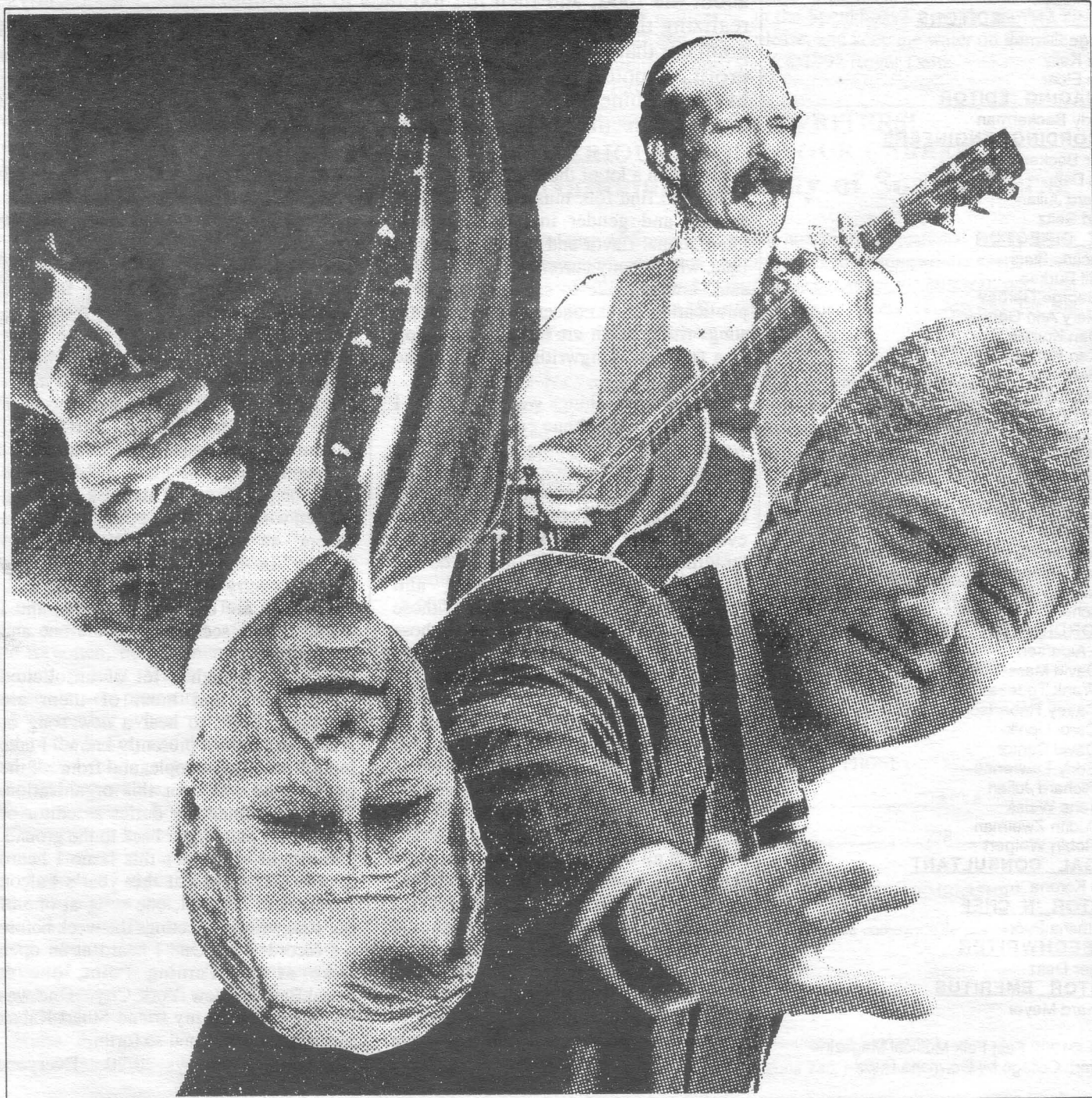


FAST FOLK

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Blowing Off Steam

Critics everywhere and not a drop to drink. Whereas it is nice to be getting mail again, I feel that a few answers and explanations are in order. Everyone seems to have a preconception of what we are and are not, what our standards are or are not, and what we should or shouldn't do. U. Utah Phillips tells a story called "moose turd pie" where the job of cook in the cowboy's chuck wagon is self-perpetuating unless someone complains about the food, and then the job falls to the complainer. The cowboys' realizing that their cook has just cooked up a moose turd pie are quick to point out that it is "mighty good, though," my point being that we are a non-profit, volunteer organization and at this point nobody gets paid, so if you have a genuine beef about something, you can put your time or your money to work to rectify the situation, and we will gladly accept either or both.

I agree with a lot of the criticism; it is not so easy to find folk music of all sorts of species and gender inclusiveness and international flavor and still come out on time, which is my current objective. That said, I would like to say that we are a publication that concerns songwriting: songwriting as an art form, songwriting as a tradition, songwriting as part of the folk process.

There are a few things we are *not*. As I explained to one phone caller last week, we are not a stepping stone to the "industry." This character was ready to send out a tape *avec* acoutrements without ever having seen a copy of *Fast Folk* or even knowing what it is. We are not a "traditional" folk publication. I do not delineate between traditional and contemporary. Somebody "wrote" those "traditional" songs and I bet, for all those different variants documented by Harvard professors, the current versions are probably pretty close to the originals. (Nobody sings John Denver's version of "City of New Orleans.") Also, we have recorded "traditional" songs, often whole issues of them. The question of why we don't have more women recorded was jokingly answered by one of our staff, "because all the women in this scene got famous." There are lots of new women—count them in this issue. Pete Seeger (if I might drop a name) says we should include more people singing other people's songs. I agree. We have had whole issues devoted to that concept and will do so in the future. It is hard to break through the egos of the collective songwriter, but in many *Fast Folk* shows

we have had a policy of everyone singing one of their own songs and one of someone else's. We will return to that format this year.

People criticize the "quality" of songs we record. I must apologize for the subscription flyer that said we record the newest and the best songs. I have never claimed that this is the best, only what *is*. I have recorded many songs that I *don't like* but I will still present them because they are interesting, different, adventuresome, quirky, despicable, outrageous, or just plain good in one genre or another. At the risk of being flooded with second-rate poetry, we have a "poem" in this issue. We have had "poetry" in the past. I do not delineate between poetry and songwriting. In their origin they are one and the same, and I would like to see them become one and the same again.

We wade through a lot of unsolicited submissions, and most of them are garbage. I live to hear a new song or artist that I do not presently know. I take input from many people, and from *all* the people who work for this organization. When I resumed my duties as editor of *Fast Folk* I put my ear back to the ground. One of the songs for this issue I heard around a campfire at this year's Falcon Ridge Folk Festival, one song at one of our songwriters' meetings the week before we recorded it. One I heard at an open mike at the Turning Point, one at SpeakEasy in New York City. One was recommended by my friend Stuart Kabak upstate, and so on and so forth.

Hindsight is always 20/20. Everyone

loves to drop the fact that we recorded Suzanne Vega before she was famous, but even Suzanne will admit that back then she had a lot of songs and not all of them deserved to see the light of day. Somewhere the deification process begins and reality heads for the back of the bus until you get someone going through Bob Dylan's garbage (who must believe that his shit doesn't smell.) We are not about deification. We are not part of the "industry." We are not a *record company*. We are a magazine that includes a recording. With the advent of the CD, we can now get 16, 17, or even 18 songs into an issue. I still firmly believe that every songwriter has at least one good song in them. They may not have written it yet or they may not know which one it is, but we should respect their right to write. Back to the campfire at Falcon Ridge—right after I finished playing a song and someone said "thank you for sharing that with us" (drumroll of eyes, please), someone suggested that the guitar be

passed around so that everyone could have their turn, in turn. I suggested that we pass it back and forth, to which the first person replied, "You mean so it will be your side against our side and we see who wins," to which I replied (tongue in cheek), "Nobody wins. We're all losers; that's why we're here at the campfire" (instead of the main stage.) But I don't really believe that.

It is time for us to play at the campfires out of choice. To play the open mikes for fun. The natural habitat of a folk song is the campfire or the living room and not the concert hall or the football stadium. But *Fast Folk* can come to your living room, and if you put your "forks and knives" away you might even enjoy it. And Pete—we're sending you the CDs anyway, and who knows, maybe you'll sing one of the songs.

—Jack Hardy

July 30, 1992

Dear Folks at *Fast Folk*,

Thanks for this issue of *Fast Folk*. The "In Memoriam" issue is better than most of the issues I have heard recently, but I have some very strong feelings I feel are important to share. I am going to be blunt because I want to be understood and because I feel *Fast Folk* is in the very important position of recording history and creating a standard for folk music. I hope you will receive my comments with an open mind, and I apologize if I step on any sacred cows.

In terms of your selections, songs sound different to me than they do to you for a number of reasons. I don't hear the artists in person; all I have is a recording. I don't know the performer. I can't see the performer's eyes. I'm not aware that the performer is overcoming a divorce (or cancer, or addiction, or whatever). So what may have been a riveting performance, which you can re-live through the recording, can be to me a one-dimensional experience.

Through many of the most recent issues there has been a sameness, to the extent that, unless I really work at listening and understanding, I hear the drone of the classical white male and Joan Baez "wannabees" at times preaching, at times whining, about whatever. For a while I attributed the sameness to the fact that I'm not an expert or a "purist." But I don't think *Fast Folk* was evolved to appeal just to purists or to create a standard that is exclusive and unchanging.

I first ordered *Fast Folk* for my husband (Tom Jerige) because it was a revolutionary idea, because it supported non-mainstream music, and because it gave new people a chance to be heard. I heard a diversity of music, and there was excitement generated because of that diversity. The new HEAR samplers and Redwood samplers provide the kind of diversity I would have expected in most issues of *Fast Folk*. I would like to hear new sounds along with the traditional. Where are the songs of the Native American, the folk songs of the South? Can't gospel fringe on folk? Does anyone besides me feel that David Massengill singing about the Bloods and the Crips would have been funny if it wasn't so pitiful? Is rap the only song of the inner city? African Americans founded the blues—and isn't that folk music? What

Letters to the Editor

July 24, 1992

Dear persevering and hardy songwriters:

I subscribe because I have heard a few very good songs from some of you. But only a few songs seem to have caught on and been sung by others. Does this matter to you? Maybe your main aim is to get paid for people listening to you sing? I think this is shortsighted. Woody died, but his songs have given him life after death. I urge you learn from him; his use of old but very singable melodies, his use of repetition, his glints of humor in the midst of tragedy, his writing songs for friends and family.

Congrats on continuing to publish, late or early.

Best,
Pete Seeger

August 6, 1992

Dear Fast Folkers,

I never get time to listen to tapes or CDs, etc., but I would like to get your magazine regularly. Why hasn't *Sing Out!* done an article on you? Theoretically I should know. But I think

what's needed is the right writer. Perhaps an old folkie, or a far folkie. An anti-folkie.

Sorry for haste,
Pete

P.S. Don't send the CD. Send it to someone with time to listen.

September 9, 1992

Dear Editor Jack,

I whipped out *Fast Folk* and read it as soon as it arrived and am Xeroxing "Boppin' in the 'Burbs" to send to friends such as the monthly Katonah Clearwater Coffeehouse at Harvey School, and the sloop clubs in Westchester, Dutchess, and Ulster [counties] that welcome singers each month. I'll also send it to *Sing Out!* to show them how vain it is to hope that the term "folk music" still includes music of working folks—gospel choirs, ethnic choruses, or grandmothers in kitchens. No, it must be a venue with a mike and hoped-for Success, however small. Nevertheless, thanks. Bruce Morrison is grandson of my childhood doctor.

Best,
Pete

about revolutionary folk songs and singers that have sought refuge in this country (from Chile, Ireland, Guatemala, and Italy)? Is there folk music that doesn't make our kids say "yech?" Are there groups and duos? Are there more women? Can they sing with deep voices? Do you exclude feminists? Is English the only acceptable language? Is there music without words, are there voices without music, does anyone play the flute instead of the guitar?

In the spirit of frank and loving consultation I ask: Has *Fast Folk* become "The Old Boy Folk Network?" I guess I don't expect a detailed response, but I would appreciate it if someone would let me know if you think I'm out there all by myself.

Most sincerely,
Sally Arango Renata

Editor's Note: Ms. Renata asked that we delete her statement about David Massengill, but to quote Massengill himself, "Better offensive than boring."

Dear Sir:

To quote from the editorial, FF92, Volume 5, #10:

"These are dangerous times . . . Now is the time to write and incite with a sharp edge, because in these lazy times we are losing a lot of ground socially and in the courts."

Bingo. Exactly.

Actually, that's not even enough. They're not just "dangerous" times but, to quote Jim Infantino, "desperate" times.

Unfortunately, as appropriate as *Fast Folk's* call to arms was, it was way too late.

The farmers had grabbed their guns, formed a militia, marched to town with torches and emotions burning. But there was no general there to lead.

In other words, the writers were here, the ideas were here, the music was flowing, and the songs were shooting. But where were you? Where was *Fast Folk*?

Don't get me wrong. The effort made by *Fast Folk* in issue 5/10 to finally confront the Gulf War after the fact (either pro or anti, it doesn't much matter which) is applaudable. Better this than nothing at all.

But isn't this the publication that is supposed to bring the songs (and the



George Gerney whoops it up at the Fast Folk table at Falcon Ridge.

ideas) to us as they happen? Current and topical? From the headlines to the guitar to our mailbox in 60 days?

What the hell is folk music if it isn't topical? Sure, we have romance, heartbreak, life in general, etc., etc. Usually, our subject matter isn't that much different than 20 other modes of writing. But the one thing that is supposed to set us apart is how we, when the occasion warrants, deal with current events. I would say that world war warrants a mention, and I know for a fact that writers were mentioning it.

Unfortunately, as in many other current issues, *Fast Folk* wasn't releasing it.

John Gorka's "Temporary Road" and my own "Places You Will Go" are good examples. Both, in no uncertain terms, deal with war. Both bring the terrible facts home in very personal ways without losing an audience to overstated (or simplified) ideology. I'm not trying to toot my horn or Mr. Gorka's, but both are well-written, topical songs.

And, par for the course, both were released long after the close of the Gulf War.

I am very happy to see them released at all, but the fact is that *Fast Folk* knew of these songs while American soldiers were dying in the Gulf and they chose, for whatever reason, to sit on them.

Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young's "Ohio" is a "good" song. But what point would it have served if it had been released a year after the Kent State shootings? Entertaining, sure. But who cares?

And what of the artists out there who have yet to be recorded by *Fast Folk* at all?

I'm not talking about Joe Drippy and his Banjo Quartet in Podunk, Iowa, either. But the young writers out there who are trying to build a reputation. They're out, they see America, and they're writing about it.

Jim Infantino's "Desperate Times" would have been nice in the early Bush years. "Gangway," his song about the dangers involved in protesting the Gulf War, is now a dead issue. You missed the boat on that one.

Where was *Fast Folk* when Robert Meitus was writing "100 Flowers," about Tiananmen Square? He was writing, I understand, from personal experience. Or how about Vance Gilbert's "Good Cup of Coffee?" If released when written, it would have provided your audience with a very subtle, very moving prelude to what happened in Los Angeles this year.

I notice Patty Larkin's "Metal Drums" has finally made your cut. Congratulations. But where was it when the issue was "hot?" Where were you?

I take great, personal offense at your statement that American folksingers are "generally . . . white, middle class, and insulated."

It is not we who are insulated. It is you. It is *Fast Folk*.

Some of us make a living on the road with our songs. Others of us have seen our share of America and the world while engaged in other pursuits. To have the hardships and injustices we have seen not come through in our songs, we would have to be cold-blooded machines, or just bad writers. I don't mind people knocking

my abilities as a writer, but I for one am not a machine.

You wrote that "[songwriters] don't put themselves or their art on the line."

Correction: we never got off the line. *Fast Folk*, however, seems to have lost its way.

If what you want to be is a Greenwich Village publication for Greenwich Village people with Greenwich Village songs, then fine. There is nothing wrong with that.

But don't claim to be something you're not. Frankly, I could just subscribe to *Rolling Stone* and at least be assured that the current issue would show up when they said it would.

The songs haven't gone away, and neither have the writers. Not in this decade, not in this century, not in history. We have always been here; we will always be here. The question is: Where have you been?

Sincerely,
Christian Bauman
Songwriter and Soldier
Fort Eustis, Virginia

Keith Kelly offers a few totally unsolicited thoughts:

What's gotten into this guy? Did we ever claim we were "supposed" to bring songs to the public as they happen? Of course, folk music can be topical, but it doesn't have to be. A non-topical song isn't any less legitimate than a topical one. We're not *U.S. News and World Report*, you know? What "obligation" are we supposed to have either to our subscribers or to the "young writers" Chris seems to think we're intentionally snubbing? Were we ever even offered the songs he's pissed at us for not recording? Suppose we had released any or all of those songs; what earthly difference would that have made to the outcome of the Gulf War, the L.A. riots, or anything else? No, we didn't "miss the boat." We may have chosen a different boat, but that's simply not the same thing.

He may have some right to criticize us for that choice. And Richard's editorial did lay on the piety a little thick. Maybe yet another rendition of "From a Distance" is not worth quite so much trumpeting. Maybe we are a little too insulated. But Chris writes as though we've broken some promise that he never even names. And where does he get off allying himself

with this imaginary band of freedom-loving, daring, fearless songwriters? What blows for art or democracy has Chris Bauman ever scored? "Some of us make a living on the road with our songs." And some of us hide out in the Army.

I take "personal offense" at the way he manages to work in a plug for one of his own songs in the middle of all this righteous indignation crap, and even calls it "well written" in the same breath in which he claims he's not trying to toot his own horn. And I'm the most curious why he's waited for so many months to complain about us "missing the boat" and not delivering the holy writ quickly enough.

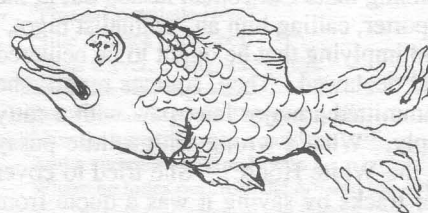
It sounds to me like the few songs he's written and the few months he's spent at Fort Eustis, Virginia have gone to his young head. Maybe he's got us mixed up with *Sing Out!* or *Broadside*. And maybe he's gotten himself mixed up with Nathan Hale.

Dear Jack,
An omission/correction: on my cut, "Let Them Go," David Lawrence played guitar. Also to give credit where it's due, Sandi Klein took my photo (and I want it back).
Thanks,
Mafa Edwards

P.S. I don't understand why you edited my statement, "her virgin recording outside of the island of Samoa," to read "her first recording?" Brevity? Clarity? Sobriety?

Just wanted to tell you—you guys are great! I'm so impressed by the quality and variety. I just didn't expect it all to be *this* good!

A pat on the back to all involved with *Fast Folk*—you are wonderful!
Ginger Perry



Jill Burkee

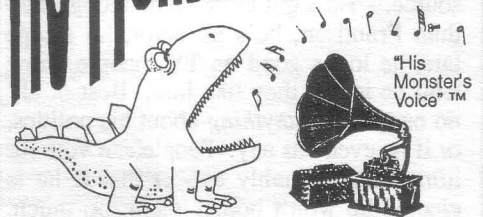
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We need help! We are an all-volunteer organization. If you can spare even one evening or one weekend afternoon a month, you can help us. We need writers, reviewers, typists, graphic artists, photographers, computer hackers, drivers, packers, schleppers, gofers—you name it, we can use it.

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A Folksinger in the White House? Frandsen for President

by Dave Elder

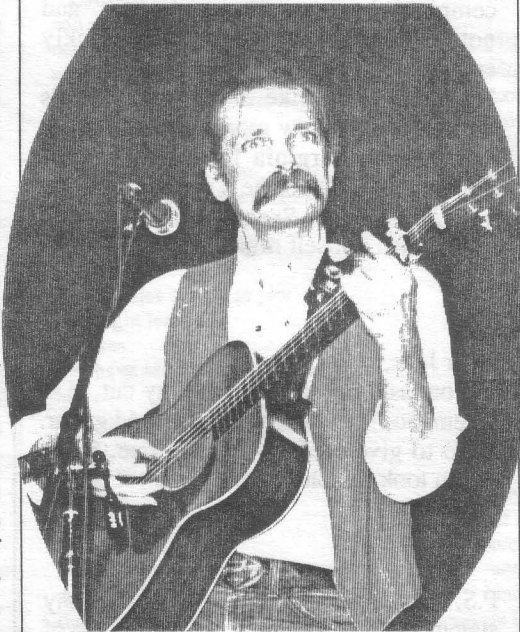
The Erik Frandsen for President campaign hit its stride this week, with the candidate refusing to even acknowledge its existence. "Get this spit away from me," said Erik, "I think this . . . Frandsen for President stuff is one of the stupidest things I've ever heard."

Campaign manager Jack Hardy sounded pleased when reached for comment later. "Methinks the candidate doth protest too much. Erik's so cool, after he's elected, he'll probably *still* say he doesn't know what's going on."

And what's going on is a groundswell of epic, or erik, proportions for a candidate previously unknown to politics. Polls taken across the country indicate that Frandsen easily leads both Clinton and Bush, running slightly behind Morris, the 9-Lives cat. One political insider put the situation this way: "They weren't expecting Morris. When Perot dropped out it looked like there was no one left, and then all of a sudden Morris puts his paw into the ring. It could be a close one."

"Morris could win it," said another source. "He's got more name recognition than Frandsen, he's an actor, he sleeps late, he looks good on TV, people know who he is and they like him. Best of all, no one knows *anything* about his politics, or if he even has any. People can vote for him and reasonably expect that if he is elected he won't bother them too much. He's got no programs, no commitments, no agendas—make him President and he probably won't do anything but complain about the food. And isn't that what America really wants?"

Hardy admits that he knows what they're up against. "The country wants a choice—Clinton versus Bush is not a choice. And when Perot dropped out, I did think we had it made. Then Morris declared—no one even hinted that he might run! But I still believe Erik will win in November. After all, Erik hasn't declared yet; he's held out longer than any candidate in history! But even though he insists he's not running, we're trying to line up the four-way debate—Bush, Clinton, Frandsen, and Cat. And I think that when people see what's really behind the Cheshire grin they'll take another look at their *real* choice, Erik. Erik also sleeps



late, and he's even *more* finicky about what he eats, if you can believe that."

While Republicans have accused "the liberal-biased media," as they call it, of making Morris their "pet," there are indications that this attitude might be changing. Just this week a tabloid reporter asked Morris, "Finicky or not, aren't you really just a dumb cat, after all?" While Morris himself just uttered his characteristically evasive "Meow," his running mate Catwoman lashed out at the reporter, calling him an "animalist bigot," and implying that he ought to be neutered and declawed. Then, sources report, she committed a major faux-paw with a catty reply, "What's wrong with a little pussy in the White House?" She tried to cover her tracks by saying it was a quote from JFK.

"They've got to learn to play ball with the media," said one election analyst. "Reporters may start digging into Morris about his reputation for tom-cattling, or his running mate's rumored past brushes with the law, and if they don't handle it well, this campaign could end up in the litter box."

Which would put Frandsen squarely in the lead. That same analyst said, "America loves politicians who play hard to get, and the irony of *the* finicky cat admitting he wants to be President may not be lost on the public."

However, all is not rosy fingerboards in the Frandsen camp, either. Within Erik's core support group, the folk community, which may number in the tens of tens nationwide, one hears comments like "Erik hasn't picked up an acoustic in years . . ." and "Erik's not here—he's gone uptown." Some even call their former hero "Off-Broadway Erik."

None of this worries Hardy, however. "The day I see Clinton, Bush, or Morris strumming a six-string, I'll worry. Until then, well, they can complain, but most singer-songwriters know which side of the bridge their strings are strung on. There's an estimated 23 million guitar players in this country, according to *Acoustic Magazine*, and they vote early and often—because they travel a lot; that allows them to vote in several states."

One of these guitar players, a political observer named Brian Rose, is taking an active role in this campaign by advising Erik to use his song, "I'm So F%*#ing Sensitive," as a campaign song, noting that the repeated use of major seventh chords proves "Erik isn't prejudiced."

What about a Frandsen/Morris ticket? Erik said, "What would our slogan be? Put a cool cat a heartbeat away from the White House. Of course, that's probably better than me being a heartbeat away from the cathouse."

As for other possible running mates, how about someone else from the folk scene? "Bob Dylan didn't use the track I played on. Tom Paxton is too political. Pete Seeger plays the banjo. Arlo has curly hair."

Asked if he ever inhaled, Erik replied, "I'm not your f%*#ing guru; go ask Rod MacDonald!" Asked if his guitar was Japanese, Erik said, "It doesn't matter

because I stole it.”

Through the campaign disclosure law, we have gleaned a partial list of donors to the Frandsen campaign, shown below:

Matt Umanov
Joseph Zbeda
Allen Pepper
Barbara Bush
Woody Allen
the 1990 winner of the Dylan imitators' contest
the 1989 winner of the Dylan imitators' contest
the 1988 winner of the Dylan imitators' contest
the 1987 winner of the Dylan imitators' contest

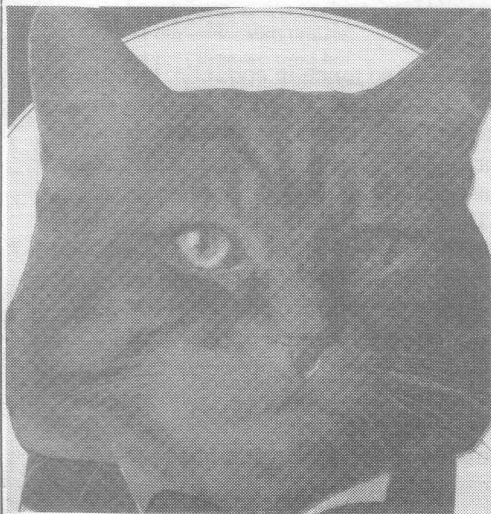
Asked about the coincidence that so many winners of the Dylan imitators' contest (which Frandsen judged) were on his contributors' list, Erik quoted another contributor, Joseph Zbeda: “Tell them, ‘This is New York.’”

Meanwhile, as we go to press, there are reports that Hardy's recent song, “Mousy Creep,” has started some vicious talk about cats that is eating away at Chairman Meow's lead. Stay tuned . . .

Editor's Note: Any similarity between the characters in this article and any persons living or dead is purely coincidental. Would we lie to you . . .

News Flash:

This just in—In a stroke of genius, campaign manager Jack Hardy has hired veteran Fast Folker Roger Deitz as a speechwriter for the Frandsen campaign.



Frandsen on the Stump

Editor's Note: Recently it has been the tradition that the text of political speeches is handed out to the press hours before they are delivered. In the Fast Folk tradition, we are offering Frandsen's acceptance speech even though he has refused to accept the nomination.

Text of a speech written to be delivered by Erik Frandsen at the SpeakEasy. Eric overslept. The speech was entered in absentia . . .

My fellow Americans: I don't want to be President. I don't need to be President. I would rather berate than be President. But if Jack Hardy can be a magazine editor, I guess I ought to be elected President—in a friggling landslide.

Make that a mud slide. I expect a dirty campaign. At any rate, I hereby announce my candidacy for the office of President of the United States. Now that that's out of the way, send money! I want to buy some of those shiny little campaign buttons. Besides, the rent is due next Tuesday. Hey, I'm no Ross Perot.

Who am I to run for President, you ask? What are my qualifications? For starters, I sold vintage guitars, and I wrote a successful off-Broadway play. Even John Simon gave my play a rave review in *New York* magazine. The last time John Simon liked a play, Sophocles was dreaming about sleeping with his mother. Or is that the last time Sophocles liked a play, John Simon was dreaming of . . . ?

Anyway, the point is, and I remind you, my fellow Americans, that there is a point to all this, a folksinger speaks for the common people, and a playwright speaks for the masses. I am both. Does that make me massively common? No! I remind you, a playwright was made president of Czechoslovakia. Prague, now that's off-Broadway!

Also, I am an actor. Remember, an actor was elected President of the United States for two consecutive terms. All right, so he wasn't much of an actor—but then, he wasn't much of a President either. At least I can sing, too, and I can even dress and feed myself.

I also lettered the calendars for the SpeakEasy. Month after month, like

some indentured Biblical scribe, I snidely entered the names of folk music's ephemerals until Suzanne Vega got her major record deal. Then the job lost its luster. I mention this here because we at *Fast Folk* like to evoke Suzanne's name every chance we get, *ad nauseum*, and this speech should be no exception to that rule.

Finally, I have a deadly acerbic wit. No twerpy Congressman or uppity foreign dignitary would ever get the better of me. You'll have to take my word for that. You'd see how funny I actually was if I wrote this speech myself; instead, we let Roger Deitz write it. We gave the job to Roger because back in 1973 he dated Peggy Noonan, one of Ronald Reagan's speechwriters.

Roger's not as funny as I am, but we like to hear him go on about Peggy. And we can usually talk Roger into doing anything. Why should I waste my valuable time writing speeches when Roger's such a fish? I digress.

As I stand upon this hallowed stage and look about this tastefully decorated room, I am reminded of many great and stirring SpeakEasy memories which settle in my heart like a ton of bad falafel.

So it is here I come to you to speak of freedom. Although hundreds of open mike nights fade into a cacophonous din, I still hear the resounding echo of the same three chords over and over again, relentlessly, in my mind. I implore you, my fellow Americans, you don't know the value of freedom until you leave the SpeakEasy at the end of open mike night. And read my lips: if you want to play folk music, learn a few new chords.

But I like to live on the edge, the cutting edge. That is why I choose to live in Greenwich Village with the hordes of wannabe Joni and Dylan impersonators, each more profound and more morose than the last. It reminds me that it is here in Greenwich Village where a revolution was ignited to light up the '60s. And light up we did! Should we let these kids know the sixties are over, and encourage them to get jobs? No, I say! To whom do you think we sell all of these vintage guitars?

cont. on p. 23

Woody's Children All Work Together

An Interview with the Guthries

by Keith Kelly

Woody Guthrie earned a multitude of reputations. In his unique and varied 55-year lifetime, he established himself as a songwriter, singer, political activist, revolutionary, union champion, and an indelible influence on countless other singers, songwriters and just plain folks. The man who wrote such classic American songs as "This Land is Your Land," "Pastures of Plenty," "So Long, It's Been Good to Know You," "Hard Traveling," "Oklahoma Hills," "Union Maid," and many hundreds more, who published novels, wrote a newspaper column, performed on record, radio, and stage, gained thousands of fans in all his travels, but mostly kept his home life private.

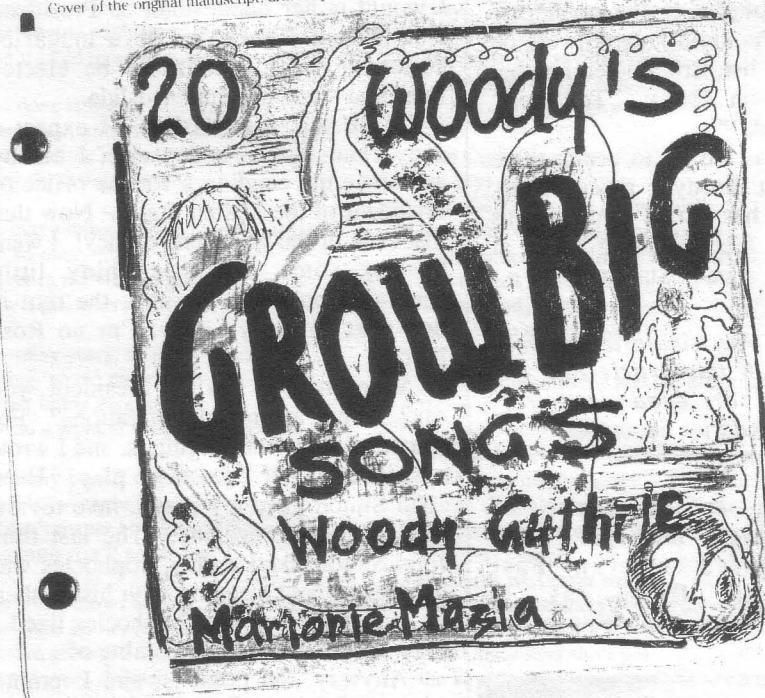
Guthrie was married three times and was the father of eight children. Now three of those children, with six children of their own, have completed a new songbook/recording project, *Woody's 20 Grow Big Songs*. It is the resurrection of a long-lost children's music book begun by Woody and Marjorie Guthrie themselves in the 1940s, with an accompanying album that combines Woody's original recordings of many of the songs with the singing of the next two Guthrie generations. On August 25, the cassette and compact-disc versions of the recording were released by Warner Brothers Records, and the book published by Harper Collins. Cassette/book combination packages are also available.

Guthrie wrote more songs for children than many people realize; the inspiration for many of them was his daughter Cathy Ann. The gradual shift of his focus from blazing political activism to more everyday concerns was the natural result of a combination of maturity, responsibility, and changes in lifestyle. At the time he wrote most of the *Grow Big* songs, Woody was in his late thirties, married for the second time. The years of touring, rambling, and hoboing were winding down. His hitch in the military was over. He was back home with Marjorie and their first child (his fourth).

With his wife pursuing a career in modern dance, Woody was spending long periods at home caring for the baby, something he did only rarely in his first marriage. He soon became so fascinated with his daughter's growth that he would sometimes write down every word she said and every gesture she made. The ornery

and exhilaration of making new discoveries, the stark terror of being small in an outsized world, the all-encompassing joy of being cuddled and loved . . . and, most of all, the bouncy, open rhyminess of being a kid. It was somehow inevitable, once he returned from the army and started spending more time with her, that he and Cathy would become collaborators in fact as well as spirit—

Cover of the original manuscript, drawn by Woody Guthrie in 1948



radical left-wing folksinger was peacefully changing diapers. In a sense, he was exploring all of childhood, not just Cathy's, for the first time.

Joe Klein, in his 1980 biography *Woody Guthrie: A Life*, suggests that Woody was able to capture a child's view of the world not by imagining or even recalling childhood, but by actually, happily, regressing to it. Klein wrote, "His innocence, the childlike quality of wonder . . . was more than just a pose—he actually seemed able to shed thirty years of experience and see the world as Cathy did; to really understand the danger

they had so much in common, creatively."

Woody gladly kept track of the rhymes and tunes Cathy was constantly inventing, and used them as the basis for songs, such as "Riding in my Car" and "Pick it Up." These were of course far removed from the brilliance of his earlier work, but intentionally so. Klein points out, "They were truly *children's* songs, though—written as children might write them, without much of the condescension in songs for children composed by adults." Perhaps Woody was only observing one of his own lifelong philosophies, "You can only write what you see." When he

was riding the rails, or battling fascists, or marveling at the Columbia river dams, he wrote about those things. When he was raising his child, he wrote about that.

Indeed, Woody often worked harder on his children's-music albums, and the children's concerts he performed with Marjorie, than he had for any political campaign or union drive. In the booklet that accompanied the album *Songs to Grow On for Mother and Child*, Woody explained his purposes: "Watch the kids. Do like they do. Act like they act. Yell like they yell. Dance like they dance. Sing like they sing. I don't want the kids to be grown up. I want to see the grown folks be kids."

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Tragically, Cathy died in a fire in 1947 at age four. Woody and Marjorie, devastated, somehow managed to continue their music for children. In the year following Cathy's death, they prepared a manuscript for *Woody's Grow Big Songs*, their only children's songbook. Woody wrote out lyrics and drew illustrations for twenty of his (and Cathy's) songs, and Marjorie cut and pasted the entire volume together. In their 1948 foreword to the collection, the couple wrote, "This book is dedicated to the memory of Cathy Ann, whose words inspired it, whose playing gave birth to it, whose smile and whose laugh we try to catch parts of to make our hearts laugh."

Then, just as the manuscript was very nearly completed, it disappeared. Despite many fruitless searches and endless brain-racking as to its whereabouts, *Woody's Grow Big Songs* simply could not be found. Sadly, the project was abandoned.

Over the next four decades, the songbook was forgotten. But miraculously, the original pages were discovered in 1989, tattered and dog-eared, in the library of Sarah Lawrence College in suburban Westchester County, New York. How and when the work was left there remains a mystery, but Marjorie did

perform often at Sarah Lawrence with the Martha Graham Dance Company, and Woody sometimes traveled with her. And Woody was known to be rather careless with his writing; often Marjorie would have to retrieve valuable pages that Woody had crumpled and tossed in the garbage. Whatever the circumstances, the manuscript was ultimately sent to Harold Leventhal, Woody's manager and long-time friend.

Plans were quickly made to finally publish the book. Then, inspired by the multi-generational father-and-child recordings done by Hank Williams, Jr. (and once by himself), Arlo Guthrie decided to record all the *Grow Big* songs for today's generation of children. In 1991, Cathy's three siblings and their children gathered at Arlo's recording studio in Massachusetts: Arlo and his four children, Abe, 22, Cathy, 20, Annie, 16, and Sarah, 13; Nora Guthrie and her daughter Anna, 14 (Nora also has a six-year-old son, Cole, who does not perform); and Joady Guthrie and his son Damon, 12. But what all anticipated would be a short, enjoyable project instead turned into seven months of long, hard work, for both technical and emotional reasons. As Nora tells it, "We had planned a pretty easy schedule for recording. It should only take a couple of days, and what could be more fun than singing along with Woody?"

"Then we heard the tapes of Woody singing. Half were out of tune; the rest were just . . . 'out.' We heard Woody put extra beats where no man had done before. We heard notes hovering strangely between those we had learned from our music teacher. We finally concluded that we would have to take each of these songs, one by one, and actually *work* on it. So we told our kids to set their bathing suits aside, cancel the plans they had to go to the shopping mall and show up the next morning at the studio, ready to sing.

"And they did. And we did too. We had a lot of good laughs along the way, as well as a few good fights, and even a couple of sad cries. We remembered how to 'Wake Up,' 'All Work Together,' and 'Jig Along Home' again as a family."

The resulting album and songbook are a celebration of love and harmony and feelings and thoughts, a series of work songs ("Cleano," "All Work Together"),

play songs ("Merry Go Round," "Race You Down the Mountain"), morning songs ("Wake Up," "Mr. Mailman"), goodnight songs ("Sleep Eye"), and simply fun songs ("Jig Along Home," "Put Your Finger in the Air," "Howdy Doo"). Arlo and the band turn the songs into rockers, blues, Cajun tunes, lullabies, and waltzes. The adults and children handle lead and harmony singing smoothly and professionally. Woody sounds glad to have the company.

As well as marking the release of the *Grow Big Songs*, 1992 also marks the eightieth anniversary of Woody's birth, on July 14. To celebrate, a free tribute concert was thrown in New York's Central Park. It was held on a Sunday, the day before the beginning of the Democratic National Convention. Politicians, celebrities, and delegates (and, of course, musicians) were all over town. Despite gloomy skies and two rainstorms, the entire city and especially the park seemed to thrum with an unusual



Authors' photo courtesy of Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc.

energy that would power the coming week.

The concert was, naturally, standing room only; crowd size was estimated at 25,000. Attendees ranged from infants to grandparents, of every color, shape and size. The day's M.C. was Jim Hightower, former Texas agriculture commissioner. Wearing a big cowboy hat and a bigger smile, he cracked jokes and told Woody

stories all afternoon, including Guthrie's love for New York City and his wry observations on politics.

The tribute combined the familiar and the new. Arlo and Pete Seeger performed together as they have so many times before, but now joined by Pete's grandson, Tao Rodriguez. The current crop of political candidates of course came in for their share of scrutiny. Ross Perot, still in the game at that time, was the first target, as Seeger sang a new song he co-wrote with Calvin Trillin, "The Ross Perot Guide to Answering Embarrassing Questions," with the chorus "I lie, I simply, baldly falsify / I look the fellow in the eye / And cross my heart and hope to die / And lie." Dave Sharp, formerly of the Alarm, sang "I Don't Want Your Millions, Mister" and Woody's "My Name is New York." Suzanne Vega spoke of listening to her father's recordings of "Bonneville Dam" and "East Texas Red" as a girl, before leading the audience in a play-song she learned in the schoolyard. The San Francisco rap group Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy performed its own brand of socially conscious music, with a cheerful "Maximum respect to Woody Guthrie!" mid-set. Nanci Griffith sang "Do Re Mi," and dedicated her own sardonic song, "One Blade Shy of a Sharp Edge," by sending it "respectfully . . . no, not respectfully, it just goes out to Mr. Dan Quayle, just because he bothers me so darn much." Billy Bragg, with his black electric guitar, sang "There Is Power in a Union" and "Deportee," as well as his own "Marching Song of the Covert Battalion" ("We're making the world safe for capitalism.") He also spoke at length on Perot, warning that we'd see "the other nine-tenths of the iceberg" after it was too late.

The final set of the afternoon, by Arlo, Pete, and Tao, was interrupted after about five songs by a surprise visit from the Reverend Jesse Jackson. Beaming, Jackson took the stage and spoke, sang, chanted, and roared for a quarter hour, touching on everything from the Los Angeles riots to the history of unions to the current Democratic platform.

After Jackson hollered "God bless the Guthries!" and left the stage to an ovation, Arlo sang a passionate song, "Keep the Dream Alive," then led the multitudes in a sing-along of "This Land Is Your Land,"

complete with an eighty-candle birthday cake.

The following day, I spoke with brother and sister Arlo Guthrie and Nora Guthrie Rotante, in the Manhattan offices of Harold Leventhal Management/Woody Guthrie Publications. In an easy-going conversation punctuated with much laughter, we discussed the tribute concert, the Democratic convention, Woody's legacy, and the trials and tribulations of re-discovering some of Woody's lost songs.

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FF: Well, to begin with, I went to your tribute show yesterday in Central Park.

ARLO: Oh, you did.

FF: It was really very, very good. It was quite a nice afternoon.

NORA: Did you last the whole time?

FF: I did.

NORA: Good for you! [laughs]

ARLO: Rain and all.

FF: Rain and all, and what I noticed all day was something you pointed out at the very end—the diversity of the many different kinds of people who came to see the show and enjoy the music. Even the performers that you put together reflected that. They were all so very different from each other, but yet they've all been influenced by Woody's music. You had singer-songwriters from New York, from Texas, from England, even a rap group.

ARLO: Yup.

FF: But I was expecting more of a tribute to Woody, and I was expecting more of his songs would be sung. Yet Billy Bragg pointed out that the intention was not to sing Woody's songs, necessarily, but to sing songs that Woody would probably like. Was that the general idea?

ARLO: Well, I think the general idea was to present some people who wouldn't focus so much on Woody, but focus on the philosophy that he espoused, which

was to be yourself. Sing about yourself, and sing about those things that you know and are familiar with, and not to be repeating historically accurate, parrot-like information, but to really bring to others, and share with others, and let others share with you, their sense of reality.

FF: And do you think Woody would have enjoyed the show?

ARLO: Yeah, I think so. I don't know if he woulda gone, but I think he did enjoy the show yesterday.

FF: And let's not forget the guest speakers. Were you as surprised as I was that Jesse Jackson showed up and spoke for fifteen minutes?

ARLO: Well, frankly, I was surprised that he spoke for fifteen minutes, but Jesse Jackson fans notwithstanding, I would have much rather heard Jim Hightower speak on and on. I just love that man.

FF: He was fun to watch.

ARLO: Fun to watch, and listen to, and I think Jim would have been the one person my dad would have wanted to hear, and would have paid attention to.

FF: One thing a lot of these people did have in common was their, oh, distaste, shall we say, for the current state of politics.

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ARLO: Yeah, and frankly I didn't like that part of the show as much. I would rather have kept the politics out of it, and kept the humanity in it. I don't think that any particular political ideology is going to solve anyone's problems, or adherence to it. I think what's important is for people to think for themselves. My particular philosophy, and I think it stems from my dad's, is not to look for leaders, but look to yourself, and to your neighbors and your friends. So who the current bigwigs are in the political system does not have to have the import or the impact that a lot of people believe it should, or that a lot of people believe can make a difference.

Underneath what Jesse Jackson was saying, I think that's what he basically said: people have to change things. I think what needs to change is people's attitude toward themselves, to take possession of those things that are theirs, and not look for somebody to give it to them.

NORA: I think in all grass roots, that's the common denominator that runs between a lot of these different politics, this certain grass-roots understanding that the more we as people talk and sing and disagree, or whatever has to take place, it's from that basis that something can grow. It's not gonna come from above, no one's gonna throw down some magic thing that's gonna make everything wonderful. It comes from people getting together as much as possible, each in their own way.

ARLO: Well, I'm not saying that politics aren't important. I think what Jim Hightower said was great—"We gotta get the hogs out of the creek!" But that doesn't mean you get most of them out and put a new hog in there. The idea is to get all the hogs out of the creek, and keep the new ones from getting in.

NORA: Keep it clean.

FF: Well, let's not get too serious here. About these children's songs—I'm still not too clear on the origins of this music. I know it was an original manuscript that your parents put together in the 1940s, and somehow was lost for forty or so years, and turned up, of all places, at Sarah Lawrence College. Does anybody have any guesses how it ever got there?

ARLO: I don't think anyone knows. The best guess is, our mom was a teacher at Sarah Lawrence, she taught dance there during the forties, that's one possible explanation. But when I mentioned that we had found this book to Pete Seeger, he said, "Oh, I'm happy you found it! Because I had seen it, and I gave it to [former *Almanac Singer*] Millard Lampell." So my mom or somebody gave it to Pete, and Pete gave it to this other guy, and what Millard did with it after that, no one seems to know. So there's a lot of loose ends. Nobody knows how it got to Sarah Lawrence. I had never heard about it.

NORA: He was almost in tears when we found it, because somehow he had something to do it with it, that's all we



know. He was very relieved when it was found and sent back to us.

ARLO: No one had ever talked about it. It wasn't like we were looking for a lost manuscript.

NORA: Well, it was written when Arlo was fourteen months old, I wasn't born, Joady wasn't born, so somehow in the next year, it was lost. It was probably lost pretty soon after it was put together. They put it together in full manuscript form; everything was cut and pasted and illustrated. It was a final manuscript that they were gonna take to get published.

ARLO: That was 1948.

FF: And who was lucky enough to find it?

NORA: A librarian at Sarah Lawrence—

FF: Really?

NORA: —was just cleaning out the shelves, and it was one of these little miracle stories. She found it, and it said "Woody Guthrie" on it, and she looked in the phone book and found Woody Guthrie Publications, and sent it to us, and said, "Does this belong to you?"

ARLO: You know, for the last twenty or thirty years now, Harold Leventhal for the most part, and now for the last five or six years Nora, have been going through the archives in this office, and coming out with all kinds of new Woody Guthrie things. It's fairly interesting that a man who's been gone since 1967, but whose creative life was over long before that, should still be producing, during these last three decades, a number of things. It's one thing to be looking through and making up stuff out of what's here, discovering things here.



It's a whole other thing to have a manuscript come out of the woodwork, already done, not here. One can only speculate as to what else is out there. I mean, this guy is more prolific dead than a lot of people who are still alive!

FF: Prolific is the word, all right. So whose idea was it to make the album, and to combine your father's singing with yours, and your brother's and your children's?

ARLO: Well, when I heard about the book, it occurred to me that a songbook for kids is fine, but kids can't read songbooks. Most parents can't read music, so what's the point? Especially in this day and age; twenty-thirty years ago, everybody had some kind of musical education. It's not true today. So I thought, well, wouldn't it be nice if we could record the songs in the book, so that parents could see how the songs went? Or the kids could learn the songs

directly from the tapes, and look at the illustrations.

And then I thought, well, if we're gonna go that far, why not get my brother Joady, and Nora? And then the next step was the potential of working with all of our kids. And further than that was to try and sing along with Woody on the recordings that were still salvageable in terms of the usefulness for putting on the record. Some of them are so scratched, or abused over the years, or never recorded right in the first place, that we really couldn't use them; they were unintelligible.

Of the songs in the book, Woody had recorded a number of them. And of those, we picked the best ones and sang along with them. On the ones where he wasn't, we started from scratch, did the songs ourselves. And on one where there wasn't music, we wrote the music.

FF: Which one was that?

ARLO: "Little Bird."

FF: That's one of my favorites. It's really very touching. Arlo, you used this technique once before, when you recorded "This Land Is Your Land." [for the soundtrack of *Hard Traveling*, a documentary film on Woody that Arlo produced for PBS in 1984]

ARLO: Yes.

FF: When I first heard that, I thought it was kind of spooky.

ARLO: Yeah, me too! [laughs]

FF: Did it feel that way for you, too, and was it any less spooky the second time around?

ARLO: Well, thankfully, I had had that experience, so that that was really the first time, if I can say so, before Natalie Cole and Nat "King" Cole. No one had really attempted to do that except for . . .

NORA: Hank Williams.

ARLO: Hank Williams, Jr. And really, the difference between Hank Williams and Woody Guthrie was that Hank Williams was a professional musician, in the sense that he was making music with other people. And Woody was too, but not on these particular songs. These songs were recorded in a publisher's studio, not in a recording studio. They were recorded to document the writing of the songs, to publish the songs.

FF: Oh? I didn't know that.

NORA: Well, some of them were acetates that were done in studios. It was a real hodge-podge.

ARLO: Well, I'm just trying to point out that the difference between somebody like Hank Williams, who comes in with a band that's playing in a metered time that we all recognize, with other guys who are all professional musicians, not running out the door to lunch . . .

NORA: Woody's style of recording, even in a quasi-professional studio, was still kind of his own home-grown style.

ARLO: This is Woody Guthrie by himself, solo, not in a recording studio but in somebody's office, thinking that the sooner he got out of there, the better. So there's not the sense of performance that there would be under normal circumstances.

And to get, frankly, a bunch of people together, family, who are not for the most part professional performers, to sing along, to listen very closely . . . I knew

how hard it was gonna be because I've been doing this for a long time. But it was very difficult to follow Woody on "This Land Is Your Land," because the meter speeds up, slows down, goes this way, goes that way, and I knew it was gonna take some work. And to have everybody come through like they did, and listen closely, and wait for those strange half-beats, quarter-beats between verses, or those waits, you know, [sings] "This land is . . . y-o-u-rrr landthis . . . land is my-y-y land." It wasn't quite that bad, but it was close at times.

NORA: There were a lot of "W-c-lll . . . well . . . weallworktogether." [they laugh]

ARLO: Or he'll sing the same melody, but play three different versions of the chord changes during the verses. Well, how do you get musicians . . . first of all, we went in, we got some people that I've been working with for a couple of decades who are real close to me, and who I knew I could work with. And we went in, and we really got every little nuance we could with a whole band, to make it easier for the girls and the guys to come in and sing along to it. 'Cause Woody's tape was basically just digitally-cleaned-up acetates. We tried to get some of the scratchiness and the hisses and the pops out of it. But still, we're listening to a monaural recording where you can't bring the guitar up. You can't take the voice, you can't tune his guitar. What do you do?

I don't think that any particular political ideology is going to solve anyone's problems.

NORA: We used to try, like, "Should we all go out of tune?" So Arlo would say, "We'll all tune to Woody's guitar." And all the musicians would say, "Okay, the E's a little flat. Should we all be flat with Woody, or should we try to cover him up?"

ARLO: And we also made some great discoveries. In this process, we discovered that, for the last forty years,

the recordings of Woody's kids' songs have for the most part been six to twelve percent slow.

FF: Really?

ARLO: Yeah. How do we know that? You can't tell with a guitar and a singer, because you can tune a guitar, but you can't tune a harmonica. So we're listening back to the tapes of Woody, we're saying, "That's in no key!" So we determined that the original recording equipment was fast.

NORA: It happened with "Wake Up," that was the first one we heard. We went in the studio just to listen to Woody's original tape, and we're sitting there all in a good mood, you know, like "This is gonna be great." And the first song comes on, "Wake Up," and it sounds like a herd of turtles singing, like [drones] "wake up, wake up." And we're going, "It doesn't sound like waking up to me!"

And then also, my mother had notated in the manuscript all the keys. For instance, it would say, "in F," it was notated in F, my mother was a very good musician. And here's [slowly] Woody . . . singing . . . in . . . E, . . . "wake . . . up." It was like a detective story: why would Mom write it in F when he sang it in E? And it's not really quite E, and it doesn't sound like waking up.

And I remember it took us like an hour, and we said, "Maybe they're slow!" And it suddenly hit us, and it was this incredible discovery. And then we just played in the studio with bringing it up to speed a little bit. The old tapes had gotten stretched out, all kinds of changes. Our theory is that this kind of stuff had happened years ago.

ARLO: Well, the original acetate recording machine may have been a little fast, because I remember Nora all of a sudden sitting there going, "There's my dad! Now I hear him!"

NORA: Right. When we would speed it up, it didn't sound like him . . .

ARLO: We didn't hear his talking voice, we heard this recorded voice that we had heard for forty years that none of us could relate to on an everyday level. And all of a sudden, when we sped it up, we brought it up to speed, there was his real voice that we all remembered.

NORA: And it happened to be closer to the key of F than E. So you could only kind of deduce, it was like putting

all of these little pieces together.

ARLO: So for years, Woody's been putting people to sleep, mostly because he's been singing these songs way too low! [they laugh]

NORA: There were quite a number of songs where we were incredibly depressed after this first day, because originally we were just going to go and sing along, and it would be a piece of cake, and now it turns out that all the tapes had to be fixed up, the original tapes from the forties were out of key or in no key.

The idea is to get all the hogs out of the creek, and keep the new ones from getting in.

And then there was another problem we found—that Woody would sometimes play the whole song with one chord. He'd be in F, and it just went on [she mimes playing guitar], there were no chord changes for ten verses. Arlo was going, "Very interesting." So what Arlo had to do was build an arrangement of chords, and kick in with his vocal, keeping his guitar strumming in F for three minutes, and would have to build an arrangement with the other instruments around that, so that the song flowed, and had some melody to it, instead of just being in Woody's style.

FF: Well, I think you achieved that pretty well.

ARLO: I think we snuck it in. I don't think most people will know. They won't hear the work that went into this. But we know what it took to get these.

NORA: Like "Needle Sing," did you hear "Needle Sing?"

FF: Yes.

NORA: Woody played one chord, and there's like ten verses—[drones] "knitting for my daddy, strumming with my baby, waiting for my sweetheart, needle sing, needle sing," and it's just this endless guitar tone. Arlo said, "We just can't play to this music." So we had problems like that, where we just had to put more interest to it. So they would bring Woody in, and then they would switch

voices, and switch verses. And then he got a little carried away, and started adding this beat underneath it, a blues-rock kind of beat, with the Shirelles in the background.

FF: The Shirelles? [laughs]

NORA: The Arlettes, they were called.

FF: Well, there is some variety there. That song, and the other song, "Bling Blang," has sort of a Cajun feel to it. And the waltzes, and the lullabies.

NORA: We were brought up on so many different kinds of music that it's probably just natural that there would be so many different styles. Not that we try, or anything like that; it's just that each song would bring out a different rhythm, or a different flavor.

FF: Is that you, Nora, singing "Little Seed?"

NORA: Yes.

FF: It's really very pretty. I've never heard you sing before.

NORA: I never sang before.

FF: You never sang before?

NORA: In the kitchen. I'm one of those in-house singers. I sing a lot, but I've never recorded. That's a pretty song, no one's ever recorded that song before.

FF: Oh, no?

NORA: Isn't that spectacular? That's what I think is so wild. I want to send that song out to somebody like Reba McEntire or Dolly. I think that's such a beautiful song.

FF: It is.

NORA: It's one of the hidden, one of the new songs, actually. It was never even in any of the songbooks. And we just did a new songbook with the publishers, and we put that right in there at the top. We re-discovered a lot of songs that we hadn't heard before.

FF: Arlo, is that you or Joady singing "Howdy Doo?"

ARLO: That's me.

FF: Sounds like you had fun.

ARLO: [laughs] I did have a lot of fun.

FF: What's Joady up to these days? I'm only aware of one album he ever recorded.

ARLO: Well, that's more than anybody else who's been here today, that's very good. He's still writing songs, and—

NORA: And articles, too. He's been working in journalism, editorials and

stuff like that that he writes around to some of the local papers in California.

ARLO: He's a citizen activist.

NORA: He's a real activist, around San Francisco.

FF: Okay, so who plays the part of the mailman?

ARLO: That's Joady. It's the best character on the record. It's the most visual thing.

Okay, the E's a little flat. Should we all be flat with Woody, or should we try to cover him up?

NORA: Well, other than the "pleazeldy weazeldy cheazeldy squeeze."

ARLO: Yes, that's good, too, if you do say so yourself. [they laugh]

NORA: The kids all got into that whining. "Okay, kids, we're gonna whine in this song." "Oh, can I do it?"

FF: The kids sound like they're enjoying themselves all through the whole record.

NORA: These kids were such troupers. As much as they had fun, we worked their butts off. For two vacation periods, Christmas and spring break, they were in the studio instead of the shopping mall.

ARLO: And then in the summer.

NORA: Summer vacation, and their Christmas vacation, we had them in the studio every single day for ten days, from ten o'clock in the morning till five or six o'clock at night. And they were on call the whole time. So in context, the fact that they sounded like they were having a good time, and even were having a good time, is like a triple medal for these kids, because . . .

ARLO: Because they're mall rats.

NORA: They gave up two of their vacation times to come in and do this, which is pretty extraordinary for teenagers. To spend their vacation with their parents, and aunts and uncles, in a ten-by-ten room, having to practice singing with their grandfather—I think the kids make the record. I think the

kids' spirits and tolerance are what make it so special.

FF: So now that they've had a taste of it, are any of them planning musical careers?

ARLO: Well, they took a few hours, each one of them, doing makeup and clothes, like the Uh-Huh girls.

FF: Matching gowns and everything?

ARLO: Yes. So they're definitely looking forward to any live performance.

NORA: They're definitely looking forward to a tour, a very large tour. They're ready to sing at the Meadowlands.

ARLO: They'd open for Donald Duck if he wanted them.

FF: Do you have any serious plans for performing live, or perhaps videos?

ARLO: We're thinking about a video, mostly for the fun of it. We're trying to get Nora to choreograph it. That's her forté.

NORA: We did a mini-show in California when we were out there for the book. We all did a twenty-minute set together. Arlo said, "Oh my God, the performance from Hell!" But it was great, though, and the feedback that we got from everyone who was there was so wonderful. People had tears in their eyes seeing us all together. So there's been some rumblings about the possibility of doing something more together.

FF: We were talking before about the song "Little Bird." I was really quite touched by that one, and I wonder—did your father write specific songs for specific children? In other words, is there a special Arlo song here, or a special Nora song, or a special Joady song?

ARLO: If there are, we don't know what they are.

The guy's eighty years old, forty years dead, and still bothering us!

NORA: There are specific songs, but not in this collection. He did write songs for Arlo, and for all of us separately, but they're not in this publishing.

ARLO: And a lot of the songs, I'd say the bulk of them, were probably written for our sister Cathy, or actually

written by Cathy.

FF: Are there any more of Woody's original children's recordings still available?

ARLO: Yes, they've always been available.

FF: On Folkways?

ARLO: On different—I think maybe Rounder might be putting out some at the moment.

NORA: This is just two of the kids' stuff that we have. [*She hands me two cassettes, Songs to Grow On for Mother and Child and Why Oh Why?*] There are other ones, too.

ARLO: These are not speed corrected. These are the original, unfixed.

It's a spiritual hot dog for me, seeing as I'm a vegetarian.

NORA: But these are okay. There's a couple of the children's stuff that's always, and will always, be out in this version.

ARLO: That's one of the reasons we didn't hesitate, in a sense, to sing along with him and decimate the originals. 'Cause we knew that they would always be alongside of this. If you wanted to hear the pure stuff, it would always still be available.

FF: Last question. Woody's eightieth birthday is tomorrow. Do you have any special plans for the day?

NORA: Interviews, at the house.

ARLO: He's still bothering us. The guy's eighty years old, forty years dead, and still bothering us! [*they laugh*] Still making us work.

NORA: We don't make plans, usually; things kind of happen. Things always happen.

ARLO: The plan-less family.

NORA: But things always happen, so it's okay. It's never boring.

ARLO: Well, we're not gonna do something special—although we probably will, because I'm saying we're not, something special will happen.

NORA: But we don't know what it's going to be . . . we go out and visit our parent's ashes on Coney Island, that's our service. Our service is going to Nathan's

and getting hot dogs. On which we were raised. So we do like a family thing.

ARLO: More like a ritual.

NORA: A ritual, right. It's a religious hot dog kind of thing.

ARLO: Yes. It's a spiritual hot dog for me, seeing as I'm a vegetarian.

NORA: Yeah, he's a vegetarian, but

once a year, you know . . .

ARLO: I've gotta get dispensation.

NORA: Right. We were raised on Coney Island, so we have a secret part of the beach that we used to play on all the time where our parents' ashes are. So we go out there once a year and play in the sand, and go to Nathan's.

Three of a Kind

The *Woody's 20 Grow Big Songs* project was the first opportunity the three adult Guthries ever had to work together. Yet they all have individual careers in the music and publishing games.

Joady Guthrie released an album of original songs, *Spys on Wall Street*, produced by Country Joe McDonald, on Rag Baby Records in 1985. He lives, as Arlo and Nora told me, in San Francisco, and works in journalism, contributing articles and editorials to local newspapers, and as a "citizen activist." He's still writing songs, too.

Nora Guthrie is president of Woody Guthrie Publications in New York City. She maintains the voluminous archives of Woody's writings, drawings, tapes, and other materials that have been collected over the decades, tracks the progress of old and current projects, and strives to introduce new generations of fans to the Guthrie legacy. Among her current projects are a 30-minute animated video of nine of Woody's children's songs, a children's program for cable television, and a touring children's-music revue.

For grownups, a new album is being readied that will mesh the recordings Woody made with his friends and contemporaries Cisco Houston, Sonny Terry, Brownie McGhee, and others, with those of today's hot pickers, creating the first-ever opportunity to hear, as Nora puts it, "Lead Belly jamming with Ry Cooder." She and her staff also provided many original recordings for the new film *Bob Roberts*, a satire about a folksinger turned politician, that will be heard for the first time.

Arlo Guthrie continues his long musical career, now on his own record label, Rising Son Records. In the last year he has released *All Over the World*, his second "greatest hits" collection, *Son of the Wind*, new recordings of classic cowboy songs, and his first single release

in twenty years, "Norman Always Knew" backed with "Massachusetts."

The cassette single was released as a fund-raiser for two organizations important to Arlo, the Rockwell Foundation and the Guthrie Center. Fifty percent of the artist and publisher royalties from tape sales will be donated to these causes. "Norman Always Knew," written by Joe Manning and Steve Vozzolo, is a tribute to Norman Rockwell, the other famous resident of Stockbridge, Massachusetts. The Rockwell Foundation is a non-profit, tax-exempt, educational museum slated to open in 1993, and will allow many more of Rockwell's original paintings to be displayed. The single's flip side, Arlo's song "Massachusetts," is the "official state folk song" of Guthrie's home.

The Guthrie Center, founded by Arlo, is also a non-profit, tax-exempt organization, not coincidentally housed in the former "Alice's Church" (yes, that Alice; yes, that church), which Guthrie bought a few years ago. The center contributes to such causes as AIDS research, helping the elderly, and environmental protection, and includes a separate spiritual area for prayer and meditation.

To receive information on the CDs and cassettes, subscribe (for \$5) to Arlo's quarterly newsletter, *The Rolling Blunder Review*, ask for a free "Get Stuff!" merchandise catalog, or make a donation to the Guthrie Center, please contact:

Rising Son Records

P.O. Box 657

Housatonic, MA 01236-0657

To send a donation to the Rockwell Foundation, please contact:

The Campaign for

Norman Rockwell

The Norman Rockwell Museum

Stockbridge, MA 01262

—K.K.

Lyrics

In Order of Appearance

Gun-shy (Ed Carey)

Johnny's back in town with a new toy
for all to see
It's shining hard and loaded tight,
he's got six shots at his reach
And all the other boys in school
want one for their own
'Cause now Johnny ain't afraid to walk
where no man walks alone

Chorus
'Cause he ain't gun-shy
He ain't afraid to catch some fire
He ain't gun-shy
Don't call that kid a liar

Johnny calls the boys around,
says he's had to use it once or twice
And if they want one of their own
it'll be worth paying the price
"I'll talk to my man uptown
and we'll cut you a little deal
'Cause there's nothing like the feeling
of a finger against cold steel"

Now boys don't fight with their fists,
it's primitive, they say
There ain't no twenty paces
like in the olden days
It's fight fire with fire
in this war out on the street
Just watch your back, turn and fire
And blow each other away

Johnny met his fate one night,
he was blown right off his feet
Shots rang from an alley
and left him lying in the street
What comes around goes around,
everyone pays the price
Johnny didn't know he'd be blown away
by his own merchandise

Gillianna (Wendy Beckerman)

All the boys love Gillianna
Gillianna understands
Follow her across the country
Two by sea and one by land

All the girls love Gillianna
Gather close to touch her skin
Hang their beads upon her body
Gillianna Magdalene

Gillianna small and mighty
Tucks her hair behind her ear
Carries on her naked shoulder
Two regrets and one small tear

Gillianna writes a letter
Says I hope your heart feels better

Let the pages fall
They feel nothing at all

Once she mingled with magicians
Gillianna Halloween
Now she answers all your riddles
In the telephone machine

Gillianna blue and cloudy
Takes a rowboat out to sea
Ends the day without a lover
Two get hooked and one set free

Tossing and Turning Blue (Keith Kelly)

I could have done a whole day's work
since the last sunset
And it's about as quiet
as this town ever gets
We don't get crickets, howling wolves,
or roosters on my block
But the garbage truck's so regular
it's how I set my clock
I don't want another cigarette but there's
nothing else to do
Except wait for morning,
tossing and turning blue

I shut off the damned old TV set,
shut off the radio
Electric voices gone to where
electric voices go
I kicked a couple more dead soldiers
far across the room
I'll bury them right after breakfast
in the afternoon
They had no words of wisdom
and I could use a few
For my insides burning,
tossing and turning blue

I wish to hell I knew how come
this got to be my fate
Wasting my prime, upside down time
I always miss the midnight train
out of this sorry state
Left without me, forgot about me

I punch into the graveyard shift
and man it punches back
It's round and round we go
'til one of us is laid out flat
I'm staring at the ceiling
from the center of the ring
The referee declares an undefeated champion
He says, we got our work cut out
educating you
It's too late for learning,
tossing and turning blue

I'm way too beat to climb so I'm just
counting up the walls
Never changing, just the same thing

Sometimes the shadows run me down,
sometimes they only crawl
But they reach me, then they teach me

I feel the city stirring,
it's like a cold machine
The colors change from black to gray to brown
to blue to green
If I looked out the window I could pick my
personal cloud
To cover me with thunder
if I laugh or cry out loud
This eternity of misery will stick to me
like glue
The rest of morning,
tossing and turning blue

Gonna Gonna (Susan Biegler)

Growing up I was so easy
Always did what I was told
Growing up was fine until they
Tried to make me fit the mold

Chorus
When you gonna gonna
when you gonna grow up?
When you gonna gonna
when you gonna buy shoes?
When you gonna gonna
when you gonna brush your hair?
When you gonna gonna
when you gonna wear makeup?
When you gonna gonna
when you gonna buy a skirt?
When you gonna gonna
when you gonna like pink?
When you gonna gonna
when you gonna get married?
When you gonna gonna
when you gonna have a kid?

When are they going to see,
that's not me?

Growing up the race got faster
Always did the best I could
Never wanted all the right things
Always knew I never would

That's not me but I'm trying hard
That's not me in the eyes of God

All grown up and getting older
Thursday's child has far to go
Still not like the other children
They'll never learn the things I know

Courthouse Lament (Carl Alderson)

Curtis Benson sits in his prison cell
Five long years in one place

He doesn't turn when he hears me coming
He doesn't see my smiling face
So back again today huh buddy?
Why don't you go find
some real hard news
There's the world outside so listen
Don't waste my time,
don't waste yours too
I only know one thing here mister
You see beyond those gates out there
At 4:15 the train rolls by
And after that it isn't there

Henry Rose is the criminal justice
So many years he sits up there
He wipes his brow in the sweating courtroom
He sees the faces look back and stare
I remember when I first got started
You think you know what is and isn't fair
And then you watch the lives that crumble
And in your minute you're gonna
set them square
Don't you think I can be discouraged?
Don't you think this is hard on me?
I want to see a kid get some justice
Don't want to see 'em down
the dead-end street

I want to watch 'em like the tall grass growing
I want to know what the heart can find
I have seen the same cold winds blowing
We are the blind leading the blind

Curtis Benson is thumbing the want ads
For the day he calls his "big reward"
The day they unlock the prison cell
The day they open up all the doors
I'm not scared of nothing, not ever
Least not anything in this place
But I got one thing I ain't too sure of
Me and freedom face to face

©1988 Carl Wayne Alderson

**The Nervous Wreck of
Edna Fitzgerald**
(Camille West)

We sailed away from Huntington Bay
And the waters were calm as could be-oh
On our new cabin cruiser,
the first time we used her
'Twas just the family and me-oh
And my husband stood proud
in his new captain's hat
Using words like "Ahoj there"
and shit like that
So we took the kid and Cleo our cat
And set out to conquer the sea-oh
Everyone loved it but Clee-oh

And it's yo ho over the seas
The salt and the spray and the
cool ocean breeze
Pass me a bottle of Perrier, please
This is the life for me

The tranquility three miles out to sea
Suddenly came to an end-oh
When the kid started saying,

"No way am I staying
I'd rather be playing Nintend-oh"
And the captain cried, "Ho there,
you little snot
I paid sixty grand for this family yacht
You're gonna enjoy yourself,
like it or not
So you'd better learn how to pretend-oh"
(We all caught the man's innuend-oh)

So it's yo ho over the seas
The salt and the spray and the
cool ocean breeze
Pass me a bottle of Dramamine, please
This is the life for me?

My husband the captain
was checking the charts
While the cruiser was burning up fu-el
And the kid threw the cat in,
trolling for sharks
He called it a project for schoo-el
I reached down to pull the cat in
by the tail
When I saw what was left
my complexion went pale
That's when I lost my lunch over the rail
The kid thought the whole thing was coo-el
Mama was not feeling too-well

So it's yo ho over the seas
The salt and the spray and the
cool ocean breeze
Pass me a bottle of Valium, please
Is this the life for me?

We ran out of fuel by mid-afternoon
And the clouds were moving in fast-er
And the captain did say,
"There's no more Perrier"
Which made it a total disast-er
With hardly a warning it started to pour
And we drifted 'til we reached
the New Jersey shore
(Never thought I'd be glad to see Jersey before)
We started drifting in fast-er
Tried to steer the ship, but we crashed-her

And it's yo ho over the seas
The salt and the spray and the
cool ocean breeze
Pass me a bottle of cyanide, please
This is no life for me

Epilogue
I'm back in my condo,
the cruiser's a wreck
My husband is spending the insurance check
On something for dry land
or I'll break his neck
'Cause this is the life for me
Yo ho

©1992 Camille West Wodicka/BMI

Against the Bottle
(Brian Crawley)

Saw a sign, said "Drink Canada Dry"
So I went up there and gave that a try

Ran into my dad in Montreal
We had one quick whiskey just before
last call
He said, I'll introduce you to some
friends of mine
If you don't mind buyin' us
a bottle of wine

One bottle, two bottle, three bottle, four
You gotta step across Wanda
on the bathroom floor
Five bottle, six bottle, seven and more
Say, whose turn is it to go the
convenient store
Speak up, don't try to be subtle
That's the only sin I know
against the bottle

Jack Taggart is a friend to rum
When he starts feelin' empty he pours him
some
Crazy Mary is the slender thing
Who put both Jack's arms in a
Singapore Sling
Spain's man calls Mary Mona
Jack found her with his lips on his Barcelona

Dead cold, and brittle as metal
Is the kiss you get from the mouth
of the bottle

Now my room's a disgrace
There's empties all over the place
I believe I'm the drinkingest man in the whole
human race

Meet Tucker, he's the kind of man
Mix a 10-gallon cocktail in a 5-quart pan
King Sturgeon, well, what can I say
He lets his fists do his talking for him anyway
Anneliese lives in a world of her own
When she starts speakin' German
you can tell she's gone

A peach skin, the veins in a petal
You can cut 'em easy with a broken bottle

Nothing's sacred, everything's for sale
See Jonah on the fourth with his
dancin' whale
Reminiscent brings a world of tears
Well, I got nowhere and it's taken me years
Every night I waste on booze and laughter
Ain't the night life kills you,
it's the mornin' after

Wood Hollow Road
(Richard Meyer)

The cold water runs by the side of this town
Where the red oaks grow old
and shade what goes down
There's talk in the barrooms of many odd
things
But no one looks my way to see what I think

I drifted back to this town
where my first love was killed
Now I move through this hollow
to get away from myself

I was cut down down beside her
when I fought for us both
Now I take back from others
what cost me the most

Chorus

Oh, I remember walking down
Wood Hollow Road
Mothers tell their children
not to play there at all
And it doesn't look different
'til you go there with hope
Down Wood Hollow Road

I haunt the couples by starlight
and I'm never seen
I walk without shows and of course
I don't breathe
My heart can disturb them
and lead them near death
But I'm as good as invisible
when they feel what I felt

There's not much I believe in,
but this much I know
That some holy truths will never be known
I died where most love is as safe as can be
But the love of faint hearts
is in danger from me

©1992 Richard Meyer/ASCAP
*Richard Meyer appears courtesy of
Shanachie Records*

Appear to Disappear
(Sheila MacDonald)

Did you appear to disappear on me?

I'm walking home from somewhere
twenty years ago
Tracing fallen angels in the snow
Falling in your footsteps, tugging at your
sleeve
Knowing from the start that angels leave

Chorus

And there is sorrow here
standing by the stair
And no, I don't dare to recall
You can lose your life,
it's fragile as the light
So many souls lost on the road

Did you appear to disappear on me?

It's leaving home for somewhere
many miles away
Wishing for the place where I will stay
Watching out my window,
waiting for a snow
Wondering if you thought you mightn't go

Did you appear to disappear on me?

A prophet in the subway tells me where to go
The colors on his blanket would not show
A voice calls out from somewhere,
"This is the last train"
Freezing in my footsteps I remain

Did you appear to disappear on me?

I'm waiting for your answer, tears turn into
snow
Melting in the dark I'll always know
Sailing south for somewhere
snow mixes with rain
Leaning toward the light that keeps me sane

Did you appear to disappear on me?

Whose Fault
(Jack Hardy)

Chorus
whose fault or none at all
or none that anyone can see
whose fault, go lay the blame
right beneath my feet

I gave her everything she could want
I gave her everything she needs
she wanted more than I could give
she wanted more than me

the dove is beauty, the wren is sweet
the thrush knows how to sing
you feed the birds all winter long
they fly away in spring

so many miles these feet have known
oh so many miles
never in my wildest dreams
saw a girl who would not smile

so many years, so many years
living 'round these parts
never in my darkest days
found a woman without a heart

so many books, open books
read between the lines
doesn't matter how hard you look
the truth you'll never find

the child knows hunger, the child knows fear
the child knows how to sing
but we grow old and we are told
to put away childish things

©1992 Jack Hardy Music/BMI

As One
(Christina Muir)

I'm askin' you to be my bride
We'll walk together, side by side
Though life may carry us far apart
Our hearts forever entwine

Oh yes, my love, I'll marry thee
We'll be as one through eternity
Though life has woven us worlds apart
We're spun as one design

Then bathe with me in this river wide
We'll wash away what may us divide
I'll flow forever unto your arms

And you will be my wine

Then come now with me, we'll build a fire
Consuming all in pure desire
We'll curl together as wisps of smoke
And ascend to Love Divine

Now soar we high on this wind so free
And dance we wild on the cool, green sea
'Tis halves we are of eternity
My love, you are divine

©1986 Christina Muir

Keys to the Highway
(Eddy Lawrence)

The telephone rings and the telephone machine
Clicks on in the night
I put the pillow on my ear
but I still can't help but hear
That it's Cindy on the line
I say, "Not this time, not me tonight
"Not again," I swear
But while I'm saying "No,"
I'm putting on my clothes
To meet Cindy somewhere

And Cindy says she's got
the keys to the highway
And she knows I'm gonna ride
no matter what I might try to say
Something moves inside of my mind
like it ain't my brain
When Cindy says she's got
the keys to the highway

The bolt cutter snaps and the chain links
collapse
And we're through the gate
We sneak across the lot
and I drive out the locks
While she puts on the forged plates
Wire touches wire in a little dance of fire
and gears engage
I take the passenger side
'cause Cindy always likes to drive getaway

And Cindy says she's got
the keys to the highway
And she ain't just whistling
some old worn-out blues refrain
The cool crisp breeze of larceny
blows through my brain
When Cindy says she's got
the keys to the highway

We drive all night 'til we cross the
state line
And then we meet the fence
I always get a chill
when he's counting out the bills
And I say, "Never again"
I start to toe the line,
I even get a job this time
Don't even mind it much
Then one night the phone rings
It's Cindy callin' just to see
if I've still got the touch

©1992 Eddy Lawrence/BMI

Finally With You
(Steve Packenham)

and I will roam
to the farthest sea
yes, this I know
with certainty
my precious youth
that seeps from me
a chosen few
I turn to you

Chorus
that's how we walk, that's how we run
now I know it's just begun
your mission with me,
my mission with you
we will find our own way through

sacrifice and bliss
it's all well and good
searching for this
it's understood
so here I go
into the blue
finally alone
finally with you

our trails are crossed, without meeting
the rain continues, unceasing
step up above the wall, above the noise,
above it all
our trails are crossed, without meeting
the rain continues, unceasing
step out into the night, into the dark,
into the light

and I will roam
to the farthest sea
yes, this I know
with certainty
so here I go
into the blue
finally alone
finally with you

Baby Why?
(Carol Lipnik)

Baby why you do me like you did?
Baby why you do me like you did?
I don't know why you did me like you do
But worst of all why'd I let you?

Big clouds billow across the open sky
Big clouds billow across the open sky
Don't it make my big heart
want to break down and cry

I cried before
Threw away my pride before
I ain't got it anymore . . . no

6:05 train whistle curlin'
in the corners of the wind
6:05 train whistle curlin'
in the corners of the wind

Don't it make my suitcase
want to pack it all in I packed before

Lyin' to my poor heart,
you got me lyin' to my friends
Lyin' to myself while lyin' on my bed
Once the lyin' starts
the lyin' never ends

I lied before
Threw away my pride before
I ain't got it anymore . . . no

Now I'm starin' out my window
into the wicked heart of night
Starin' out my window
into the wicked heart of night
Wish that I could see you comin'
But there is nothing in sight

Baby why you do me like you did?
Baby why you do me like you did?
I don't know why you did me like you do
But worst of all why'd I let you?

©Carol Lipnik/BMI

In the Rose Garden
(with the Bushes)
(Don Haynie)

Somewhere in the world
A farm is foreclosed
And a family examines their options
Like living in their car
Which still runs pretty well
Though it seems to need oil kind of often
So they start down the road
And the gas pumps start eating their money
One desperate night
He turns to her and says, "Honey,
Over that next hill, is that a mirage
Or a thousand little tiny points of light?"
She says, "Darlin',
That's only Las Vegas"
And maybe they both could be right

Because in the Rose Garden
with the Bushes
Things are whatever we say
And in the Rose Garden with the Bushes
Everyone has a nice day

Somewhere in the world
There's a little tin can
On the counter beside a cashier
And the picture of a child
Is taped to the side
With a sign that says
"Please Contribute Here"
Little Monica Davenport
Needs a liver, a lung, and an eye
These are very expensive
But without them she'll probably die
Now the surgeon owns a sailboat
And a summer home in Maine
Where he hides out from the *hoi* and the *polloi*
And even if they raise all the money for his
fees
He'll only buy some more expensive toys

But in the Rose Garden with the Bushes
The forest is hidden by trees
And in the Rose Garden with the Bushes
The doctors become the disease

Somewhere in the world
A savings and loan
Slides under the oil-slickened waters
Your mortgage has been sold
To a strange little firm
With the morals of Dracula's daughters
Your kids are overseas
In the desert defending cheap oil
Your boss is Japanese
And your blood pressure's starting to boil
So you gaze out at the smog
And think about it all
And try to get a handle on the facts
But it's hard to get it clear
So you go to get a beer
On which they have just raised the tax

Yes, in the Rose Garden with the Bushes
It's either read lips or read minds
But in the Rose Garden with the Bushes
It's like the blind reading the blind
Still we should take special care of these
Bushes
And hope that their health never fails
For there's a birdbrain concealed behind the
Bushes
The world's most dangerous
Quail

©Don Haynie

Desperate Lies
(Ken Korreis)

No, you will not let it rest
No, I have not more to say
Like the sleep that will not rescue me
Or the child of an empty dream
I will let you overrule my eyes
I will let you tell me desperate lies
And I will even let you stay
Save it for tomorrow
No need to finish this today

No, I don't love you
Not in the way you'd wish
And you won't settle for a friend
Check the ocean, I'm not the only fish
And a broken heart will always mend
I will leave you to review your thoughts
Foolish laughter comprehends
And I wouldn't worry
Save it for tomorrow
No need to finish this today

Moon Poems
(Jane Hohenberger)

APRIL MOON

Moon of having sex in the rain
with our bodies slippery
and our hands rooted in the muddy earth
we are growing out of each other's water

climbing with the gardens
rolling getting darker
loving darkness
loving wet rain
loving.

MAY MOON

Moon of having sex in the blooming outside
when the stamen grows
full of pollen
full of life
and I can create with the seeds
the most beautiful soundful sculptures
and move in new dances toward the light
and blind in blissful darkness
we can only feel
like a flower green and growing
our limbs, petals
our love, roots
our eyes, suns
and our fingers, wild caterpillars
changing into butterflies
abandoning our skin
we become spirits in the air
you and I and our photosynthesis
for moments we are in full bloom
bodies left behind
and when our flesh returns
hot and red
we wilt and sleep
before we grow again.

JUNE MOON

Moon of having sex in the sun
when I can see your body
by the light of slow timing
and get lost in the curly hairs
that make branches of shadows
fall over your skin
and I fall over your body
bright and wet on the inside
like split fruit
we eat
when days go on forever
and your sweat is clean
when you're naked
and we forget
that anything can end
or be evil.

JULY MOON

Moon of having sex on the beach
when the sand gets in our hair
and on our skin
so we swim in the warm ocean
until our lips get so salty
it feels like we've been eating
movie popcorn for our entire lives
and the sand begins to sting after a while
you begin to sting after awhile
the sound and the wind stings
like a flock of burning jellyfish
that have taken off
like bubbles to the air
floating their poison
to our brown skin
covered with sand
covered with each other
each tongue a spoon
lapping up
this stinging moon.

AUGUST MOON

Moon of oral sex
when we fill each other's mouths
with beads of juice
that make a spilling necklace of light
and joy of touch and feel
your hair on my stomach
wanting the summer to never end
or this time when I can feel your face
like a cool sculpture
the air from my lungs must have shaped
its perfect curving cheeks
and sharp chin
move me, we move.

SEPTEMBER MOON

Moon of having sex in the falling leaves
our twisting bodies
cool in the air of change
and strange
new ways to free our hands
are born like storms
and we become wind and fire
burning, breathing
needing
the night and the light
we know what whole is from here
in the face of earth's sleep
each dream falling flight
in the air
like fireflies caught in jars
the bright leaves
the eyes
that have seen so much in the sun
fall
you and I
are so many colors
and blind
blind.

OCTOBER MOON

Moon of having sex under blankets
the buried moon
the funeral moon
dark sleep noises march on the air
and we hide
in traditional ways
norms and mores
no time to try
new coldness
that dries the skin
still we let each other in.

NOVEMBER MOON

Moon of having sex in the dark or blindfolded
when surprise comes like serpents
and on our bellies
moving sleek, dark and shy
the eyes go closed and rolled
back to feeling exceeding sight
to black where
something frying is rain and
bare feet hitting wet pavement and
sea foam of the ocean dissolving at sunset
where the birds taking off sound like applause.

DECEMBER MOON

Moon of having sex in the snow
in cold that numbs the body red to heat
and nipples are erect

as solid *Mezzo Dital*
imported from Italy
shaped like the boots left in the house
naked warm bodies make ice under skin
only untouched snow stays soft
and now even your skin is hard
smooth cellophane, shiny
in the blinding white winter sun
that makes weapons out of water
and wind hurt blowing snow like sand
spirals of air that make us leave
angels
where our bodies have been.

JANUARY MOON

Moon of celibacy
because there comes a time
where one simply must stop
and remember what it is like
not to touch or be touched.

FEBRUARY MOON

Moon of masturbation
moon of the number one
unlonely but alone
folding over itself in waves
movements, hands, self discovery
A bell as opposed to wind chimes,
instead of the sound of many colliding
making breaking dynamic shards of music
it is a separate whole
in synchronicity with the self
singing
a trapped voice in a tower
who doesn't need a choir
to have the song.

MARCH MOON

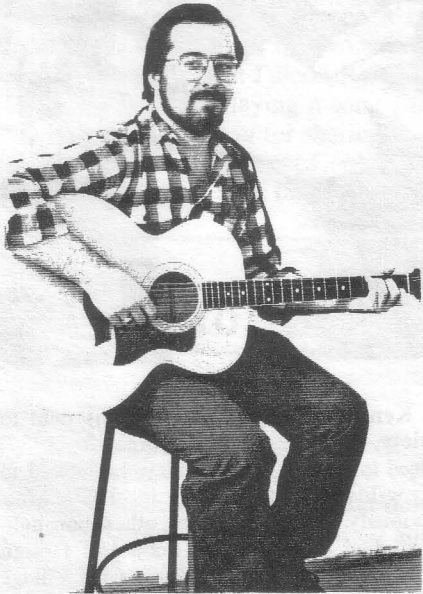
Moon of having sex
remembering that the mortal bodies
of our immortality
are part of the experience of life
and should be used, explored
and nature
is inside
and when touch is introduced
it is the quest of high expectation
we should harvest and feast
the creation myth fails
we are the garden of Eden.

*All songs ©1992 by author unless
otherwise noted*

Bios In Order of Appearance

Ed Carey is a 23-year-old songwriter raised in Barksville, NY. After a four-year hiatus in New Hampshire, Ed is back in the New York area touring clubs and coffeehouses, and is working on a new batch of songs as he prepares to record his first album.

Wendy Beckerman is originally from New Jersey and now lives in the East Village. She performs in coffeehouses and clubs throughout the U.S., and has toured Italy. For info: 210 1st Avenue, Apt. 15, NYC 10009.



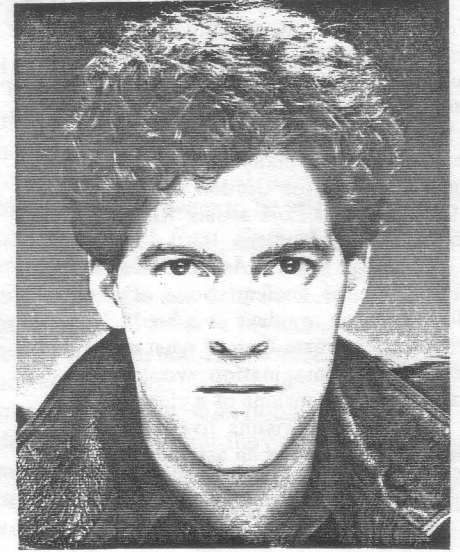
Keith Kelly is making his first appearance on *Fast Folk*. He was born and raised on Staten Island, NY, but long ago wised up and now lives in Manhattan. He has been writing and performing acoustic music for over ten years. Keith has played at many clubs, coffeehouses, festivals, rallies, and benefits from New York to New England and the Midwest. He has opened for several fine acts including Bill Staines, and plans to release his first album, *Kelly Green*, in early 1993.

Susan Biegler grew up on Long Island, NY, graduated from Sarah Lawrence College, and has been writing songs for five years. She, Susan Delaney, and David Lawrence formed The Lazy Susans in 1990. They may be reached at (718) 834-9632.



This is the second time **Carl Alderson** has appeared on a *Fast Folk* release. His song "Courthouse Lament" was inspired by a controversy surrounding a federal five-year mandatory prison sentence law. Carl is originally from the Jersey shore and now lives in New York City.

When **Camille West** stopped growing at a mere five feet she elected to become a satirical singer-songwriter because she didn't need to stand on an orange crate to reach high notes. This vertically-challenged artist chronicles life's absurdities from her home in Queensbury, New York, and performs at coffeehouses, clubs, and festivals throughout the northeast. For info: RD2 5 Pinewood Hollow, Queensbury, NY 12804.



Brian Crawley was raised mostly in Cincinnati, Ohio; he moved to New York from San Francisco in 1989. Shortly afterward, he bought a guitar. This is his first recording. He makes a living rewriting books.

A reformed workaholic, **Richard Meyer** is a painter, stage designer, songwriter. His second album, *The Good Life!*, was released this year by Shanachie Records. He edited *Fast Folk* since 1986 before recently returning to civilian life. He has designed over 80 stage productions in all styles, with names worth dropping in places various and far flung.



Sheila MacDonald has been writing songs and performing since 1991. "Appear to Disappear" was written in December of 1991 and was inspired by falling snow.

Jack Hardy has nine albums and six plays to his credit. He can be contacted at: 178 W. Houston St., #9, NYC 10014, (212) 989-7088.

Christina Muir first recorded with *Fast Folk* in 1990, on the last of the album releases, *New Voices*. While she accompanies herself on guitar and mountain dulcimer, her instrument of choice is voice, which she has added in harmony on recordings of many fellow musicians, including those of Gordon Bok, Ann Mayo Muir, and *Fast Folk* artists Richard Meyer and Wendy Beckerman.

Christina says, "As One" was inspired in part by the ancient drone of a vacuum cleaner during my days as a housecleaner. I would often dream then of what else I might do and my imagination would roam far beyond the dimensions of a clean house."

Currently, Christina lives and works in New Canaan, CT, as an assistant teacher in a kindergarten class. For bookings: 429 Ponus Ridge Rd., New Canaan, CT 06840.



A regular of the circle of clubs that make up the Greenwich Village folk and acoustic music scene, Steve Pakenham moved to New York City in the fall of 1988 from California. As a member of True West from 1984 through 1987, Pakenham and the band recorded two critically acclaimed albums. The band toured the U.S. and Europe extensively, supporting R.E.M. on their 1985 "Reconstruction Tour." For more information, contact: (212) 477-1771, 101 St. Mark's Place, #17, NY, NY 10009



Carol Lipnik has been performing her songs in various venues around NYC since 1986. Her musical theater works, which have been seen in NYC, include *Coney Island Screams All Night Café*, *Pornsongspiel*, and *The History of Pornography*, which she wrote with Kevin Malony.

Don Haynie and Sheryl Samuel hail from the Woodstock area of upstate New York, home to many folk, rock, classical, and jazz musicians. They have released two albums, *Life in the Circus* and *Stations*, on their own record label, Hard-Pressed Records. They now spend several months a year on the road, traveling in a small trailer with their son Seth (who they teach themselves, and who occasionally performs with them), playing to ever-growing audiences across the continent. For info: RR One, Box 298, High Falls, NY 12440.



Ken Korreis, having paid his debt to society, began writing songs in 1987. Raised in pastoral New Jersey, he moved to the wilds of Manhattan in 1990 after previously living in every other borough. He studied art at Parsons School of Design (BFA 1983) and enjoys capturing the Village scene in drawings. Women know him as "the anchor."

For info: 52 E. 7th St., #18, NYC 10003



Jack Hardy, Christina Muir, and Ed Carey

Eddy Lawrence was born some time ago in Alabama. He hopes to live a while longer but hopefully not in New Jersey. He has never stolen anything larger than a sofa, but he has released four albums on his own label, Snowplow Records. For information on these or other sordid deeds, contact him at (201) 867-8149.



Born in Nyack, New York, Jane Hohenberger moved to Greenwich Village in 1991 to attend Eugene Lang College, where she studies creative writing. Her most recent collection of works, *Maybe Your Tongue is a Fish*, can be obtained, along with any other desired information, by writing: Jane Hohenberger, 216 Piermont Avenue, South Nyack, NY 10960

Frandsen

cont. from p. 7

The SpeakEasy is where I first viewed the Washington Squares, a moment which changed my life, folk music, and Western civilization forever. I can't forget the Washington Squares, but then, others have, and that's good enough for me.

With these stirring memories of folk music's illustrious past in mind, and with no certain guarantees for folk music's future, I run for President. Others may have forgotten, but I remember why we all sang protest songs. I think it's because we were protesting.

I remember when we took up the cause of the hungry and the impoverished. (I've been backstage during a *Fast Folk* revue, and believe me, nobody's wearing a Rolex, not even the Roches.)

So, with my hat officially in the ring, I can go back to my apartment and take a nap. I know my appeal is to that segment of the population that never registers to vote. Therefore, this may prove an uphill fight. Yet, I also know the name and address of a certain alleged President's alleged mistress. So all in all, I ought to have a fighting chance.

Make me your President, and I promise no new taxes. I promise peace in

our time. I promise a land where the streets are paved with gold, and where Mia's children sleep safely in their beds at night. I also promise that *Fast Folk Musical Magazine* will come out regularly and on time. (All right, so maybe I can't keep all of my promises.) I promise to debate all Presidential candidates, and even enter a spelling bee with Dan Quayle.

Lastly, may I invoke the words of Woody Guthrie when I say, "This land is your land, this land is my land," and the words of Margaret Mitchell when I say, "Land, it's the only thing that matters, it's the only thing that lasts," and the words of Christopher Columbus, "Land Ahoy!" and the words of Jerome Kern

when he said, "gets a little drunk and you lands in jail."

With these words ringing in our ears, I place my fate, the fate of our great land, in the hands of the voters, because without the voters we wouldn't have elected politicians, and without elected politicians, we'd have no one to vote out of office.

So, it is with ringing ears and ringing hands I rest my case. Thank you. Good night. By the way, why is it it takes all night to get drunk drinking Wild Turkey at the SpeakEasy? Joseph, another if you please, and keep the water on the side.

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-2-

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Christina Muir: harmony vocal
Jack Hardy: mandolin
Jeff Tareila: bass

-3-

Tossing and Turning Blue

(Keith Kelly)

Keith Kelly: guitar, vocal
Sheryl Samuel: wood block

-4-

Gonna Gonna

(Susan Biegler)

Susan Biegler: guitar, vocal
Susan Delaney: vocal
David Lawrence: electric guitar
Darren Solomon: bass

-5-

Courthouse Lament

(Carl Alderson)

Carl Alderson: guitar, vocal
Jon Herington: guitar
Carol Sharar: violin
Jeff Tareila: bass

-6-

**The Nervous Wreck of the
Edna Fitzgerald**

(Camille West)

Camille West: guitar, vocal
Steve Kovacic: guitar, vocal
Jeff Tareila: bass

-7-

Against the Bottle

(Brian Crawley)

Brian Crawley: guitar, vocal

-8-

Wood Hollow Road

(Richard Meyer)

Richard Meyer: guitar, vocal
Christina Muir: harmony vocal

-9-

Appear to Disappear

(Sheila MacDonald)

Sheila MacDonald: guitar, vocal
Jeff Tareila: bass

-10-

Whose Fault

(Jack Hardy)

Jack Hardy: guitar, vocal
Christina Muir: harmony vocal
Wendy Beckerman: harmony vocal
Sheryl Samuel: harmony vocal, cabasa
Jeff Tareila: bass

-11-

As One

(Christina Muir)

Christina Muir: guitar, vocal
Richard Meyer: harmony vocal

-12-

Keys to the Highway

(Eddy Lawrence)

Eddy Lawrence: guitar, vocal
Jack Hardy: mandolin, harmony vocal
Dave Elder: bass, harmony vocal

-13-

Finally With You

(Steve Packenham)

Steve Packenham: guitar, vocal
Jeff Tareila: bass

-14-

Baby Why

(Carol Lipnik)

Carol Lipnik: guitar, vocal
Joe Cacciola: guitar

-15-

In the Rose Garden

(with the Bushes)

(Don Haynie)

Don Haynie: 12-string guitar, vocal
Sheryl Samuel: tambourine, vocal

-16-

Desperate Lies

(Ken Korreis)

Ken Korreis: guitar, vocal
Carol Sharar: violin
Jeff Tareila: bass

-17-

Moon Poems

(Jane Hohenberger)

Jane Hohenberger: vocal
(contains some explicit language)

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Recorded live to stereo DAT by Richard Julian August 23, 1992
in his lovely new apartment in NYC.