

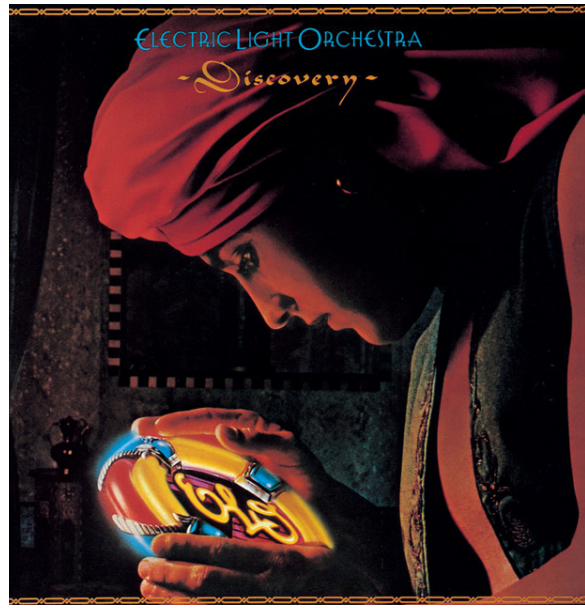
QUEER

Disrupting the Status Quo



DISCOGRAPHY DEEP DIVE

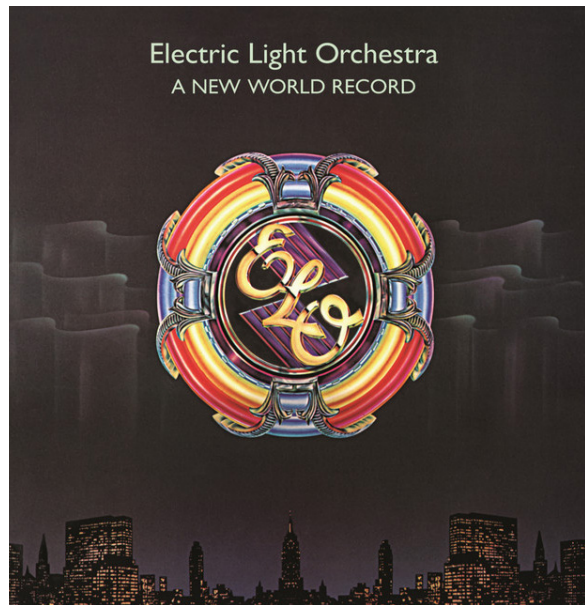
NATALIE



1

FAVORITE TRACKS:
'LAST TRAIN TO LONDON,'
'SHINE A LITTLE LOVE'

“This is such a killer album through and through. There’s not a bad song.”



2

FAVORITE TRACKS:
'LIVIN' THING,' 'DO YA'

“Outside of Mr. Blue Sky, this was my introduction to ELO. So many of these songs live rent free in my head.”



3

FAVORITE TRACKS:
'FOUR LITTLE DIAMONDS,'
'DANGER AHEAD'

“When I saw how long this album was, I dreaded listening to it. I was genuinely shocked by the number of songs that I loved on first listen. I love the concept of the album, and I appreciate the divergence from the original ELO sound which I didn’t expect.”

REAGAN



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'LAST TRAIN TO LONDON,' 'WISHING'

“Perfect album from start to finish, not a skippable song.”



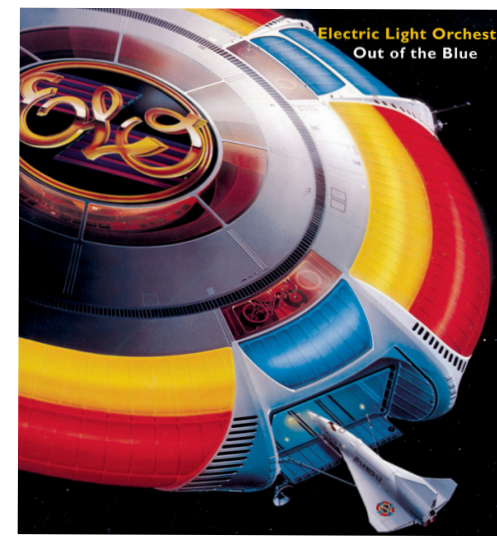
FAVORITE TRACKS:
'STARLIGHT,' 'NIGHT IN THE CITY'

“Almost a perfect album. I’m not too crazy about side 4. If that had been omitted, it’d be absolutely perfect.”



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'NOBODY'S CHILD,' 'CAN'T GET IT OUT OF MY HEAD'

“I’m obsessed with the storyline of someone escaping their mundane life through dreams.”



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'TURN TO STONE,' 'SWEET TALKIN' WOMAN'

“To be the first album most people think of when someone mentions ELO, there were a decent number of songs I could take or leave. However, the high points of this album really shine.”



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'NOBODY'S CHILD,' 'CAN'T GET IT OUT OF MY HEAD'

“I really like how the vibe and tempo changes up from song to song but there’s still fluid movement throughout the album.”



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'STRANGE MAGIC,' 'EVIL WOMAN'

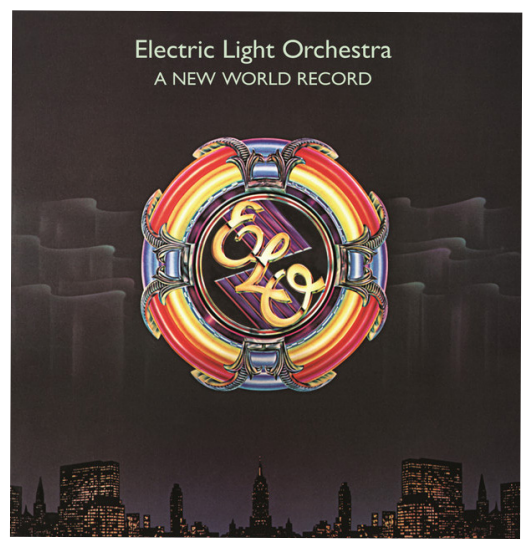
“Similar to *Out of the Blue*, it’s a good album overall, but ‘Strange Magic’ and ‘Evil Woman’ clearly stand out against the other songs in my opinion.”



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'HERE IS THE NEWS,' 'YOURS TRULY, 2095'

“I like the futuristic feel and the concept of the album, but in execution it isn’t my favorite of their work.”

4



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'SO FINE,' 'ROCKARIA!'

“Lynne was really starting to find his footing here and hone in on the ELO sound. Overall the album is good but not perfect.”

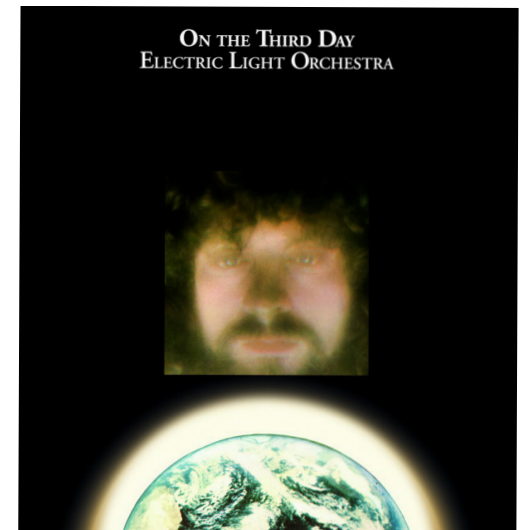
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FAVORITE TRACKS:
'TWILIGHT,' 'HOLD ON TIGHT'

“This is their first album chronologically that starts to show the strings taking a backseat for heavier synthesizer use but it has one of my favorite ELO songs on it.”

6



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'BLUEBIRD IS DEAD,' 'SHOWDOWN'

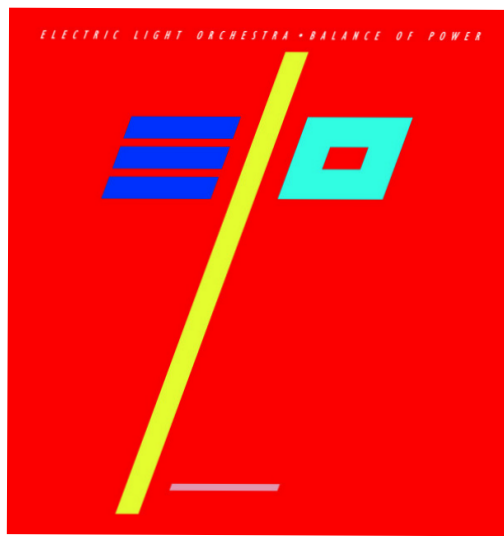
“This is the first album that had Jeff Lynne as the principal songwriter. The songs obviously show that.”

7



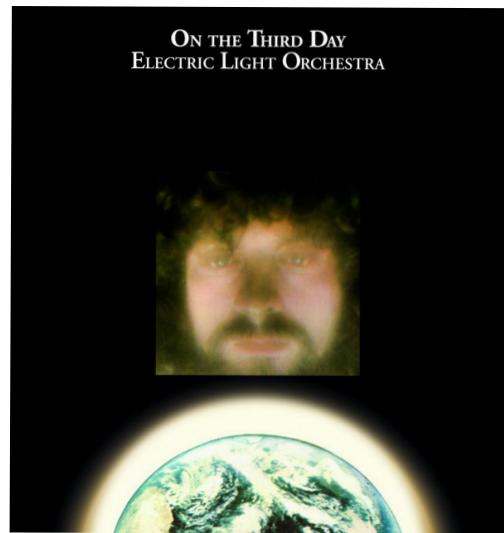
FAVORITE TRACKS:
'TAKE ME ON AND ON,' 'BLUEBIRD'

“I think it’s funny how the group subtly poked towards the recent controversy stirred up by the PMRC with the album title and backmasking. Synths are heavily used which is reflective of the time but overall it’s not a bad album.”



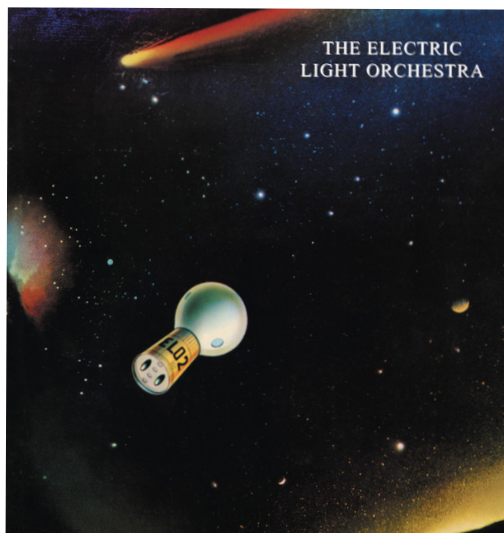
FAVORITE TRACKS:
'CALLING AMERICA,' 'GETTING TO THE POINT'

"This album wasn't life-changing but I definitely found myself getting caught up in and humming along with some of the songs."



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'SHOWDOWN,' 'MA MA MA BELLE'

"This was the first ELO album chronologically that I didn't expressly dislike. There's still a lot of room for growth, but I actually enjoyed some of the songs."



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'IN OLD ENGLAND TOWN,' 'ROLL OVER BEETHOVEN'

"I would like to note that picking favorite songs from this album was really picking the most tolerable songs. Why are we dragging every song out for so long? Please, let's wrap it up."



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'1ST MOVEMENT,' 'MANHATTAN RUMBLE'

"This album is interesting, but I definitely wouldn't call it appealing."

8

9

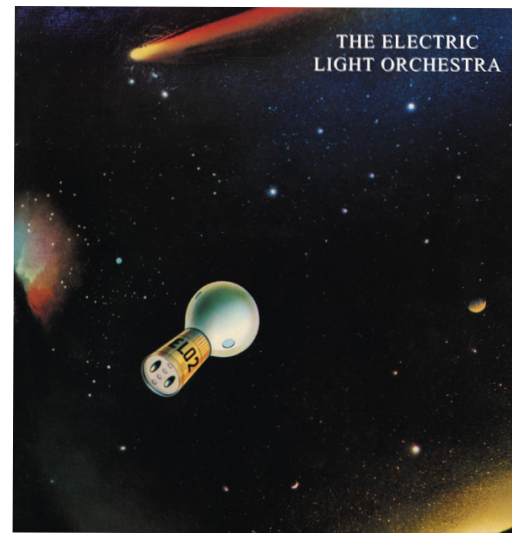
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11



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'EVIL WOMAN,' 'STRANGE MAGIC'

"Besides the two hits that are classic ELO songs, I didn't think the album was as cohesive."



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'ROLL OVER BEETHOVEN,' 'MAMA'

"This album is 41 minutes with only 5 tunes on it. I love the Chuck Berry cover but am quite bored by the rest of the album."



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'NELLIE TAKES HER BOW,' 'MR. RADIO'

"This album makes me wonder if ELO would've been as successful if Roy Wood had not left the group to start Wizard. The Lynne tunes are the highlights of the album. The others... not so much."



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'SO SERIOUS,' 'GETTING TO THE POINT'

"Jeff had already checked out by this point and it shows within their songs and in the writing. This is my least favorite album because it feels like Lynne had lost his passion for ELO."

Reviews

The Lion The Beast The Beat

Grace Potter & The Nocturnals

by Natalie Stagers



Grace Potter is one of my favorite female vocalists of all time. Her ability to seamlessly shift from soft, gentle vocals in her head voice to powerfully moving vocals in her chest voice is something I have always admired and wanted to improve about my own vocal technique. In the midst of recording this album, Potter began to feel stifled by the rules and pressure of the studio and chose to halt the project. Hitting the road, she spent a month driving through the wilderness in an effort to reconnect with herself, nature and her innate songwriting ability.

This album manages to feel cohesive while juggling different dynamics and musical styles. The electric, driving opener flows into the first single, "Never Go Back," which features a combination of raw, bluesy guitar licks and keys that add an atmospheric, ambient feel to the track. In many ways, I see this album as Potter processing existential questions that she doesn't have answers to and allowing us to join her on the ride.

"Parachute Heart" wrestles with something that nearly everyone has experienced: jumping headfirst into a "skydive love affair" that was "doomed from the very start." With vivid imagery and vocals that make you feel as if you're floating, this is one of the most moving songs on the album in my opinion. Not to mention, it's immediately followed by "Stars," a heartbreaking ballad about losing a loved one. This whole song is emotional, but the build up to the final minute, resulting in a desperate plea for understanding will always bring tears to my eyes. "Timekeeper" is one of my favorite tracks because it really displays how much control Potter has over her voice. She effortlessly shifts from ethereal, airy vocals to brazenly bellowing and back again. The lyrics of this song also resonate with me, particularly, "I wish I could start over again. I'm too young to be feeling this way." She takes these fears and emotions that most people cover up and try to ignore and whittles them down into digestible, relatable, moving lyrics.

"Turntable" cleverly opens and closes with the crackle and pop of setting a needle into a groove. Comparing herself to a record, Potter seductively and wittily captures the exhilarating feeling of being with someone. "Keepsake" is another favorite of mine, chronicling a relationship where neither party is necessarily happy but both are reluctant to give up ("I'll never be the one to say we're through/But if you play the game, I'm gonna play the fool"). The grit and emotion in Potter's voice is vividly on display, expressing the frustration of feeling unwanted.

With "One Heart Missing," the beautiful imagery, guttingly vulnerable lyrics and emotionally intense vocals return. After a short guitar break, Potter nearly screams, "I will follow you no matter where you run/I'm holding all the cards, there's only one." This album combines elements of rock, blues and alternative to create a starkly unique collection of songs. I've always adored Potter's voice, but as I've gotten older I've come to seriously respect her songwriting as well. Her lyrics are poetic but straightforward, often discussing topics that most people are too afraid to talk about. From the steady but groovy rhythm section to Potter's electrifying vocals to the atmospheric background to the driving guitar riffs, it's difficult for me to find something that I don't love about this album.

Gish

The Smashing Pumpkins

by Natalie Stagers



While *Siamese Dream* and *Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness* are both killer records, their popularity and acclaim overshadows The Smashing Pumpkins' debut, *Gish*. Before the release of *Siamese Dream* in 1993 which skyrocketed The Smashing Pumpkins' notoriety, *Gish* was largely overlooked by bigger publications, peaking at only 195 on the Billboard 200 in the year it was released, 1991. *Gish* is also heavily overshadowed by Nirvana's *Nevermind*, an album that was released later in the same year and produced by the same person who produced *Gish*, Butch Vig. Prior to *Gish*, Vig had largely worked with small indie bands who had very limited budgets and couldn't spend more than a few days in the studio. Billy Corgan, however, was dedicated to perfecting the production, guitar tone and overall texture of the songs, and the album ended up requiring 30 working days before Corgan was satisfied.

While this album isn't as polished as their later releases, I find it to be their most raw and visceral. It feels unprocessed in a good way, relying on instinctive decisions rather than intellectual, overthought chord progressions and guitar leads. This aspect especially shines on "Bury Me" with erratic and totally unpredictable guitar work. It's difficult to choose a favorite song from this album because each song is uniquely interesting and brings something special to the table. "Siva" masterfully uses a wide dynamic range to create a sense of tension and build up before going totally off the chain. "Rhinoceros," which is the longest song on the album clocking in at six and a half minutes, brings the volume down and uses layered vocals to create an almost psychedelic, meditative feel to the record. The first half of the song lulls you into a false sense of tranquility just to lay down one of the hardest Smashing Pumpkins guitar leads over three minutes into the song. Corgan has stated that "Rhinoceros" was written while he was strung out which is likely partially responsible for the psychedelic nature of this track. The only song on this album that doesn't really draw me in is the closer, "Daydream." It is distinctly different from the rest of the album and feels like it should have just been left off.

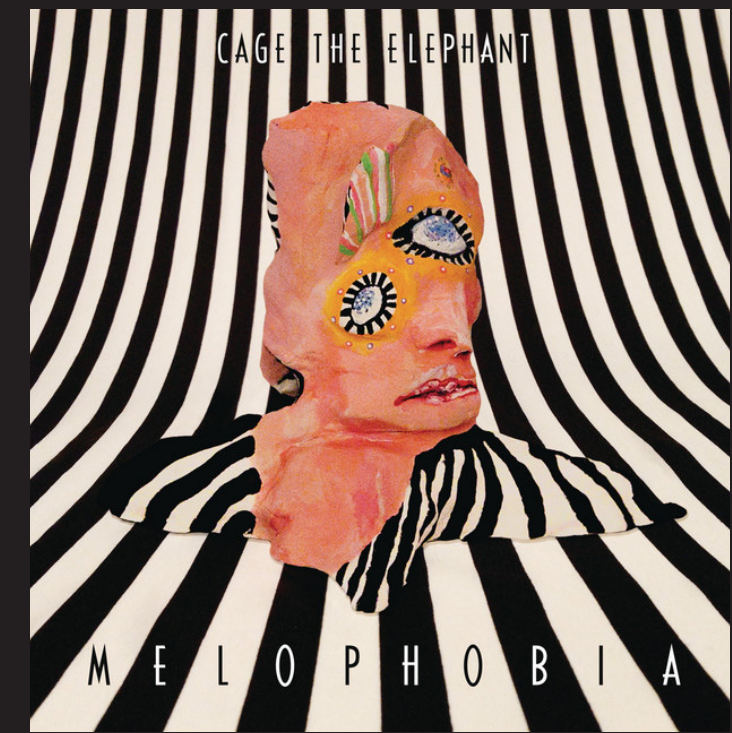
While many people disregard *Gish*, seeing it as less than their later work, I both value the album as a stepping stone to what followed it and as its own unique project. I had listened to other songs here and there, but *Gish* was the first Smashing Pumpkins album that I listened to front to back and it will always hold a special place in my heart due to that. I've been casually looking for a copy of it ever since I got a record player a little over a year ago, and recently on a trip to Oxford, I found a remastered release and almost screamed. I'd looked in God only knows how many record stores and never found a copy, even a used one, and here I was holding a brand new, remastered version.

Many of the things that I value about *Gish* (the obscure lyrics, sudden changes in dynamics and shocking moments of vulnerability) are things they expanded on in future albums. I am by no means saying that *Siamese Dream* or *Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness* are surpassed by *Gish*, but there is something unique about this debut album. For anyone who has only listened to later material from Smashing Pumpkins, I'd heavily encourage you to give *Gish* a listen to see where this revolutionary band's journey began.

Melophobia

Cage the Elephant

by Natalie Stagers



Between the success of their self-titled debut and their second release *Thank You, Happy Birthday*, Cage the Elephant spent nearly five solid years touring. Naturally, after half a decade without a break, they decided to take some time off and regroup. When they reconvened in 2012 to begin working on their third album, they realized that their previously homogenous vision of what direction the band was headed in had become muddled. With time to explore solo projects, they had each started to go in different directions musically. They decided to rent a cabin in Tennessee so that they had a neutral space to brainstorm and discuss how they were going to format the album.

During their time at the cabin, they chose to abstain from listening to new music in an attempt to have a clean palette while curating the record. Obviously, they were still influenced by music they'd heard before, but they wanted to do whatever they could to make a fresh start and create an album that was new and groundbreaking, distinctly different from what came before it. Lead vocalist Matt Shultz noted that he wanted the album to be somewhat introspective, including mellow and subtle songs with deep meaning. The rest of the band, however, wanted to make something electric, filled with energy and vivacity. Rather than trying to pick and choose, they decided to blend these elements, creating the paradoxical feel that is evident in the drastic shifts in dynamic and feel throughout the album.

"There's this element of playfulness and swagger that was absent on our last record," Shultz said.

The title of this album is so clever because, whether or not it was intentional, it seems to have a double meaning. Shultz has said that they titled it *Melophobia* (meaning "fear of music") because of the vulnerability that comes with creating a work of art and the simultaneous desire and fear of honestly communicating through music. I have also interpreted the title as an analogy for how the band avoided listening to new music while creating the album to avoid external influence, which can be thought of as "fearing" music, or at least the effect it may have on you.

I love the chaotic nature of this album. I remember that the first time I listened to it, I thought to myself, "Wow. I genuinely can't predict what's coming next." I've listened to songs from this album while experiencing virtually every emotion imaginable because each song is different from the last. When I'm feeling chaotic and like life is spinning out of control, "Teeth" and "Spiderhead" are my go to songs because they embody a sense of insanity. "Halo" and "Hypocrite" are so cathartic to sing along with when someone has stabbed you in the back. When I get stuck in my head, wondering what the future will be like and if everything will work out, "Telescope" finds a way to reel those thoughts in. Of all songs to close the album with, "Cigarette Daydreams" ends it on an extremely high note, with the perfect combination of teenage nostalgia, confusion and fear of vulnerability. This album may seem disorderly, but it is undeniably intentional and I love the sense of anarchy it introduces to Cage the Elephant's sound.

Music is subjective and we can all agree to disagree.

My opinion doesn't determine if an album is bad or not.

*Metropolis Pt. 2:
Scenes From a
Memory (1999)*
Dream Theater

★★★★☆

This is the first official concept album that I've listened to as a part of Queue and I have to say, I'm not disappointed. I've never been a huge Dream Theater fan since a friend of mine showed them to me when I was in high school. I respect the members, especially Mike Portnoy as a fellow drummer, but their style of prog has never done it for me. Something about the keyboard parts turn me off of their overall sound. I do have to say that the story throughout the album is incredibly interesting and one of the reasons that I continued to listen to the album. I can only listen to so much of Dream Theater at one time and I think I've gotten my fill for the next few years.

*Yoshimi Battles
the Pink Robots (2002)*
Flaming Lips

★★★☆☆

The thing that intrigues me about this album the most is the combination of different layers. In "Ego Tripping at the Gates of Hell," you hear a drum machine, synth strings, acoustic guitar and a flute. Who would've thought all of those sounds belonged together? Somehow they meld it together into a wonderfully eccentric sonic voyage. I don't think the lyrics have aged well, and it was obviously created in the early 2000s.

*A Sailor's Guide
to Earth (2016)*
Sturgill Simpson

★★★★☆

I listened to the first two tracks and thought to myself, "Here's a sad, slow country album that I have to get through somehow..." I was proved wrong when the third track started and the Stax-inspired horns hit me like a truck. I may be alone in this thought but "Sea Stories" reminded me a lot of "Acid Country" by Tim Wilson. I was caught off guard by the Nirvana cover. I try not to read too much about the albums while listening to them so his version of "In Bloom" surprised me, in a good way. I think it's one of the best re-conceptualizations of a song that totally changes the genre but keeps the meaning of the song the same.

Fool 2 Tha Game (2022)
Volcano

★☆☆☆☆

Now, I know a reader sent in this suggestion purely to mess with me. I know I'm not the most well-versed in a lot of genres that all of you suggest but I'm just going to give my knee jerk opinion. I honestly thought this album was a little corny. If Fred Armisen was doing an SNL skit on what encapsulates hard core metal, this is what he would come up with.

Trouble (2004)
Ray LaMontagne

★★☆☆☆

This album triggers an immediate reaction in my brain that brings me back to my first radio job at WMSV where we probably played Ray LaMontagne four times a day. I couldn't stand his music back then and I can't stand it now. I like to think of this genre and type of music as a combination of Bob Dylan and the "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" effect. By track two, I felt like I had been listening to it for forty-five minutes and was disappointed that I had 35 minutes left to go. Thanks to albums like this, we ended up with Mumford and Sons.

Cool World (2024)
Chat Pile

★★★★☆

Uh oh. As soon as I saw that I couldn't read the band's name on the album cover, I knew I was in for a wild ride. The band showed dynamics and versatility which I think is the biggest criticism I have with bands that fall under the "harder metal" umbrella. Lead singer Raygun Busch can switch from death growling to sprechgesang when it's called for and when necessary.

Serene Demon (2025)
Art d'Ecco

★★★★☆

d'Ecco was my new artist of the month a few months ago and his newest album was released a few weeks ago. I've been looking forward to it since I heard the single "The Traveler," which was also my introduction to him. He has reinvented himself this time, taking on a similar persona that is reflective of Bowie's "Thin White Duke." It's a contrast from his earlier albums which incorporated a more glam sound. This mysterious and almost seductive arrangement and lyrical endeavor is a peak for him and I can't wait to hear what is in store for this artist.

Minute by Minute (1978)
Doobie Brothers

★★★★☆

A few days before I sat down to write this, I watched the HBO documentary about the "Yacht Rock" genre. This album is the creative and commercial pinnacle of that genre and moment in time. This is honestly one of my favorite albums of all time. McDonald's masterful songwriting is evident, including the McDonald-Loggins track, "What a Fool Believes." Even though the McDonald era of smooth, Fender Rhodes sounding tracks was in full effect, that old Doobie sound is still there. With Patrick Simmons sharing lead vocal duties with McDonald, there's a lot of depth to this album. I don't think it would be fair to label it as a true "Yacht Rock" album but more as a fantastic album to come out of the late '70s.

Rashida (1973)
John Lucien

★★★★☆

This is a beautifully arranged album. My favorite moments are the lush harmonies that are accompanied simplistically by an acoustic guitar. I couldn't find much about the artist but this album has to be a highlight of his career. It'd be hard to beat the simple yet effective arranging of vocals.

GO:OD AM (2015)
Mac Miller

★★★★☆

After being urged by Natalie to listen to Mac, I sat down to listen to this one. I was genuinely impressed. I had never intended to listen to his work before. I had either been in the car with someone while a song of his played in the background or come across clips of his Tiny Desk concert. I don't know if this is considered a "concept album" but there is the obvious recurring theme of time, making a name for yourself and being the best at what you do. There was one line that really hit me because of what happened to Mac. Even as someone who doesn't have an emotional connection to this particular artist, it's heavy: "Cause I'm speedin' with a blindfold on and won't be long 'til they watching me crash / And they don't wanna see that / They don't want me to OD and have to talk to my mother / Telling her they could have done more to help me / And she'll be crying saying that she'll do anything to have me back."

Frailty (2021)
Jane Remover

★★☆☆☆

This is quite an odd collection of genres. I can't even begin to describe it. I want to try and pin a genre on this album but the words are escaping me. The best description I can think of is it's like if an emo fan dropped MDMA and went to a rave.

East My Love (2024)
Current Joys

★★★★☆

God, this is a depressing album. I'm currently listening to these last reviews at 4:00 a.m. and these songs make me want to take my headphones off and stare at the ceiling.

Baby (2013)
Born Without Bones

★★★★☆

Hold up. I found myself disappointed at the beginning of the first track, thinking, "Great... another midwest emo album." As soon as the rest of the band came in, I started nodding along. They remind me a bit of Green Day if Billie Joe could actually sing and play guitar. "Stone" is one of the best songs I've heard in the last 15 years.

Facelift (1990)
Alice In Chains

★★★★☆

LET'S GOO!!!! Man, all of the AIC songs I've heard on the radio kick ass and I've been meaning to listen to this whole album for months. Layne's voice makes me want to punch a hole in the wall. He gives Cornell a run for his money for the greatest grunge vocalist. Jerry Cantrell doesn't get the credit he deserves as a creative force of the time and region. Having "Man In the Box" as the second song on your DEBUT album is absolutely insane. I know I said when reviewing Smashing Pumpkins last issue that I'm not a grunge fan but when this album is spinning, I'm putting on my flannel.

NEW ARTISTS

The Retrograde



by Natalie Staggers

In a society that looks to horoscopes and moon phases to determine what their upcoming week will look like, “The Retrograde” is a pretty kickass name for a rock n’ roll band that’s trying to pull from past influences and create something new. These young Tallahasseeans released their first full album, *That’s The Spirit*, in June of 2024 and it’s full of fresh, invigorating, electric riffs and captivating hooks that keep you wanting more. Kicking off with an immediately interesting guitar lick and drum groove, this album never feels stagnant or boring. Each track commands your full attention, but the middle section of the album (“If 6 Was 4,” “Come Around,” and “Dirty Daisy”) stands out to me. The end of “Closer To Somewhere” blends perfectly into the beginning of “If 6 Was 4” which then seamlessly shifts between time signatures, keeping the listener

guessing. “Come Around” comes in right behind it with unbridled energy, demanding an audience. “Dirty Daisy” refuses to falter, changing energy and tempo throughout to keep you engaged. I’ve heard lots of smaller bands trying to imitate the classics that have come up with nothing but lifeless, unimaginative, poorly-executed replicas that bring nothing new to the table. The Retrograde is different. As writer-columnist Rob Lucchesi wittily stated, “You Guys Aren’t Ready for The Retrograde Yet... But Your Kids Are Gonna Love ‘Em!”

Chloé Antoniotti



by Natalie Staggers

Chloé Antoniotti fell in love with the piano at a young age, as she would frequently listen to her mother and grandfather tickle the ivories. Hayao Miyazaki, the chairman of Studio Ghibli, heavily influenced her, and she fell so in love with his music that she decided to begin teaching herself piano at only 11 years old. Through her blending of piano and synthesizers, she creates music that is reminiscent of sitting inside a warm coffee shop with a cappuccino in hand while looking out to a bustling street of people traveling under a cloudy, gray sky. The cover art for her first and second singles “Jasmin” and “Mimosa” features a similar vibe to this, as she sits behind a piano with her cat curled up in her lap and a piping hot cup of tea sitting on the table next to her. She released her first EP, *Bouquet*, in May 2024 and added “one more flower” to it in July. The cover art for the newer version of the EP is similar to that of the old one, but the color scheme is different, and I see that as reflective of the new sound this additional song has. While the other songs on the EP use synthesizers as a sort of background element and allow the piano to be the driving instrument, “Iris” emphasizes the use of synth, creating a different sound. This song builds dynamically, creating a sense of tension and anticipation before dropping into a beautiful piano outro. It’s only the beginning of this composer’s career, and I’m excited to see where the future takes her.

Miami Nights 1984



by Reagan Bussey

Both of my new artists for the month are inspired by the ‘80s but this first one is my favorite. Miami Nights 1984 is the passion project of Michael Glover from Canada. He’s been releasing this project since 2010 and everything I’ve heard has been fantastic. I imagine that I’m going to see Don Johnson rolling down the street over the course of their songs. MN1984’s newest release (*Gunblaze Assault*) is a campy take on early shoot ‘em up games, down to using the old Sony box art as the album art and the first track being named “Start Screen.” It’s the perfect album to satisfy that urge of nostalgia but it’s also a fantastic work from this electronic artist.

TWRP



by Reagan Bussey

This is a little embarrassing to admit but I discovered this band through my Game Grumps binge a few weeks ago when Dan mentioned their collaboration with this group. I was curious and immediately went to Spotify to hear their work. They are another ‘80s inspired electronic band from Canada. Their blend of electronic synths and funk-inspired grooves, especially the bass lines, got me hooked on what they’re putting down. What intrigued me about this band the most is that their identities and origins are unknown. Each member goes by a stage name and wears costumes/masks along with fabricating backstories to further play the part that they’re a galactic band that has landed on Earth to fuel the ever present ‘80s resurgence.



Tuesday - Saturday 11-6



@scootersrecords

New and used records - posters - speakers
and turntables

Queue Crossword #1

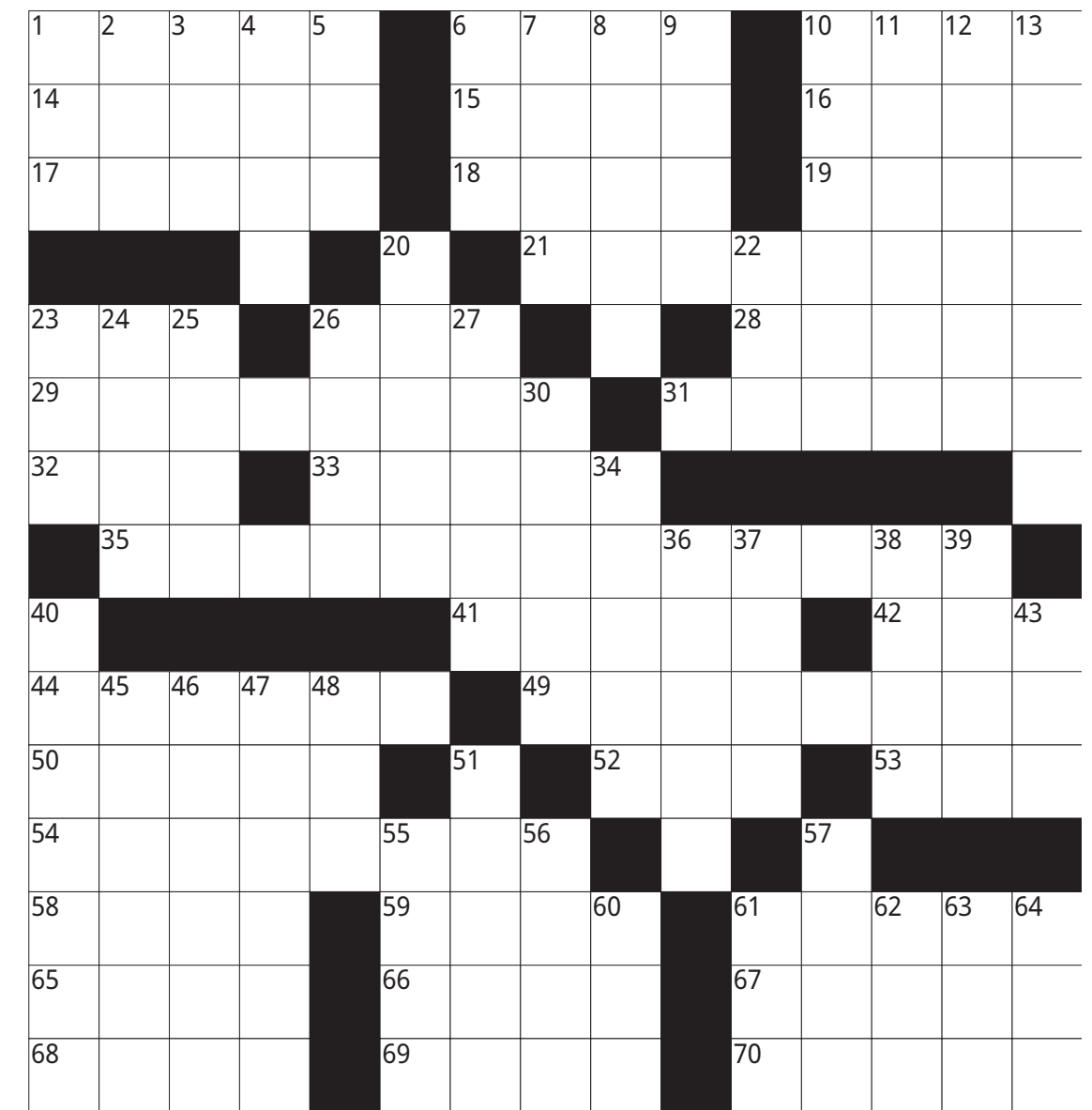
Reagan Bussey

ACROSS

- 1 "Everything" order on a hot dog, with "the"
- 6 October birthstone
- 10 Music producer, ___ Lange.
- 14 American cable television channel devoted to music-related programming.
- 15 Type of disco dancer
- 16 "In the Valley of ___": 2007 Tommy Lee Jones film
- 17 Delaware's capital
- 18 Classic game console, for short
- 19 "The Bookseller of Kabul" author Seierstad
- 21 Doesn't bring a plus-one
- 23 French "Inc."
- 26 Sting hit, "I don't take coffee, I take __, my dear.."
- 28 Legislative assemblies
- 29 Suggestion made with a wink and a nudge
- 31 Aries, astrologically
- 32 Day-___ paint
- 33 ___ Rose (Catherine O'Hara's role on "Schitt's Creek")
- 35 1 across, 29 across, 70 across, 13 down, 50 across, 40 down hint to the discography of this British band.
- 41 ___ Walker (booze brand)
- 42 Video game series with installments such as "Modern Warfare" and "Black Ops"
- 44 Nigerian city of 3.5+ million
- 49 Wild West dueling distance
- 50 Indy 500 and Daytona 500
- 52 Radical '60s org.
- 53 Rock-___ (jukebox brand)
- 54 Infamous Chicago bootlegger
- 58 Net lining in a woman's hat
- 59 Les Claypool, Bootsy Collins, and Benjamin Orr have this in common.
- 61 Behavioral pattern
- 65 Use a surgical beam
- 66 "Not if ___ help it!"
- 67 Herb Alpert and the Tijuana....
- 68 Retired, as a prof.
- 69 Black & Decker rival
- 70 Wagner work

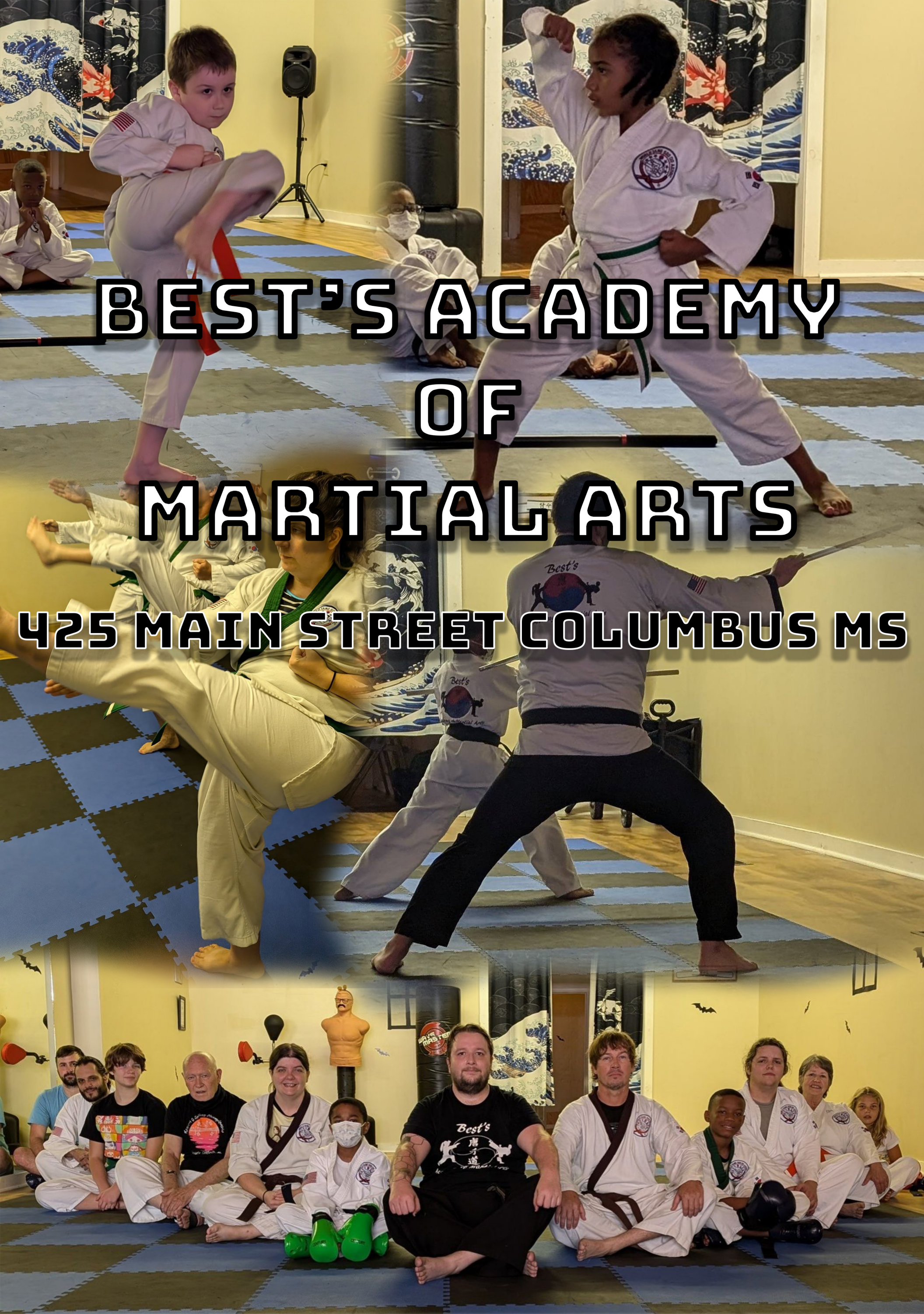
DOWN

- 1 Roll of bills
- 2 Palindromic kitchenware brand
- 3 Contagious virus that causes infections of the respiratory tract.
- 4 "Hooked on Classics" label
- 5 The Russian abbreviation for their Foreign Intelligence Service.
- 6 Veterans, as of rap's golden age
- 7 Early Atari video game
- 8 Album by the 5th Dimension, "The ___ Aquarius"
- 9 Misplace
- 10 One of numerous childhood spots?
- 11 Belfast's province
- 12 River of Fairbanks
- 13 1997 Michael Douglas film
- 20 Comic book character who was introduced in 'The Amazing Spider-Man' #300
- 22 Planet shape: Abbr.
- 23 Smoke, for short
- 24 "To Live and Die ___" (1985 film)
- 25 Organic compound
- 26 China-based online marketplace
- 27 "Revenge is ___ best served cold"
- 30 Planetary path
- 34 Lew who was married to Ginger Rogers
- 36 Kind of session
- 37 "Stee-ri-ke!" callers
- 38 ___ Domani: Italian wine brand
- 39 Fielding of "The Great British Bake Off"
- 40 Backup singer with Smokey Robinson
- 43 Org. that counts Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Rashida Tlaib among its members
- 45 Biblical prophet on a mount
- 46 Point the finger at
- 47 Blackjack table figure
- 48 Nile reptile
- 51 Band who had the 1979 hit, "My Sharona"
- 55 Kimono sashes
- 56 Morales of "NYPD Blue"
- 57 50-and-over org.
- 60 NBC show since 1975
- 61 "The Sopranos" and "Curb Your Enthusiasm" network
- 62 Sweetie, in slang
- 63 Neighbor of Leb.
- 64 Airport screening org.



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The Man Who Shot the '70s



by Reagan Bussey

You may not know the name Mick Rock but you know his photos. Rock was one of the most prolific photographers in terms of music photography. One of his most famous works is the cover of Queen's second studio album, *Queen II*, which then inspired the opening of their "Bohemian Rhapsody" music video.

Born Michael Smith in London, England on November 21, 1948, not much is known about his early life but his start in the music scene and as a photographer came by happenstance. During his time at the University of Cambridge, he picked up a friend's camera and started photographing the local rock scene. Just one aspect of his career is album artwork. His first major album cover photography gig was for Syd Barrett's solo debut album in 1968, *The Madcap Laughs*. He had met Barrett during his time at Cambridge and they became friends.

To be honest, there's not much information about Rock besides interviews he did later in life but they mainly focus on his relationship with David Bowie. Rock was credited for album artwork for Bowie's 1969 album, *David Bowie*, but sources say that he did not meet Bowie until 1972 when he was hired to write an article on him and take a few photos. The two began a flourishing friendship and partnership that lasted for several years. Rock was Bowie's official photographer and videographer, taking not just concert photography but candid photos in their travels too, which are my personal favorites. He directed Bowie's music video for "Rebel Rebel." Rock was introduced to Lou Reed and Iggy Pop of the Stooges through his friendship with Bowie as he was producing both Reed's and the Stooges' albums, *Transformer* and *Raw Power*, respectively. Both of these albums have iconic covers that were taken by Mick Rock.

Mick Rock then became acquainted with Freddie Mercury of Queen during a photoshoot in 1974. They never became as close as he did with David Bowie but as a result of his relationship with Queen, he produced one of the most recognizable album covers of the 1970s. We've all seen the beginning of the "Bohemian Rhapsody" music video recreated and parodied over the years. Queen even recreated it for the video of their 1986 single, "One Vision." Rock got another gig with Queen, shooting the album cover for their 1974 release, *Sheer Heart Attack*. This was Queen's first breakthrough album both in the US and the UK.

He began to specialize in photo sessions in the 1980s, mostly working with Lou Reed and Steve Harley & Cockney Rebel during the decade. He went on to produce iconic imagery for pop culture icons like Debbie Harry, Madonna, Mötley Crüe, the film cast of *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, Snoop Dogg and Kate Moss.

Not much may be known about the man behind the lens but he's often referred to as "The Man Who Shot the 70s" as that is the title of one of his collections that was published a few years ago. He achieved a decade in music so people like myself could look back on these legends. He often said that "I didn't set out to become a photographer. I just pointed a camera and talked, and that worked." Rock passed away in 2021, but I hope wherever he is, he's reunited with Bowie, Mercury and Barrett, having a few drinks and continually taking photos of these artists that we've come to love and admire.

Daisy Jones & the Six

by Natalie Staggers



If you've never watched the official live video of Fleetwood Mac performing "Silver Springs" and seen the tension between Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham building with the dynamics of the song, I would highly recommend it. Moments like this captured from their performances are what was the initial inspiration for Daisy Jones & The Six.

As an avid fan of music documentaries, Fleetwood Mac and everything from the '70s, when I heard about Daisy Jones & The Six I knew I had to watch it immediately. My dad and I watched all ten hour-long episodes in one weekend because anytime he tried to take a break, I begged to watch one more episode. Since then, I've rewatched it multiple times, and it just gets better with each watch.

The show is an adaptation of Taylor Jenkins Reid's novel which is loosely based on Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham's tumultuous relationship and the development of their Grammy Award winning album *Rumours*. Though it's only meant to be inspired by Fleetwood Mac and not a direct representation of their history, Nicks made an Instagram post shortly after the show was released, saying, "It brought back memories that made me feel like a ghost watching my own story."

I don't want to spoil the plot for anyone who plans to watch it, but I will give you a brief summary of what the show is about, how it connects to real-life things that occurred in the lives of members of Fleetwood Mac and how the overall production and execution of the show is effective enough to justify multiple rewatches. After that, it's up to you to determine if it's worth dedicating a couple days (or if you're determined, one day) to bingeing it.

First and foremost, who do the characters in the show represent? Frontmen Daisy Jones and Billy Dunne are naturally representative of Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham, respectively. Keyboardist Karen Sirko is meant to represent Christine McVie, and guitarist Graham Dunne is supposed to be John McVie. During the recording of *Rumours*, Christine and John McVie were in the process of getting divorced. This is reflected by the complicated relationship that Karen and Graham have throughout the course of the show. Nicks and Buckingham had a complex, disorderly and often extremely toxic relationship which is reflected through the confusing and volatile dynamic that Daisy and Billy share. Daisy's appearance is very similar to how Nicks presents herself—big and bold curly hair, jewelry typically including stars and moons, and flowy shawls that make her larger than life.

We follow the band's development from playing to single-digit crowds in Pittsburgh to becoming one of the biggest bands in the world. As they gain fame and tension between bandmates increases, we see rock n' roll start to rear its ugly head with sex and drugs driving rifts between members of the band and destroying their personal lives. The first song that Daisy and Billy write together is "Look At Us Now (Honeycomb)" which was originally about Billy's guilt surrounding his marriage but eventually developed into a song about how good things can become bad. This foreshadows the path ahead of the band and also serves as an analogy for Fleetwood Mac's hit song "Landslide" that delves into the fear of being a failure and ruining the life you've built.

As Billy and Daisy's relationship develops, their songs become more targeted, and by the end they're practically writing letters to each other. This is very similar to Nicks and Buckingham's dynamic which involved many songs imbued with emotions surrounding their breakup, namely "Dreams," "Go Your Own Way" and "Silver Springs" which are all from *Rumours*.

I don't want to get too deep into the correlations between The Six and Fleetwood Mac for fear of spoiling important plot points, but if you love Fleetwood Mac, drama, good music, tension or all of the above, Daisy Jones & The Six is definitely worth the watch. You can also listen to their album *AURORA* on any streaming platform which I would highly recommend even if you don't watch the show.

Daisy Jones & The Six is special because every aspect of it is exceptionally executed. Not only is the storyline interesting and engaging, but the character development and depth allows you to invest yourself in the lives of the bandmates. There are many moving parts and dynamics to keep up with and the actors really get into their roles, making them easy to connect with. The cinematography emphasizes the struggles that characters deal with, and the music is both remarkable and similar to the style of Fleetwood Mac. The directors of the show hired numerous songwriters to curate the album, including Blake Mills, Phoebe Bridgers, Marcus Mumford, Jackson Browne, Jason Boesel and Taylor Goldsmith. They came together to create songs that have depth and are reminiscent of '70s pop rock, writing catchy hooks that are impossible to get out of your head. Some of my favorites from the album include "Let Me Down Easy," "Aurora," "Look At Us Now (Honeycomb)" and "Kill You To Try." All in all, I think Daisy Jones & The Six is well worth the watch, and if you don't believe me, take one hour to watch the first episode and see if you don't get hooked.



The Sound Of Mississippi

by Reagan Bussey

I grew up in a household that had a significant emphasis on music, whether it was listening to it or playing it. My dad was in a band in the early 2000s and the majority of their performances were at a shack across the highway from our house. I remember being three years old running around this old house as the band played. A variety of people there taught me how to play pool, throw darts, and vandalize walls with spray paint.

Those tall PV 215s (which I have inherited since then) always caught my attention with the striking logo across the front of them. My dad owned several Peavey products and that love extended into other members of my family. The picture to the left is a Peavey DeltaBlues 210 that belonged to my grandfather. I never gave a second thought to the Peavey brand. I always thought it was just like Fender or Marshall. I had no clue that those speakers were designed and manufactured just a few hundred miles away from where I was standing.

My mother grew up in Meridian, Mississippi where Peavey Electronics was founded and still operates. I visited her family many times over my childhood and somehow I missed the big yellow building as we were driving around town. It took until I was a freshman in college at Mississippi State University to realize that Peavey was in Mississippi. I had been handed a copy of my part to the MSU fight song “Hail State” and in the right corner, the composer’s name was printed, J.B. Peavey. I thought, “Huh.. What a coincidence?”

After seeing that name as we rehearsed the tune over and over during the course of the week-long band camp, I had to satisfy my curiosity. After some googling, I discovered that this J.B. Peavey was not the founder of Peavey Electronics. That was his son, Hartley.

This isn’t an overview of his career as the head of Peavey, and I’m not going to get into the specifics of what products he sold, but I want to acknowledge that Hartley revolutionized the business of music amplification. As the sole salesman, engineer and business manager, he created one of the biggest companies in the business.

Hartley Peavey was the son of “Mutt” Peavey who owned and operated the local music store, Peavey’s Melody Music. The young Hartley dreamed of being a rockstar after attending a Bo Diddley concert in 1957. His father discouraged this because he thought rock ‘n’ roll would never last. He wanted to learn to play guitar but his father wouldn’t give him one so Hartley made one of his own. He needed an amp so, once again, he decided to make his own. By Hartley’s graduation from Mississippi State University in 1965, he had been thrown out of a few bands as a result of his poor guitar playing skills. He came to the conclusion that he was never going to be a rockstar. He still had his love for music and love for musicians and he seemed to be pretty good at the electronics side of things, thus began his business.

He founded Peavey Electronics in 1965 after his college graduation, starting his business in the loft of his dad’s music shop. He’d build amps and go out to other music stores to sell his products. After hustling his amps to music shops over the southeastern region, one dealer in Montgomery, Alabama told him that he didn’t need any more amps, but if he could build a PA system, he’d be interested. As resilient as he was and still is, Hartley came back home and began building his own PA system which took off and continued to sell.

Hartley had been the sole manufacturer by this point, but in the first few years, he hired several part time employees that helped put amps and speakers together along with a few salespeople. The rest is history. The company grew at a substantial rate. At one point, Peavey Electronics owned approximately 1.5 million square feet of warehouse space across North America, Europe and Asia.

I had the joy of talking to the former General Manager of Engineering and then GM of Commercial Audio at Peavey, Kevin Ivey. Funnily enough, he was in my grandfather’s boy scout troop and that’s how I was put into contact with him. We spent 20 minutes discussing our favorite artists, including Steely Dan and my featured artist this month Tommy Bolin. Ivey gave me remarkable insight into the Peavey operation and into Hartley himself. As Ivey has a background in broadcasting, he said he’s seen Peavey speakers at a political rally in Nicaragua, on the lawn in front of the Reichstag in Berlin and even in Russia. One anecdote that struck me was that a few of the engineers brought a plan they thought had not been patented yet. Hartley opened a drawer behind his desk, pulled out a periodical out of hundreds and flipped to a page that showed the exact patent that



his employees were presently showing him. Between Fender, Marshall and Gibson, they have 102 active patents. Peavey Electronics alone has 180. His first patent was filed on April 10, 1963 when Hartley was 22.

Hartley Peavey was awarded the MIPA (Musikmesse International Press Award) Lifetime Achievement award in 2010 from Musikmesse Frankfurt, a German based music trade show. Other recipients of the award include Jim Marshall, Robert Zildjian, Jim D'Addario and Martin Konig. His other awards and honors include induction into the Rock Walk of Fame, being honored by George H. W. Bush for workplace training, education and achievements in the international marketplace. He was also inducted into the Mississippi Musicians Hall of Fame alongside the man who started his love of rock music, Bo Diddley.

I read a story where in the early '70s, Hartley was in Gulf Shores, Alabama and stopped into a bar to see a solo act. The guy performing sounded good but the PA system sounded terrible. Upon further inspection, he was horrified to find out it was his own product. After he made a few adjustments, it sounded more like it was intended to. On the drive back home to Meridian, the experience really bothered him. He blamed the dealer at first for not explaining how his products worked but came to the realization that it was his fault. He started the Peavey School to better educate dealers on how to use the products they were selling and give consumers the best bang for their buck. The Peavey School has evolved into the Peavey Education Center, providing lessons for their personal products but also schematics for commercial audio that they produce.

Peavey Electronics has had some of the greatest musicians of our time use their products, such as Jerry Cantrell (Alice In Chains), Merle Haggard, Jerry Reed and many others. Even John Deacon of Queen used Peavey products as seen in the "Bohemian Rhapsody" and "We Will Rock You" music videos. At trade shows, folks like Alice Cooper, Leland Sklar, Jeff "Skunk" Baxter (Steely Dan, Doobie Brothers) and, to my surprise, Shaquille



O'Neal would stop by the Peavey booth to see what new products they had in store. The most predominant musician to frequent the Peavey booth was Eddie Van Halen. One of the product managers knew Van Halen and set him up to create his own signature amplifier. Van Halen would come to Meridian and hang out with the engineers, testing prototypes which would undoubtedly bother the residents of the town for a five mile radius. In 1992, Peavey produced the 5150 vacuum tube, created as a signature model for Van Halen.

I'll tell you a funny story that Ivey shared with me. In the Peavey building, there was a showroom known as "the fishbowl" where people could come test out the products that were available at the time. Across the hall from that room was the classroom where courses were given on the MediaMatrix products. An employee at Peavey was in the middle of teaching one of these classes when someone in "the fishbowl" cranked their amp up to stage volume. The instructor then said, "Someone go tell that idiot to turn their amp down. Who does he think he is, Eddie Van Halen?" Well... turns out it was EVH himself. Peavey would continue to manufacture EVH products such as the Peavey EVH Wolfgang that was produced from 1996-2004 before Van Halen parted ways with Peavey to create his own brand under the Fender umbrella. Meridian and "Peavey City" saw a great number of incredible artists grace their doors over the years. Elton John's band were all Peavey users so Elton John came and performed for the Peavey employees. John Entwistle and Joe Satriani also stopped by at one point. You never knew who was going to walk through those doors.

Besides their continued manufacture of individualistic music equipment, their focus nowadays is on their commercial audio subsidiary, MediaMatrix. MediaMatrix was the world's first digitally configured and controlled distributed audio system established in 1993. MediaMatrix, Crest Audio (acquired by Peavey in 1999) and Peavey products can be found in the Bellagio Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, Legoland in Japan, the Amsterdam Arena and the Birmingham Hippodrome in the UK.

If you've ever been to a concert in the last 60 years and happened to glance over at the speakers that a band was using (whether that be your local dive bar band or some of the most prominent groups of our time) you might've seen a familiar logo. A resilient young man from a town in Mississippi had a dream of making "great equipment at a great price for the working musician" and started a revolution in the art of amplification that others have yet to compare.



It's a typical Wednesday morning, and Scott "Scooter" Thomas is sitting behind the desk of the record store he opened over seven years ago. He cleans his glasses as Jeff Tweedy's voice croons over the speakers. As he absentmindedly fidgets with a Fant Memorial Library pen, clips of the 1978 sitcom "WKRP in Cincinnati" play on his laptop.

The walls of Scooter's Records are covered in music memorabilia, ranging from posters of Modest Mouse, Cheap Trick, Prince and Led Zeppelin to a 1986 issue of *Rolling Stone* that depicts David Lee Roth's exit from Van Halen. The counter has countless items strewn across it, including a bowl of "Cool Ass Pins" which are labeled with Scooter's handwriting, stickers, magazines, CDs and more. Scooter is wearing a dark blue shirt that lists the members of bluegrass/folk-rock band The Nervous Wrecks: "Snider, Kimbrough, Mariencheck, McLeary." He has also donned a long-sleeve denim overshirt, a blue Moondawgs Tavern hat, a multi-colored yarn bracelet and a black Apple watch.

As he rambles about an episode of WKRP in Cincinnati that involves dropping turkeys over the city as a Thanksgiving surprise, he moves around behind the desk, using his hands and facial expressions to convey the hilarity of the show. "By all that is holy, I swear I thought turkeys could fly," Scooter said, reminiscing on the t-shirts that were created in honor of the episode.

Growing up in Jackson, Scooter's first radio was an AM clock radio and he regularly listened to 62 WJDX which was a Top 40 Hits station at the time. The husband of his mother's best friend happened to be the station manager so he had the opportunity to go up to the station regularly. "Whenever I had to go to bed, I would stay up, you know, and listen to the radio," Scooter said.

While his mother was not interested in pop music, his aunt Vicky played a large role in sparking his interest in records. She worked at a record store in Hattiesburg and gifted Scooter his first record: *Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy* by Elton John. As he spoke, he rustled through a stack of records that were laying behind the counter, retrieving a copy of the record and laying it on the desk.

"If this is the first record you ever got," Scooter trailed off. "I mean, just look at that."

The cover was so busy and chaotic that it bordered on overstimulating. Images of deformed, anthropomorphic animals littered the background, overshadowed by Elton John himself wearing a top hat and riding a piano. Inside the jacket was a lyric sheet, comic book and poster that came with the album.

Between his aunt's influence and his love for his AM clock radio, Scooter fell deeply in love with music at a young age. He bought *The Kinks Greatest Hits*, the first record he spent his own money on, at a garage sale when he was 10 years old, and because it was the mid-1970s, it only cost him a nickel. Scooter never had an interest in sports and was much more intrigued by music and art. He realized very quickly that his hobbies didn't align with the kids living next door. "All the kids in my neighborhood, like, you know, their parents were getting them motorcycles and shit like that," Scooter said. "My mom wasn't getting me a motorcycle."

As a kid, he loved drawing barns, band logos and Star Wars characters. He took art lessons for a while and even won second place in a drawing contest for a fox that he drew when he was nine. A couple years later, his parents got divorced and he moved to Louisville with his mother. "That was also whenever I discovered that girls were like, a thing," Scooter noted. "Like way more interesting than dudes were, right?"

Not long after moving to Louisville, Van Halen started to get big and became one of Scooter's biggest influences. He got involved with his school's band program in fifth grade and was told he couldn't play the drums so he picked up the saxophone. Soon after, his mother decided that he should get braces which rendered him incapable of playing sax.

When his band director realized he couldn't play anymore, he moved him to drums which was, as Scooter put it, "what I wanted to do anyway." He and his best friend, Jayson Triplett, decided to start a band, but there were a few complications. First and foremost, Scooter didn't have a drum set. Secondly, while Triplett owned a guitar, he didn't have an amp.

Their band practices were conducted strictly over the phone, with Triplett learning guitar riffs that he would quietly play for Scooter and Scooter using drumsticks to keep a beat on the pillows in his living room. They named the band TNT Connection (as a play off of Triplett and Thomas) and designed a logo that looked sneakily similar to Van Halen's. Scooter's first real drum kit was gifted to him by his high school band director who allowed him to take old drums from the band hall and create a makeshift kit. He also provided Scooter and Triplett with a room to practice in, and with time they started to become a true band.

"We learned 'Crazy Train' by Ozzy Osbourne and 'Switch 625' by Def Leppard," Scooter said. "Jayson had this little guitar solo called something that he basically stole from Quiet Riot and we didn't have a singer. So, we played 'Crazy Train' with no vocals." Even without a vocalist, they headlined their high school talent show, wearing parachute pants and bandanas—iconic signs that it was the 1980s.

When he wasn't rocking out with his friends, Scooter enjoyed working on cars. His stepdad had a shop in the backyard that Scooter wasn't supposed to go into, but he regularly snuck in anyways. "Whenever I did get in there," Scooter mumbled, "I was always fascinated by anything mechanical."

As Scooter discussed why he chose to attend Mississippi State, his fingers played with the corner of a copy of the February 5, 2025, issue of *Starkville Daily News* whose headline read, "SOCSD hires Hopson as athletic director." Many members of Scooter's family were from Hattiesburg, and his initial plan was to attend the University of Southern Miss. His mother didn't like the idea of him being near his father's side of the family so she gave him two options: Mississippi State or East Mississippi Junior College.

"I was like, 'I ain't going to freaking Decatur,'" Scooter said, scoffing. Mississippi State didn't have a computer science program (which was what Scooter intended on pursuing) so he settled for computer engineering. "At the time I didn't know that that was not even remotely the same," Scooter said. He spent a little over a semester in computer engineering before switching to industrial technology, a major that he described as, "vo-tech on steroids." He took classes in finance, management, electronics, woodworking, welding and



more. He also decided to minor in computer science, studying early programming languages like COBOL, Pascal and Fortran.

When asked what he went to school for, Scooter wittily replied, "to please my mom." Though he had busied himself with other things, records were a part of his life that never disappeared. Throughout his time in college, he became friends with Owen Pugh who owned a record store called Crossroads, and Pugh would let Scooter take home cartons of 100 records for \$10.

Through taking home massive volumes of records that he'd never listened to before, Scooter was exposed to artists that he now loves, namely Jeff Beck. "I would start out with the crazy album covers and just listen to them," Scooter said.

The summer after his junior year of college, Scooter and his old bandmate Jayson Triplett played a wedding reception for one of their mutual friends. On his way home from the reception, his high school math teacher's husband pulled him over and gave him a DUI.

Considering his options, Scooter realized he might do better to stay in Louisville jail for the night than to tell his mother what happened. Triplett came to check on him and wrote him a note, saying, "Your mom is gonna freak out." "They brought me cigarettes and I didn't even smoke," Scooter said.

When Scooter's mother found out, she told him he'd be spending the next semester living with her in Louisville and would have to find someone to commute with. 21-year-old Scooter was adamantly opposed to this proposition and begged her to let him take a year off college. He moved into a house with a couple friends and many of his classes fell to the wayside. This was partially because he was working so much to pay the bills but also due to the fact that he was "completely uninterested" in school at this point. Scooter decided that the night before his physics final exam was the perfect occasion to drive to New Orleans with his friends to see Living Colour and The Rolling Stones in concert.

"I got back to Starkville and the sun was coming up," Scooter said. While he did make it to the exam, once he sat down, he promptly fell asleep. Due to this, and a few other classes that had been neglected for some time, Scooter didn't graduate. "My mom didn't know about it until she got the thing in the mail," Scooter said. "By that time I was done."

Once college was out of the picture, Scooter wanted to open a record store but didn't see it as a viable option considering how CDs had virtually made records obsolete. He spent a season trying to become the drum tech for Blind Melon but they never had quite enough money to hire a crew.

When one of his roommates moved out and rent started being split two ways instead of three, Scooter realized he needed to find a job to support his drum and beer buying habits. He started working for the city of Starkville in the water department and spent 27 years there. He monitored the water tanks and wells, ensuring that everything was in compliance with health codes. A year into working there, he was promoted, in



in spite of the fact that his hair was past his shoulders. Though he had a better position, the city hadn't raised his pay.

He took a sip out of his red mug, donned with stickers of various bands like Foo Fighters and Sludgelung and the Starkville-based magazine Queue.

"I figured out the reason why they weren't is because I had long hair so I cut my hair off and they gave me a \$10 an hour raise," Scooter said. "I used to say I was discriminated against," he recounted, laughing.

After years of stretching himself thin at a job that wasn't fulfilling, Scooter realized it was time for a change. He'd spent decades putting his health on the backburner and it was starting to take a toll. "Scott was not taking care of

himself at all,” Scooter said, referring to himself in the third person. “I was drinking too much, I was smoking cigarettes.”

One Sunday, he was at home watching TV when he started to feel like he was having a heart attack. He drove to the Starkville hospital where they sent him to Columbus in an ambulance. Though he was dismissed, saying that everything looked fine, this scare was enough to make him turn his life around. “That was the last day I smoked a cigarette,” Scooter said, his eyes wide. “And that was like the first day that I looked at the calendar and was like, ‘If I do everything right, don’t take any time off, don’t get sick, what is the day that I will have my 28 years in?’” He circled the date on his calendar and devoted all his energy to getting to retirement as quickly as possible. As he imagined what post-retirement life would be like, his mind wandered to his old dream of owning a record store.

Between February and April of 2017, the city allowed him to take paid leave time so he spent nearly every day scouting downtown Starkville to determine where he should open his record store.



The building that is now Scooter’s Records was previously a tanning salon, but the owner had recently died of cancer. At the time, the building was being used as a storage unit, but Scooter wanted to change that. The Starkville Area Arts Council had also recently started hosting Sunday Funday—a community-driven event where local artists and musicians would come together to share their work—so before having a physical location, Scooter started building a community there.

In April, he officially decided to name the business Scooter’s Records and formed the LLC. His first official event was the Old Main Music Festival where he took five crates of records and sold nearly everything he brought.

In September of 2017, the owner of the building contacted Scooter, saying he was ready to rent the building. They renovated the inside, tearing down walls of previous tanning booths to create larger, open rooms. He signed the lease in October and by November Scooter’s was officially open for business.

“The first day I opened I was busier than I ever thought I was going to be,” Scooter said. Scooter opened the store with the intention to make just enough to break even and was shocked by the amount of traffic he was getting. For a few years, everything was going better than he could have imagined. Then Covid happened. In combination with Starkville’s sudden fascination with Airbnbs and condos during the Dak Prescott era, rent was getting high. “It’s hurt my business a lot,” Scooter said. “It’s hurt a lot of people’s businesses a lot. I’m just barely scraping by.”

Though Covid wasn’t a prosperous time for Scooter’s business, his personal life was thriving. He finally had the time to invest in hobbies that he used to love, building a studio behind his house and a woodshop in his backyard. When Starkville allowed businesses to open back up in May of 2020, Scooter headed back to work, but things were very different. Rather than sitting behind the counter while customers bustled through the store, people would message him with orders that he would bring to the door. He was concerned that these new policies would be met with backlash but was pleasantly surprised by the customers’ reactions. “I never had to deal with it because cool people buy records,” Scooter said.

Rachel Holaday, who worked for Scooter from 2019-2020, said that Scooter is the best boss she’s ever had. He was kind, authentic, patient and knowledgeable, and his trust in her gave her confidence in herself. “He always wanted me to be safe and anytime I didn’t feel safe, he would say, ‘Tell me and I’ll come up there immediately,’” Holaday said.

Outside of being a business owner, Scooter plays drums in Battle and the Wheelers, a band that he started with his friend of nearly two decades, Keatzi Gunmoney. Gunmoney noted that Scooter is a special kind of drummer and that you don’t find a player like him just anywhere. “He’s not only great at it, but he’s got such an authentic like, throwing caution to the wind, just old school punk rock attitude about the way he plays drums,” Gunmoney said. “So when people want that, they go to him.”

Gunmoney described his relationship with Scooter as easy-going, both within and outside of the band. They share a love for cars, records and big loud rock n’ roll, but their friendship goes much deeper than that. In Gunmoney’s words, Scooter is hard-working, determined and has always been a reliable friend that he can go to when he needs advice. He’s an easy person to collaborate with no matter what you’re working on and he’s very dependable. One friend who has never let Scooter down is his 13-year-old corgi, Vincent. Vincent has degenerative myelopathy, a neurological disease that acts similarly to ALS, but that doesn’t stop him from being “soulful” as Gunmoney puts it. One night, Gunmoney and Scooter were sitting on Scooter’s back porch when he noticed a possum walking along the back fence. He pointed it out and Scooter immediately dropped his voice to a whisper, saying, “Oh my god, we’ve got to get Vincent inside because he’s going to lose his mind. Be calm.”



Though he may be small and getting up there in years, Vincent is just as ferocious as ever. Between the store, his studio, his woodworking shop and his beloved four-legged pal, there’s not much more Scooter could ask for in life.

As he looked around the store, thinking about how far he’d come and the place that he grew up, one sentiment rang true for Scooter.

“It scares me to think of the person I would have been if I’d stayed there.”



THE BAND FEEL

ACCOMPANIED BY

THE RETROGRADE

3.6 CHATTANOOGA, TN

3.11 NASHVILLE, TN

3.13 ATLANTA, GA

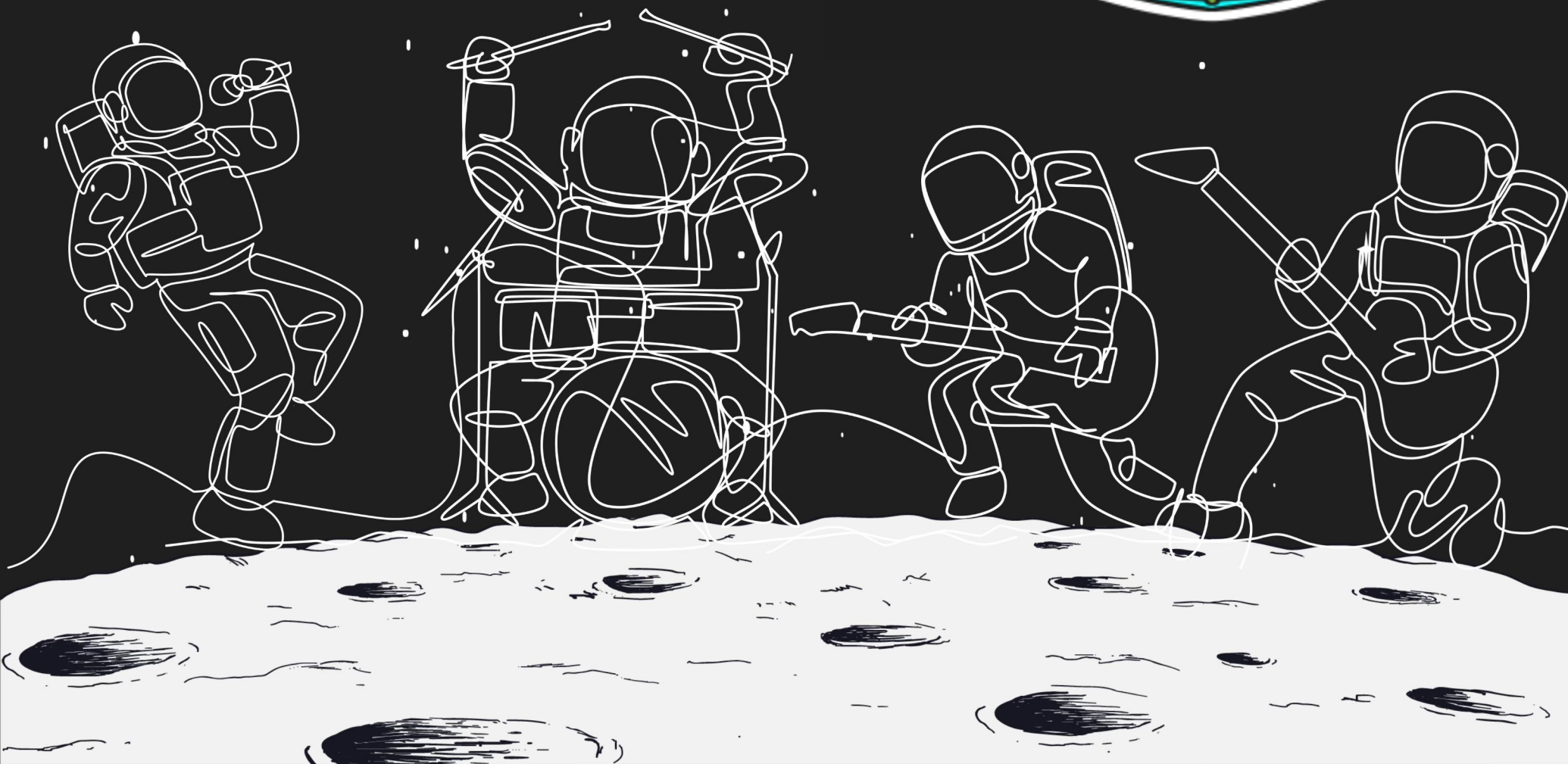
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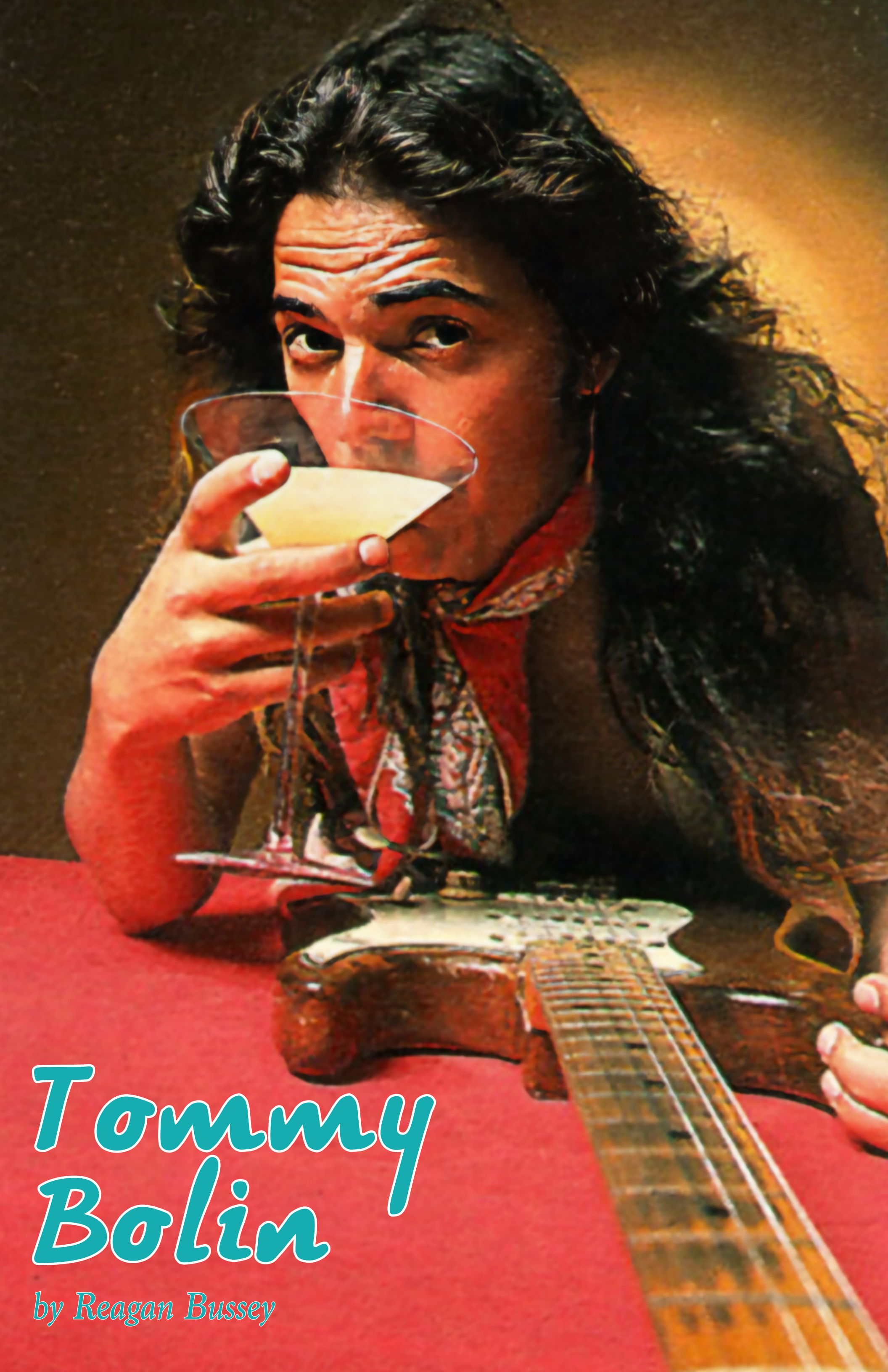


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The
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Tommy Bolin

by Reagan Bussey

Tommy Bolin is another instance of a true artist's legacy cut too short by the rock 'n' roll lifestyle. Thomas Bolin was born in 1951 in Sioux City, Iowa. He wanted to be a guitar player and bounced around from band to band in his native Iowa before settling down in Boulder, Colorado and being a part of Zephyr. Bolin was just 17 when they released their debut album which peaked at No. 48 on the Billboard Top 200 Album Charts. Bolin left after their second album, wanting to go onto bigger things, when he landed a gig with a band out of Cleveland, Ohio called James Gang. Of course, Joe Walsh was a founding member of James Gang before he left to go on to be a bonafide rock star with his solo career and his time with the Eagles.

Bolin replaced Domenic Troiano, who had replaced Joe Walsh after his departure, and during his time with the group, they released two albums, *Bang* and *Miami* in '73 and '74. The two albums failed to achieve much commercial success but had favorable reviews from the critics. His musical peak was to come in between James Gang albums when he worked with Billy Cobham on his album, *Spectrum*. This album is considered to be one of the greatest fusion albums of all time. Bolin played impeccably on this record, establishing himself as a proficient guitarist. He lent his talents to a few jazz albums and other session work during this time. He then signed a record deal with Nemperor records, a subsidiary of Atlantic Records that was founded by Brian Epstein, the Beatles former manager. His debut solo album, *Teaser*, is a force. Several of the musicians credited on the album include Jeff Porcaro, David Foster and Phil Collins. During the recording of this album, he got a call from Deep Purple.

Ritchie Blackmore had left the group by this point and the remaining members decided to replace him rather than break up. Their lead singer, David Coverdale (who would go on to form Whitesnake) had been listening to the Billy Cobham record that Bolin had played on and they invited Bolin to come jam. After a four hour session, the gig was his. The group released one album with Bolin, *Come Taste the Band*, in 1975. It performed pretty well commercially, peaking at No. 43 in the US. The critical review of the album was positive but their biggest issue with the album was it didn't sound like Deep Purple. Of course it didn't. When you lose your primary songwriter and guitar player who has a sound like none other, it's not going to sound the same. Both former members of Deep Purple Ian Gillan and Ritchie Blackmore gave positive comments about the album. All was not well internally in the group though. Bolin's increasing dependency on drugs put a strain on their ability to tour and the group broke up later in mid-1976. Deep Purple did not release another album for almost ten years.

CBS Records got a hold of Bolin and gave him the okay to form his own band and start playing shows while simultaneously working on his second solo album. *Private Eyes* was released in September of 1976. All I can say about this album is **Wow!** It's one of the greatest albums that no one has heard of. His band is tight and their groove is locked in at every point in this album. Anytime you ask someone about Tommy Bolin, their response is usually, "How about that 'Post Toastee?'"

"Post Toastee" is the closer of Side A to his second album and at nine minutes long, it's a masterpiece in groove and fusion/funk playing. This showcases all of the members of his band and Bolin as artists of their craft. It is the undeniable peak of the album and it gained him the attention of another master guitar player, Jeff Beck, after they became friends earlier that summer.

Bolin was invited to join Beck on his tour after he personally handpicked Tommy to open up for him. Thus began the "Private Eyes Tour." Bolin and his band arrived in Miami on December 3, 1976, and they were billed alongside Beck and Peter Frampton. The group played their first show that night and their opening act was interviewed by a journalist from The Miami News. After the interview, Bolin was told to "Take care of yourself" to which he replied, "I've been taking care of myself my whole life. Don't worry about me. I'm going to be around for a long time."

Several hours later, on the morning of December 4, 1976, Tommy Bolin died of a drug overdose from a combination of heroin and other substances, cementing his legacy as a painful "What if?" He was just 25 years old. I often wonder what could've happened to his status if he had lived to complete the tour with Jeff Beck. Would he be considered one of the greatest fusion guitarists to live? Would he be included in a blossoming guitar player's list of influences? All we have is his two solo albums to see what heights he would have reached had he taken care of himself a little better.

Gert Arwood & The Centennials

by Natalie Stagers



I weave my way through the crowded bar, muttering apologies under my breath as I try my hardest not to bump into anyone. I finally lock eyes with my friend and make my way to the table she's sitting at, right in front of the stage. As I scan the bill of bands who are set to play, I see many familiar names. "Battle and the Wheelers, Make It To May, Flathead Ford... Gert Arwood & the Centennials?"

My friend and I catch up as I put in my Loop earplugs, trying desperately to drown out the roaring noise of hundreds of conversations and people bustling through the small space. Mid-conversation, the mystery band introduces themselves and I pause for a moment, curious as to who they are.

The bass player and frontman is holding a white Fender American Ultra Jazz Bass V and wearing an excited albeit slightly nervous smile on his face. Standing next to him is a confident woman who's clearly his second in command, with beautifully curly hair and an aura of self-assurance that's so blatant it's almost intimidating. The moment they start playing, I'm completely drawn into the captivating energy they've created, not just unable but unwilling to divide my attention. Their unrivaled chemistry floods the room as people's heads turn to see what this Nashville-based band is about. The two vocalists blend so well, it's as if they were meant to sing together. Their harmonies come together to make a sound that's nothing short of euphoric.

By the third song, I've followed them on Spotify and Instagram, eager to learn more about who these invigoratingly groovy cats are. Their bio deems them, "The newest generation of old souls," and the longer I sit there experiencing their music, the more I understand why. Not only are they all impressive musicians, they're also creating a space that feels welcoming, inviting you to join in and sing along with them even if you don't know the songs.

Everyone in the band is expressive, bringing an emotive aspect to the show. Their ability to play off each others' movements, facial expressions and body language suggests that they've been playing together for quite a while, and they have. While the band didn't officially form until December 2021, most of the members have known each other since 2018.

Though Alex Price and Jack Warren came into the picture a little later, Christiana Alaire, Patrick Prophet, Jackson Anderson, Lucas Rennie, Adam Story and Gert Arwood all attended Belmont University and got to know each other through playing in various amalgamations together over the years. "The six of us were playing together a lot, and I was just kind of like, "That's a really good core group of people,"" Arwood said. "I would love to just have them be a part of my story, my music and my sound."

They spent 2022 writing, arranging and making demos and recorded their first EP, *Honeymoon Phase*, that summer. The beautiful thing about the Centennials' music is that you never know what you're going to get, but you know it's going to be good. Just within this five song EP, you can hear elements of funk, soul, ska, pop and rock all coming together to create a perfectly distinctive and intriguing sound.

Each member of the Centennials brings their own sound to the table, but they play off each other's strengths and blend seamlessly, resulting in a killer final product. While Alaire's musical background is rooted in soul and country, Price pulls from old funk and R&B music. Prophet leans into the pop/singer-songwriter sound and Arwood brings a rock feel to the sound. "We're all artists so we're all doing our own thing, but we're also coming together and doing a collaborative thing," Alaire said.

Half the band has solo music careers as well, making it somewhat difficult to find gigs where everyone is available, but thankfully when you have eight members, you don't need everyone at every gig. "It's kind of like a collective almost," Prophet said. "We can just grab people who are free."

One thing that was notable about my conversation with the Centennials is that they never miss an opportunity to build each other up and brag on their bandmates. You can tell from speaking to them that they truly want to see each other succeed and have created an environment within the band that feels almost family-like. Songwriting is a democratic process that everyone contributes to. Some songs may only have two writers while some have six, but everyone is encouraged to, "add their own seasoning to the dish," as Prophet puts it. "I'd say Alex is probably the garlic," Prophet said, as the group laughed.

The core of the Centennials' music is fun. Many of the hooks that fans have come to know and love were developed from being goofy and riffing off of each other at practice then stumbling upon something that was too good not to use. "It's almost like a bit we're doing all the time," Alaire said. "It's like an inside joke be-

tween all of us because we know it's just something they were messing around on." Due to the nature of their writing process, each song by the Centennials feels distinct and unique. While there is an underlying cohesive sound, no two songs sound the same. Because there's no exact science to their creative process, their music never feels stagnant, as it changes and develops with the musicians themselves. "I think it's a lot about feeling rather than a genre," Price said.

Don't forget to stream the group's newest release, "Loud & Clear," and be sure to keep your eyes peeled for the next Cennies project because whatever it is, it's sure to be good. For more information on the band's solo projects, read below.



Gert Arwood

Arwood's first single, "Yes Man," was released February 21 and has the Centennials' sound written all over it because most of them are featured on the track. With undeniable spunk and energy, this song is the perfect petty comeback to that one ex (or ex-best friend) that did you dirty. I expect that big things are coming from Arwood in the future, so make sure to keep up with future projects by following him on Instagram @gertarwood.



Christiana Alaire

Alaire's solo music is rooted in old soul and country storytelling, pulling from influences like Carole King and Shania Twain. Writing songs since she was 12 years old, she's crafted a sound that's hers and hers only. Her vocals are velvety but powerful, a borderline irresistible combo. While country isn't normally my genre of choice, there's something special about her music that I gravitate to. Keep up with future releases from her by following @christiana.alaire.



Alex J. Price

At only 22 years old, Price has released over 60 songs, adding elements of funk, soul and jazz to his poppy sound. Taking notes from artists like Prince, Michael Jackson, Whitney Houston and Bruno Mars, he has a fascination with taking an old sound and making it new. Check out his current releases and keep up with what's coming next @alexjpricee.



Patrick Prophet

Though he's convinced drumming is the only thing he's good at, Prophet has some pipes on him and his solo work displays this. While most of his time is spent drumming for other artists, Prophet holds his own with his pop lyrics and vibey melodies. Drawing from artists like Stevie Wonder and John Mayer, Pat's grooves will keep you wanting more. Check him out @patrickprophet.

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CLASSICS and VARIETIES

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The Shirelles

Gerry Goffin-Carole King

C2 D2

Be My Baby

C3 D3

The Ronettes

Jeff Barry-Ellie Greenwich

C4 D4

The Songwriters

C5 D5

by

C6 D6

Stop! In The Name of Love

C7 D7

The Supremes

Holland-Dozier-Holland

C8 D8

I Say a Little Prayer

Aretha Franklin

Burt Bacharach-Hal David

I Can't Help Myself

Four Tops

Holland-Dozier-Holland

Of the 1960s

Reagan Bussey

It Might as Well Rain Until September

Carole King

Gerry Goffin-Carole King

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The term singer-songwriter wasn't really a thing until the rise of Bob Dylan and the slew of artists that came out of the Laurel Canyon area during the late '60s, but there were a few groups of songwriters that continually dominated the charts during the early to mid-1960s.

I would say the most influential and popular groups of songwriters that dominated the American charts were the songwriting teams of Goffin-King, Barry-Greenwich and Holland-Dozier-Holland. Burt Bacharach was also a prolific songwriter, as he shared songwriting credits with several other writers.

The Brill Building housed a great amount of talent during this time period. The eleven-story historic building is located at 1619 Broadway in Manhattan and housed at least 165 different music businesses by 1962.



In the mid '60s, an artist could record a demo, find a publisher and printer, promote the record and cut a deal with radio promoters without leaving the building. That's insane to think about in the current music climate. The "Brill Building Sound" would define the sound of this time period because of songwriters such as Gerry Goffin and Carole King.



The husband-wife duo were very young, 21 and 18 respectively, when they scored their first No. 1 Billboard hit, "Will You Love Me Tomorrow." They were employed by Dimension Records and began writing hit after hit. During the 1960s, the songwriting team of Goffin-King wrote 33 Top 40 Hits, some of those songs being recorded by artists such as Bobby Vee, the Drifters, the Four Seasons, Aretha Franklin and Carole King herself.

King went on to have a significant solo career during the '70s and recorded songs she had written with her former husband for her solo album, *Tapestry*, which would go on to be a critical and commercial success. King won four Grammys, including Album of the Year. I think Goffin-King are the most influential songwriting duo in history because they inspired two young lads from Liverpool named John Lennon and Paul McCartney who are quoted as saying, "We wanted to be the Goffin-King of England."

I remember first hearing the name Burt Bacharach, funnily enough, from his cameo in the movie, *The Spy Who Shagged Me*. Yes, the Austin Powers movie. There's a scene where Elvis Costello is performing "I'll Never Fall In Love Again" and Costello mentions Bacharach's name before the camera pans to him playing the piano.



This was the first time I really figured out that there were these faceless poets who have created masterpieces of music that we've enjoyed through different artists over many years. Bacharach's most prolific songwriting partner would be Hal David but there were thirty-one Top 40 hits with Bacharach's name attached to the credits during the 1960s. His songs have been recorded by artists such as Cliff Richard, Andy Williams, Dionne Warwick, Tom Jones



Ellie Greenwich and Jeff Barry have a similar story to that of Goffin-King. Although they did not start off as writing partners, they soon became a powerhouse duo. Greenwich had already established herself as a successful songwriter after being signed to the publishing company Trio Music, which also employed another successful songwriting duo, Liber and Stoller. In October of 1962, Barry and Greenwich married and decided to

only write songs together. Although they did not have the quantity of Top 40 hits (only 14 Top 40 hits during the 1960s) as the above writers have, the songs they wrote have withstood the test of time, including “Be My Baby,” “Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)” and “River Deep - Mountain High.”

Now, enough of the Brill Building because there was another writing group that was located 617 miles away from Manhattan in the Near Center area of Detroit, Michigan. Established as Tamla Records by Berry Gordy in January of 1959, it became known by its more famous name, Motown Record Corporation, in 1960. Motown had enormous success as its black artists had success with white audiences during a time of segregation and the label’s songs began showing up on the Billboard Hot 100 rather than being pigeonholed onto the Soul Charts.

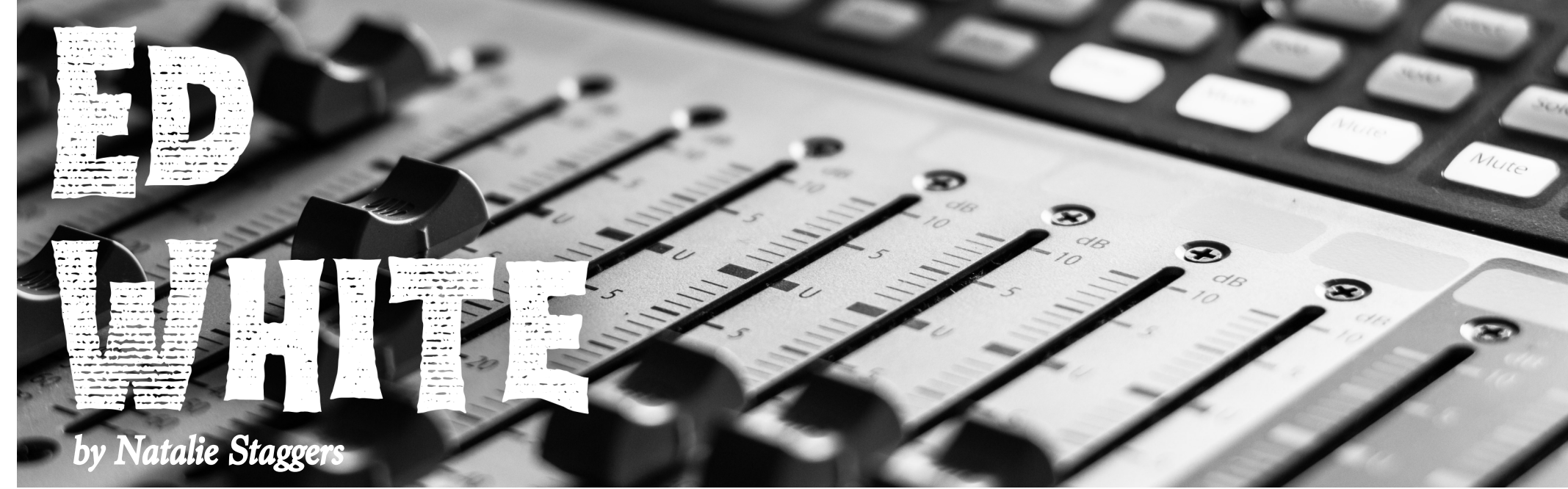


One of the writing groups employed from 1962 to 1967 consisted of Lamont Dozier and brothers Brian and Eddie Holland. The trio wrote, produced and arranged all of their songs for Motown artists like the Supremes, the Four Tops, the Miracles, Martha and the Vandellas, the Temptations and the Isley Brothers. During their time at Motown, Holland-Dozier-Holland had forty-six of their songs enter the Top 40 on the Billboard Hot 100 and twelve of those reached No. 1.

These artists’ legacies didn’t just last in the 1960s. Their songs would be covered many times over the following decades. There are only nine same titled songs that have reached No. 1 by different artists. Three of those are by two of the songwriting groups mentioned above. “Go Away Little Girl” was written by Goffin-King and recorded by Steve Lawrence and Donny Osmond, “The Loco-Motion” (also by Goffin-King) was recorded by Little Eva and Grand Funk Railroad and “You Keep Me Hangin’ On”

was written by Holland-Dozier-Holland and recorded by The Supremes and Kim Wilde.

There are artists that have written their own songs that stand the test of time but these special songs are credited to these faceless and voiceless songwriters who have brought us joy for over 60 years.



He walked into the recording studio with his cassette, preparing to play his music for Norbert Putnam, the same producer who cut albums for Jimmy Buffett and Dan Fogelberg. After listening intently to a couple of his songs, Putnam asked why he wanted to pursue a career in music. Becoming a famous singer-songwriter had been one of Edward White’s dreams since he was a kid. “Well,” White said, reflecting, “I don’t know. I’ve just always wanted to do this.”

Putnam replied that at the end of their lives, people who are extremely lucky in the music business can take everything they ever did, put it in a shoebox and rattle it around. This confused White, and he asked for elaboration. Putnam said that extremely talented and successful musicians make around 10 to 15 albums over the course of their life, enough cassettes to fill a shoebox. Often, this work is all-consuming, and they don’t have much else to show for their lives.

White returned to the studio he’d been recording with to speak to his producer, Bill Rice. Rice told him that if he signed the record deal, which would only allow him to see his family 15 days out of the year, there was no going back. If he got three months into touring and decided it wasn’t for him, he was stuck in the business until the recording studio made their money back. White and his wife Rhonda mulled it over that night and concluded that it wasn’t the best time for him to take a leave of absence, considering their daughter was only a year old.

White grew up in a rural town in a house that had no running water, plumbing, or electricity with a grist mill across the street. “Coming to Columbus was like going to New York City,” White said, laughing. His father saved up and borrowed money to buy a new house and before White was in his double digits, he lived in a home with modern utilities. In 1968, a year before the United States landed on the moon, his family installed a telephone. White’s father grew up during the Great Depression and learned how to be self-sufficient, picking up trades like mechanics, contracting, farming and more.

“My father could take an old spool of thread, a pencil, a rubber band, and a color crayon and make a tractor,” White said, reminiscing on how his father used to make toys from household objects when he was a child. White’s parents were not involved in music whatsoever, and he learned what he knew about singing from TV shows like “The Beverly Hillbillies.” He got involved with his school’s band playing the trombone and began developing an interest in music.

When he was 12, his parents bought him a guitar. Their house had a decent amount of acreage, and there was a rental house with four small rooms that wasn’t being used at the edge of their property. White’s father said that if White helped him clear out the house, on Saturday evenings around 6-7 p.m. they could play music there and open it to the public. The first night, one man showed up, and he taught White to play “Wildwood Flower” by the Carter Family. Within two months, 50-100 people were showing up each Saturday night to play music together. In each of the four rooms, different genres of music could be heard, some playing bluegrass, some Gospel, and some country. White would wander through these rooms every Saturday, picking up what he could learn from the hodgepodge group of musicians that showed up each night.

Years after turning down the record deal in Nashville, White moved back to Mississippi and decided to open a recording studio of his own in Columbus. White built the studio from the ground up, putting upwards of \$250,000 and countless hours into this project. The studio was placed ten feet from a railroad track, and he had to dig a trench between the studio and the tracks that he filled with packing peanuts to muffle the noise from trains passing by. White consulted bankers, people he knew in the music industry, and everyone else he could think of, and they all told him they thought the studio was a great idea and would be successful. “I thought his idea was a good one in theory,” White’s wife Rhonda said. “I just was there to support him, and we would see how it worked out.”

Soundtrack Studios opened in 2000 but within a few years had been hit by two tornadoes. When the second tornado hit the studio, White decided it was time to move on to something different and chose to build houses. He learned contracting work from his father and built houses periodically throughout college and while he pursued his career in music. His newest project is building a Presbyterian church in Lamar County, an area that has not had a Presbyterian church for over 100 years.

“When he sets out to do something, even if everybody else thinks, ‘This is crazy,’ he perseveres,” Rhonda said, faithful that White’s newest endeavor will be successful. White said he spent years trying to figure out what he was going to be. Would he be a contractor, a musician, a father, a husband? “I finally one day figured out that I knew what I was going to be. I was going to be Ed,” White said, chuckling. “And whatever that entailed, that’s what I was going to be.”

The Marías



by Natalie Stagers

The Marías were founded in 2016 by then-couple María Zardoya and Josh Conway. They met at a show Zardoya was playing at the Kibitz Room in Los Angeles and immediately had chemistry, making plans to record at a studio Conway was working at. Their attraction to each other brought them together on a regular basis as they started writing and recording music together. After a trip to Joshua Tree, they recorded a demo of “I Don’t Know You,” which became the first track on their first EP.

When this song got picked up by a Santa Monica radio station and started receiving significant airplay, they decided to get serious and try to develop the project, recruiting their friends Jesse Perlman and Edward James to help out. Between Zardoya’s influences of Latin music and R&B and Conway’s deep love for The Beatles—particularly their more psychedelic work—The Marias’ unique sound was born.

Though Zardoya and Conway have since separated, they’re still making music together and the breakup surprisingly resulted in a creative breakthrough, leading to their sophomore album, *Submarine*. Their blending of psychedelia, jazz and funk layered with Zardoya’s airy vocals has culminated in an ethereal sound that feels otherworldly. Sit down and close your eyes while listening to “Heavy” and tell me you don’t feel like you’re floating. While I like a lot of their early releases, *Submarine* blew me away and made me gain a new level of respect for this Los Angeles-based band.

The opening track begins muffled in a way that makes you feel as if you’re listening to it from underwater. Zardoya’s siren-like vocals draw you in in a way that’s almost hypnotic. It’s easy to fall into a meditative state while listening to the album, allowing the music to wash over you.

Though it’s not expressly disclosed as such, I’ve always assumed that “Run Your Mouth” revolves around emotions that were brought up after Zardoya and Conway’s split. Zardoya has said that while writing the song, she was very “conflict avoidant,” wanting things to be okay rather than dealing with her feelings of discomfort. The music video for this song embodies the same psychedelic nature of the music itself and reminds me in some ways (the interesting videography and creative use of a singular space) of the video for “Virtual Insanity” by Jamiroquai.

The simple but droning bass holds down the first minute and a half of “Real Life” before it transitions into what I can only describe as an explosion of sensation. The song balances these two dynamics beautifully, taking the listener on an atmospheric journey. This is the perfect song to blare with windows down while driving through a big city late at night.

“Blur” bounces back and forth between sounding eerie and daydream-like. The verses have a chilling quality that’s disrupted by the choruses’ happy, colorful mood. “Paranoia,” one of my favorite songs from the album, explores insecurities within relationships and how they can be counterproductive, driving a wedge between people. I love the fluid sound of the guitar on this track and how it adds so much to the song even though it serves as more of a background element.

“Lejos de Ti” and “Ay No Puedo” may not be immediately understood by non-Spanish speakers, but that doesn’t make them any less appealing. The rhythmic flow and inherent musicality of the language combined with the euphonic melodies of both songs makes them alluring even if you don’t know what the songs are saying.

The biggest hit from the album, “No One Noticed,” was written four years prior to the album’s release but put on the back burner for a while because the band didn’t think it would be very successful. It was so mellow, and at the time it was so different from their sound that it just didn’t feel right to include on the first album. To the band’s surprise, “No One Noticed” hit no. 22 on the Billboard Hot 100 in November of 2024. It started to receive significant critical acclaim and became a popular sound on social media platforms. Now, a few months later, it has nearly 300 million streams on Spotify, almost triple the amount of the next most listened to song on the album.

“If Only” isn’t talked about as much as many of the other songs, but it’s one of my favorites from the album. The simplistic arrangement of piano, vocals and horns is serene and hauntingly beautiful. Zardoya’s vocals really shine on this track because there isn’t much else to distract from them. Though The Marías have only released two albums, their work so far is unique and impressive and I’m eager to see what they have coming next. I’m sure it will be a bit before we get a new album from them considering they’ll be busy touring for quite a while, but I have a feeling it will be worth the wait.

Back in January, we did a bracket-style tournament to see who was the best of their genre.

Thanks to our readers and followers, here are the groups you picked!

Best Pop Act

Elton John

Best Rock Band

Beatles

Queue & A

Who is your favorite producer?

Natalie's Pick: Neil Dorfsman

After sending out 125 resumés looking for a job in the recording industry, Neil Dorfsman received a call from Electric Lady saying they needed someone to assist on a project. On that fateful night in 1976, he began his journey of music production, eventually training under Eddie Kramer who cut albums for The Beatles, David Bowie, Jimi Hendrix, Led Zeppelin and countless other legendary artists. Dorfsman has his fingerprints on many notable albums, including **Brothers in Arms** by Dire Straits (which won the 1986 Grammy Award for Best Engineered Album) and **Brand New Day** by Sting (which won the 2000 Grammy Award for Best Pop Vocal Album). With his unique drum micing techniques and willingness to experiment in the studio, Dorfsman has helped mold and shape some of the biggest hits of the '80s and '90s. **Brothers in Arms** shattered the expectations that the media had of Dire Straits at the time, and for good reason. Though Dorfsman was working with a small studio on the island of Montserrat, he used baffles and blankets to curate the perfect sound for the record. Digital recording was in its infancy, but that only made Dorfsman more eager to experiment with the Neve console which made a large contribution to the crystal clear, pure sound of the album. Dorfsman also made the executive decision to dismiss Terry Williams, the original drummer for this album, from the recording sessions and bring in Omar Hakim whose energy and attitude added a new dimension to the project. While **Brothers in Arms** is one of my favorite projects Dorfsman has worked on, his resumé is extensive and impressive and there's something about the overall sound of his work that I will always gravitate towards.

Reagan's Pick: Gary Katz

Gary Katz doesn't have many albums under his belt. There are only 16 studio albums that he's produced over his career. Quality has dominated quantity in this case. Gary Katz is the man who produced all seven of the original Steely Dan albums and Donald Fagen's first solo album. His works, specifically **Aja** and **Gaucha** by Steely Dan, have become somewhat of a legend when it comes to sonically perfect albums. You hear stories of stereo salesmen and consumers using those two albums to test their stereo equipment before they purchase it, and I'll be the first to say that I'm guilty of it. Anytime I acquire new sound system components, I throw on **Gaucha** for my record player or **The Nightfly** for my cassette player and adjust the EQ from there. Katz has also worked with other big names such as Joe Cocker and Diana Ross but his work with the Dan has cemented his legacy as one of the most accomplished producers of the 20th century. When watching interviews with Katz he doesn't brag a bit and claims that it was all due to Donald and Walter finding the best musicians that they possibly could. He also credits their award-winning engineer Roger Nichols for his innovative practices in the studio. All four elements in tandem did contribute to creating the sonically perfect albums, but no one else was probably willing to remix "Babylon Sisters" almost 300 times.

**Who is your favorite producer?
Let us know at @queuediallc!**

Summerteeth Wilco



LED ZEPPELIN

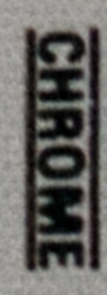
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