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SAN DIEGO

# ROUBADOOR

Alternative country, Americana, roots, folk, gospel, and bluegrass music news



March 2003

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# welcome mat



## MAILBOX

Dear Troubadour

Celebrating music and the people that make it is our slogan at Shadowlight Studios. The Troubadour does a great job at doing just that. Thanks for showcasing such a wealth of local talent. With love and music, Jamie and John Paul shadowlightstudios.com

Hi there!

First off, let me say thanks for all the kind words published in the *Troubadour* regarding some of my recordings (Darlin' and Rose, Bruce Dale Betz, Dead Rock West, etc.). I really appreciate it, and I know the artists do too.

I noticed several errors in Paul Abbott's column entitled "Recommended Listening" wherein he lists three recordings he feels best represent minimal mic-ing techniques, specifically with regard to Miles Davis' remarkable album *Kind of Blue*.

Abbott states that it is "a classic example of how to capture a small ensemble with just three mics — a stereo mic for the band and a spot mic for the soloist." This is totally incorrect.

In fact, this is a three-track recording, which at the time (early 1959) was the state of the art. The sessions for the album were recorded using seven microphones, one for each instrument and two for the drums. The mics used were primarily Telefunken U-49-tube mics (which were a brand new item then, and still amongst the sweetest sounding ever made) and subsequently mixed amongst the three tracks so that

instruments whose ranges would not collide were paired onto the different tracks: tenor sax and piano on track one, bass and trumpet on two, and alto sax and drums on the third. Although two mics were used on the drums (one on the snare and an overhead for the cymbals), they were not mixed in stereo. However, due to the fact that there was considerable "leakage" between all the mics and the large space in which they were recorded, the stereo mix of the resulting three tracks does have quite a bit of dimension. Also providing some added depth is subtle usage of an echo chamber on some of the solos, most apparently on Coltrane's. Due to the fact that stereo recordings were still inching their way into the marketplace and stereo mic-ing techniques were in their infancy at best, I doubt that a workable stereo mic was even in existence at that time.

Many of these facts were culled from the book *Kind of Blue: The Making of the Miles Davis Masterpiece* by Ashley Kahn, an excellent companion guide to this wonderful album.

With regard to the surround sound version, I recommend caution when listening to any album that was not recorded with that as its intended medium. Much like the Beatles' "simulated stereo" releases, some things are better left as is.

Thanks again for all you do, Sven-Erik Seaholm Artist/Producer Kitsch & Sync Production www.kaspro.com



*I appreciate Sven's cross-referencing. I was obviously misinformed about the exact techniques for the Kind of Blue session. However I still would consider a seven-mic/three-channel recording to be minimalist, especially by modern standards.*

*Regarding the technical feasibility of a stereo mic: I use the term "stereo mic" fairly generically to refer to either a true stereo mic or a pair of mono mics wired for stereo. However, for historical accuracy, Neumann introduced its SM2 in 1957.*

*Regarding the 5.1 surround sound version of Kind of Blue, no recording (to date) is a completely accurate dimensional representation of the music performed, and listeners should not be content to accept a recording's limitations "as is." I believe this surround-sound version to be a very engaging, viable experience that's worth experiencing.*

Paul Abbott



### MISSION

To promote, encourage, and provide an alternative voice for the great local music that is generally overlooked by the mass media; namely the genres of folk, country, roots, Americana, gospel, and bluegrass. To entertain, educate, and bring together players, writers, and lovers of these forms; to explore their foundations; and to expand the audience for these types of music.

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# Memoirs of a Local Teen Rock Star

by Lyle Duplessie

Jan Tonnesen, better known to some by his alter ego Troy Dante, is not just a premier guitar slinger but a storehouse of knowledge on San Diego's music heritage from the early '60s to the present. His ranch-style spread in La Mesa is a virtual treasure trove of classic vinyl, CDs, books, magazine, photographs, and every other type of artifact that documents the American contribution to folk, jazz, blues, and rock. But more importantly for this article, Tonnesen and his private archives provide a primary source record of our own local music scene for the past four decades. Furthermore, much of what is chronicled in the Tonnesen tomes was lived out by the man himself.

So much music history can be gleaned from Tonnesen that it was difficult to narrow the area of focus for this piece. But being a product of the '60s, I felt a natural gravitational pull toward that decade.

Tonnesen was born in Wisconsin and moved to San Diego with his family in 1959 when he was nine. Both his parents were music lovers, and as such he was surrounded by music. Being the first in the neighborhood

to see the benefits of stereo, his folks purchased a home unit. Moreover, unlike many parents of Tonnesen's vintage who disapproved of post-war musical trends and the effects it had on their children, Tonnesen's parents were hip. At a very early age they encouraged their son's forays into the root sounds of the time.

As a boy Tonnesen's musical tastes were eclectic. He recalls that the first two 45s he bought with his own money were Tennessee Ernie Ford's "Sixteen Tons" and Peggy Lee's "Fever." His vistas were again expanded when his babysitter introduced his innocent ears to Elvis.

By the time Tonnesen turned 13, he was exploring American folk music. With his parents' blessing he attended his first-ever concert at the Land of Oden, a coffeehouse music venue in La Mesa. The featured act for the evening was Hoyt Axton. So impressed was he

by Axton that Tonnesen set out to become a folk troubadour (as long as he could come home at night for a hot, home-cooked meal). Among his mementos is an autographed handbill from that memorable evening.

Soon after, his parents bought him a Goya nylon-stringed guitar. In short order he was playing and performing live at his father's company picnics. Also as a testimony to enlightened parenting, his folks encouraged his record

collecting and even purchased him membership in the Colombia Records Club, that gave him access to the works of Dylan, Dave Brubeck, Thelonious

Monk, and Carolyn Hester.

Around the time Tonnesen turned 15, folk music gave way to surf twang and with it came the need to go electric. He was soon playing lead in a surf band called the Avengers. When the British Invasion swept America in early 1964, the Avengers evolved into the Contrasts. Though just young junior high pups, the Contrasts became a very credible, polished working band.

Skinny Bolan, the Contrasts' rhythm guitarist, had a father who was an enthusiastic supporter of the boys. The father, Bill Bolan, scored them local gigs playing school dances, military enlisted men's clubs, and teenage night clubs like the Cinnamon Cinder in the old Commanche Bowl in La Mesa and Big Sur on El Cajon Blvd. and 55th St.

Tonnesen recalls that Mr. Bolan generally arranged gigs consisting of four one-hour sets. The band would get paid \$50, with each member taking home \$8.08 after taxes. Though it doesn't sound like much now, in those days making that kind of money playing guitar sure beat the heck out of

other teenage job options like mowing lawns or delivering newspapers.

Though each bandmate owned their own equipment, Mr. Bolan would arrange with local music stores to lend the Contrasts amps and other sound apparatus. Having a hot young combo to sport a music store's wares was a savvy business move during the heyday of neighborhood garage-rock rock bands. After all, between '64 and '67 most red-blooded American male teens had visions of becoming rock 'n' roll stars, and local music stores wanted a piece of that market.

During this time in the local spotlight, the Contrasts played on the Saturday afternoon television show, *TV 8 Dance Time* with host Bob Howar. They also appeared a few times on the Channel 8 morning show *Sun Up*, with host Bob Mills and channel 39's *KAAR à Go Go*. Mr. Bolan was so optimistic about the potential success of the band that he even footed the bill

for a Contrasts recording session at the legendary L.A. studio Goldstar Records and Capitol Records. Tonnesen has possession of that acetate recording with the band's original number, "She Didn't Care." This 1966 recording still sounds very cool, with Tonnesen infusing a Jeff Beck/Yardbirds influence into it. Alas, however, the song was never pressed and sold as a single.

Tonnesen, an avid Rolling Stones fan, had a few interesting stories from that era, revolving around the famed group. The first was in November 1964 when the Stones arrived to play at the Starlite Bowl in Balboa Park. He related how, after being the first to call the Radio KDEO hotline, he won a "press pass" and the opportunity to meet Mick and the boys. This was the Stones' first appearance in San Diego and of course there was much anticipation for the event. Tonnesen recounts that he got to Lindbergh Field in plenty of time and saw the plane land. Then the band members got off the plane—the time had finally come to meet the Rolling Stones! In seconds a car drove up and whisked the band away while "press pass" holders were left abandoned at the terminal gate.

So much for that touted "press conference."



José Sinatra and the Troy Dante Inferno, l to r: Gregory Page (aka Justin Case), Jan Tonnesen (Troy Dante), José Sinatra, Miff Laracy, and Owen Burke (aka Buddy Pastel Jr.)

Nevertheless, Tonnesen was there to see the Stones play that evening.

Another Rolling Stones story took place on the evening of May 17, 1965 in Golden Hall at the Community Concourse. This was the date of the Stones' second San Diego tour. Tonnesen and other

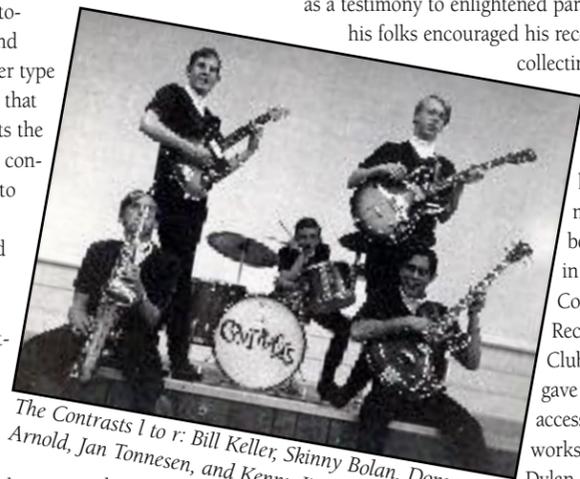
Contrasts band members, dressed in their matching rock 'n' roll band outfits, sat right on the front row. The show opened with the long-time local group, Sandy and the Accents followed by the Byrds, whose rendition of the Dylan classic, "Mr. Tambourine Man," was making its way up the charts. After playing their agreed-upon warm-

went to different high schools. Tonnesen was scheduled to go to Helix, while the other members went off to Crawford. Not much happened musically in high school except for a short-lived stint with a local psychedelic band called the Luv Children, whom some readers might remember playing at the Sunday afternoon Presidio Park Love-Ins around the spring of 1967. Tonnesen was also half of a folk duo specializing in Simon and Garfunkle covers and were regulars at the Candy Company on El Cajon Blvd.

In 1969 Tonnesen went off to Denmark for a short time to attend college. By the time he returned, he was a full-blown hippie. He pretty much stayed out of bands until 1984 when he hooked up with local icon and *Troubadour* columnist José Sinatra. For better or worse, and in both duo and band formats, he has maintained this unholy alliance as Sinatra's sizzling lead guitarist right up to the present. Unfortunately there is not enough room



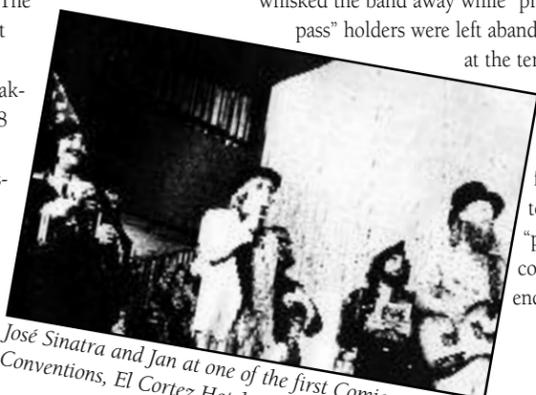
A teenage Jan Tonnesen at the First National Bank company picnic, 1964.



The Contrasts l to r: Bill Keller, Skinny Bolan, Donny Arnold, Jan Tonnesen, and Kenny Jiampa



The Contrasts with Bob Howar



José Sinatra and Jan at one of the first Comic Conventions, El Cortez Hotel, 1975



The Byrds, 1964

up set, the Byrds remained on stage. The Rolling Stones had been delayed in traffic and the Byrds were needed to take up the slack until they arrived. When the band ran out of Byrds songs, they took to playing Stones songs. According to Bill Wyman in his autobiography *Stone Alone*, when the Stones finally did arrive, they enjoyed seeing the Byrds playing Stones music so much that they remained in the wings and watched.

The Contrasts also went on to win their share of local "battle-of-the-bands" contests but despite their local notoriety, the group broke up when its members

here to document the adventures and misadventures of Jan Tonnesen's dark side: Troy Dante. That will have to wait for another time.



The infamous press pass



# Recordially, Lou Curtiss

The 30th Annual Adams Ave. Roots Festival is coming up April 26-27 right here on Adams Ave. in the Normal Heights area of San Diego. Since it's been called the Roots Festival these past 10 years (the first 20 were called the San Diego Folk Festival), I figure it's about time that roots music got a definition. Because I've booked the previous 29 and I'm booking this one, I guess that I should be the one to do that.

Well, we start with our own traditions, ranging from blues, jazz, country, gospel, cajun, tejaño, and zydeco, and add to that all the ethnic minorities that brought their music here. Now we add to that the fact that this is "roots" music, so what we look for is music the way it was and music that was influenced by that music. For instance, we book a bluegrass band for the old-timey content of their music. We book a singer-songwriter whose songs are influenced by old-time songs and whose way of playing them sounds old timey.

The interesting thing is that my concepts of "old time" and "roots" have changed in the years I've been doing this festival. There are people being booked today who play in a style I didn't consider old time 30 years ago. My tastes have changed and the music I consider old timey and worth preserving certainly have too. Add to that the fact that 30 years ago it was still possible to get artists who were performing music in the 1920s and '30s, but that is mostly past us now. We need to locate the survivors, but I'm seeing fewer and fewer of them every year. There is more old-time roots music available today on CD reissues, on the Internet, and on the radio.

You can find great old-time music on vintage 78s and LPs. Why do so many people write dismal songs with two-chord accompaniment and think they are accomplished performers? Lots of the coffee houses hire such people and they develop a following, and some give me a bad time because I don't hire them to play at the Roots Festival. However, just because some misguided people out there with little or no taste in

The best contemporary pop music draws on roots music for lyric content and hot licks. There's nothing wrong with that. To be a complete performer, you've got to have all these things. To be a unique performer, you've got to put them together with your own stuff, whether it be interpretive or original, to get what works right for you and for those who want to hire you. Listening to a wide range of

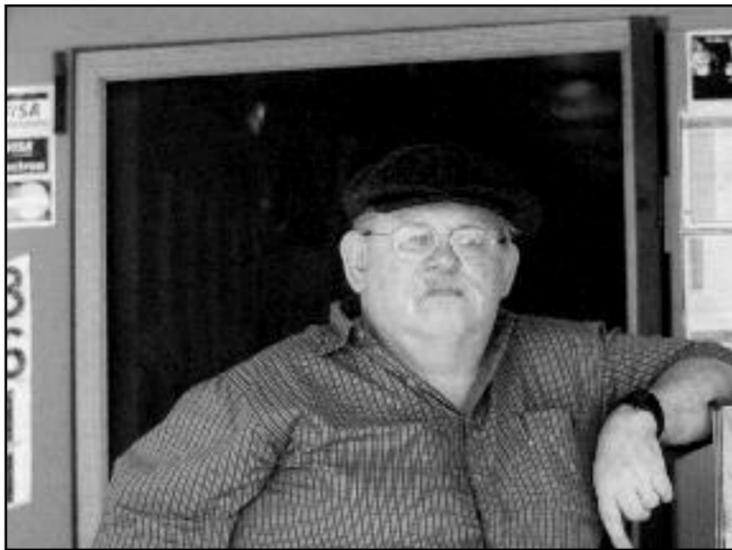


music tell you how great you are doesn't mean that you are. Learn five or six more chords, listen to songwriters like Cole Porter, Bill Monroe, Bob Dylan, Mary McCaslin, Bob Nolan, or Lalo Guererro. Learn a couple of their songs. Learn a couple of new tunings on your guitar, mandolin, accordion, or whatever. You might wind up at the Roots Festival.

I find that different kinds of roots music often tug on each other. Cajun accordion guys learn stuff from tejaño accordion guys. You'll hear an old-time Blind Lemon Jefferson lick in a tune by Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys.

music can do one of two things. It can teach you how stuff is done or it can discourage you from wanting to perform. If the latter is the case, then maybe you don't want to be a performer. Maybe we'll actually hear some roots music in the coffee houses.

At any rate, festival number 30 is coming up. Along with that are several other anniversaries for me. Festival number one took place 35 years ago, which was the same year I opened Folk Arts Rare Records, and for 25 years Folk Arts has been located on Adams Avenue



Lou Curtiss

(3611 Adams Avenue: shameless plug). I also did my first radio show in 1967 for KPRI. Along the way, I've been on KGB and KDEO (remember Radio Kay-Dee-Oh). For the past 16 years I've done "Jazz Roots" on KSDS (now on Sunday nights, 8-10 p.m.) and for the past three years I've been doing "The Melting Pot" on World Music Webcast ([www.world-musicweb-caset.com](http://www.world-musicweb-caset.com)), which runs about four times a week (Saturday, 8-9:30 a.m.; Sunday, 1-2:30 p.m.; Thursday, 5-6:30 p.m.; plus a floating show that might wind up anywhere). This winter and spring "The Melting Pot" has been rebroadcasting tapes of some of the early Folk Festivals we did. There's great stuff here from such artists as Jean Ritchie, Ray and Ina Patterson, Roscoe Holcomb, Mike Seeger, U. Utah Phillips, Wilbur Ball

and Cliff Carlisle, Frankie Armstrong, Kenny Hall, Robert Pete Williams, Lydia Mendoza, Joel Sonnier, and so many more. It's been a big kick for me to revisit so many of these fine people we've had at festivals over the years. I'm trying not to talk too much but I'm hoping the occasional story puts some of this music in context. Listen in if you can. And you musicians/performers, listen to what these people are doing. This is the best of the best in roots music. I find so many wannabe performers who don't know how to listen. I spend most of my life (whether by selling records, playing music on the radio, or presenting music at festivals and concerts) giving you opportunities to listen. Most of these opportunities don't cost you anything, and the rewards are what ever you make of them. As the old harmonica player said: "Go thou and blow now." Good luck.

Recordially,  
Lou Curtiss



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## front porch

# Kenny Edwards: A Rock of American Folk-Rock

by Britta Lee Shain and  
Jim Wakefield

In case the name does not immediately come to mind, behind-the-scenes player Kenny Edwards has long been an influential force in the American folk-rock movement. A native Californian, who early on developed a passion for blues, Appalachian music, bluegrass, rock, and all kinds of ethnic and roots music, Kenny Edwards, along with Linda Ronstadt and Bobby Kimmel, co-founded the Stone Poneys. A superb guitarist, mandolin player, bass player, lyricist, composer, singer, and arranger, Kenny went on to perform and co-write with Ronstadt for many years, playing on her records and touring extensively. He is often credited, along with Andrew Gold, as the backbone of the Ronstadt sound.



Kenny Edwards (left) with Linda Ronstadt and Andrew Gold in the '70s

During L.A.'s "Troubadour days," a time that solidified the California country-rock sound forever, Kenny met Karla Bonoff. Together with Andrew and Wendy Waldman they formed the band Bryndle. Kenny, who is responsible for supplying Linda Ronstadt with several of Karla Bonoff's songs, then went on to produce three classic Bonoff albums, *Karla Bonoff*, *Restless Nights*, and *Wild Heart of the Young*.

Later he produced other records too and was frequently called upon as a session musician for many great artists, a practice that continues to this day. A partial list of Kenny's session credits includes the names Don Henley, Brian Wilson, Stevie Nicks, Warren Zevon, Art Garfunkel, Vince Gill, Mac McAnally, David Lee Murphy, Jennifer Warnes, Danny Kortchmar, Bonnie Raitt, and Lowell George.

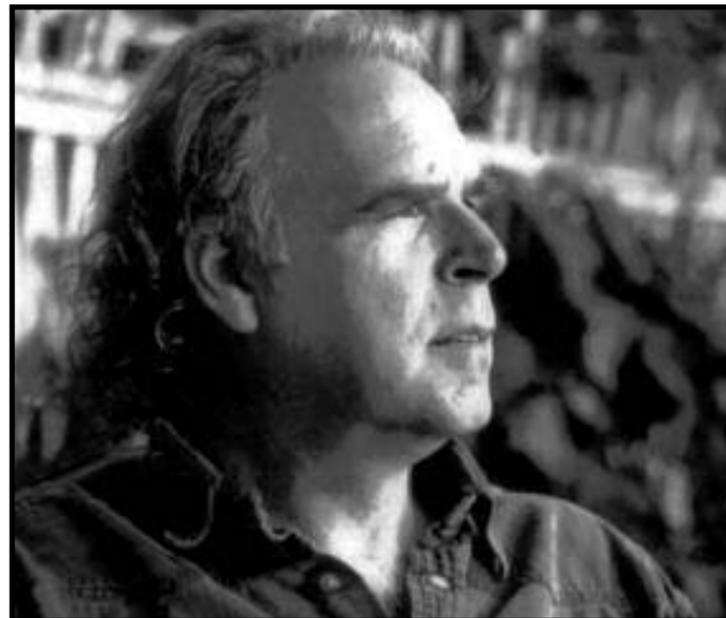
Now, Kenny has come into his own with the reuniting of Bryndle, whose critically acclaimed albums are almost entirely co-written within the group and the recent release of his first solo CD. Released in the summer of 2002, Kenny's self-titled album, which delves deep into his blues and folk roots, was produced by Freddie Koella, musical director for Willy Deville and mastered by Gavin Lurssen who also mastered the *O' Brother, Where Art Thou?* soundtrack. "It's pretty intimate and homey sounding and I like that after all the band oriented music I've been involved with over the years."

In an interview in *Performing Songwriter* last December, Kenny laments, "At the peak of Linda Ronstadt's career when we were playing these huge arenas, we never had much contact with the audience. I'm trying to have this experience now of touring on my own, getting in the van and playing some cooler little places."

Kenny Edwards is a remarkable, articulate person—passionate and knowledgeable about music. Audiences don't know how very familiar they are with the sound of Edwards' voice

and his wonderful musicianship.

Kenny Edwards will be performing at Wynola Pizza Express (3.5 miles west of Julian) on Friday, March 21, 6-9 p.m. For more information, call 760/765-1004. Join Kenny on Saturday, March 22, 9 p.m.-1 a.m. at the Bayou Bar and Grill, at 329 Market Street in the



Kenny Edwards

Gaslamp Quarter, where you can eat the finest cajun and creole food west of the Gulf Coast. Try the croco-

dile or the soup! Yummy. There is no cover charge. For dinner reservations call 619/696-8747.

## Who, or More Likely, What Is Skelpin'?

*Skelpin'*: Gaelic for a spanking; to thrash about wildly; or the sudden chill that sweeps over a body unexpectedly due to a disembodied spirit having just passed through you. Of course, then there's the other translation of *Skelpin'* — a form of hanky-panky involving the back seat of a car.

by Pam Diehl

Part of the fun of seeing Skelpin', one of the region's best-known Irish bands, is a tossup — just which one of these definitions is the right one? Fiddler Patric Petrie, the band's own high-energy "Wild Irish Rose," is quick to shrug her shoulders and claim that Irish music has a life of its own — and what happens once the band kicks into a tune is nothing but magic. "It's easily the most fun you can have . . . and still get paid for it," Petrie chortles. Not to say there isn't a serious side to what Skelpin' plays, but this isn't your father's "Danny Boy."

"Traditional music isn't a museum piece nor a fly stuck in amber," she explains. "What Skelpin' does is make the music come alive again. Every piece we play takes on the character of the musician performing it. And when you love the music, that comes through as well. What could be more original than that?" she asks.

Skelpin' has been performing around Southern California for several years and has been the featured house band at Dublin Square Irish Pub in San Diego's Gaslamp District for the past year and a half.

Part of the beauty of Skelpin' is watching the band members do a musical version of a Vulcan mind-meld—Steve, a guitar virtuoso equally at home laying down a driving rhythm or amazing the audience with his delicate fingerwork; Richard, the band's musical cut-up who suddenly launches into the theme song of *Leave It to Beaver* or "Locomotive Breath" while in the middle of polka set; Harold, bold disciplinarian of pub songs and T-shirt philosopher whose credo is Benjamin



Skelpin', l to r: Steve Peavey, Richard Tibbitts, Harold Southworth, and Patric Petrie

Franklin's saying "Beer is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy"; and Patric, lilting singer of romantic songs with an Irish twist, who says, "I don't care. It doesn't count as a love song unless someone dies."

Besides multiple gigs clustered around Saint Patrick's Day in March, the band is often showcased with the world's best-known Irish band, the Chieftains, who visit San Diego several times a year.

"My family is from Achill Island," Petrie explains. "And when I go back, the cousins and I drive down the coast to Westport where Matt Malloy (the Chieftain's flute player) has a pub. It's a great place for picking up a session. Almost all the musicians on the West Coast [of Ireland] seem to stop by on a regular basis and you just never know who'll turn up for a tune."

Back here in the States the band seems to be equally at ease on either side of the border. "Just over the holidays we played a concert in Mexico to raise money for the orphanage in Rosarito," Petrie said. "It was a first

for Skelpin'. I don't think we've ever played in a place where people were out on the street scalping tickets for our concert."

On a lighter note, Skelpin' has just finished its CD, *Whiskey Before Breakfast* and has high hopes it will do well. Petrie smiles as she explains about the title, "While it is a well-established fact that the band has been known to enjoy a drop or two—for medicinal reasons only—it is sheer coincidence entirely that one of our favorite tunes is the aforementioned whiskey title."

Other Skelpin' favorites include "Whiskey in the Jar," "Whiskey, You're the Devil," "Patric's Farewell to Whiskey," and not to show prejudice or favoritism, the band has decided to call its next CD *Beer: Not Just for Breakfast Anymore*.

Petrie points out that sometimes you have to give credit where credit's due. After all, talent will only get you so far.





## Carlos Olmeda Finds Variety the Spice of Life

by John Philip Wyllie

For Puerto Rican-born Carlos Olmeda, music was a constant feature of life from the time he could sit up in his crib. The wide variety of music he was exposed to at an early age made a profound impression. Blessed with an acute sense of hearing and a desire to absorb all that he heard and regurgitate most of it, the die was cast that one day Olmeda would be a musician.

"Ever since I was a little kid, if I'd hear a sound enough times, I could mimic it. I guess I'm kind of a mockingbird by nature," he admits.

"My Mom had us listening to everything as kids," Olmeda recalled following his regular first Friday of the month gig at Lestat's Coffeehouse on Adams Avenue.

"My ears have always paid attention to good songs whether they were simple or complex. It may sound very P.C. [politically correct], but I didn't have one specific [musical] hero. Every good songwriter and performer made an impression on me. From Elvis Costello to Pearl Jam to They Might Be Giants to Cat Stevens to Frank Sinatra to Billy Holiday and Glen Miller, there was always something special about a good song when it came along. They [good songs] are what my ears have always been attuned to."

Olmeda's critically acclaimed 1999 release *Sensitive Groove*, like his more current music, draws upon a number of sources for inspiration, but his meticulous attention to detail, the warmth in his voice, his vocal range, and his stylish guitar playing enhance his

unique brand of folk-pop.

"Everybody I have ever brought to hear Carlos perform has told me that he has the most amazing voice," says percussionist Scott Lee. "So it is not only his songwriting, but also his amazing singing style that people find attractive."

Olmeda believes there are two things that set him apart. "My music is pretty syncopated and it is not genre specific. I don't write only one style of songs. If people want to hear a series of songs that are not going to sound the same from beginning to end, they should come out and hear me play. They will come away saying, you don't hear that every day."

Olmeda's February 7th performance at Lestat's found him in substantial pain, still recovering for a recent motorcycle accident,



Carlos Olmeda

but his discomfort did not prevent him from putting together a thoroughly enjoyable show. Accompanying himself on guitar, the highly personable Olmeda had the intimate coffeehouse crowd eating out of his hand by night's end.

Displaying his amusing sense of humor, Olmeda threw in a slightly bawdy audience participation Irish pub song entitled "Mike Rotch" at one point and playfully chastised an unsuspecting late arriving patron by bellowing, "close the door and sit down!" midway through a song in his best Marine Drill Instructor voice. Later on after doing another Irish song, Olmeda slipped into a dead-on Irish brogue and facetiously explained to his audience that Puerto Ricans back in his homeland often sit beside their campfires and sing songs in Gaelic.

Using a gravelly Cat Stevens voice on one tune and crystal clear falsetto reminiscent of Dan Fogelberg on several others, Olmeda provided something for everybody. While he sings primarily in English, Olmeda acknowledged his Hispanic roots on several occasions including a slowed down version of the old time classic "Besame Mucho."

While he has no immediate plans to return the recording studio, Olmeda is currently working with local bluesman Richie Blue on some songs he hopes to perform with a couple of new rock 'n' roll bands he is putting together.

"I don't expect the bands to be ready for another six months,

[but when they are] we'll do originals with a lot of jazz-blues chords in them and some cool vocal harmonies. The genre we are working in is just pure fun," Olmeda says.

Having abandoned at least temporarily what was once a hectic travel schedule of playing clubs throughout California and beyond, Olmeda now relies on several of his many talents to pay the bills.

"I'm doing voiceovers and writing voiceovers for TV commercials for a group called L-7 Creative," he explained. "I supported myself totally through music for many years, but I just got tired. Now I do a number of things like writing music for commercials."

"Right now, I'm just chillin'." Up until a couple of years ago I spent a lot of time on the road touring with Jason Mraz and Toca Rivera. We had a lot of fun, but right now I'm just chillin' and writing songs."

Fortunately for his San Diego audience, Olmeda performs those songs live on the first Friday of every month at Lestat's.



## Truckee Brothers in Overdrive

by Ellen Duplessie

The unique, edgy duo known as the Truckee Brothers are making their presence known in the San Diego music scene. Patrick Dennis and Christopher Hoffee bring together a mix of original style, soul, and honesty that is refreshing in these days of over-produced, pre-packaged sound.

With an undeniable magnetic stage presence, these two sing their original songs either together with a Byrds-esque harmony, or solo backing each other with their added instrumentation. The music is perhaps best categorized as alternative rock, but played on older style acoustic instruments, namely guitar and mandolin among others.

Patrick Dennis' new EP, *Atlantic*, his third solo release, is just that—a solo release in the purest form. All six songs are written, performed, and produced by Patrick, showing off an edge to his multi-instrumental abilities to match the energy of his songwriting. Joined by his fellow Truckee Brother, *Atlantic* delivers a powerful combination of bombastic attack and intimate confessions.

Cutting his teeth while playing in old school punk bands, Patrick soon joined the Byrds-inspired Homer Gunns, and also toured as band leader for Dave Sharp (the Alarm). He then



The Truckee Brothers in concert

wrote and recorded his first solo album *Spun* for indie label Cargo Music. Patrick has also performed with acts like Clem Snide and Luka Bloom.

Christopher Hoffee has created a solo music persona known as Atom Orr. His first album *Wake*, along with his second album *Noir*, are both complete originals, with all songs written, performed, engineered, mixed, and produced by him. Christopher describes *Wake's* music as "Pock," while the music from *Noir* he describes as "Left-of-center Pock." Both records are due out this month. That's right . . . two releases in one month! Hoffee is also a member of the local alternative rock band, Fivecrown.

An appealing aspect of the Truckee Brothers is the combination of their intimate yet powerful music mixed with a self-effacing sense of humor that displays their pure enjoyment of the music just for the sake of the

music. It's clearly not about them, but rather it's about their creative musical endeavors. An example of this can be seen on the [www.atomorr.com](http://www.atomorr.com) website, under biography, where the description reads: "Christopher has been in bands since 1990, and has opened for such acts as Radiohead, Oasis, Blur, Cracker, Cake, blah, blah, blah."

Not only do the Truckee Brother create their own music, but they also work together in the role of producer. Their most recent work is none other than that of Lisa Sander's new album, *Hold On Tightly*, due out for release on April 12 (see CD review on page 12).

This creative duo has the curiosity to experiment, while retaining the roots and longevity of the musical heritage that has preceded them. My hope is that these Truckee Brothers will continue to "keep on truckin'" for a long, long time.



## parlor showcase

by Laura Preble

It's an unseasonably hot day, even for California winter, and Lisa Sanders sits in the window of a coffee-house sporting sunglasses and a short-sleeved shirt. Under a water-beaded glass of iced tea, the hand-painted table where she sits displays a motto that fits the San Diego singer-songwriter: ART IS GOOD.

Lisa isn't in it for the money, although that would be nice. She's not in it for the fame, which she deserves. After a recent split with her small record label, Cargo, the self-described creator of Black Cowgirl Pop music is in it for herself, making art the way she wants to, despite an industry geared toward indifferent teens, disposable tunes and the almighty quick buck.

"Grownups don't buy records because the record companies don't give them anything to buy," she says. "But all of a sudden you have Steve Earle, Bonnie Raitt, James Taylor, and thousands upon thousands of people are in the audience for their shows."

Like those stars packing arena shows, Lisa Sanders can't be easily pigeon-holed. Her music is tinged with blues, folk, country, pop and rock — pretty much anything she finds interesting. "I need a little variety. Wherever my mind and heart is, that's how music comes at the time."

Lisa was drawn to the street corners of Philadelphia in her early years where her brother

Photo: Thom Vollenweider

Tyrone sang Motown hits on summer nights with a group of seven or eight friends. She says she wrote her first song at age nine. Lately, she's been listening to a lot of Aretha Franklin, Etta James and Billie Holiday,

women who have always been influences but who now resonate even more with her new direction. When she performed at the last Lilith Fair with the likes of Sheryl Crow, Sarah MacLachlan, and the Dixie Chicks in front of 17,000

screaming fans, she knew her direction was the right one

Her latest effort, *Hold on Tightly*, was "an exercise in stepping outside the bubble. I still can't figure out why it hurt. I wanted to stretch out, and it was painful." In her typically low-key way, she smiles, arches an eyebrow and says "I'm one uptight chick."

"I'm a woman and I'm black and I'm singing cowboy music and that is not usual."

# Lisa Sanders Praves



But describing what Lisa Sanders does as 'cowboy music' isn't quite right either. *Hold on Tightly* is a valentine to a time when

radio was *good*, when you could actually click on an FM station and hear innovative, cross-genre tunes. "I set out to make a retro record in modern times. I wanted it to have a summertime flavor, with things that meant a lot to me musically." It does have that quality — it careens from the title track, a

But anyone who's seen Lisa Sanders perform knows that her self image isn't exactly what her fans see. A dynamic guitarist and singer, Lisa has the ability to connect with an audience in an intimate way — almost as if she were your best friend and the two of you were sharing stories over a bottle of wine. Combine that with the accessibility of her songs and you have anything but uptight. What you have is Black Cowgirl Pop.

"I'm a woman and I'm black and I'm singing cowboy music and that is *not* usual," she laughs when asked the origin of BCP and the cool but quirky image of a dark Dale Evans diva. "I mean, I'm from *Poway*, what do you want me to play?! I finally came up with this. I like to let my music speak for itself."

Photo: Millie Moreno



Lisa at the Adams Ave. Street Fair last year

# parlor showcase



## That Art Is Good

Despite the sunny tone of the record, Sanders says it threw her into one of the deepest depressions of her life. "It was a mix of nostalgia and my feelings about how the world's been

radio rock tune, to "Ever Find a Way" with its George Harrison-esque guitar work (done by Sanders herself) to "Crumble," a cross between flower power Simon and Garfunkel and punk Pretenders. Listening to the album is like taking a long car trip cross country, punching those radio buttons and finding that each new station is playing something cool that makes you do that front seat shimmy.

*"Hold On Tightly is a valentine to a time when radio was good, when you could actually click on an FM station and hear innovative, cross-genre tunes."*

changing," she says, her megawatt smile dimmed for a moment by the unspoken sadness that seems embroidered at the hem of everyone's consciousness today. Who wouldn't want to go back to those days before — before terrorists, before corporate scandals,

before suicide bombings and anthrax mail? "I want people to be boppin' down the highway, reminiscing, having the same feeling they'd have if they were kids again."

Maybe one of the biggest achievements to come from *Hold on Tightly* is the fact that she gave a copy to her 23-year-old daughter "and she flipped. All these young women are freaking for the record. It's nice that the kids like it too, and for the first time I'm getting feedback from kids in a positive way."

Young people who've grown up musically in a stilted corporate radio environment have missed out on some of the best and most innovative artists around.

"I wanted to do something that has the flavors of the things they've missed," she says. "Because a lot of the kids missed out on Marvin Gaye and all that stuff. The rappers talk about it but I don't think they really know."



Lisa and Sarah McLachlan at Lillith Fair

And this is the first record she's done on her own after departing her record label and starting Pathfinder Records, named for a farm owned by a friend. Plunging into the cold and calculating world of music without the backing of a label is scary, but Sanders relishes the chance to let people hear what she wants to say. She's primarily marketing her music through the internet, at [LisaSanders.com](http://LisaSanders.com), and she's hoping to work up a touring schedule in the near future, maybe opening for some national acts.

At the time of this writing, she's getting ready to hit Nashville for the national Folk Alliance, where her music will get a well-deserved listen. Who knows, maybe the world is ready



Photo: Thom Vollenweider

for some Black Cowgirl Pop and a return to music that doesn't fit into someone else's narrow definition of what's "marketable."

After all, art *is* good.

*Hold on Tightly* will be officially released on April 12, with a release party at the Seaside Church in Encinitas at 8 pm. Tickets are \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door. An artist's reception begins at 7 p.m. with wine and light hors d'oeuvres. Reception and concert tickets are \$20. Call 760/598-3996 or email [info@lisasanders.com](mailto:info@lisasanders.com). The Seaside Church is located at 1613 Lake Dr., Encinitas.



Lisa with drummer Nucci at the Whistle Stop

Photo: Millie Moreno



ramblin'

# The Bluegrass CORNER

FIRST IN A SERIES

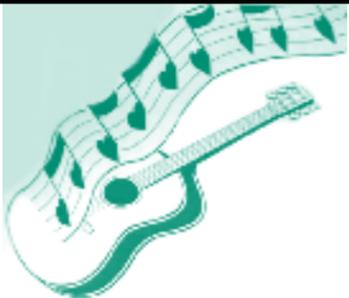
by D. Dwight Worden

## Mixed Company Steals the Audience Award at the San Diego Bluegrass Society's "January Bandscramble"

On January 14 the SDBS Bandscramble was held at Fuddrucker's in La Mesa where more than 30 names were drawn from a hat and formed into six "instant bands." The drawing randomly mixed seasoned pros from nationally recognized bands with a variety of other players ranging from serious amateurs to beginners and young people. The bands were given 15-30 minutes to meet each other and work up a few songs before performing them on stage to a packed house. Competition was fierce for the coveted Audience Award, to be determined by the volume and raucousness of the audience's response to each band as judged by SDBS's respected and experienced audience professionals Emma and Deedee Radcliffe. SDBS certificates of participation were given to all entrants.

First out the box was the band Mixed Company, featuring John Cherry on mandolin, Bill Paul on banjo, Bob Cool (and was he ever!) on fiddle, the evening's Master of Ceremonies Gary ("I'm open to bribes") Kennedy on guitar, Nashville visitor John Bellar on bass, and Ida Denny on dobro. They set the standard in generating wild audience applause.

Next up was Partial Deck, who presented a powerhouse line-up,



including Kenny Wertz (of Country Gazette and Down the Road fame) on banjo, Jim Murphy on mandolin, Dan Sankey (of Silverado) on fiddle, Michael O'Malley on guitar, Mary Birkitt on bass, and Mr. Specialty John Deckard (leader of Full Deck) on jaw harp. These two hot bands got everything off to a great start, and the judges were seen huddling carefully in contemplation.

The Complete Strangers were next up, sweaty palms and all, feeling the pressure. Keeping the action hot were Phil "Doc" Levy on banjo, Jim Blakemore on mandolin, Dwight Worden (of Bigger Fish and the 7th Day Buskers) on fiddle, Bob Arsenault on guitar, and Mike Phillips on bass. Rumor has it that bribes to the judges were passed by other competitors after they heard this hot group!

Charging up next was O' Brother; the Green Tatars, sporting SDBS president Mike Tatar (of the Virtual Strangers) on banjo; Bob Cool (back for more!) on fiddle; Mr. Denny on specialty; Becky Green (of Down the Road fame) on bass; and Les and Lou Ann ("you can't separate us") Preston on guitar and vocals. Great job and great vocals!

Following was the evening's classical wannabe entry of Isaac and the Stearns comprised of a young and daring Isaac Finklestein on guitar, an only slightly older Andy Lohr on mandolin, veteran Don Hickox (of the 7th Day Buskers) on fiddle, Bob Pearson on bass, and Dan Sankey (Silverado) again, this time on banjo. Quite a show!

Last but not least was the aptly named Last Chance, showcasing Corey Miller on mandolin, veteran Ken Tagame on bass, pro-Yukon Jack on guitar, Don Hickox (7th Day Buskers) in his second appearance on fiddle, and Bob Arsenault back for more on guitar. They closed the competition with a rousing bang!

Tension mounted as the judges huddled in final consultation. Then came the announcement: Mixed Company was declared the winner by a narrow five-point margin, who played out a couple of "winner tunes" to end the evening. As the happy but exhausted players packed up and headed for home, murmurs were heard calling for a "rematch" and "I'll bring my whole family, including the dog, to make noise next time."

## Ron Spears and Within Tradition Brings National Bluegrass Band to San Diego

February 7<sup>th</sup> saw a successful concert by nationally recognized Ron Spears and Within Tradition, which was held at the Poway Community Center. More than 100 happy bluegrass fans enjoyed the great vocals and instrumentation of this outstanding group. (See the February issue of the *San Diego Troubadour* for more information on this band.) The show opened with San Diego's own Down the Road, who put on a stellar show.

Stay tuned for upcoming issues of the *San Diego Troubadour*, which will feature more reviews of local performances, including dates and who's coming.



Ron Spears and Within Tradition

# RADIO DAZE

FIRST IN A SERIES

by Jim McInnes

## TRAVELS WITH JIMMY

**M**y career in broadcasting has enabled me to do things I'd have never thought possible...like going to the good old U.S.S.R.

By way of introduction, why don't I backtrack? Good!

In high school (during the Cold War) the U.S.S.R. was the "enemy," so I chose to learn not only the Russian language, but also an entirely new (Cyrillic) alphabet. I carried on with my Russian studies through my third year at Lawrence University in upstate Wisconsin. The coolest thing about Lawrence was that it had a REAL 10,000-watt FM radio station...the place where I got my REAL education! The main problem was that I was a mathematics major, so when I **flunked out** of Lawrence, I went to Southern Illinois University, earned my B.S. in communications, and began my dream career in radio and television.

### Fast forward to 1990...

Twenty years after leaving college, the good people at Budweiser offered to fly me, KGB's Promo guy Scott Chatfield, and 138 others from around the U.S. to see the Rolling Stones perform in Moscow. **San Diego's** KGB was going to Moscow to be tailed by **the other KGB!** Alas, after a yak-load of wrangling, the Soviets denied the permits for the Stones concert in Moscow, so all 140 of us had to settle for their



Jim McInnes

show in Copenhagen, Denmark (a fantastic city!). The day after the concert, which reminded us of life-sized wax Stones mannequins with remote-servo-operated life-like movements trying to appear like they gave a shit, we all went to Moscow anyway. We were gonna PARTY with the Russkis! And a party it was! The Russians somehow stole 75 percent of the gazillion cases of Bud we had brought from the States and, within an hour of our arrival, were selling the beer on the street outside our hotel. That was when we realized that VODKA was now our beverage of choice!

We listened to a few Russian rock bands. They all wanted to be The Scorpions.

We saw many beautiful Russian women. They were for hire. We visited many drab monuments honoring many drab commie functionaries.

Ho-hum.

BUT the regular Russians we met were terrific people who knew how to PARTY! When we were ready to head home, we put KGB radio stickers on the walls of the Moscow airport. And sure enough, **the other KGB** was on our tail, removing those stickers as quickly as we had stuck 'em up. Luckily no political incident occurred and we all lived to tell about it.

I'll never forget that trip. I wish you had been there, comrades.

Call me nostalgic, but, given the current world situation, I kind of wish the Cold War and the USSR were still around.



Jim McInnes and KGB's then promotions manager Scott Chatfield in Moscow



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# Hosing Down

by José Sinatra

Any true artist must be prepared to admit being wrong when he/she is in error. Personally, I'm sure I would own up to any incorrect statement or action I might instigate should that absurd day somehow eventually dawn. So I'll still wait for pigs to fly, sustained perfectly by my rigid self-awareness that continues to guide my humility, bravery, and honesty.

Oh, there still are pitfalls. My reputation as fashionable stud—one, I might add, that I acquired after years of training, study, practice in solitude—came into question one evening not too long ago, and it still rather annoys me. My feelings have been hurt, and occasionally my well-known sensual pout involuntarily engorges itself to the point of absurdity. I must discharge the truth now in order to reclaim my reputation and my beauty. The Truth, the error-free gist of that incident is the perhaps-unfashionable fact that intergender group "scenes" (as swingers used to call them) have never been my bag. And I truly meant no disrespect to any of the Osmonds or their guests. In fact, but for their unfortunate expectation, I generally enjoyed my half-hour or so at their winter solstice "gathering." *Chacun à son goo* as Casanova might have said, had he been French and blessed with my enviable voice.

In troubled times the sensitive soul feels his heart drifting backward to less

daunting days, and this season my left ventricle has been leaning toward memories of the unsurpassed joys felt by a defenseless world during a zealous cultural assault years back. Think British Invasion. It wasn't really so long ago. Here was proof of music's power to unite, to change, to intoxicate.

I've never put myself forth as a learned historian of music and its several forms (although I am one) nor have I ever claimed to chronically, consensually finger the pulse of societal trends when the candles of common reason have nearly burned out (though again, I do so happily). Still, I state without fear that Time itself can be a bastard. And Time both gilds and dims the emotions that England's musical messengers so blessedly engendered. For a moment, it seemed, we *were* one. God, I miss the Spice Girls.

Their absence as a group (*the group!*) continues to poke and probe the heart in our intestines like an inadvertently swallowed crack pipe. They enriched us; now without them, we are impoverished. Or were they ever really here?

No Tiny Spice to imagine playing daddy with. No Rasta Spice and her soulful jive. No Ugly Spice to console, no Old Spice to keep us feeling young. No Goth Spice to learn studied mysteriousness from (okay, head tilts down, eyes way up...got it. Gimme more!)

That I haven't heard a word from any of the "chick power" girls since their breakup is understandable,



The inimitable Mr. Sinatra

since my phone number is unlisted. But if even one of them is now reading these words, then these last couple minutes I've invested in them will not have been in vain. She'll know that there is one romantic American male who hasn't forgotten them, at least today... one sensitive lounge metal god who truly loved them in ways some would consider selfish... or adolescent... or deviant. One man who yearns for even a partial reunion, who himself is willing to fill any opening within the group. Any time. But time's a bastard, isn't it?

When the Spice Girls invaded, we truly witnessed a miracle: a five-faced pile of tripe that talked. Time has sweetened the aroma, and I get tingly sniffing it out.

Oh, I miss leg warmers too, truth be told. Real posing Hose; absurd fashion, little shame; real posing Hose.



# Delivery Infrastructure

by Paul Abbott

About 12 years ago a friend of mine was working as a tech for a San Diego-based electronics repair company. His job was to put broken equipment back together. So, he had the raw materials needed to do work on all manner of electronic equipment.

At the same time I was doing a lot of experimenting with acoustic guitar amplification as well as a lot of coffeehouse performing. Since I was using very high-impedance pickups for my acoustic guitar, I noticed a lot of interference and noise when I amplified it. I inquired with him about custom-building me some cables, using higher-quality components to see what the difference would be. I was amazed at the improvement. Quality cable had better shielding and thicker gauge wire that translated into better frequency response and a more open sound. I was hooked.

Cables are just as important as any other piece of equipment in your recording or performance environment. Amazingly though, many people – even professionals – use fairly cheap off-the-rack cable to connect their equipment.

For a lot of people, it's an issue of cost. However, if you know how to put cable together from bulk supplies, you can cut your expenses in half. Companies like Canare and Neutrik sell bulk cable and connectors (respectively) that are as good as one can ask for. After you've procured the



Paul Abbott

bulk supplies, it's just a question of finding an electronics-savvy friend who is handy with a soldering iron to wire up the cables for you. As a bonus, the cables can easily be made to lengths that fit your specific needs.

If you have deeper pockets and want to go with pre-configured cables, there are a plethora of choices. Some companies are sold on utilizing silver, others on oxygen-free copper. The conductive materials and specific trends of cable creation evolve as our understanding of perceiving sound expands.

Today I use the best quality cable I can afford to connect my mastering studio, and I'm always on the lookout for better stuff. What quality cable offers is a purer, more accurate transference of an electronic signal that ultimately ends up vibrating a speaker and moving air molecules into sound. Pretty important, huh?



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## of note



### Lisa Sanders Hold on Tightly

by Phil Harmonic

All of us have had special moments in our lives. What makes a moment special to one is different for another. As musicians gathered at Java Joe's to pay tribute to their favorite venue on the last evening before closing its doors, the mood was melancholy. "Lisa, play a song," rang out Joe's voice, like an invisible boom box. Lisa Sanders, who emits talent from every pore of her body, said softly, "Here's a song I just wrote." As I listened, the room became quiet. Paralyzed, I closed my eyes and felt the goose bumps rise. That feeling spoke to me: This is what life is all about.

This humble singer-songwriter, who has shared the stage with many well-known musicians, manifests her inspirations into lyric and melody. Her latest CD, *Hold on Tightly*, is due out April 12. Producers Patrick Dennis and Christopher Hoffee (aka the Truckee Brothers) capture the essence that Sanders emulates when performing live and brings it along as you stroll through this 12-song tour de force. Dennis and Hoffee provide all the back-up instrumentation, which blends beautifully with Sanders' vocals. Her remarkable voice wails and cries, quivers, then roars, bending notes and tones while caressing the lyrics. Her sound is crisp, and the richness and purity of her voice allows the emotion and *feel of the song* to penetrate and transfer the feeling to you.

My favorites, "All About Love," "Ever find a Way," "Blind to You, Baby," and "Cry Me a River" have slow, beautiful melodies that mesmerize, juxtaposed with lyrics and go deep. They contrast well with the more upbeat "Skywalk," "Crumble," "Astronaut" (a tribute to Steve Poltz), and the driving title song "Hold On Tightly."

The effective use of vocal harmonies, from subtle to powerful, contributes greatly to these top-notch arrangements. Sanders combines all styles of music to create her own unique style, and she sits at the top of the ladder with the other local great songwriters, namely Poltz, Page, Berkley Hart, and Dolan to name a few. Just listen for yourself and I think you will discover that Lisa Sanders is one "special" moment.



### Randy Phillips Wild Horses

by Phil Harmonic

Randy Phillips' latest CD, *Wild Horses*, combines different styles of music in her eclectic 12-song selections. Most songs are written by Phillips and/or in collaboration with Peter Sprague, who co-produced with Phillips, John Katchur, and others. On the title track "Wild Horses," side man Dennis Caplinger goes from banjo to mandolin to fiddle to add his skillful, gourmet flavor. Katchur's harmonies blend full and mesh well into Phillips poetry. Sprague's acoustic guitar highlight a South American samba flavor on "Down to the Bone." On the beautiful "Far Away," less is more. The simplicity of voice and guitar give you chills as this song becomes a prayer. The entire band shows off musicianship of the highest level. In my opinion, Sprague and Caplinger are two of the finest musicians on the entire planet. Their contribution is immense. Phillips vocals are pleasant as she moves from ballads to blues to rock, but her voice, more suited to the slower tunes, really shines on songs like "Far Away," "Gypsy," and "Falling Star," her voice in the latter reflecting a folkier sound of Joan Baez purity against Caplinger's Dobro. The song title "Troubadour," which I like for some reason, was written for Katchur. Richard Tibbitts adds a "Middle Ages" feel with recorder, flute, and krumhorn. Phillips has written lyrics well worth experiencing. Good songs deserve many listenings to fully appreciate them.

So, what are you waiting for?



### Various Artists Drunk & Nutty: Hillbillies Foolin' with the Blues

by Lou Curtiss

Anthologies of country and old-timey artists who play the blues have been around a long time, and they always seem to appeal to blues fans who might not otherwise buy an old-timey album. This 50-track double CD is as good a bet as any, featuring all the greats, from Charlie Poole through Darby and Tarlton, Frank Hutchison, and even the Carter Family and Bob Wills. Some good instrumental music, such as Narmor and Smith's masterpiece of Mississippi fiddle, "Carroll County Blues." Some great harmonica, like Tom Ashley's "Haunted House," Bill Cox and Cliff Hobbs' "Oozlin Daddy Blues," and the Prairie Ramblers' "Jug Rag." Lot of slide guitar too, with Cliff Carlisle and the Allen Brothers along with Jimmie Tarlton. There's also some great blues picking by Larry Hensley who's been slicing blind lemons into his moonshine. We get a little into the birth of country boogie, and hence rockabilly, with Al Dexter's "New Jelly Roll Blues" and even into the rock era with Prince Albert Hunt, whose "Blues in the Bottle" provided raw material for the Lovin' Spoonful many years later.

This kind of anthology is frequently cited as conclusive repudiation to those who insist that white men and women can't sing the blues. Certainly it's evident that they have always done so, although it's also evident that even when they're as close to the original as it's possible to be, what they're doing is always something significantly different. This is the blues and it isn't at the same time, which to me is just what is so great about it.

With well-designed packaging and substantial and reliable notes by Neil Slaven, this is a generous package well worth investigation, especially if hillbilly blues is something unfamiliar to you.

## REPORT FROM THE NAMM SHOW



### The New Taylor Guitar Pickup System: You Won't Believe Your Ears (at first)

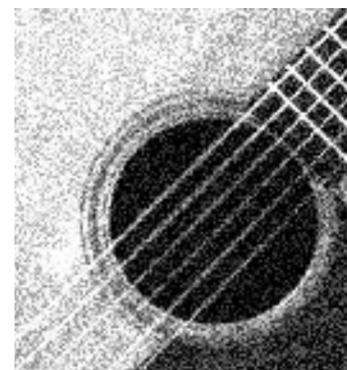
by Steppin' Eddy

My dear brother and sister guitarists, it has been my very good fortune to be (peripherally) involved with the development of the Taylor Expression Series pickup system for guitars, designed by the R&D boys at Taylor and spearheaded by Dave Hosler with the assistance of Rupert Neve. A year ago I was given a guitar equipped with one, but I had to return it because it was so sensitive, I was picking up radio stations! A year later, however, all I can say is WOW! What Dave and the boys have done is reinvent the acoustic pickup, thus raising the bar so high that there is nothing else on the market today that better captures the amplified sound of an acoustic guitar. I've had friends tell me, "it's too sensitive; all my mistakes come through now," and true enough, if you chose to, you can play the pick guard or the tuning pegs for that matter. But fear not, brothers and sisters. It does not change, color, or modify the acoustic sound of your guitar. If you love the warm responsive sound of an unplugged wooden-bodied guitar, then I suggest you check these out. There are basically two sensors in the body that pick up the vibration of the body (not just up and down, but side to side) and a magnetic humbucker pickup buried in the neck to get the string vibrations... many leading artists insist that the best way to enhance the sound of an acoustic guitar is with a magnetic sound-hole pickup and a high-quality external mic. This setup accomplishes that and more, since you don't have the unsightly slab of plastic blocking your sound hole or the nuisance of being glued to an external mic. (If you've ever bumped into

one during a performance or had to deal with the feedback problems, you know what I mean).

Although these pickups are ahead of their time, many people expect them to sound like and behave like everything else on the market. As a matter of fact, many people don't even hear what they're hearing and it's only when they compare the sounds from their old setup with the new Taylor system that they hear the difference and, believe me, I was one of them. The difference is like night and day.

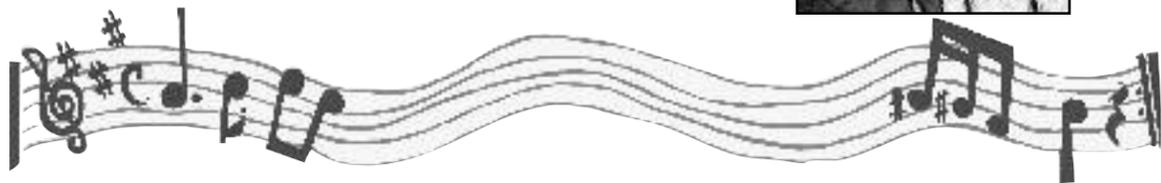
People get used to hearing things a certain way. For example, in the old days folks got used to using crappy vocal mics and when Shure came out with the SM57 (a vast improvement) they set about trying to get them to sound like the mics they were used to. In other words, there is a learning curve involved with any new technology. People scoffed at the first automobile, the first airplane, the first steam engine, but they quickly became the standard. Now it's up to the manufacturers of acoustic amps to catch up with Taylor to be able to capture all the harmonics and range that an acoustic guitar is capable of producing.



# 'round about



## Local Yokels



### A HAYSEED'S MUSIC PICKS FOR MARCH

by Gus T. Williker

*Free Bird* ain't just fer **Skynard** no more. Yer favorit double-wide deejay has busted loose like a rabid goose and dropped his last gig like seagull doo on a day-tripper from Des Moines. I've got a ton o' music, and no place ta use it!

If you run a club/coffee-house/bar . . . whutever, and you wanna have a country/roots/rockabilly sorta nite at yer spot, give me the proverb holler. I can git a mess o' press fer yer joint, and if ya give me sum time, I'll make ya proud and bring out a crowd (okay... so *proud* don't pay the bills, but I can make this thang worth-while fer ya).

E-mail me at:  
**Gus@WhiteHotTrash.com**  
Now 'bout that music stuff...

If you were my lil' love lemming, I'd steer ya toward Tio Leo's Lounge on Saturday, March 1. **Cowboy Nation, the Bastard Sons of Johnny Cash**

and the **Ghost Town Deputies** are playin' that night, and that's a damn good bill. **Cowboy Nation** is at the top of my list, with a unique, lonesome sound that seeps deep into ya like Clinique moisturizing lotion into my desperately dry pores. I luv 'em.

Rise up early on Monday, March 3 and tune the boob tube to channel 9 (uhh...guess that's 51 fer you poor slobs who don't got cable). Anywho, the **Bayou Brothers** are gonna be on the KUSI Morning News doin' a Mardi Gras tune-up. Zydeco only goes so far with me, but I'll sling a foot this time of year fer shore. San Diego's Mardi Gras celebration gits goin' on the followin' nite in the Gaslamp Quarter.

**Buddy Blue** is playin' Friday, March 7 at Tio Leo's Lounge. Okay, yes, um, well I do pimp this fellar just 'bout every column, but good is good, right is right ('cept Blue leans a bit more left, but let's not git all politikal rite now ... who knows

when the Homeland Corporate Nazi Whores are gonna track me down fer expressin' a viewpoint that don't mesh wit' thar mass consumption, money-makes-right, piss-on-the-poor mentality!)

They don't play out too often, so I recommend headin' over to Incahoots on Thursday, March 1 to see **Darlin' and Rose**. These two sweethearts pour themselves into thar music, and it shows. You'll feel their luv'in' vibe and will have a good time (am I soundin' like sum kinda smoked out hippie...err...whut?)

You got two options on St. Patrick's Day (Monday, March 17) . . . go down to the Gaslamp and drink over-priced green beer and listen to bad blues bands, or pack into the Casbah for the **Downs Family, Deadbolt, the Scotch Greens, Red Eye Gravy** 'n more! If you like the **Pogues, Flogging Molly**, and the like, then just think of the **Downs Family** as thar bumpkin cousins! They

mix traditional Irish music with punk and hillbilly stylings, and it kicks big time bootie!

The **7th Day Buskers** will be at the Whistle Stop on Friday, March 21. This billygrass band just simply nails the traditional stuff, and wit' **Robin Henkel** on Dobro and slide, it don't come as a surprise.

You might wanna call ahead to check, but the **Weary Boys** are supposed to be at Incahoots on Thursday, March 20. They didn't make it to San Diego the last time they wus booked, so I'd call first to confirm.

Finally, our own **José Sinatra** will be makin' an appearance with the **Troy Dante Inferno** at Tio Leo's Lounge on Saturday, March 29. Now, you might not think much of José, whut with him down-playin' his skills 'n all, but trust me . . . this man is a phenomenal talent! I hear that Brit from American Idol just ooded and awed over his CD (which can be purchased online



Gus Williker, the "Sexiest Man Alive," according to the media.

at [www.gregorypage.com/josesinatra/](http://www.gregorypage.com/josesinatra/), but José refused to lower himself. He's a tony talent, that one.

xoxo,  
Gu\$  
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# 'round about

## MARCH MUSIC CALENDAR

### saturday • 1

**Cowboy Nation/Bastard Sons of Johnny Cash/Ghost Town Deputies**, Tio Leos. Call for info.

**Lafayette & the LeaseBreakers**, Fat Katz. Call for info.

**Cedar Mill** (bluegrass), Wynola Pizza Express, Julian, 6-9pm.

**Across the Room/Tim Corely/Malia Andagan**, Café Crema, Pacific Beach, 7pm.

**Katherine Cleary**, San Dieguito United Methodist Church, 170 Calle Magdalena, Encinitas, 7:30pm. Call 858/566-4040 for info.

**Peter Bolland/Katie Strand/Kerrie Caldwell/Robert Spencer**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**The Uprights**, Lestats, 8:30pm.

### sunday • 2

**Michael Smith**, Dark Thirty Productions, Lakeside, 7:30pm. Call 619/463-9622 for reservations.

**Antie Em**, Lestats, 8:30pm.

### monday • 3

**Bayou Brothers**, KUSI-RV morning news show, 7-9am.

**California Guitar Trio/Tom Griesgrager**, Dizzy's, 8pm.

### tuesday • 4

**Comedy Experiment**, Lestats, 9-11pm.

### wednesday • 5

**San Diego Songwriters Guild**, Lestats, 8:30pm.

### thursday • 6

**Neville Brothers**, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 8pm.

**Bitty Bums Showcase**, Lestats, 8:30pm.

### friday • 7

**Buddy Blue**, Tio Leos. Call for info.

**Robin Henkel Band**, Coyote Bar & Grill, 300 Carlsbad Village Dr., Carlsbad, 6:30-10:30pm.

**David Orvics/The Prince Myshkins**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**Carlos Olmeda**, Lestats, 8:30pm.

**Earl Thomas**, Hard Rock Café, La Jolla, 10pm.

**Sue Palmer**, Bookworks, Flower Hill Shopping Center, Del Mar, 8-10pm.

### saturday • 8

**Joan Berry**, Golden Goose Cafe, Lakeside, 8pm.

**Tom Brosseau**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**Mark Jackson Band**, Wynola Pizza Express, Julian, 6-9pm.

**Prince Myshkins**, Lestats, 8:30pm.

**Richard Greene**, Valley Music, 530 E. Main St., El Cajon. Fiddle Workshop: 2pm. Concert: 7:30pm. Call 619/444-3161 for further information.

### sunday • 9

**Earl Thomas**, Humphrey's Backstage Lounge. Call for info.

**Andrew Beacock**, Lestats, 8:30pm.

### wednesday • 12

**Nathan Hubbard**, Lestats, 8:30pm.

### thursday • 13

**Darlin' and Rose**, In Cahoots, Mission Valley, 9pm.

### friday • 14

**Ricky Scaggs**, East County Performing Arts Center, 7:30pm.

**Kevin Tinkle/Matthew Foster**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**Sue Palmer**, Croce's Top Hat, 9pm.

### saturday • 15

**Kinney Reynolds Project**, Wynola Pizza Express, Julian, 6-9pm.

**Django Reinhardt/Stephen Grapelli Tribute**, East County Performing Arts Center, 7:30pm.

**Tim Corley/Saba/Jason Yamaoka/3 Simple Words/Jenn Grinels**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**Bayou Brothers**, Gallery at the Marina, 6-10pm.

### sunday • 16

**Chris Smither**, Dark Thirty Productions, Lakeside, 7:30pm. Call 619/463-9622 for reservations.

### monday • 17

**Bayou Brothers**, Patricks II, 9pm.

### wednesday • 19

**Great Big Sea**, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 8pm.

### friday • 21

**Kenny Edwards**, Wynola Pizza Express, Julian, 6-9pm.

**Mark Jackson Band**, Golden Goose Cafe, Lakeside, 8pm.

**Atom Orr/Chuck Schiele and the Mysterious Ways/Patrick Dennis**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**Berkley Hart**, Dizzy's, 8pm.

**7th Day Buskers**, Whistle Stop, 2236 Fern St., 9-11pm.

### saturday • 22

**Billy Walson w/ Robin Henkel**, Coyote Bar & Grill, 300 Carlsbad Village Dr., Carlsbad, 2:30-5pm.

**Stamets Family Singers**, Wynola Pizza Express, Julian, 6-9pm.

**Kahuna Cowboys Jug Band**, Templar's Hall, 14134 Midland Rd., Poway, 7:30pm. Call 858/566-4040 for info.

**Mary Black**, East County Performing Arts Center, 7:30pm.

**Peter Bolland & Broken Hills/Mark Jackson Band**, Claire de Lune, 2906 University Ave., 8pm.

**Kenny Edwards**, Bayou Bar & Grill, 329 Market St., San Diego, 9pm.

### friday • 28

**Young Dubliners**, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 8pm.

**Berkley Hart**, Croce's, 9pm.

### saturday • 29

**José Sinatra & Troy Dante Inferno**, Tio Leos. Call for info.

**Berkley Hart/Eve Selis/Hatchet Brothers**, Casbah. Call for info.

**Bruce Dale Betz**, Wynola Pizza Express, Julian, 6-9pm.

**Bayou Brothers**, Gallery at the Marina, 6-10pm.

**Deborah Liv Johnson/Peggy Watson**, First Lutheran Church, 1420 Third Ave., San Diego, 7:30pm. Call 858/566-4040 for info.

**Cindy Lee Berryhill & Randy Hoffman/Kim Fox & Friends**, Dizzy's, 7:30pm.

**Young Dubliners**, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 8pm.

### sunday • 30

**Zydeco Spring Fling w/ the Bayou Brothers & Friends**—music and cajun food, Dizzy's, 7pm.

### monday • 31

**Bayou Brothers**, Patricks II, 9pm.

## WEEKLY

### every sunday

**7th Day Buskers**, Hillcrest Farmer's Market/DMV parking lot, 10am-1pm.

**Steve White**, Elijah's, La Jolla, 11:30am.

**Celtic Ensemble**, Twiggs, 4pm.

**Extreme Country**, hosted by **Mike Vlack**, 7-10pm, KSON (97.3 FM).

**Jazz Roots**, hosted by **Lou Curtiss**, 9-10:30pm, KSDS (88.3 FM).

**The Bluegrass Special**, hosted by **Wayne Rice**, 10-midnight, KSON (97.3 FM).

### every monday

**Swing Dancing**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 6-8pm.

**Tango Dancing**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 8pm.

**Open Mic Night**, Lestats. Call 619/282-0437 for info.

**Open Poetry Reading**, Twiggs, 8pm.

### every tuesday

**Comedy Experiment**, Lestats, 9pm.

**Zydeco Tuesdays**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 6:30pm.

### every wednesday

**Open Mic Night**, Twiggs. Sign-ups at 6:30pm.

**Hatchet Brothers**, The Ould Sod, 9pm.

**Sue Palmer Trio**, Bayou Bar & Grill, 329 Market St., 6-8pm.

**Bayou Brothers**, Sassafras Bar & Grill, 3667 India St., 6-9pm.

### every thursday

**Will Edwards' Music Show**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**Hep Cat Hoedown w/ Gus Williker**, Incahoots, 9pm.

**Hot Rod Lincoln**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., Call for info.

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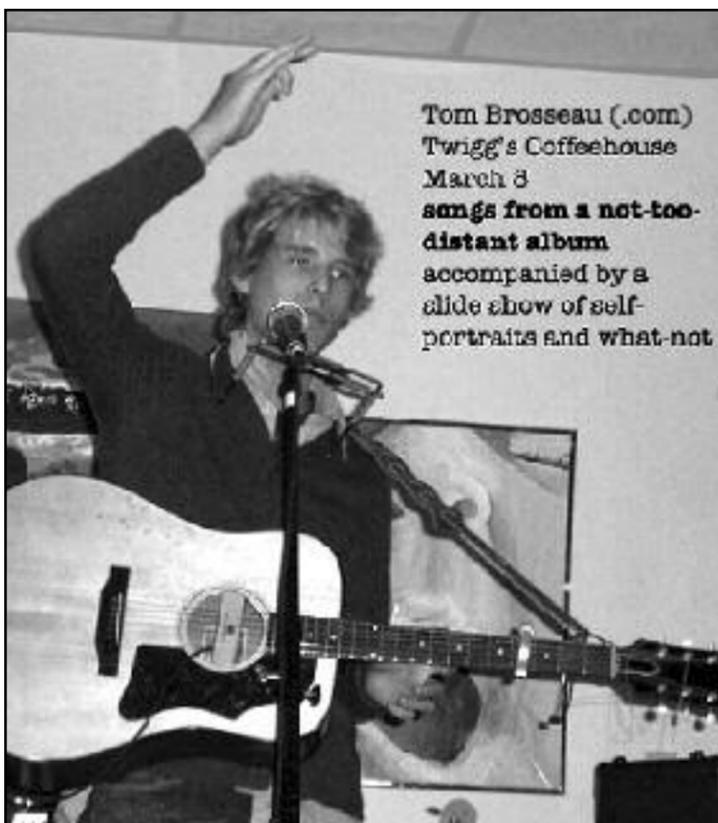
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# the local seen



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& Herb Pedersen
- 7th Day Buskers
- Jon Adams
- Connie Allen & Bill Dempsey
- American Folk Singers
- Bayou Seco  
Ken Keppler & Jennie McLerie
- Curt Bouterse
- Budapest Brothers
- Roy Ruiz Clayton
- Kenny Hall
- Robin Henkel
- Merritt Herring
- Stu & Gloria Jamison
- Frannie Leopold
- Los Californios
- New Lost Melody Boys
- New Smokey Mountain Boys  
Clark Powell & Wayne Brandon
- W.B. Reid
- Tanya Rose
- Mark Spoelstra
- Chris Stuart
- The Tatters
- Steve White
- Mimi Wright
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