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All Ages
CounterCulture

DECEMBER 2008 FREE IN USA



AMERICAN BEAUTIES

SNAPSHOTS FROM A
FORGOTTEN COUNTRY
MUSIC REVOLUTION
BY LEON KAGARISE
AND EDDIE DEAN

OLIVER HALL TALKS
WITH THE PRETENDERS'
**CHRISSIE
HYNDE
& JAMES
WALBOURNE**

**TRIGGER HIPPIES
& TRIMMER GIRLS**
LIFE IN A CALIFORNIA
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BY **DAVE REEVES**

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HOW SKATEBOARDING
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PLUS, "TIPS ON
SURVIVING THE UPCOMING
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AND REMNANT!



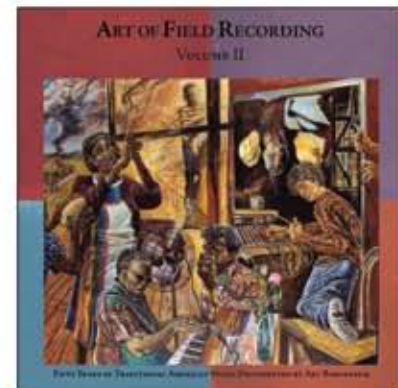
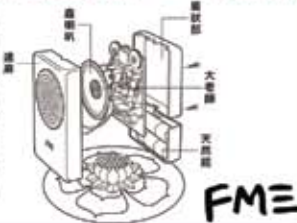
* PLUS * **NEW MUSIC** * COMICS * **FASHION** * AND OLD TIME KITCHEN FOLK MAGIC *



FM3
Buddha Machine II SOUNDBOX

"Insanely brilliant!" —Alan Bishop, Sun City Girls
"An extraordinary piece of sound art." —The Wire

The Beijing-based duo **FM3** is back with an all-new version of the *Buddha Machine*, the extraordinary soundbox from China which caused sensation worldwide and won praise from artists as diverse as **Brian Eno**, **Mike Patton**, and **Sunn O))),** *Buddha Machine 2.0* features 9 new loops, 3 new colors (brown, burgundy and grey) and a tremendous new feature: pitch bend. Blurring the line between music box and musical instrument, the *Buddha Machine 2.0* is an interactive album that lets users customize the listening experience. Boost the speed or drop the pitch – the possibilities are endless. Essentially, it's a box with a life, a tool for living, and to many, it's a friend.



VARIOUS ARTISTS
Art Of Field Recording Volume II
4CD BOX

The Dust-To-Digital label returns to offer another high-quality window into an absolutely fascinating past. Esteemed archivist **Art Rosenbaum** assembles a collection of rural American traditional music for the latest installment in this highly-acclaimed series. This impressive 4CD set presents rare, essential cultural artifacts – ballads, blues, spirituals, work songs and slave songs, religious singing and other traditional folk music – in a robust boxed set with historic images and detailed texts describing the artists and their works.

"Harry Smith's Anthology of American Folk Music for a new generation..." —USA Today



Lillie and Pete Steefe with Art Rosenbaum



Neal Pattman and Precious Bryant



FENNESZ
Black Sea CD/LP

This long-awaited new album finds guitar/laptop composer **Fennesz** in full form as a master of melody and dissonance, with guest appearances from **Rosy Parlane** (Thela) and **Anthony Pateras**. *"Fennesz does with sound what Stan Brakhage did with film, altering its very fabric and texture, employing disorder and error as forms of communication and expression."* —Stylus Magazine

TOUCH



KTL
IV CD

From the ongoing duo of **Stephen O'Malley** (Sunn O))), **Khanate** and **Peter Rehberg** (Pita) comes a demanding beast of blowtorch riffs and computer bass rattles, with punishing drumming from **Atsuo** (Boris). Produced by **Jim O'Rourke**, **KTL** take references from **Swans**, **Wire** and **This Heat** towards a stunning new direction.

EDITIONS
MAGO



SACROS
Sacros CD

The rare album from this incredible Chilean psych-rock band from 1973 is a strange musical combination of country-rock mixed with Latin American flavor. A highlight of the Chilean *Love, Peace, & Poetry* collection, **Sacros** combine amazing 12-string Rickenbacker sounds and experimental effects. Essential for fans of **Los Jaivas**, **Los Blops** and **El Congreso**.

SHADOKS MUSIC



WICKED WITCH
Chaos: 1978-86 CD/LP

First-time ever reissue of obscure '80s DC black punk psycho machine-funk. A musical cauldron of **Funkadelic**, **Sun Ra**, **ESG**, and **Hendrix** delivered direct from the heart of the **Witch**, remastered and with rare photos.



JOSEPHINE FOSTER
This Coming Gladness CD/LP

Josephine Foster's stunning new full-length surpasses any "free folk" tag through the sheer timelessness of her songcraft. 10 transcendental songs by one of the great unsung folk artists of our time. *"Mountain songs that never were, spaced-out hybrids that never will be."* —The New York Times

Bo Weavil
recording



SUSANNA
Flower Of Evil CD/LP

12 sublime covers of **Black Sabbath**, **Nico**, **Lou Reed** and two **Susanna** originals, beautifully sung by one of the most exceptional new voices of recent years. Guests include **Bonnie "Prince" Billy** and **Helge Sten** (Supersilent). *"Her voice is extraordinary, wedding mountain-stream purity to a deep soulfulness."* —Mojo

rune grammofon

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Photography by **Leon Kagarise**



Photography by **Leon Kagarise**



AMATEUR MUSICIANS, 1960S
Here were **Mennonites** and **urbanites**, **down-home country folk** and **hipster folkies** on weekend trips from **Greenwich Village**, all come together in the spirit of the music. The communal vibe spilled into the parking lot, close by the fenced-in grave of **Sunset Park** founder "Uncle" **Roy Waltman**, where informal jam sessions had local musicians fresh out of the cornfields mixing with counterculture pilgrims such as **Jerry Garcia**, a young banjoist from **California** whose dream at the time was to be one of **Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Boys**.

LABOR DONATED BY

John Adamian is the managing editor of the Hartford Advocate. His writing has appeared in The Believer, Relix and elsewhere. He lives in South Hadley, Mass.

Contributing editor **Daniel Chamberlin** makes photographs of plants at night and puts 'em up at intothegreen.wordpress.com.

Alia Penner needs a new pair of ruby slippers. aliapenner.com

After a flurry of activity Chicago-based **Plastic Crimewave aka Steven Krakow** and is staying indoors, drawing and masterminding new schemes....

Joseph Remnant is an artist/cartoonist living in Los Angeles. He's currently working on illustrating work for Harvey Pekar and a collection of his own short comics that he hopes to publish some time in the next year. remnantart.net

Gabe Soria fights the good fight in New Orleans with his wife Amanda and son Caleb. He's learning to play the trombone, is starting a small publishing company specializing in weird fiction in 2009 and likes beer.

Brooklyn-based drone-smith **W. C. Swofford** is lost wandering among different rooms in search of secrets regarding the Taoist Tadpole Script. Sure, he's marooned—but practicing mirror yoga does help pass the time. If you've recently received an ecstatic dream vision regarding the whereabouts of the rumored Tadpole Codex, he is thankful and invites you to submit it to his new minting facility, universalmutant.org ...

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Wise Man
Michael Sigman

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TWO ESSENTIAL REISSUES OF PRIMEVAL BRITISH PSYCH ROCK

LOOP



HEAVEN'S END
2xCD (REACTOR01)

The original 1987 album, remastered by Robert Hampson, plus an unreleased studio outtake, alternate mixes, and the band's first Peel Session



LOOP
FADE OUT
2xCD (REACTOR03)

Loop's 1988 sophomore full-length, remastered by Robert Hampson, along with bonus demo material, alternate studio mixes, and a second Peel Session

Heaven's End and Fade Out are the first two releases in a series of long-overdue reissues by British band Loop.

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Real Eyes

WHAT ARE WE SKATING TOWARDS?

One indication that I am not quite an enlightened being is my temper—I can get very angry and lose touch with my higher purpose. As much as I enjoy skateboarding, when things are not going well I occasionally lose my shit: throw my board, punch myself, scream at the heavens, and curse myself for even trying to ride the thing. It's not always fun and games. In addition to the physical challenge, skateboarding can be highly emotional and often takes me to the edge of some very unpleasant feelings: doubt, frustration, depression, seething anger. Yet I keep coming back to my board, to roll around and delve deeper into the process. After 20 years of sidewalk surfing, I've started to understand what I am looking for.

I received my first skateboard—a Sims Kamikaze—in third grade in the rapidly developing suburb of Columbia, Maryland. I was a child with a toy. I played on my skateboard, hung out with friends, rode bikes and built ramps and listened to music and played video games. As I entered middle and high school and became more independent and physically capable, skateboarding became more of a lifestyle.

I didn't fit into any particular mold. I was artistic, but didn't take art very seriously. I had an intellectual mind, but didn't care for school. I was athletic, but distanced myself from organized sports and the jock/coach/spectator mentality. Skateboarding became a way for me to be outside, having fun, while still being creative and independent and curious. I did not like being told what to do and on a skateboard, people kept their distance. Meanwhile I had fun and got exercise and traveled up and down the coast with friends, chasing adventure.

When I left for school in California, skateboarding continued to help me find an identity and establish my priorities. It informed my art, my writing, my taste in music. It helped me meet new friends and get around and stay inspired. I dropped out of school after a year, and then had a horrible car accident. I fractured my skull, had holes drilled in my head, and as a result I had my first spiritual experience. In a hyper-conscious and blissful state, I saw the promised land. I would never be quite the same afterwards.

Eventually I healed and got back into skating. My best friends were skaters, and together we entered the real world and got into business. I chose not to go into the skateboard industry, feeling that I had a more individual path to pursue. I ended up starting an internet company with a skater friend, primarily



Illustration by Joseph Remnant

to make the most of a freeform lifestyle that was not tied to any location or employer. Our goal was fun at any cost. I still felt myself set apart from the social standards. I sought something outside of money and career and relationships, but I wasn't sure what it was.

I took to booze and drugs, and found myself spiraling towards a self-destructive, nihilistic view of the world. Happy-go-lucky as I may have seemed, I was still a young man foundering in dis-ease, aggression, and frustration. Yet skateboarding was always there for me. It helped me endure, and it provided an outlet. I found it confusing to be a young American from a broken home in a sick society. If nothing else, skateboarding was my connection to an objective reality.

In my mid 20s, bloated and disgusted with myself, I started to change my trajectory. My fascination with Eastern mysticism and martial arts finally took hold with some real practice, and I started connecting the dots between heaven and earth. I made a holy pilgrimage into the ocean and caught some water waves. I started eating organic food, taking herbal medicine, and after 10 years of glasses and contacts, stopped wearing corrective lenses on my eyes. I turned away from the material world and focused on the spiritual meaning in life. I rode around on my skateboard in the middle of the night in Koreatown, New York and Tokyo, seeking answers to the mysteries of the universe, my head spinning with various metaphysical philosophies and magical interpretations.

I had great insights, I really did. I learned about breath, and its relationship to the cosmic dance. I learned about gravity, acceleration, and the energetic similarity to love. I learned about physics, relaxation, balance, awareness, and confidence. Every time I stepped on a skateboard I would have revelations and discern mysterious truths. I got better at skating but I didn't have any guidance, I didn't have any grounding. It would take another decade of study, failure, and

asking for help for me to cut through the chaos and reach a stable understanding of how things work. I found some mentors and learned some humility, and I learned about myself.

I'm in my 30s now. I have a 12-step sponsor, not a skateboard company sponsor. I do yoga and taiji, pray and meditate. I have gratitude that I am still alive, and I try and share some of the beauty that I have found. I started The Land of Plenty, a skateboard foundation for kids. I think the skateboard is a perfect invention, the quintessence of human achievement. Skateboarding is an American art form, and it has been influenced by the most transcendent acts I have encountered: the surfing of water waves, compassionate relationships, and the study of the self.

Skating is my practice, my discipline. It is a substantial context for the life experience. It is a self-supporting community of artists, engaged in fun, non-violent, zero-emission, independent physical education. And now that I am old and experienced enough to understand the cycles of time, it makes perfect sense as a mind-body, authentic spiritual practice. Every time I return to my skateboard I continue to real-ize: to make real my experience of life.

Bhagavan Das once called India "Dharma Bhumi: the land of religion", and America "Karma Bhumi: the land of action." In this land of action, we are called to express ourselves and share our insight. This is my story, and I can't help but wonder how many other people share a similar path. Reality is here for us to embrace. The wave you choose to ride will not be the same as anyone else's wave. But if you choose to ride it, you may find what you are looking for, for the truth is nowhere to be found but in your own heart. ☯

L.A.-based columnist Greg Shewchuk is the director of the Land of Plenty Skateboard Foundation. thelandofplenty.org



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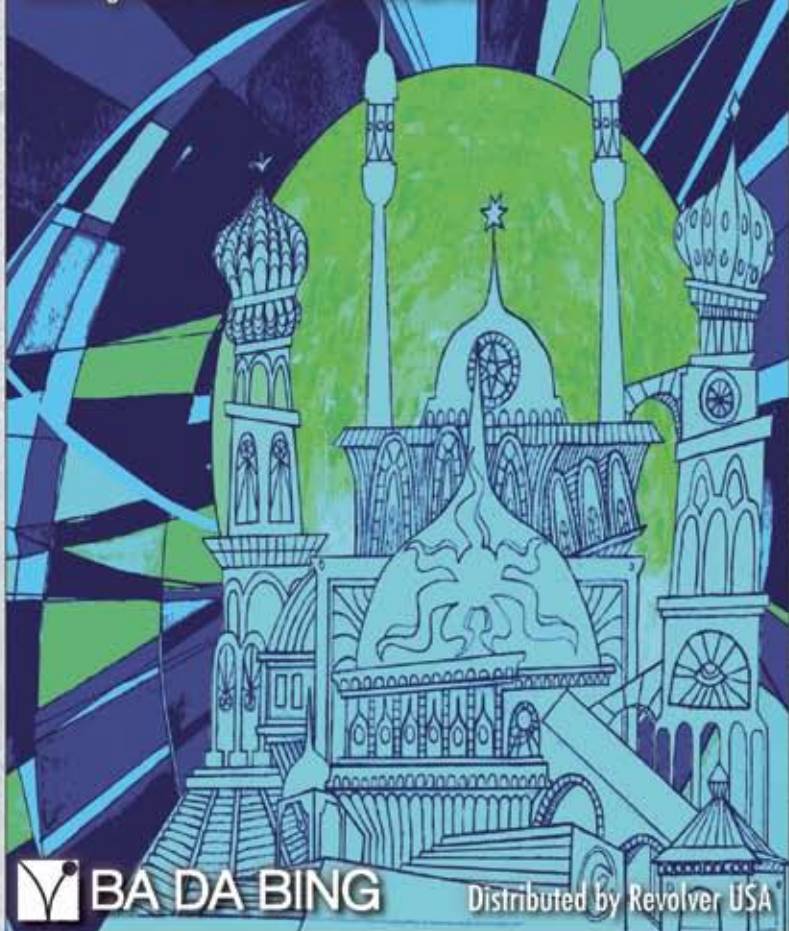
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FREE BLOOD
The Singles CD
(RONGDFA07)

This two-piece Brooklyn band has more street cred than you can shake a stick at, and for good reason. Consisting of Madeline

Davy (Octopi NYC) on the microphone and John Pugh (formally of !!!) also on microphone, Free Blood has got some serious, serious heat on the mic and mixing board. On *The Singles'* six original tracks and five remixes, the pair synthesizes pop and avant-garde leanings.

still available: *Never Hear Surf Music Again 12"*,
Royal Family 12", *Parangatang 12"*

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DO THE MATH
BY DAVE REEVES

Honest Work

LIFE ON A HUMBOLDT CANNABIS FARM DURING HARVEST SEASON

In 1996 Californians passed a Proposition called 215 that allowed a citizen to go to a doctor to get certified as demented enough that a federally banned vegetable substance known as a "Joint" is the only remedy. The Doctor gets a hundred dollars. The Citizen gets a number, a little patch, and if things go a certain way during the Bush Obama changeover, a free ride to a Special Federal Camp.

The distinction between State's Rights and Federal Law has led to some lively debates, most notably "The War of Northern Aggression" (1861-1865), after which it was deemed that, in spite of the Constitution, Feds make the Laws and States shut up. So sorry California, weed is still illegal in the US. This has created a situation where Growers, thinking they can cultivate legal weed behind their Prop 215 permission slip, get robbed by Federal Agents. The Grower can't call the Sheriff, and the number at the UN is always busy.

If the production of weed were legal, trimming weed in Humboldt would be a lot like the seasonal job of stomping wine in France. It is not legal, so trimming weed in Humboldt is like cooking meth in Kentucky. What can I tell you about going to work on a weed farm that the Grower, The Trimmers and The Landowner won't kill me for? Soft criminals are especially tense about getting put in cages by men with guns.

For the sake of this story I will posit that every Grower is, due to certain skill sets and predilections, essentially the same kind of guy. All Growers have three shitty houses but don't live anywhere in particular; all Growers are trigger hippies who learned

to drink in the Army and don't like to have a boss; all Growers have a truck, a dog and an ex-girlfriend with an axe to grind; etc. I don't know if crime makes cliches come true or if it's the other way around, but I would guess that a variation of the following drama is acted out in remote camps across Humboldt every year at harvest time.

The first nights at the camp were the loudest nights. It was rumored that a Mexican gang was pistol whipping and robbing growers around the valley. So the neighbors would let off a shot, and we'd follow suit, letting the theoretical Mexican gang know that the whole mountain stood in a steady state of readiness or madness. It had yet to dawn on me what was fishy about the Mexican gang rumor because after a day of cop watch reports and terrible music on radio station KMUD, my brain was washed of all sense. I was ready to believe anything.

The main camp consisted of a reclaimed meth trailer, an outdoor kitchen and a drying shack made of some found wood: exactly the same as one of those tobacco shanties you see slouching haphazardly around the South, except it reeks of skunk. Outside the drying shack was the kitchen: a freestanding gas jet normally used to fry turkeys, a Coleman two burner camping stove and a gas grill, all covered by an elegant tarp roof. The living room was comprised of several wonky chairs arranged in front of a fire pit cut into the road leading down to the green house.

I considered myself lucky to be passing a bottle around out in the woods while the stars skated around the sky. The dirt road out in the middle of

nowhere was easy street compared to the economic uncertainty of the real world down valley.

The Grower sang "All we are say-ing/ is stay on your land" to the tune of "Give Peace a Chance" while merrily blasting a fresh faced pumpkin away with his service .45. The jack-o'-lantern's bright eyes and toothy grin provided almost a half an hour of joy before his brief candle was snuffed. I let the tragedy ride as I was outgunned and, judging from the Grower's marksmanship, underserved.

In the course of an evening the simmer of pistols graduated into salvos of "deer rifles" gilded with small arm glissades until the show of force spent itself leaving only a lonely nine pop-popping out an echo in the valley below. The percussion movement was in a magnum key and provided great comfort to all Growers within earshot, but it like totally freaked out the hippy masseuse/trimmers and their fat vegetarian mutts.

If the production of weed were legal, trimming weed in Humboldt would be a lot like the seasonal job of stomping wine in France. It is not legal, so trimming weed in Humboldt is like cooking meth in Kentucky.

The Grower had set up a three-season R.E.I. tent in which I was to sleep and guard the fortune flowering in the lower greenhouse despite all the best efforts of voles, the Campaign Against Marijuana Planting (CAMP), the Department of Justice, the California Highway Patrol, the California National Guard, meth heads and the natural enemy of any grower: The Ex-Girlfriend.

Eventually I drank enough to decamp to the tent hidden in the scrub. The natural camouflage that made it hard for helicopters to spot also made it hard to find at night in my whiskey shoes. Using my superior sense of direction and a flashlight I was able to fall in one direction consistently until I fell onto something which proved to be my tent. Anticipating

COBRA VERDE



Haven't Slept All Year



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Illustration by Arvik Roper

L.A. Trimmer, who had tucked her hair away under the camouflage hood of her jacket.

"Well you could take the ridge back up," the Landowner swept his arms at the ever darkening forest, "or, if you let me catch the dogs, I'll give you a ride."

The Landowner peeled the tarp off a derelict Chevelle in the yard.

"This car is real life," he said. The Chevelle was modified with a home-made gearbox of shiny sheet metal riveted in under the dashboard. "I take the door panels out and run this fucker all the way to the East Coast every year." He turned the key and the car farted up a cloud of blue exhaust and then roared. His dogs jockeyed for position on his lap as the Chevelle spit gravel all the way up the steep road.

The L.A. Trimmer hid in the back under a blanket as we swerved past the gate where the Ex-Girlfriend was still parked. She ran into the road frothing at the mouth, beating on the Landowner's car and screaming "This man grows marijuana!"

"Jeezus. It's about time for her to leave the county," said the Landowner.

He took us to the two-lane road and dropped us off at the sign where we agreed to meet the New Girlfriend. A cop, a fire truck and an ambulance screeched around the curve with sirens lit.

We called the New Girlfriend to tell her that we made it. The Grower took the phone from the New Girlfriend.

"Where is it?"

I tried to tell him where the stash was. It was hard to communicate because he was worried. Worried that the raccoons would get into the weed. Worried that the meth-head neighbor might find a year's worth of work and sell it for nothing. Then the Grower would have to kill everybody to prove a point.

"It was down that cut bank by the stump, take a right and contour across the hill until you hit a creek bed, under some ferns."

"Yeah, okay. When you get to town, get your truck off the road. You know, cops look for dirty trucks coming off the back roads."

The description of a Trimmer "sister" with a hafro and ass-kicking legs had the cops out in droves. I got the L.A. Trimmer tucked into a hotel off the main strip. We tried to clean off the three weeks of woods and waited for the Grower to run the gauntlet into town. Finally he showed up, filthy with fingernail scratches all around his neck.

"I couldn't find the truck and figured you'd left town with the weed."

"I left it in the bush, like I said. And you told me to hide the truck."

"Well, I looked for the weed out there for a while." This time the innuendo was harder to miss.

"It's there."

"I guess it is, if you're here." The Grower sat down heavily and produced a bottle of whiskey from his jacket. I noticed that he had his pistol tucked in his belt. He poured us all drinks.

"Shit, me and the Landowner thought you were long gone with the weed and the truck."

A flash of regret must have registered on the faces of me and the L.A. Trimmer because the Grower laughed at us.

"Tell you what, have a drink. And live it up, goddammit!" he yelled, slinging Johnny Walker Blue all around on the carpet. "If you're gonna get into the game you got to live it up, because when they come through that door it's all gonna change."

We spent the night drinking and watching windows, talking business with the Grower in a room full of suitcases and guns. The love of easy money has been the ruin of many a poor boy and by morning you know I was one.

So call the cops and tell them to bust me. Tell them that I'm coming south right now with some of that dank Humboldt OG babyshit trainwreck kushywushy. Tell them they can't miss me. I'm on the 101 with a dangerous Trimmer from L.A. right now. I'm in a white van, a dirty blue Toyota truck and a sedan with hollow doors. Doesn't matter what I'm driving, really. Throw up roadblocks, pull everybody over and let the courts sort it out. Then bust everyone ordering pizza after ten o'clock. Bust all the turkey bag buyers. Get those skinhead pigs from Riverside up in a helicopter to look for dangerous flowers and send these growers indoors where they belong.

Do every bit of that zero tolerance shit and let's get this weed price up from the price of gold to the price of platinum because I'm trying to live. ☹

Dave Reeves has a short story titled "Bottle to Throttle" published in the Two Letters Collection of Art and Writing. Also he is expecting to have a movie he co-wrote with Larry Clark called Shame in production by March, but understands that everyone in this town lies to him about shit like that so he will jump through hoops like a little trained dog.



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THE ANALOG LIFE
BY ERIK DAVIS

Slow Down

IS IT REALLY SO HORRIBLE TO IMAGINE THE PLANET DOWN-SHIFTING FOR ONCE?



illustration by P. J. Hladaligo

You can hardly blame anyone for feeling the fear and panic that helped drive October's near financial meltdown. Scanning the headlines or the newsfeeds, our eyes greeted a steady pulse of bumner lingo. "Global Recession." "Great Depression." "Financial Collapse." Serious words for serious times. But there was another phrase I kept stumbling across, less apocalyptic certainly but still delivered with a grim fatalism, that struck me differently. The economy, we were warned, was showing signs of a significant *slowdown*.

Slowdown? I don't know about you, but I could use a bit of a slowdown right about now. Take things easy, not run around so much, maybe poke around the garden and restring that guitar. Hold a neighborhood potluck, learn emergency response, can some tomatoes. I haven't finished rebuilding the office, and haven't even cracked *The Man Without Qualities*.

OK, I am being a little facetious. After all, "slowdown" describes the debilitating stuttering of

capitalism's endless Big Bang-like expansion, an enormously powerful wave of transformation that in some manner or another floats almost all of our boats. If this immense flow of nested feedback loops, production networks, and capital flows starts to slow, then things don't just mellow out. They start to fall apart, like a Chinese acrobat—scratch that, *American* acrobat—whose spinning plates lose their momentum and inevitably fall to the floor even as the poor fellow keeps his balance. That means families get pushed into poverty, small businesses close, poor folks grow desperate and rich folks even more selfish and mean.

But an economic slowdown also means a temporal slowdown, and, in the right measure, that might not be such a bad thing. A lot of us spend our days like zombies on speed, pounding caffeine, schizofrantically multitasking, twittering and flickering, and thereby sacrificing what is really a rather brief span on this glorious ball of disquiet to the insatiable demands of work, consumption, self-improvement, and technological mediation. Is it really so horrible to imagine the juggernaut down-shifting for once, at least enough for folks to step back, take a breath, and re-assess? Certainly the planet wouldn't mind if we all just pulled over to a rest stop for a couple of years before buckling back in and flooring it towards the great Singularity the technologists predict.

Slow time could be seen as elastic time. Once you slow down enough, you can see all the things that need help and care, and you have more time to attend them, and more time to creatively respond to difficulties and constraints. If the slowdown is not too catastrophic, it will carve out more room in time and space for individuals and communities to take responsibility for their lives and localities and for some of the myriad grass-roots solutions that already exist to take root. There won't be as much money floating around, but there will be more human hours and human needs, including cultural needs that might return to the fore as something more than digital distraction. Maybe music is about to get really good again.

So the next time you hear about the "slowdown," think instead of "slow food." Formed in support of regional food traditions and against homogenized industrial pseudo-grub, the slow food ideology is also a reaction to the digital, push-button, time-saving logic of fast food. In other words, the slow food scene is a conscious attempt to restore the depth, meaning, and complexity of the entire food cycle, from farms to family meals, and to do so partly through *changing*

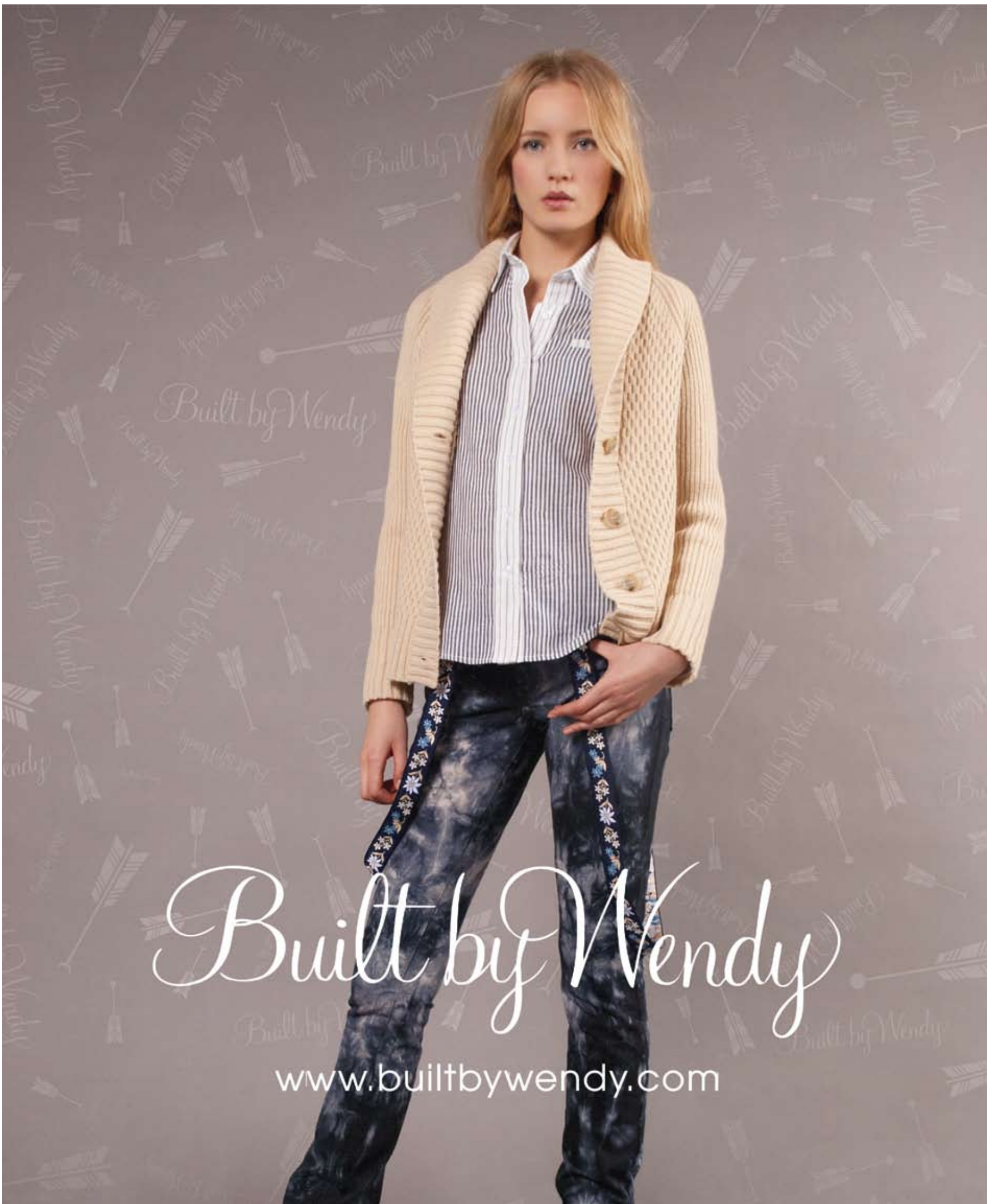
our relationship to time. Slow foodies encourage people to take their time cooking, and take their time eating, and they argue that the sacrifices that slowness requires might, in the end, give us more—not just great food and the spiritual pleasure of a satisfying chow-down with humans who are paying attention to their cooking and one another, but the even deeper medicine of restoring ourselves in time and place.

Sure, the slow food movement can seem precious and fussy, and as In-n-Out burger fans like me know, sometimes fast food can be done right. But the fact that people need to create a mission statement about something that was once perfectly natural shows how thoroughly we have given our lives over to the intensely linear, molecularly regimented, and globally synchronized framework of objective time that runs the modern world and its ruthless calculus. From the days when monks called the monastic hours with tolling bells, thereby organizing the days of townspeople as well, time has grown increasingly mechanized. In the late nineteenth century, "noon" for most towns in America was still the hour when the sun was overhead; then the need to coordinate train schedules forced the creation of numerically synchronized "time zones" which separated communities from the analog connection between twelve o'clock and the solar zenith. With the later spread of actual digital clocks, even the old horoscope-like clock faces disappear, and the true nature of modern time is naked before our bleary, over-worked eyes: number. Modern time is a numerical abstraction, a quantity rather than a quality, and as a quantity is hoarded and spent, rather than nurtured and magnified.

But time is not just an abstract measure. Time has its own moods and seasons, like a landscape with hills and valleys, dense forests and placid seas. We have trouble sensing this landscape because we are taught to think of time as homogenous and purely objective, a vision that is reproduced by our quartz watches and digital clocks and all the other temporal mechanisms that humans have been hammering out since Paleolithic shamans started tracking the moon with marks on bone. But even this objective-mechanistic view of time is melting down, as media and technology push our minds and productive capacities towards absolute speed. So whether you are a 2012 synchronicity groupie or a technofuturist charting out the oncoming Singularity, to say nothing of a fast-food slave in Bangalore whose every bathroom break and basket of fries is tagged to the nano-second, you can feel a tectonic shift rumbling in the flow of moments. Our times feel like the endtimes not because time itself is ending, but because the conventions of time may be ending.

This does not mean we are going back to the world before the monks and their pesky bells. The quickening is happening and the feedback loops are feeding off each other too fast to stop. That said, there is no reason we cannot take advantage of whatever slow down lies ahead to open up to a more multi-faceted and integrated sense of time, a sense of duration as well as intensity, of slowness as well as speed. This process, I suspect, begins within, which is why I am spending a chunk of December in an isolated hippie dome in the shadow of Kilauea on Hawaii's big island dog-sitting for a pal. There I hope to play with the Zen master Dogen's claim that "being is time." In other words, we don't just move through time or submit to time or make time—we *are* time. And beneath the whirring of my own relentlessly chattering forebrain, which I hope will produce a large quantity of written words, I hope to dip my soul into the deep slow river that sinks all the way into the bubbling earth. ☹

Erik Davis lives and writes in San Francisco. His next book, a collection, will be called *Nomad Codes: Adventures in Pop Esoterica*. He posts regularly at techgnosis.com.



**WEEDEATER
BY NANCE KLEHM**

Breaking it Down



illustration by Megan McGintley

There are three fundamentals that guide this time of descent into northern-hemisphere darkness. The winter season is one of decline and decomposition, activity below ground and general shadowiness. The fundamentals that guide us are:

- Everything comes into this world hungry.
- Everything wants to be digested.
- Everything flows towards soil.

EVERYTHING COMES INTO THIS WORLD HUNGRY.

Bacteria are the living structure assisting all life forms including ourselves. They are the primary alchemists transforming structures of life into other structures. Bacteria shall from hereon be known as 'beasties.'

All matter is constantly, biochemically altering as enzymes already present in an organism break down from within, and microorganisms, namely beasties (but sometimes fungi too) settle in to eat and excrete, transforming a pear on your counter, a pile of leaves on the sidewalk, or an animal corpse into a lovely pile of biological goo or soil on the spot where the pear/leaves/corpse formerly rested. It is the end of the line in one way, but the beginning of another too. In other words, the snake eats her own tail. It's nature's nature.

Beasties make milk into cheese, fruit juice into vinegar and wine, vegetables into pickles, beans into miso. Fermentation is basically making a habitat in which beneficial bacteria and/or fungi can set up shop, eat and excrete until they run out of their food source, or you deem it time to stop them because the wine or cheese or pickles are ready. Shoot, without these beasties it would be difficult to throw a party.

EVERYTHING WANTS TO BE DIGESTED.

Demonstration No. 1: Take a slightly bruised fruit, or peelings of fruit (not a gorgeous piece of fruit—save that for eating) and place it in a glass jar. Add sugar. Screw on the top and shake it a bit. The

BACTERIA, DIGESTION AND OLD-TIME KITCHEN FOLK MAGIC

mixture needs to breathe, so remove the lid and place a rag over the jar and secure it with a rubber band around the ring of the jar. Place in a dark, room-temperature space so the beasties can eat in peace. After ten days, taste the mixture. If you like it, strain out the fruit and put in the fridge, which will slow the fermentation process.

You have just made unfiltered pro-biotic fruit-scrap vinegar.

Securing and processing food for storage used to consist of simple, sometimes labor-intensive, but entirely petrochemical-free processes: slow evaporation, smoking, fermenting, and preserving in oil/vinegar/honey/salt/alcohol or in-the-ground storage. These low-techie but completely safe methods were used extensively until the mid 19th century, when kitchen folk magic was displaced by pasteurization, the process that fueled modern germ theory. This paradigm shift saved lives, but it also contributed to our general fear of soil, our bodies and our bodies' waste. And pasteurization, with its requisite application of high heat, kills the good beasties that help keep our raw food safe and healthy. We gotta keep our internal gardens of beasties thriving! Eat... Excrete... Eat... Excrete...

Demonstration No. 2: Chop veggies, wild greens, roots, or whatever you want to pickle. Make a brine with non-chlorinated water and sea salt. Brine should be nearly saturated with salt, just like ocean water. Toss the denser material (i.e. roots, garlic cloves) into the brine and swirl it around a bit. Drain the

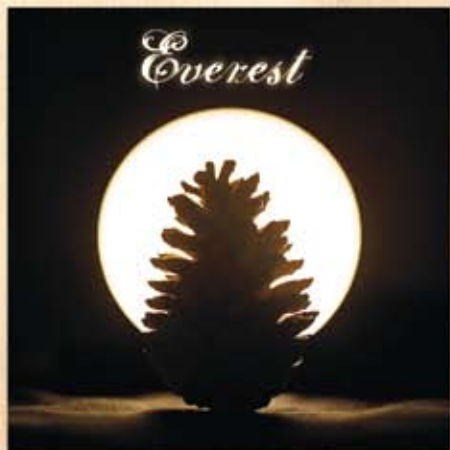
veggies but save the brine. Mix the pre-brined veggies and less dense material (i.e. greens). Pack a glass jar with your mix and pour the brine over it, submerging all material. Work out trapped bubbles with a stick. Now fill a small bag with extra brine and use as a water bladder: that is, place the brine-filled bag on top of the vegetable material to submerge it under the brine in the jar. Leave the jar open for at least three days to allow the beasties to eat. Taste, then let the beasties continue to eat for a stronger flavor, or if it's ready, put the jar in a cool place like that 38-degree box called a refrigerator and slow their process down.

Since August Wilhelm von Hoffman discovered formaldehyde in 1867, it's remained the choice of human embalmers. Formaldehyde put an end to something called the "Exploding Casket Syndrome" that was afflicting Union troops during the long, hot train ride back to their families in the North. Formaldehyde is a far cry from the older embalmers' choices of spices/salt/herbs for human pickling. As bodies decompose (because the bacteria does get into those caskets eventually), formaldehyde leaks into the groundwater and you can guess the rest. Lucky for Europeans that the EU last year banned its use. Good to know that embalming is not required by law in the United States. There's no need to rob food from the living beasties.

EVERYTHING FLOWS TOWARDS SOIL. ♻️

Nance Klehm is working with 500,000 worms to turn food slop into soil.

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- 3 RELAX. BREATHE EASY. And REMEMBER to EXORCISE Daily by CASTING OUT CORRUPTION!

PUT OR TEAR ALONG THE DOTTED LINE

One of the oldest themes in magic(k) is that of death and resurrection. Recurring in the origin stories of numerous religions, death and resurrection also played an important role in the initiation ceremonies of early shamans across the globe. By first descending into the depths of sickness, disease, and even death itself a Siberian shaman would make allegiances with spirit allies who could be called upon to help the living. But in order to do so, the shaman would have to survive the ordeal and return to life before s/he could act as an intermediary.

Anthropologists have observed similar tendencies in shamanic initiation throughout geographically divergent cultures. Although the story of Jesus Christ is perhaps our society's most familiar example, scholars of world religion are quick to point out that many aspects of the Christ story are reflected in earlier religious beliefs surrounding such deities as Osiris, Dionysus, and Mithras to name but a few of the more notable, regional examples. However, the list of dying-and-rising gods numbers well into the dozens and extends across the world map to include the likes of Quetzalcoatl (Aztec), Odin (Norse), Ishtar (Mesopotamia), Julunggul (Aboriginal Australian), and Travolta (Hollywood).

While Tarantino's resurrection of Travolta might not qualify him as a "god" worthy of the aforementioned pantheon, themes of death and resurrection have long played out on the stages of popular culture and entertainment. Early performers in Native America and in ancient Egypt

would amaze audiences by bringing animals back to life. While in India, fakirs performing the famed "basket trick" would stuff a child into a woven container before perforating the basket (and presumably the child) with multiple swords, only to reveal a short moment later that the child was still alive and well. More recently, magicians P.T. Selbit and Horace Goldin might not have the popular name recognition today that they once shared in the 1920s; however, one would be hard-pressed to find someone who doesn't recognize their famed (and misogynistic) illusion: sawing a woman in half.

A resurrection routine in theatrical magic often takes one of several forms: a transposition (in which the assistant disappears from one place and reappears somewhere else), a transformation (in which the assistant appears to change into something or someone else), or a restoration (in which the assistant is returned to normal after first being subjected to some sort of ghoulish sadism). A vanish on the other hand (in which the assistant simply disappears) is seldom used for a resurrection act because the audience is left ill-at-ease wondering what happened to the body after the magician stabbed, shot, burned, or cut it.

More commonly, vanishes are employed as a metaphorical reminder for the ephemeral and illusory nature of life. Coin vanishes are among the more familiar tricks in a conjuror's repertoire, and audiences seem to have no trouble relating to the disappearance of money even when it happens inexplicably before their very eyes.

Thurston, the great Vaudeville magician and master Mason, took the vanishing act a step further by introducing the "the vanishing Arabian steed" followed a few years later by "the vanishing automobile" along with its passengers. More than simply illustrating the technological trajectory of transportation, Thurston's vanishes demonstrated to his audience that coins, cars, or other symbols of material wealth possess a value that is not lasting. Later magicians failed to recognize the potential for multiple levels of symbolic relevance and focused only on scale as a determining factor for their illusions by vanishing elephants and water buffalo.

However, the same cannot be said for David Copperfield's famed vanishing of the Statue of Liberty. With 1984 looming and Ronald Reagan busy conjuring his own "voodoo economics" the disappearance of Lady Liberty probably should have spooked audiences more than it did. Clearly more prophetic than Thurston's vanishing horse, Copperfield's vanishing Liberty should have been regarded not as prime time entertainment but as a dire warning of politics to come. If treated as an omen, we can at least take comfort in the fact that Copperfield's illusion is ultimately a restoration and not simply a vanish. If so, and the mystical vision holds true, we can expect the return of our civil liberties, cell phone privacy, and perhaps even the freeing of those who

have been disappeared by government contracted "extraordinary rendition" aircraft and in the CIA-operated secret prisons abroad.

In stage magic, vanishes may rely on a range of methods to achieve the desired effect. The use of mirrors, trap doors, secret compartments, and doubles might be used to restore an assistant to a healthy state. While politics also utilizes no short supply of ruses, deceptions, and misdirections, it takes much more to return to a healthy state. Although we witnessed the vanishing of George Bush from the White House in January of 1993, we were left dumbstruck when a second George Bush reappeared in the Oval Office in 2000. Unlike the shamanic ascension from the underworld that affords mysterious new powers for helping treat the ailments of others, this hellish return was accompanied by two wars, an exploding national debt, a devastating economic crash, and mysterious new powers for government surveillance and the executive branch.

Thankfully the curtain call has come for that sad act. The stage has been reset and we are now eagerly awaiting the next Bush vanishing act from the halls of government. Hopefully this time it's a permanent disappearance. And perhaps when the curtain goes up on this next act we'll witness the resurrection of the long-dead spirit of democracy that has recently begun

haunting our hopes and dreams again.

Undoubtedly, politicians and governments will continue to perform much as they have in the past. Yet, the mass mobilization around the Obama campaign has given the audience new clues in determining the outcome of the show. The close of the Obama/McCain election represented a political shift in more ways than one. For the first time in eight years (if not longer), people poured into the streets not to protest an act of government but to celebrate one. The jubilation went far beyond party politics because the triumph went not only to the Democrats. People could feel their own political power. Whether or not Obama lives up to his campaign promises and our highest expectations remains to be seen; yet, the real victory here is the empowerment of the grassroots to accomplish a major political mission. Hopefully, the next eight years brings the political utopian equivalent of unicorns and demons sharing the last slice of birthday cake under a shimmering rainbow. But if it doesn't, we now have a road map for organizing that doesn't just look like another weekend march with placards and puppets in the financial district of a major metropolis. On the contrary, the mobilization around Obama was widespread, sustained, contextual, and media-savvy. It utilized multiple outreach strategies, creative tactics, and a model of fundraising that accumulated

millions of small donations into a mega-fund for manifesting a collective vision. And now that we see what we can accomplish, there's no reason why we should stop there. The show must go on - locally, nationally, globally. Or else we may find ourselves sitting once again in a dark theater awaiting the resurrection of our political nightmares.

For this next act, it's time for the audience to take the stage and perform a vanishing act of our own by banishing the Bush/Cheney cabal once and for all. We recommend that the White House be fully cleansed with sage, and garlic should be hung in all doorways and windows. Further, we have provided a do-it-yourself exorcism form for readers to use in cleansing all corrupting influences that may be possessing the remaining politicians in D.C. Much like the shaman who gains his healing abilities by passing first through the trials of sickness, we, too, have suffered collectively over the last eight years and are now in a position to emerge with newfound powers for restoring the health of civil society through creative initiative. ☺

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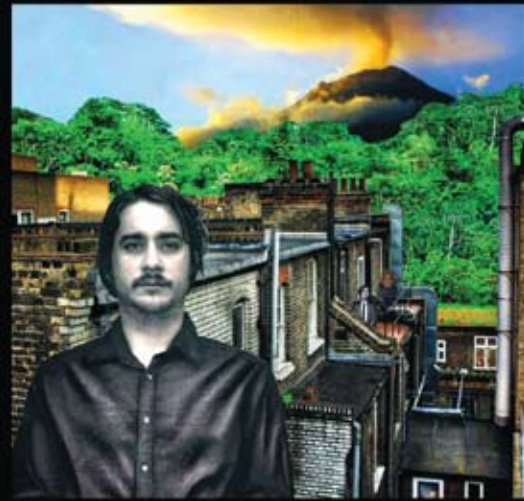
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"The Door is still firmly in a field of its own, offering six tracks that are equal in barbed psychedelic power yet compliment one another in such a way that this album - although brief by the clock - feels substantial, fully-realized, and bizarrely anthemic." **Pitchfork (7.7)**

"[The Door] witnesses the coagulation of the four-piece into something more identifiable as an honest-to-badness rock group." **Wire**

"[The Door] is where they bring all the strategies they've honed exploring the while, outer tip of improv into the instrumental bear pit and tear rock'n'roll a new one." **lattice Plan B**

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INTERVIEW BY **OLIVER HALL**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **LAUREN BILANKO**

WAY TO GO OHIO

For the Pretenders' Chrissie Hynde, Akron, Ohio has always been a hometown in permanent decline, a place she fled for England. Now America's greatest ex-pat rock 'n' roller sees the future in her past: a reborn urban core where counter-culture businesses, including her own new restaurant (vegan, of course), are helping restore progressive community to a downtown trashed by short-sighted greed. That sense of small-is-better renewal runs through her band's new album, which features the playing of James Walbourne, an acclaimed young rockabilly guitarist who joins Hynde here for an exclusive conversation with Arthur's Oliver Hall.

Chrissie Hynde is in Hollywood on a short promotional tour of the United States to promote the new Pretenders album, *Break Up the Concrete*, which comes with a piece of seed paper that will grow flowers. Hynde likes to joke that the paper contains high-quality cannabis seeds, but my feverish experiments have yielded naught, perhaps because the "soil" in my neighborhood is plaster sand and the "water" is pure chlorine bleach. Just the sort of ungreen conditions of city life that Hynde wants to break up. Accompanying her on this trip is the Pretenders' brilliant new guitarist, James Walbourne, fresh off of stints playing with The Pogues and Jerry Lee Lewis. Walbourne, a contagiously excited Brit in his late 20s, is about to join us here in their hotel room, and Hynde wants to make sure I'm going to bring him into the conversation when he arrives. "This magazine is different, so you don't have to

do the Chrissie Hynde Story," she says.

For this tour Hynde and Walbourne have been playing mostly acoustic sets in radio stations and record stores. In L. A., they played at Amoeba Music and made an unannounced appearance at the McCabe's Guitar Shop 50th anniversary show at UCLA. They briefly shook up the sleepy programming at KCRW, and I met them shortly after they'd performed on Sex Pistol Steve Jones's local radio show, Jonesy's Jukebox. At Amoeba, Hynde took the stage and declared "I'm a wreck" before undoing the top button of her jeans. The Amoeba show and the KCRW appearance were delivered from a fiery fuck-you-it's-live point of view. The shows were a thrill, since Hynde's voice sounds gorgeous as ever, and because if she occasionally got lost trying to remember one of her lyrics—which is not hard to do when

your lyrics have as many non sequiturs as a Beckett play—Walbourne would improvise their way back to the song.

Chrissie Hynde’s voice as a writer and a singer is a hell of a thing. You could talk about the dramatic range of a voice that can sneer “You’re gonna make some plastic surgeon a rich man” and break your heart with “Kid” on the same album, or you could talk about her expert control of tone and pitch and the effect of her voice on an audience, or you could talk about her vocal tremolo, which immediately distinguishes her from other rock singers—you could talk about all these things, and I hope that you will, but the cold fact remains: your band will never, ever be able to pull off “Tattooed Love Boys.” For my part, I suspect that Hynde’s performances are so emotionally affecting because she has never given up on the hard work of trying to imagine a public domain in which she and her art and her bandmates and her audience might more perfectly coexist. On their 1984 recording of Hynde’s song “My City Was Gone,” the Pretenders depict what it feels like to return home and find yourself in an urban-renewalized ghost town, where all local distinguishing marks have been erased or paved over, and everyone works at the same shopping mall. I imagine that if the late, great radical environmentalist Edward Abbey were still above ground, he would be merrily whistling the new Pretenders song “Break up the Concrete” while jackhammering up great chunks of the interstate and throwing beer cans heedlessly over his shoulder.

Hynde herself wrote about rock music for NME briefly in the early ’70s, having moved to London from Akron, Ohio, where she was born September 7, 1951. In the initial punk years, she was a comrade of the Clash, the Sex Pistols and Motörhead. The original Pretenders took shape in summer 1978 when Hynde, drummer Martin Chambers, bassist Pete Farndon and guitarist James Honeyman Scott recorded the “Stop Your Sobbing” single with Nick Lowe. The band’s debut album, *Pretenders*, which followed in 1980 on Sire Records, contained the hit “Brass in Pocket.” Shortly after Hynde, Scott and Chambers kicked Farndon out of the band in 1982, Scott died of drug-related causes; Farndon died the following year, also from hard drugs. The different versions of the Pretenders Hynde has led since then continue to develop a singular vision of rock and roll that makes the reggae, soul, country and western and punk genres sound continuous. If you live in the United States and have an FM radio, then you have heard “Back on the Chain Gang” and “Brass in Pocket,” and, if you are lucky enough to have an antenna that picks up “deep cuts,” then you’ve heard “Mystery Achievement” too.

Hynde has been a staunch advocate for animal rights and vegetarianism since at least 1969, when she became in her words “a fairly dour vegetarian,” and is a longtime PETA supporter and activist. In 1989, at a Greenpeace press conference, a reporter asked Hynde what she had done for the environment; she said, “I’ve firebombed McDonald’s.” A McDonald’s in Milton Keynes, England was subsequently bombed. Asked whether she regrets “advocating violent protest” for the U.K.’s Independent in 2004, Hynde replied, “Well, that depends on what you’re protesting about. In the case of McDonald’s, we’re talking about a company that makes its money out of animal slaughter. So you have to steam in there, guns a-blazing. You can’t talk them out of it, can you? Sometimes you’re forced to use force.”

Break Up the Concrete is the first new Pretenders album in six years. Hynde says that Shangri-La Records chief Steve Bing approached her just as she was “about to throw in the towel,” saying, “Let’s try it. You don’t need a producer, just go in and work.” Usually when I hear a new record with rockabilly licks on it, I reach for the nearest handgun, but

when I heard James Walbourne’s playing on *Break Up the Concrete*, I reached for my Kleenex box. In Walbourne’s hands, the rockabilly idiom has nothing to do with the light entertainment, lite beer nostalgia cult that is still popular in some American suburbs. The pain, joy, frenzy and sheer number of surprising ideas Walbourne is able to communicate in his playing ought to make anybody think twice about pop genres commonly assumed to be dead. Walbourne made his first appearance on record as a teenager, on Peter Bruntnell’s 1999 album *Normal for Bridgewater*, and subsequently worked with the Pernice Brothers and Son Volt, whose Eric Heywood plays pedal steel guitar on *Concrete*. North London punk Nick Wilkinson is the Pretenders’ new bassist, and on the album, legendary session dude Jim Keltner—named by Neil Young as one of his three favorite drummers—commands what I hope at this point in his career is a very comfortable, ergonomic drum throne. Original Pretenders drumaniac Martin Chambers will return when the band tours next year. Catch ‘em: They rule.

Back at the hotel, we’re trying to have tea. Hynde is wearing a T-shirt with detourned Coca-Cola logo reading Enjoy Akron. At the Amoeba gig, Hynde wore the same Think Rubber t-shirt she wears in the *Break Up the Concrete* liners...

ARTHUR: So the Think Rubber shirt — is that another Akron shirt?

CHRISSIE HYNDE: Oh, it’s all these Akron shirts. I’m sort of pumping Akron’s profile at the moment. Well, you know, I’ve got a vegan restaurant there—the VegiTerranean.

A: How’s it doing?

CH: Amazing, it’s a phenomenon, it’s a big success. No one could believe it. Everyone said, “Don’t do it, you’ll lose everything.”

A: Cuz they thought it was the wrong place for it?

CH: Well, they thought that, y’know, most vegetarian restaurants go under and, yeah, it’s in Akron, Ohio, there wasn’t one vegetarian restaurant. It’s full every night and people absolutely love it.

A: Great set at Amoeba yesterday. It seems like there were some intense people up front.

CH: Yeah, but you know if you’ve been around for a while, you collect them after a while. What can you say? But there are the all right ones who— I mean they’re fans, y’know, without them we wouldn’t, et cetera. But then there are some who, y’know, it’s not funny. Some followed us to the hotel last night, and they had a big stack of [records]— “Oh, but we’re big fans,” and they wanted me to sign all this stuff. I said, “Y’know what—don’t buy any more of my records. Y’know, don’t be a fan, okay? Don’t be a fan.” Cuz they were lying to us.

JAMES WALBOURNE: You kind of worded it a little better at the time [*laughs*].

A: Do you mean when Chrissie said at the in-store, “Did you ever think maybe you’re already dead?”

CH: Oh, no, that was some other thought. Have you?

A: What’s that?

CH: Thought maybe you’re already dead?

A: Oh, sure.

CH: Oh, okay, well, it’s obviously something going around. I mean, we did all that signing [at Amoeba] and that was nice, but then they come with a stack of stuff...

JW: Ebay.

CH: See, I don’t mind people selling stuff on Ebay and making money out of me. But you know, if I don’t have that much time and there’s a queue of like, however

many people, 75, 100 and we’re signing, then it’s what the English call “taking the piss.” So these guys came [to the hotel] and said “Ooh, we got pushed to the end, we couldn’t get in,” or something, and—[to Walbourne] you loved that, you hadn’t seen that before, had you? The “Ebay Special.”

JW: No, I have, that’s what pisses me off with it.

CH: Cuz it seems to be modified every year—one year it’s just a card, now it’s getting more and more—it’s frameable. Now, it’s all ready to go into a frame. But, like

“You can ask anybody, they’ll say the same. It’s all disappeared, the best things about London.”

—JAMES WALBOURNE

I said, I don’t mind someone making a little bit of money, but don’t—you know, we were chased by someone who had a stack of records he wanted us to sign. So I signed one, and I said, “Okay, cheers, thanks for coming out,” and he goes, “They’re all different.” And I go, “Well, I’ve gotta get to another radio station,” and he was pissed off! He followed us through red lights.

A: People feel entitled.

CH: Well, they’re not. So, you know what? Turn that dial. When the Pretenders come on, turn it off. I won’t bother you, you don’t bother me. Unless you wanna have the kind of exchange that we all live for, which is what [legendary Stiff Records rock and roll singer] Wreckless Eric described as a secret between the audience and the artist. Y’know, where it’s really personal and you feel like the rest of the world don’t know about it. That’s why we’re there.

A: He’s great, I saw him last year. With, I think, his girlfriend—

CH: His wife, now. The missus. Yeah, the new album’s great. We saw him in Pennsylvania. We were in one studio, and they were in the other, and we sort of bumped into them. Yeah, we’re big fans, and that’s what he said to me once—that there needs to be, like, this secret between... I mean, I’ve spent more time in my life as the audience than I have as the artist, that’s for sure.

But there are certain things you don’t do to strangers. I wouldn’t do that to a stranger. If you think you know me, then why didn’t you already read that I’m not a very nice person, and will tell you to fuck off?

A: I think I remember John Lydon saying in an interview that he moved here because people left him alone.

CH: He’s a compulsive liar. He moved here because he could be a big shot and have barbeques and live in the sun and have a private swimming pool.

A: It sounds to me like the new record was mostly recorded live, is that right?

JW: It’s all live. Actually, there’s probably an acoustic overdub...

CH: Accordion overdub, an acoustic...

JW: But that’s it.

CH: It’s live. All the mistakes are in there.

A: James, is it fair to characterize some of your playing as like Western swing?

JW: I never thought of it like that—I guess on this one, more rockabilly. But it’s weird, because on one of the

solos, one of them is the song “Almost Perfect” which I thought sounded like Western swing; that’s why it sounds so fucked up. I heard it as Western swing, and that’s what I had in my mind. As for the rest, I play more rockabilly, I would guess. [*to Hynde, on the balcony*] You out for a cigarette?

CH: No, I’m just getting the ashtray.

A: You can smoke in here, I’m a smoker—listen to me, here I am telling you that you can smoke in your own hotel room, that’s how Americanized I am.

CH: That’s how crazy it’s getting. No, I mean, we’re losing it here, actually.

A: I heard on the radio today that every month in Britain around 60 pubs are going under, that pubs are just closing. [*Walbourne looks grief-stricken*]

JW: Yeah, they are.

CH: Well, you know what’s happened—they’ve become gastro-pubs. So, what they’ve done, because pubs—well, actually, James, correct me if I’m wrong here—

JW: Oh, it’s so depressing.

CH: Yeah, I knew it would be depressing. He’s a real pub guy.

JW: It’s close to my heart.

CH: I think they used to be more for, like, working men, and women didn’t really go in them, probably, when they started.

JW: Back in the ’70s, nowhere.

CH: In the ’70s? Well, I’m talking about a little further back than that. When I arrived, in the ’70s, you couldn’t get a glass of wine in a pub. And if you asked for a tequila, they didn’t even know what you were talking about—it was like asking for a cup of coffee somewhere, they only had powdered coffee.

The other thing that’s interesting about pubs—well there’s a lot interesting about pubs, just the names of them are interesting—but if you were to ask a London cabbie a direction, over here they would say, “It’s on the corner of La Cienega and whatever,” whereas there they direct you by, you know, “It’s by the Dog and Bone.” They have a different system over there, and the pub’s a real important part. But what’s happened? Women started going; I think that kinda changed the vibration.

JW: It was an escape, for a man, I think, an escape from the women. That’s what it was.

CH: After you were working, if it was in a coal mine or whatever it was, you could get together and relax—like a halfway house between going [to work] and home, probably.

JW: They’ve become like bars. Gone are the carpets, and the dartboards are gone. One up near where I live recently got rid of all the pool tables.



“The greatest thing if you’re in a rock band is if there’s some kind of a scene. In London, during those punk days, everyone was in a band or trying to get a band together. And that makes you feel, even if you’re only traveling with a few bands, it’s still like you’re in a traveling circus or a fun fair or something.”

—CHRISSIE HYNDE

1. One of the author’s favorite albums is the Numbers Band’s incomparable *Jimmy Bell’s Still In Town*, recorded live

at 15.60.75’s gig opening for Bob Marley and the Wailers in Cleveland in 1975. It is available in splendid CD sound from the

great David Thomas’s label, which has both an esoteric and a demotic spelling: Hearpen, or Hearthan, Records.

CM! But you lose the vibe.

JW! It's wrong.

AI So how do you get the vibe? It's just the room and the people in the room?

CM! Yep. That's all it is.

JW! We had a great engineer called Don Smith, who was fantastic. All the gear was old. Really small amps, but they sound huge when you hear 'em back. He got great sounds.

CM! Cuz we pulled it together so quickly. They hired in these gorgeous guitars, and every night, Roy, who brought the guitars in, would take 'em all, pack 'em up and take 'em away somewhere, because each guitar was worth like seventy grand or something.

JW! It's ridiculous. A '51 Tele. . .

CM! And what about the mandolin?

JW! The mandolin's a prototype Gibson. Louvin Brothers, you know—it didn't even look—

CM! Played on which song?

JW! I don't think we used it.

CM! Well, we used it on the HWH [*pronounced "Hugh," for Heywood, Walbourne and Hynde*] sessions.

JW! Oh, "977."

CM! Right. James plays great. We went in to do a bunch of B-sides, extra tracks that would be given—

JW! It's on the album, but only from iTunes, or something. So I've read.

CM! And it will be sold in Wal-Mart. We did a track with Willie Nelson, Steve Bing brought that together. He produced that song.

AI What song did you do?

CM! A song called "Both Sides of Goodbye."

JW! It was a song Willie liked.

CM! Steve had been doing some record, and it was this guy's songs, and nothing happened, but that was one of the songs.

Their idea was, if we went in and did some versions of old Pretenders songs or something, just for B-sides—what we call B-sides, which are extra tracks for different outlets. And I guess there's a sticker on it, you can download it—I dunno how it works. Eric Heywood was still in L.A., so we went in as Heywood, Walbourne and Hynde, and Eric said, "Or 'Hugh.'" So those are the HWH tracks, and that's where you get to hear that 200-year-old mandolin.

AI Do you have a fondness for country music, Chrissie?

CM! Yeah, if it's good.

AI Well, what's the good stuff to you? I hear country changes in some of your songs.

CM! I never really listened to it when I was growing up, but maybe it was just too close to the. . . It's funny in this country how there was the rock industry and the country thing and that they didn't really mix at all. I was listening to rock radio, so I guess I just never really heard it.

JW! It must be ingrained, though—

CM! I was in denial—

JW! —because "Back on the Chain Gang" does have a kind of [country] thing to it.

AI Or "Kid," or even "Talk of the Town."

CM! That has a lot to do with the guitar players I've played with, who've all loved that sort of stuff. That... [*sings the beginning of the lead guitar line from "Kid"*].

AI [Killer first Pretenders guitarist James] Honeyman

Scott was a country guy?

CM! Oh, he loved that—he was like James, he loved the cowboy shirts and that kind of thing.

JW! Robbie [McIntosh].

CM! Robbie, same. Again, that's not my sound as much as—but there's no question that, sometimes I hear Connie Francis in my voice, and I go, like, [*cringes*]. Cuz it wasn't really the right thing at the time. Now I see that country is—y'know, I just listened to radio.

JW! It's all about good songs, innit. Country, rock, punk—it's all the same.

CM! Yeah, exactly. The industry's tried to separate it. But when you hear a song and you find yourself crying,

"Y'know, I live in England and I have other concerns. If I had heard that they were using my music for a Burger Chef ad or something, I would have been out with my Molotov cocktail immediately."
—CHRISSIE HYNDE

you know that it doesn't matter if its classical, or if it's—I only draw the line at marching bands.

AI That's a fair prejudice to have, Chrissie, I think I'm with you on that.

CM! And even that, maybe I just haven't heard the right marching band.

JW! Otha Turner. Have you heard Otha Turner, the old guy from Mississippi? It's kind of different, I guess, but it's a fife-and-drum band—that's amazing.

CM! There's always the exception to the rule.

JW! And that's a kind of marching band, they play marches but it's with a fife, it's more spiritual. That's amazing, Otha Turner.

CM! I think it's just American films where they've got— [*sings brassy fanfare*], and they're coming through town, flags waving and stuff.

AI Have you ever had your music used in a movie in a weird way?

CM! I dunno.

AI Well, I guess there's that thing with Limbaugh, right? [*Rush Limbaugh uses a Pretenders song, "My City Was Gone," on his radio show. According to an agreement he made with the Pretenders in the '90s, Limbaugh is to donate all royalties from his use of the song to PETA.*]

CM! Oh, that rages on and on. It's kind of embarrassing cuz I've never heard his show.

AI Is he still paying PETA?

CM! Y'know, I don't know how it works. I don't know if it was just a little loop of the song, cuz I've never heard it, and it wasn't really enough that he had to ask permission, or how that worked. And then I started to get people running up to me at airports, going "You've gotta stop it! You've gotta stop it!" It seems to me, having not heard his show—I know my dad likes it—I think he stirs people up and he gets some sort of a dialogue going, and perhaps that's a good thing, I don't know. Calling

us "vegeterrorists" and things like that. Again, I've never heard it. I feel in some ways negligent, that I should have got in there. But it's not just about what's going on in the United States. Y'know, I live in England and I have other concerns. If I had heard that they were using my music for a Burger Chef ad or something, I would have been out with my Molotov cocktail immediately.

AI What animal rights stuff are you doing?

CM! I don't really do anything if I have no profile, because I don't wanna be like a professional celebrity who does [that], even though I would do anything for [PETA]. When I did my protest of the Gap [in 2000], we just piggybacked the tour we were on. So every time we got to a city, we'd buy a leather jacket from the Gap with a PETA credit card, go out in the street where we had invited the local press, show them the tag inside that said "Made in India"—and that's very close to my heart, slaughtering those beautiful cows in India, where that's so wrong. And then we'd take it back into the shop and say, "We want to return this jacket because it's made in India and it's using illegal leather from a black market trade." And they'd say, "Okay, thank you very much," and they'd give us our money back. So we did that in every city until we got to New York, and they still kept saying "We'll get back to you. We'll source the leather." Cuz they said, "It says 'Made in India,' it doesn't say that's where the leather comes from."

So we thought, Okay, we've heard this lie now for about six weeks. So then when we went to New York, we went in and bought the jacket, the press was there, we took it back in and said "We wanna return this jacket," but instead of leaving the store then, we all—me and Ingrid Newkirk and Dan and Paul—leapt into the store window, with all the press standing outside, and we just stood there and wouldn't leave. But the [store] manager was going, "Don't do anything, just leave it leave it leave it," cuz they don't want the bad publicity.

The thing is just to get some attention—you feel like an idiot, but you don't care. So we're beating on the windows, going "We're not leaving till the cows come home!" And I'm thinking, y'know, I have a gig to do the next day. Dan says, "Don't worry, it'll be fine." So, y'know, I'm saying "Arrest us, already, get us out of here, arrest us," and the manager's going, "No, no, no, don't arrest them." So we had to start ripping up the displays, and taking the jackets off the dummies and ripping them up and knifing them. It was starting to stop the traffic and stuff, and the manager's going "Don't do anything, don't do anything," so finally they hauled us off. And the Gap stopped using black market leather after that.

But the interesting thing was, I had been asked if I wanted to donate a song to the Gap's "Everybody in Leather" campaign. And my manager looked at it and just put it in the files, cuz she knew that was a no-no. So when she heard I was doing that, she goes, "Oh, that's odd, because they asked to use one of your songs," and I said "Send it to PETA immediately—someone at the Gap isn't doing their research." And [PETA] put it out to the press to make them look like what they were.

We had been talking for an hour and a half, which is about as long as you can reasonably expect people to talk to you without tea or something stronger. I walked out into 100-degree heat on the Sunset Strip and I wanted to tear it all up. ☹

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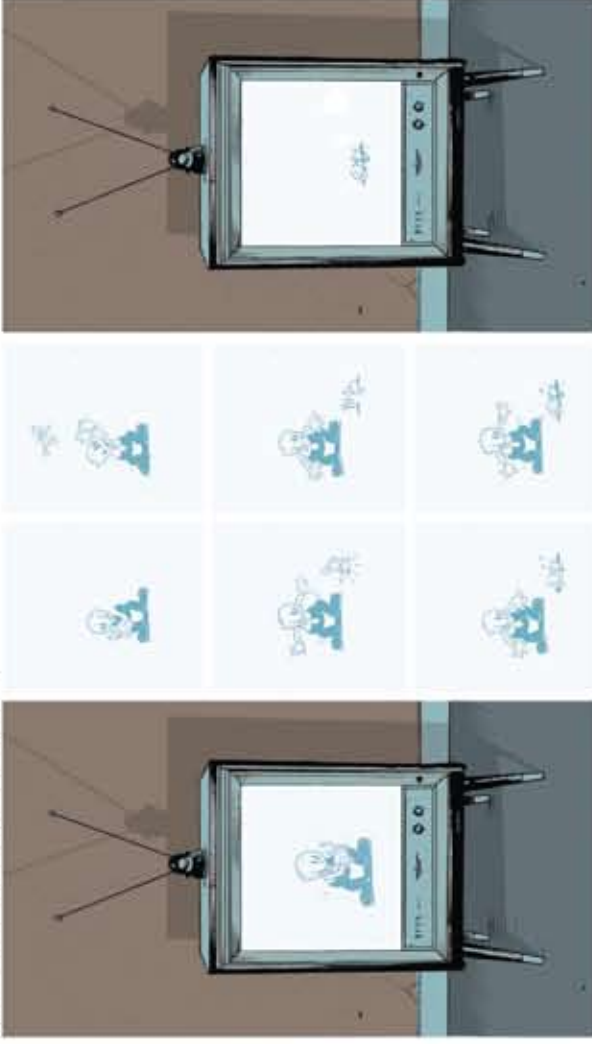
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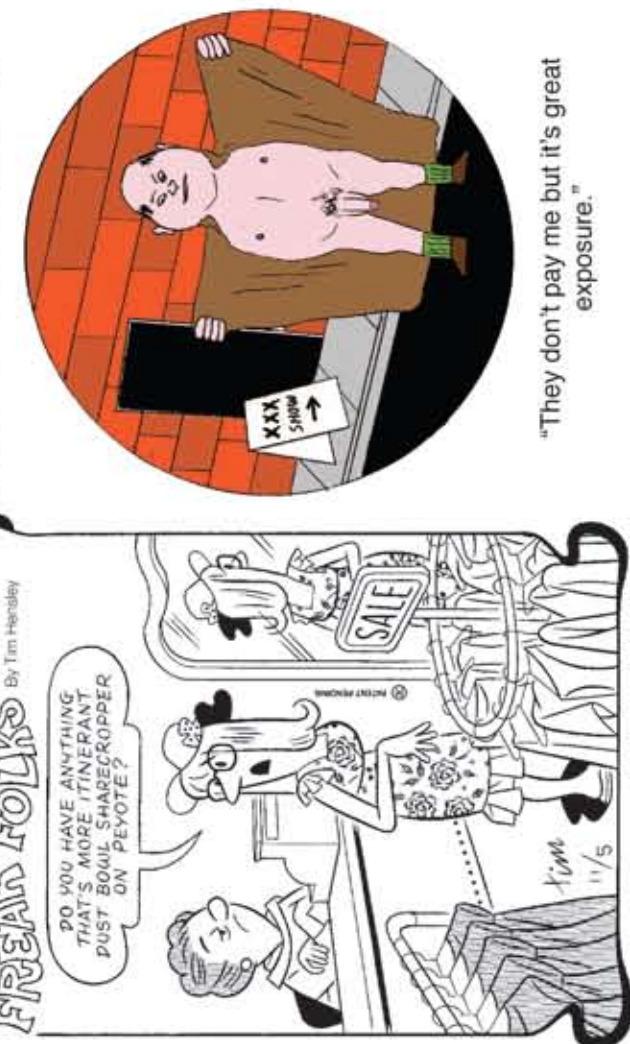
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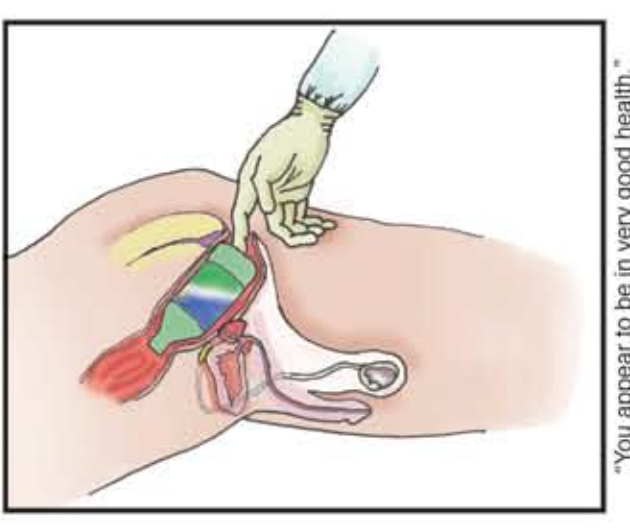
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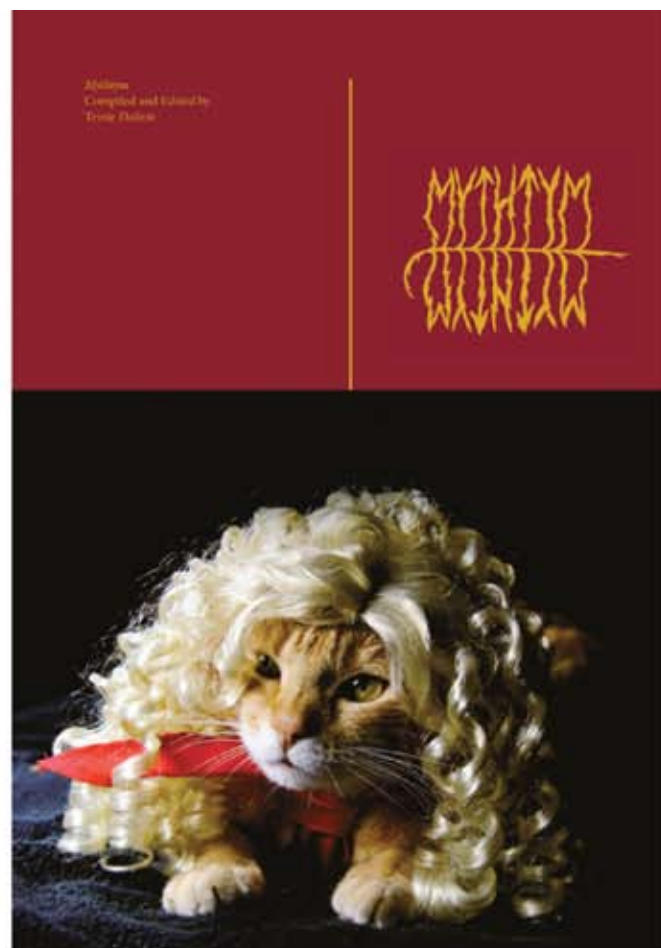
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NOTES ON A FEW AMERICANS FINDING MUSICAL JEWELS IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS

PEARL DIVING

BY IAN NAGOSKI

Record players are altars. The listener first goes through a repertoire of ritual gestures, removing the black spiral-inscribed disc from the sleeve, holding it by the edge and label and placing its center through the spindle before lifting the tone arm and placing it at the edge of the spinning vinyl. The air in the room begins to move, and the memory held by the disc of a performance by some living, breathing person is reiterated, separated from its image and corporeality in an angelically invisible space. Some part of the listener enters into that space and goes into communion with the unseen force of the sound. It is magical and mysterious stuff, this impulse for sound-play that is universal among human beings through all times and places on earth.

As a teenager, I listened to records to escape a world I found intolerable and evaluated them based on their ability to take me elsewhere. Some of the most powerful performances came with good stories (I'm thinking of the literature surrounding the Beatles, for instance, or Lester Bangs' writing on the zonked ESP-Disk house band, the Godz) and some came with built-in social ties that identified me with some "outside" group (the bohemia of the Velvet Underground or the rural world of the Carter Family). Gradually, I noticed that the stories, mostly written by average people, were sometimes only half-true, making them no better than the world I already knew. In my day-to-day life the "outsiders" were everywhere, with simple needs for money, food and love. The amounts of money and the flavors of the food vary from place to place, but the qualities of love remain consistent.

To find music for oneself, rather than accepting the sounds being distributed from on high like rations of cultural identity, seemed to me to be a way out from the handed-down myths of an unacceptable status quo. The world I lived in needs its plot rewritten, and the easiest way forward, I thought, was to listen to its smallest voices. Those voices, it turned out, are often the ones that don't speak English. So, arriving late to the understanding that music's pleasures are in its ability to manifest aspects of the unknowable internal worlds of its creators and that those creators are scattered equally over the earth and throughout time, my music education began in adulthood and with it, my education in the larger scope of humanity, culture and history than the American rock-soul-country-blues-jazz-

gospel canon can offer.

The process was simple: buy a box of records I'd never seen before that no one else seems to want, cheap, and listen to them. Several things became immediately apparent:

Most records are bad. Generally speaking, the vast majority of the music issued over the century that sound recording has been popular home entertainment was made to make a buck and represents a pale merry-go-round of glib amusements, cute enough to dazzle the public for a minute (and fleece them of a fraction of their salaries) but not nourishing or ostentatious enough to stand up to repeated listenings. And worse, most of them are rehashings of other performances that were well-liked. The majority of them were made in the big cities where, as in the courts of the old world, the way to make money as an artist is to play the kind of music the rich folks like, which is a recipe for a particularly insidious kind of equally disposable, if fancier, bad music.

There are too many records. Some quick guesswork: if there have been, let's say, 500 million households in the U.S. during the 20th century—the century that produced vinyl records—and each household had maybe 25 records, that's twelve billion records. And that doesn't count the crazy record collectors who have thousands of discs, or the warehouses full of unsold or unwanted stock. So, there are maybe 20 billion records just in this country, and most of them are boring. This is what capitalism hath wrought on music.

Finding good music is the easiest thing in the world, as long as you understand that it happens only very rarely and only with bloody-minded and ferocious persistence. For me, two in every hundred records is a real triumph, a pearl. How do I know it's a pearl? Because it seems to fulfill some confluence of memories and wishes inside myself. Every person will hear it differently depending on their own memories and wishes, their own knowledge of pearls and understanding of the ocean of music. The pearl explains the ocean, and the ocean explains the pearl, but never completely.

So: finding good records is a private process, one that requires thousands of hours by the shrine of the record player in search of a feeling. And I am lucky to have been able to share part of what I've found, via an extraordinary record label in Atlanta, Georgia called Dust-to-Digital, which recently released *Black Mirror: Reflections in Global Musics 1918 - 1954*, a CD compiling music from some of the old records that have excited me most in recent years. Before *Black Mirror*, I had already formed the sense of a tradition, both academic and decidedly non-academic, of people who had discovered some remarkable things from records. But putting together *Black Mirror* brought me closer to some of the amazing self-starter Americans who are actively pursuing that magic two percent of all industrial output that has enduring value, and then finding ways to share these pearls while

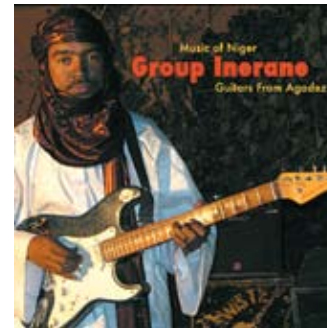
respecting their mysteries. The following owner-operated record labels are special: they're not simply shoving music down the cultural gullet, but putting it on the menu and hoping other seekers will find it, and start asking questions.

DUST-TO-DIGITAL

Debuting in 2003 with *Goodbye, Babylon*, a six-CD collection of sacred folk music and sermons from the American South dating from the first half of the twentieth century, all packed in a cedar box with raw cotton and a book of notes designed like a 19th century hymnal, Lance Ledbetter's *Dust-to-Digital* has been issuing a steady stream of staggeringly lush packages of extraordinary old music. Lovingly assembled, *Dust-to-Digital* releases are epic tales told by monumental collections of music housed within an array of texts, images and textures, drawing equally from a concern for aesthetics and a wealth of research, often mining the knowledge of the previous generations of collectors, musicologists and aficionados like Dick Spottswood (an under sung hero of musicological research, credited by John Fahey in his book *How Bluegrass Music Destroyed My Life* as the man who first played him the blues that proved the seminal musical experience of his early life; whose 15-LP series for the Library of Congress, *Folk Music in America*, should have long ago received the kind of treatment Harry Smith's *Anthology* has gotten; and whose seven volume *Ethnic Music on Records: A Discography of Ethnic Recordings Produced in the United States, 1893 to 1942* is an utterly flabbergasting and indispensable investigation into the true depths of this country's musical past), Joe Bussard (the legendary and irascible so-called "King of Record Collectors" and subject of the engaging documentary *Desperate Man Blues*, available on DVD from *D-t-D*) and most recently Art Rosenbaum, Georgia-based artist and music documentarian.

Art of Field Recording, Volume 1: 50 Years of Traditional American Music Documented by Art Rosenbaum, a four-CD set of folk music performances taped on Rosenbaum's travels around the U.S. was issued last year with a 96-page book and over a hundred illustrations to near-unanimous five-star reviews. *The New York Times* called it "an ark." The sheer depth of Rosenbaum's work documenting the still-flaming embers of *Source Americana* has necessitated two more volumes of equal scope, one to be issued this year and another in 2009.

In addition to preparing the loamy sounds of Rosenbaum's material for commercial release, *Dust-to-Digital* also recently issued a disc of 1970s recordings of Tuvan throat-singing, the unearthly cowboy music of North-Central Asia, the afore-mentioned *Black Mirror*, and *Victrola Favorites*, a two-CD set embedded in a thick, lavish clothbound book of imagery exposing the gorgeous, cross-cultural remnants



opposite: Hunters' musician Yoro Sidibe with donso ngon (hunters' harp). Mali, West Africa, 2006. Photo by Cullen Strawn.

from the era of the mechanical windup gramophone. Comprised of forgotten material from America, Asia, Africa, and Europe, *Victrola Favorites* is more humorous, anti-academic, nostalgic and tweaked than any other entry in the early-recording reissue genre. Its creators, Rob Millis and Jeffrey Taylor of Seattle, have been working as sound artists under the Climax Golden Twins moniker for more than a decade. And they've been attached to a loose collective of explorers of sounds from afar called...

SUBLIME FREQUENCIES

Over the past five years, Sublime Frequencies has issued 44 CDs, DVDs and LPs of music and sounds from cultures in Southeast and Central Asia, North and Saharan Africa and Central and South America that have been largely ignored by American record companies. *Princess Nicotine: Folk & Pop Music of Myanmar*, still one of the label's highlights and one of the most exciting recordings I've ever heard, was originally issued as an LP on the Majora label in 1994. The cover was a black-and-white collage of what turned out to be Burmese folks. Instead of credits or any information, the rear panel had only a prose-poem which began, "Princess Nicotine, you got Coca Cola fucked in the wind of 37 names..." I do not remember whether it was my roommate or I who could

afford to buy it at the time or which of us had something to smoke on hand at that particular moment of youthful indiscretions. I do remember the overwhelming bafflement as we sat listening to it that first time. Was the record running at the right speed? Was it supposed to sound like this? Was it possible that human beings could make this music—at once so outrageously fast and seeming to float on top of Time, so cheap and shitty and distorted and blown-out and so clearly refined and gorgeous? Once we decided that the record was not simply fucking with us, I remember we looked at each other and laughed out loud with joy.

That roommate, a wild cat named Jason Glover, moved to Seattle and now plays with the Sea Donkeys, a near-anonymous group of oddballs that includes Hisham Mayet, who has also been responsible for some of Sublime Frequencies' most wonderful releases, including two documents of outrageously fiery guitar music from the Saharan bands Group Inerano and Group Doueh, as well as several films of narrationless North and West African musical performances. A rotating cast of purposeful journeymen including *Victrola Favorites* co-editor Rob Millis and *Princess Nicotine* compiler and musician Alan Bishop (best known as a third of the late, great Sun City Girls) contribute releases to a label which has evolved from a style of presentation that originally emphasized, like my own first



hit of Burmese popular music, the catastrophic shock of confrontation with the music itself to objects that are saturated with a depth of knowledge and devotion to their subject matter.

Over the past 20 releases, SF has included studies of aspects of the recent musical cultures of supposed “enemies” of the American state, including Syria, North Korea and (of course) Iraq. It’s a humanistic response, one that points out the unifying essentials among people everywhere, regardless of their governments, even as it underlines the conspicuous absence of music (and thus: culture, understanding, etc.) from places America’s media yammers on about every day. It’s subtle stuff, conducted with a sense of respect and purpose, a slathering love of the excitement of great performances and a near-hermetic view of the Divine and the Profane which permeates music and its creators. They are records that are made to reveal and unveil, without pretending to tell the whole story any more than your radio already does.

EXCAVATED SHELLAC

If the word “radio” sounds weird in this context, there could be a couple reasons. One is that very little of this music is played on radio, which is what sends us down the rabbit-holes looking for it in the first place. When it is broadcast, it’s on those rare free-form, college or public radio stations that exist in big cities. But even then, it’s rare to hear music originating from afar in time or space. The other big reason is that we have arrived at a moment in the evolution of sound media when the most permanent format, the 78 rpm disc which is made of 70% ground stone and is, literally, a rock containing sound, has given way to ever more ephemeral media, arriving most recently at the mass popularity of the shittiest and most disposable format yet, the mp3. On the plus side,

the ease of dissemination of digital files has meant that many people are able to hear a wider swath of human music-making at any time of day or night for free than they would be able to find in months of looking through and paying cash for records in person. Let’s hope there is some maniac out there with a great pair of ears and an array of hard-drives that copy each other twenty times a second (like they have at banks to keep track of financial transactions) who is busily archiving all of the amazing music that is being disseminated before it’s lost to the inevitable breakdown of the hardware.

My favorite steady source of digital revelations is Jonathan Ward’s “Excavated Shellac,” a blog of folkloric and vernacular music from around the world taken from Ward’s own dazzling collection of 78 rpm discs. Each Sunday night, he posts a side of a disc, digitally restored with much of the format’s inherent noise removed without compromising the sound of the performances, along with substantial discographical and musicological context and thoughts on the performance, which usually take the form of wonder and respect for the magic they contain, all made available as free downloads. Dozens of startling pieces, often from little-heard-from regions and obscure, little-studied styles, are available at any given time as gifts to the world. His site explains his motivations:

“The feeling that you’ve never heard anything like this before in your life; it transports you to a place where words are irrelevant. But part of that feeling is thinking how you’d want to share that with others, to have them feel exactly the same way. Record collectors are eccentric people. I don’t even like the term ‘record collector.’ They’ve been parodied far too many times. Accurately, I might add. But I could not live with myself as a ‘collector’ without at least one person I could share sounds with.”

Right on.

MISSISSIPPI RECORDS

The record itself is the subject and purpose of the Portland, Oregon label (and record store) Mississippi Records. Over the past few years, they have issued 20-odd collections on vinyl only (no CDs or MP3s), following a “good music is good music” ethos: new music by Tara Jane O’Neil and the Evolutionary Jazz Band, reissues by post-punks Dog Faced Hermans and Animals + Men, late-’60s jazz by Philip Cohran, as well as reissues of ’30s Delta blues icon Skip James, singular ’20s gospel songster Washington Phillips, ’70s Texan street musician Bongo Joe Coleman, a compilation of ferocious ’60s-’70s gospel rockers, two compilations of urban African folk and pop of the ’60s, miscellaneous ethnic masterpieces from the ’20s and ’30s. Each Mississippi release seems to ask, “Is this what you were looking for?” And the general consensus among record hounds: “Yep.”

The music is consistently elemental, subversive and wonderful, and the vinyl format lends itself to treatment as literature. After all, a record is listened to intentionally—you have to pick it up and put it on, rather than striking a button while doing something else. It asks to be considered, discussed and filed away for reference more than any other medium. It feels like part of the real world of lived experience, of face-to-face contact among people, something that has only recently receded from the dialog about music. It should come as no surprise that Mississippi has no web presence and that co-founder Eric Isaacson only recently got his first CD player for the sake of expedience in dealing with the CDRs he owns.

YAALA YAALA

Almost ten years ago, teacher and drummer Jack Carneal was living in the small town of Bougouni in Southern Mali. He got heavily into the music scene as a listener, buying tapes of rural stuff not found outside the area and occasionally recording musicians himself. After returning to the U.S. and passing around the copies of the music he’d fallen in love with to friends, his passion for the music impelled him to release it more widely. His Yaala Yaala label has released four discs in the past year, manufactured and distributed by Drag City.

Packaged in Carneal’s own beautiful photographs, the music is hypnotic and appeals directly to the desire to hear something elaborately beautiful without being fancified by high-tech aesthetics or what the monied West is perceived to want to hear. The label’s most recent release is from the hunter-musician Yoro Sidibe, and it’s a killer. Over three long tracks, Sidibe sings epic stories to his own ngoni accompaniment with a patient urgency that is unlike anything else I’ve ever heard.

Yaala Yaala feels like the kind of labor of love captured in Werner Herzog’s best documentaries. Carneal seems to have thrown himself passionately into the

music and the lives of its creators (to the extent that it can be done from Maryland to Mali), amplifying its life in the retelling of it through the label. His zealous work is a real gift for us, an ocean away from its source.

IT JUST KEEPS GOING...

Of course all of this is just the tip of the iceberg. Important labels like Numero Group and Fat Possum have been getting down to the real human level of the documents of Americana of the past 40 years, and there are hundreds more people looking outside the readymade genres and handed-down cultural blinders of Americana for something else, something essential, about music and the wide world behind it.

Then there’s David Murray, who runs an email list dedicated to the study of rembetika, the Greek folk music of the urban hash dens that flowered in the ’30s, also runs a blog called “Haji Maji,” dedicated to recordings of Chinese opera from 78 rpm discs. A fellow named Brent Field in Lancaster, New Hampshire has pressed up a hundred copies of a 7-inch entitled “So That Beauty Shall Not Perish” to reissue six sides from his own ethnic 78 rpm record collection, including music from Kenya, Vietnam, Bhutan, India and Armenia. Honest Jon’s in England has been issuing great foreign-language stuff from the 20s and 30s from the EMI archives in Hayes, Middlesex.

Music—the finding of it, the sharing of it, the understanding of it, the simple hearing of it—has pleasures far greater than can be talked about sensibly. I think of Henri Michaux’s poem:

*Music which leaves me suspended
its snares
its snares
which holds me in its snares.

The world turned soft
turned soft
the whole becoming waves
and flowing*

It makes me want to put on a record. ☺

CONTACTS

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Mississippi Records: 4007 N Mississippi Ave Portland, OR 97227 / (503) 282-2990
Dick Spottswood: wamu.org/programs/ds/
Sublime Frequencies: www.sublimefrequencies.com/
So That Beauty Shall Not Perish: antireality.org/audio.html
Victrola Favorites: climaxgoldentwins.com/victrolafavorites/
Yaala Yaala: dragcity.com/catalog/catyaala.html

Ian Nagoski is a musician and music researcher in Baltimore, Maryland. He is currently researching music of the Eastern Mediterranean as it was recorded in New York in the ’20s and making new music for voice and electronics.

“[A] hilariously satirical debut novel. *Miller, Lawrence, and Genet stop by like proud ancestors* . . . But it’s a more recent generation of mischievous deviant writers (Nicholson Baker, Mary Gaitskill) that truly looms large.” —Zach Baron, VILLAGE VOICE

“A great book, written with flawless verve by a tremendous fictioneer and thinker, and it deserves glory. A classic.” —Andrei Codrescu, EXQUISITE CORPSE

“Like *Miller and Bukowski*.” —Richard Rayner, LA TIMES BOOK REVIEW

Human personality is like religion. It can be a source of great wisdom and solace, but it also creates divisions, conflicts, and sometimes even wars. Personalities, like religions, had often done more harm than good, and now that more than sex was involved, now that our personalities had entered into the relationship, we were already experiencing conflict. It was oh so much easier when few words were exchanged and all we did was fuck.

“Brilliantly and hilariously expressed here at last is the story of our gargantuan amounts of consummation (sexual) unnoticed and hidden and camouflaged in the supposedly humdrum acts of daily living.” —Barney Rosset



EROTOMANIA A ROMANCE

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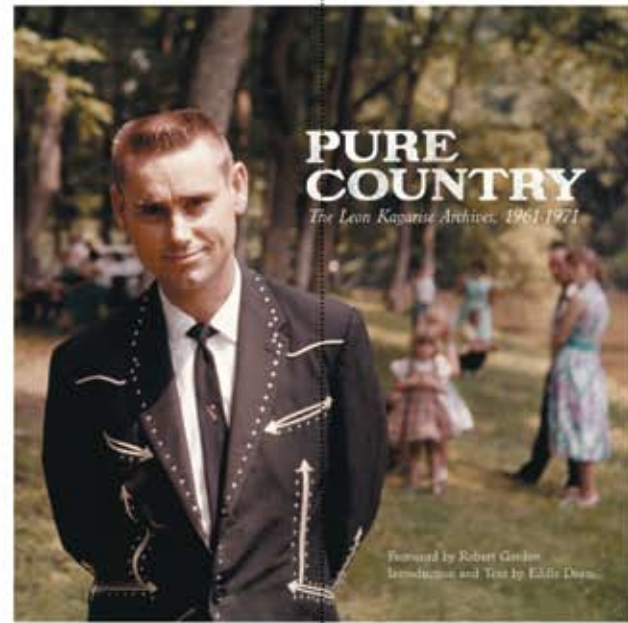
A NEW NOVEL BY LAWRENCE SHAINBERG

So urgent is the mind’s yearning for distinction between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ or, more precisely, ‘me’ and ‘not-me,’ that such yearning may well serve as the root cause of the habit we used to call nose-picking. It is no exaggeration to say that, since every crust is an active, even aggressive defiance of such distinction, each of our nasal secretions is an opportunity to confront the essential ambiguities of self and identity.

“One of the most **perverse satires** I’ve ever read.” —Jonathan Lethem

“That rare bit of lampoonery that is both **humorous** and **smart**.” —Tod Goldberg, LOS ANGELES TIMES BOOK REVIEW

“Half DeLillo’s Jack Gladney, **Linchak is a model pundit for a post-9/11 age**.” —Zach Baron, VILLAGE VOICE



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The Leon Kagarise Archives, 1961-1971

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The Leon Kagarise Archives, 1961-1971
Foreword by Robert Gordon, Text by Eddie Dean

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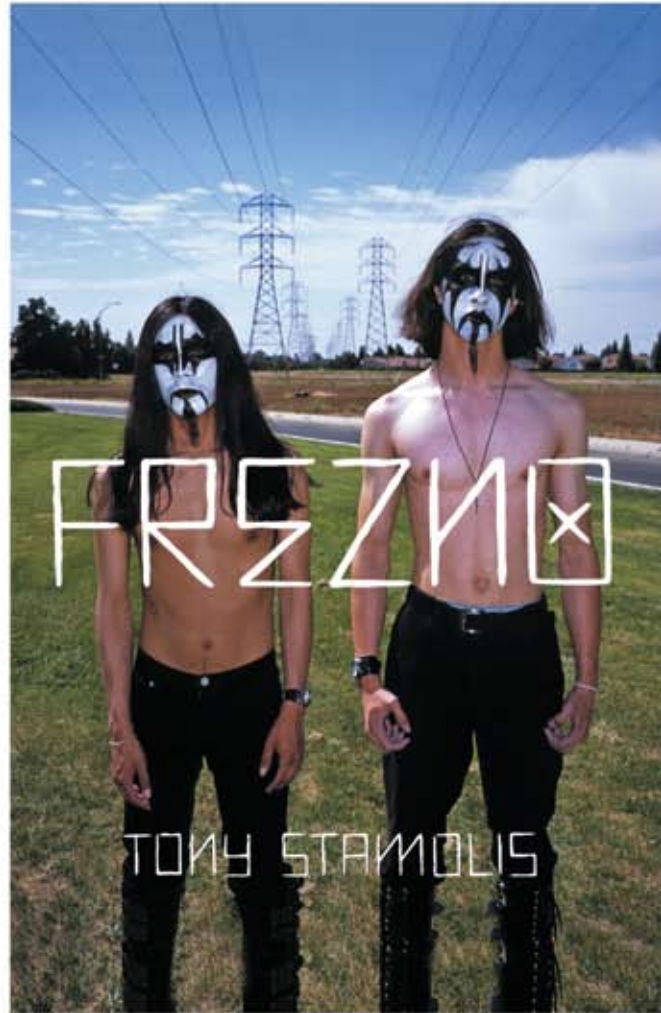
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FREZNO

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DOPE MENACE

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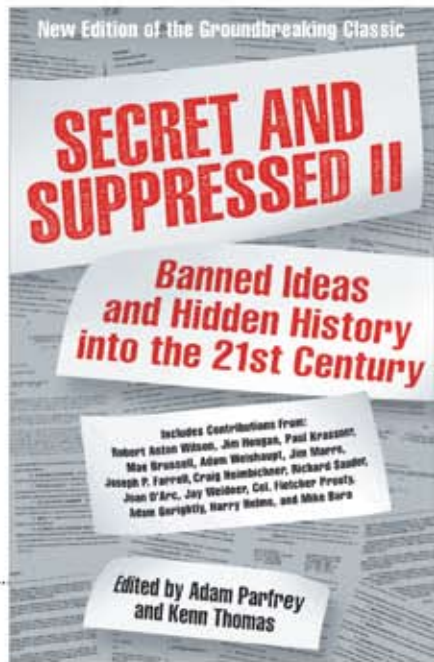
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TEXT AND CAPTIONS
BY EDDIE DEAN

Leon Kagarise was a teetotaling amateur photographer who captured the bucolic vibes of the now-forgotten country music festivals that flourished along the Mason-Dixon line in the '50s and '60s. Award-winning journalist Eddie Dean tells his story and shares some of his extraordinary photographs in this expanded excerpt from the new book, Pure Country.

AMERICAN BEAUTIES

Country music, at least the kind you hear on the radio, has been a joke for so long now that it's easy to forget that it was considered a joke even when it was a vital American art form.

The Southern rural culture that gave birth to country music and later begat Elvis was for generations a national joke, ridiculed as a backwater cesspool of poverty and ignorance left behind by a progressive, mainstream America. In the late '40s and early '50s, when hillbilly stars like Roy Acuff and Hank Williams and Kitty Wells sold millions of records, most people looked down on country as the music of poor white trash.

By the time Leon Kagarise came of age in the late '50s, the rock 'n' roll revolution engendered a suburban teen culture that likewise rejected the country music that Elvis and so many of rock's pioneers were raised on. Doubly despised by his parents' generation and the youth culture of his peers, the country music Leon loved became

marginalized and found refuge in the remote outdoor parks where he chronicled its final years as a bona fide American roots music.

For more than a decade, Leon followed the same Sunday ritual: He would attend early-morning service at his local Church of the Brethren outside Baltimore, and then he'd make the hour drive north in his '49 Plymouth to a pair of country-music parks along the Mason-Dixon Line, New River Ranch in Rising Sun, Maryland and Sunset Park, in Oxford, Pennsylvania.

Armed with a 50-pound Ampex reel-to-reel tape recorder, an Electro-Voice microphone and a Zeiss Ikon 35mm camera, Leon made live recordings and took hundreds of photos. He later said he was simply trying to "save the moments" that gave him an inutterable joy. He was not an artist or even a self-conscious documentarian. He was a country music fan.



Adapted and expanded from
Pure Country:
The Leon Kagarise Archives 1961-1971,
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 www.daniell3.com
 www.processmediainc.com.

What Leon captured with his secondhand camera was a magical time when stars mixed with the faithful with an ease that showed they hadn't gotten above their raising, and a crucial historical moment when the music was still a grassroots, homegrown phenomenon ignored by mainstream America.

The world Leon documented is long since vanished, but its legacy lives on in bluegrass festivals and other scattered places in the hinterlands where the old-time sounds endure. One of the fans who attended shows at the country-music parks in the early '60s was the late Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead. When he was asked years later about his music heroes, Garcia didn't hesitate with a response. He said whenever he needed inspiration, he would get as close as he could to the stage and watch Scotty Stoneman take a fiddle solo.

The presence of pilgrims like Garcia underscores the allure and romance of the country-music parks in their heyday. Not only were venues like New River Ranch and Sunset Parks hallowed shrines to see bluegrass heroes such as Bill Monroe, Flatt and Scruggs, and Carter and Ralph Stanley perform onstage, they were gathering places for the legions of amateur musicians and novices like Garcia, a 21-year-old banjo player who made the cross-country trip to Sunset Park from California in a '61 Corvair.

Some of the finest performances happened out in the parking lot, at the back of an old pick-up truck or around a picnic table, where informal jam sessions sprung up in small colorful clumps like mushrooms after a hard Pennsylvania rain. For most of these amateur musicians, it was as close as they would ever get to the stage at Sunset Park, but it was close enough. This was a picker's paradise, a chance to shine with a solo and grab a moment of glory to brag about for years back home. "A whole bunch of people would stand around and listen, and they would give requests and some of the music back there was as good or better than what was onstage," recalled Leon. "Music was everywhere, it just proliferated the whole park."

The spectators took the music no less seriously. Week after week, the same crowds would congregate from noon until well after darkness, and they would stay until the last note of music.

What Leon found here was a community, an extended family where he felt at home. It was a thriving underground scene, these urban folkies and interlopers mixing with the crowd of farmers and factory workers and displaced Southerners who'd migrated for jobs. Some worked at the munitions plant in Elkton, Maryland, or at the mushroom farms near Kennett Square, Pennsylvania or at the Western Electric plant or Bethlehem Steel in Baltimore. They were hungry not only for work but for the old-time string band music of their native regions.

Both Sunset Park and New River Ranch were humble meccas as befitting their time and place. Open-air wooden stages, rows of sawmill planks on cinderblocks for seats and a day's entertainment for a thousand or so faithful ready to bust loose after church. There were fortune tellers and concession stands and carnival booths for the youngsters.



Previous spread:

AMATEUR MUSICIANS, 1960S

Here were Mennonites and urbanites, down-home country folk and hipster folkies on weekend trips from Greenwich Village, all come together in the spirit of the music. The communal vibe spilled into the parking lot, close by the fenced-in grave of Sunset Park founder "Uncle" Roy Waltman, where informal jam sessions had local musicians fresh out of the cornfields mixing with counterculture pilgrims such as Jerry Garcia, a young banjoist from California whose dream at the time was to be one of Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Boys.

Above:

DONNA STONEMAN, 1966

Donna Stoneman was Leon's muse, the subject of more of his photos than any performer. His camera found her everywhere on the park grounds: sharing meals with fans, posing with her sister Roni, daydreaming off by herself in a rare moment alone. Most of all, he found her on stage, where she appeared as a vision from on high, literally floating above the floorboards in a display of fancy footwork that mesmerized Leon to the point of obsession. "When she played the mandolin, she danced," he said. "She couldn't play without dancing and she would jump in the air a foot. And coincidentally she was one of the best mandolin players who ever lived. I was talking to Bill Monroe at Sunset Park and he said to me that in a contest with the mandolin Donna Stoneman would win against him. He said, 'Donna's better than me.' That was his estimate and Bill Monroe was the King of Bluegrass."



This page clockwise from upper left:

JUNE CARTER AND JOHNNY CASH, 1962

In 1961 the Carter Sisters joined the Johnny Cash road show, and it was during this time when June and Johnny became smitten with each other, a chemistry that was for years held in check by Cash's addiction to pills and booze. During a show that year at Sunset Park, Cash let loose with a garbled, Benzedrine-laced monologue before losing his voice in the last set. In '62, at New River Ranch, Johnny was in fine fettle in a show that Leon captured on tape and considered one of his best recordings. That night Leon caught the Man in Black and his Woman in White signing autographs for fans. They would eventually marry in 1968.

HATTIE STONEMAN, 1970

One of the most memorable voices heard on Harry Smith's landmark *Anthology of American Folk Music*, Hattie was already married with six children when she coyly refused her courtier's advances (as sung by husband Ernest) on "The Spanish Merchant's Daughter," recorded in 1928. Her 50-year union with Ernest "Pop" Stoneman produced not only seminal records but one of the most talented broods in country-music history. She carried 23 children, gave birth to 15 and all but two

played music. Leon shot this portrait at Hattie's 70th birthday celebration, two years after Ernest's death in 1968. She still played her banjo in the old-time mountain style she learned as a girl in the hills of southwest Virginia, when she went by the name of Hattie Frost and was courted by a young carpenter named Ernest.

POP STONEMAN, 1963

Ernest "Pop" Stoneman: Country-music pioneer (first-ever version of "The Titanic," 1925); native of Iron Ridge, Carroll County, Virginia; family patriarch; guitarist; itinerant carpenter; songwriter; mill-hand; autoharp master; railroad section man; instrument maker (inventor of harmonica-holder harness); talent scout; mail clerk; TV quiz-show winner (NBC's *The Big Surprise*, 1956) gospel singer; and hero for Leon. "It makes me so mad when I see histories on country music and they always call the Carters 'the First Family of Country Music,' because the Stonemans were the first," said Leon. "Pop was first." In April 2008, shortly after Kagarise's death from heart failure, Pop was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame, and in October came a two-CD retrospective *Ernest V. Stoneman: The Unsung Father of Country Music*.



Above:

RAY PRICE

The ultimate honky-tonker who recorded *Night Life*, a concept album about tomcatting around 'til dawn, Ray Price was used to playing dark, smoky dance halls and nightclubs, but he could still hold his own in the white-hot glare of the July sun at the country-music parks. Here he stands resplendent in his Cherokee Cowboy chaps, one hand holding a lit cig and an autograph pen, the other wrapped around an admirer. Ray could always count on the loyalty of his fans to perk him up from the 750-mile, all-night drive from Nashville to New River Ranch. Like he sang in his monster hit: "Crazy arms that reach to hold somebody new."

For the musicians, these parks offered a pit stop in between the grind of low-lit honky tonks and beer joints and the glare of the Grand Ole Opry. Many made the 750-mile drive from Nashville after a Saturday night appearance, rolling in with just enough time to shave in the car and hit the stage.

All the biggest stars played here: Hank Williams, Roy Acuff, Ernest Tubbs, Patsy Cline, Johnny Cash, George Jones. And there were bluegrass greats that Leon loved most, especially the Stoneman Family, as well as hundreds of obscure acts whose biggest taste of fame was earning a billing on a poster for a show at Sunset Park or New River Ranch. Whether greenhorns on their way up, or grayhairs on their way down, they were always welcome out here in the sticks.

Even as the '60s wore on and country records became slick and larded with orchestral arrangements and background choirs, the shows at these parks celebrated the music in all its raw, pristine beauty. They became ever more crucial gigs for traditional performers who couldn't get airplay, the ones who toured with their own tight, cracker-jack bands that shunned electric amps and other modern frills, with singers harmonizing around a single microphone.

Old-time country music done the old-time way. That's the way the crowd liked it and it wasn't uncommon for hecklers to jeer acts that featured electric bass or drum sets. Acoustic music didn't get more hardcore than this—right off the back porch and straight from the hollow—presented without affectation. Fans like Leon discovered that even if real country music wasn't on the radio, it was alive and well at remote outposts like Sunset Park and New River Ranch.

Of all the country performers Leon chronicled with his camera and recorder, the Stonemans remained closest to his heart. In this dysfunctional, poverty-stricken and prodigiously talented clan of displaced Virginia hillbillies, he found a family that won his undying love and devotion second only to his own kin. The Stonemans transformed their ongoing domestic drama into an entertaining and electrifying stage show, making art out of the precarious anarchy of their lives. Leon was not only their most loyal fan, he became a trusted family friend, the only instance where he was able to break through the barrier that always separated him from his idols.

The Stonemans offered Leon all God's plenty. Spurned by the Nashville establishment (many say it was professional jealousy due to the fact they could out-pick anyone in Music City), the Stonemans always found a home at New River Ranch and Sunset Park.

What moved Leon most was the Stoneman's never-ending struggle to survive in the cut-throat music business despite their talent and showmanship. "They were the sweetest people in the world and they were very poor," he said. "They lived in a house for several years that didn't have a roof. They deserved so much more than what they got, both in money and in fame. But they were just country people, they didn't know how to behave, they weren't politically motivated in any way and they didn't seem to care about the fame or anything. They just enjoyed their music."

The country roots of the Stonemans were revealed most fully in their comedy routines, brimming with bawdy backwoods banter, a dose of R-rated humor slipped into the park's G-rated family entertainment. They especially liked to massacre the latest country hits from the Nashville assembly line; they'd turn a saccharine recitation like Bill Anderson's "Still," into a celebration of moonshine stills; most of the routines were straight from the school of outhouse jokes handed down for generations, and many were unabashedly sexual. The usually prudish Leon got a special thrill hearing the Stonemans get down and dirty and let off some steam on-stage. "They could get real raunchy," he said. "But they were just having fun. The real dirty jokes they did, most of the kids wouldn't get 'em anyway."

The Stonemans were one of many bands that



Above:

HANK SNOW, 1964

Weighted down with enough pomade to grease an 18-wheeler, Hank Snow once fired a fiddler whose bow nudged his hairpiece off in front of a crowd. Hailing from the squid-jigging grounds of Nova Scotia, the Singing Ranger made his American stage debut at Sunset Park in 1950. For the next decade, Snow enjoyed a steady stream of hits like "I'm Movin' On," "The Golden Rocket" and "A Fool Such As I." He was a small, wiry man with a big booming voice, warm and inviting as an old pot-bellied wood-stove. By the '60s, he was one of Nashville's power brokers and ruling elder statesmen, full of bluster and short of temper, especially when it came to his toupee, crowning his head like a coiled anaconda. "But the joke was he was so rich," said Leon. "You could see a mile away it was a hairpiece. Couldn't he have gotten a better hairpiece? A better piece of grass?"

worked the rough hillbilly bars of Washington and Baltimore. The shows at New River Ranch and Sunset Park offered temporary respite from the hell of the honky-tonk nightlife where they scratched out a living. The country-music parks offered a sanctuary where, if only for a few hours each Sunday, people tried to live by the Golden Rule. A backstage sign at Sunset Park made it clear the entertainers were held to the same high standards, providing explicit warning to all performers: "No Profanity (Not Even a Hell or Damn) Allowed On This Stage In Any Show. KEEP YOUR SHOWS CLEAN—NO SMUT. Please refrain from cussing backstage as Microphone is always open. Thank You."

For years the Stonemans performed as the Bluegrass Champs six nights a week at a bar called The Famous, right next door to the Trailways bus station in downtown D.C. Pay was usually \$12.50 per band member, but they made more in tips, which were collected in a galvanized trash container, dubbed the "pitch pot." A sign read: IF YOU DON'T PITCH IN THE POT TONIGHT, TOMORROW YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE A POT TO PITCH IN."

The regulars at The Famous were mostly servicemen and transients homesick for hillbilly music; a drunken, brawling crowd a far cry from the family picnickers at the open-air parks. On the street outside, hookers plied their trade, while inside fights erupted at the least provocation. Local bluegrass veteran Bill Harrell

recalled singing while, a few feet from the stage, a woman threatened her cheating husband by holding a gun to his head and, another time, Harrell nearly drowned an unruly sailor by holding his head in the men's room toilet.

Donna Stoneman, taught by her brother Scotty to play mandolin "like a man," was a sight for sore eyes at the Famous, where her admirers were fiercely devoted. One of her fans—a serviceman—was killed on his way back from the bar to the nearby Andrews Air Force Base. In the dead man's wallet, authorities found a photo of Donna clipped to a \$5 bill.

Leon never dared to enter these dark, smoky places. He was a lifelong teetotaler who considered alcohol and tobacco "lethal poisons." For him, it was enough to meet his idols in the sun-dappled grounds of the parks, where his more innocent vision of country music lent his photos a spiritual radiance. Raised in a church where graven images were forbidden, he became as devout as any Russian icon-maker.

A key element that made Leon's photos stand out was their brilliant color. Most of the fans strolled the parks with their old Box cameras snapping their tired old black and white pictures. Leon shot everything in color. They were still in Kansas, while he had found his very own Oz. "I saw so many people take so many gosh-awful pictures and I learned from all that," he said. "I tried to compose before I took the shot. All the pictures had to be dead-level, no weird angles, no tricks." He

BULL TONGUE

By Byron Coley
and Thurston Moore

Exploring the voids of all known undergrounds since 2002

Of all the fucked up, nasty ass, deliriously damaged rock bands in the recent history of the American underground wonderland (particularly Texas), none come close to the squirm and hellacious sqwunk of Rusted Shut. From the incinerated skum of Houston weirdness improv outfit Grinding Teeth arose **Rusted Shut** in 1986. Their shows were a notorious mess, drunken and fueled by cheap-jack acid. After years of slovenly survival they've been somewhat rescued from universal distaste by the current noise legions. The Emperor Jones label released the Rehab CD in 2003 and AA Records did a sick lathe ("Bring Out Your Dead") last year and their notorious "Fuckin'" track off the 2006 End Times Festival live comp is still the only loop that matters (check their myspace page for that one). It was with some apprehension of being held up by knife point that we unzipped their new **Hot Sex** EP (Dull Knife). But goddamn if this is not a great goddamned beast of a record. The **core duo of Don Walsh and Sybil Chance** (the original still alive members of Grinding Teeth) and Domokos (on drums and 'earthscreamer') just lay it out in an unctious smear of rawk n roll decimating any obvious pretence of hardcore, black metal, death metal, sludge, punk, avant improv goop etc.—shit is the REAL amerika full on. Salute and die.

Nigel Cross's British label, Shagrat, only releases extraordinary material. He doesn't bother with anything else. That means it's always a label to watch and their newsy release, the **Mariachi Riff Live and Free Music LP by Formerly Fat Harry**, is a case in point. FFH were an ostensible Country Joe offshoot band, based in England, who recorded a lone laid-back, country-fried

album for UK Harvest. It never struck us as wildly interesting, but Brits who saw the band live were always blowing spit-bubbles about how psychedelic they were. Some of that material finally surfaced on the **Hux CD, Goodbye for Good**, but this LP has the essential jewel—a 25-minute West Coast jam pinnacle that can match any ballroom band for sheer acid flash. An amazing record! The flip has two free-form pieces the band recorded earlier and they too are mind-blowers. If this material had surfaced while the band was still extant, they'd be legendary. As it was, they were so arcane only a few true believers like Pete Frame, Colin Hill (who wrote the fantastic liner notes) and Nigel had any idea that there even was a grail to seek. Easily the best archival find of the year, and an incredible record by any standard.

Really fine new book of poems by **Jasmine Dreame Wagner** (who also records as Cabinet of Natural Curiosities). It's called **Charcoal** (For Arbors) and while it looks at first blush as though it'll be a bit academic, she continually slams our heads with powerful words and images. "Blessed are the ego mules, for they are shod with their own lead." Indeed! Similarly choice are the **two new books by P. Shaw**, **Strings 02008CE** and **Strings Executive Toddler Edition**. Shaw's visual work is moving ever further from his ratty origins, with some of the pages achieving an oddly elfin mandala quality. The stories (esp. *Ex Toddler*) are actually sicker than ever, but their surface is a charming distraction.

Dunno if the band's from Clifton NJ (where one of us b-tonguers worked as a caddie for several years), but we must give some localist props to **RSO's**

Row LP (RSO). They create a vibe in the tradition of the Bay Area's Pet Rock groups: Flipper, Wounds, Lassie Come Home, Toiling Midgets, et al. Fine fine fine post-core guitar sludge with he-man vocals. From California itself come the **Nothing People**, and their long-awaited, eponymous debut LP (S-S Records) is the blast we'd hoped. All the noted just-pre-punk-weirdo elements are in place (Debris, Chrome, etc.) and the space-punk knob has rarely been yanked this hard since the demise of the Twinkeyz. Looking due East, we see the eponymous debut vinyl by a North Carolina duo, **Waumiss** (Little Ramona). Their sound lacks some of the cough-syrup-confusion



above:
Charcoal

right:
P. Shaw's Strings

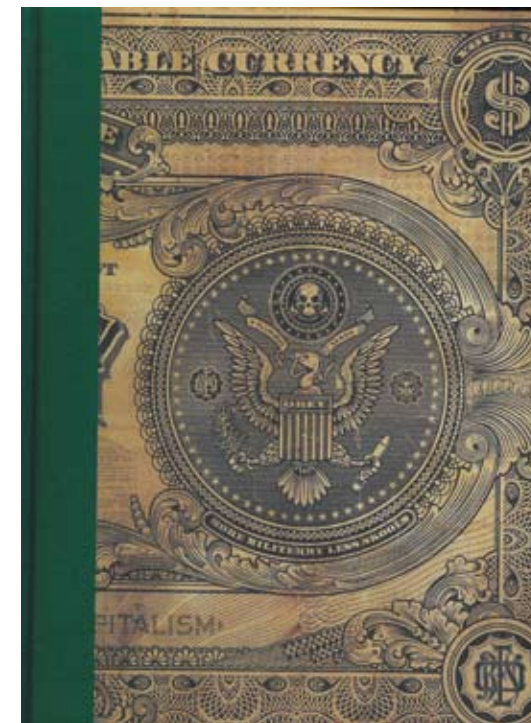


of our favorite Southern artists, but it has a light and graceful weirdom all its own. Mixing concrete collage action with dub texture and the raw power of Christian pop (without the Christianity), Waumiss make days a little sunnier whether you like it or not.

Breakdance the Dawn is a cool name for a label, gotta admit. And it's from Australia and by dint of its cassing (yeah!) release "no one" by half OZ half Kiwi **4et Mysteries Of Love** we look forward to revisiting this equatorial wonderland. Faraway percussion and reverberoided coyote/human vox fusion make this an almost down under Pochahaunted listening experience. Fantastic utilization of quiet-style feedback lines.

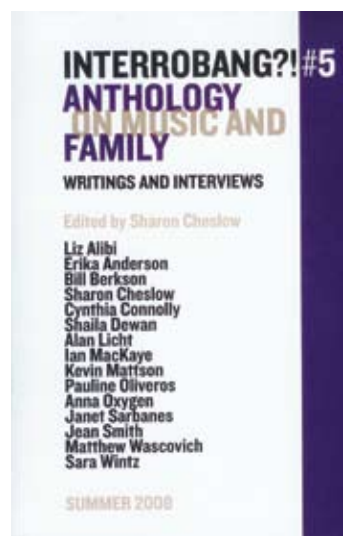
Not sure how we missed it exactly, but **Punk Magazine** is back, still under the editorial watch of **John Holmstrom**. It's a tad slicker than it was during its first incarnation, but Holmstrom's chops are still in place (as editor, writer and illustrator) and the gestalt's excellent. There's some space given to new punk bands, but the bulk deals with people who were on the scene in the '70s, and it reads as well as ever. As does the new issue of **Sharon Cheslow's** splendid occasional, **Interrobang?!** (Decomposition). This issue is printed in trade paperback format and has interviews and writings about the interface between family and music during childhood and beyond. Most of the pieces (by Alan Licht, Bill Berkson, Paulie Oliveros, etc.) are excellent, but our fave is the interview with Ian Mackaye. Sharon goes back to the earliest days of the DC hardcore scene and really manages to get some wonderful and very personal stories from Ian. Maxist.

Turpentine Brothers are a trio from Boston and their second LP, *Turpentine Brothers* (Alien Snatch!) is a pretty good, small band recreation of the Fleshtones at the height of their early '80s power. Very Battle of the Garages, but in a good way. On the absolute other end of Boston's vomona, we find **Twodeadsluts Onegoodfuck**, whose great CDR from



top row left to right:
Carouse, 2Stories, Charcoal

bottom row, from left and right:
Interrobang, Deep Suburbia



last year has been vinylized by Apop. Really nice use of fairly harsh (but not off-putting) feedback sonnets and gruel-spattered vocal sputts. Pleasant to own in this format. Meanwhile, former sometime Bostonian, **Chris Brokaw**, has had his 2005 CD, **Incredible Love**, reissued on vinyl (I and Ear). The album is not one of Chris's guitar demonstration efforts, rather it's a generally quiet singer/songwriter effort, originally released by Gerard Cosloy's 12XU label. And, especially on the acoustic numbers, it has textures as deep as anything you'd hear on Village Thing. Been listening to it a lot lately. You will too. Another Beantown expat is improvising violinist **Katt Hernandez**, whose debut solo LP *Unlovely* (no label) is seriously boss. A student of Joe Manieri, Katt plays in a style that flies through the valley separating new music and free jazz, like a hive of cunning bees. Great inventions.

Anathema Sound has a clutch of new heavy noise tapes out that are worth it not only for the caliber of the artists but the unified design of the cassettes them-

selves. **Buffalo Altar** by **Oklahoman/Digitalis Industries honcho Brad Rose** and pal **Nathan Young's Ajilvsga** project is a headrush synth-storm played as cranial dirtstorm. **The Light of Life** by **Wereju**, the solo sound-world of **Ireland's Cathal Rodgers**, is next in the continuing trend past prototypical drone into full-on murk expression. **All Of The Witches** by **Husere Grav** is amazing in its grey-zone harsh vocab: a lonesome fusion of early '90s Helvete comradie and Italiano industrial sick sadness. Not sure who this cat is but judging by this release and the previous split with Robedoor on Not Not Fun a while back he/she/it is one to beware of. Each of these tapes comes packaged in full color hyper-sense BEAUTIFUL fold-over sleeves with cool inserts and labels all designed by Matt Yacoub.

Arabesque II (Shivastan Press) is a new xerox lit mag from Woodstock's **Shiv Mirabito**, printing new work, old work & everything inbetween. Contributors revolve around the Shivastan core group

(Ira Cohen, etc.) and it looks to be an ongoing project. New issue of the excellent Canadian lit mag, **Carouse!**, is out. This one is largely turned over to poetry and illustrations, done by folks who are new to us, but of very high quality. This is issue 23, and *Carouse!* has evolved into one of the most solid oddball-lit mags around. Another extremely solid way to fry yr eyes is with the Chicago based Mule. Issue 5 has Linda Perhacs, Jennifer Herrema and lots of words and images related to finding things. Highly recommended. Also hep is **Deep Suburbia** by **Marissa Magic**, former member of Olympia's Punks. She's down in the Bay Area now and this personal 'zine, musing on *Blondie*, *Free Kitten*, noise boys and other topics is a genius move inside the genre of personal 'zines.

The latest **Directing Hands LP Songs From the Red House** (Singing Knives) is a mutha. Alex Nielson has been using this moniker to further his deep UK folk investigation and he has here co-conspired with Vinnie Blackwall. Blackwall's femme vocals swoop and swail through glorious avant garde trails whilst stroking note plenitude from cellos, harps and harmonium. A striking affair and one of the most interestingly modern perusals of folk forms to date.

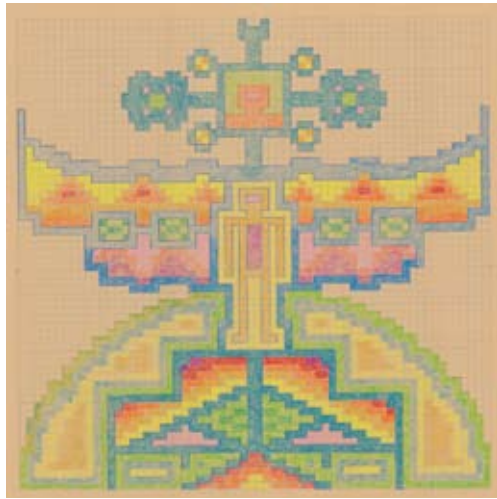
Aldebaran Record Farm has released an awesome cassette called **Full Frontal Nudity** by **Face Plant**, the solo nom de plume of Aaron Coyes (Unborn Unicorn, Rahdunes, Peaking Lights). Coyes creates raw sonics from a hook up of vintage stereo components and hand-cut vinyl with a nasty-ass needle scraping thru. With his sense of rhythmic goop control and space organ jammering this is some sweet brutality.

Malcolm Duffy's new comic book, 2 Stories, may be his best yet. The way

he crafts his narratives, with simple evolving black & white illustrations, mutating slowly and quietly, has a wonderful way of simultaneously dampening and highlighting the weirdness of his tales. Good one. Which is not to diminish the value of his two other new ones—*4th Bridge* and *The Heroic Mosh of Mary's Son* (all *Missing Twin*), both of which mine some of the same basic technical ideas with fluid grace. We just prefer the new one. Okay? Another massive gouge in the eye comes from **E Pluribus Venom** (Gingko Press), a hardcover catalogue derived from the massive Shepard Fairey retrospective in New York last year. To many folks, Fairey is still known primarily as the creator of the whole OBEY Andre the Giant schtick, but his work has evolved in all kinds of directions. His basic orientation has rejected neither public art nor political art as a touchstone, but his paintings and large works are complex meditations on the implications of those original image bursts. A very swank volume, sure to please several tough nuts on your Xmas list.

There's something definitely cool about bands who release music on cassette that stands up to anything they do on CD or LP, regardless of which label its on. Case in point is **Deathroes** who, after annihilating any listener who came near their No Fun/Misanthropic Agenda LP *Final Expense* have unleashed a sick-ass beast of a tape on the IDES label called *An Infinite Blaze*. Deathroes is Gerrit from Misanthropic Agenda and the primordial existence of he who is known as Sixes. The shit is massive swaths of crushing, flowing rivers of sound sex.

Also guilty of the crime of cassette godliness is the Excitebike t*pe label (or EXBX) which is overseen by Dan Dlugosielski of the consistently ruling Uneven Universe



left:
RTX's Jennifer Herrema

Album artwork for
TheUSAisamonster's Space Programs

lower left:
Parliament live

below:
Alan Kaprow

above:
Mythical Beast



ALLAN KAPROW
HOW TO MAKE A HAPPENING
(PUBLIC INFORMATION)

C: He's saying, "Take advantage of ready-made events." "Just take things as they come and re-arrange them as easily."
D: Oh yeah? Well let's do that. I'm broke, in debt and got laid off my job, which I was good at. Where's my bailout money?
C: Hey, so am I!
D: Where's my bailout money? I'm not working until I get some.
C: Me neither!
D: Let's go on strike!
C: Non-violent direct action!
D: Yeah!

THEUSAISAMONSTER
SPACE PROGRAMS
(LOAD)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

CHRIS MORRIS
ON THE HOUR CD BOX SET (WARP)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

DOUG PAISLEY
DOUG PAISLEY
(NO QUARTER)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

HUSH ARBORS
HUSH ARBORS
(ECSTATIC PEACE)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

FUNKADELIC TOYS (ACE—IMPORT)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....

PARLIAMENT FUNKADELIC LIVE
1977—THE MOTHERSHIP CONNECTION
DVD (SHOUT!FACTORY)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....

AC/DC
BLACK ICE (WALMART)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....

"PLAYING GODS: THE BOARD GAME OF DIVINE DOMINATION"
BY THE CREATOR (BALLS OUT PRODUCTIONS)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....

RTX
JJ GOT LIVE RATX (DRAG CITY)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

MYTHICAL BEAST
SCALES
(LANGUAGE OF STONE)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

LARKIN GRIMM
PARPLAR
(YOUNG GOD RECORDS)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

"POP SURF CULTURE: MUSIC, DESIGN, FILM, AND FASHION FROM THE BOHEMIAN SURF BOOM"
BY BRIAN CHIDESTER AND DOMENIC PRIORE
(SANTA MONICA PRESS)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....



top row, from left:
Doug Paisley
Larkin Grimm
Hush Arbors

above:
Playing Gods

right:
The Holy Modal Rounders in Bound to Lose

LUNATIC FOLK-POET PRANKSTERS
THE HOLY MODAL ROUNDERS GET THEIR OWN DOCUMENTARY
BOUND TO LOSE

It's hard to imagine a music scene more in a need of subversive humor, half-crazed irreverence, and a swift attitudinal kick in the ass than New York's folk scene in the early 1960s. The folkies in the Lower East Side circa 1963 called out desperately for jesters to deflate their over-serious pieties and do-good earnestness. But when Peter Stampfel and Steve Weber, a pair of hard-partying absurdist folk poet-pranksters, gave the scene just what it needed in the form of the first Holy Modal Rounders record, the effort was met with puzzlement or offended condescension by the established order. As music critic Robert Christgau says early on in *Bound to Lose*—a loving, engaging and sometimes painful documentary about the group—the Holy Modal Rounders were folk geniuses on the order of Bob Dylan, because they had internalized the founding documents of the movement, most notably Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Folk Music*, and they'd approached the business of making folk music with the zeal and experimentation of the abstract expressionist painters and beat poets who partied at the same bars.

If you've ever stayed awake for all of *Easy Rider* you've heard the Holy Modal Rounders. They have a tune on that touchstone soundtrack. Even on a such a drug-addled soundtrack, the song, "If You Wanna Be a Bird," stands out as a piece of acid-casualty weirdness, like something made by a pack of lunatic muppets playing a drunken waltz on a saloon piano. But the band never made a penny off it, according to Stampfel. It's a long story, they probably signed a release: that's the best answer that can be provided for that business fuck up. And that's about the level of specificity that the Rounders can provide on their career. It's been over 40 years, and these guys took a lot of drugs; don't expect them to have much recall. In one funny scene in the movie, playwright and actor Sam Shepherd, who also played drums for the Rounders for a stretch, is shocked to learn that the band played on the TV show *Rowan and Martin's Laugh In*.

In some ways the film is a cautionary tale of substance abuse and wild living. After all, these guys are in their 50s and 60s and both Weber, and Stampfel to a lesser degree, seem incapable of providing for themselves without the kindness and generosity of women (an elderly artistic mother living in the country in Pennsylvania in Weber's case, and a photographer and publisher wife in Stampfel's case). But then, as stoic bassist Dave Reisch says in a deadpan moment at a grim nightclub and an evening fraught with interpersonal tensions and recurring substance abuse problems that threaten to sink the band's reunion tour on the West Coast, "Once you get past the humiliation, there is some fun to be had." But that's only if he can convince Weber, the wild-eyed Manson-looking and more erratic and perhaps charismatic one of the band's frontmen to stop drinking before showtime, or if Stampfel can be persuaded to stop berating Weber for his failing memory of the song lyrics and chord changes. The two seem to spend a fair bit of their time on stage engaging in cringe-inducing squabbles about whose song they'll play next or why one of them can't act right.

The Rounders definitely evoke comparisons to Captain Beefheart, Dead Kennedys and Ween, artists not known for having much to do with mental stability. In an era when loco folksters from 40 years ago are always getting rediscovered and championed to a new generation by artists like Devendra Banhart, you'd think the Holy Modal Rounders would be experiencing a renaissance, with their manic parodic sensibilities and comic streak—maybe you've heard their loopy prurient anthem "Boobsalot" or another favorite, "Fucking Sailors in Chinatown"?—but even now, for some, the music is perhaps a little too unhinged, too close to madness.

John Adamian



Arthur Russell
Love Is Overtaking Me
ADK 1010

Twenty-one demos and home recordings of some of the rarest, and arguably the most accessible of unreleased pop, folk, and country. "Love Is Overtaking Me is a collection of tender, unaffected acoustic pop songs that at their best, put Russell on a par with **Nick Drake** and **John Martyn**." — *NME*



The Aimless Never Miss
The Aimless Never Miss S/T
DIW 112

San Francisco's **The Aimless Never Miss** makes their debut with a dynamite package of guitar distortion and bittersweet boy/girl vocals all tied together neatly over driving drums and swirling keyboards. This heady stuff is utterly beyond post rock.



Wax Fang
La La Land
DPC 2

With *La La Land*, **Wax Fang** have created music that's instantly familiar and yet vaguely otherworldly — Dense, spacey layers expand into a whole new psychedelic universe. "Wax Fang is epic guitar rock, with melodic solos breaking free from hypnotic loops." — **Todd Martens**, *LA Times*



Ocean
Pantheons Of The Lesser
IPT 220

"Moving with the slow, inexorable force of some gargantuan sea-beast from Norse mythology, **Ocean** marry heaving riff tectonics with expansive rockscapes, straddling doom metal and post rock with their colossal, continent-eclipsing sound." — *Mojo*



Arthur Russell
World Of Echo
ADK 1002

"World Of Echo is an orbit of resonance, a giant, subterranean repository of Dub" — *David Stubbs*
Arthur Russell's definitive work, *World Of Echo* is a deeply meditative album of awe-inspiring grace and remains a timeless work of sublime beauty.



Arthur Russell
Calling Out Of Context
ADK 1001

"... music not as escape but as transcendence" — *New York Magazine*
Includes *That's Us/Wild Combination* and *The Platform On The Ocean 12*, extraordinary unreleased tracks from the timeless visionary genius of the New York Underground.



Light FM
Black Magic Marker
DIW 113

L.A.'s power/pop rock sensation crushes it with their new release! This guitar and synth driven sound will immediately appeal to fans of **The Cars**, **Grandaddy** and **The Rentals**! Trust us; this band is anything but light.



Alec Empire
The Golden Foretaste Of Heaven
EAT 1

Electro-rock crossover from the legendary ATR frontman. "If you like your electronic music powerful, grimy, uncompromising, yet accessible - then this is the album for you." — *Future Music*
"More thrilling torment from one empire that will never crumble." — *NME*



Army Navy
Army Navy S/T
FZN 1

"Army Navy follow in a direct line from **The Zombies** to **Teenage Fanclub**, with brief detours for **The Posies**, **Redd Kross**, **My Bloody Valentine**, **Blur** and the like, layering heavy, distorted guitars, pounding rhythms and oh-so-sad and sweet vocal melancholy into rock and roll bliss." — *Othermusic*

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NEIL HAMBURGER SINGS COUNTRY WINNERS (DRAG CITY)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

ED SANDERS SANDERS' TRUCKSTOP (COLLECTORS CHOICE)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

THE HOLY MODAL ROUNDERS LIVE IN 1965 (ESP-DISK)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

THOSE DARLINS THOSE DARLINS (OH WOW DANG)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

"GASOLINE" BY DAME DARCY (MERRELL)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

EARTHLESS LIVE AT ROADBURN DOUBLE-CD (TEE PEE)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

WEEN AT THE CAT'S CRADLE, 1992 (MVD AUDIO)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

SONIC'S RENDEZVOUS BAND LIVE, MASONIC AUDITORIUM (ALIVE/BOMP)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....



JULIAN COPE BLACK SHEEP (HEAD HERITAGE)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

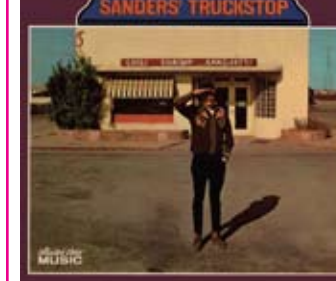
"GASOLINE" BY DAME DARCY (MERRELL)

C:....
D:....
C:....
D:....
C:....

C: And that's all we wrote.
D: See ya, wouldn't want to be ya! ☺



JULIAN COPE BLACK SHEEP (HEAD HERITAGE)



top row, from left:
Those Darlins Earthless

middle row, from left:
Album artwork for **Ed Sanders' Sanders' Truckstop**

right:
Neal Hamburger



JIMMY CARL BLACK

(2/38 - 11/08)

YOU WERE MORE THAN JUST THE INDIAN OF THE GROUP. YOU WERE THE JAZZED-OUT CHARGING BEAT BEHIND FRANK ZAPPA'S CRAZED MOTHERS OF INVENTION. YOU WHOOPED FULL-FORCE INTO YOUR OWN GERONIMO BLACK AND COLLABORATIONS WITH GOD OF HELLFIRE ARTHUR BROWN, EUGENE CHADBOURNE, THE MUFFINS & TOO MANY OTHERS TO MENTION. MAY YOUR FREAK-OUTS CARRY YOU INTO THE NEXT DEMENTED DIMENSION...

- PLASTIC CRIMEWAVE 11/08



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VARIOUS ARTISTS
African Scream Contest: Raw & Psychedelic Afro Sounds From Benin & Togo 70s CD/LP

This outstanding collection of raw, rare sounds from Benin and Togo shines light on some of the funkier and most overlooked West African sounds of the '70s. Features thundering cuts from the mighty **Orchestre Poly-Rythmo** and from previously-unknown bands such as **Discafric**, **El Rego**, **Les Volcans**, **Ouinsou Cornelle**, and more. Housed in a deluxe slipcase including a 44-page booklet with interviews, photos and travelogue.



ORCHESTRE POLY-RYTHMO DE COTONOU
The Vodoun Effect: Funk & Sato From Benin's Obscure Labels 1972-1975 CD/LP

Benin's **Orchestre Poly-Rythmo** cut some of the world's best funk sides in the 1970s. This disc gathers the hardest-hitting and rarest tracks the band recorded for Benin's tiniest independent record labels. Includes a gorgeous 44-page booklet with extremely rare pictures of the band, obscure record sleeves, and much more.



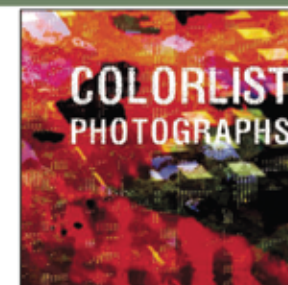
KEVIN AYERS
What More Can I Say... CD

Kevin Ayers was a key member of **Soft Machine**, and this is a collection of intimate, previously-unreleased performances from Kevin's classic early-'70s period. Features **Robert Wyatt** and **Whole World** members **Mike Oldfield** and **David Bedford**. "Kevin Ayers' talent is so acute, you could perform major eye surgery with it." —John Peel



BARBARA MORGENSTERN
BM CD

BM is the long-awaited fifth full-length solo album from Berlin's queen of fragile and poetic electro-pop, **Barbara Morgenstern**. The lightness of her previous work has given way to new depths, and what was minimal before is now far more complex, even weighty — making her latest pop music creation utterly mesmerizing. **Robert Wyatt** makes a guest appearance.



COLORLIST
Photographs CD

Second full-length from this Chicago-based musical-hybrid project featuring appearances by members of **The Drastics** and **Telefon Tel Aviv**. "...sounds like **Terry Riley** jamming with **Paul Desmond** and **John Herndon** while **Rob Mazurek** sits behind the effects board." —Audiiversity



TEN EAST
The Robot's Guide To Freedom CD

Los Angeles-based **Ten East's** line-up reads like a veritable stoner-punk supergroup: **Gary Arce** (**Yawning Man**), **Mario Lalli** (**Fatso Jetson**) and **Bill Stinson**, with **Scott Reeder** (**Kyuss**, **Obsessed**), **Bryan Giles** (**Red Fang**) and **Greg Ginn** (**Black Flag**, **Gone**). Think Ginn's frenetic, free-jazz-inspired riffs combined with the scorched desert-rock of stoner pioneers **Yawning Man**, **Fatso Jetson** and **Kyuss**. Get blazed and amazed.



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photo, **IRA COHEN**

WE GOT MUTATION:



SCOTT HULL AUDIOFILM I 3" CD
The first in a series of limited-edition 3" CDs that feature short, 10+ minute pieces of fearsome deathscapes from **Pig Destroyer** / **Agoraphobic Nosebleed** guitarist **Scott Hull**, showcasing his blending of blackened **Lustmordian** drift with terrifying mixing techniques that clot the mind's eye with unnerving, nightmarish sound events. The disc is limited to a single pressing of 1,000 copies, packaged in a tiny 4" x 4" glossy gatefold jacket with stunning full color artwork from artist **Seldon Hunt**. Recommended to enthusiasts of the isolationist terror of **Painkiller's Execution Ground** ambient disc, **Lustmord**, and **Scorn**.



BLACK ELK ALWAYS A SIX, NEVER A NINE CD
Always a Six, Never a Nine is the second album and the follow up to the 2006 self-titled debut from Portland, OR agro wreckers **Black Elk**, whose psychotic brand of crushing, noise-rock influenced heaviosity is a return to the unhinged underground rock force of bands like **Jesus Lizard**, **Melvins**, **Black Flag** and **Hammerhead**. This new album features ten songs of seething weirdness, with the dissonant, crushing riffage, lunging rhythmic push and awesome freaked out, Yow-esque vocals of singer **Tom Glöse** that made their debut a fave among anyone who remembered the days when **Amphetamine Reptile** ruled the underground rock scene, but with some interesting new elements (bleak guitar ambience, piano, etc.) that add new shadows to **Black Elk's** ferocious sound. Presented in a 4-panel gatefold jacket.



WILDLIFE PEAS FEAST 12" + DOWNLOAD
Previously available as a handmade CD-R that **Wildlife** self-released to sell at their shows, **Peas Feast** is now available on 12" vinyl with a digital dropcard that allows you to download the **Peas Feast** tracks as well as the previously unreleased **Drongolet** Demos tracks. The 12" features four lengthy songs, starting with the zonked ultra-heavy sludge and atonal, barbed wire guitar freakouts of "White Eyelidz" and the fx-damaged, psych-pop of "Violent" to the melodious massiveness of "Shining Son" and "My Song". A heavy dose of spacey cosmic sludge and lysergic poppiness.

SOON: **MONARCH!** *Der Mort* CD, **GENGHIS TRON** *Board Up The House* Remix LP w/ **Tim Hecker** + **Aidan Baker** + **Dudes You Can Trust**, **BLASTWAVE** bi-weekly podcasts, new **HUMAN QUENA ORCHESTRA**, **OVERMARS**, **RAMLEH**, and much more.

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"Yximalloo's time may be at hand. One day -- soon -- we will all be wearing his underpants, and nobody will be laughing. He may never be popular (whatever that means now), but he's always been something better; an Unpop pioneer -- primal, primary, primitive and prescient."



— Momus



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Nina wears dress by Sir Heffington www.sirheffington.com, Leggings by Brian Lichtenberg www.brianlichtenberg.com, Feather Hat by Laura Kranitz at Shoupony
Ryan wears Vest & Pants by Endovanera www.endovanera.com, Collar & Cuffs by Hazel meets Heffington, Feather clip by Boudoir Queen at Shoupony
Glitter World by Visuellefascination www.visuellefascination.com



Robbie wears Hooded Coat by Endovanera www.endovanera.com, Earring by Annie Costello Brown www.anniestellobrown.com
Music and Dance Collective, **We Are The World** is Megan, Ryan, Nina & Robbie. www.myspace.com/wearetheworldthecult

Feeling a bit... Unsettled in these hard economic times? Predictions of gloom making it hard for you to greet the day? Wondering how you're going to make ends meet now that you're even more broke? Well then please enjoy Arthur's....

Written By Gabe Soria

Art by Joseph Remnant

TIPS ON HOW TO ENJOY THE UPCOMING DEPRESSION

TIPS STILL USEFUL IF DEPRESSION IS AVERTED!

Tip 1: Start a mutual assistance secret society.

Getting through times like these takes a lot of help. Risk looking like a fool and agree with some good friends that you'll do anything to help each other. Cook meals with em; take care of each other's kids! Come up with a grand and lofty name for yourselves - Everything's better with a good name.

Tip 2: Learn to cook a lot of one pot meals, preferably over campfires.

A variation on this equation - oil + vegetables + meat + water + wine (or beer) + salt, pepper and other spices + Dutch oven is going to be your best friend. Learn it, live it, love it.

Tip 3: Learn an acoustic instrument and prepare to play on the street a lot.

Don't count on that electricity! With this skill, you can keep a relatively low profile, play some tunes, make some cash anywhere and be ready to change location at the drop of a hat.

The Loose Marbles playing on Royal St., New Orleans.

Tip 4: Own a Boy Scout Manual (or the equivalent)

Seriously. Seriously. These little tomes - usually available cheap at a used bookstore - are indispensable sources of practical, wizardly outdoors know-how. (The older ones have really great line art by the way.)

Tip 5: Play more D&D... Or backgammon, or chess, or cards, or whatever.

The simple communal act of playing a game with a few pals, (see tip 1.) is a tonic for the soul like no other. Combine with tips 2&6 and you're golden. (Note: We recommend old school D&D.)

Tip 6: Homebrew! Bars are expensive, dude. We're not saying that you shouldn't go out, but having a supply of D.I.Y. Beer is a nice and cheap incentive to kick it at the homestead or bring the party with you. Invest in a set-up with friends if you have to!

Tip 7: Buy a flask "Going to bars is expensive dude." If you buy a flask and get a bottle or two of your favorite hooch, the savings will stack up.

Tip 8: Get a library card. Sounds obvious right? But you'd be amazed at how many people don't even know there's a library in the neighborhood, much less have a card. These joints are like magic - free books, records, movies! Besides - - You're broke. Take your flask and make an afternoon out of it!

Tip 9: Don't give up hope. Ever.

As Paul Atreides once said, "Fear is the Mindkiller." Advice suitable for good times and bad. Peace - and GOOD LUCK!

MATADOR® PROFILES

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PAUL MAJOR

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MATADORRECORDS.COM

HOME: New York City.
AGE: 54.
PROFESSION: Dealer.
DRINK OF CHOICE: Wild Turkey, and Matabrew.
MOST MEMORABLE BOOK: Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary.
FAVORITE PICK-UP LINE: Humbucker.
OBJECT OF DESIRE: My wild woman, Brannan.
FAVORITE BAND: Donovan.
ACHILLES HEEL: Doing weird stuff.
PERFECT DATE: 7/7/77.
QUALITY YOU LOOK FOR IN A COMPANION: Hotline communication.
PRIZED POSSESSION: Whatever record I happen to be listening to.
PET PEEVES: Pets that think they're better than me.
LAST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Making a shit-hot album with my band, Endless Boogie.
DESCRIBE YOURSELF IN THREE WORDS: Father of Laura.
PROFILE: The friends of Matador share a vision with the label's suave record company executives. Paul "Top Dollar" Major has volunteered to do this Matador Profiles™ ad without payment. He thinks the animals live outside the zoo but most of them are OK. He can't remember names, but faces are plowed into his memory.



Authentic There are more than a thousand ways to record music in America, but few are authentic enough for Matador Records. The quality standards established in 1946 have never varied. Into each album go only the finest whiskies from the Highlands, the Lowlands, the Hebrides.

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SELF TITLED DEBUT ALBUM

Pitchfork "9.0" • *Entertainment Weekly* "A"
Mojo "★★★★★" • *Guardian* "★★★★★"
Rolling Stone "★★★★"



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