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CREEM

America's Only Rock 'n' Roll Magazine

Lollapalooza
Flashbacks!

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Stone
Temple
Pilots

Take on
the
Butthole
Surfers

U2
Drunk On
Their Own Wine!

Jesse Dupree • Velvet Underground • Mindfunk • Morbid Angel • Pat Benatar • GG Allin

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CREEM



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SEPTEMBER
'93

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Amanda Sherren



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CREEM

"Without music life would be a mistake."—Nietzsche



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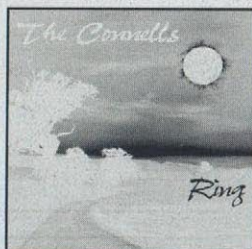
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The Connells



new album

"Ring"

featuring
"Sackjavel"

Produced by Lou Giordano & The Connells



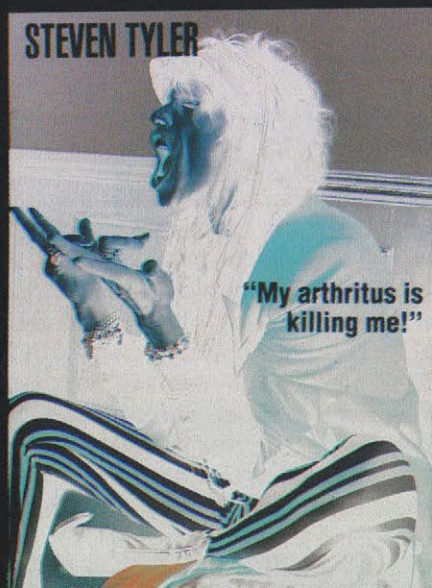
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Peppers and **MICK JAGGER**, make Cash an item again? If he doesn't, **U2** should. The mega-rockers' latest album, *Zooropa* (Island), contains the track "The Wanderer," on which Cash takes lead vocals. "It's Johnny Cash goes to the moon," **BONO** said in a recent interview with *New Music Express*. "It's one of the best things we've ever recorded, and I'm not even on it."...**IN OTHER** legendary news, 1980s new wave/power pop veteran **PAUL COLLINS (THE NERVE and THE BEAT)** has teamed up with ex-**dBs** and **SILOS** members **WILL RIGBY** and **RICK WAGNER** to form **THE PAUL COLLINS BAND**. The debut release *From Town to Town* will be the first on their self-started New York label Wagon Wheel Records...**HORDERS** unite! No it's not a gluttonous battle cry, it's the latest addition to the ever-growing list of summer music festivals. Known fully as the Horizons of Rock Developing Everywhere, **H.O.R.D.E.** is the grass-roots rock equivalent to Alternative's Lollapalooza. Attractions on this summer's second annual event include **WIDESPREAD PANIC**, **COL. BRUCE HAMPTON & THE AQUARIUM RESCUE UNIT**, **BLUES TRAVELER**, **BIG HEAD TODD & THE MONSTERS**, **THE SAMPLES**, and **ALLGOOD...GETTING** back to

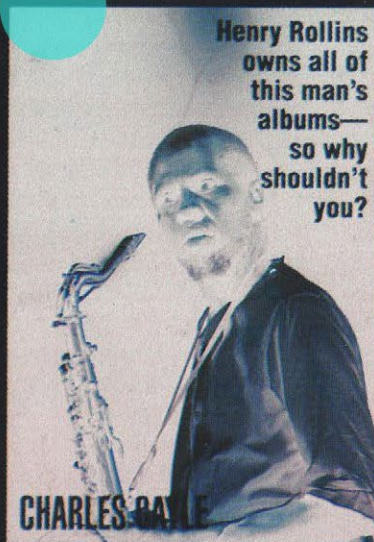
basics. Taking a break from the stadium-type performances of its major world tour, **AEROSMITH** recently stopped in Sioux Falls, South Dakota where it made a surprise late-night appearance at the extremely small Pomp Club. The 45-minute set included classics such as "Walk This Way," "Love in an Elevator," and a cover of the Beatles' "Come Together." It is not yet known if the show was recorded...**ON** his second release for Tim Kerr Records, junk prophet **WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS** has enlisted the dissonant touch of **NIRVANA's KURT COBAIN**.

The dark and eerie 12-minute

tale "The Priest They Called Him" features Burroughs's classic dead pan narration against the backdrop of Cobain's haunting instrumentation and is available on CD or on autograph-inscribed vinyl...**RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS** have once again hung the Help Wanted sign. Soon after the group recently began working on material for its next album, it became evident that current guitarist **ARIK MARSHALL (JOHN FRUSCIANTE's replacement)** "wasn't working out." The band claims the break was a mutual decision and is looking through its personal rolodex for Marshall's replacement...**INTENSITY** is practically a way of life for **HENRY ROLLINS**, so in between rehearsals of the new Rollins Band he took in a night of the Knitting Factory's What Is Jazz? Festival after hearing that ultra-intense free jazz tenor sax master **CHARLES GAYLE** was playing with his trio. As usual, Gayle blew his guts out in a transcendent hour-long set (check out his new two-CD live set on Knitting Factory Works, his best recording yet). On a pair of Tuesdays in July, Rollins took to the stage of CBGB to test out his new unit in unannounced shows. New songs such



JOHN HARREL



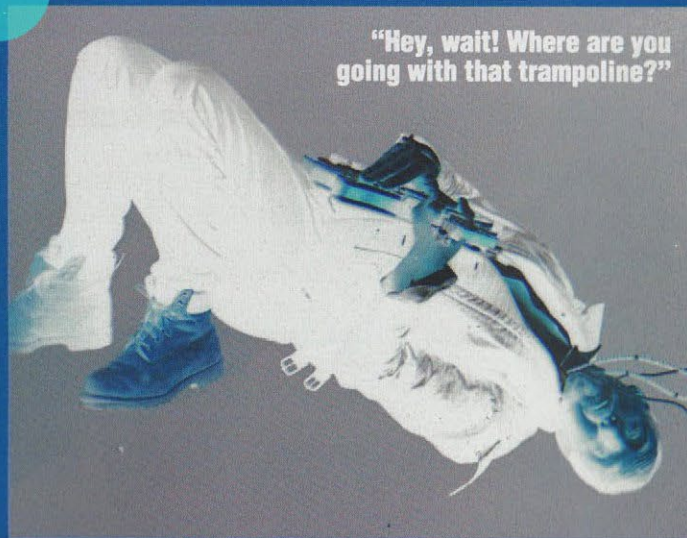
MARGO MYLES

as "Disconnect," "Self-Denial," and "The Liar" prominently featured new bassist **MELVIN GIBBS's** meaty, elastic five-string foundations and Rollins's trademark exhortations and dissections...**BLIND MELON** hasn't had time to shop lately, but it did find time for a short acoustic set at a Sam Goody's in New York's Greenwich Village. Besides a rousing version of the sing-a-long hit "No Rain," the guys unveiled a pair of new tunes during the six-song jam. The show was taped for radio, but if you miss it, look for Melon on tour with Soundgarden and Neil Young...



REBEKAH BLU

...LOOK WHO'S BACK



ANDREW ECCLES

With the recent release of *Psychoderelict*, his first album in four years, windmilling guitar great **PETE TOWNSHEND** once again challenges the norms of classic rock. Both the album and live show mix music and acting to create the story of "washed up" rock veteran Ray High and his struggle to survive the tactics of a greedy manager and a muck-raking journalist. "I know what they're saying" said Townshend at a recent press conference, defending accusations of being a rock 'n' roll dinosaur. "I don't think I am. I could give up trying to do new things and take the easy way out, but I don't." The gruff guitarist, whose musical masterpiece *Tommy* is enjoying a Broadway revival, also went on to attack classic rock radio for its contributions to musical narrow-mindedness in general. And in case you're wondering, his hand and ears are fine.

Flying BLIND

(l-r) Brad Smith,
Christopher Thorn,
Glen Graham,
Shannon Hoon
Rogers Stevens.

All photography by
**BLIND
MELON**

**"I traded
smiles with
Robert Plant.
He's got
great hair!"**

—Shannon Hoon

"Are we stars in the States yet?" Shannon Hoon casually lobs this inquiry at his label publicist as she enters the dressing room of The Marquee in London, where the singer and his bandmates in Blind Melon—guitarists Rogers Stevens and Christopher Thorn, bassist Brad Smith, and drummer Glen Graham—are waiting out the few hours between soundcheck and a sold-out performance at the club. London, evidently, has really taken to the band's unique sound, which incorporates seemingly incompatible influences into one very fluid and spirited mood ring of music. There are no false colors in their carefully-textured arrangements, which thrive on vital, swinging, and ever-changing emotions and a collective joyousness between the players. Their unnatural mix of folk, funk, and various rock influences in fact comes off sounding totally natural, with folk melodies recalling the Grateful Dead feeding into instrumental jams that freely tap Southern boogie, Pink Floyd spaciness, and headbanging power chords for inspiration

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CREEM

by Chris Nadler

The search for a word or words to accurately describe Blind Melon's music recalls the scene in Woody Allen's *Husband & Wives* where Juliette Lewis, playing a writing student of Allen's, explains she simply made up a word for one of her stories because she felt the scene demanded it and that her made-up word was the only one that would fit. The music of Blind Melon also demands a made-up word to describe it, not so much because the music is so different but rather because of the vibe the band brings along with it.

Sadly, however—getting back to Hoon's original inquiry—they're not stars in the States yet. It's sad 'cause these are guys—as long as they don't go changing—who live and act the way you wish the people we call stars and whose music we take to heart would live and act. The bottom line is that if there really is some sort of star-making machinery, Blind Melon is running the plant in its own way. The guys often seem to treat interviews the same way they would a chance encounter with a fan after one of their shows—they're interested in dialog, not just in hearing the sounds of their own voices, and are genuinely interested in conversations where each party learns something about the other.

Of course, there are still a few weeks to go before V-Day, or, more specifically, MTV-Day, that being the momentous calendar date when the music channel will premiere the Melons' video for the song "No Rain." The band doesn't know it yet, but when the video begins turning up regularly in MTV's "Buzz Bin" rotation ("brainwash rotation," Hoon calls it), the group's star will begin to take on a promising shine and quickly swoop within almost scary reach.

For one thing, Blind Melon's self-titled debut, which was released in late September 1992, will enter the charts for the first time and quickly scramble into the Top 50. Suddenly, Blind Melon won't be that band you only think you've heard of or arrived too late to see at MTV's "120 Minutes" tour a year ago. Instead, people will be talking about the "Bee Girl" (a carbon copy of the hapless girl gracing the album cover) in the video of "No Rain" and how cool it is when, in the clip's most invigorating moment, this lonely and ostracized square peg opens some imposing gates to find "all those other freaks just



Christopher finds his niche on the streets of London

"We have versions of 'Manic Depression,' 'Closer to Home,' and the Sesame Street theme song [on our album]...we're pretty proud of it, really."

— Rogers Stevens

like her," to quote a friend of mine who managed to resist Blind Melon's charms until the "No Rain" video immediately got her hooked. Maybe that's what being a Blind Melon is really all about—a bunch of freaks just looking for other like-minded freaks to hang out and enjoy life with.

But, hey, snap out of it! 'Cause on this particular warm June evening in London, we're still weeks away from that end of the rainbow. Tonight, we're trading stories and sharing bland sandwiches in the Marquee's sparse dressing room. As the line of people outside begins to grow, inside there's a certain warmth generating from the common faith that the band is on the brink of something big, of really breaking out. It's comforting, the sort of vibe that instantly allows strangers to be friends. And with the Melons—a bunch of truly good guys eager to stay focused on their music and as removed as possible from the music business's curious idea of loyalty—it's a lasting vibe. Similarly, fans who discover a friendly voice in the band's words and music aren't apt to just move on to the next new thing or "buzz clip." Already, there are Melon-heads along for the duration.

Blind Melon has picked up plenty of new fans and friends on this European tour. While the band has already toured the States enough times to be able to tell you which restaurants deliver after midnight on a Monday in Atlanta or which truck stops between St. Louis and Kansas City carry rolling papers, this was its first overseas venture.

And, yes, you can make that *adventure*, as the band managed to get kicked out of at least one country during its cross-foreign country trek, which included stadium dates with Guns N' Roses as well as club gigs. But we'll let the band tell you about that. ☺



"Love is all around, no need to fake it/You can have the town, why don't you take it..."

AFTERNOON EXPRESS

Shannon: We were in this small city in Copenhagen called Christiania, which is pretty much run by its citizens. It's known as a social experiment to let this part of Denmark govern itself.

We were told that the police couldn't really go into the confines of Christiania and come down on the people there. [laughs] But they did. And they happened to come up to a picnic table where we were sitting just at the moment that Brad was rolling a spleef with some hash.

I guess the local officials have been trying to catch the tourists smoking there, because it will help in their crusade to close this place down. And, lo and behold, Brad had "tourist" written all over him, so they arrested him. Once Brad mentioned the little fact that we were in the city 'cause we were playing with Guns N' Roses, that's when the hammer came down. [laughs]

They threw us out of Scandinavia for a year. We had to cancel a show with Guns in Oslo, Norway, and one in Stockholm, Sweden. They deported Brad Smith and pretty much kicked all of us out of Scandinavia.

WHO'S THAT DICK ON STAGE?

Brad: We were in Switzerland playing in front of a festival crowd. Guns N' Roses were on stage. They always have this pizza guy who delivers a pizza during their acoustic set. I was watching from the sound board when this naked guy in a Viking helmet walks on stage with the pizza. When the cameras zoomed in on him and threw him up on the 20' x 20' screens on either side of the stage, I realized that penis belonged to Shannon. He came out fully nude, sat down at the congas, and played his heart out.

Shannon: I played my heart out and my hard-on!

Brad: I'm sure that most of the people there were intimidated by it. I certainly was. And quite shocked, I must add.

BLIND LEADING THE BLIND

Shannon: One of the great things about touring the States as much as we did is that we were able to watch the process of building a faithful following. The first time we toured the States, we drew a lot of people because of the hype. But when we weeded out the hype and brought it right down to the playing and what kind of a feel it had for people, things began to change and settle into something more comfortable and real. We played the States something like four times. You learn to make friends doing that. You see a lot of the same people when you hit the same location every time around. We do our best to make them part of the show. And we got to watch the process of what building a faithful following is all about.

"Hmm, I photograph really well. Better'n the other guys, even. Almost hunky. Now if I did a solo album..."



"We don't want people to wonder if we have skid marks in our underwear. We show them the skid marks in our underwear!"

—Shannon Hoon

BORN AGAIN!

Brad: When we're playing in the clubs, we want to take the music further than just our songs. In the beginning, I think we were more of a song-and-dance type band. We'd come out, play our songs, say thank you and goodnight. We've taken it a

step further by getting into funk and free jams. We're trying to give people something a little extra. And that eases some of the pressure on us. Because we're having to be somewhat spontaneous and creative on stage.

Shannon: As sick as we may get playing the same songs, the flame that we felt when a song was fresh to us is rekindled every time we run into a responsive audience. When you see people who really enjoy your music enough to sing along with it, it rekindles that flame that might have been put out because you've had to play the songs every night. It would be hard to smile after the show if we didn't have that.

Brad: That's the big pay-off, really. Playing in front of a crowd where everybody gets what you're doing.

COME AGAIN?

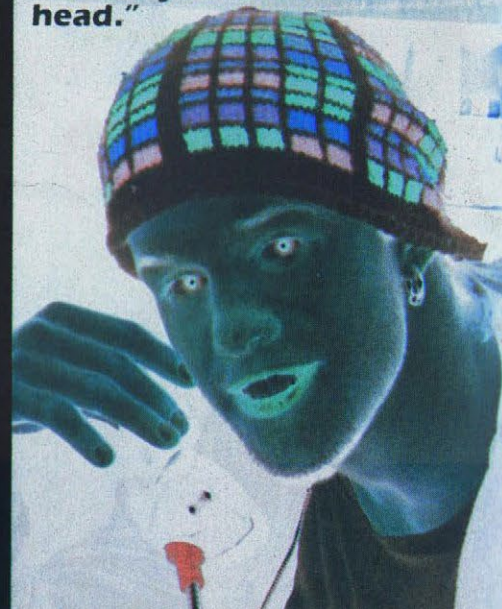
Rogers: My thoughts drift back and forth between other things than the show when I'm on stage. I find myself at certain points of the show trying to think of different things to inspire some sort of emotion in my playing. I'll think of something really horrible, like my mom or dad getting shot in the head. [others exchange stunned looks] That inspires some sort of aggressive feeling in my while I'm playing my... [laughs] while I'm playing my solos, which are my trademark.

Chris: Damn! I just think about catering and stuff.

Brad: I think about doing laundry.

Chris: Maybe that says something about my playing.

"You just asked me that one. You're wasting the corporate credit card, you melon-head."



"Huh-huh. Do you have Prince Albert in the can? Huh-huh..."



"Get management on the phone, dammit. I specifically requested anchovy & peanut butter sandwiches."



TRAFFIC JAM

Shannon: We often do "Dear Mr. Fantasy" by Traffic in the middle of our song "Change." I was turned on to Traffic by Glenn. We all got into the band. "Change" happens to be an unconscious, complete rip-off of "Dear Mr. Fantasy."

Chris: But you wrote it before you ever heard the song.

Shannon: Yes, I wrote it before I ever heard of Traffic. But Glenn brought to my attention the fact that the two songs sounded alike. So rather than have people sit back and think, "Wow, those guys are blatantly ripping off Traffic's 'Dear Mr. Fantasy,'" we just connected it with "Change" and play them back to back at a lot of our shows. We wanted to get it out in the open.

You see, we don't want people to wonder if we have skid marks in our underwear. We *show* them the skid marks in our underwear!

Rogers: We also have versions of "Let It Be" on our album. We have versions of "Manic Depression," "Closer to Home," and the *Sesame Street* theme song. Let's see, what else? Oh, we have some other blatant Beatles and Jimi Hendrix rip-offs. We're pretty proud of it, really.

TOO CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

Glenn: We were in the dressing room at the 9:30 Club in Washington, D.C. One of our crew walked in and said, "There's somebody outside who says she's the Paper Scratcher and *that* she needs to see you at once." So this girl walks in, all husky, walking like a girl from L7 or something, drops her bag on the floor, and says, "I need to talk to Shannon. Where's Shannon?" He wasn't there at the time, though. So she says, "Well, I've been working at this gas station. I've got all my words with me, all my writings. And Blind Melon, Skid Row, and Def

Leppard have all stolen lyrics from me. And I'm here to collect." Then she dropped this huge pile of papers and notebooks on the floor and waited for someone to approach her.

Chris: We've got a song called "Paper Scratcher." She probably thought the song was written about her.

WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING

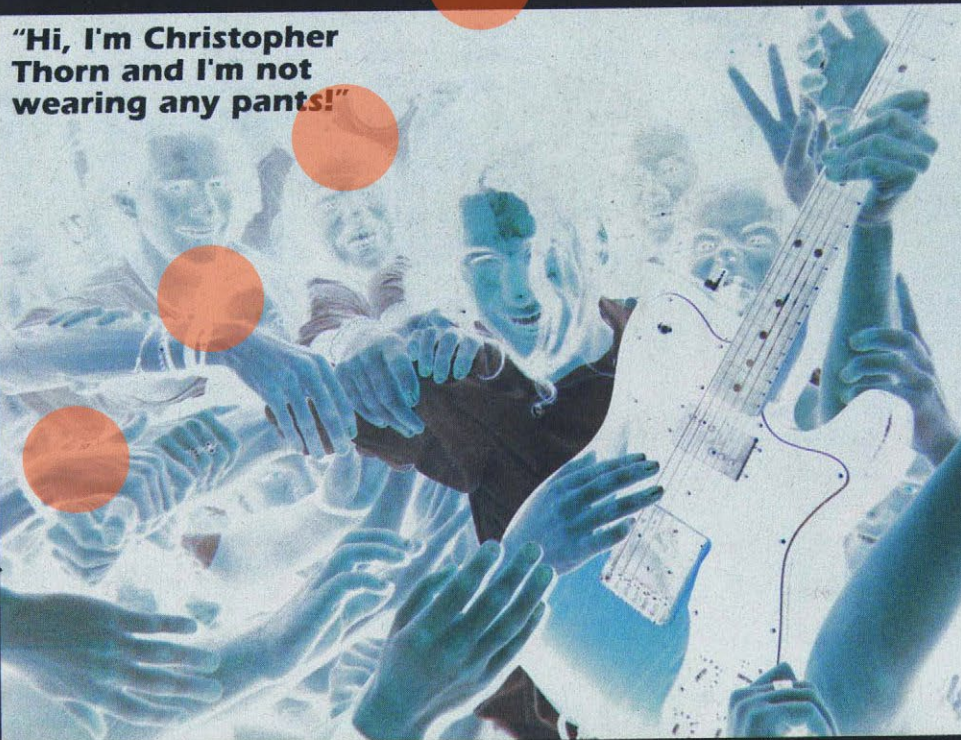
Chris: We had MTV contest winners coming to our shows in Europe, which just totally baffled me. They *won* the opportunity to meet Blind Melon.

Rogers: Lucky them.

Shannon: They'd come backstage and go, "Where's Axl? Where's Slash? Where else can I go with this pass?"

Brad: "Hey, dudes, tell Axl I said, 'Hey!'"

"Hi, I'm Christopher Thorn and I'm not wearing any pants!"



THE SONG REMAINS THE SAME

Shannon: We do meet the occasional girl for whom nothing else matters but finding the rock star who's going to pay for her whole stay on God's green earth. We were in the lobby of this hotel. Robert Plant was checking out, we were checking in. These two girls came up to Rogers and myself. It was immediately quite obvious that, because Robert was checking out, the baton was being handed to us.

Rogers: One girl said, "I was with Robert Plant and she was with Little Angels. And now we're with you."

Shannon: You know, I traded smiles with Robert Plant. He's got great hair!

IT'S A DIRTY JOB, BUT...

Chris: When you're just a kid dreaming about playing on stage someday, you're not thinking about all the other crap that goes along with the music business.

Shannon: I never got in a band or started writing music to do half the things I do three-quarters of the time now. But we're fortunate enough to be surrounded by people who give us our space when we're writing our songs. Nobody really fucks with the creative process of our band.

Chris: And when I hear myself complaining about all this, I think, well, we could all go back to our old jobs, selling clothes, pumping gas, whatever. So I definitely appreciate everything that's going on.

Glenn: But we're not complaining.



Some unique male-bonding techniques develop on the road.