



# the loose

### JACK CASHILL

### Freedom of expression in corporate KC

am not by disposition inclined to paranoia. I still believe, for instance, in Wonder Bread, Ronald Reagan and the single bullet theory. So when a year ago, after I had written my regular "Business Journal" column about Hallmark, I casually disregarded the friendly critic or two who felt that "I had gone too far" or that "I had chosen the wrong target?' I thought they were seriously out to lunch.

They weren't. They knew the score better than I. In Kansas City, as I learned, sacred cows are not to be milked for humor. The column proved to be the last I would ever write for the "Business Journal," reputedly the town's gutsiest medium (excuse me, Joe Bob, second gutsiest). And the whole incident set me to thinking about the dubious state of free expression in a corporate burg like Kansas City.

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Perhaps more so than any city larger than Gopher Prairie, Kansas City is dominated by a merchant oligarchy of dynastic bent. Here, there is little countervailing power and no competing elites - no entertainment elite, no cultural elite, no international elite and, as I discovered the hard way, no media elite of consequence. What is more, the jigsaw of state and county lines that cross the area negates the power of any sort of governmental elite.

As a result Kansas City has emerged as a mercantile city-state not unlike, say, 15th Century Florence. Unfortunately, however, Kansas City aspires not to be the Florence of this epoch, but rather the Peoria. It prides itself on its typicality, on it usefulness as a test market. on its right-thinking, God-fearing, Mid-American orthodoxy. A town sane and safe enough to lure the wandering corporation or to send a Future Farmer to - such is the way the city fathers see it. But to maintain this image, public relations has had to prevail over free expression, and the status quo has had to prevail over all.

And no corporation in Kansas City has more faith in public relations, nor more passion for the status quo, than Hallmark. Nor more power. A quick word about the ill-fated column. In it, I had told the strange-but-true saga of a hugely unsuccessful job interview I once had at Hallmark and of my wonderfully indiscreet ("We hide our artists so no one can see them/We only hire people who fill slots") interviewer. The column was light, congenial and self-effacing.

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The corporate response, however, was hard, heavy and humorless. Hallmark's VP for Public Affairs - a grim chap with the appropriately Dickensian name of Charles Hucker - wrote a "public clarification." In the letter, he took two tacks, one more curious than the other.

First, he stated — in impressively fluent WhiteHousespeak — that the interviewer in question had "no recollection" of any such interview, thus implying that it never took place at all. Da noive! Then, he cited four distinct but equally bizarre reasons why the column,

even if accurate, was "unfair" (e.g. "The alleged interviewer is no longer at Hallmark because he left to take another position"). Huh?

Whatever private pressure Hallmark brought to bear upon the publisher, I do not know. A registered letter of protest that I sent to Hallmark Chairman, Donald Hall, went unanswered. And I vanished from the pages of "The Business Journal" as silently as an Argentian Desaparecido. "Too much heat," explained my supportive but savvy editor.

Admittedly, my own case is extreme. Rarely do corporations resort to suppression (i.e. "put an end to forcibly") since oppression (i.e. "weighing heavily upon") does so nicely. Indeed, there is little reason to suppress. Hovering in the atmosphere here - right about neck height - is the understanding that corporate employees, especially Hallmark's, remain mute on any issue more controversial than a called third strike at a Royals game.

This silence quickly leads to paradox. For example, no corporate employee, with even a shred of ambition, would dare take a public stand either for apartheid or against the ever enduring anti-Semitic codes of the town's "power" country clubs. What matters here is not that justice gets done, but that the status quo goes unruffled.

This reverence for the status quo affects artistic expression as well. In Kansas City, corporations endow the arts generously as long as said arts are safely dead and institutionalized. But the climate is such that the more lively and controversial arts - theater, music, film, even the fine arts - wither from lack of corporate support either in money or in bodies. Particularly sad is the demise of Kansas City jazz which the city fathers, given their reverence for things dead, endeavor not to revive but to mummify.

The redeeming value of an oligarchy marshalled its creative resources and encouraged expression. The result was the Renaissance. In Kansas City, alas, the oligarchy stifles free expression and encourages conformity. And the result, so far, has been Rainbow Brite™.

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PENYLINE

News

### Deep centerfield

### forever

What's the big excitement this time of year? Is it the starting of those massive world tours? Or maybe all those exciting summer releases? Could it be the second edition of Beatles CDs? Nope, it's the start of baseball season. Though pop music and baseball don't usually appear in the same column (unless the story deals with drug scandals), they are both fave American pastimes. The meeting of both worlds was expressed succinctly over two decades ago by major league guru Charlie Findley, the same man that offered the world orange baseballs. When asked about his offer of five-hundred-thousand dollars (quite a hefty sum in 1964) to bring the Fab Four to KC's Municipal Stadium, Charlie-O replied, "The Beatles fan of today is the baseball fan of tomorrow."



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## Ridin' with the king

### LEROI®

Yee had some good guesses about the title "Ridin' with the King." But no one has gotten the correct answer. We'll try it again this month and I'll give you a couple of hints. First, it has no connection with John Hiatt or Elvis. Secondly, you should think in a foreign tongue.

Anyway, there's lots of good, new music to talk about. So let's take a ride.

77's



Produced by Robert Musso (I think it's Sid Musso's cousin or something). Island 90565, \$8,98 list

Ever had an itch and couldn't scratch it? That's what this record does to me. I hear bits and pieces of the Byrds, R.E.M., U2 and some Plimsouls throughout this record. Just when I think I'm scratching in the right spot, the

### **Psychedelic Furs** "Midnight to Midnight" Produced by Chris Kinsey

CBS 40466, \$8.98 list Hard-driving rhythm, heavy beat, powerful guitar and above all, Richard Butler's distinctively raspy vocals: it's vintage Furs! No more, no less and I like it.

Best of the month Oingo Boingo "Boi-ngo"

### \*\*\*\* Prod

Produced by Danny Elfman and Steve Bartek MCA 5811, \$8.98 list

Chances are you're not familiar with Oingo Boingo. Even though they've released a half dozen great records and regularly sell out 5-thousand-seat concert halls, they're still a cult band. This might be the record that puts them over the top. Although they don't sound alike, they still remind me of the Talking Heads. Danny Elfman's vocals and songwriting are distinctive to say the least. And the rest of the band is top notch as well.



Webb Wilder says, "I want YOU to buy my record."

Webb Wilder and the Beatnecks "It Came from Nashville" Produced by R.J. Field and the Beatnecks Landslide 1013, \$8.98 list

Having heard about as much rockabilly as I can possibly stand, I must admit it takes one hell of a record to shake me out of those hillbilly doldrums. And man, does this record do it! The music is the hottest and the vocals are the coolest. If this doesn't rip your face off, nothing else will.

#### Rank and File

Produced by Bill Pfordresher Rhino 70830, \$8.98 list

After listening to that Webb Wilder record, I thought, what the hell, I'll go ahead and listen to the new Rank and File album. I must have been in the mood or something, because I dug the shit out of this one too.

### Kim Wilde

"Another Step" Produced by Ricki Wilde MCA 5903, \$8.98 list

In this exciting edition, Kim Wilde does her Donna Summer imitation, thus further fueling the rumor that she is the second coming of Pia Zadora.

#### **Chris Isaak**

Produced by Erik Jacobsen Warner Bros. 25536, \$8.98 list

The bottom line with Chris Isaak is that he's being marketed as the new Elvis. Photos, hair, eyes, everything spells Elvis, yet he sounds as much like Roy Orbison. Throw out all the marketing and prejudices and you have a great record by an artist that has the potential to become a legend in his own right.



Jon Butcher "Wishes"

Produced by Spencer Proffer and Jon Butcher Capitol 12542, \$8.98 list

I don't usually take my music with such heavy doses of rock. But every once in a while I'll hear something that rips it up and makes me wanna rock. "Wishes" is one of those records. This album reminds me of a cross between Robin Trower and Thin Lizzy with a touch of Little Feat. This Butcher gives you the prime cuts.

Heaven 17 "Pleasure One" Produced by Heaven 17

Virgin 90569, \$8.98 list Heaven 17 is one of the foremost purveyors

of the Euro-disco sound. It's very funky, danceable stuff. It has no socially redeeming factors, other than it's totally dance-oriented and you can have a lot of fun with it. With good exposure and a lot of luck, "Pleasure One" could get some top-40 hits. If you don't like disco, don't touch this one. But if you do...





drivin' n cryin' April 15th EPITAPH coming soon... The Neats

APRIL • KC Pitch 5

Reviews



### ROCK

Just released domestically is the new album from **Peter Hammil**, "And Close As This" (Enigma ST-73246, \$8.98 list). Once again Hammil has explored another tangent of his remarkable career. This time he has experiemented with computer sequences to generate much of the sound on the album. Still, human elements are the primary focus of the LP, not the technology.

Hammill may have soft pedaled the characteristic, oppressive gloom of his Van Der Graaf Generator days, but "Too Many of My Yesterdays" is suffused with a complex web of regret, agony and pain that strikes a resonant chord. On the other hand, "Beside the One You Love" is perhaps the most lyrically and musically simple work Hammill has ever composed. But this simplicity strengthens its underlying tenet and is an exception on an album whose other songs burst with ideas and emotion.



Indeed, the cleverly crafted "Other Old Cliches" is a noticeably fragile creation built upon a foundation of the thoughtlessly tossed and misused aphorisms which worm their way into a relationship. Even relying on cliche-like sentiments himself, Hammill transports "Faith" from the mawkish to the uplifting. Exhibiting radical contrasts in mood, Hammill rends "Silver" in two with scathing anger and indignant accusations. Meanwhile, "Sleep Now," though not a traditional lullaby by Brahms standards, is still a tender exchange between parent and child.

As for the computer itself, Hammill exercises its possibilities best on the colliding melange of "Confidence," as the artificial sound moves beyond novelty and actually assumes a presence of its own, supporting Hammil's vocals and providing the necessary bombast he normally elicits from a band.

"And Close as This" will certainly please fans, as it peels away yet more layers from Peter Hammill's psyche. Not quite the intricate opus of last year's "Skin," the album is an interesting bit of self-analysis and not self-absorption.

Hitting the groove with their third studio LP, the Style Council have drawn together all their vigor on "The Cost of Loving" (UK Polydor TSCLP 4, \$9.98 list). Although Paul Weller is still firmly in control of the show, he

as exfor their talents. Certainly there is a strong Motown and Stax album. feeling again, but Weller uses these classic infocus fluences as a springboard to embellish each song with his personal touch. "It Didn't Matter" is irresistible white-boy-cool funk, with its lazy beat spiced by Weller's jazzy guitar. of My

Hopscotching to the rollicking, up-tempo Philly sound of "Heavens Above," he drops a violin solo into the middle eight, coaxing additional spirit into the song. Likewise, the rendition of "Angel" is non-descript save for the harmonizing between Weller and Lee. As for the erstwhile Talbot. Weller trusts the

manipulates his players more effectively in

achieving an original sound and genuine feel-

ing lacking previously. Still relying heavily on

his junior partner, keyboardist Mick Talbot,

Weller has also promoted vocalist Dee C. Lee

and drummer Steve White to full time member

status and assigns them roles perfectly suited

As for the enswine failot, while thists the understated quality of his organ and synth on the title track, a nice bit of soul pop nearly extinct in this beat heavy, technology laden day. Talbot's tinkling piano keys function even better with the solid brass arrangement of "Walking the Night," as Weller exhibits surprising control and finesse of his jazz vocals, seeming thoroughly relaxed and assured.

Even on the album's weaknesses like "Fairy Tales," the horns and hand clapping lend such a party ambience that the listener forgets the banality of the lyrics. Only on the excruciatingly awful rap "Right to Go" do things go awry. Weller's minimal presence turns the number into a noisy, clumsy diatribe for the Labour ticket.

Although his dabblings in the soul vein have yet to produce anything nearly approaching his brilliant work with the Jam, Weller and the Style Council have offered their finest work to date in the genre.

The latest 12 inch from XTC, "The Meeting Place" (UK Virgin VS912-12, \$6.98 list), is distinguished not for the A side, but rather the B side. Consisting of four home demo selections that have never been recorded in the studio, slightly rough and ragged in execution, they are still enjoyable. Andy Partridge's peculiar political sensibilities get exposed on 'Terrorism," with its mysterioso Middle Eastern synth sound and "The Troubles," where, in time to its chugging beat, Partridge bemoans the situation in Northern Ireland. Colin Moulding's contribution, "Find the Fox," is an erratic, slightly off center, bit of folk-pop. None of the songs are worthless rejects from the scrap heap, but levels of achievement other bands only strive to attain.

-Larry Fry



Music Inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's Fairytales. Odense Symphony Orchestra; Ole Schmidt, conductor. Unicorn-Kanchana DKP 9036 digital; \$12.98 list.

Who could resist an album with a title like this? I certainly couldn't and I was pleasantly surprised at what I found: a charming but meaningful as well as powerful collection of

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rarely-heard esoterica, well-performed and fascinating. Actually, the title is a bit misleading, as two of the compositions on this record are from operas Andersen wrote librettos for, unrelated to his fairy-tale output, which show his enduring interest in music.



The album starts out with August Enna's Overture to "The Little Match-Seller," a pretty, delightful, thoroughly Scandanavian piece, followed by C.E.F. Weyse's Gipsy Dance from "Kenilworth?" It too is charming, light and very dancy. Both works contain interesting orchestrations. Poul Schierbeck's string arrangement of one of his songs, "In Denmark I Was Born," continues in a reflective, Scandanavian mood, sentimental without becoming too sweet. The surprising conclusion to the first side is J.P.E. Hartmann's overture to his opera "The Raven," the libretto by Andersen from a work by Carlo Cozzi. The overture is extremely dramatic and vigorous, with amazing structural and thematic similarities to Beethoven, without actually copying anything of Beethoven's.

The second side is where the meaty works are. Louis Glass' suite "The Hill of the Elves" has an ominous, vivid introduction that leads to a body of colorful music reminiscent of Grieg's "Peer Gynt." Passages of charm alternate with passages of whimsy and drama. The ending is quiet and reflective. The best is saved for last with Finn Hoffding's "It's Absolutely True," a piece that does show the influence of Nielsen, but perhaps also a bit of Janacek? You decide. The dynamic music and colorful orchestrations combine to make this a truly fascinating work.

The well-arranged program is performed with heartfelt vigor by the Odense (Denmark) Symphony and Ole Schmidt. Their work is excellent in the Hartmann and Hoffding. The sound on the LP is very good, as are the surfaces. The creativity of the works in this collection make this a very interesting record, warmly recommended to all who delight in the unusual.

Victoria: Motet and Mass "O Magnum Mysterium"; Motet and Mass "Ascendens Christus in Altum." Choir of Westminster Cathedral, London; David Hill, director. Hyperion A66109 digital; \$12.98 list.

Tomas Luis de Victoria (1548-1611) was the greatest Spanish composer of the Renaissance,

one of the few Spaniards who mastered the subtleties of style of Palestrina, the towering genius of the era. Yet the little music left by Victoria shows him to be a truly original composer with his own idiosyncratic style. One of the chief characteristics of his music is the joyous evocation of the liturgical elements of the texts he set. Certainly there is poignancy and mystery in his work, but his apparently cheerful disposition never let him remain downcast. All of the masses he set were to the music of festive, rather than penitential, psalms.

This album is the latest in what appears to be an ongoing series of recordings by the Westminster choir of Victoria's music. The first two have shown incredible examples of the music and musicianship of these performers (a third, related album from them showcased music of Victoria's contemporaries in Spain). Presented here are two motets composed by Victoria, each followed by a parody mass based on the motet.

The motet "O Magnum Mysterium," written for the Feast of Circumcision, unfolds with warmth and wonder on the birth of Christ. The mass that follows continues in this vein, the vocal textures conveying the emotional joy Victoria wished to express. Likewise the motet "Ascendens Christus in Altum," written for the Feast of Ascension, is followed by a mass expressing, as in the motet, the uplifting joy of the subject. Emotions are light and even bouncy and one can't help smilling at the effect.

The Westminster Cathedral Choir turns in a marvelous performance here. The tone they achieve is a shade warmer than other English choirs since the alto parts are taken at Westminster by boys instead of counter-tenors. This produces a Continental sound more appropriate to the music than that produced by King's or St. John's. The choir sings with beauty and emotion. The gorgeous mood created is almost ineffable in its subtle effect. David Hill's direction is masterful, his tempi always appropriate, drawing out the wonder and liveliness that are essential parts of this music.

The sound of the recording is bright and clear, with solid bass and soaring treble lines, the textures of alto and tenor coming through clearly as well. The ambience of Westminster Cathedral is also captured well. Surfaces of the Teldec pressings are very good. So far, only one Victoria disc (motet and mass 'O Quam Gloriosum' and mass "Ave Maria Stella") and the collection of his contemporaries' music have made it to CD. Hyperion will, I hope, remedy this situation soon. Strongly recommended to early music collectors and with the quality and emotion of the performances it is recommended to interested novice collectors as well.

Venezianische Mehrchorigkeit. Tolzer Knabenchor; Linde-Consort directed by Hans-Martin Linde. EMI-Electrola 1C 063-30112 (1973).

Venetian polychoral music, popular in the l6th and early 17th centuries, featured instruments alone or with voices divided into two, three or four choirs. They would play from different positions in a hall or cathedral, fill-



ing up the space with sounds that transported contemporary listeners into ecstasy, as their accounts relate.

Reproducing this effect on record is difficult, but this one, part of Electrola's old Reflexe series, does a fine job. Containing the work of composers ranging from the obscure. (Cesario Gussago) to the famous (Giovanni Gabrieli), the well-conceived program alternates between the instrumental and choral, exploring the differences as well as the similarities of this magnificent music.

Canzoni make up four of the six instrumental selections, with a sonata and a set of dances thrown in for good measure. The dances by Salomone Rossi which open the album are particularly compelling and delightful, a perfect introduction to the choral piece which follows. Gussago's Sonata "La Leona" is a real charmer, with wonderful melodies produced by the unusual tones of the authentic period instruments. Giovanni Gabrieli's Canzone of 1615 shows his deft ability to compose lovely music within the form. The Canzone "La Foccara" by Claudio Bramieri is dancy and melodious, with a disarmingly bouncy midsection leading to a beautiful conclusion. Tiburtio Massaino's Canzone No. XXXIV contains interesting rhythms and instrumentation. Finally, the Canzone of Giovanni Battista Grillo is a strong yet subdued work, an appropriate interlude between the two strong choral pieces which finish the album.

The choral selections are the strong point of this record, consisting of four madrigals and a motet. The first of these, Orlando di Lasso's "Hor che la nuova e vaga primavera" is a vigorous work with marvelous vocal textures. Giovanni Croce's "Dialogo de Chori d'Angeli," one of only two sacred works on this collection, is utterly delicate and mysterious. The recording emphasizes the "dialog of two choirs of angels" with a near-far separation, rather than a right-left stereo effect and the result is deliciously ethereal. Another work by Lasso, the madrigal "Trionfo del Tempo," features the outstanding Hans Buchhierl as one of two soprano soloists in a stunning work with soaring vocal lines, utterly gorgeous and one of the two best selections on this record. Andrea Gabrieli (Giovanni's uncle) is featured with "O passi sparsi," which begins as if out of a mist with delicate vocal lines and builds gradually to a solid conclusion. The final selection is Giovanni Gabrielli's famous motet "Omnes Gentes," the other sacred piece and it concludes the album fittingly. A massive work for two choirs of voices and two choirs of instruments, it soars with utterly rapturous phrases and textures - truly a masterpiece in probably the finest recorded performance of it available.

The Linde-Consort plays their authentic instruments with a precision and verve born of familiarity and practice. The excellent Tolzer Knabenchor sings with their usual vigor and delicacy that has put them among the finest Baroque interpreters working today. The recorded sound is excellent, the sort that makes you wonder if digital is really as much of an improvement as is claimed. The LP surfaces are fine. Notes on the style of Venetian polyphony are in German and English. Texts are in the original Italian or Latin but translated to German only. And complete lists of instruments and their choral divisions are provided for each piece. The cover features a handsome page from a 16th century miniature score. Don't wait for this treasure to come out on CD (it may not) or for a new digital recording (it won't be this good). As a perfect example of the kind of musical experience that can never be duplicated, this is urgently recommended to early music enthusiasts and to all who truly love music.

-Walter Stanford

### JAZZ

April hysteria strikes again. With the crack of the spring baseball bats comes several crack jazz releases. Bo Jackson may be one of Kansas City's stellar new celebrities, but it would be a shame not to mention Bobby Watson, our community's top jazz product. Ironically, Watson is a bigger name in Europe than he is stateside. For the last several years he's been flooring European audiences with his astonishing arsenal of tunes. His latest venture is "Dance" (52e RUE EST 005, \$9.98 list), with bandmates Kamal and the Brothers. Watson executes an errorless performance on this album. The scope of the material extends from the exuberant title track to the meditative alto voicings on "Brotherhood" and "Prayer."

As bandleader Kamal Abdul Alim puts it, "This album is dedicated to the people of the world. May the music help to remove the ignorance, prejudice and racism that separates humanity and create a true universal brotherhood. Let the rhythms captivate the body, the melodies soothe the soul and dance..." Be sure to catch this high caliber recordine.

Another versatile hornman in this month's lineup is John Zorn, who makes a dynamic appearance with the Sonny Clark Memorial Quartet on "Voodoo" (Black Saint 109, 59.98 list). This vibrant album is an inspiring dedication to the late gospel, blues and bebop pianist who recorded several albums for Blue Note in the '50s and early '60s. Floating past the listener like a jazz knuckleball, this recording mesmerizes from start to finish. The quartet exhibits excellent control on the Clark compositions "Minor Meeting," "Cool Struttin" and "Sonny's Crib." The name Sonny Clark should no longer be lost in obscurity after listening to this dynamite album.

Next up are two tenor players of towering significance on the jazz diamond. Joe Henderson and James Moody drive home some key solos on Henderson's "State of the Tenor, Live at the Village Vanguard, Volume Two" (Blue Note 85126, \$9.98 list) and "Something , Special" (Novus 3004, \$9.98 list) from Moody. First up is Henderson, receiving some excellent support from Ron Carter, ruling the bass lines and Al Foster, dropping back for some dexterous drumming. Henderson blows a flaming tenor, especially on Chartie Parker's "Cheryl" and Monk's "Boo Boo's Birthday." The album closes with Henderson's masterful tune, "The Bead Game." James Moody settles in for an exhilarating work out, breathing new vitality into an old favorite, an updated reading of "Moody's Mood for Love." Of particular interest are Moody's swift flute runs on producer Tom McIntosh's "Nubian Fantasies."



Another speedster who can cover all the bases on flute is James Newton. He is one of the most underrated, yet solid, performers on the jazz scene today. He's definitely a talent deserving wider recognition. Newton's latest effort, "Romance and Revolution" (Blue Note 85134, \$9.98 list), is both heartrending and hostile. The wrath is provided by two dedications to Charles Mingus, Newton's original "Forever Charles" and the revamping of Mingus' "Meditations on Integration." After hearing these tempestuous numbers, you can't help but yearn for more Mingus material from James Newton. On the album's two closing numbers, Newton moves to the romantic side with Ornette Coleman's "Peace" and Newton's

own "The Evening Leans Toward You." This versatile performer can play both hard and soft ball.

A final release this month is bound to create a major stir among jazz adherents. Ornette Coleman's "Prime Design/Time Design" (Caravan of Dreams 85002, \$10.98 list), is a live recording from Fort Worth's art performance mecca The Caravan of Dreams. Though the music on this album was composed by Ornette, it was performed by the Gregory Gelman String Ensemble with Denardo Coleman on percussion. Ornette labels the piece "A harmolodic composition for four instruments and percussion in honor of Buckminster Fuller." He further states, "When I met Buckminster Fuller in 1982, he impressed me with a spirited demonstration of his model of the tetrahedron, a geometric figure at the basis of the structural design of the universe. He manipulated the model, turned it inside out, made it dance -but the corners never touched. I said to myself, 'That's just like my music' and at that moment I was inspired to write a piece based on Fuller's mathematics?"

Coleman unveils his long-awaited masterpiece on this recording, which was recorded in the Caravan's Fullerian Desert Dome. The composition was written for five soloists who, at different points in the piece, play in differing time signatures, ranging from 2/4 to 12/4. The second violin introduces the theme, which is then played by viola, cello and first violin. After completing the theme, each musician plays his part as a solo. After listening to this recording, Ornette proves that his status as the reigning king of jazz-from-left-field remains beyond repute. Recommended for the adventurous jazz fan.

-Bill Marks



### oe Bob goes to the drive-in

#### JOE BOB BRIGGS Drive-In Movie Critic of Grapevine, Texas

my favorite teevee show is called "Dream Girl USA," which comes on Channel 21 Sunday morning right after rodeo and right before Jimmy Swaggart, and the basic idea is you take all your reejects from the Miss Providence, R.I., beauty pageant and you ask em to come out to Hollywood and stay at the Hilton three days and sing "Oklahoma" with their hands on their hips and wear stiletto high heels and aerobics clothes and answer the weekly "think on your feet" question, which is always somethin like, "What is your favorite Bee Gee and why?" Then, all the time they're doing this, there's a panel of celebrity judges, guys like Ziggy "The Animal" Liebowitz, head of Liebowitz and Frick Productions, who produced "Celebrity Safari" for Canadian syndication, and Wilhelmina Swanson, head of The Swanson Agency, which did all the casting for "Rat Patrol: The Second Edition." And the celebrity judges are hittin these automatic electronic gong buttons that flash points up on the screen, so as soon as Desiree Dillard from East Winnebago, Kan., stops poundin out the "Christian Hits of Amy Grant" medley on a baby grand piano and grinnin like a Siamese jackal, they can zap a big ole "27" up on the screen, to show that she didn't do diddly, and then whoever's left over at the end gets to come back for the semifinals and try to win some more nail polish.

It's great.

I watch it ever week.

Here's the best part of the deal: the "up close and personal" interviews with the contestants. Like here's one with Faith Jernigan of Stillwater, Okla., who's a day-care assistant at Interstate 40 Babtist Church when she's not having her body waxed in preparation for "Dream Girl USA":

"When I really feel like splurging, I have may boyfriend take me to Baskin-Robbins. On most days of the week I eat yogurt. You have to when you're trying to watch that figure. But then I'll say to myself, 'Faith, you DESERVE some of the banana-nut surprise, and I just feel so GUILTY. But that's what I like about life here in Stillwater. It's the kind of place where you can take it easy, be with your friends, be whoever I want to be, and someday I hope to be able to use my personal skills as a people person to settle down and do something wonderful with my life in the advertising and public relations field. That's why 'Dream Girl USA' is so important to me. This is a great country, and God loves you."

I'm telling ya, WATCH THIS SHOW. You don't believe me. I KNOW you don't believe me. You CANNOT get this on the network.

Speaking of body meat, I went to see this flick called "Death Before Dishonor" while I was up in Cicero, Ill., last week visiting my good friend Camille Wilks, also known as the United Way Agency of the West Side. Everbody in Cicero, Ill., wears camouflage flack jackets and carries M-16 rifles to the grocery store, except Camille, who carries an AK-47 Kalashnikov assault rifle and wears spandex hip huggers. She loved the flick.

What we got here is some Marines that get sent over to a slopehead Middle Eastern sandbox country full of guys named Shamir wearin wimp mustaches. Col. Brian Keith is assigned to keep all the Abduls and Jamblads from killin any normal American people at the embassy. And since Brian Keith got real fat last 300-pound fortune teller to kickbox some slopehead mobsters. Imelda Fu. One star.

"Jungle Holocaust"(?): "True account" of a guy who discovered some Stone Age cannibals livin in the Philippines. He ends up eatin dirty flowers, gettin the spider-torture treatment, watchin crocodile brain surgery, rapin a native girl and tellin her how he'll build her a great place in Malibu once they get out. Unfortunately, she gets turned into a Swanson TV dinner. Ferdinand Fu. Three stars.

"In the Shadow of Kilimanjaro" (1986):



Col. Halloran scours the horizon searching for Butty and Mr. French in "Death Before Dishonor."

year, he takes Fred Dryer along with him to guard the 47,000 tons of sophisticated weapons the United States is giving away to camel herders that never shave. Then — whoops! the terrorists mess up REAL bad and kidnap Brian Keith and stick a power drill through his hand and make Buffy cry. Then they steal some rifles and leave a dead Marine in front of the American embassy and a kamikaze terrorist blows himself up in a bakery truck and kills some tourists and pretty soon Fred Dryer is steamed.

We're talkin the best exploding-foreignperson flick since "Missing in Action." Seventyseven dead bodies. No breasts (no time). A 56 on the Vomit Meter. Drunk Marine chest pounding. Three motor vehicle chases, with two crash and burns. Lesbo terrorist. Power drill Fu. Drive-In Academy Award nominations for Joanna Pacula, as the Israeli secret service photographer who hangs around with Arab scuzzballs and has a really swell apartment in Jemal; Fred Dryer, who really oughta keep doing this, he's got that Chuck Norris intensity; and Brian Keith, for blimping up to Mr. French's working weight just for this role. Four stars. Joe Bob says check it out.

### This Month's Drive-In Videos

"Pay or Die" (1979): Filipino kung fu queen Marie Lee joins up with a transvestite and a Man-eating attack baboons, with tour-bus baboon attack, baboon-induced plane crash, baboon bonfire, exploding baboons. Timothy's bottom. Two stars.

"Manhunter" (1986): William Petersen, as the official FBI sexual deviate, spends the entire national defense budget capturing the world's only killer with a full-time art director. Three stars.

"Maximum Overdrive" (1986): Eighteenwheelers take over the world in Big Steve King's directin debut. Unfortunately, Steve tries to do a kissy-face scene with Emilio Estevez. Barf City. Two stars, but a 93 on the Twisted Metal Meter.

"3 Nuts in Search of a Bolt" (1964): Starring Mamie Van Doren modelin the Frederick's of Hollywood catalog, including a production number (!) with the Queen of the Drive-In in a silver-sequin spaghetti-strap spill-it-all-out hip-hugger evening gown. Starring, directed, written, produced by the little weenie Tommy Noonan, the drive-in Jerry Lewis, who agrees to go to the psychiatrist in place of Mamie and the two guys she lives with, to save money. Very sixties. One of Mamie's best. Four stars.

"White Cannibal Queen" (?): One of those Eyetalian shipwrecked-in-the-Amazon classics, with luscious Sabrina Siani as the girl who is raised by bloodthirsty intestine-eating cannibals. Full of gut-ripping, back-spearing, armhacking, fertility-dancing, five-minute wifechomping scenes, and lines like "This forest is full of unexpected deep holes." A 97 on the Vomit Meter. Three stars. Joe Bob says check em out.

### Joe Bob's Mailbag

Victory Over Communism! Last fall, Joe Bob Briggs gathered together eight beautiful girls with a combined weight of 2,200 pounds and offered to the public, for the first time anywhere, the Dancing Bovina Sisters, the world's largest chorus line. Since then the eight Bovinas have been the toast of Dallas, appearing at sleazy parties far and wide, and now Bovina Julie, the Bovina Dance Captain, has become ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED and will have a full Bovina Wedding, with Bovinas as Bridesmaids, this fall, Remember, with eternal vigilance, true love can happen to you, too. To discuss the meaning of life with Joe Bob. or to get free junk in the mail, write Joe Bob Briggs, P.O. Box 33, Dallas, Texas 75221.

DEAR JOE BOB: If you substitute the position in the alphabet for each letter of your name and add these numbers together, then multiply by the sum of the digits in your P.O. box, the result is 666, which is the "number of the beast." Now you don't have to recite incantations such as "Ya decinae vah" any more to summon Satan. — STEVEN HOROWITZ, BERKELEY, CALIF.

DEAR STEVE: If you add up all the letters in your last name, multiply by 17 and paw the ground four times with your left foot, I'll give you a cookie.

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DEAR JOE BOB: I dunno, Mr. Briggs — I still have my suspicions about you. I can't help but notice that I've never seen you and The Masked Cattle Molester together at the same time. And what exactly is it that impels you to slap yer armpits with the Bovine Divine cologne? There's something behind Elsie's enigmatic smile other than a tickling mechanical milker. Stay the hell away from my sister, damn you. — JUSTIN REED, PHOENIX, ARIZ.

DEAR JUSTIN: There's no need to get hysterical. Let's sit down, have some grain sorghums, talk it over.

DEAR JOE BOB HONEY: Your mom is still worried if you are wearing clean socks to work. She's afraid you'll end up hired on one of them double "d" cup boat races as the sewer man. I told her not to worry since your a famous writer and can spell big words now. You'll be proud to know that I'm learning

to read a little and because of your articles I'm learning to use a dictionary. I like it a lot! Yes — reading and using the dictionary.

But you shouldn't of made fun of that poor fella who can't spell! Did you forget what Uncle Fred told us at our last popcorn festival in Muleshoe? Well, darlin, he said that people of extremely high intelligence can't usually spell — don't write good and can't read worth a

darn. That's how they knew I was a genius. Well sugar, its been a sweet visit. Send me a new hat cause this one's wearin out.

Your cousin, BERTHA MARIE, DALLAS. DEAR B.M.: You're not wearin a hat.

# ook good, smell good

### BILL BLAST

ay (sniff, sniff), what's that terrific smell? Is it? Could it be? Yes, it's time once again to look good, smell good with the king of sleaze and tease, everybody's best friend (if only they'd let me be), Bill Blast.

First off, I want to thank all the folks who expressed concern over what became of ol' Blast. The important thing is I'm back. So forget those rumors about Al Goldstein taking over this column. No way. Remember, it's 'smell good', too. I can't go into why I was out last month (or the state of Kansas). Let's just say it's nothing a good bail bondsman couldn't fix. And hey Connie Chung my little dragon, don't hold a grudge and neither will I.

This month's video, available from

PennyLane Video, is "Sweat," starring Amber Lynn. Sometimes you come across a film starring one of your favorites, only to get it home and find out she's only in one lousy scene and you're just left hanging. Well, if you dig Amber, "Sweat" is one of her best. She's in every scene. And if you're not hip to Amber Lynn, you better get hip, 'cause she's steaming the screen like nobody's business.

"Sweat" is about Amber's inability to work up a sweat. In the opening scene, after some torrid rollicking, Amber informs her partner he's fallen short (so to speak): "I don't want somebody that'll make me whine, grovel, spit or hoot. I want somebody to make me sweat." Damn right!

Also featured is the lovely Nina Hartley

(always worth watching) and Patti Petite. As for Patti, look out. This girl is red hot and, as her last few movies show, ready for anything. Patti's going to be a big name like Ginger Lynn, Amber Lynn, Taja Rae, Angel and Raven. This Petite girl doesn't leave a dry seat in the house.

In "Sweat," Amber goes to see Doctor Hand "with the fingers," played by Jamie Gillis. The first part of this scene is truly funny. Dr. Hand has the prescription to make Amber sweat. He says, "You need mystery. I'm giving you this address. Go inside and take your clothes off. You'll see a table with blueberry cheesecake on it. Whatever you do, don't eat the cheesecake?" "Why?"

"It's low cal. Who eats low-cal blueberry cheesecake. Aaccchh!"

You get the idea. Jamie and Amber then have at it in a big way. These two know how to work each other over. Big fun, but no sweat. Amber even tries a little deep-sea fishing with Patti Petite, but still, no sweat (unless you want to count mine).

There are some gorgeous ladies in this film, who know the bedroom inside and out. And the guys are some of the best in the business. "Sweat" gets four and half stars and a good towling off from yours truly.

It's time to smell good. This month's scent is a true classic: Clubman After Shave Lotion by Pinaud. This is the stuff barbers have been using for years. I remember as a kid, the whole barber shop used to smell like this stuff. If you're game, it can still be had. But don't look for Clubman at a styling salon or unisex shop. In those kinds of places, they're too busy trying to decide who's a better journalist: Christy Heffner or Helen Gurly Brown. Ha!

No, I suggest you search for Clubman at a real barber shop, a place where men go to have their hair cut, their shoes shined and their nose hairs clipped. Clubman is a man's man's aftershave. And the women will know it right away. They'll even thank you for it. This smell lets the gals know that you might have your off days like anyone else, but you won't let it get your dobber down in the dirt.

Clubman gives you confidence — confidence that makes you want to walk up to the first biker you see and say, "Man, I had your old lady before she had tatoos." And the memories: it's what Dad smelled like when Mom went out of town to visit the relatives. Clubman. It's good for sensitive skin, not sensitive men. I recommend it.

Before I go, it's that time of year when the boys of summer start girding their loins in preparation for the national pastime. Baseball is the most sexual and sensual of sports. You doubt my word? How about the "double play" or "hit and run"? No? Well what about the "squeeze play"? You've heard 'em say, "He can really slap some leather," or, "He's a switch hitter, good from both sides." That's just a start. You can be "tagged" or "put the tag" on someone else. He may have been "spiked" or he's a "free swinger? Or how about one that's "high and tight"? or the "clean-up spot." Then there's my personal favorite, the "head-first slide." I love this game.

Until next month, this is Bill Blast saying, "Play ball, but play nicely." And remember, it's one thing to look good, it's another thing to smell good.

### Free classifieds

Send your classified ad to KC Pitch, 4128 Broadway, KCMO 64111 or drop it off at any PennyLane. It's still free.

Order Rabbitwear for Easter! Bongo T-shirts \$12 (includes p&h), Binky sweatshirts \$20 (includes p&h). Life In Hell, PO Box 36E64, LA, CA 90036.

Greetings From Hell, series I. Sixteen of the best Life In Hell comic sitips from the last 5 years now in postcard and notecard form. Doctards-1-06 designs for SIO, 87 calendars SO% of T--5.598 Prices include shipping. Send check or M.O. to LIFE IN HELL, PO Box 36E64, LA, CA 90036.

Guitar and bass lessons, beginner or intermediate levels, all styles, fair prices. Call Brian at 333-1426.

Having trouble understanding your girlfriend, boyfriend, boss or spouse? I offer a computer psychological profile covering attitudes about, relationships, work, stress, sex. This profile is the end result of thousands of hours of preparation and programming and is available to you for only \$12.95. Psychocomp, Box 8301, Shawnee Mission, KS 66208.

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APRIL • KC Pitch 9



# Nightcrawlers

### STEVE WALKER

### The name game

hirley Ellis' 1964 novelty "The Name Game" turned a rediculous premise into a hit song and provided some laughs in a year bereft of them. In a similar vein, Hollywood is looking to the yellowing top-40 charts of the same era in a smarmy, desperate attempt to latch a wellknown title onto a film that has no relationship to the tune's storyline.

Frank Zappa recently commented on this phenomenon by saying, with no small amount of horror in his voice, that kids today will grow up to be nostalgic for the same songs their parents wax sentimental over. One can see, if this trend escalates at present proportions, the evaporation of the concept of oldies: Casey Kasem as Dorian Gray, dedicating to 13-yearold lovers the same tune their dead grandparents twisted to at the sock hop.

"Stand By Me," "Peggy Sue Got Married" and "Soul Man" are the immediate examples. The relationship of song to film content is marginal at best. (However, Bobby Vinton's "Blue Velvet" seemed to be the perfect title for David Lynch's Hardy-Boys-in-hell story of the mutation of innocence.) John Hughes' "Pretty in Pink" is guilty as well. Though the song by the Psychedelic Furs at least hailed from the same decade, its relationship to Molly Ringwald's class wars was nonexistent.

"Some Kind of Wonderful," from the same team responsible for "Pink," is the worst offender. You can listen to any one of the three versions of the song — The Drifters', Grand Funk Railroad's or Carole King's — and still have no clue to what it means to the action on screen. Later this year, we're promised "Walk Like a Man" with Howie Mandel. The most ominous note about this is that the Four Seasons will be back on the charts.

As Hollywood sweeps out Alan Freed's tomb and shakes the dust and cobwebs from the relics found there, it is important not to blame this callous lack of creativity on the Brat Packers. Though at least one of the tribe smiles his or her perfect smile in each of the offenders mentioned, there is a precedent that coincides with rock and roll itself. Bill Haley's "Rock Around the Clock" came from the movie "The Blackboard Jungle;" but eventually garnered a film of its own (though it was as B and bottomof-a-triple-bill as it could get).

The 1970s embarrassingly produced "Ode to Billy Joe," with the original brat, Robby Benson and "The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia." But the era need not hide its head



A befudialed Mary Stuart Masterson contemplates the connection between the tune "Some Kind of Wonderful" and the film of the some name for bringing out the underrated "Who'll Stop the Rain," one of the first movies to explore the victimization of a Vietnam Vet.

If there's no escaping it, we can at least acknowledge that there exists out there in the stratosphere, where old radio signals dance indefinitely, marvelous song titles with movies waiting to be made from the images they evoke. Vietnam War films, having built-in box office appeal right now, lurk behind "The Lion Sleeps Tonight," "Eve of Destruction" and "Soldier Boy," stories about young men flirting with their mortality just before the skirmishes ballooned into conflicts.

"Sixteen Candles" was sweet, but "Sweet Nuthin's" more accurately details the dilemmas of pubescent girls looking for their identities in the back seats of cars. "Hey Paula" is but one of those girls' stories. The boys in these tales, with their hormones rampaging across the schoolyard grounds, get their movie with "It's Now or Never" or "Leader of the Pack"

Here's a new game for solo driving : Tune to a radio station heavy with doo-wops, shbooms and ram-a-lam-a-ding-dongs and construct a movie around each song you hear. If you have half a liter of the creative juices that are flowing along Rodeo Drive right now, your fortune as a Hollywood producer is waiting just around the bend.



### JOHN SCOFIELD STILL WARM



### John Scofield/Electric Outlet





"His fluid legato lines almost make you forget that he's a guitar player. That is, until he launches into a biting, bent-string blues attack." *Downbeat, January 1987* 



Electric Outlet Still Warm



SEE JOHN SCOFIELD AT THE UPTOWN THEATER, SATURDAY APRIL 25





THE BEST NEW BEATS

Gino Vannelli

# Jump for joy

### REV. DWIGHT FRIZZELL & JAY MANDEVILLE

ot since Duke's days as a highschool-age soda jerk at the Poodle Dog Cafe back in D.C., where he wrote his first composition, "Soda Fountain Rag," has Ellington's music sounded more joyous and genuinely American than on "Duke Ellington: The Blanton-Webster Band 1940-42" (RCA / Bluebird 5659, \$29.98 list). This megalithic, digitally remastered release chronicles Ellington's tunes and tone poems on a rise, bursting with gaiety, sophistication and black emotional amplitude. Undeniably, the juiciest, most convulsively beautiful scene in hot, hot Harlem at the end of the '20s was Ellington's three-year stint at the Cotton Club. Beginning with opening night, December 4, 1927, the Ellington band swung hard, convincing the sophisticated ofay club audience night after night that if sex can become a spiritual experience, then Duke's jams and arrangements were a perfect accompaniment.

"Yes, they expected the horns to blow loud and the girls to look wild," Ellington said later. "When a girl began to wiggle and shake



Billy Strayhorn had just joined Duke's allstar line-up as staff arranger and collaborator in 1940. And Ellington had picked up a terribly advanced bass player, Jimmy Blanton, in St. Louis. With the addition of Ben Webster, tenor sax master from Kansas City, to his reed section and after his recent weekby-week successes in New York and Chicago, the Duke was ready to permanently etch his music in wax, again and again producing recordings of consistently high quality.

If you can spare a minute from your merry-makin', I'd like to have the pleasure of introducing the greatest living master of jungle music, the riproaring harmony hound, none other than Duke Ellington. Take your bow Dukie...

--Irving Mills, introducing an Ellington Showcase before a group of rowdy whites, New York, April 12, 1929. to the throb of that great tom-tom Sonny Greer was beating, they thought she was in the throes and the spirit of Africa was upon her?

Throughout his career, Ellington was always feeling up dancers for rhythmic insights, checking out their steps and translating their turns and twirls into tone poems. Several of the Bluebird recordings from the '40s refer back to his younger Cotton Club days, when the Ellington stage was filled with tappers and legs. "Bojangles" is a musical portrait of Bill Robinson, a favorite at the Cotton, with brass playing sharp and staccato phrases to emulate his rattling feet. Even one quick listen to the stimulating "Cotton Tail" proves that to Ellington's brilliant eye, music is always more than music: It's dance, color, a woman and a drum.

Destined to "take the Uncle-Tom image out of Hollywood," Ellington created a socially relevant "revu-sical," "Jump for Joy," which opened in LA and played at the Casa Manana in 1941. Six songs from the show, whose all-black cast had to pack up after an early close, survived from the all-night Bluebird recording session in Hollywood on June 26, 1941.

Futurist African instrumental effects meld with naive lyrics of a black genesis sung by lvie Anderson ("Chocolate Shake"). More timely perhaps is the disheartening "I Got It Bad (And That Ain't Good)." Johnny Hodge's alto sax fondles the melody with high super-lagato lip slurs and lvie's straightforward singing is her most probing on record.

Ellington orchestrated using the particular grain in each voice of his ensemble, always connecting the sound with the feeling. Cootie Williams' trumpet, growling through a plunger mute, creates a language weighted in flesh ("Concerto for Cootie"). The orchestral dynamics are meaty and immediate. Cootie proves that with three of the Concerto's multiple themes you can do anything.

Oscillating between dream and claustrophobic wakefulness, the jagged melody, jabbing brass and relentless melody of "Johnny Come Lately" thrust the listener into the belly of black existential angst, circa Hollywood 1942. The only interruption of this sinister scenario is Ellington's precomposed solo in the upper register of his piano, which infuses a delicate, wispy suggestion of hope into the storm-charged underground sound of the street world which surrounds it.

The bizarre "Are You Sticking, Man?" presents us with an ever-expanding locus of competition between Barney Bigard on clarinet and the rest of the ensemble. The tune progresses and the rivalry accentuates with devastating hyperbole.

Ellington's compositions traverse the breadth of black wisdom and sorrow and put it on view. As their reverberation increases, they take on the appearance of art objects outside time and space. But their suggestive depth still creates a fascinating omnidimensionality, where history is continually re-evaluated. And with the release of Duke's complete 1940-42 recordings, he has again proven that black art would survive a welter of ballroom glitz.





# April



They Might Be Giants.

# The giants of rock and roll

They Might Be Giants is too often hung with the goofy-rock-meets- performance-art label. Yes, they do fence with loaves of French bread and lead the audience in sing-alongs using giant cue cards. And the duo does perform tunes with titles like "Youth Culture Killed By Dog" and "Put Your Hand Inside the Puppet Head." But get below the surface, beyond the guitar/accordion/rhythm box sound and the papier-mache props and you find a group that offers more for your rock and roll dollar than any other band around.

"They Might Be Giants," (Bar/None 002, \$8.98 list), the band's debut album, offers 19 examples of the group's schizo-kiddie sound. At only 42¢ a song, even Bruce's mega boxset, song for song, wasn't this much of a bargain. They even have a dial-a-song service, so the uninitiated can check them out before plunking down those dollars on albums or concert tickets. Call (718) 387-6962 and you get a song (usually something other than what's on their album) and a nice little message. This dial-it service, the world's first viable alternative to radio, video and print exposure, might just change the whole complexion of the record business ... well, maybe.

The They Might Be Giants sound is an anarchic blend of styles and thoughts masquerading as light pop tunes. Children's songs, soul, country and rock all wiggle around together, creating music that's as intricate or loony as you care to make it. Accordionist Linnell explains, "I think our deepest concerns have to do with music we listened to when we were nine." Most writers seem to be falling all over themselves to try and come up with a nifty little socio-political/sci-fi metaphor to accurately describe the Giants' sound. See for yourself. They Might Be Giaints perform April 15 at Cogburn's in Lawrence and again April 17 at Parody Hall.

### Nanci Griffith: country poet

Rarely do we get a chance to see an artist on the rise, knowing full well that in a short time they will be a popular personality, appearing in larger venues. Nanci Griffith has been hailed by critics from Nashville to New York as the next country music superstar. In a recent telephone interview, Ms. Griffith shed some light on her style and musical philosophy in preparation for her upcoming concert at Parody Hall April 4.

"I'm still clinging to the acoustic side of what I do. You know, I kinda ride the fence. And I call what I do 'folkabilly,' cause it is just right in the middle of that. I still really enjoy going out and doing solo shows. I was with the Everly Brothers for four months, opening for them solo.

"I think it always shows if you love the music. It has always been my main goal to broaden my audiences and bring the music to as many people as wanted to hear it. At the same time it has always been very important to maintain the type of music that I do and never insult the integrity or the intelligence of my audience. I feel like that's been done in country music in the past 10 years. My main goal is to just be happy to be a part of a change in country music. With new artists that are now on major labels and turning country music around, my audience ranges from 15 to 70 years old.

"For a long time, I feel country music lost the younger generation. I see the younger generation coming back. And it's exciting to be a part of that."

Nanci's recording sessions are also a return to the old ways, with everyone contributing simultaneously.

"We do things differently. My recording sessions are like Loretta Lynn's recording sessions in the '60s. We achieved that by having everybody in the same room at the same time. So even the new album, "Lone Star State of Mind" (MCA 5927, \$8.98 list), is recorded that way. Even though it's 32-track digital, you can still hear Phillip Donnelly messing around with his guitar and everybody breathing. I like that



### Nanci Griffith

feeling. Everybody's happy and making jokes. That all goes down on vinyl?"

Nanci Griffith could be called many things: a singer, a picker, a writer, a teller of tales. This Texas-born musician could also be called the perfect prairie home companion. Her sweetness is tempered with an inner strength which makes her songs more than mere exercises told from a woman's viewpoint.

"I consider most of my songs to be little short stories. I spend a lot of time studying normal people, middle-class America. I try to give some positive aspects of relationships and lives that aren't simple when you sit down and look at them."

Nanci's early recordings are full of colorful character studies and first-person narratives depicting the people she's gotten to know through her Austin, Texas upbringing and her life on the road. Starting with "There's a Light Beyond these Woods" (Philo 1097, \$8.98 list) and "Poet in My Window" (Philo 1098, \$8.98 list), Nanci Griffith began forging her career as the queen of Texas' singer/songwriters. Then came "Once in a Very Blue Moon" (Philo 1096, \$8.98 list) and the hugely successful "Last of the True Believers" (Philo 1109, \$8.98 list). This continued next page





A Second Control

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led to her major-label signing and the current push to wider acceptance and popularity as a performer.

"Stardom is something I never expected. But I'm glad all these people will get a chance to hear the music I've written about them. I'd like to just go on writing as an honest writer and continue singing and recording. And I think if I looked back, I would see a heck of a good time. Because that's what I'm having now."

With Nanci Griffith's career on the upswing and nation-wide exposure just around the bend, we're all in for a heck of good time. —Saul Tucker

### Folk-scene king

Within the folk scene, Martin Carthy commands an extraordinary position. To quote one critic, "His influence ... has been total, making him not only the most revered singer in the business, but also the most imitated. Quite simply, Martin Carthy is the master." And there are not many who would question that. You have only to watch him for a few minutes in a club or listen to a couple of his recordings to realize that Carthy has a quality that sets him far apart from everyone else.

He began playing the guitar and singing while a student, but spent a brief spell in the theater before turning to singing as a career. His awesome reputation was born during his partnership with Dave Swarbrick. This followed an invitation from Carthy to join him on a solo album. They discovered their musical tastes matched. A year later Swarbrick joined Martin in London. Their success on the folk scene is well known. They continued to astound their audiences until Dave joined Fairport Convention and Martin returned to solo performances.



Martin Carthy

But Carthy's solo career was short-lived. He received an invitation to join Steeleye Span and recorded two albums with the group. The first of the two, "Please to See the King," is regarded as one of *the* folk classics. Carthy was also part of the Albion Band and now performs with the Watersons, the legendary Yorkshire family vocal group and with John Kirkpatrick, Howard Evans, Richard Chetham and Martin Brinsford in Brass Monkey.

The "Boston Phoenix" described Martin Carthy as "...balancing folk resonance and modern immediacy. Carthy has long been a model of wit and taste, hot licks and pointed narrative? Catch Martin Carthy as a part of a special Folk-Nite, presented by the Missouri Valley Folklife Society, at Parody Hall, April 6.

### The art of country

Chris Hillman's initiation to the rites of Nashville was nothing less than a baptism by fire. The bassist and founding member of America's quintessential '60s folk-rock band, The Byrds, had just completed work on "Sweetheart of the Rodeo" (CBS 9670, \$5.98 list), a classic blending of pop and country music. The album and the band were at their peak of popularity. The result was an invitation to perform at country music's Mecca, the Grand Ole Opry.

"We were a pop group that had just recorded a country album? Hillman recalled. "No one had done that before. When we started to play, they hooted and hollered. But we kept playing and they liked it and it all worked out okay. We definitely ruffled some feathers down there, but nothing collapsed. Nothing went away. We didn't destroy any tradition. People just weren't ready to have a West Coast rock band on their stage"

In the years since, with projects that included The Flying Burrito Brothers, Manassas and the Souther-Hillman-Furay Band, Hillman has

<complex-block>



Fri., April 17 Sat., April 18 Tues, April 21 Thur., April 23 Fri., April 24 Sat., April 25 Coming Up: The Stranglers The Big Beat Club Strategic Dance Initiative Nanci Griffith Martin Carthy Rank and File Joe King Carrasco with The Rubbermaids They Might Be Giants Strategic Dance Initiative The O'Kanes Jason and The Scorchers Christy Black China Crisis

Adrian Ballew

proven to be one of the strongest links in the melding of country music and rock and roll. Hillman's newest creation, The Desert Rose Band, who performs at Cassidy's B.F.Deal April 26, is proving to be another in a long line of critical successes. Band members Herb Pedersen, Jay Dee Maness, John Jorgenson, Bill Bryson and Steve Duncan, bring to the group a background that runs the musical gamut from traditional bluegrass to motion picture scores.

This all-star cast has provided Hillman with one of his most creative outlets to date. "They're a bunch of pros who like to play music," Hillman said of his current colleagues. "We have a good time when we do it and we do it as long as it's a good time. We're not making up false scenarios of truck driving or cheating songs. To me, country music is still an art form. What I do is an art form. That's the bottom line."

### On the Scottish vanguard

The name Battlefield Band has been at the forefront of the tremendous resurgence of Scottish music that has been going on since the mid<sup>2</sup>70's. They have pioneered the traditional use of such diverse instruments as organ, synthesizer, fiddle and bagpipes. With an approach that is ever-respectful of their tradition and yet allows for some startling originality, they have broken down many musical barriers and continue to reach an ever-widening audience. Since the early '80s, the band has received global recognition and numerous awards. (Their album "Home is Where the Van Is" even topped Phil Collins in the German record awards.) The Battlefield Band has opened for Mike Oldfield, toured America numerous times and played all the major festivals the world over. Playing a unique blend of new age and traditional Scottish folk music, the group's vocal and instrumental prowess combine with an inventiveness that makes their music exciting, creative and accessible to all. The quartet will perform?Saturday, April 18 at the Community Christian Church.

### Wild from the streets

Straight from the streets of Austin, Texas, a city that has become one of the tougher proving grounds for aspiring garage bands, come the Wild Seeds, a quartet that mixes spice with finesse and comes up with a truly charismatic and original sound.

From their loft-party/college-dance beginnings in '83, the Wild Seeds proved from the start to be one of Austin's better products. Though rooted in the same Tex-Mex, r&b and country traditions of Austin's countless other bar bands, the Seeds take things a step further by injecting enough muscular rock and roll and earthy pop to keep the band from falling into one of those neat little categories that can snuff out any sense of originality.

The group still knows how, when and why to raise the roof, but they also know when to pull back and offer a mellow ballad. This is continued next page





"Mr. Gray's epic outpouring...will touch and transform anyone who hears it...This film's arrival in the wake of Mr. Demme's pioneering concert film 'Stop Making Sense' and his jubilant, anarchic comedy 'Something Wild' completes quite an amazing triple play." -Janet Maslin, NEW YORK TIMES

"A STUNNING PIECE OF WORK."

"A brilliant tour-de-force. Gray takes the leap to the screen with dizzying comic and literary results...A one-of-a-kind entertainer whose time has come."

### "EXTRAORDINARY...THIS IS A PERFORMANCE IN WHICH EVERY LINE STINGS WITH IRONY." -Jerry Tailmer, NEW YORK POST



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WESTPORT RD.





Wild Seeds

a neat trick and aptly proven on their LP "Brave, Clean and Reverent" (Jungle Records 1009, \$8.98 list), which has made even the most jaded music publication take notice. Much of the group's success is due to lead vocalist/ guitarist Michael Hall's voice. He can take a familiar sound (Richie Valens and the Standells come to mind) and make it seem brand new. Have a ball with the Wild Seeds at the Grand Emporium April 2.

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**BABY LEROY \* \*** 

"ROCK & SOUL"

"RHYTHM & ROCK"

"VINTAGE ROCK"

\* \* 4 SKNNS \* \*

"CLASSICAL ROCK"

### CLUBS

Blayney's, 561-3747. See ad on page 18.

Blues Alley, 924-6400. Blues singer Barbara Carr comes to KC April 19 for an Easter Sunday show. Every other Fri. and Sat., it's Linda Shell and the Exact Change Band with guitarist Leon Estell.



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4 SKNNS

"CLASSICAL

4 SKNNS

ROCK N ROLL

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**REMEMBER**"

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DRESS

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"REGGAE ROCK'

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4 SKNNS

"CLASSICAL ROCK"

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**CONTRABAND \* \*** 

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**BABY LEROY \* \*** 

23

30

4 SKNNS

"CLASSICAL ROCK"

"REGGAE ROCK"

"R&B, FUNK, SOUL"

**APRIL 1987** 

KC BLUES

BAND JAM

KC BLUES

BAND JAM

KC BLUES

**BAND JAM** 

KC BLUES

**BAND JAM** 

KC BLUES

BAND JAM

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**NO BODIES BUSINESS** 

"ROCK, R&B & FUNK"

WESTSIDE

HEAT

"HOT CHICAGO BLUES BAND"

WARM UP ACTS
Mon Steve Epley
Tues. — Jeff Black
Thurs. — Allen White Fri. — Dave Krull
Sat. — Allen White
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COMING

\$47

ATTRACTIONS
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STREET CORNER
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HEAD HUNTERS
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DELRAYS
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HUSH-HUSH

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City Light, 444-6969. It's the Richard Ross Trio April 1-2, 7-9 and on the 23rd. Claude "Fiddler" Williams performs on the 3rd, and 11th. The Blue Note 6 play on the 4th, then cut back to their regular line-up as the Blue Note 4 on the 5th, 19th and 26th. The City Light Orchestra swings the blues on April 14-18, 21-22 and 28th through May 2.

Cassidy's BF Deal, 333-3336. See ad on page 19.

Cogburn's, (913) 843-9723.

Dudley's, 383-3333. Bishop Steele rocks the house April 10-11. Every Sun., Tues. and Thur. you can play bingo with \$1,200 given away nightly.

Epitaph, 931-6903. See ad on page 16.

Grand Emporium, 531-1504. See ad on page 20.

Harlings, 531-0303. Every Monday, see Separate Chex. Every Tues., it's Contra Band. Black Crack Revue performs April 1-3. On Sat., April 4, see Robin Flowers with The Bleachers. Jeff Black plays Wed., the 8th. On the 10th, it's Hollow Men. Privateer plays the 11th. Norton Canfield performs April 15, 22 and 29. On Fri. and Sat., April 17-18, it's New World. Unsung Heroes plays the weekend of the 24th and 25th. It's open mic night every Thur. Harris House, 531-1580. Inside every weekend, it's **Poppin' Fresh**. On the deck, it's **Contra Band** every Fri, and Sat. **The Slammers** play every Sat. afternoon at 3 p.m.

Hot Rocks Too, 561-6868. See ad on page 17.

Hurricane, 753-0884. See ad on page 23.

Jazzhaus, (913) 749-3320. Brave Combo rolls out the barrel on Wed., the 1. On the 2nd, it's Homestead Grays. The Mackender-Hunt Band plays April 3-4. Fuzzy Dice perform April 8-9. On April 10-11, it's Altered Media. It's Lonnie Ray's Blues Jam April 15 and again on the 29. The Paladins play April 16. On the 17th and 18, it's Screamin' Lee and the Rocktones. Red Zone plays April 22. Sax player Gary Foster blows into town on the 23. On April 24-25, it's Christy Lee and the Midnight Walkers. Common Ground performs April 30.

Jimmy's Jigger, 753-2444. See ad on page 19.

Liberty Hall, (913) 749-1912. See ad on page 15.

Lone Star, 561-1881. See ad on page 22.

Milton's, 753-9384. The Ron Vincent Quintet comes to KC for April 15-16. Every Fri. and Sat., it's Jazzmania.

Parody Hall, 474-7070. continued next page





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available at PennyLane Westport and Phoenix Books, presented by Renegade Productions. Call Harlings at 531-0303 for more information.

The Friends of Chamber Music present the **Beaux Arts Trio** at the Folly Theatre, Sat., April 4, 474-4444.

It's time for the UMKC Accordion Orchestra's annual spring concert, Sun., April 5 at White Recital h all. Call 276-2700 for more info.

Pianist **Ruth Senoa** performs at Rockhurst's Mabee Theatre on Thur, April 9. For more information, call 926-4127.

Crosscurrents present Win and Paul Grace, Fri., April 10 and Sparky Rucker on the 11th. Call 361-5147 for information.

The third annual On the Waterfront extravaganza, featuring the City Light Orchestra and the Elder Statesmen of Jazz, gets rolling Sat., April 11 with real gambling. Hmmm, jazz ... gambling ... this would be a great time to give away the coveted Milton A. Morris Jazz Heritage Award. This year's recipient will be KC's own Marilyn Maye. For info call 451-8345.

The electrifying **Kronos Quartet** return to the heartland for a performance at KU's Crafton-Preyer Theatre, Sun., April 12. Call (913) 864-3912.

The Lyric Opera of Kansas City present Verdi's "Falstaff," April 18, 20, 22 and 24. Gilbert and

Sullivan's "Pirates of Penzance" will be performed on April 25, 27, 29 and May 1. Call the Lyric at 471-7344.

The 1987 Marlboro Country Music Talent Roundup semifinals will be held April 20-23. Cooperating clubs include Club 95, 9601 Hickman Mills Drive on the 20th, Ms. Kitty's, 1421 Merriam Lane in KCK on the 21st, New Country, 126 S. Clairborne in Olathe on the 22nd and the General's Inn, 8300 Blue Parkway on the 23rd. The finals will be held at New Country on the 28th. For further information, call 531-2483.

Jazz vocalist Bobby McFerrin and his father,

opera star **Robert McFerrin**, perform at UMKC's White Recital Hall, Wed., April 22. For ticket information, call the UMKC Box Office at 276-2700.

The Wichita Jazz Festival runs April 24-26, featuring Phil Woods, Stanley Turrentine, Diane Schuur, Joe Sample and a host of others. For information call (316) 263-4717.

Sax man Gary Foster and pianist Bill Dobbins perform with UMKC's 12 O'clock Jazz Band, Sat., April 25 at White Recital Hall. 276-2700. The Friends of Chamber Music present the Tokyo String Quartet, Thur., April 30 at the continued next page







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then be detonated and the young lady will, we're told, emerge unscathed, proving that "Nice Girls Don't Explode"

ART At the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in April, a showing of prints by Jim Dine opens the

25th. "Wanderlust-Photos from the Hallmark Collection" runs throughout the month. Prints by Robert Cottingham are on display through May. "Mounted Oriental Porcelain" runs through April.

### MISCELLAN

Hey, it's the Ice Capades, "America's #1 Family Show," at Kemper Arena April 1-5. In addition to the usual glitz and glitter, this year's edition includes a skating Teddy Ruxpin and a spectacle entitled "The Beatles Remembered." However, the real highlight will be the performance of the Ice Ca-nines, billed as "a parade of pooches who provide the 'paws that refreshes".' Tickets are available at all CATS outlets or through dial-a-tic, 576-7676.

In conjunction with the Kronos Quartet concert at KU's Crafton-Prever Theatre April 11, is a lecture at Liberty Hall in Lawrence. This free forum, entitled "Living Composers Communicating with their Artists and Audiences," is from 1:30 to 3 p.m. that afternoon. Panelists





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