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THE PRODIGY

DANCE MUSIC'S FINEST

by Mateo

Winding it Up and Going Full Throttle

The Prodigy is the greatest hard-dance group ever. Eager to challenge listeners, they have a unique sound that is always diverse. Music simply does not get any better than this. It stands to reason, then, that their current

EP *One Love*, featuring songs from their forthcoming album *Music for the *Rebellious Juvenile**, was the best dance single released during the rather sparsely entertaining year of '93. From the classic rave anthem Charly (Yes, *that* "Charly")

to "Out of Space" (the song that took everybody's brain to another dimension) to today's "Rhythm of Life" (which brings new meaning to the declaration "Ahhhhhhhhh!!!"), the Prodigy doesn't just stand out as more than another





one-hit-wonder. They have proven themselves to be powerful artists.

The Prodigy consists of four members. Two of them are dancers Leeroy Thornhill and Keith Flint. An MC with the unlikely name of Maxim Reality joins in on the group's live presentation. Together, this trio guarantees their audience one of the liveliest shows in the underground and club scenes. They'll make you laugh and cry— and occasionally Keith will even oblige you with a kick in the head via stage diving.



What more could one

ask for? The music, of course. That is where the Prodigy's fourth and most vital member comes in. At



22, Liam Howlett has written and produced all the Prodigy's tracks to date. He claims that none of these roles are optional. "I have to

produce, write and engineer it all myself. Otherwise I'm just not happy with it," he says adamantly.

Currently working on production for the forthcoming album, Howlett is quick to explain that his method for concluding whether or not a song is ready to be recorded has a great deal to do with the fans they perform for at each show. "Because we do so many live gigs, the process we use when I write a new song is to try it out in the PA before it's actually released. This way, we get to tell how well it goes down from the





crowds.” In this custom, the Prodigy maintains a one-of-a-kind link with its audience... a tool used as a key to their success. If a song does hang on the opinion of the audience, the audience is, in a sense, a passive member of The Prodigy itself. Such theories aside, Hewlett maintains that he’s reluctant to embrace The Prodigy’s inherent role as musical royalty. “None of us want to be stars. We just want to carry on with what we’re doing. I mean, we all want to be successful in enjoying underground hard-dance music, you



know, and at the same time open a few doors to interest different crowds as we go along.” If the music is any indication, it looks as if Hewlett is determined to open more than just a *few* doors. Reggae, house, thrash, classical, breakbeat, grunge, techno and even some slight hints of country have all been featured in The Prodigy’s discography. All of these blend into a form of dance music that only Hewlett could pull off. “I’m someone who likes to feel a buzz. When I listen to the songs, it’s got to be something that touches an

emotion when I hear it. It’s the same as when I write a song for the first time, I have to feel that buzz. Otherwise, it doesn’t really feel like it’s a part of what I’m doing. A song that creates an atmosphere is what gives me that buzz. Happy or moody or whatever, it has to create an atmosphere.”

Since the late ’80s, the world of dance music has been infiltrated by a number of faceless acts whose music is just as much a trend as it is their own expression. Whether those bands play techno, house or bluegrass all depends



← on whatever everybody else is doing. On top of all that, the music is really bad. (How bad? Well, if you've heard 2 Unlimited...) Each Prodigy disc, on the other hand, comes with an unwritten guarantee: If it has the Prodigy name on it, you can be sure it's worth your time. Even the B-sides are

top-notch, as in the case with 1992's infamous speaker-killer "Crazy Man" and 1993's rollercoaster "We Are the Ruffest." This guarantee also extends to remixes The Prodigy has done for

other artists, including Front 242 ("Religion"), Jesus Jones ("Zeros and Ones") and the Art of Noise ("Instruments of Darkness— All of Us are One People"). This last remix,



although widely regarded as a politically charged Prodigy tune promoting social equality (similar to 1992's "Wind it Up"), was intended simply for entertainment. As far as the Prodigy are

concerned, politics is not their territory. "Whether or not the music has a message, well... maybe there are some messages that I'm not really aware of. I was aware of it in 'Instruments of Darkness' because the song itself is quite obvious: getting everyone together under one roof. But that

really relates quite heavily to dance music anyway, because everybody is having a good time in the club and dancing together and just doing it. But as far as 'Wind It Up' goes, the equal



rights and injustice, that's a bit too political for us. After all, *The Prodigy* is really only about—I hope this is enough—dance music. Just going to a club and enjoying it, that's all we've ever really tried to be about. I don't think we ever really want to get too heavily into racism or anything like that. But that's the way 'Wind it Up' came out... and with those lyrics on there it just worked well musically. It just so happens they meant something as well."

Considering Howlett's youth, it's easy to wonder what his parents must



think about their little boy's newfound position as an underground icon. "My parents totally support what we're doing. Especially my dad, he just loves it. But when we first started, he was like 'No, no! Don't leave your job! Don't leave your job!' and I was saying 'Look dad, we really are serious about this, we're going to go for it.' I guess he just got with it after a while." With parents who actually support artistic expression over corporate mediocrity, an ever-increasing league of fans and followers all across the world, and singles that

always end up somewhere within the top 12 of the Gallup charts, it might seem that Liam Howlett would be obliged to believe that a higher power is watching over him. Is there a god, Liam? "I reckon yeah. I mean, I definitely believe that things that are made to happen do. If it suddenly ended tomorrow, I would think that was meant to be and just go with it. So I guess there is... but then what about the dinosaurs? Where did they come from, anyway?"

Since the *One Love* EP is a perfect example





of how good dance music can be, one might wonder why it has received little or no airplay in the States. Their American label, Elektra, determined that The Prodigy's American audience wouldn't like the song, and decided not to release it in the US. This strange case of a big record company dictating what fans should and should not hear comes as a disappointment to both Prodigy enthusiasts and Howlett himself. "I'm really annoyed about it.

We need to get material out in order to keep people interested and happy with the band. What I think is



going to happen is [Elektra] will release *One Love* eventually, but as a B side, and this other song I've written for America will be

the A side. They just didn't think it was right for America, but I know it is! I know it's a cool song, I know it's strong. It got to number 10 in the charts in England so it must be strong. It's a bit of a shame but there you go... that's the decision they've made. Still, I'm looking forward to going back to America. I just hope everyone

remembers us when we come back." That we will, Mr. Howlett, that we will.

Axcess #4





Talking About Nothing With Trent Reznor

by Leah Lin

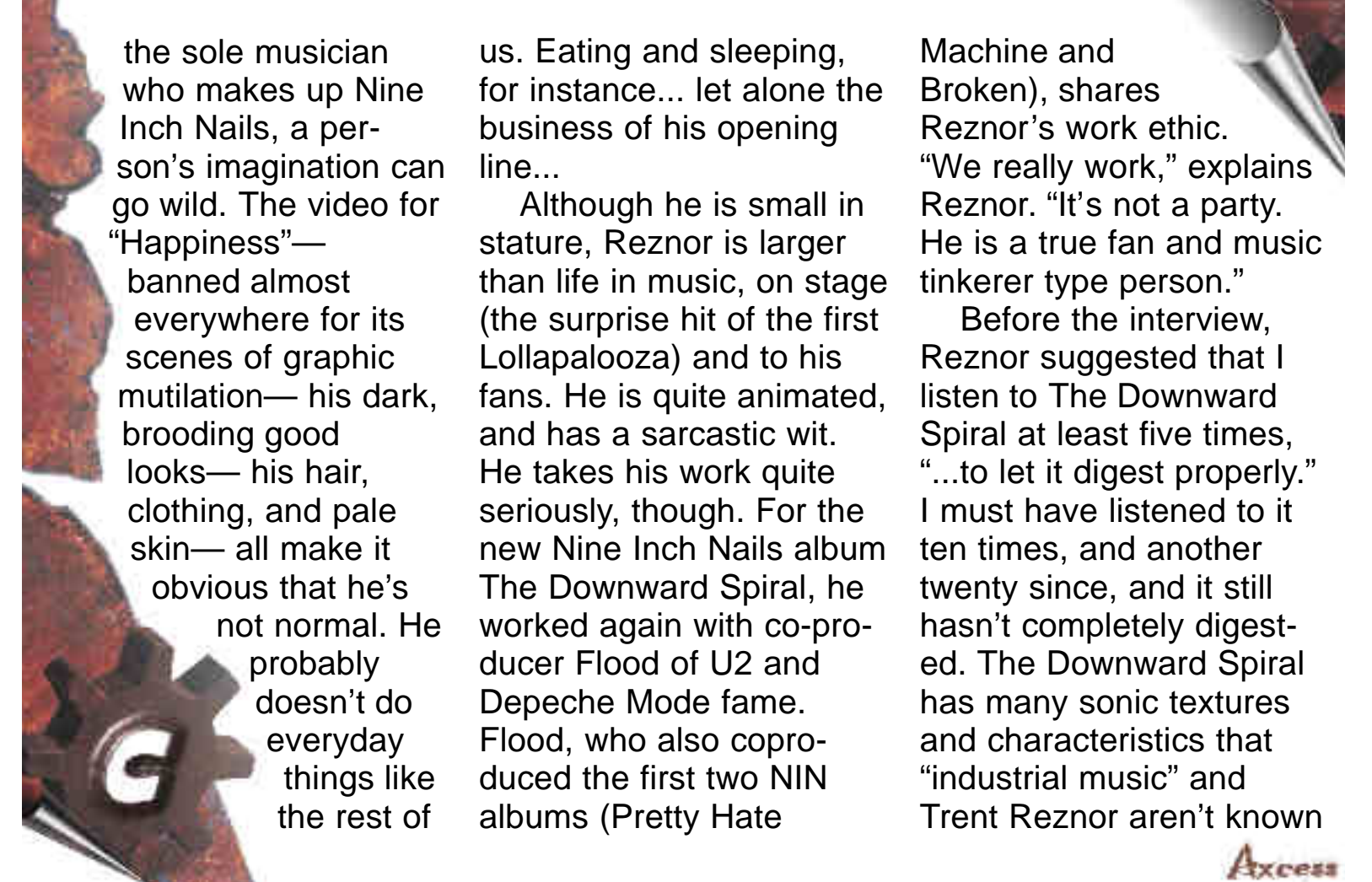
“I pee standing up, just like everyone else. That’s what I was doing when you knocked on the door.” My gosh— did I shake his hand? I can’t remember...

Trent Reznor insists he is a normal guy. He doesn’t

hang from the rafters during the daylight hours— he spends them in a recording studio playing with musical instruments, electronics, and noises. Even so, he has an atypical persona, expressed first in his music, and then

in the brutal and disturbing imagery of his videos and photos. His previous residence— the now-demolished Tate mansion— adds to his strange image. (He kept the front door as a souvenir.) Armed with these bits and pieces of





the sole musician who makes up Nine Inch Nails, a person's imagination can go wild. The video for "Happiness"—

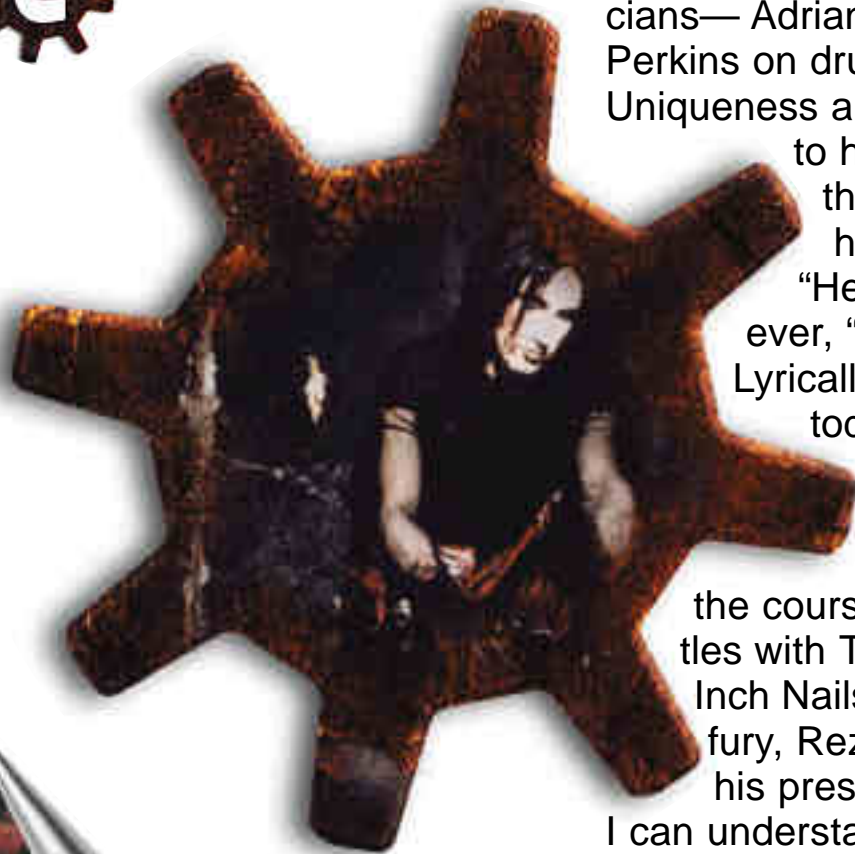
banned almost everywhere for its scenes of graphic mutilation— his dark, brooding good looks— his hair, clothing, and pale skin— all make it obvious that he's not normal. He probably doesn't do everyday things like the rest of

us. Eating and sleeping, for instance... let alone the business of his opening line...

Although he is small in stature, Reznor is larger than life in music, on stage (the surprise hit of the first Lollapalooza) and to his fans. He is quite animated, and has a sarcastic wit. He takes his work quite seriously, though. For the new Nine Inch Nails album *The Downward Spiral*, he worked again with co-producer Flood of U2 and Depeche Mode fame. Flood, who also coproduced the first two NIN albums (*Pretty Hate*

Machine and Broken), shares Reznor's work ethic. "We really work," explains Reznor. "It's not a party. He is a true fan and music tinkerer type person."

Before the interview, Reznor suggested that I listen to *The Downward Spiral* at least five times, "...to let it digest properly." I must have listened to it ten times, and another twenty since, and it still hasn't completely digested. *The Downward Spiral* has many sonic textures and characteristics that "industrial music" and Trent Reznor aren't known

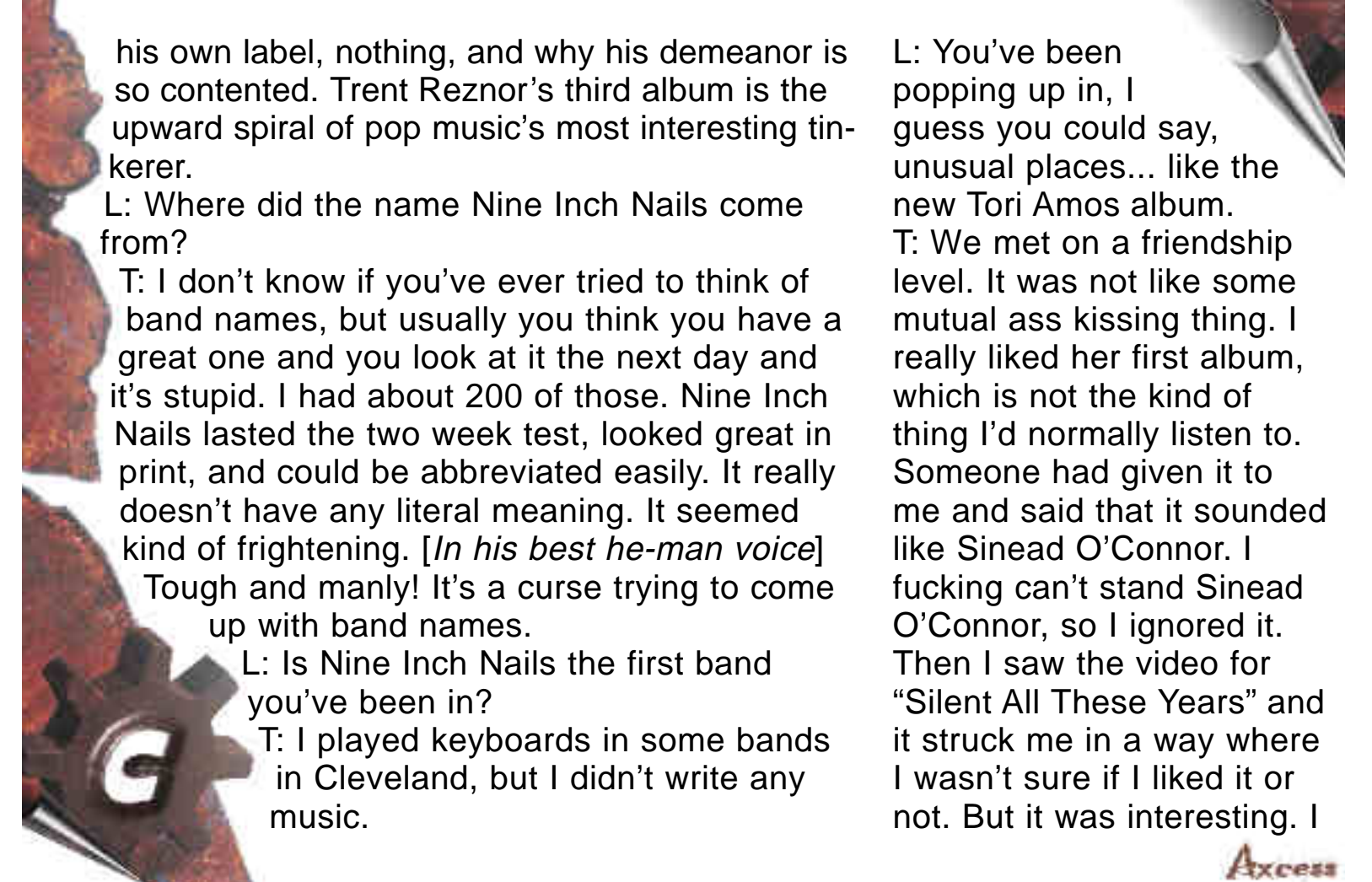


for. He enlisted the talents of human musicians— Adrian Belew on guitar and Stephen Perkins on drums— for a track each.

Uniqueness and risk-taking are very important to him, and he has taken chances with this album. The track “A Warm Place” has no vocals. While songs such as “Heresy” are as icy and electronic as ever, “Hurt” has a warmly human feel.

Lyrically it is classic Reznor: “I hurt myself today, to see if I still feel/I focus on the pain, the only thing that’s real...”

The Broken album was filled with the outrage that was generated over the course of several years of bitter legal battles withTVT Records, the first home of Nine Inch Nails. Although still filled with musical fury, Reznor seems much more content with his present situation. Listening to this album, I can understand why he likes and respects the musicians he has collaborated with and signed to



his own label, nothing, and why his demeanor is so contented. Trent Reznor's third album is the upward spiral of pop music's most interesting tinkerer.

L: Where did the name Nine Inch Nails come from?

T: I don't know if you've ever tried to think of band names, but usually you think you have a great one and you look at it the next day and it's stupid. I had about 200 of those. Nine Inch Nails lasted the two week test, looked great in print, and could be abbreviated easily. It really doesn't have any literal meaning. It seemed kind of frightening. [*In his best he-man voice*]

Tough and manly! It's a curse trying to come up with band names.

L: Is Nine Inch Nails the first band you've been in?

T: I played keyboards in some bands in Cleveland, but I didn't write any music.

L: You've been popping up in, I guess you could say, unusual places... like the new Tori Amos album.

T: We met on a friendship level. It was not like some mutual ass kissing thing. I really liked her first album, which is not the kind of thing I'd normally listen to. Someone had given it to me and said that it sounded like Sinéad O'Connor. I fucking can't stand Sinéad O'Connor, so I ignored it. Then I saw the video for "Silent All These Years" and it struck me in a way where I wasn't sure if I liked it or not. But it was interesting. I

was pleasantly surprised to find someone who I thought was taking chances. Not playing it safe, and also writing good songs, melodies and really good lyrics.

I thought that I should try and get in touch with her, just to try and say, not that I normally do this either, "I think your record's really good." I relate to her work a lot, on some level, in an opposite of

a Nine Inch Nails arrangement kind of way. I really think that it works.

... like the new Tori Amos album.

We met on a friendship level. It was not like some mutual ass kissing thing. I really liked her first album, which is not the kind of thing I'd normally listen to.



She approaches things with a totally different aesthetic

than I do, but it's good.

L: Is TVT always going to have a piece of you?

T: Probably.

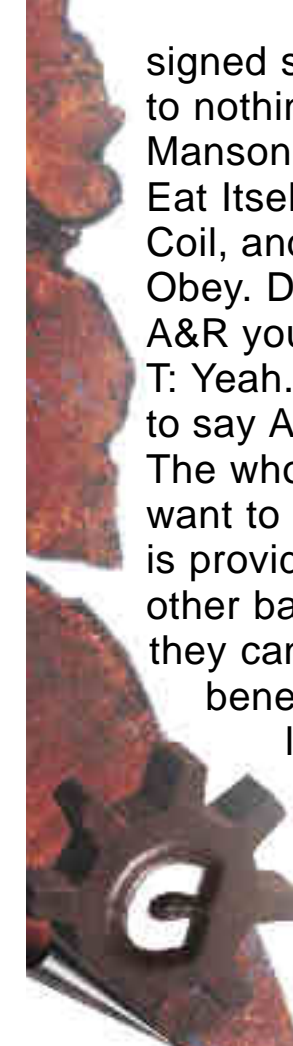
L: That sucks.

T: Well, as long as it's hidden from me and I don't have to deal with them. It disgusts me. It makes me sick to think that they still get money from me, but as long as I don't have to see them or deal with them.

L: Does TVT have any rights to anything the nothing label does?

T: Just Nine Inch Nails.

L: You have already



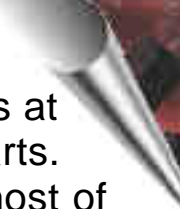
signed some bands to nothing: Marilyn Manson, Pop Will Eat Itself, Prick, Coil, and Trust Obey. Do you do the A&R yourself?

T: Yeah. I don't like to say A&R, though. The whole thing I want to do right now is provide a shell to other bands where they can have the benefit of a major label without being fucked with creatively in any way.

Let them do what they want to do, make them aware of the business side of things— how the money is spent.

L: What do you look for in a band?

T: A band I like. A sense of originality. Having something to say, not being caught up in following the trend of the moment. Some sort of uniqueness that needs to be heard. And that uniqueness is the thing that I think is the most important and needs to be protected from meddling major labels. They tend to soften the edges to get it



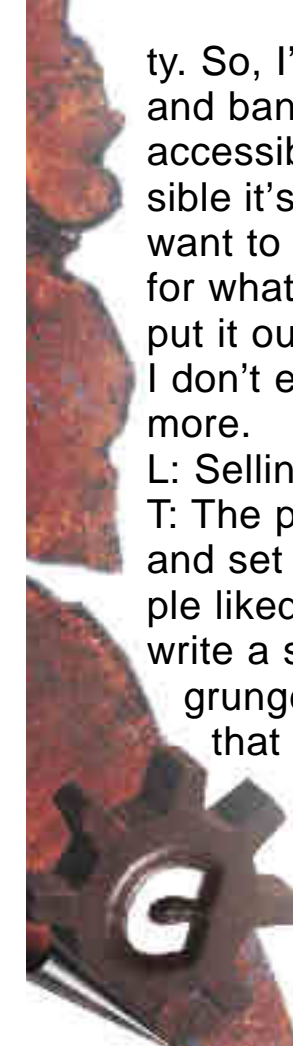
on the radio or to imitate who ever's at the top of the charts. And I think that most of what's on MTV right now is terrible. Radio I don't much like either. Why is that? Is it that human beings just aren't making interesting music anymore?

L: I read somewhere that you almost feel guilty or responsible for bringing industrial music into the mainstream.

T: I don't feel guilty. I don't think I've done that. There's a scene that has been flourishing for the past five years or more.

Underground club oriented danceable music has been labeled industrial due to the lack of coming up with a new name. Nine Inch Nails/Industrial, Industrial/Nine Inch Nails. I'm so tired of thinking about it I can't even tell you. What was originally called industrial music was about 20 years ago— Throbbing Gristle and Test Department. We have very little to do with it other than there is noise in my music and there is noise in theirs. I'm working in the context of a pop song structure whereas those bands didn't. And because someone didn't come up with a new name that separates those two somewhat unrelated genres, it tends to irritate all the old school fans waving their flags of alternativeness and obscuri-





ty. So, I'd say I've borrowed from certain styles and bands like that. Maybe I've made it more accessible. And maybe by making it more accessible it's less exclusive. I just make music that I want to make, that's interesting. That's extreme for what I want it to be extreme for— and then I put it out and the media says it's this or it's that. I don't even know what I'm talking about anymore.

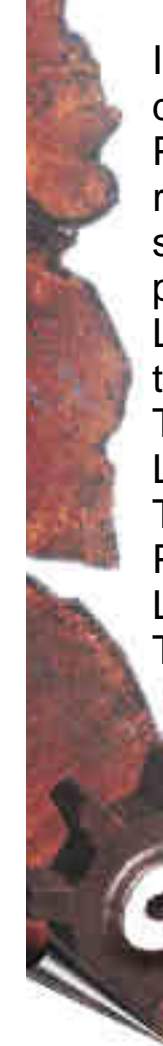
L: Selling lots of records isn't such a bad thing...

T: The problem is, if I would have made a record and set down and thought— “O.K. A lot of people liked ‘Head Like A Hole’— yeah, maybe I'll write a song that sounds just like it. Okay, grunge is in— maybe I'll grow a goatee. Yeah, that might be cool. But I need a big techno edge, ‘cause that's really popular right now— so I'll have Moby remix it.”— and then I sold a shitload of records, I'd feel on thin ice. I'd never do that in the first place, but if I did, I'd feel uneasy

because I basically sold out.

L: But don't you have a responsibility to yourself as a musician, let alone to your fans?

T: Absolutely I do. I'm saying if I did that I'd feel shitty about selling a lot of records. But I've made the records I've wanted to make. And if a lot of people want to buy them, then who am I to say they're not cool enough to buy my records. “You're a nerd. You're from Pennsylvania, you can't buy this.” I grew up there! I was one of those guys who wasn't cool enough.



It's music. If you don't like it, the Pearl Jam record is right there on the shelf. Buy it! It's for people like you.

L: What do you listen to?

T: Pearl Jam.

L: Alright.

T: I fucking hate Pearl Jam.

L: O.K.

T: Everytime someone asks me that question I freeze up. I listen to a lot of old stuff. Old David

Bowie, Lou Reed, Iggy Pop. Stuff I didn't listen to that much when I was growing up.

L: What did you listen to?

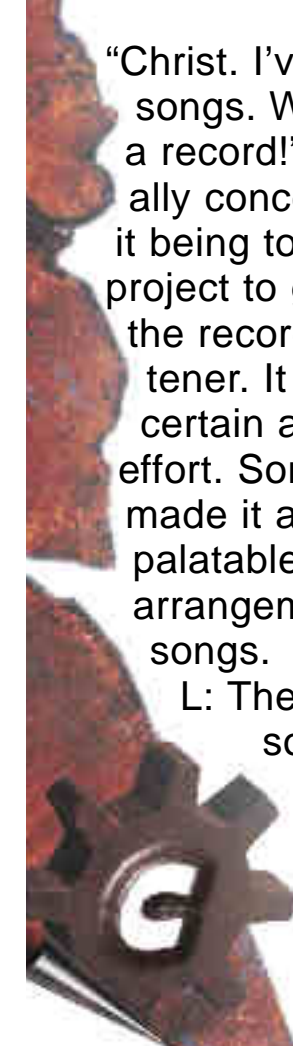
T: Kiss. Just Kiss, nothing else. Partridge Family a little bit. Before Kiss, then Kiss. You know,

Supertramp, Speedwagon thrown in. Just kidding about the Speedwagon.

L: Pretty Hate Machine had ten songs, Broken six. The Downward Spiral has fourteen. Is that because there was so much time between albums? Were some of those songs floating around during the last

three years?

T: No. I mean there were no songs written before I started this album. I don't have a stockpile of hundreds of songs written, waiting to come out. With this record I reached a point where I knew I was done. There were a couple of songs that weren't quite done; they'll probably be on a twelve-inch or something. If I get them finished. I didn't really look at it in terms of songs. I didn't even know how many songs were there until the final stages of doing this and I realized,




“Christ. I’ve got 14 songs. Wow! That’s a record!” I was actually concerned about it being too long. It’s a project to get through the record for the listener. It requires a certain amount of effort. Something that made it a bit more palatable was the arrangement of the songs.

L: The last five songs definitely bring a different mood.

T: The order was

made to work as a climax and then go down a tube. That side has to work as a whole. It adds to the A/B nature. There were a few things I wanted to do with this album. Get away from the verse/chorus, verse/chorus, middle part, end structure. Which came from listening to *Low* by Bowie. Some of the songs don’t seem that odd until you listen to a song and there wasn’t any singing on it, but you didn’t even realize it wasn’t there. Odd structures and stuff. I doubt the average listener pays attention to it, but when



you try to better the craft of song writing, you listen to those kinds of things. Also, to experiment with mood and put more effort into that than I had in the past. Music that might evoke visual images, not any specific ones. Perceptions.

L: Which four songs are going to be videos?

T: We are finishing up one for “March of the Pigs,” that hasn’t been edited yet. That’s the second video for that song. The first one didn’t work out due to my fault, conceptually. It was average. I



wouldn't put out a record like that so why put out a video?

L: Are they going to be videos that any of us are ever going to get to see?

T: No. I'm going to keep them for myself; show them only to my close friends.

L: You know what I mean.

T: The approach on this record was to work in the context of something that could be seen. I don't foresee four videos of reconstructive penis surgery. I think it's more challenging to work with something that's more accessible yet is interesting, different, subversive. I don't direct videos, so it's a challenge just to hook up with the right people. Work with more mainstream video directors, but take them out of context and experiment. I found all people that hadn't done videos before with mixed results and it ended up being a lot of hand holding. I don't have time for that right now. So, with the first one, Peter Christopherson— who did the "Wish" video, and is in a band



called Coil, who I've signed— did “March.” We'll see what happens.

L: And the next three. Do you have any ideas?

T: The next one is going to be “Closer,” and I don't know what's going to happen video wise. I'd like “Reptile” to be a single. Probably the least bearable to get through. I think it's fairly grueling, but that's what I like about it. It's an ugly little track.

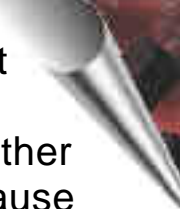
L: What about “Eraser”?

T: I don't know. Those are more interesting to me than “Heresy” or “Piggy.” I'd be more excited to make a video for “Eraser.”

L: The last five songs are very sensual, which I don't think you've really done before.

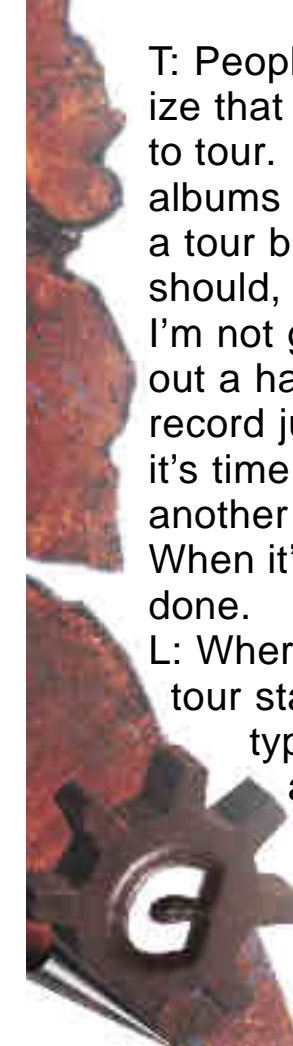
T: Not as consciously or as successfully in my opinion. With Broken, the compass was pointing towards harder, meaner, faster, tough.

L: Well, you were pissed too. I mean that state of mind when you were writing.



T: Yes. I think that this record and Broken work together interestingly, because there was no touring between. I finished one and basically started up on the next one without delay. Broken wasn't physically easy to make, but direction wise, I knew what I wanted. This record had a less clear cut path. I wanted to make something that wasn't just hard songs.

L: Not that I want you to run right back in the studio, but is that how long it takes you between albums, three years?



T: People don't realize that it takes time to tour. I don't write albums when I'm on a tour bus. Maybe I should, but I don't. I'm not going to put out a half-assed record just because it's time to put out another record. When it's done, it's done.

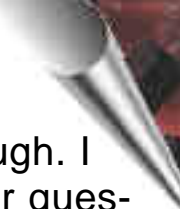
L: Where will your tour start and what type of shows are you going to do?

T: You have to have little passes

that say you are cool to get in. None of our mainstream fans are allowed in. You have to have tattoos and piercings.

L: Do you have any piercings or tattoos?

T: Just my ears. No tattoos. That's what makes me stand out today. I thought about getting branded, but I don't have the right kind of skin. I could lighten a dark room with the underside of my arms. I had my septum pierced for a year and a half, but when you're singing the mike hits, or your guitar strap pulls it when it goes over your



head. Ouch. On stage it's chaos. Enough was enough. I didn't answer your question, though.

L: Sorry.

T: We're doing some warm up shows, then Australia for a couple of weeks, then to America for six. A couple of weeks off, then Europe, then America for twelve weeks, then Japan— blah, blah, blah. The first wave through America we're going to play fairly small places.

L: Do you think some of those "cool" fans will be disappointed or feel a lit-



tle bit betrayed?

T: I can't even begin to answer that.

When I was recording this I started to think, "Are people going to like this?" It's just a creative trap to fall into. The person that liked that one thing I did before— is there enough of that on this record?

What I'm guessing they liked in the first

place.

L: Like you were saying with "Head Like A Hole."

T: Same exact thing. The other records I did were because that's what I wanted to do. In hindsight, I think that this is a record that doesn't have any real singles on it. I don't really see any of these songs being a big MTV video song. I really don't hear it as that type of a record. I'm sure there will be people that don't like this record just as I'm not so sure that there will

be people that do like this record. I like it and that's all I can do. It will be interesting to see what happens.

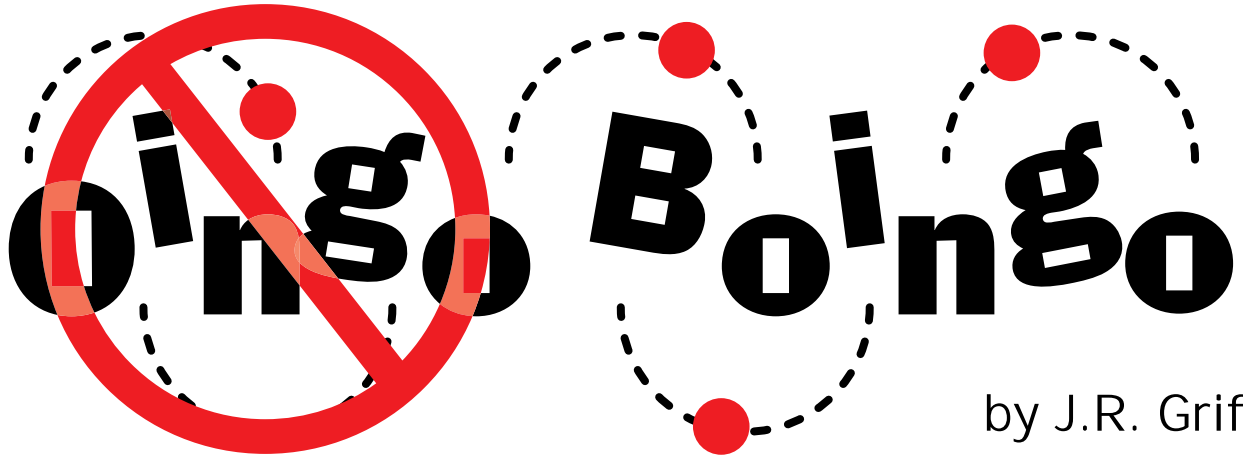
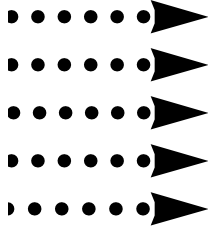
L: Are you nervous a bit?

T: We have a modest expectation of the whole thing. I sound like Spinal Tap, "Last time you were around, you were playing big venues, and this time...Well, our appeal has become more selective." I don't have any idea of how big we are.

THE MUSIC LINE

Access





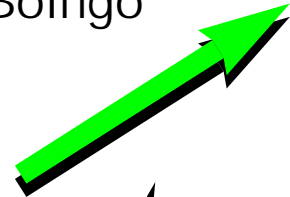
by J.R. Griffir

With a total of nine albums under their collective belts, a new record company and more than a decade of roaming the earth, the guys in Oingo Boingo are finally learning how to relax.



AXcess

To hear Boingo – (double click)



THE MUSIC LINE®





“This is strange, very strange. I didn’t think it would happen again,” admits Boingo’s flaming-haired frontman Danny Elfman early one morning from his Malibu home. “This is the third time we basically have murdered, killed, suicided ourselves and then returned to walk the Earth. I guess we’re seeing ourselves as more zombie-like than ever.”

B



They’re back, but fittingly so. For a





while, Oingo Boingo was dead. After a total of eight albums and over a decade of existence, Oingo Boingo, California's purveyors of the original Dead Man's Party, decided to call it quits.

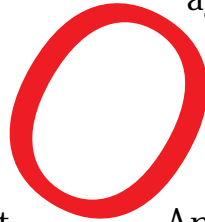
"After we finished *Dark At The End Of The Tunnel*, we figured that was about it," says Elfman. "We said what we had to say, and basically it was getting boring."

Even though in 1990 Elfman and the rest of the band's core— Steve Bartek (guitar), Johnny "Vatos" Hernandez (drums) and John Avila



(bass)— may have thought it was over, all they had to do was take a look back at their own history to discover that it takes quite a bit to rid the world of Oingo Boingo.

With his professional exactness intact, Elfman begins the story of how, since 1981, Oingo Boingo has had the habit of dying, but always returning to life: "The first time we [split up] was in '84. I came out with a solo album of mine and that lead to us starting out in a whole new direction. But I didn't expect that, it just kind of happened. I was down in my studio and I was



showing my daughter how to use a drum machine and came up with 'Dead Man's Party' on the spot. And all of the sudden I got excited

again. 'Oh, boy this doesn't sound like anything we've done.' *Dead Man's Party*, the album, came out of that.

And, like now, we resurrected ourselves to walk the Earth."

"Then over the course of the next three albums— even though I feel we had gotten away from the first three— it started becoming boring for me again. And after *Dark At The End Of The Tunnel* it





was like, ‘Okay, there’s that phase.’ It’s like a curtain closing on the end of a play. That’s what it felt like as we finished that

album— I felt a curtain closing. I’ve never been afraid of that closing, that ending. I’ve just said, ‘Okay, it’s finished, that’s fine.’”

Then, almost in a prophetic manner, the band had gotten back together again, ending a three year hiatus— its longest separation ever. The breakups and reconstructions of Boingo

have transformed the band—originally The Mystic Knights of The



Oingo Boingo, then Oingo Boingo, now officially just Boingo— from an avant-garde

WE’VE JUST KIND OF CONSIDERED OURSELVES BOINGO FOR A DECADE NOW. WE WANTED TO CHANGE OUR NAME TO BOINGO IN ’85, BUT OUR OLD RECORD COMPANY WOULDN’T LET US.

punk band to a multimedia experience, with the extravagant live sets and costuming surrounding the *Dead Man’s Party* days of the late ’80s. With their ninth album, *Boingo*, and a new

label, Giant Records, backing the band, the wackiness is over, allowing Boingo to incorporate the members’ collective expertise to push Boingo into an entirely new arena of music.

After gaining even more personal notoriety by composing musical scores for movies like *Batman Returns*, *Edward Scissorhands*, *Beetlejuice* and TV themes for *The Simpsons* and *Tales From the Crypt*, Elfman could no longer hold back his orchestral talents from his first love, Boingo. Full of Elfman’s society-damning lyrics, Boingo’s first song “Insanity” contains





something no other Oingo Boingo song has ever

had: a hint of Elfman's orchestral past. "When I wrote 'Insanity,' I said, 'could this possibly be signs of life?' Then I got excited about [Boingo], we had a couple of rehearsals and wrote a couple of different songs."

But Elfman's growing orchestral career held up the reincarnation of Boingo for another year. "We actually started the album a year ago in January [of 1993] and recorded what I



thought was half an album—and then *Nightmare Before Christmas* held me up until late October."

"It was strange when I went back and listened to the tapes. I didn't like anything— only 'Insanity.' So in essence we were starting from scratch, relatively unprepared, without enough material for a whole album. We just started winging it. And the process of winging it was the most fun I ever had doing an album."

Having almost nothing to form an entire album around, the band had to make songs rather quickly—something

they've never really done before. Oingo Boingo's past was based on perfection. Masterminded by Elfman, every song and every note was done and redone until they were perfect. Layers upon layers of Oingo Boingo's big sound were constantly changed until they were right.

"Looking back on that now," says Elfman, "it's the lack of quickness that I don't like about our early works, not capturing that spontaneity. Everything had to be too perfect. If I could go back in time, I think that's one thing I would change.

"It was hard, because





there was a lot of adjusting to do as far as how we approached the making of the music. Tunes were coming out totally

unprepared or planned. Five songs on the album were just us going in the studio to do some demos— things we weren't ready to record—and

putting them down and really liking them. Most of those

moments later ended up on the album as songs. What I'm

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describing is nothing new for a lot of bands, it's just not the way we've ever done it. It's exciting."

Boingo used its newfound freedom to express themselves musically like

"WE GOT SMART BOMBS, IT'S A GOOD THING- BECAUSE THE BOMBS ARE CLEVER... THEY ONLY KILL BAD PEOPLE NOW." EVERY TIME I TURNED ON THE TELEVISION, ALL THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT WERE THESE SMART BOMBS... IT HORRIFIED ME. THE WHOLE THING WAS SO TECHNOLOGICAL, SO COLD.

never before. Incorporating the best of what was Oingo Boingo and blending it with the new— obvious Beatles, Hendrix and classical

overtones— Elfman pushed the limits of a band that was once tethered to horn sections, party favors and grand illusions of the undead.

"Those [new] influences are not an accident," says

Elfman. "I have a

15-year-old daughter, and hanging out in her room

listening to a lot of stuff brought me back... a lot of

Hendrix, Beatles, Led Zeppelin. I started to rediscover this stuff and it began popping up all over the album."

It's rather easy to



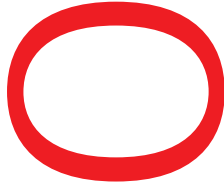


point out the classic rock influences in the new

Boingo record: “Lost Like This” slips into

psychedelic realms with a swirling guitar backbone, and the Beatles cover “I Am The Walrus” is a dead giveaway. But their most fitting tribute arrives through a tune entitled “Change.” Sixteen minutes long,

“Change,” ventures on a surrealistic musical journey about half way through the tune— incorporating odd rhythms, moments of near silence, and samples from a full-



blown cocktail party into the mix. It serves almost as an extension of the Beatles’ “Day In The Life.”

“‘Change’ was a total experiment in elasticity. It started out as only three and a half minutes long. But I had all these sonic ideas in my head and we just started stretching and stretching,” says Elfman. “And in the process these melodies would come in. The basic law of the tune was that it didn’t matter if it ran in two or 100 directions. Whatever it wanted to do, it was going to do. Let this little child run amuck and let it destroy what it wants... it was my way of exorcising the last decade of well-rehearsed songs out of my system.”

Elfman’s exorcism led to an album made up of songs averaging six minutes in length— longer than most





radio-friendly tunes. The album, officially released on May 17, kicks off with the single “Hey!” After enjoying himself in the studio during the production of Boingo, Elfman had to cut “Hey!” in half to fit the golden timing of three to four minutes. Reality sucks.

“That was a bitch,” he admits. “That was the not-so-good part.” But with creative bravado, Elfman quickly sidesteps any negativity and chooses to concentrate on his music. Boingo doesn’t escape without a heavy dose of Elfman’s barbed social commentary. Since the

beginning— “Only A Lad,” “Gray Matter,” “Violent Love” and the like— Elfman educated a generation on the mediocrity and brainwashing tactics of The Man and how beautiful it is to stand out. This release is no different. Who would possibly expect less? “Insanity” takes on every societal ill from politics to religion, but the lyrical clincher is “War Again.” Condemning the Hollywood portrayal of the Gulf War, Boingo sarcastically obliterates the perception that those who died in the desert were only a series of numbers. “We got smart

bombs, it’s a good thing— because the bombs are clever... they only kill bad people now,” sings Elfman with a rap-like urgency.

“Every time I turned on the television, all they were talking about were these smart bombs... it horrified me,” he says. “The whole thing was so technological, so cold. As soon as it was over there were hundreds of thousands of civilians starving and dying of cholera because all of their irrigation means have been destroyed. But you didn’t hear about that at all.”

So after it all, is it a different Boingo we’re





looking at? Sure, all the wackiness has been subdued. Their music has matured. Not depending heavily on layers of horns or outright extravagance, it now can rest solely on the talented musicians who make it. But how different is it really? And what's up with the name change anyway?

"We've just kind of considered ourselves Boingo for a decade now," says Elfman. "We wanted to change our name to Boingo in '85, but our old record company [MCA] wouldn't let us—



something to do with record store bin cards. Initially we planned if we stayed together a certain number of years that we'd cut the name in half. Then in five or six years, we'd cut it again and just become 'NGO,' then just 'O.' It was part of this ridiculous long term plan to keep halving our name. It didn't work out before for legal reasons, but when we signed to Giant, we talked about changing our name to just Boingo and we remembered. We said, 'Oh yeah, that's what we wanted to do ten years ago.'"

Ultimately, Elfman seems a little concerned about

returning. "When I finished the album, I told the record company, 'You better brace yourselves, Boingo fans are going to hate this album.' I hope I'm wrong, but that's what I'm kind of prepared for."

Later, after snaking my way through the narrow roads of Topanga Canyon, I arrived at Danny Elfman's house ready to see the "new" Boingo. Contrary to popular belief, Elfman does not live in a castle or a gothic mansion. He resides comfortably in a rather simple home nestled within a wooded valley. Inside, though, there





are things which are very much Danny. Joe Coleman paintings, religious paintings, small figurines depicting characters from *Nightmare Before Christmas* and countless skeletons all blend together in one giant Day of the Dead theme.

The band is preparing for a photo shoot and things appear incredibly normal: Johnny “Vatos” is discussing the channeling of energies through the different metals which make up his pyramid “hat.”



He wears it while he drums, and says it helps him. I ask him if

his triangle-shaped hair cut helps him channel energies also. “No,” he laughs. “I just like the look of it.” The metal pyramids on his head and on his necklace are all he needs.

Bassist John Avila is relatively quiet, most animated while armed with a



bass on stage. Steve Bartek, the tall lanky guitar player, comments on the beauty of

Julie Newmar, the original Catwoman. And Danny—well, Danny is being very Danny. It’s Good Friday, the Friday before Easter. “What’s so good about Good Friday?” he asks no one in particular.

“It’s the day Jesus died,” someone answers.

“Yeah, so what’s so good about it?”

Later, he points out a portrait that depicts him as a Viking wearing a necklace of vertebrae. “I just happened to come across a bag of vertebrae at some shop,” he explains,

“so I made necklaces of vertebrae for my friends for Christmas and she





had me wear it in that picture.” All very Danny things to say.

It’s funny how Oingo Boingo used to scare me when I was younger.

Then there’s the mysterious new fifth member of Boingo, Warren Fitzgerald. Known more for his membership in the Orange County punk band The Vandals, Fitzgerald is currently practicing and touring with the band. And today he’s appearing in the photos. He’s the newcomer, the young one. When the guys stand in front of

a mystic painting, posing exactly like the figures within, Fitzgerald serves as the baby. They make it through the photo shoot like champs. They turn on the charm when the camera starts snapping: faces get serious, Elfman’s eyes narrow and the devilish creature that frightened me when I was younger makes an appearance.

Later, the devil is gone and Elfman is sitting in front of his computer, happier here than in front of a camera. His latest hobby is taking images of himself, his family and band members and

manipulating them on his computer. He scans in the images and tweaks them out in Photoshop. Flipping through images of his daughter under different computer-generated “textures,” the band members’ heads on naked ladies’ bodies (he conveniently forgot to include himself) and a virtual computer transformation of himself from young boy to a fiendish lookalike of the protagonist of “Only A Lad,” Elfman obviously knows his way around a computer. A self-taught musician, Danny is most comfortable when





exploring, going another step beyond.

As he explores the boundaries of his computer, I remember something he told me during our initial phone conversation. “It was always our desire to be an evolving ensemble—and certainly not just a desire, but a necessity,” he said about the band’s constantly changing faces. “When I just get flack and mail from old fans saying, ‘you’re betraying us!’ they just have to understand that if I didn’t keep changing there wouldn’t be a band.

Everything I do in my

life is essentially to fight boredom, and that constitutes change. So it’s either a choice of moving on or evaporating. As much as I feel bad for people who want a revival of the aspects of the band they love—and I appreciate that—I just personally can’t do it. I’d go insane if I had to repeat myself too much. I just have a very low tolerance for repetition. I do the best I can, but ultimately we all have to keep moving on for better or for worse— or what’s the point of doing it in the first place?”

A noble point. Another

thing that struck me: while zipping through his computer, exploring, Elfman made a mistake. Accidentally placing one portable hard drive icon onto another, his computer attempted to copy the drive, trying to erase some of the system’s memory. This forced him to shut down his computer prematurely. Regretfully, he did the deed. It was just a temporary shut down, and one any computer junkie is used to.

Danny’s a pro, though, and as with Oingo Boingo, he simply rebooted and hoped for the best.



AXcess #4

Tori Amos



HOLDING HANDS WITH VIOLENCE

by *Laura Morgan*

“Want a piece of fruit gum?” asks Tori Amos from behind a conference table ten times her size. Amos, a copper-haired, vintage-store bundle of ragamuffin charm, immediately conveys a childlike naiveté. It seems odd that this diminutive woman could be the same Tori Amos who assaults the patriarchy, organized religion, and sexual repression with such brilliant vehemence. The fairy tale references and deceptively pretty melodies of her songs often belie the rage within them. Take “Cornflake Girl” from her new

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Illustration by Ken Meyer, Jr.

NIN

Access





Atlantic album *Under The Pink*. The song's whimsical mentions of "cornflake girls" and "raisin girls" may have you thinking

Amos is a veritable fruitloop. But the song, based on Alice Walker's book "Possessing the Secret," is anything but ingenious.

"It talks about how the mothers took their daughters to the butchers to have their genitalia removed. Even though it may be instituted by the patriarchal group in the

culture, it's very telling that the monsters were the ones that took this away from the daughters. When I just started to feel what that made me

I'm confronting the institution of God that we've been taught through Christianity, the one that kind of rules this planet as far as the media goes.

feel like," Amos sighs, "I started to really have to deal with my illusion of the sisterhood. I mean, we all like to think that only guys can do

something like that, but we can be very, very vicious and we have to be responsible as women for the fact that we've got a lot of blame going on.

We blame each other, we blame men, we take very little responsibility for what we've created."

With *Under The Pink*, Amos goes head to head with deeply personal demons she

first confronted on her critically acclaimed and soul-bearing *Little Earthquakes*. On that album, she





hauntingly sang “She’s been everybody else’s girl, maybe someday she’ll be her own.” On *Under The Pink* she is defiantly her own.

“Healing for me is being able to sit next to the butcher and say, ‘Yes, I’m

sitting next to the butcher now,’ instead of saying ‘There is no butcher.’ Well, there definitely is one!” asserts Amos. “On this record, I try to hold hands with violence. I’m holding hands with him and it’s like ‘Let’s go get some dresses and hang out together.’”

“We’re walking in a darker space than we were on *Little Earthquakes*. There was a little more light then,” she admits. “Now I’m getting my flashlight out because I have to hurt and search for it a bit.”

On *Under The Pink*, Amos’

twisted storybook tales meld beauty and monstrosities, grace and dissonance, to create a startlingly revealing tone. Lyrically, images of daisies provide a serene backdrop to witches burning, mud pies and betrayal are whispered in the same breath, and Easter is juxtaposed with masturbation. It’s a beguiling mess, sometimes fragile, sometimes brutal.

“With this record it’s been helpful when I kind of put some bread crumbs down, like a mother,” Amos says. “This is a





very active record. It's not a passive record.

So when somebody thinks it's a passive record, I need to get my bread crumbs out, because I think we're listening with a *Little Earthquakes* hat on. You have to take that hat off and put your own hat on."

A child prodigy who played piano from the age of three and was tossed out of Baltimore's prestigious Peabody Conservatory at only 11, it seems that Amos has always been somewhat of a hellcat. In

those days, her rebellion manifested itself in a frowned-upon fascination with John Lennon and precocious questions about Jesus and Mary Magdalene's involvement— a theme that

"This needs to be about evolution, and evolution is happening very quickly now."

lurks in "Past The Mission."

"Of course, I believe they were together. Of course, I believe they were a couple and she understood things," Amos says, practically


jumping from her chair. "She represents the goddess, the female, the feminine, the joining, the equality. Some things only she knows. And until we acknowledge there are some things only she

knows— and there's some things only he knows too— and until we have that mutual respect, there's that prison tower, and

there's that mission, and the hot girl got lost somewhere in between."

Give this wild-eyed curiosity her vitamins and a severe dose of





Sunday prayer, and you've got today's Tori Amos. Even now an unearthly bluntness permeates her material. On *Little Earthquakes*, she smirkingly assaulted the collective male ego with the jaw-dropper "so you can make me come, that doesn't make you Jesus," and daringly confronted her rape in the harrowing "Me And A Gun."

Under The Pink has its share of shockers as well—whether it's "Icicle," in which Amos sings about masturbating in her


pumpkin pajamas while her family is saying their Easter prayers, or "The Waitress," in which she fantasizes about killing a fellow worker with the kicker "But I believe in peace, bitch." But unlike the modern assembly-line pop star, Amos isn't playing at outrage.

"It comes pretty naturally," she laughs. "I like the way it makes me feel when I say it. It's really good for me, it's almost like words have anchors on them and they've been weighted down, like in *The Piano* when the rope is pulling her down. It's just

getting out that little blade and cutting that rope, but with words... with thought."

"This record's been really empowering for me," she continues. "Instead of talking about how I've been a victim, it's asserting myself and saying 'No, I'm not going to do that anymore.' And how to do that is by making certain choices."

When speaking about her songs Amos becomes so thoughtful that it borders on the mystical. "I feel like it's really kind of nice they come and use my body to say what they want to



say. It's an energy force that comes and visits me."

A large portion of *Under The Pink*'s baggage stems from Amos' strict religious upbringing. Raised by her part-Cherokee mother and Methodist minister father (with added threats of impending hell from her grandmother), Amos was riddled with guilt and shame about her sexuality for years. On "God" she attacks the patriarchy which has bestowed on women a sexless role model in the Virgin Mary and has reaped negativity for


the past thousand years.

"Now *my* idea of God is not the energy I'm confronting," Amos says emphatically. "I'm confronting the institution of God that we've been taught through Christianity, the one that kind of rules this planet as far as the media goes."

"I'm saying, 'Buddy, you need to sit down, and you need a babe, and I'm not busy this week. There's just some stuff we've got to go over here.' It's been very empowering. Instead of this 'I'm not worthy, I'm not worthy.' That's just a bit too

big for me."

With lyrics that are often a direct challenge to male dominance— "God sometimes you just don't come through, do you need a woman to look after you?" ("God") and the sadly relevant female questioning, "Don't you want more than my sex?" ("Leather")— Amos comes off the arch-feminist. But "Bells For Her," "Cornflake Girl" and "The Waitress" address betrayal among women, while "Baker Baker" acknowledges the female role in emotionally cutting off



a lover.

"All of us are really affected by this," Amos observes. "That doesn't take away from my patriarchal little tea party that I'm having on God, because that needs to be had. A lot of us have been victims to that, mankind and womankind. And we've projected stuff and been creators of some of this. Think of all the people killed in the name of the Lord, all the witches that were burned in the name of the Lord, and women were burning other women too."

"Yeah, it has been a

'male energy' which has turned into a controlling energy. But I don't think any of us really understand what pure male energy is. I'm trying to get to that primitive feeling, but it's turned into this, and that's what's been so divisional. It's divided me from myself. My physical body has been divided from my spiritual body, divided from my emotional and my mental, because they're all warring in there. I'm just a little warring faction when I walk around, like Waterloo is happening in my kidneys!"

"Women need to think

about what's happening to the guys out there," she admits. "They're so angry, listen to the music they're making. They don't know what their role is. We say, 'Oh, be sensitive, be vulnerable,' and they do and we go, 'You know, I really want you to dominate me, actually.'"

Despite her seemingly innate gift for wreaking havoc on convention, Amos, who's in a serious relationship, seems to have found a balance in her life. Liberated and perceptive, but hardly



a poster child for the riot grrrls, she's come to terms with her past without becoming an advocate of promiscuity.

"I'm in a relationship, and I'm monogamous, and the reason I'm monogamous is because I have a lot of respect for the man that I'm with. I don't believe in saying it's morally wrong to sleep with other people. It's how he would feel if I did and how I would feel if he did. So I ask myself, 'Is this thing that I'm attracted to, is this about a relationship?' And if it is I've got to make a life



choice. Here it is. Is it this one or that one? I have to ask myself, 'Do I want a relationship with this person or is there just an energy that I want to suck? Is it that what it is? Because there's something in them that I'm trying to ignite in myself?'"

Perhaps the only safe thing to say about Tori Amos is that she consistently levels conventions and surpasses expectation. With her description of the album as a trip through the Emerald Forest where souls are "patched up," Amos seems an otherworldly waif, yet her

concerns are quite common.

"I think about how I want to rear my child because we don't really know, do we, what an artist would be like coming from semi-healthy thinking parents. There aren't any out there. We really don't know how provocative that would be. We don't know what kind of ear sensation that would be because it hasn't happened yet."

"It might happen with the next generation coming up because I feel like this generation is standing up and raising it's hand and going, 'I can either





pass this down to my kids or I can change it within myself and outgrow my boundaries.' I don't feel like leaking onto someone else's life. Instead of having my kid go become a ballerina because I was sitting on my ass playing piano all the time and always wanted to be a dancer, why don't I just go take some ballet classes? It's almost as if we're caretakers of these souls that come in. And so what if the people above us don't understand that? The generation before us did as much as they could, so



now let's go with the evolution. This needs to be about evolution, and evolution is happening very quickly now. It's like the acceleration is quicker than it's ever been."

Whether it's the lighthearted romp "The Wrong Band," in which the characters' weaknesses duck and run beneath a playful piano, or the introspective yearning of "Yes, Anastasia" where Amos asks herself how brave she really is, *Under The Pink* travels to a very private place. A real place. A place where the ugly and the

majestic intertwine, battle it out and end up bruised and tearful, before calling it a draw.

"*Under The Pink* is a place, it's an internal place," she explains. "It's the inner world, the inner life. You have to listen from your stomach. To me it's all there. But you've got to be willing to put your moccasins on and walk down the road."

A daunting invitation, indeed.



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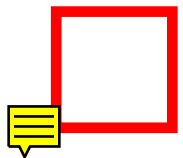
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INTERNET KLIFF NOTES

By Thomas Powell

The Internet: the world-wide collection of computer networks that links millions of people. Those of us who are “jacked in” consider the Internet an invaluable part of our everyday work and social lives. However, netters often forget that most people still don’t know what the Internet is, nor why they should connect.



**Internet:
What is it?**



**How To
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**Internet:
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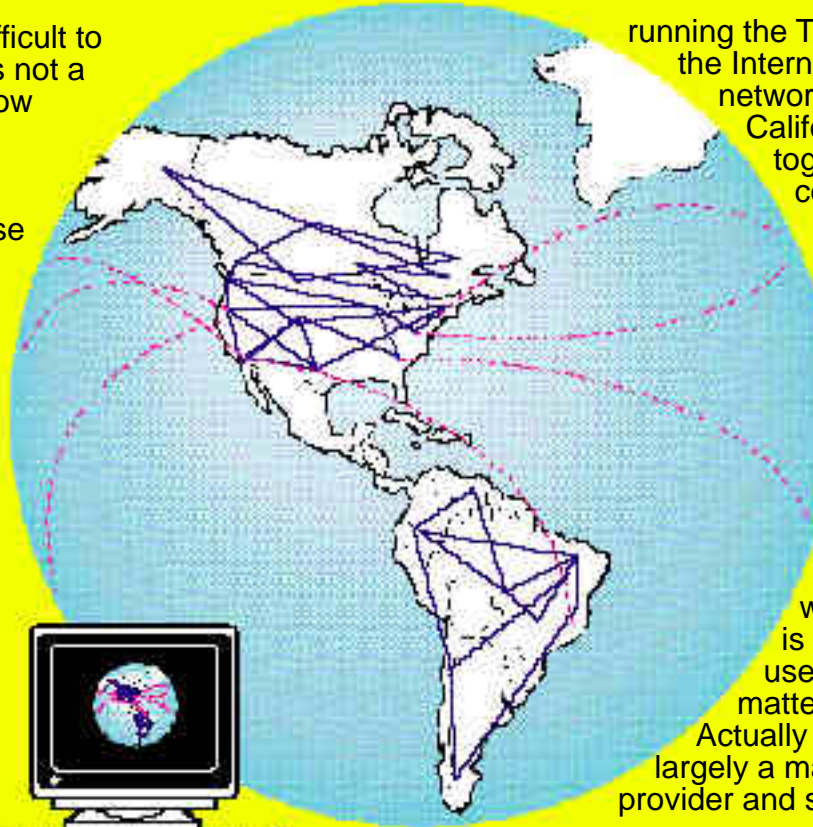


What is the Internet?

The Internet is difficult to understand because it is not a single thing. Similarly, how would one describe the world-wide telephone network? You can't describe it easily because the "phone net" is actually composed of many different companies around the world like AT&T, Japan's NTT, Pacific Bell, and TelMex all hooked together with strung telephone lines, undersea cables, satellite links and all other manners for transferring information.

The Internet works in a similar way. Composed of many different networks all

running the TCP/IP networking protocol the Internet is a "network of networks." For example, in California, CERFnet hooks together many universities, companies and individuals. In New England, NEARnet does a similar job, as does PIPEX in England. There are dozens of such regional Internet providers across the planet. The Internet just like the "phone net" is formed by the connection of these regional networks with each other. The networks or "wires" which make up the Internet is interesting, but the tools used to access the 'net's data matter more to the end user. Actually getting connected is largely a matter of finding a local provider and signing up.





Getting Connected

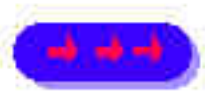
These days, getting connected to the Internet is not very difficult. The Internet was once the exclusive domain of large companies and educational institutions, but now a single user with a personal computer and a modem can get connected just as easily as Bill Gates.


Single users looking to connect to the Internet via a modem and a standard phone line have a choice between two types of Internet accounts: **host** accounts and **SLIP** accounts. Though online service like AOL and Delphi have begun to provide various levels of Internet access to their users.

Host accounts provide an account on a system which you can call up using a standard terminal or telecommunications program like Procomm Plus for the PC or Z-term for the Macintosh. Once connected you generally have to navigate the Internet using an ASCII menu system or even the dread UNIX command prompt. Host or shell accounts are cheap, but may be difficult to use and lack the graphic capabilities.

SLIP accounts provide direct connectivity to the Internet for your Macintosh, DOS, or Windows machine. Rather than using a telecommunications program you run a networking protocol called TCP/IP over the phone line to your Internet provider. By becoming an actual node on the Internet you use your own local interface and system to cruise in cyberspace. Advanced graphical user interfaces like the Mac have made new point and click Internet tools like Mosaic possible for SLIP connected Internetters. SLIP accounts do however tend to be more expensive and may be difficult to setup.

If getting on the Internet is your goal decide on what type of account you want to use and find the “best” provider in your area. The PDIAL list compiled by Peter Kaminski contains most of the providers selling Internet access. The PDIAL list can be obtained from the InterNIC information services group for by calling





619.455.4600. Many of the books about the Internet also provide this type of information.

We have provided some contacts for connections and Internet software that may be helpful. Back issues of Access contain more detailed information about the Internet including information about SLIP connections and using Mosaic.

Selected Commercial Internet Service Providers

CERFnet	800.876.CERF	Panix	212.877.485
Delphi	800.544.4005	PSI	800.PSI.3031
Netcom	408.554.8649	The World	617.739.WRLD

Selected SLIP Software Vendors

Netmanage	408.973.7171	Internet Chameleon for Windows
Spry	800.998.4269	Internet in a Box for Windows
Ventana	800.743.5369	Internet Membership Kit Mac & Windows



Internet Toolbox



E-mail— Short for electronic mail, e-mail is a service for sending a message to another user on the Internet or connecting networks, similar to postal mail. E-mail is the tool that most Internet users know how to use.



Gopher— A menu-based tool used to access information on the Internet. Good for browsing large amounts of text information. Gopher may replace FTP as the way to access public file archives on the network. Accessing a Veronica server allows you to search for Gopher items quickly.



FTP (File Transfer Protocol)— The program and protocol used to access the huge public “anonymous” software archives the Internet has to offer.



Telnet— A program and protocol which allows you to make a remote connection to another machine on the Internet. Good for accessing many library catalogs, databases, and MUDs.



USENET— A collection of thousands of “discussion groups” covering a variety of different subjects. USENET is the public forum in which many Internetters come in contact with each other and new ideas. Discussions in USENET can be very harsh.



WWW (World Wide Web)— A hypertext-based system to access various Internet information resources. The links of the Web connect machines all over the world with one interface. Mosaic is a new graphical browser used to access the “Web.”



IRC (Internet Relay Chat)— The “CB Radio” of the Internet. Internetters discuss (by typing) various topics on different IRC “channels,” all in real time.



MUD (Multi-user Dungeon)— A multi-player virtual reality-like adventure game played on the Internet. MUDs are generally text based.



Holy Wars

on the Electronic Frontier

by Sir Thomas Powell



USENET news consists of nearly ten thousand unique online discussion groups. If you've ever read any of them you've probably already realized that these newsgroups don't constitute a sanitized,

civilized cyber-society, much less a virtual Singapore. Users looking for a civilized 'net have had always Prodigy, with its administrators issuing virtual canings to posters of questionable taste. USENET is more like an online "melting pot" where groups discussing people's desire to kill the purple

scourge known as Barney (*alt.barney.die.die.die*) are just relevant as groups about research in artificial intelligence (*comp.ai*). Existence of a particular discussion group is only restricted by the desire for people to discuss the topic. Simple majority rules.

F flames, Flame Wars, and Netiquette

USENET has prospered under its own form of organized anarchy— some might say democracy— for many years, with only vague rules of polite conduct called 'netiquette' to guide its users. Most people tend to follow these standard rules of interaction, but occasionally, spates break out between users. The most common problem in USENET has

Access

always been the electronic equivalent of an argument. How the arguments start varies, but generally it involves one reader




posting a nasty message, or 'flame,' to another. The offended user flames back, and the argument grows in size— spawning a flame war.

Typically, flame wars exist in a single group or small number of groups and tend to die down after a short period of time.

These online arguments are not intrinsically bad, and may serve as a way to discuss charged topics or to vent steam. Despite the flaming and its lack of centralized authority, USENET has thrived for many years without major incident.

Occasionally, a user's flaming might pass the line of USENET social acceptance and be escalated to something higher than an online argument. In the past because of the



elite nature of USENET it as usually pretty easy to deal with chronic flamers or others who majorly disregarded netiquette. A polite e-mail message or telephone call to the provider's system administrator usually did the trick. The administrator would then warn the perpetrator that continued harassment could result in loss of USENET access or other disciplinary action. This action generally stopped most problem users, but those who continued their inappropriate activity eventually lost their accounts; before the current Internet boom was very difficult to find alternative access to USENET. These days,

though, getting access to the 'net is relatively easy. There are literally hundreds of providers willing to sell access to USENET.

Commercialization: Flaming Barriers Removed?

Many long time netters believe that the commercialization of the Internet, with its open access to USENET, is the root of all the problems. Many believe that ubiquitous access has removed the few checks and balances

that kept problems at a minimum in the past. Lose your account at one provider for inappropriate activity like excessive flaming? Just sign up with another. Since users pay for their net access many actually think it's okay to do what they want. "I'm the customer and I'm always right" is their attitude. Combine this attitude with a serious disregard for other people's net rights or a desire to change the overall purpose of USENET and you have more trouble than millions of clueless users. **AXcess**



Flaming for Fun?

Whatever the reasons, there seems to be an increasing number of USENET posters bent on causing as many problems as they can. In fact there are even some who put on their cyber jackboots and post racial slurs in the *rac.culture* groups. Other posters enjoy flaming and its associated controversy as cyber pranks. This scenario generally involves a user entering a group and posting a

series of articles aimed at inciting argument. This form of flame fodder is just a variation on a very old prank:

PC computer zealot posts article to Macintosh group stating something to the effect of 'Macintoshes suck!'

Macintosh advocates respond en masse to inform the PC user that he or she has been out in the sun too long.

PC user watches from the sidelines laughing.


Occasionally posts a message to keep the flames coming.

These types of spark postings are so old that longtime net users

just ignore them. The problem is, flame fanners are more sophisticated now and often attack in groups. Sometimes the flamers will even take up both sides just to make it look like a fight is going on only in order to get others to join in and take over.

Trendy Flaming

Mass invasion of a USENET group by people just looking to disrupt the peace is fairly rare, but it has occurred. One famous incident is the



invasion of *rec.pets.cats* by aders from *alt.tasteless*. This ren was even detailed in the ell known technical culture agazine *Wired*. Unfortunately, ter all the publicity, it iddenly became cool to cause oblems. Groups such as *t.syntax.tactical* recently have rmed for the sole purpose of arting flame wars. Others have ed to create loose lationships of people who cel at the fine art of flaming, eating a so-called Knights of e Flaming Roundtable. It ems that the longstanding oup *alt.flame* just isn't cool ymore— flammers want to bring their anger and

supposed humor to your favorite group.


Flaming and Posting for Profit

The trendiness of flame wars might subside in the future, but the few chronic flammers with bad attitudes will always be around. Learn to live with them. A more significant problem will face USENET when the motivation for breach of netiquette changes to supposed

financial gain. Today the Internet is becoming very commercialized; it is no longer dominated by students, researchers, and government. Given the number of people reachable via the fledging information highway, it doesn't take a genius to see the advertising possibilities of USENET and other Internet services. Readership for USENET is estimated to be as high as 10 million users worldwide, possibly more. Potential advertisers see the system as a way to cheaply advertise their products to millions .

Standard USENET

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iquette has always frowned on commercial postings. These postings were tolerated, in moderation, especially if they served to inform rather than annoy. If you had a new PC game to sell, a brief announcement to a PC games group usually caused few problems. There are even special areas in USENET, like the collection of *biz* groups, where commercial solicitations are the norm. Large scale or repetitive posting has always elicited flames, but it has never been much of a problem until the arrival of Canter and Siegal, the infamous Green Card

Lawyers.

S pam, S pam, S pam

Arizona attorney Laurence Canter and his partner Martha Siegel recently engaged in a large scale commercial posting that elicited the largest flame war in USENET history. The two lawyers posted an electronic advertisement informing people to get in touch with them if they needed help obtaining a green card. It reached nearly three fourths of the groups in USENET. This mass posting technique, known as “spamming”— after the infamous canned meat product

which splatters very messily when thrown— elicited a title wave of flames from netters. Besides flames posted back to the newsgroups, netters flooded the mailboxes of the two lawyers with nasty messages, including very large binary files— the equivalent of electronic mail bombs. C&S’s Internet provider indirect.com was effectively shut down by the USENET lynch mob. The initial amount of mail received by the lawyers approached 30,000 messages and took up hundreds of megabytes of disk space. After such abuse, it was in the Internet provider’s best interest to remove the

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offenders from their stem. The lawyers' kneejerk response: "See you in court." Problem solved? Not quite.


The Green Card lawyers don't just have one account. They had several. As soon as the self-appointed net police had them removed from one provider, they popped up using an account at another access provider. More sophisticated net veterans, particularly USENET administrators, decided to fight fire with fire, creating programs to issue article cancellation requests for spammed articles like the Green Card post. Though USENET rules specify that only the poster has the ability to cancel an article,

net veterans believe that mass spamming requires netiquette to be modified. Problem is, this is the fake cancellation technique that has been used by less responsible people as a form of censorship. One homophobic net user harasses gay posters and tries to censor them by issuing a forged cancellation message for any articles he doesn't approve of. The legitimization of article cancellation as a form of electronic gagging without some sort of centralized authority dictating what should be restricted could disrupt USENET much more than the spammers themselves.

Spam Counterattack Electronic Terrorism

Attacks on the lawyers are beginning to border on electronic terrorism. One common technique, called mail bombing, involves sending large binary files, potentially containing viruses, to the





poster's electronic mail box. more ingenious mail attack ing a program called *Fletcher* - named after the Chevy Chase character who made up false names on a moment's notice— can generate hundreds of fake positive responses to the advertisement, wasting the spammers time and money by adding them on numerous wild goose chases. Other netters send continuous traffic to the posting site, making net use all but impossible. This 'terrorism' has even transcended the electronic frontier as some netters decided to take their anger outside the confines of USENET and e-mail by barraging the

lawyers fax machine with continuous transmissions of solid black pages, a very expensive fax toner depletion attack. (It's unknown if they even receive faxes directly to paper, so this attack may be less damaging than people think.) Others have harassed the couple by filling their voice mail system with garbage recordings or continuously calling the office, sometimes even threatening the lawyers. Other people have done things as simple as signing the couple up for junk postal mailings, figuring that a physical barrage will be more effective than an electronic one. One of the worst

results of the C&S spamming is that it has justified these electronic terrorist tactics in many people's minds.

Spamming: Was It Worth It?

Unfortunately for USENET the mass spamming by Canter and Siegel has been more successful than the lawyers could ever have hoped, despite the many negative responses. The two have become instant, if infamous, celebrities.

Articles in the *Wall Street Journal* and appearances on CNN paint them more as advertising folk heroes than disrupters of the electronic space. The media generally ignores their questionable past, which includes suspension from practicing law by the Tennessee and Florida bar associations in 1987. The attention resulting from the initial mass spamming seems to have only doubled the resolve of the lawyers, resulting in a number of copycats.


Usenet's Uncertain Future

The fact that two people can rock the foundations of USENET indicates that changes



are in order. Despite the negative net response, it is still too easy for others to mass post similar advertisements for “Making Money Fast,” or to pitch some alleged wonder product. Cantor and Siegel themselves have changed their career focus. They now promote electronic advertising with a book about USENET advertising techniques and a pay-for service called CyberSense which will use their spamming program to mass post an advertisement. Even if only

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tenth of a percent of their responses are valid, it will still be worthwhile for these electronic junk advertisers to continue their pursuits.

Changes to control posting, methods to improve the filtering capability of USENET news readers, are necessary to prevent the network from becoming so unusable that people move to private mailing lists or smaller exclusive forms of newsgroups. Even worse, if such disruption becomes profitable it won't take long

for the concept to mutate into direct advertisement via e-mail. The only solutions that would limit such abuse involve either usage-based fee structures for USENET (and potentially the Internet) or some form of electronic censorship. Add these two elements to the Internet, and it loses a lot of its attraction.

This topic isn't going away any time soon. If you are interested in such issues, subscribe to the mailing list known as Com-priv, which is

dedicated to discussing issues related to commercialization and privatization, or read the USENET news group *news.admin.policy*. *Axcess* welcomes any comments about this issue to *kliff@axcess.com*. Remember, the spamming and flaming problems can only be resolved if a majority of USENET readers acknowledge the issues and work towards reasonable technical or organizational solutions.

Style Content

Toy Trade

Infomercials

Artist Profile

Armageddon

What Ever
Happened 2?

Exit





barrio's

the toy trade



Want to find a car under \$10,000? The car of your dreams? It's yours—Speed Racer's Advanced Model **MACH 5** model kit. At \$59.95 it won't take you anywhere, but if you live in California you know cars are just for looks anyway.

I've always been fond of toys that *do* something, and now I've found the Boxing Nun.

She's got a habit, they say, for fighting for what's right. An oversize, severe head smiles fervently while the rabbit punches ly from black boxing gloves. The nun is a rand puppet that operates on a couple of evers and a hand-held stick hidden under- eath her vestments. Nun finger puppets are also sold, but what do you do with them?



FOR MORE INFO CALL:
STREAMLINE 3-D AT 310.998.0070

Fun with Religion

by Michelle Farrar

While all the world's awonder with stereoscopic posters, don't forget the double-imaged holograms of Jesus and the Virgin of Guadalupe. On top of my list of things I'd like to see is a Jesus hologram where the eyes follow you around the room— my grandma used to say the religious paintings were watching her around the house.



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Trying to start a new fashion trend is the rosary

bead eye-glass chain.

If you've lost your awe of the unknown, try putting the super back into the supernatural with the

Day-Glow Virgin Mary. The Virgin



Mary is also available as night light protection. And though it's only a toy if your parents let you play with lightbulbs when you were little, the **CROSS light bulb** is

incendiarily eerie.



Prayer candles *do* something, too.

Black "Separa" candles claim to break up a loving couple. After that you'll need the peachy-pink "Chaparrosa" candle, made with the "nectar of love." And while another candle promises "protection from your enemies," the Spanish version promises to protect even further— "Muerte a sus Enemigos"— death to your enemies. If bilingual superstition eludes you then it's time to resort to tougher methods and newer patron saints: Flip Wilson and

Starsky & Hutch votive candles.





What ever happened 2?

Julie Newmar

During a recent meeting at Axxess Headquarters with creative director R. Martinez, I proposed an article on Catwoman. My lifelong preoccupation with the Batman character is well known to the editors and staff at Axxess, as well as just about everyone in my life. As a child, I *lived* Batman. I woke to a Batman alarm clock. I ate my Froot Loops from a Batman cereal bowl, wiped my mouth on my Batman shirtsleeves, jumped on my Batbike and tore off down the sidewalks of my neighborhood in search of imaginary arch-criminals, with my blue bath towel cape flapping defiantly in the breeze. *[And then he moved out of his parents' house and went to college. —Editor]*

What began as simple boyhood idol-worship of the Adam West Batman grew over the years into what many of my friends call near-obsessive Bat-behavior. This established, you can see why I was shocked and surprised by Richard's reply to my



latest “Batman pitch.”

“Yeah, that’s actually a good idea,” he said. “I hear that there’s going to be a new Catwoman movie starring Michelle Pfeiffer. See what you can dig up.”

Catwoman. The name alone flooded my mind with images and memories so vivid and overwhelming that I found myself speaking without conscious thought (for me, a common occurrence). “Rich,” I said, “if you want a story on Catwoman, why don’t I do a piece on the original Catwoman, Julie Newmar?”

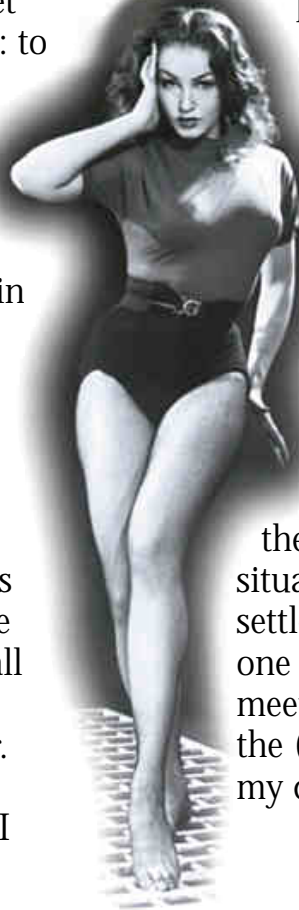
“You mean the one from the TV show?” The look in his eyes said that he’d been hooked. “Man, that would be great! Hell, yeah! Do you know where to find her, man?”

“I’ll find her,” I said, doing my best Bruce Wayne.

In reality, I had absolutely no idea where to find Julie Newmar. I didn’t know where she was or what she

was doing, but by God, I was going to find her. Let me explain something here: to me, Julie Newmar was first, last and always Catwoman. The sight of her slinky, sinuous portrayal of the feline felon affected my pre-adolescent development in ways I still don't quite understand. Not only did I find her the most beautiful woman I'd ever seen in all of my single-digit years, the vision of her curvaceous cat suit would haunt me for years to come. To put it bluntly, she was my purr-fect woman. If all went well, I would soon be standing face to face with her.

After nearly a month of runaround phone calls, I



finally reached her publicist, who arranged the interview. It would take place the following week, at Ms. Newmar's home. It was not until after confirming the interview with my editor that the reality of the situation began to settle in. In less than one week, I would be meeting, in the flesh, the (Cat)woman of my dreams.

The week passed quickly. As the interview drew nearer, I found myself growing increasingly nervous. I found this both unsettling and somewhat humorous. Throughout my career, I've interviewed everyone from rock stars I've admired, to politicians and corporate heads I've despised. All the while, I'd maintained a professional attitude. Now, for the first time, the fear of losing my composure in an interview came to mind. I could see it clearly: unable to string together a coherent sentence, the interview becomes not only a total washout, but an altogether humiliating experience that I would carry to my grave. This could not

happen. I had to get a grip: after all, beauty aside, she was just human. Suppose the beautiful and talented Julie Newmar no longer existed, replaced by a tired, bitter woman? Who was I kidding? She was a goddess, and I would be lucky to get through this without blacking out.

Upon arriving at Ms. Newmar's home, my sense of impending doom had graciously wound itself down to a minor ball of tension in my stomach. I began to think that everything was going to be fine, that I had psyched myself up to the point where even meeting the enchantress of my youth couldn't cause me to lose my composure. That idea was



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she opened the door to greet me. I was literally devastated by her beauty.

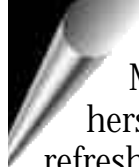


**Julie Newmar photographed by
Monique M. Ozimkowski**

Nearly thirty years had passed since she introduced us to her Catwoman, and she was

still as stunning as ever. Possibly even more so, as the years had only accentuated and refined her beauty. And I was still on the doorstep.

Inviting me inside, she informed me that my photographer Monique had already arrived. They had been getting the photographs out of the way, so she could fully concentrate on the interview. I was still wondering if I could fully concentrate on the interview. The whole thing had begun to take on a dreamlike quality. At any moment, I fully expected Rod Serling to step out from around a corner to launch into a *Twilight Zone* monologue. I was going down, and going fast.



Ms. Newmar excused herself to prepare refreshments, possibly sensing the anxiety oozing from my pores. She returned shortly with some holiday eggnog, the high octane variety. This all but confirmed my neurosis, that she had already perceived my nervousness and was hoping a stiff drink might do me some good. Meanwhile, Monique was finishing up some last minute shots and packing up to leave. As in leave me alone... alone with the Catwoman.


When the photo session ended, I fumbled with my tape recorder while sheepishly admitting that I'd been an admirer of Ms. Newmar since childhood and had


always hoped to meet her. "I've always been afraid to meet people I've greatly admired," she replied. "For the fact that they might break the bubble." This statement struck a chord with me, not only for its honesty but for the fact that this was one of my concerns with this very interview. Not wanting to dwell on this, I launched into my questioning.

She recalled her early career as a dancer with a faraway smile. "I was born in Los Feliz, near Hollywood. When I was a little girl there were some really great ballet teachers there. Outside of New York, Los Angeles was a great center for the world of dance, and I grew up in this world. My father was

an educator, my mother a Ziegfeld Follies girl. So it would seem as if my career was destined, you know, living in Hollywood and having the availability of all those fine teachers. But deep inside, I'd always known that I had to go to New York."

I naively asked if she had any unique memories of her days of jetting back and forth from LA to New York. "Oh yes," she said with a sly smile. "New York is such a dishy place. Socially and intellectually stimulating. From the theaters to the all-night restaurants, it was always "on," you know? Like going to Carnegie Hall and seeing Richard Strauss and having absolutely orgasmic





feelings with this Olympian music! And the intellectual writers: Kerouac, Ginsberg... everyone was getting into it.”


I replied that many of our readers were turned on to the very same writers today. Arching an eyebrow, she remarked, “Well, if you want to know who first turned me on, it was Lenny Bruce.” She laughs. “With his *mind*, I mean! He literally had me on the floor with laughter. This man and the truth in his view of life during the times of pre- and early Vietnam... he was truly a divine talent. And then there was Janis Joplin. What a unifying force a talent like hers had on all of us.” I couldn’t help envisioning this


statuesque, graceful woman in front of me as a long-haired flower child, heralding the dawn of the Age of Aquarius. It made her seem more *real*.

Suddenly, I realized that my worst fear, that Julie Newmar might not be what I’d anticipated, had come true. She didn’t live up to my expectations, she *surpassed* them. This was not the two-dimensional Catwoman of my youth. This was a vibrant, spirited, radiant woman whose wisdom was born of experience. This was truly someone who’d been there and done that. And I was lucky enough to be taking it all in.

As if she were able to read this revelation in my mind, Ms.

Newmar slowly closed her eyes as she held her hand out to me. I reached out and took it slowly, unsure of what was going on. Again, as if she could look right into my mind, she opened her eyes and said softly, “Everything’s going to be all right, in your life.” At this point, I let the interviewing go and we simply talked to *each* other. We talked about Zen. We talked about children, and the effects of violence. About the responsibility of the individual. About what is weakness, what is strength. We talked about what makes someone truly special. We talked about life. And slowly, I came to the conclusion that the fear I’d experienced coming into this situation





was really the fear of the unexpected. Here was my precious interview, venturing down the path of the unexpected and giving me much more than I'd hoped for. Maybe that's what she'd meant by everything being all right. Maybe.


Realizing that our time together was almost up and that we hadn't even discussed the "C" word, I brought things around to the inevitable topic of Catwoman. Many of the anecdotes from the days of the 1966 television series have been told and retold by Ms. Newmar so many times that she must be growing tired of them, but you'd never know it by her exuberance.

She seemed only to recall the good things about that time. "I tend not to look for things to be negative about. There's so much negativity in the world already, one doesn't need to look around for it." She had nothing but praise for her co-workers on the *Batman* series. "Adam West was the perfect Batman. He had just the right blend of humor and seriousness. I don't think there's been a better portrayal since Adam's."

Commenting on Eartha Kitt, the legendary performer who became the third actress to play Catwoman (after Lee Meriwether, who played the role in the 1966 *Batman* feature film), Ms. Newmar was her usual gracious self. "Eartha was

absolutely fabulous! I could never purr like that! No one can. She was just heavenly."

She was most emphatic in her approval of Michelle Pfeiffer's performance as the feline femme fatale. "Michelle was simply fantastic. Of course, she *had* to be in order to serve as competition! Seriously, she has to be one of the best actresses to come along in the last thirty years. I think she did a marvelous job." When I mentioned the development of a Catwoman movie *minus* Batman, she looked elated. "Well, why not? She doesn't need to be attached to anything. I feel that the role is one of the best characters for an actress today. Catwoman is a very



physical character and should be portrayed as such. Like a female Douglas Fairbanks. Can you imagine how many men would want to go to bed with a woman like that?"

Even today, she wears the cat like a crown, never tiring of the attention. "People still stop me to say 'You're the one, you're the best!' How can someone grow tired of being told that they're the best at anything?" Though today's kids may have a new cat for the '90s, for most of us there can be only one.

Weeks later, on a flight from Detroit to LA, I discussed this interview with the person next to me. Suddenly, the thirtysomething executive



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type seated across the aisle looked up from his Powerbook and asked, "Did you just say Julie Newmar?"

"Yes," I said. "Are you a fan?"

"I guess so. She owns my apartment building."

"So, how is it having the Catwoman for a landlady?" I asked jokingly.

"Fine, I guess," he replied, smiling from ear to ear. "But I will tell you one thing. Whenever she comes around to water her flowers, I *always* grab a window seat!"

AXCESS #4





BIOGRAPHY
ARTIST ROBERT
WILLIAMS

Born in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1943, Williams, grew up in Montgomery, Alabama, where his father ran the Parkmoor drive-in restaurant. After his parents divorced, Robert returned to Albuquerque with his mother, where he soon started running with the local hot rodders and street gangs. Many of his recurring artistic themes date back to these youthful experiences: hot-rods, fast food, and Southwestern ‘Pachuco’ culture.

Williams once informed a school psychiatrist that he would someday be a famous artist. He was a straight-A student— at least in art class. Other subjects didn’t matter, and he dropped out of school in eleventh grade. In 1963, he

moved to California, where he attended L.A. City College before marrying fellow student Suzanne Chorna. A series of tedious corporate jobs, punctuated by a brief return to school, ended when he found work with Ed “Big Daddy” Roth, the king of the hot-rod underground. Williams’ T-shirt designs and illustrations led to a position as Roth’s art director, a five-year stint that ended when the studio folded in the late 60s. The timing was just right. Robert Crumb’s *Zap Comix* had just hit the scene, and Williams made his underground debut in the fourth issue of that seminal publication, joining the ranks of the subcultural elite: Rick Griffin, S. Clay Wilson, Spain Rodriguez and the rest.

Through all of this, Williams continued to paint like a man possessed.

For Williams, the purest form of art inspires simple visual interest, drawing viewers in with a direct appeal to their natural curiosity. As Robert proclaims, “Art is not the slave of decoration. Hail the voyeur, the only honest connoisseur.” At 51, Williams stands as the leader of the lowbrow art movement, a successful man who hasn’t had to take a commercial commission since 1970. The secret of his success is his compulsive dedication to his work. Williams summed it up best when he said:



“People don’t consider me a true artist. They say I’m just an illustrator, a comic artist, but as I paint I realize I’ll probably die of some strange disease because of the paints and chemicals that I use— and you can’t be more of a fucking artist than that.”





FROM SPEED DEMONS TO DEMON RUST

**ROBERT WILLIAMS TALKS ABOUT HIS HOT RODDING DAYS
AND WHY THE NEW YORK ART WORLD IS TERRIFIED OF HIM**

BY THE PIZZ (Edited for Acrobat version)

For those of you in the Dark Ages as to who Robert Williams is, you've been missing out on over thirty years of mind-blowing work, a cascade of creation whose volume could easily swamp any anemic Art School's entire graduating class. He's still at the peak of his creative powers, churning forth masterworks fueled by everything


he can grab in the Pop lexicon. He has access to every corner and cranny of his mind and is unafraid to lay it naked and sweating for the world to gasp at. We suggest you track down any and all of his published works for the full visual impact which words cannot even come close to describing.

Now, as the father figure

to a movement, Robert seems poised on the precipice of fine-art acceptance. He is one of the few artists of this century to start from the bottom (vox populi), to the top (museum show elite). Hence, his official designation of his work as 'Lowbrow'.

The point of this is not another "Hey, look w discovered" lame-out interview.





We're gonna focus not on his main work, but his main hobby and love affair: The hot-rod, and hot-rod culture.

Being the multi-brained alien that he is, it took the three of us to tackle this one corner of Robert and his world properly. The conspirators are:

The Pizz: upstart artist breaking into the Big Game and notorious in many small ponds of backwater Pop Culture.

Long Gone John:

the Anti-Mogul behind Sympathy For The Record Industry, world-class weirdo and collector-scum who's carved an empire out of the trash and donated a bunch of shit to the Kustom Kulture show. And Bruce the Brush: Pinstriper, Flamer, Hot-Rodder, Biker, Maniac Mechanic who's been there and done that. Together, we've known Robert for 30 years and change. Refereed by the ubiquitous **Suzanne Williams**, whose keen perception and razor wit kept in check some overzealous chest-thumping and hoo-haw.

So maybe we can come up with an interesting query or two— 'cause this is the reason you've purchased the mag, right?

Hey Robert, did you draw a lot of cars as a kid?!

Robert Williams: Yeah, I did, a lot of 'em.

Bruce the Brush: We need to discuss the adolescent affliction which we all have.

Pizz: You go to the drag races when you were a kid with your old man or your buddies?

Robert: Mostly my pals.



Pizz: What was the scene like? Any kind of sponsorship, or all wildcat guys?

Robert: Well actually kind of primitive, crude.

Bruce: You have an airstrip?

Robert: Different places, with different airstrips.

Pizz: Just in Albuquerque?

Robert: In the South too. Montgomery, Alabama. I was 6 to 13 years old.

Bruce: So your recollection of being a car-freak goes way back.

Robert: My first car was a '34 Ford. Paid \$125, which was a lot of money back then.

Bruce: What was the license age?

Robert: It was fifteen, but you could get around it.

Pizz: At the races, did you get to see anybody die?

Robert: Well yeah, but not all the time.

Bruce: More on the weekends, probably.

Robert: You want me to tell you some hot rod stories?

Let me think. I was working on this deuce roadster. This guy came to my house, had this '30 model A coupe. I'd

seen it in the high school parking lot. No fenders, somehow he got the splash aprons off. And he channeled this thing about 10 inches. Channeling's where you cut the floors out and then the body falls down. Stock model A buckets with these little sealed beam headlights in, headlight bar he made in shop class, fucking radiator standing up stock height with about ten inches to twelve inches of channeling, model A, 4-banger. So he comes by one day. Now, this guy was really crazy...



Suzanne: On top of his bad taste....

Robert: So he asks if I want to go for a ride. I look at that fucking crate, with a piece of plywood for the floor board, no firewall, cowl gas tank. So you're looking at your feet at the edge of this plywood, then motor, with the ground underneath, sitting on a pillow or something, and he didn't bolt the body on. Got some type of U-shaped things but he never drilled 'em, body's just sitting there.

We go tearing off in this goddamn thing, really fast, flying down this dusty street, coming up to a fork in the

road. I'm thinking, he's going to go down the side street, but instead he launches into a power slide at about 65 m.p.h., and this heap's got mechanical brakes, see, and the back end starts whipping and the body breaks loose, coming down on each side like a guillotine, blam! blam! blam! He's hanging on with his foot still mashed into the sumbitch, finally gets it straightened out, but the radiator's all crooked, and falls into the fucking fan, and this old two blade steel fan exploded into steam and water. There's no windshield, no firewall. So now we're scalded in this motherfucker.

So, he says, "Well, maybe it's time I took you home." On the way, we come to this four-way stop, we're waiting in line, four-banger chugging away, carbon monoxide getting to him. He's getting tireder and tireder. So he gets out of the car to get some fresh air, sits on the curb and passes out, blocking all this traffic, I tried to wake him up. Nobody wanted to touch that fucking car. Later, much later, 'bout '59, he comes back to my house. He's got some work done to it, lot of work. Got a Chevy V-8 in it now with a four speed and hydraulic brakes. Still got the fucked up



headlights and the radiator standing high, cowl gas tank, still no firewall. And now he's got six fucking 2s on it, 8 Rochesters.

Bruce: Tune-up nightmare!

Robert: I say, I ain't getting in there with a four-speed tranny and a Chevrolet engine, and a cowl tank. You'll roast in this thing if something goes wrong with that clutch. So he splits, comes back a week later with the tank in the trunk. So we go driving, all over, and he's a fucking maniac in this thing. Fuckin' stock

front end with hydraulics adapted to it, ol' wobbly

kingpins so the wheels go back and forth. That thing was like a meteorite, tremendously powerful. So after tearing up the streets all day, we pull in to a gas station to fill up this thing. This car was ugly— *scary ugly*. We pull up into this cheap gas station and he opens up the deck lid and he shows the attendant where the gas goes, into this tank, was just a regular automobile tank. Just sitting on the cross members propped on cinderblocks. He pays the guy off, fires the motherfucker up, and in the valley on top of the engine block, was this big old pool

of gas that shoots up this big sheet of flame. The attendant shit his pants. We light 'em up out of there, straight out into the street and I hear this horrible noise. The gas tank had hit the pavement and it's dragging down the street. We just put it back in and split....

Bruce: The real deal!

Robert: Now later, this guy named Jerry Weeks, we were in a car club called The Rickshaws. I hated car clubs, but I had to have a place to work on my roadster and they had a giant shop, down by the Rio Grande river, with milling machines, grinder, lathes, arc welder, acetylene torch and stuff. These

weren't a bunch of teenagers, these were race car builders. Serious dragsters, dirt track roadsters. They had a small propensity for crime there, the highway patrol would come in and check engine ID numbers every six months or so, there'd be an awful lot of drinking and sex going on down there. The real hot rod world. There were some clubs with guys like dandys....

Pizz: You mean fags?

Robert: They would help out old women and give them their club cards....

Bruce: Foster a *good*

image....

Pizz: Yeah, *fags*.

Robert: So this guy Jerry Weeks down the street from me joined too. A real nerdy guy, thick glasses, meek. But you get him behind the wheel... and....

Bruce: Jekyll and Hyde?

Robert: Totally. So anyway, I got him his first roadster body.

We used to take trucks and trailers and comb the Southwest, Arizona, Colorado, for T-Bodies, A-Bodies....

Pizz: Just sitting around for the taking in fields?

Robert: Yeah. I had a huge stack of T-Roadster bodies

in my garage. I gave him a real nice one, traded it for a perfect steering wheel. Well, I lost contact with him when I came out here. Then I find out later he's running sprint cars at Ascot. A CRA champ and a USAC champ. He's famous. He doesn't race anymore. I had this other pal, Joe, was kinda a playboy, wealthy, with a '34 hot rod. This was like '60, '61. Starting to get into drugs a little bit. Well, actually, quite a bit. If you smoked marijuana back then and were caught, they'd put you so far in jail you'd never see the light. But at the time, nobody knew what it

was but the cops. When everyone was smoking Bull Durham handrolled anyway, I can recall walking down Central Ave. in Albuquerque casually smoking a joint, no big deal. So anyway, this guy was wealthy enough to commission this car, he gets it about half done, and he got antsy and pulled it out before it was complete. So it was actually perfect, the whole undercarriage was completely chromed, hopped-up motor, but a primer body, no interior, no glass. 409 motor, a dream car. '34 five window, channeled with 3 twos, four-

speed, chrome rear end, mean-looking. So I had a couple of real interesting adventures with this guy. One night we're driving around, no windshield and no top piece, drinking beer with these two little underage girls at, like, three in the morning.

Pizz: How old were you?

Robert: Old enough to go to Santa Fe prison for this. So, we're driving through some scrubby-looking rough fucking neighborhood, and up comes a cop. Hits the lights, and I'm thinking, "Oh shit, we're in some deep shit now. This is beyond repenting." So the cop comes

up to the window and asks Joe to come back and talk to him. He's gone awhile, then Joe comes back, fires up the car and takes off.

Pizz: He bribed the cop?

Robert: No, the cop wanted some heroin....

Pizz: Ah, the good old days!

Robert: Well, now that I look back on it I think it was for some undercover work or something. Another time we're racing around at night. We hit this bridge, the one where route 66 crosses the Rio Grande, and he pegs it. We're drunk, going like a low-flying airplane. Shoooooooooom! Then a cop comes up out of nowhere.



Speeding on a bridge is a *serious* offense. Cop comes up to the window and says, “You were going over a hundred! This is a thirty mile an hour bridge!” Then another cop pulls up, then another, this fat sergeant comes up to the first cop that pulled us over, “Look at this, no windshield.” He put his hands through the windshield, “No wipers, no brake lights, no this, no that, no fenders, na-ner! na-ner! na-ner! [sound of a clenched-jawed cop going off] Throw the fucking book at him!” Then all the cops take off. We’re left with just the first cop. Then he

says, “Man, this is a bitchin’ hot rod! Now get the hell out of here!”

OK, LET’S JUMP TO THE PRESENT

Robert: My ulterior motive is to open up a big movement here, underground comics, psychedelic posters, really get a handle on this colloquial California art that’s been neglected. Try to push it into the fine art world. Now, the art world’s reaction to this, haven’t formed its ranks yet. Now when I went to NY, and you witnessed this....

Access

Pizz: Yeah.

Robert: I went to N.Y., and when it was bombed, like it is now, hadda sold-out show, two thousand people at the opening, police barricades, nobody had ever seen anything like it and nobody gave me a stitch of fucking write-up. The woman who's the head critic of the N.Y. Times, Roberta Smith, a member of this group called "Guerrilla Girls," came there to see the show. Then came back later to see it again, hadda come two times to make sure she hated it.

Bruce: Hadda get a second opinion from herself. Multiple

personality crisis?

Robert: She wouldn't write it up. She knows, they got a situation in NY, it's representative of change, a big change in the wind. In other words, the entire economy's collapsed, no shit selling, Manhattan has one hundred-fifty thousand artists and only ten are selling, and I'm one of them, the guy doing the sold-out show. These people know this, the art schools know this, the foundations know this, they haven't figured how they're gonna deal with this. Should they merge in on this and be a part of it, or ignore it and try to come up

with something else, use this as a feminist issue and try to get them to stop it....

Bruce: Why don't they just acknowledge it as it is and just...

Robert: 'Coz they can't do it! The artists can't do it, it's like if we had fifty idiots in this room... we're incapable and incompetent, and we all wanna play instruments...all we can do is lower the standard to where all we play are kazoos. Then you get somebody who comes in and can play a solo violin, they gotta run him out, makes them look like shit. That's what N.Y. is like.

Pizz: The problem they

have with Robert is they can't use all the swell "isms" they learned in fag-art school, that snob thing where they can parade their snazz, show off what their daddy's money bought them. They love art with all this art history baggage so when they do a review they can show off all the shit they memorized. This shit comes to town and it's like a cold slap in the face of everything they represent. "Hey, you're irrelevant..."

Bruce: A 3000 mile "fuck you." It's a different country back there.



Pizz: They hated the West Coast in

the '50s, jazz out here was considered nowhere, daddy-o. They've always been snobs.

Robert: Well, how are you gonna displace 150,000 people out there that claim to be Artists, displaced by one person with a sold-out show. They can either kill me....

Pizz: Let's not give the weaker minded any ideas!!

Robertor they can join in. My stuff has to be endured. They don't understand they can work around me, they can still do their shit. It's a challenge to them.

Long Gone John: I don't get this chasing-after-acceptance

deal. Do you want an audience that hasta be told, "Now it's okay to like Robert Williams"?

Robert: It isn't me, so much as it's getting my 50 other artist pals in there. Me alone can't do it.

Pizz: We're talking posterity here.

Bruce: What's success to you, Fame or Money?

Pizz: Well, Robert already proved that. If it was monetary, Robert woulda went for that a long time ago, and not give up half his dough to galleries, just sell his stuff. He's eaten a lot of shit to get acceptance.

Long Gone John: Well, I'm just curious about the 15 paintings instead of 30 you usually do for your shows. Are you tired? Concentrating on books?

Robert: I'm just taking it easy. I went seven years, seven days a week, getting up at 4:30 in the morning. Seven fuckin' years.

Pizz: That's like doin' hard time. How many paintings, 120?

Robert: Something like that.

Long Gone

John: What's the ultimate, in your mind,

I mean you're obviously successful already....

Robert: I'm successful on a very small level.

Long Gone John: Well, you just had a sold-out show, and probably coulda sold three times over. You got a

captive audience, what's the next step? Where do you go from there?

Robert: Well, it would be nice to be in a museum in town. Get thousands of people in to see it. Big commissions from big

museums would be nice.

Long Gone John: You're big, you've made it!

Robert: You're confusing me with other guys. I'm not a big artist, I'm just making a living at it.



Is that a Food Dehydrator in Your Pocket, or Are You Just Happy to See Me?

The Access Guide to Infomercial Royalty

Insomniacs all over the world are no strangers to the rogue's gallery of Infomercial personalities who take over your TV's late-night airwaves. From some guy with a can of spray-on hair to a friendly miss with a frighteningly powerful stain remover, it seems that everybody and their Aunt Joleen are trying to peddle something Infomercial. But with a keen eye and a strong sense of character, one can easily tell the serious Infomercial gods apart from simple Infomercial dogs. It's sad, but not everybody can pull off that elusive "I've got Infomerciality" style. Those who can, however, gain entry into the Royal Family of Infomercials.

The Queen— Susan Powter: Stop the insanity! Susan is absolute fantastic. From her fuzzy white crewcut down to her frank perso-

Queen Susan blurs the line between Infomercial entertainment



and advanced performance art. Chances are, even if you have no interest in her weight-loss program, you'll have a good time watching her in action. She's funny, sincere, kooky and absolutely the most beautiful woman ever to grace your television screen. Nobody else could ever qualify as the Queen. We love you, Susan!



THE PSYCHIC POWER
OF THE PRINCESS

The King— Ron Popeil: Master of food dehydration and the famous Popeil Pocket Fisherman, Popeil is quick to reassure potential buyers that all his goods are “that easy” to operate as consumers struggle with scary loud machinery. Unfortunately, his crown could be seized by a mysterious “Mister X” as rumors circulate that a small child in Nebraska met

an untimely fate at the cold-blooded hands of the Popeil Pasta Maker. Kiddie-pasta, anyone?

The Princess— LaToya Jackson: Don't mess with LaToya! After all, she's psychic... she could crush your head with the slightest effort of her mental powers, boy. And don't you forget it!

The Prince— Tony Little: Can we trust this man? Despite his All-American exterior, Samsonesque blond locks, muscle-bound physique and whiter-than-white

smile, we strongly believe that Tony Little is, in fact, an undercover agent working for Cher's Brotherhood of Evil Infos. It gets worse. Have you noticed how he always seems to suddenly fondle his guests as they perform his kinky aerobics? Let's keep a close eye on this guy, America.

The Princess— LaToya Jackson: Don't mess with LaToya! After all, she's psychic... she could crush your head with the slightest effort of her

mental powers, boy. And don't you forget it!

The Duke— Uh, That Guy With Really Big Teeth:

What's his name? Who cares— he's got big teeth, and he tries to sell you confidence through a series of tapes and other junk. Bad press stating that he's got a glass eye, a wooden tooth, eighteen toes, a peg leg and an "invisible friend" named Mr. Noony prevented him from his chance at



being king. Due to his meager status as Duke, That Guy With Big Teeth attempted to "off" King

Popeil by apparently "making him feel like he was no good."

The Duchess— Miss Dionne Warwick:

Even Psychic Friends weren't enough for Miss Dionne to be Queen. Although she is quite adamant that "friends

can be lovers,” Dionne is also rumored to practice bizarre rituals on Psychics who try getting out of the business. The local gossip is that nobody leaves the Psychic Friends Network alive.

The Brotherhood of Evil Infos

The Evil Queen—

Cher: Did Cher murder hair guru Lorrie Davis in a bitter battle over gouda?



Access 4

Who knows. Nevertheless, Cher’s fall from grace in the world of Infomercials prompted her to become the dark force of the witching-hour brood. Neighbors say they’ve heard her screaming “I wanted to be Queen! I wanted to be Queen!” at odd hours of the night.

Extended Late-Night Nasties

Those Horrible Party-Line Girls: If you manage to see past their sensuous, wet lips, silicon-enhanced breasts and creamy thighs, you’ll find

that these tramps are actually evil spirits from the grave who fiendishly crave human brains.

The Pious Pigs of Christian Television:

Bottom line— these people are up to no good. And what’s up with that lady’s purple hair?





If You're
Reading This
You're Not
Dead Yet:
The Science Of
Eschatology

by Michelle Farrar

Grade school health books in the '60s included a chapter on surviving in fallout shelters.



During the cold war, we suffered from a lack of imagination. The end of the world was safely railroaded into mutual nuclear destruction. Grade school health books in the '60s included a chapter on surviving in fallout shelters. The TV movie *The Day After* was a national affair during the Evil Empire days of Ronnie Reagan. Later, we had Ground Zero Week, where the nuclear holocaust was rehearsed in every detail short of an actual detonation. Like a primitive talisman, recreating the act was a measure against the act itself.

How boring. In the days before the atomic bomb, creative minds didn't prefer one form of cataclysm over another. The crackpots that buy their fifteen minutes of fame with predictions of doom are selling odds on the longest shot of them all. As we approach the second millennium, many of them are looking forward to the year 1999. Our much relied-on calendar is simply based on one religion's belief in the sacredness of a spiritual leader's birth, designating that birth—which may have been four years later, anyway—as Year One.





Whether you're waiting for the Virgin Mother or the mothercraft, there are many more exciting ways to close the curtains.

Note: Big earthquakes and other minor population removal aren't listed here.

Comet Disaster

Could've been what killed the dinosaurs. Luckily foreseen by Star psychic Jean Dixon—unfortunately for Jean, never happened. In the Halley's Comet pass of 1919, scientists predicted that poisonous gases in the comet's tail would choke the planet. 1919 also marked the year that electronic telescopes and accurate data were long overdue.

The Ice Age Is Coming

Even if we can wait out 20,000 years of frozen weath-

AXcess



er, we'll still have no available acreage to feed the world with. Predicted by both Californian

Mobius Rex (a former talk-show host) and New Age seer/UFO liason Earlyne Chaney.

You thought we had problems with the Greenhouse Effect disastrously raising our temperature by a few degrees? Chaney predicts that the heat will vaporize the oceans and the moisture will make its way to the poles, where the glaciers will form. Sounds like science? All this will happen between now and the year 1999. Devastated by speedy glaciers encroaching on our continents and attacking us in our cities, humanity will be all but wiped out. Chaney's white Light Starship will rescue some.

Biological Warfare

And by whom? Engineered virus gets out of hand, resists the anti-

You thought we had problems with the Greenhouse Effect disastrously raising our temperature by a few degrees?

Chaney predicts that the heat will vaporize the oceans...

dote of those that made it to save themselves, wipes out the species *homo sapiens*. Strangely, the most technical forms of genocide are the ones least predicted by those ancient texts. Some seers into the future *they* were. Stephen King had better luck— read *The Stand*.

Polar Shift

Predicted by such popular psychics as Edgar Cayce and Nostradamus (we think he's



Tick... tick... tick.... Ooh, look isn't he cute? He's our *fourth* boy. Tick... tick... tick... it's a boy! Tick... it's a girl! Tick... tick....it's one more mouth to feed.... **Boom!**



had his hand in *everything*). Having too much ice building up on the poles would shift the weight of a moving object like planet Earth, unbalancing the globe and toppling it out of orbit. The result— earthquakes, tidal waves, and electrical storms— would resemble a planet-wide train wreck. Poison gases would even be released from the ground. Also the subject of *Pole Shift*, a book by John White. The reality is that while polar shift is an existing dynamic, rebalancing is subtle and minor.

Wrathful God

The scenario is this: Non-Earther can't stand the

AXcess



goings-on on Planet Earth and, like an over-disciplinary dad, “Kicks yer bum friends outta here.” No wonder it's the theme that

shows up most often in patriarchal religion.

Immaculate Conception

Human seed will become sterile, due to pollution, genetic mutation and dependence on chemical deodorants. The human race could die out if scientists couldn't discover a way to imitate or repair human gametes. Fictionalized in the book and film *The Handmaid's Tale*.

World War, Round 3

The squabbling nations predicted in the Christian Bible have less to do with any far future vision than with

ancient politics. The Beast of Revelation represented the Roman Empire. The “king of the north” in the book of Daniel referred to one of the Seleucid rulers of the Hellenistic Empire. The number of the Antichrist is widely believed by theologians to be the numerical value of the Hebrew letters that spell Neron Caesar— Nero. While a third world war may someday arise with or without being foreseen, it seems that those who don't know their history are likely to repeat it— and they publicized the *hell* out of World War II.

The book *The Population Bomb* predicted our death from using up finite resources by **1983**

The Population Bomb
Tick... tick... tick.... Ooh, look isn't he cute? He's our *fourth*





boy. Tick... tick... tick... it's a boy! Tick... it's a girl! Tick... tick....it's one more mouth to feed.... Boom!

The book *The Population Bomb* predicted our death from using up finite resources by 1983. Assuming we can't add a few more stories to metropolitan apartment buildings, it's safe to say that the world won't end even if we're way overcrowded— but the traffic will be a pain.

The Big Crunch

Scientists back it, fundamentalists denounce it, and it's still quite a few billion years away. The Universe, ever expanding from the Big Bang, will reach a maximum span and, like smaller explosions, collapse. By this time Hollywood will have a special effects crew good enough to figure the problem out. If not, it'll be a hell of a ride back to the center of the Universe.

An End of The World Timeline

999

Christian world freaks.

1033

European famine fuels dire predictions.

1962

Indian astrologers cause millions of Hindus to panic because of the alignment of eight planets in Capricorn.

1988

40 years and one Biblical generation

after the founding of the modern state of Israel. Fundamentalist preachers on standby.

1993

David Koresh smoke-signals the end of the world.

1999-2000

Nostradamus bets the house on big disasters.

2012

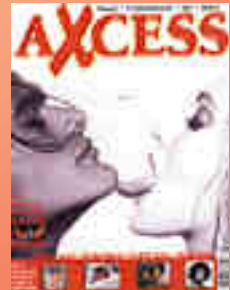
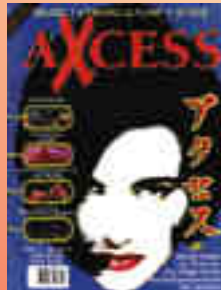
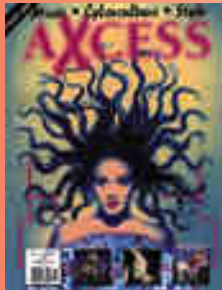
The Mayan calendar predicts the end of five great cycles. However, a newer, brighter world will take its place.



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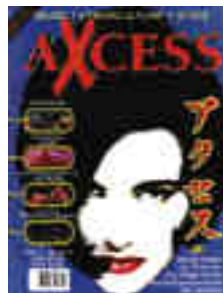
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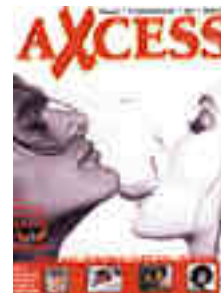
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