

ISSUE ELGHT I JANUARY 2004 | RESPONSIBLE ADYOCACY

Arthur regular **T-Model Ford** talks about crack, in-town cars and underage sex. **Holly Golightly** invites us into her kitchen. And we get some letters.

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Rootsy or folk? Post-punk or blues futura? The answer is: Yes. **The Fiery Furnaces** might be all over the map, but *Margaret Wappler* finds out one thing's dead certain: No one else is gettin' in the band.

A PHOTOGRAPH by David Ellis

BROTHER FROM THIS PLANET

Hallucinogens, Ukrainian Catholicism, Nascar town alienation, the Tao De Ching and the Beatles helped make **Brother JT** the homegrown musical genius he is. *Jay Babcock* interviews America's least-known national treasure. Plus, *David Katznelson* guides us thru JT's vast and beguiling

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'Astrology by Arthur,' as written by Weird War vocalist *Ian Svenonius* (Gemini); reviews of records and one book by *C & D*; and oodles of doodles by *Ed Ruscha, Jr*.

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LARIS KRESLINS Publisher

w. T. NELSON

NEEMA ENRIQUEZ Distribution Director neema@arthurmag.com

KRISTINE MCKENNA
PAUL CULLUM
MARK LEWMAN
EDDIE DEAN
BYRON COLEY
Senior Advisors

JOHN COULTHART Our Man in Manchester ROBIN ADAMS

DANIEL CHAMBERLIN COURTNEY HARRIS Proofreaders

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### T-Model Knows Better

He says he doesn't need his cane anymore. And he says he can help us.

So, every two months, Arthur's humble editor calls T-Model and asks him some pressing questions. T-Model gives his answers over the phone, then we at Arthur HQ transcribe the conversation, with some help from Bruce Watson at Fat Possum Records, T-Model's record label. And bip-bap-boom, there it is. If you have any questions for T-Model, and we suspect that you do, email them to editorial@arthurmag.com

Arthur: T-Model one of our readers wrote in and said, "I'm worried about one of my longtime friends. He's been hanging out with this woman who I know smokes crack. I'm afraid he's going to start smoking crack too. What should I do?"

T-Model Ford: Well, be worried. If you like him, and he in it, best for you to stay away from him much as you can. Cuz you'll get in trouble. You'll be doin' what he be doin', or what the othern' doin'. That crack helped cause a-many young people to mess up. I don't know what it do, but some I hear say it mess the brains up. It must do somethin' 'cos they all want to fool with it. They wild, they don't do right. They stay in rouble, meddlin', breakin' in, fightin', do anything. I never seen none of it when [I was a young man], and I ain't never smoked none of it. Now I done quit smokin'...quit about 20 years... I wouldn't smoke another cigarette. Ain't than free will and borne out by got no feeling for it. And I do good and I feeeel good. As old a man as I is, I'm still gettin' up and goin'.

Astrology

Arthur

Predestination; a concept older

recent scientific elucidations on

historical dialectics, genetics

and chemical psychology. Each

labyrinth of circumstance and

cosmic programming, acting out

our grotesque fate in an awful,

the astral bodies affect us in

a profound way; each offhand

movement of a planet can have

humanity and our various client

species, via magnetic fields,

likewise be an irresponsible

entity, tumbling through the sky

carelessly, without regard to the

tidal waves it may or may not

cause. A correlation could be

drawn to our own unthinking

rearrangement of ant life or

This column is a transmission

readers (who have star signs), but

detail" is your cachet. Recently

however, everyone seems to have

good taste. It's a veritable "Age of Capricorn" with the whole of

society engaged in conspicuous

collecting of obscurant minutia

These poseurs are like a race of

mushrooms who 've blossomed

overnight, and they've seemingly

rendered you redundant. Or

maybe not. Legend has it that

there's still a backwater region

somewhere in New Guinea,

where no one knows about the

particular labels and sub-trends

which are your passion. Go there now and take your rightful place

as their inscrutable aesthete.

ignorant manner.

of us is caught in a tangled How can you tell when someone is on

I seen some of 'em since they done got way in it. Everywhere that smokin' that crack got a good thing going, it breaks it up. Greenville looks like a ghost town now. You don't see nothin' hanging around. That crack? I hate to even see anybody smoking that mess. They don't look right, they don't act right. They lunar alignment. The moon can look wild and stupid. If anybody smoke it, you can tell it. In the way they acts.

Get on away from 'em. Is there anyway to get 'em someone off of crack who's already in it?

Not hardly. Not 'til they get in enough microscopic organism culture. of a mess, then they have to get out of

Okay. Next question. One of our older readers writes in to say, "Dear T-Model, get them to understand that even I thought I was a good father, my wife and I have been very loving, we have a beautiful daughter, she's 15 years old. but we're worried that she's started to have sex."

"That crack helped cause a-many young people to mess up. I don't know what it do, but some say it mess the brains up. It must do somethin', 'cos they all want to fool with it."

"She hasn't admitted it to us, but we think it's happening. We don't know what to do. Should we leave her

she'll start sassin' you, blessin' YOU

Yes Leave her alone Cause next thing they get their selves in trouble or mess

out, tellin' you what you can't do! What SHE can do! "I'm grown, I can do what I wanna do." Blowin' back. First thing you wanna hearin'. See you can't raise your of herself. children now. You have to let 'em go til up. Then they go to see anybody but it



Holly's Mashed Roots

Submitted by Holly Golightly of London, England. In the winter I like to make this dish whenever I roast poultry or game. I have fed some minor celebrities on it and thrown it at boyfriends. It's very versatile that way.

> Four large carrots and four large parsnips Large knob of butter Ground black and red pepper Peeled, crushed garlic to taste

Peel and cut vegetables in evenly sized discs along the length, place in pan and cover with cold water. Add a pinch of salt. Bring to boil and simmer until soft (about 8-10 minutes) on low heat. Strain off water and chop roughly with a sharp knife. Add butter, pepper and crushed garlic and mash until smooth. Serve piping hot with rous ted poultry or game (stuffed with chestnuts and apricots) and slow rous ted po be loes, bread sauce, green beans and port gravy.

be too late. They all do.

Is there a way for these parents to tell if their daughter is having sex? Can

Yeah, you can tell. Watch the breasts. They get sassy and nasty and ... Once it get started, then let 'em get their own place to stay. That'll whoop 'em quicker than anything! That's right. They'll find out they can't. That a home's where they at. It's somethin' else. You wanna go and get out like that, remember one thing gets turned over to the Good Lord. Ever where she head, let her go. She get into somethin', don't get her out, let her get out the hard way. Once she get out, she'll make something out

A reader in his late teens writes, "Dear T-Model, I gotta buy a new car. I'm just drivin' around town. I don't need a truck. What should I look for? You got any suggestions on what kind of car I should get?"

If you gon' do that, just to ride around in, find you an old model. The Lincoln, if it's in good shape when you get it, take care of it, keep the oil changed and filter changed, and it'll last a loooong time. Or a good Chevrolet or a good Ford or a good Buick.

You like those American cars.

Y= indeed. They all been good to me. They so longer. They last longer. And I had good safeties out of 'em. I love 'em. 1 2014 '79 Lincoln here. It's an antique, I want to buy an antique tag for it. It look good right now. Everybody's trying to buy it. They want me to sell it. I told 'em, It ain't for sale. But still they want it. They like it.

Now, you know how to fix cars, right? Well I can but I'm not able now, I done got broke up that limb. Tree fell on me and I can't get around. Before that tree fell on me, I'd work on and build motors

How did you learn how to do all that? Go 'round where people workin', and WATCH em . Watch em. I can't read and writ can't spell nothin'... but I never did carry my car to the shop.

### Letters of Comment

We're Post-Dualist, Man...

I'm writing in response to an ad placed in Arthur No. 6 by Dean's Beans national scale grows their commitment concerning my father's company, and volume as well as our own. From Newman's Own and fair trade coffee.

As a point of clarification, Newman's Own Organics is owned by Peter Meehan and me and we produce this line of coffee, not Newman's Own.

My father has been very supportive of our venture into the world of organics, but he lets us do as we please and does or suppliers. Therefore Mr. Dean's father rather than at Peter and me.

From Our Perspective? Both. Cur coffee, and for their commitment to business with Green Mountain on a my perspective, is your coffee cup half full, or half empty??? Nell Newman

> President of Newman's Own Organics newmansownorganics com

Just Beyond The Horizon...

Jeezie-peezies, what a great magazin not direct us in our choice of product vou've put together. I am soooo glad not to be reading visual sound-bites. accusations were falsely directed at my So far the only issue I have read is your

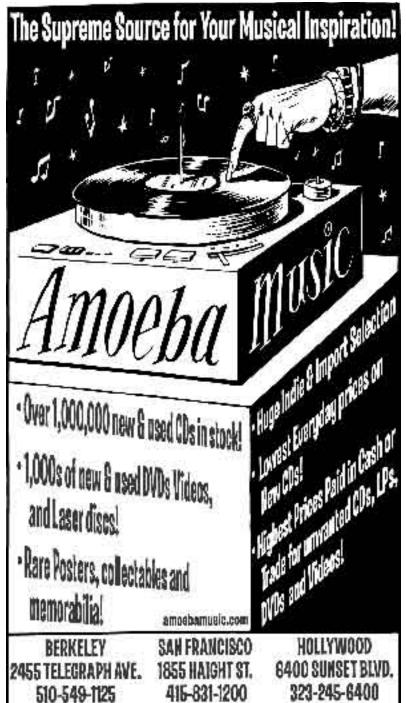
be good!) and there is no college radio of amazing volunteer operatives working these issues. The very act of doing (used to have that, too, but I digres). You see, unfortunately, you get used b these things, and you miss them when they are gone. You sense there are other things out there just beyond your horizon... Like when we take a road trip to New Jersey and discover college to subscribe...which you can do at our radio-real college radio-still exists. And there really are still people doing nteresting things. Hooray to you!! And keep up the good work.

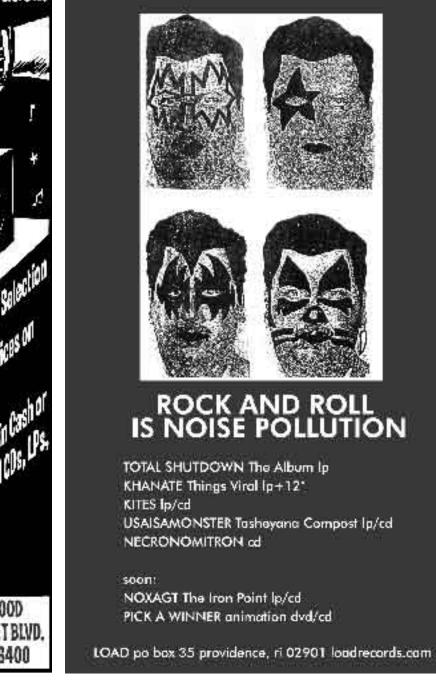
> Your pal, Millie Baltimore, MD

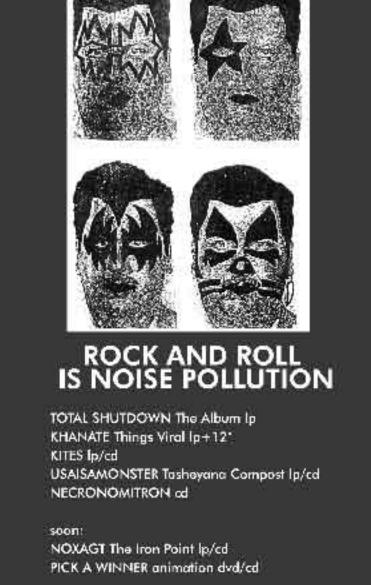
Joe Strummer retrospective (March | to hear that you haven't been able to Green Mountain Coffee Roasters was 2003), but I could not have loved it find other issues of the mag. Arthur chosen by Newman's Own Organics for more. You have no idea what a relief is distributed across North America their ability to provide us with National it is to us thirsty folks in a land where (distribution points are listed at Distribution for our fair trade, organic the City Paper really stinks (used to www.arthurmag.com) by a vast network

under the able direction of the soon-todary Cap'n Neema Enriquez. Unfortunately, copies of Arthur tend to disappear almost as quickly as we unload 'em. So the best way to guarantee that you'll get every issue of Arthur is website using PayPal, or through the mail with a check. If you're interested in getting caught up with back issues of Arthur, again, you may order them via our website...while supplies last. They're going quick, so don't dawdle! Arthur Magazine: confirming that there really Thanks, Millie, we'll do our best. Sorry are people still doing interesting things

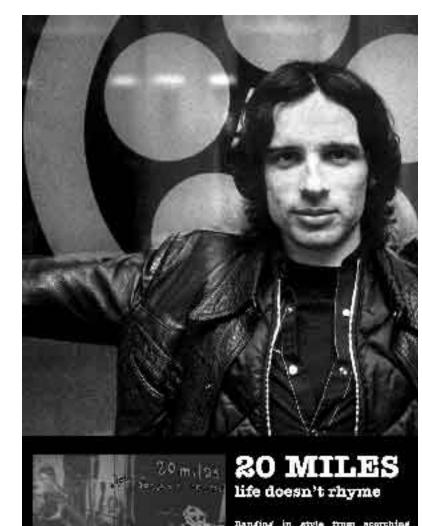
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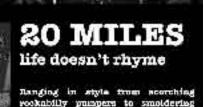






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### FIRE'S CLUB

Rootsy or folk? Post-punk or blues futura?

The answer is: Yes. THE FIERY FURNACES might be all over the map, but Margaret Wappler finds out one thing's dead certain: No one else is gettin' in the band.

LISTENING to the Fiery Furnaces for the

first time is like finding a pirate radio station while driving through the Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee. The map swears you're 100 miles outside Chattanooga but in the pitch-blackness, can you trust something as arbitrary as coordinates on a piece of paper to define place? What really locates you is that station at the end of the dial, with its strange accent and colloquialisms.

The Fiery Furnaces-Matt and Eleanor Friedberger, a brother-and-sister duo residing in Brooklyn, New Yorkare behind the latest pirate station in rock: they've flipped on a switch and defined a special place between the forest and the mountains. Sixteen songs appear on their debut Gallowsbird's Bark (Rough Trade): it's a trunk show of delicious oddities, lovingly stitched and fringed with twirls of piano, itchy funked guitar solos, lyrics like "In the Cracker Barrel dumpster I found a bag/Red-white striped, I opened it—gag" tickled along by prickly cool rhythms. It's blues, post-punk and a traveling vaudeville show pieced together with equal parts confidence, naivete (is it going too far to suggest that songs all about foreign lands are a tad Peter Pan?) and a kind of manic curiosity that sees the Friedbergers grabbing hold of a sound from one decade, giving it a good shake and then setting it down and running off to the next decade-or several ones previous—sending the listener into an enjoyably vertiginous tailspin. Matt might be a little too fond of those noodly solos that made more than a few Led Zeppelin songs deflate and I cringe each time Eleanor sings that line "Mummy, Mummy, Mummy"-though I'm not sure if it's because I really love it or can't stand it—but who cares? The Fiery Furnaces' gawky moments pose problems that are actually interesting.

The first 15 minutes of my Saturday afternoon conversation with the Furnaces were spent catching up (by the way, I went to junior high and high school in Oak Park, Il., with Eleanor) but soon enough, it turned to other things—blues, identity and the comfort of being a brother/sister band. Throughout our talk Eleanor and Matt, her senior by four years, played a funny game of cat-and-mouse-teasing, then supportingsometimes sounding like the squabbling siblings from Wes Anderson's Royal Tenenbaums. Here are some

According to the pithy and droll liner notes of Gallowsbird's Bark, Matt and Eleanor's struggles to finally become the Fiery Furnaces in 2000 was proceeded by great violence, nothing less than Eleanor being "hit over the head, stabbed in the knee and smashed on the foot for coming down in the basement," where Matt "guarded the scene of his humiliation." i.e., prior failed recordings.

Eleanor: Matt was very mean.

Matt: I was a horrible stupid kid.

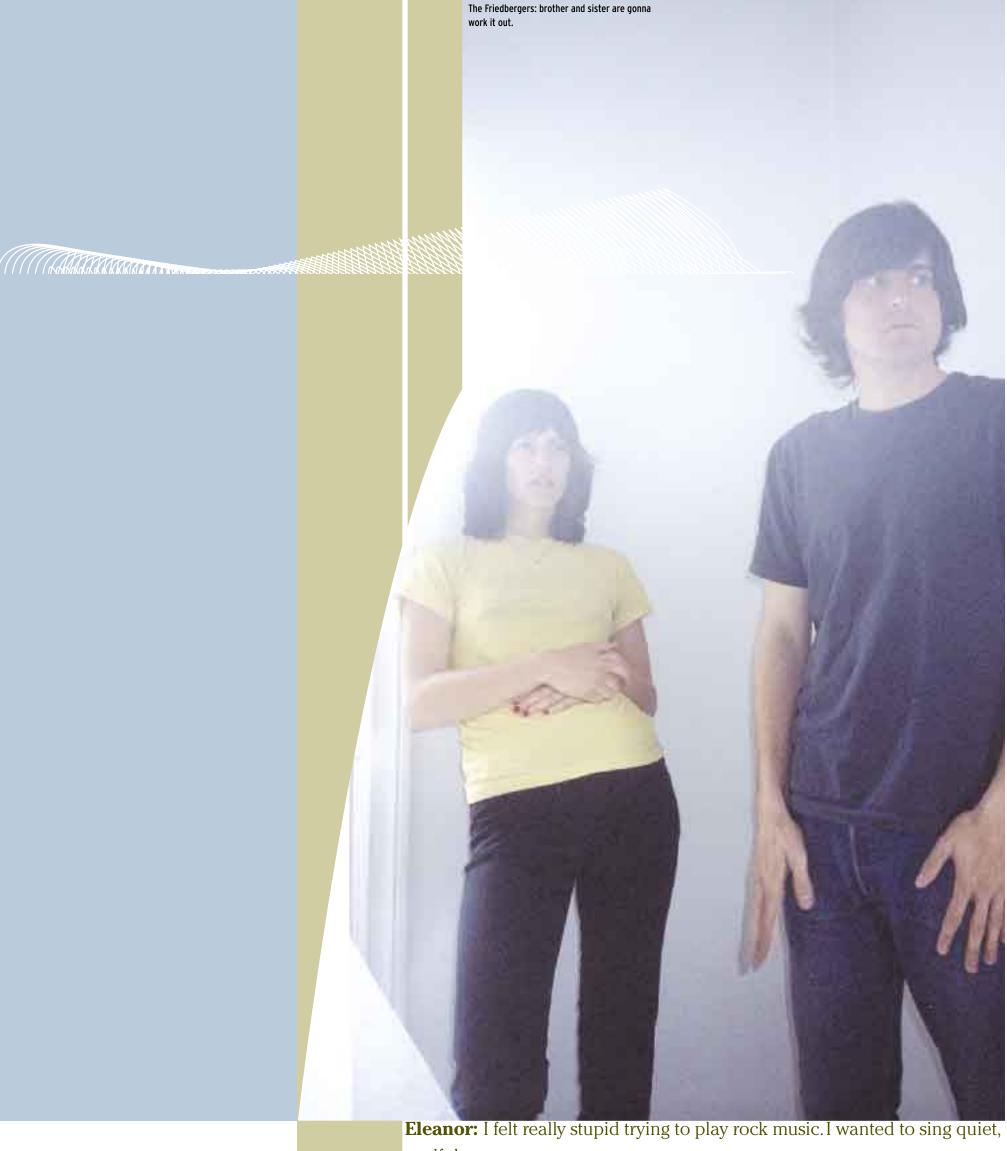
**Eleanor**: He beat me up.

Matt: I would never beat you up-I would hit you.

**Eleanor**: He was very abusive. As soon as he got little bit older, though, he was the most supportive, the most generous. He completely turned around. But now he's reverted back to the old way. Just kidding-I

One of the rituals of the high school we attended was going to the Chicago Blues Festival every summer; you and your friends camp out, surreptitiously drink cheap beer and listen to the likes of Howling Wolf or Bo Diddley playing to a crowd of tens of thousands. I asked the Friedbergers if growing up in Chicago, where tourists pile nightly into the clubs of Rush Street to hear a more commercial form of the blues than what we typically heard at the Blues Fest, affected

Matt: I love Chicago '50s music, people like Chuck Berry, Muddy Waters and Howling Wolf ... but I wasn't going to try to sing like Lightning Hopkins, or certainly not Howling Wolf. Not that Eleanor sings like that either but Eleanor, from the first moments we were trying this, Eleanor could sing over these very normal blues riffs in a way that sounded good



soulful songs.

**Matt:** If we are any good live, it's because of Eleanor. She can pull it off, yet she's not pouring beer on herself or jumping around or doing Debbie Harry impersonations.

to me. Hopefully as we go along, we can take advantage of that more in a way that doesn't sound anything like the White Stripes. I think I like the kitchen sink approach to the Chicago blues sound. It's very different from the revivalist garage stuff that's been going on in the past few years.

For most of 2000 and 2001, the Fiery Furnaces played at several rock clubs around New York, not thinking of themselves as, in Matt's words, an official band, "like, here's our name and here's our sticker and that kind of shit." Towards the end of 2001, things had changed. They were a band, all right—but what kind? I asked them whether they practiced constantly, trying to develop and hone their sound, during those first months when they were playing at clubs.

Matt: It's funny you should say that because we didn't develop a damn thing. We just went to our shows, we had some songs and we'd just show up and start playing them.

Eleanor: I thought we were going to be like a folky act.

You thought you were going to be a folky

Eleanor: That's what I thought, yeah. Just the two of us, singing our songs.

Matt: I thought live we were going to be as rootsy as possible because we couldn't be bothered with anything else. We could hardly be bothered to get anyone else to play with us. I never thought of it like trying to be folky, though. I like to say 'rootsv.

Eleanor: I, for a long time, thought I didn't want to be a loud rock band. I felt really stupid trying to play rock music. I had sort of a complex about being a girl and trying to do this. All the girls who were doing this were either dressed up in some kind of ridiculous outfit or you were like this punk rock ... [searches for the right word] Tough ass.

Eleanor: Yeah, and I didn't want to be any of those things. I wanted to sing quiet, soulful songs.

Matt: But what I thought from playing a few shows with Eleanor is that she did seem confident and more authoritative so I thought what works well for us live is to play as a proper rock band.

Eleanor: Well, now it feels that way.

Matt: So slowly we started to play that way, as opposed to trying to sound 'interesting'-or we'd just try to be as spontaneous as possible. Now on our record and live we play like a rock band for better or worse. It's good because if you're playing in rock clubs, it's helpful to be a rock band, if only because you do a lot better. No. actually, if you're playing in front of a bunch of people talking, not necessarily interested in you and more interested in a girl across the room, it works better to play as aggressively as possible, as a way to try to work something out that's interesting. It's useful sensationalism. Some of that Pete Townsend 1965 stuff is true.

So, you found yourself adjusting to whatever the audience was giving you? For instance, if they were mumbling and what not, you'd step up your playing?

Matt: For me playing in bands, I always feel ... pissed off when I'm on stage. Like I look at people and I think, what are you doing here? It's sort of a hegomonic attitude. It's really a defense mechanism because I'm nervous When you're nervous you get agitated. For me, it's more of a reaction to what I think Eleanor is good at doing, or what she has that's different. It's a loud rock band, and she can pull it off, yet she's not pouring beer on herself or jumping around, and she's

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**Matt**: I was a horrible stupid kid.

**Eleanor**: He was very abusive. As soon as he got a little bit older, though, he was supportive. He completely turned around. But now he's reverted back to the old way. Just kidding! I think.

not doing Debbie Harry impersonations. So that's why I think, live, if we are any good, it's because we're using Eleanor. Eleanor: (laughing) Yes, using me.

So, Eleanor, how did you ever figure out what kind of identity you wanted to

**Eleanor:** I don't know. We played this show the other night in London for the Rough Trade 25th Anniversary celebration and it was at this club and it was this big media-type thing. It was really fun. I don't know what happened, but at some point there on the stage it was like everything came together for me. I don't know if Matt even noticed or anything. I don't know what happened. Matt: I don't know what the fuck you're

Eleanor: I don't know. I felt really good. I felt really comfortable and I was having so much fun.

Do you feel like the audience picked up on it?

Eleanor: Well, I bought this really great Japanese sash earlier in the day, maybe that had something to do with it. I don't know how it happened but it didn't happen overnight or anything. I think it's the development

Before the Fiery Furnaces, Matt had another band. The Suckin' Doghounds. with a 12-year-old cousin. They eventually petered out but the four-track recordings live on. Eleanor says their mother calls nearly every day with articles or reviews she's spotted about the Fiery Furnaces her parents like to find them on the computer. With kindred (in every sense of the word) cousins and supportive parents. do the Fiery Furnaces need anyone outside the clan? Their current lineup like something so much I'd just try to be features David Muller on drums and Toshi

Yano on bass. I asked the Friedbergers about the cycle of drummers the Furnaces had gone through, and whether they'd ever have a non-Friedberger become a permanent member of the band.

Eleanor: Probably not. Matt: No. I wouldn't want to necessarily record with one person forever.

Eleanor: The whole idea, if we are a band, is that it's Matt and me playing together.

Matt: But David and Toshi, they do a great job and if people start to like us. it's partially because of them. I wouldn't want to slight their contribution.

But it sounds like it's important to have the band basically be the two of you.

Matt: Yeah, it's important for us to think we only have to argue with each other. It's uncomfortable, especially before when this is something you're doing as a hobby, you're doing it for fun, you're from playing in front of audiences for a doing it because it's something you like to do anyways, and you don't want to have to... if you're going to compromise with someone, you want it to be with someone vou trust. Someone vou think oh, it's fine that they got their way about this because I feel that way about that That's the way I feel about Eleanor. It's easy for me to do something her way whereas if it was someone else, I might think the song they wrote was stupid Then I'd say, 'What the fuck am I doing bothering with this person? I'm going to go watch TV.' But with Eleanor if I didn't supportive, so it makes it much easier to

be in a band with someone [related to you] because you behave well. On the other side-

Eleanor: Yeah, I was just going to say-Matt: On the other side of it, it's easy to yell at the other person because you can say what's on your mind. You don't have any social inhibitions with this person. It's bad because you can get in nasty fights quicker but I'm comfortable doing that with Eleanor because-

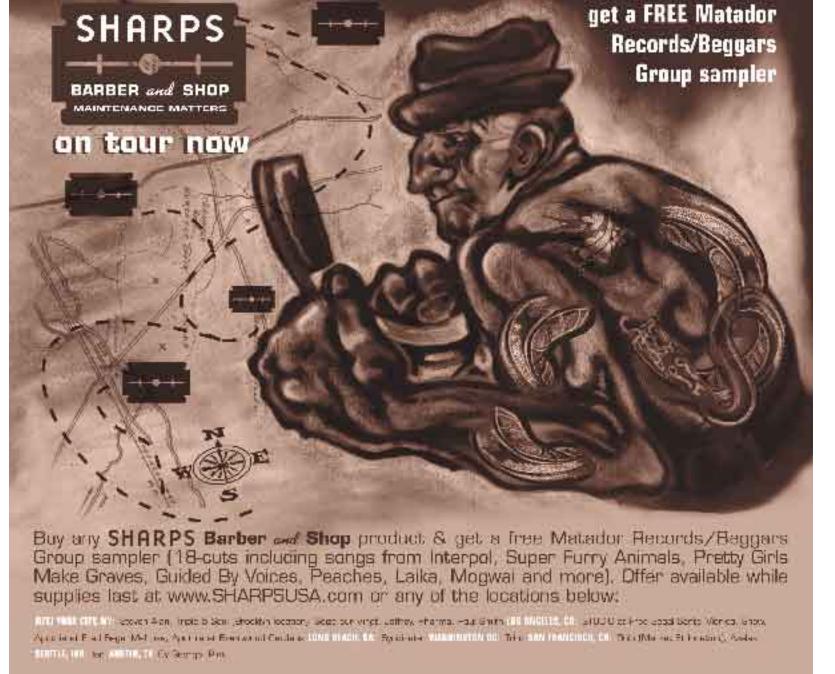
Eleanor: He can boss me around. Matt: Yes, because I can boss her around. I've been bossing her around my whole life, so why stop now?

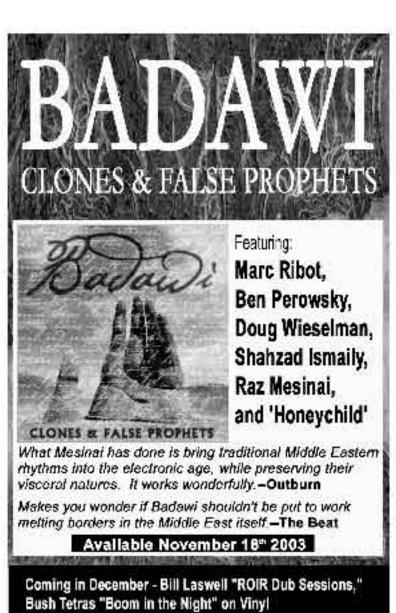


**Aquarius** astrological characterization which hippiexploitation musical Hair. Yo dug all the attention at the time but now you'd like to dissociate vourself from those fabulous furry freaks of yesteryear. You've found yourself pigeonholed; you find i hard getting jobs as a butcher of a Pentagon military contractor, fo example. It's time for everyone to know that Aguarians aren't just well-meaning free-thinkers living in schoolbuses and teepees. That nazis like Ronald Reagan and slaveowners like George Washington were Aquarians too. That Aquarians are tough mothers like Rollins and rabble rousers like John "Rotten." And that if this millennium is indeed the "Age of Aguarius." it's a bloody epoch featuring war and nuclea proliferation; not just food co-ops Your work in expanding socia versatility is absolutely crucial for the people of your sign.



You are the sign of the fish. Fish travel in large groups, called "schools," but you hate school which makes you an unusual fish; a romantic, loner, James Dean-style fish. Part of a new "me generation" in the fish world wary of social conventions--such as egg laying and gill use--and intent on individual freedom. It's a very American outlook and one which many in the fish world resent. They see your insistent individuality as selfish and bad for the surviva of the species, especially if you represent a turning point in evolution. You on the other hand, ee them as conformist drone bound by stifling tradition. Make a civic gesture toward them to allay their fear; tell them you haven' niven un on school altonether you're just taking a year off to





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Flash: You've been characterize

as the "baby" of the zodiac. Any

Aries: If I had a publicist things

would be different. But I refuse to

pander to the media in the way

that others--such as Gemini and

Scorpio--do. The whole "sexual

thing Scorpio has sold to the world

Flash: But don't you believe that

judgments...it's just fashion Remember Leo in the '70s?

Everyone wanted to be a Leo. Warhol

pretended to be one... Where is Leo

now? Reminiscing about the glory

days...talking about Jimmy Page

Flash: Who's hot now and who

Aries: Free-willed Sagittarius was

big in the '60s, power brokering

while elitist Capricorn defined the

90's. The big money in Vegas now is

power recedes and "reflection

and Studio 54.

each sign has intrinsic qualities?

comments on this?

Aries: I don't read my press. Flash: You've been called temperamental and difficult as well.

of the proletarian term "bullshit opting instead for the effete and At a cocktail party for example, they will pronounce their displeasure with an idea or opinion with a smug chortle, as they shout "Complet and utter horseshit!"; or perhaps just "HORSESHIT!" Their pleasure ir the use of the word is self evident from its delivery. The opinion of the academic, honed by years in the ivory tower, is especially authorized by the use of this word. While you, Taurus, may be relieved that you fecal matter finally isn't being used as totem of ultimate devaluation you should actually be offended As everyone knows, the mythic vileness of a creature's waste is inversely proportionate to their power, so these elite academics are betraying their class origins and loyalties by ignoring your offal. You to them are mere chattel. They uphold the knightly horse, with it's dung subsequently attaining the

mantle of ultimate awfulness. The

knight of course is the most recent

ancestor of the matador, who is you

sadistic arch nemesis. Destroy these

intellectual matadors therefore and

Confusion rules your underpants

Well your forebears before you

all seemed equally confused;

Ray Davies sang about "Lola"

McCartney mistook his major

Jane Wiedlin kept lips sealed

but your 'Prince-ly' hermaphroditic

Nancy Sinatra wore those boots

Gemini confess:

Are you a rogueish lady

or a very womanly gent

Sun Ra wore a dress

autobiographically?

for a suffragette lady

cannot be concealed

Morrissey swore celibacy

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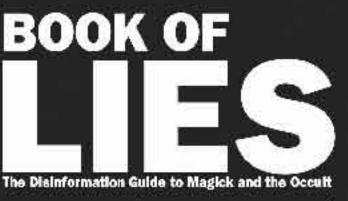
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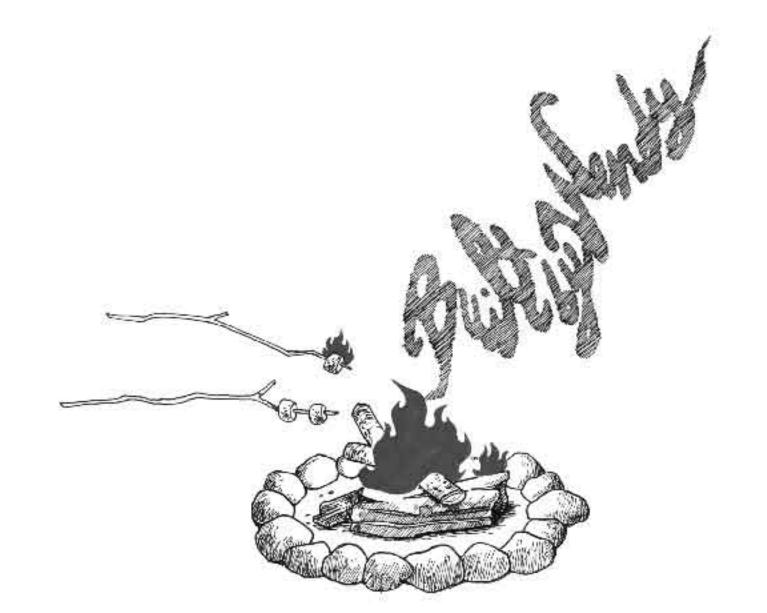
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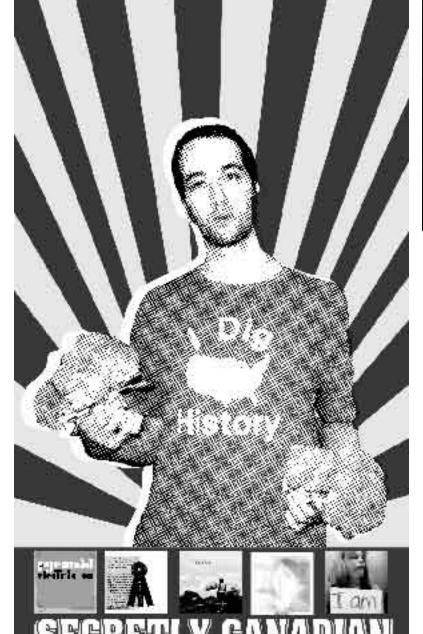
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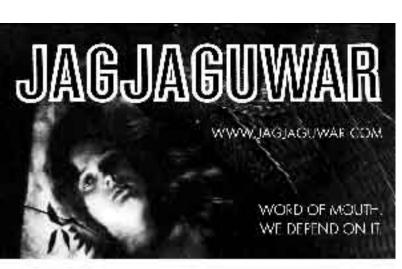




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length record doces their signatole string. ánskavag atack ord unbligal diordaremous coloure or Jacques Biol. (In or kilter swagger of Dylan's Bloods Ge Bloods. and the bushy belladry of Nick Cave.



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The crab announces its gender on its chest through a particular design emblazoned on its shell. As a Cancer, you similarly announce your gender through your hairstyle and choice of clothes, even through your manner and affectations. In socalled Western culture, respective gender differences are highly exaggerated through style and prescribed social behavior so as to accentuate sexual contrast. If you're a woman Cancer for example, sometimes you'll wear a skirt or a brassiere. What's the deal with that? Are you some kind



The gazelles which you normally feast upon are getting scarce. They've all moved into a group house and just play video games, never going out anymore. You've heard that they think you're a not a completely unfounded idea. It's a depressing development ultimate starvation. Maybe you should move to Portland and



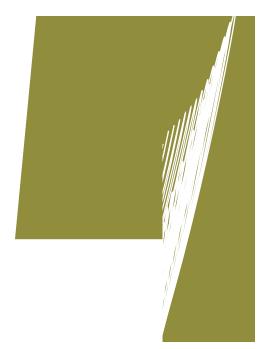
**Virgo**While perhaps you're not technically a virgin, your spiritual "maidenhead" is intact, meaning that you've never let your pretense of purity be trampled underfoot by the hordes of lecherous hucksters. You are the unsullied ambassador of your aesthetic ideal. This is why the various witch doctors are so intent on dragging you to the mouth of the volcano and spilling your blood for their various deities. In an age when Faust can't get a large french fries in hock for his soul, you are still a coup! Of course, nowadays there aren't deities per se. There is only one god and his name is Moolah. The high priests are agents, ad execs, bankers et al. whose might is represented by their ability to rend and bend the ideological and the artistic vision... they want you in their bed! Resist their humping gesticulations at all costs! Or at least hold out for "total creative



Astrologers typically discriminate against one sign or another, using the forum to promulgate their own bigotries toward certain signs and the people who inhabit them. This is an absolutely unprofessional approach, as an astrology column should never be used to serve a single individual's sicko agenda. All the star signs must be dealt with according to a scientific reading of the stars and a quick survey of animal entrails. Many astrologers particularly dislike Libras, who are such self-righteous, status-seeking jerks. Then there is the other kind of Libra who tends to be more like a pile of moss, just totally weird. Oh, and also Libras steal. A Libra stole my bicycle once. Maybe one day you'll find an astrologer who is inclined toward your sign and

who won't put you through that

kind of discrimination.



### BROTHER FROM THIS PLANET

Hallucinogens, Ukrainian Catholicism, NASCAR town alienation, the Tao De Ching and the Beatles helped make **Brother JT** the homegrown musical genius he is. Jay Babcock interviews America's least-known national treasure.

"A good myth or poem ... addresses our appetitye anarchies, and offers safe conduct to some lifeenhancing energy by giving it a name; and a bad one does the opposite, 'binding with briars my joys and desires.' But in the absence of an authoritative myth or poem, the lights simply go out and the soul is closed down: no name, no game. In other words, we have to play; and if we refuse, our robotic bodies are simply wired up by this week's television commercials.

—Origins of the Sacred: The Ecstasies of Love and War.

Not to get too evangelical-although given his name and interests, perhaps some fervor is only appropriate-but both the prodigious output and the career-shape of the man they call Brother JT offers just the type of myths and poems, in song and words and drawings and deed, that Mr. Young is yapping about here.

Listen to the beautiful smeared mess—homemade and lush and voluptuous-that is Maybe Should We Take Some More?, one of the two albums JT released in 2001: noise-covered melodic pop; fluteand-tambourine folk; pastoral instrumental epics; dubspace recorders self-replicating into Jajouka horns; Hendrix jamming in Bombay with street musicians, remixed by Cabaret Voltaire; and so on. And that's just one album—there are many more where that came from (see David Katznelson's enlightening sidebar on page 14). This is boundarydissolving, spirit-ennobling music: aural stuff that can help you as you hang out in back in the garden of your mind. Or something.

BROTHER JT was born John Terleskey in 1962 in Easton, Pennsylvania. Starting in the mid-'80s Terleskey lead The Original Sins, whose mission, he notes on his website, was to "merge pop and garage/punk, taking inspiration from the Lyres, Buzzcocks, Stooges, and that whole 'Paisley Underground' thing from the early '80s." The Sins continued to record albums through the '90s, but beginning in the early part of that decade, Terleskey began releasing solo records under the "Brother JT" moniker. ("Brother JT" is a nickname given to him by underground journo/advocate (and now-Arthur columnist) Byron Coley after hearing JT's Descent, which, JT says, was "kind of my version of Coltrane's Ascension, only it was supposed to be Jesus descending into hell while he was dead and freeing the saints or something. And side two, 'Kabbalah,' was pretty much an acid Gregorian chant with just voices. I think he felt the music sounded like the work of some twisted monk or something ... [It] just kind of stuck.")

On the phone from Faston (where I again after a 12-year-interim in nearby Bethlehem), JT is soft-spoken, funny, precise and open, with a disarmingly humble matter-of-factness; when I ask him how he's managed to put food on the table through all these years of limited commercial success as a musician, he mentions one of his favorite jobs: "I drove a newspaper delivery truck in the afternoons, throwing bundles out for kids .... A lot of songs came out of that route." Of course: Brother JT delivers.

I opened our conversation with some remarks about *That's Life*, a set of harrowing spoken-word (the Brother had to rap!) pieces JT recorded sometime in the early '90s that could be described as Bitter Surrealist. They're stamped with the same inventive, humorous spirit that marks all of JT's work, but these rants' bad-trip, freaked-out disgust seem miles away from the more, shall we say, positive outlook of his more recent albums...

Arthur: You sound so angry on that spoken word CD.

**Brother JT**: I was probably a lot more angry then than I am now. When you're is your religious background? all—basically you keep going but you not quite. It's still under the Pope. It's the always just think you're practically at next best thing to being a Byzantine or the verge of something or other. A lot of the early stuff that I did was a purging of sorts. What I didn't know then was that my early teens and then it just fell away. things might work out okay. [chuckles] worked out better than I thought they

I wrote them in a fever of ... automatic subconscious thing going and connect with what I thought might be my subconsicous. But you really don't know—there's a lot of things going around there all the time. Usually you edit vour thoughts. In this case I just no. I doubt it. Somewhere along the way tried to let it spill out, and that was I consciously decided, "There's gotta be the result. Those were done on a mic something more. There's gotta be a little in my room in Bethlehem, trying to do more to this than just happenstance." I more positive, and not just drop this on played a role in all that. The Masses

'90s, I started thinking that whatever was spooky. Very spooky. And when creative process I do I'd better try that gets in you when you're a ki to think in a little more positive way, you don't ever really dispose of it. The written with a negative tone had sort of a universal archetype. So it gets to be comes back on you, or it's a self-fulfilling getting older, you feel like you've got all expurgating all these demons—you should be out of demons by now. I'm not, but I do feel more of a responsibility talking about? to try to make some things of beauty too, and not just all this catharsis.

There's all these religious references in your work: your band was called religious iconography and roadside

there's a huge spiritual element in your work. And you lived in a town called Bethlehem for 12 years. What exactly

younger you have this block that makes I was raised Ukranian Catholic which is you think that there's just no hope at very close to being Eastern Catholic but whatever. I went to catechism, and had holy communion. I went to church up to But, as I'm sure a lot of younger people Not that they have per se, but they have experience, it stays with you—maybe moreso than if you were Protestant or something, where it's not such a big deal and there's not so much ceremony writing, trying to get some sort of a involved and not so much attention paid to this kind of mystery thing going on. Which always appealed to me.

Over the years I've gone back and forth between thinking that there might be something to this and thinking Well, 'em without any breaks. If I tried to do think I forced myself to start thinking a spoken word thing now, it would be a along the lines of spirituality, if only to lot more soooooothing, make it a little enrich my life. My upbringing definitely are ingrained in me from when I was a kid: there was a lot of incense, a lot of Somewhere, probably around the mid-droning kind of hymns in Ukrainian. It because a lot of the songs that I had Christ story is there in you, almost like come true! [chuckles] I felt like it sort of where you don't know whether it's really something real or if it's just inculcated in prophecy, or something. And also, just vou to that extent, that it has become a reality of belief, or faith.

this off your chest. You've been doing Your records and writings are rants it for 10 years—10 years is enough for are pretty open about your interest in hallucinogenic drugs. Did they play a role in this spiritual opening up you're

Yeah, but I think just sort of getting through life teaches a lot of things about the possibilities. Just things that happen where you would have to say, There's the Original Sins, you have these gotta be a point to this because why kitschy photos on your covers of else did these things happen. There seems to be some kind of scheme, one **graphics and so on. Yet it's obviously** that anyone could see, something where **not completely a wink, or scornful—** most people would say, There's a lesson



pages are excerpted from The Big Picture by Brother JT (1999).





to be learned here

of an opening back open of a door that I'd shut during my teenage years. I was a very straight teenager and really only got into hallucinogens in my early 20s. It had a profound effect: something similar to flipping a switch in your brain that had been switched to "off" onto "on." You know, thinking, "Geez, no wonder all this stuff is the way it is." A lot of people these days probably don't even need it. But for me, given the upbringing I had ... [chuckles] I came up in the '70s, you know? Which, to me, like having layers of brown and orange gauze taped over my head. I remember being completely clueless as a kid and a teenager and this was a big revelation. Whereas I think maybe kids these days are just sorta like "Eh. so what." Or that they already know. and they don't need any help in knowing that there is sort of a oneness in things. It's not so much of a revelation. Maybe it's just bred into them now. I hope so! I I really do sense that there's evolution taking place—I don't know in exactly which direction: outward, or inward, or what. But people do seem a little different than when I started out in my observations

But yeah, hallucinogenics were kind

I was the last of four children, and I was significantly younger than the others. It was almost like being an only child, to an extent, because by the time I was coherent they were pretty much out of the house. My parents were both 39 years older than me when I was born. There's a major gap there. They were great people, my mom's a great person, and so was my dad, but there were certain things they just couldn't relate to, and certain things I couldn't relate to with them. So there was a certain amount of alienation from the start. I probably had a pretty good intelligence as a kid. I did pretty well in school, but I think as a result of being kind of in my own world a lot of the time I became alienated from everything. I can't say I had a terrible childhood or anything but I just missed out on a lot of it because I was so withdrawn. When that happens I suppose it just builds up in you like wondering what all this stuff is about that other people are doing. [chuckles] As I said, the '70s had built up a lot of frustration in me. It's like American society was in its teenage years then too: People didn't really know what was going on. They were getting all these shocks from Watergate and Vietnam and so on, which resulted in this slightly off-kilter, out-of-control culture. I think it's finally kind of righted itself to an extent. It's a lot more sophisticated these days. I don't envy kids these days, certainly not-in a way, I probably had it a lot easier, but... Also, I never developed this easiness with people that I see in a lot of people. If you're like that, you get left out of a lot of things. And that probably built up a good deal of frustration which eventually came out via music.

### How did you end up doing music with a band—making records, performing in front of an audience and so on-if you were so lonely and alienated?

My brother Greg, the next youngest showed me some bar chords on the guitar when I was about 15 and I just nda fell in love with certain kinds o music. I was big into the Beatles when I was a kid. And instead of going to college, I went to a school for audio engineering. I'd started to write some songs by then, it was just the year out of high school, and one of the projects was you had to record songs. I thought, "Well, I might as well do one of mine." It showed me that gee, I can do this. It wasn't that hard. But it took me a few years to get up enough contacts or whatever to actually get into a working, or a group. It was like '83 or '84 when I started playing bass in some minor groups and eventually switched to guitar again.

It was just a process. Music had always been around. I remember my brothers getting Beatles albums when they came out in the late '60s, I was only 6 or 7 maybe, but I still remember listening to The White Album and just being

ARTHUR & JANUARY 2004

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### A WITNESSING

**David Katznelson** guides us thru Brother JT's vast and beguiling career.

For the past 20 years Brother JT has made records that exemplify the "freeness" and dark-green/blood-red hazy warmth of true psychedelia. As a songwriter, he is so proficient that no one takes notice; as a guitar player, he subtly outshines any slinger around (besides the Cheaterslicks' Dave Shannon) with riffs, leads and solos that are consistently bewildering; as a rock star...well, he was just born for the job, regardless if anyone ever figures it out. He writes one—liner bits of philosophy that are as memorable as those of Yogi Berra, H. L. Mencken, or Will Rogers. JT is, in short, the most hidden of greatest treasures.

I have been a big fan of the music and vision of Brother JT since first hearing his mind—altering tour de force **Meshes In the Afternoon** in the early '90s. As I am prone to do, I have since collected his entire output ... carrying my fanaticism so far as to release a record of his on my own label. If you are able to find a Brother JT record in a store—and it can be difficult (see bottom of page for record—location people who can help you)—know that it will most certainly do all the things you assume it will do: it will move you, it will rock you and it will uplift you. You will be swept away to a cloudy island where ideologies of a time long past are channeled through a devout soul whose musical prowess and ability to create a perfect melody welcome all and conquer all.

The following spew examines the mind-blowing, intolerably underappreciated recorded output of Brother JT. Please note that it does not include the great recordings of his band The Original Sins, who deserve their own, separate celebration.

### **Descent** Brother JT

(1991, Twisted Village)
JT's solo debut was a standard-setter for the mighty
Twisted Village label and a good launching place for
our now-Original Sins-less psychedelic hero. Beautifully
packaged in a Folkways-meets-Impulse handmade blackand-white homage to John Coltrane's Ascension, this
platter features two sidelong drones. The Spacemen 3 called
such constructions "ecstasy symphonies," but these two are
dirtier and much less calm inducing.

### Meshes In the Afternoor

Brother JT (1992, Twisted Village)

A masterpiece of stream-of-consciousness psyche. Meshes consists of one piece spread over two sides, with haunting yet hopeful songs coming in and out of the fuzz. "In The Afternoon" is a particular favorite, with a resolution that brings the whole record to a magnificent finale. Similar to the brilliance of Bill Holt's Dreamies, Meshes In The Afternoon sees JT fusing his garage pop know-how (always present in the Original Sins) with basement chemicals to create the warm, buzzing sound that would become his trademark. An essential artistic presentation.

"Ice Cream Cone/Moon Pie" 7-inch single

Crush Nova (1993, Mind Cure)

The year after **Meshes** was rather quiet for Bro JT, with the exception of a few releases under different names. The best of these is this single, a tour-de-force homage to JT's favorite treats and a showcase for JT's pop-garage flavors.

### Brother JT

(1994, Bedlar

The first of JT's beautiful vinyl-only homemade silk-screened releases. These introduce the basement-recording, song-oriented era of Brother JT hinted at within the mesh of **Meshes**. Side A is fullof stand alone hits, with "Time Was (...but now it isn't)" the in-house chart-topping classic of swirly guitar vibrations and ghost like vocals. The second side is a returns to long-iam land (and what a good place it is to re-visit).

### Holy Ghost Stories Brother JT

(1994, Bedlam

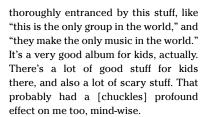
Number two in the homemade recordings series is a strange look into Brother JT's acid-tinged, almost child-like obsessions. Songs like "From the Throne" examine that particular bodily function which infants first appreciate and soon become proud of. **Holy Ghost Stories** may not be a great place to start listening to Bro JT, but it does give the fan positive insight into the workings of JT's imagination. And once again, the silk-screen cover is beautiful.

BROTHER J.T.

### Music for the Other Head Brother JT and Vibrolux

(1995, Siltbreeze)

The cover looks as though it might be a Bedlam release, but it is actually a release from one of the classic underground labels in America, Siltbreeze. The first side of this platter, entitled "The Comet," is epic: as Fuzzhead did with their rendition of Can's "You Do Right," JT and Virbolux infectiously repeat the song's grooves while JT proclaims that "The comet will come." Mind (rot), on Side Two, contains the classic JTism, "I don't mind if you get out of your mind, do you mind if I get out of mine?" This record is groove-driven heaviness with long jams and lots of repetition. Bliss. Somewhere on Side Two, there's even a piece of "Fortune Teller," a song that was covered by all bands that mattered in England in the labe-'60s.



But you never moved to a bigger town to try and get your music career going.

I never did have any desire to move to

a city even if it would have made more sense because it would have been so much more expensive. We could pretty much go there for the shows, anyway. There were a whole lot of showcase shows in New York. Nothing really came of it. But we went through that mill and eventually just gave up trying. I was in Bethlehem that whole time. People in the group had lives too, y'know. It was never like a real working band. It was an unusual situation, dictated probably by my own lack of ambition. [chuckles] But not lack of ambition to write songs. Just lack of ambition to do the things necessary in order to make it a working band.

So where you live, is it rural or ...?
I'm living in the heart of NASCAR country. We've got a speedway in Nazareth. That's where Mario Andretti lives. It's kind of that sensibility. [chuckles] It's that kind of area: it's an older area, people know what they like, and are a little bit set in their ways, probably. It's pretty alienating, but ... Maybe to understand why I never moved away, it would help for me to

I go where the wind blows, you know? And basically it's just not very windy.

explain my character... I go where the wind blows, you know? And basically it's just not very windy. [chuckles] It has not been a very windy life for me.

I read all the existentialist stuff in high school and it seemed like kind of a dead end. I was really looking for something that made sense to me. I got this Alan Watts translation, this Tao De Ching thing. I lapped that right up, cuz I was already pretty lazy. It said "The best good is to flow like water" or something like that, and to NOT try to make things happen, but just to let things happen to you, to become part of things and all that. And that's really been my guiding ... anti-philosophy. It was the one thing that really made sense to me. As a practical guiding premise for the way I've led my life, that probably was pretty instrumental. Not to say I'm a Taoist, or I take it really seriously, but just to develop into that kind of being was

something I probably was interested in

As a result, it's sort of like, if somebody HAD called me up and said, and even today, "You have an opportunity to live in Madagascar at a parrot plantation, you have to feed the parrots, that's your job." I'd probably do it. [chuckles] I am a completely passive type of a guy. I'd say, "Well okay, sure." But as it is, no one ever gave me the opportunity, and nothing ever really came up to say, "Well, why don't you join our band out here in Portland or something or Florida" or whatever, so I just kinda stuck, waiting for the universe to move me, rather than me moving the universe.

### But you still say in NASCAR territory. It's not aggravating, alienating enough to move?

Well, it gets a bit much sometimes but really I'm not sure where I'd fit in. [chuckles] I really don't know. I've never fit into any group, I never felt particularly at home anywhere that I've visited, and thought, Gee I could really see myself living here, moreso than where I live. That's another thing about that, it's like saying it really doesn't matter where you are, it's where your mind is. I'm not sure what the exact phrase is. That probably partly somehow explains it.

The cover for your new record is a close-up of a crucifix. And the title is *Hang in There, Baby.* 

I hope people don't take that the wrong way. It'd be very easy to think, "Oh he's being a wiseguv saving to Jesus, 'Hang in there, baby." But it's more like me saving—to everybody—including him to just hang in there and not... It was like a lot of the album covers I ended up with: the image came first and then the title I saw that photo and I thought "I gotta use it," and then it occurred to me that would be a good book there. If you hear the music, I think you'd know that that [denigrating Christ] is not where I'm coming from. On the back, there's a guy we saw in Austin when we were there driving through town on Good Friday and the guy evidently wheels along this cross probably every Good Friday. I don't know how far he was going, but ...

It just seemed to fit in.

You used a title from Maya Deren's

Meshes of the Afternoon for one of
your albums. Are you a fan of her

work?
I didn't even see *Meshes of the Afternoon*, til after I had used the title. [chuckles] I'd seen the title and a still from the film, of Maya looking out the window, in a book about avant garde film that I'd been reading. I had no idea what it was

about but it just struck me, so I made up in my mind what it would be about. [chuckles] I liked the title.

Maybe We Should Take Some More is like a survey of different kinds of psychedelic music from around the world. There are parts on it that remind me of the Jajouka musicians from Morocco, and so on. Are you familiar with that stuff?

Oh yeah. That and parts of this other record I did called *Holy Ghost Stories* back in the mid-'90s were sort of an attempt at making the suburban middle-class equivalent of bush folk recordings. Just trying to get that spirit into it. I had this album, just incredible stuff, called *The Secret Museum of Mankind*, that had an influence to an extent, cuz these pieces were all real short and crudely recorded, but they'd really got something down there. This was from the '30s and '40s. Just incredible things, incredible sounds.

### What are you listening to right now?

Usually I listen more to stuff in my car. Right now I've got a tape of Lee Perry, a tape of fairly obscure ska reggae stuff, dub stuff ... and also I made a tape of recent hip-hop stuff that I listen to a lot, the more progressive stuff like KAOS and Outkast and Ol' Dirty Bastard. The stuff where you can tell there's some brains behind it. All the other stuff I have no interest in. That stuff really moves me. It's touching to see people literally trying to turn a culture around with music. I think that's wonderful. So much music is for nothing, you know? Just to make money.

To me that's the only stuff currently going on that seems like it's moving anywhere, to be blunt. It's not just those artists, cuz I don't know enough about it to really speak like ... But as far as futuristic music, stuff that I think where music probably should be going by now, a lot of that hip-hop stuff seems like *the* way. Maybe even moreso than techno, which WISHES it was that.

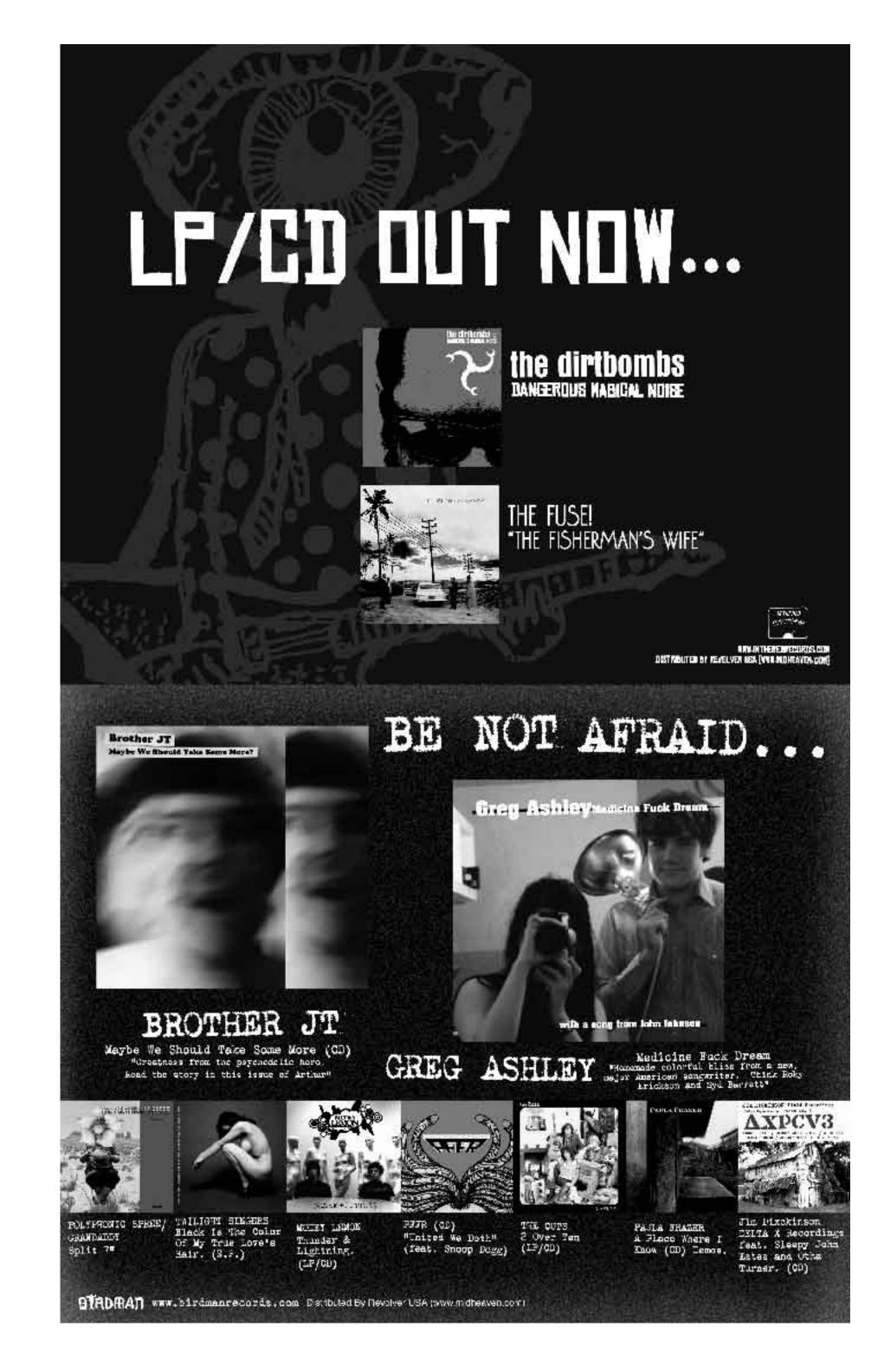
And there's probably a Neil Young tape in the car, too.

### If someone unfamiliar with your thing showed up at a Brother JT3 gig, what would it seem like to them?

If you're talking about the full-band thing, usually in the last couple of years I've ended up having four people. Another guitarist, usually, one of the two guys that are featured on *Hang in There Baby*. Some people would think

### COSMOLOPINATITIVOD





Rainy Day Fun

(1995, Drunken Fish)

The masterpiece of Brother JT's basement era, with solid songwriti throughout. The album opens with the fragile "Is It Soup Yet?," boasting backwards guitars and poignant narration. The sequence shown on the CD itself is wrong, so I'm uncertain if the next song is the reported "This Is The Life" or if it is the one after. Regardless, the first is a groovy pop ditty while the second is a sing-along smile of a track that makes ya wanna shimmy. "Beginning To Smile" is anothe classic one to sing to your girlfriend while embracing in a field of poppies (lyrics: "Have another hit, and then lets get down to it"). "Oh Mother" is JT-going-T. Rex with grinding guitar leads and confident vocals surfing the electric waves. "Slowly" is a great re-make of a song that appeared earlier on an obscure seven inch. The electric guitar is all swirls on this solid, loveable record. A classic.

Brother JT and Vibrolux

Originally released as a Bedlam artifact LP with silk-screen cover; Siltbreeze provides the digital issue with completely new artwork. Doomsday Rock is a thoroughly entertaining mind warp with epic grooves and brain damaging soundscapes. Doomsday is here, and JT gets political with his prophetic preview, "The President's Brain Is Missing." "You can stop the clock," he teaches on "Planet June"; "Now you're gonna die," he promises on the heavy "Grok," Guitar solos or top of guitar solos ("In Her Space", "Infinity") weave the heaviest of Rve to fall through (and not be saved). A rockin' good time.

### Come On Down

(1996, Drunken Fish)

A melancholy, trapped trip of a record with somber, very fatalistic lyrics, the very minimalist Come On Down is composed mostly of tremolo guitar, wah-ed out lazy bass, an electronic mosquito and JT's light, effected vocals. "Try Not To Try" and "Red Cathedral" are very laid back, almost Smog-like, sing-a-longs. The between song banter ("It Keeps Raining," for instance) is laced with mind-altered collegian philosophy that pales to the righteous one-liners that often appear in JT's music Come On Down's highlight is the closer "Little Man" a stripped-down post-Syd-Pink Floyd-era whimsical toe tapper. An

### **Dosed and Confused**

Brother JT and Vibrolux (1998, Bedlam)

Music for the Other Head-era concert recording. JT's version of Live At Leeds, with extended heavily-rocked up versions of songs you have come to know and love, some incorporated into medleys a la "My Generation." "The Comet" comes alive on this offering. As a live act, when Brother JT is on, the souls of Rob Tyner and Jimi Hendrix are called to order. A heavy motherfuckin' ram job of a rock record

(1999, Drag City)

The first of JT's Drag City releases, produced by Royal Trux, is an allout rocker with a good dose of JT as guitar God. But Way to Got Jacks the intimacy of JT's previous releases; it often sounds more like a JT-fronting-the Trux record than a Bro JT3 record. That said, the title track alone is a monster and worth the price of admission

### Maybe We Should Take Some More

Brother JT

(2002, Birdman) A Brother JT record on my own label. While I don't think it's a cohesive as, say, Rainy Day Fun, there are many fine JT momen here. "SOS" (Son Of Sam) is a beautifully sparse track about the serial killer (among other things). "Whatcha Gonna Do" ha inventive frog-belching responses and air-guitar-inviting riffs. The groover "Lay It On" lays down a killer bass line while JT asks "Baby," won't you lay some light on me?" But it is "Honeysuckle" that is the jewel amongst this CD's jewels: a wonderful Sunday morning favorite that sounds like a sun rising and naked lovers stretching. Maybe We Should Take Some More is a strong outing in the basement/bedroom recording category of Brother JT's thang.

(2002, Drag City)

Released a few months after Maybe..., Spirituals nicely displays the other side of JT. This time, the Hagerty (Royal Trux)-producer/ JT-performer team clicks and the resultant platter has the rock (as you would want JT to rock) as well as the detail of his basement recordings. Some of these songs, such as "Be With Us" and "Summer," were originally presented as simpler tracks for Maybe, but JT rightfully wanted to flesh them out in the studio. "Mellow my favorite track on the record, has that signature recorder sound. biting into the memory of all that were blowing it in elementary school. The "Mellow" vibe is reminiscent of the Ophelias' opus "Mr. Rabbit," with a chorus that is shower-singable and a frolicking groove that induces buffalo chasing. "Lord You Are The Wine" is a top-notch rocker, and the traditional song "Mole In The Ground" is a perfectly arranged head-hobber culminating with a trance inducing, let's-all-speak-in -tongues musical freak-out...and get a load of that killer slide-guitar action! Really strong stuff.

### Hang In There, Baby

(2003. Drag City)

Possibly one of JT's finest moments and the definite highlight of his Drag City work. Just listening to the catchy psych-pop brilliance of "Gettin' There." "Lets Not And Say We Did" showcases the soulstirring aspect of JT's voice, presenting a depth that is uncommon in JT's ouevre. Strong all the way through, Hang's highlights include "Shine Like Me" ("Went to the mountain...the mountain in my mind") which is a guitar-led flying rocker and "Head Business," wherein we get yet another classic Brother JT line: "What I do with my head is my own damn business/CAN I GET A WITNESS??!?!?' What kind of witness is he looking for? Dunno, but Hang In There is probably the best place to start listening to Brother JT. Everything is here: great songs, amazing layer-upon-layer psychedelic quitar mayhem, and lyrics that will stick in your head like powerful propaganda.

ABOTHER UT

Where to find Brother JT's recordings:

Your local mom-and-pop record store will most likely have the Drag City releases, and maybe even the Birdman and Siltbreeze releases. But Brother JT's catalog is generally not well stocked. Here are some places where one can get most of the Brother JT offerings reviewed here:

Revolver Mail-order Website: www.midheaven.com

Aquarius Records: www.aquariusrecords.org Brother JT himself, whose site offers many amazing exclusive musical items: www.brotherjt.freeservers.com

it's kinda jammy-you know, there's really rudimentary songs, basic chords, raw-sounding, and there's this guy up front, he's kinda pudgy and he's got kinda straight hair, he looks like he's been drinking, maybe. [Babcock laughs] He'll start playing guitar or singing. The one thing that stands out probably is just how much I try. [chuckles] Maybe more so than is fashionable at this point. I really try to put it out there, either singing or guitar-wise. Usually it's just three-chord songs, the songs are usually something to do with some kind of spiritual concern, and we just get into some two-guitar freak-out thing while bass and drums are bashing away. You get into interesting things. It's not like a jam group doing a blues jam, it's more like trying to find holes in the sound and trying to go against rhythm, soloing, and get it... trying to get close in our own half-assed way to some kind of jazz thing. Like free jazz. If it's a good night. [laughs] There have been some reallly beautiful nights over the last couple of years but it's sorta like what mood's the lead singer's in, you know? [chuckles] It's lightning in a bottle. There have been great, great nights. Usually I'd start with an a capella kind of work our way into ... People



I think somewhere along the way people got angry at this Mystery, or whatever you wanna call it-this other-ness of the world-and just decided to content themselves with worldly things.

element that's always been in my music. But also heavy psych via these very loud

screaming guitars.

You've been doing a traditional folk song or two on each of your recent albums. Is that a recent interest?

It's more recent. I used to know some old particularly blues things, I was always into acoustic blues. But more recently, I think when I was out west back in version of some old folk song and then '98, somebody let me borrow the *Harry* Smith Smithsonian Anthology that had a would probably recognize a garage lot of these songs, particularly the ones that I did, or re-did. It struck me that this was a way that maybe the songs could be realized in a different way. Not taking anything away from the wonderful originals, just like ... If you're gonna do a cover, you might as well bring something to it, and I thought I could do something. They suggested themselves to me that way, heavy guitar for some reason.

There's songs on that Anthology that when I hear them, or when I sing them, I still get chills down my back. I know there must be something about those songs. I think it is a connection back to something we lost contact with through all this crap that we've surrounded ourselves with. Those people didn't have anything back then. They were probably surrounded by all this mystery that to them was probably de rigeur. you know? It's a wonderful thing. I think there's not much mystery left in the world, and these people seemed to be kind of hooked into it.

### They were confronting, or dealing with, the Mystery in those songs, whereas we're sort of distracted from it.

I think somewhere along the way people got angry at this Mystery, or whatever vou wanna call it-this other-ness of the world-and just decided to content themselves with worldly things. This society really plays that up, makes it a very seductive thing to just be eater up by all that. And yet when you dip back into that well, it's unmistakable that there's something there. And it's a valuable thing. I think.

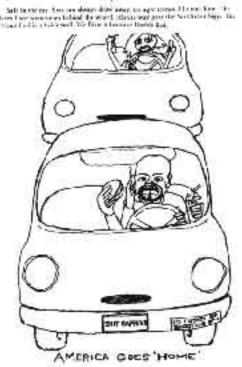
That's just one way. That music is just one way. There's a lot of great music and great things that can take you back into



that Possibility that people have ruled out for so long. I wish I could make something as good. [chuckles] That's one what I'm shooting for eventually. It probably will just take a long time but at least it's to have something to look forward to.



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the frog and the scorpion. After

the frog kindly gave you a ride

across the water, you repaid him by striking him with your stinger! While he deteriorated, you explained that this was simply "your nature." Everyone thinks you're a real stinker for this incident, but perhaps they should think about things from your perspective. The frog always had it pretty good, with those big eyes and luscious lips. He sat on his picturesque lily pad, had amphibian powers and a versatile tongue. Every human child studied his progeny, the miraculous tadpole Bards such as Three Dog Night and Burl Ives sang his praises in hit compositions. He was a legend. You, in the meantime, weren't even born with a face. Perhaps the frog's "kindly" gesture was really intended to show off his ability in renards o your limitations. Perhaps he forgot that, even if you can't hop or swim or catch flies with your (nonexistent) tongue, you do have a pretty cool stinger. Perhaps he deserved everything he got.



betray an ancient and primeval forest. The sound of flutes emanates rom stage left, giving way to the sound of hooves. Two centaurs canter to the center of the stage. Sagittarius 1: We are despised for our lower nudity and our interminable rutting. Sagittarius 2: Aye, but 'tis not our fault! The design of pants does not extend itself to our form. S1: So we are accursed to roam pantsless forever? outside of

S2: Aye. 'Tis our destiny. S1: Then curse be on those who wear pants everywhere: the closet freaks and moral arbiters who leave us a wandering, trouserless people! Exit stage right. Stage Dark, curtains down

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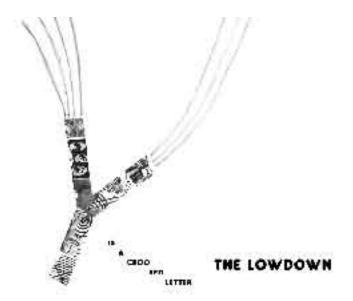












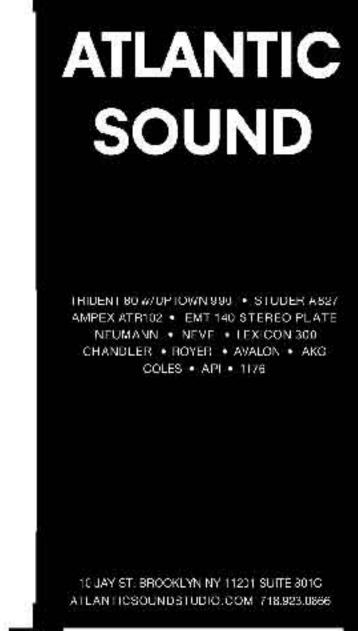
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Unicorns
Who Will Cut Our
Hair When We're
Gone?
(Alien8)
C: Who?
D: Who what?
C: Who, Sir D, will cut
the Unicorns' hair when
they're gone?
D: Ah, yes.
C: You don't really care,
do you?
D: Can't say that I do,
no not really. These no, not really. These guys are wacky. C: Sub-Ween wacky pop.

b. Hendin Sucking stoners.
C: Queasy synthesizers.
D: A Rephlex artist gone Dr. Demento.
C: [puzzled]
D: This is like hearing someone you're not interested in taking Flaming Lips for them...? There's some talent here... "Child Star" sounds like a Radiohead parody... You know, it's not easy providing comic relief providing comic relief. D: This whatever-it-is

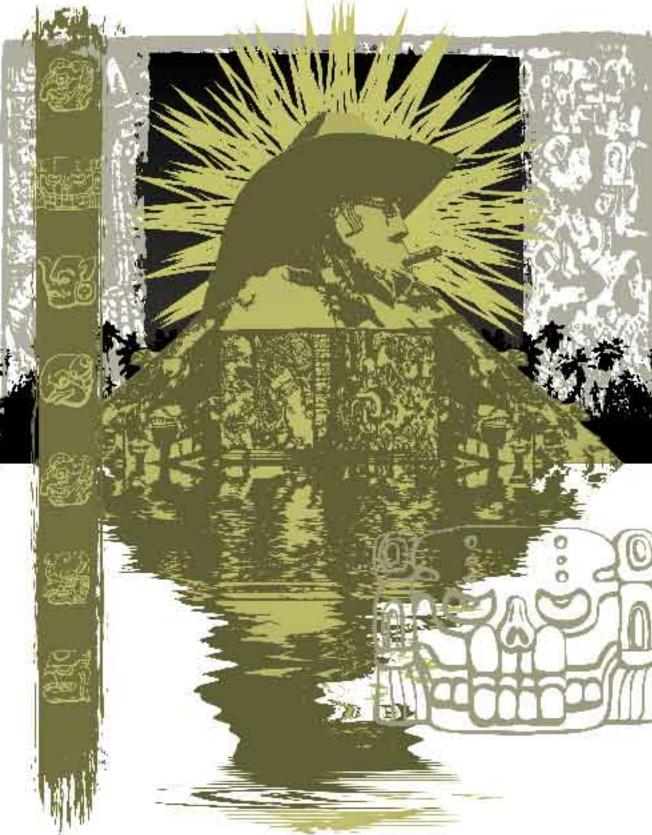
of china. D: Indeed I do. Left Rev. Mc D

C: And you have a lot

(Water/Kunt)
D: [reading] "Eugene
McDaniels - the soul
anarchist." Then it says
here, "Under conditions
of national emergency
, like now, there are

who do not... the good guys vs. the bad guys. -- mc d." opening track "Outlaw". ]"She's an outlaw, she don't wear a bra." Um, yeah...I don't know if it's me, but this doesn't

be seem to have aged well.
D: This came out in the early '70s.
C: The guy has cred, supposedly he gets sampled a lot. And you can hear why... there's a nice feel to these songs. Ron Carter on bass, Ron Carter on bass, from Miles' group...
D: But the lyrics are terrible! And his singing is totally affected. "La la a smoke a joint" blah blah.
C: Yeah I don't get what the big deal is either.
None of these songs stand out...in a good way, at least. [laughter]
D: The cover looks amazing, though.
C: Talk about badass,
there it is in front of ya.



JOHN COULTHART

### ENCOUNTER WITH MAXIMON

While investigating Guatemala's folk-magic patron saint of thieves and whores, British travel journalist James Marriott made a serious mistake.. THE FIRST CHILDREN I asked to show me the way to the house of Maximon, Guatemala's 'evil saint,' turned tail and fled. The next boy I approached was unable to escape, hobbled by a pair of oversized rubber boots, and pointed me in the right direction. The building wasn't much to look out-unpainted concrete blocks with a corrugated iron roof—but once I was in I knew I'd come to the right place.

Maximon sat at one end of a dark room, the lifesized dummy of a moustachioed white man wearing a suit, sunglasses, a felt hat and a silk scarf, with a garish handkerchief over his mouth. Candles were arrayed before him, and towards the entrance, at the opposite end of the room, tarot and palm readings were taking place. Another doorway led through to a courtvard, beyond which was a shop selling cigars, magical potions, herbs, candles and anything else the devotee might need.

There was a fire in the courtyard, around which a Mayan woman with gold teeth, a ladino woman and two boys of around 6 hyperventilated on huge cigars, working themselves into a sweat. The Mayan woman offered to read my palm. When I foolishly declined, she shrieked with laughter and returned to the serious business of her cigar. The ladino woman didn't even look at me-Maximon is the patron saint of thieves and prostitutes, but I couldn't very well ask her if either of these applied-and when the nicotine-crazed boys started to run around my legs, I went back into the main room to take a seat at the back and make myself as inconspicuous as possible.

New arrivals would walk straight past the tarot readers and into the courtyard, where they consulted with the Mayan woman before puffing on cigars and preparing themselves for a consultation with the saint. They would then approach the impassive figure and speak to him, stroking his arms and laying money and other offerings in a bowl in his lap. A smartly dressed man standing by the saint appeared to be his keeper, putting offerings of cigars in his mouth and tipping aguardiente, a fiery local spirit, down his wooden throat, or gently lashing the devotees with a bundle of herbs during a limpia or soul cleansing.

The children came in, one looking demonic as he threatened the other with a bottle, then tied his feet together with a length of twine. The keening victim tried to hide behind me, crawling into a safe position sheltered by the gringo as the increasingly demented bully giggled and made throat-slitting gestures, the pain and anguish in his victim's face only spurring him on to greater fury. For a terrible moment I thought that I was mistaken—they weren't children at all, but rather stunted adults, their growth arrested by heavy nicotine use-but the pitch of the victim's whine reassured me. As the bullying grew nastier in tone, I wondered if I should intervene, but it seemed patronizing to do anything— the only attention the other adults paid was to motion to the weaker child to be quiet. Eventually the bully left the room, and his charge fled. It seemed a fitting introduction to the world of the Judas of the Western Highlands.

Nobody's quite sure where Maximon comes from. Most sources maintain that he is a syncretic conflation of a pre-Columbian Mayan god, Mam, and the Christian Saint Simon. According to this tradition, the name derives from a combination of Simon and max, the Mayan word for tobacco; many people still refer to him as San Simon. His powerful influence has traditionally been feared by the Catholic Church, which has attempted to suppress his worship by portraying him as Judas, and at Easter in Santiago Atitlan figures of Christ and Maximon are paraded through the streets for a powerfully charged symbolic confrontation.

But their efforts have been in vain. Maximon equally popular among the Mayan and ladin populations of Guatemala, and the plaques lining the wall of the largest Maximon shrine, at San Andres Ixtapa, are testament to the faith many have in his power: to help financial ventures, to bless journeys or to cure disease. Maximon is a worldly saint, recognizing the needs and failings of normal people; like them, he likes tobacco, alcohol and the trappings of wealth, such as leather shoes and silk scarves. He is well disposed to granting blessings in exchange for offerings of the things he likes. To visit Maximon and leave nothing is considered a serious mistake.

He has five shrines in Western Guatemala—in Zunil (the shrine described above), Santiago Atitlan, Nahual, San Pedro de la Laguna and San Andres Ixtapa, and in each he appears different. In some he is life-sized and recognizably human; in others he is little more than a bundle of clothes topped by a roughly hewn mask.

Myths of his birth vary, although most sources maintain that he was created by

Maximon is a worldly saint, recognizing the needs I was driven away by the choking fug conjuring spirits, until finally I left. On and failings of normal people; like them, he likes tobacco, alcohol and the trappings of wealth, such as leather shoes and silk scarves.

> Guatemalan Nahuales (shamans) to told me about a Maximon shrine just 20 stop the worship of the country's very combat witchcraft and evil spirits. In his minutes away by bus, so I went to check own Baron Samedi. Christianity may first incarnation he was too powerful, it out. Getting out at the end of the bus have strong roots here, but it is of a his unbridled sexual energy driving him line. I asked a local where the shrine was, kind resembling the early Christian era. to appear as a beautiful man or woman He looked puzzled, then asked if I wanted during which even the blackest grimoires in turn, seducing both male and female the witch. I agreed, assuming that here adopted a pious tone. villagers before leaving them to die. The Maximon was considered witchcraft, Fertility rituals can still be seen at Nahuales responded by twisting his head and he told me how to get there; another Mayan sites throughout the country, a around, breaking his legs and tying his couple confirmed his directions. means "he who is tied with string."

the shrines were, pointing to someone I'd come to the wrong town. else and telling me to ask them; and occasionally my searches took me to Magic and religion are inextricably linked interesting places by mistake. A woman in Guatemala. The disapproval of the who worked in a museum near Antigua Catholic Church has done nothing to

arms down, so that they could control I knocked on the door I'd been directed the attention of tourists more interested him, and even today the figure is rarely to and a Mayan woman answered. She in the dead stone of Tikal. A wizened paraded around in public, being kept told me there was no Maximon there, farmer took me to one at the hilltop site most often indoors in a large glass box. and that I had the wrong house; but I of San Francisco near the Pacific coast, According to this interpretation Maximon persisted, sure that there was something showing me on the way an ancient Mayan here, and reassured her that I had no carving at which he'd made offerings, I visited all of the Maximon shrines this would stand me in her favor. Why, I told me that Maximon was a living god, during my stay in Guatemala, although asked, did three people tell me that this unlike those worshipped on the hill, and I didn't feel comfortable approaching was a witch's house if there was nothing took vengeance on those who visited him the trickster saint himself until a visit going on here? Finally she let me in, and without leaving anything. to San Andres Ixtapa, the largest shrine, showed me a shrine. It looked much like There were two stones on the hilltop, near Antigua. It was easier to understand a normal Christian shrine to me, and and I watched a woman tend a fire before what was going on there-most visitors when I pointed this out she took me to one of them, limes, eggs and charred were *ladino*, and spoke Spanish—and a back room, where the real weirdness chicken feet still visible in the ashes. The nobody seemed to mind when I made lay. Here was a crowned saint with a procedure followed at the stones was my own requests to the saint. I even felt death's head: Rev Pacual, I was told later similar to that at a Maximon shrine, with comfortable watching a divining session this was a syncretic mixture of Ah Pook, aguardiente drunk and splashed over the at one of the many tables facing the the Mayan death god, with imagery from carvings—one a full-figure relief of a god. shrine, during which a man scattered Catholic saints. In front of the figure were the other a large bald head, half-sunk in red and white beads and crystals then arranged a number of brandy glasses full the ground—and money and flowers left

rearranged them while telling a young of water, each containing a conch shell.

couple what their future held. At some of She told me that she could read water; the other shrines the keepers spoke only that people came to her to invoke spirits in various Mayan languages and looked and that the answers the spirits gave askance at a gringo visitor, a tourist could be seen in the water. We discussed treating their deity as just one more stop the dangers of uneducated straying into on the well-trodden trail. At one shrine the spirit world and different ways of of air-freshener a devotee continually my way to the cenral plaza I asked a man sprayed over the figure. The keepers where the artesania market was—the looked bemused when I began to cough, town was renowned for its weavingstheir lungs inured to chemical abuse and he told me that there wasn't one from years of living near the capital. here; it was in the next town along. I Some people refused to tell me where hadn't been where I thought I was at all;

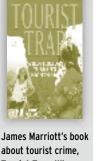
camera and wasn't an American hoping after which he was given better land. He

on the ground. The teenaged girls who were presumably the objects of the ritual giggled and ate a picnic of takeaway chicken nearby, apparently oblivious to the events unfolding around them. When the family came to leave, I was warned that I should go with them: a decapitated body had been found nearby recently. and mara-Guatemalan youth gangswere active in the area.

I wondered if other Mayan ritual practices were still common, and attended festivals half-hoping to catch glimpses of ecstatic bloodletting. obsidian spines passed through penis or tongue: perhaps I'd see some reptilian teenager showing off his ritual tongue bifurcation or encounter a coneheaded child, a noble heir whose skull deformation had been engineered from birth. But this religious bloodthirstiness seemed long since to have passed from them, chicken now the only animals to feel the priest's blade; a boom in other magical practices filled the void.

The shops surrounding the shrine at San Andres Ixtapa sold a huge variety of magical artifacts—from home exorcism kits to potions for every conceivable need, from making yourself irresistible to the opposite sex to silencing a nagging wife. Even villages lacking such an obvious focal point would feature payement vendors hawking small paperbacks with an unvarying range of content: teach yourself karate, attract women, make money fast, learn spells.

At first the widespread belief in magic in Guatemala seemed romantically appealing to me: it was fascinating. imaginatively charged, and colorful



Holiday Turns to

by Virgin Books, under

ARTHUR & JANUARY 2004

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when compared to the drabness of much levelled at a few of the sites. of modern Europe. But the inclusion of I consulted the books as to the best magical texts with the street vendors' offering to leave for gratitude, and found other product soon made me think that I should light three yellow candles for the Guatemalans: a dishonest as I took the bus to San Andres Ixtapa I none. Rather than trusting in Maximon, of finally paying a debt. I lit one candle, people should be working in land reform the flame to soften the base of another. movements, fighting the inequities of A woman ran over, anguish distorting land ownership in Guatemala through her face, and grabbed them from me. political pressure—and through force, if She explained that I shouldn't use one

surrounding Maximon serve another candles back from her grinning broadly function altogether. In a country and again held a lit one upside down, that has seen its indigenous culture dripping wax on the table to prepare a threatened by colonization, religious bed for it to stand in. The woman, who'd conversion, military dictatorships been watching anxiously, shrieked and and, finally, tourism, Maximon and again grabbed the candle from me. Now a god. Guatemalan, a cultural form that if shrine.

C: We haven't got off

to a real positive start

here... D: Who chose these CDs,

anyway??? C: The editor.

this one. Very Gun

"cowpunk"? C: Yeah. [shudders]

Club! Do vou remembe

Actually I think this is

better than, say, the Bo

Deans or something. D: The Bo Deans! Now

there is a name from

C: These guvs are from

sense. Countryish rock,

some punk aggression slide guitars...walking

bass...throaty singer.

D: Nick Cave and the

Bad Seeds. C: Yeah, that's true.

There's some Birthday Party in there too.

[looking at the lyric

saying... D: He should practice

C: He sings in a tough

kev a lot of the time

from the lyric sheet]

Yep...lyrics about

ut he hits it. [reading

voodoo, burgundy wine

rebel angels...and a gu

have ourselves a bona

C: But anyways, you

can totally hear the

the Gun Club but also

(Astralwerks)
D: Whoa! Who is this?!?

old, from England. It's

like the Starvations

D: But more banging. Blues-rock with pun

balls! C: Yeah the hooks are

bigger, the playing is better. Hard to believe

they're not Americans.

They've got the Gun

D: That solo is like that

stuff the white auv who

plays with R. L.Burnside

does! C: Kenny Brown. Yeah

noticed that. He totally

does slide solos like

Kenny. D: You can dance to

C: Yeah that's the

I dunno. This track

march but it's also real soulful... That's hard

voice reminds me of a non-fucked up Shaun D: "King Bee," that's an

C: Big Chicago blues stomper. This is

something, Pretty good

for a debut EP--there's not a weak track. I see

why there's such a fuss

bout these guys. Too bad we missed em when

they opened for Jet and Kings of Leon last

month. Oh well.

the Blasters and the

Geraldine Fibbers.
D: Nice to hear an

22-20s

the distant past.

candle to prepare another—or at least But belief systems such as that that's what I thought she said. I took the

a distraction in one sense; in another cemeteries: an inverted torch, signifying the objects stolen was a large Maximon happily lacking. And there can't be any it is one of the strongest currents in death, the extinction of light. But I souvenir—one meant to confer good strict, sub-Tutankhamen curse applying continued my ritual anyway, thanking luck. The warnings finally got to me. Maximon palm and my candles forming a triangle on a hospital bed as six large parasitical Can there? wreaked revenge on those foolish enough on a nearby table. The woman who'd worms were removed from my back. to visit him without leaving anything. tried to stop me making a grievous error They'd been there for a while, but I'd I had even asked for something—the smiled uneasily as I left. I didn't think waited until the holes in which they lived commissioning of my third book, Tourist much more about it until two events were bleeding heavily—it happened Trap, a grisly collection of holiday tales occurred toward the end of my trip in mostly after they ate—before contacting from hell—and had the request granted, such rapid succession that I feared I had a doctor. He seemed stunned that I'd but I'd left nothing except the gringo fee offended the gods. Or, more specifically, waited so long, and called a nurse over

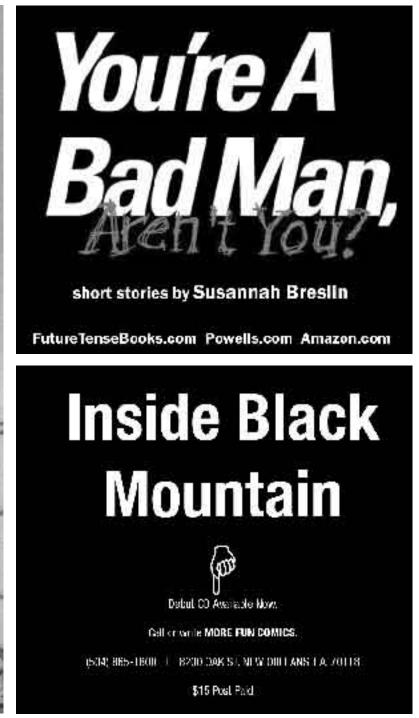
The woman who'd tried to stop me making a grievous error smiled uneasily as I left. I didn't perhaps this was a dangerous distraction and leave some cash. It seemed easy, and think much more about it until two events ocpromise of power for those who have had a sense of having come full circle; curred towards the end of my trip in such rapid or Rey Pascual, the indigenous Maya then held it almost upside down as I used SUCCESSION that I feared I had offended the gods.

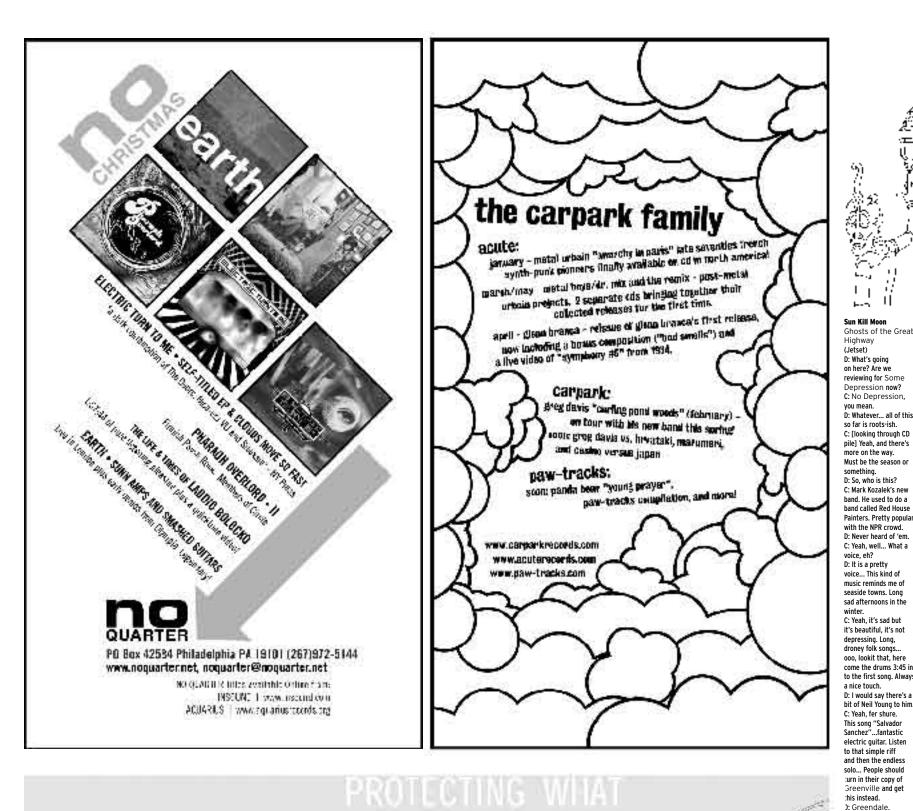
Maximon and leaving my money in his A week later I lay in twitching agony to leave an offering, then botching one. as I lay on my front to tell her, 'Look! You can see its head coming up to breathe!' He even gave me the worms afterwards, and I kept them in a jar until they died from lack of food. The largest was about an inch long, with a ring of black bristles

> I'm not sure even now if the curse of Maximon has lifted. The odd brutal synchronicity or run of appalling luck can

still be blamed on his malign influence, as contemporary Mayan rituals provide a it dawned on me—lit candles should The first was when I had my backpack can the insect hum of anxiety providing focus for something which is uniquely not be held upside down at a Maximon stolen. It could have happened to the backbone for my existence since anyone, but along with my passport, my return from Central America, But anything has grown more powerful I should have known. I'd seen the airline tickets and one of the notebooks his victims are said to die from stomach through being suppressed. It may be same symbol outside London's Victorian I'd been using for Tourist Trap, one of infestations, something in which I am for such minor misdemeanors as failing

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the duting the control of the form of the first of the fi s. If in 9 have as minored times for the management bearings as

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2: Whatever, When h

outs the strings behin

nis falsetto, whoa. This s almost too intense to

fou know what? This is

what Jav Farrar fron

could do...

D: It is bittersweet

2: Stunning, really. On first listen, I gotta

Jolie Holland

2: She sounds a littl

ike Karen Dalton

2: Yeah. She was in his group the Be Good

guess. It's good, huh. Acoustic guitar, ukulele

): Sleighbells!): Yeah. Country-blues-

spooky. She's got that

white-girl Billie Holida

ike Karen Dalton did.

:hat? She sang "3 a.m

'Holland/Parton/Syd Barrett''...?

or this ish of Arthur..

reading the sleeve] 'The Littlest Birds."

hafta admit, I don't

(now exactly what she's

): It must be. [repeating

pirds sing the prettiest

ongs..." That's true, ou know.

): She must be 2: She is. D: There's a song

[listening] Did you hear

...AND ME astride a mighty rooster, with a raging red crown and swelled breast and silver claws, and it running, running: but suspended, rising and falling slow like tides, like a horse in a dream who gallops without going anywhere—rising and falling with hydraulic and dream-like monotony, round and round, the same dim motion ascribing its circumference of colored lights and warped music round and again like a lathe into the world's great big empty bowl. The next time around, it was a goat I rode.1

Oh it may have all started way back, when I was 9 and saw a unicorn while on a honeymoon in Mexico. It was 1984: the beginning of the end for so many of us, God's children. Of course, nobody believed me. We also saw the Love Boat on that honeymoon, docked in Puerta Vallarta. It was my mother's second marriage, the real one. But what does it matter now, anyway? That was another age, a virgin country.

And I can tell you, because you already know, how the paths that bring us from childhood to this are crooked and fraught with pitfalls. And this is what we get for our troubles: a soul full of rusty fish hooks and bullet holes, eyes that squint, hands that shake. But there are certain little comforts of adulthood. Whatever your poison happens to be, you seek succor where you can. In a time of great need-starvation, privation, aggravation, a broken heart and a broken head—I found succor at Dollywood

I suppose I should thank the Bearded Menace, because I never would have discovered Dollywood if he had not smashed up a dream and sent me packing. So it was a fine gift he gave me, in the end. This hotblood from down-home Georgia who said, "Come on baby, let's go down south where I am from: I'll build a mansion in your name, we'll swim in the black creeks, lay down in the weeds, anywhere we want, lay back on the front porch or on piles of old tires and rock and rock until we are old and wise and ugly to everyone but each other, ourselves. And we'll hold hands and murmur this dreaming talk with dogs at our feet, licking and scratching, rolling in play with our naked children, who will cackle in raucous joy and swing from the scuppernong vines-wild flesh, dying light, faint music wafting in from somewhere. Ripe peaches and pokeberries'll be washed clean and brought to the porch steps for us by possums and coons. Fruits of the land collected and carried to us by the crows and ants and snakes, who will all gather 'round in the evening to hear us speak in tongues and sing tales of these very days we are living now and the glory days to come, full of moon-age romance and steamy concupiscence, and don't forget adventuring, on the sea, in the air, by camelback and purple Triumph: come on baby, let's go down. Go down with me."

Back in 1984, when I saw the unicorn in the month of November, I knew that you only had to believe in something enough to make it come true. I knew this because my mama told me, and it was confirmed by Robert Vavras's 1984 "Unicorns I Have Known" calendar, which advised the following: "to the pure of heart: watch carefully entering each forest glade as though you were the first human to set foot there; take time to sample pollen carried on a golden breeze; do not use deodorants or insect repellents or wear leather shoes or belts; and believe. Yes, above all, believe, and you will surely meet as lovely and noble and snow-white a single-horned creature as any who pirouettes upon these pages."

And so I did. All over 1984, I scrawled with the new calligraphy pen that was also a Christmas present that year: "I BeLleVe! UnlCorNS arE ReAl! UniCoRNs LiVe in 83! I ? UNicOrnS!" And almost a year later, on the honeymoon, it came true. Nobody saw it but me. Not even my mother, who was wrapped up in her own love dream in the Mexican jungle, brighter and more free and happy than she had ever been before, or has ever been since.

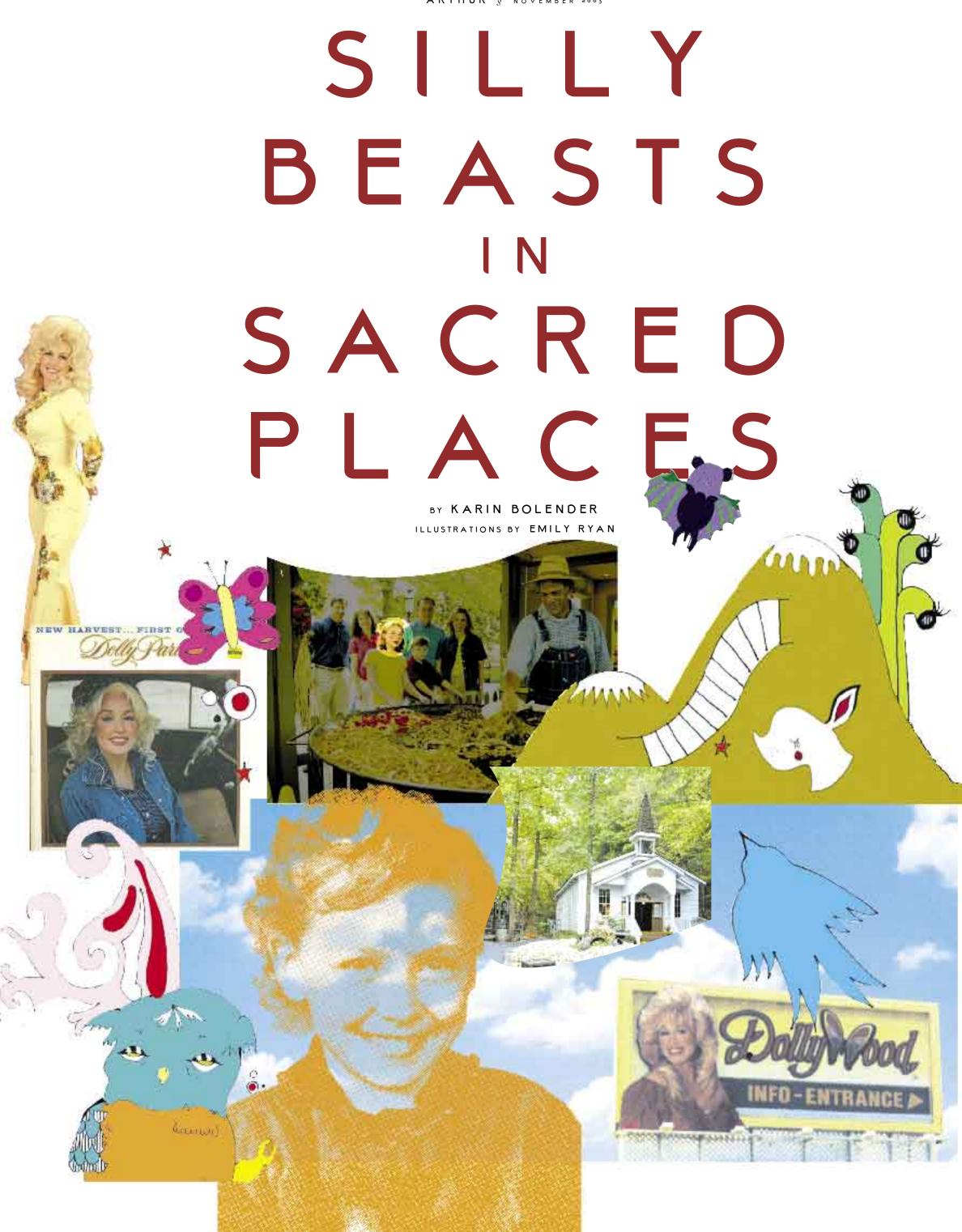
"Women are so wise. They have learned how to live unconfused by reality. Impervious to it."<sup>2</sup> This comes from William Faulkner. But it might just as easily come from the pages of Dolly Parton's autobiography, Dolly, if you read between the lines. Or it could be painted like a motto in 20-foot letters, alongside a gigantic pink butterfly and an even more gigantic image of Dolly herself, all a-sparkle with sequins and high nest of golden hair, on one of the billboards along the highway in northeast Tennessee, advertising how many miles are still to go before the pilgrim shores up at Dollywood.

But of course, that couldn't be. Because what lies under the however-many square acres of the Dollywood park is not the glitterful attractions and family entertainments that lure people in, but an old organic thing buried beneath. A mighty powerful secret. Primeval, even.

But oh, the unicorn: it's not that I ever really forgot it, it's just that after a while, in time, that quarry was overrun with the dream of other beasts—boys and men, but mostly boys. And with pubescence, I began a metamorphosis into a new and strange kind of being myself: some kind of rootless, hairy, hallucinating mushroom with linguistic and motor skills.

As if the hormones of pubescence themselves are this bewitching and infinitely powerful kind of hallucinogen, the effects of which never quite wear off, and make you hear and see, and more so believe, all sorts of beautiful monstrosities and warped miracles that fall under the rubric of sexlove. Wild imaginings like "I saw a unicorn" get replaced by wilder ones, like "I will love you forever."

And somewhere along the seam between childhood and this circus that is sexlove, we are supposed to weed out illusions and fantasies and find out what reality is.



anyway. But most of us make it out of and coughing a thick black smoke. adolescence somehow, and emerge as more mature human beings with hopes people. Then, we are all screwed. Yes, that's exactly what we are.

Well, that's how I got screwed by the Bearded Menace anyway. Hell, you heard what he said! Let's see you try to not fall last letter-every pitch and note and rhythmic twang-to work to construct the world newly every moment, build it with words and woods and other raw materials into what he believes it should be, all the forms and lights and glories that seem to be exactly what you have rubber bands. been longing and working for all this time, and trying to build, alone. Just see if that doesn't get all your electrical juices flowing. Silly beast, you believed in this-that the words and deeds were plank-for-plank making something real and solid of a dream, and not just playing around in funhouse mirrors.

Well, when the blue lightning was over down in Georgia, the darkness that followed was profound. I was thinking all this over one evening, lying there alone in twisted sheets, in the fall, in his parent's attic, when it was dead. That is the sheets full of our scabs and little but suddenly there it was.

Except it was not a figure but a booming knows it, too. sourceless voice that came into my head, out of nowhere, and commanded, "YOU MUST GO TO DOLLYWOOD."

park? What the hell?

"NO, NOT HELL. DOLLYWOOD. GO THERE, GET THEE,"

And how can you argue with a booming go somewhere, especially when you are no longer welcome where you are and have nowhere else in mind to go?

I lit out of Athens early the next morning, admit I was drunk on Coca-Cola. Sure, after I looked up on the Web where Dollywood was. I had never heard of it was only about four hours north of where I'd been dumped—a straight right up through North Carolina to the And of course a profusion of images of through the flames of autumn foliage. get to Dollywood, as soon as possible. It along the flower-banked paths, I swear Dollywood had blossomed into a shining comforting, mysterious and beautiful ashes, perhaps. I just had to get there. It was launched from my mother's lap. had become a quest.

There isn't room here to chronicle the tribulations of that daylong journey. lostness in love, in geography. There in a doomed silver wagon I bought down there from a Bible salesman. But with every setback, every breakdown, every hold-up in some roadside gravel spit or tourists' gold-mining village in North Carolina, I knew with more the earth, loamy, molecularly similar to panting urgency that I had to make it to Dollywood somehow. That if I could only get there before it closed at 6 p.m., I—and my children, and my children's had to make the most of it. First thing I children and so on and so on-might be saved. It was a race against time, and maybe fate even more so.

I hit Gatlinburg, the famed Smoky earth are so easily forgotten. Inside the Mountain tourist village just south of Pigeon Forge, at around 4 p.m. I made it surreal colors and variety. I gathered this far by the blessing of electrical tape an arm-load of baubles and trinkets, and a nomad named Uel who roamed gifts and raw evidence. I paid and the country selling machines that make 
stuffed them into my bag, then emerged snow. The silver wagon just made it over blinking back into the sunlight, with a

A dark time is had by all, for a while the mountains, barely topping 20 mph

Then, in the tunnel through the last mountain between Gatlinburg and and desires and, heaven help us, beliefs. Pigeon Forge—so close now—the traffic Beliefs are great and all, until they stray jammed. Sitting there in the semi-dark, toward the savings and doings of other staring at the wide rear of a Volkswagen camper, that grayer version of reality struck again. It was late; I could see through the mouth of the tunnel ahead that the gold post-meridian sun was streaming low through the reds and in love with somebody who vows, with oranges and still-greens of the old oaks, an avowal disturbingly familiar to the and Dollywood was still half an hour away. I knew from the website that the admission price was 30 bucks, and I had just handed over my near-to-last silver dollar to the Bible salesman in exchange for the sputtering slab of rust I had been patching all day with coathangers and

But even as these reasonings thudded through my brain, I knew I wouldn't give up, not so close. I was determined at least to see it, at least to lay eyes on the giant pink butterfly. So when the traffic building up between the two of you started to move several minutes later, I crept out of the tunnel clutching the last scrap of enthusiasm, crazy as Clark Griswald and more determined than ever to make it to Dollywood before the sun went down, maybe for good.

The sign of the giant pink butterfly is where the ordeal ends and the dream begins. I am not just talking about my dream, either. I am talking about Dolly's.

When you push through that shiny when it came to me like a startling burst, silver turnstile into the theme park, it's hovering over the dark filthy futon, in clear to one and all that you are passing into a dreamworld. That is brightly bloodstains left over from the plague obvious. But the secret of Dollywood, of seedticks we had suffered together well, that is something you have to with our mutts. And the last kiss—a search for, beneath the shimmering desperate end-kiss. I will tell you. It was surface. But seek and ye shall find. something I had never thought of before, Among the old, old rocks, in the mud and waters and crevices and tiny caves DOLLYWOOD. That's how it came, of lizards and bugs, and in your very a vision, like Jim Morrison's Indian. mitochondria, it is there. And Dolly

It was 4:30, almost early evening, late in the season. The park was nearly empty. Maybe it was the perfect What? You mean Dolly Parton's theme weather—that slight fall chill with warm sun just knocking through, the leaves rasping in the little benevolent winds, the warm asphalt stretching on toward unknown wonders. Welcoming sourceless voice that commands you to doorways every few feet, inside of which people were baking or candle-making or carving wood into animal shapes or talking quietly and smiling.

I know it seems unlikely, and I there were all the expected kitsch monstrosities and cliché "down-home Pigeon Forge, Tenn. By a stroke of luck, country" entertainments. A replica of the tiny shack where Dolly grew up poor with her flock of brothers and shot up 441, straight out of Georgia and sisters—all the rags-to-riches platitudes. Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Dolly herself, starring as the queen, the angel, the sticky-sweet little gal. But But the scenic beauty was the least of there was something else, too. In the my concerns, just then; I just needed to late evening sun, as I wandered alone was like a fierce hunger or a full bladder. to you, in the spell of that evening, I Somehow, overnight, the vision of truly felt Dollywood was one of the most new hope, something rising out of the places I had found in this world, since I

Gone for a while was all of my anxio megalopolitan darkness of soulyou are nestled into the earth, tucked into the mountains. A place, I sucked down the Coca-Cola. It was everywhere, like manna. Coke reigns in that country I had always known that Coca-Cola is of rich, dark dirt: elemental. Never did I feel the truth of it more than at Dollywood.

But the day was waning fast, and I did was rush to the Emporium: I knew I needed physical artifacts—memorabilia sacraments-because our days on the gift shop, I was overwhelmed by the

little over an hour left to see as much of the park as I could.

Up in the righthand corner of the map was a prominent, wild-looking swirl of line and color. Next to it were the words "Tennessee Tornado-New in 1999!" Dollywood's brand-new rollercoaster! This is where I rushed first, up a dappled lane. I found the mile of maze unpeopled, and clambered to the loading dock. The clanking and the smell of grease and iron and exhaust were ripe in the air. The little black train pulled into the station, and I ducked on board near the front and locked my body down.

Lord, what a ride! Ouickened into a warped timespace of less than two minutes, the spiraling madness rocked and shook, rose and spun and moments on the Tennessee Tornado, hanging upside down over the tangled green and some of the oldest rocks in the world, millions and millions of years, all the little heartbreaks and burdens rolled down away for an instant and gave way to pure gleeand I understood, no. felt, felt with every electron and all the empty spaces in them reverberating like bells, as I hung there still, upside down over the old, old mountains. what Beckett was talking about when he said: "Yes even then when already all was fading, waves and particles, there could be no things but nameless things,

Mark Lanegan

(Methamphetamin

Oddities) **EP** 

distinctive voice

Brought to you by

Mariboro... D: Mark Lanegan! He's

in Queens of the Ston

comes out in the middl

of the show and hangs

C: Right, right. Used to

did a bunch of solo

records on Sub Pop.

artist that not enoug

people check on, for

some reason. D: This is pretty rough

C: Yeah it's kinda grimy

Machine rock, at leas this first track.

C: I gotta say I prefer to hear his voice

credits] Oh right, oka so this is the sessio

Josh and Nick from

the Queens and so or With that lineup you

could probably call it Desert Session 8.

or something. Only in

happened in the Valley

not the desert.
D: [listening to "On the

Steps of the Cathedral']

rondolet... And the next

What is this...? C: Pretty, eh? Like a

song is a Beefheart cover, "Clear Spot."

It sounds like they're

really tinny and flat. This stuff has a

using a drum machine

Tricky feel to it. Very

D: Reminds me of that

song at the beginning of The Sopranos...

[singing] "Born under a

c: Yeah, I can hear that.

Listen to that solo...it's

all high up, like one of

those solos Jack White

does on Elephant.

Only this was recorded before that came out.

This track "Message

to Mine" sounds like a demo for a really

you hear that organ? Nice. And a little bit

on the chorus, which

is appropriate since

out next year is called

C: Spoken-word here..

tacked piano... "Skeletal

to that... he's crooning with a swagger.

C: Yeah. Good stuff.

beatnik... [repeating

words1 "Girls stare in

dead-eyed wonder"..

D: And this last one is

country dub, right? 6am

comedown music... This is a strong EP.

D: 8 sonas. 26 minutes.

C: Yeah. It's like a

C: Thanks for the

Sounds like Laney gone

for dear life!

(Beggars Banquet)

no names but thingless names."

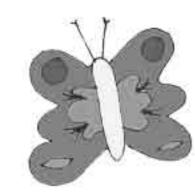
I rode the Tennessee Tornado three times, alone, Hanging upside down, high over Dolly's ancient green rocks and mountains, the leaves swelling and rolling like waves of the sea. The wildflowers exuding. The insects calling and calling. The birds murmuring from

Just like when you shake a bottle of milk or soda pop, the wild rocking of the rollercoaster brought all the buried secrets of organic being up to the surface in a great foamy mass. Postrollercoaster. I began to see everything as if through a kaleidoscope of clarity, if you can imagine such a thing. The surface of Dollywood, just like Dolly herself, is all artifice, all smoke and mirrors, sequined and lace-trimmed plummeted. And in the furious foaming It is an explosion of what American culture holds as essentially feminine. What you see is all ephemeral colors and flashy forms, as captivating as an oil slick rainbow on water. But what you don't see, while you are distracted by all that glittering, is that the dreamworld of this one painted lady is rooted deep in the earth, in pre-history, in some of the oldest rocks in the world. One could go into a reverie here about

Dolly's religious faith, invoke the Rock of Ages, but even Christianity is mere baby's breath compared to what really lies under Dollywood. The park blooms among those Great Smoky Mountain thrusts of Proterozoic quartzite, conglomerate and shale. Nearby-not



The sign of the giant pink butterfly is where the ordeal ends and the dream begins. I am not just talking about my dream, either. I am talking about Dolly's.

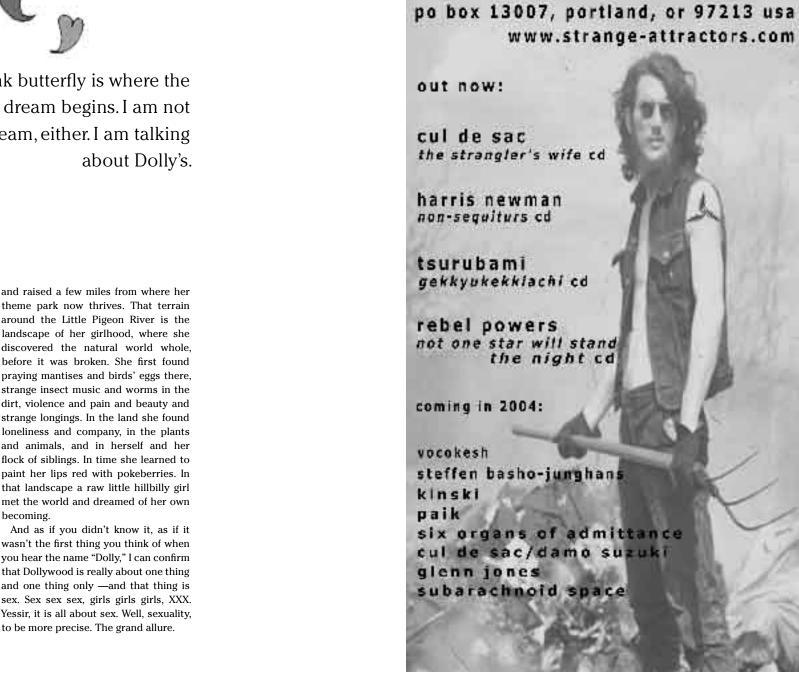


exactly a stone's throw, but close enough to matter-you can find outcroppings of Cambrian. Ordovician and Silurian limestone, sandstone and shale from the early Paleozoic sea. Wherein lie tales written in minerals and tiny bones of the earth's incomprehensible ages. All within the lordings of Dolly Parton Enterprises.

Not to suggest Dolly consciously chose the location of her theme park for its geological attributes: anybody who knows the first thing about Dollywood knows the park exists where it does for one reason only—that it is Dolly's "Smoky Mountain home." Dolly was born

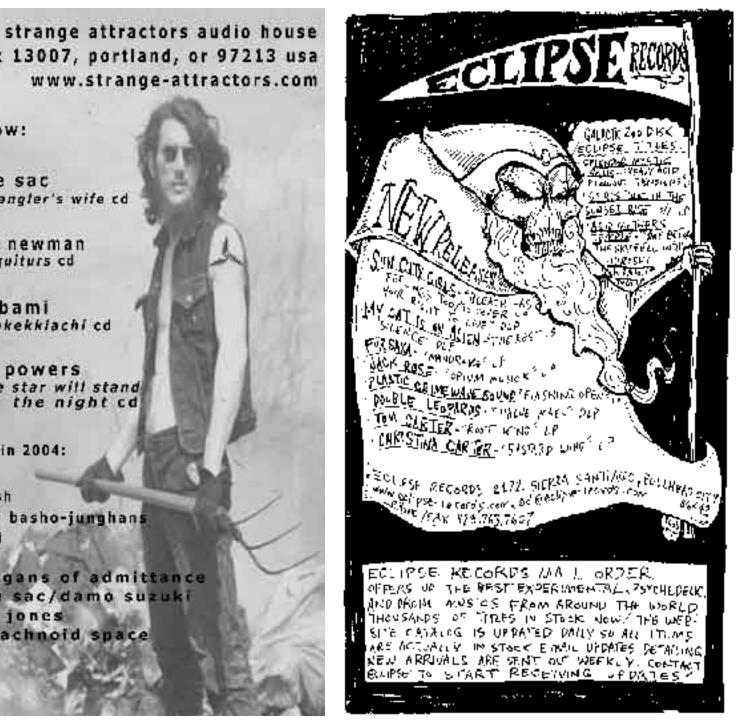
theme park now thrives. That terrain around the Little Pigeon River is the landscape of her girlhood, where she discovered the natural world whole, before it was broken. She first found praying mantises and birds' eggs there, strange insect music and worms in the dirt, violence and pain and beauty and strange longings. In the land she found loneliness and company, in the plants and animals, and in herself and her flock of siblings. In time she learned to paint her lips red with pokeberries. In that landscape a raw little hillbilly girl met the world and dreamed of her own

And as if you didn't know it, as if it wasn't the first thing you think of when you hear the name "Dolly." I can confirm that Dollywood is really about one thing and one thing only —and that thing is sex. Sex sex sex, girls girls girls, XXX. Yessir, it is all about sex. Well, sexuality. to be more precise. The grand allure.



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C: Uncategorizable ...dark co

D: I like his voice but I can't hear what he's saying. C: Yeah it's always like that

with these guys, you just

be my favorite Califone yet. D: There's a bit of a Tom Waits Bone Machine fe

here. The Lanegan record

had that, too! C: Mmm, you're right. Kind

of rustic, kind of futuristic

Vintage futurist. It remine me some of that Medicine

album that came out this year too... Apparently this is something of a concept

D: What is that on the cover

king, I guess. Kinda got that

Svankmajer vibe, doesn't it? And then, check this out...
I was gonna say Califone

like Radiohead and Wilco stripped of the pretension and pop sense, but then

there's this track... [skip ahead to "2 Sisters Drunk On Each Other"] It's actuall

funky. They're bringing in

C: Exactly. This is a proper jam band. Sounds like som

but it really works. I've seen 'em do it live. Totall

underrated. D: They played at All Tomorrow's Parties at UCLA!

We saw them-

Book of Lies: The

Disinformation Guide to Magick and the Occult edited by Richard Metzger

D: So we're reviewing boo

C: We've go thte Guitar Wolf

C: So, this certainly keeps u on the witchy path, don't it

D: Yes, flooking at the list of

contributors on the cover]
But for a book about witche

and magick...why are there no women here? C: [taking the book away]

Give me that. Lemme lool Hey, you're right.... [reading further] Oh geez. From the

editor's introduction: "Fo

warlock. Even when I was

C: Yeah, and DVDs, if we

have time. D: Which ones?

of this stuff was improvised









### This is the golden age.



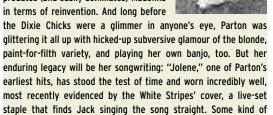
ARTHUR & JANUARY 2004 ARTHUR & JANUARY 2004

### DOLLYOGRAPHY

A Listener's Guide to Dolly Parton by **Paige La Grone** 

LAST YEAR, Dolly Parton released Halos & Horns, a bluegrass pastiche of story-songs, love-gone-wrong songs and timely anthems exploring faith and spirit that rounded off her recent trilogy of back-to-the-roots music. It was her 72nd album.

A highly accomplished songwriter, singer, actress and performer, Parton has embedded herself into the American psyche. A veritable five-foot-by-buxom celebration of womankind, Parton predates (and easily dominates) Madonna



wonderful peculiar beauty, that.

Born in 1946, the fourth of 12 children to sharecropping parents,
Dolly Rebecca Parton's earliest years in the Smoky Mountain
foothills of East Tennessee's Sevier County were marked by extreme
poverty, abiding faith (in both God & herself) and determination to
make the most of her gifts. Parton's uncle, Bill Owens, himself an
aspiring country songwriter, was the girl's first musical mentor. He
taught her to play guitar and took her to the city of Knoxville to
meet grocery store magnate and radio show sponsor Cas Walker. By
the age of 10, Parton was singing on Walker's radio show and later
on his television show.

Parton's first recording session, with Louisiana's Goldband Records, was arranged by Owens and resulted in the sweetly singsong single "Puppy Love." Owens' persistence on his niece's behalf was rewarded with Parton's first appearance on the Grand Ole Opry and a 1962 single for Mercury, though the latter went nowhere and Mercury's interest in the young talent waned. Determined as ever, Parton graduated high school in 1964, announcing at the ceremony that she was "going to Nashville to become a star." Parton's words elicited laughter from the assembled graduates and their families. She left for Nashville the following day.

Once in Nashville, Parton babysat to make ends meet. She appeared on the occasional radio show and wrote with fervor—at the date of this writing, Parton has published well over 3000 songs. During the early days in Music City, Parton pitched songs to no avail and sang on some demos. While Capitol passed on her, Monument—who'd broken Roy Orbison earlier in the decade, and gave a pre-Austinized Willie Nelson a shot—took Parton on. As Monument founder Fred Foster recounts in the liner notes to the double disc set, "The Monument Story," he took a meeting with Parton on recommendation of Billy Graves, one of Capitol's A&R men, himself a retired artist. Auditioning live with a handful of original numbers, Parton's raw falent wooed and won Foster.

The first Monument recordings were marketed to pop audiences, though a listen to this early material from sides and the recording "Hello, I'm Dolly"—later piece-meal chronicled on both the Monument Records Story and The World of Dolly Parton, Volumes 1 & 2—show the young Parton to be thoroughly adept at harderedged twang and tune. Two Monument singles, "Dumb Blonde" and "Something Fishy," both penned by Parton, were hits. They show Parton as a young woman to be reckoned with: simple though strong melody, a thin mountain-inflected soprano gracefully quivering and pure, able to put across clever and thoughtful lyrics with emotion and a charismatic innocence underpinned with subversive strength and actualized sensuality—qualities that continue to ripen and mark the artist's work throughout her decades-long career.

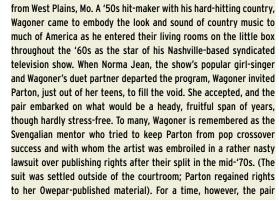
FSSFNTIAI 1964-196

### The World of Dolly Parton, Vol. 1

Some of Parton's hardest country sound. Volume 1 contains the crucial Monument recordings, including "Dumb Blonde" and

"Something Fishy," the former of which illustrates her willingness to take on perception, and engage the juxtaposition of image versus truth.

The hits for Monument brought Parton to the attention of country singer Porter Wagoner, the Thin Man



What struck me most that afternoon of the first trip to Dollywood was that the prevailing symbol of the enterprise is not what you would expect—Dolly's famous feminine endowment-but the butterfly. Like the crucifix in a church the butterfly symbol is everywhere at Dollywood: napkins, ticket stubs, trolley cars. This is what's interesting; this is the subversive gesture that hints at how the whole show is not about an icon in the form of a single person, a country star, but something much broader, much more human. And, significantly, much more androgynous. I submit that this is Dolly's greatest triumph.

In the lonely winter months that followed my return from the Southeast, I began to understand how the obscurities of sexlove were what had drawn me to Dollywood, like a moth to a lamp. But like a moth, I just kept bumping up against the glass. I couldn't get in. I was trying to put the revelations into words, but all I could seem to come up with was this: "Dolly Parton is an insect."

Scrabbling with the rudiments of language one dim winter afternoon in a new century, I managed this elaboration:

Dolly is the insect, the He/She, the naked bones of a soul—what we all want to glimpse, if only we could get there. The clack of leathern wings, oh yes, fluttering. Don't you see? You might think that butterflies are girlish, but think again . . . they are INSECTS. Transforming creatures of the non-human world. And this is what

Dolly is. And Dollywood is her hive. Her

sweet honey hive, oh ves.

Carved into the some of the oldest rocks in the world, though. She is powerful. There was so much more going on there than met the eye, on that clear day when a person fled there to escape the Bearded Menace. I need this; I need to get my sexuality back from the Bearded Menace who battered it, you see. And Dolly can help; beautiful, sexless Dolly, disguised in her glitter and sequins and sparkles, inside there hides her dry, prehistoric insect soul

Dolly Parton is an insect. You think the butterfly image is a coincidence? Dolly Parton will lead us out of the bondage of sex; a beacon, a glow we will follow into the sexless world. Yes, as sexless as the bugs, the rocks, the physics of pinball, the colors of the rainbow, the light, oh the light, and the stars.

But I was on the wrong track then. Dolly is NOT sexless AT ALL. I had yet to get the real revelation of Dollywood. I had work to do. But back then I was bitter as a dandelion after the BM busted my love dream. My dream? Yes, the dream was mine, my dream alone, impervious to reality, I have been told, being a silly dreaming beast

But back to that afternoon. After the rollercoaster ride, I wandered with new eyes. The light was dimming, but something else was dawning. I was Coke-drunk and dizzy, shaken up; it could be that my authority from this point on is unreliable. So you don't have to believe me, then, when I tell you what transpired at the Carousel.

It was nearly closing time, and pretty much everyone but a few employees were gone from the midways. Ice troughs leaked shiny black rivers across the asphalt. Concession booths were battened down for the night. I didn't bother to look at the map, just wobbled aimlessly in a daze of low golden sunlight, sucking at a \$5 dose of Coke I bought for the commemorative plastic mug it came in, showing the rollercoaster and a shiny Dolly with her arms raised like an angel

I sat for a while on a bench beside the banks of the raft ride. The dirty pale blue water churning riffling gurgling in its concrete chute. Every so often one of the round eight-seater yellow rafts floated by, spinning emptily and bumping against the sides. I got up and wandered on, haunting Dollywood as the purple dusk approacheth. In



that dimming light I remembered the sacred epigraph: "No soul shall walk save you."<sup>4</sup>

Dusk was coming on for real when I came around a last bend in the path and saw the Carousel. The attendant was just closing it down. It took a minute to understand what I was looking at. I had seen carousels before, but never one like this.

It was still lit up with rows and rows of golden lights. They sprayed out in perpendicular lines across the eaves of the spherical roof, with orbited mirrors set into the core of the structure at perfectly spaced intervals. Set against the darkening evening, this whirligig nearly blotted out the horizon.

But the most striking thing about the Carousel was that the herd of animals impaled there were not just the familiar prancing horses, but a whole endlessly galloping menagerie of beasts both domestic and imaginary. Giant birds and mammals—a phyletic spectrum of creatures, frozen at varying altitudes in a kind of baroque equipoise. The first long look from the side where I stood in amazement revealed among the chargers a zebra, an iridescent dragon with little bat wings, a threepoint stag, and a brown bear. All the steeds, horses especially, were garbed in ornately carved tack-saddles and bridles crusted with jewels and sculpted flowers and feathers, shapes and patterns of every color and degree of shine. Most were bridled—excepting the pig, the dragon, the white rabbit, the red cock, and the cat who carried a fish in its mouth—as if impalement on golden spikes wasn't quite enough to keep their flung limbs and silent roaring under control. A black iron fence surrounded the Carousel, like a corral to keep the whole thing from rolling off wildly in a stampede of silver sparks and clatter and obscene whinnying.

The attendant saw me staring and waved me over with a smile. I managed to string together a few crooked sentences about how amazing the Carousel was, and she told me a few facts about its maintenance, with what seemed like genuine pride. Then she offered me free rein to wander among the animals while she finished closing down.

So this is what I did. I walked the buckled silver floor amid the copse of fiberglass mammals. The animals glistened, and felt cool and slick to touch. I fingered their teeth and pink tongues, their flared nostrils, their bunched and shiny muscles. I ran my hands along their legs to their silvershod or cloven hooves or paws or claws or flippers, where they thrust at the empty air. I mounted the ostrich, the pig, the lead stallion with his flaming arc of mane. I was up on the rooster when the lights flickered for an instant and a warbling music kicked up; the animal under me began slowly to rise. The trees and buildings slid backward. I grabbed the golden pole and looked at the attendant. She smiled at me from the

Halfway into my second ride, the lights flickered again and went out. The music died down. The circling wound slowly down and stopped, and the attendant called that she really had to shut it down now, it was getting late. The goat I was on was arrested at its full risen height; I swung down six feet to the ground and patted the goat's shoulder out of rider's habit.

I rejoined the attendant to thank her, and just then a handsome middle-aged man came up. He was wearing an understated Dollywood uniform, just a butterfly patch on a khaki shirt over black pants. He introduced himself as manager of operations for the park.

He greeted us, the attendant and me, and she told him I was from New York, and how I had been admiring their carousel.

"Oh, well, this carousel is special," he said, "It's one of the few in the world with what is called the Dentzel menagerie. Most have only got horses,

sparked one another creatively. Wagoner, who hadn't written in years, was inspired by the prolific Parton and began to write again, all the while encouraging her free-flowing pen and wide open persona. For her part, all Parton needed was a venue, an audience and a little time to make it her own way. Long a recording artist for RCA. Wagoner brought Parton into the label's fold and with her made some of the finest duets of country music; their voices twinned themselves in song, making the two voices sound as though they sung four parts. Too, the partnership gave Parton an outlet for her original material to be put to wax. The young, rural-edged sound and complimentary bespangled look of Parton gave a lift to her boss' complacent comfort as king of his own parade. As much as he offered his protege. Parton took Wagoner for a ride he'd not have made without her. Their first single, "The Last Thing On My Mind," made the country Top Ten during 1968. There they stayed, as a pair song after song for the better part of the next six years.

The pair was named Vocal Group of the Year by the Country Music Association in 1968. Her solo debut for RCA, "Just Because I'm A Woman" (a pretty damned good record, but like most in her

career, holistically inconsistent) was modestly successful in sales and charting. Yet it was as Wagoner's duet partner that Parton was best known and loved. A vibrantly hokum version of Jimmie Rodgers' "Mule Skinner Blues (Blue Yodel No. 8)" was what broke it for Parton, Encouraged



to record the song by her duet partner, Parton played it up to the hilt and the country music public, fans of Hee Haw-style vaudeville-holdover big fun, rewarded her with a No. 3-charting hit. Parton continued to write and record in quick succession, both for the Wagoner-paired duets and her solo efforts, and the solo No. 1 hit "Joshua" came right behind the Rodgers cover. It was during this period that the stellar "Coat of Many Colors" was recorded, both the album and its title cut, a moving autobiographical number that reframed her poverty-ridden childhood and wove in Biblical metaphor.

Parton's big break came in 1974 with "Jolene," a woman's paean to a rival for her lover's affections. Featuring a strangely wonderful staggering repeat intro to each verse and Parton's quick-tongued quavery emotive vocals spinning off into its highest and most vulnerable register, she sold the simple song so believably it was plausible to imagine the unimaginable: that the bodaciously bosomed and glamour-puss Parton as narrator became comparatively homely, almost pitiable, yet brave for the asking.

### SSENTIAL-- 1967-1971

### The Best of Dolly Parton (RCA)

One of the most under-served major artists. Parton has vet to be collected on a true box set; the two-disc RCA retrospective skimps on her stronger earliest material in favor of her latter day crossover material. A fantastic interpreter and a fine songwriter, Parton's albums are spotty on the whole, therefore, this short 1970 bestof collection is critical, "Down From Dover" is an under-recognized gem, and perhaps Parton's saddest song. Also included: "How Great Thou Art," "In the Ghetto." "Just Because I'm a Woman" and "In the Good Old Days (When Times Were Bad)."

### The Best of Porter Wagoner & Dolly Parton (RCA)

Parton (RCA)
Short. Sweet. Best collection to hit
the high points of the duo's shared
catalogue. Includes "The Last Thing
on My Mind" and the oft-requested
Parton original, "Jeannie's Afraid of
the Dark." The faux sun-bronzed pair



staring out from the cover are the shade of Nashville establishment

### Prince's medium hot chicken. Coat of Many Colors (RCA)

Both girlish and womanly, containing the best of Parton's autobiographical canon (the title cut) alongside such lusty numbers as "She Never Met A Man (She Didn't Like)," "Traveling Man" and "The Way I See You."

Parton's ascent on the wings of "Jolene" freed her up to pursue more of the same; no longer was the tether of Wagoner's leash so very necessary or utile. Though she continued for another two years to appear on the box with him and to cut records with him, Parton ceased to accompany Wagoner on the road for the live shows. With heart, grace and artistry, Parton severed the cord completely by writing and recording perhaps her most enduring song, "I Will Always Love You," her gift to Wagoner. Heads and shoulders better than both her own remake (for the Hollywood-ized, Burt Reynolds vehicle "Best Little Whorehouse In Texas") and the over-blown blockbuster hit version by Whitney Houston nearly 20 years later, Parton's original take, with its sob-in-the-voice recitation of wishes, is stunning and tear-inducing. Coming from elsewhere (Houston, we

### have a problem!), the truth of the sentiment could easily become suspect and cheesy

### ESSENTIAL: 1971-1975

Best of Dolly Parton (RCA) RCA's second collection of its solo artist. The original vinyl, out of print but worth searching through the bins for, features Parton in a sequined banana color jumpsuit on the back and as a wholesomely sensual kerchief-wearing artist in the bonus poster. Hits the high spots of this period: "Jolene," "The Bargain Store," "I Will Always Love

You," "Love Is Like A Butterfly," "Touch

All Parton originals, My Tennessee Mountain Home is her rootsiest, most autobiographical recording. Warm, idyllic, un-fussed & mussed

As the distance grew between Parton and her days with Wagoner, so did the distance between proven formula and the road to criticalmass appeal. "The Bargain Store," likening the protagonist's body (and broken heart) to a discount shop, is downright erotic. Dolly hit the airwaves of primetime television on her own in 1976, and produced her album New Harvest, First Gathering. The monstrously infectious Barry Mann / Cynthia Weill penned "Here You Come Again" hit microwave rotation on pop stations in 1977, and was followed inevitable if ill-advised flirtations with disco. By 1980, Parton made her acting debut in 9 to 5 alongside Lily Tomlin and Jane Fonda and her theme song for the film became her first No. 1 hit on the pop charts. The album "9 to 5 and Odd Jobs." an entity separate from the film's soundtrack, is dated by the heavy-handed production and realism arrangements of the era, yet remains a vital cog in the machine of not just Parton's catalogue, but of social commentary and feminism. Women and work, their relationships to it and to the ones they love. is the through-line, and here Parton marries her originals with wellchosen covers, including a surprising (and quite heautiful) take on "Every animal got this much attention in

With household name recognition (and plenty of boob jokes abounding), the '80s saw Parton's star blazing through the mainstream—"Islands In the Stream," a duet with Kenny Rogers was the Dollywood Chapel for a long-time a massive hit, and by the mid-'80s, her fans of yore saw her as no longer dancing with the one that brung her. RCA chose not to renew I'm glad you found the Carousel. We are her contract in 1986; Parton rebounded with Bela Fleck setting a fast picking pace on White Limozeen for Columbia records. Parton's finest hour, however, for a decade to come, came in the form of "Trio": a back-to-the-roots project with musical sistren Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt.

(Thrill Jockey) C: Speaking of

conspiracies..

"Franchised Jesu Christ,

Organized paradise/Clea

Channel, bargain priced/

We're not very nice/We're taking over the world"... Yeah... Dude means well,

D: Turn it off now.

C: Oh, come on, we have to listen to more than fou

songs. D: I am exercising my veto

C: [turning the CD off]

Okay, well what do you

think of the cover.

D: Nice pyramid and the

eye, okay, I get it, I get

it. Masons blah blah. Off! [Throws CD out window.]

C: Hey bro, you need to get

D: I will get another bee

C: [to tape recorder] Man, he's totally losing it! He's been useless today,

useless... D's falling off..

do this myself then. [put: CD in, looks st jacket] US Maple? I hate these guys.

People say there's some

Beefheart in there, and maybe there is, but all

hear is a lot of dry wank

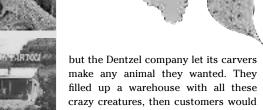
and no humor or beauty or whimsy, which the Cap

always had. [listening] Hm this is alright. Like AC/DC simmering. Blasted. Not

exploding, just...simmering yeah. The vocals are low. A Dylan cover too? [pockets

CD] I'm taking this home,

US Maple Purple on Time. (Drag City) C: Okay, I'm just gonna



Dentzels.

crazy creatures, then customers would just walk around and pick out the ones they wanted.' The man said all the animals on the modern Dollywood Carousel are

"And look at the detailing," he said. "It's all hand-painted by artists."

fiberglass replicas of original wooden

He pointed to the nearest charger; along with all the carved folds and bright breastplate of flowers and inset iewels, on the flank was a small scene of a Native American on a pinto pony looking out over an unseen landscape. Every detail of the picture, from the feathers on the rider's headband to the whiskers on the horse's muzzle, was represented with exquisite care and

We all three studied the painting me newly, and the others with renewed

"And it isn't just this one," said the man its making."

"But I have to go," he said, looking at the lateness. "We're having a wake in employee who just passed away. But very proud of it here."

He went away, and though it was nearly dark. I had to take one more look at the detailing of the animals before leaving. I saw scenes in cracked paint all sorts of breached little imaginings. Like tattoos, all the creatures wore them. The zebra, the stag, the leaping gray mares. Then—it's not that I was looking for it, but it didn't really surprise me to find it there—on the offside of the cock, on the saddleblanket of the stallion with the mane of tangled fire. I discovered a small image of a unicorn. It had a twinkling golden horn, and reared prettily as two hovering fairies held it by

But the darkness had come, and it was

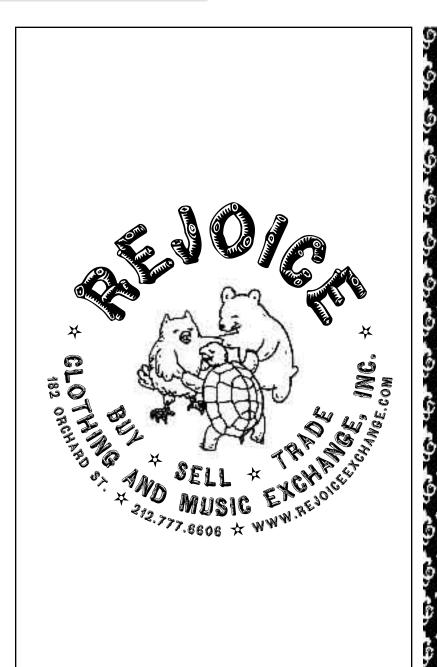
fraved reins of pink ribbon.

That there is a form of sex, one's own much for the enjoyment and enrichment sexuality, that is whole, an excitement of atoms whose flow can never be stopped up for good, or taken away by anybody because it is not one's own dream, but what a woman is: but when you get maybe a dream of nature made into

flesh. The fleshed-out forms that nature dreamed us into-genome phenome, beast and human being. What we are born with, a shape that changes as we grow into it, as it grows all up into us. But still the rock is at the bottom of us-that's the old secret, Dolly, that you know, that you taught me. I can't tell you how much it means. I am sincere. I don't care if I die. I needed to know something about the mysteries of beasthood, and vou showed me delicately. Sweetly. It is old old old. The old secret element: how the dark earth gives birth to us. That is what I learned at Dollywood (What happens in these hallowed

spaces, place of amusement, explosive colors, rose gardens of mystery? Emphasized, larger-than-life womanhood, femininity, for one thing. The overblown blossom, Go there, Get thee. If you want to know.) The secret behind the pink butterfly: Dollywood is a wholeness, a great realization of a sexuality that belongs to itself, completes itself, but in this case it's as of others as it is for herself. Sure, Dolly is a woman, all woman, at least in the prevailing American perception of down to the meat and bones, the muck

The surface of Dollywood, just like Dolly herself, is all artifice, all smoke and mirrors, sequined and lace-trimmed.

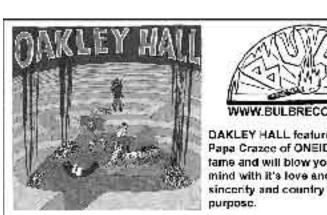






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(Tumult) C: The mighty Skullflowe One album, one riff. Talk

about jamming econo! It's a good riff, fortunately Somewhere around

Sabbath's "Supernaut." No

vocals, just riff and maybe a drum machine and now

there's loads of texture an

stuff coming in and out..

electronics towards the

end and the riff is buried But the riff doth remain.

Well, it's a mind-narrower

Definitely could be used as a meditation aid, what with

the propulsive rhythm and

the repetition of the guita riff. If you're into that sort

of thing.Better than one of those fucking Enya/ Mickey Hart catastrophe

Anyways. "Exquisite"? Yeah. "Boring"? No way

Pearls From the Rive

listened to these guys before. Hearing this, I ha

some definite catching up

to do...[reading from the sleeve notes by Coley]

"Join Pelt in celebrating the ecstatic joy that results from refusing t

accept the alleged primacy

in it. And we must refused

hand. Yr hand. Right now

to that.
D: [muffled sound from

himself. Great. Okay, so it's YET ANOTHER instrume record we've got here..

three longish acoustic pieces... Like Godspeed I guess, but with some

Jack Rose on guitar..

Really beautiful, hauntin kinda dramatic, out-ther

woodstuff... Some slight

menace on this second track. Music to hold han

too, late at night... Actua

playing here, this isn't abstract experimentation for the artists' sake a la

which totally blew. This las

a bit, only not so fast. I'd

Yeah, so... Man, where's D?

I dunno, we might need

(Times Beach Records)

C: Oh, right on. Perfect.

D: What were you playing C: Skullflower, that shit is

D: Well, put it back on, you

chill out. Listen to this

D: This is nice, who is she?

D: Kind of like Beth Orton C: Yeah. And Joni, and Nick Drake. And Miss Cat

Power. This could be ver

big in the college-town coffeehouses of America

For sure. She's a good

singer but she doesn't over-do it like those Lilit

Faire buskers. So nice to

scum-suck! C: "Scum-suck"...? Dude,

Indian raga flair to it, and

C: Gotta say I never

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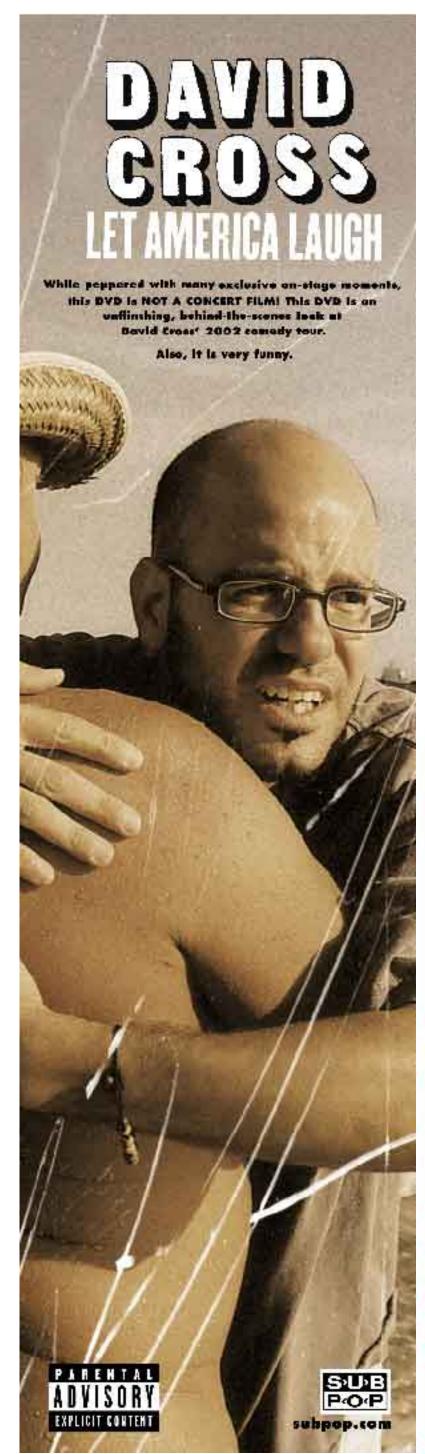
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and salt and mess of sexuality the way Dolly does, the distinction is less significant. Her caricature of femininity is a grand disguise, almost a fantasy in itself. Dolly is the first to admit this-how she is all wigs and makeup and plastic surgery. She jokes in Dolly that she doesn't know how long it takes to do her hair, because she's never there when it gets done. machinery. I doubt any grown-up walks for sure what that is? beyond it. It becomes androgynous, quite like it. more elementally human—mammalian

as the great udders Dolly is famous for. You don't need to scratch too deep at the had been the chapel in Caton's Chapel, I would venture to guess that most painted surface of Dolly's colorful fantasy the little community we lived in. Most Dollywood patrons are not as open to— world, before you get a notion of the grit of its windows were broken, and the or maybe in need of—sexual revelation that lies under it. You can find it in the old floorboards were buckled and dusty, as I happened to be on the occasion of blacksmith's sparks, the woodcarver's but to me it seemed like God still lived my first venture there. But that does not scrapings, the buggymaker's sawdust— there. Ironically it had become a place make the fact of Dollywood any less how the Dollywood Foundation works to for all types of sin and vice. Boys would provocative. Pretty little gal she may preserve the old crafts of the mountain meet there to shoot craps or drink beer be, but you are standing in the actual folk. And it's in the music, of course—its and moonshine. Couples would use it at realization of that gal's vision, what evolution and perfect presentness. And night for sexual encounters. Men and clearly required millions in capital to beyond that, those old rocks again, the boys fought there. There had been more create and maintain . . . and what is more minerals that are the source and the than one stabbing. And yet, for me, God

You don't need to scratch too deep at the painted surface of Dolly's colorful fantasy world, before you get a notion of the grit that lies under it.

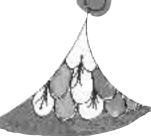


powerful in this country, in this day and elements of all matters—scales, flesh still lived there.

age, than the almighty buck? Her vision and feathers, love and electricity. And I would often play in the space under

I used to put the two sides back together and pretend they were coins. I knew exactly what they were and would never dare take these coins home. It was because I knew what they were that I was fascinated by them. I knew what had come in this package, what it had been placed around, and what it had ultimately been placed into. That to me held more mystery and attraction than real gold would have.

on the walls were more testimonies to



"It was an old abandoned church. It

packages that had contained condoms.

Inside the old church, the drawings

ESSENTIAL: 1976-1987

**Emmylou Harris** 

(Warner Brothers)

harmony. Song-centered.

ESSENTIAL: 1988-2002

The Grass Is Blue (Sugar Hill)

Dead on. Soulful bluegrass Dolly style; a

critic's darling of a record. Some of her

best honed writing in years; a formidable

cover of traditional, "Silver Dagger." The

first in Parton's bluegrass trilogy, "The

Grass Is Blue" is Dolly moving forward into

the past: straight ahead mountain music, a

perfect bridge from one century into the next.

Arthur's guide to Dolly's film and TV work is available

9 to 5 and Odd Jobs (RCA)

radio-friendly "But You Know I Love You" and the womanist anthem "Working Girl."

A hauntingly spot-on take of "The House

of the Rising Sun" inverts the gender of

the original, with Dolly singing from a prostitute's point of view. The material is

Trio: Dolly Parton, Linda Ronstad

Traditional country, its leading fema

voices smack at the center. Gorge

The wildly popular title cut, Woody Guthrie's "Deportee,"

A radio artist from the start, the late '80s and '90s found Parto

alongside her peers, pushed from playlists dominated by cookie

cutter hot nu-country Garth Brooks and his ilk. Parton continued to

record and play out; there was another brief stint at television and

there were two more films, though nothing that rates as essential

until 1999's transcendent "The Grass Is Blue." which pre-figured by

a year the onset of the ongoing "O Brother" hoo-ha.

She is a drag queen extraordinaire. away from Dollywood without a little But all this is just chicken scratch. And in this case, the disguise points awe for what it is. It may be true that Here is what Dolly knows, the root and like a flashing neon arrow to what lies there is nothing else in the whole world stalk Dollywood blossoms from. Here is what she wrote:

made solid, real, in acreage and clanking then there is the light, and who can say the floor of the old chapel. . . . It was while I was playing under the old porch that I sometimes found the gold foil







ARTHUR & JANUAKY 2004 ARTHUR & JANUARY 2004 32 33

Also inside the church was an old piano, with a cracked sounding board and rusting strings, that had been left behind when the congregation moved on. So here in one place was God. music, and sex. My fascination was complete. I picked up the flat pieces of ivory that had been the tops of the piano keys and kept them as treasures. I once took some strings from the soprano section and affixed them to an old mandolin I had found in our barn. It was more like a dulcimer, really, And when I strummed it, it sent up a droning sound that I could sing to. I wrote a lot of songs with that old mandolin. And so I would sing hymns to God for a while found Dolly Parton. And I loved them and look at dirty pictures for a while and pray for a while, and one day as I prayed in earnest, I broke through some sort of spirit wall and found God. Away from the stares of boys and the mothers and the preachers. I had met him not as a chastising, bombastic bully but as a friend I could talk to on a one-on-one basis. He is our father, after all, and that's the kind of heavenly father that made sense to me. Here in this place of real truth. I had come to know that it

I knew that was one of the things God meant for me to be.

I also knew that my dreams of making music, of traveling outside the Smokies and pursuing a greater purpose, were not silly childhood ideas but grand real schemes ordained and created by my newfound heavenly father. I was validated. I was sanctified. I was truly reborn, I was happy, I thanked God long and loud . . . I sang with a strength and conviction that only God, and possibly Curt Dockery, could have understood. The joy of the truth I found there is with me to this day. I had found God. I had

This is delicate. I mean, it needs delicacy. It needs honor. It needs honesty. I have something truly wholesome. And by tried to peel back the layers and look at Dollywood as I saw it that day. How a person can ride the cock with new dignity and calm, and learn that sex is not a burden, but maybe a great flowing gift, from old times on. And forgive the Bearded Menace or the bitch who broke seemingly confusing images. I had found vou. because no one means to harm the love dream-they only appear and was all right for me to be a sexual being. lend it flesh for a while, breath, and



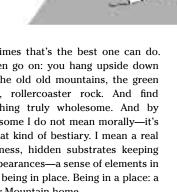
sometimes that's the best one can do. So then go on: you hang upside down It is just this. Here this a no wait over the old old mountains the green tangle, rollercoaster rock. And find wholesome I do not mean morally—it's not that kind of bestiary. I mean a real wholeness, hidden substrates keeping up appearances—a sense of elements in place, being in place. Being in a place: a Smoky Mountain home.



1. I owe much inspiration for this and other things to William Faulkner's story, "Carcassonne," found in Faulkner, William. Collected Stories of William Faulkner. New York: Random House, 1950.

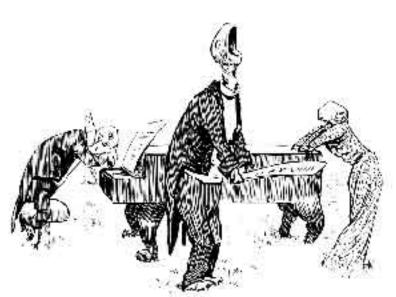
- 2. William Faulkner, "Carcassonne," Collected Stories, p. 895
- 3. Samuel Beckett, Three Novels (New York: Grove Press, 1991).
- 4. O Suttree.
- 5. Dolly: My Life and Other Unfinished Business (New York: HarperPaperbacks, 1994), p.77.





Dollywood exposes an open seam of a dream of who a person wants to be, who and what one wants to love and behold. The strange beasts we are born, and the ones we become. Along the way to this becoming, we get lucky sometimes; we find sanctuary where belief in some wild dream meets land and flesh and machinery. Imagined forms mingle with architectures, hills and hollows-the sacred spaces where we sometimes find





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hey kids! can you spot which one of





these record collectors





is different from the others?

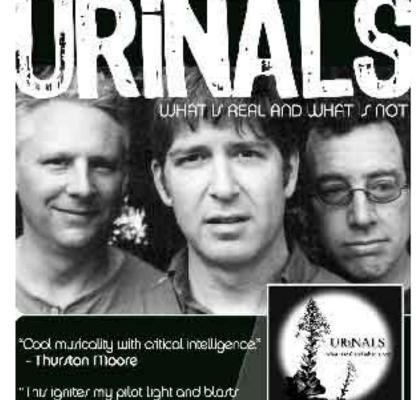




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my boler."

Mile Watt

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### EMPEROR JONES.

100% STORMS ENSEMBLE A Semblam, Derec for the 1999 Wedi . In LP. A muneel piece from Elin Morrison (of Leels/Home) and many symptomic briends means to capitation had any electron of America. Ashrading an a wet highway just before carsening headleng into WWIL go min DMM was glow in

PRIMORDIAL UNDERMIND The Meil of decoupor LP. An Low of pelva-melting, byin-dramming, TeySun-baked beyold from Long Are. Ars. Grysta lived. Movements), and commudes.

the car's covers, 300 concer-

HALA STRANA SET CO. Steven R. Smith follows up his Jewelled Amiles debut to hala Scena with a first an of Control and Eastern European collemana computed songs.

ALASTAIR GALBRAITE / CON-STANT NE KARLIS Comm (1). -A moreover rellaboration in which Galbeana's trance state violin, in melded with Karlis' High Dependency I mid cram buses for a 35variance cafe inside an all-extress cars unchances bernan four pribits.

34

CRACK PIPES Sugar in or Versa CD. Tunn's swenty savage blace howless recura with a sermon an Super Motel 8: H-Bombs and average resided of unit .K.

LOVE YOU BUT I'VE CHOSEN DARKNESS (S.T debit) CEEP -Well-drassed fono pop from the hose sof Aurria, produced by Britt Daniel of Smooth.

THUUA AT Strong Same of the Pro C.D. Jewelled Antier's grown newel of Rom Reger Gleron Donaldson, a Larva Chasse and Street R. Smith making despected and beautiful socials fears the environment and

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LEELS Connotational Silver Lagues STEVEN R. SMITH KALL PARCEL TIA CARRERA LF PAUL NEWNAN CD RESTRO SHUT BANGO



Hoterials addributed by New Abor Proplemen comit and Cornet Sign

ARTHUR & JANUARY 2004

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(Times Beach Records) D: I was ordering India C: Oh, right on. Perfect D: What were you laying? :: Skullflower, that shit

D: Well, put it back on, you scum-suck! . C: "Scum-suck"...? Dude D: This is nice, who C: Audra Kubat. I think this is her first record

C: Yeah. And Joni, and very big in the college town coffeehouses of America. For sure. She's a good singer bu she doesn't over-do it like those Lilith Faire buskers. So nice to hea

(Constellation) : We are not listening to o much rock music t time around, are we? C: 22-20s and The Starvations were prett D: [drinking beer] Yeah you're right!!! But this not rocking, although it is something very good. What do you call this C: Well it's from the Godspeed You! Blac Emperor camp, or at least from the label the they do. I've lost track

of who's in whose band doing which project. It's like Parliament-Funkadelic up there But who is the George linton of the Montre lisastercore scene? T is the auestion.. is very scary music very cinematic. It's like something terrible is just about to happen

something I don't want to know about... C: And then the next track skips to after the event, doesn't it's It's like build-up and aftermath, but no actual event. They circl it, skirt its edges... [dreamily] This stuff wine and light some candles. Or go down to the train yard and look hop a train out of town slide guitar! This is th

best! Man... [doorbel

rings] And there is our food! Double Leopards (Eclipse) D: This is not eating

music. C: You're right... Why don't you go in the otheroom and I'll finish this ID exits. 1 He is useless Reminds me of Coil. a bit. Amazing cover and sleeve. Like that "Aumgn" song on Can's Tago Mago--if you dig that, which we all have at one time or another records' worth. Hums Buzzes. Very cool stuff for the headphones I bet, and good music to

end a party with. This

is some seriously dark mystery shit. Whoa...

### The Mattress Has You

**Steve Aylett** pulls you from the pod



Maybe the *Matrix* trilogy will make mental activity glamorous by making it synonymous with kicking the hell out of people, but in doing so it may remove people's understanding of how and when to physically do so.

Invisibles and my own "Beerlight" stuff, but it established a cool of its own, working from the theory that a free agent in the third **Hellraiser** CGI stunt borgs.

the lite version.

to scream years before Neo.

had finally got to the point where

real images and CGI were genuinely indistinguishable. Compare this to

The Matrix's look is a mix of

Dark City, Hardboiled, Blade, Accion

Mutante, Grant Morrison's The

Wild fucking Palms.

the more blank faces there are on movie, he was no longer Pinhead, The Matrix movies have opened people to accept anything that's done namesake of Morpheus's hoversub, the screen, the fewer there will be in just a declaratory tosser. (In fact, up "meaning-spotting" to the casual to them. And it's more glamorous to viewers will always evade what the the audience. An actress like Fairuza Hellraiser III: Declaratory Tosser viewer, with a few very deliberate talk about evil machines (or aliens, dream really means, for fear of having Balk, whose face can really move, was one of the titles mooted for meanings and the most impressively demons, vampires, Satan ...) than it is to actually do something about it. would have upset the whole deal. The that sequel.) In Matrix Reloaded inadvertent ones since Willem Dafoe's to deal straight with the utterly bland Don't really get out from under, just blankness worked great, though, for the balanced repartee of Weaving 9/11 prophecy in Faraway, So Close human bastards who actually fuck us pretend you're Neo and that you could Agent Smith, who would be hilarious was taken up more successfully by and the characters Mac and Windows over. Real evil is too crass and low-res any time you wanted. It's a portable just reciting from the phone book. In Lambert Wilson in the character of the in Carpenter's The Thing (which one to work as an industry pitch. This is adventure you can carry anywhere keeping with the "more quantity, less Merovingian, for whose scenes I woke contains the nasty bug? which one the problem with science fiction—the and superimpose over any situation quality" scheme of the sequels, Smith up briefly. Even his girlfriend (Monica will last longest and operate most more compelling the world created as a prophylactic against real action. uncoupled himself from the Matrix Bellucci) was a nice departure, in creatively?). The "there is no spoon" on screen, the less likely that anyone There will be no Revolution. You're in **Reloaded** and duplicated himself that she appeared to weigh more notion of changing the Matrix by will translate it back into an active still asleep, smartass. The mattress hundreds of times. His "now it's than a kilo. Meanwhile the good thinking differently about it is meant meaning in the real world. So this has you. 🗇 personal" thing went too far-Hugo guys, two-note characters in the first to push the Buddhist/postmodern remains a story about energy-battery Weaving's restraint was what made film, were reduced here to a single folly that believing something makes humans plugged into VR, and not Steve Aylett is the author of him funny, and many characters and robotic note—to the extent that the it so, thus removing the expectation about the constant re-examination of Slaughtermatic, Atom and concepts fall apart when uncoupled blank Keanu and stonier-than-thou of having to physically do anything thought premises leading to practical Shamanspace. from the rules—when Pinhead became Fishburne were often replaced with about it. "There is no fact" is beloved action.

of government because it helps

I liked the first Matrix okay but I wish it was braver and more specific. The IRS is mentioned in passing but not the PNAC-such surgical opportunities are regularly missed. Fans look for rabbit references-Night of the Lupus is on TV in the Oracle's apartment-it's a safe little parlor game. Maybe the Matrix trilogy will make mental activity glamorous by making it synonymous with kicking the hell out of people, but in doing so it may remove people's understanding of how and when to physically do so.

I briefly hoped that Revolutions might throw some folds into the cyberpunk lite routine, with Smith ending up as a deadpan stand-up comic in the style of Richard Belzer. The "humans and machines should work together" bit-obvious enough to be unavoidable even for the archevaders directing this mess-could in fact have been dodged at the last minute in favor of a splodgy, wading pie fight like something out of The Great Race. Get in there, Monica! But no-the requisite lusty enthusiasm and flushed, giggly humanness would have been a universe out of place.

I was hoping that at the very least the wasteland and Zion could turn out to be another digital reality inside another inside another etc all set un for the amusement of the cat which Neo saw twice in the first film-the cat is called Ramone and is having the time of his life. "And that's what I did for the weekend," the sock-puppet cat says in the final frames of Revolutions, and smiles open-mouthed like Kermit the Frog. Fade to black. Instead we have Smith the Terrorist designated villain ultimate cop-out distraction from the real manipulators.

Like Nebuchadnezzar, the

Reviewed: The whole

Matrix bollocks.

### Camera Obscura

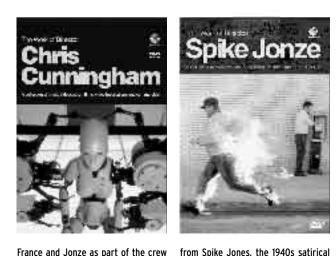
"The Golden Notebooks"

by PAUL CULLUM

Spike Jonze

at Satellite, the vanguard subsidiary of big-band leader whose most famous from flesh to machine."

Propaganda, are credited with reviving hit was "Der Fuehrer's Face," to



"There is no need for you to leave the house. Stay at your table and listen. Don't even listen, just wait. Don't even wait, be completely quiet and alone. The world will offer itself to you to be unmasked; it can't do otherwise; in raptures it will writhe before you."-Franz Kafka

"One day I found a big book buried deep in the ground. I opened it, but all the pages were blank. Then to my surprise, it started writing itself...." -Biork, "Bachelorette"

The half-hour HBO series, which own feature.

K Street is getting really good.

The Believer is the most politically the world view of Jonze's Being John mix cop-show cliches in "Sabotage"). low-slung convertible on the freeways size, papier-mache turd. (Even the provocative film in recent memory, Malkovich or Adaptation in Daft This is the side of him apparent of downtown L.A., where two players name of his former band, Oui Oui, is each episode is directed, shot and edited by Steven Soderbergh five days before airtime in furious run-and-qui fashion, literally buzzing on instinct and the exquisite threat of failure.

When Soderbergh directed Schizopolis, his \$250,000, quasiincomprehensible, bilingual absurdist farce, virtually everyone was

in this column:

The Work of Director

The Work of Director

Michel Gondry (Palm)

by Steven Soderbergh

K Street directed by

Steven Soderbergh

(HBO, not available on

(Criterion)

Spike Jonze (Palm)

**Chris Cunningham** 

fan – financing short-film magazine by autobiography.

Which is one of the incidental number of his dread-filled universes episode) until David Geffen wrote him lives with a mean dog.") pleasures of viewing the collected on display—from the Manhattan where a personal letter.

with often the same bands (Daft Punk, generous to a fault. The former Adam Britain's 2000 A.D. comics before strip of continuous action in Cibo

Cumulatively, each director's DVD seems

like an accidental narrative, strangely driven

by autobiography.

remains the consummate billionaire- accidental narrative, strangely driven landscapes, eroticized technology Forever Be," somehow forces the the works. 🗇 and human anatomy, particularly its industrial imagery from the window RES and the touring RESfest, or The Spike Jonze DVD, like its numerous pathologies, Originally trained of a commuter train into the rhythms releasing the 10-hour Cremaster creator, is affable, garrulous, slightly as a painter and sculptor, he worked of their "Star Guitar," creates a cycle.) Working from a shared lexicon, ADD perhaps, but enthusiastic and for several years as an illustrator for split-screen symmetrical Mobius

mystified. He vigorously defended the Punk's "Da Funk," in which a quileless in Fatboy Slim's "Praise You," where are well into the launch trajectory one out." In fact, much of Gondry's film at the time, citing the need for innocent with a giant dog's head and "B-boy choreographer" Richard of an incessant monologue that raw material appears undigested raw experimentation to reenergize his full leg cast hobbles his way around a Koufay (actually Jonze himself) and employs, by my count, 47 "niggas," from his dreams. Actively ridiculing filmmaking. And with the effervescent Taxi Driver Manhattan, or the seeds of the fictional Torrance Community 21 "motherfuckers," 11 "bitches" and Freud (even as his work resembles Out of Sight, the almost Cubist The Michel Gondry's Human Nature in the Dance Troupe descend on the Mann 21 free-floating "fucks"—it starts out, an open case study), he attributes a Limey and Oscars for Traffic and Erin fairy-tale forest imagery of "Human Bruin Theater in Westwood for a live "I hope we find some motherfuckin' survival function to dreaming: Natural Brockovich following it up, it's hard Behavior" and his five other Bjork performance of stupefying execution— bitches, nigga, man, I'm horny as a selection has carried it through half a to argue with him. More recently, the videos. (All three features are written a conceit taken all the way to a motherfucker, nigga—you know what billion years to release deep forgotten dismally received Full Frontal was, in by Charlie Kaufman, as is Gondry's performance at the MTV Music Awards I'm sayin', nigga?" and progresses emotion at night, which re-bonds retrospect, merely a working template upcoming The Eternal Sunshine of (dutifully chronicled in a third half-hour accordingly. Four minutes and 22 monogamous mates every morning, for the callous immediacy, oblique the Spotless Mind.) And it's fun to documentary, where emcee Chris Rock seconds into the video, everything thus preserving the structure of the editing and telegraphed detail of K speculate how Jonze's formal goofs can be heard saying. "Fatboy Slim? screeches to a halt as a ridiculously family across the millennia. Street, now much improved from the might have informed Harold and Looks more like White Boy Retarded.") long stretch limo displaces them Dave Grohl, whose Foo Fighters watertight op-ed pieces of its earliest the Purple Crayon or his upcoming Along the way, we deiscover that's Axl in frame and disgorges Aphex Twin, video for "Everlong" features a Where the Wild Things Are, or how Rose getting off the bus as the guy who performs a crotch-grabbing, couple's dueling dreams, recounts how The freedom to experiment and fail Gondry's ambulatory cartoons might runs by on fire in Wax's "California"; pirouetting dance with parasol—ZZ Top Gondry justified the giant prosthetic has been bred out of American movies— have presaged his Green Hornet, from that the dancing mailbox in Bjork's meets Michael Jackson—leaving the hands he was forced to wear by or, rather, reversed; filmmakers are a script by Robocop's Ed Neumeier. "It's Oh So Quiet" (the inspiration for gentlemen and their two prospective admitting he was once plagued by pham's long-gestating Lars von Trier's **Dancer in the Dark**) is consorts to stare in wide-eved s fail, on their own time and their own Neuromancer, in particular, written the voice of Ernie on Sesame Street; wonder. (Also intriguing is a teaser for "It was insane and ridiculous and dime. Studio fare has become largely with author William Gibson, which and that Anson Williams (Potsie on Rubber Johnny, a powerless figure inane," says Grohl in the documentary, critic-proof precisely by courting the Matrix trilogy is only the latest Happy Days) refused to appear in with a giant head in a wheelchair, "and it didn't seem like it made any diminishing expectations, just so it to descrate the memory of, might Weezer's "Buddy Holly" video (which described by Variety as "a live-action sense. But then after he explained it

robotics-in his words.

But it's his two videos for Aphex

DVDs/videos discussed can rise incrementally above them. have been an extrapolation of any places the band inside a composited underground comic about a guy who to me, I thought... Maybe every one of By contrast, everything in Gondry's phobia or something inside of him that short works of music-video mainstays a crack addict's limbs shatter like Cunningham's DVD is darker, colder endlessly inventive body of work can he's afraid to tell anybody else, and he Spike Jonze, Chris Cunningham porcelain in Leftfield's "Afrika Shox," and vastly more cerebral—the mimetic be summed up in the title of the 80- just makes videos or puts it into film. and Michel Gondry, being released to the creepy Osaka Home for Mentally equivalent of Gova's famous title "The minute documentary he prepared It's a head trip." simultaneously on DVD through Disturbed Children in Squarepusher's Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters" especially for the DVD: I Have Always In raptures it will writhe before you. the Directors Label, their imprint "Come on My Selector," to the 2001- (depicting a collapsed poet beset by Been 12. Combining the technical A second trilogy of discs from The Work of Director at Chris Blackwell's Palm Pictures. inflected assembly line in Bjork's bat-winged cormorants). Like J.G. and conceptual, he fashions a row Mark Romanek (One-Hour Photo), (Blackwell, whose Island Records icy, autoerotic "All Is Full of Love." Ballard, Cunningham returns repeatedly of dancers into a live-action video Jonathan Glazer (Sexy Beast) and brought reggae to an unwitting world, Cumulatively, each seems like an to images of council flats, industrial effect in the Chemical Brothers' "Let Sanji (Propaganda) is reportedly in

A born inventor (his grandfather, Constant Martin, invented one of the the moribund music video form in the accommodate an already pronounced Twin, aka Richard D. James, that are "Baby, You're a Rich Man"), he is early '90s, And the British Cunningham. trickster ethic that would one day his masterworks, "Come to Daddy." constantly shown attaching wires to with a pedigree that includes heading dream up Jackass. In addition to against an onslaught of harsh Biork's fingers to create a keyboardup the FX crew for David Fincher's documentaries on Houston bullriders industrial drones and urban collapse. triggered Spirograph or scratching Alien 3 at 19 and doing animatronic and Fatlip, formerly of the Pharcyde uses ghostly video images and gangs into the groove of a record and design for Kubrick's abortive A.I., is (who deserves a standing part in any of angry children, all of them with yelling, then playing back his own arguably the most famous filmmaker future Spike Jonze film), there are James' bearded face superimposed, to voice. (Bjork is clearly the unsung under 30 who hasn't vet directed his 16 videos included (of the 40-plus he sustain a deep irrational fear—tapping hero here, having discovered Gondry. has directed). These are invariably into the same disturbing imagery as championed the others early on and Viewed together, these compilations conceptual one-offs (the Pharcyde Don't Look Now or Cronenberg's introduced them all to each other. At run, features a real James Carville and of music videos, short films, rap backwards in "Drop"; Christopher The Brood, or the same sudden their L.A. premiere at the Egyptian Mary Matalin at a fake D.C. lobbying commercials and documentaries—each Walken dances and flies in Fatboy terror that David Lynch used to access Theater, Bjork was the guest deejay.) firm on the real K Street inside the with a 52-page booklet of interviews, Slim's "Weapon of Choice"; kids play so effortlessly. Following up with Gondry's images seem mostly Beltway, with fake characters, real photos and drawings—all demonstrate Biggie and Puffy in "Sky's the Limit") "Windowlicker," his stated effort "to rooted in a pre-adolescent scatology cameos and real events driving the a surprisingly coherent style, whose or outright jokes (M.C. 900-Foot Jesus make a more commercial video for and the fear of sex: The disc includes plot. Working from sketched outlines permutations may well play out over mails himself home in a box in "If I Aphex." he opens on a strident parody animations about farting and a short by screenwriter Henry Bean, whose dozens of features. It's easy to spot Only Had a Brain"; the Beastie Boys of hip-hop stereotypes, rolling in a film where David Cross plays a life-

White Stripes in Legos in "I'm in Love

with a Girl" and then makes them

into stop-action human time-trails

in "The Hardest Button to Button."

a homophone for urination.) And according to his mother, four times a week between the ages of five and nine, Michel had the same nightmare, U. As George Carlin once said about the train going into the tunnel at the end of North by Northwest, "You

his videos is some crazy nightmare or

DVDs/videos courtesy of Cinefile. the official video store of Arthur Contact Cinefile at (310) 312-8836 or www.cinefilevideo.com

### **Bull Tongue**

Exploring the Voids of All Known Undergrounds

by BYRON COLEY and THURSTON MOORE photographs by SETH TISUE

INTERESTING to see and Kate Biggar kicking out kosmik jimmies during the Wayne Rogers Unit set. hear the Tarot or Aorta: Memories of a PRE Festival CD right now. It's one of the first three CDs released by sex-muzak kingpin Tom Smith's rather recent lahel stah The Smack Shire (www.smackshire.com). Along with the remarkable Georgia peach new wave sci-fi teen toilet graphic is the actual document of what was an outsider-music festival, curated by the sad pockets of Mademoiselle Smith. When Tom sent the call out to the chosen sensualists to partake in the Tora Tora Tora fest it seemed then, in 1997, as an incredible venture. Surely he was nuts; this was already proven through his years as slaughter-poet/ vocalist with To Live and Shave in L.A. and Peach of Immortality. What was exciting was Tom's vast net slithering through and past the most obvious noise-boy contenders in search of deeper, more bizarro authentica. And it was beautiful: Loren Mazzacane Connors, Davy Williams & LaDonna Smith, Monotrona, Harry Pussy, Liquorball, leslie q., and a dozen or so more true American genius originals. possibly relevant only as historical swell, if you weren't it all seemed archaeologics. Regardless, they're once to see how much greatness was to come and go guickly and the wild all excellent or near-excellent in the flurry of post-post-noise underground way they rip the fabric of rock and roll, mania pulsed forward in bunny-fucking avant-garde music, free-anything into multipludiny—to the point where the sputtering future delight. The curious for the rumbling artist appetites. For a action rock which proved that they, Tora Tora Tora festival was a faint thing is what the future delight has memory of some lost Mayan era. So turned out to be in late 2003, a crazy

creative light, either in the same guise or anew, but some of them are much has come and gone with babies six years hence. What's going on kinds of wonderful free-rock racket. intelligentsia, young pups and old contingency today and Tom's issuing though raw like dripping meat.

Stopping for a quick breath (or '90s, when Harry Pussy was a wholly nowness, makes some kind of holistic

and grandmas and pas making all now is an excited fusion of disparate contrast, has a rather low-key stance, and MC5. A number of sporadic sonic There's a whole new stream of blood- dogs, preternaturally sophisticated super-lost folk/psych woodsmen. No 

was made painfully obvious when early October for what was the Destiil/Freedom From Festival of Music. Both Destiil and Freedom From are deep underground labels from Minneapolis. While Freedom sense. Particularly since Adris Hoyo From is notorious for wallowing in (drum/vox of HP) has been seen the slop of any and all scum noise returning to the stage as of late with and chatter (with mixed technical a fascinating, new-thought edge, results), they have achieved a well-

Kangaroo positivism. His other love is the culinary arts and he paused hardly being consistently exhibited on stage so as to run home and cook up whole fresh turkeys, pot roasts and soup pots real live punk freak he's a bonafide super chef and last I heard he was in deep sushi prep studies. Destijl, in releasing very limited recordings of catalog listing or website presence but a recognized and honorable profile. It is also the label that initially spearheaded this event and it is a token of its appeal to absurdity that they would actually conjoin themselves with the rampant lunacy of Freedom From. It was a meeting destined for either total hell breakdown or magical mystery success. Fortunately, for all in

attendance, it was the latter. Friday, October 3rd was the prefestival night at a hip rocking bar in Listening to the throwdowns that run earned nutso celebrity status. Label St. Paul called Big V.'s. Hair Police through this snapshot of Tora Tora boss Matthew St. Germain is a hard- from Lexington, KY, who we squawked Tora is at once quaint and curious. puffing cherry pop of a lad entering about a couple of **Arthur**s ago, hit the and T. Moore guitars. It's a conflict Most of the music freaks involved into the conflicted adult world with a stage and were sick. We mean literally of interest for us to talk about our is in frantic rotation here. Like that

tempered by LSD-driven Kaptain an alien bursting from his Whitehouse t-shirted chest, lung shredder Mike Connelly proceeded to puke into his upended quitar case. Many electric devil signs and middle fingers and power fists were flailing as Hair Police moved through a set of experimental and Michigan kingpins Wolf Eves, are the most exciting bands from the American Midwest since The Stooges releases by Hair Police exist on vinyl and cassette but this weekend saw the band celebrating their new cassette Probe Cutting, on Mike Connelly's own Gods of Tundra label. This tape is remarkable as it offers an alternative view into the band's group sound. While some may write them off as just another spazz attack, here they seriously delve snuffle-deep into warp group cosmosis. An insightful interview with the boys Mike, Trevor and Robert can be read at the

bettawreckonize webzine. Next up was The Dream/Aktion Unit which was Chris Corsano drums. Paul Flaherty sax and Jim O'Rourke are still locked in devotion to their hellbent Brother Theodore madness sick. After playing quitar as if it were participation here but let us just say

moist nips were way erect by gig's rosy dawn. And speaking of moist nips. it was a gas to catch the legendary Michael Yonkers romp through a set of hard blues slice-and-bake guitar rock. Yonkers has been busting with intensified singular outsider yowl in Minneapolis since the '60s, when he led teen garage dynamos Michael & the Mumbles, to the '70s, when he weaved improv slink with Milo Fine's Blue Freedom's New Art Transformation into the '80s/'90s/'00s, where he continually pumps shards of gut from his axe unlike any other electric sixstringer around. All this is apparent on the Microminiature Love LP which Destiil released in microminiature quantity. Thankfully, it has been rescued again and is easily attainable as a Sub Pop CD. At this fest he was slipping a few of his new It's Only Yonkers CDRs around and it's already being touted as the most fried-inside Photographer of modern Yonkers yet. It demands Seth Tisue

day of the fest and Aaron Dilloway was chosen for the opening invocation. Dilloway is the one connective tissue 'twixt this event and the six-yearsprior Tora Tora Tora fest, as he had anneared at that affair with the trio known only as Hercules Dilloway is Massacre (original Tobe Hooper of googling the knifeblade along his energy through mind/machine improv. The last couple of years have seen him primarily involved with the ultra-ruling Wolf Eves so to see him play this solo lunchtime slot was a precursor to an unflagging mindblow of a trip. With stringy locks hanging, black boots sweet ride. Dillo delivered an ace. He Hanson Records where you can seek out some solo Dilloway laceration as

possibly posthumous, LP on Atavistic

well as a host of other fine meats.



Chemical Brothers, Bjork), Gondry in Spiegel took his professional name specializing in prosthetics and then Matto's "Sugar Water," replicates the ARTHUR & JANUARY 2004

### **Bull Tongue**

dispossessed alien zap. Songs take on a grey whoosh with blurposette whizzing vox and oddball sampled guitar crackle to make you maybe think you're drunk on the moon. A curious display and not too far removed from the hep qualities found on their Fluorescent Towers LP available on Hanson. A forthcoming split LP on the Belgium Veglia label with the UK's phenomenally fucked Evil Moisture has us all panic sweating.

Wooden Wand & The Vanishing Voice is the new project of ex-Golden Calves Money Band and this performance had ringleader James Jackson Toth joined by Tovah O'Rourke (of Dead Machines), Matt Krefting (of The Believers) and a few other sprites out for adventure. It all slipped from some faerie aether into a sweet lyrical pronouncement from Toth and within eight minutes he bailed into the audience and sang his way into the basement, thus winding the rather extended ensemble to a finish. WW&TVV's future plans are that they will hitchhike-tour across the USA. Give 'em a lift and maybe they'll turn you on to their Book of FM cassette released on their own Polyamory label. It's an initial clatter of a session and downright weird but no weirder than what will be their future LP release on Destijl.

Emil Beausoleil, the performing quise of RRRecords' resident genius Ron Lessard, blew the house down He plugged a table lamp in, and set it up on stage next to a couple of Ron-rigged turntables. A semi-circle of curious elves gathered to see what this hurried man was up to. He chose his materials and set the needles down and listened to the front of house speakers emit their conservative rock and roll output. "Can you please turn up the PA??!!" he yelled to the soundman, who obviously had NO idea how to deal with Fmil. The soundman, in his learned judgment, thought that the noise was loud enough as noise, unlike some lame hard rock band which he'd probably knee-jerk to deafening decibels. But this was obviously wrong and to have it any louder would be criminal but Ron pleaded, "Turn it up! I am a professional!" The pleading became part of the show and Emil mixed it up with the great noise blowing out from the electric stylus hotcha, all the while infuriating the soundman. After about 20 highly entertaining minutes of this back-and-forth Emil went into a wonderful choreography of preparing his self with the adornment of a button-down sweater and tie. Now he was ready to go! But the soundman had to remind Emil that his time was pretty much up. Everyone was told to stay at the 30-40 minute mark as there were so many acts. At Emil's 30 minute mark he exclaimed "I was









fucking thrashed. He always does.

We were spent and ran out to fish for some liquids and missed Devendra Banhart but returned duly to be melted by the exquisite vocalese of Bridget St. John. Bridget released four dark folk LPs whilst traversing 1960s psychedelic London, Greenwich Village and the West Coast. She was a confidante of Nick Drake and had played in settings with Kevin Ayers and Mike Oldfield, amongst others. Her four-and-a-half solo LPs Ask Me No Questions (Dandelion 1969). Song For The Gentle Man (Dandelion 1971), Thank You For (Dandelion 1972), Jumblequeen (Chrysalis 1974), and The First Cut (Shagrat 1996). are haunting masterpieces of folkcharmed drama. Many thought her vanished but she has been alive and well on Bleeker Street, NYC for some time and appeared shockingly a few vears back at a memorial concert for Nick Drake in NYC. Destijl plans on recording a new Bridget LP soon (a CD, Take The Fifth, containing a pastiche of odd session tracks was released on the UK See For Miles label, which also reissued the Dandelion sessions) and if her appearance at this fest was any indication of the beautiful nature that LP may contain, then be prepared to have mind and heart embraced. What was most telling of this festival is how much the boundaries between extreme noise slash and classic hippie dawn folk have blurred. The new generation's appreciation of all outsider music as common aesthetic is as remarkable as it is organic, yet it's also nutso in its record collector absurdity. The one performance I saw Wolf Eyes noise queen John Olson stage front at was the Bridget set and he was obviously digging the honest sublimity flowing like sweet clotted cream through his oracular scope. Or maybe he was just trying to cadge a beer from someone.

As soon as Bridget began to head for the basement zone she noticeably stopped and turned in quizzical response to an immediate sound happening back on stage. Fursaxa, the lone figure of Pennsylvanian Tara Burke, had immediately begun a chime tree incantation of readiness. All minds seemed to gravitate towards this non-break in action and it took the classicism of Bridget's world and delivered a wholly other 'scape of folk/psyche contemplation. Fursaxa swept the audience off its collective squat, emoting swirled long note vocal lines floating atop mystic pump organ balustrades. Her closing piece was a lavered accordion texture composition that dropped all to enchanted grace. She has two new self-released CDRS on her site: Trobairitz Are Here From Venus and The Cult From Moon Mountain, both of which are highly recommended.

We took anot



### Mekons - Punk Rock css2cd \$14 Oct January 20th 2004

in the 1970's in Leeds, L.C. The Mickons epitomized and embraced the isks, extremes and Lichtrous pionise of purk rock. They eventually set that aside to morph into a wire, stranger, multi-dimensional beast. Returning to their earter material for a series of 25th anniversity. snows, these songs showed thamselves to be time e-s and no less relevant now than they were then. Punk Rock is a combine ion of new slucto and the recordings. of the best of hese songs. A medern take of the energotic beginning of "the most revolutionary group in the history of rock and roll" case large.

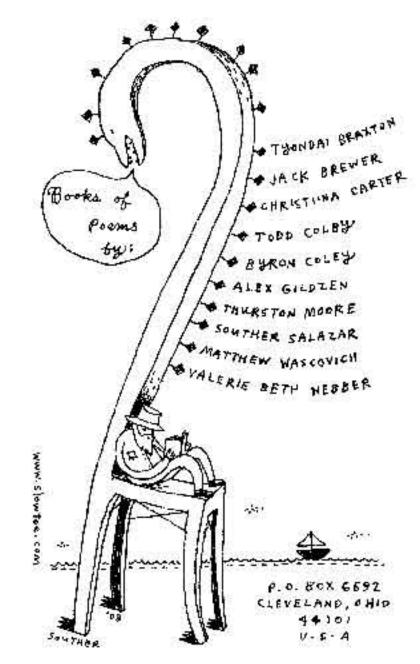
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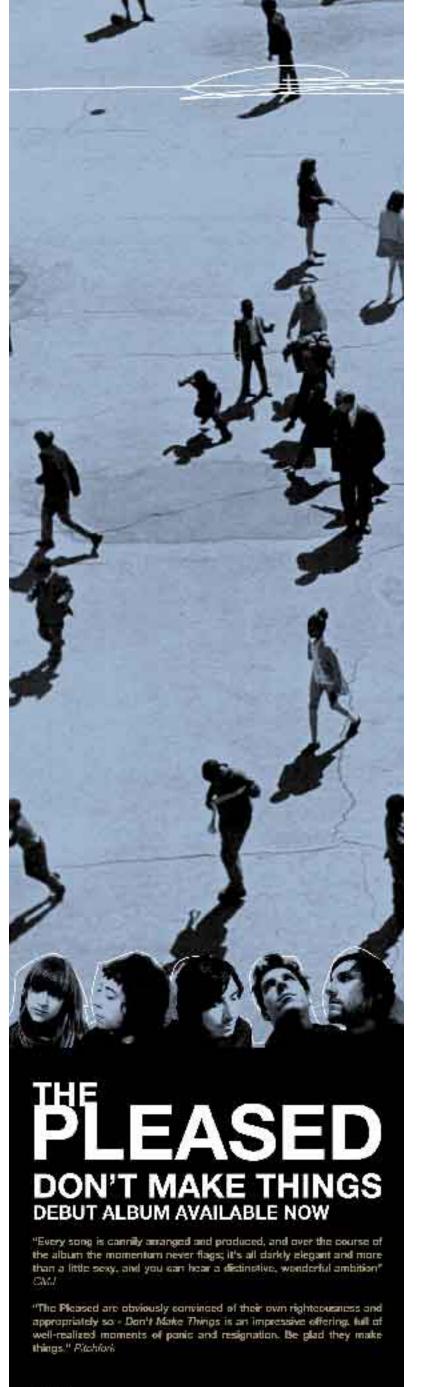
"This Mekans can do anything, because he one told them they account", and they do if be fer than airrost anyone ese.". Border

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Arthur No. 7 (Nov 03)

Cover by John Coulthart and W. T. Nelson; My Bloody Valentine's Kevin Shields; Paul Cullum on Sun Ra; underground psych bands Sunburned Hand of the Man, Comets On Fire and Six Organs of Admittance profiled; Peaches advises readers; Joe Carducci on Charles Bronson; photos by Susannah Breslin; John Geiger on the Dream Machine and the Beats; T-Model Ford on home schooling; Steve Aylett and Brian Evenson on terrible diseases; comics by Sammy Harkham, Gary Panter and Jordan Crane; Byron Coley & Thurston Moore; a horoscope by lan Svenonius.

Arthur No. 6 (Sept us)
The Return of Iggy & the Stooges, with long interviews with Iggy and the Ashetons, Miek Watt tour diaries and amazing live photos. Plus: Holly Golightly, the L.A. Cacophony Society, Weather Underground, T-Model Ford, Erin Cosgroves' The Baader Meinhof Affair, Mrs. Nugent's memoirs, Ian Svenonius horoscope, Paul Cullum, Byron Coley & Thurston Moore, and comics by Jordan Crane, Megan Kelso and Souther Salazar.

Pinchoeck, Sharon Rudani, Robbie Conal, Godspeed four Black Emperor, John Coulthart, Patti Smith & Jem Cohen, Carol Swain, Peter Kuper, Megan Kelso with Ron Rege, Bill Griffith and David Lasky. Plus: the Electric Six, June Carter Cash, Paul Cullum, Byron Coley & Thurston Moore.

### Arthur No. 4 (May 03)

Alan Moore on art, magic and consciousness; Plus The Black Keys and Sleater-Kinney on the road, "Ask T-Model Ford," Othar Turner and Bernice Pratcher, Alissa Quart on how corporate marketers target kids, comics by Martin Cendreda, Renee French, Luster Kaboom, Steven Weissman, Johnny Ryan, Jordan Crane and Sammy Harkham. Plus Byron Coley & Thurston Moore.

Arthur No. 3 (Mar 03)

A wake for Joe Strummer, with a lengthy interview by Kristine McKenna and magnificent photos by Ann Summa; Gabe Soria on The Polyphonic Spree; an excerpt from Ashley Kahn's A Love Supreme: The Story of John Coltrane's Signature Album by Ashley Kahn; John Lurie deals advice; artist Shirley Ise spotlighted; comics by Sammy Harkham, Jordan Crane, Johnny Ryan, Sam Henderson, Marc Bell and Ron Rege Jr. Plus Byron Coley & Thurston Moore.

Arthur No. 2 (Jan 03)
Unseen '60s photos of the Velvet Underground, Lenny Bruce, Anita O'Day, James Baldwin, Marlon Brando, the Black Panther Party by Charles Brittin; Sue Carpenter joins the circus; Gabe Soria spotlights Devendra Banhart; Douglas Rushkoff talks with Genesis P-Orridge; Steve Aylett on Jeff Lint; except from Caetano Veloso's autobio; T-Model Ford tells it like it is; comics by Kevin Huizenga, Jordan Crane, Anders Nilsen and James Kochalka, and a drawing by Sammy Harkham; Byron Coley & Thurston Moore; and Peter

Arthur No. 1 (Oct 02)
Premiere issue featuring Mat Hoffman; Peaches interviewed by Ian Svenonius; Daniel Pinchbeck; at home with Arthur C. Clarke (I), with new portrait by Geoff McFetridge; a frightful fairtytale by Dame Darcy; Eddie Dean's Blue Ridge Mtns ice cream truck memoirs; Joe Carducci on contempo culture, with painting by Camille Rose Garcia: one-panel comics by David Berman; a profile of Lift to Experience; Neil Hamburger gives advice; Paul Cullum on Eagle Pennell; and Byron Coley & Thurston Moore.

### **Bull Tongue**

streets in search of reality and missed Espers, a folkish conglomerate from the East Coast, but made it back in time to catch a formidable excursion by Nmperign. Like John Stevens' Spontaneous Music Ensemble Nmperign (Greg Kelley-trumpet, Bhob Rainey-sax) evince music from small free actions and are fully inside the compositional propulsion, granting the listener a steam head experience of fresh born creativity. A helluva time; but you got to be right up in it to let it flip and canoodle around your psyche, otherwise it becomes so much tick-tock inside the environment. Which is not altogether a bad alternative. They had unboxed their new double-LP, handsomely packaged by the Siwa label, entitled We Devote **Every Effort to Offer You the Best** That You Deserve to Have for Your Enjoyment. Siwa takes great care in producing high quality editions. This Nmperign LP is downright beauteous and it wonderfully captures the work style of these cats.

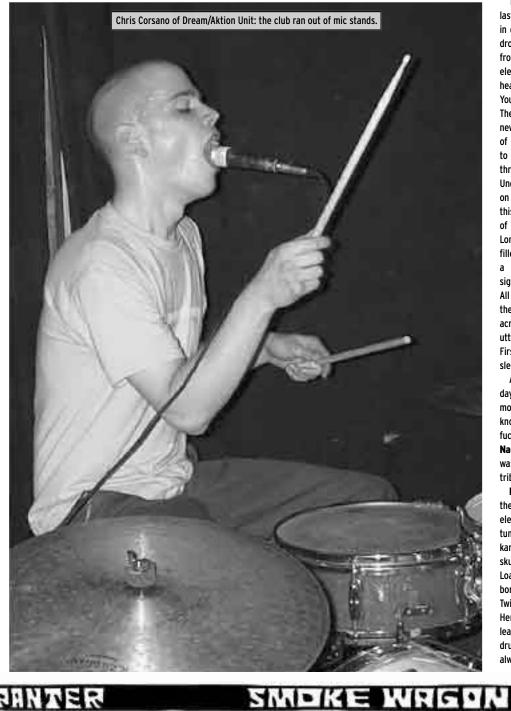
The MVEE Medicine Show is Matt Valentine and Erika Elder and, as evening began its nudging arrival, these good practitioners of earth/ magic love played a welcome set of radical animal head jam. It's Matt and Erika's Child of Microtones outfit which put on the Brattleboro Free Folk Fest that The Wire splashed on its "New Weird America" cover and, in a more outside/rural way, pre-dated this now full-blown orgy of groove.

At this point, the group mind of the audience was in superbake mode and it was due time for some regal asskicking, 'though we weren't quite in agreement as to how that should take place. The Wayne Rogers Unit took the stage and a cynical perspective took hold. These guys are gonna play some psych-rock noise jamz? That might be a cornball bummer! Within 30 seconds of Kate Biggars' awesome rock + roll guitar goddess power swings and Wayne's zapped lead scorch, the club was a burning hole of high time energy. Completely and totally ass-blasting, the entire dumbstruck audience lit up with raging rock energy and pushed this band into sheer sonic epiphany. They shut down with a weepingly great rendition of Thunderclap Newman's "Something in the Air." The night time is the right time and all systems were jumped. Wayne and Kate have plenty of different sides available from their record label/store Twisted Village. Hopefully they'll kick out a Wayne Rogers Unit disc quick. [A new Wayne Rogers album is out now from Drag City; it includes his cover of The T.N. song. - Helpful Ed.] Before exiting the smoked stage,

Kate raised both hands in the air and yelled "Borbetomagus!!!" as that was indeed the next salacious course. We've been tracking the

ARE YOU GUYS DEMONS





Borbetomagus monster since its mid-'70s inception and tonight they strode onto the stage like feted royalty. It was legend time and in celebration of such mythos, Don Dietrich sported an oversized Jimi Hendrix t-shirt which was a visual call to arms. Dietrich and Jim Sauter. within a hot minute, locked their horns "bells together" and sent out snaked multiphonics careening with total life over the guitar-driven field of concrete miasmas courtesy Donald Miller. Unusual for Borbetomagus. at least in our experience, the trio actually got into some guietism, which opened their palette of intensity to a neo-sophisticated, freakish level. To the delight of everyone, the reedmen whipped out rubber hoses and attached them to their horns and blew out jettisons of grunt ending with Dietrich on his back gurgling up a mouthful of beer through the sounding rubber. This was sex Nyack, NY-style and the room was dripping.

The midnight hour threatened as last call would be in effect and it was in giddy anticipation as Tony Conrad dropped a white sheet across the front of the stage and set up his violin/ electronics unit. Tony Conrad=fucking heavy. In collaboration with LaMonte Young in the '60s Tony formed the Theatre of Eternal Music, where a newfound investigation and reckoning of drone music dynamism was put to action. This was a direct current through John Cale into the Velvet Underground, a premier influence on just about everything moving in this room. And that's but a segment of Tony's history in multimedia. Long, sonorous electric bowed tones filled the space and at each pause a percussive moving whomp of a signal punctuated the environment. All the while, a surrealist shadow of the performer bellowed in gargantua across the stage. This was pure and utter mesmer music. As heavy as God. First night over. All crawled home and slept for the coming Sunday.

A different vibe this day, as second days usually are. Bleary-brained mortals ready to bust a second nut but knowing they really need to find some fucking java and soon. We missed lan Nagoski's opening set but heard it was a sublime offering to the rising tribes poking about the aether.

Neon Hunk decided to caffeinate the gathering heads with hard-spiked electro slap adorned in knitted tumble-wear. Each hyper-bonk karate chopped its way through our skulls, not unlike their wicked LP on Load Records Smarmymob or the bonkers cassette Neyan Honkies (on Twig from Nautical Almanac's label Heresee). This duo-Jennifurmium on lead synth/ yox and Pink Diamond on drums, modular 'tronics and vox-are always a sweet kick to catch but we

### GARY BANKER

### THEY'RE TOO STUPID TO HA HA! THEY'RE NOT DEMONS . JUST CHUMPS!





### **Bull Tongue**

were still seeking the sex charm left the night previous.

It was within the grasp surely of Burning Star Core. We raved about these little fuckers an issue or two ago and they've only grown in amazingness. The violin-slicing Spencer Yeh, electronix arbiter Mike Shiflet and drummer Trevor Tremaine had spent the last 36 hours noise slamming in the pits, from the Hair Police Friday kill-down to last night's Tony Conrad mind-crush. They were ready to slav and they did and in their own time. They didn't beat off and blast, they let the music take its own path and guided it masterfully. Zipper fuck violin amp rock intershot with improvised quarktronix grabbed us back into the beast. It was topped off with Hair Police's Mike Connelly joining for a vocal necksnap and we were on our way to a fucking killer day of sickness. Connelly's Gods of Tundra label has just released the Amplified Body Sound cassette and we suggest you grab a couple now.

Into a room abrim with pariah visions, shuffled the crown prince of outsider U.S.A.: the soul-blamming persona of Arthur Doyle. Arthur has heard the noise of God penetrate Satan's sacrum in more ways than most of these pups have had teeth in mouth, but does he lord this wild wind about their shells? Naught! He calls a dog a dog, and today he was the diva with the hand cream notion. His recorder and voice songs were gracious Nivea to the grey matter of towelette consciousness. The ladies in attendance I saw Heather Leigh Murray of Scorces and Rita Ackermann of Angelblood, silently evoked this man's great hands in bliss everlasting with smiles and eyes betwinked. Arthur Doyle can lay waste to any jaded preconception and though today's salutation was noteful for its brevity, it was nevertheless relentlessly religious. An event a lot of us were salivating

for was the appearance of **Dead** Machines, the romantik-noise union betwixt John Olson and Tovah O'Rourke. Olson runs American Tapes, possibly the most recognized of contemporary U.S. underground noisetronix labels. It's also one of the most infuriating as releases come roughshod out of the gate in extreme micro numbers (editions of 15 are not unusual) and are discontinued post-haste. And their iconography is hardcore psychoslash making them rather difficult to differentiate. Which, of course, is their beauty, as it constitutes a universe of living music The label is just past its 300th release drink-fight-and-fuck keychain belt justion into folk blues quitar text, sat time of his travel on the Eclipse label Nyoukis—brilliant). [There's also a new with no sign of slowing down. Since and Tovah is resplendent in her natural his ass down and ripped through his Tovah (ex-Golden Calves) relocated gorgeousness. When Olson walks blue mountain repertoire. Jack came to Michigan to take Olson's hand in over, kisses her, grabs the mic and out of the mighty drone psyche world day got busted as Angelblood made sacramental rite, as well as to do her proclaims "fuck the cops," you know of Pelt and with the same southern a completely rare appearance on the sweet sizzle, the mood was buzzing own thing, she's released some of the vou're at the center of the universe. charm that combo identified itself, live stage, Angelblood forms from the in warmth and grooviness, No Neck coolest sounds from the American If only just for a while. They have a Jack does so in solo stance. The uncategorizable flares of NYC's Gang Blues Band set the stage up with Tapes factory to date. Together one-sided handcut LP "The Things" process of breaking-through is as. Gang Dance Diadal and No Neck Blues, their classic array of urban fire music





they've exhibited stretches of improvised iunk machine counterplay which bring to mind a feminized Wolf Eves with a gonad butter dish of bohunk. Olson is insane in his fabricsplitting military fatigue T-shirt and

really the real deal.

Jack Rose, continuing his invest-

(edition of 15-available as of press meritorious as the actual blow-out and time but probably long gone). There's 

Jack languishes at this acoustic door 

Greenwood runs the U-Sound Archive a great cassette in a large edition of showing us all things we may have where much JOMF is available (as well 40 called "Future Funerals" which is been dulled to by through the years of as a new limited edition book of illos post-Tora Tora Tora exposition. He has iust released a great document of this Decay/Decaer Pinga wizard Dylan called Opium Musick.

What seemed like a dude-laden

Band as well as the ricochet finger jab-guitar licks of Orthrelm. Indeed it was Orthrelm's Mick Barr who was responsible for a lot of the compositional guitar action, but his lickage is now played by a strapping Swede improviser who gave the group a new sense of metal flow. And metal is the elemental catalyst of this odd vet sultry swagger. What began as a three-woman night-trip (Jess Holzworth left for warmer climes) is now just Rita Ackermann and Lizzie Bougatsos singing/chanting/evoking/ crying/screaming the spirits of earth and moon, driven by the right-on dark metal skin pummel of No Neck's Dave Nuss, who got this shit down cold a long while back whilst a lad named Bambi in the Texas metal circuit with Angkor Watt. Rita moves with a sensual Hungarian nightclub lift with a smile and a cigarette and a voice howling into the soul of dark dreams while Lizzie stands in black with an early Ozzy intensity, her banshee shreeks breaking any freak spell within 9000 miles. The tunes were killer and the girl/girl sex possession rituals were uncaged eros. The scent was dizzying. After the **Angelblood** and **Masses of the** Daggers CDs on the Japanese Captain Trip label, they now have a new CD of this crazed line-up being readied for issue by Printed Matter.

With boners engorged, we crawled to a bar around the corner to drown the heat, missing the over-excited hard rock of No Doctors But we returned in time to see the last half of Noxagt who were on a rampage of crushing blackball bass (Kjetil Brandsdal), whamming drum constructions (Jan Christian Kyvik) and hyper violin shard spray (Nils Erga). These three Norwegians have been at if for a few years now and recorded a killer document of their moves released by Load Records called Turning It Down Since 2001. This disc just plain slams and tonight's gig showed the crux of their group gush. A perfect soundtrack to our horndogged oats.

Jackie-O Motherfucker played an extended piece of music completely beyond anything we've ever heard them do. It was an exhilarating display of mass instrumentation in active repetition. They had the sophisticated wherewithal to let the composition have its own accord, whilst gracefully directing it to new wide-open levels of positivism. Astounding and assured and joyful. Head honcho Tom by legendary Chocolate Monk/Prick double-album by JOMF on ATP Recordings.-Helpful

After JOME warmed the club to a

### **Bull Tongue**

percussion and prepared guitar/sax. And there was Michiko, long-haired Japanese woman adding a vibe of actual Noh-wave spontaneity. And Keith Connelly with Stooges aviator shades and wildstyle red beard. People were ready for this. Many here knew No Neck as some mythical sub-world improv OllTfit. All the band had to do was do what they do best: wrap the music round their heads and let it rip. It certainly started off this way and the audience was latching on, but then it went into bloopersville. An attempt at living danger was in effect, but to a crowd of hardcore Midwesterners this was about as dangerous as the Knick City Dancers. Drums and cymbals flew into the audience, ashtravs were tossed off the balcony blasting glass bits around the onlookers feet (cool!). blindfolds were worn across the stage (though there was obvious peeking going on), and a beer bottle shard was used to cut into skin (ouch...fuck!). It was entertaining, regardless, especially Keith's antagonistic "hev why dontchyou shut the fuck up?" patter to the heckling crowd. The club owners threatened to pull the plug on the festival after witnessing the backstage fruit tray being tossed in the air nearly shattering hanging light fixtures (cool!) and demanded to Clint Simonson, the Destiil organizer, to stop the band, Clint was digging it, we all were-retardo chaos is a gas-so he refused. It ended with most of the band winding down in apoplectic disengagement. There was the feeling of divisiveness and regret, as a chance to prove how good No Neck can be was overshadowed by a food fight. A general review of "whatever" was handed down. It certainly would be one of the more discussed sets of the event but for total mindblow it didn't even enter the race NNBB had been touring around with

was waiting to see these legends from Sweden. They came out to a riotous welcome, four elder gentlemen with shirts tucked in, and proceeded to trip out into a long classic drone rock groove. Lead guitarist Bo-Anders Persson was 60-plus years old and severely kicking everyone's ass. A mainstay of TG+S. Bo first formed the group Parson Sound in 1967 as a way to explore minimalist rock

Trad Gras och Stenar (Swedish for,

Trees Grass and Stone) and everyone

to International Harvester in 1968 years saw them release a self-titled Minneapolis iamming heavily and we throughout Sweden, playing outside punk days as T. Gas). The Ti'llinden

and re-arranged members a bit, and LP on Decibel, Rock for Kropp och are more than mellow. Jim O'Rourke take on mid-'80s Arkestra action and got very involved with hippie "free" Sjal (Silence) and Djungelns Lag is passing out free LSD to anyone pretty cornpone. We bolted to get culture, recording two excellent LPs (Tall records). They split up in 1973 who's ready and much to everyone's **Soy Gott Rose-Marie** (Love Records) and released the posthumous **Mors** pleasure. Rita Ackermann comes and Hemat (Decibel Records). In Mors LP (Tall), but regrouped every dancing onto the stage to muse the boogleing like a mouse on fire as the 1969 they got more into it, traveling once in a while (once during the 1981 men into a higher key, Sweet!

For almost everyone in attendance

club personnel swept away the dust of goddamned good time. Where a festival of this consistent greatness can lead is only to a next generation. What seems to be in the

instead....well it was a rather softcore

some sick pizza around the corner

and returned to see Matt St. Germain

focus to do so. Also 3 to 5000 dollars helps. The next one in the works right now is the No Fun festival in Brooklyn this March 2004, as curated by Carlos Giffoni of Monotract What distinguished the Tora Tora Tora fest and the Freedom From/Destiil fest was the curators' devotion to the tapestry of artfulness and original soul power running through avant garde jazz to dark folk dreams and buzzbomb noise power. Note to Giffoni: can't fucking wait, dude.

As always, If you have material (Vinyl, Books, Mags, Vids etc.) to be LICKED by BULLTONGUE please send two (2) conies to:

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Tara Burke of Fursaxa. raga. The band changed their name are just the band." The next four Draj." And now they are in fucking to be recreated live tonight but

Don Dietrich of Borbetomagus: the only real way to play the sax when you get right down to it.

### any mainstream confine with a freaked label released a 1970 live CD in 1995 this was the end, but one more act was light and happening performance called Gardet 12.6.1970 and a double ready to go and it was Dwight Frizzell. aesthetic, changing their name this CD of Parson Sound music, both which the man who released the weirdo 1976 time to Trad Gras Och Stenar and are awesome, and Silence issued a out jazz LP, Beyond the Black Crack. cards is the idea that anyone can put proclaiming "vou are the music we 2002 session on CD "Ain Schvain The talk was that this LP was going on a festival like this if they have the

GRRY BRUNER

## ARE YOU SURE THAT YOU SHOULD BE OUT HERE WITH ALL THAT CASH?



こうりょう しょうしん



the artist best known for his comic strips featuring neanderthal punk Jimbo and his set designs for Pee-Wee's Playhouse, lives in Brooklyn with his wife and daughter. In 2000 he was awarded a Chrysler Design award. More of his work may be seen at garypanter.com

Gary Panter,

### SHRY BHNNER SMOKE MREDN









"Hummers, SUVs are destroyed in West Covina; other SUVs damaged in Duarte, Monrovia and Arcadia. Earth Liberation Front calls incidents 'ELF actions.'

"Nearly 100 sport-utility vehicles in the San Gabriel Valley today were destroyed in a suspicious fire or were damaged with spray paint, in what authorities described as a possible case of domestic terrorism." —Los Angeles Times, August 22, 2003

"The [United States] military is teaming up with hip-hop bible *The Source* to recruit black urban kids with pimped-out Hummers and off-da-hook merchandise.

"'You have to go where the target audience is,' says Col. Thomas Nickerson, director of strategic outreach for the U.S. Army Accessions Command, who says that the Army just reached its recruitment goal of 100,200 enlistees this year. 'Our research tells us that hip-hop and urban culture is a powerful influence in the lives of young Americans. We try to develop a bond with that audience. I want them to say, Hey, the Army was here—the Army is cool!"

— Salon.com, Oct 17, 2003



The ELFs set fire to San Gabriel's SUVs
Blowing the horn of sympathy for earth and man
Promising to never rest until the rest of us get it right
After Herr Gropenegger steered one of his recalled Hummers
Straight into the governor's unstable mansion.

Automobile addicts kick the habit
Downstairs by saving space in the volunteer army
For rip rap hip hop artists
From the defense department with unlimited budgets and
Pitiful powers of persuasion to morph enough
Niggers with Attitude into Niggers with Gratitude
Jacked up from grand theft auto to Hummer.
Join the American Foreign Legion.
Save the rich white men's empire from its diaper full of policy.

Target practice on the target audience.

Show us people we can shoot and get paid for it

Where men can't find work and volunteer

Uniformly for a job, a few meals, a chance to leave the streets

Of their hometown, their hoods, their barrios.

Go from the curb to the pinnacles of power

Reeking with criminally incompetent mischief

Dreaming of war without casualties.

Let us all now wallow in spent uranium
Spending enthusiasm for Gulf War Syndrome's
Inexplicable diseases except by the poisoned atmosphere of fear.
You want terror? Wake up to the nightmare grapple of
Mortal combat with abstract nouns
Produced by paranoid projections.

The American system of criminal free enterprise Camouflages its intentions as public good Promoting private desire. Meet general disillusionment, Camouflage, sabotage, subterfuge.

Carlot after carlot of unsold steel and chrome basks in Zero interest for new cars quadrupled for the used ones Poor people are conned into borrowing to buy.

A yellow Hummer coming down a one way alley Forces me to wait in the left turn lane For Bobcat to come home to papa Now detained in Texas on a DUI.

Joy is a ride we all want to take.

Poet CHARLES POTTS lives in Walla Walla, Washington, where he operates The Temple Bookstore, a temple for poets. His Little Lord Shiva: The Berkeley Poems, 1968 was recently reprinted by Glass Eye Books.



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