

New Marley issues serve his memory

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by Eric Alper

I guess the party was pretty boring. Oh, there were your average sin party flavours in all shapes, sizes and colours. Over the speakers came an old AC/DC song, but it abruptly halted at the chorus. A series of "AAAAAWWWWW"s followed. The next voice was Him. And Him was dead. And I was in shock.

It's a strange obsessiveness in society that picks the bones of its most illustrious dead. Jimi Hendrix, for one, has had almost 50 hours of his music released after his death, compared to about six hours when he was here.

The "He" talkin' on my stereo was Bob Marley. His influence and his audience have not waned since his death in 1981. The release of two records proves this.

Reggae Sunsplash '81: A Tribute to Bob Marley captures reggae

MUSIC

Bob Marley
Reggae Sunsplash
Elektra Records
Talkin' Blues
A & M Records

music's best artists performing a concert memorial to the master. Rita Marley and I-Three's, Marley's own back-up vocalists, take centre stage for "Belly Full" aka "Them Bellyfull (But We Hungry)." Black Uhuru's status as masters of riddim and rhetoric is reaffirmed by "Plastic Smile" and "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner."

Third World brings their instrumental and harmonic force to "1865 (96 Degrees In the Shade)" and "Rock the World." Sheila Hylton smoulders on "The Bed's Too Big Without You," familiar to many due to The Police's cover. Gregory Isaacs, Steel Pulse and Ziggy Marley and The Melody

Makers round off the "I wish I was there" concert.

Talkin' Blues combines a 1973 live-in-the-studio airshot, a couple of outtakes from the Natty Dread sessions and a storming '75 Lyceum performance of "I Shot the Sheriff," which outstrips the one on the *Live!* album. The songs are padded by extracts from a Jamaican radio interview.

It's only "almost the classic lineup" because cracks had already begun to appear in the original mighty band and Neville "Bunny Wailer" Livingstone had elected to stay home in Jamaica. The Wailer's old buddy and former vocal coach Joe Higgs manned percussion and sang alongside Peter Tosh and Marley himself; otherwise, all the ingredients were right in place. Broadcast live from The Record Plant in Los Angeles before a small but vocal audience, this is chamber reggae of simultaneous pinpoint delicacy and intensity.



Posthumous records don't often make a musician look good. But, Bob Marley's memory is well served by two recent releases: *Reggae Sunsplash '81: A Tribute to Bob Marley*, and *Talkin' Blues*.

Concert Calendar

Teenage Fanclub. Want guitar influences? How about Jesus and Mary Chain, Dinosaur, Jr. and Neil Young? The melodies are courtesy of The Beatles, Kinks and The Beach Boys. But TF make it sound all their own. Need more reasons to see them? How about *Spin Magazine's* choice as "...The best album by 'white people' in a long while." The same white guys are at The Opera House, Monday, February 24. Believe the hype, the band is here to stay. They'll be playing cuts from *Bandwagonesque*, their history-in-the-making album. Songs in past concerts included "Too Involved," "The Concept," "Sidewinder," "God Knows It's True," and Madonna's "Like A Virgin." Just go, thank me later.

When INXS played the CNE summers ago, opener **Ziggy Marley** almost blew them off the stage. It would have happened if there hadn't been

30,000 Michael Hutchence love-children in the audience at the time. Ziggy has an eerie resemblance to his father in the vocal department, but displays remarkable confidence in performing onstage. Dance the night away, feel good, and keep the music alive. He's at The Concert Hall, Tuesday, March 3, with the aptly-named **Eye & I**, who's mentioned in the new issue of *Entertainment Weekly's* Hot Faces section.

Ah, **Siouxsie**. Where did we go wrong? Toronto could be soooo good for you, if you just check out our late night bars and excellent transportation system. She's back for a second time in a year — she performed with her backing band, **The Banshees**, on the successful Lollapalooza Tour — to promote *Superstition*. On the new album, they pop it up with "Kiss Them For Me," visit Twin Peaks on "Softly" and reflect Van Halen on "Gotta Get Up." Siouxsie's voice has never

sounded better, sometimes hard as nails, sometimes high and shimmering.

The Wonderstuff opens, making this night an even better concert one won't want to miss. Their latest offering, *Never Loved Elvis*, is fun and flirtatious—one reviewer noted: "...If Peter Pan had an electric guitar, this is how he would have seduced Wendy." Show date is Tuesday, February 25, at The Concert Hall.

I Mother Earth's music has been called "Van Morrison meets Death," which didn't stop a certain record company from signing them. Ghostly originals are played with startling tightness, and covers such as The Beatles "Tomorrow Never Knows" and Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit" are played slower and darker than their originals. Their shows are simply astounding. Get there early as their last club dates were filled to capacity. The Opera House, Saturday, February 29.

Peter Frampton comes alive! Yes, he's back, but without **The Northern Pikes**, as earlier announced. For all of you who can't get enough of his double live album, or loved him playing guitar on **David Bowie's** Glass Spider tour, The Phoenix is the place to be Monday, March 16.

Many of the songs are well-known: "Get Up, Stand Up," "Slave Driver" and "Kinky Reggae," for example. The attraction of the album is the sound. Producer and Island Records President Chris Blackwell's engineering and careful digital mastering pays off big time.

Most important, the performances are outstanding. Virtually every line Marley and Tosh sing explodes out of the speakers. The interview segments are a different story. I could say that it will take a few listens to actually understand what Marley has to say, but, hey — if you've smoked as many drugs as he did, you wouldn't be in a

hurry to correct — or even complete — your slurring sentences, either.

Hearing Marley speak about his band, his music and his struggles is a unique opportunity for anyone pissed off over the lack of quality or originality of certain artists' reissues (come forward, fans of Buddy Holly and James Brown). Bob Marley, thank Him, doesn't fit into this category. Island Records continues to treat his back catalogue with admiration and respect.

With more reissues to be released this summer, Island will have to outdo themselves. They probably will. For the time being, this will wet our joints with delight.



The Wonderstuff, those unhappy, frowning people, open for Siouxsie and the Banshees at The Concert Hall on Tuesday, February 25.

New School Leaders' bright Future

By Colin P.

Leaders of the New School performed January 31 at the Concert Hall. The audience was hyped and received them well.

Although the sound quality from the mikes was poor, blurring their



Leaders of the New School: (from left) Dinco D., Busta Rhyme, Charlie Brown and Cut Monitor Milo. They put on an average show which was stolen by, of all people, Fu Schnickens.

CONCERT

Leaders of the New School
The Concert Hall
January 31

words, they still managed to get the crowd movin'. The Leaders performed about six songs off their debut album *A Future Without a Past* (available on Elektra Records).

On the whole, Leaders put on an average show which was stolen by the Fu Schnickens' live stage presence and out of the way style. For most people this was an introduction to the Fu Schnickens — without a doubt they'll be looking for more.

American Indie band Swervedriver has arrived

by Kathryn Bailey

Swervedriver has arrived among a heap of similar bands. Nirvana, Teenage Fan Club and Moose, among others, are strict followers of the American Indie scene, and revel in grunginess. They have been referred to collectively as "grunge rock," a step away from the previous wave of "shoegazers" and a further step away from "heavy metal."

Swervedriver emerges from this category with an air of sophistication. They are not a band to be taken lightly. Lumped together with all the near-adolescent noisemakers, it is apparent their music has meaning. At the very least, it has coherence.

Raise, Swervedriver's debut LP, has an obvious theme: cars and driving. Not only is this evident on songs like "Son of Mustang Ford" and "Pile Up," but even the band's name. The effect of murmuring lyrics over droning guitars adds to this fascination with driving.

In a New Musical Express interview, vocalist Adam revealed the fact that cars make guest appearances in

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Swervedriver
Raise
A & M Records

its way onto Canadian charts, is clearly inspirational, with the near-audible lyric, "been driving for days now," which may be suggestive of their career.

all their songs. "Being in transit... moving about... these are inspiring things." The perfect song "Rave Down," which has gradually worked

Out of the mass of grunge rock bands, Swervedriver did not create a giant wave like Nirvana and they take their work seriously. Their success is virtually assured.



Out of the mass of grunge rock bands which have grown, like fungus, on the music scene in the past couple of years, Swervedriver actually take their work seriously. Don't believe us? Check out their latest album, *Raise*, and decide for yourself.

Excilibur arts —
you have to ask?

