

NEW LONDON COUNTY • WINDHAM • HARTFORD • MYSTIC • RHODE ISLAND

Sound Waves

Volume 16

Issue 3

December 2005



**An
Interview with**

TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA



Plus

U2

CLUB LISTINGS

RESTAURANTS

CONCERT INFO

BAND LISTINGS

REVIEWS & MORE

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13 JENNIFER TAYLOR	14 Dinner 7 Days A Week	15 JOHN VALBY	16 ROCK & SOUL REVUE	17 THE REDUCERS
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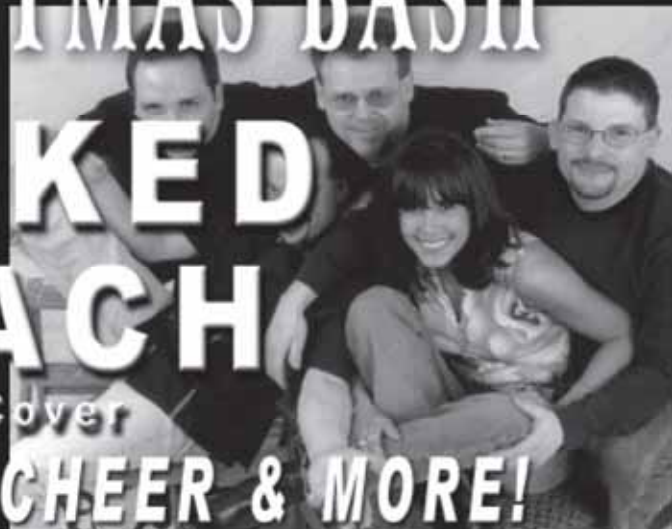
FRIDAY 23rd

CHRISTMAS BASH

**WICKED
PEACH**

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HOLIDAY CHEER & MORE!



NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY



**SUGAR DADDY
BAND**

BUFFET ~ PRIZES

CHAMPAGNE

\$20 Cover

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DON'T
TURN
CHRISTMAS
EVE
INTO
CHRISTMAS
MOURNING



Designate A Driver

**If Your Holiday plans
include alcohol,
pleasedesignate a driver
before the party begins.**

MADD
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MAILBAG



Dear Readers,

Tis the season! There is so much going on and so much to do this month that it seems we are racing along at 100mph. Are there enough hours in the day? Then after the New Year it is recuperating time. The good thing about this area is that there is alot of good entertainment to be found within these pages. So after all the shopping, get out and relax a bit.

There is a new venue that just opened it's doors in New London. **Adagio** is a piano and jazz club that has a great atmosphere with some unique and relaxing entertainment. If anything you have to check out the player baby grand piano. I have to get one of these! The thing is amazing in what it can do. When you go, there is a proper attire strictly enforced. So remember to dress to impress!

Sound Waves Magazine will be entering it's 16th year of publication in 2006! It amazes me how the time flies! We have made it this far because of you the readers. Sound Waves is a free publication because of the advertisers. So remember to say you saw an advertiser's ad within these pages and keep supporting the magazine!

Enjoy the Holiday and New Year. Remember to don't drink and drive.

Wishing Everyone A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year!

David L. Pottie
Editor/Publisher

Sound Waves

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VOLUME 16, NUMBER 3

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⁹ SUGAR DADDY BAND	¹⁰ ZOOM
¹⁶ LOOKWEST THRONE & RENADA	¹⁷ XTREME COMEDY
²³ SPANISH DJ	²⁴ OPEN CHRISTMAS DAY 4pm-closing
³⁰ SHORELINE CONNECTION	³¹ NEW YEARS EVE XTREME COMEDY Plus DJ's GARY & CHRISTINE

JANUARY

Sun	Fri	Sat
¹ EIGHT TO THE BAR New Years Day	⁶ DIRTY DEEDS	⁷ Karaoke & JUSTIN POMFRET
	¹³ WICKED PEACH	¹⁴ COMEDY NIGHT

CONCERT DATES

BARENAKED LADIES

2 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

THE BEACH BOYS

7 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

8 - Chevrolet Theatre, Wallingford, CT

BONNIE RAITT

16 - Foxwoods, Mashantucket, CT

CHRIS ROBINSON

6 - Chevrolet Theatre, Wallingford, CT

CIARA

12 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

CLAY AIKEN

9 - Perf. Arts Ctr., Providence, RI

10 - Chevrolet Theatre, Wallingford, CT

CYNDI LAUPER

18 - Foxwoods, Mashantucket, CT

THE DUKE ROBILLARD BAND

17 - Chan's, Woonsocket, RI

ELLIS PAUL

9 - Wilde Auditorium, Hartford, CT

GLEN CAMPBELL

7,8,9,10,11 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

GWEN STEFANI

12 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

HERMAN'S HERMITS

30,31 - Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, CT

KENNY ROGERS

21 - Palace Theatre, Waterbury, CT

LOU GRAMM

3 - Aqua Turf, Southington, CT

PHIL LESH & FRIENDS

5 - Chevrolet Theatre, Wallingford, CT

POPA CHUBBY

9 - Black-Eyed Sally's, Hartford, CT

10 - Chan's, Woonsocket, RI

TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA

15 - Civic Center, Providence, RI

16 - Civic Center, Hartford, CT

U2

7 - Civic Center, Hartford, CT

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Saturday 17th - **D.O.T.** & Guest

Friday 23rd - **SUPERBALD** & Guest

Friday 30th - **TBA**

Saturday 31st

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Live Bands

Fri	Sat
2 ROCK & SOUL REVIEW	3 GIRL GONE BAD
9 VALENTINO BAND	10 ALTER EGO
16 OUTRIGGERS	17 AUGUSTUS GLOOP
23 STONE WALL	24 
30 Christophers & Staff Wish Everyone A Safe & Happy Holidays	31 LOOSE CHANGE
NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY Celebrate New Years at Christophers as only Christophers can! Music by LOOSE CHANGE Buffet ~ Party Favors ~ Champagne Toast Only \$10 Cover!	

LADIES

All Male Review

Every Wednesday

No Cover Before 9

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Thursday Night

w/ DJ DAVE 9 to close

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Friday 9th

T-RAY

Friday 16th

KURT VOLAND

Saturday 17th

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WED, THURS, FRI, SAT

KARAOKE

SUNDAYS

KARAOKE DANCE PARTY

FOOTBALL ~ FOOTBALL

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& Specials*

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FACE FIRST ~ HELLBORN

SINARIA ~ MORTAL MADNESS

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There's Always Something Going On At The Brookside!

U2

By David Geller

As their 2005 "Vertigo" world tour dizzyingly speeds toward its crescendo this month, U2 visits the Hartford Civic Center on December 7. Like their last tour in 2001, all the shows sold out quickly, most within minutes. Supporting their 11th studio album, "How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb," released in late 2004, they have now played almost 100 arena/stadium shows in North America and Europe this year. They've made appearances at various other events, including the July 2 London "Live 8" show, after which they did a scheduled show that same night in Vienna, Austria. Unlike other bands with such a dynamic presence, they continue to successfully find ways to keep their shows intimate. For example, during this tour, they dedicate the arena floor area to several thousand standing room only, general admission tickets, keeping the price unusually fan friendly and affordable. A circular walkway extends out half way into the floor area, allowing them to mix well with those in the general admission floor area. Connecting with the audience at a spiritual level is what they are about, and they have managed to do so during this tour.

With singer Paul David "Bono [Vox]" Hewson recently nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, spearheading the organization, "ONE," to help curb third world debt, and hobnobbing with world leaders, freedom-fighters, and even the Pope, it makes sense that there is an emotional and spiritual force that translates to their live shows. Of course, U2's amiable lead is often put to task about his self-aggrandizing style. He's far from dumb to the situation. As he said in his November "Rolling Stone" interview, "I'm sick of Bono. And I am Bono. But there it is. At least we're not dull." The fact of the matter is U2 makes things happen. During their October 20 concert stop in Washington D.C., as posted on U2.com, Bono says "I know I'm always going on about Africa, quite understand if you're bored with it - I bore myself..." But the talking works because, he goes on, ".....at the start of this tour we asked for 1 million people to sign up for the ONE Campaign..." The campaign has already surpassed 1 million signatures, and the momentum continues. We should all be so boring. The point is that he walks the talk.

As an entity that expands beyond the music industry, U2 has amassed a resume that is unmatched by any band in the modern music era. Period. No need to argue about this. Yes, speaking strictly music, everyone's taste is unique, and there are endless arguments about which band's catalog is more impressive, who are better musicians, and so on. However, when you look at the handful of bands that can be legitimately argued as the most important, U2 is always there. And as the modern rock era enters its 5th decade, I assert that no other rock group other than U2 has continually produced critically acclaimed music over such an extended period - just over 25 years to be precise. "How

to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb" - a lyrical meditation on the death of Bono's dad in 2001 - is another in its line of thought-provoking and musically adventurous studio albums.

Without a doubt, U2 cuts through multiple generations like no other band. From marketing its first single "Vertigo" via the Apple iPod commercial to the tune "Miracle Drug" praying for medical breakthroughs to negotiating with business leaders and Presidents for financial support of its "ONE" campaign, U2 influences young and old, liberal and conservative.

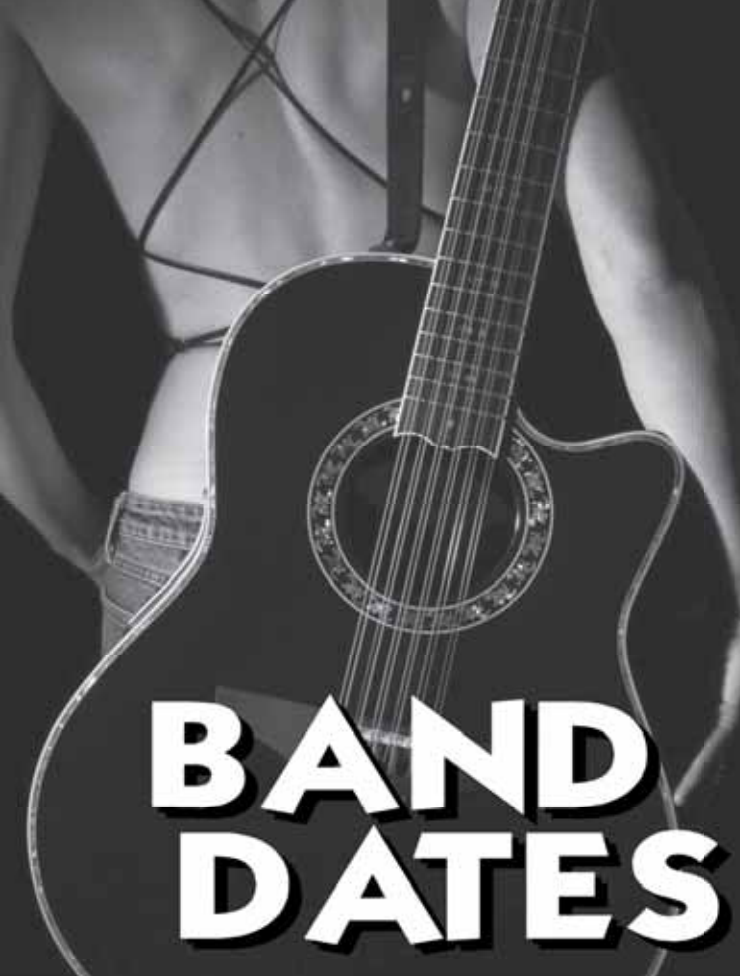
Back to earth, let's not forget that U2 is still focused on playing for their audience. Shocking, particularly in light of the slew of musically stagnant and once great (currently inconsequential) bands from their era and earlier that continue on their nostalgia tours charging a fortune for even the nosebleed seats. Still, U2 often seems grandiose and untouchable. What can you say, except it's an unavoidable outgrowth of such massive fame. But don't despair because there is no doubt when you are at a show, they seek closeness. Technically, they expand their sound in the live venues, and add uniqueness to each show. No wonder they were voted best live act by England's "Q" Magazine recently.

Dave "The Edge" Evans is a guitar scholar, and works continually on his sound. Having over 30 guitars that he brings to each live show, he certainly works with his range. As Edge describes in a September 2005 Toronto Sun interview posted on U2.com, "It's [the current tour] a real guitar player's tour and I'm reveling in that aspect of it." Certainly, a galaxy away from the band that was humbly playing small venues in the Boston era during my college years. Edge goes on to say in the same interview, "but more than that I think the response from the U2 crowd has been overwhelming. Everywhere we've gone it's just been this unbelievable reaction. It's humbling, because it's not us that people are applauding. It's, in some weird way, themselves and their own lives and what those songs mean to them."

Beyond their own music, U2 is a catalyst for young, up and coming bands. Current big names in the modern rock scene, like Franz Ferdinand, have been touted early on by U2 members. As well, their opening bands for this tour are obviously selected for their viability and relevance in the music scene. Kings of Leon supported the whole opening leg of the tour that began this past March and went on through the end of May. Since then, they have played with an endless assortment of great new groups, The Killers, Keane, Doves, Feeder, Dashboard Confessional, Damian Marley, and of course, Franz Ferdinand, to name a few. This is a pretty amazing statement about U2's musical ethic, and the respect these young bands - many of which headline their own shows at this point - have for U2. It is not the norm in the concert scene.

So much has been published about the history of U2. Together without interruption for almost 30 years. Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductees this year. Faith and family oriented, the band remains atypically close. As Bono noted during the October 20 Washington D.C. show, "I have a brother, a brother in the Edge. He spends a lot of time looking after me..."

Continued Page 25
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BAND DATES

DAN STEVENS

2,16 - Perks & Corks, Westerly, RI
 7 - Red Lion, Stockbridge, MA
 8 - Dolphin Striker, Portsmouth, NH
 9 - York Harbor Inn, York Harbor, ME
 10 - Unitarian Church, Meriden, CT 7:30
 11 - Gritty McDuff's, Portland, ME
 30 - G. W. Tavern, Washington Depot, CT
 31 - 1st Night, Bridgeport, CT

DON CAVEN

14,28 - Main & Hopewell, S. Glastonbury, CT
 26 - Poncho's, Wilmington, VT 6-10

FACE FIRST

9 - Brookside Cafe', Preston, CT
 23 - Rick's Billiards, Putnam, CT
 31 - Bank Street Cafe, New London, CT

FIVE FINGER DISCOUNT

3 - Fat Cats Bar, Colchester, CT
 14 - Glock Grill, Higganum, CT
 16 - Knuckleheads, Moodus, CT

GOPHERBROKE

1 - Baci Grille, Cromwell CT 7-11
 2 - School Street Bistro, Westfield, MA 7-11
 3,31 - Ivory Pub, Deep River, CT
 8,22 - Riverwalk, Mystic, CT 8-11
 9 - Main Street Tavern, Old Saybrook, CT
 15 - Cafe Manhattan, Springfield, MA
 17 - GW Tavern, Washington, CT
 24 - Red Lion Inn, Stockbridge, MA 8-11
 29 - Tuscany Grill, Middletown, CT 8:30
 30 - Bidwell Tavern, Coventry, CT

JAMES HARRIS

7,14,21,28 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
 8,22 - Lighthouse Inne, New London, CT
12 SOUND WAVES

9,16,23 - Riverwalk, Mystic, CT 8pm
 13,27 - Harp & Hound, Mystic, CT 8-11

KICK

3 - Rentschler Stadium, E. Hartford, CT
 9 - Geraldines, W. Springfield, MA
 10 - J.R.'s, Cranston, RI
 16 - Murphy & Scarlettis, Farmington, CT
 30 - The Harp, Boston, MA
 31 - The Funway, Foxboro, MA

MIKE SAVINO / THE SONS

1,17,29 - The Ivoryton Tavern, Ivoryton, CT
 2 - The Old Corner Cafe, Naugatuck, CT
 3 - Legends, Bristol, CT
 4,18 - The Driftwood, Clinton, CT
 9,30 - Oliver's Taverne, Essex, CT
 10 - JRoo's, North Haven, CT
 16 - 3W, Litchfield, CT
 22 - Cafe Manhattan, Springfield, MA
 23 - Quality Time, Meriden, CT
 24 - The Black Seal, Essex, CT
 31 - Italian American Club, W. Haven, CT

MORTAL MADNESS

9 - Brookside Café, Preston, CT

RYAN HARTT & THE BLUE HEARTS

22 - Stash's Cafe, New London, CT

SUGAR DADDY BAND

9 - Iron Chef, Essex, CT
 17 - Burkes Tavern, Niantic, CT
 22 - Rookies, Cromwell, CT
 31 - Stash's Café, New London, CT

SUGARFREE

8,29 - Nicola's, Westerly, RI
 13 - Stash's Café, New London, CT 8-11
 23 - The Voodoo Grill, Mystic, CT

2 CAT ZOO

1 - Nicola's, Westerly, RI
 18 - Voodoo Grille, Mystic, CT

WICKED PEACH

2,31 - Hard Rock Cafe, Foxwoods, CT
 23 - Stash's Cafe, New London, CT

WORLD'S SMALLEST QUARTET

2,30 - Angus House, Old Saybrook, CT
 3,17 - Glock Grill, Higganum, CT
 9 - Bidwell Tavern, Coventry, CT
 10 - Adams Mill, Manchester, CT
 16 - Meeting House Pub, Tolland, CT
 23 - Fred's Place, Glastonbury, CT

Any bands wishing to be listed for the month, **MUST** have their dates into **SOUND WAVES** by the **LAST FRIDAY** of every month. **NO** listings will be taken over the telephone. These listings are **FREE!** Mail Listings to the magazine or

FAX them to:

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E-MAIL: Editor@swaves.com

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- Kenny Love



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"Ground Level" is an ambitious musical project from a cast of seasoned musicians that leaves the listener wishing for more. Let's hope Rick Singer and friends will collaborate on more musical projects like this in the future.

 - Sound Waves Magazine

GROUND LEVEL

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Saturday ~ Dec. 17th

CHRISTMAS PARTY

KARAOKE w VAL

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MUSIC NOTES

By Mark T. Gould

Hey Santa, Baby!- Here's Some Great Musical Gift Ideas

It's a place we've all been in. So many people to buy for, and so much to choose from. Here are some recommendations for CDs, DVDs and books, all with a musical flavor, for your holiday shopping:

Bill Lloyd: Horizontal Hold (billlloyd.com) is an eclectic collection of outtakes and demos that this fine writer and singer has accumulated over the years and is now releasing via his web site. I've described Lloyd's music as "Marshall Crenshaw meets the Beatles and they all go to a Poco concert," and this continues that fine tradition. He's a much-underrated gem. **Billy Joel: My Lives (Sony Legacy)** is a four audio, 1 DVD collection spanning his entire, incredible career. The set includes many rare tracks from his early days with the Lost Souls, Attila, and the Hassles, along with demos of a number of tracks, including "Oyster Bay," the seminal "Piano Man," "Miami 2017," and Dylan's "Highway 61 Revisited," plus alternate versions of "Only The Good Die Young," "River of Dreams," and an unreleased live duet of "You May Be Right," with Elton John. Add to that a generous smattering of his recent classical work and the Frankfurt concert previously shown only on the Disney Channel, and it's a real smorgasbord for his many fans. **Professor Louie & The Crowmatix: "The Spirit of Woodstock" (Woodstock)** is just that, but much more, highlighting mostly covers of material recorded by The Band over the years, which makes sense since lead singer Aaron 'Professor Louie' Hurwitz worked with the group in its latter days. Add to this splendid performance, recorded live at the New York State Museum in Albany to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the Festival, the backing of the 'Rock of Ages' horns, many of whom also worked with The Band, and you've got the perfect remembrance of an era. **Good Morning Starshine: The Best of Oliver (Taragon)** is a long overdue, but well worth the wait collections of the popmeister who brought us the mega-hits "Good Morning Starshine," and "Jean." But, as this well put together and documented set shows, he had a much broader range than just those two hits. Among the highlights here is "Come Softly to Me," a duet with Lesley Gore. **Dion: Bronx in Blue (Orchard)** won't be released until just after the New Year dawns, but is a down home, all-acoustic blues album that showcases that still magnificent voice and some of the best chops in the history of rock and roll. **Raise the Roof-A Retrospective: Live from the Barns at Wolf Trap (Wolf Trap)** collects 13

tracks from the 22 albums that have been recorded at that veritable venue, and adds three previously unreleased tracks. Artists include Nils Lofgren, Tom Paxton, Chris Smither, the Nighthawks and others, all captured in an acoustically aesthetic surrounding. **Dolly Parton: Those Were The Days (Sugar Hill)** is a superlative, wide ranging collection of cover songs, from "Crimson and Clover," with Tommy James on guitar and vocal; to "Both Sides Now," backed by Judy Collins, "Turn, Turn, Turn," accompanied by Roger McGuinn, and the title track, performed with original singer Mary Hopkin. Like just about everything else she does, Parton's talent and originality make this work, in spades. **Bob Dylan World Tours 1966-1974 (Music Video Distributors)** is a fascinating, behind the scenes look at the legendary 1966 and comeback 1974 tours with the Band. In between, it focuses on other highlights, and lowlights, of Dylan's career, including his 1966 motorcycle accident, residence with the Band at Big Pink in Woodstock and his first encounter with the Beatles. **Rockin' at the Red Dog (Monterey Video)** showcases a monumental piece of rock 'n roll history with the story of the Red Dog Saloon in Nevada, the place that gave rise to the San Francisco scene in the mid to late Sixties. A "Where Are They Now" feature on the disc brings fans and viewers up to date with these seminal musicians and scene-makers from a wild setting. **Paul Zollo: Conversations with Tom Petty** is a massive, detailed project, setting forth, through a series of interesting, and interested, interviews presented in chronological, book format, the life and times of one of America's premier rockers. In lesser hands, this might be boring as all get out, but Zollo is clearly a fan who did his homework and his probing questioning brings out some startling, wonderful responses from Petty. **Woody Guthrie: This Machine Kills Fascists (Snapper Music)** is a superlative DVD chronicle of the life of our most important singer-songwriter. Narrated by Billy Bragg, the project includes rare performance footage of Guthrie and detailed interviews with Arlo Guthrie, Pete Seeger and manager Harold Leventhal. **Jamie Oldaker: Mad Dogs & Okies (Concord)** is a super collection of artists, ranging from Eric Clapton to Bonnie Bramlett and Peter Dinklage, all acknowledging their debt and interest in the "Tulsa sound" emanating from Oldaker's Oklahoma environs. It's a robust, eclectic series of fascinating performances. **Don McLean: Rearview Mirror (Hyena)** showcases the writing talents of the artist who brought us "Vincent" and the still unbelievable song-story epic "American Pie." Along with those chestnuts, this album includes several unreleased performances from McLean's personal archives, spanning from cowboy songs to the blues, and includes a strong new track, "Run Diana Run." **Thelonious Monk Quartet with John Coltrane at Carnegie Hall (Blue Note)** is absolute, knock you down in your tracks, stunner of a performance of two of the greatest, and most important, jazz artists of the 20th century. The tapes of this November 29, 1957 show were, thankfully, located last year at the Library of Congress, making this find one of the most important jazz releases of the year. **Siegel-Schwall Band: Flash Forward (Alligator)** is this vastly underrated blues band's first new studio recordings

in 31 years, and is well worth the wait. Drummer and relatively new member Sam Lay, who helped start the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, wrote four of the 13 tracks on this great record. If you love the blues, you will love this one. **James McMurtry: Childish Things (Compadre)** was comparatively short in the making, three years, but also very much worth the time. McMurtry, much like his father, author Larry McMurtry, is a superb storyteller who challenges a listener to think and react to his songs. **Jimmie Dale Gilmore: Come On Back (Rounder)** is a wonderful song cycle tribute to his late father's favorite songs from yesteryear. The many styles and influences are strongly presented through Gilmore's distinctive singing and playing. Fans will be happy to note that members of his "other" band, the Flatlanders, accompany him throughout this very satisfying musical journey. **Les Paul & Friends (Capitol EMI)** is a fitting tribute to the 90-year-old guitar innovator. The guest performers, who play on a mix of standards and rock and roll tunes, include a veritable who's who of musicians, all influenced by this seemingly infatigable man. They include Sting, Edgar Winter, Jeff Beck, Buddy Guy, Keith Richards, Steve Miller and Billy Gibbons, testimony to Paul's huge influence on their music, as well as the importance of his. While listening to **The Best of Sam Cooke (RCA/Legacy)**, which features all of his classic tracks, including "You Send Me," "Wonderful World," "Chain Gang," "Having a Party," and a host of others, you can read **Peter Guralnick: Dream Boogie: The Triumph of Sam Cooke.** In it, the author, who wrote the definitive two-volume biography of Elvis Presley among several other important musical histories, traces the up and down life of the singer, tracing through not only Cooke's career but the framework of the times in which he lived. Then, go to the disc for a superb sounding collection of every hit of this most crucial artist of his time. **Rodney Crowell: The Outsider (Columbia)** continues the more stripped away, raw, singular songwriting that he adopted on "The Houston Kid," and "Fates Right Hand," with a terrific song cycle of ballads, rockers and political-tinged songs that cement his well-earned creative genius. **Carly Simon: Moonlight Serenade** might seem, at first blush, to be just another recording of standards, but it is far, far more than that. Reuniting her with uber producer Richard Perry, this is her fourth collection of romantic and pop-oriented work, and, with that gorgeous voice still intact, it's a smash. And, I still don't care who "You're So Vain" is about! **100 Years of Jazz Guitar (Columbia Legacy)** an exhaustive, superb collection of 78 guitarists spread over some 33 record labels, all detailing the rich history of the instrument in this genre. The essays, transcriptions and historical analysis that accompany this treasure trove are worth the price of admission, in itself.

So, run out and grab some of this great stuff, or, at the very least, put it on your holiday wish list. Then, you will rock, roll, swing, stroll and bop into the New Year.





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By Rex Rutkoski

When it comes down to it, art is about touching emotions says Paul O'Neill, creator of the musical phenomenon Trans-Siberian Orchestra (TSO).

And, in this native New Yorker's view, there are three kinds of art:

Bad art, good art and great art.

"Bad art has no effect on you emotionally. You walk past a bad painting and never notice it. Or you don't even hear bad music," says the producer-composer-lyricist.

Good art makes you feel emotions you've felt before, he says.

"Great art, and this is the hardest thing to do, makes you feel an emotion you've never felt before. What does it feel like to be missing a child on Christmas Eve (the subject of one of TSO's songs)? If you can make a listener feel that you've done something. Anger is the easiest emotion to trigger. But laughter, sympathy, all those things are much, much harder to trigger, but the rewards are greater."

And that's what Trans-Siberian Orchestra is going for with a unique two-company (East and West units) holiday tour of America of its rock opera. Their music is "symphonic rock," blending elements of hard rock, Broadway, R&B and classical stylings into TSO's original compositions, symphony excerpts and contemporary adaptations of holiday material.

It is not hyperbole when its publicists suggest TSO is rapidly becoming a modern American holiday tradition.

Their live shows are both critically acclaimed and a box office smash.

Their 2004 holiday tour was number seven in overall top grossing concerts and second in attendance according to industry trade Billboard Magazine, making TSO one of the top live concerts in the United States.

In a span of a few years, TSO has gone from playing medium-sized venues to the largest indoor arenas, even adding shows in many cities.

Through 2004, they had performed to 1.5 million people, from pre-teens to senior citizens, grossing more than \$50

million.

It is anticipated that the '05 season will surpass last year's tour in ticket sales. With one dollar from every ticket going to local charities, and a projected attendance of over 650,000 people, TSO is expected to once again be giving over half a million dollars to charity.

The group has released three critically acclaimed albums, as well as a DVD/Video, "The Ghosts of Christmas Eve." Their 1996 debut release, "Christmas Eve and Other Stories," which remained at number one on the Top Catalog Chart for two consecutive weeks in 2004, is best known for producing the hit "Christmas Eve Sarajevo 12/24." The work is still a staple at radio during the holiday season. It has since been certified double platinum and is annually one of the Top 5 Holiday Records in the U.S. Two years later the band continued its success with another radio hit "Christmas Canon," which was showcased on the 1998 platinum-selling album, "The Christmas Attic."

In 2004 Trans-Siberian Orchestra released "The Lost Christmas Eve," which was certified gold in only five weeks. That CD offers a musical journey of loss and redemption. It centers on a rundown hotel, an old toy store, a blues bar, a gothic cathedral and their respective inhabitants, whose destinies are intertwined during a single enchanted night in New York City.

O'Neill describes it as a story about Christmas and its ability to change endings. "If there's anything in the past that you regret, hopefully this album will give you an excuse to go back and correct it. I think that's what Christmas is about – it gives you an excuse to be kinder, to apologize for a past wrong, to do good," he suggests.

Each Christmas record, says Billboard, is annually a Top Ten best selling holiday record, as well as a Top Ten best selling catalog record in the U.S.

All of which has created considerable demand for TSO. That fact, and the relatively short Christmas season, led to the decision to go with two groups of musicians touring the country.

"It's probably the hardest thing I've ever done in rock'n'roll, and I've been in it for more than 25 years," says O'Neill, who produced two live albums for Aerosmith, promoted every Madonna and Sting tour in Japan, was a guitarist in the Broadway production of "Hair" and was co-songwriter for the rock band Savatage.

"The quality has to be so high with a TSO concert. One TSO tour is complicated. A normal rock band has four or five musicians, or the bigger ones have eight members. We are touring with over 20 band members and singers in each company on stage."

O'Neill describes TSO as something of a hybrid: halfway between a rock group and a touring theatrical Broadway show.

"We like it better that way -- with the impact of all that instrumentation, the dynamics, a full rock band kicking in or going to a single piano. There are a lot of options. It gives the show different dynamics, and there's the story factor which makes all the songs kick in."

The Trans-Siberian Orchestra was formed when O'Neill joined with producer-writer and Buffalo native Robert

Kinkel and songwriter-singer-multi-instrumentalist Jon Oliva to create a modern format for classic Christmas music.

The concept first came to light in 1995 with the track, "Christmas Eve/Sarajevo 12/24," originally heard as a highlight of Savatage's symphonic rock album, "Dead Winter Dead." The contemporary story was set amidst war in the former Yugoslavia.

With the enthusiastic response to the track, O'Neill, Kinkel and Oliva proceeded to interpret and expand on a number of traditional Christmas songs, including "The First Noel" and "O Come All Ye Faithful/O Holy Night."

Released in 1996 as part of its "Christmas Eve and Other Stories" album, the music, along with original compositions such as "This Christmas Day," "An Angel Came Down" and "Old City Bar," became the formal introduction to Trans-Siberian Orchestra.

"The Christmas Attic," the second part of the planned holiday trilogy, told the story of the Lord's youngest angel and its Christmas encounter with a 14-year-old runaway.

TSO offered its first television special, "TSO: The Ghosts of Christmas Eve," an hour-long production featuring Jewel and Michael Crawford in 1999.

As for that "What's in a name?" question, O'Neill replies, "That's a complicated one."

The musicians had finished their first album and needed a name for the group. "It was really, really late at night and we were all really tired," he says. "I had been in Siberia in the '80s and thought it was staggeringly beautiful and incredibly harsh and unforgiving. It blew me away. The only thing everybody had in common was the Trans-Siberian Railroad. In life, music is one thing everyone has in common, one thing everybody in the world knows."

O'Neill says the power of music is staggering. "You can cross just so many country and ethnic lines. It's an amazing thing: a great song is a great song. They can cross bridges and divides," he says.

The holiday season has its own power says O'Neill, who considers himself very much a Christmas person. "From a very early age I learned that there is something about this day that causes people to act strange in a really good way. Both sides stopped fighting on Christmas day during wars. There is some kind of incredible magic on this day that seems to transcend time and location. We want to give the other guy a break on Christmas. It's fascinating."

TSO is about an ideal, O'Neill explains. "It is doing whatever it takes to make the music great. We have no limitations. The line-up is fluid. Because of that we are able to bring in whatever voice or instrumentation we need."

The program features music from "Christmas Eve And Other Stories" performed in its entirety in the first half. "All the poetry read between the songs really works great," O'Neill says. "I was a little nervous about it the first year because it had not been done before. But it flows seamlessly. The stories are really easy to understand. They come off great."

It reminds me of when I was a kid and I saw 'Jesus Christ Superstar' live."

In the second half, TSO can draw from highlights from

Continued Page 24



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HEARING AID

EURYTHMICS

"Ultimate Collection"

J Records

I was babysitting last week when I had an initial listen to the much anticipated "Ultimate Collection" from music legends, Eurythmics. This duo, combining Annie Lennox's lyrical and vocal charisma with Dave Stewart's musical sensibility and mastery, has been enormously influential for over two decades. For sure, it's a veritable trip down memory lane. For some it will be an album to blast while pre-drinking gin and tonics with your group of 20 or 30-something year old friends on a Friday night. For others, it will remain a guilty pleasure. Nevertheless, whether in public or private, this is one to savor. In my case, I gave it a listen while flipping grilled cheese sandwiches and dancing around the kitchen.

The album, comprised of 19 tracks, including the two previously unreleased, "I've Got a Life" and "Was it Just Another Love Affair," hurtled me into a sort of bizarre time warp. Though their general sound is so signature, it's surprisingly tough to describe. They created pop music that is electronic and avant-garde, light-hearted but fierce, operatic and anthemic. "Sweet Dreams," "Would I Lie to You," "Sisters are Doing It For Themselves," and a slew of other hit singles are delightfully strung together and sandwiched between the two new tracks. You can't ask for anything better than that. Each song was re-mastered by Stewart himself, providing a truly authentic and, of course, ultimate, collection of this band's work.

Understandably, I haven't thought of this two-some in a while, as they've been out of the spotlight since the release of "Peace" 5 years ago. After a complete listen, though, I realized that the degree to which this band has not only made a name for themselves, but also influenced countless others across the music spectrum, is impressive. It's significant that Lennox and Stewart's musical creations were so esteemed that a variety of more modern artists have produced their own versions of these classics. To name a few, there have been P. Diddy, Pink, Faith Evans, and most notably, Marilyn Manson, with his version of "Sweet Dreams." Imitation is the highest form of flattery, right? Still, I couldn't help having a poignant moment

watching kids I was babysitting for. Marilyn Manson, to them, is considered old. The idea that they may not grow up with the ground breaking originals of Eurythmics as part of their own life soundtracks made me a bit nostalgic.

In the end, however, I spoke to soon. When their father got home a few hours later he was thrilled to see my copy of this disc on the kitchen table. He told me that a few months before he had let the 13 year old listen to one of his old Eurythmics records. When I asked if he had liked it, the dad replied that he had been totally into it. In fact, he had gone right away to download a few songs to his MP3 player. Cheesy as it sounds, I went home happy. The classics will always persevere through the generations. That's what makes them classic.

This band has been around for 25 years, has won innumerable awards, and has achieved a huge amount of worldwide recognition and respect. A listen to this album will not only take you back, but will also really allow you to appreciate Eurythmics as the force that they are and the impact that they've had. They were, and as "Ultimate Collection" proves, still are an extremely relevant duo.

- Karyn A. Gray

KATE TAYLOR

"Beautiful Road"

Front Door Records

Kathleen Edwards

"Back To Me"

Zoe/Rounder

There is nothing better in recorded music than a singer with the voice and the material to make a self-assured, head-turning, yet, at the same time, low-key, album that makes a listener sit up and take notice. And, when both the veteran Kate Taylor, and the relative newcomer Kathleen Edwards release such spellbinding gems at the same time, well, listeners are in for a real treat.

Taylor, continuing to be armed with the beauty, grace and dignity that she's had since she came on the scene with her more well known brothers James and Livingston over three decades ago, interprets, wraps herself around and breathes stunning life into songs mostly written by her late manager and husband, Charlie Witham. Accompanied by Tony Garnier (who co-produced), Stuart Kimball and Larry Campbell from Bob

Dylan's band; the incomparable Levon Helm (on mandolin rather than drums); keyboardist Chuck Leavell; and the glorious voices of Mavis Staples and brother James, Kate Taylor delivers a personal, heartfelt, amazing performance.

The same can be said, in spades, for Edwards, whose "Back to Me" is only her second solo release, following her incredible debut, "Faller," from two years ago. Like her first release, and, frankly, like Taylor has done for her longer career, Edwards can both flat rock out and, then, with just a few softer words, pare back her delivery to reach the same punch, but in a much more subtle way. The title track, "Back To Me," kicks off, while the wistfulness of "Old Time Sake" and "Summerlong," and the heartache of "Independent Thief" and "Away" display the gamut of emotional delivery of talent at the very top of her game.

So, whether it's through three decades of Kate Taylor's experience, or the two albums of Kathleen Edwards, these two remarkable women set the standard, and the bar, very, very high, indeed.

- Mark T. Gould

Both: ***** 1/2

ROLLING STONES

"Singles 1968-1971"

ABKCO Records

This, the third and final volume of the limited edition boxed sets of Rolling Stones' singles, showcases the first major transition in the band's history, when Mick Taylor replaced founding member Brian Jones as lead guitarist. As such, the music contained on these nine discs, stands as reminder of the seamlessness, and challenges met, of that change.

The set begins with the always incredible "Jumpin' Jack Flash," which returned the Stones to their glorious rock and roll roots after their madcap sidetrack into psychedelia with "Their Satanic Majesties Request." The rest of the releases, from "Street Fighting Man," to "Honky Tonk Women," to "Brown Sugar" are clear evidence that, with either Jones or Taylor, the moniker of "The Greatest Rock 'n' Roll Band In the World" was a lot more than hype.

This final box also delivers a bunch of special goodies, as well, including the hard to find "Memo From Turner," from Sir Mick Jagger's movie "Performance;" the recent remixes of the classic Beggars Banquet track,

"Sympathy For The Devil;" and a bonus DVD which contains the original promo film for "Jumping Jack Flash," a 1964 performance of "Time Is On My Side" from the Ed Sullivan Show, a live 1967 version of "Have You Seen Your Mother, Baby, Standing in the Shadow?" and a 2003 video of the Neptune remix of "Devil."

The Rolling Stones went on, of course, to many, many more years of greatness following the years covered in this, and the other two boxed sets preceding it, and may well have still many, many more years of great music and performances still to come. Yet, these great tracks stand testimony to their phenomenal output in the first decade of their amazing musical journey.

***** - Mark T. Gould

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Masters of Horror"

Immortal Records

When I was first informed that I would be writing a review on "Masters of Horror" I was afraid I would be reviewing a double CD set of nothing but metal. However, "Masters of Horror" is surprisingly diverse, featuring work by bands like Shadows Fall and Mastodon, all the way to an acoustic version of "Division ST" by Thursday. While the diversity of the music on this record makes it extremely difficult to talk about as an album, it makes it quite a pleasure to listen to. Whether you prefer death metal or acoustic music, this album offers something for almost any listener.

"Masters of Horror" is a double disc compilation album featuring many of today's most prolific rock bands. Each of these bands has a very distinct sound, and although this makes the album a very interesting listen, it detracts greatly from the overall continuity of the album. While this fact is true of most compilations, most compilations also have a very definite genre that the album sticks to. "Masters of Horror," although prominently a metal album, sports a fair variety of musical styles, which occasionally flow well in and out of one another, and occasionally clash a little bit.

However, considering the varying styles on this album, the song arrangement is done masterfully. For instance, the hard and fast "Keith the Music" by Every Time I Die manages to flow well into Matchbook Romance's almost all acoustic "In Transit (For You)" due to the intro in the beginning of "In Transit (For You)." The ability of this album to combine greatly differing

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genres of music in a way that is for the most part harmonious and seamless is very impressive. The musical diversity of this album also facilitates growth in musical taste for those who listen to it. Fans of hardcore and metal are exposed to softer and more melodic music, while listeners of the more melodic bands on this album are exposed to some of today's best metal bands. This is great in an age when genres of music are very exclusive of one another and have become quite homogenous.

If you are a fan of modern rock music, I highly recommend this album.

Although this is more suited to fans of more aggressive music, it definitely has something for fans of more melodically driven rock as well. "Masters of Horror" does something that compilations seldom do by pushing the boundaries of genre while still maintaining its hard-hitting edge.

***** - Wyatt Shibley



***** Excellent

Highly Recommended

Good Addition to Collection

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COVER STORY CONTINUED

their "The Christmas Attic," "Beethoven's Last Night," their first non-holiday release, among other selections.

O'Neill is flying back and forth between various companies. "Each album takes about 100 musicians to create. In the past a lot of guys got left behind. That's another reason why we decided to take all the musicians and singers working with us and put two separate groups touring the east and west coasts."

There are a lot of visuals. "We grew up in rock'n'roll. We bring a big light show," he says. "There is a lot of action on stage. In every city where we can the band comes out after the show and hangs out. We like to break the wall down between audience and band."

This is a good show for families too, he says. "To me great music crosses all generations and divides. There is a classical theatrical edge to TSO. The audience is incredibly mixed. There are kids in rock t-shirts and their parents and their parents."

"A lot of record companies are corporate-owned and corporations like to pigeonhole everything and say certain music is for certain age groups. But I think if you write music for the sake of trying to create great music everyone can find something they like."

"We just worry about the music and stories and try not to worry about whatever is popular at the moment, or whatever is the fad. We believe if you just care about the music everything else will come. You try to remember you are trying to create magic for people."

TSO is always looking to create as much magic and elicit as much emotional response as possible, he says. Since Sept. 11, he believes that is needed more than ever. "With Christmas there is a little extra edge. People are even a little more open to magic and being enchanted."

SIDEBAR:

The Trans-Siberian Orchestra's Robert Kinkel has worked with artists ranging from Aerosmith and the Who to the Police and Genesis.

The Buffalo native is the TSO's co-writer/producer, keyboardist, orchestrator and musical director.

He has scored music for MTV, Nickelodeon, Al Franken's "Why Not Me" (book on tape), and AT&T and Verizon.

He began piano lessons at 8, becoming active in music and theater.

Kinkel earned a B.A. in music and a minor in physics at Hamilton College. In 1978 he received a full scholarship to study solid state physics from Columbia University.

In 1981, he began working in the music industry, going to the Record Plant Studios in New York City to learn engineering and production.

In the early '90s he began collaborating with Paul O'Neill and created and produced the hit "Christmas Eve (Sarajevo 12/24)," which first appeared on the Savatage album "Dead Winter Dead."

The success of the song led to the creation of the Trans-Siberian Orchestra.

Editor's Note: CPTV is showing a special on this band during the month of December. Check it out. It is an excellent special.

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U2 Continued

The band was formed in 1976 when Bono, Edge and bassist Adam Clayton responded to a flyer that 14-year old drummer Larry Mullen Jr. posted on his Dublin area Mount Temple High School bulletin board. The four, gathering in Larry's kitchen, along with Edge's brother, Dik, formed a band, and named themselves Feedback. Dik Evans left the band shortly thereafter. In 1978, desiring a shorter, snappier name, they changed their name to U2. During those few years of developing from a not so good cover band to original recording artists, Paul McGuinness, still their manager today, discovered them at Dublin's Project Art Center in 1978. Releasing their full-length debut, "Boy," in 1980, they quickly began struggling for a group identity.

Embraced early on in the States by the college crowd, particularly in the Boston area, their music came across as hard rock with a pseudo-punk attitude. However, the group's Catholicism-based spiritual undertones cried out to be heard. Their ideas stood out a bit more on the songs in their second release, "October." The message was resoundingly received by the world on their third album "War." Anthem-like socio-political songs like "Sunday Bloody Sunday" and "New Year's Day" elevated their game. Now they had a universal audience hearing its faith-grounded statements. From there, it was a fast uphill climb. With a growing reputation as one of the elite live bands, their recording success began to follow and peaked in 1987 with "The Joshua Tree." Of course, they have maintained their stature and high level of music throughout, but no one could have predicted the renewed fervor that ensued after 2000's "All That You Can't Leave Behind." It became a rebirth of their identity to a new generation.

As a group, U2 has cleverly exposed their inner demons and hopes through their music. Yet it is impressive, as our entertainment culture has become exponentially more intrusive with the explosion of the internet, that the group remains reasonably humble and true to their core. While much of today's media machine looks for whatever dirt it can shovel to empty the shelves, when Bono or U2 are covered on a popular magazine, like the recent "Rolling Stone" issue, I'd say that people aren't hoping to find those hidden personal secrets that will bring them down a notch. Rather, with U2 I think it is the opposite. They want to hear how they are succeeding with their causes and maintaining stable group and personal relationships. They are a media anomaly. Like the stock market indices during the 1980's and 1990's, their career has had many peaks and a few valleys, some personal bumps and scrapes, but limited professional controversy. Unlike the stock market, they are continuing strong into the new millennium.



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