

# The Fireplace Whiskey Journal

Published sometimes  
February 1, 1988

Random music and life in Nashville

## Scorchers Replace Jeff, Add Guitarist

by Tom Wood

Jason and the Scorchers, who have recently completed demos for their next album without a replacement for bass player Jeff Johnson, have finally found their man. Er, uh, men. The new lineup will include not only bass player Ken Fox, but also a new guitarist, Andy York. An informed source describes the pair as "friends of (guitarist) Warner (Hodges) from New York."

Johnson, whom some informed locals considered the musical genius of the Scorchers ("their Keith Richards," said one), left the band following its May tour of Australia to pursue other projects. (See "Whiskey Shots" note on Guilt.)

Persistent rumors this week have asserted that the Scorchers were to make a surprise appearance on Friday, January 29 at Elliston Square. The band's management, however, has told the *FWJ* that nothing of the sort will be happening, with the possible exception of a guest appearance by Hodges.

No release date has been set for the next Scorchers album, but it is expected to be out before the end of the summer. It will be the group's first since signing with A&M Records. The band escaped last summer from an onerous contract with EMI.

## whiskey shots

-- Carlyle Records is plunging into the Nashville rock marketplace with two February releases. *Mad Hog*, a four-song EP by Dessau will feature a dance remix of the band's club fave "Unshakeable" created by Al Jorgenson, known for his work with Chicago bands Ministry and Revolting Cocks. Dessau's John Elliott promises that this release will be "more rock, not as synth-pop as I've been guilty of before." The Grinning Plowmen's *Days of Deformity*, featuring seven new songs, will also be released on the Carlyle label. The Plowmen recently

scored a coup by wrangling an official invitation from the government of Poland to play over there; plans are being finalized.

--The Georgia Satellites are hunkered down in a Hot 'Lanta studio at press time, working with producer Jeff Glixman toward a projected May release of their second Electra album, the follow-up to their platinum debut. Word from down there is that the band has "17 to 18 good songs to choose from" and that they are considering reworking some of the material from their killer first EP that came out in 1985 on the British label Making Waves.

--Jet Black Factory plans to release the sequel to their well-received 1987 EP *Days Like These* in late February. The new record, *Duality*, includes six songs, among them a new take of 91 Rock favorite "Three Poisons."

--Guilt is back in town, still, as the Guiltman painted on Hank Williams' house saith, "not dead yet." This despite several months of dangerous proximity to the San Fernando Valley. The group one-upped Tony Bennett, who Left His Heart In San Francisco, by leaving their lead singer in El Lay. Jeff, Skot and Craig are now looking for a new one. You know where to find them.

### ELLISTON SQUARE

#### Mid-Winter Line-Up

"Something to live  
for until spring  
comes."

- Sat. Jan. 30 Dusters w/  
Paralyzers
- Wed. Feb. 3 Neighborhoods  
(from Boston)
- Fri. Feb. 5 Audience w/  
Gypsy
- Sat. Feb. 6 Rumble Circus
- Tues. Feb. 9 Brandos
- Fri. Feb. 19 Jet Black  
Factory record release  
party w/ Mr. Zero
- Sat. Feb. 27 Boilers
- Thurs. March 4 Claim-  
stakers
- Thurs. March 18 Walk the  
West



# Pop Life



by J. VanOrden

It's so damn ugly out, I may as well sit at a typewriter. It's one of those days when the sky is the same color as the pavement. I think I will sit here and write to everyone I know. But first...

The new Aztec Camera album is out, and it is titled *Love*. Wait a minute, didn't those dodgy dunderheads The Cult call their first album the exact same thing? Jeez, and they're both on the same label, too. Anyhow, it appears that neither of 'em have the idea--this pukey release makes me want to wring Roddy Frame's pathetic little neck with those sissy suspenders he insists on wearing all the time. First of all, it's no longer really Aztec Camera--that name now serves as a record company front for fraidy-cat Frame, who now sounds more like a "sanitized for your protection" brand of the disco-fied Chaka Khan and Scritti Politti than the acoustically-inclined, ultra-sensitive genius teen he made waves as just 5 years ago on his classic *High Land, Hard Rain* LP. Oh well, nothing lasts forever, eh? Especially not the pre-fab, overindulgent, too fussy arrangements on this massively disappointing and highly un-recommended vinyl disaster. Roddy, why'd ya do it? If you need money that bad, call

me up. My Uncle Tim owns a country club and he could give you a loan or something. Meantime, go write us an album of folk songs or Scottish fugues. Anything beats thesaurus-pop. What a letdown.

On the other hand, if you MUST dance, at least do it with some class. Believe it or not, George Michael's *Faith* is 80's soul-pop by a guy who makes it sound a lot less pale than you'd expect. In fact, if ole George keeps turning out songs like these, the GUYS might start liking him, too. A new year, a new demographic, you know?

Aha! Here he is! It's the mucho-hyped ex-G.I., ex-boxer, expatriate known as Terence Trent D'Arby, who is most definitely black and most certainly beautiful. He's got a voice so monolithically fabulous, songs so wonderfully crafted, a record so obviously head and shoulders above the rest that a lot of people will probably overlook this as just another shiny pop album by a cute black guy. But if you let *The Hardline According to Terence Trent D'Arby* pass you by, you may as well grab your ankles and have somebody kick your ass for missing out on one of the greatest REAL soul records released in this decade. I bet Al Green even likes Terence. No shit.

...*Nothing Like the Sun* by Sting is a pretentious exercise in hysterical, runaway narcissism. This is a man who probably makes love to himself in front of a mirror every morning. Lighten up, Sting. You're not THAT important. He is most likely an Aries.

The new Squeeze LP is fine. Yes yes yes yes yes yes yes! It's about time they made some money! According to most snooty journalists, the last Squeeze album, *Cosi Fan Tutti Frutti*, was a real arfski. I adored it--Squeeze with Jools Holland back on keyboards is better than a dripping, milk-soggy Oreo. It would be great to get drunk with Glenn and Chris. Long may they avoid hangovers.

The worst band I've heard lately is All About Eve. Why do the English insist on pushing all these no-talent Goths? Bleah and double bleah.

Chip and the Chiltons have released *What's Wrong With This Picture?*. Well, Michael Jackson called his album *BAD*. Chip and the Chiltons should rename this one *SAD*.

They Might Be Giants... well, they should be. In a perfect world, these guys would be winning several Grammys per year. "Hi, We're the Replacements" is the finest tribute the boys from Minneapolis will ever receive. By the way, what's the deal with all these artists writ-



ing tributes to other artists? The Replacements write about Alex Chilton, ABC writes about Smokey Robinson, Jonathan Richman writes about Harpo Marx. Are we having an identity crisis or what? Back to our main train of thought, though-- They Might Be Giants' fab new EP is called *Don't Let's Start*, and it has a big blue snowman on the cover.

Just because she has a shaved head doesn't mean she's a Hare Krishna. Sinéad O'Connor is from Ireland, and she's probably making U2, Clannad, Cactus World News and the rest of Eire's tunesmiths sham-rock green with envy because she's got it: REAL PASSION. One listen to *The Lion and the Cobra* and you will be hopelessly spellbound. You can't even imagine what this sounds like, and it's pointless for me to even try to describe it other than saying: Dream Music for Soul People.

Psychic Surgery-- "Inside Your Head"....this IS a joke, isn't it? Shitty record, great raincoat.

Well, the cat is sleeping next to the space heater and I've gotta go move the retarded animal before it catches on fire...bon soir, mes petites choux.

P.S. Here's a little list of upcoming attractions for all you hip pop junkies...some of these may even be out already.


AC/DC--Feb.  
The Adventures--*Sea of Love*--Feb.  
Agitpop--January  
Balaam and the Angel--*Live Free and Die*--Feb.

Blue Hippos--*Forty Forty*--Jan.  
The Christians--Jan.  
The Church--*Starfish*--Feb. 16  
Clannad--*Serius*--Feb. 2  
The Damned--*The Light at the End of the Tunnel*--Feb.  
Durutti Column--Feb.  
Bob Dylan--Feb.  
The Fall--*Palace of Swords Reversed*--Feb.  
Hall and Oates--Feb. 25  
Robyn Hitchcock--*Globe of Frogs*--Feb. 2  
Hunters and Collectors--*What's a Few Men*--Feb.  
Huxton Creepers--Feb.  
Rick James--Feb.  
NRBQ--*God Bless Us All*--Jan.  
Gary Numan--Feb.  
Pedaljets--*Today, Today*--Feb.

The Pogues--*If I Should Fall With Grace From God*--Jan. 25  
Pop Will Eat Itself--*Box Frenzy*--Jan.  
Public Enemy--Feb.  
Salem 66--Feb.  
Jane Siberry--*The Walking*--Jan.  
Patti Smith--Feb. 25  
Talking Heads--Feb.  
Thin White Rope--*In the Spanish Cave*--Feb.  
Timbuk 3--*Eden Alley*--Jan.  
Triffids--*Calenture*--Jan. 25  
Velvet Elvis--Jan.  
The Waterboys--Feb.  
Zodiac Mindwarp--*Tattooed Beat Messiah*--Feb. 16

Not everyone has the opportunity to be a hero. But everyone does have the opportunity not to be a scoundrel. - Yevgeny Yevtushenko

# RUMBLE



# CIRCUS

ELLISTON SQ. - SAT, FEB. 6

\$4.00 ■ w/guests WISHCRAFT



# 1987

the showz  
the songz  
the musik u LUVVVED

Well, every magazine tries to be a forum in its own way. Here, we're actually devoting valuable space to peoples' Top Fives from '87. You can't say we don't indulge you....or ourselves.

**Robert Logue** (bassist for The Royal Court of China and mandolinist for the Shakers):

**ALBUMS:**

1. *Mother Juno*-- The Gun Club
2. *In My Tribe*-- 10,000 Maniacs
3. *Permanent Vacation*-- Aerosmith
4. *Momentary Lapse of Reason*  
-- Pink Floyd
5. *Hillbilly Deluxe*--  
Dwight Yoakam

**SHOWS:**

1. Crosby, Stills and Nash  
-Starwood (July)
2. 10,000 Maniacs--Exit/In
3. Stevie Ray Vaughn--Wiltern  
Theatre in L.A. (May)
4. Red Hot Chili Peppers
5. Suzanne Vega--War Memorial

**Bruce Fitzpatrick** (manages and books Exit/In)

**ALBUMS:**

1. *Document*-- REM
2. *Electric*-- The Cult
3. *See How We Are*-- X
4. *Lord of the Highway*-- Joe Ely
5. *Darklands*-- Jesus and Mary  
Chain

**SHOWS:**

1. The Mission UK--Exit/In
2. The Replacements--Armory
3. Marshall Crenshaw--Exit/In
4. Red Hot Chili Peppers--Exit/In
5. Bo Diddley--Exit/In

**John Koski** (Music Director at 91 Rock)

**ALBUMS:**

1. *Songs About Fucking*-- Big Black
2. *The Official Version*-- Front 242
3. *The Wailing Ultimate*--  
Homestead Compilation
4. *Come On, Pilgrim*-- The Pixies
5. *You're Living All Over Me*-- Dinosaur

**Jeffery Williams** (singer and duct tape-wearer for Rumble Circus)

**ALBUMS:**

1. *Jane's Addiction* (same)
2. *Life in Limbo*-- Boscowitz and Myriad
3. *Document*-- REM
4. *Galaxy 500*-- Fetchin' Bones
5. ...nothin' else with my  
greenbacks (hardly earned).

**SHOWS:**

1. The Cock-N-Titty (ain't we pretty?) GRangels (who could make me laugh harder--shoulda played Zanies!)
2. Red Hot Chili Peppers  
-Exit/In (Thankyeforgivin')
3. U2 at Tootsie's Orchid  
Lounge--different.

**J. VanOrden** (FWJ word girl, bullshitter about town)

**ALBUMS:**

1. *Mary Jean and 9 Others*  
- Marshall Crenshaw
2. *The Hardline*-- Terence Trent D'Arby
3. *Tallulah*-- the Go-Betweens
4. *Element of Light*-- Robyn Hitchcock
5. *The No Comprendo*-- Les Rita Mitsouko
6. *Endless Soul (Young and Stupid)*-- Josef K

**SHOWS:**

1. Carnival Seasons--Elliston Square (Dec.)
2. Marshall Crenshaw--Exit/In
3. NRBQ--Exit/In (May)
4. Smokin' Dave and the Premo  
Dopes--Elliston Square (Nov.)
5. The Mission w/Balaam and  
the Angel--Exit/In (April)

**Emma** (bassist and singer for In Pursuit)

**ALBUMS:**

1. *Sign O' the Times*-- Prince
2. *Let Me Up--I've Had  
Enough*-- Tom Petty & the  
Heartbreakers
3. *Permanent Vacation*  
-- Aerosmith
4. *Crowded House* (same)
5. *Knocked Out Loaded*-- Bob  
Dylan

**SHOWS:** Didn't see enough!



**Alan Johnstone** (drummer  
for Rumble Circus)

SHOWS:

1. Guadalcanal Diary--The Cannery
2. The Producers--Picasso's
3. Dumptruck--Exit/In (Dec.)
4. Edmond--Elliston Square  
(Bluesfest '87; Jeff Cease on  
drums).
5. Duran Duran--Starwood (BOY!  
They were GREAT!)

**diXIe KuPP** (FWJ's Special  
Smyrna Correspondent)

4 WURST ALBA:

1. Red Hot Chili Peppers (So  
bad diXIe can't remember its  
name. Crushing letdown. W/O  
George Clinton they can only  
resort to nasty lyrics to sell  
themselves.)
2. *Contagious*-- Y & T (Therez  
heavy metal, then therez  
aluminum cookware.)
3. *Firing Squad for God*-- Swimming Pool  
Q's (Shoulda renamed the band when Anne  
R. Boston left. Incompetent thrash.)
4. *Bad*-- Michael Jackson (Self-indulgent  
weirdo piece of shit from a guy who wishes  
he were Grace Kelly and spends ever  
greater amounts of money working on it.)

**Tom Wood** (Itinerant Spondee)

GOOD TUNES:

1. *Standing in Your Shadow*-- In  
Pursuit
2. Various demos obtained by  
subterfuge and sheer  
wiliness-- The Questionnaires
3. *Foster and Lloyd*
4. White Animals' take of  
"Could You Be Loved"
5. The parts of *Trio* without  
Ronstadt singing lead

**David Willie** (singer for Jet  
Black Factory)

ALBUMS:

1. *Force of Habit*-- Leather  
Nun
2. *Infected*-- The The
3. *Earth Sun Moon*-- Love and  
Rockets
4. *Age of Chance*-- (same)
5. *Lolita Nation*-- Game Theory

**Regina Gee** (manages Jet Black  
Factory; brainstormer for FWJ)

ALBUMS:

1. *The World We Know*-- Panther  
Burns
2. *The Sound of Music*-- dB's
3. *Earth Sun Moon*-- Love and  
Rockets
4. *Electric*-- The Cult
5. *Document*-- REM

**Matt Swanson** (bassist for Clockhammer  
and pro eyebrow flexer)

ALBUMS:

1. *You're Living All Over Me*-- Dinosaur
2. *Your Funeral My Trial*-- Nick Cave and  
the Bad Seeds
3. *Brown Book*-- Death In June
4. *Songs of Love and Fury*-- Membranes
5. *Sister*-- Sonic Youth

**Lee A. Carr** (guitarist for Mr. Zero; sub-  
liminal cartoonist)

ALBUMS:

1. *Dali Does Windows*-- Defenestration
2. *Appetite for Destruction*-- Guns 'n' Roses
3. *Exit O*-- Steve Earle
4. *You're Living All Over Me*-- Dinosaur
5. *Oh My Gawd*-- Flaming Lips

**Warner E. Hodges** (Scorcher axe)

1. *Permanent Vacation*  
-- Aerosmith
2. *Lord of the Highway*-- Joe  
Ely
3. *It Came From Nashville*--  
Webb Wilder
4. *Born to Boogie*-- Hank  
Williams, Jr.
5. *Forty Years Overnight*--  
Kenny Lovelace

**Laurie George** (manages Pedaljets; local  
rock goddess)

ALBUMS

1. *You're Living All Over  
Me*-- Dinosaur
2. *Appetite for Destruction*  
- Guns 'n' Roses
3. *Clockhammer*--demo tape
4. *Mirage*-- Meat Puppets
5. *Frank's Wild Years*-- Tom  
Waits
6. *Faster Pussycat* (same)



# A NIGHT

It started out to be an ordinary night. How was I to know that I was soon to embark on a journey that ended just short of the Twilight Zone?

Anyway I had just left my Intermediate Hostility class and stepped into the brisk night air. The lecture had been a fascinating one; we were discussing the unconscious mind as opposed to the conscious when I finally lost consciousness. No one bothered to wake me so I left campus with a red stripe across my face and the obligatory saliva monkey bridge trickling from my chin to my shoulder.

When I reached my car I was reasonably coherent so I drove to the nearby convenience store and to get a copy of the newest Weekly World News and a breakfast beer for the next morning.

Pausing at the Kleenex display as I always do (the little boxes make funny noises when you squeeze them; try it some time), I noticed a familiar face. I was overcome with elation when I realized that three feet away from me was none other than Danny Bonaduce, a.k.a. Danny Partridge from the old TV series! My heart raced with joy to think I was in the same room with the man who, in the early 70s, was an integral part of such hits as "I Think I Love You" and... and...Oh well, lots of others too.

He was instantly recognizable from the old days, still that same bloated little fire pail full of old mountie jockstraps, only with fewer freckles than I remembered. He was gathering up bottles of Liquid Plumm'r and Yoo-Hoo by the score and he seemed to be sweating visibly.

I knew I had to make my move fast and not let this magical moment slip through my fingers.

Ever so subtly I traipsed over to the counter where he was in the process of paying and I tried to capture his attention with a few coughs and some significant throat clearing. When this didn't work, I quickly resorted to violent wrenching and a lion's paw swipe to the back of the head.

He turned and looked at me real cool, as

if to say "Hey Lee! What's up? Keep cool. We don't want these assholes here to notice us and make a scene." I immediately caught on and pretended to be really engrossed in the chocolate zinger I was eating.

When he left the store I trailed after him, longing to experience everything just as Danny did. I couldn't help recalling the many times I had watched The Partridge Family and howled with laughter as Danny tossed out non-sequitirs like "If it walks like a duck and looks like a duck, it's probably a duck."

Danny, genius that he is, got into his car, which wasn't a Mercedes or a Porsche like I woulda thought, but a '61 Impala with a cracked windshield and Bondo all over one fender. This is it, I thought. Danny's gonna casually invite me into his car, pull out a credit card and a hundred dollar bill and lay out a few lines of the purest cocaine imaginable.

Instead, he looked up at me, asked me for a cigarette and before I had a chance to reply, he roared off into the night.

As I stood shivering in the parking lot illuminated by the giant glow of neon, my mind raced and wandered. There were so many things that I longed to ask him, relevant issues like "Could you really play the bass?" and "Do you still remain friendly with David Cassidy?" and the most important question "Are you bitter as hell about Susan Dey's successful television comeback on "L.A. Law"?" When she portrayed Laurie Partridge on the show, Danny once commented on her disfiguring overbite, "When she bites a carrot, she merely crimps it.."

My evening with Danny, my brush with greatness. I could feel his raw passion, his lust for life; I witnessed his soul engine burn in shadows tossed upon an oil-stained pavement glistening with parallel lines while above our heads a banner that read "Bud Light 3.79/6 pk." wafted in the breeze.

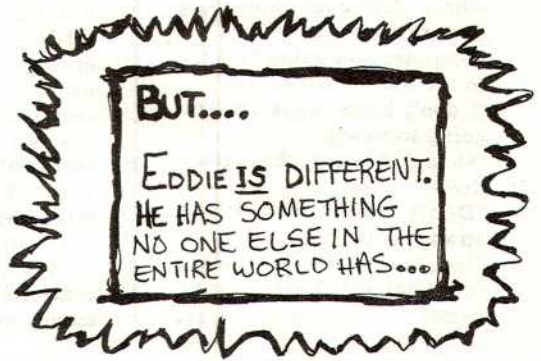
I would have followed him but I was late for a bowling date with Zsa Zsa Gabor and Bob Dylan.

# WITH DANNY

-by Lee A. Carr



by Lee A. Carr



**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GROUP 149 IN NASHVILLE**

has adopted as its Prisoner of Conscience a Kenyan man, Maina wa Kenyatti. Mr. Kenyatti has been imprisoned since late 1982 on charges of "possession of seditious material"-- he was a university professor and a student-produced leaflet critical of President Daniel arap Moi was found in his possession. For this crime Mr. Kenyatti has been kept in a lighted cell for 24 hours a day, thus aggravating a serious eye condition for which he receives little adequate care.

You can help. Write to His Excellency the Honorable Daniel arap Moi, Office of the President, P.O. Box 30510, Nairobi, Kenya. Respectfully express your concern and ask that Mr. Kenyatti be given "remission in accordance with the Prisons Act." You can also help cover his legal costs by sending a donation to AI Group 149, P.O. Box 121408, Nashville 37212.



# Galette AND Goofette

Good day!



My stomach hurts..



Galette makes up her bed perfectly.



Goofette tears holes in her sheets.



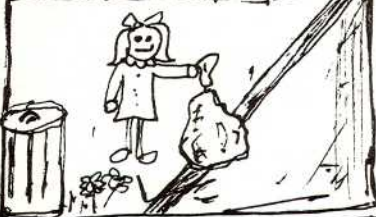
Galette says "Please" and "Thank you."



Goofette says "Piss off" and "All mine!"



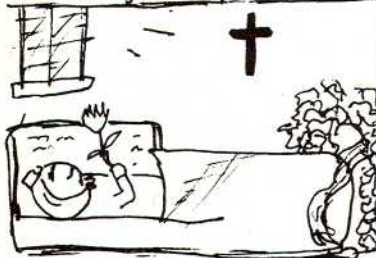
Galette takes out the garbage every day.



Goofette sits in the garbage babbling things.



Galette gets a proper funeral.



Goofette's death goes unnoticed.



SUN., FEB. 21

• Nashville has a new rock magazine titled The Fireplace Whiskey Journal. It's being distributed free in the shops on Elliston Place and at Cats Records on West End Avenue.

the TENNESSEAN Showcase

YEAH,  
but did  
you  
LIKE  
it,  
Bob?



XIWOS - XIWOS



# Won't · You · Be · My

Whatever happened to Athens, GA? Does anyone remember when it was more than R.E.M.'s home base? When, if you knew that a band was from Athens you'd be curious enough to check them out, and bands from Athens would write "from Athens" across their flyers so you'd be curious enough to check them out, and bands would even MOVE to Athens so they could write "from Athens" across their flyers so you'd be curious enough to check them out?

What Athens had for a few years was a reputation for being a creative center, a hotbed where young musicians created an identifiable scene. Is Nashville the new Athens? I don't think so. Out of Athens came a couple of good quirky pop bands and many self-conscious arty tag-alongs. We have many highly individual bands here, and because in Nashville music is a business, these bands have the resources to make this city a home base from which to expand.

Here a band can record demos, press records, create cover art, work with BMI and ASCAP on publishing and copyrighting and find a music lawyer to represent their interests. Nashville is similar to Athens in that it is beginning to draw new bands who want to make Nashville their home.

I talked to several of Nashville's new additions to find out why they chose our city, and, now that they've settled in, what their impressions are. Originally this article was going to cover all the bands who have moved here, but I got so much information that I decided to write a series, focusing on one band at a time. I'll start with the first band I talked to: Will and the Bushmen.

Will and the Bushmen had already achieved honorary citizenship before moving here. They were good friends with Renaissance man Clark Parsons, and visited many times, making more friends (and fans) with each excursion. When I first asked Will why the band moved to Nashville, he swore it was to meet John Travolta. It seems "Urban Cowboy" came to the Bushmen's hometown of Mobile last year, and this epic film so moved them that they immediately packed their bags with visions of mechanical bulls bucking in their heads. I quietly pointed out that the

film was about Texas and Will, suitably chastened, explained the real reasons behind the move.

"Mobile," he began, "is a good city to be a banker in. It's not a good city to be a musician in." The Bushmen had played live everywhere they could, honing their live show, and then it became a question of "what next?"

"In Mobile, we were at the end of one of our ropes, so we grabbed a new one - Nashville. At one point this was the only city anywhere where we were receiving any airplay (WRVU). It was close. On earlier trips we had made friends with Webb Wilder, Trip Aldredge, Bill Lloyd, Don Spicer and Raging Fire. There was an affinity."

When asked to comment on Nashville's moniker "the new Athens," Will laughed and said "Yeah, that's what they said about Tuscaloosa when bands started popping up there. Probably the only real scene was New York in 1976. *That* was a scene."

Another thing that amuses Will is what people keep telling him about Nashville bands. "Everyone here is always on the verge of getting signed. 'Have you heard of [fill in the blank]?' They're about to get signed."

Will observed that this is the city of playing showcases and passing out demos. This is difficult to understand for a band whose game plan is more traditional. Under manager Leslie Manier's guidance, the band is hitting the road, travelling behind their record *Gawk*. It seems to be paying off. Their New York debut garnered a solidly favorable review and there will be some national press in the coming months.

All in all, Will and the Bushmen are happy here. They like their new home in East Nashville. They like the people. They like the clothes. Recently Will spotted a denim jacket at the Alamo. It was embroidered with a Vegas showgirl. A salesperson told him confidentially that it would soon be marked down to \$455, so when it goes on sale, he says he'll buy it. We'll keep you posted.

They miss Mobile Bay oysters, but they like the meat-and-threes. Will and the Bushmen didn't come to Nashville to ride the coattails of some rumored scene. It's a good place to play and to keep your integrity intact.

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# STEPPING in CARBURETOR DUNG

Michael McCall, senior entertainment writer at the *Banner*, has told me that I am the only person in Nashville who reads by-lines, those little tags under the headline that tell you who wrote an article.

Well, only sometimes. When I was a faithful reader of *Creem* and *Rolling Stone*, the only by-line I remember was Lester Bangs, the frenzied, ultra-talented rock critic, the spiritual leader at *Creem* and main cheerleader of the punk movement. And Bangs wrote the only rock books I ever bought. He was my hero when other girls were slobbering over Farrah Fawcett.

Bangs was a legend among rock critics, arguably the best ever. In a short biography, he said of himself "perhaps a contender . . . for the title Best Writer in America (who was better? Bukowski? Burroughs? Hunter Thompson? Gimme a break. I was the best.) . . ."

Bangs also wrote thousands of pages of manuscript, including several rock books, a partial biography of the Rolling Stones, a novel called *All My Friends are Hermits*, a book of several rock lives, including Lydia Lunch, Marianne Faithfull, Robbie Robertson and others, a book called "Rock Gomorrah - The Scandalous Lies About the Woodstock Generation," and a book on prostitutes.

SO WHAT ARE YOU GETTING TO? I'm not nearly the writer that Lester wuz and I'm just trying to get you to understand how great he was so that I can sell you on this book of his articles that Greil Marcus (author of the great *Mystery Train*) and a friend of Bangs', has collected.

It's called *Psychotic Reactions and Carburetor Dung*, which was the title he

had conjured up for a book of his essays that he was going to collect on his own that would explain every phenomenon in the Western world, including disco, pet rocks, snuff movies, the end of the concept of avant-garde, Lou Reed and the invisible war beginning right now, of which he hoped to be a leader.

Bangs loved noise more than music, and thought that Iggy Pop was the Savior. He had a running battle of words with Lou Reed, though he once said he would gladly suck Reed's cock.

Bangs once played the typewriter in concert with J. Geils Band. He also had his own band. He adored John Coltrane and Richard Hell. Thought that the Sex Pistols' *The Great Rock 'N Roll Swindle* was "one of the greatest albums ever made."

He loved trashy, underproduced music, spontaneous experiments and one-album wonders. Bangs had a very sensitive bullshit meter, and hated most of the disco and wimp rock of the 70s. He couldn't get laid.

He was a brilliant writer with a style all his own. The rhythm of his writing is the rhythm of music, uses its language and metaphor. He was one of the only career rock writers that could read rock like literature and critique it that way.

Most of those ideas have ended up in Marcus' collection. You gotta buy *Psychotic Reactions* if you really love rock and roll or are interested in it as a social phenomenon. So stop reading crappy writers like me and go get his book. Or mebbe if you're nice I'll loan you my copy.

--Nicki Pendleton



## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS IN LONDON

has issued an Emergency Action Request for pressure on the government of Israel to stop human rights abuses of Palestinians in Israel's occupied territories.

"The first priority is to use force, might and beatings," Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has been quoted as saying. AI has documented many cases of persons being beaten by the security forces-- not only demonstrators, but passers-by as well. One youth has reportedly been beaten to death. Over 40 Palestinians have been shot dead by security forces and vigilante groups in the past two months.

You can help. Write to Minister of Foreign Affairs Shimon Peres, Hakiriya, Romema Street, Jerusalem 91919, ISRAEL. Courteously but firmly express your protest at the beatings and killings, arbitrary arrests, incommunicado detention, summary trials and deportations of Palestinians. Point out that all of these actions are in direct violation of the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights. Send a copy of your letter to your Congressman and a copy to AI Group 149, P.O. Box 121408, Nashville 37212.



## ELLISTON SQUARE

### march screamin

- Thurs. 3 Fields of the Nephilim  
 Fri. 4 Raging Fire  
 Sat. 5 2-4 all ages: Zero Hour w/  
 Gravelworks. PM: Hot House  
 Mon. 7 Private Lives  
 Tues. 8 Blind Farmers  
 Wed. 9 Questionnaires  
 Thurs. 10 Tabloid Press  
 Fri. 11 The Affirmative  
 Sat. 12 2-4 a.a.: Intruder w/ Mr Zero  
 Mon. 14 David Lee Murphy and Blue  
 Tick Hounds  
 Tues. 15 Cruel Blue  
 Wed. 16 Mystery  
 Thurs. 17 Broadcasters  
 Fri. 18 Dusters  
 Sat. 19 2-4 a.a.: Teenage Love  
 PM: Audience  
 Mon. 21 The Assassins featuring  
 Jimmy Thackery  
 Sat. 26 Rhythm Pigeons

## NIGHTMARES CAST IN VERSE

I

The nerve-ends shuffle restless, slurred in sleep,  
 Creeping the streaming screaming bathroom tile  
 With echoes that their dreaming would revile,  
 If splattered protoplasm could but peep.

II

As I depart the solid aching,  
 Earth and make a break, breathtaking,  
 Stunning secrets will be free.  
 And the suspense is killing me.

--Tom Wood

"shamat"

"Every great and original artist, in proportion as he is great and original, must himself create the taste by which he is to be relished."

- William Wordsworth

"Ditto for subversive publishers."

- A. Spondee

## The Fireplace Whiskey Journal

Those held responsible:

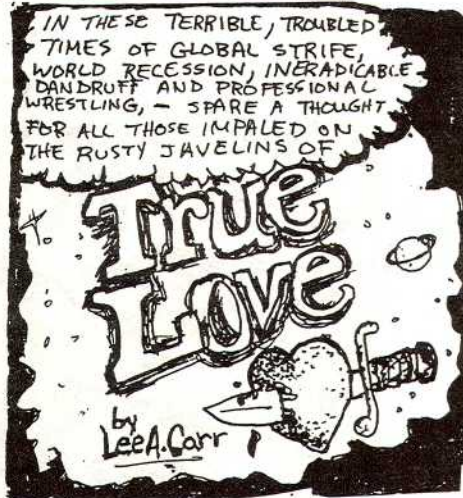
Lee Carr Regina Gee  
 diXie KuPP J. van Orden  
 Nicki Pendleton Tom Wood  
 & John Does 1, 2 & 3

Executive Offices:

The Winter Palace  
 154-B Woodmont Blvd.  
 Nashville, TN. 37205

Phone: (615) 298-4716

Writers/Artists, send us your free-lance submissions; Music People, send us your records or comp passes; Ladies, send us your panties. Send SASE if you want 'em back. We'll make an honest effort to deal with these things in coming issues. But we make no promises. Otay?





# The Fireplace Whiskey Journal

Published sometimes

April 5, 1988

Special Issue: Flogging the Media

Random music and life in Nashville

## UNFORTUNATE POSE OF THE MONTH:



Associated Press

"Alle raus! Ich habe eben gefurzt."

Coming Soon--

**THE FIREPLACE WHISKEY CALENDAR**

April 15 ain't just tax day. It's also the date set for the inaugural issue of the FIREPLACE WHISKEY CALENDAR, a listing of Nashville happenings to be published every two weeks by the FWJ. Look for it where you picked up this issue of the FWJ. And if your club, band, out-of-work symphony etc. needs to get the word out on upcoming events, keep the FWC in mind. You can get half off of our already-low ad rates if you place ads in both the FWJ and the FWC. Call 298-4716 for details.

## whiskey shots

-- "Where is Richie Owens?", concerned folk have been asking for the past few months. The Movement has been unable to function without its front man, several local hairstylists have gone broke without Richie's frightwig to work on, and his friends have been worried sick. It is the FWJ's sad duty to inform the world of Owens' ignominious fate. Richie Owens is appearing on Dolly. Our L.A. informant spotted him on the set recently, seated on a hay bale, in overalls, stomping and clapping. It breaks our hearts. Dolly Parton, who is Richie's cousin, couldn't be reached to explain why she would do such a thing to a fine young death-rocker, & her own kin too.

-- Foster and Lloyd have been waxing telegenic lately. They put in a quick cameo in a new Aretha Franklin anti-drunk-driving spot, and have just wrapped a video of "Texas In 1880," the third single from their RCA disc. Lloyd, meanwhile, is co-producing Hege V's second album along with MTM's Tommy West.

-- Last year a child with the AIDS virus was hounded from his school by the good citizens of Lake City, TN. Vanderbilt's Medical Ethics Department has now instituted an AIDS Education Project to combat such ignorance, and a rock&roll benefit to raise money for the Project is in the works. Raging Fire's Melora Zaner & others are working out details, and the roster of bands is still being decided. Keep an eye on the FWJ or the new *Fireplace Whiskey Calendar* for more info as this develops.

## ELLISTON SQUARE -- April Action

Wed. 6 Will & Bushmen w/Serious George	Thu. 21 Red Belly Boys
Thu. 7 Paralyzers	Sat. 23 Triple XXX w/Simmons
Mon. 11 Rosary w/Serious George	All Ages 2 - 4// 21 & over 10:30
Wed. 13 7 Zark 7	Tue. 26 Tiny Lights
Thu. 14 Shallow Rain w/Adams Housecat	Thu. 28 Boilers
Fri. 15 Government Cheese	Fri. 29 Cashmere Jungle Lords
Tue. 19 Hit & Run	Sat. 30 Rumble Circus w/Mr Zero & Sir Chance I

Coming May 7: Pedal Jets w/Clockhammer



# flogging our colleagues...

This didn't start out to be a "theme" issue. It just grewed.

The *FWJ* staff tends to hover over pitchers and pizza and kvetch about the bourgeois universe. Often our dissatisfaction is focused on the Nashville press and media, who can really set off our collective bullshit meter. Questions arise: how can KDF pull such huge Arbitron ratings with so little imagination? Does the *Banner's* habit of referring to People With AIDS as "AIDS victims" have anything to do with its right-wing politics? Why does our local government's institutionalized corruption go largely unreported? When the dirt does come out, why isn't it placed in context? (For instance: when a Metro cop is fired for raping a suspect, why aren't we told about the numerous other reported sexual assaults by Metro's finest in the past few years?)

So it was natural that this issue should wind up trashing a few local wordfolk. (No fair exempting ourselves from the calumny, though-- see Keith Gordon's letter.) We try not to take ourselves too seriously, but if we annoy some of the right people, we may even make them think. --Tom Wood

## DO we get letters?

Dear Tom:

Thanks for reviewing the LP. Maybe you'll like the next one! --Joe Bidewell

Dear Joe:

We honestly hope so. You are the best sport we've ever seen. We've nominated you for ambassador to some cushy nation like Belgium.

Nicki:

'Tis a shame you couldn't use my piece [a submission intended for publication in the March *FWJ*-- Ed.]... It would have drastically improved the quality of writing found in the *FWJ*.

...You have a responsibility to present voices differing from your editorial position... Mindless dreck and inane horseshit...is no alternative to anything.... Your wit and sophistication escape me... unless you temper your...attitude... you'll remain a bunch of posturing drones.... --Keith Gordon

Dear Keith:

You're right! Now bend over for that Pine Sol enema.

Nashville's  
**EXIT/IN**  
Music Forum

APRIL ROCK 'N' ROLL

4th BILLY JOE SHAVER  
6th FREEDOM  
OF EXPRESSION

8th THE KINGSNAKES  
11th THE SILO'S  
13th THE RAINMAKERS  
15th FETCHIN' BONES  
20th THE WINDOWS  
21st THE BOILERS  
25th QUEEN IDA  
28th THE DYNATONES

29th & 30th  
WEBB WILDER

YAA Hoo!

# BIRTHDAY BASH!

**SAT. APRIL 16—TWO SHOWS!**

Celebrating **REBEL 100's** first anniversary  
& **CAT'S RECORDS'** fifteenth year



**THE BEST IN LOCAL ROCK  
LIVE AT THE CANNERY**

7 p.m. all ages show featuring  
**PARADISE LOST** (formerly Audience)  
& **SCARLET**

10 p.m. show featuring  
**THE KINGSNAKES**  
HOPPIE VAUGHAN & THE WEEBILS,  
DENNIS LOCORRIERE & PARADISE  
LOST (formerly Audience)

**ADMISSION ONLY 100 CENTS!**

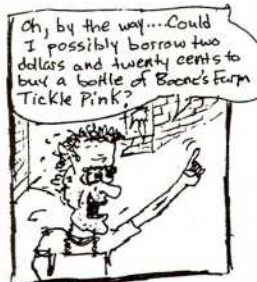
Listen to the Rebel  
for more info, and we'll see  
you April 16!

11 Convenient Locations



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what goes on in April...

Sundays - Corona \$1.50.

Music by BackCreek.

Mondays - Domestic longnecks \$1.

Tuesdays - Imports \$1.50

Music by Jeremy Lyons

Wednesdays - Pitchers \$3.75.

R. Jackson & A. Ellis play

Thursdays - Pitchers \$3.

Hearts of Stone play starting 4/21

Fri. & Sat. - Ladies Night.

\$.50 draft, \$1 long necks and coolers

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**2 FOR 1 PITCHERS**  
WITH THIS AD!

**GO WEST**  
Presents...



**DON DIXON w/  
Marti Jones & the Woods**

with Special Guest  
**SEVEN KEYS**

At the Cannery

Friday April 8th - Showtime 9 pm

**91 Rock WRVU Annual Benefit**

featuring: bang shang-a-lang, DESSAU,  
GRINNING PLOWMAN, JET BLACK FACTORY,  
THE SHAKERS, SIR CHANCE I &  
DJ WHITE KNIGHT, also Friday April 8th at the  
Cannery, buy 1 at regular price, 2nd show 1/2 price

REBEL 100 celebrates it's 1st birthday with

**THE KINGSNAKES**

HOPPIE VAUGHN and the Weebils,

AUDIENCE, and DENNIS LOCORIERRE

At the Cannery, 7 pm ALL AGES show features:  
SCARLET AND AUDIENCE

Saturday April 16th - Showtime 10 pm

**LET'S ACTIVE**

with Special Guests

WILL and the BUSHMEN / VELVET ELVIS

At the Cannery, Friday April 22nd - Showtime 9 pm

**ALSO:** JOHNNY WINTER with Special Guest  
Saturday April 23 at the Cannery, 9 pm

L.A. GUNS  
Sunday April 17 at Sal's 7 pm (all ages)

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT ALL TICKETMASTER LOCATIONS INCLUDING CAT'S RECORDS



# Reviews

Love 'em or hate 'em, you gotta admit that *Duality* is a record that showcases their cohesiveness and dedication to their sound. Dave's breathless vocals are just off-key enough to make them interesting... and catchy, dreamy and sometimes doomy. Their live shows don't do justice to the intricacies of this wonderful record. My cat is even smiling.

Speaking of smiling, I hate the way Whitney Houston smiles. Did you see her on the Grammys? I just wanted to slap her face silly with a smelly old mackerel.

Ho hum de dum. Well, friends, I guess it's back to medialand oblivion and a stack of death-rock records for me. It's a shitty job, but you knew I'd do it, anyway.

## RIP-- Rednecks in Pain.

Thrash lendeth itself naught to academia. No sense or even rhythm is discernible on this cassette without the aid of the lyric sheet. Once you study the marginalia, though, insights abound, e.g.: "I'm trapped in a town with a thousand men called Bubba."

I'm glad someone is doing monster hardcore deathsquad rock in Nashville, but I have a hankerin' for audible lyrics, it's the Hank in me. Take me back to the well-enunciated Replacements' *Stink* of yore. --TW

*ewwww*

"Rock music has one appeal only, a barbaric appeal, to sexual desire-- not love, not eros, but sexual desire undeveloped and untutored... In short, life is made into a nonstop, commercially prepackaged masturbational fantasy." --Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*

"Our 'boogie' comes from the Ki-Kongo mbugi, meaning 'devilishly good'... 'jazz' and 'jism' likely derive from the Ki-Kongo 'dinza', which means 'to ejaculate.'" --Michael Ventura, *L.A. Weekly*

## The Royal Court of China.

w/ Mr. Zero Cannery, 3/18/88

Mr Zero's singer looks like all the Temptations at once on acid in grey suit & black tie & they sound great & I can't decipher a damn word but oh well & with the FWJ's Lee Carr on guitar there is at least the appearance of a conflict of interest here as they say in the legal field in which I was until very recently employed. So I'll move on.

The Royal Court of China lurches Leviathan-like toward the proscenium, drummer Chris in a most regal purple, smoke billowing o'er the stage.

Yeah, I remember my first Styx concert.

Hype is forgivable if you deliver. They did. Ripping from a searing take of CCR's "Run Thru the Jungle" straight into "Take Me Down" and onward into a set that encompassed most of the stuff from their two albums, the newly revamped Royal Court won over hearts & minds faster than a Marine in Honduras with a pound of chewing gum.

Despite having worked in new members Drew Cornutt (bass) & Josh Weinberg (guitar) in the space of one month, the RCC put on a very tight set. If anything, too tight. Clearly the band had put a lot of work into making each song segue into the next, but the run-together effect overemphasized their lack of melodic variety. Joe Blanton is one of the more underrated rock lyricists in this town, but the group needs to set those lyrics more creatively.

There's still room for growth, but the RCC is on the way up. Their first A&M record exceeded expectations, and they proved here that their recent reshuffle was a very beneficial move. --TW

## The Cactus Brothers

Douglas Corner, 3/18/88

If you could buy stock in bands, I'd corner the market on the Cactus Brothers. Then I could boss these guys around & force them to focus all their energies on this acoustically-inclined cold hard country group, by far the more energetic, unpretentious and real of the two projects in which most of the Cacti are involved.

Alas, their rock band, Walk the West, has obligations to Capitol Records, which signed them at the tail end of the countrified-poseur binge that the labels went on in 1986. WTW aide Guy Marsh says to expect an album this year, by the way.

On this night, the Cactus Bros. packed Douglas Corner with little publicity and appeared to please the crowd's (continued on page 8)

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APRIL

LIVE MUSIC NIGHTLY

8TH JOHN JACKSON  
RHYTHM ROCKERS

14TH TOM OYANS  
STRANGE RANGERS

22ND HAL NEWMAN  
MYSTICS OF TIME

29TH TONI PRICE  
JAM WRANGLERS

30TH RHYTHM PIGEONS

WED. HOPPIE VAUGHN  
THE WEEBILLS

TUE. WRITERS NIGHT



## Aren't You Ashamed of the Nashville Scene?

by Steve Morley

By now, most of the *Nashville Scene's* supposed constituency is aware that it's a lousy paper. But I had forgotten just how bad until I came across the wrongheaded "review" that Bruce Honick recently gave Nashville songstress Nanci Griffith's *Little Love Affairs*.

Because Honick "just knew her second album would catapult her to stardom," he was deflated to find that Griffith's LP, in his estimable opinion, offered "not a potential hit in the bunch." Honick's pompously assured attitude that commercialism is the main factor in judging an album is the kind of babble that qualifies the *Scene* as such an effective cat box liner. He fails to recognize that artists, unlike *Scenesters*, write their copy before they sell the ads.

The truly astonishing part of the so-called review is the schizophrenic manner in which it applies the ax to Griffith while professing devotion in grandiose terms: "Once she gets that first hit under her belt, and America falls in love with her (as I have), Nancy Griffith will become one of the most important singer-songwriters in the annals of country music. But this will never come to pass if she persists in forsaking commercialism for art."

Just for the record, I'm not a big Nanci Griffith fan. I'm not here to defend her or her work, though I do respect her dedication to her artistic path.

Honick concludes: "pretention does not belong on a Nanci Griffith record." It does, however, appear to belong in the *Nashville Scene*.

**CACTUS** (continued from p.5) about-equally divided young & old sectors-- some of whom presumably had learned and others never forgotten that the fiddle, dulcimer and lap steel are not disreputable instruments, no matter what Ronstadtish nightmare productions they may adorn in the world of Glitter Country.

Maybe it was Tramp's buckdancing routine that won me over, or the Brothers' fiddlefied rendition of Zep's "Rock and Roll" or lead man Paul Kirby's awarding of little plastic cowboys and split-rail fences to those devotees brave enough to square dance.

Somehow these guys have managed to blend pre-kitsch country energy with just the slightest trace of a punkish smirk, and tossed in some decent songwriting skills while they were at it. I can only term the result **delightful**.

Maybe I'll buy stock in whichever wise record company signs the Cactus Brothers. --TW

### Mad Hog-- Dessau.

I'm the only *FWJ* staffer who likes dance music, so for once they let me review an album, which they don't usually since I like everything too much.

I love *Mad Hog*. I'm not helping my credibility at all, but I really think it is one the best records of its kind. Intense, relentless, dark dance music from hell complete with satan's vox mouthing wonderfully enigmatic lyrics and a solid, hounding wall of background noise.

The production, which can make or break dance music, is clean and tight. Admittedly, the use of newsreel ("Skeletons by Nature") is a little tired. And the remixed "Unshakeable" has had all the

charming bugs taken out of it. But if the clubs don't jump on this one, they're crazed.

The album gives you screams, whoops, hollering tape loops, newsreel, hairy voices, backwards music, nightmares, solid walls of drums and someone banging on a pizza pan all the way through "Skeletons by Nature."

All of which adds up to a pace and a sound so frenetic that you've got to dance to shake the angst, but it's too fast for dancing cause I learned to dance with the Jacksons but you can't help it and you'll just have to find a new way to dance. --NP

We at the *FWJ* recently weeded out our record collections for albums to sell so that we might put out another issue of this publication.

In the process, we noticed that most of the artists' names begin with letters A-P, and the end of the alphabet is under-represented.

Sure, the end of the alphabet is stuck with some loser letters like Q, X and Z, but then there are prolific artists like James Taylor, Rolling Stones, U-2 and Talking Heads to take up the slack. Still, less than a third of the collection is in the last half of the alphabet.

What is the reason for this? Enlighten us by writing to the *FWJ* and we'll publish the answers in a forthcoming issue.

 **The Fireplace Whiskey Journal**

*Parties Responsible:*

Lee Carr      diXie Kupp  
J. VanOrden    Nicki Pendleton  
Tom Wood

*Unindicted Co-Conspirators:*

Regina Gee      Steve Morley  
Clark Parsons    Luke Warm

Contact us at:

154-B Woodmont Boulevard  
Nashville, TN. 37205

Phone: (615) 298-4716



## whiskey shots



--Elliston Square is undergoing a change of ownership. Tommy Smith, co-owner (along with his father) and proprietor of the cozily ambient nightspot, cites a desire to spend more time with his family as his primary motive for leaving. Smith did not disclose the buyer's identity.

-- The first outdoor Cat's concert in three years was quite an event, according to the few survivors we at the *FWJ* spoke with. First up was **Clockhammer**, who were in the middle of a fantastic set when all of a sudden **21 Guns** jumped onstage and kicked Clockhammer's ass, then they jumped offstage, kicked the entire audience's ass, then kicked their own ass, and then **Guilt** bounded onto the stage and threw wine bottles at the audience while the crew, in an effort to halt West End traffic, climbed onto the billboard and chipped their teeth. In the meantime, **Grandmaster E** got onto the stage while **Mr. Zero** held up the Kwik Sak and Mrs. Zero had to go make bail. By that time, **21 Guns** had gone to Sal's and kicked **LA Guns**' ass in an attempt to acquire more hair. Luckily, **Simmonz** had been in the back of the club sipping tea when the members of **LA Guns** wanted to kick Simmonz's ass. Then **Jet Black Factory** got onstage and it rained and they became **Wet Black Factory** and they played under a plastic bubble.

-- **Rumble Circus**'s first video is in the can, as the much-gabbed-about locals continue to shop for a record deal. Nashvillean Knox White was at the camera for the band's cinematic interpretation of a cut called "Scarce and Scatter."  
-- **MTM Records** "has dissolved its rock division," says the label's Scott Borchetta. "I can't

tell you that we are not going to be in the rock business," says MTM's Sandy Neese. Somewhere between the doubletalk and the truth are the label's two rock acts, **In Pursuit** and **Hege V**. Each were expected to release LPs this year, following up on excellent but commercially lackluster albums that each released in 1987.

Our sources report that **In Pursuit**'s record may be issued through a development arrangement with another label. Hege V's George Hamilton V, meanwhile, is laying down tracks currently for a record likely to be released through MTM's country division. The new material, says George, has a "surf-guitar-meets-Ghost-Riders-in-the-Sky" sound, *a la* Steve Earle and Foster & Lloyd; Bill Lloyd, in fact, is co-producing. "The line between country and rock is a dotted line," asserts Hamilton, "and you can pass back and forth now without being Kenny Rogers." The album will probably come out under George's name-- "Hege V" having been judged to be too similar to Kenny G, Sheila E et al. But George caught shit recently in *Billboard* for contemplating recording under his own name. The mag insinuated that he was invoking the name of his father, country star George Hamilton IV, for purposes of nepotism. "If the name gets in the way, I'll change it to John the Baptist," he says, a little frustrated.

-- Athens roadtrip time! **Jason and the Scorchers** will headline a campuswide-party gig at the U. of Ga. on Friday night, May 13. The band has no plans to let Nashville see its new 5-piece lineup in the near future, so true diehards will have to make the jaunt.

## The Fireplace Whiskey Journal

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Views expressed are those of individual writers and do not necessarily express the positions of the *FWJ* as a whole. (Fr'instance, the Editor likes Dessau & thinks bang shang-a-lang sounds kinda hot as long as the guy with the dark hair does the singing; Randy Fox differs.) Send SASE with unsolicited manuscripts if you want 'em back. Marca Registrada. Sic semper tyrannis. Et cetera.

## EXPOSURES

PHOTOGRAPHY



(615) 297-1456



# RETURN of the BRADY BUNCH

a short play by Lee A. Carr

**SCENE ONE:** The familiar theme song opens and we see the girls' bedroom, just as we remember it. Same frilly curtains, psychedelic posters, stuffed animals, and of course, Marcia's trophies and awards (which still make Jan quite jealous). Marcia, Jan and Cindy are lounging on their respective beds, looking at the latest photographs of teen idol Davy Jones.

## CURTAIN

**Marcia:** Would you look at these FAB PIX AND FAX about Davy? He has the grooviest smile.

**Jan:** And the cutest hair! Golly, he's the dreamiest!

**Cindy:** That wimp? Give me a major break! My God, he's such a candyass. Now give me Iggy Pop anyway. I'll bet he's hung like a Clydesdale!

**Marcia:** Pay no attention to the BABY, Jan. Honestly Cindy, will you ever grow up?

**Cindy:** Fuck you, Marcia. This isn't 1972 anymore and our careers have died violent deaths since then.

**Marcia:** Hey, hold on now, I was in that movie with all the car chases through the swamp!

**Jan:** Yeah, and I played in *Portrait of a Teenage Hooker*.

**Cindy:** Yeah, but that's about it. At least I've got steady work in the porn industry.

**Marcia:** Cindy, look at yourself! You're a mess! Why, just look at all the bruises and scars all over your arms! And those frequent nosebleeds you keep having are certainly not ladylike. You've bleached your hair to hell and back, and your buttocks are not as firm as they used to be.

**Cindy:** God, how did I end up in such a Squaresville family? I just wanted to be in show business, but our singing career as "The Silver Platters" was an insipid farce. Greg threw away a perfectly legitimate career just because he wouldn't change his name to "Johnny Bravo". I just can't even get a break! Here, Jan, tie me off. (*Hands Jan a leather belt and a syringe*).

*As they struggle with Cindy's paraphernalia, Alice's familiar voice calls from the stairs...*

**Alice:** Oh girls! Come and get it before I have to throw it out!!

**Girls:** Coming, Alice!

## CURTAIN



Thur/June 9, 8 PM	Gladys Knight & The Pips Alexander O'Neal
Wed/June 15, 8 PM	John Cougar Mellencamp
Sat/June 18, 1 PM	KDF's One for the Sun
Fri/June 24, 8 PM	Randy Travis, The Judds Tammy Wynette
Sat/June 25, 8 PM	30th Anniversary of Rock 'N' Roll
Wed/June 29, 8 PM	Herbie Hancock Chick Corea
Wed/July 6, 8 PM	Heart, Michael Bolton
Fri/July 8, 8 PM	Dan Fogelberg The Magical Strings
Sat/July 9, 9 AM	McDonald's & WTVF-5's A Children's Fair
Tue/July 12, 8 PM	Rod Stewart
Thur/July 14, 8 PM	Dirty Dancing Tour
Fri/July 15, 8 PM	Reba McEntire Steve Wariner
Sun/July 17, 8 PM	Mikhail Baryshnikov & Company
Tue/July 19, 8 PM	Billy Ocean
Wed/July 20, 8 PM	Bruce Hornsby & The Range
Fri/July 22, 8 PM	Bob Dylan The Alarm
Sat/July 23, 8 PM	Jimmy Buffett
Sat/July 30, 8 PM	Chicago
Wed/Aug 3, 8 PM	Tiffany
Thur/Aug 4, 8 PM	Del Leppard Europe
Sat/Aug 6, 8 PM	Steve Winwood
Tue/Aug 9, 8 PM	Sting
Sat/Aug 13, 8 PM	James Taylor
Sat/Aug 20, 8 PM	O'Jays & The Temptations
Sun/Aug 21, 8 PM	AC/DC
Fri/Aug 26, 8 PM	Merle Haggard Willie Nelson
Sat/Aug 27, 8 PM	Kenny Loggins
Fri/Sept 9, 8 PM	Barry Manilow
Sat/Sept 24, 1 PM	WSM's Fall Fest
Sat/Oct 8, 8 PM	George Strait

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# A Wistful Look Back at the Skinhead Era

by Kath Hansen

Rick Champion doesn't want to be called the "Godfather of Nashville Rock." But the tag seems to suit him: he's responsible for many of the events that have transformed this city from a bucolic country music haven into one of America's most watched and respected rock scenes. Rick has made a name for himself as the manager and booking agent for the city's first real rock club, Phrank n' Stein's, as booking agent for the now-it-seems-legendary Cantrell's, and in his present capacity as manager of Raging Fire. He's become known as a cultural trendsetter locally, having latched onto the bands he believed in long before anyone else would give a listen. I talked with Rick recently about the beginnings of the Nashville rock scene, the record business, and the future of our city's rock and roll.

**FWJ:** What were the reasons you got involved in the Nashville music scene?

**RC:** Well, I had mostly political reasons. In the mid-70's I

went to school. I didn't have anything to do with Nashville-- I lived by myself and worked in a warehouse. I've always been a music lover, but I just didn't like mid-70's music... I listened to old psychedelic records at the time. The punk thing caught my attention because of its youthful rebellion, its attitude, and its attack on rock and roll as being stale. The industry had made it so slick....

My first encounter with any Nashville rock musicians was when I was working in the Gusto Records warehouse. That's where I met they guys in Cloverbottom. They were sorta goofin' around about putting a band together and so I said, "Well if you put a band together, I'll get you a show." And just by coincidence, I had a friend that used to throw darts at this club called Phrank 'n Stein's. It was a folkie bar. The White Animals were playing there, but they were an acoustic folk band at the time. This was around '78-'79. Well, anyway, the first time I walked in it hit me that the place could be the ultimate cavern rock and roll club.

These people that I'd met the first night I went there had recently bought Phrank 'n Stein's and, as it was, they were trying to make it into a rock club. And that's when they started booking Cloverbottom there.

With Cloverbottom, we really didn't know what we were doing-- we had no business angle, no paths to follow. It was like "Record deal? What's that?" But we did take promo tapes around and people would say "You have to leave town, *now!*" This was 10 years ago, before Music Row had any "hip" people. There was a real hostility against rock and roll in Nashville. We learned pretty quickly that the business people saw Nashville as being for country and New York and L.A. for rock. Period.

**FWJ:** What did you and Cloverbottom do about it?

**RC:** We said, "This is bullshit. Nashville is one of the top recording centers in the world-- why should we have to go anywhere?"

**FWJ:** You took over Phrank 'n Stein's and turned it into a rock club?

**RC:** Yeah... the owners came up to me one night around January 1980 and said "We're gonna sell the club back to the original owners." And that's when it hit me that I needed to manage this club. So I went in with these people and started booking bands there. I'm not trying to pat myself on the back here, but at this point, I think I did change the way shows are put on in Nashville. You see, before Phrank's, there were no opening bands. If you were hot, you got to play on Friday or Saturday nights as the house band, three or four sets a night. I changed that when I



★ America's youth, circa 1981: Jeff Johnson (left), later of Jason & the Scorchers, and Richie Owens, later of the Movement, appearing as The Resistors in the GooGoo factory parking lot.



started booking a different band every weekend-- with an opening band. Managing Phrank's was great 'cause I had this pretty good paying day job. I had no real financial worries except "How much money do I have left over to buy drugs at the end of the month?" Ha ha.

**FWJ:** What kinds of bands did you book? There really weren't a whole lot of rock bands in Nashville at the time, were there?

**RC:** You'd be surprised... the punks came out of the woodwork once I let it be known that I'd let 'em play. I mean, I was feeding these kids, letting them rehearse here. Not so sound nostalgic, but I watched a scene develop. And it was, like any other scene, completely by accident. A certain clique of people just started hanging together and it just happened to be around punk music that they were focused. I mean, it happened kinda late in Nashville, but it did happen. And it was definitely cool to watch.

**FWJ:** Who were the first Nashville "punk" bands?

**RC:** There were about 10 or 12 bands that would have been considered punk or even rock and roll at the time. Around 1980 there were bands like File 13, the Ratz, Cloverbottom, Actuals, Dessau, Jap Sneakers, the Hots, the Electric Boys - that was Jeff

Johnson and Warner Hodges who later evolved into the Nashville Scorchers.

**FWJ:** That was before my time. What were they like?

**RC:** The Electric Boys? Oh, they were probably the best punk band in town. You see, Jeff and Warner coined the term "country punk" before any journalist knew what it was. They started doing punk versions of Hank Williams songs. Jeff could play circles around any guitarist in Nashville-- he taught Warner how to play.

**FWJ:** Why did Phrank 'n Stein's close down?

**RC:** We had this police raid back in '81. There were lots of underage people in the club, some drugs, so they closed us down. We all have a fond memory of being closed down, getting taken downtown and all. It was cool 'cause I didn't get to run the club for three years and get where I'd have to make a lot of compromises to keep it going. We got *raided!*

**FWJ:** Cantrell's became the new punk hangout?

**RC:** Well, it didn't start out to be a punk club. It used to be that the White Animals and Dave Olney would play on the weekends. But then some touring shows started coming through Nashville-- bands like the Brains, the Producers. Cantrell's was the natural place for those shows to happen. Eventually I got to book

Cantrell's four or five nights per week, but we didn't really want to compete with other clubs in town because the rock audience was still pretty small. One night I had to book a show and it happened to be the same night as the Volunteer Jam. The idea occurred to me: "Why not book three or four bands to play just as a take off on the whole Vol-Jam thing?" I wanted to call it the "Dysentery Jam," but [owner] Terry Cantrell was totally flipped out over that, so we called it the Alternative Jam.

I guess Cantrell's became the new "punk" place in Nashville 'cause there wasn't anywhere else for the crowd to go. The Exit/In was a songwriters' showcase club--very laid back. And Elliston Square was an arcade-- no music at all. Cantrell's was it.

**FWJ:** What do you think of the current state of affairs in the Nashville rock scene?

**RC:** Nashville's scene is now fulfilling what it started out to be 10 years ago. We've all learned a lot, and we've had to make some compromises in order to gain success.

**FWJ:** And the scene is a lot less unified as a result.

**RC:** That unification had broken down years ago. It's the nature of "scenes." Scenes depend upon not being successful, and they depend upon the fact that something is truly happening at a certain

*continued on page 14*

## Ruminations on a Rock Relic . . .

The other day I ran across the June, 1983 number of the Nashville Intelligence Report. Anybody remember the NIR? Andy Anderson's chronicle of the Nashville subculture lasted maybe 30 rollicking pre-desktop-publishing-technology issues. Here we are in mid-1983. That's five years ago. 35 in dog years. Damn near the paleozoic era in rock & roll years. News from the 6/83 NIR:

\* A Flock of Seagulls' singer reveals (in an exclusive interview) that he uses AquaNet hairspray.

\* Jason & the Nashville Scorchers to release Fervor; story by freelancer Rick Hull cites band's "uneasy union of religious and sexual fervor"

\* "A hot new reggae-ska band from Murfreesboro called Freedom of Expression makes its local debut on Wed. 6/29 at Cantrell's."

\* White Animals' new single "Don't Care" is out.

\* Practical Stylists headline NIR benefit; \$400 raised.

\* Cat's Records on West End advertises new hip releases:

Southern Death Cult, New Order, O' Jays, Tears for Fears.

\* The Brains breaking up; "drummer Magellan went to the Satellites, another Atlanta band."

\* Local punkers CPS to play "Rock Against Reagan" festival in Atlanta; "I don't count on people killing each other," states CPS's David Willie, questioned about audience violence at the group's shows. --TW





EVERY MONDAY IN JUNE-- THE THIEVES

- 1st: REBEL-100 Rock Night with Shaking Family and Sheba's Breakdown
- 2nd: Velvet Elvis w/GoGo Surreal
- 3rd: John Jackson
- 4th: Unitz
- 7th: Drink or Drown with New Dinosaurs
- 8th: Delbert McClinton
- 10th: The Nerve
- 11th: Drivin' n' Cryin'
- 13th: Slammin' Watusis
- 14th: Drink or Drown with 11:59
- 15th: Buzz Henderson & the Shuffle Kings
- 17th: Radio One
- 18th: John Jackson
- 20th: Rave-Ups
- 21st: Drink or Drown with Anson & the Rockets
- 24th: Kingsnakes
- 25th: Love Tractor
- 30th: Businessmen

## TALKING WITH RICK...

(Continued from page 11)

time between a collection of people. I get upset sometimes 'cause people get these nostalgic throwbacks to Phrank 'n Stein's days. I never get that. I know what I did, I know what it was and I'm glad it's over.

**FWJ:** When did you realize that Nashville rock had become a business?

**RC:** At the first NEA [Nashville Entertainment Association] Extravaganza. I think everybody realized it then. This was three years ago. Suddenly, the Nashville music industry was faced with the realization that so-called underground music had gone "BOOM." And it was the biggest music-related fund raiser this town had ever seen. It was like saying "Try to ignore us now." These days, some Music Row people get off work and go down to Elliston Square to see Clockhammer. Rock has crossed over into the country sector mainly because the Music Row people have realized that, hey, you can make money this way, too.

**FWJ:** And the major labels' attitudes about Nashville have changed a lot.

**RC:** Yeah. They used to think we wore overalls and stuff! But I'm finding that it is harder for a Nashville band to get an independent deal than it is to get a major label deal. It's weird: now that bands like Walk the West and the Scorchers and the Royal Court of China are with big labels, the indies are afraid to sign a band from Nashville. Maybe it's because we're not obscure enough for them anymore! But major label reps are constantly coming through town to look at bands these days.

**FWJ:** Is there a "Nashville sound?"

**RC:** No, I don't think so. I mean, all the record companies come to town trying to sign another Scorchers, but that's not gonna happen. But that whole country rock tag has really stuck with us for some reason, even though we've got bands like Mr. Zero and Dessau. I guess it's the whole Nashville heritage thing. But that's changing, gradually. I mean, eight years ago, who'd have thought we'd be where we are? Today we've got bands moving here from all over. The Nashville scene has become as crummy, as good, as loose, as tight as any scene anywhere else. Actually, I think that as a scene, Nashville is very, very strong right now. We're lucky to have the pool of talent we've got here. I give the people here more hell than anyone else, but at the same time, I'll always defend these people.

**FWJ:** Why?

**RC:** Because life without rock and roll sucks...

## EXPOSURES

PHOTOGRAPHY



(615) 297-1456



# The fringe competes for attention

by Pete Wilson

# or + when the press is truly free

A while back, before I joined the *FWJ* staff, I was picking up the issue with Mike Dukakis seiging heil on the cover just as some woman was taking a *Metro*. I took the opportunity to hand her a *FWJ*, saying, "Take this, too; it's really good." The woman looked at it as if it were an eight dollar bill. I can only imagine what she would have looked like if Ivan Stang has handed her one of the publications mentioned in his new book, *High Weirdness by Mail*.

Because they are pretty wild. The book is subtitled "A Directory of the Fringe: Mad Prophets, Crackpots, Kooks & True Visionaries," and Stang means it. Himself a bigwig in the tongue-in-cheek "cult" of the Church of the Sub-genius, Stang is attuned to the outer wavelengths of the spectrum of ideas. Publications described in this book, which conscientiously gives addresses, include: a sort of *Tiger Beat* for lurid violence aficionados entitled *Murder Can Be Fun*; a scientific journal covering *Weekly World News*-style topics like bleeding statues and human combustion with "wry humor and intelligence," called *Fortean Times*; comics (many available at the Great Escape, which is the only place I've seen the book itself so far) like *Flaming Carrot*, *Roadkill*, and *Cannibal Romance*. There's also a listing for an anti-circumcision broadside called *A Small Voice Crying Out in the Wilderness*.

Stang divides the universe of non-mainstream thought into 20 galaxies, which we might as well list a few of so you'll get the

picture: Weird Science, Jesus Contactees and other "Channels," Health/Self-Improvement and Schemes/Scams, New Age Saps, Cosmic Hippie Drug-Brother Stuff, Weird Politics, Weird Art, Rantzines, Comics, Great Badfilm and Sleaze, The Audiocassette Revolution and Rudeness and the War Between the Sexes.

Also offered is a thorough explanation of how all this info was gathered and some helpful hints on getting hold of these rags. Stang suggests getting a post office box to receive all these things in order to keep the Moonies or the Falwellites--or the FBI-- from coming to call. It pains me to admit that I haven't yet sent off for anything I found in this book. I can vouch from past experience for some of the stuff, though. The comics of Raymond Pettibone, the dark genius who drew most of Black Flag's record covers, are included. So are Harvey Pekar's pioneering autobiographical comic book *American Splendor* and a brilliant, obnoxious and highly politically incorrect punk fanzine called *Forced Exposure*. Most of the truly dangerous material in here I'm unfamiliar with, but I'm sure it's of the highest quality and intensity, from Christian fascism to Mansonian anarchy. Read this book and have a ball.



## The Bonus Review

The Dusters, Red Hot and Ready to Roll.

Listening to blues on a record is something like watching sex on film. Same thing over and over again. Kinda boring. Same thing over and over again. But with either one of these noble activities, when you're right there in the fray, nothing is more exciting.

So what I wish for the Dusters and every other blues artist is that there were a good way to capture their live sound on vinyl. "Red Hot and Ready to Roll" is a fine EP if you're familiar with the Dusters. If you love the group, or any pared-down blues, these songs will bring back the memory of how great the stuff is when it is performed live.

Personally, I wish they would add another guitarist. Ken McMahan's voice overpowers the single guitar. Even a steel guitar would be cool. But I suggested this to him one night and he didn't think it was such a great idea. So much for advice.

"Red Hot" is fine product from the Dusters, but it suffers the blues plague, indeed, the scourge of all native and folk musics - by the time it gets onto vinyl, it's a shadow of its former self. --NP

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# dear diXie Kupp

William Bennett, U.S. Education Secretary, keeps saying that if the U.S. wants Japan to quit taking away its business, it's gotta be more competitive in schools, and he wants them overhauled, one subject at a time. diXie wants her name in the hat to renovate mathematics.

See, what math teachers never get across to the ordinary student in all the talk of sets and x and y is that anyone can find out anything with mathematics, because anything can be an equation.

People use math all the time without knowing it. When I skate with the Antioch Ladies Flaming Wheels, I use math to figure the top speed and how close I can get to a rival skater to throw her off balance without actually fouling.

Probably the most common encounter with complex mathematics is do-it-yourself carpeting. Folks who can't spell "algebra" use it without realizing to figure how long each carpet strip should be, how many rolls of carpet and boxes of tacks to buy, and the total cost. When the situation is real life, math comes as naturally as breathing.

To illustrate, diXie developed a formula that will yield the probability that a couple will go home at any given point during a night on the town.

The Probability (P) that a couple will go home at any point in the evening is a function of the Sobriety factors (S) of the two parties ( $S_1 + S_2$ ), where (S) is a number on a scale of 1 to 10, multiplied by the Hour (H), which is calculated on a special 24-hour clock, where noon = zero. Then multiply by the Bitch factor (B), the measure of friction between you two if you stay out versus go home, on a 1 to 10 scale. Then divide the whole thing by the Activity factor (A), or the interest value of the possible activities if you stay out. On a scale of 1 to 10, are the possible activities interesting enough to keep you from going home? The raw equation looks like this:

$$P = \frac{(S_1 + S_2)(H)(B)}{A}$$

So you're out and it's early, 6 p.m., which on our specially calibrated clock gives an H value of 6. Both parties are sober, yielding  $S_1=1$  and  $S_2=1$ . Both of you are ripping to have some fun and there will be no friction at all if you don't go home. So the Bitch value is very low, 1. There is a terrific band playing a

free show later, so the Activity value is 1, that is, something worth staying up for. That combination of factors yields this equation:

$$\text{The probability that you will go home (P)} = \frac{(1+1)(6)(1)}{1} = 12$$

meaning that the likelihood that you will go home is very low.

Here's another scenario to test the equation. Say one of you is slightly unsober and the other is somewhat soberer, resulting in (S) values of 7 and 4. The hour is getting late, say 1 a.m., yielding an (H) value of 13 on our special clock. There is a great party going on at a friend's house, so the Activity value is a fairly high 4. But one of you desperately wants to go home to bed, so the B factor is 5, since the one who wants to sleep will complain about going to a party. The Probability that you will go home is  $\frac{(7+4)(13)(5)}{4} = 178.75$

meaning that it is very likely that you will go home.

For the advanced student, there is T, the trauma square, which factors in incidents so extraordinary that they change the course of an evening. Suppose for instance that you're headed home and Ed Meese pulls up next to you at a stoplight and invites you to a party with some of his friends. In cases of positive trauma, divide the final product (178.75 in the previous example) by the trauma element, which is high, since Meese may soon be a scarce commodity, so say the value is 9, yielding 19.86, which dramatically ups the odds that you will take Mr. Meese up on his offer. Other events that fall into this group include winning money, running into a long lost sibling or discovering the entrance to Middle Earth.

Now go back to the first scenario and imagine that as you are driving to hear this terrific band for free, you are aggressively forced off the road by a band of badboy outlaw phone company workers on matching bicycles. This is very traumatic and you are shaken. In this case of negative trauma, square or cube the equation. Squaring the first answer gives 24, which means that you are twice as likely to go home. Other events in this group include a nuclear attack or being pulled over for DUI.

Work this equation and make America more competitive.

Dear diXie:  
Geez, when I graduated from college, the



speaker was a dude from the AFL-CIO, not some celeb like Ollie North! I heard his next gig is at Managua High. Is this true? --A. Theist

Dear Theist:

Don't fret; the U. of Wisconsin had Captain Kangaroo slated to speak until the students voted him out at the last minute. He was understandably hurt at rejection by 15,000 people he had helped raise.

I don't understand the concept of the celebrity commencement speaker. I suspect it developed because no one in the student body of a huge school ever recognized the chancellor when he got up to speak. But everyone has famous speakers now, making celebs very scarce that time of year. Be glad you got the AFL-CIO instead of someone like Ray Blanton.

As for Ollie, I heard that his next stop was Oral Roberts University.

## Confessions of a Muzak Musician Malcolm Glass

for Steve Dunning

I don't tell many. I have a family, my kids to think of. But you seem a reasonable sort. You'll understand when I say it's only a job, just another gig. And I like to think of the millions, maybe billions, even, who hear me on that tenor. Look, how much work you think there is for a reed man in that soulful, heavy metal world out there? I'm history, as they say. My kind went out with the war. I mean The War. I bought my tombstone when Glenn packed it in over there. Bless his soul. You know, one time I found myself in a phone booth dialing that number just to see who'd answer. God, I prayed to hear June Allison on the other end, but it was busy, for Chrissake. Pennsylvania six, five thousand busy. Can you believe that? It gave me a kind of hope, getting something on the other end. I never tried it again, though. Hey, I'm all for style myself. But the guys who arrange these elevator ditties, they know better. You want music people hear and never listen to? You give them all the old cliches watered down to a common denominator. No surprises to jar anybody out of that mood they're in, mindlessly pulling out the green to fork it over. So it's a job, these sessions. I've seen better days, I'll grant you that. At least I'm not on the road with some four-bit circus. We'll spend the day locked in the studio. Nothing to it. They put the music in front of you. You play.

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## Fetishes on Parade

--Doreen De'ath spruced up the coffin of her husband, Ron, last September in Westcliff, Wales, using decorative marital aids from his sex shop after he accidentally hanged himself in a nude bondage game.

## NEWS OF THE WEIRD

--Sheriff's deputies sought a man who fled his home in Hesperia, Calif., as they tried to question him. The man, Corey Cragg, had buried more than a dozen cars and trucks on his desert property. Neighbors had watched Cragg for months industriously bury the vehicles with a backhoe. "He was a busy, busy boy," said one deputy who was called in March when a neighbor finally alerted authorities after watching Cragg bury an almost-new car.

--James Bruce Meyer, 17, of Augusta, Ga., was jailed in March after police found the remains of a Confederate Army major, dead for 125 years and stolen last year from a nearby cemetery, in his home.

--When the Environmental Protection Agency announced in September that dioxin had been found in ordinary white toilet paper, it received a query from a man who had been eating toilet paper for over 20 years, requesting help in finding a safe brand to eat. (EPA assured the man that the traces of dioxin did not pose a health hazard.)

## The Continuing Crisis

--Two employees of an Anchorage, Alaska, animal shelter resigned after being accused of making unauthorized meals of two rabbits and a rooster scheduled to be put to sleep. They were charged with taking animals without paying the adoption fee.

--A Baldoyle, Ireland, private school suffering through budget problems recently asked students to bring their own toilet paper.

--Two University of Colorado (Boulder) sociologists, using FBI statistics in a Gerontology magazine article, concluded that the elderly, when arrested, are 50 percent more likely to be arrested for violent crimes than are younger people.

--The president of a commodities firm with a seat on the New York Stock Exchange was arrested after he set up cocaine free-basing apparatus (ether, butane and a torch) in the lavatory of an Eastern Airlines flight from New York to Miami in March.

--Both the winner and the first runner-up in the 1987 Miss Minnesota-U.S.A. contest had criminal records for shoplifting, and both eventually resigned from office; Miss Kentucky-U.S.A. competed despite her January arrest in Nashville on drunk-driving charges.

--John Wayne Gacy, 45, on death row in Illinois for killing 33 young men and boys, announced his engagement on Feb. 28 to Sue Terry, 43, of Centralia, Ill. Said Terry, who is the mother of eight children, of the charges against Gacy, "I don't believe hardly any of it."

--To nurse a heroin addiction, Mary Beth Lara, 36, of Santa Ana, Calif., sent her parents a total of 150 kidnap notes over a two-year period, during which time they paid \$350,000 to have her released. The father died of a heart attack recently while clutching the last of the notes.

--In Stockholm, a subway people-mover maintenance man was charged with assault on 632 people for turning up the speed to see how fast the people-mover had to move before walkers would hop on. Disgusted that some people still preferred to walk, he got the people-mover up to over 50 mph, causing riders to be slammed into a restraining wall.

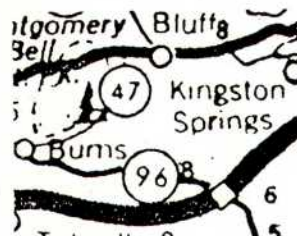
--Just before sending off the final tape of the TV movie The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, the National Captioning Institute discovered that one of its editors, apparently unfamiliar with Nazi Germany, had typed, as the crowd chanted after every salute, "Hi, Hitler!" rather than "Heil Hitler!"

--A recent sample of airborne pollen in West Los Angeles taken by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America revealed that 40 percent of the weed pollens were from marijuana.

--Last fall, a student worker at Washington University (St. Louis) law school accidentally shredded the final exams of 113 students in an evidence class before they were graded.

--When the body of Karl Brauer was cremated in Forst, West Germany, this winter, the fire caused his implanted pacemaker to explode, setting off a chain reaction that leveled half a city block before it was brought under control. --Chuck Shepherd





# AN AMERICAN IN NASHVILLE

Poor Fred.

He earned his stripes at the *New York Times*, became a dependable law authority on CBS, and now has been snubbed by the rubes he was honoring with his living room presence.

Yes, that movement of the Earth's surface you felt recently beneath your feet was due to the relocation of Fred Graham from local anchor to some sort of nebulous "great journalist and crusty character emeritus" position at WKRN (Channel 2, idiots). Now it's *deja vu* mueler, as Bob the mustache reclaims his anchor seat for the lowest rated station in town.

Maybe a car giveaway would help.

Speaking of bad taste: this citizen is still recovering from the display of high culture and intelligence known as "The Mayor's Art Auction." Staged during the Summer Lights Festival, the cavalcade of vacuity was a compelling argument for keeping art from the grubby hands of human enemas masquerading as civic leaders.

The honorable (sic) Bill Boner presided over the display, as underappreciated works by local artists were paraded in front of a crowd consisting of Ricky Skaggs fans, Roger Miller fans, Adolph Coors fans, a handful of shocked humans and yours truly.

Fresh from the cattle auction circuit, the auctioneers tried valiantly to get rid of each lovely "pitcher," but many were not even bid upon. Put it down to fate.

Yes, Sheriff Fate Thomas was there, seated on the steps up front and looking like a narcoleptic koala bear. He and Boner (yes, fate and a boner run this town) traded East Nashville trumpet blasts, as Thomas' platinum-headed cupcake tried to convince her comatose peacekeeper of a hubby to buy one of the non-selling "pitchers."

Word has it that next year, the awk-shun will include nudie calendars from concrete pipe manufacturers.

*(Continued on next page)*

*Coors*

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# AN AMERICAN IN NASHVILLE ...

Has anybody seen Dick Fulton?

While his presence seems likely, rumors abound that another former hero is in our midst. During Fan Fair Week (no comment) several media organizations were tipped that someone was wandering around Fan Fair incognito.

ELVIS.

The King reportedly had a facelift, and was mingling anonymously with the crowd. While many among the intelligentsia may doubt this assertion, the facts lead one to a conclusion of utter indecision.

Fact. Just before Fan Fair, a local farmer reported sighting a U.F.O.-- the sighting was given special credence by a *National Enquirer* caliber editorial in *The Tennessean*. Sounds like Elvis.

Fact. The day after the tip was received, electrical power to the State Fairgrounds, the whole Fan Fair Festival, was shut off for over an hour. Authorities blame a faulty transformer. Blame Elvis.

Fact. On the very same day, the Sun disappeared, and temperatures plummeted to record lows. No kidding. Check your almanacs, doubting Thomases.

Fact. The #1 selling album at the Fan Fair record store was by Ricky Van Shelton. "Insignificant," you snort. Scramble the letters of his name and see who laughs. ELVIS OK. TRY CHANN is the message. Now, loop it by joining the final word with the beginning again. ELVIS OK. TRY CHANNELVIS OK. TRY CHANNEL 5 IS OK. TRY CHANNEL 5 IS OK. The rest is up to you. Is this a rendezvous code, or does the King just prefer Chris Clark and Brenda Blackmon over Fred Graham, like most of Nashville's TV-watching swine?

Poor Fred.

Speaking of having the chair pulled out from under one's buttocks, several schedule changes of note should be brought to your short attention spans.

The fabled Monsters of Rock concert, originally scheduled for Friday July 8, has been moved to Saturday, July 9. The shift was apparently due to many ticket buyers' complaints that they'd miss the Friday night PBS lineup and C-SPAN's broadcast of Dukakis' speech of the day.

Another erasure for the calendars is the September completion date for the Nashville City Center's first tower downtown. The new structure, taking shape at 6th and Union, is deemed too risky for Nashville's architectural tastes. Designers had apparently failed to include some silly gimmick in the design to make

the building stand out among skyscrapers.

While the Dominion building boasts white neon and a giant crustacean, the Third National resembles a lego Egyptian greenhouse, the American General is actually a giant Lite-Brite set, the Hyatt is home of Spacely's Space Sprockets and several upper-floor corners of the Stouffer were lopped off the keep it from looking like copy of the American General, the new structure boasts no idiosyncracies of design.

The date for completion has been moved back, and designers are plotting to let native artist Red Grooms adorn the structure with a giant smiley face.

Rumor has it that Tennessee is one of three lucky states on a super-secret list of final candidates for the proposed 50-mile superconducting super collider the Feds want to build. Landing the project could guarantee that all those dorkoid Vanderbilt engineering students opt to work here instead of plaguing General Motors in Detroit.

The Pistons were mugged.

So was Fred Graham.

Poor Fred.

--Addison DeWitt

## COMING SOON-- TO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD!



From A Past Remembered by Nashville historian Paul Clements: "There were those who remained in the background and reaped the financial benefits as the city grew at the expense of those who, without benefiting financially, were forced to spend extra hours in traffic each month, at the expense of those who, without benefiting financially, were the victims of a dramatically accelerating rate of crime, and at the expense of those who, despite the empty promises of local boosters of rapid expansion, faced the prospect of a swelling tax burden." Past tense?



# Pop Life



by Kath Hansen

Have you ever noticed that Debbie Gibson looks a heckuva lot like Olivia Newton-John? And just where is Livvy these days? Hmmmm...has anybody ever seen these two in the same room?

Not to be cool or anything, but when everybody was hailing The Clash and the Sex Pistols as the future of rock and roll, I was convinced it was a job strictly for The Fall. Not that I didn't revere The Clash and the Sex Pistols like a good lil' punk rocker; I did. But for sheer sonic architecture, The Fall just could not be touched by these bands. Hell, they were playing kazoos and cowbells by their second LP. And Mark E. Smith was always an even worse singer than Johnny Rotten.

On the sorta-new Fall album, *The Frenz Experiment*, the band does a complete 360-degree turnaround from where it started over a decade ago. I've learned--you should never trust a band. They'll either disappoint you or break up or do like The Fall did and let the singer's wife join the band. With this album, everything that was good about them has officially vanished, namely, their refusal to knuckle down under the threat of technology and their stubborn belief in the English proletariat. I mean, whose idea was it to let The Fall cover The Kinks' "Victoria"? Gosh, this is an even bigger bummer than when the Buzzcocks broke up and I wore black for a week.

There's really some decent Japanese metal out there, if you're interested in

looking. A friend played me an import by Japan's Meat Market called *Laughin' Nose* that about curled my chow mein. With some horribly obscene lyrics, the troopers-of-death nuclear guitar and lots of leather (and a foot-tall blonde mohawk), Meat Market wins my vote for most exotic headache metal makers of the year. Really--Loudness can suck their sushi.

There is nothing soulful about Steve Winwood anymore. He just happens to have the kind of voice that sells millions of records. And that won't change with his new one, *Roll With It*. I hear Steve Winwood has a part-time home in Nashville these days. Good. Maybe I'll run into him at Kroger's so I can ask him, "Gee, Steve, who writes your lyrics, Hallmark?" Bring back Chaka Khan.

Nothin' like a good rap. But a whole LP of good rap? Unheard of. The *Colors* soundtrack has so much variety and so much tempo-changing rhymability that I've been forced to update my general belief that an album-full of rap is boring. Shop-rockers like 7A3, Salt-n-Pepa, Rick James, Roxanne Shante and the ever-def Ice-T keep *Colors* from getting anywhere near tedious. Give us more rap records like this! Inspiration from Roxanne: "While you were over here perpetratin' a fraud, I was overseas on the charts with Boy George". *Huh*.

I remember my first encounter with the Mission UK. Singer Wayne Hussey was, shall we say, *feeling no pain*. He sat there and just stared at my shoes, hypnotized, for a

good five minutes before I finally got bugged and asked him "What the hell's your problem?" With the Mission's second LP, *Children*, I repeat this question to Mr. Hussey. What--do they think we've never heard Led Zeppelin before? Do they think we can't see through John Paul Jones' sox-in-yer-pants production only to find the goofiest lyrics since Donovan? Guess that's what they think. But then again, this is the band that has their drugs delivered to them on stage, on a silver platter, by a bow-tied dwarf.

God save the Queen. She gives us the Close Lobsters, hailing from some backwoods British village, knockin' at our door. Their LP, *Foxheads Stalk This Land*, is lovable for its title alone. But breathtakingly tuneful jangly (yes!) guitars, sleepyhead vocals and totally spontaneous arrangements pretty much defy you not to fall in love with this band. Not to mention lyrics with the word "transfiguration" in them. The comparison to the much-maligned but awfully original Orange Juice is pretty unavoidable. Even so, the Close Lobsters wear that near-patented OJ Crown of Naivete with something close to dignity. If you have ever felt like taking a bath in tonic water or divorcing yourself from the human race, listen to this record. You'll be kissing flowers and picking lips in no time.

Run Westy Run's *Hardly Not Even* wants to rave up and be interesting, but works way too hard at it and just winds up being so blase I



# more POP life

can't even describe it to you. Imagine the Meat Puppets without hooks. or FIREHOSE without charm. Imagine another bunch of limesuckers making another record to clog the drain that is college muzak. Imagine a world without clownholes. Imagine Run Westy Run is secretly bummed out that Journey broke up.

Nick Haeffner's *The Great Indoors* is the kind of music for people who think Disneyland and The Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper* have a lot more to do with reality than do either the 5 o'clock news or Washington, DC. Nick is basically a fruitcake--remember the first time you heard Julian Cope? Well, he's a little to the left of that extreme, but I bet he still uses squirtguns to kill flies and invents new lan-

guages in his spare time. And listens to plenty of XTC.

Weird shit of the month: Vanessa Williams, the Penthouse candidate for Miss America, has an album out. And it's not terrible. *The Right Stuff* is the name of her single and her LP, and its sure not the Vanessa who did "Blue Moon" at the Pageant. No, this girl's grown up. In control, thank you. I fully expect that her record will be around for at least as long as that last Pebbles tune.

Do you know what we at the FWJ do with records we are less than enchanted with? We stick them in the hot sun until they are nice and pliable and then we make hats out of them. We give these hats to diXie KuPP and she wears them around town. No shit.

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# Marginalia

Chet Atkins was accused of ruining country music by adding string sections. Dylan was accused of ruining folk by going electric. And with this issue the FWJ has traded in its 10-point Times Roman typeface for 9-point Palatino. Playing with fire, eh?

The type style is not the only thing we've changed with this issue, but it's one of the more noticeable steps we've taken as we have evolved up through the primordial slime of desktop publishing. Astute FWJologists will note a few other mutations. diXie kuPP is on vacation this month. Also, all of the music news we heard this month was either confidential or not exciting enough to print, so we have given "Whiskey Shots" a rest.

In place of these items, we are debuting our third new feature in the past two issues. Nicki's "Gallery Scene" column allows her to do the unheard-of: make practical use of her liberal arts education. Along with "An American in Nashville" and "Fireplace Flicks," it constitutes a step in the direction of diversity and versatility—a direction in which we have intended to grow since the first issue.

Speaking of departures: effective this issue, the FWJ is no longer going to be produced in partnership with REBEL-100. The very success of the joint venture has made it necessary for me to take on the FWJ as a full-time job. We got into the partnership because we had a common goal of supporting good music that might not toe the corporate line, and we still share that goal. Nashvilleans may not realize how lucky they are to have a station like REBEL-100 in town: a recent issue of the national trade mag *The Gavin Report* gushes that "REBEL-100 is truly one of the most experimental Album/Alternative hybrids in the USA.... [It] is not only the chief alternative in Country Music USA, but it represents the spirit of how important and diverse music is in Nashville."

## KRIPA

We used to say his wrists and hands closed in on the speed of light, and when they broke the barrier, his sticks would become solid wood, fan-shaped boards, and all the sound he ever made would fall upon us in an instant, an explosion unimaginable by man or god.

All we had of him was flat: photos, platters, and the sound squeezed through a single speaker, but we knew his power and control, the garish dazzle of gunfire and the molten sprays of sunstorms all compressed beyond sight in those grooves.

Such wildness the man gave us, accelerating on the curves; and such temperance, railing with reason: Listen, he said, to this chaos honed so thin you'd swear it was order.

And it was.

—Malcolm Glass  
(Originally published in *The Nebraska Review*, fall 1986.) Reprinted by permission of the author.)

Now that we're flying solo once more, you can contact us at the old address: 154-B Woodmont Blvd., Nashville 37205. We really appreciate all the feedback, positive and negative, that we've received in the past few months. Please keep it up. We can't be all things to all people, but we want very much to be a unifying force within the large and diverse community of middle-Tennesseans whose interests are not addressed by the mainstream media. So, communicate.

A few errata from the last issue— all entirely the fault of computer malfunctions, you see. 1) Errant Cowboy erred in implying that Webb Wilder is a great songwriter. Webb is a great personality. His sidekick Bobby Field handles most of the lyrical greatness. 2) "Idiot Girls Comix" were by Tracy Villarreal, (which means "royal mansion" in either Spanish, Italian or Pygmy, I forget which) the last four letters of whose name were heartlessly truncated by a Liquid Paper spill. 3) To add insult to injury, we left Tracy V. as well as Paul Mitchell out of the staff box.

Finally, a note from the "I Get By With A Little Help From My Friends" dept.: Our Will and the Bushmen cover photo comes to us courtesy of 1) David Wood who shot it, 2) Kurt Denny who carried the roll of film from NYC back home, 3) Chip DeVilbiss who developed the film on a moment's notice on a Friday night and 4) Kim Proctor who printed the photo. There are a half-dozen stories of this kind of generous cooperation behind every issue of the FWJ, and just this once we'd like to say thanks.

Parting shot from my brother Dave, in reference to the lead on July's Will Rambeaux story: "If Tootsie's is the maternity ward of country music, what is CBGB to rock and hardcore? The teen clinic?" —Tom Wood

## The Fireplace Whiskey Journal

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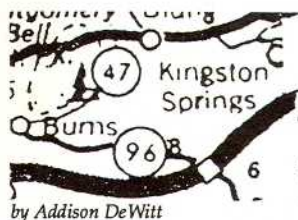
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# AN AMERICAN IN NASHVILLE

by Addison DeWitt

Like a new space shuttle with chimps at the helm, Tennessee's capital city hurtles ever higher in search of legitimacy, while the cultural O-rings continue to rend and rupture from the strain of indifference.

Rigor mortis and resurrection simultaneously loomed over the Nashville Symphony in July, as the bankrupt Symphony Board continued to negotiate a new contract with the former players. Many orchestra musicians had emigrated from Muzak City in search of food, but management and the union tirelessly persevered to keep the flickering flame of classical music alive.

Mayor Bill Boner recognized a political opportunity when it sat on his face, and after the Symphony declared bankruptcy, he magnanimously committed \$250,000 Metro tax dollars to the re-start effort. Boner's unprecedented pledge of Metro dollars brings Nashville within \$1 million of the average amount cities earmark for arts funding. This progress stuff can be dizzying.

The local jazz community, rumored to be actually one versatile person, suffered a blow when the scheduled Herbie Hancock/Chick Corea concert at Starwood was nipped in the bud due to lukewarm ticket sales. The tour's sponsor, Benson & Hedges, still gave \$1,500 to Nashville charities as they had pledged. Even the tobacco industry can claim higher moral ground than local concert

goers. Oh, the shame of it all. And, in what must have come as a shock to Nashville, ballet master Rudolf Nureyev's August 4 Starwood show was canceled due to lack of ticket sales. The show had been scheduled fill a void left when Mikhail Baryshnikov was injured and forced to call off his July Starwood performance. The Starwood management figured that if one Russian cream-puff could sell 8,500 tickets, then surely Nashvillians would flock to see a different guy in tight tights.

Not so. Nashvillians clamored to see Baryshnikov just to be near someone who's actually slept with Jessica Lange—a local fave for her role in Sweet Dreams.

Bill Boner hasn't been seen with Jessica Lange. Yet.

He has sat near Oprah Winfrey, however. He appeared on her satellite gabfest in July to share his homespun anecdotes about buying drugs and living as a bum. Boner, who has been living as a bum for years, confined his yarns to the short period when he doffed his suits and actually adopted the telltale dress of bums.

A July news story revealed that more than 2,000 Nashville residents are licensed to carry a gun. The ballyhooed list of pistol-packers includes, sadly, one of this reporter's last remaining idols, Johnny Cash. Don't laugh, mama DeWitt used to play his songs on the harpsichord when we tired of Mozart. God, what a letdown.

continued on page 4

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continued from pg. 3

God Bless the U.S.A. Yes, sensitive artist Lee Greenwood, who botched The National Anthem at a spring Vanderbilt Basketball game, also is cleared to throw lead, as is ass-kicker Hank Williams Jr.

Hank, named the Country Music Association's 1987 Entertainer of the Year, recently released the socially conscious single "If The South Woulda Won." In this hypothetical nugget, Hank says he'd ban all the cars made in China. See, "made in Japan" just don't rhyme with any southern states. Bocephus also postulates that killers would "quickly swing" in his perfect world. Hank avoids the sticky issues of cotton tariffs, states' rights, and apportioning 3/5 representation for slaves.

To repeat: he is licensed to carry a gun.

Luckily, Conway Twitty doesn't have a gun, because he disbanded his fan club recently due to financial difficulties. Wonder if the suicide note would have read "Goodbye, Darlin'."

In his tear-stained form letter to fan club members, Conway wrote that he didn't want to raise dues again, so he just decided to call the whole thang off. Not since the Clash's early days has an artist eschewed profit margins with such integrity. Word has it that Conway recently got a mohawk, fired

off an "eat me" letter to MCA Records and demanded that his concert backdrops read "Conway's Not For Sale, You Wankers."

After July's "Less party platform, more eye contact" Democratic Convention dissipated, Tennessee Governor Ned McWherter offered this campaign advice to party leaders on how to win his state:

"Give Us Bentsen."

Give us a down pillow.

With George Will urging Bush to pick Peter Ueberroth, with James Kilpatrick pushing Senator Nancy Kassebaum and with America's snoring drowning everyone out, whimsical George should name a running mate with some zip.

Possible candidates and ticket slogans: Whoopi Goldberg - "Laughter, the Best Medicine," Yogi Berra - "Nary a Noriega Will Wheelde George or Yogi," Judge Douglas Ginsberg - "A Chicken in Every Pot, Fried." Ahh, the theater of politics.

Waldo Lydecker, an associate, has offered to share his quote of the month culled from the local press. He sent in this gem: "Listening to this was one of those experiences where you say, 'Ooh, I like that one. Ooh that one's even better.' 'No, I like this one.' 'Wow, each one seems better than the next,' and finally, 'Oh my word, I actually love this album.'" -Robert Oermann, trashing Corey Hart's latest in the *Tennessean Showcase*, July 17.

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# Fireplace Flicks

by Alonso Duralde

The reason most movies stink on ice is because they're boring re-hashes of ideas that weren't that original to begin with. (Please, spare me any more movies about millionaires who are just plain folks, and their struggles against wicked Aryans with good teeth.) Unfortunately, there are no simple measures for improving the state of cinema because risk is no guarantee for a good film.

Sure, taking a gamble on properties like *The World According to Garp*, *Slaughter-House Five* and *Ragtime* has led to some great films; on the other hand, *The Hotel New Hampshire*, *Portnoy's Complaint* and *Myra Breckinridge* would have done better to just stay on the printed page.

I'm harping about all this because three literary works that I've enjoyed (all right, two of them are comic books, but very good ones) are slated to be made into movies. And I'd like nothing more than to stop them before it's too late.

Starting out with a "real" book with its neck on the block, I have to wonder why Hollywood wants to touch Jim Carroll's gritty *Basketball Diaries*. After all, it's full of unapologetic heavy drug use and rampant promiscuous bisexuality — two taboo subjects in the commercial American cinema of the late 80s. Once upon a time, Hollywood might have delivered an even-handed, powerful look at the perils of potentially deadly chemical abuse, but the whole subject of sex and drugs has producers so frightened that all they can come up with are preachy, sanitized just-say-no homilies like *Less than Zero*, another somewhat striking novel turned to pabulum by a major studio. (It was in that film, you'll recall, that the novel's bisexual, coke-snorting amoral protagonist somehow metamorphosed into wet-blanket, Tipper Gore Fan Club president Andrew McCarthy.)

As if the source material of *Diaries* didn't hold enough traps for a Hollywood filmmaker, Anthony Michael Hall is being strongly touted to play the lead. Hall, you'll recall, made three very funny movies for John Hughes before getting busy, as a friend of mine puts it, "making the worst movies ever made." (Even in these dog days of summer, I have yet to see anything crappier than *Johnny Be Good* in 1988.)

Carroll should be left on the printed page, unless he wants to direct the movie version himself, on grainy, black-and-white 16mm film on a low budget in New York. That I could handle.

Another potential fiasco on the horizon is Twentieth Century-Fox's proposed adaptation of Alan Moore's *Watchmen*. If you missed it, *Watchmen* is a landmark graphic novel (the term "comic book" just doesn't fit) about fascist, god-like superheroes and a plot to destroy New York to avert global thermonuclear war. It's a brilliant work, rich in symbolism, metaphors and recurrent motifs.

Does anyone really want to see a hack-job movie version, complete with a love theme from Phil Collins or some other castrated milquetoast pop vocalist? *Watchmen* is dynamite on the printed page, but celluloid can only make it a fizzling firecracker. (If you don't believe me, try sitting through the film version of Joyce's *Ulysses* some time.)

For *Watchmen* to work, it would have to be an off-center

triumph like *Brazil* or *Insignificance*. However, those are the kind of movies that sneak up on you, and not the kind that are made by a big studio that has paid a lot of money for the rights to a popular comic book. DC Comics president Jeanette Kahn promises that the screenplay (written by newcomer Sam Hamm) is faithful to the source material, but what would you expect her to say?

Another comic book character getting a Hamm-handed treatment is the Caped Crusader himself, Batman. Now I don't think that there's anything inherently unfilmable about Gotham City's Guardian (the recent *Dark Knight Returns* — a dark story that contemplates the more vigilantic nature of the character — in particular would probably make quite a film). The problem here lies in the casting choices that director Tim Burton (*Pee Wee's Big Adventure*, *Beetlejuice*) has made. Jack Nicholson wouldn't be my first choice to play The Joker — the role requires a spry maniness over smirks — but it might conceivably work.

The looming disaster lies instead with Burton's choice to play Batman — Michael Keaton. Yes, that's the same Michael Keaton with the funny faces and the career that's gone almost nowhere since *Mr. Mom*. Keaton as an almost-crazed avenger, a figure of the night, a dangerous opponent to all that is evil? The choice of Keaton seems to have more to do with the big bucks earned by *Beetlejuice* than with his suitability for the part. (I guess we're lucky that Burton hasn't asked Pee Wee Herman to play Robin.)

Don't think that I'm just complaining because it's Keaton — the problem lies in the fact that a jokey Batman has been done already. (Adam West, where are you now?) The 60s camp TV show version of the hero ruined the comic for years, but recently artists and writers like Frank Miller, Brian Bolland and Alan Moore (see above) have squeezed more life out of the character, and a new film would be the ideal place to show off the dark, insidious Batman. With Keaton, however, the whole thing will be one bad joke — something like a Superman with Gene Hackman in the title role rather than as Lex Luthor. (And let's not forget that the last time a fairly sophisticated comic book was played for laughs on screen, we ended up with *Howard the Duck*.)

I hope that, years from now, I'll be embarrassed by this column: after all, *Gone with the Wind* and *Star Wars* had their nay-sayers before they won over the world. Nonetheless, it seems that the richness and creativity of *Basketball Diaries* and *Watchmen* are what makes them inherently unfilmable. As for *Batman*, could we please have ANYONE besides Michael Keaton in the title role?

Well, anyone but Anthony Michael Hall?

## ★ ★ NOW SHOWING ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Arthur 2: On the Rocks Rated: PG

Only *Johnny Be Good* saves this godawful sequel from being the year's worst film. Dudley Moore returns as the rich, childish drunk who laughs at his own jokes, except this time the audience doesn't laugh with him. Or at him. Or at all. Somehow, the simp he left at the altar (once Jill Eikenberry, now played by Cynthia Sikes as a tough career broad) still wants to marry the pathetic lush, so her rich daddy arranges for Arthur to lose his fortune in order to force him to divorce Liza Minelli and marry his little girl. Oh, my sides. Stay far, far away from this putrid mess.

Big Rated: PG

A charming, hilarious comedy about a twelve year old boy who wishes he was big, and wakes up one morning in the body of Tom Hanks. Director Penny Marshall takes the tired old kid-in-a-man's-body chestnut and makes it into a laugh-out-loud triumph, aided greatly by great performances by Hanks and Elizabeth Perkins (delivering on the promise she demonstrated in *About Last Night*.) One of this summer's handful of must-sees. (Keep reading, there are more.)



**Bull Durham** Rated: R

Who would have thought that a Baseball Movie — that most treacherous of genres — could be such a mature, comic, romantic gem? Susan Sarandon plays a seasoned baseball groupie torn between two minor-league players: the talented-but-dim Tim Robbins (one of my favorite second bananas in a long-deserved starring role) and seen-it-all catcher Kevin Costner, in his best role since *Silverado*. This is a clever comedy about life, love and *The Game* that deftly avoids clichés and presents some of the most fleshed-out characters I've seen in a while. Another summer must-see.

**Caddyshack II** Rated: PG

Not as vomitous as *Arthur 2*, but still not deserving of a roman numeral. Jackie Mason does a lame Rodney Dangerfield impersonation in this tepid follow-up to the so-so original: strangely enough, though, he's doing Dangerfield's populist-millionaire shtick from *Back to School* rather than the *Caddyshack I* character. When Randy Quaid (as a manic attorney) steals the show from comedy vets like the overpaid Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd, something is terribly wrong.

**"Crocodile" Dundee II** Rated: PG

Yet another bland and unbearable comedy sequel. Taking a cue from *Romancing the Stone*, Dundee's girlfriend gets a roll of film from an ex-lover with pictures of a major drug deal going on. When the greedy South Americans in question kidnap her, Dundee takes her back to the Outback so he can prove that Aussies can easily pick off a bunch of Hispanic nogoodniks. It's got none of the charm — or laughs — of the original, although you'll probably hone your watch-checking-in-the-dark skills during the second half.

**Die Hard** Rated: R

Who would have thought that Bruce Willis, after wasting our time with two lame Blake Edwards comedies, a shitty album and a season's worth of waning Moonlighting, would star in the year's best action-adventure flick? He plays a New York cop visiting his estranged wife in L.A. during Christmas, only to be the only person in a huge skyscraper that can stop a brilliantly nefarious terrorist (the slippery Alan Rickman) from an elaborate theft. This is one of the few caper movies in which the bad guys have the brilliantly thought-out plan — in fact, except for Willis, none of the good guys are nearly as smart as the villains. There are also enough suspenseful chills and big laughs to rate this as one of the year's most fun pictures. Yup, it's another summer must-see.

**The Great Outdoors** Rated: PG

As if *Pretty in Pink* and *Some Kind of Wonderful* weren't reason enough for John Hughes to stop letting Howard Deutch direct his scripts, along comes this inane comedy about urban vacationers in the wilderness. John Candy is all sweetness and light, and naturally he gets walked all over by Dan Aykroyd, once again doing his technical-language-real-fast spiel, which seems to be his only way to get laughs. This is one of those movies that starts out being about two very different people on each other's nerves, and ends up with everyone getting all nice and saving each other from mine shafts. Spare me.

**Short Circuit 2** Rated: PG

Unlike the summer's other sequels, this one is actually an improvement upon its predecessor. That's not to say, however, that it's worth seeing. Johnny Five, the cute anthropomorphic robot, returns in this tame kiddie movie, but thankfully Steve Guttenberg and Ally Sheedy didn't. This time out, Johnny helps East Indian malaprop master Fisher Stevens make toys and averts a jewel heist to the tune of "Holding Out for a Hero." It's a step up, but not nearly up enough.

**Monkey Shines** Rated: R

Director George Romero (*Night of the Living Dead*, *Creepshow*) sacrifices gore for suspense and comes up with a terrifying tale of a quadriplegic whose "helping hands" monkey begins to act out the handicapped man's murderous desires. Probably the least violent good scary movie in years.

**Who Framed Roger Rabbit?** Rated: PG

A savvy, rompish love letter to the cartoons of the 40s that's both a technical tour-de-force as well as a great comic whodunnit. Bob Hoskins, Joanna Cassidy and Christopher Lloyd are wonderful, but the main draw is the collection of cameos featuring everyone from Betty Boop and Mickey Mouse to Donald and Daffy Duck, together on-screen for the first time. The summer must-see.

**Willow** Rated: PG

It's bad enough that this silly adventure rips off everything from the Bible to *The Wizard of Oz*, but one would expect more than flagrant cultural plagiarism from George Lucas and director Ron Howard. It's predictable (soothsayers are always prefacing upcoming plot points with "it is written...") and anticlimactic (one gets the impression that things would have turned out well even if the heroes had done nothing). Thankfully, there is justice since it's not the smash hit everyone predicted. Too bad we'll be up to our asses in *Willow* merchandising from now until Christmas.



CONCERT SERIES

Wed, August 3rd	TIFFANY
Fri, August 5th	DEF LEPPARD SUBPO
Sat, August 6th	STEVE WINWOOD JOHNNY CLEGG
Mon, August 8th	HUEY LEWIS & THE NEWS
Tue, August 9th	STING
Sat, August 13th	JAMES TAYLOR
Fri, August 19th	SADE
Sat, August 20th	O'JAYS TEMPTATIONS
Fri, August 26th	MERLE HAGGARD WILLIE NELSON
Sat, August 27th	KENNY LOGGINS
Wed, August 31st	INXS ZIGGY MARLEY
Thur, Sept 1st	KENNY G STANLEY JORDAN
Sun, Sept 4th	DEBBIE GIBSON
Wed, Sept 7th	JIMMY PAGE
Fri, Sept 9th	BARRY MANILOW
Sat, Sept 10th	JUDAS PRIEST CINDERELLA
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Sat, Oct 8th	GEORGE STRAIT K.T. OSLIN

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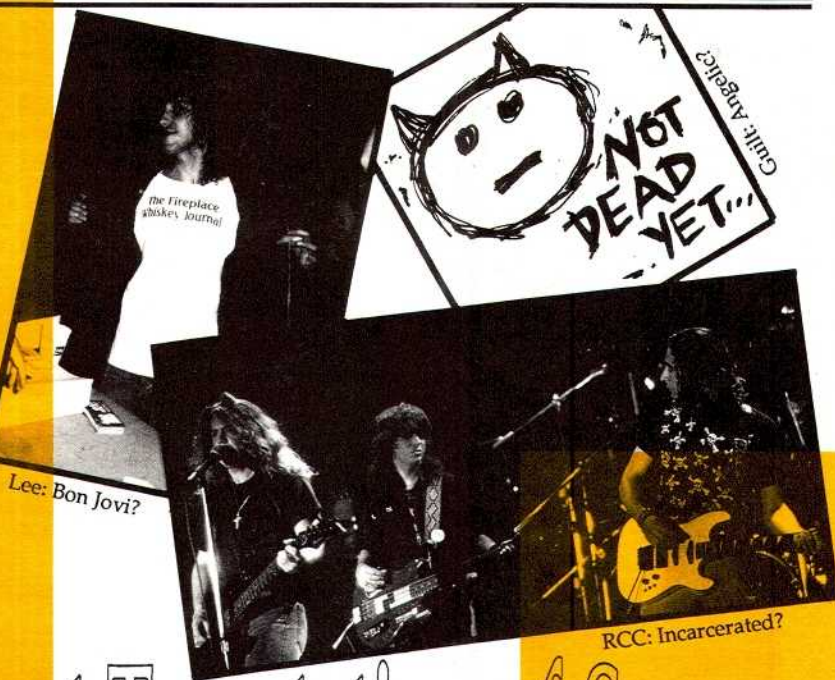
# The Fireplace Whiskey Journal

The dog days are over (supposedly), and it's time once again to howl at the harvest moon. *FWJ* readers everywhere are now queuing up at the bank, seeking loans to cover their air conditioning bills, while others are now returning to school, thereby ending the carefree season. But school or no school, by the end of Labor Day weekend, everybody will be wondering: "Where did my summer go?"

Asking around in a nosy-but-casual fashion, I found that summer seemed to begin for our ever-variable demographic with the Summer Lights Festival. Remember walking two miles across the Festival site only to reach the Viacom Stage just in time to hear the last three chords of "Guitar Town"? Remember buying last-call beer tickets only to reach the front of the beer line to be told, "Sorry, no beer sales after 9 PM." And remember the look of horror on Lee Carr's face as two rednecks, convinced he was Jon Bon Jovi, pursued him around the grounds? Ah, the Fest was fab. The *FWJ* was there. We handed out "The Bible of Life" to over 1,000 people.

Then there was the New Music Seminar in New York City. Your friendly *Journal* also busted a schmooze at this grandpappy soiree du slime, forcing almost 1,000 copies on poor, unsuspecting attendees. The national exposure given to Nashville at the NMS by the *FWJ* and, ahhh... that other mag in town, brought our fair city's R&R visibility to an all-time peak.

Now, channel back to last summer. Admit it—you spent more than a little time holed up at the World's End in hopes of a glimpse of a member of REM. The Athens Ambassadors recorded their first Gold Record, *Document*, at Nashville's answer to the U.S.S. *Enterprise*, the Sound Emporium. And Whyte Lace? The Summer of '87 wouldn't have been complete without 'em. For those with short memories, Whyte Lace was that prefab sequin-metal band that gained instant notoriety about town because of their annoying habit of parking their deluxe white stretch



## The Last Temptation of Summer

limo in front of Elliston Square for no apparent reason (other than just being SEEN). By the end of summer, August 31 to be precise, Whyte Lace had played their first and final public performance to a "sold out" but not nearly full house at TPAC. You figure.

This summer, no such band has captured the imaginations of the Nashville rock contingent. Blame it on the death of the underground. Non mea culpa. Anyhoo, an idle mind is the devil's workshop, so finish up your summer in bang-up style, people. Here's the Official *FWJ*-Approved Whoopee List:

**Childlike Decadence:**

- Get waterlogged at the wave pool
- Puke in somebody's mailbox
- Get drunk and lie in the street
- Drive four hours to find a decent roller-coaster

- Steal stop signs
- Do doughnuts in a golf course
- Experiment with spray paint or fireworks
- Pee in the pool
- Buy a box of popsicles and eat them all. Skip dinner.

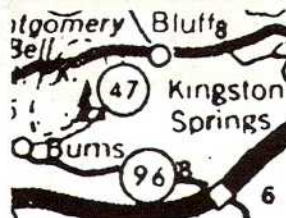
Tell your little brother he'll have watermelon vines growing out his ears if he eats the seeds.

Skateboard (but don't rollerskate... not cool)

**Teenage Tomfoolery:**

- Take X or acid
- Make out in Dragon Park with someone you'll never see again
- Hang out at rock clubs and see bands, but never before midnight
- Loosen the tops of salt shakers at the IHOP





# AN AMERICAN IN NASHVILLE

by Addison DeWitt

Now that the sticky winds of August have been swept under the rug of remembrance and been replaced by the hot, stagnant days of September, we can cast a fond eye back on the Summer of Money.

Money, money, money.

Everyone wanted it, some were forced to share, and a few are in peril because they have none of it to spare.

Yes that man of the people himself, Bill Boner, has decided to give a break to his old vagrant buddies. The night-school law graduate fancies himself a Donald Trump, the tycoon of the Metro-funded homeless hotel.

Billy boy has decreed that if all homeless people don't check into his proposed 100-room facility, he'll put them in jail. Considering that there are at least 600 homeless people downtown, the surplus bums could find themselves in roundup scenes right out of *Chitty-Chitty Bang-Bang*. Imagine tobacco-chewing potbelly T-shirt men with soiled derby hats and tall hyena sidekicks throwing giant nets around unsuspecting conveys of sleeping vagabonds.

For those keen-witted panhandlers that elude the lurking paddywagons the Mayor has concocted an even more diabolical scheme to rid the streets of People Less Successful Than Us. In August it was revealed that Metro Police are disguising themselves as human and mingling with the species in hopes that Homeless People will ask them for money. Anyone foolish enough to do so will be whisked to jail, where they'll conceivably be starved until they sign a statement confessing their revolutionary treason and support of Phil Bredesen for Mayor.

Speaking of million-dollar Phil, his efforts to negotiate a new Nashville Symphony contract with players were successful enough to make Boner take credit for the reorganization in an August news conference. The "new" symphony is much like the old, except they'll be playing what the people want to hear.

What the people want to hear. You figure it out.

Maestro Kenneth Schermerhorn took a pay cut and threw artistic pride to the wind in response, declaring that his new orchestra will play classical concerts, pops concerts, cabaret shows, bar mitzvahs and Mondays-Thursdays at the Bull Pen Lounge. Rumor has it that the symphony will work up a version of "Freebird."

Meanwhile, with their annual salary whittled down to \$14,002.10, several symphony musicians have already been nabbed by Boner undercover panhandler agents.

In other cultural news, all three local theater chains announced that they wouldn't screen a film about Christ's life. Carmike, Consolidated

and AMC Theaters all buckled to the demands of the local atheist lobby, a grassroots force of nonbelievers committed to a secular society. Anyone wanting to see the film, which reportedly contains *A Message*, would have to make a pilgrimage to Chicago or Houston.

Such a flight would begin and end at the Nashville Airport, a facility whose name may soon be changed. The Metro Airport wants to add "International" to the title. The heady claim is justified by plans for one American Airlines flight to exotic Toronto, Canada, where arriving fliers would be greeted with backbacon. This means that Toronto would boast a no-escape flight corridor to Nashville, and Toronto's city fathers, proud of their new facility, are planning to add "Gateway to Hell" to their airport's moniker.

Sheriff Fate Thomas, that wily businessman, was found to be operating a car wash in the parking garage of one of those Government Buildings With No Front Door down-

## The Fireplace Whiskey Journal

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All contents © 1988 by *The Fireplace Whiskey Journal*. Address correspondence & submissions (with SASE) to the FWJ, 154-B Woodmont Blvd., Nashville, TN. 37205. Phone: (615) 298-4716. Subscriptions: \$5 for six months; check payable to the FWJ.

# EXPOSURES

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town. It seems that Thomas was running a car wash with prison labor and he had inmates scrub the autos of several chums and cronies. No word on whether or not Cool Hand Luke was part of the shackled enterprise system.

Several inanimate objects, not including Fate Thomas, seemed to take on lives of their own in August. A giant industrial Tonka Toy truck cranked itself and leveled the wall of a downtown warehouse. A stray bulldozer awoke, drank a few beers and went berserk in a Nashville neighborhood, leaving cracked walls and driveways in its wake. In a development even strange for Music City, a giant Mickey Mouse balloon liberated itself from atop a Bell Forge Kroger, disappeared and then resurfaced several days later, strung out on heroin, behind a Murfreesboro Kroger.

Bill Boner continued his bid to become America's Elton John, as he donned yet another ridiculous costume. In August he assumed the identity of Stan Laurel, and appearing alongside *Tennessee* scholar Jerry Thompson as Oliver Hardy, he made a noble appeal for funds for public TV, something neither man has ever seen in person. In October, the two budding comics will appear as Linus and the Great Pumpkin.

Speaking of Pigpen, Tennessee's capitol city is running out of places to dump its trash, and neighborhoods are taking turns refusing proposed landfill sites. In August, several wise local councilmen searched their hearts and decided not to decide anything about the issue yet.

Time for my ever-officious friend, Waldo Lydecker, and his quote of the month from local media:

"Elvis Presley is dead, and he's not coming back to life." — Metro Medical Examiner Dr. Charles Harlan's shocking announcement on the 11th anniversary of the King's burial. *Nashville Banner*, August 17, 1988.

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**Live Music in September:**

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  - Every Wednesday: The Onlies
  - Every Thursday: The Unknown Band
  - Fridays: 9/9 Aashid, 9/16 Uno Futuro, 9/23 Commercials 9/31 & 10/1: from Atlanta-- Blue Blazes
  - Saturdays: 9/10: Mark Stuart, 9/17: Back Creek, 9/24: Sons of Nuns
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**JIMMY HALL & the**

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\$5.00 ltd. advance/\$7.00  
remaining

**THE KINGSNAKES, with**

special guests  
Saturday, September 24 9pm  
\$5.00 ltd. advance/\$7.00  
remaining

**IN PURSUIT,**

with special guests  
Friday, September 30 9pm  
\$5.00 ltd. advance

**HOT TUNA, with special**

guests  
Thursday, October 6 8pm  
sharp!  
\$8.00 ltd. advance

**BILLY BRAGG, with**

special guest MICHELLE  
**SHOCKED**  
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# MR. ZERO: GANGSTERS from GALLATIN?

by Randy Fox

The life of a rock journalist is nowhere near the opulent style so many would imagine. For every Dylan that you get to interview are twenty Huey Lewises. A scary thought indeed. Naturally, one can imagine my thrill when I found that I would have the chance to interview none other than those gangsters from Gallatin, Mr. Zero.

I arrived early in the alley off Elliston where I was to meet the band. After a long wait I began to wonder if I had been the victim of some cruel prank. Suddenly a dark blue van screeched to a halt in front of me. From within a mysterious voice beckoned, "Youse the guy that's s'pose to meet Lee?"

"Yes," I replied shakily.

"Get in."

I found myself in the presence of bass pounder extraordinaire "Machine Gun" Kelly Butler. I was quickly whisked off to the sound of Whodini and Guns 'n' Roses ricocheting from the walls of the van. After a trip through several back alleys—"to shake off the pigs," I was told—I was delivered to the hide-out of Lickster Lee A. Carr, King of Guitar.

**FWJ:** How did Mr. Zero get started?

**Carr:** Well, Kelly and I have pulled off jobs before. We met the Grandmaster while in reform school in Gallatin. We're all from Gallatin, except our drummer, Jim Phipps. About two years ago, we decided to do this rap thing, so we gave the Grandmaster a call.

**FWJ:** That raises a good question. Where is the Grandmaster?

**Butler:** He's a very busy man. He doesn't have time for these silly interviews.

**Carr:** Yeah, you know Grandmaster E is a very important man. It's not easy being the best-dressed man in Nashville. His mind is always working. The way you see him on stage is the way he is all the time.

**FWJ:** Where do you get your ideas for music?

**Carr:** Everything is pretty much ripped. We make no bones about it. Most rappers steal from other records with samplers and scratching. We do the same thing in a live situation because we don't know anything about turntables. E writes the lyrics, and we do the music.

**Butler:** He does all the lyrics, and cussing and dancing.

**Carr:** Well, we've been known to cuss and dance also.

**FWJ:** What kind of message are you trying to get across?

**Carr:** There is definitely deep inner meaning in all we do. When Grandmaster E grabs his crotch he's not doing it out of manliness. He's not holding onto that mantool because it's instinctive. He's saying, "Look here I'm sick and tired of the way you people have treated my people, and what's more, the way that the white man has treated the American Indian, and I'm not taking my hand off my crotch until it stops."

**Butler:** And then some people take us too seriously.

**Carr:** People keep talking about the rock and wrestling connection, but we're the band that's on the same level as professional wrestling. Like it or not, you can't help but watch it for a while. People have told me that we've managed to win them over, though. They'll come up and say, "You know, I used to think you guys were a bunch of bullshit, and now I KNOW you're a bunch of bullshit."

**FWJ:** What happened with your announced break-up?

**Carr:** It's funny—everything started to come together when we announced we were going to break up. Grace Reinbold offered to manage us, and there's talk of a record deal. So things are going pretty good.

**FWJ:** You've conquered the stage, and hopefully records, what's next—the movies?

**Carr:** Definitely. The Mr. Zero movie is going to be a lot like the old Elvis films. A lot of girls, the occasional busting a rhyme if even slightly provoked. On the beach, in jail, in Hawaii. Maybe even some Kung Fu action. The movie will be sort of an autobiographical docudrama. We'll have to juice up a few things of course. Instead of three women, E will pick up four in the film.

**FWJ:** You know, movies would be an excellent idea. A lot of your appeal is in the contrast on stage between...

**Carr:** "Contrast"?! What kind of a crack is that?! Lucky for you E ain't here. Kelly, get this bum out of here...

**FWJ:** But I... (Editor's Note: This is as far as we were able to transcribe Mr. Fox's notes. Mr. Fox is recovering very nicely at Vanderbilt Hospital's intensive care ward. Apparently, the reconstructed kneecaps are going to work just fine.)



## September...

2nd Anglo Saxons

3rd Claimstakers

4th LABOR DAY PARTY! with the Kingsnakes

6th Drink or Drown: The Wigs

7th Addison Ellis & Rob Jackson

8th Picture This

10th Freedom of Expression

12th Rapid Fire

13th Drink or Drown: Claimstakers

14th Addison Ellis & Rob Jackson

16th The Questionnaires

20th Inspector 12

21st Addison Ellis & Rob Jackson

22nd I-Tal

23rd John Jackson

28th The Penguins

29th Benefit for Dismas House: Dave Olney & the X-Rays and Tim Kregel & the Sluggers

30th The Kingsnakes

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What'll we call it? BNT Corporation, new owners of the legendary Nashville rock venue Elliston Square, are seeking input to come up with a new name for the club. Send your suggestions to them at 2219 Elliston Place, 37203. The party responsible for the winning name will receive a one-year free pass to the club.



# POP life



LUKE GOES TO ELLISTON...

by Kath Hansen

Am I crazy, or has this summer seen more releases by female-fronted rock groups than any other summer in recent memory? And do you think this a good sign? Me, I don't know... I don't think it's necessarily a feminist thing. But it does appear that the amount of BS a girl is willing to put up with is at an all-time low these days, c'est vrai?

It's as if there's a contest for female vocal contortionists or something. We've got Siouxsie, Sinead, Danielle Dax and a Cecil B. deMille backup choir of squeakers and screamers, and now there's Bjork of the Sugarcubes. But the Sugarcubes are so wrapped up in quirky histrionics and the business of being utterly and completely foreign that they're actually quite original. And being original is a tough deal these days. At first listen to *Life's Too Good*, the temptation to throw them in the blender with *Altered Images* is extremely high. But despite both bands' fascinations with birthdays and insects, a difference really does exist between the two. It lies in the fact that Clare and the boys wanted to munch down on fruity Jell-O for the rest of their days, while the Cubes are more prone to crawl into the ol' igloo and do it all night. Either that, or jump in the bathtub and do the same. Fine by me. Let's just not take this thing too seriously, people. Remember: Nico started it all.

Tracie Spencer is Capitol's bid for a teen girl star a la Debbie Gibson or Tiffany. But there's sort of a problem here. Tracie can sing. Like Whitney "Wanna Be a White Girl" Houston, she's got absolutely no clue on how to pick decent material to wrap her fabamundo voice around. But then, Tracie's only 14. So she probably didn't realize that the production of her record was pored over to the point of a corpse-like stiffness. And 14-year-olds should never, NEVER be allowed to cover "Imagine." Still, it seems like there's a bigger promise of style on Tracie's record than there is in Tiff's and Deb's wardrobes combined. So pass the Love's Baby Soft already.

Of the VH-1 crowd, Climie Fisher's *Everything* is mequite-grilled perfection. It is like furniture, in that it has a certain chintz-covered, no seams visible durability. Long may they Mellotron.

Oh give me a break...there's NO excuse for...oh never mind. *Spuds MacKenzie's Party Faves* is my Arfski of the Month. C'mon Spuds, couldn't you come up with a more

original batch of party tunes than "Louie, Louie", "La Bamba", "Great Balls of Fire", Johnny B. Goode", etc.?? If this record is a party, I'd rather watch Michael Dukakis' eyebrows grow.

Hey, now—this is original! A concept album by a metal band! And it's Queensryche! Let's see, best I can figger, *Operation: Mindcrime* is a story about a young dude who is force fed mind drugs by a corrupt government and is brainwashed to do bad, evil things against his will. Hmmm...*Quadrophonia* it ain't. But any attempt at originality in the metal arena, no matter how small, is genuine cause for celebration. Personally, though, I'd much rather hear a concept album by William Shatner that deals with Tutankhamen's opium problem and its consequence on the feline population in Egypt.

The Correct Use of Vinyl Dep't: The buzz is already out on Edie Bickell and the New Bohemians' *Shooting Rubber Bands at the Stars*, but I just have to add to it. Can you resist Edie's charming, childlike vocals? Yes? Than you sure as hell can't resist her insight. This record is both moodproof and weatherproof, and in a perfect world, "Nothing" and "Beat the Time" would be all over the radio. But it's not a perfect world, and Edie knows it. Consequently, *Shooting Rubber Bands at the Stars* is the most wildly romantic LP since (ahem) *Frampton*. And Geffen didn't even have to buy anybody any drinks.

Yummy yummy yummy. It's the Primitives' lovely...which is so thoroughly a Blondie record that you could go sell your copy of *Parallel Lines* and hardly miss it. And while the Prims have none of that "Sharks vs. Jets-sunglasses-all-the-time-Attack-of-the-Jupiter-Amazon-Princesses" appeal, their record is at least ten times better than anything Debbie Harry has done in the past five years. And picture this, they even have a blonde girl singer! Not exactly a marketing person's nightmare... but maybe somebody's daydream of sunny beaches, cheap cherry wine and a toss in the backseat. *lovely* is the most apt album title you're likely to hear all year.

Well, I found Bill Lloyd. And I also found diXle kuPP, with whom I drank the "Spanking Wine." Don't ask.

## Bonus Live Review!!

Bar-B-Q Killers, w/ Clockhammer. Elliston Square, 8/12/88.

Friday was hot. The whole summer was hot. The inexplicable greasy veneer that never really leaves the body was... hot. I slipped into

my jackboots and traipsed down to the recently revamped Square to catch Nashville's Clockhammer and Athens, GA's Bar-B-Q Killers.

The Clock boys are now a power trio. I was relatively well-acquainted with the ole hammer sound. The three-piece is, in a word, an improvement. In other words, it is wonderful. Guitarist Byron Bailey is now allowed more freedom to lay down his unique style of thrash/jazz/spasm chords and leads. Matt Swanson and Ken Coomer were tight as two peas in a pod. The audience was highly attentive and receptive. Even during the quieter numbers only a choice few individuals sashayed off to get a corndog at the bar or playskeeball. Some diverse chops abounded, I dug it.

The Killahs were hot. The summer was hot. Have I mentioned that? Laura Carter, singer/spokesmodel, screamed retched and writhed to the amazement and disgust of all present. The Killers churned for about an hour and ten minutes, harboring notions of "clearing the hall." Their brand of Kentucky-fried industrial grunge was loud and abrasive and tasty. The show was hot. God bless Right Guard. I'm outta here. —Luke Warm

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LIVE MUSIC NIGHTLY  
SEPTEMBER

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SHOWS 7-10

TUESDAYS - WRITERS  
NIGHT

10TH & 12TH GARY JENKINS  
AND THE HEATERS  
17TH & 23RD MELISSA  
PREWITT  
AND ABUNCHA  
DUDES

24TH W.T. AND THE  
BAD EGGS

29TH SEASON FOR CARING  
BENEFIT SHOW





# AN AMERICAN IN NASHVILLE

by Addison DeWitt

Are you still alive?

More importantly, is your head still attached to your body?

If so, you're one of the lucky few who survived Nashville's inert September, in which politicians at rest tended to stay at rest, decapitators in motion tended to stay in motion, and charlatans' actions provoked equal and opposite reactions.

It was a month to shove brutally at the boundaries of reality and judgement, and it could only have happened in this pious red-beans-and-vice pit of a city.

At first glance, there were all the great makings of a fabulous month:

Mayor Bill Boner didn't dress up as anyone.

Sheriff Fate Thomas didn't attend any art auctions.

Even actor Ned Beatty, who was sodomized in the movie "Deliverance" spent several days here without being ridden through the street like a naked pig.

But when several others of porcine aspect squealed, the Metro Police Sex, Drugs and a Bit More Sex Scandal dragged the month into lunatic mud. After being fired for snorting coke (*action*), Officer Lisa Stojanowski accused her superiors of coercing her to have sex with them (*reaction*). The ensuing investigation unearthed a rotten log full of worms, bugs, altered grades at the police academy and people who like to have sex with other people who like to have sex and carry guns.

The day after the investigation ended, in what he described as a totally unrelated move, Night-Mayor Boner announced a Police Dept.

reorganization that included nine divisions, enough cops to simultaneously fill IHOP, Mack's and the handicapped stall in each area truck stop.

David Frantzreb and Kenneth Poole made a shocking discovery of their own in 1987. Their housemate, Michelle Byrne, had not only forgotten to pay the month's rent, she was a French-Canadian transsexual. David and Kenneth did what any Nashvillians would do: according to the authorities, they tied up Michelle/Michael, beat and kicked her for three hours, sent Ken's wife Cindy Poole out to McDonald's to get food for the kids, beat Michelle for four more hours, cut off her hands, feet and head, threw the corpse in the Cumberland River, cleaned off their carpet and repainted the walls.

Frantzreb was convicted of murder this month, and Cindy Poole was the state's key witness. While Cindy plans to testify against her husband Kenneth in his upcoming trial, she's also surprisingly filing for divorce. Meanwhile all French-Canadian transsexuals are steering clear of Nashville and paying rent early.

Bob Hope was in Nashville during September, but with so many great murder trials in progress, no one gave a damn about Bob Hope.

John David Terry apparently didn't like having to sign his letters with the protracted title of Pastor of Nashville's Emmanuel Church of Christ Oneness Pentecostal. Last summer, he embezzled \$50,000 in church funds, obtained a false i.d., killed a church maintenance man, cut off the man's head (the latest *USA Today* trend), cut off one arm, cut off some shoulder skin, burned his church with the body inside, tossed the head and

arm into Lake Barkley (the Cumberland was too full of discarded body parts), shaved his own head and applied some suntan accelerator, all in an effort to fake his own death and get off several fourth-class mailing lists.

As the former supermarket butcher's trial stretched through September, many former members of Terry's congregation stood up for his character, which only goes to show how kind Nashvillians can be when their friends are in a bind. The jury, however, took a dim view of Terry's wacky antics. After being found guilty, Terry stood up and sheepishly admitted that he had sort of, uh, offed the guy.

Jesus was scheduled to visit Nashville during Jewish holy week, but he never showed up. Starwood Ampitheater attributed the cancellation to poor ticket sales.

Some area Baptists sold their worldly possessions in preparation for September's predicted Biblical Rapture, flooding the market with clear plastic upholstery sofa covers and white Chrysler K-Cars. Meanwhile, the man who wrote *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Happen in 1988*, the book that fanned the flames of fervor, was busy closing land deals with profits from his highly successful work. Take that, Iacocca.

The Third National Bank on West End Avenue was the scene of a bizarre standoff between police, SWAT teams, the FBI and several Currier and Ives prints. Armed gunmen bungled a morning bank robbery after putting the bank's tellers into a closet as each one arrived for work. When they discovered the locked, time-release only safe, the gunmen fled, forgetting to let the tellers out of the unlocked closet.

The police soon arrived, and law n' enforcement officials enacted a four-hour scene from "Dog Day Afternoon" as they tried to negotiate with the Boston ferns holding the tellers hostage. The tellers eventually fled the asbestos-filled building and SWAT men lobbed explosives inside to counteract the health hazard.

Speaking of health hazards, touching items on sale at flea markets could be fatal in Nashville. Donald Middlebrooks didn't like the way some kids were handling a clock he was hawking at a makeshift Gallatin Road market. He followed the boys as they left, and the stabbed body of an over-curious 14-



## The Fireplace Whiskey Journal

Producer/Director: Tom Wood

Makeup & Costumes: Kath Hansen

Best Girl: Nicki Pendleton

Animation: Lee A. Carr, Trace Villarreal

Key Grip: Dede Madden

Accounting: Forehand & Ernst, P.C.

Starring: John Atkins, Addison DeWitt, Alonso Duralde, Randy Fox, Tom House, Michael McCall, Paul Mitchell, Mike Muldoon, Jim Ridley, Luke Warm, Pete Wilson

Production facilities provided by Steve Garner, god, & by McQuiddy Printing Company.

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year old was later found under a mattress in some nearby woods.

Producers of "Wheel of Fortune" were in Nashville in September to find a host to replacement for former local weatherman Pat Sajak. "Wheel's" other previous host, Chuck Woolery, also spent time in Nashville as a songwriter. The Nashville connection is real, but considering that host finalists include Charlie Chase, the rapid talking head on The Nashville Network's fluffly gabfest "Crook & Chase," let's hope the host has never heard of Snowbird.

Local comedian Jim Varney's Saturday morning TV show, "Hey Vern, It's Ernest," began airing on CBS. Now that's bizarre.

In other grim entertainment news:

Charlie Daniels's tour van caught fire in Ventura, CA.

Kenny Rogers' drummer, Bobby Daniels, was charged with the shooting death of his ex-wife.

Tammy Wynette faced a \$900,000 debt by filing for bankruptcy.

A Nashville jury sentenced Latin singer Lucho Guerro to 175 years for dealing cocaine.

Barry Sadler ("Ballad of the Green Berets") was shot in the head near his residence in Guatemala. Sadler is a contributor to *Soldier of Fortune* magazine, so a hole in the head could do some good.

My esteemed colleague Waldo Lydecker has escaped the ever-violent, never-silent Nashville, but if he were here, he'd agree that this should be the quote of the month:

"This has got everybody bumfuzzled. There are no rascals on either side of his family."

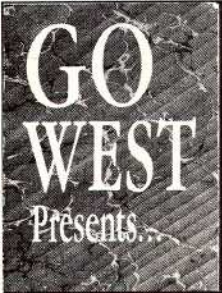
—Roy Bugg, on 16-year old Chad Swetzell, who left school in Priceville, KY. early after three classes, took two of his father's semi-automatic rifles, drove to Linden, TN. and killed 41-year old Carolyn Kilpatrick "to see what it would be like."

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**Tuesdays-- Import Night \$1.50 Imports...**  
75¢ draft  
**Wednesdays-- Rock Night... Rolling Rock \$1**  
and... Drink or Drown, 9:30-2 ... \$6  
**Thursdays-- Drink or Drown, 9-1 ... \$5**  
**Fridays-- Irish Night-- Killian's Draft 75¢,**  
\$1 wine coolers  
**Saturdays-- 75¢ Draft Night, Coronas just**  
\$1.50

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Live Music in October:**  
Tuesdays: 10/4, 11 Steve Dodge, 10/25 L. Beall  
Every Wednesday: The Onlies  
Fridays: 10/7 Murphy Bros., 10/14 Cruel  
Shoes, 10/21 Wm. Howse Band Saturdays: 10/  
8: White Dwarf, 10/15: Craven Raven, 10/22:  
Sons of Nuns, 10/29 Art for Ears  
416 21st Avenue South 321-0099



**IGGY POP**  
with special guests **JANE'S ADDICTION**  
Saturday, October 15, 9 p.m.  
Remaining tickets \$12

**IN PURSUIT** with  
special guests **SWING**  
Friday, October 7 9 p.m.  
\$4 advance/\$7 at door

**NAJEE**  
Wednesday, October 19  
Merchants Hotel  
8 p.m. and 10 p.m.  
Tickets \$15 at Ticketmaster outlets

**DAS DAMEN** with  
special guests **CLOCKHAMMER**  
Saturday, October 8, 9 p.m.  
All ages show  
\$4 advance/\$6 at door

**THE NIGHTHAWKS** featuring **JIMMY HALL**  
with special guests the **BELAIRS**  
Saturday, October 22, 9 p.m.  
\$7 ltd. advance, \$9 remaining

**BILLY BRAGG** with  
special guests **MICHELLE SHOCKED**  
and **MANCATOL**  
Friday, October 14, 9 p.m.  
Tickets \$6.50 ltd advance/\$9 remaining

**JOHNNY WINTER** with special guests  
Thursday, October 27  
8 p.m. sharp  
\$8 ltd. advance, \$11 remaining

All shows take place at the Cannery, 811 Palmer Place, except as noted. For more information telephone the Cannery at 256-6151. Tickets available at all Ticketmaster outlets including Cat's Records and Tapes



# POP life



Special guest  
inspiration  
by  
The Idiot Girls

by Kath Hansen

I just got back from Detroit, where they still play Styx on the radio. This just ended up making me really homesick for Nashville, where they still play Billy Squier on the radio.

Can you say "Steve Jones is a great guitarist" and actually keep a straight face? Iggy Pop's *Instinct* has plenty of Stevie boy's handiwork all over it, which kinda reminds me of my favorite Iggy story. I saw Ig open for the Rolling Stones in his hometown and he got booed right off the stage by 100,000 drunk Detroiters. The fact that he was wearing a red ballerina's tutu with nothing on underneath may have had something to do with it. Anyhoo, he gave us all the finger and told us to fuck off. And after a listen to *Instinct*, I bet Iggy still likes to give the finger every now and then... but it's a safe bet that he's lost the red tutu forever.

Intense and Husker Du-like tunes abound on Agitpop's new one, *Open Seasons*. Agitpop is the only existing industrial percussion-type band who can play xylophones/cowbells/schoolbells and get away with it. Well, since there ain't no more Husker Du, go grab this disc, crank it up, and bite the top off a beer can.

I'm not embarrassed to like the Style Council while there's groups like Johnny Hates Jazz and Bruce Hornsby and the Range out there. *Confessions of a Pop Group* is a lot less heavy on the anti-Thatcherisms than the Style Council's previous work (perhaps because she's been re-elected since their last LP?), and it appears that Paul Weller has figured out that you can't change politics through music. This is just as well, because the Style Council is much better at 'piano paintings' than Jam-like political railings any old day. But it looks like Paul still agonizes over the right polka-dotted tie to wear for the record cover photo.

Europe's *Out of This World?* Dog breath vapors. Their hair and bone structure are marvelous. Their music is worse than flat soda. *Out of This World?* *Out of My Face* is more like it, bozos.

If Bush or Dukakis really wanted to win the election, they should give away free copies of the Ramones' *Ramonesmania* to each American household. Better yet, why don't we just elect the Ramones for President(s)?

After the jillion-dollar advance and the billions of tons of hype, *Nothing's Shocking* is all we get from Jane's Addiction? Try, try, try as they may, nothing here is near as cool as "Pigs In Zen", their supremo toon from the *Scream* compilation. "Idiots Rule" is a nifty cosmic jam, but Perry Farrell's voice sounds like the face you make when you open spoiled cottage cheese. I guess if this and Guns N' Roses are the best L.A. can come up with, lots of people will stay at least marginally interested in the coming years. Me? My money's still on Pop Will Eat Itself.

Judging from *Power's* endlessly offensive album cover, Ice-T is most likely the biggest macho asshole homophobe to ever walk the earth. Which makes him a great rapper. But do big gold necklaces and machine guns and half-naked chicks=power?

Happy to report that all those adjectives you've heard describing the Shakers' *Living In The Shadow of A Spirit* are true. Adjectives like haunting, pristine, old-fashioned, spellbinding... they are all in this EP. Being one of the few bands on this planet who honestly don't give a damn about chart dictates, the Shakers are true rebels and make me proud to hail from Nashville. Simply shimmering. Buy it now and own a collector's item of the future.

The Smiths' *Rank* is a fast and fabulous live memorial to one of the only influential groups of the 80's (what a desolate decade for music it's been!). After Morrissey's excruciatingly dreadful *Viva Hate*, *Rank* is a welcome and ringing remembrance of past genius. You know, some people don't like the Smiths. But then, some people have no sense of humor.

Speaking of humor, I recently sat down and watched an hour of MTV. Adam Curry's hairdo was enough to leave me in stitches, but WAIT! It's the Top Twenty Video Countdown, ten of which I have room to talk about here, heh heh...

10. Huey Lewis & the News/"Perfect World": The Stan Laurel of rock and roll does the obligatory cutesy op-art clip. The song? Well, let's just say don't waste good money on Sominex.

9. Def Leppard/"Love Bleeds": Look, I'll mention it once and shut up. If you're in a big money band, and you have nothing else to say on film than you did in the song, why bother with a video?





8. Michael Jackson/"Another Part of Me": Ho ho! A live video from Wacko Jacko, otherwise known as the Dr. Doolittle of the Nutrasweet Generation. He yelps, thrusts, turns and pouts like a mortal, but the silver spacesuit is a dead giveaway.

7. Poison/"Fallen Angel": Brett's Frosty Rose lipstick is reason enough to hate this one, but these jerks make me hate them even MORE by going through 15 million costume changes in the space of this three-minute video entrail. With just enough 16 year-old coozer T&A to keep y'all interested, Poison more than aptly demonstrates their great taste in bad taste.

6. Guns 'N' Roses/"Sweet Child O' Mine": Well, if you're not sick of this one, I'll be sick of it for both of us. Axel's stupid snake hips dance makes me laugh with embarrassment for the rest of the band. And this goddamned puerile song... it's enough to make you wonder if their tattoos are Cracker Jack lick-'em-off specials.

5. Kenny Loggins/"Nobody's Fool": A video that is as non-descript and artificial as the song itself. I wish the damn groundhog would get the bomb already.

4. Joan Jett/"I Hate Myself For Loving You": Well, at least the girl's consistent. With plenty of gooeey close-ups of her atrocious eye make-up, the oldest tomboy in rock and roll has yet another fuck-off-sneer-at-the-camera song. Joan takes off her leather, only to reveal a bod that makes guys green with envy because she is more well-muscled than most of them could ever hope to be.

3. Cheap Trick/"Don't Be Cruel": Lawdy! The former '70s kitsch-meisters try for '80s kitsch and, well, at least Robin Zander still outclasses every other pretty-boy singer in the universe. It's hard for me to not like this one, mainly because I still sing "Surrender" in the shower.

2. Van Halen/"When It's Love": It's no secret that my mom loves Van Halen, so when I asked her what she thought of this yawnsville video, she naturally had no comment. But we both suspect that Sammy Hagar washes his hair with Ajax and that Michael Anthony is the Neanderthal Man.

1. Robert Palmer/"Simply Irresistible": Can you believe this guy has used the exact same formula in his last 3 or 4 videos and has actually gotten away with it? Shouldn't he sue himself or something? Vacuous identical models that can't dance stare blankly at the camera whilst Robert wears a nice Italian suit. If originality was the law, this clownhole would have hit Death Row about 5 years ago.

Song of the month: "We all go to Brookmeade" as sung by Jason Ringenberg (while sailing down the road in his massive blue bomber). Thanks a lot, Jason. What's next— "Jungle Book"?

## the Springwater writers' night

it's a late club getting started  
to an empty house around ten maybe  
ten-thirty they start drifting in  
all primed to play and i bullshit  
and sip a little whiskey stay on top  
of it all

cat's first time down  
he usually plays Spankey's Monday nights  
for the hundred bucks "you don't have  
no prize?" he wants to know  
"this ain't no cattle show"  
i tell him

John and Marsha bring the house down  
sticks and hubcaps and Mississippi mud-stomp  
stop-and-go guitar people beating on tables  
and ashtrays pounding the walls

other nights the place is loony  
jumping around who know who on who knows what  
cigarette smoky gospel burned out rockers  
and crooners the hardcore extravaganza  
the city's longest-running  
defiant in the face of indifference

i get paid ten bucks a week and beer  
to stand up there and tell whoever shows up  
this is it  
can you handle it?  
let's go

—Tom House

## ROBB HOUSTON

The WITH DISCIPLINE  
**CONSPIRACY**



APPEARING AT EXIT -IN  
THURSDAY OCTOBER 13

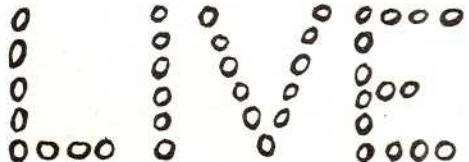


10:00 PM



Hosted by  
Shannon of KDF





# in Nashville

## The Questionnaires. *Exit/In*, 9/16/88

Tom Littlefield shaves it bare. The lead singer and songwriter for the Questionnaires, a rip-it-up rock band with pop smarts, Littlefield comes from the open-up-and-bleed school of lyricists, though he also is sharp enough to occasionally dress his wounds in allegories and metaphors.

In his songs, he doesn't mask his anger, his pain or — and this is what sets him apart — his hope. His songs say that battles are rarely easy and never really won or resolved.

What makes the Questionnaires an outstanding band is how well they translate these feelings to sound. At their best — and they've never sounded better than they did at the *Exit/In* on Sept. 16 — the music grabs you by the lapels, yells in your face and then throws an arm around your shoulder to say, hey, I care about you, I just hate to see either of us screwing up, inevitable at that may be.

The songs sometimes portray an inner struggle. In "Cigarettes and Time," the writer says "I know I got things to do" but isn't doing them. The frightening "Everytime I Lose My Mind" is about the damage that results when people go off the edge.

Other songs tell of those who find the strength to go into the world to face another struggle with what they confront. In "Throw It Away," the lyrics taunt a friend for wasting away a special ability. "Fine Collection of Friends" sneers at how friends squander time and relationships, while "Boomtown" is as good a song as has ever been written about growth destroying a city's qualities and history. The rocking "Shake It Down" encourages a friend to go for it, but once he or she gets there, "you might not like what you have found," warns the singer.

Two of the best songs directly tackle the dilemma of reconciling inner emotions while also trying to deal with the complications of the outside world. In "Fool's Parade," the singer feels ready to step outside and has even found the sense of humor to accept the confusion he finds. In "Window to the World," he also willingly throws open the shutters, even though he says "I can't close my eyes to what I see."

Only in the group's best new song, "Too Far Gone," does the hope dissipate. Set to a swampy country blues, with Doug Lancio supplying a moody slide guitar reminiscent of mid-period Rolling Stones, the song portrays a guy "too blind to see" whose self-destructive impulses are heading him into the abyss without a paddle.



Lancio and Littlefield.

The band seems to get stronger with each outing. Guitarist Lancio, especially, has elbowed himself into the spotlight; his wise-guy smirk reveals his confidence without hiding the fact that he's enjoying himself. He smoothly slips from crunching rhythm to sparse, tasteful and ringingly clear leads. The rhythm section of Hunt Waugh and Chris Feinstein is built out of railroad steel, and they handle a variety of pop styles well.

The Questionnaires knew the *Exit/In* date was important. It was their first in Nashville since they played to thousands at One for the Sun, and likely their last until next year. The record executive who signed them to EMI/Manhattan Records, Michael Barackman, was seeing them in concert for the first time since the Nashville Entertainment Association's Extravaganza last January.

In other words, the pressure was on. They nailed it, hard, straight on and not giving any ground.

Perhaps the best sign of hope and faith comes when people put everything they have into a dream. The challenge now is for the Questionnaires to capture their dedication to craft, their confident swagger and their sneer on tape. They seem as well prepared as any band I've ever seen without an album to their name. —Michael McCall

## Go-Go Surreal w/ Serious George. *Elliston Square*, 9/8/88

I am at a loss to explain why I was expecting an R.E.M.-clone from Serious George. Instead, thankfully, I was treated to a band that delivered a degree of creativity and youthful exuberance that was refreshing to watch. Serious George draws from many sources for their music, and mixes them well. Although there are still some rough edges, it is great to see a band that plays so well, and so obviously enjoys doing it.

That comment applies even more strongly to Go-Go Surreal. Though the band has only been together a few months, their sound has very few rough edges, and is one of the most exciting I have heard in some time. The members of Go-Go Surreal obviously love rock 'n roll in all its many forms, and that love is reflected in their music and their playing.

Go-Go Surreal draws from just about every form of rock imaginable to create a sound that defies pigeon-holing. For me, Go-Go Surreal is not just the next big thing, they are THE big thing. —Randy Fox

## The Dusters, Raging Fire, Government Cheese and Tomorrow's World. *Cat's Last Chance Dance*, *Cat's West End*, 9/4/88

After a summer of concerts which threatened to put many Nashville music lovers into heat stroke, this year's *Cat's Last Chance Dance* proved a pleasant relief. As the temperature dipped to forgotten levels, one had to look to the bands for a rise in the mercury. It proved to be a toasty show.



Things started off cool with Tomorrow's World. On some numbers, their set blasted with the hot torch of the saxophone player. But most often the band delivered a mix of the their trademark Bauhaus-Bowie boys gloom and doom. Lighten up some, guys.

Government Cheese roared onto stage with a hot set, and some very tight playing. The benefits of their recent heavy touring schedule were evident in the tightness of their sound as they scorched out some of their best tunes. Unfortunately, at the end of their set they launched into an almost endless medley of their novelty songs. "Fish Stick Day" can draw a chuckle from those who haven't heard it, but it loses something for those of us who have been subjected to it many times. Play more real songs, Cheese. You're good at those.

Raging Fire also heated up the stage with a good set. Always engaging and entertaining, the band again lived up to its reputation as one of the best unsigned bands in Nashville. One can't help but hope that the prefix "un-" won't be there much longer. (Ed. note: Not just in Nashville; an upcoming CMJ compilation featuring "the best unsigned bands in America" will include Raging Fire).

Between the dropping temperature and the heat of the bands one could stay quite comfortable. Then the Dusters hit the stage with a force that threatened to peel flesh and melt the tar off the parking lot. Forget red hot, the Dusters exploded with white hot fury in one of the best sets I have ever seen them give. The Dusters really made the Last Chance Dance live up to its name. They ain't no jukebox; they ARE a rock 'n roll band. —Randy Fox

## Watch out for...

\*Jaime Kyle, who unveiled a hot new band recently at Elliston Square. Featuring Paul Pierce (guitar) and Kyle Miller (bass) of the recently-broken-up Boilers, the new band complements Jaime's tightly written power-pop material well. A positive buzz has been swirling around Jaime's name all summer, largely on the basis of several hot demos that have generated good listener reactions on REBEL-100's "Nashville's Own" program.

\*David Keith, co-star of *An Officer and a Gentleman*, who did more than just premiere his new flick *Heartbreak Hotel* when he was in Nashville a few weeks ago. Keith, best known in these parts as "that actor who's on the sidelines at all the UT football games," is now seeking new fame in rock and roll. Having played Elvis in *Heartbreak Hotel* (and having romped through a few of the King's standards with Jaime Kyle and band at Elliston recently), he now plans to put together a band to perform some of his own "kind of rockabilly" music. This fall, touring with a rock band will definitely be more fun than watching UT play.

\*Art For Ears, a trio performing what singer Robert Sutherland calls "rhythm and jazz." Some of the tracks on the demo they sent the FWJ sound like Ranking Roger-Eddie Van Halen-Lionel Hampton jam sessions. Haven't seen how they bring it off live yet, but I may just have to saunter down to Panama Red's, where they are playing Friday nights indefinitely, or to Bobby's on October 29th to catch them. --Tom Wood

## MAIN STREET

527 West Main  
Murfreesboro  
890-7820

Fri, Sat Oct. 7,8 Fly by Night

Wed Oct. 12 These are Houseplants

Thurs Oct. 13  
Walk the West

w/ Adams Housecat (voted by *Musician* magazine as one of America's top 10 unsigned bands)

Fri Oct. 14 Sheba's Breakdown

Sat Oct 15

## The Godfathers

Tickets \$7, on sale at all Ticketmaster outlets

Tues Oct 18 Barking Tribe

Thurs Oct 20 Very special guests, to be announced

Wed Oct 26 Blues Co-op

Thurs Oct 27 Psychobash Halloween party with Raging Fire

Fri Oct 28 VOC

Sat Oct 29 Dig Mandrakes with 4 for Nothing



# Fireplace Flicks

by Alonso Duralde

With the exception of pornography, is there any genre more likely to be screwed up by filmmakers than horror? The temptation to provide cheap thrills, inexplicable plot developments, repellent gore and sexist attitudes seems always to throw a monkey wrench into a branch of filmmaking that can, when done correctly, provide laughs, thrills, enjoyment and thought-provoking entertainment.

Looking at the most popular horror series these days supports the idea that good fright flicks are the exception rather than the rule. Those *Friday* the 13th movies manage to go lower and lower with each film, bumping off teenagers for no apparent reason with increasingly nauseating aplomb. *Nightmare on Elm Street* started out as an interestingly surreal spooker, but each subsequent entry makes less sense. Even worse, Fred Krueger the child molester/killer has become Freddy, media idol, funny guy and TV host. Somewhere along the line, he went from Charles Manson to Spuds Mackenzie (there's even a Freddy Krueger fan club).

When a good horror film comes around, it's cause for celebration because it's such a rare occurrence. With Halloween coming up, I thought I might point out some goodies, some of which are available on videocassette and some of which, one could hope, will return to area theaters for the holiday.

**The Hitcher.** While Siskel and Ebert ran roughshod over this film for its violence, they missed the point that most of the mayhem took place off screen. But then, nothing's as scary as what you don't see. *Newsweek* critic David Ansen has noted, rightly, that the evil title character Rutger Hauer "makes Jason look like a Muppet."

**Near Dark** and **The Lost Boys:** Like *Return of the Secaucus 7* and *The Big Chill*, these two 1987 vampire movies have a lot in common, but the low budget and critical success of one makes it hip to dump on the other. I think that both of these features-of-the-night are effective in their own respective ways. *Near Dark* never uses the word "vampire" but its troop of marauding nocturnal bloodsuckers are terrifying members of the American gothic, nomadically roaming in a Winnebago. (*Near Dark* is Sarratt's Halloween feature.)

**Lost Boys** is much more Left Coast, but it features kinetic cinematography and wonderful performances by Corey Haim, Corey Feldman and especially Kiefer Sutherland as one of the most blood-chilling screen presences in a long time.

**The Stepfather:** While perhaps more a suspense film than a horror movie, this witty and terrifying satire will keep you riveted. In fact, as far as suburban psychotic movies go, I place this one over David Lynch's occasionally muddled *Blue Velvet*, and I'll put Terry O'Quinn's brilliant performance here next to Dennis Hopper's any day. O'Quinn plays a man obsessed with having a perfect, Norman Rockwell-style family. When his wife and/or kids disappoint him, he kills them, changes his identity and moves on to a new one. When his latest stepdaughter gets suspicious... look out.

**Monkey Shines:** I'm hoping that this sadly-overlooked George Romero (*Night of the Living Dead*) film will get one more try in area theaters for Halloween. Like *The Hitcher*, it leaves most of the gore to the viewer's imagination, which is why it's so darn scary. A quadriplegic law student gets a helping hands monkey to help him out. Unbeknownst to him, the chimp has been the subject of experiments with human brain tissue that give it a psychic link with his master. When the student starts feeling murderous impulses, the monkey starts to carry them out. Don't miss it if it returns.

There are other greats, of course, but you already know that films like *Psycho* and *The Bride of Frankenstein* are great. And I leave out films like *Aliens*, which I loved, but looks crappy on TV. Trick or treat.

As I write these short reviews, the summer movie season is waning. By the time you read this, the fall movies that I haven't seen yet are in full swing. To spare me having to review movies I haven't seen and you having to read about titles long gone from local screens, I'm just going to preview the Sarratt goodies of the month.

## Bright Lights, Big City Rated: R

Who would have thought that one of the most indulgent novels of the '80s and one of the worst actors of the '80s could make such a wonderful film? Michael J. Fox stars as Jamie Conway, a proofer for a New York magazine indulging himself in a coke-filled hedonistic life to forget his estranged wife and his recently deceased mother (a moving performance by Dianne Weist). The chock-full-of-character-actor cast includes Kiefer Sutherland, Frances Sternhagen, John Houseman, Jason Robards and Charlie Schlatter. If you thought you'd hate it, give it a shot—I wasn't expecting much either. Oct. 14, 15, 7:30 and 9:45 p.m.; Oct. 16, 3 p.m.

## Broadcast News Rated: R

One of the year's 10 best films—probably the best written—this one was unfortunately run over by *The Last Emperor* come Oscar time. Still, it's a must see—if only for the fine performances of Holly Hunter, William Hurt and Albert Brooks. It's one of the few clever films that doesn't bury itself in cynicism. Oct. 21, 22, 7:30 and 10:10 p.m.; Oct. 23, 3 p.m.



Head of the Gamma Phi Gamma pledges, Julian (Giancarlo Esposito, l.) tries to break Half-Pint's (Spike Lee, r.) concentration during a fraternity ritual in *Lee's School Daze*.

## Jean de Florette Not rated

One of the few sweeping epics that actually cares about the characters. Yves Montand and Daniel Auteuil are two landowners who want to drive city boy Gerard Depardieu off his land by blocking its water and generally making his life miserable. It's a powerful story, and don't forget to return the following week for *Manon of the Spring*, the sequel in which Depardieu's daughter settles the score. October 25, 26; 7:30 and 10:00 p.m.

## Network Rated: R

Sidney Lumet's savage satire of television news (brilliantly written by Paddy Chayefsky) just gets truer and truer with each passing year. Faye Dunaway plays an ambitious chief of network entertainment who takes over the nightly news when anchorman/prophet Howard Beale (Peter Finch's final, glorious, Oscar-winning role) goes off the deep end and captures a jaded, '70s public's attention. As opposed to *Broadcast News*, this one does get pretty cynical, but it works anyway. Look for more fine work from William Holden, Beatrice Straight, Ned Beatty and Robert Duvall. Oct. 23, 7:30 and 9:50 p.m.

## Paris When It Sizzles Not rated

Not for everyone, but if you love silly '60s movies, Hollywood self-satires or Audrey Hepburn, then it's a must for you. Hepburn plays a typist assigned to work with William Holden, a burnt-out screenwriter who has three days to come up with a script for the title he sold to a producer: *The Girl Who Stole the Eiffel Tower*. It's one of those movies that if it sounds like your type, it probably will be and if it doesn't, it definitely won't be. Oct. 24, 7:30 and 9:35 p.m.



**Patti Rocks Rated: R**

Somewhat on the talky side, perhaps, but it's definitely good talk. A sexist, married boor has a mistress who doesn't know he's married and subsequently refuses to get an abortion when he impregnates her. He drives with his divorced best friend to see her and talk things out. The conversations between each of the three pairs are illuminating, offensive, funny, thought-provoking and very true-to-life. Part of the Critical Eye VI Festival, with a discussion at Sarratt after the early show. Oct. 16, 7:30 and 9:15 p.m.

**School Daze Rated: R**

Spike Lee's bigger-budget follow up to *She's Gotta Have It* is somewhat of a disappointment because it's too long and it ends badly, but Lee's main fault is that he has too much to say, which is an affliction found all too rarely in today's American films. Nonetheless there are some great scenes and incredible musical numbers that make this somewhat flawed film worth seeing. Oct. 9, 10, 7:30 and 9:40 p.m.

**White Mischief Rated: R**

The kind of British costume melodrama that usually gets on my nerves, only this one works. Greta Scacchi is too yummy for words as a bored wife who carries on with Charles Dance in Africa during World War II. Dance's murder creates a shock wave through the decadent society of English expatriates. Also stars Sarah Miles, Geraldine Chaplin, John Hurt and Trevor Howard. Oct. 11, 12, 7:30 and 9:25 p.m.

**Zelly and Me Rated: PG**

The debut feature from director Tina Rathborne is a moving, shocking and tender story of an orphaned child being raised by her sometimes loving, sometimes cruel grandmother (Glynis Johns), who can luckily turn to her governess (Isabella Rossellini) for love and support. Featuring director David Lynch in his acting debut. Like nothing else I've ever seen; only during the reign of David Putnam could a major studio have made this film. Part of the Critical Eye VI Festival, with a discussion at Sarratt after the first show. Oct. 17, 7:30 and 9:15 p.m.

## Ridley's Video Picks

### *The Milagro Beanfield War*

You know a movie is in trouble when its most engaging character is a pig. Robert Redford directed this overly polite adaptation of the John Nichols novel about a bean farmer who defies a land baron's control of the local water supply. Trying for a combination of magic realism and social commentary, Redford comes up with something like magic sanctimony—a Damon Runyon translation of Garcia Marquez. The most appealing performance is by Ruben Blades as a laconic sheriff, but so many characters and undeveloped subplots emerge that nobody else makes much of an impression, and the whole movie becomes sickeningly sweet. Still, that's some pig. (MCA)

### *Jean de Florette*

In the second irrigation movie of the month, a scheming landowner and his son drive a hunchbacked tax collector to his ruin by damming his water supply. The best reason to see Claude Berris' clunky adaptation of the Marcel Pagnol novel is Yves Montand's effortlessly graceful, vital performance as the landowner. Otherwise, the film is redundant, unimaginatively filmed and only slightly involving. The main problem is Gerard Depardieu's performance as the noble tax collector Jean: few actors convey less nobility than the loutish Depardieu, whose specialty is hulking sexist brutes. With Depardieu out of the way, however, the sequel, *Manon of the Spring*, is much more entertaining. The movie is hurt on home video where the widescreen compositions are chopped at the edges. See it at Sarratt for full effect. The subtitles, incidentally, are the most egregiously misspelled I have ever seen. (Orion)

### *The Last Emperor*

Coming from Bernardo Bertolucci, a Marxist director with a remarkably voluptuous style, one would expect this film about the life of China's last emperor to be charged and passionate. It is neither. The first hour is entrancing, detailing the imperial excesses of the Forbidden City, but the film loses its dramatic momentum: the emperor is too passive a figure to support the movie. By the time Bertolucci gets to the rise of Chinese nationalism he has resorted to such dumb melodramatic devices as a leather-clad Dragon Lady who seduces the empress. Some of the images, however, are magical; particularly haunting is a shot of the child emperor toyed with a billowing curtain while his thousands of subjects wait outside. (Nelson)

### *Empire of the Sun*

Steven Spielberg's film about a boy separated from his parents in Shanghai at the beginning of World War II came out at the same time as *The Last Emperor* and was virtually ignored. That was a shame, because this is a far more interesting film, as brilliant and foolish as the best of D.W.Griffith. Here Spielberg equates entering adulthood with devastation; even the first stirrings of sexual desire are accompanied by explosion. As the boy, Christian Bale gives the most expressive performance by a child actor since Jean-Pierre Leaud in *The 400 Blows*. Unfortunately, the masterful widescreen compositions are ruined on home video; it is worth seeing anyway. (Warner Bros.)

Briefly: In *Patti Rocks*, two actors get to play at being sexist louts, and as usual in largely improvised movies they are nowhere near as shocking or funny as they think. Spend time with some insurance salesmen instead... *Lady In White* is a nifty little ghost story perfect for Halloween: it has imaginative special effects and a charming campfire-tale ambience... *Brain Damage* is a suitably unhinged horror movie about a brain-eating monster that sings old Glenn Miller songs. --Jim Ridley

## Exposures

P · H · O · T · O · G · R · A · P · H · Y



MODEL: Performer, Sheila Lawrence

615/327-2170

## Catechism

The rain  
had hung above  
for several days and  
now was willing to  
dabble in salvation,  
cleansing his pronounced stride  
quicken with faith and  
cocaine.

—Luke Warm



# Man in the Mirror

A Discussion, of sorts, with

*Bright Lights, Big City* Author Jay McInerney

by John Atkins

I'm like, Can you call me back later. I'm standing here naked in the middle of the apartment with all the shades open.

Alright, John goes. I'll call you back in a couple. And he hangs up.

I love John. He cracks me up. He's probably the only guy I know that I haven't fucked. That's probably why we're still friends. So, anyway, I go out for awhile and come back and there are like six messages on my machine from John. He's like, I'm just calling to say hi, I guess you're not home. And I'm like no shit, John.

A couple of hours later, I'm sitting around blowing a few lines with my roommate, Gray and there's this knock on the front door. Gray gets real paranoid and hides the blow under the coffee table. And I'm like, Gray, if it's the fucking cops they're not going to go, hey look the blow's under the coffee table, this isn't the house we were supposed to raid tonight.

Very funny, Alison, Gray goes.

So I open the door real slow like, keeping the chain on, and look through the crack.

*Story of My Life,*  
the new novel by

Jay McInerney

.. author of *Bright Lights, Big City*  
and *Ransom*, is available at all three  
Nashville area locations of  
Mills Bookstore



A limited number of autographed copies  
of *Story of My Life* are available.

Mills Bookstore

Hillsboro Village  
Belle Meade Plaza  
Brentwood Place



It's me, John says.

Oh, I go, closing the door in his face to lift the chain off.

I can see you're really glad to see me, John goes in this real sarcastic tone.

Yeah, I say. Like I was expecting you to show up at my front door at one in the fucking morning.

Well, I tried to reach you all day. But I guess you were out, John goes. But this shouldn't be any big surprise. The only times I've seen you in the last three months have been between two and six in the morning. But, I don't care what time it is or how much blow you've put up your nose, Alison, you'll always look fresh and clean as a whistle to me.

Fuck you, John, I say.

Thank you very much, He goes.

What's so important that you have to tell me right now, I say.

And John goes, Jay McInerney.

Jay, Mac, and Erney? I go.

No. Jay McInerney, the guy who wrote that book, *Bright Lights, Big City*. Do you like him?

I don't know, I go.

I mean, I know who John's talking about, I've seen a picture of him in *People* or somewhere like that.

Like him? I've never met him, I say with this look which really drives John up the wall.

No. I mean, do you like his writing?

Gray interrupts and says, Alison it's your turn. John, you have to do a line too. House rules.

And John's like, No thanks, I'm trying to cut down. Cracks me up.

So Gray goes, Well, Alison?

John and I sit down and I do my line. And Gray starts chopping up the pile real intensely, like she's concentrating on lifting the table with her eyes.

Well, John goes, I interviewed him on the 24<sup>th</sup> in the back room at Mills Bookstore. He was sitting there with his feet up on a bunch of boxes and we talked for about an hour about his new book, *Story of My Life*, and a bunch of other stuff.

Yeah? I say. Is that all? Is that why you called my machine six times today? To tell me you spoke to this author.

I'm like, am I suppose to care?

I can tell that John is getting really

frustrated with me. So I decide to let him talk for a while, so he doesn't explode all over the blow.

So what did he say? I say.

And before John can tell me, Gray goes, forget what he said. We want details, length and width.

To save John the trouble of explaining to Gray, in the state she's in, that he only interviewed this guy, I say, ignore her. I can see that John's really pissed and defensive because he thinks Gray is inferring that he's gay. Which he's not.

So John turns to me as though I were the only one in the room.

Well, the really weird thing is that the main character, the narrator in the new book, *Story of My Life*, is named Alison. Like you.

I'm like, no shit, John. I'm glad you could remember my name.

He's like, no really. It's pretty weird. This girl, Alison Poole, talks just like you and me. And she does a whole lot of blow like you. And her family's kind of fucked up, too.

I'm starting to really get into what John is saying and I kind of forget that Gray is there doing all the blow.

Change of scene, Gray says.

I'm like, where to? It's nearly one-thirty a.m.

The Urban Lounge, Gray goes.

So when get there, we have just enough time to hear last call. Gray's freaking out a little and cuts out to the ladies room to do a bump or two while John tells me about Jay McInerney.

McInerney was talking about Alison Poole as like a stereotype of a girl like you who lives all over the country, John goes.

Really? I say.

Yeah, He goes. McInerney said that Alison Poole was, this character generated by this voice. This sort of slangy, american idiom, which is not unique to Alison and her friends, although they're richer and wilder and a little more extreme than say their peers in Omaha or Ann Arbor.

And I'm like, no kidding. Sometimes I feel a little more extreme than my peers right here in Nashville. But then, I just look at Gray and realize that I'm pretty normal for someone who could be really fucked up.

Did McInerney talk about being so successful so young, I say. What is he 24 or 25. I mean, he's part of the so-called post-literate generation, whatever that means, like us, isn't he? I go.

John sort of laughs.

I think he's 33, really, He goes. But, yeah, he's still pretty young looking. McInerney said that when he wanted to publish *Bright*



down themselves and like one or two of their friends have gone into rehab. And they think, Oh shit, I don't want to get AIDS, I guess I'll just marry Susan. After all, I've been going out with her for seven years. And then, they think that this is a fucking national trend, you know, just because of their own aging process.

Yeah, I go. I've always figured those Time and Newsweek fellow were a little too straight to be making all that money.

Jay said that, I see just as much sex and drugs out there as I ever did. But for people getting older, there's more of an awareness of the dangers of drugs and more natural

caution about who you fuck. I don't think that we've suddenly become a clean living country. A lot of people are fiddling while Rome burns.

I guess that includes me, I say. But what I don't understand is if all these older people had the right to fuck up, why can't we?

John shrugs his shoulders to this. I suppose, He goes, it's because they're the ones who buy all the toilet paper.

Cracks me up. John stands up saying that he's got to go.

I've got to transcribe this interview in the morning, He goes. It is the morning, I say.

Yeah, I guess it is, John says. Want to go get some breakfast at IHOP?

Sure, I say. Story of my life, breakfast at IHOP at five o'clock in the morning, coming down from a really big buzz.

## In a Nashville Country Club

To the memory of John Virgil Russell,  
an aide-de-camp to General Forrest

It is a sort of purgatory here. Among human silhouettes the sweat-sea, not unpleasing, forms. No hope of air-conditioning here, so we are all in the same boat. Perspiration permissible in the steam room.

Ethereal,

It hides us all in heroic, fat-forgiving haze. It cloaks the glistening distended bellies. Cold Heineken awaits when we leave, naked, this purgative machine. Soon, reappearing properly perfumed in the world, we shall flow fearless down the freeway.

Or ride perhaps down Franklin Pike, A moment's thought jogging one's mind: Down this once-dirt highway Hood fled, and Grandmother's grandfather stayed behind And helped "that Devil," the raider Forrest— Defensive now— to cover the path. And followed back to Mississippi. Uncultured man, needing a bath. (I smell the seething of rank flesh. I see his face, tobacco-drawn. I feel the eyes that may have glimpsed A thousand dead in a Franklin dawn.) Was he the one of whom we know Who stumbled (or perhaps was sent) Into Hood's quarters, there to find A warrior weeping in his tent?

Wounded intestines, so they say, Give off an odor not demure. The corpses bloat within a day (Less in the heat). Best to immure Without delay. Upon the heath Our fathers learned of gangrene And learned to fear the smell of death.

—Tom Wood

Clem returned to his home in Gastrow, Georgia, worn out from his stint in show business.

He laid low for the next few years, afraid the Holiday Inn in Omaha, Nebraska might want their ashtray back. But he never stopped creating. He spent three years working on an epic poem based on the limerick "There Once Was a Man From Nantucket", but the 400-page opus was never published.

But Clem could still play the banjo. He formed a band in the early eighties and toured the South. Unfortunately, the number of club-goers who wanted to hear a two-hour version of "Dueling Banjos" was small. Clem's band left him stranded when he stopped to use the restroom at a Howard Johnson's in Xenia, Ohio. They took the band bus and headed home.

Clem was eventually able to make his way back to Gastrow, raising enough money for bus fare by working as a geek at various carnivals in the Ohio area. When he got home he thought his career was over. He thought about turning his epic poem into a screenplay, but plans for that fell through when he found out it had already been done several times.

He was working as a gas station attendant when he got a call from K-Tel Records, asking him to be on their

compilation, *Songs From Washed-Up Has-Beens* (which, incidentally contains a stunning version of "I Am Woman" by Alice of the Brady Bunch). But as is often the case with musical artists, Clem didn't read the small print on the contract. Not only did he lose all

his royalties, he had to clean the K-Tel offices twice a week.

Clem eventually got out of his contract by promising never to scare the president's children ever again. He returned to Georgia and rested up, planning his next move. That move didn't come until recently. He has just finished a diet book: *The Clem Johnson Guide to Gauntness*, and he's planning a tour of the talk shows to promote it.

"I'm just glad to live in a country where there is always a second chance for a media star like myself," says Clem.

## WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO



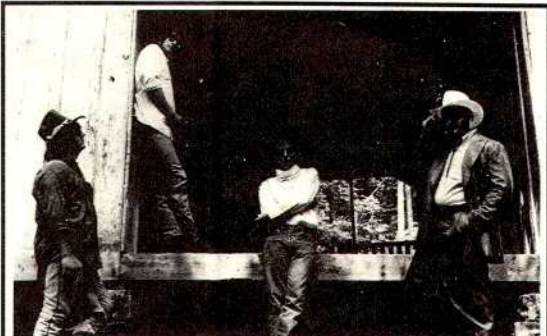
## the guy from "DELIVERANCE"?

by Paul Mitchell

You hear it everyday, no matter where you are, everyone's asking: "Whatever happened to that mutant guy who played the banjo in *Deliverance*?" Well now his story can be told; our crack staff has dug up the lowdown on this cult figure.

Following his memorable performance in *Deliverance*, Clem Johnson immediately joined the cast of the road performance of *A Torch Song Trilogy*. But after less than two months, he was replaced by Russell Johnson of *Gilligan's Island* fame.






They're BIG, They're BAD,  
and They're BACK!  
100% U.S.D.A. approved.  
**THE BLIND FARMERS**  
with guests  
Chip and the Chiltons  
**Thursday October 13th**  
at The Cellar  
132 2nd Ave. North

# The History of Television

"Honey, I'm home."  
"But Ricky, why can't I be in the show?"  
"Ward, don't you think you are being a little hard on the Beaver?"  
"I'll take Paul Lynde to block."  
"Freeze, punk!"  
"Well little buddy, you did it again."

"Honey, I'm home."  
"I'd like to buy a vowel, Pat."  
"You have the right to remain silent."  
"Mike, don't you think you're being a little bit hard on Greg?"  
"I hold in my hand the last question."  
"Everyone out there is giving 110 percent."  
"Honey, I'm home."  
"And we all know how painful that can be."  
"I'll take Joan Rivers to block."  
"Put your hands on top of your head."  
"It's a perfect day for football."  
"I thought you brought the tools."  
"Jane, I don't think I can go on: my husband got a 15-year-old runaway pregnant, my son is a transvestite, my daughter is living with three surfers in a van, and I just broke a nail."  
"My next guest is one of the legends of the television industry."  
"Honey, I'm home."  
For a further study of the history of American television read the preceding history again. --Paul Mitchell



Artists & the Law: Songwriters, graphic artists, authors, and all others interested in the arts-- know your rights! Learn how to protect your property by attending a day-long seminar at the Vanderbilt University School of Law entitled "Copyright Basics for the Independent Artist". This free seminar will bring together artists, persons in the entertainment industry, students, and practicing attorneys to discuss in plain English some of today's most pressing copyright issues. The seminar will begin at 10:00 am on Sat., Oct. 29 at Vanderbilt Law School. For additional information contact Jordan Musen at (615) 322-2613.



# To our Readers, Subscribers, Advertisers, Friends . . .

This is the last issue of *The Fireplace Whiskey Journal*.

We're not "temporarily suspending publication," or anything like that. This is the end.

Ironically, this is also our best issue. In this issue we come closest to fulfilling what I have always considered to be the *FWJ*'s primary role: providing a forum that would draw together a community of creative and concerned individuals. I wanted us to put our heads together and start a new country, even if its boundaries never extended beyond my living room. Perhaps this was a childish endeavor. But it has succeeded, to some extent. Talented writers, cartoonists and other creators have come out of the woodwork, and with each issue their offerings have formed a more cohesive whole.

One night last January, Regina Gee, Kath, Lee, Nicki and I sat down at Obie's and conjured up a magazine. (Kath and Nicki, who hated the cold weather, demanded that the publication be named after something warm; hence our moniker.) On

January 29th the first issue appeared, a 12-pager with a press run of 500. No more than ten days had elapsed between initial conception and finished product.

It goes without saying that the magazine began with no "business plan." We intended to sell just enough ads to cover the cost of production. But before we even got the first issue out, we were being swamped with support-- mostly moral, but some in the form of ads-- from people in the music industry, who were eager for the growing rock scene in Nashville to gain some kind of credible coverage in the local press. Naturally, we were pleased as punch, and the magazine grew astronomically.

It was one thing, though, to engage in publishing as a time-consuming and deeply rewarding hobby, and quite another thing to convert that hobby into a business. Essentially, the seat-of-the-pants business philosophy that guided our founding and early issues has now come home to roost. Every issue, until the current one, has turned a profit, but at the same time it has become clear that the magazine as currently structured can never come in more than \$200 over cost. It has been my full-time job for the past two months, and I can't live on \$200 a month-- and we certainly can't hire advertising sales staff, improve our miserable computer or make other necessary business moves on so slim a margin.

In an editorial in our first issue, we said that Nashville needed a reliable weekly magazine that would cover local music, books, dance, cinema, theater and the gallery scene, as well as providing "coverage of our sordid local politics with some guts to it." We also openly scoffed at the idea that the *FWJ* would become such a publication. But the magazine did take steps in some of these directions. I want to state emphatically that an arts-and-entertainment magazine with an edge can succeed in Nashville-- and that Nashville needs it, bad.

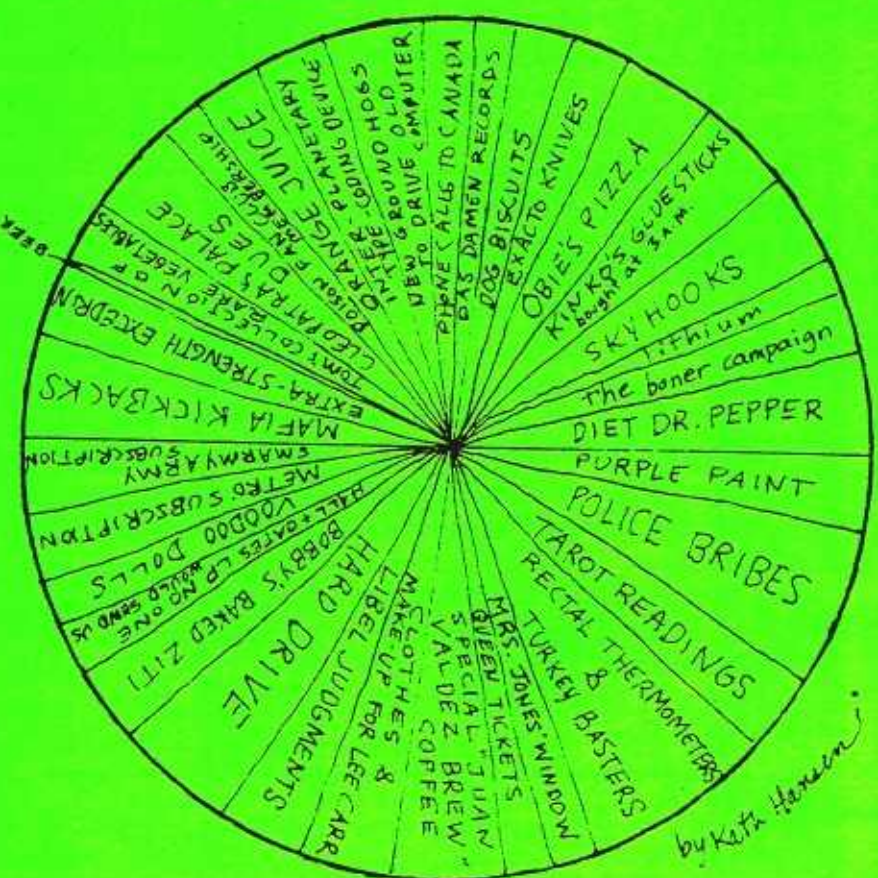
A note to our subscribers: pro-rated refunds are on the way. And to everyone else who made it such a blast, thanks.

--Tom Wood



**FWJ TODAY**

"Where the Money Went"  
-OR-  
can you resist an official-looking graph?



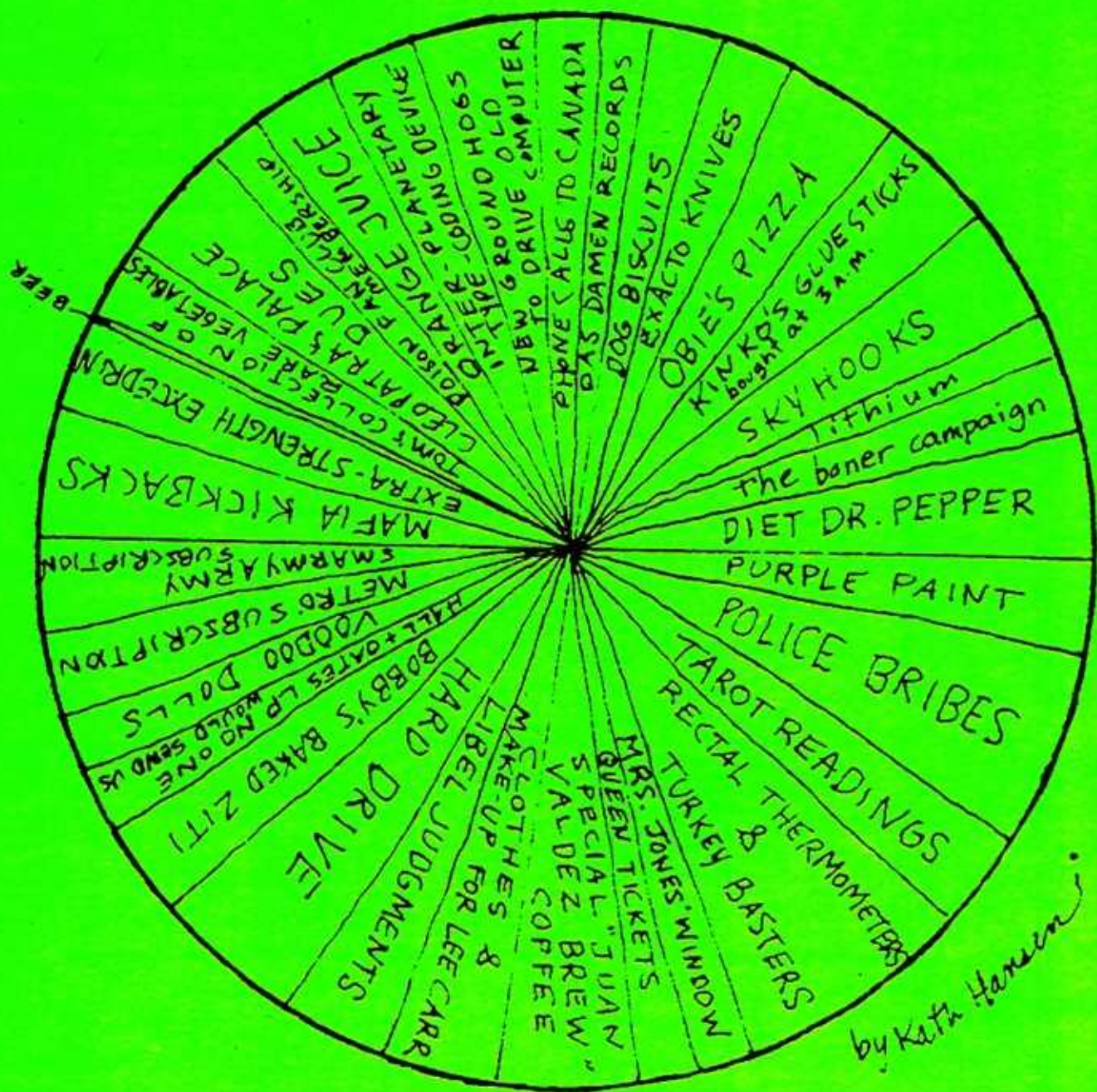
by Kith Hammen



# FWJ TODAY

"Where the Money Went"  
-OR-

can you resist an official-looking graph?



by Kath Hansen



Carnival Season, w/ Mr. Crowe's Garden. Sal's Rock Block,  
7/15/88

In spite of the remarkably small turnout—maybe 20 for Atlanta-based Mr. Crowe's Garden, double that for Carnival Season—this double-bill of a pair of talented up-and-comers from down South proved to be a fine way to cap off yet another long week of work.

Riding ragged riffs that fall somewhere between classic Stooges and pre-Zeppelinized Cult, Mr. Crowe's Garden may yet grow up to be the next great white hope of unpretentious non-metal hard rock. In the meanwhile, they're a highly entertaining live quartet—despite their self-absorbed stage demeanor. As this show demonstrated, singer Chris Robinson is a charismatic performer who doesn't have to hop around to command attention. This was a strong but not frenzied set, all the more impressive considering the miniscule crowd and inconsistent sound mix throughout.

The headliners, Birmingham's Carnival Season, are industry vets compared to the barely-post-teens Mr. Crowe's Garden, and, in many ways, they showed it. They played a distinctive, muscular pop that ventured clear from the "Southern jangle" cliches that all too often plague bands from this region and delivered it in a rough-hewn style that was well-received by the sparse but enthusiastic audience. Singer/bassist Brad Quinn and guitarist Tim Boykin traded spry hooks and rough chords with equal aplomb and good-natured ferociousness.

The show's campiest point came in the final set of encores, wherein Robinson joined Carnival Season in tongue-in-cheek, albeit exhilarating, covers of The Stooges' "Loose" and Led Zeppelin's "Rock 'N Roll." Both bands are worth seeing at first chance, even on weeknights when it means a rough next morning at work. This was the bright young face of Southern rock and roll.

—David Wykoff

*Mr. Crowe's Garden will appear Saturday, August 13 at Elliston Square, with special guests Swing.*



more than just Bluegrass.

# KENTUCKY'S RISING T

by Tom Wood and Randy Fox

There is no more beautiful stretch of road in the Commonwealth of Kentucky than U. S. Highway 27 between Lexington and Paris. Enclosed on either side by the whitewashed fences of thoroughbred farms and by Kentucky's trademark rolling landscape of low, verdant hills, the road presents the appealing scene that inhabits many of our imaginations when we think of our northern neighbor.

But there's a new beat galloping out of the Bluegrass State. It comes from the collegiate scenes of Lexington and Bowling Green, from a maverick radio station in Munfordville, and from the urban pulse of Louisville. Rock and roll has come to life in tranquil and traditional Kentucky, and several of the state's emerging acts appear poised to make a major impact nationally.

## Shaking Family

Although Louisville's Shaking Family is not yet signed to a major label and not yet as well-known as some other Kentucky bands, the quartet may be the most powerful act coming out of the state's nascent rock scene. Singer Barbara Ann explains that the band has tried to build its following around Lexington's vibrant club scene, since "there are only a couple of cool venues in all of Louisville." Given the reaction to their self-titled and self-produced debut LP and two recent gigs at the Exit/In, the Shaking Family's horizons seem likely to expand soon. A number of labels have reportedly expressed interest in signing the group.

Their sound is definitely pop, but the musical and lyrical substance of the band's tunes sets them far apart from today's standard radio fluff. And they appear to be able to translate the heavily layered vocal and guitar sound of their album into a live setting with no loss of effect. The rich power of singer Barbara Ann's pipes is no studio fluke, although she and guitarist Vince Emmett clearly know their way around a control board; they



Shaking Family — back: Charles Ellis, Vince Emmett; front: Brendan Lewis, Barbara Ann, Tim Chewning

did an excellent job of producing their LP. It may be one of those rare independent records, like Guadalcanal Diary's *Walking in the Shadow of the Big Man* or Jason and the Scorchers' *Fervor*, that can be reissued by a major label more or less as is.

## Stealin' Horses

Few unsigned bands have been the subject of more intense music-industry intrigue than that which surrounded Lexington's Stealin' Horses in the first few months of 1987. Their Nashville showcases drew A&R reps from both coasts and set local observers abuzz with talk of "the Bangle factor"—the band then sported a metal-inclined female guitarist along with the two women who are its core personnel, singer/songwriter Kiya Heartwood and drummer Kopana Terry. But while Heartwood's talent was immediately evident, the band seemed to be putting on glam-rock airs in its attempt to lure a label. They even equipped the Cannery with stage-wings for one gig; the guitarist pranced, mugged and gyrated in an effective argument against the widespread availability of wireless guitars.

By and by, good taste won out. Arista signed the band and ensconced Terry and Heartwood in the studio with legendary west-coast session guns Waddy Wachtel, Danny Kortchmar and Russ Kunkel, as well as veteran producer Greg Ladyani and, for a few cameo appearances, Neil Young. The result, a self-titled debut album, showcases the band's diversity and Heartwood's heartland songwriting. It is radio-accessible—the single "Turn-around" made some headway on AOR charts—but one gets the impression that after so much fine-tuning of the lineup (they just switched guitarists for the third time) and the sound in attempts to conform to a perceived norm, Stealin' Horses has come back to the honest exuberance that apparently created the excitement about them in the first place.

## Sheba's Breakdown

The Southern college-town touring routine can provide a growing band with financial stability. It can also leave a band trapped like a fly in amber. Nashville's White Animals and many other acts have learned the hard way that a "cover band" tag can prove insurmountable when a group evolves into all-original status. With a TNP/Enigma Records deal memorandum in hand, Louisville-based Sheba's Breakdown appears prepared to bridge the chasm.

First as "The Score" and then under its present name, Sheba's Breakdown has been averaging over two hundred engagements annually for several years, and the road grind has helped them to hone their melodic-pop sound. Their live show is infectious, and they now plan to work on bringing that energy into the studio, possibly with John Cougar Mellencamp guitarist Mike Wanchic as producer.

## Velvet Elvis

Another Kentucky act snapped up by Enigma Records is Lexington's Velvet Elvis, whose Mitch Easter-produced, self-titled album came out in April. The Enigma record follows (and reworks much of) the band's homemade 1986 LP *What in the World*, which made a big splash on college radio. The "Velvet" portion of the name is significant, as VE sounds at times a lot like the Velvet Underground, particularly on the new album, from which the twangy intonations of the 1986 record are absent.

VE toured heavily in the southeast after their independent record came out, and recently has been on the road with Mitch Easter's band Let's Active. The exposure thus gained promises to boost their fortunes still further.



# IDE of ROCK and ROLL

## The Head Hunters & "The Chitlin' Show"

The Head Hunters are a bunch of brothers and cousins who earn their livings backing up mainstream country acts like Ronnie McDowell and Sylvia. And these guys have formed a band and they get on the radio ever so often in a hamlet called



Munfordville and they call it "The Chitlin' Show." Can this be the least bit cool?

Yes. When guitarist Greg Martin describes the Head

Hunters' sound as "Bill Monroe meets Cream," he's not far off base. The band plays blues-based roots-rock that is nuanced with bits of rockabilly, jazz and country—and having jammed together since childhood, they play it tightly. Last May, they began hosting The Chitlin' Show as a live program broadcast on WLOC-FM, an alternative station inexplicably emanating from Munfordville (102.3 on the dial; you can pick it up on I-65 north of Bowling Green).

The Head Hunters have devoted their forum to roots music of all kinds. Typically they will play a few of their own tunes and then yield the floor to guest performers, who have included Jerry Dale McFadden, founding NRBQ member Steve Ferguson and Velvet Elvis, among others. The Chitlin' Show's growing stature as a cult favorite has prompted interest from beyond the area of its listenership, and moves are now afoot to syndicate it regionally or nationally.

### The Bowling Green Scene

Bowling Green lies like a dimple of conservatism in the middle of south-central Kentucky. Rock bands have always had a hard time in Bowling Green, as they face a largely apathetic student population and have to cope with the best efforts of local government to stifle musical expression. Despite these problems, bands have persevered, and a small but growing local scene has managed to emerge.

Until a few years ago, most bands in Bowling Green were of the Holiday Inn cover-band variety. A few original bands surfaced, such as the legendary Sgt. Arms (featuring Bill Lloyd), but none showed any real lasting power.

The appearance of Government Cheese brought about a change in Bowling Green. The Cheese played their own brand of power-pop and insisted on doing things their own way despite almost overwhelming odds against them. In the space of a couple of years, Government Cheese transformed themselves from "that weird band" to something of a local phenomenon that could pack the house anytime they played in Bowling Green. With a national tour under their belts and their EP *C'mon Back to Bowling Green (And Marry Me)* out on Reptile Records, the Cheese is doing quite well.

One of the more established Bowling Green clubs, Picasso's, began to book more original bands after the success of Govern-

ment Cheese. Nashville artists such as Walk the West, Royal Court of China, The Questionnaires and the Dusters started playing Picasso's, often with Bowling Green bands opening. A small club that sprang up next to campus, Mr. C's, followed suit with an eclectic run of shows ranging from folk music to hardcore, giving an even greater push to local music.

Local music suffered a blow when legislation was passed that restricted a large portion of its potential audience from going to clubs. Although Kentucky's drinking age is 21, state law allows clubs to admit persons aged 18 to 20 as long as they are not served alcohol. But late last year the city council of Bowling Green passed a local ordinance closing this loophole. Since the imposition of the new measure, Picasso's has veered back toward the financially safe cover-band fare, though local favorites like Government Cheese and the Head Hunters still draw good crowds.

Many established Nashville bands also still play at Picasso's, with local bands opening. Mr. C's responded to the new law by regularly scheduling all-ages shows. The opening of a no-alcohol club, Niteclass, on campus has also given local bands a venue. And local radio station WDNS now runs a weekly radio program devoted to music from Bowling Green, the rest of Kentucky, and Nashville.

Bowling Green's music scene is not dead yet, and if one can judge from some of the hot bands in town, like Go Go Surreal and Toxic Shock, there is still a bright future ahead.

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# Life and Literature

by Pete Wilson

Raymond Carver, perhaps the best short story writer in the United States, died on August 2 of lung cancer at the age of 50. A friend of mine gave me the first word I heard of it when he called from Grand Central Station a few days later, reporting that he'd seen a memorial ad in the *Times* taken out by Random House. He was upset. A writer himself, living in Brooklyn and looking for work, he liked Carver's stories a lot when I introduced him to them. I think we both identify with the alienated, lonely, directionless men of Carver's work, despite superficial differences like education and an ability, so far, to escape the blue-collar drudgery that shapes the lives of Carver's people. Neither of us has his life on a solid, comfortable course, and we are vulnerable to life's changes, to the degeneration of relationships, to our own mismanagement. Carver means something to us.

When an Elvis Presley or a John Lennon dies, armbanded masses gather outside Graceland or the Dakota. The glamorous world of rock 'n roll responds to death in a

glamorous way, and it's hard not to suspect a sort of tight-lipped, perverse satisfaction in these rituals. I don't think similar pomp has surrounded Carver's death—readers and critics tend not to invest so much adulatory energy in the deaths of people who write books. I can imagine, though, a chain of readers passing the news and sharing a certain communal grief in this case.

Carver could hit you where it hurt even if you weren't an informed reader of fiction. You didn't have to have an opinion on minimalism, the school that critics insisted Carver typified, to appreciate his work. As Marilynne Robinson put it in a review of the retrospective Carver collection published this year, *Where I'm Calling From*, "Mr. Carver uses his narrow world to generate suggestive configurations that could not occur in a wider one. His impulse to simplify is like an attempt to create a hush, not to hear less but to hear better." In other words, a lot is said in a few words. Necessarily, much is implied and not spelled out; while you need not be informed about literary trends to read Carver, you have to read sensitively. But the few well-chosen words bear startling loads of emotion.

Carver wrote lots of stories between 1963, the year of his first publication, and 1987. During most of those years he was also struggling with the responsibilities of a family (he married, barely out of high school, and almost immediately had two kids), a string of draining, low-paying jobs and alcoholism. Eventually these burdens were removed, but his fiction from the beginning is about mature, usually married or recently divorced, people, who work for a living and enjoy few of life's finer joys. Carver has made me think about what is happening and may happen in my life as I get farther away from college age, and while that kind of thinking can get scary, I'm grateful. His fiction isn't a collection of aesthetic experiments; it's a personal but accessible realization of what life is like.

Thirty selections from previous collections and seven newer stories make up *Where I'm Calling From*. I think one of the best and most illustrative of Carver's talent is "Why Don't You Dance?" In this one, a man has placed nearly the entire contents of his house in his yard. His wife has left and he's selling it all, set up on the lawn as it had been arranged for the two of them. A young couple makes offers on some of the things, tests a bed by lying on it. The man lets them

bargain him down. They all have a few drinks, the man puts on an old record, and the girl dances with the boy and then with the man. At the end of the story the focus is on the girl, weeks later. She keeps telling people about this odd experience. "She kept talking. She told everyone. There was more to it, and she was trying to get it talked out. After a time, she quit trying."

Robinson, in her review, helps the girl: "The intimacy of marriage is voided, exposed, re-enacted and distanced, all at once. The moment may be said to suggest memory, art, the astonishing bond of intimacy among a world of strangers, the ghostliness of one's attachment to any place or relationship." Robinson's right, of course, but there's more life caught up in the bizarre image of the household on the lawn than she can capture. And that's why it's a good short story.

In *Where I'm Calling From*, you can survey Carver's range, from anorexic minimalism about bizarre incidents (in "Little Things," a separating couple argues over who gets the baby and they accidentally pull it in half) to the later, more generous and optimistic style of "Cathedral," "Fever," and "A Small, Good Thing." In each of these stories Carver wrests with great effort a moment of mysterious transcendence from situations ranging from pangs of petty jealousy to the sudden death of a couple's little boy. They represent some of the most affecting of Carver's work.

Clearly, the greatest tribute to Carver possible is to read his stories. Get *Where I'm Calling From*; it's superb and important fiction. And wear your armband on the inside where it belongs.

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one)  
if i fall  
& hold your hand in public  
you will  
gently  
let me go;  
two)  
if i fall  
& let it slip i love you  
you will  
softly  
stuff my mouth with cotton  
& pretend you didn't hear;  
three)  
if i fall  
& ask for reassurance  
you will  
sweetly  
lie to me

-Jim Ridley



**The Glass Menagerie** Rated: PG-13

Joanne Woodward deserved the Best Actress Oscar last year, and those scumbuckets didn't even give her a nomination. Even if you hated reading the Tennessee Williams play in high school, don't miss director Paul Newman's hard-hitting adaptation, with Woodward delivering the performance of a lifetime as the flighty and manipulative Amanda Wingfield, ably supported by John Malkovich, Karen Allen and James Naughton. Sarratt Cinema, September 18, 19.

**The Manchurian Candidate** Rated: PG-13

The best film I've seen all year, but wouldn't you know it: it came out 26 years ago. Frank Sinatra stars as an Army officer who suspects that he may have given the Congressional Medal of Honor to a sergeant (Laurence Harvey) who has been brainwashed to be an assassin. This political satire/thriller hasn't dated a bit in its two decades out of release: look out for Angela Lansbury's stunning performance as Harvey's mother, a Congressional Lady Macbeth. Sarratt Cinema, September 7, 8.

**Monkey Shines** Rated: R

Director George Romero (*Night of the Living Dead*, *Creepshow*) sacrifices gore for suspense and comes up with a terrifying tale of a quadroplegic



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Happy marauding! *THE RESCUE*'s Ian Giatti, Marc Price, Ned Vaughn and Christina Harnos sally forth in pursuit of implausibility.

whose "helping hands" monkey begins to act out the handicapped man's murderous desires. Probably the least violent good scary movie in years.

**The Rescue** Rated: PG

A nauseating rip-off of *Iron Eagle* (a bad enough movie in itself), with five kids who sneak into North Korea to capture their captured dads. In addition to its utter implausibility, the film offers inane performances by Kevin Dillon, the guy who plays Skippy on *Family Ties* and some dull kid who reminded me of an even less charismatic Eric Stolz, as well as an offensive it's-okay-to-kill-a-Commie mentality that pushes this one over the edge into utter junk.

**She's Having a Baby** Rated: PG-13

For the life of me, I can't figure out why critics enjoyed John Hughes' sappy *Planes, Trains and Automobiles* and then turned around and dumped on this charming comedy. Kevin Bacon and Elizabeth McGovern play a pair of newlyweds dealing with unemployment, suburbia and childbirth. Hughes' directorial style cut loose here, being almost reminiscent of the style of Richard Lester's Beatles movies. Worthy of a second glance. Sarratt Cinema, September 30, October 1.

**Shy People** Rated: R

This little treasure hustled in and out of Nashville in just a week, so you probably missed Barbara Hershey's performance, which won her the first of two consecutive Best Actress awards at Cannes. No matter how great Hershey is, don't ignore the fine work by Jill Clayburgh (perfect as a pushy *Cosmopolitan* reporter) and Martha Plimpton (as her JAP daughter). Shy People deserved a better release than it got: don't miss it. Sarratt Cinema, September 28.

**Stealing Home** Rated: R

Despite a goopy score by David Foster (*St. Elmo's Fire*), this flashback-piece comedy/drama offers superb performances all around, particularly from Jodie Foster. Mark Harmon plays a man whose life takes an introspective turn when he has to return home to dispose of the ashes of an old friend. If nothing else, *Stealing Home* features some very clever casting: Harmon's parents are Blair Brown (TV's Molly Dodd) and John Shea, and Jonathan Silverman (*Brighton Beach Memoirs*) grows up to be Harold Ramis. A delight.

**Who Framed Roger Rabbit?** Rated: PG

A savvy, rompish love letter to the cartoons of the 40s that's both a technical tour-de-force as well as a great comic whodunnit. Bob Hoskins, Joanna Cassidy and Christopher Lloyd are wonderful, but the main draw

is the collection of cameos featuring everyone from Betty Boop and Mickey Mouse to Donald and Daffy Duck, together on-screen for the first time. The summer must-see.

**Young Guns** Rated: R

This Brat Pack Western manages to be even more repellent, stupid and offensive than I could ever have imagined. Billy the Kid (Emilio Estevez) and his cronies go around shooting everyone that had even the slightest involvement with the killing of their mentor (Terence Stamp, who actually delivers something of a performance). Despite the big names of Estevez (weak), Kiefer Sutherland (unbelievable), Lou Diamond Phillips (hammy) and Charlie Sheen (just plain awful), the film was stolen, for me, by Casey Siemaszko and Dermot Mulroney. Don't even watch this one on cable.

## VIDEO PICKS

*Ed. note—Alonso's column notwithstanding, we thought we ought to clue you into a few cinematic diamonds-in-the-rough that probably won't even make it to Sarratt this year, but are available on video. "If you liked Fatal Attraction," says Jim Ridley, "you might as well stop reading. We have nothing further to discuss."*

### NEAR DARK

"I hate it when they don't shave," grumbles a redneck vampire in this terrific unheralded horror movie that barely received theatrical release. A guy picks up a honky-tonk angel in Texas, and before long he is barreling through Oklahoma in a trailer with a gang of Confederate bloodsuckers. The idea of white-trash vampires is a good one, and the script is consistently imaginative and outrageous: there's a scene in a jukehouse that pits bikers against the supernatural fiends, and it's a classic. The cast as a whole is exceptionally good, but the unforgettable performance is by Bill Paxton, whose rowdy vampire murders people with spurs. Kathryn Bigelow is the director: hers is a name worth remembering. (HBO)

### TAMPOPO

This chipper Japanese satire of appetite uses *The Seven Samurai* as a point of reference—a widow enlists the services of some mystical travelers to create the world's best ramen—but it touches on everything from Godard to dentistry, with time out for an amazing sex scene involving raw eggs and live shrimp. The director, Juzo Itami, has an unusually light visual style: bold colors, circular motifs more reminiscent of the French New Wave than Kurosawa. It's the perfect look for a comedy. Everything is played straight, which makes the high-flown Zen noodle discussions staggeringly absurd: the cast must have struggled to keep from bursting into mad laughter. Itami goes *Woody Allen's What's Up, Tiger Lily?* one better—he's made a Japanese movie that really is about intrigue in the cooking community. And it's funny as hell. (Pacific Arts Video)

### WALKER

With this film Alex Cox, director of the American classic *Repo Man*, successfully completes the dissolution of his talents begun with *Sid and Nancy* and *Straight to Hell*. Cox's protagonist is William Walker, the Nashvillian (or Nashvillain) who led an ill-advised takeover of Nicaragua in the 1850's. Cox clearly wants to show that nothing has changed in American foreign policy since 1850, but the parallels are obvious enough without the smug anachronisms (helicopters, *People* magazines). For Walker's betrayal of his ideals to move or instruct us, we would have to see the gradual change in his attitudes and his essential humanity; instead, this Walker is a counterculture cartoon. Cox shoots soldiers and tycoons in grotesque close-ups so we won't miss any of their piggishness, but let a peasant or a small brown child cross the screen and he pours on the hearts and flowers. It's jolt revisionism—all the saccharine and twice the baloney. Ed Harris plays Walker, but Alex Cox is Walker: he doesn't miss a chance for crude exploitation or carnage, the better to instruct us in his high moral purpose. The disastrous script is by Rudy Wurlitzer. (MCA)

### HOUSEKEEPING

From *Gregory's Girl* to *Comfort and Joy*, the comedies of Scottish director Bill Forsyth have become progressively darker and more pessimistic about society. This is his darkest yet, his first American film. Two girls orphaned by their mother's suicide fall under the influence of their bizarre Aunt Sophie, who collects newspapers and ignores housekeeping entirely. Christine Lahti's performance as Aunt Sophie is daring: her refusal to turn Sophie into a darling Auntie Mame gives the movie a disturbing undercurrent of real eccentricity. By the end of the film the family has been torn apart and driven from town by the disapproving townspeople. Forsyth's characters are once again individuals hounded by a mob mentality, and his point seems to be that escape from the world is preferable to the company of others. As always, Forsyth creates lovely, seductive images to lure viewers away from the world, and the atmosphere he conjures is magical. But the magic here is faintly scary, and perhaps even more beautiful for it. It's a splendid film. Based on the novel by Marilyn Robinson.—Jim Ridley



*The Generation of Swine*, by Hunter S. Thompson. Summit Books (hardback only). \$19.95.

"Is it true that you have referred to today's youth as a 'swine generation'?" my friend Rich Gazala asked Hunter Thompson when he appeared at Vanderbilt in 1984. "Bullshit!" thundered Thompson, reeling back and forth at the podium. "You sound like a reporter from a Hearst newspaper! I called you a *generation of swine*, not a 'swine generation'!"

This collection of reflections on the Porcine Era, culled from Thompson's columns in the *San Francisco Examiner*, surprised me at first with its lucidity. Judging from HST's antics at Vanderbilt and from the slackness of his previous book, *The Curse of Lono*, I didn't expect to encounter the perceptive, if twisted, insights found here. George Will he ain't, but he does make his point with a certain eloquence:

"If making love might be fatal and if a cool spring rain can turn a crystal blue lake into a puddle of black poison scum right in front of your eyes, there is not much left except TV and relentless masturbation."

I shouldn't have been surprised. Hunter Thompson, after all, had won his wings as an investigative and political reporter long before my high-school friends and I got our copies of *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* and set out to horrify our elders by living according to its substance-abusive precepts. He foresaw the 1969 Altamont concert tragedy in *Hell's Angels* (1967); he foresaw the accessions to power of both Jimmy Carter and Gary Hart in his early-70s political coverage for *Rolling Stone*.

*Generation of Swine* served to remind me that Thompson is more than just a journalistic clown—even when he is merely using political figures as the butt of his humor, he can sum up their essences in damningly pithy fashion: thus Reagan "was once the best salesman of his time, but now he is like Willie Loman" and Hart has "the face of Abraham Lincoln and the soul of Jerry Lee Lewis."

The tall-weird-tale style of *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* makes a few cameo appearances here, but the conversation always returns to politics. Significantly, Thompson only briefly addresses the subject of drugs, and at no point in this book does he acknowledge having ingested anything more psychotropic than Wild Turkey bourbon. —Tom Wood

## ANOTHER

why should i smash a bug  
when i could slap you down  
and make you cry  
keeping myself occupied for an hour or so  
then we could make up  
and kiss  
and grope each other balcony-style  
until i became bored

—Rev. Collin Wade Monk

Fiction...

## Manfred Larkin's Month of Sundays

by Curt Holman

During his hasty breakfast on the morning of May 1, Manfred Larkin noticed that the kitchen's Pup-of-the-Month calendar was still open to the month of April. Setting down his cup of coffee, he leaned over to the wall and flipped the page over, bidding a silent farewell to April and its accompanying photograph of a baby Scotch Terrier gripping a plaid bonnet in its mouth.

He nodded at May's photo—a yawning Dalmatian pup curled up in a fireman's hat—and began reaching for a cinnamon Pop-Tart when he felt that something was curious, out of place. He looked again, and spotted the incongruity:

Each of May's 31 days was marked "Sunday."

What luck, Manfred thought. You always hear about months of Sundays, but you never dream that you'll get one yourself. This is like winning a lottery! Grinning, he yanked off his tie and fixed a big breakfast of waffles and Eggs Benedict for his wife and children.

The rest of May, Manfred had time to do all the things he'd been putting off all year. He cleaned the gutters like his wife had asked him in March, he sanded the edges of the basement door so it would stop sticking, he polished both the family cars, and one day he got up early, bought some new shrubs, and spent all day planting them along the front yard. His cheeks and shoulders grew rosy in the warm afternoon sunshine.

He didn't spend the whole month working, though—that was the wonderful thing about the May of Sundays. He had all the freedom he needed, so he read the Sunday paper every morning, cover to cover (the newspaper always kept up with the rest of the world, of course, since everyone in the country had working weeks but Manfred). He finally finished that book by Scott Turow that everyone was talking about. He could have gone to church every day, if he wanted to, but he always ended up choosing different leisure activities such as movie matinees or badminton tournaments.

He spent more time with his kids, teaching his son to throw curveballs and knuckleballs, and taking his daughter shopping—the malls were clean and always open, but never very crowded. He even got into the habit of making love to his wife once a day.

Manfred knew that other people were working while had a month of days off, but it didn't especially bother him: that was just the luck of the draw, the way the ball bounced. So he went to bed the night of May 31, tan and complacent and perfectly rested.

The next morning, June 1, he turned the calendar page to see a tiny Chihuahua, all bony and wide-eyed, crouching beside the heavy heel of an enormous black boot.

And that day he began his month of Mondays.

.....

Note about kulchur: Two Sunday night poetry readings this summer at 12th and Porter have been well-attended and wildly successful, showcasing some tremendous local talent. The first featured, among others, Rusel Brown and Becky Hinshaw. The second reading hosted Michael Martin, Margaret Krakowiac, Donna Parramore and Bill Wise. There's a buffet of wonderfully esoteric, hard to identify, terrific food. Admission is only \$2, so it's the best bang for your buck in town. These are a must see. New York City, eat your heart out.

.....



FM

AM

# The Problem with Classic Hits Radio

by Randy Fox

"We need change, we need it fast  
Before rock's just part of the past  
'Cause lately it all sounds the same to me."  
—The Ramones

It has been eight years since the Ramones warned us of the future; now those words seem more appropriate than ever. Radio is changing. The traditional oldies format, once the sole province of tiny AM stations, has mutated into the lumbering giant we now know as "classic hits" radio. And the mutation has certainly not been a benign one.

Classic Hits differentiates itself from its little brother, the oldies format, in two important ways. On oldies stations there is a certain innocence and naivete about the format. Virtually any song from about 1955 up until the mid-seventies is fair game for the playlist. One hears the great classics alongside the great cornballs. Much like what radio in the sixties was like before so many classifications crept into rock.

With the classic hits format there is more of a tunnelvision into the past. In many ways the classic hits format is really just a recycling of the seventies AOR format with anything too metalish (Zeppelin, Aerosmith) carefully extracted. Also, for a format that is supposed to be "the greatest hits of the sixties, seventies, and eighties," there is a conspicuous lack of many black artists from those time periods. Granted there are exceptions... but very few.

It is also interesting to note how repetitious the classic hits format is. Listen to a classic hits station for a week, and you pretty much have the format down for weeks to come. It seems that with over twenty years of music to draw from, there could be more variety than is now found in a format by which you could set your watch every time "Green River" is played.

The other important difference is the attitude of classic hits formats. At oldies stations, the attitude always seems to be: "Isn't this neat—old songs!" Meanwhile, with classic hits format, the message is: "There is no good rock around today except for a few songs we pick." "Modern Classic" is the term most often used to justify the playing of any current music. Which most often is music by artists who already have older songs in the station's format. New, original bands, which for years have had to face overwhelming odds in cracking the corporate rock formats of most radio stations, have now been eliminated altogether.

Classic hits radio in many ways could be viewed as the "final solution" to the problem that rock & roll radio has always been to the music industry. Since rock's very beginnings the music industry has attempted to control and package the music in a way that would maximize profits and defeat rock's unpredictability. Just when rock seemed under control in the early sixties, the Beatles, the Stones, Dylan and others came along to revitalize rock and point it in a new direction. In the seventies, when yet again the corporations had regained their hold, punk exploded on the scene to return the music to its roots. The main problem with trying to control rock is that every subsequent generation has brought its own vision to the music.

With the classic hits format, radio has managed to lock rock into the past by tapping into the heart of the baby boom generation. This is not only one of the largest demographic groups in America, but also one of the most affluent in terms of income. To baby boomers, classic hits radio is not merely a nostalgia kick, it is the music that many of these people grew up listening to. And with many of them jaded by the lack of originality in corporate rock, unaware of the many new original bands, they have decided to stick with the past.

Add in the factor of new techno-toys like CDs and the forthcoming DATs, and suddenly record companies become very interested in classic hits. They have a whole new market for music that already paid for its expenses long ago.

It may be still too early to sound the death knell for rock & roll radio, but with many major stations converting to classic hits, things do not look good. I think I'll go listen to records. ■

idiot girl doing is easily entertained...



by Trace Villareal

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- Oct. 15 GoGo Surreal w/ December Boys
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- Oct. 20 Hothouse
- Oct. 21 Swing w/ Two Small Bodies
- Oct. 25 Gotham City
- Oct. 27 Rob Houston
- Oct. 28 Rumble Circus w/ Tiny Lights
- Oct. 29 firehose w/ Screaming Trees and Clockhammer
- Oct. 31 Halloween Party w/ Chuck Allen & special guests