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WAVELENGTH/SEPTEMBER 1981
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**Homegrown TV**

The second edition of Channel 26's *Homegrown* series will air Sunday, September 13 from 9:00 PM. Expanded to an hour long, the show will feature The Cold, filmed live at Jimmy's on July 23. Also included will be some comedy clips, written by Cold member Vance Degeneris (who was an original co-creator of the "Mr Bill Show") and starring members of the band.

*Homegrown* is co-produced by Bob Gremillion and David Jones and directed by Gremillion. As might be expected from the title, the series will focus on area bands. Director Gremillion says: "*Homegrown*'s purpose as an attempt to display some of these musicians to a wider audience and to make New Orleans residents aware of the wealth and diversity of musical talent our city really holds. The Channel 26 series will be a way to make New Orleans residents and optimistic about the project.

Currently, tape and optimistic about the project. Gremillion and Jones have set aside a larger budget for the second show. The producers welcome any comments viewers might have about the show and the overall concept. For anyone interested in music at all, the series should be well worth following.

—Keith Twitchell

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**Cajun Accordionist Nathan Abshire Dies**

Nathan Abshire, respected and loved Cajun accordion player from Basile, Louisiana, died on May 13th at the age of sixty-eight. The news comes as a shock to New Orleanians, many of whom had just become acquainted with his unique style at this year's New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival.

In music circles, Abshire was best known for his traditional French style of accordion playing and his love of the night life. He learned to play the instrument in the early 1920s, developing a repertoire that included blues and polkas along with the usual waltzes and two-steps. For a number of reasons, he quit playing the accordion in the early 1940s. But Abshire has made a comeback since then until the ‘50s, thereby not participating in a period when Cajun music (and culture) underwent many changes. Upon returning to the music business, he continued playing, "... only way he knew, keeping alive a style of accordion playing not heard elsewhere.

Abshire had a reputation in Southwest Louisiana that went beyond his accordion. Cajun-country star Allen Fontenot said, "Nathan was a real Cajun," in this case meaning that Abshire never allowed himself to be influenced by modern trends. Besides refusing to change his style of playing, he also refused to move away from his home in Basile, though he received many job offers. Preferring to enjoy his life in his hometown, Abshire frequently turned a gig into an allnight party. A measure of his standing in the community was indicated by the huge turnout at the "benefice," a fund-raising party for his widow, held in late June.

Abshire, a regular performer for the last thirty years at the Avalon Club in Basile, first gained widespread popularity for "Pinegrove Blues," recorded at radio station KPLC in Lake Charles Louisiana. This song, along with many others, is available on the album *Nathan Abshire and Other Cajun Gems* (Arohille LP-5013). Other albums on which he appears are *Cajun Fais Do Do* (Arohille LP-5004), *Nathan Abshire* (Swallow 6023), and *Nathan Abshire* (Swallow 6014). He can also be seen and heard in Les Blank's film on the Cajuns, *Spend It All*. In the film, one can see Abshire's motto lettered across his accordion box: "The Good Times Are KIlling Me." —Gene Scarruzzo

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**Golden Moments In New Orleans Rock 'N' Roll III**

December 1949 - Lew Chudd, owner of Imperial Records, and his producer, Dave Bartholenew, enter the "Hideaway Club" on a Friday evening. The attraction is a chubby young piano player named Antoine "Fats" Domino. The partnership that developed with this trio resulted in the sale of 66 million records.

Almost Slim

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**SEPTMBER**

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**WAVELENGTH/OCTOBER 1981**

7
Nevilles Update

The Neville Brothers' first tour since the release of their Fiyo on the Bayou album on A&M Records had to be classified as a significant breakthrough. The itinerary included stops in Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York and Washington, D.C. The Brothers played three nights before crowds of over 4,000 at the Chicago Fest and ended up doing four shows at the Roxy in Los Angeles before A&M President Jerry Moss and musicians such as Boz Scaggs and Patrice Rushing. The measure of their popularity can be seen in the fact that the Bayou in Washington, the Roxy in Los Angeles, and the Savoy in New York have all asked the Nevilles back for longer fall dates.

As to Fiyo on the Bayou, rave reviews have appeared in such diverse publications as the New York Times, Penthouse, Rolling Stone, Cashbox, and Billboard. Billboard picked the album for its commercially coveted "Closeup" review in its August 15th issue. By the time you read this a single from the album should be available, "Sittin in Limbo," with "Iko-Iko: Brother John" on the B-side.

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How has the album been received locally? Black-oriented stations haven't turned their backs on local talent this time with WBOK, WAIL and WYLD all playing the album. In addition, WTUL, WRNO and WQUE have been paying it attention. This writer even heard snatches of Aaron's "Mona Lisa" and "Ten Commandments of Love" on WWL. Based on reports from A&M Records, and my own research, New Orleans to Swing: Woody Herman Show

Woody Herman is coming to town, but not on September 15, as originally reported. According to Paul Lentz, general manager of the new Woody Herman Club in the Hyatt Regency Hotel, "We are shooting for the week of October 15th, barring any structural hang-ups."

By "structural hang-up," Lentz is referring to the fact that a new room is being built in the Hyatt especially for Herman. It will be in the Poydras Mall next to Georgie Porgie's. Lentz described the decor as having "clean lines, with a modern touch." He said the club was designed with television in mind, and that already there is serious talk about specials, and even a musical series. The club will encompass 11,000 square feet, and will seat 500, with a small dance floor situated in the rear so as not to interfere with the show. And a show is what Woody Herman intends to present. "Las Vegas in scope," Lentz calls it, "but still very New Orleans." The show is called "From New Orleans To Swing," and it is a concept that Herman first developed years ago on a European tour with Louis Armstrong. The Heritage Hall Jazz Band will open, and play about 45 minutes, at which point they will go into a transitional number and bring on Woody Herman. Without any break between the bands, Herman will take over and call out the Thundering Herd for a long set of swing, building up to the free-flowing finale when the Heritage Hall Jazz Band reappears, and both bands swing away in an open-ended jam session.

Herman has played with the Heritage Hall Jazz Band before. Lentz calls the jam session the most "consistently exciting" ever in Hartford, Connecticut, by attracting an audience of 35,000. That would translate here into 12 weeks of full houses, and that could only benefit everybody.

There will be one show a night, six nights a week, dark on Sundays. Because of the jam session, the shows are open-ended, but expected to last at least two hours. The cover is twenty dollars, which includes two drinks, but not gratuities. Lentz says that they plan to please both "the hip and the unwashed" by making serious music and real entertainment synonymous.

As for Woody Herman, he has just finished recording a live album at the Concord Jazz Festival in California. He plans to stay on the road up until he opens here, after which he will be spending nine months of every year in New Orleans. After 46 years of one-nighters, he's due for a steady job.

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1. TUESDAY—It's 25th birthday party night at Tipitina's with a couple of the city's finest young rock bands, the Rockalbes and RZA.

2. WEDNESDAY—Tonight from 8-10 PM, Channel 12 (WYES-TV) and WTUL (91.5 FM) present a live simulcast featuring inimitable Sun RA and one of the jazz fusion pioneers, Herbie Hancock.

3. FRIDAY—Rhinestone cowboy David Allan Cee saddles up and rides his pony into Ole Man River's to open a three-night stand tonight. Turn that damn air conditioner off!

4. SATURDAY—Saxman Earl Turblin heads up an ensemble that includes incredible young bassist James Singleton and incomparable drummer John Vidaevich for some 21st century jazz tonight only at the Maple Leaf Bar. The Front will be opening the Beat Exchange tonight at midnight.

5. SUNDAY—New Orleans Steamboat Company presents Rick Nelson, a teen idol from our teen years, and The Stone Canyon Band preceded by the pop band Ivy at Jimmy's tonight only at the Saenger Theatre.

6. TUESDAY—One of the finest young guitarists you'll hear anywhere, Stevie Vaughn, brings his band into Tipitina's tonight only. The Go-Go's appear also tonight only at Ole Man River's.

7. THURSDAY—The Copas Brothers have regrouped and they'll be playing at Jimmy's tonight only at 10:30.

8. FRIDAY—Bahamian obeah man Exuma brings his strikingly original brand of island music into the Maple Leaf Bar tonight only.

9. SATURDAY—This is the second night of a weekend stand at Tipitina's for two of the south's finest rock 'n roll bands, N.O.'s own Radiators and Mississippi's hot rockabilly band, the Dreesers, who open the show at 10:30 each night.

10. SUNDAY—Channel 26-WGNO-TV's locally produced variety show Homegrown is back tonight at 7 PM featuring The Cold coming right into your living room. "26" has a good idea here: an interesting format for local talent, well worth watching.

11. MONDAY—Blues soloist Spencer Bohren picks and sings tonight and every Monday in September at Tipitina's.

12. TUESDAY—Another fine soloist, John Magnie, who spends his weekends leading Lil' Queenie's Perculators, does his own thing on piano tonight and every Tuesday at Clarity.

13. WEDNESDAY—WTUL (91.5 FM) presents a live broadcast tonight at 8-10 PM featuring Remedy, alive and nasty from Tipitina's.

14. THURSDAY—Marcia Ball and her band open a two-night stand tonight at Tipitina's.

15. FRIDAY—A young pop band with a fast-growing following, The Models play tonight only at Jed's.

16. SATURDAY—Tonight is the long-awaited uptown debut of Velvet Touch and the Pleasure Masters at Jed's. Get your tie-dyed shirt out of the mothballs and get "experienced."

17. SUNDAY—Well worth a drive to the state capital: Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers perform in concert tonight only at the Baton Rouge Centroplex.

18. FRIDAY—Another fme soloist, John Magnie, who spends his weekends leading Lil' Queenie's Perculators, does his own thing on piano tonight and every Tuesday at Clarity.

19. WEDNESDAY—WTUL (91.5 FM) presents a live broadcast tonight about 10:30 PM featuring Remedy, alive and nasty from Tipitina's.

20. SATURDAY—Tonight only Tipitina's presents "the Man himself", Muddy Waters and his band.

21. WEDNESDAY—Jimmy Don Smith and the Coldcut, a tight R&B outfit from Texas, open a four-night stand at the Old Absinthe Bar tonight.

22. THURSDAY—Former Jefferson Airplane and Starship vocalist Marty Balin, who this year released his first solo album, will perform with his band tonight only at the Saenger Theatre. Also opening tonight (for 2 days only) an exhibit of artworks by John Lennon entitled Bag I is scheduled for the Hanson Gallery at 229 Royal St.

23. SATURDAY—Amazing vocalist Al Jarreau performs for two shows (at 8 and 11 PM) tonight only at the Saenger Theatre.

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he Hotel Wales on New York's Upper East Side is modest even by New York standards. For $35 a night one can get a squeaky double bed, drippy faucets, and all the conversation you can stand from a man in the lobby who claims to have lived there for the last 12 years. The Radiators occupied four rooms on the sixth floor. In Room 602, Ed Volker, the group's keyboardist, carefully unpacked from the long trip. Speakers and a cassette player came first, then boxes of T-shirts, towels and other personal items. A cassette tape begins to play, and soon Bobby Marchan's "There Is Something On Your Mind" fills the room. "Now that's survival music," Volker said, "I'll need it to survive this trip." There is a knock on the door. The maid peeps in looking bewildered. "Do you need towels?" "No, we got plenty." It was the Radiators first time in New York City. Two weekend dates were booked in June at the "80's," a small basement club on 86th Street. The crowds both nights were respectable for an unknown band miles from home with only an obscure 45 under its belt. Reporters from Cashbox Magazine and the SoHo News were in attendance, but all in all it was not the city's most publicized musical event. Each day the club was flooded with inquiries about the group. "What are they, punk, or new wave?" "No," came the answer, "they're from New Orleans." This confusion could have easily shown up on the dance floor that night. By eleven the Radiators cranked up; a half dozen couples hit the floor, suddenly some unknown fan "popped the gator," then somebody yelled out, "Suck the Heads" ... it was just like being home.

If music is a reflection of social need, the implication may be that New Orleans needs the Radiators. Since their birth in early 1978, the band has continued to draw larger and larger crowds at Tipitina's, Jed's, The Maple Leaf, and Jimmy's, making them, along with the Cold the city's largest-grossing entertainment group. Their first album (a two record set!) Work Done On Premises for their own Croaker Records, has sold 1,500 copies locally, and almost another 1,000 nationwide. "It's amazing sometimes," says the group's manager Bill Cat. "I'll open my mail and there's cash in the envelope, and it's from a guy in Idaho who says he has to have a copy of the record. Maybe we have more fans out of town than we think."

To define the music the Radiators play could be a futile attempt at being encyclopedic. To say it's "rock 'n' roll" is too simplistic; to call it anything else would place limits on its boundaries as a legitimate musical manifestation. In an attempt to gain media exposure, the group invented the term "Fish Head Music" as a vain search for some identity. But ask any member of the group just what that is and they'll say, "Hell if I know," followed by thirty seconds of uncontrollable laughter. Much like the six blind men who touched the elephant, their music can be couched in many different forms. At its base the Radiators music is a panorama, a Whitman's sampler of American pop and ethnic music in the last 30 years. "We've all played so many different styles of music," says bassist Reggie Scanlan, "we just put it all to work for us." From the island rhythms of "One Eyed Jack" to the country slide guitars of "I'd Rather Waste You," from the parade beat of "Bad Taste" to the Professor-Longhair-tinged "Straighten Up & Fly Right," and blues busters like Ray Charles' "I Wanna Know," their performances showcase the most fundamental elements of a half dozen musical idioms. On a recent trip to the city, Alligator Records' president Bruce Iglauer remarked, "Of all the young bands (black and white), these guys are the most New Orleans sounding I've heard."

Like any great performing band, the Radiators possess a chemistry, an indefinable something that sets them apart from other groups. The saying, "the whole is greater then the sum of its parts," may well apply. The five members, average age 30, collectively have almost 65 years in the music business. Each member brings to the group a unique personal history giving substance to their eclectic musical style.

Ed Volker, the group's unofficial leader, is easily seen as a fourth generation New Orleans-style pianist. Growing up in the city's Carrollton area, Volker learned piano by his early teens, cutting his musical teeth on Ray Charles records and discs produced by Allen Toussaint on the then-popular Minot label. In his spare time he collected hundreds of R&B 45s. "I use to go to City Liquor Store where Tac Amusement would flush out all their used singles. I used to buy 'em for ten cents: lots of great stuff that never made the radio."

By 1963 Volker was attending dances at the Arrow Room and St. Anthony's listening to R&B bands like Mike & the
Jokers and Oliver Morgan. "Within a years time," he recalls, "there was a shift from soul music to young white kids playing Rolling Stones and Beatle music. It was a musical as well as a social change. The English groups gave people my age the idea that we could play music."

Through the Sixties, playing with groups like The Other Side and Yesterday's Children, he began writing songs, many of which were incorporated in the group's "hits on the radio" format. Some generated good audience response, others did not. "I remember the famous night I turned 18. I was playing the Beaconette, and Roy LaRocca was complaining to me about some awful original song we were doing. "

Malone grew up on a sugar cane plantation. Moving to New Orleans in his late teens, he formed a country group called Dustwofie. "I took a lotta guts to play country back then, but I loved it. I used to listen to Roy Nichols in Merle Haggard's band. But my idol is Steve Cropper." If music is a language, Malone says few words — tough, hard edged and straight to the point.

Like Volker and Bua, Baudoin is an alumnum of Sixties groups, The Souls Of Orleans, NOLA Express, and Yesterday's Children. As a guitarist he is well versed in blues, rock 'n' roll and country, handling each with amazing competence. Together with Malone, they comprise the hardest-hitting dual guitar attack in town, the perfect musical marriage.

If one were to trace the birth of the Radiators, it may have taken place one afternoon in 1971, at the Ivanhoe on Bourbon Street. Bua, Volker and Baudoin met for a jam session. After hours of playing each man knew something magical had happened, and soon with bassist Eddie Whiteman, they formed the Dogs. Within months they made the long
treat to San Jose, California, in search of more lucrative employment. “We were out there eight or nine months,” Volker recalls, “and in that whole time we got maybe one gig for fifty dollars. So with our tails between our legs we came back home.” But times were hard and the band was forced to play for nude shows on Bourbon Street. In frustration, they disbanded in 1973. The trio drifted apart for several years, then resurfaced as the Rhapsodizers with two new members, Clark Vreeland, guitar, and Becky Kury, bass. In a short time they gained a respectable following for their dance rhythms, songs, solid body originality. “I wanted to get crazy,” said Volker, “I was tired of commercial interest directing my life. It was a great outlet for me.” In the Rhapsodizers, Volker began fine-tuning his songwriting skills. Compositions like “U.F.O.,” “Exactly,” “Sunglasses On” and “Down In The Need” were pure crowd pleasers. “I almost gave up music after the Dogs broke up,” said Bua, “but I came back because of Ed and his songs.” By Mardi Gras 1978, the Rhapsodizers had disbanded due to personnel problems. Again the trio regrouped, recruited Malone and Scanlan from the country group Roadapple, and within a month the Radiators were born.

In only three years the Radiators have built a solid reputation as a live performing band. In the opinion of many they are the city’s, and possibly the South’s best. Part of their success is due to the consistent songwriting of Ed Volker. The group now plays over fifty of his songs, each performed like a diamond in a musical setting. As musicians they have no formula, no well-rehearsed riffs repeated night after night. Rather each song’s playing is a new beginning, a challenging interplay between musical personalities. At their roots, Volker’s melodies are simple and refreshing. His lyrics are often tender, humorous, sardonic, but mostly expose the most basic elements of human nature. Lines like, “if your heart ain’t in it, get your other part out” and “how can I reach you it don’t make no sense” using words like a barbed wire fence all around us” are but two examples of Volker’s street-wise lyrical style. “I don’t dictate too much. I bring a song in and let them find the groove that everybody feels comfortable with.”

To make it in the music business, so the legend goes, one has to travel to Hollywood or New York, stake out some record company president’s office, and hope for the big six-figure record deal. New Orleans bands historically stay home a lot, content to be the big fish in the little pond. So where do the Radiators stand? Bill Cat, the group’s soft-spoken manager, put it this way: “The record companies know about us. It may just be a matter of time. But the real thrill for me is that these guys have a future. Their music isn’t a passing fad like punk or disco. I see them growing creatively week by week. We’re going to travel more. We have a new record out, and we’re making more money than ever. With lots of hard work we’ll make it. The future’s great!”

—Tad Jones
To be — is to do the Raffey,” a famous German philosopher might have said, and more and more New Orleanians are agreeing with him. In just eight months of playing in this area, the Raffeys have advanced to headline status at uptown clubs, opened for national touring acts at Ole Man River’s, purchased a truck and a new P.A., and most recently, installed themselves as regulars on Monday nights at the Blues Saloon.

This last accomplishment really has the band going. “Monday nights in New Orleans are traditionally dead, unless you’re a red bean” notes drummer Rajah Raffey. “Now there’s something to do.” Just getting the Raffeys’ brand of crisp, driving rock ‘n’ roll into the Quarter is an accomplishment, and, if it goes over well at the Blues Saloon, might induce some other clubs to follow suit.

The Raffeys’ rocket-like rise began on a very humble launching pad. Two of the bandmembers were enjoying an all-expenses-paid government vacation in Florida after an indiscretion with a couple of young — very young — ladies in the Quarter, and used the time to start jamming together. Their return to New Orleans roughly coincided with the breaking up of the Dukes; out of the debris of that band came Riff Raffey and Rasta Raffey to join up with Rajah and band leader Raff Raffey. In the early stages there was some juggling of instrumental duties, resolved now with all three front men playing bass and doing vocals on different numbers, Raff and Rasta handling the guitars, and Rajah keeping it all together on the drums. The constant shifting of instruments takes nothing away from the band’s tightness, though, and allows for more diversity of style than one might expect from the Raffeys’ format.

Do not associate the Raffeys with the new wave scene. Although they frequently appear on the same bill as new wave bands, they see their music as “white pop jive,” projecting a good time rather than the rebellious negativity associated with new wave. The themes of their original songs are mostly standard rock: “Girls in Space,” “Girl of the World,” although a tune like “Bloody News,” about the uptown murders, pops up now and then; they cover numbers like “Judy in Disguise” and Al Jolson’s oldie “Neon Love.” In performance these songs are short and sweet, with no fancy instrumental breaks, no long solos. They are a unit, not a group of individual musicians; the flamboyancy they project on stage is a total effect, with the limelight shared equally.

No haphazard, wandering production, the Raffeys are in the last third of a ninety-day plan, and are well ahead of schedule. Recent publicity in the form of news coverage (by Channel 8’s Ed Clancy) of the I-10 bridge west out of the city, long emblazoned with “Do The Raffey” has helped. So did the inclusion of “Fat Chance,” an original penned by Raff Raffey, on an album of local bands being compiled by WRNO for late summer release. The recording the Raffeys submitted was done with basic equipment, but Raff was philosophical about it. “There are always three recordings,” he says. “The one you want to make, the one you make, and the one you wish you’d made.” But the song did make the record, which will be distributed in stores at a bargain price.

What does the future hold for the Raffeys? Continuing improvement musically (the last several shows have been stronger and stronger); building up the fan club, already over 200 strong and including kids who’ve never seen the band; and, more distantly, visiting Australia (?). “Sure,” says Raff, “look at all the bands they’ve sent over here. There’s definitely a market for our kind of music in Australia.”

Beneath all the fun and games, there is a strong sense of professionalism about the ways the Raffeys go about doing things, with creativity to match, and a serious ambition to make it to the rarefied air of musical success. Or, as that British writer should have said, “To err is human, to do the Raffey, divine.”

—Keith Twitchell
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THE ROCK-A-BYES

Usually opening acts have a thankless task of attempting to entertain an audience that is impatiently waiting for the "name" band to appear. Last June, when rockabilly artist Joe Ely played at Ole Man River's, not only did the crowd enjoy the wait, but actually extended it by encore calls for New Orleans' own Rock-A-Byes. Consisting of Cranston Clements on lead guitar, his brother David on bass, and Kenny Felix on drums, the Rock-A-Byes occupy an ever-growing niche in New Orleans live music that's both unique and hard to define.

What makes the Rock-A-Byes one of the city's most engaging bands? It's an approach to music that's almost unknown to New Orleans and this time frame: The British music hall style of knowing how to work with an audience. The Kinks have used this secret to such advantage that their road tours now attract several generations of fans. But the Rock-A-Byes have little in common with the Kinks except for a knack for coming up with some great off-the-wall rock lyrics.

Besides their personable manner that's evident in their banter with the crowd, or Clement's legendary bad jokes, another hallmark of a Rock-A-Byes concert is the inclusion of a special guest appearance. Among those who've taken over the vocals during the last year have been Mandeville Mike, Stephanie Punk, George the Max and most recently Suds-Brioleaux. Mrs. Brioleaux, who does fine renditions of "I Was Born a Woman" and the obscure "She's a Wind Up" is none other than the wife of the lead singer of England's Dr. Feelgood, a great blues rocking band. According to Cranston, "The guest appearances aren't a variety show; we've just been inviting people on stage for a long time. You don't walk into somebody's wedding with a bottle of Thunderbird." David quickly adds, "Well, you might."

The band classifies its music as "Rock-A-Bye music," which translates into a mixture of about 60 percent original compositions such as "Other Neighbors," "Speeding," "Idiot Boys" and "Vacate," and such diverse covers as Roy Orbison's "Pretty Woman," Gene Vincent's "Knock Bim Bam" and the immortal "Ubangi Stomp." Much of this is rockabilly, which Cranston and David say is both fun to play and dance to. Their audience, if polled would certainly agree. In addition to the above, depending on audience requests you'll be treated to rendi-
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Some groups take a long time to gel properly, but sometimes the right collection of individuals gets together and clicks very quickly. The Uptights fall into the latter category. The band started about a year ago with Carolyn O'Dell and Alan Hill on guitars and Web Burrell on drums, and their current bass player, Jim Hymel, has only been with them since March. But anyone who has seen them recently will tell you that they put on a very solid, professional show, and in my opinion they perform the finest original material of any band in town.

The group first came together as a vehicle for O'Dell's songs. She had been writing for some time, but the real impetus came when she spent a year in school in England. While there she achieved some success as a member of Cindy and the Virgins. She says, "That was when I really started writing a lot. I'd gotten a few good songs together, and when I came back from England, I just wanted to get those songs recorded. For whatever reason, I just wanted to get them down. At least then I could get them copyrighted."

After she returned, the members went through a convoluted series of groupings and regroupings, too complicated to go into here, before settling into their current lineup this spring. According to O'Dell, "We've done our share of empty nights at Jedd's," but they've gone from that stage to gradually widening their audience with the help of a few breaks along the way. They've opened for the Cold at a couple of their CYO dances and gone over very well with the younger set. In April they played before a large crowd on the quad at Tulane for the WTUL Marathon. And a couple of months ago they did a live broadcast from Tipitina's (a first for a new wave band) over WTUL. O'Dell said, "We really tried to do our best originals for the Tip's broadcast, and the response was very good." They do quite a few covers — T. Rex's "Bang a Gong," "Lies" by the Knickerbockers, early Beatles, Who, and Kinks, some Blondie, Jam, and Costello — but what came through loud and clear on that broadcast was the striking variety and depth of the original songs written by O'Dell and the other members of the band. And now they're planning to release their own independent single, "I'm Awake/Promises," which should be out by the time you read this.

For a band with so many good songs, the main problem was narrowing down the choices for a single. Drummer Web Burrell described the recording process. "We did a lot of taping; we really put a lot of effort into the recording. We took all of our songs and did a number of sessions at the Uptown Sound [bassist Jim Hymel's P.A. company] warehouse in the CBD. We listened to those tapes after we'd worked on them and picked three or four songs we thought were our best. We set up a weekend and went down there with my recorder and board and Jimmy's mikes and everybody's headphones and did it. We recorded four songs and took the best two recordings of those. We were getting fairly good sound on all of our recordings, but we decided to concentrate and try to make a session into a record — see if we could get something out of the four-track situation. We mixed the songs at Dale Anthony's home studio."

The night this interview took place, the test pressings had just come back from the plant. As I arrived, the band was listening to the songs, and everyone was visibly pleased. From what I heard, justifiably so. Recording on four-track equipment is not exactly a liberating experience, but it can be a good influence since it forces a band to make some hard decisions at an early stage in the recording process rather than allowing them to record everything piecemeal and then make the decisions at the mixing stage. The recordings I heard certainly did not betray their humble origins. The mix was very well done, and the use of a digital delay line for echo gave especially the vocals a sense of depth that was breathtaking.

I'm sure many people were expecting "The Universe" to be the single, since a tape of that song is played quite often over WTUL, but O'Dell's song "I'm Awake" is one of their most popular numbers live, and "Promises," an O'Dell/Burrell composition, has some of their best lyrics and a really neat guitar part.

Anyone who's ever made a record has dreamed of getting it played on the radio, and the Uptights are no exception, but they're realistic about their chances for radio success. According to guitarist Alan
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Hill, "One of the goals is definitely to try and get it on the radio, but we really haven't spent that much money on it, so it's really just a way of communicating, showing people what we've got. We'll have a picture with our names, a logo, and a couple of our songs. That's something we can easily get to people that we want to get gigs with, we can send them this. It shows what we look like and what we sound like; that's basically it. We want exposure rather than profit. It's our form of advertisement."

As with most bands at this stage of their careers, one of the big problems for the Uptights is trying to find suitable live gigs. Burrell admits, "We don't play that much. With a lot of gigs there's just not that much money, and we haven't developed the following at this point that makes it rewarding. So we've been putting more effort into practicing, getting the music right, and recording. The problem with doing melodic original music is that it takes time for people to get into it. It's a whole new experience for them. And that's what we're mainly interested in doing, original music."

Bassist Jim Hymel speaks from experience when he says, "It's just so hard to do a gig and have an adequate sound system and have enough time to go in and do a sound check. Especially with the Uptights. This isn't a rockabilly or punk band; we have a lot of complicated, melodic vocals. And without a good enough P.A. where the vocals can get over the instruments, we might as well stay home. It's just such a job to do it. We'd rather just do it occasionally and put on the best show we can than play two or three nights a week and have it be a shoddy show. We just pick our gigs carefully."

O'Dell adds, "We do want to play more, and we will when school starts again and the college crowd is back. And we're going to start playing out of town more."

O'Dell's brother, John, recently arrived from Kansas to join the group. He's a former member of the Thumbs, and his presence will add to the group's versatility. They will probably add some keyboards, and some of the burden will be lifted from Carolyn, who now has to play rhythm guitar and sing almost every song. John O'Dell told me, "I want to make it big. I didn't come down here to fuck around."

And I think he meant it.

The various members of the band have been writing together, and their material should continue to mature. A final word from O'Dell: "With the record coming out and everything, I want New Orleans to awaken to the fact that there are other bands besides the Cold. I just hope that we can grab ahold of some of their audience. They're fine, you know, but there should be room for us, too. I mean, there should be a music scene in this city. I don't want to leave town just for the sake of leaving. I'd like something to happen here. It seems to be opening up now. When you think about how sad it was a few years ago, it gives us some hope. The whole country is finally awakening, and it's going to happen here, too."

—Steve Alleman
Ah, the West End! It has been commemorated in one of Louis Armstrong's most celebrated and shrill trumpet solos, and reckoned as the site of necromantic orgies where Marie Laveau summoned serpents from Lake Pontchartrain and made her attendant whoop and howl with ecstatic frenzy; at the turn of the century, dapper men with hair parted-in-the-middle beneath straw boaters for summer and derbies for fall and winter squired ladies in immense flat-brimmed feathered amazon or picture hats and in hobble-skirted gowns, beneath which lurked layers of silk, mohair, baezeen, whalebone stays and stockings with lace inserts. These diurnal revelers
wandered through the poetic, and then more extensive, ruins of Old Spanish Fort and ate ice cream at the West End and listened to groups on the bandstand blaring out gems from Victor Herbert’s “Natoma” or Balfe’s “The Bohemian Girl.” In our own time, the vision of the West End is of families at long tables in the restaurants built over the lake on pilings—a jangle of Jazz and Regal bottles and trays (bearing the smiling time-hatted cavalier and with the motto Prince Regal Salutes You) jammed with newspaper and piles of crab shells and crawfish shells, ladies with cat-eye glasses tucking into seafood platters, your father showing you how to peel shrimp, your aunt letting you have just a little glass of beer...this part is still true, to a certain extent, although hurricanes and fires take no further. The New Orleans mentality is pervaded by boys—you mentally superior types can sit there swapping enormals and swap small-town society gossip as you scarf up a fortune nose candy or sip your Hennessy and soda or cup of Fish House Punch, but boys (Yai, Cajun, Italian, mixed-Wasp) are true eccentrics, and they’re talking about their Z-28s or their parole officers or the big wreck on the Expressway on the Day of Rock And Roll and are getting shifted on (at the most elegant) Rock And Roll and 7-Up or Crown Royal and Coke, and you haven’t been vouchsafed the benificent vision until you’ve heard Boo or Bubba announce that he cries every time he hears “Stairway To Heaven” and then proceed to do it. (For boys, it don’t mean a thing if it even comes close to having that swing.)

At the West End, there are girls, too, but the ratio is astounding: there are about eight or ten boys to each girl (no Surf City here) and the girls are either attached or semi-attached, like slave quarters, or are covertly prowling in constant Brownian Movement while the boys stand around and thumb and form various tableaux vivants.

Augie’s Del Lago, a large complex and multi-leveled wooden building over the Lake, looks something like a Yat vision of the Castello Estense in Ferrara that turns up in many di Chirico paintings; it has five bars, a great many steps, penthouses everywhere, downstairs windows painted in a primitive fashion with seahorses and starfish and hardshell crabs capering and generally disposing themselves. There is a restaurant inside (not owned by Augie’s) and soon another, which will be a ritzier version of the usual stuffed-shrimp-with-a-view | West End seafood house. Shrimpers tie up during the season and come in for beer and the surrounding waters are often two deep with sailboats and power-boats on Sunday afternoons.

Augie’s is the place to see and be seen: the boys have aquiline noses, square faces, lots of body hair, mustaches, prominent cheekbones, and lakeshore drive; the big names are probably Ricky, Dale, Mark, Donny, Phil and Wayne; the clothes are rangy, though less so than that of the girls— Fayva running shoes, Fesy boots, flip-flops, a good many open shirts, big belt-buckles with rearing horses and wild ducks in flight, Sasson jeans, gold neck charms and studied leather bracelets. The girls have their hair arranged every way imaginable—fried, sprayed, braided, cut to the min, New Wave— and their names are probably Linda, Debbie, Carol, Sharon and Sandra. Their clothing is a riotous tropicalia of color and shiny fabric; hibiscus or Holmenchurc and studied leather habit type pants, gilded belts, tube tops, backless wooden shoes or those casual Italian-made bamboo-colored heels, nearly transparent summerly white dresses that show a refreshing immodesty. What do they do? Our guess is that they are telephone lineman or operators, Kentwood Water delivery truck drivers, nurses, construction workers, roofers and receptionists, legal secretaries or sheet-rock workers, central-air repairmen, file
A Lake Avenue apartment complex is
clerks, and the fact that all of them might
they have the perplexed-terrified look of
relevant because they are

even while the band (South, 8 or 9 people,
a tough-cookie girl singer with a deep,
uttering people to dance close-
simultaneously one sees the cha-cha
executed to perfection) and the waltz and
the footrot, other couples engaged in in-
timate chatter.

Then there is Spinnaker's which is a
large, somewhat forbidding-looking disco
over the water — forbidding because it
has no windows — and we didn't go in,
possibly foolishly so. They're making
neutron bombs in there, one of our compa-
nions whispered, though the amount of
traffic indicated otherwise. And at the
South End of the West End is Federico's,
a po-boy joint and hang-out for boys,
which smelled something like Stromboli
Pizza on First Avenue near St. Mark's
Place in New York at 2 a.m. Music play-
ing of jukeboxes ("Heart of Gold," "Riders On The Storm," "She's So Cold," "Let's Get Serious," etc.) and
pool tables by young men — something
like an audition for a Correggio or
Caracci ceiling piece — in denim vests and
beat-up jeans with bandanas in the back
pocket, that alarmingly beautiful New
Orleans skin color (unpainted cypress,
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muttering in raspy-but-not-deep-
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The music is incidental at Augie's —
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horn men, playing "Fame," "The
Wanderer," the Heart version of "Tell It
Like It Is," even "Desperado" and
"Whip It") is playing downstairs, the top
level is thronged — you can't sit down —
and when the band isn't playing, the
music issuing forth is a weird mixture
("Tom Sawyer" by Rush, "Mesmerized"
by the Cold, "Day-O" by Harry
Belafonte).

Next to Augie's is the Palace (former
site of the My-O-My, home of Mr. Pat
Waters and His All Boy Revue and New
Orleans' answer to Finocchio's in San
Francisco), which is a place to hear music.
The Palace (a large T-shaped room with
flags on its walls, a mezzanine, a billiard
room off) alternates big acts (A.W.B.,
Leon Russell) with local bands and this is
one of the latter nights and the crowd is
small but enthusiastic. Outside "Steppen
Wolf" (?) is advertised as coming; inside
is further evidence of the macho aesthetics
— a large and gaudy punching-bag machine which has numbers in concentric
circles like a ship's speedometer, but this
test of strength doesn't have the charming
labels of the Pennsylvania machines of
similar design (Big Fairy, Lover Boy).

The acoustics are very good and the
band, Jessika, named for its lead singer —
an imperiously, mannequinishly pretty
girl with a shag and a Chinese-looking silk
dress, is proficient. Now if they would
just turn that bass down . . .

The Bounty is like a 1960s cocktail
lounge — padded triangular bar, low ceil-
ings, not much light (you can imagine Jeff
Chandler and Kim Novak at a corner

table Talking It All Over), a small
figurehead and a back wall flanked with
cannon giving onto a view of The
Bounty Restaurant. ("It's like Bobby's
Place for grown-ups," whispers a
companion.) A girl in a sort of Canal
Boulevard version of New Wave fashion
looks completely out of place — the
people here are, generally, older and the
verdant attire is casually dressy — lots of
tank-washes, silks, pantsuits that
look something like Russian cakes from
Binder's, peasant tops, large shoulder
bags. It's a more romantic place — many
women frankly on the prowl, the band
(Tuff, who have their names in four-foot
mylar letters at the back of the bandstand,
is a fairly slick act alternating between
slow and moderately fast ballads, with a
lead singer with one of those limber,
poignant yet inexpensive classic-New-Orleans-
white-boy voices like, say, Eddie Powers)
inspiring people to dance close —
simultaneously one sees the cha-chas (ex-
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AUGIE'S DEL LAGO - 1930 West End Park - Pop, rock bands.

BANDERA LADY LOUNGE - 7820 Chef Menteur Hwy. 242-9787 - Bands on weekends.

BARRY'S PLACE - 3124 Loyola Dr., Kenner 469-8253 - Bands on weekends.

BAYOU BAR - Pontchartrain Hotel - 2031 St. Charles Ave. 524-0581 - Piano bar.

BEAT EXCHANGE - 2300 Chartres St. - Pop, rock bands & New Wave.

BEAU GESTE - 7011 Read Blvd. 242-9710 - Pop, rock, jazz bands.

BISTRO LOUNGE - 4061 Tulane Ave. 482-9377 - Soloists.

BLUE ROOM - Fairmont Hotel - University Place 529-4744 - Supper Club entertainment.


BOSS LOUNGE - 1926 West End Park 282-9144 - Pop, rock, jazz bands.


BRONCO'S - 1409 Romain St. Gretna 368-1000 - Country & western.

CAFÉ BANQUETTE - 3445 Prytania St. 891-2227 - Soloists.

CAFÉ BROMELIAD - Hilton Hotel - 2 Poydras St. 561-0500 - Sunday jazz brunch.

CAJUN BANDSTAND - 1822 Airline Hwy. 466-8100 - Cajun & country music.

CASA BLANCA LOUNGE - Airport Hilton - 901 Airline Hwy, Kenner 721-3471 - Cabaret entertainment.

CHARLIE BROWN'S LIVING ROOM - 2219 Veterans Blvd. Kenner 466-8144 - Bands Thursday thru Saturday.

COURTYARD - Hyatt Regency Hotel - 561-1233 - Sunday jazz.

DOROTHY'S MEDALLION - 3232 Orleans Ave. 488-2099 - R&B bands on weekends.
DOWN SOUTH - 1610 Belle Chase Hwy. 368-9148 - Country.
DREAM PALACE - 534 Frenchmen St. - Pop, rock, R&B bands.
EXCHEQUER TOWNE CLUB - 6200 Elysian Fields 282-3210 - Pop and R&B soloists and duos on weekends.
FAIRMONT COURT - Fairmont Hotel - University Place 529-7111 - Piano bar.
FAUBOURG - 626 Frenchmen St. 944-0110 - Contemporary jazz.
FLICKER'S - 3208 N. Arnould Rd. Metairie 888-7254 - Pop, rock bands.
FOGARTY'S - 3612 Hesser Ave. Metairie 885-7591 - Bands on weekends.
FRANKIE BRENT'S - 4724 Utica St. Metairie 885-7764 - Floor show.
FRENCH GARDEN BAR - Hilton Hotel - 2 Poydras St. 561-0500 - Soloists.
GALLEY LOUNGE - 2211 Veterans Blvd. 466-5506 - Pop, rock bands.
GINO'S - 3308 Magazine St. 895-9200 - Piano bar.
HAWG'S - 3027 Jean Lafitte, Chalmette 872-8495 - Country and western.
HIRED HAND SALOON - 1100 S. Clearview Pkwy., Harahan 734-0590 - Pop, contemporary jazz, country bands.
HYATT REGENCY ATRIUM - Hyatt Regency Hotel 561-1234 - Piano bar.
JERRY EVANS' CLUB - 2820 Lyons St. Metairie 887-3945 - Floor show.
JEZEBEL'S - 621 Elysian Fields Ave. 948-9623 - Big band on Saturday night.
JIMMY'S - 8200 Willow St. 866-9549 - Pop, rock, blues, R&B bands.
JOHN L'S - 812 N. Claiborne Ave. 523-8103 - R&B bands very late Saturday night.
JOHNNY'S JAZZ GARDEN - 3536 Fat City Ave., Metairie Metairie 888-9476 - Pop, jazz, R&B bands and soloists.
JOINT VENTURE - 2183 Stumpf Blvd. Terrytown 368-2426 - Bands on weekends.
LARRY'S FLAMINGO CLUB - 1800 Stumpf Blvd. Gretna 361-9697 - Bands on weekends.
LE BON TEMPS ROULE - 4801 Magazine St. - Folk, bluegrass, country, jug bands.
LUIGI'S - 6319 Elysian Fields Ave. 282-9210 - Pop, rock bands on Wednesdays.
MAPLE LEAF BAR - 8316 Oak St. 866-9359 - You name it, bands and soloists.
MEETING PLACE - 3655 Fat City Ave. Metairie 887-9666 - Floor shows.
NEFF'S - 361 Whitney Ave. Algiers - Piano bar.
NEW SILVER EAGLE - 1801 Stumpf Blvd. - Country & western.
OLE MAN RIVER'S - 2125 Hwy. 90, Avondale 436-3000 - Pop, rock, country bands.
PAGODA BAR - Imperial Palace Regency - 601 Loyola Ave. 522-6866 - Soloists.
PALACE SALOON - 1928 West End Park 282-9449 - Pop, rock bands.

PAT BARBEROT'S JEFFERSON-ORLEANS NORTH - 2600 Edenhaven Ave. 454-6110 - Big band swing.
PENNY POST COFFEE HOUSE - 5110 Danneel St. - Acoustic soloists and bands.
PEPPER-RONI'S - 5101 West Esplanade Ave. Metairie 455-8926 - Soloist.
PETE FOUNTAIN'S - N.O. Hilton Hotel - 2 Poydras St. 561-0500 - The place to hear Pete Fountain.
PHIL'S LOUNGE - 7742 Chef Menteur Hwy. 242-5405 - Soloist and duos.
PREZENT STEAMBOAT - Canal St. Wharf 586-8777 - Pop, rock bands on Saturday night.
PROUT'S CLUB ALHAMBRA - 732 N. Claiborne Ave. 523-9896 - Blues, R&B bands.
QUARTER NOTE - 3800 Hesser Ave. Metairie 888-9088 - Pop, rock bands.
RACQUETS PIANO BAR - Fountian Bay Hotel - 4040 Tulane Ave. 486-6111 - Piano bar.
RECOVERY ROOM - 3340 Canal St. 822-9036 - Bands on weekends.
RED ONION - 2700 Edendene Ave. Metairie 455-6677 - Soloist.
RETREAT LOUNGE - Midtown Quality Inn - 3900 Tulane Ave. 486-5541 - Piano bar.
ROBERT'S REEF - 1030 West End Park 282-7393 - Cabaret entertainment.
ROSE TATTOO - 4401 Tchoupitoulas St. 895-7780 - Pop, rock, R&B bands.
SUGAR MILL - 5213 Fourth St. Marrero 347-8130 - Soloist.
TIPITINA'S - 211 24th Street 734-0590 - Contemporary jazz.
TREND LOUNGE - 2211 Veterans Blvd. 466-3333 - Pop, rock, R&B bands.
TIPITINA'S - 501 Napoleon Ave. 899-9114 - Pop, rock, blues, jazz, R&B bands and soloists.
TOP OF THE INN LOUNGE - Sheraton Hotel 366-8531 - Piano bar.
TOP OF THE MART LOUNGE - ITM Bldg. 522-9795 - Cabaret entertainment.
TRAVEL LODGE AIRPORT LOUNGE - 2240 Veterans Blvd. Kenner 467-7341 - Soloists and duos.
TYLER'S - 5234 Magazine St. 891-4989 - Pop, rock, blues, jazz, R&B bands.

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Too much, too soon, too easy . . . But now he's ready for a comeback

**KING FLOYD**

During the first ten years of his career, King Floyd sold more than five million records and then simply vanished. No records, no public performances — King Floyd disappeared, leaving a startled public eager for more of King's unique brand of soul.

The reasons were as complex as King himself.

"I had a need to travel a bit. I was looking for something different, I needed that inspirational thing. I just wasn’t satisfied with myself. I was like a baseball who got base hits and homeruns, and suddenly can’t even get a bunt."
BY ALMOST SLIM

That's what happened to me. Suddenly my feeling for writing just dried up. I needed something and fortunately traveling brought it back.'

Although he was born in New Orleans, King's career and influences are markedly different from his New Orleans contemporaries. "I started singing when I was about 11 or 12. From there I got to know people like Earl King and Willie Tee hanging around the One Stop on Rampart Street. I decided I wanted to be a musician, and that the best way to learn was to learn from the people who were out there doing it."

"Google Eyes got me my first job, at the Showboat Bar on Rampart Street, around 1961. I really got inspired watching people like Ernie K-Doe, Tommy Ridgley and Irma Thomas at dances at the Holland Gym down where Causeway Blvd. is now. I also use to dig Otis Redding, Sam Cooke, Joe Tex and Jackie Wilson. I was caught between the local people and the national thing.

"I left New Orleans and went into the military. When I got out in 1963 I went to New York. I started working for Shaw, who did a lot of booking in the Manhattan area, and worked around New York, getting some exposure. I started hanging with J.J. Jackson and Don Covay who gave me some hints on writing. One of the things that really inspired me was Barbara George's "I Know." I figured that was easy. After about a year people started saying things were happening in California, so I moved to Los Angeles.

"I met Buddy Keelen there, a Black DJ who introduced me to Jimmy Holiday. They helped me produce my first record, "Walking and Thinking," and "Why Did She Leave Me?" That was on Original Sound. The record did very well on the West Coast. The record hops were very popular then and I worked off the record. I hit a low period though, after the record and I needed to write again. I hooked up with Harold Battiste — I had known him through Barbara George — and I use to go over to his house because he had a piano. Plus he had a kind of atmosphere you'd love to be in. By hanging with Harold I got to meet Jimi Hendrix, Sonny and Cher. I was learning something from everybody.

"I also put that Mac Rebennack. Funny I never met Mac in New Orleans, but we started to write some stuff together. We wrote the songs for my first album, on Pulsar. I had already written "Groove Me." Really I wanted to get into the funk thing 'cause the pop thing wasn't showing me nothing.

"I was writing a lot for Harold's artists and I even wrote something for Shine [Alvin Robinson] and Mac. We collaborated on "She's About To Drive Me Wild." I spent about five years in Los Angeles, but I decided I hadn't reached the height I wanted to reach. So in September I decided to go back to New Orleans and decided to give up the music business. It just didn't happen on a big enough scale for me. I wasn't known nationally.

"After awhile I ran into Wardell Quezergue, but he said he really couldn't do anything if he signed me as an artist. I ran into Elijah Walker, who was cutting Tommy and Sammy Ridgley. I suggested to him that he record me but he wasn't too impressed with the idea. Walker was also handling C.P. Dove, really an outstanding performer — I don't know why he isn't better known. Well, C.P. suggested to Walker that he record me instead of himself, and that really impressed Walker. Walker talked to Wardell, and Wardell said, "yeah, he's got some good tunes." So one Sunday we all went up to Malaco [Malaco Studios in Jackson, Miss.] There was Jean Knight, Bonnie and Sheilla, and myself. That was May 17, 1970.

"I just about didn't make it because the car broke down on the way. I was working for the post office and I had to be back that afternoon for work. When I got there everybody was waiting on me, so I only had a few minutes. We cut two tunes, "What Our Love Needs" was the first one. That took three takes because I was saying 'hitting' and it sounded like 'hating.' Then we did "Groove Me." It only took one take, boom-boom bomp, and we did it on down. I was out of there in about a month or so. Miss. I then begged Wardell to get me a deal. Wardell arranged it. I loved Wardell's arrangements on the funk things. Bobby Freeman had arranged it when I was in Malaco, but I said that's not the way I want to cut it. Uh-uh.

"Malaco had a lease agreement with Atlantic but I held hold of Jerry Wexler. Walker's office was down in the Ninth Ward and we just sat around listening to the record. We tried to interest Stax in it but couldn't; they said I had a flavor of Otis in my voice but they didn't like the song; 'Groove Me.' I couldn't understand that 'cause I was hung up on 'What Our Love Needs.'"

"We couldn't get anybody to leave it so they decided they were going to put it out themselves. I got the record in August 2. I brought it to WBLK and gave it to Hank Sample. He was a singing DJ. He started playing 'What Our Love Needs.' It played for a month or so. Miss. I then got with George Viner, who was with WYLD, bumped into me
one night when I was going into the post office and said, 'King, I got great news, I just got your record. I'm gonna take it out to my niece's party and give it a listen.' So
he called me about 6 the next morning and said, 'You got a record baby! I'm gonna play it on the air now.' So he played 'Groove Me,' and I said 'No, George, you're playing the wrong side!' He said, 'No man, I took it to my niece's house and that's the only record they played the whole night long.'

"So everybody started playing it on the radio, and none of the record shops could keep the record. All the jocks were on it. We had a double-sided hit but 'Groove Me' took off. Vinet called Atlantic and told them it was happening. Atlantic got in touch with Malaco, and they came down and signed the papers. WTIX picked up on 'Groove Me,' I heard it on WLAC out of Nashville, and some friends of mine came back from Chicago and said they heard it up there. Then I realized I had a big record. George was getting the Atlantic reports and said, 'Hey you got a monster on your hands.'

Oddly enough, King hadn't sung in public at all since his return to his hometown, just worked as a post office clerk. In September I did my first gig in New Orleans at the I.L.A. I got $150 for the gig, and the response was so great they booked me back in October. That was good money! From there Percy Stovall started booking me into little towns around the state. I started working ten nights in a row before I'd be off two. It really got exciting.

"Groove Me" was certified gold on Christmas Day 1970. After that I met Alex Hodges of Paramount Agency, and he asked me, how much I was making. I said $500 a night. He said, I can get you $1,200. So I told Walker 'Hey, we better go with him.' I made $104,000 in 1971.

"We went back up to Malaco to do the album, but the sound kind of changed a bit from 'Groove Me.' Wardel started hearing things, and I was hearing things. I guess the egos started coming out. Everybody started clashing and things don't work that way.

"We came back with 'Baby Let Me Do It To You.' It started selling really well, but it got pulled off of WABC in New York because they felt it was suggestive. Sales just backed up after that.

"We had cut 'Woman Don't Go Astray' for the album but didn't release it on a single for two years. We had cut a few new things but really nothing big. George and my uncle always said, 'King, you got to do 'Woman Don't Go Astray.'" Finally Atlantic released it and it was a smash. It sold 600,000 records.

King's association with Malaco ended in 1974 after five years. During his stay at Malaco before moving to Mercury, he released four albums and a dozen singles that chalked up total sales in the 4½ million range. King reflected on the split. "I always got my proper royalties sometimes late, but I always got 'em. But I always had trouble communicating with engineers, so I decided to go to studio school. Traci Borges was my teacher. Tommy [Tommy Couch, Malaco producer] wanted me to be an artist and a
writer, but I wanted to help engineer stuff, too; ‘cause I though I could help. Tommy felt it would take away from being an artist and a writer. I tried to tell him it wouldn’t, but we couldn’t come together. That’s why I left. It wasn’t because I wasn’t paid.”

Despite his success, King expressed other frustrations: “I felt like I was only being exposed to black audiences. I knew I had a broader appeal. I felt I should have been on the rock concerts like Otis was, but I didn’t make it. Then disco came in and I was still writing this funk stuff. That just about terminated my writing.”

Recently King’s material finally reached a broader audience. The Blues Brothers successfully covered “Groove Me” on their debut album. “I heard Mick Jagger gave them the idea. I really enjoyed their version, too. They kind of drew on my reggae influence.”

This occasional sway toward reggae is apparent in tunes like “Baby Let Me Do It To You.” King reflected, “When I toured the Caribbean, I met Peter Tosh and Bob Marley. What really intrigued me was the drums on the islands. When we got back to the studio I wanted to incorporate that reggae feel.” King enjoyed popularity throughout the Carribbean. He added, “I’ve got seven number one records in Trinidad.”

King reminisced on his successful tour of Europe in 1974, where he was lauded as the “Soulful Highness.” “I loved Europe, it was a real experience. I did the military bases and the civilian circuit. I had a band from London that was fantastic! We worked England, Sweden, Germany and France. I wanted to bring ’em back to America, I would have had the ‘Average White Band’ kind of thing. We had great write-ups every day. In fact, I was supposed to go back to Europe on the fifth anniversary of ‘Groove Me’, but I blew it. I was going to get $50,000 for a month plus expenses, but I lost my damn briefcase on the way back to America and it had all my contracts in it. It seemed like after that everything started falling apart.”

Now still in his early thirties, King is back at square one. It would be easy to be bitter over his rise and fall from the public’s acceptance, but King takes it in stride, faulting only himself. “I fumbled the ball. That’s why I’m back where I am. It seemed like everything was going good for me. The door was open for me, but it got slammed in my face.”

What does the future hold for King Floyd? “Hey, well I can do it again. I feel if anybody from New Orleans can do it, it’s me, because I’ve got the knowledge now, the experience, and the international appeal to do it. I learned my lesson.”

“What I want to do is have my own record company, my own publishing company, and do the whole thing myself this time and see how it works. Berry Gordy did it, I have no doubt that it can be done again.”

King Floyd is back and he’s got a lot more singing to do and a lot more records to be made. Anyone who sees or hears him knows these are only the first chapters in the King Floyd Story.
Dennis McGee, well-known traditional French fiddle player, will participate in the fiddle workshop.

This month, the people of Southwest Louisiana celebrate their music and culture.
The most recent America magazine features a section on travel in the USA; it lists highlights of major cities and their primary attractions. One of the listings is New Orleans. In that piece, the writer mentions the music of south central Louisiana. "Cajun music, a fiddle-accordion-percussion sound, has been a part of life in the Cajun country west of New Orleans. The best way," the article continues, "to bring this music to your ears is to attend one of the big Cajun music festivals (the biggest is in September in Lafayette)." That festival is the Festival de Musique Académe, part of the Festivals Acadiens, and has been slated for September 19 and 20, Saturday and Sunday, in Girard Park in Lafayette.

Cajun music is truly a living and growing entity, representative of the people and attitude of this area of Louisiana. The first group to perform on Saturday, Denéanot, Ardoin and Fontenot, are indicative of this. According to Lanier, "Freeman Fontenot learned to play accordion from Canray Fontenot's father and Bois-Sec Ardoin's cousin, Amede Ardoin, who was a legendary musician and one of Louisiana's most important musicians of his day. Freeman Fontenot is 81 years old, and he is the contemporary going back in time..." The rest of the Saturday schedule reads with the same jewel-studded ring. From Rayne, Nathan Menard and the Cajun Swing band has the stick, uptown sound popular on the dance circuit. Zachary Richard and Fatras are popular here and in Quebec. Saturday is closed down by Hector Duhon and the Dixie Ramblers, who've been making music since the Twenties.

On Sunday, The Cajun Ramblers represent the newer generation of traditional players while Beausoleil is considered an innovative group working within the traditional motif. John Delafose, just back from Africa, will be performing that rich zydeco sound so popular on the dance circuit. Dewey and Tony Balfa maintain the superb sound the Balfa Brothers Band has become known for; the brothers and some of their friends will close the last day of the festival.

According to Barry Ancelet, who is with the Center for Louisiana Studies at the University of Southern Louisiana and is the music director for the festival, the idea for a festival began in 1973. It began with a conversation between a group of concerned individuals -- Ancelet, James Dornegaux, Ralph Remslo, Dewey Balfa, et al -- about the state of indigenous French music in the Lafayette area. By 1974, the first festival had been organized and was planned for Lafayette's Blackham Coliseum.

Conray Fontenot, Freman Fontenot and Bois-Sec Ardoin open the show.

"We didn't know what to expect," Barry said. "People had been used to going to the bars and honky-tonks to dance to the cajun music, but they didn't really pay much attention to it beyond listening to it to dance. We wanted to put people into a situation where they listened to this music in a concert-like atmosphere." CODIFIL (Council for the Development of French in Louisiana) was working closely with the festival, with James Dornegaux its director. "We wanted to rivet people's attention," Ancelet noted, "and we were trying to fill a large space. It had never been done in this area. Dewey Balfa played at a Newport Festival and saw 15,000 people stand to an ovation when he played music his hometown people called chunky-chank."

Ancelet described the night of the first fest in Blackham back in 1974. "It was a bad night. It was raining and storming, and it didn't look good. We just didn't know what to expect. CODIFIL used the visit of a group of about 150 French journalists as an opportunity to have the fest. The public was invited, and the thing was ready. The coliseum was filled with 12,000 people; it is rated at 8,000. People were in the bleachers, behind the hands, on the floor!"

The Festivals Acadiens moved outdoors to the brick facility at Girard Park in its third year. The next year the event moved around the park to an area dotted with big trees and bordered by a winding coulee. In 1980, the support of the fest was handed over to the Jaycees, a civic organization in Lafayette. CODIFIL went on to continue work on the seedling and organization end of the French heritage movement in the area while the Jaycees used its considerable logistical skill to organize and run the annual event. Vance Lanier, with the Lafayette Jaycees, is the director of the Cajun Music Festival.
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The Cajun Music Festival is only one event of a series held at the same time in Lafayette. Ann Wakefield describes other activities:

"The Bayou Food Festival, within walking distance of the music festival, offers a complete selection of Cajun and Creole foods, along with a few other ethnic specialties thrown in for good measure. Gumbo, jambalaya, crawfish etouffee, and boudin are just a few of the mouth-watering dishes that can be sampled during Festival Acadians. This year, the noble alligator will be added to the menu as it is becoming more widely accepted as a culinary delicacy."

"The Louisiana Native Crafts Festival, also within walking distance of the music festival, serves as a showcase for a wide range of both traditional and contemporary crafts, as well as cooking demonstrations, gospel choir singing, and music workshops."

For more information, contact the Lafayette Convention and Visitors Commission, P.O. Box 52065, Lafayette, LA 70505, or telephone (318) 232-3808.

—John Donlon

Cajun Music Festival Schedule

Saturday, Sept. 19, 1981
11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Freeman Fontenot, Bois Sec Ardoin and Canray Fontenot
1 p.m.-2:30 p.m.: Nathan Menard and The Cajun Swing
3 p.m.-4:30 p.m.: Zachary Richard and Fatras
5 p.m.-6:30 p.m.: Hector Duhon, Octa Clark and The Dixie Ramblers

Sunday, Sept. 20, 1981
10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.: Fiddle Workshop with Dennis McGee, S.D. Courville, Preston Manuel, Gervis & Verhies Stanford, Varise Connor and Lionel Lelieux.
Noon-1:30 p.m.: Ricky Bearb and The Cajun Ramblers
2 p.m.-3:30 p.m.: Mike Doucet and Beausoleil
4 p.m.-5:30 p.m.: John Delafose and The Zydeco Band
6 p.m.-7:30 p.m.: Dewey Balfa and The Balfa Brothers Band

Both Days
Quebecois folk singer Jocelyn Berube will perform two half-hour-sets during the festival. These are still to be scheduled into the break times. Most likely there will be one set each day.

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Lois DeJean

For someone who sings like heaven, she sure can raise a lot of hell.

—Ron Cuccia

Lois DeJean was born into the Gospel. Her mother was an iron-clad Christian. Her father was a preacher. They lived above a saloon.

"We used to lie on the floor and put our ears to the floor, and listen to the music downstairs. All of a sudden, we'd feel a sting on our buttocks. He'd holler, 'Get up off that floor! I know what you're doing!' But he understood. He was a cool dude."

It was her father who gave Lois an early show of faith.

"I remember my very first solo. I was about five years old, and my father said he was going to have his own program. I thought he was going to go out and get people to sing, or whatever, but he just meant that he was going to have his own kind of program. So I kept asking him, 'Daddy, please let me sing on your program, let me sing on your program.' So he did.

"The first song I sang was 'King Jesus Will Roll Our Burdens Away.' I couldn't read music, and I had the sheet music in my hand, but it was upside down. I didn't know what I was doing, so I just kept singing the same thing over and over again. That was my first solo, and that's when he really found out that I could sing.

"So have many others since then. DeJean is an enormous and natural talent. From a family of singers (eight out of nine children could sing), Lois was always the "whooper," the one voice to rise above, take the lead, possess and impassion a song.

DeJean can sing both alto and soprano. As a teenager, she had the offers (and desire) to be a professional blues singer, but because of her father's disapproval, she did not follow them up. In the lower register, her voice has blues shadings. It is warm and earthy; it is embraceable.

But when the songs begins to rise, DeJean becomes another being, like the highest bird, on top of the mountain, jumping away from the peak, catching an updraft in its wings, and shooting exuberantly through the clouds into the creation of angels. She takes your heart with her. It is an exhilaration that is almost frightening. When she sings, there is nothing beneath you but air, but you don't care, because, when she sings, Lois DeJean is a powerful angel.

She also has an ear for arrangement, the kind that no amount of formal training can ever equal. This invaluable gift has been a key to her success, for, even though she had been singing professionally with her family and solo ever since she was ten years old, by her own account her musical career did not begin until she was thirty.

"I was lying in my bed at home, and we were looking for a choir director for my father's church, Gloryland Mt. Gillion Baptist Church, and, in a vision, a Voice spoke to me, and told me to go to my father, and tell him I would direct. No knowledge of music, no nothing. And I asked the Voice how I could when I could not read music. And the Voice replied back to me, 'I'll put it in your head.'

"I went to church, and told my father about it, and he said, 'Well, I can't say that it wasn't a vision, or it wasn't God speaking to you, so I'll let you try.' And I did it. Couldn't read a 'C' if it was big as the Municipal Auditorium, but I could pick up the sheet music, and whatever way the notes went, I went.

So Lois marched into her first directorship against the objection by some in the congregation that she did not have any formal training. It is difficult to imagine, but one thing may come more natural to DeJean than singing, and that is standing up for herself. Her answer was clear and simple, "I didn't get offended. I told them to come back when they thought I could teach them something."

DeJean learned to direct, she learned to teach, and she went on singing in churches around New Orleans every Sunday. Then, in 1969, the lesson came to her.

"My husband died, and I didn't know what to do with myself. So, my daughter asked me to work with them, and I told them no, I didn't want to work with no young people, they're too disgusting. [She laughs] But I gave it a try, and I fell in love with it. It changed the course of my
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life.
"I found out that you can try to shape
up young people, but you first have to
shape yourself up. They put me on my p's
and q's. I had to be careful what I was doing
if I wanted to stand out as an example,
and I did.
"It wasn't what I did for young people.
Young people did a lot for me. They did it
for me. I don't know what would've hap­
penned. Probably, I would've gone back
out in the world, and got wild. I had a
great loss, four children to raise. I don't
know really what I would have done. This
was a good way for God to pull me in the
right direction."

Lois Dejean's decision has changed a
lot more lives than just hers, as well as
gospel music itself here in New Orleans.
She started with six young people, calling
them the Gospel Inspirations, and this
they became. Church services were
normally held at eleven in the morning
and seven at night. The Gospel Inspirations
initiated a lively service at three in the
afternoon, and kids, who otherwise
would have been at the beach or at a
movie, found out they could have their
fun at church.

The first anniversary of the Gospel In­
spirations turned out to be the somewhat
chaotic, somewhat charismatic birth of
what many people call the best gospel
group in town. "There were so many
young people who wanted to join The
Gospel Inspirations, and we wanted a
group to open up for their first anni­
versary, so I said let's get us an
interdenominational group of young people
to open up the program. And we did, and
practically every day that we had
rehearsal, it rained.
"If it didn't rain, we had no
musicians. And I told them, I said, 'Well,
I've given it about three or four tries, I'm
not giving it any more.' Just then the
doors opened, three musicians walked in,
and the rain stopped."

And so the Youth Inspirational Choir
was born, 106 voices big. Everyone en­
joyed that first night so much, they
wanted to keep doing it. As if four
children and one gospel group weren't
enough already, Lois seriously considered
it - perhaps because of her faith in God,
perhaps out of the curious joy that springs
from exhaustion, or maybe she was just
plain crazy. But she had seen something,

a hunger, a thirst, when
great
women

cannot
resist
feeding children.

She kept the choir together. She taught
them to sing, "even the bad voices I
always could do something with," like
making a flag out of rags. And what a
glorious flag they have become. They do
the Gospel mighty proud.

She taught them more than that. "I was
at the same time trying to groom them in­
to being productive citizens. The overall
goal was not just to get them to sing,
but to find out that they could go back to
their churches and do some things that
were positive. They could act as leaders;
they could grow up to be good men and
women, respectable young men and
women."
She took on their problems, often in place of her own. She gave them discipline. She taught them by example how to stand up for themselves. She has been amazingly successful, judging by the hundreds of young people who turned out at her recent Night of Recognition to sing and praise "the Wida," as she is called by her kids.

This past year Dejean had a head-on newsmaking clash with the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. She had worked for the festival for nine years. She was in line for promotion, and some positions had come open. Not only was she passed over, but she got a cut in pay instead. She brought suit; she also vehemently denounced Jazz Fest office politics. She lost her job. It was a difficult time indeed.

Speaking of changes she fought for over the years, as well as the final confrontation, Lois had this to say:

"You could not get any of the gospel personalities to say anything when it came to an actual fight. They were scared. Scared! Scared of what? But then I found out the almighty dollar speaks. And who am I; just a poor nobody. What does it matter?"

"But I wonder to myself, what is it doing to our young people? Say you sit back and say nothing. When it's time for your young people to fight about something, how can they fight? They haven't seen you do anything.

"My kids stuck with me. And I didn't have a job. I lost my piano, which was my heart, and one of my kids saw that I got another piano. I was living off my kids. They were going into their savings accounts, and putting dollars in my pocket, until I found a job. What I learned from it all was that I did not win the battle, but I won a whole victory when it came to my kids. I found out how much they loved me. And I found great joy in that."

And, in the final accounting, that is the best measure of all.

So this woman of will looks forward. She is grooming herself in business sense with an eye toward the World's Fair. (She wants to be sure that gospel music gets its share.) Cox Cable chose the Youth Inspirational Choir to be the sole representative of gospel music on the local channel. That's not good enough for her. She wants a whole channel for religious programming, and a chance for all the city's choirs to perform, and to be paid. She is very vocal about the monies that go to support the Scouts, sports programs, the "Y", etc., but none for the city's gospel choirs, which she feels actually serve the same purpose.

She has a big mouth about injustice, and, if you could hear her sing without seeing her, you might think that sound came from a sizeable woman. Actually, "the Wida" turns a svelte 46 this year. Her kids also call her "the Rosa Parks of the Eighties." Maybe it's her faith that makes her sound so big, but for someone who sings like heaven, she sure can raise a lot of hell. It's doubtful that there was ever a great woman who didn't.

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DREAD

Peter Tosh is a Third World urban bush doctor stepping razor sharp into the eye of Babylon with natty shield of Rastafari to deflect the blows of the evil forces out to downpress upon the righteous. One third of the original “Wailers” — the archetypal reggae organization/trio composed of a triumvir of songwriters/messengers: internationally known Bob Marley, legendary Bunny Wailer, ne Livingston, and word warrior Tosh — Winston Hubert, “Peter” Mackintosh, born October 19, 1944, is a self-taught musician proficient on guitar, piano, harmonica and percussion. Musically, Tosh believes he was born with music in him and that his life task is to manifest this core reality. Composer of reggae classics such as “Stop The Train” and “400 Years,” he is co-composer with Bob Marley of the often recorded anthem “Get Up, Stand Up.” Founded in Kingston, Jamaica, during the Sixties, the original Wailers broke up in 1974 with Bob Marley retaining the band and the name and touring, while Bunny and Peter decided to remain in Jamaica. Two seminal recordings from that period are Catch A Fire (Island 9241) and the sine qua non of any reggae collection, Burnin’ (Island 9256) which offers the best recorded example of original Wailer harmonies.

In 1975, Tosh was badly mashed up by Jamaican police. He responded musically with “Mark Of The Beast,” a sensational hit record in Jamaica that was promptly banned from airplay by the Jamaican government. He followed up with another challenge of the “shit-stem,” the pro-herb song “Legalize It” which the government also banned and which also quickly became a hot selling single.

In 1976, Tosh’s illegal single caught the attention of Columbia Records and he released his first solo album, not surprisingly entitled Legalize It (Columbia PC 24253). Former Wailer band members Family Man Barrett and blood brother Carlton were on bass and drums, along with others from the Wailer family such as keyboardist Tyrone Downey, guitarist Al Anderson, and singers Rita Marley, Judy Mowatt, and most significantly of all, Bunny Wailer. In 1977, Tosh created what has since been recognized as a reggae milestone, the militant and uncomprising album Equal Rights (Columbia PC 34670), a quintessential recording which many people consider Tosh’s best. Holding down the bottom on Equal Rights are drummer Sly Dunbar and bassist Robbie Shakespeare, a duo who are currently Jamaica’s most active rhythm team and record producers. Bunny Wailer provides background vocals. In addition to the popular title number, this album also includes an iron strong version of “Get Up, Stand Up,” and political groundation numbers such as “African” and “Stepping Razor.” Both Legalize It and Equal Rights were archetypical (produced) by Tosh.

In 1978 Tosh released Bush Doctor (Rolling Stone 39109) which featured a cover of the Motown classic “Don’t Look Back” done in duet with Mick Jagger of The Rolling Stones. The track brought airplay, television appearances and public recognition from a large audience who had previously been unaware of the reggae revolution in music. In that same year Tosh was the first non-Rolling Stones member to be signed to Rolling Stone Records. In 1979 Tosh’s annual LP was Mystic Man (Rolling Stone 39111), whose title number was a sharp denunciation of Babylon fast food/drug culture.

In 1980 Tosh did not produce an album but did contribute tracks to the reggae film Rockers and co-produced Keith Poppin’s single, “Jam Down Festival,” which won “Number One Reggae Song” at the Jamaican Song Festival that year. With the music that Peter Tosh is making both live and on recordings, such as Wanted Dread and Alive, it is clear to all who have ear to hear and heart to feel that reggae is no passing fad/wave music. Reggae is for real and Doctor Tosh correctly say/sing the diagnosis that dread song be doing fine, all is Irie, is well & ALIVE.
What are your goals?

My goals are just equal rights, justice and freedom. Irrespective of what man may achieve materially, that is nothing because the world belong to my father. So I don't see what's on the earth. All what's on here belong to equal rights, justice and freedom.

So consciousness they still live in fantasy because the world belong to Jab. When you praise me and until Black people come to that freedom. Irrespective of materially, that is what man may achieve Jab that means the world belong to you.

I had to teach those who are still lost ignorance, freedom youth was on the earth of ignorancy, but it was made me with light and we see many Black people as a victim of the shit-stem. We knew what is taking place, we knew what is taking place.

They say they crucify Jesus the name of the creator that we serve. They say “Give them Jesus, give them this, give them that, give them every other God.” And everyone of them is dead. Every God that man praise today is dead. Every God that man praise today is dead.

So our people were enslaved, for instance, in Jamaica and not only our clothing and tools were taken, but they tried to strip us of our culture.

Yes, everything. They even took away the name of the creator that we serve. They say “Give them Jesus, give them this, give them that, give them every other God.” And everyone of them is dead. Every God that man praise today is dead.

So ignorance still continue. And what they are trying to show us know that Emperor Haile Selassie is dead too. But, I-and-I who have investigated and know of prophecy, know that in this time it would be said that the creator is dead, like it was two thousand years ago when they say they crucify Jesus Christ. But every disappointment is for a great-purpose.

Jah said he work mysterious things, believe I have to search to find out the reality of that fantasy. I found out the reality that I, the rastaman, is the reality of what they call Christianity today. Because it is only the rastaman is the humblest man in creation today. He was condemned by society. He was given naught to multiply with naught, but he did that and got one, and that is very difficult.

So our people were enslaved, for instance, in Jamaica and not only our clothing and tools were taken, but they tried to strip us of our culture.

Yes, everything. They even took away the name of the creator that we serve. They say “Give them Jesus, give them this, give them that, give them every other God.” And everyone of them is dead. Every God that man praise today is dead.

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Jah said he work mysterious things, learn that. When I investigate, I've never seen a Christian who has been humiliated in this time. Because they are a part of the shit-stem. But everytime you say Rastafari you are looked down on and condemned within the society, for what? Because you are seeing reality, knowing that the prefix Ras means head, and the suffix Tafari means creator, and when you say Rastafari it's coming from the Amharic vocabulary which is millions of years old.

Do you find that there is a better reception for reggae music now as compared to two or three years ago?

Uh-umm. In Europe the people highly appreciate reggae music and love it dearly. But in these places, I feel, more and more it is the media that controls and makes it difficult for our people to hear the music through the radio because the music has been branded political because of its so-called political ingredients. They make it difficult to get to the people because it is a music of awakening. The people have been suffering from the shit.

How did you search?

Just searching because I learn of Christianity, I learn of Jesus, I learn of righteous, I learn of God, and I learn of all these ignorancy. But it is like saying and telling me that this is a key [holding a lighter] and because I don't know I believe. Believe is fifty percent doubt and that's what the world we living on today: belief, fifty percent doubt until we become certain. Well this certainty was inside of me and everytime I see that they taught me something to make me believe, it always come in conflict. So every time they teach me something to make me
stem for so long, and because people are getting up and standing up for their rights, one and two, and three and four are getting into the message and getting across to what the message has been saying and spreading the news.

What makes you think that the media has such a big control?

It's a part of the politics, part of the shit-stem. The politicians have to control the media to keep the people ignorant. They have to program what is played on the media. They tell you what to say and when to say it. Because those things have been going on for so long, those things are the reasons why Black people don't get to do anything, it is a part of keeping ignorance in function.

The music is for Black people and they want to keep it away from Black people so they don't see the light. It is lessons of awakening for Black people. Reggae is a vehicle for getting across to people lost in fantasy who are seeking a reality.

In Jamaica, I don't know about now, but two or three years ago it was not easy to hear reggae music on the radio.

That's the same thing going on now, maybe even worse. But that's how powerful it is; even though the media don't play the music that much, it's the people's national music. That's what the people respond to and love. The radio stations is a pack of shit and I hate it badly for that. It is trying to defamatute the character of reggae music and make those who are playing reggae music look like fools. When I go to other places outside of Jamaica to see how people respond to reggae music, I'm treated like a king. In the place where reggae music is originated, the people who make reggae music are treated like dogs according to the shit-stem. They try to do everything to incriminate the singers and charge them with ganja and smoking and bullshit, but it's just to keep the rastaman's philosophy in the dark.

What do you listen to besides reggae?

I listen to plenty American music. O-jays, all the music with a message. Commodores, all the music that is beautifully decorated. There is plenty music in America that is beautifully decorated but it hasn't got a message.

Why do you think that is?

Because of the shit-stem. The singers can not do better because if they sing a messaary it won't get no air play and they want their music to be played, so everybody just sing "Darling, I love you" like there is nothing more to sing. If you listen to an American chart and there is one hundred songs on the chart, ninety-eight of them is telling about "My Girl" and "Darling, I will swim the ocean and I don't deal with that.

Me like to hear something awakening to Black people because music is so powerful, and music has so much psychological ingredients that it automatically get to the ears and minds of the people, and you are thrilled by the ingredients therein. If the ingredients of the music alone can thrill you, then you should decorate the words to write with and make it a message. \-
**REGGAE ARRIVES**

The Peter Tosh Concert at the Saenger August 7 was a big success, paving the way for more future concerts and more opportunities for reggae fans to hear the music they love.

Reggae music has made its arrival in New Orleans. The Peter Tosh concert at the Saenger Performing Arts Theatre on August 7 proved this as well as provided us with some of the finest live reggae to be heard in New Orleans to date. The winds are changing for reggae when a large music hall like the Saenger Theatre is willing to take a chance with a Jamaican act; when a radio station (WYLD-FM) with a predominantly black listening audience sponsors the show; and when New Orleans responds by practically filling the hall.

As tremendous as the performance was, I was equally affected by the breakthrough for Peter Tosh that this concert represented. Here we have a reggae artist who was in perhaps the most influential reggae band to ever come out of Jamaica (the original Wailers consisted of Peter Tosh, Bob Marley, and Bunny Wailer). Although Bob Marley became the most well-known worldwide after the breakup of the original Wailers, Peter Tosh continued to be an important figure both musically and politically in Jamaica. Following Tosh's appearance on *Saturday Night Live* in December 1978 (performing "Don't Look Back" with Mick Jagger), he conducted a tour of America which brought him to New Orleans and Ole Man River's. In performance and in interviews at the time he attempted to convince America that he was a big star. My memory of his performance at Ole Man River's is of Tosh, dressed in combat fatigues and white plastic sunglasses, lighting up a spliff during "Legalize It" and trying extremely hard to impress the audience. Every song was performed a bit faster than the recorded version and all were disco-fled in an attempt, I thought, to please Babylonian tastes. Nevertheless, the concert was impressive, featuring a back-up band of reggae's finest, including Sly Dunbar and Robbie Lyn on keyboards, Donald Kinsey on lead guitar, Steve Golding on rhythm guitar, Vision on percussion, George "Fuly" Fullwood on bass, and Santa on drums. Much has been said of the Sly Dunbar/Robbie Shakespeare rhythm section (and with good reason), but Santa and George Fullwood are at least as good.

At the Saenger, looking very much in control, he effortlessly had the audience watching every marching-step he took, listening to every word he sang.

So we're at a point now where it's likely we'll see more and more reggae coming into New Orleans. Artists like Tosh who know that 'Babylon makes the rules' are learning how to use the system (or shistem, to quote Tosh). It was four and a half years ago when Third World first came to New Orleans, beginning a sporadic but unceasing chain of live reggae shows that have mainly taken place at Ole Man River's and Tipitina's. These clubs should be thanked for their devotion to the cause, because it's due to their early efforts that artists like Peter Tosh are now receiving the recognition they deserve. If the August 7 show proved money can be made from reggae music, this might prompt some radio stations to go beyond sponsoring reggae shows and actually playing reggae on the air. We all stand to benefit from this. Reggae fans will get to hear the music they love, and the artists will be able to get their message across to a wider audience.

By the way, one of the reasons Tosh went over so well at the Saenger was his band, Word, Sound and Power. The 1981 touring version of Word, Sound and Power consists of Keith Sterling and Robbie Lyn on keyboards, Donald Kinsey on lead guitar, Steve Golding on rhythm guitar, Vision on percussion, George "Fuly" Fullwood on bass, and Santa on drums. Much has been said of the Sly Dunbar/Robbie Shakespeare rhythm section (and with good reason), but Santa and George Fullwood are at least as good.

—Gene Scaramuzzo
MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY
7 p.m. - 2 a.m.
SATURDAY & SUNDAY
2 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Cathy Lucas & The Loose Band
THURSDAY THRU SUNDAY
Smokey &
The Bottom Dollar Band
MONDAY THRU FRIDAY
2 p.m. - 7 p.m.
The Cole McBride Band
522-3265
THE LOOSE BAND 
HITS THE 
OPERA HOUSE

Cathy Lucas is a newlywed with a new band who intends to hang on to it all — and she has the talent to pull it off. Right now she and her band play before an ever-changing audience of Bourbon Street country music lovers.

She's barely 21, and already Cathy Lucas has performed for the likes of Muhammed Ali and Ruthie the Duck Lady — among others.

Admittedly, her Ali performance was with about 59 other kids when she was in a junior high madrigal in New York City. They did a lot of Latin and Yiddish numbers for city functions.

These days Cathy, her husband Larry, and the rest of the Loose Band play progressive country music for whoever wanders into the Old Opera House at Bourbon and Toulouse streets.

There's a long copper bar, small wooden tables, the usual New Orleans mix of posters featuring Dr. Frank Minyard, the 1980 Rodeo, and Professor Longhair, plus a neon sign that flashes "Bullshit" during "Cotton-eyed Joe."

The clientele is more mixed than the decor. "We just pull in whoever's walking down Bourbon Street, and of course you know there's all kinds of people going down Bourbon Street," says Lucas, sipping on a diet Dr. Pepper at a tiny table near the French doors.

"Like Ruthie the Duck Lady. She'll come in and quack around the door. A lot of people who work on oil rigs, when they come in they've got a lot of money. There's a couple of faces you'll see every three or four weeks.

"There's a lot of people who like to hang around in here. They don't stand out here, but they would anywhere else . . . . They're a little strange."

As the first set begins on a summer Sunday afternoon, business seems slow, with one waitress munching fried chicken and another dancing by herself near the end of the bar.

But the music drifts out the French doors, and the place fills up quickly — mostly tourists drinking light beers and frozen fruit-flavored concoctions. Before the music starts, a regular drops in a tip and a request for "Margaritaville," and after the set begins, even the listeners standing out in the street send in tips.

It was only a few years ago that Lucas, at 17, was one of the listeners. Now in pink Hawaiian-print hot pants and a white shirt, she does most of the singing and the talking. "I run the show, I talk to the audience . . . cause here in this setting it's not a dance club, obviously, you need
FOOTBALL MEETS ROCK 'N' ROLL

Chinese Bandits
The Cheerleaders
Spinet 1000

With football season on the immediate horizon, I just had to cover this one. This record is much sought after by L.S.U. fans and New Orleans rock 'n' roll addicts alike.

The tune, of course, praises the "Chinese Bandits" who were the "lemon brick wall" defense on the 1959 National Champion L.S.U. Tigers.

The Cheerleaders were in fact a studio group that featured Jerry Byrne, Frankie Ford, Lenny Capello, with Huey Smith supplying the contagious second line piano stylings. My favorite line goes like this,

"I don't know but I've been told,
When the bandits rock you're supposed to roll.

Continued from page 43

somebody up there with the jokes, the band, whatever, and that's my job."

It's an amazingly slick performance, especially considering that this "Loose Band" has only been playing together for a matter of weeks. Only occasionally did the melody seem to get lost for a few seconds, reappearing quickly.

Band membership has fluctuated, but on this Sunday the group included Cathy, vocals and rhythm guitar; her husband Larry, lead guitar, fiddle, pedal steel; Jim Messa, bass; Mark Trent ("It's Tren-ticosta, but I'm not sure how you spell it. T-R-E-N-T... that's what we call him onstage"); and Chris Lacina (drums) with others in the group occasionally taking over the vocals.

Forming a band in New Orleans is not that difficult, says Lucas, "You just put an ad in the newspaper." She began taking guitar lessons at age 18, later marrying her teacher, Larry Lucas. Both Lucases write songs, but in the past year they've spent most of their efforts forming and polishing the band, and sticking to country-rock standards. A set includes a little of a lot of sounds from "Diggy, Diggy Li" to "Too Late Baby," "Silver Threads" and "On the Road Again," apparently an overseas favorite.

"A couple of weeks ago we had a table full of Norwegian sailors sitting here, and I did "On the Road Again" by Willie Nelson, and all of a sudden they were all singing along. I was amazed."

It's an odd business, and Lucas, who has lived all over the country with her family and Coast Guardsman father, says she likes the lifestyle. But it's been a little harder for her family to accept. "It took a while for it to sink into their heads that being a musician is being a professional, and there's a lot of good things involved in that. It's unstable you know, it's not like the kind of job where you just go in nine to five, and you know that the only way you're gonna lose that job is if you mess up. Whereas, here, anything could cause us to lose our job - not anything, but a gig is not as stable as a job."

"My mother kept saying, 'but, well, that's fine Cathy, but when are you gonna get a job.' And I said, 'Mother I have a job,' Lucas laughts.

It's a long-term job at which she is willing to work. She says the group needs to be more polished, and there is at least talk of an "Old Opera House" album which would include music from all the groups that rotate playing at the club.

Lucas is, at 21, a newlywed with a new band who intends to hang on to it all: "Actually, it works to our advantage. I think that if Larry and I were not doing the same thing, it would be harder to keep a relationship going. First of all because of the strange hours that a musician winds up working. It's brought us closer together than the fighting-type thing that you might have - you know, Tammy Wynette and George Jones, it's not we work well together, and we plan on continuing to work well together..." she says, her voice trailing off in thought.


— Nancy Weldon
**NIGHTHAWK BLUES**

This six-volume set of disks, Nighthawk 101-106, is a blues collector's dream. The collection, one of the finest of post-war blues and valuable for its historic significance, is a must for every lover of the blues.

The blues roll on and here's a set of six albums that will give it a good push. Blues collectors today have never had it so good. We may go broke fast, but now suddenly the music is so easily obtainable. Looking at the titles these albums contain, I remember the trouble and expense I went through to get a hold of a few. But they were worth the trouble! Likewise these albums are worth getting; in fact, the entire series is essential for blues collectors and will go down as one of the finest collections of post-war blues.

The first issue, *Windy City Blues*, covers the "Bluebird Beat" era. This style is best typified on this set by Sonny Boy Williamson (the first Sonny Boy), whose selections are classic examples of his early style. Robert Lee McCoy's "Prowlin' Nighthawk" included here proved to be so successful, he adopted Nighthawk as a surname. Delta blues enthusiasts will be gratified that two of Robert Lockwood's first sessions are included. The earliest recordings that produced "Black Spider Blues" stylistically show the influence of the "genius," Robert Johnson, Lockwood's stepfather. Other high points on the lp are Tampa Red's doomy "Green and Lucky Blues" (check out Johnny Jones piano), the first version of "Everyday I Have The Blues" by Pinetop, and the rockin' "Please Don't!" by Johnny Shines. Chicago Slickers covers Chicago's "classic" blues period but there is an underlying country flavor to this urban blues collection. The titles included are culled from the small labels Parkway, Tempotone, and Random. The first studio collaboration between Little Walter and Muddy Waters dating from 1948 is included. The country, or Delta blues flavoring is emphatically brought out by the Johnny Shines selections. They feel so relaxed you'd guess they were recorded on the porch of a cabin after a day's work in the field. Homesick James deserves special mention: he manages to translate the rough country blues into an urban setting. Also included in this set are the mysterious Delta Joe (Sunnyland Slim), John Brim (pre-Chess), Forest City Joe and Robert Nighthawk's magnificent "Maggie Campbell."

If I had to pick out a favorite album from this collection it would have to be *The Memphis Harmonica Jam*. This album contains nothing but stomping, down-home music straight from the juke joint blues. Thankfully we now have reissues of Hot Shot Love's whooping Sun pairing, "Harmonica Jam" and "Wolf Call Boogie." Another famous Memphis harmonica player, Walter "Mumbles" Horton, is represented with two of his earliest cuts, the rockin' "Jumpin' Blues," and the slower "Tell Me Baby." Strangely two drummers, Willie Nix and Woodrow...
Adams, are included. Nix's tracks are magnificent Southern blues and jump, while the Woodrow Adams tracks can best be summarized as raggedy but right. The lion's share of this disc goes to Joe Hill Loui, the one-man band from Memphis. His haunting "Street Walking Woman" is a Memphis blues masterpiece while "Boogie In the Park" is an unparalleled juke joint rocker. His super-rare Meteor session where he used the alias Chicago Sunny Boy is also included. Unfortunately "Mumbles" is the only artist on this album left to enjoy such a worthy reissue. 

Detroit Ghetto Blues is another barn burner. This release is especially close to me because the bulk of the recordings were made by Joe Von Battle. Joe was a strange character who cut his sessions in the back of his record shop where I used to buy some of the titles included in this set. The recordings are extremely rough and primitive. Slim Pickens, Walter Mitchell, and L.C. Green all turn in typical blues renderings. The Playboy Fuller tracks are extremely rough, sounding like they were recorded in a bathroom, which is in fact where Von Battle hung the microphones! Fuller is actually Louisiana Red: however the notes incorrectly state he was born in New Orleans. Actually he was born in Vicksburg. Robert Henry does a great rick edition version of "Something's Wrong (With My Little Lovin' Machine)." My favorite performances on the disc are turned in by Baby Boy Warren, whose "Hello Stranger" included Sonny Boy Williamson on harp.

Lake Michigan Blues features pre-war recordings by a number of southern bluesmen who came to Chicago. Six tracks are included by Robert Nighthawk, including the lonesome "Friars Point Blues" and "Take It Easy Baby." Nighthawk never cut a poor record and these are among the best of his recordings. Also included is Sonny Boy Williamson's first RCA recording, "Jackson Blues," and "Bluebird Blues." Excellent selections are also included by Tampa Red, Milton Sparks and Yank Rachel.

The last album in the series, Down Behind the Rise, covers the rural Texas blues scene. The best known artist is Lightnin' Hopkins, who has his two best "Gold Star" sides represented. Frankie Lee Sims' storming "Single Man Blues" is a strange cut as it features a ringing country steel guitar. More typical of the Texas sound is Wright Holmes and Jesse Thomas who did "Gonna Move To California." He did just that. Johnny Beck is somewhat of an enigma. However his two cuts here are on par with the best from Texas. My nod goes to Willie Lanes' "Too Many Women Blues" as the sleeper on this set with Jesse Thomas's "D Double Due You" a close second.

If you can't get all of these, they are still valuable single selections. A standing ovation for Nighthawk: let's hope these sell enough to finance some more reissues. If you've got the blues (and I always do) these are for you.

— Almost Slim
WWOZ A YEAR LATER

New Orleans' newest radio station is determined to play the city's older indigenous music. But that the station exists at all is a study in hard-headed persistence.

The Italian girl was talking to volunteers from WWOZ, a radio supported by its listeners. Only it did not have any listeners. It had yet to broadcast even one song. She was perplexed. Rome was full of radio stations. They came without warning from the backs of barbershops and attic apartments. Answering to no one, they jammed for what they pleased. without warning from the backs of barbershops and attic apartments .

The Archdiocese in the city's older indigenous music. But supported by its listeners.

The Archdiocese claimed that if other community station could be con-

The transmitter is set at Nine Mile Point, near Bridge City, and beams its signal at 90.7 mHz every day from 9 am to 10 pm. Tuning in to WWOZ, you might hear old favorites by Little Richard or Fats Domino, or older favorites by Sidney Bechet or Jolly Roll Morton. You might hear James Brown "Live" at the Apollo, an obscure track by Bobby "Blue" Bland, boogie woogie, swing or bebop, or the best of contemporary jazz. Going a two-step further, you might hear the "Country Cajun" recipe for turtle sauce picante sandwiched right in between some good zydeco cha-cha.

Maybe there is a counter-claim on behalf of Xavier University for the same frequency. It was the last spot on the non-commercial span of the dial. Once that slot was filled, no other community station could be conceived. The Archdiocese claimed that if the OZ group had not gotten it together in all that time they never would.

Time has proved them wrong. They underestimated the strength of a good idea and the dedication of those people working for its fruition. New listeners from Bayou Gouge to the Rigolets can enjoy the spicy-good, downhome music that has made New Orleans famous around the world and local music-lovers can enjoy what our friends in Sweden or California, for example, have enjoyed for decades; the sounds of New Orleans jazz and rhythm and blues over a radio.

The station reports that its listeners come from throughout the metropolitan area and are of all ages. The expected preponderance of middle-class, college-educated upholders has not been in evidence. Many older people are calling to ask where the station gets records of music that they danced to back in the Twenties. Traditional jazz is one of the most popular kinds of music with the OZ audience, and its fans are legion throughout the city. The same can be said of the gumbo R&B spun by deejays with handles like the Duka Paduka and Almost Slim. Sometimes musicians call up after hearing a song that they or their cronies recorded, but had long since forgotten. Also, a young black man, calling to say he was glad to finally hear Billie Holiday after reading about her for so long, is pretty typical of other calls OZ gets from its listeners. It all indicates that designating music as "traditional" does not mean it is dry meat suited only for the academe.

Yet it seems slightly ironic that WWOZ plays our older, indigenous music. It is, after all, New Orleans' "newest" radio station. That the station, old or new, exists at all is a study in persistence.

WWOZ was initially a brainstorm of Walter Brock, then a program director of community station KCHU in Dallas, Texas. He visited New Orleans in August 1976, lured by the music that has always made this city dance. He was surprised that hardly any of it could be heard on the radio here. Knowing that even then only one frequency remained unclaimed, he realized he had to move quickly. But he
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was a stranger here and knew hardly anyone in town. By chance he learned at
an uptown record store that someone had
ordered a provocatively titled guide to
starting a community radio station. Figur-
ing that might signify some common
ground, he investigated. The book was
called Sex and Broadcasting, and the
reader in question turned out to be more
interested in pornographic poetry for the
masses. However, all was not lost. The
bedecked fellow behind the counter at
the Mushroom turned out to be quite
helpful. That clerk was Bunny Matthews,
now notorious through several other
media. He told Brock about the nature of
the local music scene, including its various
business aspects. He also introduced
Brock to his brother, Bobby Matthews, a
lawyer working for the New Orleans
Legal Assistance Corporation. Bobby
wrote up the incorporation papers. Before
Brock returned to Dallas, the application
was filed with the FCC for a non-profit,
community-oriented radio station to be
designated WWOZ.

Things went slowly after that. The per-
mit to build the station came a year later,
September 1977. Brock returned early in
the new year 1978, but it was already too
late to apply for any grants. He had to
content himself with doing research and
learning the city. He stirred up some in-
terest and got pledges of support from af-
cionados all over town. He also met as
many musicians as he could and heard
from them how hard it was to get any
radio support for local talent.

Another year passed. A grant for
$88,500 from the National Telecom-
munications Administration was awarded
in September 1979, to buy basic equip-
ment. By now the legal proceedings were
going complicated and entangling. Still,
things were looking better. Brock was
joined by his equally irrepressible brother,
Jerry. Friends from other stations
donated odd pieces of equipment, some
records, and much moral support. Also,
more money was obtained in the form of
a loan from a federally-subsidized
development fund. The stage was set.
That is how things stood a year ago when
those volunteers sat in the flea market.

The legal challenges still had to be met.
Additional dollars had to be raised to
match some of the federal funds, and
more was needed to prepare a studio
space. Somehow it happened. The station
started officially broadcasting on
December 2, 1980.

Of course, the station still has
problems. It must locate a permanent studio
site. And there is the nagging question of
money; money to pay back the loan, to
buy more records and equipment. The
station still pays no salaries. It needs to
enlist more contributing members, and it
has begun soliciting program under-
writing from area businesses. At least
now, no one has to tell us what it's all about. We can hear for ourselves, on 90.7
FM.

—Steve Armbruster
**THE PENNY POST COFFEE-HOUSE**

Good coffee, good conversation, blue grass music, and everyone is a potential performer.

Appalachian mountain and bluegrass music right here in the swamplands of New Orleans? Durn tootin’! Mountain music, folk music, blues and more is performed five nights a week at one of the best kept secrets in town — the Penny Post Coffee House.

There’s an informal atmosphere at the Penny Post — a backgammon game in progress, conversations around pots of coffee and tea, people reading and doing paperwork, and always a relaxed group listening to the music. The setting may be different from a mountainside front porch, but there’s one similarity... everyone is a potential performer. Over the course of an evening the chess player in the back might become the fiddle player in a bluegrass band, or the folk guitarist might take up duties behind the coffee bar.

While professional musicians do perform at the Penny Post (such as Joe Barbara and Spencer Bohren), the majority are part-time musicians who are in it for the love of music. With a true knowledge of Appalachian and bluegrass music, they trace the music and instrumentation from its roots in the highlands of Scotland and Ireland to its present forms, with many interesting anecdotes along the way. A statement like “Bluegrass is just a commercialized form of Appalachian music” can send the group off into an hour-long debate. They’re familiar with historic milestones of the music such as the recording of the Child Ballads and Lomax anthologies. And they pride themselves in knowing other songs of the genre that have never been recorded, continuing the music’s tradition of being passed down from generation to generation through performance.

The quality of the acts range from beginners cutting their teeth on the Penny Post’s friendly, supportive audience to highly polished, professional acts. With occasional exceptions, the instrumentation is acoustic... guitars, banjos, dulcimers, fiddles, upright basses, etc. (A recent act consisted of four people on saxophones!)

The Penny Post, besides offering music not heard elsewhere in the area, provides a perfect opportunity for the novice musician or even a seasoned one who would like to experiment with original material, develop stage presence, etc. All that’s required is to sign up in advance. Many of the veteran performers speak of their nervous, raggedy beginnings in front of a Penny Post audience.

Jam sessions occur frequently. Every Sunday night is the Bluegrass Jam, with songsheets passed around so anyone can join in. On the second Thursday of each month an event called “Musicians Without Partners” offers musicians the opportunity to experiment with different musical collaborations.

But the biggest event to occur at the Penny Post, a treat to musician and audience alike, is the Bluegrass Mini-Fest. On the third Thursday of each month, the Mini-Fest features half-hour sets by the most popular of the Penny Post musicians. Hundreds of people drop by to hear the cream of the crop of bluegrass bands and solo performers, including the Sunbelt Bluegrass Band, Higher Ground, Mason & Dixie, and Jonathan Harder.

The Penny Post, now six years old, is a co-op providing services to its members in exchange for volunteer work behind the coffee bar and a pledge to spend a dollar or two when they spend an evening there. To some Penny Post regulars, the music is only secondary; they see the Penny Post as an environment suitable for bringing the family. (Yes, the kids are welcome!) The approach of the co-op, besides its commitment to music, is to create an extended family unit, providing not only a relaxed place to go in the evening, but also organizing parties for the holidays and picnics during the summer.

There is never a cover charge at the Penny Post. It survives (barely) on the sale of imported coffees, herbal teas and homemade baked goods. It’s open Wednesday through Sunday from 8:00 PM, and is located at 5104 Danneel Street (between Soniat and Dufosset, three blocks off St. Charles). Drop in by. Set a spell. Take your shoes off.

—Gene Scaramuzzo

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The original bad attitude kid,
hero of the last decade of films,
 isn’t playing well to the Eighties.

John Desplas has some thoughts
on Nicholson’s rise and apparent
fall from popularity with a
generation that may be looking
for new heroes.

A generation of white American males
found a role model in 1970 — they
got to the movies and discovered Jack
Nicholson in *Five Easy Pieces*. He didn’t
wear his hair long — in fact, he was
noticeably balding — but he knew what
was happenin’ and where it was at; he was
the hip loner, Holden Caulfield with grit,
and *Five Easy Pieces* was Further
Adventures in the Land of the Phonies.
Nicholson was the apotheosis of the
anti-authoritarian figure in an age that had
concluded that all authority, ipso facto,
was corrupt, hypocritical, and
self-serving. Respect for one’s ancestors had
become a bizarre notion — after all,
they had been repressive instead of permissive,
they had exploited their fellow creatures,
and they had pillaged and plundered to
come by their gains.

Bobby Dupea, as the Jack Nicholson
character was called, suffered from some
nameless malaise, a peculiarly debilitating
strain of anomie; in literary terms, he
experienced the same existential listlessness
that was Meursault’s undoing in Camus’s
*The Stranger*. Bobby was a bright guy,
smartier than anyone else in the movie, yet
he preferred to throw in his lot with a
gum-chomping waitress and old field
treach and bowling alley floozies; there was
something authentic about these people,
or to employ a then-popular expression,
they were real. Bobby’s low-life friends let
it all hang out, they didn’t try to
camouflage their thoughts and throw up a
smoke screen around their feelings. (They
wouldn’t know how if they wanted to.)
Quite a bit different from the middle class
that produced Bobby and from whence
came so many of Jack Nicholson’s
staunchest fans.

Bobby didn’t take no guff off anybody,
he always had a snappy answer, and he
liked to fuck. When he exploded after an
unaccommodating waitress refused to
serve him a side order of toast, audiences
cheered. And he had that great shark
smile.

*Five Easy Pieces* was a critical and com-
mercial success (though its influence far
exceeded its modest box office returns,
modest in comparison to blockbusters like
*The Godfather* or *The Exorcist*, roughly
from the same period.). And Jack
Nicholson was hailed as a major screen
actor. Yet practically everyone believed
that Nicholson was simply playing
himself. Subsequent roles in *The Last
Detail*, Carvalh Knowledge, Chinatown,
and his most popular film, *One Flew Over
the Cuckoo’s Nest*, were finely calibrated
variations on a theme. (The one major
exception during this period was the highly
under-rated *King of Marvin Gardens*,
which treated the relationship between
two brothers: Nicholson was the cautious
introvert to Bruce Dern’s impetuous
extravert.) And because his character
remained in essence unchanged from film to
film, he maintained his status as a role
model throughout most of the Seventies.

Other actors like Al Pacino and Dustin
Hoffman and Robert De Niro were
equally popular, but no one knew quite how
to imitate them; they tended to submerge
their own personalities in the characters
they played, and their range was
appreciably wider. Isn’t this why we think so
highly of them as actors? How would you
ape Robert De Niro? In addition to being
ethnic and sensitive, what is Al Pacino all
about? Isn’t Dustin Hoffman really an ac-
complished mimic? But as you stood in line outside a theatre, you might well hear, "Jack Nicholson, that's my man."

There are a few other contemporary male stars whose style has met with great public favor: Burt Reynolds has turned his could-give-a-shit-less smirks and struts into a sizeable fortune; Clint Eastwood is the last macho hero who steadfastly refuses to "go vulnerable"; and Woody Allen has lots of us believing that if you're smart enough and witty enough you can still Make Out well even if you're not much to look at. (It doesn't hurt to also be rich and famous.) But none are really role models; they're fantasy figures (yes, Woody Allen is a fantasy figure - I really want to be Woody Allen). Robert Redford almost makes it, but when you get right down to it, he's rather bland and a bit too much of a goody-goody. (Sorry, Bob, I think it's great what you're doing to promote solar energy, but ...) So Nicholson may well have been our last great cinematic role model, but if the receipts from his last few movies are any indication, white American males between 25 and 45 are having second thoughts.

I saw Five Easy Pieces at the Pitt in July and I was stunned by what time had wrought. The film holds up fairly well, but I can't remember an instance when my feeling about a protagonist had so radically altered. Ten years ago, I readily identified with Bobby Dupea - Jack Nicholson; today, I wanted to quietly disassociate myself.

What looked like rebelliousness but a mere decade ago smacks of elitism from an Eighties perspective; and what was deemed admirable then appears irritatingly adolescent today. Don't misunderstand me; Bobby is not a despicable person, he simply is preoccupied with himself in a narcissistic fashion. He has to fight back tears as he tries to explain to his paralyzed father that "things go bad if I stick around too long," but the tears are really for Bobby; his father just happens to be there. Bobby is quick to come to the defense of Karen Black's none-too-swift waitress when his family's circle of intellectual acquaintances look down their snooty noses at her lack of cultural refinement. But then scriptwriter Adrien Joyce and director Bob Rafelson have "stacked the deck so that only the simple folk are "real" and those who aspire to an existence that emphasizes the higher mental faculties are "phony." Yet upon closer inspection Bobby is every bit as patronizing and condescending to the yahoos as his family. Only he finds some kind of crazy satisfaction acting the role of a superior being among the lower orders. Bobby is the type of guy who doesn't really want a worthy opponent; he needs to make sure that he can't be bested, that he can always win. He's afraid someone might call his bluff.

As the navy lifer in Hal Ashby's The Last Detail, the Nicholson character has really found his niche. He can rebel forever against a stupid, rigid, unfeeling
bureaucracy; he can rant and rave about the system, but he has made certain that he is effectively kept from doing anything to change it or to remove himself from it. His life is nowhere near as bright a fellow as Bobby Dupea and he's a sadder figure. Five Easy Pieces has its unsettling moments — certainly the ending doesn't bode well — but it has those great highs and that's what everyone remembers. The Last Detail is saturated throughout with an insinuating melancholy that emanates from the sight of a man unable to make the transition to an adult.

I think it's no longer possible to sell the public a movie because "Jack Nicholson is in it." His quirky western, Going South, came and went unnoticed. The Shining was a Stanley Kubrick film that just happened to star Nicholson; it also collapsed from bad word of mouth. And the recent remake of The Postman Always Rings Twice, despite a plethora of magazine covers and interviews, bombed out. It's a respectable piece of film making (again directed by Bob Rafelson) that goes wrong for elusive reasons. Whatever the ultimate judgment on the film is, it also represents the Jack Nicholson character now well into middle age, and it's not a terribly pretty sight. The Nicholson persona has always been essentially a drifter; rootless and homeless, he's forever on the road to Somewhere. But the glamour that such an existence holds while one is young tends to pale with the passage of time. And that may partially explain why his former fans have begun deserting him. In Postman, Nicholson looks haggard and almost beaten. More importantly, he has no money or status, things that may have seemed odious back in 1970, but are literally the currency of everyday life for the Reagan era. I may be over-reading the film, but I found it difficult not to view it in the context of Nicholson's career and what he meant to an entire generation.

Why the movie flopped I don't really know. No one went the first week of its release, so you can't say word of mouth killed it. Some say the title confused people. (Not something to be lightly discounted.) According to one market research survey, Urban Cowboy met with some audience resistance simply because there were a lot of people who weren't sure just what urban meant.)

So who knows? The point is that Jack Nicholson is no longer the role model for the Eighties. As it must happen to all idols, his fans may have reached that juncture marked "Ain't it hard when you discover that, he really wasn't where it's at." Which is not to say that Jack Nicholson isn't a great screen actor; I think he definitely is. In The Last Detail and The Postman Always Rings Twice Nicholson is playing a loser, and you just know that there is no way that Jack Nicholson is a loser, I mean no way. Yet he's very convincing. Maybe he hasn't been playing himself all along.

—John Despals
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Composer, teacher, author and clarinetist, Alvin Batiste is blessed with many talents — and excels at them all.

Jazz musician-composer-writer-teacher Alvin Batiste is munching on a Cafe du Monde beignet in the afternoon heat — oblivious to the small clouds of powdered sugar drifting over the table, a tape recorder, and a rolled up copy of the score of his “Musique d’Afrique Nouvelle Orleans.”

He has just come from rehearsing the symphonic work (due to premiere the next night) with the full New Orleans Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, and his own musicians. He’s accompanied by a couple of those musicians and some Texas friends here for the opening. In a voice occasionally drowned out by ships on the nearby Mississippi, big rigs on Decatur Street, and the incessant chattering of cafe au lait crazed tourists, he explains the “Musique d’Afrique” concept.

“All I’m doing is writing music that we’ve all done on gigs. It’s an esthetic notion that I’m dealing with now. I think that, in America, the real composers are the players, who express in and beyond what the market calls for. Instead of dealing with spontaneous composition like I usually do, I’m dealing with contemplative composition. And so, this music has already really been composed — it’s just like a hindsight that’s put in a contemplative mode.”

But why decide to write it down now?
“I’ve been doing it all along, and I’m a firm believer in doing what you can do.”

For Batiste, that’s doing quite a lot. “Musique d’Afrique” follows three other orchestral compositions: “North American Idiosyncracies,” “Planetary Perspectives,” and “Kheri Hebs.” Batiste is also the director of the Jazz Institute at Southern University, Baton Rouge; has performed with the Duke Ellington, Billy Bobham and Ray Charles orchestras; recorded with Cobham and Cannonball Adderly; has his own second album, “Salty Dogs,” scheduled to be released this summer and expects to have an African-American music book also published this summer.

Not bad for a kid whose first clarinet was a kind of do-it-yourself project assembled by his father.

“When I got ready to go to high school, he picked me up a clarinet. He bought the keys from a music store, the horn from a pawn shop, and he put ‘em together. That was amazing,” reminisces Batiste, laughing, “that he could do that. And he put the reed on it and started playing it!”

He also practiced a whole lot, and even-
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tually made it to the first chair in the band at Booker T. Washington High School. More recently, music has taken him even further. Nearly ten years ago, it sent him to Africa while he was developing a "multi-ethnic music curriculum." "Musique d'Afrique" reflects some of the things he heard on that trip.

"Musique d'Afrique," which Batiste says will be the introduction to his first full symphony, also has bits and pieces of New Orleans, including a few brief, minor-sounding bars of "When the Saints Go Marching In."

The piece begins with an African-exotic introduction with Oriental-sounding overtones followed by vocalist Ivan Jerome Griffin's "Searching" solo and an unusual segment where symphony members respond vocally to Batiste's clarinet.

"When the orchestra speaks, that represents what we would say—an objective request," he explains. "That would be a physical, psychological request that we would collectively or as an individual make to our inner selves. In a religious context, making a prayer, right?"

"We're working for goals within us...It's like an esoteric admonition where you say, if you ask the self, you get it. You know, whatever you ask the self, the self will give you that, plus more, because the self is aligned with the Divine Being. And the Divine Being will satisfy any needs that you can perceive that It could take care of, and give you more, because of this broader wisdom than man's finite consciousness.

"And so, the orchestra itself represents man and his state that we're in now, and the clarinet represents what man can perceive from on high, and utilize in harmony with the physical reality."

For a moment, Batiste has gotten so caught up in concepts that even in the Decatur Street heat, his café au lait has cooled and skimmed over. But he is quick to come back to earth when asked if teaching takes away composing time.

"I don't find any problem in being a teacher and being an artist. I find I have more time to develop and practice and do artistic things when I'm at home. On the road, you spend most of your time traveling."

He thinks there's a trend away from pigeonholing people into just one profession. "So all we, a lot of us—I'm not by myself in this—are saying: 'Look, dig me. This is where I'm at. I'm just a human being. I'm not no star or nothin' like that. The things that I do, if you feel that I do them at a higher level than normal, it's because I spent the time, and I have a commitment toward them.'"

"I firmly believe that anything that man creates—collectively or individually—is for the benefit of somebody else."

"You know, 'cause we're all just experiencing each other...experiencing ourselves."

Or, as Batiste said earlier, it's like the Biblical parable of the talents: "If you don't use 'em, you lose 'em, right?"

—Nancy Weldon
**WAVELENGTH/SEPTEMBER 1981**

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**REVIEWS**

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**One Mo’ Time**

**Original Cast Album**

**Warner Bros. HS 3454**

**Duke Ellington’s**

**Sophisticated Ladies**

**RCA CBL2-4053**

I think the current wave of “musicals of color” (e.g. “One Mo’ Time,” “Ain’t Misbehavin’,” “Sophisticated Ladies,” et al) are a tightrope walk away from gross minstrealism — for certain, they are vehicles designed to entertain white people. But I must admit, my distaste for the genre notwithstanding, there is a genuine joie de vivre glistening on the body of these shows like the soft sweat of summer morning lovemaking in New Orleans humindness. While it is no accident that tourists love “One Mo’ Time,” what makes this music important as entertainment is that it far outshines most of what one sees and hears in the majority of theatres, halls, ballrooms and nightclubs in America.

“Recorded Live at The Village Gate,” the One Mo’ Time album is better than the show precisely because the music is the show (the drama is nearly nil). The house band is so good that their backing of the singers transcends accompaniment. Listen especially to drummer John Ribichaux using wood block, bell and bass drum, and to Jabbo Smith going for the gusto with declarative trumpet statements, and tuba virtuoso Walter Payton undergirding the songs with buoyant but gentle fat bass notes. The studious arrangements of pianist Lars Edegran and clarinetist/musical director Orange Kellin considerably aid the non-singers in the cast, particularly author/director Vernel Bagneris. Fortunately, the high-spirited songs are strong enough to carry the technically limited singers.

The majority of the numbers are either dance routines (e.g. “Cake Walkin’ Babies,” “Papa De Da Da,” “Wait Till You See My Baby Do The Charleston,” or “There’ll Be A Hot Time In The Old Town Tonight”) or blues songs, most of which have sexually suggestive, double entendre lyrics (e.g. “You’ve Got The Right Key But The Wrong Keyhole,” “I’ve Got What It Takes,” or “Kitchen Man”). A virtual compendium of Twenties New Orleans songs — there are twenty songs included — this cast album cogently captures not only the authentic music but also an authentic feel for the music. Additionally, the visuals and design of the album featuring pastel photographs, including a good shot of the legendary Lyric Theatre, are an important plus. One Mo’ Time is sort of like a second line, once it starts up, you find it difficult not to join in or at least pat your foot and keep time.

**Sophisticated Ladies** is an excellent album of Duke Ellington songs culled from a Broadway show which wisely does not even pretend to have a story line — the music elegantly speaks for itself. Rather than futilely attempt to recreate the inimitable Ellington orchestra sound, musical director Mercer Ellington wisely concentrates on the numerous, albeit often overlooked, popular songs written by his father, e.g. “Solitude,” “Don’t Get Around Much Anymore,” “I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart,” “In A Sentimental Mood,” “I’m Beginning To See The Light,” “Satin Doll,” “Mood Indigo,” and “Sophisticated Lady.”

The featured singers are Gregory Hines, Terri Hausner and Phyllis Hyman. Hines attacks his numbers with the same irrepressible vivaciousness as did Ellington’s legendary trumpeter Cat Anderson hitting his extra high notes. Klausner, one of two white leads in this African-American musical, is a strong singer who demonstrates, to Jabbo Smith’s delight that Johnny Hodges used to conjure with his honey toned alto solos.

Most of the major voices in Duke’s band were instrumentalists, none of his vocalists produced any memorable recordings of his music. But, paradoxically, as this album incontestably demonstrates, Duke wrote music that begged to be sung. His hummable melodies and challenging changes are a treasure trove for any agile and sensitive singer to mine. Listening to Phyllis Hyman’s beatific incantations on this album makes one wish for a time machine; if only Duke and this lady could have worked together. So meanwhile, dreams aside, we have this studio double record which is uniformly good except for lapses on side one which has too many novelty numbers that descend to the status of mere “entertainment.” This is a very good introduction to a side of Duke Ellington that is not praised enough, i.e. Duke Ellington the songwriter. Sophisticated Ladies is a fitting, although far from complete, tribute to the Duke.
These two albums represent the best parts of popular theatre entertainment in America — both of them transcend their Off-Broadway and Broadway environments. Moreover, unlike most musicals (and especially those which attempt to "recapture" the Black experience), Sophisticated Ladies presents first rate music which does not require visual wizardry nor slapstick to carry the tunes. Although Sophisticated Ladies is easily the better album, both stand on their own, requiring no stage larger than a record player.

— Kalamu ya Salaam

**Praise God I'm Satisfied**
Blind Willie Johnson
Yazoo 1058

It's about time. Been waiting for this one.

I first heard Blind Willie Johnson's "You're Gonna Need Somebody on Your Bond" on a Donovan record (his first? Catch the Wind?); then Pat Sky did a version of it on one of his early Vanguard albums. Basically Sky and Donovan were reworking Johnson's reworking of an ancient spiritual entitled "You're Gonna Need King Jesus on Your Bond." More than just good songs, such work as Johnson's has the resilience and spiritual potency of a sustaining and transcendent resource such as water, a meteor shower, the long lost lover's touch.

Johnson's stuff has been hard to find and, when found, usually in pieces. Praise God I'm Satisfied assembles 16 of his marvelous songs. Oo head on, Yazoo. Do it to me! When this man gets a rhythm on, it's all you can do to keep from jumping all around this room. An impeccable beat, these songs have an impeccable beat. Tear this building down! ("Samson and Delilah," one of Blind Willie's staples, and also one of Gary Davis's, is not included here. It's a shame and a sin, but mayhaps Yazoo is cooking something up. Cook, Yazoo, cook!)

His voice, the great beautiful beast of a gruff voice, offers us the treasure of his soul and his suffering, his rage and his joy. Take "I Know His Blood Can Make Me Whole" — in his gruff voice he sings "I was a gambler" — then sweet, weary, distant, he sings "just like you." On several of the selections his wife Angeline in her tiny sparrow of a soprano joins in on the singing.

What about his slide guitar? Dare you ask. Just listen to "Dark Was the Night, Cold Was the Ground." This whole piece is a mournful moaning vehicle for Johnson's sinewy slide (no singing at all). And you would know without anybody telling you the title that the title is "Dark Was the Night-Cold Was the Ground" — 'cause it's dark, somber, chilling. Spider up your spine, ice in your veins, bare knuckles gripping your knees. Cosmic
The Nevilles
The Roxy
Aug. 7, 1981

LOS ANGELES — At first, only a few heads nodded tentatively to the beat of the sequin-bedecked Neville brothers. Then whole rows of listeners swayed, a few handkerchiefs waved, and by the time the Wild Tchoupitoulas strutted across the stage, dozens of listeners were up, waving and stomping around the Roxy club's small tables.

The "Fiyo (Fire?) on the Bayou" finale, complete with man-made swirling fog and leaping flames, was no surprise to fans who saw the Neville's album preview show this spring at New Orleans' Civic.

But it was quite a jolt to the usually more placid Roxy-goers.

All in all, a more than warm response. Or, as one Angeleno — feigning a feeble finger tapping the table — put it: "At the Roxy, this is considered a warm response."

The Neville's visit also attracted some local press — both alternative-type weekly newspapers (The Reader and The Weekly) noted the group's upcoming performance as listings' pick of the week. Performance reviews in the Los Angeles Times and the L.A. Reader were generally favorable, at times criticizing the show for poor pacing (citing too many slow songs like "Arianne" and "Ten Commandments of Love," or "overbearing" string arrangements).

The Nevilles' set included cuts from their new album, Fiyo on the Bayou, which has also been sometimes criticized in the California press as too many slick versions of too much old material. But how can one put complete faith in the judgment of critics who come from the same culture that spawned avocado burgers?

—Nancy Weldon

All These Things
Various Artists
Bandy 70007

More New Orleans Solid Gold from Bandy. This time it comes from the Camp Street vaults of Joe Banashak's Instant Records. Originally released in 1969 and entitled WNOE Presents Solid Gold from New Orleans, it was Instant's only release in the album market and sadly went nowhere, thus consolidating Instant's interest in the singles market. Remember, rhythm and blues is foremost a singles
market and always has been except for the odd exception. Besides, what’s the point in buying a $3.98 album when you already have a closet full of Chris Kenner and Ernie K-Doe singles with your initials carved onto the label?

Well, we know better now, and even if mom didn’t clean out the closet when you went away to college, those battered old 45’s are probably intolerably scratchy. So you better get this set.

Instant was a foundation of solid New Orleans R&B throughout the 1960’s. National hits by Chris Kenner supported Banashak’s penchant for recording other New Orleans people and coming up with excellent results, even if they only sold well locally.

Art Neville’s “All These Things” is the real sleeper of this package, and perhaps of the history of Instant Records. Though the tune never made the charts, it was one of the label’s biggest sellers. The record has staying power. I swear I saw it on a juke box last month in Montreal, stuck between “Love To Love You Baby” and “Do Ya Think I’m Sexy”? What can you say about the song? Besides, it’s an absolute classic. Anyone who has ever been in love knows what Art is talking about when he sings “It’s all these things that make you mine.”

Brother Aaron even kicks in with an inspired version of “I’ve Done It Again,” that is also on side one.

Lee Dorsey’s first pairing of “Lover of Lovers” and “Lottie-Mo” is included, appearing originally on the Valiant label (Instant’s predecessor). Both performances prove Lee was rhythmic and witty right from the start. “Lottie-Mo” is a nursery rhyme type song, that employs that “shave and a haircut” approach while “Lover” sails along smoothly over Toussaint’s simple arrangement. What recipe of Instant singles would be complete without a couple of ingredients from Chris Kenner? “Land of a Thousand Dances” and “Something You Got” are Chris’ contribution, and are representative of his laid-back approach to his material. I’ve always felt Jessie Hill and Chris Kenner were masters of this style. Neither were very good singers, but no one could “bleed” a song like Jessie or Chris. Just listen to “Land of a Thousand Dances”; no one else could pull off such a ridiculous song and turn it into a runaway hit. Talk about loose, it sounds like it was recorded at 4 a.m. in the Little Rum Boogie!

Roger and the Gypsies’ contribution to the language of New Orleans, “Pass The Hatchet,” thankfully is included. Quite possible the worst New Orleans live band ever, they nevertheless managed to pair the second line beat with soul and came out with an unconditional KILLER record on Seven B, Instant’s subsidiary. This 46-bar instrumental remains one of the city’s favorite “oldies.”

Huey Smith sneaks a tune in on side one under the disguise of the Pitter-Pats, “It Do Me Good.” However an earlier and superior version was recorded for...
Ace. I would have liked to have seen Huey’s “Blues 67” or the hilarious “You Ain’t No Hippy” instead.

Side 2 opens with a straight-up instrumental by Allen Toussaint’s group The Stokes. “Young Man, Old Man” is catchy; I prefer it to their more popular rendition of “Whipped Cream.” Also included is Willie Harper’s “New Kind Of Love.” Typical of Toussaint’s ’60’s arrangements, its cooing vocals and solid piano back up Willie’s snappy lyrics.

“’I’m Gonna Put Some Hurt On You’ is another sleeper, being extremely popular here but nowhere else. Raymond Lewis shouts out the boisterous lyrics over the similar second line beat that typified the best Jessie Hill and Chris Kenner records.

Somehow K-Doe’s “Come On Home” was slipped in. This tune is a ringer because it never appeared on Instant, but no one should complain since it does not appear on any of Bandy’s other collections.

Musically “All These Things” is all one could ask for. However, more informative liner notes would have been a boon for this collection. Even Greg Mason’s original notes would have been satisfactory. Classic New Orleans R&B does not have the popularity it deserves, and an outstanding collection like this one is a good way to spread the word. For aficionados, of course, it’s must listening.

—Almost Slim

Zydeco Man
John Delafose
Arhoolie 1083

Anyone who records a Cajun or zydeco record is going to get compared to Clifton Chenier. There is no getting around it. So instead of trying to avoid the issue, it is best to hit it straight on.

Delafose hails from Eunice, Louisiana, where he and his group, The Eunice Playboys, are one of the most popular groups in the Texas/Louisiana Gulf Coast area. Most weekends they can be found playing in roadhouses and bars of the region. Now in his forties, Delafose plays the old time button accordian and the modern piano accordian employed by Chenier. Unlike other men in the zydeco field like Buckwheat and Rockin’ Dopsie, Delafose is closer to the origins of zydeco, only taking the occasional foray into the more modern soul/blues.

The recording mirrors his older style. His staccato-style playing is perfectly suited to the older waltzes, as on “La Valse A Freole,” to the more popular swinging two-steps as on “You Took My Heartache” and “Prudhomme Stomp.” It’s been a long time since Chenier has recorded music this primitive, perhaps due to his popularity with the younger audiences, and because he plays the more flexible piano accordian. At times
Delafosse sounds African in the same way that John Lee Hooker did in his early blues recordings.

The back cover notes, compiled by Nicholas R. Spitzer, are very informative, both on Delafosse and the history of zydeco. In fact, I think Arhoolie tries to emphasize the educational aspect of the music rather than the entertainment value here. (In comparison, their latest Clifton Chenier album, Arhoolie 1083, contains no sleeve notes.) At times some of the songs blend into the other, and it is hard to recall which was which after a listening. Not surprisingly my two favorite tracks, "Rag Around Your Head" and "Lonesome Road," were recorded with the more efficient piano accordion. Still a fine recording of a most deserving "Zydeco Man." —Almost Slim

The Best of the Bumper Crop Of New 45s

"Anything You Can Do" / "Gossip" — Jean Knight
Soulin 1949

Ms. Knight is back and she is still her nasty self. This time she warns her man "Anything you can do, I can do as well as you." Flip is funky too. Arranged by Wardell Quezerque, shades of Mr. Big Stuff.

"Looking Back" / "Don't Stop" — Irma Thomas
RCS 10113

Top side is a mellow Nat Cole ballad that lets Irma sing like we've always known she could. "Don't Stop" picks the tempo up a notch in a strange blend of funk and strings. Nice follow up to "Dance Me Down Easy" / "Woman Left Lonely."

"Girls Are Made For Lovin" / "You Know You Want To Be Loved" — Premium
Soulin 1948

Nothing worth swimming Lake Pontchartrain for. Typical modern Crescent City funk record (what ever that is).

"Good and Juicy" / "You Got Me Worried" — Walter "Wolfman" Washington
Hep Me 161

A lot of us have been waiting for this. I wondered when Senator Jones was going to get Washington in the studio. "Worried" is a slow blues that soon grows on you, impassioned vocals and a nice guitar break. Flip finds Walter in George Bensonville (ho-hum). One-sided blues records on the 1980's genre are hard enough to find, though; lp soon to follow. — Almost Slim
This is Rose Maddox  
Rose Maddox  
Arhoolie 5024

If you're tired of all those so-called "crossover" albums, souped up with ornate horns and strings, This is Rose Maddox is for you. Rose is a white-haired, Alabama-born singer who started performing with her brothers in the Dust Bowl days, and about the only crossover she makes is from bluegrass to country to bluegrass.

Her latest album mostly consists of old time country standards, some of which — "Silver Threads and Golden Needles," "Rocky Top," and "Amazing Grace" — have been perennially reworked in country and pop formats.

Rose takes them back to a purer, earlier sound with the premier bluegrass group, the Vern Williams Band, which has Williams on mandolin and vocals, plus guitars, bass, banjo and fiddle — no drums. There are even a couple of coal miner songs — "Dark as a Dungeon" and "Dream of the Miner's Child" — both focusing on bad luck and hard times.

According to the liner notes, the Maddox family had some hard times itself, riding freight trains to California where they became fruit pickers until Rose and her brothers began performing in the San Joaquin Valley.

For more than 40 years, Rose has performed alone and with groups. Her album is worth hearing, especially for country and bluegrass fans jaded by too many urban cowpokes.

— Nancy Weldon

The King of Zydeco  
Clifton Chenier  
Arhoolie 1086

This is the umpteenth lp from Chenier, and at least the third live one. Although the jacket doesn't say, I would guess it was recorded in 1977, at the Montreux Switzerland Jazz Fest. Since then the personnel on this recording has splintered off into the bands of Buckwheat and Rockin' Dopsie.

Chenier and his group, "The Red Hot Louisiana Band," swing right through the standards as expected. At times the group sounds a bit on the stiff side on side one, but after the third tune, "Pinetop Boogie Woogie," the sparks start to fly. Between tunes Clifton tries to explain each of the songs, in the manner of a school teacher, to the Europeans (who I'm sure were watching and hearing one of the strangest things they ever came across).

Chenier gives a real sampler of his style here. Everything from primitive zydeco on "Cher Cin," which he plays alone with his brother Cleveland, to storming recreations of "Money," and "Woo Woo." Of course along the way Clifton throws in some signature tunes like "Calinda," "Ay
Another great album from "The King of Zydeco." The only issue I would like to raise is why record the man in such reserved surroundings? Why not take a portable recording unit to one of his dances at "Richard's Playhouse" in Lawtell or "The Y-Ki-Ki" in Opelousas where Clifton's enthusiasm is matched by the crowd? Not once on this album does Chenier yell, "We gonna party all night long!"

—Almost Slim

**Preservation Hall Jazz Band**

Royce Hall — U.C.L.A.

July 11, 1981

LOS ANGELES — The song was "Bourbon Street Parade"; the group was The Preservation Hall Jazz Band — and you could almost close your eyes and smell the French Quarter — that elusive blend of aromas from Lucky Dogs, Takee Outee, old "to go" beer and a host of oddments better left unidentified.

The group, in dark pants, white shirts and "Preservation Hall" neckties, looked as if it had been lifted from its tiny St. Peter Street hall by a great band and placed intact before the black velvet curtain at U.C.L.A.'s Royce Hall.

The 1,892-seat auditorium was nearly full of toe-tapping listeners who applauded each solo so vigorously that it was difficult to hear the next one; then spent the intermission snapping up copies of Preservation Hall albums and talking in learned tones about the "survival" of traditional jazz.

The group itself knows all about survival. Most were born near the early part of this century. Clarinetist Willie J. Humphrey (brother of trumpeteer-band leader Percy Humphrey) cheerfully admits to being 80 years old (this while simultaneously conducting an interview and signing autographs backstage after playing and singing for two hours and leading a second line around the auditorium).

"I don't think it's gonna die out. It might have faded a little bit," Humphrey mused when asked about the survival of his kind of jazz. Still, he said, there will always be a market for what he calls "foot-stomping music."

Allan Jaffe, who with his wife, Sandy, opened Preservation Hall some twenty years ago, agrees. "If nothing else, this band has shown there's an audience for this kind of music."

The group playing at U.C.L.A. included the two Humphreys, James Edward "Sing" Miller, piano; Josiah "Cie" Frazier, drums; Narvin Kimball, banjo; Frank Demond, trombone; and Jaffe, tuba.

It's one of three bands that play out of Preservation Hall in New Orleans. This group had one more West Coast stop.
then back to New Orleans for a few days before an East Coast tour scheduled later this summer.

Playing out of town, Humphrey said, "You have to excel a little bit more." They focus on the classic favorites such as "Little Liza Jane," "St. Louis Blues," "I Know He Watches Me," "Ice Cream" (You scream, we all scream for ice cream), and a jazz funeral version of "Just a Closer Walk With Thee"—moving from a dirge-like beginning to a joyous cutting loose.

And, despite a Preservation Hall sign that says "Traditional requests $1; others $2; the Saints $5;" the finale was "When the Saints Go Marching In"—no extra charge. The audience-participation second line ended up looking somewhat bemused on stage, and the show was over.

Then, it was backstage to the "green room" where band members handed out autographs and gold-and-black "Preservation Hall" buttons.

Surrounded by family, friends and stray New Orleanians, the Preservation Hall Jazz Band seemed unfazed, calmly packing instruments for the next day's trip to a 30,000-seat hall in San Francisco.

As pianist "Sing" Miller once put it: "It's my life. It keeps up my self-concern."

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Hoy-Hoy!

Little Feat

2BSK 3538

This $13 double album of 19 Little Feat tapes spanning the Seventies partially answers some questions about Lowell George, the Feat's leader who died a couple of years ago. Namely, did George leave behind a bunch of tunes and tapes? Was he as prolific as various fanzine missives purported him to be? No, and probably not.

Keyboardist Bill Payne refers to George in a liner note as "the Rosemary Woods of rock and roll." Too bad for us. Lowell's best vocal effort on a previously unreleased tune is Hank Williams' "Lonesome Whistle," which his wife found in a brown paper bag in the garage.

And the only original tune written by him is a facile outtake from his solo album. Yet these discs are plenty interesting to fans. Sixteen of the tunes are previously unreleased versions of songs, and as a group, especially when held next to previous versions, they reveal where George's — and the band's — genius lay: in the chemistry, as people who've heard them live can attest.

So a picture of George becomes clearer: Prolific only in the sense of a perfectionist. Not so much a worker as a re-worker. And ultimately he needed his band to write.

There are a couple of other nice things about the album — a good new song by
Paul Barrere, and a magnificent new one by Payne, the best thing on the album. And plenty of words and pictures and whatnot, including a quote about each song from band members and friends and a 12-page "brochette" (?) with, among many other things, a flyer advertising a concert in Pasadena with Captain Beefheart, Ry Cooder, and Little Feat. Tickets $1.50. Ah yout'.

—Tim Lyman

Mardi Gras in New Orleans
Professor Longhair
Nighthawk 108

What can I possibly write? This is just too good for words. The only complaint I have is that it didn't come out soon enough.

This album takes us back to Fess's earliest recorded efforts on a variety of labels (from 1949 to 1957). Most of these tracks have never appeared on an LP in America before, therefore it fills a nice gap alongside New Orleans Piano, on Atlantic, and Crawfish Fiesta — his last, on Alligator.

The sound is familiar, Fess's braying vocals, set on his patented Crescent City rhumba, and blues flavored 88s styling. This album will find its way into many collections because of the quality of the sound and rarity of its content. Sound quality is excellent, despite much of it being dubbed from old 78s (although I do have static-proof ears).

Nighthawk deserves a tip of the hat and a float dedicated to them in next year's Zulu parade. This is hip stuff and essential for your collection. Worth considering mortgaging your loved ones to acquire.

*Don't confuse this with JSP 1025, an alleged bootleg recording Fess in Europe.

—Almost Slim

Bram Tchaikovsky
Funland
Arista AB4292

Bram Tchaikovsky is a former guitarist with England's Motors, that recorded a solo album a couple of years ago and had an unexpected American radio hit with "Girl of my Dreams." If you remember that song, it had a terrific melody, very simple lyrics, a big, spacious sound, and a strange airy quality provided courtesy of Mike Oldfield's tubular bells. Tchaikovsky and his producer, Nick Garvey, spent the rest of two albums trying to duplicate
the success of that formula (minus the bells) with little success. The material, pop songs mostly, clashing with guitars often mixed to a heavy metal intensity, was usually pretty ordinary, so that the big production sound seemed like empty bombast. Tchaikovsky has a barely serviceable, rather characterless voice, and this weakness is not hidden by the constant use of heavily echoed vocal overdubs. The vocals remind me of ELO or Queen, where the choruses are so slick they don't appear to be sung by actual people, but produced by machine.

The first side of Bram Tchaikovsky's new album, Funland, continues in much the same vein. "Heart of Stone" is fairly catchy, and parts of "Model Girl" are quite impressive, but the tempos tend to drag a bit, especially on the opening cut, "Stand and Deliver," where the sought-for dreaminess remains elusive. Synthesizers are used here and there to perk up interest without much effect. This stuff is pleasant enough while you listen to it, but, as in the old saying about Chinese food, you're hungry an hour later.

On side two Tchaikovsky and Garvey try their hands at several different styles with very mixed results. We have the rather tepid rockabilly of "Miracle Cure," Garvey's fake "Soul Surrender," and the quirky "Why Does My Mother Phone Me?" apparently aiming for "silly but interesting" but actually resulting in "silly but stupid." There are a couple of successes, though. "Used to Be My Used to Be" is a neat, upbeat song that sounds like it could have been written by Buddy Holly, and "Together My Love" is a sweet ballad modelled on Smokey Robinson's "Tracks of My Tears." But then the album closes with the horrible "Egyptian Mummies," which sounds like a combination of the worst of Gary Numan and Devo. Would you believe a chorus of "Shop window dummies/Egyptian mummies" repeated over and over? Is it supposed to be a joke? Are you laughing? This doesn't bode well for the next album, but perhaps the grab bag, "we'll try anything" approach will yield at least a few more hits than misses next time out.

—Steve Allman

More From The Last Concert
The Modern Jazz Quartet
Atlantic SD 8806

"All Too Soon"
Quadrant
Pablo Today 2312-117

The Modern Jazz Quartet (MJQ), an aggregation that lasted over twenty years (nineteen with the same personnel), represents a near-perfect mashing of emotion and intelligence, improvisation and structure. True to the title, this album, companion to the 2-LP The Last Concert...
(Atlantic SD 2-909), is the balance of their final concert. Directed by pianist/composer John Lewis, with vibraharpist Milt Jackson as their major soloist, backed by bassist Percy Heath (currently of Heath Brothers fame) and drummer Connie Kay, the MJQ's repertoire spanned adaptations of classical music to earthy renditions of basic blues.

Standing out in bas-relief from an overall moving performance are "Really The Blues" composed by Milt Jackson, "Tears From The Children" composed by John Lewis and based on Prelude No. 8 from Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavier," and "In Memoriam" also by Lewis. Although Jackson's chime-toned, rolling vibes stylings attract immediate attention, Lewis is also a formidable soloist. Percy Heath is a solid swinger and Connie Kay prefers to be felt rather than to be heard (although if you listen closely you do hear how well he employs his full drum kit including striking use of cymbals and bells). The sixteen minute "In Memoriam" encapsulates the major strengths of the MJQ. This is music to savor; spiritual repose that will still and satiate a spirit agitated by the jagged ebb and flow of life in modern America. Recorded November 25, 1974, this music has not dated but rather has aged into a mellow musing of adult (meaning mature and not risque) sounds.

Quadrant is a band composed of Milt Jackson on vibes, Joe Pass on guitar, Ray Brown on bass, and Mickey Roker on drums. A musical toast to Duke Ellington, the veteran musicians present subtle and reflective interpretations of eleven Ellington classics. Rather than simply play the lead and solo in standard four/four time, Quadrant took time to arrange each number. Moreover the arrangements are inventive; often the lead switches back and forth between the vibes and the guitar, and sometimes between vibes, bass and guitar.

A major surprise is the choice of tempo, "Take The A Train" — which by the way, although indelibly associated with Duke as his theme song, was actually written by Ellington collaborator and musical alter-ego, Billy Strayhorn — is done at a very leisurely tempo, and "Solitude," in contrast, is done as a bossanova. But it all works, and works well, due in no small measure to the resilient and sagacious bass work of Ray Brown. Brother Brown's bass stylings are remarkable not for their flash but rather for their choice and placement of note and tone. Like a well-decorated interior, every bass note perfectly complements the lead voice.

Both the MJQ and Quadrant are strong because of the mutual respect, empathy and interplay that happens within the two quartets. Calmness permeates their work. For those who are not too uptight to relax, nor too enamoured of things new to be open to the ripe goodness of good-old creations, these two albums offer rare meditative moments. Enjoy.

—Kalamu ya Salaam
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WAVELENGTH/SEPTEMBER 1981
Louisiana LeRoux was in Studio in the Country in August, as was Tony Dagradi. We'll be looking forward to hearing the results of those efforts... October 2 is the date of the Models' going-away party. The band is leaving for a month-long tour of Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania and Michigan, including a Halloween bash in Cleveland billed the "Best Bands in Four States." Nov. 13-14 at Jimmy's will be the band's return weekend.

The Hired Hand Saloon is featuring free dance lessons on Monday and Tuesday nights. With their 2,400 square foot dance floor, there should be plenty of room for two-steppin'... Tammy Lynn, well-known jazz and R&B vocalist, is in New Orleans for a spell... What's this we hear about Leigh Harris and violet hair? Or was that violent hair...? The Memphis Heritage Festival is slated for Labor Day weekend. Quint Davis is running the show... The Delta Blues Festival is the next weekend in Greenville, Mississippi. Muddy Waters will be there, too.

Woodenhead will be in Seasaint studio this month to record an album, produced by Mr. Allen Toussaint himself. The record should be on your favorite record store shelves by November.

There's been a crack-down in Jefferson Parish on affixing posters advertising bands and events on ye olde light poles. According to the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Department, the law's been on the books for a while, but enforcement has been stepped up. A $50 fine for each poster could hurt. Wonder if this applies to politics?

Ricky Sebastian has been keeping his drums busy these days. After completing work on an album with Exuma, he left on Gatemouth Brown's U.S. tour. Ricky's regular gig is with the jazz group Spectrum and in a trio with Ellis Marsallis and Herlin Riley.

Duncan Kilburn, saxman and keyboardist, plus John Ashton, guitarist, of the Psychedelic Furs, gave a rare live interview to WTUL's Shepard Samuels prior to their S.R.O. appearance at Jed's. The Furs and Columbia Records are so impressed by the city's response that a return date may be in order as soon as October.

Rolling Stones are rumored to be coming to the City around Thanksgiving. The Stones decided not to open their tour in Baton Rouge after all.

Barbara Hoover's new club, the Beat Exchange, opened August 13 with recorded music and an art show of body casts by Tomio Thomann. The spacious size and good p.a. of the club will make it very attractive for local bands... Gino Castricone, whose talent for making late night places happen is legendary, is the new owner of Gino's Place, formerly the Dunn Inn, on Magazine Street. Grand opening is September 10. See you there as the dawn breaks.

Ramsey McLean's album, History is club is having a big membership drive, will be on Channel 26 Sunday, September 13 at 7 pm.

A copy of Footnote, a British magazine dedicated to New Orleans music and edited by Terry Dash, recently crossed our desk. Primarily a jazz booklet, the latest issue features vintage photographs and excellent stories on Papa Celestin and the recently deceased Paul Barnes — Even a column called "On The Banquette!"

Although August is traditionally a slow month for music, blues lovers were treated to extended engagements by Bobby "Blue" Bland, Z.Z. Hill, Albert King, Etta James, and Big Walter Horton... Okay, hands up if you missed The Cobras this month at Tipitina's. You missed some fine Texas R&B from one of the tightest bands on the scene.

Solid Smoke Records, which brought you James Brown's Live At The Apollo, plans to release a live Roy Brown set recorded at the 1979 San Francisco Blues Festival.

Wavelength contributor Hammond Scott is producing a session in Dallas on Anson Funderburgh and The Rockets... Excellent interview on Minden, Louisiana's Percy Mayfield in the latest Living Blues Magazine.

Get well quick wishes to Almost Slim who's recovering from a nasty bicycle accident. We miss you...
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