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#155/244 December 2009

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**FAR Away In Bethlehem
(or not)**

**JOHN THE REVEALATOR
FREEFORM AMERICAN ROOTS**

#124

**ROOTS BIRTHS & DEATHS
REVIEWS * * * * * (or not)**

'NONE OF THE HITS, ALL OF THE TIME'

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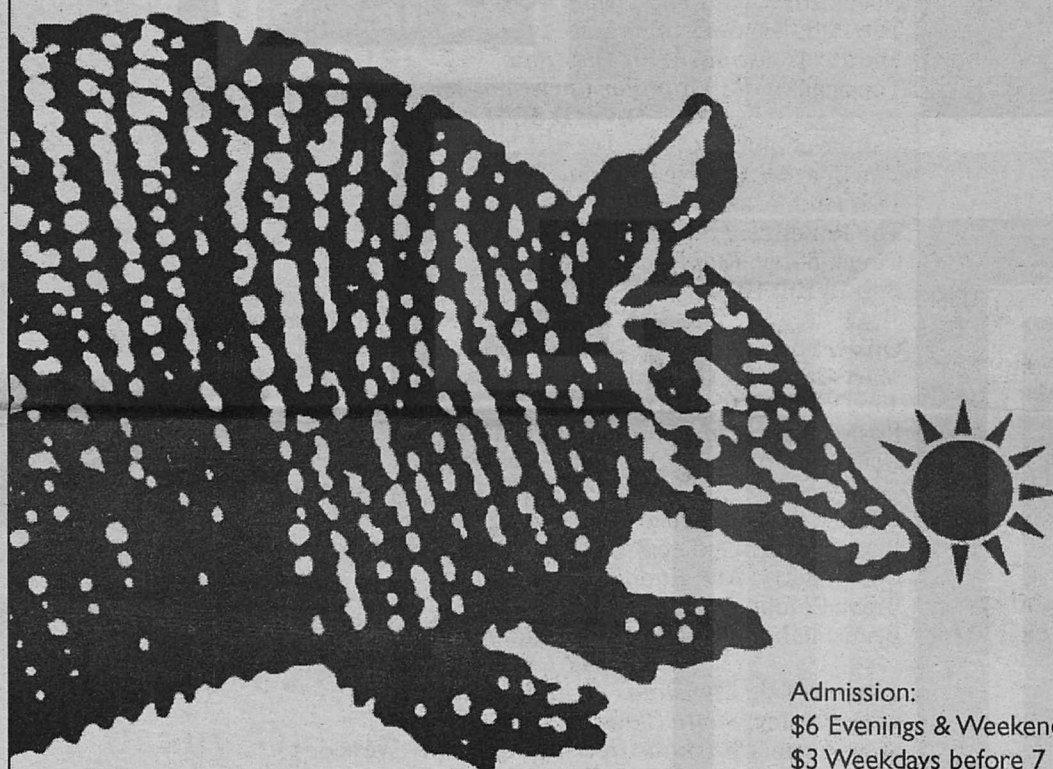
December 11-24 • 11 am - 11 pm

Austin Convention Center

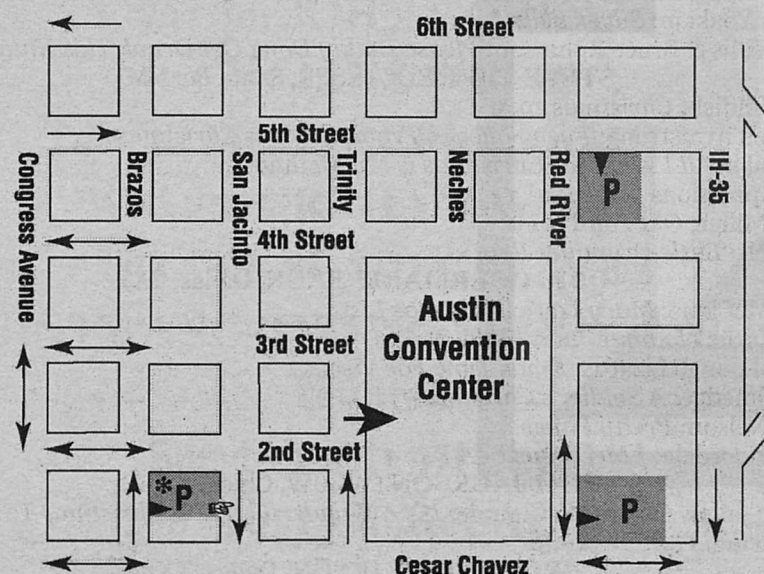
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8-11 PM Son Dos/Del Castillo

Saturday 12

12-2:30 PM... Ian McLagan & The Bump Band

3:30-6 PM Toni Price

8-11 PM Eliza Gilkyson

Sunday 13

12-2:30 PM... Austin Lounge Lizards

3:30-6 PM Brave Combo

8-11 PM Cienfuegos

Monday 14

12-2:30 PM... Kalu James

8-11 PM W.C. Clark

Tuesday 15

12-2:30 PM... Kat Edmonson

8-11 PM The Gourds

Wednesday 16

12-2:30 PM... porterdavis

8-11 PM Ray Wylie Hubbard

Thursday 17

12-2:30 PM... Suzanna Choffel

8-11 PM Marcia Ball & Pianorama

Friday 18

12-2:30 PM... Sahara Smith

3:30-6 PM Shaidri & Hank Alrich w/

Doug Harman

8-11 PM Jimmy LaFave

Saturday 19

12-2:30 PM... Band of Heathens

3:30-6 PM Terri Hendrix

8-11 PM Van Wilks

Sunday 20

12-2:30 PM... Rick Trevino

3:30-6 PM Asleep at the Wheel Quartet

8-11 PM An evening with the music of
Stephen Bruton

Monday 21

12-2:30 PM... The Biscuit Brothers

3-3:30 PM Blazing Bows

3:30-6 PM Joe McDermott

8-11 PM The Eggmen

Tuesday 22

12-2:30 PM... Dustin Welch

3:30-6 PM Warren Hood

8-11 PM Albert & Gage

Wednesday 23

12-2:30 PM... Shelley King

3:30-6 PM Guy Forsyth

8-11 PM Carolyn Wonderland

Thursday 24

12-2:30 PM... Slim Richey

3:30-6 PM Greezy Wheels

8-11 PM Texana Dames

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(Cow Island) *CP/*GS/*JF/*JM/*MN/*MP/*MT/
*RH/*RMT/*RS/*SH

- 2 Rosie Flores & The Pine Valley Cosmonauts: *Girl Of The Century* (Bloodshot) *BL/*CS/*LB/*LG/*NA/*MP/*ST
- 3 Dave Rawlings Machine: *A Friend Of A Friend* (Acony) *JW/*RV/*TM
- 4 Arty Hill & The Long Gone Daddys: *Montgomery On My Mind* (Cow Island) *GF/*MM
- 5 Rosanne Cash: *The List* (Manhattan) *AB/*KC/*LMG
- 6 Shelley King: *Welcome Home* (Lemonade) *HP/*JD
- 7 Avett Brothers: *I And Love And You* (American) *TW/*XE
- 8 Caroline Herring: *Golden Apples Of The Sun* (Signature Sounds) *JP
- 9= Kevin Deal: *Seven* (Blind Nello) *DA
- Teri Joyce: *Kitchen Radio* (Girl Friday)
- Lyle Lovett: *Natural Forces* (Lost Highway) *BS/*JMB
- 10 Corb Lund: *Losin' Lately Gambler* (New West) *RJ
- 11 Bop Ensemble: *Between Trains* (Cordova Bay) *BW/*KM
- 12 Jo Serrapere: *Love Going South* (Detroit Radio Co) *PTT
- 13 Tom Russell: *Blood And Candle Smoke* (Shout Factory)
- 14 Electric Rag Band: *If You Got Some* (ERB)
- 15= Jasper Brown: *Murder* (Little Kiss) *JT/*TG
- Chip Taylor: *Yonkers, NY* (Train Wreck) *TJ
- 16 VA: *Things About Comin' My Way* (Black Hen) *LH/*RL
- 17 Caroline Mark & NQ Arbuckle: *Let's Just Stay Here* (Mint) *DF
- 18= Danny Barnes: *Pizza Box* (ATO) *MY
- Jay Farrar & Benjamin Gibbard: *One Fast Move Or I'm Gone* (F-Stop/Atlantic) *GM
- Chuck Prophet: *Let Freedom Ring!* (Yep Roc) *BJ
- Loudon Wainwright: *High Wide & Lonesome* (Proper) *AG
- 19 The Mayflies: *A Thousand Small Things* (Mud Dauber) *HT
- 20= Brandi Carlile: *Give Up The Ghost* (Sony BMG) *SB
- Cliff Eberhardt: *500 Miles* (Red House) *BK
- Dolly Parton: *Dolly* (RCA Nashville/Legacy) *TS
- Richmond Fontaine: *We Used to Think the Freeway Sounded Like A River* (Arena Rock) *R78
- 21 Robert Earl Keen: *The Rose Hotel* (Lost Highway) *BF
- 22= Patrick Bloom: *Ghosts Of Radio* (Mud Dauber) *BB
- James Hand: *Shadow On The Ground* (Rounder)
- Wrinkle Neck Mules: *Let The Lead Fly* (Lower 40) *CF
- 23= Brian Burns: *American Junkyard* (self) *EW
- Exene Cervenka: *Somewhere Gone* (Bloodshot)
- Cole Mitchell: *Primordial Reckoning* (Little Kiss)
- Hank Williams: *Revealed* (Time-Life) *KW
- 24= Matt Harlan: *Tips & Compliments* (Berkalin) *CJ
- Mark Stuart & The Bastard Sons: *Bend In The Road* (Texicalli)
- Judy Tampa & Bunko Squad: *Tainted* (Media Rite) *PP
- The Texas Sheiks: *Tradition & Moderne* *AA

FAR AWAY IN BETHLEHEM (OR NOT)

So, thinking on Dylan's new album, I asked the FARsters if any of them played seasonal music, which brought responses ranging from several 'No Christmas Music On My Show, Ever' to four-hour thematic playlists, but as many DJs said they had favorite songs rather than albums (as one noted, "Best Christmas album is kind of an oxymoron"), I thought it might be entertaining to do a Xmas FAR chart. Only I sent out an ambiguous email and then managed to close a large file of notes without saving it first. One way and another, not my finest moment as an editor. Anyway, I still thought what I could salvage was fairly interesting. As you'll see, a lot of what you might hear from FAR DJs is stuff that one described as "left of center." I'll say.

JEN MEDLIN-LLOYD (WNMC, Traverse City, MI)

Neko Case: *Santa Left A Booger In My Stocking*

Mr Hanky: *The Christmas Poo*

Robert Earl Keen: *Merry Christmas From The Family*

Cornell Hurd Band: *It Gets Like This Every Christmas*

Dale Watson: *Santa And My Semi*

Yarn: *Christmas In Prison* (or the John Prine version)

STU REID (CKUW, Winnipeg, Canada)

Trailer Trash: *Hard Candy Christmas*

Paul Kelly: *How To Make Gravy*

Roger Miller: *Old Toy Trains*

The Puddles: *Christmas List*

Marah: *Christmas With The Snow*

The Scabs: *All I Want For Christmas Is My Methadone*

DAVID JOHN (KTRU, Houston, TX)

Carol Noonan: *O Come O Come Emmanuel*

Tim Sparks: *Nutcracker Suite*

Tish Hinojosa: *Arbolito*

The Ronettes: *I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus*

Chuck Berry: *Run Rudolph Run*

Bob Dylan: *Winterlude*

JOE PARERES (KSYM, San Antonio, TX)

Otis Gibbs: *Color Wheel*

Mary Gauthier: *Christmas In Paradise*

Jon Dee Graham: *\$100 Bill*

Rosie Flores: *Christmas On West Mistletoe*

Drive-By Truckers: *Mrs Claus' Kimono*

JIM BEAL Jr (KSYM, San Antonio, TX)

Charles Brown: *Please Come Home For Christmas*

Benny Grunch & The Bunch: *12 Yats of Christmas*

Chuck Berry: *Run Rudolph Run*

Brave Combo: *Must Be Santa*

Beausoleil: *It Came Upon A Midnight Clear*

BILLY LEE (Dublin City FM, Ireland)

Johnny Cash: *Christmas As I Knew It*

Elvis Presley: *Santa Claus Is Back In Town*

Steve Earle: *Christmas In Washington* (live version)

Dale Watson: *You Can Call Me Nick*

Dwight Yoakam: *Silver Bells*

Kelly Willis & Bruce Robinson: *Please Daddy Don't Get Drunk This Xmas*

STEVE TERRELL (KSFR, Santa Fe, NM)

Billy Childish: *Christmas 1979*

Rev Glen Armstrong: *Even Squeaky Fromme Loves Christmas*

The Scabs: *All I Want for Christmas is My Methadone*

The Impressions: *Amen*

Roger Miller: *Old Toy Trains*

Joan Jett: *Little Drummer Boy*

OBIE OBERMARK (KNON, Dallas, TX)

Antsy McClane: *Mary Lou's Christmas List*

Steve Earle: *Nothing But A Child*

Austin Lounge Lizards: *Xmas Time For Visa*

Jeff Talmadge: *A Soldier's Christmas*

Willie Nelson: *Pretty Paper*

Jim Lauderdale: *I Met Jesus In A Bar*

TOM JACKSON (WLUW, Chicago, IL)

Guitar Outlaw Christmas Chorale: *It's A Wonderful Life Is Christmas To Me*

Red Sovine: *Faith In Santa*

BRUCE PRICE (KNON, Dallas, TX)

Johnny Cash: *Little Drummer Boy*

Cheech & Chong: *Santa Claus*

BILL WAGMAN (KDVS, Davis, CA)

Spinal Tap: *Christmas With The Devil*



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***XX = DJ's ALBUM OF THE MONTH**

Freeform American Roots is compiled from reports provided by 140 freeform DJs. More information can be found at <http://tcmradio.com/far/>

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Tue 9th McMERCEY FAMILY

Wed 9th GRAHAM WEBER

Thu 10th SLAID CLEAVES

Fri 11th TWANG-TWANG SHOCK-A-BOOM
reunion

Sun 13th ED MILLER

Tue 15th IAN McLAGAN

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DECEMBER 2009

Tue 1st • Michael Martin (cafe)

Wed 2nd • Hank Harrison Trio (cafe)

Thu 3rd • Raul Malo w/special guests (church)

Fri 4th • First Friday: In & Outlaws (church)

Sat 6th • Campanas De America

Holiday Scholarship Concert, 6:30pm & 9pm (church)

Sun 6th • Gospel Brunch with Earfood Gospel Orchestra (church, noon-3pm)

Mon 7th • Toys for Tots Toy Drive: hosted by Sisters Moales with Teri Hendrix & Lloyd Maines, Two Tons Of Steel, Jason Allen and more (church)

Tue 8th • Bett Butler & Joel Dilley (cafe)

Wed 9th Casbeers Campfire with Butch Morgan & Jimmy Spacek (cafe)

Thu 10th & 19th • La Tentaciones De Chamuco (Temptations Of The Devil)

traditional Mexican Christmas play (church)

Fri 11th • Greg Trooper (cafe) • Freddie Krc songwriters in the round holiday show

w/Mitch Jacobs, Cam King (church)

Sat 12th • SA Bluecats (cafe) • Marcia Ball (church)

Tue 15th • Open Mike w/Glenn & Kim (cafe)

Wed 16th • Eric Hisaw (cafe)

Thu 17th • Brother Dave's Open Mic (cafe)

Fri 18th • David Garza (church)

Sat 19th • Patricia Vonne (church)

Tue 22nd • Ruben V (cafe)

Wed 23rd • Earfood Hootenany (cafe)

Thu 24th/Fri 25th • CLOSED

Sat 26th • Mitch Webb & The Swindlers (church)

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JOHN THE REVEALATOR

Last month, I mentioned that I had to learn from a Dutch DJ that **KUT** had moved Nick Spitzer's syndicated *American Routes* to a truly dreadful time slot, but later realized that it has, at least, been replaced by a locally produced show, Ed Miller & Tom Pittman's *Sunday Folkways* (2-4pm). However, while making an effort to bring myself up to speed on matters KUT, I discovered, rather late in the day, that the host of *Texas Music Matters*, David Brown, was brought to Austin from NPR's Los Angeles-based business affairs program *Marketplace*. This seems more than a little odd as KUT already has a couple of people who know a bit about Texas music, and seems to fly in the face of the station's pissing and moaning about being short of money. Which brings us to some really bad news for the Save Larry Monroe and Paul Ray campaign, the latest KUT fundraiser brought in record donations and listener ratings. Emulating KGSR has obviously paid off and I can't help feeling that KGeezer's Nov 30th move to 93.3 (107.1 is being taken over by a 'Regional Mexican' format) means that the commercial version is not long for this world, which might help explain Jody Denberg's abrupt departure.

- An Erwin Center press release says, "There is no substitute to seeing **John Mayer** perform live." Well, actually, I can think of one very viable alternative—not seeing John Mayer perform at all. Another press release claims, "It's a dream ticket for country music fans: **Reba McEntire** and **George Strait** are headed out on tour together." Have to say, "dream" is not the word I'd have used, which is maybe why incredibly boring country stars don't ask me to write press releases.

- Just after the **CMA awards**, I ran into a musician who played behind one of the stars (though when I say 'played,' he was actually miming, and not even to his own part—live is so 20th century). One requirement of his job is perfect pitch, so his most painful memory was having to listen to **Taylor Swift**. "It's amazing, you'd think she'd hit the right note occasionally just by accident, but she's always out of tune." Incidentally, John Mayer's latest album features a duet with Swift, isn't that special?

- Quite why I was watching the CMA awards isn't easy to explain, I guess it's the same rather sick fascination that makes one slow down to check out a wreck on the highway, but when Swift won Entertainer of the Year, I couldn't help but be reminded of the moment when **Charlie Rich**, opening the same envelope in 1975, saw **John Denver**'s name, pulled out his cigarette lighter and set fire to it. DL and I had a big argument about this, she thinks it was rank bad behavior on a par with Kanye West, I see it as Rich taking a principled stand, but then, of course, I don't give a shit about either Swift or Beyonce's videos and I loathed and despised John Denver.

- Kinda pitiful, laughing at your own jokes, but when I saw the cover of a magazine at the supermarket checkout featuring **Tim McGraw** saying "My wife makes me a better man." I immediately thought of the punchline of an ancient gay joke, "If I gave her the wool, would she make me one?" Cracked me up anyway.

- Not being on any major label mailing list, I naturally didn't get sent a copy of **Christmas In The Heart**, and while, of course, one's first reaction to the idea of **Bob Dylan** singing carols is that it's wrong on so many levels, it does, at least, tell you which religion Zimmerman is currently practicing—don't know about you, but I can't keep track. I've been getting mixed messages from **3CM** readers, though even enthusiasts like Joe Specht of Abilene acknowledge "a few clunkers and stinkers," but his friend Melody Kelly is unambiguous, "the hungry will remain hungry if they are depending on the sales of this questionable effort."

- Can you construct a sentence that includes the words '**Ernest Tubb**' and '**Kid Rock**'? Of course not, what would be the point? So, try this on for size: "The latest group of honorees whose names will adorn the **Music City Walk of Fame** was announced on Tuesday, and that seventh Walk class includes country icon Dolly Parton, Country Music Hall of Famer Ernest Tubb, rap-rock star Kid Rock, Tootsie's namesake Tootsie Bess and Charlie Daniels." Those Nashville fuckers really are utterly shameless. If I'd been in ET Jr's shoes, I'd told them to stick up their jumper, but the poor guy looks more like an accountant than Charlie Rich.

- Too late for most all of you, I know, but I can't resist mentioning the December 3rd **Country Music Sale** at Christie's auction house. Centered round property from the estate of Hank Thompson, it also includes instruments, stage outfits, and hand-written lyrics from Hank Williams, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, Loretta Lynn, Waylon Jennings, Hank Snow, Conway Twitty, Bill Monroe, Buddy Holly, Johnny Cash, Luther Perkins and many more. I don't know how long they keep the e-catalogs up, but as the URL is as long as my arm, try going to Christie's home page, click on December 09, then scroll down to the 3rd and be prepared to drool. A rather neat tie-in is that Cow Island artist and **3CM** cover girl **L'il Mo & Monicats** were booked to provide music during the event.

- Presumably, *someone* must have written *The Hokey Pokey*, but exactly who, or, come to that, where, as there are claimants in America and, where it's known as *The Hokey Cokey*, Britain, is lost in the mists of history and a web of litigation. However, the November 23rd death, age 104, of one of the putative authors, pianist **Robert Degan**, who did at least have a 1944 US copyright to back him up, reminds me of what was once my traditional end of the year message to **3CM** readers—what if the Hokey Cokey really is what it's all about?

WAYNE TOUPS & ZYDECAJUN

LIVE 2009

(Swallow ☼☼☼☼)

Fifteen years after **Back To The Bayou**, Swallow, the Cajun arm of Floyd Soileau's Flat Town Music, which hasn't been too active the last few years, and Touns, for a few years in the late 80s/early 90s on Mercury, one the most commercially successful Louisiana artists (and, come to that, accordion players), are together again, with an album of Touns doing what he does best, driving an audience into a frenzy. Six tracks, *Zydecajun Train*, *Sugar Bee*, *Johnny Can't Dance*, *Sweet Joline*, *Petite Ou La Grosse*, *Leap Of Faith* and *Please Explain* were recorded at Crowley Rice Festival, *That's What I Love About My Baby*, *Two-Step Mamou* and *Take My Hand* at Rox/Cypress Bayou Casino and *La Porte D'en Arriere* and *Tupelo Honey* at a club in Lafayette, and it has to be said that while Touns and his terrific band, featuring Tony Ardoin on guitar, sound great throughout, the Crowley crowd's feedback noticeably cranks up the energy level. Touns' extraordinary physical presence hardly needs a DVD, it comes across strong and sweaty on plain ol' CD. Despite the title, there is one studio track at the end, *I Should Have Never Fell In Love*. Cajun and Zydeco album have got hard to come by, Touns himself spent much of the last decade or so on Shanachie, a label best described as 'secretive,' so it's good to see a classic label and a kickass performer are both still in business.

JC

MATT HARLAN • TIPS & COMPLIMENTS

(Berkalin ☼☼☼☼)

Seem to be getting a rather steady stream of excellent albums produced by Rich Brotherton, who, like Gurf Morlix, if somewhat less edgy, seems to handpick his projects. Following Leeann Atherton's **Heart Travelled Road** (September) and Rita Hosking's **Come Sunrise** (November), Brotherton, with the help of Warren Hood fiddle, Marty Muse pedal steel, Riley Osbourn keys and Phoebe Hunt of The Belleville Outfit vocals, helps a Houston singer-songwriter come out of the gate with, if not a bang, at least a very convincing debut indeed, Harlan, who's spent time in San Antonio and Austin rock bands, has racked up a good few songwriting awards, which goes to show much much use songwriting awards are, but he does at least deserve them. with material that ranges from deadly serious observation to wry humor. *Elizabethtown* is about a brother becoming a drug addict, *Something New* is a terrific take on 'you can never go home,' while the title track reflects on his chosen career and *You're Just Drunk* is about honky tonk 'romance.' This is kind a classic four flowers album—Harlan writes very good songs, his voice is way better than most singer-songwriters, the production and musicianship are first-rate, in short, what's not to like?

JC

DESOTO RUST • HIGHWAY GOTHIC

(self ☼☼☼☼)

You can't help but admire a band that gets an album title from the font that's been used for federal road signs since the 40s. That is just way cool. On their third outing, the Philadelphia roots-rockers have come up with a mildly bizarre cross between a studio album and a live recording, essentially trying to capture their bar band essence without dealing with the problems inherent in recording in an actual bar—as **The Rock Bible** says, "the worst venue in Europe is still better than the nicest venue in America." This hybrid approach works pretty well for them, there's an urgency and energy usually lacking in the studio, where you're not actively trying to win and hold an audience, while, at the same there are, like, high and low ends, not just the mid range that so often damps down and muffles a live set. According to one local writer, whom I have no reason to disbelieve, you can't make it unless you leave Philadelphia, but then rhythm guitarist and principal songwriter Ray Hunter, lead guitarist David Otwell, who contributed one of the eleven originals (there's also a cover of Dylan's *New Morning*), bassman Steve Savage and drummer Dave Reeve seem content to testify to the Delaware Valley. With the unusually high quality of the material, confident identity and assured musicianship, DeSoto Rust now remind me more of Austin's late, lamented The Highwaymen/Loose Diamonds than, as they did on their earlier albums, of The Band or CCR.

JC

SAND SHEFF • TURN ME AROUND

(Upheaval Dome ☼☼☼☼)

Couple of years ago, Sheff sent me a trilogy, which I have to admit is two CDs more than I can handle at one time. It looked like a 'concept' and I don't do concept. Way I figure it, you write a song, then another until you have twelve keepers, put them on an album and start over. Of course, the tricky bit is 'keepers,' songwriters not necessarily being the best judges of their own material, but Sheff, who now lives in San Marcos, TX, has had almost ten years since "the final daze of what they still call 'Country Music'" to consider this batch and weed out any duds. Recorded in Nashville, four tracks feature Sheff's one-time band, Buck 50, the other eight a larger cast that includes Barbara Lamb fiddle and Tom Lewis drums. From the romantic title track through the ribald humor of *Wet Dog* to the pathos of *Angel Don't You Cry*, Sheff weaves a varied and satisfying tapestry. I may never know what he was trying to do with his trilogy, but twelve solid originals I can understand, and appreciate.

JC




DECEMBER MUSIC

Mondays, Austin Cajun Aces, 7pm
 Tuesdays, Brennen Leigh, 6pm
 Kevin Gallagher, 8pm
 2nd, Cowboy Johnson, 7pm
 3rd, Liz Morphis, 7pm
 4th, Larry Lange's Lonely Knights,
 10pm
 7th, Sunset Valley Boys, 3pm
 9th, Paul Glasse & Mitch Watkins,
 7pm
 10th, Erik Hokkanen Trio, 7pm

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11th, Ponty Bone
 & The Squeezetones, 10pm
 12th, Omar & The Howlers, 10pm
 16th, Danny Britt, 7pm
 17th, Andrew Hardin
 & Danny B Harvey, 7pm
 18th, Freight Train Troubadours,
 10pm
 19th, Christmas Matinee w/Thierry
 LeCoz & Friends, 3pm
 Bo Porter, 10pm
 24th-27th CLOSED
 30th, Craig Tounge, 7pm
 31st, Old Farts Early New Year's Eve
 w/Cleve & Sweet Mary
 Hattersley, 7pm

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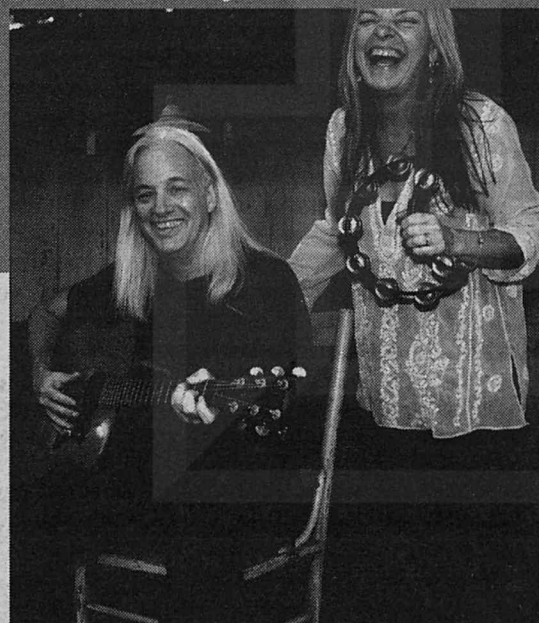
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JONESING FOR REAL COUNTRY

Unless I'm very seriously mistaken about 3CM's demographic, I feel confident that, anytime over the last 20 years, whenever I struck up 'Country Music, my ass,' I would be joined by an approbative international chorus. Recently, a rather well-known voice added itself to the strains of what has, sadly, become a standard in these parts. You may have come across the rather surprisingly well-circulated AP interview with George Jones in which, when asked about what he thought about music by today's top country stars, the 78-year old said, "they've stolen our identity," adding, specifically about music by artists like Carrie Underwood and Taylor Swift, "They had to use something that was established already, and that's traditional country music. So what they need to do really, I think, is find their own title, because they're definitely not traditional country music."

I suspect AP's Caitlin King doesn't know that this isn't The Possum's first rodeo. Back in 1974, outraged by the CMA giving the Female Vocalist award to Olivia Newton-John, Jones and Tammy Wynette hosted the protest meetings that founded the short-lived Association of Country Entertainers. Not that Jones is the paragon of country virtue and purity—I doubt anyone has made as many of the disposable albums that have plagued country music since LPs were invented. Nonetheless, he is George Jones, the man who could almost make country-politan tolerable.

And, of course, he makes a very legitimate, if not exactly novel, point. When even the great Bill C Malone, in the second revised edition of his classic **Country Music USA** (UT Press, 2002), accepted as country anything marketed as such, the rather obvious conclusion is that country music has become nothing more than a flag of convenience. As 'pop' isn't a genre but an industry, it has to attach itself to a host with an established infrastructure, so Taylor Swift gets marketed as country, even though there's nothing remotely country, even country-pop, about her schtick (and, as Miss Leslie says, don't get me started on Lady Antebellum).

Jones' remarks set off an Internet shitstorm, the few 'George is right, they need to find their own title' voices drowned out by claims that Underwood and Swift had brought more fans to country music in the last two or three years than Jones had in the last forty by making it relevant to young people. This is, of course, Ben Tre logic, in order to save country music, it has to be destroyed.

One could amuse oneself by thinking up genre titles for Swift et al, my current favorite is Suburban & MidWestern, but the country music establishment has far too much invested in its relationship with pop, while the artists and their handlers will fly the country flag just as long as it's convenient. So it's probably easier for what Jones calls 'traditional country music' to find a new title instead, which is why 3CM and FAR use 'Real Country.'

Which brings us to one mistake Jones made in the AP interview, when he said, "there's quite a few of us that are going to hope that [traditional country music] comes back one of these days." Actually, George, it's never gone away, you just don't go to the right places. If you're ever in Austin, Baltimore, Burlington, Brooklyn, Houston, Denver, a whole mess of places, maybe even Nashville for all I know, you could go out and hear some great traditional country music. Thing of it, though, there ain't a whole of money in it these days. **JC**

SONNY BURGESS & THE LEGENDARY PACERS GJON STOMP!

(El Toro [Spain] ****)

My all-time favorite joke is about two Stalin-era farm managers meeting up and one asks the other, "So, Ivan Ivanovitch, how are things on the Great Red October Collective?" To which the other replies, "Well, Gregor Gregorovitch, they're average." "Average? How do you mean average?" "I mean worse than last year, but not as bad as next year." You don't have to know anything whatsoever about Soviet agricultural policy to appreciate the universal applicability of this classic example of Russian black humor to just about everything, including, indeed very obviously, music.

Watching the 2009 Country Music Association awards show, I was struck, even more forcibly than usual, by how completely commercial country music has become disassociated from its past—by which I mean not just the past as 3CM readers are most likely to think of it, the 40s, 50s and, up to point, the 60s, but the immediate past. As a friend remarked about those awards, "These days I almost miss Garth Brooks, saying your main influence is The Eagles doesn't seem half as heinous as it used to." Mind you, I'm sure R&B and jazz buffs could, mutatis mutandis, say much the same about their genres.

Without wanting to launch anything as Quixotic as a crusade for repecting the past, I am, once again, drawn to an album, once again on a European label, by a group that has changed little, in personnel or style, over the decades. Albert 'Sonny' Burgess formed the Newport, Arkansas-based Pacers in 1954, breaking out in 1956 with the first of five Sun singles, *We Wanna Boogie/Red Headed Woman*, revered in rockabilly circles as the rawest, most raucous and energetic single in the genre. They also established a reputation for blowing away the other acts on Sun's package tours with their frantic stage show, often closing because no one wanted to follow them. The Pacers disbanded in 1971, but Burgess reunited the group in 1997 to meet demand from European festivals. Fifty three years on, now The Legendary Pacers, with a saxophone replacing the trumpet, they dusted groups a quarter of their age at a 2007 rockabilly festival in Oveido, Spain, so thoroughly that El Toro rushed them into a local studio to bottle some of that lightning.

Back in the mid-50s, Burgess & The Pacers were somewhat anomalous, a boogie-woogie band, featuring piano and trumpet, with little, if any, of the hillbilly influence most critics consider to be an essential component of rockabilly, but they seem to have mellowed somewhat, including Hank's *Cold, Cold Heart* and Eddie Miller's *Release Me* along with Roy Head's *Treat Her Right*, Carl Perkins' *Honey Don't* and *Blue Suede Shoes*, Jimmy Reed's *Baby Watcha Want Me To Do*, with Roy Orbison's *Mean Woman Blues* somewhere in between. Any young musicians listening to these septuagenarians (Burgess was born in 1931), The Hackberry Ramblers of rockabilly, would have to ask themselves if they'd not only be keeping the faith but still kicking ass and taking names when they're the same age. **JC**

SHEREE HOMER CATCH THAT ROCKABILLY FEVER

(McFarland, paperback)

Homer is nothing if not ambitious—"My hope in writing this book is for rockabilly and its unsung heroes to finally receive the respect and recognition that has been deserved for over fifty years." Well, good luck with that. Unfortunately, she starts out with two handicaps. One is that the bulk of her book draws on interviews she did for her shortlived magazine *Rockabilly Revue*, so the already dead, apart from Ricky Nelson, are poorly represented, and, let's face it, any book about rockabilly that only mentions Gene Vincent en passant lacks a certain something in the credibility department. The other is that her publisher made her get releases from her interviewees, which thinned the ranks of Golden Agers who, like most 50s musicians, are snakebit about signing documents. However, even allowing for these limitations, the curious structure and the weakness of the writing—Homer has an irritating habit of consistently referring to rockabilly women, who've already had more than their fair share of derogation, as 'gals'—the book's real problem is glaring lacunae in knowledge of a subject whose fans tend to be walking encyclopedias. Take the chapter on 'Texas Rockabillies,' Buddy Holly & The Crickets (marginal at best), Sonny West, Gene Summers, Lew Williams and Huelyn Duvall (good call). That's it. Ronnie Dawson is at least mentioned in Martí Brom and Sean Mencher's interviews, which is more than you can say for Charline Arthur, Helen Hall, Johnny Dollar or Groovy Joe Poovey, and that's just skimming the cream, while, from the many references to Austin, you'd never guess that Texas rockabilly was almost entirely a Dallas/Fort Worth phenomenon. Homer is an enthusiast, no question, but this is yet another book about rockabilly that people who aren't already into the music will never read and people who are will find fatally flawed, to put it mildly. **JC**

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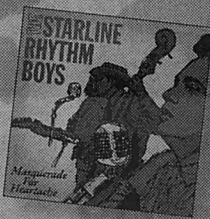
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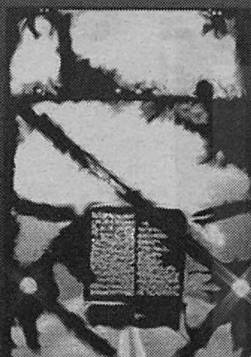
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- 1st Slim Willet • 1919 Victor, TX
Magic Sam † 1969
Stephane Grappelli † 1997
Lee Dorsey † 1986
- 3rd Rabon Delmore • 1916 Elkmont, AL
Randy Garibay • 1939 San Antonio, TX
Kendel Carson • 1984 Calgary, Canada
Jimmy Heap † 1977
Grady Martin † 2001
- 4th Larry Davis • 1936 Kansas City, MO
Freddie Cannon • 1940 Lynn, MA
Ernie Durawa • 1942 San Antonio, TX
Chris Hillman • 1944 Los Angeles, CA
- 5th Little Richard • 1935 Macon, GA
Molly O'Day † 1987
Wilf Carter † 1996
Bobby Marchan † 1999
- 6th Hugh Farr • 1903 Llano, TX
Leadbelly † 1949
Joe King Carrasco • 1953 Dumas, TX
Tish Hinojosa • 1955 San Antonio, TX
Anna Fermin • 1970 Manila, The Philippines
Roy Orbison † 1988
- 7th Tom Waits • 1949 Pomona, CA
Bill Boyd † 1977
- 8th Floyd Tillman • 1914 Ryan, OK
Big Walter Horton † 1981
Marty Robbins † 1982
- 9th Dan Hicks • 1941 Little Rock, AR
- 10th Rich Minus • 1940 San Antonio, TX
Johnny Rodriguez • 1951 Sabinal, TX
Otis Redding † 1967
Faron Young † 1996
- 11th Big Mama Thornton • 1926 Montgomery, AL
Tom Brumley • 1935 Stella, MO
Brenda Lee • 1944 Lithonia, GA
Troy Campbell • 1964 Germantown, OH
Fiddlin' Johnny Carson † 1949
- 12th Clifton Chenier † 1987
Ike Turner † 2007
- 13th Conni Hancock • 1956 Lubbock, TX
- 14th Charlie Rich • 1932 Colt, AR
- 15th AP Carter • 1891 Mace Springs, VA
Red River Dave McEnery • 1914 San Antonio, TX
Jesse Belvin • 1932 San Antonio, TX
Betty Elders • 1949 Raleigh, NC
Fats Waller † 1943
Valerio Longoria † 2000
- 16th Kimberly M'Carver • 1957 Mesquite, TX
Gary Stewart † 2003
- 17th Spade Cooley • 1910 Pack Saddle Creek, OK
Nat Stuckey • 1937 Cass Co, TX
Arthur Neville • 1937 New Orleans, LA
Big Joe Williams † 1982
- 18th Wilf Carter • 1904 Port Hilford, NS, Canada
Eddie Cleanhead Vinson • 1917 Houston, TX
Professor Longhair • 1918 Bogalusa, LA
John X Reed • 1945 Charleston, SC
Blaze Foley • 1949 Malvern, AR
Don Santiago Jimenez † 1984
- 19th Charlie Ryan • 1915 Graceville, TN
Little Jimmy Dickens • 1925 Bolt, WV
Phil Ochs • 1940 El Paso, TX
- 20th Hank Snow † 1999
Lydia Mendoza † 2007
- 21st Albert Lee • 1943 Leominster, UK
Danny Barnes • 1961 Belton, TX

- 22nd Hawkshaw Hawkins • 1921 Huntingdon, WV
King Karl • 1931 Grand Coteau, LA
Red Steagall • 1937 Gainesville, TX
Speedy Sparks • 1945 Houston, TX
- 23rd Esther Phillips • 1935 Galveston, TX
Johnny Kidd • 1939 London, UK
Tim Hardin • 1941 Eugene, OR
- 24th Dave Bartholomew • 1920 Edgard, LA
Lee Dorsey • 1924 New Orleans, LA
Stoney Edwards • 1929 Seminole, OK
Cornell Hurd • 1949 Honolulu, Hawaii
- 25th Cab Calloway • 1907 Rochester, NY
Alton Delmore • 1908 Elkmont, AL
Johnny Ace † 1954
- 26th Harry Choates • 1922 Rayne, LA
Lowman Pauling † 1973
Peck Kelley † 1980
- 27th Scotty Moore • 1931 Gadsden, TN
Will T Massey • 1968 San Angelo, TX
Bob Luman † 1978
- 28th Johnny Otis • 1921 Vallejo, CA
Dorsey Burnette • 1932 Memphis, TN
Charles Neville • 1938 New Orleans, LA
Freddie King † 1976
Hoagy Carmichael † 1981
- 29th Rose Lee Maphis • 1922 Baltimore, MD
Ed Bruce • 1939 Keiser, AR
Walt Wilkins • 1960 San Antonio, TX
Tim Hardin † 1980
- 30th Joaquin Murphy • 1923 Hollywood, CA
Bo Diddley • 1928 McComb, MS
Skeeter Davis • 1931 Dry Ridge, KY
John Hartford • 1937 New York, NY
Michael Nesmith • 1942 Dallas, TX
- 31st John Platania • 1946 Poughkeepsie, NY
June Tabor • 1947 Warwick, UK
Robert Pete Williams † 1980
Rick Nelson † 1985
Floyd Cramer † 1997

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