

MEMPHIS

MODERN THEFT
BOB DYLAN & PLAGIARISM

REGGAE IN AMERICA & WHITE REGGAE

SNOW PATROL

THE RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS LIVE

JACK'S MANNEQUIN
AT THE WEBSTER THEATER

INTRODUCING: ANTHONY MARTELLO

THE QUEEN

THE BURNING LEAVES

JOHN BONHAM & LEVON HELM

FALL 2006

MUSC108 CLASS MAGAZINE

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THE QUEEN

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“EVERYTHING THAT HAS EXISTED IS ETERNAL, THE SEA THROWS IT BACK ON THE SHORE.”

“That is why art alone, by being inconsequential, is capable of grasping it. It is impossible to give a clear account of the world, but art can teach us to reproduce it—just as the world reproduces itself in the course of its eternal gyrations. The primordial sea indefatigably repeats the same words and casts up the same astonished beings on the same seashore. But at least he who consents to his own return and to the return of all things, who becomes an echo, and an exalted echo, participates in the divinity of this world.” (Albert Camus, *The Rebel*)

“People down here don’t let nobody tell them what to do.” –Dan Penn, on the South

LAURA NAHMIAS

Memphis is this queer place where everyone is so involved in their own business that they can’t get any sense of historicity, that they can’t see their own place in the world. It is a place of immense historical importance, but it seems to take for granted its own generative power. Its heart is in the right place, but it doesn’t have any common sense. All of the threads of soul music just form a part of the collective consciousness in my memory, without a history. This is the place where Isaac Hayes is just the man who hosts the radio show “Hot Buttered Love Songs,” on 103.5 The New Soul Classics, where a member of the Mar-Keys runs a really excellent Italian deli, and William Eggleston can be seen on any given day of the week mowing his lawn. There is magic in these details and there isn’t anyone to write them down until they’re gone. Memphis’s issues with historical preservation take form in the fate of the Stax studio, the lifeblood of Memphis music, and what one would consider a landmark for American cultural history.

“On the theater marquee would soon appear in giant letters of red plastic, Soulsville U.S.A. (for a while, in more socially conscious times, Stay In School). In later years the theater would be pointed to as the cause: it was the configuration of the sloping floor, it was the giant, bass-heavy u-8 movie speakers that made everything sound that much better on the

playback. It was the retail record outlet, the satellite record shop, which occupied the former candy and popcorn stand and served as a kind of on the spot barometer of taste for the fledgling operators of the label. It was the neighborhood: local kids dropping in after school, future songwriter David Porter bagging groceries at the Jones Big Star across the street, Booker T. and William Bell attending the same church nearby.” (97)
(From Sweet Soul Music, on Stax Recording Studios at East Mclemore Rd., Memphis)

The theater, in true Memphian obliviousness, was torn down in the late 80’s, quietly, since no one could fight for it after its condemnation. It has since been rebuilt and christened the Stax Museum of American Soul Music. If you visit there today, which I recommend for the excellent memorabilia they have on display, including some documentary footage of the Stax/Volt tour in Europe which is really sensational, you can look across the way and see the stone foundation of the Jones Big Star, a Memphis chain which closed down about 10 or 15 years ago if I remember, and from which the seminal Memphis rock band Big Star derived their name.

In August my friend Kate and her road trip partner Tonya stopped through Memphis on their way back up to Ohio, and I told them they could stay at our house. Coincidentally a close girl-friend of mine, Alex was returning from a foray to the west coast in order to meet up with



a mutual friend, Ben, who had taken a job at the local paper, for the summer. When we met up, toward the middle of August, our guests asked me what there was to do in Memphis.

“Memphis in the mid to late 60s was like a boomtown in the middle of a religious awakening. The success of Stax, and the flood of imagined possibilities which that success unleashed, set off a chain reaction that found every entrepreneur in town getting into the “record bidness.” Memphis, after all, is a town that has never been prone to self-doubt; civic pride has always held that a city which gave birth to the Piggly Wiggly, the Holiday Inn, Elvis Presley, and the blues, which could boast of its reputation as one time murder capital of the world, was somehow touched with magic. When that magic showed up all of a sudden in the realm of rhythm and blues, there was no one, it sometimes seemed, who was not prepared to take the leap, no matter what might be his or her lack of previous experience.”

In the summer, the weather in Memphis is so thick you feel like you can hold onto it, and when you’re young you have two options: you either sit around with the old people and sip on half and half teas while you complain in a spirit of brotherly agony, or you pretend like it doesn’t really matter and relish the sweat. We have an air conditioner at my house though, so the answer to the query of what to do was manifest. We would go out and sweat.

Ben was the best dancer I had ever met; I couldn’t for the life of me figure out why he had chosen to take a job as a newspaperman, but it turned out that his job, at the local alternative weekly, included a fair amount of forays into the social world, and he could subsidize trips to the Kentucky derby, Crunkfest 2006, (a crunk concert that erupted in some mild violence) or the ring of local concert venues and juke joints, thereby fulfilling the requirements of his job, while still getting a little

shakin' in on the side. He thought it would be a good idea to take our guests to a black dive bar.

“And yet it was rapidly taking on a cast and a character all its own, unorthodox, even for Memphis, which has always been known for its unorthodox operations. Every morning Estelle’s son Packy Axton, would open up the studio [Stax], prompted by a reminder call from his mother at the bank...any night he wasn’t playing with the Royal Spades (the high school band which had rehearsed such long and enthusiastic hours out at the studio in Brunswick), he was club-hopping with some of the characters he had met at Satellite (the record store,) soaking up the atmosphere at various r ‘n’ b joints around town, showing up, according to William Brown, in places where few other whites would dare to venture.”(107)

Wild Bill’s, is run by Wild Bill, and is located in a strip mall in North Memphis, a black neighborhood bordering the triangle of affluent white people that stretches east from its center in the area known as Hyne Park. This is not to be confused with South Memphis, affectionately referred to as “Hell” and home to illustrious rappers three six mafia and Gangsta Blac. White people usually don’t stray into this neighborhood, and if they do, they get friendly warnings from gas station attendants or restaurateurs to keep moving. (this happened to me about six months ago) But Wild Bill’s, unassuming as it is nestled in the low-lying, fluorescent lit strip mall, is a different situation, and the atmosphere is somewhat friendlier.

“The other factor that contributed to magic in the air was that “transracial,” almost bebop atmosphere which has been variously ascribed to Packy, to Chips, and to the McLemore location, and which would have been remarkable for anywhere in 1960, let alone Memphis and the south. Memphis in 1960- and not just on the testimony of Jerry Wexler either-was a strictly segregated town.

Despite the social revolution struggling to take place, despite Memphis’s reputation as the home of the Blues, despite WDIA and the birth of rock ‘n’ roll at the Sun Studio at 706 Union, there were not a lot of places for black and white to mingle easily. White teenagers who wanted to be “daring” went over to the Plantation Inn in West Memphis (rhythm and blues the fare, clientele strictly white), where Phineas Newborn, Sr. Ben Branch, and trumpet player Willie Mitchell led jumping little bands...” (110)

Wild Bill sits at the door, on a stool, looking grizzled, maybe like he has glaucoma, but he’s wearing the best dark suit, and sweating profusely. If I can recall he had on a yellow tie this time, and a black fedora, cocked so that the red lightbulb just inside the door highlighted the slick on his bald head. So we paid our cover charge, and sat down inside. The walls are painted red, and Christmas lights dangle limply and flicker in one place back near the fluorescent lighting of the kitchen. The walls are covered with slightly outdated posters of half naked women with L.A. Looks hairstyles, and photographs of patrons with Wild Bill, whose expression hardly varies from photo to photo. Patrons laze in stiff back chairs against checker table cloth covered card tables. There’s a menu up on the washboard, and Alex and Kate ask me what chitlins are when they see that it’s the Friday special. The only alcohol available is Budweiser in 40 oz bottles, which also seems to amuse our guests. It turns out quite fortuitously, that we are sitting next to the former Trezevant High football coach, a figure of some local fame, if I can recall, for some college recruitment scandal, but he’s holding onto a bottle of Stolli vodka and a little plastic container of cranberry juice, and laughing from the bottom of his stomach. We got there just as the show was starting. The main event is a group of musicians who call themselves the Soul Survivors, who’ve set up their instruments in the front left corner of the bar. At our card table, we have our right sides to the musicians, who invite their guest singer (new guests every nite!) up to the microphone. She is a beauti-

ful, rotund woman named Miss Minnie, and I get the distinct feeling that she knows both the football coach, and my dear friend Ben, from former interactions at this very locale. She starts to sing, something raunchy, which has all of the women in the bar laughing belly laughs and all the men pointing and slapping. Basically there's a lot of side to side motions going on. One couple, elderly and elegant, are dancing, dirty-dancing on the dance floor. Miss Minnie wastes no time in congratulating them on, something, which also rouses no small amount of laughter. The Trezevant football coach, Coach Carr, offers me and our entire party vodka and cranberry in tiny bathroom cups, with a conspiratorial but amiable laugh, and we accept in good faith. We are the only white people in the room, but it actually does not seem to matter. I think maybe everyone is drunk already.

"There are lots of reasons, of course, why blues should attract a white audience of some proportions. There is, to begin with, a question of colour. Most of us had never known a Negro. That didn't stop us however, from constructing a whole elaborate mythology and modeling ourselves in speech and dress and manner along the lines of what we thought a Negro would be. Norman mailer has expressed this attraction well in "the White Negro." It was really, the whole hipster pose. But it was also, as Eldridge Cleaver has pointed out, that rock n roll represented not only an implicit social commitment but the explicit embrace of a black subculture which had never previously risen to the surface, so that we were set up, really- was, anyway, along with my friends- for the adoption of a purely black music and a purely black culture. Blues offered the perfect vehicle for our romanticism. What's more, it offered boundless opportunities for embroidery due to its exotic nature, the vagueness of its associations, and certain characteristics associated with the music itself. For one thing it was an undeniably personal music; whatever the autobiographical truth of the words, each singer undoubtedly conveyed something of

himself in his song."(Feel like Going Home, 22)

Miss Minnie launches into another slow, growling song, half-familiar, and the other women in the bar offer some rousing affirmations, "take what you want, but get what you need." She sings a Wilson Pickett song, "634-5789," and a Carla Thomas song, "Tramp," and Ben gets up with a full body shiver, like someone just walked over his grave. This is how I know that he is going to dance. Miss Minnie pointedly asks the crowd how they feel about shaking a tailfeather, can she see us shake a tailfeather, wont we wont we, and they call back. Ben and Alex and Kate start to quiver a little bit as Miss Minnie rolls back into the band and disappears. The old men and women in the club are bent over, shaking a tailfeather, Tonya is slumped over in her chair clutching a forty and talking to a man with several gold chains and a pale blue suit, and I'm fielding queries from the Trezevant high football coach, the replies to which are summarily ignored. The band, the horns, the sax, the keyboard are sort of rocking from side to side, in the same motion as the asses of approximately half the patrons, and the Trezevant high football coach hands me a little baggie filled with pot, telling me to have a good time ; this phrase is cut off at the end as he turns a quarter turn away from me and introduces the Stoli and cranberry to a woman with cat-eye glasses on his right. I wasn't about to look the gift horse in the mouth, tucked the baggie into the lining of my jeans, and shook my tailfeather. Tina Turner would be proud. When Miss Minnie starts to grind up on Ben she starts talking about how they always do the next song, rough, but they never do it nice, and easy, and I know she's going to sing Proud Mary. I start to roll a little bit and Kate turns to me, and whisper-yells, "I'm having the best time."



MODERN THEFT

L O G A N N E E D L E

Noddling by the fire in divine solitude, Bob Dylan mulls over ideas for his inevitable upcoming release... but he's all used up, the fields have turned brown. Sad-eyed, vacant and numb, and with Boticelli's niece nowhere in sight to be his muse, Dylan totters over to the bookshelf, takes down the works of Henry Timrod, Poet Laureate of the Confederacy, and rifles through in search for a rhyme. There it is, the perfect line! Bob buries the book deep in his chest, hunching over like Quasimodo to shield it from view, a mad grin on his face. His prayers have been answered; he can once again wow the world with his indefatigable wisdom... they'll never know!

I can't imagine that anyone actually thinks this is how Bob Dylan wrote *Modern Times*, like a high school student cheating on a paper. But since 2001, accusers have been shouting theft, without much love. The "Folk Tradition" is no excuse for these Googling finger-pointers. What has arisen in the last five years is a new way of looking at studying, attacking, down-playing, obsessing over, and, for most of us, enjoying Dylan. Surprising? He's been called a lot of names before - Thief, Joker, Judas, God... just to name a few - because he's Bob Dylan, the ultimate trickster. He's always been cagey about revealing his influences - it's bad for mystique... and Bobby is all about mystique. He's constantly

transforming himself, his music, and the way that we, his alternately adoring or abhorring audience, perceive it. So we have, at the very least, always had a lot to talk about, and this newest revelation - the lifting of lines from the poetry of Henry Timrod and using them in *Modern Times* - is another chapter in the ever-evolving epic that is Robert Zimmerman. Do I concern myself much with these charges of plagiarism? Not really - when it comes to Dylan, I've learned not to argue or to judge. But with everybody shouting "which side are you on!?" while calypso singers laugh at T.S. Eliot... perhaps it is worth some discussion. It was Eliot, after all, who famously stated: "Immature poets imitate; mature poets steal." *Modern Theft...*

First thing's first: what is plagiarism and when can it be applied? Where there does seem to be a general consensus is in the definition - plagiarism is the act of taking someone else's work and passing it off as one's own, whereas with allusion, the author does not wish to conceal their source. This applies, however, to academic works - theses, dissertations, and things of that nature. Here, we're talking about songs. Where was all the fuss when "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall" came out? One might argue that "Hard Rain" is the folk tradition in its purest form, borrowing from Scotch-Irish ballads to create an ominous

and timeless atmosphere, blending the medieval with the modern. But that is exactly what Dylan does on *Modern Times*, and what he's always done. "I think that's the way Bob Dylan has always written songs," said Scott Warmuth, the New Mexican disc jockey whose Google philandering uncovered the lifted lines on *Modern Times*. "It's part of the folk process, even if you look from his first album until now." *Love and Theft*, his last title before *Modern Times*, seemed a quite obvious reference to its own allusions, but the problem for some has been that *Modern Times* does not explicitly credit Henry Timrod (just Charlie Chaplin?). Dr. Stephen Scoobie of the University of Alberta spoke in defense of Dylan's use of English Nursery Rhymes, African-American Blues, and an obscure 1950s pop song to pen the lyrics of *Love and Theft*, explaining that, "Dylan takes the whole idea of love and theft very seriously. He loves the stuff, but also unashamedly steals it. You could call it post-modern intertextuality, or good old-fashioned plagiarism."

I, for one, would call it neither... but this is getting interesting! Intertextuality? Dylan the post-modernist? Again, why didn't anyone cry "intertextuality!" way back when "Hard Rain" came out?

Bob knows the extent to which his every word is scrutinized – he's been dealing with

it for a long time; and as this funny old world keeps a-comin' along, he may be sure that reams of doctoral theses, tomes weighty, tomes flighty, by the highly-cultured and the lowly-obsessive, and of course, an Amazon of blogs, will silt the mind 'til the levees of unconsciousness break... but time must have a stop.

Indeed, Aldous Huxley borrowed the title *Time Must Have a Stop* from Shakespeare's *Henry IV (Part I)*, Hotspur's final words before being skewered by Hal. Shakespeare himself was prone to borrowing, lifting plotlines from various other sources. The plot of *As You Like It* was taken almost directly from Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde*, but I doubt Shakespearean scholars would call that intertextuality. It is worth noting that Dylan's influences are so diffuse as to make his ability to incorporate all that he has heard and read all the more unbelievable and rewarding for listeners. "Chekhov is my favorite writer," he told Ron Rosenbaum in a 1978 interview, and in the liner notes for *Biography*, Dylan advises, "to the aspiring songwriter and singer I say disregard all the current stuff, forget it, you're better off, read John Keats, Melville, listen to Robert Johnson and Woody Guthrie."

The latest installment in Dylan's Renaissance trilogy, *Modern Times* is as steeped in blues

and folk influences as were the previous two parts, 1997's *Time Out of Mind* and 2001's *Love and Theft*. With each passing year, Dylan's voice sounds more experienced and otherworldly. Here, his blues pour down like rain:

Gonna raise me an army, some tough sons of bitches
I'll recruit my army from the orphanages
I been to St. Herman's church; said my religious vows
I've sucked the milk out of a thousand cows
I got the pork chops, she got the pie
She ain't no angel and neither am I

I did all I could, I did it right there and then
I've already confessed - no need to confess again

Thus Dylan and his band furiously launch the album with "Thunder on the Mountain." The drums shuffle with brushes, the piano is pumping like Jerry Lee Lewis, the bass is popping, and the slide guitar sounds like it's channeling Michael Bloomfield a la *Highway 61 Revisited*. But these are not just blues songs. "Spirit on the Water" is a celebratory, beautiful parlor song with slippery jazz chords. "When the Deal Goes Down" is admittedly taken from Bing Crosby's trademark song "Where the Blue of the Night (Meets the Gold of the Day)" but no one's going to mistake Bobby for Bing. Actually, Dylan's singing style in these songs comes not from the mean-hearted crooning Crosby, but from the great blues and jazzman Lonnie Johnson, whose version of "Tomorrow Night" Dylan has been playing in live sets for years. In *Chronicles*, the first volume of his spectacularly entertaining and eloquent autobiography, Dylan discusses the influence of Lonnie Johnson on his songwriting, which is clear in the sweet song ambition of "Spirit on the Water."

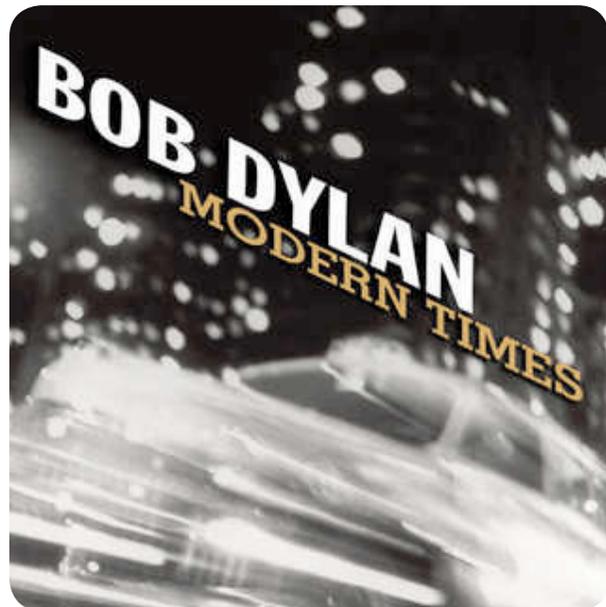
With "Rollin' and Tumblin'" Dylan swipes the riff, title, and tune itself from Muddy Waters' version of Hambone Willie Newbern's "Roll and Tumble Blues." On "Someday Baby" Dylan evokes Sleepy John Estes' "Worried Life Blues" (aka "Someday Baby" or "Trouble No More") which has been covered before by Dylan at Toad's Place in 1990, as well as by Fred McDowell, Lightnin' Hopkins, Muddy Waters, Chuck Berry, Eric Clapton, and the Animals, among others.

Coming out on the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, "The Levee's Gonna Break" is a poignant condemnation of the greedy and powerful, while "Workingman's Blues #2" mourns the fact that "the buyin' power of the proletariat's gone down/Money's getting shallow and weak... they say low wages are reality if we want to compete abroad." These songs walk the line between the topical ballads of Cisco Houston and Woody Guthrie and the love songs of Stephen Foster and Leadbelly. The struggle in Dylan's voice shows that he doesn't give into either side, but walks his own long and lonesome road, and where he's bound, even he can't tell. Along the way, though, he seems to have seen it all and found it wanting. On *Modern Times*, he comes in from the wilderness, sets down his crown of thorns, and tells us the story. And we're lucky to hear it. Dylan is the road-worn holy thief, the brawling but tenderhearted lover, the poetic pickpocket. He knows his characters because he has been all of them and can turn them all inside out in song. *Modern Times* explores a full range

of emotion and experience, from love (“When the Deal Goes Down,” “Beyond the Horizon”) to mortality (“The Levee’s Gonna Break,” “Ain’t Talkin”) to the state of the world (“Workingman’s Blues #2”).

The final track, “Ain’t Talkin,” reveals a wandering pilgrim singing a gypsy ballad to a lonesome fiddle, piano, and hand percussion. It is both ironic and fitting, with the gentle interplay of the instruments underscoring the seriousness of the words. One thing is made certain: he’s going to keep on keeping on.

In these ten songs, Dylan presents a new weird America with wild humor, bawdy joy, bottomless sadness, and restless heartache. With the aid of those who came before him, he creates an album that is both modern and timeless. Electric blues, porch and parlor tunes, and pop ballads that could easily have come out of the 1930s come together to produce a final product that transcends its own origins. Every song that has influenced him, Dylan contains within himself, and through his use of them, adds to their histories and legends. If a crime there be, all I can say is that genius forgives more than we can fathom. That is fact, not elitist fancy. Should we think our wonder boy – now our wonder-AARP-cardholder – a saint? Of course not. If you want a friend, get a dog. But ought we to be the ones who put him out to death? It ain’t me, babe .



***DISCLAIMER:** Many of the lines in the above article were shamelessly lifted from, primarily, Dylan’s own work. To avoid any legal action taken against the author, the sources from which the lines were borrowed are listed below.

W.B. Yeats “When You Are Old”
Dylan, “Cold Irons Bound”
“Sad-Eyed Lady of the Lowlands”
“Not Dark Yet”
“When I Paint My Masterpiece”
“Love Minus Zero/No Limit”
“Desolation Row”
“Song to Woody”
“Ballad of a Thin Man”
“Don’t Think Twice, It’s All Right”
“Shelter From the Storm”
“Tangled Up In Blue”
“I Dreamed I Saw St. Augustine”
“It Ain’t Me Babe”

R E G G A E

IN AMERICA, THE UK AND THE CREATION OF WHITE REGGAE



Part 1

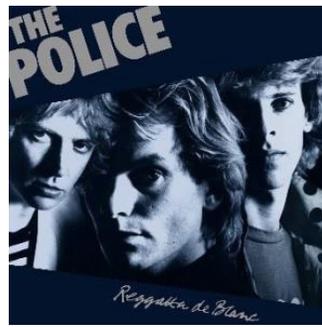
MEGAN WILLEY

The most idolized symbols of early Reggae are Jamaican Rastafarians, characterized by long dreadlocks, a marijuana haze and red, green and yellow clothing, advocating rebellion and protest. Reggae is often referred to as “The Music of Participation,” because of its simple, danceable rhythms, positive messages and reproducibility. And although Reggae’s musical influence on many rising Rock stars of the 1970’s and today’s culture is apparent, the general themes of Reggae are somewhat lost.

Reggae is the modern popular music of Jamaica. The origins of Reggae stem from a direct lineage with the Jamaican music culture, growing from many different forms of Jamaican music including Mento (Jamaican folk music), Ska (also called Bluebeat), and Rock Steady. Specifically, the format of Reggae refers to heavy accentuation on the second and fourth beat of a four beat bar. This format originated in 1968, sparking a universal cultural trend that has continued, not only in

today’s Jamaican pop music, but the world over. Other forms of Reggae include Dub/Roots, Dancehall, Ragga, Lovers Rock, and, the popular and apparent form in today’s music culture; White Reggae (Reggae performed by mostly white musicians, generally targeted to a white audience).

Reggae is rebellious music, uniting the poor and oppressed while encouraging protest and revolt. It is also known as the voice of the Rastafarian movement. Rastafarianism is an individualized religion in which knowing Jah (God) is actually being him. In short, the general theme of Rastafarianism is that of repatriation to Zion (Africa); seeking a better life with a return to the homeland while rejecting white European culture. The Rastafarian movement had a great influence on the poor and unemployed, localized mainly in Kingston. The young Bob Marley exemplifies the movement’s most famous disciple. Mar-



Part 2

JAIME WENDEL

ley became the greatest advocate for the movement and the most prominent leader of the tradition with his music. The themes of the Rastafarian movement also coincided with general feelings of oppression stemming from Jamaica's colonial government, the United Kingdom. Thus Reggae music is a product of this counterculture of the poor black community.

In the 1950s, Ska (an energetic Jamaican music style deeply influenced by black American musicians such as Fats Domino and Louis Jordan) became hugely popular in the U.K.; resulting in United States record companies attempted marketing of Jamaican music to international audiences. This initial attempt at marketing largely failed on the global scale. This did not reduce, however, its appeal to British youth. Although Jamaica won independence in 1962, a close tie remained with the U.K. in the music world of youth culture. This culture embraced the music's objections to general authority, and therefore, appropriated it as a representation of identity for working class white youth. This subculture seeks a means to rise above their situation and express themselves in many forms, music being one of them. Reggae, although initially representing discontent with Jamaican society, also took on a universal identity for youth and its opposition to society, better enabling British subculture to relate to Reggae subculture. This means of identifiably for the British youth allowed for a large following of Reggae amongst them.

Reggae music remained a part of the subculture in the United Kingdom and even the United States until the early 1970s. Before then, some Jamaican reggae artists, such as Millie Small, Desmond Dekker, and Jimmy Cliff, as well as American artist Johnny Nash, experienced marginal international success. The mainstream audiences did not embrace the rhythms and melodies of reggae music as rock music was in popular demand.

It was not until Chris Blackwell, the president of Island Records, and Bob Marley & the Wailers released their first album, *Catch a Fire* (The Bob Marley Story), that reggae music truly exploded onto the international scene. Blackwell launched the *Catch a Fire* album with the commercial appeal of a rock album; he cast the Wailers as rock stars, created a user friendly album cover complete with written lyrics for white audiences, and toured through the United States and the United Kingdom, making radio and television appearances. Many other Jamaican reggae artists followed this formula, such as Toots and Maytals, Peter Tosh, Burning Spear, and Bunny Wailer.

While the records were marketed differently, other aspects of authenticity in the Jamaican reggae aesthetic were also questioned in the new international scene. The reggae of the 1970s continued to address issues of Jamaican politics: the oppression of the poor, repatriation, the fight against authority, and Rastafarian ideology; but was often lyrically altered to have more universal appeal, based on the universal theme of protest.

Qualitatively, international reggae had a much more polished, studio appeal than earlier reggae music. Many early tracks were edited, mastered, and over-dubbed in studios in the United States and the United Kingdom. The instrumentation of international reggae was also altered; many producers de-emphasized the electric bass guitar and drums to create a softer reggae sound, borrowing from some American genres. The changes in sound and instrumentation in international reggae music brought about some controversy among reggae purists.

The commercial appeal of international reggae attracted the attention of not only white audiences, but also white musicians. As early as the early 1970s, white artists from the United States and the United Kingdom began borrowing elements of the reggae aesthetic and implementing them into their music. Paul Simon was the first to do so in 1972 with the song "Mother and Child Reunion". The song, one of Paul Simon's first as a solo musician, was recorded in Kingston, Jamaica, backed by an all-Jamaican band; even Paul Simon himself did not play on the track. While musically Paul Simon adopted the reggae aesthetic, lyrically and ideologically he did not.

The presence of reggae in Paul McCartney's music in 1973 and 1974 helped to bring more awareness of the reggae aesthetic to a mainstream audience. In the song "Live and Let Die", Paul McCartney utilized the bass and rhythm guitar in a few bars of reggae that were incorporated into the song. In a second song, "Jet", the rhythm guitar, with reggae styling, played a more prominent role in the song. However, neither of these songs incorporated any of the lyrical themes of Jamaican reggae music.

Ultimately, the commercial success of the British band, The Police, and the release of their reggae inspired album, "Reggatta de Blanc", coined the term for this Jamaican-inspired genre, "white reggae," in 1979. In "Reggatta de Blanc," and in the rest of their albums, The Police utilized a number of aspects of the reggae aesthetic, which helped propel them to stardom in the United Kingdom and the United States. They not only used reggae melodies, rhythms, and instrumentation, they also were one of the few bands in the white reggae genre that incorporated the lyrical themes of protest from Jamaican and International reggae in a number of their songs. The commercial success of The Police prompted many other artists, such as Blondie, to produce more music in this genre.

The commercial success of Paul Simon, Paul McCartney, The Police, and other white reggae artists brought reggae music to mainstream audiences; however, this change has been met with both criticism and support in the music industry. While these white artists adapted the rhythmic and melodic aesthetics of reggae music, they neglected the most important aspects of reggae: the themes of oppression, protest, repatriation, and Rastafarianism ideology. The separation of various aspects of Jamaican reggae in white reggae music distorts the authenticity of the original genre and loses the positive voice of the past generations. Ultimately, The roots of reggae were lost in the desire for commercial success.

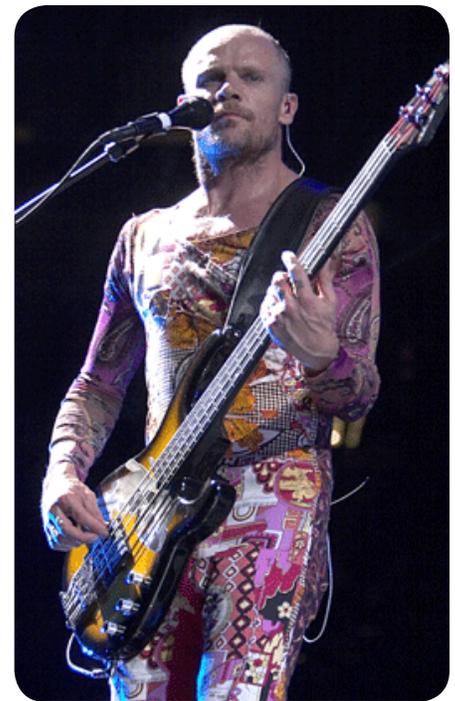
THE RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS L I V E :

THEY MAY BE GROWN-UP,
BUT THEY STILL GOT IT

JOAN BOSCO

The Continental Airlines Arena in East Rutherford, New Jersey was just one stop on the Mars Volta and Red Hot Chili Peppers' multi-city North American tour, but enough energy was exuded by both the performers and the crowd to merit making this concert the only one in their lineup. The Chili Peppers launched this tour in late summer in order to promote their Stadium Arcadium album (released in May 2006), and, along with "special guests" the Mars Volta as their opening act, will be touring until early winter.

The Mars Volta walked onto the stage at precisely 7:30 pm, lacking in pretension or even any acknowledgement that they shared the room with about 20,000 other people. In fact, except for singer Cedric Bixler Zavala's occasional seizure-like dancing across the stage, the members of the band did not interact with the audience at all, which was both strange and refreshing, and was well paired with the band's hour-long set of pure sound manipulation. Not having heard much of the Mars Volta's work before this concert, it seemed to me that their set consisted of one extremely long song, created by utilizing



feedback and sound distortion techniques to produce a trance-like, space-age sound that was occasionally interrupted by Zavala's Robert Plant-like howling. However, I later learned that the band had in fact played several distinct songs, including the well-known "Drunkship of Lanterns;" the song that showcased the most Plant-like wailings. For the most part, the members of the band stood in one place on the stage and ignored their audience, but the sound they created was very unique (even incorporating what appeared to be a giant set of bongos) and even easy to dance to.

After a half-hour of set-up and burgeoning anticipation, three of the four Chili Peppers (Flea, on bass, John Frusciante, on guitar, and Chad Smith, on drums) walked onto the stage and began to perform what seemed like an improvisational jam session. When singer Anthony Kiedis joined his band mates on stage a few minutes later, the jam turned into "Can't Stop," from their 2002 album *By the Way*. The friction which had been rumored to be present between band mates before and during the creation of *Stadium Arcadium* was undetectable by watching the Chili Peppers play. Kiedis, the strongest or at least

the most notorious personality in the group, strutted back and forth between Flea and Frusciante, sharing microphones, dance moves, and knowing glances. In this respect, the band was, for the most part, getting along, at least for the sake of their music. However, it was noted that Kiedis arrived onstage at least five minutes after the rest of his band, and then left about ten minutes before Flea, Frusciante and Smith were finished playing, allowing them time to create instrumental jams but giving the impression that Kiedis was somehow separated from the rest of the band. Aside from this one observation, the chemistry between the band mates was undeniable, as they played off each others' energy, as well as the energy of the audience, to produce an intense and non-stop two hours of music, during which their old material was played with the same vigor and liveliness as their new work.

The two-hour set included many songs from Stadium Arcadium, but songs from the Chili Peppers' last two albums, *By the Way* (2002) and *Californication* (1999), were also performed. While most of their biggest hit singles were played, such as the title songs of these two albums, the band also incorporated some "B-side" tracks, creating an unexpected and eclectic mix of their work. The band even reached back as far as 1987, playing "Me and My Friends" from *The Uplift Mofo Party Plan*, (an album that was recorded before Frusciante and Smith were even in the band).

The pyrotechnics and special effects used at the show were minimal, with the most elaborate effect being the white confetti that was sprayed on the audience during the Chili Peppers' performance of the song "Snow (Hey Oh)." Elaborate effects proved unnecessary,

however, and may have even taken away from, the Chili Peppers' down-to-earth and energetic performance. While Kiedis' crazy strutting and dancing seemed almost off-rhythm at times, watching him recklessly jump up and down even during the slower parts of songs incited the crowd to go wild and added to the sincerity and lack of pretension associated with the Chili Peppers' performance. Unlike the Mars Volta, the Chili Peppers, mostly Flea (arguably the most charismatic member of the band) attempted to converse with their audience. Unfortunately the acoustics in the arena were so poor that from where I was sitting, I couldn't make out anything that they were saying.

Frusciante's guitar solos in almost every song performed also provoked the crowd's excitement, as the audience waited in mounting anticipation as he approached the climax of each solo, and then proceeded to scream in unison as he raged past it, (at times playing so hard that he wound up lying on the ground by the end of his solo). Although drummer Chad Smith has told *SPIN* magazine this past May that the upcoming tour was going to be the "fuckin' John Frusciante Rock Show" because of the abundance of guitar solos on the new album, Frusciante's prolific solos didn't steal the show. Rather, they added an element of musical complexity and almost maturity to the concert, enrapturing the audience and demonstrating Frusciante's prowess and versatility as a musician. Frusciante was, however, the only member to perform solo throughout the night, playing a cover of Carole King's "Will You Love Me Tomorrow?" and thus adding to the evening's eclectic mix of mu-

THE BURNING LEAVES:

WHY?

ALEX KAUFMAN

sical numbers and showcasing his melodic, airy vocals, previously only heard as back-up to Kiedis’.

Judging by their performance, one would not be able to tell that the members of the Chili Peppers are approaching their mid-forties (with the exception of Frusciante) and have been performing for over twenty years (the band was formed in 1983). Playing off of each other and off of their audience, the Chili Peppers delivered a performance that was so seamless it appeared professional and rehearsed. At the same time, however, it was also so energetic and fresh that it seemed to be as spontaneous as Flea, Smith and Frusciante’s opening and closing jams and Kiedis’ outlandish dance moves. While the music played at the concert showed that the Red Hot Chili Peppers have, as a band, grown and developed significantly, transcending their image of the group of guys who wear only strategically placed tube socks and perform novelty rap songs about sex, the performance itself showed that the Chili Peppers haven’t lost the offbeat energy and playful mischievousness, not to mention the ability to not take themselves too seriously, which made them famous in the first place. The only disappointment was that the set itself was much too short, and the end of the show left me wanting to hear much more live Chili Peppers music.

I wasn’t sure what to expect when I went to meet the elusive members of The Burning Leaves. The first thing that they told me was that they didn’t like interviews, that they didn’t like me either, that they were kidding, and that in fact they really loved me, a lot. The leader of the band (Dan Crossley) made himself clear when he stood up to shake my hand. “The name’s Crossley, but you can call me ‘Beefy Love’.” He was wearing a large three-cornered hat, knee-high boots, and a red sash.

Let me provide a little background on The Burning Leaves before I go any further. According to the members, they first met at a drug-laden after-party for the Yanni World Tour Show at the Fillmore West in ’65. In Crossley’s words, “After hours of listening to Yanni’s sweet, sweet sonata’s, we all began to discuss our love for the lush foliage during the fall season. We laughed about stories of campfires and loves lost, and how we had all shared these tales through the majesty of song. Like bards from a land long forgotten, we all began singing of love, passion, and our obsessions with marijuana. We soon combined these passions by forming a band and creating a hilarious pun with our love for campfires in the fall and our other love for smoking the sweet, sweet ganja. Soon after, we all graduated from middle school and left home to start a new life in the world of music.” Thus began what would eventually become one of the longest and most illustrious music careers in the history or the entertainment business: The Burning Leaves. The rest, as they say, is history.

When asked for his most influential band or artist, Crossley responded, "I would have to say the work of John Coltrane post-Love Supreme, an ultimate reflection of a life's accomplishment. Either him or Cypress Hill." Crossley's erratic and unpredictable personality has led him into some rather uncomfortable situations in the public eye. The worst of which took place several summers back when Crossley was facing charges of indecent exposure after being caught grape-stomping in the nude in a public park. When I touched upon this subject, he responded, "Yes, I was at a 'grape-stomping for testicular cancer' rally in the park and I figured the girth and sheer weight of my endowment would aid in the squishing."

The things that stuck out in my mind after meeting the legend and household name that is Mr. Dan Crossley, would have to be the fact that he routinely gargles "Drano" to maintain his cool image, his beloved "smoke a pack a day for 40 years" voice... and his horrendous smack habit.

The next member to introduce himself was Nate Kaufman. He was tall and handsome, bearing a stark resemblance to Sean Connery in the early Bond flicks. He was wearing a t-shirt that said "Red Hot Chachkas Klezmer Band" in a bright red gothic font that had blood dripping all the way down the front of the shirt. Nate's favorite childhood toy was his dreidel, his favorite deli meat is gefilte fish, and his biggest hero is Dan Crossley. He told me his favorite song is "The Whisper Song", because it's very soothing. He plans to start a mashed potato business in Orange, New Jersey as soon as he gets enough money. That was all that I could get out of him, because a few minutes into our conversation he became strangely quiet, got a forlorn, lost look in his eyes and just stared at me blankly repeating,

"make the bad man stop". Nate is the most elusive member of the band, and rarely agrees to make public appearances like this one. Crossley informed me that they "usually don't let him out of his cage for too long, because the sedatives start to wear off after only a couple of hours."

"Pflueger", "Marmotman", or "Druncan Will Duncan" (depending on which nickname you use for Will) stood up to shake my hand. Will had a maniacal look permanently frozen on his face, a side effect of singing 'screaming laughter' background vocals for The Burning Leaves for over 40 years. He told me that he has spent most of his free time lately watching Popeye cartoons. "He has really had a strong impact on my life these past few weeks, except for the whole spinach eating thing. "I don't like spinach," he said. It's widely known that he eats bats as a pastime, a direct influence from his favorite artist Ozzy Osbourne; although some say he takes it a little too far (he has had animal rights activists egg him a number of times during their shows). Part of the reason he has so many disfigurements, he told me, was because his favorite childhood toy was his chainsaw...seriously. Although he now solely does vocals, his first instrument was a xylophone. When I asked him about it, he told me he promptly broke it and was never allowed to play again...hence the vocals. He aspires to one day be Euro trash, that or a hermit.

At first glance David Skinner appears to be a tough, hard-edged badass with a 'nothing to lose' attitude. He smokes Kool menthols instead of brushing his teeth, and he claims he only does hard drugs, because "marijuana is for [expletive deleted]s". If he had his way, people would call him Dirty, The Dirtiest, El Mud, Mudbutt, Pigpen, Hangnail,

Nailtooth, or just Rambo. Unfortunately, none of these nicknames have caught on, and the general public still knows him as “Dumpling”. Dan Crossley routinely packs David’s Looney Tunes lunchbox, a habit that stuck with them since their early childhood days. When asked who his favorite superhero is, Skinner replied: “Jesus. No one can stop Him.” He loves to play the spoons, which his grandfather taught him how to play when he was 3 weeks old. Suffices to say, he’s a musical genius, and everything he touches turns into gold records. There have been rumors that he feels underappreciated by the band, and when I asked him about it he gave it to me straight up, correcting this rumor and laying out how he feels about his role in the band: “I’m just in it for the cash and hard drugs,” he said. “If I could change something, it would be the number of times I had to get the rest of the band to get out of their weed haze and stop playing with the life-size wax statue of an Indian Chief we keep on the bus.”

Jason Kim was the final band member of the Burning Leaves that I spoke with. He was hard and cold on the exterior, and

didn’t seem to want to be there. “Batman is my biggest inspiration,” he told me completely unprompted, “because he rises above all others in terms of fighting skills, mental abilities, and is an inspiration to the common man with no superpowers.” When I asked him what the most embarrassing moment of his life was, he

simply replied, “I’m not willing to share that with you.” The only question he would answer after that was what his goals and aspirations for life are. “I just want what any man wants: a home to sleep in, someone who loves me to come home to, and more money than God.” Can you blame him?

After meeting the infamous Burning Leaves, I walked away with a new appreciation for their sound. They’re not just a bunch of burnt

out hippie stoners trying to relive the glory days of the psychedelic 60’s. They’re a lovable group of guys, some with harder edges, others with big hearts, and still others with serious, serious issues. Overall they balance each other out perfectly, which is why I believe they’ve been together and successful for so long. I think Dan Crossley summed up the group’s ambition nicely when he said, “I want to be the first group to sell over 1 billion records world-wide, thus making us the first group to go multi-Uranium.” So there you are: The Burning Leaves.



DO DRUMMERS DESERVE THE SHORT END OF THE STICK?

Q : What do you call someone who hangs out with a bunch of musicians?

A : A drummer.

DUSTIN BROCKNER

The plight of the rock drummer seems to be captured perfectly in the Beatles' film, "A Hard Day's Night". After being constantly teased, Ringo Starr walks out of the studio for an introspective stroll to think about his importance in the band as well as in the world. Although it may be a bit of an exaggeration, drummers do not always get the respect that they deserve. The drums occupy a unique role in rock music. The rhythm, the beat, the groove or whatever you want to call it, is held down by the drummer and bassist together. No matter how good of a guitarist or singer one may be, if the drummer is off, everyone is. Rhythm is what makes you dance; it is what you feel in your feet and in your body.

There are no songs composed for the drum set. With the exception of "Wipeout," the average person would not be able to identify a song based only on its drumbeat. However, this is for a good reason because the drums are only what the song is built off of. It is similar to looking at a metal frame of a car and trying to guess what the color, year, company, or engine type will be.

You can learn some valuable lessons about music if you consider the art of drumming. It is curious that there is the exact same drum beat played on the verses of AC/DC's "Back in Black", Michael Jackson's "Billie Jean" and the Band's "The Weight." Despite having the

"same" drumbeat, these three songs are remarkably different, with remarkably different textures. Yet each drumbeat fits the song perfectly. You must realize that it is not necessarily what the drummer is playing, but rather, how s/he is playing it. This affects the music more than an average listener realizes. Still, this is just the beginning of the many musical subtleties involved with beats and rhythms. How the drummer is feeling the song is how the audience will, whether consciously or not. Missing a note, although unpleasant, is not something you feel as strongly as when the drummer misses the beat.

Next time you listen to music, try to listen to the drummer. For many pop songs it may not be all that interesting. But try to tap the beat; you may realize that it is very hard to do so. Now, realize that the drummer must coordinate all four limbs to make a precise beat. Still, I will admit that it didn't matter who was the drummer for acts such as Hank Williams or Chuck Berry or early Elvis Presley. There are many people who keep solid time with no frills involved. But not only is this logic counterproductive, it also can be applied to any member of the rhythm section. But, I'll tell you one secret benefit of being the drummer: it gives you best seat in the house.

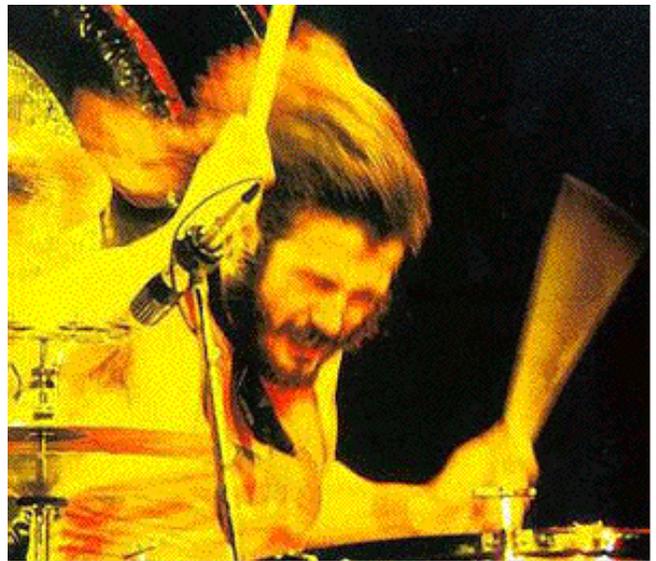
The following two articles are biographies of two very different drummers who were inarguably indispensable to their band's music.

THE THUNDER BEHIND LED ZEPPELIN BIOGRAPHY ON JOHN BONHAM (1948–1980)

All you need is just one listen, from any song on any album, to realize how momentous a figure John Bonham was, not only in the realm of rock drumming, but also in the ethos of percussion everywhere. John Henry “Bonzo” Bonham was the man behind the drums of the British super group, “Led Zeppelin” from 1968 until his untimely death due to alcohol in 1980. On September 24, 1980 Bonham had taken the initiative to drink about 36 shots of vodka in only a few hours. He died from choking on his own vomit that night. Although best known for his extended drum solos, a staple of many Led Zeppelin concerts, what made Bonham the best was his subtle, yet powerful, grooves on many of Led Zeppelin's tracks.

Starting out on the English club scene in the mid-1960s, Bonzo was disliked by club owners who believed that he played too loudly. His sheer physical size, combined with his tendency to line his bass drum with tin foil, created the earth-shattering intensity with which he played. By 1968, he had developed a good reputation in England, which is why Jimmy Page recruited him. The rest was history as Zeppelin dominated the rock scene in the U.S. and the U.K. for the next decade.

It is rare for a drummer to be just as indispensable as the vocalist or guitarist, but Bonham's funk/soul based grooves gave Led Zeppelin the rhythmic backbone that heavily defined their sound. With his sheer technique and raw power, he excelled at improvisation. Many of Led Zeppelin's songs became extended journeys with Bonham and bassist John Paul Jones in control.



It was during the decadent 1970s that Led Zeppelin developed its reputation for off-stage antics, many times led by John Bonham. According to their tour manager, Richard Cole, some stories include Bonham driving a VW bug into the river to see if it could float, defecating in some poor “groupie's” shoe, and an incident involving a groupie and some recently caught red snappers (wikipedia.org if you want to know more). Here is some suggested listening that truly captures the essence of John Bonham:

- “Good Times, Bad Times” from Led Zeppelin. You may never have noticed, but just listen to the rapid-fire bass drum fills towards the end of the song. Signature Bonham. Solid drumming throughout.
- “When The Levee Breaks” from IV (unofficially untitled). This was recorded by placing Bonham's kit at the bottom of a three-story stairwell and putting the microphones on top. Bonham's heaviest groove as well as most sampled. Check out the Beastie Boys “Rhymin & Stealin”, a direct sample.
- “Fool in the Rain” from In Through the Out Door. Although later Zeppelin isn't as fresh, Bonham's syncopated half-time shuffle makes the song. The Latin-influenced breakdown is silly, but demonstrates the thunderous sounds he elicits from his drums.
- Anything off of How the West Was Won. Led Zeppelin's amazing live performances made them rock legends. Bonham revamps all his grooves and fills them with energy unmatched by contemporaries.

THE ONLY DRUMMER WHO CAN MAKE YOU CRY

BIOGRAPHY ON LEVON HELM (1940-)



John Bonham, although a versatile drummer, occupied only one niche in the percussive world. Dazzling technique, extended improvised soloing and heavy hitting are traits mimicked by many rock drummers today.

When I was playing music in high school, Bonham was it; he was who I wanted to play

like. But as my music taste expanded I learned about The Band and its drummer, Levon Helm. His simple, funky feel and his incredible voice redefined for me how a drummer can serve the music perfectly without frills.

Levon Helm, hailing from Marvel, Arkansas, got his start at the age of seventeen playing drums for fellow rockabilly singer Ronnie Hawkins. Unlike Bonham, Levon was not constructing drum sets out of pots and pans when he was younger. Rather, he took to playing guitar and singing country songs with his sister. Although he had a knack for the drums, he never really considered taking it up until Ronnie Hawkins told him that it was the only available slot in the band.

Levon developed his skills on the Canadian rock'n'roll circuit from 1957-1964. All Hawkins wanted out of him was a solid beat to which people could dance. If you listen to these early recordings, including "He Don't Love You (And He'll Break Your Heart)", you get an idea of Levon's technical skills as a drummer. The song includes breakdown in which only the drums are playing. He does a simple, yet effective syncopated rhythm. One almost feels like scoffing at Bonham for his flashiness upon realizing that it is not what you play, but rather what you leave out.

Singing had a huge impact on how Levon approached the drums. He understood the neces-

sity of keeping things simple while letting the lyrics tell the story. Most importantly, singing while playing never impeded his solid time. His best performances came when he was singing; perhaps his control of the rhythm and melody of the vocals allowed him to accompany himself perfectly. He sang and played for The Band from 1968 until their farewell performances in 1976, which was captured on film and called *The Last Waltz*. However, the end of The Band did not retard Levon's career. Between solo works, playing with a reunited The Band (never with the original line up) and beginning a career in acting, Levon Helm has stayed fairly busy. Today, he is still singing and playing, giving frequent performances at his barn in Woodstock, NY.

Suggested Performances:

- "Tears of Rage" off of *Music From Big Pink*. Perhaps rock critic Jon Carroll had this song in mind when he called Levon "the only drummer who can make you cry." With his uniquely tuned toms, the sound of the drums seems to stay suspended in the air. This slow lament about the heartache of parenthood is perfectly backed by Levon's tasteful drumming.
- "I Shall Be Released" off of *Music From Big Pink*. This sublime closer shows a more innovative Levon. By playing the snare on the bottom of the snare drum, Levon creates a percussive texture that fits perfectly.
- "Sleeping" off of *Stage Fright*. Levon holds out until the chorus performs with its waltz feel. He plays with the music perfectly, letting the chorus play out like one fluid musical phrase.
- Anything off of *The Last Waltz*. While The Band was on temporary hiatus around 1973-4, Levon took the initiative to attend the Berkeley School of Music to improve his technique. Although Levon's approach to the standards recorded in 1968-71 on this album is much more conventional, his newly found professionalism shines through. For the album, many of the instruments and vocals were overdubbed. Only Levon's drumming remained untouched from the live recording. He nails it, no doubt about it.

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE AT THE WEBSTER THEATER

With A Couple Strokes of Luck, It Turned Out to be the Best Night Ever

KAITLIN HALIBOZEK

It was four hours before the sold out show was supposed to start and we didn't have tickets. We had ordered tickets online a month earlier, but there had been a "glitch" and the order hadn't gone through. My friend Kate and I went to the Webster Theater in Hartford on September 27 to see Jack's Mannequin anyway, and it turned out to be one of the most fun and memorable days of my life.

After telling members of opening acts The Hush Sound and Daphne Loves Derby our predicament—they apologized but said their guest lists were full—we got into the will call line at 4 pm, which was only an hour before the doors to the Webster Underground opened. We knew the show was sold out, but figured we'd try our luck anyway. There were no tickets available, but due to the kindness of strangers with extra tickets, we ended up getting into the show anyway.

As we were standing in the overcrowded Webster Underground, waiting for the doors of the main stage to open at six, the girls I was standing with were talking to the Jack's Mannequin tour manager on the phone—apparently they've all been to more than a few shows and they knew him. So out comes Casper, a big six-foot tall teddy bear. And he had twenty Meet and Greet passes in his hand; these were the coveted stickers every girl in the crowd wanted.

The girls around me got their passes, and he still had a few left. I figured, "Eh, what

the hell?" and said in the sweetest voice I could, "Casper, I only need one." (There had been girls asking for seven or eight passes, and he had refused them.)

The next thing I knew, I was holding a sticker that would allow me to meet Andrew McMahon, the "triple threat" and driving force behind Jack's Mannequin and his more well-known outfit, SoCal rockers Something Corporate. He writes, sings, and produces all his music, and quite possibly plays the best rock piano since Billy Joel—in my opinion, at least.

In June of 2005 he had been diagnosed with Acute Lymphatic Leukemia, and in August of that year he had a stem cell transplant. Ironically, he had his transplant the same day Jack's Mannequin's debut, the "Pet Sounds"-inspired "Everything in Transit," hit the stores. For Andrew, it was a new beginning. For all of us, it was another opportunity to hear Andrew's personal and at times heartrending lyrics. Everything in Transit is his deeply introspective concept album detailing his battle with his illness and how it affected his relationships with his friends and girlfriend.

And I was so looking forward to hearing those songs directly from him, instead of just listening to my CD again. Three hours prior to this, I didn't even have a ticket. Now I had a ticket and a pass to meet Andrew? It didn't seem real.

Seven o'clock finally rolled around, and Chicago's The Hush Sound, featuring Greta Salpeter on keyboards/vocals, Bob Morrison on guitar/vocals, Darren Wilson on drums and Chris

Faller on bass. Their piano-punk sound had hints of jazz and folk, and the boy-girl exchange in the vocals added a different twist to the run-of-the-mill male angst-filled tenor that usually accompanies such melodies. Most of the younger girls in the crowd knew this band already, and the rest of us were just so excited to see Jack's Mannequin that from Greta's first note on the keyboard, the show was a party.

Next up was another group of young rockers, Washington state's Daphne Loves Derby. Bassist/vocalist Jason Call is only eighteen, yet has already graduated from both high school and college! Stu Clay (drums), Kenny Choi (guitar/vocals) and Spencer Abbott (lead guitar) round out the quartet, whose sound is reminiscent of bands such as Jimmy Eat World.

Their set was difficult to enjoy, however, because of all the people pushing towards the stage to (eventually) get as close to Andrew as humanly possible—even though he wasn't even going to be on-stage for at least another two hours.

The claustrophobia only got worse when Copeland took the stage. It was tough to even hear them because the rush of people pushing their way forward! My friend and I couldn't even breathe at one point, and there were shouts of "Stop pushing, bitch!" which unfortunately continued for the duration of the ten-song set. Their mellower, piano pop-rock should have calmed the audience down, but because we all knew who was up next, it just didn't. When front man Aaron Marsh announced that they were going to play two more songs before handing the stage over to Jack's Mannequin, the crowd went nuts. The biggest and loudest cheer of the night so far was when they left the stage.



It took what seemed like forever for the stage crew to set up for Jack's Mannequin, but I was kept entertained with what seemed like Michael Jackson's greatest hits album playing over the speakers. When "Thriller" came on, people actually started doing the dance. We were all so excited that I don't think it really mattered what music we were listening to because we knew that any minute, Andrew McMahon would be taking the stage.

The electricity in the crowd reached an all-time high once the stage crew wheeled out Andrew's Yamaha electric piano. "Oh my God, he's gonna be right there!" squealed the girl standing right next to me. And she was right—we were about ten feet from where he would be! This realization led to quite a bit more pushing and shoving, and security came out and yelled at the crowd to stop or the show would be cancelled. That got everyone to chill.

Finally, the lights dimmed and four figures took the stage. When Andrew came out, the crowd erupted. He sat down at the piano, and began to sing. "I've got my things, I'm good to go..." and as the lights came back on, we began to sing—or rather, yell—the words to "Bruised" right along with him. He seamlessly transitioned right into the mid-tempo "Kill the Messenger," before inviting us to rock out with him to "I'm Ready." A couple songs later was the B-side's "Last Straw" which Andrew informed us we could feel free to download illegally. Apparently the story behind that song is that he was feeling pretty down right after the 2004 presidential election; he was broken up with his girlfriend, and he was not too thrilled about the outcome of the election. When he got to the line, "How did this man become the president?" he changed the words to a blue-state friendly, "How did that motherfucker become the president?" That got a decent shout of support.

The next song was what really got the crowd going. As I previously mentioned, Andrew is also the frontman of Something Corporate, who, even if you don't know much of their music, you must be aware of their 9:36 ballad—"Konstantine." Of course you know that song. And of course all the people in attendance at this Jack's Mannequin show knew it too, so when he began playing the first few measures of it, the crowd got really quiet because it's a commonly known fact among Andrew's fans that he never plays "Konstantine" with Jack's Mannequin. And of course he wasn't playing it now because eight measures in, he moaned, "It was dark blue..." before kicking it up a notch and playing the band's second single. After his ode to "lesbian pot dealers," "Holiday from Real," he slowed things down with the Simon and Garfunkel cover "Homeward Bound," followed by the heart-wrenching "Rescued" and "Katie," which he wrote for his sister after she provided bone marrow for his transplant.

To bring the crowd back into it, he switched gears again, this time playing the most "rock" song on Everything in Transit, "The Mixed Tape." This is one of the few times he didn't remain at the piano for the whole song, which means that we were even closer to him! He followed with "Into the Airwaves," which is my favorite Jack's Mannequin song.

And then, being "the guy from Something Corporate," he obviously had to play one of his old songs. He chose "Me and the Moon," which, he informed us, is one of his favorite songs that he's ever written, even though it is quite morose. It's the story of a housewife at the end of her rope, and she murders her husband. From the opening "It's a good day for a murder..." to the haunting "The blood stained the carpet/She's lucid and departed...You marry a

role and you give up your soul 'til you break down," it was enough to give everyone in the place chills.

As eleven o'clock approached, Andrew told us that he was going to play two more songs. He invited us to grab our friends to sing along to "La La Lie," which, contrary to the title, is actually about friendship. And then he closed with the eight-minute epic "Made for Each Other/You Can Breathe," before leaving the stage. For most of the concertgoers, that was it. But I had my Meet and Greet pass.

After waiting almost a half hour after the show ended, Andrew finally came out to meet the twenty of us lucky enough to garner a blue backstage pass. We each only had about thirty seconds with him, which was just enough time for an autograph and a quick photo. But it was enough time for me to realize that I had met Andrew McMahon! As I was leaving, however, I noticed that the picture of Andrew and I was blurry (thank God for digital cameras!). I ran back inside and waited in line to see Andrew again. When I told him the picture didn't come out, we took another one. Then we realized the flash wasn't on. Eventually Casper took a picture while Andrew held a flashlight under our chins, ghost story-style, which came out clear. I was just thrilled that I got to spend a couple more pictures with Andrew, and I even got a hug goodbye!

All in all, this was one of the most fun nights of my life. I saw an amazing concert with my best friend, and I met my favorite musician. The day before I was crying because I wasn't going. But in the end, it couldn't have turned out any better.

THE COMPLETE JACK'S MANNEQUIN SET LIST:

Bruised, Kill the Messenger, I'm Ready, Miss Delaney, Last Straw, Holiday from Real, Dark Blue, Homeward Bound, Katie, Rescued, The Mixed Tape, Into the Airwaves, Me and the Moon, La La Lie, Made for Each Other/You Can



INTRODUCING:

Anthony Martello

AMY LUM

From his double in Butterfield A, Anthony Martello '10 has single-handedly written, recorded and mixed his first full solo song entitled *Ashes to Ashes*. Hailing from Austin, Texas, Martello has combined his various musical and editing talents to create his latest release. On his track Martello plays the guitar, bass and drums as well as sings the lead and back up vocals. This versatile musician has been involved with music his entire life. As a child he sang in his church choir and continued singing throughout high school by participating in musicals. Martello is a self-taught guitarist and has been playing for about four years. Less than two years ago he picked up the bass and drums for fun.

It was when Martello was “playing” around on the bass that he developed the basis for his song. “I started listening to The Pixies because my friends recommended them to me and I really like their song *Gigantic*,” Martello reminisced. “When I was playing around on my friend’s bass I came up with a tune that was very catchy and reminded me of that song.” That tune became the foundation for *Ashes to Ashes*.

In the span of only one week Martello wrote and recorded the song in his dorm room, which looked like a personal studio when I entered it. There were a variety of instruments and devices used for recording strewn across his side of the room. I noticed that he had only a few pieces of a drum set separated from each other on his floor. When I questioned him about this he explained, “I tried

recording with an entire set at first, but the sound of the bass drum was overpowering the cymbals. So I recorded each part of the set one at a time.” This enabled him to adjust the volume of each part using the Apple program *Garage Band*. He was able to transfer his music to his Mac through his preamp. This device connects his guitar to his computer and allows him to convert sounds and add different effects.

In addition to a bass drum, snare, hi hat and crash cymbal, Martello recorded his vocal, guitar and bass tracks separately. “I had to record a lot of different tracks and do a lot of mixing which took an extremely long time. It also didn’t help that I had to abide by quiet hours and refrain from recording at night.”

When I got down to finally asking him about his song he answered saying it was “a resolution song.” It’s about the “realization that things are never going to be the way you want them to be.” Martello admitted that deciding what to write is not what he enjoys most about recording songs. He has written lyrics in the past but it is not something he often does. While developing the lyrics he knew he didn’t want to write a love song so he just wrote the first thing that came to his mind.

Martello’s song is definitely something you should listen to. First off, it is rare to find an artist who does everything, from playing every instrument to recording, on his own. It is also an enjoyable piece to listen to. Martello’s soft voice mixes well with his upbeat song. Hopefully this recording will not be the only complete solo song from Martello and listeners should give Martello support in hope that he will compose more tracks in the future.

In May of 2006 Snow Patrol released “Eyes Open,” their fourth album in ten years. “Eyes Open” is the second release the band has had on a large label and is as phenomenal as 2004’s platinum “Final Straw”. These albums are successful, at least partially, because of the way in which the band members keep an intimate relationship with the listener, while playing music that is full of vibrant sound. The songs on “Final Straw” are similar lyrically to tracks on “Eyes Open” but lack the musical power that almost all twelve of the new tracks possess.

Although the band was formed in Dundee, none of the members are actually Scottish. Three of the five band mates hail from Northern Ireland. The strong northern Irish accent can be heard clearly in lead singer Gary Lightbody’s charismatic voice. The band is rounded out by back-up vocalist and guitar player Nathan Connolly, Paul Wilson on bass, Tom Simpson on samples and keys, and finally Jonny Quinn on drums. The band was created by Lightbody and McClelland while they were studying together at the University in Dundee. In 1998 they released “Songs for Polar Bears” which was a huge hit across the United Kingdom. Their popularity increased even more when fans found out they put on an incredible live show. Their sophomore album “When it’s all over we still have to clear up” was released in 2001, which helped them to land a deal with one of the UK’s premier record labels, Polydor. “Final Straw” was released under this label, and hit the US charts in 2004. This popular album sold two million copies in the UK and helped Snow Patrol to make their mark on the music scene in the United States. Opening for U2 on their Vertigo Tour further solidified their popularity in the summer of 2005.

After two years of touring, Snow Patrol went to the coast of Ireland to begin writing again. The band members found the isolated cottage they stayed in as a source of inspiration. Lightbody noted to Rolling Stone magazine that he needed to tear himself down in order to write songs he was proud of. “I was unhappy in many ways, and very broken after two-and-a-half years of touring. All my relationships were fucked-up. I wanted to repair myself, so I basically cut myself up and put myself back together again and [that led to] some really dark moments on this record.” The sense of expectation fans had for this album was something members of Snow Patrol had never felt before. Many fans felt as though Snow Patrol had ‘sold-out’ because the overall tone of “Eyes Open” is not as raw as the heart-wrenching love songs of “Final Straw”. However, it makes more sense to describe the most recent album as a more mature version of “Final Straw”. When Snow Patrol was writing songs for “Final Straw” no one really knew who they were. They were the underdogs of the rock world. For this album their position they were in was completely different; everyone was watching to see what they would do next. Lightbody wanted to make sure that he and his band could live up to their reputation.

S N O W PATROL'S N E W S O U N D : EYES OPEN

Album Review
MOLLY ADAMS

“Chasing Cars” is the perfect representation of the self-reflection Lightbody engages in throughout the album. He is able to write and carry out beautiful love songs without being too cheesy or monotonous. This song is so moving because it really emphasizes the notion that everything, from the vocals to the drums on the track, comes straight from the heart. “Chasing Cars” gained enormous popularity when it was used in the season finale of the hit show “Grey’s Anatomy”.

The opening track of the album is titled “You’re All I Have”. Although one might think this is a song of desperation, it is anything but that. The strong drumbeat and captivating back up vocals create a tone that is energetic and a tune



LYON, FRANCE

that is quite positive despite the misleading title. The second track on the album, “Hands Open,” is a song that is quite moving lyrically, but it is easy to tune out the musical arrangement because of this. It is interesting to note that the song “Shut your eyes” seems to have the opposite effect. The lyrics are bland and the music is pretty loud and monotonous as well.

The dark side of the album that was referenced by Lightbody earlier is clearly seen in “Headlights on a dark road”. This song can be best described as a Death Cab For Cutie song that is extremely electrified. If you were not listening to the lyrics, you would have no idea that the song was about pain and anguish. The lead guitar and fast paced drums do not match lyrics like “I pull up thorns from our ripped bodies and let the blood fall in my mouth”.

The best track on the album is “Open your eyes”. It is the only song that showcases Lightbody’s incredible vocal ability. For once a mix of loud drums and heavy guitar in the background does not over power him

Many people like to describe the style of Snow Patrol as simplistic, however, if what they are doing is uncomplicated, they have the right idea. Their entire album is a treat, and although it may be a little different than “Final Straw”, artists can’t be punished for positive changes. Lightbody sums up the general feeling of the album by saying, “There are swaggering bands, bands who are in your face. And then there are bands who get hold of you somewhere else. I think it’s a heart thing, an intimacy thing. Like you know them and they know you. I think we are one of those bands.”

A REGAL COVER FOR “THE QUEEN”

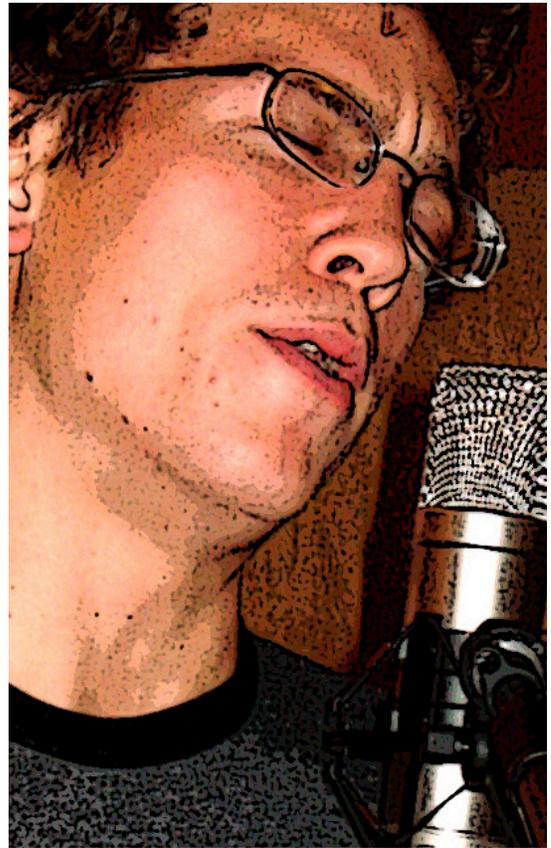
DAN DELALLA

Wesleyan’s twenty first century spin on the King of Rock and Roll, Elvis Presley, has left little to be desired. The Queen easily combines some hipster motifs of today with the timeless 1970s style of Las Vegas Elvis Presley. This gritty combination enables the true spirit of Elvis to connect with his next generation of fans. The Queen’s first single covers JXL’s remix of A Little Less Conversation by Elvis Presley. Dan Bloom does a superb job with the original lyrics as well as rocking this difficult vocal solo. The King’s original version of A Little Less Conversation has gone through a remarkable transformation and been able to adapt to the new musical styles, all while remaining unique and original in its own right. This new creation is able to stand on its own as a new artistic piece of music, yet has not forgotten its

distinguished and complicated background. The Queen makes the clever play on words in this cover version, and that ironic motif plays out thoroughly in the music video. The video complimented the originality of the cover and added dramatically to the overall quality of its presentation. This video catalogue of The Queen’s imitation of Wesleyan students and their activities blended together nicely with the Elvis Presley look from the 1970s. The Queen’s totally outrageous antics and behavior mesh with this new sound and the original dance moves left behind by the King himself; thus leaving audiences entertained, perplexed, and of course wanting much, much more.

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