

# AntiMatters



**Michelle Shocked!**  
**AntiFolk Fest!**  
**Lisa Loeb!**  
**Stuff!**

*(r. to l.) mr. scarecrow and little oscar of the antisection*

**April 1998**

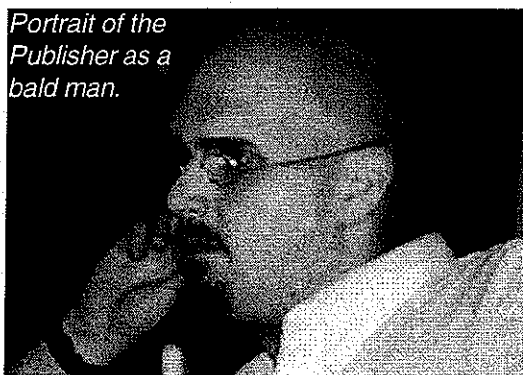
AntiMatters is back!

After a several week intermission, the zine on the AntiFolk scene has returned to its former glory, coming out of the closet and into your hands. Missing a monthly deadline for the first time in a year and a half, editor/publisher/*bon vivant* Jonathan Berger offered the following excuse: "I got tired.

"Job pressure, overwhelming anxiety, and failed love affairs -- well, obsessive fixations -- kept me from doing the job I was born to do: regurgitating useless facts about AntiFolk activities for a ~~rabid~~ dedicated fanbase numbering in the teens."

Swearing he will never let his personal life get in the way of his amateur publishing career, Jonathan Berger will forge on, making sure that you are, in fact, reading, the best AntiMatters yet!

*Portrait of the  
Publisher as a  
bald man.*



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## AntiMatters

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6 Months of AntiMatters

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You can't beat that with a stick!

# Report from the Fort

3/12/98 - When Bill Popp's father, George L. Popp, AKA "Daddy Tapes," died of a heart attack on November 1, 1986, the Queens rocker lost someone who had been a consistent supporter of his band, The Tapes and had often helped him promote his band. Subsequently, it occurred to Popp (who founded the Tapes in the early 1980s and, after many personnel changes, still leads the band in 1998) that one way to honor

his father's memory would be to hold annual benefit concerts on "Daddy Tapes'" birthday, March 12, and donate the money to the American Heart Association—something he went on to do 12 years in a row. This year, Popp's 12th annual "Daddy Tapes" tribute and benefit concert, held at Kenny's Castaways on Bleeker Street in Greenwich Village on March 12, earned over \$800—all of which he's giving to the American Heart Association.



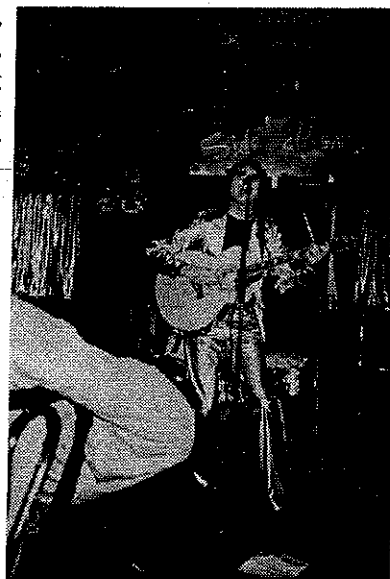
Acts on the bill ranged from decent to excellent. Despite sound-

ing a bit hoarse from battling a cold, Popp was in good form on "Sidewalk Dance," "Rapline," "Stone To Throw" and other original songs underscoring his love of 1960s British Invasion rock. A charismatic vocalist and prolific songwriter, Popp was influenced by The Beatles more than anyone—though his consistently melodic material also draws on other 1960s influences like The Yardbirds and The Zombies. Popp's CDs with The Tapes, "Popp This" (1989) and "Insides" (1996), are so British-sounding that if you didn't know he'd grown up in blue-collar College Point, Queens and hadn't heard him speak with his strong Queens accent, you'd think he was from London, Manchester or Liverpool.

Other highlights of the concert ranged from the excellent though obscure folk singer Mark Handleman and traditional Irish/Celtic artist Stanley Rygor to singer/songwriter Anne Husick (formerly of The Tapes and Band Of Susans) and The Novel-las—a quirky, promising band that sometimes brings to mind The B-52s and draws heavily on 1980s new wave. Another band that showed potential was My World, whose aggressive, abstract style of "alternative rock" is greatly influenced by avant-garde jazz. One got the impression that My World's members are well aware of the contributions of such left-of-center jazz explorers as Ornette Coleman & Prime Time and Ronald Shannon Jackson.

With this benefit, Popp not only raised \$X00 for a worthy cause—he presented an evening of music that was as diverse as it was generally enjoyable. (Alex Henderson)

3/22/98 David Dragov, aptly named, I thought, for my initial feeling that he should be dragged off the stage for bitching so much about his evil cousin Roy, has evolved, or rather my perception of him has evolved into him walking on the stage and me being dragged off into nirvana. "I'd rather be a CHIMPANZEE!" Yeah! He turned a Japanese phrase into a wild pop song. If cataclysm is redemptive then David Dragov is a one



man cleansing hail storm. When I first heard him (and I was about ready to confess when I did) he only had his guitar, but check out his performance with a little tape player attached to the sound system. It might restrict some of us to be playing to sequencers but he has recorded tracks of classical proportions to accompany his vocals and guitar licks. He's also the first performer I've seen prepare a guitar by inserting quarters between the frets. He has the perfect voice for spoken angst ridden rap but he is incredibly musical and a competent pop arranger. The man has a music PhD. He also has incredible stories to tell. He is a major addition to the anti-folk scene. And look, if he says his cousin Roy is evil, I think you'd better listen to him. (Peter Dizozza)

3/25/98 - Sean Altman is one slick guy. He's coming from an entirely different tradition than antifolk -- he's what you might call an a Capella artist. Only now he's got a band. It's kind of confusing. The point is, though, he's mighty good. He gave the audience candy, and was very generous of spirit. His songs are pure pop (he covered Badfinger -- actually, he covered Badfinger covering the Beatles). On the downside, Sean Altman is one slick guy...(Jonathan Berger)

3/25/98 - "You gotta check these guys out," Mark told me, "Uncle Carl is great."

"I think I've seen them before," I said, recognizing the tall wounded bass player.

"And what'd you think?"

Not wanting to answer, I said I'd stick for a couple of songs. Uncle Carl is a bald guy who wears a beret and plays, depending on the night, keys, ax, or vox. "He's great on all of them," Mark told me, "He's multi-talented."

I nodded, thinking about the songs.

The Uncle Carl band — a four-piece that evening, with Carl

# Reportin'

exclusively handling the mic — plays a particularly competent sophisticated pop. Almost jazzy in its maturity. They were good at what they did, like they were the last time I'd seen them, a couple years back, with a somewhat different line-up.

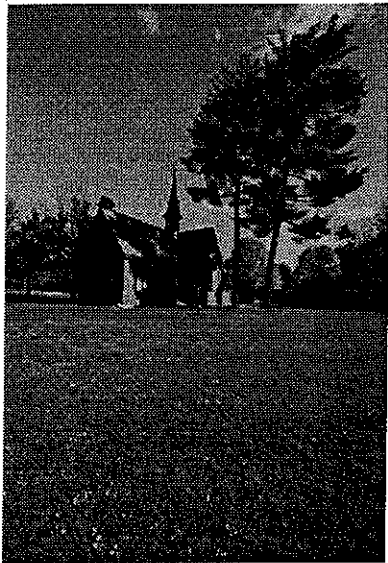
"They seem good at what they do," I said to Mark.

"Yeah. Hey, what time is it?"

"Ten thirty," I told him.

"Oh, I gotta go," he said, getting ready to leave.

No way was he leaving me alone there. While Mark collected his things, I booked. (Arnie Rogers)



4/13/98 - Piñataland told me to come by a Baby Jupiter at 9. They said that's when the show begins. What they didn't say was that the show wasn't theirs, it was Dirty & Cheeky's Rocket to Vaudeville, featuring four comics and only afterwards, the pure punky polkadelic stylings of Piñataland. Dirty & Cheeky are a pair of alternacomics whose act is basically being incompetent old school vaudevillians. It's

a tired concept, but they pull it off well. They're funny.

Not much like the acts they introduced to the stage. That evening, they presented Microphone, VoodooLulu, Hassan & Epstein, and some ugly looking guy with a boombox (not his real name).

They were all allegedly comics.

I learned somethings new that night, if not necessarily important. First, I learned never to trust Piñataland. But I also learned there's a difference between bad music and bad comedy (at least, between bad songs and bad jokes).

A bad song is recoverable, because you can get something more from it in repeated listenings. Change in the song can improve it demonstrably. A bad joke gives up its punchline, it's surprise, at first listen. Changes and improvements will never free you from the knowledge of the poorly presented joke. The disappointment will be with you always. Anyway, humor doesn't repeat as well as tunes (when was the last time you relistened to Bill Cosby? To the Beatles? *Aha!*).

So, I picked up flyers from some of those comics, but I'll never see them again, except maybe Dirty & Cheeky, who closed out the comedy portion of the evening with, "And now, proving once again that jokes outnumber the audience, this was another installment of Dirty & Cheeky's Rocket to Vaudeville!" Then there was Piñataland, hitting the stage an interminable hour and a half after I'd been promised.

Nattily dressed as always, the accordion-driven band was good.

They added a member to the line-up since I'd last seen Piñata — a beautiful blonde on fiddle. Maybe it was the length of her skirt, or her other obvious talents, but my eyes rarely left her throughout the show. She — Anna Goodman <also of the notorious jugband Porkchop> — might be the most capable player in the group. She filled in many of the usual accordion parts, and added a sweet underbelly to the normally balls-on style of the Piñataband.

There were some new songs in the mix — there always are — and some old favorites, like songwriter Dave's "Tunnel of Tears," and songwriter Doug's "New Year."

After the show, I asked Dave, accordionist, head songwriter, & perhaps prime mover/shaker of the P-Land machine what was going on. He told me of an eminent trip to LA to record their song "Creature" for a show on Comedy Central called Premium Blend II.

"Isn't that one of Doug's songs?" I asked.

"Yeah," Dave said.

"Does it bother you that you write most of the material, but it's one of Doug's songs you get to record for international TV?"

"No. Doug's material is much more accessible than mine. Everyone loves 'Creature.' In fact, Doug was more bothered about it than I was."

"Or maybe he was just pretending to be..."

I walked off, leaving Dave to stew. He was the one who told me to show up at 9. (Gustav Plympton)

4/16/98 - Luna Lounge hosted the record release party for Regular Einstein's new single, "Prince of Reichstadt." I didn't like the teutonic overtones, but hey! Wasn't Einstein jewish, anyway? I decided to go.

I've loved Paula Carino (the singer/songwriter/bandleader for Reg Ein)'s stuff for years, but never been too impressed with her band situation. I always thought they distracted from rather than distilled her muse. She writes very clever lyrics and cool low key hooks that always seemed to work best when playing solo electric or that very rare acoustic show. The band tries to rock, but always seemed to fall a little short.

Not at this single release party, though. They kicked my ass from here to the foosball table and back again. With the addition of drummer Bill Gerstel, a man who hits his kit with more power than any unhated object warrants, the band is reaching something important. The power of the additional members is finally worth the sacrifice of subtlety. Regular Einstein has become a rock combo to be reckoned with. So I reckon I'll be seeing them again!

(Jonathan Berger)



Paula Carino

If you saw a show that you liked, and are eloquent enough to say why, please do. AntiMatters is always looking for local live reviews for Report from the Fort. Email, snail mail, drop off at the Sidewalk, c/o AntiMatters... get it out there. We'll get it published.

# The Winter Antifolk Festival '98

(lach with anne husick)

## Fort Report 2/18 Day One:

Secret Guest Lee Chabowski opened the night with a batch of cool, eerie, funny songs. Jonathan Richman meets The Cramps.



It'd be interesting to see him in a band as lead singer with someone else playing a big old Gretsch, hollow body with whammy-bar through an old tube amp. Lee is very funny and it'd be cool to see him free of the guitar and just grooving spontaneously. The stand out songs tonight were Atomic Overload, Voyage to The Bottom of The Sky and Kidney Punch.

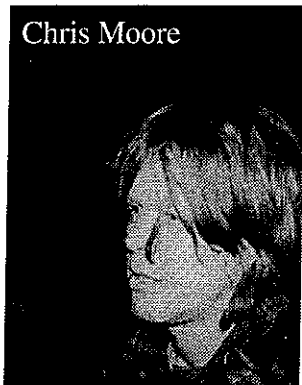
Mike Rechner followed with a paradise of parables. The John Wayne/Ford Song and John Good song were perfect slices of desolate Americana/Antifolk.

Chris Moore captivated a packed house with songs both sophisticated and real.

Jack Pedler spun his Tom Waits-like tales of desperation and word play. We look forward to his new album on Mutiny Records.

Rick Shapiro took the stage to an overflow crowd. Alone with just the mike, his voice, and physical presence, he is the embodiment of Antifolk attitude. Raw, honest, funny, daring, iconoclastic. A fellow comic was seen leaving the set with hanging head muttering "I feel like a hack." Yup, Shapiro illumines our reality by destroying our illusions.

Chris Moore



## Fort Report 2/19 Day Two:

One of the scene's top guitarists and songwriters, Mr. Scarecrow, opened the evening. Using a beautiful, old acoustic Gibson guitar Crow combined classic technique with an Antifolk sense of quirkiness and humor. For his famous cult hit "Bill's Song" from 'Lach's Antihoot' CD (Fortified/Shanachie) Crow was joined on piano and voice by Beau Mansfield. This pairing lent a seventies' sound to a nineties' issue thus adding a nostalgic tone to the wistful song.

Michal Towber, the scene's youngest performer, played a short set with star quality. She added a talkish phrase during "Cold War Baby" which enhanced the immediacy of the song. Michal announced her final number, "Bliss", as the first song she wrote. It is a great song showing off what would become her trademark combination of cool hooks and precociously mature lyrics.

Jarrold Gorbel's set of sexy lyrics and fast punk/funky guitar style earned a pair of panties thrown to the stage. He quickly improvised a song called "Camouflage Panties". Here's hoping it worked!

Mia Johnson's browsy, movie star looks and rootsy, compelling songs made for a wonderful introduction to this fine performer from the Philly Antifolk scene. She was followed by fellow Philly-star Butch, who filled the room with melodic, gritty songs and voice.

Paula Carino closed out the night with various guest stars from her band Regular Einstein. A gifted songwriter and talented performer, Paula capped the end of an altogether delightful evening.



## Fort Report 2/20 Day Three:

The evening had a slow start due to technical bugs, thugs and cubicle mugs. As Lach set up the P.A. he had to deal with a table of Hell's Angel wannabees. An old hand at this sort of incident Lach ignored them into nonexistence.

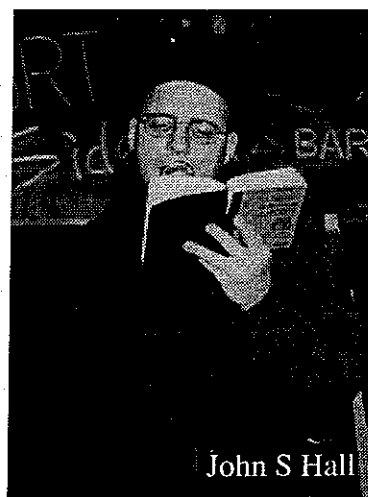


At 8 p.m. Jen's Revenge took the stage in a welcome return filled with wit and charm. She had to contend with leftover TGIF office workers one of whom walked drunk and oblivious onto the stage to request Dylan songs. Jen deadpanned, "I only play my own songs and one cover, 'I Will Survive'." The yuppies withered away.

Curtis Eller was up next. A foot stomping, reality strummer

songs filled with bones, boots, blood, Buicks and banjos. He ended with the lonesome song "Hey, Mary" a beautiful, plaintive tune of need.

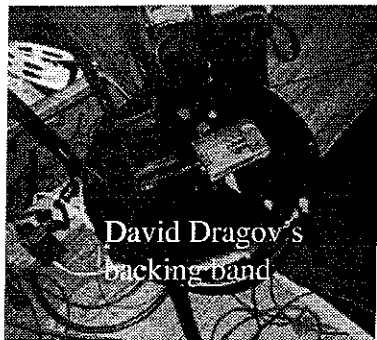
King Missile's John S. Hall was up third and with just a mike and spoken word he held the room as he read selections from his book "Jesus Was Way Cool" (SoftSkull Press). (He introduced one piece as "The title track from my book"). Highlights of



his set included his surrealistic view of touring which he had written for Spin Online and the hilarious definitions of what is gay and what is straight.

Newcomer David Dragov followed and every song was a hit. Wrapped in a silver suit he played smart, compassionate songs accompanied by his brilliantly produced backup tapes.

Scene superstars, The Humans, were next in their new full band singing the set love's format. Unfortunately, the quartet does not yet live up to the potential of the original duo. Some of the boy's sweetest melodies are getting lost in all of the equipment and noise. Though the new drummer, Joe Bendik, has



David Dragov's backup band



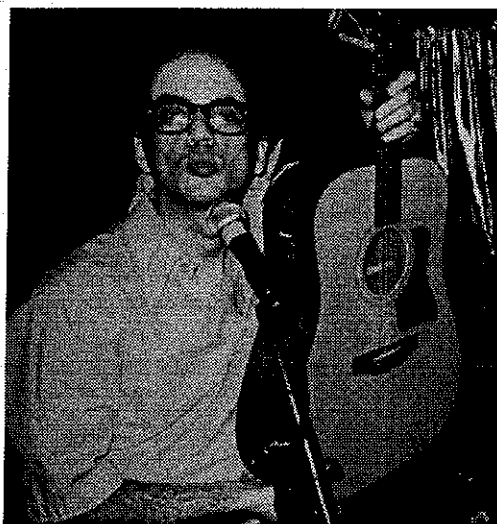
the band



the humans

energy and charisma he has yet to add the tightness that the songs call for. Seeing as the band now includes Bendik and Dragov it would be fun to see the group sing some their gifted songs. Perhaps this band should be looked at as an Antifolk supergroup instead of an expansion of the Schurtman brother's act.

Joe Bendik followed The Humans with a setup that included his brother on drums, tape loops and Joe, himself, on guitar and vocals. Joe is a favorite on the scene and his sharp songs, punk



strumming a n d Clashlike stage presence help define the true Antifolk sound.

Some guy named Lach played next but I was abducted by aliens during his set and have no recollection of that time.

Bionic Finger closed out the night with a hot set of rockers and ballads. Highlights included "Texas" and the crowd favorite "A.S.S.H.O.L.E."

#### Day Four: 2/21

The Goofballs lived up to their name by immediately changing it to The Grimicis at the start of their set. They then went on to attempt new and unfinished songs to a packed house. Somehow all of this worked in the way a loose Alex Chilton concert does.

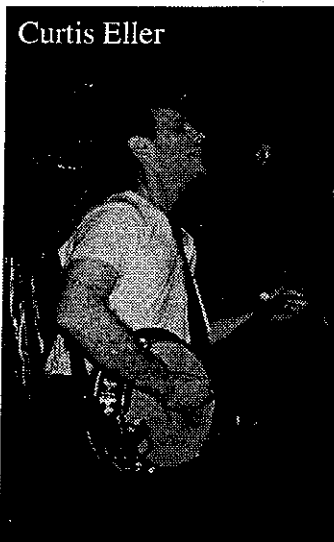
Animal Head continued the loose atmosphere by having Pat, the band's rhythm guitarist play drums in lieu of their absentee drummer. It worked fine. The group fulfilled their growing reputation as a great jamming band in the tradition of The Grateful Dead . . . hmmm, Grateful Head (I could go further on that joke but I figure you already did). The Novellas jumped right into the feel of the evening with broken strings, strange feedbacks and stage patter consisting of unknown and violent current events. However, by the third tune "Caterpillar Man" they settled into their groove of X-Files meets The Talking Heads.

Homer Erotic followed and shone bright. They are one of the hottest bands in town with joyous songs of freedom and true

living. With all of the mopey, teenage fodder the corporations try to push on us it is so refreshing to see Homer Erotic dance the dance of tribal spirit and joy.



The Reachers closed the night with their edge country stompers. A rousing Yang reply to Homer Erotic's slice of Yin. Yeee-hah!



Curtis Eller



## AF Festival, Continued

Day Five: 2/22 Anne Husick

I always smile when I see Steve Espinola play. He comes off as such a sweet, innocent young thing but when he takes the stage, his inner dog comes out — barking, sniffing and proudly wagging it's tail. Armed with Theraflu and very large Vitamin C tablets, Steve stormed through his set. Never one to let a little deathly illness stand in his way, he moved easily from piano to guitar to electric tennis racket, singing sincerely and sarcastically about life and love.

I must admit that when I saw Dan Kilian solo, I thought he was funny in a novelty act kind of way. Not so with his band, National Anthem. They rocked my socks off. Everyone in the club was boogieing in their seat. Songs like Four Fingers of Fun took on a new dimension, moving from "cute" to kick ass. This was definitely a move in the right direction. Dan announced the name of the band between every song, taking the spotlight off himself and putting it onto the band. Well, they got my attention. I'll be at the next show. Lenny Molotov and the Illuminoids had a great show. And

Dan Kilian



that is not because I'm in the band. Lenny was in rare form that night. Besides the fact that his vocals were finally loud enough for me to hear, he seemed imbued with a rare spirit. Maybe it's all the time he's been spending at home working on developing himself as a guitarist and a vocalist. Maybe it's cause we did a couple of new songs and he really feels them. Who knows? Who cares?

Lead guitarist Scarecrow was looking a little under the bottle, Oscar (drums) was Oscar and I was stressing cause I was doing sound as well as playing. But we rocked. We locked in tight and laid the foundation for Lenny's vision of politics and love (mostly gone wrong - thanks to you know who).

Steve Espinola was in awe after Shameless played. "You know," he said, "when I was growing up, and in high school, there weren't any bands as good as this."

Final Act: Shameless (viewed by Jonathan

Berger): The finally-completed line up of Shameless (Anne Husick, Knot Watkins, Craig Gordon, Little Oscar and Brianna Winter) were excellent at their first and only show. With Craig leaving the fold, Anne's pop vision will be forestalled. Again. Damn shame since they were so shamelessly fine.

## AntiMatters Endorsement



# My Haunt

Where do I go to unwind after a hard day of doing nothing at my job? Where's the best food, the best drinks, the best juke-box? Where is my (to borrow a term from Don Juan) "personal power spot" where I have mastered the art of simply being? What physical surroundings do I feel are a natural extension of myself; filling me with an almost erotic electricity, inducing sparks to fly from my fingertips and causing my hair to stand on end? Any for God's sake, why at this very moment do I have this strange grin on my face; that look as if my loose and hanging jowls were pulled back and taped together at the back of my head?

Well, I'll tell you. It's because I'm at my favorite haunt right now in my room! And if this is my haunt, I am surely it's ghost-restless, wandering, and dissatisfied; keening in the darkness. Every once in a while I catch a glimpse of myself in the mirror. Who is that pale, wild-eyed visage staring back at me? I scream but there is no one to hear. For this is my room and no one else is allowed. Oh yes, they try to come in, but they can't. I've erected a force field around the perimeter. It's booby trapped for ten miles in every direction with potholes, speeding cars, and roving gang members. You might as well try to eat a large, very sensitive landmine with a knife and fork. That's how well I have it guarded.

In my room, everything is good. The music always plays and the elves dance and sing. The wine flows like a river. (I frequently find myself washed up on the banks in the morning.) Every day is like it's 1939 at the New York World's Fair and I'm staring into a gloriously bright future. There's the Perisphere and the Trylon. I take a deep breath and ignore the fact that Hitler is sweeping across Europe. But then, 1940 arrives

and the threat of war is imminent. Yes, it's time to go to work. I leave my room. I walk into the burning sunlight (Why must it be so bright?!) and though I feel more at home in the twisting labyrinth of the subway tunnels as I walk to my office, I know that the journey is all too brief and I must travel upwards

free  
CD Release Party!  
Saturday  
May  
9th  
7-9p.m.  
at  
Sidewalk Cafe'  
Ave. A & 6th St.  
with special guests:  
Dina Dean!  
Curtis Eller!  
Lach!  
Chris Moore!  
Lee Chabowski

etc,

Sports center, etc,  
etc,...bla,bla,bla,  
Jets, etc, etc, Tuna.  
Etc, etc...

Etc, bla,bla, cleat.  
Etc, quarterback...  
Wow ,your head just  
Changed shape, wow...

PAT HARPER

to the land of the living. Who are these people? Why do they stare at me so? I long to return to my haunt; fling off my clothes, burrow into the hay, and breathe in deeply; filling my senses with the reassuring smell of my urine.

Dave Wechsler

If you heard a recording that rocked — or didn't — don't you think people want to know about it? AntiMatters wants YOU to review recording that make you move, or make you a prude. Contribute to AntiMatters, following the information on the inside cover...



# "We opened for Michelle Shocked!"

Jonathan Berger

It was synchronicity. Sort of.

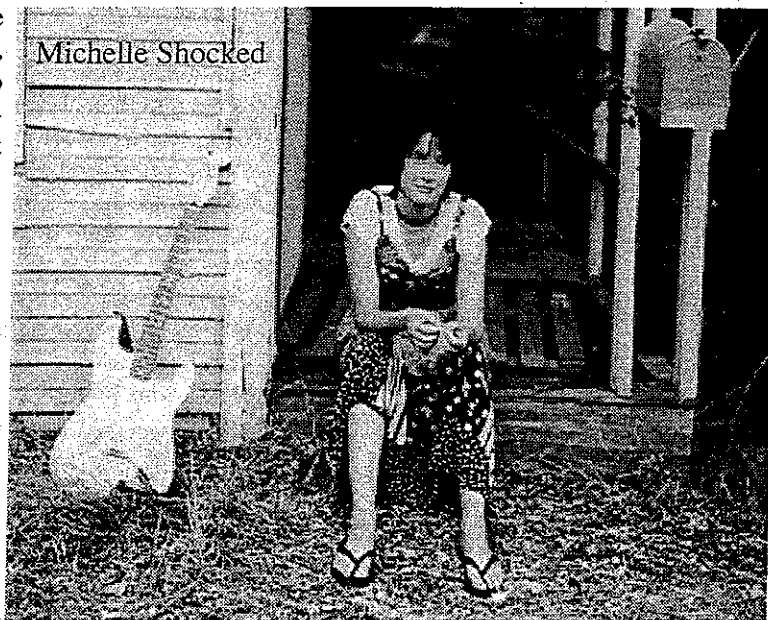
Dina Dean had been asking Steve about Michelle Shocked a lot lately. He had a lot to say.

"I went through a period around 1988 where she was just IT for me. Especially The Campfire Tapes, and Short Sharp Shocked almost as much," Steve said, "In the over-technicized, cynical late 80's, hers was some of the only music that felt basically uncorrupted."

He had shared those first two albums with Dina, as well as a dubbed radio show that "includes a version of 'Anchorage' that will make anyone's eyes tear up." She'd recorded before parting ways with Mercury. Dina was increasingly impressed by the artist. "She changed my life," Dina said, "I found her music to be steeped in a traditional yet not effete form of american folk/blues/country music."

Michelle Shocked rose to national prominence in the late 80's with The Texas Campfire Tapes, an album allegedly made around the eponymous texas campfire. She was already well known, however, by the AntiFolk community. Option magazine in 1988, named Shocked one of the foremost members of that East Village folk club: "Though now nominally based in London, Shocked still considers herself a part of the Lower East Side scene." In the same article, she says,

Michelle Shocked



"I'd spend half my time at the Fort and half my time at CBGB's with the skateboarding hardcores."

Dina and Steve, both later pledges to AntiFolk, had known of Shocked, but not been part of the scene until long after her departure.

Shocked truly hit her stride with her sophomore release Short Sharp Shocked, and the virtual hit "Anchorage" which

is probably still her most popular song. That's when Steve first heard of her. "I was covering her songs in my sets; the only other people I covered were Chuck Berry and the Shangri-La's," Steve said.

Making it all the more meaningful when he heard about the contest.

Dina Dean was the first to know. Listening to WFUV, her radio station of choice, Dina learned that Michelle Shocked was looking for opening acts for her 4-night stint at CBGB.

"I heard about the contest while listening to crackly radio at work. The announcement said if you sent it a tape, you could win a slot as her opening act. They said 'send in a tape of your best song.' I called Steve immediately."

Steve Espinola, with his virtual decades of recording experience, agreed to help Dina put a song of hers on tape in the day left before the tapes were due. She chose "The Word & the Deed," a song originally written because of a quote she heard on WFUV.

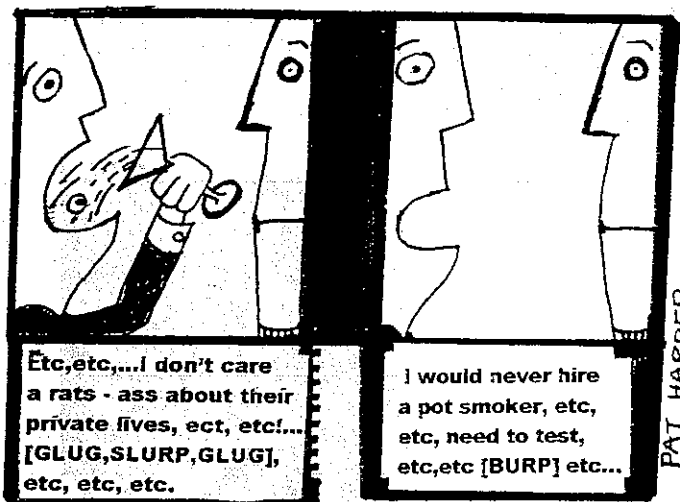
Steve offered suggestions, pushed the buttons, basically, served as producer. Generally, made it a positive recording experience.

"Steve was so helpful. He kept moving the mikes around while I was singing."

Steve recorded his newest song, "Woop-Dee-Doo," almost as an afterthought. He did it quickly before work, on the last morning of the contest. He loved the song, but wasn't amazed with the recording. "My piano is way out of tune, and I made a terrible, noticeable botch in the middle of an impromptu piano solo, but I didn't have time to keep redoing it, and I was out of tape." He gave the demo to Dina, who rushed the pair up to her alma mater, Fordham U., where they were to be judged by Shocked and her husband, Bart Bull.

Steve thought little more about it, fully expecting Dina to get an opening slot. "Dina and I hadn't really been sure we'd come up with anything usable from her takes; we had no per-

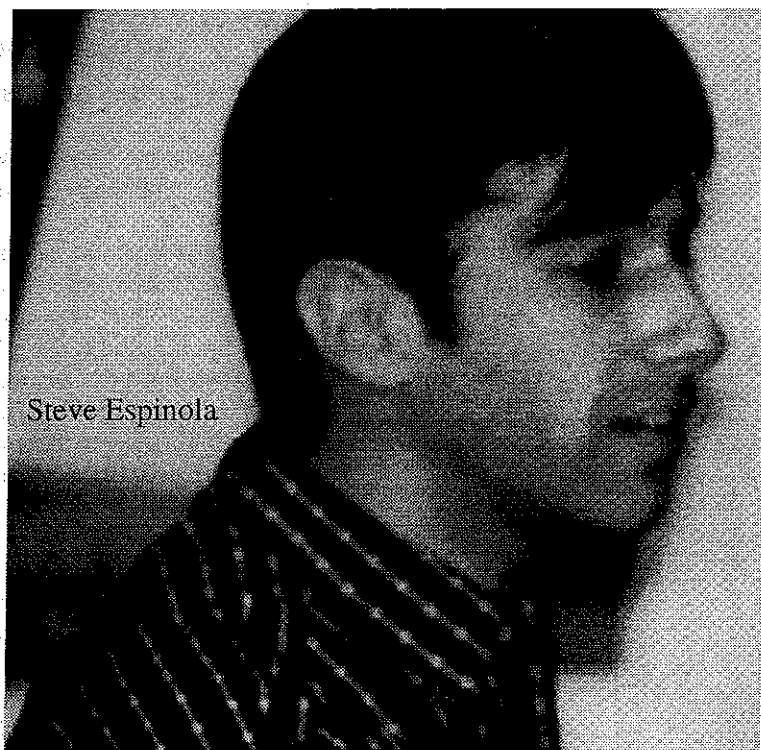
etc,



Etc,etc,...I don't care  
a rats - ass about their  
private lives, ect, etc!...  
[GLUG,SLURP,GLUG],  
etc, etc, etc.

I would never hire  
a pot smoker, etc,  
etc,etc [BURP] etc...

PAT HARPER



Steve Espinola

spective. But that Friday morning, when I dubbed the cassette of her song, I got chills. She sounded so good. I was convinced she had won." Meanwhile, he was secure in his own failure. "I thought I'd totally fucked up my chance at the slot." But at week's end, he was amazed to get a call from Bull, telling him he was opening up on the opening night of the CBGB series, debuting her new album.

He was so accommodating it was silly: "Would Sunday Night be convenient for you? And we're thinking of having the winners and the best runners-up do a sort of open Mic on Wednesday. Would you be cool with that?"

He discovered 26 hours before the show. Little time to get it together. This was, after all a prestigious show. He may have played for more people — joining Vancouver friends cub at Roseland, playing 19-string Electric Tennis Racket—but never for someone he respected as much.

(He was surprised that Dina didn't get picked, but that diminished his joy very little)

"I was nervous as all hell."

For the show, he called together his friends and sporadic collaborators, Dan Emery and Raul Rothblatt, of the Mystery Band and Eletfa, respectively.

"Dan and I play together all the time, because I'm in his band and he'll be in mine if I get my act together enough to have one. I've worked with Raul since our days at NYU. Dan and Raul have both backed me up for a song or two at most of my shows, and they already know many of my songs. Still, the stakes were a bit higher, and I wanted to do all my new stuff."

They had a panicked 2-hour rehearsal the Sunday of the show.

"We arrived at 4:45, and Michelle's people were the nicest in the world," Raul said.

They had a lengthy opportunity to wait.

The audience was paying scant attention as Steve and his band took the stage, but when Michelle Shocked came on to introduce him, everyone took notice.

"They just quieted down," Dina, near the front of the room, observed.

Michelle referred to the cool inventor of the electric tennis racket.

"But don't let that fool you," she said, "He writes really good songs to. Ladies and gentlemen, please, Steve Espinola!"

Steve, with Raul on cello and Dan on guitar, went

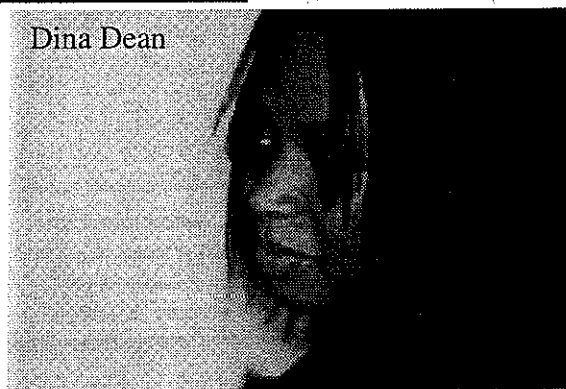
right into "Right Out in the Street," one of Steve's longer numbers, "A love song to New York." The audience, already attentive because of Shocked's arrival, quickly got into the song, laughing and wincing at the right points. Still, "We sped the song way up after the solo, because I felt it was getting long."

Mixing solo songs with band numbers, mixing fast-paced quirk with soft sensitive ballads, Steve kept the capacity crowd's attention throughout. Especially through the end, a double whammy of "Woop-Dee-Doo," the song that got him the gig, and the electric tennis racket finale,



Michelle Shocked

Dina Dean



"Rejection." The last song, however, didn't entirely impress the audience with the brilliance of the electric tennis racket.. "The thing kept going dead and I screamed 'Even my tennis racket is rejecting me at this crucial moment!!!!'"

Enthusiastic clapping followed. "I got off the stage and Michelle kissed my cheek and said I did a great job."

Afterwards, "I asked Bart about Dina, and he immediately remembered her, to the extent of almost quoting the song. It was clear that it had sort of been a toss-up as to whether she'd get one of the half-hour slots."

Meanwhile, Dina went back stage to talk to the band, "When I was backstage with Steve, I met Bart. He said he really liked what I was doing, and could I do a couple of songs on the last night." She accepted.

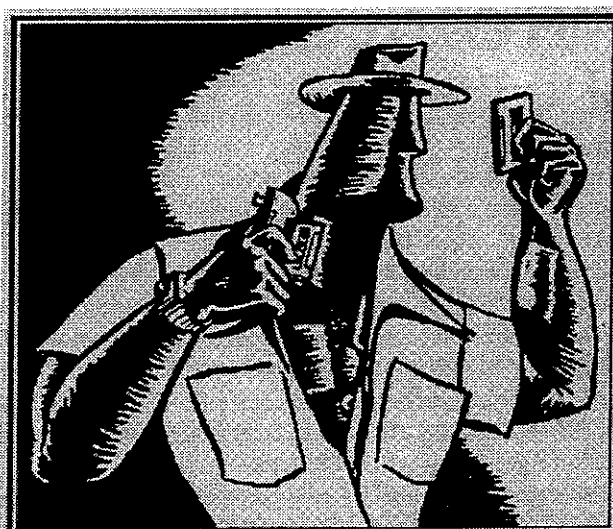
"I was convinced she had won," Steve later recalled, "and basically, I was right.."

Dina's showcase wasn't quite as impressive as Steve's. That Wednesday, she played only two songs, and Michelle was nowhere to be found for introductions. Still, Dina performed "Bluebird" and "that 'America' song," solo, unadorned, to a receptive house. Following, there was a more important event.

"After I got off stage," Dina said, "she talked to me. Michelle signalled me to come over and sit next to her."

They spoke for ten minutes while other artists performed. "She asked me some questions. We really bonded."

Michelle performed her set, riveting the audience with her voice and her band's exceptional party flavor. The final song of the evening was "Can't Take My Joy From Me," which had been previously performed a cappella by the band. On this



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final night, Shocked asked all of her opening acts to join her on stage, asking each person to take part of a verse. Steve and Dina, who had recorded together just days before, were able to complete the journey together as well. JB

### **Next Issue:**

#### **Friends and Lovers**

**What makes the best music?  
(Hell, what makes the *worst*  
music?)**

**Stories about love.**

**And who do you tell your  
tales to?**

**Your friends.**

**Next, AntiMatters explores  
the strange nether-region  
between relationships and  
rock and roll. Write, draw,  
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### **SIDEBAR**

Dan Emery, member of Steve Espinola's backing band, played a song of his own before the CBGB crowd. He spoke to AM about an unrelated adventure:

"We were hanging out before show, and the guys were nervous. I was nervous, too, but I said to them, 'Look at Michelle Shocked up there on stage.' She was doing soundcheck. 'Do you think she's nervous? No!'"

"Just then, Michelle said into the microphone how nervous she was. She then proceeded to spend the next 15 minutes talking about it. So, I don't mind saying, that got me nervous."

"Ten minutes before we had to go on stage, I realized I had to go to the bathroom. And not just go, but to defecate."

"Now, you know the men's room at CBGB's, right? There's no door, and the toilet looks right out to the stairs from the stage. But I had to go, so I sat down."

"Next thing I see, coming down the stairs a pair of platform shoes, and shapely legs, and I call out, 'I'm sorry! But I have to go.'"

"As soon as she passes, another girl comes down the stairs. And another! Some girls from Spain even whipped out a flash camera, and took a picture of me."

"Eventually, I finish, and I go upstairs to play, and you know, I'm not nervous at this point. After defecating in public — which is what I basically did — playing in front of them doesn't seem like such a big deal."

GP

# Reviews of Recordings

Sean Altman: Seandemonium - Sometimes, you just need the right gimmick.

There's no shame in it — it's an in, and it's a way to get people to listen to you. Steve Espinola has a tennis racket. Dan Emery used to throw a dozen tricks in every show — juggling, a mystery box on stage, his string-changing race, so on. Hamell on Trial can make a joke out of any subject you throw at him. But these are all live strategies. It's rarer to come up with a gimmick for a recording. They can exist, though. The Upper Crust's entire songwriting style is sort of a "Wealthy White Man's Blues." Theme albums like Big Daddy's song-for-song replay of Sgt. Pepper's fit the bill, too.

And so does Sean Altman's new Seandemonium, an album based entirely around the man's mouth. "My mouth still hurts," he writes on the CD sleeve.

Granted, that covers only eight of the 30 tracks included. There's a slightly larger number of band songs, and roughly ten sound snippets — sometimes a cappella recordings, sometimes samples from phone conversations or bar mitzvahs. All in all, it's a sprawling effort, with a cool gimmick.

He's got some of that Bobby McFerrin thing going, but it all seems more fluid, poppier, more rocking, bigger, cooler. The Sean Altman a cappella sound is huge, and great. The beautiful lead voice sounds mostly like George Michael, which is no

means a b a d thing.

The man was a founder of the Bottom Line regulars Rockapella, who have been fea-



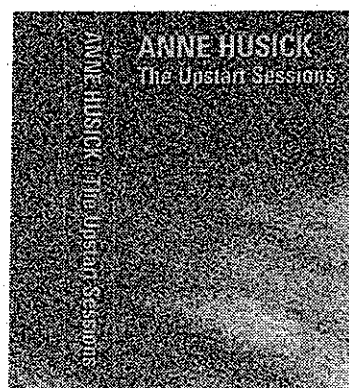
tured on the children's show Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego? He left the group to become some sort of rock star. I don't know if that will happen based on Seandemonium, but he's bound to travel somewhere on the strength of his mouth. <BigSean Music, 200 E. 10th St., #490, NY NY 10003. www.bigsean.com> *Stephanie Biederman*

Anne Husick: The Upstart Sessions - "Oh, when the band finally gets together," she told me, "It'll be something. When everyone knows their parts, and I can get a harmony singer... it just doesn't sound like it does in my head."

I nodded while she spoke. They all say that. They all offer some reason why they can't present the music that they envision in a form that anyone can actually appreciate. It's junkie logic: all excuses, no proof, no evidence of anything better. Like I said, I nodded my head.

I was nodding my head while I listened to Anne Husick's Upstart Sessions, named after the New Jersey recording studio where it was created. From the first minute, when it was just an acoustic guitar riff with breathy vocals laid over, it was obvious something special was going on.

From the first instant of the first of three songs, you're experiencing pop overload. The music swirls, and it's filled with more hooks than you can imagine. The harmonies are exquisite, and they're all from the delightful Ms. Husick. Often, when you have just a couple people in the studio, infinitely multitracking, you get an absurd muddle. Husick and producer Chris Gibson, however, have created, with "The Corner," "Voices," and "Hurricane" something truly fine. <718-468-9888> *Jonathan Berger*



Mike Young - Who knew there would be so many hooks? Mike Young, former king of AntiFolk stopped playing the Fort when he stopped playing acoustic guitar. It's just as well. Even solo acoustic, Young cleared a house quicker than anyone under the sun. He played and sang like he was in a stadium, and people just gravitated to the nosebleed seats. He was just too rock and roll, too raucous for any club claiming to be acoustic.

The problem was, you couldn't hear what he was doing. He created a 3-piece Mike Young Band, playing larger clubs, which made it easier on the ears, but they were still too loud. All you could get was an overpowering guitar and desperately screeching voice.

On this new eight-song cassette, Mike Young records with a band, made up of Mike Young and some nameless producer. He has begun to incarnate that huge sound he's been trying to capture for so long. And the hooks... each song is chock full of riffs, vocal catches, and fun. "Box of Cheerios" and "Maybe" are standout tracks, but each of the eight numbers included are pretty damned cool.

It's still hard to figure out exactly what he's singing about, but the lyrics are there to be heard, and in a package that makes you actually want to. <212-988-9580> *Gustav Plympton*

Elaine K: Yeah, Really - You don't see Elaine K play too much around the East Village. She was a regular hearabouts around 1994, 1995, but her light Gaelic accent pegs her as a foreigner. It's a pity, because she's got that great accent, an incredible voice, and some pretty impressive songs. Some of them made it onto Yeah Really, her 1997 full-length CD. Some of the cuts that are most memorable are "My Reason Why," "Love Moves On," and "I Love You (& I Hate You)." Some of the cuts that are beyond memorable are "All I Need" and the slinky anthem

## Recordings...



"Put Your Hands." Neither of them says anything new, but that doesn't limit their power.

"All I Need" is about a relationship that's bad. The song starts small, and grows. The verse is whispered over a light snare, and a little bass. Then, easing into the chorus, piano and

acoustic guitar join the fray. At the chorus, a gorgeous wail comes from Elaine K's voice and Martin Lynam's guitar. The chorus runs "You don't know all I need to know. You will never be all that I need." In the context of the instrumentation, it comes across as incredibly meaningful. You have to hear it. "Put Your Hands" is a song Elaine K used to perform in NYC with the incredible Muckafurgason. They aren't on this recording, but it's still a slinky motherfucker. The title says it all, but it's got such a sensuous bassline, and the energy from the electric guitar snakes through it. The song bats clean-up on the album, and nothing really could complete the release better. Really. Yeah, really.

<Moo Records, Box 80, Hudson St., NY NY 10014.  
elainek@mailexcite.com> *Arnie Rogers*

last time i talked about what stereo is. here are some tricks for using stereo in your music.

pans of single tracks: of course, by panning something left of center or right of center (similar but not the same as your balance on your home playback system), you can move instruments off the top of one another. this can help your mix, so that things are heard but do not compete.

bigness: things in stereo sound bigger. almost all electric guitars that you hear today that are trying to sound big and powerful are done with stereo imaging. vocals, keyboards, drums, everything can benefit from it. (of course, contrast is good, so leave some things in the center of your mix to clue the ear into the bigness of your stereo sound.)

editing tracks in rough mixes: see next months column on Billy Kelly's project.

tricks for getting stereo bigness:

1. record using two equal mics. pan their outputs hard left and hard right. the farther apart you put the mics, the bigger the stereo image.
2. double a track. replay the track you want to stereo-ize and pan the old and new hard left and hard right.
3. eq. split the recorded track to two channels on your mixer. boost one channel at a certain eq frequency, cut it at the same frequency on the other channel. the more frequency bands you do this at, and the more extreme the boosts and cuts, the wider the stereo. (this introduces you to the concept in mixing that a track in insolation might sound like caca, but when sitting in context with other tracks, it works—each of your eq'd tracks will sound weird-one thin, one bassy, but panned and played together, they sound big.)

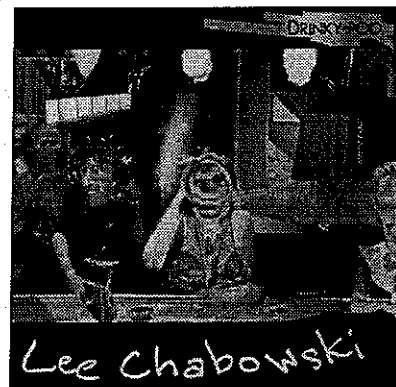
### DEMO TIPS by Tom Nishioka

Lee Chabowski - Drinky Poo: Even though Lee Chabowski recorded just about everything on his new EP himself (with the help of AntiFolk regulars Chris Moore, Curtis Eller and Dina Dean), he wanted to give it a band name. But all the good names were taken, and he figured he'd never have to litigate another band over the name **Lee Chabowski**.

The songs included on the album are fun. Some of them are old favorites, like the opener "Clown Killer" and closer "Kidney Punch." Some, like "Space Monster," a roaring rocker of a song cinematically (well, cinematic like Roger Corman) telling a variation of Alien, are brand new to fans.

The band sound fleshes out already strong material very well. Mr. Chabowski claims that a band is in the works, so that these eight songs are representative of the sound that's upcoming. So long as he keeps on telling the sometimes simple, sometimes sweet stories, like "Shrunken Head" and "Between Walls," that'll be a very good thing indeed.

<Half Wit Records,  
Box 840, Village Station, NY NY 10014.  
www.leechabowski.com>  
*Jonathan Berger*



#### 4. electronic effect.

a. stereo delay. set the left side delay to 30 ms. set the right side to 60 ms. leave your dry track in the center. your ears will hear the same signal three times and from different locales. after all your brains calculations to locate the sound based on what got to your ear when, it says "whoa, that's big."

b. stereo chorus. this will vary the signal going to each speaker in pitch. remember from last month, different signals at different speakers gets your brain calculating location over a wider phantom image.

5. phase relationship. i'm not going into this one, because it involves characteristics of a sine wave and constructive and destructive interference between waves. but, there is a simple demonstration for it. take a speaker on your home playback system and undo the wires. plug the wire that was going into the black terminal into the red terminal, and vice versa. now, go out in front of your speakers (where you were localizing the phantom image last month) and listen. eyes closed, where's the sound coming from. not the middle anymore. not from either speaker. not between the speakers. from outside the edges of the speakers. now, that's wide. in fact, they call it surround sound. it's not done quite this simply on a professional level, but the principle is the same. it works like this: in addition to the "at ear arrival time" I spoke of last month, your brain can analyze the phase of the sounds at your ears. sound moves in waves and hits your eardrum—in and bouncing back out. your brain calculates position of the sound based on the timing difference between left eardrum in, right eardrum in. when you start messing electronically with phase by crossing wires, you can really freak your brain out, so that it paranoiacly shrieks: "it's all around me, man!"

now plug your speakers back in and have fun with your music.



# Michelle Shocked's Good News

The first notes of "Good News" off of the album Good News tells you that a new Michelle Shocked is in town. That's nothing new. Every major recording she's made has been a marked departure from those before. But this one, well, this one's different.

"Good News" is a screaming indictment on industrial pollution, and man's inability to reconcile his greed with his compassion. "This used to be God's Country — Heaven on Earth. Peace in the Valley — Now they call it Cancer Alley." It rages full scream ahead for its full six minutes, ending with a chant-along "I've got some good news... I got some bad news for you!" It sets off a fine set of songs on a strong album.

"Little Billie" rages similarly as Michelle screams out about a New Orleans (her new home)' funeral, with a mother of a murdered child dancing on his coffin. The frustration and fury of the song is apparent throughout, until the resigned whimper of an ending.

There are ten listed songs on the album, mostly in the R&B tradition, plus an unlisted New Orleans jazz-style cut, sounding like it was recorded in someone's busy kitchen. The album isn't as emotional as her last, Kind Hearted Woman, but it's damned good stuff. I can't figure why an artist as important as Michelle Shocked has to self-release her albums. (Jonathan Berger)

This is a party album. The problem with party albums is that without a party, they sort of fall flat. The problem with owning party albums is they flat most of the time, since you don't always have parties going on (welcome to my life). Michelle Shocked usually takes on a style, an approach, with each of her albums. Her Mercury albums were Folk, Southern Rock, Swing, then American Traditional. This time around, she seems to be going for Soul, which is an approach she tried to sell to Mercury before leaving the company. They'd have none of it. I can see why. Michelle Shocked prides herself on coming from a songwriting tradition, but a lot of the songs on this album are more jamming exercises, which could sound incredible in concert, but don't necessarily come across so well on record. When Michelle Shocked played this material (virtually the whole album) during her recent residency at CBGB's, it was epiphanal. They jammed all over the place, making the "Anchor-age"-seeking audience dance up a storm. Sweat pored off the walls. None of this happens on the recording. The band — almost identical to the one on the album — is top-notch, but their playing doesn't jump off the shiny CD surface. It's good music, good performances, good artists, but it's not a good album. I can understand Mercury's decision to shelve this kind of album. It just doesn't work so well for a white chick. (Gustav Plympton)

on her knees praying and in her pillow crying. the projects called Leftie... Little Billie sure song with vehemence, but also amazement at the scene that develops. A musician's funeral in New Orleans is a huge event, she tells, and "Billie sent her boy home with the love of five thousand strong." It's grassroots community activism, in the guise of a good Christian burial (with pagan overtones). Not all of the songs fit into the religious mode. "You Take the Cake" is a newfangled "Happy Birthday" in standard mode. "Tabloid" and "Good News" are more about the troubles aplenty in the world, perhaps closer to some of the subtle politics practiced in Shocked's last album. Still, the entire work is suffused with a loveliness, a sense of belief, that gives it all an undeniable power. (Stephanie Biederman)

When you open up the new, environmentally safe cardboard bound Michelle Shocked album, you see the shape of the cross. Evidently, the artist formerly known as an AntiFolkist found God since she last recorded the incredibly depressing Kind Hearted Woman — a Christian God, which makes some sense for a white southern woman. But Shocked's God seems to be a compassionate one, one that creates joy and happiness. Her new songs are infused with a love of the world around her, while still seeing troubles aplenty. "No Wonder" tells of Shocked's growing faith: "Foolish of me, I know, I did believe that chariots carried it high into the sky. But it's your smile that makes it glow. So now I know and it's no wonder."

Covering similar ground is "Can't Take My Joy," an ensemble a Capella spiritual which offers traditional-sounding references as touchstones in Shocked's search for faith, as in "Went up on a mountaintop looking for the victory. I found it in the valley low, can't take my joy from me."

"Forgive to Forget" is the newest composition on the album, and it's all about placing faith in a higher power. "I don't know when I lost the will to live and I found the will to forgive."

"Little Billie" is more complex in it's religious message. "When a woman has five sons, she's gonna spend a lot of time down And now her boy lay on the street shot in could sing the blues." Shocked sings the

Michelle Shocked, Princess of Wailing Guitar The Anointed Earls:  
Jamie Brewer, Earl Silk of Bass Orlin Anderson, Oude Earl of Drums  
John Reuther, Phantom Earl of Keys Thelma Hodges, Earl of Old Guitar  
Produced by Darrell Brown at Sound Services Studio, New Orleans LA  
except Good News produced by Earl Bull at Hamilton Studio, Austin TX  
additional musician on Good News: Jan Dee Graham and Martin Hamilton  
all songs written by Michelle Shocked  
©1998 Mood Swing Productions  
©1998 Minutal Cycle Music except © Minutal Cycle Music/Full Real Music

## Good News

See a fat brown snake lay her eggs down in the mud  
Go slipping through the swamp with a poison in her blood  
And a snakehead lightning—sparks are flying through the air  
And when the dust gets to settling see it lying everywhere

This used to be God's Country — Heaven on Earth  
Peace in the Valley — Now they call it Cancer Alley  
When Paradise is lost and the whole world gained  
And when profit is the cost of a shame shame shame

I got some good news—I got some very good news  
I got some good news and some bad news for you

Now we know what we know still you do what you do  
But it cannot stand when my God is through  
For where two or more gather in His name He will be there  
So we listen for an answer, 'Make a way' is our prayer

No wonder  
It's no wonder the sun  
Waits outside your window  
At the break of day  
As if to say  
Come out to play  
Let's have some fun  
And it's no wonder  
No wonder the sun

Foolish of me, I know  
I did believe that chariots  
Carried it high  
Into the sky  
But it's your smile  
That makes it glow  
So now I know  
And it's no wonder

When I look within  
I can't see things without  
Your wonderful smile  
Your wonderful smile  
Makes it all worthwhile  
As if to say  
It's no wonder  
It's a wonderful day

Limited Edition # 0282 of 500

## Good News

and the Anointed Earls

Michelle Shocked

Good News  
Can't Take My Joy  
Forgive to Forget  
Little Billie  
What Can I Say?  
Trying Shame  
Tabloid  
You Take the Cake  
No Wonder  
Why Do I Get the Feeling?



# Lisa Loeb

Lisa Loeb has guitar heroes. No kidding.

Oddly though, none of them wear glasses.

Or at least they didn't up on stage, like she does. It's hard to imagine Jimi Hendrix, one of Loeb's many guitar gods, appearing on the Live with Regis & Kathie Lee. It's harder still to imagine him wearing a conservative pair of lenses while talking nice-nice with Regis.

I talked with Lisa just before she started her latest six-week North American tour. She was doing one of those wonderful meet-the-fans things that made me uncomfortable but that she handled with kindness and grace.

Must be the glasses.

A dozen women had won a free lunch with Lisa contest through a local radio station. So, just before she sat down for her last supper (before the concert started), we talked. She and I were caught in a media gang-bang. I was the loser holding the microphone for the local NBC station. I decided the only way to keep any self-respect in this self-serving scrum was to ask something besides the obvious 'What about Lilith fair?' questions.

So I picked guitar heroes.

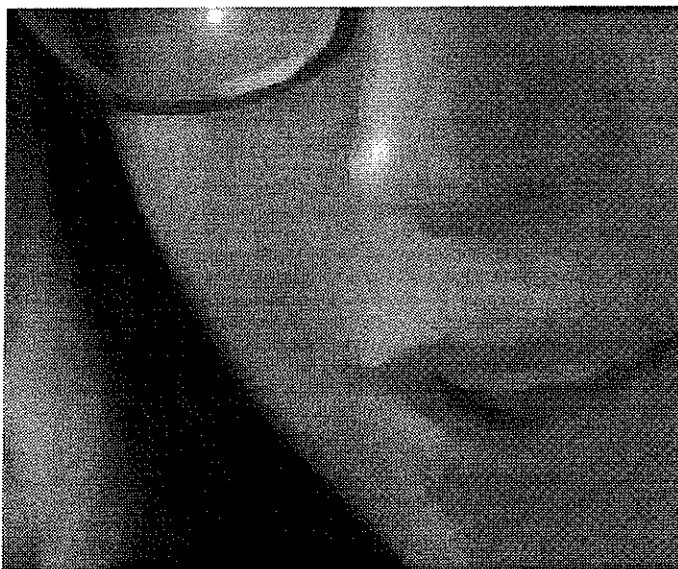
Lisa looked relieved I wasn't asking her one more time about her glasses. Not that she didn't escape that question - but more on that later.

About guitar heroes, Loeb said, "That's my life. Jimi Hendrix, Steve Ray Vaughn and bands that have a

lot of guitars in them. I love guitar playing."

Pretty cool for a girl whose first video showed her walking around a Soho condo, sans axe.

Records and tapes were as close as Lisa got to guitar heroes. Not a lot of women are picking



and grinning when you grow up in suburban Dallas.

So she looked elsewhere.

"Chrissy Hynde played guitar. The girls in the Go-Go-s played guitar. But the people I really listened to, the ones I was more influenced by, were Jimi Hendrix."

She's even picked up a few techniques from the man whose name is synonymous with Barbiturate overdose.

"I've tried to use some of his style in my music."

Even if they knew that at first, most listeners wouldn't notice it.

"You probably can't tell."

But the major, number one influence that rolled over the suburban lawns, broke through the bi-level house walls and down the plush carpeted floor to Lisa's room involved the cops.



Or, more correctly, the Police.

"I love Andy Summers. I loved the fact that all the people in the Police could play so well. And it was such a high level of performance and ability."

Cool, but heroes alone do not a guitarist make (German sentence construction so goofy is).

"I practice everyday."

And is Lisa learning from Joan Baez, Lita Ford or Melissa Etheridge?

Nah - look for changes in the pop she's doing now.

Lisa Loeb loves to rock.

Hard.

*charlie starkweather*

## Charlie Starkweather and Lisa Loeb



"I've been learning Heavy Metal guitar. Black Sabbath, Scorpions, Van Halen. I'm working on my guitar playing everyday."

CD's and lied, telling her that "East Village Girl" was written just for her.

And that was the interview. Except then my camera guy felt compelled to ask her about the glasses. Lisa gave that "not again" look, shoved her nose right up to the lens and then said, slight smirk on her face, "I can't see without them. That's such a good question. How did you ever think of that?" Cool - Lisa's already got what it takes to be a guitar hero. Balls.

Imagine Lisa Loeb in leather, Marshall stack and big hair.

Ok, maybe that's a bit too far. But I would pay for the leather part.

She says it hasn't been easy to make fans realize she's a guitarist first, singer second. But maybe that will change as she continues to tour - and show up on Regis - with just her guitar.

"Eventually it will be the case," she says. "When people think of women musicians just like we think of ourselves - as just musicians. Not just as women."

On that note, Lisa was called to lunch. Vegetarian, naturally. I shook her hand, gave her one of my



## HANGOUTS

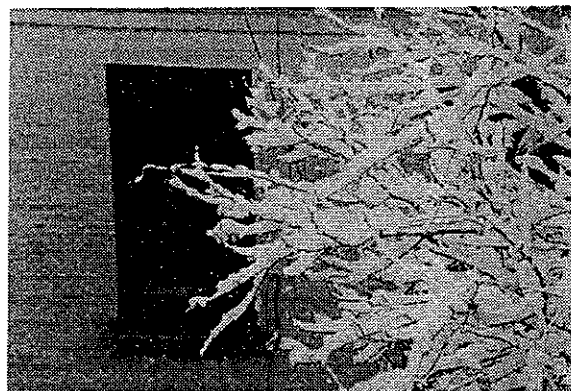
Peter Dizozza

The great hangout of the East Village when we're not brunching at the Sidewalk is called LITTLE POLAND where slender nubile waitresses direct from Big Poland scoop out bowls of a vegetable borscht that is quite the complete meal when coupled with buttered challah bread. And don't miss that two dollar breakfast special before noon. Scrambled eggs include toast, tea, fries and tomato juice (ask for a slice of lemon with the juice). Don't be offended if the waitress appears to forget to bring water or jelly for your toast. All requests will be filled in time. It's at 2nd Avenue East side between E12th and E13th. Warning: Lately the clientele on crowded weekend mornings is making the place resemble the Canadian Pancake house! What's going on here? I was a patron when it used to be called BRUNO'S. Some sleepless gentleman was sure to sit next to me at the counter and share a story. Celebrity sitings include Laura D, but that was some months ago.

KKK's is another pleasant polish place. You'll find it down the block on 1st avenue and it has a back yard eating area that is quite pleasant, weather permitting, especially if you like meeting alley cats. There's a good Japanese restaurant up the block from Veniero's specializing in sushi with delectable roles. It is quite reasonable if you order from the special two-for-one menu.

For Christmas in July there's the battling Bangladeshi restaurants, two walk-ups serviced by a single staircase, at 1st Avenue between East 5th and 6th. They both have maitre'd's vying for customers but I always go to the one on the right. Its claustrophobic garish glitter, matching upholstery and wallpaper and blinking lights is enough to neutralize the most distorted mind. Remember to ask for the mango ice cream to clear the palate at the end of the meal and see if you don't leave with change back from your ten-spot.

For screenplay writing, Spanish film-maker Luis Bunuel (deceased) recommended a booth in the Oak Bar at the Plaza Hotel. I doubt if a drink order there would return change back from your ten-spot, but if you manage to esconch yourself and stay for more than an hour, you may succumb to the pressure to be brilliant. How about scheduling an anti-folk festival there? Then it, too, would be a good place to hang out.



# Some Things I Have Been Thinking About

I've been trying to quit smoking lately.

Some people would say that I'm not really trying that hard, but fuck 'em. If they want to try being inside my head while I'm trying to quit, go right the fuck ahead.

And while I'm on the subject of being inside my head, I thought I'd share some of my memories, dreams, reflections, and paranoidas with you the cerebral studio audience.

## **Dream:**

About four days into quitting smoking I dreamt that Seventh Avenue in Brooklyn was carpeted in a maroon shag. I was carrying my laundry on my back, looking like the old guy from the Led Zeppelin album and I looked up and down the street seeing nothing but a vast vista of maroon. My feet were silently trudging the purple highway. I would look down and notice the little traces of my steps, slight indentations of footprints and trails where the carpet was pushed against the grain.

At one point I noticed that there was only 1 car parked along Seventh Avenue. It was a Volkswagen Beetle. Maroon. I looked inside the window. Maroon carpeting inside.

Pretty cool.

## **Out of Body Experience:**

On the second day of not smoking I was having an out of body experience about every twenty minutes. I would be sitting on the floor, drinking tea, or walking down the street and suddenly realize that I simply wasn't "in" my body at all. I would feel myself leaking out of my ear, or sense my consciousness left in the echo of a footstep and I'd have to haul astral ass to catch up with myself because I was already halfway down the street at this point and I knew that if I lost myself there would be big trouble because I'd have no idea what I was doing and that's generally the fastest way to get into trouble. I suppose I could always camp out on my front stoop and wait for my body to come back home, but then again I don't know my schedule, I don't know what I'm liable to do without consciousness.

I think the most bizarre of these out of body experiences is when I felt my body go into Lotus position (I was standing at the time and I know I was standing because I was watching myself in a mirror, but then again I think my nicotine depletion tore a whole in the fabric of linear time). So I felt myself go into Lotus position, and then I felt as though I was wearing a pyramid on my head. At the top of the pyramid there was another me, sitting in Lotus position, and on top of that head was another pyramid, at the top of which sat another me, wearing another pyramid. I never figured out which one was actually me, maybe they all were, or maybe none of them were. Maybe I was the pyramid. I think I was the mirror.

## **Sex:**

I got dragged to a blues club by some friends of mine and there was a fourteen year old virtuoso guitarist playing with Papa Chubby. Too much talent can be very irritating to everybody else.

Anyway, this kid's licks were good and he had amazing control of the guitar, but there was something that was just a little too calculated about his playing. I figured out what it was: he hadn't experienced sex yet, so his playing was something like mimicking what he thought the blues should sound like, like thinking about what sex would feel like without having that firsthand tactile experience. There is no way to communicate the intimacy and immediacy of sex verbally, visually, or conceptually. It has to be experienced.

I came up with a formula:

The blues is all about sex.

Rock and roll is all about frustration about not getting sex.

Heavy metal is all about lying to your friends about all the sex you're actually not getting.

Punk is all about being too high on speed to give a shit about sex.

## **Money:**

My landlady asked me to start paying my rent in cash. When I was handing over the envelope stuffed with bills I realized that paying for stuff in cash is a transaction of absolute finality. Paying in check is more of a contractual agreement, a tentative deal, if you don't like what you're getting yourself into you can stop payment and go back to square one. Paying in cash though is a done deal. It's like handing over your soul.

## **Reincarnation:**

I have some problems with the idea of reincarnation. For starters, I think it lessens importance of our present lives because there's so much emphasis on your actions from a past life that you can't do anything about, it sort of like blaming someone else for the shit you're in now. Too much emphasis on past lives removes us from personal responsibility for our present condition.

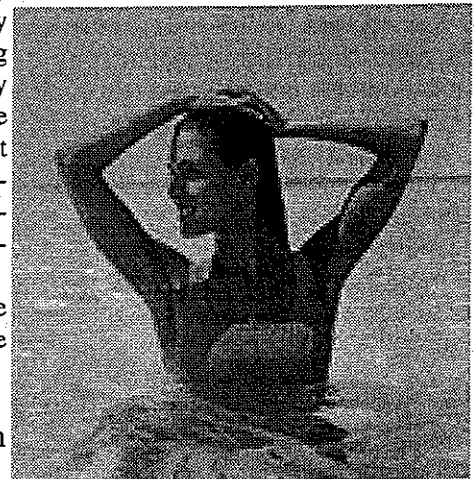
My other problem with reincarnation is that everybody who comes back from a past life regression always reports being a king, queen, pharaoh, philosopher or other such impressive personage. Nobody was ever a janitor.

## **Smoking:**

I'll probably go back to it. My brain is feeling kind of burnt by all these bizarre thoughts that jump up into consciousness spontaneously and uninvited.

These thoughts are like poetry roaches.

Seth A. Doolin



Ever played at Freddy's? Well, I can't say it will hold the same fascination for

you that it does for me, but

Freddy's is always one of my favorite gigs. Perhaps it's because it's located one block away from my house. Located on the corner of Dean Street and 6th Avenue in Brooklyn, Freddy's is known mostly because of it's exterior which is used in the TV show Brooklyn South. In Brooklyn South, Freddy's is the place where all the cops hang out and talk shop. In reality the bar is located kitty corner from the local precinct, but the cops know better than to set foot in Freddy's these days. After an owner change last year, the new staff went about ridding the bar of the unwanted element (e.g. our city's finest law officers) because they caused too much trouble and scared away customers. After a long and scary battle in which it was made clear to the law that they weren't welcome, Freddy's became a delightful place to hang out. And they've also started booking music there. I've seen the Jug Addicts there. I saw Dan Emery play with there some weird little guy named "Slappy", and I have yet to miss a weekend that Piñatoland plays there.

Other than Frank, the perpetually drunk owner who will doubtlessly talk your ear off, the other guy to befriend immediately upon entering Freddy's is Don. Don is the bartender and in many ways, the soul of Freddy's. He chooses all the music that's on the jukebox (one of the finest selections I've come across) and his amazing homemade video collages play constantly on one of the TVs in the corner. He is also involved with Lurch, a literary and arts magazine which he will be happy to tell you about. He also makes one of the best whisky sours in town.

They have a wonderful back room where you can play pool and where bands play and the art on the walls is all by local artists, usually at least one of which is hanging out there having a drink. And for all you swingers out there, Freddy's attracts a surprisingly large number of attractive people considering the neighborhood that it's in (i.e. my neighborhood.)

There are downsides to playing at Freddy's. For instance, they have nothing even resembling a sound system. Go as acoustic as possible. You might have to use a small amp for your vocals, but it's a pretty small room and they prefer you keep

## Brooklyn Side!

*Dave Wechsler explores the other worthwhile borough...*

it down anyway. Ever since their standoff with the police, they've been very careful not to give the law any reasons to hassle them.

The other downside (for those who don't live a block away) is its location. You shouldn't expect any Manhattanites to come see you play, but Freddy's consistently draws a lively and friendly local crowd, and anyone on your mailing list that lives in Brooklyn (Propect Heights/Park Slope area) will be thrilled that they don't have to trek into Manhattan to see you. I for one, will be very grateful.

*To get to Freddy's: take the 2 or 3 train to the Bergen Street stop in Brooklyn, get out, cross Flatbush, walk short block to 6th Avenue, make a left, walk down one block to Dean and there it is. Or you can take any train B,D,Q,4, and some others I forget what they are, that stop at the big Atlantic Avenue stop, walk up Flatbush to Dean (2 blocks) and make a left, and walk down one block to Freddy's.*

Slightly farther (probably a full ten minute walk from my house), but still in the ballpark is the always fabulous Two Boots. I have no idea which is the original Two Boots, but this is definitely the coolest one. They have music there nightly and you get free food if you play there. So far, we've always been generously paid as well, but word is that that's going to be changing. Still, even the free food alone is worth playing there for. You get two sets, an hour long each. The first one takes place at the tail end of dinner time, so plan a mellow first set. In any event, there's a fellow there we like to call "Turn-it-down-Tom" who will always tell you to turn it down. Ol' Turn-it-down will usually say something to this effect, "Guys. It needs to come down like 40%." The correct response is to fiddle with the knobs on your amp for a second and then turn them back to exactly where they were. Unless, of course, you really are too loud. Watch the audience. If they start lookin' for the exit, back off.

Anyway, Two Boots is always a mellow, fun show and for at least the first set, there will probably be a bunch of little children there who are always good for some cheap laughs.

*Two Boots is located on 2nd Street, in-between 7th & 8th avenues in Park Slope. Someone named Piper is doing the booking these days, but I've never talked to her so I can't tell you if she's nice or not.*



# Memorial Benefit

For the family of Don Brody

Sidewalk Cafe

Saturday, May 2nd

8:00 Bianca Bob

8:45 Gene & Mimi

9:30 George Usher

10:15 Big Happy Crowd

11:00 Mary Ann Farley

11:45 Lach

12:30 The Novellas

Plus Special Guests

All proceeds go to Don Brody's widow and children.



# Fort Schedule

The Sidewalk Cafe (94 Ave.A) is proud to present the following schedule. All shows are free. For updates please call the club at 212-473-7373 or check out our website: <http://members.aol.com/folkbro>

Thurs.April 23- Rob Ryan's Country Thursday! 8- Elizabeth Jean, 8:30-Curtis Eller, 9-Rob Ryan, 10-Mike Younger, 10:30-Matthew Gaudalupe and The Regulars, 11- CountryJam

Fri.April 24 - 8- Uncle Carl, 9 - Ruth Gerson, 10 - Johnny Seven, 11- The Trouble Dolls, 12- Remnants of The Addiction

Sat.April 25- 8-Jocelyn Ryder, 9-Hood, 10- Deni Bonet (of Robyn Hitchcock and The Egyptians)

Sun.April 26- 7:30 - My Dog, 8 - Double Naught Spy, 9-Paul Griffen, 9:30- Steve Espinola, 10-Collider, 11- Ash Negative

Mon.April 27- The Antihoot with Lach. Sign-up at 7:30. 2-for-1 drinks until 8!

Tues.April 28- 8:00 - Springwell, 8:30 - Damion Wolfe, 9 - Jonnie Davis, 9:30 - Joshua Russell, 10 - Daniel Harnett

Wed.April 29- 8-Burn What's Left, 9-Bernadette, 9:30- Connor Tribble, 10- Rick Shapiro

Thurs. April 30- Rob Ryan's Country Thursday!

9-Rob Ryan, 10-The Reachers, 11- Country Jam!

Fri.May 1- 8 -Lezlee, 9 - TBA. 11- Torn& Frayed

Sat.May 2 - Benefit for Don Brody's Family with 8- Bianca Bob, 8:45- Gene & Mimi, 9:30- George Usher, 10:15- Big Happy Crowd, 11- Mary Ann Farley, 11:45- Lach, 12:30-The Novellas Plus Special Guests!

Sun.May 3- Strange Folk Sunday- 8- Andy If, 8:30- Gary Heidt, 9-Scott Prairie, 9:30-Meaghan Gannet, 10-Animal Head, 11-Mammals of Zod

Mon.May 4- The Antihoot with Lach. Sign-up at 7:30.

Tues.May 5 - 8- David Clement, 8:30-Michal Friedman, 9-Puckett, 10- Michael Eck, 10:30- Jessica Kane, 11-Bright Blue Gorilla

Wed.May 6- 8- Joe Mookoe, 8:30- Valerie, 9-Gilligan Stump, 10-Rick Shapiro

Thurs.May 7-Rob Ryan's Country Thursday! 8-TBA, 9-Rob Ryan, 10-Zane Campbell, 11-Country Jam

Fri.May 8- 8- Jarrod Gorbelt, 9-Ruth Gerson, 10-Tamalalou, 11-Slide

Sat.May 9- 7:00 -The Lee Chabowski Record Release Party with: Lach, Chris Moore, Dina Dean, Curtis Eller 9- TBA, 10- The Cucumbers

Sun.May 10 - 8-TBA, 9-The Slant, 10-Dynamo 131

Mon.May 11- The Antihoot with Lach. Sign-up at 7:30. Try the blackened chicken!

Tues.May 12- 8-Mia Johnson, 8:30-Liz Graham, 9- Giles, 10- The Mighty Vitamins

Wed.May 13- 8-Neal With an "A", 8:30- Malcolm Holcombe, 9- The Peter Spink Three, 9:30- Tara Angell, 10- Rick Shapiro

Thurs.May 14 -Come to the Seinfeld party and Rob Ryan's Country Thursday! 8-Little Mo, 9- The Last

Episode of Seinfeld on multiple monitors, full stereo sound!! 10- Rob Ryan, 11- The Country Jam

Fri.May 15- 8- Mr.Scarecrow, 8:30- Michal Towber, 9-Lezlee, 10- The Johnson Boys, 11- Thomas Covenant, 12- The Swimmies

Sat.May 16- 9:30-David Dragov, 10- Joe Bendik and The Heathens, 11- The Meanwhiles

Sun. May 17- 8 - Hannah's Group, 8:30 - Eric Sariento, 9 - Jim Lampos, 9:30 - Stephen Clair, 10 - Trance Senders

Mon.May 18- The Antihoot with Lach. Sign-up at 7:30. The fun starts at One!

Tues.May 19-The Valentines, 8:30-Ted Korsmo, 9- Ina May Wool, 10-Anne Husick, 10:30-BoweryAngels

Wed.May 20- 8-Mark Humble, 8:30- The McCarthys, 9- Tony D'mattia, 10- Rick Shapiro

Thurs.May 21 - Rob Ryan's Country Thursday!

8- Helen Hooke, 9-Rob Ryan, 11- The Country Jam!

Fri.May 22- 8- L.E.G. Slurp, 9-Eletfa, 10- Delta Garage, 11- Uncle Carl

Sat.May 23- 8-Jocelyn Ryder, 9-Ashley Wilkes, 9:45- Fuzzy Doodah, 10- Homer Erotic, 11- Bionic Finger

Sun.May 24 - 8 - Tequilla Mockingbird, 8:30 - Alice Stopkoski, 9 - Jim Kemp, 9:30 - Adam Brodsky, 10-Ivy Bautista

Mon.May 25 - The Antihoot with Lach. Sign-up at 7:30. Sing out your sorrows to encouraging ears!

Tues.May 26- 8 - Amanda Thorpe (of the Wirebirds) 8:30 - Mark McManus, 9 - Springwell, 9:30 - Nancy Falkow, 10- Patty Murray

Wed.May 27 - 8- Joy Zuzulo, 8:30- Michael Berke, 9- Jeff Lang (From Australia), 10- Rick Shapiro

Thurs.May 28 - Rob Ryan's Country Thursday!

Fri.May 29- Thom MacFarlane, 9- Gene & Mimi, 10- Lenny Molotov &The Illuminoids, 12-Big Black Nun

Sat.May 30- 8- Curtis Eller's American Circus, 9- Lezlee, 10- Tricia Scotti

Sun.May 31- 7:30-My Dog, 8-Little Oscar, 8:30- Box The Compass, 9-Brian Bauers, 9:30-Lisa Itts, 10- Melissa and The Mad Dog

