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Vol. 11
No. 1

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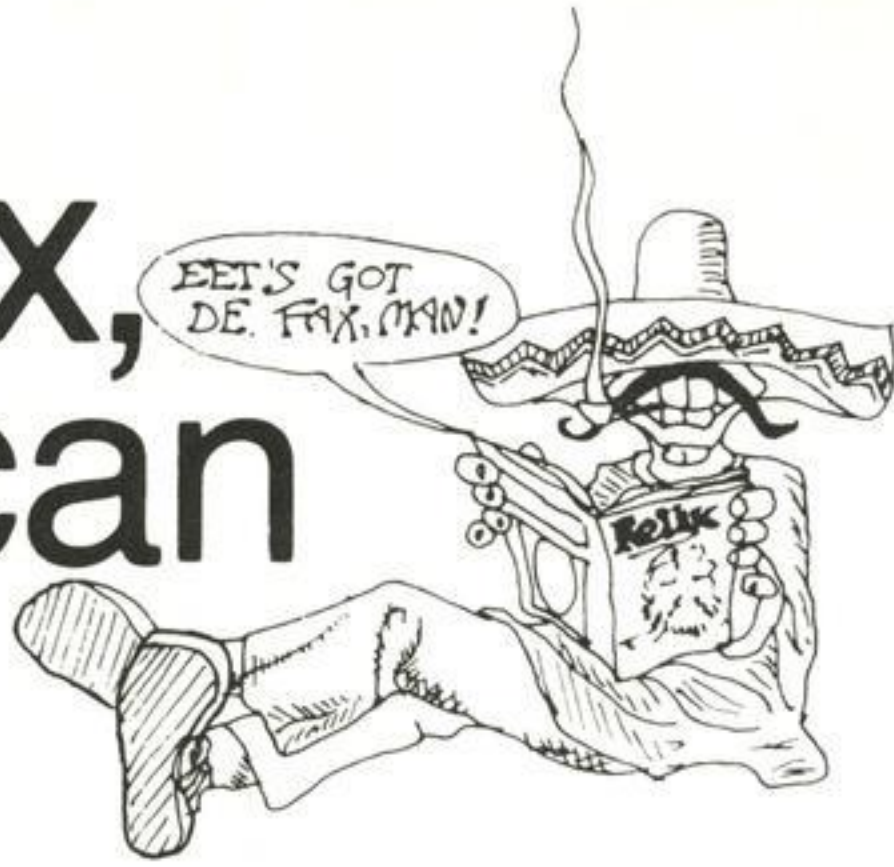
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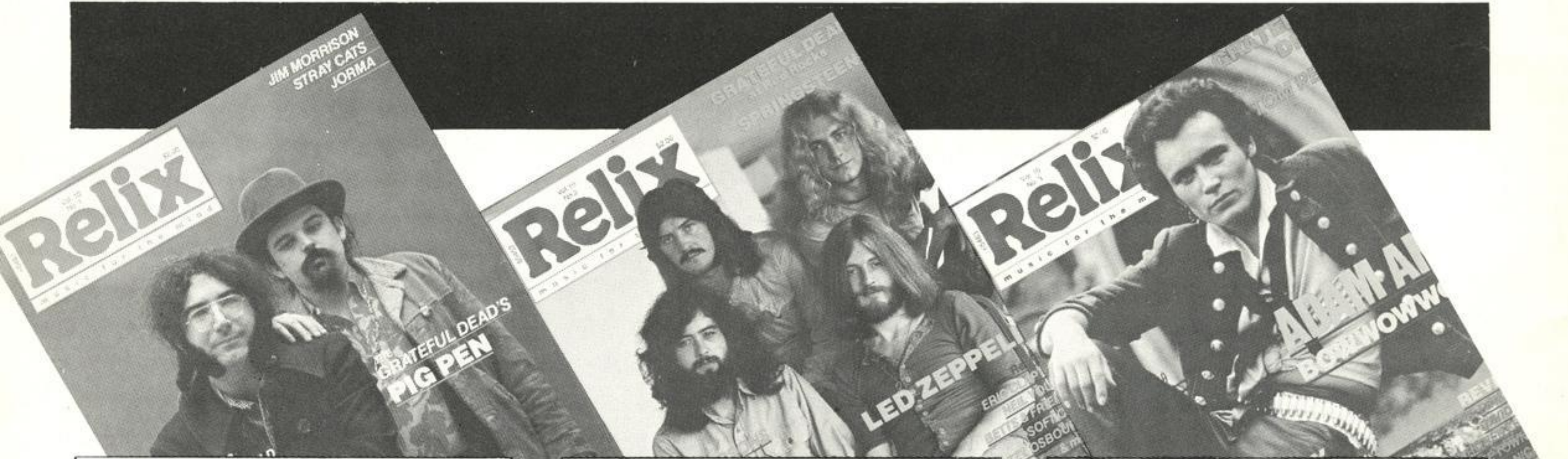
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RELIX

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RELIX MAGAZINE (USPS 401850 is published bi-monthly by Relix Magazine, Inc. P.O. Box 94, Brooklyn, NY 11229, with offices at 1734 Coney Island Ave., Brooklyn, NY. Printed in the USA. ©Copyright 1982 by RELIX MAGAZINE, Inc.

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Second class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. Additional entry fee paid for mailing in New York, N.Y. POSTMASTER please send form 3576 to P.O. 94, Brooklyn, NY 11229

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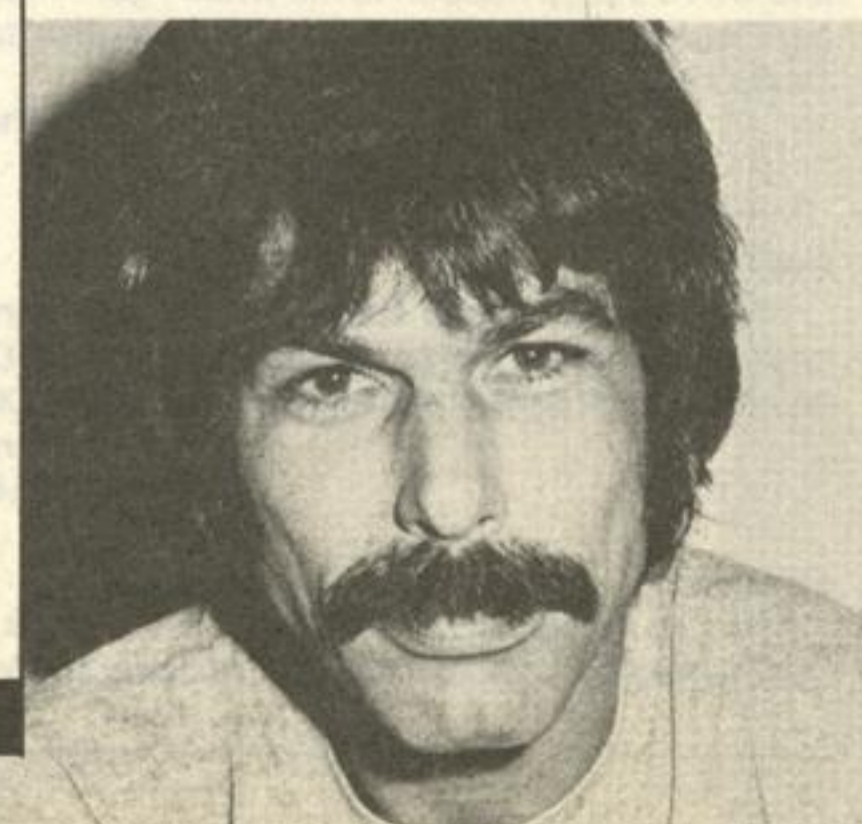
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LETTERS

Dear Relix,

After receiving your 10th Anniversary issue and being a subscriber for just over a year, I feel it's time to voice my concerns about your magazine.

First of all, I'm confused. Are you trying to reach a broad audience, or are you catering to just Dead Heads? If you're trying to reach a wide audience I think you're failing. You can't compete with magazines like Rolling Stone just because of the content and extent of their coverage of pop idols. However, if you're proving to be the vehicle of communication for Dead Heads, then why don't you go 100%?! I'm really tired of reading about "how stoned I was when I saw the Dead at Red Rocks" & "how I saw God when Jerry played Sugaree." Let's hear about what the Dead have been doing *recently*. Songlists! Photos! Interviews! What was the point of Robert Hunter's Day-O. (Big Deal-O!)

Come on guys, decide where you're going! You've got an audience with the Dead Heads—give us 100%. No more of this Boy George, Roger Daltrey, Bruce Springsteen—names on the cover only to feature a photo. Big Deal! Show photos of the Dead instead! You're the *only* ones who have the potential of giving Dead Heads the news we need.

Well thanks for letting me get this off my chest.

Michael Major
Concord, NH

Dear Mike,

Thanks for your letter. It's always a pleasure to read a letter that gets the entire office off their seats, fighting over who should answer it! Naturally, we wanted to send it to Hunter, and have him answer you, but we felt that his reply to you might not be tempered with patience!

Anyway, first let me briefly discuss Relix Magazine. Once a year, or abouts, we run a questionnaire asking our readers to tell us what they want in Relix. Now remember, this questionnaire is answered by people like you, and other dedicated readers of Relix Magazine. Shocking as the answers might be, the results of the last survey told us the following: The 10 most requested groups were: G.D., Hendrix, Springsteen, Pink Floyd, the Beatles, Starship, Journey, Benatar, the Doors, the Police. That is why we give our readers more than the good ol' Grateful Dead.

We will be running the questionnaire again within the next couple of issues, and we will print what the readers of Relix tell us they want. However, we still must sell magazines to pay the bills. We do feature Springsteen, Adam Ant, the Who and Led Zepp because they sell! For every issue of Led Zepp we sell, we can print another G.D. issue! Remember, the Dead don't sell much in Omaha. We only have 8 subscribers in New Hampshire. How about helping us sell mags in your town? Get your friends to buy Relix. If we had another 2,000 subscribers, you would only see Grateful Dead in the magazine. So, it is really up to you!!

As for the Hunter piece, the reason he wrote it was to show readers a glimpse of his personal life, and to say, "Gee, it costs me all my money to go to a concert, and weird things happen to me when I go." That is the big Deal-O. If Garcia wrote it, would you also say Big Deal-O? Or Wow-O???

The Staff

Relix:

I recently purchased Relix Vol. 10 #6, mainly because I saw Boy George photos on the cover. Do you have any back issues with features on Culture Club?

Thank you,
Vicki Macey

Dear Vicki,

They've mentioned in a column in Vol. 10 # 3, accompanied by a photo. (You see, Michael Major!)

Dear Relix,

We really enjoy your magazine, and being serious Dead Heads, we appreciate the basis from which it grows. However, you have repeatedly explained that the Dead and family offshoots do not provide enough regular news to fill or sell RELIX on a steady basis—'tis sad, but true and we understand this. However—we don't feel it's necessary to fill the magazine with commercial mainstream rock & roll in order to have something of value and interest to communicate. You might consider doing some historical pieces on people like Woodie Guthrie or the people who wrote the great Blues: Lightnin' Hopkins, T-Bone Walker, John Lee Hooker, Willie Dixon, etc.

Also, you might find reader interest in some articles explaining digital recording and similar industry developments. Maybe a piece on the smaller record labels.

All this comes down to the fact that being long time Dead Heads, we feel we have 'highly' developed musical tastes; and we hope that Relix will continue to be an excellent vehicle for furthering this growth process.

We hope this letter is of value rather than an annoyance.

Our best wishes for continued success.

Love and Peace,
Ben and Cheryl Smith
Johnson City, TX

P.S. What about Mickey Hart's new album, Yamantaka?

P.P.S. What ever did happen to Alligator Moon by Hunter?

Dear Ben and Cheryl,

Thanks so much for your letter. Your ideas are wonderful. My only problem is finding the writers to do the work. Know anyone?

See Mickey Hart's interview this issue regarding his two new albums. As for Alligator Moon, just after it was recorded, Hunter was unsatisfied with the song selection and final outcome. So it sits in a dark can. After repeated requests that he release it, he still does not feel strongly enough about it.

Toni

Dear Relix,

Thanks for a great 10th Anniversary issue. I can never read enough about the Dead and related bands. I've only been on the bus since January when a friend played Terrapin Station to me. The next week I bought American Beauty and that did it, suddenly I couldn't hear enough Dead. Then going to both shows at Madison Square Garden in October really got me going, and I am currently trying to start getting tapes of other shows. Just keep up the good work and you have a subscriber for life!

Now in the anniversary issue there was a letter signed by "The Real Rockers." That letter is a perfect example of how people with closed minds think. They sound like some of my friends, who only like the junk played on MTV and some Rock Stations. Of course some radio stations are different like WNEW-FM New York which does play Dead every day. I still like Zeppelin, The Who, Pink Floyd, and even some Heavy Metal. But since I Started on the Dead, I have started to explore other bands, like Quicksilver Messenger Service and Hot Tuna. Another friend, who likes the Dead but is not a Dead Head, got me started on Eric Clapton. I guess what I'm trying to say is that you need an open mind. Decide for yourself if you like the music, Don't let the Media decide for you.

With true DEADication
John D. Bucsek

Dear Relix,

I wish to thank all your staff for the work they do in putting out an excellent magazine. The last 3 issues have been very good.

The Grateful Dead are a very special band to me, as they are to thousands (or should I say, hundreds of thousands) of people, and it was important to me to find a publication that offers as much concert recording information, as well as "behind the scene" activities and personal interviews of the band as possible. Relix provides all of the above as well as high quality Grateful Dead accessories (T-shirts, buttons, posters, etc.).

It has been an added bonus that many of the musicians and bands featured in Relix are of interest to me.

Thanks again, all of you.

Jim Halvorson
Napa, CA

Dear Buddy:

In The Eye Of The Bloodshot Beholder was good reading—interesting, inciteful and enjoyable. You're one fine storyteller. The part at the end about Marmaduke touched a special chord. It renewed my faith that even rock 'n roll musicians, deep down, remember the people who help them through bad times.

Here's to the Neurotic Superfluous Age,

A believer

Dear Folks,

I really like to subscribe to RELIX, it's the greatest magazine around, so keep your way. Thanks also for the two issues with articles on Pig Pen—they were worth being read. It's very appreciable to know that some folks still care about the Dead's heart of the old days.

There's one thing I have to tell you: Please let your readers know about the troubles the European Dead Heads have to stand—we're waiting—really waiting, and never stop hoping—that this year justice will be heard in California—that the Dead will come back to Europe. I know it's not so easy to afford to tour Europe, but they have a lot of fans around here who want to share the music. Let's see! Keep you day job—and leave it on,

Happy Trails,
Christian Schober
Austria, Europe

ANOTHER TRUE LIFE TALE OF LIFE IN THE DEAD ZONE

HI RELIX FOLKS!

Have you noticed that the older you are, the more serious and less fun your mail becomes? I thought you'd agree—but today was exceptional. At the bottom of the rubble in my mailbox, I found a new RELIX. As I flipped through the pages, the tour dates for Robert Hunter caught my eye; New York, Cambridge . . . but, no Virginia dates. A downer, but at the end, a positive note, "Keep an eye out for performances not yet listed." "That's an optimistic chord," I thought, and even, as I finished reading the final word, my faithful car stereo speaks to me announcing that the elusive wordsmith will perform this very night in Virginia Beach. Very good . . . the fates have just orally disclosed my activity for the evening.

Abbey Road is a small resort-strip bar, but for a few hours it was the communal gathering locale for Tidewaters, gratefully dedicated. A very enthusiastic crowd greeted Hunter in this close up appearance.



Opening up with "Scarlet Begonias" and "Sunshine Daydream," Robert Hunter played with fire and sensitivity. Some less heard numbers like "Mountains of the Moon," "Slack String Quartet," "Dark Dusty Road" and "Tiger Rose," were well received by the audience.

A group of Dead favorites were played also. "Touch of Gray" excited the crowd as did beautiful renditions of "Wharf Rat" and "Box of Rain." "Sugaree" closed out the first show. Unfortunately, Hunter played only an hour, but then the music was excellent and I was with my people, and when was the last time we saw the lyricist?

Thank you Robert Hunter. Thank you Abbey Road and thank you to the U.S. Post Office and the fates for letting me in on tidbits like this Ain't it crazy?

Scott Robertson
Toano, Va.

Dear Toni,

In Fragments (Vol. 10 # 6), you state with one line that Brian Marnell of SVT died. He wasn't the drummer, he was the guitarist, and a great one. He was also a great songwriter and performer. I thought you would know this considering how many times you saw the band.

Chris Coyle

Dear Chris,

Sorry for the error. One line was truly inadequate, but if I'd have know of the fact before the deadline, something could have been put together. It's not the first time news got to us LATE! Yes, he was a wonderful musician. And after speaking with Jack Casady recently, I know he'll be missed.

Well, all I can say is forgive me this error, I was suffering from pre-anniversary issue insanity.

Toni

Drivin' down the road
On my way to Santa Fe.
Got just enough money
To last another day.
But once I get to the show,
My troubles are all gone away.
Take a little sunshine,
And sell vinyl art all day.
Oh yea! I got them bumper sticker blues.
Captain can you tell me
What else can I do?
But follow you around
From town to town,
Eat when I can,
And sleep on the ground.
But everything's OK
You inspire my beliefs,
Take me from my troubles
And save me from my grief.
So I'll stay with you always
Till somebody goes
Keep yourself healthy
And on with them great shows!

B. Kearns
Alex., VA

Danny Brown #83B-428



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11229

Having just moved into a new neighborhood, I wanted to start out on the right foot and not disturb anybody with the New Year's Eve party I had planned. To test the sound from the stereo, I put on a rock 'n' roll record, turned it on full blast, walked out of the house, closed the door and listened. An awful amount of noise came through, and I tried to open the door to turn it off. But I was locked out. Since my wife would return soon, there was nothing to do but wait in the car, although I felt more like crawling under it.

Soon a neighbor came tearing out of his house and headed toward me. As he approached, he shouted above the racket, "Look, Mac, if you'd turn the damn thing down you wouldn't have to sit out here to listen to it!"

Henry E. Leabo
Tahachapi, CA

CONSUMER ALERT BUYER BEWARE!!

It has come to the attention of Relix Magazine that there are people who are starting new Grateful Dead magazines and "clubs."

These people are using the terms "official," "Club," and are offering "memberships." Some are using names that sound Grateful Dead related, and are using similar art styles to existing Grateful Dead art work.

Now, we are not talking about organizations such as "Dead Central," which exists because of energy and don't ask for money. We are talking about people who are asking you for your money.

To the best of our knowledge, besides the DEAD HEADS in San Rafael, California, there are no official, nor approved fan clubs, nor official publications. Relix Magazine advises you to be careful, and NOT send any money to any person, place or organization unless you are absolutely positive that they are a reliable organization and have checked them out completely.

In the meantime, Relix Magazine will be checking out these other organizations, and will be reporting back to you.

NOTE: Watch out for Robert Hunter—he'll be coming to your favorite East Coast club sometime in March!



Relix's Tenth Anniversary Celebration

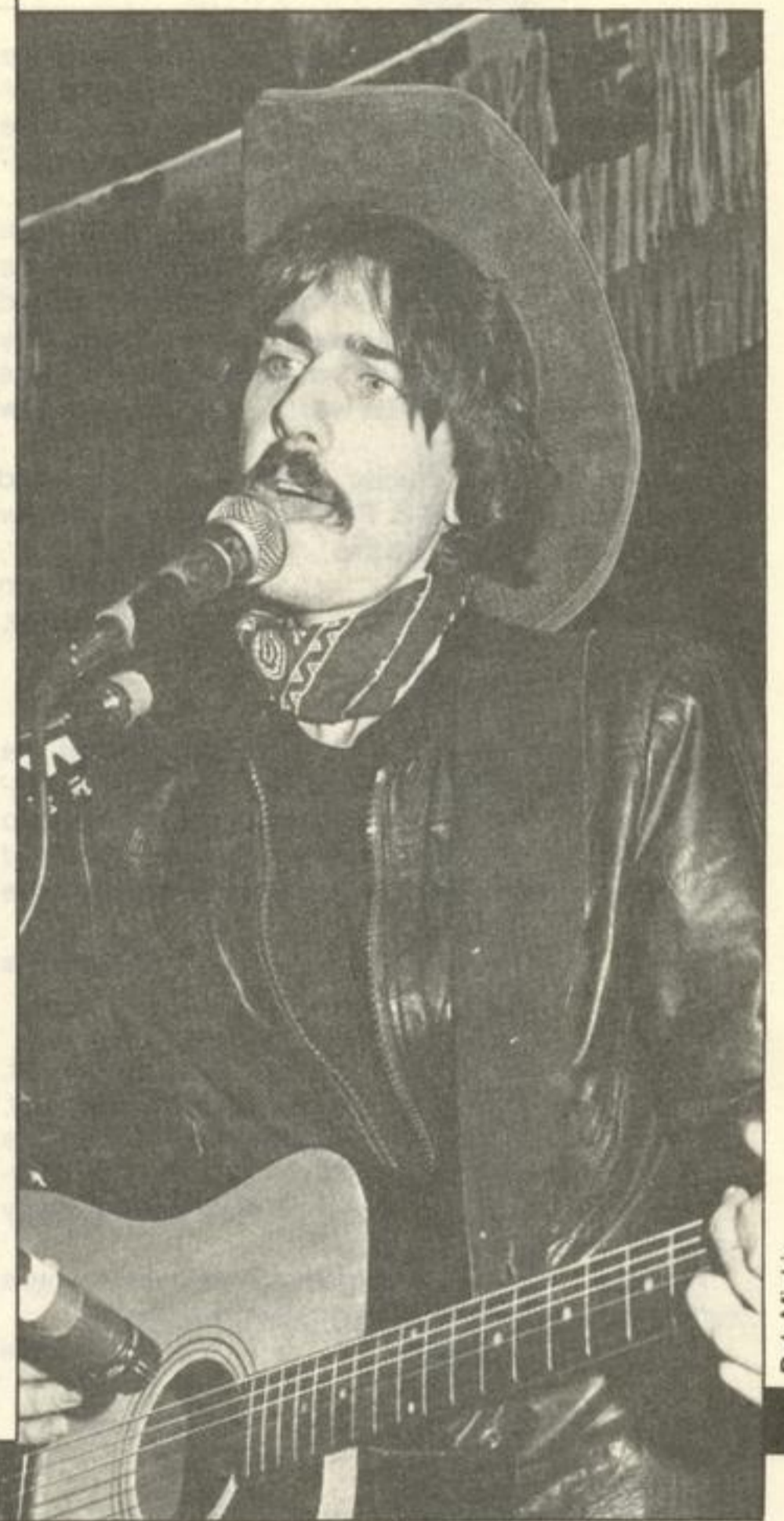
It's hard to believe that Relix is now ten years young. A celebration was hosted by the Lone Star Cafe in NYC, on January 3rd, 1984. The evening's entertainment included Buddy Cage and Bad Dog, performing some great covers, including a spectacular medley of Warren Zevon's "Lawyers, Guns & Money" into the Dead's "Wharf Rat" and "Bertha." Neil Hearts also contributed several acoustic selections.

Very special guests, Jorma Kaukonen and Michael Falzarano (recent Hot Tuna guitarist), performed two long sets as a duo. As they had never appeared alone together in public (after many hours of privately playing), it proved to be a very special performance.

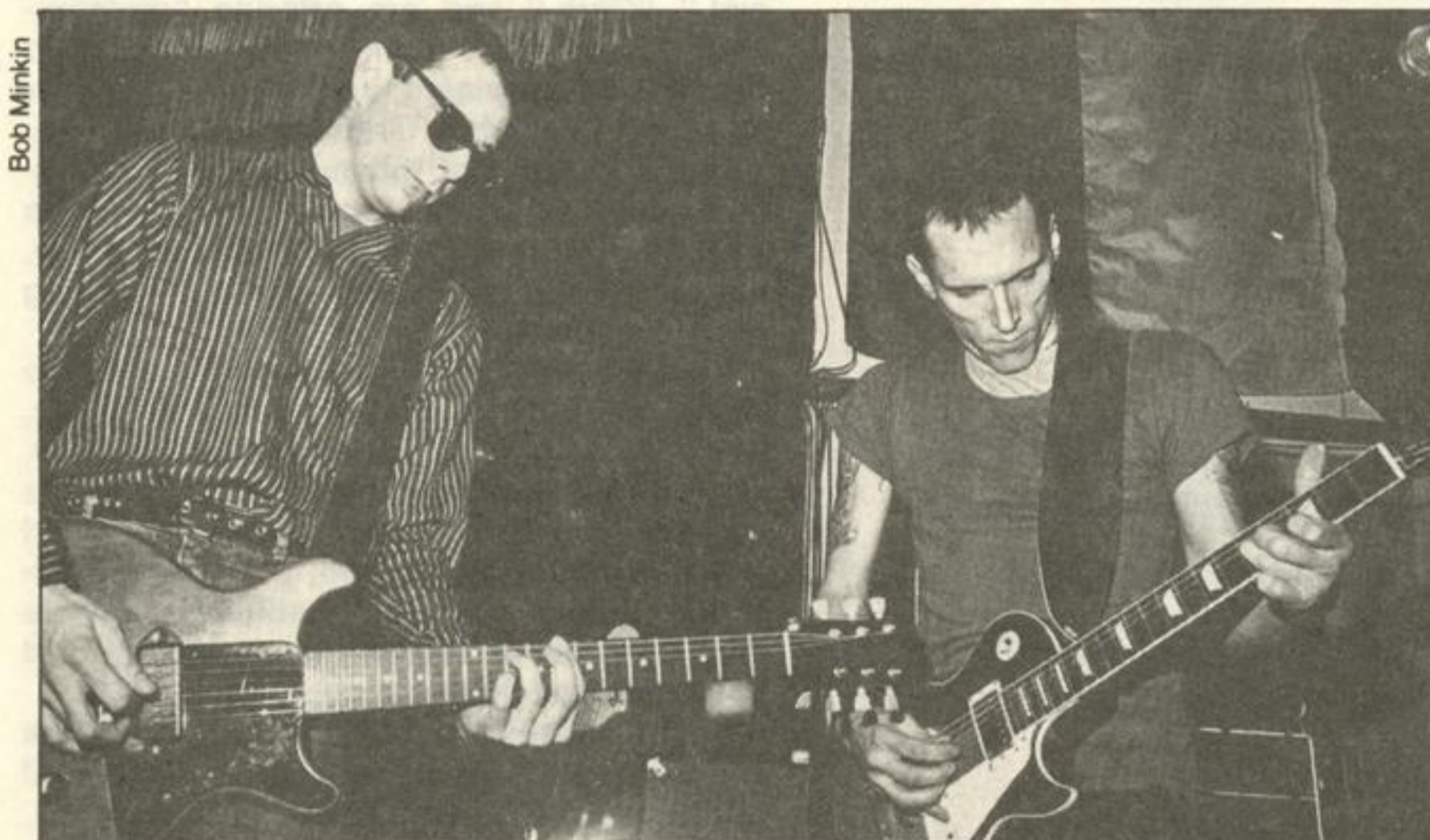
The audience was filled with many well wishers and folks who have contributed to Relix over the years. Not only were many subscribers present, but so were people of such note as Jeff Tamarkin (former, though still contributing editor of Relix), photographer Bob Minkin, John DeCesare (president of the Gram Parsons Memorial Foundation) and musician/writer Tom Russell (just back from a tour of Norway).

Sorry if you couldn't be there, but we do hope to see you at our 20th!

Toni



Bob Minkin



Bob Minkin

NEAL HEARTS—Relix Anniversary Celebration.

ATTENTION DEAD-HEADS THE RETURN OF MAX CREEK WITH BUDDY CAGE + BAD DOS MON-1/2
 RELIX MAGAZINE PARTY! FEATURING A SAN FRANCISCO ?? GIANT ?????????? TUES-1/3
 TWO DAY DEAD-HEADED FESTIVAL!

MICHAEL FALZARANO and JORMA KAUKONEN. 1/3/84 — Relix Anniversary Celebration.

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 DAY TWO TUES. JAN. 3 84 JORMA KAUKONEN AND SPECIAL FRIENDS! PLUS BUDDY CAGE

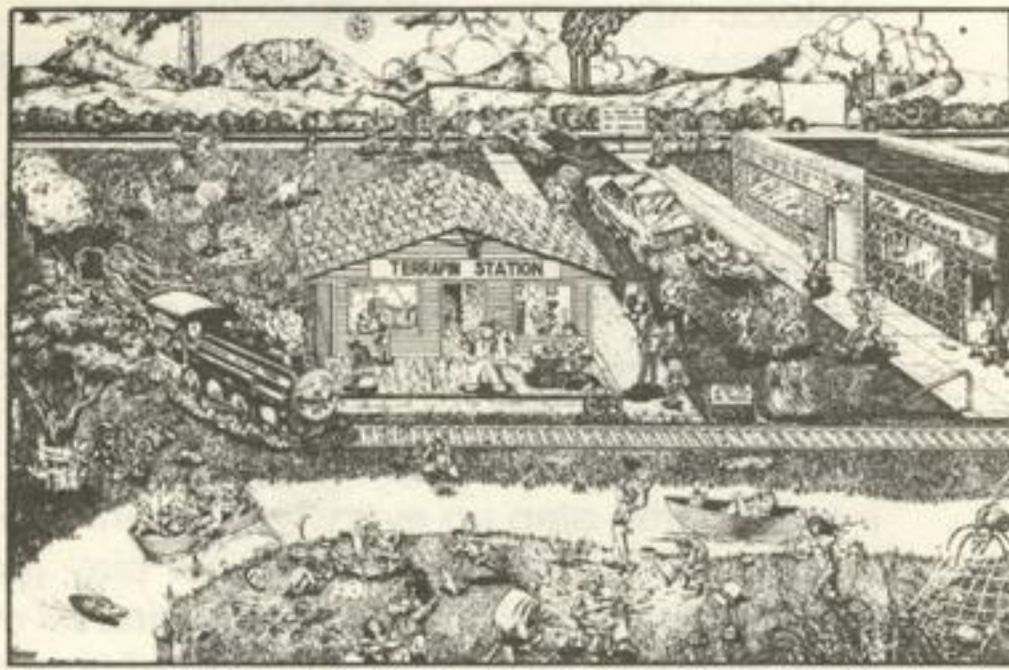
BUDDY CAGE & Bad Dog with friends



Bob Minkin

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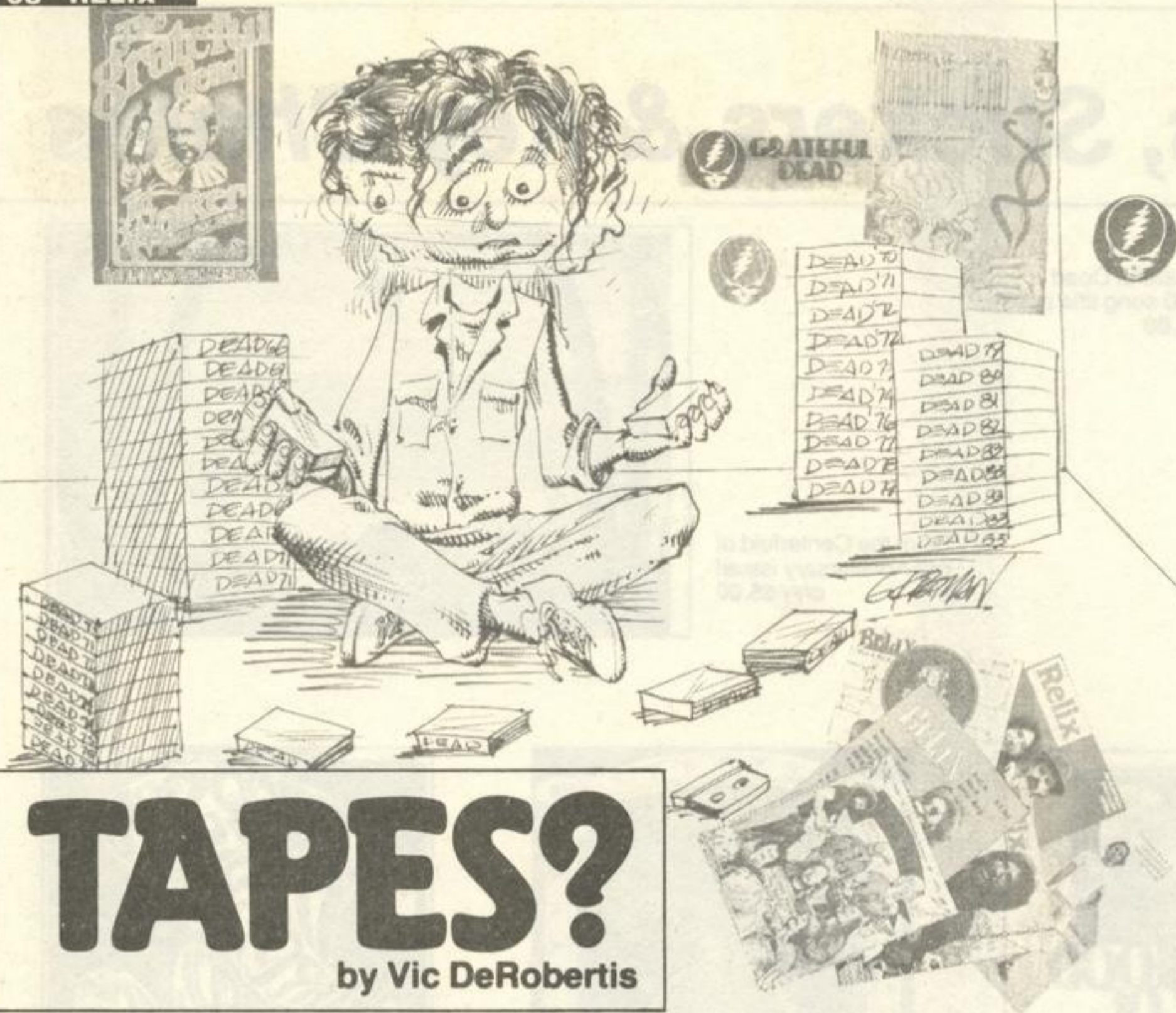
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TAPES?

by Vic DeRobertis

Hey, all you Dead tape collectors out there, have I got a thought for you:

What happens when you start getting tired of listening to just the Dead?

What happens when a first-generation Greek Theater board just doesn't turn you on like it used to?

What happens when you've got hundreds of choice-quality cassettes in your room, and you don't know what the hell to do with them?

Here's some creative suggestions for you:

1. First of all, the condition may not be terminal. You may be experiencing what has become known among tapers as "Collection Rot." If you catch this heinous disease in the early stages, it may be curable, and you'll save yourselves a lot of hassles in dealing with finding something useful to do with your collection.

The best advice I can give you here is to immediately, that's right, run, don't walk, amass as much money as possible and get a good solid Grateful Dead fix. Try to inconvenience yourself as much as you can, so you'll convince yourself that it was worth it.

"Yeah, the Volks broke down in Toadsuck, Arkansas, and I had to hitch three hundred miles to the nearest gas station to get a fuel pump, then rent a car to get back to the Bug, but the rental car had transmission trouble, so we missed the entire tour, except for the encore at the last show in Iowa. But man, that was the hottest 'U.S. Blues' I ever heard."

You get the idea. I personally tried this remedy in the summer of 1982 when I went from New York to Red Rocks to get rained on, stranded, and sick for three nights. But, man, that was the hottest "U.S. Blues" I've ever heard, and it kept me going for a while!

If this doesn't work, try getting loaded, and listening to "Rosemary" off of "Aoxomoxoa" for three hours, then go to a Van Halen concert.

If you're still not sure that you'd rather listen to your good old Lyceum '72 boards, you're in the terminal stages, and you need to find other means to utilize that monster collection you've been spending all your money and time on. I mean, you can't just let it gather dust.

2. Some of you more enterprising tape fiends out there may be thinking along the lines of selling your collection. Sure, you can justify it to yourself ("Hey, I'm just giving other people a chance to start a collection by letting them get ahold of some choice tapes so they can trade with other people who normally wouldn't even look at their lists. Who can turn down my personal first generation Pacific High Recorder studio tapes from '71?"), but you just can't keep that lizard look off your face and the dollar signs from flashing in your eyes. Besides, a year ago, you would have cheerfully joined in the lynching of some hapless wretch who tried to sell a Dead tape to twelve Deadheads from the Bronx who are decidedly militant about "sharing the music."

Well, if the thunder don't get you, the lightning will, to coin a phrase, and if the Deadheads don't get ya, the law will, and the folks over at Arista definitely frown upon selling Grateful Dead recordings.

3. Well, you *could* give them away, but that is such a ridiculous idea that we'll just forget it.

4. Depending on how you store your tapes, there are certain practical solutions to the problem:

Those of you who keep your tapes individually wrapped in aluminum foil and stored in the freezer are not well, and should see some sort of doctor about this problem.

Those who have the "serious" tape cases, and I'm talking anywhere from the ones that are two-sided and hold 120 cassettes each to the ones that can be taken on tour and lived inside of, have a few more options.

I personally use two of my 120 cassette cases to hold up my guitar amplifier in my room. Not only does this encourage me to listen to other music, it builds up my forearms from lifting the damn amp up every time I want to hear a tape. Those of you who do not play guitar should learn how. It will keep your mind off what to do with your tape collection, and when you're good enough to get some serious equipment, you'll be able to beat up all your friends.

For those who have their collection stored in those cardboard boxes that hold 10 or 12 each, try painting them bright colors, and build things with them. Don't you think it's time you invested in some real tape cases?

And finally, for those of you who have no boxes of any sort and just keep your tapes on the floor, I'm surprised you were able to find this magazine. Go now to your collection, and find your Pauley Pavillion 11-17-73 tape. By the time you find it, you'll probably be into the Dead again as much as before.

Anyway, don't get me wrong. I've got hundreds of tapes myself (I'm sitting on a couple of cases as I'm typing this; they really make good furniture), and I still can't resist a nice, hot, low generation board, you know the ones where Jerry's guitar just rips right out of your right speaker, and Phil's bass shakes your roommates' 18th Century German beer stein collection off the shelf, and Bob's voice causes the dust to sift down from the ceiling . . .

Well, I'm not quite in the terminal stages of "Collection Rot" yet myself. The best advice I can give you is to start listening to other bands with the Dead, like some reggae or even jazz, for the more adventuresome lot. Try some Pat Matheny. He calls his band the "Grateful Dead of the jazz world," and they are. I've seen them.

Most importantly, hang on to those tapes. You can always get satisfaction (no pun intended) from turning on some poor guy who thinks his "Makebelieve Ballroom" bootleg is just the greatest, to your Frost Amphitheater 10-10-82 tapes. One man gathers what another man spills, you know.

Bob Minkin



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The Singular Reggae of UB40

UB40

by Tim Schuller

DETROIT reminded UB40 of their home town, Birmingham, England. Both cities are industrial and multi-racial, both tend to have bad weather. The British burg has a goodly population of Jamaicans, and it is this fact that permitted the eight UB40 members early access to reggae. Like Detroit, which the band visited on their debut tour of America this past summer, Birmingham plays host to many jobless people. UB40 is, in fact, a reference number on a British unemployment card.

UB40 also represents the state of the art in reggae interpretation. Non-Jamaicans rarely do the elusive music form as validly as island-born rastas, but UB40 individuated themselves years ago with their command of the idiom. Some musicians began playing reggae because it is trendy to do so, but UB40 never played anything else.

"It's not like we discovered reggae one day out of the blue," says guitarist/founding member Robbie Campbell. "We grew up on it. We heard Western music and we heard British pop on the radio, but reggae was all we took seriously."

"None of us could play instruments before we started the band," Campbell continued. "We'd talked about having a band for years and finally we said, 'let's stop pissin' about and do it!' So we got hold of various instruments. I'd had an acoustic guitar since I was a kid and knew about six chords. So we got a couple reggae records and copied 'em. We joked about at first but then we said, 'if we're going to do this it's got to be a total commitment, a profession. So from ten in the morning till five or six at night we were in a cellar underneath one of the guy's flats, copying records and making up tunes of our own.'"

That was five years ago. Campbell and his brother Ali had been listening to reggae since the late sixties, leaning particularly toward Gregory Isaacs, the Roots Radics, the Gladiators, and Bob Marley. ("I really got into Marley when he did *African Herdsman* in 1970," remembers Campbell.) On Feb. 11, 1979, the band played their first gig, for a birthday party in a Birmingham pub. They went over well and got

other pub dates, and were soon ready for a "mini-tour" of London. It was there that Chrissie Hynde of the Pretenders saw them.

"The Pretenders were about to embark on their first British tour," explains Campbell. "They had the number one album and the number one single so it was *the* biggest British tour of the year. Chrissie said to us, 'I think you guys are great, I want you on my tour' and it was as simple as that. Her manager and promoters were all freakin' because they wanted a name band, and actually wanted us to pay to get on the tour because it was a prestigious tour, y'know, a guaranteed sell-out. But Chrissie was God at the time so she argued for us and we got on the tour. It all happened for us on that tour."

UB40 got better reviews than the Pretenders, who'd not perfected their live act by a long shot. Audiences liked UB40 as well as critics did, and this relieved Campbell who'd feared that the Pretenders' rock following might be unreceptive to reggae. They put out their first 45, "King," on the little Graduate label, and within weeks it became the first record in U.K. history to reach the top ten without major label backing.

It wasn't all ease, though. An old bugaboo that's often plagued anglo blues and jazz players resurfaced; can white people effectively play a black-spawned music? Rasta acquaintances of Astro, the black trumpeter who joined the band after their third gig, thought not; they chided him for consorting with whites. Racial illogic of another sort came from the press. Black publications often lauded the band, but white ones took them to task.

"The greatest resistance we meet is from white, middle-class, left-wing journalists," asserts Campbell. "NME gave us a real hard time. And I'll tell you a little story. There's a guy called Eric Fuller who writes for *Sounds*, a London magazine, and he's a real hard-liner, likes only original Jamaican reggae. Every release we did, they gave it to Eric Fuller and he really slammed us, really ground us into the earth. We had a publicity agent, and she took this 12-inch we released and played it for this guy without telling him who it was. He raved about it, said it was great. She let him go on and

on, and finally told him it was UB40. He hasn't spoken to her since!"

The journalist's prejudice didn't hinder UB40's record sales. Their Graduate LP (*Signing Off*) was attracting the attention of major labels who made offers that were tempting, especially in light of the debts the band had incurred while preparing for the tour with the Pretenders. In Campbell's opinion the offers were all too typical; good money up front but no long-term percentage cuts. The other band members agreed. It was best to bide time with Graduate, a firm that gave them artistic control as well as half of whatever monies were made by record sales.

Relationships with Graduate began to fray gradually, however, and went completely askew when the firm leased the band's LP to a South African label, agreeing to delete the cut "Burden Of Shame" because it made uncomplimentary references to South African politics. The deletion was made without consulting UB40.

"That was the last straw!", declares Campbell. "That's when we decided to part company and form our own label. Now we get more than half!"

In late 1980, the band formed the label DEP International and released the LP *Present Arms*. By then their sound was fully defined. Ali Campbell handled most of the vocals; he and Robbie were both playing guitar and were good at the scratchy, punctuative guitar mode that typifies reggae. Drummer Jimmy Brown had full command of the eccentric but propulsive drum style exemplified by the Jamaican players, Horsemouth Wallace and Sly Dunbar. Particularly strong was the horn section. Norman Hassan (trombone), Brian Travers (saxophone), and Astro (trumpet) were a multi-racial line-up that added tremendous aural assertiveness as well as visual diversity to the band. Earl Falconer played bass and Michael Virtue was the keyboardist. (Virtue had replaced one Jimmy Lind, who had left the band in its embryonic stage because he didn't think it would go anywhere.)

The band toured, not only in the U.K. but in New Zealand, Europe, and Australia. They played five dates on both American coasts, receiving response sufficient to make them aware that their recent tour of the states would be a viable one. They also played Zimbabwe.

"That turned out to be a nightmare," Campbell claims. "We were invited by the Zimbabwean government to tour there to celebrate their second year of independence. The problems were mostly financial. We didn't get anything we were promised and we're being sued by an airline for freight. The people (who set up the tour) said they'd handle that, they'd pay all the companies. The gigs were great, though. Since we've been there, we're the number one band in Zimbabwe. I don't think it's a reflection on us as a band, it's that they're so starved for music there. Now they buy our records religiously."

In late 1981, UB40 released the LP *Present Arms In Dub*. Last year they put out *UB44* and from it came two hit singles, "So Here I Am" and "I Won't Close My Eyes." Both songs are on their first American release, the LP *1980-83* on A&M.

"The deal we have with A&M is a licensing deal," Campbell states. "They have an option to take anything on DEP. We aren't signed to A&M, DEP International is. This is the way we wanted it and it's why we held out for a better deal."

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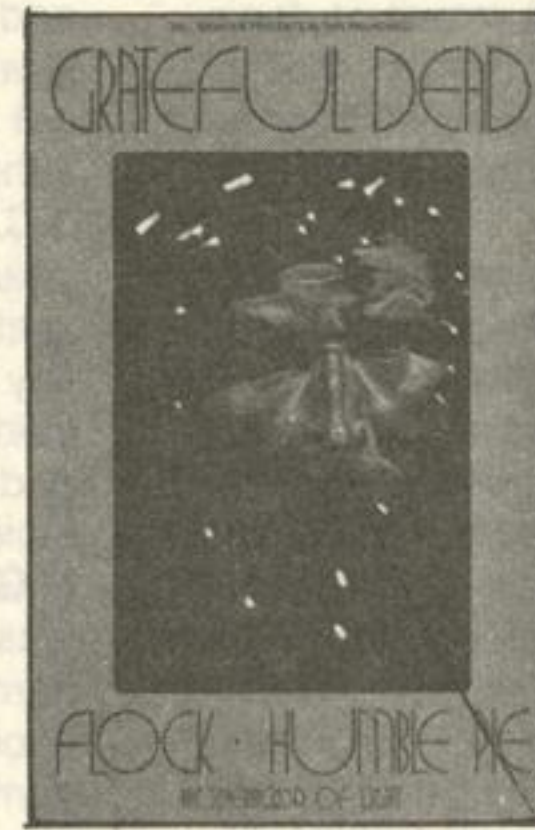
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Bob Minkin

NICKSILVER

NICKSILVER

By Mick Skidmore

THERE was a good-sized crowd at Jonathan Swifts Club in Cambridge, Massachusetts to see two shows by Nicksilver during their recent successful tour of the East Coast.

Like myself, a good number of people were drawn to the show not quite knowing what to expect due to the fact that show was being advertised as Nicksilver, formerly Quicksilver Messenger Service, featuring Nicky Hopkins, John Cipollina, Greg Elmore, Nick Gravenites and Al Stahaley, which is a little misleading in as much as that line-up only includes two of the original four members of Quicksilver, and if Nicky Hopkins played on the tour, one latter day member. However, I am sure that no one left either of the two shows I saw feeling dissatisfied, because Nicksilver played a dynamic set that included a mixture of blues and rock that was liberally sprinkled with some dazzling improvisations that recalled the inventiveness of the early Quicksilver Messenger Service, even though they only played three songs that were recognizable as Quicksilver tunes ("Mona," "Who Do You Love" and "Pride of Man"). Nicky Hopkins was replaced at the last moment by Merl Saunders, who I am sure needs no introduction. Merl seemed to fit into the band well.

Before the show I got together with the band for a chat and was more than a bit dubious about their motives for the seemingly heavy reliance on the legendary name of Quicksilver Messenger Service, especially as John, Nick

and Al had previously toured as the Cipollina-Gravenites Band. However, my mind was soon put at ease by the affable Nick Gravenites and John Cipollina.

J.C. The promoter asked us to come out last year as Quicksilver and we said no. Then they said we'll book you as yourself, but we want to say former members of Quicksilver, and we said I don't know, yeah . . . that sounds okay, and they said we want you to play at least 50% Quicksilver stuff and we said forget it.

N.G. I didn't want to use the name Nicksilver. It was the idea of this promoter in New York named Michael Gaiman. He has been trying for a long time to put together a band that would in some way resemble Quicksilver that he could use to take advantage of that name. We were going to have Nicky Hopkins in the band as well at first, but we just couldn't take Nicky away from what he is doing now. It is just too lucrative for him. He gets double and treble union rates and everything. He is working in Hollywood doing sessions and film scores and all kinds of stuff. We just couldn't afford to have him on tour with us, but he is so good. He makes you sound good. When he plays with the band he makes us all sound good. When we couldn't get Nicky I wanted to go out as a four piece, but Gaiman insisted that we have a keyboard player and he insisted that we take Merl. He was intent on having a band tour that he could connect with the Quicksilver name, so in the end I agreed. I didn't care. I just wanted to get out and tour in my own country. I haven't toured here properly

in years, and I just wanted to show everyone just how good I play the blues.

Relix: Will there be any more Nicksilver tours or any records coming out?

J.C. Well, Nick's recording an album right now, but I don't know if it will come out in the states. As for Nicksilver, I would hope that there will be more tours. I had kind of hoped that we could use our original line-up. If the promoters back east would quit being so chintzy, maybe we could. We had a band out in California called Thunder and Lightnin', which is basically Nicksilver except instead of Merl we had Nicky Hopkins. I love Merl; he is very good and he was a real big help, and there was no problem with Merl at all, but I am used to Nicky. He is not only a close and old dear friend, but he is also an excellent pianist, and I like the rhythms I work off of with Nicky.

Relix: Are you still playing with the Dinosaurs and Terry and The Pirates?

J.C. Yes, the Dinosaurs are still together. In fact, I started working with them the day I got back from the Nicksilver tour. Michael Gaiman has been promising to put together a tour for us, which I think should happen fairly soon. We are just real loose. We haven't done any recording yet; we have a few live tapes. Anyway, we just issued a press release that says we will definitely make an album sometime within the next five years! Terry and The Pirates have just released a new album, *Rising Of The Moon*. It's on Country Joe McDonald's label Rag Baby Records, and is available in the states. All

NICK GRAVENITES celebrates his birthday at the Lone Star Cafe, NYC.

these bands are running concurrent with one another. It keeps me out of the house. We toured Germany last year with Terry and The Pirates. The band was David Hayes on bass, Greg Douglass and myself on guitars and Greg Elmore on drums. Greg Douglass is real hot. He keeps me on my toes. He is now playing with the Greg Kihn Band.

Relix: How come your albums are only available in Germany and certain other European countries?

N.G. In 1979 this Swedish girl came to see the band in San Francisco (the band at this time being John, Nick, Roger Troy and Marcus David), and she fell in love with the band and said, "Why don't you come and play in Sweden?" And we said, "We'd love to if you get us the gigs." Well, she used to work for a promoter, and sure enough, she lined up some shows for us and the guy who runs Line Records came backstage before the show and asked us if we had any tapes with us that might be suitable to put out as an album and we did. He stayed for the show, listened to the tapes, liked them and gave us the money right away. The tapes were all things that we had recorded and paid for already. (This was the John Cipollina album, *Raven*, the Nick Gravenites album, *Bluestar*, and the Terry and The Pirates album, *Doubtful Handshake*, and an album by Marcus David called *Greatest Hits*. Most of these are available from good import stores and are well worth checking out.)

J.C. People are always coming up to us at shows and asking where they can get the records and we say go to Germany! I also sold a Terry and The Pirates album to Wild Bunch Records in Italy. I like it, although the sound quality is not as good as a regular album. What it lacks in sound quality it makes up for in dynamics. It was recorded with one stereo microphone in front of the monitors. I still owe Line Records a solo album, but I haven't had the time to do it, what with playing with The



Bob Minkin

Dinosaurs, Terry and The Pirates and these guys.

Relix: The Gravenites/Cipollina album, *Monkey Medicine*, was recorded in Germany, wasn't it?

N.G. Yes. We were at the end of a tour there early last year and they wanted an album, so

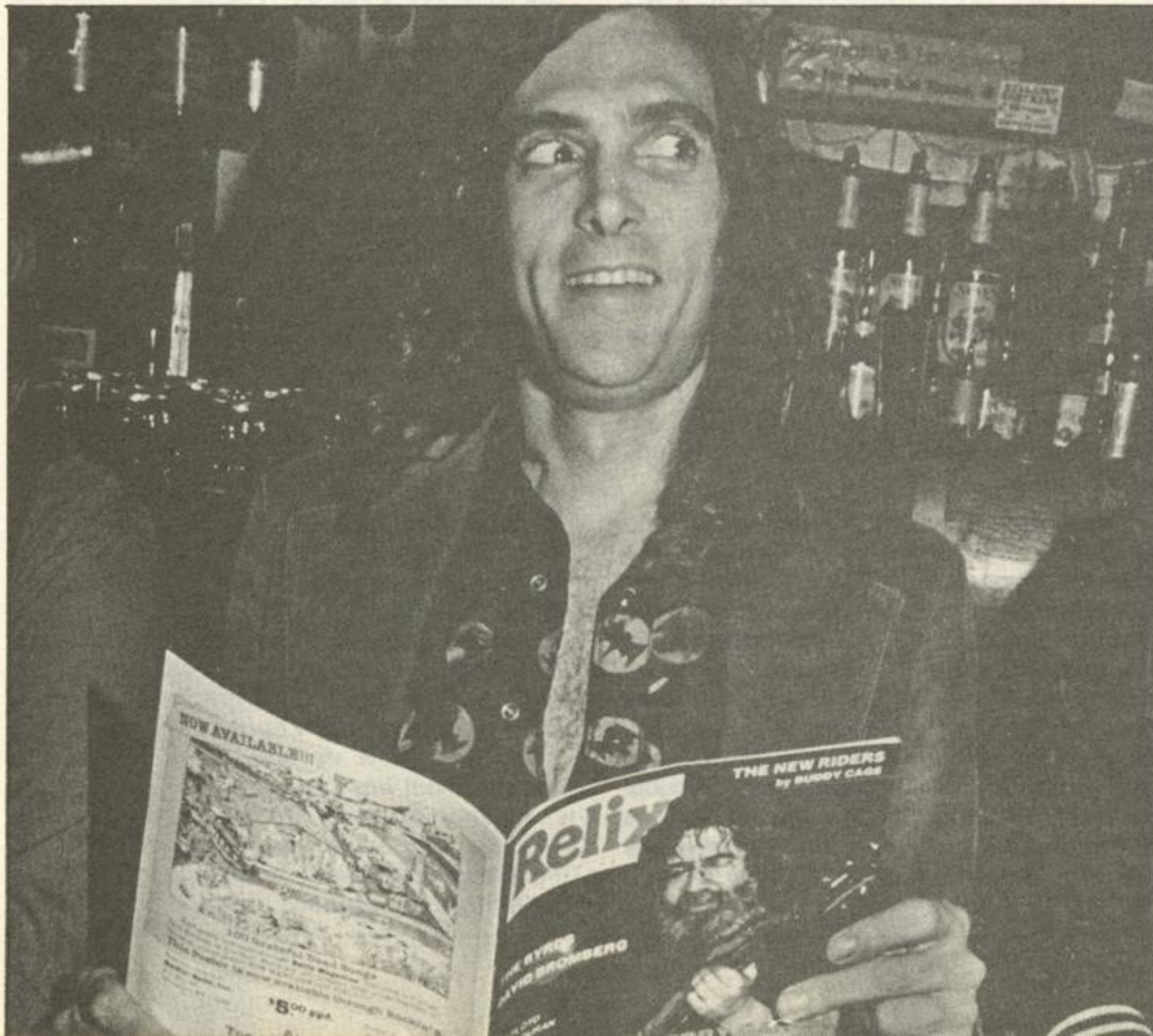
we went in and did it in a studio in Hamburg. The whole album only cost about \$1,500 to do, including everything.

Both bassist Al Stahaley and drummer Greg Elmore have albums that they are trying to get released in the U.S.A. Al's album is on his own Ranger Records label and so far has been released in Germany and England on the Polydor label. It's a really nice album and finds Al covering a wide variety of styles from country rock to rockabilly to reggae to hard rock. One of the songs on the album, *Trust Me*, was one of the highlights of Nicksilver's recent show.

Greg Elmore's album is also on his own label and as yet is unreleased, apart from a few promo copies that he has had pressed up. It's an interesting album pretty much in the hard rock/blues area. The line-up of his band, who are called Little Joe, is Bobby Vega on bass ("The number one funk bass player" according to Mickey Hart of The Dead), Greg Douglass on guitar, Greg on drums and singer Charlie Williams. The album is made up mostly of original material written by the band, but there is a nice version of Led Zeppelin's "Dazed and Confused," and a real good blues number written by none other than Nick Gravenites called "Love Me or I'll Kill You Baby."

It really is about time for a U.S. company to put some faith and money into the fine albums these guys have been producing and get something out in the states. God knows there is enough interest, as witnessed by their recently successful tour, and I'm sure that there is no need to rely on the name of Quicksilver Messenger Service. These guys let their music speak for itself, and they are all extremely talented musicians, and in Nick Gravenites they have an amazingly prolific songwriter.

Bob Minkin



JOHN CIPOLLINA



The Vanilla Fudge *Mystery*

by Stu Simone

THERE'S a charge of electricity in the control room of Pasha studios in Hollywood as producer Spencer Proffer and engineer Duane Baron listen intently to the heavy sounds of a new band exploding from the massive speakers. The band has a distinctive, modern sound that combines the power of Zeppelin-esque heavy rock with the colorful textures of today's synthesizers. Yes, it sounds new, but wait a minute . . . this band got together *seventeen* years ago? And they broke up *thirteen* years ago? Producer Proffer grins mischievously—this could only be THE VANILLA FUDGE.

Just like their smash debut LP in 1967, *The Vanilla Fudge*—vocalist/keyboardist Marc Stein, drum legend Carmine Appice, bassist extraordinaire Tim Bogart and guitarist Vinnie Martel—have come out of nowhere with the surprise rock album of the year. And like their 1967 debut, their reunion LP, appropriately entitled *Mystery*, seems bound to make waves, especially considering the strong musical contributions of Stein, Appice, Bogart and legendary guitarist Jeff Beck, who makes a guest appearance on the album.

Much of today's rock audience is too young to remember the impact that the original Vanilla Fudge had on the rock music scene; their debut album shot to the top of the charts without the help of a hit single, a feat which triggered a whole new approach to rock resulting in the AOR radio stations we have today and a vastly increased emphasis on hit albums as opposed to singles. Their heavy, classically influenced sound and their high-energy flashy stage show also changed the course of music. But as quickly as *The Fudge* made it—practically overnight—they faded away, although their

members achieved notable success after their 1970 break-up in such rock acts as Rod Stewart, Beck, Bogart & Appice, Dave Mason, Ted Nugent, DNA, Tommy Bolin, Boxer and even Ozzy Osbourne.

The roots of *The Vanilla Fudge* go back to the mid-sixties when Tim Bogart met Mark Stein in a Top-40 band called Rick Martin & The Showmen. It wasn't long before Stein and Bogart left to form their own band, The Pigeons, with guitarist Vinnie Martel in 1966. As Mark Stein recalls, "I think what started this whole Fudge thing was when we went to see a band called The Rascals. That was the first time we'd seen that kind of energy coming from just three musicians; when we saw The Rascals and where rock was going, what we were doing wasn't satisfying to us any more, and we decided we had to get another drummer so we could do the arrangements we wanted to do. We saw Carmine at this place called The ChooChoo Club in Garfield, and after one look we asked him to join; he did, and it really clicked.

"There were a bunch of bands in the Long Island area at the time—one of them was The Vagrants, whose guitarist was Leslie West—who were taking old material and doing these big production numbers on them. Between that idea and what The Rascals were doing, we evolved the Vanilla Fudge sound. We'd take other people's tunes, like "You Keep Me Hanging On" from the Motown catalogue, and we'd completely re-arrange them. A producer for Atlantic records, Shadow Morton, took us into the studio and we recorded that one in one take. For some reason, everybody freaked out."

"We just got lucky," adds Tim Bogart. "It was a rate-the-record contest on Scott Muni's syndicated radio show, where they'd play five new tunes and the audience would pick their favorite. We just had a demo tape, hoping to get a deal, and our manager knew somebody and it got on the air; suddenly the kids were screaming for a record that didn't exist. One minute we were a club act, and the next we were a hit rock group on Atlantic Records."

Stein, "Our first LP was all re-arranged covers, which nobody else was doing at the time," recalls Mark Stein, "So the first time it was done, it was a big winner because the approach was so fresh. But we didn't think about any of that then—what we recorded on that first album was basically just our stage act."

And speaking of stage acts, *The Fudge* had one of the best, and most agreed that the intensity of the Vanilla Fudge live show was never captured on vinyl. In their first two years, *The Fudge* seemed unstoppable as they blew other acts off the stage time and again. Stein remembers, "When *The Fudge* was at its peak in 1969, Led Zeppelin opened for us on their first American tour. They'd sit there and watch us, because we were one of the most visual live bands of the time, and while people don't believe it, Zeppelin definitely learned from us. The next tour they did, we had a split bill, for we'd already peaked and they were just hitting their stride with Led Zep II, and *that* was the band that blew us off. In six months the improvement was amazing."

Meanwhile, the Vanilla Fudge went about killing any momentum they'd created with their "overnight sensation" debut. "I don't know if anything as outrageous has ever happened as

with our second album, *The Beat Goes On*," says Mark Stein. "The intentions were real good—Shadow Morton has this idea of creating a chronological musical work, moving through music historically from a few centuries ago to the present, trying to portray historical events with music; it was pretty weird, but those were really experimental times. I guess it was really pretentious, and while everybody was waiting for something like the first album, it was just totally off-the-wall. In retrospect, it was a horrible mistake which we all regret, but at the time everybody thought it was the right thing; I think we all wonder if the Fudge had progressed in a normal fashion and followed up on our debut if we would have become . . . let's just say we'd be a hell of a lot richer today. It had a tremendously negative effect, and we never recovered from that mistake."

Vanilla Fudge went on to record three more albums, *Renaissance*, which introduced some Fudge originals, *Near The Beginning*, which featured one side of live performances, and *Rock 'n' roll*, which was recorded as the band was breaking apart. If there is one thing that the members of the band agree on today, it's that the first album was the only one that really had the vision and the magic.

The Vanilla Fudge officially disbanded when Tim Bogart and Carmine Appice left the band in march of 1970. According to Bogart, "Success changed us tremendously, and what was the group was no longer, so for me it wasn't significant any more. That's why I left—I was the one who split—I said 'Carmine, let's go,' and he said OK. Carmine and I were going to play with Jeff Beck and Rod Stewart, but Jeff got into a serious accident and that was that; so Carmine and I formed Cactus. Then, one afternoon just after the Cactus album was released, Jeff called up and said 'OK, I'm ready to go now' and I just wanted to die because it was too late." Bogart and Appice went on to play on four Cactus albums before Beck called up once again. Beck, Bogart & Appice was quickly formed, and while Paul Rodgers almost became their lead singer, the band decided to sing themselves. After a year and a half, B.B.A. disbanded due to conflicts between Beck and Bogart. At this time the original Fudge attempted a reunion and actually rehearsed for a short time, but Bogart decided to concentrate on his new band Pieces, which featured a singer by the name of Steve Perry, who went on to join Journey. After Pieces shattered, Bogart went on to replace Boz Burrell in Hinkley's Heroes, play with Boxer for a few years, play in a band called Pipe Dream with Willie Dee on vocals, spend a short time in Italy with a disco band, release two solo albums, the first of which, *Progressions*, garnered Top-5 FM airplay in the summer of 1981, and play with the likes of Bob Weir, Billy Cobham and Bobby Cochran in Bobby & the Midnights. Meanwhile, Mark Stein went into temporary seclusion, then went on to perform with Tommy Bolin (Deep Purple lead guitarist), Alice Cooper, Dave Mason, as well as writing and playing radio commercials and putting together a few original bands. Meanwhile, Carmine Appice was writing drumming books and running drum clinics and contests when he wasn't playing with KGB, Rod Stewart (where he played on four platinum albums and co-wrote several songs including the quintuple-platinum hit "Do Ya Think I'm Sexy") various Pasha Records projects like Danny Spanos, Billy Thorpe, Peter Noone and DNA (his original duo with guitarist/vocalist Rick Derringer) and his own solo album, which used drums as a

lead instrument. One of Appice's many benefit appearances was a UNICEF benefit concert at the Savoy in New York in March of 1982.

"That's how this whole Fudge reunion came about," recalls Carmine Appice. "There were many rock luminaries invited to play, like Rick Derringer, Charlie Daniels and Phil Lynott (Thin Lizzy), and during the course of inviting, everyone felt it would be exciting to see what the Vanilla Fudge sounded like after not playing for twelve years. Everyone happened to be in town anyway, so at the end of the show the original Fudge line-up played 'You Keep Me Hanging On,' 'Take Me For A Little While,' 'People Get Ready,' and 'Shotgun,' and the audience went wild."

"I must admit, the magic was really there, even if it was the old material," adds Mark Stein. "The energy and the fire that we always had was still there, and talk started again of the Fudge possibly re-forming. Then we started getting calls, and finally Ahmet Ertegun, Chairman of the board of Atlantic Records, called and made a reunion sound very important and attractive to everybody, and with all the old sixties bands re-forming, it seemed like a good time to do it. But I'm sure people will be really surprised when they hear this stuff, expecting to hear something kind of dated, for this sounds very contemporary."

After one listen to *Mystery*, one can't argue with that, and much of the credit must go to Stein; once famed for his organ playing, Stein plays no organ or piano on the album, but supplies layers of colorful synthesizer textures. Producer Spencer Proffer calls the LP "a picturesque work, a mini-movie in sound that's very dramatic and pictorial. Hopefully we'll be able to put together a video of the entire album that will weave all the songs together. The songs are commercial, but they're richly textured—we chose to color them in shades of turquoise and magenta versus shades of black and white."

Although Atlantic originally wanted the album to be mainly cover tunes, like the original debut, there are only two covers on the record, the Motown classic "My World Is Empty (Without

You)" and Burt Bacharach and Hal David's "Walk On By," which was chosen after it was decided that a cover of "Stairway To Heaven" would be too risky. The seven originals were penned mainly by Stein and Appice, with one song by Tim Bogart, and they're ample proof of just how far the band's writing chops have come since the original Fudge days. "Under Suspicion," "The Stranger" and "Don't Stop Now" are heavy rock powerhouses, while "Mystery," "Walk On By," and "It Gets Stronger" are impeccably-crafted pop numbers. Plus, the album has an added bonus, the screaming guitar work of Jeff Beck on two tracks, which makes this a B.B.A. reunion album as well.

Although the four main players on the record are incredibly busy—Mark Stein is working with his own band, Modern Design; Ron Mancuso, the young Los Angeles rocker who played most of the guitar parts on the album, is a member of Modern Design. Tim Bogart is playing in no less than three bands, and plans on touring to support his recently-released solo album *Master's Brew* on Allegiance Records (which features the likes of Eddie Van Halen, Brian Auger, Rick Derringer, Stein and Appice; and Carmine Appice is working with Derringer on a second DNA album, touring with Ozzy Osbourne, and perhaps Jack Bruce and Friends as well—all four agree that a Vanilla Fudge tour would be something special, and if *Mystery* does well, the Fudge could well be touring this summer. The key to *Mystery*'s success could be how much it appeals to the kids who've never heard the old Fudge and how little it alienates the fans of the original band. Everyone involved believes that it should appeal to old fans and new ones alike.

Concludes Carmine Appice, "All that weird stuff that broke the band up is still there, but that's also the madness that creates the magic we have. This album was really a trip because we're trying to picture how The Fudge would have developed over the past thirteen years if we'd stuck together. And nobody knows what the Vanilla Fudge would sound like in 1984 . . . until they hear *Mystery*."

The Vanilla Fudge won't be a mystery much longer.

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THE POLICE

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ATTITUDE

by Jeff Tamarkin

A little over five years ago, the last week in 1978 to be precise, I received a phone call from the editor of a local newspaper for which I was writing. "Go and interview the Police," he said.

"Which precinct?" I asked, having no idea what he was babbling about.

"No, dummy," he continued. "The Police. They're a new British band. And they're not at any police station, they're at CBGB's."

"OK, if you say so," I replied, shrugging that an assignment is an assignment. "But is there anything I should know about them?"

"Nah, they must be just another punk band if they're playing at CBGB's," said the ed. "Oh, yeah, there is one thing. The lead singer is a guy named Sting and he's going to be appearing in the film version of *Quadrophenia*."

CBGB's was almost empty that night. Maybe 50 local punks and winos lingered about, with a handful of die-hards crowding up against the stage. The Police—there were three of them, I counted—came out and put on a rather energetic set that didn't sound that punky to me at all. It was forceful music, alright, but there was an obvious high level of musicianship at work here. And they seemed to have quite a grasp of reggae rudiments, which they incorporated nicely into their rock. I approached them for an interview and the group, its entourage and the reporter (me) convened to a local restaurant.

I learned that this was their first trip to the States—it might've been their first night

here—although the drummer, Stewart Copeland, was an American citizen whose father worked for the CIA and who'd lived in strange locales such as Beirut. I also learned that he had been in a British progressive rock group called Curved Air prior to joining the Police. The guitarist, Andy Summers, another blond, had also put in time with prog-rockers, most notably Kevin Ayers and Kevin Coyne, and had been a member of the last bunch of Animals that Eric Burdon had recruited long ago. And then there was the one named Sting, the actor. I learned that he could be a mite difficult to talk to. My first impression was that he was quite a fan of himself.

It was obvious even then that this band had plans to make it, and they weren't going to let critics pigeonhole them. "We never wanted to be part of the punk thing," Copeland told me. "We just liked playing to the punk crowds because those kids were hysterical to play to. Then the press decided that we were too sophisticated to be punks and started calling us bandwagon-hoppers. Even though we were there before the press was."

"How much can you do with three chords and a lot of screaming, anyway?" Sting chimed in.

Today, of course, the Police are used to a lot of screaming, but it doesn't emanate from the stage. Instead, thousands of little girls screech their lungs out at the bleached bombshells, who have somehow managed to become the biggest rock band in the world in the half decade

since the CBGB's date. A few months after my initial encounter with the hottest threesome since Moe, Larry and Curly, "Roxanne," the reggaeish number that was so impressive at CB's, began its climb to the top, followed by the album *Outlandos d'Amour*, the first LP from a British new wave group to crack the American top 20.

The Police didn't have to stay on the CBGB's circuit very long. Within a year they had graduated to three-thousand-or-so seat halls, and as everyone knows, they've since worked their way up to Shea Stadium hugeness.

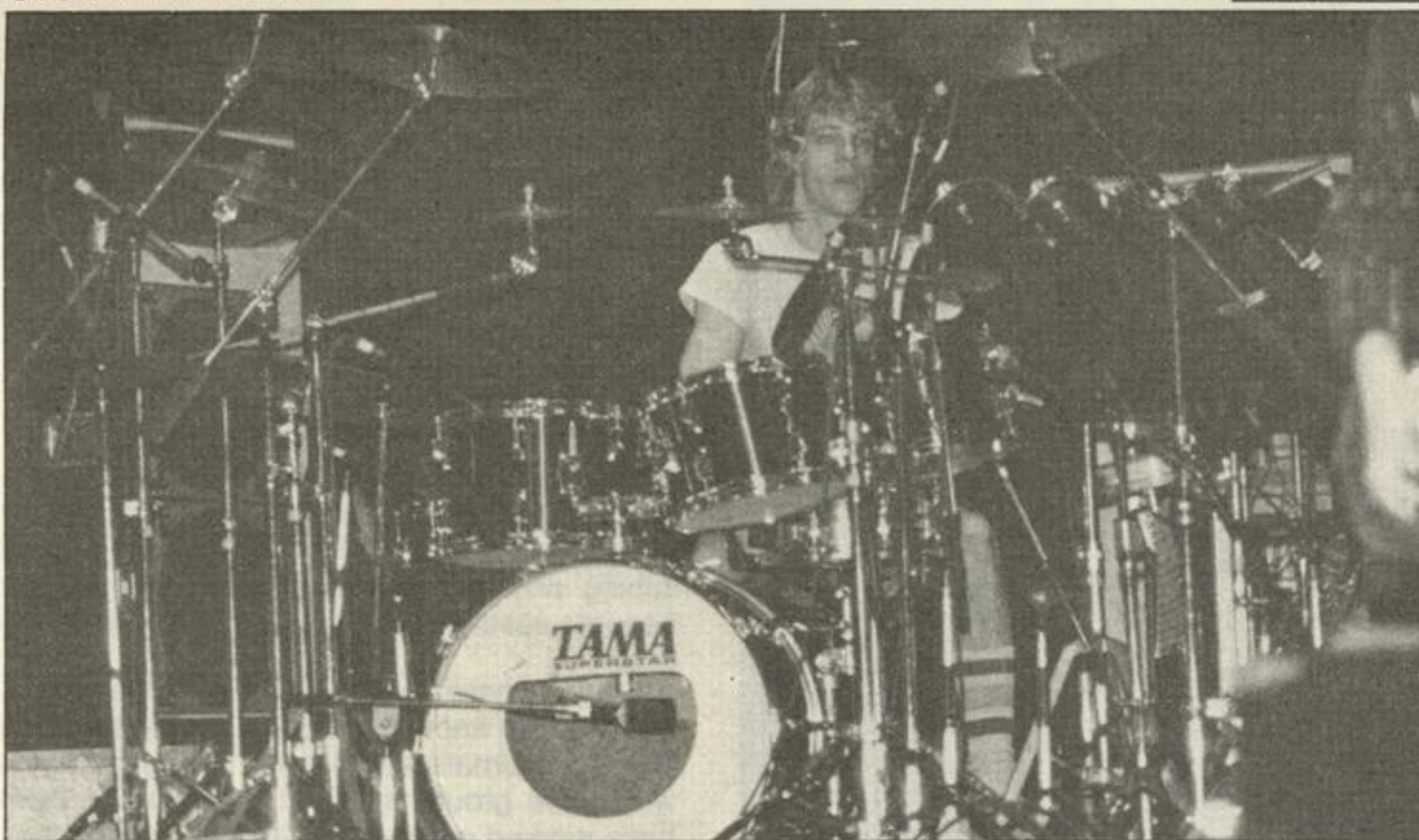
But at times it seems as if their self-infatuation, especially in the form of Mr. Sting's ego, has grown concomitantly with their fame. And grown to legendary proportions, judging by his statements to the press.

For instance, this Sting quote, from a recent book on the Police: "A&M Records has no control over content (of our albums). It's a great temptation to present them with an album of farting—they'd be legally bound to give us the money. There's a part of me saying, 'Fucking great! Rubbish next album!' But if that was really the case I wouldn't want (to do this) anymore. I'd rather open a greengrocer's shop."

Although there hasn't yet been an album called *Sting's Greatest Farts*, many police fans and observers have taken to wondering just how long the group can last now, given their well-documented negative attitude and the increasing bickering among members. Sting, especially, has taken to spouting outrageous statements whenever he opens his mouth to the press. And whether he means them or not, it can only be a matter of time before any band would wilt under the pressure brought on by continuous in-fighting and ego-tripping.

In the same book that contained that brilliant quote about Sting's desire to record his digest-

STUART COPELAND



Chris Fallo

ive problems, (*The Police*, by Phil Sutcliffe and Hugh Fielder, published by Proteus Books), Sting readily admits that the Police is nothing more to him nowadays than a vehicle through which to establish his solo success. In a recent MTV promo, he can be heard joking that "I'd like to place an ad for another band," but when he repeats the same sentiments in interviews in a more serious tone, one has to wonder just why Sting sticks around long past the point that he has to. He says, matter-of-factly, "I'm out for myself, and Stewart and Andy know it. As long as the group is useful for my career I'll stay. As soon as it isn't, I'll drop it like a stone. All for one, one for all—fuck that. That's very limited. This is the longest job I've ever had. I want something else. I'm not seriously suggesting that the Police are splitting, but the next time we play I'll have to really want it."

Hardly the words of a musician satisfied with the current state of his art, which is a shame, because despite all the hype and teenybop attention, Sting and the Police *have* managed to release five albums' worth of innovative music which has constantly grown and stretched. Few other bands which have approached the level of success attained by the Police can claim to have done so without pandering to the obvious commercial formulas. Even the mega-hit "Every Breath You Take," sappy as it is, is somewhat gutsy in its approach and imminently sturdy—it holds up after numerous listenings, whereas your average top-10 wimp song becomes nauseating after the first time, or before.

That's where the irony lies: that beyond all of the ridiculous trappings that surround the Police, from their sex symbol posing to their brushes with the press, they are still one hell of a good band. Even their top 10 singles remain a breath of fresh air on the otherwise polluted airwaves: "Synchonicity II," "De Do Do Do, De Da Da Da," "Don't Stand So Close To Me," and the others manage to sound inoffensive among the schlock on the airwaves even after the sound of Sting's exaggerated vocal mannerisms have long passed the point of becoming an annoyance.

The Police have always managed to find new musical inspiration since day one. Their early reggae-tinged pop is as far away from their more recent ethnic and experimental music as Boy George is from Z.Z. Top. But according to Sting, the group's commercial success is accidental. "Our most creative material just happens to be our biggest hits as well," he has

said, and listening to their albums one is struck by just how true that is: the Police do have the fortunate knack of knowing how to go for the charts while stretching their musical boundaries at the same time. "We could easily keep playing places like Madison Square Garden and have our audiences screaming for two hours," Sting once said. "But instead we choose to work hard and stretch. We've always had a pioneering spirit."

That spirit has taken the Police to geographical locations where few rock bands—let alone bands of their stature—have dared venture. South America, Bombay and Cairo are hardly stops on the average rock tour, yet the Police chose to lay in those places and others that are equally removed from the world of big bucks rock and roll. Even though they lost money by traveling to those areas, the Police felt that the experience was valuable, that the idea of turning on masses of people whose culture generally excludes trying to hide a six pack of Bud in their boots to get past the security check at the local stadium where Iron Leppard is playing, was more important than adding a few more millions to their bank accounts.

Sting told an interviewer that playing in India was one of the most rewarding experiences of his career. "It was just like a scene from *Gandhi*," he said to *Musician* magazine last year. "When we walked out there they politely applauded, and I told them that we're a dance band so I'd appreciate it if they danced. And by the end of the show we had a stage invasion. All the old ladies in their saris got up with their umbrellas, and we had them screaming and shouting and yelling and jumping up and down. That confirmed my belief in music as a universal phenomenon that can work anywhere."

So why then does Sting insist on trying the patience of his two bandmates and seeing just how close he can come to pushing the group towards a split? It seems that every time he utters something into a reporter's tape recorder Sting makes sure that the world knows that he doesn't always get along with Copeland and Summers. *Newsweek* quoted him as saying, "It would be stupid of me if I thought the group was the be-all and end-all of my existence When I get bored with it the band will stop I don't want to be in Las Vegas 10 years from now being the balding chap in a tuxedo who sings 'Roxanne.'" In the next breath, the same person (born Gordon Sumner) will stop and ask the reporter, "Am I being too pretentious?" One



Nancy Cataldi



ANDY SUMMERS

hardly needs to give him the answer; it's obvious that he already knows it.

Yet you can also use the argument that it is this competitive spirit and tension between the group that allows it to keep coming up with new musical ideas. After all, it's only when rock bands become too content that they become lethargic, so perhaps it's to their advantage that the members of the Police get off on knocking each other down at every turn. Andy Summers, perhaps the most imitated guitarist of the 80's, nonchalantly shrugs when asked about Sting's jabs at him and Copeland, and whether he's satisfied with the group's present state. "I don't want to be satisfied," he said. "I want to go on itching and trying to scratch that itch. If you become satisfied, you're at a stage of rest—it's death."

Sting himself downplays the name-calling. Although he knows he does it, he says that it's only the journalists who dwell on the problems within the group, and that the three of them have worked out their relationship so that they can continue to make good music in spite of themselves. "Journalists are always trying to get into the politics of the group," Sting told writer Jim Green in 1982. "They're trying to get dirt on how I supposedly ride rough shod over the others, because it makes good copy. If I could get away with it, I wouldn't do any more interviews. Some are enjoyable, but the music says it all."

"People get burnt and I'm not apologetic about it," Sting says in the Stuchliffe/Fielder book. "I know it happens—musically and socially. I've always said that ambition is stronger than friendship, and people have been shocked by that, but I actually believe it. I'm not justifying it morally; I'm just saying I think that."

On one hand, Sting constantly castigates the others, saying that he's out for himself, as in the

above quotes. But on the other, he readily admits that the Police would only function as a unit, that individually the band's members could not produce music that is as satisfying as that created by the Police. "Yes, I need the group," Sting finally admitted to one interviewer. "They're the best musicians I could work with. But at the same time, there's a great desire in me for freedom. I really get trapped sometimes in all aspects of my life, and I have to get up and kick and punch. That's just my personality, my psychological problem."

And in the end, it might just be Sting's inner conflicts that throw the final punch. While Summers and Copeland have learned to deal with Sting's harangues, Sting himself seems to have trouble coming to terms with his own position. He basks in the glory of fame, yet his sense of self-doubt in regards to his own precarious position as pop star with an ego equal to his commitment to his art, keeps him from achieving happiness. "If you're determined to be an artist you have to be hungry," he said in a recent book, "and my life now is too easy. I'm full. The artist in me is looking for death, destruction. Artists are perverse, they're not normal. I'm not normal."

Millions of teenage girls might disagree, and many more won't even care what their idols have to say as long as the blond wonders continue to look good on MTV and on the posters that hang on their bedroom walls, and as long as the radio keeps blaring the music of Sumner, Summers and Copeland every hour on the hour. And maybe in the end that's all that really matters, personal demons be damned. But the next time that Sting and his fellow coppers step out on a stage to sing "So Lonely," one might be forced to think about just how much they really mean it. And that would be a real shame.

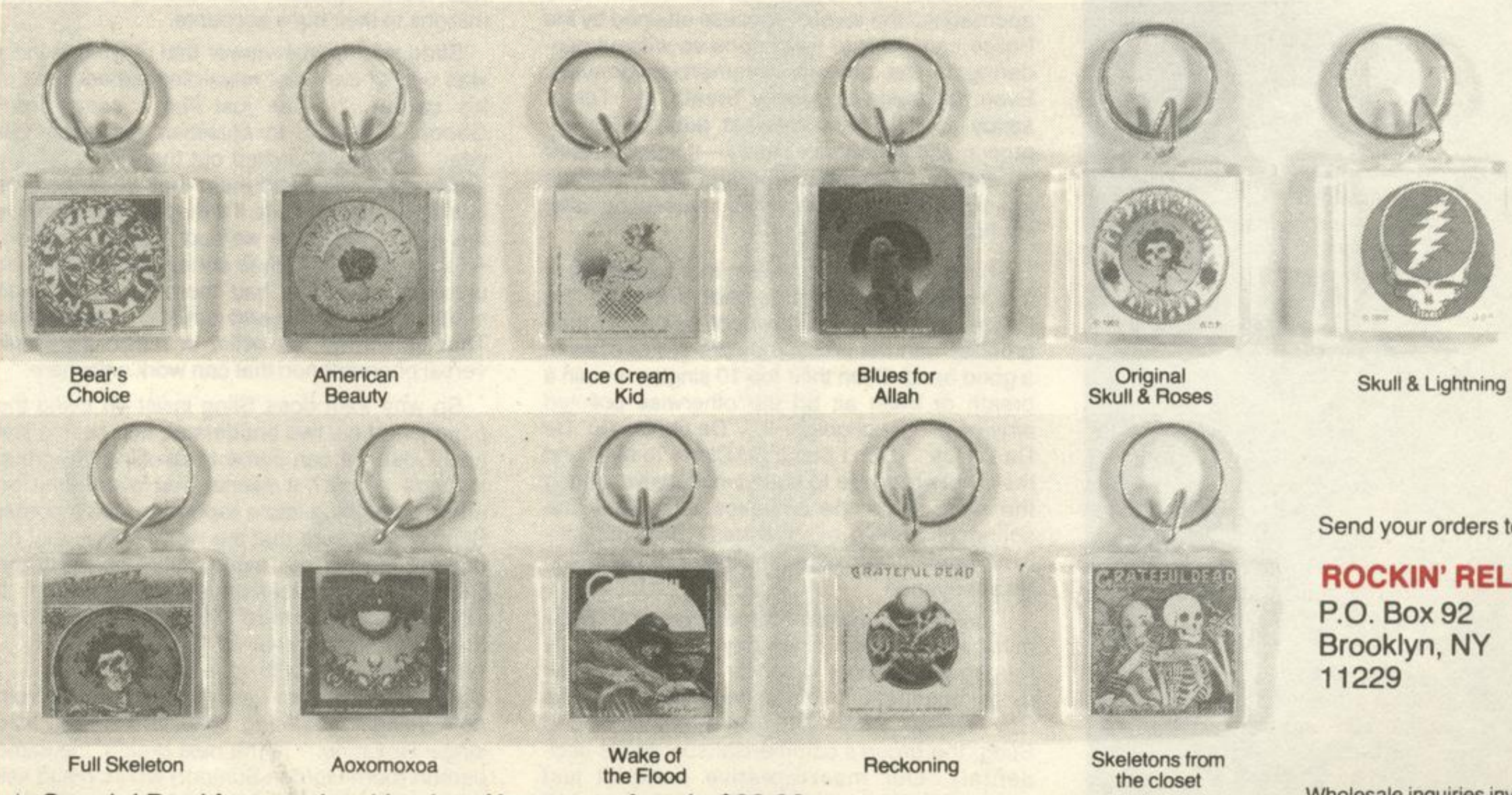
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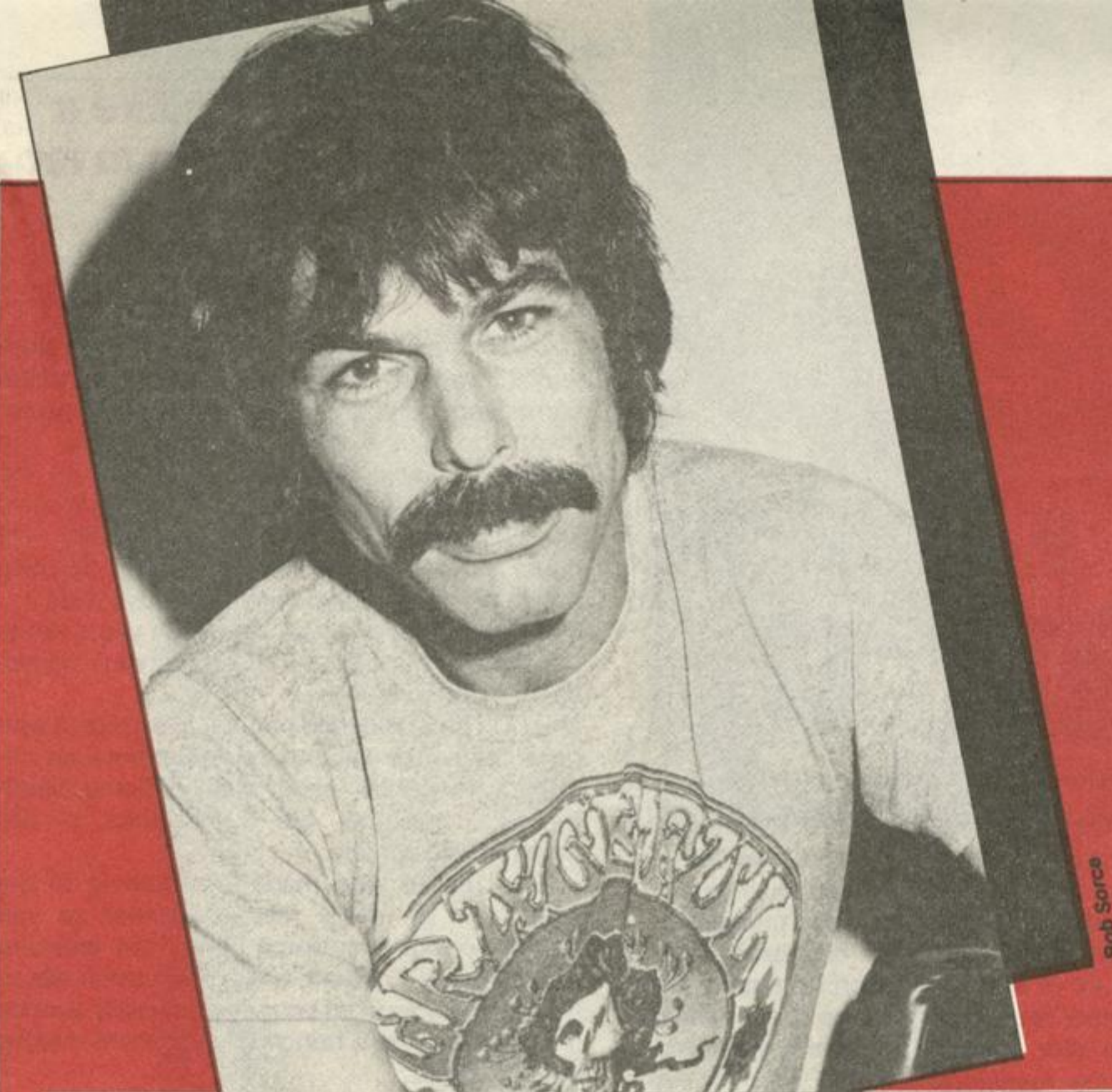


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Bob Sorce

An Interview with Mickey Hart

By Toni A. Brown

FOLLOWING their most recent East Coast tour, Relix had the opportunity to meet with Mickey Hart, Grateful Dead percussionist extraordinaire. Over a late breakfast and the rattle of dishes, we set into conversation. We discussed his life and love of percussion, and his two newly released solo albums, *Dafos* and *Yamantaka*.

RELIX: There are many people out there who put on your solo albums and don't get what they expect of them. How do you feel about those people?

HART: I don't think of those people. I don't know what they expect. I try to sound like what I feel. This is what I do, I play music and I would hope that someone would like it. If they don't, that would be their misfortune and mine, but I couldn't play to their tastes—whatever they may be.

RELIX: Did your Egypt experiences help you transcend the traditional percussive boundaries?

HART: It started before Egypt. When I went there, I had learned the instruments of Egypt so I wouldn't be a gringo—a stranger in a strange land. I learned their language, their customs and their instruments. They knew I took the time to share their culture. I've been into other percussion in other worlds for years. I knew that the world of percussion didn't end with a bass and snare drum. I was always attracted to it because I like sounds.

RELIX: On *Rolling Thunder*, your first solo effort, you used a variety of unusual sounds—rain, marimbas, a water pump . . .

HART: That's what "The Greatest Story" started with, my water pump. I live in an old place, and the pump brought the water out of

**"What is the strangest instrument you ever played? . . .
"The human skull."**

the well. Those were early experiments, because everything was sound. In my life, the early Grateful Dead life, let's say, everyone was taking acid and smoking pot and doing all kinds of weird and crazy things. Everything started having their own individual meanings. It was time to think about things to hear things other than the normal waking everyday sounds. I'd say we were more aware of our surroundings, so we used our surroundings in the music.

Bob Minkin



MICKEY HART and the Beast

RELIX: What were your earliest influences, and what drew you to expand beyond tradition and consider yourself a percussionist, as opposed to being a drummer?

HART: I don't think I tried to *become* a percussionist. It just happened. I never realized the difference.

RELIX: But you don't stay within any confines, as most drummers do.

HART: Oh no! There are no rules for me. The only rules are what I want to sound like and the inspiration I have to go to an instrument. When an instrument comes into my path, I have to find out if I can feel for it. I usually pick it up and it will mean something to me. And if I have a feeling for it, then I'll sit down with it.

RELIX: Do you find it easy to pick up a new instrument?

HART: Sometimes. If it's an instrument I should be playing. For some reason, you're better suited to certain percussion instruments. I'm talking about devoting time to an instrument. I'm not talking about picking it up and playing it for an hour. I'm talking about bringing it into your home, like a child or a friend. My home is filled with these instruments, and one by one, I pick them up and I go around playing them. Some of them wind up way in the back of the barn. Some wind up right in my bedroom, hanging from the walls. Those are the instruments that are dear to me.

RELIX: Do you use the same timing and rhythms with the Grateful Dead as you do with solo efforts?

HART: It's really all the same thing. But I do use different instruments.

RELIX: What is the strangest instrument you've ever played?

HART: The human skull. Living human. His name is Steve Parrish. I played him in L.A. when we were making *Terrapin Station*. I got him into the studio, put a couple of mikes on his skull, used a giant beater, put it through some processing, and played a human skull!

RELIX: Are you constantly making additions to the Beast?

HART: All the time! I added a new one this last time around. It's called the Ballaphone from Kenya. It's a marimba. All the bars have been tapped electronically. So now it's an electric ballaphone. It's the first of its kind. A new breed is born.

RELIX: On the *Apocalypse Now Sessions*, were you given a set of circumstances to work within, or were you given artistic freedom?

HART: Artistic freedom, I'd call it. Frances (Coppola) wanted a performance of *Apocalypse* and I assembled the instruments and myself, Airto, Billy (Kreutzmann), and we

“There’s nothing like a percussion album to let you know what your system sounds like.”



Bob Minkin

played the movie. He just said, “make it happen,” and we did.

RELIX: Is there still a Diga Rhythm Band?

HART: Oh no. Diga was just a whole group of people. But that was then. We couldn’t keep that band together. I think there were 15 of us. That lasted for just a little while. That was a band, a percussion orchestra.

RELIX: Let’s talk about your newest release, *Dafos*. I sense some jazz overtones. Were the songs pre-arranged and rehearsed, or somewhat improvised?

HART: Somewhat improvised. We assembled certain instruments to play, and described it before hand and talked about it, then played it. It isn’t overly composed music. Yes, it has a jazzy flavor because it just turned out that light. Instead of the Marshall drums, this is a more musical drum. This is more tune percussion. It’s really clean. Then there are Airtio, Flora Purim and Bobby Vega, the bass player. These people are really accomplished musicians, they really play. So, it’s percussion, but it’s also got what people call music because it’s got melody in it. It’s easily digested.

RELIX: Whose idea was it to bring this particular group of musicians together?

HART: My idea. But the idea isn’t as important as the result. I’ve had a lot of ideas that were good, but this *sounds* good. This situation just turned out to be ideal. The production was done really well. The people at Reference Recordings are real good people. The production was flawless. We had an easy time with a lot of people. Bill Graham let us use the Kabuki Theatre in San Francisco. We moved in there. There was a real large stage, so we were able to set up the Beast and all the instruments of Batucaje, the Brazilian Players and Keith Johnson, a recordist. He built his own 3 track machine—2 channel stereo, then he has a bass track in the middle. He’s a great remote recordist. He was able to capture and phase correctly the ambiance of the Kabuki Theatre without sacrificing any of the transient responses. It is quite accurate. And he has an 8 track mike remote unit. It’s analog, but it’s so clean, almost digitally clean. So the percussion was able to live in this environment and sound good in it. This record travels at 45RPM. That’s to enhance the groove depth, or the fidelity. You remember the 45’s and how they sounded so robust coming off the machine. That was because of the depth of the groove. This record shares that. It’s an LP, but it revolves at 45

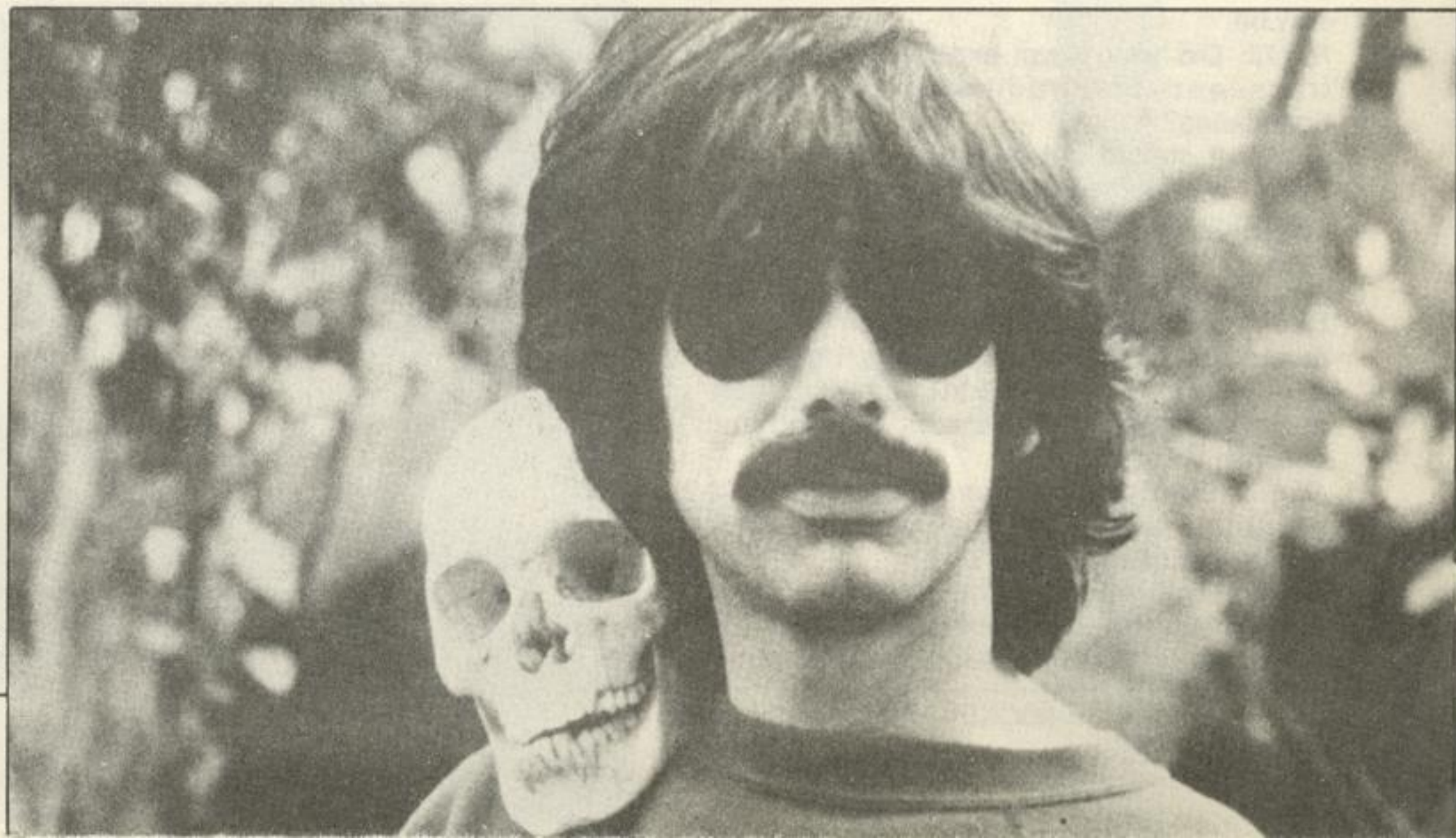
because of the extreme highs and lows put on this record. This record was made as an audiophile record, that means that it was pressed on virgin vinyl using extremely high tech techniques. A lot of care was taken for quality. It’s an expensive record. Each stage of this record was cared after. It wasn’t something you throw down to the mastering lab and it’s over. So what you’ll hear is the imagery. It’s just beautiful. You can really see the whole band there.

RELIX: It’s a very exciting record, some very up moments.

HART with SLY DUNBAR



Peter Simon



Foley



The Beast behind the band

itself. The record company should be able to make their money, at least. This is the record business. Me, it's another record. I'm in the Grateful Dead and I play live music. That's how we make a living. We don't make our livings selling records. It's part of it, though not a major part. But if a record could make enough money to enable us to make another record, then that would be commercially successful. But we'll go on anyway because we have to make our music. Some records are just more successful than others. Now, *Dafos* is getting incredible reviews and I didn't expect people to like it as much as they do. It's my music, and it's a very personal thing with me. But there's some easiness about listening to this album.

RELIX: You have another new release entitled *Yamantaka*. I haven't heard much about it.

HART: Yes, that's another audiophile record. It just happens that *Dafos* and *Yamantaka* were released at the same time. I didn't do them at the same time. Sometimes it takes a long time to get a record right. This one was done on Teldec vinyl and they were having trouble with the process, so it took a long time to come out. This is a record with no membranes. There are no drums used. Henry Wolf and myself, he's the Tibetan bell player, we struck things, metal things, and we rubbed things. We did so many different things but we didn't hit any membranes. So this is more of a music record. Twenty-first century kind of music. You won't hear anything you'd recognize on this record. It's lighter percussion. You can meditate to this album. It's really out there.

RELIX: You're stepping out of boundaries again.

HART: This is just another part of me, another dream. This is what the dream sounded like. This wasn't made for great commercial acceptance. I don't know what people think of this one yet. It was released by Celestial Harmonies.

RELIX: What does *Dafos* mean?

HART: *Dafos* is a place—Airta and I are into collective consciousness—this is a fantasyland where this record lives. We painted a picture of a place where things happen, like the "Dry

Sands of the Desert," "The Gates of Dafos." Those are physical representations of this land our imagination takes us to. We sit around and talk about other places, other worlds, other levels of consciousness, and how they would act, how their music would be. It's just our imagination running away with us—us having a good time with our imagination. That's what *Dafos* is. It's not like anything else, it doesn't sound like anything. It's just a place.

RELIX: Are you still into hypnosis?

HART: Oh yes. Self hypnosis. I use it all the time.

RELIX: A form of concentration . . .



PHIL LESH & BOB WEIR sing together for the first "St. Stephen" in years. Madison Square Garden, NYC 10/11/83.

HART: Sure. And sometimes I have to do some superhuman thing, like climb over a building. I use it if I'm tired, if I have to be sharper, or if I have to remember something. I use hypnosis in that way in my music.

RELIX: Where do you see yourself going in terms of future solo projects, film sound tracks . . .

HART: I do have a lot of things coming up, but it's really hard to talk about them because they're all in the works. Some will happen and some won't. I've worked on a film, "The Whales Weep Not," shot off the coast of Sri Lanka. It's a whole family of sperm whales playing under the water. We'll be working on another one by the same people. I'm doing some of the microphoning of the whales. I'm going to mount some contact mikes in their mouths to analyze their sounds and put them through the computer and see what their frequency response is. I'm doing underwater recording, digital remote recording. I'm going out on the week-ends and recording everything in sight. I stay active in the recording world all the time just by recording things.

I've also written a play with Barry Melton about humans and insects. I'd like to see it brought to the stage.

RELIX: Where do you see yourself going with regard to the Grateful Dead?

HART: Upward and onward. We're just coming into our own. Really feeling good. It takes a long time to really play good music. I'm enjoying it.

RELIX: You played St. Stephen on your last tour. That was a thrill!

HART: Yes. It really was. It's a good song. What great words. Robert Hunter is always with me with those words. "Writing 'what for?' across the morning sky . . ."

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HOT TUNA—performing a free concert in Paradise Park—1975.

The Hot Tuna Review

An Interview with Jorma Kaukonen

By Mick Skidmore

It has now been over five years since the long Kaukonen/Casady partnership ended when Hot Tuna decided to call it a day and disband early in 1978. The announcement of the split was as much of a surprise then (even though they had not played any gigs since November 77) as the recent rumors that Jack and Jorma were once again back together and playing music, and contemplating a full-scale reunion tour. After all, the duo had always seemed to be inseparable, and it did come as a shock to hear that they had split after having played music together for over two decades, that is, if you count the time that they played together as teenagers in Washington, DC, when they had a little band called The Triumphs that would play hits by Buddy Holly and The Everly Brothers, with Jack on lead guitar and Jorma on rhythm and vocals!

During their long musical partnership they were responsible for creating some fine, imaginative music. Hot Tuna's eclectic mixture of country blues and rock was undoubtedly an important contribution to the music of the seventies. They cut a number of classic albums, including *Burgers*, *Phosphorescent Rat and Hoppkorv*, and more importantly, they gained a reputation for their high-energy live shows, which sometimes lasted up to five hours. It was live in-concert that the band was at its best, when they had plenty of time to stretch out the songs with long, spontaneous, improvised jams that were often dazzling and musically complex.

Even before Hot Tuna, Jack and Jorma had been responsible for some pretty amazing stuff. Just listen to how they propelled Jefferson Airplane through some of its more adventurous moments on albums like *After Bathing At Baxter's* and *Bless Its Pointed Little Head*.

Jack Casady eventually wound up playing in a San Francisco new wave band called SVT along with fellow Hot Tuna member Nick Buck. SVT recorded a couple of EP's and an album, but none of these met with any significant commercial success, and earlier this year lead singer/guitarist Brian Marnell died of a long standing illness.

Meanwhile, Jorma for the most part returned to playing solo acoustic/electric gigs, performing pretty much the same blues-based material that he had with Hot Tuna, although he did have a couple of brief flirtations with high energy rock groups, the first being the short-lived *White Gland* and the second being *Vital Parts*, who despite several personnel changes lasted long enough to back him on his 1980 album, *Barbeque King*, and to tour Italy and Germany in the same year.

After Hot Tuna split, neither Jack or Jorma's comments left much hope of a reconciliation. I had spoken with Casady in London shortly after SVT had gotten together and found him rather reluctant to talk about his days with Hot Tuna, and at the time he seemed to be intent on trying to forget about the connection with Hot Tuna as it was having an adverse effect on SVT's development. He simply cited the reason for the split as being 'boredom'. Jorma's own comments in part, echoed those of Jack. When I spoke with Jorma in 1981 and asked him what had brought about the demise of Hot Tuna, he said, "Basically it was getting stale." However, that was all a long time ago and things seem to have changed considerably since then, because sure enough Hot Tuna are back together again and they have already completed a month's worth of dates on the East Coast, with the promise of more to come. (New Year's Eve in N.Y.C.)

The new line-up of the band is Jack and Jorma plus the additional talents of guitarist/singer Michael Falzarano and Japanese drummer Shigemi Komiyama. These two had previously played together in a band called *The Phantoms*, and more recently Michael has been leading a San Francisco band called *Vauxhall*, who in fact, have been recording themselves. There is a possibility that they will have an album out soon. Judging from the material that Michael was performing with Hot Tuna, it is an album well worth looking out for.

Reunions are always a difficult thing to judge, because it is hard to live up to people's expectations and it's hard to translate the then into the now. Midway through the tour the

rumors were flying that the band were lukewarm rather than hot! So, it was with a certain amount of trepidation that I viewed their show in Boston in November. Sure, this was not Hot Tuna at its peak, but it was certainly not a nostalgia trip. Jack and Jorma are both far too accomplished musically to fall into that trap. The addition of Michael Falzarano has certainly added a new dimension to the band's sound with his fine singing and songwriting abilities and Shigemi has turned out to be more than a competent drummer. Jack was a little disappointing in that he seemed to be content with playing a more basic style of bass. Gone were his once imaginative "lead-like" bass runs, but Jack explained to me that this was intentional and more suited to the band's current sound. Jorma was as sharp as ever on lead guitar. He still has few peers in the rock world.

Overall, the tour was quite successful. There was enough of a mixture of old and new to make it relevant today and to satisfy most people. Remember, it was originality and experimentation that made these guys so good in the first place, so perhaps it would help if the audiences were a little more open-minded and accepted the band for what they are now. Maybe then, Kaukonen and company would really show us what they are capable of.

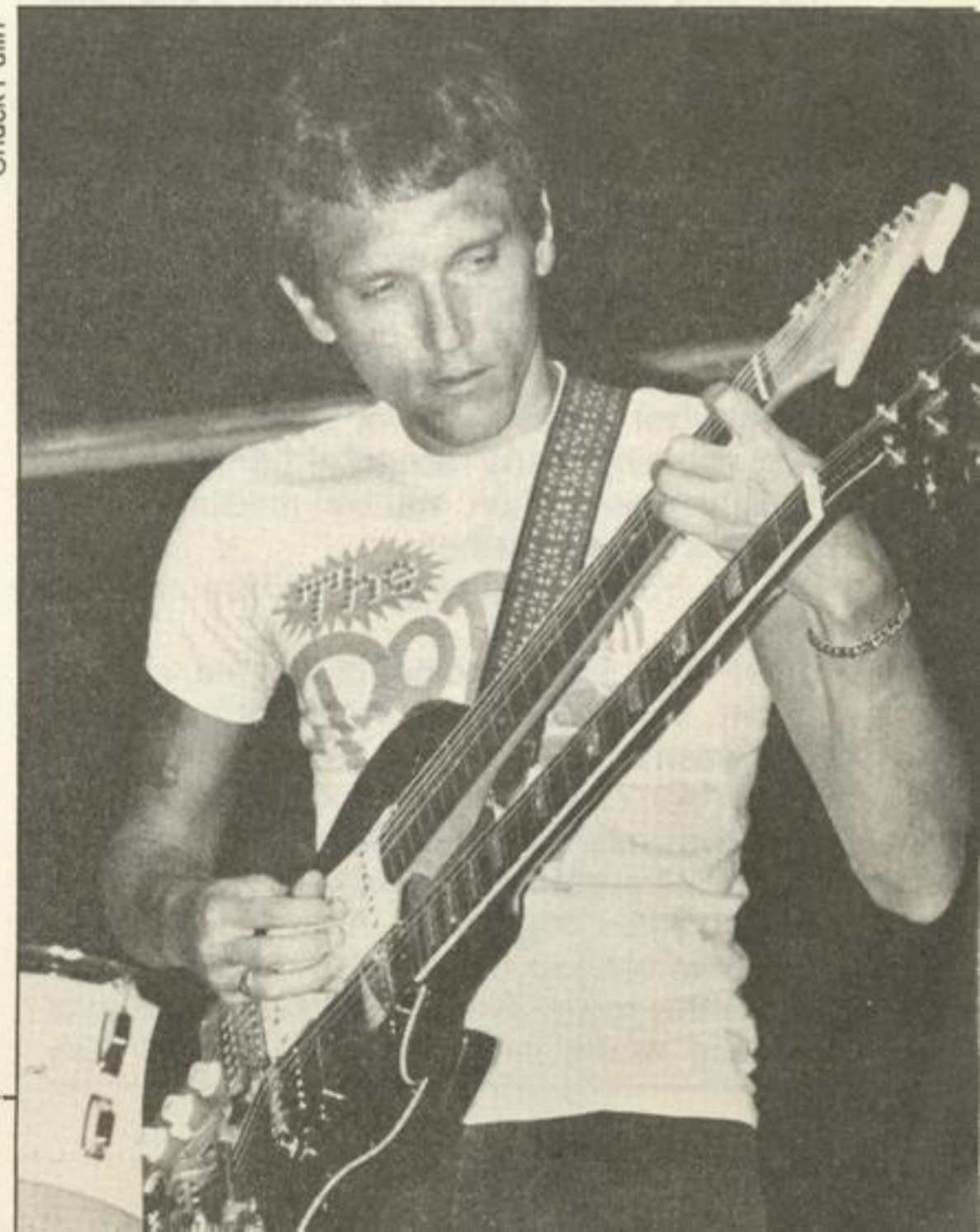
Relix: Are you currently doing any recording?

Jorma: I am doing an album for a friend of mine named Tom Buckner. He is a jazz singer and he has a small label called Arch Records out in Berkeley, California. It is a very small label and they do jazz and all kinds of weird stuff. They have some real nifty equipment and some excellent pressing facilities, so it should be a real audiophile record.

I was working on a "solo" album, but that has mutated considerably. The album is now being recorded by me, Michael (Falzarano), a keyboard player named Jerry Long and a mysterious feminine vocalist, who shall remain nameless at the moment. We are going to continue working on the album as soon as we get home. I don't know how long it's going to take. It's one of those artistically ideal situations, because we can take as long as we want and we can do whatever we want. There are no deadlines or restrictions, except to make it sound good. I am going to be putting some of my own money into moving up to 2 inch and automating into 48 track for mixing and stuff. I don't know how long it's going to take, but we

Chester Simpson

Chuck Pullin



JORMA in 1973



Bob Minkin

have a free hand and it's going to be good. Hot Tuna is not planning to record.

Relix: How did this tour and reunion come about?

Jorma: The big Hot Tuna reunion! Well, it sort of happened by accident. If you can believe this, and you'd better believe this because it's true—it was mentioned on MTV, and somebody called me and said Hot Tuna is getting together. I said, "Yeah, yeah, yeah." Then, just by coincidence, Jack dropped by. I immediately blamed him for it, but no, it wasn't true. So, we just laughed about it, and then a couple of weeks later this agent that has been booking me started saying, "Gee, you know maybe you ought to think about doing some playing with Jack," because he had heard that we had been talking together and I thought why not. The tour seemed feasible. It's not really music dominated and it's not a financially dominated thing. Everyone gets along good and that's the most important thing. So, we are functioning and having a few laughs, playing some music and waiting to get home and do some other things.

Relix: Where did you meet Michael, and how do you find it playing with another guitarist in the band?

Jorma: Michael and I have been friends for a real long time, but we have only been playing together for a little over a year. Up until now, we had never worked onstage together. When he's not doing something and I'm not doing something we must play four or five hours a day together. And when we sit down and think about it, some of the stuff we do together makes the stuff we are doing onstage sound like bubblegum. Michael is in a band called Vauxhall and we haven't discussed anything beyond this immediate thing, so we don't know what will happen. He may decide to continue with Vauxhall or we may do something else together . . . who knows! Having another guitarist in the band gives me plenty of room to go wild!

Relix: What kind of set-up have you been using onstage?

Jorma: It's pretty much the set-up you are familiar with, like when I have been doing the solo gigs. I just have some extra guitars including a nice black Gibson Les Paul. (Jorma's set-up includes a whole battery of different guitars including two Violette-Citron guitars, one of which is a baritone model, which is a fifth below the sound of a normal guitar and it has a really incredible sound. Jorma plays all his guitars through a Roland Stereo Chorus and a Yamaha 1010 analog delay, which he in turn

couples with a vast array of electronic distortion gadgets.)

Relix: Have you noticed any significant differences in the audiences on this tour? You certainly seem to be attracting a young crowd.

Jorma: Yes, we do get a young crowd. I like this. Honestly, I have no idea where some of these people even heard of what we did. I can't imagine they could have heard the records, or if they did hear the records, that it would have interested them in hearing what we do now. I really don't know. It really is a peculiar phenomenon.

Relix: I wonder if it's because in some ways you still represent that sixties psychedelic era.

Jorma: There is that too. There's this idiotic sixties nostalgia going around. There are a lot of reunion bands that are real reunion bands. You see, when we decided to do this thing I didn't even want to call it Hot Tuna, and we did it for the obvious reason, because the name's worth money.

Relix: What happened with Vital Parts?

Jorma: Personalities!

Relix: Before Vital Parts, you had another band called White Gland with Bob Steeler on drums. Who was the bass player?

Jorma: That was Denny DeGorio. He went to Italy with me last year. (Jorma did a solo tour of Italy and was backed on the closing of the show by Denny when they would play a few numbers from *Barbecue King*, including a very interesting arrangement of "A Man For All Seasons" a.k.a. "Junkies on Angel Dust." In fact, Jorma jammed on a number of occasions with an Italian singer/guitarist named Guido Toffoletti. Guido was the opening act on the tour!). Danny O'Brian who was the drummer in The Avengers in San Francisco whenever they were together, five or six years ago was the drummer in White Gland. The band kind of died when Danny went off to play with Joanie Jett in England. He was playing with her for six or seven months.

Relix: How well did *Barbecue King* do? I thought it was really good, very diverse.

Jorma: I have no idea! When it started out it was getting a lot of airplay, which really surprised me. But I was living in Germany at the time and by the time I got back it was dead. It was kind of bizarre. I wasn't totally satisfied with it. There were certain aspects of the sound that I didn't like.

Relix: Do you still play 12 string guitar at all?

Jorma: No. I hocked it. I don't like the 12 string that much. It's too hard to keep in tune.

Relix: I remember that you said it originally set

your playing back a couple of years when you first joined the Airplane.

Jorma: Yes. But it probably wouldn't do that now. It was really because I was just learning to play electric guitar when I first joined the Airplane.

Relix: Didn't you used to have a weird double neck guitar with two six strings on it, a Gibson and a Fender?

Jorma: Yes, I did at one time, but I don't have it anymore. It was made for me by Rick Turner at Alembic. It was a very odd guitar.

Relix: Do you ever do sessions for other people? I know you played on a couple of Grace Slick and Paul Kantner's solo things and you were on David Crosby's album, *If I Could Only Remember My Name*.

Jorma: No, but I am available. I don't know why no one asks me. I can even read music!

Relix: *Double Dose* is an excellent album. However, a lot of the songs seem to be considerably shorter than you normally play them. Why was this? Did you deliberately shorten them?

Jorma: No. They were massively trimmed. You see that album was massively edited. Felix (Pappalardi) produced the final mix and this guy named Ray Stevens had something to do with it. Peter Frampton came along and did the recording, and he did a really good job. The tunes were immensely long. That album was cut by at least two-thirds. Felix was there snipping away. I think the recording cost about \$5,000 and the mixing about \$75,000!

Relix: I remember in the late sixties reading that Jimi Hendrix said that he liked to jam with the people from Jefferson Airplane. Did you jam with him at all?

Jorma: Yes I did. I jammed with all those people.

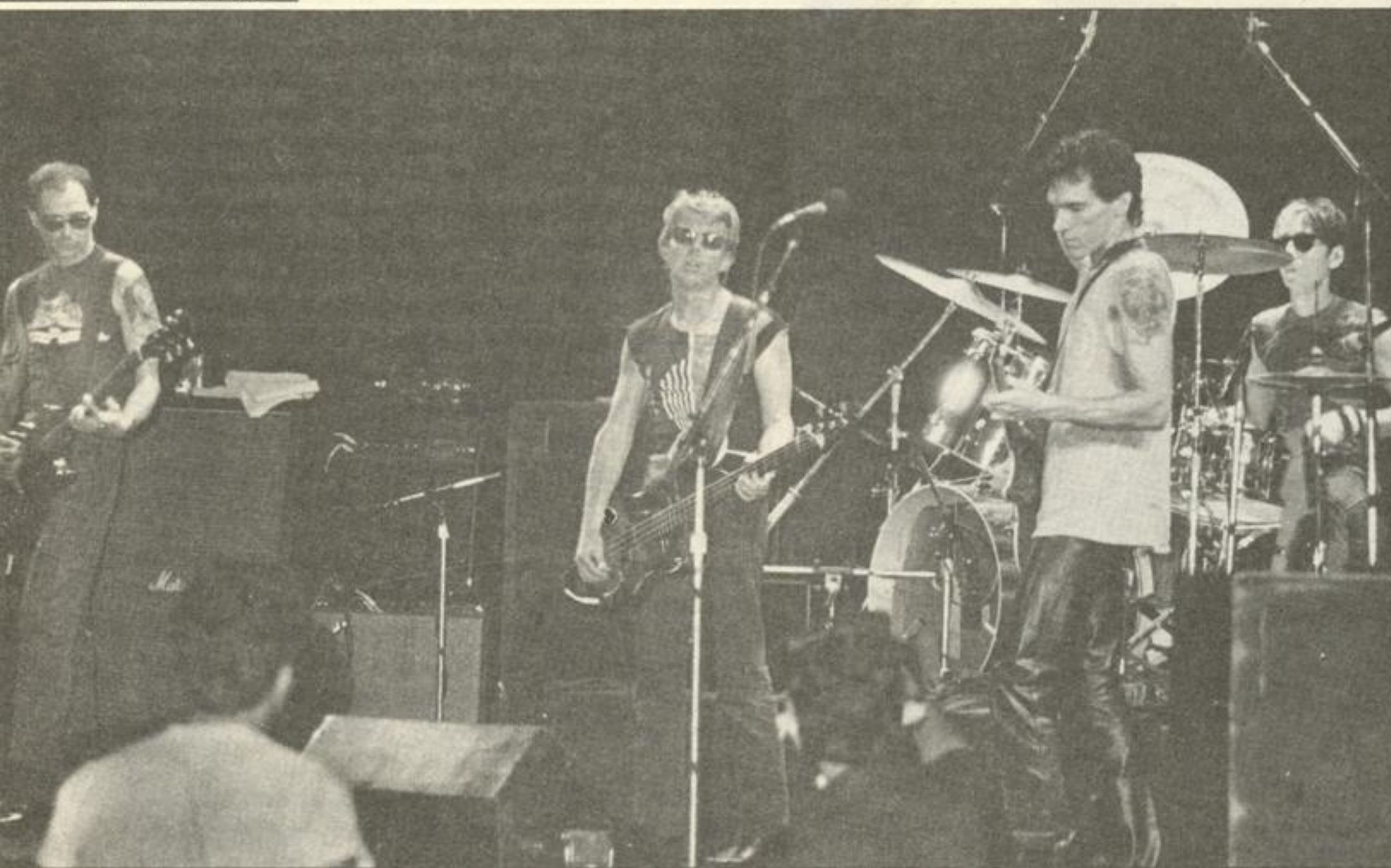
Relix: Who are your favorite guitar players?

Jorma: Well, back then, of the contemporary white guitar players I liked Eric Clapton. I liked his approach. Hendrix was a good guitar player, but I didn't relate to what he was doing so much then. But of the black guys I really liked Buddy Guy. He influenced my electric playing a lot although you probably wouldn't notice it from the way I play.

Relix: What about Mike Bloomfield?

Jorma: Well, Mike was actually the first person I ever heard playing really hot electric guitar. He was a great guitar player, but his style was a little too verbose for what I was into at the time.





HOT TUNA at the Capitol, NJ—10/8/83

Bob Minkin

I was into a little more spartial type things when I first went back to San Francisco. I also like John Hammond. He does Robert Johnson stuff real well.

Relix: Over the last couple of years you seem to have been playing with a lot of younger musicians. What sort of stuff do you listen to yourself? Is it mostly new music?

Jorma: Yes, I listen to a lot of new stuff. Mostly I have been listening to European stuff, because I have spent part of the past few years living there for part of the year. Have you heard of the German band called Spliff?

Relix: No, I haven't (Note: I have now, they have an album out on Columbia in the USA as well).

Jorma: It was Nina Hagen's band. She is in L.A. doing whatever she is doing and these guys have a studio in Berlin and they made an album. It's on German Columbia and it is just fantastic. I have been listening to them a lot, as well as some other German bands.

Relix: I notice that you have been playing more slide guitar over the past few years.

Jorma: Yes, but I don't really play slide guitar. I just play a couple of songs with the slide, "Killing Time in the Crystal City," and occasionally I do "Hot Jelly Roll Blues" with a slide. It's just fun to do and I really like the sound of it. When I was with the Vital Parts guys and I did that European tour in 1981, I had a 1930 something . . . Rickenbacker lap steel, and the thing had an unbelievable sound. Anyway, I fixed it up so I could play it standing up like a dobro and we worked out "I Am The Light Of This World" and it seemed incredible. I'll probably have to do that again some time.

Relix: Do you do most of your writing on the acoustic guitar? A lot of the songs that you originally did as electric numbers with Hot Tuna seemed to adapt fairly nicely for your solo shows.

Jorma: Yes, usually because that is what is around. I have been working on a lot lately with the electrics and all the electronic gadgets that you see me with on stage as well as some others that I have at home.

Relix: Around the time that Hot Tuna split you were beginning to play more acoustic. Did that have anything to do with the band breaking up? Do you prefer playing acoustic?

Jorma: Yes, I was playing more acoustic at the time, but I only prefer playing acoustic when I don't have a band.

Relix: Is there any unreleased Hot Tuna material that could be released as a compilation album or something?

Jorma: Well, there are probably a few exotic things, but not much. I think they pretty much got everything.

Relix: Your brother Peter made an album for Grunt and he went a bit overboard with the production, although there are some nice things on it, but overall it sounds cluttered.

Jorma: My brother is a funny guy. He has lots of technique and he plays a lot of instruments real well. I am schizophrenic enough in the world about playing one instrument real well, so I just play the guitar. But my brother plays guitar, bass, drums, mandolin and all that, and he just went nuts with the production.

Relix: Didn't you first start off playing the piano?

Jorma: Yes, but that was when I was just a kid. I never really learned how to play.

Relix: Your brother was a member of one of the very earliest line-ups of Hot Tuna, wasn't he? And he played with the band on those dates in Hawaii back in 1969. I've heard some tapes from the Matrix club also in 1969 and there is a second guitarist playing with you then. Most of the stuff was instrumental. Would that have been Peter?

Jorma: Yes, I think it could well have been. Marty was in the band too, but that was a short-lived thing. You know how it is working with family.

Relix: Who was the sax player that played with you at the Paladium back in 1977?

Jorma: The guy's name is Bob Roberts and he is a tattooist and he sometimes plays the saxophone. He lives in Los Angeles.

Relix: I remember reading somewhere that you had coaxed Jack into singing one night at a Hot Tuna show and that you got Grace Slick to start singing from an off-stage microphone just as Jack was about to sing. Is that right?

Jorma: Well! I didn't get Grace to sing. We couldn't stop her from singing! I remember that night, I think it was at the Paladium and she was a bit fucked up at the time, but you know that's Grace for you. Jack never wanted to sing. I don't why.

Relix: Going back over all your albums, what would you say is your favorite?

Jorma: Well, there are a bunch of songs on various albums that I like. I really like the first Hot Tuna album a lot, but as a complete work I would have to say *Quah*. I put a lot of time into that one.

Relix: Is there any possibility that you would do another album similar to *Quah*, just acoustic?

Jorma: Eventually I will do another one, but it takes time to get it together, *Quah* was mostly songs that I had known for a long time and had wanted to record for a long time.

Relix: I read earlier this year that Marty Balin said he would like to get Jefferson Airplane back together for a reunion, but he thought you wouldn't do it because you're too much of a purist!

Jorma: Definitely no. I think he is right (Jorma muses to himself for a while over the thought of working with Marty again.)

At present, Jorma is anxious to get back to working on his next album, which is long overdue. I think it will be a very interesting record when it finally comes out. In the meantime Hot Tuna will be touring more, and sheer common sense would indicate that the band will have improved for the next tour, purely because they will have had longer to get to know each other musically, and who knows, maybe they will change their minds and record a live album at some point if the music warrants such a document.

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| 7. Smokestack Lightning | 38. Bertha | 70. Doin' That Rag |
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| 10. Truckin' | 41. Big Boss Man | 73. Samson & Delilah |
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| 20. I'm a Hog for You | 51. Tennessee Jed | 83. Unbroken Chain |
| 21. Loose Lucy | 52. Born Cross Eyed | 84. Deal |
| 22. New Potatoe Caboose | 53. Crazy Fingers | 85. Cosmic Charlie |
| 23. Greatest Story Ever Told | 54. The Eleven | 86. Box of Rain |
| 24. Terrapin Flyer | 55. Turn on Your Lovelight | 87. Morning Dew |
| 25. Casey Jones | 56. Dupree's Diamond Blues | 88. Spider Gawd |
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| 27. It Takes A Lot to Laugh (It Takes A Train To Cry) | 58. Goin' Down the Road (Feeling Bad) | 90. Big River |
| 28. Dark Hollow | 59. Ship of Fools | 91. Wharf Rat |
| 29. Hangin' Boy Blues | 60. Row Jimmy, Row | 92. Dancin' in the Street |
| 30. The Faster We Go (The Rounder We Get) | 61. U.S. Blues | 93. Black Peter |
| 31. Dire Wolf | 62. Ripple | 94. Stealin' |
| | 63. Lost Sailor | 95. Bird Song |
| | | 96. Saint of Circumstance |
| | | 97. Golden Road |
| | | 98. High Time |
| | | 99. Lazy Lightning |
| | | 100. You Win Again |

GRATEFUL DEAD PHOTOS

COLOR PHOTOS

RED ROCKS, COLORADO
July 27, 28, 29 1982
C601 - Group Shot
*C602 - Lesh
*C603 - Garcia, Weir, Hart
C604 - View of Red Rocks

NY HILTON HOTEL
January 1979 (Candid)
*C820 - Garcia lighting up
*C821 - Phil laughing
*C822 - Bob smiling
*C823 - Kreutzman & Hart

KEYSTONE, BERKELEY
August 1981
C701 - Garcia, Full body
C702 - Garcia, Close up

WINTERLAND, SAN FRANCISCO
December 29, 30, 31, 1977
C002 - Garcia & Weir
*C003 - Lesh singing
C004 - Garcia & Weir
with balloons
C005 - Weir
*C006 - Garcia, Weir, Lesh

GARCIA BAND
FAIRFAX, CALIFORNIA
August 22, 1981
Lesh as Special Guest
C801 - Garcia
C802 - Lesh (Close up)
C803 - Garcia & Lesh
C804 - Lesh (Full body)
C805 - Lesh (Tuning up)

AMSTERDAM, HOLLAND
MELKWEG
October 15, 16, 1981
C120 - Garcia
C121 - Weir
C122 - Lesh
C123 - Lesh & Weir
*C124 - Kreutzman
*C125 - Garcia, Weir, Lesh

GARCIA BAND
ROSELAND
May 31, 1983
C920 - Garcia
C921 - Whole Band

RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL
New York City, October 1980
C110 - Whole Band (Acoustic)
C111 - Garcia & Lesh
(Acoustic)
C112 - Weir (Acoustic)

SOLO ACOUSTIC
NYC April 1982
*C950 - Garcia

BOBBY & THE MIDNIGHTS
February 1982
C850 - Weir
C851 - Weir & Cochran

THE SPECTRUM, PHILADELPHIA
April 25, 1983
C350 - Lesh
C351 - Weir & Kreutzman
C352 - Brent



BW2



BW12



C120



C804

HOT TUNA, 1977
*C101 - Jorma & Jack

HOT TUNA, 1983
C102 - Jorma & Jack

GARCIA BAND
ROSELAND, NYC
May 31, 1983
BW38 - Garcia
BW39 - Whole Band

BLACK & WHITE PHOTOS

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN
October 11, 1983
BW40 - Lesh & Weir (singing
together during St. Stephen)
BW41 - Lesh
BW42 - Lesh & Weir jamming
BW44 - Group Shot

WILLIAM & MARY UNIVERSITY,
VIRGINIA
April 16, 1978
BW35 - Garcia, Donna, Weir
(Unique double exposure)
*BW36 - Lesh (Candid)

GARCIA BAND
FAIRFAX, CALIFORNIA
August 1981
Lesh as Special Guest
BW21 - Garcia
BW22 - Lesh
BW23 - Garcia & Lesh

HOLLYWOOD, FLORIDA
November, 1980
BW5 - Weir
*BW29 - Garcia (Smiling)

SAVE THE WHALES BENEFIT
SAN FRANCISCO
August 12, 1977 (Outdoors)
BW12 - Garcia
BW27 - Garcia & Kahn

GARCIA BAND—1977
PALLADIUM, NYC
BW45 - Whole Band with Maria
Muldaur & Donna Godchaux

RED ROCKS AMPHITHEATER,
COLORADO August, 1979
BW1 - Whole Band
BW2 - Lesh
BW3 - Entire Stage
BW4 - Lesh & Weir
*BW30 - Lesh & Brent
*BW31 - Garcia

RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL 1980
BW8 - Group Acoustic
BW9 - Group Electric
BW10 - Garcia acoustic
BW11 - Garcia & Lesh acoustic
BW12 - Garcia & Lesh electric
BW13 - Weir & Lesh electric
BW32 - Garcia, Weir, Lesh

WINTERLAND, SAN FRANCISCO
December, 1977
BW7 - Garcia & Weir
*BW14 - Garcia
BW15 - Group Shot
*BW33 - Weir
BW46 - Garcia & Weir
(Unique Double Exposure)

THE MELKWEG, AMSTERDAM
October 1981
BW16 - Weir
BW18 - Garcia
BW19 - Double exposure of Weir
*BW34 - Garcia acoustic

CAPITOL THEATER, NEW JERSEY
November 1978
BW6 - Group Shot
BW20 - Garcia, Donna, Lesh

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IT'S ALIVE

RONNIE LANE'S APPEAL FOR A.R.M.S. Madison Square Garden New York City

It was something like the Yardbirds meet Led Zeppelin meet the Small Faces meet the Stones. But then again it was something else altogether.

It's not often that a large cast of megastars get together to support an ailing cohort and to aid a charity such as Action and Research for Multiple Sclerosis. But it's even rarer, perhaps, that the music gels into an exciting and coherent whole rather than a loosely structured, slapdash jam session. At the Garden, despite the presence of guitar icons Page, Beck and Clapton, the benefit for Ronnie Lane's cause never degenerated into directionless riffing or boogie overkill.

The performers at the A.R.M.S. show, which had also played London (with a few different performers), Dallas, San Francisco and Los Angeles before hitting New York, displayed an obvious respect for one another's talents and time on stage. No single musician dominated and rather than trying to outdo each other, the shortest-lived supergroup in history really did perform as a unit. And what a unit it was.

There was Kenney Jones, late of the Who, and Charlie Watts, Stone-faced rock of rhythm, on drums, with the flamboyant Ray Cooper (Elton John band) on all sorts of percussion. Cooper, looking something like the grandfather in *A Hard Day's Night*, indeed provided some of the evening's highlights—both musical and visual—jumping around like a madman, hitting anything in sight.

Rounding out the rhythm section during phase one of the long evening was Bill Wyman on bass, subdued as ever (though he actually sang a few background notes), while the guitar and vocal section was handled ably enough by one Eric Clapton, looking like a Wall Street businessman rather than one of the five most influential rock guitarists ever. Chris Stainton (of Joe Cocker fame) and James Hooker (of no particular fame) played the keys and Andy Fairweather Low, a talented guitarist (whose place on the program was secured only because his latest album—with the group Local Boys—was produced by the show's organizer Glyn Johns) filled it out.

Clapton was in admirable form, running through his more well known FM radio staples, "Lay Down Sally," "Cocaine," "Wonderful Tonight," etc. Rolling Stone Ron Wood joined in as the unannounced guest of the night, doing more cheerleading than guitar playing, while even sixth Stone Ian Stewart ambled on with no introduction to tinkle some ivories for a tune.

Joe Cocker, appearing healthier than he's looked in recorded history (number one records will do that to a fellow) relieved Clapton of the

Mitch Nochlin



Ronnie Lane

Jimmy Page

Ron Wood

Jeff Beck

Ray Cooper

frontman duties and scored perhaps the most impressive vocal performance of the night (not that the competition in that department was much), rendering moving versions of Dylan's "Watching The River Flow," Traffic's "Feelin' Alright," and his own mid-'70s smasheroo, "You Are So Beautiful." Ronnie Wood came back to play along on Dylan's "Seven Days," the only song ever to appear on both a Joe Cocker album and a Ron Wood album.

Phase two was Jeff Beck's, and because concert appearances by Beck, who looks the same as he did in 1965, are about as rare in New York as earthquakes, he received tumultuous applause simply for plugging in his axe. For fans of Beck's instrumental fusion, his set was undoubtedly orgasmic. But for those who aren't particularly impressed by guitar gymnastics without substantial songwriting behind them, Beck's share of the show was a bore. Backed by the utterly useless Jan Hammer on portable keyboards, bassist Fernando Saunders, and over-enthusiastic drummer Simon Phillips, with Fairweather Low jumping in for faceless vocals during the last few numbers, Beck performed "People Get Ready," "Goin' Down" and his own ancient theme song "Beck-Ola," dazzling the full house with the kind of fretwork they came to see.

Before the applause could die down, Jimmy Page replaced Beck to the most fervent and heartfelt ovation of the night. Page, of course, has remained somewhat of a mythical recluse since the demise of Led Zeppelin, and this was his first concert appearance since the death of Zep's John Bonham. For many in the audience to whom "Stairway To Heaven" is the teenaged equivalent to the "Star Spangled Banner," his appearance in itself was akin to the spectacle of Jesus walking on the water two hundred decades ago.

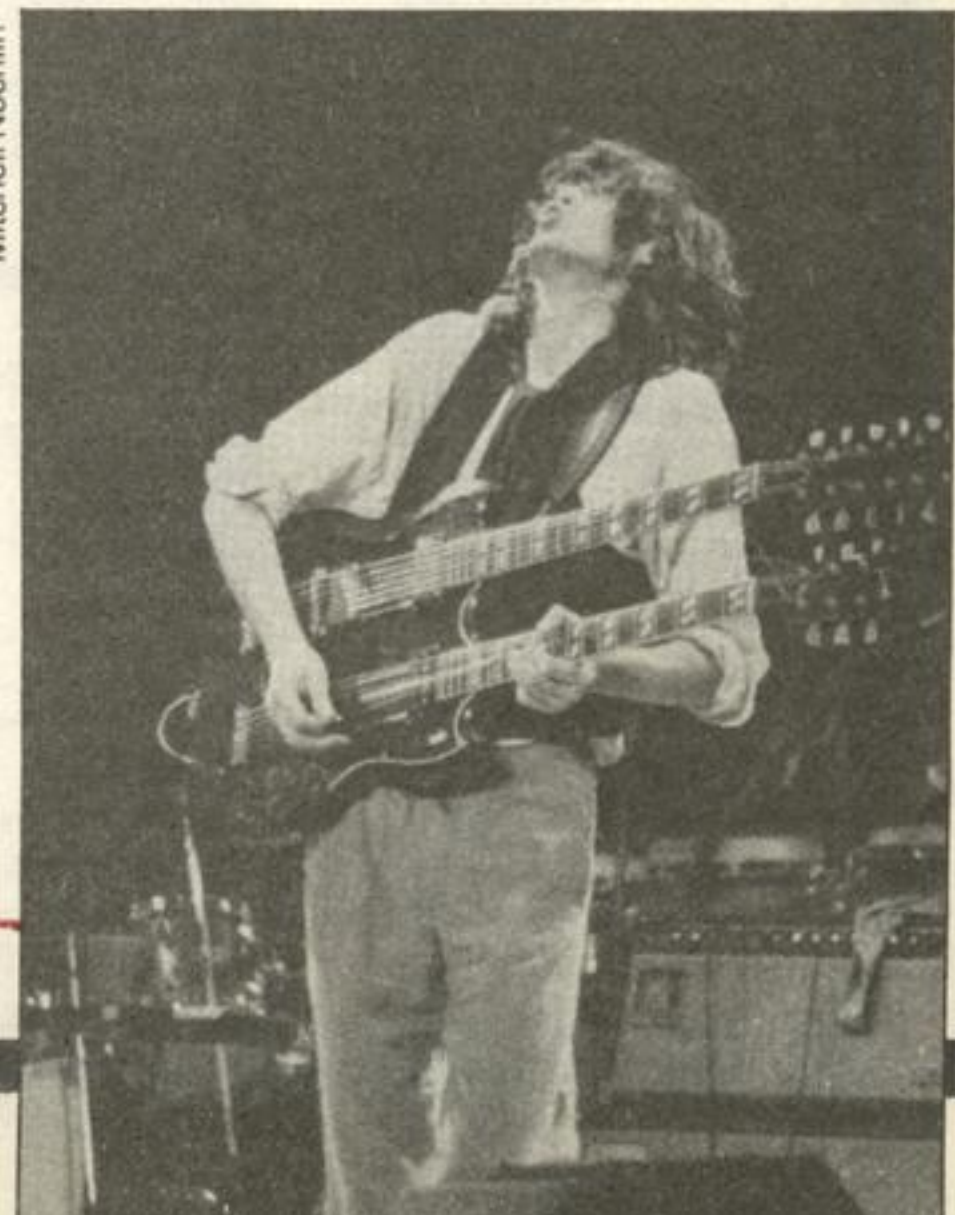
Page began his set by pulling out some kind of classical melody from his guitar, possibly from his recent soundtrack album *Death Wish*. He was truly in fine form on guitar, proving to any doubters that he hasn't lost his skill during his absence. Though he escaped into heavy metal cliches that might've sounded more fitting

coming from one of his thousands of disciples, there was no denying that Page is a master musician with a total command of rock and roll guitar technique. When he called out former Free/Bad Company singer Paul Rodgers to vocalize on a few songs, the act lost momentum, but when Page went to his trademark double-neck guitar and picked out the opening notes of "Stairway To Heaven," the rafters shook. He played the entire song instrumentally and Robert Plant was not missed by many from the sound of the rapturous ovation that followed.

For the grand finale, the multitude of Brits assembled and put it all together to the tune of "Layla," proving that there was life in the U.K. before Duran Duran. The all-star cast performed an energetic version with contributions from all the major participants. Looking at the stage and seeing such luminaries as Clapton, Beck, Page, Wyman, Watts, Jones, Cocker and ther rest, truly was some kind of stupefying experience. One doesn't see a bunch like that at the local club, does one? (And one couldn't help but think that the total worth of these stars probably outdid the bank accounts of some small countries!)

Not to be outdone, the true star of the show, Ronnie Lane, joined in for the closing, asking the Garden, "How do you like my friends?"

Mitchell Nochlin



JIMMY PAGE—"Stairway To Heaven"



Mano Saunders Bill Wyman Kenny Jones Simon Phillips Charlie Watts Bill Graham

They did, and they let him know it. Lane, who had to be helped to the microphone due to his crippling disease, offered first "April Fool," a song he performed with mate Pete Townshend on the duo's album together, and ended it all with Leadbelly's classic "Goodnight Irene." It had to be goodnight, because there was no way anyone could follow that.

—Jeff Tamarkin

THE TALKING HEADS Forest Hills Stadium New York

ON their most recent tour, the Talking Heads presented a perfect mixture of music, video and theatre. At Forest Hills Stadium their two and a half hour performance was incredibly well paced with each set containing its own builds, climaxes and surprises. This was no ordinary rock and roll show.

Before the show began, a surprising sight was a totally empty stage. When the lights went out, David Byrne entered with an acoustic guitar and sang "Psycho Killer." As he maniacally danced around the bare stage, the road crew wheeled out a bass amp, Tina Weymouth came out, and the duo performed "Heaven." This process continued for most of the first set until the entire nine piece band was assembled and rocking into "Burning Down the House."

The second set consisted mainly of music from *Remain in Light* and their latest album, *Speaking in Tongues*. A large video screen supplied background settings and showed silhouettes of the performers. During "This Must Be the Place," the stage became a livingroom (lamp and bookcase included) as Byrne sang his most beautiful lyric to date. As the set reached its peak and was apparently over, the Tom Tom Club (a band led by Chris Frantz and Tina Weymouth) came out and did a ten minute version of "Genius of Love" that had everybody dancing. When the stage was returned to the Heads, they were taking it home with Al Green's classic, "Take Me to the River."

Many of today's bands do not pull off live what they manufacture in the studio. The Talking Heads have shown that not only are they in a league of their own on vinyl, but live they are

equally as creative and exciting. This is no ordinary band.

—Errol Wander

KING SUNNY ADÉ AND HIS AFRICAN BEATS Greek Theatre Los Angeles, CA

The question on many lips this evening was would King Sunny Adé and his nineteen piece band be able to shake up the staid Greek Theatre as they had the rowdier Hollywood Palladium a few months before? The Nigerian superstar had offered up a feast of extraordinarily coordinated polyrhythms, graced with a delicate mesh of guitars and topped off with distinctly African melodies and chants and the gyrating dancers who filled the massive dancefloor ate it up, amazed at the outpouring of positive energy coming off the stage.

And yes, the King had a few tricks up his sleeve to get the crowd out of their seats at the Greek too. The intro was brilliant. A guitarist appeared onstage and began playing one funky riff. One at a time, the other band members trotted out and joined him, each playing a different part, until the entire ensemble of five



Mitch Nochin

vocalist/dancers and fourteen guitarists and percussionists was onstage, each contributing something different and complementary to the music. Incredible!

The orchestration of the African Beats was often mind (and body) boggling. Highlighting the instrumental section were the spare, high melodies coming from the steel guitar and the breathtaking, rhythmic accents of the talking drums. Always at the center of things was Adé: dancing, strumming, singing, grinning, taking brief leads, cueing the different tunes and ceaselessly inspiring the band.

But he didn't get the people—a wide cross-section of LA music lovers—up on their feet right away. Response was positive right from the start but it wasn't till one-third of the way through his set, when he placed his best-known numbers, "Ja Funmi," and "Synchro System," back to back, that the music pulled the people up.

And it's only when you move with this music that you get its full impact. A subtle crossrhythm or a sudden unexpected undertow of momentum can make the music soar into another realm altogether and if you're dancing with it, you can feel yourself soaring with it. And it wasn't just me; as two such numbers concluded, large portions of the audience erupted with spontaneous yells of exultation. This wasn't just great music, it was magic.

After it was all over, we were once again left with feelings of joy and amazement. The values of cooperation, peace and love, missing as creative forces in most American music for some time now, were shown to be alive and well in Nigeria. They also come through on Adé's Mango albums—but for the magic, see the man and his band in the flesh.

—Michael Davis

THE B-52's The Ritz

WITH their debut album in 1979, the B-52's established themselves as a unique and vital band. Their sound contained the rawness of punk and the dancability of new wave, with their own zaniness thrown in. By 1982, the band was collaborating with David Byrne and developing a more sophisticated sound, synthesizers, horns and percussion were now creating countermelodies and polyrhythms against the already extravagant vocals. Their concerts, however, retained the hard edge of their original sound.

Until now, that is. On their current tour, the B-52's have become victims of techno-pop. Their set at the Ritz began hot. Old classics like "Strobe Light" and "Planet Claire" had everybody rocking. At the midway point of the set, Keith Strickland left his drum set and a synth-drum track was piped in. The band no longer sounded live, and the crowd's enthusiasm was obviously dulled. During "Queen of Las Vegas" the tape accidentally shut off, leaving the band confused and looking foolish. As the set was ending, Strickland returned to the drums and the band finished on a high note with "Private Idaho" and "Rock Lobster."

When a band expands its sound in the studio, it will inevitably face the problem of what to do about live concerts. It can choose to retain its old sound (like the Clash), increase its size (like the Talking Heads), or not perform live at all (like the Beatles). The choice the B-52's made was a cop out and an injustice to the crowds that filled the Ritz for four nights.

—Errol Wander

Sunny Adé

VITAL VINYL

BOB DYLAN

BOB DYLAN

Infidels (Columbia)

BY now you've undoubtedly heard the good news about this one—*Infidels* being the best Dylan LP in many a moon and all. Well, you can believe the hail of sanctimonious praise because this time they're right. *Infidels* is rife with clever song structures, hooky straight-ahead rockers, passionate vocalizing and keen lyrical insight. For my money, every tune here is a bonafide winner.

Consider an ace musical assemblage that includes the likes of ex-Rolling Stone guitarist Mick Taylor, Dire Straits axe-man Mark Knopfler and the famed rhythm team of Sly Dunbar and Robbie Shakespeare. You know you're in for a treat right from the LP's opening track, "Jokerman." With its steady, fluid organ hum, melodic guitar fills and methodical drum whack, "Jokerman" is a sparkling gem-of-a-tune with a melody that grabs and holds. Ditto the sheer understated melodicism of "Sweetheart Like You" and "I And I."

When Dylan cranks up the volume the results are no less gratifying. "Union Sundown," a rousing denouncement of capitalism ("Well it's sundown on the union/And what's made in the USA/Sure was a good idea/Until greed got in the way"), is an undeniably catchy guitar-driven workout. Even better is "Neighborhood Bully" wherein Dylan casts Israel as a pugnacious modern-day Goliath who's "criticized and condemned for being alive" and "always on trial for just being born," both obvious references to that country's 1948 eradication of Palestine and the virulence of the anti-Zionist vendetta that followed.

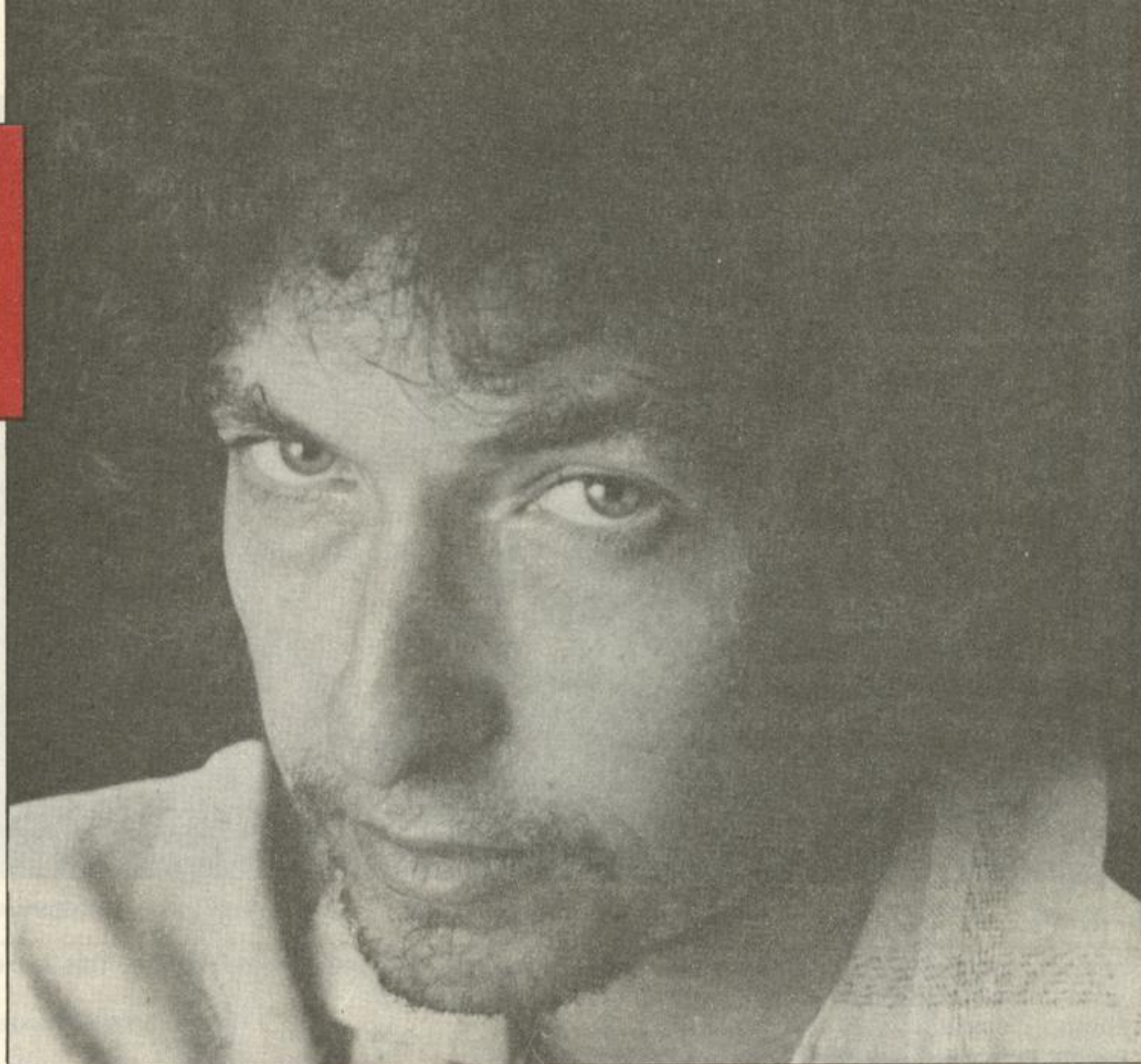
From the mournful introspection of "License To Kill" to the simple love plaint "Don't Fall Apart On Me Tonight," Dylan has fashioned one terrific LP. —Tierney Smith

THE DOORS Alive She Cried (Elektra)

AFTER mentioning that yes, this new live Doors LP effectively captures many aspects of the band's music, what can I say? I mean, there are at least three books on them currently available; what can I add in a few paragraphs? So those of you desiring more info on these late '60's sensations can go to your local bookstore; I'll concentrate on the vinyl here.

Since this project has been in the works for literally years, it's nice that it turned out so well. The sound quality is fine and so are the performances. The band is tight when cohesive power is called for—for instance, on "You Make Me Real" and "Love Me Two Times"—and loosely together when a more spacious approach is appropriate—on "Moonlight Drive" and "Texas Radio & The Big Beat."

The improvisational strengths of the group are showcased especially well. Manzarek's



"Light My Fire" organ solo strays somewhat from the recorded version, but it's Krieger who really comes through instrumentally, offering tasty fills in between Morrison's lines and creating eerie sounds to help evoke an aura of mystery. His animal noises on the "Horse Latitudes" section of "Moonlight Drive" can be considered a forerunner of Adrian Belew's current wild-animal-park-after-dark approach. Morrison too, extemporizes, particularly on this version of "Gloria"—and his monologue is both an expression of unbridled lust and a crack-up to boot. Jim did have a sense of humor.

Morrison's charisma shines through as well. The ex-chemically-crazed UCLA film student also had roots in the deep South and shared something intangible with the rock 'n' rollers of a previous generation like Jerry Lee Lewis and

Elvis Presley. In any event, the little girls did—and some still do—understand.

—Michael Davis

MICKEY HART Dafös (Reference Recordings)

(or Cody's Corner—a common folks review of Dafös)

I'M part owner of a parakeet, Cody, The Commander, with very discriminating musical taste. Thus any new album or tape, however acquired, is put to the Cody Acid Test. His behavior generally reflects our somewhat more carefully formed opinions.

For example, Frank Zappa drives Cody crazy. He screams in protest, his behavior becomes parakeet psychotic. He behaves like-



RAY MANZAREK

JIM MORRISON ROBBIE KRIEGER

JOHN DENSMORE



wise to Nugent, and Zeppelin, and other "real rockers." On the other hand, Cody jams to the Dead. He dances on his perch, swings on his swing, twitters, tweets, and plays his bell. Very often he fills in passages with seeming insight, as though the music plays him. He behaves likewise to Cooder, Cale, Clapton, and even the Clash. Other music he merely ignores. This often includes classical compositions and what he apparently considers inoffensive, but not moving, rock-n-roll.

Before reviewing *Dafos*, I'd like to explain its acquisition. We acquired it because advertisement works in America. Prior to the advertisement in *Relix*, neither Reference Recording nor Prof. Keith Johnson meant anything to me.

However, since the acquisition of *Dafos*, RR and Keith Johnson are synonymous with clean music on vinyl. I'm certainly no expert, but I do know that this album is the cleanest recording in a somewhat extensive album collection. The recording is awesome.

Cody really doesn't care about the cleanliness of a record, though. His opinion is based on music alone. From the first strains of the woodwinds in "Dry Sands of the Desert" to the last gong on "Passage," Cody sways and bobs, twitters, tweets, and occasionally takes time out to snack. His approval is unconditional. He likes it. And my more carefully considered opinion?

I like it, too. *Dafos* has reinforced many of my notions about Mickey Hart. I've always considered him a percussive virtuoso, and like the Cheshire cat, quite mad. His compositions are unique and well executed. The rhythms, though not familiar, are appealing to the imagination. The music evokes images of brown skins, jungle trees, bon fires. It induces a frantic peacefulness. The sound is neither Latino, nor Indian, African or Western but a universal percussiveness.

The myriad of percussive sounds, which are undoubtedly favorably reproduced by the recording, are played with sincerity. There is a liveness to it, a crispness, a freshness, a very realness, if you will.

Airto again, as in *The Apocalypse Now* sessions, showcases his percussive genius in composition and execution. The other musicians are equally talented, though virtually unknown to me. My loss, I'm sure. Their part can only be appreciated as part of a very quality whole.

In conclusion, if you have seventeen bucks to invest in an adventurous fashion, do so in *Dafos*. If you call in your order, RR will volunteer to send you their catalogue. I think that you'll be pleased, not only with Mickey Hart's performance (there's even a piece, "The Gates of *Dafos*," which features Mickey alone on the Beast), but with the performances of all the artists. If you don't know Reference Recording, Ltd., as I didn't, I know you'll be pleased with the quality sound of the product. And if you have a musically discriminating parakeet, as we have, I think that you'll find *Dafos* passes the most stringent bird acid test.

—Jo Ellen Miller

THE ROLLING STONES Undercover (Rolling Stones)

STANDING head and shoulders above much of the Stones' mid-to-late 70's musical output, *Undercover* easily ranks as the finest of the band's post-Mick Taylor LPs. Yep, better than *Tattoo You* and certainly far superior to *Emotional Rescue* and the

equally dreadful (and disgustingly overrated) *Some Girls*.

Undercover starts off with a bang, its title track a heavily percussive romp featuring Bill Wyman's funky, pulsating bass lines and some jagged bursts of rhythm guitar topped by Mick Jagger's on-the-edge-of-desperation vocals. If "Undercover" inspires images of onrushing turbulence, it may well be more a reaction to the group's riveting (and glaringly violent) video than the song's actual lyrical content.

In either case, "Undercover" sets the tone for the entire LP where at times the Stones would appear to be trying to out-gross the competition. This is particularly true of "Too Much Blood" wherein Jagger recites a gory tale of one man who literally made diced meat of his unfortunate girlfriend. Musically the lightly percussive "Blood," with its sweet, melodic guitar runs and upbeat trumpets, is one of the LP's highlights, proving that the Stones are, more often than not, at their best when they're not aiming for decibel overkill.

The Stones aren't above borrowing from their own back pages when the mood strikes them. "Too Tough" and "It Must Be Hell" offer rhythm guitar hooks lifted directly from "Jumpin' Jack Flash" and "Soul Survivor," respectively. Whether these guys are suffering from a scarcity of original ideas or simply playing the sly jokester is anyone's guess.

What really counts, though, is that from the sheer catchiness of "All The Way down" to the bopping pop/rock of "Wanna Hold You" (the latter featuring Keith Richards on lead vocals), *Undercover* offers plenty of good reasons to guarantee heavy rotation on stereos from coast to coast.

—Tierney Smith

STEVIE RAY VAUGHN AND DOUBLE TROUBLE Texas Flood (Epic)

ON "Texas Flood," Stevie Ray Vaughn, who first came to the public's attention by playing a fierce lead guitar on David Bowie's "Let's Dance" album, has taken a traditional blues base and added his own brand of unpredictable guitar playing.

As rock's newest guitar hero, Vaughn is a raucous singer who prefers to let his 1959 Fender Stratocaster do the talking. And talk it does.

Borrowing generously from fellow Texans T-Bone Walker and Charlie Christian, Vaughn delivers in a style that's lean, pure and to the point. Vaughn is a veteran of countless Texas juke joints where blues and country, played with punch and drive, are THE musical styles.

Vaughn has made his debut under the auspices of a legendary producer, John Hammond, whose discoveries have included Billie Holiday, Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen. Hammond's production is simple and uncluttered, at all times complementing the music without complicating it.

Backed by Chris "Whipper" Layton on drums and Tommy Shannon on bass, Vaughn has released a live-in-studio album of exceptional blues offerings.

From covering the Parliaments' "Testify" and Howlin' Wolfs' "Tell Me," to playing a rave-up version of his own "Rude Mood," Vaughn feels completely free to experiment with and eventually venture beyond his Texas blues base.

Other highlights include "Lenny," a delicate ballad written for his wife and a Buddy Guy reworking of "Mary Had A Little Lamb".

He is, by his own admission, an adequate blues singer, but that doesn't keep him from being the best blues guitarist this side of Albert Collins. Vaughn has given new life to the blues guitar and has given us a break from the monotone vocals and synthesizers which jam today's radio stations.

—Steve Ryan

MERL SAUNDERS San Francisco After Dark (Sumertone)

UNDoubtedly the majority of *Relix's* readers will associate the name of Merl Saunders with that of Jerry Garcia. During the early '70s Saunders, Garcia, bassist John Kahn and assorted drummers and other musicians, played countless gigs and recorded a handful of soulful albums that showed Dead Heads another side of the GD guitarist's talents. But Merl Saunders was playing around long before he met Garcia and hasn't rested on his laurels since they went their separate ways either. And his keyboard playing is as fine as ever.

Granted, some of *San Francisco After Dark*, on an independent label from San Fran, consists of standard jazz fusion and lacks the spark that fired up the better Saunders-Garcia collaborations. But those cuts that do work here display sophistication and chops from Saunders and his sidemen. Saunders has added various synths to this keyboard bank, and while it is still his organ work which draws the most praise, he certainly knows his way around the modern electronic keys as well. When he allows himself to stretch out with his bandmates, as he does on the cover of the Meters' "Sissy Strut," there's some exciting music going on.

The title cut puts Saunders into a contemporary R&B frame with the dynamic lead vocals of Vicki Randle soaring over the funky arrangement. Side two's "Left Out In The Cold" is a gem (with Paul Butterfield adding harp), and the closing ballad, "People Make The World Go Around," gives Merl's son Tony on bass (as he is on most of the LP) a chance to strut awhile and showcases the raucous percussion of Jordan Armantha. (Sumertone—P.O. Box 22184, S.F., CA 94122)

—Jeff Tamarkin

ADAM ANT Strip (Epic)

"STRIP's chorus repeats the lines, "We're just following ancient history/If I strip for you will you strip for me?" Coincidentally or not, Adam Ant's career parallels the first line while this album's theme of seduction matches the second.

By ancient history, I mean the traditional show-biz technique of gaining attention by creating a distinctive, flashy style and then when you've ridden it as far as you can go, ditch it and use whatever skills and contacts you've acquired to move to the mainstream of whatever field you're involved in. In Adam's case, he came up with a post-punk glam-rock approach that combined audacious incongruities both visually (Indian war paint and pirate costumes) and musically (Burundi-derived drum patterns and post-Duane Eddy guitar licks). After two albums which gained him a massive following in England and a moderate one over here, he washed off most of his makeup and broke up his Adam And The Ants band, retaining only his right hand man, guitarist/co-songwriter/co-producer Marco

Pirroni. His *Friend or Foe* LP began his move to a more traditional stance and with *Strip*, he embraces the pop mainstream with seemingly no reservations.

And what better place to explore this new (for him) direction than Polar Studios in Stockholm, home of Europop superstars Abba? Except for the two tracks produced by Phil Collins where the drums dominate, the primary instrumental presence here is that of sometime-Abba-orchestrator Rutger Gunnarsson; Adam's evidently shelved the Burundi beats as he has last year's wardrobe. Combined with his courtly sex songs, which are direct without being crude, the results sound like what would probably happen if you took Freddie Mercury out of Queen and put him in front of Abba's backing band. Except Adam's cheekbones are "better;" this is teen idol fluff stuff we're dealing with here and although you could do worse in this field than succumb to the Antman's romantic fantasies, I doubt many people out of their teens will be particularly interested in Adam's music. His bod, maybe, but his music? Doubtful.

—Michael Davis

CULTURE CLUB
Colour By Numbers
(Virgin/Epic)

WITH his disarmingly unconventional appearance, Boy George may have been one of the more visible figures in the '83 musical picture, but judging by what really counts—namely his artistic output—you couldn't call the boy just another pretty face. The proof's in the grooves.

Those enamored of *Kissing To Be Clever*, the Club's debut, won't be disappointed by this one. On the contrary, with *Colour By Numbers*, Culture Club has returned with an even sturdier collection of tunes. Arrangement-wise, little has changed save for some decidedly stronger hooks and more ingenious melodies. George's soulful vocals are richly varied as always, suffused with a refreshing warmth and open friendliness.

Colour's ten tunes are an engaging aural pastiche comprised of Roy Hay's sweetly melodic guitar fills, bright splashes of keyboard coloring, floating sax lines, the understated John Moss/Mickey Craig rhythm section and fervent, emotionally charged backing vocals courtesy of Helen Terry. Good stuff all around, and there's just enough variety to keep things interesting from smooth, midtempo pop ("Changing Every Day," "Karma Chameleon," "Stormkeeper," "Mister Man") and propulsive, upbeat soul ("Church Of The Poison Mind," "Miss Me Blind") to a few choice ballads ("That's The Way [I'm Only Trying To Help You]," "Victims").

Nothing profound here, mind you. Boy George and Co. aren't telling us anything lyricwise that we haven't heard elsewhere numerous times before. They only manage to make you feel as though you're hearing it all for the first time.

—Tierney Smith

THE ENGLISH BEAT
What Is Beat?
(IRS)

BEING that the Beat has undergone a major personnel change—lead singers Dave Wakeling and Ranking Roger have gone on to form General Public—now seems as good a time as any for IRS to release a "best of"-type collection of the band's brightest moments. *What Is Beat?* offers a mixture of live cuts ("Get A Job," the Thatcher diatribe "Stand Down Margaret"), a few UK singles previously unavailable on any Beat LP ("Hit It," "What's Your Best Thing," "Too Nice To Talk To") plus lots of all-around great tunes culled from the band's three studio LPs.

What Is Beat? opens with "Mirror In The Bathroom," that invigorating slice of divine reggae/pop boasting a driving sax, a killer hook and Dave Wakeling's distinctive vocals delivering a creepy tale of psychosis, all adding up to arguably the Beat's finest hour. From the staccato rhythm guitar that powers the quirky "Twist And Crawl" to the lazy Caribbean shuffle "Doors Of Your Heart," *What Is Beat?* offers an

array of tuneful delights—listen to the likes of "Best Friend" and "Save It For Later," with their irresistibly melodic guitar jangle, and you're bound to think you died and went to pure pop heaven. Equally admirable is the eternally positive slant of the band's lyrical output, or as Ranking Roger tells us in "Doors Of Your Heart," "It's strictly love and unity we a dealin' today."

Though *What Is Beat?* makes for a first-rate primer for the uninitiated, there are nonetheless some awfully good tunes in the Beat repertoire ("Big Shot," "Two Swords," "Sugar and Stress," among others) that unfortunately are not included here. In that case, there are always the three original Beat LPs waiting to be discovered. Just be sure not to miss *I Just Can't Stop It*, the band's smashing debut.

—Tierney Smith

THE JAM
Snap!
(Polydor)

THE unconverted among us now have a golden opportunity to catch up on what the now disbanded Jam were all about with *Snap!*, a 2-LP compilation that effectively traces the band's evolution from their 1977 inception as angry young mods to their final days as pop/funk/soul masters.

Thrill to the fierce wham-bam thrust of the band's early works ("In The City," "The Modern World," "All Around The World") and the way Paul Weller's snarling, impassioned vocals soar above those tunes' exploding rhythm chords with an exhilarating impact.

As the Jam grew artistically, their previous reliance on rhythm guitar was supplanted by melodic, poppish leads ("Man In The Corner Shop," "Tales from the Riverbank") and the results were marvelous to behold. Ditto "Beat Surrender" and "The Bitterest Pill" wherein the Jam added female backing vocals, strings, trumpets and melodic lead guitar, all without sacrificing a drop of their old invigorating verve.

Yep, Weller's youthful, unbridled idealism coupled with his firm pacifistic stance made for some mighty brilliant rock and roll moments.

—Tierney Smith

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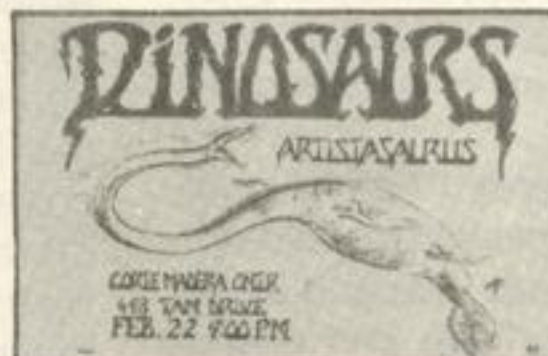
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BOOK REVIEWS

HIT AND RUN: THE JIMI HENDRIX STORY by Jerry Hopkins Perigree Books \$8.95

HIT and Run provides an intimate and revealing portrait of Jimi Hendrix, one of rock's most influential and creative guitar wizards. This biography of the man who called himself "the Voodoo Chile" was published on the thirteenth anniversary of his premature death.

The music, like much of the world at the time, seemed to explode. It was music that provided a sharp counterpoint and an ironic soundtrack to the war in Vietnam and the havoc in American cities. Throughout the Western world, Jimi Hendrix's music carried an ecstatic message that rang loud and clear. He provided the musical accompaniment to a world gone haywire.

Through interviews with Hendrix's father, brother, road manager and colleagues, Hopkins paints a portrait of a little boy from the Seattle ghetto who used wild antics to mask a shy personality. Childhood never prepared Hendrix for the persistent demand of commercial and artistic success. Nor did it prepare him for a Mafia kidnapping, affairs with such pop luminaries as Marianne Faithfull, shady business deals and a thousand "acid" trips that Hopkins chronicles.



Jerry Hopkins, author of *Hit and Run*, took this photo of Jimi Hendrix in June, 1969 at the Beverly Rodeo Hotel, Beverly Hills.

THE NEW ROLLING STONE RECORD GUIDE edited by Dave Marsh and John Swenson

EVERY now and then, a book is published that doesn't deserve to be recognized. This is such a book. Regard this as a warning! Not only are many of the reviews in this book closed minded and biased, but it is far

from current and is sorely incomplete. Not only don't some of the contributing writers understand what they are writing about, but they appear to lack any true conceptions of the art of making music.

This book should be an important reference guide, however, its reviews are written too personally critical for it to be considered a professional reference guide.

This is, without a doubt, the worst book of its kind to have ever come to my attention. Following are some excerpts:

Grateful Dead: "There isn't much about this group that's impressive. They are a pox on the face of pop. Exactly the sort of stuff that gave peace 'n' love a bad name."

Hot Tuna: "Excessive meandering jams belied the assertions of blues spirit."

Robert Hunter: "Exaggerates the aspects that make the Dead notoriously inconsistent. Hunter sings like Jerry Garcia trying to imitate Randy Newman. Not exactly easy listening." (Doesn't list two latest LP's, *Jack O' Roses* and *Promontory Rider*.)

New Riders: "Disorganized, second-rate country-rock outfit without a decent lead singer. Appropriate background music for rustic keg parties in the wilderness. Guaranteed to put you to sleep."

Rowans: "Marin County wimps. Most god-awful hippie mindlessness since It's a Beautiful Day."

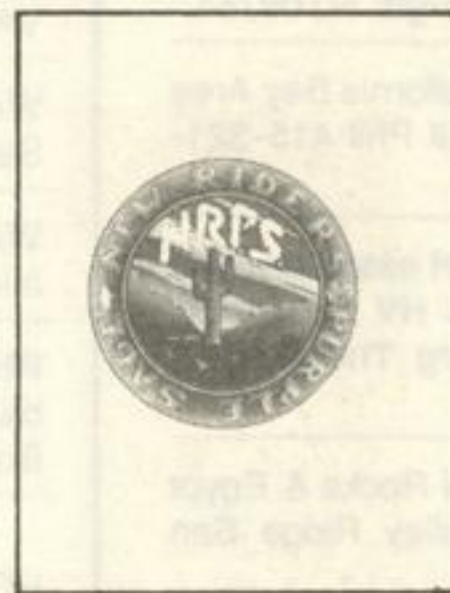
I find it an insult to all music enthusiasts that writers of great stature, such as Dave Marsh and John Swenson, could seriously compile this heap and print it all under one cover!

Toni A. Brown

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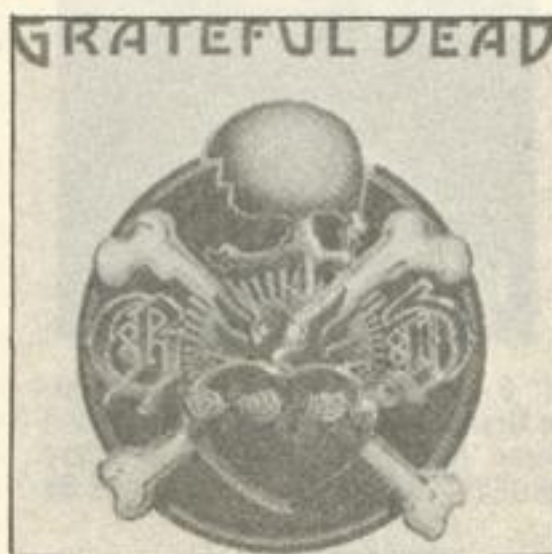
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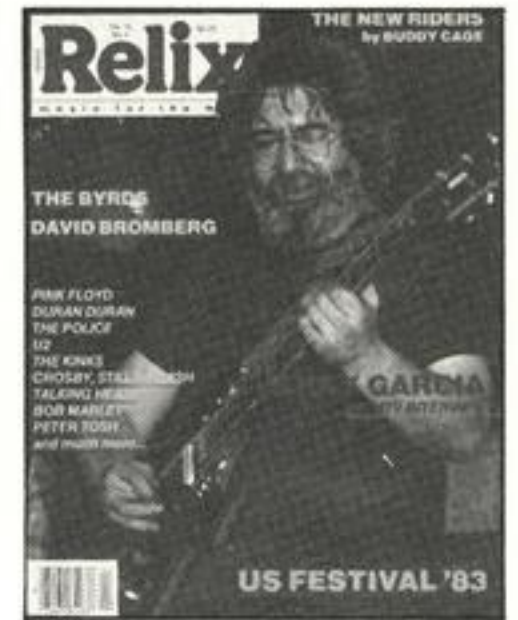
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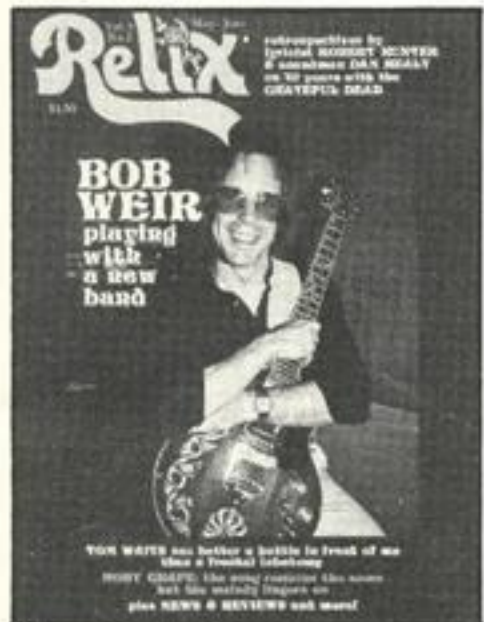
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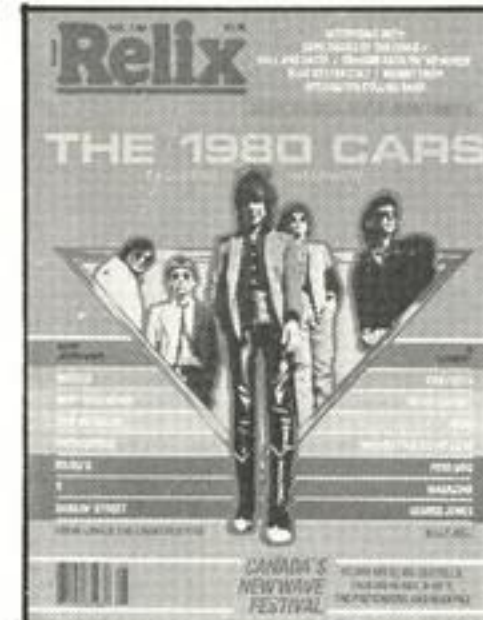
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