

FAST FOLK

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

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New Voices NYC



18 of New York City's most promising songwriters
Recorded live July 6, 1995, at the Fast Folk Cafe

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On the Cover:
(Most of) this issue's New Voices
outside the Fast Folk Cafe.
Photo by Richard Meyer

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Checking the ego at the door

"The words die when you act them out, they wither, and we are left with nothing but your ambition."
-Leonard Cohen

To think that one is so important as to have written a song that people will want to listen to is a rather heady concept; a thought that must be filled with self-confidence and backed up by an experience and knowledge that is worth sharing. "Thank you for sharing that" is a holdover from some bygone hippie era but that is exactly what presenting a song is: a sharing. A transcendent sharing. A sharing of what is produced by the subconscious and subsequently affects (effects, infects) the subconscious of the listener. But what we have here is the ultimate paradox: the very ego that we need to embark on this bardic enterprise (another oxymoron), that same ego that we need to climb on a stage, or even to climb on a stool in a living room, that same ego has to be completely ignored, actually banished, to enable ourselves to create. That ego becomes our worst enemy.

But it is long before we enter into the creative process that we must check our egos at the door. It is the ego that makes it impossible to listen, impossible to take in the information we need to refuel our creative juices. It is the ego that demands comparisons: the ego that demands competition; the ego that belittles the obvious; the ego that resists change, innovation, experimentation; the ego that fears what is different; the ego that creates hierarchies, that demands judgement. It is the ego that fills us with ambition and loads every line with self-consciousness until our poetry is one big sophomoric pimpling mess. Filled with our own self-importance we expect everyone to be anxious and eager to "get into our head space" and follow our trials and tribulations like devoted soap opera fans. It is the ego that has already picked out which performer is going to "cover" the song before it is written and uses the shoe horn as a creative tool.

It is the ego that stands guard on tradition with an iron fist. Another paradox. How do we rectify the creative process with tradition? That tradition that is the ultimate judge, jury, and executioner of our songs in that trial that we will neither be allowed to participate in, nor be around to witness. For that is the only true success of our art and our craft: If someone wants to sing our songs a hundred years from now, after everyone has forgotten who wrote it. The ego's worst nightmare.

Let's look at the creative process for a minute. Those who meditate know that they

have to – in the words of Carlos Castaneda – "stop the world." Stop the rational brain from thinking about the laundry, the credit card payments, the forthcoming interview, the next gig. Most writers of poetry and song refer to the trancelike state they must reach to create poetry. But almost all songwriters claim that they have to wait for this muse to strike them. or they think that they can rely on artificial stimulation, in the form of drugs or alcohol to achieve this state. (That may have worked once to open some doors or expand horizons, but in the long run it produces long, runny songs.)

Why do we do all this? If we slow down the world by stopping the chatter of the mundane we can begin to marvel at the simplest of ordinary objects and events. We begin to see the terrible beauty in everything. We live in the moment, with no history or future to weight us down with excess baggage or expectations. We begin to elevate everything to the realm of poetry. We begin to see the strange and beautiful relationships between everything, and our songs start branching out in a multiflowered tree of knowledge.

If we do this consciously, if we try to control the process, if we inject our ego into the operation, we become a joke (like the red-neck whose family tree "doesn't fork") and lower everything to the realm of *bad* poetry. We start writing rhetoric and platitudes and attempted anthems, and if we have room, we save the whales (and the only thing that looms as big as a whale is *bad poetry*).

On to the critics. Once we create our masterpiece, we take it to a songwriters' meeting. Why? Because art cannot exist in a vacuum. Why? So we can make it better. We are only human and not everything that comes from our goose is gold. Also, we need to try our work out on someone before we subject some poor unsuspecting audience to it.

What? You don't have a songwriters' meeting? Then start one. Nothing happens unless you make it happen. Once again we must check our egos at the door. Just as in the writing process, we must risk everything. Risk total failure. We are only as good as our latest songs. Our "twenty pounds of headlines stapled to our chest" won't help us now. Enter Machievelli, stage right. *Beware of flattery*, "That was nice!" "That was great!" "That was your best ever!" "That was a hit!" "That sounds commercial as hell!" Only the last statement was true, but let's get real. Let's say real things. Specific things we are doing well and occasionally things that we are doing wrong. (We may not learn from our mistakes

but others might see their own faults through ours). We respond better to having our strengths pointed out; which is why we are vulnerable to manipulation through flattery. Once again we must not be competitive. It is only ourselves and what we have attempted and hence what we might have achieved. Let's not be too hard on ourselves.

Somewhere along the line in this technological world people started believing in perfection, first in the recording process and then in the creative process itself. Songwriting itself became mechanical. There were "formulas." Songs could be written by "teams" of writers. But there is no perfection, only sterility. Or, *all* is perfection. We are dealing with something that is truly subjective (which is one of the things that makes songwriting such a beautiful art form). There was once a song that I considered one of the worst that we had ever recorded for Fast Folk and, lo and behold, we get a letter from some disk jockey who says it is his favorite song and he plays it every time he's on the air. But part of being an artist is getting past the initial rush of being aware of the fact that we *can* create to realize that everything we create is not sacred; that there is work to be done in editing; that there is an audience to be considered.

You can see them onstage at the open mike, eyes darting around to see who's watching them; asking whether they passed the audition; never listening to anyone else; jokingly putting down the less talented; dropping off their demo tapes; making mental notes to make follow-up calls. But what makes one a professional performer (getting paid for it) doesn't necessarily make one a good songwriter.

It is better to have learned to write good songs before embark-

ing on a performing career. This is the craft. We should not let the craft replace the art. We should not let the perception of perfection inhibit us from experimenting. In reality, in the realm of the song as art form we are merely at the shoreline of a vast ocean of possibilities. Very little has been attempted.

We are the pioneers, the discoverers. The ones who came before us were merely the ones who opened the doors, who brought us to this point.

We cannot explore this new territory if we are tied to our ego; if we are worried about what people will think; if we are worried about maintaining our image; if we are worried about comparing ourselves to those who are more "successful" or worried about being seen with those less "successful"; if we are worried that we might fail; if we are worried about whether it will make money.

The best is yet to come. Let's check our egos at the door and go after it.

- Jack Hardy

About this issue...

The Fast Folk Cafe has been up and running since March. An integral part of the cafe schedule is our weekly open mike night. And if there is anything new in New York City, it usually shows up first here on Tuesday nights. The open mike also allows seasoned performers a chance to try out new material or just hang out and play for fun.

This issue's title, "New Voices NYC," is slightly a misnomer. What's "new" on the scene at any point is made up of new people, new ideas from people who have been around for a while, and people who used to be around and have recently resurfaced. It takes all kinds to make a scene; this issue is no exception. We have taken one evening of fun and recorded it live in front of an audience, complete with street noise, car horns, car alarms, and other forms of urban merriment. We could have taken a different evening and a different group of performers and a different group of urban noises and it would be no more or less valid.

If you're in New York or passing through, come down and visit. Many of the songwriters heard on this issue will be performing at the cafe as opening acts, as headliners, or at the open mike. The Cafe is at 41 N. Moore Street in Manhattan's trendy Tribeca neighborhood, hard by the Holland Tunnel with abundant parking. We're doing shows Friday and Saturday nights at 7:30, plus the Tuesday Open Mike. Our November-December schedule appears on Page 8.

Whereas "non-profit folk club" is a repetitively redundant name, our all-volunteer staff is creating a sense of community that is hard to find anywhere at any price. Stay tuned...

Letter to the Editor

Dear Fast Folk,

I just want to thank you for contributing so much to real music from the heart (OK, from the diaphragm). I went to high school with Gregg Cagno, Chris Baumann and, dare I say, Jeff Tareila, and started out in my musical interests playing in a band with Cagno and Baumann. It is wonderful to see these two have an outlet such as Fast Folk for their craft.

Thanks,
Rob Collins

P.S. The Eddy Lawrence/Linda Sharar show last Friday at the Cafe was luscious. I look forward to hearing "Nathan" on CD.

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New voices from elsewhere out there

A bevy of regional compilations provide counterpoint to our own CD's local focus

This is Boston... Not Austin

Reviewed by Joe DeRouen

This is Boston... Not Austin, declares the cover of this compilation of Boston's best singers and songwriters, defiantly challenging Austin, Texas' long-held title as the proving ground for any folk musicians worth their salt.

Austin, move over. You have company. This 15-song disc from Black Wolf Records contains songs from some of the best and brightest performers in folk today, music that could stand up against any other city or area in the country.

Jonatha Brooke, long one of my favorites, starts off the collection with "Just One Word," a beautifully crafted piece sung with an earthy urgency. Brooke's voice has to be one of the best in folk, wrapping itself around the music, matching it, bringing the song to even greater heights. This song only hints at her talents.

Ellis Paul's "Paperback Man" holds the second track, and is just as strong as Brooke's song. Paul's vocals are both haunting and compelling as he sings about a woman lost between the pages of a novel, living a life of fiction. He also plays a mean guitar, all of which adds up to one of the very best entries on the compilation.

The rest of the album manages to hold the pace set by the first two songs, in a few cases even surpassing it. A few songs fade into the back of your mind after the first listen, but the majority are strong, solid efforts by some of folk's most talented players today.

"Glory Bound" is an epic ballad exploring the life of a traveller looking for a little glory, performed expertly and effortlessly by Martin Sexton. Sexton's voice on the song is incredible, moving from a carnal growl to a beautiful falsetto and then back again; a vocal tour de force.

Kevin Connolly's raspy-voiced "Take Me to the Sea" is at once startling and soothing, a rambling, bluesy song that reflects his seaside upbringing. Connolly was voted the best folk artist of 1994 by *Boston Magazine*; this song makes it easy to see why.

"Sweet Addiction" by Deb Pasternak, is an achingly sad song about a woman with a desperate need for escape. Pasternak's style has its roots both in jazz and folk, and it works very well for her and for the song and its inclusion on the album.

Sean Staple's "Golden Fear" is one of the most powerful songs in this collection, at times rivalling and imitating the energy of some of Cliff Eberhardt's best work. "Golden Fear" is a hard-rocking, intelligent acoustic masterpiece, a song about challenging fear and the dangers that lie within. This is probably my favorite piece from the compilation. I wouldn't be surprised to see Sean making national headlines very soon.

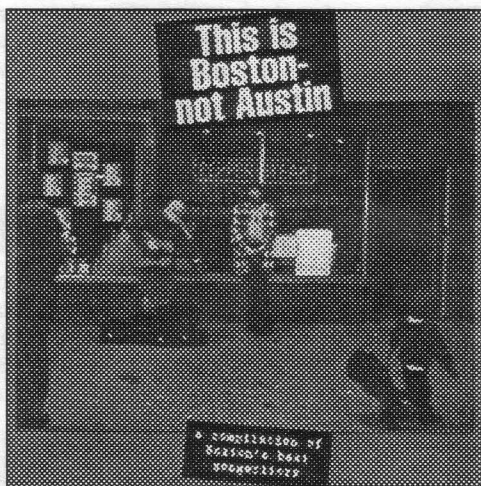
The last track of the album is Barbara Kessler's "Happy With You," a pretty song about being happy with the one you love. Kessler has a very rich voice and really brings this song alive, infusing it with

an emotion and power rarely found in even the best of songs. A fitting end to an excellent album.

As the CD's title maintains, Boston has most certainly nurtured a large piece of the nation's folk talent. If the talent represented here is any indication, Austin may indeed have something to worry about after all.

Info: Black Wolf Records, P.O. Box 38-1978, Cambridge, MA 02238.

Joe DeRouen is a Texas writer who also publishes the monthly on-line electronic magazine Sunlight Through the Shadows.



Here We Are: An Asheville Area Acoustic Songwriter Sampler

Reviewed by Joe DeRouen

I've always loved compilation CDs; they seem to have more music on them than regular discs do, and you get to check out a wide range of different musicians. After you've listened to it, you usually end up with a small list of artists you liked and thus a few CDs to search out and add to your collection.

Here We Are: An Asheville Area Acoustic Songwriter Sampler, however, is much more a full-course meal than a sampler platter. Recorded in the Asheville area in North Carolina by the Independent Songwriters Group and featuring twenty different local acoustic musicians, *Here We Are* is a multi-layered musical feast for the ears. From the opening track of Phil and Gaye Johnson's beautiful "In the Heart of the Mountains" to the very last track, David LaMotte's touching "Grey Eagle," the compilation never hits a slow spot. The CD is as pure and unfettered as its Carolina mountain origins would seem to reflect.

Still, some songs stuck with me more than others. If the sarcastically funny "Some-day," a song about putting things off for just one more day, is any indication, Tom Troszak promises to have a great career ahead of him. The same goes for Billy Jonas, whose "Chain Letter" is an out-and-out fun romp that follows the meanderings

of just such a missive.

I couldn't help singing along with Wanda Lu Greene's "Mechanicsville," a melodic song about going home, even when listening to it the first time. Greene has such a strong, clear voice, and a believable sincerity, all too rare, in music today. Her music just grabs the listener's attention and makes him sit up and take notice.

Suzi Katz's vocals on "Whispers You to Me" are among the very best on the album, at once sensuous and haunting. Her lyrics are poetic in their own right, intelligent and compelling.

Here We Are organizer Jimmy Landry's "Just an Illusion" is a clever, catchy song, sure to stick in your head long after the CD player has ceased to spin.

Nance Pettit's "Aftershock" is an intriguing, complicated song, giving evidence of the artist's talents both in her strong rhythmic vocals and use of words and allusions. Her work here is moving and

compelling, as deserving of national attention as anything in the mainstream.

David Wilcox, the compilation's only real "name" outside of the Asheville area, is another highlight with his "Who's Got Who," a bluesy, soulful offering with some great slide guitar thrown in for good measure.

When all is said and done, every song on the disc deserves to be there. Every performer did his or her best, and delivered a strong, solid performance. It's an album full of twenty highlights, with not a weak link to be found.

Here We Are is first and foremost a representation of the best singing and songwriting that Asheville, North Carolina has to offer. But it's so much more than that. Any song on the compilation could stand by itself, and any of the singer/songwriters could carry an album of their own. The appeal of the music certainly isn't just regional. North Carolina should be proud.

Info: Independent Songwriters' Group, P.O. Box 9974, Asheville, NC 28815.

Capital Acoustics: Contemporary and Traditional Folk Music of the Washington DC Area

Reviewed by Michael Hagen

I'm very much in love with this 17-track collection from D.C. and its suburbs. It builds on a solid base of established performers and adds a pile of newcomers who have made themselves names in the four years since this album's original release.

Its real strength is its range of material: Ethereal dulcimer and Celtic harp on a medly from the duo Ceoltoiri; Native American themes infuse a modern sound in Maggie's "Land of the Cree"; the droll comedy of Fast Folk veteran Steve Key's "Oat Bran Muffins" (oh, how we lament his semi-retirement from performing); gorgeous harmonies you may never hear again from Hazlewood, doing Ewan McColl's "The Terror Time" (the duo has since split, but the lovely voices of Grace Griffith and Susan Graham White each carry on solo); the duo Side by Side nails Steve Gillette's "Darcy Farrow," aided by Steve himself on guitar. And The New St. George stake their claim as kings of the avant-traditional hill, making fresh and new the traditional sea song, "Our Captain Cried 'All Hands.'"

Three of the performers herein, John Jennings, Pete Kennedy (sans Maura) and Jon Carroll, are veterans of Mary Chapin Carpenter's band; in addition to their own solid tracks, they're all over the album adding tasteful instrumental support to their neighbors. That kind of interplay lifts this album from being a mere assemblage of songs to an expression of musical community.

Info: The Institute of Musical Traditions, 7040 Carroll Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912.

Michael Hagen is assistant editor of *FFMM* and, by night, wages a

one-man war against *The Conspiracy*.

Devouring Our Roots: San Francisco's New-Folk Uprising

Reviewed by Michael Hagen

A broad range of styles and material is also the strength of this collection from the city by the bay. The CD offers two cuts from each band presented. I like that double dip, probably a fairer way to sample an unfamiliar act, and although there are only six bands represented, they're half great with only one stinker, very different from one another, and each act demonstrates some range in the two very different cuts presented.

Three solid winners here: The Bedlam Rovers turn in a rollicking, reeling Celt-pop "Wishing Well" and a world-weary rendition of the Irish traditional "Star of the County Down." The Wannabe Texans are a punk/country hybrid blending tasty git-box, twangy sangin', electric washboard and some fine fiddling with nihilist lyrics on "I Cut Myself" and "Rich Girl." The Muskrats' '60s folk-rock sound is reminiscent of The Washington Squares; here they offer covers of Dylan's "Walking Down the Line" and Tony Joe White's "Willie and Laura Mae."

And three acts not so accessible: The Longshoremen offer a beatnik-style monotone song/poetry with minimalist accompaniment. One can't help but compare these two tunes (unfavorably) to Laurie Anderson. Penelope Houston and the Birdboys add psychedelic tinges to a folk-rock sensibility, but it left me cold. As for the Terminators of Endearment, here with one surf-folk number and one song of truck-stop theology, one can only say: Great name for a band!

One other plus: The album is a benefit for Food Not Bombs, a San Francisco organization that provides free food to people truly in need and works to make the war on hunger at least as important as whatever other wars we're fighting this week.

Info: Subterranean Records, P.O. Box 2530, Berkeley, CA 94702.

Lost in Detroit: The New Urban Songwriters

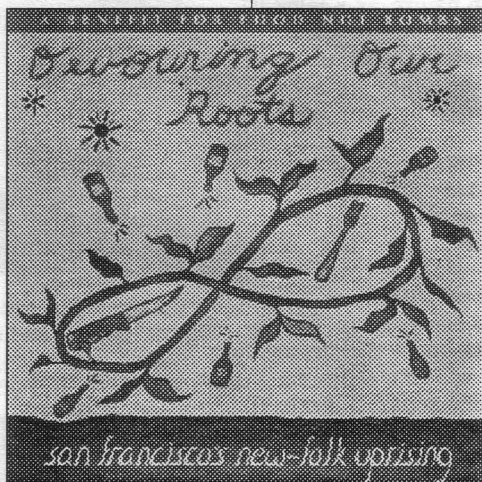
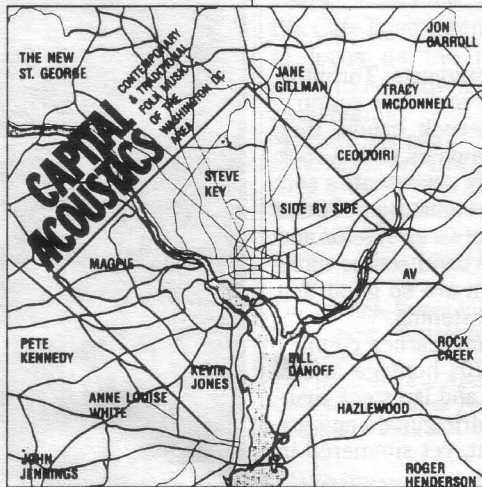
Reviewed by Michael Hagen

Oddly enough, this collection from the Motor City runs low on soul. With two songs apiece from only five performers, it's also kind of skimpy.

Best of the bunch is Chris Moore, who has something real to say in "From a Window" and "What It's Worth." But Scott Fab, Alex Lumelsky, Adam Druckman and Priscilla Ederle boast fine musician-ship in service of hollow songs.

The liner notes boast that "it's not unplugged, 'cuz it was never plugged," but I can't escape the fear that these five are rock and roll wolves in sheep's clothing, with amps a-waiting in the trunk and an eye out for the MTV cameras.

Info: Trampoline Records, P.O. Box 20811, Ferndale, Mich. 48220.



A mixed bag of record reviews

Blue Rodeo, Rick Lee, Debbie Diedrich, Terri Allard and New Middle Class

Blue Rodeo, *Five Days in July*

Reviewed by Dorissa Bolinski

Although not as honky-tonk as their name suggests, Toronto's Blue Rodeo does straddle the fence between rock and country. Following the tradition of early '70s country-rock bands, they combine a homespun jangle and pleasing harmonies with a rock sensibility. Their latest release, *Five Days in July*, represents a sort of coming of age for the band. As with previous Blue Rodeo albums, it showcases the superb songwriting of Greg Keelor and Jim Cuddy, but musically and stylistically, the band seems more confident than ever. Many songs on the album are so good that they seem like familiar favorites after just one listening.

Blue Rodeo is obviously influenced by many earlier country rock musicians, but the band is not a retro '70s homage in any sense. Their use of instruments such as pedal and lap steel, mandolin and accordion combined with tuneful electric guitars and driving keyboards creates a sound that is current, yet simmered in tradition.

Lyrical, songs on the album are romantic in nature, as Keelor and Cuddy choose to write predominantly about love lost or found. Unlike typical country music, though, Blue Rodeo's lyrics never approach sentimentality. Rather, they explore the subtle nuances of relationships and the forces that bring people together and drive them apart.

The album opens powerfully with the title track, a restrained, oddly wistful song about two people who find true love during a hurricane. Moody keyboards and a slightly dissonant guitar jam lend the song a subdued feel that gradually builds like an approaching storm.

"Hasn't Hit Me Yet," perhaps the best track on the album, follows. Although its lyrics describe a relationship breaking up, they are masked within the song's hooks and lustrous, poppy melody in which the band's vocals are sweetly combined with the sparkling delicacy of a mandolin. As with many Blue Rodeo songs, this one features the kind of stick-in-your-head refrain that the band has made its specialty.

The only track that approaches a retro feel is "Cynthia." Its prominent pedal steel, country piano and slightly stoned lyrics about UFO sightings recall the New Riders of the Purple Sage.

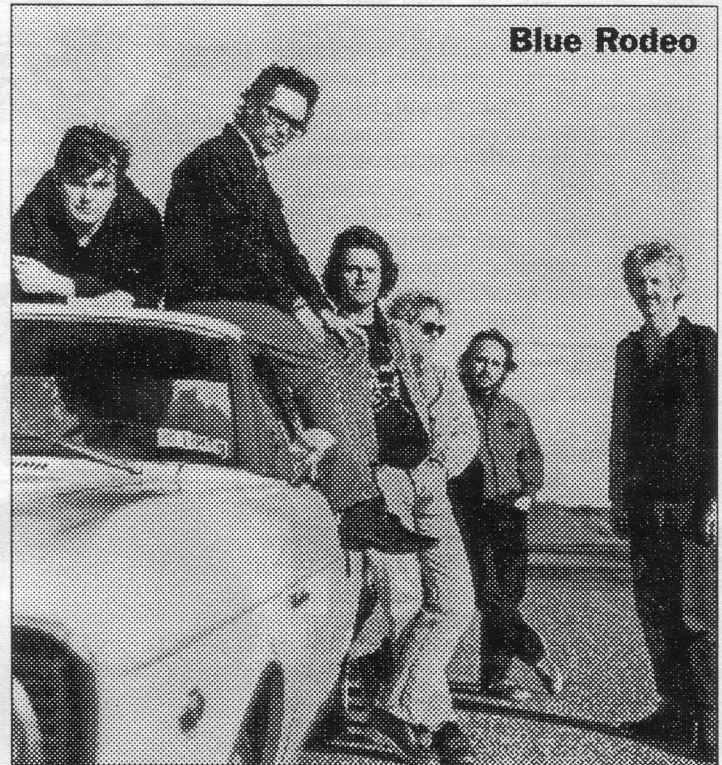
The album closes with a gentle folk medley, "Know Where You Go/Tell Me Your Dream," featuring the vocals of fellow Canadian Sarah McLachlan. This minimalistic medley, augmented with just guitar, bass and piano, relies heavily on the band's dusky harmonies.

Although "Five Days in July" is Blue Rodeo's most musically accessible album to date, it does not suffer from overblown production work. Nor does it lack the acoustic warmth of their previous efforts. It is certainly not a flirtation with uninspired commerciality. Rather, "Five Days in July" reflects the band's rich history and also proves that Blue Rodeo has been perfecting their skills over the years. The band's trademark blending of country and folk with a modern rock inclination and the concisely written songs of Keelor and Cuddy could appeal to fans of all types of music.

Rick Lee, *Natick*

Reviewed by Joe DeRouen

Natick is a small New England town with an estimated population of 1,651 people. It was once much more than that. As the title track of Rick Lee's new album *Natick* (Waterbug Records) explains, "Natick was a language, Natick is a town. No one speaks



the language, all of them are gone..."

Natick tells the sad story of the Native Americans displaced by the English and eventually interred on Deer Island in Boston Harbor, where they eventually died out, taking the Natick language with them.

Lee's song is at once sad and touching, a history lesson that none of us should ever forget. His voice reverberates through the music as he sings about the fate of the natives, emotionally charges and stirring.

Not all of *Natick* is as serious as the title song, but it's all just as well done. Lee's album is filled with traditional and contemporary ballads, both Irish and American in origin. "The High Part of Town" is a clever rhyming ballad about life in a small village in England. It's funny and entertaining, and the lyrics will stay with you long after you've listened to it.

"The Tinkerman's Daughter" is the true jewel of Lee's album, a retelling of an 11-verse poem about a farmer who steals a tinker's daughter and what befalls him and all the players involved. The song is truly epic, bringing to mind classic Irish and Celtic tales and songs.

Other highlights include a cover of Merle Haggard's "I Made the Prison Band," the 17th century ballad "Lady Margaret," and "Strangers," a touching juxtaposition of strangers exchanging points of view.

"Tam Lin," the last song on the album, is probably my favorite. It's the story of Thomas the Rhymer and his encounter with the folk of Faerie. As Lee's liner notes explain, it's an excellent instruction on how to rescue someone from enchantment. Lee's rich, deep voice lends itself particularly well to this song, making it stand out from all the others on the album.

Natick is a solid album, without even a single lacking track. If

you enjoy traditional ballads and new songs with a traditional feel, you'll want to add this one to your collection.

Debbie Diedrich, *Going the Distance*

Reviewed by Frank Gosar

"Just a twinge of pain, a slight reaction;
What we've got here is a *uterine contraction*.
We're moving in on a miracle you see:

It's the Miracle of Birth, and I'm *so glad* it's you and not me."

Actually, if there is any miracle on Debbie Diedrich's CD, *Going the Distance*, it's that the debut outing of this singer-songwriter should be so literate, polished, and uniformly excellent. Diedrich believes that folk music should challenge its listeners, make them feel, make them laugh, make them think. Her songs touch the heart, the head, and the funnybone.

Diedrich doesn't just write songs, she shares pieces of her life. Intelligent, sensitive, acerbically funny, her songs range from the bittersweet, sentimental "My Dad's Song" to the wrenching "Going the Distance" to the bitingly humorous "You Sure Would Look Cute (in a Paternity Suit)" and "Miracle of Birth."

In an genre often divided into songs political and personal, Diedrich is both. Pieces of life experience are woven into her songs, such as her "token political song," "The Other Side of Town," which begins with her five-year-old self moving to other side of town, where "the schools are so much better," and "all the other boys and girls are more like you," to a grown-up encounter with a homeless couple: "Where will my two dollars get them, I can't say..." Her conclusion, "There's no such place as the other side of town," says more in its refrain than the legislature does in a year.

More of her life shows up in the venomously funny, "You Sure Would Look Cute (in a Paternity Suit)," a song calculated to raise the consciousness of even the most boneheaded deadbeat dad:

"Now the facts of procreation are quite easy to explain:
I'm the one who bore the kid, the isolation and the pain.
I've made agonizing choices, undergone financial strain -
By the way, you owe me eighty thousand dollars."

Most of the album is less political, but no less universal. The emotionally wrenching title song talks of distances other than the purely physical:

"Who do I think I'm fooling, why do I even try?"

You're not even here and I am saying goodbye."

Other songs, such as "The Day the Tree Came Down" and "My Dad's Song" share personal reminiscence with an attention to detail you can smell and taste:

"My dad would have been a great old man..."

All he ever really wanted was to read the morning paper
With a cup of black coffee in his hand."

Originally released as a cassette in 1994, the album was resequenced for CD release, and includes a bonus track, "The List," originally recorded for *Fast Folk* #703. *Going the Distance* is available from West Broadway Music, P. O. Box 12178, Eugene, OR 97440.

Diedrich also performs with singer-songwriters Laura Kemp, Katie Henry, and T. R. Kelley as Babes With Axes. Their premiere CD, *W.O.W. Live Babes!* can be ordered from the same address.

Frank Gosar hosts The Saturday Cafe on KLCC-FM (89.7) in Eugene, Oregon.

New Middle Class, *New Middle Class*

Reviewed by Michael Hagen

One of the joys of volunteering for *Fast Folk* is getting first crack at the audition cassettes. You can keep your major-label CDs with glossy color booklets; let me at the self-produced cas-

settes with handmade black-and-white covers.

Case in point: This six-song demo tape by the Hudson Valley's New Middle Class, a/k/a Mike and Barbara Borok. Two pure voices and one guitar prove that elaborate production is merely gilding the lily with a truly well-crafted, original song.

The standout track is "I Was Born," which is either the official anthem for the naked egoism of our materialistic age or a hilarious satire of New Age narcissism. The genius of the song is that it works perfectly well either way.

"She's Cool" eyes the chasm between the teenaged computer dweeb and the unapproachable goddess he worships across the mall. A catchy beat, some very nifty wordplay and cleverly constructed rhymes that Tom Lehrer could envy.

"I'll Rock Your Cradle" is a lovely lullaby that strives to comfort in our terrifying times; "All Over Now," an original take on the break-up song; "Hands of the Press," a take on O.J. Simpson's Bronco ride that avoids cliché and makes a point that outlasts the circus of the trial.

Info: P.O. Box 708, Jefferson Valley, NY 10535-0708.

Terri Allard, *Terri Allard*

Reviewed by Bill Craig

After establishing a solid base of support in clubs in and around Charlottesville, Va., Terri Allard released her brilliant self-titled album last year. Her songwriting gifts are seen in the mix of the disc's heartbreak and heartfelt ballads, barroom rockers, plus a dash of unpretentious social consciousness.

A native of Minneapolis and the daughter of a National Geographic photographer, Terri's musical psyche was shaped by family members who both performed and appreciated good music. Terri's writing is marked by a passion that was nurtured both by her relatives and the work of favorite artists such as Emmylou Harris, John Prine, Bonnie Raitt, and Nanci Griffith.

And even though her powerhouse voice and acoustic guitar are enough to make most words sound awfully good, the production of engineering genius Bob Read, backing instrumentals by Pete Kennedy, Robbie Magruder, and Rico Petrucelli make Terri's alternately touching and raucous songs into music that begs for larger audiences.

What you hear on her album is the seamless blend of her no-frills songs with the distinctive sound of her backups. Get out your beer and hankies for the vivid country-girl-meets-the-big-city loneliness of "Metro Train" and the helpless despair of "What Do I Have to Do" and then pull out the old air guitar for the raw electric-guitar driven rock of "Once Upon A Time" and "Goin' Down." The finest writing is her "social" song, "Never Ceases to Amaze Me," a deceptively simple tune that gently reminds us of the absolute need to look out for one another.

As these eleven songs so gracefully demonstrate, Terri Allard is one of those precious few singer/songwriters who is both ready-for-the-radio and right-for-the-listening room. For info, write: Reckless Abandon Music, P.O. Box 592, Crozet, VA 22932

Bill Craig writes for the Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch and Acoustic Musician magazine.

Tracy Spring, *Life and Art*

Reviewed by Bob Franke

I wouldn't presume to review Tracy Spring's life and art (at last count she's still in the middle of both), but her new CD *Life and Art* is done, and it exhibits nearly everything I love about the Northwest music scene.

Tracy's songs are thoughtful and accessible at the same time, and cover a wide range of basic human experience. The settings they are given here by Tracy and her producer Linda Waterfall are sublimely *musical*, done with intelligence that doesn't point to

itself, but breathes life into every cut.

Tracy is a natural born singer whose alto voice is a wonderful folk and pop instrument, and always under exquisite control. She's surrounded on this disc by a virtual Who's Who of Northwest musicians, including Ms. Waterfall, Orville Johnson, honorary Northwesterner Nina Gerber, Cary Black, Kim Scanlon, John Miller, Janet Peterson, and The Righteous Mothers.

If you could afford this much talent at this level in Nashville or L.A., you probably wouldn't be allowed to exhibit this much fun at the same time - this CD isn't the product of an industry, but of a loving and supportive community of musicians.

There is a generosity of spirit that shines through this disc, and not only in the fact that in 13 well crafted songs you get 51

minutes and 31 seconds of great-souled music. As any kind of CD I call that a bargain; as a debut, independently produced CD it's really remarkable.

The disc is available from AziZ Productions, P.O. Box 2221, Yakima, WA 98907, at \$15 + \$1.50 p&h.

Bob Franke's newest CD on Daring/Rounder Records is *The Heart of the Flower*. Bob will perform at the Fast Folk Cafe in New York on December 9.

Also of note:

Jane Kelly Williams, whose song "I'm Just Feeling It Now" appeared on Fast Folk #707, *Guerrilla Recording*, just released her debut album, *Tapping the Wheel*, on Parachute/EMI Records. The album is available at most record stores.

Coming to the Fast Folk Cafe

October

Fri 10/27 New Voices NYC CD release party for issue 804

We reunite the culprits from this issue's CD. Including: Tim Robinson, Nich Haber, Linda Sharar, Mike Soloway, Peter Smith, Richard Cuccaro, Peter Twist, Paul Sachs, Dain Ichikawa, Ron Renninger, Ed Alkalay, Jonathan Pointer, Paul Clarke, Alan Andrews and Bingo Gazingo.

Sat 10/28 Michael Smith & Anne Hills plus Peter Smith

Among Michael's renowned songs: "There's a Panther in Michigan" and the much-beloved "The Dutchman." *Time* is his current CD for Flying Fish. *Angle of the Light*, Anne's eighth release on Flying Fish, is new this month. Her previous solo CD, *October Child*, was entirely Michael Smith covers.

November

Thu 11/2 John Gorka plus Wendy Beckerman

When will you ever see John in a room this intimate? *Out of the Valley*, John's fifth CD, is on High Street. If the audience is truly worthy, we might also hope for a visit from blues legend Slow Blind Driveway. *Marina's Owl* is Wendy's follow-up to her Great Divide debut CD, *By Your Eyes*.

11/3-4 Jack Hardy plus Nikki Matheson

Fri and Sat

Civil Wars, Jack's tenth album, was released last year on Great Divide Records. It encompasses both the War Between the States and the wars inside our own hearts. Longtime subscribers will recall Nikki's many Fast Folk appearances.

Fri 11/10 Carol Lipnik/Ron Renninger

Carol melds jazz influences, incredible vocal range and wacky Coney Island imagery. *Flowers in the Sidewalk*, Ron's third album, was just released to good reviews. Ron appears on the newest Fast Folk CD, #804, with "Only the Rivers Run Free."

Sat 11/11 Hugh Blumenfeld plus Leo

Barehanded and *The Strong in Spirit* are Hugh's two albums on 1-800-Prime-CD. Hugh bowled 'em over at the Falcon Ridge Folk Festival this summer. Many love him best for the poignant "Let Me Fall in Love Before the Spring Comes."

Fri 11/17 Roy Book Binder plus Paul Cartier

The Hillbilly Blues Cats (on Rounder Records) is our favorite CD of country blues by this master picker. If you haven't already seen it, search out the great interview in the summer *Sing Out!*

Sat 11/18 Richard Meyer plus Cady McClain

A Letter From the Open Sky, Richard's third album, is on Shanachie Records, on the heels of his *The Good Life!*

Fri 11/24 Oscar Brand plus Stone Soup

Oscar recently marked the 50th anniversary of his WNYC radio show. We're hoping to hear lots of the uncensored classics from his *Bawdy Songs and Backroom Ballads* album. Stone Soup, a downtown-based quartet, sings of struggle and social justice, recalling the sound and spirit of the Weavers.

Sat 11/25 First Anniversary Benefit Show

We can't yet divulge the names of the special guest artists who will celebrate our first anniversary here on North Moore Street. But we do promise you a spectacular show. Special admission price for this fundraiser event is \$20.

December

Fri 12/1 Brooks Williams plus Amy Correia

Sat 12/2 Ilene Weiss/David Hamburger

Fri 12/8 Priscilla Herdman plus Tim Robinson

Sat 12/9 Bob Franke plus Tamara

12/15-16 Richard Shindell plus Peg Loughran & Rob Laurens

Sat 12/30 Five Chinese Brothers plus Nich Haber

Coming January 27, the 14th annual Fast Folk Revue at The Bottom Line

The Fast Folk Cafe is at 41 N. Moore St., Tribeca (Two blocks below Canal St., east of Hudson St.)

Franklin Street Station on #1 subway, Canal Street Station on A/C/E trains.

Call 212-274-1636. Showtime is 7:30. Tickets are \$10 (\$8 for Fast Folk Musical Magazine subscribers).

Tamarack proves you can't be too Canadian

Stateside audiences are warming to this trio from the Great White North

By Jan Vanderhorst

When discussing the Canadian folk trio Tamarack, you could easily come to the conclusion that their credo is "If you write songs about your audience, they will buy your recordings. Shameless use of the *Field of Dreams* analogy this may be, but one only has to look at the titles of the Guelph, Ontario, group's albums to see why *Music of Canada*, *Frobisher Bay*, *Tamarack on the Prairies* and *Tamarack on the Grand* are just some of the trio's 10 recordings. During the 16 years the group has been in existence, they've sung traditional and contemporary songs about the people and places which shaped the Canadian psyche and landscape.

Using Canada's Celtic tradition as a starting point, Tamarack explores historical events and locales to illustrate the rich heritage Canadians across the country share. Whether it be Quebec ("Les Raftsmen"), Newfoundland ("The Old Ragadoo") or the Canadian Arctic ("Frobisher Bay"), Tamarack focuses its attention on the strength in, and the hardships faced by, people throughout the country over the years. "Sooner or later," says group member James Gordon, "we'll have a little album to go with every little part of the country and [then] we can stop!"

The beginnings of Tamarack can be traced back to 1973 and a collection of a dozen musicians called Maple Sugar. By 1978 this dozen was whittled down to a trio consisting of Randy Sutherland, James Gordon and Jeff Bird. Their first LP, *Music of Canada*, was released in 1980.

In the years since 1978 a myriad of musicians have joined and left the band, leaving James Gordon as the lone original member. But it is not his sole vision which guides Tamarack. The changing personnel of the group has had a distinct influence on keeping the music fresh for the group as a whole. One look at the Tamarack family tree shows that most new members already had some connection to Tamarack prior to joining the group. As an example: Gwen Swick, who was in the band from 1990 to 1993, was previously in a band with Alex Sinclair. Alex replaced Randy Sutherland in 1985, but had already been the engineer of 1980's *Music of Canada*, as well as being a member of Maple Sugar in 1973.

In fact, it was through this musical cross-pollination that led the Cowboy Junkies to record "Mining for Gold" for their *Trinity Sessions* album. Jeff Bird and percussionist David Houghton left Tamarack in 1988 to play backup for the Junkies, and brought with them the song James Gordon had adapted from a British Columbia mining song.

It was also because of this extended family tree that Tamarack always seemed to know someone who could step in when a member left the group to pursue other musical projects. It wasn't until Gwen Swick left in 1993 that they actually held an open call audition, with Prince Edward Island native Carole Leclair being chosen. "We've always done a certain proportion of our material from the maritimes," says Gordon, "Now we've got an authentic

ring to it. As well as being a bass player and vocalist, which are sort of the shoes she was filling, she's also a really good guitar player, so it's changed the instrumental configuration a little bit and added another dimension to it. We're really pleased with the way the vocals blend."

To last 16 years playing distinctly Canadian music is a tribute to the group's persistence, ingenuity and strong belief that what it's doing is important to all Canadians. "If there's a secret we've discovered," says Gordon, "it's that in this country the popula-

tion isn't large enough, and the entertainment business isn't big enough to sustain yourself just on what you would call a "regular gig." There just aren't enough venues around that book entertainment of our ilk. So you almost have to go out and make your own. We'll create certain projects that have a certain audience built-in for them . . . you almost have to create a need for what you're doing."

But there's a flip side to this approach to music making. According to James Gordon, "We're also discovering there isn't a huge market for this angle of the business, so we're just trying to cover as much of that territory as we can."

It's very ironic, then, that *Tamarack on the Grand*, a collection of songs dealing with the Grand River watershed of Ontario, as well as the previous two recordings *Frobisher Bay* and *Fields of Rock and Snow* are on the Folk Era label out of Naperville, Illinois.

"It's certainly reaching an audience that we would not be able to reach ourselves, or another small Canadian company," says James. "The strange trouble we're having right now is [it's] easier

to find our albums in the States than in Canada right now! [Canada's] always been pretty pathetic for distributing folk music, but since [Folk Era's] got the extra problem of

Tamarack's songs spotlight Canadian places and uniquely Canadian stories. Their worry: would the Americans get it?

doing it from another country, sometimes we actually have to go down and smuggle our own albums back into this country."

The prospect of promoting Canadian folk music to an American audience did raise some genuine concerns for Tamarack, as in "Would the Americans get it?"

"Well, they're very curious about [the songs], Gordon admits. "We were worried, perhaps more than we needed to be, when we went into the States. We'd look at our set list and go, 'Jeez, how are they going to figure that one out,' or 'That's about something they'd never know,' but [American audiences] don't really care about the historic details, they're there to listen to the music. Most of our songs on one level just tell a story and they seem to be pretty receptive to that. It seems to be a method of musical storytelling we're doing that they don't have a lot of down there. Not only is the material of a subject matter they're unfamiliar with, I think we sound kind of different to them too, and that has worked to our advantage."

When the matter at hand is survival in the world of folk music, any advantage is worth taking advantage of.

A slow, steady climb for The Bottle Rockets

Lead singer Brian Henneman talks about touring, touring, touring

By Dorissa Bolinski

In these days of restrictive radio programming, a band like The Bottle Rockets could go almost entirely unheard outside of their local St. Louis area. By touring almost non-stop, they're trying to introduce America to their music the hard way — one city at a time.

The Bottle Rockets have been steadily gaining a following thanks to the eclectic and progressive booking of club owners across the country. Their numerous appearances never fail to attract capacity crowds that rock as hard as the band.

Hailing from the bowels of the Midwest, The Bottle Rockets combine country and Southern rock with a Ramones-era punk sensibility, and are as American as trailer parks and your dad's old Buick. Although this musical approach is not uncharted territory, their sound is surprisingly refreshing now that a few years have passed since bands like Jason and the Scorchers and The Blasters carried the roots rock torch in the mid-'80s.

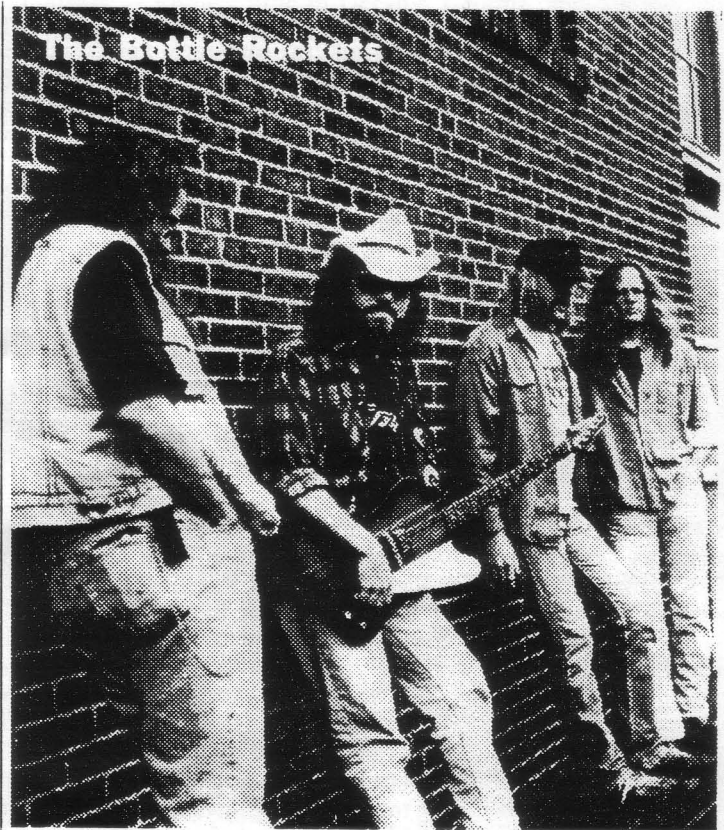
In 1993, The Bottle Rockets released a self-titled CD on the Minneapolis-based East Side Digital label. Recently they released *The Brooklyn Side*, their second album, on the same label. *The Brooklyn Side*, an infectious, guitar-slamming collection of country-tinged rock somewhat reminiscent of Neil Young and Crazy Horse, is remarkably polished considering this indie band is just barely three years old. Songs range from thoughtful pop ballads to driving, '70s-style hard rock.

Formed in 1972, the band consists of guitarist/vocalist Brian Henneman, drummer Mark Ortmann, guitarist Tom Parr and bassist Tom Ray. Prior to forming The Bottle Rockets, Henneman was a guitar tech for Uncle Tupelo and was prominently featured playing several instruments on their March 16-20, 1992 album. Meanwhile, Ortmann was living in Nashville, where he backed country artist Shelly West and performed at the Grand Ol' Opry.

Slouching across America in old jeans, flannel shirts and John Deere caps, The Bottle Rockets don't look like MTV's current incarnation of cool, but this blue-collar sense suits their music and outlook perfectly. The band members are all well into their 30s, and this sets them apart musically and philosophically from many of their indie-rock peers. Most notably, the difference lies in the band's well-developed vocals and its songwriting, which tends to be more melody-based than many young bands. Lyrically, their songs are simultaneously humorous and poignant, evoking images of small-town life and the characters who inhabit middle America.

According to lead singer Henneman, the band cites their home town of Festus, Mo., as a major influence on their lyrics. In fact, he says, all of the songs on *The Brooklyn Side* are meant to represent a day in the life of this town. Although a song like "Welfare Mother" could be construed as a joke about small-town economics, it has a sympathetic quality. "We don't write 'joke songs,'" he says flatly. "That's not what we're about at all. I think music is too important to be a joke. My style of songwriting is based more on the kind of stuff John Prine does. I learned a lot about writing songs from listening to his music when I was younger. A lot of his lyrics seem funny at first, but then the irony hits you."

"Contrary to what some people think, none of our lyrics are



'We take gigs where and when we can get them. We all quit our jobs and this is what we do for a living. If we stop, we go broke.'

meant to make fun of small towns or the people who live there, but they don't glorify small-town life either like a lot of silly country songs do. Our songs on *The Brooklyn Side* are just observations of the things we've witnessed in Festus," says Henneman. "I think a lot of people hate their home town when they're there, but get an appreciation for it when they get the chance to leave. Ultimately, you can't ever totally hate where you came from because that's where your friends and family are. When you get away, you always go back in your mind, and sometimes you see things differently, more sympathetically."

The Bottle Rockets are an unusually cohesive live band, which accounts for the growing attendance at their shows. Of course, constant touring has helped them perfect their live playing skills, but Henneman grudgingly admits the old cliché that there is a definite chemistry among the band's members.

"We know each other real well. Like, on stage, if Tom [their bass player] is gonna pause to light a cigarette, we all can tell before he does it. We anticipate what the other guy is gonna do or play, and go with it," he explains.

The band has not taken a break in touring since the release of

their first album, and Henneman admits that this touring schedule is often grueling, especially when there are inconsistencies in the logistics. But Henneman and his band mates are pragmatic. "We take gigs where and when we can get them, and we're not gonna complain. We all quit our jobs and this is what we do for a living. If we stop, we go broke. Or, at the very least, we'd have to pay for our beer," he jokes.

So far, the band's favorite cities to play are New York, Philadelphia and Boston. According to Henneman, "We have a local fan base in the Midwest, but it's cooler to play a big city like New York because no one personally knows us there. People come to see us because they like our music, not just because we're local heroes. We didn't know anyone in the Northeast when we started playing there, but now we have a fan base there, and it keeps growing after every show through word of mouth or whatever."

On stage, The Bottle Rockets barge through their songs with a gutsy guitar bravado, never losing the melody to thrash. Their live sound is definitely more raucous than the recorded material, but Henneman explains it is also their most natural sound. "When we record an album, everyone's using like ten different guitars as opposed to just one or two when we play live. Plus, when we're live, we don't have a lot of time to think about doing a song differently like we would in the studio."

The Brooklyn Side was recorded in, of all places, Brooklyn, N.Y., and produced by former Del-Lords guitarist Eric "Roscoe" Ambel. According to Henneman, the band could have recorded it in the Midwest, but, ironically, "New York saved us money because we got to stay at a friend's house."

So far, the album has been selling well in such diverse cities as Chicago, Portland and Minnesota. According to Henneman, the CD is played on AAA and college radio stations "in little pockets across the country, but not one place in particular." Henneman admits that the band prefers to let the East Side Digital folks handle business and promotion work. "I don't know if we have a tar-

get audience, but the record company is sending CDs out everywhere," he says. "They're just throwing the fish on the ceiling and seeing which ones stick."

Many songs on *The Brooklyn Side* seem suitable for country radio, but that format, in most parts of the country, is as restrictive as any other. Henneman says, laughing, "We've gotten no response from country radio because our music is too rough and we don't look like a bunch of peach-faced cowboys!"

Henneman admits that he is dismayed by the fact that so few opportunities exist for a band like The Bottle Rockets to be heard. "I remember listening to the radio in '73," he recalls.

"Everything you heard was so different, but it was all accepted. You'd never get that variety today. The programming is so calculated. In the early '70s, you'd hear something new and it would open your mind to something else. You don't get that chance today."

"In general," he continues, "it's really hard for a new band to break into the music scene. A band like Green Day becomes popular so now every record label is gonna scramble to find their own Green Day. If you sound a little out of the norm, forget it."

The world of music is fickle and constantly changing, but there will always be a desire for the type of rootsy American music that The Bottle Rockets create so well. This sound, neither trendy nor contrived, is as honest and straightforward as the band's approach to their chosen career. Of the future, Henneman says, "We don't know what to expect. We're enjoying touring and playing live and hope our name gets around that way. This is what we've chosen to do, and we're happy."

The Brooklyn Side, with its songs about a day in the life of small-town America, was a concept album of sorts, and Henneman says the band is considering a similar idea for its next release. "We won't stray far from our sound or anything," he explains, "But we're always thinking up strange concepts for albums. We'll just see what happens. You can't name the baby before it's born."

Gabriel Yacoub to tour U.S.; New York date is November 5

The editors have no doubt that longtime Fast Folk subscribers will be as ecstatic as we to learn that Gabriel Yacoub will launch his U.S. tour here in New York November 5 with an 8 p.m. show at Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. He'll be accompanied by Gilles Chabenat on the hurdy-gurdy.

Although he has toured the U.S. and most of the planet inside out these last ten years, Yacoub, ex-leader of the legendary French folk band Malicorne, has never played a full-length show in New York (although did appear twice on the bill of the Fast Folk Revue at The Bottom Line in the '80s).

Gabriel's career started as guitarist and singer with the demigod of harpsichord, Alan Stivell, in the '70s renaissance of French folk music.

Quickly enough, Gabriel founded Malicorne, for 12 years or so one of the most tasteful folk-rock bands you're likely to happen across. "They did for French folk music what none of their British counterparts ever quite achieved: put it smack-bang in the path of commerciality," said *Folk Roots Magazine*.

Malicorne proved their point with three gold records, without ever compromising their artistic integrity.

"Malicorne was respected from all sides of the musical divide," wrote *Billboard* recently.

When Malicorne separated in 1981, Gabriel went solo. *Bel* and *Quatre* are the two recent albums of the passionate and restless singer-composer-writer-musician in the full maturity of his art. The acoustic show that will tour 20 U.S. cities and premiere in New York will feature songs from both albums.

For information about the New York show, call 212-355-6160; for info on tour dates, contact your local Ticketmaster.

Here's more of what they've been saying lately about Gabriel: "The passion in French singer Gabriel Yacoub's voice defies the language barrier."

— *Boston Globe*

"Yacoub's voice is liquid and reedy, his guitar work brilliant."

— *Vanity Fair*

"He is a superb singer with a powerful, emotional voice, an outstanding guitarist and a brilliant songwriter."

— *Down Home Music*, San Francisco

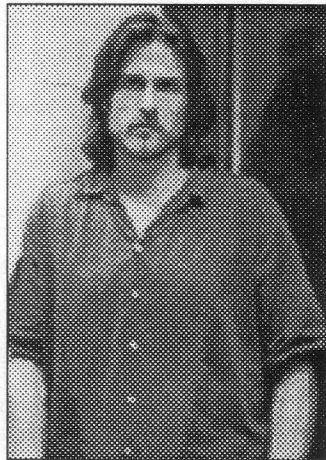
"Yacoub's music has the assured sound and feel of someone doing what comes naturally ... highly recommended."

— *Billboard*

Bios

We've added a new wrinkle to the brief biographical notes we always run about the songwriters represented on this issue's CD; we've asked each writer to share the ten records he or she would take along if stranded on a desert island. We hope their disc picks give you a little more insight into what drives their music.

Tim Robinson is a songwriter from Croton, N.Y., by way of Park Slope, Brooklyn. He writes in his kitchen from a pile of notes and odd memos scribbled down in fits of confusion. He has a recording session slated for the very near future which will be available on cassette. Tim is 10 to 20 years behind all current forms of technology and hopes it shows in his music. His favorite color has been endlessly compromised, his favorite book is *Winesburg, Ohio*. For further info, call (718) 789-5707.



Tim's disc picks:

John Prine, *Prime Time*
Lucinda Williams, *Lucinda Williams*
Bruce Springsteen, *Greetings from Asbury Park*
Bob Dylan, *John Wesley Harding*
Ry Cooder, *Chicken Skin Music*
Joe Ely, *Live at the Liberty Lunch*
The Flatlanders, *More a Legend than a Band*
The Clash, *London Calling*
Steve Earle, *Shut Up and Die Like an Aviator*
Any of Jack's old Merle Haggard LPs

Jonathan Pointer was raised by Methodists a mere six miles from the banks of the Missouri River.

Elvis Costello, *Trust*
Randy Newman, *Trouble In Paradise*
Randy Newman, *Land of Dreams*
Tom Waits, *Bone Machine*
Steve Earle, *Guitar Town*
Steve Earle, *Train a Comin'*
Sarah McLachlan, *The Freedom Sessions*
Richard Thompson, *Rumor & Sigh*
Richard Thompson, *Mirror Blue*
Bruce Springsteen, *Nebraska*



Linda Sharar first wet her feet in the Manhattan folk scene in 1991, making appearances in cafes such as Sin-E and the Eagle Tavern. With a musical style following in the footsteps of mentors Shawn Colvin, Emily Saliers and David Wilcox, she has made significant strides toward her own sound and a unique poetic voice. Her songs aim to convey potent, thoughtful awareness toward the many subjects which strike her interest, from city living to the challenges of being an independent woman.

Linda consistently appears in New York area venues such as the Cottonwood Cafe, the West End Gate, the Sun Mountain Cafe, Maxwell's in Hoboken and the new Fast Folk Cafe. Outside of Manhattan, she has performed at such well-known establishments as Eddie's Attic in Decatur, Georgia, and The Bluebird Cafe in Nashville. Linda is currently making recordings of her material with David Seitz of the New York record label 1-800-Prime-CD.

For more info, write: Share Our Music, 52 MacDougal St. #5D, New York, NY 10012; phone (212) 533-9811; or e-mail LDSharar@aol.com.

Linda's disc picks:

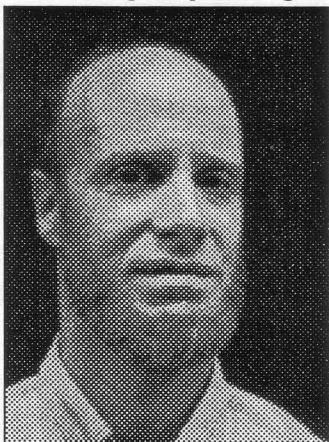
James Taylor, *Mud Slide Slim*
Shawn Colvin, *Steady On*
Tuck & Patti, *Tears of Joy*
Indigo Girls, *Rites of Passage*
Joan Armatrading, *Replay*
The Pretenders [debut]
Take 6 [debut]
Original soundtrack, *No Nukes*
Pierre Bensusan, *Spices*
Stevie Wonder, *Musiquarium*



Currently residing in Maspeth, Queens, **Mike Soloway** has spent most of his life in the New York City area. He enjoys playing the guitar, singing, composing and teaching. He plays every Saturday night from 6 to 9:30 at Basset's, 123 W. Broadway (near Duane) in Tribeca. Mike recommends it as a great place to grab an early dinner before heading up to the Fast Folk Cafe.

Mike's disc picks:

Grant Green, *Street of Dreams*
Art Tatum, *Piano Starts Here*
The Weavers at Carnegie Hall
The Beatles, *Abbey Road*
Thelonious Monk, *The High Priest*
Dexter Gordon, *Our Man in Paris*
The Essential Lenny Bruce
Allan Sherman, *My Son, The Folksinger*
Anything by Blind Blake
Charlie Parker, *Now's the Time*
Honorable mention for best album title: Mort Sahl, *Look Forward in Anger*



Paul Sachs was born and raised on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. He has played several downtown clubs including Sin-E and The Bitter End.



Bronx-born **Tamara Feinman** began with the violin and the piano at the age of six. It wasn't until the late 1980s, however, that she finally found her way to the guitar and began to write songs. Since returning from Boston, where she studied at the Berklee College of Music, Tamara has been featured in showcases presented by organizations such as Women in Music and the National Academy of Popular Music. She has become a regular on the New York City club scene. Info: 326 E. 74th St #12, New York, NY 10021.

Tamara's disc picks:

Joni Mitchell, *Blue*
 The Beatles, *Help*
 The Beatles, *Rubber Soul*
 Suzanne Vega, *Suzanne Vega*
 Wendy Beckerman, *Marina's Owl*
 Peter Gabriel, *Shaking the Tree*
 Elvis, *Elvis' Golden Records*
 Richard Julian (as soon as it comes out, ship it to my island)
 Aretha Franklin, *Aretha's Gold*
 Paul Simon, *Graceland*



also participates in the weekly Songwriter's Exchange. Wendy released her debut album *By Your Eyes* in January, 1993, on both Great Divide Records and the Swiss label Brambus. Her second, *Marina's Owl* was released in Autumn, 1994. Both are distributed by Hear Music and Tower Record stores, and available through the mail. \$15 CD \$10 tape to Wendy Beckerman c/o Great Divide, 178 W. Houston St. #9, New York, NY 10014.

Wendy's momentary disc picks

Phoebe Snow, *Phoebe Snow*
 Fabrizio De Andre, *Rimini*
 Leonard Cohen, *Songs From a Room*
 Bonnie Raitt, *Give It Up*
 Stevie Wonder, *Original Musiquarium*
 Billy Holiday, *Verve Silver Collection*
 Suzanne Vega, *Solitude Standing*
 Original Cast Recording, *Hair*
 The Roches, *Bootleg tape live at Reactionary Mary's 1978*
 Steely Dan, *Countdown To Ecstasy*



Singer-songwriter **Paul Clarke** composes and performs on piano and guitar. Moved to anger and tears at social and environmental conditions, he sings songs of the wounded earth and her creatures. His songs have been played on WBAI-FM, at the United Nations and at professional teaching seminars. He has collaborated with homeless people to write and present music/theater pieces at neighborhood churches and at the New York Open Center. Supporting himself by teaching in a New York City high school, he writes and performs with his students (who like his music!). He plans to release his first CD in the near future. Info: (212) 724-1333.

Paul's disc picks:

Joni Mitchell, *Blue*
 Beatles, *Revolver*
 Edith Piaf, *The Best of Edith Piaf*
 Paul Winter Consort, *The Misa Gia*
 Stevie Wonder, *Conversation Peace*
 Pink Floyd, *Dark Side of the Moon*
 Stevie Wonder, *Inner Vision*
Best of Motown
 Christoph Eschenbach, piano, *Chopin Preludes*
 Bach, *Inventions*



When you hear **Alan Andrews** for the first time, you know why he is at the vanguard of the modern folk scene. His edgy lyrics, coupled with an unorthodox folk approach, sets him apart from the folkies of yore.

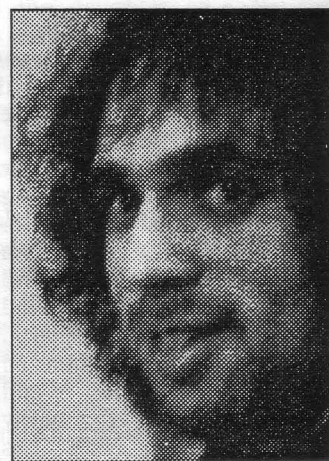
That he was born and raised in New York City plays a large part in that. Obviously, a good dose of cynicism and wit come with the territory. So does the exposure to an eclectic range of musical styles.

So, from the boom boxes near his house on Manhattan's West Side, he's picked up a taste of Tejano music. By befriending a waiter at his favorite diner, he's taken a shine to some Greek instrumentation. And of course, as is the birthright of any American white boy, he throws a little rock 'n' roll into the mix as well. But as a songwriter with something to say, his interest was inevitably piqued by the burgeoning downtown folk scene.

Despite the fact that that downtown folk community has embraced his talents, he here bites the hand that feeds him with his anti-anthem "Folk Music."

Alan's disc picks:

The Essential Johnny Cash
 Nina Simone, *The Blues*
 Lou Reed, *New York*
 Dave Van Ronk, *A Chrestomathy*
The Patsy Cline Collection
 Leonard Cohen, *I'm Your Man*
The Best of Leonard Cohen
 Robert Earl Keen, *Gringo Honeymoon*
 Lenya and Weill, *Berlin American Theater Songs*
 Ennio Morricone, *Once Upon a Time in the West*

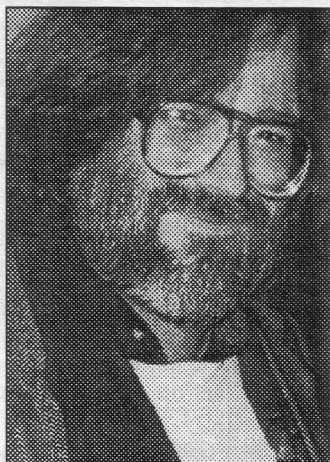


Originally from New Jersey, **Wendy Beckerman** has been an active part of the New York acoustic music scene for several years. She has recorded several songs for Fast Folk and has performed in our annual revue at The Bottom Line since 1989. She

Peter Smith recently moved to New York City from Florida (“\$5.50 for a beer?”) He has been a journalist, actor, singer, comedy writer, playwright, stand-up comedian, theater critic, composer, telephone book proofreader and hit with a pie by Soupy Sales (he has pictures). He loves his kids (Hi, Brennan and Nolan), Steely Dan, Ted Peter’s Smoked Fish in Pass-A-Grille, Fla., Robert Anton Wilson’s books, *Pogo* and *Love and Rockets* comics, Django Reinhardt, Theodore Sturgeon and the nape of Shell’s neck. He has serious, serious attention span problems.

Peter’s disc picks:

The Beatles, *Revolver* (British version)
 Robert Kraft and the Ivory Coast, *Moodswing*
 The Replacements, *Pleased to Meet Me*
 Django Reinhardt and the Hot Club Quintet of France
 Caravan, *For Girls Who Grow Plump in the Night*
 Michael Nesmith, *Infinite Rider on the Big Dogma*
 Steely Dan, *Countdown to Ecstasy*
 NRBQ, *Peek-A-Boo*
 Van Morrison, *St Dominic’s Preview*
 Michael Smith, *Michael Smith/Love Stories*



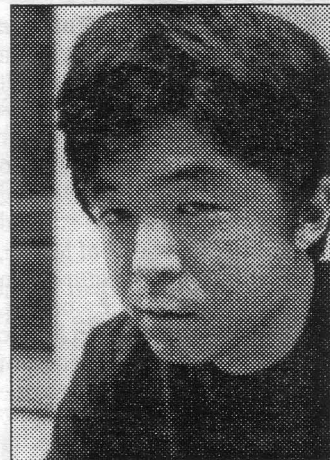
Nich Haber started playing in various bands in 1987, working the clubs in and around the Boston area. He started playing solo when he lived in Berlin in 1989. Upon he return to Boston he joined with Seth Cahn to form an acoustic duo called Mallachi Crunch, which played the Boston area and then toured through Amsterdam and Germany including the newly reunited Berlin. Nich has recently moved to New York to continue his work as a solo artist. He has just recorded *Eight Powerful, Solid and Efficient Songs* on Treyftone Records with his band Genius Move. Contact: Treyftone Records, 52 W. 88th St #4F, New York, NY 10024; or phone (212) 877-5948.

Nich’s picks:

The English Beat, *Special Beat Service*
 Toots and the Maytals, *Live at Hammersmith*
 Steel Pulse, *Rastafari Centennial*
 Manu Dibango, *Wakafrika*
 Beatles, *Abbey Road*
 Beatles, *Revolver*
 Vladimir Horowitz, *Scriabin*
 Seth Cahn, *Peaceful Man*
 The Clash, *London Calling*
 XTC, *Black Sea*



Dain Ichikawa grew up around New York, spending most of his time here and has been playing the guitar about the last third of his days thus far. He’s a newcomer to performing on stage and takes his hat off to the people of Fast Folk. We at Fast Folk apologize to Dain for the typo mistitling “A Mandolin and Harmonica” as “Guitar and Mandolin” on the CD package here.

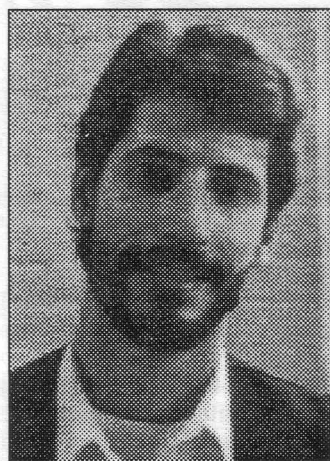


Ed Alkalay is a songwriter from New York City. He performs both as a solo act and as part of a trio with Steve DeRosa and Pat Almonrode. His songs do not moralize or romanticize, but rather relate a story or a feeling to which a listener must bring his or her own experience.

Ed is currently working on his first CD. He is recording it in Boston with the help of several area musicians as well as Steve and Pat. It is tentatively scheduled for January 1996 release. Ed intends to be the first musician to have recorded a CD without owning a CD player. For info: Dark Waters Productions, 407 E. 85th St, #4R, New York, NY 10028; or call (212) 737-5880.

Ed’s disc picks:

1-10. K-Tel’s Greatest Hits



Ron Renninger has been performing for audiences in Europe, Japan and the United States. His just-released third album, *Flowers in the Sidewalk*, has been critically well-received. He’s currently performing at folk festivals and coffeehouses. Info: c/o Vienna Virginia Records, 84-70 129th St #4E, Kew Gardens, NY 11415; or call (718) 846-2789.

Ron’s disc picks:

Original Cast Recording, Steven Sondheim’s *A Little Night Music*
 Sting, *Nothing Like the Sun*
 Miles Davis, *Kind of Blue*
 Steely Dan, *Royal Scam*
 Judy Collins, *Wild Flowers*
 Maurice Ravel, *Pavane for a Dead Princess*
 Original Cast Recording, Irving Berlin’s *Annie Get your Gun*
 Original Cast Recording, Bernstein & Sondheim’s *West Side Story*
 Bonnie Raitt, *Nick of Time*
 Keith Jarrett, *Vienna Concert*





Sandy Opatow and Lucia Russett have been friends for ten years, and New York City-dwellers for six. They started singing Roches songs at Bryn Mawr College, and launched **Petronella** to impress their friends at their fifth-year college reunion. In April 1994, they released their debut album, *Where You Are*. The duo has been bringing its sassy, harmony-laden, NYC-inspired folk music to audiences throughout the Northeast. On a recent California tour, they learned highway driving and the true meaning of the word "awesome."

Petronella's disc picks:

V.M. Bhatt and Ry Cooder, *A Meeting By the River*

Steeleye Span, *The Early Years*

Joan Armatrading, *Track Record*

R.E.M., *Murmur*

Cecilia Bartoli, *If You Love Me: 18th Century Italian Songs*

Joni Mitchell, *Blue*

Stevie Wonder, *Songs in the Key of Life*

k.d. lang, *Ingenu*

Michelle Shocked, *Short Sharp Shocked*

Trevor Pinnock and the English Concert, J.S. Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos*

Peter Twist, recently transplanted to New York from California via D.C., is pleased to have his work included in this compilation. He is currently working on a new recording project and is in search of a jumbo-body Guild and a border collie, though not necessarily in that order. At this moment, he can be seen tearing down the Saw Mill River Parkway in a borrowed vehicle, dictating this bio to a terrified but reluctantly compliant companion.

Peter's disc picks:

Rolling Stones, *Exile on Main Street*

The Replacements, *Tim*

Matthew Sweet, *100% Fun*

Richard Meyer, *A Letter From the Open Sky*

Alex Chilton, *A Man Called Destruction*

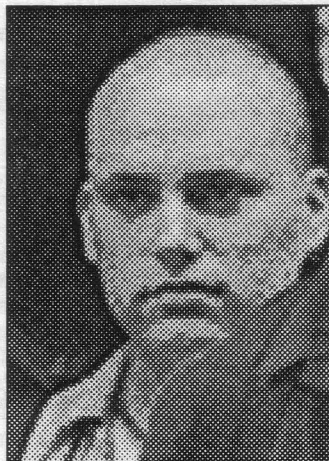
Tamara, *Two Dresses*

Dan Hicks, *Shootin' Straight*

James Booker, *Junco Partner*

Maceo Parker, *Life on the Planet Groove*

Dave Alvin, *King of California*



Born in Bridgeport, Conn., **Richard Cuccaro** currently resides in Brooklyn. He's been writing songs on and off for 30 years. "Fast Folk Magazine and the Cafe have given me a chance to focus on the most favorite thing to do with my life - writing and singing."

Richard's disc picks:

Little Feat, *Feats Don't Fail Me Now*

Greg Brown, *Dream Cafe*

Elvis Presley, *The Sun Collection*

John Hiatt, *Bring the Family*

Cormac McCarthy, *Picture Gallery Blues*

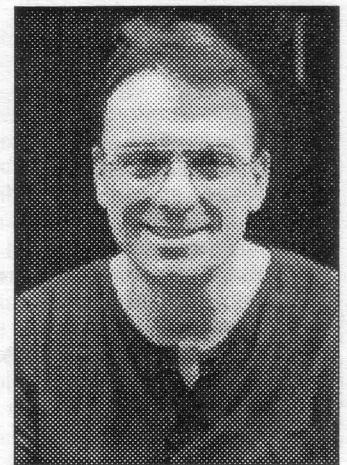
The Beatles, *Sergeant Pepper*

Neil Young, *Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere*

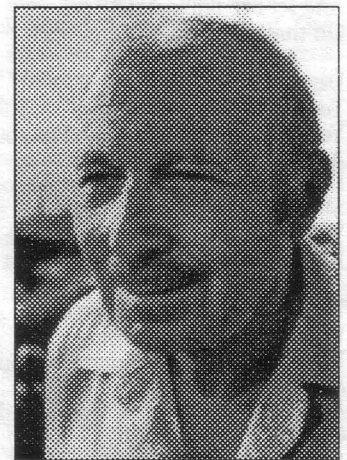
The Band, *Rock of Ages*

Dave Mason, *Alone Together*

Original Soundtrack, *Woodstock*



What can we say about **Bingo Gazingo**? Writer of "Psycho/Psycho" and "Let it Rock, Let it Rip, Let it Roll." He just had a record out called "Juice the Juice or Let Him Loose" but the record died before Bingo did. But he still has "Psycho/Psycho" in reserve, which he says will sell 40 million copies. Info: 4340 Byrd St., Flushing, NY 11355; or phone (718) 461-6645.



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Lyrics

1. Disassemble Yourself (A Walk to the Station)

Tim Robinson

There's a walk to the station
Where there's a bridge to a train
Ten thousand hurried crossings made
How many more can remain?
There's a smile on a dog,
Yeah, you've been mocked by an airedale
For your hesitant steps
And the sum of your failures

The morning holds rain
And prepares to release it
On the sea of grey flannel
That gathers beneath it
A bridge is a fuse
Yeah, you could burn that trestle
And let fire fall instead
On that serpentine vessel

Disassemble yourself
Your newsprint for eyes
You've got a clock strapped to your skin
And a briefcase for sighs
Disassemble yourself
Shed some of your parts
Yeah, you could burn that bridge today
Just strike a match on your heart

There's a dream 'bout the train
Where the train is a horse
You've got a fistful of mane in your grip
All matted and coarse
And there's some dust from red dirt
Over five hundred miles
And deep in lonely Sonora (where cactus
won't live)
there's a bridge on fire

Chorus: There's eyes on a river
Awoke by a horn
There's a profile set in the hills
Four decades worn (down)
In your book of appointments
Red penciled at noon
In a dream back to no man's land
By a bright orange moon

©1995, *Tim Robinson*

2. Smokin' the Night Away (Gauloise Blue)

Jonathan Pointer & Fred Koller

Up on the stand with a gold saxophone
He's wasted, but man can he play
It's way after hours and this place should be
closed
But he's smokin' the night away

He noticed her soon as she walked through
the door
You could tell by the look on his face
And the soul that rose up from the bell of

his horn
He was smokin' the night away,
Smokin' the night away

They roll up the sidewalk and change all
the signs
While you usher the night into day
And you want to believe that it's all in your
mind
He was smokin' the night away,
Smokin' the night ...

You blow and you sweat but all that it gets you
Is cocktails and minimum pay
Till you fade with a throat full of French
cigarettes
From smokin' the night away,
Smokin' the night away

©1995, *Jonathan Pointer and Fred Koller*

3. Nathan (The City)

Linda Sharar

Nathan wakes up to greet the sun
beyond the buildings
sometimes the sun, it never shows
but like plants that grow in darkness
in the ocean
he's found a way to shine alone

and he lifts the souls around him
feeds them with his smile
and they wonder who has sent him
to live with them for this while

the city stirs, the city wakes
when he listens closely, he can hear it
the city yawns, the city aches
and in the midst of chaos
he believes he's found his place

he always knew there'd come a time
he's leave the city
move to a country hideaway
but every time he had the chance to use
the one-way
something would always make him stay

like the children in the alley
after a game of hoods and cops
this one dying near his uzi
and the bleeding will not stop

the city hopes, the city grieves
when he listens closely he can hear it
the city toils, the city reaps
and in the midst of chaos he believes he's
found his piece

Nathan looks up to greet the moon
above the buildings
not even one star can break through
but he knows a distant kindred soul is
watching over
mirroring love down to his stoop

and the city turns in darkness
refusing rest or sleep
so he counts the calls of sirens

just as if they were his sheep

the city cried, the city pleads
when he listens closely, he can hear it
the city tires, the city dreams
and in the midst of chaos
he believes he's found his peace

©1995, *Linda Sharar*

4. Fifty G's in the Hole

Mike Soloway

I used to be debt-free and happy
No financial worries hanging over my head
I paid all my bills by the deadline
And my mind rested easy when I went to bed
I lived in a state of composure
I was comfortable, safe and secure
And each year I'd pay into my IRA
And I never hungered for more

Chorus: Now I'm fifty G's in the hole
And credit has taken its toll
At eighteen percent I can't make a dent
In fifty G's in the hole

Well, soon I was entered in wedlock
We said how 'bout a house of our own
But I had no history of credit
So the bank wouldn't give me a loan
So to prove to the bank I was worthy
I established some credit accounts
And so every day we went out of our way
To build up the credit amounts

Repeat chorus

Well, soon we were swimming in plastic
More cards than my wallet could hold
CDs of Bert Jansch I put on Carte Blanche
The microwave on AmEx Gold
Our restaurant meals went on Diners'
On Visa, the new VCR
Our island vacation went on True Grace
With Discover we paid for the car

Repeat chorus

Now I've got a house and a mortgage
And more debt than I've ever seen
My combined finance charge is so god-
damned large
It's turning my face AmEx green
I go to sleep each night with worry
I wake each morning with dread
I'm going to get life insurance
To pay off the loans when I'm dead

Repeat chorus

©1995, *Mike Soloway*

5. A Better Man Than Me

Paul Sachs

Some men go crazy
By the light of their own moon
I thought nothing would save me
born without any silver spoon
If you could whip this world
and never write back home again
and still find peace

If you can revel in
the darkness this world creates
I hope you find sweet release

Well, brother, I hope that it's diamonds
diamonds that you see
In a lonely mind waiting
You're a better man than me

I know a man who lived
a hundred lives
many years to the day
on his lips no smile arrives
and if one does
it fades away

Well, brother, I hope there's a river
and you're sailing out to sea
on a lonely ship of fools
you're a better man than me

Who will save this shipwreck
who will share this mighty feast
who will cry all hands on deck
to the nature of the beast

Tonight I'll smoke my silence
and set myself free
with a desperate urge for violence
you're a better man than me
a better man than me
you're a better man than me

©1995, Paul Sachs

6. Two Dresses

Tamara

I bought two dresses with you in mind
One is black, one is the color of your eyes
You'd like the black one, it's short and it's
tight
I'll bet in that dress I could get you to dance
with me all night
No bows, no buttons, underneath - no nothin'
Double my chances for trouble or some-
thin' with you

Ooh - The black of the night
Ooh - I want to wear it all the time
The other - the one that's the color of your
eyes -
Montauk daisies, a carnival on a hot
summer night
I spin and I spin in the mirror until I'm a blur
When you're not here, I wish you were

Ooh - The color of your eyes
Ooh - I wanna wear it all the time
Which would I wear when it's been a while
And I want you to know I miss your smile?
I think when you get here, I'll let you
choose
One or the other, baby, either way you
know you can't lose

Ooh - I miss your smile
Ooh - I wanna wear it all the time

©1995, Tamara Feinman, SESAC

7. I've Got a Zoo Inside Me

Paul Clark

I've got a zoo inside me
I've got creatures from A to Z
If you see me returning home
you'd better know I'm not alone

I've got a reptile inside my blood
and a mammal who lives for love
and human who lives for meaning
meaning, tell me what it means?

When my little life is off the track,
and I feel I'm under full attack
swimming up the stream day by day
then by night I drift away.

I've got a black man in my dreams
and two red men whose eyes have seen
buffalo and mercantile systems
in the killing fields.

I know the rain must fall
I know the big grow small
I know we're part of it all.

Just the same I feel the pain
of poison ivy in my veins,
the fish in me cannot explain
progress called acid rain.

My bumblebee has been deflowered
my panther has been devoured
my evergreen counts the hours
till saw men waste the mighty tower.

I know the rain must fall
I know the big grow small
I know we're part of it all.

I've got a zoo inside me
I've got creatures from A to Z
if you see me returning home
you'd better know I'm wounded and not
alone
you'd better know I'm angry and not alone
you'd better know I love you but I'm not
alone
I'm not alone

©1995, Paul Clarke

8. Truth

Wendy Beckerman

I thought I'd find truth today
Underfoot
I'm digging in an empty place
Swear to God
I buried it here months ago
Prayed for sun and prayed for rain
And prayed for autumn come

Truth come back or truth be gone
Over winter
I will not forget the time
I first saw you
Walking this abandoned road
I can feel your fingers still
I told you I could love you

Where does truth go on its own
Over oceans
Trusting anyone at all
Spending fortunes
Just to sleep and just to eat
Sends a postcard all it says is
Wish you were with me

©1995, Wendy Beckerman Music, BMI

9. Folk Music

Alan Andrews

Folk music, you'll be the death of me
Folk music, let's bust off that old antique
Some poor bastard sitting on a stage
Picking his Guild with a razor blade,
Man, that cat has given up hope
The only problem with folk music
Is not the music, it's the folk

Folk music, wow! you are killing me
Folk music ends up like a Greek tragedy
Let's take off our leather belts, honey
I want to try that final number by Phil Ochs
The only problem with folk music
Is not the music, it's the folk

Folk music, any blind man could see
Folk music probably ain't my cup of tea
But it seemed as simple as two plus two
If you don't like my style then, hey, folk
you!

The only problem with folk music
Is not the music, it's the folk
Is not the music, it's the folk

©1995, Alan Andrews

10. Heartbreak in Florida

Peter Smith

The sun's out, it's pretty, been that way
since April
Except for the rainstorms that come with
the dusk
Be that way tomorrow and next month
inclusive
And only a fool would complain, but I must
If you live in the sunshine, you're supposed
to be happy
You can't let your misery impose on the day
If your heart breaks in Florida, you have to
ignore it
Or the Chamber of Commerce will take you
away

Got beaches and Disney, got cheap marijuana
Got too many Haitians, so the government
claims
Got girls with great tan lines, got guys with
no foreheads
Who say that they love you but won't give
their right names
And everyone loves it; I read it in Newsweek
I live where it's hip to ignore what is past
If your heart breaks in Florida, no one
wants to hear it
It's yesterday's papers, tomorrow comes
fast

The seafood is frozen, there are no real scallops
The buildings are plastic and so are the breasts
The sunblock is 12; the brainblock is 50
I should give it a rest

Might move to Seattle, I sure like the music
They believe in stuff out there, won't laugh at my clothes
Or maybe Chicago, or maybe Toronto
Or somewhere where nobody minds when it snows
I'm tired of bikinis, tired of palm trees
And women who just will not say what they mean
It might not be Florida, it might be my heartbeat
That signals the end of this tropical dream

©1995, Peter Smith

11. Destination Ground

Nich Haber

Well I was walking by the river
Though the river runs dry
Watching all the people as they hurried on by
A man came up to me and said
"Hey, give me a dollar"
So I reached into my pocket and we both sat down

He said, "Man, I used to be a lot like you
A man with a future and little to do
But I pissed it all away on this cat named Fay
And she took it on back to California

"But, Hey! I'm not bitter 'bout anything
It makes the world go 'round
If she didn't do it, some other cat would've
And I'd still be standing on my destination ground
My destination ground"

Well, I was working in the office where I used to work a lot
I heard the water cooler conversation get hot
When our temporary secretary said she was a singer
I bubbled out some water and I listened along

She said, "I opened for the Weavers
Smoked dope with Mama Cass
Did the hippy dippy shake 'til you were shaking your ass
But before we shook the nation as the latest sensation
My husband said we couldn't have no singers in the house

"But, Hey! I'm not bitter 'bout anything
It makes the world go 'round
If she didn't do it, some other cat would've
And I'd still be standing on my destination ground
My destination ground"

Well, I was walking downtown on an August morning
Saw a man on the ledge of the 27th floor
Admiring the view over Seventh Avenue
And a crowd gathered beneath him all wishing him dead

He said, "I cannot take the pressure
The company's in the red
Pettersen's at fault but it all landed on my head
When you play the blame game it's like Russian roulette
Oh well, it's all explained better on the note that I left

"It says, Hey! I'm not bitter 'bout anything
It makes the world go 'round
If she didn't do it, some other cat would've
And I'd still be standing on my destination ground
My destination ground"

©1995, Nich Haber

12. Mandolin and Harmonica

Dain Ichikawa

You're goin' away tomorrow
You're goin' over the sea
You're goin' away tomorrow
On a ship a-sailin' into my reverie

I bought you a mandolin
I gave you a harmonica and a song
I bought you a mandolin
Now you've taken them and have gone

In the cafe, laughter and music so loud
You'll be singin' and smilin' at the crowd
But I remember when there was not
Another soul or sound around

Remember what you be singin'
Hear the melodies through and through
Remember what you be singin'
And maybe the thought of me will come to you too.

In the cafe, laughter and music so loud
You'll be singin' and smilin' at the crowd
But I remember when there was not
Another soul or sound around

I bought you a mandolin
I gave you a harmonica and a song
I bought you a mandolin
Now you've taken them and have gone

©1995, Dain Ichikawa

13. I Never Rode a Freight Train

Ed Alkalay

Last night I had a dream I was rollin' 'cross the land
Last night I had a dream I was rollin' 'cross the land
On a freight train like a hobo holdin' Woody Guthrie's hand
Although I never rode a train and I never knew the man

And now as I stumble along these city streets
Travelin' like a runaway train in a runaway dream
I pass a couple winos down on 42nd Street
Drinkin' from a bottle filled with broken dreams

Chorus: And 'though I never rode a freight train and I never knew the feel
Of the hoboos and the gamblers and the long steel rail,
Tonight I'm as free as this city will allow
And in my mind I'm rollin' down a long steel rail

One wino shouts out, "Mister, got some money you could spare?"
One wino shouts out, "Mister, got some money you could spare?"
When I hand him a dollar, he offers me a drink
I say, "You just keep your whiskey, boy, it'll help you not to think.

Then my head started spinning so I closed my weary eyes
And when I opened them again for the first time in my life
I gazed up at the stars shining in the night
And the city disappeared into the prairie in my mind

Repeat chorus

And there were two laughing hoboos sittin' by my side
Singing songs, pickin' guitars, drinkin' whiskey, tellin' lies
And though it wasn't quite music, it sounded so sweet
And we danced like fragile angels on that broken melody

And when the music stopped, the city reappeared
When the music stopped - the city reappeared
There were two drunk winos lyin' sound asleep
With smiles on their faces as they danced in their dreams

©1995, Ed Alkalay

14. Only the Rivers Run Free

Ron Renninger

You say your country's beautiful
With gently rolling hills
And pristine beaches and mountains high and still
And the leaders of your nation rule by decree
Yes, this land is lovely
But only the rivers run free

You say it's paradise
So why does no one smile
Fear clouds the face of every woman, man and child

They've been hunted and terrified and
robbed of their dreams
Yes, your country's beautiful,
But only the rivers run free

The shadows loom over the mountains
For years they've darkened the land
A new baby clings to his mama
And she holds him as close as she can

The only lights that shine are from the stars
at night
The only song heard is from the birds in
the sky
And when the rain comes, it mingles with
teardrops it seems
Here in this sad nation
Where only the rivers run free

©1995, Ron Renninger

15. The Too-Long Song

Sandy Opatow and Lucia Russett

Early one evening, we set out to play
At one of our neighborhood bars
They put our name down at the end of the list
After twenty-nine boys with guitars

Little did we know that all of the boys
before us would play too long
Each ten-minute set they shamelessly
stretched
It was 5 am before we got on . . . at
The night of the too-long song, my friends
Night of the too-long song

Each boy got on stage and closed tight his
eyes
And crooned yet another refrain
Just when you thought that he'd get to the
end -
He'd start it all over again . . . at
The night of the too-long song . . .

How can there be so many sad, sad boys
With so many long, long songs?
You'd hardly guess they were ruling the
world
From their epics of how they've been
wronged
O, Night of the too-long song . . .

Night of the one-chord song, my friends,
Night of the one-chord song

Heed our sad tale of the folk club scene
The moral of which is quite clear
Come early to play-
Be first on the list-
Or bring lots of money for beer! . . . to
The night of the too-long song . . .

©1995, Fouvounette Music

16. Kiss It All Goodbye

Peter Twist

I think it's time we tried to run away
Get out of here
Before the city tries to make us stay
Before the end is near
You and me we should try it out
Try and learn what we're all about

'Cause I'm not going in to work today
And I'm not staying home
I got the urge to try to run away
I got the urge to roam.
Move real quiet and stay ahead
Leave your clothes and leave your bed. Yeah,
we'll

Chorus: Pack the kids into the car
Pull the tow down 'neath the stars
Kill the headlights, I don't mind
We can kiss it all goodbye
Leave a note under the mat
Says we ain't never coming back
When this world's a waste of time
We can kiss it all goodbye.

Doesn't matter if you leave your job
Or if you leave your car
Doesn't matter if you're hauling trash
Or you're a movie star.
Leave the keys, leave your hate and pride
Won't need them on the other side. Just

Repeat chorus

I'm not a slave to work or some false society
We'll do what we want, our freedom begins
here

Doesn't matter if you leave your job
Or you're a movie star.
Leave the keys, leave your hate and pride
Won't need them on the other side. Just

Repeat chorus

©1995, Peter Sonenstein

17. Hattertown Road

Richard Cuccaro

Two miles down Hattertown Road
Where it curves to the left you go straight
ahead
A hundred feet or so up Moutainside Drive
Make the hairpin turn up the hill to the
right
One Pine Tree Road, third house on the left
Number seventeen, laced with evergreen
The strip across the "For Sale" sign
Read "Sold" . . . it's finally gone this time

Chorus: Rollin' down Hattertown Road
See the leaf shadows glide
Over the hood and chrome
It will lead us around each sun-speckled bend
Through each shady glen
But it will never again lead us home
Rollin' down Hattertown Road...
Rollin' down Hattertown Road...

Dad is gone but the trees still stand
Like sentinels where he put them by hand
The stone walls too, how they interlock
Just like he was, as steady as rock
The mountain laurel and the lilac tree
That sweet aroma as I rode to sleep
The dogwood tree will lay its blossoms
down

A carpet of white, gently on the ground

Repeat chorus

Mom raised all five boys right
Whatever it took, a hug or a fight

Those home-cooked meals at dinnertime
The vigilant watch if we were sick at night
The boys are grown and gone our separate
ways

We get together on holidays
Mom needs to find an easy way of her own
How long can she go up that hill alone?

©1995, Ron Renninger

18. Everything's OK at the OK Corral

Bingo Gazingo

It's high noon at the Last Chance Saloon
In the cowboy movie in my head
And they're dealin' from the bottom of the
deck

But I've got a royal flush up my sleeve
And the queen of hearts in my heart
And everything's OK at the OK Corral

Here comes the posse
They're comin' my way
But I'm jumpin' out the window
And landing in the saddle
And everything's OK at the OK Corral
There's a rope around my neck
But I'll always get away
And everything's OK at the OK Corral

It's the North against the South
The bad men against the good men
And John Wayne against everybody
And everything's OK at the OK Corral

Wyatt Earp is laughin' at it all
He's shootin' his way through hell
Ten bullets in the barrel
Hot lead in the cylinder
And he's shootin', blazing away
And everything's OK at the OK Corral

Doc Holliday said this is funny
To die with my boots off in the arms of my
nurse
In my TB bed, but anyway,
Everything's OK at the OK Corral

Hi-ho Silver, the Lone Ranger rides again
As long as the grass shall grow
As long as the river shall flow
As long as the stars shall shine
And everything's OK at the OK Corral

Randolph Scott is riding down the trail
On his back is a sack of U.S. Mail
All filled with cash
And here comes the guy with a mustache
He tries to steal the whole deal
But Randolph Scott isn't going for that
And everything's OK at the OK Corral

And all the horses say:
John Wayne, you're full of it.
Life will teach you, love will save you
And death is just a little thing
And everything's OK at the OK Corral

Mama, can I have a dime
To see my favorite cowboy star
And a nickel for a chocolate candy bar
Mama, don't cry
Everything's OK at the OK Corral

©1995, Bingo Gazingo

Credits

1. Disassemble Yourself (A Walk to the Station)

Tim Robinson
Tim Robinson, vocal and guitar
Ron Renninger, second guitar
Mark Dann, bass

2. Smokin' the Night Away (Gauloise Blue)

Jonathan Pointer, vocal and guitar
Mark Dann, bass
©1995, Jonathan Pointer/Fred Koller (BMI)

3. Nathan (The City)

Linda Sharar, vocal and guitar
Mark Dann, bass
©1994 Linda Sharar

4. 50 G's in the Hole

Mike Soloway, vocal and guitar
Mark Dann, bass
The cast and audience, backup vocals
©1995, Mike Soloway

5. A Better Man Than Me

Paul Sachs, vocal and guitar
Mark Dann, bass
©1994, Paul Sachs

6. Two Dresses

Tamara, vocal and guitar
Mark Dann, bass
©1995, Tamara Feinman (SESAC)

7. I've Got a Zoo Inside of Me

Paul Clarke, vocal and 12-string guitar
Mark Dann, bass
©1995, Paul Clarke

8. Truth

Wendy Beckerman, vocal and guitar
Mark Dann, bass
©1995, Wendy Beckerman (BMI)

9. Folk Music

Alan Andrews, vocal and guitar
Josh Weingust, electric guitar
Jack Hardy, mandolin
Ed Alkalay, banjo
Steve DeRosa, acoustic bass
©1995, Alan Andrews

10. Heartbreak in Florida

Peter Smith, vocal and guitar
Mark Dann, bass
©1995, Peter Smith

11. Destination Ground

Nich Haber, vocal and guitar
Tamara, backup vocal
Ed Alkalay, backup vocal
Tim Robinson, lasso d'amore
©1994, Nich Haber

12. A Mandolin and Harmonica

Dain Ichikawa, vocal and guitar
Mark Dann, bass
©1995, Dain Ichikawa

13. I Never Rode a Freight Train

Ed Alkalay, vocal and banjo
Steve DeRosa, acoustic bass
Pat Almanrode, guitar
©1995, Ed Alkalay

14. Only the Rivers Run Free

Ron Renninger, vocal and guitar
Mark Dann, bass
©1995, Ron Renninger

15. The Too-Long Song

Petronella:
Sandy Opatow, vocal and guitar
Lucia Russet, vocal and kazoo
©1994, Foufounette Music

16. Kiss It All Goodbye

Peter Twist, vocal and guitar
©1995, Peter Sonerstein

17. Hattertown Road

Richard Cuccaro, vocal, guitar, harmonica
Ron Renninger, second guitar
Ed Alkalay, banjo
Mark Dann, bass
Sandy Opatow, backup vocals
Lucia Russet, backup vocals
©1995, Richard Cuccaro

18. Everything's OK at the OK Corral

Bingo Gazingo, vocal
Jonathan Pointer, background guitar
©1995, Bingo Gazingo



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