

MY FUNERAL



W/O LOWER LAKE LEVELS • FIVE SHOTS • PRAISE THE LORD • 1 900 DEAD YET



FABRICS & FINDINGS, INC.

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50 ANDERSON AVENUE
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Elegy Of The Inanimate Anthropomorph

I'll never be able to hold a snowball
Tightly in bare hands until it's clear
And not think of Tarzan
And The Eye of the Idol.

I take a flashlight and shine it all around
Way down deep in the ocean
Where there are some fish
Who think they look like God
And want to blow up the world.

Life. I didn't know you were actually supposed
to USE it.

Les pompiers on vite eteint l'incendie.

Like Elvis said, "Let's say you're sending parcel post.
I don't know if they put enough weight on me to
Get it shipped out."

Smell my footprints leading to the judgement throne,
Groin out thrust as if I owned it.

The ancient Romans chiseled OVR FOVNDER in gold leaf
Lasting to these present days.

A black bicycle lovingly given and carelessly destroyed
By a laughing group of strangers
In a hungry frenzy of companionship.

I'll be shutting down the power
Because with a half moon on snow
And twenty below sunburn,
We can read by delicacies
A diamond made to order from coal.

REFRIGERATOR 2

Channel 10 carried the first story early the next morning. The police had found a car smashed up against a tree. The wreck had nobody in it, but then they found its driver, frozen solid outside a house nearby and partly covered by a snowdrift. Neighbors remembered hearing some shouting during the night.

What police told reporters was that the injured man must have stumbled away from the wreck to find help, and he must have collapsed and died before he could wake up anybody in the house. This was before the autopsy. The real story came out when the body thawed and the police found the bullet holes.

Sonia who works in our mailroom had a migraine today and tells me she has had it for a week. And now she has to go home to get her house ready for a party. She says she has been under a lot of strain lately, because her uncle, who was only 36 and who was very close to her, died two weeks ago. When Sonia went into his bedroom to wake him up so she could take him to work, he simply didn't wake up. Now her fiancé has talked her into throwing a surprise birthday party for her closest friend.

This girl, Sonia says, has felt very blue for the last month because she lost her boyfriend, who was the father of the child she is carrying. He had been driving the car that was wrecked.

The person who killed him was a second girlfriend, whose existence Sonia says the birthday girl did not even suspect. When the police caught her, the second girlfriend said she had argued with him while they sat in his car. She pulled out a pistol and shot him. Five shots. Then she jumped out of the car and he tried to drive away, probably to try to get himself to a hospital. He crashed the car in the front yard of a house around the corner, then staggered onto the lawn and bled to death there. When the body thawed and the coroner did an autopsy they found the bullet wounds.

Sonia tells me her friend heard about all this on the television news: first about the wreck, then that it was her boyfriend, then about the bullet wounds, and then about the second girlfriend.

DUAL USE TECHNOLOGY

Some of my neighbors are too lazy to put their trash out every week. The city is saving a bundle with this new trash pick-up routine. One guy and a truck with a hydraulic lift. My neighbor and I have been discussing alternative uses for these huge trash containers. He was thinking about scoring another one and cutting the front off so he could use it as a wheel barrel for lawn work in the Spring. I thought we could rinse one out in the summer and fill it up with water for swimming on a hot day.

And what's the deal with this government issue army green color? It looks like Stepfordville out there on trash day. If I painted mine, would they still empty it? How about if I painted a naked lady on it?

LONG LIVE DOKTOR KEVORKIAN

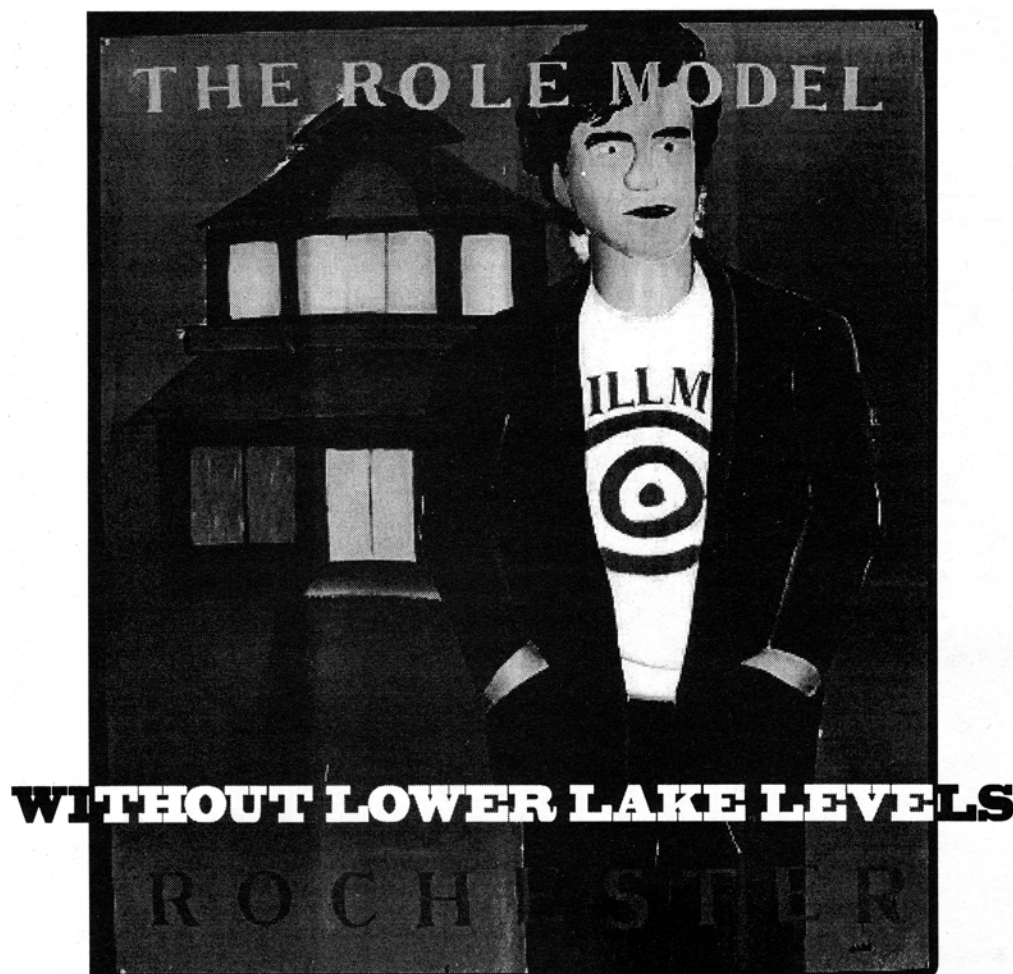
The Los Angeles County Coroner is proposing that gang members be subjected to watching the autopsies of slain gang members. Supervisors have already appropriated \$50,000 for the first year of this program. I agree with the critics of this plan who say these theatrics will only harden them further. I certainly have been desensitized by the hundreds of horror movies I've seen. I don't think an autopsy would even look real after "Reanimator". I would assign these kids to look after those who are living but terminally ill or handicapped, or to work with other kids who've been dumped by their parents.

The Chief of the Trenton Police Department in New Jersey located forty witnesses to a murder/abduction at a private club. Not one of the witnesses had come forward on their own. Two nationally syndicated television programs approached him about appearing on camera for their take on the sensational story and he turned them down. He's disgusted and claims, "If we don't change, it's going to be where we're stepping over bodies. Or we'll have martial law"

A recent issue of "The Weekly World News" ran a photo of three guys sitting around a glass coffee table drinking Pabst Blue Ribbon beer. Inside the glass coffee table was the wife of one these gentleman. She had died two years earlier of a heart ailment and he treated her with special chemicals and sealed her up in the glass coffin/coffee table. His new girlfriend told him he was sick and that he would have to get rid of the thing so he reluctantly sold it at a garage sale for \$216.

We have received an alarming number of wrong numbers lately. We're waiting for technology to provide a more reliable way for these people to dial the number they want. Maybe shouting the name of the person they want to talk to at a phone equipped with voice recognition will do the trick. The next time you're eating at The Bangkok order the fried squid appetizer. You get a plate of what looks like deep fried tarantulas with a delicious red dipping sauce. Add a little of that hot black oil and crunch them down.





Someone told me the lake used to come right up to Ridge Road. The high school I went to on Kings Highway would have been about a hundred yards out, underwater. I don't remember if the ridge was supposed to have been created by the glacier (I may be mixing up my folklore) but this does seem plausible. If you turn north off Ridge Road from Greece to Wayne County you immediately go down a hill.

When you choose to live on the lake you do so because of the spectacular spectacle of all that nature out your picture window. And nature is the boss no matter how much money you have. So I don't have all that much sympathy for these homeowners when a good storm hits. El Niño has affected our weather this past year. Our summer was wet and all that rainfall has rolled downhill and wound up in the lake. Now parts of the Saint Lawrence River have frozen with ice jams making it impossible for the Army Corps of Engineers to control the water level. Lake Ontario is now at its highest level since 1973.

Monroe County has distributed 30,000 empty sandbags and the county closed all the beaches and piers last week. I am concerned that the House of Guitars may fill up with water and the last few copies of Armand Schaubroeck's albums will be lost.

When I moved here in the mid seventies one of the first posters to catch my eye was for "Star Death Consortium" at the Holiday Inn downtown with Armand Schaubroeck Steals. The show was recorded and released as a double album, *Live At The Holiday Inn*. Check out the blues-based avant noise rock "Streetwalker" on the live album with Armand's beat delivery and monstrous crowd response dialed in at the studio. "Ratfucker" from the album of the same name comes alive like Tim Curry in "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" and predates that scene by ten years. Armand does a pretty good hitman-for-hire on "Independent Hitter" and even gets in a line like this one to Mr. Seglino at the deli. "I'm off duty. I'm here to buy a six pack."

His first album *A Lot Of People Would Like To See Armand Schaubroeck... Dead* opens with Armand in the confessional flashing back to bumping into a statue while knockin' off a church. This three lp set brilliantly details Armand's experience in the Elmira Reformatory and even includes some of Armand's paintings. Let's make "Love For The Last Time" is actually sentimental. My brother did time in the maximum security prison in Mansfield, Ohio for pot possession in '69. We listened to this album together recently. It is as real as it is entertaining. There's a version of "Bells," co written with Edgar Allen Poe on his second lp *I Came To Visit, But Decided To Stay*. What more could you ask for in a rock song? These audio verité albums were huge in France. They're seeped in Catholic mythology. On "Cry Myself to Sleep" Armand asks, "Jesus, how could you know how I feel? When you came as man, you never had a woman." It's about time for Armand to do another record in the floodproof digital format.

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Next issue:

Bad Acid Trip

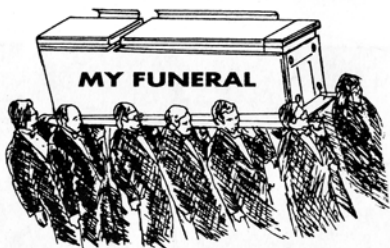
Submissions on this
or any other topic are welcome.

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REFRIGERATOR

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Praise the Lord

My sister and her husband are born again Christians. The day before my family was to meet my sister's fiance, my Father and his business associates attended a Jaycee's party at a suburban country club. The entertainment consisted of a young magician who promised to replicate Harry Houdini's underwater escape from a straight jacket. For \$50 this young man had two of the pool lifeguards jacket, handcuff, and tie him up; place him into a large, beat up military duffle bag; padlock the duffle; and heave him into a 12' deep swimming pool.

After the first three minutes, the audience figured that there must be some sort of gimmick, a hidden air supply or the like. Or perhaps it was all an illusion and the magician would appear from behind the shrubbery. But as the clock ticked on, most people began to get a little annoyed. Staring into a swimming pool wasn't particularly fun and they returned to their cocktails. David Copperfield or even Houdini wouldn't have wasted their time so cheaply.

After approximately ten minutes the lifeguards decided to rid the pool of the ugly duffle bag, and in the process brought up a heavy sack containing the magician. It took several minutes to untie the wet, tight knots and the rusty handcuffs. The magician was a pale blue and no pulse could be detected. Only after repeatedly striking his chest and performing mouth to mouth did he sputter back to life. His first words were "Praise the Lord."

This magician is now my brother in law. He tells his youth group of his near death experience, of how he saw a light at the end of a long dark tunnel and felt the warmth of heaven in his soul. The Jaycees withheld payment for non performance of the escape.

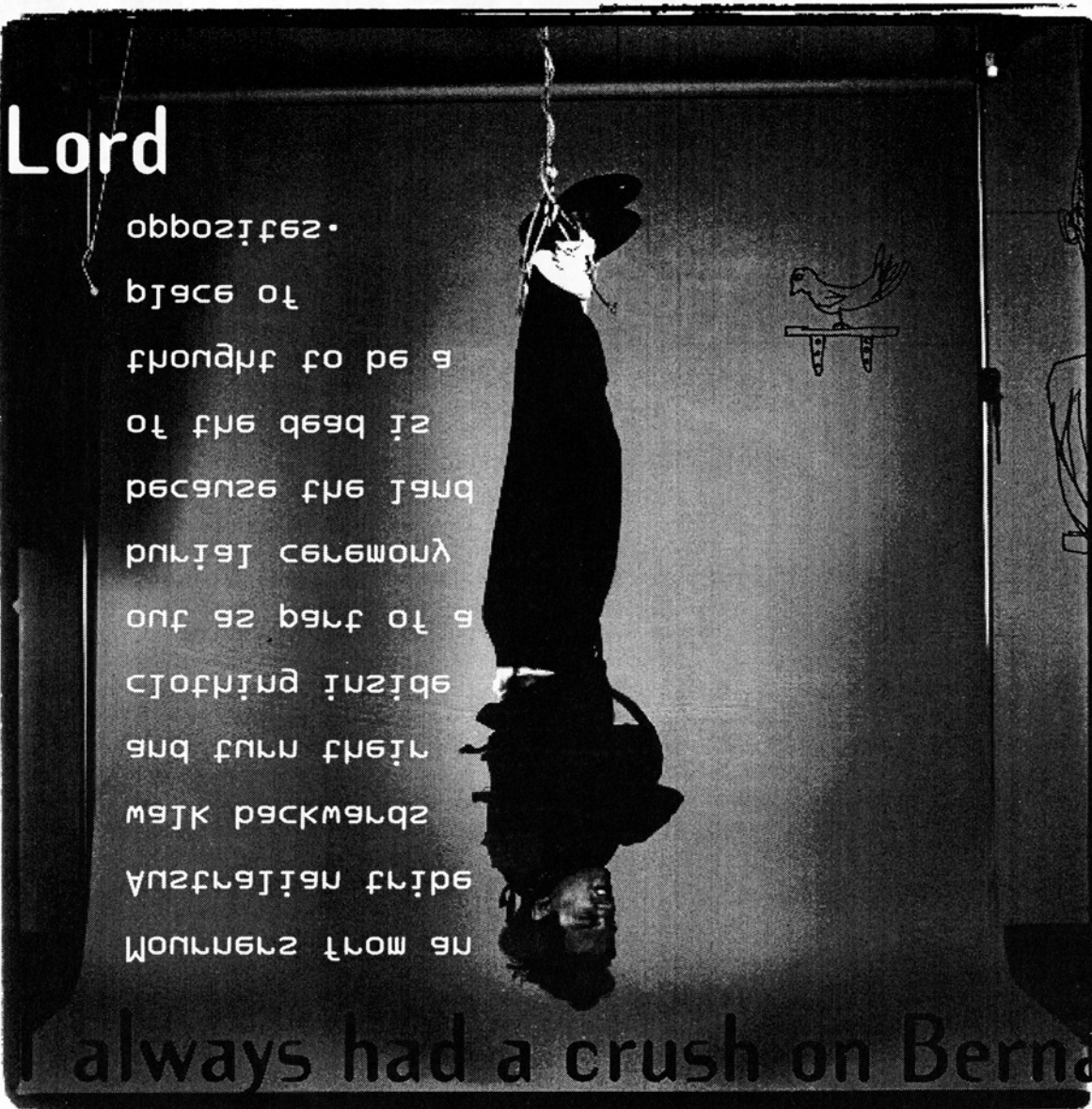
One day when I was 8 we played a game called "Jungle" and I got killed. I laid dead under a willow tree in about an inch of grassy water listening to the survival of the fittest and the resurrection of an insatiable food chain.

Mothers call dinner. I am dead and rotting. Toby or Sparky slept on the raised and dry tree roots that night.

(If it was Sparky, incidentally, a couple of years later I killed her with an arrow for biting me a second time.)

My brother was home from his first year of college then and taught me how to spell Khrushchev and advised me to tell my friends "you're not my mother."

So I did.



I always had a crush on Bernardo

Ever been at a party, engaged in a conversation about movies, and find yourself wondering if a certain actor or actress is still alive? Like, who ever would have imagined that Lillian Gish was still alive and in her late nineties up until a few weeks ago? What ever happened to George Chakiris and is the guy who played Superman in the TV series still alive? Call 1-900 DEAD YET. Bob has already copywritten this idea but you won't be able to access his service for another few months.

I would like to have a traditional funeral like the ones from my ethnic childhood. Frankly, I could not subject my loved ones to an alternative service with new-age, new speak stammering, white calla lilies in recyclable containers, Enya on CD and a nutritious lunch afterwards with a variety of sparkling waters.

I want the gusto. Give me a highly religious service in some orthodox church that uses a language that no one understands. Armenian would suffice. Incense and thundering, basso-organ is of course a requisite. I would like the church to be in a very bad part of town, so people could couple their mourning with anxiety over their parked cars.

A lunch should be provided for the mourners with loads of non-nutritive, colorful food and hard liquor. Fruited jello is always a treat. Several cases of whiskey and fortified wines seem to get even the most reticent into a fine keening wail. Several fistfights and a score of marital disputes will undoubtedly live up the afternoon.

When everyone wakes the next morning with hairy tongues and throbbing heads, my memory will live on.

My wife and I went to a funeral home in Webster last night. A friend of ours' father had died of a heart attack while vacationing in the Bahamas. "What a way to go" said his son. "He was probably placing a bet when he got it. I hope I go like that."

I haven't given too much thought to going, although I used to think I would probably go young. It's too late for that now. I do think it will happen quick though, like out of the blue. And no way are they gonna stuff me. No religious service either. Just a day off for my friends and family and a little get together. Put my ashes in the compost pile along with the coffee grounds. And if I cross your mind again, check the soil with one of those litmus strips.

"What a nice guy he was." Sure, I thought. Easy for her to say. She never knew me. She sort of was a friend of a friend who heard about me.

I was amazed at the turnout. One good thing-they remembered to play that Cooper tune like I requested-"Dead Feelings Are Cool." I merely resembled a full ash tray. A slight mixture of cigars, cigarettes, tiperillos and pot.

"I remember once..." Hey, a story being told...about me. I decided to float over and listen but was sidetracked by the casket. Wow. It appeared that someone had forgotten something. Wasn't I supposed to be cremated? I floated out into the hall. There was an over sized man drinking water. I passed through and saw the sign. John P. McClinter. Shit. Wrong funeral home.

I pluck a canape from a passing tray and taste it without looking. Some kind of paté on a wafer of water chestnut. Just what I would expect at one of Dave's parties. The mostly forty-something crowd is loud. Joan, a beatific smile on her face, is greeting people over by the fireplace. What's she so happy about? Her husband is in an urn on the mantle. Most of him, anyway.

"He'll be sorry he missed this," I say to no one in particular. A woman next to me looks up. "Dave liked a good time," I add.

"Were you close?" She asks, lines of concern creasing her forehead.

"Oh, 30 yards or so..." I say, motioning over my shoulder. She has long straight hair. Crystals dangle from her ears. She smiles absently, running her gaze around the perimeter of my head. I maneuver my face into her line of sight.

"I live next door," I explain. "He invited me to his parties so I wouldn't complain about the noise. You know Dave..." She nods, slowly. Dumb with grief? I wonder, or just dumb?

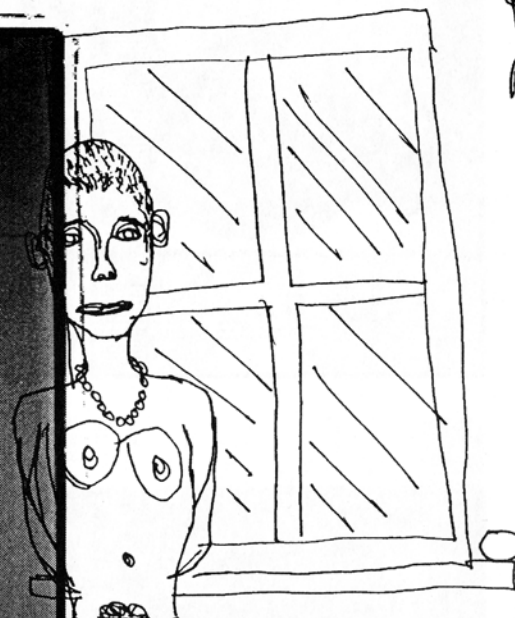
A little of each, I discover. She begins to talk about auras. How when you cut a leaf off a plant, the aura remains. I excuse myself to get a drink.

There's champagne in the kitchen. I fill a blue plastic tumbler and wander into the family room. People are watching television. I recognize a guy from Dave's last party. Someone he worked with, I remember. Balding, with a neatly trimmed beard. He introduces me to his wife, Sonja. She's wearing what looks like a cheesecloth toga over spandex. They turn back to the TV and I realize it's Dave on the screen, looking thin but happy. "This may be the last time you see me, but not the last time I see you," he says with an hoarse chuckle.

I can see that these people believe him. They ooze new age optimism. They believe in limitless possibilities. They don't need God because they have faith in science and nanotechnology and cryogenics. But they cling to the hope of eternal life with all the fervor of fundamentalists.

In the basement of a private laboratory in California, Dave's head hangs suspended in a tank of liquid nitrogen. A cold so absolute, the molecules of his brain are locked in place. Every thought preserved for some future time when they can be spliced into a new clone, another temporary vessel. I wonder how he'll feel sifting through the ashes of his first body-the one we knew-the gritty gray powder running through his fingers. Will he look up and laugh?

On the deck off the family room, the aura lady is blowing bubbles. Dave's balding coworker aims a camcorder at her. "We'll put this in the vault for Dave," he says, panning to following the rising iridescent globes. "He'll get a kick out of it." And I think, Whose funeral is this, anyway?



My funeral will probably be like most of my birthdays were, like my graduations were, like my wedding was, like my divorce was-rather non-eventful. It'll just happen.

I'll be dressed up, I suppose. My Uncle Charlie had a great funeral. He packed a church full of people. Later, on a windy day about 15 miles off the coast of Long Beach, California, we threw his ashes and flowers into the ocean.

If there is reincarnation and if I have a choice, I would like to be a dog that rides in the back of a pickup truck fairly often.

But getting back to the actual day of my funeral, I'm still drawing a blank. I hope that date is a surprise and very far off.

Most importantly, Spring is here and perhaps I am in love.

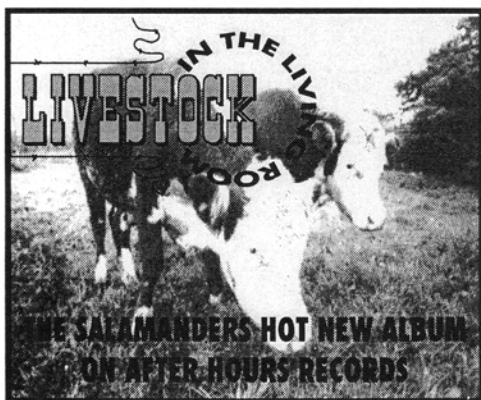
Get a life





THE EVER IN FLUX TOP TEN RECORDS OF THE NINETIES

Leonard Cohen, *The Future* (Columbia)
Julee Cruise *Floating Into The Night* (WB)
Jimi Hendrix *Stages* (Reprise)
Joe Henderson *So Near, So Far*
(*Musings For Miles*) (Verve)
Neil Young *Harvest Moon* (Reprise)
Hal Wilner Presents *Weird Nightmare:*
Meditations on Mingus (Columbia)
Nod Nod (Baby Music)
Tom Waits *Bone Machine* (Island)
Various Artists *Cumbia Cumbia*
(Discos Fuentes)
Mickey Hart Planet Drum (Ryklo)



REFRIGERATOR E

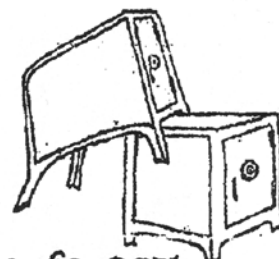
I hear from a reliable source that the cafeteria in McCurdy's is the only place left in Midtown where you can smoke. We stopped in to have a cup of coffee and a piece of pie last week and sat in the small no smoking section in the back. We immediately struck up a conversation with the strangers beside us and felt like we were in a truckstop in the middle of Ohio and that's a compliment.



OLLIE'S EYES

In this, momentary drunkenness, his repetitious thoughtlessness, Ollie turns his last swallow, into recollective reality. Staring into the barley, wallowing in the rye, Ollie's reflection glares back, at what was, at what it's become. Ollie's eyes, lenses, focusing on his being, his life in the bottle. A life swimming in hallucination, a life no longer tasted. Licking the metal, not the wine, Ollie's eyes drift and dream. Singing the whispering melody of a liquor ballad, rolling his bloodshot eyes, in memory of the man, who washed away his years, walking with the whiskey. Closing his eyes, embracing his fear, sober are his hands, sliding off the trigger.

Italian Bread from Martusciello's Bakery on Saratoga Avenue (available from Home Grocers) could be about the best in the city. I used to think it was Riccardo's on Norton.



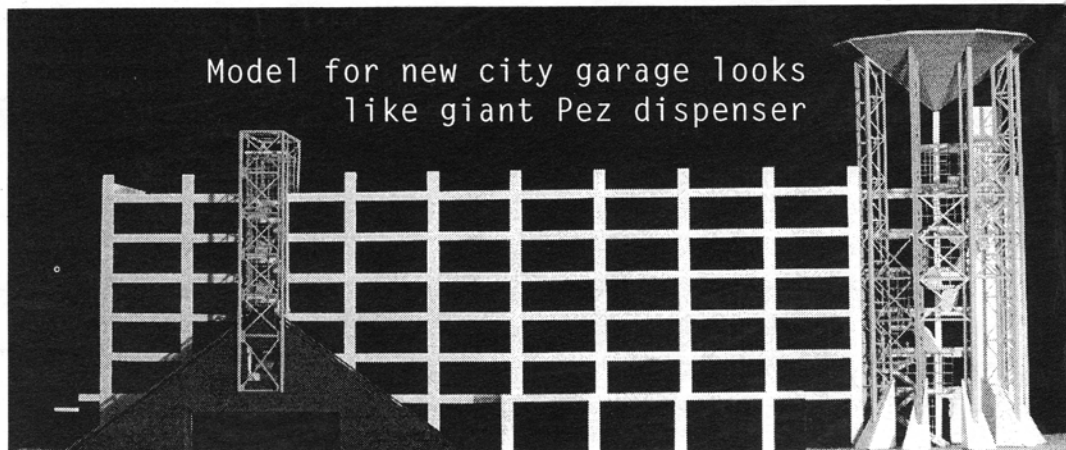
safe sex

SOME KIND OF SNOB

I'm afflicted by an obsession with fonts. We go to a movie and, as the credits roll by, spout off what face is being used and what I think of them! Even the teenagers in the front rows have a tough time keeping up with our rambunctiousness. And of course every promotional direct mail piece or newsletter that passes through our ever mounting mail pile gets scrutinized by my unflinching criticism and delicate font sensibilities..


So this is the double deuce issue and we can't help but notice the growing pack of free publications cluttering the tops of cigarette machines around the city. There is even one that has taken the name of the top half of a refrigerator and pretends to be some sort of sister publication to this one.

In February we received the first issue of a newsletter named after a really big refrigerator, *The Walk In*, (*Wine And Food News From The Rochester Club Restaurant*). I used to think of this place as being too formal. They even stuck their neck out with Mark Groaning art recently. This place is relaxed and happening. Pretty soon we'll be sitting out on their patio for lunch.



"Nice of you to have come to my funeral."

Charles Mingus

"He Stopped Loving Her Today" may be the finest song ever written. It was "his" funeral that brought a conclusion to to "his" lifelong flame. It was George Jones' biggest hit in 1980 and took as long to produce as a Peter Gabriel song. Simply quoting the lyrics would slight the spine tingling reading that George lays on this tune. Click here  for a sound demonstration and then track it down on a greatest hits package.

MILES IS DEAD

The first Joe Henderson album I bought was 1974's *The Elements*. The four songs, "Fire," "Air," "Water" and "Earth," were trance-like and psychedelic. "Fire" was on a tape we played at the chapel for our wedding. Joe Henderson won a Grammy this year for last year's very popular *Lush Life, The Music Of Billy Strayhorn*. We saw him at the Art Park jazz festival last summer and he was sensational. Like standing in front a Franz Kline painting, his music gets deeper and deeper in person. He has just released a tribute to Miles Davis. The quartet (Joe, Dave Holland, John Scofield and Al Foster) on *So Near, So Far* all played with Miles when he was alive and this record is like listening to testimonials to Miles at his funeral from professional storytellers. And the cd gets deeper when you play it loud.

We bought a new font from Emigre in Sacramento and used it on the cover of the last issue. They sent a music catalog along with the font and I ordered their newest release by Honey Barbara. They sound as cool as the font looks. In fact I really like this band. *FeedLotLoopHole* was recorded at home on an eight track. This was the promise of all the new recording technology a few years back. Quirky chords put them in a friendly art rock bag. I picture them playing outdoors behind a remodeled farmhouse near San Antonio. The lead singer sounds like Marty Balin from the Jefferson Airplane and they do a pretty good job of describing their sound as "pathetic psychedelic."

SUN RA IS NOT DEAD

These Evidence label reissues of old Sun Ra stuff are incredible and many of them are repackaged two lps to one cd. *Sun Ra Visits Planet Earth/Interstellar Low Ways* from the late fifties is otherworldly. Big band music with African roots from outer space, it's timeless stuff. *Monorails And Satellites* is just Sun Ra at the piano and a real treat. There are about ten of these reissues and the guys at the Bop Shop have promo copies behind the counter. They'll play them for you to check out while you make up your mind.

The sight and sound of Sun Ra playing chords with the drum sounds setting on his Yamaha keyboard at the Red Creek or Jazzberry's in his last few visits here is permanently etched in my mind. I know I'm impressionable but each time I see him I think "that was the best show I've ever seen in my life." Sun Ra has had a few strokes but is still playing. The coolest club in town will bring him here next.

We have a modem and a fax but only get a sense of the potential to work on an international level when our *Bossa Nova, Trinta Anos Depois* cd is on. So dreamy and easy to work to, this compilation covers thirty years of bossa nova hits by the original artists. We could be in the cocktail lounge of a tropical resort pecking away at our keyboards.

Saint Etienne has an international flair to their sound too. Sort of second generation Angelo Badalamenti with found vocal snippets between the songs (like maybe they take their DAT recorder with them to coffee shops in London). Their new record *So Tough* is hardly tough at all. It's light and fun like the best euro pop or San Francisco's Angel Corpus Christi. Her new, perfect world, blue vinyl single, *Big Black Cloud*, is available by mail only from A&R ENT. PO Box 22113 Sunset Station SF Ca. 94122.

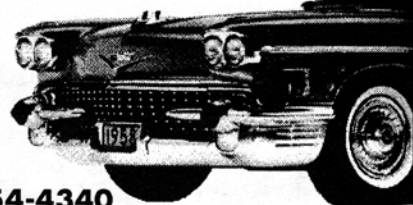
So David Bowie and Brian Eno were influenced by the work of the modern minimalist composer Philip Glass when they created their popmasterpiece, *Low*. And now Philip Glass has reworked *Low* into a mutated pop symphony. I picture David Bowie and his supermodel wife with Brian Eno and his significant other in plush velvet seats at the New York premiere. A nice evening was had by all. I start daydreaming in these classical settings and this cd gets me there.

Wow! A commercial radio station in Love World that will play the new record by JJ Cale along with a block of Thelonious Monk. That doesn't sound like much but the new WJZR is the only local commercial station programming its own playlist and not bowing to some common denominator California consulting firm. JJ Cale always sounds cool. He just doesn't do it very often. His *Number 10* is digital country folk. There is no drummer credited on the liner notes. You know those new high speed German trains that are so smooth you won't spill your coffee? Well the drifter playing guitar in the lounge is JJ Cale and the scenery is pure Americana.

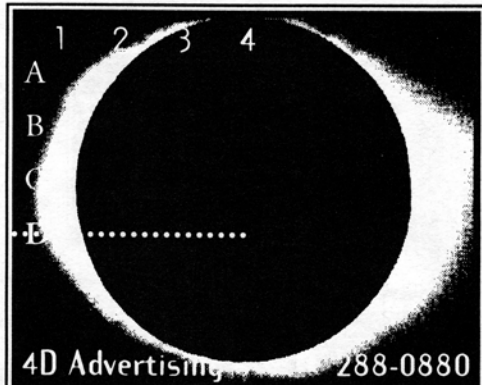
I was headed downtown in my car at about 3:30 in the afternoon and I caught Bathsheeba's show on WRUR. It appears she will play and say about anything on the radio. I was in and out of the car but I heard bits and pieces of Harry Partch, the primitive Olatunga!? in a time signature I could not figure out, a modern prepared guitar piece for five guitars and some homespun poetry. As cool as Rick Petri's Wednesday night show on WITR.

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Dear Refrigerator,

I finally found a copy of the Refrigerator and without a doubt loved it! So, sign me up. Enclosed you will find a check for \$20 for 2 subscriptions—one for myself and one for an equally hip chick who works in the Big Apple. Thanks a bunch, Kelley

Dear Refrigerator,

I wanted to take this opportunity to tell you that I am looking forward to all the great issues I am sure will grace the readers this upcoming year. With that said I would also like to enclose a pair of pages that perhaps someone over there might dig! So until next time, keep up the great work and I look forward to reading and writing for the following issues.

Peace, dmm

Dear Refrigerator,

The holiday season has past but memories linger, like leaving the Bug Jar in a Frank Capra-like snowstorm or the visit from my friend Guy on the day after Christmas. Walking in with a beautifully wrapped gift that Guy said "I thought of you and had to have it." It wasn't a matter of cost now that he worked as as photo editor for AP in NYC. Not like when we were RIT students taking full course loads, waiting tables together, and working on a special publication called the "Photojournalist." We had talked of our own publication. It was and is wishful thinking, but still important.

As we talked, Guy picked up my copy of the Refrigerator and asked, "What's this?" I told him that it was a great little, locally produced alternative publication full of people's thoughts, wishes, observations, and ideas written in

anonymity. "Wow, kind of like the *Sojournal* might have been or will be." "Yeah," I thought, "what a perfect gift." "I'd like to get this in NYC," Guy said.

Enclosed is my check and his address to feed his hopes for the coming year.

L.L.

