

Introduction to The Music Issue

*"I saw the worst bands of my generation scrawled by magic marker on drywall... "
TMBG - "I Should Be Allowed To Think", JOHN HENRY*

This was to be a **small** issue - as usual, things got out of hand & started expanding. In the last issue, I went into a small rant about some of the bands that existed in San Fran- &cc in the **early** to **mid-1990's**, how there should **be** some documentation of their existence. This is an extension of that particular idea - I'm not sure if **this** will turn into a larger project **for me** or for someone else **with** more resources and/or knowledge (**one** can hope!), but it's a start at least.

What **prodded** me into doing this was being extremely dissatisfied **with** music writing in **general** - ROLLING STONE and SPIN are mere husks of what they once were, but even in the **non-corporatized 'zine community'**, there's **very little** substance - I'm sorry, but ass-kissing **5th-rate, umpteen** generation "punk" bands doesn't quite cut it, in my view. **One of the zines** I admired was CAUGHT IN FLUX (still in existence), **which** always went **more** in-depth with **the** artists featured, much more so than typical music coverage. I had that in mind when I did my first band interviews for MIMAZINE #1. (In a **roundabout** way, **this** issue is in **homage** to CiF, & the ReSearch/VSearch series, **which** was also highly influential.)

A Really Self-Indulgent Personal Tangent

My **musical** tastes **were** formed **rather haphazardly** - **the** main albums I remember hearing at **an** early age were **Janis Joplin's PEARL**, **Ike & Tina Turner** (mainly "Proud Mary" & a B-side of a single, "Funkier Than A Mosquito's Tweeter", **which** my **grandmother** **thought** was a bad **influence** - I had to keep retrieving it from the **trash can** several times before she **finally** broke it into pieces.); and the soundtrack **albums** from **CAMELOT** (the Broadway **cast** recording **with** Richard Burton, Julie Andrews & Robert Goulet), **BUTCH CASSIDY & THE SUNDANCE KID** (Burt Bacharach), **THE GRADUATE** (Simon & Garfunkel) & **THE MUSIC LOVERS** (adaptation of music by Tchaikovsky).

I ended up listening to a lot of **film** scores & classical **music** very **early** - most of **the** rock music I **only** had a vague **sense** of from **the** radio (which was about as bad as **radio** is **now**, as I recall). I **knew** most of **the Beatles' songs** (post - **REVOLVER**), but **really** **had** **no** **concept** of **bands** - **songs** **mainly** **caught** my interest. I couldn't stand **disco**, **Led Zeppelin**, or **KISS**; but somehow formed a liking for **Ted Nugent**, of all people. I still

remember **groups** like **Brownsville Station** ("Smokin' In The Boys Room", "Martian Boogie"), **Molly Hatchet** and **Ozark Mountain Daredevils**; **Kool and the Gang** (when they were doing good songs like "Hollywood Swinger" & "Jungle Boogie"), and of course **SOUL TRAIN**, which was watched religiously.

There was also **P-Funk** - **George Clinton & the Mothership**, but to me, it was almost like a folk tale - **in the town** where I grew up, **Cape Girardeau, MO**, there **were** **no** **real** **music venues**, **strange** for a **town** with a state university. To go to concerts, it was a **2 hour** **hip** to either **St. Louis** or **Memphis** & you had to **have** a **car**. Most of the big **acts** I never saw in their prime, so there was a cultural gap of sorts, when I was in jr. **high** / high school - I didn't even know who **Pink Floyd** were, until "**The Wall**" **movie** **came** out. **Thea** **came** **new** **friends**, and with them, **New Wave & Punk**. I've **written** earlier about my friend **Ian** (**MIMAZINE #2**) - not only was he into soundtracks, he was also into the **Sex Pistols**, **The Clash**, **Devo**, **X** and a lot of other bands I'd barely heard of. It was a **fun** **discovery** process. even **though** there were a lot of people who bated "punk" as much as they hated **disco**.

Leaving Cape (finally!) to go to college, meant getting into newer & better environments & seeing shows. My first live 'concert' experience was **prior** to **leaving** for college, when **the** **Kansas City** **group** **SHOOTING STAR** **came** through on **tour** (**pretty** much forgotten **now**, **although** their most famous song. "**Last Chance**" is a staple of classic rock radio.); a much better time was seeing **JASON & THE SCORCHERS** in **Lawrence, KS**. **There** was **college** **radio** (**KJHK** in Lawrence. **still** at it) and **with** it, a lot more **punk**, **spurred** by **REPO MAN & THE DECLINE OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION**. **The** **first** **punk** show I **saw** was in **Chicago** at **the** **Caberet** **Metro**, **The** **Circle** **Jerks** with the **just**-starting out **DEAD MILK MEN** (who got **way** better - **they** were **fucking** **horrible** when started out); **BLACK FLAG** came through a month later (**I** still have **the** **tape** **I** **made** of that show). **In** school in Southern Illinois. there were **the** **basement** **clubs**, where **punk** bands barely heard of at the time (& most never heard from again) played. **X** came through, **opening** for **Warren Zevon** - decent enough show, but **both** weren't at their peaks: and **Stevie** **Ray** **Vaughn** & **The** **Fabulous** **Thunderbirds**, playing a **thundering** set at the **Do** **Quoin** County Fair in Spring of 1989.

The **next** big **shift** in my tastes **occurred** in **San** **Francisco**, where there was the opportunity to experience **so** many **genres**, & **the** **opportunity** to **finally** see bands I liked. My first show in SF was at the **I-BEAM** (RIP) on **Haight** **St.** - **HOUSE** **OF** **FREAKS** were doing a free show & there was no way I was **not** going to go - I'd been a fan of theirs & bad missed them years earlier when **they** were opening for **MIDNIGHT OIL**; that show **still** sticks in my mind as **the** **best** show I've been to. That was followed by shows by **Stan Ridgeway**, **David** **Baerwald**, **The** **Cramps**, **Oingo** **Boingo**, even **Michael** **Nyman**