

ALICIA SILVERSTONE: The *Clueless* kid

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Anna Nicole Smith:
The widow wore white

People

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The Grateful Dead's **JERRY GARCIA**

The life and times of
rock's happy warrior
(1942-1995)



SONG

SOUP

Blind Melon

Two years ago, the lives of this hippy-dippy alternative band and a 10-year-old girl named Heather DeLoach were inextricably linked: DeLoach, a Lake Forest, Calif., fifth grader, was cast as the bespectacled Bee Girl in Blind Melon's video of their spacey hit song "No Rain." Dressed in a sequined bee suit, she frolicked through a bucolic field. From that moment on, Blind Melon became known to MTV viewers as the Bee Girl Band.

Without an instantly recognizable vid clip from their sophomore effort, the band will have to rely on more aural recognition. That may be hard with this wildly veering record. Still, the release is anything but safe, and it may silence those who criticized Blind Melon for being grunge-lite and flighty. *Soup* is a crock pot filled with disparate ingredients, from early Led Zep-ish riffs to Dead-inspired fills. "2x4" is a prime example, with its sharp shifts in tempo and style. The formless "Dumptruck," however, blasts off on a razor-edged guitar groove only to drift into some cosmic percussive noodling. And lead singer Shannon Hoon and Co. seem to randomly drop in the under-2-minute jug-band ditty "Skinned," which abruptly breaks up the pace of the first half of the disc. If Blind Melon's eclectic approach sounds a bit maddening, it can be. But at least they've accomplished an important task: establishing a musical life beyond the Bee Girl. (Capitol)

■ ANDREW ABRAHAM

THE SNAKE

Shane MacGowan and the Popes

Shane MacGowan is the kind of singer who could turn "Ave Maria" into a bawdy drinking tune. His ragged voice and slurred speech made everything he sang with his former Celtic-flavored rock band, the Pogues, sound like an ode to a distillery. He certainly isn't taking the clean-and-sober approach on his first outing with his new band, the Popes.

There are a few of the traditional penny-whistle-and-Irish-harp songs jazzed up with catchy pop melodies, just like those the Pogues used to do. But ➤



▲ BLIND MELON Hoon, left, Rogers Stevens, Brad Smith, Christopher Thorn and Glen Graham

Talking With . . . Blind Melon's Shannon Hoon

NEW HOON RISING

The mind reels. Blind Melon's bad boy lead singer, 27-year-old Shannon Hoon, who has been known to strip onstage, says he now likes the quiet life, tending flowers in the garden of the Lafayette, Ind., home he shares with his girlfriend of 10 years, Lisa Crouse, 26, and their newborn, Nico Blue (she's named after his favorite flower). "The flower Nikko Blue is beautiful, and the baby is an angel, a gift from God," gushes Hoon, who does allow that she's inherited his, er, intense nature. "She has her father's calm demeanor," he says, laughing.

Will the fact that you have become a father surprise some people?

It's probably going to *shock* some people! But I'm responsible for someone now, which is obviously a different thing for me. I was there during

the birth and everything. It's hard to take pictures when your eyes are filled with tears. I smashed my face against that little viewfinder, but I couldn't see nothing 'cause I was so overwhelmed. I'm still glowing. With the birth of the baby, I felt a part of my identity die. It was an identity that was selfish, and I felt it go away, which was good because that whole carelessness was a pain in my ass for a long time.

Has the Bee Girl from your hit video become part of your extended family?

Are you kiddin'? That girl was so annoying I was ready to strangle her the day we were shooting the video. Her parents got mad because I took off all my clothes and ran through this field. They didn't take too kindly to that and grabbed her by a wing and left. ■ A.A.

DANNY CLINCH