoonfulrecords.com) Super tough, savagely lovely and profoundly rocking. At its R&B/Garage-iest this is super awesome and when this tries to get country rock-ish, or soulfully sensitive, I admire the effort. The voice here is pretty moving and expressive and if this is what Ohio is back to producing these days, then I almost forgive them for poor voting choices.

Tragedy Andy "It's Never Too Late to Start Over" (Pop Smear Records, www.popsmearerecords.com) They should be called Shitty Fucking Terrible Andy.

Trailer Park Tornados "Don't Mind the Maggots" EP (Big Neck POB 8144 Reston VA 20195) Glorious trash rock nastiness that is *this close* to not even being music!

Traindodge "The Truth" (Ascetic POB 411193 St. Louis MO 63141) Rather than listen to this 3 hour CD again I would opt to not dodge a train.

Traitors "Bring Me The head of Matt Skiba" (johannsfacc.com) This is the fucking best record in America. They sing a bitter upbeat song about drinking beer from the skull of an ex-band member who became successful, a faux hardcore song, and a pro-Polka, pro-hate song. Better yet are the bonus tracks that appear only on the lyric sheet. They have an anti-Cheney song (as if these guys can read the newspaper) and a pro-manatee song (as if these guys ever went to marine biology college).

The Trakes "Nine Giants" (\$7, 250 Suydan Ave apt. 4 Jersey City NJ 07304) The Trakes play every kind of music from pop punk to gay rock and make it all pleasingly futuristic and old-timey-ly familiar. This is the rock of tomorrow!

"The Trans-Canada Beaver Cookoff" compilation (Catch and Release 2030 34th Ave SW, Calgary AB T2T 2C3) Six Canadian garage/pop/punk/rock bands make kind of funny, fairly rocking rock. For pure rockery you can't beat the Forbidden Dimension with their silly scariness and for good band name you can't beat the Donkeys. The best moment on here has Shikasta screaming "This one is about a dog!"

Trans-Siberian Orchestra "The Lost Christmas Eve" (Lava) This sounds almost exactly like "Stonehenge" by Spinal Tap. At least the Mannheim Steamroller guy did "Convoy" when he was younger, I can't think of any reason to recommend this grand, pretentious Christmas regal orchestral rock X-mas concept record. Buy King Diamond's recent Christmas themed puppet concept album instead.

Travisty Theory "Silver Spoon" (PGOL Records, PO Box 751, Flora, MS, 39071) Ooph! Not good in many many ways.

The Travoltas "The Highschool Reunion" (Fastmusic) Trevolting

Treephort "Enchanted Forest" (Springman POB 2043 Cupertino, CA 95015-2043) Punk bands like to go crazy but few actually arrive at crazy. But these fuckers sound genuinely mentally ill. Absurdist and goofy, the Treephorts make magical soundpharts.

Tribeca "People Need to Know" ep (tribecamusic.net) Tri to stay awake

A Tribute to the Steve and Gary Show VHS (planetkrulik.com) This compiles the best moments from a no-budget early 80s New York cable access dance/music show that featured a couple of goofs welcoming weird punk and rockabilly and rock and experimental bands to a set that looked like a 3-year old's birthday party. The unfocused, teenage Beastie Boys, the ultrafocussed but squeak-tastic Eugene Chadbourne, the Butthole Surfers, Ben Vaughn, Half Japanese and others cavort amidst comedy bits, reminiscences and magic that can only happen when you are raised on Soupy Sales and have the opportunity to make media without commercial considerations. This compilation is nicely formatted, as it lets the auteurs (Steve and Gary, of course) contextualize their show by explaining what TV formats in the past inspired them and has them walk us through the production process and the quirks and kinks of absurd TV making.

Trigger Happy "I Hate Us Even More" (Bad Taste Records) The 9th best Canadian punk band is back! And I am a 9th excited!

Turn On Your Mind: Four Decades Of Great Psychedelic Rock by Jim DeRogatis (Hal Leonard). To DeRogatis' credit, he does go farther than the obvious (Jefferson Airplane, Grateful Dead, etc.), covering all the semi-obscure and never-made-its like Lothar & the Hand People, Silver Apples, United States of America, etc. And the Thirteenth Floor Elevators get a huge chunk of text, so all the garage/psych collectors who read *Ugly Things* can rest easy. However, it should be noted that DeRogatis doesn't end the tale with the classic-rock era - he views psychedelia as an ongoing genre, so 70's prog-rock, the 80's psyche underground, Moby, the Flaming Lips, the Teardrop Explodes, and De La Soul also fit in his loose definition. Some hardcore International Artists fans might not like this eclectic view, but if you look at it from where Jim's coming from, it holds up.

.22 "The Patriots" (Roydale) On a scale of 1 to 10 I would give this a 22! Indie-rific!

Twilight Circus "Dub Form the Secret Vaults" (ROIR) Dub-ble your pleasure! This collection of semi-ambient dub is hazy, heady and mysterious, demonstrating a command and knowledge of the history of Jamaican music but also an original voice that connects to outer space music in a way that is welcome and atypical. The best circus music that didn't involve a monkey I've heard in years.

Twinemen "Sideshow" (hi-n-dry.com) Tied up in genius!

The Tyrades "I Am Homicide" ep (Shit Sandwich) Tyrific! This band is so good they make my glands hurt!

The U-Haul Adventures zine (801 Eagles Ridge Rd. Brewster NY 10509) When Mike Faloon of *Go Metric* isn't writing about music he can really write well. Not that his writing about music isn't really good, just that most music writers have problems writing about actual life, and Mike is not afflicted with that disability.

Ultrachrist DVD (Eclectic) Unfunny Jesus jokes.

The Ultra 5 "Denizens of Dementia" (Green Cookie) Garage-arific nasty 60s-style rock that sins and wins.

The Umbrella Sequence "sparkler cliché" (Ohev) Not all wet!

Uncle Kracker "72 and Sunny" (Lava) I broke my thesaurus trying to come up with enough words for "bad" to describe this.

Underoath "They're Only Chasing Safety" (SolidState) Underwhelmed.

The Unicorns "Who Will Cut Our Hair When We're Gone?," "2014" (Suicide Squeeze Records, PO Box 80511, Seattle, WA, 98108) If magical gnomes were hipsters they would have this on their ipods.

Unpersons (Life Is Abuse) One long (well, not too long) dark, crazy fucking symphony of noisy messes and ugly brutality. Unpersonably excellent!

Unwritten Law "Here's To The Mourning" (Lava) Write this law down - "Thou Shalt Not Play On My Stereo Ever Again." I guess that's more of a commandment than a law.

Upsilon Acrux "volucris avis dirae-arum" (Planeria POB 21340 WDC 20009) If you like your boobily, goobily, bloopity, blibbity experimental free jazz glibble globble with extra boobily and goobily then this is the CD for you.

The Upswelling (theupswelling.com) Made my ears swell up!

Vaeda "The Red Queen" (vaeda.com) Please don't make any more music.

Vanishing "Still Lives are Falling" (GSL POB 65091 LA, CA 90065) Evil saxophone dance music makes you move to the rhythm of wickedness.

Velvetone "switchback ride" (Crossect) Rockabilly countrified rock n roll that takes a clean, crisp swing at trashy music and hits it like a sophisticated caveman. Retro, but not old, this is one of the better takes on rootsy music out there. And you have to dig Euro-rockabilly sung in a Southern drawl mixed with a Teutonic accent.

Velvet Revolver "Contraband" (RCA Records) Better than the Velvet Underground covering the entire "Revolver" LP. Scott from STP didn't need to kick drugs...he just needed to get rid of that sweater he used to wear. Now that he's shirtless, and considering that Slash hasn't changed his clothes since then 80s, we are in for a treat - a superstar band guaranteed to be around for decades to come!

Venemous Concept "Retroactive Abortion" (Ipecac POB 1778 Orinda CA, 94563) All star hardcore that is so pummelingly brutal that it violently sodomized my stereo.

Vertonen "Return of the Interrobang" (c.i.p. POB 378681 Chicago IL 60637-8681) *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* of epic relentless electronic drones.

The Vibrations "Out of Sight" (Shout) This is a double disc set of the band's Checker sides (though it does feature a remake of their pre-Checker "Stranded in the Jungle," which was the original, though the Cadets version was better). Of course they are legends for "The Watusi," one of the best records of the early 60s, but this also includes my favorite food song, "Peanut Butter," which they recorded as The Marathons (which was a ripoff of the Olympics "Hully Gully," and I think there was an Olympics version of "Peanut Butter" as well). If all of this is confusing, welcome to the crazy Doo Wop world of pre-Beatles pop, and if you are not a tri-state resident Doo Wop aficionado (or at least an avid PBS pledge drive viewer) this is a perfect introduction, as the Vibrations vibe with the best of them!

The Violettes (theviolettes.com) Violicious! Seductive 60s drug haze pop that messes with the best of contemporary indie rock without losing its haze.

The Visitations "Propaganda" (visitations.com) Making a good, experimental electro-psyche record about how awful Bush is by using his own words against him should have really won the election for the anti-Bush...what happened?

Visqueen "Sunset on Dateland" (Bluedisguise POB 16362 Seattle WA 98116) I am in love with the singer because she tells it like it is and sounds pretty. And her band rocks.

Viv "Flawed" (Ten Toes Over Records, 500 Buchanan St., #A San Francisco, CA, 94102) College bar music by some talented folks who have a knack for melody.

Viva Vertigo "Viva Viva" (Bad Afro) I believe that Satan is the vocalist for this dark rock n roll post-Rockabilly band. And he scares me.

The Vulvettes "This is the Science We Believe In" (Dragnet Records, 3519 S.W. Elmgrove St., Seattle, WA, 98126) Art damaged music by cavemen with access to electronics.

the warmers "wanted; more" (Dischord Records, 3819 Beecher St., NW Washington DC, 20007) Nearly a decade old these Warmers recordings are still warm, partly because so many boring indie and emo bands these days seem to be trying to re-do ancient Dischord records. This is better.

The Watchers "Dunes Phase" (Gern Blandsten POB 356 River Edge NJ 07661) The best band in America.

Waterwise by Joel Orff (Alternative Comics) This is so much better than those two Ethan Hawke films where he spends a day with the girl in Europe. This is a small but epic story of two old friends meeting and profoundly connecting for a brief but crucial interlude. It so in tune with the quiet, minute aesthetic magic of life's failures and quiet passages and magic moments that it stands as one of the most impressive comics of the last few years. If you are someone who believes in comic as a medium you owe it to yourself to give this peacefully ambitious project a try.

The Waxwings "Let's Make Our Descent" (Rainbow Quartz Records, 440 9th Ave., 8th Floor, Suite 36, New York, NY, 10001) Lovelier and more lushly 60s-style pop psyche garage (in a very sober, mature manner) than ever. Tastier than Wax lips!



"We Aint Housewife Material" compilation (Dionysus) An international comp of all girl hard rock bands. Mensen from the Netherlands and Japan's Fifi and the Mach 3 have rocked me in the past, but groups I didn't know like the Soap (Japan), the Dirty Burds (UK), and Ventra (Italy) were super impressive. This is pretty diverse, going from bombastic metal-ish rock to moody garage, but it's pretty high quality throughout.

Weapon of Choice "Color Me Funky" (Challenge) Apparently there is such a thing as "too funky."

we versus the shark "Ruin Everything!" (Hello Sir) Scrambly, brambly mathematics make for the kind of tough chum that even the meanest sharks would have trouble swallowing. Unless they went to shark art school.

Bergen White "For Women Only" (Rev-Ola) The cover art and title of this reissue made me think this was some kind of generic, mushy muzak album from the 60s, but (while arguably mushy), that is far from the case. White was a member of Ronny and the Daytonas and became known in the industry as an ace Nashville arranger. But this album is in the vein of Nilsson and Wilson (Brian that is). This is a lush, lovely and weird album that never is as sublimely strange as the oddest Beach Boys material, but still manages to combine oddly churchy keyboards, expert pop composition, pretty vocal arrangements and dynamic orchestration in ways rarely heard on vinyl. This is definitely a lost conversation piece bordering on a lost masterpiece and I would recommend lush pop-heads seek this out.

White Hassle "The Death of Song" (Orange Records) Blues-rock hillbillies who like novelty records and the Butthole Surfers and Blues Explosion but also sound like they like getting high and eating candy.

Wild "I" and the Spirit "True Bliss" (Bullseye) About as wild as an aging all-bunny bar band.

Wire "on the box: 1979" (Pink Flag Archive Research) Many Wire fans have seen a shitty bootleg of the band's live appearance on the 1979 German version of *Don Kirschner's Rock Concert* called *Rockpalast*, but they've likely never seen a pristine copy and I've never seen the band interview that follows the concert before. It's not surprising that Wire was on TV - despite their music being challenging (after one of the first songs ends abruptly the audience isn't sure what to do) it was definitely rock that was the right length and energy for TV, and they were good looking, stylish, powerful live performers. Though the band was at its best when they shot this, sadly TV Rock was not. Despite my Kirchner comment, the American TV show this most resembled was PBS' *Soundstage*, with its live performance

and intimate setting. But German TV rock, which had peaked a decade earlier with *Beat Club* (originally recreating a rock club scene and eventually perfecting a chromakey/blue screen psychedelic hard rock fantasy video world) was at a low point. Within a couple of years a chimpanzee named Ronnie playing music videos would usurp the genre completely. This show is shot adequately but the excitement of the audience (or in this case, the confusion) isn't properly captured, and the editing is pretty clinical. Nonetheless, the band is dynamic and determined. The interview is especially nice as these gents are so confident and ideological in their rock beliefs (including a refusal to play requests) yet are also such a clichéd posing rock band. Hard to believe they didn't make it as big as Duran Duran.

Wolf Eyes "Burned Mind" (Sub Pop) By being fortunate enough to be in one of the noise hubs of the US I've seen Wolf Eyes make damaged sounds numerous times and I will definitely buy that they are the superstars of this fucked scene. But the idea that there is wide appeal for anyone making audio this broken and absurd is ridiculous, but I hope Sub Pop is right. This particular record at times reaches epic proportions as the regal power of this white noise is inspiring, but if it sounds like anything other than static to most indie rock fans I will be surprised.

Wolves! [of Greece] (Gringo) Gloriously grecky! This record will musically tear your head to shreds, but work its way from your brain to your flesh instead of the other way around. Awooooooooooooo!

Wrangler Brutes "Zulu" (Kill Rock Stars) This is Sam from Born Against's current apeshit thrash/hardcore band. There's some DC scramble music here and there, but there is plenty of old crazy fucking hardcore here, and the drumming is really distinctive and powerful. I'm officially wrangled.

The Wrens/The Five Mod Four split CD (Contraphonic POB 2203 Chicago IL 60690) I like Wisconsin better than New Jersey, but the Wrens (Cheeseheads) pummel the garden Staters in this battle of the bands. When the Wrens let loose we hear that their drive and flavor is unique and special. Their opponents merely have pleasant melodies.

Wrestling Its Its Young zine (c/o RAF Ent., 1658 N. Milwaukee Ave. #277, Chicago IL 60647) It takes a lot of smarts to recognize the poetry and ethnography and sociology and ballet in something as dumb as rasslin'. And the mysterious writer of this frequent newsletter is just smart enough to love stupidity. Or vise versa. Or a reversal. Or an eye gouge!

XXX "9mm" (Slusaj Najglasnije) Dub prog robo future music - the most progressive record I've ever heard from this very fruitful label. Rated triple AWESOME!

Yeah, It Is! By Leslie Anne Mackenzie Stein (LAMS1406@aol.com) A stylish tale of rocking teen angst that is so beautiful and humorous and touching in design that it isn't angry in a bad way, just in a sweet way that resonates like a distinct bell. The depictions of "cool" captured here are cooler than the other side of the pillow.

Year Future "The Hidden hand" (GSL) This intense, high-drama, scary, sexy band is so futuristic that I can't even write a review until 2009.

Yeti "Volume Obliteration Transcendence" (Life is Abuse Records) Music so dark that it is blacker than black. Dirges so weighty that they crush inward upon themselves. And there seems to be vocals by martial Orcs on track three.

The Youngs (Web of Mimicry) I Like Youngs!

Young Snakes "(Lemon) This is the first ever release of an LP's worth of material recorded by a 1981 New York downtown art school-style new wave band (or the Boston equivalent, a music conservatory school-style New Wave band). This act featured Aimee Mann as a vocalist and bass player and the drummer from Negative FX. This is not a lost vital masterpiece, but it doesn't suck at all, and if you like your New Wave wavy these snakes might have your venom.

Yourcodenameis:milo "All Roads To Fault" (Beggars 625 Broadway 12th Fl NYC 10012) Yourcodenameis:yousuck

Your Team Ring "In Service of the Villian" (Perhaps Transparent) Hello genius! Music for the smart or the gifted, this is weirdly hypnotic.

Yowie "cryptology" (Skingraft) Music that tastes like chocolate covered haggis. This is a sonic orgy involving very little sex but a lot of lubrication. Best album cover of the year.

Timi Yuro "What's A Matter Baby" (RPM) Rarely mentioned today, Yuro really was one of the best singers of her era, with a voice that held tremendous emotion and weight even when singing piffly pop. Vocally somewhere between Patsy Cline and Julie London, Yuro was something else, and I get extremely excited whenever another fine RPM reissue (with bonus tracks) comes out.

Zamsli Zivot Drugaciji Od Ovog (Listen Loudest) Super dramatic music that made me ponder my existence.

Zebrahead "The Show Must Go Off DVD (Kung Fu) At this point I've seen so many videos in this series that I am no longer impressed by the technical triumphs (yes, these are all very well shot shows) and now only notice how shitty most of these popular poppy punk bands are.

Zebulon "troubled ground" (I Used to Fuck People Like You In Prison Records, Schäferstrasse 33a, D-44147, Dortmund, Germany) Heavy like a 18 wheeler, this is what Metallica thinks they sound like now.

Thalia Zedek "trust not those in whom without some touch of madness" (Thrill Jockey Records, Box 08038, Chicago, IL, 60608) I like the title, but other than that I'm having a hard time connecting with anything here. I have several records by Ms. Z from past bands that I really dig, but this is music I can't find anything but dull.

Zero Child "Live in Mexico City" (Slusaj Najglasnije) Bob Urh gets Urh-gonomic below the border (but with his vocals mixed above the fray) for some genuine party bar rocking that made me bust a piñata, which unfortunately turned out to be the ceiling light, so I'm typing in the dark now.

Zisk zine (801 Eagles Ridge Rd. Brewster NY 10509) More hits than Ichiro!

Zolar X "Timeless" (Alternative Tentacles) Before this CD I had never actually heard this group, but as far as heard of this group I was more than taken care of. In the decade plus that we've doing *Roctober* we have been blessed to be sent numerous amazing photos of them. Apparently, anyone who has both seen this band back in the day and read this rag is convinced they are one of the ultimate *Roctober* bands. And I see why. The fact that they were space aliens who wore Spock ears, antenna and intergalactic garb on stage (and apparently off stage as well) would be enough, and the fact that they did this for almost a decade (early 70s through the dawn of the 80s) is heroic considering the lack of commercial success (they were never really signed to a label despite a few close brushes). But what makes them real Star Warriors is the awesomeness of the music. They traverse glam, glitter, rock, bubble-metal, pop, flashy punk, art rock and of course space rock (though never too prog-ish, always with good, accessible record making in mind) with joy, genius and dexterity. This is an amazing release with spectacular photos and liner notes. Jello's new crop of reissues of records that were never actually issued but should have been marks the dawn of a new glory age for Alternative Tentacles.

Guest Review: Jake Austen

The Nomi Song directed by Andrew Horn (thenomisong.com) I've always considered myself a mega-Klaus Nomi fan. The German-born gay futuristic space alien (whose magnificent operatic voice sang both arias and absurd pop songs in the early 80s New York underground scene before succumbing to AIDS at the height of his talent) is one of my greatest heroes. He created a small body of recorded work that many find grating but that I have found myself listening to non-stop for weeks on end. Even his strangest, most awkward tunes (like "Rubberband Lazer") hypnotize me. While his avant-garde plastic clothing and magnificent makeup should make him a performance/multimedia artist who loses power without the visuals, Nomi is perhaps the only costumed pop artist that fully conveys his costume through his vocal performance.

Nomi sightings have been few and far between. He appears with odd, incongruous musicians and backup dancers in *Urgh! A Music War*; he made a handful of fantastic special effects music videos; and he famously sang and moved with David Bowie on *Saturday Night Live*. These were my only video references to Nomi but it was enough I thought; despite knowing very little about him I have always felt a profound connection to Nomi, or at least to his work. For several years I've heard of Andrew Horn's work on this Nomi documentary and it was definitely worth the wait. Not surprisingly, all the information I'd gathered in decades of Nomi-fandom was exponentially increased by this magnificently constructed, meticulously researched and generously stocked (with footage that was no doubt near impossible to find and certainly expensive to license) film. We not only get to see (Super-8?) footage of Nomi's earliest performances in New York's underground theater world, but also remarkable footage of the legendary shows that established the Nomi character, and that called upon an amazing talent pool of artsy scenesters to create spectacles more dazzling than Broadway plays on non-existent budgets. The film also includes insight into Nomi the human, as we see interviews with him out of costume, recollections of friends, relatives and roommates about his mortal life, and (perhaps most tellingly) the story of Nomi abandoning his no-budget band and art friends when RCA records and Europe called. Of course, there are some odd skews in any narrative as told by the survivors. The abandoned New York underground musicians were justifiably not happy with being cast off and ripped off, but the implications that the cheesy music that backed Nomi in *Urgh!* and in subsequent recordings was particularly different from their work doesn't seem to hold water, as their playing seemed just as (appropriately) cheesed out in the concert footage seen here. Also, I understand why there was restraint with playing up a melodramatic death bed scene when Nomi succumbed to AIDS-related illness, but in a few interviews I've done with Nomi friends, particularly the George Elliot interview that ran in these pages, talk of those last days yielded some amazing views into Nomi's humanity. But to criticize this film for what it isn't is absurd considering how much I appreciate it. To all my fellow Nomi cult members (hopefully more than a handful) this film is a gift. And to those who know nothing of the man this film will be a revelation. I envy the discovery filmgoers will experience when they see this remarkable documentary.

GUEST REVIEW: CHASE ADAMS

Tom Hienl and Bobby Bare Jr., live (The Elbo Room, Chicago) There's one prudent thing to do if you have been blessed, like Tom Hienl, with a strong, resonating, Johnny Cash voice. Have some fun with it, because after all, you ain't Johnny Cash. Using recordings of giddy tunes and country-twanged back up singers, Hienl sang of oddities like failed threesomes and peeing on the highway. Before resuming with a song about going to IHOP at two in the morning, Hienl took a hilarious break to sit in a rocking chair and read from his fifth grade diary. I found myself engrossed in his dry wit, and the confidence with which he presented the material. It took the audience some time to gauge his intentions, but by the end, the crowd was captivated and laughing heartily. For those seeing Hienl for the first time, skepticism is understandable - it's not everyday that you see someone get up on stage and sing seriously about morning wood. Bobby Bare Jr. ended the night with an intriguing, dark performance that oddly invoked a high energy response despite the music's melancholy tone. He crooned through his songs in a distinct waver, commanding the stage with the power of a veteran performer. The contrast of Hienl's shenanigans against Bare's despondency combined for a night full of rich emotion and genuinely moving entertainment.

GUEST REVIEW: JASON MILES

Little Beaver "The Very Best Of Little Beaver" (Stateside/TK)

Little Beaver; sounds more like the name of a cartoon character or a porn star than a Soul musician. Be that as it may, Willie "Little Beaver" Hale is just that, a Soul musician of the funkiest sort. How a name like Little Beaver could escape my attention while on my search for all things funky is beyond me, but it did. That is, of course, until I picked up that smoking little CD by English Soul newcomer Joss Stone. The story goes that young Joss (sixteen-years-old at the time) was well on her way to becoming the next Britney Spears when she auditioned for S-Curve Records Prez Steve Greenberg with her rendition of

"On The Radio" by the Queen of Disco, Donna Summer. Greenberg was so bowled over by her sound that he immediately hooked her up with soul legend Betty Wright as a mentor. It wasn't long before Joss and Betty had gotten together a batch of songs and began searching for a band that could do the material justice. They didn't have to look very far, Betty called up the very same group of musicians she had used since the seventies, guys like Timmy Thomas, Latimore, and the man of the hour, William "Little Beaver" Hale.

Little Beaver and Betty's musical relationship stretches back to 1971 when the two recorded Betty's breakthrough hit "Clean Up Woman" on the little known Alston label. The powerhouse performance both Little Beaver and Betty gave that cut propelled the song to Billboards R&B #2 spot and #6 on the Pop charts in the summer of 1972 and helped to put the City of Miami on the map. It wasn't long before folks like George McCrae, KC & The Sunshine Band and others began creeping out of the woodwork providing 1970's Miami with its own Funk, Soul and Disco sound. Based on the success of Betty's "Clean Up Woman," Beaver scored a solo deal of his own on T.K. Records subsidiary Cat and proceeded to record six solo albums over the next eight years.

The Very Best Of Little Beaver, released on the EMI subsidiary label of Stateside/TK is an import from England which will be hard to find, but once found will be well worth the search. However, before we get to the actual review I'd like to mention my utter disdain for Best Of packages. I've never liked them, and always felt owning the actual albums is much more important than purchasing some Greatest Hits package that some record exec's put together from material they feel best represents the artist. Generally, this means the biggest hits. It's about making money, and 9 out of 10 times that's all a record company are interested in; the cash and not the cow. Another feature of these so called Best Of packages which burns me up every time is when they tack on unreleased tracks to a compilation of previously released material.

Suppose you've been a faithful fan of Stevie Wonder your whole life, purchased all the original albums and never felt a need for *"The Essential Stevie Wonder"* because you've already bought everything. Not anymore, the very same record executives who put these heinous collections in print in the first place felt the need to boost sales and develop yet another marketing scam to sell those very same albums all over again. Welcome to the age of "Bonus Cuts", "Digital Remastering", "Limited Edition Gold Pressed Picture Discs" and "DVD Video Tracks" tacked on to the end of all the albums you've ever owned.

Despite my dislike of Best Of packages, occasionally they do get it right, or at least partially, as they have with *The Very Best Of Little Beaver*. Now, the reason why I condone the sale of this "Best Of" over the sale of others is because Little Beaver's albums are all out of print or can only be purchased through select internet vinyl distributors. As a gold card carrying member of the RGA Club (Record Geek's of America) even I could only find four of his six albums for sale, and those were vinyl copies, not CD's. So, for once they got it right by issuing a Greatest Hits collection, too bad they didn't tack on any bonus cuts (hehe). I would have been even happier with this package if they had gone to the trouble of listing the albums which the songs were selected as well as the musicians appearing on each track.

Call me a stickler if you like, but I'm a sucker for in depth information about albums and songs I'm listening to. I wanna' know where they were recorded, who the producer was, who played bass, drums, organ and everything else. As a somewhat self-respecting musical connoisseur, I like knowing these things. The more you know about what you're listening to, the easier it becomes to find more of that good stuff to listen to in the future. To be completely honest, I wouldn't have ever run across the name Little Beaver in the first place had I not thought to myself "damn, who's the guitar player on that track" while listening to Joss Stone's version of Willie Garner's "Super Duper Love Pt. 1" from *The Soul Sessions* EP. He tears it up on that track, and can you imagine how unhappy I would have been to find that there weren't any album credits to inform me who that rippin' guitar player was?

Regardless of Stateside/TK/EMI's ineptitude in the art of keeping the casual music freak happy with the much needed gravy to go along with the meat and potatoes, the short little essay on the inside of the CD jacket is quite informative for an artist as little known as Little Beaver. Through my own research I found that the majority of the cuts constituting *The Very Best Of Little Beaver* are culled

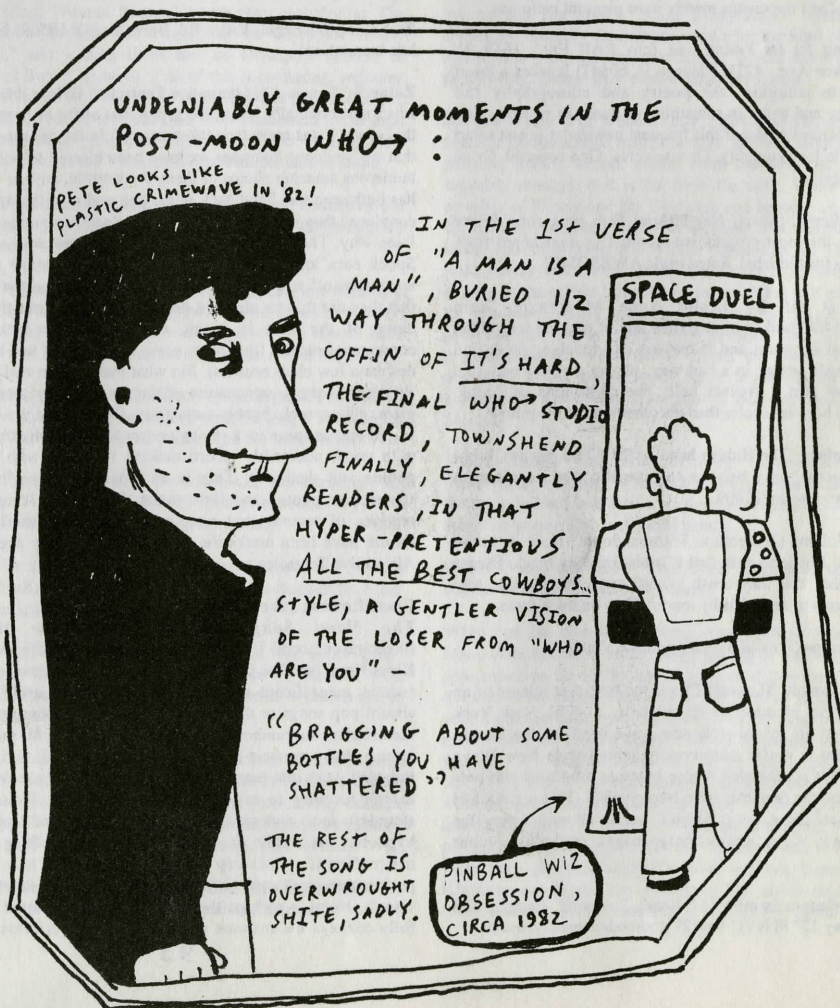
from 1974's *Party Down*, 1976's *When Was The Last Time*, and 1980's *Beaver Fever*. Only one track was selected from his first solo album, 1972's *Joey*. Two of his albums go unrecognized, 1972's *Black Rhapsody*, an instrumental funk guitar homage to Wes Montgomery, and 1974's self-titled *Little Beaver*. Taking a look at what albums a record company pulls its tracks from to form these collections can give you some important insight into the focus of a Greatest Hits package. This particular collection seems to be geared toward Beaver's more Disco cuts instead of his funk guitar workouts. I for one would have been happier with the latter instead of the former but am still quite happy with this collection.

Much of this album is the type of slinky soulful guitar based disco cuts reminiscent of Shuggie Otis' more accessible music. In fact, much of Little Beavers music reminds me of Shuggie, just not as psychedelic, and more dance based. Little Beaver isn't quite as cutting edge but the sonic similarities are quite astounding. On many of the tracks the layered rhythms are propelled by the very same primitive sounding drum machine which Shuggie featured on his futuristic *Inspiration Information*. The silky smooth guitar rolls drift like the breeze, forming iridescent colored bubbles which float across your mind. The party atmosphere is ever present throughout this compilation; in fact, much of this collection seems to be focused on getting down and having a good time. Song titles like "Party Down Parts 1 & 2," "Get Into The Party Life," "Let The Goodtimes Roll," and "Party Times" does a fairly accurate job of summing up the theme for much of this record. Knowing that much of the record is culled from his later work, it's not surprising to find that most of the cuts are tempered Disco tracks heavily laced with elements of soulful singing and funk guitar.

One of the best tracks found here is "Get Into The Party Life" which has that breezy guitar bubbling up in between the lyrics like purple lava. That primitive sounding drum machine I wrote about earlier is found in full force on this track. The simple beat never lets up and provides the song with a rather complex feeling of mechanized dreaminess. "I Can Dig It Baby" sounds like a title track which was left on the cutting room floor from a mid-70's porno flick. Funky guitar fills propel this song on its path to stratospheric success. It's one of those tunes where the

chorus hangs out on the tip of your tongue for way too long while an acid washed guitar echoes a dreamy solo till the end. My absolute favorite from the collection is "Let's Stick Together." This is one of those real cool Super-Dope "I'm gonna' love you all night long, baby" type songs that starts out with a love letter styled spoken introductions. This song is so smooth and funky that it makes you hot and sticky just sitting still and listening. It's about making up with that one you love the most, and what better way is there of making up after a big fight than making love? This cut nails that feeling on the head. Sexy, yet ferociously smooth in its power to evoke intoxicative thoughts of love.

Given the unlikely proposition of Stateside/TK/EMI ever releasing a second volume of *The Very Best Of Little Beaver*, I'll concede my approval of this collection. If I had been given the opportunity to put this together, it's my earnest feeling that I could have done a much better job in selecting material and putting together the package, but overall I'm quite happy. The material stands on its own and does an excellent job of providing a glimpse of a rather important musician of the Miami music scene in the mid 70's. It hasn't changed my opinion of Best Of collections in the least, but it's good to know that for once, they did get it at least somewhat right. As for Little Beaver, he's still an enigma worth researching and last I heard he was working a nine-to-five for Amtrak. I have the feeling that my completist personality has gotten the better of me and I'll now be going out and purchasing all the new and used Little Beaveyr vinyl I can find. My only hope is that the resurgence in popularity created by Joss Stones' *The Soul Session* EP has rescued Little Beaver from obscurity and that this isn't the last we've heard of him. Given the Hip-Hop dominated quagmire the record industry seems to be caught in while it searches for The Next Big Thing, it seems that the world now more than ever is ready for a guy like Little Beaver to come and spread the kind of music the public so desperately needs; good ol' fashion funky soul. So play on Little Beaver, play on. EXCELLENT PARTY MUSIC: 4 STARS For further listening explorations into the magical world of the Miami music scene during the 1970's, check out *Miami Sound: Rare Funk & Soul From Miami, Florida 1967- 1974* on the Soul Jazz label. Both of these releases as well as a gaggle of other Super Dope records can be found at www.DustyGroove.com

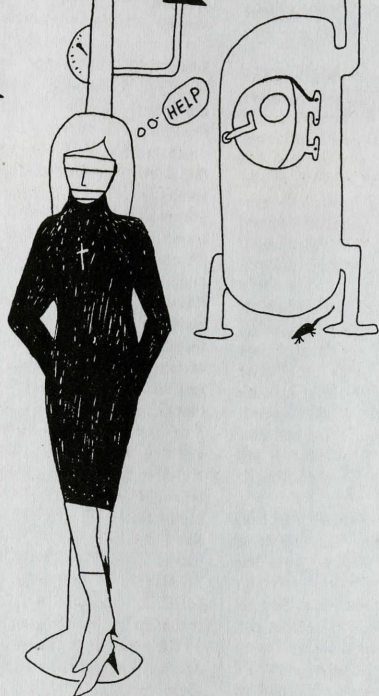


The ROCKIN' ACE

Vol. 3 No. 4

BY SLINK MOSS

Grace Hill
is held
captive
on a
cruise
boat.

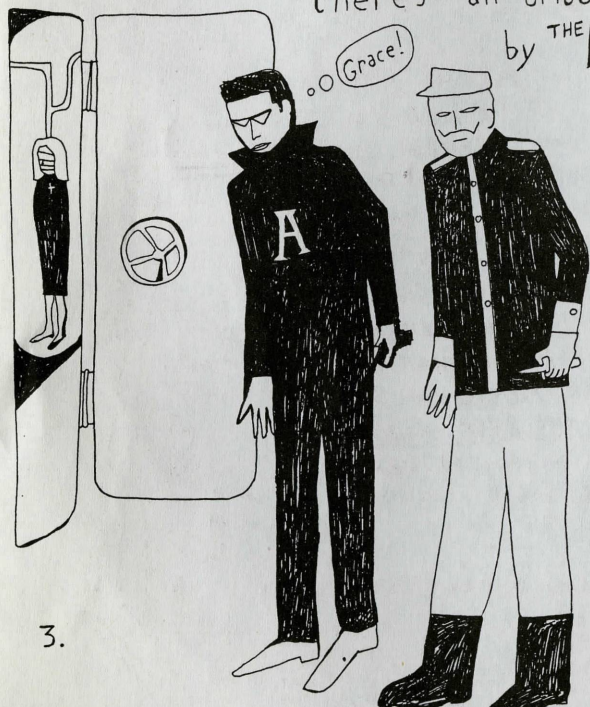


Ace and
Captain Sami
check the
engine room
in search of
Grace Hill.

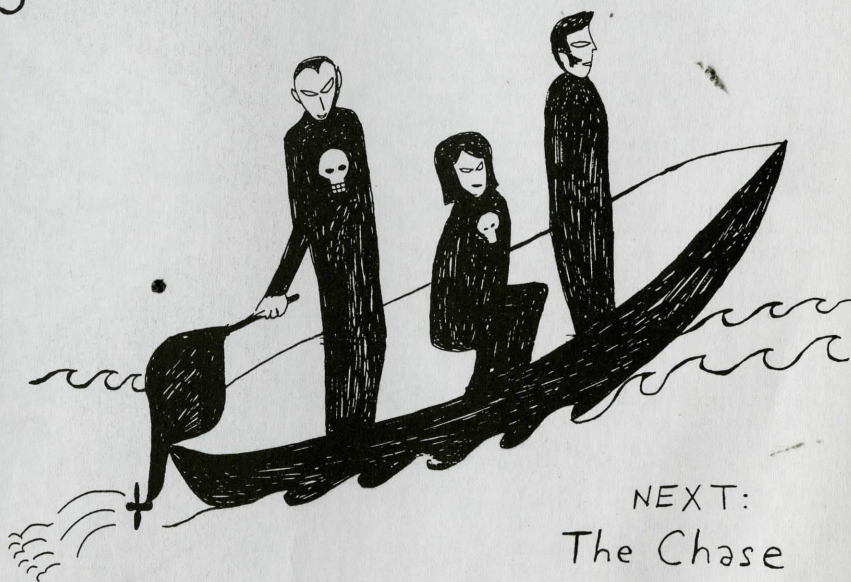
1.

They enter with caution in case
there's an ambush

by THE EVIL 3



But THE EVIL 3 escape...



NEXT:
The Chase

3.

