

108



May 2005

108 Musical Autobiographies

How to be a rock star's wife
Langerado Music Festival

Plus updates on:
Up Top, Down South
Special Brew
Black Heart Orchestra
La Spanka

The Band
Balamina
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Al Roker and the Tummy Tucks Weathering the Storm

by Chris Samsen

You already know Al Roker and the Tummy Tucks from their debut performance earlier this semester, a cover of Johnny Cash's classic "Ghost Riders in the Sky." A new twist on a familiar song, it was certainly well received by a host of music critics, specifically the MUSC108 class. Now, as we await their sophomore effort into the realm of music recording, let's get a closer look at the band.

The most pressing question, of course, is "Who is Al Roker?" To fill that role is Alon Hafri on bass guitar. Alon, a sophomore here at Wesleyan, aspires to walk in the footsteps of Al Roker, the jovial NBC weatherman, much in the same way that Bob Dylan looked up to Woody Guthrie in his early career. Of course, these guys would rather play music than point to a graphic of a cloud...

The Tummy Tucks round out the band (so to speak), with Bill Kellogg on guitar, Pat Wolf on guitar and vocals, and Alaia Zeno on drums (filling the unusual spot as a female drummer, ala the Velvet Underground). This band fits the mold of a classic rock band, with all the essentials (vocals, gui-

tars, bass, and drums), and none of extras that seem to plague modern art rock bands.

The name Al Roker and the Tummy Tucks may seem an unusual name, but looking at its origins is evidence of a more standard rock group name format, derived from the names of many 50's rock groups like "Jerry and the Pacemakers." Commenting on the choice of "Al Roker" as the lead man, Bill Kellogg says "he's a jolly guy and a fantastic meteorologist." Enough said.

Of course, the big risk of a second release is the "sophomore slump." Alon and the gang aren't as concerned about this. They're looking forward to a recording an original song this time around, possibly a more upbeat dance number. They don't believe they have very big shoes to fill after their first release. However, there was nothing but praise for their first effort, especially factoring in time considerations, and the fact that they're a brand new band, compared to some other veteran bands of MUSC108.

What's in it for the

future of Al Roker and the Tummy Tucks? The band hopes to stay together. In fact, a slightly transformed line-up played a concert on May 7th at Psi U on campus.

After that, who knows? The effort that goes into a band, as this foursome has learned, is almost prohibitive in the face of a college

course load. In addition, the time and distance of summer precludes any major advancement of the group. But we hope that they continue to provide Wesleyan with a classic, but innovative rock sound, and I'm assured that their sophomore release will be nothing but a success.

**"He's a jolly guy and a
fantastic meteorologist."
Enough said.**



To Live and To Die:

The fall of the Black Heart Orchestra

by Ben Nissim



It should be well known by now that the group The Black Heart Orchestra has fallen apart. But while we do know they are no more, we do not know why. The trio that became famous for their rock cover of 'A Whole New World', off their self titled debut quickly bowed to the heavy burden of fame. For a group that has inspired so many, a clan that was at the apex of its musical genius to break apart so suddenly, I had to know why. So on April 20th I left on a journey through darkness and light on Wesleyan University's campus, to discover the roots of the Black Heart Orchestra's disintegration.

I had intended for my expedition to begin midday in Clark Hall. I knew that the three members of the group made their homes in the hall, and assumed that would be the best place to start. All three members were enigmas; I had a long history with them, but had no faith in my ability to track them down. Much like Al Aronowitz, Bob Dylan and the Beatles, I had turned these rising stars onto their drug of choice. Unfortunately their drug was Jewish

Passover Seder treats. When Passover came each year Ben, Hans and Jonno would rush to every Kosher Kitchen east of the Mississippi and buy up the entire supply of kosher candy. On April 20th, the day of our meeting, Passover was only a few short days away. I hoped I was not too late.

Arriving at Clark Hall I noticed an eerie silence. Matzo boxes were strewn haphazardly across the hall, sure signs of a binge. I was worried about my friends, but more worried about their hall mates. There is no telling what a man on a Matzo high will do.

I high stepped through the scattered boxes I peered into Ben's door. He was passed out, propped up on his bed, pieces of Jewish cracker dribbling onto his chest. His lips were pressed into an unnatural grin. After several attempts to jar him awake, I was finally able to revive the lead vocalist. It took several minutes and a few gummy fruit slices to make him comprehensible, but eventually his words rang true.

The man was a shell of his former self. The baritone that

had belted out the melody for 'A Whole New World' could barely hit a 'G'. My questions revolved around my mystery, but it quickly became clear that his mind was so warped from kosher chocolate treats that my leads would never bring him to the end and the answers I wanted. Realizing I was wasting my time, I left Ben to his Seder rants and matzo dreams.

As I left Ben's room and walked out into the hall, a shadow flashed into the bathroom. On a hunch and deduction based on Ben's condition I followed the shadow into washroom. There, lying on his back kicking a ball playfully in the air like a kitten, Jonno giggled to himself. There was something wrong here. Eight months ago this brilliant drummer and arranger would never have been caught dead on the bathroom floor. Now there was no place he would have rather been. Discouraged, I turned and left the room. There would be no answers found in the lavatory.

The last man I had to find was Hans Hsu. And I knew that this would be the hard-

est to reach yet. Leaving the bathroom I marched confidently to his room. Acting confident is half the battle. I knocked solidly on the door but was greeted with silence. After going through the cycle of knocking and waiting several times I threw open the door...to emptiness.

Disheartened I left the room and slowly walked to study lounge window. It was a beautiful day; the sun was shining through every crack and for all the students on the hill, there was life. But standing inside the dormitory with the ruins of a Passover binge scattered on the floor all around me, I knew why the Black Heart Orchestra had fallen. The band had found superstar status, but that was never what they played to reach. They searched for answers for their own questions, not to satisfy any others. They had found their American Dream. It was in a box of matzo and a bathroom floor.

FOXY MUSIC

YOU ARE NO MATCH FOR EUROFOX

by Brian Thorpe

Eurofox. The name conjures mental imaginings of too-tight snakeskin pants, huge egos, the overbearingly masculine scent of musky cologne and a level of sexual bravado that makes the dirtiest copy of Hustler look like the Book of Mormon. Surely any band that would adopt such a moniker must pay homage to the gods of ludicrous material excess and indulgent self-importance.

Upon meeting the members of Eurofox, however, one realizes that the group hasn't quite succumbed to the narcotic and sexual dependencies their name implies. In fact, it quickly becomes obvious that this collection of goofy, down-to-earth Wesleyan students never takes themselves too seriously, yet enjoys the humor in being satirically over-the-top. A tendency towards the ridiculous is present in everything the band touches, from their name to their music to their e-mail correspondence with this journalist. (Guitarist Nat Webb '06 once finished one of his e-mails to me by stating simply, "My cock looks huge in leather trousers.")

This sense of humor can be seen in Eurofox's debut track, released in the first academic quarter of this year. The band forcibly mashed two classic tracks by the Phil Spector-produced '50s girl group, The Ronettes, into a Moreau-esque beast of a cover song. "You Came, You Saw, You Conquered/Be My Baby"

GUITARIST NAT WEBB '06 ONCE FINISHED ONE OF HIS E-MAILS TO ME BY STATING SIMPLY, "MY COCK LOOKS HUGE IN LEATHER TROUSERS."

was so deliciously over-the-top as to even feature an interlude where Webb and fellow guitarist Jesse Young '06 quickly banged out the opening riff to AC/DC's "Back in Black" for good measure.

However, do not mistake the humor that defines Eurofox as nothing more than a cover for lack of musical talent. Webb and Young are both distinguished guitar celebrities on campus, being founding

members of another band, The Panthers. Lead vocalist Rachel Kiel '07 can be counted among the ranks of Wesleyan's award-winning, all-female a cappella group, The Cardinal Sinners. Drummer Victor Vazquez is familiar to any follower of campus bands as he is a multi-instrumentalist that can claim membership

in several different groups, including La Spanka. New to the Eurofox lineup for the second quarter of MUSC108 is the talented bass playing of Miles Turner '08.

Eurofox's next project will be a live performance of an original composition. Appropriate considering the group's sense of humor, it will be over-the-top and heavily influenced by funk. One band member said to expect their show to be "danceable like whoa." With Vazquez and Turner providing a thunderous rhythm section, Webb and Young's twin guitar attack, and Kiel's expansive vocals, it seems safe to say that very few audience members will be sitting down when Eurofox hit the stage.

A Special Brew

Changing Perceptions

by Josh Tanz

You may remember Special Brew for the hilarious lyrics of "Talkin' Wesleyan Blues." The cover of Bob Dylan's "Talkin' New York" is a commentary on the party scene, or lack thereof, at our school. From freshman to seniors to alum to professors, the song strikes a chord that everyone can relate to. Who hasn't been at a party that Public Safety broke-up and been too lazy to walk to the next party? "Sometimes creating original lyrics that everyone can relate to is better than just straight covering a song," says Tim Mcgee.

Special Brew's jocular first release was not only pure

comedic entertainment. Chris Gateman, the band's vocalist and head writer, points out that "although the song talked about partying, we did have a political message hidden in there, which seemed to [get] lost in the shuffle." In the song, Gateman asks, "Where did all the parties go? North College is trying to keep us down." The climate of Wesleyan has changed over the years and Public Safety and the administration have begun to suppress the party scene. The new Quiet Houses on Home Ave. have prevented seniors from throwing the parties that used to be so popular. Instead

of great parties, students are forced to drink in their rooms privately fearing punishment from Public Safety if they venture outside.

For their next release it remains to be seen whether there will be a message in the music. No matter the decision, the band cares much more about making people laugh than think. Although Special Brew hasn't committed to anything yet for the final, they are looking to include Tyler Franklin, the percussionist, on the vocal track to complement Gateman's folk style. Whatever they choose, the Brew's writing

will surely be enhanced by "a few cases of Natty Light," says Franklin.

The band is excited about the possibility of performing live. With a party sure to occur in conjunction with a concert, Special Brew will be a proactive force in fixing the problem they sing about in "Talkin' Wesleyan Blues." No matter the quality of the music, if the band can help students alter their perceptions—either alcoholically or otherwise, then they are undoubtedly successful.

The Three Amigos

Former members of

Up Top, Down South

by Sam Astor

tackle Hendrix

After the messy breakup of Up Top, Down South, Adam Rose, Andy Saxon, and Dan Reif knew that their musical endeavors were not finished. As they meandered through the paths of Wesleyan looking for musical salvation, they found something that had from the start- friendship and the Spanish language that none of them speak proficiently.

The Three Amigos already have big plans. Their acoustic version of "Plush"- originally recorded by the Stone Temple Pilots- makes hardened construction workers want to cry. As a matter of fact, during our interview around a construction site, we had to pause and observe the entire group of masons cry.

This heightened level of musical achievement that the trio has realized is quite unexpected from the trio's previous undertakings. Up Top, Down South's rendition of Contagious, despite reaching the top in the Music 108 pop chart, lacked the harmony that Saxon and Reif were capable of achieving.

The close relationship that the two share on and off stage is quite apparent with their frequent quarrels that can't help remind their followers of Sonny and Cher. Nevertheless, when they find their common ground and start playing it is an experience like nothing else. When this combination is paired with the album art of Adam Rose, The Three Ami-

gos experience is complete.

It is no wonder that The Three Amigos' agent, Jenn Heinen, claimed in a press release that "this album will rise faster than The Three Amigos on a Viagra binge." After vomiting at that very thought, I went out and heard the single. While I can't clarify if Heinen's statements are accurate, I can tell you that Plush is a timeless piece of art.

When asked if they had plans for a follow-up, Reif clandestinely revealed that they had a project in mind. He mentioned they were working on "Lil'" Wing, a remix of Jimi Hendrix's Little Wing. Reif, not known for his modesty in the industry, eloquently claimed "yo I'm mad good at

guitar" and says any Hendrix riffs are well within his grasps. While Saxon has no officially confirmed this follow-up project to Plush, his background in acapella has shown his vocal diversity and clear ability to cover Hendrix. Questions still remain on whether Adam Rose can match Little Wing's graphic art, but inside sources say he's working hard clicking a mouse somewhere.

Whether The Three Amigos is the final stop for these three...amigos, remains to be seen. After the bitter breakup of the previous band skepticism abounds. However, with such fabulous music being churned out, there is really no time to stop and question the future.

The Long and Winding Road of The Grocers

by Eliot Nelson

The Butterfield B lounge is the current hot spot in the vibrant Central Connecticut club scene. Its several couches evoke the Salvation Army look that has been so popular among the Alphabet City contingent. It is no surprise, then, that the Grocers have convened at this veritable New England Studio 54 to write the follow up to their smash hit, "Produce Isle Blues."

"You couldn't go anywhere without hearing that song," recalls Max Horowitz, the groups now famous keyboardist.

Horowitz has had a busy year. He just returned from India where he spent several months studying the sitar with Ravi Shankar. The trip was supposed to be a retreat from the pressures of stardom—a way to remove himself from the celebrity brought on by "Produce Isle's" success. However soon after his arrival he began a relationship with Indian film actress Aishwarya Rai and things got crazy.

The couple was a tabloid magnet: within days of their first public appearance the two were the poster children of every Indian gossip page.

"And here everyone was talking about the sparks flying between Ritesh Deshmukh and Isha Koppikar on the set of Kya

Lukewarm Hai Hum," says bollywoodworld.com editor Akshay Rampal Morea, "but then one day, you know, BAM. It was the Max and Aishwarya show."

The attention was clearly affecting the couple and after weeks of a rumored breakup, the two finally called it quits after annulling their brief, 83 hour marriage.

"It's just...it's just," says Max with a pause to take a sip of his scotch sour, "it's just hard y'know?"

For Horowitz, it has been a long and oftentimes arduous journey from his humble roots in New Orleans as a dock worker's son.

"My earliest memory of my father was hearing his stories about seeing the Buddy Bolden Band live. He'd go and seem them every Saturday night with the money he earned. If he had a little extra, he'd buy a scotch sour or two," recalls Max as he mixes himself his 12th scotch sour, "So you see, this is really just a tribute."

By his 16th birthday Max was inspired enough by his father's tales of musicians to set out on his own as a pianist. His career went nowhere fast. After several years of playing debutante balls, brothels, and Hard Rock Cafes, Horowitz was losing patience.

"I thought to my self, 'you know what Max, fuck it.'" Yet Max's fortunes changed when he was spotted by the legendary New Orleans pianist Professor Longhair. The two soon became inseparable and Max's status in the music community skyrocketed, "It was fucking unbeliev-

able, here was Professor Longhair taking me under his wing. You know what they called me? 'Student Round-Coif.' Wow."

Horowitz's renown brought him success and his string of New Orleans piano albums sold well. His Scratchin' Like an' Old Hound, The News from Basin Street, Piano Gumbo and I Really, Really Like Scotch Sour are considered classics of the genre.

However things got stale for Horowitz. "I just didn't like what I was doing anymore; I needed a change of scene."

Max left New Orleans for Berkshire County in Western Massachusetts where folk artists like James Taylor have drawn their inspiration.

"It gave me a totally new perspective. In the mornings I'd wake up and take a walk amongst the evergreens. In the evening's I'd go for a meal in Stockbridge. It was great."

This new world view had a clear influence on Horowitz's next album which had a decidedly folksier feel. Autumnal Touches was a complete departure from his previous New Orleans sound and was panned by critics.

After a few more years relaxing in Massachusetts, Max went to Connecticut where he met up with the people that would make up the Grocers.

Max first met Grocer guitarist Albert Hill at a night club in West Hartford.

Hill had been DJing at club Grinder for several years after an extended stay in Europe. Hill had been involved in the German trance scene and had found success mixing several

club hits. "Das Good!" hit the German dance charts and stayed there for 34 weeks.

"It was frustrating," quips Hill, "Most people just focused on the pulsating bass line and the Earth Wind and Fire samples. They didn't appreciate the underlying lyrical condemnation of Coca-Cola's unrelenting stranglehold on the proletariat. I needed to get out."

Max then came across the singer Cece Seiter who's series of children's albums are well known throughout New England.

"I've always been about the children's music scene," Brags Horowitz, "Raffi, Sesame Street, Pete Seeger, I love that stuff. So when I came across the 'Cece sings sings' series? I knew I had found a singer."

But now the band has put the past behind them and is focused on the future.

"We're going to continue our experimentation. With Max just coming back from India, we might just take a more world music route." Says Seiter.

Of their untitled new single, she says that although the music may change, the message remains the same, "We're trying to express the importance of the grocery store."

The single has been a long time coming notes Hill, "Well we were going for a prog rock slash 100 piece orchestra sound but it just wasn't practical. Instead it's evolving into a dance folk combination."

"Whatever," cries Max as he pours his 37th scotch sour, "We'll bring it."



A Family Affair

by Naomi Green

When I set out to read the almost 90 musical autobiographies that Professor Charry handed me from our History of Rock and R&B class, I was expecting chaos. How could 90 people with 90 different backgrounds and 90 different brains be viewed as a cohesive whole? As it turns out, by having families.

A common thread running through most every biography was the way people said their families had influenced their taste in music from an early point in their lives. Whether someone's mother taught them how to play an instrument or their father played music tapes in the car, the music of our youth seems to have been our parents' music. Of course, when we're very young we have no choice over what we listen to—but most people looked back on the music their parents shared with them in fondness.

But then something happened to us. And it was....Green Day. Huh? I was confused at first, as I saw the obligatory admission of young Nirvana obsession, but Green Day? Sure they were popular, but so were Hole, Stone Temple Pilots, Pearl Jam, Alice In Chains, Smashing Pumpkins, Soundgarden, Red Hot Chili Peppers

and lots of other early 90s rock bands. But Green Day came up over, and over, and over again.

Finally, one student's words crystallized it for me. He wrote: "I could make my parents uncomfortable by listening to CDs with a parental advisory sticker on them." I remembered my own copy of Green Day's *Dookie* and the explicit lyrics label that accompanied it, unlike a Nirvana or Pearl Jam album. When teenagers want to rebel from their parents' music tastes, they try to listen to things their parents would hate. For us, it was often gangsta rap, punk, or alternative rock that did the trick. Hence Green Day.

Once young people gain more independence from their families by getting a driver's license or going to college, it becomes easier to develop their own tastes. That is what I found people had done. We diversified our palette of music, but certain things still remained missing. Disco wasn't very common, nor was 80s pop music, or

polka for that matter (although I think for another reason entirely). What came up as a common interest was '60s music, classic rock and soul, and other music popular in our parents' days. How did this music retain its popularity even today?

Here's the key: our parents are Baby Boomers, the most hulking mass of Generation our nation has ever seen. The influence they command over American life and culture is staggering, simply because the rest of us puny Generations are too small to stand up to them. Thus, they get to control popular tastes in many ways and decide what gets attention and what gathers dust.

It comes down to the fact that our families have influenced our music choices from the start, and we will probably always have that in our minds. In the end, music tastes come and go, but we'll always have our families.

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The Story of Our Musical Autobiographies

American Idols: Reality Television Churns Out a New Generation of One-Hit Wonders

by Alice McKenney

Music reality TV shows are huge right now. They aren't a particularly new phenomenon (think back to the Partridge Family and the Monkees), but they have reemerged in recent years. Making the Band sought out new musicians via national audition, and American Idol claims to have the next big pop star up its sleeve.

Why do we watch so many music reality TV shows? Currently on its fourth season, American Idol has become the most popular of these shows, with Making the Band running in second.

American Idol entices thousands of young men and women to audition, and has a huge following of viewers. Over 34 million tuned in for this season's premiere!

The basic idea behind the show is that thousands of people audition across the country, with only

the worst and the best moving on. The worst are only pushed towards the finals for comedic value, where they are torn to bits by one of the show's judges, Simon Cowell. The other two judges are Paula Abdul and Randy Jackson.

The best singers are then flown to LA, where they compete to win a recording contract under the menacing eyes of the three judges. Each contestant's outcome is then up to the general public, who vote via the internet and cell phone text messaging.

American Idol combines insults and heartbreak with ultimate fame. Is this what a 'reality' show needs to become popular? It may seem like it. MTV's Making the Band from 2000 followed the creation of a boy band that would later be called O'Town.

A similar formula to American Idol was taken; with contestants being kicked off the show until only five remained. Likewise, broken dreams and shattered hopes ensued. People seem to crave seeing others crash and burn!

But is that really why we watch these "made for TV musicians"? To revel in other peoples' misfortunes? Possibly. Although there are definitely other followings, like children looking for role models, teenagers looking for someone to fawn over next week, or even adults just looking for good entertainment. It's not hard for companies to capitalize on these target audiences. Just bring in young talented musicians and judges who throw out insults like it's nothing and you've got a winning combination.

Pop music

isn't bad. It is definitely entertaining in many respects, and can be worth listening to. But to a certain extent, pop is a genre where its musicians have to fit a mold. These shows with made-for-TV musicians surely exploit the easy sale of pop music to the general population.

Though there is nothing outwardly wrong with them, they should be viewed more for their entertainment value instead of as predictors of the future of music. Some of the stars may show talent, but they will undoubtedly fade away, just like O'Town or Reuben Studdard (an American Idol winner). Made-for-TV musicians are truly the epitome of one hit wonders.



Madonna: A History

By Vincent Benevento

No woman over the last twenty years has had a more significant impact on pop-culture than Madonna. As an artist, she has undergone numerous aesthetic makeovers to her image and musical style. She has managed to transcend trend and age in order to produce successful music and continually redefine her persona and the way that Americans, in general, view sex.

Madonna thrives upon incorporating the duality of the pure and innocent virgin in contrast with the sexually promiscuous temptress as primary themes of her music and identity. Now as both a wife and mother, Madonna fulfills a domestic role. Whatever facet of her identity she wishes to accentuate- be it singer, dancer, actress, fashion icon, sexual revolutionary, or wife and mother- Madonna's willingness to takes risks, coupled with amazing social consciousness and business savvy allows her to expand an already iconic international celebrity.

In the early 1980's, Madonna was a well-known fixture in the international, underground club circuit. But the artist would not make her way into the mainstream music scene until September of 1983. That month, she released a self-titled debut album, which met with immediate national success. The first single "Holiday," broke into the Billboard Top 20. The follow up track, "Borderline," became Madonna's first top 10 hit.

Steamrolling off the success of the first record, Madonna made *Like a Virgin* in 1984. The title single became her first number one hit, topping

the charts for six weeks. Madonna's immediate ascension to stardom instilled in her a unique confidence that allowed her to take artistic risks.

Madonna's early career can be characterized as more provocative, sexy, and offensive than that of most other artists. By 1985, her life was encapsulated by a whirlwind of media controversy. Her marriage to power-house Hollywood actor Sean Penn received offensive of Media coverage. At the

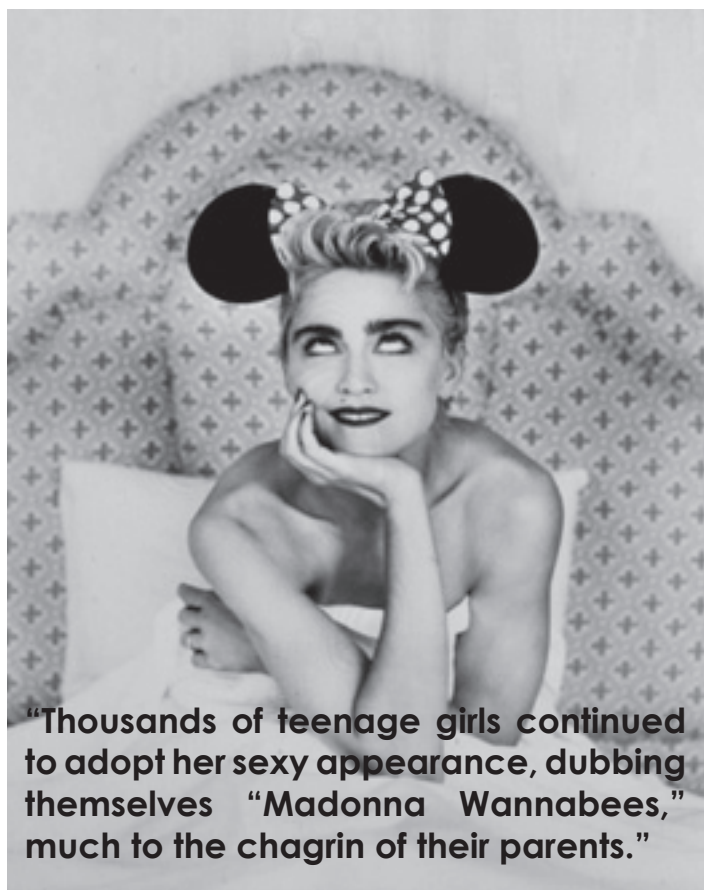
entirely original, it successfully revitalized the image of the Hollywood Gold-digger of the 1920's and 1930's. Once again, girls fell in love with the idea that they had the power to manipulate a man and use him for his wealth.

Later that year, Madonna starred in her first feature film- *Desperately Seeking Susan*. She was met with critical acclaim for her role and the film flourished. While Madonna portrayed the glamour of the

With the success of *Desperately Seeking Susan* came the release of *A Certain Sacrifice*, a low-budget film in which Madonna had appeared in 1979. This erotic thriller landed Madonna much negative press and made her name a mainstay in tabloid headlines. The bad press continued when *Playboy* and *Penthouse* published nude photos of the singer/actress from shoots that occurred in 1977.

Many critics felt that the poor publicity would affect the artist's sales. Nevertheless, when she turned out *True Blue* in 1986, the album sold over five million copies in the U.S. alone. "Poppa Don't Preach" became her fourth number one single. Thousands of teenage girls continued to adopt her sexy appearance, dubbing themselves "Madonna Wannabees," much to the chagrin of their parents, who were concerned with the controversial image of the artist.

Madonna's next significant cinematic success would not come until she starred alongside Warren Beatty in *Dick Tracy* in 1990. However, her musical prosperity continued with the release of her 1988 album *You Can Dance*. The record spawned three more number one singles: "Cherish," "Keep it Together," and "Express Yourself." The video for "Like a Prayer" was criticized by the Vatican for its links between religion and eroticism. As a result, Pepsi- a longtime sponsor of Madonna- withdrew its corporate endorsement. Nevertheless, the controversy only boosted sales again, making the work a global best-seller.



"Thousands of teenage girls continued to adopt her sexy appearance, dubbing themselves 'Madonna Wannabees,' much to the chagrin of their parents."

same time, "Material Girl" reached number two on the charts, and on the heels of the success of the single, she began her first world tour.

Though Madonna's "Material Girl" persona was not

Hollywood starlet through the thematic content of her music, she enjoyed the spotlight of superstardom in reality. At this point, Madonna's career was thriving, but scandal accompanied this immense fame.

After severing her ties to actor Sean Penn in late 1989, Madonna would reach the pinnacle of her career in 1990 and a new level of superstardom. Accompanied by the success of her movie, Madonna unleashed the massive Blonde Ambition World Tour, which was met with outstanding success. “Vogue” became a monster hit, driven by performances for sold out audiences worldwide.

The tour was commemorated by the video documentary Truth or Dare, which was released in 1991. Despite its emphasis on alternative means of sexuality and explicit sexual content, the film received both critical acclaim and mainstream success at the box office. Madonna, however, was not satisfied with the phenomenal success of her tour and subsequent film. Before years end she released The Immaculate Collection, a greatest hits album. It contained two new songs “Rescue Me,” and “Justify My Love;” the former was a number one hit and the latter became the highest debuting single by a female artist in US pop-chart history. The year of 1990 exemplified the kind of iconic celebrity status that Madonna possesses.

In 1992, Madonna made a clear effort to take complete control of her career. She signed a multi-million dollar deal with Time-Warner guaranteeing the release of albums, films, and books by her own production company, Maverick. This deal gave her the artistic autonomy to tackle other realms and subject matter. She crossed over to the literary sphere the previous year with her steel bound, soft-core, pornography book {Sex}. It contained pictures of

her and other celebrities posing in the nude. Madonna always recognized the importance of sex appeal in image marketing. This book was an effort to apply her own blend of uniquely controversial sexuality as a writer. Though the book did not sell as well as originally anticipated, the accompanying album Erotica sold over two million copies.

Throughout the 1990’s, Madonna continued to produce successful musical and cinematic works. 1993’s Bedtime Story was her seventh multi-platinum. In 1995, Madonna lobbied hard for the role of Eva Peron, the wife of Argentinian dictator Juan Peron, in the cinematic adaptation of Andrew Lloyd Weber’s Broadway musical Evita. Madonna met with strong resistance from the people of Argentina, where the film was made. They were

portrayal of Peron. Madonna was rewarded at home as well for her efforts. She received the Golden Globe Award for Best Actress in a Comedy or Musical. The soundtrack, which was released in 1996 and consisted entirely of ballads, showed that Madonna could expand herself stylistically and gear her talents towards the mature audience for which the film was intended.

Along with the release of Evita and its resulting accolades in 1996 came the birth of Madonna’s first child, Lourdes Maria Ciccone Leon. Her father, Carlos Leon, was her longtime boyfriend and personal trainer. Though their relationship soon strictly became a friendship, Madonna dedicated herself entirely to motherhood. Consequently, she took a seventeen-month leave of absence from the

her classic dance-pop sound for the late 1990’s. The album received uniformly excellent reviews and generated a series of hit singles.

Madonna’s most recent work, Music, became a trans-Atlantic hit in 2000. She celebrated her success with her marriage to English filmmaker Guy Ritchie, once again reclaiming tabloid headlines internationally. Together the two have a son, Rocco. Madonna, using her international celebrity and motivated by her relationships with her two young children, has managed to parlay her creativity and love of children into numerous profitable business ventures, including a children’s clothing line and a series of best-selling children’s books. In addition to her motherly duties, Madonna today continues to perform, soliciting aid for various charities.

This past January, she headlined a Who’s Who of musical icons in raising money for the victims of the Tsunami.

Madonna is one of the most powerful, wealthy, and influential people in the world. She has continually redefined herself as an icon of both popular music and culture by altering her image to fit the changing tastes of the times. Madonna has consistently fascinated both her fans and



disgraced by the idea that a woman who was viewed as a national hero would be played by someone with Madonna’s poor reputation. However, Madonna won over public favor throughout the country for her reverent and accurate

music industry.

Madonna came back in full force with the release of Ray of Light in 1998. She worked with producer William Orbit to create an album strongly influenced by electronica, techno, and hip-hop, thereby updating

the media over the course of her long and illustrious career and serves as the primary musical influence for a younger generation of female stars who place a primary emphasis upon sexuality, namely Christina Aguilera and Britney Spears.

How to be a Rock Star's Wife

By Jenn Heinen



We've all thought about it, there's no denying...we've all wondered what it would be like to marry a rock star, and I've decided to make it my life goal. Ever the humanitarian, I wouldn't want to have all the rockin' fun myself (plus I need someone to hang out with while my rock star's on stage), so I've decided to create a useful guide to all you other hopeful rock star's

wives out there.*

First it's important to make sure you choose the right kind of rock star. You don't want to go marrying a Vanilla Ice type or anything...well, unless you're lame. The coolest rock stars aren't always necessarily good looking, in fact their raw animal-like appearances (long hair, crooked teeth, talons) just add to the sex appeal. Animals and rock stars have a lot in common ("hungry like the wolf"... coincidence? I think not) so you're going to have to like animals, but not too much. Sharon Osbourne may love her puppies, but she still stood by Ozzy when he bit the head off a bat (twice) and flung twenty-five pounds of pig intestines and calf livers at his audience.

The hardest part is getting in the inner rock circles. Any girl can call all the hotels within a 100 mile radius of the venue, hide in the tour bus bathroom, or strap herself to the back of a speaker but it takes some creative energy to really leave a lasting impression.

Take "Cynthia Plaster Caster" for example. When given an assignment in art school to "'to make a plaster cast of anything that was solid enough to retain its shape'" Cynthia, the ever devoted rock star lover (it all started when she was six--with Liberace, seriously) decided to immortalize her rock star men's little men. She really knew how to get ahead and her artistic ingenuity made her infamous in the rock n' roll circles. She was meeting, and plastering, rock stars left and right, even reaching the ranks of Jimi Hendrix and Led Zepelin.

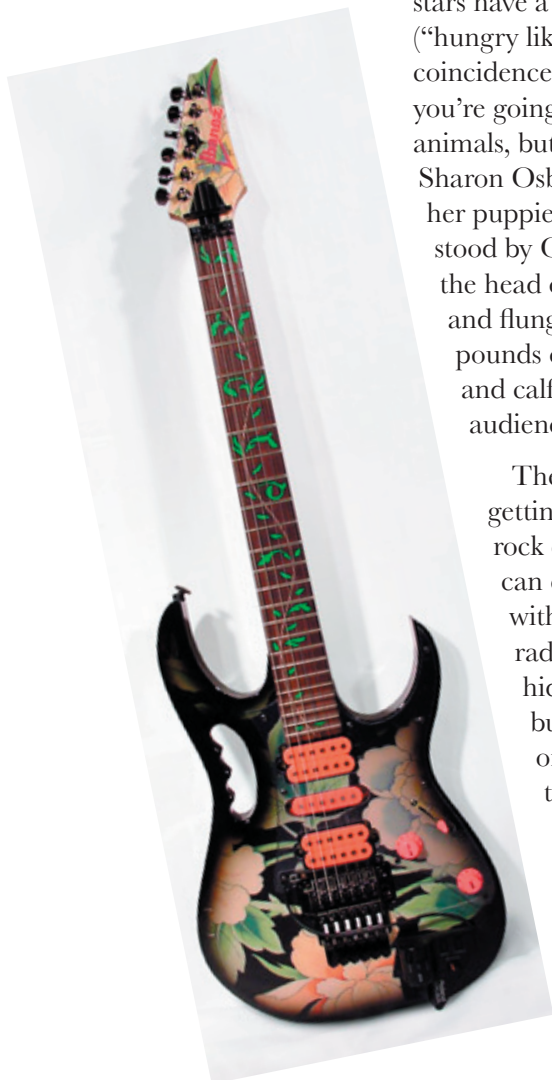
The next hardest part is putting up with your rock star. Let's face it, rockstars are demanding; Van Halen demanded bowls of M&M's backstage with all the brown ones removed (on a joint tour with Van Halen the Rolling Stones once requested all the brown M&M's that Van Halen didn't get). Iggy Pop requested seven dwarves once. Kiss on the other hand, required blow up dolls of themselves in their dressing room.

Luckily, being a rock star's wife does not necessarily mean meeting these demands, it means knowing how to make a scene. In fact, I'd say that the stan-

dard is that rock relationships aren't exactly smooth sailing (full pun intended). You've got to be prepared to take a few beer bottles to the face, maybe a domestic abuse scandal or two, and definitely at least a few public falling-outs (preferably in an area with lots of paparazzi around to capture the drama). Take Pamela Anderson and Tommy Lee for example, they've had three marriage ceremonies and seem to be the king and queen of making public scenes.

Finally, once you've married your rock star you two will be responsible for breeding future rock stars. Don't believe what the doctor's may say, beer in a bottle is really not that bad, it will give your infant a head start on future alcoholism and drug abuse. Teaching them to play an instrument is optional, but teaching them to play the ladies is of essence. If you can make your child's first words be something along the lines of "I'm a golden god" or "the greatest thing you'll do with your life is sleep with me" you know your on the right track.

**Not to be gender normative...it is the firm belief of the author that any gender of rock star partner is equally bad-ass.*



the story of

The Band:

How a Mostly-Canadian Quintet Embodied the American Dream

By Joseph Feldblum

Many people who know of The Band know them only in passing, as a historical footnote, the band that backed Bob Dylan on his first electric tours around the world. They are much more, however, than marginal players in momentous musical events; they are the best band ever.

The Band began forming in the late 50's when Arkansas rocker Ronnie Hawkins recruited fellow Arkansonian, eighteen-year-old Levon Helm, to play drums for his backup band, the Hawks.

Their touring took them all over the country, but eventually Hawkins found that he could make the most money in Toronto, where he developed a huge following.

Over time, other members of the Hawks left and Hawkins picked up local talent, eventually settling on Rick Danko on bass, Garth Hudson on organ, Robbie Robertson on guitar, and Richard Manuel on piano.

Soon the five split from Hawkins, and toured somewhat unsuccessfully as "The Hawks" and "Levon and the Hawks".

In '65 and '66 their famous break came when Dylan invited them to back him as he "rocked" the folk community and music in general by going electric.

Their experiences playing Chicago-style rhythm and blues with Hawkins and electrified folk with Dylan forced The Band to expand musically, and it showed in their debut release "Music from the Big Pink."

After their tours with Dylan, they retired to a house in Woodstock, New York, and decided not to leave until they had completed an album.

"Music from the Big Pink," along with their second, eponymous release are considered by many (those in the know) to be two of the greatest albums of all time. Both feature a striking mix of blues, folk, and other roots elements of American music. It was a welcome

Joni Mitchell, Paul Butterfield, Ringo Starr, and Van Morrison, among others.

Although their music didn't sell very well originally, it was immediately accepted by the musicians of the time.

Every member of the band had charisma and personality, and were equally important to



entrancing as it was defying of characterization. Rick Danko and Richard Manuel had two of the most soulful voices in rock and roll, but Manuel sang in a haunting falsetto that balanced Danko's voice perfectly. Levon Helm infused his vocals with the Southern soil of his youth and his deep Southern roots in songs like "The Night they Drove Old Dixie Down."

Of course, I can't expect anyone to believe me without hearing them first, but "Music from the Big Pink", "The Band", and "The Last Waltz" will make a believer out of all listeners. Their music has a timeless quality and connection with the roots of American music that has been lacking in music since before they released their first album.

What they meant to music as a whole is enormous, as evidenced by the incredibly diverse cast of artists playing with them in their final concert. Everyone can enjoy The Band because they transcend genres or specific musical influences.

What sets them apart from everyone else is the sheer feeling of their music, the soul and the emotion. It touches me every time I listen to them and has turned almost everyone I've known to listen to them into a diehard fan. This is why they will remain immortally etched in history as the best band of all time.



change from psychedelia and the British Invasion.

They were not opposed to the counterculture; they merely had a different style.

So why are they the best band ever?

First of all, they embody the American dream, even though most of them were Canadian. They worked their way up from nothing, touring relentlessly in their early years. They used to have to steal food from supermarkets in the US under their big Canadian coats, but by '76 they were so respected in the musical community that they played their final concert with Bob Dylan, Eric Clapton, Muddy Waters, Neil Young,

The Band's success. They all played multiple instruments, and all sang but Robbie Robertson and Garth Hudson.

Robertson, however, was lead guitarist and songwriter, and Hudson a classically trained organist and horn player. During the band's first years, Garth had to make them all pay him ten dollars a week so he could pretend he was teaching them music and not playing in a rock band like his parents feared.

The great thing about The Band's music was that their individualities and personalities came out on stage, and yet they meshed together seamlessly to form a sound that was as

Shinnai Comes to Wesleyan

by Shamiso Mtangi

Of the millions of people that make up Japan's population, less than a few hundred have been awarded the official title of Living National Treasure. Tsuruga Wakasanojo XI is in this minority and displayed his mastery of the art of Shinnai—which garnered the prestigious title for him—at Wesleyan on April 13. Shinnai, a form of traditional Japanese music, is two hundred and fifty years old and had its beginning in Japan's Edo era. Wakasanojo is eleventh in a line of Shinnai masters who have upheld the obscure art and is currently an artist-in-residence at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

The event's sponsors were proof of the broad, interdisciplinary scope of Shinnai—the Wesleyan Music Department, Freeman Center for East Asian Studies, Center for the Arts, and the East Asian Languages Department all collaborated to bring the musician to the World Music Hall. Indeed, the art of Shinnai draws from different fields in order to create a cohesive performance. Music is the means through which a story is told in Shinnai, but the subject matter and presentation are also relevant.

A popular story often sung in narrative form is

that of the lovers' suicide. In traditional Shinnai, the lovers' suicide is portrayed and perceived as the ultimate show of romance and devoutness. Similar to the western story of Romeo and Juliet, the Shinnai narrative of lovers' suicide includes two young lovers who are denied the chance to be together despite their love. Because of the traditional religious belief that puts two people who die simultaneously together in paradise, the concept of dying at the same time as one's lover provides a somewhat happy ending to the Shinnai story.

Narratives in Shinnai almost always relate feelings of pain, anger, grief, and the like. In an example Wakasanojo performed, a woman confronts her husband's mistress and pleads with her to end the affair. Though it is sung in Japanese and therefore indecipherable to non-Japanese audiences, the emotions of the woman are translated through the singing of the performer. In high pitches, Wakasanojo wailed mournfully at some points while plucking the strings of his shamisen.

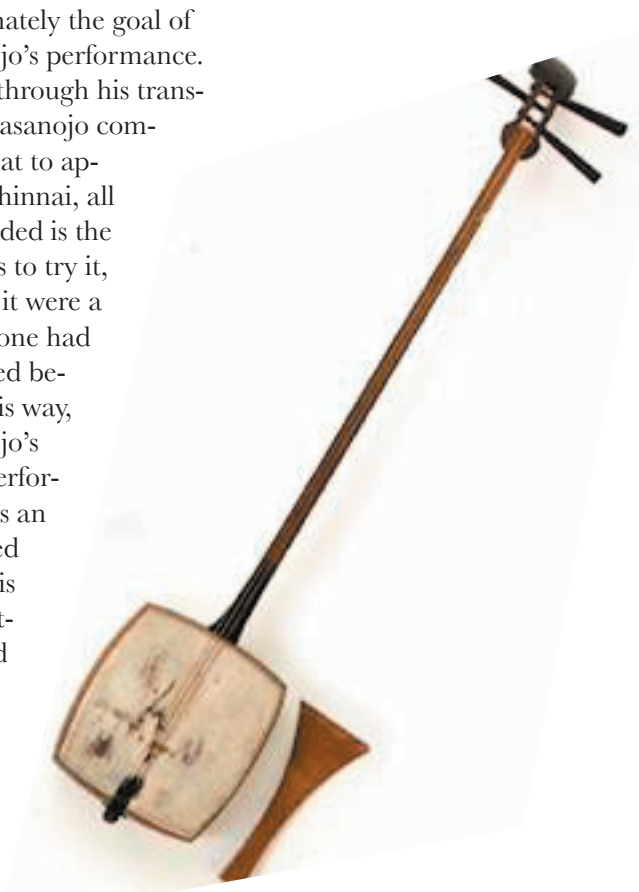
The shamisen is often employed in various types of traditional Japanese song besides Shinnai, and it creates a sound most comparable to the Ameri-

can banjo. In Shinnai there are traditionally two singers, both of whom may play the shamisen as an accompaniment. For his performance at Wesleyan, Wakasanojo's daughter assisted him on the shamisen, creating a layered sound that complemented Wakasanojo's singing.

"Hearing the shamisen was pretty cool because the sound is so distinctive. You immediately associate its sound with Japanese music, but most people don't know its name or what it looks like," remarked audience member Elaine Lai.

At the end of the night, reactions such as Lai's were ultimately the goal of Wakasanojo's performance. Speaking through his translator, Wakasanojo commented that to appreciate Shinnai, all that is needed is the willingness to try it, as though it were a new food one had never tasted before. In this way, Wakasanojo's Shinnai performance was an understated meal that is at once satisfying and different.

"Wakasanojo is eleventh in a line of Shinnai masters who have upheld the obscure art."



Balamina: West African Fusion Thesis a Success

by Joseph Feldblum

Bill Dixon: an Unconventional Trumpeter

by Lorrae Doig

Bill Dixon is a legendary trumpeter who started his career in the 1960's. As a jazz lover, I went to his concert due to his status as one of the best.

Very rarely am I surprised by the concerts I hear. This concert proved to be an exception.

I thoroughly enjoyed his sounds and the suspense he created with his trumpet. I was expecting to hear classic blues melodies but when he started playing I realized that I was completely wrong.

Bill Dixon would build you up with eerie wind-like sounds and then would startle you with sharp screams from his trumpet. His delivery drew you in because you never quite knew what to expect from sound to sound.

I could not find a particular melody and I don't think anyone else did. This is what created the anticipation factor.

I was so impressed with Bill Dixon because usually I am moved by well composed music, but he moved me by sending my mind jogging, anticipating his next note.

He has perfected his craft by making use of not only his trumpet as an instrument but also his breath and the microphone.

His performance completely drew me in and opened my eyes to the many uses of musical instruments.

Although I was thoroughly engaged in Bill Dixon's performance, I do not think I would buy a CD of his works simply because, in my opinion, it is not everyday listening.

Nevertheless, I would go to another one of his concerts because he captures the audience with his presence and musical delivery.

I would recommend this concert to everyone simply so that they can experience a journey of sounds delivered in a non conventional way.

I never expected the best show I saw all year to be a senior thesis recital, but I was wrong. Eric Herman's show was captivating, fun, and eye-opening. My friends and I experienced more than a concert; we experienced great music, the thrill of dancing, and the experience of Eric allowing us to feel his love and understanding of West African music.

Eric Herman's thesis was to show that African music didn't have to be an esoteric enjoyment, but could be integrated into a form that accentuates the commonalities of West African music and African American styles.

He had studied under a Malian guitarist named Ali Farka Toure, who he said was one of the greatest guitar players in the world. He picked up on a lot of what the man had to offer.

Eric played a variety of songs with a variety of accompaniments. His first few songs were up-tempo and powerful, but with an undeniable African feel.

After listening later to Ali Farka Toure, I realized that Eric had an amazing sense of Ali's music. Even during the concert I could recognize the African feel to the music from my brief exposures to music from the continent.

True to the thesis, I never once looked at it as anything more than good music.

He then went on to play a few mostly acoustic songs, one accompanied by a percussionist beating on a hollow wooden hemisphere with a microphone underneath. I felt Eric's love of the music most strongly at this point, when he performed a song he wrote for his sick friend.

The concert ended on a string of upbeat danceable tunes that everyone actually danced to. I was swept up in a mass of crazy dancing Wesleyan kids.

When the dust cleared and the ushers were able to make everyone sit down, an African dance ensemble went up onstage.

I was surprised after the show to find that one of the songs he played was a cover of a Radiohead song. This was another validation of his thesis, that the music of a weird band from England could be combined with West African sensibilities to create a new and very listenable result.

The West African Fusion concert turned me on to a whole new world of music that was lovingly crafted by Herman into one of the best concerts I have ever attended.

La Spanka Moves On

by Emily Einhorn

Donielle Lemone's senior recital features members of MUSC 108

The Crowell stage had never looked so much like a little kids heaven; giant lollipops were created for the sides and stuffed animals were sprawled everywhere. The thing that set it apart from a play pen was a drum set, microphones, amps, and a projector screen ready to go.

This was the set up for Donielle Lemone's senior recital that took place Sunday April 10, 2005. Her band, La Spanka, played along with guest musicians from Wesleyan including Shannon McIntyre, Justin Martinez, Jack Reilly, Rene Wachner Solomon, Deborah Witkin, and Daniela Gesundheit.

La Spanka is made up of members Donielle Lemone on vocals and guitar, Nicole Concepcion on bass guitar, and Victor Vazquez on drums. They have been together for two and a half years and have

played many shows at Wesleyan, including Zonker Harris Day 2005.

The show started off with a song entitled "Grasshopper" whose chorus included lyrics "I'll make you an offer/ That'll make you gyrate/ You just gotta clear a space." Donielle came out in a beautiful long white dress. A video started playing on the projection screen that consisted of two black males talking to each other, dressed all in white, in front of a checkered background. From there, all sorts of other images were shown.

The recital consisted of 14 different songs, all written by Donielle except for "Postdeath-ray Bonehuff" composed by Vazquez, the sole Junior in La Spanka.

During the middle of the show, Donielle was on stage alone with her guitar and told the audience a story about a

conversation that took place between her and her father. She told her dad that she wanted to "be Bob Dylan, not like Bob Dylan." She then started the 6th song of the night, Clue, and played acoustic guitar and harmonica, Dylan-style.

Trivial Pursuit, the next song, was dedicated to George Bush and included the chorus "Don't take it personally/ Because you don't matter you see/ We are not unique snowflakes/ Your footsteps don't cause earthquakes."

Many of their songs had a salsa reggae beat, especially "Magic Eye" that had the addition of a seemingly possessed and livid Wachner-solo.

Lemone's voice seemed operatic at difference parts of the performance and Vazquez's drumming was tight and emotional. All performers were comfortable and smiling, really enjoying their perfor-

mance and had an undeniable chemistry.

Lemone is doing Teach for America for the next two years and Concepcion is moving back to Chicago. The band tentatively plans to reunite in two years and move to the Bay Area, where Vazquez is originally from.

By putting La Spanka on the Crowell stage, an interesting dynamic was created. Was this just like any other rock concert, or was something more "high-class" going on that night?

Rock and roll has often been seen as low class and urban, compared to its predecessors from Tin Plan Alley. By incorporating Donielle's classical training, operatic elements, and the actual venue itself, the majestic Crowell concert hall, rock and roll certainly had a cultural night.

Ryan Adams Disappoints in Concert

by Emilia Burditt

Four songs into Ryan Adams' April 27th set at the Calvin Theater in Northampton, Ryan Adams had us all fooled. After he and his new band, The Cardinals, ripped through the first few tunes, including a countrified funk version of the popular "New York, New York" and several songs from the soon-to-be-released album "Cold Roses", everyone in the audience believed that he was there to play a rock show.

The high energy was abruptly stopped at the announcement of a smoke break for the band. When they returned to the stage they never recovered. While the band was playing, they were extremely tight, and even managed to jam through an unrehearsed version of "The Rescue Blues" with little trouble.

The set was hampered by guitars Adams claimed were out of tune or simply inappropriate for a particular song, Adams' sore wrist flaring up, and simple indecision on Adams' part as to which song he wanted to play. By the end of the night, one felt as if the band had spent more time standing around on stage than actually playing.

It would be unfair to say that the night was entirely unentertaining. Adams, himself, was in a good mood and even calmed hecklers with humor rather than the hot temper he has a reputation for. Musical highlights included Adams' solo acoustic "Oh My Sweet Carolina" and the unexpected driving jump given to "When the Stars Go Blue" during the second half of the set, which was bogged down by the fact that it consisted almost entirely of ballads.

The superb moments served to highlight what an energy-packed, soulful set Adams could have delivered. He certainly has the songs to put on a consistent show, but seemed every time Adams gained momentum he lost it again due to a mystifyingly long break between songs or an imperfectly tuned guitar. This may have been acceptable, even considered "intimate" or "quirky," at a small club filled with a hundred people. However, at \$30 a ticket in a large concert hall, Adams should have delivered something a little more.

Joseph Arthur *Our Shadows Will Remain*

by Emilia Burditt

In Joseph Arthur's sonic universe, it is perpetually dusk. On *Our Shadows Will Remain*, Arthur's fourth full-length album, every vocal melody is tinged with ragged sorrow, and every guitar line acknowledges impending darkness.

This is not to say that the disk is drab or dreary. On the contrary, Arthur's twilight is full of intricately layered vocal tracks, guitar loops, and percussion that subtly add smatterings of indie rock ("Can't Exist"), new wave ("Puppets"), and industrial ("I Am") among other styles. Arthur's gravelly voice is the element that holds the album together. It injects the tracks with sober lyrics that are unwavering in their sensitive reflection and frequently surprising in their optimism.

"The world will make a dream and a prayer out of our bones/To find where we belong/Our shadows will remain even after we are gone" he croons on "Even Tho". The earnest, weighty lyrics are contrasted with light drums, a simple bass groove and an airy mix of guitar, piano and strings. All this lies beneath pop hooks any Top 40 artist would kill to copyright.

The song *Our Shadows Will Remain* is a fine example of what makes this album so magnetic. Arthur's quirky melancholy makes the track even more seductive, and turns what might be a guilty pleasure track on any other album into a compelling and rewarding listen. It is a record loaded with sounds, but Arthur is not muddying his waters in order to appear deep. Beneath the vocals, guitar loops, strings and percussion tracks sit finely crafted melodies that make up the albums core. The sparse "A Smile That Explodes" finds Arthur at

Zappa in New Haven

by Aaron Smith

On April 5th, 2005, the Frank Zappa tribute ensemble, Project/Object, stopped in New Haven to play a gig at the legendary Toad's Place as part of their Social Insecurity Spring Tour. Unlike previous Project/Object tours, these April dates feature two of the original members of Frank Zappa's Mothers of Invention, guitarist and vocalist Ike Willis and Napoleon Murphy Brock on saxophone. Willis, who recorded with Zappa from 1979-93 on albums like *Joe's Garage*, gave the performance an extremely authentic sensation. His soulful timbre and vocal hysterics perfectly matched the vocals on various Mothers studio albums. Brock, who has since moved onto a solo career, also added to the authenticity of the show with his Zappa-esque licks and overall mastery of the saxophone.

As their second night on tour, the band appropriately played the 1973 Mothers album *Over-Nite Sensation* in its entirety, as well as a few other original Zappa tunes. Criticized as one of Zappa's most commercial albums, *Over-Nite Sensation* begins with the country rock piece "Camarillo Brillo" and eventually leads into more instrumental compositions like "Fifty-Fifty" and "Zombie Wolf." At Toad's Place, however, the choice to play the album was everything but criticized. The intimate crowd erupted at the first sounds of

the Zappa classics "Dirty Love" and "Dinah-Moe Humm." These two tracks really turned up the energy level within the venue more so than any others. Everyone was dancing and the band just fed off that energy to keep their vibe flowing.

Willis did an excellent job replacing Zappa's vocals on songs like "I'm the Slime" and "Montana." The quirky feel to the lyrics was not lost in Willis' translation at all. Let's not forget Brock, who also gave a stellar performance Tuesday night. He was given ample free space by Project/Object to solo out in various songs throughout the night. Most memorable was an extended soulful jam that he laid out towards the end of "Dinah-Moe Humm."

The overall musicianship of the band on Tuesday was phenomenal, as one would expect from any Frank Zappa tribute band. Particularly, I found Bassist Dave Johnsen, and drummer, Glenn Leonard to have exceptional skill. The only unimpressive facet of the show was its duration, as the band just barely breeched the one and a half hour marker. But who can argue with quality over quantity?

Project/Object is usually Dave Johnsen on bass, Eric Svalgard on keys, Glenn Leonard on drums, and Andre Cholmondeley on guitar. Check out the upcoming dates of their April 2005 tour at www.projectobject.com.

his barest with only an acoustic guitar, piano, and back-up vocals accompanying his voice. It reveals that Arthur's songwriting is strong without the dynamic production that accompanies most of the other tracks on the album.

For the most part, *Our Shadows Will Remain* is grave lyrically, but Arthur is easy to take seriously due to his heart-

felt delivery, hum-able melodies and off-beat production. It is virtually impossible to describe Arthur's sound by comparing him to other artists, but if one were to try it would go something like this: Somewhere between Elliot Smith and the Velvet Underground, Clinic and the Afghan Wigs, or Radiohead and Pete Dinklage lies Joseph Arthur, in a sphere all of his own.

Langerado Fest: A Return to Haight- Ashbury Culture

by Ben Ansfield

The fall of the hippy era is an established fact. It has turned into a cliché taught in schools, lamented by lingering heads, and glorified by punks and conservatives alike. The shattered remains of the counterculture underwent an ontological Diaspora – some retreated to communes, others surrendered to capitalism, and the most unfortunate degenerated into dismal ghosts of the much elevated '60s.

My parents were part of that counterculture. I am too cognizant of the ease with which the grown-up counterculture compromised their core values. As I inherited this explanation of the sixties, I became obsessed with experiencing just a glimmer of the much-hyped glory. Attending music festivals featuring the remains of broken sixties bands soon exposed the commercial reality that was the fate of the counterculture. This harsh disillusionment faced most of the generation, especially the originators of the Haight-Ashbury scene who watched it disintegrate into a shallow, drugged out, mainstream playground after the Summer of Love.

After ten years of searching for my glimmer of an unadulterated version of the counterculture, I experienced the closest thing to it at Langerado Music Festival during this past Spring Break. The two day festival, held annually in southeast Florida, was least contrived and commercial musical experience I have ever experienced.

The most surprising characteristic of this festival was its size—despite having top acts, the organizers capped its attendance at ten thousand. This is a major advantage over larger festivals, like Bonnaroo, which shares many of the same bands, only with eighty-thousand more people. The small size allows for a more personal experience, eliminates long lines, and gives everyone a chance to stand near the stage.

The band lineup was impressive for its eclecticism and ability to balance rising artists with accomplished legends. Music spanned across a dozen genres including reggae, hip-hop, bluegrass, soul, Afrobeat, electronic, and a fair deal of Dylan spin-offs. During two days of pristine weather in a 600-acre park, I stood thirty feet away from Toots and the Maytals, De La Soul, Antibalas Afrobeat Orchestra, The Dirty Dozen Brass Band, Medeski, Martin & Wood, the New Deal, and String Cheese Incident.

Although seeing these bands was a phenomenal experience in itself, the atmosphere and mood of the show was the most distinct

Jeff Chang...the new Guru in Hip Hop?

by Suzanne Tran

"My own feeling is that the idea of the Hip-Hop Generation brings together time and race, place and polyculturalism, hot beats and hybridity..."

-Prelude to *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation*

During spring break, I bought Jeff Chang's *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation*. The publication was very much anticipated by Hip-Hop heads, the industry, and the Asian American community. Chang compiled his 10 years of involvement with the Hip-Hop community into this much-anticipated book.

Chang hails from Hawaii. He has experienced the music scene in New York City, and now lives in California. Chang received a bachelor's degree from Cal and a masters degree in Asian American Studies at UCLA.

He started working as a hip-hop journalist in 1991. One can trace his writing in lesser known hip-hop magazines and in mainstream magazines like Vibe and Spin.

His resume reads like a true hip-hop mogul. He is a former Senior Editor/ Director at Russell Simmons' 360hiphop.com. He is also the cofounder and president of an influential hip-hop indie label, SoleSides, now Quannum Projects. Chang knows what it takes to organize grassroots style; he helped put together the National Hip-Hop Political Convention.

Do not be fooled, his interests are not limited to just Hip-Hop. Chang is a founding editor of Color Lines magazine hailed as the nation's leading periodical on race, culture and organizing. Throughout the course of Chang's career, Chang has written comprehensively on race, culture, politics, arts, music and anything in between. Chang

has been at the forefront of various movements in the capacity of community, labor and student organizer.

Chang continues to give back to the community by serving as a board member for numerous organizations promoting social change whether it is for media justice, the arts or hip-hop activism.

I greatly anticipated this book. It is satisfying to see someone who is on point about racial politics within the industry gain clout. Chang who knows hip-hop and was being recognized for it. His fieldwork is not being discredited because he is Asian-American.

To Chang, hip-hop is not confined to just rap music. As quoted on his website, www.cantstopwontstop.com, "It offers a generational worldview that encompasses the shoes you choose to wear, whether you're inclined to vote or not to how you understand the issue of race. So I use this worldview to look at the last three decades of the American century".

Chang is tapping into the history of the Hip-Hop generation by going straight to the sources: the people who helped create it, like Dj Kool Herc (who contributes the introduction to the publication).

Chang is taking his knowledge to the streets to illumine the voices that have been misrepresented or ignored. Chang has joined Serena Kim, Chuck D and Janet Tzou for panel discussions and appearances.

"This is a nonfiction history of a fiction—a history, some mystery and certainly no prophecy. It's but one version, this dub history—a gift from those who have illumined and inspired, all defects of which are my own". This is Chang's disclaimer to his book, but the man is making moves...he can't stop and he won't stop.

tive quality. After attending many music festivals, this one easily stands out as having the most organic, euphoric, and friendly crowd. There were countless groups of hippies exhibiting Merry Prankster- or Hog Farm-style antics, mixing stilts, hula-hoops, bubbles, and animals with nudity, gymnastics, and contortion. Everyone was eager to engage in conversation and share their food/chair/illicit substance. It was impossible to look around without seeing a thousand smiles. The festival was also remarkable for its political undertones. Many artists not only featured topical songs, but briefly discussed local or national issues during song breaks. One of the highlights of the festival was watching the only visible upper-class

Southern couple leave in disgust as Antibalas Afrobeat Orchestra sang "Condoleezza Rice, Indictment!" Additionally, in the vendor area, multiple booths featured information about various left-wing and environmental organizations.

Despite the wonderful environment created at the festival, it is impossible to overlook its pricetag. At \$75 for two days, the price is extremely reasonable when compared to \$50 for a three hour Bob Dylan concert. Yet free music was a cornerstone of the '60s counterculture, which just solidifies my suspicion that I will never wholly experience the extolled and utopian atmosphere that baby boomers still eulogize.

