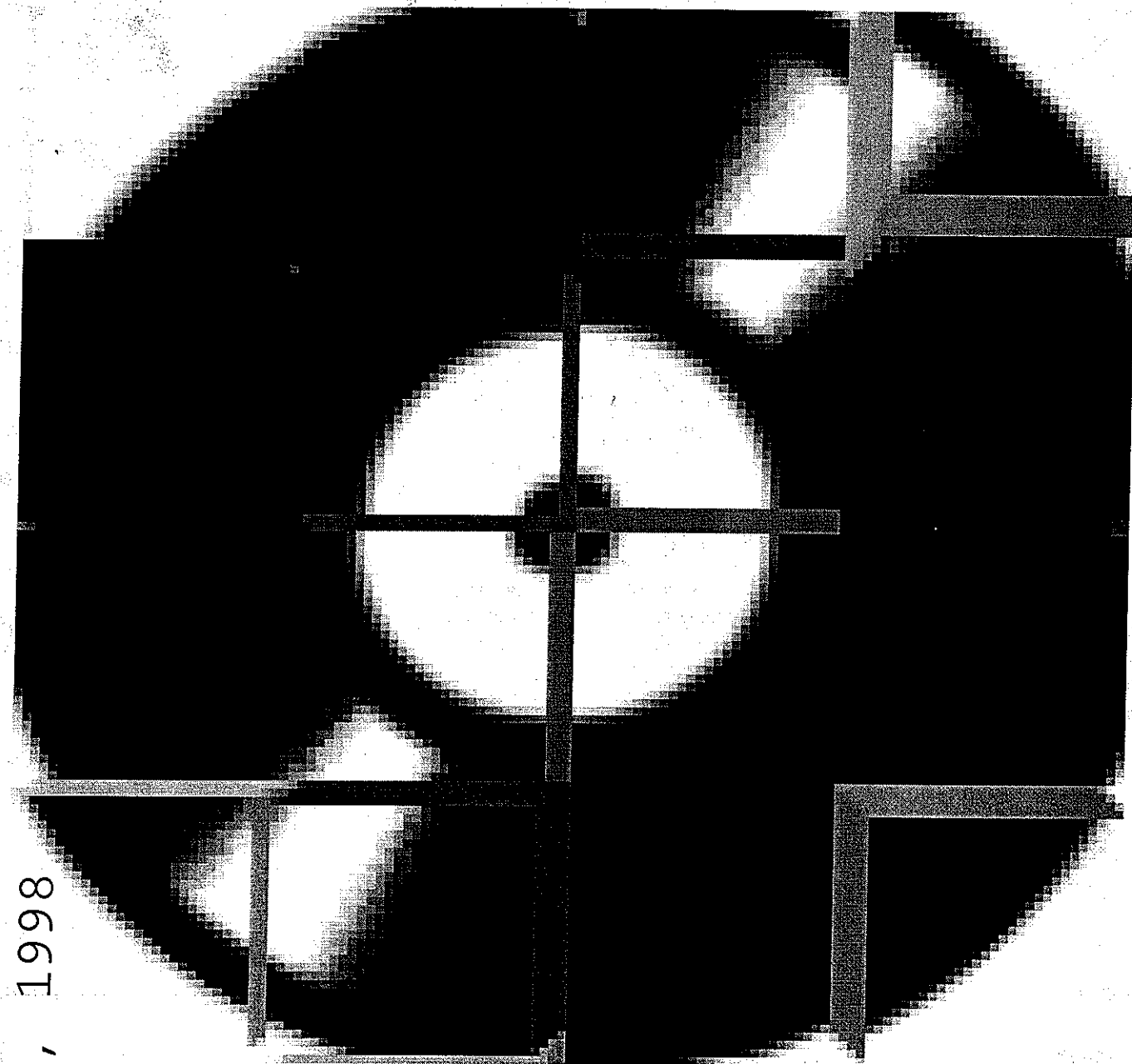


ANTIMATTERS



February, 1998

Breakin' Records!

AntiMatters

150 West 95th Street
Apartment 9d
New York, NY 10025

Lord of the Dance Jonathan Berger

You have in your hands (and if you didn't pay for it, God may forgive you, but I'll hunt you down like the zephyr you are), the latest, greatest issue of AntiMatters ever to see print. The theme, a companion to last month's brilliant "Makin' Records" (and that's not just coming from the publisher, but a reader -- I liked the magazine so much, I bought the company) is "Breakin' Records," which sort of continues the process.

See, recording is just part of the battle. After that, you've got to get people to listen to it. If you're like most musicians, you want to get lots of people to listen to it, and that means breaking it to the public.

After that works, of course, when you've moved more units than any of your peers, then you've broken a record, too. A personal record.

Anyway, all of these things, and many more, are included in this issue of AntiMatters.

Jonathan Berger

Contributors

Jonathan Berger
Stephanie Biederman
Pat Harper
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Penner MacBryant
Gustav Plympton
Arnie Rogers
Chrissi Sepe
Dave Wechsler

So, you made the record.

What now?

Now, you've got to get it out there. Make people listen. Make people love the music as much as you did when you started recording, two and a half years ago. You've got to break the record to the listening public.

And, of course, if that fails, you've got to break the record, to declare it a loss at tax-time.

(Hey, don't ask me: it's not my theme)

This is the "Breakin' Records" issue, which is different than last month's AntiMatters in that the word "Breakin'" is in the title, and not "Makin'."

(Hey, don't ask me: not my zine)

Enjoy it, or stop reading. Otherwise, what's the point?

Gustav Plympton

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"And if it's really good, it'll stop you right in your tracks. Braking records." - That was from Lach.

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Subscription Information

6 Months of AntiMatters
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Report from the Fort

1/6/98 - Niki Lee played bracing songs that sounded excellent solo. With nothing but her wet guitar sound and a strong voice, she didn't need any band to back her up, which just might have been the point. She dedicated one of her last songs, "Nothing You Can Do," to her ex-husband, which was summed up by its chorus, "Nothing you can do that I can't do for myself." With her assertive attitude, her great playing, and her cool songs, she's probably right. Except:

Niki Lee closed with "Test," a mostly spoken word piece about boys and girls and how they get along. It felt pretty much like the bridges in early Violent Femmes songs, momentous and fun but finally forgettable and irrelevant. Pretty much a novelty single -- full of sound and fury but signified nothing. Empty. The rest of the set was keen, though. (Jonathan Berger)

**Next Issue:
March 1998**

h a u n t s

AntiMatters explores places people hang out.

Where people listen to music.

Where people get away from listening to music.

Where people write music.

Where people drink -- musically.

And so on.

Feel free to contribute...

1/7 - Neal with an 'A' is pretty cute, which doesn't hurt. He's got that protoslacker Beck thing going on, with an omnipresent skicap and an effervescent youth that's inescapable. And he's got songs too. The best of the bunch is the totally boppy 'Popcorn,' which I think mines the same kind of material as J Geil's 'Centerfold,' the loss of innocence based on nostalgic synchronicity -- or am I reading too much into it? It's got percussive rhythm playing, and very cool vocal pausing tick

which really makes no sense. I can't stop thinking about it. Near the end of many of the lines, Neal with an 'A' draws out the syllable, presumable to make you think he's going to say one word, when he actually says another -- you know like some quasi-obscene camp song. The thing is, he says the word you thought he was going to say all along, and when you think about the word he was threatening to replace, you realize there's no other word it could've been. When he sings he took the girl home to "make pop..." there's really nothing else that fits but "...corn." Or am I missing something? He played that song, as well as 'Secret Agent of Love,' and a set-worth of other material, all good. And he's pretty cute, too, which doesn't hurt. (Stephanie Biederman)

1/7 - Mike Younger threatened to play the first of two sets on subsequent nights at the Fort. His friends, the Reachers were in the audience, so it wasn't really any big surprise when they took the stage with him -- but it was when they were introduced not as Mike Younger with the Reachers as support, but the Reachers with Mike Younger as support!

Any time the Reachers play is a cause for celebration, with their vigorous energy and their very potent material. But there was something special about this unannounced show -- other than the good guitar work of Mike Younger. That very energy that makes the Reachers such a powerful live show was subdued. Geoff Boyd's singing and playing, usually over the top, was quieter in all ways, which gave the songs a greater change to be heard over the performance. Peppering their short set with covers, the Reachers let a great opportunity to differently render their songs be only partially experienced. Still, it was a great show. Mike Younger closed it up with a couple of solo songs. (Gustav Plympton)

1/8/98 - Piñataland played and played. They came prepared to perform a short set with limited instrumentation, but the follow-up act never showed, so the soundman kept egging them on with encore after encore.

"You can play a few more," Mr. Molotov said, after the band had said goodnight.

Chagrined, barely prepared, Piñataland played on. And on. It seemed a strange form of torture -- for the band. The audience wanted more. (S Biederman)

1/14 - Gilligan Stomp is mighty funny. He has a well-executed stage-show. He's bald. He plays guitar. He's got a ridiculous name for his solo performance. I think he's spent some formative time in Texas. He'd be the reincarnation of Hamell on Trial, if he weren't already carnate. Stomp is more intentionally funny, and less technically adept, but he's great. Songs deal with getting stoned ("I Get Stoned"), beatbox hip-hop ("Stuck in my Head"), and political consciousness ("Most Perfect Friends"). There were others, and they sounded just fine. I hope he has more material. (Arnie Rogers)

Iggy Gorgess

by Chrissi Sepe

(in which our hero begins a couple of days of work — or does he?)

Iggy was worried because he forgot to go to work.

Iggy squinted at the face of the black, octagon clock. It was already one o'clock, and he was supposed to be at work! He forgot to wake himself up and hadn't set his alarm. He had even stumbled out of bed a few times throughout the night to go to the bathroom and to get himself a glass of water, but it never even crossed his mind that he should actually get up.

Iggy ran to the phone, but he didn't know what he should say. He could call in and say he was coming in later, but he didn't think he'd feel like coming in later. He was still groggy and super-sensitive to all the little hummings and noises around him. He was hungry, and he wouldn't have any time to eat if he hurried into work. He didn't feel like standing on his feet all day with Craig hogging up the cash register and Iggy having to just stand there on the floor like an idiot. That was it. He was going to call in sick. Robbie wouldn't tell on him, he'd better not! But what did it matter anyway? He didn't even like working. He picked up the phone and called in sick.

Iggy went into the kitchen and heated up a frozen lasagna TV dinner. Now that he was working, he could afford to buy himself foods like that. He felt he deserved it. He opened the huge oven door and wished that he had a microwave — that way he could get it done in seven minutes instead of twenty! Maybe Caramel could buy him one. He pulled his Vixen Marlina novel from his shelf while he waited for his lasagna to cook. He opened his writing folder and flipped through the pages. He closed the folder and put it back onto the shelf. He didn't feel like writing it. He didn't know if he'd ever feel like writing it again. He sat down on his couch and turned on the TV.

After Iggy finished eating, he didn't know what he should do with himself. He was tired, but he didn't feel like sleeping. He had a full meal in his stomach, and he needed to get some fresh air. He felt like going for a walk, but he was afraid that somebody from work would see him and tell Rosalie that he wasn't sick after all. But who cares, Iggy thought. There's no law against a person getting fresh air!

Iggy went to his favorite place first — Washington Square. It was sticky hot outside with not much fresh air to go around. There were tons of people in the park, and the noise made Iggy's hung-over ears rattle. He sat with Joe under a big, shady tree.

"So, how's work, son?" Joe asked.

"I skipped it today."

"Oh, you shouldn't do that," Joe said in a fatherly tone.

"I drank too much last night. It's the first time I've ever done that. Skipped work, I mean."

"But you've only been there a few weeks, it'll look bad on your record."

Iggy was annoyed at Joe's judging him. After all, he was a bum. "Hey, Joe," Iggy said.

"Yeah?"

"You never did tell me what happened to that job you had — on Wall Street."

"Oh," Joe said, looking down. He leaned back against the

tree and stretched his legs out in front of him. "I should have stuck with that job," he said definitively. "Never missed a day of work in my life. Never late, always did my job best as I can."

"Then what happened?" Iggy asked.

Joe turned to him suddenly. "Picture this," he began, his hands out in front of him. "Guy comes breezin' through town one day, says, 'I hear there's this lot outside of West 8th Street and Broadway — beautiful new space, it's up for grabs, the guy who owns it, ya see, he's movin' down to Florida. He's got a cheap price on it, dirt cheap. Says he just wants to get rid of it. It's a smart fella's gonna come and snatch that space up. He can set himself up a swanky store, make a fortune for himself, but it's gotta be a smart fella that does it.'" Joe paused for a moment.

"So, you mean, you bought the space and set up a store?" Iggy asked.

Joe turned to him suddenly. "It was a beautiful place, sold everything — hats, shoes, scarfs, pocketbooks — all the rich ladies shopped there. I quit my job and put all my savings into it. See, my brother had just died not long before that fella come through town. I'd been keeping that money safely hidden away, and suddenly, this guy breezes through, gives me this tip. I figured it must be some sign or something." Joe stopped again.

"So — what happened?" Iggy asked.

Joe's tone turned solemn. "Well, I ran that business for about a year, got myself a swanky new place to live, really high class," Joe said, fixing his shirt collar. "I counted all my blessings that year. But the next year wasn't so good. Ya see, I hadn't gotten anyone to help me with the books. Always get yourself a lawyer, my son." Joe shook an admonishing finger at Iggy. "Never be too big for your jeans, if you know what I mean. By the end of next year, I'd lost everything."

"Just like that?"

"You'd be surprised how quickly it all goes, son."

Iggy leaned back in amazement.

"Couldn't you go and ask for your old job back — the one on Wall Street? You said you'd done really good work there."

"I could have. They'd have taken me back, too, in a second."

"Then why didn't you?" Iggy sprang up.

Joe leaned back again and plucked a piece of grass from out of the ground. He examined it. "I didn't want to. I figured, what for? If that's the way life wants to treat me, then why should I? Better to be a bum on the street. At least I'd know what's in store for me." Joe looked into Iggy's eyes. "No expectations, no disappointments." He suddenly became quiet.

"How's Tom?" Iggy asked, changing the subject.

"Oh, Tom? He's back in the hospital."

"Is he sick?" Iggy asked, surprised.

"The loony bin, son, where he should be. They had no right to kick him out of there last time, poor soul, doesn't know how to manage on his own. There he can get the care that he needs."

"Oh," Iggy said, looking down.

"But, hey," Joe suddenly said brightly, slapping Iggy on the knee. "How's that book of yours coming along?"

Iggy thought for a second. "It's sort of a love/hate thing. I can't seem to get any more of it written lately."

Chrissi Sepe

"That's because you've gotta decide," Joe said.

"Decide?"

"Yeah, which one is it going to be? Is it love, or is it hate? Once you figure it out, son, you'll know what to do."

"Oh," Iggy said. He picked a blade of grass out from the ground.

Iggy arrived at Caterpillar ten minutes before his shift started. He saw Marta waiting on a customer at the cash, and he walked up to her. "Hi, Marta," he said.

Marta handed change to a woman customer in front of her. "Oh, hi, Iggy," she said. "Do you feel better?"

Iggy felt guilty. "Yeah, thanks," he answered self-consciously.

Marta handed the bag to her customer. "Robbie said you didn't look that good when he closed with you Wednesday. What did you have, a cold or something?"

"Nah, I just didn't feel that well. I'm better now."

"That's good," Marta smiled sweetly.

Janna came out from the back office. She dragged three boxes with a metal dolly. "Iggy, can you price these boxes of T-shirts? The price lists are taped onto the tops of them."

"Sure," Iggy answered. He was so happy that he wouldn't have to just stand on the floor all day doing nothing.

"I'll bring you the price gun," Janna said.

Iggy piled the boxes on top of each other. He lifted all three boxes at once and placed them onto the counter beside Marta.

"Wow, you're strong!" Marta said, looking at the slight muscles in Iggy's arms.

Iggy smiled and stared into her eyes. He took his key from his jeans' back pocket and used it to slice open one of the taped boxes. He pulled some T-shirts out and placed them into a pile on the counter. Janna brought him the blue price gun from the office. Iggy ripped the price list from the top of the box and used it to find the prices.

"So, how do you like it here so far?" Marta asked.

"It's okay, it's a job."

"No, I mean the Village. You're from Staten Island, right?"

"Oh, yeah, right. I like it. So far."

"I live in Brooklyn," Marta said.

"Yeah? What's the rent like?" Iggy asked, pricing a T-shirt.

"Oh, it depends. But I don't pay rent, we all live in a house."

"You and your family?"

"Yeah, I'm the oldest," Marta said proudly. "I have three younger sisters and two younger brothers."

"Six kids!" Iggy said, amazed.

"Yeah. Most of my neighbors come from big families. I can't wait to move out."

"When are you moving out?"

"I don't know, someday."

"Oh," Iggy laughed and priced another T-shirt.

"I'm so glad I'm graduating next year!"

Iggy looked up. "You're graduating from college!"

"No, silly. From high school. Why, how old did you think I was?" Marta asked, smiling.

"Well, I didn't know," Iggy answered.

"Oh, come-on." Marta jabbed him in his arm with her

Iggy Gorgess

elbow. "Really, how old did you think I was? Most people say 19, but I'm really 17."

"Oh," Iggy said.

"How old do you think Janna is?"

"I don't know, 50?" Iggy joked.

"No, really!" Marta giggled.

"I really don't know — 26?"

"She told you!"

"No, I just guessed. Janna doesn't talk to me."

"You don't like her much, do you?" Marta asked.

"Why do you say that?"

"I can just tell. You don't hide your feelings very well. They're usually written all over your face."

"I'm an honest person," Iggy said.

"You don't like Craig much either," Marta said.

"What are you trying to do, make me bad-mouth everybody?" Iggy asked, half-joking.

"No. I know you don't like him. Nobody does. It's too bad he's so damn cute!"

"He is?" Iggy asked, incredulous.

"Yeah, well, you don't know that 'cause you're a guy, but he's cute, believe me. Janna used to go out with him a long time ago. She talked Rosalie into hiring him."

"Rosalie probably regrets that now!" Iggy said. He opened up another box of T-shirts with his key.

"Janna's got him scheduled to work with her most of the week. But when Rosalie is in, he's on his best behavior."

"Yeah, I guess," Iggy said.

"Hey, are you done pricing those T-shirts yet?" Janna asked from out of the office.

"No," Iggy said matter-of-factly.

"Well, hurry up! I have to get them out on the shelves!"

"Why don't you help, it'll get done faster," Iggy quipped.

"I don't help price when I ask someone else to do it — I'm a supervisor!" Janna said huffily.

"I've seen Rosalie help people price," Iggy said.

"Yeah, but that's because, well, she — she wants to!"

"Good answer," Iggy laughed at her.

"Hey, don't get fuckin' smart with me," Janna said.

"Listen," Iggy said, slamming down the price gun. "I'll price the damn T-shirts but don't you dare use that language when you're talking to me."

Janna looked shocked. "Hey, lighten up, buddy. Nobody else seems to care. It's a friggin' clothing store!"

"Look, Robbie and the others might think it's cute, but to me, it's exemplary of your lack of a substantial vocabulary."

Janna's face turned red. "Yeah? Okay!" She went into the office and slammed the door shut.

"You know that she has no idea what you just said," Marta said, laughing.

Iggy smiled slightly and shook his head.

Don't forget to check out AntiMatters' Website:

<http://www.geocities.com/sunsetstrip/club/3794>

Peter Dizozza Uncovered!

"Like so many young men in more powerful positions than his, he's interested in dating attractive women. Beyond Ephron's predilection for the carcass caress and the massage as manipulation, is the resounding truth that people need to touch each other, using magic hands so to speak, and women respond to that." -from Mark of the Librarian by Peter Dizozza

Peter Dizozza has been a mystery to me ever since I walked into the Sidewalk Café unexpectedly catching the last 5 minutes of a performance of Prepare to Meet Your Maker, his epic musical about the various exploits of Cemetaria, a voluptuous woman brought back to life by Quasimodo. It wasn't till much later that I actually met him and got to talk with him. When I did, I discovered that, although he is the sweetest guy you're likely to meet, talking with him can be a fairly disconcerting experience. For instance, at his Romantic Enlightenment Variety Show I asked him what he meant by "Romantic Enlightenment". In response, he mumbled something about Rousseau, which kind of trailed off, as he returned his attention to arranging the wine and cheese platter for the guests.

He will cheerfully explain the premise of his plays, songs and novels to me and without exception, the explanations have left me more confused than I was before I asked. He'll also cheerfully admit that most of them have some kind of necrophiliac act somewhere in them but you still have no idea why many of his plays, stories and songs have necrophilia as a central motif. It was clear that I had turn elsewhere for answers about the mystery that was Peter Dizozza.

I met Peter's parents (Madeleine and Nicolas) and sister (Monica) initially at Peter's Romantic Enlightenment Variety Show at the community center in Forest Hills. Later, I arranged to interview them about Peter at their home (also in Forest Hills). After being fed a delicious piece of homebaked apple pie and engaging in small talk about myself and the article, (I told them that Antimatters was not a communist paper, but I actually have no idea. Is it?) we retired to the living room where I they told me little bit about Peter Dizozza.



DW: So your family comes from Italy?

Mad: Well, my father is from Naples but my mother was born in the United States.

Nic: My mother was born in Brooklyn, but my father was born on the Adriatic in a city called Bari.

DW: But you were both born here.

Mad and Nic: Yes.

Mon: So I guess that makes me and Peter 2nd generation.

Peter's music has never struck me as particularly

Italian in nature. At best, you could probably connect him thematically with Dante, if only with part one of the divine comedy. I left off questioning about family history and started with Peter. (I should mention at this point that due to laziness and holiday frenetics, I finally transcribed this interview about four months after it actually occurred. Unfortunately, the tape wasn't so clear and I had only a vague memory of what people had said by that time. Nicolas especially suffered since he was the farthest away from the microphone. And they all tended to talk at the same time, making it impossible to decipher what any one of them was saying. Anyway, I think they said all this stuff. Please ignore anything that turns out not to be true.)

DW: So when did Peter start playing piano?

Nic: 5.

Mad: 6.

Mon: Well, you bought him a piano then.

Mad: Well, you know, we're at Macy's and we're looking at the toys and they had one of those little toy pianos and he played Jingle Bells. Well when I saw that happening I thought, "Oh this is great. He can do it. He can sound it out right on this dopey little piano." So the next thing you do... you go out and buy him a piano. And a grand piano at that. And a teacher.

The name of Peter's teacher was George Sahagan. And by the Dizozzas account he was a great teacher for Peter but was very unstructured. Thus, the first brick in the entertainer that Peter Dizozza would turn out to be was laid.

Nic: He could never be a concert pianist. He could only be an entertaining type of pianist. He does things his own way. He bounces around.

Mad: Well, he didn't have the kind of training that you'd want your son to have in the early formal stages of learning to play the piano. This guy was very relaxed with him and made piano playing fun for him. The early stages of learning to play the piano can be awful and he made him happy playing. However, it has a disadvantage because then you need the structure.

Mon: Well, I don't think we know that. He got a kick out of it so much.

I also took piano lessons and he treated me very differently. He indulged Peter.

Nic: He let Peter do his thing. Jumping around and stuff.

DW: So when did Peter start composing?

Mon: He was writing songs on guitar when he was ten.

Nic: What was it? "Shake, shake, shake" or something?

Mon: No, he wrote a song about you, about being a lawyer.

by Dave Wechsler

Dizozza Uncovered

by Dave Wechsler

(Sings) *Running down to Wolfie's got papers to sign
You better hurry up before the clock strikes nine
It's five after nine and you're late again
You sneak into your office that you share with Ben
It looks like it's gonna be another lousy day again
And then it goes on-* (recites) "You got a new case and

you're in a mess. It looks as if it's going to be a tough one, yes."

DW: So he was already distrustful of working in an office by the time he was ten? He was a quick kid.

(It is interesting to note that Peter is now a lawyer.)

Mad: Oh of course, of course.

Mon: And he wrote a lot of heavy rock and roll stuff too. That's my favorite stuff he's written. Very heavy.

This information gave me pause. Clearly an important link in the Peter Dizozza story, I had been totally unaware that he had ever written anything besides odd show tunes that sounded like a combination of Cole Porter, the Marquis de Sade, and the Kabbalah. But at one point, Peter Dizozza played guitar in a rock band. For some reason, this made me happy. I decided to find out more about his other activities.



DW: So, what else was Peter involved in?

Mad: One thing you may not be familiar with is that Peter made movies. We were up in New Hampshire and we had this 8mm camera and he got involved in making this movie about a frog. [At this point I asked them what the plot of the frog movie was. Unfortunately, I cannot for the life of me decipher their reply on the tape. You may ask, "Well, why don't you just call them up and ask again?" The answer: Embarrassment. I told them when I was interviewing them that the article would be out in the next two weeks. Four months have now past and for some reason it just seems a little late to call up and say, 'Now about that interview. I need to clarify most of it...'. Anyway, sorry. If you really want to know about the frog movie you should conduct your own interview.]

Mon: He also had a fascination with the dead railroad tracks around here. He'd make movies on the dead tracks; like a horror movie, about people killed by vampires and then they'd run over onto the tracks.

(Now this was sounding more like the Peter Dizozza of today.)

Nic: And he was very talented with photography. (pause) He wrote a Christmas carol. (pause) He wrote books too.

Mad: But nobody can understand them... I can't understand them.

DW: I read one of them. Mark of the Librarian.... Why are you rolling your eyes?

Nic: Well, he doesn't like simple sentences. He's not appealing to the masses. (pause) His sister often sings with him. You have to mention Monica too; she's part of the team.

Mon: Well when he writes new songs, he tries them out on me.

Mad: He has so many interests. For instance, we have a house in Connecticut and he put together a newspaper with a little printing press that you have to stamp each letter in. And he put together these activity papers and would distribute the paper. He's really done an awful lot, but with his music and stuff he's never been able to market it.

Mon: Well, I think it's hard to market himself because it's very very personal. He's writing what he knows about.

DW: Well, have you heard the Hermitage song?

Mad: Yeah, yeah I did. He sang it at the community center. It's very good... I don't know why he sings it. I always ask why.

DW: So there's no hermitage in his past?

Mad: No, he had lots of friends. I think sometimes he thinks he's a loner. But he's always had lots of friends.

Mon: He was very cool. He used to wear this blue velvet jacket all the time.

DW: When was this?

Mon: Early teens. 13, 14.

DW: Did he have a rebellious stage?

Mad: Sure. He went to Arch Bishop Malloy high school. And they had a dress code there. He was supposed to wear shirt and tie but somehow he invented the turtleneck with a tie. He did his thing. He had a band there.

Mon: Steak and Potatoes. SAP.

DW: That was his rock band that you mentioned earlier?

Mon: Yeah.

From there we moved onto his post high school life. He went to Queens College and majored in music and English with a minor in philosophy. Then he went to work for the city.

Nic: While he was there he took pictures of landmarks of the city which were so good that they exhibited them in the Federal Courthouse.

Mad: He developed all his own pictures.

Nic: There's chemicals in our bathtub still.

Mad: Then, while working in the comptroller's office, he went to law school at night. And while he was doing that he was putting on these musical productions that they called The Law Review. Those shows were outstanding. He's done a lot of performing, but definitely not with popular success.

Nic: Not yet.

Dizozza...

by Dave Wechsler



seem to want to perform it... Well, even if I don't understand it, I love him.

Mon: Peter doesn't know how to lie. I don't think he's ever lied.

Mad: He's very open about things. Sometimes you want to reserve some things. That's why I find his subject matter which he seems to dwell upon is so...

Mon: Not uplifting?

Mad: Yes, not uplifting, but he seems to

Mon: Well, it's nice to hear you say that.

Mad: It's nice to hear him say that because Nicolas would rather he be a top-notch lawyer.

Nic: Well, law's tough. If he put his great brains to lawwork... but his heart's in music, not law.

DW: What about *Cinema VII*? (His production company)

Mon: Well, some guy at United Artists took a liking to him and would give him movies to watch.

Mad: We showed them in Connecticut, in the basement.

Mon: And he would charge admission. He put up a sign, "Cinema VII presents". And he was showing movies that were showing in theatres at the time.

Mad: When he was very young he'd run away from cowboy movies with the shooting and killing.

Nic: He didn't like all the violence.

Mon: And now if you see what he's writing.

Mad: He made a major about face. It was the same with horror movies. He couldn't watch them. And now... What he's thinking... I don't know. I think maybe it's misguided or misdirected somewhere. I mean there are many writers in the world that I'm sure I wouldn't understand. I'm sure Shakespeare is hard to understand.

Mon: Well, it's like piece of art. You look at a piece of art and it's your interpretation.

DW: Well, in his material I almost always know what's going on. It's just a little hard to tell why anything is happening. His material is very episodic and it's hard to connect all the vignettes sometimes. And as for what he's trying to get across... Have you seen *Prepare to Meet Your Maker*?

Mad: I've seen it and I don't understand it.

Nic: It's complicated.

Mon: Well, he took this spanish comic book and wrote a play and music around that. It's a little religious, with a fascination of death and sex and all that. Mad: Well it's a mythical thing. My main interest when I watched it is in the music. That's what my ear was tuned to. But I don't understand what he's getting at. Why can't it be simple? He seems to spend a lot of time and effort in repeating it. And I know he has a lot of performers who

be cynical about it. It's a joke, he says.

DW: Well, maybe his writing is a kind of exorcism. A way to get all this stuff out.

And here, dear reader, is where I had my opportunity. Now was the time to ask, "Why do you suppose much of your son's work has a running central motif of necrophilia?" But I was having such a pleasant time and they were so nice to me and the pie was so good that I felt bad about bringing up this rather unsavory topic. And so, the moment was lost.

But you know, some things are better left unexplained. And after all this talk about Peter, I was beginning to understand his work. Since I interviewed his parents and sister I've seen other work of Peter's. At the end of September, I saw a reading of the first draft of *Witchfinders*, Dizozza's play about a group of beings who hunt down witches while living their lives backward in time (odd time movement is also a motif of Peter's) And all around the room there were confused and bewildered looks, but I was able to follow along, laugh merrily as Edmund (the central character, read by Mr. Peter Dizozza) described in detail how the best orgasms he's ever had were brought about by killing witches, and I left not confused and bewildered, but profoundly entertained by the production. The fact is, witches and orgasms are cracking good entertainment. Dead women brought back to life making love with hunchbacks... Get me a chair, I want to watch! It's like watching a staging of an old Victorian penny dreadful that built on an abstract intellectual platform. There is no more highbrow and no more lowbrow performances being done



Dizozza - completed by Dave Wechsler
than those of Peter Dizozza. In fact, I highly recommend it as first date material. Nothing says "I want you." quite like Dizozza's quasi-religious erudite hedonistic love songs.

Anyway, the interview came to a close and I headed out into the Forest Hills night. For reasons of space and incomprehension, much of the interview has been cut and pasted into the format that you just read. But there is one nugget that I'd like to leave you with that I wasn't quite able to squeeze in elsewhere.

Mad: Peter didn't start talking until very late. He was already two when he said his first word.

DW: What was that?

Mad: Duck. One day he just came out and said it, "duck, duck, duck." His next word was "phonograph".

Goodnight.

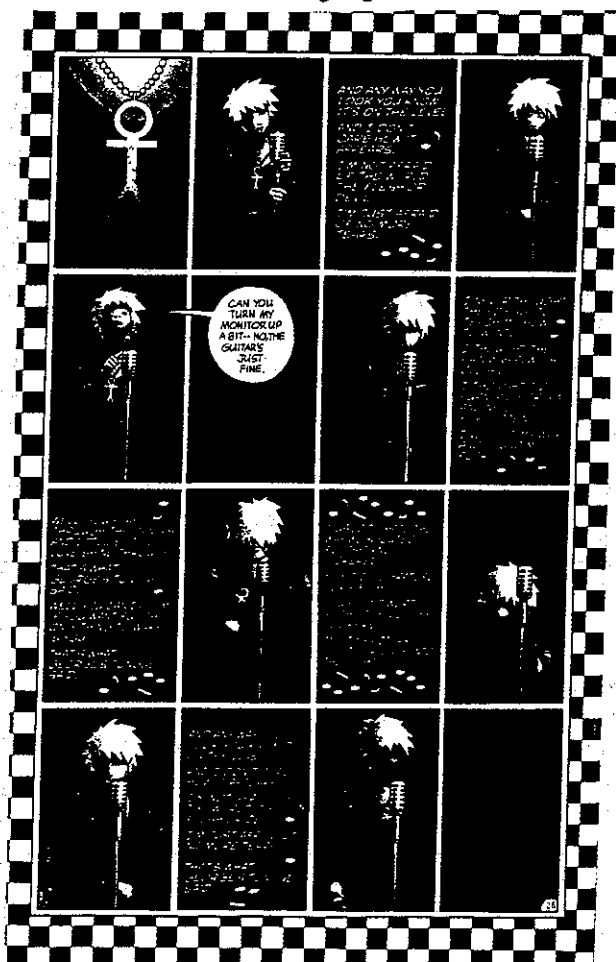
Dave.

Death: The Time of your Life

by Neil Gaiman,
Chris Bachalo, & Mark Buckingham

I was told to review this for the wrong reason.

"Neil Gaiman's the writer, see?" one of the editors said, "And he's the reason that Geoff Notkin got involved in punk, and got involved with Lach, and got involved with AntiMatters. So we owe Gaiman something, right?"



"Right," I said, uncertainly, looking at the comic book placed so recently in my hands.

I have no idea why I was asked to do it, but, never one to turn down a challenge (or a comic book), I began reading to review. I like comic books, and, to when I say comic book, that's exactly what I mean. While the term's existed for hundreds -- or dozens -- of years, it always referred to a little magazine of 4-color cartoons. In the last twenty years or so, though, publishers have been producing actual books -- bound and everything -- of comic art and stories. They call them graphic novels or comic collections, but they're really what they were always misnamed: comic books.

Of course, as books go, *The Time of Your Life* is a pretty slim one, measured at less than a hundred pages. The entire story didn't take me long to read. Still, it was a potent brew.

And that's how I discovered the real reason to review this book.

The story's about a modern-age family, Hazel, a housebound chef, her son Alvie, and her lover, Foxglove, called, according to a reporter, "The new queen of acoustic rock and roll."

Foxglove plays solo, and is beginning to promote her new album, *Slits of Love*. She's wondering if she should come out of the closet, wonders if it'll do well for her album, which she promotes in New York City. Everything suggests Foxglove is punk, fighting the constraints of corporate conditioning, and fundamentally AntiFolk.

How *Death* comes into the story is another thing entirely. In less than 100 pages of pictures, I grew to care about the characters, including a dead manager, a buddhist underwear model, and, of course, the incarnation of excarnation. Good book. Available in quality book stores, and Border's.

(Arnie Rogers)

Acts of Necessity: The Bernadette Interview

by Penner MacBryant

She's a black-haired, coal-eyed beauty of an adolescent girl, with the face and near perfect smile that easily snags the covers of magazines like *Seventeen* or *ym*. Given her artistic background, she herself could have chosen the route of an artist's model. But don't let the soft looks fool you. It takes only a minute's worth of conversation to learn how much strength lies beneath the becoming surface. Bernadette is an articulate, serious-minded young singer/songwriter who has over ninety songs to her credit, acts and speaks with discernible resolve and sings with one of the most engaging vibratos bubbling just under the surface of major recognition. The overall image is clear: softness without weakness. We caught up with her at one of her gigs here in New York to learn more about this fairly new and promising artist on the scene at the Fort.

PM: Let me start by saying how impressed I was by the caliber of your material. It's particularly remarkable because—I know you probably get this all the time because of your age (17), but the lyricism evidences a sophistication you don't link with most adolescents.

B: I guess writing has always been an outlet for me. I've been writing all my life. It's something that I submerge myself in. It helped me to grow as a person as well as a writer. The drive to want to be a good writer has helped me push the creative envelope a lot. Besides I think music is something that's not so much thought out as it is channeled. I don't know how I write [the songs] I'm not going to question it. I just feel that it's something that comes through me more than I'm contriving.

PM: Tell me something about your musical background. Was there precedent for a career in the arts in your family?

B: I came from a pretty artistic family. My brother Eddie is an actor. We've always had fun artistically. It was always very natural in our home setting. Arts were appreciated there and we were basically encouraged. We learned from each other, I think. I have six [siblings] so when I was a toddler, they were listening to punk rock and stuff. So there's this variety of music. I think being exposed to that certainly helped my songwriting. It broadened my horizons.

PM: I hear that, in addition to guitar, you play several other instruments.

B: Well, guitar is my first instrument. I started that when I was about four or five. I got my first real guitar then. It wasn't until I was about ten years old that I started playing drums and piano also. I work on pretty much all of them. I think I like them all equally.

PM: What's been the general response in or outside of your family, to this decision to pursue a career in popular music?

B: My family, even my grandparents, and probably (I think) the generation before them, all their careers were in the arts. It's not unusual. It's not this far out thing that I'm doing. The most pressure that I receive is in the school system because—I've been in Honors programs for most of my life, and in those classes especially they push the careers that basically you can assure yourself that you will make money from. They're more guided toward the practical—quote/unquote. And when I would say that I'm going to do this for a living, I'm going to do music, it's sort of, "Yeah, but what are you really going to do?" People really don't believe that things like that happen. They think these careers[in popular music] are impossible, which is ridiculous because, apparently, there are people who make it.

PM: You always play the Fort when you're in New York. What do you find particularly engaging about it?

B: The aura of that room, of the crowd that goes there. People are just listening. The performers talk to each other. There's this really warm, cozy, bohemian feeling to it. It's exactly how I'd picture a New York venue to be. And I just have always felt really good when I go on stage there. Lach is great. He's really nice. I sincerely enjoy going up there. I like watching the other acts and stuff. It's a great place.

PM: In addition to the material, you have a vocal style that's uniquely your own. Did—for want of a better term—the vocal tremor in your singing style that's become something of a trademark for you—Where did it come from?

B: I've heard comments about that before. The vibrato or whatever that is at the ends of my notes. I don't know. Maybe it's something I picked up from the music that I've listened to. I really don't know. I wasn't really conscious of it until people started to point it out. It's just something that happens I think with the air.

PM: Sort of like Buddy Holly's hiccup (laughter), which leads me to an interesting point. Is it just me hearing rockabilly in your musical influences?

B: Rockabilly happens to be a really big influence. I used to listen to rockabilly music a lot. There's something very raw about that playing; very rhythmic. In a way, it's minimal, but it's so effective. It's the rhythm of it, I think, that really gets me. Bo Diddley happens to be one of my influences.

PM: Really? I thought I heard Bo in there a bit! (laughter) How close are you to committing anything to vinyl at this time? Are you thinking of taking the independent route as so many musicians are doing, or considering a major label?

B: I'm not shut off to major labels at all. I'm not shut off to independent labels. I'm just open for the deal that would work best for me, and I'll know that when that comes. I give people who work at it a long time and who release records on their own and build their following over a course of years—like Ani DiFranco—I give them a lot of credit because that's a very original way to approach it. It takes a lot of devotion and it shows that they really love what they're doing. I would be open to doing that if I didn't get a major label deal. My ultimate goal is just to make music, put it out there and hopefully in 1998, I'll get to make a product. Whether it's distributed with someone backing it or on my own, it's still going to be there.

PM: While we're on the subject of the industry, a song of yours -- "I Want To Be A Star On MTV" — one of several you've

written that addresses the notion of 'stardom' There's a line in it. "Make a mannekin out of me..." which just stood out when I first heard it. Is it safe to assume that you harbor a pronounced ambivalence towards the business regarding the way it treats and promotes people?

B: I think many, many artists do. It's extremely hard. I mean, you're coming from a place of pure art, trying to be yourself and you're entering commerce. And for the sake of commerce, you can be changed. People will change you or people will try to change you to make you marketable. Not all the time, but when that happens, I think---which is sometimes a necessary step in advancing in your career--- you have to collaborate with other people, which isn't always easy. But when that happens, it's very hard for artists. It's very hard to spill your guts in front of people, it's very hard to get up and go to another gig, worry about whether people are getting it or if you're affecting anyone. You just want to make records; you want to reach people and there are all these complications, in terms of business, in between, and that's a struggle that you feel as an artist [who records or wants to record] and that I feel. And that's what "I Want To Be A Star On MTV" is *really* all about.

PM: When you were up on stage a little while ago and announced that you were about to perform a song you had written at age twelve, I was admittedly curious to hear what would follow. I mean either it will prove embarrassingly simplistic or remarkable. "Without You" is an impressive bit of work considering your age at the time.

B: Thank you.

PM: When did you know that you were a songwriter and when did you officially declare this as your calling?

B: I always knew that I would write music and that I would pursue this career, even when I was a toddler, I knew. Unconsciously, I just sort of went along, doing my instruments and stuff, with faith that I would be able to write one day. And it really happened over night. I don't know exactly how. I mean, maybe it was attributable to experiences in my life that I was going through. A lot of transitions and my emotions were just very turbulent. And a song was born from that. I just found that place where the songs can come from and I never lost touch with it. They came one after the other in those days. Strange. Very strange.

PM: Do you see yourself as a solo artist exclusively and/or are you presently assembling a band?

B: I see myself mostly as a solo artist, but I am assembling a back up band, just to make the arrangements of the songs more full. I've written so much original material, so much solo stuff that I've yet to hear expanded, whether recorded or performed live. I'm just not at that point yet. I don't know about the future. I can't say if I'll decide to collaborate with other people. Right now, I'm still developing myself as a performer. I'd like to remain [solo] for now at least.

PM: Do you see yourself mostly as an acoustic performer?

B: Actually, no. I listen to a lot of electric music. I listen to a lot of electronic music and heavy guitar music. Acoustic guitar is

just the way I perform right now. I don't really prefer that style over the harder, electric style. I'm not a folk artist. In the future, I hope to sort of steer away from acoustic performance and perform more electrically. More loud. Because that's a lot of the emotion that's in the music. I think acoustic music is beautiful, but I don't prefer it over electric regarding the music.

PM: How would you yourself describe your music?

B: In terms of genre? (pause) I hate this word because I don't think anyone knows what it means anymore, but it's alternative. It's like a sophisticated punk rock in a sense. It means something but at the same time it's still rowdy and there's a formula to it. It's a good question. I'll have to think about it.(laughter).

PM: You speak of various kinds of voids in your song lyrics. What for you is the great void that exists in popular music these days and how do you address it through your music?

B: I think sometimes what happens in the studio is we get really caught up in dubbing, in tracking, in using all the technology that's there and being really neat and organized. I think that when music captures the mistakes or the natural feel or when a band plays and they just play [the material] the way they play it, there's something to be said about that, that natural, raw sound that's coming across. I think it's important for that to be captured--at least, in my opinion, for my music. Also, there seems to be a loss of melody and message sometimes. There are some artists that [work] on it, but a lot of popular music steers away from the songwriting and just kind of goes toward the production. I think songwriting is really important. If you have both, production and good songwriting craft, then you have amazing music.

PM: What for you, so far, as a singer/songwriter, has been the moment of affirmation--- meaning the moment when you felt emotionally justified for all the previous steps you'd taken towards this career of yours?

B: There are stories that come back to me sometimes about people who hear my tapes. There is an overweight woman in some state far away and there was someone who had my tape and the song, "Lily" was on the tape, which is about the way women see themselves and how hard it is to meet the standards, physical and otherwise, that society sets for them. And this woman was crying when she heard that song, and the story about her got back to me. And I feel like when I get those experiences, it shows me that I have to keep going, because it helps people. It makes me feel that there's something there they can relate to and understand. When I see the audience stare at me or it seems like they're connecting. Those are the moments that are most memorable.

Acts of Necessity

by Penner MacBryant

Reviews: Music that must be heard to be believed

Getting the album out there is a motherfucker.

Making it was hard enough, seeing as how you had to pay for the transportation, the studio, the tape, then mixing, mastering, and mass producing, but that ain't nothing compared to getting people to hear it.

Some people take the easy way out, giving their music away to any old sucker who shows half an interest. Jon Segol wrote last month about some sucker-friend of his — KL — who does that, despite not having two wooden nickels to rub together for fire. There's benefit to that: you don't have to try to take money from people, and you believe you're giving your music a good home, but still, that usually puts you out a shotload of money. So you've got to find a way to sell it. Or you've got to find a way to justify giving it away, in the hopes you'll be making money on the stuff someday. Important people and publications often are sent music, gratis, in the hopes of garnering good reviews and eventual purchases.

AntiMatters, being the paper of records, gets the occasional review copy of AntiFolk and wannabe AntiFolk releases. Some are good. Some are bad. Some are surprisingly bad. Some are reviewed. This is their story.

Nancy Falkow- There's just no getting past the voice. It's excellent. The songs, all at the least cowritten by Falkow, are at turns sweet, strong, poppy and mysterious. The packaging is minimal, which makes would make you expect a less professional-sounding demo EP. The real thing that sets this release apart, though, is the voice. It sweeps, it whispers, it belts, and it rarely overshadows the rest -- despite that fact that it's clearly in control. (Tongue & Groove)

Dignus: In Your World - Down in Nashville, Randy Perkins changed his name to Dignus, and seems surprised when people misspeak it as 'Dingus.' The price you pay, I guess. He's trying to sound soulful, and sometimes does, with certain phrasings, but just as often doesn't. The production, by Garry Tallent (Isn't he an E-Street Band boy?), is pretty slick. Pretty big. This '96 release is clearly vying for commercial success. With an artist's name like Dignus, maybe it'll find it. (D'Ville Record Group)
Slide: Whipdang! - Whipdang starts with "Whipdang," which brings back memories of the 80's and Living in a Box. The song, a crunchy nouveau blues with power trap, features the erroneous line: "2 ways to live, but just 1 way to die." The group is led by songwriter/guitarist/vocalist s Wolf Wortis, and is based in Boston. There's a lot of good hooks on the album, and enough powerful performances to make you think they should be seen to be believed. Despite the force and hooks of most of the songs, there's still room for the shimmery girl-sung 'He Loves Her.' A very good album, well worth owning. (Your Name Here Baby)

Patrick Harper 

SATIRE
MONOLOGUES
VERSE

- Acid-tongued, very strange, sharp comedy.

!!! SUNDAY
FEB. 8
9:30pm

SIDEWALK CAFE 94 Ave A.

Stephanie Biederman

Small Tip: To break a record, you ought to know your audience.

Who are you trying to pitch your music to? A couple of basic categories come to mind:

• DJs • The record-buying public • Bookers, management, PR • The Religious Right • Friends, family, lovers.

Each is looking for something else in music, sometimes contrary things. A release for any of these groups could be tailored to them: Friends & people you know are just looking for what you want to put on. They're gonna listen to your stuff no matter what -- or will say they will -- at least. DJs are tough: they want something that they can play, which puts certain constraints on free expression, but also still requires hooks enough to keep them entertained. The Religious Right wants god in the details. If you want to please them, avoid songs about killing their lord. The record-buyers of most gigging artists with no radioplay want something like the concert. That's what turned them onto the music in the first place. They'll probably listen to the whole thing, though, which marks them as decidedly different from Bookers and other forms of business types. They have limited time, and will usually cut off a demo after 60 seconds if nothing gets their attention. However, they don't have the same kind of limits as to what they can use, so profanity, obscenity, and unnecessary violence might actually work to your advantage.

It's possible to record and release something that can satisfy each of these audiences: an immediately hooky song that speaks well of the lord but still has enough originality/creativity to make people want to listen to more. It's possible -- but it doesn't hurt to know who you're aiming for, to think about who you might hit.

Professor G Lesse II

A 14-year old breaks a record, and takes a mind-contracting trip into rock&roll hell....

Friday evening, February 21, 1975; I perused my small but very cool record collection. Zeppelin IV, Molly Hatchett, Steve Miller, Dark Side of the Moon, the Eagles, Todd Rundgren... "I should be a DJ," I thought. But one record definitely did not belong, like a sore thumb, it stuck out. I was ashamed of it... "The Partridge Family." Their first album. I could bear it no longer. I pulled the disk from its sleeve, and with all the rage I could muster, bent it, kicked it, stepped on it, and finally, broke it in half. I ripped the record jacket into several small pieces, and stuffed it all into my wastepaper basket. That music represented a part of me that was dead. I didn't like that childish stuff anymore. I was a metalhead, and damed proud of it. There was no turning back. This would be an exceedingly 'heavy' evening.

A badly-dented 1969 Vista Cruiser station wagon stopped outside my house, horn honking. I said "bye" to Mom and Dad and ran out to the car, not too fast, I didn't want appear uncool, but just beneath the surface I was bubbling with excitement. This was my first rock concert, my first journey to that fabled rock Mecca, the Boston Garden. Jamie McNab, Billy Driscall, Brian Buckley, and Ronnie Ivanoff were all senior toughs, and I, little 14 year old freshman was flattered that they had invited me to see Zeppelin and Aerosmith, two of my favorite groups. I was realistic about the invitation: two days before I had purchased an ounce of "Colombian red" for \$30. McNab had 5 tickets, he sold me one for 15 bucks and told me I could travel with him provided I got everyone high and pitched in for beer.

I was reclining in the back of the car with two spare tires, assorted junk, and a large plastic bag of stanching household garbage. It wasn't really very comfortable, but hey, cool. McNab jammed a Peter Frampton tape into the 8 track, and I remember thinking "It doesn't get much better than this." Our first stop was the Exxon station, McNab hit me up, three dollars gas money. Then the liquor store, Ivanoff was old enough to buy, he had stayed back 3 times. I shucked over 6 dollars, enough for two six-packs, I asked for "Miller", Ivanoff paid no attention to my request and came out of the package store with 2 cases of "Haffenreffer Private Stock" aka Green Death, "It's on sale, \$7.50 a case.", he said. I was a little aggravated but kept it to myself, besides these guys obviously knew more about partying than me.

We all lit up cigarettes, cracked open some beers and set off down the highway towards Beantown. I handed my bag of weed to Buckley, who began rolling joints. We fired two or three right away. Twenty minutes into the ride and I was blasted. Between tokes I chain smoked Marlboroughs and chugged beers. As we entered Boston Buckley handed me back a severely depleted bag of grass and seven king-sized joints, "Leave your bag in the car, bring the joints into the show" he instructed. "Good idea" I said. Then I picked up a beer and guzzled hard... "Oh my God," This was the bottle I'd been using as an ashtray, my mouth was instantly filled with about 3 ounces of lukewarm Haffenreffer and a half dozen waterlogged butts, (tobacco, filters and ash). Gross me out! I had swallowed some. I spat the rest onto my white Levi bellbottoms. Everyone except me was roaring with laughter, I felt sick, very sick. McNab, the driver screamed, "Don't puke or I'll beat the shit out of you". Buckley was more

compassionate and suggested I quickly drink a fresh beer to clean the flavor out of my mouth. He added that I should fire another joint to calm my stomach... It worked.

Amazingly McNab found a free parking space on a side street 3 blocks from the Garden. After he parked, I remember we paused before getting out of the car until the Zeppelin tune "Immigrant Song" was finished on the radio. I was a little drunk, very stoned, and still feeling rather sickly. I was wasted. Stumbling. Ivanoff grabbed my collar and pushed me against a wall, "You better not fuck up! You got the joints?" "Yup" I said, showing him the 6 large stogies in my coat pocket... As I pulled away from the wall I heard a ripping sound. Looking to my right I noticed tufts of white fluff, puffing out of my new down filled coat, the shoulder had caught on a tiny nailhead protruding from the wall. My new coat, a Christmas gift from my parents, looked like hell now, I was feeling sunk. Ivanoff eased my concerned somewhat when he recommended I patch it with electrical tape when I get home. Nobody would notice.

We entered the Boston Garden without incident, Aerosmith roadies were checking the stage. The atmosphere was electric, invigorating, rebellious. Hey, the building was full of cool people like me. They even had the same haircut... even the girls. Yes, I was rebounding, feeling much better... people here were cool, nobody was going to like me less because I had tufts of fluff bulging from my shoulder. I felt one with the crowd, as if we were all one family partying together... This euphoria was short-lived.

As we were headed to our seats we were stopped in a crush of people, suddenly I felt a hard warm stream of liquid against my scalp, then a loud patting sound as it hit my coat. I looked up and saw that from the second rafter above, some guy was peeing, urinating on the crowd below and simultaneously waving his middle finger. I couldn't believe it... I was positively drenched. Ivanoff got some on his leather jacket and said that if he found the guy he'd kill him. Ivanoff and I took off to the restroom to wash. As I waited my turn at the sink, I noticed the joints in my pocket were saturated with urine. Disgusting! I threw the sticky contents of my pocket onto the floor. I washed up as best I could. Then Ivanoff told me "Go back should go back out to the car get what's left of the pot. We can't see this show without 'combustibles'." Then he wandered over to a pirate-looking dude who was standing near the stalls chanting, "Green dots, three dollars a hit... Green dots, three dollars a hit..."

McNab gave me the keys to his "Vista" and reminded me where the car was parked. "Alder Place, 3 blocks behind the Garden." Off I went into the bitter cold, sticky and stinky. My hair froze... I found the car, found the pot, and headed back to the Garden. Sadly, when I got to the turnstile I realized my ticket stub had been in my coat pocket, discarded with the joints. Emotionally broken, I returned to the car, freezing, no rolling papers, no bottle opener, no money. I jammed "Frampton Comes Alive" into the 8-track. Amazed, I listened as the tape got chewed up in the machine. "What a sound"! I reflected. It doesn't get much worse than this... McNab was gonna be pissed off.

Pat Harper

Breaking Records

Gustav Plympton

(AntiFolk Artists with Major Deals)

Hard as it may be to get a record contract, it seems just as hard to keep it. Look at those people who exploded from the AntiFolk scene over Christmases past:

Brenda Kahn had one album with Chaos, a Columbia subsidiary, before it folded and then the Columbia gave her the heave-ho. She's been with Shanachie, but fourth-hand word is that she's considering other takers (something about a non-exclusive contract leaving her open to offers).



Roger Manning's had three different albums on three different labels: SST, Shimmy-Disc, and most recently on Shanachie. He has also released works with unknown company 109 Records, but that's no longer an option, since they no longer exist.

Casey Scott, once with Capitol, is again looking for a way to make records.



Hammell on Trial, after two great albums with Mercury Records, has just again become a free agent. He was unhappy with his relationship with the label, and expects to be signed again within a few months.

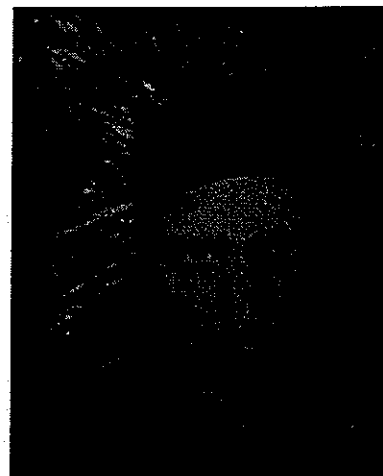
Michelle Shocked, also with Mercury, made four good albums of varying degrees of popularity before being stymied in her desire to make a fifth. Three different sets of recordings were shopped to the label, all with different thematic content, all of which with different songs, all of which were rejected. After releasing her Graham Parkerly titled Mercury Poise greatest hits collection, Shocked went semi-self-released with the independent Private Music label.



Lach put something out on Gold Castle at the turn of the 90s, and has been biding his time for the follow-up.

Kirk Kelly had an album out on SST what seems like a decade ago. He was going to work with Gold Castle, but, almost upon signing with him, the company went belly-up.

King Missile, featuring spoken word revolutionary John S Hall, they had a pretty good record of making records for Shimmy Disc, then Atlantic, but hey! Where are they now?



Making Records: Contracts in AntiFolk



Paleface has been on Shimmy Disc and a couple of majors -- possibly Columbia and Elektra. Not today. He's working on recording, secure in the belief that another company will be sniffing around in no time.

Cindy Lee Berryhill has so far released a pair of albums on Rhino, then another pair for Earth Music, or Cargo, or something else. Several of the albums were rave reviewed, but right now, Berryhill's a free agent.

So far, the only former AntiFolkie with a stand-up record deal is Beck, and, of course, everyone knows his star is on the decline.



Why, then, are there so many close calls in the AntiFolk kingdom? So many who had a shot at making recording history, only to fall so so short. Could it be the nature of the business? Sure. Could it also be the nature of the performers, unwilling to make any concessions for their art, simply making the music they feel is important? Could it be punk ethic of No Compromise? A DIY belief in self-reliance? Could it be writers simply being true to themselves?

Doubtful. It's been scientifically proven that musicians are willing to sell their (as well as anybody else's) mothers for a good record deal -- Lach sort of sings about it in "The Blue Monk." There must be some other solution to the question of the failed AntiFolkies at major record companies. It won't be found here.

Community Announcements

Corrections:

- Joe Bendik played with a *sequencer*, not a DAT, with Medic Alert on January 3, 1998.

- Lach seemed displeased when he wasn't credited in the last AntiMatters.

"I sent in that effects and pedals piece," he said, "Where's my name?"

"You didn't write it, you got it from the internet," was the reply, to which the Architect of AntiFolk sneered.

"I wrote the last couple," he said, "I want a retraction next issue."

"Yeah yeah yeah..."

Retraction? From AntiMatters? Never!

- Last month, AntiMatters erroneously went on record as supportive of the Mandatory Abortion Act, a controversial fictitious congressional bill that encourages the wholesale slaughter of any person with the name of Carl. The bill, in fact, exclusively endorses genocide toward people named KARL. AntiMatters apologizes for any misunderstanding.

Adam Brodsky has an AntiHoot in Boston. If you can't get enough of open mics in NYC where they don't want to hear you and laugh while you sing your heartfelt paeans to pain and torment, you might as well jet down to Philadelphia, home of the second best AntiHoot on the East Coast, if not the entire Eastern half of the United States. Hosted by Adam Brodsky (who swore he'd never write for AntiMatters again if his thing wasn't mentioned -- a promise far more than a threat) and engineered by Butch Ross (see next issue), and presumably including such occasional Fortsters as Nancy Falkow, Brian Seymour, Mia Johnson, and the chicks from Cory, it promises to be something to go to. The only East Coaster so far who's seen what Philly has to offer is Lenny Molotov, and though he's said nothing, he did return up north with a dazed smile on his face. For more info, contact: ahmynose@aol.com or 215-230-PUNK. AntiHoot. Ask for it by name.

Contributions to AntiMatters are always appreciated.

The zine is about MUSIC JOURNALISM. Please feel free to share your ideas with anyone on the editorial board. Submissions accepted through e-mail, post, or through delivery at night to the Fort @ the Sidewalk.. It takes the Village to raise a zine. Make it so.

Java Junction,
up in Brockport, NY
(way up near Rochester)
has a Thursday open mike starting at 8.
Head up hundreds of miles from home to reach
56 Main Street, and ask for Mike Dockin.

BECK!



The most successful person coming out of AntiFolk is Beck. Not known quite so much as an East Village denizen as the man who defined post-grunge folk/hip-hop conglomerate slacker-rock, Beck spent 1990 living downtown, writing songs and playing AntiHoots. As often as he doesn't, Beck (Hansen, AKA nee Campbell) admits the debt he owes the AntiFolk scene, which is why he's such a ripe target for assessment at AntiMatters.

Course, who's gonna get in touch with him?

When traditional means (talking to the artist after a show, buying him a drink, then surreptitiously taping the conversation) failed to net the interview, the staff at AntiMatters got desperate.

Then, as so very often happens, they got creative.

"Beck's a sampledelic dude, right?" The editor-in-chief said, "He's always lifting bits and bytes from other people."

"And there's his wholesale theft of indigenous Village music --" the other editor guy put in. "What're you talking about?" La Editorialé Prima asked.

"It's a well-known fact that a bongload of Beck's stuff is ripped directly off of Paleface." "Oh, that's such a load of --"

But anyway.

The conclusion to the... lively discourse was that, since Beck himself samples, why not sample a Beck interview? Cobbled together from various quotes in a variety of magazines culled from vast sources (well, all taken from The Beck Web: <http://www.rain.org/~truck/beck>. Ask for it by name), this interview may not exactly be the zine on the AntiFolk scene talking to the mother of all AntiFolkies, but it will probably seem, like many a Beck song, to be a potent brew, a seamless concoction, rising from its precursors. Like Beck's music, it's something different from what has immediately preceded it.

Read on, McGuy:

I can't really play anything.. I just try to feel my way around it. (*Spin*, 7/94)

You were a local phenomenon like Dick Dale was in the 60's and then you just exploded.

Yeah, or imploded. I don't know. (*Nardwuar The Human Serviette* prank calls Beck)

I remember reading all the time, "There's only 2 words for Beck: Tommy Tutone." (*Interview* 8/96)

How did you find your way toward folk music?

By being a kid in the 80's and seeing how fake and artificial all the music was, and feeling disconnected from it - all this Huey Lewis and the News stuff didn't make an impression on me - and stumbling across Blind Willie Johnson, Woody Guthrie. This kind of stuff is really potent and pure. It kind of shook me up. It also seemed possible. None of the pop music in the 80's seemed like you could be part of it. You just had it inflict on you. Now I hear music on the radio, and it's guitars. It sounds a little more possible. Hearing Woody Guthrie, it's like "Oh, that's guitar." He's just sort of talking. He's just a person.

Where do you seek inspiration?

People always ask me what my favorite records are, and I don't really have any. I learn from things that are flawed. To me, bad music is more inspiring than a masterpiece just because something that's perfect is invisible. It's canceled itself out. Stuff that is refuse, be it music or art or a movie or a TV show, there's still a chance to take it and use it even as an inspiration and come up with something, take it closer to being perfect.


Musically, I've never thought in terms of fleeting popularity

'cause that's what popularity is. Playing folk music, I've always thought in terms of contributing to a longer tradition. I think that's what attracted me originally to folk music. It had a timelessness to it. As far as being flavor of the month, that just kind of seems distant to me. It's a postcard from somewhere. It isn't a place you live. There is an element of attaching yourself to a certain time. The whole thing is going to seem old in 10 years anyway.

Your grandfather was part of the Fluxus art movement, which conveyed the same message: everything exists for a short amount of time so take advantage of it while it's there.

I have a lot of general attachments to that - embracing that sort of dada, anti-reason. I think





my grandfather influenced me like anybody in your life influences you. People's character and ideas tend to rub off on you, whoever you're around. I remember him wanting to buy my old plastic rocking horse when I was a kid. It was sitting in the garage all covered with dust. He gave me \$5 dollars for it, and when I came home from school later that day the thing was decapitated and covered in cigarette butts and spray painted silver. I was horrified but also electrified at the possibility of taking something that was useless and turning it into a beautiful monstrosity. (UHF Magazine 7-8/96)

Referring to a film of his Al Hansen's:

It involved a gay wedding, a projection of 16-millimeter film, the throwing of toilet paper around--it created a sort of toilet-paper tent, a mini-amphitheater of toilet paper--and people walking around with toy guns. It was all choreographed, but there was a certain element of chance, and the two who were getting married were tied up and they had to saw a chair in half. I remember being so overwhelmed with this

spirit of I don't know what. Some other force overtaking me. In 20 years we're going to be digging that. Fifth generation style, that'll be the style. I'm really into collecting vinyl. The wannabe Dylans that probably never sold more than 200 copies. Or Stones rip-offs. At this point they are almost more interesting than the original. (SPIN 8/96)


Your songs are such a hodgepodge of musical styles that somehow perfectly fit the evocative narratives. What comes first?

Usually the music inspires the lyrics. The lyrics just sort of fall off like a bunch of crumbs from the melody. That's all I want them to be--crumbs. I don't want to work any kind of fabricated message. Sometimes I'll have an idea for a story or have a subject that will inspire lyrics, but most of the time, hopefully, they already exist somewhere else.

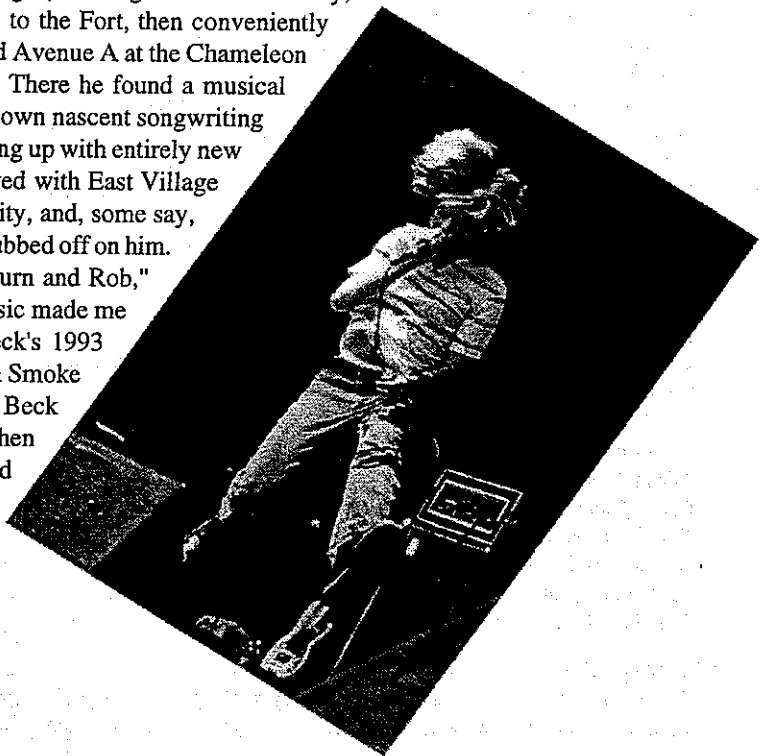
I think a lot of what I'm trying to do musically is draw upon the refuse and make something interesting out of it. It's not out of a desire to be kitschy or retro or anything like that. If that's the impression I give, then I haven't figured out how to do it right. I'm still learning like anybody else. There are things going on below the surface other than just a bunch of glib references to '70s and '80s waste culture.

I love the way people spoke in the '30s, and the amazing slang of the mid-'60s and '70s. I have to take a crippling piss before we continue this. I remember reading all the time, "There's only two words for Beck: Tommy Tutone." (Interview 8/96)

Just the facts, man:



In 1989, Beck Hansen (having adopted his mother's name in favor of his father's: Campbell) bussed out from his West Coast roots to inhabit New York City. Finding the East Village easily enough (Just a right at Port Authority, then a left on 10th), he wound his way to the Fort, then conveniently situated off the corner of Sixth Street and Avenue A at the Chameleon -- presently known as the Wonder Bar. There he found a musical scene like no other, an inspiration to his own nascent songwriting muse. Word is, he spent each week coming up with entirely new material -- or was that Paleface? He lived with East Village imigre Paleface during his time in the City, and, some say, some of Paleface's unique writing style rubbed off on him. The concept of Mr. Face's '91 single "Burn and Rob," located in its' mantra, "Rock and roll music made me burn and rob" was soon repeated in Beck's 1993 "Loser" b-side, "MTV Makes Me Wanna Smoke Crack." More telling is the voicing that Beck chooses to use in his acoustic numbers. When his voice isn't hidden behind distortion and distance, he sounds very much like a plaintive Paleface. Contrast Mr. Hansen's "Pay No Mind" with any Paleface song from the same period, or earlier, and be amazed. Or say, "Hey, they lived together. Was anything funny going on?" Or just turn the page, and pay no mind.



Tales from the Trenches: Breaking Records

OTIS EMERSON:

She's beautiful on-stage. She's beautiful off-stage. Laurie Lewis is a vision of loveliness.

This is difficult, as she's my employer. Part-time, but still... It's my job, when she's on-stage, or in transit, or meeting people, to make sure she's safe. I'm a glorified bodyguard, and with her body, I love my job. But it's not just the body — which is great — that makes me adore her. It's her voice, her songs. It's the fact that she's Laurie Lewis that makes me want to protect her from those wretched ogling eyes all around. I'd do anything for her.

So, seeing some tiny suited schlumpy schmuck hurriedly approach her just as she gets off-stage, I'm quick to react.

"Can I help you?" He tries to turn, but, with my hand on his shoulder, can't. She continues walking, oblivious.

"I need to see Ms. Lewis," he winces under my grasp.

"Of course," I say, "We all do. But if you have no appointment —"

"— But I do," he replies, just as she returns. A white towel covering her shoulders, a glass to her lips, Laurie Lewis has come back to me.

"Hermann Slugwurtz?" she asks.

"Yes. I believe we have an appointment, Mr. Lewis"

Or to him...

HERMANN SLUGWURTZ:

Damn ape thinks he's doing me a favor, letting me in? Ms. Laurie Lewis may be some kind of up-and-coming acousticelebrity, but I've had this appointment for weeks. Damn ape...

"That was a truly excellent show, Ms. Lewis."

"Well, that's very kind of you to say." She shoots a winning smile on me, and it's not so hard to keep on this polite face. She radiates warmth. "I just wanted to ask you a few background questions, talk about the past a bit, before we get to the future."

"You're the boss," she smiles. She smiles beautifully, and I forget my train of thought, for just a bit.

"How long have you been playing music?"

"Well, I premiered at the Trench, this little club over on East Corner, almost two years ago, and after a couple of showcases, some people began saying some very nice things about my songs."

Calculating while she's talking... something feels a little off. It's tough when you have to take notes, but my recorder's in the shop...

"Do you play those small clubs any more?"

"Not as much as I'd like. I prefer the intimacy of small rooms, but they get too awkward, too many people in the club, falling on each other. It's not as much fun for anyone. I still play the Trench unannounced."

Good interview, very professional, very pretty... Didn't bring the camera. Damn...

Question after question, she remains polite and sweet, smooth and smart. She answers completely, and doesn't get flustered. Finally:

"Thank you, Ms. Lewis. I really appreciate the chance to talk to you." Shaking hands, she replies, "It was my pleasure."

With her hand on the door of the dressing room, I lob a final question.

"When will you release another demo?"

"No," she smiles, "I feel it's better that the songs only come from me at — Another demo?"

"Yeah," I say, figuring out what was wrong earlier. "Another. After Dance Dance Dance!"

"Hm," she leans on the knob, "How'd you hear about that?"

"Oh, a friend..." I say.

"Excuse me," she answers, and is gone.

Suddenly, I think I'm on to something.

BRIAN KELLY:

The window seat is wonderful and Viceroy's. People think there's more than one window seat, seeing as how roughly one third of the

tables lean on glass, but really, there isn't. If you think about it, there's not much choice at all. Fourth table into the restaurant keeps you far enough away from the door to avoid a draft, but close enough to see everyone who comes in, and yet still far enough to become wrapped up in whatever you're doing if you see someone you want to ignore. Meanwhile, you get a perfect view not only of the sidewalk, but the corner — the Four Corners, where all sorts of people come and go. Drug deals and car crashes, lust for sale and loves lost, fights on phones and fantastic fe — hell, was that a MAN?

A lot of activities goes on at Four Corners, so there's a lot of good people-watching. And from far enough in the dark-lit restaurant, no one can tell that you're watching, but before that giant functionless column that obstructs any view from the further tables. A lot of inspiration lies just outside, waiting to be plucked from the unsuspecting, right there, at the fourth table in at Viceroy's.

It's easy enough to see why it's a great view when you can watch some radiant girl approaching from the East. She's turning heads, some of which recognize her, some of which just like the way she looks. I can't blame any of them, especially as I can tell who it actually is, long before she hits the door of the Viceroy. Strong legs, billion-kilowatt smile when it's on — which it's not, it's an old friend.

"Hey Laurie," I say as she reaches the table, "What's up?"

"Brian," she says to me, "We have to talk."

LAURIE LEWIS:

"I'm sorry I lent out the tape."

"Sorry doesn't cut it, Bri," I say.

"What's the big deal? So your not proud of your old work —"

"It's not my old work. I take no credit for that unspeakable piece of trash. I don't even want to talk about it."

LEE Chabowski

CB's Gallery

\$5.00 Cheap

Feb. 10 9:00 Sharp

"What? Dance Dance Dance!?"

"Brian," I hold onto the table for all it's worth, "I am this close to smacking you through the window."

He stares, maybe surprised I'm acting this way. Normally, I'm calm, laid back, mellow. Not now. He gets it.

"I did say I'm sorry, didn't I?"

I don't say anything, so his gaze moves from me to the outside world, and I wonder how DARE he be distracted during this crisis. As he stares after some passing mini-skirt, he adds, "You did give it to me, you know. I didn't think there were strings."

Sighing, I reply, "I gave it to you two years ago — one of five copies — before I found my muse, back before I knew I had anything to offer."

"And now everyone knows you have something to offer."

"And we part of what I offer is the mystique of live shows. It's building a draw at my shows, and building anticipation for a record. Already, several majors are courting my management."

"Hold up," Brian stops me, mid-sentence, "You have management? You want a record deal?"

"Oh, Brian," I say, suddenly very tired. "Grow up."

BRIAN KELLY:

"Can we take a break?" I ask.

We've been walking around town for what feels like hours, Laurie making me lead her on an embarrassing passage.

First, we visit Jamie Black, who I'd lent my only copy of Dance Dance Dance! to. Then, evidently to her new beau, Harmony Bob, who has a lisp or a limp or something that's "Just so *cute!*" but who wasn't in when we stopped by. His room-mate had passed it on to Even Brody, which caused Laurie some small amount of anxiety.

"What's he doing with my tape? He doesn't even talk to me!"

"We can ask him?" I suggested, and immediately regretted it.

"Can we take a break?" I repeat.

"As soon as I see the original tape again."

I sigh, almost weeping. I was having a relaxing cafe day at the Viceroy, and now, guilt and responsibility had gotten me trailing a psychowoman — a beautiful woman, but still a psychowoman. There were better things to do with my time.

"Hey, Laurie," I say, stopping short, "A thought."

She turns, grabs my arm to force me to move closer to Brody's place.

"What, Brian?"

"Aren't we going at this ass-backward?" She glares at me, and I continue quickly. "Instead of finding how my tape got to the ears of this reporter who might report about it, shouldn't we talk to him about how he got it, then block that source?"

She ponders on the street corner, and finally nods.

"So how do we find him?" I ask.

HERMANN SLUGWURTZ:

"So we have a deal?" he asks.

"How could I refuse?" I reply, and we shake. He takes out some papers to make it official, just as the interruption occurs. Laurie Lewis storms in with some white guy backing her up.

"Ms. Lewis," I say, "We were just talking about you."

"Hey Laurie," my soon-to-be partner says.

"Merc," Lewis says, "What're you doing?"

"Well, I just got you some free publicity is all."

"I didn't realize Dance Dance Dance! was such a secret," I said, "This is great copy."

"What? Young girl makes awful pop tape and wants to forget about it?"

"Considering your recent fame, absolutely!" Merc, bossman of the Trench, says, "When I heard that the labels were sniffing your way, I figured this would be a great way for you to get some extra press, and for me to make some money."

together again

Pugilist Pianists!
Kombative Keyboardists!

Jerome Rossen & Peter Dizozza

Dueling for the Baby Grand!

At the FORT @ Sidewalk

Tuesday, February 3rd @ 10:00PM.

together again

featuring

New Orleans Jazz, the poetry of
Thomas Hardy & Tupac Shakur, and
the premier of *another* Titanic song.

together again

together again

"Laurie," the white guy says, "Didn't Merc have his own copy of your tape?"

"Sh, Brian. How do you make money?"

"Well, I'll rerelease this early tape of yours, and, since it'll be out before any other Laurie Lewis album, everyone'll buy it — and the majors'll know how much you sell!"

"But it's awful!" Laurie screams, "I refuse to put that crap out!"

"You didn't copyright this, did you? Hermann'll promote hell out of this. Trust me, Laurie, this'll be great."

Laurie Lewis seemed so nice earlier. But now, at least a little bit, I'm afraid. She moves in close on Merc, and whispers, "You can't, Merc. It's not legal, it's not right, and it's just for a quick buck. AND, you will get nothing else out of me. If you produce so much as one tape, I'll quit the business, and no one will know who the hell you're trying to sell."

"Just one?" Merc gulps.

"One," she asserts.

Suddenly, he smiles. "Too late."

"I'm out of here," Laurie says, and storms out the door.

"Laurie," the white guy says, following her out.

I turn to my partner. "You think she means it? Think she'll drop out, just to spite you?"

Merc snorts. "And miss the gravy train? Come on!"

"You're probably right," I reply, and smile about my upcoming paychecks.

OTIS EMERSON:

"That was Laurie Lewis," the announcer says over the radio, "Who hasn't been heard from in — what's it been, Billy? 15 months?"

"Sounds about right," the jolly sidekick responds, "Not since that disastrous remix EP, Dance Dance Dance! came out."

"Still, some poppy stuff on it, right?" the announcer asks.

"Wonder what she's up to now?" the sidekick says, just before I turn the radio off.

Schedule

Tues. Feb.3 - Piano Night: 8- Cynthia Hills, 8:30- The Count, 9- Bill Popp, 9:30- Enid, 10- Peter Dizozza & Jerome Rossen, 11- Uncle Carl
Wed. Feb.4 - 8-Ben Arthur, 8:30-Brian Bauers, 9-Peter Spink Trio, 10-Rick Shapiro
Thurs.Feb.5 - 8-LEG Slurp and The V-Nex, 9-Puckett, 9:30- Rachel Spark, 10-Lach
Fri.Feb.6- 8- Helen Hooke, 9- Alan Andrews, 12- The \$6,000,00 Band
Sat.Feb.7- 8-Animal Head, 9- Gene&Mimi, 10- Johnny Seven, 12- Gil Schwartz and The Lava Daredevils
Sun.Feb.8 - 8-Little Oscar, 8:30-Full Throttle Aristotle, 9-Gary Heidt, 9:30- Pat Harper, 10-The Defenders, 11-Pinch
Mon.Feb.9- The Antihoot with Lach. Sign-up at 7:30.
Tues.Feb.10- 8-Gilligan Stump, 9-Nancy Falkow, 9:30- tricia scotti, 10- Dots Will Echo
Wed.Feb.11- 8-Peter Frook, 8:30- Bernadette, 9-Wendy Chamlin, 9:30- Pat Mattingly, 10-Rick Shapiro
Thurs.Feb.12- 8-Springwell, 8:30- Bree Sharp, 9- Cody Melville
Fri.Feb.13- 7- Mark Humble C.D. Release Party, 9-Ruth Gerson, 10- Parker
Sat.Feb.14- Valentine's Love Vibe- 8-Jocelyn Ryder, 9- Lo-Fi, 11- The Meanwhiles
Sun.Feb.15- 8- Henrietta Bob, 8:30- Stephen Clair, 9-Red Radio Flyer, 10-Giles
Mon.Feb.16- The Antihoot with Lach. Sign-up at 7:30.
Tues.Feb.17- 8-Marilee, 8:30- Tony Demattia, 9- Deb Montgomery, 9:30-Robert Sheridan, 10- Anna, 10:30- Amy & Max

The Winter Antifolk Fest '98 - Feb.18-22

This year's festival will also be a benefit to raise money to upgrade/repair the sound equipment at the club and pay for extra sound-proofing.

Wednesday, February 18- 8:30-Mike Rechner, 9-Chris Moore, 9:30- Jack Pedler, 10- Rick Shapiro

Thursday, February 19 -8-Michal Towber, 9-Jarrold Gorbel

Friday, February 20- 8-Jen's Revenge, 8:30- Curtis Eller, 9-John S Hall, 9:30- David

Dragov 10- The Humans, 10:30- Joe Bendik, 11- Lach, 12- Bionic Finger

Saturday, February 21- 7:30- The Goofballs, 8:30-TBA, 9-The Novellas, 10-Homer Erotic

Sunday, February 22- 8- Steve Esponola, 8:30- Dan Kilian, 9-Lenny Molotov, 10- Shameless

Mon.Feb.23 - The Antihoot! Sign-up at 7:30.

Tues.Feb.24 - 8-Frank Rowland, 8:30- Michael Dann, 9-Neal with an "A", 9:30-Niki Lee

Wed.Feb.25 - 8-Matt Sherwin, 8:30-Tracy Kash, 9-Ina May Wool, 9:30-Joe Bidewell, 10-Rick Shapiro

Thurs.Feb.26 - 8-Liz Brody, 9-Bree Sharp

Fri.Feb.27- 8-The Demolition String Band, 9-Raving Noah, 10- Deni Bonet, 12-Delta Garage

Sat.Feb.28- 8-The Goofballs, 9-Gene&Mimi, 10-Tamalalou, 11-Sinde Kise, 12-Jim Allen Band

The Sidewalk Cafe (94 Ave.A) is proud to present the following schedule for your publication. All shows are free and begin at 8 p.m. For updates please call the club at 212-473-7373.