

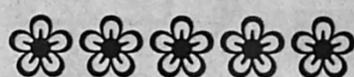
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RAMBLIN' JACK ELLIOTT

#94/183 NOVEMBER 2004



REVIEWS



(or not)

ROY ACUFF

CHET ATKINS

LAUREN DILLON

NANCY K DILLON

TIM GRIMM

MERLE HAGGARD

Hard-Headed Woman;

A Celebration Of

Wanda Jackson

TRACI LAMAR

WILLIE NELSON

DAVD RODRIGUEZ

DAVID & CARRIE RODRIGUEZ

CHIP TAYLOR

& CARRIE RODRIGUEZ

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3 Tim Grimm: Names (Wind River) *BL/*FM/*JW/*TT
4 Buddy Miller: Universal United House Of Prayer (New West)
*AN/*DY/*GM/*KR
5 Steve Earle: The Revolution Starts Now (Artemis) *N&T/*SC/*WR
6 Chris Stuart & Backcountry: Mojave River (Backcountry) *JCS/*RE
7 Rod Picott: Girl From Arkansas (Welding Rod) *JB/*MF/*MP
8 Th' Legendary Shack Shakers: Believe (Yep Roc) *DV/*RMS/*XR
9 Tony Joe White: The Heroines (Sanctuary) *MA/*R78
10 Cowboy Jack Clement: Guess Things Happen That Way (Dualtone) *RJ
11 Ray Lamontagne: Trouble (RCA/Stone Dwarf) *JR/*KM/*SB
12= CC Adcock: Lafayette Marquis (Yep Roc) *JF/*JZ/*TJ
Hopped Up!: Get Gone (Rhythm Bomb) *BR/*RM
13 Amber Digby: Music From The Honky Tonks (self) *FS/*JC/*PP
14 Terri Hendrix: The Art Of Removing Wallpaper (Wilory) *DB
15 Kasey Chambers: Wayward Angel (EMI) *RR
16 The Gourds: Blood of the Ram (Eleven Thirty) *OS/*RC
17= Neko Case: The Tigers Have Spoken (Anti) *TH
Robyn Hitchcock: Spooked (Yep Roc) *MDT
18 Tom Waits: Real Gone (Anti) *SG
19= The Sadies: Favourite Colors (Yep Roc)
VA: Hard-Headed Woman; A Celebration Of Wanda Jackson (Bloodshot)
*BP/*MT
20= Chuck Prophet: Age Of Miracles (New West) *MO
Slim Cessna's Auto Club: Bloody Tenant Truth Peace (Alternative Tentacles)
*JE/*UC
21 Ramblin' Jack Elliott: The Lost Topic Tapes: Cows Harbor 1957 (Hightone)
*SMJ/*WR
22 The Hoyle Brothers: Back To The Door (Loose Booty)
23 John Fogerty: Deja Vu All Over Again (Geffen) *NA
24 VA: Unbroken Circle: The Musical Heritage Of The Carter Family
(Dualtone)
25= Beausoleil: Gitane Cajun (Vanguard) *AR
Flogging Molly: Within A Mile Of Home (Sideonedummy) *DN
Magnolia Sisters: Apres Faire Le Boogie Woogie (Rounder) *JP
Split Lip Rayfield: Should Have Seen It Coming (Bloodshot) *TM
VA: Beautiful Dreamer; The Songs of Stephen Foster
(American Roots Publishing) *LG
VA: Touch My Heart; Tribute To Johnny Paycheck (Sugar Hill)
John Vandiver: I Found A Dream (Jelly Roll) *JA
Jason Wilber: King For A Day (WilberTone) *LJ
26= Drive-By Truckers: Dirty South (New West)
Mark Jungers: One For The Crow (American Rural) *MM
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Dave Alvin: Ashgrove (Yep Roc) *GC
Nels Andrews: Sunday Shoes (Little Kiss) *ND
Grég Brown: In The Hills Of California (Red House) *R&H
Jesse Dayton: Country Soul Brother (Stag) *TO
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Nathan: Jimson Weed (Nettwerk) *KC
Nora O'Connor: 'Til The Dawn (Bloodshot) *DF
27= Junior Brown: Down Home Chrome (Telarc) *KD
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Dan Treanor & Frankie Lee: African Wind (Northern Blues) *DT
Bobby Flores: Festival Favorites (Yellow Rose)
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Tim Hus: Alberta Crude (Saved By Radio) *BS
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Traci Lamar: Apasionada (Akashic) *GS
Jim Lauderdale: Headed for the Hills (Dualtone) *CS
Bill Mallonee: Dear Life (Fundamental) *BK
Raul Malo, Pat Flynn, Rob Ickes, Dave Pomeroy:
The Nashville Acoustic Sessions (CMR) *SN
Mark McKay: Shimmer (Toadfish Collective) *BB
Liz Meyer: The Storm (Strictly Country) *EB
Munly & The Lee Lewis Harlots (Alternative Tentacles) *KG
Mike Plume: Rock & Roll Recordings Volume 1 (Clann) *SR
Polecat Creek: Leaving Eden (Yodel-Ay-Hee) *AA
Suzy & Maggie Roche: Why The Long Face (Red House) *MR
David Rodriguez: The Lonesome Drover (Wintermoon) *MB
Randy Rogers: Roller Coaster (Smith Entertainment) *JS
Dexter Romweber: Blues That Defy My Soul (Yep Roc) *QB
Jerry Sartain: Sing Me Back Home (CSP) *JT
The Skeeters: Easy For The Takin' (Freebound) *DS
Sally Timms: In The World Of Him (Touch & Go) *TW
VA: I Am a Cold Rock. I Am Dull Grass;
A Tribute To The Music Of Will Oldham (Tract) *SF
VA: Vote In November; Election 2004 Anti-Theft Device (Waterbug) *DJ
Betsy Dawn Williams: Rocket Girl (El Toro) *RS

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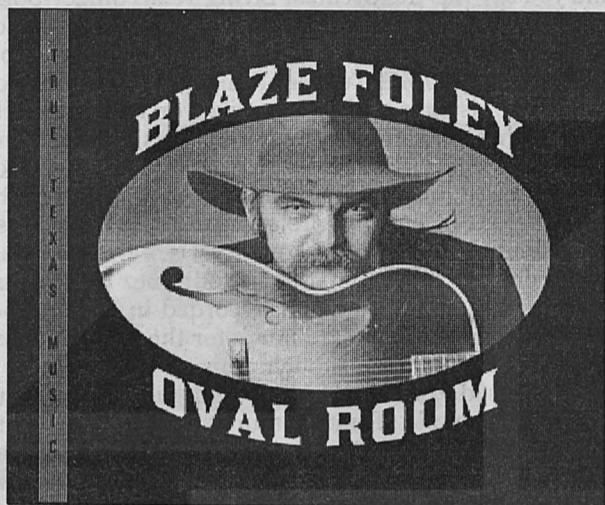
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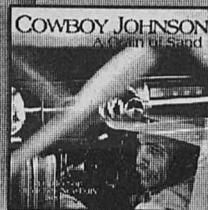


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VA • HARD-HEADED WOMAN A CELEBRATION OF WANDA JACKSON

(Bloodshot ****.5)

Pretty much every tribute album invites second-guessing, why this song and not that one, why this contributor and not another? However, even accepting that *I Gotta Know*, *Mean Mean Man*, *I Wanna Waltz* and, rather oddly, *Hard-Headed Woman* didn't make the cut, there's one omission here so inexplicable that it has to be aired—Martí Brom. She and Jackson have done many shows together, Jackson has raved about her in interviews, and, without wanting to get ugly, there are people on this album, Trailer Bride (a truly hideous *Fujiyama Mama*), Kim Lenz (*Cool Love*), Sheri Hurst with Bottle Rockets (*Let's Stop Kicking Our Hearts Around*), The Ranch Girls (*If You Don't Somebody Else Will*) and Gina Lee (*Why I'm Walking*), who are not and never will be in Brom's class. However, The Cornell Hurd Band, with whom she often performs, were invited (*This Gun Don't Care Who It Shoots*)—which could raise another issue, the Sausage Factor, Asylum Street Spankers (*Funnel Of Love*, sung by Wammo), Robbie Fulks (*Tears At The Grand Ol' Opry*), Wayne Hancock (*Let's Have A Party*) and Jesse Dayton (*Both Sides Of The Line*)—so it's hard to see how producers Rob Miller and Holly George-Warren could possibly justify Brom's exclusion from an album that has several duds among the 21 tracks, especially towards the end. Openers Carolyn Mark (*Hot Dog! That Made Him Mad*) and Nora O'Connor (*Sticks And Stones*) are handicapped by inept musicians, Anna Fermin (*Box It Came In*), though not in top form, Kelly Hogan (*Right Or Wrong*) and Neko Case (*Brown Eyed Handsome Man*) deliver the three in a row standouts, with Jesse Sykes (*Weary Blues From Waiting*), Rosie Flores (*In The Middle Of A Heartache*), Candye Kane (*Rock Your Baby*), Jane Baxter-Miller (*One Day At A Time*), Kristi Rose (*This Should Go On Forever*) and Laura Cantrell (*Wasted*) variously a step or three behind them. So far, no compilation has successfully encapsulated all the aspects of Wanda Jackson's career in one CD (Capitol's **Vintage Collection** came closest), indeed Ace's **Queen Of Rockabilly** took 30 tracks just to nail down one, so Miller and George-Warren were attempting the difficult, if not impossible. Still, shooting themselves in the foot, even once, didn't help. **JC**

NANCY K DILLON • JUST LET ME DREAM

(Rose Rock ****)

For all she's spent the last 20 odd years in Seattle, making a name for herself singing folk, country, R&B, jazz and Western Swing, Nancy K's still the girl who grew up in Oklahoma City, six blocks from Route 66, and her album, which she describes very neatly as 'twang-folk,' has plenty of windswept Southwest in it. Specific references are to Oklahoma (*Crossing 66*), Texas (*Nothing In Texas*, with her band, The Nancy Boys) and New Mexico (*The Ballad Of Mabel Dodge*), but hints of honky tonk, Tex-Mex and cowboy music, intertwined with bluegrass, country, gospel and traditional folk, make this a true Americana album that could easily have come out of Austin. With the smooth, relaxed warmth of Nancy's vocals, stellar backing and production and twelve strong originals (plus a cover of Jimmy LaFave's *Give Your Sweet Love To Me*), of which the highlights are *Almost To Idaho* and *Play 1-4 Susie*, well, what's not to like? **JC**

LAUREN DILLON • THE COST OF LIVING

(Sugarshack ****.5)

Even though she might ought not to have produced herself, or used beta-blockers to take the edge off studio stress, and definitely should have sent Joe Forlini home and focussed attention on her own acoustic guitar playing, showcased only on the standout *Rib From Your Side*, Dillon's debut still pays off. When she hits her stride, she's a low key blues with a dab of country chanteuse, relying on nuance and styling rather than balls out belting, but she gets off to a rocky start, a Lou Ann/Malford style duet with Mike Cross and the too tightly wrapped title track, starts picks up steam with *Them Old Blues* then settles into a slow boil with *Whirlwind*. Her twelve originals have real strength apart *Home Away From Home*. A transplant from West Virginia, via Nashville, I guess she hasn't learned that songs about Austin rarely work. **JC**

TRACI LAMAR • APASIONADA

(Akashic ****)

Now all three Texana Dames have an album of their own, but, to be honest, this is not one I would have anticipated. Lamar is a gifted instrumentalist and I expected something comparable to Chavela or Eva Ybarra rather than Chelo Silva. Only picking up her accordion once, for Güicho Cisneros y Sus Dandys' *Negrura*, Lamar offers romantic boleros, canciones and jazz standards, and apart from Johnny Mercer's *Midnight Sun*, Ray Evans' *Never Let Me Go*, and possibly an Antonio Carlos Jobim medley (*Corcovado/Meditacao*), the Spanish and Latin American material is unlikely to be familiar to anyone who isn't a serious Latin fan. Produced by trombonist Freddie Mendoza, he and fellow Jazz Vatos Russ Scanlon guitar, Ernie Durawa drums and Terry Bowness piano, with strings by Tosca, Evan Arredondo bass, Joey Colarusso saxes and clarinets and Tony Campise saxes and flute, Lamar's mother, Charlene Hancock, singing backup, her sister, Conni Hancock, playing steel guitar and Dames saxman Tomas Ramirez on one track, Dames guitarist John Reed on another, provide a sumptuous backdrop for Lamar's torrid and sensuous vocals. A far cry from those old Supernatural Family Band LPs Lamar played on as a child, but with the Hancocks it's always safe to expect the unexpected. **JC**

DAVID RODRIGUEZ

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ANGEL OF THE MORNING

(Wintermoon ****.5/Wintermoon *****/Trainwreck *****)

Who would you say was the Greatest Living Texas Singer-Songwriter? I'm sure we could go round and round on that one, but my candidate rather took himself out of contention some eight years ago by moving to Holland. To me, David Rodriguez is the JMW Turner of singer-songwriters, no matter how often you hear one of his songs, it's always like you're experiencing it for the first time, which is what puts him in the same class as Townes Van Zandt. Still, I have to admit that his self-imposed exile probably makes him a fading memory even among Texas singer-songwriter aficionados. It has, after all, been 12 years since Dejadisc, long out of business, released **The True Cross**, one of the Essential Texas Albums, and his subsequent CDs were on Swiss and Dutch labels. Still, if you do remember him, this is Rodriguez Redux, just as good as ever with ten songs and an instrumental recorded in Holland between 1997 and 2003. I have to admit I don't care much for the atypical folkly title track, but otherwise he sure hasn't lost his touch.

◆ After Brambus released **Freidens Angel**, Rodriguez and his daughter Carrie, who played violin on a couple of tracks, toured Switzerland where a show, at Drei Könige, Chur, was recorded. Carrie was a bit alarmed when she first heard about this CD, but if few musicians would care to be reminded of how they sounded when they were 16, she was already pretty wonderful, and anyway, she's fairly far back in the mix. There are two good reasons for trying to get a copy of this numbered, limited edition, one that it's a very rare and highly collectible piece of Carriana, the other that it's another great, if, with only seven songs and couple of intros, rather short, David Rodriguez album.

◆ Chip & Carrie's duet of Taylor's perennial hit (a nice little earner, as we Brits would say) *Angel Of The Morning*, which charted in 1968 (Merrilee Rush [US], PP Arnold [UK]), 1970 (Connie Eaton), 1977 (Melba Montgomery), 1981 (Juice Newton) and 2001 (Shaggy)—I always liked Skeeter Davis' version, but I've never heard Evie Sands' which is supposed to be the best—has long been a crowd favorite. With their next full-length album due in the spring, *this is* technically a single, and only for the fans, at any rate six live versions of songs from their twoprevious albums are billed as bonus tracks, it isn't being promoted to the media or radio and doesn't seem to be in record stores. *Angel* features Lloyd Maines on steel guitar, *Laredo*, *Let's Leave This Town* and *Do Your Part*, recorded at Club Blå, Oslo, has Swedish musicians Jonas Goransson guitar and Petter Ericsson bass, *Don't Speak In English*, *We Come Up Shining* and *I Wasn't Born In Tennessee* feature the home team, John Platania guitar and Kevin Smith bass. If you've seen Chip & Carrie live, you'll know what to expect, if you haven't, well, that's your problem. **JC**

TIM GRIMM • NAMES

JASON WILBER • KING FOR A DAY

(Wind River *****/Wilbertone ****.5)

Kicking back after **Coyote's Dream** (reviewed #76/165), which entered the FAR chart at #1 in April 2003, Grimm, Chicago musician turned Hollywood actor turned Indiana hay farmer, presents a thematic collection of covers, all songs with, as per the album title, a name in their titles. On the face of it, the 12 tracks, Robert Earl Keen's *Mariano*, Mickey Newbury's *San Francisco Mabel Joy*, John Mellencamp's *Jackie Brown*, Woody Guthrie's *Pretty Boy Floyd*, Gillian Welch's *Annabelle*, John Prine's *Sam Stone*, AP Carter's *Lula Walls*, Bruce Springsteen's *Johnny 99*, Tom Waits & Kathleen Brennan's *Georgia Lee*, Billy Edd Wheeler's *Reverend Mr Black* and the traditional *Barbara Allen* and *Lady Maisry*, seem like an odd assortment. However, Grimm's special talent is that he can mold this disparate material, turning it into Americana without contorting it, not just blurring but erasing any distinctions between Child ballads, rock & roll, folk and country. And he makes it sound easy, which it definitely isn't or more people could do it. Recorded outside Bloomington, the album's musicians "all live within an hour of each other and the studio," including Jason Wilber (guitars, mandolin, banjitar, Irish bazooki) and Carrie Newcomer (vocals and dulcimer).

◆ Newcomer was one of the first to hire Wilber as a sideman, he's since played for Todd Snider, Greg Trooper, Iris DeMent and John Prine, while putting out a couple of well-received though poorly promoted albums. Striking out on his own, he's also kept it local, in fact sharing a bassplayer with Grimm, and one of his six originals, *Talk About 69*, is about a hot Hoosier button (a proposed \$1.8 billion freeway carving up rural Indiana). With idiosyncratic covers of Otis Blackwell's *Don't Be Cruel*, Gary Nicholson's *Pay Bo Diddley*, Roly Salley's *Killing The Blues* and Prine's *Sabu Visits The Twin Cities Alone*, Wilber's uncluttered, even minimalist, style highlights his distinctive vocals and lyrics, while a live take of the title track, cut at a Bloomington club, showcases him as an entertainer. John Prine says, "If you haven't already listened to this recording, I suggest you do so immediately." **JC**

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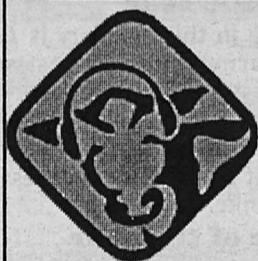
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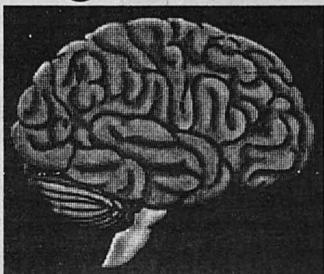


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AND THE WINNERS ARE... ANNUAL CMA AWARDS PREDICTIONS

As I sit down to write this column, 24 hours remain until Election Day here in America. Because you are reading this in the weeks that follow, you have the advantage of knowing how things turn out, but I am a day away from knowing the outcome. I have my fingers crossed and I am planning on buying rabbit's feet, four leaf clovers and every other proverbial good luck charm I can find in hopes that winds of change will be blowing. But as I said, you already know who won. Or maybe there has been a recount and you don't yet have a clue.

Sitting here pondering the election and its outcome, I find myself wishing that the campaigning/voting for the annual CMA Awards, airing on CBS November 9 at 7pm Central, could be more like our presidential elections. I may have had my fill of mud-slinging from politicians, but how fun would it be if it were taking place between country singers? Imagine Reba getting slammed by Terri Clark in a campaign ad that alleges Ms McEntire has abandoned Nashville for bad sitcoms and Broadway shows? And you can certainly picture Toby Keith doing an ad that says voting for Aussie transplant Keith Urban for Male Vocalist of the Year is un-American. Or how about some push-polling? I imagine the phone calls going something like this... "As a registered voter in the Country Music Association, would you be less likely to vote for Kenny Chesney for Entertainer of the Year if you were made aware that he had corn-holed a veal calf during his last tour?"

But while such political shenanigans would be great fun for writers who cover Nashville, I don't think anybody really cares enough about who wins on CMA night to bust out the Carl Rove tactics. We did have the vote-bartering that used to go on between the labels, but the CMA has been using computers to sniff out that kind of cheating for a handful of years now. So, there won't be any recounts and all of the winners will go home happy.

However, one big story in relation to the CMA Awards that popped up in the last month has plenty of people in Nashville unhappy. It was announced earlier this fall that the 2005 CMA Awards telecast is set to take place in New York at Madison Square Garden. After 38 years as exclusive host, Nashville is being snubbed in favor of the Big Apple next year. CMA Executive Director Ed Benson made the announcement and has been working overtime to put a positive spin on this change of venue. He has stated that the move will provide a major boost in exposure for "country music's biggest night", and that the advertisers and media outlets that have ignored country music in the past will now sit up and take notice.

Is Benson correct in his assumptions? Only time will tell, but I have a feeling that moving the show will generate a fair amount of talk in Gotham for a short while, and then the people there will go back to completely ignoring Nashville's version of country music. Why do I say this? Well, if you consider the fact that New York is the largest media market in America and it doesn't have one single country music radio station, then you can kind of get a feel for where cowboy hats register with those folks. Benson has stated that he thinks moving the awards to New York for a year will be a stepping stone to getting country music on the radio in New York, but I have my doubts. Whatever the result, the show will return to Nashville in 2006.

CHARLES EARLE'S B-Sides

But enough about future shows. We have the 2004 version of the CMA Awards coming up on us quickly, and it's time for my annual predictions. I picked seven of the twelve winners last year; a winning record, but hardly a set of numbers with which you would want to launch a gambling career. The outcomes have become harder to predict lately, and this year is no exception. But like sugary barbecue sauces and sex with your cousins, my picks are a, uhm, southern tradition. And traditions must be continued. So here we go...

Entertainer of the Year

Meet the new bosses...same as the old bosses. All five nominees from last year's show return again this year. The traditional thinking on this category is that it goes to the act that generated the most national exposure in the past year. That is why Garth Brooks won the award during so many years when Vince Gill was winning for Male Vocalist. Garth was all over the national media and Vince was by far the better singer. But that logic doesn't explain last year when Toby Keith and **Kenny Chesney** were coming off huge years, but ultimately lost to Alan Jackson. Those three will once again compete with Brooks & Dunn and Tim McGraw. Jackson, McGraw and Brooks & Dunn have all previously won this award. I think that leaves it a toss up between Chesney and Keith this year. I'm going to guess that Chesney takes home the trophy. Nashville still has a few issues with the outspoken Keith, a resident of Oklahoma.

Male Vocalist of the Year

Alan Jackson has won both this category and Entertainer of the Year for the last two years in a row. This leads me to believe that voters will go in a different direction. Chesney and Keith are nominated here, though I don't think either is regarded as any sort of exceptional singer. That leaves George Strait and **Keith Urban**, and choosing between the two is a tough call. Strait had a patriotic hit song this year, and you can't ignore that as a factor during wartime. But I'm going to guess that Urban brings home his first Male Vocalist trophy. He has had a great year with the crossover success of *You'll Think of Me*, and his new single *Days Go By* hit number one this fall while voting was taking place.

Female Vocalist of the Year

This is certainly one of the most difficult categories to handicap in 2004. Martina McBride has won three times, including both of the last two years. Will voters want to reward her again? Perhaps so, since the rest of the group of nominees didn't overwhelm with sales or exposure this past year. If you consider that Reba is old news and Alison Krauss is seen as an outsider, in spite of her CMA wins in 1995, that leaves Sara Evans and Terri Clark to compete with McBride. I think that voters will see three wins as enough for McBride, at least for the time being. That's why I'm picking **Sara Evans**. She had more nominations than any artist in 2001, but only won in the Best Music Video category. Evans is also regarded as a fine singer, though I have heard her sound flatter than a pancake at times. But regardless of whoever wins, they just better be glad that Gretchen Wilson wasn't nominated in this category.

Horizon Award

I wish they would just do like the Grammys and call this thing Best New Artist. That way, I wouldn't have to explain it every year. But there will be no confusion about the winner come November 9th. **Gretchen Wilson** will take this thing by a landslide. As I've said before, I think Wilson tries a little too hard to convince everyone of her hayseed street cred, but hers is a much better record than you will hear from most female nominees on this awards show. She is an actual country artist, and you can't say that for Reba, Shania, Faith, Martina, or any of the other female pop artists from Nashville.

Vocal Group of the Year

For the second year in a row, it pains me to predict that the godawful **Rascal Flatts** will win in this category. It hurt to be right last year, and it will again in 2004. Competing against the likes of Lonestar and Trick Pony, this is a slam dunk. A look at the nominees in this category should definitely send the folks on Music Row out looking for a few decent vocal groups to sign. It can't be hard to compete with this kind of crap.

Single of the Year

There are inspirational/nostalgic cuts from Tim McGraw, Alan Jackson and Brad Paisley on the list. There is also Toby Keith and his ode to bars. But I think the winner will be **Gretchen Wilson** for *Redneck Woman*. The song created a huge buzz from the minute it appeared on radio. Rural women related to the subject matter, and men wanted to get their paws on Wilson. Programmers used to fear this kind of lyrical material, now the labels will be scrambling to sign any woman who sounds like Wilson. I'm just glad to see any woman nominated for something other than the typically sappy female empowerment ballads that always seem to get Martina McBride on this list.

Album of the Year

Another very difficult one to call. Gretchen Wilson has gotten rave reviews and sold tons of copies of **Here For The Party**. Brad Paisley, Brooks & Dunn and Kenny Chesney also had successful records this year. But to me, this category comes down to **Toby Keith** and Gretchen Wilson. Keith will have gotten shut out in the Male Vocalist and Entertainer categories. But his record sold too many copies to be ignored. Keith will win for *Shock 'N' Roll*.

Vocal Duo of the Year

I've said it every year...the only reason this category exists is to fill television time and sell a few records. Whenever the nominees are announced, it's always a bunch of people most folks have never heard of competing to get trounced by Brooks & Dunn. Well, this year may actually be a little different. Folks on the Row, whether they admit it or not, are always looking for someone else to vote for in this category. And since **Big & Rich** have had a very successful year, I am predicting that they will win in an upset.

Song of the Year

I think that the best song in this category is *Long Black Train* by Josh Turner, but the best song doesn't always come in first. That's why I'm picking *Live Like You Were Dying* as the winner. The Tim Nichols-Craig Wiseman composition was a big hit for **Tim McGraw**, and it has the sort of message that CMA voters seem to like.

Music Video of the Year

Who watches these things anyway? Because I don't much care, I'll predict a win for the **Jimmy Buffet/Alan Jackson** duet *It's Five O'Clock Somewhere*.

Vocal Event of the Year

Some interesting combinations on this list...Dolly & Norah, James Taylor & Alison Krauss (Kenny Chesney & Uncle Cracker...gag!). But I'm going with **Jimmy Buffet, Clint Black, Kenny Chesney, Alan Jackson, Toby Keith & George Strait** for their collective cover of *Hey Good Lookin'* simply because there are so damn many heavy hitters here that they have to draw enough votes for a victory.

Musician of the Year

Everyone in Nashville loves to hear **Kenny Greenburg** play guitar. He has tons of integrity and tremendous skill. I'm picking him to win.

Okay folks, so there you have it. I'll be back next month with a wrap up of the show and the final numbers on my predictions. One final note...Vince Gill won't be hosting this year. As I have mentioned before, he is taking time away from the show to focus on his career. So I must apologize on behalf of Nashville in advance for the cornball job that will be turned in by hosts Brooks & Dunn.

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JOHN THE REVEALATOR

Even though I'm still disgusted with the **Americana Music Association** for bestowing its 2004 Best New/Emergent Artist award on **Mindy Smith**, I have to backtrack on my wholesale renunciation of the very word 'Americana.' One thing I forgot is that two of the Freeform American Roots DJs use it in their show titles, JC Shepard's Fort Collins, CO, show is, in fact, simply called *Americana*, Rik James' Bozeman, MT, one is *Americana Backroads*. Also, 35 of the FAR jocks specify Americana as one of the types of roots music they play, though I know some of them at least fly it as a mere flag of convenience with no great loyalty to the underlying concept, whatever that is. So I guess I'll go on using it as a descriptive term, even though what you understand me to mean by it may be rather different from what I intended to convey.

◆ Of course, what I should do now is present you with a definition of **Americana** that will make everyone shout "Yes! Thank you, oh wise and profound JC, thank you, thank you." This is an enterprise on which many have ventured, most throwing in their hand pretty quickly, and if you try it yourself, you'll soon see why. OK, let's take a run at it: 'Americana is any music that draws on the traditions of quintessentially American musical genres without being obviously categorizable as any particular one of them.' Christ, that's clumsy, and prolix, but it does resolve one of my pet peeves, double dipping by acts that quite clearly belong to a recognized genre. Let's try a negative approach. 'Any artist or act that has ever been nominated for, or is even eligible for, an award in any other genre is, by definition, not eligible for an Americana award.'

◆ Which brings us back to the AMA fiasco. As I see it, the AMA has come to a fork in the road. Either its coldblooded calculation will pay off and Mindy Smith actually will become a star, which, God help us, could happen. Of course, this only works for the AMA if she then identifies herself as an Americana artist and does things like thanking the AMA at awards shows, which would effectively brand Americana as superficial pablum. Alternatively, Smith will go nowhere and the AMA will have compromised itself for nothing, though there always next year and another ambitious bimbo. Either path leads the AMA to the land called Irrelevance.

◆ In this month's editorial, I quote conservative journalist **Rob Long** on the pitiful music at the Republican Convention. From the same *Slate* article, this bit is too good to waste: "the real difference between Democrats and Republicans is that their celebrities are, like, actually famous and ours are, well, singing weirdly erotic songs about Our Savior. Metaphorically, anyway. It's not so much that Republican celebrities are all Christian rockers, it's that they all pretty much adhere to the Christian Rock Principle—it sounds like rock, for about one second you *think* it's rock, but it isn't quite. Something's off. The performers and celebrities who will appear at the RNC certainly *sound* famous—they have Grammys and awards and huge followings, apparently—but they aren't, quite."

◆ Last month, I paid tribute to the anonymous genius who created the enduring legend that The Girls Of The Golden West were born in Muleshoe, TX. This month's contemporary PR offerings are rather more mundane but sure have a certain something. Let's start with: "The Texas Music Project's latest endeavor is an excellent compilation CD called **Don't Mess With Texas Music** which features some of Texas' most influential artists such as George Strait, Clint Black, Bonnie Raitt, Beyonce, Pat Green, Los Lonely Boys, Eric Clapton (performing a Robert Johnson classic) and many more." Good stuff, huh? I can sort of understand Clapton, I mean there's the Robert Johnson connection, not that he was from Texas either but he did a lot of recording in San Antonio . . . OK, there's no way to make this stretch. Clapton and Raitt

as Texans aside, I love the derivative Los Lonely Boys being described as "influential" (let's not get started on Beyonce).

◆ This one's a bit more of a music insider number: "Yes, it's true. **Delta Moon** and Gina Leigh have parted ways. The decision was mutual, and the time is right. No hard feelings, but we've all agreed it's time to move on." Obviously your initial reaction is going to be 'So, who gives a shit?' The humor in this one is that Delta Moon recently released a CD, on which Leigh is heavily featured, so the time could hardly be more wrong.

◆ While reading up on Ramblin' Jack Elliott, I came across a good story about The Weavers' 1955 Reunion concert. The group called it quits during the Red Scare because no one would book them, and when Harold Leventhal defiantly decided to stage the reunion, he approached **Carnegie Hall**, which accepted the hiring because, cocooned in the rarified world of classical music, its management had absolutely no idea that there was anything remotely controversial about The Weavers. Not quite ten years later, Carnegie Hall, which would never have countenanced a pop concert, let promoter Sid Bernstein book the prestigious venue for The Beatles, of whom the management had never heard and led to believe were a string quartet.

◆ Reader Hal Davis came across this hilarious link on Amazon: "Customers interested in **Blind Willie Johnson** may also be interested in: *Blinds Made To Measure & Off The Shelf All Styles*, UK Next Day Delivery. www.Top-Blinds.co.uk."

◆ And while we're on Internet, I stumbled across an advanced bit of music criticism analysis. You may have come across one or more editions of *Fauxcabulary*, my dictionary of what the words music writers use actually mean, but **Daniel Wicks** is way beyond needing such a crib. "The example I use to illustrate the extent of **Thom Jurek's** apparent madness is his *All Music Guide* review of Matthew Shipp's **Nu Bop**, "Shipp's methodology is one of shifting rhythmic hypnosis and modal inquiry along scaled intervals and striated harmonic pathways that lead through the middle registers of both the saxophone and the piano." Allow me to interpret his review: Basically, Shipp's 'methodology' is one of droning grooves ('shifting rhythmic hypnosis') that stay in the same key using the same bassline ('modal inquiry along scaled intervals and striated harmonic pathways') that never veer out of the middle register. In other words, really uninteresting jazz-funk."

◆ Had some radio fun in October. Because my confreres, Dan The Cake Man and Tom The Perfessor, had scheduling problems, I wound up doing three Saturdays in a row, which seemed like a rare opportunity for a three-part theme. Naturally, I thought about Love/God/Murder, but went with Steve Goodman's "I was **Drunk** the day **Mama** got out of **Prison**." Lotsa Hank, Johnny and Merle, of course, in fact all three shows ended up being heavily classic country and honky tonky, because, well I hardly need to explain that. One mildly interesting thing was how many country songs I found that have *Mama and prison* in them.

◆ Also, I did my bit for democracy by digging out some songs that were topical when they were first released but have become topical again, The Flying Burrito Brothers: *My Uncle*, Freda Payne: *Bring The Boys Home*, David Rodriguez: *Constant War*, John Trudell: *Bombs Over Baghdad*, Blaze Foley: *Oval Room*—plus ça change, plus ça la même shit.

◆ I'm only doing one show this month, but I think it might be worth your while tuning into it (www.accd.edu/tcmn, then hit the Live Feed button) on Saturday November 6th, 2-6pm Central. Part of the show will be devoted to celebrating the joint birthday of **Stonewall Jackson**, **Guy Clark** and **Doug Sahm**, but I'll also have the very wonderful Miss **Amber Digby** in the studio, as she's performing at Arky Blue's in Bandera that night.

† JOHN PEEL

Though he worked on several US stations in the 60s, including WRR, Dallas, KOMA, Oklahoma City, and KMEN, San Bernadino, John Peel's name probably won't mean much to Americans, but in Britain he was a giant. Hired by the BBC in 1967 when, tired of being humiliated by pirate radio, it abandoned its rearguard fight against rock & roll, Peel used Radio 1 as a platform to launch awareness of wave after wave of music no one else would play, pub rock, punk, reggae, hip hop, world and roots music, playing demo tapes, 3rd World 45s and all manner of indie and self-released albums, moving on when the music got any measure of acceptance. He pretty much created the prevailing ethos of the British music media (at least when I was still part of it), that the major labels are irrelevant and the real action is always just coming over the horizon. Born John Ravenscroft in 1939, he was more eclectic, radical, passionate, open-minded and freethinking than DJs a third his age, plus he had so much clout that the suits had to let him go his own way. Also, though I haven't seen him in forever, he was a really great guy. John Peel died of a heart attack on October 25th while on holiday in Bolivia, age 65, and his favorite song was, reportedly, still The Undertones' *Teenage Kicks*.

LOOSE DIAMONDS A DJ'S PRIVATE STASH #9 ROB SILVERBERG

I've been at WCUW for 10 years minus a couple of short breaks. I came to radio sort of late in life, I was around 46 when I did my first show. WCUW is a Community station, that means we're always really broke. The upside is, due to the fact we don't know what we're doing and our utter disdain for organization, we're a candidate to be the last great radio station in America. I play a lot of different kinds of music on *Crosstracks*, but in the end, it's a Hillbilly show.

Here are couple of newer releases and a few older out of print (some vinyl) that I could play on the show every week into infinity. It was very difficult to winnow the list down to a few. It ended up being disorganized.... just like my shows. I like to think of disorganization as sort of beautiful.

Mike Stinson: Jack Of All Heartaches (Big Ol', 2002) Kind of a straggly voice singing country melodies with extremely clever lyrics ("I'm sure I'd slur the words I long to tell her... and by now that's all she comes to expect") and it works out just right.

Joe West & The Sinners: Jamie Was A Boozer (Rehab, 1999) Sounds countryish to me, but I guess it's a sort of poppish, too. Like Mike Stinson, clever lyrics, catchy melodies.

VA: God Less America (Crypt, 1995) C&W for all ye Sinners 'n' Sufferers, 1955-1966, a bunch of weird and wacky heartbreakers sung mostly by unknowns. *My Neighbor The Firefighter*, *8 Weeks In A Barroom*, *Please Don't Go Topless Mother* and 15 more, plus a really great picture on the back of the album.

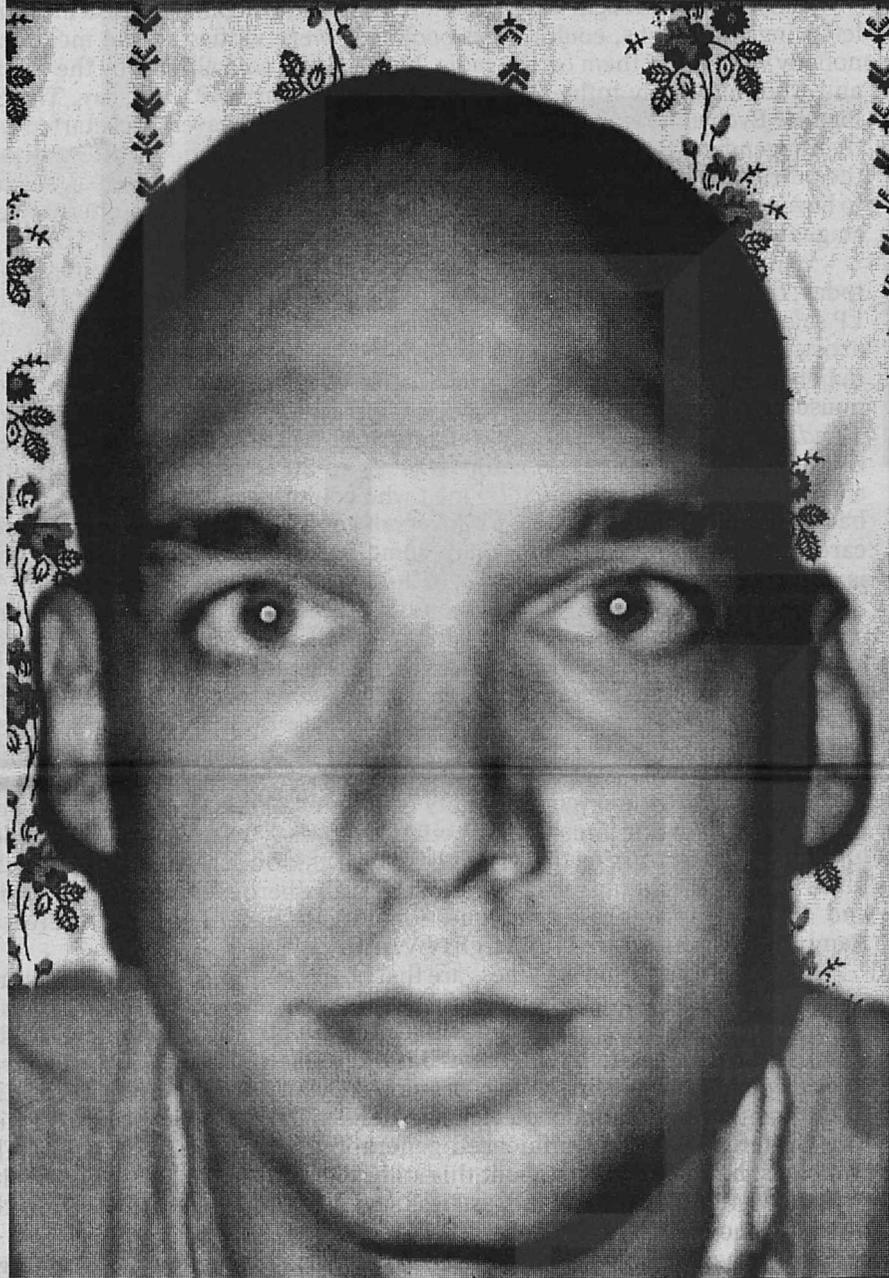
Vernon Oxford: His And Hers (Rounder, 1980) Why hasn't Rounder reissued the Vernon Oxford albums they put out in the 80s? One of the best country singers of all time. On one song you can hear him choking back the emotion. *Daughter Of The Vine*, in praise of the numbing effect of alcohol, is my favorite drinking song ever.

VA: Hillbilly Music, Thank God (Capitol, 1989) This was my personal introduction to Jean Shepard, Speedy West, Gene O'Quin, The Farmer Boys, Jimmy Lee and others. Mostly 50s West Coast Country from Capitol records. Great stuff

Marvin Rainwater: Whole Lotta Woman (Bear Family, 1994) Hillbilly Rock at its finest. I have an affinity for pure country singers doing rock & roll. It always comes out just right to my ears. A big plus is great guitar playing by Grady Martin and a young Roy Clark, some fantastic guitar breaks.

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(Columbia/Legacy)

You will now hear me saying nice things about a major record label, so pay attention, it probably won't happen again anytime soon. One thing majors have going for them, at least in theory, is their back catalogs, which are enormous, containing not just decades of work by artists signed to the labels themselves, but also by those who recorded for the hundreds, if not thousands, of indie labels the majors have swallowed up over the years. However, the long and complex history of those holdings makes them problematic. Consider Dot Records, founded in 1950 and bought by Paramount Pictures in 1957. Paramount was later acquired by Gulf + Western, which eventually sold Dot to ABC, which closed it down in 1977. ABC was in turn absorbed by MCA, now, of course, a subsidiary of Universal Music Group. Ask yourself, how many people at UMG, or even MCA, have been around long enough to know that, leaving the singles out of it, the conglomerate owns over 1000 country, R&B, gospel, rockabilly, pop and early rock & roll LPs made by artists such as Arthur Alexander, Louis Prima, The Andrews Sisters, Ray Price, Doug Sahn, Jack Kerouac, The Surfari's, Freddy Fender and Leonard Nimoy, among scores of others? Bear in mind that I've talked to people at MCA who didn't know it used to be Decca.

More to the point though is that even if anyone knew, usually nobody would care (this combination of ignorance and indifference has long been exploited by European reissue labels). However, while the other majors have little or, at best, sporadic interest in their vaults, it is to Sony's credit that in 1990 it created a division that does nothing else but rummage nonstop through the back catalogs of Columbia, the oldest continuously used label in America, Epic, Okeh, ARC, Vocalion and Brunswick. Legacy has given us some wonderful stuff, particularly the Country Classics/American Milestones series.

That said, Legacy's latest batch of releases pushes the word 'Essential' pretty hard. The only one that really merits it is the Acuff collection (****), whose 14 tracks, originally released on Vocalion, Okeh and Columbia between 1938 and 1948, include pretty much all his classics, from *Great Speckle Bird* to *I Saw The Light*. Given his enormous influence and once dominant role, it's really rather odd the way Acuff has faded out of the picture, but you can hear why he was called the 'King of Country Music' for so long.

The Atkins (***) and Haggard (****) albums suffer from the same flaw, both men's truly 'essential' recordings were made on other labels, Atkins' for RCA, Haggard's for Capitol. Atkins fell out with RCA because they wouldn't let him make jazz records and listening to 'The Columbia Years' you can see why. To be honest, I never had much use for Atkins on any label, even aside from his kingpin role in the creation of country-politan, and unless you have a taste for jazz lite, flawless technique masquerading as real music, this is definitely non-essential. With the notable exception of *Big City*, Haggard's 'Epic Years' were a sentimental disaster area—*I Had A Beautiful Time* is still one of the most annoying songs I've ever heard—and while Haggard & Willie Nelson may have done wonders for Townes Van Zandt's ability to pay alimony and child support, their version of *Pancho And Lefty* is still superficial. Razor & Tie's *The Lonesome Fugitive* is a much better buy.

Van Zandt's name also comes up, inevitably, with Coe (*), whose career was jumpstarted by Tanya Tucker's hit *Would You Lie With Me (In A Field Of Stone)*, a blatant ripoff of Van Zandt's *If I Needed You*. Coe's own version and 13 other cuts from his 26 Columbia albums, including Steve Goodman's *You Never Even Called Me By My Name* with the 'perfect C&W song' verse ("I was drunk the day Mama got out of prison"), may be essential to some people, but I can't stand to listen to him. In fact, I can't even abide looking at his picture on the cover.

In the American Milestones series, Nelson's gospel album (****.5) was recorded in 1973 but not released until 1976, after *Shotgun Willie*, *Phases & Stages* and *Red Headed Stranger* and, like much of his catalog, has to some extent simply been overshadowed by that triple whammy. However, the album, though briefly making it to #1 in the Country charts, also had a marketing problem. As Ray Wylie Hubbard observes of *When She Sang Amazing Grace*, "I came to find there wasn't much call for honky tonk gospel music." The mainstream audience for gospel, by and large, loathed Nelson as a longhaired, dope-smoking hippie, while longhaired dope-smoking hippies, by and large, didn't have much use for gospel music, even done by Willie. With a band that included Jimmy Day steel guitar and dobro, Doug Sahn fiddle and Sammi Smith background vocals, Nelson approached hymns like *Uncloudy Day* and *Precious Memories* in his own style, with loose arrangements and extended solos, a far cry from normal gospel albums. Four bonus tracks, recorded at Austin's Texas Opry House and previously unreleased, feature Day, Johnny Gimble on fiddle and Mickey Raphael harmonica and include live repeats of the title track, *Will The Circle Be Unbroken*, *When The Roll Is Called Up Yonder* and, unfortunately, *Amazing Grace*, which, as always, is a death trap.

JC

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YELLOW DOG DAYS

Quite why I feel I shouldn't talk about politics in a music magazine, I'm really not sure. After all, as I mentioned recently, Minnesota's Republican governor, after complaining, on his weekly radio show, about Bruce Springsteen mixing politics with his music, played a Springsteen song, and there's no shortage of other examples of people mixing music with their politics. Put it this way, wouldn't you like to have a dime for every musician who's been asked to play at a political rally or fundraiser? Better yet, how about a dollar for every musician who's been asked to play for free? Powerball couldn't pay off that good.

My first American experience of this two way street was a late 80s Austin mayoral campaign, when, at their respective shindigs, the Republican asshole (but I repeat myself) had godawful 6th Street cover bands and the Democrat had the cream of Austin music. From this I deduced that Dems have better taste and that American musicians, the good ones at any rate, tend to be mildly progressive (America's idea of rabidly left-wing). Fifteen years later, and from the belly of the beast, Charles Earle confirmed this view in his column last month, "The Republicans managed to get Lee Ann Womack and a bunch of people you have never heard of . . . The Democrats countered the next night with a show that included Steve Earle, Emmylou Harris, Rodney Crowell, Raul Malo, Allison Moorer, Nanci Griffith, Matraca Berg and Jeff Hanna."

Of course, one of the things you hear constantly is that musicians (and actors and other artists), at least if they're batting for the other team, aren't qualified to talk about political issues. This, mind you, comes from people who think George W Bush is qualified to be President. I would be the first to concede that your average musician isn't always the sharpest note in the octave, and most of them are just as well educated and well informed as most Americans, which is kind of the point. Most Americans can't do much to get their voice and views heard beyond writing a letter to the local paper, but musos, actors, etc have pulpits, and *that's* what really pisses off people who don't agree with them. There seem to me to be many people on the right who, even if they support freedom of speech in theory (not a given), really can't stand it when it's practiced in front of thousands of adoring fans who might actually be influenced. Of course, in the case of The Dixie Chicks, those fans were more influenced by the shitstorm, which politicized countless young women who until then probably thought the First Amendment was a clause in their cell phone contract.

Thing is, whether, like Springsteen, Earle, Prine, Ray Wylie Hubbard, Eliza Gilkyson, James McMurtry or, come to that, Toby Keith, they articulate their politics at every show, or just play at rallies and fundraisers, activist musicians are doing nothing more than participate in the process, which is supposed to be a good thing. The problem for the right is that not only are their musicians no good, they don't even draw. As Rob Long remarked in *Slate* about the music scheduled at the GOP convention, "I'm aware that I'm going to sound like one of those liberal Democrat media snobs—which is unfair, because I'm a conservative Republican media snob—but *who are these people?*"

Why is this? Well, in a kind of riff on John Stuart Mill's dictum, "Conservatives are not necessarily stupid people, but most stupid people are conservatives," I'd suggest that while it may be going too far to say that conservatives don't have souls, Republicans most certainly don't have soul.

By the time you read this, most roots musicians, and roots music fans, will either be moderately pleased by a Kerry win or totally bummed out by the prospect of four more years of Bush, Ashcroft and Michael Powell. **JC**

RAMBLIN' JACK ELLIOTT

THE LOST TOPIC TAPES

COWES HARBOR 1957 • ISLE OF WIGHT 1957

(Hightone *****/****)

Even for, perhaps especially for, people who lived through the Folk Revival of the late 50s/early 60s, let alone those who know it best from seeing *A Mighty Wind* or the equally, if unintentionally, hilarious PBS special *This Land Is Your Land*, it all seems rather ludicrous and cheesy now. All that relentless perkiness, the pasted on perpetual smiles, the hideous matching preppy outfits, the hokey faux-hillbilly showmanshit, the bland, processed music and the fucking audience singalongs. I hate singalongs, can you tell?

Consider this though: The Weavers, crucified during the Red Scare for their left-wing affiliations, couldn't get bookings, were vilified in the media and nobody would play them on the radio, but they still sold albums by the million and were massively influential. Remind you of anyone? Like, say, The Sex Pistols? Even at its worst, the folk revival, which The Weavers kickstarted with their legendary 1955 Carnegie Hall reunion concert, offered an alternative to the putrid pop of the time, music that at least seemed to be more real, seemed to have more substance, just as punk, even at its worst, offered an alternative to stagnant rock.

While groups like The Limelites appear hopelessly passé figures of fun today, their enormous commercial success—at one point, half of all Columbia's LP sales were by The Kingston Trio—opened the doors for more consequential artists, most notably, of course, Bob Dylan. He'd never have been signed by a major label if folk wasn't selling, and he became commercially viable, and a household name, because of Peter, Paul & Mary's hit cover of *Blowin' In The Wind*. It can easily be argued that if Pete Seeger hadn't formed The Weavers, there'd be no folk-rock, no country-rock, no alt.country, no introspective songwriting, no bands fronted by men who couldn't sing and a lot less really bad harmonica playing, which, for lovers of good irony, means that a onetime card-carrying Communist, who made some artists and major labels very rich, is one of the most important figures in 20th century American music.

However, when Dylan's eponymous debut came out, there were those who considered him nothing more than a Ramblin' Jack Elliott clone, as late as 1995, a folk magazine still described him as a cartoon version of Elliott. Whether this was ever really a tenable position, and it wasn't shared by Elliott himself who, often derided as a Woody Guthrie soundalike, saw only a talented kid, whom he first met at Guthrie's hospital bedside, learning the trade by imitating him, it does illustrate the esteem in which Elliott was, and is, held in folk music circles. Despite the inherent absurdity of Elliott Adnopoz, a Jewish boy from Brooklyn, reinventing himself as a Scots-Irish cowboy troubadour, which Elliott himself recognizes, joking that "I was born on a 45,000 acre ranch in Flatbush," in the vicious, backbiting world of the folk revival, where everybody else's 'purity' and 'authenticity' was called into question, Elliott's never has been—there's no Ramblin' Jack caricature in *A Mighty Wind*.

Elliott's strength and weakness are that he has endured, doing pretty much the same thing for 50 years, singing folk songs, very few of which are originals. Along the way, he lived and toured with Guthrie, who famously remarked, "He sounds more like me than I do," knew Jack Kerouac and James Dean, inspired Mick Jagger to buy his first guitar, promoted Dylan, who in turn featured him in the 1975 Rolling Thunder Review, befriended Jerry Garcia and sat in with The Grateful Dead, and influenced generations of singer-songwriters. The trouble is, he won't shut up about this stuff, like your dotty old uncle with his "When I were a lad" stories, and, as I was saying to Ray Wylie Hubbard just the other day, nobody likes name-dropping.

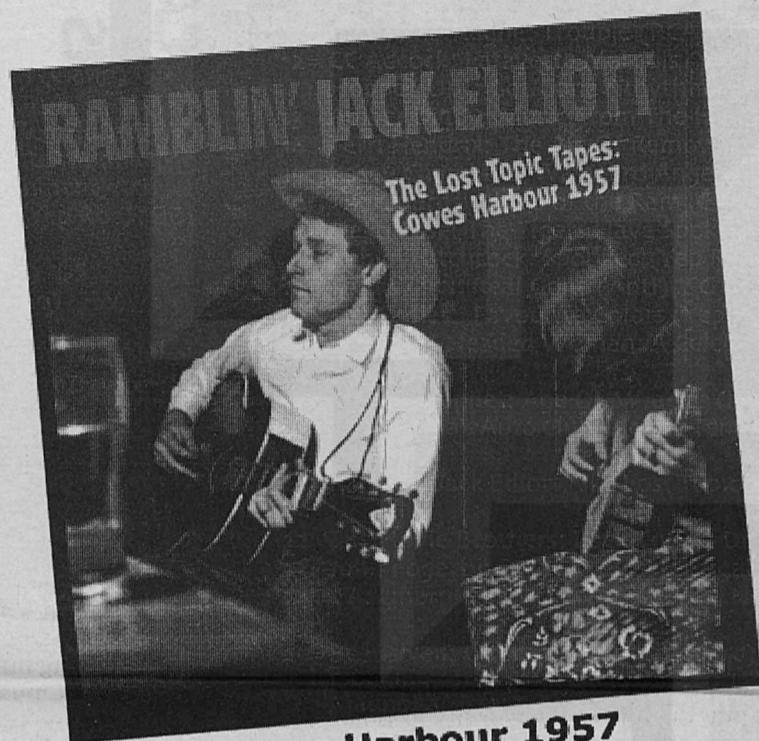
Still, when you step back in time and look at Young Jack, a seemingly limitless treasure trove of songs he'd learned from the source, most notably, of course, Guthrie, or from an oral tradition rather than from recordings, you see why he had such an impact on the nascent folk world. Nowhere was this more true than in England, where he and his wife lived from 1955 to 1960, when Britain's own Folk Revival was getting under way. In constant demand on a circuit of skiffle clubs and left-wing coffeeshouses, like The Partisan, where I saw him in the late 50s (I was kind of a baby Beatnik wannabe), Elliott, also a familiar figure on British TV and radio, made several LPs for Topic, the folk label operated by the Workers Music Association, a cadre of the Communist Party of Great Britain, which, incidentally, is still going, though now under private ownership, making it the oldest indie in the world.

Rather oddly, considering, these two albums of previously unreleased recordings, the tapes of which were stored for safekeeping in the British Museum and recently rediscovered by Topic, were made on a yacht moored in Cowes Harbour, scene of an annual regatta that was one of the British royalty and aristocracy's rallying points. However, Elliott didn't spend May 14th, 1957, laying down 32 selections from his repertoire of folk, cowboy, county, gospel and blues songs while the Royal Yacht Squadron showed off their expensive toys, as Cowes Week is in early August (limey trivia).

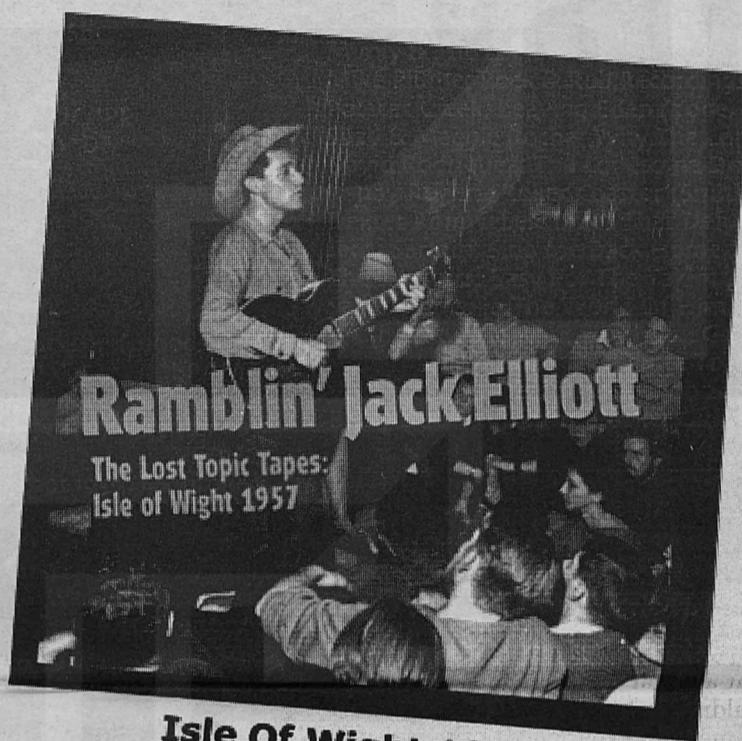
I've talked to people who feel that, except in a few isolated pockets like Scotland, folk music in the real sense, ie not the singer-songwriters of the Folk Alliance, is pretty much dead, but these almost 50 year old recordings remind one that it was once a potent and radical force. Also that, as *Esquire* put it in 1984, "For much of the 60s it seemed that anyone who picked up an acoustic guitar did so harboring earnest hopes of playing like Mississippi John Hurt and singing like Jack Elliott." **JC**

Ramblin' Jack Elliott

The Lost Topic Tapes



Cowes Harbour 1957



Isle Of Wight 1957

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- Lyle Lovett • 1956 Klein, TX
- Sippie Wallace † 1986
- 2nd -- Charlie Walker • 1926 Collin Co, TX
- JD Souther • 1945 Detroit, MI
- 3rd -- Sonny Rhodes • 1940 Smithville, TX
- Hugh Moffatt • 1948 Fort Worth, TX
- Champ Hood † 2001
- 4th -- Delbert McClinton • 1940 Lubbock, TX
- 5th -- Etta Moten • 1901 San Antonio, TX
- Roy Rogers • 1911 Cincinnati, OH
- Ike Turner • 1931 Clarksdale, MS
- Gram Parsons • 1946 Winterhaven FL
- Johnny Horton † 1960
- 6th -- Stonewall Jackson • 1932 Tabor City, NC
- Frenchie Burke • 1933 Kaplan, LA
- Doug Sahm • 1941 San Antonio, TX
- Guy Clark • 1941 Monahans, TX
- Tary Owens • 1942 Toledo, OH
- 7th -- Little Bob • 1937 Arnaudville, LA
- AP Carter † 1960
- 8th -- Ivory Joe Hunter † 1974
- 9th -- James Talley • 1944 Mehan, OK
- 11th Sippie Wallace • 1898 Houston, TX
- Mose Allison • 1927 Tippo, MS
- LaVern Baker • 1929 Chicago, IL
- Hank Garland • 1930 Cowpens, NC
- Dave Alvin • 1955 Los Angeles, CA
- Beau Jocque • 1957 Basile, LA
- 12th Bukka White • 1906 Houston, MS
- Booker T Jones • 1944 Memphis, TN
- Neil Young • 1945 Toronto, Canada
- James Intveld • 1959 Los Angeles, CA
- Lord Buckley † 1960
- 13th Sonny Fisher • 1931 Tyler, TX
- Ray Wylie Hubbard • 1946 Hugo, OK
- Ruth Ann Logsdon • 19?? New London, CT
- 14th Noel Boggs • 1917 Oklahoma City, OK
- Buckwheat • 1947 Lafayette, LA
- Joe Gracey • 1951 Fort Worth, TX
- Tex Edwards • 1954 Dallas, TX
- 15th Clyde McPhatter • 1933 Durham, NC
- Wes Reeves • 1933 La Mesa, TX
- 16th Jesse Stone • 1901 Atchison, KS
- Bois-Sec Ardoin • 1916 Duralde, LA
- Earl Bollick • 1919 Hickory, NC
- Shirley Bergeron • 1933 Church Point, LA
- Albert Collins † 1993
- 17th Terry Noland • 1938 Abilene, TX
- Gene Clark • 1941 Tipton, MO
- Black Ardoin • 1946 Duralde, LA
- 18th Hank Ballard • 1936 Detroit, MI
- Leeann Atherton • 1955 Birmingham, AL
- Doug Sahm † 1999

- 19th Katy Moffatt • 1950 Fort Worth, TX
- 20th Eck Robertson • 1887 Amarillo, TX
- Duane Allman • 1946 Nashville, TN
- 21st - Lloyd Glenn • 1909 San Antonio, TX
- Jean Shepard • 1933 Paul's Valley, OK
- Dr John • 1941 New Orleans, LA
- Cecil Brower † 1965
- 22nd Whistling Alex Moore • 1899 Dallas, TX
- Hoagy Carmichael • 1899 Bloomington, IN
- Charles Mann • 1945 Welsh, LA
- Angela Strehli • 1945 Lubbock, TX
- 23rd - Spade Cooley † 1969
- Big Joe Turner † 1985
- Roy Acuff † 1992
- 24th Scott Joplin • 1868 Bowie Co, TX
- Tommy Allsup • 1931 Tulsa, OK
- Johnny Degollado • 1935 Austin, TX
- Buster Pickens † 1964
- 27th Werly Fairburn • 1924 Folsom, LA
- Jimi Hendrix • 1942 Seattle, WA
- Lotte Lenya † 1981
- Charline Arthur † 1987
- 28th Cecil Brower • 1914 Bellevue, TX
- Bruce Channel • 1940 Jacksonville, TX
- Libbi Bosworth • 1964 Galveston, TX
- Wanna Coffman † 1991
- 29th Merle Travis • 1917 Rosewood, KY
- Joe Falcon † 1965
- Ray Smith † 1979
- 30th Fred 'Papa' Calhoun • 1904 Chico, TX
- Walter Mouton • 1938 Scott, LA
- Jim Patton • 1950 Alton, IL
- Jeannie Kendall • 1954 St Louis, MO
- Guy Forsyth • 1968 Denver, CO

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