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COVER PHOTO

I found this photograph in a scrapbook
of my father's, from his time in the
Army during the Second World War. I
asked him about it recently.

During the war he was stationed in
Alabama and scheduled to be shipped
out to the South Pacific in late 1943.
The officers on base apparently asked
the servicemen what they wanted to
have on the ship, and there were
enough requests for instruments to
form a band.

My grandfather and a business associ-
ate named Wadsworth agreed to donate
the instruments, and a paratroop plane
was dispatched from Alabama with a
number of senators aboard bound for
Newark Airport. The instruments that
had been collected in New York were
taken back to Alabama, and they and
the crew were shipped off soon after-
ward on the General Robert E. Olds.

The band played on the bases in
Okinawa and Tinian and survived the
typhoon of 1944. Tropical air made the
instruments fall apart little by
little. On VJ Day there were parties
on the ship, and guns were set off,
enough so that an alert had to be
declared to get things in military
order again. Before the celebration
was over, the sailors, expecting to
be sent home soon, threw the instru-
ments overboard and were stuck on the
ship for some months afterward. This
picture was taken by the ship's
photographer some time in 1945.

- Richard Meyer

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JOHN GORKA

by Charlie Hunter

John Gorka walks sloped. He looks like he feels kind of tentative about occupying the space he's in; like somebody's going to tap him on the shoulder and ask him to move. He talks in fits and starts, and the whole effect makes you want to say, "Hey buddy, it's okay. Relax, things'll be fine."

He's also got a voice that doesn't fit that persona one whit. John Gorka's voice is like the most intoxicating burgundy you ever tasted. When he gets on stage and starts singing, you realize you'd be a damn fool or crazy to tell him anything at all. He sings with such authority, such effortless vitality, that it's hard to believe it's the same unassuming fellow you were just talking to who has forgotten the keys to the apartment at which he's supposed to be staying.

And the buzz after the show, when Gorka plays a town for the first time, is usually about the voice, rather than the songs. It's not that the songs are poor; far from it. They are, indeed, very good. Rather, it's just the fact that the voice is so warm and wonderful and strong.

Things weren't always this way. When he stumbles over words while introducing one song and starts the introduction again, he explains, "One of the reasons I started to write and sing songs is because I couldn't talk right."

And the voice, according to Gorka, just happened of its own accord. "I took one semester of voice lessons in college," he remarks, scratching behind his ear. "And it was the only 'C' I got. I guess I did learn some stuff about breathing that helped, but it was never a case where I was primarily a singer. When I first started playing, I'd strum the guitar as loud as I could to drown out my singing, and sing as loud as I could to drown out my guitar playing."

"When I was in school, I was the class clown," he says. "I always got bad marks for behavior. When I was in sixth or seventh grade, though, something happened, and I got more introverted. I became a nerd. And I just continued along that way, being a nerd, until I started performing. I guess the music has been a way of



John Gorka backstage at The Folkway in Peterborough, NH.

returning to my role of the class clown."

It would be a mistake to describe Gorka as a 'comic' performer; there is so much more to his songs than simple humor. But his between-song patter does contain a generous amount of dry wit. For example, before playing a song titled "Down In The Milltown" (Fast Folk, Jan. '85) he deadpans, "I discovered a long time ago that I would rather sing and write about the work process than actually participate in it." The song itself, however, is a skillfully sketched portrait of a steel worker heading home from work, with the lovely refrain from the traditional song "Down In The Valley" providing an achingly touching counterpoint to the gritty realism of the verses.

There is a loveliness to Gorka's work, a gentle fondness for mankind--and life in general--that is subtly prevalent. In "Winter Cows," for instance, Gorka describes dairy cows in a blizzard:

The cows in the mooyard are making their plans
For the long winter nights and the cold winter hands.
Some out in the field are covered with snow
The black ones turn white and the white ones don't show.

One could quibble about the near cloyingness of a word like "mooyard" (why not just "meadow"?), and maybe the joke shouldn't be in the second line, but the almost haiku-like purity of observation in "The black ones turn white and the white ones don't show" is very good writing indeed.

In fact, Gorka's description of why he likes Steve Goodman's writing--"He could do both great funny songs and great serious stuff, and he wrote novelty songs that you could listen to more than once."--could also be applied to much of his own work.

A graduate of Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Gorka started out playing the open mikes in

Nancy Talanian

the area near school. His personal epiphany occurred when he discovered Godfrey Daniels Coffeehouse in Bethlehem in the summer of 1979.

"I'd listened to people like Steve Goodman and Jim Croce in college. Then this friend of mine took me to Godfreys, and I started hanging out there, meeting everyone I could. I couldn't believe there were all these incredible performers I'd never heard of, writing their own songs, coming through there."

Gorka has written about Godfrey Daniels (Fast Folk, March 1985), and he becomes animated when discussing the club. One gets the feeling that this place is just about the most significant spot in Gorka's life.

"I started running the open mikes at Godfrey Daniels, and eventually started opening shows. I was delivering flowers for a living for about three years, and I'd get done with that about three or four in the afternoon, and I'd go over to Godfreys and play the piano or do whatever."

It was during that time that Gorka started chronicling the goings on in and about his town, the "South Side" of Bethlehem. A number of the songs heard on the *Fast Folk* albums date from this period.

"'Geza's Wailing Ways' (CooP, Sept. '83), 'The Sentinel' (Fast Folk, May '84), and 'Downtown Tonight' (CooP, June '83/Fast Folk, May '85) are all about people from the South Side," explains Gorka. "I wrote 'Downtown Tonight' about this fellow who did a lot of bad things. One night he wheeled a motorcycle away from in front of the tavern next door to Godfrey Daniels because there were some parts on it that he liked the looks of. That's what the line 'when nobody's looking, you can slip it out of sight' is talking about."

"'Geza's Wailing Ways' is an early song of mine. It was a real breakthrough for me, because it was about somebody, about something other than myself. When I delivered flowers, I'd see this guy--he ran errands for local people--walking along, making these noises, and the song pretty much just describes him and what he does."

Although originally from New Jersey, Gorka has adopted the Bethlehem-Easton area and taken it to his heart. He supports himself as the assistant editor of *Sing Out!*, another folk music magazine, and is now starting to

expand his audience. Texas songstress Nanci Griffith caught him opening for her at Godfrey Daniels and immediately began to spread the word. Last year she got him on the bill at the prestigious Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas, and he walked off with the "best new performer" honor. He is also part of the Fast Folk revue and is now gigging regularly around the Northeast.

People are starting to talk about Gorka, and there's a small but steady "word on the street" building about him. But John Gorka seems kind of oblivious to this. He's still a personable, shy, self-effacing guy, who only seems real comfortable when singing.

And so, at shows, Gorka talks about the little lives he's observed around the

Lehigh Valley, and then sings his fine, wry narratives. From the bikers in "Silver Wings of the Harleys" to the itinerant folk musicians in "New Legends Are Made," he chronicles their lives with love. I get the feeling he's singlehandedly saving for posterity the goings on of a whole troupe of characters in and around the steelmills and urban sprawl of Bethlehem-Easton, Pennsylvania. ("It's the second-largest urban area in Pennsylvania," he says with evident pride.)

And as long as he's singing about those lives in *That Voice*, there are going to be more and more people who are going to listen.

Ed. Note: John Gorka has recently recorded his first album, which can be expected some time in 1986. Will keep you posted.

19TH CENTURY PARLOR GUITAR

by Bill Shute

Through most of the 19th Century, the guitar in the United States, exclusive of the Spanish-speaking areas of the Southwest, seems to have been mainly a genteel 'parlor' instrument, as opposed to a 'folk' or 'concert' instrument. Its players were largely middle- or upper-class amateurs who played for their own amusement or for that of their friends.

The instruments were considerably smaller-bodied than their European cousins, though strung in a similar fashion, with catgut trebles and silk-wound basses. By mid-century, the European guitars were developing into concert instruments to be used by professional recitalists in large halls, while the American instruments seemed designed for home use. (Compare Torres and Martin guitars of the 1860s, for example.)

There are, however, many pieces that hold interest for the modern folk or classical player. The first strain of the Civil War song, "Just Before the Battle, Mother," became the first part of "The Hobo's Lullaby"; there were also arrangements of popular fiddle tunes such as "Old Rosin, the Beau" and "Listen to the Mockingbird."

Of particular interest to folk guitarists are a number of compositions by a nearly forgotten figure, Henry Worrall.

From the 1850s on, he wrote several pieces in what is called 'open' tuning, that is, where the guitar is tuned to an open chord such as G ('Spanish') or D ('Vestapol'). The names traditionally attached to these tunings by folk musicians seem to refer directly back to a few Worrall compositions, namely "Spanish Fandango" and "Sebastopol" or "The Siege of Sebastopol"; the former survives both as a folk guitar piece (Libba Cotten has a version) and as a banjo piece (Art Rosenbaum and Tom Paley have versions).

The "Fandango" enjoyed a long period of popularity, being reprinted in collections and guitar methods right through the 1890s. Presented here is a tablature version of the original, minus some of the variations, which, in an 1891 publication, extended for three pages (Septimus Winners' *Eureka Method for the Guitar*, published by O. Ditson). The tuning is open G (D G D G B D from bottom to top), and it is played with four fingers of the right hand. (Remember: thumb notes are written stem down in the tablature.) This is a fairly simple piece, and should serve as a nice introduction to the use of open tuning and to parlor guitar style.

Bill Shute is a performer and a teacher of guitar and banjo playing. He lives in Northampton, Massachusetts.

Composition by Henry Worrall
tablature by Bill Shute

harmonics---

The musical score is written on eight staves. The first two staves are for a guitar with a 12-string or similar configuration, showing harmonics and various fretting techniques. The third staff is a 2/4 time signature, featuring a bass line with a 4/4 time signature. The fourth staff shows a series of slurs and fingerings. The fifth staff continues the slurs and fingerings. The sixth staff shows a series of slurs and fingerings. The seventh staff shows a series of slurs and fingerings. The eighth staff shows a series of slurs and fingerings.

THE MINSTREL AND THE MAIDEN

by Roger Deitz

Once upon a time, in a little kingdom by a big river near a great forest, there lived a king who never smiled. That is not to say that he didn't want to smile. Oh, how he tried! But it just wasn't to be...nothing amused him. The burdens of his office wore heavily upon him. There was so much unhappiness among his people, and so little he seemed able to do to rectify the situation. Although King Harold was a good king, he realized that goodness alone sometimes just wasn't enough.

There had been in times past more merriment in the kingdom. It was once a most happy place. People sang and danced in the streets. Once it was that all would remark of the king's good nature, and most charming, ever-present smile. However, the kingdom had of late fallen on hard times. Now there was poverty, misery, and sadness. These days it was hardly a fairytale to live in the kingdom, and because of the king's concern for his subjects, he was troubled greatly.

At the heart of the king's woes was the fact that his subjects had lately begun to be harassed by a rather nasty troll who had left another fairy tale in order to find more regular employment of his harassment talents: scaring the heck out of little boys and girls by jumping high into the air and exploding while cackling like a demon; defacing public restrooms with graffiti (in this he was way ahead of his time); and gobbling up musicians because the troll particularly liked the crunchie sound made by lutes.

The king could have tolerated most all of this nastiness. After all, there were plenty of ill-behaved little boys and girls about, always tying tin cans to puppy dog tails and eating too much candy and getting sick at the circus. A king could look the other way. The exploding and cackling? Well, it was all rather amusing, and in those days a kingdom derived much of its reputation from the antics of its resident troll. A little snap, cackle, pop was good for business. As for the graffiti, well, everyone enjoys a good read on the throne, and the king was no exception.

But the troll's harsh criticism of the kingdom's musicians seemed a bit much and couldn't be overlooked. What would people do if they couldn't take their

minds off their troubles by listening to a nifty tune or two? Perhaps they might realize how bad things had come to be. In addition, they might also notice that since the troll had taken up residence in a cave near the river where everyone used to bathe and do their laundry, nobody had dared to bathe or do their laundry in months, and even though bathing and doing the laundry wasn't of the highest priority in those days, most everyone was now noticing an air of universal gaminess prevalent throughout the kingdom.

The king knew only too well the nature of politics and realized that even the most loyal of subjects might overthrow the kindest of kings given their subjection to the wrong inconvenience. Something had to be done, and done soon, or the king would be looking for a new crown or, worse, a new head upon which to rest his crown. He had to hurry: there was but one musician left uncrunched, and people were starting to grumble about current events.

Now, this little kingdom had always had the finest musicians and balladeers. It was an object of pride among the populous. All but one of these musicians were extremely popular because they sang the June/moon/spoon/croon songs that everyone liked to hear. That's show business: give the people what they want, and they'll beat a path to your moat. The one exception, Marvin, was now the one remaining minstrel. Because of his political stance he was always on the outs with the king. He had not had much of a career because he saw things as they were and chose to sing about things as he saw them. Having a social conscience in a fairy tale is a real career killer.

For the fifteen years he had worked the various inns in the mountains, the minstrel billed himself as Marvin of Myrth, the Purveyor of Pleasure. One reviewer called him "The Grim Reaper of Folk Music." His agent couldn't even book Marvin at half the customary fee of one wild rabbit. When Marvin played a bar gig, the patrons would stop drinking ale and start crying. The club owners hated Marvin. Bargain rate or none, there was no splitting hares; they would rather not book Marvin at all.

The funny thing was, Marvin wasn't a bad performer. As a matter of fact, he was quite good, but unlike the other, officially sanctioned court musicians, Marvin chose not to paint a rosy picture of life in the kingdom, and since

life of late wasn't the least bit pleasant, Marvin of late wasn't the least bit entertaining.

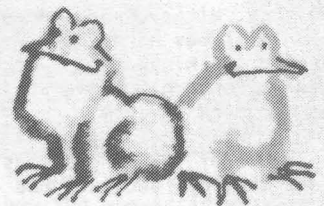
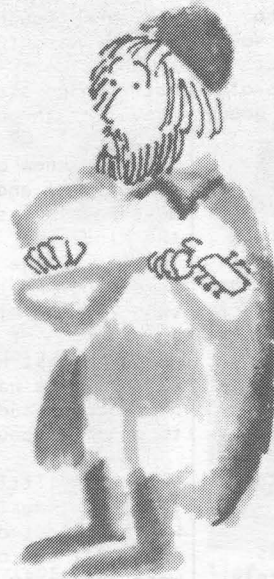
The king, too, was not amused. If Marvin hadn't been the queen's sister's son, the king might never have allowed Marvin to continue singing at all. But sing he did. It got to the point where the king had to do something to correct the present situation, or the troll and Marvin would have the entire kingdom in riot.

The king felt that tradition obligated him to offer the hand of his daughter in marriage to anyone who could drive off the troll, but he had already married off three of his daughters as rewards for solvers of three previous difficulties that had befallen the kingdom. King Harold's fourth and final daughter, the princess Grezelda, sensing that some day her father might get into difficulty again and she might have little choice in the matter of which sort of wacko she would have to wed, ran off with a troop of jugglers and was never heard from again.

The king did fortunately have a forty-eight-year-old, unmarried niece, and he pressed her into the service of his kingdom. For this she was actually most grateful, as she was by this time a tad long in the tooth, and rather antsy waiting for her shot at the big time. Her name was the Maiden Euessey, and she was most fair of face and figure. Her only drawback, if it could be termed as such, was her reputation for kissing frogs.

The fair maiden would spend the better part of each day kneeling at the bank of a pond catching frogs, and kissing them in the hope that one might turn out to be a handsome prince. They, of course, all turned out to be frogs, except for the toads, which were always toads to begin with.

There was nary a prince in the pond, but that didn't matter so much as the fact that the maiden Euessey grew fond of frogs in their own right. They in turn grew fond of her. The problem was that her reputation for amphibian osculation put off many of the local lads, who feared that kissing Euessey could lead to a case of terminal warts. There was one additional problem--a good number of frogs followed Euessey around and about the kingdom. Even if one wanted to kiss Euessey, there were all those frogs to tiptoe over and all of that deafening croaking to con-



Dennis Di Vincenzo

tend with. A date with Euessey was like a high school biology class nightmare.

The king summoned Euessey to the castle, set a place at the table for her frogs, and told her of his plight. She was pleased to be of assistance, and listened intently as he explained his plan. It was elegant in its inception even if it was no surprise to her what the plan was; the king would offer the maiden's hand (and various anatomically related parts) to any of his subjects who would rid the kingdom of the scurrious troll. He would even throw in a free trip for two to Acapulco, a washer/dryer serf, and a catered frogs' leg-feast wedding ceremony. Of course, there had to be a down side. Anyone who tried and failed would be banished, but that was a moot point as the troll would probably do away with them before that happened.

An ad was placed in the local parchment, and after a week there were three takers. The first was Sir Glib, a knight of the realm who had a reputation for being the mightiest knight in the kingdom. Sir Glib was not much on finesse but rather a straightforward military type who believed in might

making right, giving one's life for king and country, and always wearing clean underwear just in case that day's crusade wasn't a total success.

Next on the roster of questers was Archibald the alchemist, a rather shrewd sorcerer and about the brightest guy in the kingdom, having scored straight 800s on his SATs (Sorcerers Aptitude Test). He believed in the nobility of pure science. Heretofore, his most noteworthy contribution to science was his formula for turning platinum into gold. This experimentation had set him back most of his savings. He needed to marry well if he was to continue his work.

The final entrant was a surprise to all save the king, who had encouraged him to enter; it was Marvin the minstrel. As a lute player, Marvin's reputation for right-hand technique was legendary, but as a troll eradicator his talents were questionable. The king wasn't certain that he could rid himself of the troll, but he hoped at least to soon be rid of Marvin.

The morning of the quest the smart money was on Sir Glib, and Archibald was a fair bet given the right odds,

but Marvin was to say the least a long shot.

The whole show was put on with a great deal of pomp and pagentry. It was very tastefully done, as if World Championship Midget Mud Wrestling were aired in a prime-time television network spot. All that was needed was O.J. Simpson as announcer to screw up the names of the participants, and it could have been the ABC Game of the Week. Everyone in the kingdom was there rooting for their chosen favorite participant. Vendors selling oranges and souvenir "I SAW THE TROLL" T-shirts added to the sense of event.

As the trumpets blared, as the people cheered, as the troll scratched his head and growled, the three entrants drew lots to determine the order in which they would proceed. The honor of going first went to Sir Glib.

The knight errant made a magnificent picture as he sat upright on his great steed. The sun reflected off his gleaming armor and outstretched lance. Sir Glib had decided that a frontal assault would show him at his most dashing. True to his vow of chivalry, he called out to the troll to prepare to meet his

better. The troll growled and beckoned that the knight should give it his best shot. Then Sir Glib closed his visor, and rushed onward toward the troll who was standing at the bank of the river.

The troll stood his ground until the last possible instant, then took two casual steps to his right, thus avoiding the outstretched lance, the galloping horse, and the soon-to-be-the-late knight.

Sir Glib couldn't halt his charge in time. His own momentum carried him over the river bank, his mass carried him to the bottom of the deep river. It was a typical case of the military failing to understand the gravity of their actions. Gleefully, the troll jumped high into the air, cackled like a demon, and exploded just for effect.

Next to have a go at it was Archibald the alchemist, who challenged the troll to an exciting game of chess. Surely superior intelligence could prevail where brute force did not. And Archibald was way ahead on points until the troll, realizing he would certainly

lose his queen, altered the game rules just a little, and invented the Ogre's Gambit...he ate Archibald. To this day, there is no known defence for such a bold chess move.

Only Marvin remained. What was to be done when mighty force and intelligence both failed? What was to be done indeed!

Marvin first started to play, and then to sing. The troll licked his chops when he saw the crunchy lute. The music sounded pretty good, but was Marvin so naive as to believe that old chestnut about music's inherent charms being able to sooth the savage? No. Marvin had a different strategy.

He began to sing an allegorical ballad about the troll himself. About how the troll was mightier than knights and alchemists and little children. He described the troll's exploits in detail: how brave the troll was; how wondrous was the troll's ability to jump into the air, cackle, and explode; how sad it was that the troll had to

leave the kingdom in order to become a dentist.

The troll was thrilled. He had never heard a song about trolls, let alone one about himself. Marvin's lyrical salvo hit the target. The troll had an ego. The troll had never realized that he could be anything but what others had told him he was. The troll had repressed aspirations. Could he really be a dentist? The song had a powerful effect on him, more mighty than brute force or science. Marvin knew the power of a good song, and he hoped that this power never fell into the wrong hands.

Life does in fact copy art. Some time afterward the troll was admitted to dental school under an affirmative action program. Marvin the minstrel, now a critical success, married the maiden Euessey and moved into the castle. Because the maiden insisted on bringing along her frogs, the king didn't smile as broadly as he might have, but he again smiled all the time nonetheless. Otherwise, everyone for the most part lived happily ever after.

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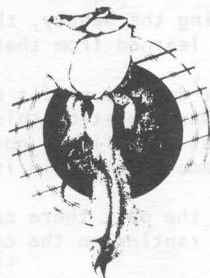
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SIDE BY SIDE

NO FUTURE

the buildings stand empty yet they still stand
stand in the way of progress
the bulldozers come to make their mark
and the riot police are lurking in the dark

the last bastion of true freedom
the freeloaders and squatters on the land

the artists and students, the riff-raff and low-life
these buildings have no future and they know it

and there is a plan, an incredible plan
to build up the city of the future
and all they must do is make these buildings disappear
and then their way it is perfectly clear

we're all in the same project together
we speak the same language of economics

and it makes a lot of sense and it makes a lot of dollars
and if it makes a lot of homeless with no future, so what

that the towers will be built is not debated
we hear them babbling in the press
words like urban planning and revitalization
they take away their homes and give them housing instead

though they have the gift of tongues they have no love
only the clanging of the factory bell

destroying the beauty, the chaos and understanding
that is learned from that school called no future

and what doth it profit a man to leave another homeless
we who dare question this vanity
know that a profit is not without honor
except among family in its own country

without the past there can be no future
the man ranting on the corner's been misunderstood

they have destroyed his past and given him no future
they look at their creation and they say it is good

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SOUNDING

Just like the keys of a piano are we
Two different colors and all different keys
Living in search of the same melodies
Looking for ways to be blending

Just like the strings of a silent guitar
We're next to each other, not touching
But play them and then we can see who we are
And hear how we're sounding together

Just when it seems that we're learning the songs
We'll find an excuse to stop playing
Embarassed that some of the notes might be wrong
And afraid of what we might be saying

Just like the face of a banjo is round
We follow the circle and soak up the sound
Learning the way that our lives are all wound
Lives that keep growing in circles

Just like the notes of a scale we wait
Hoping for one to arrange us
Descending and climbing in measures of fate
Resolving our patterns and changes

Just like the keys of a piano are we
Two different colors and all different keys
Living in search of the same melodies
Looking for ways to be blending

by David Roth © 1985 Roth Records (ASCAP)

AS THE CROW FLIES

When I was a child I'd look up and pray
But the mountains and clouds always got in the way
I'd close my eyes and dream away
Straight up to heaven as the crow flies

Then I grew up but I could never understand
The distance between a woman and a man
Then I fell in love and the distance was spanned
Heart to heart as the crow flies

Mama used to say, "Son, you'll never survive,
If you worry 'bout the distance, you won't ever arrive."
Daddy used to say, "Son, the mountains are wide
But they ain't so far...as the crow flies."

If there were mountains and valleys between you and me
And icy old river or a cold dark sea
The earth and water would mean nothing to me
I'd travel straight to your heart as the crow flies

by Tom Russell © 1985 End of the Trail Music (CAPAC)

CARES TO THE WIND

Spanish moss hangs,
The river moves slowly
and Devil be damned they're in love.
Their wine bottle sails and it sinks with a splash
and they laugh but they are not alone.
The small town roads are like telegraph wires.
They might as well fight off the sun.
Teasing each other with innocent sins
and pushed towards a ring they don't want.

Chorus:

And they chase their kisses till the midnight
and they lie in the grass till the dawn
Throw their cares to the wind
while the kisses burn in
and the small town won't leave them alone.

She gathers her skirt
Her hair falls around her
he touches her lips with his hand
they've learned to feel guilty about small romances
and now they don't know what to do next
The river that whines cuts a loop around time
and ties them like marionettes
they tip awkward glasses to delicate things
in a bittersweet dance humoresque (Chorus)

The carillon rings
like the sermons remind them
That each spring the river runs wild
Cold hearts turn away from the light of a new love
And their friends whisper low what they've tried
in old empty houses and out of town places
the wedding march is not on their minds
but the dust on the roads will settle and go
like promises told in the night (Chorus)

© 1985 by Richard Meyer

THE CHEMICAL WORKER'S SONG

A process man am I and I'm telling you no lie
I work and breathe among the fumes that trail across the sky
There's thunder all around me and poison in the air
There's a lousy smell that smacks of Hell and dust all in me hair

Chorus: And it's go, boy, go, they'll time your ev'ry breath
And every day you're in this place you're two days nearer death
But yer go.

I've worked among the spinners and I've breathed the oily smoke
I've shovelled up the gypsum and it nigh on makes you choke
I've stood knee deep in cyanide, gone sick with caustic burn
Been working rough and seen enough to make your stomach turn
(Chorus)

There's overtime and bonus opportunities galore
The young lads like the money and they all come back for more
But soon you're knocking on and look older than you should
For every bob made on the job you pay with flesh and blood (Chorus)

© 1964 by Ron Angel

UP IN THE ATTIC

I been climbing up in the attic
Cardboard boxes with magic marker names
My old toys
I was always up in the attic
A secret place there where grownups never came
Just a boy
And a child's face appeared in the dust
Recalling years I knew I could trust
But this is crazy stuff
I thought I was old enough to know better

And I remembered being a baby
In the morning kitchen the tile floor was warn
I recall
I was sitting inside a blue square
I closed my eyes and started slowly floating down
A dreamer's fall
And in a world of soft green light
I would make my morning flight
So I'd end each night
'Til I was old enough to know better

When I used to sleep by the window
I was small enough to climb up on the sill
And watch the night
And then the lightning jumped from the darkness
And the rain would race before the howling wind
In frenzied flight
And only inches from the storm
I never felt so safe and warm
There I'd stay 'til morn
'Til I was old enough to know better
And I been climbing up in the attic

© 1984 by Buddy Mondlock

SIDE YR C&S TWO

YOU GOT TO BELIEVE

Chorus: You got to believe in miracles
You got to believe, that's true
You got to believe that hearts can fly
And sometimes mountains move

Mary, Mary, sing for me
Sing me your song of love
When I'm gone whisper out my name
To the stars above

I love you truly, I love you so
I'll love you 'til I die
In my heart I'll stay with you
'Til I'm by your side (Chorus)

I wish there were no mountain high
In between me and you
I wish I had two snow white wings
I know what I'd do

I'd fly over this lonesome land
To the well where your love springs
I'd lay down in your lovin' arms
And there I'd shed my wings (Chorus)

All mountains are not made of stone
Some are made of flesh and blood
The longest hill I've every climbed
'S when I've hurt someone I've loved

Oh Mary, Mary, I'm not free
There are things I've left undone
Some bright day I'll fly to you
And we will live as one (Chorus)

by Hugh Moffatt, © 1985 Boquillas Canyon
Music/Atlantic Music Corp. BMI

MY HEART IS ARTIFICIAL (BUT MY LOVE FOR YOU IS REAL)

You've been hurt by cheatin' hearts I've been told
Now you're lookin' for a heart of gold
You want to find one truer than the rest
Well my heart is different, you can plainly see
It's plastic and it's powered by a battery
And it's beating for you right outside of my chest

Chorus:

My heart is artificial, but my love for you is real
My heart is artificial, but my love for you is real

I'm a marvel of the modern medicine
I'm just the fourth or fifth person that the
heart has been in
A guinea pig establishing a trend
So please treat me gentle, don't you break my heart
It's not easy to fix (It takes a week for the part)
And Crazy Glue won't help to make it mend (Chorus)

Now I can't walk to the ends of the earth just
to tell you I love you
And you don't make the blood rush through my veins
But you help

So I'm gonna wait a while to have sex in heaven
'Cause I'm wired up to my Jarvik 7
I'll stay in circulation for a while
And I'll give you my heart if you will be my babe
(It's soaking in a jar filled with formaldehyde)
And if my brand new pump don't falter
I'll go to the altar with you (Chorus)

© 1985 by Bob Mellman

NORTHERN GIRL

Why are the rain clouds comin', pourin' down on me?
Why can't the north wind turn and blow the other way?
Where has the sunshine gone? Oh I can barely see,
This northern rain is fallin', and home is callin' me.

Sun in a southern sky is all I need to see.
Watchin' a small bird fly, above the fields and me.
Walkin' a dusty road and there's nothin' 'round the bend
Except those golden tones of goin' home again.

Goin' home - goin' home

Muddy old river flowin' 'neath a fallen tree,
Sunflower garden growin' twice as tall as me.
Sister and father hear me, what I've learned today,
I ain't no northern girl, I've been too long away.

Starry old summer evenin' hummin' warm and sweet,
I hit the road believin' I was bound to leave.
It took a New England sky to teach me how to say
I ain't no northern girl, I've been too long away
I ain't no northern girl, I've been too long away

This ain't no northern song - I've been too long away.

© 1985 by Cheryl Wheeler

STEVE ON H

Turn that clock around
See it stand where I come from
Turn your head around
Watch the crutch tumbling down from above

You know better, you know much better
than I

I watch your child play
See the shadow dark you by
And wonder where is the line
The dog sets 'tween earth and sky

You know better, you know much better
than I

Walk through the windows
Crawl out the doors
Make it easy
Fall on the floor
Color by number
Color by color
Color my collar
Take my slumber

Where have all the women gone
Where has your sweet rose gone
Where has your good mama gone
It's a desolate home, my son

But you know better, you know much
better than I

© 1985 by Cindy Lee Berryhill

NUIEBA (THE DESERT SONG)

Pita! Pita! Melon! Melon!
Pita! Pita! Melon! Melon!

I close my eyes...
and dream...
of a time spent on crystal sand
of a time reborn in foreign land
of a time feeling free...
I close my eyes to sea...

a figure by the ocean shore
washing drifting dancing waking
with the waves
gently smiling in the sun
was that figure me?

I hear the sounds of
trinkets bells ancient stones beads shells
the arab man in Jerusalem sells
the shrouds of mystery...

I DON'T CARE

Under the marquee sign
On Seventh Avenue
With the concrete underneath his head
A drunken bum lay down to rest
Sleeping off a belly full of booze
People just pass by
Nobody seems to care
What could anyone do
That's what the words come to
And that's why.

I don't care if I'm lucky
I don't care if you're a yuppie
I don't care if I don't have good
sex like Dr. Ruth
I don't care about Nicaragua
Or if they start a war there
I won't have to go, I'm already
thirty-two.
I don't care about abortion
Or media distortion
And most of all I don't care about you.

I've felt the winds of change
I've seen the hard rains fall
They'll tell you these are good times
at last
They'll give you a song and a dance
'Cause news is entertainment on TV
While they're playing with our lives
We'll be home watching Dynasty
But don't be too concerned
You can't take these things too
seriously
And that's why.

I close my eyes once again to be
drifting on the sands of coral seas
while on the dunes the woman cries
Pita! Pita! Melon! Melon!
Pita! Pita! Melon! Melon!

on the sands man camel stride
adorned with riches...
filled with pride.
he kneels to pray
alongside
the spirits dancing in the sun the sand
the sea
we all are One...

it's all so simple here
you feel the life
you breathe the air
what you own is what you share...

I don't care about Reagan
And all the bombs that he's makin'
God knows the defense plants
Put people to work
And I don't care about the tax
Or which plan gets the ax
'Cause I'll never tell the government
how much I am worth
And I don't care about the poor
Or how they make do
And most of all I don't care about you.

Who can you call a friend.
They're hard to find these days
Never trust a stranger
Don't show your love 'cause there's
a danger
In even letting anyone know you care
Contemporary urban life
The great American Dream
It's help yourself and screw your
neighbor
Only do a favor for a favor
And that's why.

I don't care about lovers
And I hog all the covers
And I don't respect women that don't
respect me
I don't care about health spas
And diets and fast cars
And I don't give a damn who catches
AIDS or VD
I don't care if I'm vulgar
Or what I'm not supposed to do
And most of all I don't care about you.

© 1985 by Bob Batch

I close my eyes...
again I stand alone in this dream
on this land
the transformation taking place
attain
transcend
this human race...

I close my eyes...
to hear...

Pita! Pita! Melon! Melon!
Pita! Pita! Melon! Melon!
Pita! Pita! Melon! Melon!
Pita! Pita! Melon! Melon!...

© 1983 by Carrie

1985 FOLK FESTIVALS . . .

KERRVILLE: A SONGWRITER'S FESTIVAL

by Beverly Bark

In the hill country of Texas, set between the towns of Austin and San Antonio, the Quiet Valley Ranch is the place to be at the end of May, for this is when Rod and NancyLee Kennedy open their home to host the Kerrville Folk Festival. For the fourteenth consecutive year the Kennedys have hosted the eleven-day event, which spotlights many singer/songwriters from around Texas and the United States.

From Memorial Day weekend (which in this case starts on Thursday) until the following Sunday a relaxed attitude and love of good music are the orders of the day (and night). There are mainstage concerts for seven nights, while the middle three days are taken up with the Bob Gibson Songwriters School and the Ray Tate Guitar School, for those so inclined. (See David Roth's article on the Songwriters School in this issue.)

Like most festivals, Kerrville has big name acts, camping, craft booths, and porta sans. But Kerrville also offers a Ballad Tree, a New Folk Contest, and campfires. The atmosphere is homey, and everyone says "hello." The evening concerts are long and enjoyable. They start as the day begins to cool down, and run until well after midnight. Rod Kennedy, producer/promoter, fills the role of Master of Ceremonies, orchestrating the flow of events for all eleven days. This year's performers



Fish Fry Special Concert with "Just Friends" Tom Paxton, Bob Gibson, Anne Hills, and some Kerrville friends. Rod Kennedy is fourth from right.

included Peter, Paul and Mary, Jerry Jeff Walker, Townes Van Zandt, Nanci Griffith, Happy and Artie Traum, and many more. There was also a good mix of up-and-coming songwriters, notably John Gorka, Melissa Javors, and Emilie Aaronson, all of whom are past "New Folk Contest" winners.

What is New Folk? The New Folk Contest is an event sponsored by the Kerrville Music Foundation (a non-profit organization established to promote and preserve American songwriting) in which songwriters from all over the United States send in tapes of two of their own, previously unrecorded and unpublished songs. Out of over 250 contestants, 40 songwriters are picked and invited to the festival to compete. Of these 40, 6 are chosen as winners and invited to play a set the next weekend. One of last year's winners, John Gorka, opened this year's festival.

The Kerrville Festival is unique in that the focus is on the singer/songwriter, with various events that support the amateur as well as the professional. Take for instance the Ballad Tree. Here we have a daily event that is basically an open mike. The setting is a large oak tree in a place called Chapel Hill, where folk mass is held on Sunday. Two guest hosts from the Mainstage line up and sign up anyone interested in playing a song. The guest hosts start the afternoon with a song of their own, and

the exchange continues until the time runs out. The feeling is communal and entertaining for a lazy afternoon.

Also supportive in a spontaneous and unpredictable way are the campfires, which start late at night and burn until dawn. These fires are fed throughout the night by roving musicians in search of a compatible group to sit and jam with. They offer everyone an opportunity to share a new composition or to revive an old standard. Through the years some campfires have become a downright tradition. For example, the perennial Mike Williams campfire attracts a large crowd, as does the campfire led by Crow Johnson, a singer/songwriter from Arkansas, whose site adopted the name 'The Crow's Nest' because she chose to camp at the top of the hill.

The feelings and impressions acquired by a Kerrville Festival goer are ones of coming home to a long-lost family; a community is built and thrives on the enjoyment of all. There are no social barriers when it comes to performer and patron. All are equal in spirit. Friends, some lasting, are made easily, but all are well experienced. You may go to Kerrville skeptical that all of this happens, but after eleven days you come out a Kerr-vivor and Kerr-verted.



The Ballad Tree

1985 FOLK FESTIVALS . . .

KERRVILLE SONGWRITER'S SCHOOL

transcribed and edited
by David Roth

A very special part of the annual Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas (see article in this issue by Beverly Bark) is Bob Gibson's Songwriters School. Convened on the three middle weekdays of the festival, it provides an opportunity for songwriters from all over the country to meet informally and discuss the craft with noted professionals. What follows are excerpts from the discussions that took place at the 1985 Songwriters School.

Joining Gibson (writer of "Abilene," "Let the Band Play Dixie," and scores of others) were Steve Gillette (of "Darcy Farrow" fame, whose songs have been recorded by the likes of Gordon Lightfoot, John Denver, Linda Ronstadt, and Anne Murray), and two fine writers from Colorado, Chuck Pyle (who has written for Jerry Jeff Walker) and Jon Ims (winner of thirteen American Song Festival awards).

Also dropping by as time permitted were Tom Paxton, Kate Wolfe, and Jan Marra. In attendance at "school" with me were 25 other songwriters, gathering beneath a canvas shelter for shade from the Texas midday sun.

We join the discussion in progress.

Bob Gibson: I'd like to start by saying two things. One is that great songs aren't written. They're rewritten. Can't emphasize this enough. The other is that there isn't anything I won't do sometimes to avoid writing a song. I'll scrub the floor, clean the refrigerator, anything. I hate to write a song. What I love most in this world is having written one.

Steve Gillette: I do a lot of rewriting. I think you have to keep completely open and not think of a song as a final product until you've gone back to it a few times. The process has to do with introspection, being in tune with what's really happening inside, how you react to it, and how you can verbalize it in a way that reaches other people.

Kate Wolf: I started writing when I was about 30, always pretty much intuitively. Sometimes if I think "I'm gonna sit down and write a song today," immediately this other voice

will say "Oh, no you're not." For me it always seems to work better when they kind of sneak up on me.

Jon Ims: I use my typewriter, have my own room, and write when I'm alone. I write in the morning when I get up, because I think that's when your subconscious is closest to the surface, just out of that dream state. Other times, I'll work between my daily routines, like for that free hour I might have before making dinner.

Chuck Pyle: I collect newspaper clippings, write down phrases I hear in conversations, even go see a lot of films, from which I've been able to write songs. Like a magazine or a book, a movie's another vehicle for ideas and a really creative one in this culture, very much like painting was hundreds of years ago.

Tom Paxton: I like to work in the morning. For me it's the best time. Just from the force of travelling a lot of times I'm denied that, but I try to write a word or two, something, every day. I have a whole bunch of songs in different stages of completion. If I have nothing to add to one song this morning, I might have something for another, even if it's just a line. I work in a looseleaf book, so when I do get an idea for a song I'll write it down at the top of a blank page if it's not convenient for me to write the whole thing then and there. This way it's waiting for me and I won't forget it. What I do forget are the things I don't write down. I used to kind of hang in on one song until I finished it, but now it feels better to have a bunch going. I've heard of novelists who stop a day's work in the middle of a sentence, and the first thing they do the next morning is finish that sentence, and they're on that roll again. It's better than that dreaded blank page...

BG For me it'll be about a life experience, something I felt a lot that I want to write about, something somebody says where they'll just screw the language up wonderfully, I'll just love it, and that phrase will just hang there. Another great source for me is other songs. I'll hear a song, say, "That's a great idea, but that isn't how it's supposed to go." One of the things

about our own experience as a starting point is that we know how it felt, and we also know the details--what time of day, how warm it was, what kind of beer he was drinking, what the cigarette smoke smelled like, all those details that really bring a song home.

KW A lot of times for me it's a phrase or a line, or I'll be listening to the radio and something catches. I usually start with the words rather than the music. I might get as far as a verse and a chorus, and then I'll stop and say, "Now what?"

Question: What do you do then, just throw it out?

KW No, I have this drawer where I keep the fragments. The first order of business is to always write it down when you can. At some point I'll go back to them, and usually I can come up with something if reminded by those little notes. The most important thing is to take the time to write.

BG I used to have notebooks with one verse, a line here or there, but I came to the conclusion that it was more important to finish whatever I was working on even if I knew it wasn't any damn good. By having so much stuff partly finished, there wasn't any point in starting anything else because there was already so much I ought to work on. Now I finish the bad ones as well as the ones I feel are good.

Question: What about rhyming dictionaries, a thesaurus, etc., as tools to help writing along?

CP Interesting. I like the idea of finding a word to rhyme. I'll start free associating and I'll find a list of rhymes that are at all possible for that song. I'll look through them and maybe find one that works. Other times I'll also see that it's all leading to an absurd direction and that what I really want is something very simple. The depth of what I really want to say should come before the rhyme. Sometimes just going through a rhyming dictionary can work. Michael Murphy's "Cosmic Cowboy" was started from the one I have. It starts out "Burial grounds and merry-go-rounds..."

BG I've gotten caught in rhyme schemes in years past. I'd like to make the statement that you sit down and write what you want to say without thinking about rhyme, and then you go back and worry about the rhymes later. You'll be in good shape. But be sure to get in touch with the noncritical, childlike writer inside, and save the critical rewrite portion for another phase.

SG When I take a song apart, I might get several different songs. One is the rhythmic song, one the melodic song, one the lyric song, the harmonic song, the emotional song, etc. Each one has its own geography, starting point, and ending point. So you have a song and you say "I don't quite know what's wrong with it..." Well, maybe something's missing in the melodic part, or the harmonic layer, or you haven't even given a thought to what's happening in the emotional song. Sometimes you have to kind of unstack them to find that elusive trouble spot.

BG The important thing for all checklists and tools and craft ideas is that we hold off using them till we're done getting the ideas written. It's too limiting and inhibiting to carry that editor around all the time, and we risk stopping ourselves cold before we've even started. From a melodic standpoint, I'll mention a good friend from North Carolina, Dick Goodwin. A lot of us tend to start our songs using the same intervals--a third, or a fifth, for example, and although we write in different keys from song to song, a lot of those opening intervals echo what we've written before. Dick points out that we might try others, like a second or a fourth, or the major or flatted seventh. The illustration he used was West Side Story. It's like a treatise on starting songs with strange intervals, almost like Leonard Bernstein was saying, "Listen to this, listen to this..." Pick an exotic interval, and it's going to lead you places melodically that you've never been to before.

SG As far as breaking new ground rhythmically goes, I've been using a drum machine for about eight months now. For a song where I know the phrase or line that I want to drive home, I repeat that phrase over and over again until the natural speaking rhythm seems to take over. At that point I'll set up or program the rhythm to match the phrase, and I'll just leave that rhythm on for a while and try to write what comes to mind from that



(l-r) David Roth with Happy and Artie Traum

beat. Even a simple metronome is very helpful, gives you something to work off of.

BG I like to keep it going until I've written a verse that feels solid to me. Then I can stop it and have a pattern to work to. It has expanded me a lot, using rhythms I wouldn't ordinarily be familiar with, and syncompating phrases in ways I wouldn't normally find.

SG There'll be a lot of argument over drum machines versus live drummers, and of course you get a different feel from one to the other, but I see the machine as another tool to help me as a songwriter. My rhythm playing improved when I got this because I hadn't realized that I used to slow down and speed up to accommodate the words at times. That's not necessarily wrong, but now I'll do that by my choice rather than by my limitation.

Question: What do you do late at night, for example, when inspiration hits, yet you're half asleep, but you know it'll disappear if you don't do something?

TP Drives me crazy. I say, "God, I wish that idea would take two aspirin and call me in the morning." I do get up, cursing under my breath, in the middle of the night to write a line or a lyric down so as not to lose it. One of the worst nights I ever spent was in a hotel, no air conditioning, summer, the soaked sheet bit, desperate to sleep, and I wrote two whole songs. Turns out both were keepers--I'd have been really mad if they turned out to be stinkers! But I'm always convinced that the song

is already there, written, and my job is to peel away the wrapping and discover that song. It's all right there in my unconscious mind, maybe the collective unconscious for all I know. The trick is to try and find the techniques for mining that unconscious.

BG If you keep those tools sharp and set aside a regular time to write, you'll be readier when the inspiration comes along. I've never seen it fail. Even if you're not consistently coming up with keepers, you've got to know that you're going to be sharp when something good comes along.

TP For me it's about 5 for 1, five so-so songs and maybe one good one in there somewhere. For someone like me who makes maybe one record a year, I'm aiming for 10 works representative of the best I can do, so maybe that means 50 or 60 songs to come up with that "top ten" over a year's time.

BG We're talking commitment here, and I'll take that over inspiration any day. I've seen geniuses disappear from sight and I've seen others who really wanted it and learned how to do it and stuck with it until they succeeded.

CP On the subject of perseverance, I always loved the stories of the songs that have been passed over by publishers. I was reading that when Eastwood changed hands and Paul McCartney bought the catalogue with "Autumn Leaves" in it, it turned out that the song had been passed over by more than 35 publishing companies. The fellow who wrote "The

Gambler" couldn't get it recorded for years because it was thought to be too long. Just like the effort it takes to write something really good, you have to be able to follow it up with the effort to get it out there. When I met Jon Ims years ago, he said "blanket the world with tapes, send 'em out every day" and he'd do as many as 20 at a time. Nowadays I never turn down giving somebody a song, I don't care who it is, because you never know who it may end up with, and who might want to do one of them.

J1 It is networking. I sent out so many tapes I was going crazy, going to the post office every day. I haven't had any big hit records, but there are a lot of people doing my songs, and a lot of the time I haven't the faintest idea how they got them, except to know that one of those hundreds of tapes made its way somewhere I couldn't have planned.

CP Even roadies, bus drivers, whoever might have contact with musicians and singers, are good folks to give tapes to.

SG My wife told me that Anne Murray was going to be at a club in L.A., the Roxy, so I went down on the afternoon of the date hoping I could catch the band doing a soundcheck. Turns out there wasn't a soul around except for the woman in the ticket booth getting ready for the evening, but I put a tape and lyrics in the envelope, addressed it, and left it, figuring, "There goes another tape. Oh, well." But I did leave it. Sure enough, and to my surprise, about two months later I heard from Anne Murray's producer who said she was going to record the song. Six months later it came out. So there's an argument for trying your luck even if you think nothing will happen.

Question: What about collaboration in songwriting?

BG From my own experience, it's great to work with other writers. Shel Silverstein and I have done this a lot. If you're just starting the process of writing with someone else, don't get together to write a song, get together to write a group of songs. It may take you three or four or five to even find out how you work with each other, how you communicate, where the strengths lie. Plus, we've already said how many bad ones sometimes need to come before the good ones. It would be a shame to get together

with the pressure of writing that one song; it's like you're auditioning that other writer and vice versa. Give it a chance, and define up front how you're looking to divide up the work.

SG Most of the collaborations I've done, we've set up a 50-50 agreement right from the start. The song may end up containing all or most of my words and/or music, but it never would have gotten written without that other person to bounce ideas off of. In turn, we may end up using most of what he's written, but we've needed each other and understood that from the beginning. In terms of productivity, getting together with someone regularly doesn't let me be as lazy as I might be writing by myself.

J1 Another ground rule for collaborating is mutual respect, and how you have to keep it, no matter what happens. The most important thing is the song, and ego and pride are secondary. You'll have to be willing to drop the brilliant line you thought of if it's for the good of the song.

BG If I'm working with Tom, and one of us comes up with a line, for example, we have a rule that the other never says, "I don't like it." He'll have to come up with a better one. I like to brainstorm on an idea or two that I've got going, and I use a kitchen timer for 10 minutes, and I just write until it goes off. Doesn't have to be wonderful or brilliant, I just write and look back at it to see what came out. I've done whole evenings of work with other writers using that timer, where we'll take an idea, write like crazy, pass our ideas to someone else, write some more, and when things start clicking, we start collaborating. Believe me, if you've got a subject to write about, your best impressions will come out in 10 minutes. If you can't find it in 10 minutes, you didn't have an impression in the first place. Once you do have something to work with, take 10 more minutes, and work on short, songlike lines, not even with rhyming just yet. And so on.

CP I'm not a disciplined writer, but one thing I like to do is something I learned from John McKuen. He'll show up 3 or 4 hours early to a gig to kind of case the place, just sort of get the feel, the spirit of the room he'll be playing, and then he'll go off somewhere and nobody will be able to find him. He'll have

found some place to be alone and play and think. That's what I need, and I try to use that time to devote some focus to a song, to a new idea, and of course, a good performance. The drawback to not being a disciplined writer is that I always feel like my work's never done, that I need to be on the job all the time.

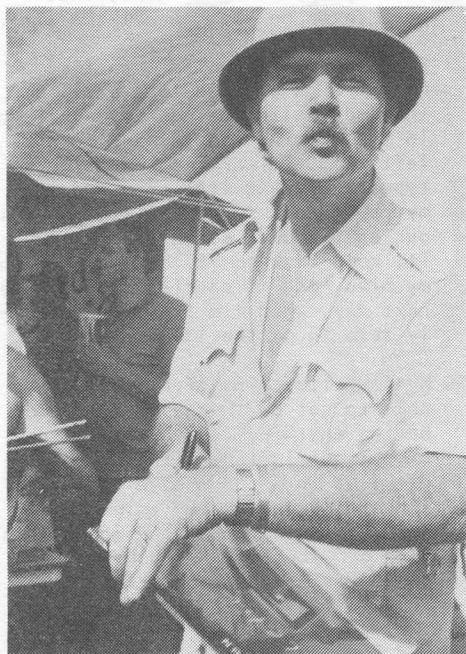
J1 Every once in a while when I come home from a gig and I've still got that adrenaline going, I'll just go in the writing room, where I've left what I'm working on in the typewriter, and I'll sit down with my rewriting, spread all the drafts out on the bed, clean it up, leave it, come back to it, but keep it on my mind, and it carries over to the next day, when I'm fresher to really zero in on the ideas.

SG My favorite thing of all is to be able to get up in the morning, not having anything to do for that day except get in tune with the song, get lost in it, not have to be in a hurry. I gave up my television set, and when I'm on the road, it's kind of nice to be without the phone. If there are distractions around, I will get distracted.

BG I'd like to tell you a story. One morning Shel Silverstein is sitting in a coffee shop in Nashville having breakfast with his daughter, and Mac Davis walks in. He recognizes Shel, a very distinctive looking man. Mac says, "Oh, Mr. Silverstein, I've always wanted to meet you." Shel recognizes Mac Davis and says, "Hi, Mac, it's a pleasure..." Mac Davis says, "You know, it's been a dream of mine that someday we could write a song together..." Shel says, "Well, sure..." Mac Davis says, "Well, maybe somewhere down the road our paths will cross..." Shel says, "Sit down, we'll do it now..." So they wrote, "Pour Me Another Tequila, Sheila," a fine song, to which Shel later added a last verse. I tell you this story so you'll know that songwriting is wherever you are, but more important, if you ever see Shel Silverstein, don't just say, "Hi, Shel." Say, "You know, Shel, I've always wanted to write a song with you..."

1985 FOLK FESTIVALS . . . FAST FOLK backstage at the NEWPORT FOLK FESTIVAL

a photo-essay by Christine Lavin



Christine Lavin

Tom Paxton gave kissing lessons along with autographs following his set.



Christine Lavin

Dave Van Ronk (right) advises John Gorka on the latest hat fashions. Nashville songwriter Hugh Moffatt tries to listen in.



Christine Lavin

Lisa, Bill Morrissey's wife, tries to explain how she was stricken with FFF, but has now recovered. Bill obviously doesn't think an explanation is necessary.



Christine Lavin

Marian Leighton, one of the owners of Rounder Records, visits the backstage area.



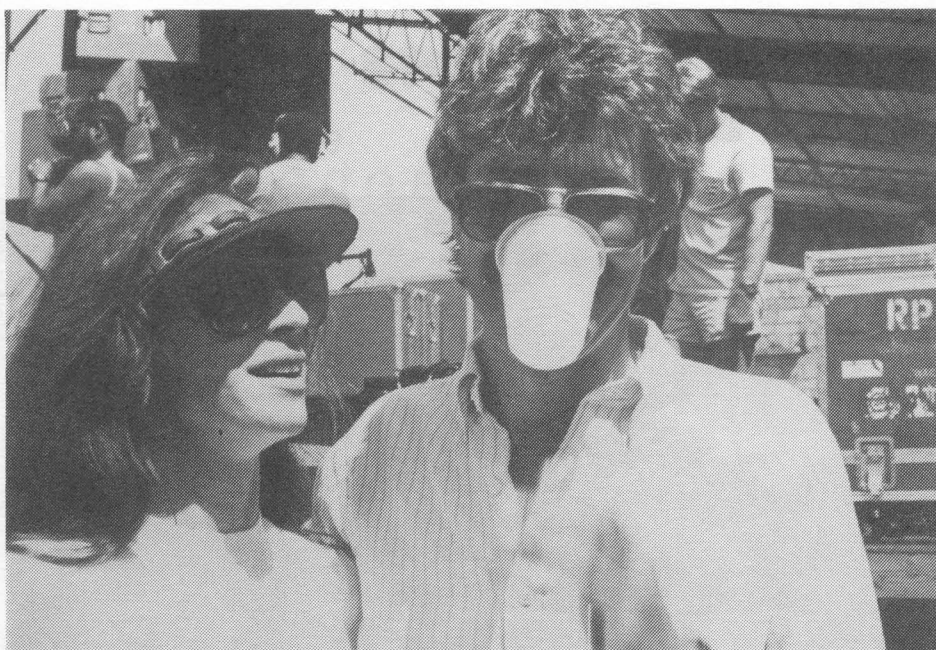
Christine Lavin

Lisi Tribble backstage rehearses her moves for David Massengill's "Sightseer."



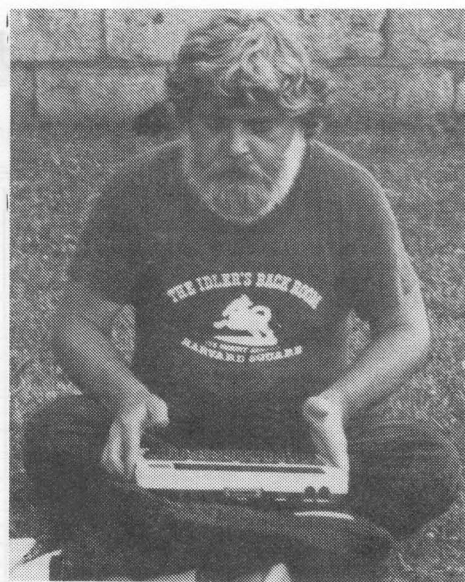
Christine Lavin

Warned by Tom Rush that the Fast Folk Fotog was nearby, Arlo Guthrie does his Stevie Wonder impression.



Despite his clever disguise, Fast Folk Fotog recognized Tom Rush and his wife Beverly.

Christine Lavin



The times they have a-changed. Jeff McLaughlin, reporting on the festival for *The Boston Globe*, types his observations into a portable computer terminal, then later "phones" in his story via Ma Bell.

Christine Lavin



Tom Wolke

Finale at Newport Folk Festival 1985. (l-r) Christine Lavin, Bill Morrissey, Jim Rooney, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, David Massengill, Judy Collins, Arlo Guthrie, Tom Paxton, Mimi Farina, festival organizer Bob Jones, Dave Van Ronk

1985 FOLK FESTIVALS . . .

PHILADELPHIA FOLK FESTIVAL

by Richard Meyer and Beverly Bark

The 1985 edition of the Philadelphia Folk Festival was filled with all the special touches that make it one of this country's great folk festivals. The beautiful setting, efficient staff, and responsive audience all provide a fine place for great music to be enjoyed at leisure. All the traditional events provided more than enough diversion for anyone seeking to be busy during their time on the festival grounds.

Mainstage concerts featured such artists as David Bromberg, the Battlefield Band, Happy and Artie Traum, Dave Van Ronk, Koko Taylor, John Hartford, Jim Post, Mike Cross, Garnet Rogers, Suzanne Vega, Pierre Bensusan, and Tom Paxton. They all turned in remarkable performances.

Koko Taylor and Taj Mahal had the audience dancing in the face of heavy rain. Tom Paxton introduced Anne Hills to the audience for a number of duets, including the striking "Biko," which brought down the house.

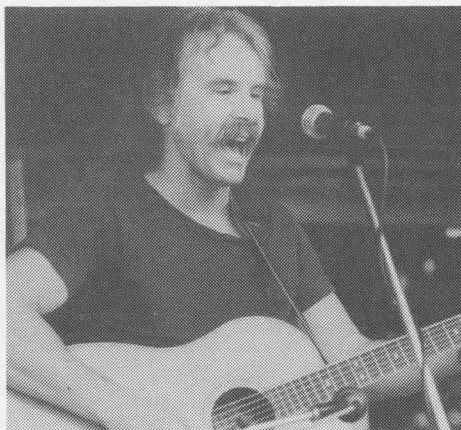
John Hartford made the ten-thousand-plus crowd feel like an intimate gathering for his set, and was cheered by the audience as he took a stroll through the house with his fiddle amplified by a wireless mike so he could keep playing. As another high point of his set, he invited Tommy Smothers onstage to join him for a song and to show off his skill on the yo-yo.

Garnet Rogers performed Rod MacDonalld's "American Jerusalem." Suzanne Vega played a strong set backed up by Frank Christian. Jim Post was his usual wild, entertaining self, and Dave Van Ronk's performance hypnotized the crowd.

On the smaller stages John Gorka, Nanci Griffith, Frank Christian, Reilly and Maloney, Archie Fisher, Aileen and Elkin Thomas, and others showed that the main stage is not the only place for great songwriters and performers to play. The small stages also supported strong workshops such as the songwriter's workshop, one on political songs led by Tom Paxton, and others on subjects that covered a wide range of what makes up contemporary folk music.



John Hartford on fiddle, Tommy Smothers on yo-yo



Jim Post

The Midway offered an assortment of quality musical items and crafts, as well as displays by Sing Out! magazine, an information booth, and a record booth offering albums of many of the musicians who were featured at the festival.

The festival is run primarily by volunteers, who all deserve congratulations for getting the show on and for being remarkably unobtrusive.

Next year will be the 25th anniversary of the Philadelphia Folk Festival, and if this year's festival was any indication of an average year, next year's festival should be quite spectacular.



Suzanne Vega accompanied by Frank Christian

RECORD REVIEWS

Paul Kaplan, King of Hearts

by Bob Norman

Paul Kaplan's second album, *King of Hearts*, finds him holding court before a live audience at SpeakEasy, a Greenwich Village folk club, backed up by a stellar crew that includes Kenny Kosek on fiddle, Robin Greenstein on banjo, Ed Baker on piano, Mark Dann on bass, and Larry Cole on bagpipes.

It's an atmosphere that brings out the best in Paul. His songs are so immediately infectious that this album is likely to set you right in the audience singing along. It has some of the pitfalls of all live recordings--a rough mix here, a flatted harmony there. But warmth and excitement make up for any technical failings.

This nice, rowdy crowd feel is not an accident. SpeakEasy, now in its fifth year as New York's only full-time folk club, is home to many styles of acoustic music. But from the start, it has been primarily a songwriter's club. And Paul, a long-time member of the musicians' cooperative that runs the music room in this nouveau fela-fel joint, writes songs that, while not the most avant-garde, are probably the best-founded in the spirit of traditional folk music. Many years of cuatro-picking with Irish bar bands probably account for it.

The title song is a good example: Combining the symbolism of British balladry with a few sly lines ("He's a royal pain in the neck") and some lovely fingerpicking, Paul comes up with a wry story of stolen love that manages to be poignant and funny at the same time. Or take "I Had an Old Coat," a reworking of a theme from a Yiddish folk tale that has a modern message (the benefits of recycling) but that sounds like you've been singing it since you were eight. Or "Wedding in the Village," which tells the story of Paul's own wedding in the pictorial language of Peter Brueghel the Elder and then segues effortlessly into a pipe tune from southwestern France, "Gascon Rondeau."

In a similar vein, but on a more serious note, the tune to "Rule Britannia" becomes the chorus of "Just Another War," a savage attack on the folly of the Falklands War: "It's war, war, war, It's just another war..." The opening

line, too, is memorable: "The bitter snows of June across the deck are thundering..." takes you into a world turned upside down. Such subtleties can get lost in first listening to Paul's songs. They seem so accessible, even disingenuous, that it's easy just to sing along. But repeated listenings, the kind that vinyl gives you, will let you peel the onion.

Paul's special gift is to take something old and make it new--with a twist--as those who know the most popular songs from his first album, "Call Me the Whale" and "Henry the Accountant," will attest. But there are also some fine songs here that don't fall into that category--a jazzy "I'm Feeling Blue," a tribute to Phil Ochs, a rousing opening love song called "I Will Keep You Warm," straightforward renderings of the traditional "Heather on the Moor" and "Greenwood Lassie" (here "Laddie").

There's some deadwood, too: "Money," though manically funny, could have used a bit more work. And "Orphans of the Storm," despite a powerful chorus, doesn't quite become the ambitious bicentennial lament it set out to be. But all in all, *King of Hearts* is a royal repast of fun songs, elegant arrangements, and eloquent sentiments, not to be missed.

Bob Norman is a singer, guitarist, and songwriter, a member of SpeakEasy's musician's cooperative, and a former editor of *Sing Out!* magazine.

King of Hearts is available from:

Hummingbird Records
212 W. 85th Street, Apt. 3W
New York, New York 10024

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We publish a bi-monthly newsletter to keep you informed of Elliott's touring and recording plans. Plus we offer hard to get Elliott Murphy items; records, teeshirts, posters, songbooks, etc. For more information or membership, please write THE ELLIOTT MURPHY INFORMATION SOCIETY P.O. Box 209, Ludlow, VT. 05149, U.S.A.

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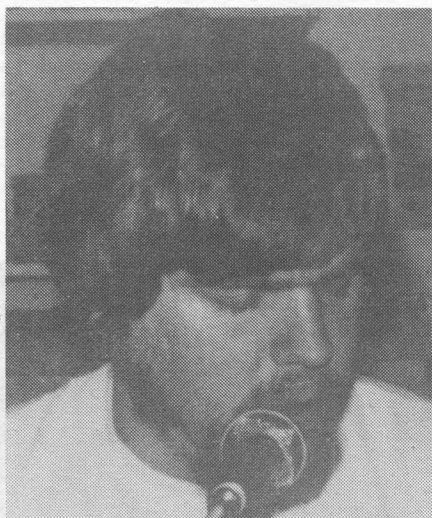
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ON THE RECORD



Bob Batch



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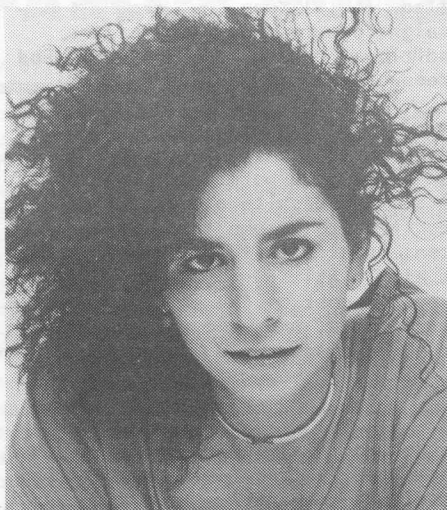
Alan Beck

Jack Hardy



Jason Threlfall

Richard Meyer



Carrie

RON ANGEL has been the organizer of the Stockton Folk Club, Teesside, England, for more than 20 years. Ron worked in a chemical plant for 10 years. "The Chemical Worker's Song" is dedicated to his father, Billy Angel, who died at 62, after working all his life down in the anhydrite mine of a chemical plant.

BOB BATCH, now thirty-two, was born too late for Woodstock and too early for disco. He presently identifies with the social classification of Yuffy (Young Urban Failures) and would like to win the million-dollar lottery.

CINDY LEE BERRYHILL resides in San Diego, California. She began her professional music career in 1976 writing, singing, and dancing with a California Vaudeville troupe. She is probably best known for her debut song, "Damn, Wish I Was a Man," on Radio Tokyo Tapes, Vol. III, released this spring on Gem/PVC Records.

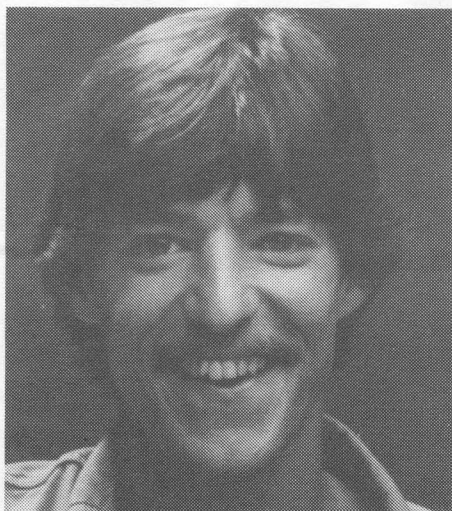
JACK HARDY has released six albums on the Great Divide label, the most recent of which is The Cauldron. Some of his earlier albums have been reissued by First American in this country and Pastels abroad. He is the editor of The Fast Folk Musical Magazine.

DEB KAYMAN interprets traditional and contemporary songs in half a dozen languages. With care for detail, she presents songs selected for their political, poetic, and musical power. She lives in her native New York, waiting impatiently for the Messianic Age or a subsidized apartment, whichever comes first.

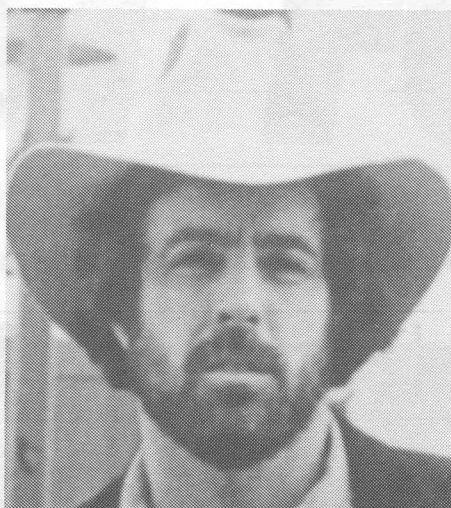
BOB MELLMAN lives in Hoboken, New Jersey, with his dog Milt. He has performed his songs throughout New Jersey and in New York City. Through a genetic peculiarity, Bob has never lost two of his baby teeth. This is his first appearance on Fast Folk.

RICHARD MEYER is a professional designer of scenery and lighting for the theatre. He is currently the resident designer for the Berkshire Public Theatre, and recently was technical director for the Mabou Mines production of Through the Leaves. Richard is working on his first album, which will be ready soon.

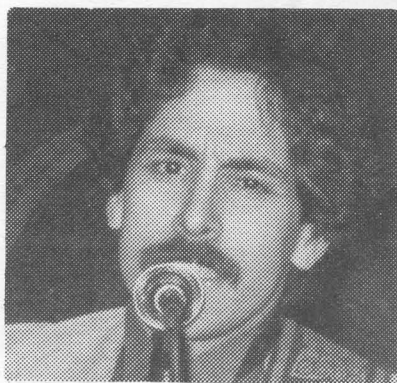
HUGH MOFFATT claims to be a drifter who loves all kinds of people, places, things, and music. His songs have been recorded by Dolly Parton, Alabama, Conway Twitty, Merle Haggard, Johnny Rodriguez, Patti Page, John Starling, Bill Anderson, and others. He has performed on stages of all sorts in 47 of the 48 contiguous states, and makes his home in Nashville.



Buddy Mondlock



Tom Russell



David Roth

Alan Beck



Cheryl Wheeler

BUDDY MONDLOCK lives in Chicago and appears regularly at many clubs and campuses in the area. He has been featured on WBEZ's nationally syndicated show, *The Flea Market*, and was picked as one of the "Best of Open Stage" at the Earl of Old Town by some of Chicago's pop music critics. His material includes ballads, bluegrass, and a few old standards.

DAVID ROTH, a native of Chicago, rewrote "Sounding" after attending Bob Gibson's Songwriters School at the 1985 Kerrville Folk Festival. He lives in New York City where he is finishing work on his debut album.

TOM RUSSELL has recorded three albums. His latest, *Heart on a Sleeve*, was reviewed recently in *People* magazine. He tours internationally and has had songs recorded by Ian Tyson and Bill Staines.

CHERYL WHEELER began her musical career with an abandoned plastic ukulele at the age of ten from her home in Baltimore. A professional artist/composer since fifteen, Cheryl has been an integral part of the southern New England folk scene since 1976. Her debut album on North Star Records, produced by Jonathan Edwards, is due for release in January '86.



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Mark Dann/Bass, Drums & Electric
6- & 12-String Guitars
Richard Meyer/Background Vocal
Chuck Hancock/Saxophone
2. The Boat Song (Lyle Lovett)
Lyle Lovett/Vocal & Guitar
Andrew Hardin/Lead Guitar
3. Sounding (David Roth)
David Roth/Vocals & Guitars
4. As The Crow Flies (Tom Russell)
Tom Russell/Lead Vocals & Acoustic Guitar
Andrew Hardin/Harmony Vocals & Lead Guitar
"Fats" Kaplin/Pedal Steel
Billy Troiani/Bass
Richard Crane/Drums & Harmony Vocals
5. Cares To The Wind (Richard Meyer)
Richard Meyer/Vocal & Guitar
John Kruth/Mandolin
Mark Dann/String Bass
6. The Chemical Worker's Song (Ron Angel)
Deb Kayman/Vocal
Judith Zweiman/Vocal
7. Up in the Attic (Buddy Mondlock)
Buddy Mondlock/Vocals & Guitar
Mark Dann/Acoustic Lead Guitar
1. You Got To Believe (Hugh Moffatt)
Hugh Moffatt/Vocals & Guitar
Mark Dann/Acoustic Guitar & Acoustic Bass
2. Northern Girl (Cheryl Wheeler)
Cheryl Wheeler/Vocal & Guitar
Kenny White/Piano & Mirage Keyboard Bass
Robin Batteau/Violin
3. My Heart Is Artificial (But My Love for You
Is Real) (Bob Mellman)
Bob Mellman/Vocals & Guitar
Mark Dann/Bass, Drums & Electric Guitar
Richard Meyer/Background Vocal
Sam Zygmuntowicz/Violin
4. Steve on H (Cindy Lee Berryhill)
Cindy Lee Berryhill/Vocal & Guitar
5. Nuieba (The Desert Song) (Carrie)
Carrie/Vocal & Guitar
Kim Starnier/Electric Guitar
6. I Don't Care (Bob Batch)
Bob Batch/Vocal & Guitar