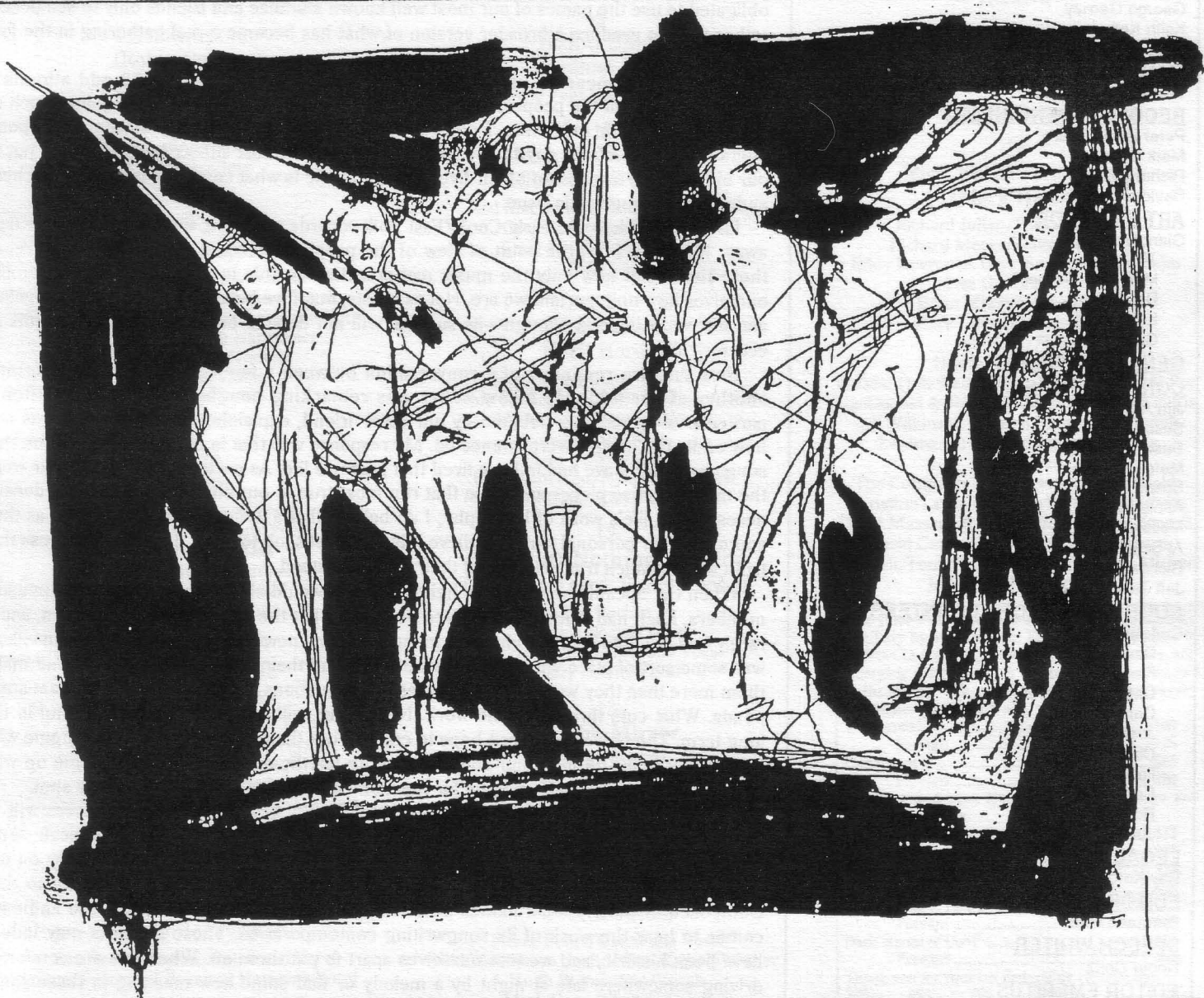


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LIVE AT THE BOTTOM LINE

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What's In A Decade?

These CDs bring you most of the FAST FOLK MUSICAL MAGAZINE's three nights of 10th anniversary shows at the Bottom Line. They marked the celebration of an extraordinary decades work by an equally extraordinary community. Planning began a few weeks after the 1991 shows as we began to line up some of the hardest touring act on the folk circuit as well as locals. There was a movement to hold the 10th anniversary at a major New York Hall such as Carnegie or the Beacon. We did look into these and perhaps could have put together financing and a show to fill seats. I felt uncomfortable about being obligated to use the names of our most well known alumnae and friends only to sell tickets rather than to produce a broader version of what has become a real gathering in the folk 'hood.

What does it mean to have lasted ten years? Looking over the 72 odd albums it becomes clear that the people responsible for the records are important only inasmuch as they facilitate their existence. I don't imagine that various editorial biases, small pond politics and each of our day to day lives mean much to most subscribers. What we put in our bios may be a snapshot of our lives but the music is what counts. It is why we are here and why you bought this issue.

Listening back to the early Coop/Fast Folk records as I have, details of the scene fade away. If I listen from the point of view of the people involved it would be easy to recall those times, but now only the music matters. Bearing this in mind we ought to remind ourselves how unimportant we are. Not as artists, but if we believe that our work has value, and our work is good enough—its survival will not depend on our personal strengths or eccentricities.

Now I'm also reminded of a conversation between a few village writers concerning another of our fold. My fellow writer was remarking how he wished he'd written a particular song recently debuted by our other friend, explaining how unusual it was and how oddly the images were connected. My response was that in order to have written that song one would have had to have lived that person's life. As each of us continues our work the most effective pieces are those that run most true to our character. While this doesn't necessitate a life's work of biography, I do believe that a writer's work gets better as they approach their personal truth. I believe it is the artist's job to seek, define and express that truth with as much transparency as their heart can stand.

When the SpeakEasy was at its height, writers would show up at the hoots in unusual numbers. Each had some preconceived notion of what the village would offer them, and it rarely had much to do with what was going on. Many newcomers expected that the village was some sort of place where legends would extend their hands, raise them up and make them more than they were. This continues in speculations about the larger or distant small ponds. What cuts through is the work. None of us will know if we are successful in the long term. The only way we can hope to create work that will outlive us is to struggle with human truths in the here and now. If we write for the ages we will likely come up with weak anthemic slogans. If we write for the moment, the true moment, we have a shot.

Biographies that may or may not be written in fifty years aside, our audiences will be attracted to us by what we write and the recordings we produce that communicate some emotional truth. Ours is not a scene dependent on flamboyance. We don't get by on our clothes, rumors or big hits. These annual shows have always been a testament to this. Composed of mostly local names performing mostly unrecorded songs, the audience comes to hear the work of its songwriting contemporaries. These concerts may indeed have been historic, and we tore ourselves apart to put them on. When you are comforted driving somewhere late at night by a melody or find some new meaning in these songs years down the line it will have been because a writer communicated some personal strength, which may have even felt like weakness, at a moment, now long gone and unrepeatable.

Richard Meyer 9/6/92

The Wren Revisited

by Jack Hardy

I am always honored when someone sings one of my songs, as I have always held that to be the true mark of success: to have a song join the immense folk repertoire, to transcend the ego of the moment, to transcend the world of buy and sell. The recording process has greatly facilitated this process though complicating it at the same time. At the same time it disseminates the song to so many listeners (and potential singers) it also limits the song by establishing a "definitive" version of the song. Definitive in the banal academic sense of collecting, documenting, archiving and basically taking the life out of a song.

You do not need permission to record a song nor do you need permission to leave off a verse. You may have my permission to do anything you like with the song. But if I might indulge myself for a few lines, I would like to state a brief case for the third verse of "The Wren".

The song "The Wren" as it appeared in my play *The Blue Garden* is used as a round dance. The song is used as a healing and as an initiation, with nine women dancing around a wounded warrior and ending with him being lifted up as a ritual sacrifice. It is hoped that (in the context of the play) this warrior will lead the society away from the male dominant myth of warfare towards the more feminine poetic myth. (He fails.)

The symbolic hunting of the wren that still takes place in certain parts of Ireland on Saint Stephen's Day is a remnant of the old goddess religion. It is a remnant of a time when the king was a yearly sacrifice to the goddess to ensure the well-being of the people and the fertility of the land. This was a sacrificial arrangement that was entered into willingly though not without feelings. Feelings of sorrow, responsibility, social conscience, and destiny. But never doubt. A new king would be crowned on the winter solstice and would reign for a year and a day when he would be ritually killed by the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water (all at the same time). During his reign, of course, he lived like a king, as consort to the earthly incarnation of the goddess: the queen or the temple virgin. What would ever drive a man to accept this role?

Yet even today we have leaders who accept this role and relive this ancient myth. Not the "safe" leaders who perpetuate the corrupt systems but rather

the leaders who challenge the status quo, accept the responsibility of social conscience and reinsert fertile concepts into society. Jack Kennedy, Bobby Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and John Lennon come to mind (Nobody shoots George Bush or Paul McCartney).

So the song starts with this question "what would ever drive a man?". The question is rhetorical. The scene set is one of winter: cold and snow; a conscious allusion to the Christmas carol "Good King Wenceslas" (which is also set in the cold and snow on St. Stephen's Day). This is the time of year when the earth needs healing and rejuvenating. But we also establish in the first verse that this man has a "dream upon his mind" and that he

has heard a "voice come singing through the snow". The chorus is where we come in singing "down down down" into the depths of our collective soul, into what we "know". The chorus that is always the same and yet always different. The first chorus establishes that the song is a "warning". "We" are bringing this warning deliberately, methodically, compulsively, "by foot". We are going to warn the wren.

The second verse begins as well with an allusion to "Good King Wenceslas" and as with that carol, it establishes the theme of social conscience in the song. Our society is definitely one where "all the people are quiet and warm except the few who gather fuel"; but those who are "quite warm" are also those who dread the wind when it gathers in the north." The north wind is always a bad omen. A harbinger of death. It is a male wind, associated with violence (as the Vikings that swooped down from the north). It is the antithesis of the south wind that brings springtime and creative madness, sexual madness. The north wind "causes all the gods to be so cruel". But we're not talking about gods here; we're talking about the goddess. The gods are associated with those who are quite warm in their comfortable, fearful, bourgeois life. Fearful of their own mortality. We're not concerned with these. We are concerned



Jack Hardy and Richard Meyer

with the few who are out gathering fuel; those who are beyond fear, those who are initiated.

In the second chorus "we" change our role from bringing a warning to the wren to "apprehending" the wren. Is this "protective custody" or "malicious intent"? Stay tuned. Now we come to the all important third verse. The verse in question.

"Those of caution to be seen". Who? We know they're being cautious, careful, thinking and they want to be seen. Where? "abroad at night about the queen". They are going through the motions of hiding themselves being out at night. The "queen is the moon." The most obvious tangible incarnation or manifestation of the goddess. But these people are not the ones we're looking for either. These are the false ones. The ones that for all their pretensions are still looking to be seen, tied up in ego. The word "abroad" is also meant in the demeaning sense of a "road". These are the ones who go through the motions, join the festival for the carnal pleasures alone in the male dominant sexual sense of conquering. They lack the intuitive, mystical communion sense of sex that is so all important for initiation. These are the ones playing "games of pretend", that are "howling at the moon or Magdalene". Why Magdalene? Magdalene the whore. Magdalene is symbolic of the futile holdout of the goddess religion into the Christian era. The Gnostic Christians held her to be Christ's number one disciple. The Gnostics didn't last long. The Gnostics lived communally, they had no hierarchy, they had women as priests, they use the round dance as part of their ritual and they didn't last long. The orthodox church, the Roman church, started it, the inquisition all but finished it. What? The systematic persecution of the feminine in Christianity. The key to the third verse is the couplet: "when all the world know that deep down inside, the burden of paradise is mean". Deep down inside our

subconscious, the bird of paradise, the wren, the king, the alchemical paradise is a burden and that it is mean. Mean in all three senses of the word: it is nasty, it is common, and it is full of meaning. So if

between sexual union, death and rebirth that has been sorely missed by the more puritanical modern society.

So now we come to the final verse, the finale; the sacrifice itself. "A flock of birds must crown a king". The key word is "must" and they must do it in the midst of everything else, the hustle and bustle of day to day life, "against the wind" that north wind again, their own mortality, and "under wing" the yearly seasonal flight south. Our society does not take a special ritual time out to crown a king. As a matter of fact, it does not even notice when "the one in the front falls and another takes his place to gather all". And as our "voice blend" we will stand behind this king though we "will not defend" him. All our warning, apprehending, howling and singing will not defend the wren, for the wren is within ourselves. The goddess cycle is alive and well deep within our collective subconscious.

So all that said, I can only say that this is what I put in the song. But a song being a two-way street and only existing insofar as someone listens to it, what the listener gets out of it is his or her business. There will be as many interpretations as there are listeners. Once the song is written, and it does not come from the ego of the author, so the ego of the author should not stand in the way of it joining the folk process. Verses will be lopped off, or added, as they do not relate to, or relate to new audiences. All the author can hope for is that the song is sung with feeling.

Ed note: One of the hazards of writing long songs is that when someone wants to "cover" one of them they invariably want to cut out a verse or two. This article started as a letter to one such person concerning my song "The Wren". There is a recording of this song on FF308 as well as my album "The Cauldron".

The Wren

Jack Hardy

What could ever drive a man
To venture out in all this cold?
What could ever be the dream upon his mind
Or the voice he heard come singing through the snow?

Singing down down bless this soul
Singing down down this I know
Singing down down down down, warning must be sent
And by foot it must be brought and so we went
For the wren

When all the people are quite warm
Except the few who gather fuel
They dread the wind when it gathers in the north
That causes all the gods to be so cruel

Singing down down bless this soul
Singing down down this I know
Singing down down down down to the forest end
And perhaps it might be there we apprehend
The wren

Those of caution to be seen
Abroad at night about the queen
When all the world know that deep down inside
The burden of paradise is mean

Singing down down bless this soul
Singing down down this I know
Singing down down down down games of pretend
Whether howling at the moon or Magdalene
Or the wren

A flock of birds must crown a king
Against the wind and under wing
And never notice when the one in front he falls
And another takes his place to gather all

Singing down down bless this soul
Singing down down this I know
Singing down down down down hear the voices blend
Though those who stand behind will not defend
The wren

these are not the ones we're looking for? Who is the wren? We know he has a social conscience, that he does not want to be seen, he knows that the job is a burden, and he understands the mystical properties of sexual union; the relationship

Songwriter's Roundtable

Jim Allen, Moderator

On a recent summer afternoon in Greenwich Village, a forum of sorts, was held. On the condition that I be permitted to remain mute, I gathered together a group of New York songwriters for a roundtable discussion on their craft. In attendance were both old and new faces: Dave Van Ronk, Jack Hardy, Frank Tedesso, Lillie Palmer, David Cantor, Germana Pucci and David Massengill all of whom have been and continue to be heard on *Fast Folk*. Coming from widely divergent backgrounds and mindsets, these seven writers pulled questions out of a hat (literally) and threw them open for discussion. The results were entertaining by turns both trenchant and humorous. Occasionally, our little gathering wandered off into what might kindly be termed pontification, but what do you expect from seven songwriters in one room? For better or worse, then, here is what transpired.

ON THE USE OF BIBLICAL IMAGERY:

Jack Hardy: I think that originally, thousands of years ago, song and religion were much the same thing under the powers of the bards. The power of invocation has always been one of their greatest. Music was used to force those transcendent moments. I think in our culture the creative process is one of the only true forms of religion left. As far as biblical imagery in song I think this is going to become less and less of a factor. In my generation you could generally assume that most of the population was brought up going to Sunday school of some sort, that there was at least a common language, a common source of allusion.

Frank Tedesso: Madonna just used it a couple of years ago and caused a big stir. That's loaded stuff. That's such a powerful thing to put in your song. Just inserting it provokes something in people.

JH: But I wonder how much of Madonna's actual audience is tuned into that or whether it's the parents of the audience that are getting upset.

FT: Well, she used it so it must have meant something to her to dance around it or to be sacrilegious about it....

Dave Van Ronk: Sacrilege and blasphemy are sort of a specialty among

Catholics and ex-Catholics. When you say the biblical imagery is on its way out you're probably right. If you're talking about the King James bible you're talking about the deepest reservoir of poetic inspiration we have in the language. I don't think that the King James translation uses much more than 6,000 words. It's a very small vocabulary and almost all the words in it are Anglo-Saxon-derived, which tends to make it much stronger in terms of making a bold statement. To see that translation go down the tubes is really a damn shame because the modern translations are poetically, practically useless.

Paul Simon has always been what I call a God-seeker and the bulk of his stuff addresses the question -- "Is God dead or isn't He?"

FT: I felt that of "Graceland". He went to Africa and he took these real primal religious thing, these ancient rhythms that

evoke something inside you without even knowing, because these are these people's prayer sounds. As much as I love that album I felt like it was almost cheating, that I would rather have him find his own prayer sounds.

JH: Jackson Braider, in an article he just sent in to *Fast Folk*, referred to Simon as sort of a musical Colonialist, that he's pirating these things in Peru or South Africa and using them to aggrandize his own ego.

DVR: I've never heard such bosh! That's ridiculous! What's wrong with that? Has Peru taken out a copyright on pan pipes? It's a meaningless accusation.

David Massengill: We should also note that Salman Rushdie has a death threat against him, and all he did was write a book and use a few religious images.

Lillie Palmer: Don't you get the feeling that sometimes a lot of these artists instinctively or unconsciously go for these images? I believe in a collective subconsciousness, that sometimes you sit back and take a picture of something in your mind and say, long after you've written it, that it's really loaded, or that it comes out of King James.

DVR: One point I would like to make about the Salman Rushdie thing is that one of the reactions to the "Satanic Verses" is



Frank Tedesso

that a large group of Muslim fundamentalists in England are campaigning to reactivate the long out-of-use blasphemy laws.

JH: But look at the religious right in this country. The same thing could happen here. They've talked about censoring the National Endowment of the Arts, it's not so far-fetched.

DVR: The separation of church and state is very well protected by the variety of religious sects here. The Methodists aren't going to let the Baptists censor literature, the Methodists want to do it!

ON THE INFLUENCE OF OTHER SONGWRITERS:

DM: I grew up with Bob Dylan, Cohen, Joni Mitchell, a great group of songwriters, but I never wanted to be like any of those people. They were already too far along for me to say, "I want to be like that." I had to go back to somebody who was a little simpler like Woody Guthrie.

JH: When I first heard you, your style was more sophisticated and complex than Woody Guthrie. You had a few throwbacks to that, but even those were more developed in terms of modern culture. I've always been more impressed by Guthrie's prose than his songwriting. I wouldn't consider his songwriting an influence to me, other than indirectly.

DM: Who got you off the ground Dave?

DVR: In a sense I think it was Bob Dylan. I've never been a disciple of Bobby's, but the most important thing that Bobby did was not to write the songs, but to show that the songs could be written. Prior to Dylan, the folk community was very much tied to traditional songs, so much so that songwriters would very often palm their stuff off as traditional. I feel toward Dylan sort of the way Ezra Pound felt toward Walt Whitman; "You cut the wood, now it's time for carving". Stylistically, I've never had much use for Bobby's contrived primitivism, which always struck me as striking a false note. His later obscurantism got to the point where he wasn't even trying to make sense anymore. But if Bobby hadn't succeeded in doing it, all of us now would be sitting here discussing protest songs, because that's the only thing that you were allowed by consensus to do.

JH: I've always thought that Dylan, when the smoke clears, will be thought of as someone who opened a lot of doors, as opposed to any kind of definitive songwriter.

DM: I look at the guy like you look at a Beethoven or Charlie Chaplin, and I've heard people slam them, too. What about Joni Mitchell? Every song she writes is such an original creation and I look at Frank Tedesso's work a lot like that. It's hard for me to categorize Frank's songs, because they're each so unique.

LP: A lot of my friends, especially my feminine friends have always sort of migrated to Joni Mitchell, because of what she said. We all identified with her. We'd be sitting in our rooms at school saying, "I feel like shit", and we'd put on her record and she'd be saying, "I feel like shit", in a very eloquent way. Since that music, to the laymen who don't write songs, is the backdrop or soundtrack to your life, I think you really go to the songwriter as the person who is going to say the things you can't say or can't reach.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF POETS/NOVELISTS:

DVR: Massengill was talking about Woody, and one of Woody's strongest influences was Rabelais. Dylan was very strongly influenced by French symbolist poets. I still have a paperback of a collection of Modern French Poetry with Bobby's underlinings in it. I've never been able to trace any of the undelinings to any lines he actually used in songs, but he was reading that stuff very carefully.

JH: If you listen to "Desolation Row" and compare it with "The Drunken Boat"....

DVR: ...or the imagery in "A Hard Rain's Gonna Fall", which is very symbolist.

JH: You can trace a lot of David Massengill into Ezra Pound. Where can we trace Mr. Tedesso?

FT: Dylan Thomas and Kenneth Patchen

DVR: I suppose my strongest influence

is W.S. Gilbert. I love the that man wrote a lyric. In a sense, the Gilbert influence bifurcates. On the one hand you have me, on the other hand you have Cole Porter!

DM: I reread Mark Twain because everything he wrote is still contemporary to me, because he always wrote about greed, and things that stay the same.

DVR: You know who I do owe a lot to actually, is Francois Villon. What Villon did is especially pertinent to what we're doing.

That is to say he wrote in the vernacular. In fact, he wrote in what is now almost unintelligible slang, late medieval Parisian Thieve's argot. If you got a few of the singers who were hanging around MacDougal Street around '64 or '65 talking among

themselves, most of the people who constituted our audience wouldn't have understood what the hell we were talking about, which was one of the reasons why we did that.

DM: It makes me uncomfortable when the press says it's not good enough to be a good song. They have to say it's like a little short story.

DVR: Poor Bill Morrissey gets that all the time.

DM: And Nanci Griffith, too. I feel terribly uncomfortable with that. I think if someone had called Yeats a good songwriter, he would have taken that as a compliment. They all follow that same line. Right now Bill Morrissey's getting the Ray Carver treatment. They're all saying his songs are like Ray Carver stories. And they're all doing that with Nanci Griffith too, now, saying that her songs are like Carson McCullers stories, and I think that Carson McCullers would roll over in her grave if she heard that. She writes wonderful songs, but I don't see anything like that.

DVR: Nanci is a regionalist, McCullers was a modernist, there's a big difference.

JH: I don't think we have any legitimate critics writing today in the expository sense, in the true sense of criticism. They don't really get into the nitty gritty of what's good about things or what's different. They're just trying to latch onto whatever bandwagon is moving at the

It's like getting a great button and then building a suit around it.



Dave Van Ronk

time.

David Cantor: They're just using the work as a Rorschach Test for their own psychological needs.

DVR: This isn't to say that criticism is inherently hopeless and useless. It's just that the current crop of critics are hopeless and useless.

JH: So far we've only talked about lyrical influences. What about musical influences? We're talking about songs as a gestalt of music and lyrics. I've always looked at that as one of the weaknesses of Dylan and his contemporaries, that their best melodies were stolen, in the good traditional sense. They didn't really contribute much to expanding the concept of melody.

DM: Jack, I've always thought of you as one of the best melody writers I've ever met, so let's hear it from you. Where do you get your melodies?

JH: Well, I grew up in a classical household and was steeped in Chopin and Beethoven, but Beethoven stole most of his melodies from folk. Every morning my father played three or four hours of Chopin etudes and Beethoven sonatas on the piano. That's probably where it comes from. If the goal is to get other people to sing your songs and make them accessible on that level, I think that's an important

part of it, to make them memorable musically.

DC: My folks were big on opera, but I kind of resisted that, and my early influences of Zappa and Beethoven were not anywhere near the kind of style I'm writing. How I fell into a Thirties sound is kind of baffling to me. The only reason I do it is because it seems to work. At first I tried to write rock, and if I could I would, but I fell into this because it seemed like the most authentic kind of music I was writing.

Germana Pucci: I grew up in a peasant family where we had

no TV and no record player. I started listening to the music on the radio when I was about fourteen years old, but we always had music around because everyone sang. Most Italians knew many arias from operas. For me, the melody alone should be able to come across feeling-wise so that you could practically omit the words.

DM: The first songs I heard were in church, in Sunday school. Sometimes I'll write a song and I'll know it's gonna take me maybe three months to get the song right. I'll start off with maybe one line of lyric and melody, and I'll know I have to build from there, but I can usually make myself a structure of a whole verse. I'll know I'm going to change the melody around later, but sometimes just to see where the song is gonna go I'll have a melody with the same number of beats that I can change later. I can work for three months on the melody and the lyrics.

FT: The tough part is to make the uninspired part seem as close as you can to the inspired part. You get the inspired part in ten minutes, and you say, "Holy shit, what a song I have here!" Then you spend the next three months trying to put something around it so that it's more than eighteen seconds.

DVR: It's like getting a great button and

then building a suit around it. My favorite melodists in this field are Tom Paxton and Bob Gibson; Paxton for his incredible simplicity in melodic statement, and Gibson for his ability to come up with melodic lines and chord progressions that I wouldn't have thought of myself. Both of them draw very strongly on traditional roots, which brings me back to what I was saying about Villon. My approach to songwriting is demotic. That is to say I think vernacular in terms of melody and harmony. Partly the result of an intellectual conviction that simple is best. By utilizing things that are common currency, lyrically, I write what A. J. Liebling referred to as "plain style". I don't believe in syntactical inversions, I think you should be able to speak any sentence in a song without being embarrassed by it. I don't like overblown imagery, and the only kind of poetic conceit that I'll even consider using is one that will be unnoticeable. I think the same way about melody. The simpler the better, because that's the way that you can reach the people you're addressing.

JH: I think that to write lyrics to a melody gives you a certain purity of form that you're not gonna get if you start from scratch. I look at almost everything I've written up to this point as being experiments. I like to think that I haven't begun to write what I will write. Recently

I think it was a very good thing that people like Michelangelo were treated like interior decorators.

I've been experimenting with song as part of theater. Germana's been experimenting with that as well.

FT: I think you let yourself off the hook when you say that everything you've done up to now has been an experiment, so you don't have to take responsibility for the style that you have met and that has met you.

JH: I look at my songwriting now and it's not that I don't want to accept responsibility for it, but what I'm trying to do now is different from what I was trying

to do ten years ago. Finding your own voice is something that takes you a long time and I'm not sure I've found mine.

DVR: I pretty much made up my mind what songwriting was all about by the late 1960s and I haven't looked back since. It works, at least it works for me. Who was it that said, "When I hear the word art, I release the safety catch on my Browning"? I think the whole artistic mystique is one of the great traps of this business, because down that road lies unintelligibility. I abhor unintelligibility. I find it much more tolerable in poetry. When songs get pretentious, overly flowery, overly wordy and obscure what the songwriter is proclaiming is that he or she is an artist.

LP: But don't you crave it in a way? Wouldn't you feel useless if you didn't have that one thing inside you that said "I'm an artist"?

DVR: No!

JH: You're more of a Bolshevik than I thought.

DVR: A carefully written, well written song is a craft item. Take care of the craft and let the art take care of itself. Frankly I think the whole concept of art as we understand it today is an early nineteenth century intellectual construct. It's based on a whole set of what I consider to be false romantic notions about human nature. I think it was a very good thing that people like Michelangelo were treated like interior decorators. I think it probably did them a lot of good!

LP: Are you ever worried about revealing too many personal things in songs? I was terrified performance-wise, because I would say certain things and it was like pulling your pants down in front of people. I figured I couldn't really do it any other way.

JH: There was a point in the Seventies when songwriting became very self-indulgent, very personal. Sort of the obscurity level of Dylan that you were referring to, Dave.

FT: But if you make the personal so

that everybody can identify with it...

JH: Sort of like Hemingway's point that if you say something that's true about yourself, then it becomes universal, and if

I was terrified performance-wise, because I would say certain things and it was like pulling your pants down in front of people.

you set out to say something universal then you'll fall. But there's a difference between saying something that's true and saying something that's so personal that it's inaccessible. I find a lot of songwriting now to be what I refer to as the therapeutic school of songwriting, where these people

are just emoting all over the place. A song should be a two way street in that it should only exist because someone listens to it.

FT: Who are your songs directed at?

DC: The best looking woman in the audience!

FT: That goes without saying, but that's not who I'm aiming it at. I think I'm talking to myself.

DM: When I went to college, to have an excuse to write, I took a lot of creative writing courses. One I took with Reynolds Price, and he asked the question, "who is that secret person that you write for when you sit down and write? Who is that person that you see hearing and reading this work?" Because everyone has one. I thought my person was my brother Mike, because Mike was my younger brother, and I was always explaining the world to Mike.

JH: Are you talking about who you want to impress, like your English teacher? Or are you talking about writing to a muse? There are a couple of different audiences.

FT: I used to think that I wanted to write it so that my mother could understand it, but I don't think I wrote for her.

DC: When I was writing plays, I always thought about this. I had an abstract ideal reader. It was sort of like a computer

program. I couldn't say it had a personality. The when I started writing songs, and it became public, now I'm totally confused as to who I'm writing for.

DVR: To me, there's this amorphous mass out there, and I'm playing blind man's bluff. I've got the blindfold on, and I'm tossing darts, not even knowing if they're headed for the right wall. Writing for or to the muse is a very old convention that goes back to the Greeks, possibly even more. I'm suspicious of it myself because I have a strong feeling that I am the muse. If I start addressing the muse, I am in reality addressing myself. Now, Kraft-Ebbing had a term for this, it leads to a form of narcissism. If I start writing in that direction, I start writing to and for myself.

JH: I've written to a muse that's a gestalt of as many as three different people that figure in, sometimes in different verses.

GP: Usually I'll write when a situation or a person inspires me, and I try to put myself in their shoes. Whatever story I come up with is based on that inspiration. So I would hope that that person, or whoever, might relate.

DC: Julian Jaynes, fifteen years ago, wrote about the bicameral mind, and his thesis was that the Greeks were a preconscious people, that consciousness only came over the last couple of thousand years. Before that they had their right and left brains separated and their right brains were the gods. They were talking to them, they actually heard them because their right brains were talking to them.

My theme is unrequited love. My other theme is revenge. If you're lucky they happen at the same time.

DM: Quite often while I'm writing I picture someone other than myself singing my songs, and I've literally gone from the B-52s to Frank Sinatra. It makes me work harder. I have specific periods of

writing every day, very late at night, it's very peaceful. I find that my brain is a little loopy when I'm tired, and it helps my imagery happen.

JH: I'm the exact opposite. I write early in the morning when my brain is wired.



David Massengill

That's the only time. I can't even function late at night. I think this inspiration business is a cop-out, people saying, "I can only write when I'm inspired and I go for months without writing". I firmly believe that if someone sits down to write every day, they might not come out with something every day, but they're gonna come out with a lot more than they think they're capable of. As long as you're putting stuff in, you can take it out.

DVR: The best advice I ever got as a songwriter, from a songwriter, was from Lenny Cohen who told me, "Never throw anything out. No matter how bad it is, keep it. You never know, you might be able to cannibalize something from it later." And, by God, it works! Tom Paxton, around the time he wrote his first song that got into circulation, "The Marvelous Toy", realized that he was going to be a songwriter. This being the case, he decided that what he had to do was sit down and write a song every day, and he proceeded to do that for almost a year, I think! It didn't matter if it was good or bad, he just forced himself to get into the discipline of being able to sit down and write. He wrote a lot of garbage in that year, but he also wrote "Ramblin' Boy", "The Last Thing on My Mind" and two or three other things that are pretty much standards now.

JH: We've had some interesting things come out of our songwriter's group on different challenges. We'd challenge each other to write on a given subject. Even in a

joking sense, one week everyone had to write a Frank Sinatra song. For me that was a real challenge, and even though I threw the song out immediately, I later pirated the melody and part of the idea for one of my plays. It pushed me in a direction I would have never even attempted.

DM: What's been difficult to do that you'd like to do in songwriting?

JH: I'd like to use that to get Germana to defend what was done at the Bottom Line this year, which was far and away the most controversial in terms of people's outspoken vehemence against it even being a part of the show, let alone some people adamantly supporting. I'd like you to state what you intended to do with that. It was definitely stretching the concept of the song to its widest...

GP: It was a play/song, and within the play I was meant to be the soul of the woman who spoke, to express the feelings. It's about a woman's impression of her man, and though he's on stage it's actually her imagination, the way she perceives it. I was actually singing, and then there was a woman reciting.

LP: So people who don't like different forms are kind of fucked up. They're kind of narrow-minded, don't you think? If they don't experiment...

DVR: This use of the word experiment always bothers me, hearing people talk about experiments in art. The term is borrowed from science. In science you try

an experiment either to prove a hypothesis or to disprove one. Your results are going to be quantifiable. Unless you can get quantifiable results, what you have is not an experiment. You may decide that it worked or that it didn't work. The audience may like it or they may not like it. This is still not quantifiable. The term is simply inapplicable, and it's used for the most godawful—I went to see a dance troupe and these two dancers got up on stage and ate a piece of balsa wood. This was called an experiment! What are you supposed to prove? They eat the balsa wood and they say "yum" or they eat the balsa wood and they say "feh". What the hell is this?

GP: I did not perform with the intention of being controversial. It so happens that I'm involved with songwriting and theater and I was asked to participate at the Bottom Line, and that was the thing I was most excited about that I was involved in at the time.

DM: Everybody should try to think of what's that secret theme they have in the back of their mind, just like that secret person that they write for. What do you do, Frank?

FT: My theme is to try to show something like sorrow, but also to show hope. To say, "Yeah, it's a fuckin' hard world, but there's something there to keep going for."

DM: That helps me to think of my theme, which is that the world is tough, but you've gotta fight it. Especially in my story songs, people don't just lie down and accept their fate. They may have a tragic fate, but they're clawing for what they want.

LP: I like to defend the things that can't really speak for themselves. That don't really have a voice as we know it. It could be anything from a person that's not very articulate to a fern by the side of the road.

JH: I think my theme, if I could distill it, would be some concept of transcendence, of what transcends the here and now. The magical in life, that essence of truth, that essence of honor, the essence of beauty that's beyond the mundane. The magical in life.

DC: My theme is unrequited love. My other theme is revenge. If you're lucky they happen at the same time.

Album Reviews

Iris DeMent: *Infamous Angel*
Philo Records PH 1138
By Richard Meyer

This debut album by Arkansan Iris DeMent is a lovely collection of country songs that are at once basic and sophisticated. Her vocal style can be compared to both Emmylou Harris and Mother Maybelle Carter, but she has a distinctive point of view.

From the first cut, "Let The Mystery Be," DeMent establishes her distance from the standard canards of religion in country music:

Everybody is wondering what and where they all came from

Everybody is worryin' about where they're gonna go when the whole thing's done

And no one knows for certain and so it's all the same to me

I think I'll let the mystery be

Some say they're going to a place called Glory and I ain't sayin' it ain't a fact

But I've heard I'm on the road to Purgatory and I don't like the sound of that
But I believe in love and I live my life accordingly

But I choose to let the mystery be

DeMent also puts her sly spin on romance in "Hotter Than Mojave in My Heart" and in a plaintive innocent voice declares:

Well baby I could stay this way forever
Just passin' time at 99 degrees

And I bless the day you came along and you tipped the apple cart

And made me hotter than Mojave in my heart

Jim Rooney's production and arrangements never interfere with the directness of the songs. The simplicity of the lyrics feels completely natural set against this music, which is supportive and appropriate, and doesn't stretch a lick for effect. The piano, for example, even sounds imperfectly tuned and imparts a backroom sound to "When Love Was Young." DeMent, too, is willing to continue the homespun feeling with her song "Mama's Opry," in which she

acknowledges a musical debt to her mother. Then in the final song, we get to hear her mother's voice and there is nothing forced, no irony or falseness about it. It is the kind of honest and rare gesture that enhances the sincerity underlying the entire album's earlier wistful songs. All too often the evocation of small-town America is entirely nostalgic, but Iris DeMent's descriptions are sweet and unusual in that they have a clean, contemporary sensibility.

Jeff Tareila: *Dust Devils Dance*
(independent)
By Chip Mergott

Jeff Tareila's third independent release is his first available on compact disc and is presented as a fully realized work.

The twelve original songs emphasize Jeff's strong acoustic guitar work and fervent singing—achieving a unity of vision rare for a twenty-four-year-old. While varied in their keys and tempos, the selections are not so eclectic as to lose the thread of what emerges as a singular and original style.

Jeff's lyrics, simultaneously dense and lean, in some cases reflect an almost literary quality in the verses before resolving into solid, memorable choruses. In "Shoot The Ghost," three different pseudo-heroic figures are described and then debunked:

Shoot the ghost of the fabled hero

Shoot the myth that fuels the flame

What method is used to choose these heroes?

What spirit is left in which to stake claim?

"Caesar and the Moon" is a stark, minor-key introspection, a kind of musical "Notes from the Underground." When the singer laments, "Everything is a blanket and everything is covering me," it's hardly a comforting sentiment. It's a white man's blues, quietly dramatic, and with its mournful allegation that "everything is ugly" and its reference to Caesar, the song implies that "There must be a better world somewhere," as Doc Pomus said. Simply put, "Caesar and the Moon" is a very fine song.

On the lighter side, "It's Work Going" is

an uptempo lament with a manic, hard-core folk edge about trying to hold down a nine-to-five job while burning the candle at both ends; and "Oh, What a Head" offers a truly humorous look at the typical New Jersey hunter, found outside the writer's bedroom window one morning. In it, a booming, almost drunkard chorus intones:

Oh, what a head, did you ever see such a prize trophy

Oh, what a head, he mounts it on the wall with his other heads

They all stare at him as he goes to bed

The production is uncluttered, offering occasional tasteful percussion, violin, and flute, along with some noteworthy guest vocalists, including Amy Malkoff and Jack Hardy, who contributes a haunting, atmospheric vocal to the album's closing selection, "Hunger."

All in all, *Dust Devils Dance* reflects a new-found maturity and should solidly establish Jeff Tareila as one of this country's up-and-coming songwriters.

Dust Devils Dance is available on both CD and cassette by sending \$14.00 for CD and \$10.00 for cassette plus \$1.50 for Post Office stuff to the following address:

Jeff Tareila
P.O. Box 5015
Clinton, NJ 08809-5015

Book Review

Joachim-Ernst Berendt: *The World is Sound: Nada Brahma*
Reviewed by Suzanne Reynolds

What does it mean to really listen? Do we actually "hear" all of the sounds that go on around us, or do we intentionally or unintentionally block out some of this never-ending garden of sound? Do we listen to our favorite music with a heightened awareness that is not present when we hear sounds such as traffic, the telephone ringing, the echo of mass conversation in a crowded restaurant, and other noises that are part of our 20th-century lifestyle?

And if there is another level of consciousness at work, what makes it so? What triggers this sensibility? For

example, take a song that you've listened to time and time again. Can you find more meaning with each fresh listening experience, noticing things both tangible and intangible that you did not hear before? Also, what about the music that makes you almost silent, or moves you such that you become one with that music, as if that piece was written just for you?

It seems apparent that there is another layer to our being that grasps these often very subtle, yet undeniably present feelings. These were a few of the reflections that passed through my mind (my consciousness) when I read *The World is Sound: Nada Brahma* by Joachim-Ernst Berendt.

Nada brahma is a phrase in Sanskrit, a mantra that can be received many ways. Firstly, *nada* means "sound." This meaning is concrete. However, *brahma* is a bit more dimensional. *Brahma* is the prime power of the cosmos. It is the all-pervasive, all-encompassing, ever-present life force that

is everywhere and in everything. *Brahma* is God-consciousness, or just simply God.

This is where we can derive several interpretations. As Berendt states in his title, we could accept *nada brahma* to mean the world is sound ("world" being everything, *brahma* being in everything). This could lead the mind to contemplate that all is sound, or everything is sound. Now with the understanding that God is everywhere and in everything, we could take the concept a step further and say that sound is God, or God is sound. This is the integral consciousness with which Berendt guides us through this journey of inner vision.

As a jazz critic and producer of records, concerts, and radio shows, Berendt has dedicated his entire professional life to music, and thus is a well-respected figure to lead such an explanation. It is notable that he is exactly that, a leader or messenger delivering ideals, and admittedly not the sole author of this text.

Throughout history, man has been aware in varying degrees that rhythm and harmony are at work in all areas of life—not only in music. We are reminded of the universal laws and interdependence all relationships share, musical and otherwise.

In a unique and beautifying way, Joachim Berendt emphasizes the importance of vibration from both micro- and macro-cosmic realms. Examples ranging from atoms and molecules to the planetary orbits are included in the book as evidence that there are magnificent structures, patterns, and a continuous striving toward one-all harmony. To keep this world harmonious is why we are here.

As we develop ourselves and evolve, we automatically explore the deeper levels of consciousness that exist within each of us. We search, we question, and we find. In this book, Berendt stresses the value and relevance BOTH of our ears, and OF our ability to hear both the inner and outer worlds.



John Gorka

"Mr. Gorka mesmerizes. His brand of humor makes listeners laugh from the gut, taking the bitter edge off his biting, poignant song-poems."

New York Times

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From "Memory" to "Future" Tracking the Pucci/Biagi Team

by Keith Kelly

Germana Pucci is no stranger to Fast Folk listeners. She has recorded for Fast Folk since its second issue in March 1982, and over time has contributed more than a dozen of her passionate, vibrant, powerful compositions to our recordings and live performances. Among her unforgettable tunes are "Farfalle Multicolori," ("Colored Butterflies") "Chocolates and Shame," "Un Raddomante Incompetente" ("The Incompetent Diviner"), "Diavoli in Avido Amore" ("Devils in Avid Lust"), "Down the Highway," and "Last Song Sung." Germana was profiled by Sam Heath in the October 1984 issue of Fast Folk. He described her "stories of lost friends, betrayed lovers, prostitute mothers, and tired, empty lives. Her voice carries us to the heights and depths of these lives with rare, unveiled compassion. She quivers and stomps, demands and pleads, cries against injustice, and weeps against unfulfilled needs." Since moving to New York almost two decades ago, Pucci and her longtime companion and collaborator Giancarlo Biagi have made remarkable progress in their artistic careers. In recent years, Pucci and Biagi have evolved from co-writing individual songs to creating full-fledged, dramatic, musical, multi-media theatrical presentations.

Both artists were born and raised in Pietrasanta (Italian for "holy stone"), a town known throughout Italy as a major center for the arts (sculptors since Michelangelo have journeyed there for its marble quarries.) Germana and Giancarlo met there as teenagers, having been steeped in the traditions of Italian culture—Germana with an extensive background in traditional Italian folk music and opera, Giancarlo in sculpture, theater, and literature. Yet both saw their beloved centuries-old traditions bypassed by most of the Italian population in favor of newer "traditions" borrowed from other cultures, primarily American. During the 1960s and '70s, the growth of rock and disco music,

the pervasive influence of television, and a fascination with the "hit parade" replaced *La Traviata* and the *Pietà* with the Monkees and Travoltas in the hearts of most Italians. Germana traces this directly to the devastation visited on her homeland by World War II. The war was a watershed event there and in many European countries to an extent most Americans don't appreciate. "Americans fight wars, but outside their own country," she points out. "When it's happening right there, the country can never be the same. Some people describe time as 'before Christ' and 'after Christ.' In Italy, people say 'before the war' and 'after the war.'" As a result, she continues, people feel a need to put those long years of destruction, poverty, and starvation behind them, and concentrate instead on more modern (if more shallow) times.

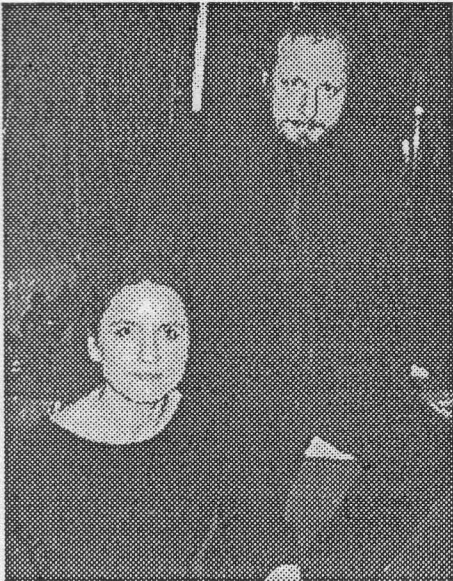
In 1975 the pair emigrated to New York City ("neutral ground," she calls it), where Germana almost immediately joined the folk scene, and found a new audience for her songs. And it was here she made the curious discovery that some Americans could relate to her music more directly than could some Italians. Though she speaks excellent English, she has always written and sung almost exclusively in her native language, a practice she continues after seventeen years in America. Rather than being a barrier between her and her audience, this actually brings singer and listener closer together. Germana explains, "When I sing in English, people say, 'that's nice.' But when I sing in Italian, people tell me 'I really got the meaning of that song,' and they don't speak Italian." To translate all her work into English, she fears, would dilute its natural impact; she calls Italian "a shortcut to my heart."

Biagi, meanwhile, was pursuing his interests in his new home as well. Though he had always collaborated with Pucci in writing songs (he wrote lyrics and she music for Germana's first *Fast Folk* recording, "Memoria," in 1982), had always written poetry, and had explored playwriting since the mid-1970s, his main forms of expression were more tangible works of art, such as paintings and sculptures. Having earned considerable recognition for his works in his first ten years in America, Giancarlo realized his

first success as a writer through a strange but happy sequence of events in 1986. He was back in Pietrasanta, casting a limited edition of his sculpture "Crabman." The statue, half human, half mollusk, represents Darwin's theory of human evolution. A well-known theatrical director from Norway happened to be visiting friends at the foundry where Giancarlo was working. He saw "Crabman" and was immediately inspired to create a theatrical piece on the same themes. He invited Biagi to Oslo to work on a script. The two men and a Norwegian actor then developed "Crabman" into an extended monologue, with one man playing multiple roles. The resulting stage production was so successful that it was later produced for Norwegian national television, making Biagi famous throughout Scandinavia.

Still, this did not induce him to favor his writing over his sculpting to any great extent. A more sobering event in 1989 would do that. An exhibition of 30 of Giancarlo's bronze sculptures was given in Los Angeles. When it was done, the pieces were flown back to New York; Giancarlo rented a van at the airport to bring them back to Manhattan. When he reached the city, he had to make a brief stop, so he very carefully locked the van and left it for a very short time. When he returned, needless to say, all 30 sculptures were stolen. Sculpting has never held quite the same appeal for him since.

So, Giancarlo began to concentrate more on playwriting, while Germana continued her songwriting. Actually, "playwriting" doesn't fully capture the nature of Biagi's presentations. He has staged three of his works in New York since 1990, as different from each other as they are from conventional "plays" or "musicals." His first produced piece, *Misterio*, was a "multi-media installation" inspired by the twenty-four-hour Good Friday processions which fascinated Biagi as a child in Italy, and utilized his photography and drawings along with recorded music and sound effects.. The following year he returned with *Instinctu* (Latin for "instinct"), a performance-art piece written by Biagi but based on the work of actors who he asked to improvise on the theme of their "instincts." This piece involved 16-mm film, artwork, live



actors, and live music. IN late 1991 he staged his three-act play *A Woman's Trilogy*, which has received four productions in New York, one attended by an audience of 300 in a noisy SoHo art gallery that Germana recalls magically falling silent when their performance began, to great relief.

A Woman's Trilogy depicts a woman reflecting on the past, present, and future of her life. The dialogue consists of the woman speaking/arguing with the man she loves, and while both the man and woman appear on stage and speak out loud, this is not happening in real time, but is a dramatization of the woman's memories (and predictions). The music (co-written and sung by Germana) represents what is really hidden in the woman's soul. The pair and their third partner, musician/writer/artist Jill Burkee, performed an excerpt taken from the "Future" segment of the trilogy in the 1992 *Fast Folk* show at the Bottom Line, included on this recording.

Both Biagi and Pucci hasten to mention the enormous contribution made by Burkee, their American friend and co-creator for many years. Germana calls Jill a "breather of arts, too often left in the dark," and an invaluable behind-the-scenes addition in ways ranging from help with English to musical accompaniment to numerous other areas. But interestingly, although the three have worked together so closely for so long, the *Fast Folk* revue

was the first time all three had performed together. Germana and Jill are both accomplished performers, but Giancarlo is happier offstage (although performing is about the only thing he doesn't care to do; for his plays, he writes, directs, designs and builds sets, chooses costumes, and oversees every other facet of the production.) He was coaxed to play a few small roles in *Instinctv*, but did not work alongside the two women

until the Bottom Line performance, and then only after great persuasion from more senior performers.

Pucci feels strongly that the evolution from writing individual, unrelated songs to writing specific pieces for larger presentations is the best direction her material could take. Her insistence on singing in Italian may preserve the spirit and fire of the music, but while the inability to understand the lyrics may not bother some listeners, it does bother others. Germana explains, "When I play a set of songs, maybe two thirds are in Italian, and one third in English. For every song, I have to explain what the setting is, and what it's about. That takes a lot of time." But songs sung within a play benefit from the play's context, the progression of the storyline up to the point the song is sung, stage design, costume design, character development, and other factors that allow each song to be much more self-explanatory on a first listening, even if still in Italian.

The next Biagi/Pucci/Burkee collaboration is a commissioned biography of the famous Italian actress Eleonora Duse. Duse enjoyed great fame in the late 19th century in Italy, Paris, London, New York, and Moscow, as a woman who replaced the stilted, formal, overdone style of acting then popular in Europe with the more naturalistic school which dominates acting today. *Eleonora Duse* concentrates on the tempestuous years following 1897, when Duse fell in love with the poet Gabriele d'Annunzio. The presentation again combines script with music. The play will run for five performances at New York's Kampo Cultural Center, November 17-22 (showtime at 7 P.M., admission \$12.00. For information, contact ARTIDA Productions at 212-777-4323.)

Another of Germana's ongoing projects

is a compact-disc release of fourteen of her songs, three of which, "Come un Sogno," "L'Antinarciso," and "Un Rabdomante Incompetente," she has also recorded for *Fast Folk*. She is co-arranging and co-producing the album with Greg Cohen, who has worked with Tom Waits and many jazz musicians. Cohen, she says, is bringing strong jazz and even Argentinean influences to her thoroughly Italian music, thanks to his own playing and that of some of his favorite session musicians. She promises her faithful *Fast Folk* listeners will be in for a surprise.

Germana and Giancarlo (and Jill) seem able to conquer any artistic endeavor they meet, and to trace their development from near-peasants in Italy to multi-talented, multi-media writers and performers in New York City is to be both impressed and inspired. Let's hope they remain in touch with *Fast Folk*, and that we can keep up with them.



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Candidates Attend Bottom Line Show

By Dave Elder

This year, as usual for an election year, all of the major presidential candidates attended the Fast Folk show at the Bottom Line. I spoke to each candidate briefly during intermission, and found them all eager to state their position on the present state of folk music and how it could be improved. Each one, of course, took a different viewpoint.

President Bush stressed his war record, stating that "War is basically good for folk music, and I think the Persian Gulf conflict bears this out. You can see a dramatic rise in songwriter output for the first quarter of '91, especially in comparison to the year before. While this has not yet translated into more work or money for songwriters, we think it will in the long run. The folk music scene is not stagnant; it's just growing at a slower rate than we're used to. But we think the economics are in place for a much better showing, perhaps even by the end of this year." Vice President Quayle added, "We strongly support folk music as a family-oriented alternative to the junk that is thrown at people on TV, filth such as Murphy Brown."

Bill Clinton, the perceived Democratic front-runner, strongly disagreed with Bush, and laid the blame right at the President's feet. "He had the war and yes, that did create songs, but since the end of the war he's done nothing to stimulate the folk-economy. Meanwhile we see clubs closing, songwriters walking the streets with guitars and nowhere to play. These days, some of the best folk jobs are in Japan and Germany! We've got to turn that situation around—government needs to provide business with the tax breaks and incentives to keep the folk factories full and the song mills turning."

Paul Tsongas agreed with Clinton's assessment of the present bleak state of the folk economy, but spoke of the need for government involvement in retraining to teach acoustic guitar players to play, say, digital synthesizers or crunch guitars. "After all, it is the nineties, but many folkies are still buying vinyl LPs. I think we need to modernize and upgrade our definition of folk. And I think government should provide daycare for the growing number of female folkies who have with

30-year-old children."

Jerry Brown, on the other hand, characterized the policies of the President and the ideas of his Democratic rivals as "folk politics as usual. We need radical change if we're going to keep folk music competitive into the next century. I think my flat folk tax could help bring about such change. I think we might be able to put together a real folk rainbow coalition, y'know, singer-songwriters, bluegrass mandolin players, discontented rock-and-roll electric bass players, and if we can do that, I think we can win in November."

Ross Perot, the independent candidate, agreed with Brown on the need for radical change but stressed his own personal wealth and independence. "Some candidates sometimes support certain musicians because of who they are in the folk world. They have a name or they can get you booked somewhere, and talent is secondary, if it's considered at all. I have no commitments to the folk establishment, so I can support folk musicians solely on the basis of talent and my own impeccable taste."

Republican contender Pat Buchanan echoed Perot's thoughts about the "sameness" of most of the other candidates, but he spoke of the need to return to "traditional folk values, the traditional-based simple folk song that made folk music great in the first place. After all, Woody said, 'If you're using more than two chords you're showing off.' And if it was good enough for the Wood . . ." His words trailed off into a chorus of "Hallelujahs" and "Amens" from a group of his fundamentalist folk followers.

While it seemed good to hear all the candidates voicing concern for folk music, and putting out a number of new proposals before the public, we've all heard promises before. Even at the time of the concert, there was talk within the folk community about running "a candidate of our own." At this writing, that talk has translated into



Eric Frandsen looking presidential

direct action, as the national folk people's choice has become obvious and the "draft Frandsen" movement gathers momentum. For more on this subject, see elsewhere in this issue.

All in all, this election promises at least some interesting possibilities for folk music. Stay tuned (no matter what tuning you use).

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Call Carl Alderson, coordinator of volunteers at (718) 447-1601.

Lyrics

Home for the Holidays (Christian Bauman)

I took myself home for the holidays, it seemed like the thing to do
Pumpkin pie, muskrat surprise, and Uncle Abner's stew
Got a dog in my lap and a baby on my back, there's pine needles in my hair
Wife's got a phone growing outta her head and there's beer in the Fridgidaire
Good God, there's beer in the Fridgidaire

Chorus

And the wise men say that you can't go home once your boots have learned to stray
But I say that you can go home if your heart never went away

Well, the mama cat had her kittens in a bush by the cottage next door
She don't fear the railroad tracks 'cause the train don't run no more

Well, I bundled up my baby and I took her to see those furry little balls of gray
But the feline fetched her fearsome fangs and sent us on our way
Good God, she sent us on our way

Well, Great Gramp Jack with the hump on his back comes a callin' 'bout a quarter till one
He got a '32 Dodge and a pin from his lodge and a new wife just for fun

Well, we're sittin' for the feast and the eatin' of the beast and we're sippin' at our tea
Then we kick 'em all out and we give a big shout 'cause tonight is for my honey and me
Good God, tonight is for my honey and me

Chorus

© 1992 Christian Bauman

The Boats Are Rolling Out (Brady Rymer)

The sun is burning hot
Clouds tied up in knots
The boats are rolling out

Seagulls circle high
Down to the sea they dive
The boats are rolling out

Waves smash on the dock
The pounding never stops
The boats are rolling out

Smoke pours from the stacks
The strong thick stream of black
The boats are rolling out

Drums ring loud and hard
Trumpets blowing sharp
The boats are rolling out

Flags stay stuck in hands
Flags lay on the sand
The boats are rolling out

Prayers are softly said
Empty rooms, empty beds
The boats are rolling out

Eyes are looking out
Oceans crashing down
The boats are rolling out

Guinnevere (Buskin/Batteau)

Chorus

Guinnevere, in my castle in Normandy
Make a new home with me
Come follow me down
Guinnevere, all my honor and glory
Will just be a story
Of the fall of the crown

And I some dancing Lancelot
Who only falls in love
With a woman who belongs to someone else
Is it just the blood of Paris running through my brain

That sees a taken woman and myself I can't restrain

Is this knight of cups in his noble stance
Just a jack of clubs with an eye askance
On the queen of hearts in her royal blue
I may shield the poor but I can't save you

Chorus

Golden apples on the mountain
This one fell to me
We are planets in the heartless gravity
I never chose to make a choice
It felt like someone else's voice
Saying all those crazy things down on one knee
Cassandra never cast a shadow
Now it's heading to the shore
Oh, the face that launched a thousand ships
Is sailing one more, Guinnevere

Chorus

Record Time (33, 45, 78) (Steve Key)

I'm spinning like an old turntable
Three speeds, going nowhere fast
I hesitate at the door to the future
Holding on to my bittersweet past
Me and all of the percolators
Me and all of the rotary phones
Me and all of my vinyl records
Warped and scratched and out of date
Thirty-three, forty-five, seventy-eight

I got friends from the old home town
We used to work for the hometown news
They got houses in a couple of cities
I'm still singing them hometown blues
Me and all of the drive-in movies
Me and all of the afternoon papers
Me and the free-form radio
Fading in and out of date
Thirty-three, forty-five, seventy-eight

I hear talk about a great depression
I hear the drums of the war machine
I wonder if I'm stuck in the past
Or if it all repeats just like a CD

I'm following the railroad lines
Another job in another town
I skip around in record time
And try not to notice the candle burn down
Me and all of the rust belt workers
Me and all of the hot type printers
Me and all of the family farms
Auctioned off and out of date
Thirty-three, forty-five, seventy-eight

Oh, the percolators
Oh, the rotary phones
All of my vinyl records
Warped and scratched and out of date
Thirty-three, forty-five, seventy-eight
I'm a thirty-three, forty-five, seventy-eight

©1991 Steve Key

Marie (Jim Allen)

There's a gang of sparrows in a tree
They ain't sweet, they don't have to be
The same rain comes through the open door
That's come a million times before
And it gets to be a bore

Chorus

Oh Marie, come and find me soon
Fever in the water, honey on the moon

The wind kicks in but it don't get far
It's like a dead man sleeping in a railroad car
The dogs bark up a storm outside
The only sin they know is pride
They scare away the tide

Chorus

A man can die and be reborn
Into a suit that's twice as torn
He stands up when the music starts
But he can't tell the songs apart
He's got to learn the way by heart

Chorus

©1990 Jim Allen

Blue Whale (Eddy Lawrence)

Hector and José, Jesús and Luís
They've been out all night down on 14th Street
They've run off the *blancos*, scared off the police
They've formed their own country and they're set to secede
They've got half-dressed jailbait from the South Bronx
They're sweating to the *salsa* in the gray light of dawn

Bacardi *añejo*, *cerveza* on ice
Just hanging out waiting for the whale to arrive

Chorus

The blue whale's coming
The blue whale's coming

Hector and Jesús, Luís and José
They've got a rust-red Chevette, circa '78
With two JBL speakers where the back seat should be

They're rattling windows clear down to 12th Street

They've built a sidewalk parlor of milk crates and tires

They've hung up old sneakers on the telephone wires

They're trading lewd gestures and bilingual jeers

Just hanging out waiting for the whale to appear

Chorus

With fuel-injected muscle and steel-belted feet
A diesel-fed hunter is stalking the streets

Dressed in blue lacquer and bulletproof glass
Packing automatic weapons and cans of tear gas
Big as a *bodega*, loud as a whore
Equipped with satellite linkage and computers
on board
It's a portable fortress, a rolling jail
And out on the street it's called the blue whale

*(La Ballena Azul . . . Un Pascado Terrible
El Tiburrón de las Calles . . . Un Animál
Vigilante)*

Hector and José, Jesús and Luís
Saw the whale turn the corner at 6:33
They cranked up the volume, opened one beer
more
Nightsticks went to cracking at 6:34
Bleeding and cursing, puking Ballantine Ale
Went four Latin Jonahs in a portable jail
It hasn't caught any killers or trapped any
thieves
But it can sure kick your ass for disturbing the
peace

Chorus

© 1992 Eddy Lawrence (BMI)

Fisherman

(Wendy Beckerman)

I have never been a fisherman
I have always lived on the land
I go to the store
Another daily chore
This I understand

I have never been a dying bird
Lying on the bottom of a cage
I am alive
Watching from inside
Lead me to the stage

I have never been a rising moon
I have never been an old cartoon
I have never been feet that dance
Maybe I can still dream the chance

I have never been you lover
I have always been your chase
I am at the door
Where many stood before
Staring in your face

I have never been a fisherman
I have always dreamed of the sea
Baiting the hook
Trying not to look
Who will set me free

©1991 Wendy Beckerman

Before the Country Moved to Town
(Michael Jerling)

And I grew up on that sound
Before the country moved to town
On the wings of a silver eagle
A country legend and his band
Fifty years out on the highway
Fifty years of one-night stands
Keeps the music clean and simple
Like a farm boy learned to play
But the legend ever noticed
That the boy has moved away

Chorus

Back in the great depression
The lifeline was the radio
Listen to the Delta blues
Jimmy Rodgers, Bill Monroe
And I grew up on that sound
Before the country moved to town

On a cheap flat-top guitar
A little black kid sure could play
He rode the blues right up the river
Like mercury on a summer's day
From the juke joints on the south side
To playing for this college crowd
They don't know nothing 'bout the blues
They just like it fast and loud

Chorus

Nothing pretty about hard times
Those days are gone for good
Color TV in the holler
Shopping malls in the piney woods
Listen to the money talking
No one argues with success
And there's nothing clean and simple
In a modern wilderness

Chorus

© 1991 Michael Jerling Music/Shanachie Music
Works (ASCAP)

Shining Brow

(Jeff Wilkinson)

Babe, come with me
To the shore of the Northern Sea
I know its wind is calling us home

There's a song that I love to sing
Its voices such joy will bring
Aloft, far beyond my reach

Looking back on the days I've lost
Like a wall that I cannot cross
But I know that the time is near
I know, when the day is clear
I will see beyond this shining brow

Love, in a field I lay
Close my eyes and hope to pray
In a circle of light on the forest floor

No one knows why the sun does shine
No one knows why we walk on this earth
I only feel
Only feel

Looking back on the days I've lost
Chasing sparks from a comet's cowl
All I know is the sky's my shield
All I know is the warmth I feel
Hold me, holy innocence
Hold me, I'm tired of being lost
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Blood Sings

(Suzanne Vega)

When blood sees blood of its own
It sings to see itself again
It sings to hear the voice it's known
It sings to recognize the face
One body's split and passed along the line
From this shoulder to the hip
I know these bones as being mine
And the curving of the lip

Chorus

And my question to you is
How did this come to pass
How did this one life fall so far and fast

Some are lean and some with grace and some
without

Tell the story that repeats
Of a child who had been left alone at birth
Left to fend and taught to fight
See his eyes and how they start with light
Getting colder as the pictures go
Did he carry his bad luck upon his back
That bad luck that we've all come to know

Chorus

When blood sees blood of its own
It sings to see itself again
It sings to hear the voice it's known
It sings to recognize the face

© 1992 Waifersay/AGR

Man on a Ledge

(Rod MacDonald)

I was never blessed with children, said the man
on the ledge
At least none that I know of
Of course it's possible for a man to have
children he never knows
It's one of the little things that sets a man apart
He can have children and never know they're
his own work of art

I was never much of a success, said the man on
the ledge
At least nobody ever told me
Oh sure, they read my work in schools where
that kind of thing is done
But the kind of recognition that sets a man apart
Never came my way, I know it in my heart

Chorus

Jump, jump, said the crowd waiting in the street
As they passed out the popcorn and the portable
seats
They were just waiting for their fun
They didn't know or care what the man on the
ledge had done

I was never much of a listener, I said to the man
At least that what everybody's always told me
But I'm listening now, tell me how did this start
He said, even when we were children, I was a
man apart
I never smoked cigarettes or ripped off the mini-
mart

I'm not even any good at this, said the man on
the ledge
At least other people know how to die
Even my lovers knew I'd never say goodbye
No matter how miserable or how we felt apart
Doing nothing at all has been my truest art

Chorus

I'm gonna do something now, said the man on
the ledge
I'm gonna teach myself to fly
Of course this might be something you can only
do one time
And off in the distance I heard a siren whine

And the clouds moved off, and the sun came out from behind

All the windows in the skyscrapers, all the water in the harbor
Began to shine
Down on the ground, a radio began to sound
He said, "Stairway to Heaven," I've always hated that song
Even when you want to die, they just want to bring you down
Look at all those people standing 'round
They just want to see me hit the ground
Well, I will not be their sideshow freak
I will not be their sideshow freak
I will not be their sideshow freak
I will not be their circus clown
Then he stood there all alone looking into his heart
And stepped away from the ledge, a man apart

© Blue Flute Music/Shanachie Music Works (ASCAP)

The Child
(Jack Hardy)

and the child has found his way to the spring with no one to lead him by hand
through the briars and brambles and nettles that sting
he follows each step of her plan
and the mother who washes her clothes by hand
looks up as the cranes cross the sky
as the old woman battles the chill on the strand
a shell that is left by the tide
and the child's built a boat to sail on the river
to play pretty prince to the queen
and the play is so real as to cause her to shiver
abandoned in the bullrushes unseen
and the mother who watches the oceans for help
for the boats filled with sweet spanish wine
as the old woman hobbles her way to the well
to draw up the flow with her line
and the child runs the beach with the horse
hooves of thunder
with his sword he does battle the waves
with abandon each thrust has now drawn him under
no thought and no spell can now save
and the mother who's left to watch o'er the spring
looks up as the horsemen pass by
as the old woman tends the boat as she sings
and holds out her hand for the tithe
in the time between time in the light before dawn
when the devil gets his due on the grass
and the sweet spanish wine lays spilled on the lawn
the sound on the wind does not last
in the time between time when the moon is at full
when love lies hobbled in the hay
by this water with no source and no force and no pull
by this water we are all washed away

©Jack Hardy

I've Got Nothing
(The Roches)

I've got nothing to hide
Eyes on the front of my face
Hair coming right out of my head
Teeth the better to eat you with
Ears, ears, ears, and I heard what you said
I've got nothing to hide
Me, I'm not the nicest person you met
Things, they always bother me
Intimacy, you can have my end of it
Peace, brother, this is the way it is currently
I've got nothing to hide
Did you ever see a bunch of cows standing around
Looks like fun, they're chewing on something profound
They don't seem to care which end of them is there
I'm not saying that I want to be a cow
So don't get me wrong if you don't understand what I'm saying
I've got nothing to hide
Free, I'm leaving it all behind
Whee, I'm dumping the big routine
Too true to be good
Moo, has to be believed to be seen
I've got nothing to hide

In the Mirror
(Brian Rose)

There's a girl who stands in the mirror
She looks for the story in her eyes
She follows the curves of her body
Wearing nothing but a naked disguise
I'm in love with the girl in the mirror
I look over her shoulder and stare
She's looking at me as I'm watching her
Running her hands through her hair
On the border of her body
She traces the bumps and the folds
Each open plain and hiding place
Each dark thicket of her soul
I'm in love with the girl in the mirror
In the light so cold and stark
I am drawing the lines of her body
A faint bruise and a pale birthmark
There's a girl who stands in the mirror
She looks for the story in her eyes
She follows the curves of her body
Wearing nothing but a naked disguise
I'm in love with the girl in the mirror
I'm in love with the girl in the mirror
I'm in love with the girl in the mirror

©1992 Brian Rose

Back in the Depression
(Pierce Pettis)

Back in the Depression, when I was living on the street
Back in the Depression, getting used to the idea of defeat
When your fellow Americans decide to cut the cost
Things they don't care about, a lot of things get

lost
So they opened up the doors of the hospitals and they cut us loose
And sent us flying like a bouquet of toy balloons

Back in the Depression, a warehouse down at the Mission Home
Back in the Depression, I was robbed of everything I own
They say the tough get going when the going gets tough
Affluent people are fond of repeating that kind of stuff
When you haven't had a bath and your stomach is empty and there's sores on your feet
And your mind is reeling like a carnival ride, you tell me just how tough would you be

Back in the Depression, in the midst of a kinder, gentler land
Back in the Depression, not a lot of people would understand
When your fellow Americans decide to save Some more money for the politicians to piss away
Oh, they never did see the thousands like me trying to stay alive
In every city, like a thousand points of flickering light

Back in the Depression, when I was stripped of my dignity
Back in the Depression, that was the last thing they took from me

Are You Happy Now
(Richard Shindell)

You took the toaster when you went
You never paid your half the rent
You took the spices from the rack
But you don't have to put them back
'Cause in your haste on Halloween
You left your camera on the bed
Where we played roles in black and white
You left a roll of black and white
I set the timer and thought of you
And put the lens up to my head
I took a photograph for you
What comes out gray is really red

Chorus
So are you happy now
Are you happy now
Are you happy now

I smashed your pumpkin on the floor
The candle flickered at my feet
As goblins flew across the moon
The children peered into the room
A cowboy shivered on the porch
And Cinderella checked her watch
The hobo waited in the street
And an angel whispered, "Trick or treat"
But what was I supposed to do
But to sit there in the dark
I was amazed to think that you
Could take the candy with you too

Chorus

I've sat all night and now it's dawn
And I cannot believe my eyes
There's garbage strewn across the lawn

Where we once stared up at the sky
And streams of paper fill the tree
That hovered over you and me
And shaving cream covers the car
That we picked up in Baltimore
And though I know it's hard to tell
I hope that what's-his-name treats you well
I still maintain that he's a bum
But it's your money, have some fun

Chorus

And you always asked why I had not
Written you a verse or two
Since that's the one thing I regret
I dedicate this one to you

Chorus

1992 Richard Shindell/Shanachie Music Works
(ASCAP)

The Last Time
(Rachel Polisher)

He was a tall man
With a short fuse
There was no woman that was broken
He couldn't find a way to use
Was it the color of his eyes
That made it so hard to see?
I swore he held the last card
But I was blinded by need

When love was just
His axe to grind
He had to have every piece of me
To leave behind
Was it the sound of his voice
That made it so hard to hear?
Or was it just stubborn pride
Turning a deaf ear?

Chorus

Sometimes you understand
Sometimes you stand and fight
There was a time when you would do everything
wrong
Just to make one thing feel right
Sometimes you understand
Sometimes you stand and fight
There was a time when you would do everything
wrong
But this is the last time

He picked the place
I picked the time
I never saw a living thing
Stop on a thinner dime
Was it the touch of his hands
That made it so hard to feel?
Or was I just holding on
Trying to make the wrong thing real?

Chorus

The last time I'd ever get close enough
To the flame that burns a fool like me

Chorus

Garden State Stomp
(Dave Van Ronk)

Allamuchy, Hacklebarney, Rockaway, Piscataway
Ho-Ho-Kus, Secaucus, Lower Squankum, Fair
Play

Wannamassa, Succasunna, Manimuskin,
Plumsock
Bivalve, Buckshootem, Turkeyfoot, Mecanipock
Jugtown, Pebbletown, Nummytown, Rahway

Wickatunk, Manunkachunk, Mantua, Mizpah
Manisquan, Raritan, Matawan, Totowa
Whippany, Parsippany, Penny Pot, Hackensack
Batsco, Nesco, Metedaconk, Peapack
Loch Arbour, Egg Harbor, Swinesburg, Caviar
Cheesequake, Boy Scout Lake, Moonachie,
Tenaflly

Netcong, Watchung, Pluckamin, Mount Misery
Bardonia, Ironia, Colonia, Weehawken
Menahawkin, Mantoloking, Mahalala,
Pennsaukin
Ducktown, Iron Bound, Frelinghuysten, Lodi
Hard Scrabble, Double Trouble, Pickettinny,
Montague
Muckshaw Pond, Okanikon, Espamong, Ocean
View

Navasink, Shabaconk, Ongs Hat, Jumbo
Wortendyke, Water Witch, Blue Ball, Ringoes
Matchaponix, Delawanna, Wawayonda,
Timbucktoo

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Rise From the Ruins
(Mark Heard)

Nobody asks to be born
Nobody wishes to die
Everybody whiles away the interim time
Sworn to rise from the ruins by and by

The engines are droning with progress
The pistons are pounding out time
And it's you and me caught in the juggernaut
jaunt
Left to rise from the ruins down the line

We will roll like an old Chevrolet
The road to ruin is something to see
Hang on to the wheel
For the highway to Hell needs chauffeurs
For the powers that be

Go and tell all your friends and relations
Go and say what ain't easy to say
Go and give them some hope
That we might rock this boat
And rise from the ruins one day
Ever try to carry water in a bucket
Ever try to carry fire in your hand
Ever try to take on the weight of the everyday
freight
'Til you find that you're too weak to stand

Why so pale and wan, fond lover
Why so downcast and desperately sad
We can walk, we can talk
We ain't yet pillars of salt
And we will rise from the ruins while we can

We will roll like an old Chevrolet
The road to ruin is something to see
Hang on to the wheel
For the highway to Hell needs chauffeurs
For the powers that be

Nobody asks to be born
Nobody wishes to die

Everybody whiles away the interim time
Sworn to rise from the ruins by and by

©1990 Mark Heard/ASCAP

The Code of Cowboy Kid
(David Massengill)

I was born in the town of Tumbleweed
When I cried out it started a stampede
On a horse I spurred
And I saved the herd
With my first word when I said, "Whoa!"

Chorus

When there's trouble I'm never far behind
When there's a fight I do what's right

All my life I have worn a cowboy hat
All my life I have twirled a lariat
I taught Lash LaRue
How to cuss and chew
We're buckaroos of the wild, wild West

Chorus

2nd Chorus
I'm Cowboy Kid
Just an orphan boy
Never knew my name
I was won and lost in a poker game

I was weaned on a mix of cactus juice
Rattlesnake oil and powdered buzzard's tooth
I taught Rin Tin Tin
To be man's best friend
He'll lick your chin on a dusty day

Chorus

Cheyenne, Navajo, Cherokee, and Sioux
All the Indian tribes I'm blood brother to
Did the do-si-do
With Geronimo
Why don't you know 'cause he asked me "how"

Chorus

2nd Chorus

Now when I hit the town after a six-month cattle
drive
I play the five-card stud, half a year's pay gone in
a night
But the man who dealt the cards is wanted dead
or alive
I have a hunch this game is going to end in a
pistol fight

Sometimes I shoot the gun out of his hand
Sometimes I shoot the man of No Man's Land
More than one outlaw
The last thing he saw
Was my fast draw between the eyes

Chorus

2nd Chorus

the king is dead
(richard julian)

the king is dead
and the last time we saw him
he was tired and strung out
and he wasn't really there at all
the king is dead
and his silence is awesome
they found him

in the bathroom hall
a common junkie
stoned on demerol

the king is dead
but your sorrow be cautioned
this could be the best thing
in his career so far
the king is dead
but not down at the auction
they found a falling star
they sold his diamond-studded
gibson guitar

lonesome is shining star
that's what charlie parker said
the bird man speaks no english
he just blew soft, and that's how it went
and lonesome is a dark star
in the clusters of the night
breathing like hurricanes
far out of sight
like the spots in your eyes
when they close from the light
he's not gone
he's just not as bright

the king is dead
the army came calling
first, they shaved his head
then they dressed him up right
the king is dead
and his profile is appalling
laid out in a suit of light
what a sight!
goodnight, my sweetheart
my sweetheart, goodnight

©1991 Richard JulianI

I Ain't Falling
(Tom Meltzer)

It's getting late and I'm getting torn
Between a lonely night and an ugly morn
I don't even know if I can hold my own
But what can I do for you
My feet are hurting from walking on a wire
But I can't be a lover if I won't be a liar
Not real sure how it's supposed to be
But I can't love nothing that don't love me

Chorus
Pick my feet up off the ground
No floor below me, no walls around me
I ain't afraid of dying
If I ain't falling I must be flying

You're getting bored 'cause you're living fast
You can only be sure when your time is past
A well-laid plan, it's all right if
You're a dying man or a working stiff
I can't keep walking in my father's shoes
Do the sidewalk shuffle to the highway blues
If I ain't working from sun to sun
I'm never gonna hate the things I've done

Chorus

I've talked to people said they'd seen it all
And if I'd only listen I'd heed the call
If you think you can believe it 'cause you seen it
with your eyes
Just because you ain't burning you think it's
paradise

Faith is forever, fame is temporary
You can't cross the Jordan on the Staten Island
Ferry
Might as well eat it 'cause you gone ahead and
picked it
And you can't get to Heaven on a round-trip
ticket

Chorus

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Inc./Elmhurst Tanks Music

Follow Me Down
(Judith Zweiman)

If you could see me now
Wending my lonesome way back home
Through the empty city streets
At 1:00 in the morning
Would you dare to follow me down
To the last commuter train of the night
Would you ride it with me
Would you follow me down

And if I could see you now
Tucked up asleep in your single bed
In a room with unicorns, glass roses and velvet
Would you dare to think of me
On the last commuter train of the night
Would you ride it with me
Would you follow me down

Bridge
Miles away our dreams wind together
And our hearts miles apart
Never mind the distance or the pass of time

And if I could see you now
Hands in pockets and shoulders tight
On the windy city streets
At any time of the morning
Would you dare to follow me down
To the last commuter train of the night

Bridge

Repeat first verse

You could ride it with me
You could follow me down

The Burden (1949?)
(Richard Meyer)

First the signs went up all over town
If you're guilty or proud,
come and say it out loud
Hands in his pockets tried to understand
She bit the apple and he was her man
Rain spit at the revival tent
They swore to lay the burden down
What they wanted wasn't legal or heaven sent
Some words you don't say out loud

Chorus

When you turn a wheel
You're gonna move
With nothing to live for
There is nothing to prove
No matter how hard the rain falls
You can only walk to shelter
If it's where you belong

She nearly wore the future out for all to see
He wished he'd been blinded at his mother's

knee

It didn't take a fast car, it didn't take drugs
She had a few months to go to motherhood
They walked together to be witnessed there
To confess that they had been in love
Then a few questions on the other side of town
It didn't take long and it didn't take love

Chorus

The holy rollers laid their own burdens down
A hot wind blew
He finally prayed out loud
He knew she'd be alone
He knew that she would cry
When her blood rain came down
He waited for her in the parking lot
Then the "doctor" looked him in the eye
Maybe a few hundred dollars could fix her up
but a prayer
would it ease his mind?

Chorus

First the signs went up all over town
If you're guilty or proud, come and say it out
loud

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(ASCAP)

A Folksinger Earns Every Dime
(Buskin/Batteau/Bingham)

Come all you wearers of Birkenstock shoes
You L.L. Beaners and you J. Crews
We'll tell you a story of toil and of strife
And the hardship that comes with a folksinger's
life

Well, it's up in the morning as early as ten
And it's yesterday's coffee or make some again
But you gotta get rolling 'cause it's almost noon
The show is at eight and there's six strings to
tune

And it's hard, buddy, it's hard
Living off rhythm and rhyme
Well it's hard, bucko, it's hard
A folksinger earns every dime
Your fingers are sore from the concert last night
But you've gotta ignore it, there's folk songs to
write

'Bout people and places and hard luck and
things
Wherever there's trouble, a folksinger sings

Well you're out on the road and the living is hell
You might even get stuck in some two-star hotel
Where they haven't got Showtime and the
bedsheets are creased
And the room service takes twenty minutes at
least

And it's hard, fella, it's hard
Living off rhythm and rhyme
Well it's hard, amigo, it's hard
A folksinger earns every dime

Well, it's off to the hoot but you're having bad
luck

The crowd yells, "Sing 'Love Shack!'"
The crowd yells, "You suck!"
And the trio before you is playing too long
They just closed out their set with your opening

song

And it's hard, hoo boy, it's hard
Living off rhythm and rhyme
Well it's hard, dude, it's hard
A folksinger earns every dime

You're playing a festival south of the Smokies
On a stool full of splinters and a field full of folkies

Tom Paxton is late so you gotta keep strummin'
When a man cries, "Look out, there's a mime troupe a-comin'"

Your blood starts to boil and your skin starts to crawl
They're doing the Robot, they're doing the Wall
It's like a bad dream or a weird déjà vu
Of the Great Mime Disaster of '72

And it's hard, Muffy, it's hard
Living off rhythm and rhyme
Well it's hard, Woody, it's hard
A folksinger earns every dime

What Could I Add to That
(Frank Tedesso)

Dead bird on the sidewalk, Jimbo put it in his pocket
His soul needed a companion who knew his way about the sky
Everybody say, "Such a strange little boy, keeping company with dead things"
But when the stars whistled up from out of their graves
Jimbo and that bird would sing

Chorus
What could I add to that
What could I add to that
The wires of a heart trembling with music
What could I add to that

The night does not understand me, the night does not speak English
Not verbs, not nouns, not these human sounds
The wind squawks at the river, the laughter of fish tingles through the current
A mouth forms about a sound but it's only silence
It comes out silence

Chorus
The carnival came to town, the fat lady shaved her beard
She married the rabbi's son
And the angels danced on Jehovah's thumb
All through their honeymoon year
(what could I possibly add to that)

The men who made the atom bomb went Christmas shopping for their children
They bought a wooden bird with no eyes, a cactus rose for atop the tree
And seashells made into a rosary
God's brain exploded over Hiroshima
But God did not go crazy, no
He just had a nervous breakdown
We call it the twentieth century

Chorus
©Frank Tedesso

Flexible Man
(David Cantor)

Oh, baby, I stand amazed
'Cause I never realized
You were this seriously crazed
But if that's what I've got to do
To hold on to you
Well, baby, I'm a flexible man

I never picked you for the type
To get her kicks that way
But, hey, I'm not one to gripe
So, if that's what it's gonna take
To make you sweat and shake
Well, baby, I'm a flexible man

I can rock you 'til you sputter
I can rock you 'til you ache
I could cover you with butter
And feed you apricots and cake

I could read you bedtime stories
Just the ones that make you sad
Or do the thing your daddy did
Whenever you were bad

You've got some strange ideas of fun
Now, what I like to do
Is whatever you'd like to have done
So whatever you need
To hit your cruising speed
Well, baby, I'm a flexible man

I could tie you to this heat vent
With a blindfold and a belt
Then apply the silent treatment
'Til your mind begin to melt

I could rub you with this antique egg
Carved from rare Siberian wood
Then do the thing your daddy did
Whenever you were good

Somebody else might say you'd snapped
But the measure of a man
Is the way he can adapt
So if that's what I've got to do
To keep my hold on you
Well, baby, I'm a flexible man

©1991 David Cantor

Where the Bottles Break
(John Gorka)

I walk where the bottles break
And the blacktop still comes back for more
I walk where the bottles break
And the blacktop still comes back

I live where the neighbors yell
And their music comes up through the floor
I live where the neighbors yell
And their music wakes me up

Life beyond the playground fence
Is serious as basketball
Life beyond the playground fence
Is serious

Four blocks from the steel mill blasts
I paint my claim up on the wall
Four blocks from the steel mill blasts
I paint my claim

From my end of the southside drag
It's a common thought to call the cops

Further west it's been gentrified
They turned biker bars into flower shops
I kind of miss those Harley guys
Who rarely did a body harm
They mostly liked to drink and shout
And flash the pictures on their arms

It happens when the money comes
The wild and poor get pushed aside
It happens when the money comes
The poor get pushed

The buyers come from somewhere else
They raise the rent so you can't hide
The buyers come from out of state
And they raise the rent

Buy low, sell high, you get rich and you still die
Money talks and people jump
Ask how high low-life Donald what's-his-name
And who cares
I don't wanna know what his girlfriend doesn't wear

It's a shame that the people at work
Wanna hear about this kind of jerk

These people aren't saints, no, people just are
They wanna feel like they count
They wanna ride in their own car
People aren't saints, no, people just are
They wanna feel like they count
They wanna ride in their own car

I just want to make enough
To buy this town and keep it rough
I just want to make enough
To buy this town

Buy low, sell high
You get rich and you still die
Money talks and people jump
Ask how high low-life Donald what's-his-name
Repeat first three verses

©1991 Blues Palace Music/ASCAP

Disenchanted
(Eric Wood)

Gone lost all my soulful friends
I'll not make ones like those again
I thought I had so few of them
And now not even you

I feel just like them old guys now
Old times is all I talk about
I mumble to myself out loud
This disenchanted muse

Lay low in this town
Climb 'board the next train comin' buddy
I got these low down
Disenchanted blues

The moon is full and high and hued
The shadows of the trees are glued
To streets lit in an empty mood
I've nothin' left to lose

I wonder why the risin' sun
Each day for this again does come
And cast it deep down under some
Dark disenchanted ruse
Got these disenchanted blues

©1990 Romany Music/BMI

Mother's Child
(Nikki Matheson)

Loose change rattling in the streetlight
He's tripping over potholes in the sunlight
You're hearing noises that just don't sound right

He's just a mother's child making his way
Just a mother's child making his way

See him leaning back against the wall
Seems so young but he looks so tall
But isn't anybody gonna help him when he falls

He's just a mother's child making his way
Just a mother's child making his way

Look for a sign of life as you pass them by
"There but for fortune" written in their eyes
Young girls and strangers pushing big city sighs

She's just a mother's child making her way
Just a mother's child making her way

Lost here in the big city
Lost here in the big city

Why we got to live in such violence?
Got these vermin preying on such innocence
Stealing youth to feed their decadence

He's just a mother's child making his way
Just a mother's child making his way
Just a mother's child making his way
Just a mother's child making his way

© 1991

On Two Wheels, In the Rain
(Frank Christian)

Was it late September, was the moon on the rise
I remember our tumbling surprise
Anxious faces scraped the asphalt floor
The saving graces were not broken, just sore
Sliding down pavements, spinning in straight lines
Soaked with rainwater, on our bodies it shines,
how it shines

Tore holes in our pockets, is our love falling out
Between the sprockets, your twisted mouth,
your twisted mouth

Was an accident brewing well before the last turn
Now running towards you, my only concern
There's a piercing of metal, a little of skin
And a boiling kettle of questions within

I never thought that we both could have died
Never knew I'm along for the ride, for the ride

There's a pause in the journey, it's a roadside flop
Alive with burning kisses nonstop
Tumbling embraces and a shaking of heads
Not anxious faces on a dying bed
There's an end to the fear
With some words you don't care to hear, don't
care to hear

And in the silence so gentle and warm
The sense, the sweet taste, the eyes of the
storm, of the storm

Was it late September, was the moon on the rise
I remember our tumbling surprise

Was an accident brewing, no one would tell
My love's undoing, not wise but too well
Where are the words, that banner you fly
Your dear honesty 'til the day that you die
But we didn't die

Is it a wreck on the roadside, a spoke through
the heart
How could you tear it apart, tear it apart

© 1991

Watertowers
(Hugh Blumenfeld)

"Just one more flight of stairs," she said
"The skylight's never locked"
Another nod to mischief, and around here
Mischief ain't nothin'
I read up here sometimes
The sun comes through the highrises
For about an hour in the afternoon

And last week I found a half burned copy of *The Satanic Verses*
In with the *Penthouses* in a doorway on East 9th
Street

And here's where the deals go down
By the watertower there's plenty of escapes
And an outlaw should always strike her deals
In broad daylight

See the circles of pigeons wheeling from street
to street

Ledge to ledge, sill to sill
They are the sworn bands of the rooftops
Necking in their tin fatigues under the
watertowers
Couriers and spies of the secret skyline

Follow the aerosol scrawl out of the subways
And wide along the streets—up the air shafts
It is the Bible of the rooftops
Preached in the shadow of the watertowers
St. John of the secret skyline

Pick up the shards of bottles, the shrapnel of
cans
They glitter and splinter and gutter in your hand
More than a rumor of war, my friend, trouble on
the rooftops
Brewing in these watertowers
Squatting in the secret skyline

Look. From Rivington Street to Rockefeller
Center, an unbroken chain of watertowers, a
watershed plain as day, only nobody sees them
They are the 10,000 renegade noon whistles that
blow at midnight, waking the secretaries in their
beds; they're the hot tubs of the homeless,
Jacuzzis of the junkies on Houston Street and
Avenue D—dry as a bone
They're the bottle rockets on their launchers,
waiting since the 4th of July; missiles drunk on
top of their silos; powderkegs filled with paupers
and princes, smoking the crack of doom, with
fuses rolled from Andrew Jackson and Salmon
P. Chase
Brown sentinels in their sombreros and rice
paddy hats, in the turrets and citadels of Fort
Washington and Fort Hamilton and Fort Green,
in the captured lighthouses over the quiet
Hudson River piers, the abandoned East River

landings, and they're waiting for it to get dark
enough
Just waiting for it to get dark enough

Future

(Pucci/Biagi)
Portami via in un posto lontano
Dalla fantasia e dagli uomini
Nel sole nero a soffocare
Chi ama ancora l'universo in pace
Lontano, lontano
Lontano nell'immenso blu
Solitudine e paura
Tanto freddo in fondo al cuore
Nello spazio vuoto
Senza fine, senza nome
Dove scrivere il tuo nome

Your embrace seduces me
Black and blue is the tip of your tongue
All your bruises on my skin
Are enough to call passion a crime

Your lovers are loners
Who wouldn't confess
You're gone in the morning
And never come back

Three roses, a poem
Well-chosen white lies
Your favors, your weapons
By which our love will die

Talk to me
I'm here for you
Talk to me
I hear no words of trust
I feel no words of love

Love, love, bitter love
Love is a bitter snake
Traveling remote cavities
Piercing the heart
Strangling the throat

Talk to me
I'm here for you
Talk to me
Beneath the rising moon
Shadowing my heart
Love, love, bitter love
Poured into a cup
To quench your thirst with poison words
To rest upon your lips so cold
Talk to me

Time, time, and time again
For all the times I've cried
Give this troubled heart a rest
This savaged soul you left behind

Let it be
Another endless night
Let it be
Sweet melodies of sorrow
For your ears to hear

Love, love, bitter love
To blind our hearts
To quench our thirst with poison words
To rest upon your lips so cold

*All songs ©1992 by author unless
otherwise noted*

Bios

Jim Allen comes from the Bronx with an acoustic guitar and a pocket full of silverfish. He'd rather be Lightnin' Hopkins than Jackson Browne. Don't ever ask him nothin' about nothin'.

Greg Anderson plays a variety of musical instruments in a variety of musical genres. He has performed and recorded with a number of songwriters including Jack Hardy, Wendy Beckerman, Richard Shindell, and Lillie Palmer. He also plays with NYC avant-garde rock band Doctor Nerve.

Christian Bauman, one of the new writers involved in the songwriters' exchange is currently doing a stint in the U.S. Army. He has written us several choice letters, one of which appeared in the next issue. Replies are forthcoming. Chris' song "Places You Will Go" can be heard on FF601 "Shut Up and Sing the Song".

Wendy Beckerman grew up in New Jersey and now lives in NYC. She has been writing and performing her songs for five years, and this is her fourth year involved in the *Fast Folk* show.

Hugh Blumenfeld has been contributing songs and articles to *Fast Folk* for nine of its ten years. In 1986 he became Associate Editor of the magazine, abusing his position to wage editorial wars against folk fascists of the left and other abusers of the generous and the oppressed. Hugh grinds other axes as well, earning his Ph.D. in Poetics from NYU last year by writing blasphemous things about artist, poet, and songwriter William Blake. Hugh has two albums, *The Strong in Spirit* (1988) and *Barehanded* (1990), and a love song on *On a Winter's Night* that *People* magazine says "borders on the eccentric." "To a desert island I would bring enough clay and wattles to build a small cabin, and enough Nanci Griffith albums to keep my wife happy."



Frank Christian has been recording for *Fast Folk* since the first LP back in 1982. He has released one album "Somebody's Got to Do It" on the Great Divide label. Frank is well known for his accomplished guitar work. He teaches, does studio dates, and scores films.

Brooklyn-born, **Mark Dann** engineered more than 35 issues of *Fast Folk*. In his spare time, he builds, repairs, and plays basses and guitars. He has played guitar, bass, and drums for countless

performers here and in Europe. He left a perfectly nice time in Colorado to come back to New York to do this show.

Contrary to what "the wimmens" claim, **David Cantor** does not have the words L-O-V-E and H-A-T-E tattooed across his toes.

Five Chinese Brothers is a New York-based band whose music draws equal amounts of inspiration from folk, country, and rock and roll traditions. Founded in 1983 (then called The Special Guests), the band originally played bar-style rhythm and blues, at times complemented by a full horn section. It evolved into an ensemble equally at home in folk clubs, country-and-western bars, and CBGB's. The Five Chinese Brothers are: Tom Meltzer, Paul Foglino, Kevin Trainor, Neil Thomas, and Charlie Shaw.

John Gorka released his 4th album *Temporary Road* this year on the Windham Hill/High Street label. He is from Bethlehem, PA, and has been a part of *Fast Folk* since before dinosaurs roamed the planet. He tours constantly, so look for him in your town.



Lisa Gutkin "is a gem"—Rod MacDonald

Jack Hardy recently released his ninth album, *Two of Swords*, on the Great Divide label and the New Rose label in Europe. "The Child," which he is performing in this year's show, is the fourth song from his play *The Blue Garden* to be part of the *Fast Folk* show (the others being "Before You Sing," "Song of the Assassin," and "Paglia e Fieno"). *The Blue Garden* was performed in March 1991 in the midst of much controversy, during the patriotic riot that was called Desert Storm.

Jeff Hardy, a noted chef during the day, turns into Superbassplayer at night. He has recorded with his brother Jack, Tom Intondi, Steve Forbert, Germana Pucci, and many of the *Fast Folk* crowd.

Georgia born **Mark Heard** lived in southern California for many years. He released 14 albums in as many years including

"Dry Bones Dance" and "Second Hand" on his Fingerprint label. Mark's production work can be heard on Pierce Pettis' album "Tinseltown". Tragically, Mark passed away this September. We dedicate this performance of "Rise From the Ruins" to his memory.

Michael Jerling is originally from Illinois and has performed at hundreds of clubs, colleges, and coffeehouses from California to New York. Jerling has opened for the likes of Roger McGuinn, Commander Cody, Dan Hicks, Nanci Griffith, Paul Barrere, and Michael Murphy. His album, *My Evil Twin*, was released by Shanachie Records this year.

Josh Joffen is alive and well and living in Brooklyn. Twice winner of the Kerrville Folk Festival's songwriting competition, Josh has performed throughout the Northeast and overseas in Holland and France. He has been known to cook a mean jambalaya, and better chicken soup (he claims) than almost anybody, except his grandmother. His desert island would be incomplete without the following albums:

1. *Made in the Shade*, The Rolling Stones; 2. *Solilai* or album II, Pierre Bensusan; 3. *Shadows and Light*, Joni Mitchell; 4. *Domingo, Carreras, Pavarotti*, D., C., and P.; 5. *Rubber Soul* or *Revolver*, Paul McCartney's band before Wings; 6. *Graceland*, Paul Simon; 7. *Sunday Concert*, Gotdon Lightfoot; 8. *Shawn Colvin*, Shawn Colvin; 9. *Gorilla*, James Taylor; 10. . . and a player to be named later.



Richard Julian has completed his third independently-released recording, *Living with Ramona*. He has played at the Newport Folk Festival, the Bottom Line, and the Bluebird Cafe in Nashville. He frequently plays at Tramps in New York with his band. Richard says if he were stranded on a desert island he would probably bring all his Don Ho records, some Jobim and Stan Getz.

Lucy Kaplansky has one of the most distinctive voices on the folk scene. Originally from Chicago, she came to Greenwich Village in the late '70s and performed regularly at Folk City and SpeakEasy on her own and as a member of the Song Project (who

released one album in Italy). She recorded regularly for *Fast Folk* since '82, and also recorded and performed with Suzanne Vega, Shawn Colvin, and Nanci Griffith. She recently received her doctorate in psychology, and these shows mark her return to the stage after four years.

Steve Key is currently living in Washington, D.C. and performs in clubs and festivals across the US. He won last year's New Folk competition at the Kerrville Folk Festival. He has produced compilations of Washington, D.C. artists entitled *Capitol Acoustics*. He has two albums out, the latest one entitled *New Hope*, on Local Folkel Records.

Christine Lavin has recorded six solo albums for Rounder/Philo Records and produced three compilation albums. She performs solo concerts across the US, Canada, and Australia. Her first songbook was released by Cherry Lane Music in April of this year. She tours with The Bitchin' Babes.

Eddy Lawrence is from Alabama but now lives in Union City, New Jersey. His fourth album "Spare Parts" just came out on Snowplow Records. Eddy likes fishing more than almost anything. This is his second time appearing in the *Fast Folk Revue*.

Rod MacDonald is from central Connecticut. He is considered to be one of the finest singer/songwriters working today, and many of his tunes have become contemporary classics. In addition to numerous recordings for *Fast Folk*, he has released three albums: *No Commercial Traffic*, *White Buffalo*, and the new *Highway to Nowhere* (Shanachie). He is also a co-producer of the Greenwich Village Folk Festival.

David Massengill is a native of Bristol, Tennessee, where he once chased a bobcat and vice versa. He made his debut at Folk City, accompanying himself on dulcimer. Dave Van Ronk taught him guitar and took him on two national tours. His songs have been recorded by the Roches and Joan Baez, and he has appeared in concert everywhere from the Newport Folk Festival to Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center. He was nominated Best Folk Act of 1987, '88, and '89 by the New York Music Awards, and was a Kerrville 1989 New Folk winner. His debut on Flying Fish, *Coming Up for Air*, was produced by Steve Addabbo.

Nikki Matheson, onz a Nieu Yorkeurre, az beeen leeveeng een Paree feur zee pahst cinq years, perhfueurrmeeng on zee stage ahnd zee studios. Chee az toooured trewaoute Europe weeeth Malicorne, Gabriel Yacoub, ahnd Charlelie Couture ahnd eez nowh toooureeng weeeth zee jazzy a cappella groupe "Crocodile Smile."

Richard Meyer lives a triple life. He edited *Fast Folk* from 1986 through this year. His second album, *The Good Life!*, was recently released on Shanachie Records. Stage design work grew out of his '60s light show learned hanging backstage at the Fillmore East. He has designed over 70 productions since '82. On a desert island he wants favorite hand tools, a block and fall, one other person of choice, and unread books. He almost electrocuted himself once, and is now more patient. He was deeply moved seeing the only surviving copy of "Preachin' The Blues" by Son House. *Carpe Diem*.

Brian Mitchell performs around NYC in various blues, jazz, and R&B bands. He is currently working with Allen Toussaint and Walter "Wolfman" Washington.



Pierce Pettis is an Alabama-born performer with a rocker's heart, a troubadour's soul, and a poet's touch. *While The Serpent Lies Sleeping*, his Windham Hill recording debut, explores a broad spectrum of topics—from infidelity to racism to the head-in-the-sand attitude of the '80s.

Rachel Polisher has been in New York City for four and a half years via Colorado. After narrowly escaping a lifetime of cooking, she now runs a doctor's office and is prying the weekends open ever wider to play music. A runner-up in the Kerrville New Folk Contest in 1988, Rachel won in 1989 and opened the festival in 1990. She has appeared and was featured at the Newport Folk Festival this August. She misses her truck and her dog.

Germana Pucci, a third-generation peasant opera singer, is a native of Pietrasanta, Tuscany. She made her debut in the Village at Cornelia Street Songwriter's Exchange in 1979. Known primarily as a singer/songwriter, she works with Giancarlo Biagi and Jill Burkee on theatrical performances. With Biagi she collaborates as a musical and lyricist co-writer. "Future," tonight's "song," is an excerpt from *A Woman's Trilogy*, a one-act play that was recently performed in clubs and theaters around the city. If you would like to know more, send a card to Artida Productions, 56 Ludlow Street, NYC 10002, or call (212) 777-4323, FAX (212) 260-1732.

Brian Rose's uptight white guy Desert Island Discs (stuck on a non-classical island):

1. *The Beatles (The White Album)*, The Beatles;
2. *London Calling*, The Clash;
3. *Songs of Love and Hate*, Leonard Cohen;
4. *Plastic Ono Band*, John Lennon;
5. *Fear of Music*, The Talking Heads;
6. *The Velvet Underground & Nico*, The Velvet Underground;
7. *Robert Johnson, The Complete Recordings*, Robert Johnson;
8. *The Legends of Rock—Chuck Berry*, Chuck Berry;
9. *Good Old Boys*, Randy Newman;
10. Suzanne Vega's next album—due in a few months.

Brady Rymer has survived tours with Jack Hardy and art school. He now tours with the band From Good Homes. He is originally from Chicago.

Richard Shindell was born more or less on the exact spot where the Hindenburg crashed, although several years after the fact. No kidding. He was once a member of the near-legendary

Razzy Dazzy Spasm Band with John Gorka. He released his debut album, titled *Sparrow's Point*, on Shanachie Records. He has appeared on several *Fast Folk* records. "Are You Happy Now?" first saw the light of day on Christine Lavin's recent compilation, *When October Goes* (Rounder). He divides his time between Paris and New York.

Frank Tedesso can't hardly sing but he can dance just as good as he wants. He is looking for investors to participate in a money-making musical scheme. To make inquiries, or to find out about upcoming performances, or for info about purchasing tapes please write: Frank Tedesso, P.O. Box 20241, Columbus Circle Station, New York, NY 10023-1487.

Dave Van Ronk has 20 albums out. He also recorded on the very first *CooP/Fast Folk* record. His most recent recordings are a jazz album, *Humming to Myself*, and an album of his own songs entitled *Going Back to Brooklyn*. A retrospective called *A Van Ronk Chrestomathy* was released in May on the Gazell label.

Detroit Monthly called Jeff Wilkinson "a balladeer with muscle." He has two European-released albums on the Brambus label. *Ballads in Plain Talk* contains story songs like "Down in Toledo" and "Postage Due," all recorded in a stripped-down acoustic manner. *Brave and True* features Jeff's band, the Navigators. This is Jeff's first appearance at the *Fast Folk* show, although two of his songs ("Big Blue Road" and "The World of Tomorrow") have previously been performed. Over the last year he has written music for a play, an animation, and has made several trips to Nashville, where he has been writing with songwriters Fred Koller and Leroy Preston. Jeff resides in the Hudson Valley near the Balmville Tree.

Eric Wood's music has been variously described by critics as fierce, compelling, urgent, immediate, intense, and even menacing. He records and tours around New York and New England with a unique group of musicians in places like Knitting Factory, Nightstage, and Toad's Place. He also toured briefly with Suzanne Vega.

Howie Wyeth, drummer, has recorded with (among others) Robert Gordon, Don McLean, Roger McGuinn, Link Wray, and is an alumnus of Bob Dylan's Rolling Thunder Revue. What most people don't know is that Howie is an exceptional piano player, specializing in the music of Thomas "Fats" Waller, James P. Johnson, and Willie "The Lion" Smith.

Gabriel Yacoub comes from Paris, France and is best known for having founded the innovative French rock group Malicorne after having performed two years alongside Breton harpist Alan Stivell. Gabriel has been touring in Europe and in the USA for the past ten years performing his solo material, which is found on his albums *Trad. Arr.*, *Elementary Level of Faith*, and his latest, *BEL*.

Judith Zweiman remains a singer-songwriter-guitarist despite her best efforts to the contrary. Having played in musical conflagrations far too numerous to mention and put out a tape or two, she recently found herself in and completed the program in TV Production at the Center for the Media Arts in a somewhat desperate effort to achieve adulthood and maybe even get a real job. On a desert island she would bring her five cats, her drummer, rice noodles with sesame sauce, and, oh heck, all of downtown Flushing.

Musician Credits

FFCD 603

-1-

Home for the Holidays / The Boats Are Rolling Out
(Christian Bauman) (Brady Rymer)

Jack Hardy/Guitar and Vocal
Eddy Lawrence/ Guitar and Vocal
Wendy Beckerman/Vocal
Greg Anderson/Mandolin
The Band

-2-

Guinnevere
(Robin Batteau)

Lucy Kaplansky/Guitar and Vocal
Rachel Polisher/Harmony Vocal
Robin Batteau/Violin
Mark Dann/Acoustic Guitar
Jeff Hardy/Bass

-3-

Record Time
(Steve Key)

Steve Key/Guitar and Vocal
Tom Meltzer, Nikki Matheson/Vocal
Josh Joffen, Judith Zweiman/Guitar and Vocal
Pierce Pettis/Vocal & Harmonica
Eddy Lawrence/Mandolin
Lisa Gutkin/Violin
Jeff Hardy/Bass

-4-

Marie
(Jim Allen)

Jim Allen/Guitar and Vocal
Richard Julian/Harmony Vocal
Greg Anderson/Bass
Brian Mitchell/Accordion
Howie Wyeth/Drums
Mark Dann/Lead Guitar

-5-

The Blue Whale
(Eddy Lawrence)

Eddy Lawrence/Guitar and Vocal
Jack Hardy/Mandolin and Vocal
Richard Meyer, Jeff Wilkinson/Trills,
Percussion and Vocals
Richard Shindell, David Massengill/Vocals
Brian Mitchell/Accordion
The Band

-6-

Fisherman
(Wendy Beckerman)

Wendy Beckerman/Guitar and Vocal
Greg Anderson/ Bass and Harmony Vocal

-7-

Before the Country Moved to Town
(Michael Jerling)

Michael Jerling/Guitar and Vocal

Richard Meyer/Harmony Vocal
Eddy Lawrence/Mandolin
The Band

-8-

Shining Brow
(Jeff Wilkinson)

Jeff Wilkinson/Guitar and Vocal
Richard Meyer, Judith Zweiman, Frank
Tedesso, Jack Hardy,
Wendy Beckerman, Richard Julian/Vocals
The Band

-9-

Blood Sings
(Suzanne Vega)

Suzanne Vega/Guitar and Vocal

-10-

Man On A Ledge
(Rod MacDonald)

Rod MacDonald/ Guitar and Vocal
Greg Anderson/Mandolin
Craig Harris/Indian Drum
The Band

-11-

The Child
(Jack Hardy)

Jack Hardy/Guitar and Vocal
Wendy Beckerman, Rachel Polisher, Nikki
Matheson/ Harmony Vocals
Jeff Hardy/Bass
Lisa Gutkin/Violin
Greg Anderson/Nylon String Lute
Mark Dann/Electric Guitar

-12-

(I've Got) Nothing To Hide
(Maggie, Terre, Suzzy Roche)

The Roches
Maggie Roche/Vocal
Terre Roche/Guitar and Vocal
Suzzy Roche/Vocal

-13-

In The Mirror
(Brian Rose)

Brian Rose/Guitar and Vocal
Greg Anderson/Electric Bass
Howie Wyeth/Drums

-14-

Back in the Depression
(Pierce Pettis)

Pierce Pettis/Guitar and Vocal
Nikki Matheson, Josh Joffen, Rachel Polisher,
Hugh Blumenfeld/Vocals
Mark Dann/Electric Guitar

-15-

Are You Happy Now?
(Richard Shindell)

Richard Shindell/Guitar and Vocal
Nikki Matheson, Lucy Kaplansky/Harmony
Vocals

Brian Mitchell/Accordion
Greg Anderson/Acoustic Guitar
Jeff Hardy/Bass

-16-

The Last Time
(Rachel Polisher/ Peter Gallway)

Rachel Polisher/Guitar and Vocal
Richard Julian/Harmony Vocal
The Band

-17-

The Garden State Stomp
(Dave Van Ronk)

Dave Van Ronk/Guitar and Vocal

-18-

Rise From The Ruins
(Mark Heard)

Richard Julian/Piano and Vocal
Richard Meyer/Guitar and Vocal
Eddy Lawrence, Greg Anderson/Mandolin
Lisa Gutkin/Violin
Brian Mitchell/Accordion
Mark Dann/Electric Guitar
Jeff Hardy/Bass
Howie Wyeth/Drums

Verses: 1) Richard Meyer & Jack Hardy, 2) Rod
MacDonald & Nikki Matheson, 3) Pierce Pettis,
Jeff Wilkinson & Hugh Blumenfeld, Judith
Zweiman 4) Richard Julian & Wendy
Beckerman

The Company: Eddy Lawrence, Julie Gold,
Christine Lavin, Cliff Eberhardt, John Gorka,
David Massengill, Josh Joffen, Gabriel Yacoub,
David Cantor, Lucy Kaplansky, Richard
Shindell, Tom Meltzer, Frank Tedesso, Michael
Jerling, Judith Zweiman

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Musician Credits

FFCD 604

-1-
Intro

-2-
The Code of Cowboy Kid
(David Massengill)

David Massengill/Guitar and Vocal
Richard Julian, Nikki Matheson/Harmony
Vocals
Brian Mitchell/Accordion
The Band

-3-
The King Is Dead
(Richard Julian)

Richard Julian/Piano and Vocal
Rachel Polisher/Harmony Vocal
Brian Mitchell/Accordion
Rod MacDonald/Harmonica
The Band

-4-
If I Ain't Falling
(Paul Foglino)

5 Chinese Brothers
Tom Meltzer/Guitar and Vocal
Neil Thomas/Accordion
Paul Foglino/Bass
Charlie Shaw/Drums
Kevin Trainor/Lead Guitar

-5-
Les Choses Les Plus Simples
(Gabriel Yacoub)

Gabriel Yacoub/Guitar and Vocal
Nikki Matheson/Piano and Harmony Vocal
Jeff Hardy/Bass
Lisa Gutkin/Violin

-6-
Follow Me Down
(Judith Zweiman)

Judith Zweiman/Guitar and Vocal
Josh Joffen/Guitar
Jeff Hardy/Bass

-7-

The Burden
(Richard Meyer)

Richard Meyer/Guitar and Vocal
Richard Julian, Judith Zweiman/Harmony
Vocals
Rod MacDonald/Harmonica and Harmony
Vocal
Hugh Blumenfeld/Tenor Sax
The Band

-8-
Intro

-9-
A Folksinger Earns Every Dime
(David Buskin, Avera Bingham, Robin Batteau)
Christine Lavin & Co

Verses: Christine Lavin, Julie Gold, Rod
MacDonald, Judith Zweiman, David Massengill
The Company: Eddy Lawrence, Ilene Weiss,
Germana Pucci, Pierce Pettis, Richard Meyer,
Wendy Beckerman, Jack Hardy, Josh Joffen,
Tom Meltzer, Michael Jerling, Jeff Wilkinson,
Richard Julian, Frank Tedesso, Nikki Matheson,
Richard Shindell, Gabriel Yacoub, Rachel
Polisher, Hugh Blumenfeld, Brian Rose,
Suzanne Vega, Tom Russell, Maggie Roche,
Terre Roche, Suzzy Roche

-10-
What Could I Add to That?
(Frank Tedesso)

Frank Tedesso/Guitar and Vocal
Brian Mitchell/Accordion
Jeff Hardy/Bass
Mark Dann/Electric Guitar

-11-
Flexible Man
(David Cantor)

David Cantor/Guitar and Vocal
The Band

-12-

Where the Bottles Break
(John Gorka)

John Gorka/Guitar and Vocal
The Band

-13-
Disenchanted
(Eric Wood)

Eric Wood/Guitar and Vocal
The Band

-14-
Mother's Child
(Nikki Matheson)

Nikki Matheson/Piano and Vocal
Gabriel Yacoub/Guitar and Harmony Vocal
Rachel Polisher, Richard Shindell/Harmony
Vocals
The Band

-15-
On Two Wheels, In The Rain
(Frank Christian)

Frank Christian/Electric Guitar and Vocal

-16-
Watertowers
(Hugh Blumenfeld)

Hugh Blumenfeld/Guitar and Vocal
The Band

-17-
Future
(Germana Pucci/ Giancarlo Biagi)

Germana Pucci/Guitar and Vocal/The Soul
Giancarlo Biagi/The Man
Jill Burkee/The Woman
Nikki Matheson, Wendy Beckerman/Harmony
Vocals
The Band

These recordings were drawn from six concerts held in New York City at The Bottom Line - February 20, 21, & 22, 1992.

Tape transfer and compilation by David Seitz and Richard Meyer
Stage Managers for FAST FOLK: Carl Alderson, Ruth Moe

Thanks again to Allan Pepper and Stanley Snodowsky for their continuing support of FAST FOLK and the Village songwriters' scene.

Richard Meyer, Rod MacDonald, Michael Jerling, Richard Shindell appear courtesy of Shanachie Records
John Gorka, Pierce Pettis appear courtesy of High Street Records
Suzanne Vega appears courtesy of A & M Records
Christine Lavin appears courtesy of Rounder/Philo Records
The Roches appear courtesy of MCA Records

We dedicate this performance of Rise From the Ruins to the memory of Mark Heard