

# 3rd COAST MUSIC

CINDY WALKER

#85/174 FEBRUARY 2004



photograph courtesy of the County Music Hall of Fame

**CHARLES EARLE's B-Sides**

**JOHN THE REVEALATOR**

**FREEFORM AMERICAN ROOTS #54**

**ROOTS BIRTHS & DEATHS**

## REVIEWS



**(or not)**

Terry Allen

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Darcie Deaville

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The Flatlanders

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1997-2003

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*Vinyl Junkies*

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# FREEFORM AMERICAN ROOTS #54

REAL MUSIC PLAYED FOR REAL PEOPLE BY REAL DJs DURING JANUARY 2004

## #1 The Flatlanders: Wheels Of Fortune

(New West) \*BF/\*CP/\*JM/\*LW/\*UV

- 2 Anna Fernin's Trigger Gospel: Oh, The Stories We Hold (Undertow) \*DY/\*MD/\*PP
- 3 Mark Erelli: Hillbilly Pilgrim (Signature Sounds) \*BR/\*KM/\*NA
- 4 Rick Shea & Patty Booker: Our Shangri-LA (Tres Pescadores) \*DN/\*RT
- 5 Paul Burch: Fool For Love (Bloodshot) \*DF/\*KF
- 6 Jerry Sires Band: You're Gonna Be Cold (self) \*EGB
- 7= Kenny & Amanda Smith: House Down The Block (Rebel) \*AR/\*CL/\*RW  
Ad Vanderveen: Late Bloomer (UTR) \*JB/\*ND/\*TO
- 8 Lauren Sheehan: Some Old Lonesome Day (self) \*MDT
- 9= Marti Brom: Wise To You (Goofin') \*JH  
Cam Penner & The Gravel Road: Get Up (self) \*FW/\*TF
- 10= Johnny Cash: Unearthed (American/Lost Highway) \*BL  
The Sundowners: Chicago Country Legends (Bloodshot Revival)
- 11 Colin Gilmore: The Day The World Stopped And Spun The Other Way  
(Squirm) \*BC/\*SJ
- 12+ Daniel Ross & The Jones Collective: The Lost Railroad Journal (Spinning Widget) \*RH  
Chris Stuart & Backcountry: Saints & Strangers (Backcountry) \*EB/\*RJ
- 13 VA: Livin' Lovin' Losin'; Songs of the Louvin Brothers (Universal) \*LG/\*MB
- 14= Dave Biller & Bobby Horton: Textotica (Vinylux) \*DC/\*MT  
Moot Davis (Little Dog) \*KL/\*MA  
Dan Reeder (Oh Boy) \*JP/\*SC  
Billy Joe Shaver: Try And Try Again (Compadre) \*CM
- 15 Holmes Brothers: Simple Truths (Alligator) \*T&L
- 16 Lucy Kaplansky: The Red Thread (Red House) \*MR
- 17 BR549: Tangled In The Pines (Dualtone) \*FS
- 18 VA: Cold Mountain (Sony)
- 19= Okeh Wranglers: Tearing Up The Old Dancehall (Blue Smoke) \*DB  
Chip Taylor & Carrie Rodriguez: The Trouble With Humans (Trainwreck/TMG) \*DS
- 20= Old Crow Medicine Show (Nettwerk) \*TW  
Red Stick Ramblers: Bring It On Down (Memphis International) \*TJ
- 21= Cracker: Countrysides (BMG) \*WR  
Merle Haggard: Like Never Before (Hag) \*S&D  
Robert Earl Keen: Farm Fresh Onions (Koch) \*TT  
Wailin' Eloys: Cheap Motel (Double Ought) \*MP  
Dallas Wayne: I'm your Biggest Fan (Texicali) \*MM
- 22= Chris Berardo & The DesBerardos, Pure Faith (Lamon) \*JT  
The Betweeners: Matador Karma (self) \*DA  
The Brothers Cosmoline: Songs of Work & Freedom (Slewfoot) \*FM  
Captain Yonder: Mad Country Love Songs (self) \*JCS  
Kris Delmhorst, Peter Mulvey & Jeffrey Foucault: Redbird (self) \*DO  
Deke Dickerson In 3 Dimensions (Major Label) \*KD  
Deke Dickerson: Mr Entertainment (Rock & Roll Inc) \*RS  
Sean Hayes: Alabama Chicken (Snail Blue) \*BW  
Bill Hearne: From Las Cruces To Santa Fe (Big Hat) \*ST  
Paul Kelly: Ways & Means (True North) \*AB  
Dale Keys (self) \*TA  
Kris Kristofferson: Broken Freedom Songs (Oh Boy) \*NA/\*SF  
Lafayette Rhythm Devils: Pray For Us (Z'Affaire) \*JF  
Robert Lee: Songs For Sale (Deep South Productions) \*GS  
Tom Lewis: 360 Degrees (Borealis) \*SMJ  
Corb Lund: Modern Pain (self) \*DP  
NRBQ & The Whole Wheat Horns: Live At The Wax Museum (Big Noise) \*RC  
Josh Owen: Fixin' To Begin (Piney Woods) \*HT  
Sarah Pierce: Love's The Only Way (Little Bear) \*MF  
Lee Rocker: Bulletproof (33rd Street) \*RMS  
The Rosinators (PDC) \*JW  
VA: Goodbye, Babylon (Dust-to-Digital) \*DWT  
JT Van Zandt & Wrecks Bell: Live At The Old Quarter Acoustic Cafe (Romeo) \*TG



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## VARIOUS ARTISTS NIGHT TRAIN TO NASHVILLE GREETINGS FROM AREA CODE 207 ROTMAN'S CAFE FANTASTIQUE

### REBA RADIO #1

## NO DEPRESSION: WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE VOL 1

And I do mean Various—more artists than you can shake a stick at, genres galore, music that's sixty years old and stuff that's hot off the CD burners, recorded at a single venue, representing a label or gathered from multiple archives.

◆ Let's start with the big dog, **Night Train To Nashville; Music City Rhythm & Blues 1945-1970** (Country Music Foundation \*\*\*\*), 38 tracks on two CDs, including a cool Royal Crown Dressing radio spot by Little Richard, who started out playing piano in Nashville clubs. There aren't too many Big Names, Etta James doing *What'd I Say* from her classic **Rocks The House** LP, recorded live at Nashville's New Era Club, Arthur Alexander, perhaps not all that well known in America, but worshipped in Britain (*Anna*), Ruth Brown with a killer 1962 remake, cut in Nashville, of *Mama, He Treats Your Daughter Mean*, Joe Tex (*I Want To Do Everything For You*), Joe Simon (*The Chokin' Kind*) and Johnny Adams (*Reconsider Me*), but if you know anyone who thinks Beyoncé's crap is really R&B, pretty much any track would serve to point out their error, though strictly speaking the title should include "& Soul," as that's what dominates the late 60s portion of the program. It's rather odd that this should come out under the CMF's aegis—like there's no neglected local country music left in the vaults—and I can't resist the temptation to say that this is one of the best country albums to come out of Nashville in years. Hey, if soft rock is considered country, why not vintage R&B?

◆ Next up are the 19 tracks, plus seven more on a bonus EP, of **Greetings From Area Code 207 Vol 4** (Cornmeal \*\*\*\*), and when I said Charlie Gaylord might be reaching the bottom of the Portland, Maine, musical barrel on Vol 3, I was flat wrong, this is just as strong as the others. Regulars like native son Slaid Cleaves (a live version of *Drinking Days*), Sara Cox, Darien Brahm, Diesel Doug & The Long Haul Truckers, Say Zuzu, Nick Curran & The Nitelives and Cattle Call provide the backbone, but there are plenty of new names and while, as usual, not all of them are to my taste, there's nothing I actually hate and, as always, one has to marvel at Portland's musical vitality. The EP features live recordings of Bruce Cockburn, Rhett Miller, Beth Orton, Howie Day, Indigo Girls, The Jayhawks and Kathleen Edwards. I've been told Edwards is more tolerable live—apparently she isn't.

◆ Down the coast, FAR reporter Troy Tyree (*American Roots Radio*, WICN) is also "booking mongrel and ace coffee maker" for **Rotmans Café Fantastique** (Rotmans \*\*\*\*), a 50 seat venue inside a Worcester, MA, furniture store. Featuring 13 "favorite Cafe performers" from live broadcasts, this is a window into New England music, with national touring acts like Terri Hendrix (*I Found The Lions*), Slaid Cleaves (*Breakfast In Hell*), Mark Erelli and Jim Henry side by side with what I can only assume are locals (try a Google search on She's Busy and Bone Dance and see where it gets you). Nonetheless, an excellent, acoustically crisp, collection, necessarily, given the size of the joint, on the folky side, which benefits from Tyree's on air experience with hard to beat sequencing.

◆ Turning back north, Wilf Carter, Bob Nolan and Hank Snow may atone for Ann Murray and Kathleen Edwards but my guess would be that few people outside Canada know much, if anything, about its country music scene. **Reba Radio #1** (Reba \*\*\*\*.5) has some ringers, Billy Lee Riley, who made great singles for Sun and knocked em dead at the Green Bay Rockabilly Festival, Jeff Kesner and Loretta Cooper are Americans, but the home team is represented by Laurie McClune, Jimmy Phair, Kim Doolittle, Crystal Silvers, Joey Sloan, Cindy Sidock and TJ Thomas, who, for all I know, are household names up there. Reba's heart is very much in what one might call classic Nashville, post-hillbilly but pre-countryopolitan., and if you have a taste for that, these Canadians still do it up in style.

◆ Jumping over to another old Dominion, **Garage Sale 1997-2003** (Reckless \*\*\*\*) is what the title implies, odds and ends, live and EP tracks, from Audrey Auld and Bill Chambers' Australian label, and is mainly of interest to their admirers. Still, there are some real gems, notably the marvellous part-Maori Camille Te Nahu's cover of *I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry* from her 2002 debut album and Fred Eaglesmith, with Auld, doing a killer live version of *Wilder Than Her*, with an hilarious intro, a must for any Fredheads out there.

◆ Finally, a tricky one, **No Depression; What it Sounds Like Vol 1** (Dualtone \*\*\*). I could pretend to be objective about this but fuck it, what it sounds like is what the magazine reads like, cheerleading for the predictable big fish in a small pond—Johnny Cash (*The Time Of The Preacher* from Justice's godawful Willie Nelson tribute, **Twisted Willie**), Allison Moorer, Whiskeytown, Alejandro Escovedo, Doug Sahm, Buddy Miller, Robbie Fulks with Kelly Willis, Neko Case, Kevin Gordon with Lucinda Williams, Kasey Chambers and Hayseed with Emmylou Harris. Worst track, by far, is the butchering, by Mark Olson, Victoria Williams & Friends, aka The Hole Dozen, of Mickey Newbury's *How I Love Them Old Songs*, best track, by far, is The Carter Family's *No Depression*.

JC

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## TERRY ALLEN • JUAREZ THE FLATLANDERS • WHEELS OF FORTUNE

(Sugar Hill \*\*\*\*.5/New West \*\*\*\*)

2003 was not a vintage year for aficionados of the Lubbock gang, with only the reissue of *Amerasia*, an esoteric album even by Terry Allen standards, and Joe Ely's rather dull *Streets Of Sin*, but we start 2004 with a bang. Many people think of *Lubbock (On Everything)* as Allen's first album, but *Juarez* came out four years earlier, in 1975, though originally only to accompany a limited edition of 50 sets of six lithographs illustrating the characters in what Allen calls "a simple story" of two couples on a drunken spree and doomed chase through the Southwestern desert. With shades of Jim Thompson's style and hardboiled humor, 'country noir' would be the best way to describe this suite, and while some of the songs, *Cantina Carlotta*, the #2 Song I Wish I'd Written (#1 is *The Wolfman Of Del Rio* from Allen's next album), *Cortez Sail*, *What Of Alicia* and *There Ought To Be A Law Against Sunny Southern California*, resurfaced on subsequent albums, they gain enormously from being heard in their intended context. Moreover, Allen has added 'Epilog 2003,' *El Camino Instrumental* and *El Camino*, so even if you have the 1980 Fate LP or 1992 Fate CD, you're not off the hook.

♦ Much as I admire Butch Hancock, Jimmie Dale Gilmore and Joe Ely individually, you may recall that I was not altogether ecstatic about *Now Again*, in fact I thought it was an almost unmitigated disaster that vied with Ely's *Hi-Res* as the worst album in which any of the three had ever been involved. The basic problem with their attempt to reunite The Flatlanders after a 30 year interval was that the material, well most all of it just wasn't up to scratch, let alone what one would expect, and, for my money, the obvious reason was that they tried to write cooperatively, which pure and simple didn't work. However, the credits on this go-round alone are grounds for optimism as nine of the 14 tracks come from their combined back catalog, and only one was cowritten, Hancock & Gilmore's *See The Way*, from Gilmore's eponymous 1989 Hightone album. Moreover, they've also abandoned the jarring verse-swapping in favor of song-swapping. Gilmore sings Hancock's title track (from *Diamond Hill*), *Wishin' For You* (from *Firewater*) and *Once Followed By The Wind* (from *The Wind's Dominion*), Ely's new *Back To My Old Molehill* and *Whistle Blues* by Al Strehli. Hancock sings his new *Baby Do You Love Me Still?*, *Eggs Of Your Chickens* (from *No 2 Alike*), Gilmore's *Deep Eddy Blues* (again from *Jimmie Dale Gilmore*) and Ely's *Indian Cowboy* (from Guy Clark's *Old Friends*). Ely gets Gilmore's *Midnight Train* and *Go To Sleep Alone* (both from *After Awhile*), his own new *I'm Gonna Strangle You Shorty* (the album's only clunker) and *Neon Of Nashville*, plus the aforementioned *See The Way*. Would I prefer a new Hancock album, a new Gilmore album, a solo acoustic Ely album and/or the release of the live One Knite tape or the Big Spring studio sessions from 30 years ago? Absolutely, but this is still far more satisfactory than *Now Again*. JC

## BRETT MILANO • VINYL JUNKIES; ADVENTURES IN RECORD COLLECTING

(St Martin's Griffin, paperback \*\*\*\*.5)

During the 80s, I put a fair amount of time, energy and money into laying hands on everything Townes Van Zandt, Terry Allen and Butch Hancock had recorded, but it didn't even occur to me to try and track down things like Allen's 1968 Bale Creek 45, *Gonna California/Color Book*, and that's why, no matter how many Texas singer-songwriter records I may own, I would never be considered a serious collector by the people who inhabit Milano's book. It has to be said that the closest his featured junkies come to sharing any common musical ground with me or, I imagine, the average 3CM reader, are those who collect prewar blues 78s ("John Tefteller has received the ultimate compliment. Even Robert Crumb thinks he's truly obsessed"). Most of Milano's subjects jones for ever more obscure and hard to find British Invasion, punk, psychedelia or, God help us, Olivia Newton-John wax. Nonetheless, even if your specific interest in an "ultimate find" such as a 1966 EP recorded in Portugal by the original lead singer of The Searchers, or Jackie Shark & The Beach Butchers' punk single *Second Generation Rising*, of which only two copies have ever surfaced, is minimal, Milano's description of the hunt makes great reading. Still, the last word on record collectors comes from bubblegum freak Lisa Sutton, "85% are lunatics, and the rest have something wrong with them." JC

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## CHRISTINE MIMS PERFECT FOR A RAINY DAY

(Yellow Rose \*\*\*\*)

Certain names in the credits can confer instant credibility on an otherwise unfamiliar artist, Gurf Morlix being an obvious example, and, on the country side at least, Bobby Flores is fast moving into his class, with sensational hard country arrangements, on top of his producing and fiddle and guitar playing skills, as his added value. And it has to be said that Mims, now back in her home town of New Braunfels, having spent some years working for Opryland USA, in Nashville, Las Vegas and San Antonio, is in rather obvious need of cred. On the plus side, though, that experience has clearly imbued her with enormous strength and confidence, and while one shudders to think what she had to sing while developing those qualities, when Flores harnesses them to classics by Roger Miller (*Invitation To The Blues*), Hank Cochran (*Don't Touch Me*), Dallas Frazier (*Ain't Had No Lovin'*), Ray Price (*Each Time*), Carl Belew (*Lonely Street*), Floyd Tillman (*Cold Cold War*) and Buck Owens (*Under Your Spell Again*), the results are pretty damned impressive. Where things get interesting is when, towards the end of the album, Mims and Flores, having invited favorable comparisons with Patsy Cline, Jeannie Sealy, Connie Smith and Jessi Colter, throw in *Cry Me A River*, replete with big ass strings. Going up against either Patsy Cline or Julie London is risky enough, taking on both is really asking for trouble, but Mims, while not a giantkiller, holds her own, which is as much as any singer can hope for, and considerably more than most could manage. JC

## JERRY SIRES BAND YOU'RE GONNA BE COLD

(self \*\*\*\*)

Remember that old thing, 'if you were a car, what would you be?' Back in the day, there were three kinds of Austin country bands, the high mileage pickups of Henry's Bar & Grill, the 'cool' custom cars of the Continental and the vintage Cadillacs of The Broken Spoke. One thing for sure, the Jerry Sires Band know what they'd be, a Valencia Orange 1950 International Harvester L110, towing the rear end of a wrecked Valencia Orange L110. It's right there on the sleeve and celebrated in Sires' Greatest Hit, *I Found Me A Trailer That Matches My Truck*. It's certainly an appropriate metaphor for a onetime Henry's regular band that exemplifies the joint's approach to country music—"if it ain't broke, don't fix it." Sidelined for much of the 90s by an injury to his arm, Sires came back in 1999 with *Bucolic Plague*, a name he dropped because places that served food didn't care for it much. Under the new name, with such Austin country veterans as Greg Lowry (lap steel, accordion, acoustic guitar, harmonica and harmonies), Mike Kearney (electric and acoustic guitars), Boomer Norman (electric, acoustic rhythm and baritone guitars) and Howard Kalish fiddle, Sires has some subtle touches, making neighbors of Ernest Tubb (*Thanks A Lot*) and Greg Brown (*Grand Junction*), Whitey Shafer (*I'll Break Out Again Tonight*) and Riley Puckett (*Ragged But Right*), Bill Staines (*The Roseville Fair*) and Alton Delmore (*Sophrone*), John Sebastian (*Day Blues*) and The Seldom Scene (*Don't Crawlfish Me Baby*), but it's still an unpretentious, muscular, no frills stone country set he can play without fear in any bar. And, by the way, I'd be a 1955 Chevy Cameo (or a '58 Apache). JC

## REELTIME TRAVELERS LIVIN' REELTIME, THINKIN' OLD-TIME DARCIE DEAVILLE PLAYS THE FIDDLE AND SINGS

(Yodel-Ay-Hee \*\*\*\*/Taller Dog \*\*\*\*.5)

One of the benefits of running FAR is that it gives me a network of scouts, and following last year's Strawberry Festival, no less than three FARsters reported that the highlight was Reeltime Travellers. Lewis Carroll's Bellman claims, "What I tell you three times is true," and while actually getting hold of a copy of their album was a comedy of errors, now we've got it sorted out, I am very willing to believe that they were indeed the Strawberry's Snark, the act to be hunted down. From Heidi Andrade's powerhouse fiddle intro to the traditional instrumental *Paddy Won't You Drink Some Cider* to lead vocalist Martha Scanlan's original *Higher Rock*, they serve up some extremely palatable old timey mountain string band music, and bear in mind that I react to the sight of an autoharp like Dracula to a cross. There's a very engaging loose, informal feel, as if they're playing for the fun of it, far removed from the dour scholasticism that's done so much to turn people off folk music. Losing Andrade would be a disaster on the scale of The Mollys losing Catherine Zavala, but as she's married to the banjo player, that seems unlikely.

♦ Deaville does indeed play the fiddle and sing, often at the same time, and also guitar, mandolin and the self-created 'octoblaster,' a solid body octave mandolin. Almost a one woman show apart from very occasional assists on percussion, drum or guitar by Marvin Dykhuis, Deaville, currently with Ray Wylie Hubbard, is in fine form on her instruments, and her arrangements of traditional material are very fine. However, it has to be said her voice is something of an acquired taste. JC

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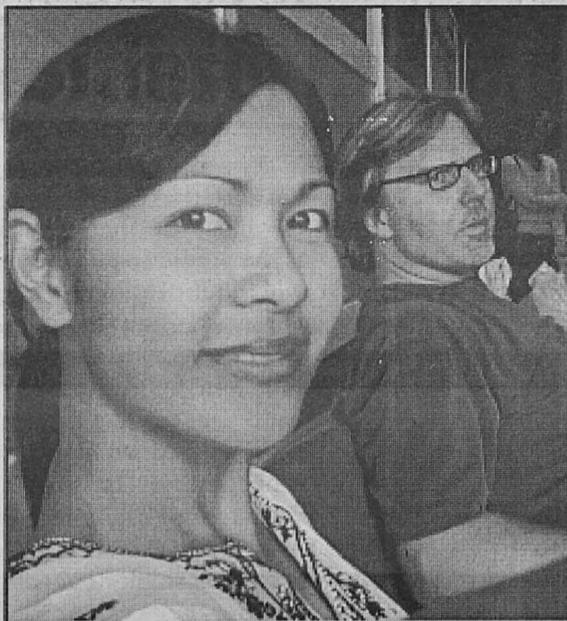
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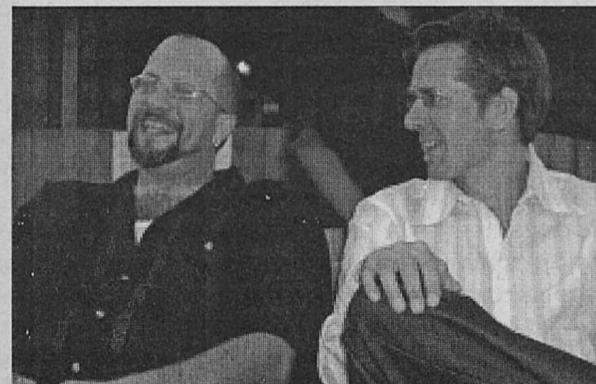
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# JOHN THE REVEALATOR

Got caught out last month in a usage. Austin reader Hank Jones, querying the phrase “tabled the suggestion” in my piece on The Sundowners, asked “Did you intend the UK connotation of ‘address and deal with the issue now,’ versus the US connotation of ‘defer it till later’? That’s one of those examples of Britain and America being two countries separated by a common language, that comes up in international business negotiations.” Good call, Hank. I did, of course, intend it in the British sense and should have said something like “put forward the suggestion.”

◆ I kind of felt impelled to qualify Cindy Walker’s much deserved TFR tribute by mentioning **Lydia Mendoza**. Not to detract from Walker’s achievements as a songwriter, but I think it’s important to remember that Mendoza is far and away the most popular, successful and prolific performer, recording artist and songwriter that Texas has ever produced, even if most Anglos, and, to be fair, most young Tejano/as, have never heard of her. What’s more, no one will ever catch up with her because during her six decade career (1928-88) she was a major star at a time when people actually bought records. To give you a some idea, the discography in Chris Strachwitz & James Nicolopoulos’ **Lydia Mendoza; A Family Autobiography** (Arte Publico, University of Houston) runs to fifty pages—with no annotation!

◆ Also, while I let it go in the feature, I’m still not happy with Texas Folklife Resources staging events at **The Paramount**, but I gather the dates they booked some time ago, before their current financial crunch, are carved in marble, and it would be more expensive to pull out than to go ahead. Still, at least one of the people intimately involved in the Cindy Walker tribute would much prefer the Scottish Rite Temple.

◆ While I was in the loop for updates to the tribute, I got this rather enigmatic email from Texas Folklife Resources: “**Toni Price** has decided only one day after agreeing to perform to cancel. LONG STORY! I’m sorry to ask but she should be removed from anything we have put her name on.” Obviously, this piques one’s curiosity, but, as I sense a trail that will lead nowhere, much less to the truth of the matter, I’m leaving it alone. Actually, what makes even me far more curious is why TFR would even ask her to participate.

◆ As a footnote to my editorial, the **Cold Mountain** soundtrack may well be the dullest album you’ll ever hear. We have it in the Third Coast Music Network library because one of the DJs is impressed with the fact that Jack White is on it. As the rest of us neither know nor care who Jack White is, this doesn’t strike me as a compelling argument.

◆ Footnote 2: in his review of **The Flatlanders** latest, *Country Standard Time*’s Brian Wahlert, complains about the “lack of lyrical depth” and thinks “the songwriting doesn’t measure up to their past work.” Fucking idiot, most of the album is their past work (see review). The same paper has one TJ Simon demonstrating his familiarity with the subject in an interview with Anna Fermin and review of her new album by referring to her previous **Things To Come** as ‘Things Change’ throughout.

◆ One interesting little tidbit in **Vinyl Junkies** (see reviews) is the true identity of singer Jennifer Warren, a regular on the Smothers Brothers Show, who Brett Milano, confessing to his first musical crush, describes as “A definite hippy dream, Jennifer was prone to white lipstick and peasant dresses, and she wore glasses more fetchingly than Lisa Loeb ever dreamed.” Many years later, he put it together that she was **Jennifer Warnes**. I remember reading once that Warnes was in the original LA production of *Hair* but was the only cast member who didn’t get naked.

◆ Good news for those who came late to collecting vinyl is that CDs will soon be replaced by digital downloads and hence become collectible. Such, at least, is the prediction of technology analyst **Josh Bernoff**, who doubtless knows a thing or two we don’t. At the recent MidemNet conference in Cannes, France, Bernoff said “By 2007 or 2008, CDs will be something only old people have.” OK, he never mentioned collectors but had he thought of them, he might have qualified another forecast, not mentioned in the news report but to be found at the Forrester Research website, that “hundreds of music stores will close.”

◆ If you’re already downloading from a legal Internet service, or thinking about it, you might want to consider another prediction made by Bernoff, that “By the end of 2004, half of the businesses that started [offering digital downloads] will be out of business.” In fact, the *New York Times* only sees Apple’s **iTunes** and RealNetworks’ **Rhapsody** as safe bets. The problem, like so much e-commerce, is that music downloads combine high start up costs with low profit margins. Apple makes about 6¢ on each downloaded song, but it can hardly keep up with the demand for iPods that iTunes creates, so they come out way ahead on the deal. Without that edge, Wal-Mart, Dell, Microsoft and other deep-pocket entrants into the field, calculating on a boom as kids switch from illegal to legal downloads, must either accept using downloads as a loss leader or pull out. Which means that one morning you may log on and find your music source is 404 Not Found.

◆ For a couple of years in the mid 70s, I lived in **Kilkenny**, Ireland, a very happy time, in large part because of Tynan’s House Bridge Bar, one of the greatest pubs I’ve ever frequented, and as one time Real Ale columnist for *Time Out*, I’ve set foot in more than my fair share. However, back then there wasn’t anything like the **Carlsberg Rhythm n’ Roots Weekend**, which in its seventh year will feature Terry Allen, Dave Alvin & The Guilty Men, Big Sandy & His Fly-Rite Boys, Hot Club Of Cowtown, Kelly Joe Phelps, Dan Hicks & The Hot Licks, Mark Olson & The Creekdippers with Victoria Williams, Caitlin Cary and much more (I should mention that it’s booked by a FAR DJ, Ms Kirsty Fitzsimons of Radio Anna Livia, Dublin). So, if you’re thinking of a trip to Europe this year, you might want to plan swinging through Ireland, and being in Kilkenny from April 29th to May 3rd. Sink a pint of Smethwick’s for me at Tynan’s for old times sake.

◆ Up to Gruene Hall for the Red Stick Ramblers, KOOP DJ Tom Mahnke was in a rare lather over having stumbled on a CMT show during which, in a staged interview, **Faith Hill** said she had never listened to Janis Joplin’s version of *Piece Of My Heart*, in fact she said she didn’t know Janis Joplin did the song. I remember hearing about this one, and may even have commented on it at the time (that short term memory loss is a bitch), but I sure don’t mind revisiting it. Of course, one’s obvious reaction is that Hill is a bubblehead, an ignoramus and a fucking idiot, but it goes deeper than that. Interviews with stars are always tightly controlled, they even have schools in Nashville to coach the country ones on what to say and what not to say, hell, they even write new lives for them to memorize (my favorite is still a bio composed for The Judds which was almost complete fiction), but for CMT, Hill’s handlers would have been able to write the script and reshoot if necessary. So the question one has to ask is why would they would they let her say such asinine things? The downside is that every Joplin fan in the world, already pissed off by her lame version, will be even more pissed off, and there is no upside.

◆ Much the same can be said of **Garth Brooks** telling *People* that his influences were Loggins & Messina, Croce, Buffett, Jackson Browne and James

Taylor, or **Clint Black**, back when he was a Star, telling *Texas Monthly*, “I don’t feel a real connection to people like Bob Wills. I never really gave those older guys any thought.” Now, you could say that Hill, Brooks and Black deserve to be congratulated on their honesty, and, of course, you and I love these kind of quotes because of what they reveal about artists we already despise, but since when has honesty had anything to do with a star interview? What all three were displaying, in different ways, wasn’t honesty but contempt.

◆ On a happier note, let’s turn to **NotSXS**. You can, if you’re so inclined, learn about the dark side from the SXS website, and even order a \$100 wristband that may—or may not—get you into official showcases. OR you can join the illuminati who have seen the true way to musical enlightenment and never go near the official festival. The March issue, available at the usual sources from March 3rd, will have the annual NotSXS calendar pullout section, but if you’d like to plan ahead, email me (john@3rdcoastmusic.com) and I’ll put you in the advance information email group.

◆ Just to whet your appetites, confirmed acts for **3rd Coast Music Presents** at Threadgill’s World HQ include Chip Taylor & Carrie Rodriguez, Anna Fermin’s Trigger Gospel, Terri Hendrix, James Hand, Halden Wofford & The Hi-Beams, Jo Serrapere & The Willy Dunns, The Bellyachers, Rick Shea & Patty Booker, Stan Martin, Mary Alice Wood, John Lilly and Graham Lindsey. Other hotspots which will be included in both the mag and the emails are Cheapo Discs, Hillbilly Lane (at D&L’s Texas Music Cafe, formerly Under The Sun), Jo’s Coffee House, Texicalli Grille, Twangfest Roadhouse Reunion, Casbeers Spring Music festival in San Antonio, and anybody else who can get their sorry ass organized enough to let me know what’s cooking.

◆ We’ve had a few albums hold the top spot for two consecutive months, but last month, **Rick Shea & Patty Booker’s Our Shangri-LA** set a FAR record by being #1 for three months running. This month, **Deke Dickerson** sets another record, being the first artist to have two albums, **In 3 Dimensions** and **Mr Entertainment**, chart in the same month.

◆ The stars are turning out for a benefit for drummer to the stars **Ernie Durawa**’s longtime companion Ginger on Sunday 29th at the Blanco Ballroom, San Antonio. Augie Meyers, West Side Horns, Joe ‘King’ Carrasco, Louie Ortega, The Blazers, Jazz Vatos, Smith Brothers, Ernie Garibay & Cats Don’t Sleep and many more to be confirmed.

## LOOSE DIAMONDS A DJ’S PRIVATE STASH #2 COW PATTI (JAMIE HOOVER)

A very early subscriber, Jamie Hoover, aka Cow Patti ever since her volunteer days, has sent me three change of address cards over the years. Sidetracked from an intended career in museum work, after creating *Lone Star State Of Mind* on KCSS, Turlock, CA, in 1989, she rose to become the college station’s chief operator and radio educator, then moved to Gallup, NM, to become general manager of KGLP in 1998. In 2001, she was appointed GM of KUGS, Bellingham, WA, on which her show, *Songs Of The Mother Road*., also aired by KSUT, Ignacio, CO, can be heard.

These are the albums Jamie wishes she could magically transform into Must Haves.

**Calvin Russell: Rebel Radio** (Free Fall)

**Wes McGehee: Landing Lights** (Terrapin)

**The Rio Grande Band** (Rounder)

**Jo Miller & Her Burly Roughnecks:**

**Live and Then Some!** (Ranch Hand)

**Katy Moffatt: Cowboy Girl** (Shanchie)

**VA: Songs From Chippy** (Hollywood)

**The Mollys: Hat Trick** (Apolkalips)

**Chris Gaffney: Loser’s Paradise** (Hightone)



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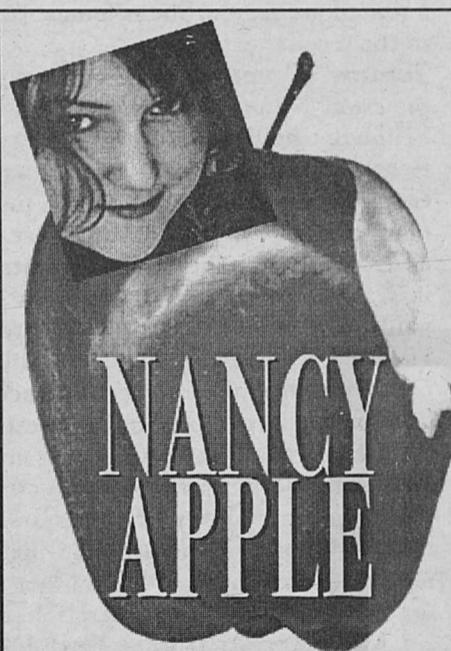
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— Chris Herrington, The Memphis Flyer

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— Chris Davis, The Memphis Flyer

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— Rikk Matheson, Rikkreviews.com

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— Nightflying Magazine, Little Rock, AR

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## STONE UNTURNUED DISSECTING ROLLING STONE'S '500 GREATEST ALBUMS OF ALL TIME'

Like most people from the last few generations, my first exposure to music journalism was reading *Rolling Stone*. The magazine was 'born' one year after I was, and was a constant in my life during my formative years as a music fan. I bought my first copy back when it was still published on stapled newspaper, rather than the slick, glossy pages of the last several years. It would be hard to put into words what an influence it was on me as a young person growing up on album radio. Before the internet, *RS* was the way passionate fans of rock music kept up with their favorite artists and found the newest voices in the genre. I've lost touch with it over the last decade or so for reasons that I will discuss as this essay goes along. The magazine and I parted ways philosophically somewhere after Nirvana, though I'd been losing faith during my days as a college radio DJ during the 80s. The renegade spirit of the publication had slowly given way to a populist agenda, and I no longer could find the things that had made me such a fan in the early days. Selling issues to the masses became the focus at some point.

But a couple of months ago *RS* published a theme issue entitled 'The 500 Greatest Albums of All Time,' and the music snob in me sought out a copy like Oprah on a five pound ham. I wanted to see where it was these days in terms of integrity when reviewing music history. I wanted to know if the Britney Spears and Justin Timberlake covers were simply a method of selling issues, while the man behind the curtain still loved cool records. Joining me in this quest was an old friend who I call in for important musical ponderings. Stephen W Smith is a top live engineer in Nashville, and has twisted a knob or two in local studios as well. Those who find me to be a cynical music fan would cringe at some of Steve's musings. So, we got a bunch of booze, a copy of the issue, and then pulled chairs in my backyard to take this thing to task.

Music fans who didn't see this issue could certainly have predicted a few things without much trouble. All the usual Stone suspects—The Beatles, Springsteen, The Who, The Stones, Bowie, Dylan, Led Zeppelin, Bob Marley, Elton John and Neil Young—had a minimum of five albums on the list. Their presence is certainly hard to argue with, and one supposes that the *RS* critics were especially intent on getting this portion of the list correct. But consider that these 10 artists account for 74 of the listed albums, roughly 15% of the total. Do these icons deserve that big a piece of the 500 Greatest Albums of All Time? Well, the very nature of such a list is completely subjective.

But perhaps the biggest reason to discuss whether these artists are overrepresented would be that there are a great many deserving records that don't come from musical icons. Sometimes classics are simply less obvious. However, *RS* listed a great many records that simply had no business being tabbed in the first place. Before we bump the tenth Beatles or the ninth Stones record on the list, let's make sure the true refuse is gone.

For starters, it turns my stomach that Eminem has three albums among the supposed 500 best of all time. I refuse to think of him as anything more than Vanilla Ice with berserk hatred issues and a better publicist. Moby made the list, which is simply a sign that we don't

## CHARLES EARLE'S B-Sides

want to hurt the feelings of nerds. No Doubt is entertaining, but do they deserve two spots? Coldplay, and their one album on the list, belongs here about as much as John Tesh. If Notorious B.I.G.'s fat ass wasn't dead, would he have two albums on the list? Who did Jay-Z blow to get two albums on here? The Cure...two fucking Cure albums is an insult to non-suicidal people. And if you can't get enough of The Cure, then enjoy four insanely depressing albums by The Smiths. Plus, The Jesus & Mary Chain is on here to make you want to slit your wrists, as well. The White Stripes may be the most overrated musical act since The Velvet Underground (with four albums on the list), and that is saying more than can be possibly imagined. Who the fuck is Massive Attack, and what the hell are they doing on here? Ahem...I digress...

But I hope you get my point. It's obvious to me that a new breed of critics at Stone feels the need to establish 'their' music... recent music... as being part of the list of classics. However, I feel that this rush to deem horseshit like Eminem as 'classic' has shown a major flaw in the critical process. To prove my point, I offer up the album **Shoot Out The Lights** by Richard & Linda Thompson. This brilliant recording was listed as the 9th best record in 1987 when *RS* listed the 100 Best Albums of the magazine's first 20 years (they love to make lists). However, the 500 Greatest in the latter part of 2003 had this epic clocking in at #333. Did hundreds of albums come out in the last 17 years that made it less relevant? Of course not. What happened is that a bunch of 'critics' with no sense of musical history got jobs at Rolling Stone in the last 17 years and disregarded a brilliant album.

This brings us to the point in the column where we get to correct Rolling Stone in the major mistakes that they made while assembling their list. Sins of omission, if you will. The following are thoughts on artists who were genuinely robbed by being left off the list. Yes, as I said before, the list is subjective. But these artists that will soon be mentioned have made relevant, passionate records that we believe were sadly left off of the final list of "all time" records.

**XTC** How these guys were left off is a bewildering thing to us. It isn't a question of which record, but how many. English Settlement, Skylarking, Oranges and Lemons, Nonesuch and Apple Venus I and II could all have been on this list.

**Little Feat** How could the best southern boogie band of all time be left off this list? Dixie Chicken and Feats Don't Fail Me Now are obvious, and Waiting For Columbus is one of the best live albums ever recorded.

**Nick Lowe** It's beyond us how one of the great pop artists of all time was excluded, both as a solo artist and for his brilliant work in Rockpile.

**Patty Griffin** One supposes that she wouldn't sell many issues for Rolling Stone, but **Flaming Red** is an album that belongs in the all time top 20. Patty is nothing but brilliant.

**Jason & The Scorchers** *RS* wet their collective pants over these guys in the 80s, and their absence from the list brings into focus the lack of regional classics and lesser known but highly influential records.

**Dwight Yoakam** Guitars, Cadillacs could have been an enormous country hit in 1955, 1985 or 2005. And he has other albums that are almost as deserving. How could he possibly be absent here? He is timeless.

**Emmylou Harris** We don't even know what to say about her being left off the list, as she has had so many unbelievably important albums. Take your pick...her early country classics or the alternative departure of **Wrecking Ball**.

**Nitty Gritty Dirt Band**: Do we even have to explain what a crime it is that **Will The Circle Be Unbroken** was left off the list? It virtually created much of the

modern alt.country sound.

**Shawn Colvin** This may seem like a stretch to some, but **Steady On** is much more influential—and wonderful—than most folks realize.

**Eddie Cochran, Dick Dale, The Ventures, Duane Eddy, Link Wray** We can discuss the thought of certain musical crimes due to the absence of an artist from this list. But the fact that not a one of these artists was included shows that *RS* has truly lost touch. The styles of guitar playing and the ballsy attitudes represented here constitute a great period in rock history.

**Squeeze** Call us crazy, but this English band made some brilliant pop records. Who can't sing along with their best known songs? They were the Brit extension of what Buddy Holly started in America decades before. At their best, they were the true kings of pop.

**The Faces** Without them, there would have been no Georgia Satellites (also deserving), nor would there have been a Black Crowes. This was the beginning of the English take on American roots rock, with a lot of ego and style.

**Joe Walsh** Plenty of folks would write him off due to populist work with The Eagles, but he was a fine player and songwriter who was a radio hero in the 70s. His James Gang work was not appreciated nearly enough for its innovation. His early solo work showed his strength as a rock anthem writer.

**Aimee Mann** Say what you will about the former Til' Tuesday singer, but her solo records have provided some of the most interesting and timeless moments in the recent history of female music. There is nothing trendy or "of the day". There is just a great collection of insightful songs every couple of years. We need more of her brilliant lyrics.

**Rickie Lee Jones**: How could she possibly be left off? Her first album and Flying Cowboys belong on here to a ridiculous degree. She is female jazz vocals at its best in the recent years.

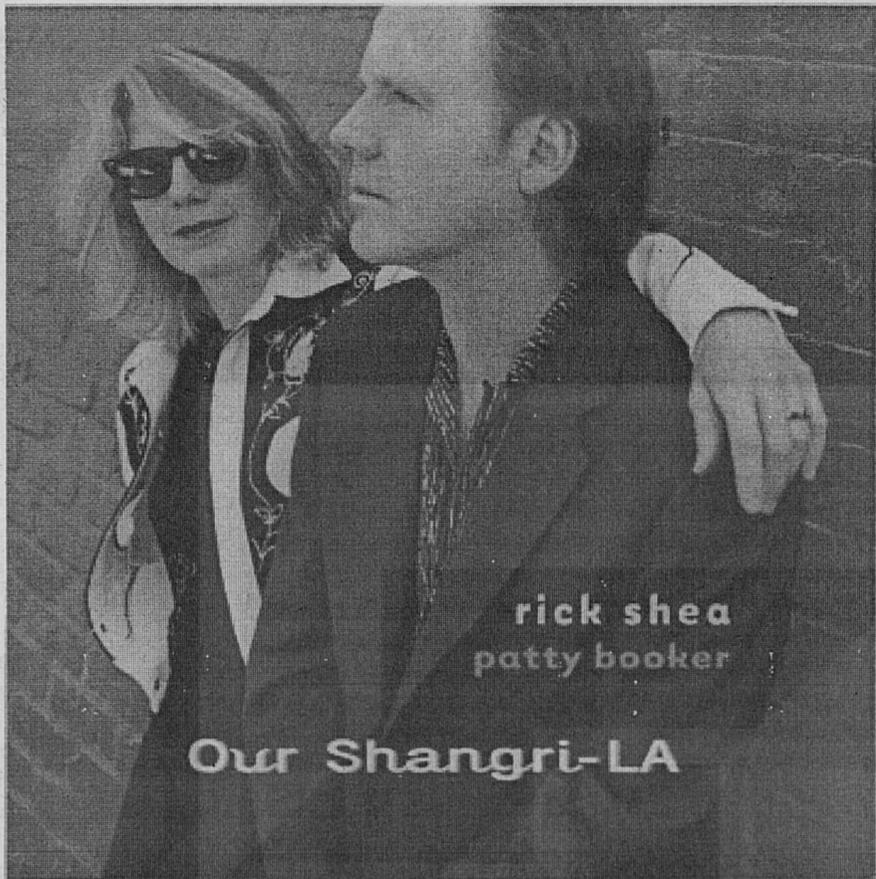
**Tammy Wynette** There is no explanation for this omission. None at all. They had Cash and Loretta and Willie on the list. Was that simply an obligatory nod to country music? Tammy simply had to be on there.

**George Jones** Are you kidding me? This guy didn't make the list? We would offer that *He Stopped Loving Her Today* may be the greatest country song ever. Folks in Nashville who truly know their stuff consider his voice to be one of the best ever in real country music. His life has been a drama of the things that make up country songs, and his performances of those songs have been all the more vital as a result.

Okay, so I think I am making my point that there were some serious errors in the creation of this list. But there are plenty of other artists that at least deserved some consideration. I will now resort to what *RS* apparently loves...a list...to get the rest of those deserving artist into consideration. Here we go...

**More Artists Whose Best Albums Deserved Consideration for the 500 Greatest** Bruce Cockburn, The Connells, Joan Osborne, Keith Jarrett, Maria McKee/Lone Justice, Robin Trower, Jeff Beck, Marshall Crenshaw, Joan Armatrading, Poco, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Robbie Robertson (solo), Pat Metheny, Humble Pie, Blind Faith, King Crimson, Marty Robbins, Mahavishnu Orchestra, Roseanne Cash, Concrete Blonde, Paul Westerberg (solo...without Replacements), The Rainmakers, John Hiatt, Jane Siberry, The Smithereens, Nanci Griffith, The Mavericks, Wilco, Spirit

So that's how it goes as we give *RS* a very close review of the 500 best records. I'll say again that it's a subjective list, but I'll also say that critics with an agenda have caused some great records to be left off the list.



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## ON THE COVER OF . . .

So, I was vaguely straightening out the office the other day and I came across a little stack of mags, the January issue of **3CM**, the January/February issues of *No Depression* and *Country Standard Time*, and the Winter '03-'04 issue of *Blue Suede News*, and I was struck by how their covers reflected very different philosophies and approaches.

*No Depression* went with abstract artwork, a pair of red sunglasses on a black background, for their T-Bone Burnett feature, tying in with their hook, 'The Invisible Man' who shuns the limelight. The tie-in, of course, was the recent release of the deadly boring **Cold Mountain** soundtrack, which Burnett produced. What this choice illustrates is that *ND* has a very narrow pool of 'personages' from which to draw. When you're trying to flog a \$4.95 mag from newstands, you have to lead with a name that people will recognize and, with any luck, want to read about, and there's a finite number of such names in the Alt.Country (Whatever That Is) world. Which means that in any given two months, *ND* has to pray that one of them will put out an album so they can have a conventional cover.

*Blue Suede News* had Johnny Cash on the cover of its first quarterly issue following his death, pretty much a no-brainer as that was a major event for 'The House Organ of the Church of Rock 'N' Roll,' though I was rather surprised that they went with an American rather than Sun Records era picture. However, it's atypical, the three previous issues, with Wanda Jackson, Nick Curran and Deke Dickerson, show far more daring than *ND* for a \$5 newstand mag.

*Country Standard Time's* current issue is by way of being a classic example of its schizoid mode. The cover picture is of Brooks & Dunn, which you may or may not consider an improvement on the previous issue's Toby Keith, but there are also teasers for a Flatlanders review and an interview with Anna Fermin. While I wouldn't go as far as saying that mainstream country fans *can't* read, the demise of numerous fan-oriented magazines has told the publishing world very clearly that they *don't* read. On the other hand, people who are interested in The Flatlanders or Fermin aren't going to snap up a magazine with Brooks & Dunn or (even with tongs) Toby Keith on the cover. In other words, a lose-lose situation.

**3rd Coast Music's** two covers (throwing in this issue to bring me into line with the others' time frames) are a tad contradictory. Featuring a band that was unknown outside Chicago and quit 15 years ago is pretty much par for the course, but Cindy Walker is a living legend. She got it because a) she is Cindy Walker, and b) I wanted to help Texas Folklife Resources plug their tribute, secure, however, in the knowledge that even if the *Austin American-Statesman* and/or the *Austin Chronicle* go with the same story, I'd have a three week lead on them.

The primary function of magazine covers, particularly for newstands, is to attract casual readers on top of the core loyalists, and by this measure it has to be said that *No Depression* is the most professional of this bunch, and **3CM** the least. As long as I can get a halfway decent visual, I put whatever interests me most on the cover and just hope y'all will read on even if the lead name means nothing to you. *Blue Suede News* falls somewhere between (or maybe Curran is much more famous than I think). *Country Standard Time* is, like **3CM**, a freebie, and I can only imagine they think that will make a difference to a commercially failed business model. **JC**

## CINDY WALKER

One day in 1940, a 22-year old aspiring songwriter was cruising through LA with her parents when she made them stop the car outside the Crosby Building, marched in, talked her way into Larry Crosby's office and pitched him one of her songs. In 1941, his brother Bing scored a minor pop hit (#23) with *Lone Star Trail*, and the young Texan was on her way to becoming a songwriting legend.

How this happened we'll never know. Was the receptionist new and not tough enough to turn away a walk-in? Was it a slow day at the office? Did Larry fancy her (as he well might)? The trouble with the Cindy Walker story is that even in 1940 it would have been an eyebrow raiser, 64 years later, it's plain and simple a fairy tale. Nonetheless, it's part of the fabric of the 'dreams come true' mystique that sustains hordes of songwriters, none of whom will ever come close to getting this kind of a career break. Is another Cindy Walker being turned away from a Music Row office, her demos tossed in the 'we do not accept unsolicited material' bin, even as we speak? Possibly, but then again not all that likely because even among songwriters, Cindy Walker is a true phenomenon.

Born in Mart, TX, on July 20th, 1918, Walker started out singing and dancing when she was seven in the Toy Land Review, and was writing songs at 16, encouraged by her pianist mother, Oree, who accompanied her daughter at that fateful meeting with Larry Crosby, which also resulted in a Decca recording contract for Walker herself. Though she was the first country music video star, making a Soundie of Bonnie Blue Eyes' *Seven Beers With The Wrong Man* (she also appeared in a couple of Gene Autry Westerns), had a 1944 Top 10 hit with *When My Blue Eyes Turn To Gold Again*, which, incidentally, wasn't written by her, the Walker in the credits being Wiley Walker, and cut singles of originals like *Why I Don't Trust The Men* and *Don't Talk To Me About Men*, Walker's recording career is little more than a footnote to her songwriting. In fact, she abandoned it in 1954 when her Decca contract expired and moved back to Mart (west of Waco), though she did put out an LP *On Monument*, **Words And Music**, in 1964 (reissued on CD in 1997 by Sony and still available).

Glamorous as the life of a singer-songwriter may be, that of a working songwriter, particularly one who shuns attention, is somewhat less so. Walker spent the 50s and 60s racking up hit songs for other people and industry honors, including, in 1970, being the first woman inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame, but kept her life strictly private. So any story about her is, perforce, about the songs rather than the writer.

Hard to know where to start with the songs, of which 461 are registered with BMI, though many appear never to have been recorded by anyone, despite Walker's reputation. One noticeable thing about her credits is the amount of repeat business, with Bob Wills, who recorded 50 of her songs, notably *Bubbles In My Beer*, *Cherokee Maiden*, *Dusty Skies*, *Hubbin' It*, *New Texas Playboy Rag* and *You're from Texas*, as her best customer. Other artists who came back to the well were Eddy Arnold, George Morgan, Jim Reeves, Ernest Tubb, Gene Autry, The Sons Of The Pioneers, Jerry Wallace, Billy Walker, Faron Young, Hank Snow, Johnny Bond, Roy Orbison (including *Dream Baby*) and Al Dexter, but they're simply the most prominent on a list that also includes Nat King Cole, Spike Jones, Ray Price, Sonny James, Webb Pierce, Frankie Miller, Stonewall Jackson, Elton Britt, George Jones, Johnny Bush, Jack Greene and many, many more.

The high point in Walker's career is easy to identify, a standard cut by myriad country singers but familiar to pop, jazz, blues, soul and MOR audiences which would never voluntarily listen to country music—*You Don't Know Me*. Originally recorded by her cowriter Eddy Arnold, it's been covered by Elvis Presley, Ray Charles, Jackie Wilson, BB King, Ruth Brown, Van Morrison, Rick Nelson, Michael Bolton, Carmen McRae, Patti Page, Vic Damone, Nancy Wilson, Henry Mancini, Eydie Gorme, Lenny Welch, Les McCann, Don McLean, Bette Midler, Boots Randolph, Jennifer Warnes and a legion of other non-country singers. Of the versions I've heard, admittedly a small fraction of the total, my personal favorite is the late Eva Cassidy's.

On Sunday, February 22nd, Texas Folklife Resources will present '**This Is It; The Ultimate Cindy Walker Tribute**' (the title, by the way, taken from that of a Walker song recorded by Jim Reeves), at the Paramount Theatre, Austin, and it's hard to think of anyone more deserving, other than her contemporary, Lydia Mendoza. The tribute will feature Walker's songs performed by Ray Benson, Don Edwards, Johnny Gimble, Cornell Hurd (who'll do *You're From Texas*, *Going Away Party* and *I Always Went Through*), Rich & Valerie O'Brien and Leon Rausch, with special guests to be announced, backed by a house band consisting of Earl Poole Ball, Redd Volkaert, Cindy Cashdollar, Lisa Pankratz and Sarah Brown. Casey Monahan, Director of the Texas Music Office, will give a curtain talk before the show.

To be honest, this lineup is a bit puzzling. I'd expect to see, if not Ray Price or Johnny Bush, at least people like Tony Villanueva, who has actually recorded a Walker song, *I Go Anywhere*, Marti Brom, Justin Treviño, Chris Wall, Dale Watson, Susanna Van Tassel, Rod Moag, Howard Kalish and Bobby Flores. All of them would jump at the chance to honor Cindy Walker if anybody asked them. Still, Miss Walker will herself be present and that in itself makes the event special. **JC**

# TERRY ALLEN : JUAREZ

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### INTRODUCTION

1. The Juarez Device (aka "Texican Badman")
2. Dialogue: The Characters/A Simple Story

### THE CALIFORNIA SERIES

3. Cortez Sail
4. Border Palace
5. Dogwood
6. Writing On The Rocks Across the U.S.A.
7. The Radio...And Real Life

### THE CORTEZ SECTION

8. There Outta Be A Law Against Sunny Southern California
9. What Of Alicia
10. Honeymoon in Cortez
11. Four Corners

### THE JUAREZ SECTION

12. Dialogue: The Run South
13. Jabo/Street Walkin' Woman
14. Cantina Carlotta
15. La Desperdida (The Parting)

### EPILOGUE 2003

16. El Camino Instrumental
17. El Camino

