INSIDE: NEW ORLEANS BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

NEW ORLEANS MUSIC MAGAZINE
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Wavelength

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Cover design by
Mary Davis
John Magnie: Now Appearing at a Record Store Near You

John Magnie packed the house at Storyville last month, celebrating the release of his debut album Now Appearing on Rabadas Records. The evening was a fitting tribute to one of New Orleans' long time rock 'n' roll pianomen. Having been the driving force behind many dance bands over the last fifteen years, the album may surprise you by how personal its statement is. This is a performer who has embraced New Orleans music and tells his own story through its many forms: rhythm & blues, gospel, and rock 'n' roll.

Like many a musician, Magnie was raised up somewhere else in the world only to be drawn here by the magnet called the New Orleans sound. "I feel as far as music, I just found my home here because I'd always listened to New Orleans stuff, particularly Fess [Professor Longhair] and Roosevelt Sykes, all of these people I was studying a lot when I was first learning how to play piano. I'm still a Colorado boy as far as my genealogy but my music was always New Orleans. Through people that had record collections, I learned more about the obvious stuff, of course, at first, Irma Thomas and Allen Toussaint, the more visible ones, and then delved more into it and found out about Archibald, Chris Kenner, Lee Dorsey, and so on." Unfortunately, upon arriving in the city of his dreams, Magnie found that the New Orleans sound was not necessarily heard on every street corner. "When I got here I was out of money and ended up living in Algiers in a real little cheap place. I didn't know anybody and the first jobs that I got were in country and western bands, playing all over the West Bank. "I couldn't find this music that I was in search of for my life because I would go down to Bourbon Street and it just sounded like top forty, even though I was impressed at all the white bands sounding like black bands, yet soulful, but it was still real commercial. I hit all the wrong places for months. I also got ripped off a couple of times after being real low on money anyway so everything I had got taken away and I got real discouraged with the town but I was so low I couldn't get out. So I was trapped and being trapped I finally started meeting people."

Some of the people Magnie met were the late Gerald Tillman and the Poche brothers, whom he joined in the group Black Male, that later became the Neville Brothers' first backup band. After getting a healthy dose of funkification, John started his own Johnny Zimple Band with Dave and Susie Malone, which was the stepping stone to his forming the highly successful dance band, Li'l Queenie & the Percolators with Leigh Harris. His collaboration with Harris continued for many years and took on different guises through Ron Cuccia's Jazz Poetry Group and the Skin Twins. Feeling the need to return to rock 'n' roll band format, Magnie formed the Continental Drifters in 1984 with old friends Johnny Allan and Tommy Malone. Finding in the Drifters a vehicle for his considerable songwriting abilities, Magnie is comfortable with the band's mix of material from the strange and obtuse to the more down to earth R&B and country they perform. The album Now Appearing was the idea of John Autin of Rabadas Records. Autin caught Magnie's regular solo performance at the Gazebo in the French Quarter and was impressed enough to approach him about doing a live record of his piano work alone. Autin had made a similar record of Al Broussard and had made his money back from Al selling it on his Bourbon Street gigs. It was only after Magnie agreed to a solo project that the pianist thought about expanding on the theme. About a week before the recording was to happen at Tipitina's, Magnie asked Autin about backup vocalists being added to the engagement. Thus the creation of the Magnetex, made up of veterans Leigh Harris, Susie Malone, and Alison Young. Each is a respected singer in her own right and all had sat in on each others' gigs in the past. So with Harris taking charge as singing lieutenant, a harmonious addition was made to the project.

Former Percolator drummer Kenneth Blevins and present Drifters bassist James Messa were also added on some songs.

So the listener to Now Appearing will be hearing John Magnie in more than one context, from solo to ensemble. As John says of this record, "It's my personal statement from having lived in New Orleans. The album includes the first song I wrote here and songs taken from other periods of my life in this town. The set was a mix which adds that spontaneous thing that, to me, is what New Orleans music is all about. Now Appearing is available at Peaches Records, the Mush­room, and Sound Warehouse.

—Jason Patterson and Jerry Brock

It's a wrap: Island records founder Chris Blackwell and writer Ted Fox pose with zydeco artist Buckwheat Zydeco at Southlakes Studio in New Orleans after completing the co-producing chores for Buckwheat's new Island release. Expect this rocking party record in the stores mid-June.
Remembering Fess

Tipitina's was named for one of his songs. Coco Robichaux created a statue of him. There's been talk of putting up a park in his honor. But Marjorie Knight of Maui, Hawaii, may have outdone them all with her "Bomb," loose, greatest set that George Blevins ever did, living up to every expectation we hold of them: funky, funny, tight, loose, and unbelievably soulful. "Young Boy Blues," "So Fine," "Drop The Bomb," it just doesn't get any better than this, friends. You say you missed it? Snooks and George will probably be making the rounds again before next year's Fest. If not, it's gonna be another long, long year.

George and Snooks

Jazz Fest means many different things to different people. Some folks pay outrageous week-long hotel bills to sit at the feet of Darryl Barker or Katlin Webster in the legendary Economy Hall tent. Some folks re-enact Woodstock and erect sun (and view)-blocking nylon tents at Stage One to hear The Band pretend like Robbie Robertson never exited. Some folks O.D. on mushrooms and some folks O.D. on Crabmeat Rita. Some folks blow their IRA deposit on a precious slab of Thomas Mann's magical Techno-Romantic jewelry. But to some of us the best thing about Jazz Fest is that we get to hear The Topcats, their all-original cassette recording, has just hit an incredible 1,000 in the New Orleans area.

For all those who still consider the Topcats an oldies band, it's time to take a new look: Sales of The Topcats, their all-original cassette recording, has just hit an incredible 1,000 in the New Orleans area.

The band is naturally happy with the response to their first recording effort, but more important than the sales is what that number represents. Robert Schulte, drummer and vocalist for the Topcats, says, "We see it as, finally, an acceptance of our original music." The band already had a big advantage going for them, a very recognizable name. However, in the crazy world of New Orleans music, this also turned out to be one of their biggest disadvantages. T.Q. and the Topcats had a long and respected history as one of the area's premier Fifties show bands. When the group restructured in 1981 the decision was made to keep the same name, with its instant recognition, and try to overcome the disadvantage of the oldies reputation.

In fact, the new Topcats bears little resemblance to T.Q.'s old group. Pat Campbell, bass player and vocals, and Sai Candibore on vocals, are the only original members left. Buzzy Beano, on guitar and vocals, joined in 1981. David Gamble, keyboardist, came on in 1982 and Schulte joined in 1984. More years of change and hard work, years of playing cover music just to survive, years of refining their sound, culminated in the December 1986 release of The Topcats. The recording went on sale for $4 apiece at Topcats shows and at Warehouse Records and Tapes in Kenner, Metairie and Gretna.

At that time Gamble asked for understanding from their old fans. "It's hard to get people to listen to anything they haven't heard on the radio a thousand times already. All I ask is that you keep an open mind." Apparently the fans liked what they heard. From the first song, "Break Another Heart," an up-tempo tribute to falling in love, through the last, an energetic cry to "Take Me Back," the recording combines harmonies only achieved after years of singing and playing together with the energy that results from an infusion of new blood. Schulte calls the sales "tremendous!" adding that with this encouragement the band can focus more on playing and recording their first love—original music instead of cover pieces.

Future plans for the Topcats include a summer concert with local band Exit 209, potential returns to the road for performances in Texas or Florida, and hopes for their video, submitted to MTV's Basement Tapes.
Dave Alvin has been a major force in the revival of American roots music for the past seven years. With his brother Phil, he was a founding member of The Blasters, possibly the finest “roots” band to come out of the late-Seventies punk movement. Since that time he has also played with X and a country-fied offshoot of that band, The Knitters, as well as guest appearances with a variety of other groups. His writing and personality have always included a sincere interest in the people and culture of South Louisiana which made him a prime candidate for a Wavelength interview. He has just formed a new band called the Alvinjiggers and is about to release a new album with the group. We spoke to him by phone from his home in Southern California.

So how did the Allnighters come together?

It pretty much just grew out of jam sessions that we were doing almost every day at this bar in Hollywood called Ra'tis. The owner’d let us come in and do R&B, country for three or four hours every afternoon. When Demon Records in England approached me for this record I said “Well, here’s my band!” We’d only done about fifteen dates prior to our gig at Tipitina’s and it still is real fresh.

Tell me a little about this record you have coming out...

It’s titled Every Night About This Time and it’ll be out in England in mid-May and hopefully on a major label here in the States in a couple of months. It’s a studio record but it was cut under really live circumstances, just turn on the tape and do it till you get it right... which is something I haven’t done since [The Blasters’] Non Fiction. It’s got a lotta space. We got some great guest performances on there by people like David Hidalgo [Los Lobos]. He did backup vocals on several cuts and some unusual instrumental work, played this funny little 8-string guitar and some great fiddle. Not many people know what a good fiddler he is...

And a knocked-out drummer, too! Yeah, really an amazing musician...

Speaking of amazing musicians, where did you pick up your pedal steel player? That guy really takes your group into another dimension...

He [Greg Leisz] is one of those guys who’s been playing around the West Coast for years, the whole country bar/San Fernando Valley circuit. He’s got kind of a weird history, he played with Jules Shear for a long time and he’s worked with [songwriter] John Stewart. He’s on Dwight’s [Youkum] new album. He’s a lot like David Hidalgo in that he can play an awful lot of stringed instruments and on each one he sounds like himself, each instrument bears his signature. The pedal steel is such an evocative instrument; I get a big kick out of just having him up there on stage. I think it may detract from the show sometimes because, in the middle of a song I’ll find myself just staring at him instead of looking out into the audience, not even thinking about the song, just totally absorbed in Greg’s playing.

What songs besides “Romeo’s Escape” are on the new album?

There’s a song called “Fourth of July.” The title song is one of the best I’ve ever written. It’s just a straight-ahead country ballad. There’s also three Blasters songs that I redid because I wanted to get them down the way I had originally envisioned them. Don’t get me wrong, I like the Blasters’ versions, but those versions weren’t exactly what I had in mind when I wrote them. There’s “Jubilee Train” from Hard Line; I thought some of the lyrics were a little too obscured on the original. “Long White Cadillac” is also on there...

Is it a slower, funkier version like you played at Tip’s?

Exactly. That’s how I had originally written it. “Border Radio” is also on there, in a country ballad style which I had written with Loretta Lynn and Conway Twitty in mind...

Another one of those Dave Alvin tunes penned with an American music legend in mind...

Yeah, I haven’t done that lately. That was one of the reasons I decided to leave the Blasters. I just couldn’t write with someone else’s voice, i.e. my brother’s [Phil Alvin], in mind anymore. It was like we ran out of shared experiences or something and I really felt it was time to start writing for my own voice. Even though it can’t do much, I still want to find out just what it’s capable of.

So are the Blasters still officially together?

Oh yeah, they’re auditioning for a new guitar player. I’d heard that Billy Zoom might join up, but he doesn’t want to tour anymore. They’ll be recording in the fall and I’m gonna write a couple of songs for the new album...

The last time I saw them was when you were at Jimmy’s right after Hollywood Fats died...

Yeah, that was one of those Dave-Remembers-The-Songs tours. Everyone was so shocked when Fats died and the band had these financial commitments that just had to be fulfilled so I went along. We did a little southern tour and a few other areas.

And you played with X for a while too. What was that like?

It was a blast. It was just what I needed at the time. I’d been doing the Knitters thing and when Billy [Zoom] quit they asked me to join up. It was a total change from what I’d been doing. The Blasters got to be a really closed thing. With X I got to do R&B, country for about fifteen dates prior to our gig at Tipitina’s and it still is real fresh.

Did you get any Louisiana food or culture when you were here in April?

I had the damn flu. Man, let me tell you there ain’t too many things worse than being sick and stuck in a hotel room in New Orleans knowing the [Jazz &] Heritage Festival is going on! Buckwheat Zydeco was recording Alvin’s song “Marie, Marie” and they’d asked me to play guitar and I couldn’t even make that! But I heard the tape recently and it sounded great so that made me feel a little better. I had a po-boy at Tipitina’s which was really good and we went to Cafe Du Monde for some coffee and beignets. I had to rest and let my throat heal.

Have you ever heard of a guy named John Alvin Sonnier who used to record for RCA?

Oh yeah, he’s been making records since he was fourteen or something...

Well, he just recorded “So Long My Baby Goodbye” [from The Blasters album] and I had written that song in a real cajun mood so I was really excited that he did it. It came out great. When I heard his version I said, “Yeah! Finally!”
"Gypsy Blood."
It Runs Hot!

"Guitarist Mason Ruffner stays close to American roots rock—chugging Texas shuffle-blues, rolling New Orleans funk and barrelhouse boogie, lyrics about women and traveling and trouble. When it comes to rock and roll, he never makes a false step."
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"The leading contender for the title of Bruce Springsteen South."
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"Mason Ruffner, the guitarist and singer, has become a cult favorite of late, with the likes of salt-of-the-earth types such as Stevie Ray Vaughan, Robbie Robertson, Carlos Santana, Billy Gibbons, Boz Scaggs and even the Boss himself dropping by the Old Absinthe House bar in New Orleans to catch his show."
—Rolling Stone

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By Rick Coleman

NEW ORLEANS, JUNE 1947

It was a song of things to come. It opened with a Judgment Day blast of horns and the reassuring catchphrase of popular radio newsman Gabriel Heater: "There's good news tonight!" - twisted to shout the dawn of a wild new age.*

It wrenched the shades of the hit parade from its multi-colored jukebox bliss to "rock" shamelessly all night, every night.

Sweet Lorraine, Sioux City Sue, Sweet Georgia Brown, California ... No.

They'll all be there, shoutin' like mad...

© Fort Knox Music

The time was June 1947 - exactly 40 years ago. The place was Cosimo Matassa’s J&M Studio at North Rampart and Dumaine. The song was "Good Rockin' Tonight" by Roy Brown.

In a time when nearly everything was strictly segregated by race, "Good Rockin' Tonight" trashed the icons of white culture and respectability and rocked the blues on its ear. It ignited rhythm & blues and what came after.

Coming Home

After wailing spirituals in the sugarcane fields of Eunice, Louisiana, crooning Bing Crosby tunes in Los Angeles, and singing ballads in Galveston, 21-year-old Roy Brown came home to New Orleans on Sunday, April 6, 1947, with the clothes on his back, air-conditioned shoes, and a song written on a paper bag. Fleeing the consequences of an affair with a white woman in Galves-ton and dead broke, he saw in The Louisiana Weekly that two out-of-town singers were performing that night.

Brown walked eight miles to Foster’s Rainbow Room, where blues shouters Wynonie Harris was making women faint. During intermission Brown pitched his song to Harris, but the notoriously arrogant singer brushed him off — "Don't bother me, son!" The band let Brown sing the song with them, and although the audience responded, Harris was still not interested.

Disheartened, Brown went to the Dew Drop Inn, where Nashville bluesman Cecil Gant also let him sing the song. Later Gant called Jules Brun of De Luxe Records, who immediately liked the song and told Gant, "Give him $50 and don't let him out of your sight!"

The very next week, Louisiana Weekly columnist Scoop Jones took note of Brown's arrival: "Roy Brown of the Palace Theatre wuvdul (sic) days is making a comeback singing and crowning in Wynonic Harris style." The following week a banner headline proclaimed Jackie Robinson's debut with the Dodgers.

Brown's first advertised gig, at the Black Diamond at North Galvez and Conti, was backed by Bob Ogden's Orchestra on Friday, May 2.

His band played a crucial role in rhythm & blues history, as they arranged and recorded "Good Rockin' Tonight." In 1985 I tracked down Bob Ogden. Now in his seventies, Ogden has played drums with many of the greats of New Orleans jazz over the last half century.

"We was playing 'Sweet Lorraine,' all the pop tunes," recalls Ogden of his years before meeting Brown. "We had a reading band. We had a band to play people's shows. If they come in tonight, we turn their music over tomorrow night and play it. And they used to come from Germany and France, all over with the Ball Club, 424 Bourbon Street. It was the biggest club in town. It had the biggest productions in town.

"Roy Brown ran into me. See, we was playin' at the Robin Hood at Jackson and Simon Bolivar. He came up and wanted to sing a number. We let him sing a number, but he didn't mention "Good Rockin,'" because he didn't have any music for that. So in one of my rehearsals I told him, 'Sing some of your numbers, maybe we can do something with some of them. That's when he sang — tried to put something with — 'Good Rockin'"'...

Brown had originally written the song two years earlier in Galveston as a spiritual, which may account for the references to Deacon Jones and Elder Brown. All of the characters Brown mentions in "Good Rockin'" are from popular songs by Nat "King" Cole, Bing Crosby, and Louis Jordan, except for the obscure Elder Brown.

"I'm Roy," he says Ogden. "He's don' the preachin', I considered that he was preachin'. We had to figure on something to fit his style. He had a religious, kicked-off style, like a deacon or a preacher. He delivered like that. 'Man,' we said, 'We got to put something [behind this] to give this cat a show!' Like the sisters are shoutin' in church when everything goes wrong...

"We was hesitant about making the thing, 'cause I didn't see where he was gonna make no money. But he kept on and finally I went [into the studio]. You know, I think Cosimo was trying to get us. He wanted me to do it for him, 'cause he knew we fixed the music for him. Give credit to Cosimo there.

The Session

The date and even the location of

Happy Birthday, Rock 'n' Roll!

Forty years ago this month, Roy Brown shouted in a new era.

*Blues bandleader Lucky Millinder had a hit in 1946 which parodied Heater more closely — "[Ah-Yes] There's Good Blues Tonight."
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JUNE • Wavelength 9

the "Good Rockin' Tonight" session have been obscure in the past. Incredible­ly, Scoop Jones made two contempor­ary references to it in his column. In the May 31 issue he reported, "Roy Brown is recording several blues hits this week with De Luxe." In his June 21 column he listed the songs recorded—two of which have been previously unknown: "Roy Brown, newest blues sensation in the nitelife whirl, has recorded four sides for De Luxe: 'Lollypop Mama,' 'Good Rockin' Tonight,' 'Deep Sea Diver,' and 'Cry Baby Blues.'"

Then on Tuesday, September 9, things changed forever. Some friends took Roy in a pickup truck to Rampart Street, where he got $4 a night as the lesser half of "The Blues Twins" with Clarence Samuels.

Wynonie Harris, having gotten wind of the song's success, decided to add it to the songs he recorded on December 23, a week before he died. He obviously still didn't like the song, as he muttered the words, bumping them into one another, and, when he ran out of lyrics, shouted the popular refrain "Hoy! Hoy! Hoy!" until he faded out.

Wynonie Harris didn't have that sound. In his June 21 column he reported, "Some friends took Roy in a pickup truck to Rampart Street, where he got $4 a night as the lesser half of "The Blues Twins" with Clarence Samuels."

The night Roy Brown sang 'Good Rockin' Tonight,' which has just been released on De Luxe Records and is the newest blues sensation in the nitelife whirl, has recorded four sides for De Luxe: 'Lollypop Mama,' 'Good Rockin' Tonight,' 'Deep Sea Diver,' and 'Cry Baby Blues.'

Bob Ogden gives the musicians on the session as Jack La Mott (alto), Tony Moret (trumpet), Walter Daniel (piano), Al Goodman (bass), Edgar Blanchard (guitar), and Earl Barnes (tenor), who created the driving horn riff.

"It was a beautiful session," says Ogden. "It wasn't no session for us, 'cause we could play it. We walked right in, gave one or two takes, and then the next one took it.""
National cooking magazines sometimes write that the Cajun food craze is subsiding. Instead, it seems to be entering a different, larger-scale phase. What has been the sensational forte of popular restaurants now stands ready to go forth into home-kitchens throughout our land. Mega-foods conglomerate, Pillsbury, has been knocking at the door of restauranteur Lionel Robin, having heard that he has developed a better way of freezing crawfish tails so as to preserve more of their flavor and texture. They are discussing an initial first-year order of half a million pounds.

Our state government and business leaders love to hear news like that. Ever since the collapse of the oil industry they have ballyhooed a diversified economy. Tourism has been one obvious field of development, and good food is recognized as one of our strongest attractions. The production and processing of indigenous edibles has also been receiving great attention. Academics and entrepreneurs alike are working to develop faster-growing crawfish, saltier oysters, and bountiful shrimp. State agencies encourage the use of previously neglected species and, something radically new, the conservation of our valuable but stressed natural resources.

I mentioned last month that our friend, Johnny Jambalaya, was holding forth at the Nottoway Plantation, serving good food in their spacious dining room. Poised as he is, halfway between Baton Rouge and Pierre Part, source of most Crescent City crawfish, Johnny is in a position to stay current on most Swamp State affairs. Recently he reported that a local-area millionaire had just painted his jet-plane the color of a boiled crawfish, put claws on its wings, and christened it "The Cajun Invasion." His plan is to fly teams of commando-cookers into bland municipalities nationwide for the purpose of setting strategic taste buds on fire. I would like to see them strap whole sacks of the fiery bugs into parachute harnesses and float them down into public places. I wonder if people would know what to do with them.

In New Orleans we certainly know what to do. Boiled crawfish continue to be the mainstay of our springtime snackfest. No neighborhood is without its steadfast purveyor of the spicy boiled mudbug. Arriving over the counter in a modest paper bag, the package is usually, brown bags of bliss." And at 99¢ a pound the price is quite friendly.

Being near the end of their season, the crawfish now tend to be bigger, with tougher shells and tasty tails. They should continue in abundance until around the Fourth of July. Look for them at Cajun Boys (4201 Magazine, corner Milan), Christiana's (next to the Maple Leaf on Oak St.), Caballero's (Browns at Carrollton), Capt. Sid's (Bucktown), or Lama's (St. Roch Market (St. Claude Ave.) to recommend just a few sources. Whitey's (Downman Rd.) or Perrino's (Arabi) are also good choices if you prefer to sit down and eat them inside.

June is also a good time to expand your menu. Shrimp get fairly affordable, and boiled crabs become easy to find both in your stores and your nets. (Picking crabs is an art worth all the skill and effort it demands. Better start practicing.) Soft-shell crabs are much easier to clean and to eat. This already looks like a great year for them, judging by the creatures starting to show up now in the stores. When stopping by Cajun Boys for your crawfish, you can also buy a softshell crab po-boy, just in the interest of a well-balanced diet. At the prices they charge, it is apparently offered as a public service. Why not take advantage of it? I also noticed that Cajun Boys is carrying a new brand of andouille, Laurent's, from the West Bank. If you are a sausage...
Most local sausage lovers still swear by Creole Country. If you do not already know about this sausage company or maybe forgot about them, you might wish to search them out. It goes great with beans. Also outstanding is their hot or mild hogshead sausage, and you may find hard to stop eating. Go by and ask one of the Schmidt brothers for a sample.

Creole Country is easier to find in Mid-City. Restaurants concerned with quality comprise most of their trade, but walk-in business is always welcome. They still maintain a retail counter in their little factory.

When you talk to the Schmidts, ask them about their crawfish boudin, black peppercorns, and their excellent smoked pork tenderloin with cracked black peppercorns, and their excellent seafood sausage. They took these off the regular board but will consider doing them on order. In fact, you could bring them your own shrimp and redfish, basically all that goes into the seafood sausage, and they will charge you only a slight fee for grinding and casing it. Have them make a lot of it; it freezes really well.

Actually, you never have to leave the neighborhood. You can walk over to Caballero’s (236 N. Carrollton) for your needed ingredients. Their fish is always fresh. The crawfish there are among the best in town, if you need an immediate taste. Or snap some of their alligator sausage for later.

I mentioned Caballero’s in a previous report as a good place to find unusual fish. On one recent visit, to give you an idea of what they might have, I found fresh tuna and amberjack, as well as some beautiful speckled trout. Since this is the time when many people cook outdoors, I should mention that these two fish are ideal for the grill. The biggest caution, especially for the tuna, is to not overcook them. The tuna should only be done until it is rare or medium-rare at most. Otherwise, it is dry, tough, and not worth eating. Redfish is another fish that really takes well to the grill.

Anyone who does a lot of barbecuing might like to know that some of the best charcoal available is to be found in 50 pound bags at Brandin Slate Co., 1021 N. Rampart. It is imported from France, made from chunks of oak, and normally used by roofers to melt tar over their little braziers because it produces such an intense heat.

Speaking of heat, now is a good time for us to light a fire under our state legislators. It seems encouraging that the rhetoric about natural resources is being countered with concerns that these are fragile and need to be protected. More than 300 separate bills pertaining to fish, wildlife, and the environment in which they and we all hope to exist are up for consideration during the current lawmaking session. Some of the bills deal with such obvious public benefits that no sane person should doubt they will be passed overwhelmingly. But click the heels of your hipboots together three times and say the words “Louisiana politics,” and you will find things exactly as they have always been before.

Some proposals are most surprising for the fact that they are not already law.

HB 379, for example, prohibits the discharge of radioactive materials into the Mississippi River. HB 869 authorizes a one-year moratorium on discharging hazardous waste into the river and requires the state to develop a plan for future discharges. (You mean all that is legal now? You mean the state doesn’t have any plan now?) HB 379 requires wetlands to be restored to original conditions after any work. (If you break it, you fix it.) There are bills aimed at stopping unnecessary dredging in the marshes and helping in other ways to stop the erosion and salinization creep that is now costing us the loss of 60 square miles of coastal wetlands — habitat for oysters, redfish, trout, shrimp, etc. — every year.

One of the bills proposed in the state senate, SB 368, would finally change the effective fishing dates for pompano so they would not be taken while they are laying their eggs. This seems eminently sensible. It should pass, but in Louisiana you never know.

There was a good summary of all the important conservation bills presented recently (May 10) by Bob Marshall, outdoor editor for the Times-Picayune, in one of his Sunday columns. He also outlined how the commercial fishing forces were set to resist any attempts to have them adopt a quota or a size limitation on the fishing of redfish. If you like to catch or eat fish, or just like the idea of living in a healthy, responsible place, you might want to read the latest news, either through this column or by contacting the Louisiana Wildlife Federation. If you don’t like the idea of an industry executive accepting a $10,000 fine for dumping some toxic waste it will cost the state $2,000,000 to clean, then it might be time to get fired up.
CARIBBEAN

Stalin: Premier of Pan

When the pan's on the stand, you lose rhythm of the man. But with pan on the man you jump with the band.

GENE SCARAMUZZO

Most of Trinidad/Tobago's successful calypsonians are skilled at writing party soca tunes, and many have on occasion written hard-hitting calypsos with meaningful lyrics. But few in history have been able, year after year, to consistently combine content with danceable beats and catchy repeatable choruses like the great Black Stalin. Stalin is the rising star of the calypso art form, offering assurance that calypso will boldly move into the 21st Century.

It was with utter amazement that we learned the Jazz Fest's bill of 'The Soca Group from Trinidad' would turn out to be none other than Stalin, who is the reigning king for '87, along with last year's monarch, David Rudder. Despite the lack of publicity for the double bill, there was a huge crowd in attendance that was attracted by the power of the music alone. But I'm sure Stalin's charisma had something to do with it also. His energetic, exaggerated movements onstage, coupled with his infectious smile, were more than enough to win over the Jazz Fest crowd, which was heavily populated by N.O. based Trinidadians.

Underneath all the frivolity and performer's trappings, though, is a very serious calypsonian who knows how to get his messages across in the guise of party music. In the early Sixties he studied under several of the great calypsonians (Successor, Pretender, and Lord Kitchener). Since 1967, he has reached the calypso monarchy finals 13 times, taking the crown in '79 (with 'Caribbean Man/Play One'), '85 (with 'Wait Dorothy Want Some Sexism') and '87 (with 'Burn Dem/Mr. Pan Maker').

Stalin's predominant theme is that black man must work to get a better world. In fact, he opened his set both days with a song from carnival '82, called 'Nothing Comes Easy' ('Black man got to keep on jammyn'.

For black man to get a little something'. In addition, Stalin has been a consistently vocal promoter of Trinidad/Tobago culture, especially in the case of the islands' most unique creation... the steel drum (or pan as it is known to the people of T&T).

As was mentioned in this column last month, carnival '87 seemed to break wide open with a newly revived interest in pan, judging from the fact that pan was heard on records by practically every calypsonian, and that one of the two songs that brought the '87 crown to Stalin was a tune called 'Mr. Pan Maker.' So his appearance in New Orleans provided a great opportunity to hear more on the state of pan from one of the true forces behind the scene. He spoke at length to Wavelength on the subject, and what follows is a portion of that discussion. But first, a brief overview of pan.

The role of pan in T&T has evolved over the years from its initial appearance, in the early Forties, slung around the necks of neighborhood gangs who roamed the streets at carnival time, to today's huge steel orchestras (of over 100 members) who mount the drums on metal stands, and who are sponsored by big companies like Shell, Amoco and BWIA. Due to the nearly immobile state of these orchestras, along with the large numbers and the money needed, pan has all but disappeared from the street carnival, making its appearance only at the annual steel drum competition, called Panorama, which takes place the Saturday before Mardi Gras. But a movement seems to be underway to bring pan back to the streets, manifested in part by the recent appearance of small groups of punists banded together (and dubbed "pan round the neck" bands) who have been hitting the streets at carnival.

Randall

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12 Wavelength • JUNE
Is it true that pan is undergoing a revival of sorts, in T&T?

Yes, this is happening. This is the reason for a calypso like “Mr. Pan Maker.” What we’re trying to do is to get that pan recognized as an instrument. It’s just something like about 40 or 50 years old, pan isn’t that old. And right now we’ve got a lot of experiments happening, a lot of people working with it to get it down to that fine instrument.

What I did this year in my song, I put everything on the pan maker, saying that he’s the man to save the pan.

What kinds of things do you think are going to happen?

Well, I think we’re getting on to standardization now. And I think with this move that they’re making, as long as we can get it standardized and have one plan... for instance, one set of tenors, one set of cellos... then we could do books and some other things about the pan. So right now all the scientists and professors are putting in some work.

What about the pan around the neck bands? Are they growing in popularity?

Yes, and they will grow in popularity. Because as I said before, steel band is passing through a phase here now, which I think is good for it. A few years ago, before we had stands, we had pan round the neck. Right now, pan on stands is supposed to be the big thing. But somehow, since pan started to get on stands, the revelers began to lose interest in the pan. With the pan round the neck, when you jump with the band you jump to the vibration of the pan, because the pan is on the man. Now when you put the pan on the stand, you don’t move no more to the rhythm of the man because you don’t get a vibration coming from the man through the pan to you. What you have now is like a stage march.

Hence, we have this problem that pan come out of carnival. After Panorama (which takes place on the Saturday before Mardi Gras), pan done. So what’s really happening now is more of the pan round the neck is coming, cause it’s sort of a revolution inside of the steel bands. We move in Trinidad to that calypso beat... we deal with cut time... we take it on the one and the three... which is the natural movement of the people...

So, hence, we have that kind of revolution, that the pan round the neck wants to get back to that thing that is his, so that he can move free through the streets and just carry the people with it, instead of the stand and him just standing there, when it’s really something he should be moving with.

These pan around the neck bands aren’t based on neighborhoods anymore, are they?

No... oh, in a way still... yes. Because pan round the neck in this time is really a panist who is frustrated over pan on the stand. He wants that freedom to get back the band to the community. Because pan round the neck don’t need no big pan shed (for manufacturing, tuning, reharsing, etc.), they don’t need pipes (for stands)... they don’t need even a sponsor. It comes back into the community, because as I’ve said before in a song, I thought it was in ’81 (“Wey I Band”) the band at a point needed a sponsor, but the sponsor took away the pan from the neighborhood. It was no more a community band when the sponsors went into it. So the pan round the neck now is part of that revolution. This year for the first time in a long time... since Panorama started... we had an unsponsored band winning national Panorama. Phase II is one of the only unsponsored big bands around.

Jazz Fest Addendum: The excellent soca group that backed up Stalin and David Rudder was handpicked by dreadlocked alto saxophonist Roy Cape. Cape has been performing and arranging on calypso records since the early Sixties, and presently is the leader of

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**JAMES LIEN**

Everybody gets mad once in a while. Aggression is part of human nature. What’s interesting is that some people make a living at it. These people (and there are a lot of them out there) thrive on the stress and insanity of a society to create scary aggressive music to earn their livelihoods. A lot of people think of being a musician as a relatively placid, low-stress occupation, consisting mainly of hanging around, being photographed, giving interviews, complaining about the mass, and partying all the while. Artists such as Henry Rollins and Husker Du show us that this is not always the case. Stress kills most of us, but others like Bob Mould and Bilha Bargeld seem to flourish in it. They swallow in the anguish, killing themselves for a living, dying for the sake of their art. This sort of thing has been going on for years, too. Destruction is cool. Death is cool. One need only to add the number of Jim Morrison posters to the number of copies of *No One Gets Out Of Here Alive* to all the Doors albums ever sold to figure that one out. If you need a way to vent some stress besides driving dangerously or operating power tools while you’re really mad, here are some listening suggestions:

**Suicidal Tendencies**

*Join the Army*

**Caroline Records,** 5 Crosby St., New York, NY 10012

Yeah, you remember Suicidal Tendencies. All they wanted was aorget, and nobody would give it to them. "institutionalized," from the movie *Repo Man* was one of those songs, sort of the "My Generation" of a whole breed of adolescent *Repo Man* movies of whom were sitting in their rooms, minding their own business, when their mothers came in and wanted to talk to them and tried to put them in institutions. These were the same punks who would writhe about on the floor whenever it came on, much like their parents did the gator to "Louie, Louie." Like so many bands who strung for that One Big Hit and finally got it, Suicidal Tendencies are forever cursed by its success, and doomed to repeat the song in concert every night for the rest of their lives. This leads to the conclusion that punk rock is now nostalgia, fodder for some Nineties version of *The Big Chill.* A Suicidal Tendencies show without "institutionalized" would be like an iron butterfly gig without "Imm Godda Davida"—these things just don’t happen, are unfathomable, try as they may, the Tendencies will probably never leave the institution into which their parents banished them. Here, they’ve opted for a more metallic sound than their earlier efforts, one that will continue to cause parents to rush into their son’s room and say "Your father and I have been thinking a lot about you last son and...Your fans will probably love it for it. Well, they went to your churches, your schools, your institutions of higher learning...and now they’re on your MTV, so be prepared.

**Angry Samoans**

*Yesterday Started Tomorrow* EP

**PVC Records,** South Plainfield, NJ 07080

The Angry Samoans are angry enough, but in truth they’re from Van Nuys (just south and east and below the equalizer from samos). At least they don’t look like they’re from samos. They do play an interesting brand of quasi-punk laced with sarcastic vocals. Most notably sarcastic is their version of "Somebody to Love," you can actually hear them smirking. While other punk bands have gone on to play heavy metal or banging out the same twelve thrash anthems night after night, the Samoans have developed a sound that recall the, of all things, obscure Sixties punk bands as glorified on compilation albums such as *Pebbles* and *Rags.* They sound more like the Thirteenth Floor Elevators than anything else. Sometimes, they’re almost as weird as Robby Crispin himself ("Electrocution, baby, on yeahhh..." sings Mike at point), or even the legendary Sky Saxon, the leader of the Sixties band The Seeds who is currently reputed to be hard at work writing his own version of the Bible. What the Samoans will be doing twenty years from now is anybody’s guess, but they probably won’t be accountants or doctors, that’s for sure.

**Henry Rollins**

Hot Apealous Machine

**Texas Hotel Records,** 122 Broadway, Santa Monica, CA 90401

Henry Rollins has been making a living for the last eight or ten years simply by being mad. His aggressive and often controversial spoken word earnings both by himself and with Black Flag have earned him quite a reputation as the tattooed man outside, and he wants to come in. He’s not just Henry, he’s one of the world’s greatest creative people. He’s more than just a singer, or poet; he is a concept. In short, he’s not just a man outside, and he is everything evil or scary about Jim Morrison, Charles Manson, Iggy Pop, and John Hinckley, Jr., all rolled into one. His live performances are explosive, dynamic, and said to be legendary. While we need people like this to shake us up and remind us how twisted society can be, at the same time I’m kind of glad that there’s only one of Henry. When Henry screams "There’s a man outside, and he wants to come in!" you’re hopping it’s not him. (Henry Rollins will be in New Orleans June 10 at the VFW Hall. See listings.)

**Electric Peace**

Medieval Moosquito

**Barred Records,** 215/5 N. Highland, Hollywood, CA 90068

Yellow fever, encephalitis and the ever-present dengue fever are not the only diseases transmittable through mosquitoes. And we know that Louisiana is the Mosquito Capital of the Western World. Now that’s kind of scary. Electric Peace are a scary, crazy band. Their records abound with staple hard guitar riffs and murky Deep Purple power organ riffing. Blue Cheer were louder than God, but Electric Peace are louder than Blue Cheer. Nobody has voiced a wah wah pedal this well in fifteen years. And God said, "Let there be peace on earth, and let it be Electric..." This record has been on my turntable for two months now, and I haven’t been able to turn it off. And I don’t wear short pants, and I always carry insect repellent. Always wear long gloves.
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Los Lobos/Dave Alvin & The Allnighters
AT TIPITINA'S
April 25, 1987

Tiptina's was so packed on April 25 that only the most dedicated dancers were able to shake at the Los Lobos/Dave Alvin and the Allnighters gig, but even the surplus of bodies couldn't dampen the power of these Los Angeles-based world-class roots music. It's all by now, the beauty of David Hidalgo and Cesar Rosas' rich multi-instrumental and vocal interplay, the band's rock solid integration, the power and grace of their compositions. Hell, Hidalgo's tenor is strong enough alone to keep an audience entranced for hours, so it's no surprise Los Lobos was able to bring the house down...with Tip's turned upside down by a waltz.

What a treat to see Dave Alvin step out front as main motivator for his band of Allnighters. He's traded that old sunburst Mustang in for a Strat and looks svelter as a pea in a pod with one left foot cocked up on a stage monitor, beating out a rumbling wave of double-time rock. Like late-model Mason Ruffner, his voice makes up for the deficit in height. Hidalgo and Cesas breaks out the baroque 12-string, and looks sure as a pea pod. When Los Lobos exploded at the top of the gig with their "Who's Gonna Rock" from the L.A. Rockabilly album (the finest cut on the album, which is so letter-perfect it causes me to become personally indignant any time a college-radio deejay plays any other cut from that album...) we knew we were in for a pretty hot time. "Anselma," "Let's Go, Let's Go!" These guys could put together virtually any double-repetitive phrase and within a few hours having it rocking your socks off. Their darker, mourny songs like "Don't Worry Baby" also pack a convincing wallop to the more "everyman-ish" ballads. But what really snapped on the audience and Rosas breaks out the baroque 12-string, things become positively ridiculous. It's the same thing that happens in Cajunianne's band at a really hot Clifton or Dopsie gig; people start listening with their bodies, dancing abandon sets in, and gravity is defied. Highest credits to drummer Louis Perez, sax Steve Berlin, and especially super-bassist Conrad Lozano, such lightning-speed licks are even more difficult on the unwieldy electric bass...tends off, hombre.

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Dave Alvin and the Allnighters: Blasting.

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Blues Across the Berlin Wall

When the Neville Brothers, Irma Thomas and Johnny Adams accompanied Solomon Burke to East Berlin, politics took a holiday.

By Norbert Hess

Before Jackie Wilson, Percy Sledge and Ben E. King entered the German charts this past winter, Burkhardt Seiler of the Berlin-based Zensor label had licensed several albums from the Rounder catalogue and even had a surprise hit with Solomon Burke's rendition of Sam Cooke's 'A Change Is Gonna Come.' With this success on hand, he convinced Lippmann & Rau to book all these artists on a tour of Germany. Holger and Swen Wuest in the Sixties Lippmann & Rau were not only responsible for the semi-legendary American Folk Blues Festivals, but were also the first in 1967/68 to bring soul stars to Germany — I vividly remember James Brown with a 25-piece orchestra complete with strings and go-go girls turning the Frankfurt Jahrhunderthalle into an Apollo Theatre (over half of the audience were black GIs). Other visitors I'll never forget were Wilson Pickett, Joe Tex, Carla Thomas, Ike & Tina Turner, Ray Charles, B. B. King, and in November 1967 a package called 'Soul Time,' also courtesy of L&R, with Little Charles, Linda Carr, Sam Baker, featuring Lee Dorsey and Arthur Conley and starring Sam & Dave.

Not knowing if and when there will be another Soul Festival touring this country, I followed this 1987 edition for a whole week, witnessing the excitement of both artists and audiences in Hanover, Kassel, Hamburg and East Berlin.

The ten-piece band, led by guitarist Sam Mayfield (a cousin of the late singer-songwriter Percy Mayfield), consisted of rhythm group, a percussionist and a five-man multi-racial horn section. Next on stage was the unadvertised Barbara Cole, a slim beauty who with her long hair and even longer red fingernails, warmed up the band and the audience.

Looking sharp in his red double-breasted suit, Johnny Adams strode on stage. His voice is the kind that gives you goose-pimples. With 'Stand By Me,' he demonstrated his rich vocal abilities. Relatively unknown outside New Orleans, Adams ranks as one of the best of all, next to Jackie Wilson and Ben E. King. From his two Rounder albums Adams gave us examples with 'Garbage Man' and 'I Feel Like Breaking Up Somebody's House'—emotional lyrics, catchy horn phrases: Southern Soul 1987 at its very best. I personally prefer his records over his stage act, though. On vinyl he sings straight, no gimmicks, while on this tour he wasted too much time to incorporate the audience to sing along or do certain dance routines. Johnny Adams is so good, he just doesn't need that.

Although Irma Thomas did only four songs from her current Rounder LP and none of her classic Sixties hits, she kept the pace of yesteryear without sounding a bit antique. And gosh, does she look just doesn't need that. 'Time Is On My Side' she sang 23 years ago, and time sure is on her side. Irma doesn't need any weird hairdo, mini-skirt, multicolor glitter stuff; she hypnotized simply with charm and voice. I don't want to knock Whitney Houston, Randy Crawford, Vesta Williams or Janet Jackson, but Irma Thomas is what I call Soul, and as long as she lives and puts out records, hers have priority over any others. Period.

After three minutes of moonstruck riffs from the band came the King of Rock 'n' Soul, Solomon Burke. Slowly he came on stage, hand waving like the pope: Bishop Professor Doctor Solomon Burke. Even in East Berlin he took the 6,000-audience back to monarchy for a moment: a huge, 300-plus pounds man in purple robe and a real crown! 90% of the tickets in East Berlin went exclusive to the Free German Youth, the juvenile training ground for the Socialist Party. But for a minute they simply forgot about socialism, screaming liberated yells by the thousands, and threw their arms into the smokeless walls, brick walls, walls of confusion' (a quote from his press conference in East Berlin). And as much as I dislike to compare: James Brown, who was in West Berlin a few weeks before, still has the tightest band in the world, but The Godfather is no King at all. Solomon Burke, about twice the size of Brown, moved with sure and spirit, while Brown just performed half-heartedly. Soul music demands one hundred percent to be honest and to be believed. Solomon Burke is more than that.

The change of equipment calmed the souls, otherwise the Neville Brothers would have had a hard time following Burke's climax. I personally have been an admirer of the Nevilles dating back to when Art was leader of the Meteors — 1969. I must share this one episode with you. The Swiss Montreux Festival had billed one night in June 1973 with The Meteors, Professor Longhair, Dr. John and Allen Toussaint. As Art was leader didn't_permit me vacation time. I just went to the doctor and took 'sick' in order to travel from Berlin to Montreux (approx. 800 miles). When I returned, my job was gone, but it was worth it — I'd do it again any time. Well, for you readers of Wavelength, I do not need to write much about the Nevilles' powerful performance. Aaron and Cyril shared the lead vocal parts. Personally enjoyed Aaron's smooth voice on Doibie Gray's "Drift Away." In East Berlin they turned back the time machine with a medley of 'Rockin' Pneumonia/Somehow You Know/Since I Fell For You.' A bit of Mardi Gras joy was spread with "Brother John/Iko Iko," "Fiyi On The Bayou" and "Big Chief" — the hottest gumbo ever tasted by East Berliners. After three hours of Soul they still weren't tired from dancing and jumping when the Nevilles did their encore with "Johnny B. Goode," spiced with lines from 'Bonnie Maroney' and 'Jenny Jenny Jenny.' One more encore — Aaron called Johnny Adams back onto stage; a capella they did "Amazing Grace" and then went into "Amen" with the whole group.

Good soul music — and here we had heard some of the best — tears down all political and racial barriers, or anything else that separates people. Before the second concert in East Berlin, a press conference was held with some of the participants. As West Berliners are not allowed to bring tape recorders into the Eastern part of the city, I can't quote...
much from what the artists said. One journalist asked, kind of persistently, what was the artists' impression of the town? They politely answered they hadn't seen anything yet — being on the road for three weeks one has other things in mind than sightseeing.

One of the key questions was whether any of the singers were involved in the 'peace movement' of the USA. For a minute Irma Thomas was the ambassador of the U.S., stating that they all as church members are automatically involved in the struggle for peace. It was not exactly the answer the questioner had expected. Church — Roman Catholic and Lutheran Protestant dominate here — does not fit in with the communist theories of Marx, Engels and Lenin. But no system can eradicate religion, so the government has to tolerate the church. Sometimes I believe that journalists in Eastern countries want to feed their readers with the impression that all 'Afro-Americans' (their favorite term) are fighting the 'white establishment' physically with machine guns. Solomon Burke answered each question with a sermon about God. Very diplomatically he said that if God would have wanted people separate, he would have put mountains between countries and oceans behind those mountains, so that people couldn't meet. I really don't know how many journalists — all have to be members of the Socialist Party — swallowed this. Only a mile away their government had erected a 'wall against fascist aggressors' on August 13, 1961. 'Fascist aggressors' are West Berliners and US-Americans (among others), in case you didn't know.

Their third day was an off day in East Berlin, and at noon a bus came to pick the group up for sightseeing. I had a chance to join them. We drove down Unter den Linden, one of Europe's most beautiful boulevards with store windows full of porcelain, antiques and art galleries. The street ends abruptly at the Brandenburg Gate. The guide, a lady in her fifties and dressed in very old-fashioned clothes, explained the historical importance of the Brandenburg Gate but didn't mention with one word the "Wall" which continues on both sides of the Gate — a gate which is closed and does not permit East Berlin citizens to visit West Berlin. The bus stopped at the Mahnmal, a memorial for the unknown soldier with eternal flame. Belatedly, Solomon Burke joined us for a brief speech to the television reporters of the German Democratic Republic. The bus then passed by the Renaissance-style Cathedral and the colonnaded 18th Century Humboldt University, stopped at the French Cathedral to take some pictures, and then took on for a 20-minute ride through the Treptow Park to the Ehrenmal der sowjetischen Armee (Soviet Army Memorial) — a mass grave of 20,000 unknown soldiers killed here in 1945 just before the end of World War II. On our way back we stopped (at my suggestion) at the Pergamon Museum. It houses some giant remodeled Greek and Egyptian buildings of over 2000 years ago — the musicians were particularly impressed by the Muslim Mosque.

Back at the hotel, I had dinner with Aaron Neville and Irma Thomas. By now it had become evident to them that East Berlin refugees get shot at the 'Wall,' also that East Berliners could not go to West Berlin, Hamburg, even less to New Orleans, to catch their show or just for visiting them. I don't know if I did explain the situation so that they could understand — but then, who does? We reminisced about James Booker, who was the first and only New Orleans artist to play East Berlin before this Festival. I don't want to brag, but on December 22, 1976, after a 10-year dry period without Black American Blues or related music in the G.D.R. I had a chance to bring Booker as the first such musician — definitely the first from New Orleans — to East Berlin. It'll never forget how I pleaded, almost on my knees, to Booker that he would not take any marijuana or other dope across the border. During the intermission of that memorable concert I entered the bathroom — and there he was, Booker sitting in the toilet smoking a reefer. He just gave me that one-eyed innocent look and smile, pointed to his wig: "I had the shit hidden there!" Aaron nodded over the table, "Yeah, that was typical."

This year Berlin celebrates its 750th anniversary.
**Allons au Festival!**

The newest Louisiana festival is an international gathering of French-speaking cultures.

By Katrinna Hugs

The Acadian town of Lafayette, Louisiana, will become center stage for the diverse creativity of French-speaking people from around the world when it hosts the first annual Festival International de Louisiane. July 2-5, in the spirit of "fostering goodwill and cultural exchange between Francophones from Africa to Canada." Top performers and renowned artists worldwide have been booked by Festival organizers Jean Ceprea and Tina Girouard, giving such assurance of success to this first-ever Festival that already it has been designated a Top Twenty state attraction by the Southeast Tourism Society... before the gates are even open!

The low-budget festival, which incidentally is free to the public, was able to secure an impressive array of worldwide talent as a result of two major international agreements. One is the twinning of Festival International de Louisiane with the Festival de l'ete International de Quebec, after which the Louisiana Festival is modeled. The other is the official recognition by the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACCT) in Paris, a major international cultural agency which represents 34 French speaking countries and states.

In addition, Festival International de Louisiane is also working with the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODIFOL) and the Delegation of Quebec en Louisiane to secure artists.

The festival’s early successes have come from a strong community commitment: the festival’s all-volunteer, 35-member board is represented by every area of the arts community in Lafayette as well as by businesses and civic organizations, including the city of Lafayette, the Lafayette Convention and Visitors Commission, Lafayette Centre (downstairs development), LSU, CODOFIL, the Quebec Delegation, the Cajun and the French Cultural Services.

So, get ready for les bons temps a Lafayette. The Festival (pronounced fes-tee-ville for all you Frenchophiles) kicks off Thursday, July 2. It runs over Independence Day weekend and ends July 5. Highlights of the festival include the music program: "La Semaine Chanteante" of the "International Singing Week"; the Gumbo Show, which is a "gumbo" of visual art, and of course, the Cajun cuisine, which will have an added touch of Caribbean and African spice for an international flair.

In addition, the four-day event will feature dance and theatre presentations, street performers and activities especially for children.

Focusing in on the music scene, the international stage in downtown Lafayette will be the focal point with open air concerts, but there will also be secondary stages. At press time international acts were still being confirmed, but here’s a taste of what to expect.

Expresso S.V.P., is a four-piece band from Moncton, New Brunswick. Their music ranges from traditional bluegrass to blues and rock.

The McGarrigle Sisters are well known in Canada, Europe, and in the northern U.S. The three sisters create beautiful and tight harmonies with new and traditional music. In the past they’ve collaborated with American rock stars like Linda Ronstadt.

For further information on Festival, the area or accommodations, call the Convention and Visitors Bureau at 318-232-3737. As a diversion from Festival activities, you may want to discover the Cajun Country in and around Lafayette where the expatriate Cajuns settled when expelled from Nova Scotia more than 200 years ago.

Allons-y!

Incredible is an apt word. Not to the same extreme, but strange nonetheless, is Europe’s only festival dedicated exclusively to New Orleans music and the talent to bring that music to a very appreciative European audience. Another common ground is the prohibitive expense of visiting, much less performing, in New Orleans or elsewhere in America. Because of these competing ambitions and obstacles, Ascona has become a major gathering place for the closeknit European/New Orleans music scene.

To be sure, New Orleans doesn’t go unrepresented at Ascona. It is natural, for instance, that retrievably preserved it and, in the process, made some-thing almost new. This Zimbabwean band, led by an Argentinian doctor, started as a copycat of old King Creole Jazz Band records. Today, banjo player and vocalist Sabine Sankope departs from the stylistic rigor to offer the occasional toothy smile, the snippet of African moan.

One Ascona improvement on the festival formula is the number of chances audience and performers get to sample one another; bands can be heard from early afternoon until late at night, each performing several about several different stages and in festival-designated nightclubs. Among those with whom repeated acquaintance paid off were festival organizer Hannes Anrig’s Picayune New Orleans Music and Sammy Rimington, Jr.’s like-father-like-son combo, Young Picayune Jazzband.

Sybil Smoot, a fresh-washed student of art history who’s been kidnapped by Florence’s Red Bean Jazz band, has a fresh-off-the-victrola vocal style that is expansive and precise at once. Her performances in the piazza di Ascona was not only acclaim but imitation. The converse could be heard from the Viennese band, Blue Note Seven, whose playing was slack and pre-occupied at this writer’s only hearing.

But live performance doesn’t tell the whole Ascona story. The festival presented a full slate of lectures concerning “The Revival” of traditional New Orleans music. One speaker Bob Wilber, sopranolo saxophonist and music director for the film Cotton Club, complemented new developments in New Orleans like The Dirty Dozen Brass Band. Later he took the stage with Freddie Kohlman’s ebullient drums and complimented himself with a piercing solo or two.

Newly relocated to New Orleans from Atlanta, and more-than-comfortably ensconced in Ascona’s festival offices, record producer George Buck was the courteous ruler of the record collector’s exchange, a big Ascona draw. When New Orleans next trumpets the arrival of multinational corporations on her streets, Buck’s Audophile label would justly be among them. Around Buck and others the business of the festival — presumably recording dates, bookings, reissue agreements — was conducted quietly.

Nevertheless, since Ascona is the Thanksgiving Dinner of the European “family” of New Orleans music, one senses that business is being done. Perhaps over the twenty-plus courses in one restaurant’s menu gastronomique, but good old-fashioned catch-up is still the same.

Aft er ten full days Ascona-style, one notices the lakewide cafés (that serve as elegant counterparts to Jazz Fest’s food tents) are a little less crowded, that the tourists are once again going about the mundane shopping and boating for which they planned all along. One more chorus of “Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans?” and you’re bound for Mio’s Field, via the everyday pluses of Swiss Air.

When the uninhibited observer anticipated, a bizarre reincarnation of Bourbon Street running right past Heidi’s house, remains a fairy tale. Ascona’s Festa New Orleans Music is instead a well-executed, loving tribute to the city that gave the world, in Bob Wilber’s words, “a music characterized by joy.” It is an event, almost a state of mind, from which those who would foster traditional New Orleans music here could learn a great deal. I suppose that is one of the reasons why, as this writer made ready to race home, festival organizers were deep in discussions about next summer’s thirteenth annual Festa New Orleans Music.

Each year for the last 12 years jazz lovers meet for 10 days to celebrate New Orleans Music — in Ascona Switzerland.

by John Gibson

Music, held for the twelfth time this summer in Ascona, Switzerland, of all places. To this beautiful resort town on the banks of Lago Maggiore in Switzerland’s Italian-speaking district, the Ticino, Festa New Orleans Music draws a couple thousand Continental jazz fans and a hundred or so New Orleans musicians every year.

And once there, they mount the most intimate, joyful celebration of the Crescent City this writer has ever witnessed. In the fashion of other such events that crowd Europe’s summertime touring calendar, the Ascona Festa marries the elan of the Old World’s appealing resorts to the allure of the New World’s intriguing music.

More intriguing yet is that most of the players in this festival of New Orleans music have never set foot in The Big Easy. A fact that distresses many and, hence, leads them to call their bands fanciful names like the Red Bean Jazz Band (from Florence, Italy, no less), the Cotton City Jazz Band (a rowdy group of Belgian chums). Sweet Mary Cat (the jive kings of Lyon) and the Neptune Jazz Band (zooming at you from Zimbabwe).

What all these musicians share, even the more renowned and simply known Sammy Rimington Jazz Band, is a lively reverence for traditional New Orleans music and the talent to bring that music to a very appreciative European audience. Another common ground is the prohibitive expense of visiting, much less performing, in New Orleans or elsewhere in America. Because of these competing ambitions and obstacles, Ascona has become a major gathering place for the closeknit European/New Orleans music scene.

To be sure, New Orleans doesn’t go unrepresented at Ascona. It is natural, for instance, that Sweet Mary Cat (the jive kings of Lyon) and the Neptune Jazz Band (zooming at you from Zimbabwe).

Louis Nelson, in a rare moment on stage, near Ascona’s Riva Michelle.
When the electric bass was introduced, Lloyd Lambert had to get him one.

For various reasons not a lot of ink get spilled over bass players. First of all, the bass just isn't a flashy instrument. It is designed to hold down the bottom for a band and to keep time. Secondly, most bassists tend to exhibit a modest temperament, a trait that perhaps rubs off from their chosen instrument. The ideal bassist isn't noticed until he stops playing.

New Orleans' Lloyd Lambert is perhaps the prototype bassist, a man of few words, who lets his instrument do the talking. One of the city's busiest musicians, Lambert fronts his own dixieland band six days a week at the Maison Bourbon, as well as spot gigging with as many as half a dozen other bands. While his name is currently linked to jazz, at one time he was a pioneer in the field of R&B. He once led one of the nation's hottest bands (a fact many musicians confirm) that backed the infamous Guitar Slim as well as a host of other R&B artists.

Lambert was also one of the first bassists to convert from the acoustic upright to the electric Fender bass.

Born on Bayou Lafourche in Thibodaux, Louisiana, June 4, 1928, Lambert was surrounded by music as a child. His father, Adam, was an accomplished music professor and all his brothers and sisters at one time played music professionally. (Pianist Famous Lambert is Lloyd's older brother.) "I played my first job on piano in Morgan City when I was nine years old," recalls Lambert. "It was with Teddy Johnson's jazz band. My father used to play guitar with Teddy and they were good friends. Teddy told my dad, 'Prof he sounds pretty good. Bring your son out every Saturday when we get these little jobs.' So every Saturday we'd play up and down Bayou Lafourche from Donaldsonville all the way to Grand Isle.

'Teddy had a good band, he used to hire a lot of musicians out of New Orleans like Kid Howard and Kid Clayton.

'Thibodaux was a good town for entertainment because there were a couple of musical families. There was my family and then there was the Gaberel family. Joe Gaberel led a band something like Claiborne Williams jazz band out of Donaldsonville. Those were the two most popular bands on Bayou Lafourche.'

Lambert stayed with Johnson's band until he was 14 years old. At that point, his father began to teach him to play the trumpet and soon after he landed a spot with Hosea Hill's Serenaders.

"Hosea wasn't a musician," qualifies Lambert. "He was a goodtimer, but he loved music. Hosea was the most important negro in Thibodaux. If you got thrown in jail or you needed to borrow some money, Hosea was the guy to see. He was a great man."
Hill was the proprietor of the Sugar Bowl nightclub, Thibodaux’s hub for entertainment located on Ligueur Street. Lambert joined Thibodaux’s Serenaders, the ten-piece band playing swing music la Benny Goodman and the Dorsey Brothers. Despite playing three or four nights a week at the Sugar Bowl, Lambert still managed to graduate from C.M. Walker High School as well as to continue his musical studies under his father's tutelage.

By the late 1940s, the Serenaders had begun to travel, playing night spots and concerts throughout the Deep South. It was during this period that Lambert began to sense that black music was turning in another direction. “Be-bop and rhythm and blues came in after swing,” explains Lambert. “Our band was pretty advanced so we could make the switch pretty easy. I’m not braggin’ but compared to people like Lionel Hampton and Louis Jordan we had the best band out there.”

It was also during this era that Lambert made the switch from trumpet to bass. Lambert explains the transition: “We had a guy in the band called Lou Williams out of the Carolina Cotton Pickers who did arrangements. That band was in the caliber of Cab Calloway. Lou got strangled in Little Rock and needed a job. Hosea bailed him out and gave him a job because we needed a guy to try and play bass and write special arrangements.”

“After awhile Lou just stayed in Thibodaux to write and provide fresh arrangements, so we needed a new bass player. I knew a little bit because I played guitar, and I said ‘How about four strings of a guitar are the same as a bass. I told Lou, ‘I’ll try and play bass; you just keep coming up with new arrangements.’

It was only natural that Hosea Hill’s Serenaders would eventually play at New Orleans’ Dew Drop Inn, but not without repercussions. First of all, before they could play in the city the band had to join the #496 chapter of the musicians union. Secondly, because Hosea Hill didn’t play an instrument the union forced him to change the band’s name, consequently becoming the Lloyd Lambert Orchestra. Lastly, and most importantly, Lambert and the band were introduced to Guitar Slim one evening in the club.

“Slim had just been playing with little bands Frank Painia (owner of the Dew Drop) had put together,” recalls Lambert. “As a musician Slim didn’t impress me, but as an entertainer… I was impressed. Hosea liked Slim too so he and Frank Painia worked out a proposition where we worked together.”

At this point, the nucleus of the Lloyd Lambert Orchestra should be noted. Besides Lambert the band consisted of Lawrence Cotton (piano), Oscar Moore (drums), Joe Timman (tenor sax), Gus Fontinet (alto — Fontinet’s father led the famous Banner Band in New Iberia), Clarence Ford (tenor and baritone) and John Gerard (trumpet). “All great musicians,” confirms Lambert.

“Playing with Slim wasn’t easy,” winces Lambert, “because his timing was terrible. But we got to the point where we could anticipate where he was gonna jump time and we’d just play along with him and nobody knew better. It was impossible to write a song with Slim, like this tune ‘Any Time at All.’ Slim just played a riff and we fell in behind. Most songs were like that.

Lambert can literally go hours on end recounting tales concerning the colorful guitarist, but due to lack of space readers might well consult the Guitar Slim chapter in *Hear You Knockin’* for more details. (Swallow Publications). Lambert might best summarize his feelings for Slim when he says, “He could tear up a house!”

Slim of course blew the charts wide open in 1954 with “The Things That I Used To Do,” which put him and Lambert on the road. One night the group was playing at a club in New Orleans and a famous band. That particular evening (likely early 1954) one of the members of King’s orchestra came on stage playing an odd looking instrument shaped like a guitar that had only four strings on it. It was the first electric bass Lambert had ever seen or heard. Although he played upright on “Things,” from that point on Lambert backed Slim with a “Fender bass.”

“When we got back to New Orleans I bought the first Fender bass that Welein had,” explains Lambert. “I was the first guy in the state of Louisiana to play one. But the bass I had was made by Gibson. It was shaped like a violin.”

At this point some clarification is necessary. Leo Fender’s guitar company introduced the first electric bass in 1952. In effect it was a new instrument, which was louder and more portable than its predecessor. Besides being the first electric bass, it dominated its genre of instruments. For many years the term “Fender bass” maintained generic status like Coke or Band-aid. Lambert’s instrument (see photo) was a Gibson EB-1 electric bass, that company’s answer to Fender’s invention. The Gibson bass featured a short scale to make it easier for guitarists to play, painted-on holes, and even a fold-away stand that allowed the bass to be played standing up!

Although the electric bass added a new dimension to the band, it also provided a few unforeseen problems. In some cities, the electric bass was such a foreign object Lambert couldn’t find a music store selling strings that would fit the instrument. He also continually had to deal with blown speakers. “I had a hard time finding an amplifier that would hold that bass down,” he says. “I bought a Gibson amp that came with the bass. It had six eight-inch speakers in it, but I’d always blow one or two out when we got to a big hall and had to play loud.”

As luck would have it, Lambert’s oldest brother Adam came to the rescue. Adam had moved to Chicago and was working for the National Guitar Company when his brother related the problem. “Adam got me this amp that had one big speaker. It was close to four and a half feet tall. It had an off-white color, was lightweight and fold-away stand that allowed the bass to be played standing up! It could even stand upright. I just loved it.”

Although Slim was offered to join the Baby Dolls, a group that alternated with the Baby Dolls at a House club. The bassist for the Baby Dolls was one Kenny Rogers who of course eventually did fame as a country crooner. “The Baby Dolls was a group like the Four Freshmen,” says Lambert. “I got an offer to join the New Christy Minstrels and he decided to take his place in the Baby Dolls. As long as I had the group’s music from being around them in the club so long. So I came to take Kenny’s place in the group and stayed there for a few years.”

Lambert was eventually convinced to move to New Orleans by his brother, Famous, in 1973, and he’s been here ever since.

“My brother told me there was a lot of work opening up on Bourbon Street,” explains Lambert. “The guy who opened the Stage Door was putting a band together and was looking for a bass player. He gave me the arrangement book and I looked over it. I played along with it when they hired me on the spot. I say there for a while and then went with Snookum Russell who played as Easy Eddy’s. I stayed there for a few years before I joined Thomas Jefferson’s jazz band and we played up and down Bourbon Street.”

Around 1981, Lambert got the chance to put his own group together and he’s been a regular at the Maison Bourbon ever since. “It’s a nice job,” confirms Lambert. “We work afternoons so when I knock off I can relax or play another job. I do spot work with the likes of Clive Wilson and Teddy Riley, as well as playing some of the jazz brunches.”

Although Lambert plays a wide variety of music he expresses no particular preference. “I like good music and I like to be with good people behind great soloists or singers. I just enjoy playing good notes.”

When Lambert was barnstorming the country with Slim, part of their repertory included the mysterious laminate record they picked up in New Orleans a few years earlier. It was a hell of a record, but on a recent trip Lambert picked up a copy of the laminated nickname “Thunderbird” because of a taste he’d developed for wine. Davis’ job with the band included valeting for Slim — not an easy job as Slim often took suits with him on the road — and singing a few songs to open up his portion of the show.

“Bird was a hell of a singer,” recalls Lambert. “It was his job to warm up the house. He was one of the best singers out there, much better than Bobby Bland or even Sam Cooke. ‘Bird’ could have been a great artist but he was so wrapped up in wine. You see, Slim was his idol and he did everything Slim did.”

Davis eventually made some great records for the Duke label in Houston, including *Blue Monday,* *Bad Dream,* and the minor-key classic, *You’re My Turn to Cry,* many of which are collected on the *Angels in Houston* anthology (Rounder 2031). Lambert thinks Davis still lives in Thibodaux but has since joined the church.

Lambert kept the band together and set out on a tour with Nappy Brown which stalled in Houston in 1960. After a disagreement with Brown, Lambert left the group and decided to stay around Texas for awhile. He landed some studio work at Duke/Peacock Records and recorded for Bobbi’s tiny piece jazz group which lasted eight years. By the early Sixties, Lambert had switched back to the upright bass to play certain jobs before abandoning the electric altogether.

While Slim often took knock off I can relax or play another job. I do spot work with the likes of Clive Wilson and Teddy Riley, as well as playing some of the jazz brunches.”

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*I bought the first Fender bass that Werlein had.*
JUNE

CONCERTS

Monday 1
East Turkistan opens this week's Brown Bag Concerts at Lafayette Square on St. Claude near Poydras. The free jazz music begins at 11:30 and goes 'til 1 p.m.

Tuesday 2
The Silver Sisters invite you to lunch with them over some smooth harmonies. Celebrate the Brown Bag Concerts' 30th anniversary with them in Lafayette Square.

Scarely the Cal; one of the more inventive bands on the U.S. independent scene, perform their country-style tunes at Tipitina's, 501 Napoleon.

Wednesday 3
Boogie Bill Web play free from 11:30 to 1 p.m. in Lafayette Square. Rank and File are a bunch of nice guys who will play country influenced rock at Jimmy's, 5200 Willow around 10 p.m.

Thursday 4
Waka Waka, a funky pop band, are today's offering at the Brown Bag spring concerts in Lafayette Square on St. Charles.

The Bangs wear summer clothes and their MTV hits at the Audubon Zoo. The Cutting Crew opens around 1 p.m.

Hot Tuna do two shows at Tipitina's, one at 8 p.m. and one at 11 p.m.

Friday 5
George Porter's Funksters party in Lafayette Square at lieutenant.

Short Dogs and Acid Bath shock the men selling soft drinks at the WVH Hall. 3131 Franklin Avenue. This all ages Swampcore show starts around 9 p.m.

Saturday 6
Reggae Sunsplash celebrates its 10th anniversary with a world tour. Freddy McGregor and the Studio A Band, Matabuke, Chuckle, Carlene Davis, and Peter Metro perform at the City Park Driving Range from 11 a.m.

Tuesday 9
The Bangs play their college radio hits at Tipitina's around 10 p.m.

Rare Earth is at Storyville, on Decatur in the French Quarter.

Wednesday 10
Henry Rollins Band. The singer from Black Flag has a new outfit. They'll play along with New Orleans based Shell Shock at the WVH Hall. All Ages. 949-0161.

Henry Rollins and new haircut.

Henry Rollins and new haircut.

Saturday 13
Hi Buns and Roots Radics perform their Reggae
tunes at Tipitina's Music Club, on Napoleon near Tchoupitoulas.

Bo Didley strums his famous riffs at Storyville.

Friday 19
Adhesion O.D. and Flag of Democracy stand on the WVH Hall's floor and play hardcore for the all ages crowd. No stage driven in this place! Call 961-0501 for the complicated directions to the phantom hall.

Saturday 20
Mannix! versatile dance-oriented high energy music, can be experienced at the Municipal Auditorium at 8 p.m.

White Animals rock Jimmy's Music Club.

Saturday 28
Newmen bash out their intense metalic hardcore at the WVH Hall.

Tuesdays May 2
Actors Lab. Le Petit Theatre offers this ongoing workshop every Tuesday. Conducted by lune Titel, these events will be based on teachings in Lee Strasberg's Method. Things begin at 7:30. Call 882-5655 for information on this and other labs.

Thursday 4
Storytelling. The New Orleans Museum of Art sponsors children's stories each Thursday at 10 a.m. Also, NOMA's summer art classes for children begin July 6. Call 488-2831 to register your child.

Saturday 6
The Loxon. The Louisiana Nature and Science Center, 10000 Lake Forest Blvd. hosts a showing of the Dr. Seuss film which has a message for adults and children alike: clean up the environment. While you're there, you could also check out the Center's new planetarium.

Sunday 7
Poetry Reading. Don Brady and Curtis Sanders read at 3 p.m. at the Maple Leaf Bar on Oak Street uptown.

Monday 8
Day Camp. Tulane University's summer camp opens. To sign up your 6 to 13 year-old for the three week session contact Sharan at 863-5301.

Saturday 13
Computer Graphics Workshop. The New Orleans Video Access Center conducts this one month workshop with UNO's Howard Jones at 1 p.m. in UNO's Fine Arts Room 116. NOVAC also holds ongoing courses in basic production and editing of videos. Call 524-8026.

Wild Edibles. The Louisiana Nature and Science Center conducts this informative nature walk at its Lake Forest Center. Call 246-5652 for details.

Sunday 14
Jazz Brunch. The Audubon Zoo, 6500 Magazine, holds the brunch from 11 a.m. Call 681-2657. Poetry Reading. Boomer's Day reads James Joyce at the Maple Leaf. 8316 Oak, at 3 p.m.

Wednesday 17
Central American Conference. A conference featuring many of the leaders of these troubled nations is held at Tulane. This economic forum is bound to make headlines. Call 885-5671.

Sunday 21
Poetry Reading. Arthur Einstein reads at the Maple Leaf 3 p.m.

Monday 29
Kids Fun Week. Tulane University offers this Super Week for kids. Activities include a river cruise, horseback riding, picnics and more. Phone 865-5301.

FESTIVALS

Through June 7: Indoor Surf Fair. The Louisiana Superdome houses this wonderland of fun, games, food, and rides. There is one price admission, then you can ride such contraptions as the Double Sky Wheel and the U.S.S. Enterprise.

Friday 5 through Sunday 6: Cajun Music Festival. Mamou, La. hosts this bash in the Jayceon Field on Main Street. To get to Mamou, drive LA 13. Festivities start around 6 p.m Friday and continue all day Sat. Call (318) 489-5552 for details.

Friday 5 through Sunday 7: Chicago Blues Festival. Get away from the humidity, travel to Illinois. This fourth annual celebration features many of the most famous bluesmen still around. Call (312) 7-74315.

Friday 5 through Sunday 7: Okra Fest. Kenner's Rivertown, a restored historical area on Williams Blvd. near Jefferson Hwy., is the site of this party. Music starts at 1 p.m. on Saturday. That afternoon will feature the Meatmen bash out Southern Nights, Oliver Morgan, Huges and Clark, and concludes at 7:30 with Lil' Queenie's & H&B Death Squad. Sunday begins with Southern Knights at 1 p.m., then Vince Vance and the Villaints play till 5 p.m. Frankie and the Cruisers close, and the day concludes with Cajun greats the Baliste Brothers at 7 p.m. Call the Jaycees at 486-7221.

Friday 12 through Sunday 14: Jambalaya Festival and Art Show. Gonzales, a town near Baton Rouge, hosts this party on Burns Street.

Saturday 13 through Sunday 14: Melrose Plantation Arts and Crafts Festival. Outside of the historic plantation, works of Louisiana talent are to be displayed, Melrose is 18 miles south of Natchitoches, at the intersection of highway 119 and 453.


Friday 19 through Sunday 21: Lafourche Cajun Festival. Galliano, La. Call (504) 332-7680 for schedule of food and festivities.

Friday 26 through Sunday 28: Bayou Lacombe Crab Festival. Don't travel enough of small sea creatures? Call 882-5792 for directions right away!!

For the July Fourth Weekend: Check next month's Wavelength for details about the Crawford Pluggy Buggy Festival, the Food Festival, at the orleans Riverpaga, and more!
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Ryan’s 500 Club, 441 Bourbon, 566-1507. From 9 nightly, the Celtic Folk Singers.

Seaport Cafe and Bar, 566-1501. Tues. through Sat.: Sally Townes, 9 to 1.

711 Club, 711 Bourbon, 525-8379. Tues.-Sat., from 9:30, Randy Hefsky, in the Showboat. Wed.-Sat., 9 p.m.-2 a.m., Al Broussard in the Main Bar.


Angela Strehli and her hot Texas voice at a record release party at the Maple Leaf Friday 26.


Do your research and check out more recent additions such as the Wes Anderson Trio, which plays every Thursday night.

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The Boot, 8200 Willow. Thursdays, 8:30 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. Call 866-0024 for an update at 866-LEAF.


Bronco's, 1801 Club, 1801 Oak Street. This new club hangs outside. Wednesdays from 9:30 to 2:30 a.m.: Sharon Henderson. Sat.: Buckwheat Zydeco's record release party.

Bud's & Quennel's Happy Lounge, 8526 Space, 866-0024. Weekend discs. The Boot, 1035 Broadway. Local music on some weekend nights. Always a low cover when there's music.

Campton Station, 6140 Willow. Muddy Waters, music. 866-0024.


Frenchmen St., Lower Quarter, 200 Broadway. Fridays through Saturdays from 9:30 to 2:30 a.m. composer/pianist Tim Davis.


Keswany's, 501 Octavia Blvd., 866-9549. See ad this section.


Madaddy Waters, 200 Oak Street. This new club has James Rivers every Friday and Saturday at 10:30. Located where Jed's and Topelo's used to be, the place has been totally remodeled. Madaddy Waters is thinking of booking more music if enough people check out James Rivers, so get on down there. Phone 866-1051.

Pennyl Post Coffee House, Danzel St. Folk music and herbal tea. Every night family entertainment, all ages welcome. Check the board as you go in for the lineup.

Tops'ine, 501 Napoleon, 897-3943. See the calendar on the last page of this issue. Music most nights including local, national and international stars. Concerts for June include Thurs. 4: Hot Tuna. Fri. 5 and Sat. 6: the Neville Brothers. Tues. 9: the Saints. Thurs. 11: the Chick Corea Electric Band have two shows. Sat. 12: the I-bad and the Root Radios. Fri. 18: Buckwheat Zydeco's record release party.

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Herkis, 8200 Elyria Fields, 368-3440. Fri., 10:30 to 1:30 p.m.: Philip Manuel with Julius Garcia. 10:30 to 2:30 a.m.: Sharon Henderson. Sat.: Phil

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Allen Toussaint paraded a medley of his hits on David Letterman the end of April. Paul Schaefer and band did a fine funky job in support. They have taken to playing "Hey Pocky Way" and "Barefootin'" at commercial breaks... Toussaint's music in the off-Broadway Vernel Bagneris production of Stagger Lee and the Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Music in an off-Broadway play. The New York Times recognized WYLD's pioneering commercial play of indigenous music with the Wavelength radio show hosted by Dr. Daddy-O in its April 5 number, as did the radio station bible the Gavin Report (the one with the Nevilles on the cover)... Bobby Charles' new record "Party Town" (which the previously mentioned Dr. Daddy-O has been wearing out) is finally in your better stores. Charles has a new one coming up about cleaning up the water, a fine Louisiana subject if we ever heard one.

Seen at the Jazz Fest: Showtime taping Robert Parker, Dr. John, Ernie K-Doe, the Dixi-Kups, Aaron Neville and the Neville Brothers (and some gospel groups) for an upcoming special. Sound spicy delicious! Also seen: practically every working music critic and most record company middle men and women of these United States and parts beyond. Award for most boogie-ing from an unexpected source: the representative of the Wall Street Journal.

Dash Rip Rock is off on an extended tour of these United States. Grace Darling (formerly Elizabeth Bennett Armstrong of Uncle Stan and Auntie Vera) debuted her new group at Jimmys.

Got my ticket in my hand: Local groups are literally circling the globe this summer: The Rebirth Brass Band at the Northwest Folk Life Festival, then Montreux, Denmark; the Finns, Neville, Rockin' Dopsie, Dirty Dozen and Beausoleil at the Jambalaya Jam in Philadelphia; Fats Domino at the Rockarama, Philadelphia; Rockin' Dopsie at the Lone Star, New York; Katie Webster with Al Green and Robert Cray at the Black Heritage Festival in Japan, where the Neville brothers and Dr. John's tours also meet. Then it's back home for one and all.

What should we hear playing on a British documentary about courtship in Nigeria but (not the original version but a very passable rendition of) "Don't You Just Know It" blaring from the speakers at a Nigerian Disco. Now that's the way to get a courship going.

The CMJ New Music Report listed the hot New Orleans group Song Dogs as their Futures Jackpot for the week of April 24, says Song Dog Red Priest (who as we all know is not a member of Waka Waka, last month's last page notwithstanding). CMJ says Allison Young's "cool delivery and style suggest Bonnie Raitt" and all round, "these Dogs have blue-ribbon talent."

The Municipal Endowment Grants for Cable Programs (MEG/cable) is a grants program being offered annually by the city of New Orleans. The program is funded through an agreement with Cox Cable New Orleans in which they provide $225,000 a year for community-oriented video production, distribution to be administered by the city controlled Community Access Corporation.

Applications are currently available for the 1987 MEG/cable grant cycle with deadline July 1...
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