

arthur

a review of life,
arts & thought

FREE DECEMBER
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IAN SVENONIUS INTERROGATES **SONIC AGITATORS**

PLUS: SIX ORGANS' Ben Chasny
& OM's Al Cisneros **TRADE RIFFS**

Dan Deacon & Jimmy Joe Roche
explain **ULTIMATE REALITY**

**THE SAGA OF
THE SODFATHER**

**PEEKING INTO
PUNK HOUSES**

**YOUR NON-TOXIC
CLEANING DILEMMAS
SOLVED!**

RED SCARE!
A FASHION ESSAY

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LAPHIL PRESENTS



The Urban Experience

The Art of Music

January 4 - 17, 2008

CONCRETE FREQUENCY

LOS ANGELES PHILHARMONIC – DAVID ROBERTSON, FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

CONCRETE FREQUENCY is a series of events designed to examine and celebrate the elements that define a city, and how they are affected by, and reflected in, music.

Tue JAN 8 8PM
SONGS OF THE CITY
BIIRDIE • FRANKLIN BRUNO
ZOOEY DESCHANEL • JOHN DOE
INARA GEORGE (The Bird and the Bee)
STEVIE JACKSON (Belle and Sebastian)
SEAN LENNON • SONDRE LERCHE
BOB MOULD • ZACH ROGUE (Rogue Wave)
DANIEL ROSSEN (Grizzly Bear)

additional guests to be announced

Some of today's most earnest urban troubadours share lo-fi songs of city life... stories of yearning, pleasure, heartbreak, and more. Be there as the divergent paths of more than a dozen artists coincide for one very special evening.

Thu JAN 17 9PM
MAN-MACHINE IN THE DIGITAL CITY
CORNELIUS • PLAID

Tokyo's Cornelius delivers electronic psychedelia while dissecting layers of technology, urban culture, and pop music. Going beyond techno, British duo Plaid produces digitalized abstract musical art, from ominous crackles to beat-heavy melodies. Don't miss this rare, live performance, featuring cut-up sonic assemblages and wildly experimental visuals.

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HALL

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Box Office (Tues–Sun, 12–6pm) Groups (10 or more): 323.850.2050
Programs, artists, prices and dates subject to change.



the James Irvine foundation



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Laris Kreslins
Publisher Emeritus



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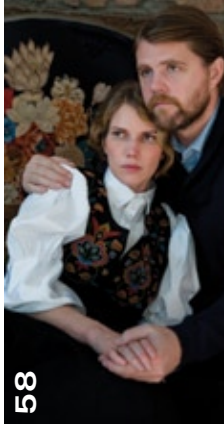
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Direct correspondence to editor@arthurmag.com or Arthur Editorial Offices, 3408 Appleton Street, Los Angeles, CA 90039 (pictured above). All correspondence will be considered for publication unless otherwise marked, and may be edited for clarity.

DUNCE CAPPER

I wanted to commend Douglas Rushkoff for his intelligent, succinct and just fucking right-on article regarding 9/11 conspiracy theories [“Conspiracy of Dunces,” Sept 07]. I’ve tried to make some of the same points to friends that are sharp, intelligent folks that have this damn counter-productive hobby, if you will. Aside from the fine point Mr. Rushkoff asserts that our creative counterculture is debilitated, spinning its wheels from this distraction of bad science and abandoned critical thinking, burning energy that could otherwise be used for addressing the real issues at hand, it just plain sucks

to have friends caught up in this nonsense.

Such a waste of energy. It’s a bummer and it’s frustrating.

I shall nevertheless show this fine article to them with the hopes that they will take a moment from their card game with Santa, Jesus, Ramtha and the Boogeyman to see, at the very least, that they should stop perpetuating this issuance of unsubstantiated garbage information. It clogs things up and prevents us from getting to the bottom of things in a timely manner. Even when people aren’t involved directly in activism, the flow of sound information is vital.

So, hats off again for a well-written and much needed article. Can’t close without mentioning that Arthur Magazine is really swell. Keep it up, thanx.

Kevin Woodruff, Via email

O(NO)MISSION

Thank you for Moore & Coley’s interview with the great, underrated Yoko Ono. They obviously knew their YO history and their respect for her shined through. I also enjoyed the capsule reviews in Tanka form but was puzzled by the omission of *Season of Glass*, certainly one of her most revered works.

As for the promo album Welcome: The Many Sides of Yoko Ono, of which is written: “it looks like this promo alb / is the only place / that a few yoko tracks land” — those rare tracks may be found on Ryko’s *Onobox*.

best,

Vernon Purnell, Via email

HANDS OFF OUR RACK

This letter is to inform you that your publication, Arthur Magazine, has been appearing in the community racks owned by Consumer Source/DistribuTech placed in select Blockbuster [sic] in the Palm Springs area. Our contract with this store chain provides in part that we are the only free publication rack and that no other free publications are to be placed in the above store chain. Please inform your distributors not to place your publication in our racks. They are for exclusive use of our customers.

If you should be interested in our distribution services please do not hesitate to contact me at (909) 923-6213. We have many accounts that I am sure would prove to be beneficial for your publication.

In the event you do not adhere to our demand to cease your actions of trespass and contract interference,

we will have no choice but to refer this matter to our legal counsel.

Vincent Armijo, General Manager
Inland Empire DistribuTech
Ontario, California

Sir, although we sympathize with your troubles, we must firmly note that Arthur most certainly does not in fact have any distributors who are paid to store the rag in the Blockbuster store chain in the Palm Springs area. If, as you allege, copies of Arthur are indeed magically appearing in these “community racks,” our best guess is that some kind of rogue distributor is on the loose, trespassing and interfering in contracts all over the Low Desert, using Arthur as an easy prop for her sick rackjobbing kicks. That, or it’s the work of an enthusiastic but misguided senior citizen high on cranberry vodka and E.D. pills. In any event, needless to say, Arthur does not condone any violation of the Sacred Rack. Do what you must, sir, but please: Be gentle in your vigilance.

REQUEST FROM FED BUSTEE

I truly love your lucid and informative magazine. I am a federal prisoner in Oregon and would love to continue receiving your dignified publication. My address is below and I thank you.

Sean P. Kelly #32873-112
FCI Sheridan PO Box 5000
Sheridan, Oregon 97378-5000

Thanks for the kind words, Sean. We are pleased to let you know that you will be receiving a free year’s subscription to our humble rag compliments of Arthur’s recently instituted “Arthur for Everybody Else” program, which allows patrons to purchase one-year, \$30 gift subscriptions to Arthur on behalf of prisoners, public libraries and medical marijuana dispensaries. Details of the program are available at www.arthurmag.com. (Note: Blockbuster stores in the Palm Springs area are not eligible for this program. Don’t even try, Grandma.)

“He was the soundtrack to my show”
The Mighty Burner remembers the Godfather of Soul.

Sonny Hopson debuted as a radio disc jockey with “The Mighty Burner Show” on Philadelphia’s WHAT in 1965, playing James Brown’s “Please Please Please.” You can hear Soul Sound Sonny announcing the news “Brown’s in town!” to all of Philly on Sonny’s storming Original 1969 AM Radio Broadcast CD (Philly Archives). Arthur spoke to Sonny by phone three weeks after James died, almost one year ago. Here’s some of what he said.

—Peter Relic

James was one of my good friends. He got to know the number one disc jockey in Philly! James had no problem calling you up and thanking you for playing his record. James really took care of his disc jockeys. He’d call me up: “Meet me at the club down on Washington, Mr. Hopson, I need you to emcee the show.” He’d give me five, six hundred dollars. He knew a disc jockey doesn’t get paid much, and he’d make sure you got paid. Always leave some money in the town he came to. James’ father used to call the station, he was in the Navy with [Philly radio deejay] Georgie Woods. Buddy Nolan worked for James as an advance man. Come to town three, four weeks ahead of time to find out everything, make sure they’re playing James’ record, make sure the show was a sellout. James’ show was two, three hours. He played every venue there was. I played every James Brown record that came out, and he put out a new record every month. James had the funkiest bottom you could put your hands on. He was the soundtrack to my show. “It’s A Man’s, Man’s World!”

One night I went up to Harlem to see James at the Apollo Theater. James was getting ready to go on and suddenly Jackie Wilson came in the house, sliding across stage, killing ‘em! James said, “What are you doing letting Jackie Wilson go on before me! Shut it down, I ain’t going on for another hour.”

There was a club, The Sex Machine on 52nd and Market, they named it after his record, he was so excited he came to the club. He was dancing, dropped down to the floor, popped back up! He also came down to the International

Astro-Disc, that was my club. He called me Mr. Hopson, never called me Sonny, and I called him Mr. Brown. We were very respectful. When Otis Redding died I was there carrying the casket in Macon, Georgia. Arthur Conley, Johnny Taylor, Joe Simon, Joe Tex, James Brown were all there. There was a photo of it in Jet magazine. Otis didn’t work as hard as James Brown but he was right up there cooking. James Brown was the boss. Everybody copied his shit. He had the blueprint. I don’t know how you can outdo James Brown unless you take out a hammer and kill yourself right there on the stage.

He’s a heavyweight part of the Civil Rights legacy. He lost radio stations trying to be a civil rights leader. We were in Miami with the Fair Play Committee when he cut “Say It Loud I’m Black And I’m Proud.” I was the only one playing “Say It Loud I’m Black And I’m Proud” but only for a minute—that record could not be stopped! James called me on the phone: “Mr. Hopson, I heard you’re the only one playing my record in Philly!” Then they all jumped on it. Everybody was wearing their hair in a process, then black got beautiful. Like James said: “I don’t want nobody to get me nothing, open the door, I’ll get it myself!”

MC Hammer is my cousin. When I told James that MC Hammer was my cousin he said, “Yeah but he ain’t as smart as you.”

Twenty years ago I went down to Constitution Hall to see James perform with Eddie Murphy. James had a limousine with a bathtub in the back. I met my son’s mother that night.

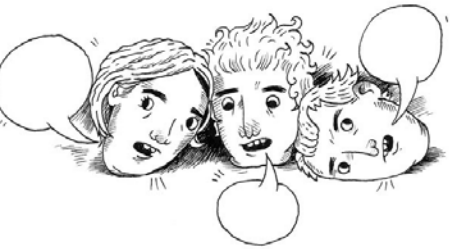
I went up to the funeral in New York. They changed his clothes three times during the funeral. That was James: “I can’t go out in the same suit.” Outside people were ten abreast for three blocks down each way, from three in the morning til six at night, all ages, all colors. No fights, no fussing, no nothing. I’m going to miss him and I’m REALLY going to miss him. Part of me died when he died.

People Are Talking About

By Brian Joseph Davis

Erik Prince’s tattoos

Tattoos passé? Don’t tell that to the beleaguered founder of Blackwater USA. Recently under unfriendly fire from congress, Prince may not say much but he is a walking canvas with his personal journey mapped out on his skin. “On each elbow I got the Blackwater symbol—it’s Celtic and means,



‘healing energy,’” he said to a fan before testifying. Not without a sense of humor, Prince has also etched the words “Private Company” in ornate script just above his groin and has been known to flash it whenever someone uses the word “mercenary.” His favorite marking, however, is a ring of dolphins on his left arm. “I was taking a break from drafting our post-Katrina policing guidelines,” he explained,

“and we were totally stuck and couldn’t decide between stun grenades or rubber bullets. Then we went out on the boat and I had one of the most spiritual, beautiful and enlightening experiences of my life when I ended up swimming naked among hundreds of bottle-nosed dolphins. We were able to nail the guidelines that night, like the dolphins were telling us how. Stun grenades all the way.”

General Than Shwe’s stolen diaries

When a storage facility invoice for the Burmese junta leader’s belongings accidentally went unpaid, a buyer leapt at the chance when the items went to auction. One diary page included the following “to do” list written on Hello Kitty stationary—

Clean house... organize life.
Be honest with everyone even if you might get in trouble.
Eat healthy... start working out at least 3 times a week.
Talk to someone if I feel like throwing up.
Call someone if I feel like using ... get a sponsor.
Get CDs back from Nicole.

For the already unpopular Shwe—who once said, “Growing up I didn’t realize I lived in a compound,

DEAR NURSE PERIWINKLE.

Q:

My nose always seems to be stuffed up. Not with snot but just... Well, I can’t smell as much as I’d like. Is there something I can eat, drink, smoke, toke or whatever that will improve my sense of smell and/or clear, or enlarge, or otherwise improve, my nasal passages?

Stuffy

Atwater Village, California

A:

Yoga, boring but true. Drink lemon water and hot tea. *Don’t* eat any dairy or sugar for 2 weeks. *Do* eat lots of brothys soups, steamed greens and protein.

Your body can’t process raw foods if your digestive fire is weak. It will turn salads to mucous. To improve your digestive fire, get morning sun, take ginger in tea or salad dressings, do leg lifts or anything that works the abs. Fuel the fire in your belly to improve digestion! Most things that go

wrong with us stem from digestion. if your colon isn’t working, you get sick, and your skin looks bad.

The key to health is greens, brown rice, lemon water and yoga.

You have to process your lymph; the evolution of our bodies haven’t caught up wth our new sedentary lifestyle.

One exercise anyone can do: sit down cross-legged, arms extended to the sides. Make fists but stick both middle fingers out and rotate your arms slowly in a circular backwards motion (a lot of lymph collects in our shoulders).

It’s more time consuming than taking a pill, but this is the cure. Yup.

Have a question for nurse periwinkle? write nurse@arthurmag.com.

Disclaimer: Nurse Periwinkle is not a “real” nurse, but is the next best thing if you don’t have health insurance, which you probably don’t if you’re reading this. Her wealth of information is sourced from centuries of forest wisdom, hours of research at the public library, distant travels to new age bookstores, and long conversations with internet shamans.

then I went to a friend’s house and was like, ‘oh’”—this comes hot on the heels of his cellphone having been hacked. That incident saw the internet posting of numbers for Ashlee Simpson, Manmohan Singh, Vin Diesel and Hu Jintao among others.

The Freewheelin’ Olsen Twins

Leaked onto TMZ.com this week are several deleted scenes from Todd Haynes’ Bob Dylan biopic I’m Not There... including a scene with Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen. The twins portray Dylan simultaneously in a scene at a Brentwood Starbucks where they terrorize a slow barista on her first day by pelting her with biscotti and Paul McCartney CDs while yelling, “Gotta serve somebody.” Then there’re prop comedians Gallagher and Carrot Top, who reenact Dylan and Donovan’s hotel room song war from Don’t Look Back, with Gallagher shaming Carrot Top into a stuttering, inauthentic mess. Temperamental director David O Russell plays an “evil” Dylan, vaporizing actors with his laser vision and hurling buses at a “good” Dylan (played by poet Charles Simic). The two battle until they merge back into a “whole” Dylan, who then rises into the sky fist first, to confront General Zod.



DOUGLAS RUSHKOFF

RAISING BABY EINSTEIN

I thought parenthood would be an opportunity to unplug on a certain level. To disconnect from the consumerist pathology of the market and engage in the most intimate and natural process available to human beings.

Perhaps. But—at least for me—to find it and hold onto it has meant going against what appears to be a full-frontal assault. While there have always been companies willing to make a buck off the guilt, fear, and ignorance of new parents, never before have they enjoyed a medium like the Internet, or a generation of parents who look to their media for the answers to all of life's problems.

If we're to believe the Web, this is the very best time ever to be a new parent. Ad-supported websites with fun names like "Babble" and "Urban Baby" cater to the educated (read: wealthy), cosmopolitan moms and dads by convincing them that the consumer skills they used so successfully as singles or hip couples can translate effortlessly to the raising of

Parenting may be the best argument yet for suspending one's relationship to the "global village" in favor of the plain old village.

happy children. And that they can stay as groovy as they ever were, despite their new responsibilities. Websites for hopeful moms have banner ads for ovulation tests through which women can track their periods for optimum insemination opportunities. Just as there are now magazines for every possible parental permutation, from Gay Parenting Magazine to Plum ("the first-ever pregnancy magazine for women 35 years and older"), there are counselors, programs, and even pills for every possible parental challenge—all just a click away.

To be sure, the always-on Internet can be any parent's best friend. According to one study, 86% of expectant parents turn to the Internet first—before friends or family—for advice on pregnancy and childrearing. And not only are we turning to the Internet for counsel, but for self-expression and solidarity. A sim-

ply Google search will reveal thousands of "baby blogs"—parents using the on-line diary format to reach out into the vastness of cyberspace for some affirmation that what they're going through is okay, e.g. is it normal for baby to wriggle, crawl, or cry the way he does? And for every question posed there is not only a flame war of conflicting responses in the "comments" section—there is also an army of market researchers working to turn this uncertainty into a new profit stream.

For my wife and I, it began before we even got pregnant. As wannabe parents in our early forties, we believed the hype and headlines about fertility rates declining with age—based largely on studies conducted by a pharmaceutical industry whose profits depend on getting people like us to initiate expensive fertility regimens. As a result, men in white coats were delivering my seed to my wife. Of course, just a couple of months after we gave up on the best methodology that science and the market have to offer and accepted our infertility, we got pregnant the old-fashioned way. Just like grandma

told us would happen.

That wasn't enough to teach us our lesson. As if trained to look into a screen rather than other human beings for answers to life's biggest questions, we continued to practice Net parenthood, which for some reason always led us to a professional or product for which we could pay. That's the true brilliance of information overload: it turns every problem into a dilemma, with countless links, resources, and ultimately costly solutions.

Take the lost art of breastfeeding. No, it is not as simple as it looks in National Geographic. It is complex—or at least this is what the parenting websites would have us believe. There is "latch," which refers to the way the infant's lips wrap around the nipple of the breast. There is "draw," which refers to the suction the infant is capable of generating given the tightness of his latch. The duration of an



Illustration by Jack Pollock

infant's nursing is also important: a short session may yield only "front milk," the less nutritious fluid stored in the front of the breast compared with "hind milk," the real gold that only flows after a good fifteen minutes of consumption. How is a new mother supposed to learn all this? Her own mother will prove useless; she was persuaded by the baby formula marketers of the 1960s and '70s that breast-feeding was a poor substitute for laboratory-crafted nutrition. So who comes to the rescue? The professional lactation consultant, with her charts, exercises, scales, nipple guards, electric pumps, sterilizing bags, and, of course, non-reimbursable fees.

Once lactation is working or over with, it's on to the new experts for advice on sleeping, cuddling and walking. Every week has a milestone, and every missed milestone has its own set of specialists, ready to intervene, interview and ultimately interfere with the process that used to be called growing up. Pediatrician-turned-authors with reassuring names like Dr. Sears, Dr. Ferber, and Dr. Karp have written competing books and websites telling parents everywhere to hold, not to hold, or to swing our babies, respectively (and contradictorily).

Other contraptions keep the baby on its side, and still others make sure he stays on his back. If a sleeping infant isn't in imminent danger of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, then he's in danger of having his sleep cycle disturbed by intrusive parents checking to make sure he's still

breathing. And, yes, there's a book you can buy, site you can visit, or an expert you can hire to make sure you don't fall into either trap.

If growing up takes a village, then the market-driven parent will have to contend with a small army of certified practitioners. That, or risk the even greater horror of a baby who can't compete with his or her peers. But how to pick the right consultants, nurses, nannies, doulas, or physical therapists?

Luckily, for those overwhelmed by the intricacies of the consultancy scene, the market has risen yet again to promote our well-being and peace of mind. For every breed of consultant, there are meta-consultants: special consultants who can help us pick our nanny, night nurse, or doula (the new age version)—all for either a fee up front or a cut of the referred consultant's charges. If the meta-consultant is too expensive, then we can just go back to the web and read the user reviews of everyone and everything out there. Our online peers will point us to the goods and services we need for our baby to measure up to today's standards. So instead of sitting around and singing songs in each other's homes, we go to storefront music education specialists such as "Music Together" or "Music for Aardvarks," where we can pay to sit around in a circle and sing the same songs, only now we do it with the confidence that each melody and lyric has been evaluated for its impact on cognitive development.

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BJ NILSEN The Short Night CD

Recorded in 2006-2007 with mostly analog equipment, BJ Nilsen (Hazard) sculpted these beautifully complex and detailed pieces from locational recordings, birdsong, weather and radio transmissions, creating another gorgeous sound-map of a fragile and uncharted territory.



BOGDAN RACZYNSKI alright! CD/2LP

Bogdan is back after a 5 year hiatus to present the Holy Grail of raving, alright! Hot on the heels of his smash Renegade Platinum Mega Dance Attack Party, a secret Björk collaboration and non-stop partying, here are 42 minutes of music to save the galaxy from absolute boredom.



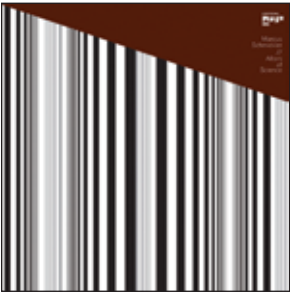
BASSEKOU KOUYATE & NGONI BA Segu Blue CD/2LP

The sole instrument featured on Segu Blue is the ngon, an ancient 5-stringed lute and one of African music's undiscovered secrets, predating the kora by a few hundred years as the instrument of the griot storytelling tradition. This is music as close to the blues as you can get in Africa.



PLURAMON The Monstrous Surplus CD/LP

The fifth album by Marcus Schmickler aka Pluramon features 3 different vocalists including avant-pop crooner, Julee Cruise. Dreamy songs that are at times laid-back and melancholic, and at other times dramatic and intense. Another leftfield experiment that succeeds brilliantly.



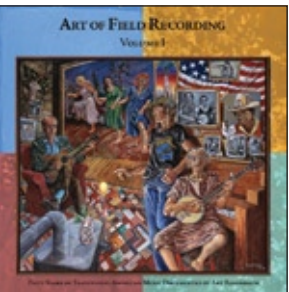
MARCUS SCHMICKLER Altars of Science CD/DVD-Audio

Altars of Science is Marcus Schmickler's (Pluramon) first purely electronic release since 1998's prize-winning Sator Rotas. A fascinating tour de force of modern computer music composition, it is an essential addition to any serious collection of 21st century audio art.



VARIOUS ARTISTS Melodii Tuvi: Throat Songs and Folk Tunes from Tuva CD

First-time reissue of these classic 1969 recordings of Tuvan throat singing, including several khoomei and one modern take on the classic Tuvan sound. "It is a sound once heard, never forgotten. A sound with the power to rearrange your mind and transform your life." —The Los Angeles Times



VARIOUS ARTISTS Art of Field Recording Volume I 4CD BOX

The first volume of Dust-To-Digital's Art of Field Recording series is a stunning (as always) 4CD set of ballads, blues, spirituals and work songs lovingly recorded and assembled by archivists Art and Margo Rosenbaum. Housed in a gorgeous box with a 96-page perfect-bound book.



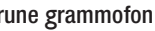
VARIOUS ARTISTS Black Mirror: Reflections in Global Musics (1918-1955) CD

Fascinating compilation of 24 recordings made and released on 78s from 1918-1955 from diverse locales like Thailand, Yugoslavia, Syria, Bali, Scotland, India, Turkey, Java, Portugal, Japan, Poland and Greece, all lovingly mastered and assembled by Ian Nagoski after years of researching and collecting.



SUPERSILENT 8 CD

Supersilent celebrates ten years together with their first studio album in almost five. 8 is another otherworldly beast, occupying the no-man's land between rock, electronica, jazz and modern composition. Heavy and dark music for heavy and dark times.



SUN I'll Be The Same CD

Oren Ambarchi (Touch, Southern Lord) and Chris Townend have been kindred spirits for years, and their sophomore record as Sun is another spirit-beam from the planet Brian Wilson. "No no-wave cauterwaul. No coldly calculated guitar-sine throbs. No drones. Just good old-fashioned jangly sunshine music."



ERIC MALMBERG Verklighet & Beat CD

Second solo release from Eric Malmberg, organist and songwriter for the now-defunct Sagor & Swing. Featuring legendary organist Bo Hansson (Silence) among its guests, Verklighet & Beat is an otherworldly collection of songs that could just as easily have been recorded 35 years ago as today.



SEABEAR The Ghost That Carried Us Away CD/LP

From Iceland's musical heartland, Reykjavik, come these fragile hymns of nonchalant casualness that revolve around the themes of nature, mortality and love. Featuring musical contributions by members of Sigur Rós' and Múm's live band.



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WILLPOWER TO THE PEOPLE!

Cognitive scientists use the term “magical thinking” to describe a lack of causal reasoning. According to them, belief in superstitions, lucky charms, raindances, etc often falls into this category. But the term can be applied to any situation where one makes judgments based on a cause-and-effect rationale that wouldn’t hold up under scientific scrutiny. Simply put, magical thinking is (from a cogsci perspective) the analytical by-product that occurs when hopes, fears, desires, prejudices, and beliefs take over decision-making.

Child psychologists often use the term slightly differently. For a child, magical thinking often refers to conditions in which the cause and the effect are disassociated. For example, the kid sees you grab a remote control from the table and hears the stereo turn on, but doesn’t yet understand that the two ac-

Power maintains itself quite nicely when people are content to simply think about an alternative reality. Perhaps that is why both Dante and Buddhists claim that the lowest levels of Hell are reserved for those who can do good but choose to do nothing.

tions are related. It is primarily this aspect of magical thinking that stage magicians rely on when performing illusions. In feats of magical reverse engineering, a good magician will think about a desired effect and then work backwards to plan the method. The success of the effect is then greatly enhanced by the magician’s ability to conceal his method from the audience. In essence, the magician returns the audience to a state of child-like perception where causes and effects are distant strangers. Some embrace this sense of wonderment while others resent the inflicted feelings of naïveté. Yet, it should be noted that while such magical thinking evokes a child-like sense of the world, it does not limit us to childish behavior.

It would be easy to believe that magical thinking

is merely the refuge of children, magic show audiences, and the superstitious; however, we bathe in magical thinking nearly every day. Many of our decisions are based not on scientific rationale but rather on information we receive from a variety of sources—friends, cultural influences, mass media, etc.—that are in fact assemblages of conflicting truths, traditional bias, and competing agendas. When we enter a theater to watch a magician perform we expect to be deceived, but what are our expectations when we read the paper, watch the news and listen to politicians?

A healthy dose of skepticism is necessary for arriving at objective conclusions. But when skepticism dominates our perception of information, two things happen. First, our skepticism quickly morphs into cynicism. Secondly, the lack of dependable, believable information drives a wedge in our reasoning, pushing us further into a realm of conjecture, supposition, and intuition. In some respects this is a troublesome place – we begin to lose the scientia, or knowledge, that is the backbone of science, and all “truths” become relative: Darwinian evolution is treated as a creation story, global climate change is regarded as a conspiracy of activist researchers, carcinogenic pesticides banned at home get exported abroad only to make their way back to our salads and fruit bowls.

On the other hand, a greater reliance on our intuition and imagination can be liberating. The “magical thinking” of a child enables a shifting understanding of the objects around her in a manner which determines use based on needs and desires: an orange is only an orange if she is hungry, otherwise it is a ball—a toy—an experiment waiting to happen. As adults, we have been passively conditioned to regard oranges as nothing but food, or perhaps decora-

tion. We consistently find ourselves impressed by material goods that are produced and proffered with specific, limited uses in mind. The sheer magnitude of specialized markets evidences both a wide-scale ability to combine materials and resources in new and innovative ways AND a collective inability to creatively define our needs and desires for ourselves. For example, the Market has encouraged inventors to supply consumers with at least six different kinds of electronic rodent traps; yet, the alienated citizenry has yet to effectively deal with the infestation of rats in public office (many of whom may owe their tenure to Diebold’s own brand of electronic rat catchers).

In many instances, our collective decision-making doesn’t appear to be the least bit impaired by a lack of information, a lack of informed opinions, nor a lack of causal analysis. The research shows most agree whole-heartedly that cancer-causing food doesn’t belong on the dinner table, that religious agendas don’t belong in public schools, and corrupt politicians don’t belong in office. Yet these conditions persist not for a lack of wisdom or concern, but from a lack of will-power.

When the imagination is divorced from action, a more problematic form of magical thinking takes place. Often termed “wishful thinking” such a condition occurs when a child blurs the boundaries between thinking and doing; thus, creating confusion between wanting something to happen and actually working in a productive manner to bring about the desired results. How familiar is this terrain to the “adults” within

our society? Is there not a similar confusion between thinking and doing expressed in the hypocrisy of those Americans who heed religious doctrines which champion the virtues of charity, tolerance, austerity and non-violence while they lead lifestyles quite to the contrary? Too often is this childlike condition equally expressed by the “progressive”-minded members of the public who believe that shifting one’s consciousness is, in and of itself, a political act which will lead to significant change. Unfortunately, power maintains itself quite nicely when people are content to simply think about an alternative reality. Perhaps that is why both Dante and Buddhists claim that the lowest levels of Hell are reserved for those who can do good but choose to do nothing.

Wishful thinkers may help maintain the entertaining illusion that all is well, but they do little to combat those who will it otherwise. At best they are like the sympathetic audience being entertained by the misdirection at a magic show. At its worst, wishful thinking postures as real magic. Neither active nor engaged, it fails to reconcile the methods and the effects. The candles are lit. The incense smolders. But

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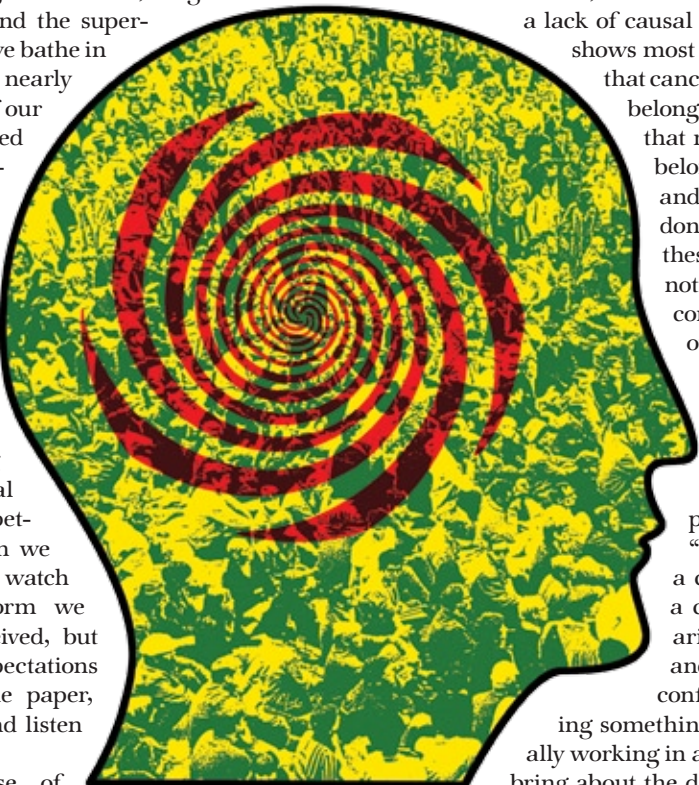


Illustration by Mark Frohman



Every day we go through the motions: brush teeth, shampoo hair, get dressed, wash some dishes. The products we use to perform these tasks can often create health risks that contradict our reasons for using them in the first place. Did you know that indoor air pollution is usually worse than outdoor pollution? With one out of two men and one out of three women being diagnosed with cancer, we need to be more observant of the toxic chemicals we use on our bodies and in our environment. It's not that any one product will kill us, but the accumulation of chemicals from all these products can add up to a dangerously toxic cocktail.

Unlike many of our environmental problems, there are easy remedies to this situation in both traditional methods and new “green” alternatives on the market. The products we use to clean our homes can be made simply, cheaply, and safely out of non-toxic substances like vinegar, baking soda, and essential oils. If that sounds too old fashioned for you, many companies are now making non-toxic cleaners that can be bought at health food stores or Trader Joe's.

If you think you're in the clear because you've decided house-cleaning is not worth your time, think again. If you use soap, shampoo, or wear makeup, you are exposing yourself to potentially toxic materials. As the FDA does not monitor the chemicals used in our beauty products (out of the 10,500 chemicals used in beauty products, only 11% have been studied for safety), it is up to us to be vigilant about the products we buy. Since there are now over 600 companies that have signed the Compact for Safe Cosmetics—a pledge banning hazardous chemicals—we have many healthy options to choose from.

Everything you need to clean safely and cheaply:

- White vinegar
- Baking soda
- Borax
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Tea Tree Oil
- Cheap vodka
- Lavender oil (for a fresh scent)
- Cut up socks and t-shirts to use as rags
- Empty spray bottle

DRYER SHEETS We begin this sordid tale with a subject close to my...*window*. Have you ever swung open the windows on a beautiful fall day, ready to breathe in the fresh air of changing seasons, but instead received a fatal blow of your neighbor's fabric softener? Not only does the dryer exhaust create noxious perfume stink clouds outside your house, it also coats all of your clothing with chemicals such as isopropylbenzene, styrene, trimethylbenzene and phenol thymol, which are then absorbed through your skin. These chemicals are known to cause central nervous system damage, coughing, wheezing,

KICK OUT THE CHEMICALS

breathing difficulty, kidney and liver damage. Suddenly static cling sounds kind of charming, no? Try Method brand dryer sheets, or other non-toxic varieties. Or better yet, air-dry your wet clothes.

GARBAGE DISPOSAL Don't use your garbage disposal to dispose of food. Compost your food waste, or throw it in the trash if you must. Food down the disposal wastes a lot of precious water, and the sewage treatment plants are overwhelmed with greasy food wastes. That ground up food is also feeding plenty of sewer rats.

NAILPOLISH, COSMETICS, PERFUME, HAIR DYE, TOOTH PASTE, SHAMPOO, LOTION Just because you aren't ingesting these products, doesn't mean they aren't being absorbed through your skin. They all commonly contain phthalates, glycol ethers, acetone, triclosan, formaldehyde, nonylphenols — chemicals known to cause cancer, liver damage, birth defects, and a variety of other unpleasant health problems. To avoid these ailments, try making your own beauty products, or buy them from a health food store or online at mothernature.com or internatural.com. Trader Joe's sells a good variety of non-toxic products by companies like Tom's of Maine. Dr. Bronner's makes the best soaps, lip balms and lotions ever, and they even got musician Don Bolles (accused of a crime he did not commit) out of the slammer.

WASHING CLOTHES There's a whole lot of laundry going on, and even after you've removed your duds from the washing machine, the chemicals in the suds keeps on working, fertilizing the algae in our waterways, causing the oxygen in the water to be depleted and thereby killing fish and ducks and all the good little squids and clams and penguins. The polar bears aren't too happy either. Switch it over to a phosphate-free soap like the kind made by Seventh Generation. For added environmental bonuses use cold water to wash, skip the bleach, and buy a front-loading washing machine to save on water consumption.

SOAP Stay away from those anti-bacterial soaps. Hot water and old-fashioned soap does the same job without growing antibiotic resistant super germs. Dr. Bronner's soap is great because it's vegetable based, it's cheap and a little goes a long way. You can use it to mop your floors, wash your dishes, wash your body and wash your clothes. It comes in many sizes and is scented with all natural oils. Burt's Bees also makes fine body soaps.

BEDS Sleeping is so good it shouldn't be contaminated with flame retardants and chemicals. Did you know that the man requires millions of pounds of flame retardants be poured into mattresses every year? In most states you need a prescription from your DOCTOR in order to buy a bed WITHOUT chemicals. This is pretty gosh-darn crazy. Hey, who wants to wake up with brain damage, thyroid disease, or cancer? Ikea has started selling beds without toxic flame retardants, and there are many fine futon manufacturers making beds with organic cotton and wool. Buying a futon is great because if you ever want to get rid of it you can compost the whole thing. (Imagine how many mattresses with all that wood and metal springs are buried in our overburdened landfills.) Wool is a NATURAL fire retardant and also keeps out the dust mites. There are many companies like www.shepherdsdream.com where you can get some fine wool bedding. Yes, wool is more expensive but it lasts forever and it's not full of formaldehyde. Also choose organic 100% cotton bedding—who needs wrinkle free (chemical soaked) sheets rubbing against our skins all night?

WINDOW/GLASS CLEANER Most window cleaners contain ammonia and blue dye. To skip the toxic fumes and still get windows that sparkle, try this mix in a spray bottle: 1/2 cup vinegar, 2 cups water, and 1/2 teaspoon dish soap. After you clean your windows with this mixture you can leave out the dish soap on the next window cleaning—just the vinegar and water will do the trick. (You have to add a touch of soap the first time to remove old waxy residues that most regular brand window cleaners leave behind.)

OVEN CLEANER Sprinkle baking soda and salt on the bottom of the oven, and then scrub with a scrubby loaded up with some Dr. Bronner's soap. Clean up the greasy suds with a vinegar rag. You will need a good scrubber and some elbow grease but it's worth it to avoid harsh chemical oven cleaners, which are generally the most toxic of all household cleaners.

FLOOR CLEANER Hey you! Moppin' that floor! Skip the chemical bath and try this natural, all-organic mix: vinegar, hot water, and a drop of Bronner's soap. If you make a spray bottle of vinegar and water for windows, you can use the same thing on your floors as well. Vinegar pretty much does it all.

BATHROOM CLEANER That little miracle worker vinegar can handle all the bathroom cleaning jobs. Pour vinegar in your tub and scrub, on mirrors, sinks, toilets, floors. If you are cleaning for the first time in a loooooong time and you have a lot of soap scum in the tub try hot vinegar and Borax, a natural mineral and good bleach alternative. You can leave towels soaked with vinegar on the water taps to dissolve mineral deposits. Mold on the ceiling or walls? Scrub the area with a vinegar-soaked rag. You can use hydrogen peroxide to get rid of mold stains on white paint (it might bleach the area if it's a color). Tea tree oil is also a great, cheap natural mold remover found at health food stores, Trader Joe's, and Whole Foods. If things are really extra germ-infested, use a cheap bottle of vodka and an old rag to wipe everything down.

DRAIN CLEANER Never buy liquid drain cleaners. This stuff can blind you or kill you if handled incorrectly—the fumes alone can cause lung damage. To prevent drains from clogging, pour a half cup of baking soda down the drain followed by a cup of vinegar, let it fizz up, wait a few minutes and then pour a kettle of boiling water in to wash it all down. (Never do this if you have already used a commercial drain opener because it may still be present in the pipes. Commercial drain openers are highly acidic and spatter like grease.) You can do this periodically to keep your drains working smoothly. If you already have a bad clog, try a plunger first. If you think the clog is caused by hair, invest in a \$20 plumber's snake. This little tool gets to the root of the problem without dumping gallons of corrosive chemicals down the drain.

AIR FRESHENER This has got to be the grossest most wasteful pollutant people bring into their homes. I don't have the room to list all the chemicals in these things, but they cause cancer, reproductive problems and developmental disorders. They even trigger asthma attacks. Baking soda is the way to go to keep things fresh and chemical-free. Put a box in your fridge or sprinkle some in your garbage can. Clean any problem areas with hydrogen peroxide, throw in some baking soda and a few drops of lavender oil. You can fill a spray bottle with water and essential oils like lavender, rosemary, or eucalyptus and spray as much as you like. If you burn your grilled cheese, put vinegar on a towel and wave it around in vigorous swirling motions. It gets rid of the burning smell and you look really cool doing it.

WEED KILLER Avoid Round-Up, from the people that brought you genetically modified food and Agent Orange. They are also buying patents for all the seeds, and once they own patents for them, they will control all the food...and they want it to be genetically modified. ..does this concern anyone?! Hey why are we buying chemicals from corporations like Monsanto? Do yourself a favor and Google this company. You will be mad as a wet hen. Sometimes it's good to get mad so you have the energy to do something about it. If you really need to kill some weeds, go buy several gallons of vinegar and pour them on the weeds on a sunny day.

MOTHBALLS/DRYCLEANING Tell your granny to stop buying these darn chemical balls. They are worse for people than they are for moths. Store your valuable woolly woollens and silks in an airtight container with some sprigs of rosemary, lavender or cedar chips. If you must dry clean your clothes, find a non-toxic dry cleaner. If you have dry cleaned clothes put them outside to off-gas for a day or so, to avoid breathing the fumes. Dry cleaning chemicals cause cancer and damage the nervous system, liver, and kidneys. You need those things.

A NOTE ABOUT PERFLUOROCHEMICALS Wow, that's one long name, and they're even harder to get rid of than pronounce. They never biodegrade. Water and sun can't touch them. They're in Scotchguard, Stainmaster, and Teflon, and several hundred tons of the stuff are made right here in the U.S.A every year. This chemical is linked to all kinds of cancers and birth defects and it's unregulated! If you would like to diminish the intake of this chemical, avoid stain-proof/wrinkle-proof clothes, sheets and carpeting. Get a good cast-iron pan and season it with oil. It will work just like your teflon pan, but without the chemicals in your food. Avoid fast food, which is almost always wrapped up in PFC-coated wrappers. Microwave popcorn and coated leak-proof paper plates are also big offenders. Get the plain paper plates for party time. It's difficult to know what chemicals are in the stuff you use everyday when so many aren't even labeled. Find brands you trust, ask questions, demand to know what's in the stuff you put on, in, and around your body.

For further investigation into DIY cleaning tips, check out **Organic Housekeeping** (Scribner) by Ellen Sandbeck. For more info on the toxins in our environment, check out the recently published **The Secret History of the War on Cancer** (Perseus) by Devra Davis. To investigate the safety of the beauty products you use every day, go to www.cosmeticdatabase.com. The Compact for Safe Cosmetics can be viewed at <http://www.safecosmetics.org>.

It’s Coming Down, Baby!

Erik Davis catches up with **SIR RICHARD BISHOP** — gypsy picatrix, ex-Sun City Girl and guitarist extraordinaire

Superlatives can be lame, but Richard Bishop is one of the few post-punk guitarists who came of age in the 1980s to have achieved the incendiary prowess of a true Guitar God. Though largely unknown outside the underground, Bishop plays and improvises with an uncommon and original power. He can tantalize in a myriad of styles, he has a global jukebox in his head, he can shatter the walls of sleep and chaos, and he can turn on a dime. He loves the guitar and mocks it: he plays like an absurdist and a romantic at once. He studies the occult and travels the Third World fringe and you can hear it. He plays guitar to save himself and fails in the endeavor and you can hear it. He can scare the shit out of you sometimes, and he can make you giggle and grin.

For decades Bishop played with his brother Alan and the Charlie Gocher in the Sun City Girls, where his ferocious and inventive exploration of psych-rock, punk spew, idiot jizz, Indo-Arabic fantasias, and jazzbo abstraction was often shadowed by the madcap antics, acerbic lyrics and general air of arcane weirdness that surrounded that impossible act. Gocher passed away in February this year at the age of 54, and the Girls are no more.

But over the last half decade, Bishop has also been playing and recording solo instrumental music as Sir Richard Bishop, and the effort is really starting to flower. This year SRB released two great albums. *While My Guitar Gently Bleeds* features three long pieces that triangulate his essential territory as an improviser: a North African arabesque, a noisy electronic nightscape, and a modal neo-raga on the tantric tip. *Polytheistic Fragments* is a more accessible and varied work, featuring a dozen tunes that also stretch into Americana, gypsy rag and Lennon-McCartney charm. As always, the recordings



Illustration by John Coulthart

are packaged with strange and mystic images that speak to Bishop’s longtime study of esoterica.

Earlier this fall Bishop toured with Drag City labelmate Bill Callahan. I called him while he was taking a break in Seattle.

Arthur: Before this tour started you spent the summer in India.

I spent the first week in Calcutta, then about a week in Assam, and then a little over two months in Varanasi. The idea was to make a quick trip and put some of Charlie’s ashes in the Ganges then head back to West Bengal. But there were all these serious floods, the train systems were all messed up, so I stayed in Varanasi. After the first weeks of constant hassle, people started leaving me alone. I got into the flow of the river, and the life on the rooftops. I got a feel for how it would be to live there.

I know you have been thinking about moving to Asia.

Well I’m starting to make a living as a musician now. It’s only taken 27 years. But the day-to-day living in the United States just wipes stuff out immediately. Money there can last three to four times longer, if not more, and in a more interesting environment.

What’s the downside?

You have to leave your friends. Plus you have to get rid of stuff. I’m just gonna take a guitar and what I need. You got-

ta be mobile these days—it’s coming down, baby!

You also went to some tantric temple festival in Assam.

The temple is called Kamakhya, and it is a shaktipitha. You know, Vishnu cut Shiva’s wife Sati into pieces and scattered the parts, and each place they landed became a pilgrimage site, a pitha. Kamakhya is the yoni temple, which is obviously the most sacred. It’s not just a big toe or anything.

Is that the one with that ferrous flow of yoni juice?

Yeah. There’s a stone yoni shrine underneath the temple in a cave, and there’s a natural spring that bubbles up all the time. During the festival period—no pun intended—the water turns red. It could be iron oxide. Other folks think the temple priests add a little something to the water just to spice it up.

What was the festival like?

It was a really weird vibe. I was the only white person for miles. There were a few people who were kinda friendly and would smile on occasion, but an hour later they acted like they never met me and didn’t want to have anything to do to me. They were really negative and then playful and then back again. I thought: What am I doing here? Do these people want to hurt me? Were they mirroring the different energies and aspects of the goddess herself?

What was most exciting were all the women priestesses who were there, kali priestesses, yoginis. You’re used to seeing dreadlocked dudes and creepy sad-hus everywhere, but these women sad-hus were really refreshing. It reinforced the idea that this place is the historical center of witchcraft and dark art and tantric ritual. Everyone was dressed in red. It was spectacular.

What is your attitude when you visit heavy tantric temples?

I go in with confidence. Of course I respect the customs, but I go in with the idea that I’m supposed to be there. That’s not always the right approach. There’s gonna be times where people or things or gods or goddesses are gonna put up roadblocks. That’s part of the fun. Whether its an initiation or just education, nothing comes easy.

Many of your most expansive solo tunes are ragas named after Hindu goddesses. What is your attitude towards those deities when you play?

It’s very subtle. The inspiration comes from my studies or travels, but I can’t directly transpose my experiences into my music, especially with a solo guitar. It’s more the energy of the experience and the study, and the feelings that come through. If I name a certain title after a goddess, it means I was at least thinking about that goddess while recording it. I don’t name them after the fact like I do with a lot of my songs.

So what is your intention with these tunes?

It’s my way of giving back to the source of the inspiration. Whether people get it is not really important. It makes me feel good that I get it and that I’m giving it back. And it keeps the listeners guessing. I get a lot of questions like this. Usually I just give em a bullshit answer, much like I just gave you.

Well, even if people don’t get the esoteric stuff, your playing sometimes sounds like an invocation.

What I try to do is when I play is to create an atmosphere, almost tell a story without words. If I’m playing a North African piece, I’m visualizing the desert and the Beduins riding their camels or whatever. Same thing with the Indian music. I’m talking about those environments without using words.

That’s funny. I was listening to one song on your new record and I got a very strong image of devilish little skeletons dancing in my head. Only afterwards did I see the title: “Cemetery Games.” What’s up with that?

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I GET TO ASK ONE QUESTION

I get to ask one question.
Mommy, where do the suicide bombers
Everyone’s deathly afraid of cause
They don’t play by the rules
Of our game—where
Do they come from? Have they
Always been a part of Islam?
(Mommy, what is Islam?)

Actually, son, they’re not
Traditionally a part of Islam.
As fucked and insane as they are
They arose in response to certain
Causes and conditions.
One day there were no
Suicide bombers. The next day
There were like a ton.

What conditions, Mommy?

Well, son, you see
All Moslems believe the soil
Of Saudi Arabia is sacred—it’s
Holy soil. Don’t ask me to explain.
We’re Americans, we don’t
Understand such things.
The last holy soil on this continent

Disappeared when we
Murdered millions of Indians.

So holy soil doesn’t compute
For us—but Moslems think
All of Saudi Arabia’s sacred.
So when the Pentagon started
Putting military bases in the Saudi
Desert in the 1990s, some people
Got very, very upset.
And then what’s known as an opportunist
appeared
A frustrated power forward named Osama
Who took advantage of the situation.

But, you know, son
We have opportunists too.
Structurally there’s no difference
Between our opportunists and theirs.
Ours send our boys off to die
In Iraq. Osama sends his to heaven.

Mommy, what you’re saying
Is very upsetting. It’s a dangerous
Package inside your head.
I’m going to report you to Homeland Security.

Yes, son, that doesn’t surprise me.
In spite of how dear I am to you
The apple of your eye
I know you’d betray your own mother
So you can keep diddling with your
Cellphone undisturbed. Every week
It has a sexy new capability.
How could I ever match that?

But, Mommy, I get to ask
One last question before I turn your ass in.
Didn’t we know what the reaction would be
Before we put those bases on holy soil?
Weren’t we fully aware
Of what we were doing?
Isn’t that what’s known as complicity?
Makes us a cause and condition
Of the suicide bombers, right?

Be quiet, son. Keep on asking questions
You’ll end up in the slammer right alongside me.
And I love you too much to let that happen.
Go answer your cellphone.
Don’t you hear that new ring tone?
It’s a foxy lullaby, put you dead asleep.

—Michael Brownstein



Thrill Jockey
Rune Grammofon
Editions Mego
Constellation • Ersatz Audio
Touch • The Numero Group
Smalltown Supersound
Smalltown Superjazz
Miasmah • No Quarter
Crammed Disc
Holy Mountain
VHF • Tee Pee Records
Ba Da Bing! • ESP Disk
Fat Cat • Bloodshot and many more...

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Ha. When I listened to that track back in studio, before it had a name, I had this vision of those Ray Harryhausen skeletons dancing around like in Jason and the Argonauts, not necessarily in an evil way, just having fun. The piece was gonna be called “Funeral Games” but I realized it took place long after the funeral. Just a happy skeletal dance, what they do when nobody’s looking, but dark enough so you could imagine it at night.

For me, real magic has always been about the imagination, about creating and projecting powerful images. Are you conscious of making music that is good for visualization?

Moreso in the past with the band. That played an important role sometimes in the mid to late ‘80s and early ‘90s, when I was really into the Crowley thing, the dark, icky thing. Now I’m not trying to

There’s gonna be times where people

or things or gods or goddesses are

gonna put up roadblocks. That’s part

of the fun. Whether its an initiation or

just education, nothing comes easy.

do anything in terms of the listener. If it works for me that’s all I care about. People will have their own take on it.

A lot of the imagery and vibes of Sun City Girls stuff clusters around death. So what happens when the real thing shows up?

I’ve been okay with death for a long time. I started off studying Egyptology, where death is so important. It’s the beginning rather than the end. Death as a necessary transformation. But when you’re dealing with the death of parents or friends, when you’re watching somebody die, its really kind of a drag. Death is in the room, and its like, You fucker.

Then what?

Once it’s over it’s not so hard. You’re like, Lucky them. They made it to the finish line first. They’re celebrating their victory. I mean, I’ve already considered where I’m going afterwards. I’m not telling anyone, but I got plans.

How did Charlie deal with dying?

Before he passed away, we talked, and he said, “Looks like I’m gonna be experiencing things before you guys.” It was

a serious conversation but it was also light hearted and somewhat humorous. Deep down inside he was most likely facing fear, but knowing that he was also comfortable dealing with it that way helped me deal with it.

So who was Mr. Charlie Gocher? Charlie was a magician of the highest order though he might never have admitted it or acknowledged it. He was perhaps the most mysterious being I’ve encountered in all my time on this and other planets. And though Alan and I knew him better than anyone else, I don’t think we ever really knew him. And I’m sure he designed it that way.

How did he change you musically?

When Charlie joined up with us, a whole new series of galaxies opened up for exploration. At that time I was still muddled in the finite worlds of punk,

far greater. We were a band and somewhat of an “anti-band.” Since the first time we all played together, at an open mic night in 1981, we were somehow led to an approach to making music that was beyond borders, barriers, and boundaries. Each musical idea became like a work of art hanging on a wall, but without a frame around it, allowing it to roam freely around the wall and the room, continuing ever outward into unexplored realms and never just confined to a single space.

You also had that punk rock attitude of not giving a shit about what other people made of it all.

We were never a group that worried at all about public opinion or acceptance. Each song or record was designed to be interpreted and understood by those who were equipped to do so, and to be shrugged off or shunned by those who didn’t like it or who couldn’t—or wouldn’t—comprehend it.

Over the years we became increasingly confident with this way of working. We were able to build this machine that seemed to run itself after a while. It was alive. It had a presence: a powerful force and at times a farce. But a farce to be reckoned with! [Erik groans at the pun.] The most important thing was that we took chances all the time, and enjoyed doing so. That was how we kept ourselves interested: constantly pushing ourselves into new situations and directions. It’s great to surprise yourself!

You can certainly hear that surprise and pleasure in your acoustic recordings, which are mostly improvisation. How does it change when you take those tunes on the road?

Well, I’ll do the same sort of song every night, but with all those songs, there’s this open space that I’ll have to fill in with different improvisations, knowing that I’m eventually going to go to a certain place. But now those songs that used to have a lot of space have closed up because I’ve filled those spaces so often with things that work. So now those songs are finished, and I’m done with them. I’m sick of playing them. It’s a little frustrating actually. Next tour I’m going to try to do all new material. Step away from that repertoire and just try something else off the cuff. Don’t worry about whether its good or bad, just try to force myself into a situation where improvisation is going to have to come back in. I might even bring electric because that might be the only thing that forces me to evolve.

A lot of folks mistake your guitar playing for finger-picking.

I am never not using a pick, though sometimes I’m using my fingers as

well. I’m terrible at finger-picking, and I have no intention of learning at this time in my career.

What the hell is that pick you use? It looks like a goat vertebrae or something.

It’s a real fat pick made out of some strange plastic by a guy in the Netherlands named Michael Wegen. Gypsy guitar players in the ‘40s and ‘50s often used picks of that thickness, only they weren’t picks. They would use things like pea coat buttons. That helped them develop those chunka chunka rhythms, that gypsy backbeat. I tried using a Fender heavy pick the other day and it was like a piece of cardboard.

On your last couple of records you have been using gypsy guitars as well, with that loud, bright tone. How did that come about?

It happened by accident. I started playing those guitars only a few years ago because I wanted to master the gypsy sound. That got old for me really quick. I went to a Django festival, which was just a collection of fucking guitar geeks. God bless ‘em, but if they don’t play the solo on the 1947 version of “Dark Eyes” exactly note for note then they feel like they’re not doing their job. I didn’t want to be like that. It left a poor taste in my mouth. Then it turned out that the tone of that guitar went really well with North African music and Indian ragas. So I just took that gypsy style and applied it to what I was already doing with the African or Hindu stuff.

You get a lot of volume out of that guitar, but you are still opening for rock bands in rock clubs. What’s that like?

When I started the solo thing I was playing shows with really loud bands like Sunn O))) and the Dead C, and here I was with my little acoustic guitar. You wonder if you’re gonna catch the audience’s attention for five minutes. Its not easy. It’s nerve wracking. But my experience of playing music is different than most people. I mean, I grew up playing in the Sun City Girls. I’m used to audience heckling and not pleasing an audience. So I’m like, I’m just gonna play because I know how to play.

Now I kinda like it when I play in front of a crowd that has no idea who I am or what I’m doing. Usually by the end of the set a good majority of the crowd is into it. And even if they aren’t, that’s just my job now. It’s a lonely feeling up there. But I have invisible friends and they’re all around me. I’m never really alone. 🐼

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1964. I had been thrown out of art school that year for (they said) wasting all my time writing songs and playing guitar. I wanted to be a pop-singer. I was as uncommercial as I could be and many doors were shown to me—and not the opening kind.

Until I met Andrew Loog Oldham that is—who opened the door to the rest of my life by giving me the Jagger-Richards song “Some Things Just Stick In Your Mind” to record as my first single, promising to use one of my own songs for the B-side and any further singles. Eventually my music dreams ran out—so I left for good. Left London, my family, everything familiar and took off for oblivion. By horse and wagon—but that’s just another story.

When I listen to this music now, I know how little I have changed and how many similar stories are told in my later songs. That love is changeable, that you cannot pin anything or anyone down in this world—and if you try it mostly won’t work. I still feel the same, suspended in a life that has turned and twisted in many unexpected ways, some good, some not so good, but always and still filled with hope. —V.B. ‘07

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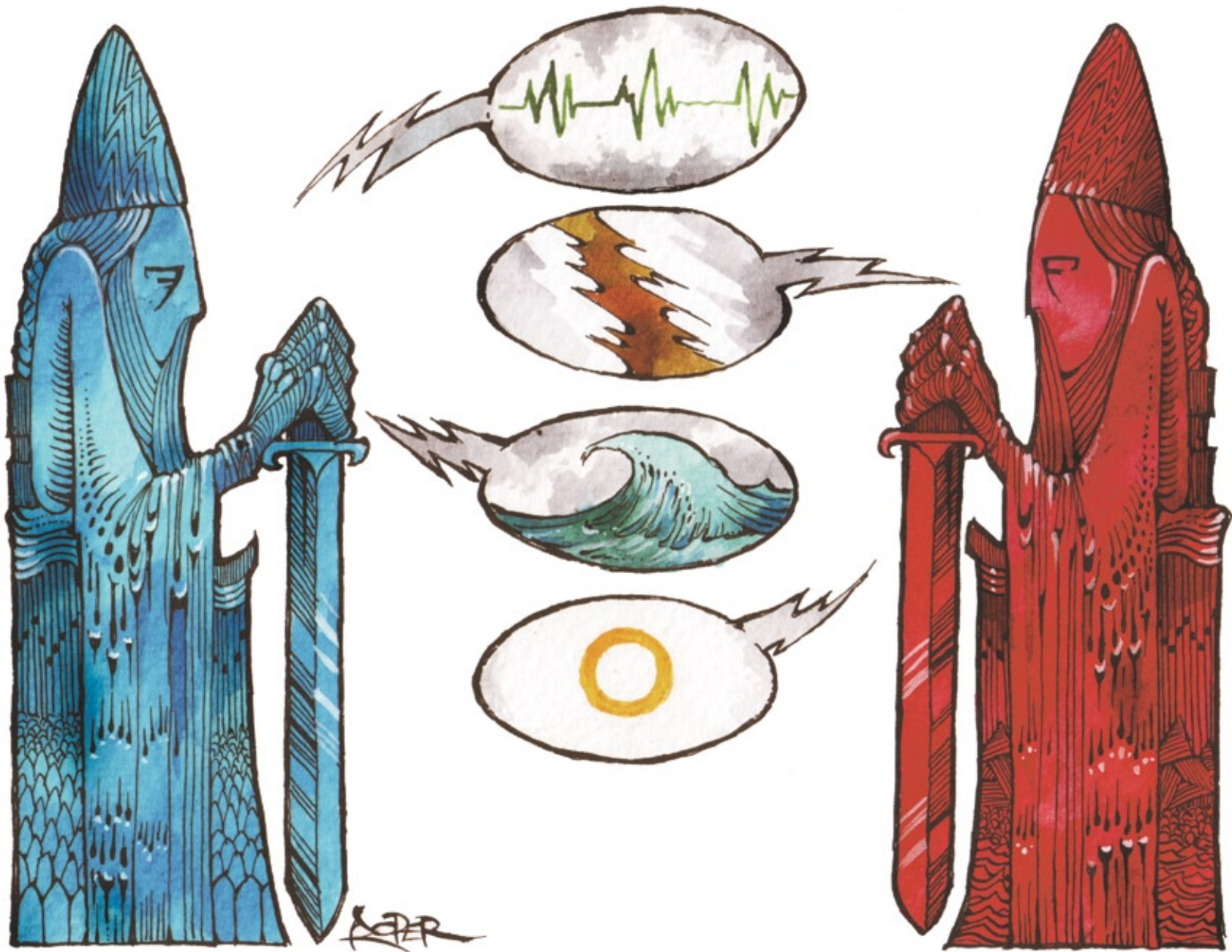
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THE WAY OF THE RIFF



Contemplators Ben Chasny (Six Organs of Admittance) and Al Cisneros (Om) discuss roots, rock, rhythm and chess.

Artwork by Arik Roper

My favorite story about Om, the bass and drum duo of Al Cisneros and Chris Hakius—the rhythm section of now defunct drone metal icons Sleep—takes place on the back patio of Los Angeles club The Echo. It’s a cool winter night in 2007 and we’re all gathered here—hippie goners, young punks, indie rock squares—to take in a few breaths of fresh air before the band takes to the stage inside. One group stands out from the crowd: two women and a guy who are having a whale of a time, gesticulating wildly and laughing like crazy. At one point the dude approaches a hipster who’s nervously dragging on a

toothpick joint. Our man offers his flask to the young fellow and a confusing exchange takes place: I can tell that he’s looking to swap quaff for toke, but for some reason he’s having trouble communicating this. I catch on about the same time the stoner does, giving up the doobie to the guy and his gal pals: They’re deaf, this happy trio of Om heads. That’s how deep the band’s sensual, mantra-like music goes. Om collaborated with Six Organs of Admittance—the revolving music-making entity with Ben Chasny always at its core—twice in 2006. First on a split 7-inch on Holy Mountain and then again on

“The River of Transfiguration,” the 23-minute drone super session that closes Six Organs’ *The Sun Awakens* album. Both men’s music deals in imagery and themes—apocalypse, geometry, birds, light, deserts, mountains—for introspective rather than epic ends, suggesting transformation and inner change. This is high-minded, deep work, more in line with the allegorical tales of Alejandro Jodorowsky or Paul Bowles than the sword-and-sandals juvenilia of Robert E. Howard. Chasny’s new album on Drag City, *Shelter from the Ash* is a richly textured affair, with tamboura-like

drones running beneath guitars that move from gentle acoustic signatures to searing electric passages. His gorgeous duet with Magik Marker Elisa Ambrogio, “Strangled Road,” brings to mind the grim visions of Cormac McCarthy and the mournful vibrations of vintage Richard and Linda Thompson. Jet engines roar in the background of “The Final Wing.”

The new Om album, the Steve Albini-produced *Pilgrimage*, is their first for Southern Lord. It contains some of the band’s most gentle work, with long stretches of quiet, sometimes fluttering bass and muted drums leading into the cathartic chanting of “Unitive Knowledge of The Godhead” and then closing out the monolithic bass raga, “Bhimas’ Theme.”

Both Cisneros and Chasny have resisted the identities that could be easily assumed given their iconic and prolific output—the former a stoner metal avatar, the latter a cryptic forest folkie. Instead, as their conversation below reveals, they’ve chosen to take on the humble mantle of “friend,” both to each other, and to anyone who sits before the speakers, transfixed by their resonant, circling explorations of repetition and change.

—Daniel Chamberlin

Ben Chasny: I wanted to talk about how you come up with your vocal phrasing, because some of it, especially on *Pilgrimage*, is heavier than a guitar. It’s like extra percussion.

Al Cisneros: Definitely. It’s in everything that we do. It’s essential, especially being in a two-piece band, not only that the vocals have a melody, but it’s much more important that they have a rhythm. Really, it’s all drums, the whole band’s drums. When I play bass it’s a drum, it’s in the fingertips, it’s a hand drum. The vocals are a drum too. The whole thing is just rhythm. The vocals are constructed in a way to keep the whole thing in interplay between the three instruments, you know?

Ben: Yeah, and it’s another rhythm in itself, a cross rhythm over it.

Al: Like when we play a riff, without even thinking about how the vocal part goes, it just happens. It’s just fine tuning it after the root’s there.

Ben: So it’s not a labor-intensive process, it’s all very natural?

Al: The labor part comes in after the root is established and takes it to an analytical place and that takes a while. But the first part takes place automatically, even if it’s the first time we play the riff, as it’s playing.

Ben: Wow, that’s crazy because your phrasing is so complex. Sometimes you will start a phrase three beats before the riff, sometimes seven and it seems so complex. It is awesome to know that it is just a natural thing. That is a totally different brain space than I am used to being in. When I make up my singing parts I am just singing what I am playing, you know?

Al: It seems like it’s similar to the way that I am hearing your records. For example, the beginning of

“School of the Flower,” it’s incredibly structured in that sense, the way the vocals contrast and go in and out. I don’t know, it seems that way to me.

Ben: I think we’re similar in the way that sounds come before the words come.

Al: That’s what I mean about the second stage, the analytical stage where you fine-tune it.

Ben: The riff comes. Then the sound with the riff. And then, yeah, carving the words out of the basic sound. In that way I definitely relate for sure. You know, when we first met a few years ago one of the things I noticed is that you seem to be possessed by vibration, like you have some sort of higher vibrational ear or something. And I don’t mean in sort of hippie dippy bullshit way, but it just seems like you pull rhythms out of the air. We’ll hang out and then you hear it and mention the rhythm or riff that is there.

Al: Yeah, I won’t say it’s a sickness, it’s just a heavy thing, all the time. Rhythms all the time.

Ben: It almost seems like a curse but you have figured out something to do with it, like playing music

Al: It goes back as far as I remember, ‘cause I remember even as a little kid I would run and hear the sound of my feet in my ears and my breathing and I would start to put stuff on top of it. I didn’t even know how to play an instrument. It was there all the time constantly, and there were all these inner circles, all these textures to it. With that it’s difficult, you know?

Ben: I wasn’t sure if you were aware that you seem

Al: I don’t know because when I wasn’t playing music in between the bands, I started to first really appreciate philosophies of sound, and sound in silence, and not allowing myself to be near stereos or be around anything. I made it so that whatever was inside would play up to the surface and I was going to examine it, and I realized how many layers of input we all have to deal with. That was important.

Ben: Did you find other ways to manifest that music and vibrations?

Al: At first I deliberately did not because I wanted to make sure that the music I was hearing was worth hearing, or if I should continue to not attach to it. I needed to know if it was valid. The only way to do that was to starve it out by not letting it come out and see how hard it would retaliate. If it didn’t retaliate very hard, the riff couldn’t have been very good. And so it got to a point after long enough with a couple of reoccurring riffs over two years where it was all breakdown. I couldn’t talk and I had to start recording again. But it has to get to that point I think. I don’t want to go around recording a bunch of ideas, it’s just that I let them go and if they are really good, they come back, they stick to you. I can’t expect anyone to listen to music, to have a part stick to them, if it doesn’t stick to the people in the band first.

Ben: Totally. We talked about that before: suppressing the riff, starving it so only the strong riffs keep coming back because they need to be there.

Al: For sure. That happened a lot in the time after the first band. I don’t know, I needed to get away from listening to music and go to a place without sound so I could actually think and see my own mental pro-

Al: If the riff keeps talking to you, it eventually finds its home in a song somewhere. On everything Om has ever recorded, there are riffs that have attained that natural terminus. They are the ones that are permitted to blossom.

cess. If the riff keeps talking to you it eventually finds its home in a song somewhere.

Ben: Yeah, it’s the riff that survives, even if you don’t pay attention to it for years and years. And it’s one way to get it out of your brain. The third song on *Shelter From the Ash* is the same way. I’ve had that for ten years and I had to get it out.

Al: Exactly. On everything we’ve ever recorded there are riffs that attain that natural terminus and are permitted to blossom. Over the past few Six Organs albums I’ve heard a lot more drumming and it’s totally linear and organic, it’s just totally natural and it makes perfect sense. And it’s interesting the way that you switch off between Black Wolf, White Wolf [Ben’s electric guitars] and the acoustic and yet all of them are one and the same, the same thing comes through it and it’s nice. I’m just really happy with the new album you did.

Ben: Thanks. Yeah, it just seems like a natural thing, you know. Noel’s drumming is never too complex,

just natural exclamation points or something, and repetition. That’s something I was thinking about today: repetition. Contemplation and repetition, do you know what I mean?

Al: Yeah, I think through repetition there’s an established current of frequency that at a certain point becomes self-propelling like an orbit. That takes place of course in all of art, but repetition is like a great healing tool, it’s a great practice, because be it an internal meditation or an external song process, you go into that peeling away of those external layers. You can hit seven points on the target but they are all varied. You want to hit that one point on the target over and over repeatedly until water comes out of the ground.

Ben: Exactly. It’s how I hear music so that is the way that I want to play music too. Repetition. Over and over. Yeah, exactly, because in each of the...

Al: But what I have always heard in Six Organs is that repetition...cyclic, as an underground, as an undertone, a root note, a root cadence, which is constant, throughout the duration of the work, but upon that ground there are top layers, and the top layers do switch back and forth and present various shades and various moods. But at all times there is that constant floor underneath it.

Ben: Right, because when you change that floor underneath it, you change the whole entire emotional shift of the song.

Al: It’s like somebody opening a fucking door at the movie theater and everybody is like, ‘What the fuck?’

Ben: And that’s the thing: the songs are naturally going to be long. It’s not setting out to write a huge song, it’s how it has to be when you are dealing with repetition in music, the importance of repetition.

Al: Exactly. Like even in the old band [Sleep] people would ask why did we write a 70-minute song? Originally it was a 70-minute song that got pruned down through studio editors and record fools to a 50-minute song and people were still like, ‘Why do you write songs so long?’ and for us it was ‘What are you talking about? You don’t sit down and plan it, it’s just there.’ You know when it’s done because you feel...

Ben: Because there has been a proper amount of repetitions that has been satisfying.

Al: Yeah, there is a certain place that’s tapped and sustained. And if it can’t even be tapped and sustained then it needs to be worked on. Yeah, it’s essential. It doesn’t matter what style of music, if that place doesn’t arrive in whatever form...

Ben: It’s just soothing to me. Repetition is just very soothing and when I work with repetition I feel safe to contemplate things in the music itself. I feel safe to set up a foundation to build things that are entirely structured on the foundation that I had just built.

Al: It’s like outer circles around a center, a hub. Unless there’s that hub established which is completely balanced in its curvature, if that is compromised at its center then everything that you circle around it

is going to be, eh, you know. And so, of course, of course, that center, that repetition-core, that ground that is tapped, that floor that is provided that sustains throughout the entire work, if it’s not there then the things that are built on top are like a bad building. It will fall.

Ben: Exactly. I was driving around thinking about that today.

Al: Like a shitty chess position. Really! Like somebody that can recite the Sicilian defense to move 19 but hangs a fucking knight as soon as they are out of book openings. You know? Not into it. I’d rather see the person that can’t even recite an opening but is a master tactician who can handle anything that’s a surprise. A surprise isn’t a surprise to a person like that.

Ben: Uumm.

(laughter)

Al: If the position is not solid, if the center is not controlled, if the pieces aren’t developed, if the king is not castled. No matter what ideas one has about the middle game, they are illusion. The foundation has to be solid. There are certain essentials that have to be locked down in place. And once that’s there, the things, geometrically, automatically, through the laws of physical reality provide their own layers. But if that sound foundation is not there, it’s a chasing game, it’s a dog chasing its tail. Anything. Does that make sense?

Ben: Yeah! Well...I don’t play chess but I know what you are talking about.

Conversation turns to Al’s recent frustrations in interviewers’ and critics’ continued insistence on approaching music only through the genre lens: eg. ‘stoner rock,’ ‘doom metal,’ ‘post-rock,’ etc.

Al: Another thing is the fallacy of genre. It’s deep, it’s deep. There’s these people who are threatened and want to fortress themselves through their status quo ideas of their biosphere around them. Whatever it is, it doesn’t matter. In that, all they are doing is continuing human history. They’re making another purpose of dividing each other.

Ben: Right, more walls.

Al: And here we are again. It’s really sad actually, because, you know, within music there are all these people that judge each other because there is that phenomenon, that place, at least in American music culture at this time, everybody has their categories in their records stores and their shelves and... STOP! There is a unity behind the differences. There is a great unity, there has never not been that great unity, behind the apparent differences. But the attempted interview reminded me of how it’s not obvious, it’s not cool, and people still aren’t ok with that.

Ben: People trying to own genres and using the genres that they think they are masters of and doubling back and making it so that those genres are as important as their own name to them. You can take that same mindset and it relates directly to war. It’s the same mindset, the same part of the brain.

Al: It’s a tragedy. It’s an ultimate sad self-defeating culture that wants all these divisions up. And then where do you draw the line? Even the people that talk about the divisions are redefining the divisions. It’s very difficult. It’s like a flypaper. It’s very easy to get stuck in the problem while even talking about the problem.

Ben: Yeah, it’s weird. You get people who think you must be playing shows with this band or that band and they always want to know, “then what scene DO you belong to?” And I just think about my friends who just play diverse types of music.

Al: But it goes beyond music though. It’s not even friends who are in bands or work on recordings and write songs. The friends that you have are friends not because of what they do but because of who they are, their character, things that are in their spirit and heart and resonate with you, certainly not reserved to just music. And your point, in agreement with you—if there’s one genre, I’m cool. But if there’s 50 and everybody is mad at each other because of that, then Stop! There’s the one and that is life. We’re all here together.

Ben: When it comes down to it, there is no classification. They are just friends.

Al: Friends whether they are in person or in present life or friends within the common vibration. There are so my levels of friends. They can be in the written word, in the recorded sound...

Ben: Your best friend when you were 14 years old, sitting in front of the stereo...

Al: Geddy Lee.

Ben: Tommy Bolin. **a**



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Field notes on the
rock 'n' roll band

CELEBRATION

by IAN SVENONIUS photography by Stacy Kranitz

Of all the places to visit, my favorite would have to be Earth. There is the strange gravitational pull, the oxygenated atmosphere, the diversity of life on the microscopic level. And of course, the rock 'n' roll group Celebration.

Celebration, above, from left: David Bergander, Katrina Ford, and Sean Antanaitis.

I know Earth has fallen out of fashion. it's decried as being under the sway of a nefarious breed of mammals who are absolutely deranged; whose extraordinary, incomprehensible sadism and greed threatens their entire planet with extinction. In fact, when I'm playing Celebration's delightful new record, *The Modern Tribe*, my comrades often condemn them out of hand for the simple fact of their being human.

I have to explain to them: Not all people are bad. It's mostly just those who are in the odious ranks of the ruling class who organize violence and exploitation for their personal gain. By contrast, their hapless subjects are often capable of creating things that are beautiful—even by universal standards—and can be quite hospitable.

A funny fact about humanity is that they often overlook the features of their planet which we outsiders might find most fascinating or bewitching. The aforementioned micro-biodiversity goes almost unnoticed. Aquatic forms of literature are practically ignored. Likewise, Celebration is—quite criminally—not that well known on their home planet.

There is an innate conservatism with humans I suppose. They hold onto unfortunate habits out of superstition or fear of the unknown. They keep phenomena like class inequity, capitalism, war, and carnivorousism hanging around, perhaps in totemistic reverence for their forebears. A kind of ancestor worship, perhaps? Anyway, this kind of mental harness has thus far kept Celebration from reaching a mass audience, which is unfortunate, since their music and performance



is affecting and exciting. In fact, with their consciousness, which is simultaneously ancient and futuristic, I can envision Celebration as spiritual and political leaders, replacing the horrid figures the humans do have running the place. A cosmic intervention would set things on this course quite easily, but the space code (strategy dictum 1,08 @675,£¢™ J75,*6.4*5%33 Chapter IV) of course prohibits us from meddling.

It doesn't stop us from communicating with foreign species however, as long as we're just collecting information by asking questions instead of giving tips on technology and the like (see Amendment G, Byline ^¶§∞¢£™¥ 45). Of course even that is rarely done, raising as it does all sorts of complicated ethical questions about the natural development of a planet. But in the present case it is difficult to resist. *The Modern Tribe* is not just good, it's intriguing. It features vocals that are lush, scary, beautiful and, at times, almost pre-verbal; drumming that is organic, martial and polyrhythmic; and a mess of keyboards, horn arrangements, and bass synth that is unique in the modern landscape of groups. There are also rumors of nomadic travel, previous groups, marriage ceremonies, and other arcana.

To see what makes the group tick, I decided to travel to the city where Celebration base themselves: Baltimore, Maryland. There, I stalked them from a distance, taking note of their interactions, speech patterns and habits for a sci-fi paperback novel that I might write. (Also I thought it would be nice if we could program some of their charming affectations into one of the new species we are developing back home.) I quickly discovered that Celebration consists of singer Katrina Ford, drummer David Bergander, multi-instrumentalist Sean Antanaitis, and guitarist/keyboardist Colin McCann. Colin has just recently joined the group so as to bring the splen-

did overdubs featured on the *The Modern Tribe* to life in a live setting, something that would have been beyond the capacity of Celebration's original three-piece model.

After a few hours of skulking about, I worked up the nerve to engage Celebration in direct conversation. Sweaty from practice, the band had gathered around a table to eat some kind of bread made of "teff," or buckwheat. Sean had returned from a long day repairing pipe organs in D.C. Although I knew all about it, having spied him at work, I feigned ignorance and asked him what he does, a conversational strategy humans call "faux naïf." This is the transcript of our chat. (I used intergalactic icon Che Guevara's journal technique of exact scientific objectivity in transcribing the events.)

Sean, tell me: what do you do for work?

Sean: For money, when we're in town, I work for a pipe organ firm. We go around, we build 'em, we tune 'em. It's crafty; cutting leather, little tools, some electronic work. Churches, funeral homes, and we do the Masonic Temple on 16th Street, "The Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite." It's a pretty cool building. They went really low-security the last couple years.

Katrina: It's PR.; they're trying to save their asses, 'cos of The Da Vinci Code.

Sean: On tours I hear the tour guides boasting about their organ, saying it's "the third largest on the Eastern seaboard." [pause] It's really quite average.

David: The Masonic Temple in Baltimore is going to be knocked down. They can't afford it anymore.

Katrina: I think the entire organization is going underground.





Your group is known for its cathartic performances. Sort of unusual nowadays...
Katrina: People seem to be trying to home in on something different. What I'm really excited about in some of the music I'm seeing these days are some really great vocalists.
Sean: We're all really happy to see the vocals coming back into the music. Where we were growing up, in the Midwest with underground groups in the '90s, the vocals were getting buried or becoming an afterthought. Now there's all these bands that are celebrating the vocals. It feels right.

What's an example of a vocal group you're excited about?
Katrina: That band Grizzly Bear; four guys, they all sing together, and it's the most beautiful thing. Music's always the balancing energy of what's going on the world—or what's perceived as going on—and because there's a lot of pain and suffering in the psyche of everyone right now, because of everything that's going on, there seems to be a throwback to honesty and beauty in the voice. I feel a calling to do that myself. It's a balancing factor I guess.

Rock 'n' roll groups are, for the most part, more vacuous than ever. They have been reduced to being accouterments in vanity fair's "fashion rocks" supplement.
Katrina: I think for every counterculture, they find a way to take away the integrity through marketing . . . taking it down to the lowest common denominator. Making it that shallow takes away the power, so the people who are involved, and who believe in it, can't stand behind it. They make it embarrassing; dumb. Once someone does something like that, it just takes the power away. You have bands like Pearl Jam; I mean I think they're like CIA operatives in a way, cos they were put in that place to take away the thunder of what was happening at the time . . . "Jeremy"? That had nothing in it. You have a whole idea, an entire movement, and the industry made it dumb by putting bullshit out, supporting bullshit.

David: Assimilationists. It's been going on for thousand of years.
Katrina: Dark energy. Taking an idea and watering it down. Destroying it from within. They did it in the '60s. With the Black Panthers.
Sean: The '60's was when they figured out how to do it, with Manson.

Like with bikers at protest rallies.

Altamont.
Katrina: Yeah. Subcontractors. Like in Iraq. But yeah, they're destroying it. Just going in and creating these bands that, again, take away the power.
David: And the channels . . .
Sean: Seems like there was a time when these superstar bands used to have talent; we just haven't seen that in many years. There's no message or relevancy. It's all under control. There used to be mainstream bands that were talented and were able to explore the outskirts of music. Businesses saw it as a threat and marginalized it. Now, because of that, we have to find new ways to get music out there. Which seems to be happening with the demise of the record industry.

Has music become sports with the internet? With the numbers on "myspace"?
David: Stats: the Billboard Hot 100 and SoundScan.
Katrina: There's that site "Elbows" that tells you who are the top 50 most blogged artists of the week.
Sean: Everything's easily measurable.
Katrina: It's a good way for Rupert Murdoch or any of those billionaire conservative asshole media moguls to understand where the channels are . . .
Sean: It's a useful tool.
Katrina: . . . and also where's the energy going? They can get a real number on the youth. Which is what they want. Cos that's what they're scared of. Always. But they've never been able to have that number . . .
Sean: Now they have a precise number.
Katrina: Music is trackable now, like sports. But you know how people root for the underdog in sports? I don't think people root for the underdog in music.
Colin: People kind of do in music, too.
David: Red Sox fans.

People can't make money by making music anymore, it seems.
Katrina: I'm all down for music being free . . . as long as people take care of the artists.
David: Yeah!

It's hard for people to make money from rock 'n' roll and yet for artists there are all these art grants. And fine art, let's face it, is totally un-american. It's european. And furthermore, nobody actually cares about it.
Katrina: Well, education is the problem there.



Government subsidies for Canadian bands have made them dominant in the usa. Is this an an argument for socialism?
Katrina: I'm all for it for a number of reasons. The Scandinavian countries all have that as well.
Colin: A lot of people aren't doing what they could and should be doing because they have to go to work and pay their rent, while their Canadian counterparts are discussing lyrics and ideas over coffee or a beer! [laughter]
David: It's like Paris in the 1920s.

You lived in New Orleans a few years ago. You've been down there since the

"I think for every counterculture, they find a way to take away the integrity through marketing . . . taking it down to the lowest common denominator," says Katrina. "Making it that shallow takes away the power, so the people who are involved, and who believe in it, can't stand behind it. They make it embarrassing; dumb."

hurricane. What's that like?
David: It's devastating.
Katrina: It breaks my heart.
Sean: It's amazing how little has been done.
Katrina: It's the embodiment of what's going on here in this country
David: They destroyed it; the French Quarter is being [inaudible] but the ghettos and the Ninth Ward are fucked.
Sean: We saw like 50 acres of mud where houses used to be, surrounded by more and more destroyed houses. And then there were like three FEMA houses; three out of hundreds . . .
David: . . . and they looked like they were made out of cardboard—brightly colored cardboard. They painted them these crazy bright colors to make you not think that they're prison cells.
Sean: It's been, what, two years? They looked like those toolsheds from Home Depot.

Katrina: The French Quarter is suffering too. There's none of the street musicians that gave it its personality

You're from Ann Arbor, right?
Katrina: I met Sean in high school in Ann Arbor.
Sean: Then we lived in Chicago.
Katrina: We met David here.
David: Those became the Love Life days. [Love Life is a previous group the members of Celebration were in.]

So Ann Arbor to Chicago to New Orleans to Baltimore. It's like that Lee Hazlewood/Nancy Sinatra song "my elusive dreams."

Katrina: That song is really in my heart.

There's also the tammy wynette version.
Katrina: That's the first one I heard. Who does she sing that with?

I think it's with Kit N. Kaboodle.
Katrina: That song is my life. I moved 25 times before I was 18.

You were an Army brat?
Katrina: No. My mother was schizophrenic. It's complicated. Basically she thought this karate instructor was out to get her.

It might have been true.
Katrina: There were a couple of dead bodies. My dad moved a lot because he was a nuclear engineer; he designed nuclear power plants. So after he'd design a power plant he'd move to the next town.

So going back and forth between my mom and my dad, I was always the new kid. So, when I first heard that song I was like, "Wow! That is my life." It's really sad. [singing] "They are only fleeting things." It's so sad.

Why were you and sean always moving so much?
Katrina: I feel like we were escaping.
Sean: When we left Chicago, we didn't know where we were going; we just got in the van. We decided to go to New Orleans when we got to St. Louis.

St louis is the home of iced tea. Now you live in baltimore.
Colin: I love the language of this town.
Katrina: Sean and I are homeowners. Something we couldn't do in DC, for example. Sean and I are talking with Dave Sitek about getting some land, building a studio, completely solar powered. In the mountains. Remote enough that it can be its own thing. Southern North Carolina. There's really good energy down there.

Tell me about the concept behind the name "the modern tribe."
Katrina: We've been working with the same group of people, like Chris Coady and Dave Sitek. Dave produced our last record and worked on the records we did before this band. We've been friends with him for a long time and his band TV on the Radio, we've all been working together; whenever they do a record we're a part of it in some capacity; I sing with them . . . All these studio projects Dave takes on—cos he's a producer—some or all of us end up working on them. And it's not only us and TV on the Radio but also all these other bands that are part of this community of people. We all have a similar kind of—not music actually, the music's all very different—but we all have the same kind of feeling about . . .
David: Philosophy of life.
Katrina: How we see the world, what kind of energy we want to put into what we do. So it's kind of like a family, or a tribe. I wanted to name the record in a way to give thanks to the opportunities and the experiences that we gained being together and working together on music; it's been a journey and this is part of it and we feel like we kind of all grew together: the Yeah Yeah Yeahs, TV on the Radio, Dragons of Zinth, the horn section of Antibalas. We wanted to say "thanks."

What about the drums? It sounds a bit glam rock, or like siouxsie or adam and the ants. What do you think about that?



David: I don't think about it. It just comes. But yeah, I like hitting toms. I listen to a lot of African, Indonesian, Indian music.

What do you think about all the animal names with the bands these days?

Katrina: It's fine. It's just the way we are. It's fine cos I'm glad there's more attention to nature.

David: I'm glad they're diversifying the animals now. Before it was just wolf, wolf, wolf.

What about american's obsession with dogs? Is it because they're hierarchical?

David: They're so obedient.

Katrina: Well, that is part of a Native American lore. Native Americans speak of animals as a single entity. Like "wolf" energy. Wolf and dog are different; dog is loyalty and obedience, but also being part of something greater than the single one, a unity which is really beautiful. There's something really beautiful about that [so many bands with wolf names], even if it's a little repetitive. **Colin:** People are getting farther and farther away from the animal, so the artifice will be more of that and less in real life. In performance there is less of "the beast."

This is probably the first time in history people haven't lived around animals.

Sean: Are livestock "animals"? I read this book by John Fire Lame Deer. It talks about how livestock are hardly animals. They're weak creatures. They've been inbred by humans for thousands of years. Being fed genetically engineered corn. It's sad.

What Native American tribe are you?

Katrina: I'm Cherokee. Really far removed. My family is from around Greenville, South Carolina. Hillbillies, Smoky Mountain people. So my great, great, grandfather was Spanish and he moved to America and took a Cherokee wife. And on my grandmother's side they have Cherokee too.

With downloading, there is less of the fetish object, there is not so much album art. Is that erasing content in bands?

Katrina: I think it's old-fashioned of us to be attached to those objects.

With less cover art being produced, are you excited to waste fewer materials?

Katrina: I'm excited about it! [laughter] I love artwork and records. But I

guess people are tweaking out their mySpace pages in the way they would have their record covers. The medium has just changed.

Colin: There are no lyric sheets . . .

Sean: People want to consume more and faster, have a shorter attention span. The two are inextricably linked to one another. The disappearance of the iconic artwork is the same as people wanting to see more . . . new stuff and the shorter attention span.

Katrina: People don't idolize one thing as long anymore because of the over-saturation.

David, you were just married?

David: Yes! It was fun.

Katrina: The cake was great.

David: You keep the top for a year. Have it on your first anniversary.

Katrina: Sean and I did that. You put it in the freezer and thaw it after a year. Or you can bury it in the ground. Wrap it in cabbage. Or a sheep's stomach.

David: Have some fermented cake. Like those eggs.

At this point, as per dictum J^{ooo}G^{ooo}L5¶^{oo}ç££™¶|54^{oo}—“” Pt. 3, I had to leave. Otherwise my membership in the SBRL would be revoked. Unfortunately, I still had so much to ask them. I could have talked all night as a matter of fact. But I felt good that at least I could take the recording of my conversation back to my home planet, transcribe it into a fanzine and proliferate it, so as to let my comrades throughout the galaxy know that humanity wasn't all gruesome; these particular characters were charming, in fact. Once word gets out, *The Modern Tribe* will be an interstellar hit record and cosmic justice will be done! 🍌

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The Sodfather

Californian compost wizard **TIM DUNDON** talks shit with Daniel Chamberlin

Photography by Eden Batki

Alchemists are often characterized in modern times as bumbling would-be wizards at best, greedy charlatans at worst. They’re portrayed as fumbling hopelessly in cluttered laboratories, unenlightened madmen trying to turn lead into gold. The reality is more complex, of course.

Alchemists were up to plenty of things, many of them having to do with relating to the natural world—and understanding its processes of transformation and transmutation—in philosophical and spiritual dimensions that transcended traditional religious thinking, both Christian and pagan, and preceded modern scientific thought. The whole “lead into gold” thing was but the most lucrative of the alchemical—or hermetic—practices in the eyes of the monarchs and rulers. Alchemy’s material prima as Peter Lamborn Wilson writes in the recent collection *Green Hermeticism*, “can be found ‘on any dung hill.’ Hermeticism changes shit into gold.” It’s an image memorably realized in Alejandro Jodorowsky’s 1973 film *The Holy Mountain* wherein the thief character takes a dump in a fancy bucket, and Jodorowsky, playing an alchemist, distills those fresh turds into a hefty chunk of golden bling.

Such fantastical processes are well known to dirt-worshipping gardening sage Tim Dundon, the beneficent caretaker of California’s most famous compost pile and the kindly warden of the tropical forest that has fruited from its rich humus. It’s here that Dundon, a scientist-poet in the truest hermetic sense, finds hope and salvation in the transformation of death into life—of rotting organic matter into nutrient-rich soil—that takes place daily in the fecund jungle he maintains on his one-acre yard.

The botanical odyssey of Dundon, the self-proclaimed “guru of doo-doo” and the man whose mammoth compost pile once covered a football-field-sized lot, begins in 1967 with a marijuana shortage. Like any good gardening story, it encompasses Hollywood producers, fires, suicide, PCP injection, a nude Quaker iconoclast, standoffs with city officials and a violent pet coyote.

Dundon, a 65-year-old lifelong resident of the Los Angeles suburb of Altadena, relays the tale with the voice of a true bard: his gospel of compost is told in a pun-filled rhyming style akin to the braggadocio-laden poesy of Muhammad Ali. He’s been a fixture in the bohemian scene of Los Angeles for four decades, known among the circle of outsider intelligentsia that has gathered for Bacchanalian parties at the Altadena ranch of Turkish painter Jirayr Zorthian since the ‘60s. He often marches in Pasadena’s farcical Doo-Dah Parade clad in white robes, a purple turban atop his head—the garb preferred by his guitar-playing alter-ego, Zeke The Sheik.

Dundon provides anyone within driving distance of his home with what is widely considered to be the finest compost in Southern California. He does not charge for the actual raw material, but asks for a delivery fee—\$35 and up, depending on where you live—for a steaming pile that could serve a small subsistence farm. Many of the recipients of his fertile mixture of manure and lawn clippings end up hosting impromptu mulching parties, inviting their neighbors to come and fill wheelbarrows and buckets with the organic matter left spilling from their yards onto sidewalks and streets. Due to the freshness of the manure component of his compost, his deliveries initially reek of ammonia, but the smell fades within days leaving the pleasant odor of healthy vegetation in its wake.

The mother pile from whence this compost comes once filled the multi-acre lot that his neighbors—the Mountain View Cemetery—granted him use of. After multiple battles with city officials and several fires, this sprawling organic mass has been confined to the lot where he lives, and where he’s been piling compost since 1973.

Dundon resides at the intersection of Mountain View Street and Fair Oaks Avenue, the main thoroughfare connecting Altadena with Pasadena to the south. Altadena is an unincorporated community of

“I’m here to capture the rapture and the resurrection at the same time,” he says, pushing a wheelbarrow brimming with fresh mulch.

almost 43,000 residents that falls under the jurisdiction of the city of Los Angeles. Its northern border is the Angeles National Forest and the San Gabriel Mountain range; it last made the local news in February 2006 when a resident spied a mountain lion napping in the shade of her backyard shrubbery, prompting a lockdown of local elementary schools. It’s also known for its population of human predators, with Ten homicides taking place in the vicinity over the first half of 2007. Gangs are one of the first things Dundon talks about to me when I call to set up the interview, complaining that some of his neighbors—they’re Bloods, he says—have parked a broken-down pickup truck in front of his property in order to “make whitey look bad.” This is to be distinguished from the fully functional pickup truck—complete with hydraulic lift—that he uses to haul compost far and wide.

Dundon’s place is not easy to find as I cruise down Mountain View on a sunny Saturday afternoon in late August. Young black dudes draped in red clothing pass blunts, chat with their friends in sparkling Escalades and give me quizzical looks as I circle the block peering at street numbers. The houses are one-story ranch affairs, the yards are dirt interspersed with yellowing patches of dry grass and weeds. After driving up and down the street several times I park my car and decide to investigate on foot, soon realizing that I can’t see the compost for the trees. Dundon’s yard is literally exploding with plant life: A riot of cacti, palms, walnut trees and succulents strains against the sagging chain link fence that marks his property line.

I find Dundon at the gated entrance to this chaotic lot. He’s stooped over a fresh load: rotting plant matter and manure from a local stable falling through

the tines of an ancient pitchfork. Tall, about 6’4” with broad shoulders and considerable biceps, Dundon is urban mountain man, his beard exploding from his face, white whiskers frizzing out from his sideburns down to the middle of his chest. His moustache is stained light brown, I’m guessing from drinking apple cider vinegar as he has a slightly sour, though not unpleasant, odor. His long hair is dark gray, pulled back into a ponytail. Blue eyes sparkle from above rosy cheeks and a weather-beaten face. Give him a conical red hat and he is an unmistakable garden gnome.

We exchange greetings and without hesitation he launches into his pro-compost spiel.

“I’m here to capture the rapture and the resurrection at the same time,” he says, pushing a wheelbarrow brimming with fresh mulch, leading me up the

black plastic gardening pots filled with young ferns and prickly-pear cacti. Dense foliage spreads out on both sides of the path: Kaffir and Stargazer Lilies bloom amidst the psychedelic red, green and yellow leaves of coleus plants. Myriad other tropical species compete with jungle cacti for the shafts of sunlight that splinter down through the banana and walnut trees. Palms tower 30 feet overhead, swaying in the slight breeze of what is a hot August afternoon. The temperature in the shade is a good ten degrees cooler. The air smells of wet dirt and blossoming flora.

“When the county came after me one time they said it was a pile of debris and trash,” he says, dumping the load of mulch, spreading and turning it between ferns and broad-leafed fan palms with his pitchfork. “The reporter from the local newspaper came, and I said, ‘Do you realize what the question is?’ I told



Cock of the walk: One of Dundon’s roosters patrols the premises.

inclined path into his shady tropical reserve. “Isn’t life triumphing over death the resurrection? The body turns back to basics and then the basics are picked up by the next generation and the next generation makes use of it and is happy to live inside this new entity because it didn’t go to the landfill. It went to the hill with the will.”

The ground is spongy and soft, piled into rolling hills of nutrient-rich soil that rise a good four or five feet above street level. Black hose—part of a DIY irrigation system—criss-crosses a pathway lined with

her *I’m sent to be the modern day Shakespeare/ The sincere seer engineer that’s here to commandeering the sphere/ Because your atmosphere and the pure have already started to disappear/ So you better get your rear in gear my dear because the real enemy is right here/ I’m like Paul Revere crossed with Shakespeare.* And the question is: Debris or not debris.” He stops for a second.

“See?” he asks. “It really gets ‘em when you say it in rhyme.”



The Dundon family moved onto this piece of land in 1933. Tim was born in 1942, and grew up here with his two brothers and a sister. He tells me it used to be a flat lot full of weeds, and that an evil spirit inhabits the house itself. “My family’s been possessed big time,” he says. As we walk through this fertile microenvironment he tells me about his nephew’s habit of “gunning” PCP, his sister’s “demonic possession” and an attempted intervention cum exorcism that ended with a family fistfight and a pile of flaming Bibles. “Over and over again my life has been full of weird, weird stuff,” he says. “I don’t want to freak you out.”

Chickens, roosters, ducks and geese patrol the paths of Dundon’s forest, and their work rooting through the top layer of mulch brings his attention back to the matter underfoot. “You can see the chickens have been digging,” he says, kneeling down and plunging his hand into the warm soil. “That’s the powder that makes you prouder and prouder,” he says, bringing up a handful of rich humus. He lets it run through his fingers and sings a verse from Creedence’s “Proud Mary:” “Big wheel keeps on turnin’/ Proud Mary keeps on burnin’.” He smiles. “See, it’s burning with the fire of life. I call it yea-palm instead of napalm. Rather than burn people to death, it brings ’em more alive. This stuff here, the raw material?” he comes up with another handful of the same fine black soil. “I call that craptonite. Crap-tonite does to the forces of evil what kryptonite does to Superman.

“There’s so many bacteria,” he continues, “so many worms and living creatures that when I wet this thing down at night there’s this big party that

comes out. They just chew it up and turn it into the black stuff. So it’s crap tonight, soil tomorrow.” He pauses for a beat, to see if I got his joke. “Like when it goes to the black form there, when it’s completely done, it’s called humus.”

The process of composting is, to quote the *Rodale Guide to Composting*, “the biological reduction of organic waste to humus.” Which more or less means that when plants or animals die and fall to the earth, they become food for other organisms. This process is both hindered and harnessed by humans: The billions of bacteria and fungi that dwell in a handful of soil are largely absent from, say, asphalt, concrete or the compacted mash of garbage in a landfill, but the process is streamlined and accelerated by traditional organic composting practices.

The first stage of decomposition in composting is chemical: microscopic organisms flock to the dead thing and start to secrete enzymes that break it down on a cellular level. As bacteria, saprophytic mushrooms and other fungi eat and digest, they give off considerable heat, causing compost piles to steam and occasionally even catch fire from the trillions of tiny post-dinner bacterial farts. Such a catastrophe took place at Dundon’s place in 1990, and nearly cost him his beloved pile. As temperatures fluctuate with-in the decomposing matter different communities of organisms rise and fall according to their ability to withstand the heat, which can approach 160-degrees Fahrenheit.

As the chemical decomposers make the dead organic matter a bit more malleable, the physical decomposers start to show up. Millipedes, sow bugs, springtails and snails are happy to chomp up the

plants. Flies arrive bringing more bacteria to the buffet, leaving behind eggs and maggots for spiders, centipedes, mites and beetles to eat. Ants replenish the fungi, transport minerals from within and without the pile and eating plants and insects. But the most accomplished of all the decomposers is without question the earthworm. In his blockbuster 1881 essay “The Formation of Vegetable Mould through the Action of Worms with Observations on their Habits,” Charles Darwin writes, “It may be doubted whether there are many other animals which have played so important a part in the history of the world as these lowly organized creatures.” These original slimy alchemists eat dirt and shit out the organic equivalent of gold: castings, also known as vermicompost. Castings enrich the soil with nitrogen, calcium, magnesium and other minerals, in addition to increasing its

“That’s the powder that makes you prouder and prouder,” he says, bringing up a handful of rich humus. “I call it yea-palm.”

ability to retain water. And they attract more earthworms, too.

If the aspiring organic gardener’s compost is comprised of the proper materials—check out a good composting book like the aforementioned Rodale guide, but no meat, cat, dog or human poop for starters—it shouldn’t smell bad or attract rodents. The primary odor that emanates from Dundon’s pile is the deep funk of healthy soil. Which is actually the smell of the spores produced by actinomycetes bacteria, a chemical decomposer that thrives in the latter stages of the composting process.

This is how the majority of humans grew their gardens for most of recorded history, taking cues from the world around them. The original practitioner of this composting process would be the forest floor itself, where a mulch of dead leaves, needles, bark and branches covers over and protects the networks of roots, mycelium, bacteria, insects and worms that take part in soil genesis activities. The first people known to have written about composting were the Akkadians, an empire that thrived in Mesopotamia between the 22nd and 24th centuries B.C. There are irregularities in this history, of course: Rodale cites a 10th century Arab agriculturalist as endorsing human blood as a potent addition to compost. Colonial-era American composting seems to have been predicated on “fish to muck” ratios. In the ‘50s gardeners were going bonkers over mulching with wet straw. (Dundon credits his pile’s success to cemetery grass clippings and never fails to point out that there’s a lot of manure involved.)

In 1840 German scientist Justus von Liebig discovered just what it was that plants liked about humus. Prior to Liebig’s research it was commonly accepted that plant roots were chowing down, literally eating, humus. Liebig’s research showed that plants were benefiting from the absorption of chemicals, specifically nitrogen, present in humus but also eas-



Duck duck goose: Dundon’s garden workers.

ily isolated and applied to roots directly. In short, Liebig’s discovery enabled the synthesis of fertilizer. As is often the case when industrial scientists decode a natural process, he proclaimed his methodology to be superior and actively dismissed the process of composting, forever changing agriculture.

The widespread use of synthetic fertilizer instead of humus was quite a coup in that a naturally occurring—often free—recycled substance that enriched the soil was replaced by an industrial product requiring nonrenewable resources that was often not only detrimental to long-term soil health, but also expensive for the farmer. Further refinements to the production of fertilizer—most notably the Haber-Bosch process of synthesizing ammonia to be used to boost crop production, developed in 1909—are often credited as enabling the population boom that has contributed so drastically to the environmental degradation of the planet.

So when Tim Dundon talks about how his pile is the answer to “all of mankind’s problems,” he’s not kidding around. And there’s no question that the pile has saved Tim Dundon.

Dundon spent his early 20s as a plasterer, shooting fireproofing on the structural steel of the skyscrapers going up across Los Angeles in the ‘60s. When a doctor told him that the asbestos that was getting in his eyes would eventually leave him blind, he switched jobs and became an ironworker. “I was being a tough young fella,” he says, sitting on a lawn chair in a salon-like clearing framed by the winding, sometimes horizontal trunk of a decades-old pepper tree. “I got really super powerful,” he says. “My barber was the third contender to the bantamweight championship.”

Dundon boxed too, in and out of the ring. He and his hard-knock friends would get into bar fights and street fights, “dusting off Mexicans” and getting dusted off by Mexicans, high on acid and pills. They’d take “racks and racks” of Benzedrine, Seconal and Percodan and spend the weekend hunting in Arizona or in the rugged forests north of Altadena, “beating the hills and catching rattlesnakes.” After these strenuous and sleepless weekends he’d return to the work of building bridges and buildings. “I was breaking my back,” he says. One of his friends, the bantamweight barber, was eventually murdered when “a guy he’d worked over a few times in street fights caught him coming out of bar with a twelve gauge shotgun. Right in the face. He wasn’t quite tough enough to take that punch. That’s a good way for somebody like that to go out though.

“This is the kind of people that used to be in Pasadena,” he says. “You talk about heavy duty, these

people were way above and beyond the call of duty.”

By the late ‘60s Dundon was living with his second wife in Altadena, raising snakes and trying to keep his pet coyote from killing his neighbor’s dogs, or his wife. “One night me and my wife did acid,” he says, “and he wanted to kill her so bad you could see the hate vibrations coming off of him. If I’d a let him go she’d a been in pieces.”

It was around this time that he first smoked marijuana, coming up on his first batch of cannabis by way of a “mailman guy” he was hanging out with. “I took a couple hits on some really good stuff,” he says. “Then I had a big steak, and then went home and played with mama and it was like whoa!” He bugs his eyes out and smiles. “*This is good.*”

The following year Dundon started on the path that would eventually lead to the lush garden where he is now talking. “It was one of those summers when you couldn’t score any stuff,” he says. “I decided to plant some behind the garage. Put in a couple tomato plants and some corn for camouflage. I saw the miracle of growth happen there. That was ‘67.” He expanded his garden of legal and illegal plants when he and his wife bought a house in 1970. Three years after that they split up and he returned home to take care of his aging parents: Frank, who worked in the aerospace industry, and Edna, a concert violinist.

“It was my calling,” he says. “My father is the gardener, I am the vine. This is one of the heavy Bible statements. My middle name is Francis. Francis is Frank. Remember the Catholic saint, St. Frances of Assisi? I’m St. Francis of A Feces. Is that funny shit or what? It goes on and on and on.”



Dundon with a handful of his “yea-palm.”

The genesis of the modern organic gardening and permaculture movement of which Dundon is an icon occurred in 1940, two years before his birth. Almost 100 years following von Liebig’s discovery of fertilizer, Sir Albert Howard, a British botanist and the Director of the Insti-

tute of Plant Industry at Indore, India, published *An Agricultural Testament*. The landmark book was a result of Howard’s years of study of the indigenous agricultural practices of India, and it lays out a vision of symbiosis between animals and plants and a scientifically validated methodology of composting that have become the core tenets of the organic farming movement. And the dude talks a lot like Tim Dundon, if Dundon were a British knight. “How long will the supremacy of the West endure?” Howard asks in the introduction to *Agricultural Testament*. “The answer depends on the wisdom and courage of the population in dealing with the things that matter. Can mankind regulate its affairs so that its chief possession—the fertility of the soil—is preserved? On the answer to this question the future of civilization depends.”

Howard’s work flew in the face of an agricultural fertilizer industry that was already entrenched across the planet. And he inspired a generation of organic farmers, among them American gardener J.I. Rodale. Rodale started publishing magazines and gardening guides—including the composting book quoted above—in 1942, based around his enthusiasm and belief in organic farming. Among the many authors that he published was one Ruth Stout, a rebellious woman raised as a Quaker in Girard, Kansas. Though her work is often overshadowed by that of her brother—Rex Stout, the author of a series of mysteries featuring an obese detective—Stout published her first book in 1955. *How to Have a Green Thumb Without an Aching Back* outlined her philosophy of permanent mulch, summed up with the maxim

“no dig, no work.” Like

Howard she recognized nature as a gardener that didn’t need to be improved upon, and was reputed to tend to her bountiful, chaotic roadside gardens in the nude.

After Dundon moved back to his parents’ place in 1973, he continued to garden, but it was Stout’s writing that gave him the inspiration to start his now legendary compost heap and the jungle that has sprouted from it. “I read her book about mulching,” he says, “and how it had turned her place into a virtual paradise. She had all this stuff growing, really wild, just by spreading hay and organic material on the ground. I took Ms. Stout to a new level.

“I had a vision in early ‘73—I was right over there,” he points through the trees to a spot a hundred yards or so from

where we’re sitting. “All of a sudden it dawned on me that that this was something that could change the whole world. People could create their own well-being, their own good health, happiness, have peace on earth, just by using organic material, turning it into a game or a competition or whatever to get ev-

eryone excited and involved. Something that could really work.”

Dundon soon began collecting the yard waste that his neighbors at the cemetery were incinerating. His pile grew to cover over the lot on which he lived, and soon the cemetery let him expand onto the land that connected their two properties. He claims the eruption of foliage occurred naturally. “I used to get the grass cuttings with the tree seeds and the shrub seeds,” says Dundon. “Instant forest.” He’s obviously done lots of planting though, as it’s likely the banana trees didn’t come from graveyard grass clippings. Likewise the massive dioon—a member of the ancient cycad family and a native of Central America—that spreads its palm-like fronds over a dilapidated shed. Or the exotic epiphytic cacti that bloom from the trunks of host trees reaching up toward the sky. Amateur botanists who travel to Dundon’s forest with a field guide in hand will be richly rewarded.

Dundon picks up a walnut from the ground underneath our chairs. “Just throw a little mulch on top and before you know it there’s stuff everywhere,” he says.

Dundon also kept up his marijuana cultivation. After his parents died, they left the property to him and selling pot augmented his income from doing odd jobs and gardening work. By the early ‘80s he claims that he was the “kingpin grower and dealer” of Altadena. “The people I was dealing with, they weren’t into cocaine and all the other stuff,” he says. “They were just into doing the herb. I had a bunch of women that were coming around and I could of said ‘Drop your drawers and I’ll give you a half pound!’ Never any of that. I knew the growers; I got the super price, to where the people felt they got the best deal on the best stuff. This is the way it should be.”

He was busted in 1985, charged with cultivation, sales to a narcotics officer and possession of magic mushrooms with intent to distribute, all felonies. He was busted again while out on bail and charged with possession of more marijuana and psilocybin. He represented himself in Pasadena Superior Court as his alter ego Zeke the Sheik, dressed in a white caftan and making his case in rhyme. “I was obviously guilty,” he says “but I was claiming that I had dominion over the plants, because I was a true Christian believer and that my father in heaven according to the Bible gave me dominion.”

He was convicted following a famously comical trial, but the judge let him off easy: 60 days for each set of felonies, but to be served concurrently at Camp Snoopy, a minimum security prison camp. He only served 18 days, and had a pretty easy time inside: “One day I was pretending like I was asleep on the ground and these black guys were talking about me, sayin’, ‘Hey man we were in Altadena and this guy was selling this weed that was so bad that we didn’t need no cocaine or none of this other stuff. That’s him right there!’ If you’re a child molester they’re gonna kill ya, but if you’re a weed dealer they’re gonna say ‘This guy’s cool, man. He’s all right.’”

Dundon’s next encounter with the authorities came in 1990, when his compost heap caught fire. “It was like hell on earth,” he says. “It was like Puff the Magic Dragon and Dante’s Inferno right in the back yard.” He was oblivious to the fire until two police officers notified him of the smoke that was rising from his pile and lying so heavily on the street that it was stopping traffic.

Dundon was in a massively depressed state at the time: His 26-year-old son had committed suicide

two weeks earlier, following the death of his mother, Dundon’s second ex-wife. “He broke up with his girlfriend. He was having trouble with the man,” he says. “He was gonna have to go to jail for Ten months or something like that. He got involved in some kind of drug deal. It was just too much for him to handle so he did the big one.” Dundon points two fingers at his head and pulls an invisible trigger. “So right at that time the pile was starting to catch on fire I was so bummed out, so blown out.”

He managed to contain the fire, but it broke out again the following day. The fire department was sympathetic to Dundon, but warned him that he’d be facing massive fines if they had to intervene. With a combination of water and silt he finally contained the blaze, and with the assistance of scientist friends he was able to verify to county authorities that his pile was no longer a hazard: the compost had mostly burned up, and what remained was non-combustible humus.

But the assault on the heap was only delayed, the issue handed over to county planners who claimed that Dundon’s pile was in violation of Los Angeles County zoning regulations. In 1999 senior county planner John Gutwein told the LA Times that “Mr. Dundon is a very nice man, conducting a large-scale composting operation. Frankly, he is doing very positive things . . . But Mr. Dundon is going to have to move the pile somewhere else.”

It came as no surprise that Dundon was unable to transport his pile—which had grown to be at least 40-feet high, and was reportedly the length of “five school busses”—to an appropriately zoned industrial area. Shortly thereafter the owners of the land—the Mountain View Cemetery board—were threatened with jail time and a \$1,000-a-day fine if the pile remained. It was soon bulldozed. After the compost was removed, the ground was sprayed with herbicide and is now a barren dirt field dotted with tufts of crispy, sun-baked weeds.

Still, this major setback, disheartening as it is, can’t detract from Dundon’s progress: Not just on his own land, but through the work of the compost disciples that swear by his humus, a congregation whose members range from prim rose hobbyists to crunchy urban farmers, bohemian permaculturalists to straight-laced landscapers. He shows me a calendar that features images from his customers’ gardens: Sprawling groves of tropical plants, flowerbeds and vegetable plots bursting with life, even a few images of gardeners who’ve followed his model and added chickens and ducks to their backyard biospheres.

Where would you be without your compost? I ask him as we wander around his house. It’s one of two on the property, though the foliage is so thick that I never manage to discern where the second structure is. (I later learn that he has another garden growing on top of one of these buildings, a green roof that serves as a refuge for a pride of feral cats.) He stops to look down on a cage with two baby rabbits inside. It’s stacked up next to more cages holding chicks, chirping in alarm at a black and white cat that has emerged from the undergrowth. He looks back at me and raises two fingers to his head and pulls the trigger. “Probably,” he says. “The ups and downs got so bad. Suicide was close many times. When the pile got destroyed and the whole thing got so weird.

“Death, and bad relationships with women and having to be alone,” he continues, noting that his last girlfriend left 20 years ago. “If I could’ve had some breaks ...” Dundon has aspirations to Hollywood

stardom, brushes with television producers and media attention that have fueled obsessions with becoming a celebrity through the transformative power of compost. Which makes sense considering how much it’s enriched his life. “It would be neat to go back and write a novel about what would’ve happened if I’d gotten in contact with all these people. How much different the world could’ve been if that had happened. It could be Ecotopia already.”

It’s one of the only moments in the hours that we’ve been talking that he seems to be at a loss for words. It passes though, and as we continue to walk through his garden he tells stories about his brother Pat’s singing abilities, and then freestyles humus rhymes: “*That’s the royal soil wrapped in foil/ So it’ll never spoil for those who are loyal/ and put in the toil/ and create the thing that will not only end the turmoil/ but replace oil.*”

Dundon’s enthusiasm for compost goes beyond the sterling scientific theses of Sir Howard, and nearly eclipses Ruth Stout’s candid mulching genius. While compost guides stress that humus springs from all organic matter—plants, kitchen waste, cardboard, et cetera—Dundon mostly focuses on the manure component. He loves the Paul McCartney album *Flaming Pie* and never fails to make a reference to the fact that a lot of his yard—all dirt on earth, in fact—is in part made out of poop. I could find only one other accounting of compost in all its degraded glory, and this from an inverted perspective; one of repulsion at the death, disease and decay that makes up this nourishing part of the cycle of life. Walt Whitman’s “This Compost” is a selection from his 1855 masterwork *Leaves of Grass* wherein the bearded poet shudders at the thought of “every continent work’d over and over with sour dead.” He closes the selection with the following lines:

*Now I am terrified at the Earth, it is that calm and patient,
It grows such sweet things out of such corruptions,
It turns harmless and stainless on its axis, with such endless successions of diseas’d corpses,
It distills such exquisite winds out of such infused fetor,
It renews with such unwitting looks its prodigal, annual, sumptuous crops,
It gives such divine materials to men, and accepts such leavings from them at last.*

Dundon expresses similar sentiments, only true to his style, and to the holistic tenets common to both alchemy and permaculture, he embraces the corruption as much as the sweet things that grow from it:

“There’s three parts to life, right: The father is the male. Spirit, or space. The second is the mother. The female, the matter, the material. Third is ‘it.’ Like these chairs,” he gestures to the lawn chairs we’re sitting in again. “All these inanimate things are it. So the pile is what I call she-it. So that way they can’t bleep it because it’s a bunch of shit.” He smiles. “No shit?” he asks.

I nod and reply, “No shit.”
He shakes his head. “Nope. All shit.” 🐞

Special thanks to Greg Dalton.

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THIS PUNK HOUSE

Photography and captions by **Abby Banks**



In 2004 photographer Abby Banks drove back and forth across America, visiting and photographing over a hundred punk houses in dozens of cities. Punk House: Interiors in Anarchy—edited by Thurston Moore, just published in durable hardcover by Abrams Image and exclusively excerpted here—is a lovingly compiled collection of Abby’s color-drenched photographs from this tour of underground outposts.

“Punk house” is a shorthand term of convenience describing spaces—houses, squats, compounds, warehouses, treehouses, encampments, etc.—occupied by groups of youngish refusenik folk looking to live day-to-day with as little involvement in America’s grey gridlife as possible.

Above:

Basement in Milwaukee

This may be from the Barely Legal house, or possibly the Robot House. Many punk houses have shows or practice spaces in their basements. You can see the seats here, the attempt at insulation. Milwaukee was fun to photograph. My friend Eric was taking me from house to house,

At their best, which is to say at their most realized, punk houses are more than simple shelters: these houses often double (or triple) as live performance venues, eco-living laboratories, do-it-ourselves workshops, countercultural libraries, floor-to-ceiling art chapels, dissident gathering spaces, and, of course, raging party centers.

That punk houses are always unique, and almost always temporary, makes Abby’s ethnographic documentary work all the more valuable. Arthur is proud to present a few of Abby’s gorgeous photos from Punk House, with her commentary.

—Jay Babcock

introducing me to people and helping me with my project. At one house, everyone gathered to see what was happening at the next, so they followed us. It was amazing. The group just kept getting bigger and bigger as we went from house to house—a mob of sweetness.



A circus punk bus, parked on Oregon

This is the interior of a beautiful bus which was parked behind the Nightmare Collective house, where it was being converted to run on used vegetable oil. They took out most of the seats, made a table and had a working kitchen. They were very organized, all their costumes and props—plungers, bowling pins—hung from pegs. Circus punks—I like to call them clown punks—are another sub-sub-culture. They’re groups who travel around the country, touring like a band, but instead of, or in addition to, playing music they do clowning, firebreathing, playing songs, making things disappear, pounding nails into their heads. Some of them bring it all the way out to the furthest edge-of-crazy stuff that you can see live. They’re very committed—there are clown punks who have their makeup tattooed onto their face.



The Gallows, Minneapolis

This is inside the kitchen of the Gallows, an amazing house. One woman named Green lived upstairs in a completely black room with stacked TVs all over. There were lots of really bizarre sculptures and mannequins and paintings everywhere, and secret hatches above the staircase that led to the space where their beds were. It's gone now. The landlord wrote about the people who lived there in this crazy right-wing newspaper he published, calling them "spoonfed American terrorists" or something, and brought them to court. Their eviction party was a demolition party.



Collective A Go-Go, Worcester, Mass

This is a punk house with a permanent attitude—they'd been there for eleven years when I visited. Punks for life. They don't have hot water, they use a woodburning stove. One of my favorite artists in the world lives there and brushes his teeth with salt. He said it was super-effective.



Villa Kulla, Seattle.

I fell in love with this really small house named after where Pippi Longstocking lived. The zinestress named Neely Bat Chestnut lived there. They had living room shows, regularly. This picture is of the bathroom; I had to use a flash because the room was lit with an orange lightbulb. The entire house was completely covered in their own artwork or stuff they'd found. That's my favorite place to be, somewhere where somebody does whatever they want and doesn't hold back at all. Villekulla was bulldozed. About 90% of the houses I photographed for this book are gone—they've been burned down, or the people who lived there got evicted, or just moved out. The ones that are still around are collectively owned or very lucky.



Bike House Squat, Salt Lake City

Some of the people living in this squat were “Jack Mormons”—somebody who’s grown up in the Mormon church but isn’t practicing anymore. They’d been watching this house because it’d been empty for a long time, and finally went to the City Hall to find out who owned it. Since no property tax has been paid on the house for years, they decided to move in and started paying the property tax themselves and see what happened. When we were visiting, they’d managed to get the water turned back on and they were putting in a wood stove because they didn’t have any heat. Their fence was made out of bike parts. That flag with the ninja is for real—these guys were seriously into martial arts. There were several garages behind the house where martial arts practices go on.



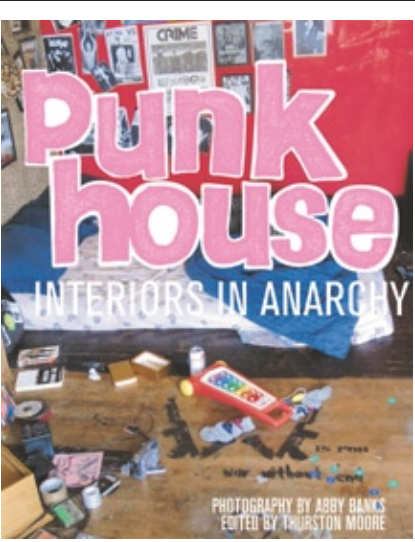
Nowe Miasto, New Orleans

This is an interior shot, taken before Katrina, from the kitchen on the other side of the building. It’s a big place—a several storey-tall warehouse where a bunch of artists and musicians and writers and record collectors live. They have events there, it’s owned by a couple of people who live there, it’s got an old elevator that’s just a platform where you pull the rope, all the machinery is exposed. The place was heavily damaged—the roof got flipped off, I think—during Katrina, but it’s still there.



The Fire-Breathing Kangaroo, Seattle

Bikes are a huge obsession in the punk subcultures. Pretty much everywhere I went for this project there was some bike enthusiasm going on: free bikes, free parts, people teaching each other how to fix their own bikes. The Fire-Breathing Kangaroo is a really well-known spot amongst hitchhikers, travelers, punks—everybody goes there. This is a picture of a shack in their backyard, which was full of bike parts, and play weapons like the swords in this picture. They were storing vegetable oil and converting diesels to run on used vegetable oil too.



Photographs excerpted from *Punk House* by Abby Banks (Abrams IMAGE, 2007), courtesy of the publisher. All photographs copyright © 2007 Abby Banks.

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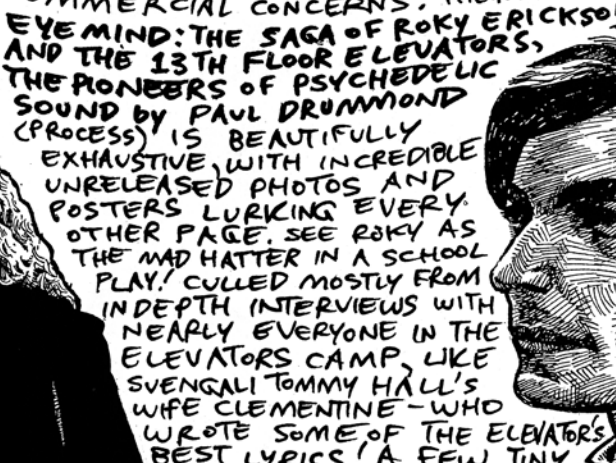
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TOMMY HALL

EYEMIND: THE SAGA OF ROCKY ERICKSON AND THE 13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS, THE PIONEERS OF PSYCHEDELIC SOUND BY PAUL DRUMMOND (PROCESS) IS BEAUTIFULLY EXHAUSTIVE, WITH INCREDIBLE UNRELEASED PHOTOS AND POSTERS LURKING EVERY OTHER PAGE. SEE ROCKY AS THE MAD HATTER IN A SCHOOL PLAY! CULLED MOSTLY FROM IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH NEARLY EVERYONE IN THE ELEVATORS CAMP, LIKE SVENGALI TOMMY HALL'S WIFE CLEMENTINE - WHO WROTE SOME OF THE ELEVATORS' BEST LYRICS. A FEW TINY INACCURACIES DON'T STAND IN THE WAY OF AN ENLIGHTENING TALE! ABOUT TRUE PROPHETS, REAL ROCK'N'ROLL OUTLAWS, AND HOW SANITY IS HARD TO GRASP WHEN TRULY IN THE RAPTURE.

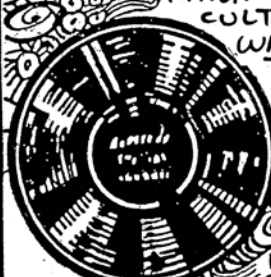


MOONDOG: THE VIKING OF 6TH AVENUE by ROBERT SCOTTO (PROCESS)

SHEDS LIGHT ON ONE OF MY ALL-TIME FAVORITE PERSONALITIES. I MUST ADMIT, HOW HIS CAREER UNFOLDED WAS A BIT OF A MYSTERY TO ME. AS WELL AS WHAT HIS PERSONAL LIFE COULD BE LIKE. TOO MUCH TIME IS SPENT ASSIGNING TO EVERY CHILDHOOD TRAUMA BUT AS MOONDOG'S AMAZING LIFE UNFOLDS, SO DOES THE AMAZING TALE. I WAS HOOKED. THE CD COULD USE A LOT TOO IN ITS DESCRIPTION, BUT ALAS.

THE SOURCE: THE UNTOLD STORY OF FATHER YOD, YOHOWA 13 & THE SOURCE FAMILY BY ISIS AQUARIAN WITH ELECTRICITY AQUARIAN (PROCESS) THIS STORY IS JUST SO GOOD, SO MONUMENTAL - I JUST DO NOT WANT TO GIVE AWAY A STITCH OF IT. THIS IS HIGH DRAMA ON A MASSIVE SCALE & TRULY EFFECTED THE ENTIRE WORLD & ALL OF SOCIETY'S HABITS. NO JOKE. IF YOU ARE EVEN MINORLY INTERESTED IN MESSIAHS, MAGIC, PSYCHEDELIC BIGAMY, DIVINE ROCK FREAKOUTS, NATURE, OR BENEVOLENT CULTS, RUN DON'T WALK TO GET THIS. MIND-BLOWING PHOTOS & CD OF RARE JAMS?!

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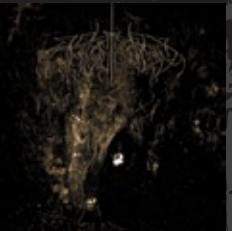
Om - "Pilgrimage"

The third album of Drone Mantra purity from Om! Featuring Chris Hakius and Al Cisneros the rhythm section formerly of Sleep. "Pilgrimage" was recorded in the summer of this year by Steve Albini at his Electrical Audio studios in Chicago. Mastered by Bob Weston. The sacred voyage initiates October 2007.



Weedeater-God Luck and Good Speed (CD)

After two critically acclaimed full length releases under their belts, these masters of putrid doomed tar: WEDEATER unleash their latest and highly anticipated album, entitled "God Luck And Good Speed"! Recorded and produced by the legendary Steve Albini (Neurosis, High On Fire, Nirvana, etc.). The sound is gigantic and both the production and recording skillfully capture the intense experience of a Weedeater show while achieving tones that will swallow you whole.



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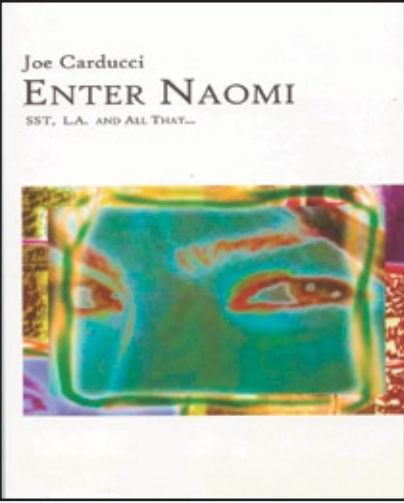
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Joe Carducci, the ingeniously screwball theorist behind Rock and the Pop Narcotic has come out of the hills to grace us with another idiosyncratic



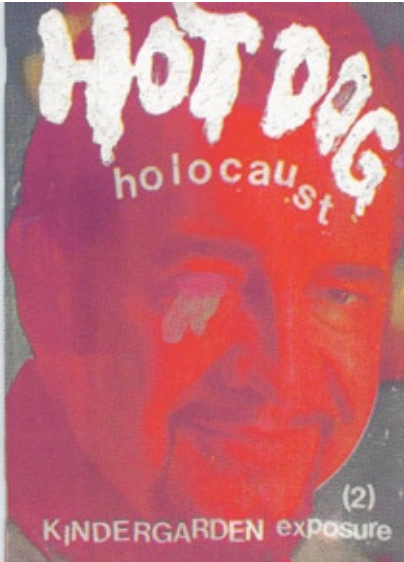
As expected, the new box of Siltbreeze stuff is a magnificent blot on our culture. **The Factums’ Alien Native** LP is a reissue of a 2004 CDR crafted (one supposes) as a side project to work with the **Fruit Bats, the Intelligence** and other combos more formal in their organization of body shape. **The Factums’** material is evenly split between loose, baggy, electron-o fiwh with a very diseased kind of surface and a guitaric syntax mangling that totally defies archeological stratification. For punk, it’s insanely buxom. *Sunshine of Your Love* by **Xno bbqX** (one of the most elegant CLE band name tributes ever) is similarly well-proportioned. Recorded a few years back (it was originally a cassette), it is the work of two Australian vegans in a shed with an electronic guitar and a drum (or something), but we’ll be rolled in a fuggin’ rug if it doesn’t sound like these

with fragmentary glimpses of drool in the distance. The vibe reminds us a little of **Dirty Three**, back when they were still on Poon Village, if they were crossed with some of the scum-roots that Mick Turner was trying to repress. Nimble!

The photographer **Mick Rock** has been responsible for a number of iconic images. His best-known work is undoubtedly his glam stuff, but for us the most important is the cover work for the **Stooges’ Raw Power** and that for **Syd Barrett’s The Madcap Laughs**. The bulk of Rock’s Stooges work came out a couple of years ago. But the Barrett shots were only available in a very expensive limited edition hardcover that came and went in 2002. Now, Gingko Press’s **Rebel Arts** imprint has released *Psychedelic Renegade*, a prole version of what I assume to be the same material, and it is a true pleasure to behold. Rock was a friend of Barrett’s from their university days, and his text is illuminative. It’s a great book, with many variations on photos that have long been burned into our synapses. On a related note, although major label stuff is really a bit outside our purview, English EMI has released a very deluxe 40th anniversary edition of **Pink Floyd’s Piper at the Gates of Dawn**. It has mono and stereo versions of the album, plus Syd-era singles tracks (not, alas, “Vegetable Man” or Scream Thy Last Scream”). Packed in a hardcover booklet with lyrics, great band pics, and a special insert reprinting some of Syd’s collage work of the day, it is very much a gas and a half. At least.



South Carolina is state we more often associate with fish-flavored crackers than with music, but we were never very good with spatial memories. Anyway, South Carolina is the home state to **Chris Bickel**, who is the main guy behind **Anakrid**, and Anakrid have much more to do with music than fish. The two albums right here right now are *Father* and a one-sided, hand-painted jobber called *Pos Load: Nihilsurrealisme* (Stereonucleosis). Both of ‘em are swellish examples of classic-style experimental chitter (as opposed to noise-yawp or something). Noise gets used as an element, and there’s plenty of effects-barf, but there’s equal attention to stuff like gamelanic-percussion-nutting and slurps that’d almost make you imagine the **Residents** were sitting in the next toilet stall, nickering. *Pos*



Kindergarten Exposure #2 *Load* is a longer chunk (and maybe a little more malignant sounding) than the relatively-poppy Father, but they’re both interesting. And Carolinian.

The return of a favorite poet is always a good reason to get drunk, so many hats will fill with booze when it is noted that **Valerie Webber** has a new book, created in concord with **Genieve Dellinger**, and called *Lignin Diadem* (Big Baby Books). Not a collaboration, so much as a complex dance, the words here move between prose and poetry and back again, wearing boots caked in mud. This book was supposed to come out years ago, but was plagued by missteps until we’d forgotten about it. Which was, of course, the perfect moment for it to appear. Also beautiful is the new issue of Western Massachusetts’ number one lit ‘zine, *Gladtree Journal*, now on the



Vinyl Records and Covers by Artists

BULL TONGUE

EXPLORING THE VOIDS OF ALL KNOWN UNDERGROUNDS SINCE 2002

by Byron Coley & Thurston Moore

non-fiction book, *Enter Naomi* (Redoubt Press), which presents an insider’s version of the SST label story. The structure teeters between chapters dealing with the particulars of the Naomi Peterson saga (she was a staff photographer for SST), and a general recounting of the label’s saga. It’s a good if somewhat fragmentary read, focusing on some of the label’s issues with gender politics more than other possible tangents. Which means it’s still not the definitive SST book—probably there’ll never be just one—but it’s a pretty exciting read nonetheless.



graphic zine Kattemad

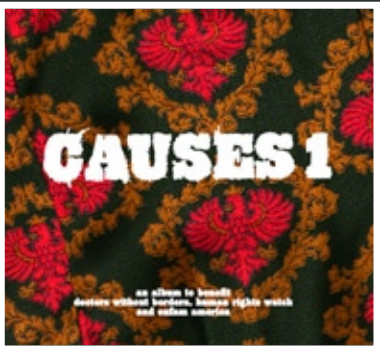
guys eat meat. What the hell? Still, vegan or no, this’s a fairly magnificent third-year of wet-black-snapper, and has all the requisite duo moves that “knowers” look for.

If it’s fun you seek, you could do far worse than to look up the work associated with Denmark’s **Smittetilke** collective. Their vibe is a bit in line with **Ultra Eczema’s**, but no one’s as thoroughly screwed up as **Dennis Tyfuss**, so the material is a bit more tame overall. Still, the latest batch of swag is quite glamorous. First up is *Kindergarten Exposure #2*, a graphics fanzine in the same vein as some of **Mark Gonzalez’s** stuff or the *Hello Trudi* material—single page illustrations and stuff by a variety of artists, primarily in a somewhat crude vein. Yum. Perhaps even more screwed is **Kattemad**. This is a graphics book by **Loke Sebastian, Luca Bjornsten** and **Zimon Rasmussen**, detailing the different ways in which cat food can be disgusting. Excellent. As is *Rock World comics* by **Soren Mosdal** and **Jacob Orsted**. We’d initially thought this looked a little straight, but the excellent English language text, about crappy music and beer and toilet paper, ended up being quite outstanding. The same goes for **Mok Nok’s Slugstorm** LP, which has a dandy silk-screened cover. The music is a cool blend of post-noise instrumentals



CAUSES 1: DARFUR

Although estimates of the number of people killed by the conflict in Darfur vary widely from 200,000 to 400,000, what is certain is that more than 2 million people have fled their homes because of the fighting, and 4 million are now in need of humanitarian assistance-making this one of the worst crises in the world today.

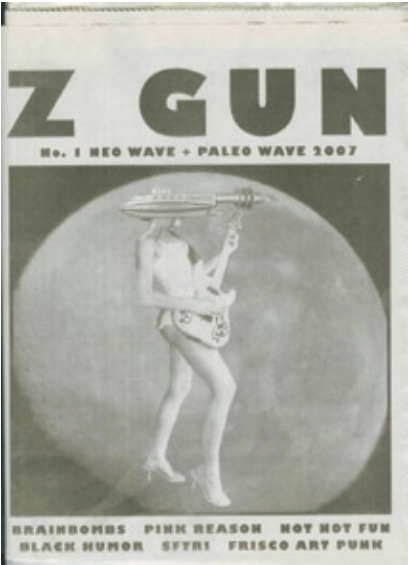


- animal collective** - *safer (exclusive live version)*
- the black keys** - *stay all night (exclusive chulaboma session)*
- bloc party** - *rhododendrons*
- bright eyes** - *coat check dream song (exclusive live version)*
- cornelius** - *wataridori 2 (exclusive version)*
- david sylvian** - *late night shopping (exclusive chris trenna remix)*
- death cab for cutie** - *world shut your mouth (rare julian cope cover)*
- the (international) noise conspiracy** - *washington bullets*
- the cure** - *the walk (exclusive live version)*
- the shins** - *turn on me (exclusive clint mansell remix)*
- spoon** - *rbthm & soul (exclusive middle version)*
- teargas & plateglass** - *one day across the valley*
- thievery corporation** - *the passing stars feat. pam bricker*
- travis** - *gimme some truth (exclusive john lennon cover)*

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stands and tally-fuckin’-ho for that. **John Shaw** has assembled a spectacular roster of Valley talent and related burns —**Sara Jaffe**, **Matt Valentine**, **Dredd Foole**, **Jessi Swenson**, **Lauren Naylor**, **Rick Myers**, **Bill Nace**, **John Moloney**, **Pete Nolan**, etc etc etc. Yikes. Great to see a new printing of **Kell Robertson’s** *Bear Crossing* (Pathwise Press). Robertson is one of the great western poets who started publishing in the ’60s, embracing a kind of legendary rurality that always makes us think of the days of the Red Dog Saloon in Virginia City. This is a fine collection of material from a lot of different slices of his life, but all of them were lived near the edge of dangerous precipices (real or imagined). Well worth checking out. As is the new lit ’zine from Montreal’s **Benoit Chaput**, *Bathyscape*. Most of it’s in French, but some of it’s in English (like our column) and it’s a strange collection of essays about inactuel culture. First issue looks cool and if we can soldier through the



debut issue of Z GUN

French, well, you can too! There are scheduled to be three issues a year. Let’s hope this doesn’t mean Benoit’s slowing down the output of books from the great *l’Oie de Cravan* imprint. That would suck.

Side Three of the *Moon by The Company* (Difficult Life in Mental Jail) is another project that has been floating around for a while. Something of a faux-solo project by the **Country Teasers’ Ben Wallers**, recorded a while ago then floated to various people to see if anybody’d want to release it. The instrumentation can be a little goony at times, but the vibe hovers somewhere between **Alvaro** and **Conrad Capistran’s** *Sound of Pot* project. For certain garage guys, this might seem random, berserk and sub-musical. And all those things are true. But this is a funny and primitivist take on experimental noise making, as riveting in its way as anything of its ilk. But really,

how could we not be won over by any album that finishes with a track called “I’ll Fuck Your Wife in a Mellow Wine Bar”? ‘Nother kinda-cool kinda-solo album is the *Abandoned Meander* LP (Smooch/Peaking Mandala) by **Andrew Douglas Rothbard**. As unlikely as it might seem, the former Pleasure Forever vocalist has cut a record that’s pretty massive in terms of studio psych. Backwards this, backwards that, Eastern strings and structures, it’s something like the most fucked-up Green Pajamas record you ever heard. Except it’s not by them.

Best music mag we’ve seen in a long time is **Scott Soriano’s** newspaper, *Z Gun*. The debut issue is genius. The best record review section around and great features on stuff, like an in-depth survey of San Francisco artpunk and equally detailed looks at the **Brainbombs**, **Pink Reason** and **Not Not Fun Records**. Truly a ruling read. Also surprisingly good is issue #12 of *Swindle*. The mag is one of those glossy art/fashion/whatsis things, heavy on design, but the contents are very swinging. There’s a great (GREAT) article on the midwest hardcore scene by Tony Rettman, and a very solid piece on L.A.’s Ferus Gallery, which will be the subject of **Kristine McKenna’s** next book. Hard to know exactly what the mag’s about, but issue 12 is a stomper. 20th anniversary issue is out of **Tim Hinely’s** *Dagger* and it’s a good read as always. This one has a very good interviews with Chuck Warner (of Hyped 2 Death), Stephen Burns of the Scruffs(!), part two of a Slovenly appreciation, a Gary Gold thing on Simply Saucer and lots and lots of reviews. Classic spew.

A couple of great labels, previously unconnected to vinyl have made plunges in different directions the last month or two, and results are been satisfying as heck. And maybe even more than that if you’re a fan of **Tom Carter**. Three Lobed Records (the long-running Bardo-associated sound-spume) has released *Smokescreen*, an LP with additional CDR tucked in, by **Sarin Smoke**. Sarin Smoke is a duo comprised of **Tom Carter** and **Pete Swanson**, a guy who is generally associated with a very noisy wing of the California underground. Sarin Smoke, however, is a two-electric guitar trance-fest of long-held notes and subtle scrambles into the dark bush. It’s a totally new thing for Swanson (as far as we know) and a nice addition to Carter’s shelf. The same duo session resulted in the one-sided LP *It Chars Our Lips Yet Still We Drink* (Wholly Other) which has a gorgeous silk-screened cover and sounds so enchanting you’ll be asking yourself, “Is it really Swanson?” Wholly Other also produced a vinyl version of **Christina Carter’s** *Electric* album, which was originally on Kranky. It

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SIX ORGANS OF ADMITTANCE SHELTER FROM THE ASH

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sounds even more amazing in this format, if we may say so—incredible ruminations on the transformative qualities of pain. Wow.

Got a nice batch of graphics from Buenaventura Press recently. The new issue of *Comic Art Annual* is as impressive as always. It has deep, long features on **Kaz**, **Jerry Moriarty** and artists from other times and places, such as **Guyas Williams** (best known, to us, anyway, for his work with **Robert Benchley**) and **Lyonel Fenineger**. It’s good it only comes out once a year, since it takes a while to adequately read and absorb all that’s here. Really looking forward to **Tom DeHaven’s** piece on Dick Tracy, which will have to wait until this column’s finished. A faster read is **Ted May’s** *Injury Comics #1*, which features an excellent strip about the philosophy of surviving high school, and a couplea other stories that’re part of larger tableaux. Weird enough to dig, certainly. But the prize of the bunch is *Elvis Road* by **X. Robel** and **H. Reumann**. It’s kind of hard to even describe what this one is. The format is an 8 X 12 hardcover book,



Detail from *Elvis Road*

with nine accordioned black & white pages, which unfold to create a room-sized page depicting a modern hell for pixies at nearly life-size. Insane, detailed drawings of people and animals and machines and buildings and things that’s set in something like a future that is now. No matter how long we look at this, we keep discovering more. Absolute hypnotism in book form.

The **Temperatures** again prove that they are one of London’s most spasmodically captivating outfits with the release of their first LP, *Ymir* (Heat Retention). The previous 7” *aktion* has been good (particularly the debut 7” on 4th Harmonic), but this record drags the whole drum/bass/duo concept

into a new sludgier realm. They don’t so any of the proto-prog caelesthetics of **Lightning Bolt**, but prefer to just roll around in muzz. Which is a fairly admirable alternative, eh? Separated from England by many billions of bees, is Niger. We only mention this because of the latest, greatest LP from Sublime Frequencies, **Group Inerane: Guitars from Agadez**. This combo (two guitars, a drum kits, and a hundred vocalists) plays examples of the Tuareg Guitar Revolution sound that all the kids are talking about. And they play it well. It’s pretty insane, actually. Much weirder than the highlife stuff that is more familiar to our ears. This carries whiffs of mystery and ecstasy from far far afield.

Mondo Macabro has issued a new, much improved version of the 1981 Indonesian classic, *Mystics in Bali*. This is one of the weirdest Z-grade flicks ever, and now you can really see the flying head sucking babies out of pregnant women and all the other crazy shit that happens. Totally whacked nightmare cinema. Their other new one is *The Blood Rose*, which is a ’69 French softcore homage to **Franju’s** *Eyes Without a Face*. It’s not a revelation or anything, but it’s an important film in the history of French envelope pushing and it a pretty entertaining way to spend 90 minutes.

The first few things we heard by **Talibam!** didn’t raise many huge welts, but their debut LP, *The Excusable Earthling* (Pendul Sound) kinda raises the stakes. For whatever reason, it’s now possible to fully appreciate how totally screwball **Matt Mottel’s** synthesizer work is, amidst the improv blather of **Ed Bear** and **Kevin Shea**. Dunno if it’s the recording or what, but *Earthling* jumps out like one of the duppiest key-bloats since those early **Six Finger Satellite** disks. Imagine! *Jazzic* in a different way—and, indeed, a good demonstration of the continuing gulf between west coast and east coast approaches—is **Adrian Orange & Her Band** (K). We count 18 participants, all of whom seem to be playing at certain times, creating a loose, big band version of the mid-period **Kinks** at their most hung-over. There’s a certain **Portsmouth Sinfonia** vibe as well, but that’s probably due to Calvin’s kettle drum playing. Much more identifiably Calvin-esque is *Play Drums and Bass* (K), the third LP by Olympia’s own **C.O.C.O.** These guys are very hip in an ultra-K way. A duo, comprised of Dub Narcotic’s bassist **Chris Surron** (on drums) and **Olivia Ness** on bass, they do a wild, stripped-down soul/dance/dub thing that gets some new punkly highlighting on the new album. But it’s still a hip-shaker, and we suppose that’s what it’s all about.

The show has wrapped up now,

but we just caught the new edition of the *Summer of Love* catalogue (Tate Liverpool) and it’s really a lovely piece of work. Rather than just a lot of standard ‘Frisco ballroom artifacts, this collects nice representations of work from the UK and the US, and even a few items from the usually overlooked European scene. You don’t get much an idea from this about Asian currents, but the show was great and the book is a good one. It attempts to reconcile certain aspects of low art & high art in ways that are cool and unusual. There have also been a coupla of fine catalogues from the NY gallery, **John McWhinnie** at **Glenn Horowitz Bookseller**. The first is called *c/o The Velvet Underground New York, NY* and was put together by **Johan Kugelberg**. It’s a fascinating, if somewhat random, collection of images and artifacts from some of the more obscure corners of the Velvets archives. Some of the pieces are great, some seem extraneous, but if you’re into the group, it’s worth checking out. There will definitely be some stuff you haven’t seen. Even better is *2001* by **Claude Pelieu** and **Mary Beach**. Both these collagists/translators/maniacs are dead now, but when they were alive—wow. They created amazing gushes of transformed images and spewed them out by the bucketload. The two sequences reprinted in this catalogue are from 2001, and just begin to scratch the surface of what these two incredible artists were about. Great great shit. Another superb catalogue that recently landed is called *Vinyl Records and*



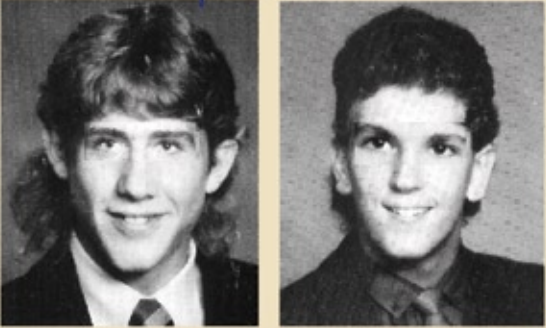
Joseph Cornell’s *Dreams*
Covers by Artists by **Guy Schraenen** (Neue Museum Weserburg Bremen). Like the legendary *Broken Music*, it reproduces tons of weird cover art by known artists for all sorts of music (from **Paul McCartney** to **Henri Chopin**). The organization is a little maddening, but there’s a helpful index and boatloads of eye candy.

Damon Krukowski and **Naomi Yang** have slowly, steadily, stealthily

made themselves into one of the most consistently interesting cultural juggernauts on the contemporary scene. As musicians, their work has been carefully progressing for two decades, and their new album, *Within These Walls* (20/20/20) is thus far, their masterpiece. Recorded with the help of brilliant electric guitarist **Michio Kurihara**, and arrangements by **Bhob Rainey**, *Within These Walls* has the feel of an early ‘70s lost-folk classic, although it is only the mood and elements of the vocals that hearken back to that time. The session has a true lightness of spirit that makes the album a blast of pure joy. It’s a bravura performance, commended to everyone out there with ears. At the same time, **D&N’s** label, 20/20/20 has been involved in issuing some superb stuff—**Kurihara’s** *Sunset Notes* album and the first in a series of compilations, called *International Sad Hits*, which allows Damon to promote the blubbering of underground Sinatras in all known languages. The first volume was massive and we look forward to more. Also, extraordinary is the press the pair run, Exact Change. They have issued some amazing books over the years—check out their backlist for a real kick in the teeth—but none have been thoroughly fascinating as *Joseph Cornell’s Dreams* edited by **Catherine Corman**. The book draws from the journals of the America’s premier surrealist, and they are an exquisite addition to his canon. Naomi’s design work on this book (and the new CD, too) is particularly striking. Beautiful evocations of dream time in all its states. Congratulations all around.

Sorta surprising to think of, but the *Soprano* LP by **Joe McPhee** (Roaratorio) is documentation of the first-ever solo soprano sax recital he’s ever given. His history with the solo form stretches back so far (30+ years) that we somehow thought it was part of his history. Well, blimey! Recorded at St. George’s Church during the 1998 Guelph Jazz Festival, this album is a wonderful souvenir of Joe’s playing at his most mesmeric and spatial. The way he interacts with the natural acoustics of the chapel is spell-binding. Another dreamweaver is **Loren Connors’** *The Hymn of the North Star* (Family Vineyard), his first full solo LP since 1990. **Alan Licht** actually appears on one piece, but the bulk of this is solo electric guitar muse-distention the way that only Loren can do it. Family Vineyard also put out a great **O-Type** box set, called *The New Edge*. This reissues the five disks releases by the latterday version of this **MX-80** offshoot (basically, the band without Rich Stim), and it adds an ambient kinda DVD by **Dale Sophea**, called *Grotesque*. Heard in sequence, we have to say these disks make a much bigger impact than

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NEW MUTATIONS FOR AUTUMN 2007



CD re-issue of the previously out of print 2004 album from Aussie free-rock behemoth GREY DATURAS. Lumbering metallic sludge rock, freely improvised ampilifier freakout, and crushing riff splatter, an utterly massive, sky-streaking blast of psychedelic corrosion. Presented in a 4-panel chipboard gatefold jacket crafted by Stumptown Printers.



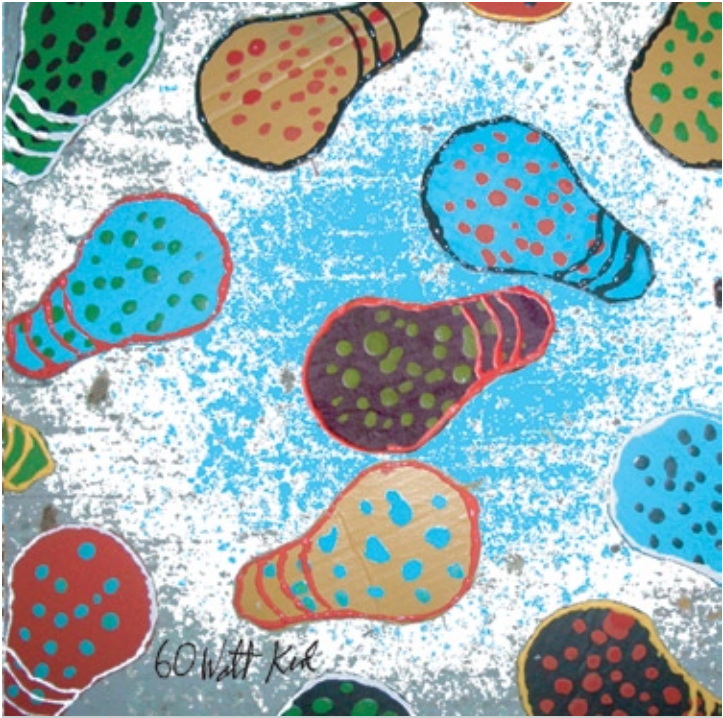
Part gluey pop hallucination, part psychedelic blast furnace, part metalloïd skullcrush. Super melodic and catchy but vaguely menacing and dark at the same time. Their debut full length CD Six follows up a fistful of CD-it and vinyl documents and summons a wicked whirlpool of dense distorto riffage and choral voices, celestial FX freakout and raging metallic percussive pummel, tribal rhythms and crushing effects-soaked guitars, subdued floatational drones and ecstaticallly gorgeous melodies, all forged into a series of psychedelic rhymns and swirling cosmic sludge anthems. Presented in a gorgeous full color gatefold jacket with an 8-page full color booklet.



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12/11/07-San Diego, CA @ House Of Blues-Delta Room

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they did before. There’s a weird linear narrative created by them that only becomes apparent by full submersion. Another exceptional object is Fantoma’s *Films of Kenneth Anger Vol. 2*. The film volume was really incredible—great transfers, nice package, some weird soundtrack updates, but what the hey. And this new one is more of the same. The films on this one are some of Anger’s best loved work—*Scorpio Rising*, *Kustom Kar Kommandos*, *Invocation of my Demon Brother*, *Rabbit’s Moon* (1979 cut), *Lucifer Rising* and *The Man We Want to Hang*. The last one, which we’d never seen before, is a documentary of



The Films of Kenneth Anger Vol. 2
a show of art either created by Aleister Crowley or with him as the subject. It’s fairly straightforward, which is about the last phrase you’d ever apply to the rest of this collection. Crazy homo-eroticism, garbled surrealist dream imagery, and ritualism of all kinds are the basis of most of Anger’s films. They’ve always been amazing visual creations, graspable on whatever level you choose, and this DVD presents them at their stunning best. We’d forgotten how insane Mick Jagger’s soundtrack work was for *Demon Brother*. Damn. Who’d’ve thunk it possible?

The tradition of how-to books about bands and touring and whatnot is not impressive. Most of the volumes we’ve

thumbed have one or two useful bits, but mostly blow chunks. The same cannot be said for **Martin Atkins’** *Tour Smart* (Smart Books). Can’t say we’ve ever been too interested in any of Atkins’ musical projects, but this book is filled with extremely useful information, both general and specific. There’s not as much info as we’d like about touring at the lowest rungs of the econo ladder, but what’s here is solid, practical and backed up with anecdotal hoo-haw about the random factors that predominate when a band gets far from home. Best thing like this we’ve seen.

If you are seeking a perfect present for a surly youth this Xmas, allow us to suggest the new *Jimbo* action figure, produced by Dark Horse Comics. Haven’t seen the actual toy yet, but we got a book about the making of Jimbo (the figure) and it’s fucking hilarious. Lots of good detailed instructions about how the pud should hang and all that stuff. Anyway, the pics of the finished product look fantastic and the box it comes in will be as stunning as any **Gary Panter** thing yr ever gonna own. And you should own plenty of Panter. Doc’s orders!

Please, if you want to be covered in this here column, send two (TWO) (2) copies of your love object to us, We are particularly fond of archaic formats—books, LPs, cassettes, magazines, whatnots, although DVDs end up being more useful than VHS tapes these days. Go figure. PO Box 627, Northampton MA 01061

CONTACTS	
Anakrid: www.myspace.com/anakrid	Neue Museum Weserburg Bremen: www.nmwb.de
Bathyscape: Big Baby Books: bigbabybooks.blogspot.com	Pathwise Press: www.pathwisepress.com
Buenaventura Press: www.buenaventurapress.com	Pendu Sound: www.psr.pendugallery.com
Dagger: www.daggerzine.com	Redoubt Press: www.redoubtpress.com
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K: www.kreecs.com	20/20/20: www.20-20-20.com
John McWhinnie: www.johamcwhinnie.com	Wholly Other: www.wholly-other.com
Mondo Macabro: www.mondomacabrocdvd.com	Z-Gun: z-gun.org



Jimbo Action Figure

C & D

Two guys who will remain pseudonymous reason together about some new records.
Note: C & D is a dialogue presented as a series of record reviews, and intended to be read straight through.

Illustrations by Beth Höeckel

DAN DEACON & JIMMY JOE ROCHE

Ultimate Reality dvd
(Carpark)
C: State-of-the-art psychedelic film with music composed by electro-dance party joker Dan Deacon and visuals by Jimmy Joe Roche, two guys from Baltimore’s Wham City operation. It’s constructed from clips from Arnold Schwarzenegger’s career—Conan the Barbarian, Terminator, Total Recall, Kindergarten Cop, Predator, Junior—collaged and layered and doubled together into something altogether overwhelming at 35 minutes in length.

D: This is Arnold’s mind on drugs. Arnoldelic, baby!
C: Absolutely gorgeous, seriously funny, weirdly poignant and possibly seizure-inducing. This is a landmark work. It’s the first time someone has taken the stuff those Fort Thunder and PaperRad dudes were (or are) doing—bright color-saturated, warped psychedelia incorporating pop iconography—and thrust it forward into a new realm of...of...beauty, really. Watching this right now is for me like seeing Wonder Showzen for the first time, or Chris Morris’s Blue Jam: a breakthrough on many levels, by somebody pretty much out of nowhere.
D: [reading from Arthur Magazine office rolodex] Or Baltimore...
C: [mischievously] Hand me that. Let’s make a phone call. [Dials on red phone...] Hello? [In Howard Cosell voice] Yes, this is Arthur magazine. We are seated here drinking kratom-powered smoothies having just watched Ultimate Reality, and we had a few questions for the filmmakers. [turns speaker phone on] So, Jimmy, what exactly is Wham City and you guys must know the Fort Thunder guys, right?
JIMMY JOE ROCHE: Wham City—the space—was a dingy, insane warehouse, then another one. Me and Dan and Dina and Adam and some other kids lived together at SUNY Purchase, all graduated in 2004, and we had this sort of unfigured-out energy. We knew we wanted



Dan Deacon and Jimmy Joe Roche



Angus Young

something, we had a vision undulating out of control, and those guys wanted to move to Baltimore, because it’s cheap as hell. It seemed like it was a potential void where someone could come in and do art, totally fresh. Fort Thunder was totally an inspiration. We wanted to take what they’d done in Providence and see if we could apply it here. We’d all seen Lightning Bolt back in the day, six years ago, we were all geeking out on them, and my friend DJ Dogdick, who books shows on Baltimore’s westside used to live with Brian Chippendale. We’re all fleas on different dogs. So yeah, we knew we wanted to do it DIY and we knew we wanted to create an environment for our own art to thrive in rather than look for someone to put it on where art was already happening. Wham City is just us trying to navigate this whole thing and be able to do what we want. You know, \$5 shows and fine art galleries and so on...
D: So, for Ultimate Reality, why Arnold Schwarzenegger? Who, by the way is our governor here in California.
JIMMY JOE ROCHE: I grew up on Schwarzenegger, he was always there every year with a new blockbuster. He’s sort of this figure of our time, presiding over this phantasmagoric interweaving of narratives that all bleed together for me. I’ve always thought that the day he becomes president, aliens will invade and reality will fold in on itself. But yeah, when I was a kid I would have dreams sometimes where I would dream new spaces for the films that had drilled themselves into my mind, like Total Recall or Terminator 2. So Ultimate Reality is kind of that—these huge narratives becoming fan fiction in my mind. When you look at them all together, it just seems so bizarre. And I thought we could use this shared iconography that’s everywhere, to make new mandalas. But you know Dan Deacon is definitely a whole part of this, it has part of its lineage in working with him...
D: How did you guys get permission to use all the clips?
C: I don’t think they need permission, it falls under fair use.
JIMMY JOE ROCHE: We also believe that it falls under fair use. Suing young broke artists would be a low pointless thing to do. Also we’re hoping because of the level that

we’ve reinvented the material, all parties will see it for what it is: a new piece of art. We’re not rehashing plots, everything’s been manipulated to a large degree. It’s been a real labor of love. We’ve been cutting this thing for over a year and a half. And I think that if anything we’re turning new people on to some of these films, we’re certainly not taking money out of any pockets, in fact I believe the opposite is true.
D: I for one feel a need to put Junior after seeing a pregnant Arnold in Ultimate Reality. Not sure how I missed that one...
C: So this is all done digitally, right? But it has the feel of some of the classic American art filmmakers—Harry Smith, Jordan Belson, James Whitney, Kenneth Anger, Stan Brakhage. How did you do it?
JIMMY JOE ROCHE: Well, that’s my secret, that’s my mojo. It’s not rocket science, I’m sure anybody who knows about this stuff could figure it out. I’m definitely interested in Bruce Connor, Bruce Bailey and of course Brakhage—his layering technique, the lushness of his colors. And Kenneth Anger and Alejandro Jodorowsky, the color palette of those films, and that film Daisies. People who were doing making something psychedelic, in a social context: using found footage, or collage, and using narrative to their own advantage.
D: There’s a lot of symmetry.
JIMMY JOE ROCHE: Yeah, mirrored footage. There’s an aspect to that symmetry and layering that gives an inward dimension to the narrative—a vortex, or road or platform where you can begin to see inside it. That’s what the best psychedelic art does. It’s what mandalas are. On a conceptual level, I feel like there is a cultural need or desire on the underground art scene warehouse/ DIY/travelin’ band scene... It’s everywhere. You’re seeing a lot of symmetry in art, and I think the reason is that we’re all over the place right now, and the symmetry harkens back to a totem-like urban tribe relationship. Trying to center or have more of a mantric, mirroring effect that Tibetan and Himalayan art have. And there was a lot of that idea in the psychedelic art of the 60s and 70s, that new mandalas were being built. I mean, a piece that Dan and I both love, conceptually and aesthetically, is Terry Riley’s A Rainbow in Curved Air. [muffled] What? Hey I gotta go. You should talk to Dan too. [Gives C and D the phone number for Dan Deacon, hangs up.]
A few minutes later...
C: So how did Ultimate Reality come about? I assume the music was made first...
DAN DEACON [on speaker phone]: Well, we were doing crazy dance shows at Wham City but there was also this very long drawn-out song that we were doing that was just focusing on repetition. We were rehearsing it one day and Jimmy was into it, said do you mind if I make a video for it. This was before [Deacon’s 2007 album] Spiderman of the Rings. Seemed cool. He showed it to me in progress. I wanted to do something that was getting more psychedelic like Terry Riley instead of just party music or whatever.
C: And you guys have done it live.
DAN DEACON: Yeah at galleries and museums to far. We project it and there’s live drumming by Kevin O’Meara and Jeremy Hyman and I do some stuff. A lot of it is sequenced, but we’re figuring out ways to make it more live, like having someone on glockenspiel. We’re gonna tour it in January.
D: Sincere full gratitude from the Westsiiiiide, for making possibly the greatest thing ever!
C [hangs up, inserts fresh DVD]: Not so fast. This may be the greatest thing ever...

continued on pg. 52



AC/DC

Plug Me In triple-DVD

(Columbia)

C: I present to you seven hours of AC/DC live footage from the very beginning to the very end, or at least 2003.

D[ecstatic]: AC/DC! The midget barbarians—the hobbits of rock—who tower over us all.

C: It's true, those guys are about four and a half feet tall.

D: But not an inch was wasted! Just like their music. Only enough, never too much. They are the perfect mechanics of rock. And this DVD has Bon Scott-era AC/DC! Listen to that super-tribal rock thump, from back when true showmen still roamed the planet. [pauses] I am approaching ecstasy.

C: Television lip-synchs on Australian and British television, professional European concert footage, open-reel black-and-white performance footage from high school auditoriums. [pauses, looks at screen] Wow, Bon Scott is duckwalking with a bagpipe, on live television.

D: Surrounded by adoring females of varying pubescence! They are the Ur-rockers of them all. Bon Scott was a goofball cock of the walk, with sailor tattoos. A shirtless lewd winker in sneakers and tight pants. You can see why he had to die. He was just too much.

C: Where is Angus at, really, when he's playing—it is like he has no brain—his whole being is a representation of pure sound. Is he the most visually expressive

guitarist ever? He's certainly the most relentlessly acrobatic with all those kneewalks on pinewood. This is the closest you'll ever see to a white fella being possessed.

D: White man being rode by the rock gods!

C: This DVD has you doing some of your best air guitaring in years.

D: Angus should make a rock 'n' roll fitness video.

C: I heard he sucks on the oxygen machine between songs now.

D: Waiter, I'll breathe some of what he's having.

C: [pauses] Okay. Now for something that should put things in perspective...

MANUFACTURED LANDSCAPES

Directed by Jennifer Baichwal

(Zeitgeist)

D: [Viewing silent 10-minute pan across silent, neverending factory, full of silent workers] What is this? It's not going well with my beer.

C: It's a full-length documentary film about how photographer Edward Burtynsky works. He makes really beautiful photographs of some of the most depressing stuff ever: mile-deep mine holes near Salt Lake City, giant quarries in Vermont and Italy, rivers of iridescent rust leading to tailing ponds of iron oxide in Canada, a pile of 40 million tires outside Modesto that eventually was struck by lightning and burned for an entire year. Horror shots of a wounded planet. This film emphasizes his recent

work shooting all of these nightmare scenes inside China.

D: Well one thing's for sure: China is really doing its part to end the world.

C: These factory scenes are totally horrific. Humans made into uniformed silent robots who work in lifeless factories, then go back to their gender-segregated dorms.

D: I guess it is possible after all to have a society no rebels or class clowns.

C: Slacking is punishable by death in China. Or worse: being sentenced to live in an "e-waste town," where everybody hand-scavenges recyclable material from dead computers shipped from all over the world.

D: Amidst the fumes of a thousand burning circuit boards.

C: Beneath skies that are never, ever blue anymore because of all the coal mining and burning going on, all those smokestacks without scrubbers. China will bury us all—not through bombs but through reckless industrialization. They took our example, but the scale they're working on...

D: Horror film of the year. Excuse me while I kratom myself into oblivion. Please stop this film, I want to go back to the way I was!

C: We gotta keep this DVD handy to remind ourselves that we're living on the slave labor of others, all the time.

D: [sputters] Slaves?!?

C: What's the difference, really? I know it's not USA-style slavery, cuz there's no racism, or at least none that I can see, but it sure looks like forced labor to me. The smart urban bureaucrat party wizards of China's government are using force, economics and superior technology to make the poor rural folks move en masse to nightmare factory towns as part of this new capitalist-communist industrial hybrid model they're using to grow the economy. Humans are becoming standardized.

D: This is like an infomercial for Hell. I'm glad I'm not in their shoes. I mean...

C: Actually, shoes are key. Burtynsky claims that it was Nike's move of manufacturing to China that really started the whole cascading trend of moving American manufacturing and assembly offshore. This one are they show here makes a billion shoes in a year.

D: This is not a vision of the future that I can embrace.

C: It's worse than the future. It's the present.

D: I think I need another beer. Or six.

C: On the extra features, Burtynsky talks about how China has 40 percent of the world's coal, but it's coal with higher sulfur content than US coal, so it has nastier acid rain. And China can burn the known coal at its current rate can for 250 years! And they will, because it's the best source of energy they have. The air itself in China stings the eyes.

D: It's like those old Sepultura albums. [in metal voice] BIOCIDE!

C: This is what Punk House and the Tim Dundon and Fort Thunder and Wham City are diametrically opposed to. It's a planet of slums and slave labor dorms and coalfields versus punk houses and endless rainforests. Which future do we want? D: [eyes twinkling] Green magic action hippies come forth!

WITCHCRAFT

The Alchemist

(Candlelight)

C: Speak of the devils...

D: [recognizing singer's voice] The mighty Witchcraft! Although to be honest he still reminds me of Mr. Bobby Liebling from Pentagram. It's Swedish mimicry at its finest.

C: They are apparently proud enough of being Phil Anselmo's favorite new band to put it in their press release announcing this album's release. You know you can hang up your sneakers when the confirmed asshole from Pantera is into you.

D: Witchcraft will always have my undying loyalty by virtue of the greatness of the singer's name alone: MAGNUS PELANDER.

C: Straight out of Jerry Cornelius.

D: [listening to "Samaritan Burden"] Whoa!

C: Now it goes all pretty as the narrator thru the woods with his damsel. This album just became worthwhile.

D: You don't see too many damsels these days!

C: It's hard rock with a catch in the voice, very naked. Emotional, even.

D: And now a guitar solo by Mr. Randy Trower. [laughter]

C: Let the record show that we just beheld a 90-second horn solo closing out "Remembered."

D: Hard rock guys' idea of what is good horn playing is always a little weird. Deep Purple, Wizzard. But then there's Van der graaf Generator...

C: [listening to "The Alchemist Pt. 1/2/3"] Unrepentant medieval metal at a gallop. Horses, magicians, newborn babies—

D: The difficulty in surviving as an outsider—

C: The spurned individual, gathering strength and courage and then—

D: Fighting back, baby!

C: [taken aback] Did he just sing, "I can blo-oh-oh your minddddddd"?

D: I give this an armor-plated thumb's up.

C: [brightly] Maybe it's the kratom speaking—but to me this seems like a political album, given the present times, as the lights dim and we slip into a new Dark Age. Somebody needs to get this to the doomed, uniformed souls suffering inside China, under the white skies and fluorescent factory lights. And to the American suburban schoolkids



Michael Hurley

getting dumbed down and standardized for their peonized future . [weirdly enthusiastic] Be strong! Return to the countryside! Embrace the analog! Eat real food! Wood not plastic! Handmade not manufactured! Plants not drugs! Community not corporation! Reforest the planet! [embarrassed] Okay, end of sermon. A good hit of kratom always makes me emotional, my heart lifts, I overflow with good feeling and goodwill towards everyone.

D: Eh, don't apologize. [muses] The old ways are the wise ways...

MICHAEL HURLEY

The Ancestral Swamp

(Gnomonsong/Revolver)

C: Snock! Talk about returning to the country, doing your own thing.

D: You know, I don't know him. [listening] Leon Redbone comes to mind. But I'm not really an expert on singer-songwriters.

C: Hurley's an original, born the same year as Dylan, been doing music for 40 years. Semi-nomad. Draws his own comics too. He was in Holy Modal Rounders when it was a Western coast affair. One of the most requested interview subjects for this magazine, but so far he has eluded their grasp. Splits the difference between whimsical, wizened and wisdom. D: ???

C: I guess you need the celebrity testimonials. Okay. How 'bout Brightblack Morning Light, Joanna Newsom, Josephine Foster, Joe Carducci. Listen to the words of Byron Coley recently on NPR: "To go to a Michael Hurley concert or listen to one of his records really is to enter another kind of universe where time moves a little more slowly, and narratives develop at their own pace. But they develop very fully. His songs are an unusual combination. The lyrics can be very funny. But few of them tell stories

of triumph."

D: These are after-dinner songs. I am just not sure what kind of dinner. [muses] Maybe barbecued catfish. Or four-bean chili. And pear juice.

C: [ignoring] Devendra Banhart and Andy Cabic from Vetiver have a little record label and they're putting our records—Jana Hunter was the first outta the gate, and Hurley is the next one, been in the works for a while.

D: Songs to sneak out of a poker match to.

C: Hurley is awesome, like a real-life Thomas Pynchon character. Long may he strum and pick, and may the graveyard be ever vacant.

KAREN DALTON

Cotton Eyed Joe

(Delmore)

C: The late, lost, recovered and now-ascendant blues/folksinger Karen Dalton. From 1962 in a tiny Colorado coffeeshouse called The Attic, live, on two disks. Amazing find! Happier times, before she'd been to New York...

D: And become an actual damsel in distress. Of the inner variety.

C: It seems like she was just too smart, and couldn't do the pandering and self-promotion that's usually necessary to make a living from your talent. Add in apparent stage and studio fright, and being a young mother, and living in New York City when you should be in a mountain shack, and you get despair and then, hard drugs. And we know where that goes.

D: [muses] Even intelligence can be a curse.

PHOSPHENE RIVER

Phosphene River

(facemop.com)

C: Music here is by respective bands and

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civilians

Joe Henry



"...the masterpiece of his career ...It's impossible to rank the 12 cuts on "Civilians" because each is uniquely compelling...one of the best CDs of this or any year."

San Francisco Chronicle

"It's the very best of what American songcraft can give us."

PopMatters

"In the past 15 years, Joe Henry has quietly fashioned some of the most eclectic albums in contemporary music. Civilians ranks among his best."

Performing
Songwriter

"A softly gorgeous disc that makes the name Joe Henry one to remember."

The Dallas Morning News

"...an exquisite collection of songs that is Henry's career achievement to date."

Detroit Free Press



Dragons of Zynth

spoken words are by the respected Dan McGuire. It's the guy who did two disks of Unknown Instructors with watt and all them. This is a bit wilder.

D: He is one of the only guys who speaks words with rhythm that I can bear to hear. I recognize this guy on the cover.

C: Nice stache on Mr. Crimewave, whose band Plastic Crimewave Sound does the music here for "Are You a Dragon?"

D: [considering] No, I am not.

C: [listening to "Red Hills," with music by Residual Echoes] Such great lyrics! "One nice debauchery and back tomorrow with different I.D.s"

D: [Seven minutes into "Potter's Field," with music by White Hills] You can't have enough fuzz. I think there should always be an unadulterated sonic breakout like this around this time, 6:30 in the evening. Reminds me of Burroughs reporting from a street corner back to headquarters. [considers] Or, Clock DV8 from England, 1981.

C: How on earth can you deduce that?

D: I am the detective of rock. The private investigator of rock.

C: "Private Investigator" is what my next t-shirt is gonna say.

BABYSHAMBLES

Shotter's Nation

(astralwerks)

C: Speaking of one nice debauchery.

D: Is this Frank Sinatra?

C: Well you're in the right pork pie hat haberdashery, but incredibly this is none other than Pete Doherty and his band Babyshambles.

D: Love this fingersnappin' swing! Not as much of a shambles as the tabloids would have one believe.

C: Of course there's some dirty rockers on here too.

D: Holy riff-stuffed Rimbaud! You know C, sometimes the unrepentant Anglophile in you takes things a bit far, but this is really putting some pep in my step.

C: Unrepentant is the only way to be.

D: Unless you should apologize.

C: And Doherty and company have nothing to be sorry for here.

SOULSAVERS

It's Not How Far You Fall, It's the Way You Land (Columbia)

D: [listening to gospel opener "Revival"] It starts already very anthemic.

C: Another collaboration, this time a British band, or deejay?, with an American singer of some renown.

D: [recognizing] Ah well that's Mark Lanegan, the man too dark to listen to.

C: But this is gospel! If church were like this, I'd be there every Sunday.

D: [Listening to "Ghosts of You and Me"] I think this time he's channeling Leonard Cohen than anybody. As Freddie Blassey would say, here he comes again. Top-rank. Hmm. What is gospel, really?

C: It's the biggest thank you possible. It's

an expression of joy and devotion. which we could use some of.

D: There's some Jason Pierce here, but not as good.

C: Yeah it's all a bit too digital downtempo deathtrap disco for me—

D: Sopranos theme.

C: Alabama 3. But it's Lanegan singing. What did Josh Homme say about Lanegan? "If he sings about toothpaste, I'll brush."

D: He doesn't have to try to sound like this, he sounds like this every morning when he goes to shave.

EXTRA GOLDEN

Hera Ma No

(Thrill Jockey)

C: Another collaboration—

D: You think you're so clever—

C: Kenyans and Americans, this time.

D: [listening] You listen to all this indie rock and bickering and wondering but listen to the Africans and everything brightens. They don't make oppressive music. At least not these guys. It's immediately optimistic.

C: The strange thing is it's made with indie music guys from America.

D: [pleasantly surprised] Ha! It's like King Sunny Ade high-life juju meets...Durutti Column?

C: Close enough. I can't tell who plays what on most of these songs, which is amazing, really, and a testament to the collaboration's strength. There's a song called "Obama" because Obama's office helped them with their visa problems. It's not easy for folks from poor countries to come to America anymore, they're all suspected terrorists.

D: [muses] It's so strange that America, which was built on immigration, is now afraid of strangers.

DRAGONS OF ZYNTH

Coronation Thieves

(Gigantic)

D: [In Star Wars stormtrooper voice] "Are these the dragons we're looking for?"

C: [laughs] Let Dan McGuire know!

D: Here there be Dragons...

C: Or at least in Cleveland, apparently. So TV on the Radio is the obvious reference point given the low/false alto harmonizing and Dave Sitek's production, but these guys definitely have their own route to the promised land.

D: [listening to "Who Rize Above"] The D.O.Z., bringing the headphones metal in a VERY heavy way, ifyoucatchmydrift.

C: Pretty weird, beautiful stuff from some sensitive males: vulnerable as well as strong. No whining, though. [listening to "Anna Mae"] Reminds me of what I thought A.R. Kane would sound like way back when.

D: [agreeing] Simon Reynolds has a lot to answer for. But what about Tricky, '80s George Clinton, Prince, Massive Attack, Basehead...

CARIBOUandorra



Tender Forever

C: "Basehead not Radiohead" is my new t-shirt slogan.

WOODEN SHIIPS

Wooden Shiips

(Holy Mountain)

D: Wooden... Wooden...I'm trying to pronounce the second word here.

C: The "J" is silent. It is an homage to a typo.

D: It all boils down to Ron Asheton. VERY highly refined psychedelia.

C: [blissfully] At last, the Les Rallizes Denudes/Spacemen 3 honorable tribute band of our dreams.

D: Just in time!

BRAD LANER

Neighbor Singing

(Hometapes)

C: An appropriate label name for this record—homebrewed, self-constructed bedhair daydreampop by a neighbor, who—

D: [listening to "Find Out] Is eight miles high from the sound of it. Excellent!

TENDER FOREVER

Wider

(K Records)

D: The Beach...Girls?

C: It's one woman, Melanie Valera. From France.

D: She's got a lot of those melodic singalong hooks certain people appreciate.

C: And her lyrics are very charming. She could write for Broadway.

D: She lives in a forest of all ideas. She's like a one-woman Bjork.

C: [thoughtful] She's someone you have the best Saturday ever with.

D: Some people just have lighter, brighter lives.

EXPO '70

Animism

(killshaman)

D: Full-on Bobby Beausoleil Orkustra stuff here! Lucifer is rising right now.

C: Another one-man operation. It's one bearded guy from Portland on vintage guitars, tape machines and amplifiers, which he shows to us on the album sleeve.

D: Serious non-ironic mood music. [bravely] The new doom!

C: I see this as the soundtrack for waiting for the sky to turn blue and then realizing IT'S NEVER GOING TO HAPPEN.

D: And indeed there is a song here entitled "Missing Sun"...

C: [bitterly] Hidden by clouds of putrid coal smoke and burning circuit boards, no doubt.

D: What is 'animism' anyway?

C: Um. It's... Uh... Well. [fetches a Webster's, pages through, reads aloud] "1. the doctrine that all life is produced by a spiritual force separate from matter 2. the belief that all natural phenomena have souls independent of their physical being 3. a belief in the existence of spirits, demons, etc."

D: [muses] I believe I am an animist.

YELLOW SWANS

At All Ends

(Load)

D: [looking at sleeve] The YELLOW Swans.

C: Well the ominous dronescape is a happening sound in 2007.

D: It conjures up excursions into darker bunkers, places with not too much light. But it is also music for inner journeys, definitely.

C: I don't think this is driving music.

D: It's music for when your car breaks down in the middle of nowhere and then there's a stranger on the horizon who steps from the dark into the light and you ask him, Can you help me? And he says, I can't even help myself. And it's the beginning of a strange night.

C: ...

D: Or he says, That's what I wanted to ask you. And then there's other people coming out of the wood.

C: The animists, no doubt.

D: [40 seconds into "Our Oases"] Did you just turn up the music?

C: No it did that itself. Nice. [reading sleeve] Mastered by "Drucifer."

D: Drucifer's rising!

HEADADDRESS

Turquoise

(totemsongs.org)

C: ...

D: ...

C: Endtimes rural blues by two fellas. Gorgeous. And haunted.

D: By the ghost of Karen Dalton, no doubt.

C: [listening to "Moon of Shedding Ponies] Is that a coyote howling?

D: Coyotes are the wolves of 2008. 🐺

guns don't kill people, songs do FORCED EXPOSURE



MARK WILKINSON *Blood On Satan's Claw* OST CD/LP



First-time release of the original soundtrack from this 1971 cult classic from the golden age of British horror. With its exotic musical ingredients like the *ondes Martenot* (the earliest electronic instrument) and the *cimbalom*, this score has amazing depth and addictive, evil hooks.

FLOWER TRAVELLIN' BAND
Satori CD

PREMIERE RELEASE

Timely reissue of Flower Travellin' Band's second album, *Satori*, as it was recently tipped in Julian Cope's *Japrock sampler* book as the greatest Japanese rock record of all time. A muscle-bound heavy rock masterpiece and a huge record in every way imaginable. A must-have.



S.T. MIKAEL
Mind of Fire CD



After 11 years of silence, the mysterious Swedish psychedelic one-man band S.T. Mikael, who spearheaded the DIY psych-rock/folk scene of the '80s and '90s, returns with *Mind of Fire*, another pebble tossed into the cosmic mind-pond. Five new LSD-inspired nuggets (feat. members of Dungen), appended with 9 unreleased archival bonus tracks.

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Blow Your Cool: 20 Prog/Psych Assaults from the UK & Europe* CD

PREMIERE RELEASE

Nick Saloman's (Bevis Frond) Psychic Circle returns with 20 brawny excursions into that amorphous hybrid of prog and psych adored by the cognoscenti, hitherto 7"—only wonders by Zior, Rattles, Egg, Paradise Hammer, and many more delights for the intrepid voyager.



TERJE, JESPER, & JOACHIM
Terje, Jesper & Joachim CD/LP

SHADOKS MUSIC

Recorded in 1970 for Denmark's legendary Spectator label (Moses, Blues Addicts, Days) and reissued with a booklet full of photos and band history, this heavy psych rarity combines massive spazz guitar action, beefy vocals and muscular rhythms for a brainbusting hard rock load.

THE STORY
Arcane Rising CD

SUNBEAM RECORDS

Glorious second album by the duo of Martin Welham (leader of acid-folk legends Forest) and his son Tom. Like its predecessor *Tale Spin*, this is a partly improvised melodic song cycle that's sure to appeal to fans of Devendra Banhart & Joanna Newsom as well as originators like Donovan and C.O.B.



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Retailers: request wholesale information from fe@forcedexposure.com

While magical thinkers experience a range of failed and successful actions, wishful thinkers fail to act at all. In the absence of clear information, magical thinking allows us to creatively apply our understanding in action. It enables us to assess reality both as we are told it is and as we experience it ourselves. Greater still, it empowers us to shape the materials and forces in the world around us in order to truly unleash the creative and magical power of the multitudes.

Exercises:

It's time to start making your wishes come true. So drop your cloak of transcendental escapism and grab your wand! Here are a few hot tips to help you reunite volition with causality. As always, good luck, and please let us know how it works for you by emailing us at: goodluck@tacticalmagic.org

1 How can you spot the difference between a wishful thinker and your garden-variety magical thinker? Wishful thinkers hope that the fruit they buy next time from MegaFood won't still smell like plastic and taste even worse. Magical thinkers start a community garden in that abandoned lot and then watch it grow into an orchard and a park and a playground and a...

2 Why wait for elections when you can begin building a better rat trap today?!? Although superstitions, curses, and prophecies may be scientifically unfounded, they can still be powerful motivators. So if you're short on lobbyists and campaign contributions consider introducing your elected officials to some angels or demons. Even if your politicians only revere the power of the dollar, their voting constituency might feel otherwise.

3 Regardless of Science's opinion of will power, it's a common fallacy to view Science and Magick as oppositional. In the words of ol' man Crowley, "Please remember that Magick is Science, that the Laws of Nature remain the same, however subtle may be the material with which one is working. It is, to put it brutally, a bigger miracle to destroy a fortress than an easy chair. You know this well enough; but the corollary is that it is nearly always a mistake to try to do things entirely off one's own bat. It is much simpler to look for an existing force, in good working order, that is doing the sort of stuff that you need, and take from it, or control in it, just that bit of it that you happen to require."

4 Like props in a magic show, protest tactics do little on their own. But when used correctly in a complete routine, their potency can be truly marvelous. Plan your next protest like a good magician, and start by focusing on the effect you want to conjure. Then, work backwards to derive the most appropriate methods. For example, a march through a downtown financial district on a weekend does little to transform the status quo. But a march may serve as good misdirection while a more cunning stratagem unfolds behind the curtain... 🍷

been evaluated for its impact on cognitive development.

Even the stuff that was once bad for our kids is now good for them - as long as the seller can find a Ph.D to vouch for it. Viacom's Noggin cable channel—baby sister of Nickelodeon, the baby sister of MTV—now precedes each of its shows for preschoolers with a list of educational attributes: Did you know Blues Clues “promotes meta-cognition?” Videos by a company called Baby Einstein—a sick oxymoron—are supposed to help develop an infant’s appreciation of color and harmony, while those from the speech pathologists at Bumble Bee draw words from the delayed toddler.

But the sheer volume of books, videos, websites, albums, devices and services supposedly required to keep a baby delivering on his or her full potential is alarming enough to provoke anxiety in even the most self-assured parents. Indeed that’s what they are really for. It’s no wonder that so many educated parents feel alone and ill-equipped despite access to all this professional help.

Of course, one can forgo all this media, technology and scientifically-justified professional help, but that means consciously ignoring the parenting industry’s mandates—which now seem to trail us wherever we go online: “Sleeping through the night by 9 months!” “Walking by 15 months!” “Twenty words by 18 months!” All these metrics are, in turn, just precursors to a child’s first real encounter with the market: the ever-tightening supply of places at exclusive pre-pre-nursery schools, through which tots can ensure their acceptance at the regular nursery schools and kindergartens into which they feed, and so on, until they reach the Ivy League, land power jobs, and obsess on their careers long and hard enough to put them in the same, hapless consumer segment as their parents.

Indeed parenting is just one of many life stages withering under the weight of the market. Consumer anthropologists analyze the moments in our lives when we are most susceptible to their clients’ advances: that first day of college, the wedding day, the day you find out grandma has Alzheimer’s. Market anthropologists call them “life cycle events.” These are the moments when we most likely to question our instincts, shun our family, and accept the guidance of a paid professional. Once we start down that path, we are evermore alienated from the people and processes that should have supported us in the first place.

And the Internet - birthplace of today’s hyper-individuated consumer analysis, tracking, and messaging - insures marketers that they’ll have our eyeballs at precisely the right moment. Want to find an anxiety producing banner ad about any aspect of parenting? Find an article about that same subject, and then look to the right.

Living in 21st-century, interactive-media-empowered America, we should be used to the notion that every interaction is really a transaction, and that every transaction can also be intermediated by a professional. But it is disheartening and confusing that this phenomenon seems to have taken hold most intensely within the most intimate sphere of human existence, the bond between a parent and a child.

Perhaps this is because parenthood—particularly modern urban parenthood—has been systematically robbed of its natural-occurring support mechanisms. The social fabric of our cities has declined over the past few decades, as parks and civic groups have given way to superstores and networking events. Cities used to have blocks in neighborhoods with old ladies and large families and neighbors who could watch the baby for an hour while you went out and got some groceries.



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Now, instead of repairing the neighborhood sidewalks, we purchase Bugaboos—the \$800 stroller equivalent of an SUV, complete with shock absorbers to traverse the potholes.

For every thread of the social fabric worn bare by the friction of modern urban alienation, the market has risen with a synthetic strand of its own. And nowhere has this become more conspicuous than for the new parent, who – faced with a host of trials for which none of his or her existing skills provide appropriate models – needs help from real people. And so off to the paid professional goes today’s parent, baby in one hand and check-book in the other.

Well, the buck stops here. I deconstruct brands like “Baby Einstein” for the sick oxymorons they really are, and refuse to cave to the rationale that spending more means I love my baby more.

I choose to rebel—not just against the marketplace, but against the intrinsically alienating effects of web parenthood. It’s not enough to get our answers from a screen, our affirmation from anonymous chat room participants, or our sense of community from a Wiki to which we contributed a paragraph about the best jagged organic baby food. Such forums may give us a quick fix, but they also make us slaves to mass consensus and ready targets for the wisdom of the market. The medium is biased not towards good parenting, but good retail.

Indeed, parenting may be the best argument yet for suspending one’s relationship to the “global village” in favor of the plain old village. That’s why I’ve signed off the websites. Instead of socializing with other upper-middle-class parents online, I socialize with their nannies at the park. In the process, I learn about child development from those with more real experience than most corporate-sponsored, lab-coated professionals.

Yes, there is a whole world of real parents and nannies willing to teach you if you talk to them, human being to human being. If enough of us do it, if enough of us get behind our kids for real, and start offering each other the help and guidance that the market wants to sell to us, we may end up with something entirely more valuable than a gold pass to an elite school: we’ll have one another, again. 🍷



I was feeling jealous
I went shopping
I bought this poster
I still feel jealous.



WWW.HUMANS.JP
Graphics by Mike Mills
Posters / Fabrics / Scarves / Ribbons
Available online. Posters \$30

WWW.THEDIRECTORSBUREAU.COM

stylist **jaclyn hodes**
photography **annabel mehrain**
models **sam brumbaugh** as john reed & **galaxy craze** as louise bryant



opposite page:
Galaxy wears white blouse by **Erin Fetherson**, vintage wool felt dress, and white thigh highs by **Sock Man**. Sam wears sweater by **Patrick Ervell**, pants by **Harmon**, and shirt by **Obedient Sons**.

this page:
Galaxy wears white blouse and blue vest by **Rugby**, vintage **Lowe** red velvet skirt, vintage white slip, and orange suede shoes by **Marc Jacobs**. Sam wears white shirt by **Buckler**, dress jacket by **Obedient Sons**, black velvet ribbon worn as tie, and his own pants.



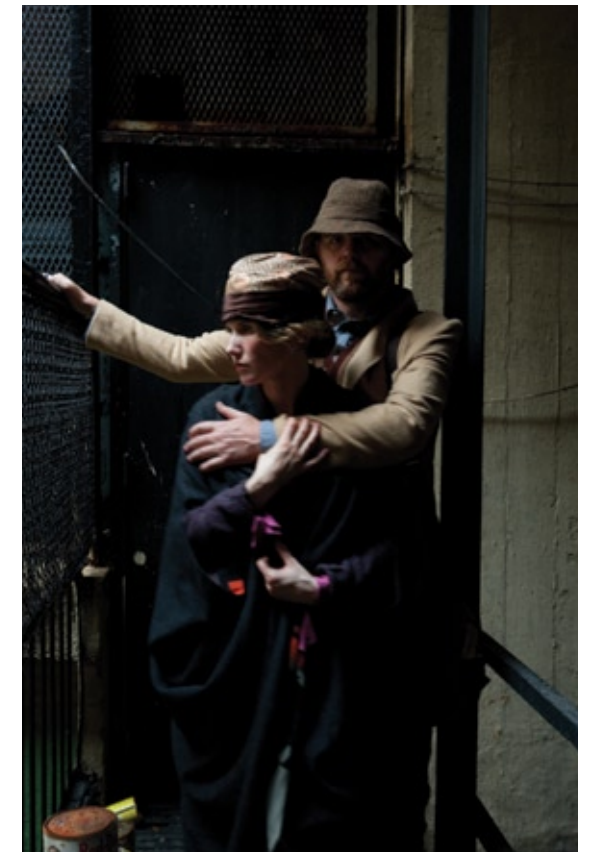


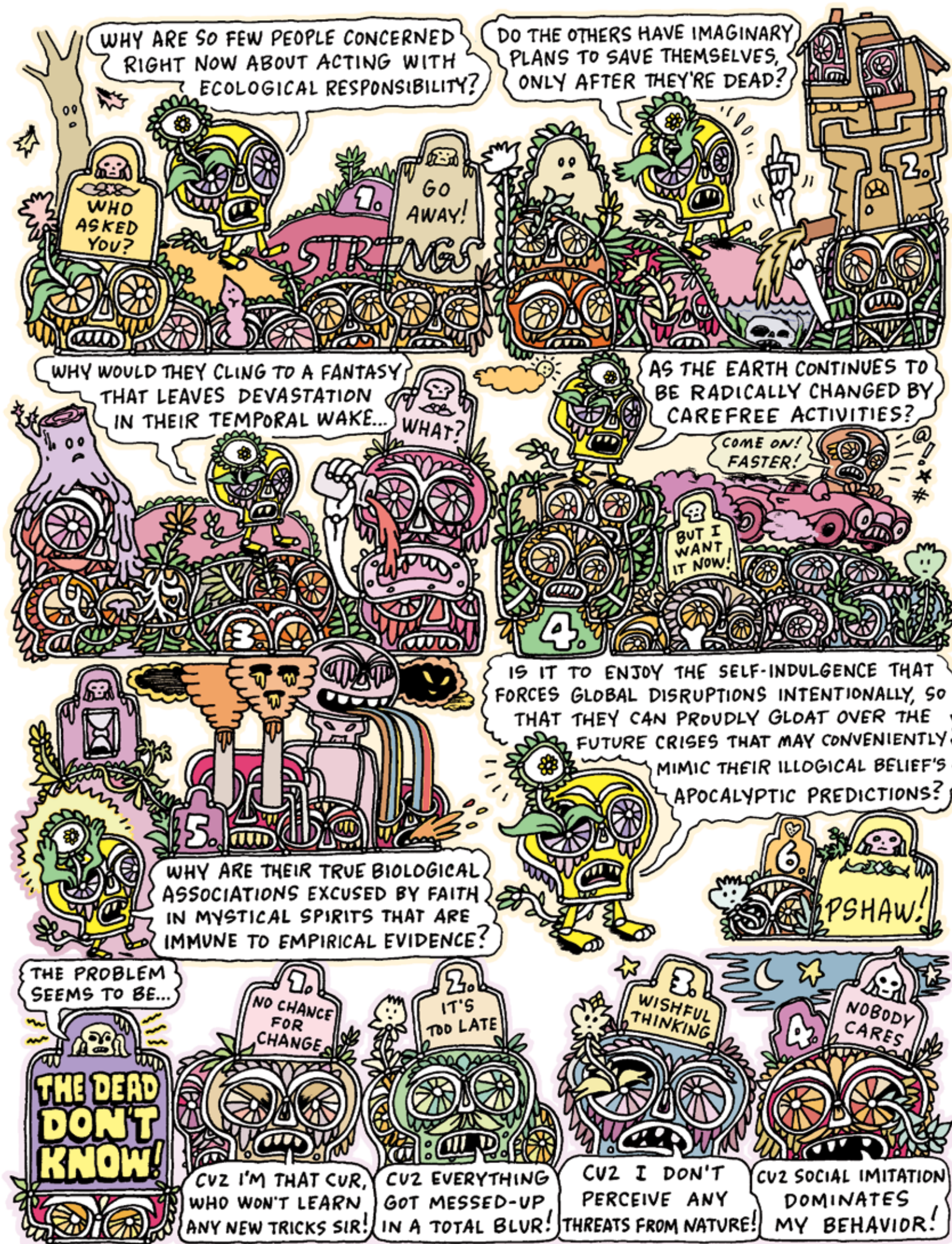
this page:
Galaxy writes in hat by NY Vintage, red sweater by **Built By Wendy**, vintage dress by **Ungaro**, and orange suede shoes by **Marc Jacobs**. Red cape draped on chair by **Built By Wendy**. Sam wears shirt by **Built By Wendy** and vest and pants by **Obedient Sons**.

opposite page, clockwise from top:
Galaxy wears sweater by **Martin Margiela** and vintage white nightgown. Sam sleeps in cossack night shirt by **Harmon**.

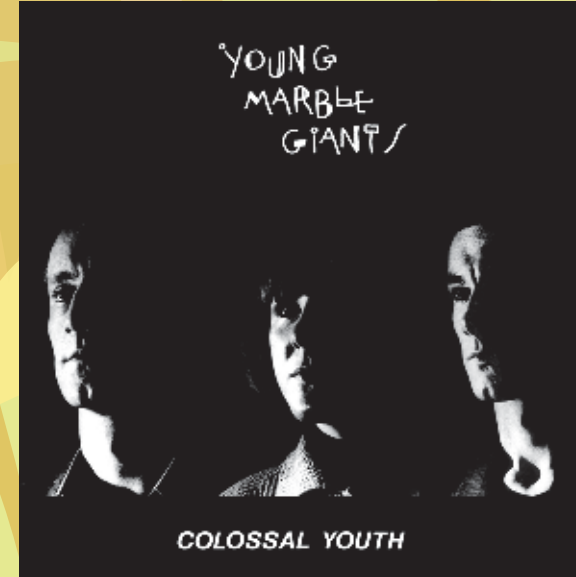
Galaxy wears hat by **NY Vintage**, grey cape by **Etro** and vintage dress by **Jean Muir**. Sam wears jacket and dress shirt by **Built By Wendy** with sweater vest and hat by **Rugby**.

Galaxy wears vintage dress by **Charvee** and vintage fur hat. Sam wears **Built By Wendy** jacket and shirt by **Obedient Sons**.





Fall releases from Domino Recording Co.



Young Marble Giants *Colossal Youth*

OUT NOW ON 3xCD/LP

For the first time, all the band's released recordings and John Peel sessions have been brought together to provide the most complete Young Marble Giants release.



Animal Collective *Strawberry Jam*

OUT NOW ON CD/2xLP/DIGI

The new studio album from the acclaimed Animal Collective.



Robert Wyatt *Comicopera*

OUT OCTOBER 9TH ON CD/2xLP/DIGI

An epic genre-bending allegory told by jazz-rock pioneer Wyatt in collaboration with friends Brian Eno, Paul Weller, Phil Manzanera and others.



Cass McCombs *Dropping the Writ*

OUT OCTOBER 9TH ON CD/LP/DIGI

"McCombs's music hits like a lightning bolt, one that might drop listeners to their knees if his songs weren't so damn stirring and accessible."—*Time Out New York*





SPOON / GA GA GA GA GA

“★★★★”

- Rolling Stone, Q, Spin, Uncut,
All Music Guide, Harp

*“Another sublime effort from modern masters.
Their most systematically infectious set yet.”*

- Uncut

“Endlessly compelling. ★★★★★”

- Spin

“The band’s most eccentric, best record yet.”

- Harp

“★★★★★”

- Time Out New York

*“An album packed with delights in every nook
and cranny.”*

- Washington Post

“A rare combination of economy and imagination.”

- USA Today

*“Longing, anxiety, satisfaction. Those casting about
for a new cult hero need look no further. ★★★★★”*

- Q

“Their best yet.”

- The New Yorker

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