

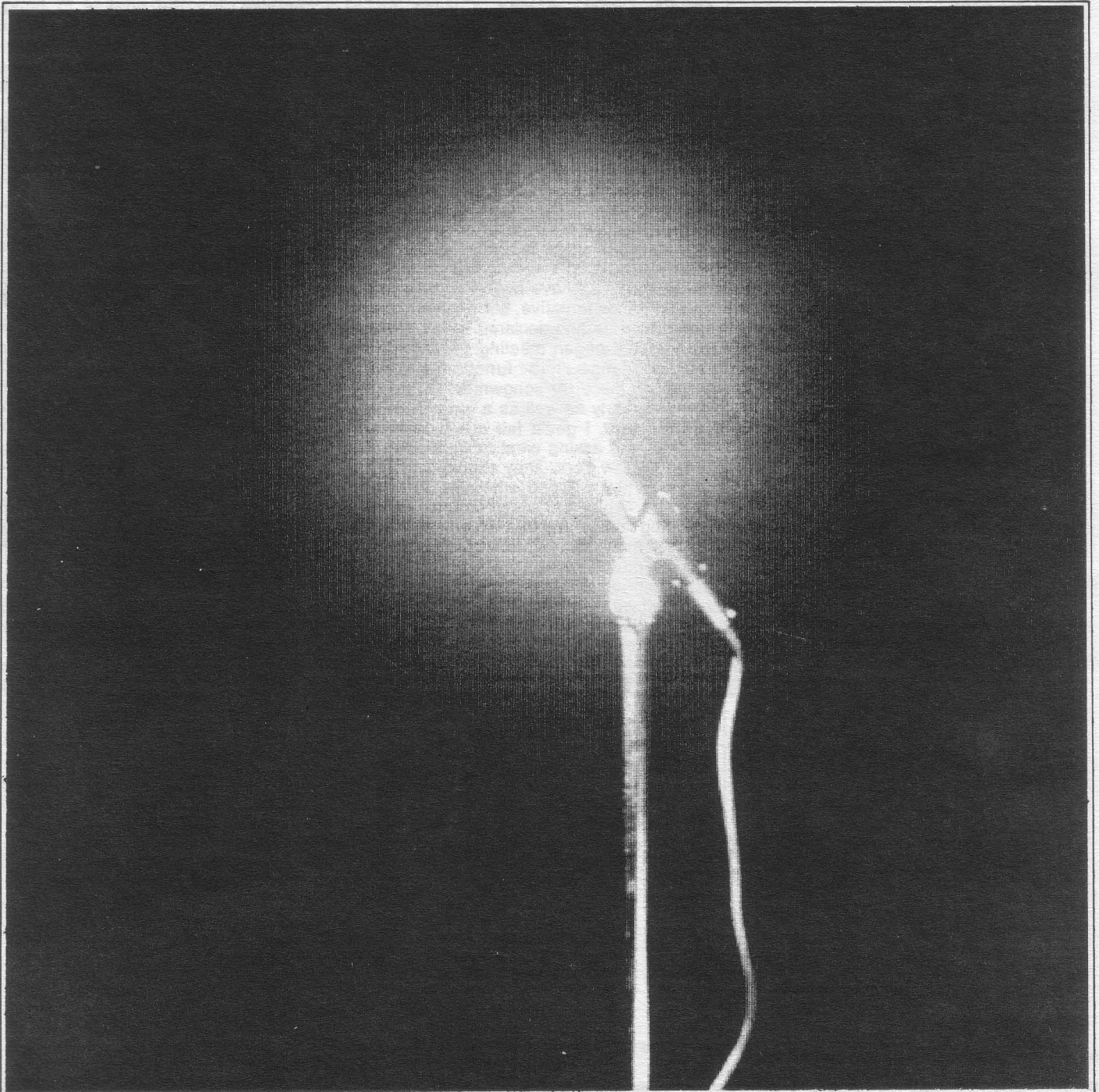
# FAST FOLK

M U S I C A L M A G A Z I N E

1990

NEW VOICES

Volume 5 No.4





# FAST FOLK

MUSICAL MAGAZINE

PUBLISHED BY THE FAST FOLK MUSICAL MAGAZINE, INC.  
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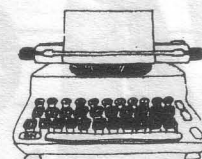
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**FAST FOLK**  
MUSICAL MAGAZINE



## SHUT UP... AND PLAY THE SONG!

By Richard Meyer

Here is a collection of songs by some writers who are new or nearly new to *Fast Folk*. Although times have a-changed to a certain extent, making a living as a not-yet-established singer/songwriter is still the butt of many a joke. Yes, there is a new folk revival (Fast, Nu-, and Anti-) and a few people are making money at it. But that is not the point, however nice it may be to those on the cash end of the proposition.

I first heard the songs on this record around the table at the Songwriter's Exchange. At the very least, I heard other material by these writers, or else someone there was excited enough by another writer to bring their songs to my attention. The songs may have been fragments, the performances tentative, but in each case a song stood up and declared itself alive.

Since it began meeting 13 years ago, the Exchange has functioned as a gathering place for songwriters in town to meet regularly as well as a great place for pasta dinner. I get a fair number of calls from writers asking what to do when they arrive in New York. They should come and join in. They will find others of their kind and be able to play songs without worrying about the fate of a career they may or may not have. They can perhaps learn something about their material. Even the most seasoned writer can benefit from such critical exposure. Though this may be stating the obvious, it is nevertheless true that no record company or club will write new tunes for the songwriter who has outgrown or released all his past work. The songwriter, by definition must still write his own songs. Isn't this obvious? Often not.

The rules, if you can call them that, are simple. Play a new song or part of one. Don't play your hits. A major revision is acceptable, but the goal is to bring in something new each week. That can mean 52 new songs a year or at least that many playable attempts. If you are new you can play anything you want, after that it has to be a new song.

It is like presenting a case to a jury. What may have seemed clear at home may be hopelessly obfuscated by rhetorical twists and fine rhyme turning. Tortured versification without simplification imbues otherwise splendid and well intended ideas with lugubrious overbearing and poetically profuse obtuse weight of cliché. OK? Hmm.....

Friends are a safe haven, but artists need challenges to grow. self-destruction The possibility for a little good-natured humiliation and musical self-immolation ought not to be debilitating. Rather, it can instill the in writer a healthy (though manageable) capacity for self-criticism. Yet, after meeting for years with the same group, one learns their style of writing and criticism. It becomes easier to trust the group with a new new song. This familiarity, makes it possible to discuss details of a new song and say more than, hey-that was good (if you want to).

Criticism is neither blind nor final. You can take it or leave it. George Bernard Shaw wrote that to criticize one must understand what an artist sets out to do, have enough background to understand what was done and then evaluate how well an artist accomplished his or her goal.

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THE FAST FOLK MUSICAL  
MAGAZINE, INC.

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The danger in any group is that it can become isolated, which is why we invite, feed, and listen to everyone. People at different stages of development are encouraged at their level. We don't take ourselves too seriously (oh, sure we do). We do take the work seriously. One long range goal is to write songs to outlive us.

Most times a writer will get on the stool pick up the guitar and begin to tune it (even if it is perfectly in tune). After they have detuned and corrected it they usually say something like....

- A) I just wrote this today and .....
- B) I don't know how to play this yet, but.....
- C) This is about.....
- D) (Insert your own apology)

It is at this time that someone, usually Jack Hardy or Brian Rose will shout, "Shut up and play the %\$#^%\$#@! song!"

We challenge each other to write outside our natural styles. Too much el sensitivo stuff goes over like bad pasta; and we take our pasta seriously.

Later news! The Cornella Street album is about to be re-released on CD by STash records, the original label. It will be expanded to include some of the outtakes from the original sessions.

So heres the new decade. The first Coop record eight years ago introduced a bunch of new voices and a dozen fine songs. Let's move on. Play this record to check these songwriters. Hold onto this record for eight years and then let's talk again about the names on its label.

4/2/90

**P.S.**

From 1978 to 1986, the Songwriter's Exchange was held at Street Cafe. The cafe issued one record in 1980 on Stash Records which includes recordings by David Massengill, Brian Rose Lucy Kaplansky, Cliff Eberhardt, Rod MacDonald and Tom Intondi. It's worth finding a copy (of course it is only available on one of those archaic 12" black plastic discs,

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by **ROGER DEITZ**

The eighteen stories in this collection originally appeared in the *Fast Folk Musical Magazine* between 1984 and 1985. All would, therefore, seem to be about folk music, at least on the surface. But there is more to them than that. Available by sending \$5.95 + \$1.00 postage to: Rescan Associates Inc., 401 Boyden Avenue, Maplewood, NJ 07040.

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## ANSWERS TO OUR CD QUESTIONNAIRE

We've had a lot of responses to the question of CDs. Frankly I'm surprised. I had thought that there would be at least a 40/60 split opinion leaning toward CD, perhaps more. In fact there has been only 1 unqualified request for the new format. Perhaps the Vinyl aficionados are more motivated to write, for fear of losing their accustomed format.

Nearly every one who responded pointed to the lower cost of vinyl, the larger graphic area for art, credits and the obvious ease for us to keep the magazine portion integrated with the musical part. It must also be mentioned that most of people who returned the questionnaire also do have CD players. A couple people urged us to issue cassettes.

Few people were willing to commit to \$100 (an arbitrary figure) or more for a subscription to **FAST FOLK** on CD. While \$6.50 is still a remarkably low price for an LP to be made with the magazine and sent out postpaid we feel we can maintain our price of \$65.00 for ten issues if we continue to gain new subscribers. Tell your friends. A few responders felt that this music which comes from the grass roots level and the street should not be priced out of the hands of the communities from which it comes.

Our conclusion is to continue producing **FAST FOLK** on LP only. We are pursuing some possibilities for reissuing selections from the early **Coop** and **FAST FOLK** records. If we do, and the licensing company wishes to underwrite to cost of multiple formats, then we will probably go ahead. Even in the case of a license arrangement we would probably keep the subscriptions to **FAST FOLK** on LP to insure that the magazine would not be disassociated from the music. I have also been told that many smaller radio stations still prefer LPs. We are very interested in keeping our entire archive (now up to 60 LPs) in one format. As long as we manufacture independently, CDs do not make sense for us.

We will keep you posted. Thanks for your responses.

-Editor



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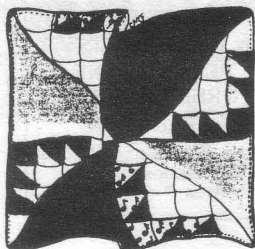
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## THE POSTCRYPT COFFEEHOUSE

By Beverly Greenfield

If you take the #1 train to 116th Street and Broadway some Friday or Saturday night, walk through the Columbia University campus to St. Paul's Chapel, and follow the winding staircase down to the basement, you will find a tiny, stone room with ancient-looking pipes lining the walls, small wooden tables with candles in empty wine bottles, and stage lit with a lone spotlight. Chances are someone will be making music -- a local singer-songwriter, an up-and-coming student talent, or maybe even a Boston-based performer who's passing through.

**What you'll notice right away is there are no microphones or speakers - just the music and the audience**

What you'll notice right away is the quiet attention in the room, and the fact that there are no microphones or speakers -- just the music and the audience.

The Postcrypt Coffeehouse was founded in 1964, by the Protestant Office at Columbia University. What was then an old storage room was cleaned out and furnished with a record player, coffee, and Italian pastries from down on 9th Avenue. Soon, "everyone was coming through there," says Bill Starr, Episcopalian minister at Columbia, who was involved in the Postcrypt's beginnings. "It was one of the first coffeehouses around." He remembers regulars like David Bromberg and Ian & Sylvia, not to mention lots of other talented musicians and poets who went on to less public careers. More recently, Suzanne Vega played at the Postcrypt while she was a student at Barnard College.

Over the years, the Coffeehouse has changed hands administratively a few times, being run by whoever was willing to commit what it takes to get the shows on every week. In the several years prior to its current incarnation, Robin Levey and Ted Kesler revived the ailing coffeehouse and spread the word about the Postcrypt to many new constituencies, including the fair number of New York's premiere singer-songwriters. The Postcrypt became known as a particularly fun gig for them, and they keep coming back, making it part of the regular circuit. Robin and Ted

**One performer looked into the audience one night and said, "You people are the only audience in New York that can drink beer and listen to music at the same time."**

managed to do this without a budget, except perhaps the one that came out of their own pockets.

Over the years, most of the performers at the Postcrypt Coffeehouse have been folk-oriented musicians and singer-songwriters, but the Postcrypt also honors a long-standing tradition of presenting and encouraging various forms of spoken-word performances with a series called "Performance of Words," which is featured most Friday nights (and some Saturdays), along with the music. "Performance of Words" showcases poetry, storytelling, comedy, monologue, and the like.

Ultimately, the Postcrypt isn't about big names or big crowds (we only have about 45 chairs). What it's really about is

a commitment to quality, originality, at least a little consciousness, and lots of fun. It's about exploring new possibilities, about bringing the audience so close to the performer that they feel a part of the performance -- encouraging people to be actively involved in their listening, and encouraging performers to take chances with their audiences.

We hope that by making a commitment to consistently interesting and original performers, we can entice our audience to wander in, not only for known quantities like David Massengill and John Gorka, but for unknown and developing quantities like powerhouse blueswoman and songwriter Dorothy Scott (who we found singing in Central Park), or Professor Louie, whose inspired rap stories give you the kind of news and social commentary you won't find in the *New York Times*.

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### HOW DID THE POSTCRYPT GET ITS NAME?

The room just outside that old storage room (that is now the Coffeehouse) was once called the Crypt Lounge, hence "Post-crypt," or behind the crypt. These days, the original "crypt lounge" is often referred to as the "room outside the Postcrypt."



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## SEVEN HUNDRED WORDS ON SONGWRITING

By Michael Smith

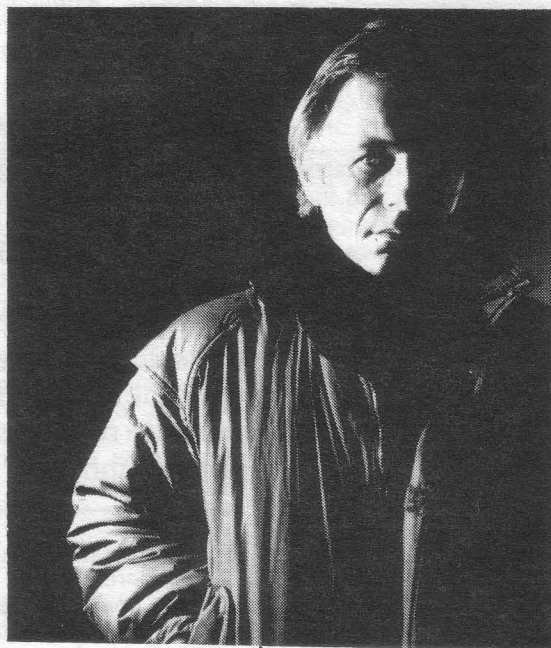
Sometimes, I get invited to do songwriting workshops. It's a heady mixture of fun, profit and guilt to pontificate for three hours about something I know and love. Because I want to give people their money's worth, I try to distill my rambling thoughts into a more potent and pithy form. I want to hold up a flower like Buddha. I want to send these people away saying now my life has changed in oh so many ways. The reality, though, is more on the level of: I play a D chord like this, and here's how I fingerpick, and sometimes I get songs from newspaper stories. That's when people sit up and pay attention. You can see it in their eyes: now they're getting straight scoop. You see, I want to tell them how they can do it, and they want me to tell them how I do it.

I didn't go to a workshop to learn to love "Strawberry Fields," I tell them. I heard it, and someone in me said 'oh yeah.' It was a private experience. I know that there were millions of us listening to "Strawberry Fields," but it was still private. What the experience was I can't put into words, and when you can't put something into words, a million words are not enough and even one is too many. But Hugh having said give us seven hundred words, then perhaps seven hundred words is exactly perfect.

I would like to be the one to say that it's only you and you alone. You're the one. You're the one who is the best at being you. You're the one who knows, and I am here on this paper to tell you that: you're the one who knows. Nobody knows you, no one will ever know you like you do. This is how I talk to myself. Why should I talk to you any differently?

You know what you want. For a long time you have known what you want. Just ask yourself. You'll see. Ask yourself what you want, then listen for the answer. It comes, it always comes. It may not come when you want it, but it's right on time. Keep asking. Songwriting is asking yourself what kind of song you want.

Who was the one who told me to love the dream of "Strawberry Fields"? Who was the one who showed me at ten that walking along Valley Road from Orange to South Orange was exactly like



going to heaven? Who is it who knows if the song I've finished is a good one? Who is the one who loves in me with a warm and caring indifference? Who says the 'oh yeah' that matters? I haven't met this person swapping songs.

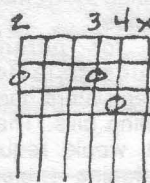
"Keep asking. Songwriting is asking yourself what kind of song you want."

When you play a song for someone and then you ask them what they think, they will make comments that will fall into two categories: that which you know and agree with, and that which you don't agree with. Why don't you ask yourself and skip the trip out of town? Why look for a mechanic when you know how to fix your car? Before Elvis sang a note, he was Elvis. Who are you? What kind of songs would you like to write? What's keeping you from doing it? Who's gonna write these songs, if not you? Dylan's got his own schedule to tend to. Who's gonna drive you home?

It's always possible that I don't know what I'm talking about, at least, as possible as it is that I do. The world is full of people who write books about songwriting with all kinds of good advice in them. It's bad advice, too. All advice (including this) is suspect, isn't it?

They say 'he who knows does not say', but what I end up doing in workshops is like holding up a whole

bunch of flowers and *saying* like crazy. I can't keep as still about it as Buddha. I'm like the scarecrow pointing in all directions to Oz. Pay no attention to me. "Panther In Michigan" is from the newspaper. I make D like this:





## A Wrap-Up On The Great Song Lyric Warning Sticker Controversy

By Christopher Kenner

The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the National Association of Record Merchandisers (NARM) recently announced that the music industry will undertake an expanded voluntary program of parental information record labeling. While the announcement has helped quell the momentum of bills aimed at mandatory record labeling introduced in at least nine states, not everyone in the music community believes that voluntary labeling is a good solution to the threat of state controlled labeling.

In 1985, a similar announcement was made. In association with the PMRC (Parents Music Resource Center) twenty-two record companies voluntarily agreed to place parental information stickers on records with explicit lyrics. One of the problems with this informal agreement, according to George D. Weiss, president of the Songwriter's Guild of America (SGA), was that not enough companies agreed to comply and that some of those who did comply did it mockingly, with intent to conceal their compliance.

With the need for parental information still unsatisfactory answered, many state legislators began introducing record labeling bills. These varied bills, if passed, would require labels for songs mentioning subjects ranging from adultery to bestiality to Satanism. Some would ban the sale of stickered products to minors; other would find record retailers liable for non-compliance. In response to this legislative pressure, the music industry has reaffirmed their commitment to voluntary labeling.

The announcement of the expanded labeling program convinced many state legislators to drop their labeling and give the music industry another chance at self-regulation. Other state bills had already hit snags due to vagueness and unconstitutionality. The new program involves six distributors: CBS, Warner Bros., Capitol, BMG, and Polygram, representing fifty-five companies.

Another improvement is uniformity in label design, content, and placement. While specifics have not been ironed out, the tentative wording is "Explicit Lyrics, parental advisory". The placement will probably be under the

"bills, if passed, would require labels for songs mentioning subjects ranging from adultery to bestiality to Satanism. Some would ban the sale of stickered products to minors; other would find record retailers liable for non-compliance"

shrinkwrap of the product.

Interference with a cover's graphic design is one of the reasons that many of the state bills were thought to be unconstitutional, an abridgement of the First Amendment right of free expression.

"Yes, it might be unconstitutional to put a label over the cover art", said a spokesman for Warner Bros. Records, "but we're not passing a law here. It's still voluntary. We're not just going to slap a label on some guy's album. We're embarking on standardizing a system we've been using for a long time. We put labels on Richard Pryor and Steve Martin albums before Tipper Gore was calling for them. And it's better than the states being in control of it."

Nathaniel Wice from Spin Magazine doesn't agree: "Voluntary labeling is a form of censorship. Symbolically, it capitulates to the fundamentalists. It makes it easy to boycott records. The chilling effect of self censorship is more dangerous because it is internal -- individuals will act from fear."

Perhaps Wice is right to fear a self-induced chill. Forced labeling could deter artists from expressing themselves freely, which is one of the unconstitutional aspects of the state labeling bills. Voluntary labeling, while not exactly censorship, could have the same effect. Instead of writing freely, artists might write in order not to get labeled.

Unless all records are labeled, a parent will not know whether an unlabeled product has been submitted for stickering or not. The five Motion Picture Association of America's movie rating categories provide specific information

as to which age groups a particular movie is suited for.

It would be impractical to consider all records for labeling because in a given year, approximately ten times as many records as movies are released. Unlike the panel which rates the year's movies, no panel could hear that many songs.

Language is the common ground of the two mediums. For example, if Two Live Crew's album, "As Nasty As They Wanna Be", were released as a movie with only a soundtrack and a blank screen, it would be rated "X". But rating graphic language is relatively easy compared with deciding which of a song's images require labeling. The graphic images of movies are easier to rate than verbal images of songs. At an "R" rated movie, we pretty well know what body parts we'll see. The imagery of songs often provokes multiple interpretations. A song can also describe a negative activity, such as child abuse, without condoning it. Like censorship, labeling requires drawing lines, and the diversity and imagery of song lyrics are even more at home with gray areas than with lines.

The voluntary record labeling system carries with it a Catch-22. If there is pressure to use the system, whether from distributors or from contractual negotiations between an artist and a company (which is probably how most labeling will be handled) then the system is not voluntary. Unless there is some strong incentive to freely use the system, like the economic incentive found in the movie rating system, without extensive participation, voluntary record labeling will be ineffective.

Social responsibility is George Weiss's incentive to use the voluntary system. A songwriter, whose name can be found on classics like "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" and "What A Wonderful World", opposes censorship: "it can only lead us down an abyss. On the other hand, we have to respond to the needs of parents with young children. Parents are reacting to what a tiny minority in the music industry are doing. Perception is more important than

"Yes, it might be unconstitutional to put a label over the cover art", said a spokesman for Warner Bros. Records, "but we're not passing a law here. It's still voluntary"



reality. If the public thinks we don't care, it will come back to haunt us. Pressure for state labeling bills, for example, should make record people pause. Will these lyrics be bad for business?"

Even though the state labeling bills would probably not pass due to unconstitutionality, Edward P. Murphy, president of the National Music Publisher's Feels a moral responsibility to label records.

"By voluntarily and uniformly providing information concerning the 'adult orientation' of certain recordings to the public, the industry will hopefully eliminate the basis for all pending legislations., while at the same time protecting the freedoms and artistic integrity of the creators and copyright owners; addressing the needs of parents, astisfying U.S. Congressional leaders whose concerns over the issue has sometimes colored their views on other industry related legislation, and generally demonstrating good-will, integrity and sensitivity of the music community. As such, this solution is not only the morally and Constitutionally correct one; it also represents a prudent business decision".

## Will these lyrics be bad for business?"

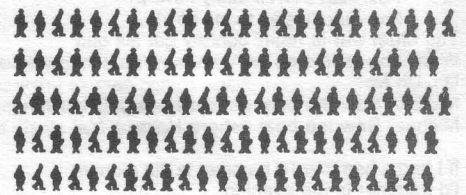
Recent public opinion polls show that 85% of Parents want some type of labeling, but Steve Gottlieb of TVT Records in New York is not one to yeild to pressure groups. "we will never submit [to voluntary labeling]. It is tacit censorship, Doing it ourself is no more friendly." He believes that the 'tiny minority' Weiss refers to is exactly the group free speech should protect, "the people on the fringe".

Gottlieb's solution to the threat of censorship is akin to using only the "G" rating from the movie rating system. "Music shouldn't be labeled for bad behavior. [Groups like the PMRC] should label records they think kids should listen to. I'm all for affirmative stickers instead of blacklisting. I would submit all my records to that kind of

sticker.

If voluntary labeling proves again unsuccessful in providing the information parents want, another solution might be necessary. It is clear that no one in the music industry wants mandatory state controlled record labeling.

Some see voluntary self-labeling as a common sense solution to the threat of outside controls. Others see it as more that a concession, as a foothold for those who want top censor free speech. For some people there will never be enough labels.



## JOHN GORKA

land  
of  
the  
bottom  
line



"...charming, unassumingly brilliant songwriter..."

—Scott Alarik, THE BOSTON GLOBE

"...one of the most devastatingly honest performances in contemporary music...John's voice is rich, compelling and powerful..."

—Christine Lavin

"No surprise Gorka was the Best New Songwriter el-supremo at the Kerrville Folk Festival... great, great songwriting...plus one of those soulful rich voices..."

—Tony May, FOLK ROOTS

"If Gorka has played your town already (and he's played them all), then your listeners are already asking for his bittersweet blend of optimism and despair. You'll find a healthy dose of both on *Land of the Bottom Line*."

—David Dye, WXPB Philadelphia, PA

Available on Windham Hill cassettes and compact discs

WH-1089

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# SIDE BY SIDE

## FOLK RAP

Gimme that guitar I'll show you how to use it  
I'll play a funky thing they call folk music  
Kingston trio; Serendipity; Peter, Paul & Mary now just to name three  
They sang about the dead and the big grand canyon  
they use to make a lot of bucks on Prarie Home Companion  
Anglo Saxon Protestant White  
Had a Hootenanny, Hootenanny Saturday night  
Doin' Folk Rap (can you dig it?)  
Folk Rap (Boogie Down Boogie)  
Folk Rap (Ain't it funky now?)  
Folk Rap (Listen to me now)  
The cruel war is ragin' Johnny got his gun  
Won't you let me go with you say 'no Johnny No Johnny  
Uh, Uh No!  
Michael Row the boat ashore Halleluh! Halleluh!  
Michael Row the boat ashore Halleluh Ya!

If I had a hammer I'd hammer in the mornin'  
I'd hammer in the evening  
I'd hammer in your face  
Puff puff puff puff puff puff puff puff  
Puff the magic dragon lived by the sea  
He froliced in the autumn in a land called Onelee  
Little Jackie paper loved that rascal Puff  
But Jackie split the scene and Puff got in a huff  
He doin Folk Rap (Yeah can you dig it?)  
Folk Rap ( Ah boogie down Boogie)  
Folk Rap (Oh Woody Guthrie knows)  
Folk Rap ( Uh)  
Kum by ya

Words and Music ©1989 O.J. Anderson

## Full Moon Laughing

Sometimes at night I dream of foghorns  
Just crying all night long  
Moaning on a misty vineyard  
Such a plaintive song

And I love to hear the freight train wailing through the night  
Telling all the M street winos the ballad of their plight  
But most of all I love to turn my eyes to catch the grip  
of the full moon laughing at the coyote's howling

I like the sigh of the pines  
just when the day is turning  
When the colors are fading away  
Before the stars are burning

Deep dark tunnels and a long rolling train  
Pass in mystery that knows no name  
But everything that you cannot tame  
Keeps the round world turning

Fog horns moaning and the freight trains wail  
Time clicking by in a tunnel, on rails  
But most of all I love to turn my eyes to catch the grip  
of the full moon laughing at the coyote's howling  
At the full moon laughing

Words and Music ©1989 By Rachel Polisher

## ELLIE'S BLUES

An object in motion stays in motion and an object at rest stays at rest  
But zero gravity changes everything  
And if you invent your own history you never have to worry  
about the boring parts  
There are more lines in the faces of trees around here  
than there are honest men in prison  
And the library closes at six, but the bars stay open all night long

The cops all drink at Charlie's Inn on Harding near the beach  
They toss down bourbon and water till they feel innocent  
or fall off their stools, whichever comes first  
They give the Spanish waitress shit and she just smirks  
and mutters under her breath  
They bitch about the TV shows where pimps and embezzlers  
always seem to get all the best lines  
Ellie don't you think we really ought to get out of here  
The lady down the street howls like a dying religion  
and throws empty gin bottles at her husband when he walks out the door  
She's got two little kids who wander off on their own  
and are brought home at night by tired policemen  
The neighbors are afraid to park their cars in front of her house  
and her dog has eyes like a sick old man  
I think she's a nurse

Down the street from Ellie's house is where Louie hangs with his buddies  
He's got a crooked Jesus tattoo on his back  
but no one has the guts to tell him  
The punks pass by and they all give each other dirty looks  
and laugh at each other's haircuts  
Someday they'll all be family men  
Ellie don't you think we really ought to get out of here  
Goodnight goodnight go back to sleep

Ellie's father is a surly old crow who looks like Vincent Gardenia  
He doesn't like me much and he always pretends to forget my name  
He plays nickel and dime poker every Thursday night  
with all the other fat Italians who scratch where they don't even itch  
She thinks she's disappointed him but he's just too dumb to please

There's a street that begins at the top of a hill  
and as it slopes down it runs into a highway  
It's wide enough for all the people who've ever been cheated  
to stand abreast  
In the small hours when the cars are asleep  
you can stand in the middle of the road  
and look down as far as the Catholic high school  
You can see the bridge in the distance and the stars overhead  
and the lights of the next town

Goodnight goodnight go back to sleep

Words & Music ©1989 by Jim Allen



**EMMA SUTTER**

it was a day in August, the air was hot and still  
they came from town to tell me that my Jim had taken ill  
they tried hard to save him, but they could do nothing more  
he was too young to go like that, he was only forty-four

we buried him on Thursday and on Friday with the dawn  
the neighbors came from miles 'round and gathered on the lawn  
they harvested our fields and they wouldn't let me pay  
it was then I knew we'd work it out, somehow I knew we'd stay

sometimes I hate that man of mine for leaving me like this  
sometimes I think I'd give the world to feel his tender kiss  
most of the time I'm too worn out when I fall into bed  
to think about those sweeter nights when he was there instead

and in my dreams the auctioneer is holding out his hand  
be hind him stands that oily, smiling bastard of a man  
who wants to build a shopping mall where all my trees now stand  
those fools don't know a thing of ties that keep you on the land

CHORUS Mary bore Jesus Jesus bore the cross  
these shoulders of mine can't carry one more loss  
so float me a loan, Lord, keep my head above water  
won't you help me keep this farm so I can give it to my daughter

morning comes at last I try to scrub away the dirt  
I put on my Sunday heels and my old blue skirt  
I'll walk into that bank alone, I'll keep my head up high  
never show them how you feel, a man would never cry

and I'm not the only one who's waiting for the axe to fall  
there's Rich and Jake and Danny with their backs against the wall  
we don't have much to say, but we are one mind no doubt  
some of us will get reprieved, some will be selling out

CHORUS

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**PORTLAND RAIN**

I see a couple dancing in the living room  
In a passionate embrace  
I hear angry accusations  
And see tears upon her face  
The laughter sometimes sounding  
Like children at play  
And the silence hanging in the air  
When there were no words to say

But the sweet and tender moments  
Kept their minds off of the pain  
While their love fell down so hard  
Like the Portland rain

In the shadow of that mountain  
He thought he'd finally found a home  
In the warmth of her arms  
He thought he'd never be alone  
But the wheels were set in motion  
When the hearts began to stray  
And home was once again someplace  
Much too far away

So he left for another city  
On the next departing plane  
While their love fell down so hard  
Like the Portland rain

Now by chance while she's out walking  
She'll run into his old friends  
She just shrugs and gives an awkward smile  
When they ask her how he's been  
And some mornings she'll be humming  
An old forgotten tune  
Then remembers it was one he wrote  
That night in the living room

Sometimes she's glad he left her  
Though the memories remain  
Of when their love fell down so hard  
Like the Portland rain

Words & Music ©1987 by Steve Key

**petey's lullaby**

remembering a time i lived in las vegas  
drivin' down flamingo, and headed for a bottle  
she was standing by the red light, but not for her wages  
she left that to the other pretty girls in nevada  
her chest and her thumb were stuck out for tahoe  
life had been long and she needed to smile  
it had been a while since i'd been to tahoe  
anyway, it ain't more than 300 miles

was mid-october when we started through the wasteland  
i thought of new england and the leaves at this time  
'cause there ain't much to look at in the desert basin  
but the sunset riding the telephone line  
she spoke not a word 'til an hour from ely  
then told me she'd left her husband for good  
"he won't believe it 'til he doesn't feel me  
lying in bed, then it'll be understood"

chorus:

i have been charged with too much hard livin'  
and i'd break outta here, could i only make bail  
you can go through the ringers, and you're still headed nowhere  
tell me, when am i gonna get my check in the mail  
when am i gonna get my check in the mail

she swore she wouldn't miss him, or at least more or less  
makin' his bed and the same with his dinner  
that man is thicker than the redwood forest  
the one thing that hurts, he was warm in the winter  
we pulled into ely and called it a night  
got us a room at the motel white pines  
made love so deep, i nearly lost all of my sight  
then she said, "don't look for tomorrow in my eyes"

chorus

she left me so tired, but still so inspired  
i told her i thought that i'd fallen this time  
she said, "there ain't enough time for love to be acquired  
keep your lovers in your arms and not in your mind  
yes, just hold me in your arms and out of your mind"

when i awoke, just me and the sunrise  
were lighting up ely like a christmas tree  
i searched through the town, but much to my demise  
said the gasman, she found a trucker at three

chorus

Words & Music ©1989 by Richard Julian

# SIDE BY RIDE TWO

## SLEEPWALKER

If we could just keep growing, learning  
As fast as we did when we were kids  
With our hearts fire glowing, burning  
As long as we have this chance to live.  
Instead we're satisfied  
Sleepwalking.  
Instead we're satisfied  
Sleepwalking.

My old friend once told me  
You know your wish, then begin your quest  
Then let nothing inside or outside of you  
Ever let you forget.  
Don't be satisfied  
Sleepwalking.  
Don't be satisfied  
Sleepwalking.

I never meant to work this way  
Doing the same damn thing everyday.  
Lost in the crowd  
Caught in the race  
Now when I come home I've got  
Nothing to say.

I'm too tired to move when I get home  
I'll spend my life trying to pay  
For everything I own.  
The cars, the boat, the modern machine  
And I can't break away from this insane routine.

I'm walking in my sleep  
Every day I seem to be intrigued  
By what my life could be if I wasn't  
Walking in my sleep.

I never meant to work this way  
Doing the same damn thing everyday.  
Lost in the crowd  
Caught in the race  
Now when I come home I've got  
Nothing to say.

I'm too tired to move when I get home  
I'll spend my life trying to pay  
For everything I own.  
The cars, the boat, the modern machine  
And I can't break away from this insane routine.

I'm walking in my sleep  
Every day I seem to be intrigued  
By what my life could be if I wasn't  
Walking in my sleep.

(a recently added verse not on the record)

What is the cost to free us  
Trapped here in the land of Nod  
Held by the hand of Morpheus  
Suspended in a deadlock job  
Winds of yesterday  
The freedom that once was mine  
The strength to stand and change  
I won't be satisfied Sleepwalking

## KNOW IT BY HEART

I know what you do  
I know what you like  
I know how you feel  
On the clearest night  
I know what you think  
In the cold blue morning  
I know where you go  
When you give no warning

How can I leave this part  
I know it by heart  
I know what you see  
I know what you do  
What brings you to tears  
When the moon is new  
Whenever I feel  
The rain in my hair  
I know you are cold  
I feel you are there

How can I leave this part  
I know it by heart

And you know how I dream of you  
How I try to run from you  
When I say goodbye to you  
You say no  
I can't go  
You always let me know you

I know what you take  
In your coffee and tea  
I know what you hate  
In the paper you read  
I know what you think  
About diamonds and rubies  
I know where you sit  
When you go to the movies

How can I leave this part  
I know it by heart  
How can I leave this part  
I know it by heart  
How can I leave this part

## Down In Toledo

The big boss told him when he was sent back down,  
"Two weeks in the minors and you'll be back in town,"  
But it's almost september and he knows his place.  
He's down in Toledo and playing third base.

refrain: Down in Toledo where nobody cares,  
if you go 0 for 4 and get a couple of errors.  
You won't see the majors if you don't say your prayers.  
When you're playing down on the farm.

He's oiled his glove and he's sharpened his spikes,  
but his kid hid his jersey, he'll be late tonight.  
Scraping the barrel on minor league cash.  
Returning pop bottles to pay for the gas.

(refrain)

Comes home late at night and the house is asleep.  
He sees a flashing red light on the answering machine.  
He kicks off his shoes, and he plays back the call,  
'twas the Angel of Major League baseball.  
"Start packing your bags, you're leaving the farm,  
you've been traded out west for a man with an arm."  
He thinks he sees his buddies with the ducks on the pond,  
as he flies over the lights of the ballpark.

Up in the Majors where everyone stares,  
if you go 0 for 4, and get a couple of errors.  
Some men play for a World Series ring.  
Other men play upon lesser fields.

Up in the Majors where everyone screams,  
if you go 0 for 4 and you slow down the team.  
And each player knows that he must place a call  
To the Angel of Major League baseball.

(Pigeon River, Michigan)

Words and Music by Jeff Wilkinson & George Garrity  
©1990 Red Truck Publishing, BMI



## Moonchild

Andrea, my sister; she swallowed the sea  
The fish inside her and set her soul free  
Her mind is a bouy, tossed by the waves  
And the Winds of Wonder blow her worries away

Sweet tides, carry her home  
Moonchild, so far you roam  
Moonshine's so bright tonight  
Perhaps to light your way home

Andrea, my sister, she dances in dreams  
When she closes her eyes she floats like a stream  
Over all of the earth she flows softly on  
Then spills over the edge with a laugh and is gone

Sweet tides, carry her home  
Moonchild, so far you roam  
Moonshine's so bright tonight  
Perhaps to light your way home

Andrea, my sister, I walk by your shore  
I'm calling your but you hear me no more  
So listen then to your own gentle swell  
And know that I love and all shall be well

Sweet tides, carry her home  
Moonchild, so far you roam  
Moonshine's so bright tonight  
Perhaps to light your way home

Words & Music © 1989 by Christina Muir

## SPIRIT SENSING DANGER

She spoke with such sincerity and solemnness of voice  
Saying every single word that I wanted to hear  
And stripping me of choice  
But her hands had a different story line  
Her hands leaked the news to my press  
They said her heart felt words were heart learned lines  
And I should lay my hopes to rest

### Chorus:

It's a symbolic situation  
It's a microcosmic show  
Of the times your mind sees one thing  
But it won't let your heart know  
Of the split between the reason and the wanting to believe  
Of the spirit sensing danger but refusing to retreat  
It's of the spirit sensing danger but refusing to retreat

Her hands put a word in edgewise  
Turning silent, squirming 'round  
Saying truth is not her purpose here  
Beware the pretty sound

But beware I did not be because I wanted to believe  
And believe I did for way too long  
Despite the signs in front of me

### Chorus

When the hands relay the message  
And the words betray themselves  
You will find your mind in question  
Of all you thought you knew so well

Repeat first verse

### Chorus

Words & Music ©1988 by Lisa McCormick

## REQUIEM (FOR THE GIANTS)

Four hundred years ago, a seed, chance-fallen, grew  
In virgin forest land that never white man knew  
In woodland silence it rose and flourished  
By northern wind was shaped, from earth and sky was nourished

White pine, silver birch: sing their names in requiem  
Giants of our Northern land, we'll never see your likes again  
White pine, silver birch: sing their names in requiem  
Giants of our Northern land, we'll never see your likes again

Two hundred years ago, the giants ruled the shield  
'Til white man came and saw the profits they could yield  
They fell like thunder and left no trace  
But giant stumps that stand as headstones in their place

### Repeat chorus

In north Ontario some giants still remain  
Though few in number now the ax-man comes again  
What will you tell them when your children ask you why  
Our last remaining forest giants had to die

### Repeat chorus

And what gives them the right, I ask, to take what's not their own?  
To kill a living beauty that four hundred years has grown  
To take and sell our heritage to fill pockets for a day  
And when this crop is gone - what will they say?  
And when this crop is gone, and the trees are gone  
The wild is gone and the beasts are gone  
And the tourists gone and the money gone - what will they say?

White pine, silver birch: sing their names in requiem  
Giants of our Northern land, we'll never see your likes again  
White pine, silver birch: sing their names in requiem  
Giants of our Northern land, we'll never see your likes again

White pine  
Silver birch  
Requiem.

Words & Music by Eileen McGann  
©1987,1989 CAPAC

## ONLY STREET PEOPLE KNOW

My name is Maria and this alley's my bed  
Some folks give me quarters, but most turn their heads  
I wonder where they'll be when winter winds blow  
Far from this world only street people know

And that's my kid sister, they messed her you see  
It's twenty for an hour, or fifty gets you three, see  
Mister- my sister, she has to have snow  
To survive in that world only street people know

Now that man's a veteran, but he lost his mind  
Before the last war was over folks used to be kind  
Sheltered and fed him 'till the White House said "no"  
"Let him live in that world only street people know"

And they came and got Gilbert, he died in the night  
Someone stole his blanket, he was too weak to fight  
But he started dying 'most two years ago  
Now he's free from that world only street people know

Now mister, you're a free man, so you got a choice  
To help to make changes if you give your thoughts voice  
Pretend you see nothing, pretend it ain't so  
Pretend no one lives where the rich folks would not go

repeat first verse

Words and music ©1989 Ed & Carol Florida

## BOOK REVIEW

**FAST FOLK**  
MUSICAL MAGAZINE

### ARCHEOLOGY OF THE BLUES

#### King of the Delta Blues: The Life and Music of Charlie Patton

Stephen Calt and Gayle Wardlow,  
Rock Chapel Press, Newton, NJ; and

#### Searching for Robert Johnson

Peter Guralnick,  
(E.P. Dutton, New York)

By Peter Spencer

In his book-length essay *'The Painted Word'*, Tom Wolfe describes how the successive waves of increasingly difficult and obscure art that emerged after World War II required increasingly detailed explanations before even the most aware of patrons could comprehend it. The gradual supplantation of the picture with the "idea" of the picture, expressed perhaps most forcefully in what is called "conceptual" art, has given us, in Wolfe's view, an avant-garde so burdened with explanatory texts as to become irrelevant as a visual medium, becoming, instead, a branch of literature.

More established writers on art than Wolfe (whose comments are simply those of a popular journalist) have identified this trend as well. Most agree that the main beneficiaries are art critics who, as prices climb ever higher, are consulted like holy oracles by dealers, patrons, and even the artists themselves.

Thus, it should come as no surprise that ambitious critics would go out of their way to champion that art which most requires their explanations. This hegemony of critics and the rising emphasis on their texts, both written and unwritten, creates a repeating, self-justifying pattern of idea and explanation - of inchoate art, critical intermediary, and powerless audience - in which the art world becomes a theocracy and the influential critic its god-king.

Unfortunately, this pattern appears to be making some inroads in folk-music scholarship, as well, if *King of the Delta Blues* is any indication. Stephen Calt and Gayle Wardlow have built the book around minutely-detailed analyses of records by the seminal Mississippi blues-singer Charlie Patton. By themselves these close readings have a certain value. But the rhetorical uses Calt and Wardlow put them to are dangerous.

Patton was born in 1891, and died of mitral heart disease on April 28, 1934. In his lifetime he was the most popular country-blues singer in the Delta, the belt of rich cotton-producing farmland in Northern and Western Mississippi that produced many of the greatest blues singers. His music links two fairly distinct musical/historical terrains: the intense, rhythmic blues later made famous by Robert Johnson and Muddy Waters, and earlier, more traditional-sounding vernacular songs.

He occupies an important niche in the history of American music, in part because he was one of the earliest and most original rural blues singers to record. Patton recorded from 1929 until shortly before his death and the 78 r.p.m. records produced from those sessions have been reissued a number of times. A two-disc set on the Yazoo label called *'Founder of the Delta Blues'* is the best introduction to his music. It is one of the essential documents of American music.

Calt and Wardlow analyze these and other Patton recordings closely, with much talk about beat patterns and bar counts and with complicated charts of which intervals are used at the beginnings of which verse.

Unfortunately, the intangibles that inform Patton's music - the polyrhythms, the microtones in his singing and guitar-playing, the strings bent or fretted with a slide, the clowning comic/rebellious attitude - make it almost impossible to describe adequately in this fashion. One wonders why Calt and Wardlow should try so hard to define the undefinable.

The answer is found in one of the book's appendixes. Entitled "Patton and the Scholastics," this chapter mercilessly attacks those writers who have written about Patton in the past, most notably Robert Palmer, David Evans, and John Fahey (none of whom are academics - Palmer is a music journalist and Fahey a professional guitarist). The virulence and vindictiveness of this section is disturbing.

The irony of this is that Calt and Wardlow's main criticism of these "scholastics" is that they are not "scholastic" enough. If anything, it is Calt and Wardlow who are the scholastics, savagely dismissing Palmer, Evans, and Fahey for not having used their "data" in an academically "correct" manner. They are particularly personal and insulting in their treatment of Palmer's book *'Deep Blues'*. They ignore the fact that Palmer's is a survey of the Mississippi School from its inception

through the international recognition given Chicago-based Mississippians like Muddy Waters. Their attitude is that since Palmer does not rigorously focus on every note of every record Patton ever made that he is completely unqualified to write on the subject.

Perhaps Calt and Wardlow resent the commercial success of *'Deep Blues'*, but the fact remains that it conveys better than any other book the power of the music, the feelings of the musicians and their audience, and the incredible story of its discovery.

Calt and Wardlow have a horror of the term "folk music." For them "folk music" is the province of the masses; it requires no special aptitude and can be performed by any representative of the so-called "folk." It is obvious that these men have never heard Doc Watson.

Calt and Wardlow's main thesis seems to be that because folk music is "derivative," then it is impossible for anyone to be in the least bit original within the confines of any regional, ethnic, or vernacular style. This, of course, is nonsense. But the authors state plainly, "From a musical standpoint Patton is more sophisticated than the blues form he employed." This hysteria at the thought that Patton could be a folk musician probably stems more from a personal ambition to be the biographers of a major artist than from any desire to educate the public.

This ambition has blinded them to common sense. How else can one describe the schoolboy howlers that dot the book? Try this one: "Bottleneck style guitar was uncharacteristic of Delta blues." That should come as a real surprise to Son House, Robert Johnson, and Chicagoans from the Delta like Elmore James and Muddy Waters, to both of whom (and the many other slide players in Chicago) slide guitar was a conscious throw-back to the Delta style.

Or this impossible statement: "Blues is essentially an undramatic medium, and one that is generally devoid of genuine vocal expressiveness." Remarks so profoundly stupid beggar comment.

Or this brave paradox: "The evidence of recording plainly indicates that Patton's material was often imitated; his treatment of his material had no appreciable effect on Mississippi blues." How can that be? Somehow it must not register to the authors that "imitation" is the way people learn in the folk process. They even mention Patton's effect on the



subsequent work of the Howlin' Wolf. But they take advantage of the fact that none of Patton's musical forebears recorded to state that Patton had no forebears at all - that he sprang from the head of Zeus in full armour.

The music Patton left behind him gives ample evidence that he served an apprenticeship that informed his work. Patton's collected recordings show a sharp divide between older, more traditional-sounding songs like "Shake It and Break It" and "Running Wild" and more harmonically and rhythmically advanced blues songs like "Pony Blues" and "High Water Everywhere." But Calt and Wardlow are more interested in self-aggrandizement than in evidence. Why else couch their attacks on other scholars (especially those who place Patton in an on-going tradition) in such dismissive and personal terms?

The folk process is not a rigid, unchanging tradition but a cultural context that changes as individual artists in that culture do the work that changes it. Great music has an effect on the society within which it is made. Patton's singular greatness changed the overall context of his society, in a process that led to the singular greatness of Robert Johnson and the singular greatness of Muddy Waters.

However great Patton was (and he certainly was the greatest of his time and one of the three or four greatest of all time) a desire to share in his glory by distorting history should not go unchallenged. If Calt and Wardlow say that Johnson and Waters are not giants of American music then millions of people will disagree. Like the self-promoting art critics of 'The Painted Word', Calt and Wardlow seem to be trying to establish themselves through whatever means available, no matter what the cost to truth and fairness.

'Searching for Robert Johnson' is a slim, but informative, book that is not so much a biography of the greatest of the Delta blues singers as it is the story of the research for that biography. Guralnick gives a lot of space to the difficulties involved in finding the living relatives of a black man from Mississippi who died fifty years ago, and he comes up with a fair amount of new information: about Johnson's travels, his recording sessions, and his death from poison at the hands of a jealous husband. He also includes a valuable bibliography and discography.

Much of the information in 'Searching for Robert Johnson' is the product of research done by the Texas folklorist Mack McCormick for his long-awaited 'Biography of a Phantom'. Indeed, quite a bit of this book follows McCormick as he traces eyewitnesses to Johnson's

murder, finds Johnson's sister in Baltimore, and accumulates memorabilia. Sometimes it seems that Guralnick is using this book to prod McCormick into publishing.

But 'Searching for Robert Johnson' is more than a warm-up or a motivator. It explains the obsession with Johnson that many collectors, folklorists and blues fans carry as well as such a thing can be explained and recreates the atmosphere of the Mississippi Delta of those days as well as such a thing can be recreated. It is a valuable book, despite its brevity.

Perhaps the single most moving page in the book, for a fan, is the frontispiece, which bears the first picture of Johnson most lovers of his music will have ever seen. Only four pictures have been found, all through the efforts of Mack McCormick, and this is the only one he has released to the general public, nearly twenty years after he discovered it.

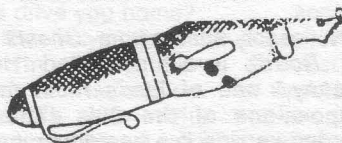
It is a formal studio portrait of Johnson seated on a draped stool playing his guitar, a round-hole Kalamazoo made by Gibson. The neck joins the body at the twelfth fret. The black finish on the guitar's top is deeply scratched, especially around the sound-hole. This is obviously a working instrument, and it matches up with the memory of the sound of the guitar on Johnson's records. It looks right.



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The player's delicate, articulate hands are in action on the strings, the left hand appearing to fret an odd A-7th chord, barred but with the top string left open, making a low E in the bass. The right thumb, sporting a white plastic thumbpick, is about to play the fourth string at G. He wears a pin-striped suit, surprisingly well-tailored, and a too-small hat cocked over his right ear. A slender, handsome, somewhat effeminate man, Johnson is smiling, but his eyes are not completely in focus; there seems to be a slight cast or cataract in the right eye. Your eye keeps returning to the hands, the fingers long, thin, poised, firm, supple, powerful, expressive. They are obviously the hands of a genius.

Part of the experience of listening to Robert Johnson ('King of the Delta Blues Singers', the Columbia LP made from his 78s, is the one blues record) was the mystery of what he looked like. The songs were even spookier for the fact that the singer had no face. But this chance to see Johnson's face does not end the mystery. If anything, it adds to it. We can't quite connect the cheerful face with the eerie moans and the haunted lyrics. And as we hear the brilliant playing and look at the hands we think: where did those fingers come from? who had them before?

'Searching for Robert Johnson', while not providing exhaustive research and analysis, does something perhaps more valuable to the casual blues enthusiast. It communicates a feeling, which is what the blues are all about in the end.

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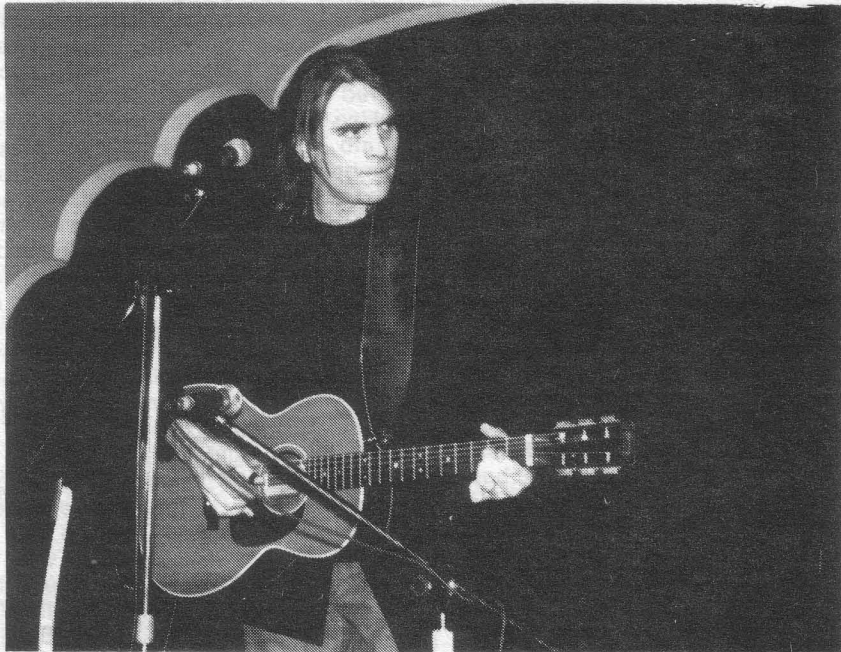
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# RECORD REVIEWS



## Ghosts Upon the Road

**Eric Andersen**  
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by Jim Mercik

Nineteen-eighty-nine brought us Hurricane Hugo and earthquakes at the world series; it also provided us with a new Eric Andersen record. The Road-going set of songs dealing with life in Europe and America, all presented in an Odyssey-like style reminiscent of Kerouac.

The album consists of ten of Eric's compositions from the last four years. Several of these ("Listen to the Rain," "Six Senses of Darkness," "Irish Lace") could be considered "classic-Eric" works: well-written, with beautifully clear lyrics and melodies. Most of the rest of the songs (with the exception of "Spanish Eyes" and "Carry Me Away," which sound like examples of a newer style. Two of these, "It Starts With a Lie" and "Too Many Times," were co-authored with guitarist John Leventhal and work particularly well. Vocals are excellent throughout the record; in fact, they are one of it's strongest points. One need only compare this recording to Eric's 1960's records to appreciate the extent to which his vocal style has developed and matured over the years.

The album's underlying theme surfaces in the title cut. 'Ghosts Upon the Road'; a stark autobiographical narrative describing Eric's early years in Cambridge and New York City. The song recreates a world of Kerouac-ian values, freedoms, poverties and pleasures in a manner similar to Jack Eliot's classic "912 Greens" and Robbie Robertson's "Somewhere Down that Crazy River." It confirms Eric's skill with lyrics and performance, and sounds better with repeated listening. Although the sentiment of the song is not necessarily new, it certainly is refreshing to hear again especially after ten years of Reagan, Bush, and Quayle.

In addition to good songs, supporting musicians include guitarists John Leventhal and Steve Addabbo, vocalist Shawn Colvin, and wonderful keyboardist Marilyn Crispell. There are great liner notes by Robert Palmer. And the booklet accompanying the CD is actually a joy to read; with one set of lyrics per page, this booklet layout should be required of all future CD releases.

Noticeably absent from 'Ghosts Upon The Road' is a tune called "Hills of Tuscany," one of Eric's most moving compositions of the 80's (The only recorded version I've heard was on Fast Folk's anniversary issue FF405/6). I suppose it is some consolation to know that Eric still has some good cards up his sleeve that may show up next time around. But until then, here is the Roadrecord of the recent work of an enduring songwriter.

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# HUMOR ME: JESSE WINCHESTER

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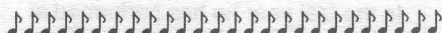
By Jeff Wilkinson

If there is such a thing as "just a good songwriter", then Jesse Winchester is on the list. Many songwriters seem to need further categorization to judge their craft, such as folk, folk-rock, pop, folk-pop, or ethnic. Winchester's music touches many of these categories: folk, folk-rock, folk-pop, ballad, gospel, country crossover, but it doesn't really seem to matter because his songs almost always touch the one category that does emotion. For twenty years Winchester has been writing and singing some of the best songs of our day. "Yankee Lady", "Isn't That So?", and "Nothing But A Breeze" to name a few. Songs that are sincere and simple yet full of subtle irony. Winchester's latest work 'Humor Me' on Sugar Hill, is full proof of his melodic and lyric mastery. On first listen the album does seem too popular and light. Not the Winchester of 'Third Down 110 To Go.' But this is a record that grows on the listener, and upon several plays the songs began to reveal their depth, and the lightness of the melodies are contrasted with the lyric, or as Winchester himself sings in "Let's Make a Baby King"--- "sadness mingling with the joy."

Throughout the record Winchester mixes together fear, courage, and the gentle humor we often use to avoid baring our heart's emotion. In the title track the singer lightheartedly recalls to his wife his two childhood loves, his dog and his first sweetheart, and states that maybe they were the only two dependable loves he would know. The thought is quickly dismissed as he adds "Humor me/ Humor me/ Oh I would pay no mind if I were you". A theme constant in many of the songs is the comparison with those who take life's concern too seriously and those who are carefree. Winchester obviously belongs to the first category judging from "If I Were Free" and "Willow". The singer admires those

who seem to avoid the bitterness and emotional tangles caused by deep love. But it is certainly not the path he chooses. Possibly the best song on the album, and one which expresses this theme is "I Will Mean Something to You".

Musically, 'Humor Me' owes more to the Platters and the Drifters than to Hank Williams and Lefty Frizzell, Winchester's previous mentors (though certainly a song like "I Don't Think You Love Me Anymore" owes alot to Hank). Winchester exposes his popular music side and the production by Jesse himself is very slick and consistent, especially compared to earlier albums produced by Robbie Robertson and Todd Rundgren. There is a nice blend of uptempo songs and slower ballads. The arrangements are well thought out, though fairly standard, but the use of saxophone on several tracks is a pleasant surprise. The CD has 2 extra tracks. This is a fine album, quite smooth and commercial. My last thought is, having seen Mr. Winchester perform in concert alone with just his voice and classical guitar, I still await the day a label will release an album that captures that magic. Recent news however, is that Jesse Winchester has stopped performing in public.



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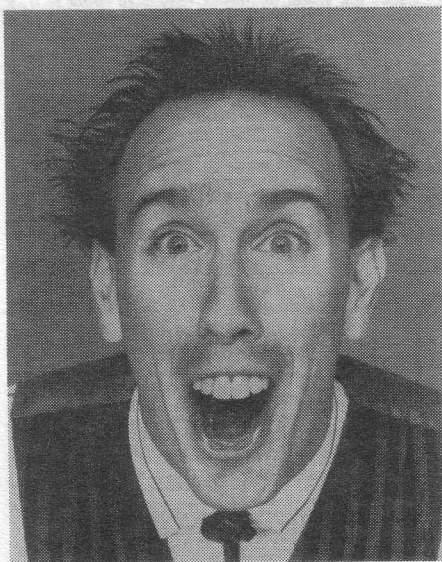
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# ON THE RECORD

## SIDE ONE



**O.J. Anderson's** international fame is eclipsed only by his uncanny ability to remain obscure. From Nova Scotia to Vancouver, La to NY Anderson has beaten and blundered his way all over the world with the je ne sais quoi form of entertainment. After singing jazz in the Rockies, studying opera in Milano, crooning madrigals throughout Europe and miming in London, Anderson returned to the states for a change of underwear and a degree in theatre at the University of Detroit. It was during this period that he met Madonna. Their Zelda-F.Scott romance was 'too hot not to cool down'. He dumped her. Apparently her aspirations were not lofty enough for him. He has a habit of befriending losers. Later while restoring an old vaudeville house in Michigan and producing, directing, starving and acting in the new repertory company, O.J., in his spare time launched his present career. Since then he has taught body movement and mime at a myriad of schools, art organizations throughout the the U.S. and with Ringling Bros. Clowns. He will break your heart and leave you laughing.



**Richard Julian** is an up and coming songwriter/performer on the New York scene. Richard moved here from Las Vegas in 1986 after spending a year taking requests and playing the cheesiest chords he knew in the land of slot machines and neon cactus trees.

In the last year he has performed at the Newport Folk Festival, the Fast Folk Revue at the Bottom Line in New York City, and the Bluebird Cafe in Nashville, along with a 4-week European tour with Jack Hardy and Buddy Mondlock. Although he is currently performing in the folk medium (solo, acoustic guitar), Richard's music leans more toward pop and blues influences. He has currently completed his second cassette, entitled "Bones", which can be bought at his performances.

The Midwest has known about Michigan singer/songwriter **Kitty Donohoe** for some time and the release of her first album, *'Farmer in Florida'*, is making that name familiar to an ever-widening circle around the country. Although her songs have been sung and recorded by other artists for years, two recent Public Television documentaries featuring Kitty and appearances on National Public Radio and an expanding touring schedule are bringing her recognition as a performing artist as well as a songwriter.



Growing up in a large Irish-American family 50 miles outside of Detroit has given Kitty a solid sense of her heritage which is apparent when she does traditional songs, augmenting the twisting lyrics and storylines with guitar and bouzoki. That same proximity to the Motor City has infused Kitty with a great love and respect for the blues. Rounding out a concert are 'new' folk songs, some by other artists and many of her own which draw on the world of the common man.



Being married 23 years makes **Ed and Carol Florida** unique in terms of both the quality of their music and the content and diversity of their live performance. Their original material includes reflections on the pressures,



struggles, and realities of their own lives as well as those of their baby boomer peers. Social and environmental issues are approached from a positive, questioning, and engaged point of view.

They began playing music during the Folk/blues revolution in California in the late 60's. From there they drifted toward Ed's native Texas, where they toured extensively as sidemen. In 1980 their children (ages 10 & 12) joined them for a three year stint performing bluegrass in and around Arkansas.

With the kids raised, and on their own, Ed and Carol entered the 'folk circuit' in the spring of 1988 and have already built an impressive following. Ed was a winner in the 1988 New Folk Competition and his songs are being performed by other artists. When they are not on the road you can find them tucked away on their remote farm in the Ozark Mountains of Arkansas.

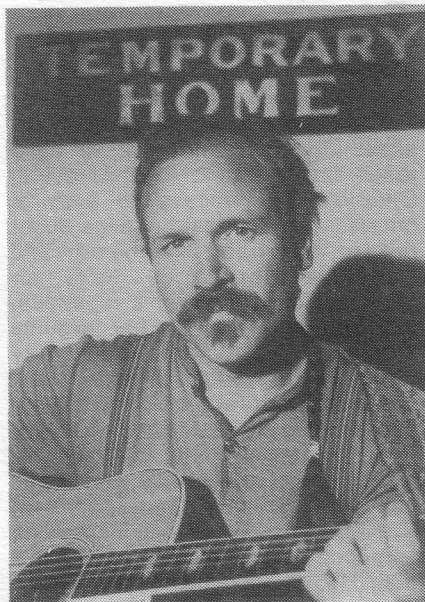


"Portland Rain" is **Steve Key's** third contribution to *Fast Folk*, following "Somebody Still Cares" (June 1985) and "Her Obsession" (February 1986). A Manhattan resident, Steve tours from Maine to Miami, selling copies of his own album, *Between Trains* (available through: To the Future Music, 275 W. 96th St., #28C, New York, New York 10025). He is a Brooklyn native, raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, and spent two years in Portland, Oregon before returning to New York in 1985. He is a co-founder and organizer of the Uptown Coffeehouse concert series held twice monthly in the Bronx, and the weekly host of "Cityfolk" on WFUV-FM 90.7 in New York. His second album, *New Hope* is set for August, 1990 release on Local Folkel Records, 104 Catalpa Rd., Rochester, NY 14617.

**Rachel Polisher** is 30, a professional cook of thirteen years, and an urban nomad. She moved to New York one year ago from Colorado. She writes poetry and fiction, and designs graphics. Rachel was a New-Folk performer at the 1988 Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas, performs from time to time at SpeakEasy in, NY as well as other clubs across the country. She was a member of the 1990 Fast Folk Revue at the Bottom Line. For Booking; contact Rachel at (212) 475-5758.



**Wendy Beckerman** is originally from Teaneck New Jersey. She recently graduated from Brandies University. She has been in the Fast Folk Revue twice once as a goddess and once as herself, or vice versa.



**Tom Pirozzoli** was born in beautiful Bridgeport, CT. and moved to New Hampshire 14 years ago. He likes living where there are more trees than people. In addition to performing across the U.S. from Maine to Texas, he also appeared in the British Isles, and Curacao's International Troubadors Festival, where he received an award for the most original presentation. He has released two full albums to date, and won Musician Magazine's "Best Unsigned Band" contest. His new album is due out this summer. Tom's favorite person who ever lived is Jalal'u'din Rumi, a sufi poet from the 13th century. For information and booking contact Tom at PO Box 287 Mt. Sunapee, NH 03772



**Jeff Wilkinson** has been gaining a reputation as an up-and-coming songwriter. His first album *Pitchin' Pennies* included such gems as "Postage Due" and "2 ft. High Umbrella Man." The London-based



magazine *Folk Roots* hailed Wilkinson's poetry as "Riveting, some of the best since Dylan," and the *Ann Arbor News* called *Pitchin' Pennies* "Just too good to be true." Since the release of his album, Jeff has headlined at such noted clubs as the Ark in Ann Arbor, Berkeley's Freight & Salvage and New York's Speakeasy, and has opened for such noted acts as Jesse Winchester, Peter Case, Rod McDonald, and Garnet Rogers. A new CD titled *Ballads in Plain Talk* will be released this fall in Europe. It contains nine new songs plus seven from his first album. *Pitchin' Pennies* is available on Blackbird Records and is distributed by: Canadian River Music, 4106 Tyler St., Amarillo, TX 79110, and Old Fogey Distribution, 1100 N. Washington, Lansing, MI 48906 (517) 372-7888. For bookings or information call: (718) 398-2630 (or write Jeff at 771A Union St., Brooklyn, NY 11215.)

**Christina Muir** is a singer/songwriter currently living in New York City. She plays mountain dulcimer and guitar and loves to spin harmonies, in her spare time she paints watercolors that she calls 'Abstractions in Natural Harmony'. She has exhibited and sold her work primarily in Cape Cod, Mass.

'Moonchild' was born out of a wish for a young woman's healing from alcoholism. It is a prayer that from her journey 'over the edge', she might bring back great treasures; self knowledge and self love.



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The Folks



"**Requiem (for the Giants)**," explains **Eileen McGann**, "was written in response to the situation in Temagami, in Northern Ontario, where the government is about to allow logging companies to build roads through, and to clear-cut in Ontario's last accessible area of priceless virgin forest." Songs about the environment, canoeing and Canada's northlands form an important part of Eileen's repertoire, and since Temagami is her favourite canoeing area, she feels very strongly on this issue. (Postcards and letters of protest can be sent to: Premier David Peterson, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M7A 1A1.) Eileen is currently working on her second album and touring in Great Britain. For booking information contact: Original Music, P.O. Box 586, Hadley, Massachusetts 01035; or call (413) 527-8180. To obtain a copy of her first recording *Elements*, send \$10.50 postpaid to: Canadian River Music, 4106 Tyler St., Amarillo, TX 79110.



Vermont singer/songwriter **Lisa McCormick** began playing guitar at the age of ten and was appearing in local coffeeshouses at the age of sixteen. Since then, she has performed throughout New York and New England in a variety of group configurations. Lisa's formal training is in classical guitar. With a combination of folk and R&R influences, she has cultivated a personal style with strength in both lyric and melody. Her eclectic repertoire is a mixture of poetic ballads and humorous folk/rock songs. Lisa plays acoustic and electric guitars and is primarily a solo performer.

**Jim Allen** was born in New York City between Sgt. Pepper and Magical Mystery Tour. He learned about rock 'n' roll from his mother and he learned about songwriting from Frank Tedesso. He is still a thorn in the side of both. He's never read Rimbaud in the original French.



# Mary Black

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- 2 -

ELLIE'S BLUES

(JIM ALLEN)

JIM ALLEN/GUITAR AND VOCAL

- 3 -

PETEY'S BLUES

(RICHARD JULIAN)

RICHARD JULIAN/GUITAR AND VOCAL

- 4 -

EMMA SUTTER

(KITTY DONOHOE)

KITTY DONOHOE/GUITAR AND VOCAL  
MARK DANN/BASS

- 5 -

ONLY STREET PEOPLE KNOW

(ED FLORIDA)

ED FLORIDA/GUITAR  
CAROL FLORIDA/VOCAL

- 6 -

PORTLAND RAIN

(STEVE KEY)

STEVE KEY/GUITAR AND VOCAL  
JUDITH ZWEIMAN &  
DUANE BERGMAN/VOCALS  
JEFF WILKINSON/HARMONICA

- 7 -

FULL MOON LAUGHING

(RACHEL POLISHER)

RACHEL POLISHER/GUITAR AND VOCAL

SIDE TWO

- 1 -

SLEEPWALKER

(TOM PIROZZOLI)

TOM PIROZZOLI/GUITAR AND VOCAL

- 2 -

KNOW IT BY HEART

(WENDY BECKERMAN)

WENDY BECKERMAN/GUITAR AND VOCAL

- 3 -

DOWN IN TOLEDO

(JEFF WILKINSON GARRITTY)

JEFF WILKINSON/GUITAR AND VOCAL

- 4 -

MOONCHILD

(CHRISTINA MUIR)

CHRISTINA MUIR/DULCIMER AND VOCAL

- 5 -

REQUIEM

(EILEEN McGANN)

EILEEN McGANN/GUITAR AND VOCAL  
DAVID WOODHEAD/ELECTRIC BASS

- 6 -

SPIRIT SENSING DANGER

(LISA McGORMICK)

LISA McGORMICK/GUITAR AND VOCAL  
DAVID SEITZ/BASS, EMULATOR, PERCUSSION

