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Adam Ant

Are we rolling?



AS AN ALTERNATIVE to my usual wittering, I'm handing over this column to Matt Allan, one of the many readers who were moved to write in response to our recent cover story on The Byrds, a band for whom *Uncut* readers clearly have an uncommon affection. Every other email I've received over the last few weeks seems to have been about them, how great they were and what their music has meant to you over the years. The following letter arrived from Matt a little too late for inclusion in this month's Feedback, but Matt had such a good story to tell, I thought I'd let him tell it here.

Take it away, Matt.

"I have been a Byrds fan since I was 14, discovered them in 1967 and have loved them ever since. I was born and brought up in Grangemouth, a grey, little industrial town in central Scotland and had never been to a 'proper' gig before when The Byrds announced a tour of Britain in 1971. The nearest they were coming to me was Newcastle City Hall, on May 7, 1971. That will do for me, I thought, and my mate and I got tickets and set off on a big adventure. We arrived in Newcastle at around lunchtime and quickly found the City Hall venue.

"As we arrived, we found the roadies taking all the gear in the stage door and asked if they wanted a hand. To our delight they said yes and we started lugging the gear in. Once it was all in, we hung around and no-one told us to leave. A short while later, The Byrds arrived - Roger McGuinn, Clarence White, Gene Parsons and Skip Battin.

"I was absolutely gobsmacked. There was my favourite band right in front of me. We watched as they ran through a quick soundcheck and then disappeared backstage. I plucked up the courage to ask someone where they were and was directed to the dressing rooms, where I got all four Byrds to sign my programme.

"Eventually someone said we could sit on the stage behind the band and watch the show. There were various other friends and hangers-on there also. It was amazing watching the show from this vantage point. Rita Coolidge was the support act, I remember, and I loved the show, I felt like I was part of the live side of (*Untitled*), as that was the set they were doing at that time - fantastic memory.

"I've still got the signed programme in a frame on my wall together with the unused ticket for the show!

"We missed the last train back to Scotland and ended up sleeping on the platform at Newcastle station but I didn't care. In July of that year I moved to London and have been here ever since. I have since seen McGuinn and Gene Parsons solo and also attended the McGuinn, Hillman & Clark show at Hammersmith (where I, and many others, got a full refund as the show was so short and not very good!) but nothing will top Newcastle 1971."

Enjoy the issue!

The Byrds' later lineup: (c/wise from top) Clarence White, Skip Battin, Roger McGuinn, Gene Parsons



Matthew Allan

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INSTANT KARMA!

THIS MONTH'S REVELATIONS FROM THE WORLD OF UNCUT

Featuring JOHN PEEL | WOODS | TONY VISCONTI ON T.REX



Neil Young with Dennis Hopper on the set of *Human Highway*, July 1, 1978

Never a dull moment!

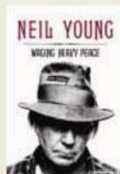
Allan Jones curls up with the autobiographies of NEIL YOUNG, PETE TOWNSHEND and ROD STEWART...

WHEN NEIL YOUNG appeared at London's Hammersmith Apollo in 2008, he walked onto a stage that was cluttered with what looked like the accumulated junk of his many years, through which he wandered as if in an inquisitive daze, touching things in a distracted reverie, like he'd just walked into a room from his past he had not recently visited, affecting surprise at what he found here, what memories objects held, parts of his life brought back to him at a touch. He seemed in his vague meandering to be looking for something, a key, perhaps, to bygone years, which turned out on the night to be the songs he was soon playing.

There's a beguiling equivalency between that stage set and *Waging Heavy Peace*, whose apparently random assembly of memories, haphazardly arranged, without tidy chronology, are often triggered by the things around him – cars, mostly, and the journeys they have taken him on – parts of his life that when he thinks about them make him think in turn of “the chaos, the songs, the people, and the feelings from my upbringing that still haunt me today”. The memories thus provoked are duly pursued, sometimes with frustrating brevity, before his attention is called elsewhere. More even than Dylan's *Chronicles*, this is memoir as mosaic, without a lateral timeline.

Waging Heavy Peace has a beginning, since it has to start somewhere. After that, everything is up for grabs, Young not so much going with the flow as being washed along in a tidal rush of free-associative recollection, likely to spin off unpredictably at digressive tangents, Neil blown along by

ROCKING READS



NEIL YOUNG
*WAGING HEAVY PEACE:
A HIPPIE DREAM*
NEIL YOUNG
VIKING
8/10



WHO I AM
PETE TOWNSHEND
HARPERCOLLINS
9/10



ROD: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY
ROD STEWART
CENTURY
8/10



Cheers to Rod the self-deprecating narcissist for his hilarious read

impetuous gusts, impulsive whims and the seething restlessness that has marked the entirety of his career, which has largely followed its own mercurial logic. One minute, for instance, he is talking about the recording of "Motion Pictures", from *On The Beach*, a song about his disintegrating relationship with the actress Carrie Snodgrass. Next thing you know, he has not only met and married Pegi Young, they are the parents of Ben Young, as Neil usually calls him, with affectionate formality. Before you know it, he's then off, after a couple of pages, on an account of the filming of his movie, *Human Highway* – a comedy about the end of the world, starring Dean Stockwell and Dennis Hopper, which nearly 40 years on he is still trying to edit into something approaching coherence.

He gives perhaps more voice than is absolutely necessary to his current obsessions – including the PureTone audio format he's developing to improve the poor quality digital sound that so infuriates him and inspires several repeated rants and, more cars alert, his LincVolt project to "repower the American Dream" with automobiles that run on eco-friendly electricity instead of eco-unfriendly gasoline. Elsewhere, he is prone sometimes to an evasive goofiness and inclined to blurry generalisation, which fans looking for more detail on the writing and recording of key albums will possibly find

infuriating. More often than not, however, the book, as wildly idiosyncratic as it is, is by turns funny, warm and moving – he writes, for instance with real tenderness about his sons Zeke and Ben, both born by appalling coincidence with cerebral palsy, and the early California music scene is lovingly evoked. He is touching, too, about the friends he has lost – long-time producer David Briggs, Crazy Horse guitarist Danny Whitten, film-maker partner LA Johnson, Ben Keith. You may find it difficult to read the final chapters without getting a little misty-eyed, as he is revisited by them.

For all the tragedy in his life, however, there doesn't seem to be much that, looking back, Young would change. Even the hurt he has caused has had a purpose. "I have become somewhat of a hard person to work for, or with," he admits, as if this is a late development. The fact is, he has always been single-minded, cantankerous and ruthless when required, loyal only to himself and his music. If people have been hurt and left behind, that's the way some things work out, nothing anyone can do about it. "Be great or be gone," Briggs once told him, and it's all he's ever

asked of anyone, especially himself.

PETETOWNSHEND was born the same year as Neil Young, 1945, but into a different world. Neil was surrounded by the Canadian prairie, wide open spaces, an endless horizon. As he vividly recalls in *Who I Am*, Townshend's formative reality was a London ruined by war and a childhood in which he was sent at the age of six to live with his evidently appalling grandmother,

Denny, in whose care he may have been sexually abused. Years of subsequent therapy failed to unravel what actually happened to him, but he seems to have spent the rest of his life coming to terms with it, finding solace in hard-drinking, cocaine, heroin, promiscuous infidelity and much self-destructive behaviour, over which he had no control. (There was a fearful symmetry to all this when in 2003 Townshend was arrested for accessing a website containing images of child abuse and ended up on the sex offenders' register before being exonerated two years later.)

Even at the height of The Who's incredible success and with much great music to his name, Townshend was beset by shame, doubt, a sense of futile worthlessness and self-loathing, often paralysed by depression. At times, he seems to be at war with everything, including his own sexuality. He finally decides he's bisexual, but not quite gay enough to fully indulge his homoerotic impulses. The book in this instance as in so many others is often painfully frank, sometimes hilariously candid, as when he confesses his attraction to Mick Jagger. "Mick is the only man I've ever seriously wanted to fuck," he writes, recalling a visit from Mick, who was "wearing loose pyjama-style pants without underwear; as he leaned back I couldn't help noticing the lines of his cock laying against the inside of his leg, long and plump". Somehow, you can't imagine Neil Young rhapsodising over Poncho Sampedro or Billy Talbot in the same manner.

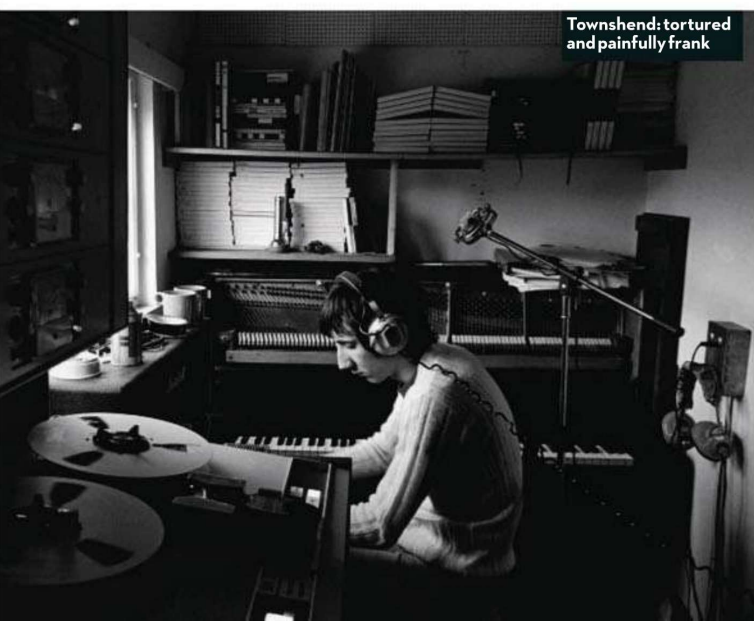
Rod Stewart's drolly funny autobiography wonderfully evokes his early life and career

WHEN YOU THINK how great Rod Stewart looked in the early '70s, when not coincidentally he made the best records of his career, it's a shame that the cover portrait of *Rod: The Autobiography* is less evocative of those recklessly flamboyant early years than the more well-turned out Rod you would associate more with the supper-club crooning of the American Songbook albums than the urchin ebullience of *Every Picture Tells A Story* or *Never A Dull*

Moment. It's as if someone's decided Stewart will never fully reconnect to the people who loved those early solo albums and the rowdy music he made with The Faces, which is probably true, and aimed the book, via supermarket sales, at what you might call his latter audience – which on the evidence of the crowd that turned up to see him at Twickenham Stadium in 2007 seemed to consist mainly of very tipsy middle-aged divorcees and rather shady blokes who looked like Third Division football managers from an age of car park bungs.

This is a caterwauling shame, because *Rod: The Autobiography* is a largely terrific read that wonderfully evokes Stewart's early life and career, freshly rendering what's become an overly familiar tale of post-war adolescence, the first stirrings of the British blues boom, crap gigs, endless motorway travel in clapped-out vans, package tours, being broke most of the time. The tone is droll, surprisingly self-deprecating for such an apparent narcissist, and full of deadpan humour. There are whole chapters here where every page made me laugh out loud, hilarious anecdotes as finely honed as anything in Keith Richards' *Life*.

➤ See more book reviews on page 105



Townshend: tortured and painfully frank



Showtime: Peel puts his feet up at the Beeb in the '70s

IN SESSION

'Always the same, always different...'

The John Peel motherlode: 458 great radio shows appear online. Briefly.

PERHAPS ONLY John Peel could unite so convincingly, from beyond the grave, the Old and New Worlds of music sharing. Last month, a mysterious fan known only as +dB digitised 458 of Peel's radio shows in their entirety and uploaded them to SoundCloud. A fusion of the analogue art of home taping and the access-for-all ethos of the digital age, it also underlined the sheer range of an extraordinary broadcasting career.

This unofficial archive starts in 1967, when Peel was broadcasting *The Perfumed Garden* on pirate Radio London, and ends with his Radio 1 show of October 13, 2004, broadcast just 12 days before his death. In between there's a 1970 interview with Syd Barrett, two 1973 appearances by Bob Marley, a 1995 Pulp session, a Daft Punk concert from June 30, 1996. Perhaps marking the apotheosis of all things Peel, March 23, 1983 features sessions by The Fall and Ivor Cutler. There is also the 1980 show in which he wryly celebrates his 800th broadcast, unaware there is almost a quarter-century of fun still to come.

For every historic moment, however, there is comparable pleasure in simply hearing Peel do his

thing: playing records at the wrong speed, allowing "Eskimo" by Hippy Dribble to get stuck for over two minutes in 1998, rambling, enthusing. It's a little spooky to hear him so alive, but oddly comforting.

News of this treasure trove quickly went viral, helped by enthusiastic online shoves by everyone from Richard Branson to Tim Burgess, who tweeted that this "was what technology was invented for. Like the Encyclopaedia Britannica of music. Dive in."

Unfortunately, the opportunity to "dive in" was shortlived. Within 48 hours of the shows appearing, the streams had gone. A spokesman for SoundCloud told *Uncut* that "we received various takedown notices from rights holders relating to various items of content in the account in question, and acted accordingly". The sources of these notices remains confidential, but "we believe them to be the rightful copyright owners of the content in question".

Understandable, perhaps, but a shame, particularly because of all the acts of posthumous Peelophilia this seemed the best fit. While a John Peel Lecture, a John Peel Stage at Glastonbury, a John Peel Day and even a wing in his name at Broadcasting House would, you

suspect, have made the man himself shrink in horror, a free online archive showcasing what he did best might just have elicited an awkward nod of approval. Anyone jonesing for a hit of Peel can visit the John Peel Centre for Creative Arts online (www.johnpeelcentreforcreativearts.co.uk), which has been uploading his record collection and creating a virtual tour of his studio. Meanwhile, these 900 hours of radio have been retired, although these days it's near impossible to put the digital genie back in the bottle. Where will they appear next? And how much Stump will make the cut this time? **GRAEME THOMSON**

KEEP TAKING THE PEELS

Three classic Peel shows

THE PUNK SPECIAL

DECEMBER 10, 1976

Having championed the Pistols, the Ramones and The Vibrators, Peel devotes a whole show to punk, underscoring a major shift in his musical sympathies. Includes terrific Damned session.

THE FIRST SMITHS SESSION

JUNE 1, 1983

The first of four historic sessions, recorded the same month as

"Hand In Glove" was released. Featuring "What Difference Does It Make?", "Handsome Devil", "Miserable Lie" and "Reel Around The Fountain".

WELCOME TO PEEL ACRES

MAY 5, 1997

For the first time, the entire show is broadcast from Peel's Suffolk home. Blur perform ("They're great, I'm fat") and Peel brings out a 1931 copy of *Melody Maker*.

THE UNCUT PLAYLIST

ON THE STEREO THIS MONTH...

GODSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR

Allelujah! Don't Bend! Ascend!

CONSTELLATION

Montreal's post-rock Orchestra Of The Apocalypse return, with what might just be their best album since *F# A# ∞* in 1997.

YOLA TENGO

Fade

MATADOR

Lucky 13th album from the artful and discreet trio, with their delicate indie-pop side very much in the ascendant.

THE CAIRO GANG

The Corner Man

EMPTY CELLAR

Will Oldham's sparring partner goes it alone, with auspicious, Chris Bell-like, results.

ARBOURETUM

Coming Out Of The Fog

THRILL JOCKEY

Uncut's favourite purveyors of contemporary folk-psych cut the jams for some relatively direct, pummeling rock.

CHARLIE BOYER AND THE VOYEURS

I Watch You

HEAVENLY

A rambunctious debut single from these London associates of Toy; in thrall to early Television, and produced by Edwyn Collins.

AZTEC CAMERA

High Land, Hard Rain

EDEL

Roddy Frame gets the reissue treatment. No sign of those Postcard singles, sadly.

MATTHEWE WHITE

Big Inner

SPACEBOMB/HOMETAPES

Compelling hippy-soul debut from the hirsute White – for fans of Bon Iver's second.

THE LEVON HELM BAND

The Midnight Ramble Sessions Volume 3

VANGUARD

A sentimental journey through Helm's live archives, 2005-2010, also featuring Allen Toussaint and Chris Robinson.

SONIC YOUTH

Smart Bar – Chicago 1985

GOOFIN'

From the vaults – SY break in Steve Shelley and locate the "Expressway To Yr Skull".

SERAFINA STEER

The Moths Are Real

STOLEN

At last! A harp-wielding British analogue to Joanna Newsom. Whimsical, mostly charming, and produced by Jarvis Cocker.

For regular updates, check our blogs at www.uncut.co.uk and follow @JohnRMulvey on Twitter



A QUICK ONE

► This month's big denial: contrary to frenzied internet rumours, Johnny Marr's manager Joe Moss has pooh-poohed the idea of a Smiths reunion in 2013. "It isn't happening," he told *NME*. "We are fully focused on preparing Johnny's new LP for release and booking shows in 2013." We'll see...



► One auspicious reunion that is happening is that of The Replacements. Paul Westerberg and Tommy Stinson reconvened to record a covers EP to help pay the medical bills of their old guitarist, Slim Dunlap, who had a stroke in Feb.



► The judges for this year's *Uncut* Music Awards have been confirmed, with faithful retainers Phil Manzanera, Linda Thompson, DJs Bob Harris and Nick Stewart, Mark Cooper (BBC Creative Head Of Music Entertainment) and Tony Wadsworth (chair of the British Recorded Music Industry) joining *Uncut*'s editor Allan Jones on the panel. Their shortlist of albums will be announced at uncut.co.uk in the next few weeks, and the winner will be unveiled in next month's *Uncut*.

► For a daily dose of *Uncut* - news, reviews, videos and blogs - check out www.uncut.co.uk



WE'RE NEW HERE

Branching out from their noisy roots: (l-r) Jarvis Taveniere, G Lucas Crane, Kevin Morby, Jeremy Earl

Woods

Recommended this month: the flagship band of a bedroom indie empire... Call the copse!

WOODS MAY be releasing their seventh album in as many years, but Jeremy Earl's psych-folk pioneers have stayed pretty low-key until now. The band's first two records were recorded in Earl's New York bedroom, and there's a sense the band have never really left it, delivering a series of delicious but undeniably lo-fi LPs, all recorded in Earl's home. "The first two were just a bedroom project," says Earl. "Then I finally let somebody hear them and here we are today." Where we are is *Bend Beyond*, a big, beautiful collection of psychedelic pop, vintage songwriting and frenzied raga wig-outs, with Earl's gentle vocals concealing lyrics of sometimes startling bleakness. "We were going for a heavier production," admits Earl. "It's more like how we come off live. But after seven records, we've got better at what we do. At first we propped up a mic and hit 'Record', but now we know exactly how we want things to sound and how to get that sound."

"We" is Earl and Jarvis Taveniere, Woods' producer/co-songwriter/multi-instrumentalist. "I do all the percussion and Jarvis plays guitar and bass, so it's really just the two of us getting lost in the songs," says Earl. "He has a studio in Brooklyn and he packs all his equipment into a van and sets up in my house in upstate New York for a couple of weeks. It's easier to record at home these days, but we still use old equipment, four-track and tape. It's like *Music From Big Pink*."

I'M YOUR FAN

"They have those perfect little feelgood pop songs that stay with you. It's all good vibes to me, solid pop from solid bros - with a psychedelic twist, of course." **Kurt Vile**



The band - a four-piece onstage - have a love of improvisation, most markedly with the Indian raga vibe of "Cascade". "Many mornings I wake up to something like Ali Akbar Khan and that finds its way into our music," says Earl. Lyrical influences are closer to these shores. "The last two records have been more on the melancholy side," says Earl. "I tend to gravitate to the sad song and people comment on the contrast with the bright sunny sound. I find that an interesting juxtaposition maybe because I grew up with The Smiths and The Cure in high school." Earl is also influenced by his other job as owner of the small but flourishing Woodsist label, who have released records by Kurt Vile, White Fence and Wavves. "When I work with a band, I let them make the record they want to make. I've made a lot of records so people trust my opinion, but I want to make it a free experience. But a band like White Fence is truly inspiring. Everything Tim [Presley] does is amazing."

The big change on *Bend Beyond* comes on the slinky title track, recorded with bassist Kevin Morby. "We'd been playing 'Bend Beyond' live ever since I wrote it, but it had evolved and we wanted to capture what we do live. Now we're talking about doing the next record as we play live, with Kevin, Jarvis on 12-string and a new drummer. It'll be the full band, and it sounds great." **PETER WATTS**

Bend Beyond is out now on Woodsist

INTO THE WOODS? How to buy the band's best records

SONGS OF SHAME

WOODSIST, 2009

Fourth album, and something of a breakthrough. Americana jams reminiscent of Crazy Horse, with the home-recording on the endearing side of shambolic.

7/10

SUN AND SHADE

WOODSIST, 2011

Glorious jangly psych-pop with a darker edge. Tape manipulator G Lucas Crane is much in evidence, lending a satisfying sense of the unexpected.

8/10

BEND BEYOND

WOODSIST, 2012

Biggest, most confident record yet, mixing West Coast psych with Americana, folk, Indian raga and a sure sense of '60s pop hooks.

8/10

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ATLANTIC

REBORN TO BOOGIE



"Emotionally charged..."
Marc Bolan and Tony
Visconti recording *The
Slider* in Rosenberg
Studios, Copenhagen,
March 1972

'Our plan is to invite Morrissey to duet with Bolan...'

TONY VISCONTI on "Frankensteining" the T.REX archives

"IT'S A FUN PROJECT and I think Marc would totally approve," says legendary producer Tony Visconti, whose work with T.Rex spanned Bolan's golden years of the early '70s. "He loved studio wizardry, and he and I were the first ones in there with that. We're trying to create a batch of new songs with T.Rex, to put together a new kind of surreal catalogue. The

idea is to regenerate that beautiful music."

Visconti is talking up T.Rex Regeneration, a novel project in tandem with musician son Morgan, his first child with ex-wife Mary Hopkin. The inaugural release is "Childlike Men", backed by "Hey, Let's Do It", the result of long hours sifting through Bolan master tapes and splicing classic songs to create something fresh. "Childlike Men" is essentially a boogified conflation of "Ride A

White Swan" and "Jeepster", with an added dash of hippyish Bolan poetry. It's an audacious idea, though it remains to be seen how it'll go down with T.Rex purists.

"About two years ago I told Morgan that I had these master tapes," explains Visconti. "Morgan is a very successful jingle writer in America and grew up with David Bowie walking through our front room and Marc Bolan holding him in his arms. He just started playing around on the computer and after about a month came up with the rudimentary elements of T.Rex Regeneration. And I said: 'Great! Now here's what Marc would have done.' The difference between Regeneration and a remix is that we sampled every member of the band. So instead of putting it through a loop, it's actually Bill Legend on drums, Steve Currie on bass, Mickey Finn on congas and the band on back-up vocals. To all intents and purposes we Frankensteined it, but this is the T.Rex band, as well as Marc Bolan. That's why it sounds so warm and lovely and beautiful."

There's a neat symmetry at play here. "Childlike Men" is the 100th release on Fly Records, the label that launched Bolan's – and Visconti's – hit-making career in 1970 with debut 45 "Ride A White Swan". But it's more than just a celebratory tribute. Visconti opines that, "Marc's legacy has never been respected. So many atrocious CDs have been put out containing bad mastering and tinny renditions of what used to be a nice, fat T.Rex sound. I've been 'conveniently' left out of any T.Rex reissues until very recently, but I'm finally getting respect now and was able to contribute to the new 40th anniversary remaster of *The Slider*. It's my legacy, too, and I just want it to be represented well. Morgan and I aim to generate at least an album's worth of material based on what we have access to. Our big plan is to invite current artists of the day to join in and do duets with Marc, be it Adele or Morrissey or whoever.

"This was the most special period of my life. 'Ride A White Swan' was my first hit and it was one of my longest associations. I was with Marc for five years, so it was almost like being married and divorced. Or having your mate die on you. It's so emotionally charged for me."

ROB HUGHES

"Childlike Men"/"Hey, Let's Do It" is out now on Fly



Ray Cooper, beating the session competition...

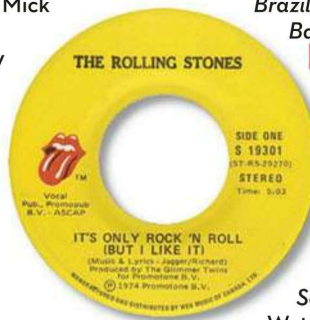
AND ON PERCUSSION... RAY COOPER

UNCUT'S GUIDE TO ROCK'S GREATEST SESSION PLAYERS

► Elton John's percussionist since the early 1970s, Ray Cooper has also played with The Rolling Stones and on Mick Jagger and Bill Wyman solo albums, as well as on records by three of The Beatles; Paul McCartney (both on his solo work and with Wings), George Harrison and Ringo Starr. Other acts he has worked with include Pink Floyd, Eric Clapton, Art Garfunkel, Rick Wakeman, Christine McVie, Bryan Ferry, Carly Simon, Harry Nilsson, Roger Waters, The Traveling Wilburys and Billy Joel. He's also worked as an

actor, appearing in Robert Altman's *Popeye* and two of Terry Gilliam's films, *Brazil* and *The Adventures Of Baron Munchausen*.

KEY SESSIONS: A host of Elton John albums including *Madman Across The Water*, *Honky Château* and numerous others. The Rolling Stones' *It's Only Rock 'n' Roll*, Wings' *Back To The Egg*, Harry Nilsson's *Son Of Schmilsson*, George Harrison's *Somewhere In England*, Roger Waters' *The Pros And Cons Of Hitch Hiking*, and Mick Jagger's *She's The Boss*. PHIL KING



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FREE
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ROCKS OFF

Your guide to this month's free CD

1 **KING TUFF****Bad Thing**

We rev up with this Force 10 power-pop hurricane, blasting out from the depths of Kyle Thomas' Vermont garage with a wicked swagger and – as our reviewer put it last month – “as catchy as VD”.

2 **THE MOUNTAIN GOATS****Harlem Roulette**

A vivid evocation of the fateful night in '68 when Frankie Lyman OD'd on smack after spending his last evening on earth recording “Sea Breeze” in a NYC studio, from the sharpest album yet from John Darnielle and cohorts.

3 **THE JIM JONES REVUE****7 Times Around The Sun**

Primal blues-rock, dirty barrelhouse piano, tribal stomping and guttural hollering from the London quintet's third album, as JJ morphs into Camden Town's answer to Jon Spencer.

4 **THE FRESH & ONLYS****Dream Girls**

Wistfully romantic psych-pop from the San Fran crew, with a swooning touch of Chris Isaak to Tim Cohen's reverb-heavy vocals and the coolest xylophone we've heard since the Beastie Boys' “Girls”.

5 **JOHN HIATT****It All Comes Back Someday**

He's been telling his stories from



The Fresh & Onlys

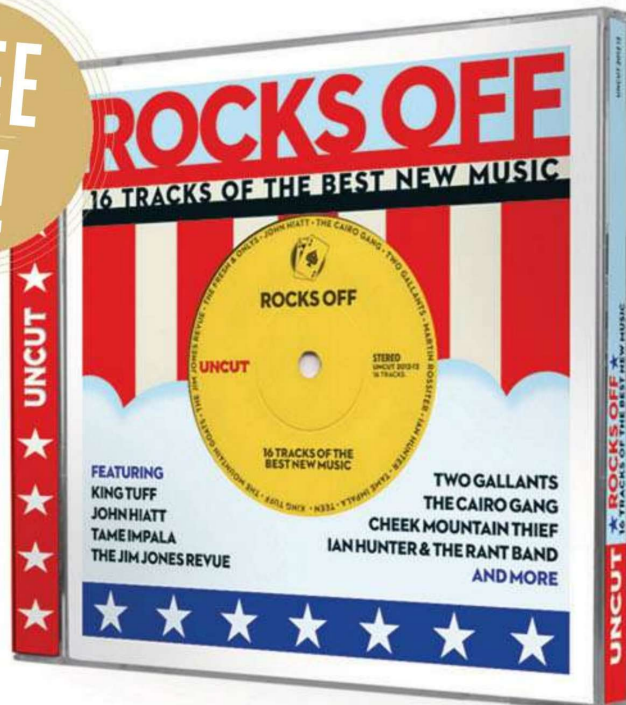
the heartland for almost 40 years now – and he's still doing it as compellingly as ever on this breezy but damaged tale of motorcycle-madness-in-the-trailer-park, from the 21st album of an extraordinary career.

6 **THE CAIRO GANG****Now You Are One Of Us**

After collaborating on almost every Bonnie ‘Prince’ Billy project since 2006, it's unsurprising if something of the spirit of Will Oldham has rubbed off on Emmett Kelly. This spare, understated gem comes from his first solo album in six years.

7 **TWO GALLANTS****Song Of Songs**

After a five-year wait, the latest from San Fran duo Tyson Vogel and Adam Stephens finds their rickety folk-rock-blues in dynamic fettle as jangle, grunge and skewed biblical references collide on this track from a welcome comeback.

8 **MARTIN ROSSITER****Sing It Loud**

The former Gene lead singer seemed lost in action after his band split up in 2004. It turns out he's been managing a Brighton studio and slowly gestating his debut solo album, from which this exquisitely tender piano ballad comes.

9 **IAN HUNTER & THE RANT BAND****Saint**

At 73, the ex-Mott The Hoople man is still doing his best to grow old as disgracefully as possible, on a raw, old-fashioned stomper, which finds him hymning the rock'n'roll life as passionately as he did half a century ago.

10 **THE WOODEN SKY****Child Of The Valley**

Gentle melancholy and warm, minor-key rapture on the opening track from the third album from Gavin Gardiner and his Toronto-based bucolic rockers, fast turning into one of Canada's most impressive exports.

11 **TAME IMPALA****Elephant**

Sweet meet Hawkwind on a cosmic jam in the BBC Radiophonic Workshop, courtesy of Kevin Parker's Aussie psych-rockers, produced by Mercury Rev/Flaming Lips knob-twiddling maestro Dave Fridmann.

12 **IRIS DEMENT****Before The Colors Fade**

Exquisite, hardcore country heartbreak with a soulful Southern twist from the first album of her own songs in 16 years by the Arkansas-born singer best-known for the much-covered “Our Town”.

13 **CHEEK MOUNTAIN THIEF****There's A Line**

Tunng's Mike Lindsay goes solo in a more rocking than folktronica vein and heads for Iceland, taking up residence in a cabin on the far northern shores, where he recorded this poignant ode to his new home.

14 **LUCERO****On My Way Downtown**

An irresistible slice of choogling Southern boogie with Memphis branded through its rock'n'roll heart – which is exactly where Ben Nichols and band can be found when they're not on the road playing 200 dates a year...



Teen

15 **TEEN****Electric**

Classic girl-pop given a new wave injection and swirling psych coda, from the Brooklyn indie-rockers, fronted by ex-Here We Go Magic keyboardist Teeny Lieberman, backed by two of her sisters.

16 **WOVENHAND****Coup Stick**

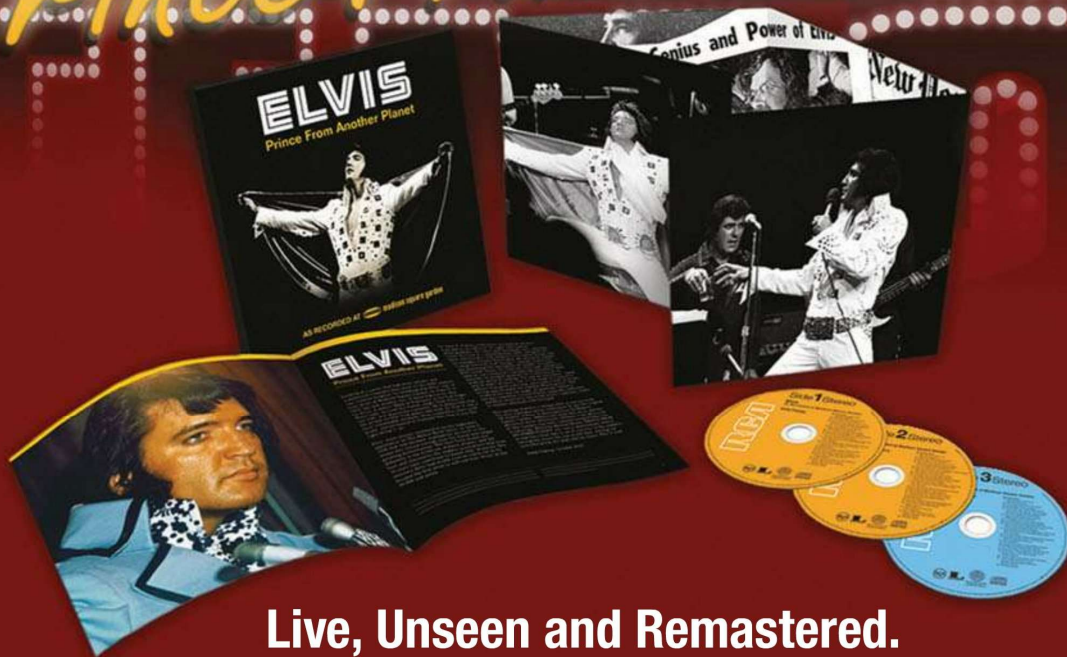
Christian fundamentalist/former 16 Horsepower singer David Eugene Edwards and his Colorado fellow worshippers take us out, rocking towards judgement day on a storming sermon, full of musical fire and brimstone.



Tame Impala: psych wizards of Oz

ELVIS

Prince From Another Planet



Live, Unseen and Remastered.

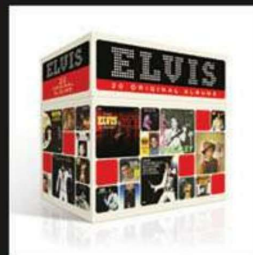
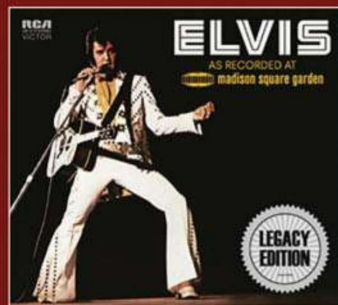
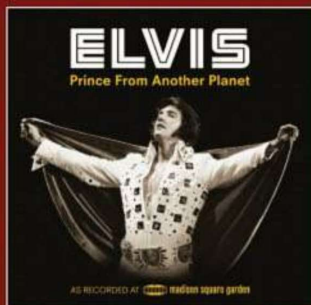
Deluxe 40th Anniversary Edition of the famous 1972 sold-out, 'Live At Madison Square Garden' shows.

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Jonny Greenwood

Interview: Michael Bonner

Photograph: Michael Clement

The Radiohead guitarist and soundtrack composer takes questions on computer games, unusual instruments and raising chickens: "Lots of burials to do..."

WE'VE RECEIVED a record haul of questions for Jonny Greenwood. Hundreds, in fact, asking the Radiohead guitarist and soundtrack composer about everything from the welfare of his chickens to rather intense inquiries about the effects pedals he used on early Radiohead B-sides. Ostensibly here to discuss his latest soundtrack, for Paul

Thomas Anderson's new film, *The Master*, Greenwood is also happy to reminisce about his teenage years as a viola player in the Thames Vale Youth Orchestra, tell us about his favourite current computer games and update us on the status of specific unreleased Radiohead tracks.

"We have a long history of writing songs and having them hang around unrecorded for years," he explains.

Now, on with your questions...



STAR QUESTION



How did you get into writing soundtracks, and how does it differ from writing pop songs? As you can guess, I'm jealous

of your new calling...

Matt Bellamy, Muse

It's just a different way of collaborating with people – like being in a band with a director, and a bunch of images and stories – instead of drummers and bass players. It's fun! Don't be jealous. Plus, you and I would only ever get to see the most pampered side of the job. Composers who do it properly all the time aren't treated too well – on many films they're ranked way below, say, make-up, in order of importance, and not given much freedom to try things out. I was just offered a film because they had to 'let go' of their current composer and I think that happens a lot – in fact, I probably came close during the scoring for *The Master*. I kept adding jazz flute. Paul kept sending me pictures of Ron Burgundy.

How did you begin your collaboration with Paul Thomas Anderson? What attracted you to his films?

Shane Rubano, Ithaca, NY

He found some bootleg recordings of some of my orchestral stuff, and tried it on a few early scenes for *There Will Be Blood* – then he asked for more. He's enthusiastic about music – he came to the strings recording day in Abbey Road and we were both buzzing about being that close to an orchestra.

What was the first guitar you bought – and which was the first song you learned?

Nicolás Gauna, Buenos Aires, Argentina

I bought a Fender acoustic for £40 from a 'for sale' column in the *Oxford Journal* when I was about 14, then an electric one from my teacher when I was 16. I still have the acoustic, but the electric one was stolen in Leeds on the first Radiohead tour (at the Duchess Of York, I think... it was a cream Telecaster if anyone's seen it). I don't remember working out many songs by other bands – maybe

"Psycho Killer" by Talking Heads. There was a tiny guitar room at school where teenagers hung out playing each other U2 songs – but I never had any U2 records.

Any idea why the soundtrack for *We Need To Talk About Kevin* was never released? And will it eventually see the light of day?

Laura Taylor, Penge

It wasn't long enough. There were a few pretty steel-strung harp things, but the rest of it was mostly laptop-generated stuff broadcast to, and recorded from an old LW radio... It's good in the film, but not exactly *Raiders Of The Lost Ark* on its own.

STAR QUESTION



Do you write "rock" songs as well as modern classical meltdowns like *There Will Be Blood*?

Stephen Malkmus

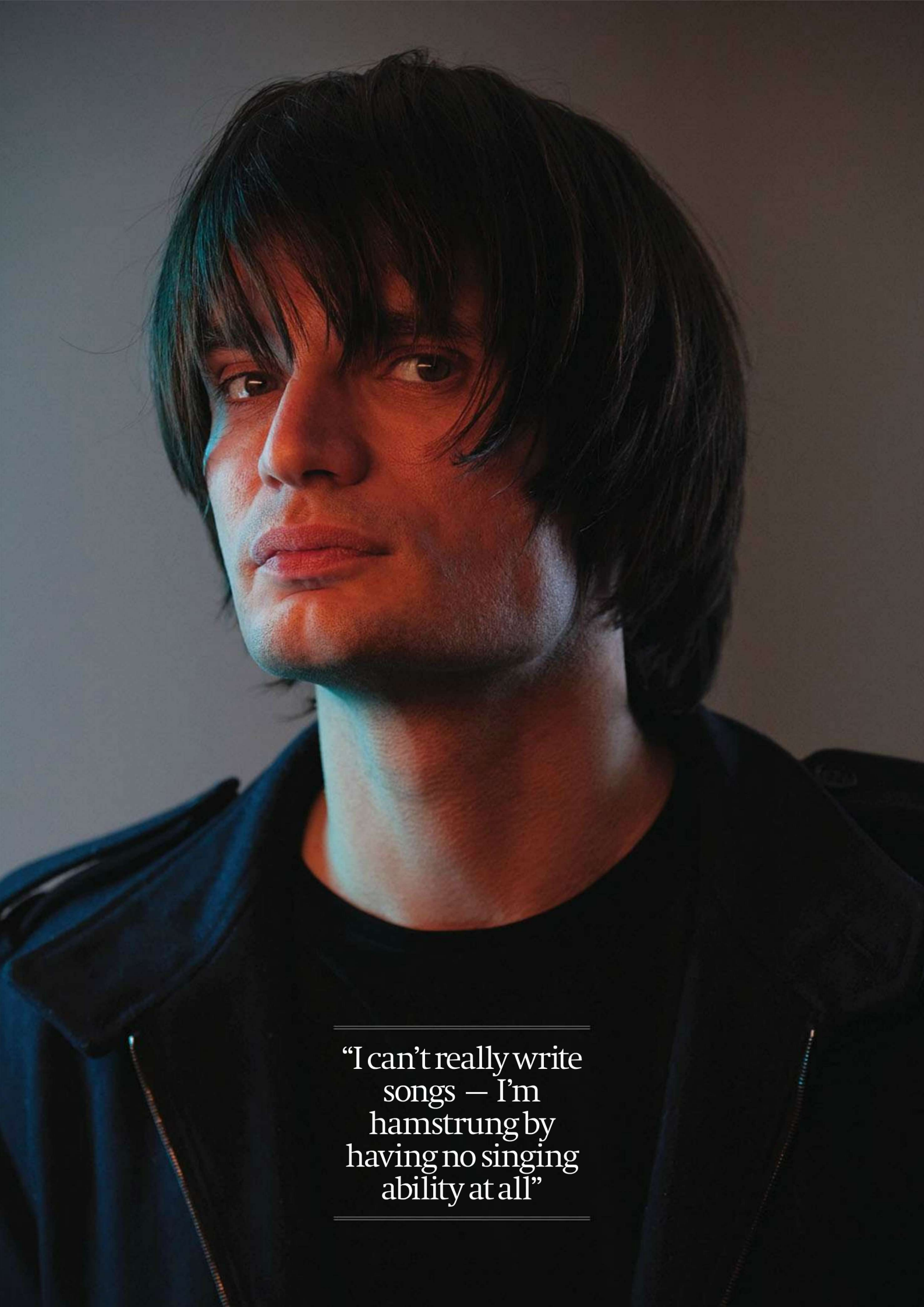
I'm hamstrung by having no singing ability at all – so aside from a few guitar chord sequences I can't really write songs. As for classical stuff, I find it pretty pleasurable at the moment working on paper – it's a bit like film photography, because there's this long delay between having the idea, and seeing if it comes out right. Weeks of work and it all comes down to one afternoon's performance, which is the first time you get to know what it sounds like.

How are the chickens doing?

Matthew Windham, Missoula, Montana

They're OK – thanks for asking. Pretty good layers. Eggs taste great. Would you like a half-dozen? We get foxes every few years, and it all goes a bit crime-scene when that happens – lots of burials to do. The foxes tend to take just one or two, and just kill the rest.

The four new songs debuted on the current Radiohead tour are excellent. But can you



“I can’t really write
songs — I’m
hamstrung by
having no singing
ability at all”



The day job: Radiohead around the time of 2003's *Hail To The Thief*; and below, Daniel Day-Lewis in *There Will Be Blood* (soundtracked by Greenwood)

→ tell us what plans there are for unreleased fan favourites like “The Present Tense”, “Burn The Witch”, “Open The Floodgates” and “Big Boots”, please?

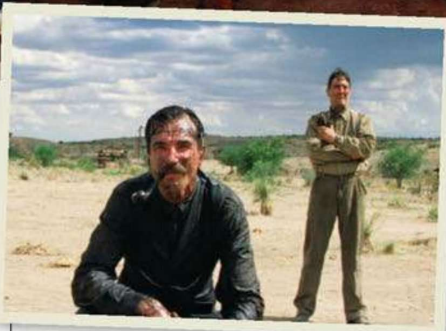
Nicolas Ormbrek, via email
We have a long history of writing songs and having them hang around unrecorded for years. “Nude” was a pretty old song – so was “The Daily Mail”. Sometimes it just sounds right during rehearsals for a recording, and so we record it. Other times it sounds all wrong. I hope we’ll get round to some of those – especially “Burn The Witch” and “Present Tense”, which could be great, if we get the arrangements sorted out.

What are your favourite computer games right now?

Kaspar Oja, Estonia
I’m among friends here, right? Well... we’re touring, so I’m limited to Mac laptop games. It isn’t the best platform for gaming, as I’m sure you know. Or would know, if you were a nerdy gamer. I finished *Portal 2* on the first American tour – which was perfect, because all those sports arenas are exactly like *Portal* test chambers: dark corridors, gigantic windowless concrete boxes: it was a confusing time going from *Portal* and back to reality. Good game, though! I’d gone off FPS games, but was missing the exploration side of those games – so the two *Portals* were just right for me. What else? *Limbo*’s a good game. *Ski Safari* is very well written. So is *Plants Vs Zombies*. And I’ve just started to go through *Braid* for the second time... love the time-shifting idea, really makes my head ache.

Other than the ondes Martenot, what unusual instruments are you fond of?

Amy Brown, via email



and the ondes Martenot more old-fashioned...?

Paul Miano, Portsmouth, VA

I know, I know – this is the contradiction going round in my head the whole time. So basically, you reject all of them as out-dated... or treat all of them as equals.

I’m mindful that some bands retreat into collecting musical gear as a way of avoiding any actual songwriting/composing – endless discussions about weird old keyboards. It becomes about the sound of things rather than what is done with them: so I’ve just got to stop looking for new things to play, and instead learn to play the ondes Martenot properly. It deserves far more of my time than I give it.

What’s your opinion on the decision to decline you a well-deserved Academy Award nomination for *There Will Be Blood* just because you included some older compositions in it?

Allen Gallagher, Paisley

I’ll take the latter. I guess I was just pointing out how traditional it’s become to form a guitar band – they’re not quite dixieland jazz bands, but it’s getting that way. Look at covers of the *Melody Maker* from the ’20s, the ’60s and then *NME* today – it goes: banjos, guitar bands... guitar bands. Maybe there’s no other way of making exciting live music with a small group, and certainly the bones of it – playing a guitar in a room with a drummer – is utterly satisfying. But then, I’m happy to accept that a fucking ondes Martenot isn’t much of a step forward. So... still working on that one. Caribou are rather amazing – and are very much a

“I’m happy to accept that a fucking ondes Martenot isn’t much of a step forward...”

The bigger kick was just getting the job, and then that very happy day recording the strings in London – nothing was going to top that. Anyway, I have a Kermode Award, which I’m very proud of, even if it does look like a seven-year-old made it with Plasticine and gold spray.

You recently said in an interview you thought the guitar was “old fashioned”. Can you clarify? Technically, aren’t orchestras

band – so good new things can still be done with people hitting things.

STAR QUESTION



Does humour belong in music?
Adam Buxton

It’s funny to get this question after one from Malkmus. His lyrics prove it does, and are some of the only ones I can quote off by heart: “...tell me off in

the hotel lobby, right in front of all the bell-boys, and the over-friendly concierge” – how it’s sung, how it’s phrased, the melody... perfect.

What do you remember of your teenage years as a viola player in the Thames Vale Youth Orchestra – and when was the last time you played one?

Nick Claiden, Whitby, N Yorks
It was the first time I heard a full orchestra play, so it was a special time for me. We used to practise at Larkmead School in Abingdon. I remember being impressed hearing this room full of strings all playing in tune (unlike school orchestras...). Mind you, I soon put a stop to that from the back of the violas. I only just managed to get in – it helped that I was playing the unloved viola. The director had us play lots of Sibelius, and I still listen to his music, the violin concerto being a pretty good way into classical stuff when you’re a kid. I stopped playing in orchestras when we signed to EMI and started touring.

How many effects pedals have you got, and what’s your favourite?

Antoine Charie, Lyons
Seven or eight? I like the ones that do a simple thing well, like shift pitch, or freeze audio. I’m not that interested in the fiddly stuff... different types of distortion pedals – all that. During the *Hail To The Thief* sessions I went through a period of only using clean, un-effected guitar sounds – it was a bit self-defeating and hair-shirty, but I wanted to try and avoid relying too heavily on pedals, and see if I could come up with interesting things without them.

What is it about Penderecki that’s influenced you more than, say, Stockhausen and Cage?

Jared Nagle, San Francisco
Well... the interesting thing about Penderecki is that he learnt all about electronic music in the ’60s – and then took that knowledge into orchestration, using it to get much stranger sounds and textures than anyone else could get with synths. An orchestra playing his abstract stuff is a weirder thing to sit in front of than most things you’ll hear out of a couple of speakers. Try and see a concert if you can. The first symphony is a good start. 🎧

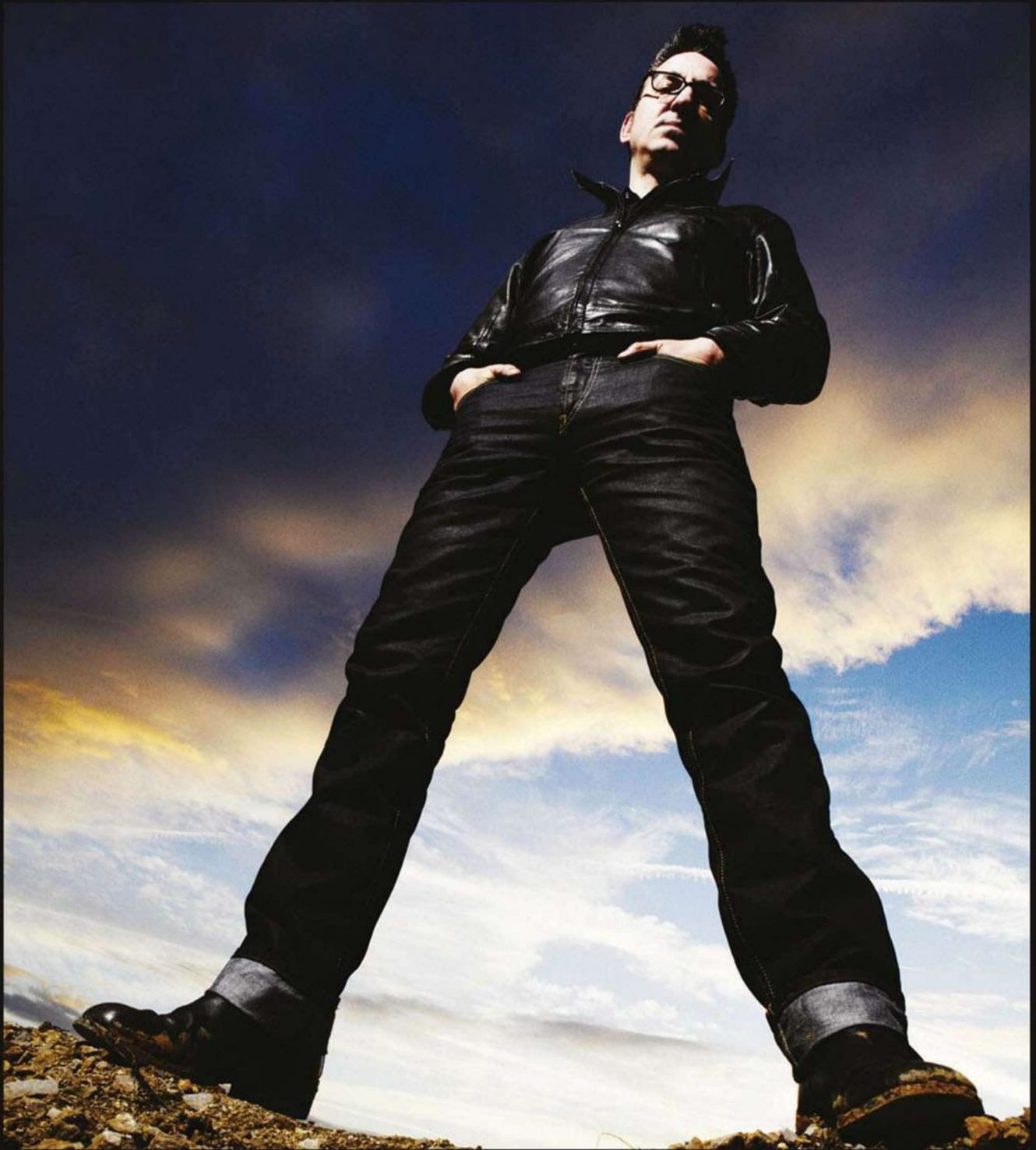
The soundtrack to *The Master* is released on Nonesuch on November 5; the film opens on November 9



UNCUT.CO.UK
Log on to see who’s in the hot-seat next month and to post your questions!

Richard Hawley

Standing at the Sky's Edge

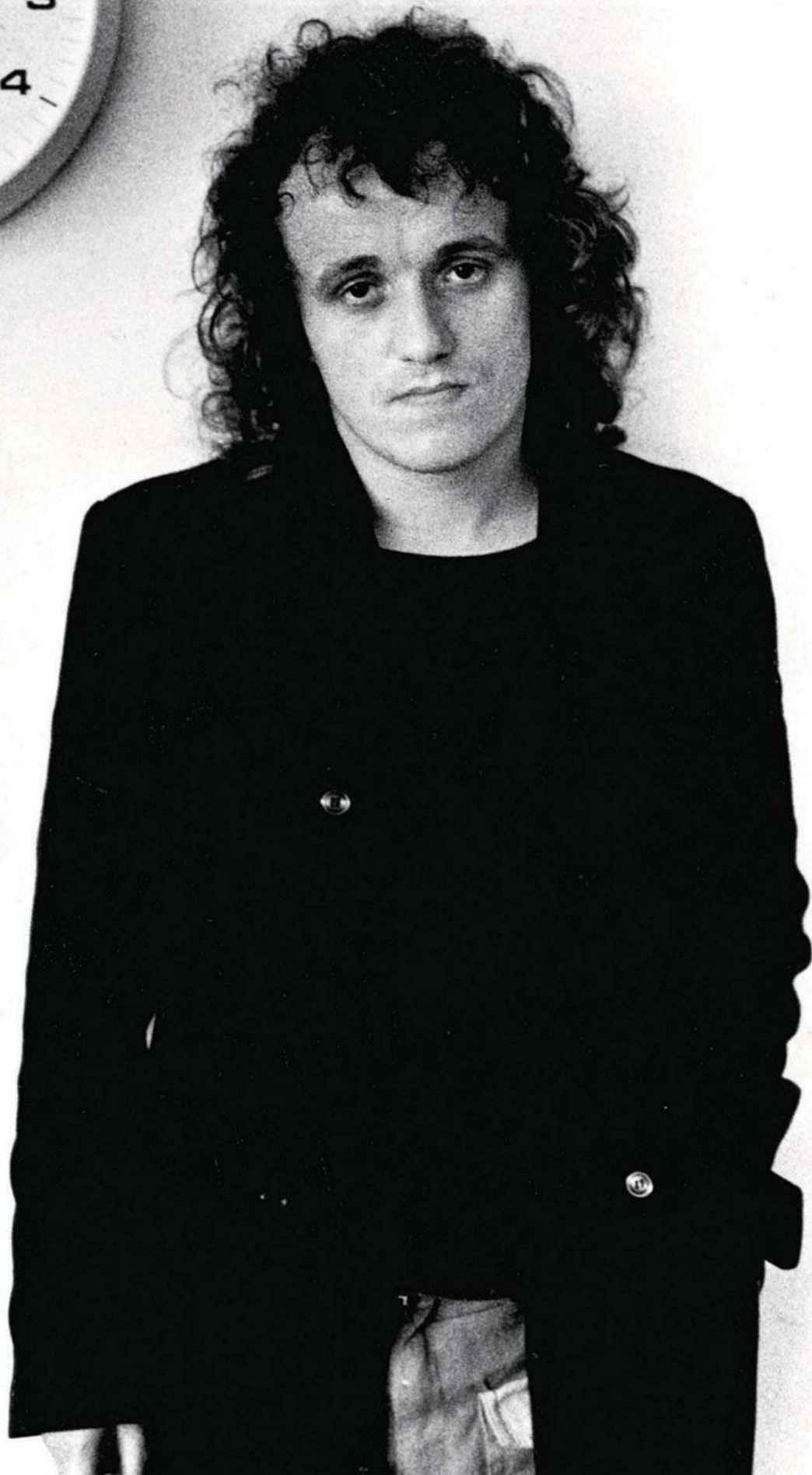
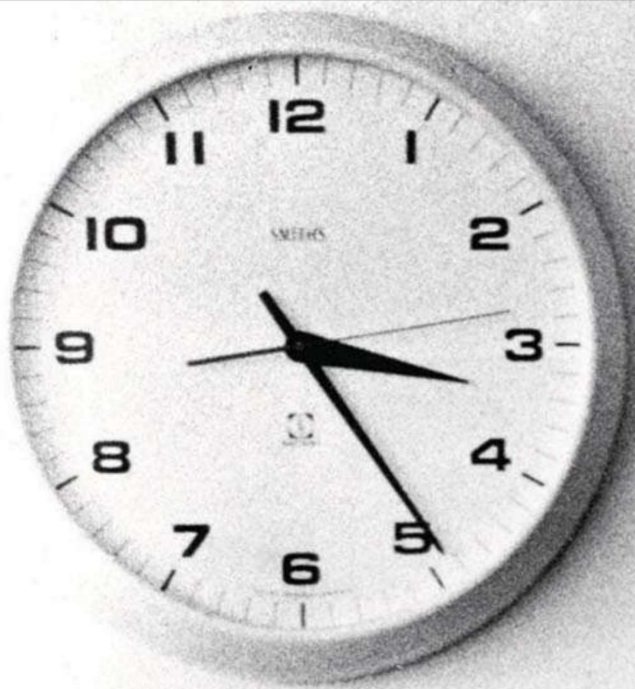


 Parlophone

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CASE HISTORIES

In the early '70s, unorthodox singer-songwriter KEVIN COYNE was being groomed for success by his record label. Championed by Peel, idolised by a young John Lydon, he was even invited to replace Jim Morrison in The Doors. As Coyne's friends, former bandmates and family confirm: "He should have become an English institution." So what happened?

IN AN ANONYMOUS terraced house, a man awakes from his single bed by the window and begins shuffling around his small domain, stringing together the rudiments of a breakfast. At first, he appears to be looking after the flat for some absent person, but then you realise, as his behaviour becomes manic and his speech eddies into tics and whirls, that this is a man who's lost his mind. He cages himself behind a chair, sticks his head inside a wardrobe, arse akimbo, muttering repetitive phrases and veering from ecstasy to misanthropy, swearing like a bipolar trooper.

This is *The Institution*, a rarely seen 1978 film co-credited to experimental filmmaker Ian Breakwell and his old friend from Derby College of Art, Kevin Coyne. Coyne is the man in the frame, and to witness this performance now is to see something unbearably poignant unfolding. Coyne was drawing on his own experiences working with mental patients in the mid-'60s, much of which also seeped into the content of the songs he wrote by the score as one of Britain's most distinctive singer-songwriters of the '70s, but within a few years this man, whom so many former friends and colleagues recall as a funny, confident and fascinating individual, the man Elektra's Jac Holzman called one of the 10 greatest voices in the world, the Virgin Records darling behind the classic albums *Marjory Razorblade* and *Matching Head And Feet*, would himself crash into an alcohol-induced nervous breakdown that would change the course of his life.

"Kevin should have become an English institution," believes guitarist Andy Summers, a member of Coyne's band in the mid-'70s. "A remarkable talent, ruined by excessive alcohol and possibly too much feeling, too much raw emotion. He should have received more recognition."

In the mid-'70s, there was no shortage of 'troubled' singer-songwriters – John Cale, John Martyn, Roy Harper, Davy Graham – dealing with their own respective demons. But none, perhaps, fell harder than Kevin Coyne. Watch the recently released DVD of his Rockpalast television performance in 1979, and you'll see a man in an advanced stage of disintegration committing career suicide on camera. "When you're going nuts," Coyne once told an interviewer, "often you're the last one to know."

I'M YOUR FAN



► "I loved Kevin Coyne. He was hilarious good fun. He'd absolutely cheer you up. Just proper drinking music. And being somewhat underage, it was brilliant. A bloke like Kevin Coyne, you could rely on him. If you couldn't go in, you could go around the back and say to someone, 'Tell Kevin there's some youngsters', and he'd come and get you in. That kind of friendliness, that community. That vibe's very important."
John Lydon

KEVIN COYNE WAS born in 1944, into a richly musical family: his brother, Arthur, was a jazz musician, his sister was an opera singer, his father played drums and his grandfather had been in an Army band. Coyne later referred to having been brought up as an 'alien spirit' in this Catholic family. While Kevin was attending Derby College of Art in the early '60s, Arthur, 10 years his senior, suffered a traumatic nervous breakdown. Kevin, who revered his brother, embarked on a new career as a mental health worker, spending 1965 to 1968 as a social therapist at the Whittingham Hospital near Preston. At the same time, he was playing rudimentary guitar along with friend Nick Cudworth, and voraciously buying records, from American blues to vintage rock'n'roll.

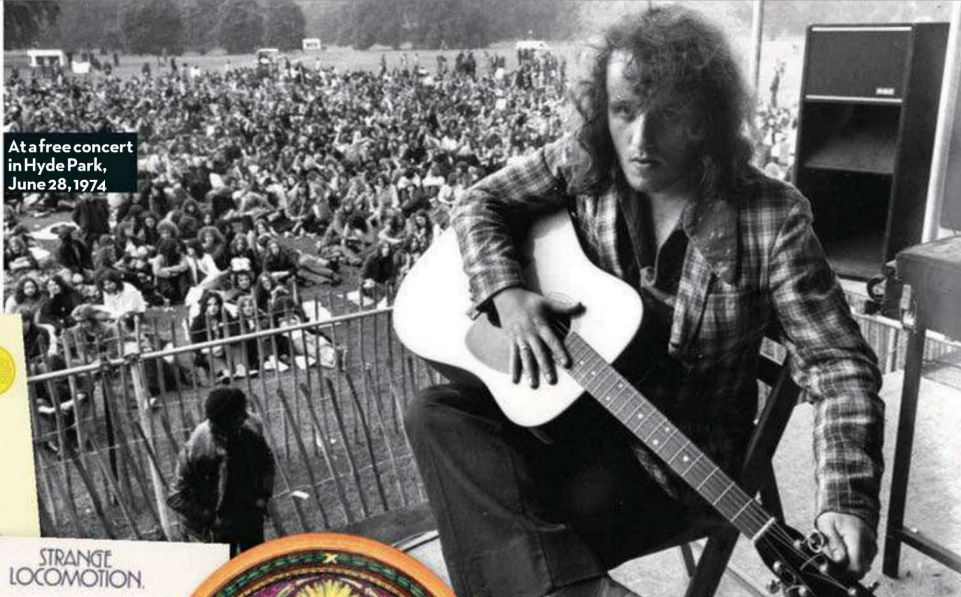
In many ways, Coyne's music represents an attempt to shake the spirit of his beloved rock'n'roll – "so full of guts" – out of its perpetual adolescence to address deeper ills. His work with the mentally ill seared into his creative output. The author and historian Robert Ferguson, a co-worker at the Whittingham and one of Coyne's closest friends in that period, recalls the atmosphere as a "sanctuary". "Kevin became interested in the very institutionalised people. He gave them a little department to do art. And there was a club called the Century Club, where patients in varying degrees of mental degeneration would perform and sing, very strange performances. Some of that spilled over into his stage act – putting a chair on his head as he sang, stuff like that. To him it had almost a religious aspect: these lost souls, could he help them? He had no notion of a thing being a waste of time. He was a very uncynical person."

"This experience seemed to have marked him and fuelled him," recalls Andy Summers. "It was something he referred to often... at times it seemed as if we were all in the asylum. Hilarious in recall, but painfully difficult at the time."

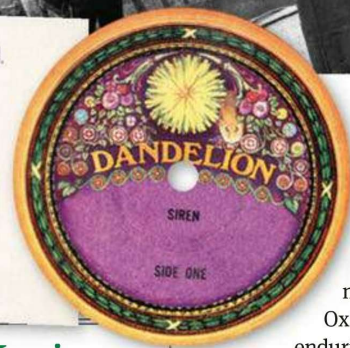
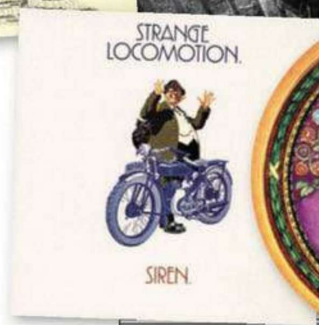
By 1969 Coyne was exhausted and depressed by his

work, but raring to become a professional musician ("I was quite ruthless about becoming a rock'n'roll star", he told Nick Kent). He moved to London where he joined Cudworth's friend, guitarist and ex-Bonzos member Dave Clague, in blues-based outfit Siren. "We got enough tapes together to go round the record companies," recalls Clague. "Then John Peel was interested, and he put out two singles on Dandelion. So many people were copying blues singers in those days, and churning out covers, but he made it all up. The band could count in and start playing and Kevin could come in with a lyric every time." Siren released two albums' worth of material for Dandelion before Coyne embarked on a solo career with 1972's *Case History*. The title gestured strongly back to his experiences at the Whittingham, and to the work he undertook when he first moved to London, as a drugs counsellor in Camden Town. "He didn't see himself as part of the record industry," believes Dave Clague. "He was more of an artist. He was drawing and painting as well as singing – it was his commentary on the world." This distance licensed him to puncture pretension wherever he found it. "In those days," says Clague, "you could drop in to Peel's flat at the top end of Harley St for a cuppa. You'd see Marc Bolan sitting in a corner. One of the objects of Kevin's derision was Principal Edwards Magic Theatre. 'Let's go round to Peel's and do some prancing!' He didn't have time for that kind of thing."

Case History displays remarkable confidence, and an "aggressively unimproved" rhythm guitar style, as Ferguson puts it. "He couldn't play the guitar," confirms Clague. "All he could do was open-tune and whack at it, and it came out in that aggressive way." Jac Holzman, who released Siren on Elektra in America, even asked him to fill the late Jim Morrison's shoes in The Doors – an offer Coyne declined.



At a free concert in Hyde Park, June 28, 1974



"Kevin didn't see himself as part of the record industry, he was more of an artist"

DAVE CLAGUE (BONZOS)

AROUND 1972-'73, WHEN Coyne was given a deal with Virgin Records, he was being groomed for a major songwriting career in the mould of Roy Harper, Joe Cocker, Van Morrison, et al. His first sessions at the newly appointed Manor Studios in Oxfordshire formed the basis of his enduringly brilliant *Marjory Razorblade*, which featured Clague as well as a newly convened group including US percussionist Chili Charles, bassist Tony Cousins and blues guitarist Gordon Smith. The latter two both knew Coyne, as all three had been employees of the Virgin Records shop on Notting Hill Gate. "I used to go round his place and we used to play together," remembers Smith. "It was great – he was a funny guy, a unique character. He was a Northerner, same as me, so we hit it off. We used to stay at the Manor and record through the night. He had all the songs in his head, so he just rattled them off, one after the other. There was no rehearsal, we just did it there and then."

"Richard's paying!" was the cry," adds Dave Clague, in reference to the entrepreneur behind Virgin. "The atmosphere was laid back in those days. Mike Oldfield was there finishing off *Tubular Bells*. He asked Kevin to put vocals

HOW TO BUY

THE BEST OF KEVIN COYNE...

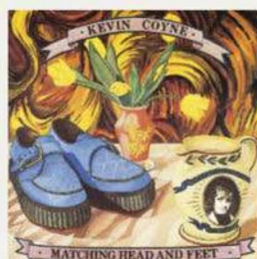


MARJORY RAZORBLADE

(VIRGIN, 1973)

This bilious outpouring of serrated folk-blues/rock remains Coyne's pinnacle, with shades of Captain Beefheart ("I Want My Crown") and his devastating indictment of the care system, "House On The Hill".

9/10



MATCHING HEAD AND FEET

(VIRGIN/EMI, 1975)

With Andy Summers drafted in on guitar, *Marjory*'s follow-up exudes a confidence that ranges from tender family ballad "Sunday Morning Sunrise" to the punkoid suburban malaise of "Turpentine".

8/10



1979 LIVE AT WDR-STUDIO 1 COLOGNE

(BLAST FIRST PETITE DVD, 2012)

A musical theatre of cruelty that's hard to switch off. A bedraggled Coyne opens the set by announcing he's unwell, and plays most of the solo set in a fevered sweat. "Saviour" is notable for its Suicide-al drum machine.

8/10



KEVIN COYNE & JON LANGFORD – ONE DAY IN CHICAGO

(SPINNEY, 2005)

"Kevin was like a young hunting dog, straining on his leash," said the Mekons man of a good-humoured collaboration recorded in 2002. Backed by The Pine Valley Cosmonauts (with Coyne's son Robert), the singer's self-deprecating wit comes to the fore.

8/10



NOBODY DIES IN DREAMLAND

(TURPENTINE, 2012)

The latest from the label set up by son Eugene Coyne are these newly discovered private demos from 1972, showing Coyne's immense on-the-hoof invention and lyricism. Excerpted from a 40-a-week songwriting habit, the songs just pour out of him.

7/10

The Kevin Coyne Band, Copenhagen, August 1975 (Andy Summers far left)



EYEWITNESS!

"HE WAS TOUCHED WITH SOME KIND OF GENIUS..."

Andy Summers on Kevin Coyne

"I first heard Kevin Coyne at a concert in Hyde Park. I thought he was very droll and different. A few days later I heard he was looking for a guitarist. "When we were actually playing, rehearsals were fine. But as long as the pubs were open we generally wouldn't get started, as the pub was where he really wanted to be. The alcohol could lead to some startling improvisations on Kevin's part, but also a psychological dismembering of each player. It could get rough..."

"His performances – usually based around a chair that he would find backstage – were manic, very funny and unpredictable. He was an electrifying and confrontational performer who had a remarkable gift for verbal improvisation – he literally spewed imagery.

"Kevin was not mad, but he drank excessively, and this did lead to difficult times. After the first gig with him, he started into me... so I told him that was it: one gig and I was out. However, he called me next day full of apologies and so I stayed on. But this was the pattern. There were times when it was unbearable. I don't think we will ever see his like again. He was touched with some kind of genius. I remember him with great affection."

on it, but he said it wouldn't fit – it was a different scene."

By this time Coyne had a distinctive look: with his shock of unkempt hair, striped braces and intelligent cruelty, he looks like a *Clockwork Orange* droog. His voice bridged the gap between Captain Beefheart and Alan Bennett. Smith recalls his "very dark humour sometimes, but he could be very funny as well – he could have been a stand-up. He reminded me of someone from the old Northern music hall."

His monologues could veer one step away from his comic hero Les Dawson, and his son Eugene remembers how "he would give the teddy bears voices and have them tell stories. The voices were gruff, and the bears were often rude." His songs are frequently wreathed in a fishy, pier's-end whiff: girls called "Bertha Lee", "Bonnie Lou", "Fat Moaning Minnie", "Jackie And Edna". In his teens he'd sung for the patrons of a Derby bingo hall, so he was steeped in the traits and foibles of working-class British life. That was what made songs like "Eastbourne Ladies" – a track selected by John Lydon on a 1979 radio show – so convincing. Today, Lydon (see panel page 19) still cites "Marjory Razorblade" as a favourite song.

Coyne's wry observations of ladies lunching at the genteel seaside resort degenerates into a demented shakedown for spare change – it's absolute vintage Coynerama – Alan Bennett with a safety pin. "He wouldn't talk about what was going on at work [in the mental hospital]," says Clague. "But he could see potential clients when we went out and about!" "House On The Hill", an album highlight, is a pitch-perfect tribute to his years at the Whittingham, visiting the different inmates in their private, tragi-comic worlds.

"He was the patron saint of the drug addicts and lost souls – they just adored him," adds Robert Ferguson. "Kevin was the first person who awoke me to the thought, 'Why not do it yourself? You like books, why not write one yourself? You like music, why not write it yourself?' It was life-changing. We're just ordinary people, but why can't we have a go?"

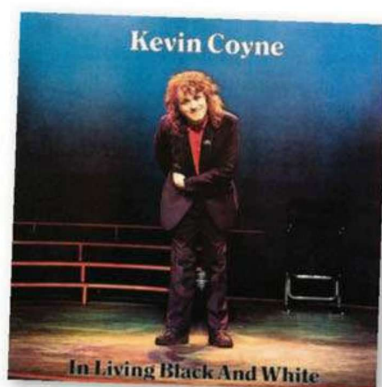
Coyne certainly practised what he preached. *Blame It On The Night* (1974) and *Matching Head And Feet* (1975) followed. "Virgin tried to make him into a rock star," reckons Gordon Smith. "They kept me and a guy called Tim Penn, who joined on keyboards and got rid of the rest of the band. Chili went

back to the States and we got a different drummer [Peter Woolf], and then they brought in Andy Summers."

The future Police guitarist joined Coyne's group in 1975, following a stint with Kevin Ayers. His distinctive electric style added extra bite to Coyne's songwriting, which was moving into reggae-inflected modes as well as the hard rock of "Turpentine", which oozes suburban menace.

On *In Living Black And White* (1976), one of the great live albums of the 1970s, Coyne sounds in full control of his demons. Summers, his former bandmaster Zoot Money on keyboards, Woolf on drums and Steve Thompson on bass, sounds invigorated and spunky. Coyne is impish, breaking into songs to deliver short, confusing monologues and taunts to the audience, before ordering the group back into action.

Underneath "House On The Hill" he plays a tape recording of himself babbling like some mad old weasel in a pub. At some shows, Lesley – his wife and mother to his two sons, Eugene and Robert – would sit at a table on stage, covering her ears when things got too loud. This is the stuff that keeps a working band on the tips of its toes. "He was determined to raise the musical standard of the band and subsequent recordings," says Zoot Money. "The bursting into ad lib sections on stage we treated as 'theatre', and always found a way back to the plot."



IN THE SLEEVENOTES to *In Living Black And White*, Coyne writes of the revolutionary potential of a secret underworld of 'mavericks' who operated outside of music industry constraints: "We'll just have to steam in and sort a few people out... Infect a bit of humanity and reality into music... We have to. I'm quite prepared to take on the whole fuckin' world!"

It didn't happen. His album sleeves offered unconscious clues to an interior instability. On the front of *In Living...*, Coyne takes a bow, grinning to the camera; while on the reverse, he conceals a gleaming shank behind his back. A promo poster for *Heartburn* (1976) showed Coyne falling to his death from a tower block. "He knew that anyone who is 'normal' is very close to a mental patient as well," insists his second wife, Helmi. "So for him there was no difference. He knew it's a very fine line."

KEVIN COYNE

A MANY-SIDED COYNE

ACTOR, ARTIST, AUTHOR...

The other talents of the singer-songwriter

THE DRAMATIST

Coyne co-writes *England, England* with Snoo Wilson, a play about the Kray twins and British nationalism. Performed in 1977 in London, starring Bob Hoskins, it featured several Coyne songs (including "Big White Bird" and "America"). The *Babble* LP derived from Coyne's one-man play, performed in the late '70s.



A still from *The Institution* (1978)

THE FILMMAKER/ACTOR

The Institution (1978), co-credited to Coyne and old friend Ian Breakwell, is a one-man tour de force as Coyne, alone in a flat, inhabits the persona of a lunatic. Coyne: "It's a film about loneliness, sadness, misery and cities. But there's a lot of humour, too. It's not a hopeless message." Opening credits feature Coyne's harsh electronic noise soundtrack.

THE AUTHOR

Coyne's published writings include *The Party Dress* (1990), *Paradise* (1992), *Show Business* (1993) and *That Old Suburban Angst* (2004).

THE ARTIST

Hardly a day went by without Coyne making a drawing or painting. His colourful, faux-naïf oils show a host of oddballs, lost teddy bears and anthropomorphic animals.

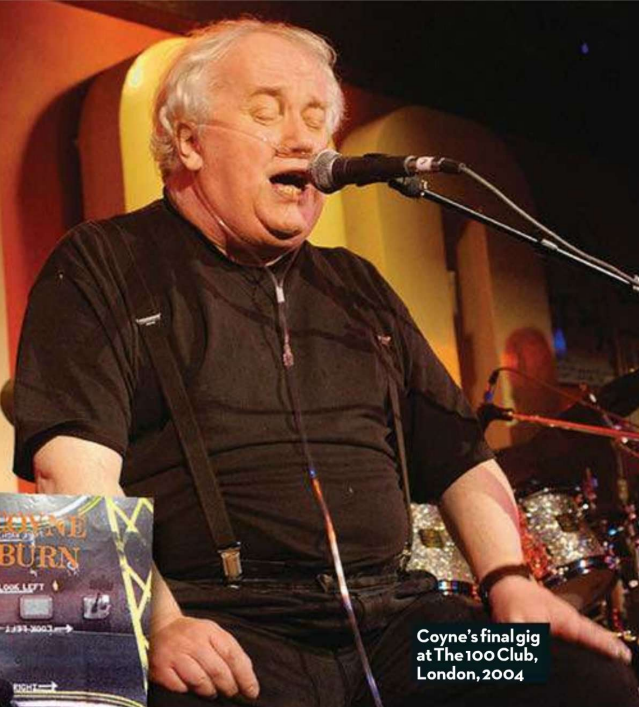


Near his home, overlooking Wandsworth Road, March 1978

→ Slowly but inevitably, the madness he enacted so convincingly in *The Institution* turned into his reality. Compassionate soul though he was, Coyne found it increasingly hard to look after himself as the '70s wore on. "We used to do a lot of drinking in them days," confirms Gordon Smith. Helmi Coyne: "He was overwhelmed. He was so young when he started his career, there was no rulebook – how do you behave, what do you do in your spare time? It's difficult to find a reason to stay sober." Coyne was also notoriously unworldly, as Helmi Coyne explains: "He told me Richard Branson said, 'What would you like?' And he said, 'A house', but being very moderate, he just had a tiny little house. Money was not a big thing for him, but for him the most important thing was his integrity, to be free and do what he wanted to do."

He was also trying to juggle a mass of parallel activities that threatened to get the better of him. "My dad was very prolific," says Eugene Coyne. "He was driven to create. Not just music: he was also writing, painting and drawing constantly." In his mid-thirties, while he recognised new energies in the arts (his song "Dynamite Daze" saluted the dynamism of punk), the drink was dragging him down and leaving him unable to keep up. 1980's *Sanity Stomp* – made with musicians from The Ruts, and partly featuring Robert Wyatt on drums – was "made when I was clinically 95 per cent nuts", Coyne later commented. "My wife tells me I'm crazy," he sings on "My Wife Says". "The next minute she says she loves me/I can't imagine a better state/Than being a reprobate." Five years later, he went rogue in the most drastic circumstances. He abandoned the family home and bought a one-way ticket to Germany, where he spent the remainder of his life. In 1985 he was in an abject state. Eugene Coyne: "My dad had a terrible drink problem. When he left the UK and settled in Germany, things were very bad for a few years – I lost touch, but by all accounts he hit rock bottom." Coyne settled in Nuremberg, divorced Lesley and eventually married Helmi, a young fan who initially helped him cure his alcohol habit. "He just had a couple of T-shirts, that was it. He stayed in his flat, reading, drinking. I gave him a lift to the AA."

In the safety of a secure home, Coyne was free to indulge



Coyne's final gig at The 100 Club, London, 2004

his creative impulses to the full. Between 1985 and his death in 2004, he released 18 albums, published six books of fiction, poetry and memoir, and painted many large canvases. "There was no day where he didn't draw or write," says Helmi. "He wasn't interested in social things. He was just happy to be in his room surrounded by books, records – and a cup of tea. He'd work night and day and I brought him pencils and stuff for painting. He'd scribble on anything

he could get his hands on. He was totally obsessed. He missed Britain every day. But when he was there, he missed Germany. He had Pay TV just so he could watch the football. He missed cricket, libraries... he was one of the most well-informed people, he read the English papers every day."

IN OCTOBER 2003, Coyne took part in a Dandelion reunion in Shrewsbury, when Siren got together again and a host of Coyne's old friends rallied round. By then, he was receiving treatment for lung fibrosis, diagnosed the previous year. At a final solo show at London's 100 Club in 2003, "I went to see him with Tony Cousins," says Gordon Smith, "and it was a shock to see him with an oxygen tank. It was a bit sad, but he was still humorous – he said we should do some stuff together again. Later, he left a message on my answering machine, saying it was great to see me again, and a couple of days after that he died." In fact, Coyne appears to have suspected the end was coming, as many friends report receiving a phone call over the last few weeks. He died peacefully on December 2, 2004. According to Helmi,

"His greatest fear was to die lonely in a hotel room, like so many musicians"

HELMI COYNE

in his last years this troubled man achieved a measure of peace. "He did what he wanted to do and he was free, and he had good friends, he was always in touch with his family," she insists. "[In 2003] A German guy [Boris Tomschiczek] made a documentary called *One Room Man*, and there [Kevin] describes his death, which is really haunting: 'I want to die...' This was his greatest fear, to die lonely in a hotel room, like so many musicians... he wanted to die in his own bed in his own place, in the early morning, surrounded by his books. And that's exactly how it happened. So, terrible as it was, it was the perfect ending for him, in a way." ☛

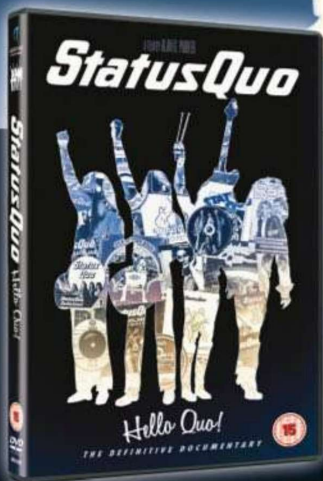
Nobody Dies In Dreamland is available on Turpentine

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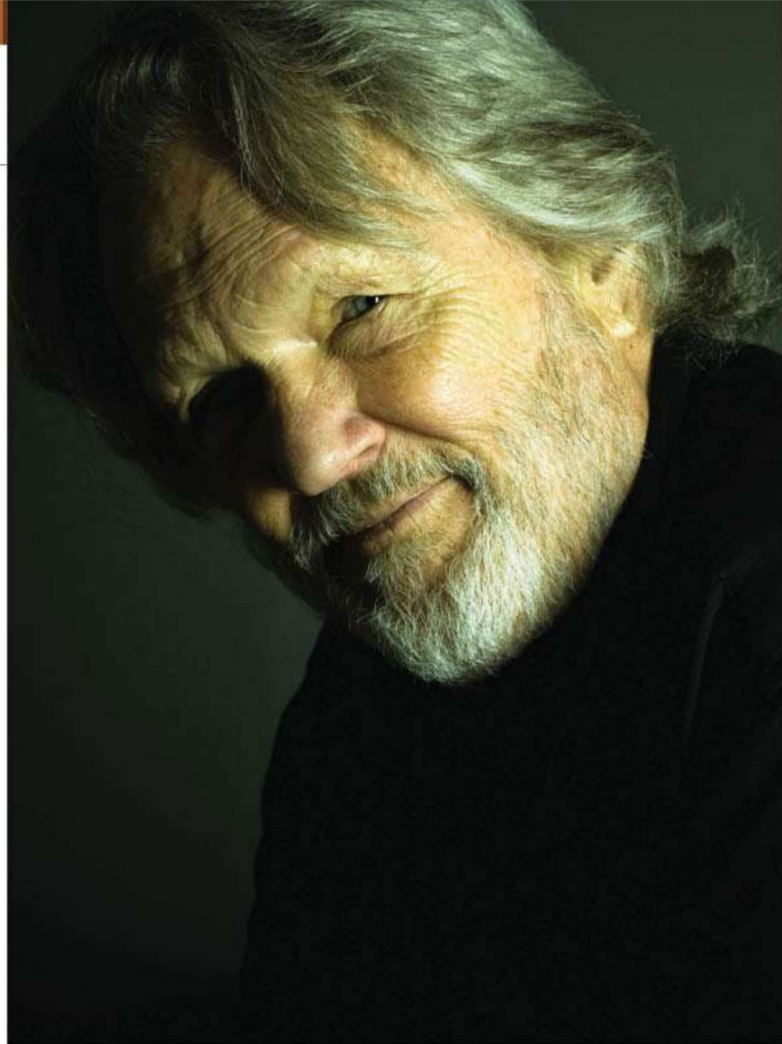
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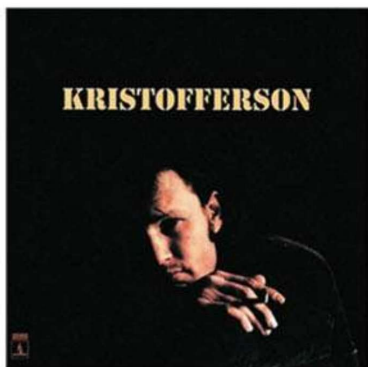
Kris Kristofferson

The great American singer-songwriter and actor revisits his musical highlights

ASK KRIS KRISTOFFERSON how he's doing and he chuckles. "Pretty good, pretty good... Pretty old." At 76, the country legend certainly has plenty of life to look back on. Kristofferson had already been a Rhodes scholar, an army captain, a janitor at Columbia's Nashville studio, a helicopter pilot and a killer songwriter before finally becoming one of the biggest recording artists and movie stars of the '70s. Revealing a muse still in fine fettle, his new album, *Feeling Mortal*, is a reflective affair, and *Uncut* finds him happily inclined to cast an eye over his numerous achievements. "Songs are just like your kids," He says. "You love them all and they're all different. I can't really pick out favourites."



THE UNCUT CLASSIC



KRIS KRISTOFFERSON KRISTOFFERSON

MONUMENT, 1970

Already 34, Kristofferson releases one of the great debut albums, a record crammed with timeless songs, many of which had already been hits for others – or soon would be...

I'd had five years of being in Nashville where they didn't even want me to sing my own demos! I got other people to sing them for me, but then my publisher couldn't afford to do that any more so I had to sing them. But Fred [Foster] at Monument decided I was a singer-songwriter, so I followed his advice and did it. I'm sure there were people who wondered why in the world I thought I'd make it as a singer, but it was something I loved, whether I was built for it or not. And it worked out magically. Johnny Cash was my friend and was doing my song, "Sunday Morning Coming Down", and suddenly it all seemed to be turning out for the best.

The album is quite produced. I wouldn't record it the same way now, but at the time I felt they were making the songs sound better than they were! I'm lucky I got to put as much of myself into this record as I did, because country music still wasn't as wide open as it is now. It didn't change overnight, it was a slow process. Bob Dylan was the guy who changed it all. Dylan's relationship with Johnny Cash was the biggest influence on Nashville in my lifetime – they opened up country music. Dylan was the groundbreaker we all benefitted from, and Cash met him halfway. The next thing you know, we started writing as freely as Bob was. I was suddenly aware that the soulful part of the songwriters in Nashville that I identified with would eventually prevail.

There were so many different ways we were trying to do it. I'd demo something at night by myself over at the publishing house and get Billy Swan and Donnie Fritts to sing harmony. We did "Me And Bobby McGee" that way. I remember Billy saying, "Man, this feels real spiritual, like 'Hey Jude'!" We loved the feel of it so much. I knew it was a good one; sometimes they're keepers and sometimes they're not. I can remember writing "Help Me Make It Through The Night" in the Gulf Of Mexico. It was pretty lonely work out there and it came real fast.

I still sing just about every one of these things. I haven't done "Blame It On The Stones" or "The Law Is For The Protection Of The People" in a while – all the others, I'm embarrassed to say, I'm singing all the time. But performing them still feels creative to me. They're things that I can believe in.



KRIS KRISTOFFERSON THE SILVER TONGUED DEVIL AND I

MONUMENT, 1971
Kristofferson's

breakthrough album followed Janis Joplin's posthumous No 1 hit with "Me And Bobby McGee", and contained "Epitaph", written in her memory.

Janis having a hit with "Me And Bobby McGee" changed everything. I think it probably got me in the movies, too, because Dennis Hopper loved that song so much and he cast me in *The Last Movie*. Everything just seemed to fall into place. From then on it was all a big blur. The only problem I had was whether my band were going to show up for work or not!

"Epitaph" was written when Janis died. I hadn't been able to listen to her singing "Bobby McGee" since it happened. I finally played it in the publisher's office, there was no-one else there so I kept playing it over and over to get used to it, so I wouldn't break up. Donnie Fritts came in, we started fooling around with a piano, and we wrote and recorded "Epitaph" that night. It's the kind of song you write because you have to, not because you want to.

"The Pilgrim, Chapter 33" is about a few other people I knew but it's about all of us, really – it was the way of life that I believed in at that time. The reception was so positive for all these songs. I felt so confident because everybody liked what I was doing and I was doing it by my own rules. I started to have more faith in myself.



The Highwaymen:
(l-r) Johnny Cash, Willie
Nelson, Kristofferson
and Waylon Jennings



KRIS KRISTOFFERSON **JESUS WAS A CAPRICORN**

MONUMENT, 1972

A beautifully conceived

record, featuring country smash “Why Me” and the teary “Nobody Wins”, a big hit for Brenda Lee the following year.

Steve Earle likes this album a lot. This was right after I’d gotten together with Rita [Coolidge]. There’s a crack team of Nashville session players on it – they were a tremendous bunch of musicians who had all worked with Dylan. Of course I knew all those guys ‘cos I’d been their janitor for years! I remember watching Dylan record *Blonde On Blonde* with them. He’d sit at the piano all night long and the band would be off playing ping-pong or pool, and then at 5am he’d call them in and they would cut some masterpiece. Nobody ever recorded like that in Nashville back then. It was always three songs in three hours. That had changed a little by the time we made *Jesus...* But not completely. I had more freedom because I was working for a publishing company that was owned by the record company, and they gave me a lot of space. I was probably quicker than I am today, though! I wrote “Jesus Was A Capricorn (Owed To John Prine)” because I was so influenced by John. When I heard his songs I felt like his writing had kicked me into doing it. You take things from all over the place, though you don’t always admit it! I was really influenced by Roger Miller, Shel Silverstein and Mickey Newbury. Everybody you admire influences you somehow in your art.



KRIS KRISTOFFERSON & RITA COOLIDGE **FULL MOON**

A&M, 1973

The first of three duet

albums with Rita Coolidge, Kristofferson’s wife from 1973 to 1980, is a smooth mixture of cover versions and husband-and-wife co-writes.

I think it was probably my idea. I love singing with people anyway, and I loved to sing with Rita together in harmony. I grew up with The Everly Brothers, and harmony was always something that I loved, and Rita sang backup with people all the time. Harmony came easily for both of us – it was very natural.

I haven’t listened to this in a long time, but I think the songs were more or less what we felt we wanted to do and what the producer David Anderle felt we could do well. It was a very different thing to what I was used to. We recorded it at Sunset Sound in Los Angeles – different city, different producer. I was doing so many different things at that time... Hell, Booker T Jones was my brother-in-law! [Coolidge’s sister Priscilla had recently married Jones].

I’m sure that I made some stupid mistakes and pissed some people off, but looking back at it all now, I think the album went pretty smoothly.

I liked working with Rita, it wasn’t tense at that time. We worked well together at first, and it hadn’t gotten to where we were fighting – yet. There were several years that were pretty nice.



KRIS KRISTOFFERSON & WILLIE NELSON **MUSIC FROM SONGWRITER**

COLUMBIA, 1984

Oscar-nominated soundtrack to Music Row comic romp *Songwriter*, starring Kris Kristofferson as singer Blackie Buck and Nelson as his partner-in-crime Doc Jenkins.

Ah, Willie! Listen, Willie Nelson was my hero years before I ever met him. Willie was everybody’s hero, he was the underdog favourite. I was just in awe of his work. He had a ranch in Nashville but he was never there, he was always in Texas, so the first time I was really with him was when I was doing *Pat Garrett & Billy The Kid* with Sam [Peckinpah] down in Mexico. Willie came down to visit and we were fast friends from then on, and he turned out to be one of the funniest human beings on the planet.

I liked that film, *Songwriter*. All my band was in it, and it was creative – by which I mean we were making it up as we were going along! I’d like to bring some of these songs back into my set, there are some things on there that I’m anxious to do: “Crossing The Border”, “Eye Of The Storm”... “Final Attraction” is a good one.

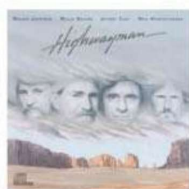
The songs were all written for the film, apart from “Under The Gun”, which I had written already.

Honestly, I’ve never really been able to write on assignment. All the albums that I’ve done, I’ve used them as a diary of what is going on with me at the time.

KRIS KRISTOFFERSON



2010: "As you get older, you get better at expressing what you want to express..."

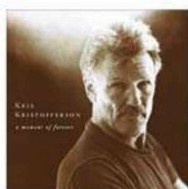


THE HIGHWAYMEN THE HIGHWAYMEN

COLUMBIA, 1985

Four titans of country music - Kristofferson, Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash and Waylon Jennings - pool their talents to form an outlaw supergroup.

Oh, it was incredible. I had to pinch myself, standing up there with these guys who were my heroes, going around the world singing together as good friends. Although I know I wasn't so in awe of them that I didn't get into a few arguments - we were all pretty, uh, self-sufficient and expressive. I remember singing harmony with John on one of his songs and finally he looked at me and said, "Nobody ever sings harmony on that song with me." I was so embarrassed. I quit singing it and then later he asked me to sing it with him! So I guess he felt shitty about it, too. Johnny never did get to be life-sized, he was always larger than life. The whole thing was down to [producer] Chips Moman. He wanted us to sing together on Jimmy Webb's "The Highwayman", it came off well so he asked us to sing some others and the next thing you knew we had an album. I'm amazed that it worked, because everyone was such an individual - Willie is like a jazz singer over there, all by himself. We'd get back together every few years and we had some great times on the road. There was enough mutual respect that we put aside anything small. As long as we could just deal with each other and not have to deal with all the wives, we did pretty well!



KRIS KRISTOFFERSON A MOMENT OF FOREVER

JUSTICE RECORDS, 1995

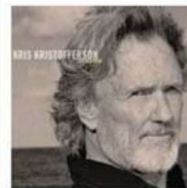
After a difficult '80s, the beginning of a long and fruitful relationship with Don Was marks a resurgence in Kristofferson's recorded work. I first started working with Don back when nobody wanted to work with me. My marriage had broken up, I was a bachelor father staying at home raising my daughter, and I'd done

"As long as we could just deal with each other and not have to deal with the wives, we did pretty well!"

KRIS KRISTOFFERSON

Heaven's Gate, which was one of the biggest bombs of all time. Out of that you get a song like "Shipwrecked In The Eighties", I guess. I'm sure my songwriting might have suffered in those times when I was doing so much film work, but at the same time I was expressing myself that way, too. I never intended to be an actor, or a performer for that matter. Looking back at it now I can't believe I was so audacious - and so lucky, because it all worked out. So Don came along at the right time and we really

got along so well, and we do even better today. He brings the best out of artists, I swear. He is a very inspiring person to work with and I've been really grateful for the things that I've put together with him. *A Moment Of Forever* was the first one, and I thought it was really good. It's got a lot of good songs on it. I think I've lightened up on my self-criticism as I get older. I figure I don't have to worry about it any more.



KRIS KRISTOFFERSON THIS OLD ROAD

NEW WEST, 2006

Turning away from overtly political songwriting towards a more reflective

overview, many songs feature just the singer alone with his guitar.

This was real easy. As you get older I think you get better at expressing what you want to express, making it more simple, and it really helps that me and Don are on the same page.

Selecting the material has always been good with him, because I trust his judgement. This record has got a few songs I'd recorded before on other albums, like "Burden Of Freedom", "Final Attraction" and "This Old Road". I'm happy doing that. The songs are all pretty ingrained. There's a lot of songs on that album that I'd like to bring back to my show, because being successful for me now is being able to recreate the emotion in the song and experience it again onstage. I know that I've got a lot better in the live concerts in the past 10 years or so. The selection of the material and the way I do them by myself seems to bring about a good communication with the audience. People really seem to appreciate whatever it is I'm trying to do.



KRIS KRISTOFFERSON FEELING MORTAL

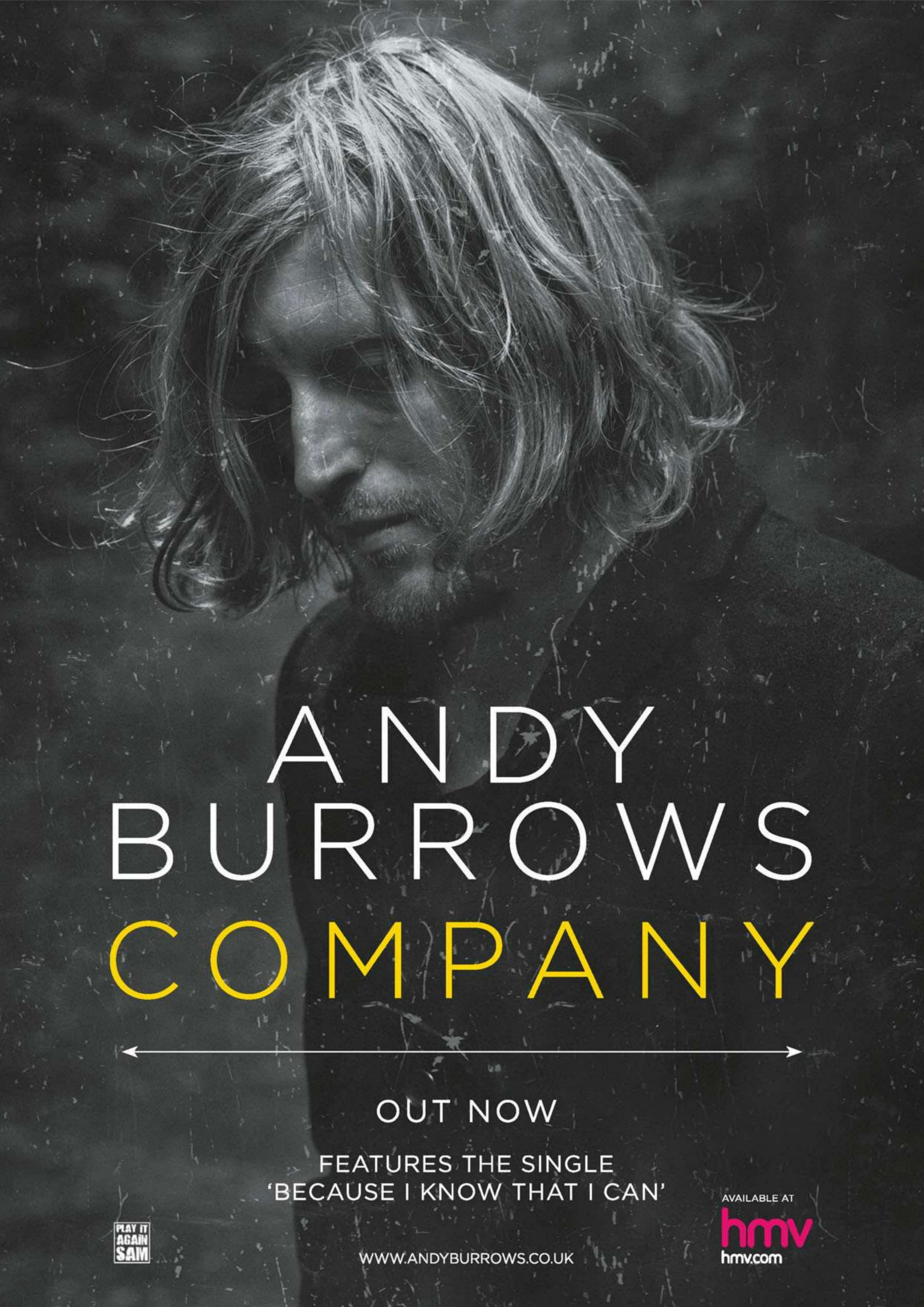
KK RECORDS, 2012

Economical, wry, raw, honest and open, his 17th solo studio album marks

a return to classic Kristofferson territory.

For each one of my albums, there has usually been a central theme to the songs that go on it. I could go through each song on this record to show you what I mean but, well, it starts out with a song called "Feeling Mortal" from an album called *Feeling Mortal*! So that's a clue. At my age there's more behind you than there is ahead of you, and as you go along your close friends and heroes start dying, so you definitely get more reflective of your whole life. A lot of the songs on this record go way back, I just hadn't released them. I'll carry things around with me for years before I use 'em. Singing them now takes me to the place I was when I wrote it, which is very rejuvenating at my age. For me it all connects back to when I decided I was going to go my own way. I left the path that others had decided for me, including being in the army, and just went off to do what I loved to do. And looking back, I just can't believe how well it has turned out. ☺

Kris Kristofferson on tour: Liverpool Philharmonic (Dec 4), Birmingham Town Hall (Dec 5), London Royal Festival Hall (Dec 7). Feeling Mortal is out on Nov 7



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“I write whatever comes into my head because it might be the last thing I ever think of”

Here's DONALD FAGEN in New York to discuss his latest solo album, *Sunken Condos*. “It’s a metaphor for my current phase of life,” the 64 year-old explains, musing on the perils of ageing, the history of Steely Dan and what happens next: “All of my past work. It’s garbage to me. I’m only interested in the future.”

Story: Jaan Uhelszki

TEN BLOCKS UP from the \$32 million mansion that Madonna calls home, and one street over from the Spence School – Gwyneth Paltrow’s alma mater – is the Hotel Wales. This century-old building is a little tarnished around the edges.

The marble floors in the lobby are scarred and pitted, the wallpaper peeling in the corners, the murky water in the vase of blowy pink roses gives the place a tawdry grace. It’s the location chosen by the less Steely half of Steely Dan, Donald Fagen, to talk about the release of his fourth solo album, *Sunken Condos*. He and his wife Libby Titus live in the neighbourhood, and it’s a short walk over to Madison Avenue, especially important on a day like today, given that the US Weather Service has issued a severe storm warning for New York’s five boroughs. Planes are grounded, trees upended, and water is streaming down some of the city’s most-traveled thoroughfares, but Fagen prevails.

It’s not exactly “*the perfect weather for a streamlined world*”, to quote the lyrics from “IGY” off Fagen’s first solo album, 1982’s *The Nightfly*, but it does speak to his state of mind. Both climate and life are less predictable for Fagen since he finished his autobiographical trilogy with *Morph The Cat* in 2006. If you don’t believe it, listen to “Weather In My Head”, perhaps the best song on *Sunken Condos*, and a tune that name-checks former US Vice President Al Gore for attempting

FAGEN FACT

“Donald had his engineer invent the drum machine. That tells you all you need to know. He worked with the greatest drummers, but he still needed a drum machine...”

Rickie Lee Jones



to counteract man-made climate change, while doing absolutely nothing for the “*weather*” in Fagen’s head.

Fagen has long been plagued by demons, from writer’s block in the ’80s to recurring stagefright. He is uncomfortable in his skin, crossing and recrossing his legs, drumming his fingers on an imaginary piano as he talks, or pacing the hallway during a cigarette break. Still wiry, with a handsome, chiseled face and deep-set eyes, his words are fastidious, his explanations erudite and rather formal. In fact, he verges on this side of being socially awkward, which perhaps explains why he’s asked his co-producer Michael Leonhart to accompany him on the first of our two interviews. “I don’t really work well with other people, except for Walter,” explains Fagen, with a short laugh. “Even that started to get a little thornier as we got older.”

Fagen met Walter Becker in 1967. Despite leaving a trail of platinum records and slavish fans in their wake as Steely Dan, Fagen remains something of a loner.

“Walter and I are our ideal fans, and we figured fans would like what we like. And if they don’t, that’s really not our problem,” Fagen says while slathering cream cheese on a bagel. He spots me watching him, and stops for a moment, cocking his head to the side – much like when he sings – and apologises. “I’m sorry, I’m hungry.”

But truthfully, the two of them never really cared what



Melodic genius:
Donald Fagen in 2012

→ anyone else thought. They just wanted to craft an alternative world where vocabulary was high, concepts complicated and the sound pristine. And that's exactly what Fagen is doing, individually and whenever he reunites with Walter Becker.

UNCUT: When you released *The Nightfly*, what pushed you to do a solo album? You knew it was the end of Steely Dan. What were your options at that point?

DONALD FAGEN: I was compelled to do it. I reached a certain age where I could feel some kind of internal dissonance compelling me to examine where I came from, who I was, that kind of thing. It was essentially an identity crisis – a little late-coming identity crisis, but it was that all the same. Musicians being a kind of perpetual adolescent, I was able to postpone my appointment with the reality principle. It just happened then.

What do you think you do solo that you can't do with Steely Dan?

I can be more subjective and personal.

Between you and Walter, are you more likely to reveal?

Walter may be more defensive than I am, generally speaking, but his records are in a way more revealing. Kind of in a shocking sort of way. But it may be what he's revealing is more shocking. He had a kind of rough childhood, so his worldview may be a little dimmer than mine.

Did you ever consider any other career path? Was there anything else that you wanted to do or could have done?

I figured I was going to go into academia, end up as some kind of teacher, something like a high school English teacher.

I read somewhere that Walter said that you would sacrifice meaning for the sound of words.

Maybe when we started. We were really into Bob Dylan and I think we saw a kind of surrealism as being valid at that time, which I think it was, and considering our state of mind and all that. But we were into a kind of a Mallarmé thing at the time. Yeah, I think you can have both.

When you're writing, how do you designate where it's going to go? Steely Dan or solo?

I don't really. If Walter and I are about to do something,



Walter Becker and Donald Fagen, 1977

“Most guys like Steely Dan better, and most babes like my stuff better. I’ve heard that before”

DONALD FAGEN

I check to see if anything that I have that's unfinished is something that he might want to work on. Some things I say, 'No, this is probably for me.' I remember I had this idea for the song "What I Do" that was on *Morph The Cat*. I showed that to Walter when it was in its early stages and he said, 'That sounds like more something you would do for yourself.' He wasn't into it. I'm pretty open. I really never put things in categories because that would stifle my writing. I just write whatever comes into my head because I figure it might be the last thing I ever think of.

Do you find that you work better in collaboration?

It's not as lonely.

You say that, having worked with Walter for 40 years, but you really do come across as a loner.

Yeah, pretty much.

So how do you function on both levels?

With Walter, it's more of a collaboration from early on. Because we've been together since when we were teenagers, we have a similar background from a musical aspect and also maybe a literary aspect, and we can kind of finish each other's sentences. It's like a collective persona.

Is this collective persona like a third being?

Yeah, I think that's true. Really, from when we first started

HOW TO BUY

JAZZ THAT'S AS COOL AS AN OYSTER...

Donald Fagen's solo albums

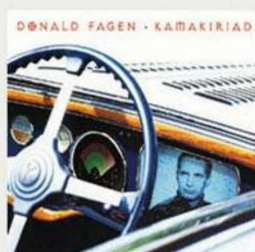


THE NIGHTFLY

WARNER BROS, 1982

Employing Steely producer Gary Katz, there's the same attention to sonics and musicianship, but the lyrics are more personal, less sardonic, even romantic at times, recalling a bygone era where dress is formal, harmonies close, nights are endless and the jazz as cool as an oyster.

9/10



KAMAKIRIAD

REPRISE, 1993

Reunites Fagen with Becker, who produced this sci-fi song cycle and plays bass, guitar and co-wrote "Snowbound" – which goes a long way to explaining why it sounds a lot like Dan's *Aja*, with a slight soul swing. If *The Nightfly* examined its author's early life, *Kamakiriad* scrutinises his middle age, but from a greater remove.

8/10



MORPH THE CAT

REPRISE, 2006

We move further through the protagonist's life, landing us in present time, with Fagen cataloging his fears in a post-9/11 age. Here he seems obsessed with his own sense of mortality, while revealing his pain and paranoia. He's dropped much of the *sangfroid* of his Steely vocals, replacing it with a vulnerability that feels like his authentic voice.

10/10



SUNKEN CONDOS

REPRISE, 2012

Sunken Condos mirrors America's anxiety, as well as an anxiety about ageing. While promising that he no longer felt compelled to write autobiographically in his solo stuff, that doesn't seem to be the case here, and that's a good thing. Standout track is "Weather In My Head": as good as anything he's ever done.

9/10



Steely Dan in 1973: (l-r) Jim Hodder, Walter Becker, Denny Dias, Jeff 'Skunk' Baxter and Donald Fagen

COVER UP...

INTRODUCING: THE DUKES OF SEPTEMBER

Welcome to Donald's side-project: a Baby Boomer supergroup

➤ During Steely Dan's early '90s hiatus, Fagen rounded up old friends, including Boz Scaggs and Michael McDonald, along with Libby Titus, Phoebe Snow and Charles Brown to form The Rock & Soul Review. In 2010, renamed The Dukes Of September, Fagen, Scaggs and McDonald took off for a two-month tour of America, with the Steely Dan live band in tow. They had such a good time, they decided to reconvene this year for a short tour beginning in Honolulu on October 24, and ending in Yokohama on November 2. The appeal? According to Scaggs, "Just the experimental aspect of it. Obviously we're not breaking any new ground in terms of creating new music, but we're experimenting with that." While they decide whether they're going to write, they're performing songs by The Chi-Lites, Muddy Waters and The Beach Boys, as well as hits from their own back catalogues. "We hope the audiences like it. They seem to," says McDonald, who began his career on Steely Dan's *Katy Lied*. "That is except the Steely Dan-ites. They're kind of pissed we're playing other people's music. They sit in the audience and heckle us..."

writing songs, it was like the narrator of the song was always like a character of some sort.

But you had to inhabit it, though.

In the beginning, I thought someone else would inhabit it because I wasn't going to be the singer. At one point we were going to try to be a duo, but neither of us thought that we were good enough so we were always looking for a singer. But it just didn't happen. Because I could carry a tune a little bit better than Walter, I became the singer.

You said you asked Loudon Wainwright to become the singer and he was underwhelmed.

He was definitely underwhelmed. Talk about a loner. Also he was so bossy it probably wouldn't have worked out anyway.

Do you consider yourself bossy?

I'm bossy, yeah. I don't throw fits, or anything. I try not to hurt anybody. I like to have fun so I just try to laugh people into doing things.

Are you the same in your personal relationships?

Unfortunately, I guess so, because I'm kind of blunt, which has gotten me in a lot of trouble in relationships. Although I also have a fear of confrontation when it comes to non-musical stuff. Firing somebody is not something I'm able to do. Also I always feel like it's only music. Nobody gets hurt. It's not like you're losing your job or it's not life or, you know? Who cares?

After you completed *The Nightfly* trilogy I thought you weren't going to write autobiographically any more. Yet with *Sunken Condos* that doesn't seem to be the case.

Yeah, that turned out to be false. I tried not to. But next time I'm going to make it. I'm going to go more Steely Dan with the next one.

OK, let's look at "going Steely Dan". Define the terms.

I want to go more journalistic, more objective with characters that are further away from myself.

Would this be a bad time to tell you I like your solo records better than the Steely Dan stuff?

Each to their own. Most guys like Steely Dan better, and most babes like my stuff better. I've heard that before.

What I remember was that Steely Dan was always considered a "boy's band".

Right. That's because part of what makes Steely Dan Steely Dan is, it's guys without chicks. Part of the sensibility is, it's not us really, but it's guys who have been rejected or guys looking for girls, or certainly guys speaking without girls in the room. So naturally, a lot of guys were in.

I was more of a Jackson Browne fan.

You and a whole army of babes.

Since we both agree [*Steely Dan*] wasn't a girl's band... was that reflected in the audience?

Sure. Yeah, we had very low female demographics.

Very much like a '70s Metallica.

My stepson, who unfortunately passed away, was a huge heavy metal fan. Even though he'd listen to all these HM bands, he thought we were the most transgressive band ever. We didn't set out to be that way. When Walter and I first got together, it was like two boys talking. My stuff isn't exclusionary. Clubby. For males only. And if you listen to Walter's stuff, even though it's raunchy it's not just a guy's thing. ➔

Fagen and Boz Scaggs onstage as The Dukes Of September



BOB, BOWLING, THE BAND

DID YOU KNOW?

Fagen facts to astound your friends with...

➤ Fagen studied English at Bard College in upstate New York, graduating in 1969 with a degree in English. In 2001, he and Becker received honorary degrees from the Berklee College Of Music in Boston, where their music is a part of the curriculum.

➤ Fagen met Becker at Bard in 1967. They began playing in bands together, but didn't form Steely Dan until 1972, after working at the infamous Brill Building, a tenure in Jay & The Americans' backing band, and then as songwriters at ABC/Dunhill in LA in 1971, where they were supposed to write pop songs for artists including Three Dog Night, The Grass Roots and John Kay from Steppenwolf. Only Kay recorded one of their songs. When it became clear that their songs were too esoteric for any of the label's acts, they formed their own outfit.

➤ The first song Fagen and Becker wrote, "I Mean To Shine", was recorded by Barbra Streisand.

➤ Fagen bought Dylan's house in Woodstock. The publicity shots for his solo album, *Kamakiriad*, were shot in the topiary garden.

➤ In 1993 Fagen married songwriter Libby Titus. She was previously married to The Band's Levon Helm. In later years, Fagen played with Helm's band, and was reportedly at his bedside when he died.

➤ Fagen has had a lifelong passion for table tennis, yet "Miss Marlene" from *Sunken Condos* is a song about bowling.



➤ How do you keep up with new methods of recording given you've been at this so long?

I don't like to interface with technology myself very much. I started out with sequencers very early on because Roger Nichols, our engineer, was into computers. But at a certain point I could see that the technology was going to overwhelm me. I was moving beats around in a sequencer and I'd stopped writing music. So I just gave up on it and had somebody else take care of that.

Do you feel that the failure to keep up with technology makes you feel old?

Many other things make me feel old but that's part of... I think technology is just part of a much larger cultural change.

There's a line in "Slinky Thing" from the new album where you sing, "More light/More light/More light/More light". Does that have to do with not being able to see in the dark without your reading glasses or something more esoteric?

"More light"? Those were Goethe's last words before he died.

Why the title *Sunken Condos*?

None of the individual songs had a title that was appropriate so I came up with that after the fact. I thought it worked on different levels. An economic level, certainly. Sociological. And I thought as a metaphor for my current phase of life, it was appropriate.

How?

Because I'm 64. It's a metaphor for broken dreams, in a way. Although a lot of things have worked out for me, obviously. There's a Debussy piece called "The Sunken Cathedral", so I just updated it.

Do things get better as you age or do they get worse? When you released *Morph The Cat* you said you were dealing with the end of life. Was something specific making you feel that way?

No, I was just being realistic. Although I've been married for 20 years, there's a thing where I'll see a good-looking waitress in her twenties, a skinny girl with a black apron on, and know how out of the running I am. It's a realisation of how invisible I am. Not that I was ever very lucky in that regard, but just knowing now how invisible I am, to me, that's one of the worst things about ageing. It's like that Woody Allen line about the death of hope. You always figure you got a shot. Then all of a sudden you don't. This is all in my head, of course.

You're one of the few artists who actually addresses the subject of ageing.

I've read all Philip Roth's books and I can't get away from it. Yeah.

You said you go see the Stones and they're still acting like adolescents, prancing around. Is that a bad thing?

No, no. I love it. They're great. Mick Jagger puts himself through the wringer to do that. I saw him perform at one of these Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame things. I saw him before he went on and he looked like a deflated balloon or something. Then when it came time for him to perform he immediately became 22 years old. It looked supernatural, the way that he transformed. It was one of these terrible things that they used to do at these events, where they had 12 bass players on the stage, and the band was just a mess. But when he started



Becker and Fagen onstage as Steely Dan at New York's Bowery Ballroom, September 12, 2003

singing, it sounded like a band all of a sudden. He forced them to become a band because of his phrasing and his body language. Then at the end, he went off on the side of the stage and I saw him collapse back into this deflated balloon. It was unbelievable, all these wrinkles suddenly reappeared in his face. I was really impressed that he could do that.

Is ageing in this business easier for people like you and Walter, who were seen as a cerebral, snarky band?

Walter and I always were, for better or worse, exactly that. Coming out of the Beat era with Ginsberg and Norman Mailer, I think for whatever reason it would have been impossible to masquerade as something we're not. So I think we're just more honest about everything. Even this.

In your twenties, you came off as world-weary. So what does world-weary become when you're in your sixties. Has that changed?

I was world-weary. I always just complained a lot, really.

You didn't start therapy 'til after *The Nightfly*, correct?

Except for a brief period when I got my draft notice, but that doesn't count, right?

Did you feel that therapy changed the way you wrote?

Yeah, I had to get through that period of trying to go from being a non-functioning person to a functioning person. After that album, I kind of fell apart.

"I never, never think of selling albums as having anything to do with success"

DONALD FAGEN

Because it was so successful, or because you were dealing with all those childhood issues?

I don't think it was that album, but doing that brought certain things into relief, that I wasn't ready to deal with. I think like a lot of people who were successful early, I really didn't have to grow up. So when I was in my mid-thirties, I ran out of that youthful energy that was keeping me going without really dealing with anything. After I made that album, the energy was gone and I started to come apart a little bit. I started doing the therapy just so I could deal with that. I also had a lot of issues from my childhood that I had to work through.

Given that you got the Grammy for Album Of The Year in 2000 for [Steely Dan album] *Two Against Nature*, would you consider your best work is ahead of you?

I have no way of knowing that. It wouldn't be scientific for me to say that my best work is in front of me.

How about just an intuition. An inner knowing.

It's just the unknown. But I do know I'm no longer interested in my past work. I'll never listen to this album again. All of my



Fagen on the cover of *The Nightfly*, 1982

GRAMMY SCAM

BUY IT NOW!

In 2001, Fagen and Becker won a Grammy for *Two Against Nature*. The rumour was they'd put the gongs on eBay. The rumour was kind of true... "Walter did put his on eBay," confirms Fagen. "It was kind of a prank, really, but he did it. That's Walter. It didn't sell. He never got his price, although I think it does say something about how much we value our Grammys. It was a Pyrrhic victory, really, because everyone was so angry that we beat Eminem. No, we were blamed for stealing Eminem's Grammy."



past work, it's garbage to me, see. I'm only interested in the future. I've already started getting ideas about what I want to do next. And I'd like to think it would be my best work. But I don't even think that. It's just, I think it'll occupy my mind so I won't get depressed. So in that sense, I don't really think of my best work ahead of me. It's just: my work is ahead of me.

Do you miss Walter when you write lyrics on your own?
Yeah, for sure.

Do you two exchange ideas, and can we assume that there will be more Steely Dan?

We've been talking about it for a couple years. But he's been spending a lot of time with his family. That's what he's into now.

When people say they're spending a lot of time with their family I always think there's some other covert reason they're not saying.

Walter always tells me, what he likes best is to do nothing. He likes to hang.

And what do you like best?
Work.

What would be your advice to the 20-year-old you?
You don't have to marry everyone you sleep with.

But you've only been married once.

Yeah, that's true. Let me correct it: you don't have to live with everyone you sleep with for 10 years.

You're a romantic?

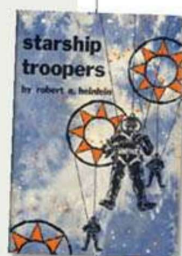
Isn't that anti-romantic, though?

NEW FRONTIER

SCI-FI GUY

Fagen on his enduring love for science fiction...

► "Reading science fiction when I was young did influence my worldview. And a lot of it had to do with what I became, and what Steely Dan became. I liked the ones that were funny, like Fredric Brown, Robert Heinlein, Theodore Sturgeon, CM Kornbluth or Philip K Dick, ones that extrapolated from the present to make some kind of comment about where things were going, or insights. I also read *Mad* magazine religiously."



No, I don't think so.
No, it's realistic.

Half empty or half full?

I usually convince myself it's half full, because it's hard for me to work if I'm in a depressed mood. Although I'm not too much of a depressive. I usually am either feeling good or feeling angry. I can write when I'm angry. It's a good motivator. I had an unhappy adolescence and early manhood, so it was hard to have a chock-full glass in those days. But I had a lot of neuroses and so on which I've mostly shed. But you have to be vigilant in order to keep them at bay. I've been to a hypnotist. Not for a while, but I used to.

Did you feel when Steely Dan reached that extreme level of success that it made up for having an iffy adolescence?

I really don't think of success in those terms, or the idea of top of the heap, like...

You sold what, 30 million albums?

I never, never think of selling albums as having anything whatsoever to do with success.

OK, define success for me.

To me, it's if you're happy in work and love. If you're vital in both those areas, I think that's what being successful is. It gives you a centre to work from. The money thing, you know what, I don't care too much for money because money can't buy ya love. ☺

Sunken Condos is out now on Warner Reprise

ALL DOWN THE LINE

In summer 1972, THE ROLLING STONES embarked on a 32-stop, 50-show American tour to promote their brilliant new album, *Exile On Main St.* Accompanied by socialites, celebrated authors and a documentary film crew, the Stones rewrote the blueprint for rock'n'roll tours. But at a price. Here, bandmembers, confidants and crew tell us tales of glorious, transcendent music — but also increasingly dark drug use, bomb explosions, sequined jumpsuits and pool games in the Blue Ridge Mountains. “It was a time of tremendous turbulence and cultural upheaval,” they tell us. “The Stones were a lightning rod. That’s how they saw themselves.”

Story: John Robinson

Photo: ©Jim Marshall Photography

PLUS MICK SPEAKS! P46 ➔

Rocks off: (l-r) Bobby Keys, Jim Price, Mick Jagger, Mick Taylor, Keith Richards, Charlie Watts and Bill Wyman onstage at the LA Forum, June 11, 1972





The Stones arrive in L.A., with Jim Price, Bobby Keys, Nicky Hopkins and Leroy Leonard

IN FEBRUARY 1974, Marshall Chess flew from New York to Munich, where his employers, The Rolling Stones, were recording tracks for their album *It's Only Rock'n'Roll*. Chess was making the trip in his capacity as president of Rolling Stones Records, and with a view to settling some unfinished business.

He had brought with him several canisters of film, a rough cut of a documentary feature made by the Swiss photographer Robert Frank during the band's June/July 1972 American tour. At a break in the sessions, the band

assembled at a screening room to watch the movie.

If they expected to be watching a musical celebration of their sell-out, 32-city tour of two years previously, then they were disappointed. There *was* music – the film began with a ragged rehearsal of “You Can’t Always Get What You Want”, and ended with a concert sequence – but this was mainly a film in which The Rolling Stones weren’t so much present and correct as implied by their fallout. The “Frank film”, as it was known, impressionistically captured the band’s impact as it progressed around the nation, sometimes focusing on the kids who came to watch, but often on assembled celebrities that were now part of the Stones’ circle: an entourage that included writers Terry Southern and Truman Capote, Andy Warhol, and the socialite Princess Lee Radziwill, sister of Jacqueline Kennedy-Onassis.

The film was beautiful, tinted a slightly cold blue because of a camera fault, and it disdained narrative, making its points by implication. There were scenes of masturbation and drug use; also of beauty, serene calm, elegant accommodations. There were moments of riotous music, when the band and the crowd seemed united in delight, as they are when the Stones perform “Uptight”/“Satisfaction” with support act Stevie Wonder. But the film also explored the isolation that emerged in the silence after the show.

In 1972 Robert Frank told *Oui* magazine that for the crowd, watching the Stones was like observing a transparent aircraft, “a Lucite spaceship”, wherein the audience can see the band, but they remain untouchably remote. “You go to all the effort to get people up for you,” he told Richard Elman, “then you use all the force you have to keep them away.”

Two and a half hours later, the film, which would be titled *Cocksucker Blues*, froze on Mick Jagger’s raised finger, and ended. From The Rolling Stones, there was no applause.

“They were,” says Marshall Chess, “like, *stunned*.”

IN SPITE OF the legend of the place, in 1971 some people do still treat Villa Nellcôte, Keith Richards’ temporary home in Villefranche-sur-Mer, Nice, as a place of business. In the basement studio, tracks are being cut for the *Exile On Main St* album, over whose four sides The Rolling Stones will make an overt musical and spiritual reconnection with the blues, gospel and R’n’B that has been integral to their sound thus far. Upstairs, meanwhile, visitors to the residence are pitching for the rights to present

WHAT'S THE STATUS OF COCKSUCKER BLUES?

“I’VE no idea, really. I’ve got enough old Rolling Stones films coming round. It gets shown at festivals, you know, it’s not got some great secret... I think it’s going to be shown this autumn, so it’s around. You can easily get bootlegs of it, too. I don’t have any intention of putting it outright now.”

Mick Jagger, Oct 2012

an American promotional tour for the album, to take place the following summer.

In the three years since The Rolling Stones last visited America (after the disastrous events at Altamont Raceway, in particular), much has changed in the music business. Events like Woodstock have altered forever the scale and mathematics of rock promotion. Bands are demanding more money to play. Venues need a larger volume of higher-priced tickets to meet their fees. Fans want to see the bands, in increasing numbers, and venues like Bill Graham’s Fillmores in San Francisco and New York are closing: not because there’s no demand, but because they’re too small to accommodate rock’s increased scale. Events that in 1969 served, at least in principle, as countercultural gatherings of the tribes, have by 1971 become revenue streams for an increasingly sophisticated entertainment business.

So who from that business will serve the Stones in 1972? One by one, its representatives come to the South of France to offer their wares. Madison Square Garden offers the copper-bottomed authority of its name and the established reputation of its touring division. David Geffen brings an impressive idea of how to create an intimate Stones show for the maximum audience: he has been discussing with Mick Jagger the idea of cinema “telecasts”, whereby a Stones concert is watched by fans in cinemas across the country.

There is also a third candidate. Four years ago, Peter Rudge was a student at Cambridge University, but since graduating he has worked for The Who’s managers, Kit Lambert and Chris Stamp. His first big assignment



THE ENTOURAGE

"VERY, VERY ACCEPTABLE PEOPLE"

Who's who in our story of the Stones' '72 tour

PETER BEARD

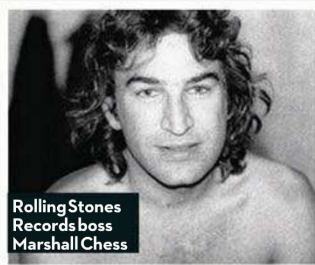
Painted by Francis Bacon. Pal of Truman Capote. Artist and adventurer. Peter Beard is a well-connected gentleman, a magnificent photographer, and an eclectic conversationalist. His landmark work, *The End Of The Game*, was most recently updated in 2008. www.peterbeard.com

MARSHALL CHESS

Scion of the Chess Records empire, Marshall Chess ran Rolling Stones Records for eight years, leaving in 1977. He now runs Sunflower Music, a publisher and label specialising in Latin music. www.sunflower-ent.com

ROBERT GREENFIELD

A man who was able to slip unobtrusively inside the Stones' tent and write intelligently about



Rolling Stones Records boss Marshall Chess

what he found there, Greenfield wrote great books about the Stones and Bill Graham, both in print. He is currently working on a biography of Ahmet Ertegun.

BOBBY KEYS

"I was part of the firm..." says the personable Texan – the Stones' go-to saxophonist for more than 40 years. Bobby's autobiography, *Every Night's A Saturday Night*, is out now, published by Counterpoint Press.

CHIP MONCK

Edward Herbert Beresford Monk was production designer for events as varied as Woodstock, the Concert For Bangladesh and Pope John Paul II's visit to Los Angeles. He lives in Australia. www.chipmonck.com

CHRIS O'DELL

An intimate of The Beatles as well as the Stones, O'Dell is now an addiction counsellor working in Arizona. Her enjoyable memoir, *Miss O'Dell*, was published in 2009. www.chrisodell.net

RAY PARKER JR

A hot guitarist for Stevie Wonder and Chaka Khan many years before *Ghostbusters*, Ray

continues to tour, most recently in Japan. www.rayparkerjr.com

PETER RUDGE

A veteran of several Stones tours, Peter Rudge is global head of music at Octagon, a music/sport management company. When we meet, he is on his way to a Shakira production rehearsal. www.octagon-uk.com

GARY STROMBERG

Long a music PR, Stromberg quit in 1982 and now runs The Blackbird Group. He writes and speaks motivationally about addiction and recovery. www.garystromberg.net

MICK TAYLOR

Guitarist on the strongest run of Stones albums, Mick left the band in 1974, but recorded new parts for "Plundered My Soul", from the reissued *Exile* in 2010. www.micktaylor.com lists upcoming appearances.



Peter Rudge, right, with Jagger and Ahmet Ertegun, at London's Earls Court, May 1976



(l-r) Robert Frank, Danny Seymour (rear) and Mick Jagger en route from L.A. to San Diego; the backing to the Stones' adhesive AAA pass reads: 'Not recommended for suede or velvet'

for them was to find opera houses in the US not opposed to the idea of a rock opera, and to book them on behalf of The Who. He has successfully accomplished his task, and Mick Jagger, a man with a keen eye for emerging talent working for the competition, is impressed.

Rudge is then invited to a further meeting in Los Angeles while the band is in the city mixing *Exile* at Sunset Sound. He meets the band at the Beverly Hills Hotel, with their adviser, Prince Rupert Loewenstein.

"The only thing I really remember," says Rudge today, "was Charlie saying, 'What will you do if he wants a swimming pool on the stage?' Meaning, how are you going to control Mick? So they said, 'Come up with a plan.'"

"I remember flying TWA back to London, and just writing streams of consciousness, to the boys, but with Mick in mind. About how they could recover from Altamont, how they could tour... pages of it. And I just mailed it to them. Crossings-out, mis-spellings. And I got a call a couple of weeks later, saying: 'Do you want to do the tour?'"

The plan Rudge set out for the Stones in 1972 focused on one element: retaining control. In December 1969, their concert at Altamont Speedway near San Francisco (at which Meredith Hunter, a black teenager, was stabbed to death by a member of the Hells Angels motorcycle gang) had been an object lesson in how not to stage a large-scale event.

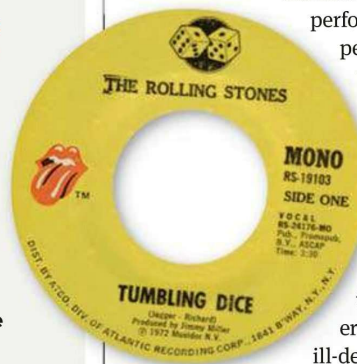
"I don't really understand the reason for doing [*Altamont*]," says Mick Taylor, then on his first US tour as lead guitarist for The Rolling Stones. "It wasn't about money... because it was free. Nobody seemed to be in charge of it. Even the Stones for all their experience must have been pretty naïve to organise that."

"As far as a 'thank you' to the US and to San Francisco, it couldn't have been mismanaged any worse," remembers Chip Monck, who stage-managed the '69 tour. "Rock Scully, Emmett Grogan and Sam Cutler decided that the best way to hire security was to hire a U-Haul trailer full of beer, and give the Hells Angels a bushel basket of pills. That was particularly clever."

SO DID THEY PLAY "LITTLE QUEENIE"?

The tour repertoire is drawn from:

- Brown Sugar
- Bitch
- Dead Flowers
- Rocks Off
- Gimme Shelter
- Happy
- Tumbling Dice
- Love In Vain
- Sweet Virginia
- Loving Cup
- You Can't Always Get What You Want
- All Down The Line
- Midnight Rambler
- Bye Bye Johnny
- Rip This Joint
- Jumpin' Jack Flash
- Street Fighting Man
- Honky Tonk Women
- Uptight (Everything's Alright)/(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction (with Stevie Wonder and band)



The mess at Altamont is often cited as being the "death of an era" or "the place where the '60s died". As tragic as it was, Altamont and other flashpoints on the '69 tour (say, in Denver, where the crowd clashed with police and tear gas was used) had a more practical application for rock culture and how Stones concerts would be staged in the future.

"Barriers were being built between performers, the production and the people," says Monck. "It became you and them. It was unfortunate, because until production [*methods*] caught up, it didn't allow people any feeling they had been involved with a musical evening."

Altamont had been a tragedy and a harsh lesson. For Rudge, today it seems like "a comedy of errors", in which the delegating of ill-defined responsibilities to unregulated third parties had been behind the event's undoing. He was fastidious in ensuring the same mistakes would not happen again. "My approach was, you've got to be more organised, more self-contained. We've got to create our own insulated touring entity, which was the philosophy we lived or died by. We can't walk into situations we don't know anything about."

To that end, the Stones' 1972 tour would know every inch of ground before it set foot on it. Rudge (saving the band a 10 per cent agency fee) personally booked the halls for the 50 shows in each of the 32 cities. Local promoters would receive minimal splits on venue profits, as it was a prestige assignment to promote a Stones show already guaranteed to sell out. To transport the "A" party – the band, honoured guests, celebrities, key tour personnel – Rudge hired the tour's signature transportation, "the jet" (actually a Lockheed L-188 Electra Turboprop), an aircraft painted with John Pasche's "lapping tongue" logo.



Chip Monck, right, supervises the installation of the stage set

If anyone were to fall ill on tour, there was a doctor. If anyone were to look ill, there was a makeup artist. For efficiency's sake, Rudge had also contrived a way, as far as possible, to be in two places at once. Whenever the Stones' party arrived in a city, it would be met by Don Watson.

Watson, a former champion skater and booker for the Holiday On Ice show, was always one step ahead of the Stones. With his seersucker jacket and tie, he was also, says Rudge, "as straight as they come". If the Stones were in Minneapolis, Watson was already in Chicago. He would meet hotel staff and venue management. He would brief security, and liaise with local law enforcement. Assured all was in order, he would meet the Stones' party, hand over hotel keys to Mick (alias: "P Ginger") and Keith ("Prince Biggles" or "Count Zigenpuss"), and fly off to the next city. "We tried to make it so that around the Stones, on the front lines, were very, very acceptable people," says Rudge.

In essence, Rudge's job was to sell a bill of goods: to take the savagery of a Stones show (libidinous music, anger, catharsis, a sense of opposition to the establishment), maintain it, contain it, and transport it from city to city as if it were the most domesticated of show ponies.

"Certain American authorities saw the Stones as a threat to the youth of America," says Rudge. "This was 1972, we're talking Vietnam, a time of tremendous cultural upheaval, and to many American authorities and Americans in general, the Stones were part of that revolutionary culture. They were a lightning rod for all these people. And obviously the Stones reveled in that. That's how they saw themselves, what they presented themselves as."

IN SPITE OF Rudge's best efforts, the tour faced disaster before it had really begun. A permit for the Stones' plane to land in Canada had not been secured by the pilot, so the band party had to be bussed over the border for the tour to begin in Vancouver on June 3.

"I remember saying, 'Mick, we've got a problem...'" says Rudge. "He said, 'First fucking day, and we're fucked up...'"

On arrival at the gig, the situation worsened. So great was demand that the 17,000 ticket holders for the show were not the only people in Vancouver who wanted to gain entry to the Pacific Coliseum. Rudge and promoters Bill Graham and Barry Fey spent most of the gig trying to hold the back door shut. Outside, a riot began with an estimated 2,500 people agitating to get into the show.

Inside the venue, Mick Jagger was debuting the first in a series of sequinned, scoop-fronted Ossie Clark jumpsuits and leading The Rolling Stones through a set that covered material from the band's current release, *Exile On Main St* (released a month previously; almost a million copies already sold), but also tracked back into their catalogue as far as 1968. They didn't play "Sympathy For The Devil". But they did play "Gimme Shelter" and Chuck Berry's "Bye Bye Johnny". An enormous mirror created by Chip Monck allowed him new and versatile ways of illuminating the band.

ON WITH THE SHOW

"THAT'S VERY COMPLICATED. IS THERE NOT A BOWL?"

What actually happens in *Cocksucker Blues*

2 mins: The band rehearse "You Can't Always Get What You Want"

5 mins: Keith jams on piano at Marshall Chess' LA house.

12 mins: "Brown Sugar". Kids mug to camera outside.

15 mins: Beautiful shot of Mick and Keith walking to their plane.

18 mins: Orgy. Stones provide rhythm accompaniment while tour party engage in sexual activity with girls from previous city.

35 mins: Terry Southern. "Cocaine is so expensive, I don't know how anyone can develop a habit. But I want as much of it as I can possibly get..."

37 mins: Keith seems to be nodding out backstage. In the next room Mick chats to Ahmet Ertegun.

39 mins: Celebs arrive: Andy Warhol; Lee Radziwill; Dick Cavett.

45 mins: Designer Ossie Clark fits Bianca for her evening gown.

48 mins: Members of the band and entourage travel the South by car - stopping at bars and pool halls.

56 mins: "Uptight"/"Satisfaction". Mick walks Stevie out on to the stage for this magnificent encore.

1 hr: Keith and Mick listen to stereo acetate of the "Happy" single.

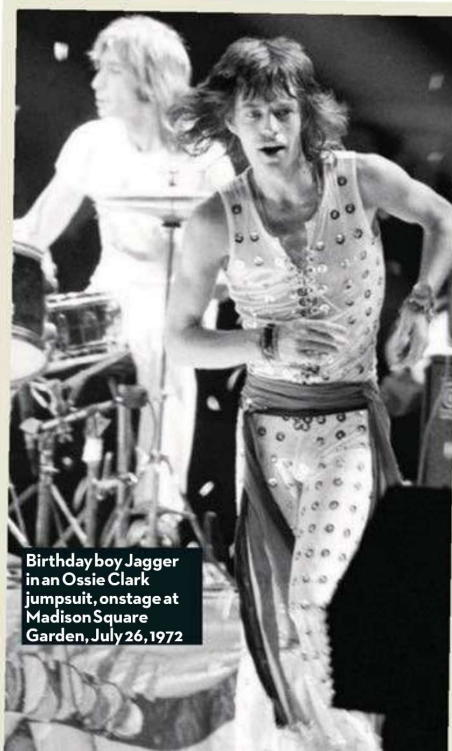
1 hr 8 mins: Keith tries to order fruit from room service, which he is informed is "by the order" of blueberries or strawberries. "That's very complicated. Is there not a bowl? What about an apple?" "I can get you an apple."

1 hr 16 mins: A hipster raps about a plan to set up a "Tomb Of The Unknown Junkie".

1 hr 19 mins: Keith and Bobby Keys tip a TV out of a window. "Just unscrew that bit - there you go."

1 hr 26 mins: The band make their arrival at a gig, in a campervan.

1 hr 33 mins: Film ends.



Birthday boy Jagger in an Ossie Clark jumpsuit, onstage at Madison Square Garden, July 26, 1972

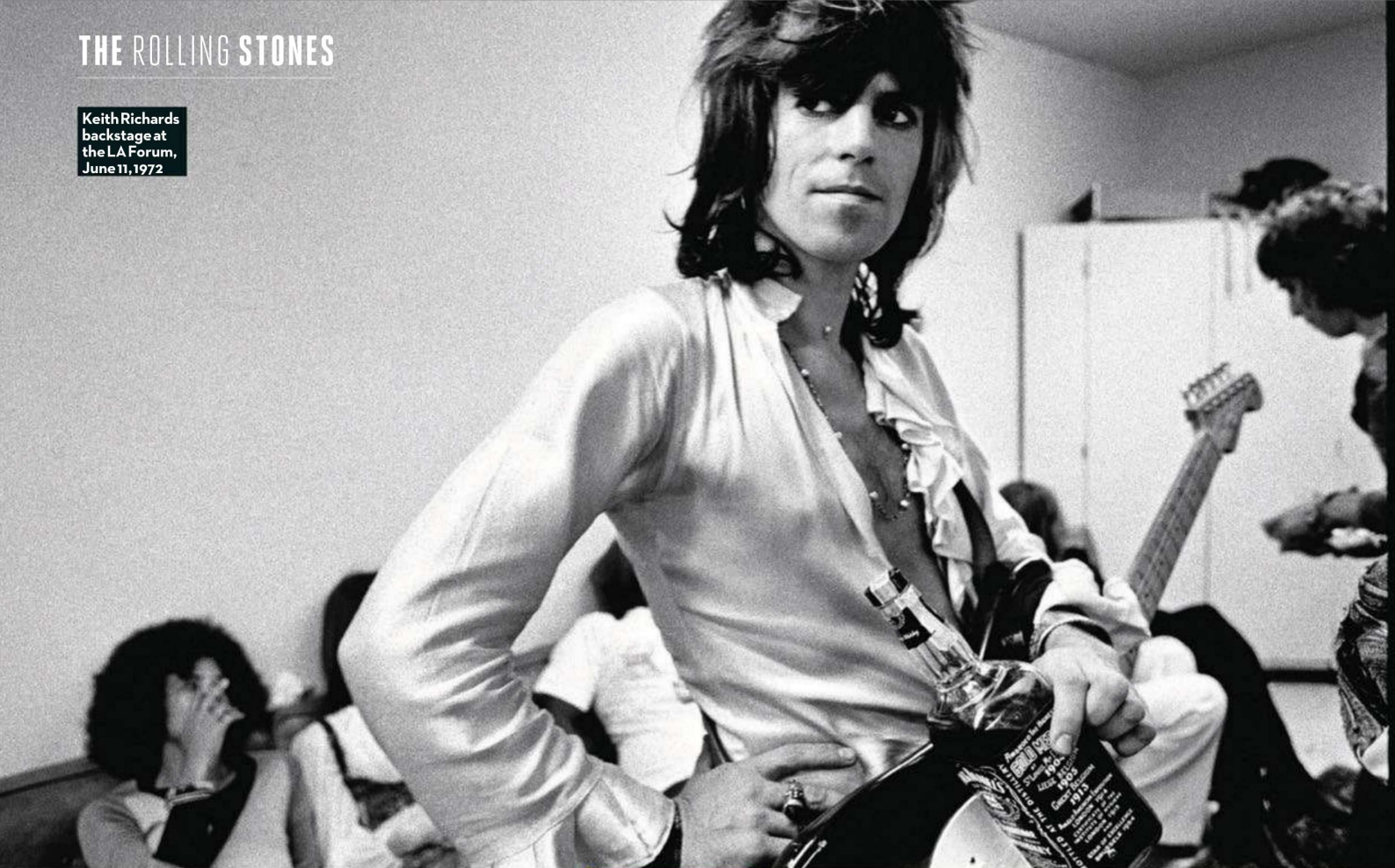
"It was the pinnacle of what I wanted to do," says Bobby Keys, the legendary Stones saxophonist. "It was like, 'Here it is: this is the cherry on the sundae.' This is rock'n'roll in its highest form - in many ways!"

"The band was so well-balanced," says Keys. "The band with Mick Taylor was a bit different: it was less structured onstage. Now Chuck [Leavell, keys] counts things off in a certain tempo so visuals can coincide with the flashpots and all that jazz. Which is cool, it's part of the entertainment thing. Then, we just had a Mylar mirror, and the band was more organic in so far as what songs it would play and what order they would be played in."

"That Stones show was unbelievable, let's not get away from that," says Peter Rudge, "with Chip's mirror, and the set, and *Exile* coming out. There was something that transcended pure music - it was magic. And we had to make sure it happened every night."

The evening ends with 37 policemen reported as injured (13 hospitalised), and

Keith Richards
backstage at
the LA Forum,
June 11, 1972



➔ 13 rioting kids arrested (nine charged).

After two shows in Seattle (Jagger wears a Marilyn Monroe tank top; scalped tickets are \$30), on June 6 the band arrive in San Francisco for the first of three shows in the city. The Stones are visited by *Life* magazine, then the highest-circulation periodical in America. Mick and Keith are interviewed about how things have changed in three years.

"Of course some people wanted to say that Altamont was the end of an era," Jagger tells *Life*. "People like that are fashion writers. Perhaps it was the end of their era. The end of their naïveté. I would have thought it would have ended long before Altamont."

Both Jagger and Richards proclaim touring as essential for the continued health and development of their art. It's something that marks them out from contemporaries like Dylan (then retired from public life and living in seclusion in upstate New York) and particularly The Beatles, who retired from public performance, to their ultimate cost.

"I can't even remember The Beatles," Jagger tells *Life*. "It seems so long ago. That was another era."

This meeting with the press served to illustrate that Mick Jagger's artistry was not confined to the stage. With the tour sold-out many times over (in Detroit, there were 120,000 mailed requests for the 12,000 seats at the COBO arena), press coverage was not being relied upon to generate sales. With PR chief Gary Stromberg, Jagger decided on a plan that would make press coverage an event in itself: to approach celebrity writers to report on the tour, from a privileged vantage point.

"We got amazing coverage by doing that," says Stromberg, "and it generated some excitement by having them with us." If in doubt, Jagger's policy was to refuse press offers.

"He said something I'll never forget," says Stromberg: "You don't give these people everything they want, or they'll chew you up and move on to the next attraction. You should always leave them wanting more."

The exclusive policy meant that in the Stones' party there circulated a group of the most agreeable kind of

A SHOT AWAY

"ANOTHER STONE..."

Jim Marshall's stunning pictures

"ABOUT 50 PEOPLE submitted portfolios to *Life* to do the Stones tour," said Jim Marshall, shortly before his death in 2010. "I got it - with 10 pictures."

No-one should have been surprised. By 1972, Marshall had been taking pictures professionally for nearly 10 years, and had found a niche for himself as a documentarian of the emerging counterculture. There were, he once estimated, only about two photographers working in San Francisco. "We were documenting a part of our history - we were being historians without knowing it."

The strange combination of Marshall's larger-than-life personality and ability to observe made him the era's most empathetic photographer of rock 'n' roll. "As out there as I am, I just want to be a fly-on-the-wall," he said in 2010. "I don't consider myself a photographer - I'm a reporter with a camera. Total access - that was important."

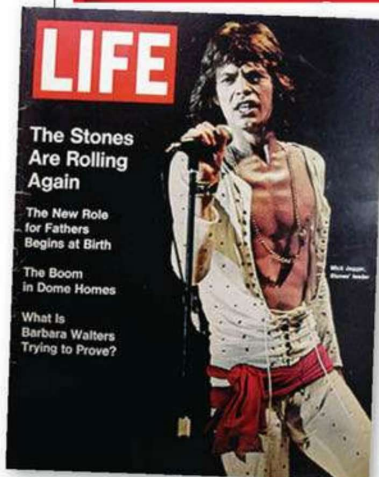
"Once he was in, he was another Stone," says Keith Richards in his intro to *The Rolling Stones: 1972*, a new collection of Marshall's work with the band in the US that year. "He caught us with our trousers down and got the ups and downs." JOHN ROBINSON



The Rolling Stones: 1972 is published by Chronicle Books

Prints are on display at the British Music Experience at the O2 from November 16 and for sale at Snap Galleries, London

www.jimmarshallphotographyllc.com



persons from the Long Island artistic/party set - a kind of roving Camelot. *Rolling Stone's* Jann Wenner commissioned Truman Capote to cover the tour, accompanied by a friend, the artist and wildlife photographer Peter Beard. The outlandishly handsome Beard would be visited by Princess Lee Radziwill, with whom he was then having an affair.

"The whole team has always been friends," says Peter Beard. "Truman was great fun to be with. Unfortunately, not on our trip, because he realised that writing was the wrong thing. At the Stones shows, when he'd come out and the crowd would cheer, he'd say, 'That's because they've seen me on *Johnny Carson*, not because they've read my books...' He was popping pills. He kept saying, 'Sinatra is an artist, the Stones are entertainers.' Which shows you how far gone he was."

Krystle Warren

direct from the Rufus Wainwright tour

“A true original her assurance is as remarkable as her range”
- **The Guardian** ★ ★ ★

“..One of the greatest living singers.. she's formidable.”
- **Rufus Wainwright**

03 NOVEMBER 2012

Belfast - Black Box (50th Belfast Festival at Queen's)

04 NOVEMBER 2012

Dublin - Odessa

05 NOVEMBER 2012

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07 NOVEMBER 2012

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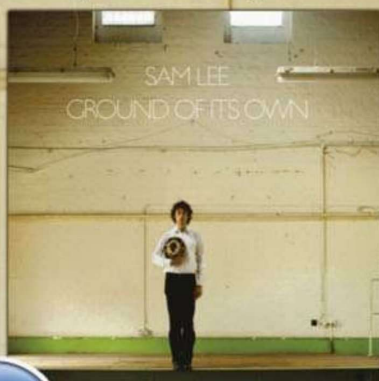
GROUND OF ITS OWN

MOJO ****: It demands patient attention but it's an album of unusual dignity and immense beauty

Q: A dream-like quality that's as rare as it is compelling

Songlines *****: Sam's extraordinary and wonderful debut album.

Guardian ****: An impressively brave and original set



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PROPER RECORDS VINTAGE 2012



Bonnie Raitt
Slipstream

"...the lustiest 63 year old in the business" **Uncut** 7/10
"Fans of roots-rock-for-grown-ups, step this way" **Word**



Aimee Mann
Charmer

"She and her foils tap a seam of pure gold...special...rich...acute"

Mojo ★ ★ ★

"Aimee delivers a gentle glory"
The Times ★ ★ ★



Ian Hunter & The Rant Band
When I'm President

"...a rollicking stomp from start to finish...maybe even his best"

Q ★ ★ ★

"...very much at the top of his game...a fiery spirited album"
Mojo ★ ★ ★

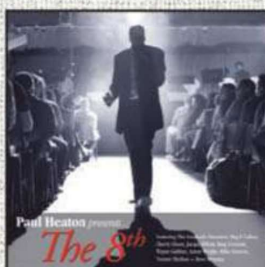


Gretchen Peters
Hello Cruel World

"...lean and poetic, unafraid to tackle the deep, poignant stuff, yet strongly melodic too." **Q** ★ ★ ★

"There's no question about it, *Hello Cruel World* is a jewel - surely it will end up as the most important record to emerge in 2012."

Maverick ★ ★ ★

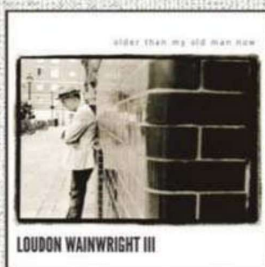


Paul Heaton
Presents The 8th

"The former Housemartin moves into new company with this astonishing pop-opera" **The Times** ★ ★ ★

"...the recurring melodic motif is gorgeous...witty and full of compassion..."

The Evening Standard ★ ★ ★



Loudon Wainwright III
Older Than My Old Man Now

"It is punchy, pithy stuff, sometimes laugh-out-loud funny...Wainwright is a master of ironic pathos."

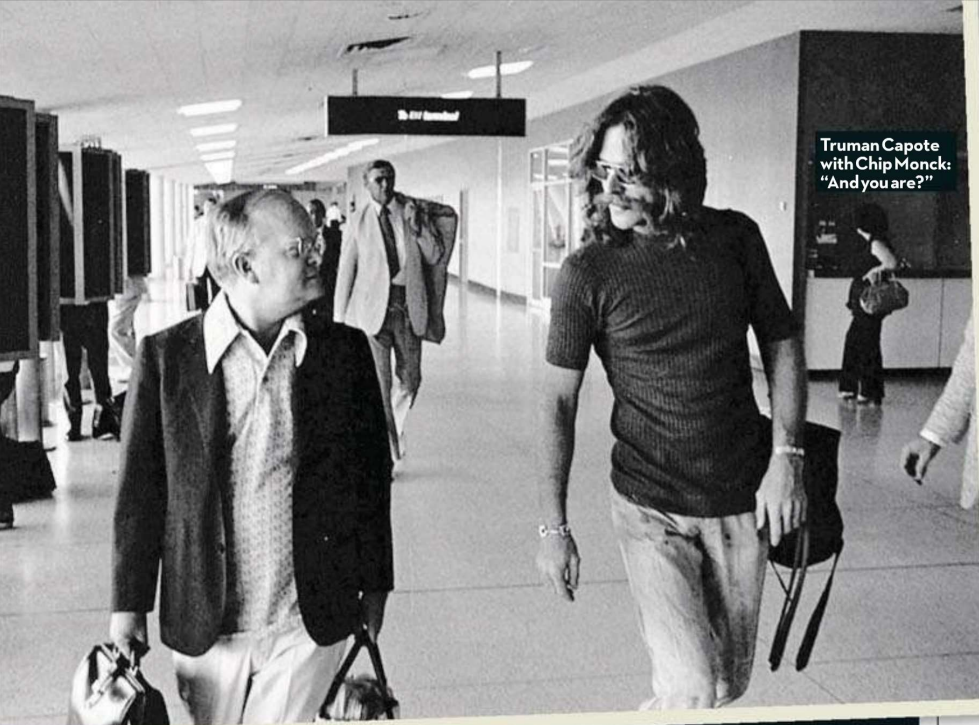
Daily Telegraph ★ ★ ★

"You don't have to be dead, or even on the slippery slope, to appreciate that it's a rather beautiful thing."

The Independent



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Truman Capote with Chip Monck: "And you are?"

→ Capote, in a comparable way to the Stones, was finding acceptance in a more mainstream context, where his celebrity was more dominant than his art. Still, he found it hard to accept that this was not his trip, not the only time Jagger's attempt to initiate creative thinking in tour coverage would author an unpredictable outcome.

"When you're with The Rolling Stones, they are the stars," says Gary Stromberg. "Truman Capote couldn't abide by that: he wanted to ride in the limo with Keith and Mick, he wanted to hang out with them at times they didn't want him to. They were living a lifestyle they didn't want him to report on all facets of," says Stromberg. "He was allowed to observe. But not to participate."

“OBSERVE BUT NOT participate". If it began as a directive, it became the moral of the story. Filmmaker Robert Frank had been commissioned to make a documentary about the tour. No-one photographs "truth", but at the start of the 1970s that was the talent for which the laconic Swiss-born photographer had long been venerated: as cameras became smaller, Frank had exploited this lack of impediment to unobtrusively record, as he had done in his groundbreaking volume *The Americans*, finding pathos and poetry in the fleeting nature of inconsequential moments.

"I liked Robert Frank very much," says Mick Taylor. "I think he found the whole 1972 tour pompous and extravagant, and he wanted to show another side of it. He seemed to have a sense of irony about the situation, like, 'I've seen this all before...'"

"I remember him coming to my house in Los Angeles, with his second cameraman/soundman, a guy named Danny Seymour," says Marshall Chess. "They knocked on my front door and they were filming already with these little handheld cameras. Robert had an intellectual, beatnik sensibility about life. 'Be Here Now' – that kind of thing. He was very much about living in the moment."

"They both had a way of disappearing," remembers Chris O'Dell, an intimate of the band and a gofer on the '72 tour. "They were constantly there, but you didn't notice."

That gift endows *Cocksucker Blues* with much of its unsettling quality. In it, we see the Stones rehearsing, snoozing, watching the television, nodding out, talking drugs ("Want to finish this, Mick? I'll roll you a note..." "Yeah, well, it's only San Diego..."), defenestrating the television, with an intimacy that is still surprising. Artistically, it remains one of the high points of Mick Jagger's career as a commissioning editor/arts patron. At the same time as the band as a public entity are reaching an

STAR STAR

20 notable guests at the end-of-tour party

- Tennessee Williams [below]
- Woody Allen
- Oscar De La Renta
- George Plimpton
- Bob Dylan
- Bill Graham
- Dick Cavett
- Pat Astor
- Baby Jane Holzer
- Lord Hesketh
- Gianni Bulgari
- Robert De Rothschild
- Bill Blass
- Dotson Rader
- Kitty Hawks
- Candy Darling
- Karen Lerner
- Marjoe Gortner
- Count Vega Del Ren
- Mrs Walter Moreira-Salles



increasingly large volume of people, the film grants us an utterly private audience with the band that could, in principle, derail it, were the two to ever meet.

"Because he was able to become invisible," says Marshall Chess, "people acted like themselves."

Historically, the film is invaluable for the way it moves between the co-existing societies of the Stones tour. In one room, we find Mick conversing with his jawdroppingly beautiful wife about a party that will be filled with "awful chi-chi people", while a music box plays. In another, Keith struggles hilariously to order fruit from room service. Celebrity members of the entourage hove into and out of view. Mick Taylor walks into a room where a boring, naked woman shares a joint with him and mocks his English accent.

"They gave Frank unlimited access," says Robert Greenfield, who wrote his essential book, *Stones Touring Party: A Journey Through America With The Rolling Stones*, about his time on the tour. "He had access that I never had. On any tour there are always rooms inside rooms. These were the rooms where the heaviest drugs were being used. And I was

almost never in those rooms. He was.

"It shows the confusion of the period. At the same time as Mick is trying to take them into another realm as a business, Keith is starting to lose it."

Cocksucker Blues shows how Mick Jagger in 1972 excels as the public face of The Rolling Stones, its high-fashion leading edge. It also captures the emergence of Keith Richards as the personification of the band's dark energy. One magnificent sequence finds the guitarist entering the lobby of a casino-hotel while a party of elderly American matrons peer warily at him: black-toothed, cigarette-smoking, alien life. They don't necessarily all know who (even what) he is, but they know that they should probably ask for his autograph. It's hard to determine who is the more unsettled and confused by whom.

"The legend of Keith Richards was born on this tour," says Peter Rudge. "He played the role of Keith Richards absolutely incredibly. He was quite dark in terms of his character, and in terms of his lifestyle at that time: all the trappings of sex, drugs and rock'n'roll. Juxtaposed against Mick, it allowed Keith a chance to authenticate himself, to be the ultimate, quintessential rock'n'roll deal."

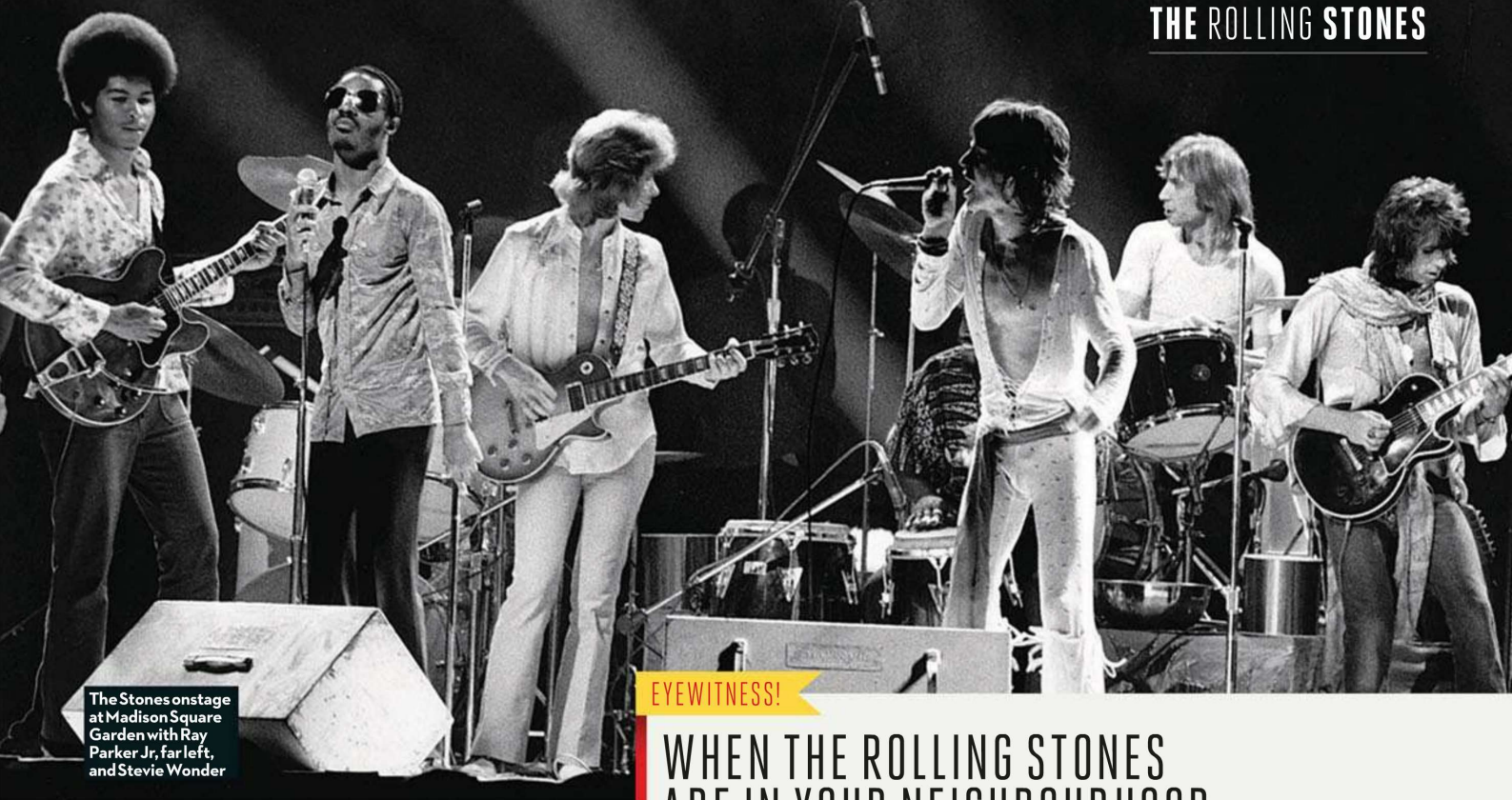
If the content of the all-access Robert Frank film was to prove unsettling, the way it was filmed was no less so. Frank's protégé, Daniel Seymour, was talented, charming and enormously wealthy (he was scion of an "old money" Boston family). In a way, he was a kind of de facto Rolling Stone, albeit one who didn't make records. Privately, he was also emblematic of another aspect of the Stones.

"At the beginning of the tour Robert had said, 'He's a brilliant photographer, he's a soundman, he'll be great'," remembers Marshall Chess. "'The problem is, he's a heroin addict.' I said, 'How can we take a heroin addict on the tour?' And he said, 'Danny promises me he'll do a detox and will be clean for the tour.' So we hired him. But unfortunately, as you see in the film, Danny didn't stay clean for long."

"Danny was a lot like Keith," says Chris O'Dell. "They became pretty close during that tour. He saw life through the heroin lens."

BY THE HALFWAY point of the tour [Nashville, June 29], *Cashbox* magazine estimated the Stones had played to over a quarter of a million people.

Certainly, by then both band and tour have gathered a head of steam. They have addressed why they're not playing "Sympathy For The Devil", a song associated with Altamont (Keith: "It's such a long piece..."). The band has assayed predicting their own reviews (Mick: "They looked like a bunch of tacky whores..."). Truman Capote has pronounced the Stones' refusal to play encores to be "heartbreaking".



The Stones onstage at Madison Square Garden with Ray Parker Jr, far left, and Stevie Wonder

EYEWITNESS!

WHEN THE ROLLING STONES ARE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD...

Who you gonna call? RAY PARKER JR explains how he joined the Stevie Wonder band



"I COULDN'T BELIEVE that Stevie Wonder was calling me – I thought it was one of my friends joking around. I hung up

on him. Finally, Stevie called me back and said, 'There's something wrong with these phones, we keep getting disconnected.' Then he played me the rhythm track to 'Superstition' and I thought, 'I've been hanging up on Stevie Wonder...'

"He told me that he was going on tour with The Rolling Stones. For a minute there I thought he was saying that The Rolling Stones were going on tour with him, because Stevie Wonder was more famous in my neighbourhood. Stevie

was a little different, but audiences on the tour seemed to accept him even though he wasn't playing hardcore rock'n'roll.

"There was a lot of interaction with the Stones – we hung out with these guys, partied with them, at the Playboy Mansion in Chicago. I wasn't even going to go – I was going to sleep that night. I was swimming in the pool with three or four models... The Stones rented a studio on a couple of occasions and we recorded with them several times – I can't remember what songs we did.

"I must have seen the Stones show a hundred times. I had a great time and learned a lot. Mick Jagger is one heck of an entertainer. Mick Taylor was just amazing. Keith holds it all together – he has his own style."

For the Southern leg of the tour, the Stones have also engaged the services of the Dorothy Norwood Singers, a small gospel group, as an additional act. While profanity and lewdness runs rampant elsewhere among the party, Dorothy goes some way to purifying the crowd with her version of "When The Saints Go Marching In".

Backstage, a full complement of high-society players – Truman, Lee, Ahmet Ertegun and his wife Mica – are all often in evidence. At ground level, meanwhile, for a short side-trip, the band elect to travel by road and acquaint themselves with some of the flavour of the country that they've so far chiefly tasted from its records.

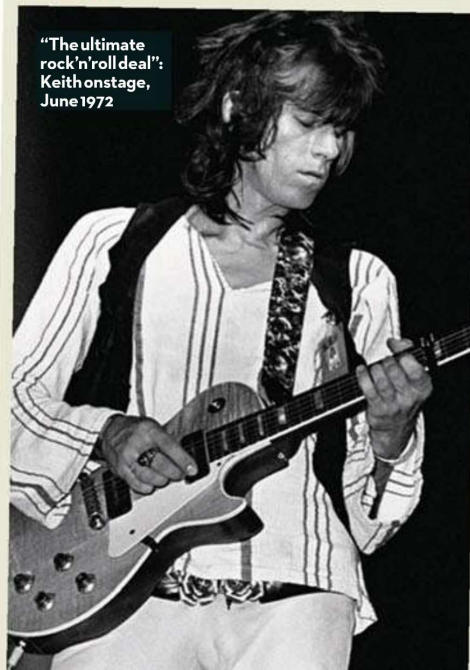
"The Stones had an appreciation for black Southern music and black Southern culture," says Bobby Keys, who went on the trip. "They were very much aware of aspects of American music that people who lived in the States were not so aware of. Booking Dorothy Norwood was something new: the Stones have always been aware of not following a beaten path, and I think that had something to do with her being on the tour. And of course they genuinely liked her."

In 1972, Ray Parker Jr was the 18-year-old guitarist in Stevie Wonder's band. As he sees it, the Stones were aware of their duty to act as patrons to performers they respected.

"I think Keith Richards is an ambassador, turning the world on to different types of music," says Parker. "The band were instrumental in turning rock fans on to Stevie. Everyone who plays in front of the Stones, like Prince, they become big stars. It's like their opening act is their introduction – they're turning you on to what they're giving to the world."

"There were a couple of dates when Keith and myself and a few other folks, we departed from the main body of the tour, jumped in a station wagon and drove down through the South," remembers Bobby Keys. "We were shooting pool up in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The natives handled it well – they didn't reach for their guns. It was the curiosity of two cultures. The Stones were always very aware of the heritage they carried on from Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf and Chuck Berry."

While the South had shown them hospitality, the next few days would show them anything but. To those who wanted to see them that way, The



"The ultimate rock'n'roll deal": Keith onstage, June 1972

Rolling Stones presented themselves as a moving, but unmissably large target. On a hot evening in Montreal, a bomb exploded under a Stones truck, destroying equipment, and reminding the party that while provisions could be made, and police cordons put in place, there were limitations to what they could prepare for.

"Such paranoia as there was was prompted by the residue of Altamont," says Peter Rudge. "The Angels were committed to recovering [Oakland chapter founder] Sonny Barger's legal fees, so throughout all this I had to deal with the Angels, who made a lot of threats. We were very exposed to a lunatic with a gun."

Even apparently insignificant encounters could prove a hindrance. A couple of days after Montreal, a photographer

fresh produce



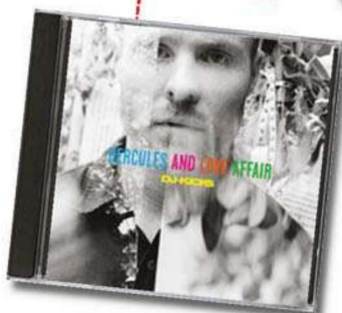
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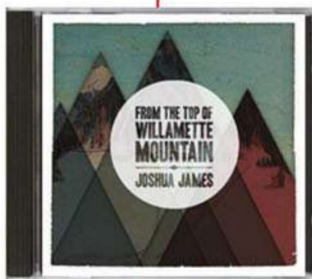


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EYEWITNESS!

I WAS THERE!

The Rolling Stones at Madison Square Garden, July 24, 1972

THE ENTIRE METROPOLIS has been vibrating in anticipation of the culminating dates on the Stones' STP tour – four shows over three days on America's biggest stage. Here I am at the first one and I can't believe the seats we've scored, right at eye level with the stage, not 50 feet from its edge. A big Mylar-covered rectangle is suspended overhead, reflecting a pair of painted serpents, the line of amps and Charlie's drum kit.

The house lights dim, the Stones file out, passing right in front of us, and – good God, y'all! – we're on Keith's side. He plugs in, scarves swirling, as Charlie does some warm-up rolls and Mick wriggles up to the mic. Then it begins – six spots lined up behind the stage hit the mirror, backlighting the band, as Keith begins "Brown Sugar". Before we can catch our breaths, the Price/Keys horn section blares the intro to "Bitch", keeping the tension hot-wired, then comes "Rocks Off", from the freshly minted *Exile On Main St*, before they

kick it up yet another notch with the sleek opening riff to "Gimme Shelter". Four songs, four show-stoppers, and they're just getting started.

Keith croaks his way through a hell-bent "Happy", which gives way to the spiralling riffs of "Tumbling Dice", with Keith slicing and Mick Taylor dicing, on the way to "Love In Vain", Taylor's showcase. Then he and Keith pick up acoustics and settle on stools behind Jagger for a gorgeously tattered "Sweet Virginia". After this change of pace comes the clarion call of "You Can't Always Get What You Want" and a playfully provocative "Midnight Rambler". As they tear into "Street Fighting Man", the house lights go on and the giant mirror presents the crowd with its own swirling mass.

When it was over, I truly believed I'd seen the most thrilling rock show ever, massive yet intricately detailed. Nothing I've witnessed in the ensuing 40 years has caused me to change my mind. BUD SCOPPA

Jumpin' Jack Flash: onstage at Madison Square Garden, July 26, 1972

approached the Stones during an unscheduled stop at an airport in Warwick, Rhode Island and was jostled away. Mick, Keith and Robert Frank were arrested – delaying that night's gig in Boston. As far as their press representative was concerned, it was all good.

"It really delineated who the Stones were," says Gary Stromberg. "It enhanced the image of these guys as living on the edge. Montreal and Boston were opportunities in disguise – it was about their bad-boy image, but didn't do any real harm."

AFTER A THREE-NIGHT, four-show run at Madison Square Garden, The Rolling Stones' 1972 tour ended on July 26, Mick Jagger's 29th birthday. Both events were celebrated at a party on the roof gardens of New York's St Regis Hotel. Muddy Waters played before a throng of well-to-do guests, as did Count Basie. Geri Miller, a Warhol Superstar, emerged from a cake. How far the Stones had come in two months! Certainly a long way from straight rock'n'roll.

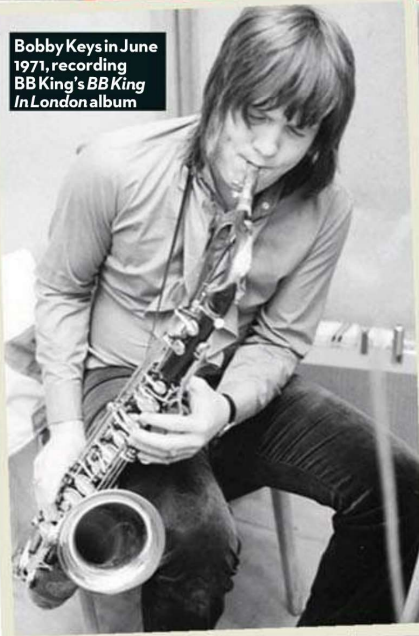
To observers on the night, even to Peter Rudge, it seems as if the balance between disorder and showbiz has swung too far the wrong way. "This has been a rock'n'roll tour for the kids," Rudge tells a reporter at the party, "and a social tour for everyone else."

"The disappointment about it was seeing an authentic lifestyle become showbusiness," says Robert Greenfield. "The lifestyle died, but the Stones were able to convert it into what the audience wanted. People said, 'We don't want to live like this anymore. We're going to cut our hair and go back to work. We're going to pay \$600 to see The Who.'"

If this meant The Rolling Stones were simply becoming avatars for a generation that had turned revolt into a leisure pursuit, where could one find the truth of their rock'n'roll? Perhaps the answer lay in Robert Frank's film canisters.

The closer you looked, though, the more it seemed that there was more to Frank's vérité than first appeared.

Bobby Keys in June 1971, recording BB King's *BB King In London* album



Televisions did not fly from windows unbidden. Airborne orgies, it began to seem, did not start by themselves – even on a Rolling Stones tour.


"It was in Denver, man," says Bobby Keys. "One of the guys said, 'Do something rock'n'roll, man.' There was nothing there but a TV set. OK, we'll just heave this home appliance out of the window. I kind of regret doing it. It seems I'm remembered more for that than what I've done musically."

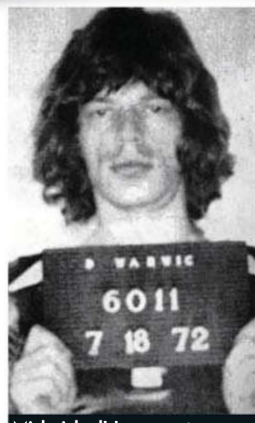
"The thing that's kind of shocking, is that they stage that incident where they bring the groupies on the plane," says Robert Greenfield. "I think it was Robert Frank's idea, though Mick agreed to it. Back then this was really heresy: if you want vérité you just open your camera, you don't create events. It's a further indication of what rock'n'roll had been for the previous 10 years, and what it was becoming. Everything is organised, everything is co-ordinated, controlled."

In the opening credits, Robert Frank seemed to acknowledge as much, with a disclaimer saying, "Except for the musical numbers, the events... are fictitious." Still, his film caught an essential

moment in the Stones' career: a parting of the ways that would lead one faction to Studio 54 and high society, the other into addiction, the threat of prison, nearly to death.

At the Tate Modern Robert Frank retrospective in 2004, Jagger's own print of *Cocksucker Blues* was shown, and sold out all its screenings. It has never been officially released.

On his return from the tour, while work was beginning on editing the footage he had helped shoot, Daniel Seymour detoxed from his heroin addiction and sold his New York loft. He travelled with his girlfriend to Florida and bought a boat, the *Imamou*, which he sailed to the French Caribbean. Since May 1973, his whereabouts have been unknown. 



Mick nicked! Jagger gets detained at Warwick, RI airport

MICK SPEAKS!

"IT'S EASY TO LAUGH NOW..."

With a new Rolling Stones film out and a greatest hits album due next month, MICK JAGGER speaks to *Uncut* about the band's early run-ins with the press, scrapping on trains, and updates us on two brand new Stones songs

Interview: Michael Bonner

WHAT DID YOU want to achieve with *Crossfire Hurricane*? It's a big leap of faith choosing the director, 'cos I'm not going to sit there in LA telling him what to do. It's not my job and I'm too close to the material. If you're making a film that's got lots of you in it, you've got to let someone contribute their ideas. You're gonna chip in comments, but not sit there overseeing the minutiae. Obviously, you say, "Oh, I love that bit..." But they always end up being too long at the start and unmanageable, mostly.

The film covers 1962-1981. Why just focus on those years? We didn't have enough time. We'd have needed another six months to go up to the present. I was



Jagger in 2005 and right, the Stones in 1963

disappointed we weren't going to do the whole story, but Brett [*Morgen, director*] was more interested in the early history. If we want to do a second part, then we can.

Keep something in your back pocket for later? Exactly.

What stories from the '62-'81 period appealed most to you? One is how the band made a breakthrough in the early days. How they saw themselves, how people thought they should be positioned, how much was a set-up, how much of that was pure chance. The ups and downs, the successes and failures, the buffets of outside and inside influence. How you

made it through to the other side. It's not an upward graph! It's got downward bits.

Has watching the film made you nostalgic for a particular period in The Rolling Stones' history? You have a laugh at some of the footage, but you get over it when you've seen it quite a few times. You've got to take a step back, which is easy to say but not always easy to do, and start referring to yourself in the third person. "Take that bit of Mick out, put that bit in here, then leave that until later."

Do you have a favourite "Mick" in the film? There are some pretty funny Micks in there. The very young one is so odd. One minute, he's completely there, the next he says something so stupid... I suppose you're watching yourself getting used to dealing with the media. Mostly, when you see yourself in these clips, you're either being interviewed or on stage. On stage, you can kind of control things, but it was quite hard dealing with those media people. It's easy to laugh now and say, "What did I say that for?" But people used to say the stupidest things then, compared to now. It was idiotic...

It was all new territory to bands, back then. Now everyone's media trained to within an inch of their life...

Yes, exactly. So it's very naïve, the press people trying to be clever, but they're pretty idiotic, and we respond in quite idiotic ways, and rise to the bait and come off with a few good replies. It's mostly quite combative. It makes you remember how antagonistic some people were.

In the film you say, "If you've got heroes, you've got an anti-hero, so it's good to have an actor who can play the part." At what part do you think it stopped being an act and became real? Or it was real, and then it became an act. There was so much media scrutiny. You're finding your feet, being questioned in very odd ways and you have to try to

protect yourself, to keep yourself a bit shrouded. People were very, very hard hitting. It wasn't a tough life, but you had to be on your guard.

Are you comfortable watching yourself?

I don't enjoy it that much, to be honest [laughs]. I wouldn't play it over and over. I wouldn't say I'm jumping up and down every time I see myself going, "Yeah, you're great! You look fantastic! Why did you wear that jacket? The check tweed?"

Tweed is in this season, Mick. I got a new check tweed jacket the other week... It's always a bit cringey, but there are some very funny moments.

Is there anything particularly that stands out to you? We're fighting this guy on a train. Not physically, but battling this guy. Then Brian says something about Georgia. It's a kind of a Punch & Judy thing... everyone's having a go at him. All in this very tight compartment. Hilarious. It's hard to believe you'd put yourself in that position, of having this guy in your face like that. Why? Who convinced you it was a good idea? It's very funny.

Were there any topics you found it difficult to address in the film? We did a lot of interviews with Brett, and like all film directors, he brought up things he thought would get a reaction. But you weren't on live TV, you had time to bat them off or delay your answer. But he didn't hold back, just because it's our film. There were a lot of moments. In the end, I answered them all, either truthfully or untruthfully. As you would.

Moving on to GRRR!, when you put together a compilation album is it always obvious to you which tracks will be on there? Or do you look on some songs afresh and think – yes, that one should definitely be included this time? It's not always completely obvious. This is available in three versions. The two-CD, 24-track version. Then there's a long version and a very long version. The 24-song one is a bit obvious, the slightly expanded one gets a few less obvious things in, and then the 50-track version gets a few oddball things in it. That's quite a nice package. And then there's the two tracks we recorded last month.

Yes, "Doom And Gloom" and "One Last Shot". What can we expect from those? They're both quite up-tempo rockers. "Doom And Gloom" is a bit faster. We recorded them in Paris in a few days then mixed them in L.A. I hope you like them. They're quite spirited, which is what you want, quite full of energy. Can I sing them to you? [laughs – starts going up and down a scale – there is some kind of singing – more laughter]

How do the Stones write these days? These two were done separately. We came together to do this very quickly. Keith said, "I've got this one song I think you're gonna like." I said, "Well, how fast is it?" It's sort of medium fast. So I thought I'll pick one more up-tempo. I didn't think a ballad would be suitable. It needed to be two energetic songs. It was a good process, in the studio, it was easy and fun. No hanging about, which is good.

How has songwriting changed for you over the years? You can write songs in a lot of different ways. You can write songs sitting waiting for a

"There are some pretty funny Micks in the film. The very young one is so odd!"

JAGGER

train on the back of an envelope, then you can put it to music on your own. Or you can sit down with Keith and have nothing, and I'll just fill in the verses or I can play a song to Keith on a guitar or a piano or just sing it and ask if he's got suggestions. As many permutations as you can think of, really.

Do you have a preferred way of working? I like doing it all different ways. If I get an idea for a song after I get off the phone with you, I'm not going to wait to have someone to work with, I'm going to sit down and finish it. But then I might sit down with Keith for a session where you start from scratch, trying to write a song from nothing. As a writer, you keep writing all the time. I don't live anywhere near Keith, so I don't have time to sit



down and write with him unless we make writing dates. When we were on the road all the time, we had a lot of time to do that. But we're not like that any more, so we don't do it.

Talking of dates. Any plans to tour, or at least play some shows? I think we're going to do some dates this year, and very soon we'll be trying to firm them up. Ask Ronnie, he'll tell you [laughs].

Any idea when and where they're likely to be? Well, it's going to be this year! We're in October, so it has to be quite soon.

Keith recently published his autobiography, as you've been asked to do on several occasions. Do you think the time will come when you'll want to write your own account? No, I don't think so... I'd have to do it again! I was offered a huge sum of money... I don't think so at the moment. ☹

Crossfire Hurricane will air on BBC2 in November, with a DVD and Blu-ray out early 2013. GRRR! is out Nov 12 on Universal Music/ABKCO Music & Records

EYEWITNESS!

"CHARLIE SAID, 'MICK'S GOING TO HATE THIS...'"

Director Brett Morgen talks Crossfire Hurricane. Plus! The secrets of the Stones' May rehearsals revealed!

"I WAS APPROACHED by the band via Mick last October. He was interested in making a movie as part of the 50th anniversary festivities. They wanted to do something that felt like a movie, and the only real dictate was they didn't want it to be a bunch of guys sitting around in armchairs discussing the past. There have been a lot of documentaries that the Stones have participated in. But there haven't been a lot about the Stones story. Almost all of them are concert films or about a very specific moment in time.

"It's the story of these seven gentlemen who were in The Rolling Stones, and how they were launching into the world and how they adapted, over the course of the first 20 years. The first interview was in January this year, and the last interviews were probably in July. Each of the guys are pretty different. I did two days with Mick Taylor, three days with Charlie, four or five days with Bill, six days with Keith, 10 or 14 with Mick. I found Keith knows his narrative very well, maybe as he's written a memoir recently. I walked into this process thinking that Mick would be the most challenging in terms of dredging up the past. In fact, all of his bandmates said that to me. Charlie said, 'Oh, Mick's going to hate this...' But I found that particularly in discussing the early

Morgen: "Mick and Keith are just very different"



years, he was really excited. We did, I think, 14 interviews, each one lasting at least two hours. I also filmed them rehearsing in May in New Jersey. It was Ronnie, Mick, Keith, Charlie and Chuck Leavell on keys and Don Was filling in on bass. It's not in the movie, unfortunately. Seeing them in rehearsals is not the way

they feel best represents them. For me, as a fan, it was the greatest moment of my career. They went into 'All Down The Line'. They hadn't played together for six or seven years, and so someone would mention the name of a song, say 'Gimme Shelter', and they would go and throw on the album version or an old live version just to remind themselves of how the song went, then they'd break into it.

"How are Mick and Keith getting on currently? Musically, they get along. They always have. Mick and Keith are as different as any two men I've ever met, but they share the same ear. All the public perceptions of their differences are rather true. They've been under the microscope for 50 fucking years so there's no mystery there. They're just very different people."



CH-CH-CH-CH-CHANGES

Art Garfunkel

"Artie, you crazy?" Paul Simon's old sparring partner navigates his life in pictures. Still keen on following up *Bridge Over Troubled Water*, it seems...



NEW YORK, 1957

There's Tom & Jerry, we're 16 years old. I have memories of being a high school senior then, coming from Queens into Manhattan to the studio. These are the Brill Building days. We had signed with Big Records, and we had "Hey Schoolgirl" in the charts, and the idea we were a team was new to us, and it was a kick. I wasn't ambitious. I just thought we were trying to be popular in high school, and win the pretty girls.



HOLLYWOOD, 1967

We are now Simon & Garfunkel. We're happening now. That's very much the two of us. We're communing about the right way to present a song. It really shows the vibe between Paul and Artie. At this point we were definitely each other's main buzz. Here we're trying to do these poignant folk songs that give goosebumps in a television studio. We tried to stick to things we knew, and television wasn't one of them.



ENGLAND, 1968

That's the heart of our salad days. Nice that we were travelling first-class. Oh, we were surrounded by acceptance and sales and money and opportunity, and chicks came to your hotel room. I'm in that super-lucky part of life, and I took all that winner's energy and just was a workaholic in that second half of the '60s. I didn't get to party until years later. You'll have to ask Paul how he dealt with it – I can help you with his phone number...

PIAZZA NAVONA, ROME, 1970

That's the brilliant director Mike Nichols. I am playing Captain Nately in *Catch-22*, an innocent who gets involved with a prostitute, and this is between takes of Nately's whore sitting on my lap. I slid into acting as a life experience. I said I was disappointed with my performances? Don't listen to me – I have very high standards. I think much of life is mediocre, me and everything. When I was young, I expected more of adulthood. So I'm always critical, and disappointed.



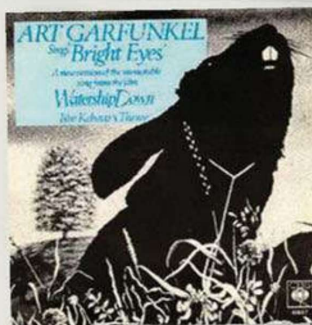
URIS THEATRE, NEW YORK, 1975

The group had diverged – I didn't say "split" – around 1970. I delighted in Simon & Garfunkel. I still think they have a follow-up in them to *Bridge Over Troubled Water*. In '75 Paul and I both had hit albums. I had *Breakaway*, he had *Still Crazy After All These Years*. I wonder what we're winning an award for? Anyway, the Grammys are a TV show. It's not God certifying how good you are. I know David Bowie better now, we ski'd together. And John [Lennon] was fantastic. He had a way of talking to you where... well no wonder he's the most popular human being on earth! He lights up the next man's ego brilliantly.



VIENNA, 1979

Nic Roeg's *Bad Timing*. Harvey Keitel is questioning me on why my girlfriend took an overdose. Nic Roeg asked for a semi-insanity from me. My game was to be tighter and tighter, and more secretly mad. When it was over, I felt wracked and ruined. "Nobody talk to me, I need a week or two..." I lost my girlfriend, Laurie Bird, at home, through suicide right around that time. I never got to feeling after that film, I was blitzed out by the events of life.



BRIGHT EYES, 1978

I'm very proud of "Bright Eyes", it's good singing. The producers were Mike Batt, and the great Goddard Lieberson of Columbia Records, who really turned me on as a singer. The idea that a lot of death's going on in that cartoon was disturbing, huh? People have to be very tender when they introduce a new person to the idea that we die someday.



THE CONCERT IN CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK, 1981

That's not far from my house. To have filled it up with half a million people is to be so unbelievably happy. But I whispered to Paul as we walked offstage, "Ahh, we blew it..." He said, "Artie, you crazy? They loved us." He was referring to entertainment. I was referring to musical exactitude. "Ah, if only the music gods were going through us and we were spot-on beautiful, we would've taken them to the moon..." So that's where I'm at.



ON TOUR, 2004

Suddenly we're old guys. What's weird about this is that the Everly Brothers are way better than we will ever be. If you want to write US history from George Washington, if you get to music, put the Everlys way up there. I have an ear for what they do, they pulled me into this whole music thing when I was a teenager. Every vowel-sound is an inspiration to me.

NEW YORK, 2009

Flight Of The Conchords. The manager called me up: "Maybe you don't watch a lot of TV but this is a hip show, give it a try. They're going to do a spoof on one of the lads trying to be Artie Garfunkel, so you're going to shock him by showing up." What can I say, except how old and wizened I look? Whether I enjoy comedy depends on the material. Like the songs I sing.



The Singer by Art Garfunkel is out now on Sony

THE CLEVEREST BAND IN BRITAIN

Words: David Cavanagh

From their studio in Stockport, the four original members of 10cc devised their blend of pristine pop and sophisticated humour. We learn about their fabulous inventions, foot-long telexes from Richard Branson and a reincarnated pharaoh: “Mad schemes... crazy stuff!”

AUTUMNAL BROWNS AND greens bathe the land around Lol Creme's house. He built it in 1976, a few miles outside Leatherhead in Surrey, with his share of the money that rolled in from 10cc. Creme left the band that same year, and has felt no urge to rejoin, but he's never sold “the house that 10cc built” – not even when he moved to Los Angeles in 1989 to direct a film and stayed for 14 years.

Creme is short, gnome-like and artistic. The walls of his wood-panelled den are lined with his own paintings; as an art student, he dreamed of being a Disney animator. Now 65, he limits his musical activities to a part-time band with Trevor Horn, The Producers. When Creme reminisces about 10cc, he does so in the excitable language of a boy. “Mad schemes... doing all sorts of crazy stuff... the most fantastic blast of my life!” Creme, though not the leader, sang early hits like “Rubber Bullets” and “The Dean And I”, in a cute voice that belied the songs' complexity. And boy were they complex. They sounded like musicals written by comedy writers. Journalists dubbed 10cc ‘The Cleverest Band In Britain’. Creme insists they were “satirical rather than cynical. I wouldn't like anyone to think of me as a cynic.”

Graham Gouldman, co-writer of “Art For Art's Sake”, “I'm Not In Love” and “I'm Mandy Fly Me”, finds a table in a Marylebone High Street patisserie and orders fresh orange juice. It's the afternoon rush. Trays crash. Babies scream. Gouldman is 66, but has a youthful sharpness, often answering questions before they're out of my mouth. “We weren't a pop group,” he stresses. “But it wasn't a rock band either. There was never a band like 10cc – in the same way that there's never been a band like Led Zeppelin.” He hopes their 40th anniversary boxset, *Tenology*, which includes discs of B-sides and album tracks, will help to reverse a



“We were
a self-
contained
unit. It was
what I
would call
a dream
band”

GRAHAM GOULDMAN

tendency to regard 10cc as a middle-of-the-road oldies act.

Kevin Godley, who played drums and sang like an angel even when he was warning of cannibals lurking in trees (“Hotel”), is walking his dog on the beach at Kilcoole in County Wicklow. It's a quiet evening and there's nobody around. Godley lives in nearby Newtownmountkennedy (“a pain in the arse to spell”) where he's been developing his new invention, an app called WholeWorldBand which allows musicians to collaborate on an audiovisual platform. Godley's come a long way from 10cc, but shares Gouldman's irritation that their legacy isn't quite what it should be.

“I feel strongly that musically we were damn good,” he says. “It annoys me that we're never in the list of names of bands who were influential in the '70s. Roxy Music, Bowie, Queen. Where the hell are 10cc?”

BANDS COME TOGETHER for different reasons. Similar tastes. Friends from school. Adverts in magazines. But only one band got together after making a Leslie Crowther Christmas single and writing a song for



Denim dreampop from 10cc in 1975: (l-r) Lol Creme, Eric Stewart, Graham Gouldman, Kevin Godley

Manchester City that went “*we are the lads who are playing to win*”. And those were only two commissions undertaken in 1970-’72 by the “four-man-production-unit-stroke-house-band” at Strawberry Studios in Stockport. Among these projects, the future 10cc made a single for Freddie & The Dreamers (“Susan’s Tuba”), which topped the French charts, and played on a prog-rock album, *Space Hymns*, by Ramases on the Vertigo label. “Ramases was a very odd guy,” remembers Godley. “He was a central heating salesman from Sheffield who believed he was the reincarnation of an Egyptian pharaoh.”

By the time Neil Sedaka, impressed by their work on his 1972 album *Solitaire*, advised them to become a permanent band, the Strawberry four – Godley, Creme, Gouldman and guitarist Eric Stewart – already had 32 years’ worth of music industry experience between them. Stewart had been a star in The Mindbenders (“A Groovy



Kind Of Love”). Gouldman had written hits for The Yardbirds (“For Your Love”) and Herman’s Hermits (“No Milk Today”). Godley and Creme had been a psychedelic duo (The Yellow Bellow Room Boom), a folk duo (Frabjoy & Runcible Spoon) and two-thirds of a folk-rock trio (Doctor Father). And then there was the 1970 No 2 hit “Neanderthal Man”, credited to Hotlegs, written in minutes when Stewart, learning his way around a new desk at Strawberry, instructed Godley to play a steady drum beat while Creme made up a silly song about cavemen. “The glue for 10cc was Strawberry,” says Gouldman, who, like Stewart, was a partner in the business. “Strawberry was where we lived. Go to the studio. Come home. Go to bed. Wake up. Back to the studio.” They were fully autonomous and insulated from outside influences. They produced and engineered their own work, presenting it to their label as a *fait accompli*. They



life is a minestrone
channel swimmer

TURN UP THE VOLUME

HOW 10cc GOT THEIR NAME

Everyone knows how 10cc got their name. Right? Wrong.

THE NAME 10cc, says Jonathan King, who thought of it, “came to me in a dream. In the dream, a band on my label had the No 1 record in the albums and singles charts in *Billboard* magazine. They were called 10cc. The reason they were called 10cc, in my dream, was so that I could see their name easily when I looked at the charts. Nobody else had a name starting with two numbers. Anyway, I called the band up the next day and said, ‘Your name is 10cc.’ They said, ‘No problem.’ So 10cc were born. All other stories are false.”

In a 1973 *Rolling Stone* interview, Graham Gouldman casually mentioned that 9cc is the amount of semen in the average ejaculation. Although the *Rolling Stone* article quoted Lol Creme giving the true story (King’s dream), the ‘semen’ explanation – that 10cc’s name was a sly boast of sexual prowess – gradually took hold. Even Creme has been known to relate the ‘semen’ version to interviewers. However, not only is it wrong, but it’s also medically suspect. The average ejaculation is closer to 3cc.



Performing “Life Is A Minestrone” on *Top Of The Pops*, April 10, 1975

→ wrote in duos, never alone. Two would present a song and the other two would be constructive critics and editors. Creme: “Each song was like a lab experiment.” Godley: “You learn, the four of you, how to recognise the germ of an idea. The challenge is to turn that into a full-blown disease.”

The most prolific duos were Godley-Creme and Gouldman-Stewart, but that left plenty of room for partner-swapping. Stewart-Creme, for example, wrote the infectious “Life Is A Minestrone” (on *The Original Soundtrack*) and Gouldman-Creme wrote “The Worst Band In The World” (*Sheet Music*), about a band so jaded and decadent that they refuse to meet their own roadies. The Zappaesque acidity (“We’ve never done a day’s work in our lives and our records sell in zillions”) was aimed at no-one, the writers claim today, but Creme admits to having Eric Clapton in mind when Godley-Creme wrote “Old Wild Men” (*Sheet Music*), a song about decrepit rockers playing on tragically into old age.

“I could never tell who wrote what,” says Jonathan King, who signed 10cc to his label UK in 1972, “and that’s why they were so great. All four of them were talented and interesting. Kevin was quite cynical. Lol was very creative and his positivity played off Kevin’s cynicism. Graham was a good writer and a friendly chap. And Eric, who was the most proficient in the studio, was very sweet and by far the quietest. The four of them together had a great chemistry.”

Creme feels that Stewart was probably their unofficial leader, as he “had the gravitas” and manned the desk. Stewart also began singing most of the singles around 1975. Godley, who completely denies that Stewart was the leader, explains how a song’s lead vocalist would be chosen. “It was a democratic process. Regardless of who wrote the song, we each had a go. If it wasn’t good enough, you’d hear ‘next!’ in your headphones. Then someone else would have



a go until we pinpointed the best performer.”

Just as the subjects of “The Worst Band In The World” remained remote from their public (“It irrigates my heart with greed to know that you adore me”), 10cc gave no thought to a fanbase. They began their career as The Beatles ended theirs: as a

studio band without an audience to relate to. Godley: “It sounds selfish, but the idea of how other people reacted to 10cc was never part of the equation.” Gouldman: “We were a self-contained unit. It was what I would call a dream band.”

THE WITTILY INTREPID travelogue known as *Sheet Music* was, they agree, their masterpiece. In 1974, Jonathan King promoted it to the press as the rightful heir to *Sgt Pepper*, and he hasn’t changed his mind 38 years later. Setting themselves Beatlesque targets of versatility, 10cc moved from pop to calypso to flamenco, with imagery that dazzled: a Hollywood starlet in the mezzanine “on the arm of a dumb marine”; a pyramid boasting its own cinema; a bomb secreted in “a cargo of escargots”. “It was the perfect moment,” says Godley of *Sheet Music*. “There was just the right amount of naïveté. After that, I think, we almost knew too much.” *Sheet Music*, like all their records, was beautifully produced. Gouldman remembers being determined to match, or even better, the finest Steely Dan productions across the Atlantic. There were some parallels between the two

“People need emotion... I think we out-clevered ourselves”

KEVIN GODLEY

bands. Both wore their eloquence proudly. Both preferred studios to touring. Neither had any interest in image. Godley can’t quite believe that 10cc (a band with two art students) never thought of designing a stage set. He and Creme put it all into the writing, be it convoluted puns or insane leaps of logic. They brought a love of MGM musicals to lines like



Stewart in the hot seat at Strawberry Studios

"Hey sis, one kiss and I was heaven bound" ("The Dean And I") and to their bravura description of Lassie as "the pup that vaudeville threw up" ("Somewhere In Hollywood").

After *Sheet Music*, and with 90 per cent of a new album in the can, 10cc found themselves at the centre of a bidding war. They agreed to sign to Virgin, giving their managers power of attorney before flying to the Caribbean for a holiday. Landing in Saint Lucia, Creme and Stewart were greeted with a foot-long telex from an enraged Richard Branson; their managers had reneged on the agreement and signed to Phonogram while 10cc were on the plane. Creme is subdued as he recalls the deals and counterdeals that bought and sold 10cc in 1975. "You felt like a lump of meat," he says. "To this day I'm furious. I'll never forget reading that telex in that little airport at Saint Lucia, and phoning Richard to apologise."

Branson missed out on *The Original Soundtrack*, but more importantly he could have had "I'm Not In Love", one of the



Lol Creme, wearing a Strawberry Studios T-shirt, 1975

biggest hits of the decade. The song ("about denial," says Gouldman) was initially a bossa nova. Godley and Creme, the non-writers, critiqued it as over-bland. Creme: "It sounded like lame Bacharach." He and Godley had the crucial ideas of using a Moog synth as a bass drum and composing a backing track of voice loops. Creme: "Then it came to life. Seriously came to life." Godley: "The vocal wash showed off the song's haunting qualities rather than its cheesy qualities. Lol and I dragged Eric and Graham into our exploratory zone and it became one of those magical sessions."

The Original Soundtrack had a cinematic sweep as it strolled along Parisian boulevards and Hollywood back lots. "We're gone with the wind on the *Orient Express* to join the *Magnificent Seven*," sang

Gouldman on "The Film Of My Love". But there were signs of overreaching. Godley and Creme's opening suite, "Une Nuit À Paris", lasted almost nine minutes in its desperation to cram in every French gag in the book. They'd wanted it to cover a whole side. The *NME* review, sensing a cold detachment in the lyrics, accused 10cc of having "an unrelenting hatred for anything outside of Strawberry Studios". It was a problem Godley believes they should have foreseen.

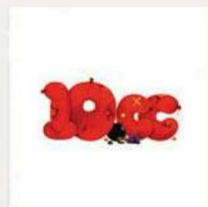
"We were always perceived as clever, smart, but not very emotional," he notes. "Bruce Springsteen was taking off at the time, and I remember saying, 'Why's he so fucking special? He sounds like music used to sound. We sound like the future!' But of course we'd missed the point. People need the emotional part. I think we out-clevered ourselves in the end."

GODLEY AND CREME left 10cc in 1976 after the fourth album, *How Dare You!*. Excited by their Gizmotron invention (see panel over page), they found it hard to refocus on 10cc. Godley

PENNIE SMITH; GARY MERRIN

HOW TO BUY

THE BEST OF 10cc...



10cc

(UK, 1973)

A debut album of spoofs, '50s references, 'death disc' parodies and witty Americana. Contains the hits "Donna", "Rubber Bullets" and "The Dean And I".

7/10



SHEET MUSIC

(UK, 1974)

Masterful follow-up from a band hitting their stride. Perfect blend of humour and pop sophistication. Includes their most scintillating epic, "Somewhere In Hollywood".

9/10



THE ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK

(MERCURY, 1975)

From their imperial phase, a Cecil B DeMille of an album. Its vast horizons take us from "I'm Not In Love" to the proto-metal "The Second Sitting For The Last Supper". Faint hints of smugness here and there, though.

8/10



HOW DARE YOU!

(MERCURY, 1976)

Last album recorded by the original lineup. Uncharacteristically subdued in places, but features terrific singles "Art For Art's Sake" and "I'm Mandy Fly Me", plus the barmy vocal tour de force "I Wanna Rule The World".

8/10

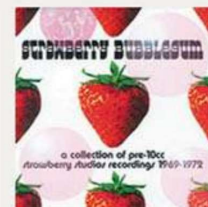


DECEPTIVE BENDS

(MERCURY, 1977)

Gouldman and Stewart soldier on. Impressive at times (notably 11-minute closer "Feel The Benefit"), but elsewhere they struggle to fill the surreal shoes of departed Godley and Creme.

6/10

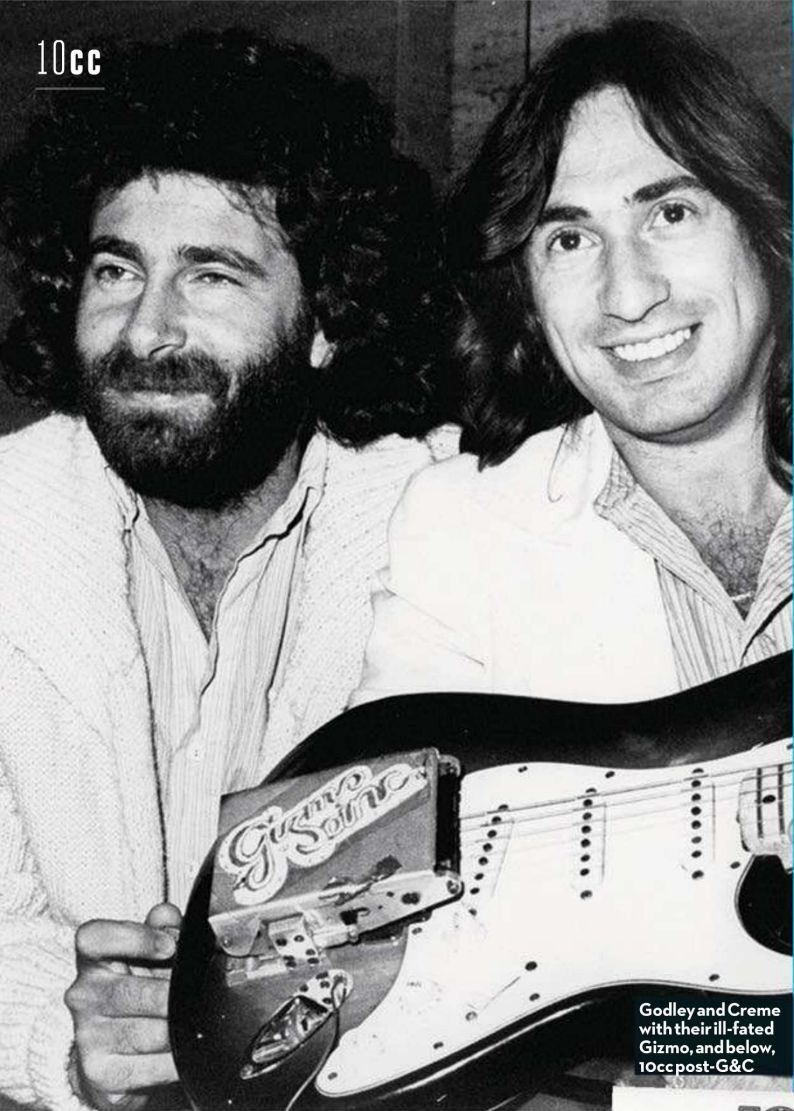


STRAWBERRY BUBBLEGUM

(CASTLE, 2003)

Compilation of pre-10cc projects recorded at Strawberry, including football songs, unashamed bubblegum cash-ins and the gorgeous "Umbopo" by Doctor Father.

6/10



Godley and Creme
with their ill-fated
Gizmo, and below,
10cc post-G&C

THE GIZMO

"The Gizmo drove me and Lol away from 10cc. But we wanted to find out what it was capable of..." - Kevin Godley

IN 1974, INSPIRED by the rotations of an electric toothbrush, Godley and Creme invented the Gizmotron, a device that bowed all six strings of a guitar, in theory making the sound of an instant orchestra. They believed it would become a must-have accessory for the world's top guitarists. Frank Zappa asked to see a demonstration. Lennon wanted one. So did McCartney. Creme talks us through the invention process: "A rubber washer on the end of the drill... gingerly we let Kevin approach my guitar with it... it rubbed the strings like a bow... I had a vision of a corrugated wheel extruding the width of a guitar bridge."

The pair had a prototype made by Manchester University students, began recording a Gizmo demonstration album, *Consequences*, and found a manufacturer, Musitronics in

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New Jersey. But Creme claims Musitronics neglected to ensure Gizmos fitted all guitar bridges. Easily affected by temperature, they were difficult to play live – and few guitarists recorded with them. The best-known use is Jimmy Page's intro to Led Zeppelin's "In The Evening". Lennon used one, Creme has heard, but he's never been able to identify the song. "When it worked well, it could sound like a cello. You wouldn't know the difference." 10cc used it only three times, including "Old Wild Men" and "Brand New Day".

Triple album *Consequences* finally emerged, wildly over-budget, in 1977. After that, admits Creme, "I never wanted to see a bloody Gizmo again."

recalls feeling disillusioned at a pre-production meeting for the album when someone said: "OK, we need a couple of romantic songs, a couple of fast ones, a couple of funny ones and a long, complicated one." There was a new ingredient in 10cc's chemistry: personal tension. "We started getting on each other's tits," Godley admits. "It became a bit like a marriage."

A disused theatre in Dorking, conveniently close to their new homes in Surrey, was bought by the band and converted into a studio: Strawberry South. But the original lineup never got to record there. Godley: "We didn't particularly want to cut our ties with the others, but we had no choice. The shit had hit the fan."

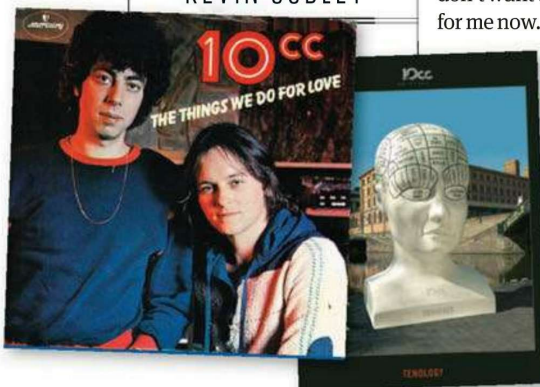
Gouldman: "In retrospect Eric and I should have said to them, 'Take as long as you like to do your own thing. We'll survive.' But there was pressure. We were on a cycle of recording, rehearsing and touring. It wasn't easy to just change the plans." As Godley and Creme walked away from a fortune – for the love of their Gizmo – Gouldman and Stewart made it clear that they'd be continuing as 10cc.

Since Stewart was already established in the public's mind as the primary singer ("I'm Not In Love", "Art For Art's Sake"), relaunching the band with a new lineup was an easier transition than it might have been. Stewart later remarked of the fifth album, *Deceptive Bends*: "The music was simpler than some of the previous 10cc albums. It was far more direct, streamlined and positive." *Deceptive Bends* was 10cc's highest-charting album to that point, even yielding a worldwide hit ("The Things We Do For Love") that eventually outsold "I'm Not In Love". Gouldman: "Eric and I were on a mission with *Deceptive Bends*. People were very cleverly saying, 'Oh, you're only 5cc now.' Ha ha. Fucking genius. We felt we had to prove



"We didn't want to cut our ties with the others, but we had no choice"

KEVIN GODLEY



ourselves, and we did. But after the next album, *Bloody Tourists*, we lost the plot a bit."

Disaster happened when Stewart, who enjoyed driving fast on country roads, had a horrific crash in 1979 that left him blind in one eye and robbed him of some of his hearing. He needed a year off to recuperate. Gouldman acknowledges that 10cc's time had gone. Compared to the punk bands, their lyrical barbs seemed tame. The future imagined by Godley – in which 10cc would prove as influential as Bowie – would never come to pass. When the camp, theatrical bands of the '80s were looking for camp, theatrical bands of the '70s on which to model themselves, they paid no attention to a denim-clad quartet with a bearded drummer who wrote songs about witchdoctors.

Today, Gouldman and Stewart no longer speak. Stewart, who declined to be interviewed for this story, is "distressed", according to Creme, by Gouldman's insistence on touring under 10cc's name in recent years. Creme – Stewart's brother-in-law – wishes Gouldman would bill his band as 'Graham Gouldman & Friends'. But Gouldman isn't bothered. "People want an opportunity to listen to 10cc's music, and this is one way they can do it. I don't want to say anything about Eric. That's not relevant for me now. We don't have anything to do with each other."

Godley and Creme are also estranged. The duo split in 1989 after a groundbreaking partnership as video directors. It was Godley's decision; Creme took it badly. But when Gouldman's lineup of 10cc played the Albert Hall in May, one ex-member did appear. It was Godley, singing – ironically – "Old Wild Men", a song about rockstars finding new ways to play old music in 40 years' time. ☺

Tenology is out November 19 on UMC/Mercury

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AMY RAPHAEL, NME 1991

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THE MAKING OF...

Frankie Teardrop

SUICIDE

In 1977, the dark pairing of Martin Rev and Alan Vega unleash a hissing, guitarless epic of domestic slaughter: "We were breaking a lot of sacred rules," says Rev today

DOMINATING MOST OF the album's second side, "Frankie Teardrop" is the dark, pulsating heart of Suicide's self-titled debut of 1977, the most extreme statement on a record many listeners already found too extreme. Formed in New York City in 1969 from a background of avant-garde jazz (Martin Rev) and visual art (Alan Vega), they were against the grain from the first. Their early shows were as much confrontational performance art as music performance, Vega attacking the walls of venues with a bike chain, when he wasn't himself being attacked by the audience.

In retrospect, their two-guys-and-some-machines set-up drafted the analogue blueprint for music's digital future, but at the time people reacted as though they were assaulting the very spirit of rock'n'roll.

"We were breaking a lot of sacred rules," says Rev today. "The amount of people in a group, the instrumentation, the theatre of it. And, of course, the fact we were called Suicide."

"Frankie Teardrop", though, was the song that sent people over the edge. A hissing, two-note, proto-industrial nightmare, punctuated by Vega's cold-blooded shrieks, it's the 10-minute-plus tale of a 20-year-old factory worker who can't afford to feed his family, cracks up, and kills them and himself: Bob Dylan's "Hollis Brown", reimagined by Travis Bickle.

To best hear the effect it had on audiences, track down the live "23 Minutes Over Brussels" EP, recorded when Suicide toured Europe with Elvis Costello in 1978: "Frankie" sends the already restive crowd to riot. "Yeah," says Vega. "It got the reaction it was supposed to get. Frankie, Frankie." **DAMIEN LOVE**

ALAN VEGA: "Frankie Teardrop" always got an extreme reaction. There was nothing in the world like it. It came about the way it did because of Marty Rev's music. The music was such a strong thing, it all just had to go in that direction. It was a deeper, darker thing, because the music got really insane and I wanted to do something that went there.

MARTIN REV: Before Suicide, I was doing a band called Reverend B, a selection of anywhere up to nine or ten improvising musicians. We played around New York, and did two shows at The Museum Of Living Artists, a space near Broadway, and that's where I met Alan, in 1969. I would return there as a haven to get off the streets at night, and Alan was living in there. Alan was definitely on a very serious edge, the way he looked, what he was doing. He was looking for something. We were in the same place: when I first met him, he had his ear inside this little two-track tape recorder, trying to hear the feedback. He was already working with a guitarist. They were both visual artists, experimenting with sound. I had drumsticks, and started to drum on the floor. That's how Suicide started. Originally, it was a wall of sound. The words were essentially shouts or screams. Alan blew trumpet. I played drums with one hand and keyboard with the other. The guitar player left after about a year. By then, I was thinking strongly about a drum machine. I started hearing a new way to do sound. I was

KEY PLAYERS



Alan Vega
Vocals



Martin Rev
Keyboards,
drum machine



Marty Thau
Label owner,
co-producer



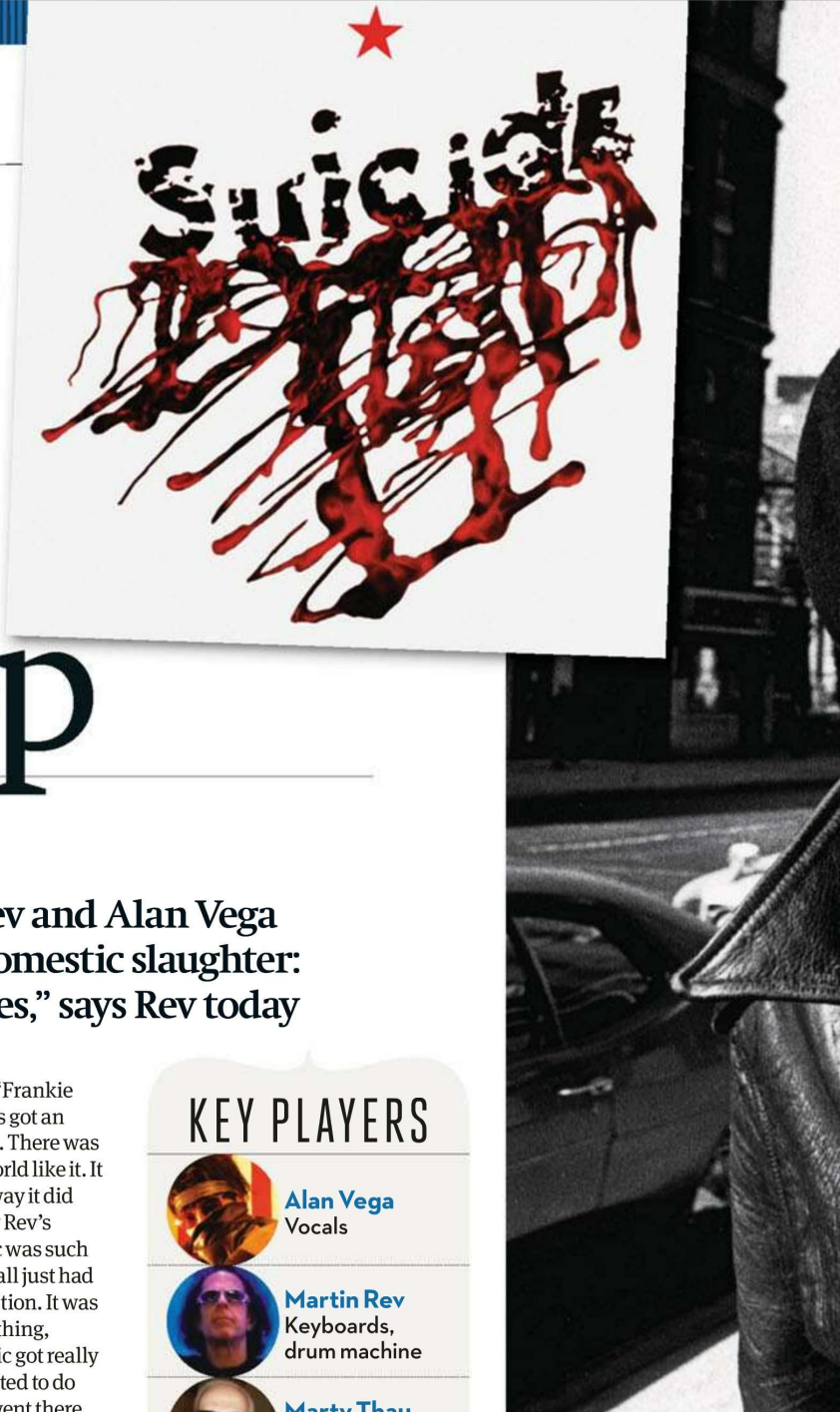
Craig Leon
Producer

familiar with drum machines not from rock, because they really weren't being used, but from very kitschy performers: guys you'd see at weddings and in hotel lounges. It was a different

space, a different dynamic. When I plugged in the drum machine, I heard it immediately.

MARTY THAU: In 1972, I was managing the New York Dolls, and established a residency for them at The Mercer Arts Center in Greenwich Village. I started booking other groups, and that's how I encountered Suicide. They were particularly outrageous. Alan would wear a black leather jacket with this big heavy chain around his arms and neck. He'd jump into the audience and get right up close to the most conventional-looking person he could spot, then sing right into their face to Rev's loud, droning keyboard. To the uninitiated, it was a frightening show.

CRAIG LEON: Suicide were actually the first New York band I saw when I first moved to the city, around 1972. It was amazing: Alan doing this whole James Brown thing, whipping people with chains. Rev had their sound down from the





Vega and Rev,
NYC, 1976

beginning: wiring everything through a radio amp and using the little rhythm box and distorting it.

REV: I wasn't hearing keyboards the way, say, Emerson Lake & Palmer did. I wasn't into filling in between other instruments. I was hearing an incredible amount of potential, new territory... feedback.

THAU: People hated Suicide.

LEON: People would throw rocks at them. They were much more extreme than the punk stuff. They weren't well-liked.

REV: Well, the Dolls always liked us. David Johansen was into it right away.

THAU: People didn't like that this was a band that didn't have guitars, didn't have drums, and had the effrontery to call themselves Suicide.

REV: It took six years before we got the chance to do the record. What we were doing was too radical to immediately be embraced. It's often

suggested we didn't have guitars due to some conceptual agenda, but there wasn't any of that. A guitar just didn't make sense with us. There was a clarity in what was coming out there that didn't need to go backwards.

THAU: I hadn't seen them for a while, then in 1976, I ran into Rev and he told me they were going to play Max's Kansas City. I went, and they were like Little Richard meets Iggy Pop meets

Mick Jagger in a dark alleyway someplace. I thought, gee, I better sign these guys, because I was getting ready to open Red Star Records.

VEGA: Going in to do the record seemed to happen over night. Jesus Christ, what a change it was to do it in the studio, after all those years playing live. I found it a

little difficult to adjust. But that studio was nice. Bruce Springsteen's amps lying around in the background.

REV: It was where Springsteen cut his first

albums, a 16-track place, an older board. That studio was a great experience, I loved it. Ultima, it was called. It was about an hour's drive out of New York, very suburban, leafy. Marty Thau would pick us up in a rented car and we'd drive up. It was visionary, especially after the tracks were done: to sit in the control room, get more and more bombed out of our minds, then drive back into the city at night. It was beautiful.

THAU: They were pretty intense in the studio. Alan was so wound up that he had to leave the control room, he couldn't just sit. He was a very nervous type at that moment. I guess it was the recording process. Although they had been around for a long time, they were inexperienced in that.

REV: In a way, though, the years of waiting had been good. It formulated our material. We had been doing the material live to a point where it had become really clear, really defined. So the album was a live album, essentially. However long the album is, that's basically how long it took to cut it.

THAU: We did all that album in four nights.

LEON: It's pretty much a live performance. The reverb, though, was

"It always got an
extreme reaction.
There's nothing in
the world like it"

ALAN VEGA



Suicide live at the Marquee, July 18, 1978

strong statement that stretched the audience beyond what they could recognise. I guess what happened is the whole thing just built up. We always did “Frankie” later in the set, and by that time the audience was crazy anyway.

VEGA: We always left it to last.

I never thought we could follow it. It was the last song we could do.

REV: You hear it on “23 Minutes Over Brussels”. The pure chaos starting on “Frankie” was the point of no return. “Frankie” broke the last straw.

THAU: When we released the album in the States, there was almost no reaction. Most people thought we were crazy. American radio didn’t want to touch it. We were getting volumes of press and great reviews internationally. In America – not a peep. It took years for people in the States to catch up. At the time, you had *Rolling Stone* calling it “puerile” and knocking hell out of it; only for them, years later, to list it among their 500 Greatest Albums Of All Time. Do

I feel vindicated about that today? Yes, I do.

REV: Alan and I were the Che and Castro of the American revolution. From the ground up, fighting the American machine. That was our energy. Mind you, the American Machine didn’t know anything about us.

VEGA: Things have changed. There isn’t a Frankie around today, I don’t think. There isn’t a factory worker like Frankie around so much today. I don’t do the song as often. I try not to, because I don’t think it really takes in the same thing it used to. But then again –

“Frankie” takes on a life of its own.

REV: I hear a lot of music, of course, that gives me memories. But funnily enough, Suicide doesn’t do that for me. It doesn’t take me back to that time in New York. Suicide is too direct, too upfront in terms of its expression. There’s an urgency there that goes forward. It doesn’t leave much time for nostalgia. When I hear the album it seems right up front, it seems right now. I don’t hear a New York that was. It’s a world that is.

VEGA: Times have changed. I think about that a lot. But, then again... Frankie lurks. I hear rumbles. Every now and then when we play, I’ll hear people chanting, “Frankie, Frankie...” They really want to hear it. And when we play it, it gets overwhelming again. “Frankie Teardrop” is a beautiful thing. It’s like a piece of metal stuck into the ground. People can step over it or ride over it or crash over it. But it’s still there. ☹

FACT FILE

• **Written by:** Martin Rev and Alan Vega

• **Performers:** Alan Vega (vocals), Martin Rev (keyboards and drum machine)

• **Producers:** Craig Leon and Marty Thau

• **Recorded at:** Ultima Sound, Blauvelt, New York

• **Released:** December 28, 1977

• **Label:** Red Star

➤ something I brought to the party a bit. I had just been in Jamaica, working with Lee ‘Scratch’ Perry and Bob Marley, and I was getting into dub. So between that and a Sun Records thing, I wanted all these repeat echoes on everything. One of my favourite albums was Can’s *Monster Movie*, and that was a role model, plus Jamaican dub, plus rockabilly echo, plus pitch feedback, sending in microphonic EQ to the echo on the reverb, and then bringing them all back. That process is what you get on “Frankie Teardrop” – a lot.

REV: “Frankie” definitely had its own flavour immediately. It was more epic in what it was trying, more descriptive, wider, compared with other tracks. But the words weren’t exactly the same. When we first went in, it was “Frankie Spaceman”. But somewhere in the session, Alan wanted to change the lyrics. He’d read a newspaper article, about a guy who couldn’t handle his economic situation and just cracked up. Out of that came “Frankie Teardrop”.

VEGA: I’d been doing this thing about Frankie The Detective and a space alien – but the more I worked on it, the less enamoured I was. Everything else sounded so good, my thing sounded just... secondary. But I always had crazy Frankie there, Frankie the killer, in the background. To get him up front took time and energy, and that was triggered by Rev’s music.

THAU: “Frankie” was really a political statement: 20-year-old Frankie can’t get a job,

can’t support his wife and kids, freaks out, kills them. Society has driven him to it. In the end, the statement is, “Rise up, we’re all Frankies.” We’re all under the thumb of those who control us. Rise up and say something about it.

LEON: Frankie was actually part one of a duo of songs. There was another called “Dominic Christ”, which didn’t make it onto a record until years later. It was like this mini horror opera, this slice of life, urban decay, ringing to the sounds of Alan’s screams.

VEGA: That fucking scream. Holy Christmas. That whole track took on a life of its own. I almost screamed myself out, almost wound up on the floor puking. I was seeing double by the time we left the studio. The whole thing was intense. That scream had a big effect on people. It was either a big turn on or a big turn off. Doing “Frankie” live after that record became really tough. I didn’t want to do it, and I knew I had to. It was hard. Gut-wrenching. But I knew it had to be like that.

REV: When we did that tour of Europe, “Frankie” did provoke a particular reaction. Just the intensity of it, the length. The lyrics, too. If anybody could hear them. I mean, all the songs were intense. But something like “Ghost Rider” or “Johnny” had a closer, more immediate connection with rock. “Frankie” was implying a

TIMELINE

Summer 1969: Vega and Rev meet at New York’s Museum Of Living Artists
November 1970: A three-piece lineup,

featuring guitarist Paul Liebgott, make their live debut at the Museum. Flyers promise “punk music”.
1976: Release home-

demo versions of “Rocket USA” and “Dream Baby Dream” as an independent 7”.
1977: Marty Thau signs Suicide to his Red Star

label. Cut in only four days, the album is released December 28
June 1978: Embark on a European tour supporting Elvis

Costello, then the UK with The Clash. At Glasgow’s Apollo, Vega narrowly avoids being hit by an axe thrown from the crowd



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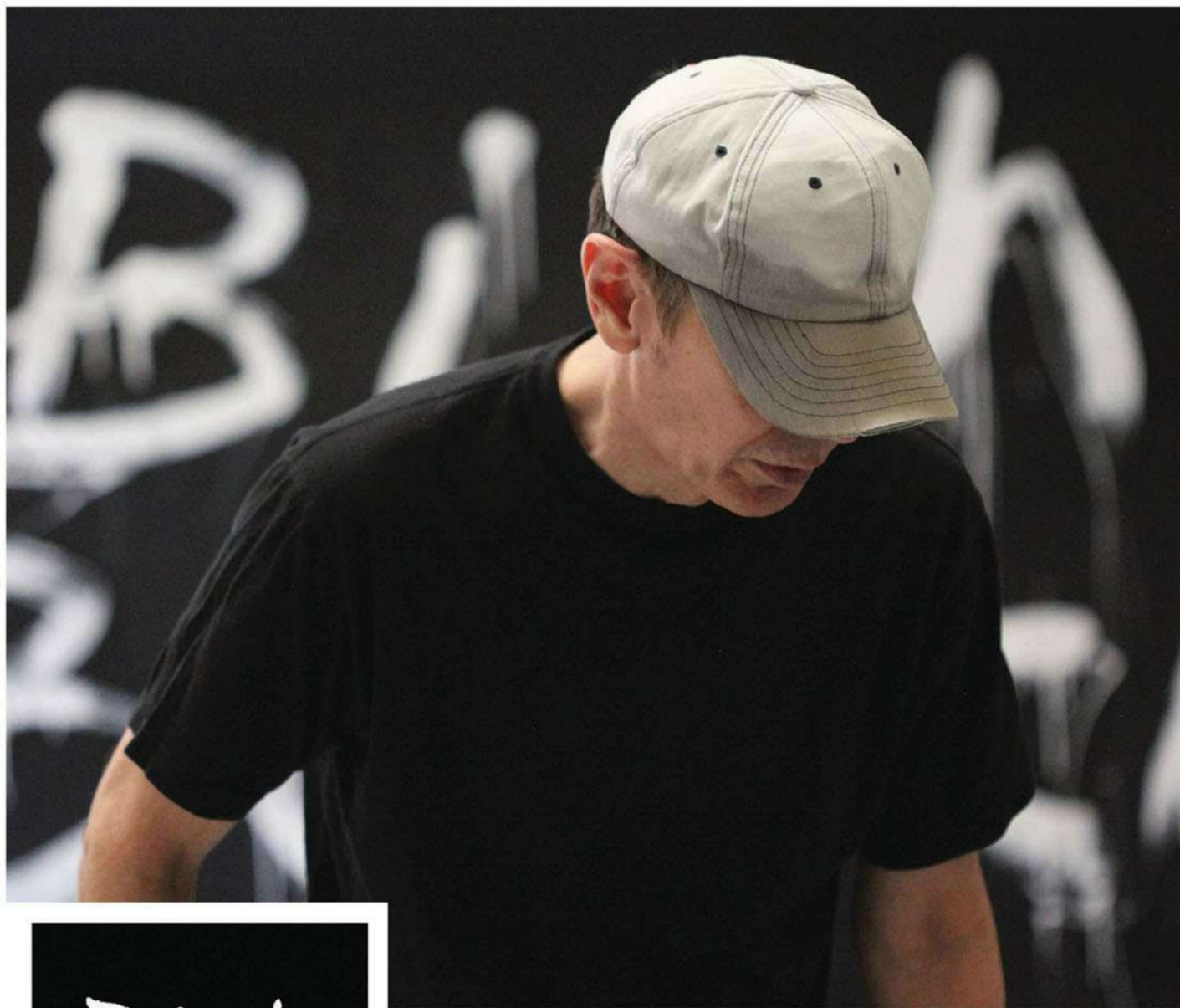
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VIDEOS AND MUSIC.**

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TRACKLIST

- 1 'See You Don't Bump His Head'
- 2 Corps De Blah
- 3 Phrasing
- 4 SDSS 1416+13B (Zercon, A Flagpole Sitter)
- 5 Epizootics!
- 6 Dimple
- 7 Tar
- 8 Pilgrim
- 9 The Day The 'Conducator' Died

SCOTT WALKER

Bish Bosch

4AD

Tubax! Zercon! Ceausescu! Walker's meta-textual journey continues. *By Andy Gill*

7/10

SCOTT WALKER FAMOUSLY never listens to his own records once they are completed; and at times

during *Bish Bosch* – particularly when adrift amid the testing 21 minutes of “SDSS 1416+13B (Zercon, A Flagpole Sitter)”, a song every bit as perplexing as its title – I’m with Scott on this one, to be honest. Rarely, I’ll warrant, have such formidable battalions of sonic weaponry – including eight different guitar tracks, rams horns and the tubax, a bizarre hybrid of tuba and

bass saxophone, of which only two exist in this country – been marshalled in the service of music destined to be played so infrequently.

But this, of course, is all in keeping with the Scott Walker mystique, involving an aura of exacting asceticism combined with prickly, uneasy, often alarming music and lyrics that resemble the most cripplingly cryptic of crosswords. Some tracks on *Bish Bosch* come with copious footnotes attached, like an Ezra Pound or TS Eliot poem, though mercifully Walker at least sticks to the English alphabet

New Albums

→ here. And throughout, there's an evident delight in lexicographical obscurity that echoes James Joyce or Will Self: no bad thing in itself, though when allied to the sometimes impermeable, abstract constructions, the results can be frustratingly opaque. In an era when every two-bit micro-celebrity begs for one's attention in ever more demeaning and salacious ways, Scott Walker just seems to shrug his shoulders, turn his back and walk away, unconcerned whether anyone actually bothers listening or not. Which does tend to tweak the interest of those brave souls who like a challenge.

It's tempting, then, to search for some unifying principle or theme linking the album's nine lengthy tracks together; and none seems more appropriate than the Shakespearean coinage "*What a piece of work is a man*", Hamlet's ironical assessment of humanity, and its linked apprehension of the surrounding world as "*a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours*". *Bish Bosch* is an album suffused with corporeal disgust and philosophical disquiet, in which mankind, the pinnacle of creation, is reduced to little more than a bag of bones and soft tissue, inhabitant of a wasteland realm long abandoned by its creator. Yes, it's that much fun.

Actually, it's more fun than you might expect, Walker's characteristic seriousness tempered occasionally with a gallows humour and bawdy ribaldry of which Shakespeare's audience would have approved. The complex "SDSS 1416+13B (Zercon, A Flagpole Sitter)" is studded with a series of gratuitous insults, punctuated by passages of silence in which the contempt hangs like a fart: "*Look, don't go to a mind reader, go to a palmist; I know you've got a palm*"; "*Does your face hurt? Cuz it's killing me*". And the bodily disgust so elegantly expressed in "Epizootics!" is suddenly interrupted by "*Take that accidentally in the bollocks for a start*", a rough-house line all the more hilarious for being delivered in Walker's aloof, academic tones.

The album title makes similarly broad-humoured play with Hieronymus Bosch, the artist whose *Garden Of Earthly Delights* offers a cavalcade of barbarous carnality, humanity reduced to meat and unfettered malice at the hands of ghastly demonic monsters. Accordingly, death stalks these songs, from the opening "'See You Don't Bump His Head'" – a title borrowed from lines cut from *From Here To Eternity*, Montgomery Clift addressing the soldiers carrying the corpse of Frank Sinatra's character – through to the closing "The Day The 'Conducator' Died", whose title references the abrupt execution of former Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. Its wanly repeated refrain describing the impatient firing-squad, "*And nobody waited for 'fire'*", is this album's equivalent of *Tilt's* haunting "*I'll give you 21, 21*".

Elsewhere, Walker punctures the more hifalutin coinings of "Corps De Blah" – "*Epicanthic knobbler of ninon, arch to Macaronic mahout in the mascon*" is not untypical – with more gaseous extrusions, "*sphincters tooting our tune*". It's just as varied musically, building from an a cappella intro through isolated, fragmentary noises before a barking cuica squeak and organ dischord are suddenly

SLEEVE NOTES

► **Produced by:** Scott Walker
Co-produced and recorded by: Peter Walsh
Recorded at: Kore Studios, London; KHS, Dusseldorf; Sofa Sound, London; Metropolis, London; Air Studios, London
Personnel includes: Scott Walker (percussion, electric guitar, keyboards), Hugh Burns (guitars), James Stevenson (guitars), Mark Warman (keys, drum programming, tuned gongs, handclaps, machetes), Peter Walsh (keyboards FX, drum programming, fingersnaps), Alasdair Malloy (percussion, tuned gongs, machetes), Ian Thomas (drums), John Giblin (bass), Paul Willey (violin harmonics), Michael Laird (rams horns), Pete Long (tubax, baritone sax), BJ Cole (Hawaiian pedal steel guitar), Guy Barker (trumpet), Tom Rees-Roberts (trumpet), Andrew McDonnell (low rumbles, white noise)

barged along by determined but intermittent drums. Shrill bursts of strings like shrieking sirens,

a demonic twinkle of abstract zithering, bee-buzz raspberry farts and dentist-drill whines, a grisly collusion of pain and bathos, are punctuated by merciful lacunae of silence, each more tantalising than the last, until the final image of "*double-bladed axe poised over shoulder*" is accompanied by the metallic swish of machete blades. Off with his head! The same swishing blades accompany Walker's rudely disputatious dismissals of Biblical claims in "Tar", the aural equivalent of Occam's Razor slicing God from the

universe. "*There but for the grace of God goes God*," he mutters.

Elsewhere, "Phrasing" uses some stark, angular guitar riffing, Latin percussion and a stop/start dynamic alongside more meaty metaphors to accompany a glum meditation which opens with the claim "*Pain is not alone*" and ends sourly with "*Here's to a lousy life*". "Epizootics!" employs the deep, burring drone of tubax, spiky skronk guitar and BJ Cole's mutant pedal-steel tones over a fast galley-slave tattoo and errant fanfares of trumpets to animate a lyric of tropical putrefaction, "*greasy black hairlines*"

Death stalks these songs, from Frank Sinatra's corpse to Ceausescu's execution

SCOTT DECODED...?

WAYS INTO BISH BOSCH

A few clues to deciphering Scott Walker's most complex puzzle...

Adepocere, or more correctly adipocere, as referred to in "Epizootics!", is the waxy fat substance, also known as corpse-wax, formed by dead bodies decaying in damp conditions away from oxygen. It preserves the body and its organs in a cast. The process, which can continue for centuries, is known as saponification. Soap is made in a similar manner.

Discovered in 2010 by astronomer Ben Burningham at the University of Hertfordshire, the **Brown Dwarf SDSS 1416+13B** is believed to be the coolest sub-stellar body outside the solar system. Orbiting its much warmer parent star SDSS 1416+13A, its temperature is estimated at around 227° Celsius, and it possesses peculiarly blue colouration. Cool!

"Pain is not alone": For the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, pain was a fascinating matter – specifically, the impossibility of telling whether someone is actually in pain or just acting pained. And in the absence of verifiable emotion, is mankind no more than sentient meat?

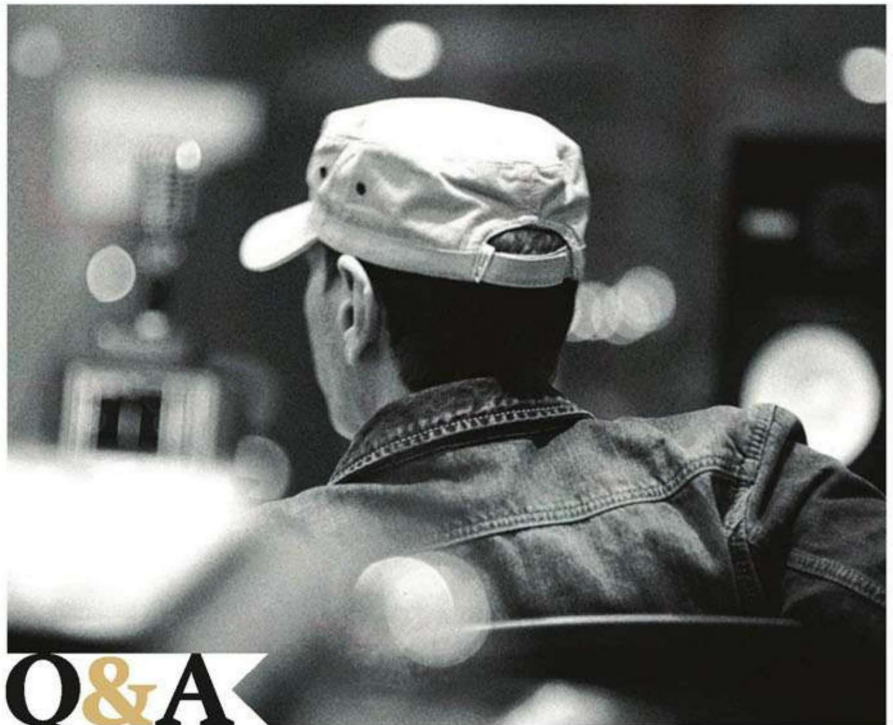
"There but for the grace of God goes God":

This Wildean epigram was coined by the always witty Winston Churchill, and applied to the politician Sir Stafford Cripps (pictured), a man of formidable intellect whose teetotal, vegetarian lifestyle grated with the more indulgent Churchill. It was also later applied to cinematic wunderkind Orson Welles.



and "melanomed ankles", in which a fat chap is vividly (and revoltingly) depicted as "Adepocere in a zoot, sloshing, karat, ballooning down the street".

"SDSS 1416+13B (Zercon, A Flagpole Sitter)" is undoubtedly the album's centrepiece, a colossal parade of grotesque imagery whose cryptic lyric embraces classical and Biblical allusion, private jokes, astronomy and anatomy, with contemporary curiosity alongside atavistic antiquity. It remains the most impervious to explication – I'm still no clearer, for instance, about the strings of Roman numerals that are recited at various junctures, nor about any bar the most obvious connection between Attila The Hun's dwarf jester (Zercon) and the brown dwarf star of the title – and its 21-minute trail of sonic exclamations, textures and evocations is the most abstract of the album, effectively a Foley-board of audio effects as much as a musical composition. But at least there's plenty of meat to work with, to use the apt terminology; all that's required is to pluck up the inclination to listen to hear it for a fourth and fifth time.



Q&A

Scott Walker explains the new album, the monstrous tubax, and his fascination with dictators...

How do you rate your progress with your recent records?

It's moving on a bit each time we go. Hopefully it's getting nearer and nearer the kind of thing that's in our heads. Little things are improving, a bit more focused. The style is improving.

What can you tell us about how the album was recorded?

If I use the big orchestra I'm using it for noises or textures, or big pillars of sound, rather than arrangements. What we did was record the drums, bass, percussion, strings and vocals in digital and analogue simultaneously. Because we knew there were a lot of silences in it, especially in something like "Zercon". And in the endings – like for "Tar", where you don't know what's going on. So in those spots we just cut off the analogue, and where we had the silences we just used the digital. And then we turned on the analogue again when everyone was playing together. Everything was recorded that way, so it's about 80 per cent analogue.

The sound is very bound up with the words...

There is always meaning for me there; I don't write haphazardly. I'm pretty sure everything is right and balanced, as far as I can get it. I won't throw anything in that shouldn't be there.

What's the story behind "SDSS 1416+13B (Zercon, A Flagpole Sitter)"?

I was interested in this thing about someone trying to escape his situation – in this case Attila's wooden palace, which he regards as an immense toilet – and achieve a kind of spiritual sovereignty, and a height beyond calculation. As the song moves forward he imagines himself at different stages of height: he imagines first that

he escapes and finds himself surrounded by eagles; then there's the mention of St Simon on his pillar; then he jumps to 1930s America where it's become a flagpole-sitter... Flagpole-sitting – trying to spend several days alone on a platform at the top of a pole – achieved a brief craze status in the '30s. At the end of the song he eventually becomes a brown dwarf, known as SDSS 1416. As with the majority of my songs, it ends in failure. Like a brown dwarf, he freezes to death.

Why a song about Ceausescu? Are you fascinated by violence?

I'm fascinated by dictators. I'm not particularly fascinated by brutality – I mean, at times I'll use it on a comic level, or it'll be angry, but I'm never striving for it – it just happens. I don't know why – that's for an analyst!

What is a tubax?

It's a combination of a tuba and a sax, and there's only two in the country. It's a monster thing, you have to sit on the floor to play it. But it means you can get below the bass, very deep.

What's the idea behind "Dimple"?

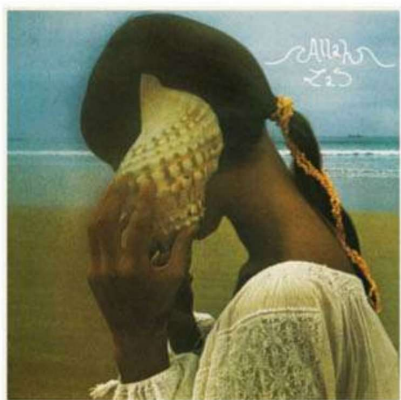
I read that no matter how much your face descends with age, the dimple stays in the same place. I'm using it as a metaphor for a constant presence, and building a mythological face throughout the first part of the song.

The world of these songs seems quite cruel...

I'm a pessimist, in that I know it's not going to end well. But most of my songs are spiritual at the core. I try not to be too cynical about things, because it's too difficult otherwise. You have to be able to work your way through it – you have to be able to see what's there, and deal with it.

INTERVIEW: ROB YOUNG

"Most of my songs are spiritual at the core – I try not to be too cynical about things..."



ALLAH-LAS

Allah-Las

INNOVATIVE LEISURE

Wistful, gorgeous '60s pop, straight outta SoCal. *By Jon Dale*

8/10

LOS ANGELES QUARTET the Allah-Las have the most perfect of backstories for a group making such informed, articulate pop music. Three of the group's members met while serving time at the legendary LA record store, Amoeba, one of the best ways to learn your craft and do your listening, all while getting paid to schlep CD cases and LP sleeves into the aisles and across the counter. They've been playing together since late 2008, slowly chipping away at a vision that's equal parts genteel psychedelia, '60s beat movement, and softly strummed, post-Byrdsian jangle-pop.

You'd be correct in thinking that's not an under-populated field right now. One of the more

surprising things about underground music at the moment, particularly in America, is the rise of fragile gangs who pledge allegiance to the fundamental tenets of the garage. Whether it's Sic Alps with their fractured pop poetics, Ty Segall's riotous beat mantras, the schizoid styles of Thee Oh Sees, or the more DIY/punkish takes of the likes of TV Ghost and Tyvek, this music's on the rise again. (The connection is more than aesthetic—Segall, very much the poster boy for this '60s re-up going down in the American underground, plays drums on the first album for Allah-Las producer and R'n'B revisionist Nick Waterhouse.) More and more, this move feels like a response to the fly-by-night hype stylings of blog culture; an oppositional turning back of the

TRACKLIST

- 1 Catamaran
- 2 Don't You Forget It
- 3 Busman's Holiday
- 4 Sacred Sands
- 5 No Voodoo
- 6 Sandy
- 7 Ela Navega
- 8 Tell Me (What's On Your Mind)
- 9 Catalina
- 10 Vis-A-Vis
- 11 Seven Point Five
- 12 Long Journey



Q&A

Allah-Las



Tell me about the musical culture you're part of in Los Angeles. Who are your peers, friends?

Though we have friends in many LA bands we admire or listen to, we don't necessarily feel like we're part of a specific musical culture. Many of the bands we like share an affinity for looking back in order to move forward.

Can you tell me more about Nick Waterhouse, who produced your album?

Nick's a close friend and has been our biggest supporter from the beginning. His like-minded passion for music along with his knowledge of recording styles really helped us capture the sound we were looking for on the record. Matt and Nick met back in the journalism department at San Francisco State University and have been friends ever since. A couple years ago Nick was visiting us in LA and after he saw a show we played at this bar in Highland Park. He got excited and asked us if we wanted to record with him. Pedrum, Matt and Spencer all played on his last record and he played organ on one of our songs. We're on tour with him in the States and it's great to be travelling the country with good friends. **JON DALE**

thing, it's how to capture the essence of the times they're so besotted with, how to distil (no pun intended) the art and craft of the songwriting of that era. "Vis-A-Vis" starts by channeling the purist jangle of the feyest of the C86 groups, who were themselves gesturing back to The Byrds and Love, before glinting tambourines and softly pattering cymbals and snares guide a sun-kissed melody off into the water. Elsewhere it's even more blatant: the opening trio of "Catamaran", "Don't You Forget It" and "Busman's Holiday" feel like they've dropped straight from a Pebbles, Rubble or Teenage Shutdown compilation, the dinkiest of guitar solos clamouring for attention among clipped barre chords, foot-shuffling maraca, honeyed harmonies, and spindly, reverbed-out guitar riffs.

There's always a chance that this kind of willful revisionism can go poorly:

bad songs, bad production, the wrong feel, the wrong ideas. But the Allah-Las get things right, and beyond that, they'd be great songwriters even if you stripped everything back to its core, without the of-the-time production flourishes.

The only real concern is that these kinds of records are often one-shot deals – groups make a statement with, and channel all their energies and ideas into their first album, and then things get real tired real quick by the second effort. The test for Allah-Las will be what they do next. For now, though, this self-titled debut is a joy.

SLEEVE NOTES

Produced by: Nick Waterhouse
Recorded at: The Distillery, Costa Mesa, CA
Personnel: Miles Michaud (lead vocal [except for "Vis-A-Vis"] - Spencer Dunham and "Long Journey" - Matthew Correia) and rhythm guitar), Pedrum Siadatian (lead guitar, backing vocals), Spencer Dunham (bass, backing vocals), Matthew Correia (drums, backing vocals), Nick Waterhouse (organ on "Catamaran")

clock, similar to the way groups like The Fuzztones, The Barracudas, The Stems and The Pandoras mined the '60s for base material, to counter the plastic aspirationalism of the '80s mainstream.

Waterhouse's presence is crucial here, producing the album, recording the group at the Costa Mesa recording studio The Distillery, and getting these 12 songs down with period-piece perfection. If other artists, like Segall or Sic Alps, dirty up the signal with blocks of fuzz and noise, often recording primitively to allow for all kinds of happy accidents, the Allah-Las are more stylised, less about the incidental. Everything here feels adeptly placed and paced, just the right production touches to drop the listener down in some surf/garage-rock haven. There's a risk this kind of devotion can dovetail to parody, and there are already interviews out there where the group talk about needing to use the right microphones from the era to accurately capture their sound. This way lies Lee Majors of The La's and his need for "60s dust" on studio equipment.

It'd all be annoying if the songs weren't so unrelentingly great. If Allah-Las have learnt one

AtoZ

COMING UP THIS MONTH...

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- p68 IRIS DEMENT**
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ARC IN ROUND

Arc In Round

LA SOCIÉTÉ EXPÉDITIONNAIRE

Footwear fetishists return in slightly new shoes

Rising from the ruins of Philadelphia nu-gazing band Relay, Arc In

7/10

Round combine dreamy girl-boy vocals and tumbling waltz rhythms with heavily treated backing. To be frank, there is still ample close-up footwear examination on this self-titled debut, which is plainly indebted to the noisier end of the oceanic, reverb-drenched sound pioneered by London labels like Creation in the 1980s and early 1990s. But behind its dense layers of sonic cladding, the album's more engaging tracks incorporate organic instrumentation and breathy humanity, from the shuddering psychedelic folk-rock "Hallowed" to the haunted-fairground swirls of "Spirit".

STEPHEN DALTON



THE AVETT BROTHERS

The Carpenter

ISLAND

Rick Rubin-produced seventh from North Carolina siblings

A personal endorsement from Bob Dylan, who

5/10

performed "Maggie's Farm" with them at last year's Grammy awards, suggested there might be more to Seth and Scott than the pleasant but faintly drippy folk-pop of their early cuts. Sadly, there's little evidence on a streamlined, ballast-free set of bubbling, upbeat melodies and minor-key laments dipped in undemanding melancholy. Songs such as "The Once And Future Carpenter" and "Live And Die" leave you wondering how it's possible to sing about mortality and yet sound so bloodless. Only the politely punkish "Paul Newman Vs The Demons" hints at stiffer sinew. By then, it's far too late.

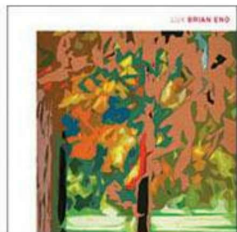
NIGEL WILLIAMSON

BRIAN ENO

Lux

WARP

The cerebral dilettante returns to ambient. *By John Mulvey*



8/10

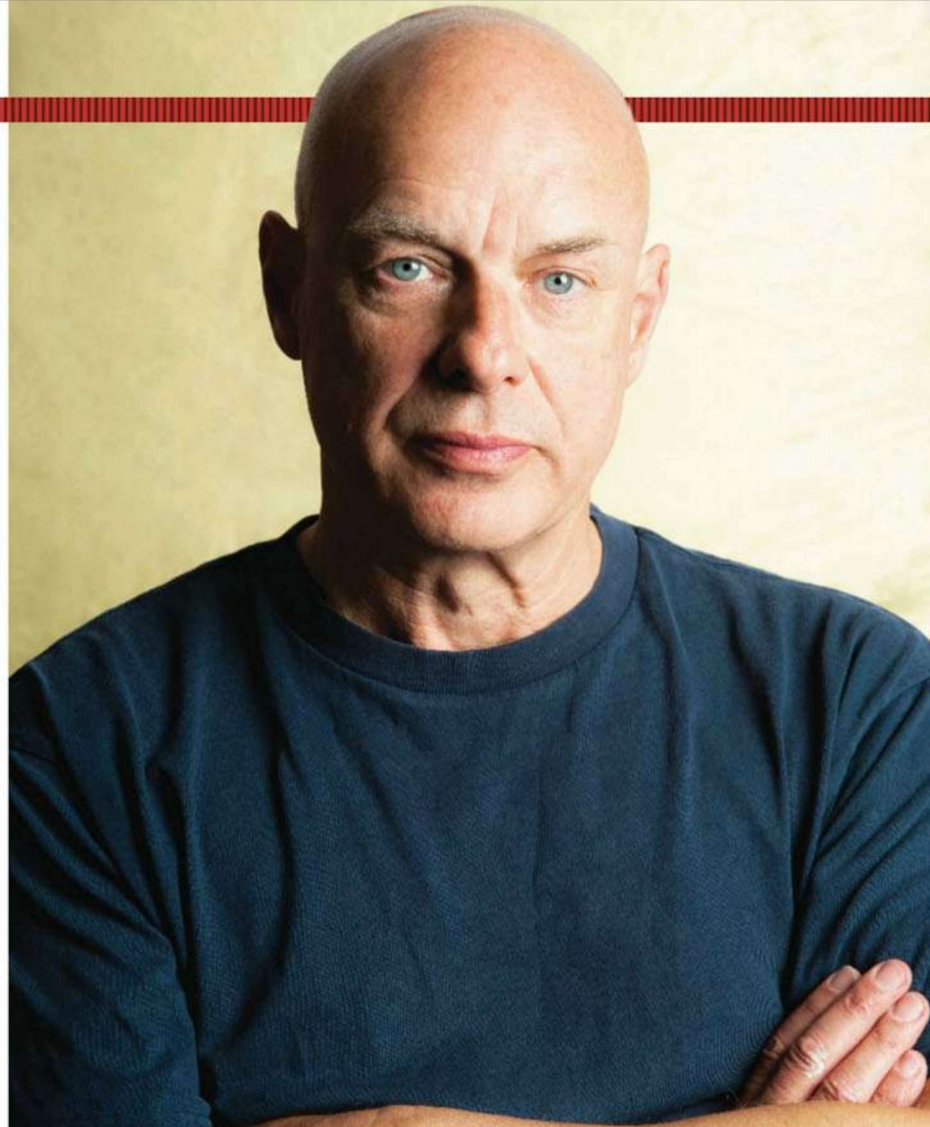
IF YOU'VE EVER suspected that Brian Eno's enduring reputation as an avant-garde genius is more mythical than actual, his discography from the past few years makes for a satisfying read. There are contributions to

albums by Andrea Corr, Natalie Imbruglia, Belinda Carlisle and Dido, alongside the higher-profile shifts with Coldplay and U2. Eno must be a lovely and useful man to have around, one concludes. He brings experimental strategies to invigorate the studio graft, but he always ensures that a shiny commercial product comes out at the other end.

Which, at a guess, he will never play. In his last major *Uncut* interview, Eno talked about listening to West African music and gospel rather than his own work, and it's easy to conclude that the creative process interests him much more than the finished music. His technology projects back that up, being mostly based around generative music software, designed to produce infinite melodic variations rather than the same old tune every time. Some of us, though, would still prefer to listen to *Music For Airports*, not to mess about with an iPhone app.

If a new deal with Warp Records in 2010 signalled a return to the old orthodoxies of album-making, the releases thus far have been disappointing, with Eno avoiding the burden of sole responsibility. Credits have been shared with two accomplished if uninspired multi-instrumentalists, Leo Abrahams and Jon Hopkins (*Small Craft On A Milk Sea*, 2010), and with a poet, Rick Holland (*Drums Between The Bells*, 2011). *Lux*, however, suggests that Eno might work best these days when he stays away from collaborators, and steers clear of proper musicians in particular. A couple of months ago, Icebreaker's rescoring of *Apollo: Atmospheres & Soundtracks* provided a timely reminder of Eno's ambient skills, his uncanny knack of applying a stately gravity to notionally weightless sounds.

Lux operates brilliantly in that tradition. Unlike the often fidgety laptop jams of *Small Craft On A Milk Sea*, pleasingly little happens over the course of its 75 minutes. Traditional ambient buzzwords like "lunar" and "sepulchral" are drawn inexorably to these suspended notes and minutely fluctuating soundscapes. Reference points are similarly tasteful, with the four movements recalling Morton Feldman, Arvo Pärt and Gavin Bryars, and with piano lines that feel like tentative improvisations on Satie. While "lux" is actually Latin for light, the implication of luxury presents a further open goal to detractors of such conceptually rarefied music – not least because it was originally designed for an opulent salon, as a generative sound installation at the Palace Of Venaria in Turin. Only the rich, perhaps, have the luxury of enough time and space to really enjoy the leisurely, contemplative possibilities of ambient music. That said, *Lux* works



on a pragmatic and egalitarian level as more or less the ideal ambient record. Its tone at times recalls his iPhone app, *Bloom*, but in the concise press release, Eno places *Lux* as part of his 'Thinking Music' sequence that also includes *Discreet Music* (1975) and the undervalued, mildly sinister *Neroi* from 1993. "I wanted to make a kind of music that existed on the cusp between melody and texture," Eno explained in *Neroi*'s sleeve notes, "and whose musical logic was elusive enough to reward attention, but not so strict as to demand it."

The same statement of intent could be applied to *Lux*. If you're looking for environmental set-

dressings, for a faint signifier of sophistication, for a sound that lingers like perfume in an elegant space, then *Lux* is extremely useful. But as a deeper listening experience, it is also unusually compelling and immersive, particularly through headphones, where the slow evolutions seem less textural and more melodically substantial than one first assumes.

It's the sort of album that a lot of people probably imagine Eno makes all the time, but in reality rarely does. Perhaps *Lux* is the best kind of Eno album, too. "Music for thinking" does not come overburdened with clever ideas of its own: it just is.

Q&A

Brian Eno

WHAT PROMPTED A return to "Music For Thinking"?

Music For Thinking is a long-term project and a description that is usually awarded retrospectively – when I notice something I've made is good for thinking to!

Did you ever think albums like *Lux* had expended their usefulness, given your interest in generative music?

I don't think generative music makes recorded music redundant, but it does call into question the primacy of recorded music. For the last 100 or so years we've got used to the idea of precisely duplicable musical experiences, and for the last 50 years these have been at the centre of musical culture. Well, perhaps they aren't going to be from now on.

How was it making music on your own again?

In this case, it was heavenly. I rediscovered the joy of sitting in a room at night on my own and making something from scratch, rediscovering myself as a composer. I'd got out of the habit.

The download I received from Warp presented *Lux* as one continuous track: is that how it will be commercially released?

I enjoyed listening to it as a single long piece. There are, however, four IDs in it on the CD, so you can at least roughly locate yourself. The length says "Use me" rather than "listen to me". It makes a point that it has a utilitarian intention – to be shamelessly competent background music – as well as an ambition to be able to sustain your interest – should you choose to extend it.

What are you listening to at the moment?

I'm revisiting some gospel records I made in the '70s and '80s: Rev Maceo Woods, Rev James Cleveland, Golden Gate Quartet. Contemporary things: Three Trapped Tigers, Port St Willow, Ebe Oke, Múm, Owen Pallett. *INTERVIEW: JOHN MULVEY*



AZITA Year DRAG CITY

Chicago's finest singer-songwriter calls out for the theatre

8/10

Azita's last album, *Disturbing The Air*, was a

stark, unforgiving thing, a dark pass through the ends of relationships and their emotional aftermath. It was devastating, so it's nice to hear Azita apply her art more playfully on *Year*. Her second album to draw from an ongoing collaboration with theatre director Brian Torrey Scott, after 2006's *Detail From The Mountain Side*, here she's singing with great character and charm, taking her songs through devious chord changes, suspending notes from her piano in a sympathetic group setting, and even on "Something That Happened", dubbing her way out of the speakers.

JON DALE



PAUL BANKS Banks MATADOR

Interpol singer goes it alone but sounds the same

7/10

Paul Banks' first solo album saw him assuming the identity of alter ego

Julian Plenti. On his second, he has taken a more straightforward approach, using his own name while adopting the same anthemic melancholia that has characterised his work with Interpol. Certainly, there's a familiarity here, the thin guitar lines and washes of synth, topped off with Banks' despondent croon, though in lyrical terms, there is a more confessional tone, most notably in the terrific "The Base", in which he announces, "I can see the truth above the lies", before revealing, with Morrissey-esque moroseness, "when I walk today, it's in silence and in rain".

FIONA STURGES



THAVIUS BECK The Most Beautiful Ugly PLUG RESEARCH

Former Global Phlowtations linchpin's genre-dodging fourth

7/10

The East/West Coast divide in the US beats scene has

long been debated, but lately LA has taken the experimental lead, with labels like Stones Throw, Mush Records, Plug Research and (especially) Brainfeeder developing hybrids of abstract hip-hop and electronica that embrace cosmic jazz and '70s funk. Minnesotan émigré and producer Thavius Beck is no newbie, but his latest should boost a profile that includes working as Saul Williams' wingman. It reads like a compendium of retro cool that leans on the cinematic, instrumental style of DJ Shadow and Peanut Butter Wolf, but revels in ravey ghetto-tech via "Terror Byte" and adopts Kanye's glossy Auto-Tuned modernism for "Joy (Bring It)".

SHARON O'CONNELL



BLACK MOTH SUPER RAINBOW Cobra Juicy RAD CULT

Magical nihilism from Pennsylvania psychonauts

8/10

If '09's *Eating Us* (producer:

Dave Fridmann) had BMSR sounding perilously conventional, they now reconvene after an extended break, self-releasing via Kickstarter (buying options include latex orange facemask or private gig in a roller rink), with what they call their "demon skater" direction. In practice it's suggestive of the luvved-up terrace thug moment of the late '80s, but with ultraviolence retained: "Dreamsicle Bomb" suggests Boards Of Canada and PM Dawn jamming on the chorus "Now that I got you my dreams are good/Let's go fuck up the neighbourhood". "Spraypaint" is a new career high, a heartbroken vocoder ballad like Kanye crooning Donovan.

STEPHEN TROUSSE

REVELATIONS

Peter Dinklage and Andy Partridge tell *Uncut* how they overhauled the blues for their album *Gonwards*



➤ **Peter Dinklage:** Andy proposed the blues as a theme before we started. Not to make a blues album, but to come at the whole fabulous mythos obliquely.

Andy Partridge: We quickly wandered away from the blues, but in a way it's an international blues record; we have a blues that might be in the Guatemalan jungle, one in Mexico and one that ends up in Russia. It was such a fantastic tonic. We broke through the tissue-paper screen at the end of the blues and we were in Happyland.

Dinklage: Andy is endlessly inventive and fantastically quick. No dithering. Andy, producer Stu Rowe and I morphed with glee into a single three-headed organism without any loss of our respective individual selves. Free to try anything. No ego clashes. No mean feat.

Partridge: I like the stripped-down beatnik stuff on here - it just makes me want to get my bongos out of the cupboard. Stu swears it comes from a car journey we took down to Taunton listening to this CD set of Jack Kerouac reading his poetry over a sax player and a piano player. Jack Kerouac in Taunton! It's an unbeatable juxtaposition. Like hot chocolate with a chaser of crème de menthe.

JIM WIRTH



PETER DINKGLAGE & ANDY PARTRIDGE Gonwards APE HOUSE

More Bonzo Dog days for XTC frontman and Slapp Happy guitarist

8/10

Essentially three men old enough to know better messing about in a shed, this art-pop *Last Of The Summer Wine* sees XTC chief Partridge and producer Stu Rowe goad weirdnik-of-all-trades Dinklage into an improbable re-imagining of the myth of the blues. Having worked similarly whimsical wonders on 2003's *Orpheus: The Lowdown*, the collaborators lock back into their *Clear Spot*-via-Tony-Bennett groove, sniggering through "Sacred Objects" and "St Augustine Said", and saving their best for the "Russian blues" of "Worse On The Way": "Pestilence, death, famine, war," smirks Dinklage. "It's helpful to know just what life has in store." Be merry.

JIM WIRTH



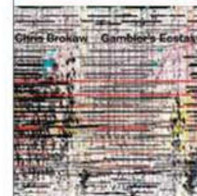
BO NINGEN Line The Wall STOLEN RECORDINGS

Winningly wiggly second from cultish neo-Krautrockers

7/10

"We are Enlightenment activists from far-east psychedelic underground," (sic) claim this London-based Japanese quartet, whose name roughly translates as "Stick Men". They've been making underground waves since 2007 via their uniformly heavy, high-volume live shows, but *Line The Wall* proves there's more to Bo Ningen than cranked amps and a Can fixation. Mining tar-black seams of '70s psych and motorik rock, metal and experimental noise, they whip up synth-processed guitar storms that source Hawkwind and Hendrix, as well as Amon Düül II and Ash Ra Tempel. Reflective shoegazer "Ten To Sen" provides breathing space, but BN are at their best when blitzing it, as on two-part epic "Daikaisei".

SHARON O'CONNELL



CHRIS BROKAW Gambler's Ecstasy DAMNABLY

Maverick adventurer returns to his alt.rock roots

6/10

Since his days with Codeine and Come back in the '90s, Brokaw's career

has followed a serpentine course, involving instrumental guitar records, acoustic folk albums, film soundtracks and working with the Tuareg band Tamikrest. His latest solo offering eschews such abstractions for a return to his alt.rock origins, from the throbbing grunge of "Criminals" to the fuzzy intricacies of "The Appetites". Brokaw calls it "a complex, messy record", which is about right. There's no real coherent thread (perhaps because its recording stretched over four years and a move from East to West coasts). But as a collection of scattered moments, it's engaging enough.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

AMERICANA



BEST
OF THE
MONTH



IRIS DEMENT *Sing The Delta*

FLARIELLA

9/10

Arkansas dazzler's first original music in 16 years

From her downhome, straight-outta-Appalachia Loretta Lynn voice, to the rolling piano and Carter Family lilt of her country/gospel moorings, to songs that delve deep into the tapestry of family, home, and faith, Iris DeMent is a one-woman calling card for so-called "country music" to do some serious soul-searching. *Sing The Delta* – just her fifth LP in a 20-year career – is jaw-dropping Southern gothic, music out of time, a heady return to her early-'90s prime but deeper.

In fact, DeMent's voice has never sounded quite this freewheeling or expressive, rising from whispers to whoops and back again, over a dozen stunning, earthy numbers.

Aided by a cast of studio pros, *Delta* is a cagey mix of organic real-old-time country, early-'60s Nashville heartbreak-and-honky-tonk, a dollop of toe-tapping church music, plus a touch of blues, R'n'B and Memphis soul. Yet it's DeMent's extraordinary songwriting – from celebratory to gut-wrenching, taking listeners on a kind of spiritual quest – that is front and centre: from the parlour-song piano opening of "Go Ahead And Go Home" (death never sounded so joyous), to the expansive, deeply personal meditation on the South of the title cut, she cuts straight to the bone. In the heart-shattering "The Night I Learned Not To Pray", wherein the protagonist's baby brother falls down a flight of stairs to his death, DeMent borrows a bit of rhythmic phrasing and detailed storytelling from Bobbie Gentry's "Ode To Billie Jo", unfolding a devastating narrative with a heart-stopping twist – the questioning of religion. The sepia-toned "Before The Colors Fade", on the other hand, is all interiors, a dreamlike rumination on love and mortality, DeMent delivering fragile beauty with a delicate intimacy. Elsewhere, "Makin' My Way Back Home" is a pure country lament, melodically akin to Tammy Wynette's "Apartment No 9", while the soaring swing of "There's A Whole Lotta Heaven", DeMent leaning into the humanistic lyric with relish, clinches a startling, inspirational comeback. **LUKE TORN**

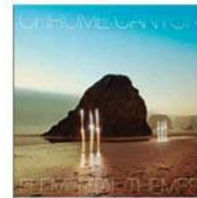


THE AMERICANA ROUND-UP

► Congratulations from all at *Uncut* to **Gillian Welch** (left), deserving recipient of 2012's Artist Of The Year gong at the recent Americana Awards in Nashville. Her partner **David**

Rawlings made off with the Instrumentalist Of The Year title. Best album, meanwhile, went to the all-star *This One's For Him: A Tribute To Guy Clark*, awarded after Clark performed a live version of "My Favourite Picture Of You". In an emotional speech, the septuagenarian said that "I wrote this for my wife Susanna, who died in June. I wish she could be here to hear it, but I'll play it for her anyway." Top song went to another *Uncut* favourite, **Jason Isbell**, for "Alabama

Pines". The highlight of the Americana Music Festival itself, staged in tandem in Nashville, was a mass tribute to the late **Levon Helm**, with Isbell, Hayes Carll and Patterson Hood leading the throng through a handful of classic Band numbers. On the recorded front, Wilco's **Jeff Tweedy** is back in the studio with gospel veteran **Mavis Staples**, producing the follow-up to 2010's *You Are Not Alone*. And **Rodney Crowell** has announced the completion of *Old Yellow Moon* (Nonesuch), a country/rock'n'roll duets album with **Emmylou Harris** that they've apparently been planning since 1975. It includes covers of Kris Kristofferson, Roger Miller, Patti Scialfa and Matraca Berg, with four of Crowell's own compositions. The pair are backed by original Hot Band members James Burton, Emory Gordy and Glen D Hardin. **ROB HUGHES**



CHROME CANYON *Elemental Themes*

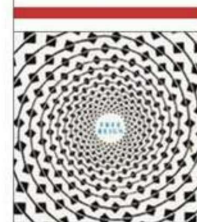
STONES THROW/
OTHER HAND

6/10

New York electro wizard dreams of the future-past

Musical trends move quickly these days, but synthesiser music, with its filmic electronic soundscapes and potential for Bacofail-wrapped irony, has proved unusually enduring. Morgan Z is a keen exponent of a somewhat kitsch retro-futurism: in the video to *Elemental Themes*' "Memories Of A Scientist", he's a wild-haired Doc Brown figure, barely in control of his lab of malfunctioning vintage hardware. The music, however, occupies less chaotic realms. "Pluze" and "Branches" resemble Air in their languid electro-revisioning of jazz-funk and prog, while the title track pulls back sparkling synths for a noble and histrionic sax break.

LOUIS PATTISON



CLINIC *Free Reign*

DOMINO

Liverpool pop surgeons could use a shot in the arm

Clinic's 2010 album *Bubblegum* offered an intriguing departure from

5/10

their sound, adding dulcimer and harpsichord to an aesthetic almost autistic in its commitment to a few core influences: The Monks, The Velvet Underground, New York proto-punks Crime. In its favour, *Free Reign* also contains some evidence of branching out: keyboards and electronic rhythms give "For The Season" and the excellently named "Seamless Boogie Woogie, BBC2 10pm (rpt)" a woozy, soporific feel; while "Cosmic Radiation", with its lonely woodwind, resembles a spooked-out Sun Ra. But rather slight songs raise the suspicion you would get more out of listening to Clinic's record collection than the band themselves.

LOUIS PATTISON



JOE COCKER

Fire It Up

JIVE/EPIC

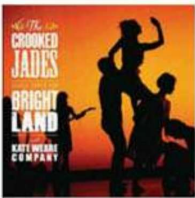
Mad Dog still snarling

Rather than opting for tasteful Rick Rubin-curated reinvention, at 68 Cocker has reconvened

6/10

with producer Matt Serletic to make a(nother) big, bold, slick rock'n'soul album garnished with some terribly hackneyed moments of wisdom. While the – undeniably rousing – title track is typical, sounding like something Simple Minds kicked around stadiums in the '80s, it's the more considered moments that linger, particularly "Younger" and "You Don't Know What You're Doing To Me", where he seems to be channelling Randy Newman. Cocker's commitment is impressive: his voice remains well-oiled, his blood is pumping, but the methods of execution could use an overhaul.

GRAEME THOMSON



THE CROOKED JADES

Bright Land

JADE NOTE

Back to the future with old-time SF quintet

The Jades deal in the same rural American string band music as the Carolina

7/10

Chocolate Drops, rooted in pre-radio minstrel tradition and Appalachian mountain heritage. Banjo, fiddle, double bass, guitar and ukulele augmented by harmonium and subtle percussion provide a pin-droppingly exquisite soundbed for the haunting baritone vocals of Jeff Kazor and the keening, lonesome accents of Lisa Berman. There's an earthy, sometimes startling emotion to their delivery of songs such as "World's On Fire" and "Unfortunate Rake" compared to the more academic and stylised approach of CCD, and although the material is mostly traditional, the retro-charm is invested with an impressively contemporary vigour.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON



CUFF THE DUKE

Union

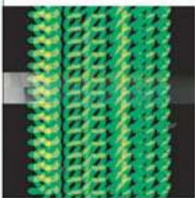
PAPER BAG

Timeless alt.country sounds from Toronto four-piece

7/10

Cuff The Duke's sixth album is very much a counterpart to last year's excellent *Morning Comes*, deviating little from the band's established strain of sweeping, retro roots-rock. "Side By Side" breezes along like prime time Whiskeytown, all twang and jangle; "Rise Above" is ragged, Byrdsy pop, while "Something For Free" has a little of the heart-tugging melancholy of *Fables Of The Reconstruction*-era REM. Shadows lengthen on the rattling "Carry On" and particularly "Open Your Mind", which rolls ominously under Wayne Petti's pure falsetto. No boundaries are broached, but everything works just fine.

GRAEME THOMSON



DAPHNI

Jialong

JIALONG

Locked-groove bliss from former Caribou man

7/10

Dan Snaith leaves his Caribou moniker behind for this new project, following on from the house and techno of his *Swim* album onto even deeper dancefloors. His monster 12" "Ye Ye" is here, its snatched vocal sample punctuating and destabilising the psychedelic melody; its Chicago house snares and claps crop up throughout the record, turning the pretty "Lights" into a sweaty jack-fest and giving the deranged effects of "Springs" a rigid framework. Other tracks, like "Yes I Know" and a re-edit of 1970s Togolese funk band Cos-Ber-Zam, are fist-pumpingly tribal, stretching disco voluptuousness into streamlined workouts.

BEN BEAUMONT-THOMAS



DAVID CRONENBERG'S WIFE

Don't Wait To Be Hunted To Hide

BLANG

Indie-folk chroniclers probe disturbing themes

6/10

Adopting a songwriting persona between Jarvis' sardonic seediness and Nick Cave's homicidal misogyny, Tom Mayne seems keen to provoke literal-minded moralists on right and left alike. Dedicated to Christopher Hitchens and Alan Turing, among many others, the third album by Mayne's London-based indie-folkers is awash with confessional about sleazy predators and date-raping sociopaths, reaching a Nabokovian nadir on sweetly romantic underage-sex ballad "For Laura Kingsman". Mayne flatters our intelligence with dramatic irony and literary ambiguity, of course, but not always successfully – especially when his songs sound like Satanic lo-fi cousins of Mumford & Sons.

STEPHEN DALTON

HOW TO BUY... JOE COCKER

The belter's best bits



JOE COCKER

With A Little Help From My Friends

REGAL

ZONOPHONE/

A&M, 1969

Equal parts lysergic

rock and gnarled

soul, Cocker's debut features appearances from Jimmy Page, Leon Russell and Steve Winwood. His gift for wholesale transformation – never more obvious than on the towering title track – is also powerfully evident on "Bye Bye Blackbird" and Traffic's "Feelin' Alright".

9/10



JOE COCKER

Mad Dogs & Englishmen

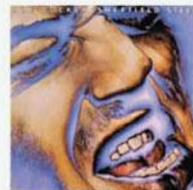
A&M, 1970

A tour, a film and a crackling double live album. Fronting

a gargantuan band

(including nine backing singers!) led by Leon Russell, Cocker covers the Stones and The Beatles and The Band, but the highlight is a powder keg version of The Box Tops' "The Letter".

8/10



JOE COCKER

Sheffield Steel

ISLAND, 1982

Riding high on the back of the success of "Up Where We Belong", his duet

with Jennifer Warnes,

Cocker decamps to the Bahamas with Sly & Robbie, Jimmy Cliff and Adrian Belew for a none-more-'80s covers album which includes versions of Dylan's "Seven Days" and "Many Rivers To Cross".

6/10

GRAEME THOMSON



MAC DEMARCO

2

CAPTURED TRACKS

Formerly insincere Canadian tackles heartfelt Americana with beguiling results

8/10

In April, Montrealer Mac Demarco released his debut EP, the sleazy "Rock'n'Roll Nightclub", born of a Frank Zappa-ish tendency to annoy with pointed insincerity. So the stylistic difference here – a move to heartfelt Americana – should be cause for suspicion. As it is, DeMarco shape-shifts with impunity: 2 deals in lugubrious late-night lyricism, and equals Kurt Vile and Cass McCombs for warmly melodic meanderings that beguile rather than baffle. Although a pleasing streak of his early weirdness remains: "Ode To Viceroy" is a peculiarly glorious ode to an unnamed monarch, so fine that questions of sincerity are long out the window.

LAURA SNAPES



FRANK EDDIE

Let's Be Frank

IMPOTENT FURY

Extended DJ oddity from Lemon Jelly man

5/10

Frank Eddie is an anagram of Fred Deakin, who is one half of the Mercury-nominated electronic duo Lemon Jelly (with Nick Franglen). With his band on hiatus, Deakin has assumed a pseudonym for this solo project of "club-friendly vocal mash-ups", excerpts of which have already been released as seven-inches over the summer. A wry trawl through dance and pop music from the '70s to the noughties, with samples from Vikki Love with Nuance's "Sing, Dance, Rap, Romance" and East 17's "Stay Another Day", *Let's Be Frank* has its moments, but it's a long way from the sweetly inventive chill-out music for which Deakin is famed.

FIONA STURGES



EL PERRO DEL MAR

Pale Fire

MEMPHIS INDUSTRIES

Swedish pop songstress lacks charm on mildly innovative fifth LP

6/10

Gothenburg's Sarah Assbring's last album, '09's *Love Is Not Pop*, was remarkable: Assbring sounded like neither Robyn or The Knife, a growing novelty in a two-strand Swedish pop scene. But Assbring isn't herself on *Pale Fire*: the title track and opener hints at an intriguing experiment, blending her sombre, winsome vocal with a stuttering South London beat, but that innovation soon drowns beneath a flood of languid Balearic rhythms stripped of sunshine. "Walk On By" is suspiciously like Seal and Adamski's "Killer". Assbring has succumbed to the same fate as her country-woman Lykke Li, forsaking early charm for a vague sense of attitude that's largely devoid of presence.

LAURA SNAPES



THE LUMINEERS

The Lumineers

DUALTONE

Pounding folk debut from Denver, Colorado-based trio. *By Graeme Thomson*



7/10

A RAMBUNCTIOUS BAND based, rather incongruously, in Colorado, The Lumineers create primal, pounding folk music which lead singer Wesley Schulz has likened to the sound of a “bunch of sailors on a ship, arm-in-arm”. But it’s not

just that they make music worth hearing; in their lengthy slog to overnight success the group also have a tale worth telling.

Originally from New Jersey, Schulz spent the best part of the last decade writing, demoing, performing and working numerous side-jobs, only to end up somewhere close to nowhere. Having landed in London, China and finally New York, he and Jeremiah Fraites, his songwriting partner-in-crime for the past seven years, found themselves feeling increasingly marooned among the hipsters and tricksters of Brooklyn.

In the end they struck gold in the Rockies. In 2009 Schulz and Fraites decamped to Denver. Enlisting cellist Neyla Pekarek, they honed their songs and let a little mountain air into their music, before heading up to Seattle last summer to record these eleven tracks. Even before the US release of their debut album in April, The Lumineers had begun to build a buzz, partly down to incessant touring but also thanks to

key exposure on TV and radio. By this summer their album had risen to 11 in the US charts; the single “Ho Hey” has to date shipped somewhere north of half a million copies.

In truth they have better songs, but as their vanguard anthem “Ho Hey” makes for a broadly representative advance party as they attempt to replicate their Stateside success in the UK. A cross between a briny sea-shanty and a chain gang stomp, the chanted verse is lifted by a chorus straight from a back room hootenanny. At these moments The Lumineers sound like nothing more adventurous than above-average roots revivalists. A propensity for pounding acoustic music, combined with period clobber, invite parallels with Mumford & Sons, the Avett Brothers or a more earthy Arcade Fire, comparisons which hold water through at least half of this record. The likes of “Flowers In Your Hair” and “Stubborn Love” are all

stamped rhythm, simple chord changes, fast finger-picking and propulsive forward motion. With its cannoning drums and primal hollers, “Submarines” wouldn’t sound out of place on *Funeral*. The celebratory “Big Parade” features decidedly analogue handclaps, while its borrowed words – “I was blind but now I see” – snare the aura of slightly shapeless spirituality which infuses the entire album.

This is all fine, but the best of The Lumineers lies closer to a kind of raw, spooked midnight music, suggestive of AA Bondy’s *When The Devil’s Loose*, Ryan Adams’ *Heartbreaker* and The Cave Singers’ *No Witch*. Of particular

SLEEVE NOTES

Produced by: Ryan Hadlock
Recorded: Bear Creek Studios, Woodinville, Washington State
Personnel: Wesley Schulz (guitar, lead vocals), Jeremiah Fraites (drums, percussion, mandolin, vocals), Neyla Pekarek (cello, mandolin, piano, vocals)

Q&A

Wesley Schulz



Did you deliberately want to make a very uncomplicated sounding record?

The rough edges and flaws, the humanity, is something we were consciously going for. A lot of our favourite records aren’t over produced, and we wanted a record that could be played through, front to back.

New York to Denver is an unlikely path to glory...

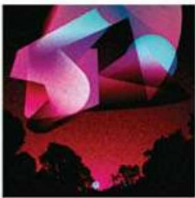
It was driven by economics. The cost of living in Brooklyn was too high, I had to work a number of jobs to pay rent and I didn’t have enough time to work on music. We unknowingly stumbled upon a thriving musical scene in Denver. We’d already hit our stride, the move only solidified the work as we had time to work the ideas out.

How are you coping with success in the US?

I don’t even know what it is that’s happened! It means I don’t have to work my side job, and I get to live the life I thought I wanted for a long time. That’s an odd thing. When you get exactly what you think you’re after you have to set new goals. It’s like a dog chasing a car: what does it do when it’s caught it? In our case, we’ve caught the car. What now? *INTERVIEW: GRAEME THOMSON*

note is “Slow It Down”, a racked tale of violence, fear and tenderness which requires nothing more than Schulz’s voice and an electric guitar to conjure late-night malevolence. “Charlie Boy”, an anti-war hymn that trades platitudes for something more opaque and unsettling, is equally spine-tingling, Fraites’ mournful mandolin and Schulz’s cracked voice combining to moving affect. Crunching finale “Morning Song”, meanwhile, proves Schulz can pen a gut-twisting lyric worthy of Costello at his most self-torturing: “Did you think of me when you made love to him/Was it the same as us?”

There is sporadic evidence of a desire to stretch out into other territories. On the quietly epic “Dead Sea” Pekarek’s cello and a well-turned minor chord add a Beatlesly undertow, while “Flapper Girl” is a graceful sing-along which sounds like it was written to accompany the flickering images of a silent film. It’s all accomplished with a nicely understated sense of drama. Nothing is overcooked, and there’s no sound or texture you couldn’t imagine being easily recreated by the band on some makeshift stage. Yet for all its attributes, this fine debut stirs as much for its sense of what The Lumineers may yet become as for what they currently are.



EMERALDS
Just To Feel Anything
EDITIONS MEGO

US synth trio's fifth proves an unsatisfying search for coherence
The latest album by the American trio of Mark

5/10

McGuire, John Elliott and Steve Hauschildt is a curiously mixed affair. The first four tracks are surprisingly limp-leaved, pastel-shaded electro-synth in a decidedly retro vein, like outtakes from an early '80s Michael Mann television production – the sub-Kraftwerk “Adrenochrome” being the weakest link. From then on, it gets better. On “The Loser Keeps America Clean” they hollow out a massive chasm of reverberating, cosmic feedback, while closer “Search For Me In The Wasteland” is a vast, mournful expanse of guitar minor chords and humid synth pads.

ROB YOUNG



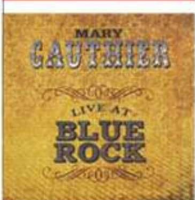
ERRORS
New Relics
ROCK ACTION RECORDS

Sparky Glaswegians take an uncertain turn
Their recent (third) album saw Errors modify their kosmische-based post-house template by adopting

6/10

warmly vivid, psych-pop hooks and revealing a new poignant fragility. Now, 10 months on, a mini-album. As its title implies, *New Relics* is concerned with progress and redundant technologies, and mixes analogue and digital sounds accordingly, but it sees them caught between nostalgia and futurism, uncertain which way to move. There's an update on Sakamoto's minimalism (“Grangehaven”) and a puzzling excess of wafty witch house and murmurous shoegazing, but the glittering “Ammaboa Glass” – a mix of African highlife and Chinese pop as if reworked by Rustie – proves that at least Errors aren't standing still.

SHARON O'CONNELL



MARY GAUTHIER
Live At Blue Rock
PROPER

Louisiana songwriter in the raw
The lives of drifters, outsiders and lost souls

7/10

have long provided fuel for country songwriters, but Mary Gauthier is more qualified than most to essay a hard-luck tale from the margins. Many of the tunes here, including “I Drink” and “Blood Is Blood”, are clawed from her past experience as an orphaned boozier and junkie, before music set her on the path to recovery. The spare live setting gives these acoustic-led songs an extra kick, her pithy voice finding a companion in the lyrical playing of Canadian, Grammy-Award-winning violinist Tania Elizabeth, most vividly expressed on “Drag Queens In Limousines”.

ROB HUGHES



BENJAMIN GIBBARD
Former Lives
CITY SLANG

Death Cab frontman offers selections from his musical diary
Venturing outside the cocoon of Death Cab For

8/10

Cutie on his first solo outing has enabled Ben Gibbard to try on new stylistic contexts as if they were outfits. He twice references his move from Seattle to LA – playfully in “Something's Rattling (Cowpoke)”, which juxtaposes his enunciated tenor against mariachi horns, and poignantly in the pedal steel-coloured breakup song “Broken Yolk In Western Sky”. Amid the Big Star jangle of “Teardrop Windows”, Gibbard references a Seattle landmark that dominated the city before being dwarfed by the Space Needle, while Aimee Mann's coolly cerebral persona is the perfect complement to his own on the hooky “Bigger Than Love”.

BUD SCOPPA

REVELATIONS

Larry Graham, Prince's favourite musician and slap-bass king



► Plenty of pop stars worship at the altar of Prince, but Larry Graham is one of the few who's revered by His Purpleness. Prince was always a fan of the influential slap-bass sound that Graham developed with Sly And The Family Stone; by the late 1980s, he'd adopted fellow Minnesotan Graham as his mentor. After the death of Prince's infant son Boy Gregory in 1996, a consoling talk from Graham apparently converted Prince to becoming a Jehovah's Witness.

“My grandchildren call him Uncle Prince,” chuckles Graham, 66, in his impossibly low baritone voice. “We jam all the time at Paisley Park. He knows my music backwards and forwards.”

Graham started out as a guitarist and developed his distinctive thumb-and-pluck bass style while sitting in for a bass player and an absent drummer (“the slap played the bass note but also stood in for a bass drum”). After several LPs with Graham Central Station, he joined a Jehovah's Witness commune in Jamaica, but finally returned to music under Prince's encouragement.

Other friends include neo-soul star Raphael Saadiq, who also appears on his new album. “I like to do what Sly did with his bands – a mix of black and white, male and female, young and old,” says Larry. “Keeps things interesting.” JOHN LEWIS



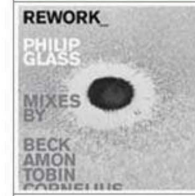
GILMORE & ROBERTS
The Innocent Left
NAVIGATOR

Third outing from country-tinged Yorkshire folk duo
Fiddler Katriona Gilmore

6/10

and guitarist Jamie Roberts have built an enviable live reputation, and “Doctor James” and the instrumental “Seven Left For Dead” typify their more barnstorming qualities (though you don't get the visual pizzazz of Roberts' lap-played guitar). “False Knight” offers a nod to tradition, while among several originals “Shuffle And Deal” shines brightest, lifted by stalking percussion and the sibling voices of Larkin Poe. Unusually for English folkies come western flavours like the dobro bounce of “Silver Screen” and the full-throttle bluegrass fiddle of “Over Snake Pass”. Little exceptional, but all likeable.

NEIL SPENCER



PHILIP GLASS
Rework
ORANGE MOUNTAIN MUSIC/
ERNEST JENNING/THE KORA
RECORDS

Beck-helmed electronic takes on composer's back cat

6/10

Amid the celebrations for Glass' 75th birthday comes this LP of remixes, and as is usual with the format, it's a blend of the mostly throwaway and occasionally essential. Memory Tapes' take on “Floe 87” and Nosaj Thing's melancholy electro version of “Knee 1” from *Einstein On The Beach* are cute but ultimately slight; Cornelius performs *Glassworks*' opening and pointlessly smoothes the jarring polyrhythms. But Beck, who co-ordinated the release, creates an excellent 20-minute suite called “NYC: 73-78” which takes in glossy synth swathes, ethereal vocals and even a section of driving gothic disco – a nice refraction of Glass' quietly proud humanity.

BEN BEAUMONT-THOMAS



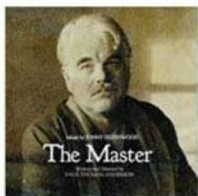
LARRY GRAHAM & GRAHAM CENTRAL STATION
Raise Up
MOOSICUS

Sly Stone's slap bass man returns with help from His Purpleness
Graham's 1974 debut is as

6/10

good a slice of deep, gospel-fried funk as anything he recorded with his old boss, Sly Stone, though subsequent LPs saw him flailing between disco and soul. His first release of this century is a tightly arranged, horn-heavy and sometimes overplayed set which focuses on his impossibly low voice. Three tracks feature his biggest fan, Prince (you can't really hear his backing vocals, but his guitar and keyboards provide an unmistakably purple imprint); there's a thunderously funky reading of Stevie's “Higher Ground”; while closer “One Day” is a lovely, Sly-ish shuffle featuring Raphael Saadiq.

JOHN LEWIS



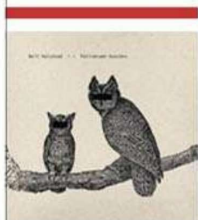
JONNY GREENWOOD
The Master OST
NONESUCH

Radiohead guitarist's second Paul Thomas Anderson score

6/10

Greenwood's previous soundtracks have experimented with high modernism (*From Here On Out*), free jazz (*Body Song*) and Japanese folk (*Norwegian Wood*). His second collaboration with director Paul Thomas Anderson is almost entirely orchestral, dominated by Debussy-esque romanticism (like "Alethia"), with touches of Charles Ives-style dissonance (check the rather lovely "Back Beyond"). Anderson's thinly veiled portrait of Scientology is set in the 1950s, and the period pieces – string-laden ballads by Ella Fitzgerald, Helen Forrest and Jo Stafford – provide some light relief, as does the Art Ensemble Of Chicago-style junkyard jazz of Greenwood's "Able-Bodied Seaman".

JOHN LEWIS



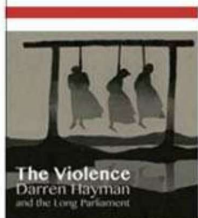
NEIL HALSTEAD
Palindrome Hunches
SONIC CATHEDRAL

Third solo album from former Slowdive/Mojave 3 man

7/10

As underrated as he is understated, Halstead has long moved on from his shoegazing days, swapping soundscapes for exquisite songcraft – but there's a common dreaminess to both. Musically the pastoral mood of songs such as "Digging Shelters" and "Tied To You" evokes Donovan's *Fairytale*, the warm voice and gentle guitar providing the song's spine, textured with splashes of double bass, violin and piano. Like Boo Hewerdine, there's a lovely, unobtrusive intimacy about his songwriting, so graceful it drifts by like a sailboat on the horizon. When your attention drifts you barely notice it's there. But when you do, it evokes a warm and evocative pleasure.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON



DARREN HAYMAN AND THE LONG PARLIAMENT
The Violence
FORTUNA POP!

Songs about witches, by London indie troubador

8/10

In the days when he fronted indie-popsters Hefner, Darren Hayman worked from a fairly small lyrical palette: girls he'd slept with, and girls he wanted to sleep with, was about the size of it. Women are the subject of *The Violence*, although credit to Hayman for expanding his brief, as these 20 songs chronicle the Essex Witch Trials of 1645. His is a personal, emotive take, and it proves very effective: "Elizabeth Clarke", the tale of a hanging put to sorrowful strums and melancholy brass, plucks deftly at the heartstrings, while a couple of interpretations of old Royalist songs prove that he's done his homework.

LOUIS PATTISON



MICK HUCKNALL
American Soul
ATCO

Simply Red man covers the classics

5/10

On his first solo outing Mick Hucknall has made precisely the album we might have expected, recording a dozen US soul covers. His interpretation of the title, however, proves pleasingly inclusive, tending towards the downbeat and finding room for Antony And The Johnsons' "Hope There's Someone" and Perry Como standard "It's Impossible" alongside such staples as "That's How Strong My Love Is" (tepid), "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood" (tender) and a decent swing at Etta James' "I'd Rather Go Blind". Clearly heartfelt, *American Soul* is more rewarding than Phil Collins' recent album of Motown covers, but is ultimately defined by a similar sense of futility.

GRAEME THOMSON

WE'RE NEW HERE
My Jerusalem



► "A post-modern gothic soul revue," is how singer Jeff Klein describes My Jerusalem, the band he assembled two years ago with members of The Polyphonic Spree, Great Northern and The Twilight Singers. Klein's career began in 1999 as a solo artist, releasing three albums under his own name, after which he got sidetracked performing in other people's bands. But after four years playing keyboards with The Gutter Twins, he began to feel restless. "I started having lots of song ideas and there was a hunger to record them," Klein recalls. "There was a kind of awakening in me and everything clicked into place."

Compared to the simmering disquiet of its 2010 predecessor *Gone For Good*, the band's second album *Preachers*, recorded in three weeks in Spoon drummer Jim Eno's studio, comes over as an anguished howl in the dark. "We didn't consciously try to write a dark record," Klein reflects, "but there were a lot of demons that needed to be excised." While he won't divulge the nature of these demons, he will say: "the experience was definitely cathartic, as all musical experiences should be, but we were careful not to let it become a selfish record. You want to allow other people to get lost in it with you." FIONA STURGES



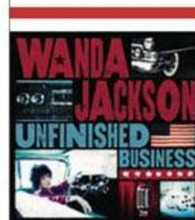
CATHERINE IRWIN
Little Heater
THRILL JOCKEY

Louisville songstress warms up beautifully

8/10

Given her standing as the dominant creative half of Freakwater, the punkish-roots band she shares with Eleventh Dream Day drummer Janet Bean, Irwin's solo career is less than prolific. But while *Little Heater* may be her first in a decade, it's evidently been worth the wait. These stark, largely unadorned folk-country songs are given added edge by Irwin's faintly metallic voice, with delicate shadings from the likes of producer and multi-instrumental wizz Tara Jane O'Neil and pedal steeler Marc Orleans. Though the star guest is fellow Louisville local Bonnie 'Prince' Billy, who adds to the delicious air of rural disquiet on duets "Mockingbird" and "To Break Your Heart".

ROB HUGHES



WANDA JACKSON
Unfinished Business
SUGAR HILL

Mighty 35th album from the First Lady of Rockabilly

8/10

First-time producer Justin Townes Earle has succeeded Jack White as guardian of the Wanda Jackson sound, guiding her through a fascinating mix of covers and originals. Both he and Jackson make a fine fist of it too, drafting in his own band as back-up and serving to magnify her wildcat vocals rather than attempt any form of radical reinvention. She's at her venomous best on "I'm Tore Down", an R'n'B chicken-shaker with real pizzazz, while there's a terrific gospel cover of the Woody Guthrie-Jeff Tweedy tune "California Stars" and "Am I Even A Memory", a great shuffle-country duet with Earle himself.

ROB HUGHES



JEFF THE BROTHERHOOD
Hypnotic Nights
WARNER BROS

Dan Auerbach produces the Nashville duo's major-label debut with mixed results

6/10

Jeff The Brotherhood, a guitar-and-drum duo, have been knocking about for a decade, recording for Jack White's Third Man among others, and here enlist The Black Keys' Dan Auerbach to co-produce their major-label debut. Brothers Jake and Jamin Orrall plough a familiar semi-feral blues-punk furrow for the most part, with varying degrees of success, but are best when they depart from the template. "Hypnotic Mind" has an ace unhinged solo, "Reign Of Fire" is pastoral folk-metal, "Hypnotic Winter" ends with a pleasing outburst of organ and the Sabbath cover "Changes" is a rather beautiful piece of unexpected electro-soul.

PETER WATTS



KREAYSHAWN
Somethin 'Bout Krey
COLUMBIA

6/10
She's got swag coming out her ovaries, y'know After becoming internet-famous off the back of her single "Gucci Gucci",

rapper Kreyashawn attempts to go beyond one-hit wonder status, and thanks to her Valley Girl charisma and omnivorous sexual gaze she mostly succeeds. Whether her dead-eyed, detuned monotone is gratingly vacuous or endearingly moronic is in the ear of the beholder, but her flow, somewhere between Gucci Mane and Tanya Winley, is always nimble and often hilarious. When she's perving on beach babes on "Summertime", making money/food metaphors with 2 Chainz on "Breakfast" and threatening to immolate her boyfriend's house on "Left Ey3", she goes harder than most.

BEN BEAUMONT-THOMAS



LAVENDER DIAMOND
Incorruptible Heart
PARACADUTE

8/10
Second LP from Becky Stark's theatrical LA hipsters

This Los Angeles quartet have a knack for writing material that you swear you've heard before. On their second album in ten years, it means that you are virtually humming along to songs the first time you hear them, be it the Karen Carpenter-ish "Everybody's Heart's Breaking Now", the "Walk On The Wild Side"-inspired "I Don't Recall" or the ersatz folk ballad "Just Passing By". The backing is beautifully understated – distorted Wurlitzers, hillbilly acoustic guitars and hymnal pianos, with the occasional, wilful excursion into synth pop – but it's Becky Stark's pure, unaffected folksy sigh that's a thoroughly comforting presence throughout.

JOHN LEWIS

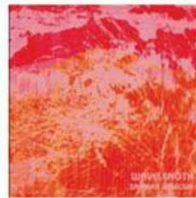


LINDSTRØM
Smalhans
SMALLTOWN SUPERSOUND

7/10
Winter warmers from the Norwegian space-disco king The antidote to chilly Nordic-noir cop shows, Norway's Hans-Peter

Lindstrøm makes electronic dance music that radiates wholesome, warm-blooded hedonism. Having indulged his left-field synth-rock side on *Six Cups Of Rebel* earlier this year, Lindstrøm returns to club-friendly electronica with this fifth studio album, a lightly conceptual affair featuring six extended tracks, each named after a traditional Norwegian dish. From the Kraftwerk-meets-Orbital throbber "Rå-å-kō-st" to the New Order-ish shimmers of "Fåår-i-kåål", this is hardly Lindstrøm's most experimental work. But like all the best dance music, it has an effortless momentum and addictive melodic pull that renders serious criticism redundant.

STEPHEN DALTON



SAMARA LUBELSKI
Wavelength
DE STIJL

7/10
Gently sighed dream pop, drawn from the night sky Sometime band member for Thurston Moore,

collaborator with Matt Valentine and Marcia Bassett (of Hototogisu) and staff at the legendary Rare Book Room recording studio, Samara Lubelski is deep in the midst of the East Coast underground, working with renegade American artists. It's a bit of a surprise, then, to clock the '70s European vibe at the heart of Lubelski's own songs. "Wavelength" is a particularly sweet example, her gentle, laissez-faire voice breathing over tightly wound psych guitar movement and loose-limbed strum, rolling out hermetic pop visions. It's a quiet, unassuming joy, full of songs cast benignly to the stars.

JON DALE

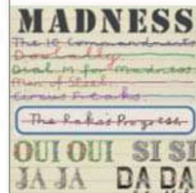


LERA LYNN
Have You Met Lera Lynn?
FLOATING WORLD

8/10
No? You really should do... Locals in her adopted hometown of Athens, Georgia will already

be pretty familiar with Lynn as the voice behind the folk-pop outfit Birds & Wire, though this ravishing solo debut firmly plants her in the same country lineage as Tammy Wynette and namesake Loretta. The breadth of styles covered is impressive enough, from the rollicking revenge tale "Gasoline" and spooked ballad "Bobby, Baby" to the Nashville-leaning "Good Hearted Man" and a cover of Leonard Cohen's "I Tried To Leave You". But her elegant songcraft is more than matched by a warm, classic voice that's capable of both teary intimacy and open-throated mutiny.

ROB HUGHES



MADNESS
Oui Oui Si Si Ja Ja Da Da
LUCKY SEVEN

7/10
The Magnificent 7 hark back to reggae and Motown for album No 10 Madness's 10th album lacks the overarching

psychogeographical theme of their last outing, and also misses the familiar toytown production quirks of their regular collaborators Langer & Winstanley. Instead Clive Langer teams up with ToeRag's Liam Watson and Charlie Andrew, and the emphasis here is on standalone songs, with each band member apparently harking back to teenage memories. The doomy dancehall of Chas Smyth's "Death Of A Rude Boy" and Mike Barson's Motown-inspired "My Girl 2" are both likeable singles, and the Thompson/Barson break-up anthem "Circus Freaks" is a classic Madness construction, but it's Woody's school-boy diary "Leon" that packs emotional punch.

JOHN LEWIS



THE MOMMYHEADS
Vulnerable Boy
DROMEDARY

9/10
Score one for the underdogs Overlooked by all but a tiny core of fervent fans during their '90s heyday in San

Francisco, The Mommyheads must feel like they're making music in a void since reforming in 2008. This, the third album in their latest iteration, is the brainy, virtuosic quartet's most ambitious and challenging work yet, marked by radical tonal shifts à la "Paranoid Android", passages of shimmering McCartney-esque pop giving way to jagged shards of proggy, wigged-out ferocity. "Science And Reason", "Gimme Silence" and "Medicine Show" comprise a mind-blowing display of rarefied musicality, at once deeply melancholy, self-mocking and defiant. The title of the LP's coda says it all: "No One Gives a Damn About Your Band".

BUD SCOPPA

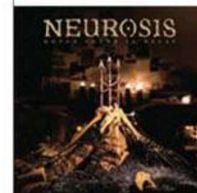


MY JERUSALEM
Preachers
THE END RECORDS

8/10
Darkly majestic second LP from Jeff Klein and friends The Austin/New Orleans band comprising Jeff Klein, former guitarist and

keyboard player with The Gutter Twins and The Twilight Singers, plus members of The Polyphonic Spree and Great Northern, follow up their acclaimed debut, 2010's *Gone For Good*, with a spellbindingly malevolent second LP inhabited by sadistic clergymen, broken souls and nightmarish creatures. There's a Caveau, fire-and-brimstone atmosphere to "Preachers" ("we're all animals in the wilderness"), "Shatter Together" and "Death Valley", in which Klein's gravelly baritone sends shivers down the spine, while the country tinged "This Time" channels Johnny Cash with its cynical attempts at redemption.

FIONA STURGES



NEUROSIS
Honor Found In Decay
NEUROT

8/10
Heavyweight 10th from Oakland, California rockers Neurosis have cut a long and lonely furrow in their

25-year history, their flinty exterior taking on appealing blemishes and contours as the decades roll by. Recorded with Steve Albini, *Honor Found In Decay* confirms that they are a metal band, yes – but one as reminiscent of Silver Mount Zion or Swans as any more traditionally heavy-rocking concern. Craggy riffs are swathed in misty synthesiser, and a firm control of dynamics lend "Bleeding The Pigs" and "Casting Of The Ages" a compelling sense of ebb and flow, raging intensity giving way to sombre piano lamentations and vocalist Scott Kelly's weathered, Tom Waits growl.

LOUIS PATTISON



TIM HECKER AND DANIEL LOPATIN

Instrumental Tourist

SOFTWARE

Cosmic collaboration from two electronic masters. *By Stephen Trousse*



7/10

Here", which spliced an ectoplasmic sliver of Chris De Burgh's "Lady In Red" to a pixelated clip from an old Mario Kart game – you might have taken that confession with a cellarful of salt. Nevertheless, since 2009's compilation *Rifts* brought his work to a wider audience, he's got into the (altered) zone, and is now shaping up to be the hardest-working man in dronebiz. In the past year alone he has launched his own label (Software Recording Co), overseen the release of a series of EPs and singles, edited a 'zine (*Cool Drool*), worked on an EP of remixes of his 2011 album *Replica*, produced a split album with Rene

IN AN EARLY interview, Daniel Lopatin, aka Oneohtrix Point Never, attributed his hermetic sonic obsession and reluctance to play in a band to megalomania. Listening to the reticent cosmic melancholy of his music – most famously his "echojam", "Nobody

Hell and, at the behest of Saatchi & Saatchi, written a score for a robotic flying circus.

Lest he be accused of resting on his laurels, his latest brainwave is SSTUDIOS, a series of electronic collaborations, inaugurated with this jam with Canadian cosmonaut Tim Heckler. If Lopatin has been crowned the philosopher king of a certain strain of peculiarly Brooklynite new wave of new age – divining YouTube satori in nuggets of '80s MOR, paying homage to mid-'80s synthpop with his label partner as Ford & Lopatin – then Heckler represents a more sober tradition: lecturing on sound art, releasing albums through venerable postrock and electronica labels like Kranky and Mille Plateaux, recording conceptualised suites (2011's *RaveDeath*, 1972 was based on field recordings of a pipe organ in a church in Reykjavik). The combination of the two promised a novel double-act, sacred and profane, of sonic mysticism. For this collaboration, though, they left preconceptions at the door to "embrace the tropes and techniques of jazz-based improvisation".

Q&A

Daniel Lopatin



Have you been a fan of Tim's work for a while?

For sure. I first heard *Haunt Me, Haunt Me...* in the early 2000s, and then caught him later on doing a gig at Harvard sometime circa 2005. He was doing a max set with contact mics in his mouth and managed a completely romantic set with none of the oblique signifiers I was typically accustomed to. His sense of melody was singular.

What impressed you about his solo records?

His ability to extend and criticise the "ambient" frame through a uniquely sculptural and personal sound, but something ineffable, as well. His music always reminded me of Rodin's engorged, twisted bodies in motion.

What surprised you about working with him on this record?

His technical rigour was surprising because I had kinda pinned him as a melody guy. His fader mix style is supermusical and was a pleasure to watch; it was like being at a live surgery demonstration.

The title "Whole Earth Tascam" is suggestive of the 1970s Whole Earth movement. Are you nostalgic for that optimism?

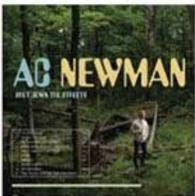
No, but I'm not nostalgic by nature. Like most of the titles we're often making reference to the impossibility of their conceits and the bravado involved therein. *STEPHEN TROUSSE*

Nevertheless, a concept of sorts seems to have emerged. *Instrumental Tourist* is apparently based around the "acoustic resonance of digitally sourced 'Instruments Of The World'" – and sure enough tracks like "Racist Drone" and "Grey Geisha" bear the trace of digital approximations of Andean pipes or Japanese koto. The title of the track "Whole Earth Tascam" – which sounds like Art Of Noise's "Moments In Love" being slowly lowered into an abyss – is suggestive. In 1966 Stewart Brand campaigned for NASA to release the first satellite photo of earth, in the hope that it might generate a heightened sense of the wonder and fragility of the planet. A lot of *Instrumental Tourist*, then, might be an attempt to imagine a sonic equivalent of that picture – a kind of cosmic take on Jon Hassel's "fourth-world music", conjured from the ethnomusical MIDI kitsch – from urban cacophony (the industrial glitch and sigh of "Uptown Psychodelia"), through mid-ocean calm ("Grey Geisha") to radiophonic rainforest polyphony ("Ritual For Consumption").

However, as sublime as much of *Instrumental Tourist* is, it rarely fulfills that promise of improvisation, of a real sonic engagement or play, and struggles to exceed the sum of its parts. You could reasonably identify individual tracks as bearing the fingerprints of each auteur – Heckler's electroacoustic signal decay on "Scene From A French Zoo", Lopatin's loopy bliss on "Whole Earth Tascam" – so much so that it might have easily been promoted as a split release without anyone being the wiser. *Instrumental Tourist* ventures into few new territories then, but, as another edifice in Lopatin's increasingly imperial ambitions, for now it will do nicely.

SLEEVE NOTES

► **Produced by:** Tim Heckler and Daniel Lopatin
Recorded at: Mexican Summer Studio, Brooklyn
Personnel: Tim Heckler and Daniel Lopatin



AC NEWMAN

Shut Down The Streets

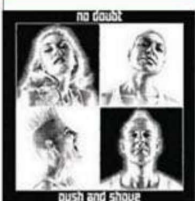
FIRE

Another piecemeal effort from Canadian songwriter

6/10

As a member of Zumpano, Carl Newman was part responsible for two of the '90s' most charming pop records, *Goin' Through Changes* in particular effortlessly channeling the ornate songwriting of The Left Banke and Jimmy Webb. Nothing he's done since, whether solo or in The New Pornographers, has been as strong, and *Shut Down The Streets* is no different. Newman's a decent songwriter whose songs never quite ignite – their seemingly light touch feels rather hard-won. Personal upheaval lines the stories of the two strongest songs, "Hostages" and "They Should Have Shut Down The Streets" – more like this would be welcome.

JON DALE



NO DOUBT

Push And Shove

INTERSCOPE

First album in more than a decade from the Californian ska punks

3/10

No Doubt's first album since the interregnum of Gwen Stefani's solo career was initially earmarked for release in 2010: two years of mixing and post-production doesn't appear to have assisted this tepid collection. Aside from the Lilt-advert reggae of "Sparkle" and the homeopathic reggaeton of "Settle Down", there is little invocation of their ska-punk roots, nor do we have the heavyweight producers (Neptunes, Nellee Hooper, New Order) who gave Stefani's solo albums a New Pop nous. "Heaven" is a decent stab at '80s synth pop; "Looking Hot" and "Push And Shove" mix bubblegum R&B with ragga-inspired middle eights; the rest is rather forgettable.

JOHN LEWIS



BETH ORTON

Sugaring Season

ANTI-

Sweet return from the English folk paragon

8/10

On her first album since the birth of her daughter in 2006, Beth Orton reminds us how valuable a songwriter she is. Her voice remains unique, and she stretches it into new territory here – on "Candles" it floats on thermals in her upper range, while "See Through Blue" sees her adopting a dramatic declamatory tone amid a country waltz. Many of these songs are faithful English folk compositions reminiscent of her one-time collaborator Bert Jansch, but Adele-worthy piano ballad "Last Leaves Of Autumn" is the most moving moment on the album. Orton remains a luminous presence among often monotone peers.

BEN BEAUMONT-THOMAS



PSEUDO NIPPON

Colorama

TIGERTRAP

Faux-Japanese pranksters display flashes of warped electro-punk genius

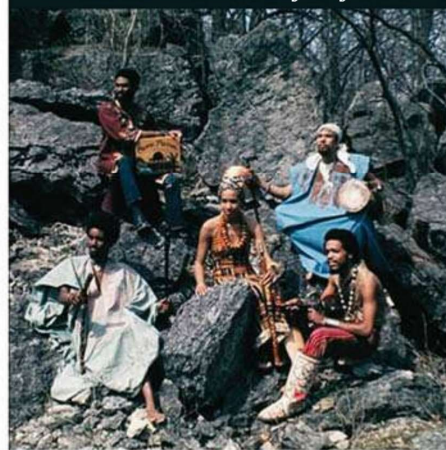
7/10

An impish British art-punk project masquerading as a deranged Japanese bubblegum-pop trio, Pseudo Nippon are inspirational and irritating on a sliding scale according to your tolerance for dissonant, crazy-kitsch surrealism. Recorded in a squatted factory, the group's second album is more confident and consistent than its scrappy 2011 predecessor, *Universal Pork Tai Chi*. While desiccated electronic ear-chompers like "Cat With Shark Teeth" and "Universal Brotherhood" suggest Mark E Smith yelping over Squarepusher-style laptop gabba-punk, a more highbrow sensibility emerges with menacing fish-based poem, "Jewelled Eyes Of A Carp".

STEPHEN DALTON

REVELATIONS

The Pyramids and their round-the-world musical odyssey



➤ In 1972, in their first year of existence, The Pyramids ended up with a CV that few people manage in a lifetime. They were fortunate enough to study music at Ohio's ultra-liberal Antioch College just as the Ford Foundation donated millions into a progressive music scheme, overseen by avant-jazz pianist Cecil Taylor. Saxophonist Idris Ackamoor, his flute-playing girlfriend Margo Simmons and bassist Kimathi Asante were given a round-the-world ticket, a monthly stipend, a high-quality tape recorder and an open brief to explore new directions in jazz. They landed in Paris, met a drummer, blagged some freeform jazz gigs in Amsterdam and spent the next nine months exploring Africa. They studied with regal court musicians in Ghana, ceremonial drummers in Kenya, and singing priests in Ethiopian caves. On their return to America in 1973 they recorded their first album, *Lalibela*, followed by *King Of Kings* (1974) and *Birth/Speed/Merging* (1976) – all fine examples of spacey, Afrocentric jazz which have just been re-released. "When we play ethnic African instruments, we don't try to replicate authentic African music," says Idris Ackamoor. "We play them in an otherworldly manner. It's music you might hear on another planet."

JOHN LEWIS



THE PYRAMIDS

Otherworldly

DISKO B

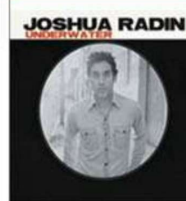
Afro-jazz mavericks release their first album in 35 years

"We were way ahead of our time," says The Pyramids' saxophonist Idris

8/10

Ackamoor, "so we decided to let time catch up." Recorded at Hans-Joachim Irmeler's Faust studios, The Pyramids' first album in 35 years certainly recalls the space-age jazzers whose careers ran parallel to them. The African chants, thumb pianos and wobbly alto sax solos invoke Pharoah Sanders; the off-kilter funk tracks recall the Art Ensemble Of Chicago, while the worldbeat textures hint at Don Cherry. But there's also a slightly manic punk energy present, particularly with their two-bass concept, which mixes a pulsating double bass with some scribbly, Peter Hook-style bass guitar chords.

JOHN LEWIS



JOSHUA RADIN

Underwater

JOSHUA RADIN

Underwater

SO RECORDINGS

Poised, precise lesson in songcraft

Having flirted with a beefier sound on 2010's *The Rock And The Tide*, Radin's fourth record

7/10

returns to first principles: elegant, hushed, almost terminally understated acoustic songs which often recall James Taylor, Paul Simon ("Underwater") and, on "Anywhere Your Love Goes", a less grizzled Ray LaMontagne. There's a classic analogue feel to both Radin's songwriting and the just-so performances, accentuated by the presence of Jim Keltner, Benmont Tench and Jimmie Haskell's graceful string arrangements. It's muted, certainly, and Radin's breathy voice occasionally grates, but *Underwater* possesses a quiet drama which reveals itself as slowly and surely as a sunrise.

GRAEME THOMSON



DUNCAN REID

Little Big Head

LITTLE BIG HEAD

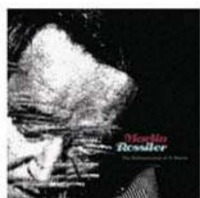
The Peter Pan of powerpop

Keeper of the powerpop flame since fronting London punk band

7/10

The Boys back in the late '70s, the much older 21st-Century Reid still orbits a world where romantic angst is best expressed via three major chords and a harmony-packed chorus. *Little Big Head* echoes with the savvy melodic charm of Stiff-era Nick Lowe or Wreckless Eric, girl trouble never too far away ("Gotta Call Simone", "Kelly's Gone Insane"). Reid updates the teen death ballad on the biker eulogy "His Name", and cuts a country dash on "If That's What You Want", but for the most part he remains fixated by broken hearts and bouncy singalongs.

TERRY STAUNTON



MARTIN ROSSITER
The Defenestration Of St Martin
DROP ANCHOR

Long overdue, emotionally raw solo debut

8/10

Eight years after the demise of his former band, Gene frontman Martin Rossiter's first album under his own name doesn't signal any radical departure in subject matter, but it's a decidedly sparser backdrop for his erudite, torch-like confessionals. Accompanied for the most part by a solitary piano, the naked balladeering addresses inadequate fathers on "Three Points On A Compass" ("the only thing I got from you was my name"), and the sweet surrender of suicide on "Let The Waves Carry You". It's not all doom and gloom, though, with Martin's considerable wit to fore while mocking his own pre-teen angst on "I Must Be Jesus".

TERRY STAUNTON



SARIN SMOKE
Vent
MIE

Brain-expanded psych jams... and all in a good cause

8/10

Sarin Smoke is Tom Carter, guitarist for Texan folk-droners Charalambides, and Pete Swanson, formerly of noise duo Yellow Swans, and the occasion of *Vent* is not a happy one. On tour this year, Carter contracted pneumonia, and this vinyl-only release is to raise funds towards his treatment. More to recommend this than charity, though. Six tracks veer between blissful vistas and feedback drone, recalling out-there Velvets and the cacophonous guitar experiments of Skullflower's Matt Bower. But even in the depths of the 11-minute "Pranayama", a miasma of solo shredding and whirring oscillators, there's a delicacy of texture that's most inviting.

LOUIS PATTISON



LUCAS SANTTANA
The God Who Devastates Also Cures
MAIS UM DISCOS

Technicolor break-up album from Brazilian post-modernist

6/10

Where his last album, *Sem Nostalgia* (his first UK release), revolved around his post-bossa guitar, the mercurial Santtana pulls out all stops here. A blast of mournful orchestral soul on the opening title track is followed by jittery Talking Heads funk, faux reggae, a brassy instrumental and a dip into MOR balladry, randomly leavened by dub echoes, falsetto choruses, Bollywood strings and '80s drum machines. It's entertaining but overly scattered stuff, focused only by Lucas' lost-love mood. In the midst of his gloom comes "Now No One Has Anything", a fine, minimalist protest song.

NEIL SPENCER



JACK SAVORETTI
Before The Storm
FULLFILL

Polished third outing from mid-Atlantic songwriter

6/10

Somewhere it's always 1975 on a California freeway, and a good-looking twentysomething dude is feeling like a "Crazy Fool" going through "Changes" and imploring "Come Shine A Light On Me". Even Jack Savoretti's burnished, blue-eyed soul voice can't rescue such singer-songwriter clichés, especially when they are married to semi-acoustic accompaniments from the Eagles template ("The Proposal" is virtually a "Take It Easy" rewrite). With James Morrison's producer Martin Terefe overseeing, it's all given a winning gloss, however, and Savoretti's gruff-but-tender vocals reach out on super-catchy standouts "Not Worthy" and "Knock Knock". It's his time, and he knows it.

NEIL SPENCER

HOW TO BUY... SAM PREKOP/ THE SEA AND CAKE



THE SEA AND CAKE
The Biz

THRILL JOCKEY, 1995

The Biz was the Chicago band's third album in just over 12 months, following their

1994 self-titled debut, and 1995's *Nassau*. Despite it being a more jam-based record than the previous two, there's no dearth of ideas here – the protracted instrumental patches are what earned The Sea And Cake their reputation for blending jazz with post-rock.

8/10



SAM PREKOP
Sam Prekop

THRILL JOCKEY, 1999

Recently reissued by Thrill Jockey for their 20th anniversary celebrations, The Sea And Cake

frontman's debut solo album has been credited by some as epitomizing the Chicago post-rock sound of the late '90s. Produced by Jim O'Rourke, it's certainly one of the softest and warmest in the genre, though not without its anxieties.

8/10



THE SEA AND CAKE
Oui

THRILL JOCKEY, 2000

Oui shared the same American release date as Radiohead's

seminal *Kid A*, though the similarity ends with both records' vanguard forays into electronic music. Oui was no musical volte face, though it did iron out the unpredictability that had defined past The Sea And Cake records.

7/10

LAURA SNAPES



SCHNEIDER TM
Construction Sounds
BUREAU B

Disgruntled Berliner's industrial magic

8/10

As if living in Europe's number one destination for stag parties and penurious ravers isn't bad enough, Schneider TM's Dirk Dresselhaus has to put up with Berlin's endless gentrification. Best-known for his synthy cover of "There Is A Light That Never Goes Out", Dresselhaus is a resourceful producer who dabbles in theatre and avant-noise. So for his sixth album he decided to record the constant cacophony of construction in his Prenzlauer Berg district, reassembling the treated drilling and grinding into haunting ambient pieces, not least the enigmatic scrape of "Container" and didgeridoo-style burbling of "Bimanual Complexity".

PIERS MARTIN



THE SEA AND CAKE
Runner
THRILL JOCKEY

Chicagoans break new ground on 10th LP

8/10

After 18 years together, The Sea And Cake are clearly greater than frontman Sam Prekop. But Prekop's solo LPs have occasionally indicated the band's direction, and his *Old Punch Card* from 2010 was a set of rather joyless electronica. It was daubed on The Sea And Cake's 2011 mini-album, *Moonlight Butterfly*, and didn't always fit well. But on *Runner*, the experimentation was part of the process. Prekop created first with synths rather than guitar, and the warm static fits as naturally with the band's jazzy post-rock as John McEntire's splashy cymbals. The trajectory from upbeat, Neil Finn-type numbers to delicate, bruised songs feels flatly linear, but Prekop's lyrical ruminations on distance and direction never lag.

LAURA SNAPES



SIMPLE MINDS
5 x 5 Live
EMI

Thrilling souvenir of this year's back-catalogue concerts

8/10

Early in 2012, Simple Minds toured a show in which they performed only songs from their first five albums. The experiment worked remarkably well, both on stage and now on record. Three parts authentic recreation to one part muscular reboot, the unsettling music weaves a convincingly atmospheric spell. The most thrilling performances are culled from their 1980 classic album, *Empires And Dance*, but there's also room for stellar versions of "King Is White And In The Crowd", "Scar", "Love Song" and "Wasteland". And crucially, the odd showboating bellow aside, Jim Kerr behaves himself.

GRAEME THOMSON



SROM One

ACCRETIONS

Uneasy listening from the electro-noise underground

A composer, teacher and theatrical sound designer, Stephanie Robinson's

6/10

uncompromising debut under her new drone-tronica alias features a series of heavily treated single-note pieces originally improvised on vintage analogue synths. The name is an acronym for "The Spontaneous Rupture of Membranes", which is also the title of one of the LP's more accessible dark-ambient tracks. While Robinson's work may sound esoteric on paper, much of it has a visceral energy and horror-movie intensity. "Anger Turned Inward" suggests a squadron of robot wasps battling gale-force winds, while the fuzz racket of "Spontaneous Regeneration" sounds like a million fire-alarms in the bowels of Hell.

STEPHEN DALTON



STARS The North

ALIVE/ATO RECORDS

Return to form for romantic electro-indie Canadians

Stars are known for their democratic approach to music-

7/10

making. With the addition of former Land Of Talk guitarist Chris McCarron, all five members contributed to music and lyrics on their sixth album, which was recorded in a remote studio north of Montreal. This all-for-one-one-for-all method has faltered in the past, but here they have produced a cohesive work that marries gauzy dreampop with more robust indie-rock. Amid the characteristic romanticism, there's a lyrical humour that is at its most compelling in "Do You Want To Die Together?" in which a warring couple take the phrase "Til death do us part" too far.

FIONA STURGES



THE STAVES Dead & Born & Grown

ATLANTIC

Sibling trio expertly surf the folk revival

Jessica, Camilla and Emily Staveley-Taylor may sound like protagonists in an Enid

8/10

Blyton story, though fresh from support slots with Bon Iver and Michael Kiwanuka, they're the latest voices in British folk-pop hoping to make a Marlingesque transition into the mainstream. On this evidence, there's no reason why they shouldn't pull it off. Produced by Glyn and Ethan Johns (whose credits include the Stones, Ryan Adams and, yes, Laura Marling), *Dead & Born & Grown* is a debut of rare sophistication, bringing together lilting acoustic guitars and lyrical poeticism. But the real ace up their sleeves is their exquisite harmonies, showcased most effectively on the opener "Wisely & Slow".

FIONA STURGES

REVELATIONS

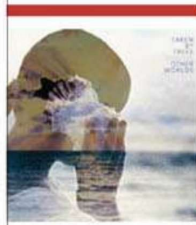
Tracey Thorn on how you create Christmas in the spring...



► "I've always wanted to make a Christmas record. Every year, when the Christmas albums start appearing in November, I get jealous and wish I had one coming out. Last year, I made a resolution to get recording in January to be ready for the following Christmas. And so that's just what I did.

"I was ill in bed just before Christmas last year, so it was a perfect opportunity to do a bit of song research. I got my laptop and searched for every Christmassy, wintry, snowy, seasonal song ever written and tried to work out which ones I thought I could do justice to. They're not all strictly Christmas songs, but if they mentioned winter or even just being cold, that was good enough for me. It's quite varied; I just wanted to do each song in a way that suited it. There's a full, lush string section on two of the songs and a brass band on another. The brass band were told to imagine it was a freezing cold Saturday afternoon on a British high street, just before Christmas, shoppers all around, sleet starting to fall. But it could be difficult to get into the spirit, recording in spring. Were we putting too many sleigh bells on, or not enough?"

STEPHEN DALTON



TAKEN BY TREES Other Worlds

SECRETLY CANADIAN

Blissful tropicália from Swedish indie queen

Following her time in The Concretes, and a cameo with Peter, Bjorn And John, Victoria Bergsman might have reasonably sustained

8/10

a career as reigning queen of sulky Scandipop. It's to her credit then, that since her '07 solo debut she's ranged further afield. '09's *East Of Eden* saw her collaborate winningly with Sufi musicians in Pakistan. Now she's drifted to Hawaii and with the help of producer/Tough Alliance stalwart Henning Fürst, she's confected a blissful collection of new Balearic love songs, all heat-haze lap steel, blanched St Etienne dub, steel drums and Vini Reilly Echoplex. With Bergsman's dourly dreamy voice and wistful songcraft, it's recognisably indiepop, but sent delightfully pie-eyed on Blue Hawaiians.

STEPHEN TROUSSE



TAMARYN Tender New Signs

MEXICAN SUMMER

Loveless pearly dewdrops from Californian duo

What is it with the shoegaze revival? The more its young

7/10

practitioners Xerox the original source, the better they sound. Joining the unoriginal but enjoyable likes of Serena-Maneesh, Spotlight Kid and A Place To Bury Strangers are boy-girl duo Tamaryn and Rex John Shelverton, whose second album painstakingly recreates the sounds and melodies of peak-era My Bloody Valentine, Cocteau Twins, The Jesus And Mary Chain and Joy Division with a slavish devotion that borders on the obsessive-compulsive. You want to hate the way Tamaryn's sexy mumbles dissolve within Shelverton's lysergic emanations. But you can't, because it's almost always excellent.

GARRY MULHOLLAND



TENEBROUS LIAR

End Of The Road

TV RECORDS

Rollicking rock and thoughtful pop from literate Londoners

Steve Gullick's loquacious musos have produced a

7/10

cracker of an album, switching stylishly between razor-strewn sludge rock and quieter, more contemplative fare dominated not by excitable guitars but by Gullick's gentle vocals. The influence of America c1991 is strong – Sonic Youth on "Burn On A Sunday", the Nirvana-like patterns of "Erase The Days" – but on songs like the growling, prowling, seductively unforgiving "Get Back" they are firmly staking out their own territory. The sheer weirdness of the dreamy Creole-esque title track and David Lynch-style torch song "Pieces For You" only add to the considerable charm.

PETER WATTS



TRACEY THORN Tinsel And Lights

STRANGE FEELING

Everything But The Baby Jesus – Tracey Thorn's Christmas makeover

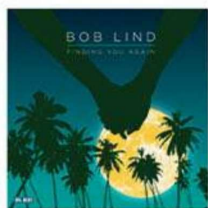
8/10

A bit Mariah Carey on paper, but startling in practice, Tracey Thorn has fulfilled an unlikely wish by recording a Christmas record, wrapping her frosty voice around seasonal selections from The White Stripes, Low and Scritti Politti, and topping them all with two bauble-shattering originals. The title track is her wistful but wise "Fairytale Of New York", but "Joy" is the star on top of the tree – "You loved it as a kid and now you need it more than you ever did," sings Thorn, recasting Christmas as a desperate, defiant celebration of life.

JIM WIRTH

Rediscovered!

Uncovering the underrated and overlooked



BOB LIND *Finding You Again* BIG BEAT

Solid return from American singer-songwriter who penned "Elusive Butterfly"

Bob Lind's last studio album, *Since There Were Circles*, was released back in 1971. It flopped and Lind returned to the life of heavy drinking and drug use he'd fallen into following the international success of "Elusive Butterfly" in 1966. Unnerved by the trappings of sudden fame, Lind explained in 2007: "I just didn't like being part of a system where

you had to have hit records for the business to stay interested in you."

By the late '70s Lind had cleaned up, settling in Florida and focusing on writing short stories, screenplays and novels. The best of these, *East Of The Holyland*, set in 1964, tells the story of a Denver folk singer watching his world collapse. It echoed the disintegration of Lind's own career and would inspire Jarvis Cocker to write "Bob Lind (The Only Way Is Down)", on Pulp's *We Love Life* in 2001. Jarvis and Richard Hawley became firm champions of Lind's sorrowful writing and the intricate, baroque folk arrangements that were a feature of his albums with producer Jack Nitzsche in 1966, *Don't Be Concerned* and *Photographs Of Feelings*. Lind will always be best remembered for "Elusive Butterfly", but he was much covered at the time. In Britain alone, Keith Relf ("Mister Zero"), Marianne Faithfull ("Counting") and Adam Faith ("Cheryl's Going Home") plundered Lind's songbook. His particular school of verbose, poetic lyrics was also cruelly sent up by Viv Stanshall's "Canyons Of Your Mind". Lind finally returned to playing live in 2004 and credits Jamie Hoover for helping him overcome his reluctance to record again. His collaboration with the Spongetones' guitarist was done without either being in the studio together, a detached approach that renders *Finding You Again* a little stiff at times. Its best songs are sombre and haunting; there's a serene sense of longing that pervades "Maybe It's The Rain" and of resignation in "How The Nights Can Fly". A solid but welcome return.

MICK HOUGHTON

I'M YOUR FAN

"There's a naïveté to Bob's music, and a worldweariness, but if anyone ever did a kamikaze on his own career, it was Bob."

RICHARD HAWLEY



ULTRAISTA *Ultraista* I AM FORTIFIED

Radiohead producer launches avant-pop collective

6/10 Opiated nu-gazing melodies and supple trip-hop grooves intertwine

to mostly agreeable affect on this album by a collective formed by Radiohead producer Nigel Godrich and drummer Joey Waronker, whose starry CV of past collaborators includes REM, Robert Plant and Norah Jones. There are inevitable echoes here of Atoms For Peace, the Thom Yorke project that also featured Godrich and Waronker, though Garbage may be a closer analogy as dreamy singer Laura Bettinson is a young unknown. Densely layered electro-rock tapestries like "Static Light" and "Gold Dayzz" are quietly lovely, even if Ultraista never quite shake off the sense of a session-muso studio supergroup dressing down in indie clothes.

STEPHEN DALTON



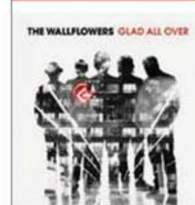
UMBERTO *Night Has A Thousand Screams* ROCK ACTION

Potent film score from former Expo '70 synth and bass player

8/10 Last February at the Glasgow Music And Film

Festival, Matt Hill performed his original score to a screening of Juan Piquer Simón's chainsaw horror flick *Pieces* (1982), prompting Mogwai's offer to release it on their Rock Action imprint. The acid test of any recorded OST is its ability to stand independent of image and dialogue and on that count, Hill's latest as Umberto more than measures up. He builds a strong sonic narrative, manipulating tension and release in unsettling synthscapes that pay homage to John Carpenter, Tangerine Dream and Goblin's work for Italian giallo director Dario Argento, but are updated for current club-attuned ears, as the walloping beats of "The Investigation" attest.

SHARON O'CONNELL



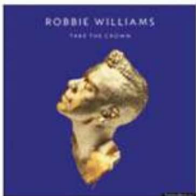
THE WALLFLOWERS *Glad All Over* COLUMBIA

Rapprochement: Dylan the Younger's group's first disc in seven years

8/10 Reuniting with the fellas after a long solo spell,

Jakob Dylan plays it all over the map on *Glad All Over*. Grandiose Springsteenian rockers ("First One In The Car") and straightforward radio fare, like the dark, bouncy come-on chorus of "Misfits And Lovers", dally with primordially old-school hip-hop/rock fusion – ie, the surprisingly infectious "Reboot The Mission" with Mick Jones on guitar/vocals, borrowing liberally from The Clash's "Magnificent Seven". Looser in feel and texture than their last couple of discs, with Dylan's husky vocals leading the way, *Glad All Over* truly catches fire on "Won't Be Long", a live-for-today fireball nailed to a majestic wall of guitars and keyboards.

LUKE TORN



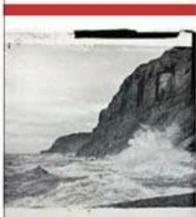
ROBBIE WILLIAMS
Take The Crown
ISLAND

A surprisingly good return to machine-tooled pop

7/10

Robbie learned from his last two LPs that no-one wants to hear him confront his mid-life crisis while dabbling in whimsical French electro or postmodern tributes to Madonna and the Pet Shop Boys. To this end, producer Jackknife Lee and primary writers Tim Metcalfe and Flynn Francis have concentrated on pure pop, the archness limited to the confusingly un-shit "Shit On The Radio". Gary Barlow's horn-heavy "Candy" is the pick, but the songwriting is impressive throughout, particularly the Beck-like "Hey Wow Yeah Yeah", the Motown-ish guilty pleasure "Not Like The Others" and the defiantly miserabilist folk-rock of The Belle Brigade's "Losers".

JOHN LEWIS



SAM WILLIS
Winterval
HALF MACHINE

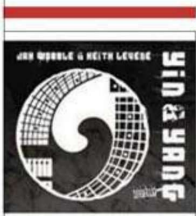
Walls man goes solo, drifting off the dancefloor

6/10

As one half of London duo Walls [with Alessio Natalizia],

Sam Willis is well-versed in the aesthetics of introversion, and his group's two albums, *Walls* and *Coracle*, are lovely slices of eldritch electronica. Solo, though, Willis doesn't really offer much more. He still works within a post-dancefloor glitch/dreampop aesthetic, all clouds of smoky texture, often hinged to an unobtrusive house pulse, hi-hats skipping across the bronze tarnish. It's nice enough, but next to peers like Lawrence, it lacks totality: these eight grab-bag pieces ultimately don't really cohere. There are plenty of enjoyable moments on *Winterval*, but this masks a slightly hollow core.

JON DALE



JAH WOBBLE & KEITH LEVENE
Yin & Yang
CHERRY RED

PiL's 'other two' balance the opposites on reunion album

7/10

Wobble and Levene reunited for this brightly

lit, muscly rock collaboration following the Metal Box Dub tour, and it follows Lydon's recent PiL album. Levene's distinctive, trebly guitar is in its element over loosely programmed rock and dub rhythms, while Wobble dwells at the deep end and adds declamatory vocals on the title track and "Jags And Staffs", as well as an unlikely cover of "Within You, Without You". Levene's strings scorch on "Back On The Block", and it comes as a pleasant surprise when he unplugs to play acoustic on "Strut" and "Fluid". The countryfied "Mississippi" strikes the only sourmash note.

ROB YOUNG



PATRICK WOLF
Sundark & Riverlight
BLOODY CHAMBER MUSIC/
ESSENTIAL MUSIC

Anniversary offering from the lupine electro-popster

6/10

It seems rather odd for

Patrick Wolf to be looking back over 10 years in music given both his age (he's 29) and the fact that he's yet to achieve commercial success (his last album stalled at No 37). But looking back he is, via a double – yes, double – album of acoustic songs drawn from his own back catalogue. Stripped of the usual bells and whistles, and backed by unplugged instruments, it's left to his voice to do the work and, given the length of the thing, it soon starts to grate. That said, there's no doubting the lyrical quality here, the simple backing uncovering the emotional complexity beneath.

FIONA STURGES

REVELATIONS

Jakob Dylan... on reuniting The Wallflowers



➤ The Wallflowers' new single "Reboot The Mission" reignites the LA quintet in a looser, newly relaxed incarnation. "The band had been together for more than 15 years," says mainman Jakob Dylan of their demise. "It was just time for a break."

Bringing Down The Horse, their multi-platinum 1996 opus, spearheaded a successful run, but though they came up with a trio of strong follow-ups (especially 2000's *Breach*), The Wallflowers petered out in 2007. Dylan released two acclaimed solo albums in the interim, and keyboardist Rami Jaffee played with Foo Fighters and Pearl Jam, but the group never intended 2005's *Rebel, Sweetheart* to be the last word.

"We came back with fresh ears, new eyes," Dylan observes. "And more energised because of the time off. We have more excitement now than we've had in years." In fact, with Red Hot Chili Pepper Jack Irons now pounding the skins, comeback album *Glad All Over* slips their sound into heretofore unvisited galaxies: swampy pop, oddball dance, fierce powerpop, imagistic balladry, in short – along with a cameo by ex-Clash guitarist Mick Jones – the most adventurous, diverse outing of their career.

LUKE TORN



WOODS
Bend Beyond
WOODSIST

Jeremy Earl's psych-pop marvels produce their finest album yet

8/10

After six steadily improving albums, Brooklyn's Woods have

cracked the formula with *Bend Beyond*, combining Crazy Horse noodling with a Byrds-y jangle and emerging with an album of understated beauty. As usual, it's been recorded in Jeremy Earl's upstate New York home, but the mix is richer and the jams more fluid than previous releases. This record oozes confidence, from the slinky title track, through Southern-fried "Cali In A Cup" to blissful pop "Lily", even as Earl's lyrics explore dark themes. Earl has often been overshadowed by bands on the Woodsist label he runs, but here Woods are allowed to stand out from the trees.

PETER WATTS



WOVENHAND
The Laughing Stalk
GLITTERHOUSE

Industrial country rock with religious overtones

8/10

The rarely restful David Eugene Edwards returns with Wovenhand's seventh LP, recorded with an almost

completely different lineup from 2010's fine *The Threshingfloor*. The new members have taken the sound deeper into quasi-industrial and metal-tinged territory, but not blunted Edwards' deeply doom-laden, God-fearin' lyrics. "Long Horn", a Southern noir gothic boogie, opens the album with an almost light touch before things get heavy – musically and metaphorically – on the dense title track, NIN-like "King O King" and sinister "Closer". It's a typically powerful set that rocks mightily, highlights being the punky "As Wool" and churning, chanting, chiming Native America-inspired "Maize". But there's an awful lot of God.

PETER WATTS



ZZ TOP
La Futura
AMERICAN RECORDINGS

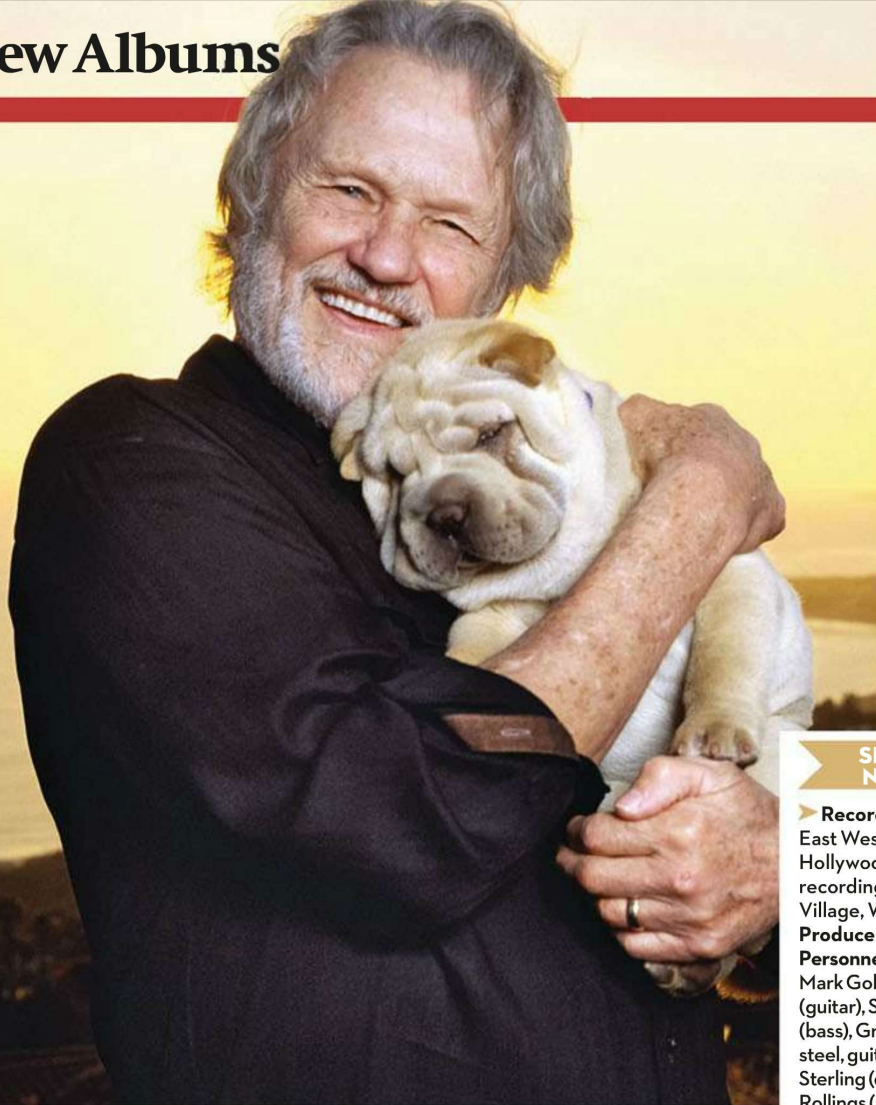
Rick Rubin co-produces iconic blues-rockers' frill-free comeback

7/10

Belying its title, the bearded Texan trio's first album in almost a

decade is less about the future and more about the reclaimed past. Ripping away the high-gloss sheen of recent records, what remains is a vintage engine coughing out raw, sweaty blues-rock. "Chartreuse" recycles the riff from "Tush", "Flyin' High" rides on a killer AC/DC hook, while "Gotsta Get Paid" is an ingeniously reconfigured cover version of Houston hip-hop song "25 Lighters". Set to growl rather than full attack mode, *La Futura* sounds at times overly relaxed (particularly the Southern soul ballad, "Over You"), but never less than a fun, frill-free ride.

GRAEME THOMSON

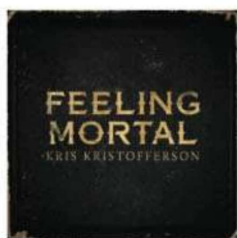


KRIS KRISTOFFERSON

Feeling Mortal

KK RECORDS

More death, Vicar? Aged 76, KK faces down the Reaper. *By Alastair McKay*



8/10

the poetic artistry and intellect of Bob Dylan circa *Blonde On Blonde*. Well, no-one could live up to that, and *A Moment Of Forever* didn't, quite. Perhaps Was mis-stated his case, because Kristofferson's gift has always been to blend the conventions of the best country music – the cask-conditioned hard stuff – with narrative. He is poetic, but he's a storyteller.

Since then Was' role as a producer has evolved almost to the point of invisibility. For 2006's *This Old Road*, the sound was stripped back, and the songs were left unvarnished, a process which continued on 2009's *Closer To The Bone*, prompting comparisons with Johnny Cash's spartan Rick Rubin recordings. Equally, the release in 2010 of

WHEN DON WAS penned the sleeve notes for Kris Kristofferson's 1996 album *A Moment Of Forever*, he didn't shrink from the superlatives. Kristofferson, he suggested, offered the emotional directness of Hank Williams, and

Please Don't Tell Me How The Story Ends, a brilliant compendium of early publishing demos, showed that Kristofferson has always had this stuff in him.

But intimacy has a different purpose when you're 76 years old. "Feeling Mortal" is as good a song as Kristofferson has written; a beautifully weary country strum which contemplates death (or, if you

allow the pun, drunkenness) in a way that combines a bit of self-pity with awe and thankfulness. True, it borders on self-parody; you could imagine it being delivered by Jeff Bridges' Bad Blake in the film *Crazy Heart*, but Blake was almost a Kristofferson tribute act. In sentiment and execution, "Feeling Mortal" is more Hank than Dylan, yet there's a subtle poetry in the way the lyric flits between life and death, dreams and wakefulness. Kristofferson is certainly aware of the architecture and grammar of a maudlin country song, and there's not a syllable out of place as Was allows the suggestion of Mexican borderland to bleed into the melody. The performance is understated; the cracks in the vocal are left unrepaired. It's funny, beautiful, and heartbreakingly sad.

The mood is maintained on "Mama Stewart", a deathbed narrative about a 94-year-old blind woman who regains her sight through "*the miracle of medicine and good old time religion*". It may be about the grandmother of Kristofferson's ex-wife, Rita Coolidge. Whatever, it's a perilously sad

SLEEVE NOTES

► **Recorded at:** East West Studios, Hollywood. Additional recording at The Village, West LA
Produced by: Don Was
Personnel include: Mark Goldenberg (guitar), Sean Hurley (bass), Greg Leisz (pedal steel, guitars), Aaron Sterling (drums), Matt Rollings (keys), Sara Watkins (violin, bk vocal)

composition illuminated by the faintest flicker of optimism, and a tune so slow it's almost in reverse.

More death, Vicar? "Bread For The Body" comes from the perspective of a life nearing completion, but it's a spirited anti-materialist folk song. "*Life is a song for the dying to sing*," Kristofferson suggests, over ribald fiddles and twanging guitars, "*it's got to have feeling to mean anything*." "You Don't Tell Me What To Do" is a road song about "*losing myself in the soul of a song*". It sounds ready-made for Willie Nelson, but there's a bit of Bob in the harmonica. "Stairway To The Bottom" and "Just Suppose" are classic dark-night-of-the-soul numbers, both employing the trick of

a narrator describing himself in the third person. "Castaway" has Kristofferson identifying with a "*lost abandoned vessel*" adrift in the Caribbean, rudderless and sinking. "My Heart Was The Last One To Know" has the feeling of a 3am confessional, with Sara Watkins offering Emmylou-ish vocal support.

It's not all desperation. "The One You Chose" is an impish love song, and the closing song, "Ramblin' Jack", is a playful tribute to – we may assume – Mr Elliott, though there's a bit of self-portraiture at work in a tale of a singer who enjoys risky nights and wasted days. "*I know he ain't afraid of where he's goin'/And I'm sure he ain't ashamed of where's he's been*," Kristofferson offers, before ending the song in a way that suggests he's forgotten where the exit is.

Just before the disc stops spinning, there's a ghost of a chuckle. Is Kristofferson laughing at death? Probably, a bit.

Q&A

Kris Kristofferson



The album title says a lot...

Yeah! Saying it straight! The whole album is more reflective of me now, but also reflecting on different parts of my whole life.

What does Don Was bring to the party?

Oh, Don keeps me going! He's great. I know he works with a lot of other people, too, but I've been working with him for about 30 years and he has always brought the right creative inspiration

for me. On this album I was recording just with him and a couple of musicians he had, and we really were on the same page all along. "My Heart Was The Last One To Know" is an old co-write with Shel Silverstein.

Were many of these songs written a while ago?

I'm not writing much at all these days. I write some, but I like going over a lot of songs that I haven't necessarily performed in public that I'm getting reacquainted with and that I think are really good. That was one of them. People like Shel and Mickey Newbury were so much a part of my life. Probably the best part of my career is that I found a place where my heroes turned out to be my friends. *INTERVIEW: GRAEME THOMSON*

MARK EITZEL

ON TOUR
WITH BAND

2013

FEB 19	LONDON	BUSH HALL
FEB 20	BIRMINGHAM	GLEE CLUB
FEB 27	GLASGOW	ORAN MOR
FEB 28	NEWCASTLE	THE CLUNY
MAR 1	HEBDEN BRIDGE	THE TRADES CLUB
MAR 2	MANCHESTER	NIGHT AND DAY CAFÉ
MAR 3	BRISTOL	THE FLEECE

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up life's sorrow, suffering and surreality
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CHELSEA WOLFE

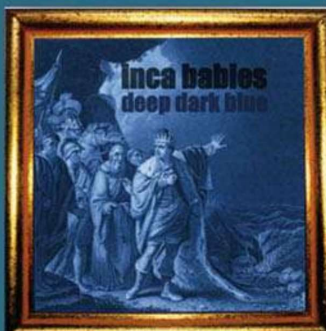
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CHELSEA WOLFE

SARGENT HOUSE LP / CD

INDIAN HANDCRAFTS

Canadian power-duo Indian Handcrafts' well-honed, massively melodic debut seems to belie the simplicity of instrumentation between drummer/vocalist Brandyn James Aikins & guitarist/vocalist Daniel Brandon Allen.

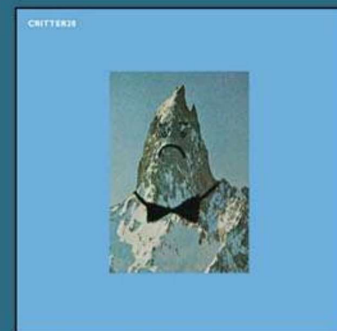


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TRACKLIST

DISC ONE

Original album remastered + singles/B-sides

- 1 Happy Together
- 2 Ghosts
- 3 Precious
- 4 Just Who Is The 5 O'Clock Hero
- 5 'Trans-Global Express'
- 6 Running On The Spot
- 7 Circus
- 8 The Planner's Dream Goes Wrong
- 9 Carnation
- 10 Town Called Malice
- 11 The Gift
- 12 Precious (12")
- 13 The Great Depression
- 14 The Bitterest Pill (I Ever Had To Swallow)
- 15 Pity Poor Alfie / Fever
- 16 Pity Poor Alfie (swing version)
- 17 Beat Surrender
- 18 Shopping
- 19 Move On Up
- 20 Stoned Out Of My Mind
- 21 War

THE JAM

The Gift: Super Deluxe Edition

UMC/POLYDOR

The Fab Three's studio swansong, with B-sides, demos, vids and a live gig. *By John Lewis*

8/10

THE GIFT REMAINS a mysteriously unloved part of The Jam canon. For many Jam

loyalists it's a record that's tainted by Weller's decision to split the band at the height of their popularity, the headstone to a premature burial.

It's also a record that, for many, strays a little too far out of The Jam's comfort zone. While the introductory chimes of the opening track "Happy Together" recall the fractured post-punk of *Sound*

Affects, we're quickly into the Motown beats, the wah-wah guitars, the big horn sections: the birth of what sneerier commentators later dubbed "soulcialism".

Lyricaly, *The Gift* does not have the cohesiveness of the two Jam LPs generally regarded as classics – *All Mod Cons* and *Sound Affects* – but it certainly has at least as many great songs as either of them. There's no arguing with the singles "Town Called Malice" →

TRACKLIST (Continued)

DISC TWO

Demos & alternate tracks, remastered
(13 previously unreleased)

- 1 Skirt (demo)
- 2 Get Yourself Together (demo)
- 3 Ghosts (instrumental demo)
- 4 Just Who Is The 5 O'Clock Hero (demo)
- 5 Running On The Spot (demo)
- 6 The Planner's Dream Goes Wrong (demo)
- 7 Carnation (instrumental demo)
- 8 Precious (demo)
- 9 The Bitterest Pill (demo)
- 10 Alfie (demo 2)
- 11 We've Only Started (old version)
- 12 Only Started (instrumental demo)
- 13 Shopping (AKA Paul's demo)
- 14 Beat Surrender (demo)
- 15 Solid Bond In Your Heart (demo)

DISC THREE

Live at Wembley Dec 1982; complete concert
from the last ever Jam tour, remastered
(previously unreleased)

- 1 Start!
- 2 It's Too Bad
- 3 Beat Surrender
- 4 Away From The Numbers
- 5 Ghosts
- 6 In The Crowd
- 7 Boy About Town
- 8 So Sad About Us
- 9 All Mod Cons
- 10 To Be Someone
- 11 Smithers-Jones
- 12 That's Entertainment
- 13 The Great Depression
- 14 Precious
- 15 Move On Up
- 16 Circus
- 17 Down In The Tube Station At Midnight
- 18 David Watts
- 19 Mr Clean
- 20 Town Called Malice
- 21 But I'm Different Now
- 22 'Trans-Global Express'
- 23 In The City

DISC FOUR

DVD Compilation

Trans-Global Unity Express

(Live, Birmingham March '82)

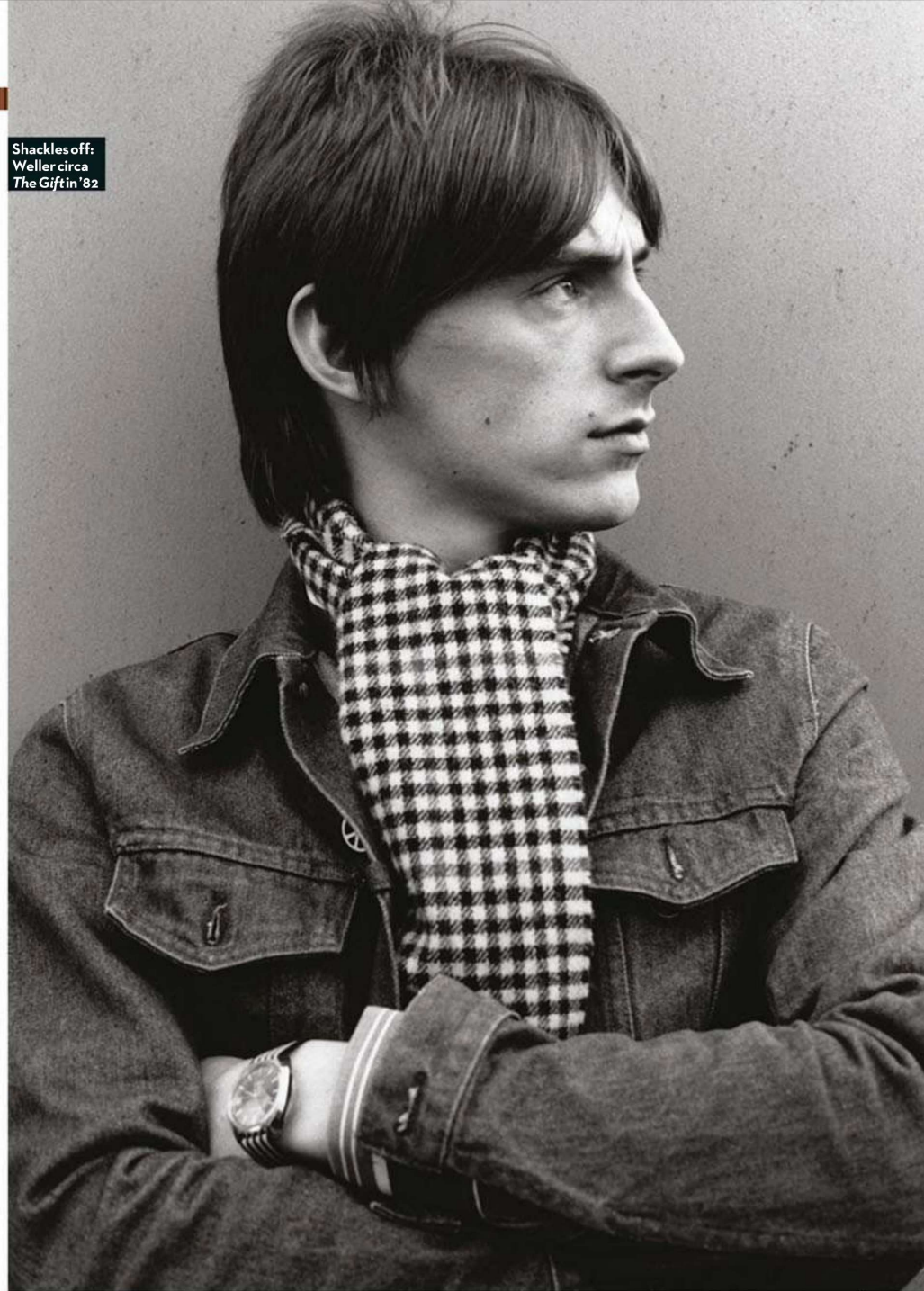
- 1 Town Called Malice
- 2 Carnation
- 3 Precious
- 4 Ghosts
- 5 Move On Up
- 6 Private Hell
- 7 Pretty Green
- 8 'Trans-Global Express'
- 9 The Gift
- 10 Town Called Malice (Promo Video)
- 11 Precious (Promo Video)
- 12 The Bitterest Pill (Promo Video)

Danish TV special (DR)

(Recorded live in Studio 3, TV-Byen, Copenhagen April 19, 1982,
broadcast April 23, 1982. Previously unseen officially)

- 13 Running On The Spot
- 14 Circus
- 15 Happy Together
- 16 Ghosts
- 17 In The Crowd
- 18 Town Called Malice
- 19 Pity Poor Alfie / Fever
- 20 Precious
- 21 Just Who Is The 5 O'Clock Hero
- 22 The Gift
- 23 Move On Up
- 24 'Trans-Global Express'
- 25 Precious (Top Of The Pops -
Recorded February 18, 1982)
- 26 Town Called Malice
(Top Of The Pops - February 18, 1982)

Shackles off:
Weller circa
The Giftin '82



(effectively "You Can't Hurry Love" reimagined by Ken Loach) or "Precious" (hypnotically itchy punk-funk, with a nod to Beggar & Co), but, for all Weller's professed "anti-rock" agenda of this period, there is plenty here to please any element of The Jam's fanbase. You want Ray Davies-style kitchen-sink realism? Try the militant vaudevillian turn "Just Who Is The 5 O'Clock Hero". You want a stunningly poetic ballad with heart-wrenching chord

changes? Try "Carnation" ("I am the greed and fear/and every ounce of hate in you"). You want haunting and graceful post-punk? Listen to "Ghosts", with its elegant horns, fluid bassline and uplifting lyric ("there's more inside you that you won't show").

The first CD contains all 11 LP tracks, along with a further 10 singles, B-sides or covers from this period which didn't make it onto the album.

Weller has always upheld the uniqueness of the flipside ("I always felt the shackles were off," he says. "You can experiment a bit"), and all of the supplementary tracks on CD1 share that same spirit of adventure, creating a secondary album that's almost as good as the primary one. Even the covers, which were approached as enthusiastic recreations of the band's new favourite songs, add a twist to the originals. "Move On Up"

replaces Curtis Mayfield's sweet-voiced earnestness with punky urgency; The Chi-Lites' "Stoned Out Of My Mind" benefits from Rick Buckler's heavily syncopated, Afro-Cuban rhythm track.

As well as a riotous live CD, and an excellent DVD of promos and *Top Of The Pops*



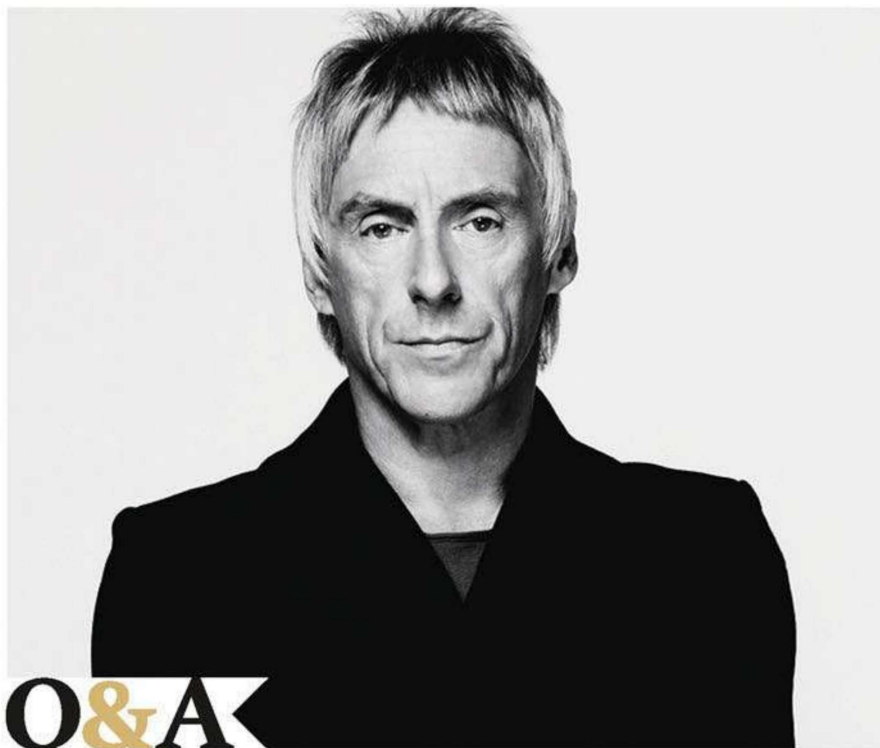
appearances, there's a CD that comprises demos of most of the album tracks and B-sides. It includes early versions of some contemporary sides not included on CD1, such as "Tales From The Riverbank" (here titled "We've Only Started"), "Absolute Beginners" (titled "Skirt"), and a Northern soul-style re-reading of the Small Faces "Get Yourself Together". All of them are multi-tracked solely by Weller on guitars, bass, piano, keyboards and even drums. Unfashionable though it might be to point this kind of thing out, Weller really is an extraordinarily accomplished musician; even his drumming has a certain wonky, Stevie Wonder-ish flair. Some of the demos are virtually identical to the finished versions, only without the horns: a couple ("The Planner's

It's a reminder that Weller really did need to break up the biggest British band since The Beatles to pursue his musical vision

Dream...", "Shopping") sound better. One gets the impression that three or four Wellers might have made a great stadium rock band.

The Jam's studio versions of "A Solid Bond In Your Heart" (separate mixes of which have previously appeared on *The Sound Of The Jam* and *Direction Reaction Creation*) are notably absent from CD1 of this package, although Weller's drumless original demo does appear on CD2, with a piano-led arrangement that's almost identical to the version later recorded by The Style Council. There are certainly premonitions of The Style Council all over *The Gift*, be it the heavy duty funk workout of "Precious", the militant call-to-arms of "Trans-Global Express", or the insistent Northern soul drumbeats on at least half the tracks. And, with veteran Trinidadian percussionist Russ Henderson playing steelpan, "The Planner's Dream Goes Wrong" is an early example of the outsourcing philosophy that Weller and Talbot would later adopt (the song also shares the same lyrical territory as "Come To Milton Keynes").

In fact it's the 10 extra tracks on CD1 that seem to prefigure The Style Council's revolving door policy. Most of the singles of this period are dominated by hired hands, not least the backing vocals of Jennie McKeown from The Belle Stars (on "The Bitterest Pill") or future Respond starlet Tracie (who almost steals the show on "Beat Surrender"). "Bitterest Pill", "Beat Surrender" and "Malice" are all dominated by Peter Wilson's piano or organ lines; while "Precious" and the three soul covers are dominated by the horns of Steve Nichol and Keith Thomas. Other tracks point out the limitations of the three-piece. A jazz waltz like "Shopping", or the off-kilter "The Great Depression" are the kind of beats that Style Council drummer Steve White would breeze through; likewise you could imagine an early incarnation of the Council transforming "Pity Poor Alfie" into a more limber soul gem. And that maybe explains why *The Gift* rankles a little for certain Jam loyalists: it's a reminder that Weller really did need to break up the biggest British band since The Beatles to pursue his musical vision.



Q&A

The Guvnor revisits *The Gift*: "It still sounds uplifting..."

WHAT DO YOU think of *The Gift* now, 30 years on?

I still think it's a great record. There are plenty of songs here – "Malice", "Running On The Spot", "Carnation" – that I still play live. Even though it's a last album, and one where there was a lot of unhappiness and ill-feeling, I don't think it shows. It still sounds positive and uplifting.

Breaking up The Jam sounds like it must have been as traumatic as a divorce...

It wasn't a nice thing. When you end any relationship you're not happy in, it has a terrible effect on others. That was hard, breaking it to Rick and Bruce, and to my old man, John. We'd all been working together for nearly 10 years, and we'd built up this thing that had just got massive and very exciting. But I wanted to leave.

Is it true you thought your demos were better than the finished versions?

I don't recall saying it, but if I did, I was talking out of my arse. Rick and Bruce took my ideas to another level, as a rhythm section. But, rightly or wrongly, I was getting to the point where I wanted to have the ultimate say over how my songs were recorded. You can call it ego, but that's how I felt. I wasn't into the collective ideal of letting everyone put their part in.

Had you already met up with Mick Talbot before you finished *The Gift*?

I've heard that, and I honestly don't remember the sequence of events. Mick said we might even have done some demos before Christmas, before The Jam split. I certainly haven't heard them!

Were you clubbing a lot around this time?

Yeah, I started going to The Wag, Le Beat Route, Blitz. Apart from hearing some old soul music, I was also checking out contemporary soul and funk. That influenced tracks like "Precious".

How good was your Northern Soul dancing?

Fucking shocking, mate. I really can't dance. Andy Croasdel, who was our DJ on the road at the time, he used to show us a few moves. He told me I had two left feet, which sounds about right. But Andy was instrumental in turning me on to a lot of underground soul stuff I'd never heard before.

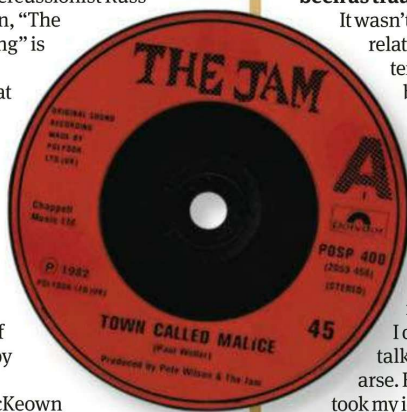
What other music at the time fed into *The Gift*?

I started listening to jazz – Wes Montgomery and Jimmy Smith in particular. I was also getting into the first three Curtis Mayfield solo albums and there were a lot of contemporary white post-punk bands getting into funky rhythms at that time: Pigbag, The Pop Group and Spandau Ballet's "Chant #1". I think we appropriated a lot of those ideas, but once it goes through your filters it comes out transformed.

In his autobiography, *Head On*, Julian Cope claims you stole the idea of using a horn section from *The Teardrop Explodes* after hearing them record "Reward" in Air Studios...

With all respect to dear old Julian, I think I'd heard a fucking trumpet before they recorded "Reward", know what I mean? Yeah, I remember seeing them around. You'd bump into

a weird mix of people at Air. Macca was doing his solo album: I remember seeing him in the corridor one day with Michael Jackson! That was pretty bonkers. Another time I saw Adam Ant and Kevin Rowland having a chat – another weird combination. It was like fucking *Stella Street* round there... **INTERVIEW: JOHN LEWIS**



TRACKLIST

DISC ONE

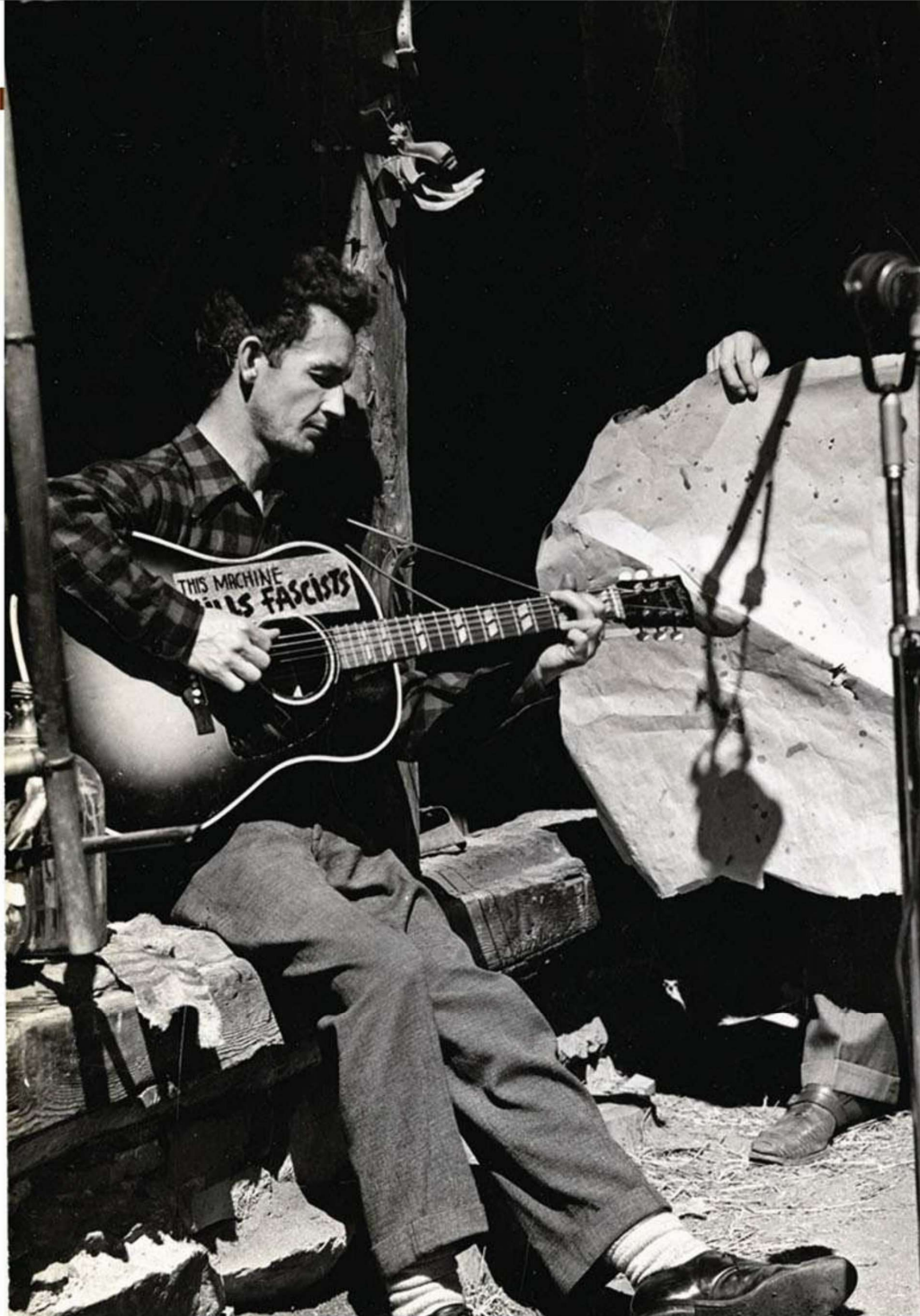
- 1 This Land Is Your Land (Alternate Version)
- 2 Pastures Of Plenty
- 3 Riding In My Car (Car Song)
- 4 The Grand Coulee Dam
- 5 Talking Dust Bowl
- 6 So Long, It's Been Good To Know Yuh (Dusty Old Dust)
- 7 Ramblin' Round
- 8 Philadelphia Lawyer
- 9 Hard Travelin'
- 10 Pretty Boy Floyd
- 11 Hobo's Lullaby
- 12 Talking Columbia
- 13 The Sinking Of The Reuben James
- 14 Jesus Christ
- 15 Gypsy Davy
- 16 New York Town
- 17 Going Down The Road (Feeling Bad)
- 18 Hard, Ain't It Hard
- 19 The Biggest Thing That Man Has Ever Done (The Great Historical Bum)
- 20 This Land Is Your Land (Standard Version)
- 21 Jarama Valley
- 22 Why, Oh Why?
- 23 I've Got To Know

DISC TWO

- 1 Better World A-Comin'
- 2 When That Great Ship Went Down (The Great Ship)
- 3 A Dollar Down And A Dollar A Week
- 4 Talking Centralia
- 5 1913 Massacre
- 6 Dirty Overalls
- 7 My Daddy (Flies A Ship In The Sky)
- 8 Worried Man Blues
- 9 Hangknot, Slipknot
- 10 Buffalo Skinners
- 11 Howdi Do
- 12 Jackhammer John
- 13 The Ranger's Command
- 14 So Long, It's Been Good To Know You (WWII Version)
- 15 What Are We Waiting On?
- 16 Lindbergh
- 17 Ludlow Massacre
- 18 Bad Lee Brown (Cocaine Blues)
- 19 Two Good Men
- 20 Farmer-Labor Train
- 21 The Jolly Banker
- 22 We Shall Be Free

DISC THREE

- 1 I Ain't Got No Home (In This World Anymore)
- 2 Them Big City Ways
- 3 Do Re Mi
- 4 Skid Row Serenade
- 5 *Radio Program: The Ballad Gazette With Woody Guthrie: This Land Is Your Land, What Did The Deep Sea Say?, Blow Ye Winds, Trouble On The Waters, Blow The Man Down, Normandy Was Her Name, The Sinking Of The Reuben James*
- 6 *BBC: Children's Hour July 7, 1944: Intro-Wabash Cannonball, 900 Miles, Stagger Lee, Pretty Boy Floyd*
- 7 *People's Songs Hootenanny: Ladies Auxiliary, Weaver's Life*
- 8 *WNYC Radio Program: Folk Songs Of America December 12, 1940: John Hardy, Jesse James, Tom Joad*
- 9 Reckless Talk
- 10 All Work Together
- 11 My Little Seed
- 12 Goodnight Little Cathy



WOODY GUTHRIE

Woody At 100: The Woody Guthrie Centennial Collection

SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS

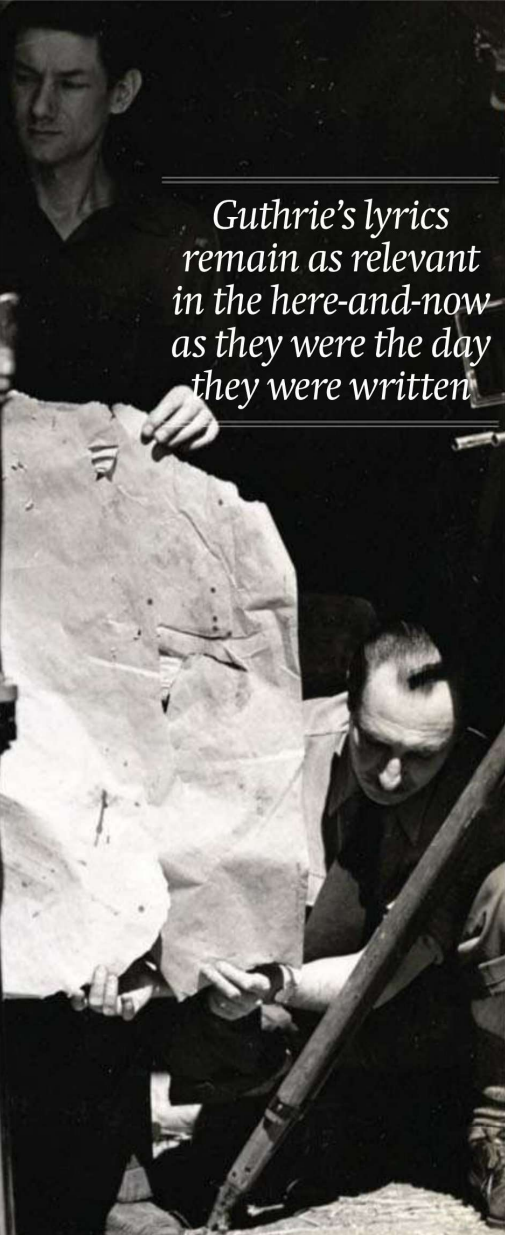
An apt celebration of America's preeminent troubadour, complete with rediscovered recordings. *By Luke Torn*

9/10 HARD TO BELIEVE that Woody Guthrie, conceivably, could still be alive in 2012, given that he's been gone for 45 years. Yet his incomparable work, especially circa 1939-1949, and the indomitable spirit of that work, a Big Bang of social-consciousness-in-song that set off reverberations down through history – from Dylan and Ochs and the whole early '60s folk revival and on to Joe Strummer's righteous punk rebellion – resonates still,

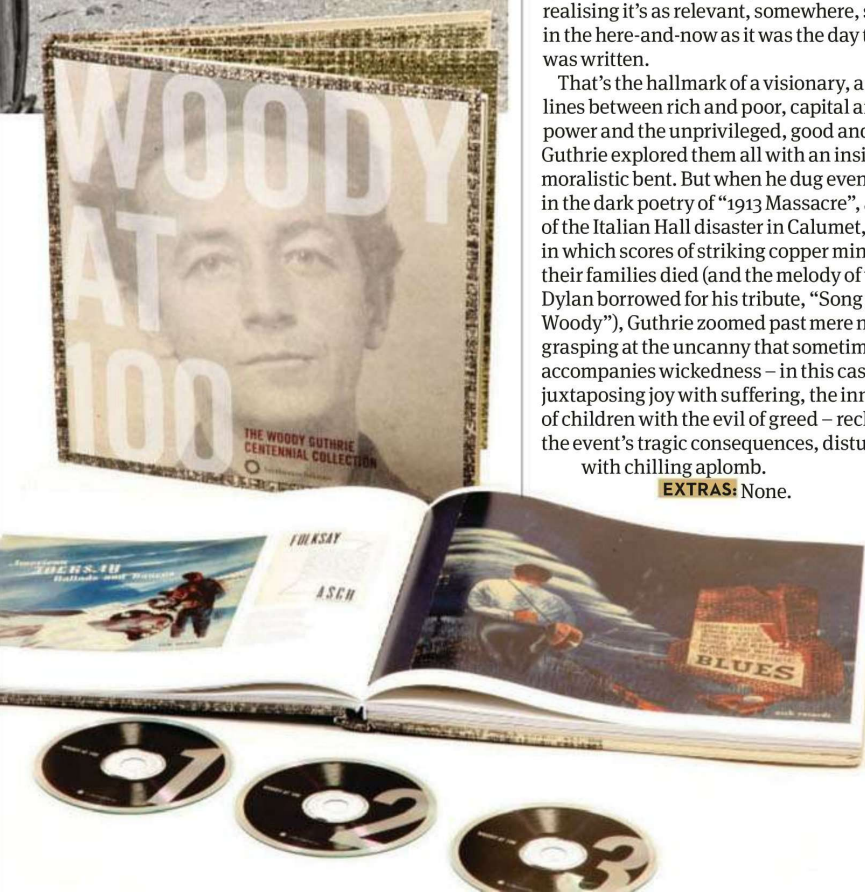
as long as repression, corruption, and abuse of power still flourish.

Guthrie himself would no doubt get a chuckle at how his legacy has played out, especially the seemingly endless stream of "product" gleaned in his name, stemming from what amounts to a hard-hitting but ragtag set of field recordings and radio transcriptions. The lavish, coffee-table artifact *Woody At 100* is a different animal, though, compared to the plain-

Guthrie's lyrics remain as relevant in the here-and-now as they were the day they were written



Woody Guthrie performing "Ranger's Command" for a documentary filmed by the Archive Of American Folk Song, 1945



jane documents that have cropped up in the copyright-free era. A three-disc set featuring some newly discovered recordings, its centerpiece might be the stylish, 150-page scrapbook, collecting original Guthrie artwork, contemporary paintings and drawings, photos, lyric manuscripts, record sleeves, and more, plus detailed notes by Guthrie scholars Robert Santelli and Jeff Place, bringing the artist's life and times into sharp focus.

As you might suspect, the first two discs here represent a kind of glorified best-of Woody: "This Land Is Your Land", "Pastures Of Plenty", "Jesus Christ", "Hard Travelin'", "Pretty Boy Floyd" – along with Guthrie's mythical, insinuating mix of ramblin' songs, labour ballads, kids' tunes, and historical narratives. Sparks fly on the third disc, which features 21 previously unheard performances and six heretofore undiscovered songs culled from five separate radio programs.

Centrepiece of the new material is a four-song Los Angeles "Presto-disc" radio broadcast from 1939 (or 1937, as its origin is in some question). In any case, Guthrie is sprightly on these recordings, which now stand as the earliest-known recordings of his career, bringing out the Carter Family cadences on an almost-jaunty "I Ain't Got No Home", leading into "Do Re Mi" with a honking train-track harmonica run. "Skid Row Serenade" and "Them Big City Ways", previously unheard originals both, are sharply drawn caricatures, the latter sporting a line that surely resonates in 2012: "The finance company right next door, got his paycheck and then got some more."

And therein lies the hook: those who would willfully write off Guthrie as a relic, locked into musty history, might take a look at the state of the world circa 2012, then listen hard: "The gambling man is rich, and the working man is poor" ("I Ain't Got No Home"); "Some will rob you with a six gun, and some with a fountain pen" ("Pretty Boy Floyd"); "Every good man gets a little hard luck sometimes" ("New York Town"); "You will never find peace with these fascists" ("Jarama Valley"). On and on it goes – in fact, you can play this game all day long, pulling random Guthrie lyrics out of thin air, fully out of context, then realising it's as relevant, somewhere, somehow, in the here-and-now as it was the day that it was written.

That's the hallmark of a visionary, a seer: the lines between rich and poor, capital and labour, power and the unprivileged, good and evil, Guthrie explored them all with an insistent moralistic bent. But when he dug even deeper, as in the dark poetry of "1913 Massacre", an account of the Italian Hall disaster in Calumet, Michigan in which scores of striking copper miners and their families died (and the melody of which Bob Dylan borrowed for his tribute, "Song To Woody"), Guthrie zoomed past mere narrative, grasping at the uncanny that sometimes accompanies wickedness – in this case, by juxtaposing joy with suffering, the innocence of children with the evil of greed – reckoning the event's tragic consequences, disturbingly, with chilling aplomb.

EXTRAS: None.



CARTER USM 1992: The Love Album (reissue, 1992) EMI

20th-Century soapboxing that still rings true

The uninitiated may have dismissed Carter as little more than crusty buskers

8/10

with a punk-inspired DIY ethic, but when 1992 topped the charts 20 years ago it confirmed that the smart, knowing pop of Jim-Bob and Fruitbat had mass commercial appeal. Typically anthemic singles "The Only Living Boy In New Cross" (transporting Paul Simon to South London) and "Do Re Me So Far So Good" led the charge, rallying cries to a disillusioned post-Thatcher youth, but there were deeper ruminations on the state of the nation via the cod music hall of "Is Wrestling Fixed?", and "Skywest And Crooked", the latter with a touching spoken word cameo by Ian Dury. Jim-Bob's vocals sit somewhere between the venom of Johnny Rotten and the melodrama of Anthony Newley, rarely more effective than on a surprisingly faithful rendition of "The Impossible Dream" from the *Man Of La Mancha* musical. The album was originally intended as a snapshot of the times, yet two decades on, many of its songs seem prescient.

EXTRAS: Singles B-sides, including covers of 7/10 Pink Floyd, Inspiral Carpets, The Smiths, The Jam and Generation X, live set from 1992's Féile Festival in Tipperary. An equally bonus-packed reissue of the group's previous album, *30 Something*, is also out this month.

TERRY STAUNTON



DEEP PURPLE Machine Head (reissue, 1972) EMI

40th anniversary expanded edition stretched to fill five discs

9/10

The biggest-seller of their career and a landmark in

turbo-charged heavy metal, Purple intended to record their sixth album at the Montreux Casino. The night before they were to begin work, the venue burned down and the band were forced to set up an ad hoc studio in a near-by hotel, with cables running through bathrooms and across balconies, and mattresses pressed to bedroom walls for sound-proofing. The conditions were so arduous that they abandoned playbacks and simply worked the songs live until they had the right take. The result was a fresh and tempestuous vigour, with Ian Gillan wailing like a man possessed; the scorching solos by Ritchie Blackmore and Jon Lord kept tight and to the point, while the sight of the burning casino inspired one of metaldom's most monumental and ubiquitous songs: "Smoke On The Water".

EXTRAS: The seven tracks from the original 6/10 1972 vinyl plus the bluesy B-side "When A Blind Man Cries" are repeated in endless remastered/remixed variations plus in-concert versions to fill five discs. Such knob-tweaking is usually for obsessive audiophiles only. But on this occasion genuine differences are readily apparent, including several alternate Ritchie Blackmore guitar solos on the quad mixes.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON



THE ROLLING STONES

GRRR!

ABKCO/UNIVERSAL MUSIC

Despite the silly title and gorilla sleeve, this 3CD compilation proves a respectable primer, says David Cavanagh



7/10

AND NOW... THE end is near. As rumours point to a possible valedictory Stones tour in 2013 (they're in France for a month of rehearsals! Keith is "sounding better than ever"!), we all have our dream scenarios of what the final gig will be like. Mine may involve a

miracle or three: a slimmed-down Mick Taylor joins them onstage and plays a 19-minute solo in "Sway" while Jagger fans him with a chiffon scarf. When the curtain comes down, what will remain? Albums, films, books, ticket stubs, T-shirts and mile-high piles of cuttings. The documents of a career.

Decanting the best of this career into a 3CD compilation is no easy task, because mathematical

logic dictates that you have to stop after 237 minutes, and because every song you omit is someone's memory, someone's wedding, someone's life. *GRRR!* will not be the last Stones compilation. There may even be ones with worse titles. But it's a respectable primer for a teenager wanting to take a chronological journey through the Stones' history from the very first single ("Come On") to a couple of new tracks recorded this year.

"One More Shot", the lesser of these, is "Street Fighting Man" meets "Mixed Emotions" with more of the latter, alas, than the former. But the other one, "Doom And Gloom", is fantastic. It's got riffs that AC/DC would be proud of; a shaggy dog story about an aeroplane crashing in a Louisiana swamp; and a blistering Jagger vocal reminiscent of – no kidding – "Jumpin' Jack Flash". Permitted to access "Doom And Gloom" via an online stream for an afternoon, I played it 14 times before the link expired, mesmerised by the power the Stones put into it. When Jagger says, "Here's a new song" at the O₂ Arena, for God's sake don't go to the loo.

Early leaked tracklistings for *GRRR!* included the likes of "I'm Free", "Heart Of Stone", "Lady Jane", "Bitch", "Shattered" and "Midnight Rambler", none of which made the final cut. The choices are far more entry-level. Disc One (1963–67) is a non-stop hit-fest that mostly parrots the first side of the 1975 double album *Rolled Gold* ("It's All Over Now", "Little Red Rooster", "The Last Time", "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction"), ending with "Ruby Tuesday", "Let's Spend The Night Together" and (very pleasingly) "We Love You", the psychedelic Mellotron epic that was overlooked on the last major Stones compilation, *Forty Licks*.

Disc Two (1968–76) opens with the post-psychedelia resurgence of "Jumpin' Jack Flash" and the Pavlovian cowbell of "Honky Tonk Women" – you could imagine a future in which Disc Two is offered as standard on certain models of car – before getting momentarily confused about its dates. "She's A Rainbow" sequenced between "Wild Horses" and "Brown Sugar"?! Quickly

recovering ("Happy", "Tumbling Dice"), it finds room for *Exile On Main St.*'s opening track "Rocks Off" (a single in France) and the 1973 US hit, "Doo Doo Doo Doo Doo (Heartbreaker)", concluding with "Fool To Cry".

Disc Three (1978–2012) is an immediate party with the disco-influenced "Miss You", an enormous comeback hit after a disastrous period. Their critical revival in '78 was a vindication of the Ronnie Wood lineup, but ardour soon cooled. Jagger's falsetto on "Emotional Rescue" was ridiculed. "Start Me Up" was hailed as a return to sanity. After that it became almost adversarial – as the '80s continued the cries for the Stones to retire rose in volume – and the tracklisting of Disc Three visibly acknowledges that there were problems. "Undercover Of The Night" (1983) and "She Was Hot" (1984) are followed, crazily, by "Streets Of Love" (2005) before picking up the chronological flow with "Harlem Shuffle" (1986). What happened? It looks like someone made a last-minute decision to drop a song from the Stones' most criticised decade. Unfortunately they chose the wrong track as a replacement. "Streets Of Love" is an awful, phony, snail's-pace, sentimental bore. Jagger is its only fan.

The last 23 years of the Stones are represented by a mere seven tunes, including the aforementioned "Doom And Gloom" and "One More Shot". Being essentially a rock compilation, it has no space for some of the Stones' forays into urban R'n'B in the late '90s and early '00s ("Saint Of Me", "Rain Fall Down"), most of which Keith is understood to have loathed. "Anybody Seen My Baby?" (1997) and "Don't Stop" (2002) are adequate, but scarcely hint at Jagger's desire at the time to keep the Stones sounding as current as possible.

To compile the optimum Stones best of, a multi-hour marathon that would eat up most of the day, you'd need to cherry-pick from nine previous compilations and add favourite album tracks of your own. But for new fans, if *GRRR!* has to do, then, despite the silly title and gorilla, it will do.

EXTRAS: None.



DION

The Complete Laurie Singles

REAL GONE

Early highs, lows and in-betweens from the ever-wandering one

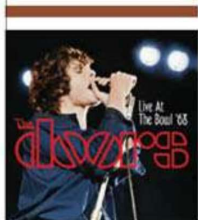
8/10

Everyone 'knows' Dion, but few appreciate how rich and strange his long trip has been, with changes more radical but more organic than most rock'n'roll chameleons. Restored in glorious mono, this 36-track set compiles every A- and B-side released on Laurie, the label with which he found solo success after leaving The Belmonts in 1960, and to which he returned at the decade's end, when his star was waning, to reignite. Solo debut "Lonely Teenager" sets the early pace: teen-idol cheese-cake, yet with something true and torn always in his voice. Nine tracks in, he rediscovers the street: the Bronx stomp of '61's "Runaround Sue" comes like the splitting of the atom, leading to whumping essentials like "The Wanderer" and "Little Diane". In '62, Dion left for Columbia, a label he dismayed with fantastic excursions into modernist blues. During the interim, Laurie continued to release Dion 45s by scouring the archive for old recordings, but the next leap forward came when he slunk back in '68 with Top 5 hit "Abraham, Martin & John", introducing Dion as lush, cosmic folk-rock. Subsequent cuts like "Daddy Rollin' (In Your Arms)" and an unbelievable "Purple Haze" suggest *Astral Weeks*-era Van working with Procol Harum and Zep under Bobby Darin. The type of guy who'll never settle down, indeed.

EXTRAS: None. Notes based around a new

7/10 Dion interview.

DAMIEN LOVE



THE DOORS

Live At The Bowl '68

ELEKTRA/DMC/RHINO

LA legends, cool, calculated and almost comatose

6/10

On July 5, 1968, The Doors played their biggest concert on home turf at the Hollywood Bowl, filmed and recorded for the *Feast Of Friends* short film. It captured the group in transition just ahead of their third album, *Waiting For The Sun*, and dipping generously into Jim Morrison's epic poem "Celebration Of The Lizard" (printed on the album's gatefold sleeve) for the lacklustre 'improvisations' "A Little Game", "The Hill Dweller" and "Wake Up". This edition marks the first time the concert has been available in full, repairing the technical flaws with the risible "Hello, I Love You", another poem "The WASP (Texas Radio And The Big Beat)", and a clumsy "Spanish Caravan", which make their debut here. This is well short of The Doors at their best, with neither the exuberance of the 1967 Matrix tapes or the crowd baiting drama of the 1969/70 shows recorded for *Absolutely Live*, their first official live album. Morrison gives one of his least animated performances, clinging lifelessly on to mic-stand throughout. Mick Jagger was there, later commenting that some of the songs dragged on. If he was checking out the latest pretender to his throne, the Rolling Stone must have wondered what the fuss was about.

EXTRAS: None.

MICK HOUGHTON

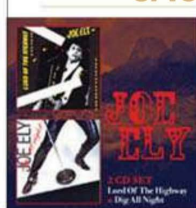


JIMMIE DALE GILMORE

Fair & Square/ Jimmie Dale Gilmore

FLOATING WORLD

8/10



JOE ELY

Lord Of The Highway/ Dig All Night

FLOATING WORLD

7/10

diverse talents are best heard in their solo work. Ely is better known, due to his late '70s tour with The Clash, but these two LPs (from '87-'88) find him settling into muscular, melodic rock'n'roll just when 'new country' was at its height. Bad timing, but there's much to enjoy, including Tom Petty-ish anthem "Settle For Love" and the swaggering "Me And Billy The Kid". Gilmore is a more original talent. He abandoned music for 16 years after The Flatlanders. His first two solo LPs catch the development of his style. The first has a rockabilly undertow; the second more twang. At his best, he's a mystical Hank Williams, taking philosophy to the honky tonk. Check "Trying To Get You", which offers this existential puzzler: "I would have killed myself, but it made no sense, committing suicide in self-defence".

EXTRAS: None.

ALASTAIR MCKAY



REVELATIONS

How Harry Pussy invented the blues

In 1991, Bill Orcutt and his future wife Adris Hoyos went into a Miami Beach studio and started playing, despite Hoyos having never played drums before – the session became their first single. "The whole project had this weird momentum to it – once we started playing we played every day," recalls Orcutt. It resulted in Harry Pussy, who made some of the most unhinged underground rock of the '90s. "I have a lot of misgivings about it now," he continues. "I wanted to play all the time, and in retrospect I realise I had [Hoyos], y'know, locked up, forced to practise. It was this recurring theme of Adris going 'Let's go home', and I'm like 'No!' The pair divorced in 1995, and Orcutt moved to California to become a software engineer; in 2008, his desire to play was reignited. "I saw a video of us playing in New York, and I was dumbfounded – the music was so extreme. It was like watching a different person." His solo work is stunning semi-improvised acoustic guitar playing, reminiscent of Mississippi greats. Was Harry Pussy basically a fucked-up blues band? "That's totally the way I think about it now!" BEN BEAUMONT-THOMAS



GRATEFUL DEAD

So Glad You Made It

RHINO

Cruise control for the Dead live

7/10

A two-disc compilation whittled down from the recent 18-disc *Spring 1990* boxset, this record is drawn from the same six shows on the Grateful Dead's 25th anniversary tour. It turned out to be the Dead's last consistent run of dates and last to feature the longest serving of the Dead's keyboardists, Brent Mydland, who died from a 'speedball' overdose in July 1990. Musically, the Dead sounded good, launching vigorously on two supercharged, exploratory jams "Playing In The Band"/"Eyes Of The World" and "Scarlet Begonias"/"Estimated Prophet", where Bob Weir sounds positively demented. There are two venerable Jerry Garcia set-pieces, a resplendent 14-minute "Bird Song" and an achingly expressive "Loser". Vocally, though, they were shaky, Mydland throatily dominating the harmonies and overreaching emotionally on his showcase numbers "Blow Away" and "Easy To Love You". A sprinkling of cover versions, usually a high point of any Dead set, is a major failing here; they plod unenthusiastically through "Gimme Some Loving" and the two Stones work-outs – "The Last Time" and "It's All Over Now" – never quite lift off. A patchy companion to existing 1990 releases *Dozin' At The Knick* and *Without A Net*.

EXTRAS: None.

MICK HOUGHTON



HARRY PUSSY

Let's Build A Pussy

(1998, reissue) EDITIONS MEGO

Dentist's drill or the sound of the universe? You decide!

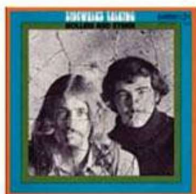
8/10

Bill Orcutt, guitarist in

Harry Pussy, has had a stunning recent phase with his solo releases, which sound like a Charley Patton jigsaw forced together wrongly – tumbling eddies of acoustic guitar and barked vocals that push the boundaries of what can be built with these classic materials. Hence the renewed interest in his previous band Harry Pussy, a duo with his wife Adris Hoyos. Much of their material was like an electrocuted version of his current work, featuring raging minute-long bursts of intricate guitar and Hoyos screaming in either absolute rapture or terror (it was never really clear which). But on this, their final record, they use only one second of this screaming as a basis for the entire album, timestretching it into a drone that requires real endurance to sit through. At times it's as beautiful as a harmonium, but then a tiny shift in tone will turn it totally hellish. The only solution is to brace yourself, notify the neighbours, and go for total immersion which, with the intensity constantly modulating rather than predictably building, is potentially transformative. As music it's unlistenable, as sound it's exhilarating and, as a final statement, it's immortal.

EXTRAS: None.

BEN BEAUMONT-THOMAS



HOLLINS AND STARR

Sideways Talking
(reissue, 1970)

LION PRODUCTIONS

Near perfect, dreamy pop-folk rediscovery

An obscure Chicago duo, Hollins and Starr recorded

their sole album for the local Ovation label in 1970. Built around guitarist and pianist Chuck Hollins' silky, soulful vocals and Dave Starr's mellifluous, soaring flute and recorder, their strength is a melodious, bossa nova folk sound reminiscent of Arthur Lee's more honeyed pop excursions. The opening sequence of "Talking To Myself"/"Krishna Dev"/"Cry Baby Cry" ranks alongside anything on Love's transitional *Da Capo* album. With elements of Terry Callier's smooth coffee-house jazz and even Tim Buckley's ultra-laidback *Happy/Sad* on the tranquil "Staying High", this has all the hallmarks of a true lost classic album. Unfortunately, the duo can't resist indulging in the sort of art for art's sake experimentation that was rife in the late '60s. A trilling solo flute piece, "Vivace", from a Bach Sonata, the period silliness of "Digress" (speeded up tapes and druggy dialogue) and the misdirected academic art-rock of "Hard Hearted Hannah" are completely at odds with the pleasingly sombre, mellow mood of the rest of the album.

EXTRAS: A couple of barely indistinguishable single 'versions', plus an expanded outtake of the jarring avant-garde folly "Hard Headed Woman".

MICK HOUGHTON

8/10



JETHRO TULL

Thick As A Brick
(reissue, 1972)

EMI

Expanded 40th anniversary edition of piss-taking prog milestone

Ian Anderson had already

dismissed other bands' concept albums as "pretentious" when he presented Tull's fifth album and follow-up to *Aqualung* in '72. Consisting of one long single track split over two sides of vinyl and which preposterously purported to be based on an epic poem by an eight-year-old boy named Gerald Bostock, the title, the spoof newspaper that came with it 39 years before Radiohead thought of the idea, and its opening line ("Really don't mind if you sit this one out"), all made Anderson's satirical intent plain. Yet if on one level the album was hard to take seriously, it also included some of the band's most potent music – and Anderson had the last laugh when his non-radio-friendly, 44-minute track gave Tull their first American No 1. Mixing acoustic guitar/flute folkiness with crunching rock heft, prog curlicues, classical allusions and a tinge of jazz fusion topped with dense and complex lyrics, it has stood the test of time surprisingly well.

EXTRAS: In addition to a "flat transfer" of the original '72 release, we get the entire opus in three additional mixes across two discs, none of which sound radically different; plus a 104-page hardback book full of Tull memorabilia.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

7/10



ANDRZEJ KORZYNSKI

Tajemnica Enigmy
[Secret Enigma 1968-81]

FINDERS KEEPERS

Psych-rock, funk and spooky minimalism from Polish composer

You're not likely to find any of the Polish movies he soundtracked on your LoveFilm list, but Andrzej Korzynski's music has long been a favourite of ardent crate-diggers. Finders Keepers recently uncovered his rare scores to the horror movies *Third Part Of The Night* and *Possession*, and this 22-track overview of snippets from his '60s and '70s soundtracks uncovers a startlingly good composer whose fusions of creepy modernism, free jazz and psych funk often stand up in isolation. Korzynski is adept at pasticheing other soundtrack kings: here he does a passable John Barry (on "Losy" and "Rosa Rosa"), a very good Michel Legrand ("Bossa Nova" with vocalist Ewa Wana), and a terrific Lalo Schiffrin ("Possession: Opetanie Five"). But it's his unorthodox rock tracks that really stand out. "La Grabuge: Pop Theme" sounds like some Miles Davis-meets-Can meltdown from 1972; "Third Part Of The Night Czolownica" is Deep Purple suddenly developing funk chops; and "Diabel" is a terrifying slice of minimalism. Best of all are the two tracks from "Dziekanka Students' Hostel" – all wiggly organs and wailing harmonicas – that sound like recently unearthed Doors instrumentals from '69.

EXTRAS: None.

JOHN LEWIS

7/10



THE JACKSON 5

Come And Get It: The Rare Pearls

UMC/ISLAND

2CD compilation of rarities from the Motown vaults

The Jackson 5 only really became an "album band"

when they migrated to CBS and renamed themselves The Jacksons. Their Motown LPs of the early 1970s tended to pad out the hits with fillers and cover versions of contemporary pop singles. Here Universal have rummaged around the Motown vaults to find a clutch of songs unfamiliar to even the most obsessive J5 fans. There are certainly cover versions galore: the brothers certainly eke new truths from Randy Newman's "Mama Told Me Not To Come" (young Michael's response to the wild scenes of partying is to shriek: "*Come on man, I don't wanna miss The Flintstones!*"). Assisted by the Wrecking Crew and the Funk Brothers, they add some funk muscle to the baroque soul of The Supremes' "Keep An Eye", add a pleasingly jerky shuffle to "You Can't Hurry Love", turn Jackie DeShannon's "Movin'" into a funky Motown gem, and essay possibly the best version of Traffic's "Feelin' Alright". There are obscurities that are nearly as good as any singles (particularly "Keep Off The Grass", "Cupid" and "If The Shoe Don't Fit"), while producer Deke Richards has unearthed three demos from his private collection, including a wonderfully raw version of "Mama's Pearl".

EXTRAS: None.

JOHN LEWIS

7/10

HOW TO BUY...

JETHRO TULL

Blues-rock-folk-prog heaven



Stand Up

CHRYSLIS, 1969

Tull's second album found them in transition between blues-rock bludgeoning and prog ambition. "Bourée" extemporises on a Bach motif and the lyrical wah-wah solo from newly arrived guitarist Martin Barre on "We Used To Know" still sounds genre-defining.

8/10



Aqualung

CHRYSLIS, 1971

Tull's best-selling album juxtaposed crunching rock on tracks such as "Locomotive Breath" with flute-led folkiness inspired by an admiration for Roy Harper and Bert Jansch. Ian Anderson still sees red if you call it a 'concept album'.

9/10



The Very Best Of Jethro Tull

CHRYSLIS, 2001

In their early days, Tull cut separate material for LP and single release, so a 'greatest hits' is essential. "Love Story" and "Witch's Promise" are among the non-album highlights on this, the best of the single-disc comps.

9/10

NIGEL WILLIAMSON



MANIC STREET PREACHERS

Generation Terrorists - 20th Anniversary Edition

SONY MUSIC

Lavish box of Manics includes many early cuts

With the Manics, there seemed to be a profound disconnect between the radical sloganeers who read the music press voraciously and obsessed over shambolic indie bands (the Richey Edwards/Nicky Wire wing of the party, if you will) and the GN'R-loving heavy rock heroes who always sounded readymade for the arena circuit (the Sean Moore/James Dean Bradfield tendency). The wealth of early cuts on this lavish boxset goes some way to explaining this paradox. Take the wonderfully scrappy faux C86 anthems "Poletaxed" and "Colt 45", the sweet and jangly South Wales demo of "Motorcycle Emptiness", or an early Billy Bragg-ish home recording called "Behave Yourself Baby" (which provided "Motorcycle Emptiness" with its distinctive middle-eight). There are also more sophisticated alternate takes: the Heavenly version of "You Love Us" starts off with what sounds like a György Ligeti string quote and ends with a full-on recreation of Iggy's "Lust For Life". In addition to the remastered album (which includes an early version of "Theme From M*A*S*H", with Dave Eringa on piano) there are a clutch of fine tracks that didn't make the LP – like the terrific "Little Baby Nothing" B-side "Never Want Again".

EXTRAS: DVD of film footage and home movies.

JOHN LEWIS

8/10

MICKEY NEWBURY

Lulled By The Moonlight/ Stories From The Silver Moon Cafe/ Blue To This Day

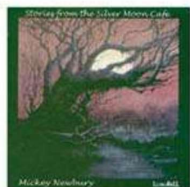
(reissues, 1996, 2000, 2003)

MOUNTAIN RETREAT/CARGO

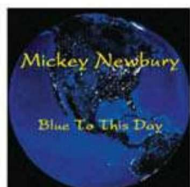
The last wilful testaments of a true original. *By Terry Staunton*



7/10



8/10



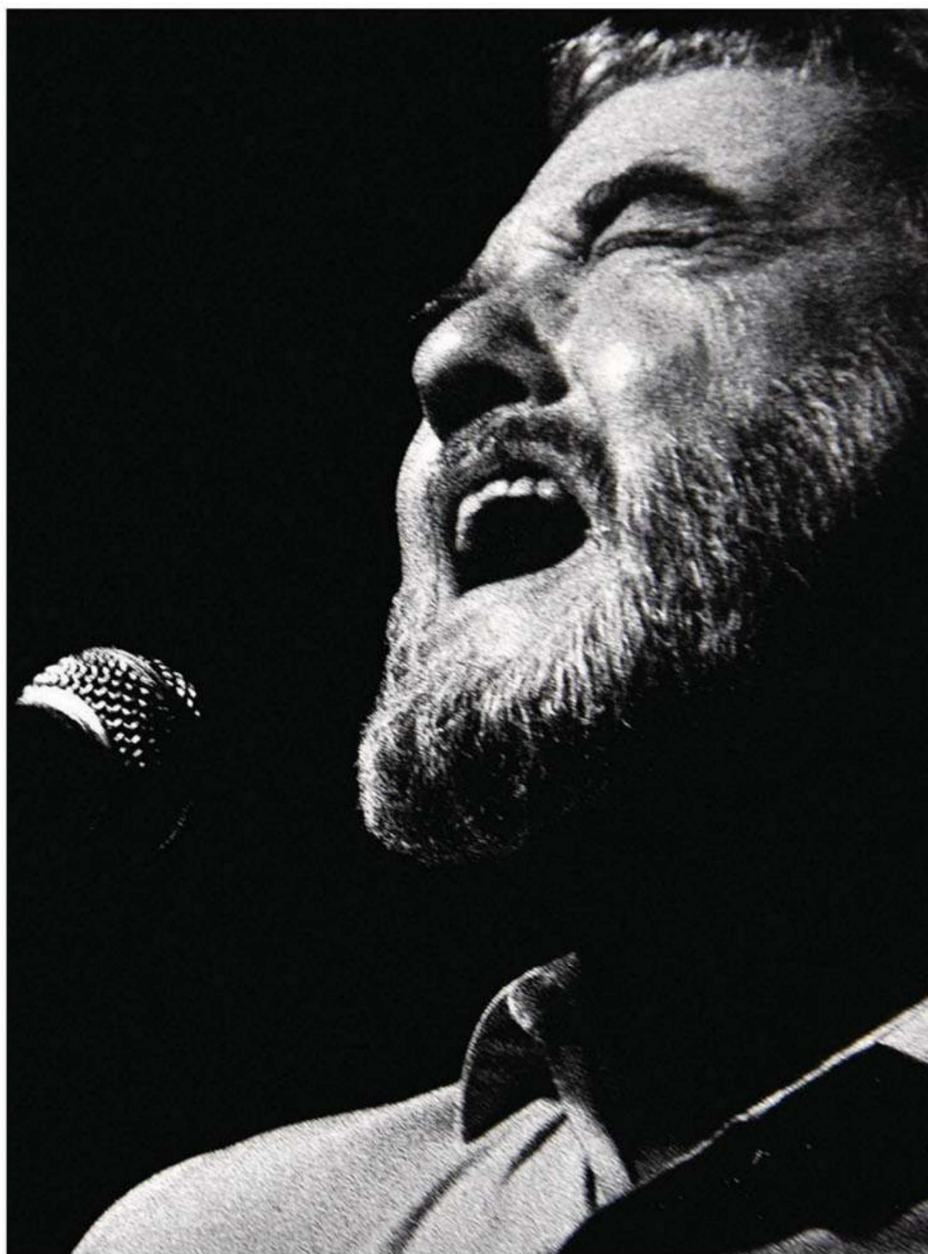
7/10

THE WORDS “MAVERICK” and “outlaw” tend to be casually grafted on to the name of any country act that doesn’t fit an easily marketable Nashville template. The latter ultimately became a sub-genre in its own right, fuelled in no small part by the western mythologising that peppers the catalogues of Willie Nelson, Merle Haggard and Waylon Jennings.

Mickey Newbury was certainly a maverick in the accepted difficult-to-pigeonhole sense, but despite being constantly championed by those more famous names above, he wasn’t strictly an outlaw. Even when Elvis Presley covers were boosting his bank balance, Newbury could be more accurately labelled an outsider.

Contemporaries who sold countless more concert tickets and records than Newbury considered him a poet. It was the word Johnny Cash used to describe him on prime-time television in 1971, going on to declare him “one of the best writers in the country”. He brought a fresh and articulate literacy to country music, perhaps matched only by his close friend Kris Kristofferson; a keen, impressionistic eye which brought the grandeur of Jimmy Webb to saloon laments hitherto lacking in philosophical ambition.

The indications were that he could have effortlessly jumped through Nashville hoops if he’d wanted to; “Funny Familiar Forgotten Feelings” (a big hit for Tom Jones in the UK), “She Even Woke Me Up To Say Goodbye” (a Jerry Lee Lewis live staple) and “I Don’t Think Much About Her No More” (20 different covers and counting) illustrate his innate understanding of the generic country form, but on his own records he relished pushing envelopes until they set fire to themselves in submission.



In the studio, he adopted the attitude of a dramatist, employing sound effects (rain, wind and thunder were favourites) to embellish his already evocative symphonies, while his lyrics could, on occasion, read like a ferocious game of *Top Trumps* between Hank Williams and Raymond Chandler. He probably knew it would never bring him untold riches, but he never seemed to care.

Last year’s multi-disc overview, *An American Trilogy*, was arguably the detailed introduction for latecomers Newbury had warranted for many years, putting a well-stacked, delicious buffet of sound to a name that might previously only have registered as a footnote or in parentheses of writings about more celebrated figures. These three albums, comprising his last original recordings before his death in 2002, represent the closing chapters, wilfully individual swansongs which, while only intermittently recalling his creative high-water marks, nonetheless reiterate his go-it-alone spirit.

Lulled By The Moonlight was his first full album of primarily original material for nigh on two decades, and it showcased a performer still unencumbered by the demands of commercial industry. He may have nodded to cookie cutter country tradition with knowing lyrical wit on “The

Future’s Not What It Used To Be”, but elsewhere he was playfully intricate, often taking his lead from the 19th-Century parlour songbook of American icon Stephen Foster.

Released later the same year, *Stories From The Silver Moon Cafe* combined songs left over from the previous album with re-recordings of older material, serenely revisiting the ‘60s hit “Why You Been Gone So Long?” and the jazz croon of “Ain’t No Blues Today”. Although a settled family man in his sixties, Mickey could still pinpoint the emotional pain of love gone wrong on “Lie To Me, Darling” and “Some Memories Are Better Left Alone”.

The posthumously released *Blue To This Day* is as gloriously wayward as anything in Newbury’s back catalogue, from the hymnal testifying of “Brother Peter” to the curtain-falling lullaby “Goodnight”, via the reassuring honky-tonk refuge of “All The Neon Lights Are Blue”.

What we have here are three very good Mickey Newbury albums; collections of eloquent, beautifully crafted songs that bristle with the intellect and curiosity he brought to just about everything he did; not entirely oblivious to the whims of big bucks country commercialism, but betraying a wry smile while charting their own laconic path.



KIRSTY MACCOLL

Kite (reissue, 1989)
SALVO

Long-overdue remasterings of tragic singer's catalogue
Ewan MacColl's daughter was too often judged as a

8/10

footnote to the various men in her life, from her folk-legend father, to husband and producer Steve Lillywhite, to her collaborations with The Pogues and Johnny Marr, and hit covers of songs by Ray Davies and Billy Bragg. Kirsty even died saving her son's life. But the in-demand backing vocalist made four rich, largely self-penned albums that deserve attention. MacColl's masterpiece is 1989's *Kite*, her second set, which features Marr and her version of The Kinks' "Days". There's no escaping how much the mix of twanging guitars, solid pop-rock rhythms and barbed lyrics resembles The Smiths; albeit with a hefty injection of the pub-friendly country-rock sound purveyed by Rockpile. But the likes of "No Victims", "Fifteen Minutes", "The End Of A Perfect Day" and "Tread Lightly" perfectly illuminate MacColl's sharp socialist wit and a pristine, restrained voice that can make personal bitches and agitprop sound like honeyed romanticism.

EXTRAS: All four albums feature

8/10 comprehensive liner notes, photos, and a bonus disc of B-sides and remixes. The *Kite* highlights are two versions of MacColl's definitive cover of The Smiths' "You Just Haven't Earned It Yet, Baby".

GARRY MULHOLLAND



CHRIS MCGREGOR

Sea Breezes
FLEDG'LING

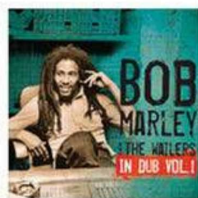
Beautiful solo piano set, ringing out from South Africa

9/10

In 1987, Brotherhood Of Breath's Chris McGregor returned to South Africa to play in the 'Carling Circle Of Jazz' series of concerts. It had been almost a quarter of a century since he last played there with The Blue Notes, before they relocated to Europe to pursue their music in a more welcoming, supportive environment, free of police attention. So it's not surprising that McGregor's set from the Natal University Department Of Music, at Durban, on October 14, 1987 feels like a working-through of memories, paying tribute to colleagues and influences in very direct ways. Indeed, some of those pieces are the most moving on the set – hearing McGregor drill into the soul of Blue Note colleague Mongezi Feza's "Sonia" is exceptionally affecting, particularly as the joy with which he caresses the melody is palpable. There are a number of beautiful readings of McGregor's own compositions, too, his take on "Bakwetha" swinging from lyrical flourishes to tight, constrained, almost staccato punchings of chord progressions. *Sea Breezes* lands us late in McGregor's career – he would pass away in May 1990. But if there's an element of historical survey, it's also tough, strident, and touching stuff, resolutely played with modernist vigour.

EXTRAS: None.

JONDALE



BOB MARLEY

In Dub Vol 1
ISLAND/TUFF GONG

Ten versions from Marley's Island years, plus one new mix
In the mindset of many, chart balladeer Bob Marley has little

7/10

to do with the sonic sorcery and thunderous rhythms of dub. They seem at opposite ends of reggae's spectrum. In reality, the distance between the two was always the flip of a 45 to the dub of Bob's latest single – at least in Jamaica, elsewhere Bob often stuck another song on his B-sides. Marley was no mixing desk symphonist. Most of his 'versions' simply let the Barrett brothers' drum and bass drive and clatter along – "Crazy Baldhead", "Roots Rock Reggae" and "Forever Loving Jah" are fine cases in point, the last featuring an awesome bass pulse. "Three Little Birds" doesn't bother to do much more than strip out Marley's vocal, while the phased "Smile Jamaica", with its clipped rhythm, has Lee 'Scratch' Perry's fingerprints on it. The one new version here – a shimmering mix of "Lively Up Yourself" by dub maestro Scientist, stretches imperious vocals against a minimalist backdrop and suggests how much more Marley the studio mixer might have done, but that is to miss the point. For Bob Marley, the song was the thing, and rather than remix the last, there was always another to write.

EXTRAS: None.

NEILSPENCER

REVELATIONS

Massive Attack – name redacted

➤ In January 1991, the fledgling Bristol outfit discovered why truth is often the first casualty of war. One of the earliest victims of Operation Desert Storm was Massive Attack's name, which was shortened to

Massive at the behest of manager Cameron McVey, who'd been advised by the BBC that their hotly tipped new single, "Unfinished Sympathy", would not be played on Radio 1 or TOTP unless they dropped the provocative 'Attack'. Massive Attack joined the Boomtown Rats, Bomb The Bass and The Cure's "Killing An Arab" on a list of banned acts whose incendiary names or songs might send out the wrong signal if broadcast during the six weeks of the Gulf War. Sure enough, every copy of "Unfinished Sympathy" was credited to Massive and the band celebrated the song's No 13 chart entry in February with a performance, as Massive, on TOTP. "I thought it was fucking ridiculous," recalled Robert '3D' Del Naja to Jockey Slut in 2003. "The phrase 'Massive attack on Iraq' seemed to be in every paper. If we didn't drop it, people would get the wrong impression and we'd appear pro-war." Normal service was resumed for their next single, the aptly titled "Safe From Harm". PIERS MARTIN



MASSIVE ATTACK

Blue Lines
(reissue, 1991)
VIRGIN

Bristol unit's trip-hop landmark remastered

9/10

The main surprise here – for there are no others – is that it has taken Virgin 21 years to roll out the remix and remaster treatment for what must surely be one of the label's most successful albums of recent times. Gingerly retweaked by the band from the original tapes, the new varnish appears to add little to an already sumptuous-sounding set, but really, any excuse to return to *Blue Lines* should be welcomed. Emerging from Bristol's Wild Bunch sound system crew, Massive Attack's stirring mix of hip-hop, soul and dub offered a darker, damaged take on Soul II Soul's streetwise funk, with Shara Nelson's stunning turns on "Unfinished Sympathy" and "Safe From Harm" seducing a generation, while an avuncular Horace Andy dispensed wisdom on "Hymn Of The Big Wheel". They'd never better *Blue Lines*, and through a mix of complacency, insecurity and conservatism would be doomed to repeat its formula, refining their technique to a level of clinical perfection that rendered later albums such as *Mezzanine* and *100th Window* emotionally numb. The good times, such as they were, are all here on *Blue Lines*.

EXTRAS: Deluxe box containing remastered 7/10 CD, DVD with high-resolution audio files, 2LP, original album promo poster and silk-screened mailer packaging.

PIERS MARTIN



MOVING SIDEWALKS

The Complete Collection
ROCKBEAT

Elusive: psych-garage monsters from the Lone Star State, anthologised
Best known for spawning

7/10

guitarist Billy Gibbons into the lineup of ZZ Top, Houston's Moving Sidewalks were among scores of lysergically inclined combos running wild within the Texas landscape circa 1965-1970, like Zakary Thaks, Mouse And The Traps and Bubble Puppy. The Sidewalks' legend stands on the immortal "99th Floor", a screaming, brain-rattling garage-rock up there with the 13th Floor Elevators' "You're Gonna Miss Me" and The Seeds' "Pushin' Too Hard". (A second, tamer, jangler studio take is a fascinating extra included here.) The Sidewalks came up with a few other psych gems, too – the throbbing "Need Me", "Every Night A New Surprise", with its surge of organ fills and blistering guitar runs, the spacey "Flashback," and "Crimson Witch", which, despite its positively incendiary guitar runs, found them wandering off into accomplished but derivative heavy-blues territory. By '69, and their lone LP, *Flash*, the story goes awry, a fine band cut down in its prime by shady labels and the military draft. Assorted instrumentals (live crowd-pleasers, no doubt), covers (a heavy, Vanilla Fudge take on The Fabs' "I Want to Hold Your Hand"), and embryonic, Hendrix-ized white-boy blues ("Joe Blues") round out the story.

EXTRAS: None.

LUKE TORN



Tift Merritt Traveling Alone

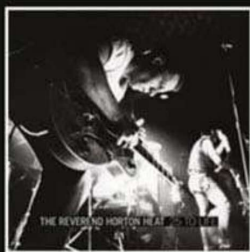
CD/LP

"Merritt's fourth studio LP cements her status as Emmylou Harris' spiritual heir" - **Uncut**

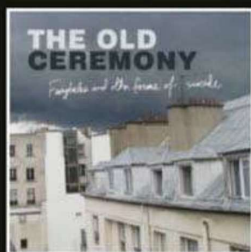


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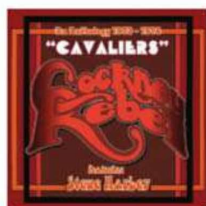
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The Specialist

Cockney Rebel



8/10

COCKNEY REBEL

Cavaliers: An Anthology 1973-1974

EMI

4CD triumph for art-pop's 'Cocky Rabble'

"The kids must need something new by now," Steve Harley said, starting his prototype-Kevin Rowland war on post-hippy excess in 1973. "They must be tired of screaming guitar riffs that say nothing."

Born in New Cross, Harley was not a cockney, but the childhood polio sufferer and one-time *Essex County Standard* hack certainly fancied himself as a rebel. The high-concept theatrical rock showcased on

Cockney Rebel's first two albums is bigger on bravado than innovation, but Harley's determination, control freakery, and incipient narcissism scythe compellingly through *Cavaliers* (a four-disc compilation), demo recordings, Peel Sessions, live material and all.

Discarded Rebel guitarist Pete Newnham recalls his old boss obsessing over *Blonde On Blonde*, *Hunky Dory* and *Ziggy Stardust*, and while Harley's lyrics single him out as a Bob Dylan wannabe who – post-David Bowie – worked out which way the wind blew, his Rebels were a more singular band than that would suggest. Dismissing lead guitarists as a Woodstock anachronism, the perma-sneering Harley let violinist John Crocker and electric piano player Milton Reame-James lead the musical line. Signed by EMI after a handful of gigs, Harley's arrogance nettled the cool kids, but glossy debut album *The Human Menagerie* (1973) has no shame. "What Ruthy Said", "Loretta's Tale" and "Crazy Raver" airlift the gossip intimacy of Lou Reed's *Transformer*, but there's no disguising the shock of the vaguely new on multi-tiered closer "Death Trip", Harley's riff on a coroner's inquest into a friend's heroin overdose. "Ever thought of dying totally unholy?" he teases, devilishly.

A non-album hit with "Judy Teen" raised the stakes, and *NME* branded Cockney Rebel "mincing Biba dummies". Still, 1974's *The Psychomodo* is anything but effete. "Ritz" and "Cavaliers" fathom its *For Your Pleasure*-era Roxy Music depths, and Harley signs off in style on "Tumbling Down", with the John Cale-ish screams in the big pay-off line "Oh dear, look what they've done to the blues", a barbed combination of anti-Ten Years After harangue and self-reverential gloating.

Insubordination in the ranks would see the original band implode soon afterwards, with Harley's 1975 No1 "Make Me Smile (Come Up And See Me)" ridiculing his former co-conspirators' excessive financial demands ("You spoilt the game, no matter what you say/For only metal – what a bore"). The kids ultimately got what they needed with the roundheaded puritanism of punk, but while Cockney Rebel's legacy amounted to little more than the Doctors Of Madness and Ultravox!, Harley's vision has gained gravitas with age. Glitter, for sure, but some of it is gold.

JIM WIRTH



SONIC YOUTH

Smart Bar – Chicago 1985

GOOFIN'

Killer live set catches the Youth at an early peak

In 1985, Sonic Youth were at a serious crossroads. They'd been through a

9/10

number of drummers and had only just hooked up with Steve Shelley; they were beginning to fine-tune their aesthetic, letting their songs stretch further, bleeding across and outside of the canvas; and they were slowly mapping out the terrain of underground America through a series of hand-to-mouth tours, including this one from August '85, which Kim Gordon had dubbed 'the spa tour' (none of the venues had air-conditioning, apparently). Coming off the macabre pastoralism of that year's *Bad Moon Rising*, by some measure their most engaging and mysterious record to date, this Smart Bar show sees the group in ferocious form, taking further liberties with songs like "I Love Her All The Time" and "Ghost Bitch", with Lee Ranaldo and Thurston Moore's twin-guitar attack by turns falsely lulling (check the seductive wistfulness of "Intro") and doggedly brutal. Previews of the following year's *EVOL*, in the shape of "Secret Girl" and "Expressway To Yr Skull", has both songs already well-formed, and "Expressway" is already stretching out into other planes, guitars clanging into dense, hypnotic force fields of buzzing and untamed drone, frozen and blissfully immobile.

EXTRAS: None.

JON DALE



TIR NA NÓG

Tír na nÓg (reissue, 1971)

ESOTERIC

Less credible string band's brush with greatness

8/10

Acoustic guitars, bongos, men with huge hair: in a

post Vashti Bunyan-world, it should be a recipe for posthumous cult stardom, but for one reason or another, Irish duo Tír na nÓg have yet to capture the imagination of modern hipsters. Their 1971 debut, however, plays all the right notes, if not necessarily in the right order: backward guitar, Incredible String Band whimsy, production by Bill Leader, a guest appearance from English fiddle king Barry Dransfield. Reissued alongside its increasingly rocky younger siblings, *A Tear And A Smile* and *Strong In The Sun*, Tír na nÓg finds the songwriting tag team of Leo O'Kelly and Sonny Condell recovering from support slots with Jethro Tull and Procol Harum through a combination of hippy dippy Donovan and Mr Fox-ish psychedelic folk. With its tablas, tin whistles and Velvet Underground viola-drone, the away-with-the-fairies title track has a poise that most contemporaries could not hold a (mellow) candle to, while "Dance Of Years" and "Dante" are testament to Tír na nÓg's Al Stewart-ish knack for catchy introspection. Otherworldly, but indubitably wise.

EXTRAS: Two tracks earmarked for a 7/10 Mike Batt-produced single that never was – Wombling freebies, if you will.

JIM WIRTH



VARIOUS ARTISTS The Haunted Pad: British Instrumental Guitar Music Of The Sixties

EL

7/10 Exuberant guitar
foot-tappers

America's golden age of rock'n'roll instrumentals between 1957 and 1962 was a mixture of novelty pop, raunchy sax and twangy, reverberating guitars. In pre-Beatles Britain, it was clean-cut guitar combos that often propped up the charts, these 35 forgotten tracks typical of an era sparked by The Shadows' "Apache" in summer 1960. Bert Weedon, whose earlier recording of "Apache" missed out, rarely troubled the charts and the innocuous, jaunty "Ghost Train" shows why. Already too old, Weedon's million-selling guitar tutor, *Play In A Day*, effectively sealed his fate by teaching the basics to the likes of George Harrison, Townshend and Clapton. If too much here is indebted to The Shadows' blueprint, a pre-"Telstar" Joe Meek tried to break the mould. There are two tracks here from *Dream Of The West*, an early concept album he produced for The Outlaws but Meek has more fun with The Moontrekkers. Their "Night Of The Vampires" is prefaced by eerie effects, creaks and screams. Ludicrously, it was considered "unsuitable for persons of a nervous disposition", whereas Nero & The Gladiators' demolition of "In The Hall Of The Mountain King" was also banned by the BBC but on the grounds of "poor taste".

EXTRAS: None.
MICK HOUGHTON



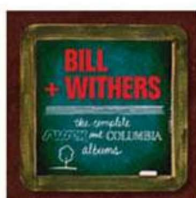
VARIOUS ARTISTS Lowe Country: The Songs Of Nick Lowe

FIESTA RED

7/10 Pub rock godhead gets
the prairie treatment

Although more pronounced on his solo output of the last 10 years or so, Nick Lowe has been dallying in country motifs since his pub rock days with Brinsley Schwarz at the start of the '70s. It's evident on that group's "Don't Lose Your Grip On Love", covered here with an even bigger debt to The Band by The Parson Red Heads, one of the many highlights on this affectionate charity project to benefit the victims of floods and fires in Tennessee and Texas. Various types of Americana acts line up to take on Lowe chestnuts, but not all restrict themselves to Basher's more Nashville-friendly songs. Chatham County Line give the beat group bounce of "Heart Of The City" a bluegrass makeover, while Texan fiddle player Amanda Shires re-imagines the spiky pop of "I Love The Sound Of Breaking Glass" as a dreamy lament in the manner of Cowboy Junkies. Saloon gals in particular strike a powerful chord, the hangover post-mortem of "Lately I've Let Things Slide" even more heartbreaking by Caitlin Rose (who also shows up on Robert Ellis' honky-tonkin' "All Men Are Liars"), and Lori McKenna brings a redneck twang to the wallflower woes of "What's Shakin' On The Hill".

EXTRAS: None.
TERRY STAUNTON



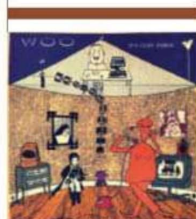
BILL WITHERS The Complete Sussex And Columbia Albums

SONY

8/10 Handsome nine-album
boxset from homespun
soulster

There was never much complicated about Bill Withers. The intricate funk of "Use Me" or "Lonely Town...", from his second (and best) album, *Still Bill*, might qualify as tricky, otherwise the ex-navyman was invariably direct and usually genial. His persona was a man with broad shoulders and tender feelings, a man to rely on ("Lean On Me"), who honoured his family ("Grandma's Hands"), saw the good side of the ghetto ("Harlem") and had an instinct about a cheating girlfriend ("Who Is He?"). With his earthy, engaging voice, acoustic guitar, and penchant for performance (1973's *Live At Carnegie Hall* is a classic), he was more folk singer than soul star. His calling card, "Ain't No Sunshine" from 1971's *Just As I Am*, has been covered to exhaustion without besting his aching, acoustic original. Though his reputation rests on the cache of songs on his first two albums, there are nuggets on his later work – the sultry "Ruby Lee" from 1974's *Justments* and "Lovely Day", a return to form on 1977's *Menagerie* – but the edge of his early career faded into the bland cocktail soul of '79's *Bout Love* and 1985's *Watching You Watching Me*. Ninety-one tracks will be a score or two too many for most fans, but good guy Bill deserves his boxset.

EXTRAS: None.
NEIL SPENCER



WOO It's Cosy Inside (reissue, 1989)

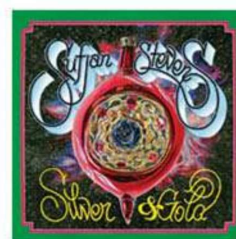
DRAG CITY

8/10 New-age siblings'
marvellous junkshop
exotica

Drag City's eccentric but edifying reissues policy continues with the unearthing of little-known Wimbledon duo Woo's second album, 1989's *It's Cosy Inside*, which made almost no impression at the time but has since acquired a modest fanbase online. Woo were – and are still – brothers Clive and Mark Ives, new-age dreamers who today compose music for healing and meditation and did so as youthful idealists in the '70s and '80s, too, recording at home on numerous tapes, primitive electronics and acoustic instruments to create a fuzzy mish-mash of bucolic post-pop. Reminiscent of Neu!'s prettier passages and the harmonious mischief of the Penguin Café Orchestra, *It's Cosy Inside* is a genuine delight from start to finish, taking in shimmering fretwork ("Marion", "No Man's Land") and purring synth pieces ("Did You See", "No More Telly"), each no longer than two minutes. While it would be convenient with hindsight to link Woo's shambling psychedelia to, say, fellow voyagers The Orb's early excursions, Woo seem to have existed in their own organically grown soundworld, one they established with their equally beguiling '82 debut *Whichever Way You Are Going, You Are Going Wrong*. Warm and familiar, *It's Cosy Inside* is the epitome of domestic bliss.

EXTRAS: None.
PIERS MARTIN

COMING NEXT MONTH...



► Festooned with decorations and drunkenly singing it may be, but the *Uncut* albums desk still must tip its paper hat to those musicians with a more

responsible attitude to the festive season. For them, work goes on.

Not least for **Sufjan Stevens**. Never a man to shy away from a high-concept idea for an album, next month, he returns with that seasonal staple, the boxset. Sufjan's own will collect his Christmas EPs of the past five years, and package them with a selection of stickers and other goodies, so that the fan of intellectual US indie with money to spare can rediscover his inner child at this festive time.

Retrospective boxes are also afoot from **Joni Mitchell** and **10cc**, whose 1970s career you can read about elsewhere in this issue. Ghosts of, if not Christmas past, then at least countryish music past will also be among us. There's a hearty **Merle Haggard** box afoot from the great Bear Family label and also *Midnight Ramble Sessions Vol 3*, the last compilation of roaring roots rock jams personally overseen by the sorely missed **Levon Helm** and miscellaneous friends, including Chris Robinson and Allen Toussaint.

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THIS MONTH: ZEP AT THEIR LATEST, AND THE STONES AT THEIR EARLIEST

Arena of the holy: (l-r) Robert Plant, John Paul Jones, Jimmy Page and Jason Bonham



LED ZEPPELIN

Celebration Day

WARNER MUSIC VIDEO (DVD & BLU-RAY)

No myth-making here: just an impressive document of old friends blowing minds again... *By Michael Bonner*



9/10

CELEBRATION DAY OPENS with a reminder of how business was conducted during Led Zeppelin's imperial phase. Over the film's opening credits, archive news footage plays from Led Zeppelin's May 5, 1973 concert

at Florida's Tampa Stadium. Channel 13's John Jones watched it happen. Slightly incredulously, the reporter delivers the statistics. On May 4, Zeppelin – "popular with the acid rock crowd, big on album sales" – played in Atlanta, selling a record-breaking 49,239 tickets. For their show one day later in Florida, they sold 56,800 tickets, grossing \$309,000, and breaking the records set in 1965 by The Beatles at Shea Stadium. "It really was the biggest crowd ever assembled for a single performance in one place in the entire history of

the world," says the anchorman back in the studio, as we see Zep's Falcon jet taxiing to a standstill at Tampa International Airport, before the band and entourage are whisked away in two black limos, accompanied by an escort of police outriders.

As it was then, so it is now – Led Zeppelin are still capable of delivering unprecedented statistics. 20 million people applied for 18,000 tickets for the band's first headline show in 27 years. The occasion was a tribute concert at London's O2 on December 10, 2007 for their old label boss, Ahmet Ertegun, documented here as *Celebration Day*. Following a brief theatrical run on 1,500 screens in 40 countries in October, *Celebration Day* is now available across six formats, from a 2DVD/2CD Deluxe Edition to an old-school three-album vinyl set (a percentage of the profits will go to the Ahmet Ertegun Education Fund). It has taken five years to get officially released.

So why has it taken so long? On the night itself, the entire performance's audio was multitracked as well as filmed on multiple cameras by director Dick Carruthers (who'd worked with Jimmy

Page on 2003's *Led Zeppelin* DVD). Speaking to David Cavanagh in *Uncut* in our May 2008 issue, Page explained, "We didn't go in with the express purpose of making a DVD to come out at Christmas, or whatever. We haven't seen the images or investigated the multitracks. It's feasible that it might come out at some distant point, but it'll be a massive job to embark upon."

We have now reached that 'distant point', and according to Page at a London press conference in late September to launch *Celebration Day*, apparently the 'massive job' turned out in the end to be no more than a gentle tweak: "If I say there might have been a handful of fixes, what I'm really saying is the minimum to what other people would do. The concert was what it was. There was very little that needed to be messed about with, because we'd already done it well in the first place." Specifically, Robert Plant admitted the vocals at the end of "Kashmir" had been tuned "because I'd run out of steam. There's only so many long notes that you can do."

In a way, Plant's tacit admission that he's not as young as he once was is critical to how we view *Celebration Day*. Because Zeppelin had been inactive for so long prior to the O2 show, our memory of them has always been of the band preserved in their pomp, Page in his black Dragon Suit, Plant with denim bell-bottoms and sideburns like gastropub chunky chips. The myth of Zeppelin always seemed predicated on their youth and virility. Robert Plant, the youngest, was 32 when the band split up; unlike the Stones or The Who, we never saw Zeppelin age, they were freeze-framed in their prime. Now here we are, watching the three surviving members of the band – two of whom have reached retirement age – reconnect with the

music of half a lifetime away. They look fantastic, incidentally. Page, with his shock of white hair and three-piece suit, resembles a flamboyant country squire in a Restoration comedy. Meanwhile, Plant and John Paul Jones are soberly turned out in black shirts and dark trousers. Apart from the 1973 footage from Tampa, there is no context – no shots of the band arriving at the O2's North Greenwich Pier by boat, no jittery pre-gig backstage banter, no grainy, b/w slo-motion walk from dressing room to stage. No fantasy sequences involving questing Arthurian knights and damsels in distress.

Relying heavily on four onstage cameras, Carruthers provides extended close-ups of the band members in action. You are, quite literally, in the thick of it. You can see the white of Page's plectrums, while you might notice that he's scrubbed out certain letters on his Orange AD-30 amp so it spells 'OR GE'. Look! Here's a close up of John Paul Jones' stylish Cuban heels, tap-tapping away. And wait! Here's Jason Bonham donning a pair of aviator shades for "Nobody's Fault But Mine", taking them off again once the song has finished. There are no gimmicks to speak of – apart from a handful of freeze-frames, or cuts to Super 8 camera footage filmed in the audience, Carruthers presents the O2 show as it happened, his crew catching every one of Page's sweaty

grimaces as he wrings another solo from his guitar, or John Paul Jones' unexpectedly hypnotic runs along the fretboard of his bass.

The band play in a tight formation, centered on Jason Bonham's drum kit, facing inwards and often playing to each other. The

There are no gimmicks, no fantasy sequences – you're literally in the thick of it

pleasure they clearly take in each other's company, playing this extraordinary music, is striking. The sound mix – by Alan Moulder, presumably overseen by Page – is pristine. The differences in performance style are enhanced by Carruthers' up-tight camerawork. There's Page, tearing through some ferocious slide guitar on "In My Time Of Dying", the sweat beginning to seep through his shirt, while opposite him is John Paul Jones – a more discreet presence, certainly, but completely in tune with Page's theatrics. A thrilling "Trampled Underfoot" finds Page and – on piano – Jones dueling solo against solo. If there's one surprise achievement *Celebration Day* can lay claim to, it's making explicit Jones' contribution to the music.

Carruthers deftly edits out much of the between-song admin – the changing of instruments, lengthy audience applause – but preserves Plant's good-natured introductions. He attributes "Nobody's Fault But Mine" to Blind Willie Johnson, claiming the band first heard it "in a church in Mississippi about 1932". Later, while introducing Jason Bonham on drums, he describes John and Pat Bonham as being "the best Jimi Hendrix impersonators in Worcestershire".

Weirdly, for a band of such legendary achievements, there is little here romanticised or mythic. Instead, Carruthers' film is simply a testament to the physical endurance of these men. In amidst the hail of statistics, and judged against their own increasingly epic live shows, *Celebration Day* is a surprisingly intimate and human thing. On one level, another Guinness World Record broken. On another, a group of friends once more enjoying the glory of their music.

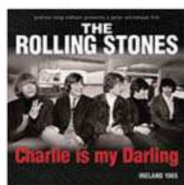
EXTRAS: The DVD/Blu-ray comes with additional 6/10 rehearsal footage from Shepperton.

THE ROLLING STONES

Charlie Is My Darling – Ireland 1965

ABKCO

Satisfaction guaranteed! The band's fascinating early days. *By Damien Love*



10/10

monumental new career-overview documentary, *Crossfire Hurricane*. But no filmmaker ever got closer than Peter Whitehead, who was there before the rocky masks had been tugged in place and the myths coalesced. Shot over three days in 1965, onstage, backstage and on the road during a short tour of Ireland, *Charlie Is My Darling*, the first Stones film, is a Stones film like no other.

Barely released in '66, since trapped in legal tangles, Whitehead's vibrant, hand-held vérité documentary has emerged in various washed-out bootlegs, but the team behind this meticulous release have returned to the archives and not only restored the print but uncovered additional footage, including extended versions of the band's fantastically raw performances: Jagger, Richards, Jones, Watts and Wyman when they were a young blues band in sports jackets, playing small venues, close enough for the hysterical audience to storm the stage.

Filming shortly after the release of "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction", Whitehead captures them in the process of

IT'S NOT AS IF THE Stones are lacking pivotal film documents – there's the Maysles brothers' *Gimme Shelter* and Godard's *One Plus One* for starters, not to mention Robert Frank's notorious, unreleased *Cocksucker Blues* – and they're about to hit us with a

going stratospheric, loving what is happening, yet also apprehensive. Here are the Stones when they weren't much more than kids, impersonating Elvis, getting chased by screaming fans across railway tracks, jamming Beatles songs, and, amazingly, caught in the act composing their own, as Mick talks Keith through his idea for "Sittin' On A Fence" ("It's about a guy sitting on a fence...").

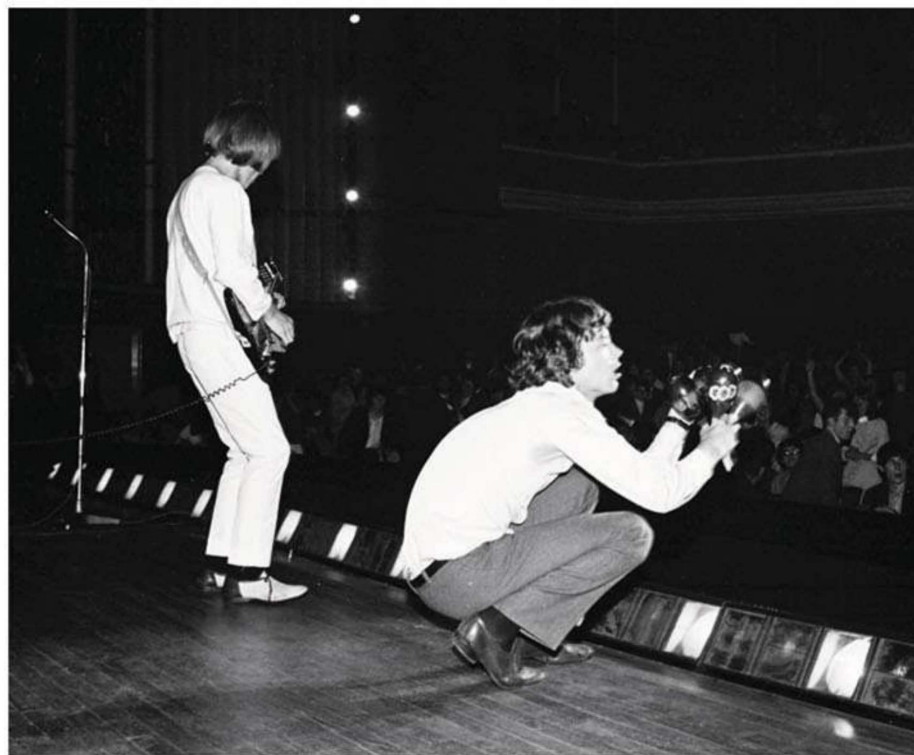
What emerges is not a portrait of young gods. Getting so close you get to watch Keith lathering concealer over his spots, this is the band unformed, unvarnished and, when Whitehead pins them down for interviews, uncomfortable. As they get bored, show off, lark around, try on intellectual pretension and mumble, the results are astonishingly intimate, often charming, sometimes toe-curling.

Just as fascinating as the picture of the band, however, is the context around them. It's 1965, but the grey, parochial world we glimpse could as easily be 1948. Whitehead uniquely captures the real sense of the group, and their fans, trying to escape grinding reality by creating something else,

something that doesn't really exist – this music – to believe in instead. Simply essential stuff.

EXTRAS: Whitehead's original 10/10 cut and Andrew Loog Oldham's "producer's cut" beside the 2012 restoration and outtakes. The "Super Deluxe" edition is pricey, but amazing, including a 10-inch vinyl comp of live 1965 performances recorded by Glyn Johns, two CDs (those tracks, plus the film's soundtrack), a fine hardback book, a replica poster from the Belfast 1965 gig, and a random film cell.

Getting so close you see Keith putting concealer on his spots, this is the Stones unformed, unvarnished



Films

BY MICHAEL BONNER

This month: BB King walks around the world, The Master fails to live up to its sublime beginning, and death strikes at Keswick Pencil Museum...

The Master Paul Thomas Anderson begins and ends *The Master* with the same image: Freddie Quell (Joaquin Phoenix), lying on a beach in the South Pacific in the closing days of World War II, nestled up close to the figure of a woman carved in the sand. Bent out of shape by the war, we learn he is an alcoholic and possibly deranged. In a series of weird, unconnected scenes, we see Freddie siphoning petrol from the tank of an aircraft, masturbating into the Pacific surf, lying in a hammock on a warship. These are near-silent passages, sountracked by Jonny Greenwood's arrhythmic, percussive score that brings to mind Jerry Goldsmith's music for *Planet Of The Apes*.

Anderson follows Freddie as he gradually slips between the cracks in post-war America. We see him working as a photographer in a department store, brewing up hooch in the dark room and seducing a store model; he's sacked for fighting with a customer and ends up chopping cabbages, finally chased across a field in the early morning light. In 1950, he crosses paths with Lancaster Dodd (Philip Seymour Hoffman), leader of modest pseudo-scientific cult The Cause – the one man who might be able to anchor Freddie, if only he'd let him. This, effectively, is the opening 30 minutes of the film, and is among the best work Anderson has done – exquisitely photographed, perfectly paced, packing so much data and information in. It promises much more, sadly, then the rest of the film delivers.

The Master is Anderson's first film since *There Will Be Blood*, and the two films share some similarities, at least superficially. They are both epic in scale, both have period settings, and both feature two men locked in conflict (and both films feature Jonny Greenwood scores). But *The Master* doesn't feel as odd or psychotic as its predecessor; nor does it feel quite as meaty. Although set in a cult, it isn't really a film about Scientology. Although Freddie and Dodd are meant to be in opposition to one another, often this comes across as thespy jousting, the roasting of ham. Freddie's inarticulate rages are dialled-up too far. Hoffman's Dodd is more interesting: a spiritual entrepreneur of extraordinary charisma, he is nevertheless paranoid, prone to sudden outbursts of anger, possibly sexually rapacious. As one character observes, Dodd is "making it up as he goes along". What does he see in Freddie? We're never clear. Amy Adams is terrific as Dodd's wife, the steely power behind the throne, bitterly

mistrusting of Freddie. Anderson creates a beautiful if strange version of 1950s America, shot in a kind of period Kodachrome by Mihai Malaimare Jr. But it's full of disturbing and arresting things, imperceptible shifts in reality: Steinbeck via John Wyndham. Yet, it feels as shallow as *The Cause* itself, as maddeningly opaque as Dodd's motivations.

➤ **Amour** Michael Haneke has often meted out cruel and unusual punishments to his characters – a middle-class couple in *Funny Games*, an oppressed music professor in *The Piano Teacher*, or an entire town in *The White Ribbon*. *Amour*, however, provides a corrective of sorts. No less uncomfortable to watch than his

previous films, *Amour* is nevertheless both a poignant love story and a typically rigorous attempt to dismantle one of the last great taboos in cinema. To Haneke, love hurts. Georges (Jean-Louis Trintignant) and Anne (Emmanuelle Riva) are retired music teachers living in an elegant, book-lined Paris apartment. When Anne suffers a stroke, Georges promises to look after her at home; at first, there is warmth and humour as they reconfigure their lives around Anne's condition, but she begins to deteriorate. Georges effectively shuts them both off from the outside world – their daughter Eva, played by Isabelle Huppert, various carers and a former pupil are all shunned. "Your concern is of no use to me," Georges tells Eva. Trintignant, best known for ...*And God Created*



Reviewed this month...



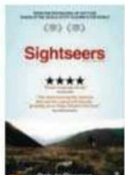
THE MASTER
Director Paul Thomas Anderson
Starring Joaquin Phoenix, Philip Seymour Hoffman
Opens November 2
Certificate 12A

6/10



AMOUR
Director Michael Haneke
Starring Jean-Louis Trintignant, Emmanuelle Riva
Opens November 16
Certificate 12A

10/10



SIGHTSEERS
Director Ben Wheatley
Starring Steve Oram, Alice Lowe
Opens November 30
Certificate 15

8/10



ARGO
Director Ben Affleck
Starring Ben Affleck, John Goodman
Opens November 7
Certificate 15

8/10



THE LIFE OF RILEY
Director Jon Brewer
Starring BB King
Opens October 22
Certificate 12A

7/10



"Oddball period thriller" *Argo*

His mother dead, his father absent, the young BB King lived in a shack, working to pay off his late grandmother's \$40 debt

Women, A Man And A Woman and *Z*, and Riva, the European lead in Alain Resnais' *Hiroshima, Mon Amour*, are both remarkable. Riva allows Anne to be slowly, systematically, taken away from Georges, while Trintignant – now 81 – is almost heroic in his stoicism. Anne describes him as "a monster, also capable of great kindness". This is moving, but not sentimental.

► **Sightseers** is a black comedy from Ben Wheatley, whose previous film, *Kill List*, was an inspired spin on the '70s folk horror cycle of movies that included *The Wicker Man*. *Sightseers* finds Chris (Steve Oram) taking his new girlfriend, Tina (Alice Lowe), on a caravanning holiday round northern England: hotspots include the

Crich Tram Museum, Ribbleshead Viaduct and the Keswick Pencil Museum. "I know all kinds of people who've had bad experiences in caravans," warns Tina's dreadful, disapproving mother before they leave, and you might be forgiven at first for thinking that Wheatley was aiming for *Race With The Devil* relocated to the Peak District. Chris – fusty, ginger-bearded, apparently trying to write a book – has problems expressing himself. Tina, desperate for his approval, becomes his muse: "I've never been a muse before," she says, delightedly. But it soon becomes clear something is amiss: "I just want to be feared and respected," Chris explains, as the bodies pile up. "That's not too much to ask, is it?"

Catching pale, wintry light as it hits the lonely landscapes of Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Cumbria helps create an eeriness familiar from *Kill List*. But working from Oram and Lowe's script – their characters have been developed over time in local comedy workshops – Wheatley's film is funnier than its predecessor, even pausing for moments of pathos. You might even detect something of Alan Bennett or Victoria Wood in the characters' fussy small-mindedness. The brisk running time of 88 minutes feels right.

► **Argo** The 'film within a film' conceit has become the default setting for horror movies since *The Blair Witch Project* and, recently, the successful *Paranormal Activity* movies. For Ben Affleck's third film as director, *Argo* is the name of "a \$20 million *Star Wars* rip-off", a fake movie concocted by the CIA's "exfiltration" expert, Tony Mendez (Affleck), as a cover to help six American diplomats escape from revolutionary Iran during the 1979 hostage crisis. Mendez, posing as *Argo*'s associate producer, will fly to Iran, issue false identities to the Americans, claim they are scouting locations for the movie, and then fly them out. A true story, Affleck's film shifts between sweaty political thriller and Hollywood satire; the kind of oddball period thriller favoured by producers George Clooney and Grant Heslov. The opening sequence of the US embassy under siege is shot in jittery hand-held close-up for extra ball-tightening tension; the Tinseltown double act of John Goodman's Oscar-winning prosthetics guru and Alan Arkin's producer, recruited by the CIA to launch the film, are hilarious. The facial hair is commendable: Affleck looks like the male lead in a Marilyn Chambers porno. Meanwhile, the actors playing the six diplomats all bear a slight resemblance to 'real' actors of the day – one looks a little like Meryl Streep, another like Diane Keaton, a third like Keith Carradine. It's a witty, suspenseful mainstream movie.

► **The Life Of Riley** is a documentary about the last of the great bluesmen, BB King, now in his 88th year. It is straightforward, soup to nuts stuff, beginning out in the Mississippi fields where we first meet King, close to the site of the house where he was born. "To be here, where somebody can truly say, 'B, this is where you were born, this is where the world first knew about you,' is a high for me." Testimonials come from Bono, Keith Richards, Eric Clapton, John Mayall – but the most interesting sections of Jon Brewer's respectful film concern King's earliest days. With no child labour laws in place at the time, King started work aged 7, following a mule through the fields, doing 30 miles a day, 6 days a week: "multiply that by 18 years, I walked around the world". His mother was dead, his father absent, he lived alone in a shack, working to pay off his late grandmother's \$40 debt. As a teenager, he saw a man hung by the Ku Klux Klan. Morgan Freeman narrates, which inadvertently makes it sound like an insurance commercial.

Also out...

EXCISION

OPENS NOVEMBER 2

Horror comedy: a student fantasises about performing surgery on her peers. Traci Lords, Malcolm McDowell and John Waters co-star.

THE SHINING

OPENS NOVEMBER 2

Jack's back! Just missing Halloween, Kubrick's classy horror gets reissued. Available to see at key cities.

THE SAPPHIRES

OPENS NOVEMBER 7

The IT Crowd's Chris O'Dowd plays the manager of the titular girl group: an Aboriginal quartet who become Australia's answer to The Supremes in the '60s.

JASON BECKER: NOT DEAD YET

OPENS NOVEMBER 16

Stirring doc about guitarist Becker, diagnosed at 19 with a rare disease, who's still making music despite being paralysed.

TWILIGHT SAGA: BREAKING DAWN PART 2

OPENS NOVEMBER 16

Finally, it ends.

SILVER LINING PLAYBOOK

OPENS NOVEMBER 21

It's David O Russell, following up *The Fighter* with this comedy. Bradley Cooper moves back in with his folks. De Niro is his dad. Comedy ensues.

LAWRENCE OF ARABIA

OPENS NOVEMBER 23

The Director's Cut of David Lean's masterpiece. It's three and a half hours long. Take a sandwich.



GREAT EXPECTATIONS

OPENS NOVEMBER 30

We're sure Helena Bonham Carter already played Miss Havisham, but anyway, here's the umpteenth adaptation of Dickens' book. Ralph Fiennes – of course! – is Magwitch.

THE HUNT

OPENS NOVEMBER 30

A kindergarten teacher is falsely accused of child abuse. Thomas Vinterberg directs, Mads Mikkelsen stars.

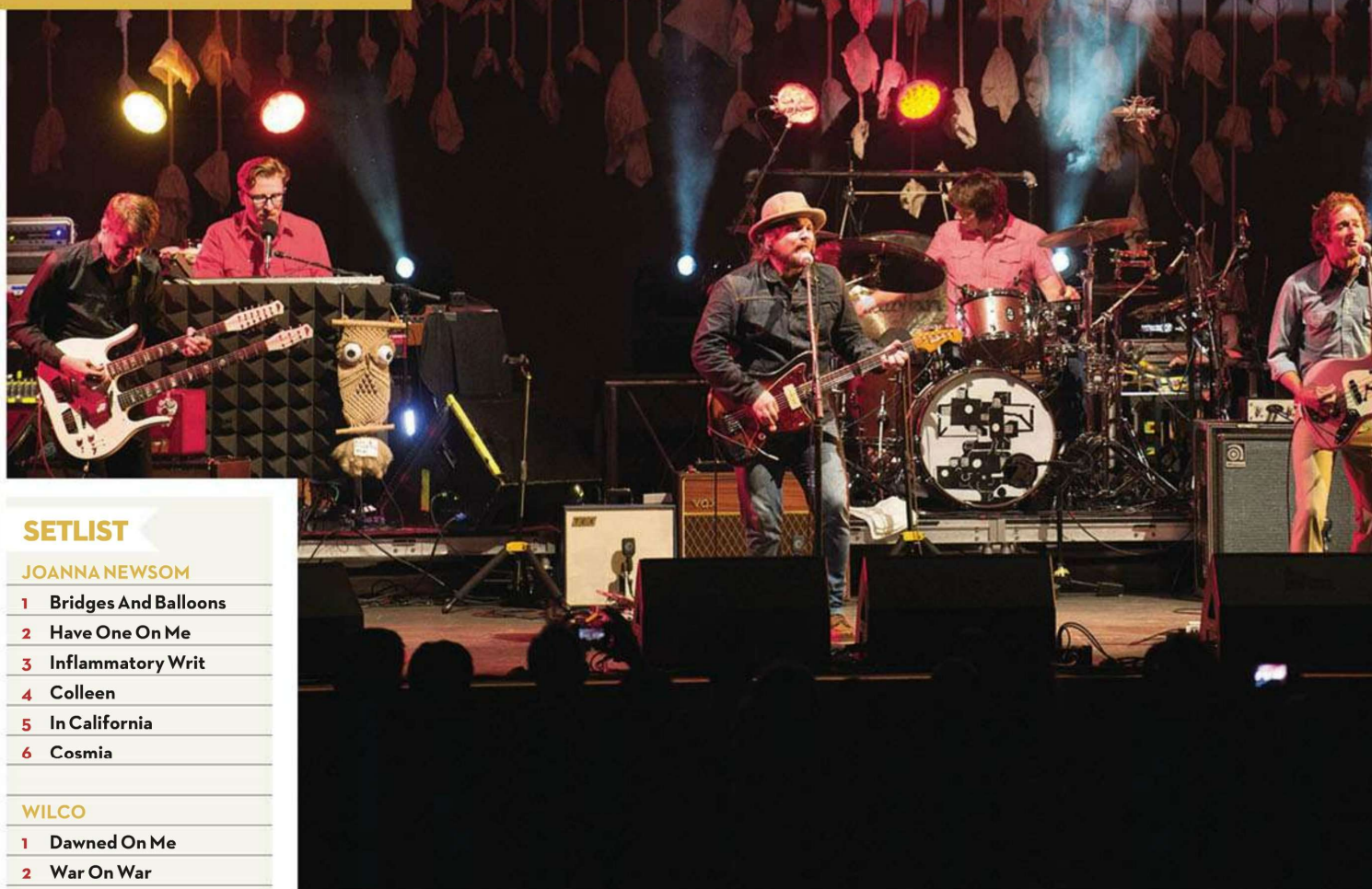
TROUBLE WITH THE CURVE

OPENS NOVEMBER 30

Fresh from his appearance at the Republican convention, Clint Eastwood plays an ageing baseball scout, on one last assignment. Justin Timberlake co-stars.

Live

ROCKING IN THE FREE WORLD



SETLIST

JOANNA NEWSOM

- 1 Bridges And Balloons
- 2 Have One On Me
- 3 Inflammatory Writ
- 4 Colleen
- 5 In California
- 6 Cosmia

WILCO

- 1 Dawned On Me
- 2 War On War
- 3 I Might
- 4 Sunken Treasure
- 5 Spiders (Kidsmove)
- 6 Impossible Germany
- 7 Born Alone
- 8 I Am Trying To Break Your Heart
- 9 Art Of Almost
- 10 Misunderstood
- 11 Jesus Etc
- 12 Handshake Drugs
- 13 Whole Love
- 14 Hate It Here
- 15 Box Full Of Letters
- 16 I'm Always In Love
- 17 Hummingbird
- 18 A Shot In The Arm

ENCORE:

- 19 Ashes Of American Flags
- 20 California Stars
- 21 Walken
- 22 Heavy Metal Drummer
- 23 I'm The Man Who Loves You

ENCORE 2:

- 24 Hoodoo Voodoo
- 25 Outtassite (Outta Mind)

WILCO/JOANNA NEWSOM

HOLLYWOOD BOWL, LOS ANGELES, SEPTEMBER 30, 2012

Outtassite! A memorable night under the California stars...

ON A SULTRY Sunday night, Wilco are playing the final US date of a 16-month-long tour behind *The Whole Love*. It is their first headlining show at the 18,000-capacity Bowl, which they've nearly filled. Tonight's pairing with the wildly imaginative Joanna Newsom, who was invited by major fan Jeff Tweedy specifically to play this date (Jonathan Richman opened the previous few shows), ensures an evening of sustained intricacy and acute contrasts.

In the fading light of a desert-hot day, Newsom takes the stage with her core sidemen, multi-instrumentalist Ryan Francesconi and drummer/percussionist Neal Morgan. Restricted to 45 minutes – necessitating that they limit the setlist primarily to shorter pieces – and playing in a venue not naturally suited to intimate

expression, the trio deliver what amounts to an introduction to Newsomian cosmology, ecology and language: this may well be the very first time most of the Wilco diehards gathered in the amphitheatre have ever heard Newsom's music.

From a distance, Newsom looks almost childlike sitting behind her gilded harp in a red patterned dress, her face visible on the left side of her instrument as she warbles and trills into the microphone. On the projection screen, her face contorts into charming grimaces as she sweeps her fingers over the strings and tackles the vocal challenges posed by the elegant complexity of her lyrics and arching melodies.

At first, the trio elicit mild curiosity among scatterings of concertgoers, Newsom's quaintly solipsistic sound undoubtedly perceived as that “*funny little thing*” she references in the

refrain of the opening “Bridges And Balloons”. The following “Have One On Me” continually morphs from one evocation to another, sounding like a barroom ballad from some parallel universe one moment, an homage to The Incredible String Band the next, before Newsom takes the song to a sylvan climax with a series of feral “oohs”. Moving to a grand piano, she races through “Inflammatory Writ” before sliding back behind the harp for a rendition of “Colleen” that sounds like it was written to soundtrack a scene in a film set in the court of Elizabeth I. Up to now a workmanlike effort under challenging circumstances, the performance undergoes a magical transformation during “In California”, a song made to be played in this setting, sounding like some especially beguiling Joni Mitchell composition, as Newsom conjures a place “*Where the darkness does fall*



Harp the herald angel:
Joanna Newsom.
Above, Wilco
onstage at the Bowl

so fast it feels like some kind of mistake” and the skies follow suit.

By the time she finishes “Cosmia”, the set closer, Newsom has penetrated the general indifference, inspiring scattered whoops, even as many ticket holders are still making their way to the seemingly endless rows of seats stretching up the hillside. She seems undaunted by the difficulty of connecting in this vast venue, confessing, “I’ve always wanted to play Hollywood Bowl.” It’s a small but meaningful victory. Later, while thanking her for joining Wilco on the bill, Tweedy says admiringly of the performance, “That looks hard.”

In a set that extends past two hours, Tweedy and his crew – five uncommonly skilful, totally in-sync specialists honed to jaw-dropping tightness from the constant roadwork – offer up 25 selections from their fat songbook. In the meat of the set, the band alternates between joyous rockers, a bunch of them from *The Whole Love* (opener “Dawned On Me”, the Costello/Attractions-like “I Might”, “Born Alone”), syncopated examples of Wilco soul (“Hate It Here”, “Whole Love”), furious avant-assaults (“Art Of Almost”, “I Am Trying To Break Your Heart”) and poignant pieces that dynamically expand from understatement – a Tweedy trademark – to grandeur (“Sunken Treasure”, “Handshake Drugs”).

Lead guitarist Nels Cline, the oldest bandmember at 56, is to Wilco as Jonny Greenwood is to Radiohead – co-star, focal point and lightning rod. “Impossible Germany”, Cline’s big moment, has been placed early in the set, and it lifts thing up as it always does. During the rhapsodic seven-minute take, nearly five minutes of it devoted to his primarily improvised guitar excursion, the LA native seems to soak up the surrounding atmosphere – from the hot Santa Ana winds to the wafting pot smoke – and direct it through his fingers to the strings of his Fender

Jazzmaster. Tweedy and the versatile Pat Sansone play Allman-esque harmony lines while Cline bends and straightens his rigid body as if he’s wrestling with an unseen demon. “He walks amongst you!” Tweedy raves as the guitarist’s wispy final chord hangs in the air.

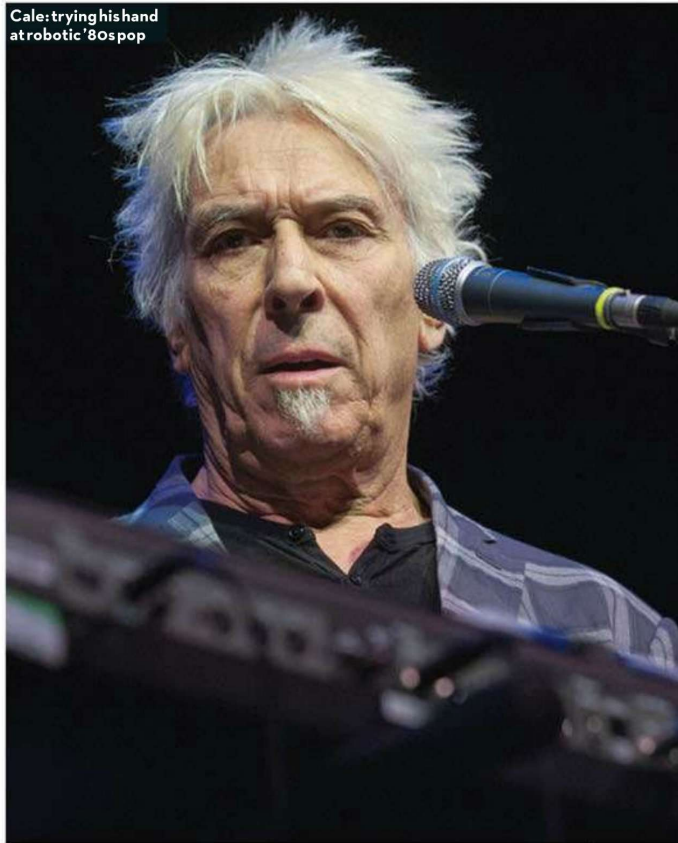
Wilco’s other bona fide virtuoso is drummer Glenn Kotche, who plays with a controlled abandon that is simply riveting. Near the end of the set, a spotlight catches him standing on a riser behind his drumkit, his red T-shirt soaked, hair flattened against his skull, striking a Rocky pose, legs akimbo and arms stretched heavenward with a huge grin on his face.

Bass player John Stirratt, who’s been standing alongside Tweedy since the band was formed, adds a country-rock high harmony to “California Stars”, a no-brainer encore selection, with its Woody Guthrie-penned images of stars that “hang like grapes on vines that shine/And warm the lovers’ glass like friendly wine”. Though the stars are invisible in the flat-black sky, a full moon hovers over the crescent shell that encloses the stage, inching upward past the landmark neon cross that sits on a hilltop across the Hollywood Freeway. After the five-song encore, the throng heads to the exits, only to be stopped in its tracks as the band bounds back onstage to extend the celebration with ebullient romps through “Hoodoo Voodoo” and “Outtasite (Outta Mind)”.

“We’re a very lucky band,” Tweedy announces in the waning moments. And on this eventful Hollywood night, we’re a very lucky audience as well.

BUD SCOPPA

Cale trying his hand
at robotic ‘80s pop



John Cale

HMV PICTURE HOUSE, EDINBURGH
OCTOBER 5, 2012

We’re doing “hard time in the Nookie Wood”, apparently...

WEARING A GARISH checked sports jacket and shuffling around behind his keyboard in a stiff-legged fashion, at 70 John Cale resembles not so much art-rock’s recalcitrant godfather as Dustin Hoffman in *Mr Magorium’s Wonder Emporium*.

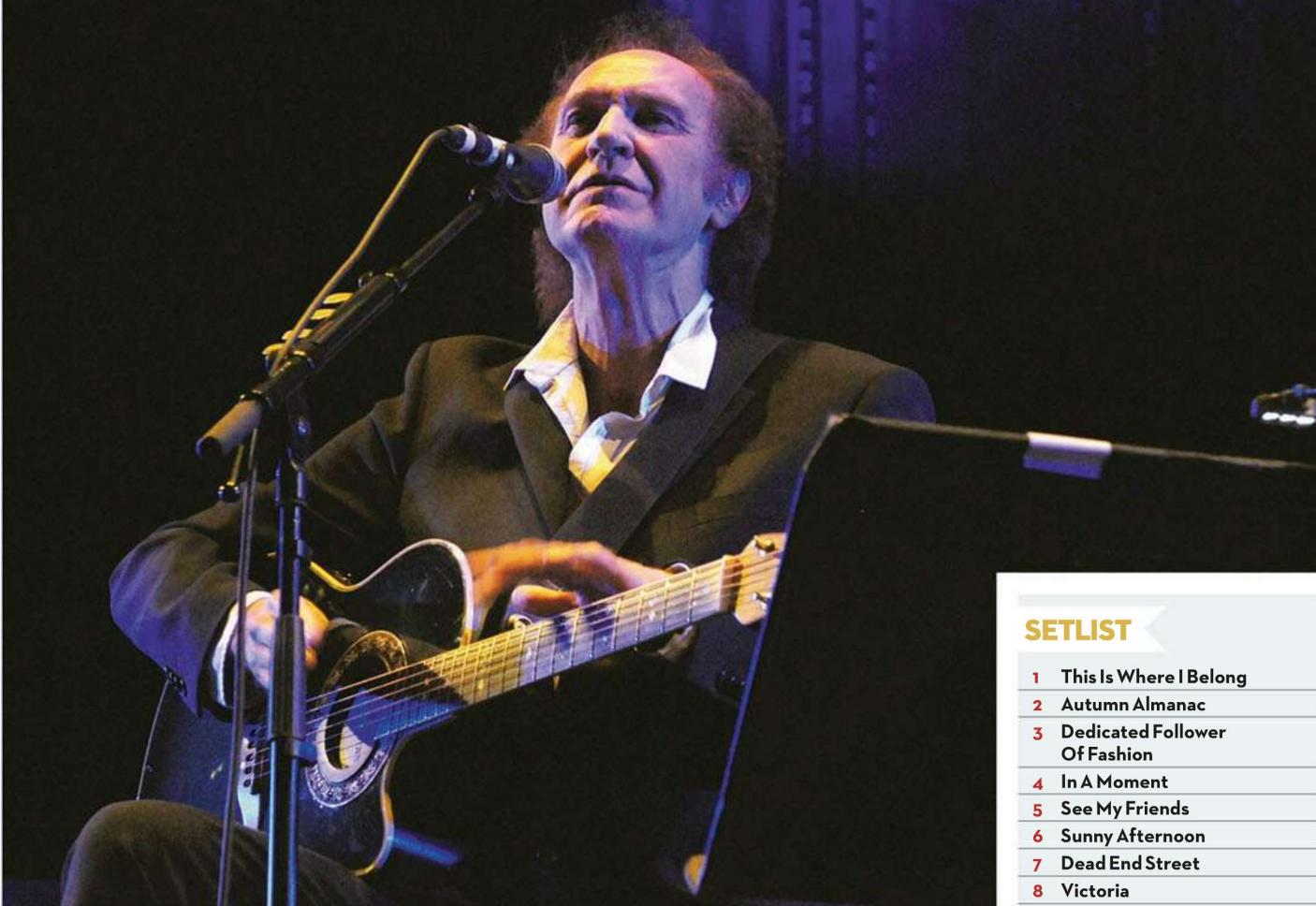
The first night of his brief UK tour, however, illustrates Cale’s continued willingness to confound cosy expectations, with the bulk of the 100-minute set drawn from patchy new album *Shifty Adventures In Nookie Wood* and last year’s “Extra Playful” EP. Backed by a heavy, hirsute three-piece comprising bass, squealing lead guitar and drums, augmented by his own keyboard and guitar, Cale makes a rather homogenous, self-consciously “modern” sound which often feels rather outdated.

On the robotic ‘80s pop of “Bluetooth Swings” his voice, still an arresting, wonderfully characterful instrument, recalls Ian Curtis. The crunchy funk-metal of “Cry” and “The Hanging” alternately suggest an arthouse Red Hot Chili Peppers and *Outside*-era Bowie. There is no viola and precious little sign of the racked baroque pop Cale does so beautifully. Instead, the acoustic guitar he straps on for the excellent “Whaddya Mean By That?” provides the evening’s only real sense of textural light and shade.

There are occasional concessions to the past – a terrific, churning “Helen Of Troy”, a rocking “Guts” – but Cale appears detached and vaguely unsettled throughout, seemingly unhappy with the sound as he shoots a succession of murderous glances sidestage. Only on a long, grinding encore medley of “Gun” and “Pablo Picasso” does he really seem to loosen up and find a satisfactory groove. It makes for a frustratingly narrow and oddly unengaging presentation of Cale’s gifts – though any man who attempts to turn “hard time in the Nookie Wood” into a crowd singalong clearly still has something to commend him...

GRAEME THOMSON

Ray Davies: from
Muswell Hill to
the Albert Hall...



RAY DAVIES

ROYAL ALBERT HALL, LONDON, OCTOBER 4, 2012

The masterful Kink gets the “Kensington blues”, with a little help from “Paul Weller from The Jam!”

EVEN DURING A gig, Ray Davies seems to be working on a concept. “This Is Where I Belong”, which begins tonight’s opening acoustic section with guitarist Bill Shanley, was written in celebration of his ’60s suburban home. It’s followed by “Autumn Almanac”, where that world claustrophobically closes in on him. With only one song from his solo albums, and nothing from the new album Davies mentions will be out next year, tonight relies on making such fresh connections to Kinks classics.

Davies’ voice is noticeably rough on the early duo songs, not surprising given he’s now 68. But the strength of those songs and the stubborn values behind them carry him through, as they have all his life. “Waterloo Sunset” is introduced as “a mythical song”, with a guest doubtless

delighted to be introduced (twice) as “Paul Weller from The Jam!” Weller’s floridly soulful vocal takes a brave, unrehearsed stab at it but misses, and he has to lurch back to the mic when Davies neglects to sing. Weller may have mixed feelings at finally knowing what it was like to be in the chaotic Kinks. “How d’you follow that?” Davies wonders, then easily does so with “Lola”, and “Waterloo Sunset”’s reprise. It’s mostly sung by the crowd, voices echoing around the Albert Hall with surprising tunefulness. The deep affection for these songs feels different from the raucous celebration the Stones and Who receive.

“Waterloo Sunset”’s relegation from the climax is part of a significant, welcome reshaping of a typical Davies gig. The mid-section, once dedicated to *The Village Green Preservation Society*, now showcases

The Kinks’ neglected ’70s and ’80s albums. Few could quibble with *Muswell Hillbillies*’ rarely performed “Oklahoma USA”, an acoustic reverie about Davies’ sister’s wistful celluloid dreams after factory work. The stage-lights put a soft, sublime haze round his face as he sings, but Davies’ other side comes out in werewolf howls during the manic confession of 1977’s “Full Moon”.

“All Day And All Of The Night” ends the main set, and just as you’re racking your brains to think what he’s left out, he begins “Days” a cappella, hand casually in pocket. “You Really Got Me” is deconstructed with his standard tale of its creation. Davies mentions with quiet wonder that brother Dave, who now seems unlikely to share a stage with him again, was just 16 when he conjured the guitar solo that “played The Kinks into rock’n’roll history”.

SETLIST

- 1 This Is Where I Belong
- 2 Autumn Almanac
- 3 Dedicated Follower Of Fashion
- 4 In A Moment
- 5 See My Friends
- 6 Sunny Afternoon
- 7 Dead End Street
- 8 Victoria
- 9 20th Century Man
- 10 Till The End Of The Day
- 11 Where Have All The Good Times Gone
- 12 I’m Not Like Everybody Else
- 13 Waterloo Sunset (with Paul Weller)
- 14 Lola
- 15 Waterloo Sunset (reprise)
- 16 Muswell Hillbilly
- 17 Oklahoma USA
- 18 Misfits
- 19 Full Moon
- 20 All Day And All Of The Night
- ENCORE:
- 21 Days
- 22 You Really Got Me
- 23 Come Dancing
- 24 Low Budget

There’s still time for “Come Dancing”. And even now Davies, re-energised by the crowd, hasn’t had enough. “This is Kensington blues tonight, boys,” he winks at the band, as they tear into “Low Budget”, his comic response to 1979’s recession. Once again, it seems, the subject matter of a Kinks song has come back to haunt him. *NICK HASTED*

Uncut’s Ultimate Music Guide on The Kinks is out on November 28

Books

BY ALLAN JONES

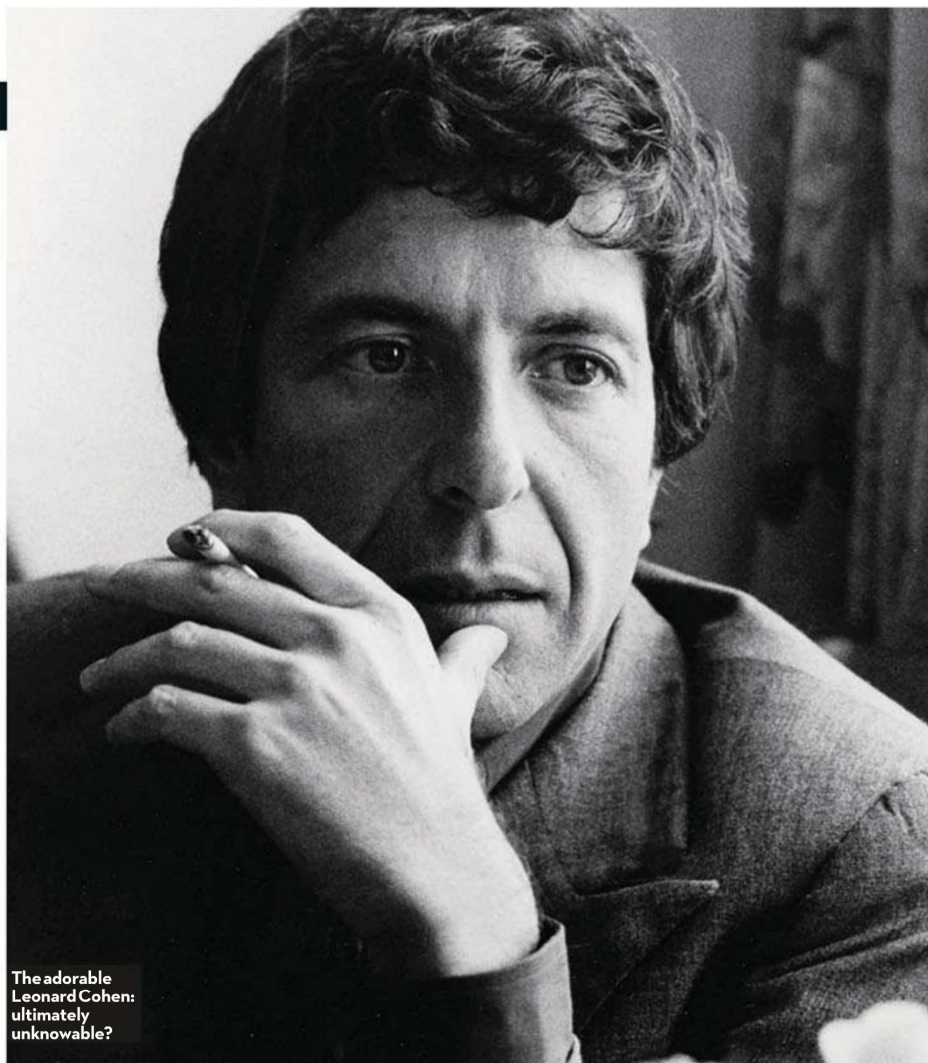
AS YOU MIGHT expect of a book about Leonard Cohen, Sylvie Simmons spends a fair proportion of *I'm Your Man* writing about love, faith, depression, finance and the demands and consolations of poetry and women. Mostly, though, the focus of this hefty and thorough book is Leonard Cohen's charm: about how an exceptionally gifted artist has seduced most everyone who has come into contact with him, through the course of an uncommonly eventful life.

Simmons, of course, might not see her book in quite the same light. But among an impressive castlist, she is as vulnerable to Cohen's wiles as anyone. "I gathered his only interest in the book was that it wouldn't be a hagiography," she writes in the afterword, following some 500 pages in which she has assembled scores of Cohen's associates to testify to his brilliance and loveliness. Former lovers are generally rhapsodic in their praise. "I felt very lucky to have met Leonard at that time in my life," says Marianne Ihlen who, among other indignities, was dumped in Montreal with her young son while Cohen gallivanted off to the Cuban revolution (he was eventually summoned to the Canadian embassy in Havana; not as a dangerous subversive, but because his mother was worried about him). Whenever domesticity looms, he heads off on another deluded macho adventure: soon after his son Adam is born, Cohen leaves him and his partner Suzanne Elrod to try and fight in the war of Yom Kippur, then flies directly from Israel to another combat zone, Ethiopia. "Women," he claims dishonestly, "only let you out of the house for two reasons; to make money or to fight a war." If only they let out men to sleep with other women, too...

Remarkably, just one interviewee can find anything bad to say about him. Steven Machat, the son of Cohen's former manager, "never liked him". The chaotic Phil Spector collaboration *Death Of A Ladies' Man*, Machat notes, "was two drunks... making an album about picking up girls and getting laid. It was the most honest album Leonard Cohen has ever made." By 2008, however, even Machat is back, helping Tony Palmer reassemble his *Bird On A Wire* film.

What is it about Cohen that inspires such devotion? Beyond the charm and the great art, the figure that emerges from *I'm Your Man* is droll, reserved, ultimately unknowable. His self-deprecation can be irritating, but the measured beauty of his language means that Simmons is perpetually disadvantaged as his biographer, grappling to describe a man who could do a much more stylish – and to some degree insightful – job himself.

As a consequence, *I'm Your Man* is a triumph of research rather than analysis, and its best sections dramatise Cohen's work as part of a team rather than as a solitary, internalised figure. There are fine and bawdy characters in the margins, like the poet Irving Layton and producer Bob Johnston (who deserves a biography of his own, incidentally), and vivid recollections of classic recording sessions and



The adorable Leonard Cohen: ultimately unknowable?

amphetamine-charged tours. Cohen heals a sick cat with Buddhist chanting, tries to get Iggy Pop to jointly respond to a personal ad, and arrives at a French festival on horseback.

By the end, and a revelatory new poem for one more faithful ex-lover, Anjani Thomas, even a cynic is starting to be cowed by the cumulative adoration. And if Simmons' writing is sometimes dogged by the romantic clichés associated with singer-songwriters – well, how could it not be? Leonard Cohen, in his life and work, assiduously created so many of them.

JOHN MULVEY

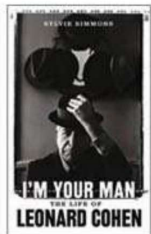
➤ Brad Tolinski's **Light & Shade: Conversations With Jimmy Page** is a timely corrective to Barney Hoskyns' new oral history of Led Zeppelin, *Trampled Underfoot*, in which serial testimony highlights some of the less appealing aspects of Page's personality. Tolinski first met Page in 1993, as the editor-in-chief of a guitar magazine and has interviewed him "many" times since. They got on, apparently, because on strict if unspoken instruction, Tolinski stayed away from the debauchery that attended Zeppelin's career and

concentrated on the music instead, as for the most part does this book, which he intends to be "an enlightening and definitive look at the musical life of a rock and roll genius, told in his own words".

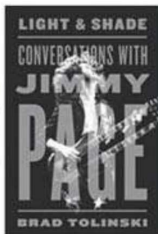
As far as it goes, this is an admirable strategy. Page is more likable than legend usually allows, articulate and fascinating. Tolinski, though, seems to have not quite enough material to sustain a book-length Q&A in the manner of, say, *Lennon Remembers*, and pads things out with a potted history of the band and interviews with John Paul Jones, The Yardbirds' Chris Dreya, Paul Rodgers, Jack White and Zep publicist Danny Goldberg. He even imports a chapter by a 'noted stargazer' to interpret the dominant archetypes in Page's astrological chart, for those drawn to such things. ALLAN JONES

➤ David Buckley's **Kraftwerk: Publikation** is stymied on two fronts. First, Kraftwerk's principal architects Ralph Hütter and Florian Schneider declined to be interviewed for the book. Second, the Kraftwerk story itself contains little drama or incident: band record album in studio, they occasionally play some dates; later, they take up cycling. Buckley is fortunate, though, to have genial interviews with former members Karl Bartos and Wolfgang Flür, Schneider's earliest collaborator Eberhard Kranemann, and Neu!'s Michael Rother. Presumably to compensate for the lack of colour, Buckley pads out his narrative with context – much of it focusing on the rise of English electronic acts in the '80s. The most informative chunks are Kranemann's early insights into the band's pre-1970s incarnation, and the final third, where Hütter's behaviour becomes increasingly controlling. Real revelations regarding the band's working practices are few, although we learn that Hütter and Schneider enjoyed a round of golf. MICHAEL BONNER

Reviewed this month...



I'm Your Man: The Life Of Leonard Cohen
Sylvie Simmons
JONATHAN CAPE
7/10



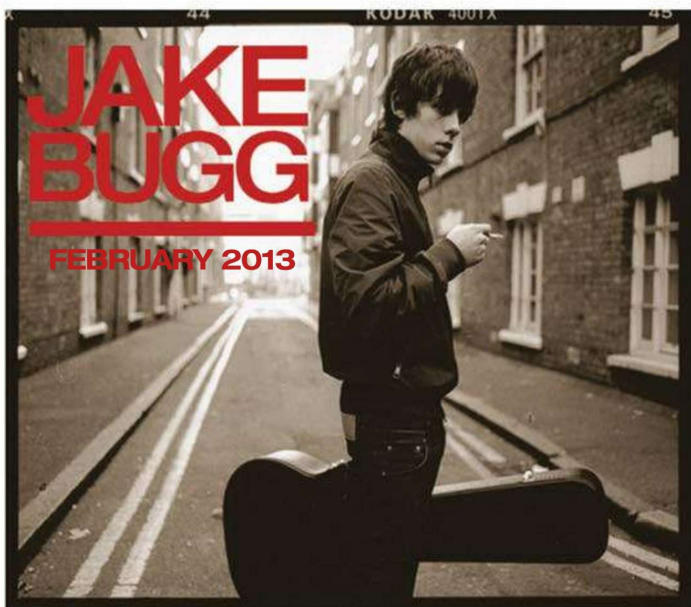
Light & Shade: Conversations With Jimmy Page
Brad Tolinski
VIRGIN
7/10



Kraftwerk: Publikation
David Buckley
OMNIBUS
6/10

SJM CONCERTS PRESENT

SJM CONCERTS, MEAN FIDDLER, DF & DHP BY ARRANGEMENT WITH CODA PRESENTS



JAKE BUGG

FEBRUARY 2013

SAT 02	SHEFFIELD O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000	MON 18	BRIGHTON DOME	01273 709 709
SUN 03	LINCOLN ENGINE SHED	0844 888 8766	TUE 19	BIRMINGHAM HMV INSTITUTE	0844 248 5037
MON 04	LEEDS O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000	THU 21	OXFORD O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000
TUE 05	NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000	FRI 22	CARDIFF UNIVERSITY SOLUS	029 2078 1458
THU 07	EDINBURGH HMV PICTUREHOUSE	SOLD OUT	SAT 23	YEovil WESTLANDS	01935 848 380
FRI 08	GLASGOW O2 ACADEMY	SOLD OUT	MON 25	CAMBRIDGE CORN EXCHANGE	01223 357 851
SAT 09	BELFAST MANDELA HALL	0870 243 4455	TUE 26	SOUTHAMPTON GUILDHALL	023 8063 2601
TUE 12	LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY	SOLD OUT	WED 27	LONDON O2 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE	SOLD OUT
WED 13	PRESTON 53 DEGREES	01772 893 000	THU 28	LONDON O2 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE	0844 477 2000
THU 14	MANCHESTER ACADEMY	SOLD OUT			
FRI 15	NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY	SOLD OUT			
SUN 17	NORWICH UEA	01603 508 050			

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02 Mar	GLASGOW O2 ACADEMY	0844 499 9990	18 Mar	OXFORD O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000
04 Mar	ABERDEEN GARAGE	0844 499 9990	19 Mar	NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY	0845 413 4444
05 Mar	DUNDEE FAT SAMS	0844 499 9990	21 Mar	FOLKESTONE LEAS CLIFF HALL	0844 871 7627
07 Mar	LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000	22 Mar	CAMBRIDGE CORN EXCHANGE	01223 357 851
08 Mar	LINCOLN ENGINE SHED	0844 888 8766	23 Mar	BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000
09 Mar	LEEDS O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000	25 Mar	NORWICH UEA	01603 508 050
11 Mar	LEAMINGTON SPA ASSEMBLY	0844 854 1358	26 Mar	SALISBURY CITY HALL	01722 434 434
12 Mar	GUILDFORD G LIVE	0844 7701 797	28 Mar	CARLISLE SANDS CENTRE	01228 633 766
14 Mar	BRIGHTON DOME	01273 709 709	29 Mar	NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY	0844 477 2000
15 Mar	LONDON ROUNDHOUSE	0844 482 8008	30 Mar	MANCHESTER ACADEMY	0161 832 1111

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FEBRUARY 2013

FRIDAY 15 / 0844 847 2487
GLASGOW O2 ABC

SATURDAY 16 / 0844 248 5117
MANCHESTER HMV RITZ

SUNDAY 17 / 0113 245 5570
LEEDS METRO UNI

MONDAY 18 / 0844 477 2000
BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY

TUESDAY 19 / 01273 709709
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GLASVEGAS

DECEMBER

SAT 01	LONDON THE GARAGE	0844 871 8820
SUN 02	MANCHESTER ACADEMY 3	0161 832 1111
MON 03	NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY 2	0844 477 2000
WED 05	INVERNESS IRONWORKS	0871 7894 173
THU 06	ABERDEEN THE GARAGE	0844 844 0444
SAT 08	GLASGOW THE GARAGE	0844 844 0444
SUN 09	DUNDEE FAT SAMS	0844 844 0444
MON 10	DUMFRIES THE VENUE	0844 844 0444

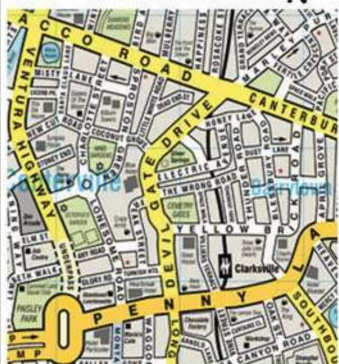
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PLUS VERY SPECIAL GUESTS
Scr itti Pol it ti



December

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Tue 11 **Edinburgh Liquid Rooms** 0844 499 9990
Wed 12 **Manchester HMV Ritz** 0844 248 5117
Thu 13 **Brighton Concorde 2** 0127 367 3311
Fri 14 **London**
O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0844 477 2000

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Sun 31 Mar 0191 277 8030
NEWCASTLE CITY HALL

APRIL 2013
Mon 01 0844 499 9990
ABERDEEN MUSIC HALL
Tue 02 0844 499 9990
DUNDEE CAIRD HALL
Thu 04 01492 872 000
LLANDUDNO
VENUE CYMRU ARENA
Fri 05 0116 233 3111
LEICESTER
DE MONTFORT HALL
Sat 06 0870 320 7000
WOLVERHAMPTON
CIVIC HALL
Mon 08 01273 709 709
BRIGHTON DOME

Tue 09 0845 146 1460
PLYMOUTH PAVILIONS
Thu 11 0844 888 8766
LINCOLN ENGINE SHED
Fri 12 0115 989 5555
NOTTINGHAM
ROYAL CONCERT HALL
Sat 13 0844 477 2000
LEEDS O2 ACADEMY
Mon 15 0844 477 2000
BOURNEMOUTH
O2 ACADEMY
Tue 16 01843 292 795
MARGATE
WINTER GARDENS
Wed 17 01702 351 135
SOUTHEND
CLIFFS PAVILION
Fri 19 0844 856 1111
BLACKPOOL OPERA HOUSE
Sat 20 0844 871 3017
LIVERPOOL EMPIRE

Mon 22 01223 357 851
CAMBRIDGE
CORN EXCHANGE
Tue 23 0844 770 1797
GUILDFORD G LIVE
Thu 25 0118 960 6090
READING HEXAGON
Fri 26 0114 278 9789
SHEFFIELD CITY HALL
Sat 27 01482 226 655
HULL CITY HALL
Mon 29 0117 922 3686
BRISTOL COLSTON HALL
Tue 30 023 92824 355
PORTSMOUTH GUILDHALL

MAY 2013
Thu 02 0844 871 3020
OXFORD NEW THEATRE
Fri 03 01603 508 050
NORWICH UEA
Sat 04 01473 433 100
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FRI 16	MANCHESTER ACADEMY	0161 832 1111
SUN 18	CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION	01223 511 511
MON 19	BIRMINGHAM HVM INSTITUTE	0844 248 5037
TUE 20	LONDON HVM FORUM	0844 847 2405

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Tue 20 Nov	Plymouth Pavilions	0352 143 1400
Wed 21 Nov	Brighton Dome	01273 700 700
Fri 23 Nov	Bournemouth O ₂ Academy	0844 477 2000
Sat 24 Nov	Reading Hexagon	0118 369 2600
Mon 26 Nov	Cardiff St David's Hall	029 2087 8444
Tue 27 Nov	Folkestone Leas Cliff Hall	0344 836 7100
Wed 28 Nov	Southend Cliff Pavilion	01702 351 135
Fri 30 Nov	Birmingham Symphony Hall	0121 780 3333
Sat 01 Dec	Manchester O ₂ Apollo	0844 477 2000
Sun 02 Dec	Sheffield O ₂ Academy	0844 477 2000
Tue 04 Dec	Leeds O ₂ Academy	0844 477 2000
Wed 05 Dec	Nottingham Royal Concert Hall	0115 367 5555
Thu 06 Dec	Norwich UEA	01603 583 650
Sat 08 Dec	Newcastle City Hall	0191 277 8000
Sun 09 Dec	Glasgow O ₂ Academy	0844 477 2000
Mon 10 Dec	Liverpool Philharmonic Hall	0151 953 9753
Wed 12 Dec	London HVM Forum	0844 847 2405
Thu 13 Dec	London O ₂ Shepherd's Bush Empire	0844 477 2000
Fri 14 Dec	London Indigo	0844 477 2000

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SAT 24TH - BRISTOL O ₂ ACADEMY	TICKETWEB.CO.UK - 08444 772000
SUN 25TH - BRIGHTON CONCORDE 2	CONCORDE2.CO.UK - 01273 673311
MON 26TH - NORWICH WATERFRONT	WEATICKETBOOKINGS.CO.UK - 01603 508050
TUES 27TH - CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION	JUNCTION.CO.UK - 01223 511511
WEDS 28TH - GLOUCESTER GUILDHALL	GLOUCESTERGUILDHALL.CO.UK - 01452 503050
THURS 29TH - OXFORD O ₂ ACADEMY	TICKETWEB.CO.UK - 08444 772000
FRI 30TH - MANCHESTER ACADEMY	TICKETLINE.CO.UK - 0844 478 0898

DECEMBER 2012

SAT 1ST - GLASGOW O ₂ ABC	TICKETWEB.CO.UK - 08444 772000
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MON 3RD - BILSTON/WHAMPTON ROBIN 2	TICKETWEB.CO.UK - 01902 40121
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THU 1 NOV	EUGENE 'HIDEWAY' BRIDGES BAND STEVE NIMMO & SEBASTIEN VAYRAND
MON 5 NOV	CLAUDIA BRUCKEN THE LOST ARE FOUND TOUR
TUE 6 NOV	JOSHUA JAMES
THU 8 NOV	IAN SIEGAL & THE MISSISSIPPI MUDBOOTS FEAT. CODY DICKINSON & LUTHER DICKINSON

FRI 9 NOV	MARTIN STEPHENSON & THE DAINTIES HELEN & THE HORNS
MON 12 NOV	YOUNG MAN LES MISTONS
THU 15 NOV	THE HEATHER FINDLAY BAND
MON 19 NOV	HORSE FEATHERS CROOKED FINGERS
TUE 20 NOV	DYLAN LEBLANC
TUE 27 NOV	OH SUSANNA
FRI 30 NOV	JASON MCNIFF ANDY HANK DOG, SIMON STANLEY WARD

SAT 1 DEC	MATTHEWS SOUTHERN COMFORT
THU 6 DEC	MOLOTOV JUKEBOX NIMMO & THE GAUNTLETS
FRI 7 DEC	THE MEN THEY COULDN'T HANG ATTILA THE STOCKBROKER
SUN 9 DEC	HAGGIS HORN BLUESMIX, CORRINA GREYSON (DJ)
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THU 13 DEC	LEWIS WATSON

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MON	04	CARDIFF MOTORPOINT ARENA	02920 22 4488
TUE	05	NOTTINGHAM CAPITAL FM ARENA	08444 124 624
THU	07	BOURNEMOUTH BIC	0844 576 3000
FRI	08	BIRMINGHAM LG ARENA	0844 338 8000
SAT	09	LONDON THE O2	0844 856 0202
MON	11	BRIGHTON CENTRE	0844 847 1515
TUE	12	PLYMOUTH PAVILIONS	0845 146 1460
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FRI	15	ABERDEEN AECC UK	08444 999 990

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MON 26 NOV GATESHEAD, THE SAGE
TUE 27 NOV BRISTOL, TRINITY
WED 28 NOV LONDON, O2 SHEPHERDS
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ALL TOMORROW'S PARTIES 2013

WEEKEND 2

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SUN 9 DEC

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SUNDAY 2 DECEMBER 2012



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Kurt Vile & The Violators

+ Lower Dens

+ Dark Dark Dark

Thursday 6th December 2012

The Forum, London

DEERHOOF

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7 december 2012

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NOVEMBER
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4 Southampton, The Brook 023 8055 5366
5 Bristol, The Tunnels 0845 605 0255
7 Brighton, Komedia 01273 647100
8 Swindon, Arts Centre 01793 614837
9 Bridport, The Electric Palace 01308 426336
10 St Albans, Arena 01727 844488
11 Manchester, Royal Exchange 0161 833 9833

18 New Brighton, The Floral Pavilion 0151 666 0000
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21 Pocklington, Arts Centre 01759 301 547
22 Glasgow, St Andrews In The Square www.ticketweb.co.uk
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Mon 10 June	LIVERPOOL	Philharmonic
Wed 12 June	GATESHEAD	The Sage
Thu 13 June	BLACKPOOL	Opera House
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DECEMBER

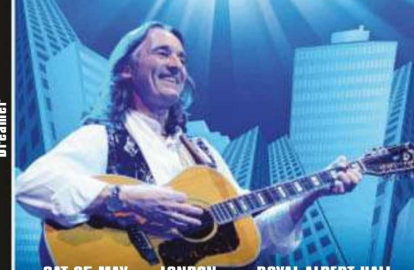
SAT 1	EXETER University Great Hall*	0844 338 0000
MON 3	NORWICH UEA LCR	01603 508 050
TUE 4	BRISTOL Colston Hall*	0117 922 3686
WED 5	MIDDLESBROUGH Empire	01642 253 533
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TUE 20	LIVERPOOL Philharmonic	0151 709 3789
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FRI 23	GUILDFORD G Live	0844 7701 797
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FRI 09	LIVERPOOL Mello Mello	0871 220 0260
SAT 10	DONCASTER The Leopard	08444 771 000
SUN 11	NEWCASTLE The Cluny	08444 771 000
TUE 13	LEICESTER The Musician	0115 959 7908
WED 14	NORTHAMPTON Roadmender	0115 912 9000
THU 15	BIRMINGHAM HMV Institute	0871 220 0260
FRI 16	GLOUCESTER Guildhall	01452 503 050
SAT 17	DEVIL'S BRIDGE Hafod Hotel	01970 890 232
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Not Fade Away

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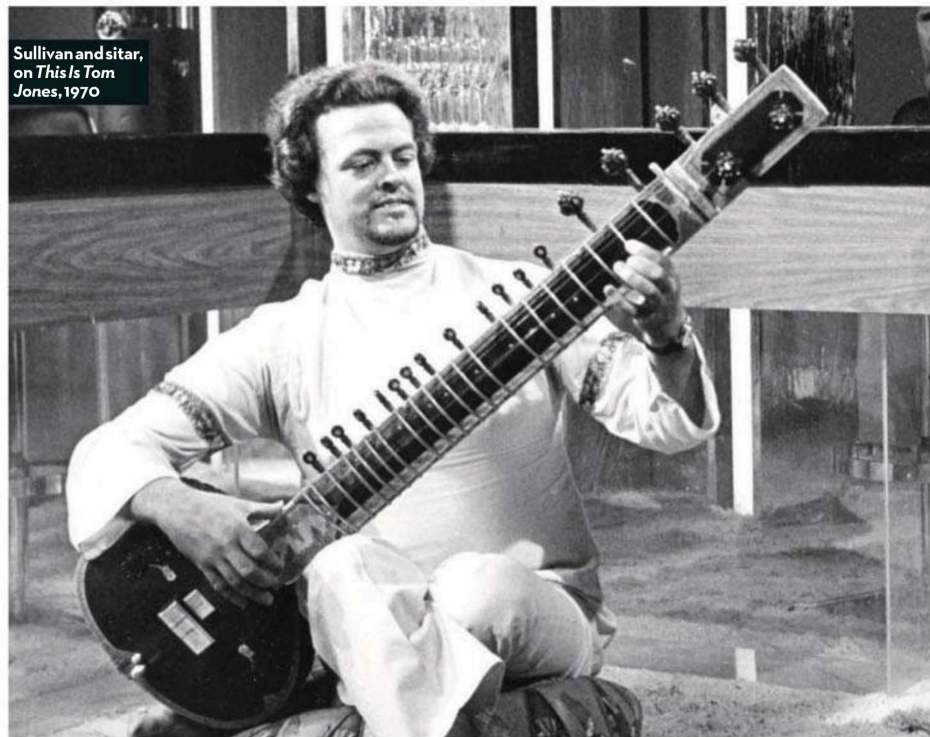
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1941-2012

BRITISH POP MUSIC would be much poorer without the largely unsung contributions of 'Big' Jim Sullivan. Arguably the most successful British session guitarist of the '60s and '70s, it's estimated that he played on over 1,000 major hits, 55 of which went to No 1. He was an early mentor to future heavyweights like Steve Howe of Yes and Deep Purple's Ritchie Blackmore, who cited Sullivan as "a big influence. He'd only been playing about two years, but he was just about the best guitarist in England." Sullivan and a young Jimmy Page were the go-to guys of the early '60s session scene: "Anyone needing a guitarist either went to Big Jim or myself," said Page, who described him as "brilliant". As Sullivan explained to this writer in 2008, "Jimmy was a couple of years younger than me, so I suppose I had that older edge. But we always respected each other. Generally, I was coming from a jazz and country background while Jimmy was coming from the blues. So we kind of introduced each other to different kinds of music."

Sullivan's chart-topping run was bookended by Frankie Vaughan's 1961 tune "Tower Of Strength" and Pilot's "January" in 1975. In between were hits for, among many others, Cilla Black ("Anyone Who Had A Heart"), Georgie Fame ("Yeh Yeh"), The Walker Brothers ("Make It Easy On Yourself"), Sandie Shaw ("Puppet On A String"), Dusty Springfield ("You Don't Have To Say You Love Me") and Tom Jones ("Green, Green Grass Of Home"). Not to mention Rolf Harris' classic weepie, "Two Little Boys". Sullivan also found time to record three solo albums. The last of them,



1974's *Big Jim's Back*, featured Chas & Dave, who were once privy to the dizzying effect that Sullivan's massed bank of session work must have had on his memory. A striking riff from a song on the radio caused Big Jim to exclaim: "If I could only play like that." To which Chas immediately shot back: "That's you, you pillock!"

Sullivan's dexterity and thirst for innovation led to him becoming something of a technological pioneer. He played on two hits in 1961, The Krew Kats' "The Bat" and Michael Cox's "Sweet Little Sixteen", that are generally acknowledged as the first British records to use a wah-wah pedal. Sullivan also brought a similarly distorted effect

to Dave Berry's 1964 success, "The Crying Game". The same year saw him introduce the fuzzbox on PJ Proby's "Hold Me". Five years later he joined Tom Jones' band, where he showcased another new contraption, the talkbox, on Jones' popular TV show.

The '70s found him starting up his own label, Retreat Records, and briefly fronting his own band, Tiger. Most recently, Sullivan had been playing alongside Doug Pruden as the BJS Duo. "My whole life is geared to play guitar," he offered. "I play what I want, when I want. And I hope the listener gets as much pleasure as I get. I'm a very lucky man."



FRANK WILSON

Motown producer/songwriter

1940-2012

Berry Gordy's decision to expand his operation to LA marked the beginning of a highly fruitful career for Frank Wilson at Motown. Hired in 1963, the songwriter/producer's first success was Patrice Holloway's "Stevie", a tribute to Stevie Wonder, for whom Wilson next co-wrote "Castles In The Sand". He went on to create hits for most of the label's major players, including Marvin Gaye, The Supremes, The Miracles and The Four Tops. "You've Made Me So Very Happy", a moderate hit for Brenda Holloway in 1967,

became a major success two years later when Blood, Sweat & Tears took it to No 2 in the Billboard chart.

But Wilson's key period at Motown came after the departure of writing combo Holland-Dozier-Holland. Anxious to revive The Supremes' waning career, Gordy asked Wilson and his team to apply a more audaciously modern approach. The result was "Love Child", which both courted controversy (due to its out-of-wedlock subject matter) and reached the top of the charts. Wilson followed it with "Up The Ladder To The Roof" and "Stoned Love". He quit Motown in 1976 after becoming a born-again Christian. Subsequent years were spent travelling the country as a minister, before he and

wife Bunny founded LA's New Dawn Christian Village church in 2004.

However, Wilson will perhaps best be remembered for a short-lived solo career that spawned one of the most valuable artefacts in pop history. 250 demos of his 1965 single "Do I Love You (Indeed I Do)" were pressed, with Wilson binning the bulk of them after being persuaded by Gordy that he should concentrate instead on producing. The tune, initially intended for Marvin Gaye, is now regarded as something of a Northern Soul classic among serious collectors. Only two or three copies are known to have survived, one of which fetched £25,000 in 2009, making it the most expensive record ever sold at auction.

ANDY WILLIAMS

Mega-selling crooner

1927-2012

“FORTUNATELY I didn’t sound like anybody else,” Andy Williams once claimed. “It just happened.” His was a voice that came to epitomise the middle ground between easy listening and strident balladeering, with a delivery as unruffled as Williams’ own personality. He began alongside his three older siblings in The Williams Brothers. Their first sniff of fame arrived in 1944, backing Bing Crosby on “Swinging On A Star”, though by the early ’50s Williams already had his sights on a solo career. He scored six Top 10 hits on New York’s Cadence label that decade, chief among them “Butterfly”, “Canadian Sunset” and “Are You Sincere?”, but it wasn’t until 1962 that he recorded the song that truly shunted him into the superstar bracket.

His rendition of “Moon River”, a tune

originally featured on *Breakfast At Tiffany’s*, was a highlight of that year’s Academy Awards ceremony. And its inclusion on Williams’ *Moon River And Other Great Movie Themes* gave him the first of 18 gold-selling albums on new home, Columbia. 1962 also brought *The Andy Williams Show* on NBC, its variety format ideally suited to his affable demeanour and a steady stream of guest appearances by the likes of Burt Bacharach, Johnny Mathis and a then-unknown group, The Osmonds. The primetime show lasted for nine years and hoovered up three Emmys along the way.

Williams’ other signature hits included “Can’t Take My Eyes Off You”, “(Where Do I Begin?) Love Story” and “Can’t Get Used To Losing You”. He was also keen to immerse himself in the business end of things, launching his own label, Barnaby Records, in 1968. His major discovery was singer-songwriter Jimmy Buffett, issuing his 1970 debut, *Down To Earth*.

In 1992 Williams opened the Moon River Theatre in his adopted hometown of Branson, Missouri. He continued to perform there himself until only fairly recently, often playing two shows per evening, six nights of the week.



Smooth as they come: Andy Williams in the 1970s

CHRIS LIGHTY

Hip-hop management supremo

1968-2012

The unexpected demise of Chris Lighty, who has died from a seemingly self-inflicted gunshot wound, has robbed the US hip-hop community of one of its most important figures. As founder of management company Violator, the 44-year-old’s roster included 50 Cent, LL Cool J, Missy Elliott and Mobb Deep, among others. The New Yorker started out in the ’80s as an associate of KRS-One, before going on to manage the likes of De La Soul, A Tribe Called Quest and the Jungle Brothers. In 1989 he was invited by Russell Simmons and Lyor Cohen to join their Rush Management mini-empire, which brought him into contact with Public Enemy and Eric B & Rakim. Many of his past and present charges, among them Busta Rhymes, Missy Elliott and 50 Cent, paid tribute to Lighty at the recent BET Hip-Hop Awards in the US. “Without Chris Lighty there wouldn’t be music like this,” said LL Cool J.

JOHNNY PEREZ

Sir Douglas Quintet drummer

1942-2012

The insistent punch of Texan heroes the Sir Douglas Quintet owed much to the rhythms of original drummer Johnny Perez. Formed by frontman



The Sir Douglas Quintet: Johnny Perez behind the drumkit

Doug Sahm in 1965, the band concocted a powerful brew of R’n’B, psychedelia and Tex-Mex that gave rise to hits like “She’s About A Mover” and “Mendocino”. They relocated to San Francisco in the mid-’60s, with Perez featuring on key albums like *Together After Five*, *Mendocino* and *1+1+1=4*. When Sahm split for a solo career in 1972, Perez and the others briefly carried on as The Quintet, issuing *Rough Edges*, a selection of earlier demos. The ’80s saw him take ownership of Topanga Skyline Studio, which played host to Jackson Browne, The Chieftains, Bobby McFerrin and, for 1986’s *Knocked Out Loaded*, Bob Dylan. Perez later collaborated with Tex-Mex rock’n’roller Joe “King” Carrasco, who called him “a volcano of rhymes”, on “Buena” and “Pachuco Hop”.

LILLIAN LOPEZ

Disco vocalist

1935-2012

The smooth, sophisticated tone of singer Lillian Lopez was one of the defining features of Odyssey, the US disco outfit who scored a number of transatlantic successes in the late ’70s and early ’80s. The first of those was 1977’s “Native New Yorker”, with producer Sandy Linzer later declaring of Lopez’s contribution: “Some artists have a quality that, when you hear their voice on a song, it just elevates the level.” Connecticut-born Lopez founded the first incarnation of the band with siblings Carmen and Louise, before the former was replaced by male vocalist Tom Reynolds. Other hits included the infectious funk of

“Use It Up And Wear It Out” and arguably Lopez’s finest moment, the sensuous ballad “If You’re Looking For A Way Out”. The latter, somewhat improbably, was covered by Tindersticks in 1999. As sole original member, Lopez continued to tour with Odyssey up until her retirement in 2003.

MICHAEL HURLL

Top Of The Pops producer

1936-2012

“Once something’s running out of steam, nothing you do on God’s earth is going to make that get any more viewers,” reasoned BBC producer Michael Hurll in 2003, referring to the axeing of *Top Of The Pops*, the show he oversaw during one of its most successful eras. Between 1980 and ’87, Hurll brought a frothy sense of exuberance to *TOTP*, its self-styled “party atmosphere” leading to a spike in ratings. He began at the BBC in 1956 as a runner, where, alongside a youthful Michael Winner, he was responsible for ushering on guests for *The Billy Cotton Band Show*. During the ’70s he progressed through a series of light entertainment and variety shows, among them *Seaside Special* and *The Little And Large Show*, before becoming executive producer on *The Two Ronnies*. He also directed 1974’s Eurovision, notable for Abba’s breakthrough performance of “Waterloo”. **ROB HUGHES**

Feedback...

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LETTER OF THE MONTH

BYRD IS THE WORD

WHAT A TREAT the November issue of *Uncut* was! Umpteen pages of Byrds-filled facts. I love to read stuff like this, almost as much a pleasure as listening to the music itself. It's always been like that for me, a self-confessed Byrds 'nerd'. A joy fills me, endorphin-fuelled smiles light up my face and I feel the world is a better place.

Though aware of the greatness of "Mr Tambourine Man", I didn't fall in love with The Byrds until the follow-up, "All I Really Want To Do". At 13, I was stopped dead in my tracks when I first heard it on a rickety jukebox in Pontins in summer 1965. Somehow, the faulty machine contrived to play the 45 over and over again, imprinting on my mind those soaring harmonies and that glistening final guitar cadence. From that point on, I was hooked.

Another vivid memory is of listening to a transistor radio in August '67 to hear Brian Matthew play "Lady Friend", its mono wall-of-sound blast leading the DJ to comment, "Please, Byrds, don't fly too high." Surely, a point was being made here as, at their height, they were making music that was never less than transcendent. Listen, for instance, to the quasi-philosophical dialogue between Crosby's naively voiced questions and McGuinn's raga-esque guitar responses in "What's Happening?!!", staggering for the time.

But the zenith for me is the 13-minute sequence that comprises Side 2 of *The Notorious Byrd Brothers*, some of the most astonishingly sublime music



"Please, Byrds, don't fly too high"

ever recorded: tersely lyrical, sonically stunning and with a brevity that, paradoxically, is brimming with fresh ideas.

In the late 1990s, I compiled a cassette for an acquaintance who pleaded ignorance of all things Byrdsian. "Poor fool," I thought, somewhat arrogantly, I admit. When I asked him what he thought, his reply left me speechless but grinning beatifically. "Godlike, isn't it?" he said.

Max Merry, Kelty, Fife

There's obviously an incredible amount of love out there for The Byrds and I've been swamped with letters and emails about our cover story and Top 20, a selection of which follows. Thanks to everyone who wrote in! - Allan

ALL A-FLUTTER

Your November issue [*Take 186*] made this *Uncut* subscriber pretty happy - I really enjoyed reading about the making of the Banshees' masterpiece, *A Kiss In The Dreamhouse*, and it was great to finally get a retrospective on *The Notorious Byrd Brothers* and The Byrds' finest tracks. However, here are three songs that in my opinion should have made your Top 20!

1 "I See You" - from the songs featured in the list, it appears that your contributors have been listening to a lot of *Fifth Dimension* lately! Therefore, I can't understand why they overlooked this gem (for "Mr Spaceman", "Wild Mountain Thyme"?). The combination of the dreamy, esoteric set of lyrics and the proto-psychedelic sound coming out of McGuinn's Rickenbacker is just stunning.

2 "Get To You" - among all the fantastic music on *The Notorious Byrd Brothers* album it's easy to miss this companion of sorts to "Eight Miles High"'s tale of the group's first visit to London. As with that, I love the way McGuinn again focuses on the British weather

("glad to be in London even though it's pouring rain"!).

3 "Gunga Din" - off the *Ballad Of Easy Rider* album, this has to be Gene Parsons' finest moment as a Byrd. Recollections of Chuck Berry not turning up to a Central Park concert and bassist John York being refused entry to a restaurant are added in to the sense of dislocation resulting from The Byrds' constant travel (perhaps not helped by the front- and back-facing seating arrangements on the old DC8s!).

Keep up the good work!

Mark Claridge, via email

...Thanks for the fine feature on The Byrds, it was great to see some new interviews with one of the seminal bands of our times. Top 20s are always subjective and I wouldn't argue with your No 1, "Eight Miles High", my favourite song of all time. But I was disheartened to see so little recognition of Gene Clark's fabulous songwriting on the first two albums, *Mr Tambourine Man* and *Turn! Turn! Turn!*. Only "I'll Feel A Whole Lot Better" and "If You're Gone" appear on your list and yet his early songwriting was exceptional,

Beatles-y folk chords with Dylan imagery. I was lucky enough to catch Gene Clark live a couple of times in the '80s and on the first occasion he was doing a short tour with his band Firebyrd (Matt Andes, Mike Hardwick, Peter Oliva and Mike Clarke) and he started the set solo, just him and his Ovation, and did "Here Without You" from the first Byrds album. It was absolutely stunning, you could hear a cent drop (it was the Lone Star Café in New York) and sent the old shivers down my spine, it was that good. Take another listen to those first two albums and you might be surprised at the quality of those early Clark songs like "Set You Free This Time", "The World Turns All Around Her" and B-side "She Don't Care About Time".

Trevor Hards, via email

NOT ALL WHITE

I have been reading *Uncut* for many years now, and was extremely excited about the Byrds articles in the most recent issue. Despite the fact that I am only 16, they are a band I am very fond of, especially the Clarence White era. I was so

passionate about their music I formed the Facebook page entitled "The 'Clarence White' Byrds". However, I believe I speak for each of the 93 members when we say we are very upset with the choice of "The Byrds' 20 Greatest Tracks". We feel that there should have been more songs from the lineup that brought us "Just A Season", "Gunga Din", "You All Look Alike" and "Bugler". Nevertheless, we can (sort of) understand you underrating the non-commercial songs, however overlooking "Chestnut Mare" was a very odd, and in many ways, disappointing thing to do. Still I am pleased you included "The Ballad Of Easy Rider", and it is unquestionable that "Mr Tambourine Man" and "Eight Miles High" are in the right place at second and first position. I look forward to the next issue.

Stephen Bennett, West Midlands
I agree about the omission of "Chestnut Mare", Stephen. To make it clear, the tracks on the Top 20 were voted for by the artists we approached who we knew were big Byrds fans, and much to my surprise none of them went for that



particular late classic from (*Untitled*). The Clarence White-era Byrds were, in fact, sadly underrepresented in the Top 20. Apart from the excellent tracks you mention, that lineup of The Byrds was mind-blowing. I saw them at Bristol's Colston Hall in 1971, when the highlight of a brilliant set was the extended version of "Eight Miles High". It was an unforgettable night. - *Allan*

AMERICAN MUSIC CLUB CLUB

The November *Uncut* was another fantastic issue, with not only a Byrds cover story but a great Mark Eitzel/American Music Club retrospective. It's the later feature that has had me glued to my AMC records of late. It was also extremely sad to hear news of the death of Tim Mooney and that the health of Mr Eitzel has not been so good also. During 2005 my band Lone Pine had the good fortune of supporting AMC on two UK dates in Cardiff and Liverpool. To this day it remains a highlight of my time spent playing with the band and getting to talk to and watch American Music Club perform is something I will always cherish.

Finally, thanks to *Uncut* and the lasting creativity of Tim Mooney, I have been pointed in the direction of *The Graceless Age* by John Murry, a beautiful and darkly expansive record that will certainly threaten some of those "end of year" polls. You do spoil us sometimes.

Daniel Holloway, Cardiff

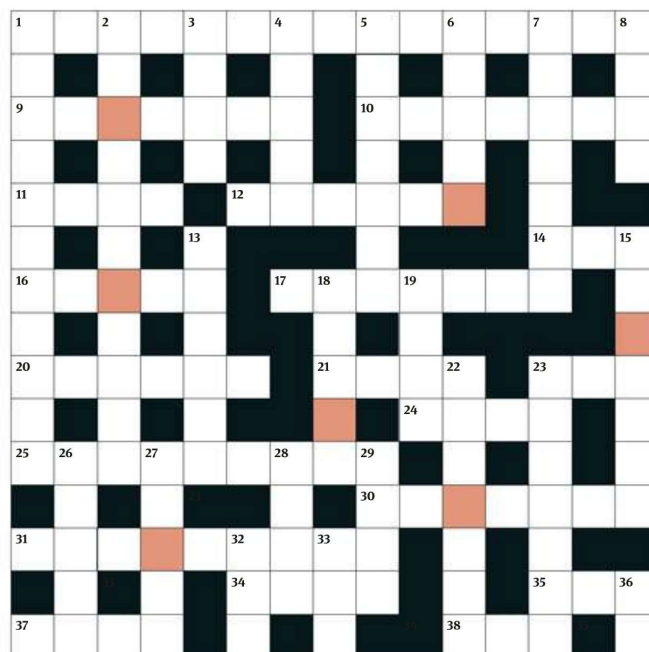
DEAD HAPPY

As a Deadhead for over 40 years, I really appreciated *Uncut*'s take on the "essential" Grateful Dead live albums. One of the things I've found from years of listening to their live recordings is that their decisions of what to officially release were mostly spot on. For instance, to me the best version of "Dark Star" is still the one on *Live Dead*.

A couple of albums need to be added to your list. *Dick's Picks Volume 4* (Fillmore East, 13-14/2/70) marks the beginning of the transition from loosely psychedelic jamming evident on their first four albums to the country flavour of *Workingman's Dead* and *American Beauty*. *Dick's Picks Volume 8* (Binghamton, NY, 2/5/70) continues this transition, and includes a couple of the best covers of James Brown's "It's A Man's World" and the Vandellas' "Dancing In The Street".

Thanks again for the monthly dose of essential reading.

Larry Pryluck, Amissville, Virginia, USA



HOW TO ENTER

The letters in the shaded squares form an anagram of a song by The Rolling Stones. When you've worked out what it is, send your answer to: *Uncut* December 2012 Xword Comp, 9th floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark St, London SE1 0SU. The first correct entry picked at random will win a prize. Closing date: Nov 22, 2012. This competition is only open to European residents.

ACROSS

- 1 Get to know people – do what Mark Eitzel did and join American Music Club (4-2-1-8)
- 9 It enabled transmission of a ZZ Top LP (7)
- 10 Record label that showcased The Doors, Love and Tim Buckley (7)
- 11+12 A Sandi Nolan re-working of a solo David Gilmour album (2-2-6)
- 14 A bit of extra money for Macca LP (3)
- 16+17 A "There's a place I go when I'm alone, do anything I want, be anyone I wanna be", 2007 (5-5-2)
- 20 "I can't sing, I ain't pretty and my legs are thin", 1969 (2-4)
- 21 The courage to stomach a John Cale compilation album (4)
- 23 Hardcore punk band formed in 1978 and originally called Charged (1-1-1)
- 24 "She's so pretty, her hair is a mess/We all love her, to that we confess", 1997 (4)
- 25 Kerry's swit some how shows up in a Jackson 5 hit (9)
- 30 The whole of this Portishead recording is in my possession (3-4)
- 31 (See 5 down)
- 34 Johnny _____, or his son Shuggy (4)
- 35+29 D That's a Frank Zappa album – or that's wrong (3-4)
- 37 (See 28 down)
- 38 The Monkees' hit "Alternate Title" was known in the US as "Randy Scouse _____" (3)

DOWN

- 1 "This ain't rock'n'roll, this is genocide", 1974 (7-4)
- 2 It's just The Rolling Stones and not The

- Cricket that are still going strong (3-4-4)
- 3+15 D Can be home in round about way with Tom Waits' album (4-7)
- 4 (See 8 down)
- 5+31 A Doves album on the airwaves for a final time (3-4-9)
- 6 (See 23 down)
- 7 Make your way to this place and hear Oleta Adams (3-4)
- 8+4 D His albums include *Love Is Hell* and *Ashes & Fire* (4-5)
- 13 On the face of it, Rod Stewart appeared pleased with this album (6)
- 15 (See 3 down)
- 18 "With no loving in our souls and no money in our coats, you can't say we're satisfied, but _____ I still love you baby", 1973 (5)
- 19 America thankfully took in this Bluebel release (4)
- 22 Christopher Cross getting the wind while on his boat (7)
- 23+6 D Instruction to proceed immediately with The Hives (2-5-5)
- 26 "She stole my _____, oh no/Sold it to the farmer, oh no", Kings Of Leon, "Charmer" (5)
- 27 "I've often felt forsaken and certainly misused/Oh but I'm all right, I'm all right, I'm just _____ to my bones", Paul Simon, "American Tune" (5)
- 28+37 A "I would love to take her home, but her heart is made of stone", 1973 (4-4)
- 29 (See 35 across)
- 32 There's scope to include an album from US post-punk band Swans (3)
- 33 A simple start for member of The xx (3)
- 36 Flying Lizards record taken in the post van (1-1)

ANSWERS: TAKE 185

ACROSS

- 1 Election Special, 9 The Madcap Laughs, 10+12 D Python Lee Jackson, 11 Presence, 13 A Good Heart, 14 Beat, 16+29 A Hotel Room, 18 James,

- 19 Alt, 20 Aja, 22 Brave, 23 Kiki Dee, 25+31 A Greg Lake, 26 Lines, 30 Catch.

DOWN

- 1 Eat A Peach, 2 Electro, 3+21 D That Old Black Magic, 4+19 D Once Again, 5 Supertramp, 6 Evans, 7

- Ingenue, 8+21 A Listen To The Music, 15 Isobel, 17 Taste It, 24 Dime, 27 Ill, 28 Eek.

HIDDEN ANSWER

"Deanna"

Compiled by
Trevor Hungerford

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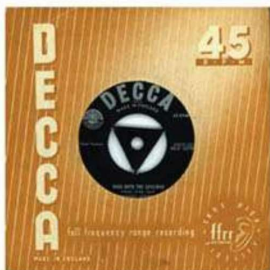
IPC INSPIRE 



MY LIFE IN MUSIC

Adam Ant

From caveman rock'n'roll to bathtime ambience – the secret pleasures of pop's rejuvenated Prince Charming...



The first record that impressed me

Rock With The Caveman
Tommy Steele 1956

This was the first record I thought was cool. I used to go to the Saturday morning pictures as a kid and I saw a film called *The Duke Wore Jeans*, starring Tommy Steele, although

I'm not sure this was in it. He was the first British rock'n'roll star; he was from the East End and was an amazing live performer. I reckon Bowie had a look at his haircuts, for Ziggy Stardust.



The album that introduced me to punk

The Modern Lovers
The Modern Lovers 1976

I was at art school and this was the first punk rock record I heard. There was only one shop that stocked it – Rock On in Camden – and everyone who went on to be involved in punk in London bought this. It was the attitude of songs like “Roadrunner” and “Hospital”, and the simplicity of it all. Jonathan Richman's approach was that of a smalltown, New England kid and he had a kind of pre-Morrissey ethos.

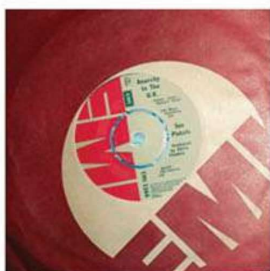


The album that struck an art school chord

For Your Pleasure
Roxy Music 1973

A band with a very artistic approach, from the album cover to costuming and makeup, and their appearance on *The Old Grey Whistle Test* was genuinely life-changing – it's a moment

I'll never forget. Antony Price styled them, and they each had a particular look – it was very early glam. But also, the music was very intelligent. It was a strongly conceptual record and I'd never heard anything like it before.



The song that always grabs my attention

Anarchy In The UK
Sex Pistols 1976

The whole of punk was such an angry revolution – almost smashing walls down – and this was the song that captured all that and represented punk's possibilities. It was

a call-to-arms, a real street anthem. This is just a great-sounding record, with amazing production from Chris Thomas. Every time I listen to it, this stops me in my tracks. It demands attention, which is what punk was all about.

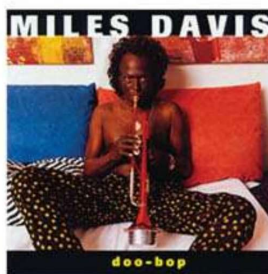


The effortlessly classy singer

Summer Wind
Frank Sinatra 1966

I'm a big Sinatra fan. He was the first pop star, really; he had all the screaming girls and he weathered the ups and downs of a long career – he had amazing tenacity. This

is such a great song; his phrasing and breathing make it sound so incredibly effortless. I saw him perform toward the end of his life, in Los Angeles, and it's definitely one of the best concerts I've ever seen.

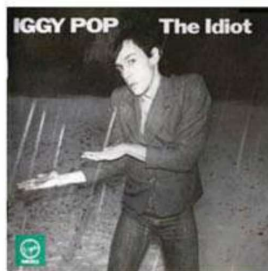


My favourite Miles Davis album

Doo-Bop
Miles Davis 1992

This is his very last album. Miles was invited into the studio by some of the top rappers of the day – people like Easy Mo Bee – and they put the rhythm section down while he

improvised. He's playing a lot more on this than he is on some of his other albums; it just seemed to click with him. The way they pulled it off and their dedication to Miles... it's a fabulous record.



My favourite album from punk's peak years

The Idiot
Iggy Pop 1977

I love this – it's an amazing record – but I can only really listen to it at night on headphones. It's quite dark and very heavy and has incredible pacing; it's just one of

those records that's perfect. Some records you might use to get up and get going, others to chill out, but if you can't sleep, this creates a good mood for writing or just thinking. It's a very restful album for me.



The best music for relaxing in the bath

Apollo: Atmospheres & Soundtracks
Brian Eno 1983

I'm a big fan of space flight; I recently went to the San Diego Space Museum and saw the Apollo 9 capsule, which I wrote a song about.

I've listened to every album Eno made since he left Roxy Music and, in terms of meditative music, this is among my favourites. I still listen to it regularly; it's a great record to stick on in the bath, after a concert or a long day.

Adam Ant's first 45 in 17 years, “Cool Zombie”, will be released Nov 5. The LP, *Adam Ant Is The Blueblack Hussar In Marrying The Gunner's Daughter*, follows Jan 21

IN NEXT MONTH'S UNCUT: “We knew we were idiots and that was liberating – we thought, ‘We may as well make this impossibly fantastic if we can.’”

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Feelgood button.

Late home from work or friends round for coffee? Simply press this button and the JB7 will play your CD collection at random so you can unwind or entertain at leisure.



Themed playlists.

Select tracks from your collection, give them a colour like red for romance or blue for relaxation then click on that colour on the remote and the JB7 will play them in sequence.



Quick to load.

It takes just two button presses to load a CD and just 3-4 minutes to rip it onto the internal hard drive. So you can comfortably load between 20 and 30 in an evening.



Vinyl and Cassettes?

You can record both onto the JB7 as if it were a very large tape recorder. All you will need is a 3.5mm stereo jack, twin phono lead, adapter or connector.



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Once you've downloaded a CD the Brennan automatically checks its massive 3 million database to confirm the album title and track names.



Keep your music safe.

Just in case of a breakdown, the JB7 enables you to back up your entire music collection onto an external hard drive so you don't have to spend time re-loading.

Introducing the world's very first 'Super-Dock'.

The NEW 2012 JB7 from Brennan

Now you can store, browse and play all your digital music as well as your collection of up to 5000 CDs on one machine!

The new 2012 Brennan JB7 links to your iPod or MP3 player and, unlike simple docks, its text search function lets you to find music on your iPod quicker than you can with the iPod itself. The big bright display lets you search and see what's playing from across the room.

The world's first 'Super-Dock' can also load your digital music from your iPod onto the Brennan JB7 to add to your library of favourite CDs. Once loaded you can keep your iPod in the car because you don't have to keep plugging it in.

Listening to your music collections on the Brennan JB7 is so much easier, quicker, and a lot more enjoyable than you ever thought possible.

Browse albums by spinning the volume knob - push to play • Delete tracks you don't like • Display track names as they play • Seven rainbow colour-coded playlists • Segue function blends one track into the next • One touch record from vinyl, cassette or radio • One button plays the entire music collection at random • Use it with existing hi-fi or on its own • Clock with alarm • 60 Watt - 4.8 x 16 x 22 cm steel and aluminium construction • Backup music to external USB hard disk for safe keeping • Credit card size remote control

Choose the Brennan that's right for you.

The NEW 2012 JB7 available as a 320Gb jukebox (holds up to 3200 compressed CDs) and 500Gb jukebox (holds up to 5000 compressed CDs) and in a choice of metallic grey and metallic blue front panels with black outer casing.

FULL MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE.

If the Brennan JB7 isn't right for you, give us a call and we will collect it and give you a full refund - we can even arrange collection from a place of work.

The face behind the Brennan JB7 range.

Martin Brennan, who designed the JB7, has worked with Sir Clive Sinclair and Lord Alan Sugar and has designed over 20 silicon chips in his career. He was a real pioneer in the computer games industry - he played a central role in the design of the worlds first 64 bit games computer.

Visit the online shop at **www.brennan.co.uk**

The 2012 JB7 will link with a number of MP3 devices including the iPod Classic.

To check compatibility visit www.brennan.co.uk

Photo shows the 2012 Brennan JB7 with a Pure digital iPod dock - you can just use the iPod USB cable directly - you don't need a dock but it looks nice.

A word about copyright "In 2006 the record companies said unequivocally that they are happy for you to load your own CDs onto a hard disk but the Advertising Standards Authority have asked us to tell you that it is unlawful to copy material without the permission of the copyright holder. Confused? Find out more and have your say at www.brennan.co.uk"



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