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100 GREATEST SONGWRITERS

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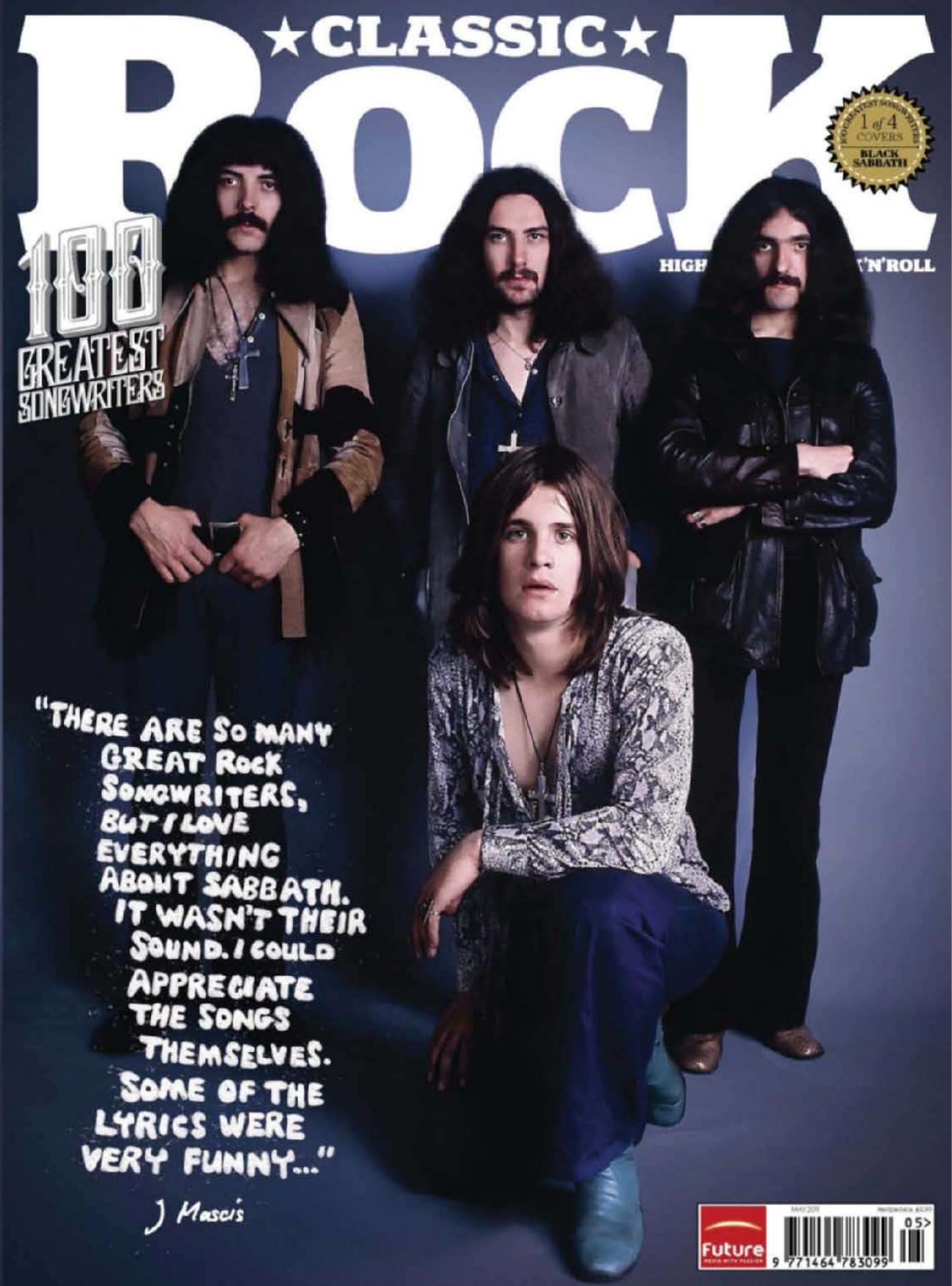

"THERE ARE SO MANY GREAT Rock SONGWRITERS, BUT I LOVE EVERYTHING ABOUT SABBATH. IT WASN'T THEIR SOUND. I COULD APPRECIATE THE SONGS THEMSELVES. SOME OF THE LYRICS WERE VERY FUNNY..."

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London Calling: a sweaty Dave Grohl and friends at Camden Dingwalls, February 2011.

ROSS HALFIN

LIVE! SOLD OUT! TONIGHT!...

Dave Grohl flies the classic rock flag at sweaty club show.

It was the hottest ticket of the year so far when Foo Fighters launched their new album *Wasting Light* with a secret gig in North London. Dave Grohl led the US arena rock titans through a two-and-a-half hour set at Camden sweatbox Dingwalls on February 26, treating the select 400-capacity audience to a mix of new and old songs, plus a cover of *Young Man Blues*, made famous by The Who, and even a tantalising snippet of Judas Priest's *Breaking The Law*.

Produced by former Nirvana cohort Butch Vig and released on April 11, *Wasting Light* features guest appearances from ex-Nirvana bassist Krist Novoselic, one-time Hüsker Dü mainman Bob Mould, and returning guitarist Pat Smear. The album's 11 tracks find the Foos ditching studio gloss and going back to basics. "I have all these huge fucking rock riffs. I can still scream for three hours," Grohl tells *Classic Rock*. "I'm 42 now, and I don't know if I'm going to be able to make this record when I'm 46 or 48. So I was, like, let's fucking go for this!"

"I HAVE ALL THESE HUGE FUCKING ROCK RIFFS. I CAN SCREAM FOR THREE HOURS."

Foo Fighters headline the Isle of Wight festival on June 6 and their own two-day mega-bash at Milton Keynes Bowl on July 2 and 3.

Turn to p96 for a review of *Wasting Light*.

CHAP. XLIII
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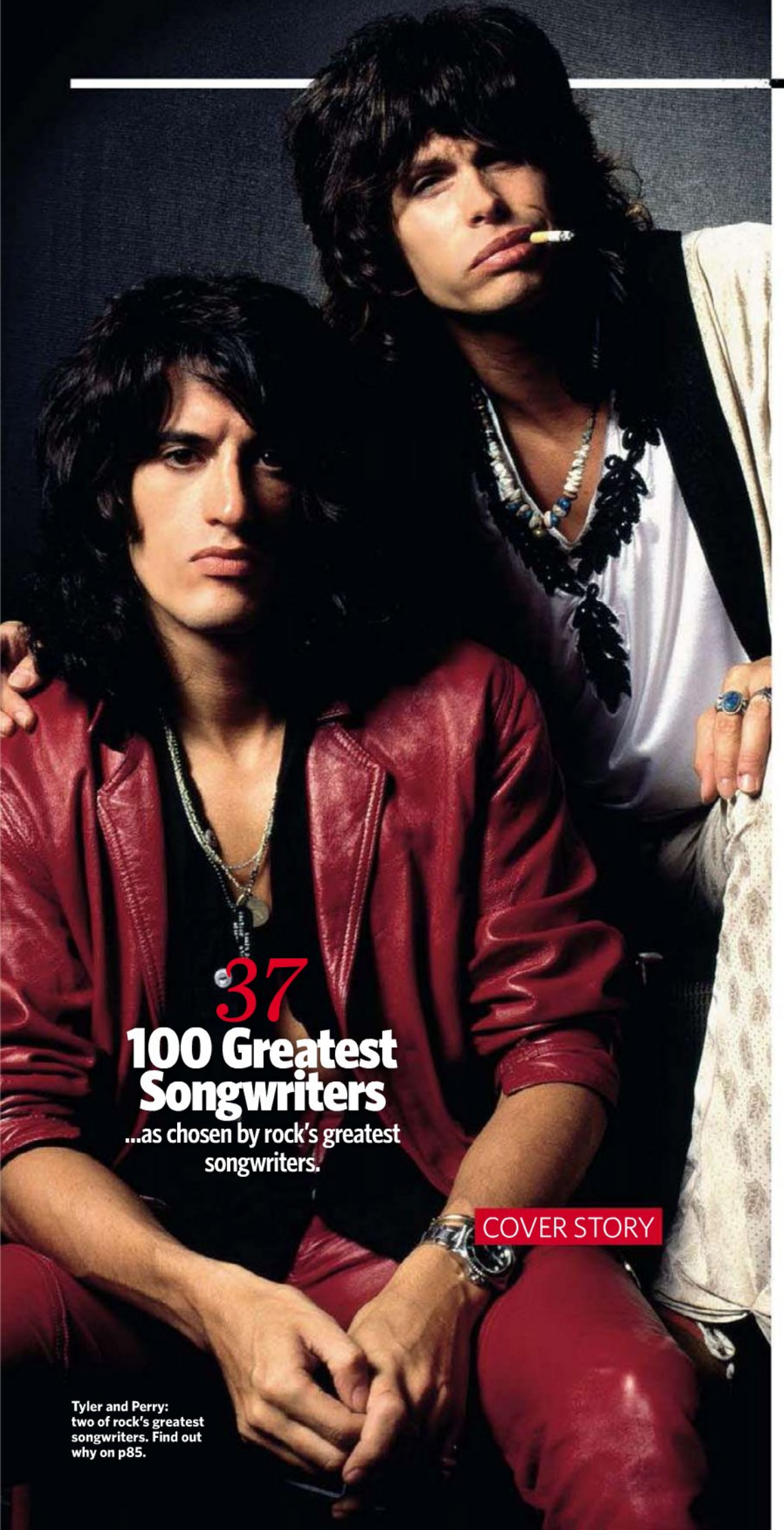

37 100 Greatest Songwriters

...as chosen by rock's greatest songwriters.

COVER STORY

Tyler and Perry: two of rock's greatest songwriters. Find out why on p85.

CORBIS

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SUBSCRIBE! SAVE 25% OFF YOUR FAVOURITE MAGAZINE AND GET A GIFT.* p88

*Unless you're a subscriber, in which case you get two more pages on the Greatest Songwriters

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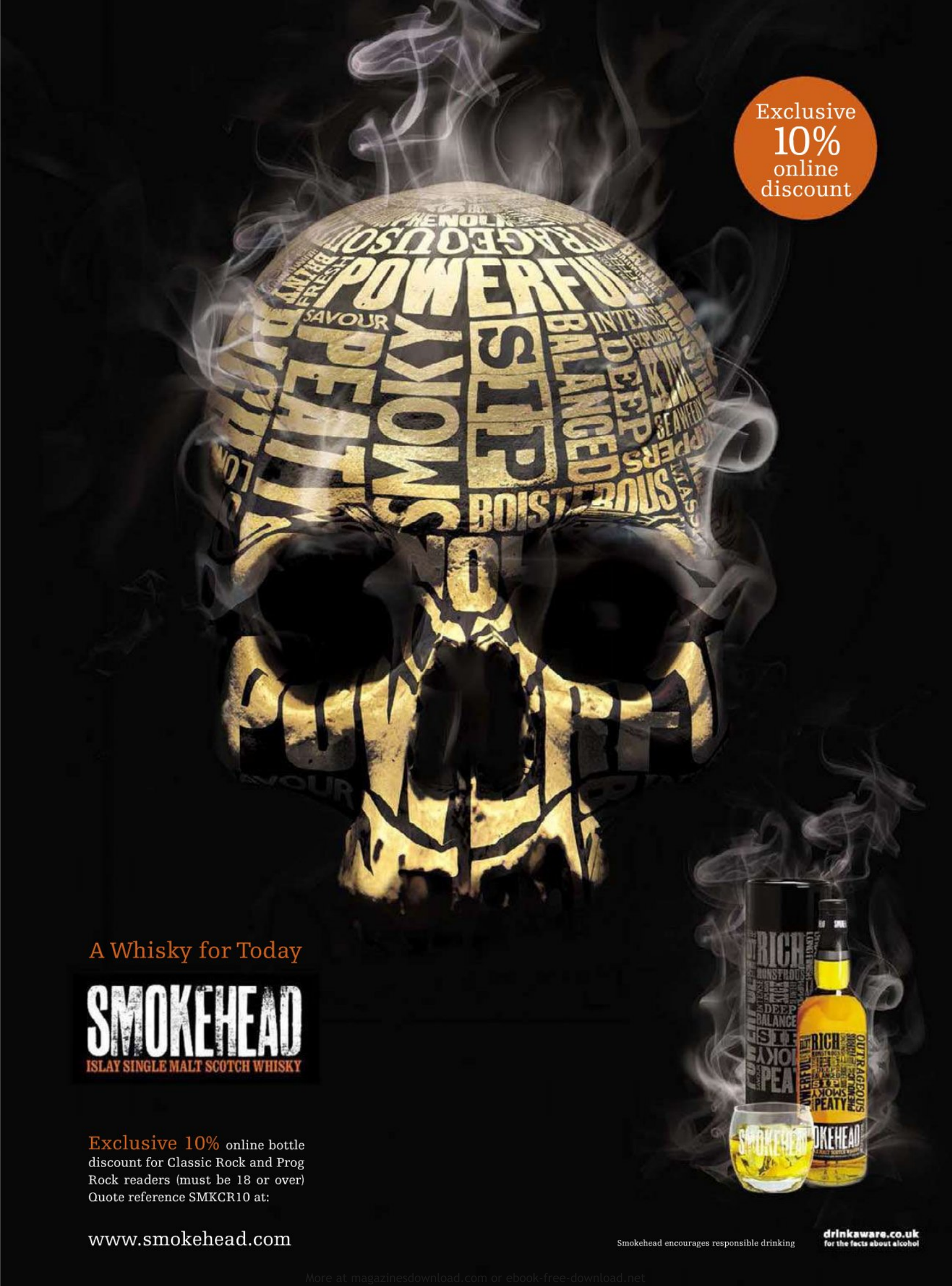

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CULT HEROES

Where our top writers wax lyrical about their favourite obscure stars of the past. Recent Cult Heroes have included Ian Gillan-era Black Sabbath (pictured), Exciter and Silverwing.

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"Your influences are the same when you're my age as when you're 20," says Lemmy at one point in *Lemmy – The Movie*. "The influences that really knock you out [then] stick with you. You're never gonna hear anything better than that."

No wonder, then that, when pressed about the songwriters that influenced them, rock's greatest songwriters tend to look back to the music that first knocked them out.

Anyone in denial about the influence of blues, soul, folk or funk on the rock music we love should read Ian Hunter on Otis Blackwell, Ray Davies on Davey Graham, or David Coverdale on how the raunch of Isaac Hayes dripped its way into Whitesnake. (It's left to a younger generation to laud the achievements of the songwriters of the 70s and 80s – James Dean Bradfield on Guns N' Roses, Joey Tempest on Whitesnake, the Gaslight Anthem on The Clash, etc).

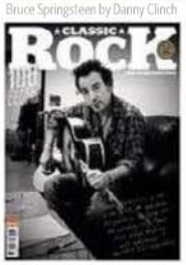
Radio 1 controller George Ergatoudis recently said that "brilliant" new rock songs were rare. Can a generation raised variously on Axl and Ozzy, Lemmy and Lynott, Coverdale and Cobain surpass the achievements of a generation raised on The Beatles and the blues, Leiber and Stoller and Little Richard? And if not... *why* not?

Scott Rowley,
Editor In Chief

ON THE COVER

Black Sabbath by Bernard Leloup

Bruce Springsteen by Danny Clinch



Aerosmith by Deborah Feingold

Queen by Richard Gray

This month's contributors

HENRY DILTZ

PAUL ZOLLO
Paul Zollo is an LA-based singer-songwriter and music journalist in Los Angeles. A Trough Records recording artist, he's the Senior Editor of *American Songwriter* magazine, and the author of six books, including *Conversations With Tom Petty*. This month he supplied in-depth interviews with the likes of Petty and Dylan on their songwriting (see p44).

HENRY YATES
This month *CR*'s blues expert Henry claimed several A-list interview scalps, including Brian May, Status Quo and the Manics. His own favourite songwriter is David Bowie: "A man whose back catalogue is so daring, diverse and jukebox-buggeringly brilliant that it makes everyone else look like a one-hit wonder." Learn more at www.henryyates.co.uk

MARK GILLMAN
Deputy Art Editor of *CR* for the past three years, Mark Gillman leaves us this month for a lucrative career in the trouser-arousing, nipple-erecting, bottom-inspecting business (aka *Nuts* magazine). Mark's likes include fry-ups, Nando's, *Only Fools And Horses* and tits. Dislikes include Joey Tempest (who once told him to "fuck off") and Germans. We love him.

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Scott Rowley
NP: Gentleman's Pistols, *At Her Majesty's Pleasure*

Editor
Siân Llewellyn
Foo Fighters, *Wasting Light*

Editor At Large
Geoff Barton
Various, *Roqueting Through Space*

Art Director
Brad Merrett
Michael Monroe, *Sensory Overdrive*

Senior Features Editor
Dave Everley
Pearl Jam, *Vs*

Deputy Art Editor
Mark Gillman
Survivor, *Ultimate Survivor*

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Paul Henderson
Can, *Tago Mago*

Reviews Editor
Ian Fortnam
Heartbreakers, *LAMF*

News/Live Editor
Dave Ling
Uriah Heep, *Into The Wild*

Online Editor
Malcolm Dome
Whitesnake, *Forevermore*

Managing Editor
Alex Burrows
Citizen Fish, *Goods*

Group Publisher
Chris Ingham
Whitesnake, *Forevermore*

Contributing writers
Tim Batcup, Max Bell, Essi Berelian, Johnny Dee, Harry Doherty, Malcolm Dome, John Doran, Lee Dorrian, Paul Elliott, Jerry Ewing, Mick Farren, Hugh Fielder, Jon Hotten, Rob Hughes, Neil Jeffries, Emma Johnston, Jo Kendall, Nick Kent, Rob Kern, Dom Lawson, Ken McIntyre, Joel McIver, Peter Makowski, Gavin Martin, Alexander Milas, Charles Shaar Murray, BP Perry, Steven Rosen, Jonathan Selzer, Sleazegrinder, Will Simpson, Sid Smith, Terry Staunton, Storm Thorgerson, Ben Fong-Torres, Paul Trynka, Tommy Udo, Jaan Uhelszki, Mick Wall, Philip Wilding, Rich Wilson, Steven Wilson, Henry Yates, Catherine Yates

Contributing photographers
Ami Barwell, Adrian Boot, Dick Barnatt, Dave Brolan, Zach Cordner, Fin Costello, Henry Diltz, Chris Dreja, Robert Ellis, Kevin Estrada, James Fortune, Jill Furmanovsky, Herb Greene, Bob Gruen, Michael Halsband, Ross Halfin, Mick Hutson, Barry Levine, John McMurtrie, Gered Mankowitz, David Montgomery, Denis O'Regan, Barry Plummer, Ron Pownall, Neal Preston, Michael Putland, David Redfern, Mick Rock, Pennie Smith, Stephen Stickler, Chris Walter, Mark Weiss, Barrie Wentzell, Michael Zagaris, Neil Zlozower

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Image Manipulation: Steven Wood, James Wootton

SENIOR CREATIVE TEAM
Group Senior Editor Aubrey Day
Creative Director Robin Abbott
Editorial Director Jim Douglas

ADVERTISING
Advertising Sales Director Malcolm Stoodley
malcolm.stoodley@futurenet.com 0207 042 4156

Advertising Sales Director Entertainment Rob Elms
relms@futurenet.com 0207 042 4272

Advertising Sales Manager Ian A Williamson
iwilliamson@futurenet.com 0207 042 4102

Senior Sales Executive Claire Adams
cadams@futurenet.com 0207 042 4104

Senior Sales Executive John Biscomb
jbiscomb@futurenet.com 0207 042 4255

Sales Executive Michael Hall
mhall@futurenet.com 0207 042 4141

Classified Sales Executive Sushma Sharma
ssharma@futurenet.com 0207 042 4261

MARKETING
Group Marketing Manager Philippa Newman, *philippa.newman@futurenet.com*
Brand Manager, Entertainment Alix Thompson, *alix.thompson@futurenet.com*
Product Manager Daniel Ridley, *daniel.ridley@futurenet.com*
Events Manager Lisa McCabe, *lisa.mccabe@futurenet.com*

CIRCULATION
Trade Marketing Manager Jonathan Beeson, *jonathan.beeson@futurenet.com*

PRINT & PRODUCTION
Production Co-ordinator Keely Miller, *keely.miller@futurenet.com*
Head of Production Richard Mason, *richard.mason@futurenet.com*
Ad Production Jason Hockridge, *jason.hockridge@futurenet.com*

LICENSING
International Licensing Director Tim Hudson *tim.hudson@futurenet.co.uk*
Tel + 44 (0)1225 442244 Fax + 44 (0)1225 732275

FUTURE PUBLISHING LIMITED
Group Publisher Chris Ingham, *chris.ingham@futurenet.com*
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Classic Rock, Future, 2 Balcombe Street, London NW1 6NW
Tel 020 7042 4000 **Fax** 020 7042 4329
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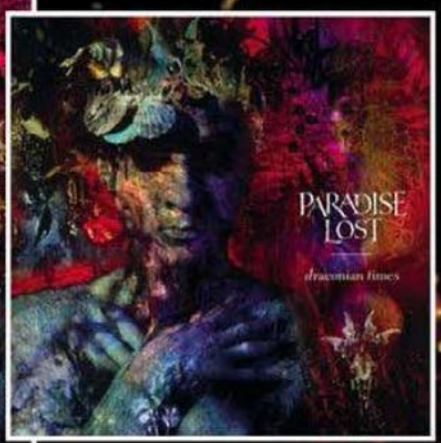

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The Darkness are back!

Dust down the catsuits: they're heading to Download.

AFTER AN ABSENCE of five years, The Darkness have reunited in time for this year's Download Festival. This latest bout of activity sees frontman Justin Hawkins and guitarist brother Dan back in tandem with original bassist Frankie Poullain and drummer Ed Graham.

The Suffolk quartet enjoyed a meteoric rise, with 2003's million-selling debut album *Permission To Land* topping the UK chart for four weeks and spawning a string of hit singles that included *I Believe In A Thing Called Love* and *Growing On Me*.

But Poullain departed acrimoniously during the recording of 2005's aptly-named follow-up *One Way Ticket To Hell... And Back*, and the album subsequently sold poorly compared to the debut. The final straw came in 2006 when Justin Hawkins quit the band without telling his colleagues after being admitted to rehab.

Post-split, Dan Hawkins, Ed Graham and replacement bassist Richie Edwards formed a new band Stone Gods, while Justin Hawkins put together Hot Leg and unsuccessfully competed to represent Britain in the Eurovision Song Contest. The bad blood between the Hawkins brothers eventually subsided and the singer was spotted in the crowd at Stone Gods shows, prompting rumours of a reunion.

Besides playing at Download, plans for The Darkness include a new studio album.

Meanwhile, Skunk Anansie, Funeral For A Friend, Plain White T's and Framing Hanley will all joined The Darkness on the Download bill, which is headlined at Donington Park by Def Leppard, System Of A Down and Linkin Park over the weekend of June 10-12. **DL**

The Darkness' Justin Hawkins: returning to action.

DARKNESS: RETNA; THIN LIZZY: FUTURE NETWORK PLC

Thin Lizzy: High Voltage bound.

More High Voltage names revealed

Rejoice! Think Lizzy, Barclay James Harvest, Skin and more confirmed for Classic Rock's outdoor bash.

Thin Lizzy, John Lees' Barclay James Harvest, Skin, Neurosis, the Von Hertzen Brothers and Electric Wizard are among the names added to the bill of Classic Rock's award-winning High Voltage festival, taking place at London's Victoria Park over the weekend of July 23-24.

These new attractions plus Amplifier, Evile, Black Spiders, Rival Sons, Grand Magus, Gentlemens Pistols, Ravens Creed, Primitai, Attica Rage and Furyon join a two-day cast that already include headliners Judas Priest and Dream Theater, plus Black Country Communion, Jethro Tull, Thunder, Queensrÿche, Spock's Beard, Michael Schenker Group, Mostly Autumn and many more.

Barclay James Harvest's appearance at High Voltage comes following the death last year of co-founding member Stuart 'Woolly' Wolstenholme.

Meanwhile, Skin join the bill despite having played a farewell tour last December. "Those dates were affected by the snowy weather, which gave our singer Neville MacDonald a cold for most of the tour and kept a lot of ticketholders away," says guitarist Myke Gray. "We are looking forward to saying goodbye to our fans as we intended, only at High Voltage instead."

Now into its second year, High Voltage claimed the Best Festival Award (15,000-39,999 Capacity) in the first ever Live UK Music Business Awards and was voted the Festival Of 2010 by listeners of Planet Rock Radio.

"We're looking forward to saying goodbye as we intended, only at High Voltage." – Skin's Myke Gray

Admission to the High Voltage festival costs £99 (for weekend tickets) and £56.50 (for day tickets) – subject to booking fee. VIP tickets will be available at £105.00 for the day, £199.00 for the weekend – subject to booking fee. There will also be various VIP and hotel packages available, at varying price levels to suit.

Updates and details of ticket packages can be found at: www.highvoltagefestival.com. Other outlets include Ticketmaster on: 0844 847 1708, and HMV tickets: 08448 222602. **DL**

This month The Dirt was compiled by Claire Adams, Geoff Barton, Max Bell, Malcolm Dome, Lee Dorrian, Emma Johnston, Dave Ling, Gavin Martin, Greg Prato, Philip Wilding, Henry Yates.

More at magazinesdownload.com or ebook-free-download.net

RIP

Thank you and good night.

Mike Starr
April 4, 1966 – March 8, 2011

Alice In Chains members Jerry Cantrell and Sean Kinney have asked the media to respect the privacy of the family of their former bandmate Mike Starr, after his body was found in Salt Lake City. The 44-year-old bassist, who left AIC after their 1992 album *Dirt*, had gone public with his drug problems on TV. Police ruled out foul play. Results of toxicology tests may take two months.

Eddie Serrato
December 5, 1945 – February 24, 2011

Born Eduardo Serrato, he was the original drummer with influential Michigan garage rockers ? And The Mysterians, who scored a big hit with the song *96 Tears* in 1966 and were among the first groups to be described as punk rock. He was 65 when he suffered a fatal heart attack.

Jan Somers
December 28, 1964 – January 28, 2011

A farewell to Jan Somers, the lead guitarist with Dutch hard rockers Vengeance. Somers was an original member of the cult-favourite quintet. He died a heart attack, aged 46. A posting at the Vengeance website says: "Thanks for all the lovely messages of support in these difficult days – the show must go on."

Phil Vane
Died February 17, 2011

The singer and co-founder of influential grindcore band Extreme Noise Terror has died in his sleep at the age of 46. A respected figure in the UK scene, Phil Vane was also briefly a member of Napalm Death when Napalm's Barney Greenway joined ENT in a controversial and short-lived unofficial exchange deal.

Joseph 'Red Dog' Campbell
Died February 21, 2011

Few roadies receive renown, but as an employee of the Allman Brothers Band for more than 30 years and having inspired a character in the movie *Almost Famous*, 'Red Dog' was no mere crew member. His biography *The Legendary Red Dog: A Book Of Tails* is required reading for fans of the Allmans. At press time the cause of Campbell's death was uncertain. His family hoped to scatter his ashes alongside those of his late buddy Duane Allman.

NEWS

A number of heavy hitters have signed up for a tribute album to **Ronnie James Dio**. Lemmy, Alice Cooper, Dave Grohl, Rob Halford, Glenn Hughes and Sebastian Bach are among those on board for the project, which is being organised by Ronnie's widow, Wendy. Expect it next year.

Melodic power metallers **Dragonforce** have announced that their new singer is 23-year-old, Oxford-born Marc Hudson, who succeeds ZP Theart. They support Iron Maiden during the summer, and release their fifth studio album in September.

Journey (pictured) release *Eclipse*, their first new studio album in three years, via Frontiers Records on June 6. It's the group's second album with current lead singer Arnel Pineda.

Vince Neil has been released early from his jail term. The Mötley Crüe frontman was due to serve 25 days for driving under the influence of alcohol but was freed after just 10 days. He will serve the remainder under house arrest.

Meanwhile, **Rob Zombie** has denied Crüe drummer Tommy Lee's claim that he is to direct the movie version of the band's notorious memoir *The Dirt*. "I am not directing the movie," said Zombie. "I don't know how that craziness started."

Rod Stewart will headline the final night of the Hard Rock Calling in London's Hyde Park on June 26. Tickets from www.hardrockcalling.co.uk

Iron Maiden: new release focuses on the past 20 years.

New Maiden anthology

Never mind the hits – weighty new two-disc compilation shines a spotlight on the epics.

CURRENTLY BEING PILOTED by frontman Bruce Dickinson aboard a customised Boeing 757 during a run of dates titled Around The World In 66 Days, Iron Maiden are to release a new anthology that charts the most recent two decades of the group's 36-year history.

Available through EMI Records from May 23, *From Fear To Eternity: The Best Of 1990-2010* is a double CD package but will retail for the price of a single set. Its prime intention is to introduce the band's younger fans to their last eight studio albums, the most recent of which is last year's *The Final Frontier*, which topped the chart in 28 countries.

Although the 23 tracks selected for the anthology include past singles *Bring Your Daughter... To The Slaughter, Be Quick Or Be Dead, The Wicker Man* and *Holy Smoke*, and more succinct tracks such as *Rainmaker* and *Tailgunner, From Fear To Eternity* places the focus on lengthier and more progressive, album-based material such as *Afraid To Shoot Strangers, Paschendale, For The Greater Good Of God, Dance Of Death* and the 11-minute epic *When The Wild Wind Blows*.

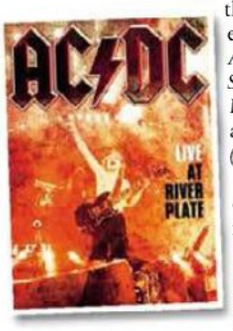
Having previously been nominated before, Iron Maiden received their first ever Grammy award in February when the track *El Dorado* (taken from *The Final Frontier*) triumphed in the Best Metal Performance category at this year's ceremony in Los Angeles.

Iron Maiden's UK string of summer dates, which include two shows at London's O2 Arena, begin in Glasgow on July 20. **DL**

'DC DVD on the way

But even Jonno doesn't know the band's next step.

AC/DC ARE SET to crown their lengthy world tour for the *Black Ice* album with *Live At River Plate*, a DVD and Blu-ray documentation of three shows the band played in Argentina in December 2009, released on May 9.



After a 13-year absence from the South American country, the Aussie legends performed in front of almost 200,000 fans at the Estadio Antonio Vespucio Liberti in Buenos Aires. Overall, the *Black Ice* tour took AC/DC to 28 countries.

The shows were captured by 32 cameras, and the footage includes all 19 of the songs the band played regularly on the 20-month tour, including evergreen golden oldies *Hell Ain't A Bad Place To Be, You Shook Me All Night Long, Whole Lotta Rosie, Highway To Hell* and *For Those About To Rock (We Salute You)*.

Fans should make the most of AC/DC's sixth official live release, as singer Brian Johnson recent stated: "After that we haven't made any plans. We just want to have a rest. We played in front of five million people, and we deserve it." **DL**

pearl jam

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-
Includes previously unreleased tracks and a bonus disc of the
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AOR takes off

Classic Rock Presents... magazine goes bimonthly.

FOLLOWING THE SELL-OUT success of last year's debut edition, our new offshoot magazine Classic Rock Presents AOR is set to be published every two months. The second AOR goes on sale May 6, with further issues to follow in July and September.

In issue two, watch out for Toto on the cover of AOR 2, plus features on Houston, Mr Big, The Babys, Roxette, FM, King Kobra, Moritz, Ten and more. There's an exhaustive A To Z Of AOR, covering everyone from Alexa to Richie Zito. Plus we have a feature on the phenomenon known as Yacht Rock – featuring an interview with Christopher Cross!

We also celebrate the 35th anniversaries of two key albums: Blue Öyster Cult's *Agents Of Fortune* and Peter Frampton's *Frampton Comes Alive!*, both of which were released in 1976.

As well as a full news and reviews service, the next issue of AOR comes with a sensational free CD. Among the tracks are an exclusive, never-before-released live version of Toto's *Pamela*, and also a brand-new studio song from Journey. **GB**

SONIC EDITIONS

Every picture tells a story...

Check out these superb photographic images.

CLASSIC ROCK HAS teamed up with Sonic Editions, who specialise in high-quality limited-edition music photography, to curate a series of 40 classic archive images of rock icons.

The collection captures 40 years of music history, combining seminal live moments with more intimate personal portraits. Concert highlights include The Rolling Stones on stage at Madison Square Garden in 1969, Aerosmith at RFK Stadium in 1976 and Iron Maiden at 1985's Rock In Rio festival. Along with those there are more revealing images including Nirvana's Kurt Cobain at MTV Unplugged, tour-bus antics with Van Halen, and Led Zeppelin fooling around at US scenester Rodney Bingenheimer's English Disco in 1973.

Each print is professionally framed and mounted to order in high-quality wooden frames, individually numbered, and comes with the photographer's name and the story behind the image. The framed prints cost from £45 unframed or £69 framed. Go to www.soniceditions.com/classic-rock **DL**

NEWS

Saxon are to release a new studio album though SPV in late May. Co-produced by vocalist Biff Byford and former Little Angels/current Fastway singer Toby Jepson, it will be titled *Call To Arms*.

Duff McKagan has shot down a persistent rumour that the classic **Guns N' Roses** line-up are planning to reunite to play at next year's Superbowl half-time entertainment. "It's a good story," the former GN'R bassist admits, "[but] pure, unadulterated bullshit."

Phil Collins has issued a rebuke to the media after announcing his retirement. "I am stopping so I can be a full-time father to my two young sons on a daily basis," says the 60-year-old, who had been quoted as saying: "I'm sorry that I was so successful. It's hardly surprising that people grew to hate me."

GETTY IMAGES

Paul Di'Anno (pictured) who was the singer with Iron Maiden from 1978 to 1981, has been jailed for nine months for falsely claiming £45,000 in disability benefits. Sentenced under his real name of Paul Andrews, the 52-year-old was told by the judge: "Your greed has cost this country a lot of money."

The troubled $65 million musical version of *Spider-Man*, with music and lyrics by U2's **Bono** and **The Edge**, has been delayed for a sixth time. Previews of the show have savaged its content, with the *Hollywood Reporter* calling it "chaotic, dull and a little silly".

Flamin' Groovies: a long time coming.

GETTY IMAGES

WELCOME BACK

Flamin' Groovies

The original line-up of the only band the Stones rated back in the late 60s/early 70s play their first UK gig.

VOCALIST ROY LONEY formed San Francisco garage rock legends the Flamin' Groovies in 1965, and quit in '71 after releasing three albums: *Supersnazz*, *Flamingo* and *Teenage Head*. Groovies guitarist Cyril Jordan subsequently transformed the band into the punk-era anglophiles of *Shake Some Action*, but it's their first incarnation that's often cited as the crucial missing link between the Stooges and the Ramones.

We caught up with Loney as, finally reunited with Jordan, the original Flamin' Groovies are poised – after 46 years – to make their live UK debut.

"We played really, really fast. We were like the 60s Ramones."

When were you first entranced by rock'n'roll?
I was a very young boy when I first heard Elvis and Chuck Berry and it took me in right away. Rock'n'roll gave me a personality. It gave me someone to be. I'd been acting since I was eight years old, doing stage plays and stuff, so I've always been a performer. It's who I am. On stage is when I come to life.

Did you feel out of step with the San Francisco rock scene of the mid-60s? The Groovies seemed too gritty for the Bay Area's chilled hippie landscape.
We were considered outcasts in Frisco. We were playing three-minute, high-energy rock'n'roll while everybody else was playing lengthy blues jams. We were out of place. We had a small coterie of fans, but we were generally considered outsiders. Everyone thought we were speed freaks because we played really, really fast. We were like the 60s Ramones.

Did you have some kind of epiphany when you played with the Stooges and the MC5 at Detroit's Grande Ballroom in the late 60s?
We did. I'll never forget walking into the Grande Ballroom for the first time and seeing the MC5 hit the stage. It was like, what is that? I wanna be like that, that's cool. They were intense, dangerous, kind of scary. The 5 and Stooges both put on great shows and it changed us a lot. *Flamingo* exemplifies how we changed after that: "It's gotta get heavier, we've gotta pump everything up".

Your 1971 album *Teenage Head* was one that the Stones were said to prefer to their own *Sticky Fingers* album.
I've heard that. Three or four years ago I was in France and went to tea at Marianne Faithfull's apartment. As I was just about to leave, she stopped, kissed my hand and said: "You know, the boys loved you. You were the only band that mattered back then." She was totally serious. I was amazed. I kissed her hand too, and it was a neat moment. So yeah, apparently the Stones loved the Groovies.

Is it true that the title track of *Teenage Head* was written as an afterthought, to fill what was an incomplete album?
That's absolutely right. And its title is a nod to Kim Fowley. When he was at the sessions his favourite phrase was "I'm looking for some teenage head."

How does it feel to be playing the first ever UK show with the Groovies?
I'm embarrassed that it's taken this long, but really excited about it. Cyril and I are just great together, and it's cool for me to be on stage, look to my right and see him digging into his Dan Armstrong guitar. Hopefully we'll continue for a while and do a record. **IF**

Flamin' Groovies play Le Beat Bespoke Weekender 7 at London's 229 The Venue on April 24.

HIGH HOPES

Royal Republic

Leather. Moustaches. Tunes. No wonder everyone's screaming for these Swedes.

ADAM GRAHN IS bewildered by the breadth of his band's demographic. "There are stoner rockers and tattooed dudes…" the Royal Republic frontman begins, casting his mind's eye over an imaginary front row, "…metal dudes with iron spikes, seventeen-year old bimbo chicks, old blues guys with scars… It's everyone. But recently it's been a lot of girls. Usually, 80 per cent of the first five rows is screaming girls."

It's a statistic you'd imagine would please the singer, who leans out of the front cover of the band's debut album, *We Are The Royal*, like a cherub-faced lothario, all leather and Brylcreem, with a moustache that would have Lemmy running scared ("No, Lemmy rules when it comes to moustaches," Grahn insists). Flanked by a trio of fellow Swedes with cheekbones you could use to chop cocaine, they do look like the kind of band you might scream at. "Girls are cool," Grahn agrees, "but we really don't want to turn into the boy-band thing."

Royal Republic are more serious than they look. The four members met at a concert in their native Malmö, and subsequently discovered they'd all studied at the city's auspicious Academy of Music. "We can play, and we take pride in it," Grahn stresses. "If it sounds like shit sometimes, it's on purpose. We always wanted great songs and a great live show, and the rock'n'roll image just got in through the back seat. None of us are hardcore rock'n'roll dudes, with tattoos and bad-ass attitudes. I mean, yeah, we do get drunk and we do get laid, but it's not necessarily part of our day. It's about the music."

If all this sounds like they've got a bit of a 'stick up their arse', *We Are The Royal* is anything but, combining fizzing, power-pop hooks with a lyric sheet that – on songs like the voyeuristic *Underwear* – might be dismissed by Justin Hawkins as 'too daft'.

"There are so many bands that do the 'serious' thing well," Grahn explains. "And I'm not saying we'll never get serious – we probably will – but on this album we just wanted to make it a 12-hour party. Some of the lyrics on the album are semi-autobiographical. For example, *President's Daughter* is semi-true. I didn't actually date the president's daughter, but she was very rich and her father hated me."

He's in a minority. In fact, Royal Republic are the kind of band it's very easy to fall in love with. Just don't analyse your relationship with them.

"People ask me to describe this band, and the music, and the attitude and the 'point'," concludes Grahn. "I hate trying to do that. I just want to drag people to the front row and say, 'Stay here and watch. That's what we are, and that's what we sound like'." **HY**

We Are The Royal is available now via Roadrunner.

FOR FANS OF...

"*Sleep Is The Enemy* by Danko Jones is really cool," says Adam Grahn. It's kinda simple, just riff-rock. And Danko Jones only has about three subjects he writes about, like, 'bitch, you broke my heart, now I'm gonna break yours', or 'bitch, I'm gonna fuck you'. And four chords. That's pretty much it. But he still manages to push out twelve new songs that aren't boring."

"Yeah we get drunk and get laid, but it's about the music..."

Royal Republic: "Girls are cool but we don't really want the boy band thing."

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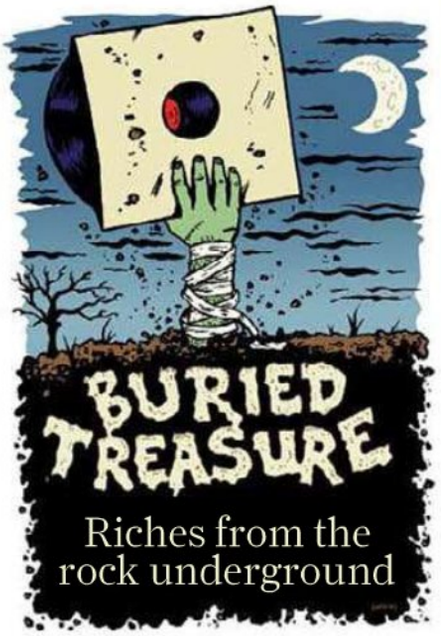

THE SORROWS

Take A Heart, PYE/Piccadilly, 1965. Value: up to £280.

Midlands R&B freakbeat rockers the Sorrows had more balls and attitude than Pretty Things and early Rolling Stones combined. Their 'punk rock' aggression, rock'n'roll aesthetics and black-clothed image set them apart from the rest.

They almost joined the big league with the brooding 1965 Top 20 hit *Take A Heart*, but failed to follow it with anything as commercially viable. An album of the same name was released later the same year but had little impact. The record wasn't pressed in large quantities, and has since become a highly regarded and sought-after item from the pre-psychedelic beat/garage era.

The raw and direct, yet melodic, vocals of Don Fardon (credited here with his real name, Donald Maughn) combined with rapid-fire drums and the frantic solos of

'A sought-after item from the pre-psychedelic beat/garage era."

Pip Whitcher hit hard on short tracks such as *Let Me In, Come With Me* and *She's Got The Action*.

The band released several great UK singles such as *You've Got What I Want, Let The Live Live* and the post-Fardon psych classic *Pink, Purple, Yellow, Red*. And although success eluded them in the UK, they were more popular on the continent, especially Italy where they relocated for several years and lived like pop stars.

Fardon split from the group in 1966 and had a successful solo career, scoring a huge hit in 1969 with *Indian Reservation*.

Excellent rare footage of them performing four live tracks on German TV can currently be viewed on YouTube. **LD**

NEWS

Singer Anthony Kiedis has revealed the – rather preposterous – working title for the new **Red Hot Chili Peppers** album. The group are considering calling it *Dr Johnny Skinz's Disproportionately Rambunctious Polar Express Machine-head*. Of course they are.

A documentary on **Gary Moore** is currently at the editing stage. Filmmakers Jörgen Holmstedt and Stefan Mossberg had been working on the project, *White Knuckles & Blue Moods*, for several years before the guitarist's death in February this year. Former Moore associates Don Airey, Jon Hiseman, John Sykes, Brian Downey, Eric Bell and Brian Robertson have all filmed contributions.

Fast-rising southern rockers **Black Stone Cherry**'s third album is released on May 30 by Roadrunner Records. Titled *Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea*, it was produced by the Grammy nominee Howard Benson (Papa Roach, Daughtry, 3 Doors Down).

Heaven's Basement (pictured) have become a four-piece following the departure of guitarist Johnny Rocker. Their new frontman is Aaron Buchanan, who replaces Richie Hevanz. As well as releasing a digi-EP produced by Bob Marlette the group awill be playing some co-headline dates with Jettblack.

Long-running proggers **Oceansize** have split up after 12 years. The Mancunian band refuse to explain why.

Buffalo Tom: which one's Tom?

WELCOME BACK

Buffalo Tom

One of rock's most underrated power trios are back after a decade-long, family-building 'bit of time off'.

AFTER ENDING A nine-year hiatus in 2007, alt-rockers Buffalo Tom have made two albums in what for them seems like indecent haste: just four years. Their latest, *Skins*, shows the band at their most reflective and personal since 1992's *Let Me Come Over*.

Classic Rock spoke to Bill Janovitz, one of BT's principal members, who had just climbed down, shovel in hand, from the roof of his Massachusetts home where snowstorms have covered a generous part of the state – not least Bill's house – in feet-deep snow.

Two albums in four years. It could be said that Buffalo Tom are on a roll.

We didn't intend to go away for nine years. It was to take a hiatus and break from each other and recording and touring, and focus on family. That ended up being nine years, but it wasn't the plan. Getting back onto the full tour/record train was not how we wanted to spend the rest of our lives. It's just finding the balance, I guess.

"I'd swap the plaudits for a few million in the bank."

So is touring now a burden, or a great way to get out of the house?

A nice way to get out of the house, absolutely. I think it was a burden early on, six weeks of touring at a time. It became a drag to be away from home for long stretches of time. But now it's back on the road again for ten days, I'm a middle-aged guy having a good time. I play poker with a bunch of guys and they just get a kick out of it. You know, "They give you beer every night to go play music? And they pay you on top of it?!" I hear that a lot.

(Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter) Tanya Donelly appears on *Don't Forget Me* on the new album. Is this the renaissance of the once much-vaunted Boston music scene, or was that just a media invention?

The truth is somewhere in the middle. It depends who you ask – even in the band. I remember people asking me that back then, but the reality was that I first met Tanya in Dusseldorf through the Lemonheads, who they were out touring with. It doesn't feel that I had any more of a kinship with Boston bands than I did with, say, Nirvana or Teenage Fanclub, because you'd meet up in clubs or on the road. With Tanya we became good friends after our daughters were born within a few weeks of each other, and we were actually playing dates together.

You made three well-received solo albums, and worked with the excellent Crown Victoria band.

When I did *Up Here* and then the Crown Victoria album, I wasn't sure that Buffalo Tom would ever record again. Crown Victoria was me forming a new band to maybe hit the road with it, but it was a time when the music industry was starting to implode and not too many people were interested in an ageing rock side-band.

You've enjoyed amazing critical acclaim over the years. Would you swap those plaudits for a few million in the bank?

Yeah, of course. But I can't complain about how we did. We made a living and bought houses. We did that for ten years without working at anything else. When we started it was lucky for us to get played on college radio and play a club here in front of a hundred people. So to get where we went, especially as the goalposts kept moving downfield a little bit, that was pretty amazing. **PW**

Skins is out now via Scrawny Records.

RAW POWER

Think pink!

Twisted Sister's Jay Jay French unites music industry rivals for disease awareness fundraiser.

THIS DAZZLING PINK guitar and amplifier are just part of a collection put together by Twisted Sister's Jay Jay French in an effort to raise funds and boost awareness of a degenerative disease that has caused the diminishing eyesight of his daughter Samantha (see box, right).

French used all his music business contacts, determination and guile to put together the collection, which he calls the Pinkburst Project, even managing to persuade rival instrument manufacturers to bury their differences and collude for the good of the project.

"People have said that if I could do this, maybe I should go to Israel and sort out their grievances," French quips. "Believe me, it took some crazy shit. Gibson and Fender have sued one another. There have been writs between Gibson and Paul Reid Smith. Fender have sued about 30 other companies. What chance did I have of succeeding? But, in all walks of life, sometimes people will stop being jerks for a while and put aside their competitive streak for a higher reason."

And, incredibly, that's what happened – but not without moments of potential failure. "Look, Ford won't tell General Motors: 'Here's the colour formula for the paint we use on this particular model [of car],'" French says. "They will say: 'You want the paint? You go fucking figure it out.'"

And yet somehow French created not only his range of custom guitars, but also a set of colour-matched amplifiers and speaker cabinets. They will be auctioned off in Boston, Massachusetts, on May 1, two days after Twisted Sister perform a special benefit gig in New York's Times Square. French, Dee Snider and company will also be appearing at this summer's Download festival on June 11.

For more information on the Pinkburst Project go to www.pinkburstproject.org

WHAT IS UVEITIS?

Jay French on the disease, and reasons for his involvement.

Uveitis is a disease which affects approximately 30,000 children across the globe. For reasons yet to be ascertained, they are mainly females.

"The best way that I can explain uveitis is that it's arthritis of the eye," says Jay French. "Without a doubt, Samantha would be blind today had I not been able to chase down the drugs to control this disease. Even so, it makes her susceptible to other ailments. The existing drugs are extremely expensive and not even meant to combat the condition. The bottom line is simple: if you have a daughter and she is diagnosed early enough, you can save her sight. If you don't, you won't. That's the message I'm trying to get across."

Gibson meets Marshall, and there's more pink than in Twisted Sister's make-up box.

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Sharp Dressed Man

Rock 'n' Roll accessories

[1]

[2]

[1] The Madams Tee
Run With Scissors Clothing, £18
www.rwsclothing.bigcartel.com
Launched in the summer of 2010 from a small town in Cornwall, RWSC is a great new brand with a lot of potential. Designs are inspired by music, art, fun lifestyle, a bit tongue-in-cheek and all printed on American Apparel cotton. This tee is totally rock'n'roll.

[2] 1960s winkle pickers
1960 Winkle Pickers, £165
www.19-60.com
1960 Winkle Pickers are a rocking, quality men's shoe designers. This crimson-red boot is louder than an amp turned to 11, made with Italian soft leather upper, lux purple sheep's leather lining, and leather soles! The boots for the leather rebel in you.

[3] Juvee Modern Chinos
Obey, £65
www.shop.obeyclothing.co.uk
Art-inspired label Obey have brought out a range of great guys' jeans and trousers. These slim-fit Chinos are rocking if you want to dress down but also look smart. The charcoal pair pictured should be rocked out with a vintage-look leather jacket, natch.

[3]

NEWS

Geezer Butler believes that **Black Sabbath** will never reconvene. Via his website the bassist comments: "I would like to make it clear, because of mounting speculation and rumours, that there will definitely be no reunion of all four original members of Black Sabbath, whether to record an album or to tour."

Queen guitarist **Brian May** and West End and Broadway star Kerry Ellis are to headline an outdoor concert at Royal Air Force Cranwell in Lincolnshire on July 16. To book call 0844 888 9991, or go to: www.rafbf.org/cranwell

For the short-term, the future of London's **100 Club** has been saved by a sponsorship deal with Converse Shoes. Paul McCartney played at the venue in December in a bid to prevent its closure forced by a rent hike.

A deluxe, expanded edition of **Rush**'s (pictured) *Moving Pictures* is released on May 2 on Mercury Records. Preceding a six-date UK tour during which the celebrated album is to be performed in its entirety, it will be available as a CD and DVD pack, and also on CR and Blu-ray.

Duff McKagan is to share the secrets of holding onto his cash by launching a wealth management consultancy for musicians. The bassist says: "When you get that big contract, or your record goes platinum and you're selling-out concerts, you don't see that [someday] it's going to end."

Within Temptation: without drummer.

WELCOME BACK

Within Temptation

With a concept album story from an *X-Men* artist, they can do without the "too Spinal Tap" stage show.

IT'S FOUR YEARS since symphonic metallers Within Temptation released their last album, *The Heart Of Everything*. Not all of the band made it through the gruelling tour schedule – drummer Stephen Van Haestregt quit. But after time off to work on side projects, make babies and come up with a comic-book concept for new album *The Unforgiving*, the band are raring to go. Although frontwoman Sharon den Adel, as she explains, is still not keen on their habit of giving her airborne stunts to do on stage.

Why were the band away for so long?
We toured heavily, so we were a little bit worn out after the last album. So it was nice for everyone to do their own small projects. I did something with Armin van Buuren, a dance thing. I was in a corner of just doing heavy music, and I wanted to do something a bit more cheerful. Ruud, our guitar player, did an Iron Maiden tribute album.

"We were inspired by our old heroes. The album has an 80s flavour."

***The Unforgiving* is a concept album. What can you tell us about it?**
We've always written a lot of lyrics based on books and films, and this time we wanted to have our own story to talk about. So we asked this comic artist, Romano Molenaar – he does the *X-Men* series – and writer Steven O'Connell. It ended up being a detective thriller.

Will the comic be the artwork for the album sleeve?
Partially. But the comic goes along with the album. The album comes with three short movies, and the comic is released every two months after that. We were inspired by our old heroes from when we were growing up, so it has a lot of 80s flavour. So one song, *Faster*, has a bit of a Chris Isaac feel but also a little bit Billy Idol. There's also a song that reminds me of Iron Maiden and Metallica.

What are the short films about?
The movies explain a little bit about where the characters are coming from. In the first one, some people have done certain things in their lives because they're in the wrong situation, and in their second life when they've passed over they get the chance from Mother Maiden to catch bad guys to redeem themselves.

How will it all tie in with the live shows?
I'm pregnant at the moment, so we have more time to prepare for the live shows. Normally we're rushed into a tour and we develop it along the way. Last year we did a theatre tour and experimented a lot with 3D animation, so that's something we're thinking of.

Who's the new drummer in the band?
That's going to be a surprise.

Are you excited about getting back out there?
Yes. We had a taste of touring again, because we did a few shows in Holland. I was hanging five meters from the ground. I was going: "I don't want to do this! I'm pregnant!" The initial plan was that the guys were going to jump from the balcony, hanging on ropes and playing in the air, but that was too Spinal Tap.

Isn't it terrifying doing that stuff?
I am afraid of heights. But they always decide on these things when I'm doing something else. They put me in a cage a few years back. Thanks, guys. At least it's never boring. **EJ**

The Unforgiving is out now on Roadrunner Records.

★ HIGH HOPES

Voodoo Six

Self-sufficient down to owning their tour bus, here's a Six pack with plenty of bottle.

VOODOO SIX ARE the epitome of the modern British rock band: sensible, pragmatic, with no pretensions of wanting to lead a champagne-and-cocaine-crazed lifestyle. That might have been their aspiration in the 1980s, but now?

"The music industry's changed so much that all we can hope to do is survive and keep going," says the band's leader and bassist Tony Newton – a man who's been around long enough not to have his head turned by a promise of ribaldry and riches. "We're a totally self-sufficient band," he continues. "We own our albums and license these to labels. We even bought a tour bus, so that wouldn't be an extra expense on the road."

Voodoo Six started seven years ago, started up by Newton and guitarist Richie Faulkner who were joined by vocalist Henry Rundell, guitarist Matt Pearce and drummer Dave 'Grav' Cavill. Since then, Faulkner and Rundell have been replaced by Chris Jones and Luke Purdie respectively. The last named only joined the band last year, and Newton is full of praise for what he's brought to the party.

"We decided to replace Henry in the spring of 2009. I then spent a week trawling the internet and found this band in Kent called Reculver, who I really like. I contacted them, not looking to nick their singer but because I liked what I heard. The upshot was I found out they'd split up a year before, but Luke had put out a solo acoustic album."

After finally connecting with Purdie, he and Newton met up, exchanged CDs with their own ideas, then booked a rehearsal session. After which the band and Purdie both felt they'd found the future.

The result is Voodoo Six's third album, *Fluke?* It's a grittier record than preceding albums *First Hit For Free* and *Feed My Soul*, and Purdie's vocals give the new songs an extra dimension. "This is the sort of singer we always wanted," Newton says. "In fact the songs on those first couple of albums were written with exactly that style of vocalist in mind."

The record itself was actually finished a year ago, but such are the vagaries of the music industry that it's taken this long for it to finally be released.

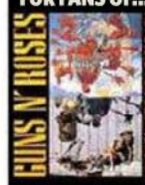
"We wanted to wait for the right deal [with Powerage], and then had to wait for a suitable gap in the release schedule," Newton explains. "But it's all been worthwhile."

The band are determined to make the album real value for money. "We're also offering bonuses like three live songs, and a new acoustic version of *I Am The Sun*, from the debut album. We know that you have to entice people to buy albums these days."

Oh, and there's one more good sales gimmick they have: the record is stuffed with good songs and strong performances. Old-fashioned values, but invaluable ones, right? **MD**

Fluke? is out now on Powerage Records.

FOR FANS OF...



Voodoo Six regard themselves as having clear British roots. "We're very old-school, but we're not retro. If you want reference points, then it's Free, Thin Lizzy, The Who, AC/DC – but with a 21st-century approach. More than anything else, though, we're inspired by early Guns N' Roses' take on blues rock; *Appetite...* is very much our blueprint."

Voodoo Six: looking after number one.

"We're offering bonuses on the record. You have to entice people to buy albums these days."

More at mu...download.com or ebook-free-download.net

PHOTO PASS

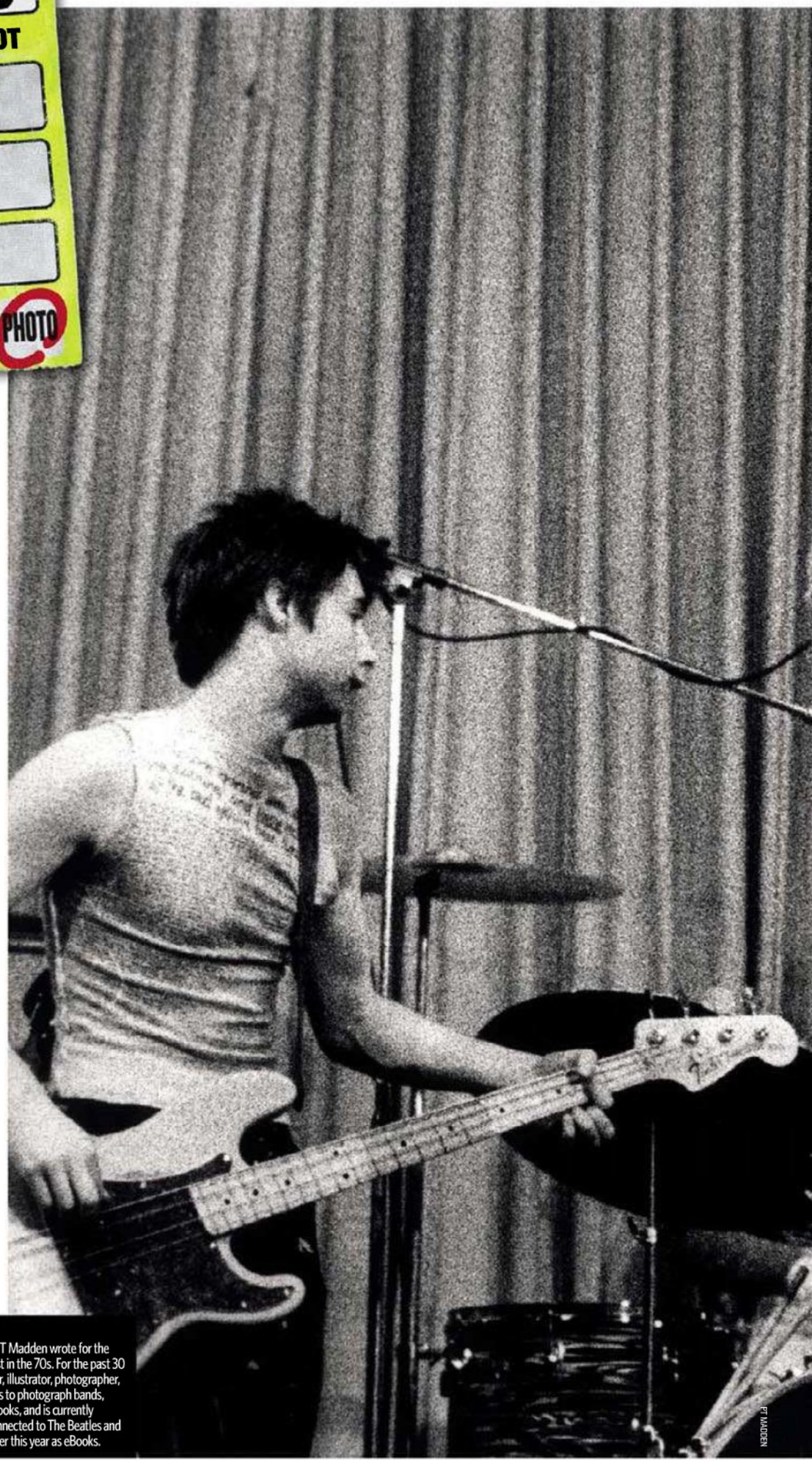
THE STORY BEHIND THE SHOT

Artist **Sex Pistols**

Location **London, 1976**

Photographer **PT Madden**

VIP STAFF GUEST AFTER SHOW PHOTO



PT MADDEN

"Although I was at quite a lot of the pre-Grundy Pistols London gigs I only shot two rolls of film of the band. This shot [at the Nashville Rooms in west London] is from the second.

"I arrived early, about five o'clock, because I wanted to ask [Malcolm] McLaren's permission to shoot the band. He knew who I was and gave his permission. There were only about twenty other people at the gig, including the 101ers who were headlining, Mick Jones and Paul Simonon. 101ers frontman Joe Strummer looked like a rock'n'roll relic to me. And I remember his shock at watching the Pistols discuss their stage gear. This was the first time he'd seen the Pistols. The performance was to be his baptism of fire and would lead directly to him forming the Clash with Jones and Simonon shortly after.

"I'd seen the Pistols implode at the 100 Club the week before but I didn't care about the possibility of being hit with a chair or a guitar. I was convinced the band were going to split up, and I wanted my memento.

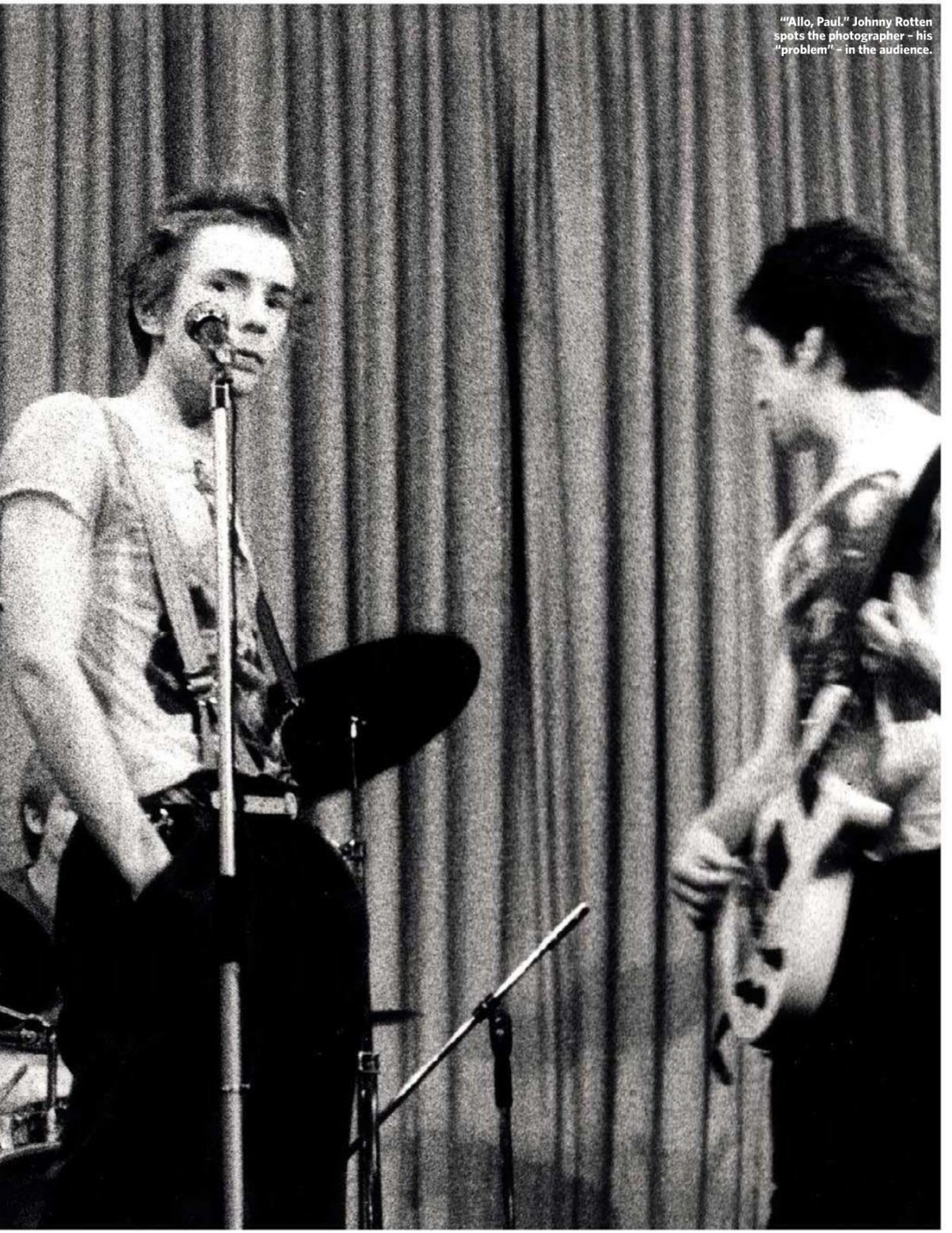
"Before they played *Problems*, Rotten clearly identified me , long-haired but a regular face at their gigs, with the words, 'Allo, Paul. You're my problem.' Photographing them was like standing up in front of the headmaster and defying him – terrifying but hilarious."

"Photographing the Pistols was terrifying but hilarious."

Madden's Sex Pistols prints can be bought direct from Photobox: www.photoboxgallery.com/madden

PAUL TERENCE MADDEN

After studying graphics in London, PT Madden wrote for the *NME* and worked as a freelance artist in the 70s. For the past 30 years he's mostly worked as designer, illustrator, photographer, writer and video maker. He continues to photograph bands, designs CD covers, websites and eBooks, and is currently documenting locations in the UK connected to The Beatles and punk rock. They will be published later this year as eBooks.



"'Allo, Paul." Johnny Rotten spots the photographer – his "problem" – in the audience.

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Heavy Rotation

What we've been listening to this month

01 White Trash Millionaire

BLACK STONE CHERRY

The Kentucky rockers return with a big riff, big chorus and an added talkbox in the mix on this, the squally first track from their forthcoming new album *Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea*. Released on May 30.

02 Nail On The Head

URIAH HEEP

The opening track from Heep's new album, *Into The Wild*. A first-rate anthem, to be sure. But is it just us, or does it contain undertones of 70s dancefloor filler *Oops Up Inside Your Head*?!

03 It Happened Today

REM

Big, strummy acoustic chords and a guest vocal from Eddie Vedder, this song from new album *Collapse Into Now* wouldn't have been out of place on 1991's *Out Of Time*.

04 Between The Lines

PRESTO BALLET

Metal Church guitarist Kurdt Vanderhoof goes prog – to stunning effect.

05 Phaze

LECHEROUS GAZE

J Mascis has said of Gaze guitarist Graham Clise: "He doesn't know any indie rock, he doesn't know who Thurston Moore is. The sound that comes out is something like UFO or Thin Lizzy mixed with Black Flag." Singer Lakis Panagiotopulos's Danzig/Vanian/Jobson impersonation is the only thing preventing Lecherous Gaze from being our new favourite band.

06 Fuck Friday Fuck Saturday Fuck Sunday Fuck You

DAN SARTAIN

With a song title that's almost as long as the song itself (a sprightly 58 seconds), the title track from the *Fuck* EP (available only on 7" single for Record Store Day on April 16) is the best minute of Ramones-like punk since Johnny and Joey began pushing up daisies. One for the school run.

07 Call Paul Stanley

BAD CITY

Hot new Chicago rockers offer Cheap Trick-like tribute to Kiss's Starchild. The heartfelt tale of a young rock star who somehow stumbles upon Stanley's phone number and calls him up in the middle of the night...

Citay: psychedelic.

08 Careful With That Hat

CITAY

Prime-time, shimmering psychedelic pop-rock from the San Francisco band's latest album *Dream Get Together*.

09 Barton Hollow

THE CIVIL WARS

Title track from the first full-length album from an alt.country rock duo that had their breakthrough with a song featured on *Grey's Anatomy* (don't hold that against 'em). Think Emmylou Harris and Gram Parsons on a collision course with the White Stripes.

10 Running Back

BRIAN ROBERTSON

Honky-tonk-flavoured remake of the standard from Thin Lizzy's *Jailbreak* album, from Robbo's brand new debut solo release *Diamonds And Dirt*.

11 Watching The River Flow

BEN WATERS

This easy-rolling Dylan cover from Waters's *Boogie 4 Stu* tribute to the late Stones pianist Ian Stewart reunites Bill Wyman with Jagger, Richards, Watts and Wood for their first studio date since 1989's *Steel Wheels*.

12 Have You Seen My Baby?

FLAMIN' GROOVIES

A rollicking assault on a Randy Newman barnstormer from the Groovies' essential *Teenage Head* album. Roy Loney and Cyril Jordan – this undervalued band's Glimmer Twins – are about to make a UK appearance 45 years after the Flamin' Groovies' first got together.

13 C'Mon Let's Go

GIRLSCHOOL

Fuck the Runaways. England's Girlschool rocked harder, wrote better songs and were a thousand times more shaggable. This bratty gem is collected on *New Wave Of British Heavy Metal*, a new compilation out now in association with Universal Music and yours truly.

14 Chime On

GARY LUCAS & GODS AND MONSTERS

One of many projects from the prolific Lucas – guitarist and collaborator for both Beefheart and Jeff Buckley – Gods And Monsters are produced by a Talking Head (Jerry Harrison) and feature a Television (Billy Ficca) and a Modern Lover (Ernie Brooks). This is deep-fried country, heavy on melody, with a side order of psyche. From forthcoming album *The Ordeal Of Civility*.

15 Winter Wine

CARAVAN

From the imminent 40th Anniversary Deluxe Edition of *In The Land Of Grey And Pink*, this wistful, achingly melodic song epitomises what Caravan at their very best were all about, and is a standout track on one of the Canterbury scene's cornerstone albums.

16 Mi Sangre (The Blood Song)

ARTILLERY

The Danish thrash maestros are back – and how. The opening track from new album *My Blood* bristles with neck-shattering, abrasive brutality.

17 Takeahnase

NEUROSIS

From the reissue of the blistering *Souls At Zero* classic: the very hardcore punk/metal album on which Slipknot have apparently based their entire career and which influenced everyone from Earth to Mastodon.

18 Embarrassing Kid

VAN DER GRAAF GENERATOR

Quirky, almost Pythonesque tale of adolescent trauma, from the prog legends' new album *A Grounding In Numbers*.

19 Oh Yeah

CAN

From the Krautrock pioneers' much-lauded third album, *Tago Mago* (40 this year), this minimalist, hypnotic track with an eerie momentum gives you early-70s, less-is-more Can in a nutshell.

20 The Light At The End Of The Tunnel Is Hell

SHARKS

From new album *The Joys Of Living 2008-2010*, which compiles the first two EPs from the best, most recent impersonation of the Clash.

21 Uncomfortably Numb

GRAVEYARD

Rare laid-back affair from Sweden's most authentic and exciting classic rock archivists. From their blistering new album *Hisingen Blues*.

22 Pushover

TERRORVISION

'You told me you're a rocker/But I caught you dancing to Madonna.' Groovy, funny, riffy... Terrorvision shouldn't still be this good, should they? From new album *Super Delux*.

23 Bridge Burning

FOO FIGHTERS

A syncopated staccato riff, an über-hummable patented Grohl chorus and – bosh! – the Foos are back with this triumphant opener from forthcoming album *Wasting Light*.

24 Gone Baby Gone

MICHAEL MONROE

A Stones-y, country-rock insta-classic puts the heart in Monroe's *Sensory Overdrive*.

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Iggy And The Stooges

Raw Power

Stooges guitarist James Williamson looks back at this proto-punk ass kicker that opened many a show circa '73 – and says what he thinks of the Guns N' Roses version.

Words:
Greg Prato
Photo:
Neal Preston/Corbis

Although now considered hugely influential, when *Raw Power*, The Stooges' third album, was originally released in 1973 it was largely looked down upon by mainstream rock. With its barely containable youthful energy and a Tasmanian devil on vocals, the album would serve as a blueprint for the punk revolution that was only a few years away.

"The songs on that album have survived multiple/dubious mixes, the test of time – everything," remembers James Williamson, Stooges guitarist and co-writer of all the songs on *Raw Power*. "They still rock, and people still like them… What else can you say? I think that's a testimony to the songs."

By 1971 the Stooges were shot, having collapsed due to drug addiction and an indifferent record label. Singer Iggy Pop had retained latter-day Stooges guitarist James Williamson, and the duo sought to form a new band far away from the group's home base of Ann Arbor, Michigan.

"We got a record deal with Columbia, and Jim [Iggy] had signed with MainMan Management – which was David Bowie's management," Williamson recalls. "We came over to London with the idea of forming a new band, to make the record. But we ended up not really finding the kind of guys that we were interested playing with. So we brought over the Asheton brothers [guitarist Ron and drummer Scott] who had been in the Stooges with us, and moved Ron over to bass guitar – which is something he used to do when I first met him. So we 're-formed The Stooges', if you will."

With the Stooges officially back in business, Williamson and Pop produced a flurry of songwriting. But their new label was unimpressed.

"It's a convoluted story, in terms of our finding material for the album, because the management team wasn't accustomed to our style of playing, so they kept rejecting all the songs that we wanted to record. Generally, the way we worked between Jim and I was that I would come up with a riff, we'd get together and he'd come up with lyrics, and then we'd go back and forth and mould a song out of that. Generally speaking, I wrote those riffs in my room on an acoustic guitar. And *Raw Power* was like that. It was fortunate for us that the MainMan Management team got distracted trying to break Bowie in the US, so they quit telling us we couldn't do stuff, and we went into the studio and made the album."

The title track might be one of The Stooges' best-known songs, but don't ask Williamson to explain what the lyrics are about. "I have no idea," he laughs. "I don't know what any of these lyrics are about."

Now armed with *Raw Power* and a set of other equally powerful tunes, The Stooges set out to lay down the tracks that would become the *Raw Power* album. And soon the album found itself linked to MainMan's top artist. "David Bowie was producing a lot of bands back then, like Mott The Hoople and so on. And they made overtures to us [about Bowie producing *Raw Power*], but we just kind of pretended we didn't hear them.

Recording-wise, we did that ourselves with an engineer from Columbia, in CBS Studios in London. That was my first album, so I didn't know anything about recording, really, and the other guys in the band weren't really that technically proficient. But we certainly had a lot of our own ideas. I'm told that the levels on that recording aren't very good, especially on the bass and the drums. We probably messed it up. We did a mix that we thought was acceptable, but when we went to deliver it to MainMan for the CBS release they thought that it wasn't. Then they got Bowie in to remix it."

Soon after, the songs were 'Bowied' back in the US. "First, Jim came over to Los Angeles, then I came over. I think I was there for most of it. Bowie was on tour in the US then, so he had to do it fairly quickly. Like I said, it was my first album, so I wasn't going to be too critical in the studio. Bowie had done a lot of albums, so we figured he knew what he was doing. But the problem was this was not a Bowie style of music – it wasn't tune-y or anything that he usually does. So I think he didn't really understand the music, and he put a real arty overlay on it. There's been a lot of criticism about it over the years, but you've got to give him credit that nothing sounded like it before or since."

On the ensuing tour in support of *Raw Power* the title track was the set-opener, and with good reason, says Williamson. "It lends itself to opening up, where the guitar can start out, and the bass and drums can drop in as the members of the band get their gear, and then Iggy can come out and do his thing. Playing that riff over and over again, it's a nice way to get things going. It was always a good riff. I think it still is. We just played São Paulo [Williamson recently rejoined The Stooges], and we opened the set with *Raw Power*. It's just a rockin' song, with a lot of energy."

Raw Power remains one of The Stooges' most ferocious rockers, but does Williamson favour it over the other tracks on the album?

"It was always a good riff. I think it still is. It's a rockin' song, with a lot of energy."

"I don't know. I think that's certainly a good one. *Search And Destroy* has now become a classic song, and I think *Gimme Danger* is kind of an 'epic song,' if you will. I like so many of them; *Shake Appeal*. We're going to do them all in London."

Over the years, quite a few Stooges-influenced bands have covered their songs, including Guns N' Roses, who tackled the title track from *Raw Power* on their all-covers album *The Spaghetti Incident*. What does Williamson think of GN'R's rendition?

"Let's just say I preferred the Chili Peppers' cover of *Search And Destroy* to what Guns N' Roses did with *Raw Power*," he says diplomatically. "But I was really happy about the royalty cheques [laughs]!"

The Stooges will be performing Raw Power in its entirety at London Hammersmith Apollo on May 2 and May 3, and Minehead Butlins 7-9. You can follow James Williamson's activities at www.myspace.com/straightjamesw

LONDON CALLING
Despite living in England for an extended period around the time of *Raw Power*, The Stooges played only a single show, at King's Cross Cinema in London in 1972, during that stay.

"Two things about that show stand out," says James Williamson. "First of all, how many people that either were there or said they were there who would shape so-called punk rock – the Sex Pistols, the Clash, and all these different bands that would be formed. Secondly, kids in England were just completely mortified by this guy jumping in the audience and this assault of music. In fact it was so severe that MainMan never booked another gig in London for us."

THE FACTS

RELEASE DATE
February 1973

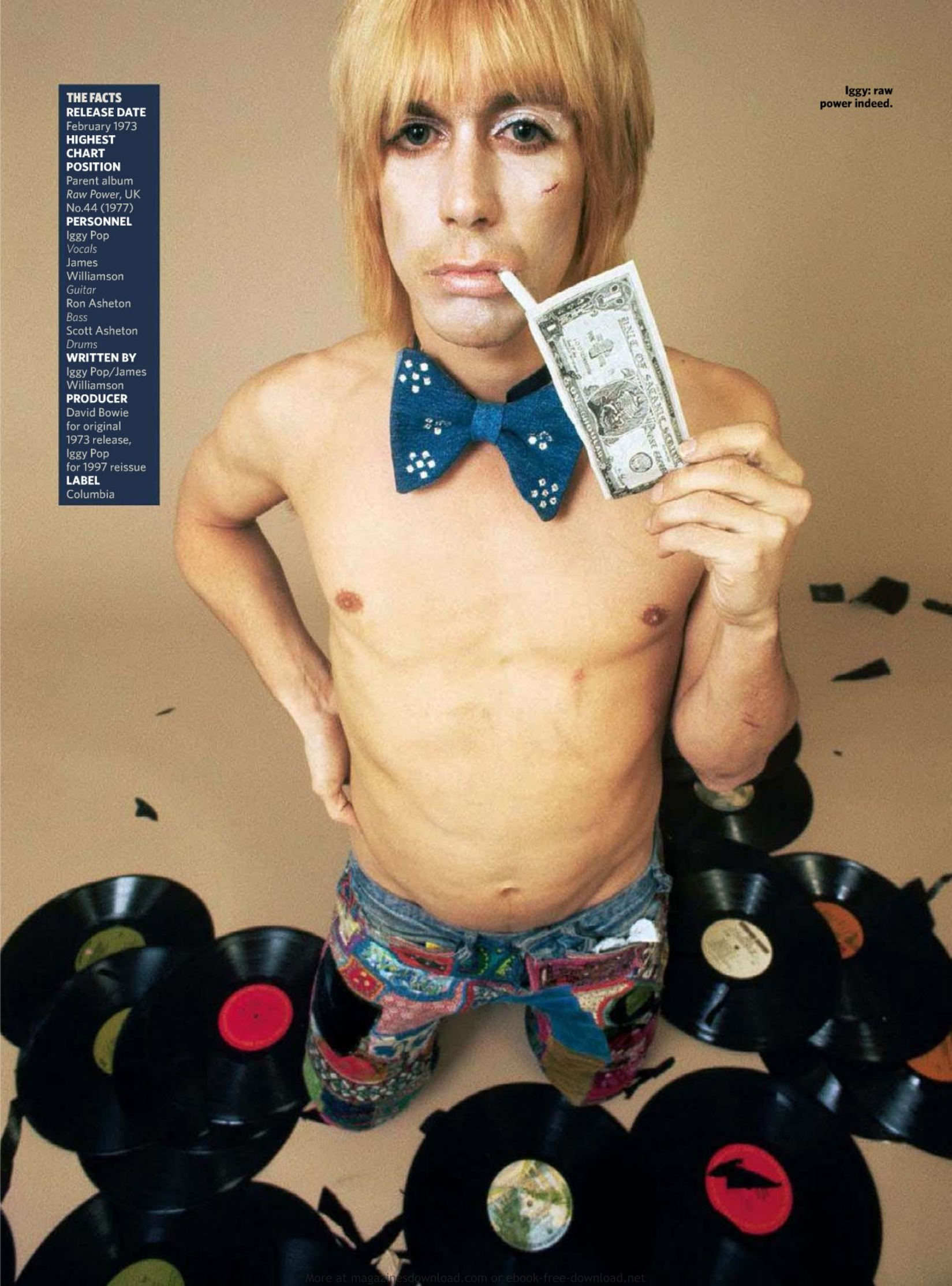
HIGHEST CHART POSITION
Parent album *Raw Power*, UK No.44 (1977)

PERSONNEL
Iggy Pop
Vocals
James Williamson
Guitar
Ron Asheton
Bass
Scott Asheton
Drums

WRITTEN BY
Iggy Pop/James Williamson

PRODUCER
David Bowie for original 1973 release, Iggy Pop for 1997 reissue

LABEL
Columbia



Iggy: raw power indeed.

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Q&A

Jeff Beck

The guitarist's guitarist on Bowie being a fan, turning down the Stones, and how he used to impress the schoolgirls.

Words: **Max Bell**

Jeff Beck comes bounding into his manager's London office looking the same as ever, bar a few more years of experience as the guitar player's guitarist of choice etched into his craggy features. After seven years in 'exile', Beck is enjoying another renaissance with the Grammy-winning album *Emotion & Commotion*, a brand new tribute to Les Paul CD/DVD called *Rock'n'roll Party*, and news of a reunion with Rod Stewart buzzing round his head. Beck is evidently in the mood (his *Together & Apart* show with Eric Clapton last year delighted both sets of fans), and he's fitting in the Rod collaboration with a US tour and the itch to get back into the studio. Now 66, he says he's still as keen as ever to pursue new ground, and, as he tells *Classic Rock*, he's got plenty to be happy about in a year that looks certain to put him back at the centre of a music business he's graced for more than 40 years.

You've just picked up another three Grammys: two for *Emotion & Commotion*, and one for the *Imagine* collaboration with Herbie Hancock and Pink. Do you enjoy attending these awards events?
It's a networking profile thing. If you don't go you won't get talked about and you become invisible. Last year I went with Imelda May (singer on Jeff's new album *Rock'n'Roll Party*) and I saw it through her eyes. Lady Gaga was swinging about on a JCB; it was a bit of a circus, nothing to do with music. But this year I was nominated for six awards so I thought I'd participate in the circus. It means someone is listening to the effort I've put into making my records. Once I went with a bunch of mates, convinced I was going to win. I realised I wasn't when they stuck us up in the gods. And the envelope gets opened and it's: "The winner is… Carlos Santana!"

What do you do with your awards?
I've got eight and they're all on my mum's piano, weighing it down. I get them for the most obscure tracks sometimes, and people say: "Never heard it." But these [Grammys] are the Oscars of the music business. They might give the album sales a bit of a tweak.

You constantly change styles – classical, rockabilly, fusion… Are you a restless type?
Yeah, I am. I've got a fascination with musical sound and what that does to me. One minute I'm angry at some new rubbish, then I'm weeping buckets at Christine Johnson singing *You'll Never Walk Alone* [in the 1945 Hollywood musical *Carousel*]. Why does that happen? Why do I get such a buzz out of *Nessun Dorma*, or *Pavane* by Ravel, and Mahler's Fifth? The fun thing for a musician like me is I can go anywhere I want. I can play Puccini; I'm not tied down to a rock formula. People can't expect me to be like Led Zep 2,3,4. I don't do that. That isn't fulfilling. I'm not doing Guns N' Roses mark twenty.

You've talked before about playing live with a full orchestra. How is that coming along?
I've done snippets, but I want the full-blown, 100-piece at the Royal Albert Hall, with French horn and the whole monty. I'd love to take that to a Madison Square Garden or a Hollywood Bowl. I'll do it when my manager says someone has cancelled, get in there. Trouble with these big ideas is you have to book halls years in advance.

Do you remember July 3, 1973?
Christ yeah. The last night of the Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars tour. Bowie originally wanted me to be in the band but he got Mick Ronson, who he always said was his own Jeff Beck. I remember they were filming, and the cameras panned in on my wah-wah pedal during *The Jean Genie* and I was wearing these dirty white platform shoes. I went ballistic when they said they were using me in the film, so I refused to sign the release. Bowie goes: "Oh, you might as well agree, they're already showing a bootleg version at the Triple XXX theatres on 42nd Street, and you didn't look any dafter than me." In the end I agreed. The pitch of teenage screaming at that gig was unbelievable. I'd never experienced that. I recall it was someone's birthday in the group, and I thought I was like a little mascot pressie. But actually Bowie is a big fan, so…

You would have looked good in face paint and a jumpsuit.
Nah. And I'm not a 'joiner', really. Pink Floyd wanted me but they didn't have the nerve to pop the question. And then there's The Rolling Stones [when they were looking for a replacement for Mick Taylor who quit in '74]. I told them I don't do auditions. And I wouldn't have fitted in. I never had any regrets. I thought about it, but I had Billy Cobham and Jan Hammer in my head. I didn't want to spend my life playing *Brown Sugar*. I think they'd probably made their best records by then, with Mick Taylor. He gave them a lot. A big old badge of sound.

I couldn't deal with their looseness. I was rehearsing [with the Stones] and I hardly ever saw Mick Jagger. When he did arrive, someone else fucked off. I'm there to work, and they're going: "Shall we pop over to Las Vegas, or Barbados?" No! I like to have bottled attention and discipline. Get the damn thing done, and then you can mess around. It was crazy.

Your new album is a tribute to the late guitar legend Les Paul. What does he mean to you?
A lot. Sadly he passed away and never got to hear us. It's like a post-party. He was a profound influence on me when I was growing up. His records were treasured. I absorbed all his tonal variations. His music was memorable, not just a barbaric rock'n'roll thing. He had class. His guitar bends were delicious and the runs were fabulous. Plus, in Mary Ford he had a singer so perfectly attuned that her pitching is always correct. Her voice stood out. As Imelda's does on the tribute songs to them. That era reminds me of a time of innocence when you had a daily bombardment of new and exciting music. I was lost in all that. This was when even the idea of ever leaving my home in Surrey was a fantasy. All that music was the antidote to school. And owning the vinyl was also a great way of impressing the local schoolgirls.

CD and DVD versions of Rock'n'roll Party are out now on Rhino Records and Eagle Vision respectively.

Jeff Beck: still doing what he wants, how he wants, when he wants.

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"PINK FLOYD WANTED ME BUT THEY DIDN'T HAVE THE NERVE TO POP THE QUESTION."

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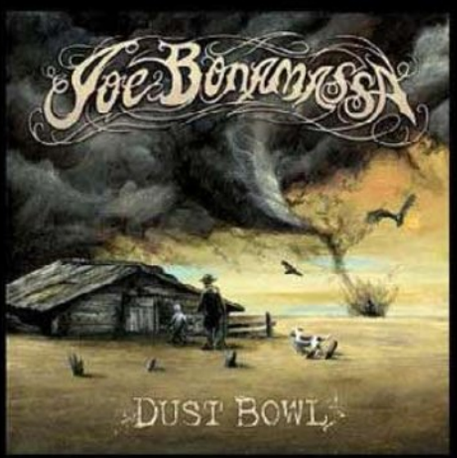

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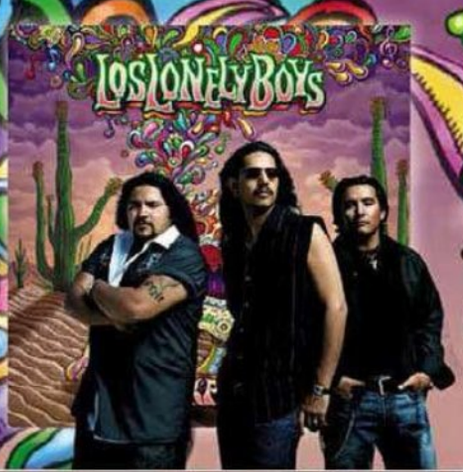

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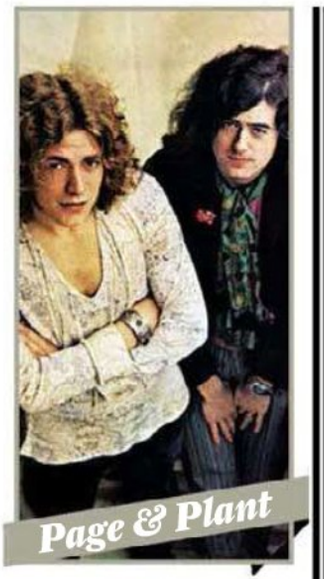

Page & Plant

Pink Floyd

Bon Scott

ZEPPELIN/BON SCOTT/LEMMY/QUEEN/SABBATH/SPRINGSTEEN/STONES: GETTY; HENDRIX: RETNA

100 GREATEST SONGWRITERS

CHOSEN BY ROCK'S GREATEST SONGWRITERS!

From *Stairway To Heaven* to *School's Out*, from *Smoke On The Water* to *Smells Like Teen Spirit*, at the very heart of the rock bands we all know and love are the *songs*. And someone has to write them. This month we celebrate those who wrote the hits, the misses and the off-the-wall album tracks. We asked 100 rock songwriters to name their own songwriting heroes. Whether it's Chris Cornell on Lennon & McCartney, Roy Harper on Page & Plant, Paul Stanley on Jimmy Webb, Tony Iommi on Hank Marvin or James Dean Bradfield on Guns N' Roses, we think their answers may surprise you as much as they did us...

Interviews: Paul Zollo, Bill DeMain, Henry Yates, Paul Sexton, Dave Ling, Emma Johnston, Paul Elliott, Malcolm Dome, Max Bell, Rob Hughes, Ken McIntyre, Peter Makowski, Philip Wilding, Lee Dorrian, Jon Hotten, Jaan Uhelszki, Dave Everley, Marcel Anders.

Black Sabbath

Jimi Hendrix

Lemmy

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THEY INVENTED GUITAR POP, YOU KNOW

JOHN LENNON/PAUL McCARTNEY

By Chris Cornell

If you're looking learn the craft of songwriting, go and listen to a couple of different Beatles records. I'm not a big fan of the early ones, but I'd particularly recommend the ones they did when they began stretching out. As an example, maybe I'd pick *A Day In The Life* [from 1967's *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* album]. It was a real snapshot of the moment – Lennon probably wove the lyrics with the melody while he ate a bagel or drank a cup of coffee. Something as mundane as that. It's a perfect example of the two moods – Lennon's and McCartney's – coming together in a song. Write them down on paper and they wouldn't work at all, even the hook seems disconnected from the lyrics, but in reality their combination is completely magical.

You have to remember that back in 1967, everyone at record companies still wore ties and was as old as your dad. But in coming up with these brilliant cacophonies of sound, The Beatles were really challenging the institutionalised nature of the music business.

To me, what made them so cool was that, collectively or individually, they began to integrate other forms of music that they were passionate about. Of course, what made it work was that it always still sounded like The Beatles. It's a great credit to Paul McCartney that he could be the singer of *Yesterday* and of *Helter Skelter* – and he wasn't the only singer in the band."

Chris Cornell is lead singer in Soundgarden. Their Live On T-5 album – taken from their 1996 West Coast tour – is out now via A&M/UMe.

CONTEMPORARY BLUESMAN

JACK WHITE

By Mike Peters

It's his respect for what's gone before that makes Jack White stand out as a great songwriter. He'll be seen as a visionary in years to come; someone who has swam up the river of rock'n'roll and drunk from the source.

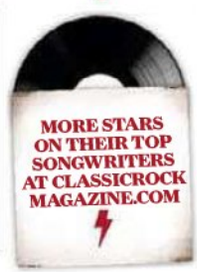
A lot has come from Jack White, but *Icky Thump* by The White Stripes is amazing. I like the fact that he's messing around with British words – y'know, it's a British phrase, 'ecky thump'. The Small Faces messed around with language like that, too.

It's not just about the chords with this song. In the same way that Led Zeppelin did, he manages to marry a killer riff into a song. It's the sort of thing that will be driving people mad in guitar shops around the world. It's rooted in classic themes like Zeppelin, The Who and Cream – but he makes it all his own.

Mike Peters is lead singer in The Alarm (on tour in May) and is also playing with Big Country on their April tour.

"In coming up with these cacophonies, The Beatles were really challenging the nature of the music business."

Chris Cornell



SONGWRITING, WHILE STANDING ON ONE LEG

IAN ANDERSON

By Steve Harris

I think Ian Anderson is one of the most gifted writers that ever lived. He's a fantastic musician and his lyrics can be anything from humorous to thought-provoking. What can I say? I'm not worthy!

I'd have to say *Locomotive Breath* [from 1971's *Aqualung*] was Jethro Tull's greatest song. Maiden recorded another song from that album, *Cross-Eyed Mary* [the B-side to Maiden's 1983 single *The Trooper*], and I could see us doing *Locomotive Breath* as well. It's a great song. It's got power. I could envisage Bruce singing it.

I think you can hear Ian and Tull's influence all over the Maiden stuff. If people suddenly discover Jethro Tull, they discover Maiden as well, to a certain degree. *Blood Brothers* [from 2000's *Brave New World*] is probably the Maiden song that has the biggest Tull influence. It's not a rip-off. It's not like we sat down and thought, right, I'm gonna nick this bit or that bit. It's just a very heavy influence. I'm proud to admit it. Mind you, trying to stand on one leg like Ian Anderson… with my heavy bass, I don't think I'd be up there long!

Steve Harris and the rest of Iron Maiden start their UK tour on July 20 in Glasgow.

SCARLET PAGE

Lennon and McCartney: "their combination is completely magical".

BRILL SONGWRITER

DOC POMUS

By Henry Rollins

I like Doc Pomus – one of the Brill Building writers. Here's a guy with polio and crutches. So, what song did he write? Save The Last Dance For Me. When you hear his story and hear that song, that really rocks. It's just such a beautiful, heartfelt lyric, so completely unguarded.

Henry Rollins is currently on a spokenword tour in the USA. Learn more at www.henryrollins.com

A SONGWRITER TO LOVE

ARTHUR LEE

By Glenn Hughes

I was making the first five-piece Trapeze album, and Love's *Forever Changes* – in particular *Alone Again Or* – was running through my head, hence my songwriting on the album was more acoustic.

When I listen back to *Forever Changes*, I'm taken right back to that safe place, at my parents' home, with the headphones on, jamming along with this LA-sounding masterpiece with my first acoustic guitar. It almost sounds like a demo in places – rough and raw, and a perfect postcard of 1969. It was John Bonham who turned me onto Arthur Lee and Love. Lee's songcraft on the *Forever Changes* album literally changed my own thought process of songwriting.

Glenn Hughes will play Classic Rock's High Voltage Festival on July 24 with Black Country Communion.

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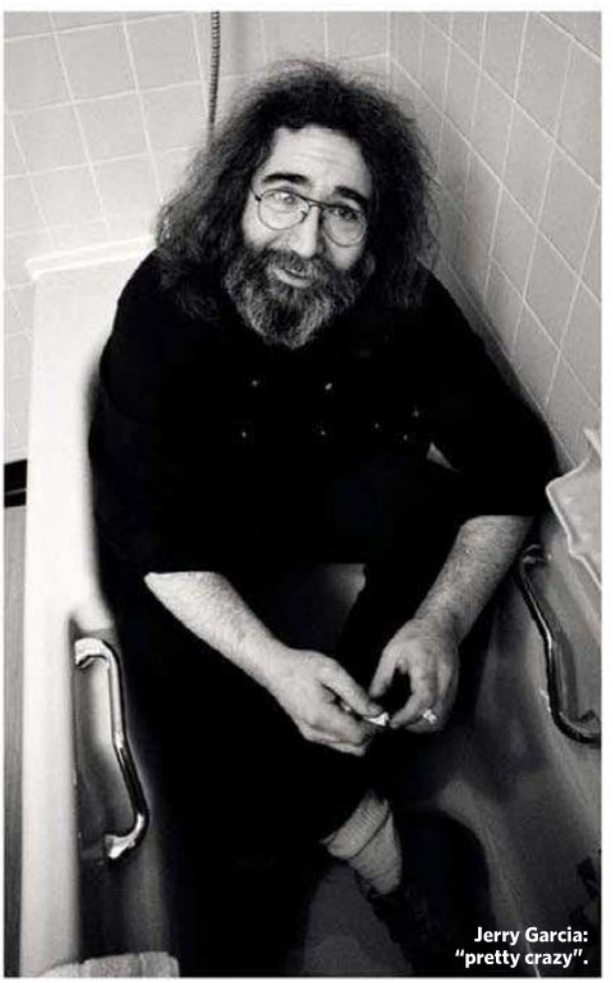

Jerry Garcia: "pretty crazy".

ULTIMATE DEAD-HEAD

JERRY GARCIA

By Warren Haynes

I didn't really discover the Dead early on. For some reason, it didn't make a connection with me. My eldest brother had some Grateful Dead records, and I'd hear them in the distance occasionally. I didn't really become a fan until 1989. Somehow the fact they'd written so many great songs kind of eluded me.

Eventually, when I realised how many great songs were in their back catalogue, I started appreciating them from a songwriting perspective. I saw them five times from '89 to when Garcia died in '95, though I did see them once as a 19-year-old in '79. I got a glimpse of what that scene was all about, which was pretty crazy. When Phil Lesh called me in the late 90s, I flew from New York to California to hang out with him, rehearse and do a few shows. We had an instant connection and from that part onwards I was part of that scene.

If I had to pick a favourite album, the easy one to choose from the Dead would be *Europe '72*, because live records tend to capture things you can't get in the studio. But from a studio perspective, the songwriting on *Workingman's Dead* and *American Beauty* was excellent.

Warren Haynes is in Gov't Mule. His solo album Man In Motion is due soon.

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TRAMPY TUNESMITH

ROGER HODGSON

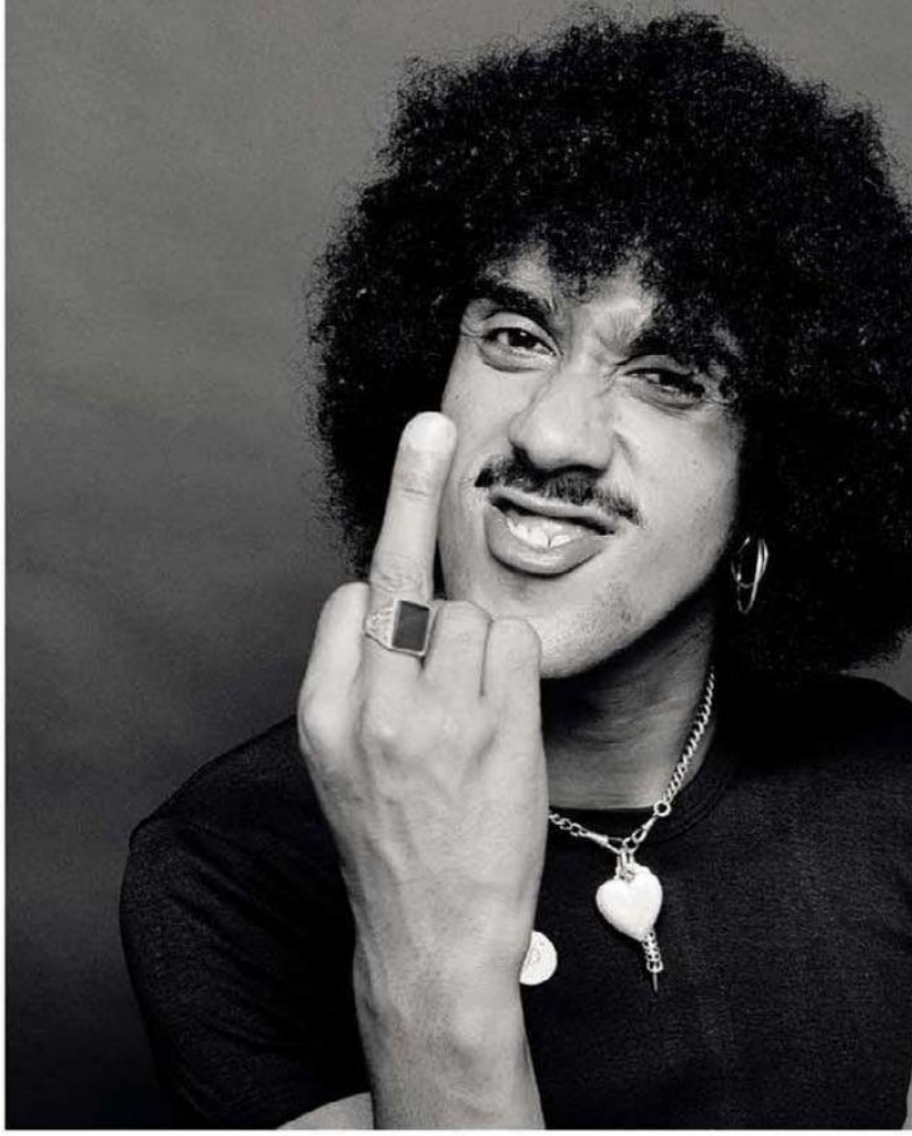
By Fish

I always look for the songwriter who can write that one special song. With rock artists it's always the one who can write the big crossover song. The pop song in the rock genre. I know that's often seen by fans as selling out, but I've never really understood that attitude. We got it to a certain extent in Marillion when we had the big hits with *Kayleigh* and *Lavender*.

One of the best examples of that approach to songwriting is Roger Hodgson. I always loved Supertramp. I remember buying *Crime Of The Century* from Preston market. It made such a strong impression on me. It was a rock album, but it had these delightfully poppy melodies.

And then I played with Roger in Malta. It was just him and his piano, and he was amazing. You just forget how many memorable songs he's written. Just listen to *Breakfast In America* – so many amazing songs on one album. And he's incredible as a lyricist and a songwriter. His sense of melody is unsurpassable, and the way he writes is just pitch-perfect for his voice. *Sister Moonshine,* from *Crisis? What Crisis?*, is a particular favourite of mine. And the song *Breakfast In America*. He's the only guy I know who got the word 'kippers' into a rock song.

Fish plays UK dates at the end of April.



SMASHING SONGWRITER

BILLY CORGAN

By Cormac Neeson

The Smashing Pumpkins have done some of my all-time favourite albums. For me, Billy Corgan always had an original style and approach as a songwriter. If you go from the *Gish* album to *Mellon Collie And The Infinite Sadness,* it's a period covering four years, during which he wrote some simply beautiful music.

At that time, Corgan was just so prolific, yet everything had his unique stamp. You knew you were dealing with the Pumpkins. Then, amazingly, he changed direction because he thought he'd done everything possible within rock'n'roll. That was a really brave move.

He taught me about getting the most out of every idea you have, and never being afraid to try something different. It might not come off, but always be prepared to be bold and experimental, and never allow yourself to get stuck in a rut.

It's hard to choose just one song of his. I'd have to go for the whole of the *Siamese Dream* record. As a complete package of great songs, it's quite brilliant. The amazing thing is that here is an example of somebody writing an entire album and making everything so interconnected that the overall impression counts for more than individual tracks.

Cormac Neeson is the singer in The Answer. They have a new DVD, 412 Days Of Rock'N'Roll, out soon, a Record Store Day 7" and a new album later this year. See www.theanswer.ie

Billy Corgan: "Wrote some simply beautiful music."

RETNA X5

Phil Lynott: "A romantic, a fighter, a poet, a lover, a rocker."

MICK ROCK

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

PHIL LYNOTT

By Ricky Warwick

Phil Lynott was a poet, no doubt about it. He's a brilliant songwriter, a criminally underrated lyricist. He had it all. He could write the perfect pop song – *Don't Believe A Word* is two-and-a-half minutes of hook-laden, simple brilliance – and then go from that to, say, *Angel Of Death*, this brooding heavy metal song, then *Sarah*, then *Emerald*, then *The Boys Are Back In Town*.

He was a romantic, a fighter, a poet, a lover, a rocker and always one of the lads. He managed to be all of those things without it seeming wrong or strange.

He had that rare talent of making his words come alive, of conjuring images with the words of his songs. He told you a story in three-and-a-half minutes. It's a rare gift.

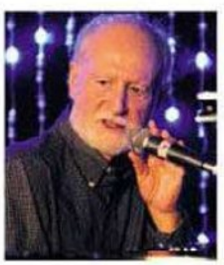
As a kid, I loved him before I heard him. No one looked like him. He was just so effortlessly cool, you know? And then I heard him sing – then it all made sense.

Black Rose – man, I lived twenty minutes away from where those '*Mountains of Mourne, come down to the sea*'. He seemed to speak directly to me, but, of course, he didn't. That was his knack. He spoke to millions. I've met people from all over Europe who felt Phil spoke directly to them, too.

My favourite Lizzy song changes night after night. One night it's *Jailbreak* – that's always good to sing – then it might be *The Rocker*. *Killer On The Loose* is a great song, too.

You know, someone said to me before I took this job [fronting Thin Lizzy]: "How are you going to fill those [Lynott's] shoes?" I don't fill them. You can't fill them. I stand beside them – I stand tall beside them and I stand proud, and I sing those songs with passion because I love them. But I don't fill those shoes. No one can.

Ricky Warwick is currently the front-man with Thin Lizzy. Lizzy appear at this year's High Voltage festival in July.



SHARP SHOOTER

MOSE ALLISON

By Chrissie Hynde

Everyone loves Mose. The Who and The Kinks, all their songs were Mose Allison songs. That was the way they structured all of them... Mose is really sharp. He's one of the greats. I don't think we're all in that class.

FP, Chrissie & The Fairground Boys' album Fidelity! is out now on earMusic.

"Phil Lynott had that rare talent of making his words come alive... He told you a story in three-and-a-half minutes. It's a rare gift."

Ricky Warwick

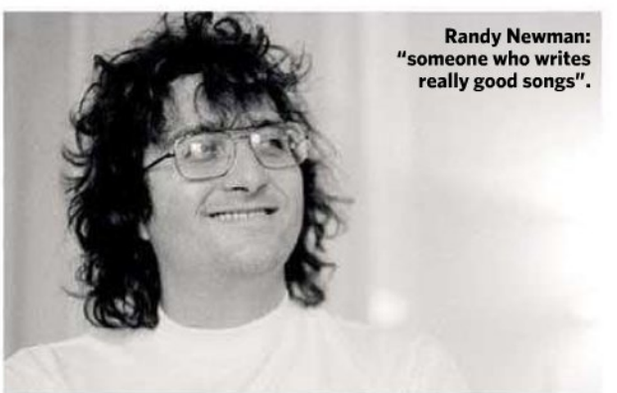
SPOOKY

ROKY ERIKSON

By Robert Plant

Roky Erikson was a hugely important songwriter. His band 13th Floor Elevators were all about 'the spook' – they mixed trippy psychedelia, surf-beat, and the British music that arrived a few years earlier. You can still hear the spook today if you listen hard enough.

Robert Plant's latest album, Band Of Joy, is out now.



Randy Newman: "someone who writes really good songs".

TOP OF THE CLASS

RANDY NEWMAN

By Bob Dylan

To me, someone who writes really good songs is Randy Newman. There's a lot of people who write good songs. As songs. Now, Randy might not go out on stage and knock you out or knock your socks off. And he's not going to get people thrilled in the front row. He ain't gonna do that. But he's gonna write a better song than most people who can do it.

You know, he's got that down to an art. Randy knows music. And it doesn't get any better than *Louisiana 1927* or *Cross Charleston Bay* [actually *Sail Away*]. It doesn't get any better than that. That's like a classically heroic anthem theme. He did it. There's quite a few people who did it. Not that many people in *Randy*'s class.

Bob Dylan has written a song or two. For the most up-to-date info, visit www.bobdylan.com

More at magazinesdownload.com or ebook-free-download.net

THIS WOMAN'S WORK

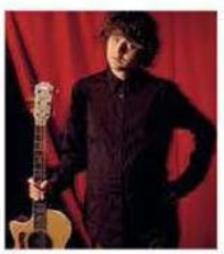
KATE BUSH

By John Lydon

Kate Bush and her grand piano? That's like John Wayne and his saddle. I remember my mum, God rest her soul, when she first heard Kate Bush, she went: "Oh, Johnny, it sounds like a bag of cats." At first it seemed absurd [starts wailing '*Heathcliff*…' from *Wuthering Heights*], but it isn't at all – it fits. Those shrieks and warbles are beauty beyond belief to me.

She supplies me with all the clues, and it's up to me to put the answers together. That's the Koran of music. And that surely is what we're all looking for – no easy answers to anything.

John Lydon was a Sex Pistol. Although he'd rather we talked about Public Image Limited, who tour the UK in June.



THE BLUE BOY

RON SEXSMITH

By Graham Gouldman

Recently I've discovered an amazing unique talent called Ron Sexsmith. I didn't know much about him until I did a songwriters circle with him and Fran Healy from Travis on BBC4, but he's the kind of writer who, as soon as he starts singing, I'm there – two notes in.

It wasn't: "Oh, listen a few times." No, he's got that voice – McCartney-meets-Roy Orbison. I'm listening to his new album, *Late Bloomer*, all the time. Every song is terrific. He's a well-respected guy, and hearing him, for me, is like a gift. He's got a country twinge, and he uses billions of guitars, which is fine by me, and a major talent. I don't even think he's started. He's got so much left to do.

Graham Gouldman wrote For Your Love and Heart Full Of Soul for the Yardbirds and was a founder member of 10cc. The band are currently on tour. For more information, visit www.the10ccfanclub.

> **"Kate Bush and her grand piano? That's like John Wayne and his saddle. Those shrieks are beauty beyond belief to me."**
>
> John Lydon

THE GRANDADDIES OF ROCK'N'ROLL

LEIBER & STOLLER

By Jeff Beck

Choosing my favourite songwriter? That's a tough call. That's like asking me what my favourite dessert is. How are you going to have rock'n'roll without *Hound Dog*? Jerry Leiber was horrified when Elvis Presley picked up *Hound Dog*. He wanted big, black American women singers to do his songs, like Big Mama Thornton, who cut the original version in 1952. That's what he loved: big girl singers. Then he was writing for The Coasters and Peggy Lee, and he founded Red Bird Records, which continued a fruitful partnership with Lieber writing these standout lyrics, and Mike Stoller playing the piano.

I can see in my mind's eye Jerry rattling around, knocking out all these really cool phrases, really great stuff, like *Yakety Yak* and all the lyrics that applied to teenage youth at that time. Rebellion, rock'n'roll, the generation gap… the birth of the teenager, in fact. Sharp, educated lyrics came from his pen. They had that sharp, Jewish quality like a properly tailored suit. And the lyrics had to fit the image of the singer.

I wish I still had all those Lieber and Stoller singles and albums, which I cherished. The first vinyl. When I moved from my cottage into the house I live in now, a burglar stole them all. I had a call from my neighbour saying: "Don't mean to alarm you, Jeff, but some toe-rag is running down your drive with a box." He dropped them in the nearby woods – priceless fucking records all over the ground. And the bastard came back for them later! Cheeky sod. All my favourite songs disappeared in a big cardboard box. And he probably didn't even like 'em. Probably sold 'em in the fucking pub. I've got a good idea who the thief is as well. I should have knifed him.

Jeff Beck's Rock'N'Roll Party is out now, on DVD/Blu-ray on Eagle, and on CD on Rhino.

Leiber & Stoller: "That sharp Jewish quality, like a properly tailored suit".

IN CHAINS

JERRY CANTRELL

By Duff McKagan

I didn't realise just how good a songwriter Jerry was until Alice In Chains first came back and played a couple of shows. All their records have two guitars on, at least, and they asked if I'd play rhythm guitar for a gig on VH-1. I was gonna play, like, three songs. Jerry called the next day and asked if I could learn a bunch more. Pulling those songs apart and learning them, it just fuckin' blew me away. He doesn't ever use anything as a crutch, you know – I'm stuck so I'll go here. His use of harmonics, seventh fret and fifth fret. At first I thought it was an accident, and then I saw how it worked.

Taken, the new album from Duff McKagan's Loaded, is released on April 19 on Armoury Records.

COMBAT ROCKERS

THE CLASH

By Brian Fallon

I think the Clash were as good as they were because they were the first punk rock band to use actual songwriting in the music, and structure. Joe Strummer seemed to be the passionate one, and Mick Jones seemed to be the melodic or sentimental one. When I first heard *White Man In Hammersmith Palais*, to me it sounded like Springsteen and Dylan. I didn't hear it as revolutionary music, I was just thinking how this song felt like a lonely kid, and that was about music, not politics, to me. I understood what they were saying about the politics, but for me it was sentimentality that was resonating inside me. I heard *Straight To Hell* and thought about the loneliness of it – it felt like growing up feels. They influenced my band in melody writing. They always had a good turnaround in their harmonies.

Brian Fallon is the singer and a songwriter with the Gaslight Anthem. They play Download Festival in June.

MICHAEL PUTLAND/PAUL SLATTERY/RETNA X4

THE ACE OF SPADES

LEMMY

By Axel Sjöberg

How do I react to Lemmy's songwriting? It makes you want to go out, get drunk and get rowdy. His songs are relentless. That's what appeals to me.

People talk about Lemmy more as an icon than as a songwriter. They tend to focus on his personality and drug habits, rather than his work. I'm guessing he has at least a bit to do with his portrayal in the media – what he chooses to talk about when he's interviewed. I haven't heard anyone say he's a bad songwriter, I just think the focus is on other matters when it comes to Lemmy.

I'm a fan of Lemmy's writing, all the way through Motörhead to Hawkwind. I'm not sure who wrote what in Hawkwind, but you can hear his influence shine through. Motörhead songs have always been around, for as long as I've been alive. I'm guessing that *Ace Of Spades* was the first one I heard, but I love his early writing. *On Parole* is an excellent album. It's sloppy, in a good way: really sloppy playing, and punk attitude in the writing. Lemmy's writing is primitive but intelligent at the same time. The track *Motörhead* off that album is fucking genius. It's like Chuck Berry on speed. They're made out to be much more metal than they really are – it's rock'n'roll. Sometimes the nature of a song is hidden in production – how it's recorded and the way it sounds – but if you listen to what Lemmy is actually writing it's rock'n'roll.

His lyrics have a way of nailing things down. He hits it on the head. Neil Young has it too. I just saw the *Lemmy* movie and he seems like quite a joker. His personality comes out in his songs. When people listen to Motörhead's music they think of Lemmy.

He writes songs that are easily accessible without being dumb. You know how a lot of shitty radio music is made to be easy to remember? I don't mean accessible in that way, I mean it hits you straight away. Some music you have to sit down and listen to. It's not like that with Motörhead, it's just like, 'Boom!'

Some people say his writing hasn't evolved? Well, Motörhead is like the Ramones and AC/DC: if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

Axel Sjöberg is the drummer with Graveyard. Their new album Hisingen Blues is out now on Nuclear Blast.

Lemmy: his songs "make you want to go out, get drunk and get rowdy".

NEIL ZLOZOWER

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Bob Dylan: thinks popular song is "a magical thing".

BOB DYLAN

ON SONGWRITING

When it comes to writing songs, **Bob Dylan**, rock's most revered songwriter, thinks that if he can do it, any idiot can. We beg to differ.

Words: **Paul Zollo**

Does world need any more songs?
No. They've got enough. They've got way too many. As a matter of fact, if nobody wrote songs from this day on, the world ain't gonna suffer for it. Nobody cares. There's enough songs for people to listen to, if they wanna listen to songs.

But as far as songwriting, any idiot could do it. If you see me do it, any idiot could do it. [Laughs] It's just not that difficult of a thing. Everybody writes a song just like everybody's got that one great novel in them.

Van Morrison said that you are our greatest living poet. Do you think of yourself in those terms?
Sometimes. It's within me. It's within me to put myself up and be a poet. But it's a dedication. It's a big dedication.

Poets don't drive cars. Poets don't go to the supermarket. Poets don't empty the garbage. Poets aren't on the PTA. Poets don't… poets don't even speak on the telephone. Poets live on the land. They behave in a gentlemanly way. And live by their own gentlemanly code. And die broke. Or drown in lakes.

Poets usually have very unhappy endings. Look at Keats' life. Look at Jim Morrison, if you want to call him a poet. Look at him. Although some people say that he really is in the Andes.

Pete Seeger told me: "All songwriters are links in a chain." Without your link in that chain, all of songwriting would have evolved much differently. You brought folk music to rock music. Do you think that would have happened without you?
Somebody else would have done it in some other kind of way. But, hey, so what? You can lead people astray awfully easy. Would people have been better off? Sure. They would have found somebody else. Maybe different people would have found different people, and would have been influenced by different people.

> **"If nobody wrote songs from now on, the world ain't gonna suffer. There's more than enough."**
> **Bob Dylan**

Have you found there are better places in the world than others to write songs?
It's not necessary to take a trip to write a song. What a long, strange trip it's been, however. But that part of it's true, too. Environment is very important. People need peaceful, invigorating environments. Stimulating environments.

What got me into the whole thing in the beginning wasn't songwriting. That's not what got me into it. When *Hound Dog* came across the radio, there was nothing in my mind that said, 'Wow, what a great song, I wonder who wrote that?' It didn't really concern me who wrote it. It didn't matter who wrote it. It was just… it was just there.

Same way with me now. You hear a good song. Now you think to yourself, maybe, Who wrote it? Why? Because the performer's not as good as the song maybe. The performer's got to transcend that song. At least come up to it. A good performer can always make a bad song sound good. Record albums are filled with good performers singing filler stuff. Everybody can say they've done that. Whether you wrote it or whether somebody else wrote it, it doesn't matter.

What interested me was being a musician. The singer was important and so was the song. But being a musician was always first and foremost in the back of my mind…

Tell us about some of your songs. How about *One More Cup Of Coffee*?
Was that for a coffee commercial? No… It's a gypsy song. That song was written during a gypsy festival in the south of France one summer. Somebody took me there to the gypsy high holy days which coincide with my own particular birthday. So somebody took me to a birthday party there once, and hanging out there for a week probably influenced the writing of that song.

But the *'valley below'* probably came from someplace else. My feeling about the song was that the verses came from someplace else. It wasn't about anything, so this *'valley below'* thing became the fixture to hang it on. But *'valley below'* could mean anything.

You mentioned that when you were writing *Every Grain Of Sand* that you felt you were in an area where no one had ever been before.

Yeah. In that area where Keats is. Yeah. That's a good poem set to music.

A beautiful melody…

It's a beautiful melody too, isn't it? It's a folk derivative melody. It's nothing you can put your finger on, but you know, yeah, those melodies are great. There ain't enough of them, really. Even a song like that, the simplicity of it can be… deceiving. A song like that may have been written in great turmoil, although you would never sense that. Written but not delivered. Some songs are better written in peace and quiet and delivered in turmoil. Others are best written in turmoil and delivered in a peaceful, quiet way.

It's a magical thing, popular song. Trying to press it down into everyday numbers doesn't quite work. It's not a puzzle. There aren't pieces that fit. It doesn't make a complete picture that's ever been seen. But, you know, as they say, thank God for songwriters.

Precious Angel* from *Slow Train Comin'

Yeah, that's another one, it could go on forever. There's too many verses and there's not enough. You know? When people ask me 'How come you don't sing that song anymore?' It's like it's another of those songs: it's just too much and not enough. A lot of my songs strike me that way. That's the natural thing about them to me. It's too hard to wonder why about them. To me, they're not worthy of wondering about them. They're songs. They're not written in stone. They're on plastic.

Joey* from *Desire?

To me, that's a great song. Yeah. And it never loses its appeal.

And it has one of the greatest visual endings of any song.

That's a tremendous song. And you'd only know that singing it night after night. You know who got me singing that song? [Jerry] Garcia. Yeah. He got me singing that song again. He said that's one of the best songs ever written. Coming from him, it was hard to know which way to take that! He got me singing that song again with them [The Grateful Dead].

It was amazing how it would, right from the get-go, it had a life of its own, it just ran out of the gate and it just kept on getting better and better and it keeps on getting better. It's in its infant stages, as a performance thing. Of course, it's a long song. But, to me, not to blow my own horn, the song is like a Homer ballad. Much more so than *A Hard Rain'* which is a long song, too. But, to me, *Joey* has a Homeric quality to it that you don't hear everyday. Especially in popular music.

Adapted by the author from Songwriters On Songwriting, Expanded Edition (Da Capo Press) by Paul Zollo.

DYLAN: CAMERA PRESS; GETTY X2

MASTERS OF PUPPETS. AND SONGS

METALLICA

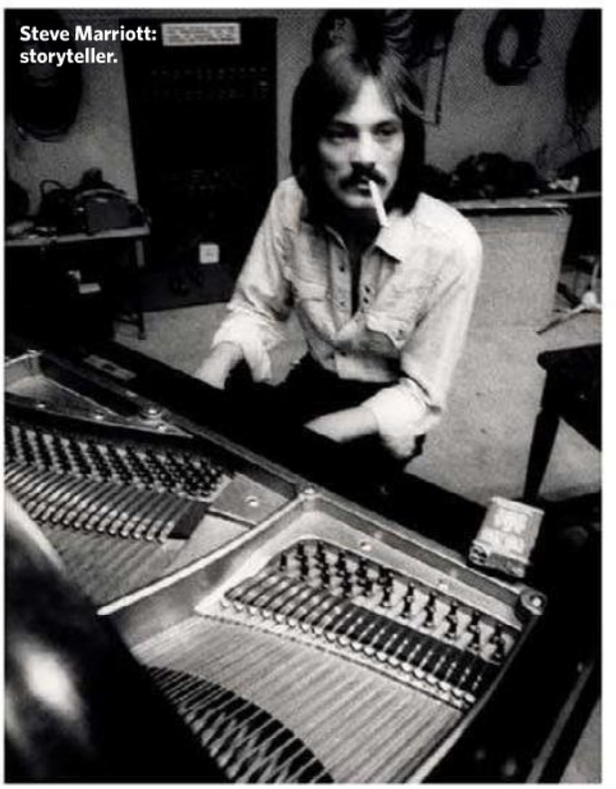
By Ol Drake

There's a magic about everything they wrote, especially over those first few albums. You just know that the band knew what they were about, knew how to create the best possible songs for what they did – and in doing so were the perfect metal band.

You just felt that the band let nobody interfere with what they did – it was all about them and then the fans. And the way they could balance riffs, vocals and rhythms was utterly brilliant. They also had an ability to do lengthy songs with very sophisticated parts, yet make it all so accessible to anyone.

If I had to name the ultimate Metallica song, then it would be *Blackened* from *…And Justice For All*. No, not one most fans would choose. But to me it represents the perfection they're capable of achieving, You can break it all down to its components, put it back together and still be in awe of their magic.

Ol Drake is lead guitarist in Evile. The band will be playing both the High Voltage and Download festivals this summer. More info at www.evile.co.uk


Steve Marriott: storyteller.

THE HUMBLE SMALL FACE

STEVE MARRIOTT

By John Waite

Here was a man who could sing anything, and make you believe it what he was saying. So it would have been so easy for him to have come up with lyrics that really were rubbish. But he didn't. In fact, like all great songwriters he was brilliant at balancing excellent lyrics with wonderful melodies. What he did was get under your skin by telling great stories.

I remember hearing the Small Faces' *I'm Only Dreaming* when I was 15 years old – and it just blew me away. It's listening to that which made me want to become a musician. I met Marriott once in New York, and it was an honour. We jammed one night at a club, and then had lunch the next day. This was a man who was totally the real deal – when you talked to him you understood this was the same person you heard in those songs.

I can still listen to his songs and they make me cry. Because they represent a time when true talents took special pride in nurturing their songs.

John Waite's new album Rough And Tumble if out now on Frontiers.

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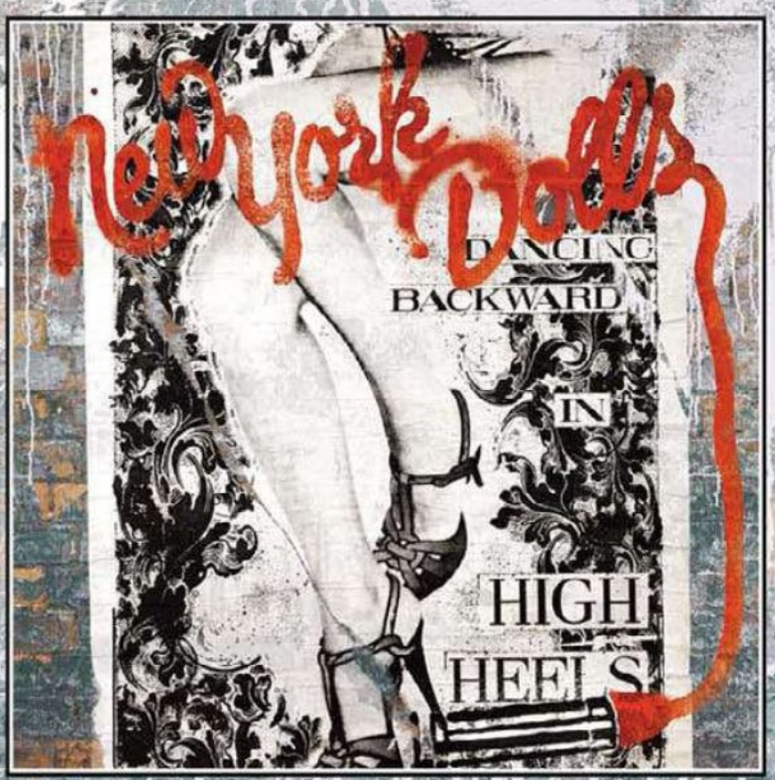

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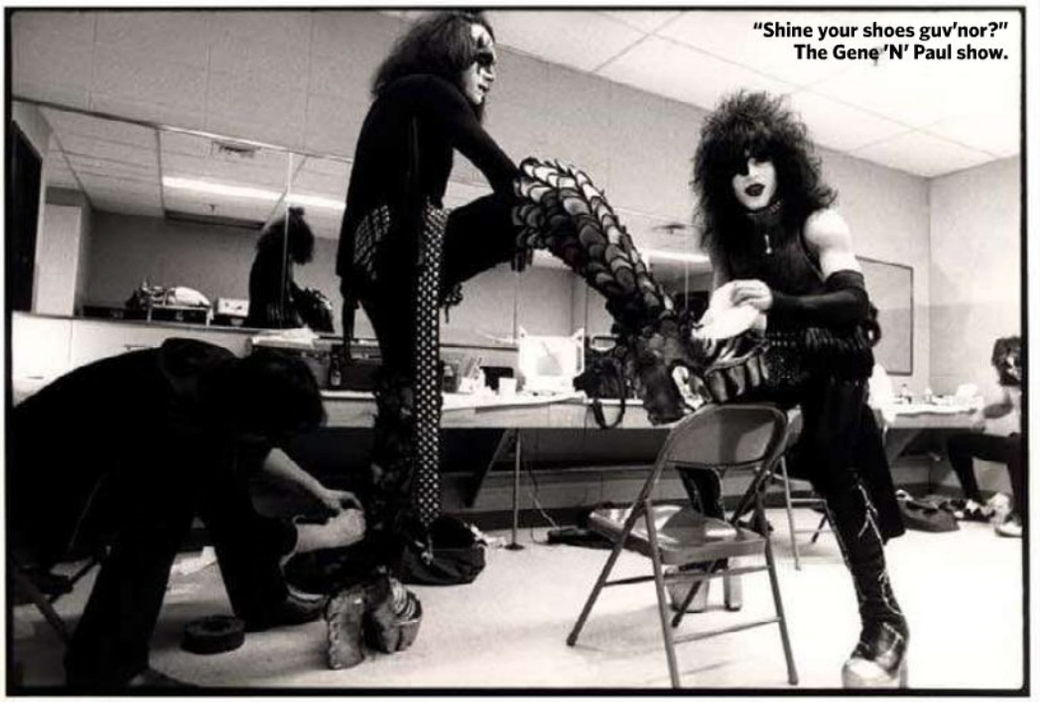


"Shine your shoes guv'nor?" The Gene 'N' Paul show.

ROCKIN' ALL NITE

KISS

By Vinnie Paul

Songwriting is what often gets lost amid the whole Kiss package – the theatrical show, the special image and the larger than life vibe. But we should never forget that Kiss write incredible songs with strong hooks, hummable melodies and great grooves.

My brother Dime and I grew up worshipping that band. In terms of musicianship, none of them were incredible alone but together Paul, Gene, Ace and Peter became the greatest rock'n'roll band ever to come from the USA. Paul and Gene were the guys that wrote most of the band's songs, but it would be unfair to overlook the fact that Peter gave them *Beth*, one of their biggest hits, and Ace wrote *Cold Gin*, *Parasite* and *Shock Me*.

Kiss are a party band, but they also have a heavy side. The song that sums them up best is the one that everyone knows, *Rock And Roll All Nite*. You still hear it on the radio today, sounding like it was only just recorded. Even if you don't like Kiss, you know right away that it's them.

Pantera were such a heavy band that you may never have guessed it, but Kiss were a massive influence on the way that I eventually wrote my own songs.

Vinnie Paul was the drummer in Pantera. He is now in Hellyeah. The band are set to release their third album later this year.

"Kiss had a heavy side. They were a massive influence on Pantera and the way I wrote my own songs."

Vinnie Paul

THEY INVENTED PROG

PINK FLOYD

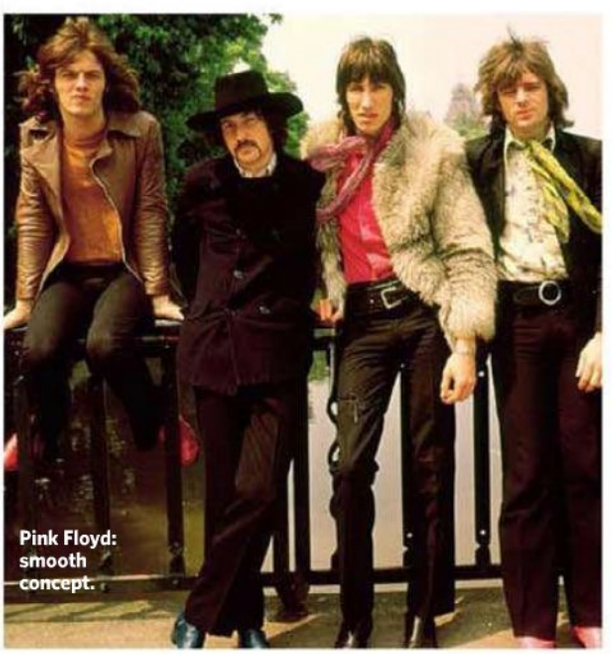
By Jordan Rudess

Pink Floyd has great meaning in my life. Their ability over the years to create anything from a seemingly innocent, almost folk like acoustic guitar-driven tune like *Grantchester Meadows* or the song *Wots... Uh The Deal?* to something highly synthesizer-heavy like *Wish You Were Here* always has managed to capture my imagination and inspire me. No matter what kind of orchestration was used there was always this incredible concept of space. Not only the trippy psychedelic kind of space but also in the fact that their songs always had a lot of room to breathe.

The other element that sometimes gets forgotten was the element of humour. This was a big part of the mix, mostly in the Syd Barrett days with the *Piper At The Gates Of Dawn* album. As someone who is involved in a group who has a virtuostic side, people have always been slightly surprised that Floyd have been a large influence, but the magic and depth of their style is something we always come back to and is important to each of us in Dream Theater. One of the most musically satisfying covers we ever did was playing all of *Dark Side Of The Moon*.

That's one of my favourite albums in the world. I always loved the way the lyrics not only could have a lot of philosophical meaning and concept but also sound really smooth and musical. An important feature with a group like Floyd where everyone listening could potentially be extremely high. Not a day goes by without feeling the direct influence of the songs of Pink Floyd.

Jordan Rudess is in Dream Theater. They headline the High Voltage festival in July – www.highvoltagefestival.com



Pink Floyd: smooth concept.

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HE BELIEVES IN A THING CALLED LOVE

JUSTIN HAWKINS

By Eric Nally

Justin Hawkins from The Darkness is definitely one of my favourite songwriters, just because it was the first experience I had as a songwriter working with someone else. We wrote some songs together for the last Meat Loaf album. I love everything he does, and I think he really has something special. I can sense that it's something he was born with – it wasn't something that he learned over time. Some people, when you meet them, it's obvious that they were meant to do something, and he was clearly meant to write great music.

One of the great things about him when we were working together was that I was able to bounce ideas off of him, and he would make them even better. That's the thing with a great songwriter, in a lot of ways – the ability to take someone else's ideas and build them and shape them as efficiently as possible, and I think he's great at that.

Eric Nally is the frontman in Foxy Shazam. Their album Foxy Shazam is out now through Warner Bros.

"Captain Beefheart influenced me because of his imagery outside the cosy box of love-song drivel purveyed by his peers."

Ian Anderson

WORDPLAY EXTRAORDINAIRE

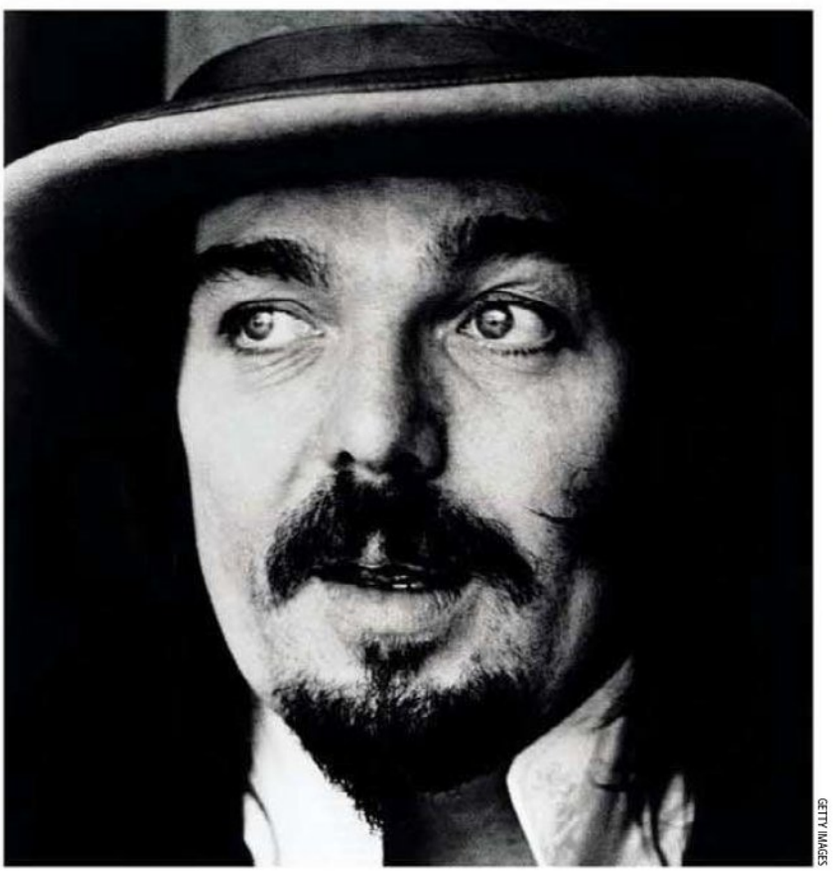
CAPTAIN BEEFHEART

By Ian Anderson

Captain Beefheart (along with Roy Harper, Frank Zappa and Ludwig Van Beethoven) is a songwriter I really rate. He's influenced me and my writing because of his lateral thinking and use of vocabulary and imagery outside the cosy box of love-song drivel purveyed by most of the rest of his peers. He was observational and found ways to express a different perspective on subjects, whether common topics or unusual. I think the best message, to me, was to include in every one of my songs, where possible, a word or two never heard in the work of anyone else. I try to do that today as a matter of course.

A classic example of his wordplay is from *Big-Eyed Beans From Venus* – *'Men, let your wallets flop out and women, open your purses.'* Wonderful double-entendre sexual abandonment in the face of alien invasion! Playing with 'beans' and 'beings' is just such good fun. Great stuff. Bless him, wherever he has gone. Off to meet the Great Trout Mask in the sky?"

Ian Anderson is frontman in Jethro Tull. They headline the Prog stage at High Voltage Festival on 24 July. More info at www.highvoltagefestival.com.



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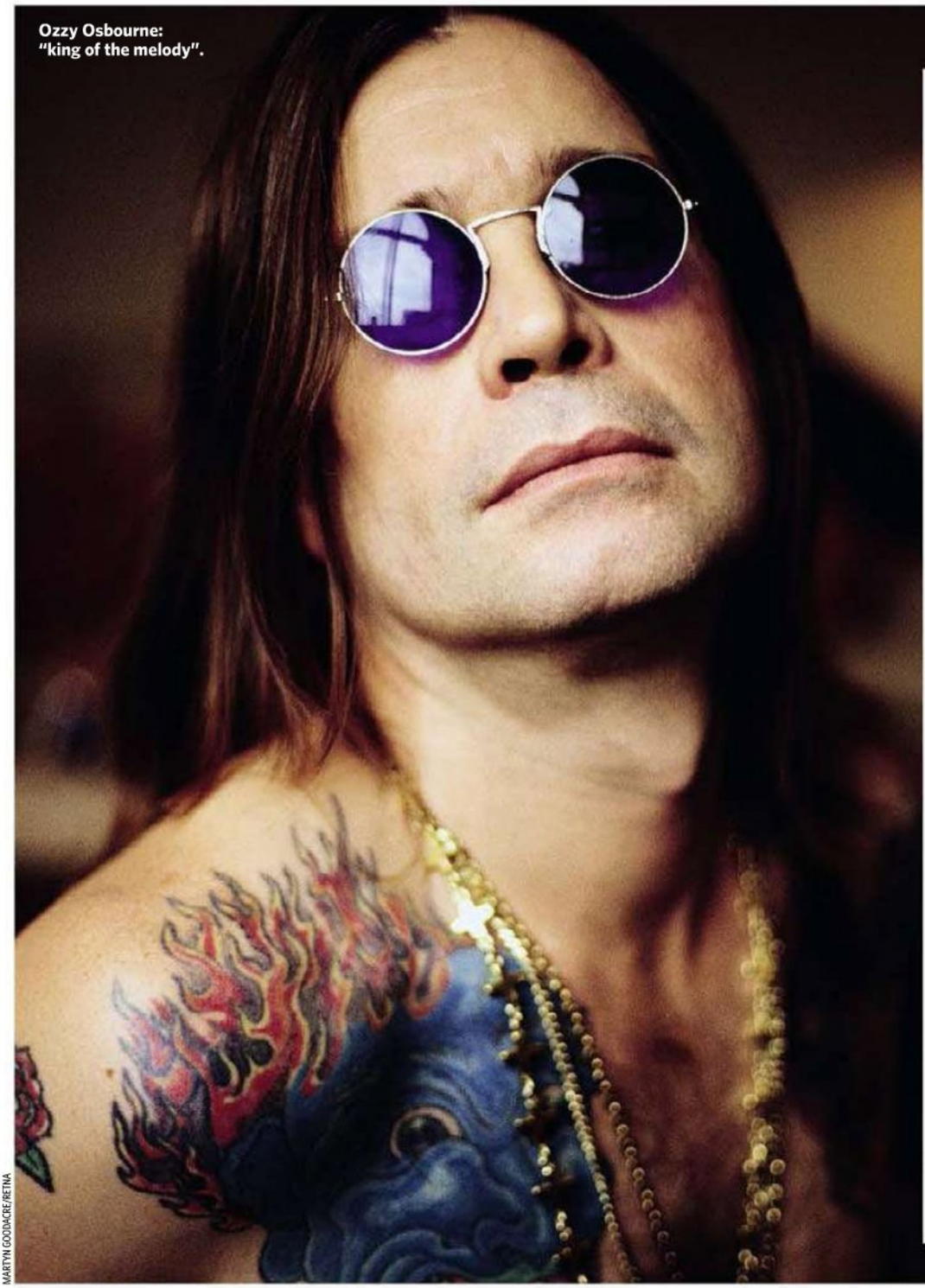
Left: Justin Hawkins "has something special". Right: Captain Beefheart thought "outside of the cosy box of love-song drivel".



Ozzy Osbourne: "king of the melody".

MARTYN GOODACRE/RETNA

THE WIZARDRY OF OZZ

OZZY OSBOURNE

By Zakk Wylde

Everything else overshadows Ozzy's writing. He doesn't play any instruments, and he doesn't know music theory so much, but he's the king of the melody. All the years we were writing this stuff, even when we were getting hammered and the partying was going on, it was usually the first thing that came out of his mouth. He wouldn't keep visiting a melody, y'know? It was always the first take. When we did *Miracle Man*, the first song we ever wrote, the first thing he sang was '*I'm looking for a miracle man*'. We knew it would work.

Ozzy's best with someone to bounce off, without a doubt. I guess his different writing partners have brought different things out of him. Sabbath was super-heavy and dark, and the way his vocal melodies always sounded so melancholy and lonely, it was the perfect combination. The stuff with Randy is completely different. You couldn't have put on that record [*Blizzard Of Ozz*] and said, "Dude, this is Sabbath".

What Ozz needs is the music to sing a melody to. He'll always have some melodies bouncing around. Sometimes he'll say, "I've been singing this all day long... can we put some music to it?" I remember when we did *Mama, I'm Coming Home*, we were sitting at the piano, and suddenly Ozz starts singing that melody. And he tells me, "I had that melody years ago – it always reminded me of this commercial I heard as a kid for carpet cleaner." And he's singing this thing and we're just crackin' up laughing at how stupid it was. Obviously, he tweaked it and made it his own. And it sounds perfect over the chords, y'know?

Zakk Wylde is the main man of Black Label Society. Their latest album Order Of The Black is out now on Roadrunner

Little Richard: "one of the best rock composers".

MICHAEL PUTLAND/RETNA

ROCK'N'ROLL'S ARCHITECT

LITTLE RICHARD

By Ian Gillan

Richard Penniman has got to be one of the best rock composers. He performs his own songs, unlike most writers of previous generations, and so remains involved in every phase, through arrangement to recording. He's a great artist, too.

He's never allowed the craft to stifle the art; it all comes across with undiluted personality and sincerity. That's inspirational, and seems so easy – until you try it.

A classic example of his songcraft has got to be *Long Tall Sally*. Once you've grasped the mastery of alliteration and the percussive value of the lyrics, you realise that no other singer could have delivered this as a first interpretation. It's as if every gasp is his last; most impressive considering the theme.

Ian Gillian is singer/songwriter in Deep Purple. They are currently on tour. Find out the latest from the band at www.deeppurple.com.

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THE 200 MILLION-SELLING MAN

OTIS BLACKWELL

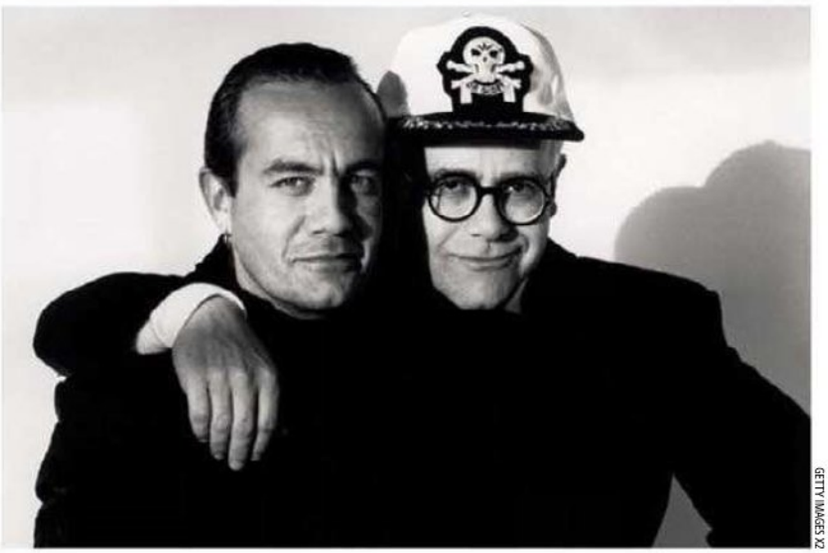
By Ian Hunter

The songs that initially knocked me out were written by Otis Blackwell, a great songwriter in the 1950s, from Brooklyn, who sold half-a-dozen songs to this guy Goldie Goldmark for $150 in 1955. One of them was *Don't Be Cruel*, another was *Great Balls Of Fire*; he also wrote *Return To Sender*, *Paralysed*, *All Shook Up*, *Fever*, as in Peggy Lee, *Broken Heart For Sale*, *Breathless*. What a run! He wrote for Ray Charles, Otis Redding and James Brown.

I met him once in New York at The Other End (aka The Bitter End), and he had his own band. Funnily, he was pretty average as an artist. He gave me his card, and it had every song I'd ever loved on it – and he'd written them. He was a really nice, polite man. He died in 2002, but quite rightly he's in the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame. He encapsulated the 50s for me. Those songs were incredible. He caught me at just the right age.

His songs sold over 200 million copies. I don't know what happened to his publishing. I hope he got sorted. Listen to *Don't Be Cruel* and *Great Balls Of Fire*. They were amazing for their time: just three chords, and yet look where they go. Jerry Lee Lewis did a great version of *Balls* obviously, but so did many others. Blackwell wrote in 12-bar mode, like Chuck Berry, but he had great arrangements that stood out. I was 17 when I heard them.

Ian Hunter's most recent album was Man Overboard. He is currently working on a new album.



Elton and Bernie: walking the tightrope between cool and corny.

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CAPTAIN FANTASTIC AND THE BROWN DIRT COWBOY

ELTON JOHN/BERNIE TAUPIN

By Nancy Wilson

They're quite different as people. I think that's the brilliance. I guess Elton is more the Paul McCartney, and Bernie is the brooding, problematic, behind-the-sunglasses guy. Elton is the honky cat, the funky monkey. Musically he brings the barrelhouse and blues together… He has elements of classical, upright English squireness, and then he just breaks all those rules. Bernie's lyrics just make me die. There's an aspect of worldliness and wisdom that only comes through great deals of pain. He actually wrote the lyrics to Heart's *These Dreams*.

"Bernie's lyrics just make me die. There's an aspect of worldliness and wisdom that only comes through great deals of pain."

Nancy Wilson

But those guys are joined at the soul. They were a match made in Heaven, right from the beginning. They just sat in a room with one little upright piano – which we actually just ran into at a museum up in Calgary. There's the piano where Elton and Bernie wrote the first five albums. They've signed it, and Bernie's written: "In this piano lies the ghost of a hundred songs."

It's life-altering stuff. In so many other rock'n'roll situations, there's English people who take Americana and retranslate it back – there's almost like this English filter, y'know – and there's nothing like it. It's like a hybrid blend of American and English. You can't beat it. And Elton John and Bernie Taupin are the champions. It walks this delicate line, poetically and musically, because one inch on either side of that wonderful, gossamer place they fall; it's just too much 'the black man with the blues harp' thing, y'know; the 'slave and cotton-field' thing that's so uncool for white people to do. They have the balance. They're walkin' the tightrope between something original and cool, and corny and derivative.

If I wanted to hear one song right now, today, 10 times in a row, the album would be *Tumbleweed Connection*, and it would probably be *My Father's Gun*. We [the Wilson sisters] come from a military heritage, and we've been steeped in the romance and history of the *Gone With The Wind* stuff. And that all fits. It's like *Burn Down The Mission*: that has a kinda southern cradle vibe, and it's slouchy and historic. It's a universally personal song, like Bernie does so well. Me and Ann grew up in the church of Elton and Bernie.

Nancy Wilson is guitarist/songwriter in Heart. Their latest album Red Velvet Car and a new concert DVD/Blu-Ray Night At Sky Church are out now on Eagle.

WELCOME TO HIS NIGHTMARE

ALICE COOPER

By Glenn Danzig

Alice is one of the great songwriters. You listen back to the albums he did in the 1970s, and every song is excellent. He balanced heaviness with pop sensibility, and lyrics that had a real sense of rebellion about them. Alice made it easy for anyone to get into what he did, and taught people like me so much. There are so many wonderful songs throughout his catalogue.

Danzig play Download Festival in June. More info at www.downloadfestival.com

ROSS HALFIN

Genesis: the Peter Gabriel-era 70s line-up produced "the most wonderful music of the band's career".

PETER MAZEL/SUNSHINE/RETINA

FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION

GENESIS

By Steve Rothery

Where do you start with this lot? So many different styles, so many eras. They began as a very English folk-style band, in a way, who offered something really unique. Then when Gabriel left they became altogether poppier yet still very English. Finally, as Phil Collins's solo success grew, so the band began to move into this musical direction.

For me it was what most would regard as the classic line-up who came up with the most wonderful music of the band's career. I'm talking about Peter Gabriel, Steve Hackett, Tony Banks, Mike Rutherford and Phil Collins. Part of the reason this worked so well was the way that Hackett and Banks complemented each other as composers.

The first time I heard Genesis was when I listened to Alan Freeman's Saturday afternoon show on Radio One, He played *The Knife* live, and I loved the energy and power. It blew me away. So much in the Gabriel period was simply breathtaking. Yet even after he left, the band continued to conjure magic, although *Duke* was probably the last album I got into.

I can't choose one song to represent them, because they were so diverse. *Firth Of Fifth* and *Supper's Ready* are classics, but there's so much they did in later times which is probably equally valid. This is what happens when you have such a variety of excellent songwriters in one band, all working together for the greater cause.

Steve Rothery is a songwriter and the guitarist in Marillion. The band's Live From Cadogan Hall acoustic performance DVD is out now.

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Bon Scott: the biggest songwriting balls of them all.

MORE STARS ON THEIR TOP SONGWRITERS AT CLASSICROCK MAGAZINE.COM

RETNA

NORTH AMERICAN COUNTRY BOY

GRAM PARSONS

By Keith Richards

As a songwriter, Gram worked very much like I do, which is knock out a couple of chords, start to spiel and see how far it can go. Rather than sitting around with a piece of paper and a pen, trying to make things fit neatly together, if you just get on the microphone, things come to you. Lines come to you that you wouldn't dream of, because they have to come to you in a split second. Gram liked to do that. But he would also work very hard – harder than I ever did – on honing it down.

Keith Richards is in a band called The Rolling Stones, for whom he has written a few hits.

Brian Wilson: 'Re-imagining Gershwin' UK tour in September.

FIN COSTELLO/GETTY IMAGES

ROBERT MATHEU

THE CALIFORNIAN GENIUS

BRIAN WILSON

By Alice Cooper

You have to put Brian Wilson and Paul McCartney together because those two guys wrote perfect songs; all of their material was melody based, unbelievable. The melodies on *In My Room* or *Warmth of the Sun* are just classic. The Beatles would have never recorded *Sgt Peppers* had they not heard *Pet Sounds*. Brian Wilson is a tortured genius, an incredible maniac. His *Smiley Smile* album is still so far beyond what anybody else has done to this day.

I'm not sure how much he influenced Alice but when we were writing *Billion Dollar Babies* and *Schools Out* and all the hard rock classics we made, we would sit around listening to *Smiley Smile*.

See p.83 for a full run-down of Alice Cooper's other influences and heroes of songwriting.

OUTLAW CHIC

BON SCOTT

By Pete Spiby

If you've got a big riff, you're halfway to getting people's attention. But if you've got a vocal melody and a great lyric too: that's another way of drawing people in. Bon Scott wrote from experience. He obviously loved the ladies, and was quite a swordsman: the ultimate party person in the greatest party band ever. His lyrics were very cheeky, tongue-in-cheek, and with a lot of sexual innuendo, but he's got a comedic way of writing that doesn't sound too sexist.

But there's a lot more to the man. I think those songs are very clever, lyrically. *The Jack* is an excellent example of Bon Scott's wordplay. It's obviously about STDs, but it can have a few different meanings, which I think is the best way of songwriting. It's almost a literary allegory. There's so many great ones. We always thought *Kicked In The Teeth* was a lost classic. I really like *Touch Too Much*: the lyrics in that are genius. *Up To My Neck In You* was my favourite title.

I just think Bon had a great sense of humour, and that comes through in the music and the writing that Angus and Malcolm did as well. I don't know whose tongue was in whose cheek. I think probably the Young brothers' tongue was in Bon Scott's cheek; I think all three came from the same sort of place and shared the same humour, and I'm sure when they were writing, they had in-jokes and certain riffs and the jokes would become part of the song structure to start with. And then Angus would come along and throw in some cheeky ideas with his solos. I don't know, but I like to think that Bon had some investment in the vocal melodies. It's obvious they had a great songwriting connection. And they didn't take it too seriously, which is always a good thing 'cos that's usually the start of the end. Black Spiders pride themselves on having a sense of humour, and I guess that's why we look up to people like Bon Scott.

Highway To Hell was the peak, and it would have been nice to see what might have followed with Bon Scott, but then we wouldn't have had *Back In Black*, so…

Pete Spiby is in the Black Spiders. Their new album Sons Of The North is out now.

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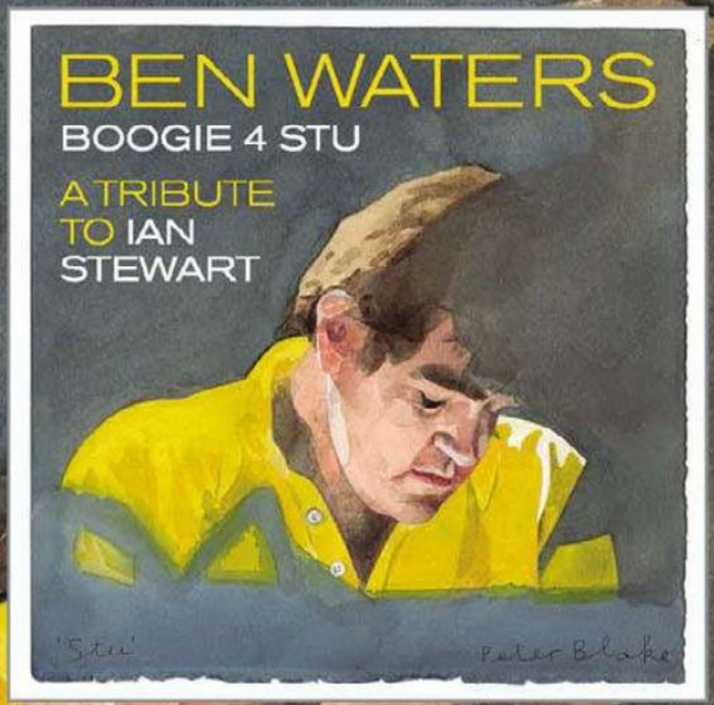

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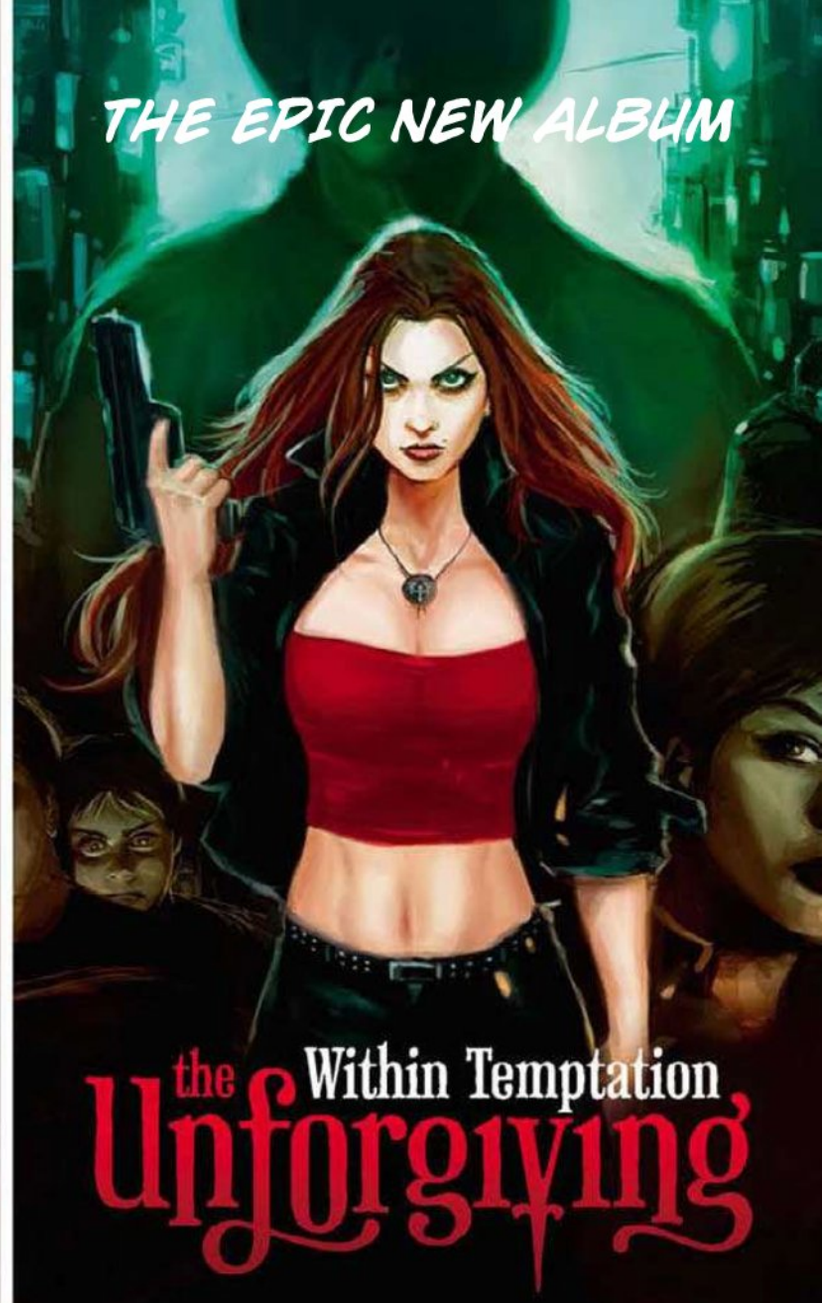

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BOB'S YOUR UNCLE

BOB DYLAN

By Tom Petty

Growing up in Florida we hadn't heard Dylan until *Like A Rolling Stone* came out as a single. And we loved that right away. We learned that, did it in the show. We learned all his singles. We didn't have Dylan albums until *Blonde On Blonde* [1966]. I had heard *Highway 61 Revisited* [1965], a friend of mine had that. But I actually bought *Blonde On Blonde*. That's where I really got into Bob. And I started to really dig his thing.

He influenced my songwriting, of course. He influenced everybody's songwriting. There's no way around it. No one had ever really left the love song before, lyrically. So in that respect I think he influenced everybody, because you suddenly realised you could write about other things.

Bob highly values his privacy, and has to go through a little bit of struggle to have it. He is not the kind of person who is going to tell you everything about himself. But I found him to be a good guy. I like him. Liked him then, and I like him now. He's a really good musician and a great songwriter.

He knows a lot about music. He could go back to sea shanties, folk music. He really knew a lot of folk songs, a lot of early R&B, a lot of early rock'n'roll songs, fairly obscure songs that I didn't know. Some of the times I remember the fondest are the rehearsals where Bob might start playing some songs that we didn't know, and you'd discover something new.

Tom Petty played with Bob Dylan in the Traveling Wilburys.

GETTY IMAGES

DANIEL KRAMER/CAMERA PRESS

Bob Dylan: proved you didn't have to sing about love.

THE METAL KING OF THE NORTH EAST

DAVID COVERDALE

By Joey Tempest

Great songwriters passionately know what kind of music they like, and have an uncontrollable urge to create it no matter what. They will put themselves into situations where they are pushed to make this possible, be it in a band or together with a co-writer.

David Coverdale seems to automatically gravitate towards these inspirational yet somewhat volatile songwriting partnerships with some of the brightest guitarists and co-writers around, from Micky Moody and Bernie Marsden to Mel Galley, John Sykes and Adrian Vandenberg, not to forget that fabulous collaboration with Jimmy Page, or most recently the successful writing partnership with Doug Aldrich. Before all of those, in his glorious Deep Purple days he wrote songs with eminent guitar players like Ritchie Blackmore and Tommy Bolin.

In his cocky yet charming British way, David gets the most from each of his collaborations. Think about it: you are about to sit down and write a song with Mr Coverdale. You must be completely bonkers not to be moved and inspired by that outstanding voice and want to give it your very best.

To me, what makes Coverdale's music so special is its trace element of blues and soul. It has a great sense of melody, but at the core of it all there's something emotional, something real. I call it hard rock with human warmth. I like the fact that, for the most part of his career, at least, it's so transparent that music has been a matter of life and death, yet still a wonderful, Northern sense of humour runs through it all.

Joey Tempest is in Europe. Look out for their live DVD Live At London Shepherds Bush, plus a Balls And Banners picture book and live CD.

"What makes Coverdale's music so special is its trace element of blues and soul. It has a great sense of melody."

Joey Tempest

TRAVIS SHINN

David Coverdale: inspirational yet volatile songwriting partnerships.

YOU NAME IT, HE PROBABLY WROTE IT

DESMOND CHILD

By Steve Overland

My guitar-playing brother Chris and I got to work with Desmond when CBS Records flew us to America to write material for FM's second album, *Tough It Out*. Desmond was the hottest name in the business, having been launched into the stratosphere by Bon Jovi's *Livin' On A Prayer* and *You Give Love A Bad Name*, but he'd already had success with Kiss and Joan Jett.

The way he worked was unusual. He could be engaged in three or four different projects at once, no matter how diverse. He'd sit there at the piano and ask what type of a song you wanted. You'd say: "Something that could have been on *Slippery When Wet*", and that would be your starting point. He'd hammer away at the keys and ad-lib some hooks. That's how we came up with our own *Bad Luck* and *Burning My Heart Down*. In his head, he already knew how the kids would be able to chant along.

Because of that, some people say that he's guilty of re-writing the same song over and over. Which to me is complete rubbish, because he has collaborated with artists as diverse as Roxette, Katy Perry, Aerosmith, Ricky Martin, Hanson and Meat Loaf. How it works is that he comes up with the hook, then gives you the song to take away and complete into something that suits your band. And, as suggested by the list of hits that he has accumulated, he does it remarkably well.

Steve Overland is a vocalist and guitarist with FM. The band play the Download Festival on June 20.

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MORE STARS ON THEIR TOP SONGWRITERS AT CLASSICROCK MAGAZINE.COM

THE ROMANTIC COUNTRY LONER

HANK WILLIAMS

By Bill Nelson

I've become a fan of Hank Williams the long way around. I had a block with country music until I started getting into Texas swing. I was aware of Hank via the covers, famously Ray Charles's version of *Your Cheating Heart*. But I started checking him out when I heard Tom McGuinness from Manfred Mann, who had a radio programme in the 80s, and he played Williams a lot. He spun this song *Mind Your Own Business*, which I loved. It wasn't typical Hank – it wasn't part of his image as a haunted character. I realised he was writing these incredibly blunt songs. The music isn't so unusual, but Hank's lyrics did it for me. They were so economical, witty and cut to the bone.

Obviously these are old-fashioned lyrics but he used a lot of play on words, and he sang them with such a jaunty swing. He puts a smile on your face. Despite his tragic image, he is absolutely paramount in the history of rock'n'roll. His song *Move It On Over* is great – you can hear where Bill Haley came from. I also like the fact that when he was young he just wasn't exposed to commercial music. He was far more interested in blues and gospel, and even got his first guitar lessons from a black guy called Rufus Payne.

He had spinal problems as a child, he was on a lot of painkillers, and he lived his life apart from a lot of society. He was typecast as a loner but he was also a star. He travelled around on the road, he typified the Grand Ole Opry, and he built up this romantic cult image. The attraction of that set him on a pedestal and it's true that a lot of his songs reflect him standing there. Some of his songs seem misogynistic to a modern audience, but he has all the ingredients to be a truly romantic figurehead. There's a parallel with him and Robert Johnson. He hit the area between country and blues, and that whole idea of being born on the crossroads, which is like a metaphor for segregation. I really like him, but I prefer his songs done by him. There are many great covers, but nobody does Hank Williams like he does it himself.

There will be some exciting Bill Nelson releases later this year. For more info please visit www.billnelson.com

GETTY IMAGES

Right: Modern country storyteller Ryan Adams.

"There was always something very personal about the way that Townshend wrote. He was prepared to show his fears."

Alex Lifeson

MULTI-GENRE SONGSMITH

RYAN ADAMS

By Pete Shoulder

This man is one of the best songwriters from the past decade or so. He has a way with lyrics that really touches you, but he's also so simple that you can easily understand what he's trying to say. I think that's important for a songwriter.

Ryan Adams' songs stick with you, and although you can tell that he's listened to a lot of Bob Dylan and Neil Young, nonetheless he has his own style. What he's done for me is make me so much more aware of how I construct lyrics, and not just to settle for something that's okay. Sometimes you read his lyrics and you know he's telling a fascinating story. There are times when you really are reading something that's extremely close to Gothic fiction.

If I had to choose just one song to represent what he's about, then I'd go for *Strawberry Wine* from the 2005 album *29*. It's a haunting ballad that I'd reckon is right up there with anything of its type that Neil Young has ever done. What draws you in here is the beautiful yet simplistic melody, And once he's got you, Adams opens up a whole world through his lyricism. He compels you to understand and appreciate what he's talking about.

Pete Shoulder sings and plays guitar in The Union. He is one of only three British artists to win a WC Handy Blues Foundation songwriting award.

Mr Steel of The Boys: cool country.

THE BOY FROM NORWAY

CASINO STEEL

By Michael Monroe

One of my favourite songwriters who probably won't get mentioned much is Casino Steel, from The Boys. He's Norwegian, you know. Him and Gary Holton from the Heavy Metal Kids, they did some really great records together. Sort of country, but really cool. Gary Holton's one of the all-time greats, too. He sounded like Bon Scott – he just had that amazing voice. There's a CD anthology out there, everyone should pick it up.

Michael Monroe's new album Sensory Overdrive is out now. he tours the UK with his band during April.

WRITING 'BOUT HIS G-G-G-GENERATION

PETE TOWNSHEND

By Alex Lifeson

The Who were always a major influence on everything that Rush did, from the very start. While I'd never question The Beatles's right to be regarded as the greatest pop songwriters in history, nonetheless what Townshend did with The Who made more of a mark on us.

What he's generated is an amazing body of work, with songs so diverse yet also connected by the fact that we're dealing with a man who wasn't ever afraid to give us a glimpse into his world, his thought process, the way he dealt with his problems.

There was always something very personal about the way that Townshend wrote. He was prepared to show up his own vulnerability and fears, and made me aware that it was OK for a great musician to prove he wasn't infallible. That's a great quality we've never forgotten in Rush. In fact, he epitomised the way we wanted to be seen by others. His songs have such a great spirit.

It's so hard to choose just one song to represent what he's all about – there's just so much going on. But, for me, the choice would come down to *Pictures Of Lily*, I *Can't Explain* or *Run, Run, Run*. They're all so different, yet also have that unmistakable strand of Townshend running through them. It's the art of being able to write varied songs, yet ones that bear your trademark. Not many songwriters can do it as well as Pete Townshend.

Rush return to UK in May with their Time Machine tour, where they will play Moving Pictures in its entirety.

Pete Townshend: a great songwriter lies behind these blue eyes.

HARRY BORDEN/CORBIS OUTLINE

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THE OTHER MAN IN BLACK

LOU REED

By John O'Neill

I'll admit it, the Velvet Underground are my favourite band of all time. Their early songs and recordings had a minimalism that was so startling, and never sacrificed subtlety or originality. For Lou Reed, it seemed that anything was possible.

Reed never set out to be commercial. What I believe happened was that the mainstream moved towards him, as he got increasing recognition for being a very intelligent songwriter, someone who could tell a story in a very simple and understandable manner.

He proved that being simple wasn't the same as being dumb. Quite the opposite. It was as if he was telling me that it was fine to do the obvious as long as it was heartfelt. And he also taught the Undertones that it was good to have a slow song on your record. Like so many, we equated a ballad with being soppy, but when you heard the way Reed and the Velvets did it, then you understood how powerful such a song could be.

My favourite of his catalogue would be *Pale Blue Eyes*. It just has such a gorgeous tune. It still has a huge impact on me.

John O'Neill is a guitarist with the Undertones. The band begin their 35th anniversary tour in April.

Deep Purple 1970. "Isn't that a minor scale over there?"

A FRACTURED SOUL

SYD BARRETT

By Chris Robinson

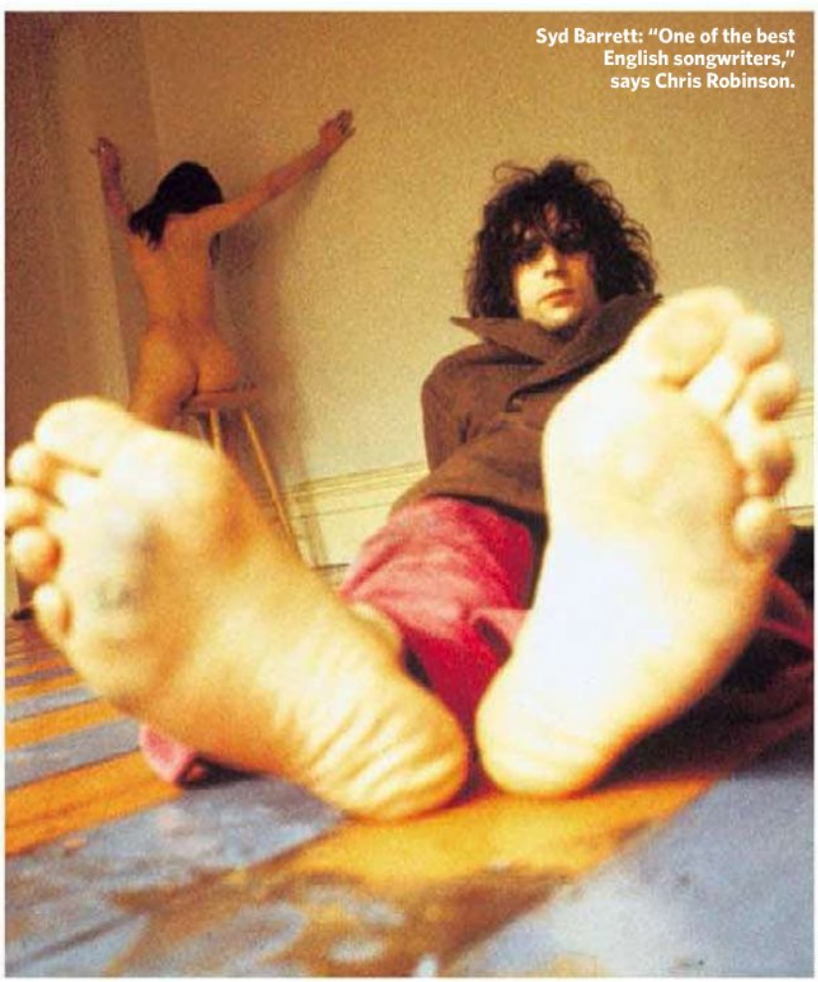
Syd Barrett was one of the best English songwriters. As a kid, somebody gave me a tape of *Piper At The Gates of Dawn*, which immediately turned into *The Madcap Laughs*. I didn't even understand what it was, I just knew that it was strange and familiar, and there was something about it that I wanted to be a part of. A virtuoso musician is different from a songwriter. Some virtuosos have never written anything. But if you do the research, people considered Syd an ace guitarist.

Does Syd Barrett prove that drugs are good for songwriting? Erm… no. Drugs are only interesting for the right person. I think songwriting is a little bit of everything: how you've lived, how you've loved, how you've gained, how you've lost. Sometimes drugs magnify that for the positive or negative, and if you're available to those kind of vibes, then you bring something out of it.

Pink Floyd are two different groups with the same name. Some people don't like the Syd era. I think there's a reason the verse/chorus/bridge works, and *Interstellar Overdrive* is definitely difficult for people who don't have a sense of adventure. *Bike* is very different. If you write songs in your room by yourself on acoustic guitar, then take them to a dynamic group of musicians, it's gonna be different.

Did Syd write enough to be considered a great songwriter? They're still writing books about him and he's still on the cover of magazines. There's your answer. There's always gonna be a 16-year-old kid in a band in some town who hears that record and grows his hair long and makes something beautiful out of nothing. They'll see a picture of him and hear that music, and that's the inspiration behind the continuation of the tradition we work in – writing songs.

Chris Robinson is a songwriter and the frontman with the Black Crowes. Their 20th anniversary European tour begins in July.



Syd Barrett: "One of the best English songwriters," says Chris Robinson.

MICK ROCK

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RETNA X3

BLACKMORE AND THE BOYS

DEEP PURPLE

By Mark Tremonti

I can remember going through my dad's Deep Purple records. Those songs just had this dark, edgy vibe to them, almost like a more progressive Black Sabbath. For the time, I think Deep Purple were one of the first bands to really come forward with that more medieval flavour in their songwriting. Which is what Ritchie Blackmore is still doing now. He's really taken that and run with it. I don't think he's even playing a guitar now. Isn't he playing a lute or something?

I've only ever written with one other person. I've never worked in a group of songwriters, and I think that might be a 'too many chefs' kinda thing. But I know it worked for Deep Purple.

As far as writing went, I don't know who the main guy was but Ritchie Blackmore is the name that pops into my head. The guitar parts he wrote sound like he was into the Bachs and the Mozarts. I'm sure he understood music theory, just because of the way he wrote his parts – he knows his harmonic minor scale, for sure! When I write a song, I throw all technique out of the window. I try to reinvent the guitar and dive into the unknown. I find that keeps you from trying to be too clever.

Things don't have to be difficult. Some of the best songs are basic, but still make you feel something. I mean, *Smoke On The Water* is so basic, but that's the beauty. When you're a kid, you hear it on the radio and that riff sticks out. You just want to hear it over and over again. The most popular songs in history are more simple than complex. We used to cover *Highway Star* in Alter Bridge. That's a really cool, high-energy song, and in terms of structure it's not complicated. But it picks the audience up and that's why it's survived all these years. Yeah, I'd be happy if the audience thought it was one of ours!

Do I think great songwriters can be difficult? How about 'quirky'? There's a lot of genius people out there that are borderline crazy. People who are great, powerful writers… but somehow they've got some kind of loose nut in their head that makes them that way. I don't know what it is.

Mark Tremonti is the lead guitarist in Alter Bridge. Their latest album, ABIII, is out now on Roadrunner and they play Download Festival in June.

"Deep Purple songs have this dark, edgy vibe to them. *Smoke On The Water* is so basic, but that's the beauty – the best songs don't have to be difficult."

Mark Tremonti

ECCENTRIC PSYCHE POP GENIUS

PETE DELLO

By Lee Dorrian

Founding member and chief songwriter of late 60s pop act Honeybus, Pete Dello (AKA Peter Blumston)'s songwriting partnership with Ray Crane was acclaimed by critics, who often even compared them to Lennon and McCartney. Following his departure from Honeybus he released a succession of well-crafted folky psychedelic pop singles before releasing a solo album, *Into Your Ears* in 1971. His slightly eccentric writing and performances are always heartfelt, whether pensive (*It's What You've Got*), witty (*Harry The Earwig*), whimsical (*Uptight Basil*), objective (*A Good Song*) or reflective (*Taking The Heart Out Of Love*) and his sense of mood, narration and melody is just superb.

Lee Dorrian is Cathedral's vocalist. They release their final album in 2012.

BY ROYAL APPOINTMENT

DUKE ELLINGTON

By Graham Nash

I loved Duke Ellington. There was a story he told about going to play for the Queen of England. He wanted to do something really fresh and new, but he hadn't written anything in the past 48 hours that he thought was worth a shit. So he's in the car, and they pull up to a light, and he winds the window down. A sparrow lands on the wall next to him and squawks some improbable riff, and Duke thinks: "Wow, what a beautiful tune." By the time he got to the Queen's place, he'd already gotten his new tune that he was going to play for her. That's seeing, that's listening, that's opening up every pore of your body for melody. There's melody in everything. There are songs all around. Like Duke, if you let yourself go on the journey, you will be well rewarded.

Graham Nash was a founder member of the Hollies, and recently rebooted Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young.

THE CHIRPING CRICKET

BUDDY HOLLY

By Ric Ocasek

That'll Be The Day by Buddy Holly had a huge effect on me. When I was a kid I heard that, and for some reason I just always remembered it and always thought it was the best song I ever heard. It was probably an inspiration for me to grab a guitar when I was 14 years old, and try to learn how to play, then write my own songs.

Ric Ocasek has reunited with the Cars. Their new album, Move Like This, is released in May.

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The Fog: "peerless".

MORE STARS ON THEIR TOP SONGWRITERS AT CLASSICROCK MAGAZINE.COM

FOGERTY'S FACTORY

JOHN FOGERTY

By Luke Morley

John Fogerty is without a doubt one of the greatest rock singers of all time. Where he doesn't get the credit he deserves is as a songwriter. The ability to write a memorable, moving, exciting and inspiring three-minute rock song that stands the test of time and rises above genre comparisons is exceptional. What is even more unusual is that the string of peerless Creedence Clearwater Revival songs that are still staples of radio all over the world were written in an insanely productive two-year spell between 1968 and '70. The number of times his tunes have been covered by other artists – from Nirvana to Elton John – is also testament to the timeless quality of the writing. He's also the only writer I'm aware of who's been sued for plagiarising his own work. He's so good he's even ripped himself off!

Luke Morley is in The Union. He also reunites with Thunder to play High Voltage.

"Rod Stewart sounds so natural it's as if he's making up the words as he goes along. The best songs are the ones with the best stories."

Ann Wilson

Southern hospitality: the Skynyrd family.

SOUTHERN MEN

LYNYRD SKYNYRD

By Charlie Starr

Growing up in the American south in the 70s, Skynyrd were everywhere, man. I think I first heard them in my mother's womb. They were the soundtrack to my youth.

They wrote pop songs, really – perfect, catchy, lean, hook-filled, quality pop songs. The riffs were all so strong, the melodies were beautiful – effortlessly beautiful – while the lyrics were always smart. Ed King says he never saw Ronnie Van Zant write anything down. Imagine that.

Second Helping is my favourite Skynyrd album. But they didn't do a bad one. People say *Nuthin' Fancy* and *Gimme Back My Bullets* were rushed, thrown away. But you listen to them – they still have a magic.

Charlie Starr is a singer/guitar player in Blackberry Smoke.

THE MOD

ROD STEWART

By Ann Wilson

I'm a Rod Stewart fan, absolutely, as both a rock singer and a songwriter. He's one of my influences. He'd write using this really unusual rhyme scheme, where rather than going A-B, A-B, he'd maybe go A-B, C-C, y'know? It just sounded natural with him, almost as if he was just making the words up as he went along.

As an example, *Mandolin Wind* is the marriage of song and singer. An amazing song can get thrown away if the wrong person sings it, but that song may as well have been written by a little cowpoke in Montana, it's so full of imagery, so full of the beautiful up-north imagery, and being inside a little cabin with a steel guitar… It's just gorgeous. It's a story of what it was like to be a homesteader out in the prairies of America in the late 19th or early 20th century. There were a couple of extreme winters where all the animals on the prairies froze to death and people lost their stock and were stuck inside their cabins… A very historical, tragic time. But this is the song of a love that lasted through that.

Of course, it's a metaphor. But I always think the best songs are the ones that have the best stories. That's why the classic country and western music was so magnetic to people. It was all about the stories, and people could really shut their eyes and go under the covers and go someplace far away.

Ann Wilson is singer and songwriter with Heart. Their latest album Red Velvet Car and the DVD Night At Sky Church are both out now on Eagle.

Rod Stewart: unusual rhyme scheme.

Kin Crimson: like no one else.

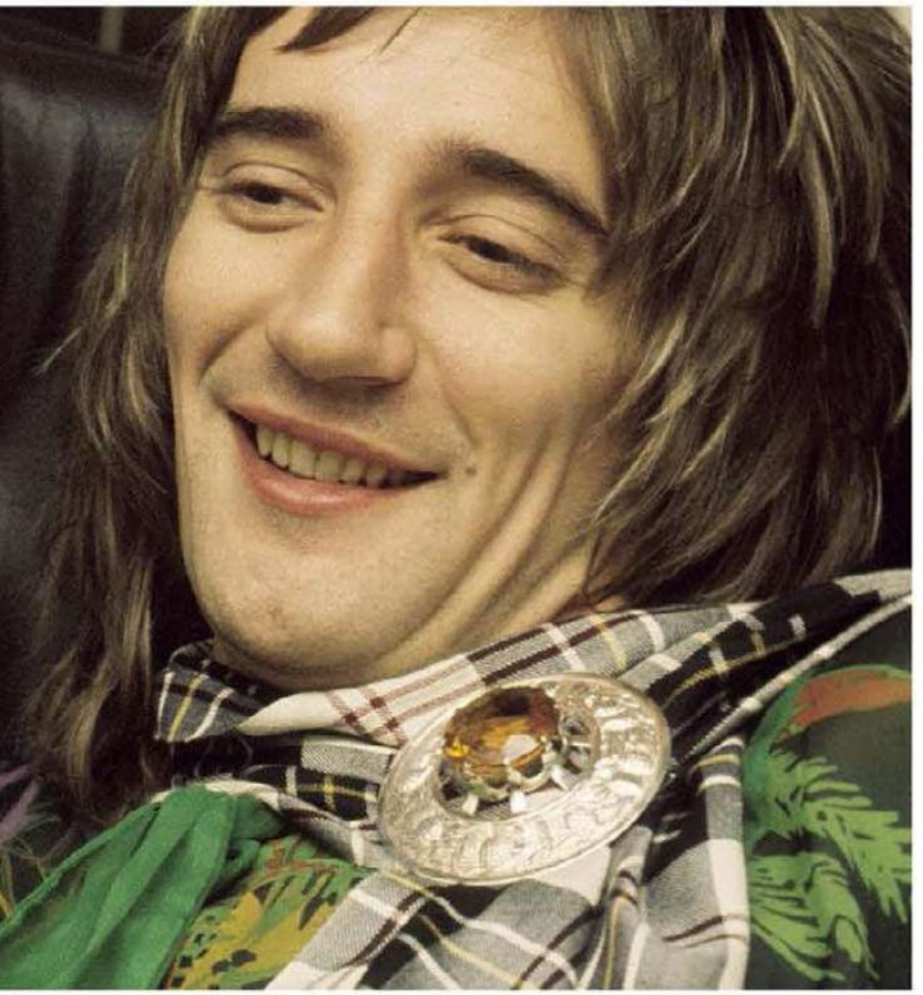
OUT THERE

KING CRIMSON

By Ozzy Osbourne

King Crimson were out there, man. No one else sounded like them back then, and no one has sounded like them since. They had all this great musicianship, but there was a fuckin' nasty edge. I covered *21st Century Schizoid Man*. That's me in a fuckin' nutshell.

Ozzy Osbourne is currently touring his Scream album. More at www.ozzy.com.



Ronnie Dio: gifted.

DIO'S INFERNO

RONNIE JAMES DIO

By Myke Gray

Ronnie James Dio was a supreme storyteller. His songs gloried in titles such as *Kill The King*, *Stargazer* and *Man On The Silver Mountain*. They sucked you in; you wanted to be part of the magical worlds that he created because, for a while at least, they removed you from the humdrum of everyday existence. That was an incredible gift.

The first rock single I ever bought was *Neon Knights* by Black Sabbath. Like many others, I suspect, it changed my life.

As far as I'm concerned, rock singers fall into two categories: Ronnie and everyone else. His was the voice that defined the genre – he was that good. The delivery was the consummate platform for his words.

But possibly his greatest talent was as a leader. Ronnie had the voice of a man you would follow into battle. When he roared: *'Stand up and shout'*, that's exactly what you did. To put his incredible talent into context, this is a guy who worked with both Ritchie Blackmore and Tony Iommi, two of the greatest riff writers of all time. If they were boxers, they would be Tyson and Ali. Yet not only did Ronnie hold his own, his contributions helped to define their best work.

Myke Gray is the guitarist with Skin. The band play the High Voltage festival on July 23 (www.highvoltagefestival.com).

LORDS OF AOR

JOURNEY

By Danny Vaughn

Songwriters agonise endlessly over 'the hook' – that piece of music or lyrical melody that might stick in the listener's ears and get under their skin instantly and, with luck, never let go.

Journey's songwriting is *all* hooks. They have instantly recognisable guitar and keyboard lines. Their verses are hooks, then the bridges hook bigger, and then the chorus hits the home run. So many of their songs start at a high plateau and then ascend from there.

Journey's writing already defined a seamless quality before Jonathan Cain joined them in 1980, but it was his blending with Neal Schon's blistering guitar playing and Steve Perry's untouchable vocals that led to the masterpieces that are the *Escape* and *Frontiers* albums.

Journey wrote the most downloaded song in history. It's so popular that if you Google the word 'Don't', its title is the top result. It's so popular that those of us that fell in love with *Don't Stop Believin'* in the beginning can no longer stand to hear it any more, it's been bastardised and diluted so often by so many vacuous, forgettable pop acts. Until, that is, you see Journey live, like I did when I opened for them in 2007. Watching masters at work never gets old.

Danny Vaughn is the frontman with Tyketto. They play three UK dates late this year, including Hard Rock Hell on Dec 3.

Most downloaded: Journey.

FOGERTY/CRIMSON/SKYNYRD/DIO: CHRIS WALTER PHOTOFEATURES; JOURNEY/ROD STEWART: RETNA

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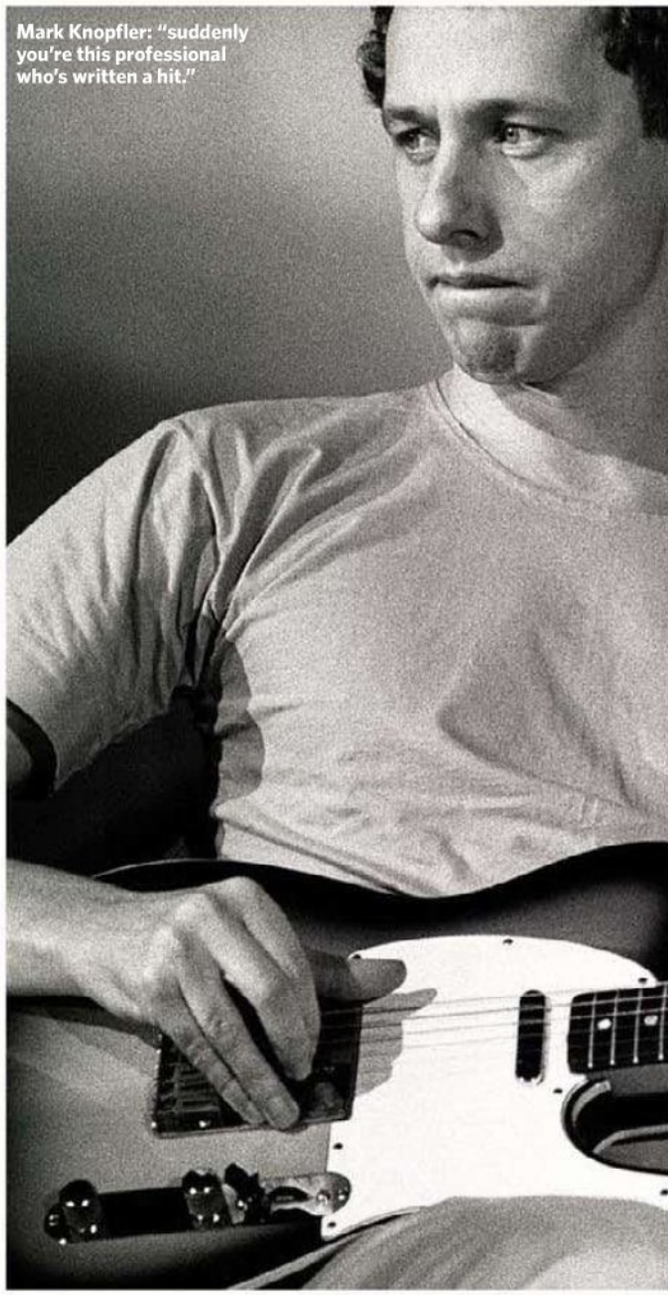
MARK KNOPFLER

On Songwriting

After being turned on to rock'n'roll by his uncle's boogie-woogie piano, with Dire Straits he and his songs went on to conquer the world.

Words: **Bill DeMain**



Mark Knopfler: "suddenly you're this professional who's written a hit."

Do you remember the first time you heard rock'n'roll?
Well, I heard my uncle playing some boogie woogie on the piano when I was about eight or nine, and I thought those three basic chords were the most wonderful things in the world. I still do.

You would've been around 12 or 13 when The Beatles hit. Was that a big event for you?
Of course. I knew about *Love Me Do* and I liked that, but *Please Please Me* made a bigger impression. That was in '63. But I was well away before that. I was gone. I was a lost cause before The Beatles.

Were you writing your own songs at that point?
No, that didn't happen until a few years later, when I was about 18. It was a gradual evolution from playing other people's music to finding my own style, my own voice. It's a synthesis.

How do you mean?
You have to expose yourself to a lot of music, then you have to play a lot. The advantage of playing a lot is that you play more and more like yourself, your own style will emerge. That only happens when you play a lot. If you just play a little bit, then you'll play pretty much like a lot of people.

That's sound advice for a songwriter.
The thing about songwriting is that there is no real formula to it. If I found a formula, I would definitely tell you and your readers exactly what it was. [Laughs] I think I'm just a bit of a gypsy, a rag-and-bone guy. I might have a fragment, but different songs come for different reasons. It's the bits of rag and bones that you pick up that can eventually make a song. But sometimes the song bell goes off, like: "This will be a song." Those kind of situation songs, where you literally find yourself in a place, and the circumstances combine and you're in a song situation. Other times it could just be something someone says to me, a line that reverberates. Other times it could be something from a book or a newspaper article. Inspiration comes from anywhere. I do find that other art inspires. Art makes more art. It's a wonderful feeling to be part of that, to inspire other people to do things. Not necessarily even to make art, but sometimes do something creative and constructive.

Along with folk music, literature has been a major influence on your songwriting. How did your love affair with books begin?
When I was eight, I was ill in bed, and I was bored with all of my books. And I remember my mum giving me something by Steinbeck. She would also read poetry to me. Before that I used to listen to a program called *Listen With Mother*. I was maybe two or three years old. It was on the radio every day. I think a lot of that appreciation for language starts when you're that young. This program was a mixture of music that was played for kids. I'd be listening to things like *The Big Rock Candy Mountain*, and I would know all the words but I didn't know what it was about. I didn't know what a hobo was, I just liked the sound of it.

There was a point when Dire Straits was one of the biggest bands on the planet. Did that kind of fame suit your personality?
No, I don't think it did it all. I'm not so sure whether it suits anybody's. I think I only just managed to cope with it. Not being a teenager made it a little bit easier. But still, it's pretty disruptive. At the same time, it's what I wanted [laughs]. The fame is saying: "You wanted this."

Did it put more pressure on you as a writer?
It was slightly strange, in that suddenly you're this professional who's written a hit, and you're expected to write more. It can lead to a certain amount of negativity, being exposed to the music business all of a sudden, as opposed to music. They're two different things.

What's the most satisfying aspect of making music for you?
To be able to write a couple of decent songs, and to make a decent record. That's all I really want to try to do. I'm really enjoying my writing these days, and my recording, so I feel very fortunate indeed. If I don't get up on a stage in front of people for a while I get a bit antsy to do it.

> **"Songwriting to me is endlessly fascinating, because it's mysterious, because there is no formula."**
>
> **Mark Knopfler**

Tell us about a couple of your most famous songs – what about *Money For Nothing*?
I was in an appliance store in New York, and there was this guy who worked there who was ranting about all the "yo-yos" and "faggots" on MTV. I grabbed a piece of paper and wrote down what he was saying. There was also an influence from Randy Newman, with the idea of putting yourself in another person's shoes.

***Sultans Of Swing*?**
It had a different melody at first. My first tune for it was on an open-strung National guitar. Then when I got a Stratocaster for the first time I rewrote the song and added more chords. It goes

back again to the idea of: What instrument are you playing? What did you write it on? As for the character Guitar George, there was a guy named George I saw playing the guitar. Over the years, I've heard from a few Georges, but none of them were him.

I think a big part of songwriting is being awake and alive and responsive to life. Eventually something of your own will emerge. Songwriting to me is endlessly fascinating, because it's mysterious, because there is no formula. I don't think I could sit down in a Brill Building situation and write that way. But then there's an awful lot to be said for putting yourself behind the guitar – to put yourself in the position where you're actually making some music. The guitar is only going to write a song when it's out of the case.

Mark Knopfler is currently in the studio recording his latest album.

GETTY IMAGES X4

BEAUTIFUL, DEEP AND GENTLE

DAVID CROSBY

By Davy Knowles

David Crosby is one of those rare songwriters that really makes you feel like you're having a conversation with him. He has this beautiful, gentle voice, but some of the most dark, deep and meaningful lyrics.

We do Crosby's *Almost Cut My Hair*, which is a wonderful song. The first few times I heard it, I had no idea what it was about. He has a wonderful ability to really make you think about what he's saying. His harmony singing is not only groundbreaking but heartbreakingly beautiful, too.

One of the best things that ever happened to me was getting an email from him saying he really liked our version. I couldn't believe it.

Davy Knowles is the singer and guitarist with the blues-rock band Back Door Slam. He has also been touring with the Grateful Dead offshoot band The Rhythm Devils.

Leon Russell: one of America's most underrated musicians.

A NATURAL THING

UFO

By Guy Griffin

One of the things for me that make UFO so impressive as songwriters are Phil Mogg's lyrics. He tells stories, and ones that anyone can appreciate. There's no fantasy, or sword and sorcery here – he takes incidents he's witnessed and turns them into lyrics. And does it better than most. It astonishes me how much this band are still underrated. They are one of the best hard rock bands of all time, yet barely get mentioned when it comes to discussing the greats. They are obviously superb musicians. But beyond even that, there are the songs. It's incredible how many amazing ones we can all name. And their diversity is equally as remarkable.

Of course, we all love UFO when they rock out – and, let's face it, they do it so much better than most. But to get the full value of what they're capable of, you really need to hear their ballads. Something like *Love To Love* is brilliantly written and constructed – it has a majesty that makes it world class. The Quireboys covered it recently [*and it's on our cover CD this month – Ed.*], and when you do that you get to understand how good the song is.

Guy Griffin is a guitarist with The Quireboys. They will be touring with Joe Elliot's Down 'N Outz throughout April.

AN AMERICAN GREAT

LEON RUSSELL

By Elton John

David [Furnish] and I produce a US TV show called *Spectacle*, which Elvis Costello hosts, and I did the first one. Elvis said to me: "You've got to choose three singer-songwriters that you think have been neglected or forgotten about." And I chose David Ackles, Laura Nyro and Leon Russell – my favourite piano player and was my absolute hero in the late 60s and 70s.

He wrote such great songs, played on so many records and is one of America's greatest musicians. David downloaded all his music, and when I played it again I started to cry, because it took me back to the most wonderful time. His music touches me, it's so beautiful. It made me so angry that it had been forgotten about. So I called him up and said: "It's been far too long… Would you like to make a record?"

Elton and Leon's album The Union is out now.

More at magazinesdownload.com or ebook-free-download.net

THE SECRET BEACH BOY

TERRY MELCHER

By Gene Simmons

Terry Melcher should be given his due. He was the son of [singer/actress] Doris Day and grew up in LA. He was deeply entrenched in the pivotal LA music scene of the 1960s. And his girlfriends – always an important subject for rock cred – included Candice Bergen and Jackie DeShannon (herself a great songwriter). Melcher rocked.

Whenever there was a Melcher song on the radio you were transported to a world of terrific, freeing imagery and great melodies. One of his first hits was *Hey, Little Cobra* by the Rip Chords (which also included later Beach Boy Bruce Johnston). I remember hearing that song as a twelve-year-old boy, and noting the lyrics didn't talk about a girl, about love or about the Purple People Eater – it was an ode to a hot rod! Later on I would become a fan of Melcher's melodic/lyrical stylings.

Melcher was able to combine some great elements in pop songs. For one thing, his songs had riffs. And that meant that, if you were a heavier band, you could turn up your amps and riff out. On top of that he had undeniable hooks: great melodies and out-of-the-ordinary lyrics. Melcher produced and wrote for Paul Revere & The Raiders, an American band that had countless hits. And those songs had really unique lyrical points of view. That was Melcher. *Kicks* was an anti-drug song. *The Great Airplane Strike* was a Top 10 hit, and *I'm Not Your Stepping Stone* was covered by the Sex Pistols and the Monkees.

When I was growing up, songs were almost always about love, about heartbreak, about jealousy, about nothing I was interested in. Melcher wrote odes to hot rods. He wrote about drugs – *against* 'em. Melcher was an influence for me in subject matter

But I was shocked to find out there was a connection between him and Charles Manson. It seems that Manson wanted Melcher to produce him – then Manson either wanted to kill Melcher for being rejected, or wanted to scare him with the murders. *Helter Skelter* indeed!

Gene Simmons, as if you didn't know, is in Kiss. Their latest album, Sonic Boom, is out now on Roadrunner.

THE STORYTELLER

TOM WAITS

By Bill Janovitz

I love those writers like Richard Ford and Raymond Carver who saw the underbelly of suburban, middle-aged white guys – who wrote about our world, pretty much. I think songwriters like Tom Waits – being a prime influence on me – were able to do that: take that beatnik influence, but go into this postmodern thing… As a writer I really aspire to that sort of stuff. To write about those vignettes, those moments in passing like you sometimes get on the written page. You listen to something like *Register Side* from our *Smitten* album, it's very much a Tom Waits influence on that song. He talks about someone having a pistol '*on the register side*' in *In The Neighborhood*, on *Swordfishtrombones*. And that line ['*Friday's a funeral/And Saturday's a bride/Sey's got a pistol on the register side*'] really registered with me (excuse the pun), it resonated. So I took that idea of a guy who has been through some trouble and now he's just decided that the best way he can stay out of trouble is to stay on the register side – be more passive than participant. That way of writing all started with Tom Waits, for me.

Bill Janovitz is guitarist/vocalist/songwriter with Buffalo Tom. Their latest album Skins is out now

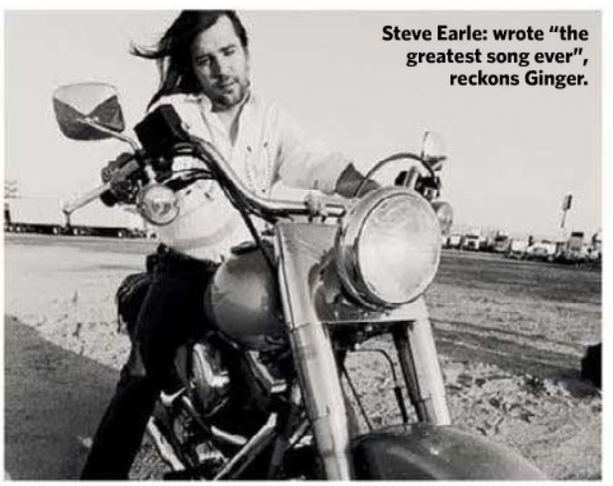
MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

NEIL ZLOZOWER

Tom Waits: an exceptional wordsmith.

"Songwriters like Tom Waits were able to take a beatnik influence, but go into this postmodern thing. I really aspire to that."

Bill Janovitz



Steve Earle: wrote "the greatest song ever", reckons Ginger.

REVOLUTIONARY RENAISSANCE MAN

STEVE EARLE

By Ginger

Tell the guys at the magazine to stop being so fuckin' mean. There's too many great songwriters to mention. But for me it's got to be Steve Earle, because he wrote the greatest song ever, I think: *My Old Friend The Blues*. That song had such an impact on me that I got it tattooed around my neck and on my throat. I wouldn't do that for just any songwriter.

Former Wildhearts mainman Ginger is currently playing lead guitar with the Michael Monroe Band.

ED SIRRS/RETNA

Malcolm and Angus Young: "possess the awesome power of The Riff".

MARTYN GOODACRE/RETNA

AC/DC'S RIFFMEISTERS

ANGUS AND MALCOLM YOUNG

By Brian Tatler

The reason the Young brothers are so great is simple: they possess the awesome power of The Riff. When it comes to leaving air between the chords, there's nobody better. The notes they leave out are just as important as the ones they play.

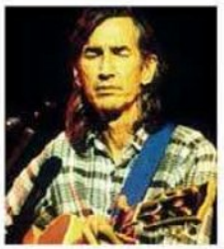
I first saw AC/DC playing *Problem Child* on *The Old Grey Whistle Test* and then went to see them in 1977 on the *Let There Be Rock* tour. They've come up with so many fantastic, simple riffs. They do what they do so well and so uniquely that the minute you stray onto their turf you end up sounding like AC/DC.

That having been said, Angus and Malcolm have definitely affected the way that Diamond Head write songs. *It's Electric* [from DH's first album] was directly influenced by the Youngs – it's basic, stripped right down to the bare bones, but incredibly punchy and powerful. We made a concerted effort to include gaps between the chords and keep things choppy and exciting.

Like them, we do not over-produce our records. AC/DC just write their songs, play them in a room and record it live. That's why it works so well on stage – they don't have to recreate twenty different guitar overdubs to make it sound the same. As soon as the riff begins, you know it's them.

Brian Tatler and the rest of Diamond Head play Sonisphere on July 8.

More at magazinesdownload.com or ebooks-free-download.net



MASTER STORYTELLER

TOWNES VAN ZANT

By Luke Tuchscherer

When it comes to songwriting, I've always been a proponent of the idea that a truly great song should always stand up when played by just one person and a guitar. In fact, in Townes' case, over-production slightly tainted a lot of his studio records. But if you listen to *Live At The Old Quarter,* on which Townes plays alone in front of around 100 people, you'll hear exactly what I mean.

He wasn't the greatest singer in the world – his voice was quite plain – but he was a wonderful finger-picker and his melodies and lyrics were sublime.

He was also a master storyteller – songs like *Pancho And Lefty, Marie* and *Tecumseh Valley* are all outstanding.

Luke Tuchscherer is in The Whybirds. Their Live Recordings Vol. 1 is available now. Info at www.thewhybirds.com

Scorpions: always gave their songs a 'punch-line'.

SUPER-CATCHY STINGERS

SCORPIONS

By Alexi Laiho

I'm definitely a big fan of Scorpions. I love all the stuff they did in to 80s. I got into them via MTV. What made them such great songwriters was that they always had great melodies that were super-catchy, and they always had this big 'punch-line', this one line in the song that people always remembered. Those two things combined was awesome, and made it impossible to not like the Scorpions. They had balls, it was still rocking. It had a pop sensibility but also has stuff in common with Dio and even a bit of that hero metal kind of vibe. Somehow Scorpions made it bigger than any of those other bands though.

They were great musicians and you could hear that: the rhythm guitar parts especially, next to the melodies, played an important part. The riffs were super-catchy. The element that made the songs rocking and heavy, they played a big role. It wasn't that they mastered simplicity as such, it was about staying true to what came to them, and doing that. Klaus Meine has a distinctive voice, too. His voice was such a trademark that you know immediately it's Scorps.

I have so many favourites. The hits, obviously: *Rock You Like A Hurricane* and so on. I love the album *Savage Amusement* [1988]. That was one of the first I had. *Don't Stop At The Top* is one of my favourites, as is *Media Overkill*. They were quite heavy, but they had lots of great tracks that weren't hits but were still great songs.

Alexi Laiho is guitarist and vocalist with Children Of Bodom. Their Relentless Reckless Forever album is out now.

"Who else would have thought of writing a hit single about interracial sex and slave-rape?"

Randy Bachman

HIS AIM IS TRUE

ELVIS COSTELLO

By Jake Burns

It's always difficult to pick out a favourite songwriter. How can you compare a Hank Williams with a Brian Wilson? Both geniuses, but the different genres and time frames make comparisons pointless.

So, limiting myself to 'my generation', I'd plump for Elvis Costello. *This Year's Model* really swung it – not a note or word out of place on there, and the intelligence and melodies were outstanding. A lot is made of Costello being 'clever', like that's a bad thing. I don't think I've ever noticed him do that for its own sake. Yes, there's a lot of clever wordplay, but it's for a reason.

The other thing I admire hugely about Costello is his willingness to take a risk. Given the 'angry young man' stance he was lumbered with at the start of his career, who could have seen him branch out to make albums with Burt Bacharach, Anne Sofie von Otter, Allen Toussaint and the Brodsky Quartet? Not all of those were successful, sure, but a lot of the music was.

Leaving aside the experimentation and the witty lyrics, it's impossible to over-emphasise his fantastic way with a pop song. *Alison, Watching The Detectives, Veronica, The Other Side Of Summer, Accidents Will Happen* and the song our erstwhile manager said to me he wished we'd written: *Oliver's Army*. A lot of bands attempted a comment on my home town [Belfast] and the vast majority failed and ended up sounding mawkish or foolish, yet this song manages to sidestep all the pitfalls, and makes a very strong statement wrapped up in an Abba-esque melody. Now, that's impressive, subversive songwriting.

Jake Burns is the frontman with Stiff Little Fingers. The band are touring the UK now: www.slf.com

RETNA X3

Jagger and Richards: making writing hits for 40-odd years seem simple.

MICHAEL PUTLAND/RETNA

THE GLIMMER TWINS

MICK JAGGER/ KEITH RICHARDS

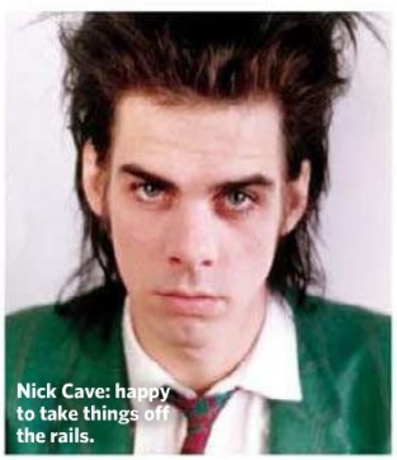
By Randy Bachman

If John Lennon and Paul McCartney were the clean-cut side of 60s songwriting – well, they did dress in nice suits – then [The Rolling Stones'] Mick Jagger and Keith Richards represented the flip-side. They were the scuzzy, grungy pair, who dived into the seamier side of life and weren't afraid to open up cans of worms.

Like every great songwriter, they made it all seem so simple, which is what initially influenced me. You listen to their early stuff and it appeared so easy. That drew you in, and once they had you, then what you got from them was just amazing.

Look at that huge body of work of theirs, which started only a little while after the birth of rock'n'roll itself and continues to this day. They were at their best when really getting into subjects nobody else would dare touch. Who else would have thought of writing a hit single about interracial sex and slave-rape – not to mention heroin addiction – as they did on *Brown Sugar*. And they went even further and darker on *Sympathy For The Devil*, which got into the whole satanism thing. These guys did it all with a sense of humour as well. That's why Jagger/Richards have retained their edge – they really did plumb the depths for their inspiration.

Randy Backman is a guitarist and songwriter with Bachman Turner.



Nick Cave: happy to take things off the rails.

THE WONDER FROM DOWN UNDER

NICK CAVE

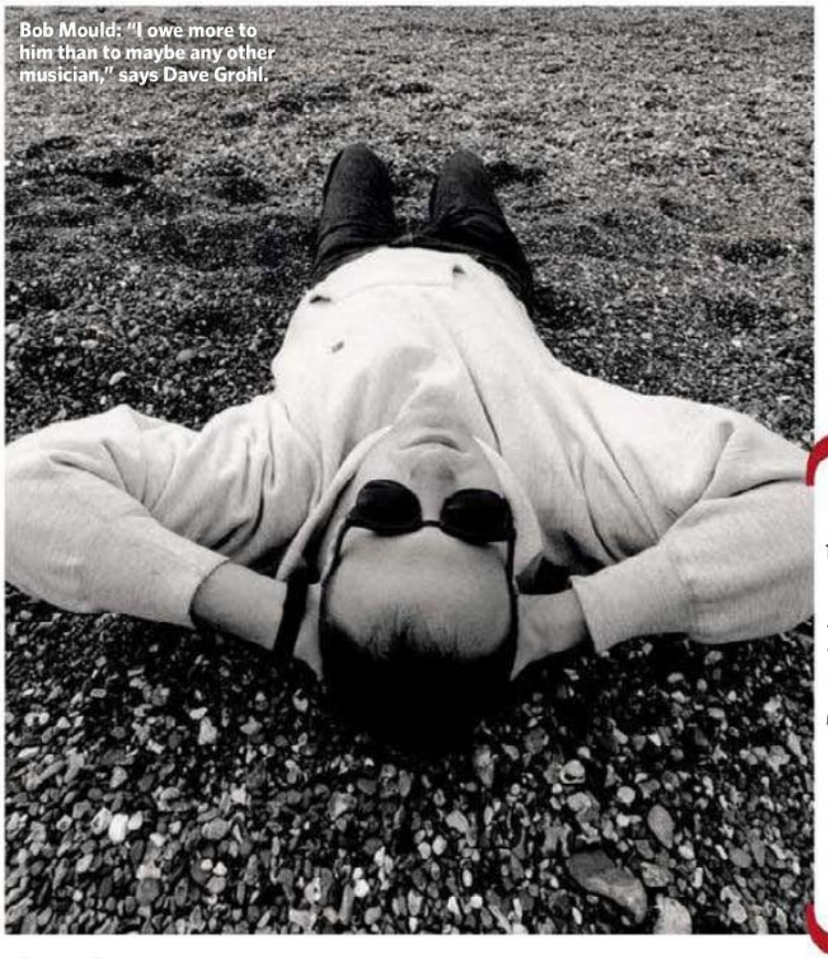
By Jim Jones

Nick Cave was an influence on my own approach, and was a brilliant frontman. He was the main part of the picture, one that had elements of other things – like the Cramps' Lux Interior – but shone a whole new light on things. He changed the way we look at everything. It was suddenly okay to bring pure noise and go that far off the rails. They could do that, but then come back and lock it all into a groove. That was the first time I heard that and appreciated how cool and sexy it could be. [Birthday Party's] *Junkyard* is a great album, and I guess *Big Jesus Trash Can* is its theme tune. Everything that's on there is distilled into that one song. When I first heard it, I remember it opening up a whole other room of stuff to listen to. It referenced all that film soundtrack stuff, with the traumatised, strip-club horn section; all that strange and weird 60s music, like *The Prisoner* soundtrack. It was like some fucked-up B-movie. It was so brutal at the same time, but done in a very fresh way. You couldn't call it heavy metal, and it wasn't even like the Stooges – it was the next way to express that brutality and spite.

The studio records were brutal, but they also had passion and were very artfully done. They redefined that brutality in a very sexy way. They had a massive impact and changed the way we think about music.

'Burning Your House Down', the new album from Jim Jones Revue is out now.

More at magazinesdownload.com or ebook-free-download.net


Bob Mould: "I owe more to him than to maybe any other musician," says Dave Grohl.

MORE STARS ON THEIR TOP SONGWRITERS AT CLASSICROCK MAGAZINE.COM

"I'd love to think I was as good as Jeff Lynne, but no fucking way. That's fooling oneself. It's only him and The Beatles."

Francis Rossi

HÜSKER DÜ, SUGAR AND BEYOND

BOB MOULD

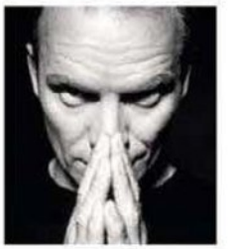
By Dave Grohl

I grew up with The Beatles, I loved Led Zeppelin, I fucking loved the Bad Brains and punk rock. But when it comes to guitar playing and song structure, I think that Hüsker Dü might be my biggest songwriting influence.

I was a huge Hüsker Dü fan, and obviously Bob Mould's music has influenced the way I write music and the way I play guitar. A lot of what I do comes from Bob. I've name-checked Hüsker Dü songs lyrically. Like in *Times Like These* it says: '*I'm a new day rising*', which is one of my favourite Hüsker Dü records.

I had this song that I thought might sound cool if he sang with me on it, *Call And Response*, so I texted him and said: "Hey, do you want to come down?" And he did. We weren't really sure what we were going to do. I watched him play guitar, and as I watched him do it I realised that I owe more to Bob Mould than to maybe any other musician. There's specific things that he does that I learned from him, not from anyone else.

Wasting Light, the new Foo Fighters album is out April 12 on Roswell/RCA.



CALL THE COPS

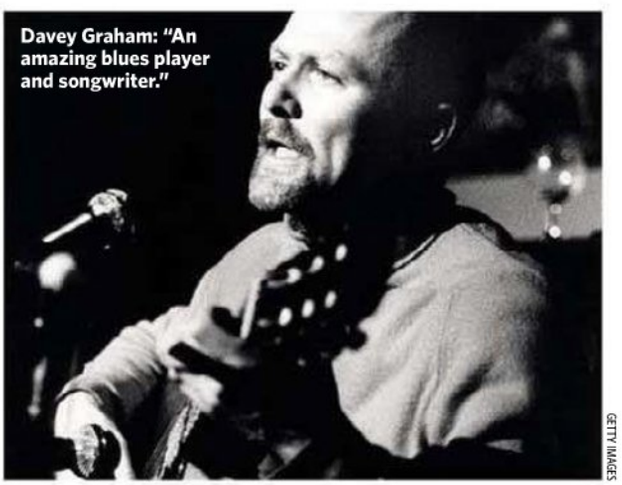
STING

By Carmine Appice

Sting has always written great songs right back to the days of The Police. The melodies, lyrics and rhythms that he uses are so cool. I always liked his writing, even when he went on to become a solo artist.

The Police's fusion of rock and reggae was fantastic. I first used to play reggae with Jeff Beck, then when I played with Rod Stewart we would sometimes change *Maggie May* into a reggae song; I was well into it. But when The Police came out during the following decade, wow – they really put that style of music on the map to a whole new audience.

Carmine Appice is currently drumming with King Kobra. Their new, self-titled album is out via Frontiers on April 18.


Davey Graham: "An amazing blues player and songwriter."

GETTY IMAGES

A LOST ICON OF BRITISH FOLK AND BLUES

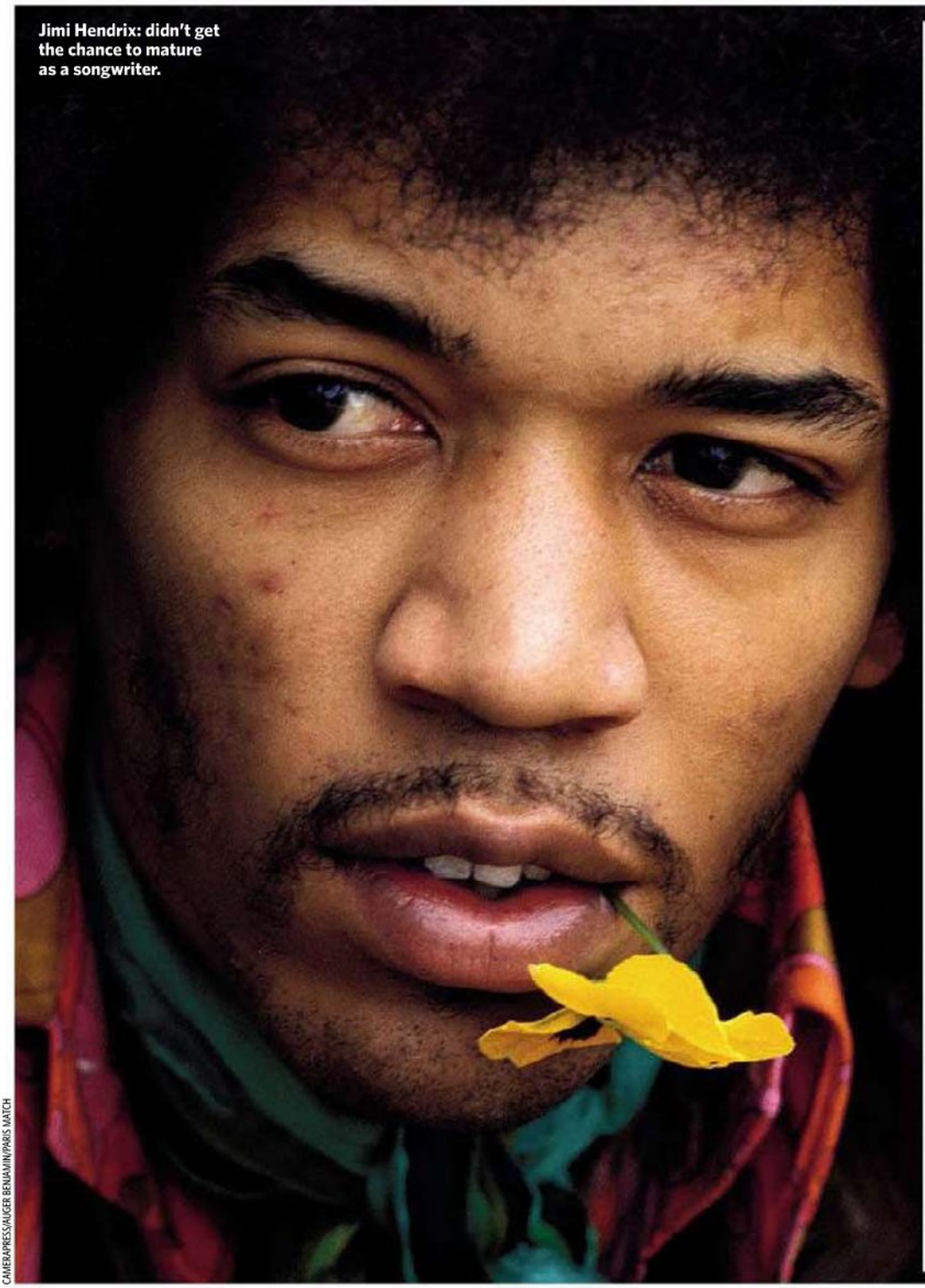
DAVEY GRAHAM

By Ray Davies

I was great friends with Davey Graham, who was an amazing blues player and songwriter, though he mostly played the folk clubs back in the sixties. We were very close spiritually. After he died [2008] I went to his wake. I think the world is still to hear his great stuff from the archives. It's difficult to pick a favourite song of his, but I'd say it's hard to beat *Leavin' Blues*. That's just beautiful.

I love country and folk. I've tried to write a few country-rock songs. I wrote one once called *Who'll Be The Next In Line* [the B-side of The Kinks' *Ev'rybody's Gonna Be Happy* single from1965]. It was a Jerry Lee Lewis-type song.

Ray Davies's latest album of collaborations, See My Friends, is out now on UMTV.



Jimi Hendrix: didn't get the chance to mature as a songwriter.

CAMERAPRESS/ALGER BENJAMIN/PARIS MATCH

MORE THAN JUST A GUITAR PLAYER

JIMI HENDRIX

By Brian May

In Queen, we all shared that awe of this amazing shooting star that Jimi was. Freddie was a disciple. He'd watch Jimi at all kinds of places, then come back and tell us everything he'd done. There's a universal feeling among guitar players that he's the pinnacle... but I do think his songwriting gets overlooked.

Life was such a whirlwind for him around the time of *Are You Experienced* [1967] that I think it all just came pouring out of him in one waterfall. It sounds so instinctive and fresh. I think he was one of these people who just absorbed everything, and he understood the 'rules', and music theory, but he just played it straight from the heart. Some of the greatest treasures are when writers are young and don't care – you've got nothing to lose, so you're not too worried whether you're treading on anyone's toes. I think Jimi was like that on the first album. If one of those riffs had sounded like someone else, he wouldn't have noticed or cared, it just came out and that's the way it was.

As a guitarist, hearing Hendrix really did make you want to give up. Or else go away and rip everything up.

It's such a shame that he died so young, because you would have seen him mature as a songwriter. He was talking about Wagner when he died. He was heading in a different direction.

My favourite track of all is *Little Wing*, which is quite mature and more evolved. He had such a compassionate nature, for the 'wild man of rock', as he was called, and I think that comes out in his writing. *Little Wing* is like a door into a magical world. That's going to look terrible in print, but that's how I feel about it. If you analysed it, you'd almost find nothing – it's a guitar, drums, bass, and Jimi singing – but it weaves this magical spell.

Queen's first five albums are reissued this month on Universal, see page 100

ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES IN THE LIGHT

JEFF LYNNE

By Francis Rossi

I'm not really someone who wanks over somebody. Jeff Lynne is the closest I get to that. I'm really taken with Jeff Lynne. To me, whatever he does is donkey's knob. Now you're a bloke, and we'd all love a donkey's knob, so you understand that 'donkey's knob' means 'good'. Everything he's done has been grand.

When Jeff writes, he'll do things the rest of us wouldn't do. He'll write in a Welsh male voice choir. He'll do a rock song and write in an opera singer doing the whole aria thing. Or put a girl on it. He does things that a lot of us would like to do. We all have this invisible parameter, like, 'you mustn't do that because you're the Quo'. I can't stand that. What's the matter with you people?

He sets up a scene somehow. I think it's obviously inspired by things he heard when he was younger – whether it's from famous movies, or maybe Disney openings – and it's the emotion that he sets up. I'd like to think you can hear Jeff Lynne in the Quo… but no. He uses the five-chord trick, where I would use the three-chord trick, and to me, the five-chord trick smacks of the 50s, and writers like Neil Sedaka and Carol King.

RETNA X3

I like too many of his songs. *Telephone Line* is the five-chord trick, and he's got the telephone sounds on there, he's changing voices, and all of us must have experienced making that call. It just evokes that emotion and puts you right there, and he does that to me every time. Bastard. My ticker starts going and I get romantic. And it gets schmaltzy, I suppose, and as much as I don't want to get schmaltzy, he makes me feel 'aw, it's lovely'.

I'd love to think I was as good as Jeff Lynne, but no fucking way. That's fooling oneself. It's only him and The Beatles, really.

Francis Rossi's Live At St Lukes is out now on earMusic.

More at magazinesdownload.com or ebook-free-download.net

TOM PETTY

ON SONGS AND SONGWRITING

Stealing drum beats from The Beatles and making friends with his guitar? All in a day's work for the Heartbreaker-in-chief.

Words: **Paul Zollo**

Does songwriting ever get easier?
There are some days when you pick up the guitar and it's very friendly to you and you can just play C and it sounds great. Some days you pick the thing up and it's not friendly. It's not ringing. It doesn't want to respond. That how I know if, "Oooh, it's being friendly today!" [Laughs] "Oooh, I feel very musical and things are coming." But when it's not I just close down.

Do songs seem to come from beyond you?
It's hard to say where songs come from. Sometimes they just appear. I just write these songs, and then I hope there's some sort of truth and some sort of timelessness to them. And if it feels like there is, then I feel, okay, that's a song. But it's very hard to get that. It takes a long time.

I try to play until I go into a semi-subconscious space. And then things start arriving. And you get so caught up in the process that you don't want to look much deeper because it could really make the whole thing disintegrate. I don't want to look too far behind the curtain. I'm just glad they're arriving. And then suddenly, like a bolt of lightning later on, I see, "Oh, I know what that is about. I would never have written that if I had known what it was about." [Much laughter].

You mustn't question songs while they are arriving. You've got to let them arrive. If you question what you're doing, that could get in the way of what's trying to come.

Do you work on songs all the time?
I could write a song now if I had to, but I don't think it necessarily would be good. You've got to have some real, very real, inspiration. But to look too hard is ridiculous. If it feels like music, then probably some level of inspiration is happening. Then you just start to play. Play *Walk Don't Run* for half an hour, or whatever has come into your mind. And from there you'll move off that into something. You'll find a couple of changes, or a lyric that comes into your own mind… You're dealing with magic. It's this intangible thing that has got to happen. And to really seek it out too much might not be a good idea. Because, you know, it's very shy too. But once you've got it, you can work on songs and improve them. Once you've got the essence of them, you see if there's a better word, or a better change.

What is the most common misconception about your songs?
It always makes me laugh when people say my music is simple. Because if you think it's simple, try to do it. It's not simple. There's a lot of nuance. And light and shade. It's not a simple thing. I was in a music store, and this guy tried to impress me by playing all our licks… And he had every one wrong. He had the right root of the chord, but we use a lot of variations. And this guy was playing everything straight.

Tell us about writing some of your songs. How about *Breakdown*?
I wrote *Breakdown* on a break from recording at Shelter Studio in Hollywood. I think we took a break because we had recorded everything we had. And I made up *Breakdown*. I wrote it on piano. I still have that piano. I bought it. [Laughs] Many years later it's sitting in my living room. I wrote it very quickly. I played it to them [his band] and they really dug it and we made the record. I think we got that drum beat from a Beatles record, *All I Got To Do*. We just varied it. That was the idea, to have that kind of broken rhythm on the hi-hat.

> **"It always makes me laugh when people say my music is simple. If you think it's simple, try to do it. It's not simple."**
>
> **Tom Petty**

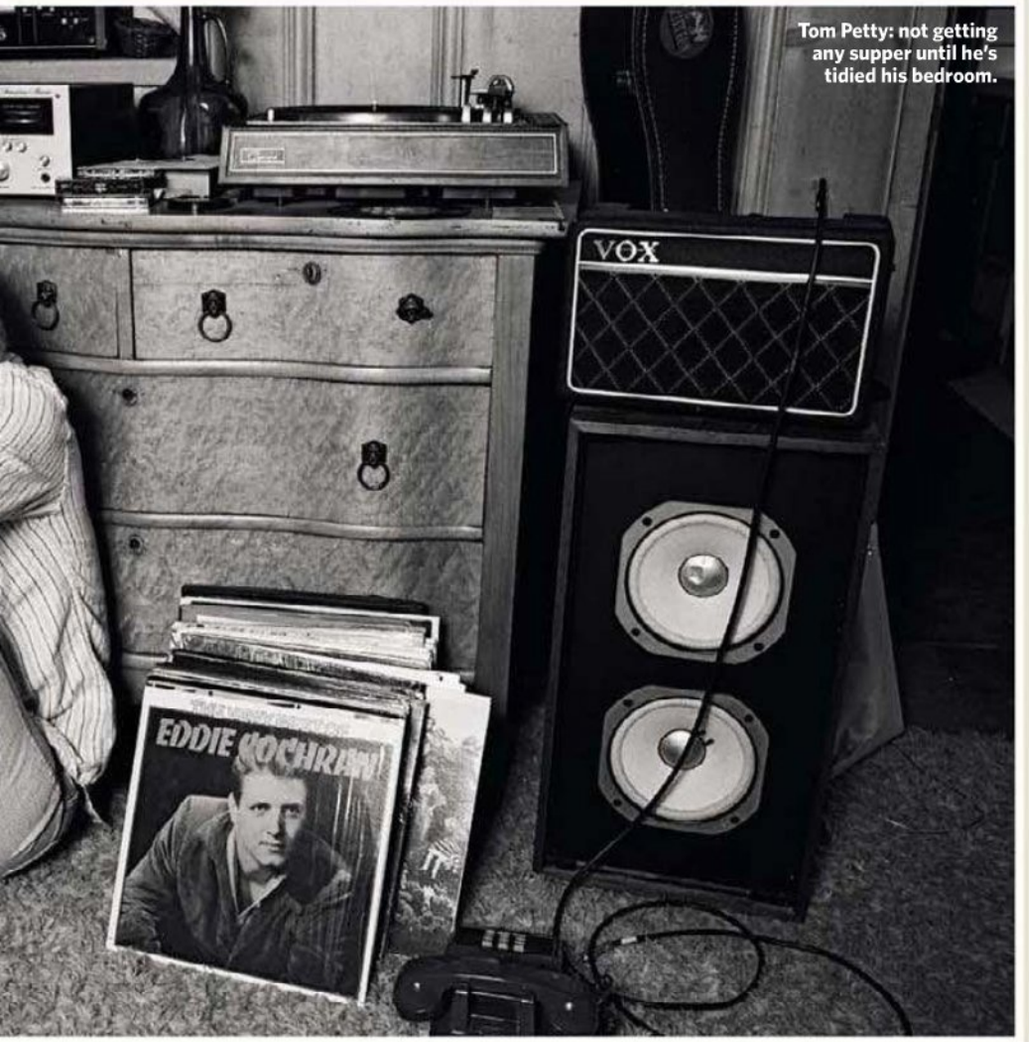
What about *Free Fallin'*?
I wrote *Free Fallin'* because [longtime roadie] Bugs [Weidel] bought this cheap little keyboard. I said: "Why would you waste money on this? I would never play something like this." He said: "Well, look, take it into the house. If you write one song on it, it will pay for itself." I thought, well, okay. And Jeff [Lynne, producer] was over. I had the keyboard, and I started playing on it and I hit this little chord pattern that we would know as *Free Fallin'*, but I had a couple more notes in the riff. Jeff looked up and said: "Oh, that's good. Can you leave out that last chord and see what it does." And when I did that it made this nice round of chords.

So I was just trying really to make Jeff smile as I was ad-libbing these words: *'She's a good girl, loves her mama, loves Jesus and America too…'* And Jeff smiled. I kept going, and I got right up to the chorus and I didn't know what to sing. And he said: [in British accent] "Free falling." And I tried to sing it but I couldn't get 'free falling' to fit into the line, so I just sang *'free…'* and then the next line I sang: *'free falling…'* And then he perked up and said: "That's good. That's great! But take your voice up an octave when you go into the chorus." And – bang! – there it was. *Free Fallin'*. I was very excited. I loved the song. Jeff went home, and I sat there for awhile and I finished the last verse alone. The one about flying out over Mulholland, and writing the girl's name in the sky.

He came around the next day and I played it for him, and he said: "Man you stayed up and finished the song? That's incredible!" So this is how these things happen. And it's turned out to be probably the most famous song I ever wrote. And there's not a day that goes by that somebody doesn't hum *Free Fallin'* to me or I don't hear it somewhere. It's become synonymous with me, I guess. But it was really only 30 minutes of my life.

Later, people told me they didn't think I should keep the vampire line – about all the vampires in the valley on Ventura Boulevard. That line came from me driving down Ventura Boulevard and stopping at all those red lights. It was night, and on the side of the road you'd see the post office or these different buildings. And there would be these teenagers in these big clothes, kind of stepping back into the shadows. I don't know what they were doing there, but I saw them as vampires. I think that's where that image came from, but it's hard to be sure.

People said I should take that line out, that it wouldn't make sense if you don't live here. But people love that song all over. So I guess there are vampires everywhere.



Tom Petty: not getting any supper until he's tidied his bedroom.

NEIL ZLOZOWER X2

Mary Jane's Last Dance?

I wrote *Mary Jane's Last Dance* during the *Full Moon Fever* sessions. I wrote all but the chorus, I just had the loop going around and around and really had most of the words and everything. I played it for Rick [Rubin, producer], and he liked it a lot and suggested I write a chorus. So I tried to finish it up while I was making *Wildflowers*, and there were maybe five years between the writing of the verses and the chorus… I don't think I was writing about pot, I think it's just a girl's name. I can't imagine I'd write a song about pot. There's not enough there to write about [laughs].

Learning To Fly?

Learning To Fly was inspired by the Gulf War. I remember that line about the rocks melting and the sea burning being directly inspired by seeing this whole thing on TV. That was the jumping off point. It became something a little more substantial than that, but that's how it started.

You Wreck Me?

You Wreck Me was written to a tape Mike [Campbell, Heartbreakers guitarist] gave me. Well, he actually gave it to Mick Jagger [laughs]. He never even played it for me. And I guess Mick couldn't come up with anything. And Rick [Rubin] remembered it and asked him to play it for me. So when he played it for me, I took the tape home and learned the lick, and wrote the song to it. [Mike] had the whole idea, the whole chord structure and everything, but no words. It sounded kind of like a jam. That was another one that was done pretty fast. And I really liked that one. I thought it sounded like an old Heartbreakers record… a nostalgic one, almost.

It took me forever to get the title. That was one where I had the whole melody sketched out and most of the words but I couldn't figure out that title for a long time. I was singing: *'You rock me'*, but I knew that wasn't going to fly. I was using it as a dummy line to get to the next one.

And then the next day it hit me. Because I didn't want to change the phrasing. I could change 'rock' to 'wreck' and suddenly this whole picture emerged. It's amazing to me how one word can completely change the entire thing. It's the hardest thing. Because if you've got the one word wrong, you've got to be patient. I've learned this from experience, that one word can mean so much. It can change the entire thing. It can lift up the whole trip and elevate it if you're patient enough to get that, that one little word or key line. It feels like I have to find it. It's almost like it's there, and I just have to keep digging until it reveals itself.

For more on Tom Petty's songwriting, make sure you check out Paul Zollo's book Conversations With Tom Petty, published by Omnibus.

THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS

GUNS N' ROSES

By James Dean Bradfield

When I think back to the songs on that first Guns N' Roses album, I think of utter chemistry. They all pitched in with the songwriting. I think it was Izzy who wrote most of *Sweet Child O' Mine*. I think it was more Slash that wrote songs like *Mr Brownstone*. And Axl's lyrics… *Paradise City* is genius. You know: *'The surgeon general says it's hazardous to breathe…'* There's some real alienation in that lyric. And then there's the flip-side in the chorus. Then there are just lovely bits of glamour in those songs. *Nightrain* has got that real youth and strut about it. It's just a lovely, succinct way of just saying: "Fuck you, I'm gonna believe in my own power."

There's a great Slash quote where he said he felt the music lost something when Steven Adler left. He said: "Steven drummed on the edge. He had an anxiety about his drumming and that fed into the songs." How can you get rid of all that chemistry?

James Dean Bradfield is the frontman with the Manic Street Preachers. They play the UK in May.

MICHAEL PUTLAND / RETNA

HIT MAN

JIMMY WEBB

By Paul Stanley

Jimmy Webb wrote so many amazing songs: *Wichita Lineman, By The Time I Get To Phoenix, The Moon's A Harsh Mistress.* These are epic songs with a cinematic quality in the lyrics. And in all of those songs the words are coupled so beautifully with a great melody. There's something deep in those songs. And they're hits. Being a songwriter writing pop songs, there's no shame in that. Pop means popular.

Whether it's music or art, I like to think I'm inspired by other artists. The great artists open your eyes and ears to a way of approaching things. That's how I feel about Jimmy Webb. My music is an amalgamation of all the things I love. There's room for Led Zeppelin, there's room for The Beatles, and for Humble Pie. And there's room for Jimmy Webb. They're a part of what fuels my imagination and makes me what I am.

Paul Stanley is in Kiss. Their latest album, Sonic Boom, is out on Roadrunner.

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STORYTELLER

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By Dan Hawkins

Richard Thompson is an unbelievable guitarist, but also, as a songwriter he's a classic storyteller. Lyrically he really captures your imagination. None of his songs are: 'I love you, baby' and all that; there's always a dark meaning behind it. The storytelling in his songs is similar in a way to Phil Lynott's, and he combines that with awesome rocking guitars.

With Richard Thompson there's a huge catalogue to choose from. I love the Fairport Convention stuff: *Meet On The Ledge* and *Matty Groves*, those really experimental folk rock songs. But it's his solo work that I like best, and *1952 Vincent Black Lightning* [from 1991's *Rumor And Sigh*] is my personal favourite. Lyrically it transports you right into this heartbreaking story of one man's love for his motorcycle and his red-haired lady. I really like songs that take you somewhere in a bookish way.

Every song I've ever written has been written on acoustic guitar, and quite often in tunings that are influenced by Richard Thompson; just to get the songs sounding interesting. If you play a standard rock song in a different tuning it comes alive. And his arrangements are so good. Ever since I got into him I've thought a lot more about where a guitar solo should land in the arrangement and about the musicality of what the guitars do. Rather than just a widdly solo to fill in between a chorus and verse, I try to make a solo part of the song. I can sing every one of Richard Thompson's guitar solos, and that's something I've always aspired to.

With The Darkness's *Love Is Only A Feeling*, the guitars and the tunings I used were completely influenced by Richard Thompson, and so was *Seemed Like A Good Idea At The Time* from the second album [*One Way Ticket To Hell... And Back*]. I think that song is one of my most accomplished arrangements, and that whole acoustic approach, and the melody, all comes from me listening to Richard Thompson before picking up a guitar to write.

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Once Bowie had left Mott The Hoople to their own devices, somebody had to step up to the plate, and I remember Ian Hunter telling me about the day he walked into the room saying: "I've figured it out! I know how to write a hit!" This was when he'd just written *All The Way From Memphis* and *Honaloochie Boogie*. I mean, what the hell is a honaloochie? There isn't one, it's a made-up word. I love that.

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It's not like getting the front page of every magazine, but Ian's writing has acclaim among the elite. I think when Ian passes he'll be valued more. The thing is, he had the hits. He wrote *Roll Away The Stone*, *The Golden Age Of Rock'n'Roll*; even some great songs that weren't hits: *Saturday Gigs* and *Foxy, Foxy*. Beyond Mott, listen to solo records like *Once Bitten, Twice Shy*: just a genius piece of music that's been ruined by other bands.

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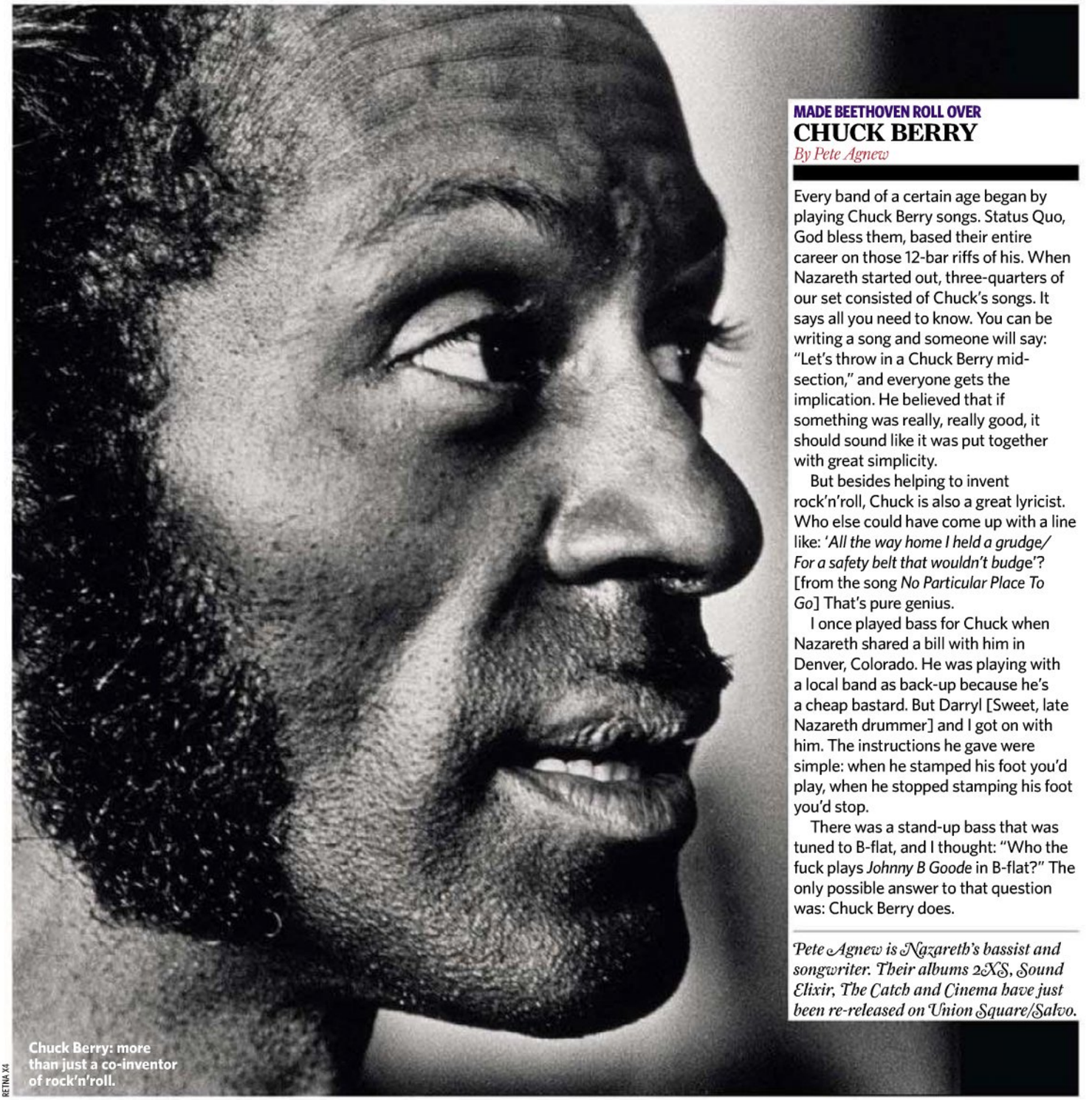

Chuck Berry: more than just a co-inventor of rock'n'roll.

RETNA X4

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But besides helping to invent rock'n'roll, Chuck is also a great lyricist. Who else could have come up with a line like: *'All the way home I held a grudge/ For a safety belt that wouldn't budge'*? [from the song *No Particular Place To Go*] That's pure genius.

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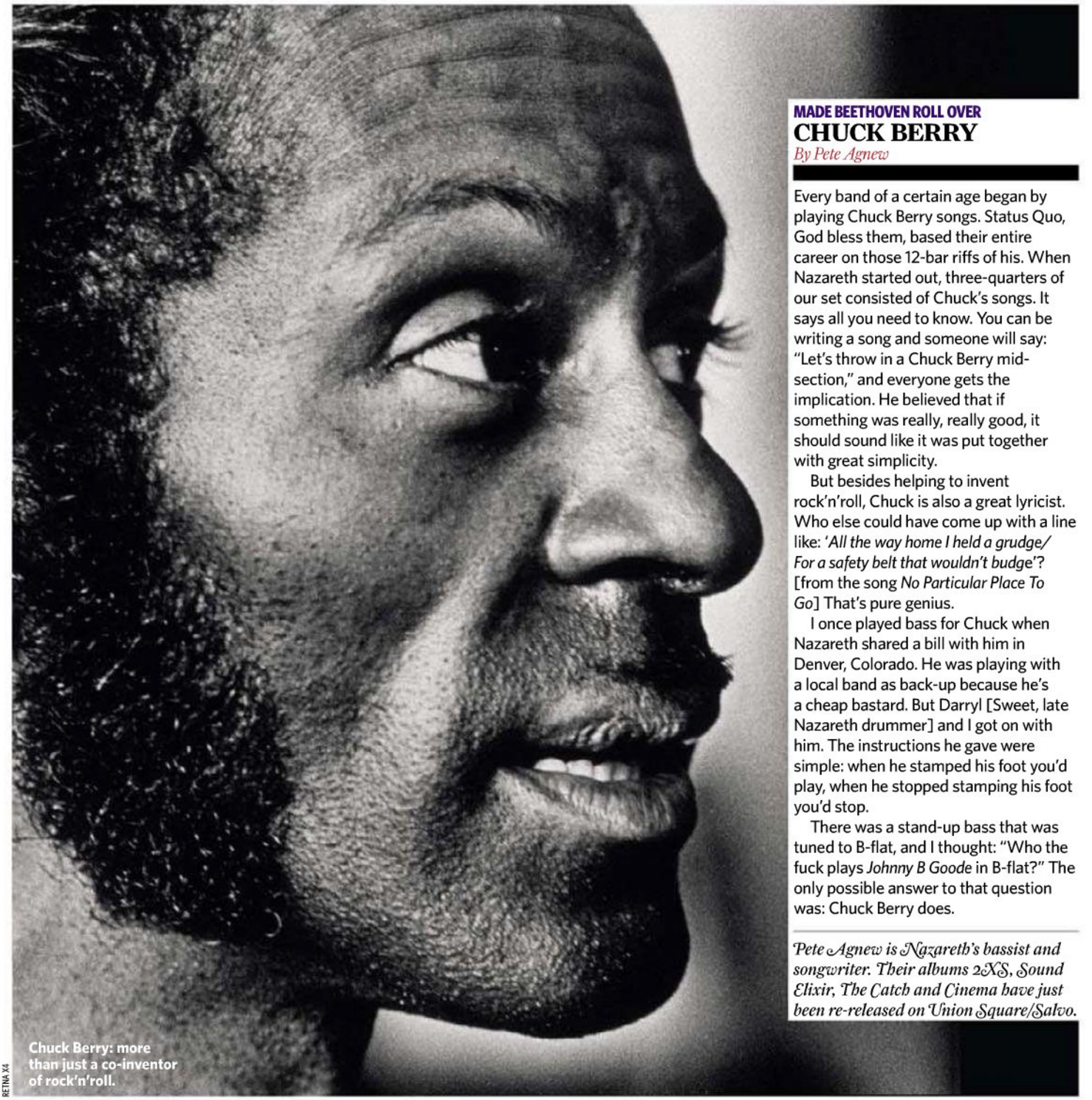

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BY ROYAL APPOINTMENT

FREDDIE MERCURY

By Roger Taylor and Brian May

Roger Taylor: Everybody gets so mixed up with all the other sides: the flash, the sexual ambiguity, the showmanship, the voice… It doesn't *frustrate* me, because I'm just pleased he's remembered. But it's when you delve deeper that you really get his musicality. Actually, at the bottom of it all was just a genius songwriter. We're re-releasing all the Queen albums at the moment, so we're being forced to listen hard to the remastering. And it's just staggering.

His words got better quickly. There were some very overt lyrics. *Don't Stop Me Now* is a good example. He was having a good time, and that was very much a *cri de coeur*. Some lyrics we wrote together, like *I'm Going Slightly Mad*, which was funny. We had fun coming up with daft things, all those ridiculous phrases.

I'd say it was Freddie's actual musicality which was the cleverest thing of all, the notes, and his harmonic structure was quite brilliant. When he wrote *The Fairy Feller's Master-Stroke*, on the second album, he was crossing sections of six-part harmonies, and I thought: "Bloody hell, that is tricky stuff." Then there's *The March Of The Black Queen*, which is almost like prog-rock, and so outrageously complicated that I can't even remember the arrangement myself. When you write songs that complex, you have to work hard at it, and it did involve a lot of head-scratching. But then he'd come up with a *Killer Queen* or, later on, lots of simple things like *Crazy Little Thing*. He had it on all sides.

Freddie evolved. I always called him 'the man who invented himself'. I think the talent was innate, but he dug deep inside himself and forced it out. His determination was quite something.

Brian May: There was huge songwriting competition in Queen, no doubt about it. It was a major factor in pushing us onwards. We were very conscious that we had to reach inside ourselves to keep up. Occasionally Freddie would write fast, but a lot of the time he'd go home and scheme and scheme, and come back with stuff written all over a pad of his dad's notepaper. He'd spend time developing ideas. But there are exceptions, where he'd get the song in one bite. And often they're the ones that connect.

Freddie mainly used the piano for songwriting, but there were times when he'd get inspiration when he wasn't around his instrument. It could be any experience; a skate on the pond. One of the last songs he wrote, *A Winter's Tale*, was written purely sat looking out on the mountains from the other side of Lake Geneva. He could obviously hear it all in his head, although he didn't have any musical instruments with him. I remember him coming into the studio and saying: "I've got this idea… just give me a few minutes." Then he brought it to life. That's a beautiful track, actually.

Another favourite is *The Miracle*, which has an incredible lightness to it. I'd say my favourite Freddie song to play is *We Are The Champions* – still. And I don't know how many times I've played it, but it always pulls something out of you. It's one of those songs where even if the winds are blowing in the wrong direction it still sounds good.

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Roger Taylor and Brian May are both still in Queen. Queen's first five albums are reissued this month.

Freddie Mercury: "You have to work hard to write songs that complex..."

MICK ROCK

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DAVID BOWIE

On Songwriting

David Bowie, one of the most consistently great British songwriters of all time, explains his creative process, and tells us why time and place matter.

Words: **Bill DeMain**

Your albums often reflect the place where they were written and recorded. For example, *Low* and *Heroes* have something of the austerity of Berlin.

Wherever I'm writing, that place tends to make itself very known, either in the atmosphere or sound. Using *Heathen* [2002] as an example, that was written up in the mountains of Woodstock. And you do have that sense of the magnificence of this really disquietingly tranquil place, but the sense of indifference about nature within it all. I think the one thing that goes through *Reality* [2003] is the sense of New York. It feels very 'street'. There's a lot more about being a New Yorker, which indeed I am. The accent may not say that [laughs], but I am. I wrote the songs here, downtown where I live, and it does reflect that. I notice that there are more references to streets around here than I realised. Tony Visconti and I were counting them up the other day, and I think there are seven streets on the album [laughs].

When you're writing songs, how important is it for you to return to a kind of beginner's mind about it?

I understand that very well. And it is terribly important for me to do that. It's absolutely essential that I get surprised and excited by what I'm doing, even if it's just for me. I think process is quite important. To allow the accidental to take place is often very good. So I trick myself into things like that. Maybe I'll write out five or six chords, then discipline myself to write something only with those five or six chords involved. So that particular dogma will dictate how the song is going to come out, not me and my sense of emotional self. Of course, I'll cheat as well. If I've got the basis of something really quite good coming out of those five or six chords, then I'll allow myself to restructure it a bit, if I think, well, that could be so much better if it went to F-sharp [laughs], or something like that. But to define the rules, then take it as far as you can go with that little rule, then break it, I find is really a way of breaking writer's blocks as well.

Do you still use the William Burroughs method of cutting up text in random patterns to write lyrics?

Absolutely. I'll use them to provoke a new set of images, or a new way of looking at a subject. I find it incredibly useful as a writer's tool. And I'm amazed these days at the amount of cut-up sites that are now on the internet. It's quite phenomenal. There are at least 10, and two or three of them are excellent. I've used them too. I've put a bunch of pieces of text into the thing, then hit the cut-up button, and it slices it up for me [laughs]. In ninety-four, when I was really starting to get into the computer in a major way, I had a program devised so that I could specifically do that. Most of the lyric content of the *Outside* [2003] album came out of that program. But now they're all over the place, especially on poet sites. There are a lot of poets who still work in that method, so I'm not alone.

> **"In my generation the idea was that if you did something *good* you'd become famous. Now, being famous is the be-all and end-all."**
>
> **David Bowie**

This idea of juxtaposition and pasting appears fundamental to what you do as an artist.

I think that was my premise for writing and making music when I was a kid. When I'd gotten a little more sophisticated and had a more rounded idea of what I was as an artist – and it wasn't immediate, by any means, but around the late 60s/early 70s – it really started to all come together for me as to what it is that I like doing and what satisfied me the most. And it was a collision of musical styles as much as anything else. I found that I couldn't easily adopt brand loyalty [laughs], or genre loyalty. I wasn't an R&B artist, and I wasn't a folk artist, and I was this artist or that kind of artist, and I didn't really see the point in trying to be that purist about it. What my true style was is that I loved the idea of putting Little Richard with Jacques Brel, and the Velvet Underground backing them – what would that sound like? [laughs] That for me was really interesting. It really seemed, for me, what I was good at doing. What I enjoyed was being able to hybridise these different kinds of music.

***Rock 'N' Roll Suicide*, from *Ziggy Stardust*, is a great example of that.**

Right. To go from a 50s rock-flavoured thing with an Edith Piaf nuance on it produced that. There was a sense of French chanson in there. It wasn't obviously a 50s pastiche, even though it had that rhythm that said total 50s. But it actually ends up as being a French chanson. That was purposeful. I wanted that blend, to see if that would be interesting. And it *was* interesting. Nobody was doing that, at least not in the same way. The same approach was being adopted by a certain number of artists from that era.

It was all this sense of "Wow, you can do anything!" The 60s were so over, and this 70s thing was a harder, more cynical, ironic place, and the attitude was a whole different thing. It wasn't love and peace and beads. This was something else, like "What a fucked up society. Let's see what it sounds like!" [laughs]. The sense of pulling away from it all.

Tell us about some of your most famous songs. What about *Heroes*?

I'm allowed to talk about it now. I wasn't at the time. I always said it was a couple of lovers by the Berlin Wall that prompted the idea. Actually, it was Tony Visconti and his girlfriend. Tony was married at the time. And I could never say who it was [laughs]. But I can now say that the lovers were Tony and a German girl that he'd met while we were in Berlin. I did ask his permission if I could say that. I think possibly the marriage was in the last few months, and it was very touching because I could see that Tony was very much in love with this girl, and it was that relationship which sort of motivated the song.

How about the song *Fame*?

Fame itself, of course, doesn't really afford you anything more than a good seat in a restaurant. That must be pretty well known by now. I'm just amazed how fame is being posited as the be-all and end-all, and how many of these young kids who are being foisted on the public have been talked into this idea that anything necessary to be famous is all right. It's a sad state of affairs. However arrogant and ambitious I think we were in my generation, I think the idea was that if you do something really *good*, you'll become famous. The emphasis on fame itself is something new. It's not the same thing at all. And it will leave many of them with this empty feeling. Then again, I don't know if it will, because I think a lot of them are genuinely quite satisfied. I know a couple of personalities over in England who are famous for being famous, basically. They sort of initially came out of the pop world, but they're quite happy being photographed going everywhere and showing their kids off and this is a career to them… That, to me, is a big worry. I think it's done dreadful things to the music industry. There's such a lot of rubbish, drivel out there.

The song has its roots in something by James Brown, right?

David Bowie: so tiny he can fit inside a toilet roll tube without much folding.

KATE GARNER/CORBIS OUTLINE

It was a guitar riff that Carlos Alomar had. He used to play in James Brown's band and he'd come up with this riff for a song called *Foot Stompin'*. When we were in the studio with John Lennon, I asked Carlos: "What was that riff you had?" And it went from there.

Had you been having conversations with Lennon about fame before it was written?
Yes. Actually, much more to the point, we'd been talking about management, and it kind of came out of that. He was telling me: "You're being shafted by your present manager" [laughs]. That was basically the line. And John was the guy who opened me up to the idea that all management is crap. That there's no such thing as good management in rock'n'roll, and you should try to do it without it. It was at John's instigation that I really did without managers, and started getting people in to do specific jobs for me, rather than signing myself away to one guy forever and have him take a piece of everything that I earn. You don't have to end up signing your life away to some fool who's just there kind of grabbing hold of the coat-tails.

***Rebel Rebel* has one of the all-time classic riffs.**
[Laughs] It's a real air-guitar thing, isn't it? I can tell you a very funny story about that.

One night,I was in London in a hotel trying to get some sleep. It was quite late, like 11 or 12 at night, and I had some big-deal thing on the next day, a TV showor something, and I heard this riff being played really badly from upstairs. I thought. who the hell is doing this at this time of night? On an electric guitar, over and over [sings riff to *Rebel Rebel* in a very hesitant, stop and start way]. So I went upstairs to show the person how to play the thing [laughs]. So I bang on the door. The door opens, and I say: "Listen, if you're going to play…" and it was John McEnroe! I kid you not [laughs]. It was McEnroe, who saw himself as some sort of rock guitar player at the time. That could only happen in a movie, couldn't it? McEnroe trying to struggle his way through the *Rebel Rebel* riff.

MICHAEL PUTLAND/RETNA

DECEPTIVE SIMPLICITY

ERIC CLAPTON

By Joe Bonamassa

The the mark of a great song is when a bad covers band can play it and you still get the same feeling. It's like The Beatles: if somebody plays *Hey Jude*, whether it's just karaoke or McCartney singing, it's always a great tune. Same thing with Eric's songs.

He's the best at making things very accessible and deceptively simple-sounding. My favourite Clapton song… *Old Love* [co-credited to Robert Cray], off *Journeyman*, and also *Keep On Growing* and *Bell-Bottom Blues* [both from *Layla*] It'd be a three-way tie. It's a simplicity thing. *Old Love* is just two or three chords. And those words… You felt him on that. That song has come out of experience.

I don't stockpile songs, I write to order. I wait until we start a record and then I'll go, 'Well, this is a snapshot of my life'. You listen to Clapton's catalogue, it sounds like he does that too. His lyrics are very powerful. Lyrically, the best stuff you'll find is on songs he wrote with Will Jennings, stuff like *Tears In Heaven*.

Everyone talks about Blues Breakers and Cream and *Layla*… I honestly think his latest record has just as much as fire, it's just a more mature version of that same guy. I think he can do what he likes now. He's earned the right.

Dustbowl, Joe Bonamassa's new album, is out now on Provogue.

METAL INSTITUTION

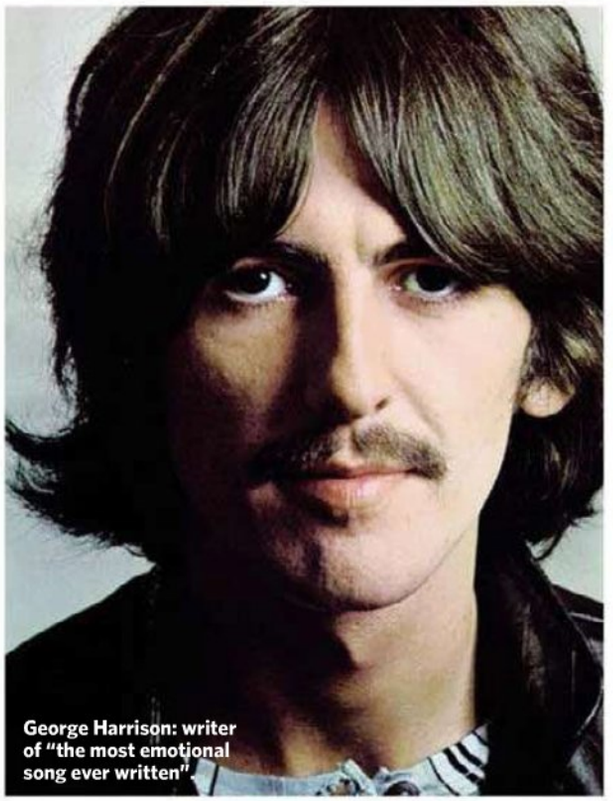
IRON MAIDEN

By John Bush

The amazing thing about Maiden and their songs is that it's unequivocally them. The trotting bass, vocal melodies, and lyrics *are* Iron Maiden. There isn't an inkling of doubt from the first note.

John Bush is the vocalist in Armored Saint, their latest album La Raza is out now.

More at magazinesdownload.com or ebook-free-download.net



George Harrison: writer of "the most emotional song ever written".

THE QUIET BEATLE

GEORGE HARRISON

By Geezer Butler

George Harrison's *Something* has to be the most emotional song ever written, and McCartney's bass playing on that song is genius.

The Beatles truly changed the world. Britain in the 1950s and early 60s was drab and still war-weary; British rock music was a pale imitation of Elvis and Buddy Holly. Then along came The Beatles. Their music spoke to me, became the soundtrack to my early teens. They were from Liverpool, a mere 90 miles from where I lived, not Memphis or California. They had English accents and didn't try to speak like Americans. I wanted to be a Beatle. My brother bought me a guitar for ten bob [50 pence] and I started learning their songs. They truly changed my life.

Geezer Butler is currently working on a new solo album and also finishing writing his memoirs. Visit www.geezerbutler.com for updates.

TAKIN' IT EASY

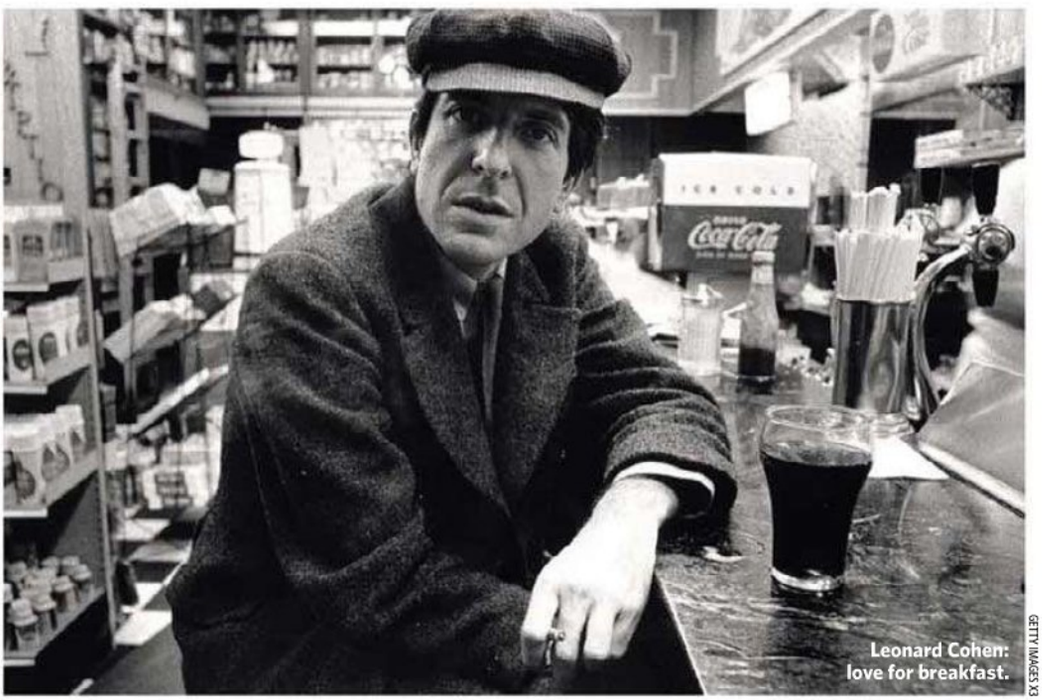
JACKSON BROWNE

By Ashley Hutchings

I'm a romantic at heart, which Jackson Browne is too – in the best sense of the word. And the best of his aching love songs are equal to the best of any ever written.

I've got a teenage son who's just turned seventeen, and he's really into *Sky Blue And Black*. He plays it on the piano. People generally don't really listen to lyrics or appreciate poetry, but to me it's the most important thing.

Ashley Hutchings is one of the co-founders of British folk-rockers Fairport Convention.



Leonard Cohen: love for breakfast.

GETTY IMAGES X3

SINGER, SONGWRITER, POET, NOVELIST...

LEONARD COHEN

By Donovan

The fascinating thing about Leo's songwriting is that everyone completely misunderstood him and thought he was so depressing. In the 60s you'd have all the depressed girls in the world buying Leonard Cohen albums and sitting there going: 'It's sooo depressing'. But I always thought he was hilarious. Listen to something like *Bird On A Wire*. Like many of Leo's songs, it has this great dichotomy of humour and pathos. For absolute downright humour, *Bird On A Wire* is just great. As is *First We Take Manhattan*, which is wonderfully bohemian, a reverse kind of angst.

He was once asked for his opinion on how the future might remember him. And rather than stake a claim for greatness, he just said: "A minor poet of the 20th Century". Did you ever hear the story about when he and Dylan met up? Leo asked him how long it took to write a song and Dylan replied: "About five minutes. How long does it take you?" Leo said: "Five years". Can you imagine anyone else labouring a lyric over and over the way he does?

Donovan wrote such songs as Sunshine Superman and Hurdy Gurdy Man. He tours the UK in June.

PETER MAZEL/RETNA PICTURES

GODFATHERS OF ROCK

BLACK SABBATH

By J Mascis

There are so many great rock songwriters. I was kind of into records from early on – the Stones were a big influence, and Black Sabbath too. I loved everything about Sabbath, from the songwriting onwards. I particularly liked how, on *Sabotage* [1975], they had a song that suddenly went from electric guitar to acoustic in the middle. I love the riffs on that album too. The songs can be very quiet, then suddenly they kick in and go really loud. That kind of thing I was really into. I think the loud-and-quiet thing we had in Dinosaur Jr had a lot to do with Sabbath. It wasn't just the sound, either, I could appreciate the songs themselves. Some of the lyrics were very funny. It was the overall impact. *The Thrill Of It All* [from *Sabotage*] is probably my favourite of theirs.

I remember writing *Freak Scene* [1988], and hearing it back in my room, thinking it sounded pretty good. It has that thing from Sabbath where an acoustic guitar suddenly comes in. We filmed the video in John Robb's garden in Manchester, incidentally.

J Mascis's first ever solo album, Several Shades Of Why, is out now on Sub Pop. He tours Europe in April.

NEIL ZLOZOWER

Black Sabbath: fans of the loud-quiet dynamic.

"Donald Fagen writes about a loss of innocence, but the music is always cool rock'n'roll loaded with jazz chords."

Ray Manzarek

THE CORE OF STEELY DAN

DONALD FAGEN/ WALTER BECKER

By Ray Manzarek

My favourite band as songwriters is Steely Dan, that's Donald Fagen and Walter Becker. Their songs are incredibly inventive, with subtle chord changes, and while those songs never sound the same they always bear that Steely Dan imprimatur, that lyrical smartness. They're the college band that made good. I like the fact they're very collegiate, intellectual East Coasters. They're not scared to admit that they've read books!

I first heard them on the radio in Los Angeles; it was probably *Rikki Don't Lose That Number*, which was a huge FM hit. *Rikki*'s got great lines and lyrics, but so has everything on *Pretzel Logic*. I don't know what it's about but I also love *Barrytown*, that's in upstate New York, it seems to be a great put down sung in Fagen's wry sarcastic way.

Then they do Duke Ellington – 1920s stuff from the Cotton Club. I suppose they're esoteric but they've expanded their horizons and they were amongst the first to go back in time with a modern twist. They had this time machine approach. They loved bebop, Latino and classic writing. And they decamped from the East Coast. They recorded in LA of course, seduced by the place and the light I guess, and that gave them a sense of distance. They worked with great musicians and created such cool blues. The track *Pretzel Logic* is immaculate – great lines about travelling the Southland in a minstrel show.

If there is a theme it's that there's a nostalgia in what Fagen sings. He writes with sadness about a loss of innocence but the music is always cool rock and roll loaded with jazz chords. Their songs are also packed with Latino and conga rhythms, which they acquired from immersion in California where you're surrounded by Mexican culture.

I never met Fagen but I did see him in a bookstore once in Pickwick Books on Hollywood Boulevard, he was so absorbed I didn't disturb him. He's a serious cat.

Ray Manzarek was in The Doors. The documentary When You're Strange is out now on Universal.

More at magazinesdownload.com or ebook-free-download.net

OUT OF THE SHADOWS

HANK MARVIN

By Tony Iommi

The songwriters I liked when I was young were so different to what I do. Hank Marvin and Django Reinhardt were who I liked initially. Hank really made you listen – you wanted to hear the song, but also what he was doing with it. He and the Shadows had such a distinctive sound, and you could learn from that – try to copy it, if I'm honest. You could learn those parts. And that was really what started me off as a player and a writer.

News and info about Tony Iommi at his official site: www.iommi.com

"I appreciate Free's sheer sense of rhythm, of course, but as writers and arrangers they were also very special indeed."

Trevor Bolder

Free: often imitated, never equalled.

GERED MANKOWITZ/GETTY IMAGES

BLUES ROCK MASTERS

FREE

By Trevor Bolder

As a bass player, I appreciated Free's sheer sense of rhythm, of course, but as writers and arrangers they were also very special indeed. I love the way that *All Right Now* starts off with the drums at the same time as the riff – as soon as you hear that beat, you knew what was coming. Rodgers then arrives with his unmistakable, magical vocals and Andy Fraser contributes that great funky bass solo, even before Paul Kossoff gets his own showcase on the guitar – it was a very brave thing to do. But of course everyone cottoned on and tried to copy it.

Andy Fraser definitely influenced me as a bass player – I was a huge fan – and, along with bands like with Cream, Free's style of writing also rubbed off on me as a writer.

Free were responsible for more than their fair share of classic songs, but I will never tire of hearing *All Right Now*. You could almost imagine the four of them writing it in a rehearsal room, putting all the little pieces together. All of a sudden you've got something that couldn't have been recorded by any other band. It sounded slightly American in places, but it's a great British rock song.

Trevor Bolder is the bass player with Uriah Heep. Their 23rd studio album, Into The Wild, is released on April 15.

BB King: letting his guitar do the talking.

CHRIS WALTER/PHOTOFEATURES/RETNA PICTURES

THE ULTIMATE BLUESMAN

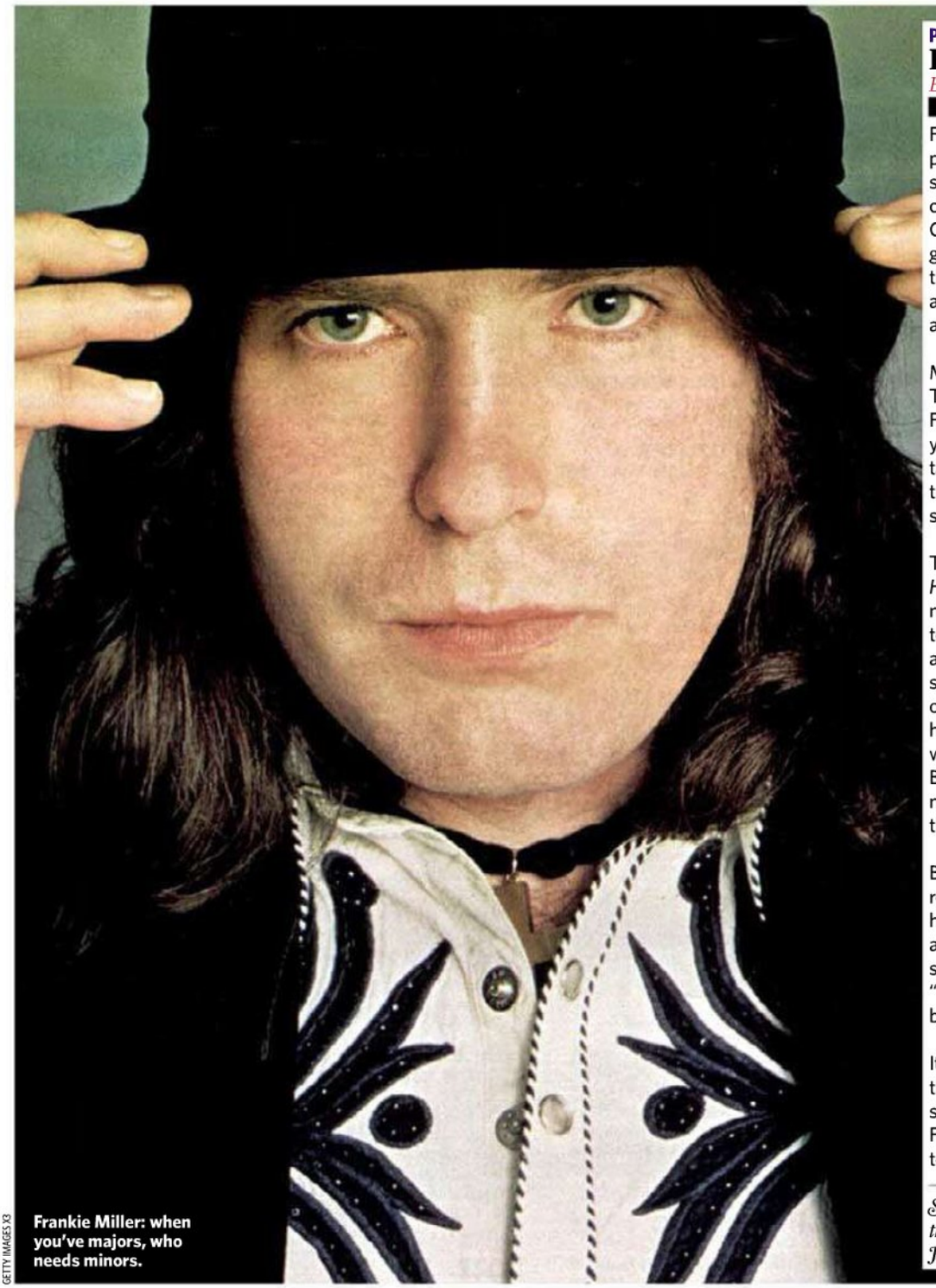
BB KING

By Carlos Santana

When I first heard BB King, I was more interested in the stories he told with his guitar than what was coming out of his mouth. Then hearing Peter Green [with John Mayall's band] do *The Supernatural*, and Jimi Hendrix create a whole song with just guitar, I knew that there was a way to have no lead vocals, just instrumental, and let the guitar tell the story.

On my songs like *Samba Pa Ti* and *Europa*, they tell a story more eloquently than Spanish or English or French or Japanese. Melody is immediate to the molecules. Molecules don't need ABCs to understand. Melody goes right to the cells.

Carlos Santana's latest album, Guitar Heaven, is out now.



Frankie Miller: when you've majors, who needs minors.

GETTY IMAGES X3

PRIDE OF SCOTLAND

FRANKIE MILLER

By Spike

Frankie Miller is an amazing singer, but people don't realise what a great songwriter he is. His songs have been covered by Ray Charles, Bob Seger, Roy Orbison, Clint Black, UFO... so many great artists. And if you listen to any of them, it's always three chords. As long as you know A, G and D, you can write a song. And his songs are beautiful.

You have no idea how much Frankie Miller has affected my life. I love Mott The Hoople and the Stones and the Faces, but if it wasn't for Frankie Miller you wouldn't have the Quireboys. He taught me a massive lesson, and the trick is: don't go minor. If you write a song, you stay on those major chords.

Listen to *Mona Lisa Smiled* (from The Quireboys' *Homewreckers & Heartbreakers* album). There are no minor chords in that. It's simple. What tortured me for ages were the lyrics. It's about Salvador Dali... when his wife died she was buried in a casket with a statue of her hand holding out. When Dali died he was supposed to be buried beside her with their two hands clasped together. But his family had him buried in his museum, so her hand is still waiting there. That's heartbreaking.

The first time I met Frankie was at the Brit Awards in 1993, when the Faces re-formed. Frankie then had his brain haemorrhage in 1994. A couple of years ago Frankie's wife, Annette, asked me to sing an album of his songs. She said: "Frankie loves you and he wants you to be his voice." What an honour.

I'm recording it in the next few weeks. It's all new songs by Frankie. The great thing is, we have four tracks with Frankie singing, so I'm gonna duet on those. Frankie's in a home now, but Annette told me it's really nice, and has a bar!

Spike is a songwriter and the singer with the Quireboys. Their latest album, Halfpenny Dancer, is out now.

Procol Harum: "elegance, wit and balance".

SERIOUS MUSIC WITH A SMILE

GARY BROOKER/ KEITH REID (AND, SOMETIMES, FISHER)

By Peter Hammill

The songs on the first three Procol Harum albums showed elegance, wit and balance. They're very English, and very good stuff indeed. There's quite a lot of humour involved – both lyrical and musical – but also some serious weight, which never spills over into pompousness at any time.

The writing also matched perfectly with the very specific instrumentation and nature of the group at the time. Tight, but still leaving room for breath in the playing.

This stuff alerted me for the first time to the possibilities of writing stuff in long-form. Also, that a sudden and abrupt change of direction can be really interesting, especially into a nasty riff. There are so many different styles involved here and they're all dealt with in a most accomplished manner.

For me, their stand-out composition has to be *In Held 'Twas In I*, from the album *Shine On Brightly*. This one goes all over the place, but for all the constantly shifting perspective the focus is still held.

This was serious music written with a smile on the face. I'll go for that.

Peter Hammill is a founder member of Van der Graaf Generator. Their new album, A Grounding In Numbers, is out now.

More at magazinesdownload.com or ebook-free-download.net

WRITING FOR THE WORKING MAN

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

By Ben Wells

Bruce Springsteen is one of the great all-American songwriters. I just think he's such a ballsy writer. Songs like *Born In The USA* or *Glory Days* fall out of his soul. His lyrics connect and his writing is very true. He sings for the blue-collar, all-American working man but his songs resonate with everyone. When his songs come on, you don't change the radio.

He writes from his own early experiences, but from looking at other people's lives too. Springsteen might be a millionaire, but I think it's okay for him to still write from a blue-collar perspective. That's what made him who he is. Smart writers, once they find what it is they do best, and that it's connecting with people, stick with that.

Bruce Springsteen: one of the great all-American songwriters.

Ben Wells is in Black Stone Cherry. Their album Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea is out May 31 on Roadrunner.

KINGS OF INNUENDO

DEF LEPPARD

By Michael Starr

The first time I heard Def Leppard was *On Through The Night*. I was in my friend's room getting stoned and he was like: 'Dude, check out this new record.' They write great lyrics. I like '*one lump or two*' from *Pour Some Sugar On Me*. I thought he was talking about putting two lumps of sugar in his tea. I thought: 'That's not too metal.' When you're young it takes you a while to figure out sexual innuendos.

If you haven't seen or heard Def Leppard before you've probably had your head stuck up your ass since you were born. They're the greatest European heavy metal band. They've lasted so long because heavy metal is like cockroaches: it will never die. We may go away in dark corners and take a while to come back, but if people want to party it's there.

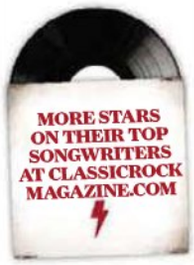
And I've got some exclusive news for ya: Joe Elliott might sing on our next record. He wants to hear the songs first. We sent him three last week and we're waiting to hear back, but it's looking like it's a go so far. I saw him at an awards show and started talking, and it turns out he's a huge Steel Panther fan. I got totally nervous around him, he's a legend.

The first two albums were really great, but it was *Pyromania* that I really gravitated to. I just loved it because of *Photograph* and *Rock Of Ages*, those songs kick ass.

That band have definitely changed the way I approach having sex with chicks after a show. If a girl likes Def Leppard it means they have a sensitive side to them, and if they're into Metallica that means they just like it in the ass. I prefer Def Leppard chicks. They have bigger boobs, too.

I think selling over 20 million records with *Pyromania* and *Hysteria* is pretty much the pinnacle of anyone's career. That's amazing. I hope that one day I can accomplish that. Our new record sounds just like Def Leppard, so everyone should buy it.

Michael Starr is a Steel Panther. Album #2 will be out this year.



BURT BACHARACH

When you listen to Bacarach, his songs are absolutely perfect when you take them apart. A hit song is when you hear it the first time and you can sing it. That's why The Beatles were so good, because they had that immediacy. If you look at Bacharach's catalogue, every single thing he touched was a hit. I've hung around many hard rock and heavy metal songwriters listening to Burt Bacharach, scratching our heads saying: "You know how good that is?" He's probably the top songwriter.

Bob Ezrin, our producer, really taught me how to write songs, and he's the same kind songwriter who says: "We never put a filler on an album." We never put on a song that you can't sit at a piano and first play the bridge and then the chorus. We've all listened to how Burt Bacharach songs go from the verse to the bridge to the chorus, and that's what makes a hit. You can play it as hard and heavy as you want, as long as you have those elements.

"I think that *School's Out* might have been the one song that we ever did that I thought: 'That's a hit!' But it wasn't the best song we ever wrote."

LAURA NYRO

Laura Nyro is the female Burt Bacharach. People will say Carole King, Joni Mitchell and Judy Collins. I personally think Laura Nyro wrote by far the most soulful, interesting songs. She started off being a street singer, with three other black girls, on the corner. And even though she wasn't black she had more soul than Aretha Franklin when you listen to her songs, and her lyrics are so crazy. It's sort of like an acquired taste.

CHUCK BERRY

Chuck Berry is the guy who taught all of us how to tell a story in three minutes. Not one single band can play rock'n'roll without playing the Chuck Berry progression. Most of the Stones' early stuff, when it was rock, was Chuck Berry. And the great thing about Chuck Berry was, if he couldn't think of a word he'd make one up. He'd say things like '*don't give me no botheration*'. I love the way he would put lyrics together. Here's a black guy in the 50s who's using all kinds of proper English: '*No particular place to go*'. There's a rhythm to that that already creates a song.

When we first started we learnt every Chuck Berry song. Songs like *Too Much Monkey Business*, the lyrics on that are insane, they're so funny. I guarantee if you asked Keith Richards who his favourite songwriter was he'd say Chuck Berry.

Bacharach: the king.

Lee: "amazing".

Berry: the storyteller.

ARTHUR LEE

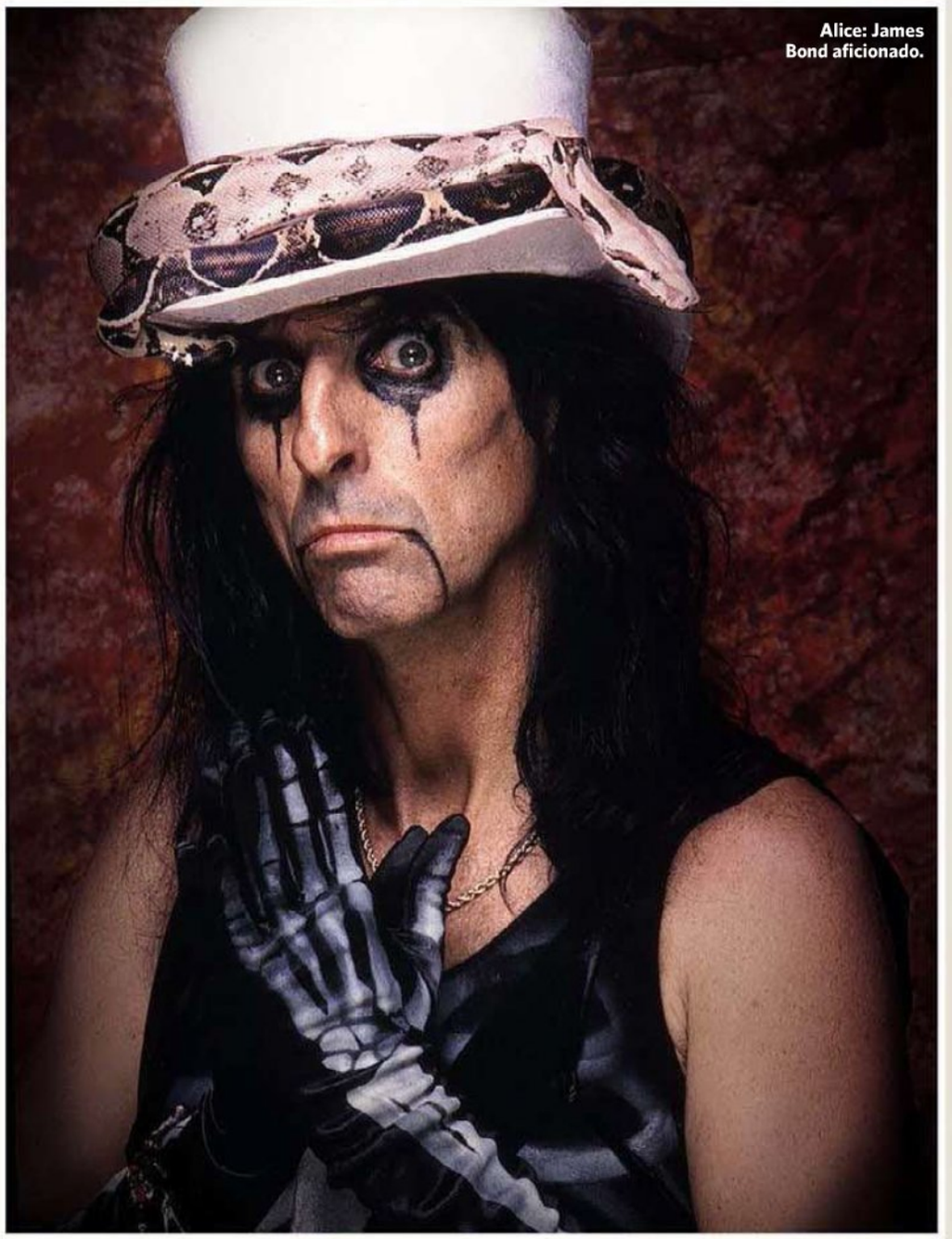
Nobody ever wrote songs in the same vein as Arthur Lee. *Da Capo* and *Forever Changes* – try to find a bad song on either of those albums. And they were so totally his. They captured the LA sex sound. Everybody at the time, including the Doors, wanted to be as good as Love. Lyrically he was just amazing: *Stephanie Knows Who, Signed DC*. Even though their biggest hit, *My Little Red Book*, was written by Burt Bacharach, they did an amazing version of it.

Love was another band that we listened to a lot, and there were a few times that we fell into that area of an LA sound very early in our writing. We covered *7 And 7 Is*, which has the same kind of beat as *Train Kept A'Rollin'*. I still can't figure what that song is about.

I'm pretty sure that Arthur and the boys did a lot of acid at the time, because lyrically they were all over the place. But on a musical level, if you listen to *Forever Changes* it's another *Pet Sounds*, and another *Sgt Peppers*. We supported Love in 1965/66. I remember watching them, standing with my mouth wide-open thinking, these guys are so sophisticated it's ridiculous. At the time nobody really got it.

JOHN BARRY

When the band were living in Detroit, writing *Love It To Death*, we listened to *Diamonds Are Forever* and all of that James Bond stuff constantly – because we found something in those songs that could be taken and used in Alice Cooper music. We loved the drama of those songs. We had no problem throwing them in; we did a song called *Unfinished Sweet*, which had a whole bunch of John Barry on it. We also did a song called *Man With The Golden Gun*, which they should have used.



Alice: James Bond aficionado.

ALICE COOPER

On songwriters and songwriting

The godfather of shock rock on the top 5 songwriters that shaped his world – and the writing of his own additions to the rock canon.

Words: **Peter Makowski**

They used the Lulu one instead. And even Christopher Lee, who played The Man With The Golden Gun, said: "Boy, they missed the boat on that one. They should have used the Alice Cooper one."

John Barry was a very, very big factor in our lives, especially *Diamonds Are Forever*. When we recorded our *Dirty Diamonds* album, I made everybody listen to that track. Those kinds of themes made their way into a lot of our songs.

That's quite an eclectic selection.
You might think it's strange that I picked such melodic artists, but when you think about it four of our five biggest hits were ballads, and I think some of the above influences crept in. You can hear a little bit of Love, McCartney, Brian Wilson in some of our songs. It's impossible for anybody in rock not to be influenced by the generation in front of them. I think maybe the only original band might have been Pink Floyd during their *Piper At The Gates Of Dawn* period, But everybody was influenced by something.

What was the first song you wrote that you thought: "This is a classic"?
I think that *School's Out* might have been the one song that we ever did that I thought: "That's a hit!" It wasn't the best song we ever wrote, but it was the best record that we ever made because it had everything. It sort of had a Yardbirds bottom to it; it had this *'Na-na-na-na-na'* bratty feel; it had the great guitar lick at the beginning.

Tell us about *Poison*.
That was written with Desmond Child [see p55]. I had listened to all the bands that had come out in the 80s and I was very impressed with some of the Bon Jovi stuff. Not necessarily the greatest songs, but great records. I told Desmond, who produced those songs: "I want a single that's got that kind of feel, but it's got to have that dark, minor, Alice Cooper edge to it. It got be a little more dangerous than Bon Jovi." So we sat for three days writing *Poison*, and it ended up being exactly what I was looking for. It had a dangerous lyric, it was as sexy as could be and it had all the elements of a perfect record.

What was the difference between writing *School's Out* and *Poison*?
School's Out was the band being as bratty as it could be – we were punks, we were like the Bowery Boys. It captured a moment and everybody who listened to it could relate to it, even to this day.

Is there a song of yours that you feel is an unrecognised classic?
There's a song on the *Hey Stoopid* album called *Might As Well Be On Mars* that I wrote with Dick Wagner and Desmond Child. I think it might be technically the best song we ever wrote. I went outside of what I normally do, and it sounds a lot like a Broadway tune. When it gets to the chorus it just explodes. The whole idea behind the song is about this guy sitting in his room in New York City, looking down at the streets. He can see his girl in the window of the bar – she lives next door – but he says: *'I see you every day but you don't care about me. I might as well be on Mars.'* He sees her every day but she doesn't know that he's alive.

***Old School*, a box set by the original Alice Cooper Band, is out on June 6.**

ALICE COOPER/BACHARACH: NEIL ZLOZOWER; LEPPARD/BERRY/LEE: RETNA; SPRINGSTEEN: DANNY CLINCH/GETTY CONTOUR

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FOLK HERO EVERYBODY'S TALKIN' ABOUT

FRED NEIL

By Richie Havens

I wanted to be a singer because it was an opportunity to sing live to people five times a day, every day of the week. Greenwich Village in the early sixties had a magical atmosphere. Every night you'd see something different. There was some incredible stuff. I went over to the Village because of poetry… hanging out with Allen Ginsberg and those guys. The next thing I know, I'm hearing all the singer-songwriters out there and they're singing songs that changed my life. Songs by Fred Neil, Dino Valente, Bob Gibson. It was very unstylish in those days to want to chase a record company. They didn't care about making records, they had living, breathing people they could play to every day.

Fred Neil came out of being a studio musician on acoustic guitar; he was on half of the American top hundred records. He'd been a studio musician with Glen Campbell, and the two of them were the two top twelve-string players on lots of fifties hits. And they both found different places to go to. Fred decided to go downtown instead of uptown. And when he got to the Village, he sang his songs, the people clapped, and he never went back.

He was one of those guys who just did it their own way. Freddie was a marshmallow, a real soft guy from Florida. He was always very easy, with a kind of lazy movement about him. He just wasn't interested in the record business at all.

I used to sing songs in harmony with Fred, but he'd be up on stage and I'd be out in the audience, singing along. After a few weeks, he came up to me, gave me his guitar and told me to go home and learn his songs myself. He really got me into performing music from that day on. Up until then I'd been more into poetry.

For the latest Richie Havens news go to www.richiehavens.com.

YES MEN

JON ANDERSON/ STEVE HOWE

By Biff Byford

Me and Paul [Quinn, Saxon guitarist] were into prog rock in the early days. Yes were the ultimate prog band – they had highly musical parts in their songs, with great melodies. Anderson and Howe knew how to craft a good song.

Close To The Edge is my favourite album of theirs. And song as well, as it happens – closely followed by *Roundabout*. *Close To the Edge* has got a bit of everything in there. When we wrote *Rainbow Theme/Frozen Rainbow* [on Saxon's 1979 self-titled debut album] it had a few Yes elements in there. In fact we still do have Yes elements in our music. Occasionally, when we're drunk in the studio, we listen to Yes on the big speakers at full volume.

Saxon's new album Call To Arms is released in May.

Isaac Hayes and writing partner David Porter in the studio in 1967, creating another monster hit.

STAX MEN

ISSAC HAYES/DAVID PORTER

By David Coverdale

The astonishing Holland-Dozier-Holland from sixties Motown wrote and arranged some of the most fulfilling songs I've ever heard, with equally astonishing musicians and singers. But Isaac Hayes and David Porter from Stax Records were dirtier, funkier and right up my alley. They wrote great, solid riffs, and had singers and musicians to die for. They were hugely influential on me – Otis Redding, Wilson Pickett, Mavis Staples, William Bell... you name it, it's all wondrous stuff for me.

Hayes and Porter actually harnessed more of a blues feel, the Chicago blues, much more so than Motown, on a more guttural and visceral level. I never, ever tire of hearing their songwriting work. I had the pleasure of meeting Isaac Hayes and was profuse in my admiration for him. He was delightfully modest.

"Hayes and Porter wrote great, solid riffs, and had singers and musicians to die for. I never, ever tire of hearing their work."

David Coverdale

Whitesnake's new album Forevermore is out now and available from www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/classic-rock-presents-whitesnake-forevermore

GETTY IMAGES X3

PAUL BERGEN/GETTY IMAGES

Joe Perry and Steven Tyler: "The Rolls-Royce of rock, really," says Paul Rodgers.

THE TOXIC TWINS

STEVEN TYLER/ JOE PERRY

By Paul Rodgers

I've recently looked at those Aerosmith songs, and those guys are actually the most amazing songwriters. I sang *Living On The Edge* with Joe Perry at a charity show just before Christmas, with Jason Bonham on the drums, and I was thinking: "Wow... this is such a great song. These guys are amazing songwriters." So kudos to them for that.

Perhaps their writing is overlooked, I might have even overlooked it myself. Whenever I hear their records on the radio, I always think: "Wow, those guys are amazing." But I don't usually go out and buy their CDs. Recently I did, though, and I listened very hard to some of their songs. Their lyrics are out of this world and their arrangements are incredible. I think they're really cleverly crafted. They're the Rolls-Royce of rock, really. It's true. I think I bought the *Best Of* and *Walk This Way*... There are a lot of songs that are super-cool.

Paul Rodgers is touring the UK in April. For further info see p118.

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SMELLS LIKE TEAM SPIRIT

JIMMY PAGE & ROBERT PLANT

By Roy Harper

Seeing as Jimmy wrote the music and Robert wrote most of the lyrics, it's very difficult to keep them apart. You don't precisely know who poked who to do what. As far as Jimmy and Robert go as a songwriting team it's a brilliant one. What they afforded the world was an absolutely brilliant piece of powerful ability. I think they were fully formed when they came to Led Zeppelin. Robert's idea of himself was completely formed already. I remember seeing him as a 17-year-old at Mothers in Birmingham, followed by about 10 women, even then. It's very difficult to comment on. Some of Jimmy's musical thing is absolutely brilliant in its conception and its rhythmic patterns, any way you care to look at it. The power just took you over, especially if you saw it first-hand. It was an entity by itself.

The four of them made a whole, another thing besides themselves. I think that genuinely, with the demise of Bonzo, it couldn't be sustained. Not simply because Robert was so heavily tied to Bonzo – the others were too, of course – but it just wasn't feasible. And you've got to forgive them for trying to keep it going. I don't want to say much else, because I can feel myself getting into deep waters. If I had the ability to go back to a certain time and circumstance, surrounded by great musicians and be looked after by engineers, tape operators and three or four backroom staff – and be in a prestigious position like that – I would grab it in a second. But it can't be done.

Dazed And Confused is one of my favourites. When I used to hang around with Zeppelin regularly in the 70s they'd usually play that one somewhere near the start of the set. And you knew that when *Dazed And Confused* came on there'd be this huge cheer, this incredibly powerful noise from the crowd. It was such a dramatic song. Not that their others weren't. But that song was just magnificent.

They were a really potent thing, wonderfully powerful. And it was such a beautiful power, too. There were other songs I was very fond of too. *Heartbreaker* was a great one. That one's right near the top of my list as well.

John Paul Jones brought his musicality to bear on Led Zeppelin in a way that's very often forgotten. You have to put him into the musical equation along with the other three.

Roy Harper is a songwriter and musician. For information and live dates visit his official website at royharper.co.uk

Plant and Page: together built musical stairways to rock Heaven.

"As far as Jimmy and Robert go, what they afforded the world was an absolutely brilliant piece of powerful ability."

Roy Harper

HEAVY METAL ALCHEMISTS

JUDAS PRIEST

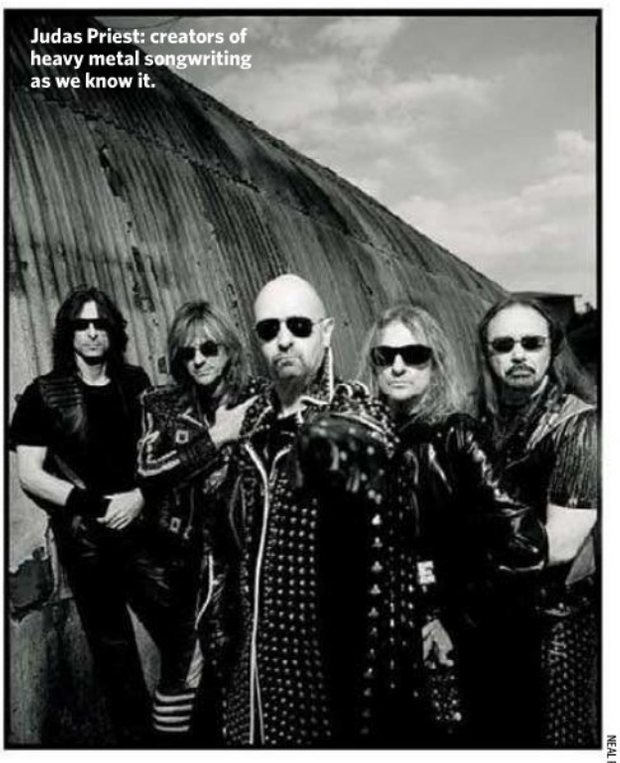
By Scott Ian

Judas Priest took their influences, hard rock, the blues and ran it through their blue-collar Birmingham sensibilities and, in my opinion, created heavy metal songwriting as we know it today. If you have any doubts, just listen to the *Sad Wings Of Destiny* record released in 1976.

Riff-wise, Glenn [Tipton] and KK [Downing] their feet firmly in heavy metal, and Rob's [Halford] vocals took the whole thing to another level. He introduced a theatricality of cinematic proportions to the vocals, going, to quote Captain Kirk, where no man had gone before.

Perfect example: *Island Of Domination*. It's a *tour de force* of crushing riffs and soaring vocals that, as a kid, made me worship at the altar of the Priest.

Scott Ian is in Anthrax and The Damned Things. The latter's album is out now, and Anthrax play Sonisphere on July 8.



Judas Priest: creators of heavy metal songwriting as we know it.

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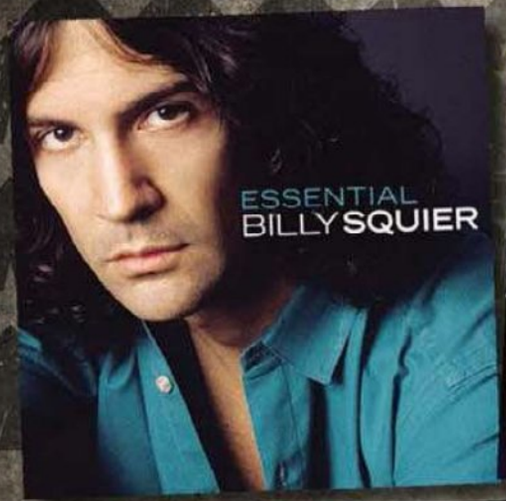

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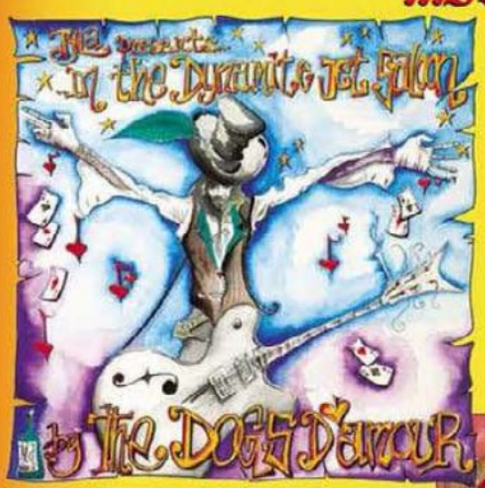

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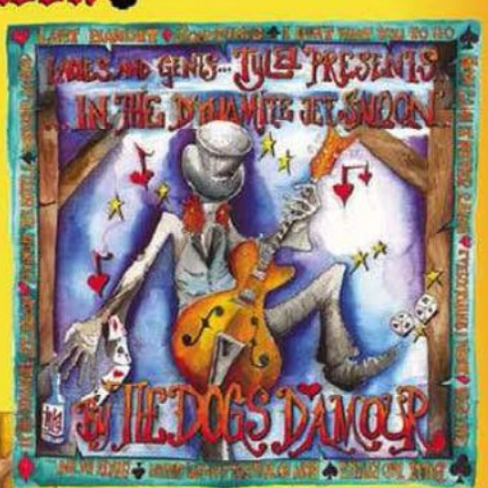

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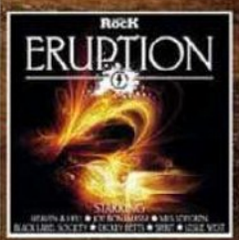

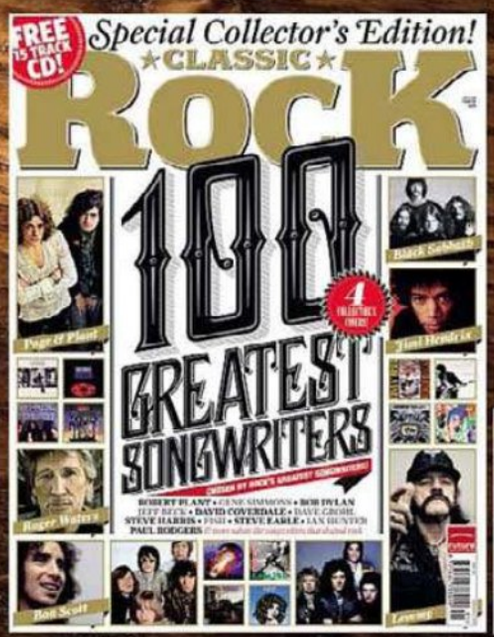

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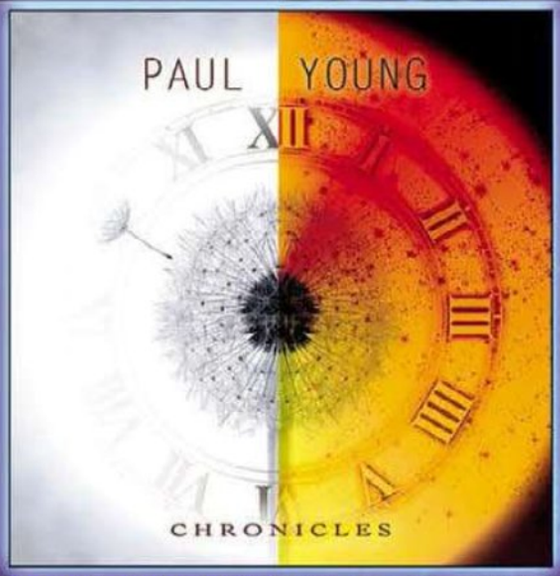

PAUL YOUNG - CHRONICLES ESM223 - Out 28th March 2011

Paul Young is sadly no longer with us but will be remembered always for his recordings with Sad Cafe and of course, Mike & the Mechanics. These newly uncovered recordings have been carefully completed by a stellar group of musicians and they are finally available for the very first time.
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Mike Rutherford, Paul Carrack (Mike & the Mechanics), Eric Stewart, Graham Gouldman (10cc), Sad Cafe, Michael Byron-Hehir (Barclay James Harvest)

COLDSPELL
OUT FROM THE COLD
ESM222 - Out 25th February 2011

Coldspell's debut CD created a stir in rock circles. The album received stunning reviews worldwide and featured on many 2009 "toplists". Here we are two years later with a brand new release "Out from the Cold", once again mixed by Tommy Hansen in Denmark.
What we have here are 12 tracks of hard rock excellence that take the band to new heights.

SHADOWMAN
WATCHING OVER YOU
ESM224 - Out 22nd April 2011

Shadowman are a band that is all about great rock music. With three albums now under their belt how can the band hone that sound into something that little bit more special?
Enter "Watching Over You", a brand new release for 2011. Once again Tommy Hansen is at the mixing desk with the same band line-up of Steve Overland, Steve Morris, Chris Childs and Harry James.

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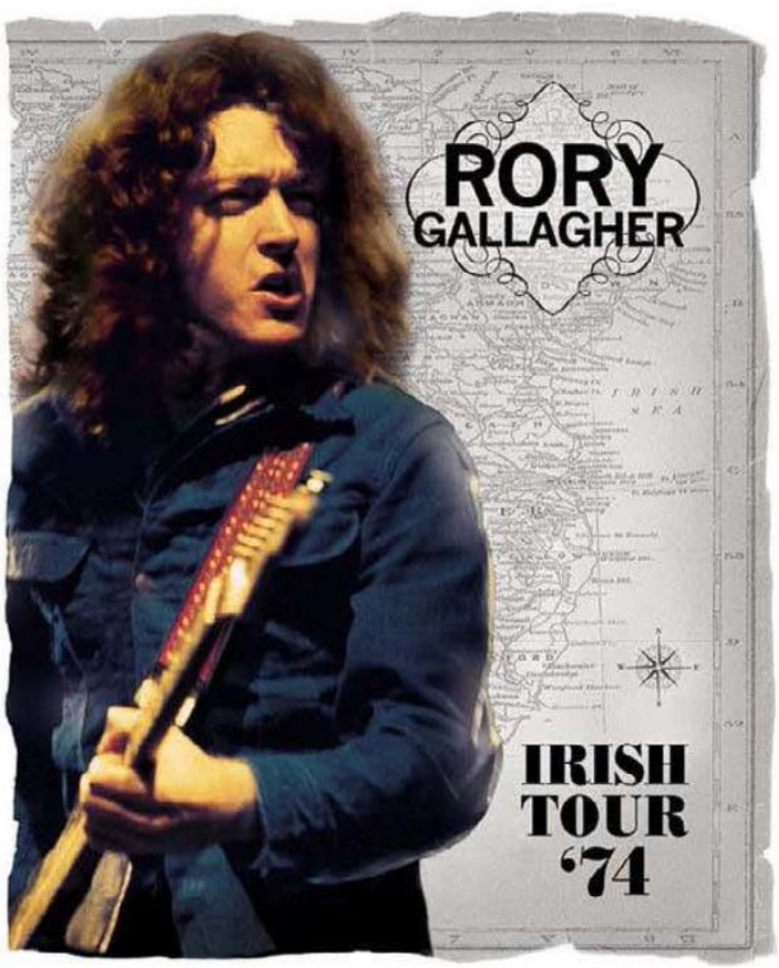

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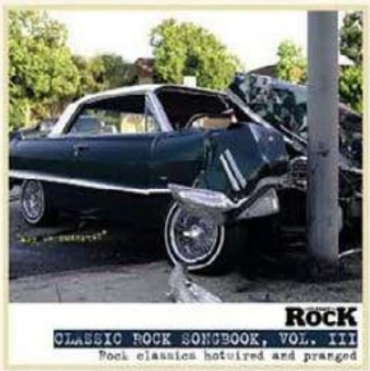

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From the EP *Cinco Hombres (Diez Cojones)*, on Dark Riders

2 The Chain

TAKING DAWN

Las Vegas band Taking Dawn (who have toured with the likes of Kiss) have genuine panache and attitude, as you can hear on this powerful version of the Fleetwood Mac classic.

From the album *Time To Burn*, on Roadrunner

3 Lucifer Sam

THE LUCK OF EDEN HALL

This modern-day psychedelic band from Chicago take on a Syd Barrett-era Pink Floyd classic. Discover more at facebook.com/theluckofedenhal

From *Roqueting Through Space*, on Fruits De Mer

4 Bicycle Race

MAMAS GUN

They've been described as George Clinton-meets-Todd Rundgren, and new album *The Life & Soul* (out June 6) supports that. Their cover of Queen's *Bicycle Race* is remarkable.

Learn more at www.mamasgun.co.uk.

5 Love To Love

QUIREBOYS

This band understand what the past has given us, and also have both feet firmly planted in the present. Which has enabled them to tackle this UFO masterpiece brilliantly.

From *Halfpenny Dancer*, on Jerkin' Crocus

6 Nobody's Fault

VINCE NEIL

As well as fronting Mötley Crüe, Neil can also strike his own chords, as he proves on his shake-up of this Aerosmith anthem from '76.

From *Tattoos & Tequila*, on Frontiers

7 Venus In Furs

SENDELICA

Sendelica are Peter Bingham (guitars/electronics) and Glenda Pescado (bass). Here they mix early Floyd ideas with the Orb and heavy riffing, on a seminal Velvet Underground song.

Taken from a limited edition 7" single on Fruits De Mer

8 Absolutely Sweet Marie

DUCKS DELUXE

One of the best British pub rockers of the 70s, DD got back together a couple of years ago. This Bob Dylan cover is one of the fine results.

From *Side Tracks & Smokers*, on Jungle

9 Voodoo Chile (Slight Return)

MICKI FREE

Micki Free proves both his versatility and deep-lying guitar talent on this appropriate homage to the legend that is Jimi Hendrix.

From *American Horse*, on Cargo Records

10 She Wants To Rock

WATTS

This Boston band (named after Charlie Watts) play trashy rock'n'roll and combine Stones inspiration with the Faces and the Replacements. From their new album, *On The Dial*.

Facebook.com/wattsrock

11 Flowers Powers

SWANEE RIVER

Swanee River started out in 2004 and won an Irish Battle Of The Bands two years later. They're about to release their full-length debut album and undertake a full NI tour.

Find out more at www.swaneeriver.net

12 I Am The Fury

WE WILL HAVE VICTORY

I Am The Fury is taken from the debut EP *Radio Contact From The Front Line*, released early June. WWHV will be playing the summer festival circuit in the UK and Europe.

Find out more at www.myspace.com/wewillhavevictory

13 Juicy Lucy

JOSEPH DEAN OSGOOD

His soulful voice has been favourably compared to many of the great British blues-rock singers. His upcoming debut mini album will underpin his growing reputation.

From *Rock'N'Roll Man*. More at josephdeanosgood.co.uk

14 Drink Beer, Destroy

TRUCKER DIABLO

The Northern Irish band have been on the march since they started in 2008. This track has a huge groove that owes something to the Almighty and Thin Lizzy.

From *The Devil Rhythm*. More at myspace.com/truckerdiablo

15 ISO

DRAMA

Drama are an alternative rock band based in Bolton, UK. who formed in 2007. *ISO* is their first single and can be heard here. It was released on March 14, and check out the video too. More info online.

Become a fan at facebook.com/dramaofficial

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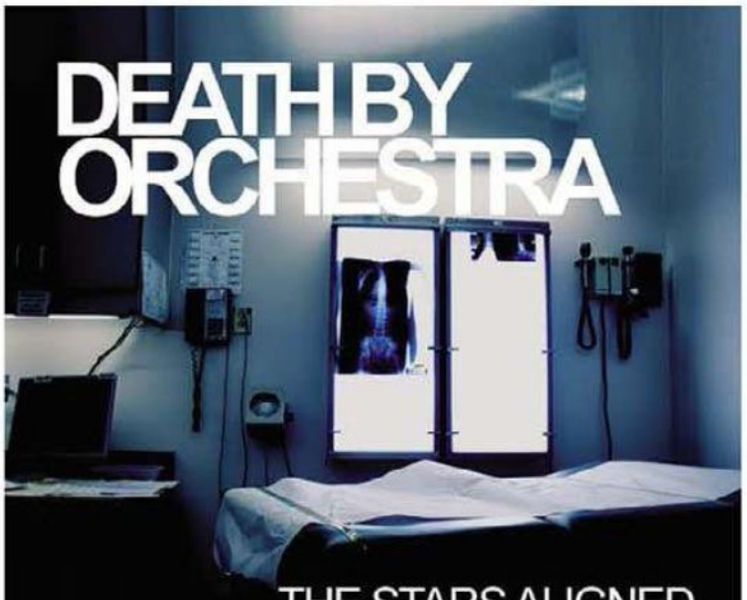

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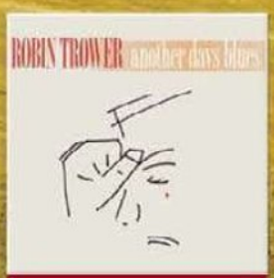
REP 5245

First released in 1994, this is an album that many fans claim is Robin's best since the days of 'Bridge Of Sighs'. The British virtuoso guitarist expresses a whole gamut of emotions, and it is left to singer Livingstone Brown to match the passion on an album that really captures the spirit of the blues.



'Another Days Blues' *
REP 5244 *

When the blues calls, then musicians often respond with their best work. Robin unleashes his most tasteful playing and delves into all aspects of the genre. Recorded in 2005, this is chock-full of dynamic performances that typify the sophisticated style of a mature musician, determined to convey human emotion through his guitar.

New album!
'The Playful Heart'
REPUK 1142

Cutting edge performances that reach new heights of passion and imagination. Robin's latest album offers a master class of guitar playing, matched by his distinctive vocal style, with backing by a superb group that plays with unerring sympathetic intensity, to unveil a seductive blend of well-crafted songs and styles.

'What Lies Beneath' *
REP 5243

A superb collection of songs by the master guitarist and singer on this 2009 studio album. Robin is heard weaving his magic over tracks that flow together in creative harmony. Exemplary guitar work sets up grooves and moods to captivate the listener with hypnotic power behind the music, praised by critics and fans alike.

All in DIGIPAK format

* Complete with informative liner notes by **Chris Welch**

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P94

Michael Monroe

Is his new album something he should be smiling about?

The Hard Stuff

The Ultimate Rock Reviews Section

18 PAGES

100% ROCK

Classic Rock Ratings

- A Classic
- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Above Average
- Average
- Below Par
- A Disappointment
- Poor
- Very Poor

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THE HARD STUFF ALBUMS

Michael Monroe: his crack new band appear to be made of leather.

Michael Monroe

Sensory Overdrive SPINEFARM

The Finnish sleaze rock overlord is reborn with a superstar new band and his best selection of songwriting yet.

Looking like a cocktail straw with a thatch of blond hair, and a saxophone hanging carelessly from a bony hip, Michael Monroe always cut a dynamic figure. Sketch out your idea of what a rock star should look like, and there's Monroe, cigarette dangling carelessly from his lips.

As history bears out, Monroe hasn't always managed to talk it the way he so admirably walks it. Intermittently brilliant – and always a fireball of life live – but with Hanoi Rocks and as a solo star he's only managed to be truly irresistible on record a handful of times. Only twice did he hit the ultimate peak where all the ingredients meshed perfectly; on 1983's *Back To Mystery City* with his former band, and six years later, his statement of serious artistic intent, the deft and thrilling, *Not Fakin' It*. Somehow, he managed to fritter so much promise away, a Hanoi Rocks reformation was as unremarkable as it was unsurprising and now, somehow, with his crooked smile and cool attached, Monroe's made the record of his career.

It's no secret that he's not alone, his latest band were a thrilling accompaniment to the last Mötörhead tour (Lemmy returns the compliment with a gruff vocal cameo on the album's final song; *Debauchery As A Fine Art*) and not only do they look the part – perfectly weathered like an expensive and collectible old baseball glove if you must know – they sound it too.

Hanoi Rocks bassman Sami Yaffa comes via a stint with the New York Dolls and brings guitarist Steve Conte with him. Conte (Company Of Wolves, the vastly overlooked The Contes, The Crazy Truth) adds irascible yet measured stabs of guitar and can sing like Steve Perry, so he's a real boon, but it's the clever inclusion of The Wildhearts' Ginger as co-songwriter that's the tipping point. Fans of The Wildhearts will find much to enjoy here, which isn't to say that his personality overshadows the album – it's a solid band affair, it's just that his phrasing and arrangements ring true through Monroe's raucous vision. Producer Jack Douglas has fallen out of mainstream favour since his days working with people like John Lennon and Aerosmith, but his work here should soon see him inundated with offers well into his dotage. Crisp and warm, brittle and dangerous, each song has its own distinct personality, jumping off the tape with a delicious thrill that's all too infrequent in modern rock and roll. You imagine Axl Rose might listen to this, then cock an ear to *Chinese Democracy*, sigh and then stab himself in the leg with a sharpened pencil.

It starts as you might imagine – belligerently. *Trick Of The Wrist* is Monroe's sneer personified, a blunt reiteration of a life spent in drugs doldrums and how he came through it. A rattling snapshot of dog days spent shivering behind closed curtains in a thrilling two minutes plus. It sets the tone and standard for what's to follow: cerebral, unapologetic storytelling, punchy, rich and distinct song writing, it's an utter and absolute finger to the world. *Got Blood?* recalls The Ramones if The Ramones had stretched beyond their dutifully drilled two and half minutes of glory. Bolshie and bold, punky yet surprisingly sophisticated – which is this album's rare gift – it's somehow snot-nosed but profound. Monroe screams down his microphone, but the melodies are strong; his words are spiky and then considered and then outlandishly bold: in *All You Need*, the band even go so far as to address a society obsessed with greed. *Later Won't Wait* is experimental and dense, a powerful, forearm smash of a song that suddenly lends itself to an extended and understated saxophone solo and spoken word meditation that somehow doesn't manage to upend the song. Few bands are so brave. *Gone, Baby Gone*, built around Lucinda Williams' distinct vocals, lets Monroe play at being Tom Petty – slide and acoustic guitars marry to create a dustbowl of lost souls, the broken-hearted piled up at the bar wishing on the one that got away. It's an album that's engaging and endlessly giving, stuffed full of ideas and opinions, brash and with a ragged beauty all its own. This year's high watermark has already been set.

'Bolshie and bold, punky yet surprisingly sophisticated.'

Philip Wilding

Cavalera Conspiracy

Blunt Force Trauma ROADRUNNER

The Brazilian brotherly love-in continues.

With a reunion of the classic Sepultura line-up still tantalisingly out of reach, the second album from reconciled siblings Max and Igor Cavalera is about as close as you'll get. Ironically, given that it's part of an ongoing healing process, the whole thing is as abrasive as a rub-down with a cheese grater. Here, Max parks the spiritual leanings and world-music tourism of Soulfly to ramp up both the 80s metal (*Thrasher* is as retro as its title suggests) and old school hardcore influences (the latter rubber-stamped by the presence of Agnostic Front bruiser Roger Miret on the bloody-knuckled *Lynch Mob*). What little fat there was on 2008's *Inflikted* debut has been blasted away here, with several songs bolting for the finishing line at under three minutes. *No Chaos AD*, but a fine surrogate.

Dave Everley

Alison Krauss & Union Station

Paper Airplane ROUNDER/DECCA

Back to the day job – with bountiful results.

For all the plaudits and prizes her *Raising Sand* collaboration with Robert Plant attracted, there are diehard Krauss fans out there who've been itching for her to return to the bosom of her long-standing band and a purer bluegrass sound. *Paper Airplane* is their first album together since 2004's *Lonely Runs Both Ways* – which won three Grammys, compared to the five of the Plant hook-up – and it's yet another democratic affair.

Despite the Krauss name being (as always) singled out on the sleeve, the prairie whine of guitar/mandolin player Dan Tyminski's lead vocal gives the collection much of its character, especially on the hardship lament of *Dustbowl Children* and plaintive gallop of *On The Outside Looking In*. Union Station continue to pull off the impressive trick of connecting with the roots and traditions of country music stretching back over a century, while still sounding fresh as next week's milk. It's all beautifully played, full of light and shade and depth, and only the hardest heart won't shed a tear when Krauss's fragile voice echoes across Richard & Linda Thompson's *Dimming Of The Day*.

Terry Staunton

Green Day

Awesome As Fuck WARNER BROS

One huge world tour captured live – and on DVD.

Green Day's rise from cherub-cheeked, van-dwelling pop-punk road dogs to stadium rock stars, with all the pomp and glitter canons that goes with it, remains one of modern music's most unlikely ascensions. That they're more Bryan Adams than they are The Ramones means the term punk only really applies to their tailored wardrobes these days, but for every fan they've lost over the past decade, they've gained five.

Billie Joe Armstrong leads the trio through a live set collected from dates all over the world during 2009-2010; where exactly is irrelevant, as each night is as slick as the last. Though the showmanship is schlocky in places there's no denying the brute pop power of *American Idiot*, the multitude of mid-tempo anthems, and earlier, wistful tunes like *Christie Road*.

The package – which includes a 16-track DVD – proves the East Bay trio still thrill.

Ben Myers

Snowy White And The White Flames

Realistic SOUL FOOD

Respected white bluesman does his thing.

Snowy White remains best known for his early 80s tenure with Thin Lizzy – which included telling contributions to *Chinatown* – while these days he can be found riffing alongside Roger Waters. But he's also been steadily making albums with his White Flames for the past decade and a half.

He'll certainly never be one to irk the purists. White's narrow blues alley is faithful to the likes of early idols BB King and Buddy Guy, while he retains the same purity of tone as another of his homegrown heroes, Peter Green.

Realistic is a solid enough ensemble piece, veering from syncopated rhythms (*Towards Higher Ground*) to soft rock (*Ongoing...*) and soulful blues (*Long Way Out Pts 1 & 2*). But he's certainly no singer, all of which makes this one for hardcore disciples only.

Rob Hughes

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Foo Fighters: not just another garage band.

Foo Fighters

Wasting Light ROSWELL/RCA

Dave Grohl & Co return with their first new material in three years.

Recorded on analog tape with no computers and no software, in the garage of Dave Grohl's San Fernando Valley home, *Wasting Light* is Foo Fighters' attempt to return to the nuts and gristle of proper bad-ass rocking. Removing the gloss and shimmer from albums is in itself a contemporary trend and there is, no doubt, an app for that – but the no fuss approach suits the Foos well. This album sounds a good deal heavier and barer than ever before, and much closer to their live sound without succumbing to all out manly riffing – something that must have been tempting considering their hallowed position and the close proximity of all those power tools.

In a strange way the Foo Fighters have become the people's rock band, a group who unite casual music fans with obsessives who could tell you the middle names of everyone who ever played with Thin Lizzy. There are many reasons for this – one is that Grohl has never taken himself too seriously, another is that he has never forgotten the importance of a good chorus, he's always surrounded himself with class musicians, and his former band Nirvana are the lingua franca of all modern rock.

For all the affection, Foo Fighters have never released a truly classic album, but *Wasting Light* comes closest. Occasional live guitarist Pat Smear (who played live for Nirvana just prior to Kurt Cobain's suicide) has rejoined the band as a core member, bringing with him a far more muscular and wiry sound, and seemingly freeing Grohl up for more howling at the moon action – *White Limo* is a speeding shredder that finds Grohl screaming his lungs out, *Miss The Misery* a charging epic that climaxes in an unbridling collision of squealing guitar and grizzled barking. Masterful stuff. There are of course the crowd pleasing anthems – *These Days* is an instant classic that adheres to the quiet-bit/loud-bit equation with gusto, *Dear Rosemary* features a stunning duet with Hüsker Dü singer Bob Mould, and *Walk* is a gigantic motivational triumph-over-adversity rocker. There is also a Nirvana reunion of sorts, with Krist Novoselic contributing bass and accordion to *I Should Have Known* – a mournful blockbuster that will doubtlessly be interpreted as being about Grohl's past.

Most bands struggle to follow a Greatest Hits album. Foo Fighters have followed theirs with a record that sounds like another Greatest Hits album. They're unstoppable.

Johnny Dee

Radiohead

The King of Limbs XL

Oxford dons fail to find post-*Rainbows* pot of gold.

Released online in February with minimal advance warning, Radiohead's stealth sequel to 2007's pay-what-you-like smash *In Rainbows* lacks the same headline-grabbing impact, either as music or as marketing stunt. This sees them continue their commendably forward-thinking exploration of rock's digitally deconstructed electro-jazz fringes, but in a business-as-usual way that breaks little new ground not already covered a decade ago on their experimental twin-set, *Kid A* and *Amnesiac*. For sheer beauty, meanwhile, nothing here is quite as sublime as *Nude* or *House of Cards* from *In Rainbows*, although the weightless dronescape of *Bloom* and the glitchy, twitchy avant-muzak of *Feral* certainly come close.

The woozy, soulful *Lotus Flower* may be a wry homage to Yorke's friend and collaborator Flying Lotus, the LA-based trip-hop alchemist with a similar penchant for sci-fi lullabies and mind-expanding beats. But the best tracks here are two fairly traditional ballads: the mournful, Neil Young-tinged piano lament *Codex* and the languid, skeletal strummer *Give Up The Ghost*. Both gain in stature from repeat listens, much like the rest of the album. Even so, this insubstantial eight-track affair ultimately feels like a minor Radiohead release, one that falls considerably short of the stratospherically high standards they set themselves on previous landmarks.

Stephen Dalton

The Mattless Boys

The Mattless Boys

DRUMMING MONKEY

Spike-topped veterans still boast best tunes.

While 1976's punk upheaval provided the vehicle upon which The Boys hitched their initial ride on the rock'n'rollercoaster, their musical roots stretched back into far more fertile stylistic soil than the artless three-chord ramalam that characterised (and hobbled) many of their contemporaries. Here, the band – temporarily without benefit of co-frontman Matt Dangerfield – demonstrate their enduring ability to channel 70s Stones rock swagger through '65 Beatles pop classicism to excellent, timeless effect. Sweet McCartney sentiments and melodies are cannily soured by the leather-jacketed, Keef-informed hoodlum-isms of Honest John Plain's subtly country-saddened guitar licks before being kicked arse-backwards into contemporary relevance by newest recruit Vom Ritchie's propulsive, four-to-the-floor drumming. Being The Boys, the piss'n'vinegar punk assaults (*Speeding, Promises*) are tempered with lashings of minor-chorded Brill Building, tears-behind-the-shades melancholia, striking a vintage glam balance that'll have you mumbling "they don't write 'em like this any more" as you pogo nostalgically from armchair to sofa.

A triumph, yes. But why wouldn't it be? These Boys can write songs that sound like sure-fire hits in their sleep. If only they *sold* like sure-fire hits.

Ian Fortnam

Joe Bonamassa

Dust Bowl PROVOGUE

The New York State bluesman channels the soil of the south.

There's a reason that Joey Bones has so authoritatively carved his way to the forefront of the Next Generation blues-rock pack, and it isn't just because he can get his fingers to scamper all quick-like around the fretboard of a Les Paul and do that pained-hollery vocal thing. It's because he has a sophisticated appreciation of, and respect for, blues rock as a form in its own right, with its own aesthetic and its own value: not simply blues heading towards rock because that's where the money is, or rock heading towards blues because that's where the authenticity and credibility are.

Dust Bowl is the best so far of his dozen solo albums, although the 2008 live album *From Nowhere In Particular* serves sterling duty as a 'Previously...' for peeps who fancy playing catch-up with his story-so-far. The title and cover might suggest that it's a roots-move folkie essay in Depression-era Cooderiana, but any acoustic intros you might hear simply set up some most excellent examples of his trademarked blues-rock thumpasaurus rex. From the ear-grabbing intro of the curtain-raising *Slow Train* through *Tennessee Plates* – a catchy grab for post-Brad-Paisley country airplay

co-written and co-sung by John Hiatt and co-guitared by Vince Gill – and a rocking romp through Little Walter's *You Better Watch Yourself*, to the soulful close-out of *Prisoner*, the man is on seriously fiery form.

Powerful but not power-crazed, deeply-felt and ingeniously textured, *Dust Bowl* is a treat and a half. By the way, there is also a vocal cameo for Glenn Hughes.

Charles Shaar Murray

Blackfield

Welcome To My DNA KSCOPE

Wilson and Geffen go back to Black.

Israeli superstar Aviv Geffen and Porcupine Tree's Steven Wilson couldn't come from more different backgrounds. While Wilson is a homebody happy to keep the prog fires burning in Hemel Hempstead, Geffen is a politically active peace campaigner bloodying the noses of Tel Aviv's powers that be. But when they come together they create something quite magical.

Welcome To My DNA, Blackfield's third album, is a thing of melancholy beauty; the deep, lush opener *Glass House* sharing an ingrained sadness with The Beatles' *Eleanor Rigby*. Geffen's Middle Eastern influence peppers the record, especially in the exotic strings of the Radiohead-dark *Blood* – its stark, staccato repetition of the phrase "here comes the blood" suggesting it was written in the throes of night terrors. The album manages the rare trick of being both doomily heavy, inventive and packed with tunes that bed into your brain for the day. Perfect for shutting the world out and having a good old wallow.

Emma Johnston

The Treatment

This Might Hurt POWERAGE

Brit youth gone wild.

With a combined age that falls well short of three figures and barely a whiff of bumfluff between them, The Treatment are the epitome of the prodigious young rock'n'roll band, arriving seemingly fully-formed and already in possession of more great songs and cocksure swagger than many seasoned veterans. *This Might Hurt* cheerily proclaims its love for Aerosmith, Buckcherry and The Black Crowes, but there is a freshness and vitality on display here that lifts most of these strutting anthems way above normal debut album standards. Vocalist Matt Jones almost certainly hasn't been snorting whisky and drinking angel dust, but he has a supremely snotty but soulful shriek redolent of Love/Hate's Jizzy Pearl, which adds an extra layer of glistening charisma to the likes of *Departed*, *Lady Of The Light* and *Shake The Mountain*. His band mates are eerily adept too, providing a convincing edge of bluesy belligerence that ensures every riff counts double.

Like The Answer and Airbourne before them, The Treatment have skipped right past the amateurish fumbling stage and gone straight for both jugular and jackpot. Jaws will drop accordingly.

Dom Lawson

Kingdom Come

Rendered Waters

SPV/STEAMHAMMER

A surprisingly well-crafted collection from the Zep-alikes.

As the great Derek Smalls so memorably observed, there's a fine line between stupid and clever, and it's a line with which Lenny Wolf is familiar. Rising to fame with his brazen, almost parodic first Kingdom Come album, Wolf's overt worship of Led Zeppelin – or at least of Led Zeppelin's success – coupled with his pre-fame life as a hairdresser made it hard to imbue his offerings with the gravity he seemed to feel they deserved. Yet there was undeniable talent in him too.

With *Rendered Waters*, he has reimagined quite successfully what Kingdom Come might have sounded like had they not sounded like Led Zeppelin. *I've Been Trying* has been stripped back and given a ringing chorus melody, *Can't Deny* has some thudding nu guitars, *Pushing Hard* a fine, bright texture, and so it goes on.

There are three new songs alongside eight KC warhorses, one of which, *Blue Trees*, proves that Wolf's touch remains deft.

Jon Hotten

Thunder

Live – Rough & Ready STC

All the good and bad bits in a collection of variable quality.

Like so many great British bands, from Free and Family to Dogs D'Amour and The Quireboys, Thunder deserved far more than they actually got. With no Bob Rock or Mutt Lange to guide them in the studio, their recordings rarely lived up to their live performances. Hence the poignancy of a collection that works as both posthumous memento for those lovelorn fans who look back on their shows fondly, and a painful reminder to everybody else of what the rock world lost when Thunder called it a day in 2009. Four CDs are culled from two shows in 2005: one from Japan – of admittedly bootleg quality – and one, of pristine quality, from London. And while 11 of the 32 tracks are alternative versions of one song, eight are singular in their appearance here, including *Low Life In High Places*, *Love Walked In*, *Back Street Symphony*, *Until My Dying Day* and *Stand Up*. Well weathered.

Mick Wall

The Atomic Bitchwax

The Local Fuzz TEE PEE

Put some 'Wax on the tracks and slide on outta here.

Second only perhaps to The Master Musicians Of Bukakke in the Great Band Names top 10, this New Jersey supergroup's output (generated as it is by members of Monster Magnet and former members of Core and Godspeed) has been a slightly less consistent affair over the past decade-and-a-half.

But if the idea of experiencing TAB's fifth full-length offering in the form of one single 42-minute instrumental track sounds a less-than-enthralling prospect, the moment *The Local Fuzz*'s heavyweight cosmic jam comes to life on your stereo you're catapulted down some late-night highway where the time is permanently set to 4:05am and the speakers heave and boom to the sounds of a premium stoner rock supergroove.

Trying to quantify stand-out moments here is a moot point; just turn on, tune in and enjoy this non-stop, white-hot riff party and wonder why on earth they didn't do this all along.

Catherine Yates

ROUND-UP: BLUES

By Henry Yates

King King: dumb name, but some terrific blues.

King King Featuring Alan Nimmo

Take My Hand Hatman

"Stupid name," sneered a passing colleague, spying King King atop the tower of promos. True enough, but Alan Nimmo is a better one: a well-regarded Glasgow guitarist whose work in The Nimmo Brothers has rarely been dull, and whose byline saved this CD from the ignominy of a fate in the coaster pile.

Stevie Nimmo strode out convincingly last year with *The Wynds Of Life*, and *Take My Hand* has enough special moments to prove Alan isn't DeVito to his brother's Schwarzenegger.

The five covers are decent – particularly Clapton's *Old Love* – but the original songwriting (shared with bassist Lindsay Coulson) is where King King feels like a band with mileage, with opener *Lose Control* evoking Mick Jagger doing his best chicken dance, *Heart Without A Soul* riding by on a clickety-clack funk riff, and *Broken Heal* finally delivering the full-bore rock classic that's been threatened throughout. It's an album to brighten days, not change lives, but sometimes that's all you want.

Sam Hare

Down To The Sea SJH

As a club night promoter, Hare is all over the London blues scene like crabs on a tour bus, so it's good to find all those 12-bar jams haven't blunted his invention on his light-footed debut. This is folky, countrified, Hammond-tinged stuff that iTunes weirdly classifies as 'Religious'. We wouldn't go that far, but if Hare can plug this like he does his night at the Alleycat, he could ride his talent a long way.

Geoff Everett Band

Adult Show

www.thegeoffeverettband.co.uk

"Oh yeah, I know Geoff Everett..." is a familiar catchphrase on the scene: he's been blazing since the 60s and, in truth, probably retains more lead in his musical pencil than most of that era's superstars. On standouts tracks like *Professor Honey Juice Blues* and *I'm A Hog For You*, guitarist Everett fuses an older man's phrasing with a younger one's irreverence, meaning it's not just adults who are likely to enjoy this *Show*.

T-Model Ford And GravelRoad

Taledragger Alive

Ford ain't running so smooth these days. Recent years have been blighted by strokes and pacemakers, but here his backing band GravelRoad provide a solid bedrock for that still-spectacular voice and those gnarled fingers. Some of these tracks rattle on far too long, but we wouldn't have the balls to tell the cantankerous old buzzard to wrap it up either.

Desert Storm

Forked Tongues Buried In Smoke

Who'd have thought living in Oxford could make you so angry? With Matt Ryan threatening to "fuck you up from the inside" and Chris White's bombastic blues-metal riffs sounding like Rage jabbing Page with a cattle-prod, this couldn't be further from scarves and bicycles. Don't expect to be handed the keys to the city, boys, but the wider world should appreciate this scorching debut.

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Von Hertzen Brothers: keeping it in the family.

Von Hertzen Brothers

Stars Aligned *SPINEFARM*

The sainted Finns break out into the wider world with a slice of head-turning brilliance.

Given that this is almost certainly the first Von Hertzen Brothers album to be absorbed by a substantial audience outside of Scandinavia, it may seem a somewhat redundant statement to exclaim that *Stars Aligned* represents a moderate stripping down of the Finnish trio's trademark sound. It's a notion that becomes even more irrelevant when faced with the reality of the band's fourth record, which even during its simplest or most mellow moments sounds like the entire Led Zeppelin and Yes catalogues hurled, with a fistful of hallucinogenics, into a giant sequin-encrusted blender manned by Jeff Lynne, Frank Zappa and Andy Partridge. But just for the record, the previous album, 2008's *Love Remains The Same*, was even more over-the-top and barking mad. We kid you not.

But it's the present that matters most, and the Von Hertzen Brothers are a band who could hardly be more in tune with the fervently prog-saluting end of today's rock continuum. *Stars Aligned* begins with *Miracle*, a fuzzy, lurching slab of ominous psychedelia, replete with blissful vocal harmonies and a steady stream of melodies that twinkle and soar. As with everything the band does, this is knowingly linked in spirit to the febrile splurge of creativity that drove rock in the early 70s, and yet there is an otherworldly quality to these songs that makes it seem equally (and oddly) futuristic. The succinct, pitter-pat grooves and rhythmic fidgets of *Gloria* continue to illuminate that illusory haze between yesterday and tomorrow, while emphasising what a fiery and intelligent rock'n'roll band this is too. Meanwhile, the stately pulse of *Voices In Our Heads* slaps a different shade across *Stars Aligned*'s broad canvas, with an eerie backdrop of shimmering mellotron and an almost Muse-like sense of mortal dread. Whether indulging in the mellifluous drift of *Down By The Sea*'s aquatic blues, exploring the cosmos with a head full of skittering licks on *Bring On The Snakes* or casually serving up a platinum-plated psych-pop like *Always Been Right*, the Von Hertzens' beautiful but strange world of multi-layered analogue warmth and limitless imagination is a consistently mesmerising place to be. With all due respect, Finland is simply not big enough to contain records this distinctive, this smart, this exciting. It's never too late to discover your new favourite band, is it?

Dom Lawson

Jeff Beck

Rock'n'Roll Party *RHINO*

Live Les Paul celebration surpasses expectations.

On the first anniversary of Les Paul's death, Jeff Beck teamed up with Imelda May and her band (plus a few guests) to perform a tribute show to his very first guitar hero at the Manhattan jazz club, where the great man himself had played a regular Monday night residency. As well as a heaping handful of Les Paul & Mary Ford classics (*How High The Moon* et al, with Ms May using prerecorded backing vocals to capture the effects created in his home studio by the inventor of overdubbing), there's a heavy dose of rockabilly. Darrell Higham delivers the boy vocals with mondo panache, plus there's a dazzling cameo by Brian Setzer on Eddie Cochran's *Twenty Flight Rock*, a brassily roaring *Peter Gunn*, a Shads-tastic *Apache*, a gloriously kitschy *Tiger Rag*, a languorously smoochsome *Cry Me A River*, Gary US Bonds rocking his own *New Orleans*, and all manner of stuff demonstrating that there was indeed musical life on earth before 1960. Beck himself is as much bandleader/host as star, giving his guests plenty of room, although when he personally steps into the spotlight – as on the gloriously soaring intro to *Walkin' In The Sand* – he gives it loads. Big fun!

Charles Shaar Murray

Dropkick Murphys

Going Out In Style

BORN & BRED/COOKING VINYL

A big old Oirish knees-up.

DKM have never taken prisoners and they're not about to start now. Irrepressible, raucous and righteously rabble-rousing, on this seventh studio effort the band display all the folk'n'punk rock trademarks for which they have become rightly renowned, and then try to outdo their own reputation by somehow upping the intensity well into the red. When a press release tells you an album sounds like a huge shindig you've a right to be sceptical – but that's precisely what you get here – though the mother of all right royal piss-ups is probably closer to the mark. What's more, this is a concept album, the lyrics telling the story of one Cornelius Larkin, a fictional character used to recount the band's personal experiences and family tales.

For those who care about such things Bruce Springsteen hollers along in a ripping rendition of *Peg O' My Heart*, though top honours ought to go to the moving *Memorial Day* and proudly blue-collar *Take 'Em Down* for an encapsulation of what DKM are about.

Essi Berelian

Within Temptation

The Unforgiving *ROADRUNNER*

Dutch symphonic rockers' overblown concept album.

Forever perched atop a cliff face, the wind in their hair, the rain in their face, a legion of the damned a brooding cloud of menace on the horizon, things must be tough in Within Temptation's world. It must play havoc with the school run alone. Built around the husband and wife team of guitarist Robert Westerholt and vocalist Sharon den Adel, they're as popular at home as Heineken, their brand of bombastic, string-laden hard rock is as over the top as a Charlie Sheen house party. Their latest album, fittingly, is a concept piece (with a storyline so dense it's liable to give you a headache unravelling it all) devised by *BloodRayne* writer Stephen O'Connell. It's grandstanding stuff, multi-layered, complex and rich, and especially good in the soaring (they soar a lot) *Faster*, the thundering *Where Is The Edge* and the massive *A Demon's Fate*.

Philip Wilding

Francis Rossi

Live At St Luke's London

DUROC MEDIA

Old school on Old Street.

Having been favourably reviewed at the time by *Classic Rock*, Francis Rossi's document of his seventh solo performance in a landmark London church sounds like the work of a man on top of his game. Starting with an effortlessly jaunty good time shuffle arrangement on *Caroline*, Rossi explores his catalogue carefully. The country roots of *Claudie* and the ballad *Tongue Tied* aren't his typical 12-bar blues boogie, while the welcome addition of female singers and

son Nicholas on guitar keeps it from becoming a little too blokey and venerable.

Evidently these are the songs Rossi rates, and the audience howl approval when he kicks into *Twenty Wild Horses* and the word riffing *Diggin' Burt Bacharach*. The Quo's slick Fender style isn't ever far from the surface – *Marguerita Time* and *All We Really Wanna Do* being guaranteed to please the Rossi army – but the overall feeling is of an artist showing that his repertoire isn't just about showmanship and sweat.

Max Bell

John Foxx And The Maths

Interplay META/MATIC

He's got your number.

Founder member and frontman for Brit new wave behemoths Ultravox! until 1979, John Foxx can count a 25-plus strong discography of forays into the electronic realm in the intervening years. Little surprise then, that *Interplay* – a collaboration between Foxx and digital experimentalist Benge – is a beguiling exercise in vivid synth-pop discipline. Those with a soft spot for the neon flicker sonics of Gary Numan, Cabaret Voltaire (or even Daft Punk's recent *Tron Legacy* Moroder tribute-fest) will find their thirst for perfectly structured 80s-inflected dancefloor hits more than met by the swirling electro-groove of *Shatterproof* or the metronomic pulse of *The Running Man*.

Fellow effects unit fiend Mira Aroya from Ladytron lends support on the icily seductive *Watching A Building On Fire*, but it's the squalling futurescape of *Destination* that points a tractor beam to your heart in the name of intoxicating robo-pop bliss.

Catherine Yates

Moon Duo

Mazes SOUTERRAIN TRANSMISSIONS

Dazzling first full album proper from US twosome.

Fans of San Franciscan psych-rockers Wooden Shjips may already be familiar with Moon Duo, the side project of extravagantly bearded leader Ripley Johnson and his partner Sanae Yamada. A couple of prior EPs have posited them as droney experimentalists in the vein of Suicide and VU, but nothing quite prepares you for this terrific full debut. It's brighter, for a start, with opener *Seer* splashing onward via sustained keyboards and guitar into a mighty cosmic wibble that stretches the six-minute mark. Once they were largely minimal; now they favour bold, accessible hooks and pounding rhythms. Wooden Shjips draw much of their primal power through repetition at worryingly high volume, but Moon Duo – for the most part – do it through texture and melody. The cavernous *Fallout*, for example, achieves sensory overload with a bucking riff that suddenly latches on to a razorwire rhythm, before being swamped by mounds of fuzz guitar. It's the same with *When You Cut*, which sounds like Silver Apples and a 60s garage band making merry hell with banks of keyboard effects and overdriven guitar. There's still the sense of a ritualistic layering of pure sound – a la Spacemen 3, or indeed the Shjips themselves – but Mazes is altogether more playful. Still a heck of a racket, mind.

Rob Hughes

Mike + The Mechanics

The Road SONY

Back on the forecourt with a fresh set of tools.

Four years after the conclusion of a worldwide stadium jaunt with Genesis, Mike Rutherford has reconvened his Mechanics with a little tinkering under the hood. Gone is previous vocal mainstay Paul Carrack, to be replaced by 80s/90s Brit soul boy Andrew Roachford and Canadian singer-songwriter Tim Howar. Musically, the engine's running as smoothly as ever – finely tuned AOR that's unlikely to grab any chequered flags.

Try To Save Me and *Reach Out (Touch The Sun)* finds Roachford staying close to the polite testifying that brought him a string of low-charting hits, but there's a richer, more countrified feel to the tracks where Howar takes centre-stage (*Background Noise*, *It Only Hurts For A While*). Solid, if unremarkable stuff.

Terry Staunton

Pushking

The World As We Love It

EAR MUSIC

All that glitters...

After accumulating 15 releases in their native Russia, Pushking sought something extraordinary to generate some international recognition. With the help of well connected Italian-American producer Fabrizio Grossi, the result is an album that propels the current trend of records that feature special guests to ludicrous new extremes.

All the usual names from the tribute/festive/novelty album circuit are present, including Glenn Hughes, Joe Lynn Turner, Jeff Scott Soto, Steve Lukather and Graham Bonnet. But against all the odds *The World As We Love It* also features an A-list cast, including Billy Gibbons, Steve Vai, Jørn Lande, Udo Dirkschneider, Nuno Bettencourt and Alice Cooper – and even a man who usually steers well clear of such extracurricular shenanigans, a certain Paul Stanley of Kiss.

The end result is a listenable and highly competent album, but one that's weighed down by disjointedness, predictability and the unreasonable levels of expectation generated by its star performers. In pure monosyllabic terms it's good, but not great.

Dave Ling

The Fuzztones

Preaching To The Perverted STAG O LEE

I wish it could be 1966 again.

There's a case for saying that the 1980s saw the real psychedelic era, and that the brief flowering of acid rock between 1966 and 1969 was a false dawn. From LA bands like The Three O'Clock and The Rain Parade to the mental mandala flowering of Spacemen 3, there was never a better time to turn off your mind, relax and float downstream. This milieu spawned The Fuzztones, close kin to The Cramps, sounding as though they had overdosed on the entire *Pebbles* series at a *Famous Monsters of Filmland* convention. Nearly 30 years on they have stayed true to the world of wobbly Farfisas, recording with all the needles in the red and the reverb up full, and songs about drugs and zombies. Change is for squirts.

Tommy Udo

ROUND-UP: MELODIC ROCK

By Dave Ling

Eden's Curse: 'A thoroughbred melodic metal delight.'

Eden's Curse

Trinity

AFM

This third album by multi-national combo Eden's Curse, is a thoroughbred melodic metal delight. Once again produced by Dennis Ward, one of hard rock's most skilled studio boffins, *Trinity* skims the surface of both of these genres, galvanising heavy metal's primal energy, but cross-pollinating it with strong, hummable hooks.

The band are indeed fortunate to have a vocalist as gifted as Michael Eden, who sings the living shit out of the anthemic *Saints Of Tomorrow* and *Can't Fool The Devil* and, at the spectrum's other extreme, an expertly despatched power-ballad called *Guardian Angel*. The unmistakable larynx of James LaBrie pops up on *No Holy Man*, a classy, mid-paced song that showcases guitarist Thorsten Koehne and keysman Allesandro Del Vecchio. Instead of using a guest spot to camouflage a weaker moment, Andi Deris is called upon to enhance one of the best tunes, *Black Widow*. Closing with an affectionate nod at Dio's *Rock'n'Roll Children*, Eden's Curse negotiate third album syndrome with aplomb.

Paul Young

Chronicles

Escape Music

Not to be confused with the 1980s pop crooner of the same name, Paul Young was the voice of both Sad Café and Mike + The Mechanics until his death 11 years ago. This all-new album was compiled from unfinished material recovered from the Mancunian's home studio. Its seemingly casual melodic coolness does the man's legacy great credit.

D'Ercole

Rock Scar

Z

A semi-conceptual disc that compares the life of a jobbing rock star with the fallibility of relationships. Musically reminiscent of Winger and Dokken, it references an uncaring media (*Critic's Choice*), personal sacrifice (*Nothing Left To Lose*) and the futile injustice of it all (*Dying Breed*). The sombre mood isn't helped by plodding, repetitive tempos.

Shakra

Back On Track

AFM

Following the departure of frontman Mark Fox, the Swiss group's ace-in-the-pack, the title of their eighth album can be viewed as a statement of intent. For an unknown, newcomer John Prakesh is quite a discovery. Shakra still come from the heavier side of the tracks, but anthems such as *Crazy* and *MMTWGR* are built upon prime radio-friendly hooks.

David Roberts

All Dressed Up

Avenue Of Allies

One of five David Roberts albums to be re-reissued, 1982's *All Dressed Up* features daytime cameos from Jeff and Michael Porcaro and Steve Lukather as Toto recorded their own bestseller, *IV*, at night. No surprise, then, that *All In The Name Of Love*, *Too Good To Last* and *Midnight Rendezvous* are superlative examples of West Coast AOR.

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The Hard Stuff: Reissues

Queen: great songsmiths, but do the early albums hold up?

PETER MAZEL/SUNSHINE/RETNA

Queen

Reissues ISLAND

The first five albums are finally getting an enhanced release – but the extras are thin.

Guest Reviewer Steven Wilson

Now, I grew up pretty much obsessed with the albums of classic 70s rock bands (and still am). These 70s rock bands don't come much bigger than Queen, but somehow I've never taken them that seriously as an albums band. I'm not alone in this; in fact for a band so firmly established as one of the greatest rock bands of all time, it's rare to see Queen albums figuring highly in all time classic album lists. Perhaps it's the sheer genius of their run of hits from this period that has given the impression that Queen were a brilliant singles band who made albums almost as an afterthought. While their *Greatest Hits* album currently stands as the best-selling album of all time in the UK, it may be an indication of the relative lack of respect paid to the band's catalogue albums that – nearly 30 years after the introduction of CDs – they are for the first time receiving the archival treatment.

This is the first batch of reissues as part of the band's new licensing deal with Island Records, and a chance to revisit the albums recorded between 1972-76, when they were still indisputably a hard rock band. When Queen were good they were jaw dropping, and each of these five albums contain some of the most ambitious and distinctive rock songs ever recorded. But a handful of great tracks does not a classic album make, and most of these records don't maintain quality control for the duration. On the best songs here Queen manage to fuse rock power, progressive rock theatrics and pop hooks with an almost unfathomable flair and panache. At their worst they have a tendency to fall into pastiche, such as the homages to end-of-the-pier British music hall, which crop up far too often across these albums, like someone repeating the same joke over and over in the hope you'll find it funny the fifth time around.

What is clear is that Queen had something special from the start – their eponymous debut [**6/10**], though not as layered and sonically impressive as the ones that followed, already has most of the Queen trademarks in place: multi-tracked vocals and guitars over a symphonic sweep of sound which effortlessly references everything from metal to opera to barber shop. This and *Queen II* [7] are both accomplished and sophisticated progressive hard rock albums, but it's on their third disc, *Sheer Heart Attack* [**8**] – probably the closest the band came to a consistently brilliant record – that Queen finally unleash their pop credentials, starting a run of albums that feature the band at their creative peak. As well as containing several deservedly massive singles (none more so than the still astounding *Bohemian Rhapsody*, one of the pinnacles of seventies art rock), there is the thunderous proto-metal of *Brighton Rock* from *Sheer Heart Attack*, the biblical prog rock of *Prophet's Song* from *A Night At The Opera* [7], and the er… breathtaking multi-tracked vocal ballad *You Take My Breath Away* from *A Day At The Races* [7]. However, right alongside these quintessential Queen numbers you'll also find the dreary country and western of '39, the slight bubblegum pop of *Misfire*, and the workmanlike plod-rock of *Drowse*. It's hard to escape the feeling that most of the work went into perfecting three or four enduring masterpieces on each album, and the rest was filler.

'When Queen were good they were jaw-dropping.'

To maintain the listening integrity of the original albums, all the bonus tracks on these reissues are included on separate discs. Queen were uniquely gifted with four songwriters, each capable of coming up with brilliant songs. But prolific they were not, and these extra discs are not exactly overflowing with riches, with only five or six songs on each. Three live shows from the 70s are represented by only four songs, with other live cuts being taken from 80s concerts. With the exception of first album out-take *Mad The Swine* (closer to straightforward acoustic pop than anything on the album) – and non-album B-side *See What A Fool I've Been*, album out-takes are confined to a handful of instrumental/alternative mixes created especially for these editions. More interesting is the inclusion of five pre-first-album demos from 1971, and four songs taken from three BBC radio sessions recorded in 1973-74 – but frustratingly eight other songs from these radio sessions are excluded and remain unreleased. With these bonus discs little more than EP length, I suspect most Queen fans will find the decision to not include the complete live shows and radio sessions puzzling, to say the least.

Steven Wilson

Crass

Penis Envy CRASSICAL

An angry-weird masterpiece.

"Crass have done it in the ultimate way haven't they? Self-sufficiency. I'm surprised they don't make their own guitar strings. I always though it was self defeating, 'cos you've got to be heard." This somewhat negative quote from Joe Strummer is reproduced on the outside of the elegant packaging of *Penis Envy* – number three in what is called *The Crassical Collection*, an ongoing series of the band's albums, gorgeously repackaged with the now near-mandatory "previously unreleased archive material."

Crass were always the most ideologically pure of the leading punk bands and – under the don't-follow-leaders leadership of founder Penny Rimbaud – the closest to a true anarchist art-punk, agitprop, creative collective, although I did worry at times that they might go to the Dadaist extreme of turning into the Manson Family. They certainly didn't maintain the same traditional record industry footholds as the Sex Pistols and The Clash. *Penis Envy* was their 'feminist album' and also the point where Crass moved on from formula one punk to a greater sound-collage complexity. Vocals were totally taken over by Eve Libertine and Joy de Vivre, delivering lyrics that were furiously literate.

As Joe Strummer pointed out, *Penis Envy* wasn't really heard. After conning the teen romance mag *Loving* into giving away flexis of the parody single *My Wedding*, subsequent exposure in the *News Of The World*, and a brush with the Obscene Publications Act. The album seemed more symbolic than enjoyable, which was a damned shame because, for my money, it's a powerful, angry-weird masterpiece, and it's waited 30 years to be appreciated. Maybe this time around?

Mick Farren

Al Kooper

Easy Does It/New York City (You're A Woman)/ A Possible Projection Of The Future – Childhood's End RAVEN

Maverick mentalist strikes out for planet weird.

Brooklyn-born Al Kooper has always been a restless spirit. With a wild career path that encompasses time as teen star, super sessioneer, Dylan sideman and record executive his solo years have been overlooked. These are three of his more idiosyncratic recordings. *Easy Does It* (1970) offers the simplest entry into Kooper's world as he veers across sweet Nashville country, aided by Area Code 615 and Charlie Daniels on *Let The Duchess No*, and turns *Baby, Please Don't Go* into a crazy blues jazz jam. Closing track *God Sheds His Grace On Thee* is almost proto-Steely Dan but suddenly he's in London, 1971, camped out at Trident Studios for the *New York City* album, with Herbie Flowers and the Hookfoot clan, mining similar territory to Harry Nilsson's contemporary work on RCA. Perhaps Kooper felt a little too comfortable in that musical bag – think Randy Newman or Elton John with lots more moog and mellotron – and decided to go for broke with *Possible Projection*, a soul rock concept album from 1972 in search of a resolution. The fusion of covers of Dylan, Jimmy Cliff and Curtis Mayfield doesn't really convince, but dig deep elsewhere and there are several candidates for your esoteric jukebox.

Max Bell

13th Floor Elevators

Easter Everywhere CHARLY

Mono and stereo versions of a 24-carat masterpiece.

Really, the 13th Floor Elevators are the band of the 60s that should have been. As potent as The Doors, as virtuoso as Love and more out there than The Beatles ever were, after three hectic years they famously collapsed under the weight of drug burn-outs, mental illness and legal persecution. Thankfully recent years has seen the Texans get their critical dues, and this 1967 second album captures a band at their peak.

Roky Erickson's inimitable vocals and Tommy Hall's other-worldly, fluttering electric jug sounds make *Slip Inside This House* and *Postures (Leave Your Body Behind)* musical mantras that tread the tightrope between head-splitting epiphanies and post-acid/Vietnam-era comedown paranoia. *Dust*, meanwhile, is simply heartbreaking; a song that could make a boulder shed tears.

Ben Myers

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The Kinks: 'strip-mining the past'.

Kinks

Kinks/Kinda Kinks/...Kontroversy UNIVERSAL

The pile of extras here begs the question: can you have too many bonus tracks?

Once, when I was talking to the drummer of a band that should probably remain nameless, I innocently asked: "So, when are you guys going to come out with a deluxe box set with all the out-takes?" The drummer looked unhappy. "We don't have any out-takes. We released every damned note we ever recorded." I grinned. "Maybe you should manufacture a few." He grinned back. "Don't think it hasn't been discussed."

Not for a moment am I suggesting that a reputable rock band would counterfeit unreleased archive material. I'm just pointing out that the band without a vault is at a considerable disadvantage in the brave new deluxe CD collectors' world. Fortunately for the fans, the Kinks are far from vaultless. Not only are they a national treasure but they seem to have an archive the size of the British Museum. The deluxe format double CD releases of the first three 1964/5 Kinks albums *Kinks*, *Kinda Kinks*, and *The Kink Kontroversy* come with in excess of a hundred bonus tracks. In fact, the bonus tracks – all the alternate takes, demo versions, mono mixes, BBC sessions and gratuitous interviews – so heavily outnumber the original releases, they tend to hide the ongoing development of the band – and the growth of Ray Davies as a songwriter – that were so plainly revealed on the originals. As all the primary choices and selections are abandoned, you can hardly see the wood for the bonus.

It's great to hear all the alternative mixes and demos of early compositions like *Stop Your Sobbing*, *Mr Reporter*, *I Go To Sleep* and *See My Friends*, and standard blues covers like *Got Love If You Want It*, *Too Much Monkey Business* and *Bald Headed Woman* from the Kinks' early days as a North London art-school R&B band, but how many times do you really want to hear them? It begins to take on an air of overkill that makes me vaguely uneasy (especially with Dave Davies playing multiple variations of the same guitar solo).

We used to call it train spotting – the acquisition of songs that would be played once and then stashed away to complete a collection. It used just to be the dedicated followers of Bob Dylan and the Grateful Dead, but now everyone's doing it, and I suspect that many record labels consider deluxe package re-releasing the way of the future. In reality it's just strip-mining the past, and history shows it inevitably ends up creating a wasteland.

All

Mick Farren

Emerson, Lake & Palmer

The Essential SONY MUSIC

Prog Rock behemoths compiled. Still bewildering.

For anyone who grew up with punk, the chart dominance of ELP during the early 70s feels like rock's equivalent of The Bermuda Triangle: a strange place where exotic creatures armed with lasers and baffling lyrics induced a wholesale collective loss of common sense.

Even now, the frantic cacophony of *Karn Evil 9 – 1st Impression, Part One* feels like music from an alien civilisation, weirder than Muse would ever dare, while the raucous reception afforded a version of B Bumble And The Stingers' *Nutrocker* (recorded live at Newcastle City Hall in 1971) beggars belief.

Twelve-minute sonic excursion *Take A Pebble* almost redefines the term jazz odyssey, while *Pirates* (which comes in at over thirteen minutes) combines classical flourishes with pop riffs, proggy noodles and blasts of red-blooded bar-room boogie.

Some much needed sanity comes in the form of the sublime *From The Beginning*, the sleazy *Still... You Turn Me On* and Greg Lake's Christmas perennial *I Believe In Father Christmas*, but the lack of new material (all twenty-six tracks have been previously released) and the lack of any sleevenotes suggests ELP will remain legends to their fans and a perplexing mystery for future generations.

Paul Moody

The Muffs

Kaboodle LEMON

Grunge-pop froth from LA.

The Muffs were never ones for fannying about: short, huffy songs that barely troubled the three-minute mark. In fact, a handful of tunes on this impressive rarities comp – B-sides, singles, oddities – are enough to make the Ramones sound waffly. Kim Shattuck and Melanie Vammen had prior form in all-girl garage band the Pandoras before founding The Muffs in the early 90s, alongside bassist Ronnie Barnett and drummer Criss Crass. Their early sound is very much a product of its time – grungey guitars, Shattuck's voice caught between a sneer and the fuzzy wail of Courtney Love or L7's Donita Sparks – though the brevity, not to mention lack of soloing, is pure punk. Hooks aplenty too, not least on the utterly infectious *Get Me Out Of Here, Right In The Eye* and 1991's *I Need You*. Their self-titled debut is their most essential release, but newcomers could do much worse than dive in here first.

Rob Hughes

The Dictators

Manifest Destiny/ Bloodbrothers FLOATING WORLD??

This lot just can't make up their minds.

They may have missed the bus by showing up too early. Or maybe it was Handsome Dick Manitoba's white boy 'fro. Or was it because they never made up their minds if they wanted to play punk at CBGB or open for Kiss on a stadium tour? In the revolutions of the mid-1970s, indecision could be fatal, especially if the decisions you did make were the wrong ones.

The Dictators had all the pieces of the puzzle but never put them together. They plodded when they should have thrashed. They were ponderous when they should have gone for broke. They borrowed from The Who and The MC5, but they borrowed the wrong bits. They even released a live cover of *Search & Destroy* when they had less to say on the subject than Iggy. But the worst decision was to recruit Murray Krugman and Sandy Pearlman of Blue Oyster Cult to produce the second and third albums, repackaged here on one CD.

The duo compounded already existing problems by polishing what should have been left raw, while, right across the street, The Ramones were stripping everything down to the high octane essentials. The Dictators remain a New York legend, but recorded reality leaves nearly everything to be desired.

Mick Farren

Houston

Houston SPINEFARM

***Classic Rock*'s AOR album of 2010 – now even better!**

The band is from Sweden, but its name speaks volumes of the inspiration behind this terrific debut album. Houston's music is a throwback to the golden age of American AOR, so finely crafted

and richly melodic that *Classic Rock* has compared the Swedes to such giants of the genre as Journey, Styx, Toto and Boston. As our own Geoff Barton once stated: "If you like your candyfloss laced with Beluga caviar, look no further."

It all sounds too good to be true, but Houston really have created a modern classic, albeit one that sounds like it was recorded in 1985. Every track is a doozy, although special mention goes to *Pride*, with its parping keyboards, and *I'm Alive*, featuring Styx-patented vocal harmonies and Syndrums – remember them?

Now reissued with two new bonus tracks, *Under The Skin* (think prime-time Richard Marx) and *Chasing The Dream* (think latterday Journey), this album is a must-have for all serious AOR aficionados.

Paul Elliott

Steve Miller Band

Reissues DEMON

On cruise control and in experimental mode.

After four years away from the studio, 1981's *Circle Of Love* had been Miller's first album since his multi-platinum, mega-selling 70s success, and the critical drubbing and commercial failure that greeted it stung him into immediate action.

Despite record company resistance, the effortless pep and cool of *Abracadabra*'s title track (taking inspiration from the unlikely Diana Ross) proved his Midas touch was still intact. But the 1982 transatlantic smash was a holdover, uncompleted in time for the previous album.

The chief's songwriting cupboard was otherwise bare so drummer Gary Mallaber and guitarist Kenny Lee Lewis stepped into the breech.

Sadly a tapering off in songwriting quality is evident in the gauche blends of 80s synth strategies and 50s soda pop innocence that resulted.

Even Miller's playful *Give It Up* is slight, the sound of the (cheese) barrel being scraped.

Two years on, the first album to be recorded on Sony's new digital multi track system *X Rays* was a sonically enhanced curio, refreshing Miller's *Sailor*-era conceptual instincts and Les Paul-bred love of pioneering technology. Byron Allred's fluent atmospheric keyboards shine as the band master rather than get overwhelmed by the new medium. But once again song writing democracy failed to engender any tunes that make a lasting impression.

Abra...

...X-Rays

Gavin Martin

Slash

Slash Deluxe Edition

ROADRUNNER

Star-studded solo album now comes stuffed with extras.

There's an awful lot of scope for disappointment in special editions. How many times have record labels tried to squeeze a bit more dosh out of their acts by just tacking on a couple of scratchy outtakes and pasty-faced Japanese B-sides? Luckily, the top-hatted one has pulled out all the stops for his rollicking solo outing.

If you haven't already got a copy you've missed out on 14 joyous, no-nonsense, fat-riffed rock anthems fronted by a stunning array or rock and pop royalty (and Adam Lavine from the execrable Maroon 5, but don't let that put you off). However, it's the accompanying DVD that works the magic on this new version. A making-of documentary follows Slash as he brings together everyone from Alice Cooper, Lemmy and Ozzy Osbourne to Fergie from The Black Eyed Peas. Then we're treated to music videos, live footage and the main man talking us through the creation of each song. By the end of it all you'll be asking why all albums aren't this packed, and how someone who's lived as fast as Slash still manages to look so infuriatingly youthful.

Emma Johnston

Utopia

Reissues CHERRY RED

The Runt's later Utopian adventures are patchy at best.

Digitally remastered, beefed-up by some rare former B-sides, bonus tracks and two newly available live DVDs as well, if you absolutely positively have to have these final recordings from Todd Rundgren's former vanity project, then you might as well get the ones with knobs on.

Certainly, the two live DVDs – the first now included with Utopia's so-so-at-best 1984 album *Oblivion*, and filmed in Detroit in 1981; the second as new addendum to the *Live In Japan* package – are worth investigation. The earlier show is particularly worthy of attention as this was Rundgren and Utopia – if not at their peak then very close to it – replete with in-concert favourites like *Couldn't I Just Tell You*, *Love Is The Answer* and *Just One Victory*.

Unfortunately, neither of the two original studio albums were up to scratch, strange new wavy things that they were. If you were a fan of Utopia's neo-prog, you had already surmised that they would never again reach the peak they'd attained in the late-70s with *Oops, Wrong Planet* or, before that, *Ra*. Indeed, by the mid-80s they had become such an anachronism they couldn't even get a major record deal.

Live, though, they were always superb, as both DVDs remind us, the paired down line-up of Rundgren, bassist Kasim Sulton, keyboardist Roger Powell and drummer Willie Wilcox as endlessly inventive in that setting as ever.

Oblivion

POV

Redux '92

Mick Wall

Levellers

Levelling The Land *Rhino*

Twenty years on, the crusties' breakthrough album is back, remastered, to claim its due.

Journalistic codes of practice require me to listen to this album before submitting my review. I did so but, to be honest, didn't need to. *Levelling The Land* and this writer have a long and happy history. The songs on this record are seared on to the shallow end of my subconscious, forever tied to grubby times in muddy fields in the early 90s, green satchels with that logo, wide eyes and high hopes. You might argue that this weight of nostalgia makes favouritism inevitable, but in fact probably the reverse is true: nostalgia is dangerous when revisited in early middle-age, and this record could have sounded dated and embarrassing. After all, I also liked Shed Seven. [*You're fired – Ed.*]

But it doesn't. *Levelling The Land* is still absolutely bloody fantastic. This has nothing to do with the remastering clean-up job, which doesn't really make any difference to these already receptive ears. It's simply that these songs remain thrilling: whippet-lean folk-punk bastard children that rattle along with irreverence, rough wit, charming naivety and more hooks than a fishermen's convention. From *One Way*'s chest-bursting chorus, through the haunted fiddle outro of *The Boatman*, to the mania of *The Riverflow* and the touching *Another Man's Cause*, this is a band with so many lightbulbs popping above their heads that the results are dazzling.

It's inevitable that the five bonus tracks suffer by comparison, but in truth, they're not bad: *Dance Before The Storm* could have been a classic if it wasn't for the dopey vocals, *Hard Fight* has a certain aching beauty, and the false starts and chat of *Plastic Jeezus* give it the feel of a much-prized bootleg. Slightly more pointless is Disc 2's Glastonbury set of 1992: a dewy-eyed treat if you were there, but really just Disc 1 with worse production and slightly strained vocals.

The inner sleeve of this reissue collects press quotes from the time of the original release beneath the self-deprecating headline: 'Bullshit Detectors On Full'. Well, chalk this one up, boys: it might just be the best British album of 1991.

Henry Yates

AMI BARWELL

Levellers: better than Shed Seven?

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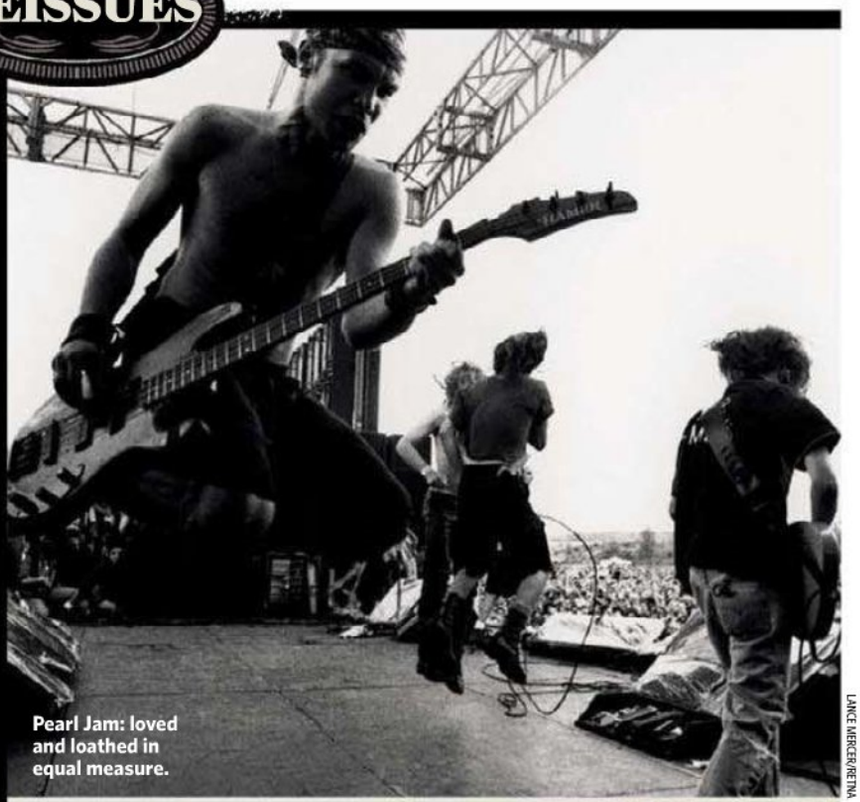

Pearl Jam: loved and loathed in equal measure.

LANCE MERCER/RETNA

Pearl Jam

Vs/Vitalogy Deluxe Editions EPIC/LEGACY

Grunge survivors celebrate 20 years with reissues splurge. Cake not included.

Few bands have been as equally loved and loathed as Pearl Jam. Emerging in 1991, they were alternately heralded as arena rock classicists or cock rock fifth columnists, depending on whether or not your name was Kurt Cobain. Signature anthem *Alive* and singer Eddie Vedder's zen surfer dude intensity provided a less confrontational alternative to Nirvana's punk-indebted arsiness. It clearly worked; their debut album *Ten* outsold *Nevermind* in America.

If that initial burst of success bagged them a seat at rock's top table, then it was the period immediately afterwards when matters took a turn for the strange. Across the space of two albums – 1993's *Vs* and the following year's *Vitalogy*, both re-released here in a selection of expanded deluxe editions to mark the band's 20th anniversary – they first ruminated on and then rejected all they stood for.

Superficially, *Vs* moved things on a few steps from *Ten*, dropping plaintive balladry (the bittersweet *Elderly Woman Behind The Counter In A Small Town*) and bizarre cod-funk mantras (*WMA*) into the mix. But it was the final two tracks that spoke volumes about their relationship with fame: '*Drop the leash, get out of my fucking face*,' snarled Vedder on *Leash*, while the mere title of closer *Indifference* said it all.

Despite their best efforts, *Vs* failed to reduce their huge fan base. Instead, that job fell to *Vitalogy*. Released eight months after Cobain's death, it ramped up both the abrasiveness and the experimentation – even the most avid Pearl Jam fan would struggle to say *Hey Foxymophandlelady, That's Me*, let alone hum it. Seen at the time as an act of self-sabotage (it ended up selling half as many copies as its two predecessors), time has smoothed its confrontational edges, while *Nothingman* shows they could pull off a show-stopping ballad even in the middle of a massive sulk.

If *Vitalogy* was a watershed in terms of their commercial clout, it was far from the end of the road for Pearl Jam. These days they balance a sense of fierce independence with a commitment to the live cause – indeed, the Deluxe Edition bundles together both albums alongside *Live At The Orpheum Theater*, a pulsating document of a 1994 Boston gig. Despite its detractors' best efforts, grunge never really died. But as these two albums show, it got very interesting for a while.

Vs

Vitalogy

Dave Everley

Greg Lake

Reissues ROCK CANDY

Slotting in some solo albums between supergroups.

Just as a giant asteroid supposedly killed off the dinosaurs, so the punk rock revolution supposedly did for prog rock beasts like Emerson, Lake & Palmer. ELP's extravagant touring arrangements, supergroup genesis and 20-minute-long song suites were the polar opposite of punk's short, sharp thrills. Their split in 1978 it is often seen as a victory for the new-wave upstarts.

The ELP species though, as we now know, re-animate every few years before splitting acrimoniously again. In between the first of these spells, bassist Greg Lake made a pair of solo albums in LA in 1981 and 1983 respectively, the latter of which is released for the first time on CD here. Both albums feature stirling guitar moves from the sadly-departed Gary Moore, but for all his decoration not much can disguise two sets of standard and rather restrained AOR fare. Lake's trademark gloomy ballads probably sounded great if you were facing divorce, but don't come close to matching the majestic doom of his ELP work, while the heavier tracks, such as *Nuclear Attack* are lyrically embarrassing. Intriguingly the first album contains a co-write with Bob Dylan – *Love You Too Much* – that's standard 12-bar blues are delivered quite feverishly by Lake and Moore. If only the whole album had been so energised.

Greg...

Man'vres

Johnny Dee

The Nice

Diary Of An Empty Day REPERTOIRE

Wake up and smell the patchouli oil.

There's no shortage of Nice compilations out there. If it's just a taster you're after, the recently reissued *Autumn 1967 – Spring 1968* does the job as well as any. For slightly more oddball tracks, live versions and obscurities, the double set *Diamond Hard Blue Apples Of The Moon* is worth checking out.

Diary Of An Empty Day, however includes the best tracks from the band's tenure on Andrew Loog Oldham's Immediate label, remastered, with extensive sleeve notes by Chris Welch. Obviously *America* is there – two versions – and *The Thoughts Of Emerlist Davjack*; and are there any other songs quite as evocative of the transition from the summer of love to the more violent spring of 1968 as those two? From childlike whimsy to revolution in the streets in under 10 minutes. The 'hits', though, paint a distorted and inaccurate picture of The Nice. Excerpts from *Ars Long Vita Brevis* and *Rondo*, included here, give us a broader view of their evolution, from R&B pick-up band to – arguably – the most important spearhead in the world of progressive rock, incorporating as they did aspects of progressive jazz and striving to emulate classical composition.

Tommy Udo

T. Rex

Get It On: The Collection POLYDOR

Get It On is a transitional collection covering Bolan's electrification years on the Fly label between 1967 and '71. It is neither a definitive career-spanning collection, nor the in-depth delve into Bolan's pre-70s folk period it purports to be, since it takes in his glam-rock hits up to 1971's *Electric Warrior* album. True, no acoustic-era T. Rex comp would be complete without *Ride A White Swan* or *Cosmic Dancer*, the biggest draws for the casual *Billy Elliot* fan towards Bolan's mystical/mythological end, but it's a frustration: the classic glam bursts of *Get It On* and *Jeepster* detract from the conceptual purity of what is otherwise a magical musical swan-ride.

The invention that Bolan and Took brought to their happy-hippy acoustic material bristles timelessly: *Mustang Ford*, adorned with Bolan's early shamanic warble, is a clear precursor of Devendra Banhart and the cult-like bongo mania of *Debora* and *Salamanda Palaganda* sound like the 60s mid-rapture. Though some tracks – *Juniper Suction, The Wizard* – get drawn into a psychedelic quagmire, Bolan's raw genius radiates in the way *Stacey Grove* and *Beltane Walk* hang halfway between The Kinks and Ziggy Stardust.

The Tyrannosaurus Rex of the 60s produced music with sky in its hair but mud still on its soles. A shame, then, that – even here – its natural beauty is concealed beneath a thin layer of glitter.

Mark Beaumont

Renaissance

Reissues *ESOTERIC*

First two albums from these folk rock trailblazers.

Formed in 1969 as a reaction to the ego-driven blues rock excesses of of their previous band, ex-Yardbirds Keith Relf and Jim McCarty intended Renaissance to explore a more pastoral landscape, inspired by folk and classical music.

With Relf's sister Jane on vocals, their debut album acts as a declaration of intent, weaving elements of Beethoven (on epic 11-minute opener *Kings And Queens*), medieval folk (*Islands*) and baroque (*The Wanderer*) into a complex sonic tapestry, clearly designed to baffle Jeff Beck fans.

Recorded at Olympic Studios in the midst of their gruelling live schedule of 1971, the follow up *Illusion* (not released in the UK until 1976) is a less placid affair – the musical muscles acquired on the road shown off in bucketloads on the 14-minute epic *Past Orbits Of Dust*. You'd never know it judging by the blissed-out *Love Is All* and contemplative *Walking Away* but the band's simmering internal divisions would soon prove insurmountable.

By the time of its completion in 1971 both McCarty and Relf had jumped ship, their places taken by ex-Nashville Teens Neil Korner and Terry Slade. Jane Relf would follow soon after. Somewhere on the horizon, however, those *Northern Lights* were glinting in the distance.

Ren'nce

Illusion

Paul Moody

Michael Bruce

Be Your Lover – Anthology *FLOATING WORLD*

Former Alice Cooper guitarist's solo set.

Alice Cooper, the man, claims that success did for his original band. On the cusp of greatness in the early 70s, the singer wanted to take their money and plough it into the band's greatest live extravaganza yet. The rest of them, bored of being broke and not sharing their leadman's spectacular vision, wanted their share of the spoils, and so Alice was suddenly a solo star. As the band's guitarist and sometimes co-writer, Bruce played a major part in Alice Cooper's early success. Strange then how underwhelming the songs from his then solo album *In My Own Way* sound now, making up one disc of this two CD set. Sadly Bruce's original compositions lack the bite of the Alice Cooper band. *So Far So Good* and *Ain't That Just Like Life* are as innocuous sounding as their titles, their hard pop leaving little impression – rather unlike his live versions of Alice songs that linger long in the memory, although quite possibly for all the wrong reasons.

Philip Wilding

Nick Lowe

Labour Of Lust *PROPER*

Superb second solo outing from this pub rock legend.

Recorded over two booze-fuelled months in the winter of '78, and on the comedown from a mammoth 50-date American tour, *Labour Of Lust* captured Lowe in rude health and boisterous form. The redoubtable Rockpile band, simultaneously recording guitarist Dave Edmunds's cracking *Repeat When Necessary* album, provided the basis for a blend of combative rock 'n' roll, spirited country, bruised blues and sweet sweet soul.

Attractions Costello and Pete Thomas assist on *American Squirm*, a sweetly flavoured but savagely turned ode to getting frisky and losing the plot in the land of the free. Megastar-to-be Huey Lewis delivers a fine blowing-down-the-house harmonica turn on the up-and-at-'em groove of *Born Fighter* and the Philly Soul stamped lead single *Cruel To be Kind* remains Lowe's most successful hit.

From *Dose of You*, a brilliantly suggestive amalgam of lust-filled craving and the roadhog's risk of social disease, to the spare eerie extra track *Basing Street* the songs are smart and full of impact. The feeling of abundance, of casual craftsmen paring their wares and wits prevails. Consistent as Lowe has been over the years, *Labour Of Lust* still represents an undeniable career high.

Gavin Martin

Twisted Sister

Resissues *ARMOURY*

Not their finest, but still far from rubbish.

There's a theory that, after the release of their breakthrough album, *Stay Hungry*, in 1984, Twisted Sister went into a fast and steep decline. That is a fair point in some respects, but if it means totally dismissing this cracking brace of albums, then it's rather harsh.

Come Out And Play was the follow-up to *Stay Hungry*. Originally put out in 1985, it's slightly brasher and flashier that what had gone before. The budget had clearly been increased, although this didn't necessarily mean better results.

It's a patchy album, and some of the tracks are clearly fillers. However, *Be Chrool To Your Scuel* (with guest appearances from Alice Cooper and Brian Setzer) is a cracking anthem, and the cover of The Shangri-Las' *Leader Of The Pack* just thunders along.

Two years later, *Love Is For Suckers* was intended as a Dee Snider solo album. Hence the presence of so many other musicians. In truth, it's a little lacking in any cohesion, and the only reason this actually came out under the Twisted Sister name was to guarantee sales. But if much of this is forgettable, then one or two moments – the title song, *Me And The Boys* – are more than decent.

...Play

...Suckers

Malcolm Dome

Sham 69

If The Kids Are United: The Best Of Sham 69 *UNIVERSAL*

Cockney Cowboys' warts-an'-all anthology

Sham 69: a good 20 miles shy of being real cockneys.

MARTYN GODDARD

With a name which read like a car number plate (inspired by decaying street graffiti in their native Hersham heralding their local football team's Athenian League-winning season in 1969), and a musical engine that hot-wired the anthemic lad rock of Mott The Hoople to punk, Sham 69's hasty arrival on the pop forecourt was never likely to impress the more serious-minded rock intelligentsia.

Nonetheless, for an 18-month period during the late 70s, Sham's souped-up sound was about as exhilarating as pop can get, their combination of bovver-pop riffs and lyrics dripping with teenage confusion a snarling update of The Who.

Even now, over 30 years on, *Borstal Breakout* still crackles with energy, while *If The Kids Are United* remains one of the great teen anthems, Jimmy Pursey's impassioned plea for youth unity (*'If we all stand together/It will just be the start!'*) proving all too prophetic: the band's live career would soon be destroyed by warring factions of punks, skins and rival football fans.

Hurry Up Harry and *Hersham Boys*, both top ten hits, continued the rabble-rousing, but Sham would never capture the same inchoate fury on record again.

By the time they got to 1980's *Tell The Children* they had all but slipped into self-parody, the saxophone-assisted intro and lyrics about "classroom cabbages", simply too much for an audience now intrigued by the murky world of Oi.

Sensibly, this 30 track collection uses this as a cut-off point, although live versions of *White Riot* and *Pretty Vacant* by The Sham Pistols (Pursey's ill-fated spin off band with Steve Jones and Paul Cook) are a poor substitute for the absence of debut single *I Don't Wanna*.

A minor grumble, really. With sleeve notes from former tour manager Grant Fleming, and a bristling live version of *Song Of The Streets*, this is Sham 69 as they were meant to be heard; loud, proud and glorying in a life lived on the margins.

"This is all about getting your head kicked in!" bellows Pursey gleefully at the start of *We Got A Fight*. You had to be there, really.

Paul Moody

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Soundgarden: you guys get as naked as you like – I'm keeping my shirt on!

RETNA

SST Records

The best of the LA label that quickly attracted a roster of cult stars to become one of the hippest underground imprints ever.

In 1978 Californian Greg Ginn was a radio ham who ran a small electronics business and played in a local punk band called Panic. Unable to find a record company willing to release their demos, he formed his own SST label instead. The result was the *Nervous Breakdown* EP, under the band's new moniker Black Flag. Ginn's first signing was San Pedro upstarts Minutemen, whose *Paranoid Time* EP was released the following year.

SST quickly became the hippest underground outlet on the West Coast, specialising in hardcore and punk. Black Flag shows became notorious for run-ins with the LAPD, leading to an ongoing war of attrition between record company and police. SST's phone lines were tapped, cops monitored Ginn's HQ from across the street and local clubs suddenly slapped a ban on hardcore bands.

The situation merely stiffened SST's resolve and increased their reputation as LA's foremost indie label. In 1982 midwestern trio Hüsker Dü became its first non-Californian signings. The next three years saw SST at its peak, loosening its hardcore roots and growing a roster that embraced post-punk, experimental music, psychedelia and beyond. There were seminal albums by Minutemen, Hüsker Dü, the Meat Puppets and a young New York combo called Sonic Youth. As the latter's Lee Ranaldo explained: "It was the first record company we were on that we would have given anything to be on." Hüsker Dü signed to a major in 1986, but SST brought in fresh blood via DC's Bad Brains and a noisy young bunch of misfits from Massachusetts called Dinosaur Jr.

But there was also growing disaffection between SST and its charges. Allegations of unpaid royalties would lead to lawsuits later on. The label was hardest hit by Island Records, who sued it in 1991 over Negativland's appropriation of the U2 song *I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For.*

The exodus from SST coincided with Ginn's new preoccupation with jazz and the ascent of Nirvana, who had been inspired by many of his bands. By the turn of the 90s SST's reputation was somewhat tainted and new releases were few and far between. It soon dropped off the radar completely, though it was briefly revived by Ginn, now based in Texas, in 2007.

Rob Hughes

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Essential Classics

Black Flag

Damaged *1981*

Such was the unbridled ferocity of Black Flag's full-length debut that nervous MCA bosses refused to release it, president Al Bergamo citing *Damaged* as an "anti-parent" record. Undaunted, guitarist and SST founder Greg Ginn issued it on his own label instead. Their 20-year-old singer Henry Rollins barked his way through a blitz of angry, nihilistic (and occasionally humorous) songs that were to become the template of US hardcore and embody the very ethic of DIY punk. *Rise Above* was a howl of rage that ranks among Ginn's greatest compositions, while *TV Party* served as both a broadside at American culture and a riotous ode to teenage ennui.

Dinosaur Jr

You're Living All Over Me *1987*

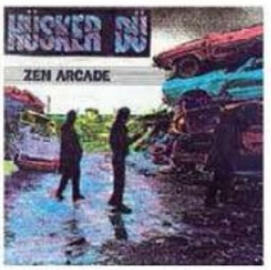
Massachusetts trio Dinosaur Jr, led by dentist's son J Mascis, did as much as anyone to invest US indiedom with crushing guitar noise. Second LP *You're Living All Over Me* was as volatile as the chemistry in the band itself. This was where shards of punk and monolithic riffs disappeared into screeching feedback, topped off by the kind of laconic voice that made Lou Reed sound positively animated. *Sludgefeast* sounds like a dream fever of Sabbath-like heft, while *Little Furry Things* hammered conventional rock into weird new shapes. Bassist Lou Barlow, latterly of Sebadoh, does his bit too, most notably on the stoned-out *Poledo*.

Superior Reputation cementing

Meat Puppets

Meat Puppets II *1984*

The Arizona three-piece began in 1980 as a hardcore punk band before frontman Curt Kirkwood came to the conclusion that "most punks are just rednecks in disguise". They changed tack, alienating fans by opening shows with the theme from *The King And I* and pioneering a searing mix of country, punk and sun-baked psychedelia. Ragged harmonies lent added charm to songs like *Split Myself In Two* and trippy barn-burner *Lost*. They reached a wider audience a decade later when they backed Nirvana on stage for three of these songs – *Plateau, Oh Me* and *Lake Of Fire* – on 1994's *MTV Unplugged In New York*.



Hüsker Dü

Zen Arcade *1984*

No one was quite prepared for Hüsker Dü's third LP. *Zen Arcade* was a genre-defying concept album about a teenage runaway, stretched out over four sides of vinyl. The Minneapolis trio's fast'n'loud early sound now gave way to near-conventional pop songs, blasted psychedelia, instrumental reveries, piano interludes and *Reoccurring Dreams*, a 14-minute jam that built and buckled in waves of dissonant noise. Guitarist-vocalist Bob Mould and drummer Grant Hart established themselves as killer songwriters with tunes like *Turn On The News*, *Standing By The Sea* and the terse *Something I Learned Today*.

Minutemen

Double Nickels On The Dime *1984*

"We were reacting against the arena rock of the 70s," says bassist Mike Watt of his post-punk trio Minutemen. "Wire and The Pop Group taught us that a band is whatever you want it to be. You don't have to follow any rules." This hectic album crams 43 songs into 74 minutes, with a dizzying spread of styles: cubist punk, funk, blues, jazz and Beefheartian weirdness. Led by singer-guitarist D Boon, who tragically died in a van accident a year later, there are skronky covers of Creedence and Steely Dan alongside Latino protest song *Corona*, later to become the theme to TV show *Jackass*.

Sonic Youth

Sister *1987*

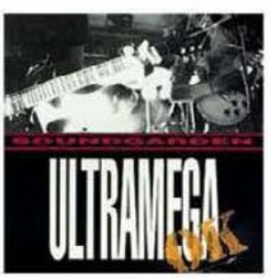
Fifth album *Sister* was where the New York quartet's atonal dissonance met songs of real structure and melodic scope. *Schizophrenia* was a case in point with churning electric guitars, flurries of deftly woven notes and cryptic verses. The blistering *(I Got A) Catholic Block* was as close as they'd ever been to a conventional rock tune, with the menacing *Pacific Coast Highway* and a corrosive cover of Crime's *Hot Wire My Heart* propelled by the terrific drumming of Steve Shelley. There was still plenty of distortion, and odd tunings though, not least on nearly-ballad *Beauty Lies In The Eye* and the narcoleptic *Cotton Crown*.

Good Worth exploring

Bad Brains

I Against I *1986*

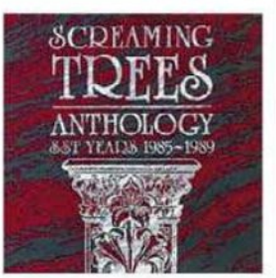
Led by Londoner Paul Hudson, aka HR, Mind Power had been a late 70s jazz-fusion combo before discovering punk and renaming themselves after a Ramones song. The all-black Washington DC outfit thus became a fierce mash-up of hardcore thrash and dub reggae. There was a brief split in 1984, but they returned two years later to record their masterpiece, *I Against I*. A highly charged, politically-pointed racket, the title track and *House Of Suffering* are testament to their ferocious power. Most intriguing of all is *Sacred Love*, that sees HR phoning in his vocals from a DC prison after being busted for marijuana possession.



Soundgarden

Ultramega OK *1988*

Metal, psychedelia and hardcore are the base ingredients in an intense mix of murky riffs, grinding guitars and wailing vocals. Songs like the ultra-trippy *Flower* and piledriving mini-epic *Beyond The Wheel* helped land *Ultramega OK* a Grammy for Best Metal Performance, despite frontman Chris Cornell's claim that label producer Drew Canulette had diluted the band's rawness. There were moments of surprising levity too. Both *665* and *667* parody the notion of Satanic rock, while *One Minute Of Silence* is a 'cover' of John and Yoko's noiseless 1969 oddity, *Two Minutes of Silence*. Rest assured everything else is as loud as bells.



Screaming Trees

Anthology *1991*

Screaming Trees' early records wed thumping garage rock to the buzzing psych of the 13th Floor Elevators. Always a highly combustible concern – they fought, drank and drugged with the best of them – the Seattle outfit released one EP and three albums during their five-year stint with SST. This comp rounds up their best bits before signing to Epic in 1989. It's a fascinating snapshot of a band in transition, not least singer Mark Lanegan, who grows from guileless young buck to authoritative frontman before your very ears. The gathering dread of *Night Comes Creeping* and *Grey Diamond Desert* ably showcase his nicotine-voiced grandeur.

Avoid

October Faction

The Second Factionalization *1986*

For every Black Flag, Hüsker Dü or Dinosaur Jr, there was also a Zoogz Rift, Trotsky Icepick or Tom Troccoli's Dog. The latter, made up of ex-roadie Troccoli and SST guru Greg Ginn on bass, were an uninspired trio with a Neil Young fetish. They weren't quite as rank, however, as October Faction. Another side-project of Ginn's, their debut featured Henry Rollins on drums, while follow-up *The Second Factionalization* was a formless jam that stretched both time and patience. Made up of indulgent guitar-noodling between Ginn and Joe Baiza, the 37-minute *Pocahontas* made even The Grateful Dead sound lean.

Essential Playlist

Black Flag
Nervous Breakdown

Black Flag
Rise Above

Saccharine Trust
A Human Certainty

Hüsker Dü
Turn On The News

Minutemen
Political Song For Michael Jackson To Sing

Minutemen
History Lesson (Part II)

Meat Puppets
Lake Of Fire

Meat Puppets
Split Myself In Two

Bad Brains
I Against I

Hüsker Dü
Makes No Sense At All

Sonic Youth
Schizophrenia

fIREHOSE
Sometimes

Screaming Trees
Grey Diamond Desert

Dinosaur Jr
Sludgefeast

Dinosaur Jr
Freak Scene

Soundgarden
Flower

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THE HARD STUFF BOOKS

David Bowie: had to graft to develop his prodigious talent.

MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES

Starman Paul Trynka SPHERE
David Bowie Kevin Cann ADELITA

One book truly definitive, the other pictorially stunning, together unsurpassable in the field of rock biography.

Fans of the erstwhile Thin White Duke have never been short of reading matter. From cut-and-paste king George Tremlett's production-line 40p faxploitation paperback of 1974, through Charles Shaar Murray and Roy Carr's glitzed and glossed *An Illustrated Record* of '81, to David Buckley's exhaustive and exhausting *Strange Fascination* in 2000, many have sought to validate a 'Definitive Biography' claim.

Bowie's legion of none-more-obsessive fans, meanwhile – seven years into his apparent yet undeclared retirement following a backstage heart attack, are readier than ever to take receipt of an ultimate overview of The Dame's extraordinary life and career. And, judging by *Iggy Pop: Open Up and Bleed*, Paul Trynka's previous painstakingly researched, insightful rock biography, there's no better man for the job.

When Tryka's book cover boasts 'definitive' it's an assertion you can pretty much take to the bank. But is it even possible – when considering all of the conflicting suppositions, hearsay and opinions that characterise the vast archive of source materials – to dismiss received wisdom, re-evaluate the myriad salient facts and make 'definitive' sense of one of the most labyrinthine and closely scrutinised careers in rock history? To out-fact the vast body of Bowie minutiae out there, Trynka would have to venture into the arena of the terminal anorak and bore his reader to their very core. He could happily resort to forensic detail with *Open Up And Bleed*, because not only had Iggy's story never been satisfactorily unravelled before, it was also page-turningly sensational from cradle to *Skull Ring*.

For *Starman: The Definitive Biography* to similarly succeed, Trynka need demonstrate mastery of entirely different disciplines – a goal he's surpassed in some style. Herein, key figures in Bowie's life – Ken Pitt, Tony De Fries, ex-wife Angie, various sidemen and collaborators – are smartly reappraised. Some, previously exclusively cast as villains and hindrances, emerge as essential enablers, selfless and heroic artistic catalysts. Others, formerly classified as true powers behind the throne are (perhaps more realistically) painted as largely unexceptional journeymen who only ever realised their ultimate potential when inspired by the presence and patronage of Bowie.

The main impression that one takes from *Starman*, however, is that Bowie, gifted as he might superficially appear, didn't come ready equipped with an unstoppably prodigious talent at all. He's quite simply a grafter of the old school; a musical artisan who cleverly shaped hard-won experience into a degree of craftsmanship so accomplished as to appear inspired. So unintimidated by, and open to, the innovations of his contemporaries, he adopted and assimilated new ideas with such rapidity as to be serially lauded as visionary. Bowie, recognising the potential of a Velvet Underground album acetate brought back from New York by his manager Ken Pitt in 1966, was featuring *I'm Waiting For The Man* in his live set before it was even released.

'Memorabilia to make the Bowie fan's eyes water.'

Bowie didn't stumble upon hits by instinctive genius, he studied his craft like a Tin Pan Alley pro. It was no mistake that *Hunky Dory*'s *Life On Mars?* and *Ziggy Stardust*'s *Starman* both utilised the sure-fire hit-making octave leap so familiar from *Over The Rainbow*. The reason David Bowie became the early 70s' brightest star was because Davie Jones had been the late 60s' hardest worker.

If Trynka's easily portable *Starman* is the definitive incarnation of Tremlett's relatively humble, train journey-friendly analytical biog, then Kevin Cann's sumptuous *David Bowie: Any Day Now Any Day Now The London Years: 1947-1974* expands upon the coffee table-buckling *An Illustrated Record* template trailblazed by Murray and Carr. It is not as impractical a read as heavyweights like *The Beatles Anthology* or Bill Wyman's *Rolling With The Stones*, but it's big enough. Thankfully, it's also beautiful. The photographic content alone is a delight. Bulging with countless previously unseen images alongside all the familiar Mick Rock and Brian Ward favourites, there's an array of memorabilia to make any self-respecting Bowie fan's eyes water. The text is also riveting: minutiae-heavy, laid out in a day-to-day diary style, great for dipping into, and, as a pictorial accompaniment to Trynka's second successive exemplar of the rock biographer's art, utterly unsurpassable.

Both

Ian Fortnam

Ronnie James Dio – A Photographic Tribute

PG Brunelli RUFUS STONE

Coffee-table celebration of the late, great man.

It would be easy to lavish huge praise on this book simply because it's dedicated to the late, great Ronnie James Dio, and part of the proceeds from its sales go to the cancer charity set up in his name.

Yes, there are some wonderful photographs here of Ronnie at work, rest and play. But, equally, there are some shots which have been blown up to such an extent that they lose definition, or are sub-standard in other ways. Also certain aspects of the book's layout leave much to be desired.

Few of the photos are captioned or put in a proper context. So while *A Photographic Tribute* is divided into sections on Ronnie live, in the studio and in private, there is some lack of attention to detail.

Still, the tributes from the likes of Slash, Lemmy, Bruce Dickinson and Jon Lord are heartfelt, and you do get a feel for Ronnie Dio not just as a rock star but also as a human being. And for that alone this book is worthwhile. Coming in various formats, it's also expensive, and will perhaps appeal only to true Dio devotees.

For all its flaws *A Photographic Tribute* is still a decent reminder of a rock legend.

Malcolm Dome

And On Piano... Nicky Hopkins

Julian Dawson DESERT HEARTS

Session-man blues.

If Nicky Hopkins, who died in 1994 at the age of 50, wasn't the greatest rock pianist Britain ever produced, then whoever was is still in hiding. An ace 60s studio rat, he worked with The Beatles, the Stones, The Who, the Kinks and zillions more before relocating to the US – he even ghosted for Fats Domino!

He could both sight-read and improvise, learn a song in seconds or create a part on the fly; play you note-perfect Rachmaninoff, or the funkiest blues between Olympic Studios and the South Side of Chicago. He had all the talent rock'n'roll could ever need, but neither the temperament nor the physical stamina: a shy introvert perpetually battling congenital ailments, the long-term consequences of a horrific childhood accident and the problem of receiving no royalties for his contributions to legendary recordings of others.

Julian Dawson's thorough, thoughtful biography, subtitled *The Extraordinary Life Of Rock's Greatest Session Man*, walks you gently through his subject's life and work. A musician as well as a writer, he collaborated with Hopkins on a song which turned out to be the last-ever session performed by the man Klaus Voorman, in his afterword, called "a classical pianist with rock'n'roll fingers".

Charles Shaar Murray

Nick Drake: The Pink Moon Files

Jason Creed OMNIBUS

Sensitive singer-songwriter under the microscope.

Although it's probably inaccurate to refer to the late Nick Drake as a cult artist these days, it's certainly true that key aspects of the paper-thin-skinned British singer-songwriter's narrative – introspection, melancholia, romanticism, tragedy – inspire a particularly potent brand of devotion.

In *The Pink Moon Files*, uber-fan Jason Creed – Editor of the *Pink Moon* fanzine which ran for 19 issues in the late 90s – has assembled an annotated compendium of the best pieces, exhaustive in scope and detail. Multiple interviews/features with the principal satellites in Drake's orbit (John Martyn, producer Joe Boyd, arranger Robert Kirby, biographer Patrick Humphries, Drake's sister and parents) dovetail well with contemporary reviews, a definitive discography and bibliography, plus meticulous sections on Drake documentaries and his lost recordings.

Speculative debate about Drake's psychopathology, poetry and modal guitar tunings may be a microscopic zoom-in too far for some, but the collective effect comes as near as any to understanding a man who at times seemed absent from his own life.

Tim Batcup

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THE HARD STUFF DVDS

Jeff Beck: getting back to his rock'n'roll roots.

Jeff Beck

Rock'n'Roll Party EAGLE

One of Britain's primo rockabilly guitarists on a guitar great's tribute to the *first* guitar hero.

Guest Reviewer Boz Boorer

How eagerly I awaited the arrival of the *Jeff Beck Rock'n'Roll Party: Honouring Les Paul* DVD, and it is a fantastic piece of work. I did see and speak to the great Les Paul himself in the 90s at Fat Tuesdays, NYC, and have toiled over many of the same solos that Jeff replicates so well here. I never actually met Jeff, although he does play guitar on one of the songs that I wrote on the last Morrissey album. His appreciation of the many classic rock'n'roll guitar styles is well known, and this DVD demonstrates how he's absorbed them all.

The show kicks off with guest vocalist Darrel Higham in fine form, singing four classic rockabilly tunes that allow Jeff ample opportunity to run the gauntlet of Scotty Moore (Elvis), Cliff Gallup (Gene Vincent) and Grady Martin (Johnny Burnette) solos. Imelda May takes over vocal duties next, her lovely, warm multi-tracked harmonies fantastically reminiscent of Mary Ford's trademark sound.

One thing that comes across is how Jeff is able to put his own stamp on the songs that influenced him; now that is a neat trick! A great version of *Sleepwalk* (originally played on steel guitar by Santo & Johnny) showcases Jeff's expertise with the tremolo arm, before 70-year-old Gary US Bonds belts out a fine version of *New Orleans*, complete with a rousing brass section also featured on Duane Eddy's *Peter Gunn*. Even Hank Marvin gets a respectful nod with an impressive take on *Apache*. Brian Setzer pops up for an obligatory Eddie Cochran song (*Twenty Flight Rock*), before the band conclude on a couple of Bill Haley stonkers, invoking the jazzy style of Franny Beecher.

Over the course of the show, Jeff (looking fantastic for a man approaching 70) plays an array of classic guitars, including a Strat, Tele, Duo Jet and, inevitably, a Les Paul, while an extra feature interview catches him in a nice, relaxed, open mood as he tells some great tales. Other extras: Jeff shows off his guitar collection (each with its own anecdote) and blues jams with Les in an entertaining, knockabout 80s clip. All in all it's a very entertaining two-and-three-quarter hours. One minor gripe: the gig footage seems a little out of sync with the backing track at times – confusing when you're trying to copy those licks.

Boz Boorer

Marillion

Live From Cadogan Hall RACKET

Aylesbury proggers furrowing their own imaginative groove.

Pioneers of an internet business model that has freed them from record company tyranny and foolishness, Marillion are able to follow their muse where it takes them. In this case it's to London's Cadogan Hall in the Christmas of 2009 to crown their *Less Is More* acoustic project with a performance of real humour and grace. Typically, they began where most people would stop – with bare bones of songs that were then rebuilt with all manner of odd and oddly-constructed instruments. In glistening HD the stage sometimes resembles the inside of a garden shed. Their catalogue is textured enough to allow musical figures buried deep in the original mixes to be brought out: a two note piano riff for an insistent *You're Gone*, for example, or the chiming dulcimer intro to *Go*, and the crafty use of the odd keyboard or electric guitar ensures that they retain their familiar and stirring dynamics. In all, a glorious and non-cynical celebration of this curiously great band.

Jon Hotten

The Big 4

Live from Sofia, Bulgaria UNIVERSAL/VERTIGO

Heavy metal history at the Sonisphere Festival.

For anyone who couldn't make it to Bulgaria or any of the 550 theatres worldwide – 79 in the UK – that received the live broadcast of Anthrax, Megadeth, Slayer and Metallica at last sharing the same stage after all these decades, this double DVD presents every single second and comes in a variety of desirable formats.

Anthrax kick things off, suitably enough, with *Caught In A Mosh*, as dark and threatening clouds loom overhead, but it's an incisive Megadeth who enjoy the full deluge that ensues, turning the metal faithful into a multicoloured sea of kagoule-wearing devil horn-throwing lunatics. Theirs is a powerful set that benefits from the drama of the storm, and provides a perfect cue for Slayer to, well, slay really – most notably with a brutal *Raining Blood*. And so to Metallica, who really do look like they're having a blast throughout. All the bands join them on a collaborative gallop through *Am I Evil?*, which, churlish though it may sound, is probably the most musically messy moment on offer here – but it is terrific fun.

The bonus behind-the-scenes documentary is enjoyable enough, but won't warrant repeat viewings – not that this is really a problem given the quality of the overall package.

Essi Berelian

Heaven & Hell

Neon Nights: 30 Years Of Heaven & Hell – Live At Wacken ROADRUNNER

The closing chapter in the life of this tiny giant of metal.

The last time Ronnie James Dio was filmed in-concert before being diagnosed with the stomach-cancer that would claim him less than a year later, this DVD takes on a special poignancy that could not have been imagined when the show took place in July 2009. On the surface then, some flawlessly-recorded footage of one of the all-time great rock line-ups, in apparently triumphant, celebratory mode, touring in the wake of their first new studio album for two decades, *The Devil You Know*. Hanging like a shadow over everything though is the retrospective knowledge of the fate that was about to befall their singer. But let's not be unduly gloomy. Not when what we have here are top-drawer performances of some of post-Ozzy Black Sabbath's greatest recordings. Testament to the band's enduring power is how seamlessly then-new numbers like *Bible Black* and *Fear* fit in with classics such as *Die Young* and *Neon Nights*. Special mention must go, though, to *Falling Off The Edge Of The World*, its opening line – *'I think about closing the door'* – almost unbearably apt. Extras include interviews with each member, including Dio, as well as some brief but heartfelt tributes paid to the singer by the others, following his sad death.

Mick Wall

TAMI Show

SHOUT

A pivotal moment in rock'n'roll, captured on film.

The *TAMI* (Teenage Awards Music International) *Show* is a recording of a one-off concert that took place over two days in Santa Monica, California in 1964, showcasing the prime movers of rock'n'soul to the youth of America.

It claims to be the first rock movie of its kind and it's certainly historic. Not only does it boast a stellar line-up – including Chuck Berry, The Rolling Stones, The Beach Boys and James Brown – but it displays to fine effect the crossover between black and white music, in the same year that racial segregation was finally outlawed.

There's a few inanities – Jan and Dean introducing the "Stones from Liverpool", Gerry Marsden's phoney grin and a few over-excited go-go dancers, but most of the performances are astonishing – especially from the Motown stable.

The Stones are pitched against James Brown for the finale, but the boys from Dartford give it all they've got. Tiny todger or not, in a few twitches from the hips and those lips, Mick Jagger shows us how he became the sex god of his generation, while Billy J Kramer went back to cabaret in Bootle with his Dakotas.

However you take your rock'n' roll – pure black or dirty white – it's all here.

Claudia Elliott

Velvet Revolver

Live In Houston EAGLE

Ill-fated supergroup at their peak. Only six years too late.

Draw a graph of rock supergroups and you'll find Cream at one end and Tin Machine at the other. And there, smack bang in the middle, is Velvet Revolver. Theirs was an unlikely marriage of (in)convenience that threw up two decent albums, a soap opera-style divorce and an apparently interminable search for a new singer that looks like carrying on until the Apocalypse. Or at least until the original Guns N' Roses line-up finally gets back together.

None of which explains the arrival of this DVD, which bursts through the doors like the last guest at the wedding reception, only to find the buffet demolished, the cake on the floor and the bride in floods of tears. Recorded in Texas way back in 2005, it captures two very different parties in the first flush of romance. Then-new collaborations *Fall To Pieces* and *Do It For The Kids* hold their own against STP's *Crackerman*, while it's curious to see Scott Weiland – a man with the dress sense of a blind drag queen who has misplaced his frightwig – trying to bend GN'R's bruising *It's So Easy* to his will.

The downside? It's old news. The Velvet Revolver story has moved on to the point where *Live In Houston* is almost irrelevant to anyone who isn't planning to audition for the remaining members. Still, it was nice while it lasted.

Dave Everley

Ginger Baker's Air Force

Live 1970

RADIO BREMEN/GONZO MULTIMEDIA

An early exploration of fusion beats and world rhythms.

Ginger Baker's Air Force was the propulsive beast that straddled the worlds of jazz-rock fusion and Afro-beat/world-beat between 1969 and 1970. Their first self-titled album (one of the best live albums set to wax), recorded at the Albert Hall, is phenomenal, and it's easy to presume that the heart of the group was torn out when Steve Winwood, Chris Wood and Rick Grech left to rejoin Traffic. And even though this notion was strengthened by the release of the sub-par second self-titled album just months after their departure, this DVD is more than enough evidence to show that Air Force were still a smoking live act right until the end.

The 50-minute set, recorded live in the studio, was heavily edited before being broadcast on German TV, meaning most of this footage is unseen in the UK. Graham Bond shines on a Persian-influenced *Gates Of The City*, and the extended jazz breakdowns of *What A Day* show that Air Force always had their sights set much higher than Blind Faith. Best of all are two meaty versions of *Sunshine Of Your Love* with lengthy drum solos featuring Speedy Acquaye on congas.

This is porn for fans of the rhythm section, a skin flick for would-be drummers.

John Doran

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MCMLXXXIV GR8

Thanks for the awesome piece on the making of Van Halen's *1984* album. It was interesting to see the problems within the band between DLR and Eddie Van Halen and what lead to the departure of the lead singer. I must admit I always thought DLR was a difficult man with his ego, but he is probably the greatest showman that walks the stage, even today. But when Sammy Hagar came in and left under similar circumstances, the fingers seemed to point to Eddie as the problem in VH.

Reading comments in Sammy's book about how difficult he is, was quite shocking. Sammy has to be the easiest guy to work with, for Christ's sake, and probably the most geniune guy in rock. I am a huge Van Halen fan and love both eras of singers, with different styes, coming together with great simmering rock'n'roll.

I just hope we get to see another VH album with Roth. Even though we keep hearing snippets of info that they are, I just hope Eddie and David behave enough that we can see them performing over here before Roth needs a walking stick!

Alex, via email

…Having been playing Van Halen's stuff non-stop for about the last month (mostly the Hagar era and the 'best of's), it seemed like perfect timing when I saw on the cover [CR156] that there was a massive VH feature inside. That morning, I was actually on Amazon and Play.com pricing all the Dave Lee Roth era VH albums, then I saw the cover of your mag that afternoon and had a little 'kid in a sweet shop' moment to myself. Yes, I got a bit excited – but that's good isn't it, that a 40 year old can still be excited by the cover of a music mag? Well only *CR* could do that to me as I do show my disdain at what's on the cover of some of your rivals' output (Beady fucking Eye indeed!).

Add the VH article to the excellent interview with Mr Coverdale and the nicely done Gary Moore touches and all the regular stuff I have to say I am really starting to like your mag again.

I have always bought it since day one and I won't stop but I now find it's taking me a few days to get through it instead of a few hours of page flicking – so it's job done then!

Alan Todd, Belfast

PS: Just wondering if there is going to be another edition of your AOR mag as I thought it was due again in February? Hope so as I've been looking forward to it and would love a Boston feature in either it or the monthly mag as I hear they have a much anticipated new album due for release this year.

Cheers Alan. The next issue of *AOR* is scheduled for May 6, with regular issues following every two months after that. Soft rock is coming back – *hard!*

AW SHUCKS, YOU'RE JUST SAYING THAT

Congratulations to you on the continuing brilliance of your front cover artwork. My subscriber issue 156 featuring the detachable double front cover was once again genius, and each month these covers just seem to get better and better – keep them coming.

Thank you also for the insightful Big Country feature. Such an underrated band, this was a treat to read. You detailed the band's difficulty in finding the right recording sound from time to time and this highlights that their main strength is live performance. Here, they and their loyal, fervent fans are truly mighty and deliver a night to remember. Catch them on their forthcoming nationwide April tour.

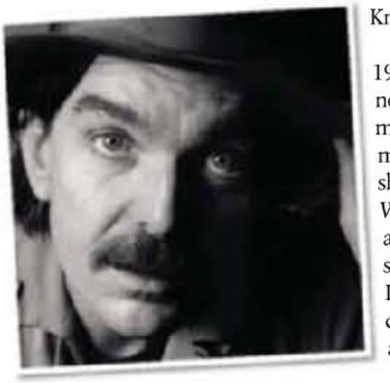
Paul Wren, Kettering

***CR*156: 'awesome', 'genius' and 'a treat to read'. Your words.**

BEEFHEART FULL OF SOUL

When someone "doesn't get" Captain Beefheart, as Paul Sale [*CR*156], by his own admission, doesn't, he should give his ears another helping of the Don and open his mind to what he has missed out on all these years. At home with his headphones on rather than among several thousand long-hairs at Knebworth in 1975, methinks.

I saw Beefheart at Knebworth in 1975 – a Beefheart concert it was not, and possibly also not the ideal moment for Mr Sale to discover his music. This particular Knebworth show was the world premiere of *Wish You Were Here* by Pink Floyd, and Captain Beefheart was on the support bill – along with Linda Lewis! (Even Graham Chapman came on as the Brigadier to tell us all to "clear off".)



LAURA LEVINE/CORBIS

Beefheart: "Opens a whole new area of music."

I was already a fan of Beefheart, having first encountered him (as many did) via *Willie The Pimp*, a track on the Frank Zappa album *Hot Rats*, in 1969. Lounge rock isn't to be found on a Beefheart album, unless its a lounge on the planet Bizarro from the Superman comics. And that's the "point" of Beefheart's music, which – when you "get it" – opens a whole new area of music that has never as obvious as all the chart stuff which sells to the masses.

So what if Captain Beefheart never sold truckloads of LPs? Lots of sales doesn't always convert into quality, otherwise we would all eat at fast food drive-ins rather than treat ourselves to the odd treat at the little bistro tucked into the backstreet.

Big Mac or rare fillet?

Give Don another listen, Paul, and treat yourself to some rare Beef!

Pete Greenwood, via email

PS: Kudos to Alex Lester on Radio 2 who had the good grace to play Captain Beefheart at 4.30 the day after he passed away. I cried a tear into my Weetabix as I got ready for work.

I don't know which is more amazing, Radio 2 playing something good or the fact you go to work at 4.30am.

"I saw the cover of your mag and got a bit excited – a 40-year-old still excited by a music mag."

SOCIAL MOBILITY

Thanks for the review of the new Social Distortion album in last month's *Classic Rock*. It's very rare that I'll buy an album on the strength of the review alone but in this case something about Sleazegrinder's review made me take notice and I immediately got the album from iTunes. So glad I did – what a great piece of work! Stand-out track for me is definitely *Machine Gun Blues*.

On the strength of this album, I've also bought *Somewhere Between Heaven & Hell* and Mike Ness' solo album, *Cheating At Solitaire*.

Star Letter

BACK IN 1974 I saw my first major band at the Free Trade Hall, Manchester. That band was the Sensational Alex Harvey Band. Since then I've witnessed hundreds of bands, many of whom have left a lifelong impression on me: AC/DC, Deep Purple, Black Sabbath, Thin Lizzy, Robin Trower, Motörhead to name but a few.

On Monday, February 27 my son Alex (named after the great man himself) went to the Roundhouse, Manchester, to see the Black Spiders. The band were totally brilliant from start to finish. The monstrous wall of sound that pervaded from the first song to the last was truly spine tingling. To say I was awestruck would be an understatement. The band were so together in a super-charged, stomping, rousing powerhouse set of songs.

I may be 52 years old but I can still be moved and energised by seeing a band for the first time, knowing that you have just witnessed something very special. Thanks to drummer Simon for his face contortions throughout the set – they made the whole thing even more memorable. And thanks to *CR* for highlighting such a fantastic band.

Steve McVey, Bolton

Cheers Steve – and thanks for having faith in us. A bottle of Smokehead is on its way.

Every month, the Star Letter wins a fine bottle of Islay Single Malt Smokehead Whisky. Enjoy. And remember: Smokehead encourages responsible drinking.

I love it when a writer can convey his thoughts on an album so clearly and passionately that it makes you want to go straight out and get the album without even hearing a note of the music. I can only think of a couple of other times that this has happened for me – The Gaslight Anthem (*The '59 Sound*) and The Hold Steady (*Boys & Girls In America*) which are both great albums and have lead me on to seek out other albums by both bands.

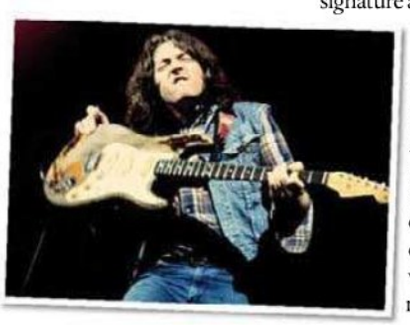
Please keep up this quality in your writing and keep employing writers who are as passionate about this great music as your readers are.

Gareth Watford, via email

THE GALLAGHER BROTHERS

I eagerly await Part 2 of the Buyer's Guide on Rory Gallagher. Part 1 completely bypassed the stage in his career that surely anybody wanting to know about his music should be aware of. He made some incredibly powerful blues-rock albums in the late 70s and early 80s. How *Photo Finish* can be left out is almost criminal, but also the live album *Stagestruck* is one of the most energetic and dynamic live albums any fan of blues-rock will ever hear. *Top Priority* is also excellent. Rory didn't just catch the wave of heavy rock at this time – he blazed the trail. Any Essential Playlist should at the least include *Wayward Child, Bad Penny, Brute Force & Ignorance, Moonchild* – so many great songs totally ignored!

Rory Gallagher: just had too many good albums and songs.



FIN COSTELLO/GETTY IMAGES

I know it is more fashionable and cool to name-check his more pure blues albums, but apart from naming *Jinx* as 'worth exploring' and *Defender* to 'avoid' I think there is a large hole in that article, and to anyone that might be a blues rock fan but hasn't discovered Rory yet, they should be made aware of this period. Anyone in any doubt? At the very least buy *Photo Finish* and *Stagestruck* and just be blown away to the power of Rory Gallagher in full flight.

Alyn Smith, Wilton

It was great that you featured your man Rory in last month's Buyer's Guide, particularly as it coincided with the *Irish Tour* biography being shown on Sky Arts. You were very astute in citing the *Irish Tour* album as one of the Essential Classics but… your Essential Playlist is a little off the mark! This list should be considered the advice you would give to someone who had not heard the artist before. So, if you were telling them about Led Zep, would you omit *Stairway To Heaven* from the list? Springsteen – *Born To Run*? Thin Lizzy – *The Boys Are Back In Town*? So why leave *A Million Miles Away* off this list? This is his signature anthem and doesn't even get a mention.

"Everyone has their own opinion," I hear you say. But just go to Spotify and check the popularity ratings of his songs – second only to *Bad Penny*, which also did not make your list.

Coming in at six on Spotify is *Shadow Play* – another absolute gem, sadly omitted from your list – so this ain't just my opinion. I look forward to seeing comments from other Gallagher fans.

Nic Scott, via email

Great to see a long overdue Buyer's Guide to the late, great Rory Gallagher. As you rightly said, Rory didn't make a bad album so I think that for once you could have omitted the Avoid section and instead extended the Essential section to include the mighty *Live In Europe* which has to be one of the seminal albums of the 70s. I cannot think of many of my old mates who didn't own a copy – in fact I have worn out two copies over the years and still play it regularly. Your magazine gets better every month, and the latest free CD was absolutely brilliant, especially the Nils Lofgren track. Keep up the good work.

Dunc, via email

Paul Elliot writes: "As Dunc acknowledged, I did state that Rory never made a bad album. In fact he made so many good ones that there isn't room to mention them all in a *Classic Rock* Buyer's Guide. The same applies to the Essential Playlist. I agree with Alyn Smith that *Photo Finish* and *Stagestruck* are great records, I just think that *Irish Tour* is a better and more important live album than *Stagestruck*, and that *Deuce* is much better than *Photo Finish*. Likewise, Nic Scott is right about *A Million Miles Away* – it's one of Rory's key songs. But is it his best ever song, better than *Crest Of A Wave*? I don't think so. That's the beauty of these Buyer's Guides – they're always open to debate. What's more, your letters prove just how much Rory's music really matters."

TURNING TO GOD

Thank you so much for the excellent Eric Clapton feature in the March *CR*. Although I was inspired to pick up the guitar by listening to George Harrison and was taken into the stratosphere by Hendrix, I soon discovered the wonderful 'Beano' album. Hendrix's guitar spoke volumes, and it goes without saying that he is essential listening; but Clapton's guitar spoke to me – or at least that's how it seemed back in my Swindon bedroom in the late 80s. My father had just died and, perhaps for that reason, I suddenly understood something about the depth of emotion Eric's playing dealt with.

Hideaway will always be a veritable library of licks and *Steppin' Out* still delights with its dexterity. But for me the solo on *Double Crossing Time* is perfection – so much light and shade in the speed, the vibrato, the sustain – to say nothing of that tortured note halfway through, which still tears my heart out whenever I hear it. After 20-plus years as a player, I can produce a passable version of this solo, but not that note – that one will always belong to Eric.

Greg, via email

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IS IT JUST ME OR DOES DAVID JOHANSEN LOOK LIKE GALEN OFF PLANET OF THE APES?
DEANO, DURHAM

MICK WALL'S JAPAN BUYERS GUIDE WAS LAUGHABLY PRETENTIOUS. JAPAN'S ROCKIEST ALBUM *OBSCURE ALTERNATIVES* DEEMED 'ONE TO AVOID'. IN THE WORDS OF RICKY TOMLINSON: 'MY ARSE'!
ROBBO

THE RISE ABOVE RECORDS CD IS THE BEST FREEBIE YET! ANY CHANCE OF A LABEL'S ARTISTS TOUR?
WEE RUSSELL

I FUCKING HATE DAVID BOWIE. WHATS ALL THE HYPE ABOUT?
ANON

WAS IT JUST ME WHO FOUND RANDY BACHMAN REMINISCENT OF PATRICK STEWART IN EXTRAS?
CHRIS, KENT

FIRSTLY THANK YOU FOR NILS LOFGREN ON CD ASTOUNDING! 2ND THANK YOU TO MY GOOD LADY FOR SUBSCRIPTION TO YOUR MAG AS XMAS PREZZIE. 3RD THANK YOU ROCK! ROCK IS DEAD? MY ARSE!
BIG AL OF BRITHDIR

JUST BOUGHT BLACK SPIDERS AND THE TREATMENT ALBUMS BOTH VERY GOOD COULD BE YEAR WHEN BRITISH BANDS MAKE PROGRESS ROLL ON GENTLEMENS PISTOLS NEW ALBUM.
ANDY, HUDDERSFIELD

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The Hard Stuff Quiz

Think you know your rock – not to mention your roll? See how many of these questions you can answer, and how many album sleeves you can identify from the details pictured.

1. What are the titles, in release order, of the first three albums by Bad Company?

2. What was the name of the band formed in the mid-80s by singer Pete Murphy from Bauhaus and bassist Mick Karn from Japan?

3. In which year did both John Bonham and John Lennon die?

4. Name the evergreen Top 10 hit from 1976 that the following verse is taken from: '*You know that chick that used to dance a lot/ Every night she'd be on the floor shaking what she'd got/ Man when I tell you she was cool/She was red hot, I mean she was steaming.*'

5. Name the jazz-rock group formed in the US in the late 60s that included Al Kooper, Steve Katz, Jim Fielder and Bobby Colomby?

6. Who were the main-stage headliners on Saturday and Sunday respectively at last summer's High Voltage festival?

7. Name the guitarist who collaborated with Billy Idol on his 1982 album *Billy Idol* (which includes *Rebel Yell, Eyes Without A Face* and *Flesh For Fantasy*), and has also recorded with Peter Criss, Vince Neil and Michael Jackson, among others?

8. In which respective years did Iron Maiden reach No.1 in the UK album chart with *Number Of The Beast* and No.3 with *Piece Of Mind*?

9. Name all six musicians who were members of the Clash in the 70s.

10. '*Didn't take too long 'fore I found out, what people mean by down and out/Spent my money, took my car, started telling her friends she gonna be a star/I don't know, but I been told, a big-legged woman ain't got no soul.* Which song, by which band, are those lines taken from?

11. Who were the rhythm section that played on the Derek And The Dominos classic album *Layla And Other Assorted Love Songs*?

12. Which US trio comprises drummer Jerry Gaskill, guitarist Ty Tabor and bassist Doug Pinnick?

13. Which British record label launched in 1969 did Pink Floyd, Barclay James Harvest, the Edgar Broughton Band, The Move, Deep Purple and Kevin Ayers all release records on?

14. What is the title of the second album, released in '68, by Fleetwood Mac?

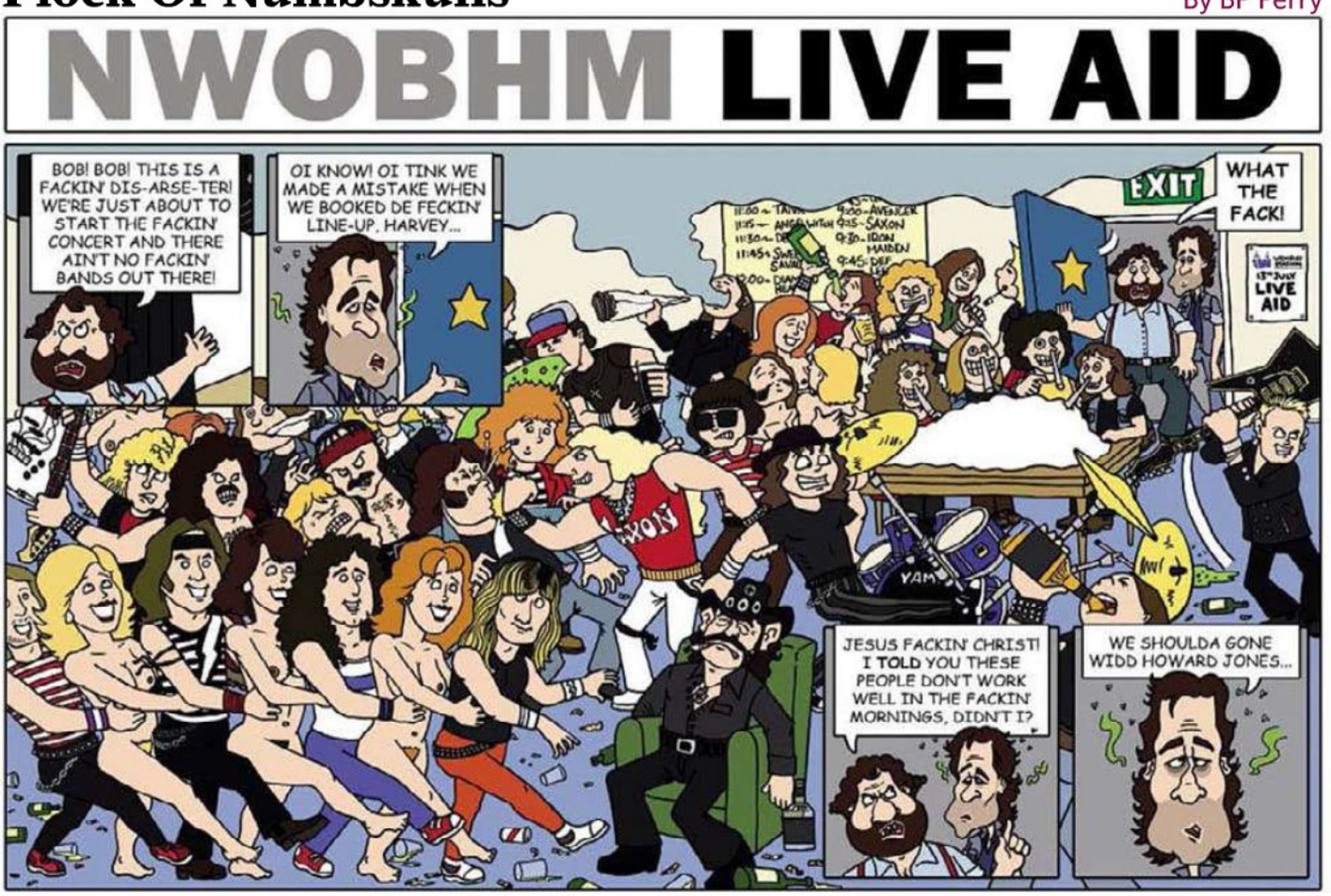
15. Who are the two long-term Scorpions guitarists who have been in the band from 1979's *Lovedrive* album to the present?

16. Name all five members in the 'classic' late-60s/ early-70s line-up of German band Can.

Answers on p117

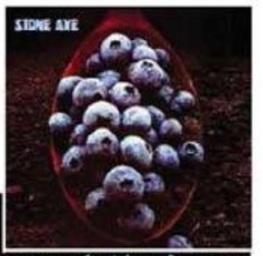
Flock Of Numbskulls

By BP Perry



STONE AXE
ON TOUR

8th April - The Wheatsheaf, Oxford
9th April - The Unicorn, Camden, London, UK
10th April - The Earl, Sheffield, UK
11th April - The Captains Rest, Glasgow
12th April - Asylum 2, Birmingham
14th April - The Vortex, Siegen, Germany
15th April - MTC, Cologne, Germany
16th April - Roadburn Festival, Tilburg, Holland



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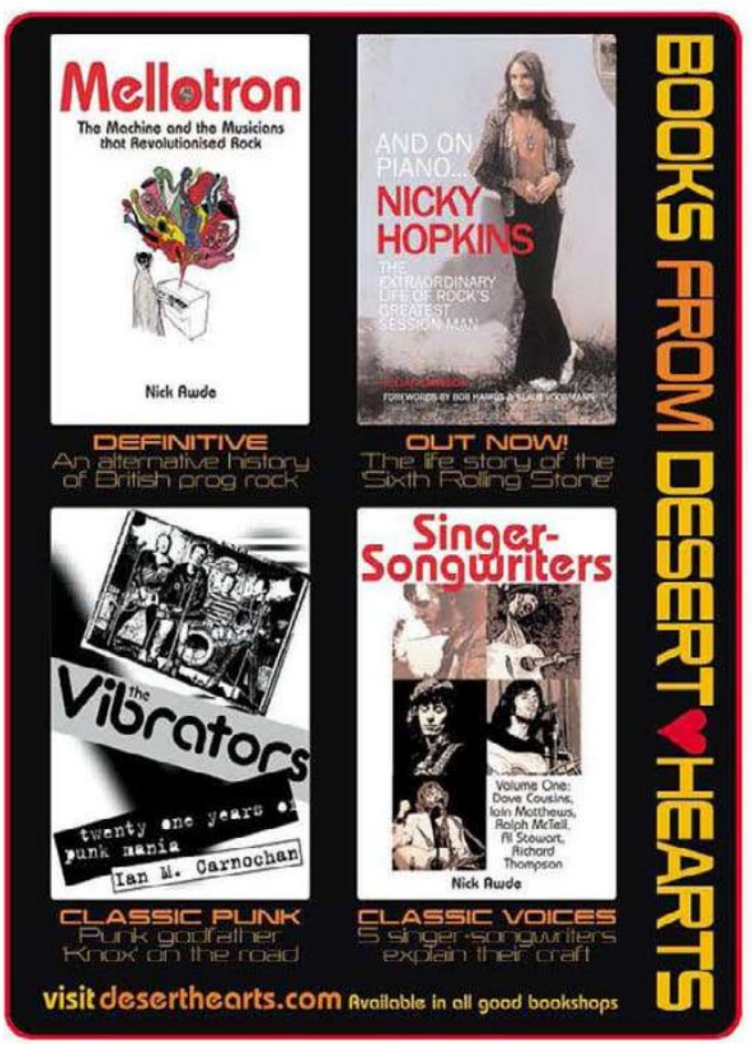

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19th Bristol, O2 Academy | 21st Falmouth, Princess Pavilion
22nd Bournemouth, O2 Academy | 23rd London, Shepherds Bush Empire
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MAY : 6th Arras, France, Blue Devils Bar | 7th Waarschoot, Belgium, Cafe Metro
13th Leicester, The Soundhouse | 14th Nottingham, Rock City
20th Ebbw Vale, The Steelhouse | 28th Durham, Live Lounge

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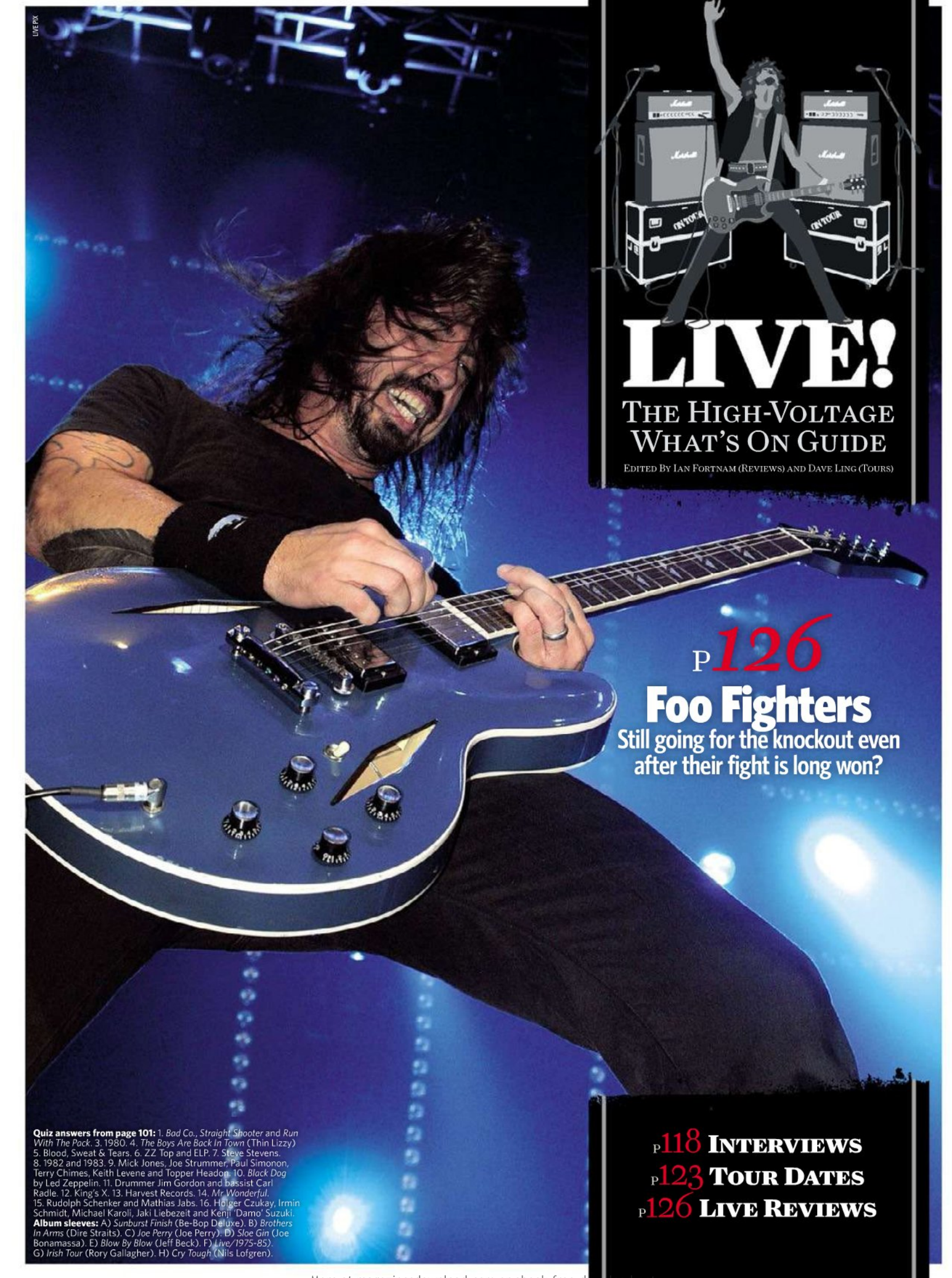

LIVE PIX

LIVE!

The High-Voltage What's On Guide

Edited By Ian Fortnam (Reviews) and Dave Ling (Tours)

P126

Foo Fighters

Still going for the knockout even after their fight is long won?

P118 Interviews
P123 Tour Dates
P126 Live Reviews

Quiz answers from page 101: 1. *Bad Co., Straight Shooter* and *Run With The Pack*. 3. 1980. 4. *The Boys Are Back In Town* (Thin Lizzy) 5. Blood, Sweat & Tears. 6. ZZ Top and ELP. 7. Steve Stevens. 8. 1982 and 1983. 9. Mick Jones, Joe Strummer, Paul Simonon, Terry Chimes, Keith Levene and Topper Headon. 10. *Black Dog* by Led Zeppelin. 11. Drummer Jim Gordon and bassist Carl Radle. 12. King's X. 13. Harvest Records. 14. *Mr Wonderful*. 15. Rudolph Schenker and Mathias Jabs. 16. Holger Czukay, Irmin Schmidt, Michael Karoli, Jaki Liebezeit and Kenji 'Damo' Suzuki. **Album sleeves:** A) *Sunburst Finish* (Be-Bop Deluxe). B) *Brothers In Arms* (Dire Straits). C) *Joe Perry* (Joe Perry). D) *Sloe Gin* (Joe Bonamassa). E) *Blow By Blow* (Jeff Beck). F) *Live/1975-85*). G) *Irish Tour* (Rory Gallagher). H) *Cry Tough* (Nils Lofgren).

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Rodgers: looks after himself to maintain that golden larynx.

"In the UK I lean towards the Free songs, in America it swings towards Bad Company."

KEVIN NIXON

Paul Rodgers

The Voice prepares to return to the UK for a 10-date tour. Probably with no mooning.

Five years after his last British tour as a solo artist, Paul Rodgers is preparing for a 10-date excursion that takes in London's Royal Albert Hall on April 28.

Phoning us from your adopted home of Canada, you must be looking forward to this UK tour?
Very much so. It's where I come from. It's going home.

How civilised are your tours these days?
All the wildness and partying is on stage. On my tour bus I'll be watching John Lee Hooker on the video, or reading on my Kindle, which I got for Christmas. I'm reading Bernard Cornwell's *Sharpe* series. I love a bit of historical fiction.

Is there a different vibe when you're touring with Brian May and Roger Taylor?
[Chuckles] They're fantastic. I'll never forget mooning them in Copenhagen. They were in their limousine, and we shot past them on the inside lane and I mooned them!

You're playing the Albert Hall again.
It's always memorable. Last time, Gary Moore came up to jam and that was amazing, because the guy is – sorry, was – a phenomenon. Off stage he was just a straight-up guy, so humble and quiet, no bullshit to him, but on stage he just exploded. He played the blues like nobody else. I'm thinking of doing some sort of tribute to him on the tour.

Jason Bonham is your touring drummer.
We reconnected at a charity show in Los Angeles before Christmas. I just thought: "Wow, what a fantastic drummer. I wonder if he wants to come on tour?' He did.

Do you ever worry that your voice will let you down?
I don't worry as such, but I do consciously take care of myself. In the past I drank and smoked and probably took drugs… I can't remember now. But those things have gone because they don't help me sing or make music, though I used to think they did. I have a pretty clean life and I stay fit, because singing is a whole-body thing, not just the voice itself.

What kind of set-list can we expect?
In the UK I lean towards the songs I wrote with Free, but in America it swings the other way – my Bad Company songs. It's hard to please everybody, but I try to include songs from the forty-two years I've been writing. **HY**

The tour begins in Blackpool on April 15.

BORO BOY
★ Rodgers isn't playing in his home town, Middlesbrough. "But I am playing Newcastle," he protests, "which is very close."
★ Joe Perry will join him on stage at the Royal Albert Hall.
★ Joe Elliott's Down 'N' Outz are the support. "Joe's a good singer and a good lad," says Rodgers.

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ROCK CARICATURES
bit.ly/gVqb2Q
Sebastian Kruger's wonderfully detailed caricatures include Steven Tyler (pictured), Lemmy and Keith Richards.

You're so Vain, you probably think this caption's about you.

Vain

Davy Vain previews glam-metal band Vain's UK tour.

Some readers will remember Vain for having supported Skid Row on that band's first UK tour, back in 1989.
Those were great times, man. I'll never forget Lemmy and Steve Harris jamming on *Train Kept A-Rollin'* at the Hammersmith Odeon. Then Robert Plant cruises into our dressing room and tells us that he likes our band. We later came back and sold out the Marquee club as headliners.

And then Island Records got sold, the follow-up album *All Those Strangers* got shelved, and everything turned sour.
Yeah, that's exactly what happened.

Twenty-two years later, how much have you changed from the libido-charged young upstart of back then?
Probably not much [laughs]. I'm still into the whole fantasy of rock'n'roll, but I probably appreciate it a lot more than I did back then, because most people I knew 22 years ago are now washed up.

Outside of Vain, as a producer you've recorded acts as diverse as Death Angel and Christina Aguilera.
There can't be too many who have that as a claim to fame. Though I actually engineered Christina, not produced her.

If you could produce any artist in the world, who would it be?
Probably some completely unknown band, I guess. I love working with bands that have youthful excitement, because I have the experience to help them bring that out.

The last time Vain played the UK was in 2009, for the 20th anniversary of *No Respect*. What can we expect this time?
We won't feature so many songs from *No Respect*. There will be a lot more from our other records. We may even play one song from a new album we're recording. **DL**

The tour ends in Bilston on April 5.

Steven Wilson and Aviv Geffen get some 'fresh' air.

Blackfield

Steven Wilson and Aviv Geffen's project takes to the road again.

Despite growing up on separate sides of the world, Steven Wilson (of Porcupine Tree and No-Man) and Israeli superstar Aviv Geffen pool their corresponding musical influences in Blackfield. Meet Geffen, a man so well known in his homeland that he's sometimes called 'the David Bowie of Israel'.

In terms of sales figures, Steven was the junior partner when Blackfield formed in 2000.
Steven is a down-to-earth guy, I am an epic icon. I'm glam rock-ish, I wear make-up on stage. In Israel I'm known as a rebel. I want to give the crowd more than just a nice show.

What about creatively, though? Steven estimated that you wrote 70 per cent of the last album, *Blackfield II*.
We have agreed that I write best for Blackfield. It's not prog rock, there are no ten-minute solos. We're the band that U2 and Placebo love – from within the industry we are the secret band that everybody likes to listen to.

You and Steven share a love of Pink Floyd, Jeff Buckley, ELO and King Crimson
That's why we called the new album *Welcome To My DNA*. He came from Hemel Hempstead, I'm from Tel Aviv, but we're soul mates. We've both had our hearts broken many times in life.

In the track *Go To Hell* on the new album, what prompted you to use the words 'fuck you' no less than 16 times

"Within the industry we're the secret band that everybody likes."

That song is inspired by my own very hard childhood. I want so much better for my own son. I'm saying to my parents: "Go to Hell."

Hopefully the live show will be a little more upbeat.
Of course it will be. Our concerts are a lot of fun.

Because of your outspoken political beliefs, you have had death threats. Is it dangerous for you to go out on your own?
[Nods] To some I am the Devil. I say that there is no God, and I don't believe that Jerusalem is a holy place. We should withdraw from all settlements and the occupation should stop. Saying such things, you make yourself a target. But I don't care. I'm willing to die on stage singing those Blackfield lyrics, because songs have the power to change the world. **DL**

The tour begins in Leamington Spa on April 6.

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Guitar frets? Pah! They're for amateurs. Watching Ned Evett play is a strangely hypnotic experience.

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Paradise Lost: not as dead (geddit?) serious as they might look.

Paradise Lost

Fans to finally get to hear the band's best-loved album live in full.

Vocalist Nick Holmes checks in as Paradise Lost, Bradford's veteran doomsters with the funereal demeanour, prepare to play all of their biggest-selling album, 1995's *Draconian Times*, at a one-off UK show at the Forum in London.

The new promo photograph of Paradise Lost as part of a horse-drawn cortège is superb.
[Laughing] There's nothing like playing up to your image, eh? We're all older now, so we can do those things and get away with it.

Does the band's Swedish drummer understand the band's dark sense of humour?
Oh yeah, Adrian [Erlandsson of At The Gates and The Haunted] has lived in the UK for ten years at least. He's fits in really well personality-wise as well as musically.

The fans have wanted to hear *Draconian Times* in its entirety for some time, but are the band just as enthusiastic about revisiting their past?
Well, it's just been remastered by Jens Borgren, who produced *Faith Divides Us – Death Unites Us* [Paradise Lost's most recent studio album], and it sounds so good that we became very excited. In a way it almost feels like a new album.

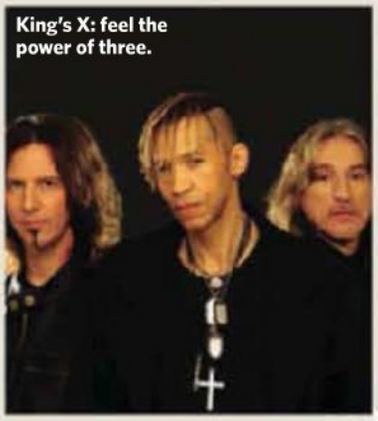
Did the group have any input into to the new, expanded Legacy Edition of *Draconian Times*?
When we heard it was coming out we made it our business to have a say. That's how Jens ended up remixing it. He's really brought out the bottom end of its sound, which you didn't really get to hear on the old CD versions.

"We're all older now, so we can do things and get away with it."

***Draconian Times* is Paradise Lost's biggest-selling album, but is it also their best?**
I don't think so, personally, though I can see why people like it. I won't be able to say which is our best album until we stop making them. There are twelve, so it's difficult, but I would even say that *Host* [an experimental and controversial album from 1999] is in the top three.

You're selling meet-and-greet packages on this tour. Is a grumble session and a packet of pork scratchings included?
[Laughing] I don't know, but that's a great idea. Perhaps we could have those cardboard dispensers on the wall like they have in pubs? I'm definitely going to suggest that to the management. **DL**

Paradise Lost play London Kentish Town Forum on April 1.



King's X: feel the power of three.

MARK WEISS

King's X

US trio return to the country where it started for them.

American trio King's X play four rare UK dates this month. Bassist/vocalist Dug Pinnick explains why this enduring band refuses to go away.

Not too many groups stay together with all of their original members for more than three decades of immense peaks and depressing lows. What's your secret?
The truth is that we're idiots. We must be fools to have stayed together this long. But the bottom line is that we love what we do.

Three years have passed since the band's last album, *XV*, which was the first to dent the US Top 200 since 1996. How is the morale within King's X right now?
We're in a good place, I guess. We know that we can still make good records. I could sit and complain all day long, but at the end of the day we're just thankful that we can still do this for living.

The tour brings you back to the Electric Ballroom, where King's X shot the *Live Love London* DVD in 2009.
We were very nervous that night, but the crowd pulled us through. Listen to the audio commentary and you'll know how we really felt about that show. It's fucking funny, man.

It was the band's first specially shot DVD. Why did you choose to do it in London?
London was the first place to open its arms to King's X. We were playing to four or five people across the US when our first record [*Out Of The Silent Planet*, 1988] came out, and we came to London and the Marquee was sold out. The place felt like home.

When will there be a new studio album?
We'll think about that when we get back from Europe. We know the record company wants one. It needs to be a record that we can be really, really proud of again. **DL**

The King's X dates begin in Newcastle-upon-Tyne on April 8.

Watch!

Rock eye candy coming into view this month

REM

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A selection of films to accompanying each song on the band's new album, directed by notable artists and filmmakers.

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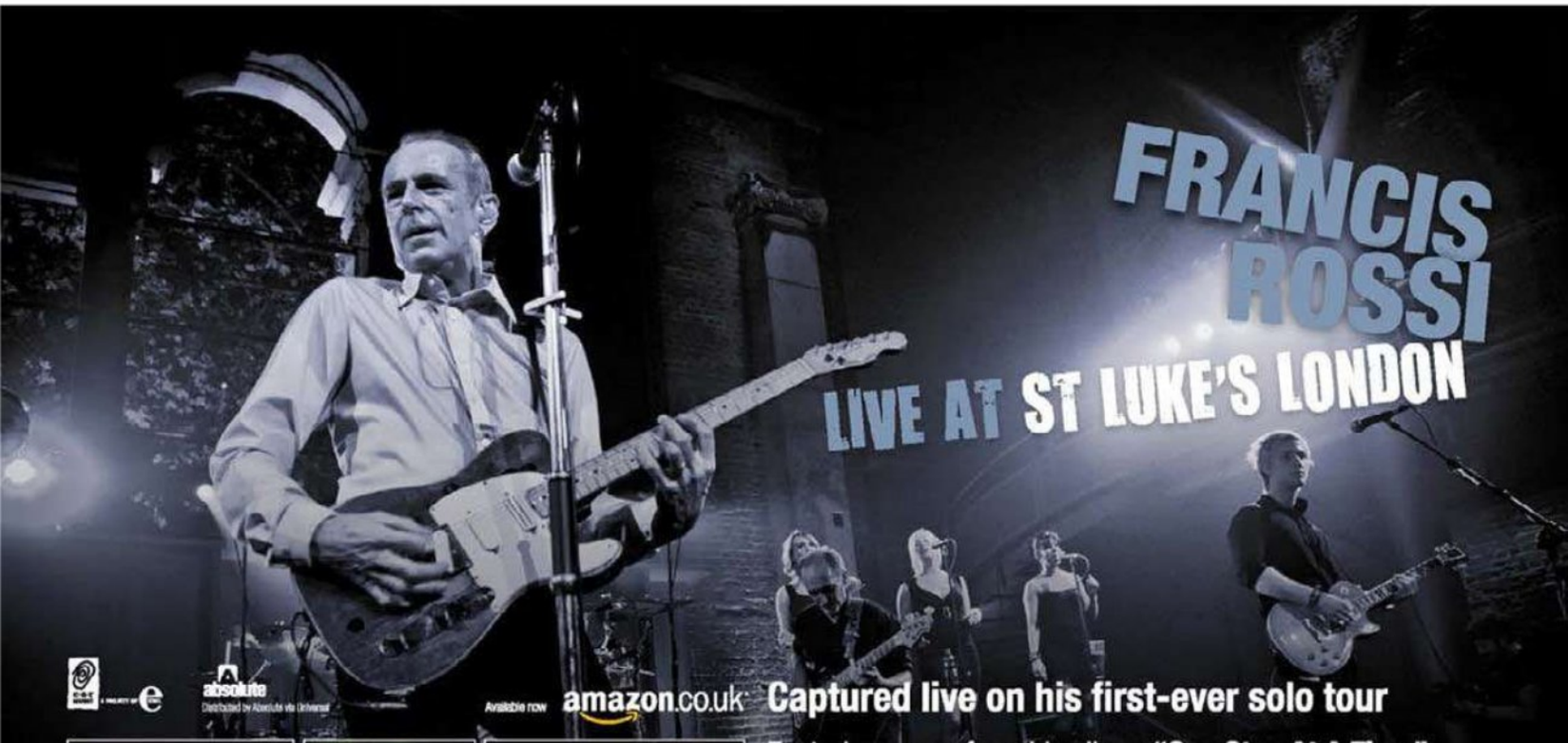

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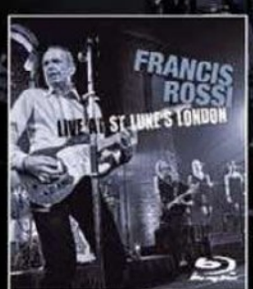

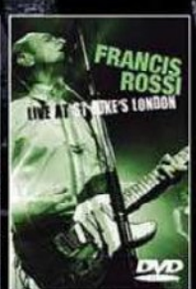

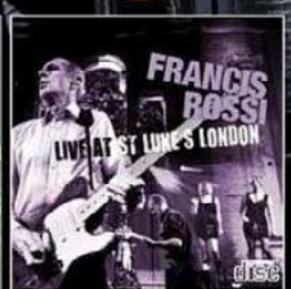

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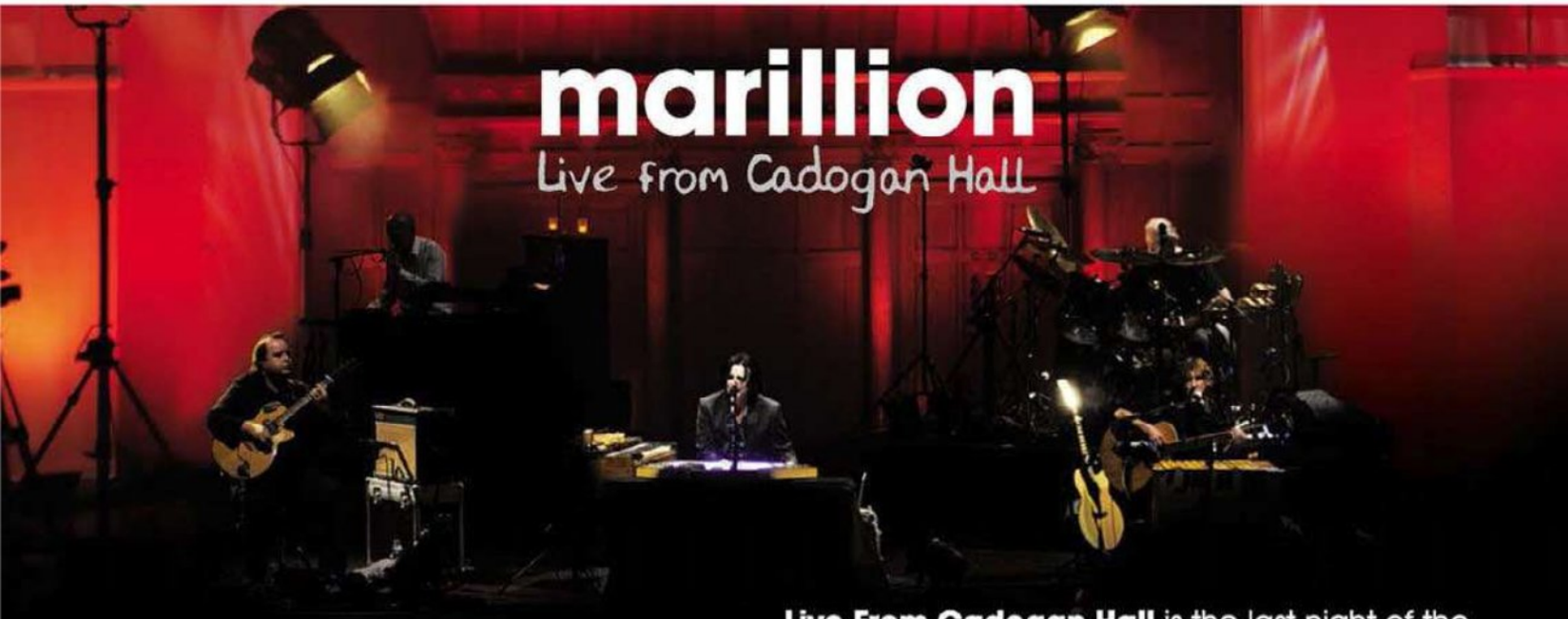

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AIRBOURNE – RESCHEDULED GIG

London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jul 30

JAN AKKERMAN

Southampton	The Brook	Apr 28
Wavendon	The Stables	Apr 29
London	Shepherd's Bush Bush Hall	Apr 30
Cardiff	The Globe	May 1
Stratford-on-Avon	Cox's Yard	May 2
Runcorn	The Brindley	May 3
Birmingham	Glee Club	May 4

GREGG ALLMAN

London	Barbican Centre	Jul 1
Birmingham	Symphony Hall	Jul 2
Edinburgh	Usher Hall	Jul 6

AMPLIFIER

London	Xoyo	Jun 15
Manchester	Soundcontrol	Jun 16

IAN ANDERSON UNPLUGGED

Shrewsbury	Theatre Severn	Sep 3
Gloucester	Guildhall	Sep 4
Northampton	The Deco	Sep 5
Bristol	St George's	Sep 6
Exeter	Corn Exchange	Sep 7
Hayes	Beck Theatre	Sep 9
London	Highbury Union Chapel	Sep 10
Camberley	Camberley Theatre	Sep 11
Buxton	Opera House	Sep 18
Gateshead	The Sage	Sep 19
York	Opera House	Sep 20
Grimsby	Central Hall	Sep 21
Burnley	Mechanics	Sep 22

THE ANIMALS & FRIENDS

Derby	Flowerpot	Apr 22

BIG AUDIO DYNAMITE

Glasgow	ABC	Mar 30
Newcastle	Academy	Mar 31
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Apr 2/3
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 5
Leeds	Academy	Apr 7
Manchester	Academy	Apr 8
Bristol	Academy	Apr 9

BIG COUNTRY

Portsmouth	Pyramid Centre	Apr 8
Manchester	Academy 2	Apr 9
Oxford	Academy	Apr 10
Cambridge	Junction	Apr 11
Norwich	Waterfront	Apr 12
Bristol	Academy	Apr 14
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Apr 15
Leeds	Academy	Apr 16
Sheffield	Academy 2	Apr 17
Dublin	The Academy	Apr 19
Belfast	Spring & Airbrake	Apr 20
Edinburgh	Picturehouse	Apr 21
Middlesbrough	Empire	Apr 22
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 23

BLACK COUNTRY COMMUNION

High Voltage Festival	London Victoria Park	Jul 24
Leeds	Academy	Jul 26
Newcastle	Academy	Jul 27
Glasgow	Academy	Jul 29
Manchester	Academy	Jul 30

Recommended

THE BLACK CROWES

Manchester	Academy	Jul 11
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jul 12/13

BLACKFIELD

Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	Apr 6
Manchester	Academy 2	Apr 7
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Apr 8

BLINK 182, YOU ME AT SIX, FOUR YEAR STRONG

Birmingham	NIA Arena	Jul 1
Liverpool	Echo Arena	Jul 4
Sheffield	Motorpoint Arena	Jul 7
Manchester	MEN Arena	Jul 8
Newcastle	Arena	Jul 12
Nottingham	Arena	Jul 13
Birmingham	LG Arena	Jul 15
Cardiff	CIA	Jul 16
London	O2 Arena	Jul 18/19

THE BLOCKHEADS, DEBORAH BONHAM, MORE

Rock And Blues Weekend	Clitheroe	Apr 22/23

BLOOD CEREMONY, WOLF PEOPLE

London	Manette Street Borderline	Apr 21

JOE BONAMASSA

Blackpool	Opera House	Oct 15
Nottingham	Capital FM Arena	Oct 16
Cardiff	CIA	Oct 18
Plymouth	Pavilions	Oct 19
London	Hammersmith Apollo	Oct 21/22

BON JOVI

Edinburgh	Murrayfield Stadium	Jun 22
Manchester	Old Trafford Cricket Ground	Jun 24
Hard Rock Calling	London Hyde Park	Jun 25
Bristol	Ashton Gate	Jun 27

BRING ME THE HORIZON, ARCHITECTS, MORE

Manchester	Apollo	Apr 22
Newcastle	Academy	Apr 23
Glasgow	Academy	Apr 24
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 26
Southampton	Guildhall	Apr 27
Birmingham	Academy	Apr 28
Bristol	Academy	Apr 29
London	Brixton Academy	Apr 30

OLI BROWN

Norwich	Maddermarket Theatre	Apr 1
St Helens	The Citadel	Apr 9
Scarborough	Blues Club	Apr 12
Charlton Kings	Vonnies	Apr 13
Bilston	Robin 2	Apr 14
Bristol	The Tunnels	Apr 15
Bury St Edmunds	The Apex	Apr 16
Exeter	The Timepiece	Apr 20
York	The Duchess	Apr 22
Hull	The Piper Club	Apr 23
Wavendon	The Stables	Apr 26
Glasgow	The Ferry	Apr 28
Kinross	The Green Hotel	Apr 29
Thornhill Blues Festival	Dumfries	Apr 30
Guisborough	R&B Club	May 1
Darlington	Arts Centre	May 20
Edinburgh	The Caves	May 21
Darvel	Music Festival	May 22
Twickenham	Live Room	Jun 22

GARY BROOKER, WALTER TROUT, MORE

Blues On The Farm Festival	Chichester	June 17-19

JACK BRUCE, MICK TAYLOR, DR FEELGOOD, MORE

Yorkshire Blues Festival	Rotherham	Apr 30-May 2

BULLET, ENFORCER

London	Camden Underworld	Apr 9

CHEAP TRICK

Download Festival	Castle Donington	Jun 11
Bristol	Academy	Jun 12
Dublin	Olympia Theatre	Jun 15

PAUL RODGERS

With still one of the best voices in rock, and a barrelful of classic songs, classic rock doesn't come more classic.

Blackpool	Opera House	Apr 15	Nottingham	Royal Concert Hall	Apr 22
Sheffield	City Hall	Apr 16	Bournemouth	BIC	Apr 24
Newcastle	City Hall	Apr 18	Southend-on-Sea	Cliffs Pavilion	Apr 25
Glasgow	Clyde Auditorium	Apr 9	London	Royal Albert Hall	Apr 27
Manchester	Apollo	Apr 21	Birmingham	NIA	Apr 28

CHILDREN OF BODOM, AMON AMARTH

Norwich	UEA	Apr 1
Manchester	Academy	Apr 2
Glasgow	Vicar Street	Apr 3
Dublin	Vicar Street	Apr 5
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 7
Birmingham	Academy	Apr 8
London	Kentish Town Forum	Apr 9

CINDERELLA

London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jun 25

ERIC CLAPTON

Dublin	O2 Arena	May 9
Belfast	Odyssey Arena	May 10
Glasgow	SECC	May 12
Cardiff	CIA	May 14/15
London	Royal Albert Hall	May 17/18, 23/24

ERIC CLAPTON & STEVE WINWOOD

London	Wembley Arena	May 20/21
London	Royal Albert Hall	May 26/27, 29/30

COLDPLAY, MORE

Glastonbury Festival	Somerset	Jun 22-26

HUGH CORNWELL

Portsmouth	South Parade Pier	Apr 6
Gateshead	The Sage	Apr 7
Manchester	Academy	Apr 8
Glasgow	Academy	Apr 9
Sheffield	Academy	Apr 10
Clitheroe	The Grand	Apr 12
Leamington	Assembly	Apr 13
Bath	Komedia	Apr 14
Wolverhampton	Slade Rooms	Apr 15
London	Islington Academy	Apr 16
Brighton	Komedia	Apr 17

CORROSION OF CONFORMITY

Bristol	Bierkeller	Apr 25
London	Camden Underworld	Apr 26
Manchester	Moho Live	Apr 28
Sheffield	Corporation	Apr 29

THE CURE, BRIAN WILSON, MORE

Bestival	Isle of Wight	Sep 8-11

CURVED AIR, THE GROUNDHOGS, MORE

Sonic Rock Solstice Festival	Builth Wells	Jun 17-19

DEF LEPPARD

Belfast	Odyssey Arena	Jun 7
Dublin	O2 Arena	Jun 8
Download Festival	Donington Park	Jun 10

DEF LEPPARD, AVENGED SEVENFOLD, THIN LIZZY, MORE

Download Festival	Donington Park	Jun 10-12

DEICIDE

London	London Camden Underworld	Jun 25
Plymouth	The White Rabbit	Jun 26
Liverpool	The Masque	Jun 27
Nottingham	Rescue Rooms	Jun 28

DELAIN, SERENITY

Manchester	Academy 3	Apr 29
London	Islington Academy	Apr 30
Glasgow	Cathouse	May 1
Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	May 2

DESCENDENTS

London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Apr 25/26

DONOVAN

London	Royal Albert Hall	Jun 3

DRIVE-BY TRUCKERS

Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	May 4
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	May 5
Bristol	Anson Rooms	May 6
Dublin	Button Factory	May 7
Edinburgh	Queen's Hall	May 9
Liverpool	Academy	May 10
Leeds	Metropolitan University	May 11

EAGLES, BRYAN FERRY, 10CC, MORE

Hop Farm Festival	Paddock Wood	Jul 1/2

EARTH, SABBATH ASSEMBLY

Leeds	Josephs Well	Apr 1
Manchester	Islington Mill	Apr 2
Birmingham	Hare And Hounds	Apr 3
Newcastle	The Cluny	Apr 4
Glasgow	Stereo	Apr 5
Dublin	Button Factory	Apr 8
Cork	Cyprus Avenue	Apr 9
Cardiff	Millennium Music Hall 2	Apr 11
London	King's Cross Scala	Apr 12

THE ENID

Cardiff	The Globe	Mar 31
Morecambe	The Platform	May 13

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LIVE!

Workington	Carnegie Theatre	May 14
Wavendon	The Stables	Jun 11
Peterborough	Key Theatre	Jun 16
High Voltage Festival	London	Jul 24

ENSLAVED

London	Camden Underworld	Apr 22

EYEHATEGOD, CHURCH OF MISERY, MORE

Bristol	Fleece & Firkin	Jun 25

FAIRPORT CONVENTION, HAYSEED DIXIE, MORE

Cropedry Festival	Oxfordshire	Aug 11-13

MARIANNE FAITHFULL

London	Barbican Centre	May 24

NEIL FINN

Brighton	Komedia	Apr 19
London	King's Cross Scala	Apr 20

FISH, STEVE HARLEY, JOHN PARR, MORE

Acoustic Festival	Uttoxeter	May 20-22

THE FLAMING LIPS

London	Alexandra Palace	Jul 1

FOO FIGHTERS

Isle of Wight	Festival	Jun 11
Milton Keynes	Bowl	Jul 2/3

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND, RISE TO REMAIN

Durham	Live Lounge	Mar 30
Poole	Chords	Apr 1
Saltash	Livewire	Apr 2
High Wycombe	Academy Of Music & Art	Apr 3
Wrexham	Central Station	Apr 4

GRIM REAPER, SARACEN, ELIXIR, PAGAN ALTAR, AGINCOURT

London	Camden Underworld	Apr 2

GLASSJAW

London	Kentish Town Forum	Mar 30

GRINDERMAN

Dublin	Vicar St	Jun 18
Cork	The Marquee	Jun 20
London	Alexandra Palace	Jul 24

THE GROUNDHOGS

Bideford	Palladium Club	Apr 8
Haverhill	Arts Centre	Apr 16
Bristol	Area 81	Apr 30
Glasgow	The Ferry	May 27
Barnard Castle Festival	Durham	May 29

GUN, MARSEILLE, FURY UK AND MORE

Manchester	SOS Festival	Jul 16/17

HARDCORE SUPERSTAR, 69 EYES, CRASHDIET

Bristol	Academy	Mar 30
Folkestone	Quarterhouse	Mar 31
London	Camden Electric Ballroom	Apr 1

ROGER HODGSON

London	Royal Albert Hall	May 25
Gateshead	The Sage	May 27
Glasgow	Pavilion	May 28
Liverpool	Philharmonic Hall	May 29

HOUSTON, SERPENTINE, MISS BEHAVIOUR

Grimsby	Yardbirds	Apr 29
Nottingham	The Rig	Apr 30
Glasgow	ABC2	May 1
Wigan	Club WN1	May 2
Bristol	Academy	May 3
London	Islington Academy	May 4

GLENN HUGHES

Northampton	Roadmender	May 14
Cambridge	Junction	May 15

DOWNLOAD

Def Leppard, System Of A Down (pictured) and Linkin Park head up a devilishly delicious Download at Donington.

Download Festival	Castle Donington	Jun 10-12

Birkenhead	Pacific Road Arts Centre	May 17
Buxton	Opera House	May 18
Edinburgh	Picture House	May 20
Aberdeen	Lemon Tree	May 21
York	Opera House	May 23
Norwich	Waterfront	May 24
Brighton	Komedia	May 26
Poole	Mr Kyp's	May 27
Birmingham	Town Hall	May 29

IGGY & THE STOOGES

Evolution Festival	Newcastle	May 28/29

Recommended

IRON MAIDEN

Glasgow	SECC	Jul 20
Aberdeen	AECC	Jul 21
Newcastle	Metro Radio Arena	Jul 23
Sheffield	Motorpoint Arena	Jul 24
Nottingham	Trent FM Arena	Jul 27
Manchester	MEN Arena	Jul 28
Birmingham	NIA	Jul 31
Cardiff	CIA Arena	Aug 1
Belfast	Odyssey Arena	Aug 3
London	O2 Arena	Aug 5/6

IT BITES

Manchester	Academy	May 14
Birmingham	Z Rock Festival	May 15
Kingston	The Peel	May 16
Newcastle	The Cluny	May 18
Glasgow	The Arches	May 19
Whitehaven	Rosehill Theatre	May 20

IT BITES, LEGION, MORE

Z Rock 2011	Birmingham Asylum	May 15

JETTBLACK, HEAVEN'S BASEMENT

Leicester	Sub 91	May 5
York	The Duchess	May 6
Grimsby	Yardbirds Club	May 7
Manchester	Moho Live	May 8
Nottingham	Rock City	May 10
Newcastle	Trillians Rock Bar	May 11
Wolverhampton	Slade Rooms	May 12
Sheffield	Corporation	May 13
Wrexham	Central Station	May 15
Southampton	Talking Heads	May 19
Exeter	The Cavern	May 22

ELTON JOHN

Cardiff	CIA	Jun 8/9
Glasgow	SECC	Jun 10
Shrewsbury	Greenhous Meadow	Jun 12
Douglas (IoM)	Valhalla Tent	Jun 16
Northamptonshire	Country Cricket Ground	Jun 25
Hove	Sussex Cricket Ground	Jun 26

THE JIM JONES REVUE

Newcastle	Academy 2	Mar 30
Leeds	Cockpit	Mar 31
Sheffield	Plug	Apr 2
Birmingham	Academy 2	Apr 3
Bristol	Thekla	Apr 12
Brighton	Concorde 2	Apr 13
London	Camden Koko	Apr 14
Norwich	Waterfront	Apr 16
Manchester	Club Academy	Apr 17

JOURNEY, FOREIGNER, STYX

London	Wembley Arena	Jun 4
Birmingham	NIA	Jun 5
Newcastle	Metro Radio Arena	Jun 7
Manchester	Evening News Arena	Jun 8
Glasgow	SECC	Jun 9

JUDAS PRIEST, DREAM THEATER, BLACK COUNTRY COMMUNION, THUNDER, MORE

London	High Voltage Festival	Jul 23/24

JUDAS PRIEST, QUEENSRŸCHE

Newport	Centre	Jul 15
Manchester	Apollo	Jul 16
Doncaster	The Dome	Jul 17
Glasgow	SECC	Jul 19
Newcastle	Metro Arena	Jul 20
Wolverhampton	Civic Hall	Jul 21
High Voltage Festival	London	Jul 23
Bournemouth	BIC	Jul 24

KAMELOT

London	Camden Koko	Apr 28

KATATONIA

London	Camden Koko	May 6

KILLING JOKE

Nottingham	Rock City	Mar 30
Manchester	Academy 2	Mar 31
London	Royal Festival Hall	Apr 1

KING'S X

Newcastle	Academy	Apr 8
Manchester	Academy	Apr 9
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Apr 10
London	Camden Electric Ballroom	Apr 12

KYUSS LIVES

Nottingham	Rock City	Mar 31
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Apr 1
London	Kentish Town Forum	Apr 2/3
Glasgow	ABC	Apr 4
Manchester	Academy	Apr 5
Bristol	Academy	Apr 6

THE LEVELLERS

Leicester	Academy	May 12
Sheffield	Academy	May 13
London	Brixton Academy	May 14

NILS LOFGREN ACOUSTIC DUO

Southampton	The Brook	Jun 1
London	Cadogan Hall	Jun 2
Bradford	St George's Hall	Jun 3
Cardiff	St David's Hall	Jun 4
High Wycombe	Swan Theatre	Jun 5
Bilston	Robin 2	Jun 7
St Albans	Arena	Jun 8
Sheffield	City Hall	Jun 9
York	Barbican	Jun 10
Chatham	Central Theatre	Jun 11
Southend-on-Sea	Cliffs Pavilion	Jun 12
Liverpool	Philharmonic Hall	Jun 13
Northampton	Derngate Theatre	Jun 15
Hastings	White Rock Pavilion	Jun 16
Shrewsbury	Theatre Severn	Jun 17
London	Cadogan Hall	Jun 18

MAGNUM

Buckley	Tivoli	Apr 12
Glasgow	The Garage	Apr 13
Newcastle	Academy	Apr 14
Liverpool	Stanley Theatre	Apr 16
Leamington	Assembly Spa Hall	Apr 17
Norwich	Waterfront	Apr 19
Sheffield	Corporation	Apr 20
Holmfirth	Picturedome	Apr 22
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Apr 23
Southampton	The Brook	Apr 24
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 27
Manchester	Academy 2	Apr 28
Treorchi	Park & Dare	Apr 29
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Apr 30
Bristol	Academy	May 1

RICHARD MARX, JOHN PARR

Glasgow	Royal Concert Hall	May 25
Birmingham	Symphony Hall	May 26
Liverpool	Philharmonic Hall	May 28
Bristol	Colston Hall	May 29
London	Royal Albert Hall	May 31

J MASCIS

Dublin	Whelan's	Apr 13
London	Rivington Street Cargo	Apr 14

METALLICA, MEGADETH, ANTHRAX, SLAYER, MORE

Sonisphere Festival	Knebworth	Jul 8-10

MICHAEL MONROE

Brighton	Concorde 2	Apr 4
Bristol	Academy 2	Apr 5
Exeter	Phoenix	Apr 6
Portsmouth	Wedgewood Rooms	Apr 7
London	Islington Academy	Apr 8
Leeds	TJ's	Apr 9
Norwich	Waterfront	Apr 11
Sheffield	Corporation	Apr 12
Newcastle	Academy 2	Apr 13
Manchester	Academy 3	Apr 14
Glasgow	Garage	Apr 15
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 16
Birmingham	Institute	Apr 17

NEAL MORSE

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London	Camden Koko	Jun 16
Manchester	Academy 2	Jun 17
Glasgow	The Arches	Jun 18
London	High Voltage Festival	Jul 23

MOTÖRHEAD, MORBID ANGEL, W.A.S.P., MORE

Bloodstock Festival	Derbyshire	Aug 12-14

MY DYING BRIDE

London	Camden Electric Ballroom	May 18
Manchester	Academy 2	May 19
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	May 20

PARADISE LOST

London	Kentish Town Forum	Apr 1

PENDRAGON

Kingston	The Peel	May 28/29
Bilston	Robin 2	May 30
Birkenhead	Pacific Road Arts Centre	Jun 2
Glasgow	The Ferry	Jun 3
Wath-upon-Dearne	Montgomery Hall	Jun 4

PIG IRÖN

ROB MONK

Croydon	The Scream	May 12
Bristol	Area 81	May 21

PRIMUS

Manchester	Academy	Jul 12
London	Brixton Academy	Jul 13

Recommended

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE

London	Chalk Farm Roundhouse	May 17
Dublin	Olympia	May 19
Glasgow	Academy	May 20
Manchester	Academy	May 21

QUIREBOYS, TYKETTO, RECKLESS LOVE, MORE

Hard Rock Hell Festival	Prestatyn	Dec 2-4

RIVERSIDE

London	King's Cross Scala	May 16

PAUL RODGERS, JOE ELLOTT'S DOWN 'N' OUTZ

Blackpool	Opera House	Apr 15
Sheffield	City Hall	Apr 16
Newcastle	City Hall	Apr 18
Glasgow	Clyde Auditorium	Apr 9
Manchester	Apollo	Apr 21
Nottingham	Royal Concert Hall	Apr 22
Bournemouth	BIC	Apr 24
Southend-on-Sea	Cliffs Pavilion	Apr 25
London	Royal Albert Hall	Apr 27
Birmingham	NIA	Apr 28

RUSH

Dublin	O2 Arena	May 12
Glasgow	SECC	May 14
Sheffield	Motorpoint Arena	May 16
Manchester	MEN Arena	May 19
Newcastle	Metro Radio Arena	May 21
Birmingham	LG Arena	May 22
London	O2 Arena	May 25

SAXON, WOLFSBANE, FURY UK

Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	Apr 9
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 10
Whitehaven	Civic Hall	Apr 11
Manchester	Academy 2	Apr 13
Glasgow	ABC	Apr 14
Newcastle	Academy	Apr 15
Leeds	Academy	Apr 17
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Apr 18
Bristol	Academy	Apr 19
Falmouth	Princess Pavilion	Apr 21
Bournemouth	Academy	Apr 22
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Apr 23

MATT SCHOFIELD

London	Manette Street Borderline	May 3
Bilston	Robin 2	May 4
Manchester	Band On The Wall	May 5
York	Fibbers	May 6
Newcastle	The Cluny	May 7
Cardiff	Glee Club	May 8
Oxford	The Bullingdon	May 9

SKINDRED

Brighton	Concorde 2	Apr 26
Portsmouth	Pyramid Centre	Apr 27
Norwich	Waterfront	Apr 29
Wolverhampton	Wulfrun Hall	Apr 29
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 30
Exeter	Lemon Grove	May 2
Cardiff	University Solus	May 3
Poole	Chords	May 4
Liverpool	Academy	May 5
Sheffield	Corporation	May 6
London	Kentish Town Forum	May 7

JOANNE SHAW TAYLOR

Bilston	Robin 2	May 17
Buxton	Opera House	May 18
Edinburgh	The Caves	May 20
Glasgow	Academy	May 21
Aberdeen	The LemonTree	May 22
York	Opera House	May 23
Newcastle	Academy	May 25
Nottingham	Rescue Rooms	May 26
Sheffield	Academy	May 27
Manchester	Academy	May 28
Bristol	The Tunnels	May 29
London	Islington Academy	May 31

SOCIAL DISTORTION

London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	Jul 7

STAMPEDE, PRAYING MANTIS

Kingston	The Peel	May 14

STATUS QUO

Thetford Forest	Suffolk	Jun 9

THREE BONZOS AND A PIANO

Norwich	Maddermarket Theatre	Apr 2
Tavistock	The Wharf	May 13
Penzance	The Ritz	May 14
Bristol	The Thekla	May 15
Newbury	Artlington Arts Centre	May 20
Hailsham	The Pavilion	May 21
Tring	Court Theatre	Jun 10

HIGH VOLTAGE

CLASSIC ROCK RECOMMENDS

Judas Priest, Dream Theater, Black Country Communion (pictured) and more, at the rockingest festival of the year.

High Voltage Festival	London Victoria Park	Jul 23-24

Bury St Edmunds	The Apex	Jun 11
Salford	The Lowry	Jun 26
Newcastle	New Vic Theatre	Jun 27

TOTO

London	Hammersmith Apollo	Jun 26

MARTIN TURNER'S WISHBONE ASH

Worcester	Huntingdon Halls	Apr 9
Yorkshire Blues Festival	Rotherham	Apr 30
Falmouth	Pavilion	May 7
Tavistock	The Wharf	May 8
Barnsley	Birdwell Venue	May 12
Bury	The Met	May 15
Worthing	Grand Victorian Hotel	May 20
Uttoxeter	Acoustic Festival	May 21
Exeter	Phoenix Arts Centre	May 27
London	Camden Jazz Café	May 31

TYKETTO

London	Camden Underworld	Nov 30
Sheffield	Corporation	Dec 1
Hard Rock Hell Festival	Prestatyn	Dec 3

UNDERØATH

Bristol	Bierkeller	Apr 12
Sheffield	Leadmill	Apr 13
Birmingham	Institute	Apr 14
Manchester	Academy 2	Apr 15
Glasgow	Garage	Apr 16
Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 17
London	Camden Koko	Apr 19
Brighton	Concorde 2	Apr 20
Bournemouth	Old Fire Station	Apr 21

THE UNDERTONES

Glasgow	King Tut's Wah Wah Hut	Mar 31
Birmingham	Academy 2	Apr 1
York	Fibbers	Apr 2
Nottingham	Rescue Rooms	Apr 7
Southampton	The Brook	Apr 8
Plymouth	White Rabbit	Apr 9
Bristol	Thekla	Apr 10
Liverpool	Academy 2	Apr 14
Manchester	Academy 3	Apr 15
London	Highbury Garage	Apr 16

VAIN

Nottingham	Rock City	Apr 1
Ballymena	Diamond Rock Bar	Apr 2
Newcastle	Trillians	Apr 2
London	Camden Purple Turtle	Apr 4
Bilston	Robin 2	Apr 5

VICIOUS RUMORS

London	Camden Underworld	May 24

VIRGINMARYS

London	Camden Barfly	Mar 30
Newcastle	The Cluny	Mar 31
Aberdeen	The Tunnels	Apr 1
Glasgow	ABC2	Apr 2
Nottingham	Rock City Basement	Apr 3
Bristol	The Tunnels	Apr 5
Sheffield	The Corporation	Apr 6
York	Fibbers	Apr 7
Manchester	Deaf Institute	Apr 8

JOHN WAITE, JON AMOR

Newcastle	The Cluny	Apr 25
Pontefract	Rogerthorpe Manor Hotel	Apr 26
Lancaster	Grand Theatre	Apr 27
London	Manette Street Borderline	May 8

ROGER WATERS

London	O2 Arena	May 11/12, 14/15, 17/18
Manchester	MEN Arena	May 20/21, Jun 28
Dublin	O2 Arena	May 23/24
Birmingham	NIA	Jun 27

WHITESNAKE, THE UNION

Newcastle	City Hall	Jun 13
Glasgow	Clyde Auditorium	Jun 14
Wolverhampton	Civic Hall	Jun 16
Manchester	Apollo	Jun 17
Bournemouth	BIC	Jun 19
London	Hammersmith Apollo	Jun 20

BRIAN WILSON

Manchester	Bridgwater Hall	Sep 13
Birmingham	Symphony hall	Sep 14
London	Royal Festival Hall	Sep 16-18

WISHBONE ASH

Southampton	The Brook	Mar 30
London	Islington Academy	Mar 31
Bourne	Corn Exchange	Apr 1
Haddenham	The Arkenstall Centre	Apr 2
Oxford	Kiddlington FC	Apr 3
Derby	Flowerpot	Apr 6
Kendall	Brewery Arts Centre	Apr 7
Birkenhead	Pacific Road Arts Centre	Apr 8
Glasgow	The Ferry	Apr 9
Wavendon	The Stables	Apr 11

WITHIN TEMPTATION

Birmingham	Academy	Nov 8
Manchester	Academy	Nov 9
Glasgow	Barrowland	Nov 10
London	Brixton Academy	Nov 11

WOLFSBANE

London	Manette Street Borderline	Apr 9

ZODIAC MINDWARP & THE LOVE REACTION

York	The Duchess	May 16
Newcastle	Academy 2	May 17
Glasgow	Academy 2	May 18
Liverpool	Academy 2	May 19
Sheffield	Academy 2	May 20
Birmingham	Academy 3	May 22
Bristol	Academy	May 23
Oxford	Academy 2	May 24
London	Islington Academy	May 25

ROB ZOMBIE

Download Festival	Castle Donington	Jun 12
Dublin	Olympia	Jun 28
Belfast	Ulster Hall	Jun 29

THE ZOMBIES

Frome	Cheese & Grain	May 14
Bilston	Robin 2	May 19
Leamington Spa	Assembly Hall	May 21
Market Harborough	Leisure Centre	May 21
Wavendon	The Stables	May 24
Cardiff	The Globe	May 25
Southampton	The Brook	May 26
London	Shepherd's Bush Empire	May 27

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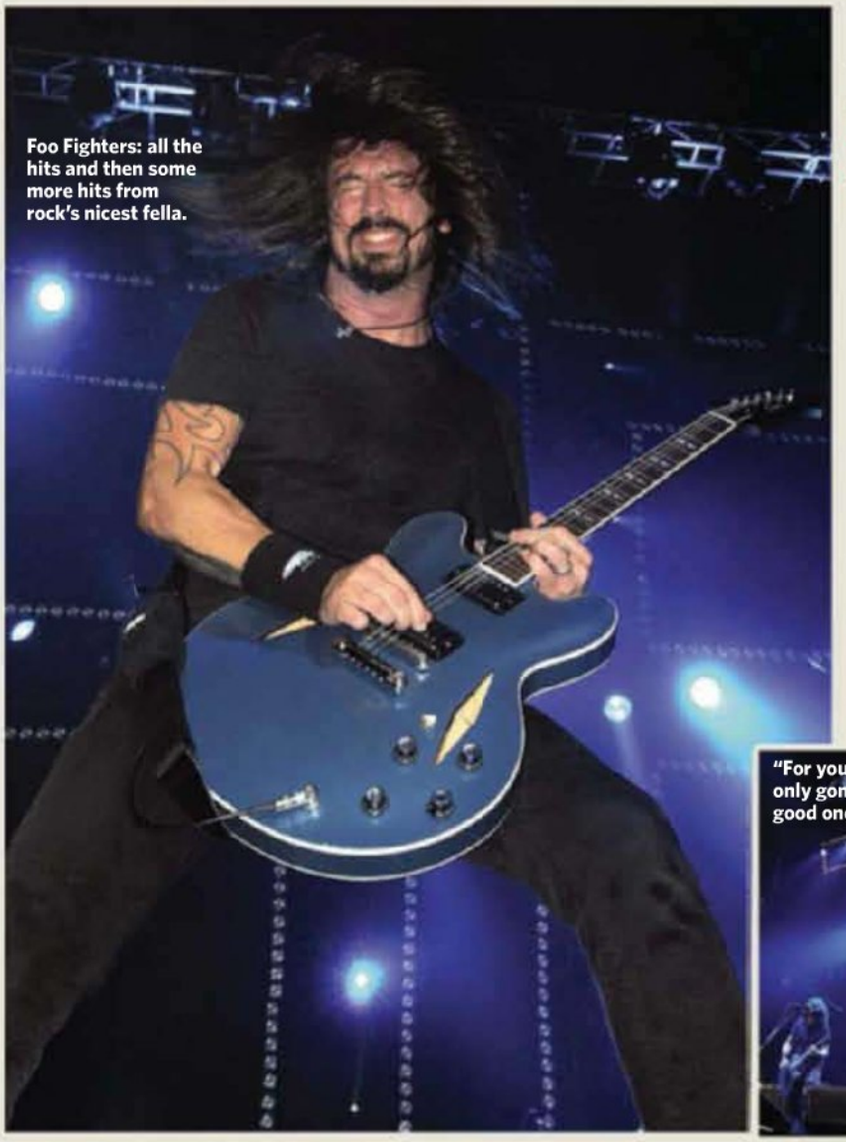

Foo Fighters: all the hits and then some more hits from rock's nicest fella.

Foo Fighters

London Wembley Arena

Good ol' boy delivers.

★ So why *is* Dave Grohl so unanimously considered 'the nicest guy in rock'? The comedy video personas? The aw-shucks attitude to his Nirvana legacy? The modesty to murder drumkits for fellow gargantuan talents such as Josh Homme and, um, Jack Black? All elements, sure, but the over-riding reason is that, like all the best seducers, he makes every crowd seem special. Two nights ago, collecting his award for Godlike Genius from NME, he broke with the awards' five song live set tradition and played two full hours, including a solo in *My Hero* played from atop Table 19. Tomorrow he treats a few hundred fortunates in Camden Dingwalls to a secret gig under the moniker White Limo. And tonight he makes Wembley feel like the belle of this ballsy rock ball. "For you guys," he grins toothily, "I'm only gonna play the good ones."

He's true to his word. From new album *Wasting Light* is skimmed only the cream – the scattergun *Bridge Burning*, the Mötley Crüe-esque *White Limo*, old school Pixies single *Rope* and *These Days*, a song that gives Nickelback a run for their money in the hairy-backed FM radio rock steeplechase. Otherwise, the Foos deliver a breathless 180 minutes of solid-minted hits, taking in the superhuman pummeling of *My Hero*, the poisoned snarl of *Stacked Actors* and some of the finest pop metal since Europe went south – *Breakout*, *Learn To Fly*, *Monkey Wrench*, *Times Like These*. After threatening to rock forever, the Foos ultimately wrap up with the tracks that epitomise them – *This Is A Call* covers the rampant melodicism and *Best Of You* hammers home the heartfelt heroics. They're tunes that merge hair-rock flamboyance with post-grunge credibility, and make Foo Fighters this generation's most classically formed and widely adored rock band. Finally, a nice guy finished first.

Mark Beaumont

"For you guys, I'm only gonna play the good ones."

LIVE PIX

Richard Thompson

London Royal Festival Hall

British folk giant rocks it up again.

★ Many different Richard Thompsons came out to play over the two weeks he curated the Meltdown festival on London's South Bank last summer, but there was one conspicuous absentee. Better late than never, the amped-up axe-wielding guitar hero finally puts in an appearance on his first tour with a full band for the best part of a decade. Tonight Thompson is in the mood to rock the house on turbo-charged cuts from his recent *Dream Attic* album, his deft fretwork embellishing the rockabilly workout *Haul Me Up* and the 60s-set blues chug of *Demons In Her Dancing Shoes*.

The group know their place, providing understated back-up and teasing out spaces for Thompson to fill with extended solos. His style contains echoes of Clapton, albeit with suitably folk-like flourishes, while the reverbed jangle of *Wall Of Death* gives us an idea how The Byrds might have sounded had they taken the path of a surly garage band. Not one for devotees of Thompson's more usual acoustic introspection, then, but watching his lightning fingers race up and down the neck on the full-throttle jig of *Tear-Stained Letter* is a sight to behold.

Terry Staunton

The Birds/ Lewis Floyd Henry

London 100 Club

Hirsute mods meet man with pram.

★ If Jimi Hendrix were reincarnated, would he come back as a busker in Brick Lane? Followers of Lewis Floyd Henry seem to think so. Armed with an electric guitar and foot-operated mini drum, he combines metal, rap and Prokofiev in a distorted thunder cloud of voodoo sound. Tonight his version of The Creation's *Makin' Time* is mind-blowing. Look out for the one-man band and his 30w pram, coming to a street near you.

Dubbed 'Mods with long hair' by diehard fan Lemmy, The Birds were one of many ill-fated 60s R&B outfits with a huge live reputation but rotten luck. Were it not for the fact their guitarist was a fledgling Ronnie Wood, they would have been forgotten. There's one original member now, frontman Ali MacKenzie, backed by a Small Faces tribute band called the Small Fakers. MacKenzie is an old rascal, with a glint in his eye when he sings "all them fine chicks will soon be gone" in *Leavin' Here*. Motown covers are interspersed with The Who's *Run Run Run* and Birds' originals, including Wood compositions *You're On My Mind* and *How Can It Be*.

Claudia Elliott

Julian Cope

Manchester Band On The Wall

A true national treasure plunders a bulging back catalogue.

★ "I've chosen a different path," booms a beaming Julian Cope as he takes to the stage for a sold-out crowd. "I might look like a celebrity... but I'm not."

There was a time in the early 80s when his band The Teardrop Explodes could easily have followed the corporate route taken by U2. But The Teardrops were far too wild and Cope too interesting for anything as conventional as a career plan. "Life is an on-going experiment," he says. "Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't," but either way, to all in attendance Cope's creative output is worth that of a thousand Bonos.

Cope may look like the 'shroomed out offspring of Odin, but he's sharper than ever and the proof of his underrated songwriting talent is evident in a set of songs that leap from the hypnotic drone-pop of The Teardrops' *Like Leila Khaled Said*, through the jaunty solo hit of *Sunspots* to the mass singalong to *Out Of My Mind On Dope And Speed*. It's as an iconoclastic polymath jester and master of the self-deprecatory anecdote that Cope excels. He knows rock is about absurdity, escapism, protest, internal exploration and *fun* – and that's all in abundance tonight.

Ben Myers

Europe

London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire

Unfinished Swedes.

★ Given some of the showbiz twaddle that fills arenas these days, that Europe are limited to the connoisseur's choice of rejuvenated 80s hard rock bands becomes more inexplicable by the year. Three strong albums into their second crack at the whip, the Swedes have done more than enough to eradicate prejudices based on *that* song and Joey Tempest's once notorious barnet, and tonight's sold-out show suggests that more and more people are wising up and giving credit where it's due.

Helpfully, their astonishing prowess as a live band shows no signs of diminishing. Tonight is being shot for a DVD, and as Tempest leads his bandmates through a dazzling career-spanning set that takes in everything from the title track of 2009's *Last Look At Eden* to the thunderous *Scream Of Anger* (from 1984's *Wings Of Tomorrow*), their confidence and class shines through persistently. Tempest frequently looks overwhelmed by the adulation his band is getting. And yes, the evening comes to a bombastic conclusion with *The Final Countdown* and the whole building bounces joyfully along, united in the belief that it can't be long before the best-kept secret in rock is a secret no more.

Dom Lawson

Europe: 'Astonishing prowess as a live band.'

GETTY IMAGES

'Europe's confidence and class shines through persistently.'

Joey Tempest: frequently looked overwhelmed by the adulation.

Wire

Manchester The Roadhouse

Post-punk vets at their peak.

★ Wire's on-off career may have been marked by restless adventurism, but at their core they've always been a great pop group. Tonight's gig seems to be almost exclusively populated by shouty middle-aged blokes in various stages of baldness. A pity really, because latest album *Red Barked Tree* is undoubtedly their best for years and one that deserves to bring them a wider audience. The great tragedy about Wire is that, diehards aside, they only seem to be loved by all the Franz Ferdinands and Blurs of this world – those who make off with their blueprint and go on to fill ruddy great stadiums with it.

Not that Wire let any of that bother them, outwardly at least. With guitarist Matt Simms in for departed founder member Bruce Gilbert, they're a thrillingly tight unit these days. Indeed, the axis of Colin Newman, Graham Lewis and Robert Grey play with enough military precision to shame most hardcore bands. The new stuff buffs up brightly, especially *Please Take* and *Moreover*. But there's plenty of love in the room when they uncork the evergreen *Kidney Bingos*, *Two People In A Room* and a chilly rendition of *Drill*. In a more forgiving world, Wire would be huge.

Rob Hughes

Von Hertzen Brothers

London Jazz Cafe

A true night of sibling splendour.

★ It's not unusual for rock bands to play at this rather upmarket venue, but usually, they're names with a history that stretches back at least 30 years. Finland's Von Hertzen Brothers are considerably younger, but such is the buzz on the band that the venue is packed, and even the Finnish ambassador has been persuaded to come down.

There is a definite feeling that this is a band who'll grow to major status over here, matching what's already been achieved at home. They're unquestionably progressive in format, with a musicality that touches on Pink Floyd and Led Zeppelin. But everything is underpinned by a real power that's not unlike classic Deep Purple. And then there are the vocal harmonies, so well constructed one can only wonder at the siblings' dexterity and control.

But it's the songs that make this lot so impressive. The likes of *Angel's Arms*, *Miracle* and *Kiss A Wish* are majestic, with the last named utterly spellbinding. No wonder the crowd are left in the Brothers' thrall.

Few European acts have made a more momentous first impression. They're back for High Voltage. Make sure you don't miss them.

Malcolm Dome

New Device/Lethargy/ The Treatment/ Million $ Reload

London Camden Underworld

Four of *CR*'s favourite up-and-comers.

★ Featuring four acts signed to *Classic Rock*'s imprint of the same name, the Powerage Records tour rolls into London.

Belfast's Million $ Reload certainly have the songs and a bucketload of GN'R/Buckcherry-style 'tude, but their performance is marred slightly by the fact that singer Phil Conalane is plagued by a head cold, which significantly hampered his usually bellowing voice.

If the way the audience fills out and then gradually subsides is a clue, then the Treatment are the gig's hottest attraction. Their fiery fusion of big riffs and lighter-waving choruses is a genuine delight, and the young quintet already perform like seasoned veterans.

Lethargy do themselves no favours, with a leaden, stodgy and workmanlike performance that, sadly, corresponds with their somewhat unflattering name.

Reduced to a quartet and introducing a brand new guitarist, New Device end the night on a high with their riff-based sleaze-rock sounding spirited and vibrant.

All in all, then, this inaugural Powerage Records trek has proved to be a huge success.

Dave Ling

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Heavy Radio

Heavy questions for a heavy DJ

Rock Radio's Tom Russell celebrates 30 years on air.

Interview: **Mick Wall**

Legendary Scots rock DJ Tom Russell celebrates his 30th anniversary as a radio presenter this year. Famous in Scotland for his celebrated *Friday Night Rock Show*, which ran for more than 20 years on Radio Clyde, these days he's best-known for fronting a weekday afternoon show on Rock Radio.

Russell was born in Lennoxtown on September 16, 1950. "It was an old mental asylum," he chuckles. "One of these Victorian buildings where a lot of people in the Glasgow area were born because it also had a maternity ward. It was knocked down about ten years ago. It's now the training pitch for Celtic."

You grew up an only child…
Mum and dad weren't particularly musical. But my dad came home one night with two tickets for some group that were playing the Glasgow Odeon and asked if I wanted to go. We went, but we never heard a bloody note with all the screaming going on. It was The Beatles, and my abiding memory was of all these women taking their knickers off and throwing them at the stage. That was my introduction to rock'n'roll. I thought, 'Hey, this is for me!'

You first job, as a 15-year-old, was as a metallurgist in a foundry…
It's the study of different types of metal.

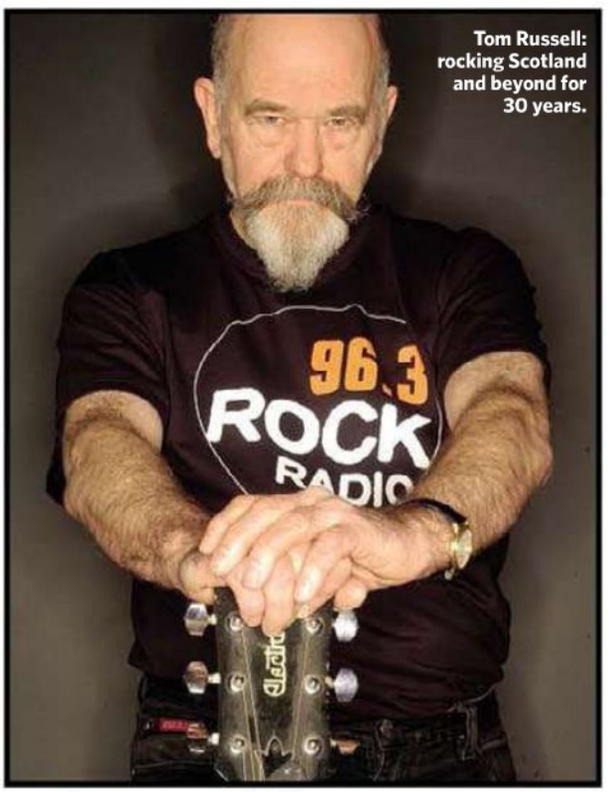
There's a joke there somewhere.
A guy there – I think he was gay and had taken a wee fancy to me – gave me a loan of some blues LPs, which I've loved ever since. And of course there's a connection between Scottish and Irish folk music of the seventeenth century, where emigrants went to America and mixed their songs with the music of black slaves. Which gave birth to the blues, which gave birth to rock.

After doing a degree in mechanical engineering in Durham, you returned to Glasgow and… opened a record shop.
I ended up with five record shops. Things changed in the 90s when supermarkets started selling records. Everything went to hell.

Your life changed in 1981 when the controller of Radio Clyde – The Fame Academy's Richard Park – invited you in for "a chat".
It was the era when record companies had parties every week and record shop owners would get invited, along with journalists and DJs. I would get pissed as a fart, and bend Richard's ear about why Radio Clyde didn't play rock. I kept telling him how much of it we sold in the shops, and eventually he took notice.

The result was your Friday Night Rock Show.
Tommy Vance was on Radio 1 from 10pm to midnight, I was on Clyde midnight till 2am. I was given a six-week contract at tuppence a week. At the end of the six weeks, I wondered what to do. I said nothing, and the weeks turned into months – and then years.

Did you find yourself affecting a deep, 'rock DJ' voice?
The first time I spoke I was like: "Hi there!" Richard stopped me and said: "You're trying to sound like a DJ." He wanted me to get angry at the mic, and I said [growls]: "*I'm Tom Russell!*" That's when I found my voice.



Tom Russell: rocking Scotland and beyond for 30 years.

"I'd like to be buried standing up. With headphones on and a guitar round my neck."

It was a very influential show.
No internet or TV music channels in those days. The only place you'd hear Black Sabbath, Led Zeppelin or AC/DC was either in a record shop, or once a week on the radio with Tommy Vance or me.

Your show ran for more than 20 years, before a new programme controller forced you to water it down.
Aye – Dire Straits was okay, Iron Maiden was not. I was terribly depressed but, hey, I still had a mortgage to pay so I would just go, do my best and pick up the cheque.

You were saved by the launching of Rock Radio in 2008.
A radio station that broadcasts 24-hour rock – that had been my dream for years. To see it finally happen was amazing.

What's been the highest point of your 30 years on-air?
I've been so lucky. Flown around the world to interview people whose records I love. It's really been a charmed life. It will catch up with me one day.

What's the best feeling in the world?
I get people in Scotland coming up and shaking my hand, telling me how I introduced them to rock. It's the feeling that what you do might be worthwhile.

Do you believe in God?
Yes. I sometimes have my doubts – when you see something like the earthquake in New Zealand, you wonder how there could be a God. But then I think, no, there must be something to believe in.

What, for you, is the meaning of life?
To leave the world a better place than it was when you were born.

The final show is over – would you like to be buried, or cremated?
Buried standing up. With a pair of headphones on and a guitar round my neck. And a bottle of single malt.

Tom is on Rock Radio, weekdays 2-6pm at www.rockradio.co.uk/scotland

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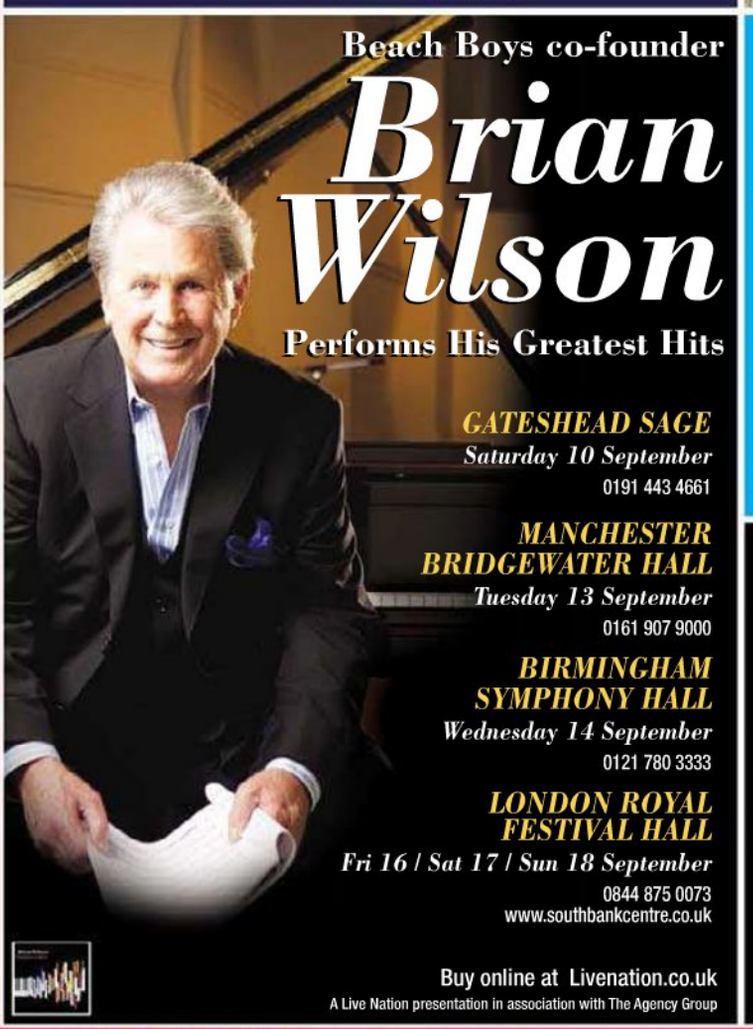

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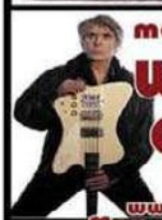

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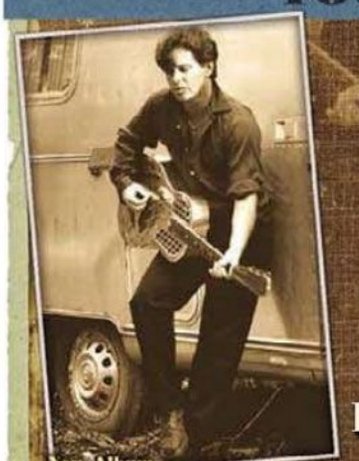

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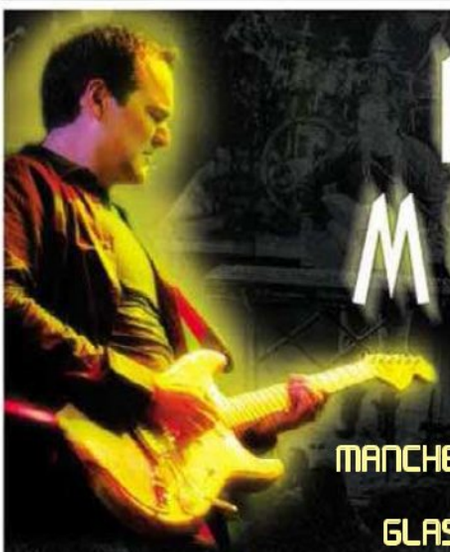

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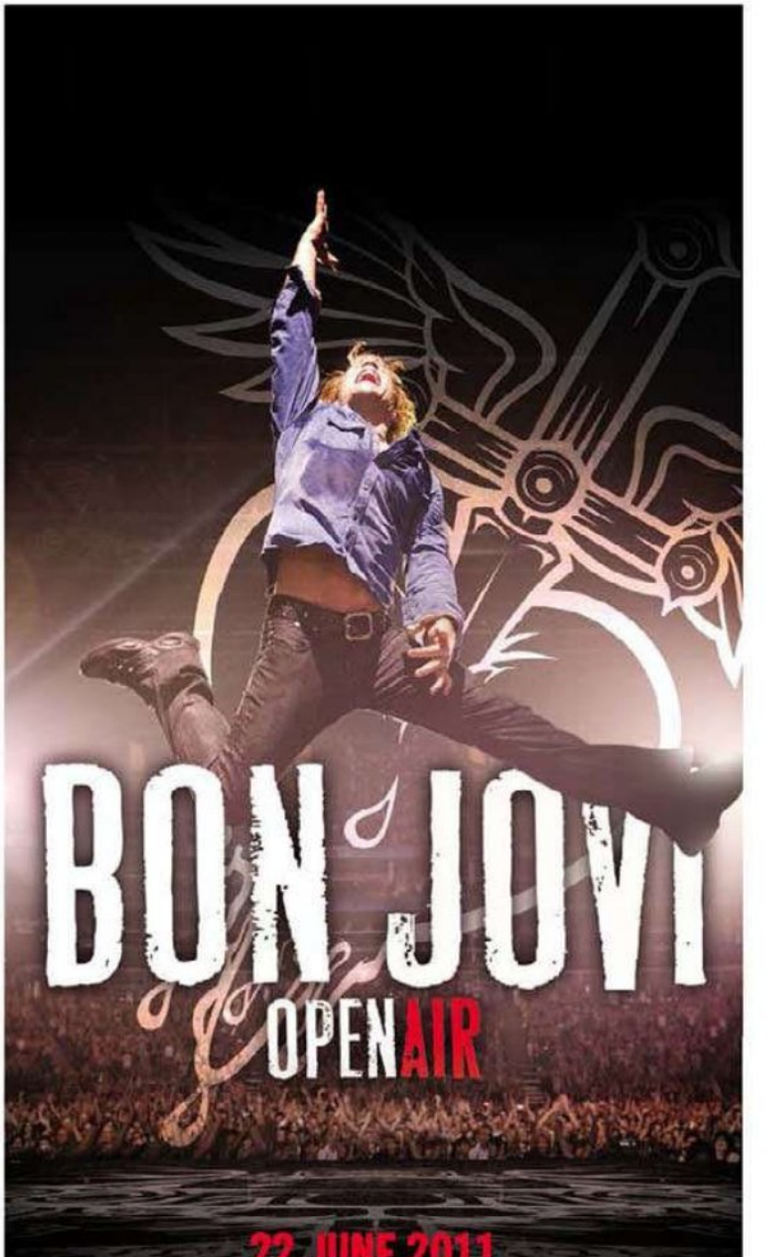

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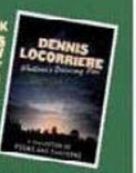

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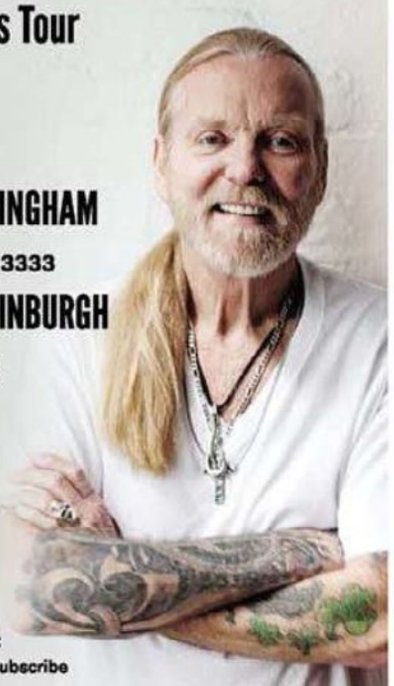

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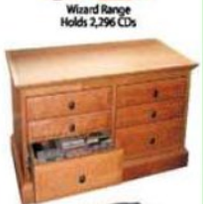

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Heavy Load

Heavy questions for heavy rockers

Jaz Coleman on death, magick and being 'beyond money'

Interview: **Ian Fortnam**

Preparing to return to the road with the original Killing Joke line-up of Geordie Walker, Youth and Paul Ferguson to promote their titanic *Absolute Dissent* album, singularly intense frontman Jaz Coleman ponders as to why people cross the street when they see him coming. Classical composer, student of the occult, green revolutionary, reincarnated soul, cigar smoker… Will the real Jaz Coleman please stand up?

Do you share the values of your parents?
Their hospitality. We always had lots of people staying at our house. So I took the idea of putting people up and feeding them, but at that point it stops.

I'm so far left in my beliefs that I'm right [laughs]. I don't ever seek to own anything. I lose it anyway. Most people just want access to things instead of the burden of ownership. I've pretty much got two sets of clothes: I wear my leather jacket with various T-shirts, I've got three pairs of trousers and two pairs of footwear. I'm not materialist and I hate our globalised world. I'm not a Marxist – there'll always be trade – but it's gone too far. I believe in a really extreme, green, all-out revolution. That's the only way we can save the human race.

What would you say is the biggest misconception about you?
That I'm unfriendly.

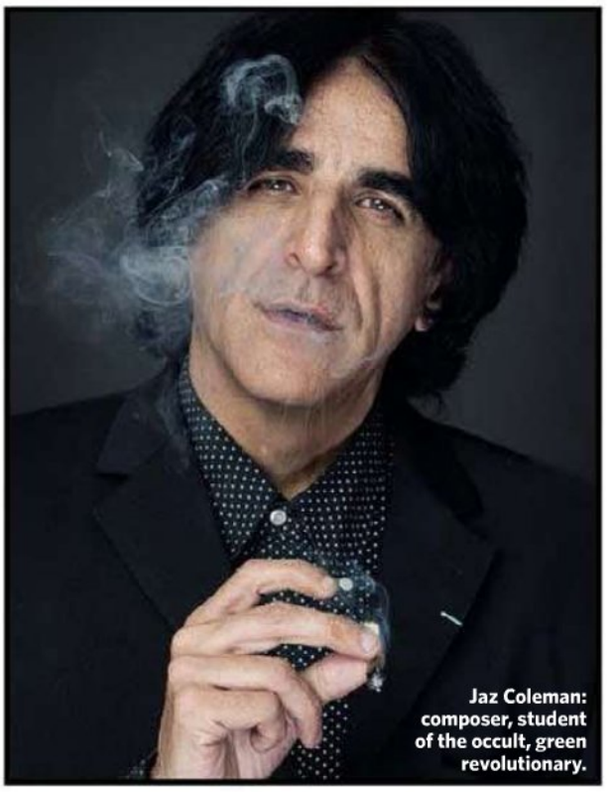
And why do you think that is?
Because I look horrible… people cross the street when they seem me coming, so privacy's never been a problem. People are surprised when they actually meet me.

What is your greatest regret?
It's very difficult to be an artist and hold down a family. Or a relationship, for that matter. And certainly children. That's always a struggle. It's near impossible. So once you've embraced the fact that this is how it's going to be – you're going to see your children infrequently, you won't be a perfect father, you can't have everything and be everything and all things to all people – life gets a bit better.

I do what I do with music with the blessing of my daughters. It means I get to see them – well, two of them – twice a year, and sometimes not for a year. These are sacrifices you have to make. It's difficult, but you can't have it all.

Do you believe in magic?
Absolutely. It worked for us. How would Big Paul [Ferguson] and myself have found Youth and Geordie if it hadn't been for a spiritual act? We didn't know how we'd find the other two, so we did a ritual, a rite of dedication, and they were found within two weeks. Eight weeks later everybody knew about Killing Joke in the UK. So things happened very fast.

Do you believe in God?
The divine… of course. But not in the conventional way the Christian religion would have it. If you're looking for a saviour-god who is going to intervene on this earthly level, I don't think it works like that. Human existence on this earth is pretty amoral. But in the greater scheme of things you have to study the ideas of parallel universes, by [Hugh] Everett. There's no such thing as death. We're only just discovering multiple time lines. We'll be able to go into the past, and future. In the distant future, Paul Raven [former KJ bassist who died in 2007] is not dead yet. We're just starting to access this world. Which is one of the great things about living in the 21st century. Our conception of time as we know it will eventually dissolve.



Jaz Coleman: composer, student of the occult, green revolutionary.

MICK HUTSON

"People cross the street when they seem me coming, so privacy's never been a problem."

Was there anything left unsaid between yourself and Paul Raven?
No, there wasn't. He knew exactly how we felt, and I was in touch with Paul pretty much until the end. One thing me and Raven always shared together was a good Rocky Patel cigar, and I'm really glad that when he came through Prague with Ministry I got my mates to give him a cigar, so he knew it was cool between us.

What's the biggest mistake you've made in terms of your career?
Well, it's all a learning curve, isn't it? We make mistakes every day, you just have to try to improve on them. You could say it was a mistake when Youth took massive amounts of LSD in 1981 and went completely nuts. But it wasn't, because it opened him up and he subsequently became a mystic and a great producer. They're all experiences, so I don't look at it as a black and a white thing.

There have been several mistakes along the way, but the will to keep Killing Joke going has always been strong and overridden everything. It's certainly beyond money. We do it because we love it. It's a hard life being in Killing Joke, but a fucking great one.

What would you like to be written on your tombstone?
In the scheme of things it's all quite insignificant, isn't it? I follow the views of Professor Christopher Knight who believes human activity should be governed by our ancestral spirits. I feel very close to Paul Raven. Sometimes I feel his presence round me, and other ancestors my father and other people I've loved and who have moved into the next world. The last thing John Hicklenton said to me before he drank the liquid and died was: "I'll get the drinks on the other side for when you come through." Because I'd told him that I'm going to drink in the next life… I've already had my share in this one.

How many CDs do you own but never play?

Store, browse and listen to your complete CD collection on the revolutionary Brennan

What's the point in owning hundreds of CDs worth thousands of pounds if you never listen to them? The problem with CDs is that it's quicker to make a cup of coffee than dip into a CD. Try timing how long it takes to pick a CD, load it in the CD player, play a snippet from a track or two, eject it and put it back where it came from. Then there is the problem of finding music. The print on a CD spine is tiny. What if the track is on a compilation CD? What if the CD is in the car? Then there is the clutter. You need to keep your CDs near the player or you won't play them. So you are forced to share your living space with literally hundreds of cheap plastic boxes.

CDs are a great way to listen to music but they are also inconvenient, inaccessible and a bit of a chore.

The Brennan JB7 is a CD player with a hard disk that stores up to 5,000 CDs - and that's not all

It saves space and clutter and delivers near immediate access to an entire music collection. JB7 owners rediscover then fall in love with their music again simply because the Brennan makes it so accessible.

The Brennan also records from vinyl and cassette so you can enjoy your entire music collection but keep the originals in another room or retire them to the attic.

Small enough to pick up with one hand yet big enough for a lifetime of music, the Brennan JB7 is one man's brilliant idea for everyone's forgotten music. Starting at just £366* it's only available direct from Brennan at www.brennan.co.uk.

Key features

- Browse albums by spinning the volume knob - push to play
- Display track names as they play
- Delete tracks you don't like
- Seven rainbow colour coded playlists
- Segue function blends one track into the next
- One touch record from vinyl, cassette or radio
- One button plays the entire music collection at random
- Plays MP3 downloads - future proof
- Clock with alarm
- 60 Watt, 4.8 x 16 x 22 cm steel and aluminium construction
- Backup music to external USB hard disk for safe keeping
- You can use it with your existing hi-fi or on its own

BEST BUY HI-FI CHOICE magazine

"I've suddenly re-discovered my love of music – it's amazing"

"I feel like a teenager all over again – thank you Brennan"

The Brennan JB7 is available in Cobalt Blue or Titanium Metallic

Money back guarantee

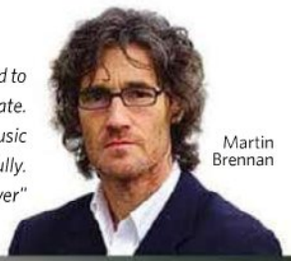
If you're not suitably impressed with your Brennan JB7 we'll collect it free of charge and refund you in full.

* Plus P&P

The face behind Brennan

Martin is a physicist, computer engineer and silicon chip designer. He co-designed the world's first 64-bit games computer.

"I always liked the promise of CDs. It wasn't so much the quality but the quick access to a given track. After vinyl and cassette that was a real plus. My first CD player was a five CD multi-changer. I liked the idea of quick access to more than one CD and music that didn't repeat after 40 minutes. A few years ago I had a go at loading my music onto a computer - but I never listened to it – I needed something simpler, more immediate. In the end the computer got a virus and the music files were lost - I still had the originals thankfully. The JB7 is really my personal ideal music player"



Martin Brennan

To get the whole story on the Brennan JB7 and order visit **www.brennan.co.uk**

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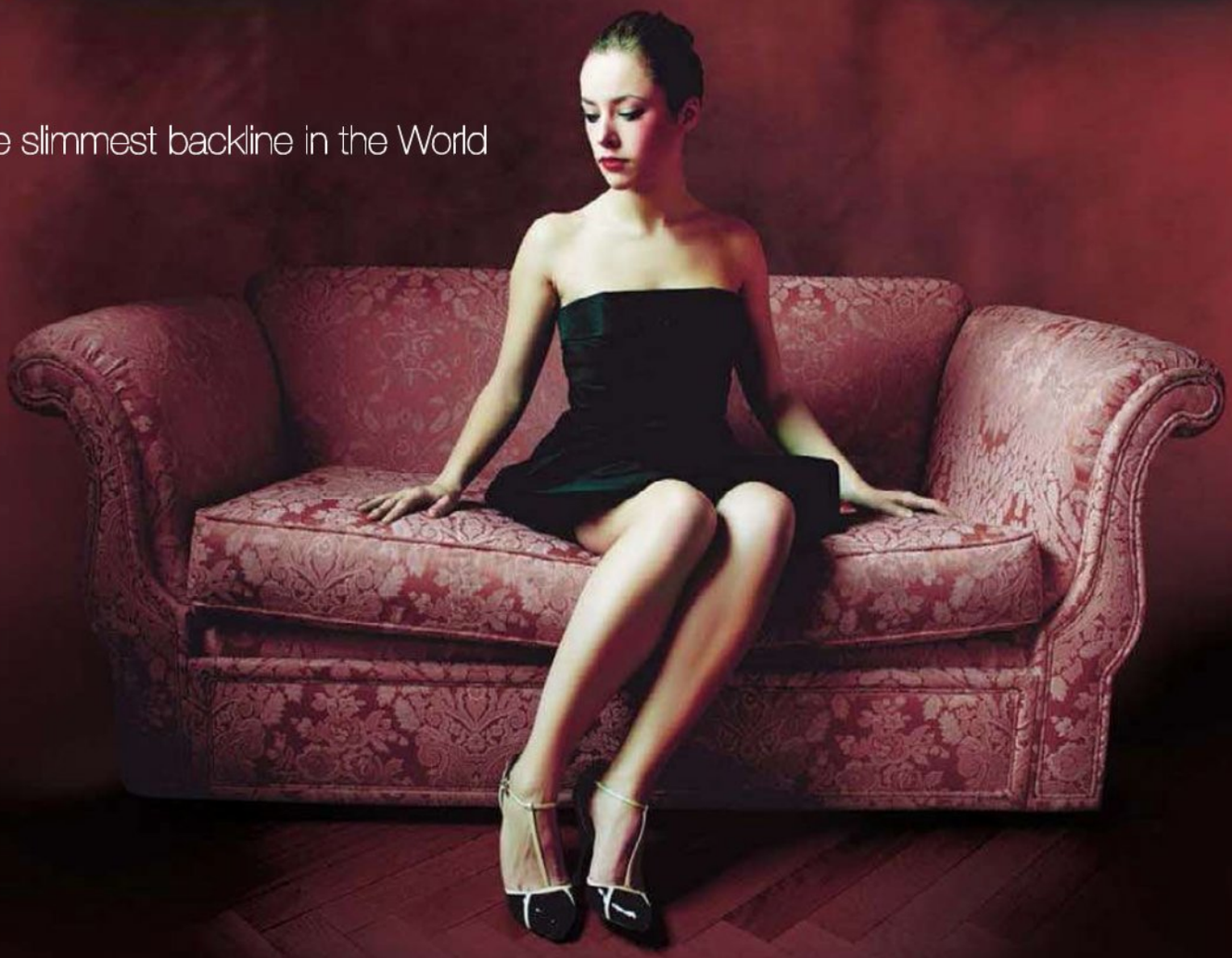
The slimmest backline in the World



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