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Connie Atkinson
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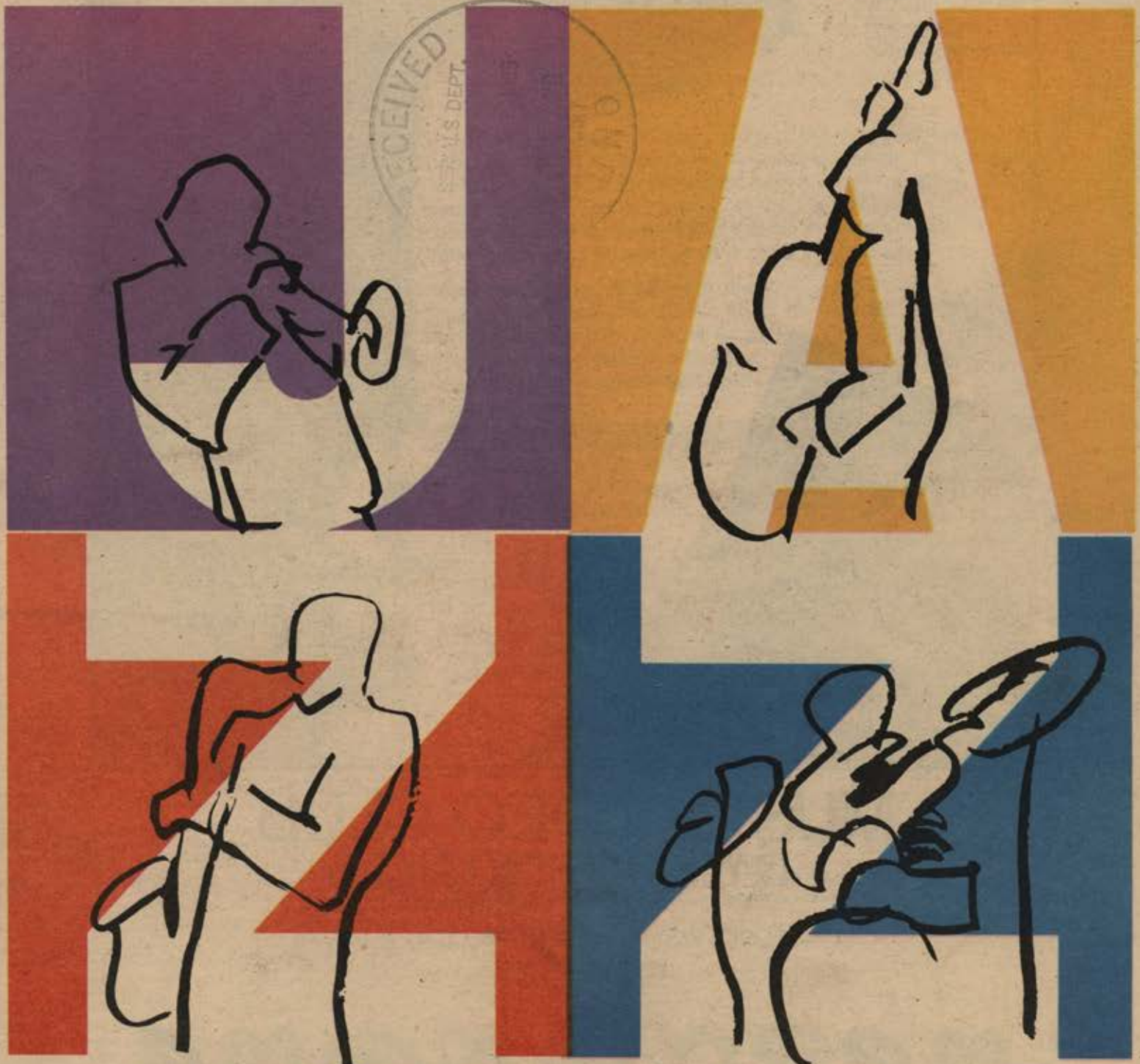
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NEW ORLEANS MUSIC MAGAZINE

Wavelength

OCTOBER 1985

ISSUE NO. 60



AWARENESS MONTH

Tipitina's Reopens • **Ramsey McLean Interviewed**
Alex Chilton Reviewed • **The Gondoliers Revisited**



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Wavelength

ISSUE NO. 59 • OCTOBER 1985

"I'm not sure, but I'm almost positive, that all music came from New Orleans."
Ernie K-Doe, 1979

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Tipitina's to Reopen

In mid-November, Tipitina's will reopen on its original site at the corner of Napoleon and Tchoupitoulas. At present, renovations are in progress.

Tipitina's closed in 1984, a victim of changing times, the World's Fair and, perhaps, too many cooks in its management set-up. The name Tipitina's is now controlled by the Tipitina Social Aid and Pleasure Club, whose seven trustees are original Tipitina's founders. In the spring of 1985, investors doing business as Real New Orleans Inc. purchased the real estate that was Tipitina's with plans to renovate, reopen and manage the club. After negotiations, Real New Orleans Inc. was able to license the use of the name Tipitina's from the Tipitina Social Aid and Pleasure Club. While Real New Orleans Inc. will manage the business of the club, the trustees of TSAPC will handle the music. The TSAPC, a non-profit corporation, exists solely to protect the name Tipitina's, with any money derived from licensing going to "the betterment of live



music in New Orleans."

What will change? The bathrooms will be bigger, with an attendant on duty in the women's room. Every effort is being made to improve the parking situation. There are talks going on concerning the use of the China Glass lot as well as the Rosy's lot. Valet parking is being considered. For bike riders, there will be a lower cover charge and a new bike rack right out in front of the club. There will be two police officers on duty for Thursday-Saturday shows. There will be two huge draw fans on the roof which will, in theory, recircu-

late the air every 30 seconds, a boon to non-smokers.

Those responsible for the changes in design are all long-time Tipitina's devotees who have many, many nights experience with the past problems. Architects Nick Musso and Seldon "Reb" Haizlip have come up with a plan that is not ostentatious, but is essential and goes a long way toward making the club comfortable. Both construction head Jim Eckert and construction supervisor Joe Bucher have also spent many a night at Tip's. As such, this is a labor of love for all involved.

The renovation of the club will add much floor space. There will be a balcony, which will be a place for private parties and even some privacy, away from the downstairs action. There is a bar upstairs and down, as well as a bar near the new patio, which is directly behind where the stage used to be. The stage will now face Napoleon instead of Tchoupitoulas. The new patio will, in theory, replace the neutral ground as the place to get outside and away from the action.

Cleaning up the neighborhood after each show will be a priority. Additional lights are being installed in the vicinity of the club to make late night revelers feel a bit safer on their way back to their cars. On Monday-Wednesday, the shows will start at 8, so those of us with real jobs can hear music and be home by 10:30. Yes, starting on time will be a priority.

What remains the same about Tip's? Visually, you will see the same posters and junk that were always there. The logo remains the same and the bar top will be there as always. So will the photo booth. The music, booked again by Sonny Schniedau, will be variable, whimsical, but essentially: the best of local and regional music, mainly of a roots-oriented variety, combined with the occasional big time act. The new, more spacious environs will allow bigger crowds, thus bigger bookings.

Real New Orleans Inc. wants the style and attitude of the old Tip's to continue on with the new. There will still be live WWOZ broadcasts — Walter Brock of 'OZ is one of the TSAPC trustees and a once-a-week "Live From Tipitina's" show is in the works. TSAPC spokesman Michael Smith says, "The reopening of Tipitina's will end the post World's Fair depression in the New Orleans music scene."

— Mark Bingham

FOUR A.M. AT ROSY'S

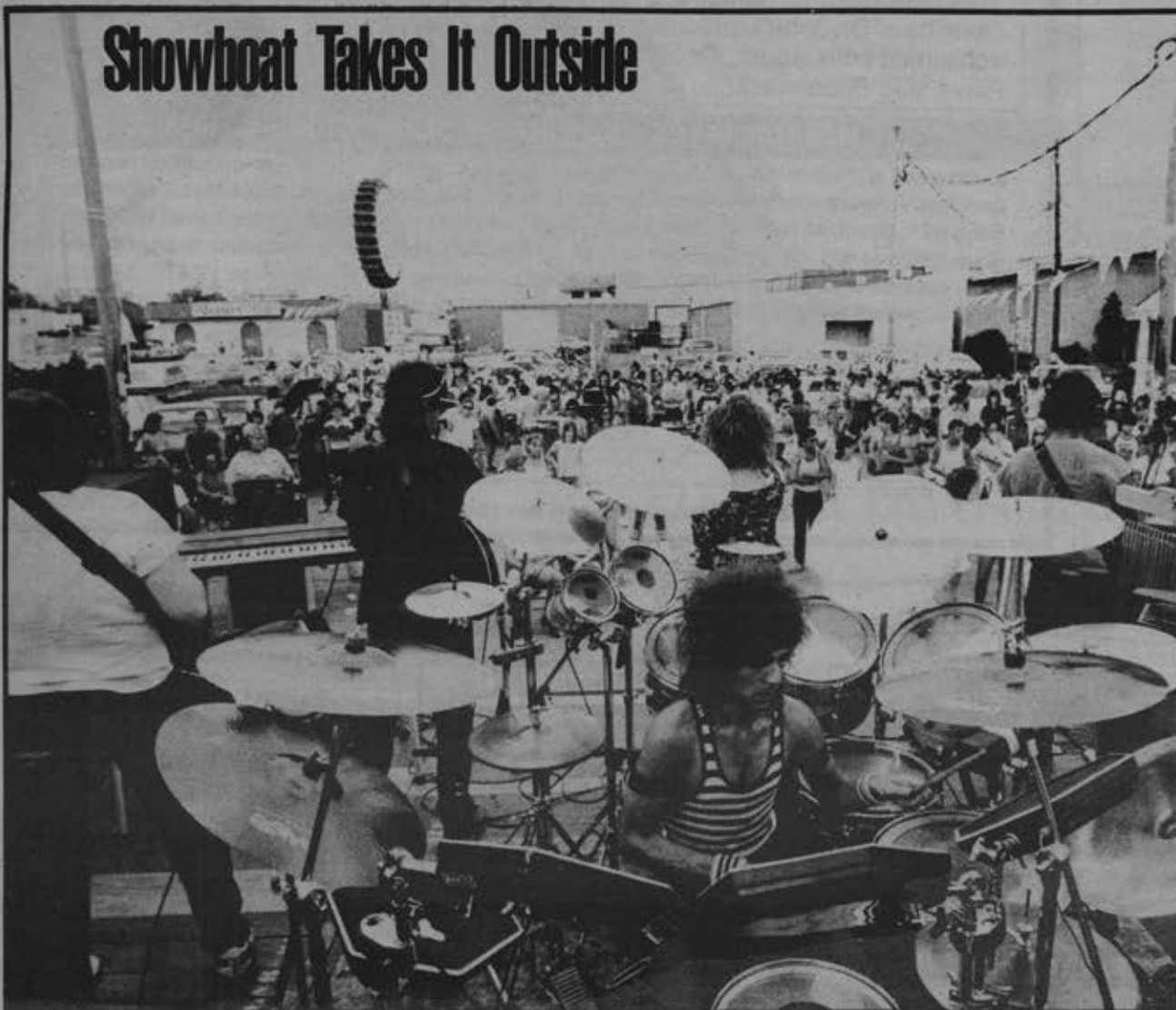
And the blackbirds swooped down.
Two blackbirds joined in
with their high brass tones
wailing together . . .
cello silent
and bass upright . . .
the way the tree recalls
music at sunrise or after rainfall.

Crystal shatters; wood reverberates.
The heart, though encased,
divides into chambers
of fear and hope.
It is that hour in a darkened cove,
when waitresses collect their tips.

But the horns are just warming up
and the gut strings getting loose.
Long fingers reach for octaves.
Quickened bows multiply
like the blur of ceiling fans.
It is this coolness that brings
the blackbirds down.

— Maxine Cassin

Showboat Takes It Outside



Perfect Strangers was one of the groups to perform September 8 at the Showboat Lounge's Outdoor Show in Fat City. Rain came but didn't dampen — or electrocute — the crowd or the bands, and it was a pleasant change for both. Let's do it again!

Recording News

► **THE NEVILLE BROTHERS** HAVE BEGUN PRE-PRODUCTION IN **PACE STUDIO** for a new album to be recorded at the Power Station in New York City. While the Nevilles are laying down the rhythm tracks (with Rob Stennit engineering), Aaron's son Ivan is playing synthesizer and singing on the new Rolling Stones album. Glem Himmaugh's remote studio will cover the award-winning cable program "Music City"'s fifth season — which will feature Catfish Hotel, John Fred and the Playboys, Astral Project, The New Orleans Saxophone Quartet and Lee Dorsey. Also at Pace, the Olympia Brass Band is recording while ex-Woodenhead Edgar Lipps is mixing the material he recorded at Composer's Studio.

► **COMPOSERS STUDIO** IS ALSO THE WORKING SITE of Patrice Fisher and the Sounds of Brazil who are collaborating on a new album. Tom Macintosh and Steve Masakowsky with Mars are each working on fusion projects while the Dukes of Dixieland are recording the soundtrack to WYES's Great Chef Series. Watch for Phil Parnell's album on the Broken Records label recorded here last summer.

► **AT SEA-SAINT STUDIO** THE TULANE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT sponsored a recording of Tulane fight songs and New Orleans classics by the Pat O'Brien pianistes Barbara Bennett and Jackie Pearson. Frankie Ford stopped by during the session, so listen for the doo-wee in the choruses. Kim Bertucci, who won the WYES auction, brought King Nino and the Slave Girls in to record some blues ballads for a single. Other singles recorded at Sea-Saint include the Battiste Brothers' "It's On (the Jam is On)," Roland and Manwell's "Say You Do You" and Reality Patio's "The Factory" which will be used as a demo in the quest for a "Star Search" television appearance.

► **OVER IN SLIDELL, THE SOLOMON BURKE, JOHNNY ADAMS AND IRMA THOMAS** albums are in the mixing stage at **STUDIO SOLO**. Look for their Christmas releases on the Rounder label. "Seize the Moment," the theme song to both the National Sports Festival and the LSU Tigers football team, was recorded here. Bill Ray, the man who wrote the current hit for Loverboy, "Lovin' Every Minute of It," will be recording for EMI. Morrow Solo has just received a contract with CBS/Scotty Brothers to record an album of rock 'n' roll.

► **STUDIO IN THE COUNTRY** HAD TO RECOVER from Hurricane Elena before business could continue. Baton Rouge bands Network and Capri were in the studio while the Chris Simpkins Choir and John Simmons recorded spiritual albums.

► Finally, at **ULTRASONIC STUDIO**, Luther Kent is recording his first gospel album in time for a Christmas release.

— St. George Bryan



Rick Nelson recently invited Fats Domino to California for a series of concerts. The concert at the Universal Amphitheatre in Los Angeles (where our L.A. correspondent Bill Bentley assures us Fats "killed the crowd") was videotaped and recorded for future release as a video and record album. Pictured backstage after the Amphitheatre show are (L to R): Al Kooper, recording artist and record company executive, Hank Ballard, Rick Nelson and Fats Domino.



MELODY MINEO

Temps-Tops Shine

There were lots of good feelings coming from the beautiful stage at Audubon Zoo as the Temptations and The Four Tops shined continually throughout a two-hour performance. When the Tops announced that they would play "a medley of eight or nine of our songs — all of them classics" no one in the audience doubted it. When they promptly launched into "Bernadette," followed it with "Reach Out" and "I'll Be There," and followed that with "I Can't

Help Myself" the crowd went wild, swaying, clapping, and singing along.

The Temptations kept the wonderful tunes coming, doing hits like "Get Ready," "I'm Losing You," and, of course, "My Girl." An unexpected highlight of their performance was a soulfully smooth rendition of "Old Man River" with the Temptations lending their voices to a beautiful arrangement of the classic show tune.

— Nick Marinello

Publications

► **THE TIMES OF ACADIANA** IS A WEEKLY OUT OF LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA. Big city as Cajun country goes, Lafayette is full of cosmopolitan influences along with the traditional marriage of oil, crawfish and second cousins. *The Times* has good writers like columnist James Edwards. His story about New York restaurants claiming to serve Cajun food was funny and right on target. Called "First You Don't Make A Roux," the article went a long way towards exposing the bland reality of most Cajun food outside Louisiana. *The Times* seems to serve the community in a more complete way than our own version of the Times, *Gambit*. *The Times* is less frivolous than *Gambit*; they actually panned a restaurant once. Reading *Gambit's* restaurant guide, a visitor would think there were no bad restaurants here. *The Times* doesn't have a multi-million dollar tourist industry breathing down its neck, either. You can get *The Times* free by driving to Lafayette or at home by writing to: The Times of Acadiana, 201 Jefferson St., Lafayette, LA 70501, \$20 a year.

► **CANADISC** IS A CATALOGUE OF RECORDS by heretofore unknown Canadian artists. Inspired by a Bunny Matthews quote from *Wavelength*, "The only thing worse than Australian bands are Canadian bands, an insufferably boorish race of musicians and not a good looking one in the bunch." Paul Comeau set out to settle the score with this complete guide to obscure Canadians. It comes on a napkin and he pays you to read it. But seriously now, I have no idea what any of the music sounds like, but there is a lot of it. Write to: Paul Comeau, P.O. Box 142, Saulnierville, Nova Scotia CANADA BOW 2Z0. Send him one dollar for the catalogue.

► **NETWORK** IS CONCERT YOU ARE CONDUCTOR... Ryosuke Cohen invites us to be a part of a mail-art network. RC says, "At present art, faculty of genius is no more necessity. Network is the soul in its extension itself and it is not art of completely pro Europe or U.S.A. All parts of the world are each cell, in other words, you are a nucleus, too." Which means: this is not gallery bound (except for maybe Franklin Furnace); this is international art goodwill. We hear from other artists, sending seals and stamps. Send your message to: Ryosuke Cohen, I-6 Hiyoshicho Moriguchi-City, Osaka 570, Japan.

— Mark Bingham

LIFE IN HELL

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MATT
GROENING

Sept. 14, 1985

KIDS' QUESTIONS ABOUT DEATH



Dear Wavelength,

We must've been crazy, but No Culture Club took on the insane task of producing Jean Paul Sartre's difficult play NO EXIT in New Orleans, in the torpid heat of August, in a new and unknown theater. In other words we shouldn't have sold more than a handful of tickets considering those factors against us.

Much to our surprise, we were SRO for 6 performances and a total of some 500 people saw the play in 10 performances (60 seat theater).

I'd never seen more than 100 of these people before so as I introduced myself to each performance's departing audience members, I asked them: Where did you hear about us? More than half replied -- "Your ad in *Wavelength*."

Moral of this story? There is a sophisticated audience out there in Gumboland that will go out of its way to buy tickets for avant garde performance, even in August. And that audience reads *Wavelength*.

Reuven Levi Proctor, Director
NO Culture Club

To the Editor:

The back issues of *Wavelength* arrived in today's mail. Thanks.

We have a request to make. The July issue arrived this morning and there is mention on "Last Page," a recording by Phil "Master Blaster" Alvin featuring the Dirty Dozen.

Could you please let us know where we can order a couple of copies of this album.

Shirley & Dick House
Honorary Citizens
of New Orleans
"Jazz Buffs from way back
who know what it means to miss
New Orleans."
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Australia

According to our sources, Phil Alvin's album will appear in late October.

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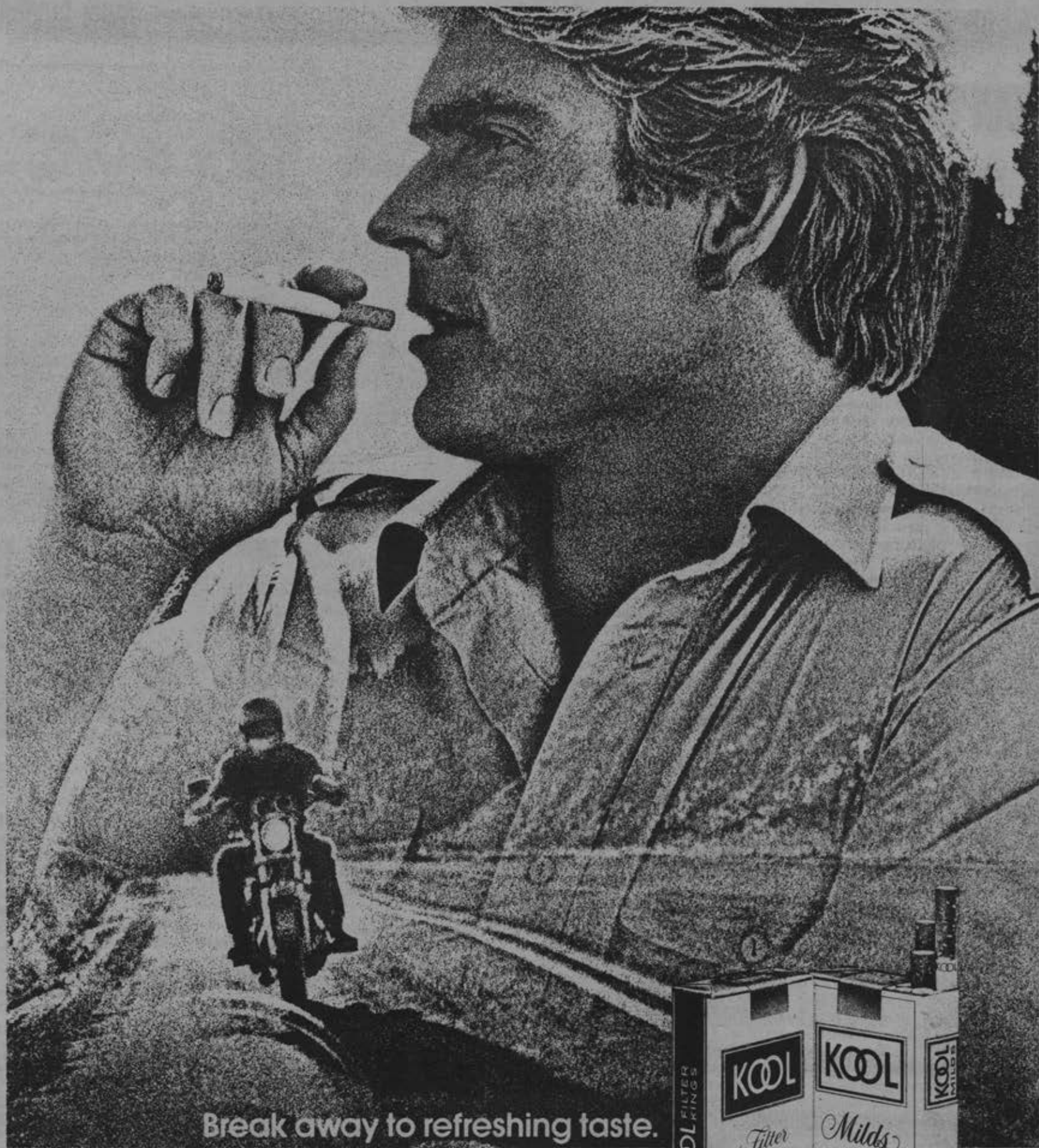
OCTOBER

REGULAR FEATURES

SUNDAYS SNAKE BITE & THE COTTON MOUTHS
TUESDAYS 1, 15, 19 CONTINENTAL DRIFTERS
WEDNESDAYS J. MONQUE'D
THURSDAYS BOURRE

WEEKENDS

FRI. 4 EXUMA FRI. 18 RADIATORS
SAT. 5 FILE CAJUN BAND SAT. 19 ANSON FUNDERBERG & THE ROCKETS
FRI. 11 RADIATORS FRI. 25 JAVA
SAT. 12 BEAUSOLEIL SAT. 26 JAVA



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Milds Kings, 10 mg. "tar", 0.7 mg. nicotine;
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av. per cigarette, FTC Report Feb. '85.

Importance of Being Earnest

Sound as a weapon; porkpacking as the state pastime; and a look at Give Today for Tomorrow.

"I always like to know everything about my new friends, and nothing about my old ones."*

Why do bands insist on playing too loud for the room? Loud music sounds great, but . . . As sound pressure level passes 80 decibels, we begin to hear more highs and lows. At 110 decibels we're cruising. At 120 decibels, serious pain begins. At Jimmy's club, the music always sounds better outside. The bands play too loud for the room, or rather, the mixers jack the PA up too loud. It's a macho thing to see who can make the most atomic-blood packed-steroid injected snare and kick drum sounds, with little regard to musical content. Exaggerated low end is fine for certain kinds of reggae and other sparse musics, but is death to bands with busy rhythm sections. Whatever happened to clarity, especially consonant clarity which allows us to hear the words clearly? Volume is fundamental for musicians to master, not a weapon for mixers to use on listeners.

"It is only shallow people who do not judge by appearances." . . . Buyer Beware . . . Knight Studios in Metairie is a must to avoid. When a person or band records, it is customary to purchase a 2" master tape from the studio, especially if planning to record overdubs or mix elsewhere. After a session at Knight, producer X purchased the master from Knight for \$150, the price of a new reel of 2" tape. Later while recording at Sea-Saint, engineer Reggie Toussaint discovered the tape to be full of splices and six minutes short of being a full reel. To sell a used reel for full price is crass enough, to sell a spliced reel borders on criminal — you can't record over a splice on 2" tape. Producer X was spending much money on musicians and studio time at Sea-Saint, money and time which might have gone to waste but for Reggie Toussaint. Thank you Reggie.

"The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it." . . . *Who's Sorry Now* is the name of the autobiography of Connie Francis. I'll send a dollar to the favorite charity of anyone who can prove to have read this book from cover to cover. Don't shuck me now, I have it memorized.

"The only excuse for making a useless thing is that one admires it intensely." . . . There is much to admire in the work of Gary Panter. His cartoons, illustrations, narratives and books are one of a kind. His work is comprehensible to those not in tune with the incomprehensible sensibility of "gallery art." He is showing at Tilden-Foley Gallery on Magazine

Street starting October 26. Also at Tilden-Foley, in conjunction with Panter, is an exhibition of photographs by Patti Perret, from her book, *The Faces Of Science Fiction*. Should a person see Panter's work, Perret's portraits, then read the writers Perret has photographed, that person would know quite a bit about modern mores.

"I am told that pork-packing is the most lucrative profession in America, after politics." . . . A recent article in *CityBusiness*, called "Overture To A Music Industry," told of the aspirations of the New Orleans music biz. With a few exceptions, the people *CityBusiness* chose to speak to were, to dredge up a chestnut, "part of the problem, not part of the solution." If the Louisiana Music Commission has done one thing for Louisiana music, well, we're all waiting to hear about it. Is it possible that the LMC exists to line the pockets of Governor Edwards' cronies, wasting valuable taxpayer money on useless offices and brag sheets about Woodland Hills, California resident Doug Kershaw, who just happens to be represented by someone on the LMC?

"The highest, as the lowest, form of criticism is a mode of autobiography." . . . I like the Radiators. I have no desire to write about them or pick them apart. A critic might say, "Modern dance-trance at its best, surpassing their influences." Or, "The Radiators must lose weight, play short tunes and wear Nehru jackets on stage in order to reach a wider audience." And so forth. The Radiators sound like they sound. You like 'em or not. To listen analytically is to *not* listen. The other night, I heard Rick Margitza, Mike Pellara, Bill Huntington and John Vidacovich play Monk tunes. I loved it. I didn't sit there thinking "Mr. Margitza's tone and stage manner recall a young Junior Cook, while his extrapolations on Monk's angular themes were both witty and concise." While all that may be true, all I was doing was grooving on an evening of jazz in New Orleans that didn't have a "just another gig" feel to it.

"Philanthropic people lose all sense of humanity. Those who find ugly meanings in beautiful things are corrupt without being charming. The ugly and the stupid have the best of it in this world. Conscience and cowardice are really the same things. Conscience is the trade name of the firm. That is all." . . . Writing about New Orleans music is tough. A friend referred to it as "The Dead Scene Scrolls." *Give Today For Tomorrow* was a recent event worth examining. *GTFT* was part of the trend started . . . well, it's been going on for some time, the idea of artists doing benefits for all sorts of human needs and in-



Hate "gallery art"? You'll love Gary Panter, at Tilden Foley October 26

terests. As such, *GTFT* was a political event. The goal of *GTFT* was to raise money to feed the hungry and house the homeless, as well as raise the consciousness of all of us spoiled rotten Americans. The blind leading the blind?

GTFT made poor use of the media. First, the song itself is an unlistenable travesty. The bottom line is: the song is an ad, a jingle for peace, just like *We Are The World*. But who can sing *GTFT* with any sincerity? Forget the immense talent of the 40-some musicians involved, the song is a stiff. People were offended by the song. And the video! Double ick! The mugging and hamming of Doug Kershaw belied the tone of an event designed to raise consciousness. I'm getting sick just thinking of Kershaw's hideous mug.

All this reminds me of the tactics of Tulane graduate Newt Gingrich, now a Georgia congressman. Gingrich is the spokesman for the concept of the Conservative Opportunity Society or COS as it's commonly known. Gingrich blames all our society's ills on the Liberal Welfare State, something we in New Orleans know more than a little about. COS reasoning is dramatically different than past brands of conservatives. He wants Republicans to reach out to black voters. The COS opposes apartheid, doesn't support the human life amendment or a bigger military budget. What the COS wants is Majority Status, more Republicans than Democrats. To achieve this goal, Gingrich takes bizarre positions, siding with the villain Liberal Welfare State.

Gingrich is the guy who spent much time delivering fire-brand speeches to an empty House of Representatives while the C-SPAN cameras rolled, turning him into a star overnight. What does this have to do with *Give Today For Tomorrow*?

Gingrich often spouts about "linguistic high ground," which is the use of snappy slogans, in his case designed to create an appealing aura for the mere idea of conservatism. *GTFT* needed some of this modern media thinking in confronting apathetic individuals. Throwing together a

few concerts to raise a few bucks is a far cry from changing anyone's mind. *GTFT* needed to *sell* the idea that there really are hungry and homeless people in New Orleans.

After the initial thrust of the record and video, concerts were scheduled for Labor Day weekend. Hurricane Elena kept the audiences small. Perhaps the haphazard, unfocused advertising also helped to diminish the crowd. Perhaps many people cared, but felt, because of the aura of "same old same old" surrounding *GTFT*, that their participation was not warranted. There are other ways to help society.

The poor attendance for the Saenger concerts made for a strange video. The local NBC affiliate chose to air an hour's worth of *GTFT* the Sunday a week after the shows, allowing thousands who missed the show to see it. Pledge numbers were shown on the screen, just like Jerry Lewis. The TV show was woefully short on new talent — there were near 40 acts who played, why did we only see the semi-stars from out of town and the old line New Orleans heroes? Did the *GTFT* producers really think people would give more if they saw Frankie Ford instead of Lenny Zenith? Allen Toussaint instead of the Aubry Twins? And so forth. Typical safe thinking of the sort that takes all the oxygen out of a situation real quick. Solomon Burke was the highlight of the tv show, along with Aaron Neville's version of *Amazing Grace*. I've read of people who could sing so powerfully so as to start fires with their voice. In another age, Aaron Neville would have healed with his voice. Come to think of it, he does heal with his voice. Despite the modest gains of *GTFT*, you have to hand it to Aaron Neville for his genuine compassion and concern. Unlike the ultra-slick Newt Gingrich, Aaron Neville is not scheming to take over or siding with the enemy to gain new recruits. Aaron's voice is a miracle. If the *GTFT* had put out a record of Aaron Neville singing *Amazing Grace*, there would be many more dineros in the *GTFT* coffers today. Lesson number one: you can't sell a stiff. □

*Quotes courtesy of Oscar Wilde.

Salem Spirit

Hotlicks



On Tour ...

Tina Turner, fresh from her portrayal of the queenly Aunty Entity in *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome*, has been hitting the concert trail all summer and into the fall. Talent must have something to do with it, since she's playing arenas throughout the western states in October and November. All the while, her single, "We Don't Need Another Hero (Thunderdome)" has become a Top Five staple.

In The Studio ...

Dio is at Rumbo Recorders in LA, finishing their latest album, *Sacred Heart*, with their long-time engineer **Angelo Arcuri**. **Ronnie James Dio** also produced the song "Stars" at Rumbo for the heavy metal star lineup called **Hear 'N Aid**, which includes suspicious members of **Quiet Riot**, **Rough Cutt**, **Blue Oyster**

Cult, **Dokken**, **Journey**, **Night Ranger**, **Giuffria**, **Judas Priest**, **WASP**, **Motley Crue**, **Y&T**, **Iron Maiden**, **Twisted Sister** and **Queensryche**. Recording for the project was done at Rumbo, Sound City and A&M Studios, all in LA ... In NY at Bearsville Studios, former **Rainbow** lead singer **Joey Lynn Turner** recorded his new album for Elektra Records, with **Roy Thomas Baker** producing ... In

Brooklyn, **UTFO** are recording at Sound Heights with **Full Force** producing. **Paul Schaffer** of *The David Letterman Show* has also been in, laying down Yamaha DX-7 tracks for producer **Tisziji Munoz** ... At the Boogie Hotel in NY, **White Lion** is recording a single called "Web Of Desire" for the film *The Money Pit* for Universal Films, produced by **Richard Sanders**. Also in were **Kut**, cutting their new EP with producer **Jeffrey Kawalek** ... **Huey Lewis** was recently at The Plant in Sausalito, producing **Nick Lowe's** new single release, "I Knew The Bride." **John Fogerty** was also in, preparing his new album project for Warner Brothers ... At Evergreen Recording in NY last month, the Riddim Twins (a.k.a. **Sly Dunbar** and **Robbie Shakespeare**) were recording with **Gwen Guthrie** for the **Taxi Gang**. **Afrika Bambaataa** was also in to record with **Bill Laswell** for Tommy Boy Records ... At Soundcastle in LA, **Dennis Lambert** is producing a new **Smokey Robinson** project for Motown with **Dennis McKay** engineering ... At Sunset Sound Factory, **The Bangles** are recording their new album with producer **David Kahne**. Also in the studio are the **Del Fuegos**, working on their new album for Slash Records with producer **Mitchell Froom**.

Critic's Choice:

Iain Blair Touts Tears For Fears

The USA appearances by Brit rockers **Tears For Fears** neatly coincided with their current chart-topping status here, and much of the polished, well-manicured set consisted of material from their *Songs From The Big Chair* LP. Led by guitarist/singer **Roland Orzabal** and bassist/singer **Curt Smith**, the band also proved to be far more visually exciting than the controlled, often cold synthesizer textures might suggest. Both singers bounced around the stage and looked surprisingly happy as they poured out their hearts on such sad and downtempo songs as "I Believe" and "Shout." Orzabal's incisive and fiery guitar playing also served to roughen up the edges of the group's electronically dominated sound — which relies heavily on the synthesizers of **Ian Stanley** and a combination of pre-recorded drum tracks and

the power playing of drummer **Manny Elias**. Although **Tears For Fears'** lyrics often focused on the downside of life, the musical energy usually by-passed the melancholy introspection, as evidenced by a bright 'n' breezy version of their monster hit "Everybody Wants To Rule The World." Don't you?

Top Of The Charts

No.	Albums	Singles
1	Scarecrow John Cougar Mellencamp (Riva)	"St. Elmo's Fire (Man In Motion)" John Parr (Atlantic)
2	Brothers In Arms Dire Straits (Warners)	"Don't Lose My Number" Phil Collins (Atlantic)
3	The Dream Of The Blue Turtles Sting (A&M)	"Money For Nothing" Dire Straits (Warner Brothers)
4	Little Creatures Talking Heads (Sire)	"Power Of Love" Huey Lewis & The News (Chrysalis)
5	Fables Of The Reconstruction R.E.M. (I.R.S.)	"We Don't Need Another Hero" Tina Turner (Capitol)
6	Hooters Hooters (Columbia)	"Cherish" Kool & The Gang (De-Lite/Polygram)
7	Back To The Future Soundtrack (MCA)	"Freedom" Wham (Columbia)
8	Ain't Love Grand X (Elektra)	"Dress You Up" A-ha (Sire)
9	Lovin' Every Minute Of It Loverboy (Columbia)	"Take On Me" A-ha (Warner Brothers)
10	Shock Motels (Capitol)	"Pop Life" Prince (Warner Brothers)

Charts courtesy of The Gavin Report.

Personal Favorites

Ron Keel, lead singer in his self-named band, picks his five favorite albums: 1. *Back In Black*, **AC/DC**; 2. *Wish You Were Here*, **Pink Floyd**; 3. *Van Halen*, **Van Halen**; 4. *Alive*, **Kiss**; 5. *Bat Out Of Hell*, **Meat Loaf**.

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What's Under the Covers?

Playing cover songs gives a new band a chance to know itself and its audience.

Perhaps one effect MTV and rock videos have had on new bands has been a trend toward a more professional attitude. With the screenings of "basement tapes" and the exposure regional bands have had on shows such as *The Cutting Edge*, success in the music industry now at least seems more attainable. Young musicians set up goals early on in the formation of bands and are becoming aware that marketing skills go hand-in-hand with success. The result has been a determined endeavor by new bands to find "a sound" — an tangible, sellable quality in the music they produce. For some, a critical step in the progression from new band status to that of a mature band with a sound

were able to develop their sound. "The three of us have such dissimilar backgrounds — when we do a sound check, Bill might play to the beat to 'Freebird,' John will play bass to Muddy Waters and I'll do something by the Clash," says Johnston, who as a songwriter is influenced by the Beatles and the Jam. Drummer Mague, while a fan of good ol' rock 'n' roll, has rounded off his musical tastes by taking eight years of classical piano and now enjoys "any music but opera." Malone, who weaves a blues flavored bass line into the band's pop sound is a second generation New Orleans musician — his dad plays in the Radiators and his mom is one of the Pfister Sisters.



Up Front: John Malone, Robert Johnston, Bill Mague.

is fun. "We play to a private school crowd," says Johnston. "We'd like to attract the audience the Cold did. It doesn't make sense to play to ten people. We want to reach as many people we can doing our own thing."

NO BAND WANTS to play to an empty house, yet not every band's goal is national attention — at least not initially.

"We want to be a successful *working* band," says Tim Radosti, guitarist/keyboardist of **Perfect Strangers**. Radosti talks of plans to play high schools, CYO's, and fraternities while still eyeing the possibility of big success someday.

"We would like to play all our own music," said lead singer Eileen "Scottee" Scott, and presently Perfect Strangers includes three of their own songs into the two large sets of their performance. The rest of the music is comprised of an eclectic selection of high-energy covers.

"We choose songs that we can sing and play well," says Radosti. The vocal strength of the band is a big asset and a determining factor in the choosing of covers. "We'll hear a song on the radio and say 'that sounds like you, let's do it.'" Everyone in the band gets a turn at the mic, except for

drummer Bob Bigler, who is kept busy playing the two sets of drums that surround him. The singing chores are shared with bassist Hal Mosely and guitarist Walter Gonzalez, each singing one of their own compositions as well as lending constant harmonies.

Scott, an intense performer with a versatile voice, points out the covers are not top 40 but rather "songs we think will go over well." The songs range from well-known numbers by the Producers and Police, to songs recorded by Pat Benatar and Cyndi Lauper with additional odd-ball tunes like the old Andy Capps anthem "I Got Your Number" thrown in.

Radosti claims the hard work involved in putting together such a wide range of covers is now paying off. "It's hard to get a show together — at first we looked like a band playing a song list. Now we have a rhythm to the sets and we're beginning to develop our own sound — after a while you kinda get tired of playing the song like the record so you start adding tastes of your own style."

A BAND'S ABILITY to interpret a cover tune into its own language is an important step in developing a sound. At this point cover tunes stop being



Perfect Strangers: Tim Radosti, Bob Bigler, Eileen Scott, Hal Mosley, Walter Gonzales.

is the adoption of cover tunes. While the goal of most bands is to develop a strong repertoire of original songs, a key in the process towards that goal is the selection, arrangement and performance of *other* people's music.

The obvious advantage of playing covers is the instant recognition of the playlist by the audience, and that makes for a more accessible performance. It's a faster way for a new band to gain a following and opens the way for a gradual incorporation of the band's own material. It's also a way for the musicians who are forming a band to get to know each other.

For **Up Front**, a three-piece band beginning to attract a large younger audience, the choosing and playing of cover tunes was an essential first step. Now that the band, comprised of Robert Johnston on guitar, John Malone on bass, and Bill Mague on drums, has been gigging regularly, they have eliminated all but five or six of the covers and the bulk of the material is now their own. But Johnston maintains that by playing covers they

"Playing cover tunes got us together," continues Johnston; "it gave us a sense of each other and we grew closer musically. It also gave us the time to work on our stage show."

In time the band matured. "For the first eight months we sounded like the Jam, but we don't anymore," says Johnston. They also became more self-assured of their own music. "You get confident that you're gonna go out there and do well, and if the audience doesn't like it — well maybe they're not your market."

The original songs that **Up Front** now play are influenced by the aggressive pop sounds of their cover tunes. "We took the information we learned from playing covers and just put it to songwriting," says Johnston.

Mague claims that covers help a band figure out what kind of music each member likes. "And then everyone can work on original material from the same point of view," he says.

Up Front's own songs are both punchy and clean, and their performance



Private Joy: Craig Cortello, Steve Duplantis, Rock Locicero, Mark Clayton.

merely copies of the original and become a creative entity of their own. For **Private Joy** this process has given rise to a style they call "power soul." Playing a hybrid of funk, soul and rock, Private Joy combines the backgrounds and tastes of its four members into a blend that at first is reminiscent of early Talking Heads. The apparent thought that the band puts into their arrangements and stage show, however, reveals a clear commitment to creating a distinguished style of its own.

Singer/keyboardist Steve Duplantis and guitarist Craig Cortello started playing rock 'n' roll in high school and later formed a band called East Cambodia. Over the years Duplantis has augmented his musical tastes by listening to black artists while Cortello explored the sounds of new wave. The two then teamed up with the drummer and bass player of the Numbers, Mark Clayton and Rock Lo Cicero. Endowed in the manic heritage of punk, this rhythm section adds the "power" to the power soul act.

"We initially stayed on the pop-side of things," says Duplantis, admitting to catering to the voice of their one-time girl vocalist. But since her departure in mid-summer Private Joy's direction has changed, shaped by the band's preference for funk and soul tunes.

This change is one the band seems both happy and comfortable with —

plus it may be good marketing strategy. "The Busboy tunes are real crowd pleasers," says Cortello. "Cover tunes orient people to what type of music you're playing — it lets them know what to expect."

"We're not going out with *all* originals 'cause the audience won't relate to that," says Duplantis, but he is quick to point out that the band has nine originals in their set and more are on the way.

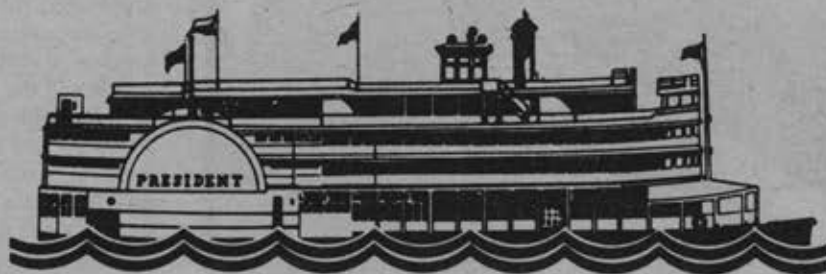
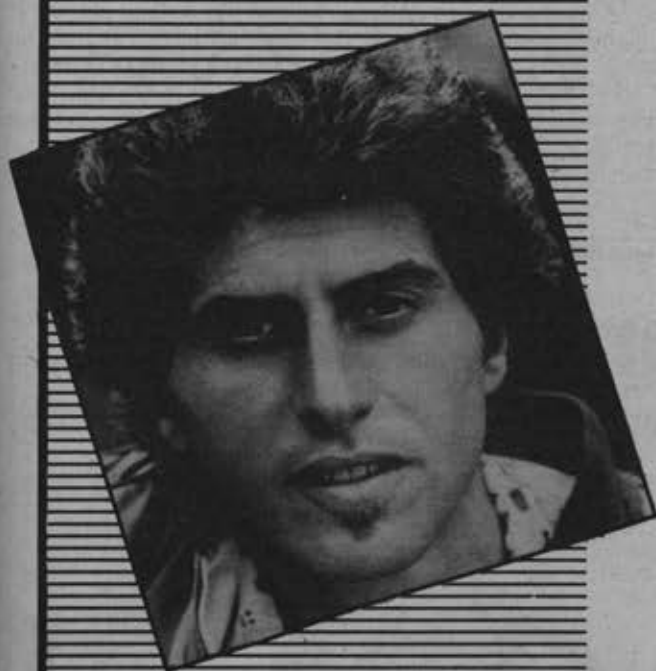
Private Joy, which takes its name from a tune off Prince's *Controversy* album, has an odd flair for style both musically and visually. Their versions of older soul tunes are revamped and full of energy. A highlight of the set, a reworking of "Tears Of A Clown," strays both from the original Miracles version as well as the popular remake by The English Beat. AC/DC's heavy metal "Shook Me All Night Long" has been turned into a rap song, and Duplantis, an experienced drummer, wants to venture further into pop-funk experiments by bringing a turntable on state to scratch out a beat.

The band's look has changed also. After debuting in camouflage pants, black shirts and black berets, the guys have relaxed their look. Duplantis now appears on stage in a beach shirt, and shorts — a visual juxtaposition to the music. The only problem now is that winter is coming. "We need to find something warmer to wear when it gets cold." □

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Talking About Talking Drums

The traditional talking drums were too loud for pop music until the appearance of amplifiers and electric guitars.

It wouldn't seem illogical to believe that the popular music of an African people would become less traditional with the introduction of electric instruments. Yet when speaking of juju music, a Nigerian pop style of the Yoruba people, amplifiers and electric guitars actually reversed this sequence for a while.

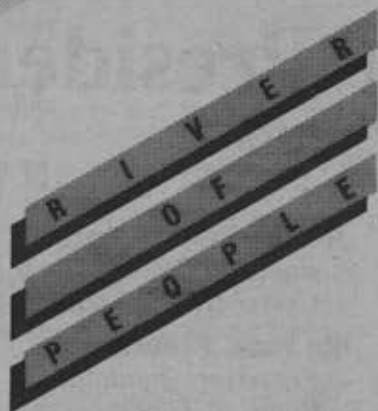
Anyone who saw Yoruba juju performers Chief Commander Ebenezer Obey or King Sunny Adé during their tours of the States will be familiar with the most important instrument of the Yoruba people... the talking drum. This drum is present at all traditional ceremonies like births, weddings and funerals, not only providing layers of rhythms for dancing but also communicating traditional folklore through its unique ability to talk.

Those who have heard talking drums know that they are *loud*, and herein was the limitation of this most traditional of instruments for use in pop music. As Lagos and other West African cities developed, along with them came the desire for a pop music to satisfy the eclectic tastes of the city dwellers. The most common arrangement came to be the solo singer-guitar (or banjo) player, who was usually accompanied by a few percussionists. The soft volume of this arrangement eliminated the talking drum as suitable accompaniment because its loud volume would have overpowered the guitar and the singing. Other percussion instruments like gourds, bottles, triangles and tambourines had to be used. It wasn't until sometime after WWII, when amplifiers and electric guitars made their appearance in West Africa, that the juju music we know today began to take form. With

amplification, the guitar and the voice could balance with the volume of the talking drum, allowing the addition of one or more of the drums. Juju music became a pop form that was hip and modern, appealing to the youth with its electric guitar, yet at the same time more traditional with its use of the talking drum and traditional call-and-response singing patterns.

What we heard from Sunny Adé and Ebenezer Obey was the result of approximately 40 years of development of juju music, from its beginning with one guitar and one microphone to the present day layer upon layer of flowing rhythms created by talking drums, trapset and conga drums, four or five electric guitars, pedal steel guitar, bass guitar and an occasional synthesizer. Ebenezer Obey, in fact, is one of the musicians credited with pushing juju to its newest ground, being the first to introduce multiple guitars and pedal steel guitar.

The talking drum, by the way, is a true means of communication, speaking to the people in as sophisticated a language as a human speaking English, Yoruba or Ibo. The Yoruba language is a complex, tonal system, meaning that a word's meaning changes depending on the way it is spoken. The tonal variations of a human voice can be duplicated by a talking drum due to a unique construction that allows the drummer to tighten or loosen the drumhead at will, giving a range of sounds from a low thud to a high-pitched slap. A skilled drummer can truly make the drum talk as I witnessed at the Dream Palace on Mardi Gras eve, 1983, when King Sunny Adé and his juju band made their first New Orleans appearance. During a



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quiet moment at the soundcheck a talking drum suddenly sang out, and immediately everyone onstage turned to check out someone who had just walked through the front door. The drummer had drummed that a very pretty young woman had just entered the bar!

Juju is not the only popular style in Nigeria to make use of talking drums. Sakara, fuji and apala styles use the drums and traditional rhythms to create a foundation for the voices. Most often there are no electric instruments used with these styles, although the only easily available example of apala music, an album by Akanni Animashaun called *Akanni De Alawiye Orin*, does contain a keyboard and occasional pedal steel guitar. The most popular style right now in Lagos seems to be fuji music, with a strong cult following. The foundation of the vocal style of fuji music is the Moslemic prayer call, itself very tonal, and a perfect blend with talking drums and other hand drums. The acknowledged star of fuji in Nigeria is Alhaji Chief Ayinde Barrister who has almost forty albums out with his Supreme Fuji Commanders. On his latest album, *Destiny*, he has changed the name of his group to the Super Fuji Vibrations and has added trapset drums to "make the music more danceable to Westerners." The trap drums do change the rhythm a bit, but with fuji music, it's the vocals that

you'll either love or hate.

Rounder Records continues to release invaluable African recordings that contain fascinating music and informative liner notes, and their latest offering is *Juju Roots, 1930's-1950's*. In interviews with today's juju stars, certain names always surface as inspirational sources, names such as Tunde King, Ayinde Bakare and Irewolede Denge. *Juju Roots* contains recordings by these stars and more, and gives a good feeling for the popular music of West African cities prior to the emergence of juju. A few of the cuts on this album are examples of juju in its infancy, the one guitar-one microphone style with talking drum and assorted percussion instruments. And one off the wall cut (presented to show competing forms of music in the Thirties), "Ore Mi Kini Se" by the Calabar Brass Band is a treasure because it features a melody which surfaced again 35 years later in Jamaica on a grounation recording by Count Ossie and the Mystic Revelation of Rastafari. Grounation music is African in its approach, using three drums called Nyahbhingi drums (in Jamaica), with call and response singing as well as verse-chorus singing. In the late Fifties/early Sixties in Jamaica, Count Ossie and his group were a highly influential force in Kingston, influencing many musicians who later ended up being stars of ska, rock steady and reggae. □

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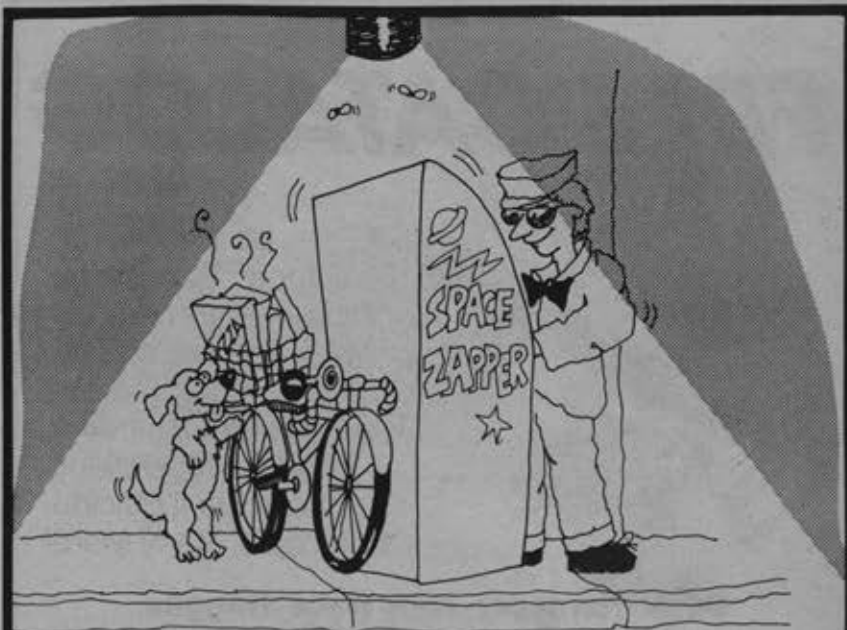
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Welcome to jazz awareness month. As you know, jazz is a formidable part of our city's heritage. From Louis Armstrong, Louis Jordan, and Louis Prima to Louie and Red's Body & Paint Shop, New Orleans has always been synonymous with jazz — and for good reason. From a historical viewpoint, the Crescent City has been a bit improvised in her development. The sociologist would be quick to point out that the New Orleanian is typically syncopated in his or her body rhythms. Finally, the city's poetics are characterized by contrapuntal ensemble playing.

One sure thing about jazz is that there are times when you are just not in the mood to hear any. So, whenever you feel like duking it out with dixieland, creating a fuss over fusion, or decoding the jazz messengers, derailing 'Trane — whatever, put down your cup of herbal tea and try the latest in fine American rock 'n' roll.

I'll stay home tomorrow and watch a little T.V." Financial success has never been easy for Alex Chilton (he says *Feudalist Tarts* is a "serf" record), but with his growing reputation among music lovers, Chilton should soon find himself with less time for television.



Saturday mornings would be a great time for a "Jonathan Richman and the Modern Lovers" T.V. show. Kiddies would love the martian-martians, abominable snowmen, parties in the woods, and dodge veg-a-matics. On *Rockin' and Romance* (Twin/Tone), Richman offers thirteen more stories — each with a little touch of that old a capella "doo-wop" sound. How far has Jojo come from Pablo Picasso? Sit your child in front of "Vincent Van Gogh," the fifth cut on the new album: "Have you heard about the painter Vincent Van Gogh, he loved color and he let it show / Now in a museum what have we here, the baddest painter since Jan Van der Mer." Tuck your child into bed with the next cut, "Walter Johnson," in which Richman praises the great baseball pitcher who loved the game so much he would ease up on the opposing players, explaining to his teammates, "Boys, this game isn't any fun if you don't get a hit every once and a while."

For Richman, who still hasn't had a hit record after ten years in the business, rock 'n' roll is as much fun as ever. Although *Rockin' and Romance* does contain its share of weak tracks, it is still a pleasant bit of silliness.

Another "neato" record is the Cucumbers' *Who Betrays Me... and Other Happier Songs* (Fake Doom). Deena Shoshkes sings breezy, bright pop songs that recall the white funk of Talking Heads' first album.

Let's Talk Hardcore

Now, as the Silver Surfer used to say, let's talk hardcore. For those of you who took an immediate disliking to hardcore music, there is a reason to give it another chance. Many of the bands that belched out obscenities in

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Alex Chilton, the cult figure currently residing in New Orleans, has release his first record in seven years. Recorded in Memphis, *Feudalist Tarts* (Big Time Records) is an immediately likeable collection of sixties-styled pop sun in glum matter-of-fact vocals. The ex-Box Top (author of "The Letter") and former Big Star leader has been a major influence on the Athens/North Carolina pop scene. R.E.M., the dB's, the Replacements and Let's Active are constantly dropping his name. His following in England propelled This Mortal Coil, a British supergroup, to record two of his compositions including the dreamy "Kanga Roo." Chilton likes to mix blues and sixties pop with light guitar flashes and unforgettable hooks. On *Feudalist Tarts* he adds some Memphis soul for seasoning. There are three covers (best of which is Slim Harpo's "Tee Ni Nee Ni Noo — Tip On In") and three originals. In "Lost My Job," which Chilton performed while opening for Jonathan Richman, he sings "Lost My Job — woe is me / Think

4/4 time at great volumes have moved away from the strict confines of that sound and towards elements of country, funk and jazz. Consequently, some have developed into the best bands in America.



The Minuteman's *Double Nickles on the Dime* (SST) was the best album of 1984. A musical hybrid of jazz, country-funk and hardcore was mixed with equal doses of humor and philosophical ambiguities in the most exciting collection of tunes I have heard in a long time. The band's follow-up EP, *Project: Mersh* (SST) contains longer and jazzier cuts highlighted by "The Cheerleaders" — a scathing attack on Reagan's Central American policies. "Tour Spiel," Mike Watt's epic-lengthened project comes across as filler, though.

of the Austin instrumentation and white funk. Songs like "Swimming Ground" and "Animal Kingdom" are convincing me that this is the best album of the year. In contention is the new Effigies' album *Fly on a Wire* (Enigma). By replacing guitarist Earl Letiecq with future guitar hero Robert O'Connor, this vicious Chicago band has developed an authoritative metallic assault. "Blue Funk" is the immediately likeable cut, but "The Eights" has a wild, biting edge.

The Big Boys have released an eponymous album on the Enigma label. Aggressive funky frat tunes yell out "Dance, life is just a Party." Watch out for the scratch mixes. Naked Raygun (pronounced "Reagan") has released the best thrash record so far this year. *Throb Throb* (Homestead) contains the vigorous "Surf Combat" in which California becomes a battlefield and Muscle Beach becomes "Pork Chop Hill." Any band that records a song called "Abba God and Me" must have a great sense of humor. Washington, D.C.'s Meatmen have released an album, *War of the Superbikes* (Homestead), that the Parents Music Resource Center may have a field day with. Just check out "Cadaver Class" — but not on a full stomach.

Washington, D.C. is also the home of "Go-Go" soul, an older cousin of New York's rap culture. *Go Go Crankin'* (TTED/Island) is a collection of the best happy-feet workouts performed characteristically live, with heavy percussion, boss rhythms and killer horns. Trouble Funk's "Say What" parties on its own while the Godfather of the Good Groove, Chuck Brown, calls out "We Need Some Money" and gets the audience responding.

Finally, the Red Hot Chili Peppers have released a new album, *Freaky Styley* (EMI), produced by the funk wizard George Clinton. On the new album, the Peppers remade the Meters' classic number "Africa." They changed the name of the brotherland to "Hollywood." Although the number starts off with promise, it meanders out of the groove. I'll stick with the Meters and Neville Brothers. □



The Meat Puppets' *Up on the Sun* (SST) is a remarkable shift from the earlier weird, death-obsessed efforts. Their new album is a catchy blending



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Stormy Weather

Mac Rebennack
Storm Warning
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At the very moment I am writing this, your favorite column in this entire magazine, Hurricane Elena is in the process of restructuring the geography of our Gulf Coast. As a result, this dedicated scribe/record collector could think of no more appropriate subject that this first solo effort by Mac Rebennack a.k.a. Dr. John.

An instrumental, very much influenced by Guitar Slim and Bo Diddley I would venture, this appeared on Cosimo Matassa's Rex label in



1959. Appropriately, the song builds very much like a storm and is punctuated by two biting sax solos, probably supplied by Lee Allen or Red Tyler. The record did quite well around New Orleans upon release, insuring plenty of work for the then-teenage Rebennack. Don't be dismayed if you don't possess the original as you can still hear the song via the LP *Ace Story - Volume One* (Ace 11).

reviews

On the Record

Louis Jordan and His Tympani Five
Jivin' With Jordan
Charly CDX7

If you thought the old MCA compilation *The Best of Louis Jordan* had all the essential material by this pioneer of R&B, this new double LP set will come as good news. *Jivin' With Jordan* is a perfect companion to the earlier collection. Of the 28 sides only five duplicate the *Best Of* album and in terms of annotation it is by far the superior package. *Jivin'* presents a selection of Jordan's material recorded for Decca, beginning with two cuts from his first session in 1939 to his last session in 1951, in chronological order. Ironically Jordan began recording with small combos while bigger bands were still in vogue, and ended his Decca sessions at the dawn of the rock 'n' roll era with a big band sound.

Nearly all the songs on side two and three of *Jivin' With Jordan* were hits on the pop or race charts. On these sides the set lives up to its title, presenting Jordan primarily in the jump mood that inspired a young Bill Haley several years later. A notable exception is "Reconversion Blues" where Jordan is in fine blues voice as he proclaims "I'm gonna buy a brand new radio that don't get the latest news." Blues or jump, Jordan's music was about good times. Even in the Eighties, one listen to "That Chick's Too Young To Fry" and it's easy to picture the band leader smiling and winking through the undisguised innuendos. The joy in all the songs here is irrepressible. *Jivin' With Jordan*

along with the previous greatest hits package is essential R&B and a great way to "let the good times roll."

— Macon Fry

Fleshtones
Speed Connection II
IRS

Recorded at the famous Gibus Club in Paris, France, *Speed Connection II* captures America's greatest live act at their best. All that is missing is having Peter Zarella kicking the microphone stand on you. R.E.M.'s Peter Buck crashes in for two cuts. Get drunk, play loudly and learn the words.

— St. George Bryan

The Roches
Another World
Warner Bros. 25321

On *Another World*, the Roches incorporate the talents of eleven studio musicians and three producers. The result is a very polished, commercially accessible package that seldom sounds like the Hammond sisters we have come to know and love. Thankfully, the musicians and producers did not smother their sense of humor. "Face Down at Folk City" is about that drinking experience no one wants to remember: "You spend the next seven hours expressing your soul / Then you go into the girls room and you give it to the bowl."

"Missing" and "Love to See You" are the lowpoints of this effort. In both songs, the Roches allow a man named Steve Lowe to throw in a little guitar solo that would embarrass

R.E.O. speedwagon. If you like the idea of the Roches singing against a T. Rex riff ("The Angry Boy Man") or the girls covering that old Fleetwoods hit "Come Softly To Me," you will also probably find enough in *Another World* to satisfy you.

— St. George Bryan

Kenny Rankin

at the Blue Room
August 14, 1985

Kenny Rankin came out alone — no band — just a classical guitar. After some Hurricane Danny jokes, he played and sang for close to an hour. His voice is an exquisite instrument. His timbres, falsetto, and dynamics put him in a class by himself, reminding the listener of a madrigal singer. His near-perfect intonation is a rarity in today's climate of casual relationships to pitch.

Unlike many solo performers, Rankin keeps solid time. His guitar work is sophisticated, yet he seems to play only what's needed, never going for flash.

Rankin seems to have gotten better with age. Sounding something like the Rev. Claude Jeter, Rankin makes gospel out of material that might become hackneyed lounge filler in lesser hands. The late James Booker had a similar talent. Rankin wells up great emotion, especially notable in the somewhat formal confines of the Blue Room. Turning the Blue Room into a coffee house can't be easy, but Rankin managed to hush the house with what is often called soul, without a hint of the Aunt Jemimaisms often found in singers who imitate the mannerisms instead of the feeling of the blues.

Rankin's self deprecating stage manner was amusing, as were his faces — many worthy of Peter Sellers. One of his last numbers was a new Jimmy Webb tune called "They Don't Make Em Like You Anymore." He could have been singing about himself.

— Mark Bingham

Various

Louisiana Cajun Special

No. 1

Ace Records (England)

This is Ace's first dig into the rich treasure trove of Cajun music that originated on Ville Platte, Louisiana's Swallow label. *Cajun Special* is an accurate term as the 16-song package presents only "specials" — the term used for the fast paced two-steps which generally fill the floor at the fais-do-dos.

Compiled by Ace's Ted Carroll and annotated by John Broven (author of *South to Louisiana*), this is a magnificent collection of modern Cajun sound. The music, which is typical of South Louisiana during the Sixties, is basically that of fiddle and accordion — influenced by blues, hillbilly and country music.

The performances are either quick paced instrumental workouts or wistful nasal vocals.

Nathan Abshire's classic "Pine Grove Blues" is here, as are two other important items by Belton Richard, "Oh Lucille" and the "Cajun Stripper." Adam Herbert's French vocal on "I'm So Lonely" is probably the bluest item with some truly heartfelt vocals. Austin Pitre is represented by two of his bestsellers, "Mamou Blues" and the rhythmic "Don't Shake My Tree." Other great tracks include the Balfa Brothers' "Lacassine Special," Nolan Cormier's "Hee Haw Breakdown" and the classic "Backdoor" by the Louisiana Aces.

This is a great item whether you've got a good run of Cajun LPs or are looking for an introduction. More soon, please.

—Almost Slim

Various

The Jin Story

Ace 144 (England)

As most of you should know by now, the Jin label was, and still is, responsible for some of the greatest "swamp pop" music ever to be laid down on wax. This is the first serious reissue from the impressive catalog of Floyd Soileau's Ville Platte, Louisiana label, so hits dominate the 16-song package, but with a few obscurities thrown in to boot. Remember this is primarily geared at the European market, so if you've got a fair run of those Jin collections (*Rockin' Date With South Louisiana Stars*, *South Louisiana Juke Box Hits*, etc.) you may find this one a tad redundant. But for those of you who don't, I can imagine no better introduction to the warm R&B and rock 'n' roll sound from the bayous.

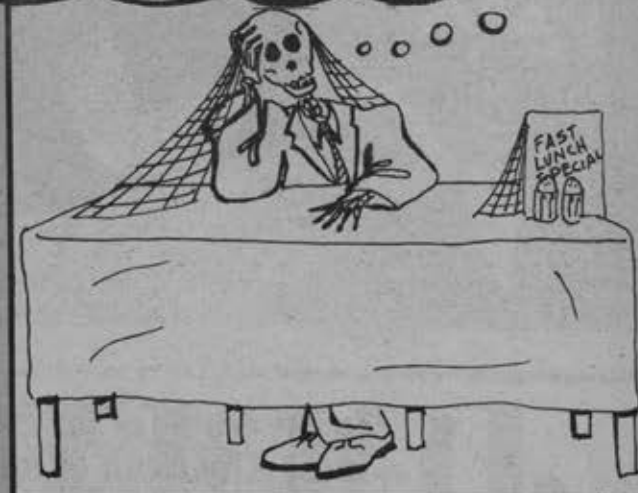
"Breakin' Up Is Hard To Do," from 1959, is probably the biggest commercial hit found here, but so too is Jin's biggest underground record Rufus Jagneaux's "Opelousas Sostain," amazingly from 1973. "Je Suis Bet Pour T'Aime" will also sound very familiar, as it is Joe Barry's French version of the Domino sound-alike "I'm A Fool To Care." Phil Bo's "She Wears My Ring" is a real raver, employing one of the hottest horn lines heard on wax (recorded at Cosimo's). There's a couple of interesting covers found here as well, Clint West & the Boogie Kings' brassy "Boogie Children," and Margo White's "Please Don't Mess With My Man." Other tracks worthy of mention are Billy Lewis & the Rockin' Hearts' "Growing Old," Red Smiley & the Velvetones "Take A Ride" and Jay Randall's "I've Had It," to name but a few.

Great liner notes by the British bayou wizard John "Bon Ton" Broven and an eye-catching cover make this a worthy addition to any collection of the sounds of South Louisiana, cher.

—Almost Slim

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In the cradle of jazz, October is the month set aside to celebrate this most American of musics. Throughout the city, at the music clubs and outside in Jackson and Lafayette squares, New Orleans is invited to become aware of the great musicians and variety of jazz available to them all year 'round.

Since 1980, the worthies of the Louisiana Jazz Federation have proclaimed October to be Jazz Awareness Month. A month's worth of special concerts and programs are planned each year in an attempt to bring jazz more prominently into the consciousness of the city as a whole. Patrice Fisher was in on the conception and inception of the project.

"It was organized originally because we had very little funding," Fisher explained. "We were trying to do a project that would incorporate a lot of the community, and have them initiate the projects and do some kind of special events that would highlight the sponsors as part of the jazz community."

Each individual event still involves a community co-sponsor who is in on the planning of that project,

although there is much more grant money now, which affords the Federation a bit more flexibility and autonomy.

October was picked for the annual affair because it is far enough away from the Jazz and Heritage Festival to avoid interference or duplication of effort, and because it is naturally a time of renewed activity in New Orleans after the summer doldrums.

"We had also noticed," Fisher said, "that every year during the Jazz Festival, a lot of musicians have extra gigs. They all do something special. We just wanted to have that same kind of feeling in the fall. It gets bigger and better every year, and a lot of the community is involved in doing it, but it's a whole lot more work than I ever thought it would be."

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

► The Jazz Awareness Month Kick-Off Party featuring The David Torkanowsky Quartet will be held Saturday, October 5 from 7-10 p.m. at Nexus, 6200 Elysian Fields.

► Jazz guitarist John Scofield, who has just completed a European tour with trumpet great Miles Davis, will perform with his band at the Contemporary Arts Center, 900 Camp Street, Thursday, October 24 at 9 p.m. This quartet will feature Scofield's new drummer, Ricky Sebastian, formerly of New Orleans.

► A big band concert at Jackson Square on Sunday, October 6 with James Moore's Urbanites, Tony Klatka's Warsaw, and the Loyola University Jazz Band.

► A "Reed Night" at Tyler's on Tuesday, October 29 featuring Red Tyler and James Rivers, with the Alvin Batiste Quartet opening.

► A "Piano Night" at Snug Harbor on Saturday, October 12 including quartets led by Larry Seiberth and Mike Peller.

► A "Latin Night" at Storyville on Sunday,

October 20 with Edu and the Sounds of Brazil, a Honduran band called Bandido led by Paky Saavedra, and the first appearance in the United States of a Guatemalan jazz band called Ensemble Acoustico.

► A fusion concert at Lafayette Square on Friday, October 11 including Woodenhead, The New Orleans Stick Band, and Kidd Jordan's Elektrik Band. Letters have been sent to band directors and principals of schools in fifteen parishes suggesting class trips to this one, in an effort to interest students in jazz through the rock elements of these bands.

► A night of singers at Snug Harbor on Saturday, October 19 with Lady BJ, Johnny Adams and Germaine Bazzle. Backing the songsters will be the Ellis Marsalis Quartet.

There may well be additions and/or changes to this schedule as the dates roll around, so keep your eyes open.

The Jazz Federation would also like you to know that anyone interested in volunteering to help out with any of the events should call the Federation at 482-8827.

AWAWARENESS



With another Jazz Awareness Month upon us, we thought it might be interesting to let some of the people most directly affected by the proceedings express whatever ideas they might have for this or future Octobers. Here are the results of our brief and decidedly unscientific survey of some members of the New Orleans music community.

JOHNNY VIDACOVICH, *drummer*: Let's have jazz every night. How about using the outdoor stage at Audubon Park? That's a nice scene. And it would be good to have it recorded, edited and played, or it could be broadcast live. That would be hip. A live broadcast every night. Give all the local guys a chance to play. Have a party. A month-long jazz party picnic. Jazz under the stars with the local stars.

VICTOR GOINES, *tenor and soprano sax*: Not necessarily in terms of Jazz Awareness Month, but in terms of jazz awareness, I'd like to see musicians begin to study jazz more seriously instead of just playing gigs. I feel like there's a need for players to study the music instead of just playing the same tunes from the Miles Davis era over and over.

PLACIDE ADAMS, *bass player and leader of The Original Dixieland Hall Jazz Band, and the Onward Brass Band*: I'd like to see more musicians participating, and have the people running the thing get the word out to more musicians. These things come up, and a lot of musicians don't even know about it half the time. They don't even know who to contact. Since it's Awareness Month, let's make the musicians aware of what's happening.

JIMMY ROBINSON, *guitarist and leader of Woodhead*: There's a good question. I would like to see people come out and listen to the music, and really support it. That's the one thing that seems to be lacking all the time. Let's promote the music of people who really want to do something different but have no outlet. Scott Goudeau recorded a great tape, but he hardly gets a chance to play that stuff with a band live. I'd like the audience to become a little more aware of the fact that there's a lot of music out there besides what they're used to hearing.

JEFF BOUDREAUX, *drummer*: Whatever is going to be happening during Jazz Awareness Month needs to be advertised more. It seems like the people who know about jazz already are going to find out about Jazz Awareness Month anyway. To reach the broader audience, the audience that is not aware of jazz but should be, there needs to be some creative kind of advertising in different places than has been done in the past.

KIDD JORDAN, *sax player and teacher at SUNO*: I'd like to see more improvised music be played.

Around here people tend to be so conservative that cats trying to do some improvised music have trouble playing.

ELLIS MARSALIS, *pianist and teacher at NOCCA*: If I had a dream list, what I would say is to have a venue in which three or four pianists come down to New Orleans and held concert/workshops. Like Hank Jones, Tommy Flanagan, people like that. These guys could be brought in to do these workshops, and then we could hook up within a hundred and fifty mile radius, say Southeastern, Southern, LSU, and USL, so that the people there would know that these things were going on. And maybe even as far away as Houston.

EARL TURBINTON, *saxophonist*: I'd like to see some music go to places where people are who can't get out to it on their own. Maybe some concerts for senior citizens, or children in the hospital, or some of the prisons.

KALAMU YA SALAAM, *promoter and radio producer*: For every radio station in New Orleans to play jazz, and that there be at least one day a week set aside on the television stations to feature jazz.

VINCENT FUMAR, *music writer, The Times-Picayune/The States Item*: I would like to see two or more jam sessions that would feature traditional and modern artists playing together. I would also like to see them promoted heavily. I would like to see a couple of special programs that would pay tribute to Jelly Roll Morton and Sidney Bechet, who have been overlooked. I think I'd like to see jazz brought into the schools, and it wouldn't be such a bad idea to have earlier starting times in clubs.

PAUL MCGINLEY, *alto sax and teacher at Loyola*: I'd like to see people actually become aware of the great live music that can be heard in New Orleans, and of some of the players just outside of all the guys you can hear on a regular basis. We have great jazz musicians and there are places to hear people, but we need to get more people in the clubs, as usual, because that means that we jazz musicians might get to play more, because the club owner might actually make a few dollars, and then that makes him want to do it again. I'd like to see Jazz Awareness Month work, so people become aware of who's out there, and how much fun it can be to listen.



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McRAMSEY CLEAN

Bassist/band leader/composer Ramsey McLean was born in New York and raised in New Orleans. In the early Seventies he studied at the Creative Music School in New York State. For the last ten years McLean has been active in New Orleans in a wide variety of bands. In the late Seventies and early Eighties, Ramsey's group, *The Lifers*, was one of a very few high profile avant-garde groups in New Orleans. When asked about his influences, he says, "The main influences on me are the people around me, not the people of my youth that I wanted to be like in the abstract. If you're associating with quality people, that's going to have more of an impact, 'cause those people are tangible."

McLean's current projects include *The Survivors*, an R&B-tinged group which features Charles Neville, *The Refugees*, a high-energy double trio (two basses, two guitars and two drummers), and *Sneak Attack*, which consists of piano (McLean), tuba (Kirk Joseph) and baritone sax (Roger Lewis).

I caught up with McLean recently for some Jazz Awareness Month musings about music, jazz, and creativity in general. We started out discussing last month's *Wavelength* article about Branford Marsalis, in which Marsalis discussed his experiences playing rock music with Sting.

RM: One of the things that Branford was saying that I really agree with is that rock really needs a jazz sensibility. I'm not trying to say that jazz really needs a rock sensibility, but I think it wouldn't hurt jazz to expand its sensibilities one more time, because it's always done that. That's the way it's perpetuated itself: It's been able to expand, and that doesn't mean just drawing on source material. It doesn't mean teaching a history lesson every time you're performing. Some nights you may feel the need to do that, and that's great, but as an overall direction, I wouldn't choose that. I don't really feel like listening to the history of jazz every time I go out, and I don't feel like teaching it every time I play. If you're trying to fit your own statement into it, that doesn't really have an historical context at this point. You have to make the statement before it can be history.

JK: It seems as if many young players, and maybe it's only the ones I'm exposed to in New Orleans, are pretty conservative these days.

I think that's the whole mood of the country, the whole mood of everything right now. But that had to come from somewhere, and that'll lead somewhere. That's not an end in itself.

Along those lines, I'm reminded of something that Miles Davis has been quoted as saying fairly often recently, to the effect that he doesn't go out to clubs very much these days because jazz now is mostly people playing the same riffs that have been going on for the last twenty-five years or so. But do you think that what he's doing now is such a different answer,



RICO

such a different direction?

Not at this point, but at the same time, it's pretty ridiculous to start leveling criticisms at somebody who's responsible in a large part for thirty years of really good music that everybody's had a chance to derive stuff from.

I wasn't really looking to criticize him or make a judgment about his saying that. I'm just trying to get at your ideas about the school of music that he's playing now. Is that a new direction?

It was in the Seventies, though that's fifteen years ago. When he came out with *Bitches Brew* and some of that early stuff, yeah. Now I think it's pretty accepted by audiences and musicians. But you get into playing jazz because, to me, it is, if not the most, at least one of the most challenging forms of music. All these value judgments about what's the best, I mean, cut it out. I really don't think anybody's in a position to make those statements because they can't back it up. It's just a matter of taste.

Sometimes I think that musicians may have the least realistic view of music.

How do you mean?

Isn't the idea of music to play music well? And for the people who go to hear a particular kind of music, let's say people who really like the post-bop music that was done in the Sixties and they want to go hear Wayne Shorter play that with his acoustic band, does it matter one drop whether or not Shorter's doing something new that night?

No, I guess that would just be lagniappe. You do what you do because you want to do it, or you're in the wrong field. You're either getting your own pleasures out of it inately, or else you're trying to demand that the situation give back to you what you put into it, and that's an inequitable relationship. If you can't get what you want out of a reasoning rational being, how can you get it out of a concept of art? As far as what I'd like to see for Jazz Awareness Month, I'd like to just see awareness. I don't care if it's about jazz or not. I'd like to just see everybody

move up one notch in their own personal awareness, and I'm sure jazz will be tagging along in there somewhere.

How do we accomplish that?

It's rough. No answer for that one. You certainly can't legislate it or pay for it. But I'd think you'd feel better if you took stock of yourself and went for it and did the best you could. And no bitterness. Fuck that. That's a sure sign of something else not going on, because everybody knows the music is really hard.

What kind of situation do you think is best for that kind of growth for a musician?

Well, there's just so much more to music than your performance. The ideal situation would be to have as many performances as you require for your on-stage self-expression. But I wouldn't want to work to the point where that's what I was doing, working. I want to work on creative things and do projects, and if you're exhausted or working too much, you don't have time for your creative projects. But then if you're not working enough, you probably don't know exactly what to do (laughs).

Are you consciously looking for, or consider it important to be looking for something new? Do you care about being different or just being good?

I think if you're setting out to do something different, that's for a very, very few people. If you're setting out to go as far as you can go, that's about the most you can ask of yourself. Even the people who are credited with all these quote unquote innovations, they always knew they were into something. Sam Rivers told me that when they were first forming certain musics in the Sixties, one of the main things that they did was to play a lot. There were new ideas coming through, but whether everyone was walking around thinking that they were revolutionary, I don't know. Then again, almost all the music that's being dealt with today was really invented in the Sixties, and that was a revolutionary decade. In my recollections of the Sixties, yeah, being a revolutionary was a good thing to be, where-

as now, people say, "Yeah, I love it, but I gotta eat."

Do you have specific goals that you have set?

The real specific goals that I have, I realize are very temporary in nature. They're simple things, because the overall goal is much higher. Simple problems like getting work. Like making contacts and getting heard. Getting your tapes even made can be a problem, much less getting them into the hands of somebody who could possibly do something with them. And I think we have come to realize at this point that the musician does not function best as his own promotional unit. You need to know a lot about the business, but to do your own business will tend to keep you as sort of a cottage industry. I'm not suggesting that if you don't have a record contract with a major record company that you can't do a lot of great things. But, simple goals like those are necessary for the success and progress of your music. I feel at this point that to be working three nights a week in a barroom, although that would be fine, is definitely not what I have in mind. If somebody was asking me what I want to do, I would never think of that.

What would you think of?

I think I'd like to be just working with other artists that are really excited about what they do, and about what you do, and what the possibilities are of working together. I think we should try to come out with a product that's above what we could do as individuals. The name of the game is gonna be change until you hit upon something that clicks, and then when it clicks, if you're one of the lucky people that things click for, and you've also got three or four, if not eight or ten projects out there, somebody might say, "This is great," and it might be number ten on your list. But if it can open doors for you, you may need to make that move.

So it's important to have a lot of things going on at the same time.

I wouldn't put all my eggs in one basket. □

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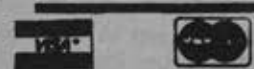
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Alonzo

★ Stewart ★

and the Gondoliers

★ *By Almost Slim*



“Unrecognized talent” is a term that drummer/vocalist Alonzo Stewart often uses when discussing his musical contemporaries. Although he’s not exactly a household word himself, he’s done a lot better than most, spending the better part of his 66 years making music his career and building a comfortable home for his family in the Ninth Ward. Like many New Orleans musical veterans, Stewart’s name carries more weight abroad than in his hometown. While one could spend a good deal of time rhyming off his many accomplishments, his instrumental prowess is such that for the past twenty years he has been an international endorsee for a drum and cymbal company, which should say a lot.

Wellington Alonzo Stewart was born an only child, April 3, 1919, to Velma and Benny Stewart in the old Third Ward of New Orleans (where the City Hall now stands). “My mother was kind of an intellectual,” chuckles Stewart, explaining his regal combination of names. “She liked English and Spanish sounding names. My father was a cook and my mother just took care of the house. She played piano occasionally in church and sang but that was about it at home.

“There was plenty of music in the neighborhood, though. There were spasm bands and plenty of parades in the streets. A lot of older musicians lived around the neighborhood that I got to know and play with when I grew up — Kid Clayton, John Casmir, Tom Jefferson, George Boyette — a lot of those cats took me under their wing.”

Stewart had a natural interest in music, and he eventually talked his mother into buying him a saxophone while he was in his early teens. “She went down to the Morris Music Shop on Rampart Street — that’s where everyone went to buy band equipment — and bought me a C-melody saxophone,” he explains. “I wanted an alto so I had to bring it back a few days later.

“I studied under Professor Valmar Victor, who taught for the public school system — he was The Man in New Orleans. I played in some walking bands and with little bands around grammar school. I even played with some of the older fellows in the neighborhood that I mentioned.”

Education was a prerequisite in the Stewart household, and he attended both Dillard and Alabama State, where he studied journalism and music. Interestingly enough, Stewart’s uncle was the renowned Black historian, Marcus B. Christian (see August’s WL), and together they assisted Lyle Saxon in researching *Gumbo Ya-Ya*, under a writer’s project for the WPA. It was Stewart who donated



The Gondoliers' comedy act on Ric/Ron.

Christian's work to the University of New Orleans.

It was at Alabama State that Stewart began playing drums. "I couldn't get into the school band because they had too many horn players," recalls Stewart. "They needed a drummer so I asked my mother to send me a set of drums. I played a little back in New Orleans, but I didn't apply myself until I was in school."

WHEN STEWART RETURNED to New Orleans he didn't jump straight into music; instead he taught for a while at Dillard and got involved in the previously mentioned research, before getting the call from Uncle Sam. "I wasn't really too involved in music when I got back to New Orleans until I ran into a fellow named Howard Davis who was a representative of the musicians union.

"I'd run into him earlier when I was with the Alabama State band and we were in New Orleans. He remembered me and asked if I was still playing. I told him not too much, so he asked me if I'd like to join his jazz band. He played saxophone and worked around my neighborhood. He hired me to sing and play drums and took me down to Claiborne Avenue to join the union in 1946.

"You see I came up playing this traditional music. That simple, two-beat New Orleans jazz that was all around the city. That's the foundation of all New Orleans music."

Stewart's stint in Howard Davis' band lasted until he formed his own unit which played a number of white dance halls on Magazine Street, including the Saw Dust Trail, Big Mary's, and a neighborhood club, the Might Duke, on Poydras Street. He also

found time to freelance with the likes of Kid Clayton "I broke up my band and took a job playing with Harold Dejean at the Opera House on Bourbon Street for \$8 a night. That place closed down after a year so I got a job playing with George Miller and the Mid-Rifts at the Robin Hood, on Jackson and Simon Bolivar. That was a good band; they used to play the Caldonia before Professor Longhair got started. They were more of an R&B band, they used to even back up female impersonators.

"Cousin Joe came by the Robin Hood while he was on his vacation. He was playing at the Famous Door with Alton and Ted Purnel. We got to be pretty good friends so when he went back to the Famous Door he invited me to sit in one night. I stopped by and sang a few songs and the owner heard me. He told Cousin Joe to bring me back the next night. I was hired to sing and play drums for \$75 a week, which was a lot of money back in the Forties. We played there for six years. We'd have probably been there longer but we played a job at the Kentucky Derby and got back late so the boss got mad and gave us our notice."

In the interim, Stewart waxed his first record, "Space In Your Heart," a lugubrious city blues, for the Flip label in 1948. "Al Young set that up," he continues. "He had a record shop on Rampart Street and he was the A&R man for Flip, a label out of California. It got to be a pretty big record around New Orleans.

"I only did that one record for Flip because Lew Chudd at Imperial got interested in me and signed me. He flew me out to L.A. to do a session with Oscar Moore, Nat "King" Cole's guitarist. Boy I was in another world! We did four sides but they didn't do too much. Imperial had me, Fats Domino, T-Bone Walker and Slim Whitman at the same time."

HAVING RECORDINGS out under his own name gave Stewart the confidence to once again form his own band. He eventually crossed paths with Edgar Blanchard in 1953, who was leading his own group, The Gondoliers. Formed in the late 1940s, The Gondoliers had already served as the house band at the Dew Drop Inn for years and had recorded for Don Robey's Peacock label in Houston.

"Edgar came in the Famous Door where I was working," says Stewart recalling the talented guitarist/arranger. "I told him I was going to try and start my own band and asked him if he was interested in joining. You see Edgar had laid the guitar down and was planning to move north to get a job in an automobile factory. I talked him into staying. I told him, 'You take care of the music, I'll take care of the business.'"

"So we got together and rehearsed for a month. We had Warren Hebrad on tenor, August "Dimes" Dupont on alto and baritone, Edward Santino on piano, Stewart Davis on bass, Frank Mitchell on trumpet, Edgar on guitar and banjo and of course I sang and played drums. We decided to keep The Gondoliers as the name because it was already out there. Edgar came up with the name The Gondoliers, because he's been to Venice during the War and saw some real gondoliers.

I had to put out some money to get the band off the ground. I bought new uniforms, a P.A. and music stands for the whole group, but we really sounded great after that month of rehearsal. Our first job was back at the Hideaway where Fats [Domino] got started. That first night we had every musician in the city come out to see us play, the place was packed. We were a hit right from the beginning.

"From there we went to the Candlelight Club for a couple of weeks and then we started to play over at the Stable Club, on the beach over in Biloxi. We worked there as much as six nights a week for three years. When we were off from there we'd come back to New Orleans and play at the Dew Drop for Frank Pania."



Clowning at the Dream Room.

The Gondoliers were often hired to play behind visiting artists booked by the Dew Drop, including Johnny Ace, Ray Charles, Little Richard and Arthur Prystock to name but a few. They also regularly worked sessions at Cosimo's studio backing a number of stars in the making. "The Gondoliers never got the credit they deserved," emphasizes Stewart. "We picked a lot of guys up and made them great. We did the 'Honey Hush' session with Big Joe Turner back when he was doing nothing but singing around the Dew Drop. Then the record comes out and pow, Joe's a big star.

"We did one of Ray Charles' first things for Atlantic, the Guitar Slim tune 'Feeling Sad.' We did a lot of stuff for Specialty too. Man, I think Edgar must have played on everything Little Richard cut down here. Of course we did a few things on our own too. Everytime Bumps Blackwell [specialty producer] came to town he called us up."

THE GONDOLIERS stayed extremely busy during the Fifties. Percy Stovall often booked the group, as did Larry Lawrence out of Mobile, Alabama. At one point they worked 96 consecutive weeks at the Keyhole Club in San Antonio, followed by 28 weeks at the Piccadilly Club in Pensacola, Florida. While in New Orleans, they worked at the Dream Room and the Famous Door on Bourbon Street when they weren't installed at the Dew Drop. They also went on the road backing Smiley Lewis, Gatemouth Brown and Earl King for a number of weeks around 1955.



The Gondoliers played behind Johnny Ace, Ray Charles, Little Richard, and recorded with Joe Turner and Guitar Slim.





Onzo Stewart: "I never forgot how to play it."

"The Gondoliers were a complete floor show," stresses Stewart. "Besides dance music we did a local group kind of thing doing Ink Spots and doo wop. We also had a comedy routine that went over well in the clubs. We'd clown around on numbers like 'How Come My Dog Don't Bark' and 'Tom Booley.' We recorded the whole routine on the album we did for Ric. *Let's Have a Blast*."

The album Stewart refers to (once covered in *AL's Rare Records* column), was the only LP issued by Ric/Ron Records. It features the Gondoliers in a rather non-musical situation running through comedy routines on numbers like "My Ding-A-Ling," "Louise of the Border" and "Fuzzy Wuzzy."

"That album sounds live but we did the whole thing in the studio," points out Stewart. "Cosimo [Matassas] livened it up by adding all those extra voices and effects. That album was Joe Ruffino's idea. He used to come out to Natal's and watch us. He liked the band and asked us to do some recording."

The Gondoliers were often employed by Ruffino for his Ric and Ron releases with Edgar Blanchard arranging most of his early sides. "We did a lot of recording for Ruffino," says Stewart. "We were on Johnny Adams' first single 'I Won't Cry' and all those early Ric things. In fact, we even had stock in the company that Ruffino gave us, but of course it never was worth anything."

Although Stewart and Blanchard were to remain the nucleus of the group, there were some occasional changes within the band. At one time or another, The Gondoliers also featured Frank Fields on bass, and pianists Edward Franks and Lawrence Cotton as well.

MANY NEW ORLEANIANS remember The Gondoliers from their extended stint at Natal's, a nightspot on the Chef Menteur Highway. Local disc jockey and record collector Billy Dell recalls the club and the group. "I was about seventeen the first time I went to Natal's. They never checked I.D. If you had the money you could get in. We'd always stop at the Safari, which was next to the Industrial Canal, before we went there. I remember it was real dark in there and the guys all drank beer and the girls drank Tom Collins."

"The Gondoliers were really popular with the kids. They used to do this routine as part of their act where they said, 'He cut her and then he cut her again!' Well it doesn't sound too funny now, but when he said he was gonna cut somebody it wasn't with a knife!"

"We spent more than five years at Natal's working six nights a week," continues Stewart. "The father of the guy who owned Natal's owned the original Canal-Villere. We made plenty of money there and so did Natal's. But they sold the place around 1964 and made it part of the bowling alley that was next door."

"After we left Natal's we took a job at a white club over in Mobile. We were supposed to play for three months but after a couple of weeks George Wallace had come to Mobile to hold a rally. Well the owner got nervous about violence, so he paid us off and we came home. After that we played out at the Safari for a couple of weeks. But after the Safari that was it, we just broke up. We had no more work. I guess I was lucky. I stayed in music but Edgar, he put the guitar away and go a day job with the T.C.A."

Edgar Blanchard is obviously one of the musicians that Stewart refers to as underrated. "Edgar was one of the top musicians in the country," emphasizes Stewart. "A guy like George Benson couldn't even hold the light for Edgar to stand under. He was a great player and arranger, Edgar could do it all."

"But that Old Comiskey did him in. Poor Edgar drank himself to death. I had to have him put in the hospital more than once. I tried to get him down at Preservation Hall after I started playing there but it wasn't any use. He passed in 1972 of cirrhosis of the liver."

STEWART'S CAREER MANAGED to go full circle, oddly returning to playing the kind of music he grew up with as he explains. "I was walking down Rampart Street one afternoon in 1965 and ran into Joe Robichaux and he told me that old man George Lewis wanted me to give him a call. So I did and he said he had a few jobs for me to play over in Japan!"

"Well we got to Japan and the first job was in a stadium filled with 25,000 people. No rehearsal — nothing — all of a sudden I'm back to playing that old two-beat traditional New Orleans music. I just slid right in, I never forgot how to play it. When I got

back I started playing with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band and I've been there ever since."

As a member of the Preservation Hall Band, Stewart plays with the touring ensemble as well as alternating with the band that plays at the hallowed jazz hall on St. Peter Street. "I can't tell you how satisfying it is to play down at Preservation Hall," he says. "Even when I'm not feeling well I go down there because I know I'll feel great when I start playing."

"The people who come to Preservation Hall are really there to hear you play. They enjoy the music as much as I do. Man some nights someone will come up to me and say, 'Man you play a beautiful press roll.' I think that's great."

"I've been around the world playing with the Preservation Hall Band — every continent but Africa. We play all the great music halls: The Kennedy Center, Avery Fischer Hall — just about any place you can name. We've played for presidents, prime ministers and emperors. How else could I have done something like that?"

Stewart is quick to cite Preservation Hall's Alan Jaffe as the major reason New Orleans jazz has remained thriving. "He's done more for traditional jazz than anyone," he points out. "Jaffe's taken guys who were in their sixties and seventies who had quit playing and put them back on the bandstand, put money in their pockets. He's a real American ambassador because he's taken this music everywhere."

"Jaffe's a saint. When a guy like Kid Thomas is sick and can't play he still gets paid. He even helps people in the street who are hungry and don't even play music. He's that kind of guy."

Presently, Stewart sees his place in music as preserving the kind of music long associated with his hometown. "I'm trying to keep close to the old style of playing," he concludes. "A lot of the younger players today are trying to swing the music. They call it dixieland, but I don't like that. All I really need is the snare to carry that two-beat rhythm. I'm a little bit disappointed that there aren't too many younger musicians playing traditional jazz properly. But still it's just like old man river, it'll keep rolling along, even when I'm dead and gone."



Stewart at Preservation Hall: "We've played for presidents, prime ministers and emperors."





w/ Branford Marsalis

Sting, most recently seen as Dr. Frankenstein in *The Bride*, ordering Quentin Crisp and Geraldine Page about, and trying to make time with Jennifer Beals, at UNO Lakewood Arena, Fri. 23.

CONCERTS

See Jazz Awareness Article in this issue of *Wavelength* for special concerts during this Jazz Awareness Month.

Every Evening

The *Riverside Ramblers* on the Bayou Jean Lafitte Sundays through Thursdays, and Fridays and Saturdays on the Natchez, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Tuesday, 1

Dio; Rough Cutt, UNO Lakewood Arena, 8 p.m., Ticketmaster.

Wednesday, 2

Dio, Mississippi Gulf Coast Coliseum, 8 p.m., Ticketmaster.

Thursday, 3

Gene Loves Jezebel, and as the Golden Gate Quartet remind us, "her flesh was too filthy for the dogs to eat." Jimmy's, 10 p.m.
Corey Hart, whose album is peculiarly titled *Houdini-like Boy In The Box*, and who is from Canada, if you needed to know. Saenger.

Friday, 4

Chuck Mangione, whose name in Italian means "big eater," as he usually informs his audiences, Dixon Hall, Tulane University.
John Hartford with the Mechanical Bulls, Jimmy's.

Saturday, 5

Top Cats on the Natchez' moonlight cruise; 586-8777.

Thursday, 10

Johnny Rivers ne Ramistella of Baton Rouge, aboard the President; \$15; 586-8777.
Steel Pulse; Yabby You; The Gladiators, Mc Alister Auditorium.

Friday, 11

Irma Thomas, Steamer President; 586-8777.

Saturday, 12

Hank Williams, Jr., Mississippi Gulf Coast Coliseum, 8 p.m., 601-388-8222.

Sunday, 13

Melissa Manchester, Saenger, 8 p.m.; 888-8181.
Nightranger (one of the sappiest popular groups since Chicago), Cheap Trick, Mississippi Gulf Coast Coliseum.

Monday, 14

Katia and Marielle LaBeque, duo-pianists; Dixon Hall, Tulane.

Thursday, 17

Winans, contemporary gospel; Saenger; 7:30 p.m.

Friday, 18 — Sunday, 20

Doug Henning, pulling bouquets from his sleeve, sawing women in half, pulling *les lapins* out of beaver hats, etc.; Saenger; Ticketmaster, 888-8181.

Sunday, 20

The Cathedral Choir and Soloists performing Bach, Handel and Heinrich Schutz; Christ Church Cathedral, 2919 St. Charles Avenue, 4 p.m.

Monday, 21

Howard Jones, mime and musician, UNO Lakewood Arena.

Friday, 25

Sting, now for someone who used to be a school-teacher (even in England where they garble their words so badly) you'd think Sting would enunciate more clearly—in that pixilatedly catchy song of his I hear constantly on my crystal-set, instead of Free, Free, Set Her Free. I thought they were singing (him too) Real, Real, Sex Appeal, which means that my mind is, as usual, down at the pumping station; but the kid's got talent and I really enjoyed him in his art-nouveau golden cod-piece in *Dune*, taking a lengthy shower while Kenneth McMillan fussed and buzzed like a flatulent, lovesick *putto* around the ceiling; UNO Lakewood Arena.

Saturday, 26

Windham Hill Sampler of New Music with Michael Hedger, Liz Story, Darol Anger, Mike Marshall; Dixon Hall, Tulane; Ticketmaster, 888-8181.

Guadicanal Diary, from the best-seller of the same name by Richard Tregaskis; Jimmy's, 10 p.m.

Sunday, 27

Manuel Lopez Romas, Argentine classical guitarist, at Longue Vue House and Gardens; 5 p.m. 488-5488.

Tuesday, 29

The Replacements, from Minneapolis, Jimmy's, 10 p.m.

November 19

REM, Saenger; Ticketmaster.

OUTTATOWN

From Saturday, 26

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November 7-10

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WAVELENGTH BACK ISSUES



- No. 3. The Cold, Tony Dagradi, WWOZ, George Porter & Joyride, Patrice Fisher
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PA RENTAL

British Ace Records boss, **Ted Carrol**, in town recently, plans a three-LP anthology entitled *Specialty In New Orleans* containing material recorded here in the Fifties. Also look for **Fats Domino**: '49 to '53 and a Johnny Allen anthology containing the song, "South to Louisiana"... Saxman **David Lastic** has recently taped a commercial for Channel 8... **Wayne Toupes** was one of the highlights of the Festivals Acadiens... **Wynton Marsalis** was named one of the fifty most eligible bachelors by *Mademoiselle Magazine*... **REM** will be coming to the Saenger November 19, a PACE concert... **Black Top's Hammond Scott** was off to Austin recently to supervise a session with pianist **Ron Levy**. Dropping in to supply the backing were various members of **Roomful of Blues** and **The Fabulous Thunderbirds**... Speaking of the T-Birds, they returned to Jimmy's this past month and supplied a typically great performance.

Music City, Cox Cable's award-winning program, begins the "Storyville Sessions" this month. Every Wednesday through December 18 they will be taping new programs at Storyville Jazz Hall from 10 p.m. to midnight. The taping sessions are free to the public and everyone is invited to attend. This month's program includes: 10/2, **New Orleans Saxophone Quartet**; 10/9, **Lee Dorsey**; 10/16 **The Shepherd Band**; 10/23, **Blues Night**.

Cyril Neville and **Gaynelle Housey** have recently tied the wedding knot. Sorry ladies... **Benny's Bar**, on the corner of Camp and Valence streets, has been featuring a number of local blues groups including **Wayne Bennett** and **Mighty Sam McLean**... **Java** will return to New Orleans this month after spending the summer in Wisconsin and New York... **Uncle Stan & Auntie Vera** wish to announce a personnel change — **Steve Hill** is on guitar, **Charlie Wehr** quit the band to pursue his own musical interests... A phoenix arises out of the ashes of the **Generics** and **Chain Gang**, it called **The Verge**. They're looking for a keyboard player too; interested parties call 469-2398.

The Neville Brothers, just completing eight dates with **Huey Lewis**, soon will begin working on a film loosely based on the life of Marie Laveau entitled *Dance on Gilded Splendors*. Directed by **Igor Asintz**, the film will star **James Earl Jones** and **Klaus Kinsky**. So which one plays Marie?... **Lonnie Mack**, Alligator Records' recent hitmaker, is headed this way soon... **KXCI-FM**, in Tucson, Arizona, has installed a weekly program solely featuring Louisiana artists... New Orleans favorite **Johnny Reno** has a new LP out, *Full Blown*, on Rounder... Another fav, **Spencer Bohren**, touring in Ohio, Michigan and Illinois—Meanwhile, a tragic event on the local art scene, rivalling Kathy B's departure: **WTBS**, the so-called

superstation, has removed *Green Acres* from its 5:35 time slot. Local drummer-writer **Ben Sandmel** is suicidal over **Ted Turner's** decision... **Carencro's Atchafalaya** recently headlined the Duck Festival in Gueydan... **Fats Domino's** back in the old gumbo after successful dates in L.A. and Vegas.

Local hit makers in the national press: Three-page spread in *Rolling Stone* on **Rockin' Sydney** entitled "Everyone's Messin' With His Toot Toot." The same issue contains a positive review concerning **Jean Knight's** new LP. A short vignette on the musical state of affairs in New Orleans recently appeared in *The Record* as well, submitted by **WL** contributor **A.S.** The art director for that *Rolling Stone*-owned rag is former *Gris Gris* staffer **Joe Dizney**.

Speaking of **Rockin' Sydney**, it's time for the monthly "Toot Toot" update. Recently in Nashville to purchase a new bus for travelling to personal appearances our man stopped by the Nashville Network for a guest appearance. Meanwhile, his "Toot Toot" is currently at number 4 in the Canadian country charts, while a German version, "Mein Tuut Tuut," is currently number 14, in West Germany.

Shreveport's **A-Train**, recently named a Miller Rock Network band, has a new six-song EP, *River Of People*, available that sounds great. Cover contains good shots of **Miki Honeycutt's** gams, too... The Great Southern Record Company has just purchased the masters for **Allen Fontenot's Jole Blon** and *Other Cajun Honky Tonk Songs*, as well as a **Justin Wilson** album from the now defunct Delta Record label... New Orleans drummer **Ricky Sebastian** is now with **John Scofield's** band. Scofield has left **Miles Davis**. Why? "I'm tired of the music," says John.

Dino Kruse, rock 'n' roller and ex-vintage guitar entrepreneur, was recently in L.A. to discuss career opportunities. Apparently a demo tape recorded in Muscle Shoals came

to the attention of a recording executive who rushed the 6'5" guitarist to the Beverly Wilshire Hotel for contractual discussions. An update should follow when his press agent knows more... The Chalmette group **The Runner**, featuring **VJ Mary Serpas**, has a new record out on the Currella label... Veteran jazzmen **Red Tyler** and **James Rivers** should have new albums out by the end of this month... Good to see **Clifton Chenier** and his **Red Hot Louisiana Band** in New Orleans recently, and sounding great to boot. His new club, cleverly dubbed **Clifton Chenier's Zydeco Club**, should be in business by the time you read this.

Zigaboo Modeliste has pending a \$20 million suit currently in Civil District Court. The defendants in the petition include **Marshall Sehorn**, **Jerry Wilson**, **Allen Toussaint** and **Cosimo Matassa**, who are accused of committing copyright infringement concerning the release of a live recording entitled *The Meters At Rozy's*. The ubiquitous **Joe Jones** is handing the case for the ex-Meter.

Famed Chicago soul producer, **Bunny Sigler** now resides in the Crescent City... **The Preservation Hall Jazz Band** is touring the Midwest at present... **Johnny Adams** and **Walter Washington** are back at **Dorothy's** on Orleans Avenue... **WWNO's Brad Palmer** and **WWOZ's Steve Pierce** are working on a radio series featuring local jazz players, which they hope will interest National Public Radio. The project, entitled *Jazz Town*, will consist of live performances and interviews. The duo hopes to produce at least 13 segments (several shows are already completed), with **Al Belletto** narrating... **Kidd Jordan** is working with **Hamiet Bluit's Clarinet Family**, which sports no less than eight clarinetists. Jordan, by the way, will be off to Europe early next year.

Lenny Zenith, the man and the band, have recorded an album for nationwide distribution. The collection of songs were recorded and



mixed at Studio Solo with **David Tokanowsky** producing. See the new band, with **Chris Luckette** on drums.

Ivan Bodley, **WTUL** radio personality and bass player for **King Nino and the Slave Girls**, broke his bass-plucking thumb flipping a fellow student in his judo class... *Bourbon Street, Las Vegas* is the name of a new casino in the gambling town. Entertainment features **Big Tiny Little**, **Fay McKay** and the convivial **Bourbon Street Parade**... The Yuletide chirper, **Johnny Marks** (he wrote "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer" and "Holly Jolly Christmas") died in New York at the age of 75... **David Byrne**, admitting to *down beat* magazine that he could not read music, said that he writes his compositions on an Emulator. Besides the **Dirty Dozen Brass Band**, **Byrne** also said that **Fellini's** soundtrack composer **Nino Rota** influenced the tracks on *Music for the Knee Plays*... A handwritten letter by **Paul McCartney** was snapped up for \$14,000 at a Beatles memorabilia auction in England... *The New York Times* commented that **Alex Chilton's** recent mini-album *Feudalist Tarts* made today's soul pretenders—"the British soul boys with their silly haircuts, the white soul singers fronting American rock bands—sound tame." The "mini-album" is ranked 22 in college airplay for September... In late November, **Tom Waits** will be in New Orleans to appear along with **John Lurie** (*Lounge Lizards*) in **Jim Jarmusch's** follow-up film to the independent hit of 1984 *Stranger Than Paradise*. The film is tentatively titled *Down By Law*. **Waits** also recorded the **Kurt Weill** song, "What Keeps Mankind Alive" from *The Threepenny Opera* for the **Weill** tribute album to which New Orleanians **Mark Bingham** and company have also contributed... That's New Orleans native **Mike Guadabascio** playing on **Jonathan Richman's Rockin' and Romance** album. It is his third year as a *Modern Lover*...

Copeland's Cajun & American Cafe is now featuring live jazz during their Sunday brunch at its Veterans, Metairie location. The music will be a mixture of traditional, Dixieland and contemporary jazz, played by the **Jimmy Maxwell Quartet** featuring **René Netto** on saxophone from noon-3 p.m.

Frankie Ford is headed back to England where he will co-headline a giant rock 'n' roll show in November... Ex-Sea-Saint engineer **Skip Godwin** now works for **Barq's**... **Luther Kent** now doing most of the bookings at Storyville. His new LP should be on the shelves this month... **Ernie K-Doe** is a regular across the lake in Mandeville at **Ruby's Rendezvous**... **King Floyd** is working around town of late and could possibly be recording soon for **Stan Lewis' reactivated Paula Label**...

LOUISIANA JAZZ FEDERATION
PRESENTS
JAZZ AWARENESS MONTH

OCTOBER 1985

KICK-OFF PARTY

Saturday, October 5 7 — 10 p.m.
Nexus — 6200 Elysian Fields

The David Torkanowsky Quartet

Co-Sponsored by Nexus

BIG BANDS

Sunday, October 6 Noon — 6:15 p.m.
Jackson Square

James Moore's Urbanites
Tony Klatka's Warsaw
The Loyola University Jazz Band

Co-Sponsored by the American Federation of Musicians
Mutual Performance Trust Fund and NORD

FUSION

Friday, October 11 11:30 a.m. — 7:15 p.m.
Lafayette Square, 500 St. Charles Ave.

Woodenhead
The New Orleans Stick Band
Kidd Jordan's Electric Band

Co-Sponsored by the Arts Council of New Orleans

PIANO

Saturday, October 12 9 p.m. — 2 a.m.
Snug Harbor, 626 Frenchmen

The Larry Sieberth Quintet
The Michael Pelleria Quartet

Co-Sponsored by Snug Harbor

SINGERS

Saturday, October 19 9:30 p.m. — 2 a.m.
Sung Harbor, 626 Frenchmen

Lady BJ
Germaine Bazzle
Johnny Adams
Featuring The Ellis Marsalis Quartet

Co-Sponsored by Snug Harbor

LATIN

Sunday, October 20 7 p.m. — 1:30 a.m.
Storyville, 1104 Decatur

Paky Saavedra's Bandido From Honduras
Edu's Sounds Of Brazil From Brazil
Ensamble Acustico From Guatemala

(First United States Appearance)

Co-Sponsored by Storyville Jazz Hall

INTERNATIONAL JAZZ ARTISTS

Thursday, October 24 9 p.m. — 1 a.m.
CAC, 900 Camp

John Scofield Mark Cohen
Ricky Sebastian Yossi Fine

Co-Sponsored by The Contemporary Arts Center

REEDS

Tuesday, October 29
Tylers, 5234 Magazine

The Alvin Batiste Quartet
James Rivers & Red Tyler
with The Red Rivers Band 8 p.m. — 1 a.m.

Co-Sponsored by Tylers

Jazz Awareness Month is jointly supported by grants from The City of New Orleans through The Arts Council of New Orleans, The Louisiana State Arts Council through the Division of the Arts, Office of Program Development, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, The National Endowment for the Arts, The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation, WWOZ and WWNO.



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