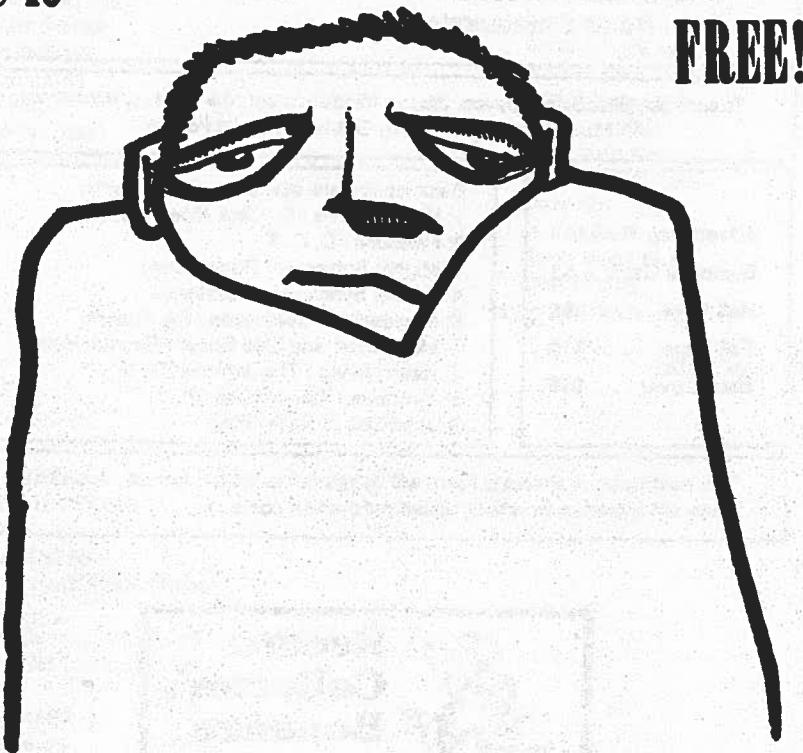


RHETORIC FARM

issue 10



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POETRY FICTION REVIEWS and the GRAPEVINE

RHETORIC FARM

po box 43171 tucson, az 85733-3171

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Jordan Gruener
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Steven Kranz

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Horse

The cop parks his transportation on the sidewalk outside my window, this long haired kid walks up to the cop, asks the cop who picks up the turds the horse leaves behind, the cop looks at the kid, says why, you looking for a job?

-Larry Oberc

32

Talkin jus talkin bout six ft under thinkin I got me all this shit to do and these people they're talkin bout bein six ft under scarin this poor boy half to death don't need that kind of shit on my birthday.

-Larry Oberc

Tucson Skids

I cruise slow down south Sixth Street

stare through stubbled and spattered alcoholic trances

dirt glazed with years of bone-close life and sidewalk nights

try to imagine the toddler

shampooed and powdered

taking that first wobbling step

some mother was so proud of

Tanque Verde Sunrise

I get up early

nurse the day's difficult birth

over jagged mountains

-Sheryl L. Nelms

-Sheryl L. Nelms

Poetry

Non-Fiction

Killing the Fine Art of Lounge Music

by Jordan Gruener

Walk through the double doors and the smell is inherently plastic. The lobby has that middle-class hotel odor: antiseptic blue with a hint of rotting food. Passing over the concrete threshold is a shock. The feeling is unreal as I leave the smell of car exhaust and replace it with a hallway permeated with similar carcinogens. Here, plastic trees grow in gravel planters.

In the lounge, curtains of brass chain hang over dark green abstract paintings of women playing guitars. While Cass Preston plays trumpet, a mirrored ball hangs motionless over the vacant dance floor. Preston is old and balding. He claps his hands. He keeps time.

This could be Friday or Saturday night, it doesn't really matter because Cass Preston plays the lounge of the Executive Inn every weekend. He's a permanent fixture. The caring item, the guy who performs, a man who doesn't ask any questions. He's just the motion. The sad thing that starts a tired mirrored ball spinning.

The cocktail waitress checks ID. A Bloody Mary and Vodka Tonic. Two drinks are \$4.25, slightly expensive, but for the atmosphere, in a slightly twisted way, it seems justified. Like oddities at a circus side-show, this '70s time-warp is worth the price. I almost like it here. But I feel stiff, uncompromising and unhealthy.

The waitress serves the drinks and the slit that runs up her polyester black and green dress separates and shows a sickening expanse of cellulite. I look again.

One booth away a woman ends a story -- "Then you do something else for awhile - so I did." The conversation becomes unintentionally sketchy as she sets her drink on one of the room's many crescent shaped tables. The black vinyl booths. She sits straight-backed, proud.

It's hard to imagine that only four or six miles away lays the desert. Where there is no formica, crescent shaped tables or Cass Preston.

His jazz whines in the plastic lounge. Preston mumbles into the microphone. Nothing he says is understandable except, "How are we doing here?" He says it again and again. The phrase becomes a queer statement of fact. Most here are not fine.

One couple away, a gray businessman/pimp-type says, "Nail me to the walls, see if I care" to some woman. Impressed with his machismo, she giggles. He hooks her with the kinked mind of an adolescent. He's an operator, a slick throwback of polyester and gold chains. No one smokes.

The gray man speaks again, "I spit up. I wet my didy and everything." He wants the cocktail waitress to vouch for his virility; he wants the waitress, he says, naked and in Wesson oil. This should impress the woman. She giggles again. Not fine.

Preston moves on stage. He sings a blues number in a thick voice - "I want a short mama with meat shakin' on her bones." There are some great rolls on the piano, then the set ends. "A pause for the cause," Preston says as he leaves the stage. He stops at each table and says Hello. At one, he sits, chats and someone buys him a drink.

Saturday night, 10:45. Everything feels like it's falling apart. The bartender is a little tense and asks for ID by saying "You know what I wanna see." The regulars find this a reason to laugh. After the excitement, they lean off their stools and look past the fake brick arch to see who the bar's next customer will be. From 20 or 30 feet off two men speculate. Will it be someone they know? No, it's only me again, another stranger, a person to see through. They can get back to talking about dog racing and stare haphazardly into their tall glasses of Budweiser once the initial commotion subsides.

"This night is dragging on," the bartender says. She's right, the air conditioner is pounding away somewhere keeping this blackened place cool, outside it's still around 90. The desert is unwilling to give up its heat as easily as this lounge does. And as the heat makes the day drag on, the talk of potlucks and dead friends make the Executive Inn's lounge a perpetual nightmare.

Earlier a man came and spoke in cliche's to the bartender. The guy said her legs were like a cloudy day - he wished it would clear up so he could see more. It was one of the better lines she had heard, and told him so.

Preston cops a good line too, but first, between songs, he closes his eyes; it's a psychic transfer of information to the band. He snaps his fingers to the as-yet unheard beat. Then "New York, New York" begins. Preston sings and gets a few people in the audience to clap along with him. "These vagabond shows are longing to stray." This seems more like a dying ground for the working class than anything else. The vagabond shows have nowhere to go.

The bartender moves unsteadily on her four-inch heels. She sits most of the night just outside the bar area getting up only to fill the orders of the lounge's only waitress, which she does often. She sits and talks about homosexuality in an unbelieving way. "I guess it didn't work out with his boyfriend. You heard me right, his boyfriend."

The bar itself curves around like a giant black question mark. Nothing at the Executive Inn answers any questions. I package everything as a separate thought. A small piece of information. A few dancers move doggedly around the dance floor as the moon moves in the sky outside. At 1 a.m. Cass Preston and the individuals will take a final "Pause for the cause" and the question mark will remain unanswered, but clean.

I don't stay until closing. Instead the orange Volkswagen starts in its cranky way and I head east on Drachman. The night is cool, the temperature has sunk to 85. Jeff Conally of the Lyres is screaming something from the VW's tape deck. Head down Ft. Lowell road at 55, left on Tucson, across Prince to some residential area that takes space the Rillito should fill. Drive down the center line at 60 with the Lyres singing "in another place" through the burnt-out speakers behind the back seat. Make a right down a dirt road and try to miss the pot-holes. Dead End. Not fine. Looking up, I can almost see a question mark where the Big Dipper should be. And near that, the tired spinning of the moon.

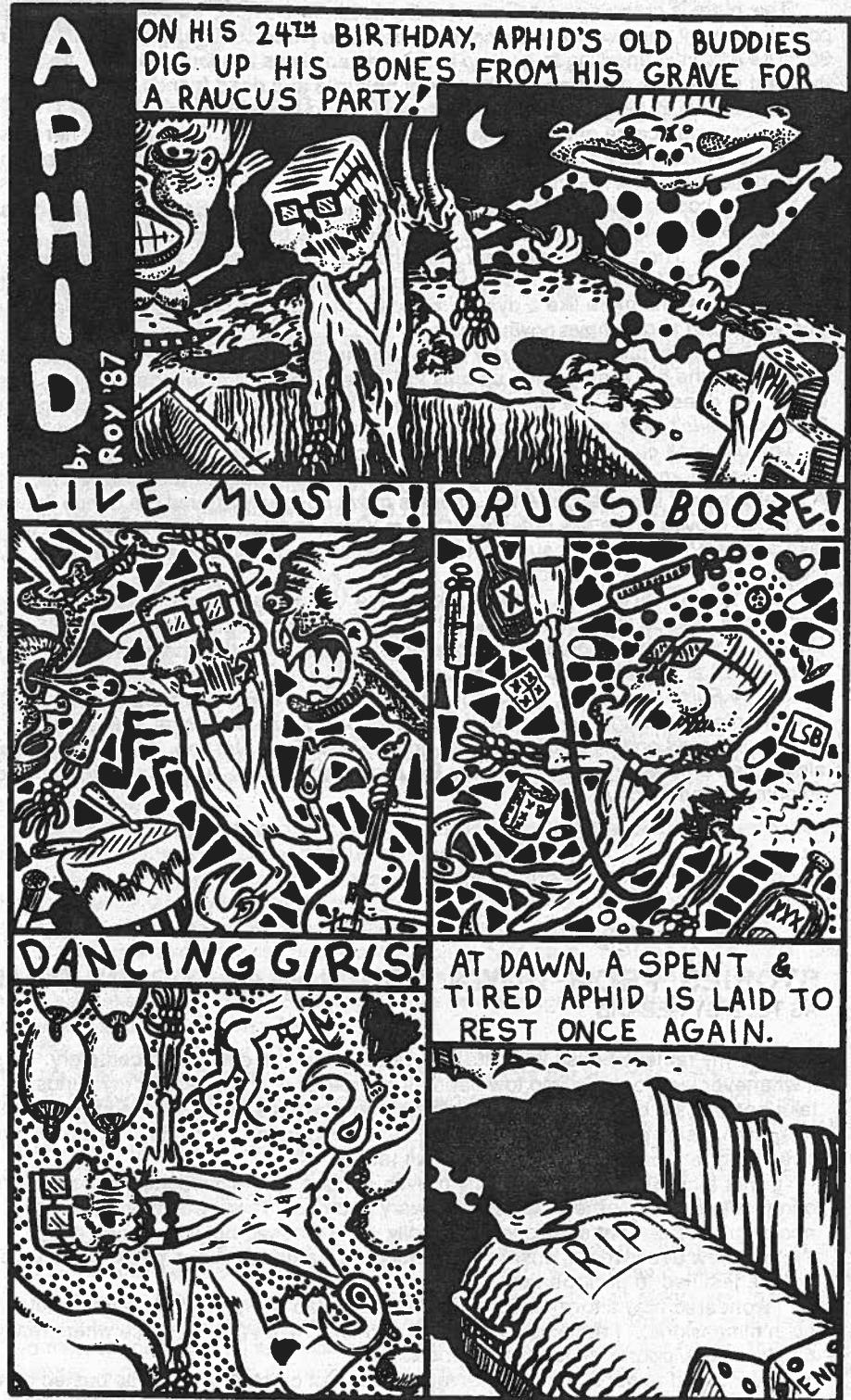
STORIES FROM DOWN SOUTH--WAY DOWN SOUTH AS TOLD BY REBARB

Near my father's house in Santa Cruz, Bolivia was an overgrown cemetery. I'd see it whenever we would go into town and, of course, one afternoon I let my curiosity take possession of me. I found myself walking down the dusty road, a strange feeling of apprehension growing in my stomach: the nervousness of a tourist going too far, of a foreigner trespassing some unknown taboo.

It was a children's cemetery, tiny graves marked with tiny wooden crosses painted bright colors, their corners carved in flowery patterns. There was a profusion of above-ground cement sepulchers originally white-washed but now turned grey. Weeds grew everywhere, pushing up amongst a garden of tissue-paper flowers. Beer bottles testified to illicit parties.

I wondered how a town such as Santa Cruz could warrant a children's cemetery of such dimensions... I remembered that I was in the Third World, a place where many children have poorer diets than American pets.

I wandered about until I came across a four foot crypt. The end was busted open and I peered in. I saw the bottom half of a small coffin and a torn-up boy's shirt.



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"A Place Where the New and Old Twist!"

LOVE OUR MEAT PUPPETS FOREVER

Beyond punk, beyond funk. Beyond Phoenix Ay-Zee, and definitely beyond this planet. We asked local legend Jeff Farr (a.k.a Jeff Colt) and personal friend of the Meat Puppets to pop the questions. Bass man Cris Kirkwood answered.

Interview by Jeff Farr. Photo by Naomi Petersen

Sometimes bands alienate their audience, other times it seems like the audience is with the band. I guess you guys do both of those things.

Well, the Puppets always do what we want to do. We go in, play the music that we think is right at the time. We make it as best as we can at the time. We put it out and other than that, it's made. We're behind it 100% and anybody who doesn't like any of our stuff can suck my dick. We have sat around and thought about it and we haven't decided to try to play this little game that's available to be played. We'd rather just live the lives we want to live and get by in the world doing something that we want to do. It's music. It's nice. It's not a mean pursuit.

Do you see yourselves as being different from all the other rock bands?

I don't really see us being that way, but we are. I just don't believe in anything, if you will. I don't buy any of this human bullshit. I mean, I'm willing to use the language because it's helpful, and I'm not really that creative of a person to be 100% "on" all the time. You know, living my ideals. But my ideal is that it's all a joke. We've all decided to call ourselves people and get by but it's completely and absolutely up in the air to me. Rock and roll doesn't exist, people don't exist. It's all talking dirt. And the dirt's merely dried up sunshine and the sunshine is melted water, and on and on.

Are you guys going to sign to a major label?

We got approached by a few major labels before this record [Ed: Their latest LP is *Mirage* on SST records] and that's such heavy business shit it's like immediately you just see what it involves. It's a really weird power game. They try to get in a position of authority over the band and we didn't dig it. We're not a young enough band, we're not inexperienced enough, we know what we're about too much. Essentially, the Meat Puppets is our baby. We're not about to sell it for the wrong price or for anything other than perfection. We'll send it to the most expensive schools and the best colleges and let it drive around in the nicest cars we can afford, but we won't sell it off to the black market. We rule. We're the best live band going. We make the best records anywhere, quack, quack. We know how to tour really well, we have all our music down, we do all the artwork... everything. If somebody's going to get us on their label, they'd have to be just as for real as we are.

You guys are lucky to have done so well, living in Phoenix.

We busted ass entirely. It hasn't been a fluke in any way. We're getting ready to tour in about a week and a half and it will be our eighth national tour. "National" meaning all around the country. Not counting the probably hundred times we're gone to L.A. Tons of times. So we are, in a way, an L.A. band, and our L.A. fans--we're talking rabid, we're talking insanity!! Last time we played in L.A., we played at the Roxy and the manager after the show's going, "You guys set an attendance record. We haven't had to pack that many people in here since the Clash played in 1980." I could have walked off the stage and walked on the people, their heads we're that close together.

Has (drummer) Derrick Bostrum been taking lessons?

He's just been practicing a lot. I have a new house and it's got a garage around the back that we've converted into a studio and he's just had the chance for the first time in years to practice alone, because the drums are a noisy instrument. We still can't make noise at night because it still is fairly noisy even though we soundproof it real good. Sounds good, doesn't he? I think [the drumming on *Mirage*] is Derrick's best drumming by far on record. It's like shit-we're getting really good! Just playing together, we're getting better and better. We practice quite a lot. Derrick just doesn't



They're willing to use the language that most humans do.
(L to R: Cris Kirkwood, Derrick Bostrum, Kurt Kirkwood)

pursue it like me and Curt do. Me and Curt are both really good drummers. I still play keyboards and I've gotten better and better. Me and Curt both play any of the wind instruments. We're just really versatile musicians and Derrick has never really jumped onto it like that. It's been more of an art thing for him. He's a conceptualist real heavily, he adds that side to it.

How do you guys keep your personal lives out of the weirdness of rock and roll?

Well, Curt's got a family. We're not stupid people. Drugs are nowhere as far as that's concerned. None of us are into the chemical bullshit side of life. That's all obviously bullshit. It's like really bad heavy metal to me. It's not even these creepy heavy metal schoozlers selling teenagers shitty music. It's acutally fuck mobsters that are selling teenagers shit that will kill them, at really jacked up prices. So we don't have any of that shit going on in our thing and that's a big part of the rock and roll lifestyle. "Keep wasted, man." I suppose that's what you're talking about.

No, I mean when I'm around rock and roll, I get a weird feeling, like in bars.

There's no avoiding that. That has completely taken over. I live by that. I sleep on my living room floor, I don't watch T.V. I have a neon that says "Fuck You." You know, fuck it. I'm a SLAVE to rock and roll. That weirdness, it reigns. That shit's unavoidable. That's why we do it.

What do you think rock and roll is going to be like in the future? Do you think it will change or anything?

Sure. I have seen the future of rock and roll. And it is the Meat Puppets.

Lonely Is an Eyesore
Various Artists
4AD

RECORD REVIEWS

Another compilation for 4AD, with stupendous graphics as usual. But these multi-layered graphics, impressive as they are, have finally reached the point where they're a detriment to the consumer. The cover lists over forty artists and the thickness, weight and hefty price led me to expect a massive grouping of artists in a two, possibly three disc set. The cold truth: one disc, nine artists and a package and glossy page enclosure of beautifully enigmatic art and text. But no Harold Budd, no Lydia Lunch, no X-Mal Deuchland...

Caveat aside, This Mortal Coil and Coulorbox contribute marvelous songs and "Crushed" may be the most proto Cocteau Twins track ever released. Look for the compact disc's less complete, more accurate listing of artists and songs.

-Ess Krantz

You're Living All Over Me
Dinosaur
SST

The noise legion grows, and SST keeps signing 'em up.

True to noise-blitz form, this Amherst trio began on Homestead, but this 2nd LP shows a more concerned intention than their self-titled debut. Predictably, the words are muddled, so the focus falls on the wail-and-scrape sound they rely upon. "The Lung" comes on subtle and innocent and ends up trying to claw its way out of itself. "Tarpit" is Joe Walsh imitating Kurt Kurtwood imitating a nuclear toothache as felt by the tooth. "Poledo" is cut-and-paste montage that stabs into the acoustic centerpiece it is built upon.

They don't raise the roof--they cave it in. Great stuff and not to be missed.

P.S. They have just changed their name to please the appropriately titled San Fran band of the same name. Look for their new name, Dinosaur Jr.

-Peter Catalanotte

Phoenix 99
River Roses
Monsoon Records

On this self-released three song EP, these local stalwarts do themselves proud. If you've never seen 'em play, then where the heck you been anyway?

Chris Holiman and Caitlin von Schmidt write some of the finest bittersweet melodic pop songs imaginable, and when you add guitar whiz Gene Ruley and natch tub-thumper Splat, you've got a piece of wax so incredibly great that you'd be a retard not to own it. These guys can hold their own with anyone. The mix is impeccable and crystalline, the playing's wondrous, so go get it. Now.

Write to: Monsoon Records, 835 E. 7th Street, Tucson, AZ 85719.

-Al Perry

Polkatharsis
Brave Combo
Rounder

Even if you think that polkas aren't "hep" and that accordians are "square," you really oughta give this record a try. You'll be won over by the energy and heart these ho-dads introduce into the genre.

From straight polkas, to chicken-scratch, to weird East European folk music, and to a buncha off-the-wall kinds of stuff most people haven't even heard of, this album delivers solid fun and is a must for anyone seeking different-sounding musical entertainment. The quality of the musicianship is very high, and if you missed 'em when they played here (twice!) then you really missed out, bub.

-Al Perry

Exploded View
Steve Tibbets
ECM

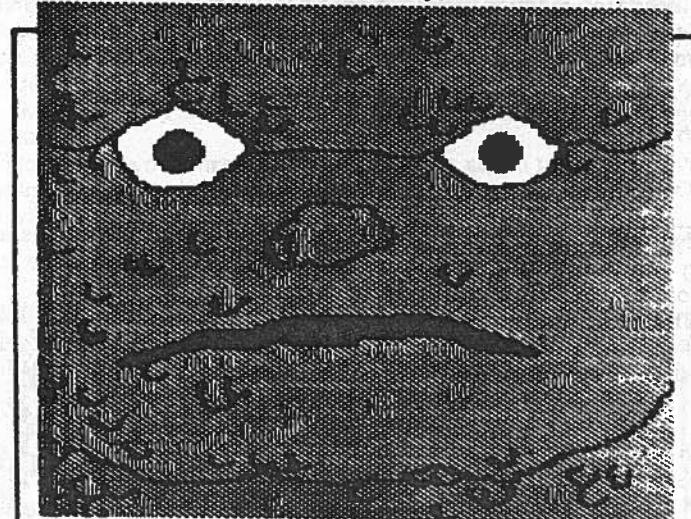
This is guitarist/tape manipulator Steve Tibbett's fifth LP and his third for ECM, but don't be sidetracked by the label's (mistaken) space age image. There are a few jazz inflections here and moments of peaceful movement and drone, but the primary component is Tibbett's feedback over disintegrating riffs.

His musical vocabulary has radically increased since his last release, but the big surprise here is the extensive use and superb control of feedback. There is also a larger focus on guitar technique and less concentration on composition, so the power here is the gut-busting, string wringing, amp squealing, peaking sparkling arcs across metal chasms and compelling rhythms.

Tibbets has said that his gift is for tape manipulation, and the evidence of this is so deft as to indicate a master's touch. Percussion phenomenon Marc Anderson has simplified the patterns he's playing, not to mention the lessening of exotic instruments, and still comes up with a vibrant, interactive backing tapestry. Ultimately, the entire work gains power with repeated listenings.

-Ess Kranz

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Safety In Numbers
David Van Tieghem
Private Music

David Van Tieghem is a rarity. He's a percussionist with a sensitivity for melody. But unlike Don Henley, another of that rare ilk, Van Tieghem displays this talent with inventive sound manipulations of strange and ordinary instruments played in an odd manner.

Above and beyond the more familiar batterie, he's credited with metal ashtrays, lamp parts, ray gun and plastic mailing tube. The music alternately invokes Daniel Lentz, Morton Subotnik, Brian Eno circa *On Land*, and Steve Reich. He played on Reich's *Music for 18 Musicians* and has worked with Laurie Anderson as well (Anderson's producer Roma Baran co-produces here).

Van Tieghem works from those influences and furthur on *Safety in Numbers*, all with a sure hand and ear. In fact, he goes one furthur in multi-media since over half of the album is derived from commissioned ballet scores and original Broadway productions.

Write to: Private Music, 220 East 23rd St., New York, NY 10010.

-Steven Kranz

Fire Town
Fire Town
Atlantic

Friendly, sure-hit LP with jangly strummin' and crispy drummin'. Their only fault is not knowing that the American Mystique is the Big Cliche'. I dare you to count how many times they mention fire (as in passion) and highways (as in loneliness).

They haven't yet reached the sickening Mellencamp extreme, so let's hope they can redeem themselves with an even better follow-up.

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Crash
Flower
B Records

Tidy little 3-songer from this New York quartet. Mostly, it sounds as if they are driving a beat-up Ford LTD down creepy Manhattan alleys while the vocalist belts the lyrics out the window.

Mean, nasty and, oddly enough, danceable. But I take heart in the fact that they sound like they'd attack the crowded dance floor anyway.

Write to: B Records, 122 Washington Place, New York, NY 10014.

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Tritonian Nash Vegas Polyester Complex
No Trend
Touch and Go

Because they've been around for close to forever, the No Trends realize they have to move on or shut up.

To remedy this, they attempt heavy-weighted instrumentals ("One Under Parr," "Bel-Pre Rising"), horn-charted funk ("Overweight Baby Boom Critter"), and slick, over-produced crap-rock (everything else).

They've made some gems in the past, and there isn't anything on here that isn't halfway salvageable. But one wishes they'd get off their collective butts and push things as hard as they used to.

-Jayne Hybrid

Famous Blue Raincoat
Jennifer Warnes
Cypress Records

Yes, the same Jennifer Warnes who won an Oscar and a Grammy for her duet with Joe Cocker on "Up Where We Belong (Theme from 'An Officer and a Gentleman'). The same Warnes who had the MOR hit "Right Time of the Night." The Warnes who was often dubbed the Ronstadt soundalike.

This album--her first in seven years--establishes Warnes as a big-leaguer in both vocal ability and attitude, and shows Ronstadt to be back-pedaling in both orientation and phrasing. *Famous Blue Raincoat* is an album of songs by Leonard Cohen, a Canadian singer/songwriter/novelist/poet, long regarded as a consummate craftsman and morbid gloomster (the latter not an entirely accurate appellation).

Warnes puts bite and passion into the delivery, inhabiting these superbly constructed songs rather than treating them as sonic icons to be admired and handled gingerly, as Ronstadt has with *What's New*, etc. Cohen's songs deal with adult realities and the wisdom that time presses on all of us, and Warnes takes her stand in these songs. She's comfortable with these pieces and with more than able support by Robben Ford, David Lindley and Roscoe Beck (and cameos by the likes of Stevie Ray Vaughn and Van Dykes Parks), she shows Cohen to be a master and herself no slouch, either. Yeah, I remember Ronstadt--she's the Jennifer Warnes soundalike, right?

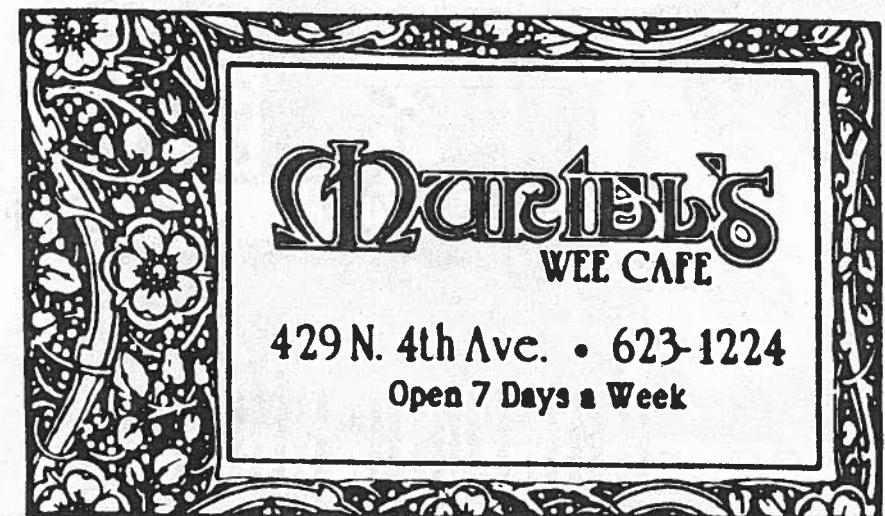
-Ess Kranz

Happy Nightmare Baby
Opal
SST

It seems fitting to end the 20th Anniversary of the Summer of Love with the release of this swirlly haze of a record. Kendra Smith (ex-Dream Syndicate) and David Roback (ex-Rain Parade) have made some impressive discs in the past, but this makes you wonder what was slipped into their drink. Witness some of the song titles: "Supernova"... "Magick Power"... If I didn't know better, I'd mistake it for the Dukes of Stratosphere's latest!

But it's hard to deny the mesmerizing effect the whole album takes on, even if the lyrics tend to stray from this galaxy ("She knows the sun... she knows the moon... she knows the wind..." from "Supernova"). This vinyl drug can be addictive.

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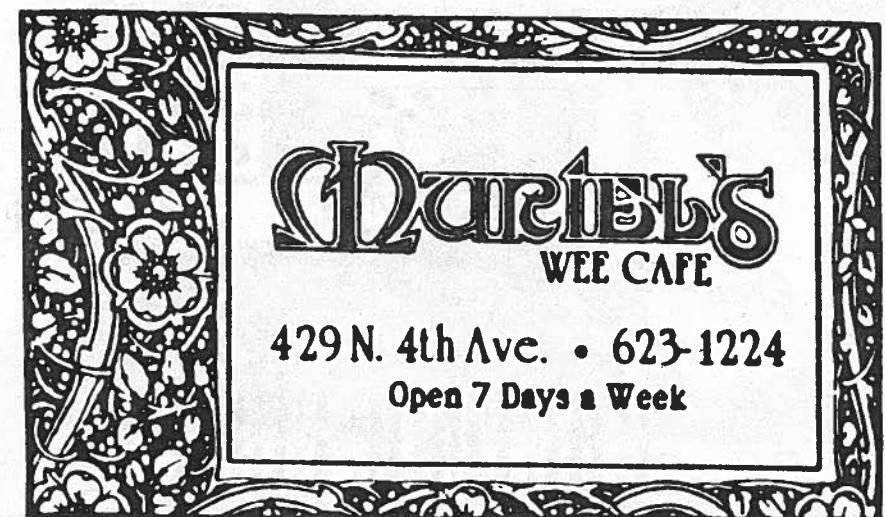
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AL'S KASSETTE KORNER

by Al Perry

The humble little cassette tape's popularity has increased dramatically in the last few years, and while records are still considered the most legitimate musical medium, many artists now prefer to release their music on the inexpensively produced cassette. Making a record requires a considerable cash outlay, not to mention the headaches of distribution, etc. Instead, one can cheaply make a small run of tapes, and get their music heard by others. And although they are considered more "small-time" than records, those artists who choose to release their music solely within the cassette format are no less talented or creative than their vinyl counterparts.

A quick scan of the pages of *Option or Sound Choice* reveals a thriving cassette underground. Within this, you will encounter virtually every style of music imaginable. And with the advent of cassette multi-track technology, the home studio is now a reality for everyone.

I have traded tapes through the mail for a few years now, and what follows is a brief overview of my personal favorites. I limited the selection to ten, which means I have left more than a few out, and I am not even including some of the great local releases I've heard. Maybe later.



1) **Don Campau**--Don's oddball vocal style combined with his cool guitar and keyboard work (as well as a variety of other exotic instruments) make him one of my all-time faves. He's got catchy songs, good lyrics. The double-tape *Pinata Party* makes a swell introduction to the joys of hometaping, as it features Don's collaborations with Dino Dimuro, Ken Clinger, Mark Hanley, and others. He also produces a radio show which is dedicated exclusively to the work of hometapers. Write to: Lonely Whistle Music, P.O. Box 23952, San Jose, CA 95153.

2) **Ken Clinger**--Mostly spoken vocals which recall fairy tales and animal stories over nifty Casio keyboard work. His tapes are the most friendly and charming around, although they also reveal a moody, brooding side. Unique and very unusual, *KC 8* and *KC 14* are highly recommended. Write to: Bovine Productions, 1012 E. Carson #3, Pittsburgh, PA 15203-1110.

3) **Dino Dimuro**--Influenced by Frank Zappa and Captain Beefheart, Dino is a quality songwriter whose lyrics are quite humorous and whose guitar playing is spectacular. The sound quality on his tapes is incredible, the best. Original and fun, he has a large catalog of releases available, including the brilliant *I'll Be Good* and *Snoutburger*. Write to: Phantom Soil, 578 N. Gower St., Los Angeles, CA 90004.

4) **Richard Franeckl**--Formerly of the nerd-punk band the Shemps (who have a cassette release), he's got quite a few tapes out, both solo, and with his current project F/i, who have a great sound: rock rhythm section with noisy electronic noodling on top, spiced with an occasional wah-wah guitar. His solo stuff is electronic ambient kinda drone music. Rich also publishes a massive contact list of other similarly inclined artists the world over. Write to: Uddersounds, P.O. Box 27421, Milwaukee, WI 53227.

5) **Randy Greif**--Falling into the arty, spooky, electronic category, he uses creative sampling to produce a rich and varied sound. His *Lost Contact* tape sounds like a scary tribal soundtrack to a bad trip in hell. Sound quality is excellent. Write to: Swinging Axe Productions, P.O. Box 199, Northridge, CA 91328.

6) **Mark Hanley**--Mostly instrumental, with the occasional found tape loop, his music is for the most part dreamy and psychedelic, but occasionally upsetting and noisy. Repeated bass figures and drumbox anchor his incredible excursions on guitar. Everything I've heard from Mark is really great, and he's extremely gifted on the six-strings. Write to: KX4, 143 Rosemont, Austintown, OH 44515.

7) **Al Margolis**--If, Bwana is the name of Al's project and it's pretty noisy and electronic. He distributes a large catalog of work by himself and others, including a great tape by locals PS Bingo. Definitely worth checking into. Write to: Sound of Pig, 28 Bellingham Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023.

8) **Joe Newman**--His vehicle is called the Rudy Schwartz Project, and features really great musicianship, sound, and hilarious lyrics. I'd say it compares favorably to the Bonzo Dog Band. *Bowling for Appliances* is a work of genius, a wild satire of consumerism, the media, and suburbia that is one of my favorite tape releases ever. Write to: 5404 Avenue F., Austin, TX 78751.

9) **Nick**--Nick's tapes are homey and charming and get better and better with each release since his beginnings as a hometaper a few years back. He hates poodles and his *Magick Television* is very good. Write to: Lucky Baby, RR2, Box 644, Linton, IN 47441.

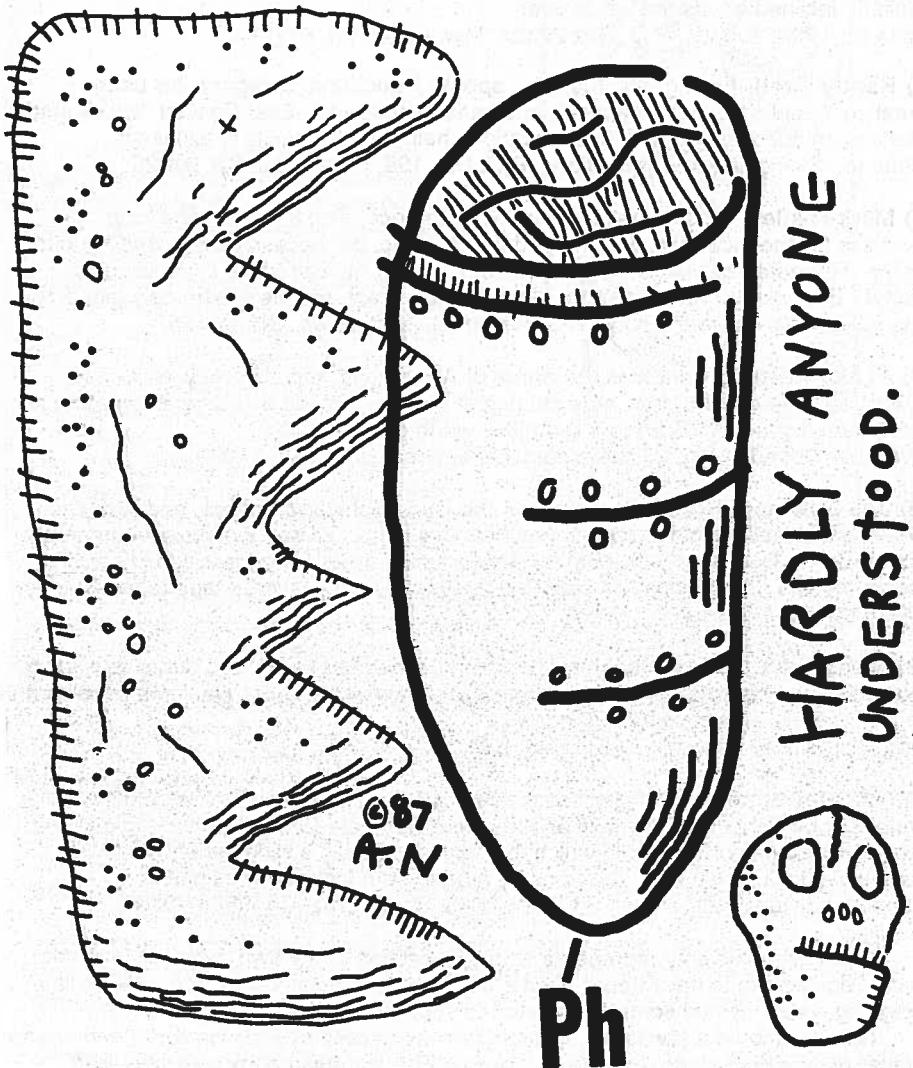
10) **Anatol Sucher**--This guy has made a great solo tape as well as putting out releases by Asbestos Rockpyle and his band Barnacle Choir, which chronicles the dark side of the suburbs from which they come. He has a wide variety of tapes available, including a very good one by a band from Iceland, of all places. Write to: Warpt West Music, P.O. Box 8045, Santa Cruz, CA 95061-8045.

Like I said, this only represents a small selection of my own personal favorites, and I don't claim to have heard even a tiny fraction of what's out there. With a little digging, you may find something suited to your own tastes.

I also distribute a few tapes, including a new release by Rich Hardesty and one by bitter genius Fred North, as well as tapes by Fish Karma and my own solo stuff. Forthcoming is a compilation tape of many of the above artists performing cover versions of each other's material.

I really enjoy trading tapes through the mail, so if you have one, why not send it? And, if you would like more information on these or any other artists, why not write me:

Al Perry
P.O. Box 40421
Tucson, AZ 85717



-Andy Nukes

a

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Books

William Burroughs: An Essay

Alan Ansen
Water Row Press

Alan Ansen is a minor figure from the Beat Generation, best known as an acquaintance of William Burroughs. This 45-page pamphlet shows that Ansen is making a living out of his brief touch with greatness, scraping money off of Burroughs' corpse - and Bill not even dead yet. It's generally recognized (most forcefully by Ansen himself) that Ansen wrote the first serious critical work on Burroughs, "Anyone Who Can Pick Up A Frying Pan Owns Death," in *Big Table* magazine in 1959. Yet, "Frying Pan" is quoted in its entirety and that takes almost a third of *WBAE*. Two other previously published essays are quoted as well, with very little new analysis or criticism of Burroughs' more recent work. In fact, Burroughs' *The Place of Dead Roads*, published in 1983, is the latest work Ansen refers to, yet adds no new insight. Save yourself five bucks and buy *The Burroughs File* (City Lights, 1984) which reprints dozens of rare Burroughs essays, as well as critical notes and reminiscences by James Brauerholz and Paul Bowles, and reprints Ansen's "Frying Pan" too.

Write to: Water Row Press, P.O. Box 438, Sudbury, MA 01776
Or: City Lights Books, 261 Columbus Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94133
-Phil Lipkin

Count Zero

William Gibson
Ace Science Fiction (paperback)

The field of science fiction is at once so broad based and limited that seldom have popular novels also been the cutting edge novels which stretch the genre's bounds noticeably. In fact, since Philip K. Dick's passing, there hasn't been a viable contender (J.G. Ballard's too avant-garde, i.e. non-linear; Harlan Ellison's true genius is for the shorter forms; and Orson Scott Card and Spider Robinson are lesser lights by an order of magnitude) until last year. That was when SF's Triple Crown of the Hugo, Nebula and Philip K. Dick Awards went to William Gibson's first novel, *Neuromancer*.

That book detailed the future with brand name precision and nonchalance, a future where the criminal underground and corporate entities battled in and around a cyberspace matrix generated and maintained in a computer consciousness and accessed via a jack implanted in the base of the skull. The concept of nationalities are obsolete; economic interests are banded together now. And Gibson depicted in *Neuromancer* enough detail in an alternately upscale/downtown gritty realism, that this follow up is welcomed as it further details the same universe.

However, *Count Zero*'s ambitions are a step more than the first novel's and there are failures and missteps. Yet, these are easily dismissed when one gets caught up in Gibson's tarnished flashy prose and propelled along disparate paths through this cyberspace, trying to decipher how these threads are knotted together. Without giving away too much, let me at least say that the final knot is merely very good whereas the skill and thought leading up to it are excellent. A subtle distinction, but it's a subtle disappointment which ends the book. Even so, a marvelous book and recommended to those who thought science fiction dead and regretted it.

-Phil Lipkin



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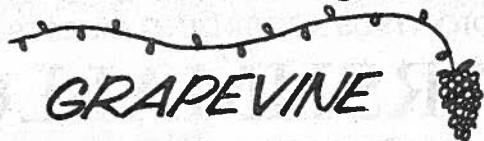


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GRAPEVINE

Ain't no mountain high enough: A round of applause to **Tina Evans, Gerard Schumacher and Dennis Prieto** for organizing the mammoth **Baja Arizona Pop Festival**. Turnout was more than overwhelming, and you can bet nobody left without having a helluva time. Highlights: Dianetic dudes **The Infinite Beauties** leaping about in musical ecstasy; the ghost of **Jerry Garcia** (you mean he's still alive?) reborn in **The Pelicans**; and **Odin** (of post-punk Viking combo **The Host**) volunteering his vocals to **The Cattle** and **Las Cruces** whether they wanted him to or not. Plans are already underway for the next one to be held sometime this coming spring... Another top show was **Thee Fourgiven** August 1st at Club Congress. Frontman **Rich Coffee** ripped and snorted, rhythm man **Bela Horvath** was hell on a drum stool, and bassist **Ray Flores IV** told bad jokes. **Lee Joseph** guested some cuts, as did **Candy del Mar**-fiance to **Coffee** and current bass gal for **The Cramps**... Those masters of mayhem **Lethal Gospel** will come through town again sometime in early 1988, so mark those calenders... Have you been wondering what is going on in that new leather shop on Fourth Avenue? Wonder no more! It is the first instillation of what will be an ambitious attempt to vitalize the famous street into a happening place. Hip founders **Arki Wolff and English Cathy** will open the to-be-called **Tucson Entertainment Center** with a step-by-step plan: First, the leather boutique, then they'll add a small cafe. When it's finished, the whole thing will resemble a massive musical metropolis with a recording studio, a booking agency, and a musician's contact service. Whew! Anyone interested in getting to the bottom of this can see it for themselves (it is ironically located in the old **Tumbleweeds** spot, across from **Value Village**). Or you can call 629-0222 and scoop the poop... The new **Naked Prey** album should be in the stores as you read this. Titled **40 Miles from Nowhere** and produced by **Randy Burns** (who has twiddled knobs for such biggies as **Megadeth**), it features a roarin' rendition of that cowboy classic "Whichita Lineman"... **Marshmallow man Tim Gassen** says forthcoming acts he may bring to town (though probably not to Club Congress) include **Firehouse** (in November) and quite possibly the afore-mentioned **Cramps** (in December or January)! Of course, this is subject to change, but you did hear it here first... Speaking of, the **Overcoat** and the **Cattle** are on a new European compilation **Raw Cuts**... **Kelle Nolan**, the gal who books gigs for the **U of A** as well as the **Tucson Gardens** and the spanking new **Mudbugs**, plans on bringing in an army of acts, including: **Redd Kross, The Call, Faith No More, The Fleshtones**, and - cross your fingers - the **Meat Puppets**... **The Sidewinders** will finally release an album sometime this winter. The title is -- are you ready for this? - **Redneck Disco**... Did anyone catch the (poorly promoted) **Inclined** show at the UA on Friday, October 2nd? This energetic little L.A. trio (all are 18 yrs. old) blew the roof away with a wild mix of punk, funk, thrash, trash, jazz, spazz- - OUCH! Sort of a mix between **The Beastie Boys, The Red Hot Chili Peppers, The Minutemen, and Led Zeppelin**. Though they have no record to promote, they hope to be back sometime soon... **The House**, the much discussed new art gallery on 3rd Avenue, is no more. It seems owners **Janet and Howard Meier** were evicted after violating their lease (they painted their floor jet black). No word yet on when and if they'll open another place... Speaking of the art world, **Michael Wells**, "the mutant step-child of post-expressionism", will have a show at **Cafe Ole** starting November 1st... What?!? You haven't bought **The Wooden Ball**, our latest magnetic groove? It's available at most local record hang-outs (Wrex, Al Bum's, etc.) and three bucks is such a cool bargain...

Sharpeville Massacre (Another lash of the dreaded whip.)

Whenever I look out
over the grave sites
of Sharpeville
I cannot look
and remain unchanged.

In the late afternoon
when the shadows
fall just right
they would appear
as hands
reaching from the graves
reaching for salvation
wanting of a justice
untarnished
by man's inherent corruption
due to a diseased brain.

Racism abounds
wherever ignorance is found
and when I can
no longer stand
to
 to look out
at all of that wasted humanity
I close my eyes
and hear their sobbing cries
feel their flowing tears
wash down upon me
soothingly upon my face
gathering strength
while listening to their call
the one that stood out most of all

Free Nelson Mandela
Now!

or be damned
all of you.

-David W. Tucker

Apartheid: Inside Hell's Kitchen

Where bloods seething raging torrents
carsh mightily against the ancient crags
repeatedly thundering svagely onward
to a cataclysmic crescendo
spewing
 churning
 diving
 into the cerebral sarcophagus
 of Hell's own Household

where no mans mind
be of His own incidence
where no mans Soul
be of His own device

where only treachery ferments
within the trembling Halls of Old Scratch
Where Humanity
is slowly broiled to ruin hanging
 upon the roasting spit
fueled by all that is Sacrilegious
basted over and over again
by the blood of remembrance
from the slaughtered cadaver of Christianity
that hangs spiked to the ceiling
Inside Hell's Kitchen
devoured by the hideous Gargoyle's
inhabiting a Godless land
gone VACANT.

-David W. Tucker

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