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REVIEWS (*** * (or not)

June Carter • Johnny Cash • Thad Cockrell • Sara Cox The Dolly Ranchers • Anna Fermin's Trigger Gospel • John Lilly Ruthie & The Wranglers • Chip Taylor & Carrie Rodriguez Mary Alice Wood She's back with a Vengeance?

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FREEFORM AMERICAN ROOTS #50

REAL MUSIC PLAYED FOR REAL PEOPLE BY REAL DIS DURING SEPTEMBER 2003

#1 JOHN LILLY: LAST CHANCE TO DANCE

(self) *CD/*DA/*GS/*JM/*KC/*PP/*TG

Bobby Flores: Just For The Record (Yellow Rose)

*CP/*DF/*FS/*LG/*MT/*RH/*RW/*S&D

Martí Brom: Wise To You (Goofin') *BL/*KF/*MA/*SH

Thad Cockrell: Warmth & Beauty (Yep Roc) *RC/*SG/*TA

Chip Taylor & Carrie Rodriguez: The Trouble With Humans (Trainwreck/TMG) *AB/*JZ/*MO/*RJ

Wayne Hancock: Swing Time (Bloodshot) *KD/*T&L

Rodney Crowell: Fate's Right Hand (DMZ/Columbia) *BF/*CM/*KR

Trailer Bride: Hope is a Thing With Feathers (Bloodshot) *HG/*SJ

Chris Knight: The Jealous Kind (Dualtone) *DT/*JB/*MM

10 Howard Kalish: What The Hey (Behemoth) *JH/*NA

Ruthie & The Wranglers: Someday (Lasso) *TS

12 Nancy Apple: Shoulda Lied About That (Ringo) *MP

13 Adrienne Young: Plow To The End Of The Row (Addie Belle) *JCS/*TO

14 Nathan Hamilton & No Deal: Live At Floores (Tamale Pot) *JP/*SC

15 Graham Lindsey: Famous Anonymous Wilderness (Catamount) *SF

16 Lyle Lovett: My Baby Don't Tolerate (Lost Highway) *AA/*KL

17 June Carter Cash: Wildwood Flower (Dualtone) *KG

Scott Gibson: Make Ready (Hayden's Ferry) *RR 18= Oh Susanna (Nettwerk America) *DY

Ben Atkins: Mabelle (Hightone) *ND

Pete Seeger & Friends: Seeds; The Songs of Pete Seeger Vol 3 (Appleseed) *SMJ

Joe Ely: Streets Of Sin (Rounder)

Mercy Brothers: Strange Adventure (Gibraltar) *JF

Pine Valley Cosmonauts: The Executioners Last Songs #2 & 3 (Bloodshot) *MF

Kris Delmhorst: Songs For A Hurricane (Signature Sounds) *KM

Danny Barnes: Dirt On The Angel (Terminus) *ST Tim O'Brien: Traveler (Sugar Hill)

Ox: Dust Bowl Revival (self) *RE

Dwight Yoakam: Population Me (Audium/Electrodisc)
Ronny Elliott: Hep (Blue Heart) *EGB
Del McCoury Band: It's Just The Night (Sugar Hill)

Kate Campbell: Twang On A Wire (Large River)

Sara Cox: Arrive (Velvet Ed)

Caroline Herring: Wellspring (Bluecorn) *R&B
The Mavericks (Sanctuary) *LB

Eric Taylor: The Kerrville Tapes (Silverwolf) *FW

VA: Ain't No Grave (Dren) *MDT

Ann & Phil Case: Why Should We Be Lonely? (Dry Run) *JT The Cash Brothers: A Brand New Light (Zoe) *FM Cracker: Countrysides (Pitch-A-Tent) *3RC

Justin Curtis: living Room Confessions (Lazy J) *RB Big Al Downing: One of A Kind (Hayden's Ferry) *RT

Heybale: Continentalive (self) *BR

The Jayhawks: Rainy Day Music (American) *OS

Jason Jordan: Genuine Vinyl (J-Mont) *DC Mike June & The Dirty Doves: Crooked (Junebuggin') *RP

Lucero: That Much Further West (Tiger Style) *MD

David Olney: The Wheel (Loudhouse) *JQB Prickly Pair: Lights Of Cheyenne (Rockhouse) *AR

Don Rigsby: The Midnight Call () *CL

Chris Smither: Train Home (Hightone) *LW

The Swiftys (self) *DP

Trophy Husbands: Walk With Evil (Hayden's Ferry) *SB

VA: Just Because I Am A Woman; Songs of Dolly Parton (Sugar Hill) *R&H VA: Spain In My Heart; Songs Of The Spanish Civil War (Appleseed) *MR SE Willis: Cold Hand In Mine (Mr Suchensuch) *TF

Neil Young: Greendale (Reprise) *DJ



*XX = DJ's Album of the Month

FREEFORM AMERICAN ROOTS is compiled from reports provided by 122 freeform DJs in the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Europe and Uruguay. More information can be found at www.accd.edu/tcmn/far.

RUTHIE & THE WRANGLERS . SOMEDAY

Bill Kirchen once told me that there's so much work in the DC area, a country (and later rockabilly) hotbed since WW2, that he has to make an effort to get on the road once in a while. In fact, he cancelled his last national tour because he was offered more than he'd have made on it to play one set at a local festival. Similarly, the 'Tour Dates' posted on The Wranglers' website take them as far afield as Maryland and Virginia. However, while Ruth Ann Logsdon and her band have racked up a wall of Wammies (Washington Area Music Awards), their albums have already won them a multitude of admirers outside their stomping grounds, and this, their fourth, is the best yet. Featuring all-original material, Logsdon came up with eight splendid honky tonkers, but while the departure of Mark Noone may mean that he and Ruth Ann have gone to Pfftt City, she's gained a terrific songwriter, songwriting partner and duet vocalist in her new bassplayer, Greg Hardin, while her quite astonishing guitarist, Phil Mathieu, contributed two instrumentals, a Ventures-style surf number and a blues, to make up the 13 tracks. Though she can veer dangerously close to perky-I don't do perky-Logsdon's engaging vitality, energy and joie de vivre, not to mention a soprano that could support her just singing country standards, make her worth knowing about even if the chances are you'll never get to see her and her crackerjack band perform.

SARA COX • ARRIVE MARY ALICE WOOD • Daisies In My Hand

(Velvet Ed &&.5)/self-released &&.5)

fter four volumes of Greetings From Area Code 207, I told Cornbread's Charlie Gaylord that he should put out Greetings From The Women Of Area Code 207 to celebrate Portland. Maine's wealth of remarkable female singers, notably Boo Hewerdine, Darien Brahms and Sara Cox. Cox had standout tracks on all four volumes and I was not best pleased when The Coming Grass shortchanged her on lead vocals on their recent album, but I guess they knew she had a solo project in the works, which I didn't. Like Brahms, who sings harmony vocals for her, Cox opted to demonstrate her stylistic range, juxtaposing accapella (Richard Buckner's Fater, the only cover among the 12 tracks), roots rock, twang, folk, AAA, pop and country, rather than make an easy to pigeonhole album, though, working with her regular band mates, she pulls it off far better than Brahms, whose musicians weren't up to it.

♦ Some years ago, I stumbled across another hotbed of marvellous female singers, notably the sensational Cheryl Stryker, but Lynne Reif and Jenny Stuckenschnieder were also outstanding. Sight unseen, I knew Mary Alice Wood is also from St Louis just from the unmistakable guitar work of the amazing John Horton, who seems to be in every band and on every album that comes out of that city. Though I haven't heard much about any of the other women lately, except that One Fell Swoop were playing without Stryker, which sounds like a waste of time to me, Wood steps in to prove that St Louis is still in the game, bringing Reif along with her to sing harmony on a couple of tracks. She put out a well-received album in 1993, winning 'Slammies' (St Louis Area Music Awards) in subsequent years as Best Local Songwriter, then put music on hold to build a career as a graphic designer. I've not heard her debut, but a ten year gap doesn't seem to have done her any harm as a singer, with hints of early Lucinda Williams and Mary Chapin Carpenter in her strong contralto, or as a songwriter, telling "12 different stories about my life." Stylistically, she too is all over the shop, folky acoustic, power pop, honky tonk and roots rock.

♦ Diverse all too often comes across as unfocused, but Cox and Wood both pull it off, Cox mainly through the sheer power of her exceptional skills as a songwriter, Wood largely because Horton's guitar provides her with such a solid platform. They might have been better off sticking to one style, personally I'd have liked the knockout country albums of which both are quite clearly capable, but as Ricky says, "You can't please everyone, so you gotta please yourself."

THE DOLLY RANCHERS • ESCAPE ARTIST

(Chaos Kitchen 常常常常)

azeldine, the last remarkable band out of New Mexico, was three women, one guy, The Dolly Ranchers, who also play melodic, harmonized country with a dash of punk attitude, are four women (and also, according to the Albuquerque Alibi, "four reasons not to hate Santa Fe"). I don't what this tells us about the Land of Enchantment, but it's certainly intriguing. Thing about New Mexico is that the next gig is hundreds of miles away in any direction, so The Dolly Ranchers have become hobos, constantly on the road, often travelling with circuses, and their live gig reviews suggest that one misses a lot on CD. However, there's still Sarah-Jane Moody's high vocals, Amy Bertucci's low ones, Marisa Anderson's twangy guitar, with Maria Fabulosa (since replaced) on bass. Apart from Hazel Dicken's Don't Put Her Down, You Helped Put Her There, Anderson, who also composed a couple of instrumentals, Moody and Bertucci wrote all the songs and there's some really lovely stuff. However, it has to be said that Moody and Bertucci's voices have that Jimmie Dale Gilmore quality—they may charm some people, myself included, but I can see how they could really irritate others. Check out Drink Me, Carry Me Home, Swan Island or WWJCD, any of which will tell you what you need to know.

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ANNA FERMIN'S TRIGGER GOSPEL OH, THE STORIES WE HOLD

(Undertow *****)

ost every album gets a fairly generalized visceral initial reaction from me and, I imagine, most of you, which then gets fine-tuned when (and if) we listen to it again. There are two exceptions—really, really good albums have one thing in common with really, really bad ones, you don't have to think about them, you recognize them for what they are right away. So even though I've only had Fermin's latest for a few days, I have absolutely no hesitation in putting it on my short list of albums that are so close to perfect as makes no difference. OK, Doris Day's Latin hit Perhaps, Perhaps, Perhaps, this album's equivalent of Things To Come's Bessame Mucho, may strike some as a bit cheesy, or maybe Tortilla Soup ruined them for any other version, but that would be my only caveat. Otherwise the album shimmers with positively ethereal beauty. Most of this is, of course, contained in Fermin's gorgeous, supple, expressive voice and her gift for impeccably nuanced phrasing of her excellent original material (the only other cover is Steve Earle's Down The Road), but if you've heard her perform, you will have witnessed the way in which, simply by being there, she dominates any musical environment. Crappy PAs sound good when she sings through them, so you can imagine what happens when she has first class equipment. What this album demonstrates is that whether or not she'll ever be a star, in the accepted meaning, over and above being an extraordinarily talented singer and songwriter, Anna Fermin has star quality. If the Americana Music Association had any sense, it'd be throwing everything it had behind her. When you hear this, you may well want to track down everything and anything she's ever recorded, but while this is being presented as her second album, following 1999's Things To Come, this is my fourth Fermin review, the others being of her 1997 self-titled EP and the limited edition Live Music Volume I (2002). The only way this album could be better is if it had Oh Lonesome Me as a bonus track

CHIP TAYLOR & CARRIE RODRIGUEZ THE TROUBLE WITH HUMANS

(Trainwreck/Texas Music Group %%%%.5)

irst time round, Taylor & Rodriguez made great music, this time they've gone beyond music—when it works, which is most all the time, this is pure magic. Since Taylor heard Rodriguez playing fiddle with an Austin country band at a 2001 NotSXSW Cheapo Discs in-store and snapped her up, they've been touring virtually nonstop, which means they spend more time together than a married couple, which can, and often does, destroy musical partnerships, as minor frictions escalate into all out personality conflicts. In their case, however, the road was a school in which Rodriguez was able to blossom, in small, low pressure increments, from sidewoman to partner. On Let's Leave This Town she was still the junior partner, the protegée, the student mastering her craft, albeit with startling speed and confidence, under the tutelage of a master. Since then, however, the duo has evolved even further into something quite extraordinary. They're not just partners, they're like a living yin/ yang symbol, male and female, maturity and youth, experience and freshness, complementing each other so superbly that they're like a single entity, Chipncarrie. Recorded live in the studio (ie no overdubs) with some superlative musicians. including long time Taylor associate guitarist John Platania, Fairport Convention drummer Dave Mattacks, pianist Earl Pool Ball, guitarist Redd Volkaert and Lloyd Maines on steel, this isn't quite flawless, at least Laredo doesn't do it for me, but Taylor's other eleven songs, of which Rodriguez cowrote three, are, well, actually it's hard to say how good they are as songs, because they're delivered so incredibly well. The title track, Don't Speak In English and We Come Up Shining, particularly, are almost superhumanly sensuous.

THAD COCKRELL • WARMTH & BEAUTY

(Yep Roc 樂樂樂樂)

Dartway through the title track, I was thinking 'Now who does this remind me of?' (I'd say I was thinking 'Now of whom does this remind me?' but I don't think you'd believe it). Anyway, casting my mind around great country singers, I realized that it reminded me of Thad Cockrell. Given a choice between a good voice and a distinctive one, I'll always go for distinctive, but, of course, both is always good and Cockrell's pleading tenor certainly scores there. If you've read anything about him, you'll know he's a man with a purpose, to "put the hurt back into country," and you won't find much mission drift on the follow-up to Stack Of **Dreams**. Rather oddly, the only song that seems uncharacteristic is the opening I'd Rather Have You, which is a bit twangy for someone who boasts "there no 'alt' in my country." After that, however, you're home and dry, though maybe not dry-eyed, for eleven tracks, including a 'hidden' one (which came up as track 21 on my player, for what's it worth), of low key misery. The titles tell the story, Some Tears, She Ain't No You (my personal favorite, about a new girlfriend who everyone else thinks is perfect), What's The Use, I Was So Lonesome, Are You Still Missing Me? One of my favorite movie lines is in Only You, when, after they've both been dumped, Joaquin De Almeida tells Robert Downey Jr, "Enjoy the pain." Cockrell is so good at what he does that you don't even have to get dumped to be able to enjoy the pain.

JUNE CARTER • JOHNNY CASH LIVE RECORDINGS FROM THE LOUISIANA HAYRIDE

(Scena 影影影影/影影影)

collowing her death last May, I think everyone wanted to put the best spin possible on June Carter's last recordings, Wildwood Flower, released last month by Dualtone, but the sad fact is that she sounded old and tired as she sang Carter Family standards for the umptyth time. As a memorial, these lo-fi transcriptions from the high power KWKH, Shreveport, LA, broadcasts of the Louisiana Hayride, capturing her at the peak of her solo career, independent of both the Carter Family and Johnny Cash, are far more fitting. The bulk of the 15 tracks, Chuck Berry's Thirty Days, a parody of Marty Robbins' Big Iron, Billy Grammer's hit Gotta Travel On, her 1955 single He Don't Love Me Anymore, souped up Carter standards Bury Me Under The Weeping Willow and Wildwood Flower and the gospel classic Where No One Stands Alone, come from her 1960 Hayride debut. She returned in 1961 with a package tour headlined by The Wilburn Brothers who backed her on Worried Man Blues and Poor Ol' Heartsick Me (a 1959 hit for Doyle Wilburn's wife, Margie Bowes), and again in 1962 with Johnny Cash's touring show, singing John Henry, The Heel and, with Cash (whom she married six years later) and The Statler Brothers, Bob Dylan's It Ain't Me Babe and Jack Clement's Ballad Of A Teenage Queen. What this summary elides is the wealth of hilarious humor with which Carter laced her set. OK, you hear some of her schtick more than once, in fact one joke is used in all three segments, but she was a truly gifted comedienne, and sounds like she was having a ball.

JOHN LILLY • LAST CHANCE TO DANCE

(John Lilly 樂樂樂樂.5)

est Virginian Lilly is in many ways an archetypal **3CM**/FAR artist. When he released his first album, **Broken Moon**, he was spurned by, in succession, bluegrass, mainstream country and Americana radio and print media, but, serendipitously, put a copy in the hands of Kay Clements, GM of KWMR, Point Reyes, CA, who lost no time in alerting me and her fellow FAR reporters, and we just ate it up. With his distinctively 'Appalachian' voice and roots in early country music, you can see where he doesn't fit any of those pigeonholes, but that's their loss, our gain. Paying tribute to Jimmie Rodgers (No Hard Times), Hank Williams (Log Train, thought to be the last song he wrote), the Louvins (Born Again, from their early tent revival days), Almeda Riddle (Long Time Travelling) and Hazel Dickens (Coal Miner's Grave), plus an instrumental medley of the traditional Johnny Don't Get Drunk and Mississippi Sawyer, Lilly's only miscue is Rod Stewart & Ronnie Wood's Gasoline Alley, which almost but not quite works as a mandolin number. Of his seven originals, Whodunit?, Some Years Ago and Good News, Bad News are all splendid, but I can't help thinking that the one you're most likely to hear on the radio, and play for your friends, is the irresistible A Little Yodel Goes A Long Way, recorded live at a West Virginia coffeehouse. Lilly, who plays guitars, mandolin and bass, uses, at most, minimalist string band support, including Sonny Landreth playing slide guitar on two tracks and Ginny Hawker singing harmony vocals on four, she and Lilly very obviously coming from the same part of the world as Freakwater. Though it doesn't have a killer 'single' like Broken Moon, easily the newest song in FAR's version of The 100 Greatest Songs In Country Music,' this is another immensely engaging slice of Lilly's distinctive style, music that Jimmie Rodgers and Hank Williams would have recognized. They might even have covered his songs.

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CHARLES EARLE's B-Sides

SO LONG, JOHNNY CASH DEAD AT 71

s you've no doubt heard by now, Johnny Cash died last month here in Nashville. I'll do you all a favor and spare you the dramatic 'Man in Black' references the press jumped on at the time of his death. Yes, Cash was a legend and certainly the greatest male country artist of his generation, if not ever. But the thing that struck me about Cash's passing was the humility he demonstrated in recent years.

As I read through the local coverage of his death in Nashville, I saw huge, glowing quotes from the likes of Mick Jagger, George W Bush, Al Gore, Trent Reznor and a host of country music's biggest names. Some offered eloquent thoughts on Cash's greatness. Others put their feet squarely in their mouth. Witness the genius that is Faith Hill: "Who else could knock on the doors of the pearly gates wearing black?" Note to Faith: You might want to learn to shut your cakehole, unless you want to make it clearly obvious what a simpleton you really are.

In spite of all of the celebrity quotes, what I was most touched by were thoughts offered by the people who interacted with Cash each day in Hendersonville, the Nashville suburb where he lived. Reading about a waitress at Shoney's who served him weekly and was treated as a friend rather than a coffee-fetcher. Hearing a story from the local florist who supplied the flowers that the man loved to give to wife June Carter Cash right up until her death four months ago was also touching. Seeing a quote from a long-haul trucker who stopped in Nashville during a cross-country trip to pay respects was moving. I heard the phrase "man of the people" often in tributes. This seems more fitting in discussion than the color of Cash's clothes.

As I am making this point about the man, I suppose it is appropriate that I share my story of having met him. It was the summer of 1998, and I was the music critic for the now-defunct Nashville In Review. Chet Atkins was hosting his Musician Days event in town, and the highlight was a concert at the Ryman Auditorium honoring Waylon Jennings and Johnny Cash. I attended simply expecting to write a review. It had been stated that week that Jennings and Cash were not well enough to perform. They'd been in poor health, with Cash having nearly died from pneumonia the previous fall. Sure enough, both men sat just offstage with their families, and neither had set foot near a microphone by the halfway point of the show.

Then Kris Kristofferson came to the stage and began a gravelly performance of his Sunday Morning Coming Down, which had been a huge hit for Cash. I've always considered this to be one of the darkest and most emotional songs ever in country music, and the performance that evening made it seem even more so. Cash lifted his tired body from the couch and joined Kristofferson at the microphone in one of the most touching musical moments I can remember. Kristofferson finished the song with tears streaming down his cheeks and embraced Cash when they were finished. Words fail me when I think about it.

A little while later, I decided to put my backstage pass to good use. I was standing on the wings of the stage taking everything in when Cash made eye contact with me. I figured that shaking the man's hand was possibly a once in a lifetime opportunity, so I went over and said hello. I told him my name, and that I was honored to meet him. He offered his hand, which enveloped mine as if I was reaching into a baseball mitt (he was a huge man in stature). He then told me that, after battling for his life during the past year, he was honored to be there just to have the chance to meet me. We talked for a few moments. He asked where I was from and said my name several times. I asked him if he intended to perform or record again any time soon. In the end, I thanked him for his time and walked away knowing I had just experienced something I would never forget.

And so in his passing, I am thrilled to read about the waitresses and florists who met the same Johnny Cash that I did. A man who was humble and kind, and who realized that people were thrilled by his presence. A man who also knew that after some hard living and numerous battles with addiction, he was lucky just to be around to meet all of the people like me, who counted his handshake as a great moment in their lives. Cash was honored with a service at First Baptist Church of Hendersonville, and the list of those in attendance speaks volumes about his impact as an artist. Guests included Rick Rubin, Sheryl Crow, Emmylou Harris, Kid Rock, George Jones, Rodney Crowell, 'Cowboy' Jack Clement, Larry Gatlin, John Mellencamp, daughter Rosanne Cash and step-daughter Carlene Carter, as well as a host of others.

I have not bothered to list all of Cash's number one records or achievements here, as I am sure that any good **3CM** reader knows much of this man's career. It is worth noting, however, that he was the only person ever to be a member of the Country Music, Rock & Roll, and Songwriter's Halls of Fame. For that matter, there is a laundry list of praise and superlatives that might bear mention, but I'll just say so long.

CMA AWARDS: PICKS AND PANS...AND A CHANGE OF VENUE?

So we come to my annual prognostications for the CMA Awards telecast. The show is set for Wednesday, November 5 on CBS at 7pm CST.

Before I take a stab at the winners for this year, a story surfaced in Nashville that is of great interest to those in the local music community. The CMA Awards telecast is certainly the highest rated annual program broadcasted from Music City, but if a group from New York City has its way that may change.

The CMA's board of directors is considering a proposal to hold the annual awards show in New York in 2005. A New York tourism development group has made this offer, and a CMA spokesperson stresses that it would be a one-time commitment. A person involved in the New York proposal called Gotham the "natural place for this prestigious event."

The CMA's Executive Director Ed Benson has said that moving the show around to increase exposure has been considered in the past, and it's worth mentioning that the Dick Clark produced Academy of Country Music Awards show last May was moved from LA to Las Vegas, but most of us in Nashville think of the ACMs as the bastard son of the CMAs. Personally, I believe that moving the CMA's out of Nashville would be disastrous. Plus, it will just give our Music Row types

a chance to blow more expense money that they should be spending on artist development.

Now that I've addressed this silliness, let's start picking the winners. I was right on seven out of 12 last year. Let's see if I get any better:

Entertainer of the Year A few years back, women were making a strong showing in this category, but we're now back to this thing being a boys club, and it's the same boys we've all seen before. Between Brooks & Dunn, Kenny Chesney, Toby Keith, Alan Jackson and Tim McGraw, I'd always choose Jackson, as he is pretty much the only one in this bunch who doesn't make me ill, but Toby Keith is going to win.

Male Vocalist of the Year Chesney, Jackson, Keith and McGraw return here, along with Brad Paisley and George Strait. What often happens is that voters will pick one male for the Entertainer category and another in the vocalist category. With that in mind, my guess is that Paisley will win here.

Female Vocalist of the Year The notoriously absent Faith Hill and Shania Twain can just sit at home, and it will thrill me to no end. The nominees are Terri Clark, Alison Krauss, Patty Loveless, Martina McBride and Dolly Parton. An interesting list, picking the winner is difficult. Clark is a long shot. McBride is a recent winner. Loveless has done brilliant work in the last couple of years, but won in the latter part of the 90s. I'm going with Parton in a shocker that will be a nod to tradition.

Horizon Award The nominees—Buddy Jewel, Gary Allan, Joe Nichols, Blake Shelton and Darryl Worley—are all a mild step in the direction of traditionalism, and that's a good thing. I'd like to see Allan win, but the voters will pick Darryl Worley who had a huge hit this year.

Vocal Group The Dixie Chicks clearly had the best record of the year in the country genre and I'd like to see them win. Alabama is retiring after 2003 and should get some sentimental votes, but they've won crates of CMA statues in the past. I'm going to (cringe) pick Rascal Flatts here, as much as it makes me ill. The Chicks won it last year and deserve it again, but I don't think country is going to forgive them for what has been said this past year.

Vocal Duo This has been the Brooks & Dunn category for years and probably will be again. I'll pick them, bur, there was talk in town of a movement to finally give this thing to the Bellamy Brothers, who've been nominated so many times. It 'd be a hoot if they won. **Single of the Year** The sentimental pick is Johnny Cash for his song *Hurt*, and I think he has a chance. He will win in the video category hands down, but who can compete with him here? Well, Brad Paisley for *Celebrity* was pretty strong. Darryl Worley and Randy Travis had solid hits. But I think voters will take this last opportunity to honor Cash.

Album of the Year Cash is nominated here again, but I don't see voters giving this trophy to an album that didn't come from Music Row. Tim McGraw had a decent year with his **Dancehall Kings** record. The Dixie Chicks had the best album, but won't win. That means Toby Keith gets this one for **Unleashed**.

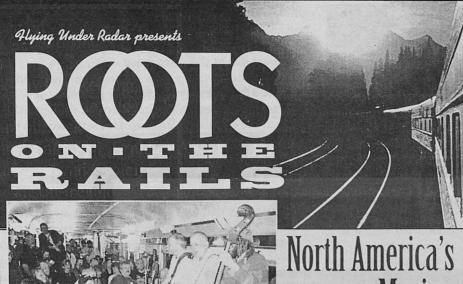
Song of the Year This one always goes to the sappiest and most sentimental cut. That means it will either be Randy Travis' *Three Wooden Crosses* or *Have You Forgotten?* by Darryl Worley. I'm picking Worley.

Vocal Event There are a few interesting things here. Johnny Cash with the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and the Kid Rock & Sheryl Crow duet would be a couple of examples. But the current duet between Alan Jackson & Jimmy Buffet on *It's Five O'Clock Somewhere* will win this category.

Musician of the Year I'm going to take a guess and say guitarist Randy Scruggs.

Video of the Year Johnny Cash for *Hurt* is a stone-cold lock. Mark this one down.

That's it folks, and I'll check back in with my score later in the fall.







VANCOUVER-TORONTO APRIL 1-5

TORONTO-VANCOUVER APR. 5-9



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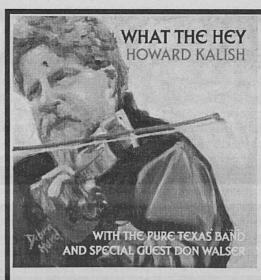
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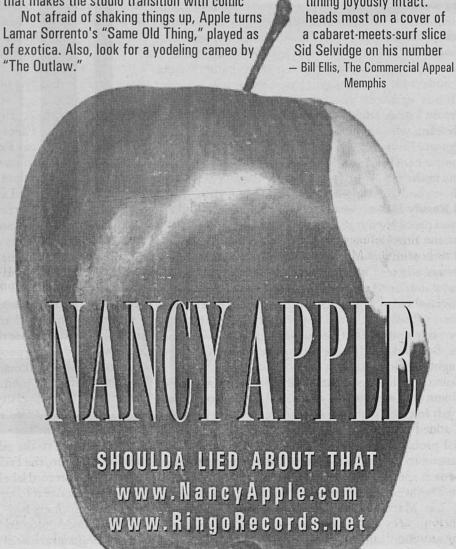
Ol' Howard's a great musician along with being a very talented songwriter. This record is real swinging Country & Western music. It's like being on the bandstand with the Pure Texas Band. Don Walser

... if you like Real Country...if you like Western Swing...if you like Texas Music, you're going to love Howard Kalish's What The Hey. Cornell Hurd

Nancy Apple is a Memphis treasure who lends both humor and poignancy to just about all she plays and sings. On "Shoulda Lied About That," Apple and coproducer Keith Sykes play up the pop sensibilities that also reside in her novel honky-tonk world.

She rolls out "The Kind to Break a Heart" like a female Buddy Holly while her voice sounds like a pillow of cotton candy on "My Boyfriend," a popular live staple that makes the studio transition with comic

timing joyously intact. heads most on a cover of a cabaret-meets-surf slice Sid Selvidge on his number



JOHN THE REVEALATOR

y all time favorite music trivia question is: when Lauren Bacall 'sings' in To Have And To Have Not, whose voice is it? The only person I ever came across who knew was Austin mandolin wizard Paul Glasse, and what makes this one particularly neat is that if you don't know the answer, you're never going to guess because you'll inevitably start out on the wrong foot. However, my favorite roots music trivia question is one that you should be able to work out logically—the answer's contained in the question: what was Woody Guthrie's middle name? Last month, I stumbled across yet another instance of this: what was Del Reeves first name? Again, you should be able to figure it out. OK, you have till the end of this column, then I'll make you go, 'Oh, damn, I should have thought of that!" Well, not the Bacall one, that'll make you go, "Get outta here!" Let me know if you have a favorite music stumper that you don't mind passing on-give your fellow 3CM illuminati a chance to astound their illiterate friends.

◆ Thinking, re the cover story, about the difficulty of buying people albums, I can remember a few successes, notably my niece, during her punk phase, thinking I was the coolest uncle ever when I gave her **Kick Out The Jams**, but more typical was a backfiring attempt to show how bighearted and unbigoted I am beneath this crusty exterior. Though I, and pretty much everyone else he knew, mocked his musical taste as bizarre and depraved, I bought a friend a new Donovan album for his birthday. I think it must have been **Open Road**, but then it was a Donovan album, so who gives a shit? Anyway, we played it at his birthday gathering and everyone was going 'Hey, this isn't all that bad.' Guess who was the one person who didn't like it?

♦ One thing that's amazed me since I first came to Austin was how many photographers there have always been working the music beat considering how little money there's ever been in the entire scene. Apart from Scott Newton, Austin City Limits' house photographer, I imagine they must all have sidelines, weddings, babies, whatever, that actually kept/keep them going. Given my nonexistent art budget, I never had much to do with any of them, though I admired the work of Brenda Ladd, Todd Wolfson and, my favorite, Dan **Schaefer**, who let me use a wonderful picture of Keith Ferguson. Rather oddly though, if you wanted to create a comprehensive photoessay on the Austin roots music scene in the 90s, you'd bypass all the professionals and archives and go straight to two amateurs, Bob Zink and Randy Dees. Between them, well, anybody they missed probably wasn't around long enough to matter. I've seen them at work and I've seen their portfolios, and their stuff would knock your socks off. The thing I always admired about both of them was that they always managed to keep the microphone out of musicians' faces, which many professionals don't seem to worry about, but, more importantly, where the pros were taking pictures of people they thought would be stars, Bob and Randy were taking them of people they thought should be stars.

◆ Some people, myself included, have a philosophical problem with **overdubs**, which, as I'm sure you know, but just in case, is when tracks are recorded separately and added to an album. However, they can also be a social problem. Last month, it was my privilege and pleasure to have both **Martí Brom** and **Bobby Flores** as special guests on a *Third Coast Music Network* shift, They were chatting outside the studio, so I missed this, but Martí was telling Bobby about the pure country project she's working on and he was nodding away and then said matter of factly, "Yes, I know, I played on it." In fact, Justin Treviño had him come in and lay down fiddle parts for almost every track, but he and Martí never crossed paths until that day.

♦ Having just lashed together a Top 100 myself, I may not be in a real strong position to criticize Rolling **Stone**, other than that everyone, everywhere is always in a real strong position to criticize Rolling Stone. Thing is, though, publishing a list of The 100 Greatest Guitarists Of All Time [sic—this is important] is a rather different proposition from polling country DJs on the 100 Greatest Country Songs, because the latter is a reasonably well defined area. Country songs may come in different varieties, but they're all apples and while not everybody would agree with every last inclusion, ranking or exclusion, none were truly outrageous. RS's list, however, includes not just apples and oranges, but an entire greengrocery full of exotic fruits, many of which, I'm not ashamed to say, I've never heard of before, and don't care if I never hear of again. However, to keep things simple, let's just look at who's not there rather than who is and in what order—though I have to say that, fond as I once was of The Ramones, Johnny Ramone at #16, three places ahead of Richard Thompson, makes absolutely no sense whatsoever.

Well, for a start, classical and jazz musicians, held to far higher standards than rock and blues players, were totally excluded, apart from the ambiguous John McLaughlin (#49). If you take the issue title literally, Andres Segovia, Julian Bream, Charlie Christian, Django Reinhardt and Wes Montgomery should all be in the top ten, but none of them made the list at all. Country wasn't completely excluded, James Burton is #20 and Clarence White #41, but you'd think someone at RS would have heard of Merle Travis, Jimmy Bryant. Chet Atkins, Grady Martin, Roy Nichols, Joe Maphis, Don Rich or Albert Lee. Apparently not. Western Swing and bluegrass don't make the cut either, so no Eldon Shamblin, Jimmy Wyble, Doc Watson or Tony Rice. World music got Ali Farka Toure (#76), who has the distinction of being the only person on the list who isn't American or British. Make that the continental US-no Gabby Pahinui.

Where Rolling Stone went wrong, of course, is with the title, which should have been 'The 100 Greatest Rock & Blues Electric Guitarists Of All Time,' which would have cut them some much needed slack, Or maybe not—where the fuck is Jesse Ed Davis? Nowhere. Alternatively, as Dave Marsh suggests, 'Another Issue That Proves We're Stupid As Well

As Ignorant' would have been the correct headline. ♦ The doors may soon close on 30 years of music history. The Bottom Line, NYC, owner operated by Allan Pepper & Stanley Snadowsky since February 12th, 1974. Like many other small NYC businesses, it's still feeling the after effects of 9/11 and with attendance down, they got behind on their rent and their landlord, New York University, has started eviction proceedings. "We want to pay off our debt to NYU, but to do so we need to remain in business. To stay in business, we need a promise from NYU that, if we pay off the rental arrears, they won't evict the Bottom Line." Pepper and Snadowsky are asking people, particularly NYU alumni, to contact John Beckman, assistant VP of the Office of Public Affairs at john.beckman@nyu.edu or Lynne Brown, VP for University Relations & Public Affairs at lynne.brown@nyu.edu ("send us a copy at SaveBLT@aol.com").

♦ As a footnote to the editorial on **UMG**'s price cuts, in February, 2000, the Federal Trade Commission found that the major record labels, including, of course, UMG, had acted in concert to keep CD prices artificially high, and that consumers had overpaid by as much as \$500 million between 1995 and 2000. Following the ruling, attorneys-general in 43 states charged the record companies with price-fixing, a case that was finally settled this summer; the companies agreed to pay \$64 million in cash and \$76 million in CDs donated to

schools and libraries. As it's impossible to be overcynical about the major labels, this last provision sounds to me like a heaven sent opportunity to clear all the real losers out of the warehouse.

♦ Remind me to warn you next year about the **Medina Lake Cajun Festival.** It was great to see **DL Menard**, but there was *nothing* to drink. The Abita booth alone makes the drive to Lafayette worthwhile.

FAR DJs OF THE MONTH

Liz Shepard & Tom Hughes

(Barstool Mountain, Voice of Vashon, Vashon, WA)
etting the nod for October in this occasional series
(if there is such a thing), Liz & Tom recently sent
out the results of some experiments they did at
www.onfocus.com/googlesmack/down.asp. The way
this website works is that you enter two words or
phrases and, in a head-to-head terabyte tug of war, it
tells you on how many webpages Google, the leading
Internet search engine, found each of them respectively.
This is what they came up with.

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2 Dixie Chicks (424,000)

And perhaps unsurprisingly (to everyone but Tom & Liz)

1 Mount Rainier (6,120)

2 Barstool Mountain (164)

+ TARY OWENS

orn in Toledo, Ohio, in 1942, Tary Owens was Praised in Port Arthur, TX, and moved to Austin with his high school friend Janis Joplin in the early 60s, where both became part of the Threadgill's music scene. Studying under the legendary folklorist Professor Americo Paredes at UT, he spent the 60s collecting and making field recordings of Texas roots music, cowboy songs, fiddle music, rural blues and prison 'toasts.' After many years of drug and alcohol abuse, of which he spoke openly, he cleaned up in the mid-80s and devoted his life to forgotten Texas bluesmen, tracking down and recording Roosevelt Williams, 'The Grey Ghost,' a 20s barrelhouse piano legend thought to be long dead. With John Foose, Catfish Records resurrected the careers of TD Bell & Erbie Bowser, Frank Robinson and Long John Hunter. Sadly, his youthful excesses caught up with him in the late 90s, when he was diagnosed with Hepatitis C, Parkinson's and diabetes. For a while his health improved when it was discovered that he was being wrongly medicated and he and his wife Maryann Price recorded an album of his own music, Milagros. A dear, kind, much loved man, Tary finally succumbed, dying in a Houston hospice on September 21st.

TRIVIA ANSWERS

When Lauren Bacall 'sings' in To Have And To Have Not, you're actually hearing Andy Williams. Woody Guthrie's full name was Woodrow Wilson Guthrie. Del Reeves' is Franklin Delano Reeves.

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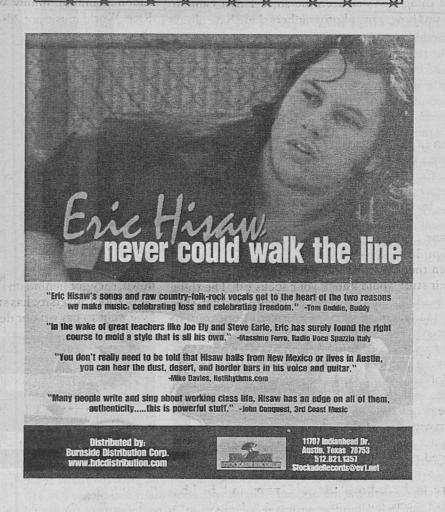


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** Must try harder

** Why did they bother?

* Piss on this noise

? I don't get it

000, AGENT OF ENTROPY

eing as how rating value for money has been **3CM**'s main raison d'être for the last 14 years, the first ever price cut in the history of the CD format has to get my attention. Market leader (28% of all record sales) Universal Music Group, sanctioned not long ago by the Federal Trade Commission for pressuring record stores *not* to discount albums, recently announced cuts of up to 30% in wholesale prices which they want passed on by retailers, "with the aim of bringing music fans back into retail stores." Unfortunately this move seems destined to have the exact opposite effect when it comes to Our Music. It's hard to imagine that anyone outside the other big five majors, which have, so far, stalled on following suit, thinks that CDs aren't, and haven't always been, ludicrously overpriced, but there is, unfortunately, an upside to the major labels' many years of price gouging.

When a major label is willing to take a 30% reduction, the obvious—and correct—conclusion, is that the profit margins on CDs are truly astronomical. One way of looking at it is that UMG is slashing a 90,000% profit on .02¢ worth of plastic to a mere 65,000%. This may not be fair, but the majors' main argument for high prices, that many of their acts lose money, simply tells me they're incompetent. Fact is, CDs have always been far more profitable than vinyl, trouble is, that applies across the board and, even though their unit costs are considerably higher, indie labels and self-releasing artists have benefited from the price levels set by the majors.

The math is fairly simple. Let's say Jane Doe & Her Doe-Nuts spend no more than \$10,000 making an album (and anybody who can't make a satisfactory album for \$10,000, preferably much less, has no business recording, but that's another issue) with a print run of 1000 copies. If she sold them all for, let's say, a fairly routine, at least up to now, \$15 a pop, she'd make \$5000. Realistically, she wouldn't because, even without spending a dime on advertising, she has to give away hundreds of CDs to the band's friends and relatives, radio stations, the press, clubs, promoters and so on. Usually, the first pressing will do more than amortise the project. If—an enormous, a HUGE, if—there's enough demand, the money will start coming in on subsequent pressings.

However, unless she's damn sure she can sell at least 2000 copies, a minor miracle for a self-released album, if she has to fall in line with UMG's \$10-12 pricing, she's fucked. Now I'm not saying this is necessarily a bad thing. Nothing personal against Jane, but there are way too many albums out there competing for the limited dollars of a finite audience, not to mention limited ink and airtime. In theory, I approve of the democratization of the record making process, in practise, with everyone and their dog putting out CDs, it's been a royal pain in the ass.

Entropy threatens to devour the self-released album and perhaps many indie labels, it'll even weaken the majors, but "Thank you, good night and please pay \$10 to download our new album at www.janedoenuts.com" is no substitute for actual CDs sold from the stage. As I see it, the future of roots music belongs to indie labels that transform themselves into one stop service centers, running the website, keeping the books, organizing short runs of CDs, taking care of publicity, promotion and advertising, all the scut work that many artists disike and very few do well. In other words, the label of the future will be more like Texas Music Roundup than Texas Music Group.

HENRY HORENSTEIN HONKY TONK PORTRAITS OF COUNTRY Music 1972-1981

(Chronicle Books, paperback %%%%)

nto you this day I bring glad tidings for the upcoming holiday season—this may well be the perfect cure for all your Christmas, Hanukkah and, well, OK, maybe not Kwanzaa, present buying headaches. Maybe you have more of a flair for it, but my track record is very spotty when it comes to albums as presents, probably because I can't bring myself to buy anything I don't like. And when the intended recipient is someone whose taste coincides with mine, more often than not, by presents opening time, he or she has already bought the album I thought would be perfect. So unless you ask people in advance what they'd like to get, which lays you open to a budget buster like the Collins Kids' box set (which, incidentally, is what I'd like this year), it's a very iffy proposition.

Books are somewhat safer, mainly because real music freaks spend as much money as possible on records, the rest they waste on rent and groceries, but, of course, it's just as easy to buy someone a music related book they'll despise as an album they'll loathe. Recently, I noted of the crappy **Heartaches By The Number** that it's the kind of thing that people who aren't into country music might think would make a great present for a friend who is and there's a lot of that out there. Autobiographies and biographies? Well, personally, I can't think of any musicians who interest me enough to read a whole book about them, as I've mentioned before, they're mostly pretty boring apart from their music. Reference books? The Internet has pretty much let the steam out of that segment. As for the academic literature, why would you do that to a friend?

The great thing about books that rely heavily on photographs is that you don't have to know anything about the genre they cover. For instance, you could safely buy **Portrait Of The Blues** for a blues lover without worrying whether Paul Trynka knows his ass from his elbow because Val Wilmer's photos so obviously kick ass. The same goes for Burton Wilson's work in **The Austin Music Scene 1965-1994**. And it goes in spades for Henry Horenstein's 'Portraits of Country Music.'

For much of the 70s and into the early 80s, Horenstein took pictures for Rounder Records and some tastefully posed and arranged shots are among the more than 100 pictures in this retrospective of the period, but the ones that make the book so compelling were taken when he was off Rounder's clock. There are stars here, a rather motley collection that includes Mother Maybelle Carter, Jerry Lee Lewis, Dewey Balfa, Porter Wagoner, Nathan Abshire, Tex Ritter, DeFord Bailey, Dolly Parton, Ralph Stanley, and so on, but Horenstein was just as fascinated by house bands, patrons, people waiting in line at the Ryman and tour buses.

Horenstein graduated in history from Chicago, as did a hero, photoessayist Danny Lyons ("I saw him as a historian with a camera. And that's what I wanted to be") and also Bill Nowlin, one of the founders of Rounder, "then it turned out that Ken Irwin and i were at the same basketball camp as kids!" "There wasn't much money in working for Rounder, but it gave me access. That's a big problem now. Of course, I didn't know it at the time, but things were changing. Back then, musicians liked being photographed, especially with their fans, because to them the fans were still important. Now it's all demographics and everybody wants to control images and limit access, which is why I don't photograph musicians, or athletes, much anymore."

Horenstein studied at the University of Warwick under the great British social historian EP Thompson, who views history from the bottom up rather than from the top down, through working people rather kings and commanders, and he's an enormous admirer of the brilliant Depression era photographer Dorothea Lange. Both influences can be seen in his work, particularly in the section devoted to shots taken at Tootsie's Orchid Lounge on Nashville's Lower Broadway, from which the photograph on the cover comes. "I could have done a whole book just on Tootsie's, there's so much more, but I had to make choices. I've always wanted to do a photessay book of these pictures but it's been a hard sell. Seven or eight years ago, I started talking to the Smithsonian, and, after a long run around, they bought the pictures and are organizing a show and a travelling exhibition, but they also decided to stop doing photography books. Fortunately, Chronicle, who'd turned me down earlier, made the exact opposite policy decision."

Over the years, I've acquired a whole bunch of books on country music and invariably they've relied for visuals on pictures supplied by record labels or publicists, because they get them for free. With Horenstein, you get a brilliant photographer whose interest goes far beyond taking the millionth picture of Shania Twain's navel, though, as he points out, it would now be impossible to get the kind of candid shots he took, you'd be pounced on by security. In a world where even the audiences for country music awards are vetted for youth and beauty, he reminds us that country music used to be made by and for real people.

Simplify Christmas—buy a copy of this for everyone you know who's into country music.

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Ist - Marc Savoy • 1941 • Eunice, LA

2nd - Leon Rausch • 1927 • Springfield, MO

---- Wayne Toups • 1958 • Lafayette, LA

---- Jo-El Sonnier • 1946 • Rayne, LA

---- Kelly Willis • 1968 • Lawton, OK

---- Gene Autry † Oct 2 1998

3rd - Albert Collins • 1932 • Leona, TX

---- Eddie Cochran • 1938 • Albert Lea, MN

---- Lewis Cowdrey • 1945 • Albuquerque, NM

---- Chris Gaffney • 1950 • Vienna, Austria

---- Woody Guthrie † 1967

---- Victoria Spivey † 1976 ---- Dennis McGee † 1989

Ath - Leroy Van Dyke • 1979 • Sn

4th - Leroy Van Dyke • 1929 • Spring Fork, MS

---- Larry Collins • 1944 • Tulsa, OK

---- Barbara K McDonald • 1957 • Wausau, WI

---- Janis Joplin † 1970

5th - Billy Lee Riley • 1933 • Pocahontas, AR

---- Johnny Duncan • 1938 • Dublin , TX

---- Belton Richard • 1939 • Rayne, LA

---- BW Stevenson • 1949 • Dallas, TX

6th - Sammy Price • 1908 • Honey Grove

7th - Uncle Dave Macon • 1870 • Smart Station, TN

---- Dale Watson • 1962 • Birmingham, AL

---- Smiley Lewis † 1966

---- Johnny Kidd † 1966

8th - Pete Drake • 1933 • Augusta, GA

9th - Goebel Reeves • 1899 • Sherman, TX

---- Ponty Bone • 1939 • Dallas, TX

---- Sister Rosetta Tharpe † 1973

10th Ivory Joe Hunter • 1914 • Kirbyville, TX

---- John Prine • 1946 • Maywood, IL

---- Tanya Tucker • 1958 • Seminole, TX

11th Gene Watson • 1943 • Palestine, TX

---- Lacy | Dalton • 1948 • Bloomsburg, PA ---- Jon Langford • 1957 • Carleon, Wales

---- Tex Williams † 1985

12th Gene Vincent † 1971

13th Gabby Pahinui † 1980

14th Bill Justis • 1927 • Birmingham, AL

15th Victoria Spivey • 1906 • Houston, TX

---- Mickey Baker • 1925 • Louisville, KY

---- Sid King • 1936 • Denton, TX

---- Al Stricklin † 1986

16th Stoney Cooper • 1918 • Harmon, WV

---- Canray Fontenot

• 1922 • L'Anse aux Vaches, LA

17th Little Joe • 1940 • Temple, TX

---- George Atwood • 1920 • Tuscaloosa, AL

18th Lotte Lenya • 1898 • Vienna, Austria

---- Chuck Berry • 1926 • San Jose, CA

19th Piano Red • 1911 • Hampton, GA

---- Marie Adams • 1925 • Linden, TX

---- Jeannie C Riley • 1945 Anson, TX

20th Johnny Moore • 1906 • Austin, TX

---- Stuart Hamblen • 1908 • Kellyville, TX

---- Wanda Jackson • 1937 • Maud, OK

---- Bugs Henderson • 1943 • Palm Springs, CA

---- Merle Travis † 1983

---- Danny Gatton †1994

21st Roy Nichols • 1932 • Chandler, AZ

---- Mel Street • 1933 • Grundy, WV

---- Steve Cropper • 1941 • Willow Springs, MO

---- Monette Moore Oct 21 1962

---- Bill Black † 1965

---- Mel Street † 1978

22nd Peck Kelley • 1898 • Houston, TX

---- Bobby Fuller • 1942 • Baytown, TX

23rd Speckled Red • 1892 • Monroe, LA

---- Boozoo Chavis • 1930 • Lake Charles, LA

---- Johnny Carroll • 1937 • Cleburne, TX

---- Ellie Greenwich • 1940 • Brooklyn, NY

---- Maybelle Carter † 1978

24th Big Bopper • 1930 • Sabine Pass, TX

---- Glen Glenn • 1934 • Joplin, MO

25th Walter Hyatt • 1948 • Spartenburg, SC

---- Johnny Lee Wills † 1984

---- Roger Miller † 1992

26th Mahalia Jackson • 1911 • New Orleans, LA

---- Beto Villa • 1915 • Falfurrias, TX

---- Wes McGhee • 1948 • Lutterworth, UK

27th Floyd Cramer • 1933 • Samti, LA

28th Bill Bollick • 1917 • Hickory, NC

---- Blackie Forestier • 1928 • Cankton, LA

---- Iry Lejeune • 1928 • Church Point, LA

---- Hank Marvin • 1941 • Newcastle, UK

70th Albert Rumley & 1005 & China OV

29th Albert Brumley • 1905 • Spiro, OK

---- Narciso Martinez

• 1911 • Tamaulipas, Mexico

---- Lee Clayton • 1942 • Russellville, AL

---- Duane Allman † 1971

30th Patsy Montana • 1914 • Hot Springs, AR

---- Otis Williams • 1949 • Texarkana, TX

31st Dale Evans • 1912 • Uvalde, TX

---- Ray Smith • 1934 • Melbar, KY ---- Calvin Russell • 1948 • Austin, TX

Threadgill's World HQ, 301 West Riverside Dr

BIERGARTEN SERIES
Sat 4th, McLemore Avenue

+ Buttermilk Jr

Fri 17th, Sambaxe + La Tribu

Fri 24th Geno Delafose & French

Rockin' Boogie (KOOP benefit)

Sat 25th, Slobberbone

Fri 31st Halloween Party with The South Austin Jug Band

STRING BAND THURSDAYS

7:30-10 pm. No Cover

2nd, The Pistol Love Family

9th, The South Austin Jug Band

16th, The Green Cards

23rd, The Slewfoot String Band SUNDAY GOSPEL BRUNCH

11am-1.30pm

5th, Breenen Leigh

12th, The Gospelaires
19th, The Durden Family

Threadgill's North,

Wednesdays, 8-10pm. No Cover 1st, Eric Hisaw

6416 N Lamar