



SIGNAL TO NOISE

The printed word from **WXYC** Chapel Hill, 89.3 FM **1999-2000 Edition**

Signal to Noise

1999-2000 edition

WXYC-FM

89.3 mhz

Chapel Hill

Carrboro

Durham

and the surrounding areas

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WXYC is a student organization at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Hello and welcome to the new issue of **Signal to Noise**, WXYC's semi-annual newsletter. Hopefully this publication will soon become a more frequently recurring event, as long as our DJs continue to volunteer their time and ideas to the project. So for those who are at all unfamiliar with WXYC and what the station is all about, I'll do my best to provide some ideas (although one of the key features to WXYC is in fact its inability to be circumscribed, limited, or pigeonholed by any absolute definition). Our station adheres to a loose philosophy of relativism concerning musical expression — i.e. no one particular genre or form of music is inherently superior to another — while attempting to maintain a high standard of quality within the wide range of music that we do play. This is (hopefully) achieved by allowing our DJs a good deal of freedom with the selection of music on their shows, some of which must come from a playbox consisting of recent additions to our music library. We encourage our DJs to be as eclectic as possible with their selections, to represent and reflect the vast amount of music one might encounter in any single part of the world, at any moment in time, over the course of the 20th (soon 21st) century. Although our first priority is to broadcast consistently diverse, high quality and entertaining music, we also take a role in promoting campus, community, and non-profit organization events, concerts, and musical performances across the triangle area. And, for one night every semester of the school year, we transform the Cat's Cradle into a den of glitzy teeny bopping decadence with our 80's dance fundraiser. But WXYC is ultimately about the music, the people who make it, and those who play it. So, if you've never heard us on the air, tune in at 89.3 FM, check it out and call the on-air DJ at 962-8989 for inquiries and requests. Even better, if you're a UNC student, like what you hear and can see yourself playing that sort of unpredictably creative mix of music, then come try out for a DJ position yourself. We have new DJ hirings at the beginning of both regular semesters as well as summer school, and are always looking for enthusiastic people with a wide range of genuine musical interests and knowledge. In the meantime, remain locked on our frequency... **Benjamin Parris, Station Manager, WXYC Chapel Hill, 89.3 FM**



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thanks to everyone who helped make this happen.

contact WXYC at wxyz@unc.edu or 962-7768 with comments or suggestions for the next issue.

Mailbag

Subject: E-mail

I work nights at a company that allows use of an excellent Internet connection (dual T3's to LAN) and I listen to many different stations & MP3 streams. WXYC provides the most interesting eclectic programming I have heard. The music is so diverse yet you go into great depth. This is a rare combination, on the 'net and on the air.

Paul
Boston, MA

Subject: From South Africa

Hallo from Pretoia in South Africa. The sound is clear. Been listening for a few months. Will be listening for a lot more.

Keep well

Winch du preez

Subject: great music

I listen to WXYC about 12 hours a day from the edge of the United States, Eugene, Oregon. thanks for providing great music

Subject: what kind of advanced music!

Heard you clear and well here in Munich, Germany, on sunday, august 1rst at 21.30 hrs our time. But, oh what kind of advanced music! (I mean that title "hypocrites") My note book nearly melted away ! No problems with streaming, excellent reception.

dieter zimpel
muenchen, germany

Subject: I am hearing you from Brazil.

Hi, I am a brazilian boy and I like your radio station. You are greatfull. I would like to receive more information about you. Thank.

Zeca

Subject: hello from Bangkok

Your music today is especially good, I enjoy the blue grass and that Hungarian music. Cheers from Thailand. Thankyou for the great music.

Piya



write to us: wxyz@email.unc.edu

s/n.3

Name That Tune

Subject: Music that doesn't suck

To whom it may concern:

Yesterday evening, I was listening to your station: Monday Oct. 25th at about 8:30 or 8:45 pm. Whoever the DJ was played what has to be one of the best songs I've heard in a long time, but alas, the name of it escaped me. I'm not that good at describing songs, but here goes: jazzy blues sounding, with minimalist piano, bass and a slow backbeat. Female vocalist sings for about half the song, then a rapper takes over. Features these lyrics repeated at the end, "You can't hide from the truth / 'cause the truth is all there is" What is the name of this song, and where can I get it? Its so rare to hear music that doesn't suck these days, and the majority of stations on the dial past 91.5 aren't doing much to help that fact. Thanks for your time.

Scott Reid

[The song was "The Truth" by the Handsome Boy Modeling School from their self-titled debut CD]

Subject: Irene & Her Sisters

I heard something amazing on WXYC a few months back and couldn't seem to track it down again - maybe you could help. It was a South African female vocal group singing almost in a doo-wop style (the lyrics mentioned "CHICAGO" repeatedly) and my failing memory recalls the name as something like "Irene And Her Sisters"...If anyone there has a vague memory of such a song or group or if you could post this email on the board somewhere I'd be forever in your debt.

xochi
san francisco, ca

[The song was "Baby are Yeng" by Nancy Jacobs and her Sisters from the compilation of South African Music "Township Jazz 'N' Jive"]

Subject: unknown artist

I hope this is not a troubling request...I have two songs by the same group on cassette that I recorded from your broadcast. Unfortunately, I did not record the set list. I have played these songs to several people who were quite musically knowledgeable, but to no avail? As a last ditch effort, I turn to you for help...what should I do?

Jack Edinger, Carrboro

[Jack sent us his tape; the first song was recorded from WXYC in 1996; the second in 1999. Both songs turned out to be by Athens, Georgia's Olivia Tremor Control.]

Through the Decades: A Subjective History of WXYC Dances

by Jeff Robins

For several years now, WXYC, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's student-run radio station, has held a decades dance once or twice a year as a fund-raiser. It wasn't always an 80s event, though. Consistent with the ephemeral nature of retro-cool in pop culture, the event began as a 60s soiree, segued into the 70s and evolved into an 80s affair. (News and Observer 3/99)

JANUARY 1982 -- FIRST 60s DANCE -- GREAT HALL OF THE CAROLINA UNION

We had a rotten attendance, just terrible for the first one. The first one didn't go. I don't think we got but 70 people, maybe 100. The second year, I'm not sure why but we did well and made some money. And we had a guy doing some lights behind us too. And then the next year, I guess at this time it was Keith Weston and I, maybe a little Doo Wop Dan (Greenfield) too, people worked really hard on the promotion, that's the only explanation I can think of because we had the simulcast, we had people lined up out the doors, we were well beyond fire code. About 10 minutes into the show, at least from the moment the doors opened, Kathie Bright comes up to me on stage with a fist full of money and she says "By the way, we've just paid the hall," she's holding like four or five hundred dollars in her hand. And I had rented a strobe light and a few things out of my own pocket and she said "How much do you need?"

(Ken Friedman, former XYC music director)



As "Gimme Some Lovin'" by The Spencer Davis Group filled the hall, a girl walked in with a perfect hippie outfit: a colored headband and a bulky Army jacket with a peace sign on the back. It was Colleen Kendrick, 16, and a student at Jordan High School in Durham. "My dad was in the National Guard in El Paso, Texas," she said. She said her father not only had loaned her his jacket, he had taped the peace sign on her back. Nobody's dad would have done that in the 60s. (News and Observer 2/85)

I brought in my friend Ed, he was a post-doc at UNC in the chemistry department and he had done one light show when he was in high school and he and I put together, for two years, a multiple projection light show which meant overhead, slides, and eight millimeter film, all running at the same time behind us. That was a real trip and

Ed was very light on his feet that night because we went into "Hard Day's Night" (the song) and sure enough we had a 16 millimeter print of "Hard Day's Night" (the film) and ran that, managed to get that on during "Hard Day's Night" (the song) and when Paul's face hit the screen all the girls screamed. It was very very 60s. (Ken Friedman)



All I can remember is the stage bouncing, me drinking far too much. I still have the jacket. It's a brocaded maroon Nehru jacket. I borrowed, one year at least, a pair of red-white-and-blue elephant bells (bellbottoms) from a guy named David who used to run the old Schoolkids. And my friend Bo loaned me his cuban heeled (Beatle) boots. So, all told, I really had the costume that night.

(Ken Friedman)

The first time we simulcasted we attempted to simulcast the costume contest and someone in the studio said this doesn't really work. So the next year, and every year after that, we ended up playing In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida over the air while we were doing the contest. (Ken Friedman)

Student Becky Sillmon couldn't wait for this year's 60s party, said WXYC promotions director Lisa-Marie Jernigan. Last year she had dressed in London get-up from 1962-63; this year she was coming as London 1968-69. How she knew what they were wearing in London, Ms. Jernigan didn't know. (News and Observer 1/85)

We used to simulcast the dances, mostly as a promotional device. (Station engineer) Richard Fox ran a cable up the stairwell from the Great Hall to the radio station and some unlucky DJ would have to spend the whole night inside the station watching the board and listening to everyone else have fun downstairs. (Bill Burton, former XYC station manager)

A friend in a white cotton kimono came up and asked if I liked his costume. When I couldn't guess who he was, he told me 'I'm Ho Chi Minh.' I couldn't imagine how I was supposed to infer Ho Chi Minh (North Vietnamese leader) from a costume that consisted of torn jeans, a T-shirt and a Japanese beach robe." (Independent Weekly 2/88)

The 60s dance crowd was really diverse -- 15 year old kids, 60 year old burned-out hippies, student-types, townie-types -- there was some sort of 'Woodstock ethic' at play, there was never any violence, never any sort of problem. The (Student) Union allowed beer in the Great Hall back then so people would just show up with these coolers and it was kind of a family outing -- that's something you can't do that at the Cradle. The Cradle dances were never violent either but it's a different crowd, less diverse, college age mostly, not as many older grey-beard types. (Bill Burton)

JANUARY 1988 -- 7th ANNUAL 60s DANCE -- THE FINAL ONE

The 60s dances were starting to fizzle attendance-wise in the late 80s. We were still in the Great Hall when the 70s dances began. (Bill Burton)

APRIL 1988 -- 1st EVER 70s DANCE

The first 70s dance was an outgrowth of a popular annual radio show that the station had been doing since the mid 80s. (Jeff Robins, former XYC DJ)

Carolyn Hochmuth and I hosted the "K-tel and Ronco Solid Gold Spectacular Extravaganza" on XYC starting in 1985. She was Disco Betty and I was the Electric Boogie Man. We did it once a year for 2 years and then because of high demand, we did it once a semester, until she graduated in 1987 and then Steve Balcom (Dynamite Danny) stepped in for her. I must say we were way ahead of the curve on this one. Needless to say, I was amused when suddenly there was a disco revival in the mid 90s, because already in 1985 we could sense that we were onto something. We now laugh about how much money we could have made had we run with this idea somehow. The show was 3 hours long and the phones literally would not stop ringing. Only 1 or 2 calls per show ask why we were playing crap. (Niklaus Steiner, former XYC DJ)

I think that first (70s) dance was seen at the time as a one-shot event, not necessarily as a permanent replacement for the 60s dance which had died out around that time. Back then, disco still had a negative connotation with a lot of people, so the dance was promoted with an obvious layer of irony, something I hadn't noticed with the 60s dances. (Jeff Robins)

In the 80s the view was 'nothing good happened in the 70s' -- disco and stuff -- now there's a revisionist look at things, hip hop and punk were born in the 70s, there was a lot of good music then, disco wasn't so bad, etc. (Bill Burton)

What stands out for me about the 70s dances are the costumes. People got into it -- Superfly, Erik Estrada, hotpants and rollerskates, and more satin than I ever suspected existed in Chapel Hill. (Kevin Kruse, former XYC DJ)

"When they start playing 'Dancing Queen' by my favorite Swedish supergroup ABBA, senior Pete Smith said, "you can bet your last ounce of cocaine my booty will be on the dance floor." "There will be people turning into J.J. from 'Good Times' left and right, screaming 'Dyn-o-mite!'" predicted freshman Nathan McClintock. (Daily Tar Heel 3/93)

At some point around 1990, we moved all the XYC dances out of the Great Hall and, thanks to the efforts of Frank Heath, they became a Cat's Cradle tradition. We moved them off-campus because UNC had changed their alcohol policy to prevent beer in the Great Hall. Plus, the Student Union started to require us to rent a metal detector. Given some of the types of costumes being worn, and the long lines that were already a dance staple, a metal detector was just not gonna fly. (Jeff Robins)

We had that system for reserving songs, so that the people on first wouldn't just slaughter off all the hits before you could get to them. People used to be really bad about that. They would play 3/4 of a song and then just slam the next thing in, completely trashing the flow, or leaving some big hunk of dead space... "Her name was Lola - Dancing, dancing, dancing, she's a dancing machiiiine Stayin alive, stayin alive..." that sort of thing. God, I hated that. (Mike Shoffner, XYC DJ)

DECEMBER 1992 -- 1st EARLY 80s DANCE

Because today's college students were too young to experience the 70s firsthand, those parties never meant more than an opportunity to dress goofy and dance. The early 80s re(tro)gression has real cultural significance. As a generation struggles to define itself, those of us in our young 20s are reaching back to the last thing we shared: our musical awakening. (former XYC DJ David Daley writing in the Independent Weekly, 5/93)



The 70s dances were great to MC, because I got to introduce all the costume people, but the 80s dance was more fun to DJ. No matter what old Martha Quinn Collection tune you pulled out, they loved you for it. Animotion's "Obsession" was treated like the second coming of Christ. (Kevin Kruse)

MARCH 1993 -- 70s DANCE TRADITION CONTINUES

The 80s dance thing was never intended as a replacement for the 70s dance, the two actually complemented each other quite well. For a few years in a row, we'd do a 70s dance in the spring and an 80s dance in the fall and the same DJs were involved in each event, especially Katri Snyder, and the same crowd would show up and the only things that were different were the costumes and the dance moves, and -- oh yes -- the music. (Jeff Robins)

MAY and DECEMBER 1993 -- 2nd and 3rd EARLY 80s DANCES

The 80s dances, more so than the 70s dances, always seemed to be about the music. In spite of the Chapel Hill Hipster ordinance against any dance besides the head-bob, people really got out there. I mean, when Shoffner would take the turntables, a breakdancing pit would spread out that was amazing. Another time, Pete Smith led the crowd in a round of calisthenics to Oliva Newton John's "Physical." He even dropped to the cradle floor and did push-ups. Or there was the time Nathaniel and I started shadow-boxing to "Eye of the Tiger." Shoffner threw a strobe light on us, and the crowd went fucking nuts. (Kevin Kruse)

I don't think anyone consciously made the decision (for the "early 80s" dance to evolve into the "80s dance"), it probably just happened because younger DJs who grew up in the late 80s and 90s draw much less of a distinction between the early 80s and the mid-to-late 80s. Whereas the older DJs recognized the two eras as very distinct. I vaguely recall that the first time I heard the Beastie Boys at an 80s/early 80s dance, I felt like it was a bit of a stretch. Now Licensed to Ill is a complete 80s dance staple that gets played 3 times a night. (Tim Ross, former XYC station manager)

MARCH 1995 -- KC (of the Sunshine Band) APPEARS AT 70s DANCE

A rumor that he might show up preceded him -- a big stretch limo pulls up to the back door of the Cradle and this guy, this fat guy with a bald head walks in the door, walks through the club and, without saying a word, gets up on stage. He didn't pause to explain who he was -- he started singing, or mouthing the words, to one of his songs ("Do A Little Dance"). KC was holding one of those 'Mr. Microphone' things in his hand-- he was there all of 10 minutes and his limo just sat out in back waiting for him while he was on stage jumping around singing or lip synching. He was originally in town for the Rice Diet at Duke, although he lives around here now. (Bill Burton)

KC coming to the 70s dance! That was probably the best thing that ever happened, ever. I was sitting on the stage "bouncing" people off during Patrick (Anders)'s shift. I went to get a coke. Came back and there was this GUY standing on stage - a truly frightening person who was large and in charge, with shades and everything. I took one look at him and went to the other side of the stage without even attempting to bounce him, out of pure fear. I had heard the "KC is coming" rumor but didn't make the connection because I had little faith so I didn't even think of it as serious. Anyway, he went over to Patrick and talked to him, and in a few minutes Patrick played his song and he did the singalong thing on the mic. The crowd went nuts. (Mike Shoffner)

SEPTEMBER 1995 -- ALUMNI-SPONSORED NEW WAVE DANCE PARTY (featuring Skinny Tie Contest)

A group of former XYC DJs thought it would be a great idea to take the "early 80s" dance concept and apply it to the type of music that XYC had been playing on the air back then, which was largely "New Wave", very pop, very danceable stuff, but mostly below the commercial radar. (Former XYC DJ) Ron Royster had just moved back to the area and put a lot of energy into the thing, even created an XYC alumni association ("Order of the X"). (Jeff Robins)

The (alumni-sponsored "New Wave") dance was fairly well-attended. A lot of people came wanting to hear Eddy Grant and Dexy's Midnight Runners and Madonna and Men at Work and weren't interested in hearing or dancing to the less-commercial new-wave that was being played. (Current) station management was concerned with how (these dashed expectations) would impact the attendance of future 80s dances. Ultimately it didn't matter much. (Tim Ross)

FEBRUARY 1998 -- FINAL(?) 70s DANCE

And now it looks like the 70s dances are discontinued, even though the last couple have done almost as well as the 80s dances. Or seemed to, anyway. But the 70s do seem like a huge psychic distance from now, even though there is a plethora of junk like "That 70s Show" floating around. (Mike Shoffner)

The 80s dances naturally became more popular than the 70s dances after awhile, especially among our DJs. With the 80s they had a first-hand remembrance; in the 70s they were little kids at the time. (Bill Burton)

The crowds were on average more demanding a few years ago, mainly because people coming to the dances actually knew the music. The people that come now were toddlers in the early 80s. The crowds now are less demanding (they're not in your face) but on the other hand it's sometimes harder to know what they will remember. Usually it's something that was just on a car commercial or something, while things like the 12" version of True Faith they don't know at all. True Faith packed every single dance floor I ever played it for in the real 80s...

and it was one of those rare long songs that would cause there to be more people on the floor at the end than there were in the beginning. (Mike Shoffner)

My most prominent dance memory: fall of 1997, dirty dancing with Nandini Khaund on stage to Run DMC/ Aerosmith's "Walk This Way" and then promptly falling off the stage when we got too close to the edge. Intense, man. (Ben Parris, current XYC station manager)

The challenge was to rock the crowd with stuff that the other "teams" of two jox wouldn't think of. The other people were always good with early 80s and "new wave"/"haircut" stuff, but you could always bring in things like Shannon, New Order, and Dead or Alive (dance remixes), Femmes, and pop stuff like La Bamba that they didn't think of or even know about. (Mike Shoffner)

The one constant at all the dances over the years: female impersonators. You could always count on a couple guys in drag showing up no matter what the dance. (Bill Burton)

SEPTEMBER 24, 1999 -- MOST RECENT (and most financially successful) 80s DANCE

The one new trend I noticed at this past dance: leg warmers. I'd never really seen them much at past dances. The whole "Flashdance" look was new this year. (Bill Burton)

Performance- (or spectacle-) wise, this past dance was probably the best time that I've ever done. What happened last time was that at 1, we stopped the music and Patrick got on talking about "We have a real celebrity for you here tonight - all the way from the 80s ... PEEWEE HERMAN!" The Dan Partridge came on with his red bowtie and started doing the "Peewee's Dance" by Joeski Love. Then we started in with some mess or another. The only thing I really cared about doing was playing "We're Not Going to Take It" by Twisted Sister - and not just the song but that whole preamble about "WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO WITH YOUR LIFE?!?... I want to ROCK." (Mike Shoffner)



Fairly early in the evening, a couple of us were hanging out near the Cradle stage, looking at the long line forming outside. Suddenly there was some sort of buzz and we caught sight of not one, not two, but four guys with the inverted red flowerpots on their heads and the sleeveless black tees. It was "Devo", right off the third album! And, as they made their way past the guy taking tickets and entered the club, about 15 of us, on cue, started applauding. If we weren't already standing we would've stood up. It was probably the first time the winner of the midnight costume contest was clinched before 10 o'clock. (Jeff Robins)

During "Dancing With Myself", Dan had his shirt off and was aping Billy Idol's mannerisms onstage with the pumping fist and the snarl. (Tim Ross)

There was a Bruce Springsteen guy with a guitar who we pulled up on stage, along with Dan and everybody else. Tim and the station people went nuts. Ben was on the mic. Dan was pumping his fist like Billy Idol. It was cool. (Mike Shoffner)

We're still sucking that decade dry! (unidentified member of station management after learning that 9/99 80s dance generated more revenue than any previous WXYC dance)

In addition to the contributors above, thanks to: Charles Guidry, Richard Fox, Howard Hoyt, Ron Royster, Dan Greenfield, Keith Weston, Kathie Bright, Lisa-Marie Jernigan, Steve Balcom, Mary Beth Ross, Frank Heath, Todd Morman, Katri Snyder, Bo Williams, Ashley Atkinson, Jessica Luginbuhl and the many others (who I've forgotten-- sorry) who devoted countless hours to establishing and continuing one of the great XYC traditions.

HUNTING THE WXYC VIRUS

> Date: Thu, 4 Nov 1999 15:06:18 -0500 (EST)
> From: Michael Shoffner
> To: Barry P. Summerlin
> Cc: Jeff Robins,
> Bill Burton,
> Tim Ross
> Subject: Re: infection
>
>> Hey, doing an article on the ca. 1993 'WXYC rules this
>> roost!' computer virus for the station newsletter, was
>> wondering if you guys had any insight on this.
>
> I'll never say. Seriously, though, I don't really know anything about it
> other than what the antivirus gimps online tell me.
>
> Sounds like a good shirt caption though. You could put JAM WXYC on the
> other side...
>
> -sh

If anyone has the goods on the WXYC computer virus, no one's talking. Antivirus software maker McAfee says it was first tipped to the WXYC virus, which only affects PCs running the DOS operating system (i.e. Macs, machines running Unix, Linux et al are in the clear), in October 1992. The WXYC virus -- actually there's a whole gang of them cited in various online virus directories: Stoned.WXYC, WXYC.A, WXYC.A*, WXYC.A-O and WXYC.B, possibly more -- is a fairly common derivative of one of the most common computer viruses, Stoned.

Stoned family viruses corrupt the master boot record of a hard drive (usually by hiding a computer's startup instructions, eating some memory and replicating themselves onto any non write-protected floppy disks accessed) as well as a floppy disk's boot sector (which, when booting a computer from an infected disk, corrupt the master boot record of a hard drive, and the cycle continues).

The original Stoned virus contains the text "LEGALIZE MARIJUANA!" in the viral source code (the behind-the-scenes (screens?) instructions that run the virus, which would not display on a terminal). About once every eight times one reboots a 'Stoned' computer, the text "Your PC is now Stoned!" will be displayed. The WXYC virus is similar, writing "WXYC rules this roost!" on the screen 1 in 7 times that an infected computer is booted. The text "JAM WXYC" is contained in the viral code.

Other Stoned virus derivatives (there's about 100) pay homage to such WXYC-pertinent topics as the Jesus and Mary Chain (Stoned.J&M.C), Frank Zappa (Stoned.Zappa; on Dec. 4th (Frank's death date), it displays "Dedicated to ZAPPA..."), and the Chinese government's student massacre at Tiananmen Square (Stoned.Bloody; on June 4th displays the text "Bloody! Jun. 4, 1989").

The WXYC listing at IBM's antivirus site Inside The Lab notes that "WXYC is the call sign of a university radio station in the Eastern United States; the virus first appeared on the campus of a nearby rival university." This is somewhat corroborated from this virus alert from the February 1996 issue of Connections, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences' internal newsletter: "A PC virus was found at NIEHS. The virus came to NIEHS on a diskette from Duke University. The virus is a master boot sector virus that will state 'WXYC rules this roost' upon bootup of your PC."

The odds are pretty long against anyone 'fessing up to the WXYC virus, especially in print. North Carolina considers "introducing, directly or indirectly, a computer program, (including a self-replicating or a self-propagating computer program) into a computer, computer system, or computer network" a Class 1 misdemeanor, the most serious classification of misdemeanor; if actual damage from the virus exceeds \$1,000, it's a felony in North Carolina, which could land our geek in the pokey.

Paul Jones, Director of UNC MetaLab, reports the WXYC virus remains "in the wild," which is geekspeak regarding a virus that remains in circulation. WXYC-B and tons of other viruses are available from mint-hpvac.com/virii/virii.html, if you make a good case ("ONLY those who need these files for researching viruses will get a reply.").

On the offchance the WXYC virus resurfaces on your PC, current antivirus software from McAfee, Symantec's Norton line et al will detect and make short work of it; a specific fix for the WXYC virus is available at <ftp://ftp.edu.tw/PC/simtelnet/msdos/virus/qwxycc.zip>

Barry Summerlin

The Sausage Party

Historical associations with fascism, technical precision and the avant garde make a strange beast of popular music. While the average thirty-something year olds of twenty years ago boogied their nights away to swinging disco-oompa [tanzparty a-go-go!] - today's aging crowds pack out neon bars sweating with leather, smoke and a certain classic brand of galloping euro-techno, which seems to be a national anthem and a cher/sade remix boiling over with the worst kind of reckless abandon.

Like most any place though, the most precise gauge of the music scene isn't the mom and dad bars, or the average Potsdamer Platz construction worker, it's the fashion-minded facade of the youth that really tells the story of what's going on.

Although one doesn't see much retro fashion in Germany, there are certain exceptions, which hold a significant, albeit aging and dwindling portion of the population. The largest of these is the goth/dark wave [so it's called] scene. This is somewhat comparable to the bi-annual WXYC 80's dance, but with the focus on Bauhaus, Sisters of Mercy, Depeche Mode, and the hundreds of unknown [to me] German synth bands of the previous decade. They could easily be mistaken for the gutter-punks because of the piercings and sad looks, but as a rule, the punk rockers seem to opt for green hair, while the goth kids stick to the classic black. The street punks are greater in number and grubbier in attire, but

musically, they seem almost silent. They pack the stairs and benches of the busiest sidewalks and courtyards by day drinking beer and asking, "Haben Sie 'n bi chen Kleingeld bitte?" The German punk life seems more (un)focused on absolute poverty and strange hair than on anything else. Stranger still, the Deutschpunk is absolutely inseparable from her/his dog, even more so than the average German. Although most German jokes are unbelievably obtuse and unfunny, one in particular sticks out in relation to this: Father's going away on a business trip for the weekend and the family goes to the train station to see him off. Just before he boards the train, he makes his good-byes. First he hugs his wife, second he hugs his kid, and then he kisses the dog good-bye.

So why is the German tie with man's-best-friend even tighter in the punk community? I've heard several theories behind the phenomenon, but only one seems remotely close to the truth. Germany has a pretty fair social welfare program, and as the story goes, the government pays [street] people for taking care of their pets as if they were dependents. I've never gotten a totally straight answer on this, but it seems to be the truth, given that most of the dogs seem better fed than their keepers.

The last, least [in number], and maybe coolest of the death-by-age groups is the metal scene. These are the guys and gals that save



up for the Helloween / Man-o-war / Motorhead reunion tours which cross Europe every summer. They're the hard core leather-skinned mullet-heads who give you dirty looks just for being a little cleaner. Mullet capital of the world: East-Germany.

Like anywhere, the avant-garde / free-jazz / noise scene is the exact inverse of a superbowl party; you have a few guys who, instead of sitting around eating a lot, and making noise without much company of women, stand around skinny and unkempt listening to noise without much company of women. Still, it's impressive to see a whole city postered up for caspar brotzmann's tour, as if Alan Jackson were coming to town.



The historically strange and technical. Here, where Mouse on Mars can sell out a huge hall alone, and the 10th anniversary Warp tour is expected to sell out Berlin arena. Two-Way-Pull might have made it in Berlin, but they'd have had to compete with the Staalplaat store already here [which keeps about half as many records in stock]. It's here where the most interesting mix occurs; where you shop to the sounds of Farmers Manual and Nurse with Wound, and minimalism meets noise masochism in a battle over the latest A-musik and Raster releases. In a place where electronic music's quite past trend and long in the thrown, the solo-bedroom producer / DJ is as common as the standard North American guitar-based noodle-unit. So while it holds true that most kids opt for silk-shirt blue-spiky-hair 4/4 acid-house clubs most nights, it's not uncommon to hear Funkstorung,

in any 'cool' store, and if you bring it up, be prepared for a staunch battle against any claims that they imitate Autechre. Despite its immense popularity, German hip-hop seems to have a serious image/acceptance crisis. Like anywhere, you can hear Puffy and Missy over and over, and then again, but there's a huge amount of native hip-hop as well, which is almost as popular [and often as bad] as its American counterpart. The problem: being down. In a very white, very middle class country, where dogs count as dependents and the real danger of the ghettos is the traffic, it's hard to pull off all the standard American hip-hop moves. The resulting scene seems to see itself coming off a little too Vanilla Ice -

overcompensating with puffiness of jackets and attitudes. The overall quality of graffiti actually surpasses America's, but when wall space has reached absolute saturation in most places, there's bound to be a few gems. The same holds true for the music as well though - with all the cheezy hits [last summer's big one was a horrible cover of the Beastie Boy's 'You Gotta Fight'], there are groups like Terranova, that really make a good name for German hip-hop.

But when the winter snow finally melts, and summer rolls around again, you can throw all the rules out the window, get naked, and dance down the street in saran wrap: it's time for Berlin's annual Love Parade. Central Europe's answer to Ibiza. Don't forget the body-paint and glow-sticks. I'll be the one in the sausage costume with ketsup/mustard water-guns.



Isaac Trogdon

Woody Sullender

in

Chicago



The exact year of the peak of punk is a floating number, maybe 1977, 1982, 1991, or sometime else. Recent commentary is that punk has finally succeeded in its initial task of annihilating corporate rock by destroying the credibility of rock and roll in general. In the past few years, "post-rock" bands such as Tortoise have become popular for borrowing from many genres of music (including jazz fusion wankery) and create one glossy package usually under the context of rock music.

But I realized one Saturday night at the Fireside Bowl, a bowling alley turned all ages punk club in Chicago, punk is still quite alive. This is not in the sense of simple Ramones derivative power chord rock, but in the sense of picking up various instruments (if one can play them in the traditional sense or not) and creating a new musical idiom for your specific culture. At least, this is how it all seemed to me when I saw a small ensemble led by cellist Fred Lonberg-Holm as well as the Flying Luttenbachers perform that night.

Fred Lonberg-Holm (Boxhead Ensemble, Lightbox Orchestra) crowded the stage with an ensemble that would normally be used for chamber music, with cellos, violins, string bass, etc. However, this also included a ramshackle drum set as well as all of the instruments were running through distorted

amplifiers. They presented a mighty wall of sound that could easily battle the Ramones' stacks of 100 watt Marshalls to the death. The compositions incorporated riffs and they sounded somewhere between uptempo Black Sabbath and Tchaikovsky but sounded nothing like either of these at the same time.

The Flying Luttenbachers were originally a side project of the late Hal Russell (NRG Ensemble) and have included members such as saxophonist Ken Vandermark and guitarist/trombonist Jeb Bishop (Vandermark 5, Angels of Epistemology), who both left the band in 1994. Currently a three piece (sax, bass, drums), the Luttenbachers' owe as much to John Coltrane as they do to death metal. Their fierce improvisations are driven by the percussion of Weasel Walter, whose drum kit and drum style seem to have been thrown together. The most simple definition of their sound would be punk improv jazz but its not punk nor jazz.

Weasel Walter writes in the liner notes to the 1998 rerelease of the Luttenbachers' "Destroy All Music", "By the way, fuck dues-paying, hierarchical, intellectual, effete 'Jazz'. I never cared for Jazz' any more than I cared for Punk Rock', Death Metal', No Wave" or any other lamebrained idiomatic straightjacket."

Shut up About Matthew Shipp and Thurston Moore and Sell Us Some Damn Tickets

Evan Muse and Michael Rodgers go to New York to see some Jazz

On a certain Friday night, two NYC DJ's decide that the only way to break the malaise is to drive several hundred miles to hear two men blow the fuck out of some saxophones--then drive back. It was a musical journey and an experiment in maintaining consciousness.

September 19, 1999.

"There's that goddamn planet again!"

Evan's cry was loud enough to wake me for a moment. I turned over and squinted at the sky, coolly lit by dawn.

"Evan," I said, "that's the moon, not a planet."

He made a few frustrated whines, accompanied by violent hand gestures pointing up through the windshield of the minivan. Clearly there was something I hadn't understood, but this mattered little as I fell, simultaneously, into the seat and asleep.

We arrived into Chapel Hill around 9:30 that Sunday morning. I remember thinking that 24 hours earlier we had not yet arrived in Manhattan. 33 hours ago we had only just passed Durham on our way north. And just an hour before that I was sitting in Evan's living room when he said to me, "So I picked up a copy of the New York Times today. Do you know who's playing at Tonic tomorrow night? Ken Vandermark and Mats Gustafsson, two powerful sax players. Ken Vandermark is from Chicago, most famously of the Vandermark 5. He recently received the MacArthur award, generally referred to as the "Genius Award," a 250,000 dollar grant to put toward his art. Mats Gustafsson has led many projects in the past ten years, with Ken and alone. He's got a sound so big he sometimes sounds like a tugboat, bellowing away and leading a whole mass of sound along with him. In short, this proved to be a great show.

"Do you want to go?" I asked. Evan froze for only a second. "You want to do it?" he responded, nodding his head.

It took twenty minutes to convince each other that we could actually do this. Any obligations for the weekend could be cancelled. Just after we had decided to go, Evan's roommate came down the stairs, dressed for a Friday night out. Evan told him we were going to New York, asked him if he wanted to go.

"Right now?"

"Yeah, we're leaving in about fifteen minutes."



"But I thought we were going to Henry's."

Bars could wait. A drink in Chapel Hill is an everyday option, but Mats & Ken were for one night at Tonic in New York. We threw whatever food, clothing, and tapes we could gather in ten minutes into the van, then stopped for some cash, products containing large amounts of caffeine, and we were on our way.

The sheer excitement of this trip, fueled also by caffeine and nicotine, made the travel time seem non-existent. It was not until the sun began to rise over Delaware that the number of hours since we left (and the many more since we last slept) became real. Just before the New Jersey Turnpike, I could feel my body slowing, my eyes locked in a dry stare on the road ahead. After taking a wrong turn, my crankiness peaked and Evan took over the driving.

We came in clear sight of Manhattan a little after nine o'clock. But it took over an hour to reach the Upper East Side. We had just enough energy to eat lunch before sleep became our only objective. My friend in New York was away in Connecticut, so we had to find a parking space and nap in the van: a monumental task in New York on a Saturday. And the launching of a parade on 5th Ave. did not help our situation. Our dementia induced by sleep-deprivation had peaked; Evan made a little step towards cracking each time we turned a corner and found the street blocked off by police. All we wanted was sleep, sleep and Mats, Mats & Ken, Ken and sleep,

but every effort was thwarted by fat Germans in lederhosen, waving from floats that passed posted notices reading "No Parking Saturday."

Finally the maze opened up and we headed north on Riverside Drive towards Harlem. Eventually we found a parking space in an ideal camping location: a block away from the subway, two blocks from a Starbucks with a bathroom. I took the back bench of the van; Evan took the floor. For three hours we slept as weekend visitors walked and the occasional bus passed, rocking the van and filling it with a cool breeze.

The intense desire to stretch my legs brought me to consciousness; that and the approaching time of our shows to see. We had added a stop at the Knitting Factory before going to Tonic. The Rachel's were playing, which on top of being a good show, was utter irony. On the way up, Evan joked about driving instead to his home in Lexington, Kentucky. I said that would only work if we saw the Rachel's, who are based in Louisville. It was fate, I'm sure. (Granted, our fate was helped by the fact that the CMJ festival was taking place that weekend. Practically every indie band was in New York. If we had joked about turning around and driving to Carrboro, we could just go see Sorry About Dresden on the Lower East Side. Nevertheless, fate rules the weary traveler.) We brushed our teeth using the remaining water he had in the car, visited the Starbucks bathroom, and headed for the Knit.

Though the Rachel's sound centers mainly on piano and string compositions, the group enjoys support from the indie rock scene, thanks to Jason Noble's membership in Rodan, and previous Rachel's recordings including members of Shellac and the Coctails. The first piece played was from their album Music For Egon Schiele, written for piano, viola, and cello. From there they moved into music from their latest album Selenography (Both albums on Quarterstick Records). It was a very gorgeous set, only interrupted by monitor troubles on stage. But this incident provided a candid glimpse of the band. To test the monitors, the sound man pumped some sort of early-eighties techno through the system. Rachel got up and danced on stage as Jason announced to the crowd, "Yes, ladies and gentlemen, the number one party band of 1999: the Rachel's!"

We had to leave the Rachel's early. The time had come to move on to our primary objective: the AALY Trio featuring Ken



Vandermark (Mats Gustafsson leads the Trio). We decided it would be faster to walk from the Knitting Factory to Tonic than wait for public transport; the many blocks flew by as both of us knew that they could be starting any minute. We arrived about five minutes into their set. I bought a beer and listened to Ken squeal and Mats bellow, excellently completed by Kjell Nordeson (drums and percussion) and Peter Janson (bass). Both horn players are amazing; Ken is a little smoother and Mats has more power. Mats bleats and gusts into his horn; sometimes he screams into it, creating a wonderful sound combined with the tone of the horn. A highlight of the set was their rendition of Albert Ayler's "Ghosts," a lengthy, spiritual piece in which each member of the group could show their stuff. Because of the amount of energy required to play their music, their set seemed shorter than normal. When finished, they were exhausted, but no one in the audience wanted to leave yet. The Trio obliged with one more, short piece; a somber tune to make us all calm down.

After the show we talked to Ken and told him that our drive from North Carolina was worth what he had just heard. We congratulated him on the MacArthur Award, and he gave us a copy of the new AALY Trio CD (on Wobbly Rail of Chapel Hill) and a CD from FJF, which includes, Ken, Mats, Steve Hunt, and Kent Kessler (on Okkadisk). We paused outside the club only long enough to catch a breath of polluted air, then it was time to get in the van and go home.

The drive home was an experiment in maintaining consciousness and coherence. Evan got us out of New York and onto the Turnpike, but then he could go no further. As I took the driver's seat, I warned him that in order to stay awake I would probably sing along to every song on my tapes. From his lack of response I figured this would not be a problem. Periodically, he would wake up and see me screaming along with the music, at peak volumes, emptying my wallet for the tollbooth attendants. A few miles past D.C. I shut down. Evan drove the rest of the way home, with Sunday morning churchgoers hitting the road and the moon still visible in the sky.



Check out these websites for more information:

Rachel's www.southern.com/southern/band/RACHL

AALY Trio wobbly.home.mindspring.com/

Mats Gustafsson & Ken Vandermark www.okkadisk.com

Ken Vandermark www.atavistic.com

cape town, south africa

wxyc dj reynolds richter reports

A definite American conception of what African music is exists - hand drumming and yelling - which is mostly tied to popular ignorance and primordialist visions of a dark continent. That's all bunk, of course, but it may surprise one to hear that South Africa is home to a huge electronica scene, a hip hop nation, it's own pop music heroes, and a thriving bootleg tape industry which disseminates music from all over the world. I'll lay it on you as I see it from my perch amongst a brood of self-devouring lunatics at the University of Cape Town.

It's impossible to generalize about the music scene in Cape Town. Do you mean the Cape Town that lives outside the city, holed up in comfy houses behind barbed wire fences, or the Cape Town that lives in corrugated metal shanties wherever there is some empty land? The circumstances of my presence (studying abroad) have plopped me down in a superwhite suburb outside of the city center. Hell, the school itself is built on Cecil Rhodes' personal estate. So doubtless my impressions are hopelessly skewed from my surroundings in this weird little European enclave.

In Cape Town, electronica reigns supreme. Mother, South Africa's nationwide party promotion network, sponsors parties all over the country. So do all the major cigarette manufacturers; the corporatization of the music world is no joke down here. Thus, we have Goldie presented by Camel, Armand van Helden brought to you by Benson & Hedges, and so on. This is positive in that it brings the money to attract big name djs, and it's also cool if you smoke because they give away mountains of free cigarettes at these events. Thousands of 'em, they have to hire people to give them away. Enough tar to pave your driveway twice.

But if you want to pick scabs, house music is the real winner down here. All the sophisticated hipsters, and the snotty kids that emulate their materialism, don a supertight ribbed t-shirt, some species of tight cargo pants, and a pair of platform hi-top utility sneakers to go clubbing. This makes it hard for them to move, however, so they dance by marching in place and gesticulating wildly. Drum and bass, jungle, trance, breakbeats, etc. have sizable followings as well, but the dominant club culture wants to be uplifted by house music. Cape Town's club scene is particularly incestuous, the same seven or eight djs play at all the clubs, only in different combinations.

Hip hop culture is definitely strong in Cape Town. I can't wipe my ass without seeing an effigy of Tupac Shakur. Also, they recently held the South African breakdancing championships in Cape Town, and the winners are going to compete in an international competition in Germany. Lots of clubs have a hip hop night, hell there's even a hip hop hostel for impressionable backpackers who think that just for once they might stay in a hostel that isn't full of creepy perverts.

There are only a handful of rock bands that play locally, those poor nerds must not have traded in their electric guitars for turntables in time. The only band I've seen publicized ("Just Jinger") looked like the Backstreet Boys after they looted the Billabong clothing section of a surf shop. I think they're trying to ride America's wave of bland alterno-pop onto South African shores. Other rock acts, like "Mango Groove" and "Ruby in the Dust" have names that are stupider than Chapel Hill's most boneheaded bar-rock mediocrity. I saw a flier for a punk band once, but they had an anarchy sign for the A and had cut and pasted "Fuck something or other" on it for the sheer shock value, so I somehow managed to stifle my curiosity.

"Kwaito," is kind of like the South African hip hop. It's like a minimalist house beat slowed down to half speed. Some non-Africans, especially the Europhile standard-bearers of house music homogeneity, dismiss it as a mere "African thing," an unfortunate trend that will soon disappear. You won't see the kids in the platform shoes and sparkle tank tops listening to kwaito in their BMW's. But then again, if things go like they have in the US with hip hop, suburban white kids will be loving some kwaito soon, if they haven't started already.

South Africa boasts lots of national pop stars that people still dig. Ladysmith Black Mambazo, who were backup singers for Miriam Makeba, are real big. Jazz trumpeter Hugh Masekela plays to packed audiences, as does pianist Abdullah Ibrahim. There are lots of South African gospel vocalists, who sing about Jesus over R&B-ish synthesizer tracks. My favorite South African pop act is "Lisa and the Big Dudes." They'll fuck you up if you talk shit.

I think one of the most telling things about the music scene in South Africa (and this is found all over Africa) is the way "average folks" listen to so many different kinds of music. The bootleg tape stands one finds near the bus

station is indicative of this trend. Tape vendors offer a bewildering selection of tapes; bewildering in the sense that one would ask oneself, "Why the hell are they selling that here?" On their stands, you can find 2pac next to Phil Collins next to Buju Banton next to Don Williams next to groups from various parts of Africa. So why do African people dig cornbread saps like Phil Collins and Don Williams? I have no explanation, just an intuition that many people aren't as judgmental here as they are in the US. And interestingly, one would be hard pressed to find a tape of "traditional African drumming" on the bootleg racks, none of the taxi drivers want to rock that shit on their sound system. They leave that for the tourists. The only drumming the tourists hear is from the stray unemployed people downtown, who play the djembe for handouts near the "authentic African tribal goods" shops because they have been marginalized by the global economy. Grrrrr....



record reviews

Loren MazzaCane Connors - In Twilight (Alien8)

There is no denying that minimalist guitar master Loren MazzaCane Connors has a true command of his instrument and the sounds he is able to produce. This CD consisting of two extended live tracks offers no surprises and is no exception to this premise. The first track, a solo performance from Olympia, Washington, finds Loren further perfecting his atmospheric electric swell, manipulating sound, echo, and anti-sound masterfully. He is joined at the Cooler in NYC by Matthew Heyner on bass (by suggestion of Thurston Moore) for a take that produced the second track, which is full of some rich interplay between the LMC and Heyner. WXYC would like to wish Mr. Connors a happy 50th birthday and we are looking forward to getting our hands on the 4CD box set "Unaccompanied Acoustic Guitar Improvisations Vol. 1-9" on Thurston's Ecstatic Yod label.

Ali Farka Toure - Radio Mali (Nonesuch)

The first of his parent's ten children to survive past infancy, Ali Ibrahim Toure was given the nick-name "Farka," in regular Malian tradition, which means "donkey" in tribute to his strength and survival. Let it be known - Ali Farka Toure is no ASS! Radio Mali is a collection of recordings from 1970-1978 done for the Malian

radio station where Toure was an engineer and a member of the orchestra. These songs find Toure (guitar and vocal) relaying the importance of preserving and honoring folk traditions (Biennial), honoring those that work hard (Machngoidi, Yer Mali Gakoyo), and even providing radio broadcasting to the most seemingly distant and rural areas (Radio Mali). The rich interplay between Toure's hypnotic vocals and amazing guitar work is simple, raw and very very effective.

Arto Lindsay - Prize (Righteous Babe)

If you've gotten to know him for his infusion of Brazilian dance pop with avant-noise experimentation, Arto Lindsay on his most recent album, Prize, brought to you by (how bizarre is this) Ani De Franco's label, Righteous Babe, will very much excite. Here Lindsay expands on his intimate Brazilian folk with lots of weird percussion and electronic effects...deceptively minimalists, while there is really much going on. Helped out by Melvin Gibbs, Dougie Bowne, Vinicious Cantuaria, and even Brian Eno, Lindsay delivers a product that bridges the gap between the hard-listening avant with soulful, power-driven rhythms and ballads that will have you dancing and scratching your head at the same time.

Thee Watzloves - Polka Jamboree De Luxe (Voodoo Rhythm)

Silky (accordion, vocals) and Guido (percussion, bkgd vocals) better known as Thee Watzloves bring you two sides of crazy and ultimately fun music from their LP Polka Jamboree De Luxe off of the Swiss-psychobilly label, Voodoo Rhythm. This music is not the accordion, drum music that you are used to and will definitely get you rockin' to the waltz-cajun two step in a matter of minutes. Just as goofy and fruity as you would like it, the entire album (save for one track) is recorded on a 4-track home recorder.

Record Reviews continued from previous page

Pullman - Turnstyles and Junkpiles (Thrill Jockey)

When the day finds you battered and reeling from demands and expectations, taking "time out" can be the most necessary thing. Pullman's album, "Turnstyles and Junkpiles," allows you to do just that. Okay, maybe that's being a little too "sentimental." But the soothing qualities of layered acoustic guitars played with the softness of the finger speak for themselves. Add a touch of banjo and a repetitive song structure which allows you to easily follow the instrumental idea of the music, and you have Pullman's musical approach. Chicago's instrumental "post rock" scene has never been so damn pleasant. Try it and loll in repose.

Hrvatski - Oiseaux 96-98 (Rechankreuxungsklanwerkzeuge)

Hrvatski, better known as Keith Whitman (or even Vat to his close friends) brings us his first release Oiseaux 96-98 on "that record label with a terribly long name). While Hrvatski is usually writing emotional and sometimes odd reviews for the Forced Exposure music catalogue, he was finally convinced to release the "practice" stuff that he had been doing in his spare time - the product of which is Oiseaux 96-98. Real static drum and bass without the bass and much in the Luke Vibert or Squarepusher vein of electronics, Hrvatski gets little more experimental and noisier with some crazy instrumentation. From powerful piano loops (Antler), mouth harps (Ghatham), to chirping birds (Cirrus Minor), Hrvatski creates some of the most magnetic layers that will make driving anywhere at 3am quite the experience.

Robert Normandeau - Figures (Empreintes Digitales)

Electro-acoustic musician/composer, and French-Canadian, Robert Normandeau provides the listening experience with a "cinema for the ear" with his Figures on Empreintes Digitales. Although the songs on this album are composed with specific sounds and subsequent meanings in mind, each of which are incomplete without the other, the musical product available to the listener is a multitimbral, montage of sounds that even in the absence of definite rhythm will make you continue to enjoy. Each of the four compositions on this release which range from soft and soothing to audibly incisive explores the subject of "the body" (hence the title) in some way, shape, or form. Also of note on Empreintes Digitales is Paul Dolden and Yves Daoust.

V/A The Cornshucker's Frolic Vol. 1 & 2 (Yazoo)

A collection of old time string band music, following Yazoo's ethic of thematic comping - here it's all good time party music for square dances and other harvest season frolics - while breaking down the reissuers' common tendency to segregate black and white material. The music here is real killer: lots of talking (dance halls, comedy and skits), lots of bowing, and lots of picking. How could you go wrong with Peg Leg Howell and Eddie Anthony's version of "Beaver Slide Rag" or Pigmeat Pete and Catjuice Charlie's elegant "On Our Turpentine Farm." This two disc collection houses forty-six of the best knee-slappin', foot-stompin', ho-down music that you've heard in a good long while.

Davka - Judith (Tzadik)

Has anybody ever gotten you so slobbering drunk that you became unconscious, at which point they decide to slice your head off and carry it around in a small bag? Well, whether or not it has, this is the story of the "great Jewish heroine" Judith and here plight over the evil Assyrian general Holofernes and the music on Davka's latest (but first Tzadik) release "Judith" just might provide a good soundtrack for this scenario. Here, the San Fran based violin, cello, and percussion trio bounces between their Sephardic and Ashkenazi traditions interlacing them with jazz, folk, and classical tendencies helping to make the entire album an enchanting experience. The dark string melodies and the power driven percussion sometimes make you wonder if Judith could be coming around the corner with a fifth of Beam and an ax, so watch it.

Bardo Pond - Set and Setting (Matador)

So it goes like this: if you've heard Bardo Pond once, you know the score. Loud and dirty, Long and drony, it's all about texture and duration. A whole lot of junkie blues changes and phrasing like Royal Trux but way more long winded. This kicks some shit in. Isobel Sollenberger sings her lines like she's been caked out with no sleep looking for some magic for long periods of time, while the guitarists lay it down with some hard edged psyched out yet somehow smooth rockin'. Although it feels like you're lagging around with wet jeans and muddy boots, the hard pounding drums will not leave you dragging too far behind. Good album for drug addicts, it will help you save some money because when you listen to this one you won't need a lift.

Stereolab - Cobra and Phases Group Play Voltage in the Milky Night (Elektra)

A new Stereolab CD really needs to be taken home and lived with awhile before one can arrive at a fair opinion, but you can't always do that (unless you buy one, of course), so it's fair to say that this one sounds like they always sound. The jocks here at the station seemed to like it, so you heard a lot of it. Maybe it's a little less swoony in terms of melody and drive, but that's okay. They can't play differently and, really, why should they? Good formulae are better than failed risks.

Kool Keith - Black Elvis / Lost in Space (Ruffhouse / Columbia)

No matter how many names this guy has, he's still a weirdo. Kool Keith, ex-ultramagnetic MC's and ex-Dr. Octagon, now only making solo records with a wacky, sci-fi, nerdy-pervy style. Elvis stuff is kinda played, as is the "lost in space" bit, but there is still some nice flow and a few tight rhymes. Get a hold of the album, even if it's just to have the liner notes and thank-you's which could stand as a project alone. This is a CD review, why am I writing it? Why?

A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO FINE CHEESES

by FU



Limburger: A very foul smelling cheese. Both the rind it is wrapped in and the cheese itself have distinct odors and tastes. In a good Limburger, the rind will taste much like sodden dirt and the soft, yellowish, moldering matter within (the cheese proper) will taste much like a tangy case of excessively musty crotch rot, unwashed for weeks. Eating Limburger, then, is much the equivalent of sucking on the testicle of homeless person. Why do we eat Limburger? There is a pleasure in ugliness and sensation, and Limburger gives the tongue a rich, unmistakable experience not easily forgotten. To eat Limburger is to live fully. A sampling of the world's delicacies will reveal many, from Haggis to the Durian fruit, which are in objective terms foul. Limburger belongs to this family. It is rumored to have been discovered by monks who forgot a wheel of Brie too long in their cellar; we may commend their courage in sampling the rotten mass and their foresight in passing it on to us.

Band Equivalent: Total

Gouda: A rich, buttery, cheese, Gouda is a staple of European tables, a stalwart, relatively cheap cheese which goes with most any palette and might be considered the Continental equivalent of Cheddar. Often cheerfully wrapped in a thin layer of red wax and a layer of moistened cheesecloth, a Gouda is both a safe and delicious addition to any quality table. The wax and the cheesecloth should both be removed before eating, but one may leave the cheesecloth on if one wishes to add a bitter aftertaste to this normally very smooth cheese. Equally good with bread or bratwurst, soup or salad, apples or artichokes, the best Gouda is solid yet soft, and adds a pleasing, creamy warmth to the dishes it is eaten with, complimenting but never overwhelming their flavor. Gouda may also come with orange or black wax, signifying, respectively, young and aged cheeses. You will find your Gouda disappearing more quickly than any other cheese on your board, and though it is also as quickly forgotten, its momentary pleasures are of an easy contentment.

Band Equivalent: Cardinal

Kirsch: An exceptionally subtle dessert cheese, Kirsch is best tasted alone on any non-coarse-grained white bread, in very large dollops. A purely white, semi-soft cheese, Kirsch is flavored with a slight yet strong flavor of cherries (whence the Germanic name). It is easy to mistake Kirsch as a dinner or recipe cheese due to its solid form and coloration, but this should never be done. Those who erroneously mix it with other victuals will be startled by its sweet and fruity taste, for once it is on your tongue, the essence of its cherry flavor is, though whisperingly understated, undeniable. There are few cheeses which offer such a distinct yet pleasant flavor, and none which so successfully incorporate fruit. It can be compared to a crisp, fine cherry vodka plus cream. A good cheese for cold nights.

Band Equivalent: Ladybug Transistor

Estrom: Often colloquially known as "stink cheese," Estrom is even more nasally pungent than Limburger, with a thick, dry odor of woody decay. However, Estrom is relatively mild on the tongue, whereas Limburger only gains its full power when masticated. Estrom is slightly grainy in the mouth, and provides a wonderful, slightly sulfurous, slightly smoky, robust topping to any bread, but is particularly good on salty breads or breads boiled in brine. Estrom should be thinly sliced, in order to take advantage of its airy texture with its many holes and pockets, and also in order not to overawe oneself with its flavor. Although some may consider a whiff of Estrom a delightful prelude to a rewarding repast, others find it malodorous, and it should be double or triple wrapped when refrigerated in order not to taint other foods, and one may not wish to keep it on the table during the entire meal, but rather only when being cut.

Band Equivalent: Ground Zero

Chevre: A goat cheese made of raw milk and often from animals reared on the hardest, most bitter and unyielding pasture, it should hardly be a surprise when this cheese results in a surprised pucker rather than pleasure on most first tastings. Goat cheeses are often referred to as having a "distinctive goaty flavor," but we may dispense with this polite euphemism: Chevre, like other goat cheese, tastes of goat's urine. The flavor is as present in the cheese produced by goats as it is in the odor of their matted pelts. Yet, as with Limburger, we should see its living flavor not as a disadvantage, but a culinary challenge. Spreadable and lumpy, a good Chevre is an excellent, extremely tangy spread for bread, especially when eating pasta dishes, and with bread may be substituted for a Greek salad for meals which require Élan but for which a chef wishes to provide an alternative to the clichéd Greek salad with Feta. Exceedingly variable, Chevres provide shifting subsidiary flavors of milk, cream, and vegetable matter which, in combination with the distinctive "goaty" assault, make this cheese a constantly pleasing puzzle. Do not buy American Chevre; the pasture here is insufficiently hardbitten.

Band Equivalent: Third Eye Foundation

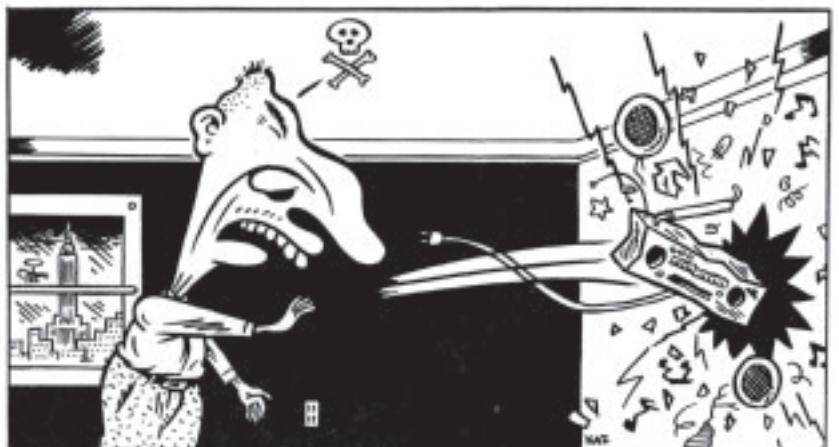
Gjetost: What is one to make of this hard, flaky, brown, blockish, sweet Norwegian cheese? Unlike any other European cheese, Gjetost is best eaten simply by itself, as if it were a block of calcified, mild caramel. Gjetost is sweet, yes, but not in the manner of a Kirsch. While Kirsch can be eaten only as a dessert, Gjetost is good any time of day, with

any of the three primary meals, or as a snack. It should, however, never be combined with any other food directly in the mouth (whatever the Norwegians may practice!). For Gjetost is still a cheese, not Nutella or some other vulgar sweetener, and consequently is at least equally as fermentedly sour as it is sweet. It has the milky suppleness of flavor and stubborn solid mold undertones which are the basis of any cheese, and consequently its sweetness is always a surprise, not an end in itself. How can sweetness come out of such an unwieldy, homely-looking lump? A mild but ceaseless pleasure, this cheese. A warning: once you start, you may end up eating vast quantities, without being sure why. Such is its stouthearted nature.

Band Equivalent: Smog

Cambazola: Synthetically factory produced, with a spray-on rather than naturally exuded rind of whitish mold, one might be tempted to dismiss this bastardization of Camembert and Gorgonzola as a cheap pseudo-gourmet fools-gold bauble for the ignorant and gauche nouveau-riche. Au contraire; the often runny, moist softness of the yellowed cheese causes an actual wet liquidity in the blue, yea, often green, veinings and pockets of mold in Cambazola, unmatched in any pressed, hard, or semi-soft blue cheese. Cambazola may be a new classic for the ages, allowing us to enjoy a brie-like mildness of flavor and texture without sacrificing the spicy twang of finer French bleu cheeses. Moreover, this is one bleu which is neither French (like the dated Roquefort) nor English (like the stodgy and relatively tasteless Stilton) but German, and it is both a testament to the entrepreneurial spirit of the Deutsche Volk and an expression of their practical nature that they should be the ones to produce the first great cheese of modern technological origin. Cambazola may become a cheese board staple next to Gouda, and a "gateway" cheese for the tasting of more adventurous varieties.

Band Equivalent: Carl Stone



Momentary Music

Ian M. Davis

Improvisational music has a firm foothold in Chapel Hill and the Triangle. Musicians, bands, collectives, organizations, and record labels find an eager audience and modest cost of living supportive to this music. What is improvisational music? Why is Chapel Hill one of the few places in this huge country that supports an active scene? When did this start being the case? I don't think I know the answer to these questions better than anyone else - often a pretense in music journalism - but I'm willing to lend my perspective and come up with as inclusive and reasonable a set of definitions as I can.

Although improv is often a source of annoyance and the butt of ridicule among non-practicing musicians and listeners, this is a strange and suspect attitude. Improvisation permeates every moment of our lives. Although some of us plan our days and work through meticulous schedules, an ability to improvise is called upon constantly in our meetings with people, our conversations - rarely planned and sometimes surprising - our responses to traffic and interruptions, our solution to work or home situations and dilemmas, our channel and web surfing, our dreams. Improvisation is how we live.

Improvisational music is just a special subset of human communications. It has phonemes, words, dialects, syntax, rhythms, timbres, melodies, harmonies, and structures, all of them based on possibilities realized through musical instruments and the improvising musicians. There are requisites to understanding these communications just as there are to driving a car or having a conversation or listening to Bach. These can be formal (e.g., "I wrote my thesis on John Cage") or informal (e.g., "I like what I'm hearing"), rational (e.g., "This music revolutionizes the existing blahblah...") or pre-rational (e.g., "I don't know, uh, its just cool") requisites, but it is important to attempt an understanding before dismissing improv. It is, after all, important to study a foreign language before thinking that everyone that speaks it is stupid.

This music is just like language in another very important way - it is constantly growing, evolving, teaching itself new ways to say what needs saying. Visitors to France, Japan, and other countries notice the English that has been tortured into new uses. All businesses and professions, youth and regional cultures, cultural and ethnic interests develop new rhythms and words to express their novel perspectives. Words are constantly being added, changed, and dropped. It is no different in improv. Comedy improv makes this point clearly. Improv comedy troupes like Second City or shows like "Who's Line Is It Anyway" use a single word or idea and build a

conversation or comedy sketch. Some of these are well done and some of them don't work at all. They are generally easier to understand because they are (1) in English, (2) performed by professional communicators, and (3) deal with topics that are well known to the audience. If any of these variables changed, the improv would become exotic, incomprehensible, not funny, or obscure. This is much of what happens as soon as musicians leave conventional melody and 4/4 meter behind in favor of exploration.

A comprehension of improvisational music is incomplete without understanding the concept of mannerisms, styles, cliches, or tropes in music (or language). When we speak in cliches, we may fall short of our meaning or purpose but accomplish the short-term goal of keeping the conversation going. Writers like Joyce, Goncharov, Proust, or Pynchon may use cliches, but they are far more interested in advancing our language, extrapolating from mannerisms, styles, tropes, cliches, finding new truths in our lives and our worlds. Improvisational music speaks in cliches, extrapolates from them, and (at its best) creates new phonemes, words, syntax that may be used as cliches by others. It is very difficult to create new information in a world that has been populated since the earliest recorded stories by enormous feats of imagination and creativity, but this is the task that improvisation sets itself - nothing less. In fact, the intimate interrelationship between music (often improvised) and the Vedic texts, or in the Homeric tales, further makes the point that these stories, while establishing new ways to communicate, did it with the accompaniment of music.

There are many kinds of improvisation and many of them are represented in the Triangle. A quick and incomplete list of genres, in order of historical precedent, might include origin (music related to the earliest human communication, self-definition, and ritual), early (Indian, Chinese, and Balinese music, for instance), "classical" and liturgical (much Renaissance and Baroque music was written and performed by consummate improvisers), "folk" (European and American bluegrass, country, and protest); and hybrid music (blues, jazz, art, or conceptual). Some of these are inherently improvisational, some highly structured with improvisation expected as part of the discourse. It falls almost entirely to African and European heritage jazz, art, and conceptual music to create the new musical linguistics that is the unique facet of improvisation.

The one last unifying factor that must link improvisational music together in its own realm is its existence in a unique moment of performance. True improvisation will never exist again. It is molded by a unique confluence of experiences, events, knowledge, and techniques that form something that is shaped once, like our lives.

Where does this place Triangle improvisational musicians? Firmly in the midst of world improvisational trends. Although there is an active jazz, world, bluegrass, folk, and origin music scene in the Triangle, there are also highly structured rules as to the kinds of improvisation that are accepted or even allowed in those genres. We will attempt to focus on music that disrupts genres.

In his various Ivanovich projects, Chuck Johnson takes elements of Indian, Chinese, Middle Eastern, American folk, and art music and redefines them through a variety of sound filters, prepared overtone and microtone series, odd plectra and bows, and stream of consciousness structural development. His music is well informed by John Cage, Fred Frith, Henry Kaiser, Derek Bailey, and other formative composers and performers. The results are personal reflections on his state of musical knowledge and raw fascination with sound. What has Chuck been listening to and what performances has he seen recently? What techniques have resulted from his last set of experiments and what can be conceived about where those experiments will lead next? This fascination has always blended over into his group projects, from the hard-edged pop of Spatula, through the unabashed rock improvisations of Gloatdragon, to his most recent forays into Eastern and folk music with Idyll Swords. Chuck also creates fleeting duo or trio works with Dave Brylawski, Troy Hicks, Grant Tennille, Amy Wilkinson, Marc Faris, and others.

Randy Pelosi is well known to Chapel Hill as the free music saxophonist on Franklin Street. He should also be known as a guitarist and, from his past, one of the most capable and unique Chapman Stick artists in the world. As his hours of reed practice have accumulated, so has a vision of music that exists only in the moment, only in a location, only with the players he has accumulated like the children of Hamelin. He first started playing in Chapel Hill in Good Neighbors in 1987. After this group broke up, he went through a never-ending reconfiguration of players including Hugh Robertson, Paul Murphy, David Jordan, Billy Miller, Chris Eubank, Rita Eliason, and names such as The Randy Pelosi Experience, F-Squill, Anubis Leisure Society Orchestra (under which name Good Neighbors/Anubis released well-received studio recordings). Another project, the Cryptic Guitar Ensemble (with Paul Price, Kirk Ross and Bryon Settle among many others) has resulted in large amounts of unreleased recordings. In 95/96, Randy, Matthew Levy, Mark Simonsen, Billy Miller, and a host of others formed Kismet and released "Curious Yellow" on Daisy Lane Records. It too was well received and Randy's recognition in improvisational circles grew. In 1998, producer Chris Stamey initiated work on Randy's latest CD "Plus Ultra" and incorporated the improvisations of Darren Jesse, Chris Phillips, Ed Butler, Alex Hong into a tapestry of sound that shifts from momentary balladry to spine crushing horror.

Another recent offshoot of Good Neighbors is Onomata, with Todd Barbee, Brian Preston, and this author (the other 2/3rds

of Good Neighbors with Randy). It has recently started playing its highly improvisational trans-genre music at the Silk Road, filling the quiet tea and coffee shop with ambient bass and drum ostinatos and endless streams of saxophone and synthesizer wind sounds. As there are many hours of studio improvisations recorded to date, this group can be counted on to release their own version of music for the moment at some point.

A beautiful improvisational and compositional experiment was conducted in '94 between Chris Stamey and Kirk Ross. They sort of moved in to Overdub Lane, improvised mightily for many days, added Ed Butler and others into the mix and came out with a much rearranged and structured set of compositions called, in short, "Robust Beauty." This group released of East Side Digital Records and resulted in a series of tours, but has since become inactive. Chris has created Umbrella Recordings that does what it can to support local improvisational music.

There is a group of local improvisational musicians whose roots are almost entirely planted in the 20th Century writing and compositions of Cage, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Iannis Xenakis, Pierre Henry, Morton Gould, Wendy Carlos, Terry Riley, Christian Fennesz, Milton Babbitt, Conrad Schnitzler, and Brian Eno. Their sometimes spare, sometimes enormous realm of sound is compelled by intellectual interests in Marshall McLuhan, Sigmund Freud, Andre Breton, Karl Marx, Jean-Luc Godard, Simone Signoret, Stan Brakhage, Allen Ginsburg, Noam Chomsky, and artists like Rauschenberg, Warhol, Pollock, Schwitters, Duchamp, Ray, and Arbus. There is a world of urban electronic influences too, from music developed for dance through improvisation with electronics, through getting up under the hood of synthesizers and effect boxes and tube amps and other gear scavenged from the world of rock. There is much television, film, video, radio, CDs, vinyl, tape, performance art, both a sense of their content but also a sense of their materials; the plastics, wires, metals, particles, and waves that form all of the stuff of which their music is made. It is a confluent form of improvisation that has more at its disposal than other art music and makes something of it all.

Where does this place Triangle improvisational musicians?

Among local practitioners, the Wifflefist Collective has been compiling materials and producing shows, sometimes thematic, sometimes music, sometimes provocative, sometimes just dance, for about seven years. Skip Elsheimer's AV Geeks shows, formed after a fortuitous bid on instructional films, uses these banal sources to re-contextualize the language of their time and obsessions. Silica Gel and Friend Side Monkey created electronic dance tracks that however programmed they needed to be, still allowed for significant shifts in sound, and were, fundamentally, improvisational in their construction. Bicentennial Quarters I improvised and used this raw material in addition to excerpts from many audio and video sources as the construction paper of tracks on several local compilations. David Jordan, a Polycarp member, continues his interest in improvisational

forms in Glockenspiel and Micro-East Collective.

In recent years, Chapel Hill has had two Transmissions Festivals that have featured local and international composers and performers that take a wide variety of electronic sound as their source material and create whatever they desire. Primary among these are Zuerichten, FM:Expanse (Keenan McDonald and Marc Faris), Comveh (Keenan and Casey Locke), V TRE (Keenan and Woody Sullender) members of which have arranged the festivals and ensured a large audience of appreciative ears. Zuerichten's set during the May '99 festival was, to these ears and eyes, a very exciting blend of audiovisual information - loud, intense, constantly evolving, and intellectually satisfying. There was no personal element (in this context, an excellent thing), only massively dense sound that crept from one moirÉ pattern, one fractal world, one tunneling electron photomicrograph to the next. Certainly, there was much more improvisational music at Trans002, but it is beyond the scope of this article to review it all. An excellent introduction to this important scene is found on the compilation CD "Zaum" on Dead CEO Records (available through <www.redeyeusa.com>).

Another improvisational unit has appeared in the last year and takes as its basis the structured improvisations of John Cage, Morton Feldman, John Zorn, and other aleatoric (chance-based) and game theory composers of latter 20th Century art and conceptual music. Micro-East Collective (MEC), based on the Mills College (Oakland, CA) Micro Collective debuted its large acoustic ensemble sound at Trans002, along with many of the more electronically oriented composer/performers. Its compositions come primarily from its membership, its sound attempts to avoid the mannerisms of rock and jazz but, like so many other improvisational groups, pulls inevitably from the huge dictionary of sounds pioneered this century by academic and iconoclastic composers. It will be a long time before MEC finds its way clear of these tropes, but it is intent on searching nonetheless. Micro-East Collective has just released its first CD, "062099" on Umbrella Recordings.

A new player and resource move to the Triangle about a year ago. Dr. Michael Pelz-Sherman studied improvisational structures under George Lewis, influential composer and trombonist at UC-San Diego. His dissertation, available to almost anyone who wants to borrow a copy, reviews the recorded and published "software" of improvisation and attempts assignment of interactive structure, a fascinating concept however post facto it may be in reality. He is a keys player and composer with a growing level of world recognition having been commissioned by several festivals for his works. Although Michael hasn't played out a lot in this area, he and his growing family are here for a while and he is a resource that deserves our attention.

Any discussion of Triangle improvisational musical would be incomplete without mention of the role the ArtsCenter and the Alliance for Improvised Music (AIM) have played over the years. To go back, Good Neighbors debuted in a two-fisted blart-fest at the Carr Mill Mall version of the ArtsCenter. Shortly afterward, Al Stevenson (who used to run Sweet

Emma Records in Durham and had a phenomenal radio presence on WXDU) got Jane Reinecke at the ArtsCenter to have a Good Neighbors gig. That actually led to two more, but that's not even the best thing about the ArtsCenter, particularly when Jane ran the jazz program. Some completely amazing improvised music came through under her vision. The Ethnic Heritage Ensemble (Kahil El'Zabar's precursor to the Ritual Trio), Oregon (with Trilok Gurtu, perhaps the most well-rounded percussionist on the planet), Tony Williams, New York String Trio, Lester Bowie Organ Fantasy, Don Byron (Smitty Smith, Bill Frissel, Jan Garbarek, Dave Holland Quartet (with M-Base Steve Coleman AND Smitty Smith!)), Sam Rivers, the under-appreciated Steve Turre Sanctified Shells group, so much more! Yes, these groups all steer closer to the jazz or world music tropes, but they were AMAZING shows held in the middle of North Carolina!

The spirit of the Jane Reinecke ArtsCenter is sustained through the services of Walter Davis, leader of AIM. The list of shows that AIM has brought is best captured on their website <baobabcomputing.com/aim/> but this again is something that makes this area a phenomenal place for music that insists on challenging us.

Much improvisational music is represented on the web these days. Amazing sites are maintained by Beanbender's in Berkeley and BIMHUIS in Amsterdam (this site features bios and discographies for many of Europe's best improvisers, among other charms). Other sites for finding out about improvisational music will be maintained and added to the Micro East Collective website: <www.umbrellarecordings.com/micro-east/links.html>.

It would be wrong to leave the topic and not give enormous credit to the indie pop scene in Chapel Hill and the Triangle. This scene has thrived through the eighties and nineties by setting aside convention and improvising its way into structures, sometimes with mundane and sometimes with extraordinary results. It may be what makes this music scene one of the most vibrant in the world. It is certainly fueled by its radio stations (WXYC and WXDU) and the constant turnover in college students, graduates, and drop-outs who do whatever they can to create a set of songs and play them at the Cat's Cradle or Local 506 or Go! Many bands fade without a trace. Others leave an influence on their peers and no recorded legacy, but it is the intent of these bands and of their improvising colleagues in the scene to change what we hear down to the essential vibrations and phonemes, syntax and structures. It is part of what makes this a great place to live and play. It makes the living improvisation of Chapel Hill evolve a new language each day and makes the life we create for ourselves from the music we play particularly worth the effort.



TRIP HOP

MICHAEL J. WEST

There are few genres in popular music that are so defined that they can be traced to a single source. But in summer of 1991, a sextet from Bristol had the vision to blend a variety of musics, already quite closely related—dub, hip-hop, soul, jazz and pop—into a left-field, experimental landscape. In the 1990s, an era that has produced more refinement of musical ideas than it has innovation, Massive Attack's *Blue Lines* album stands starkly out as one of the most cutting-edge, original works of its time. It was the advent, of course, of trip-hop. A musical genre so easily defined as to be able to simply point to the work of one act, albeit so undefinable as to invite the most cutting-edge artists in jazz, pop, hip-hop and soul to climb aboard.

Trip-hop reached its flowering moment in 1994. The one-band, one-sound approach of trip-hop had multiplied itself threefold, with three staple acts each pulling the music in a new direction. Massive Attack would retain a general feel for dance rhythms and arrangements beneath their hallmark originality: their next two albums, *Protection* (1994) and *Mezzanine* (1998) would add more and more levels of electronica and dub to the point that Mad Professor, the dub prodigy, would remix their entire *Protection* album within a year of its release. Tricky, an original member of Massive Attack who left to produce music on his own terms, became the avant-garde explorer in trip-hop. His first album, *Maxinquaye*, betrayed a rootedness in hardcore hip-hop music, but also explored the relationship between those roots and dark, textured ambient sounds. And Portishead, from the same part of England as Massive Attack, would lead the forays into pop music. Indeed, Portishead's first album, 1994's *Dummy*, was the key moment in establishing the trip-hop sound with mainstream audiences. Their approach could sound alternately like cool jazz, acid house, cabaret songs, and film score. It was such that the genre began to expand and absorb itself into nearly every genre that touched it.

Today, after only eight years of trip-hop history, the musical form has a veritable family tree of sounds. Tricky himself has had a hand in an enormous quantity of them. His 1997 *Pre-Millennium Tension* was a dark, gritty masterpiece that showcased funk, jungle, ambient, and unnamed experimental sounds as well as the hip-hop he had been working with. He turned another corner the following year with *Angels with Dirty Faces*, an album that at first sounds a great deal like its predecessor, but upon closer examination reveals the intricate free-forms of avant-garde jazz. And this fall, *Juxtapose* slipped its way into yet more new directions. Though Tricky shares the billing with hip-hop turntablists, the album reveals a strong basis in ragga, alternative rock, and even, in odd patches, psychedelic music. Such a diverse performer is a hard act to follow; perhaps Tricky's own avowed hatred of the term "trip-hop" brings in followers who would otherwise be reluctant to limit themselves to the category. A variety of deejays, in fact, from DJ Spooky and DJ Shadow to Kruder & Dorfmeister have begun to credit Tricky and sought him out to work with them. He was, in fact,

Madonna's first choice for producer on her acclaimed *Ray of Light* album.

Portishead's airy, hypnotic expansions of pop are on the other side of the spectrum, but are no less influential. Whereas the bulk of *Dummy* was made up of sampling, Portishead spent the following year composing and recording their own music, only to use it as sampling material for their self-titled second album in 1997. They followed this up with a live album: though the very idea is a little questionable, Portishead's approach was staggering. They performed for one night only at New York City's Roseland Ballroom (it was a black-tie affair, with dinner and wine served before the performance) with a 35-piece orchestra. The result was as haunting as ever, with an ambitious and lush accoutrement to go along. The album, *PNYC*, has been their biggest seller to date. Despite the fact—or maybe because of the fact—that their work is the lightest and most accessible in the trip-hop genre, Portishead have amassed an impressive following in their fellow musicians. Morcheeba has hopped onto their bandwagon, claiming that Portishead have changed their perspective entirely on what music could be. The Sneaker Pimps, too, have copped Portishead's trancelike feel, adding to it an edge very close to that of Massive Attack. Perhaps most famously and significantly, however, Beth Orton made a splash in the trip-hop and pop world this year. Orton's singular vision is founded on the rhythms and beauty of trip-hop, but fuses it with the English folk sounds with which she grew up. The music she has called "roots & rhythm" has crept stealthily into the pop universe, giving hip-hop a stronger voice in the mainstream while at the same time revitalizing and innovating it.

Of these so-called "Big Three" in the trip-hop world, Massive Attack's presence is the most obvious. Interestingly, they have redefined themselves the least of all the aforementioned acts, preferring instead to refine their club-rooted music and let it evolve with the sensibilities of its dance-music foundation. As far as recruiting disciples, however, Massive Attack lives up to its name. Jamiroquai, Skylab, the Chemical Brothers, Coldcut, and Fatboy Slim are only a few of the bands who pledge allegiance to *Blue Lines*. Many of these names—notably Jamiroquai—have also established themselves as soul, acid jazz, and even alternative voices. The Chemical Brothers have established a name as producers, while United Future Organization seems determined to bring a smooth new jazz zeal to trip-hop. And, of all people to take a cue from trip-hop, the Beastie Boys openly pay homage to Massive Attack with the sound of their 1998 album, *Hello Nasty*. Is this the beginning of punk-thrash-hip-hop?

The question is a good one, but for now we can't answer it. The most exciting and intriguing thing about trip-hop's kaleidoscopic expansion, is the unpredictability of what its scope might be tomorrow.

Stuff you can buy from WXYC

We have t-shirts and bumper stickers for sale; we're all out of buttons and demolisten tapes, sorry. You can also purchase from us the Transmissions 001 Festival CD, recorded in the summer of 1998 with local artists Conjunto Ivanovich, Marc Faris and Chuck Johnson, as well as Pelt, Azusa Plane, Tono-Bungay, the Gold Sparkle Band and Storm and Stress. CDs are \$11 postpaid; proceeds benefit WXYC and Transmissions. For any of these items, send cash or check payable to WXYC to: Box 51 Carolina Union, Chapel Hill, NC 27510. You can also make a **tax-deductible donation** to WXYC through the Univeristy at <<http://www.dev.unc.edu/development/contents/makegift.htm>>, or call (919) 962-1020. **Be sure to specify that your donation is to benefit WXYC!** Please contact us for international shipping rates.

new t-shirts: \$12 postpaid



bumper stickers (alphabet design): \$1 postpaid, or free with a t-shirt

classic t-shirts: \$12 postpaid



SUBMITTING PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS TO WXYC

WXYC airs a number of Public Service Announcements throughout each broadcast day and invites local groups and organizations to send us notice of upcoming events or services offered, ideally those of a non-profit nature. We seek a diverse mix of announcements and, even though we give preference to events and services sponsored by (or appealing to) UNC students, at least half of our PSAs are typically not University-related.

We also greatly favor things of local origin and/or local interest and give priority to groups who do not have easy media access nor large promotional budgets. If your group's event is arts-related, political, religious, academic, social service-related, designed to raise funds, controversial, mundane, weird/offbeat, or whatever, please consider sending notice of it to WXYC.

When sending your announcement to us, please include the following information:

- + name of organization
- + brief description of event or service
- + date, time and duration of event/service
- + location
- + phone number (for listeners to call for information)
- + if you email your PSA to us, please do not send Microsoft Word documents; plain text only!

Announcements should be sent at least two weeks in advance (three weeks if sent by regular mail).

Email: wxyz@email.unc.edu

Web: www.wxyz.org

Regular Mail: **Box 51 Carolina Union CB#5210 Chapel Hill, NC 27599**

WXYC Program Guide

This schedule describes each of our special programs. WXYC's standard programming can be heard the other 148 hours in the week - what we used to call "popular music of the 20th century." Regular programming is a mix of new releases from playbox and a DJs individual selections, which could be anything!

Three nights a week, WXYC presents **The Inside Track** (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 9:00pm), a new release played in its entirety. Inside Tracks are usually from 40 to 60 minutes in length and are selected from WXYC's current playlist so that listeners can hear some of the best new releases in full, set apart from WXYC's regular music mix.

Thursday Night Feature (Thursday, 9pm - midnight) offers our DJs a chance to explore a particular musical topic in depth. Thursday Night Features have focused on artists (Magnetic Fields, Coil, Beck), themes (short songs, listening favorites of an undersexed suburban male, songs with organs), regions (New Zealand, the British Empire), genres (early hip-hop, ambient, 'alternative country'), and much more.

One of WXYC's longest-running specialty shows, **Orange County Special** (Sunday, 10am - 1pm) features a wide variety of traditional and neo-traditional music from around the world. On any given Sunday morning, you can hear everything from bluegrass, blues, and zydeco to Celtic, Latino, and Eastern sufi music. The Orange County Special is also a great place to turn if you're looking for information about traditional music happenings in the Triangle. If you're lucky, you might even win some free tickets. Send your requests and announcements, comments and questions to orancosp@unc.edu.

The Southern Folklife Collection, housed in UNC's Wilson Library, contains a huge repository of southern vernacular music-- particularly country, blues and folk-- in every conceivable format from 78s to 8-tracks. **The Southern Folklife Collection Radio Program** (I know, we need a

catchier name. Any ideas welcome!) airs Sunday afternoons from 1-2pm, making available recordings from this invaluable archive, most of which are otherwise inaccessible, whether out-of-print commercial releases or the hours upon hours of tape folklorists have captured in the field.

DJs, with the assistance of student researchers at the Collection, assemble an hour's worth of material around a theme (often a region, an instrument, or a recurring lyric) or a particular artist. Although we attempt to give some background information, most of the time is spent deep within the music itself. Recent programs have featured the Victor recordings of Gastonia millworker/musician Dave McCarn, Duke's African-American harmony group The Four Interns recorded at a party at Paul Green's house in the mid-1950's, excerpts from the annual Hollerin' Contest at Spivey's Corner, and a memorial program for Heywood County's slain banjoist Carroll Best. Possible upcoming shows include "Joe Bussard and the Fonotone Label", "Capitol's Unsung Country King Roy Hogsed", "Boogie Woogie Piano Masters," and "The Descriptive Novelty: Chasing the Fox Chase."

Classic Inside Track (Sunday, 2pm - 3pm) devotes a full hour to the uninterrupted playing of a seminal, great, and/or influential album of yesteryear. Chosen by individual DJs, past Classic Inside Tracks include Dinosaur - "You're Living All Over Me", Charles Mingus - "Mingus Ah Um", Kraftwerk - "Trans-Europe Express", and the Velvet Underground - "The Velvet Underground and Nico".

Broken Music (Sunday, 3pm - 4pm) is an hour devoted to longer, more "difficult" pieces of music that are typically harder to feature during regular programming. If you enjoy avant-classical pieces by John Cage or Harry Partch, deconstructionist noise by F.M. Einheit and Caspar Brotzmann, or rhythm drone loops from the Theatre of Eternal Music, then these two hours might be cracked up for you.

Radio Nation (Sunday, 4pm - 5pm) is a news show

produced by the same folks who put together The Nation magazine. It often features interviews with writers from The Nation - Maxine Waters, Tom Frank, Doug Henwood, Alexander Cockburn, and many others. Hosted by Marc Cooper.

Northern Hemisphere Live is weekly call-in talk show. It airs every Sunday from 5-7 pm. Topics covered in the past cover a wide range of political, social and cultural issues, including abortion, the American Dance Festival, Freemasonry, bombing Iraq, legalization of marijuana, domestic violence, sexual assault, the Transmissions (music) festival, Fiesta Del Pueblo, Antonin Scalia and the U.S. Constitution, student gov't elections, homelessness in Chapel Hill, paganism and witchcraft, the housekeepers' fight for a union, migrant farmworkers, sweatshops, and countless others. Sometimes the show consists of interviews with "experts" on certain topics - for instance, professors, community activists, lawyers, social workers, student leaders, religious figures, doctors, union organizers, and so forth.

Sometimes, a few NHL staffers just talk with each other about the topic or topics of the day. Sometimes, one or two or three folks do what is called a "free form" show, where they discuss whatever is on their minds, some of it pre-planned, some spontaneous. The phone lines are always open, and we usually get around 3-4 calls an hour, but at times we get many more, and at times we don't get any.

Students do not compose the bulk of our listening audience, but we want to increase student listenership. Publicity is a struggle for us, and anyone willing to put some time and energy into that would be most welcome on our staff. ANYONE is eligible to try out for the show - you don't have to be a wxyc DJ or have any experience in radio or journalism or public speaking, though it helps if you do. As long as you are somewhat informed about current events and are willing to stick to commitments you make, we would probably hire you.

The time commitment can be very little or very much; it's up to you. After observing a show or two and then co-hosting with an experienced staffer, it is up to you to create shows. You pick topics (getting approval from the group), find relevant guests, do some research, and so the show. You ask staffers for help when you need it, but everyone is pretty busy, so there's a lot of self-motivation necessary.

The shows are pretty casual and conversational, but we still take the concepts of accuracy and fairness somewhat seriously. NHL has long been accused of a left-wing bias, but we make no attempt to hire liberals or scare away conservatives, and some good debates always heat up the show.

So, if you are politically active, interested in art or music, or just like expressing yourself, and you have some time to spend learning about current events or painting posters or hanging banners for publicity, consider joining NHL. Or, at least tune in on Sundays, where you'll have the opportunity to call us up, put your voice on the radio, and say what's on your mind.

Questions? Call Daniel or Dana at 969-9733. Or email: dbrezeno@email.unc.edu

WXYC's local music show is **Backyard Bar-B-Q** (Sunday, 7pm - 8pm), a veritable feast of North Carolina music culled from the fresh produce of CDs and singles from Chapel Hill's finest, as well as older records from NC bands of the past. The Backyard Bar-B-Q also features new local demo tapes, a list of the week's local band concert dates, and the occasional bits of local music gossip.

The New Music Show (Sunday, 8pm - 9pm) puts a spotlight on brand new releases of all types and genres. Often the records featured on this show have just made it into our hands, so if you're looking for a head-start glimpse of what the world's artists and record labels are up to, then look (and listen) here.

Sportsrap (Sunday, 9pm to 10pm) is WXYC's weekly call-in talk show devoted entirely to sports. People 'round here like sports a lot.

New Science Experience (Sunday, 10pm - midnight) highlights urban dance culture and the art of live mixing. The music featured on NSE includes hip hop, house, techno, ambient, and various genres from the underground dance scene. The show also hosts guest DJs who spin live in the studio.

WXYC 89.3fm
Box 51 Carolina Union
Chapel Hill, NC 27599



The winners of the WXYC-WXDU kickball match.