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Commercial Freedom

For two years, I've been getting a busy signal. An incessant annoyance that reminds me that I share my radio station with eight million other New Yorkers. Engaging disc jockeys tell me to make requests yet I can never get through. I know all the answers in the trivia contests that offer wonderful prizes, yet I can never seem to be the "first caller." I can't even be a caller.

Ah, the days of yore, when WCDB DJ's picked up my ringing phone — an achievement itself — and then actually played my request. Played it! I didn't appreciate this fine service until I left and moved to New York City. From then on, my relationship with FM radio had deteriorated badly.

One station claims it has "less commercials and more music," though all I ever hear is that this Bud is for me, Coke is it, and every day of the month belongs to me with Midol. Another station offers "More commercial free music than any other," though it inundates me with acne solutions, Miller time all the time, and adventures in the Navy. A third offers me New York's Best Rock, but it's more like New York's best commercials.

WCDB offered musical peace — with no commercial interruption.

And then there's the music, when these commercial stations find time to play it. My record collection had a wider variety than the playlists of most of those New York stations. In the small space allotted to music, commercial radio plays the same few commercial tunes.

Ah, the days of yore, when WCDB played The Jam next to Led Zeppelin next to John Cale next to Bowie. Let me tell you lucky folks still in the comforting clutches of the college years: enjoy your non-commercial radio station while you've got it. These people may not be as "professional" as those at profit radio, but I'll take amateur playlists for 24 hours a day over commercial playlists for ten anytime. On top of all that it rings when you call and these people actually talk to you.

Jay Gissen
Class of '80

WCDB Airwaves 91 FM Program Guide — Fall, 1982

Andrew Carroll
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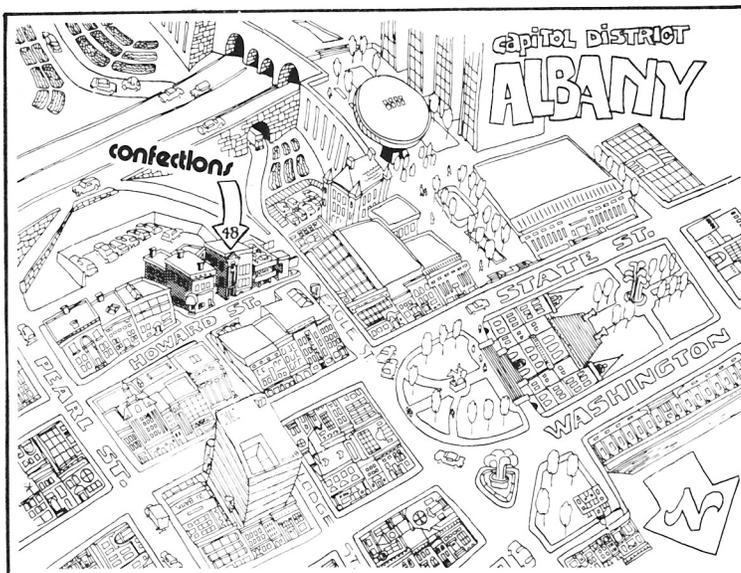
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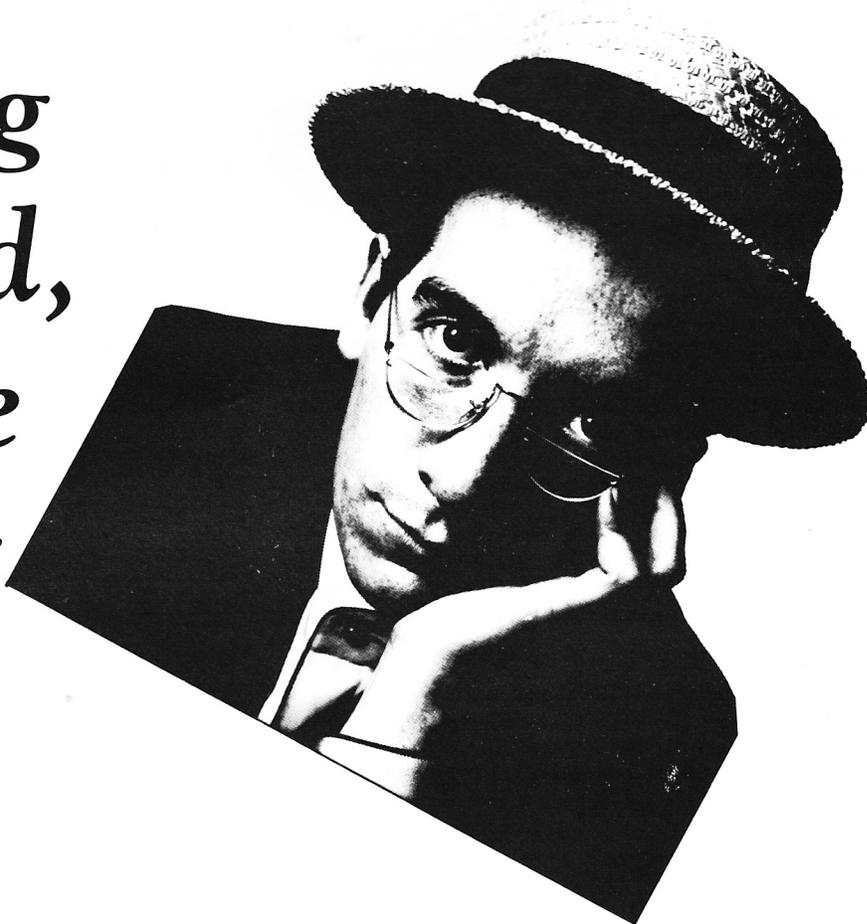
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Just Down From The Grinch



The king was dead, long live the king



E c o L s t V e l l o S

by Bob O'Brian

Imagine, if you will, the western world six years ago. The biggest thing in Washington was Elizabeth Ray, hair, male and female, was layered, bell bottoms were beginning to look really stupid, and "art-rock" bands had out-cerebralized themselves with self-indulgent "concepts" ranging from the sublime to the silly. Six years ago, in a word, boring. It was mid-decade. A couple of bands out of New York were beginning to change all of that, but it

X, *Under the Big Black Sun*

Their first on a major label and there's no hint of compromise. Exene's vocals are the strongest they have ever been, and although the three song *Death Suite* is kind of a drag, their rockin' *Matrimonial Romanticism* is still the best combination of lyrics and beat around. —C.M.

wasn't until the following summer—from our cousins across the Atlantic—that the Western world felt the tumult of angry and articulate British expression; realistic, but condensed nonetheless. All of which the journalists and rock propagandists decided to call the New Wave. You know all the details.

One detail was an Irish-Anglo ex-computer programmer with thick glasses, a slight build and an ill-fitted tweed suit. He could've been named Poindexter, but he was christened Declan Patrick McManus and he played guitar. To some, he was offensive; a ludicrous attempt to marry Buddy Holly's sentimental nerdism with Dylan's anger and worst of all, he had ripped off the name of the just cold king of rock 'n roll. He called himself 'Elvis'. Many thought him pretender to the throne, others decided just to listen to the music.

"Romeo was restless, he was ready to kill. He jumped out the window, 'cuz he couldn't sit still."

The first album, *My Aim Is True* did

not go unnoticed by album-oriented rock stations. Even a few AM stations were known to air the bittersweet "Alison," Elvis' empathetic ballad to a friend, maybe one-time lover which includes one of the most touching lyrics of our day:

"... I know this world is killing you."

For me, "Less than Zero" with its ghoulish characters and strange settings is a particularly strong cut, musically and lyrically, second only to the apocalyptic "Waiting for the End of the World," peopled once again with bizarre characters and equally surrealistic situations.

The following spring, *This Year's Model* was released, already a departure from the previous LP, first because of Elvis' new band, the Attractions, second, because, the lyrics on *Model* were even more scathing, more misogynous, and the music itself was even more danceable.

"Those daily tranquilizers, those disco

(continued next page)

GOING 100

A flick of a switch ends years of frustration

It's been nearly 2½ years since I first set foot on WCDB's soil and the memory is still a vivid one. It was the end of my first year at SUNY and I decided that it was about time for me to check out the station which I had spent a good deal of my freshman year listening to. I ventured up to the third floor of the campus center, knocked nervously on the door and was greeted by a guy adorned in tight black pants, pointed black boots and a Clash t-shirt. So far it was pretty much what I had expected.

He invited me in, showed me what the place had to offer and I immediately decided that I should have made this trip a lot sooner. The studios were impressive and I enjoyed being led around as he continued to fill me in on what the station was all about. Finally, after about 20 minutes, the tour was over and he wrapped things up by saying "and we're going to be increasing our power to 100 watts real soon."

That's where our story begins.

WCDB has been increasing its power "real soon" for about three years and nobody knows that better than the station members who work here. Our hopes have been raised more times than

(from page 4)

synthesizers, ... all this, but no surprises from this year's girl...

No canon of commercialata was left unassailed on *This Year's Model*, the denouncement being "Radio, Radio." The title says it all.

Almost on schedule *Armed Forces* arrived in early 1979. This album, originally entitled *Emotional Fascism* is, to date, Elvis' most thematic. For those seeking heart-felt statements about the

Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, *The Message*

Frightening rap classic that defines the summer of 1982. The chilling synth-riff starkly underlies the message and power of the ghetto, and the furious five subtly catch the beat. The references to fag (4 times) are also scary but its all part of the rage. — C.M.

by Rick Francolini

anyone cares to remember, only to have them shattered when we found ourselves confronted with a new obstacle.

Everyone has heard of bureaucracies before, but WCDB has been entwined in red tape that is unimaginable. The details are no longer important. What matters is that after three long years, we've finally untangled the mess and now 100 watts is a reality.

As the excitement began to mount there was only one major problem: no one was really sure how much of a difference it was going to make. Discovering that our new signal would carry all the way down to Quail instead of stopping at Ontario was a fear that has plagued me on many different occasions. However, my mind was eased when we moved into our first phase of equipment tests. A phone call from a listener in Bennington, Vermont was a solid indicator that we weren't going to be let down. You won't pick us up on Long Island but reception difficulties at the corner of Washington and Lake will be a thing of the past.

For the students who work at the sta-

tion, the power increase will provide a renewed incentive. Station members don't get paid for their long hours. Instead, we're motivated by the satisfaction which results from accomplishing the goals we set for ourselves. Our inability to increase our wattage was a frustration which had been gnawing at us for too long. The cement holding everyone together was gradually beginning to become undone but now there will be a new force motivating us. This is one of those goals I've been referring to and now it has finally been attained. One more hurdle has been overcome since we first signed on as WSUA back in February of 1963.

If you've been an avid listener for a long time, you'll appreciate the difference immediately. If poor reception was the only obstacle preventing you from tuning in, now's your chance to make up for lost time. Finally, if you've never bothered flipping your dial over to 91FM, it's time to give us a try. Don't waste your time weeding through commercials — check out some new music instead and who knows — maybe **you'll** end up making that trip up the campus center stairs too.

oppressed peoples of the world, *Armed Forces* is a disappointment. The wars are local. The crises, personal. Even "Oliver's Army" which is a veritable guide to high-tension areas around the world describes one man's angst as he peruses the best option to channel his aggression.

Cut to August, 1982. Last night, as a matter of fact, at the 12th Avenue pier in Manhattan, Elvis sang to the multitudes and to the U.S.S. Intrepid, docked there for good at New Amsterdam's West Side concert arena. I got close enough to the stage to see Elvis' spittle issue forth as he sang "Hand in Hand," "Secondary Modern," and the unforgettable clutching of the mike stand during "Alison." The moon was at three-quarters; Elvis is mellow but still volatile. No vendettas against his audience.

Following the release of *Armed Forces* in 1979, Elvis kept a low profile, then ushered in the 80s with *Get Happy*. The

release of this album marked, I feel, a transition in Elvis' career. It was discovered, for instance, that the sardonic Mr. Costello desperately needs the human touch and is a real Motown fan. Then, he was off in another direction, covering Hank Williams' songs and likened by critics to Cole Porter. Pretty soon, it'll be mid-decade again. The fecund roots of Rock 'n Roll will yield a new crop of inspired, angry young men and women and the harvest will shock the ears of pop listeners. There's no telling what will become of Elvis II. He may become dated. He may become unpopular. But he will not be ignored; not by the real fans who've been with him since '77.

An orphaned single, "Wednesday Week" provides an insightful epigram into Elvis' career:

*"You're fantastic, you're terrific
You're excellence is almost scientific."*

“Why don’t you play something good?”



Wherein a college disc jockey learns that hell hath no fury like a listener scorned

by Rob Edelstein

If there’s one thing I didn’t develop in my 10-month career as a WCDB deejay, it’s a firm sense of security. Even after countless shows, and a leaping growth in self-confidence, the assumption that “everything’s O.K.” always eluded me. I would toss and turn for hours on the night before a morning show and then arrive late, leaving me little time to pick albums. After missing one of the first five segues [you’ve probably heard this obscure radio term in several conversations, but have been too embarrassed to find out the meaning. Simply put, it is “the way in which one song ‘blends’ or ‘doesn’t blend’ into another song on radio”], I’d take a good half-hour to calm myself into a decent rap. At night, I’d dream of walking into the station late and finding no one around, no record in the library and a skipping song on the turntable.

From all this information, one might assume that my biggest fear while being on the air is a “long telephone call.” I give those words quotes because a long call in this situation only has to be a minute or so-long enough to distract one from an already disturbed train of thought. However, seeing as I love the telephone—and also keeping in mind my dj-duty—I usually tried to let the talker talk on.

And it was with this attitude that I answered the phone on a certain March morning as a typical Elvis Costello song [standard length—two minutes four

seconds] rocked in the background.

“Ninety-one ef em.”

“Yeah, uh, I got a question for ya.”

“Sure. Go ahead.”

“Yeah, uh, why is it that you play the stuff that you play?”

At this point I figured I could certainly kiss my next segue [remember?] goodbye. I could sense that E.C. was beginning to fade so I just threw on whatever I had in my hand while stalling the caller. I cued up the tune and looked for the song length. Two minutes thirty-four seconds. More trouble.

“O.K., so what have you got against the music we play on this station?”

“Well, it’s O.K., I guess. It’s just that since you are the SUNYA radio station, you should at least play what the SUNYA students want to hear.”

“Oh, I see. And what, pray tell, do the students of SUNYA want to hear on their radio station?”

“You know, some REO, some AC/DC. More top forty and more metal.”

“I see, and when did you say was the last time you took a scientifically controlled survey of the SUNYA students?”

“C’mon man, you know I didn’t take any survey.”

“Well then, where are you getting your facts from?” I asked nervously. The song was nearing its last chorus and I searched in every direction for the one album I always pull—an old Traffic record, which comes equipped with a jock’s best friend—thirteen minutes of the “The Low Spark of High Heeled Boys.” I found it, slapped it down, and kissed another segue good-bye.

“Just take a look around you,” continued the voice on the other end. “Everyone wants to hear good stuff.”

“You know, everyone can just turn the dial to the right if they want and listen to the good stuff on another station.”

“But that’s just the point. If you’re

SUNYA’s radio station, then you should, as I said, play what we all want to hear.”

“First of all, I don’t think everybody wants to hear top forty and metal. Second of all, don’t you understand the whole beauty of college radio? We may be SUNYA’s, but we’re also commercial free. Because of this, we can be the ‘rock alternative.’”

“What does that mean?”

“That means we introduce the records before the big stations pick them up and play them out. Commercial stations watch us for new trends. Have you ever heard of the Go-Go’s?”

“Sure. They’re pretty good. They just put out an album.”

“Correction. They’re really good and the album they just put out has been getting lots of airplay at ‘CDB for about 10 months now.”

The door opened suddenly, followed by the words, “What the hell is going on here? We’re all waiting to hear your next example of creative programming.”

The rather tall promotions director of WCDB was now looking at me strangely, and for good reason. The place was a shambles.

“Hold on,” I said to the phone and told promo-man to talk to the guy. I had done all I could without jeopardizing the station’s reputation any further. I spent the rest of the show, and really the rest of the day as well, wondering if being a jock was worth the anxiety that I always place on myself. I eventually concluded that it was. It gives one a good chance to say something which may change some people’s attitudes.

Well, that’s all for me. Gotta go now. Song’s fading out...

Go-Go’s, Vacation

In which our five bathing-suit clad heroines ride the crest of the new wave right to the bank . . . damn catchy, though. — J.I.

Men at Work, *Business as Usual*

Unlike their compatriots, this Australian band has found success in the U.S. without relying solely on decibels. This debut LP combines bright harmonies, refreshing melodies, and an intelligent use of sax & flute (credit band member Greg Ham) over a compelling reggae-tinged rhythmic base — one that should be around for quite some time.

— I. & P.



Your guide to great radio: WCDB 91FM

Notes from the underground



Ginny said when she was just
5 years old
There was nothing happening at
all
Everytime she puts on a radio
There was nothing going down
at all, not at all
Then one fine morning
she puts on a New York
station
You know she couldn't believe

what she heard at all
She started shaking to that
fine fine music
You know her life was saved
by rock and roll
— The Velvet Underground

This verse really represents
the dream of every radio station
on the dial, i.e. to transfuse its
love and conviction in what it's

doing to someone else. This
dream is especially desired and
difficult in college radio, where
there is no money behind the
actions—just a faith, sometimes
wrong and misguided, in that
what they're doing is somehow
right and also needed. In all of
radio the most successful
transfusion that comes to my
mind is the old ['78,'79,'80]

WCDB and rock and roll

Three words describe 75 percent of WCDB's programming: rock and roll. WCDB puts a lot of thought and effort behind the music it plays and we think if you give our brand of rock and roll a chance you'll like it as much as we enjoy playing it.

Granted, if you're an avid listener of the local top-40 station, you need not apply to WCDB, but if you've gotten tired of the repetition and advertising that commercial radio brings, we offer a refreshing change of pace. Besides the fact we have no commercials, ever, WCDB brings with it a unique

philosophy of music, not readily found in many radio stations, commercial or otherwise. We feel there is a hell of a lot of great music out there and we don't think you should be confined to listening to predefined musical standards set up by consulting firms across the country.

So here's the musical question: just because you, the listener, like Joy Division, why can't you hear The Who? Just because you like The Rolling Stones why can't you hear Adam and the Ants? To answer, we at WCDB say we don't know

why most people in the radio industry think that way. We think it's about time we gave you a chance. A chance to hear the bands you already know and like played right next to the ones you're going to like in the future. We're here to play good music from yesterday and established bands right next to good music of tomorrow from not so well known ones. Don't you think it's about time you gave yourself a chance to get all of the music scene and not just a small, predefined picture? If so, give us a chance too.

WPIX-102 in NYC. PIX had energy that transcended the medium of radio similar, I suppose, to when Alan Freid started out in the 50's, and a whole generation was "saved by rock and roll."

This brings us to *Notes From the Underground*, heard weekly on WCDB. The show is devoted to what's been dubbed as "new music." Since our station concentrates very heavily on new music anyway, it would be foolish and ultimately boring to just "spin" records. Instead, what we try to do is instill creativity and listener involvement into that old routine, creating a spirit which matches the energy of the music itself.

The show is divided into three parts; first is *The 10 Most*, a countdown of the ten songs getting the most attention at the station that week. Next comes our special section called *Noteworthy*. During this part of the show we feature an important aspect of the new music scene, always with a strong sense of the past. Specials last year ranged from interviews with X, Bow Wow Wow, and Albany's own A.D.'s--to features on The Velvet Underground, The N.Y. Dolls, and a three week special on Sun Records and the birth of rockabilly. Already planned this semester are features on rap, and Iggy Pop and the Stooges. During the final part of the show we play the records that either were too new to have made *The Ten Most* or are more experimental (ranging from hardcore to art-funk) than the new music mainstream and deserve special attention. Also included during *Notes* is an

(continued next page)

The Third World Alternative

In the past three years, WCDB's Third World program has developed a listenership that can only be described as phenomenal for a 10 watt college station. One of the major reasons for the popularity of the program is of course the music. The combination of urban contemporary and third world music crosses all social, racial and age boundaries. The fact is substantiated by the frequent mailings received from those who listen to and support the programming.

Another factor in the program's popularity is the effective blend of professionalism and creativity. This is something found throughout the station in general, but which is especially important for the Third World format, because of the absence of a commercial station of that nature in the Capitol District. The Third World staff has successfully provided our listenership with the quality of professional radio while maintaining the diversity, progressiveness and *alternative* format for which college radio is known.

The concept behind Third World is to promote music whose roots are primarily in-

Black America, the Caribbean and Latin America. As a result you will hear Disco, Rhythm and Blues, Jazz, Salsa and other latin music, Reggae, Calypso, and any forerunners or offsprings to these musical art forms.

In addition to the musical aspect, Third World attempts to provide educational features and information to the community. News and Public Affairs are an essential part of any programming that purports to speak to the needs of the Third World community. Third World recently added a newscast, created as a weekly update of news and events that affect minorities in Albany and throughout the state and country.

A Friday night, hour long dance program called "Midnight Madness" features brand new music introduced through the most innovative mixes by the best DJs from New York, Boston and the Tri-City area.

Third World at 91FM also sponsors Wednesday night discos in the SUNYA campus Rathskellar. This gives the students a chance to party to the sounds of their "home" station.

"Music in the Park", a series held in Washington

Park during the summer puts Third World in touch with the community. Our aim is to serve not only the SUNYA campus but the entire Capital District area, by providing a service not available on a daily basis anywhere in the area. That's the meaning of "alternative."

In order for this type of program to continue and to expand, the Third World staff must do the same. We need people who are interested in music, announcing, newsreporting, writing, public affairs, promotion and production. No experience is necessary. You've come to

SUNYA to learn and you can do the same at 91FM. However, it means commitment and dedication. We want to increase the diversity in our music format and features. This means DJs who have, or are willing to acquire a broad knowledge of music from the entire Third World. This means a news and features staff that will be consistent.

A wattage increase means we will be reaching more people. We want to make that increase worth our audience's while. Things are only going to get better. SO DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL! Keep in Touch and Tuned to 91FM WCDB-Third World. -P.T.

Notes from underground

(continued from page 7)

Albany/NYC club report, a new music news section, and a Rate-a-Record contest with two new releases of the week where listener calls determine the winner.

Virtually every college radio station prides itself on being the first to have discovered a new artist. There is no doubt that college radio is responsible for breaking The Human League, Haircut 100, The Waitresses, The Stray Cats, The Go-Go's, etc., here in the U.S.A. The list goes on. One glaring fault of college radio is a tendency to be too trendy and anti-commercial (vs. anti-establishment) or to form its own version of what's fashionable and acceptable, henceforth creating a 'look' more than a sound. The bands that college radio 'break' tend to be the one's who have the greatest marketing potential and who follow the latest trends, indirectly defeating the purpose of college radio. Usually the bands who suffer because of this are original and refreshingly straightforward American groups which get easily lost in the shuffle. Bands such as the Human Switchboard (Ohio), The Lyres

(Boston), The DB's (NYC), and the A.D.'s have been heard frequently on *Notes* and we feel this is what sets us apart. Our commitment to local bands is also strong and well-known; with just a tape a band can get a chance on *Notes*.

The A.D.'s, A.K.A. etc., Fear of Strangers, The Leopard Society, The Misfits, The Morons, and The X-Istentials (among others) all first received substantial airplay on *Notes* before being picked up on our regular rock and roll programs. Specials were devoted solely to Albany bands, one including the well-received, half-hour talk with the A.D.'s. Our move to 100 watts will even increase our involvement with Albany's own, and with it these groups should begin to receive the credit they deserve. Between new wave's new found mainstream acceptance and our increase in power and overall listener potential, things have never looked as good, both in terms of our audience and our station. It's well known that enthusiasm is contagious. Give us a listen this year, and who knows, The Velvet's story might turn out to be more than just a dream. -C.M.

Le jazz hot

Stuck right in the middle of the program day is 91FM jazz. From 5-8 PM weekdays and 8-11 AM weekends you can hear such things termed as bebop, swing, funk, and mainstream among others. Now rather than explain what these terms mean musically, let us just tell you what they mean to music. The roots of all of today's modern music from R&B, to New Wave lie in jazz. Ask Earth, Wind and Fire about

Lester Bowie or Lou Reed about Ornette Coleman and they'll talk to you for hours. Jazz is important and is an artform extraordinaire.

That's why 91FM must play it. We owe it to the music, the community and most importantly ourselves. That's why you can hear a mixture of the various styles of jazz represented in each set we play. Jazz belongs to us all, and only 91FM brings it to you.

Staying in touch with 91FM News

We are surrounded by it around the clock. We depend on it for information, entertainment, and advice. It influences our behavior and our opinions. It helps us make decisions. Whether on a large or small scale, the media affects our daily lives. News in particular, gives the changing perspective on events and people. From the biggest networks to the smallest radio stations, the news department has a unique responsibility: It makes the audience aware.

91FM News is one of these news departments. Comprised of SUNYA students and Albany residents, 91FM broadcasts five days a week, four times a day. Covering university, local and state-wide news, 91FM isn't just a "campus calendar". It is a link to important events. Equipped with teletype for international news and sports, and a staff of reporters and newscasters,



91FM news provides news coverage for the Capitol District. The controversial 1981 Springbok game, the mayoral election, and anti-draft demonstrations in Albany were only some of the leading news events covered at 91FM.

But news is not the only newsmaker at 91FM. Weekly public affairs shows offer forums, panel discussions, and speakers on the most current topics. Producing a public affairs show takes the hands of many. Engineers,

producers, hosts and guests work together to present an informative, interesting show. Student and community activists, public officials, businessmen, and national celebrities have all been, and will continue to be part of 91FM's public affairs program. Public affairs deals with issues and problems university students face. It is a forum for gripes and praise. It gives the students a chance to "speak up".

What makes 91FM unique? To understand why this

news station is different from others, you'll have to consider the personalities, the interests and the backgrounds of each staff member. The answer is 91FM News means individuality. It means welcoming different points of view and new ways of doing things. Since it is non-commercial, 91FM has the time to examine events in greater depth. Its main interest is in its listeners.

91FM is also a place to learn. The more people interested in writing, reporting, or newscasting, the better news coverage we'll have. As WCDB/91FM goes to 100 watts this fall, it will be reaching more people. Naturally, the news staff will have growing pains. 91FM will be looking for people who would like to train to be newscasters and reporters. Or maybe you'd like hosting a weekly news show. Covering the State Legislature might nurture your interest in the political process. The choices are here for you at 91, and we have a lot of work to do. -L.K.

NHL, NBA, NFL, NCAA? WCDB.

Although music is the heart of WCDB, 91FM Sports is an integral part of the station's programming. On the air this year, we will be covering all 9 varsity football games and a majority of the Great Dane basketball games. Our increased wattage and an expanded listenership will also allow us to broadcast the Christmas intersession basketball games for the first time in the station's history.

The most important feature of 91 FM Sports is our daily sports broadcasts. We bring you up to date three times a day during the week, twice on Saturday and 3 times on Sunday. This way you can pick the cast that fits your busy SUNY schedule to catch up on the latest pro, college and SUNY scores and highlights.

Our week of sports ends with

our Sunday midnight sports special. This year the half-hour show will consist of a review of Sunday pro highlights, SUNY sports happenings and the week in review. We also hope to include interviews with various SUNYA varsity team members and coaches in both men's and women's sports.

91 FM will also be presenting extensive coverage of intramural sports. Softball, basketball, floor hockey, ultimate frisbee and others will be featured so you can find out your team's standing.

Listen to WCDB for Yankee scores, League III semifinal scores, or even for how an ex-roommate did in last Tuesday's varsity basketball game. At 91 FM we know there is more to being good sports than just playing great music. -J.M.

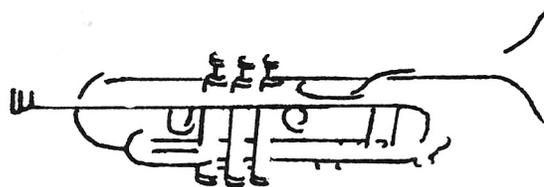
Men's Varsity Football

Sat.	Sept. 11	Home	Ithaca	1:30
Sat.	Sept. 25	Away	Brockport	1:30
Sat.	Oct. 2	Home	Union	1:30
Sat.	Oct. 9	Home	So. Connecticut	1:30
Sat.	Oct. 16	Home	Cortland	1:30
Sat.	Oct. 23	Away	Norwich	1:30
Sat.	Oct. 30	Away	Alfred	1:00
Sat.	Nov. 6	Home	U. of Buffalo	1:00
Sat.	Nov. 13	Home	Marist	1:00

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Jazzing up the Capital District

by Matt Maguire

The Albany area may not offer jazz in as many places and as many diverse forms as Manhattan, but there are plenty of ways for the jazz buff to hear good music in the Capitol District.

The most noteworthy feature of the area jazz scene is the Kool Jazz Festival (nee the Newport-Saratoga Jazz Festival), two 12-hour marathons conducted on a Saturday and Sunday early in July each year since 1978 at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center. The festival offers something for every listener—big band, bop-oriented mainstream, Kansas City swing, Latin-flavored jazz, the jazz-like pop of commercial groups such as Spiro Gyra and the Crusaders, and even some avant-garde music. The festival has produced some priceless moments over the last five summers: one of the last appearances of big band legend Stan Kenton, an all-day big band extravaganza in 1978, and consecutive sets in 1980 by Mel Tormé and Manhattan Transfer—the best of the old and the best of the new in jazz singing.

Many night clubs in the area offer different kinds of jazz; the three which are most reliable are as different as can be. One is one of the area's fanciest restaurants; the second, one of its dingiest rock clubs; and the third, a hip cafe in Saratoga Springs.

The Van Dyck Restaurant in Schenectady, long viewed as one of the city's best and most exclusive restaurants, has been hosting some of the big names of solo and small group jazz for several years. It is said to be one of only three clubs in the country Dave McKenna routinely plays—which makes the area quite lucky

because McKenna is one of the most intriguing solo pianists in jazz. Earl 'Fatha' Hines, Red Richards, Red Norvo, Jack Maheu, Warren Chaisson and even the venerable Roy Eldridge have played here in the last few years. The atmosphere is pleasant, the sound is good, the service is friendly and the prices are reasonable. New York City should be so lucky.

The loss of rock club J.B. Scott's to an arsonist's torch in the summer of 1982 affected jazz fans as well as rock lovers. The big bands of Count Basie and Buddy Rich looked forward to gigs at Scott's, and always played well there; the Manhattan Transfer reportedly would play no other night club in the country once it became big enough not to need night clubs. And little-known mainstream ensembles such as the Mingus Dynasty and Steps, each featuring half a dozen of the superstars of mainstream, received exposure at Scott's which they could not have received anywhere else in this market.

The Tin Shop, a relatively new jazz spot in Saratoga Springs, somehow has managed to book some of the biggest

Richard and Linda Thompson, *Shoot Out The Lights*

The critics are unanimously on target; this is a wonderful record, mesmerising and unforgettable. The vocal duet has never sounded better. Richard Thompson's guitar playing places him among a select few, and, most importantly the material is as good as they are. — C.M.

names in jazz—McCoy Tyner, Betty Carter and others. This club has been a welcome addition to the local scene.

The concert halls in the area usually bring a few established stars to town each year. At the Egg at the South Mall, Joe Williams, Gerry Mulligan, George Shearing and many others have given superb shows. The Troy Music Hall, with its nonpareil acoustics, has hosted Oscar Peterson, Joe Pass, Ella Fitzgerald, Dave Brubeck and Betty Carter. Proctor's Theater in Schenectady often books jazz acts, usually in such conservative, early forms as swing or Dixieland.

Many other nightclubs in the area, including the Chambers, the Downtown Athletic Club, the Gemini Jazz Cafe and the Lark Tavern, all in Albany, often host jazz. The Lark frequently features Nick Brignola of Troy, one of the world's best baritone sax players.

And of course, there's one other constant in the Albany jazz scene—91FM, WCDB, which broadcasts the best of jazz from 5 to 8 PM weekdays and from 8 to 11 AM weekends.

Richard Hell and The Voidoids, *Destiny Street*

A great sound returns. Best guitars on an album in a long, long time (Bob Quine and Naux), earth-shattering drums (Fred Maher), and the Dylan meets CBGB vocals. The slower and mid-tempo numbers work best — all those guitars sometimes get in the way of Hell's joyous and heartfelt yelping. Glad they're back! — C.M.

Stray Cats: The Long Island Sound

The South Shore of Long Island just itches to be stereotyped into a mold of suburban nothingness. By car on Sunrise Highway, peering out at it from the Long Island Railroad, or even flying over it on the approach to Kennedy, it all blends together.

Rockville Centre is Bellmore. Bellmore is Seaford. Seaford is Wantagh. The lawns, the patios, the split levels; home sweet boring home. And then there is Massapequa.

Actually it is just like the rest save for a funny Indian name, which some locals call "Matzoh-Pizza" for the two distinct ethnic divisions in town. Still, like the rest, it's a place where you're born, grow up, and try to leave as soon as possible.

From out of this, whatever this might be, come the Stray Cats, who did a lot of early time in Massapequa. Now Long Islanders are zealously protective of hometown boys who make it good. They enjoy gushing with pride over biggies like Billy Joel and Blue Oyster Cult, whose records they bought when no one else

by Steve Gosset

did. Now it's the Stray Cats turn to be fussed over, however late such gestures might be.

Brian Setzer, guitarist, front-man, songwriter, manic presence, yes folks, the man who keeps the Stray Cats purring, first got his hash marks in the 70's with a New York band, the Bloodless Pharoahs. They developed a small cult following, grabbed some good notices and not much else.

After the Pharoahs took the road to oblivion, Setzer started over with Slim Jim Phantom and Lee Rocker to form the Stray Cats.

But clubgoers were not exactly clamoring for their contemporary send-up of rockabilly; so Setzer and Co. established base in England, where it seemed like anyone with a pompadour who could warble an Eddie Cochran tune was getting a recording contract. While the Stray Cats paid due homage to Cochran, they managed to rise above the pack

with some heavy touring; giving many people a chance to see a show that has as much of a rep for its infectious theatrics, as for the music.

Lee Rocker would find an excuse to be a wild man while thumping away on his stand-up bass, while Slim Jom Phantom made the most out of his kiddie drum set. Setzer though, was the real juice, whipping 'em into a frenzy, taking time out to sweat later.

All of this was sweetened by a string of successful singles, including a couple of number ones in, *Runaway Boys* and *Rock This Town*.

It's all too common on this side of the pond that we wait for a new act to be a smash in the U.K. before they get the open arms treatment even if they did start out here. Such was the plight of the Stray Cats, which makes all the raves over their debut album, merely a compilation of their British 45's, rather suspect. Ah, but don't cry for the Stray Cats, Massapequa. A few more royalty checks and all will be forgiven.

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- Nov. 8
Roxy Music *Siren*
- Nov. 15
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The Jam *This is the Modern World*
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- Dec. 6
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Phil Spector's *X-Mas Album*

FEAR of Strangers

Their album finally out, Val Haynes and Steve Cohen open up

With the record industry booming in the late 70's and The Units appearing with such bands as The Police and The B-52's, it seemed to the casual observer that a debut LP was right around the corner. However, it wasn't until this past August that 91FM finally dragged Val Haynes and Steve Cohen up to our studios to discuss their recently released debut album **Fear of Strangers**.

Half a decade and a name change later (after realizing that San Francisco had already given birth to a "Units" of their own) the Albany-based band had finally

viola on *Blacksheep*)

Val: No, I had the idea and I hummed the part to him (Steve) cause he can write — you know — charts . . . I can't do any of that stuff . . . I'm just a genius.

On SUNYA

WCDB: Are you a SUNYA alumnus?

Steve: Yeah, I'm a SUNY graduate . . . (puts on affected professional voice) BA in music Cum Laude

Val: Come louder?

Steve: Val . . . please, its *Latin*. It means I was a good boy.

who wrote that should realize that it's his profession, journalism, that makes it seem like El Salvador is just fine now.

Val: When in reality it's not.

Steve: It's ugly head will resurface again.

On Relationships

WCDB: *Happy Hearts* is one of many songs on the album about relationships . . . sometimes I think you guys are a big lonely hearts club . . . I thought rock n' rollers were supposed to do ok.

Steve: Well, we do ok . . . but when you want to get serious about it, everybody's got their broken hearts.

On Norberts

WCDB: A couple of times when I've seen you play, Val will shout out something like "This one's for Norbert." Who is Norbert? What is Norbert?

Steve: You've stunned us both.

Val: Alright, — that's what we call each other — Norbs.

WCDB: I just thought it was this small E.T. — like friend of yours.

Steve: It was St. Norbert from 12th century France — he cashed in all his resources and started a monastery — that's who we worship in our off hours.

WCDB: I shouldn't have gotten into that one.

Don't miss Tom Lindsay's interview with Fear of Strangers on 91FM's *Notes from the Underground* September 28th at 11 p.m.

Joe Jackson, *Night and Day*

Joe Jackson's continuing evolution of style has this time yielded a superb artistic effort. *Night and Day* is the culmination of Jackson's recent experiences in New York City. Jackson shows us the beauty and terror of life in the big city as he touches on such things as homosexuality and class conflicts. Jackson's main concern, however, is with the night life which is captured best in the brilliant *Stepping Out* combining his inspiring songwriting capabilities with outstanding keyboard work and an interesting use of latin sounds. These qualities are found throughout the LP, providing Joe Jackson's finest album to date.

— F., P. & I.

PHOTO BY DAVE SUAREZ



released their first L.P.

The album, which features Al Cash on drums and Todd Nelson on guitar as well as Steve on bass and Val handling most of the vocals, touches on as many ideas as did Val and Steve during the course of their two hour visit. Here are some of their comments

On Writing Music

WCDB: Who came up with the idea for the arrangement for *Black Sheep*?

Val: Me.

WCDB: Did you have the idea and then go to Susan St. Amour? (Ms. Amour leads the string section of the Albany Symphony Orchestra and plays

On Radio

WCDB: The other day Steve was saying your favorite station was what?

Val: WGNA . . . well at times it's a little too mainstream for me, but I like it a lot . . . I grew up on a steady diet of Les Paul and Mary Ford.

On *Guerrilla War*

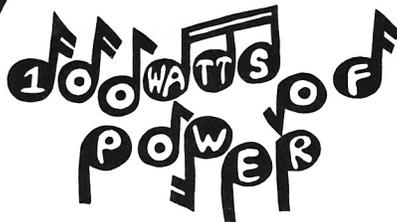
Steve: That's the song that was called politically naive and out of date.

WCDB: You know I read that, but I was thinking the day the album came out there were those hearings on —

Steve: — on El Salvador. That's how out of date it was. The reporter was a week behind. You know, the reporter



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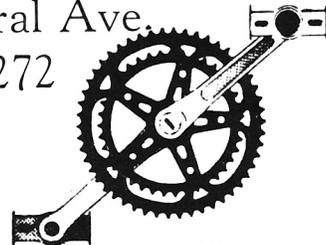


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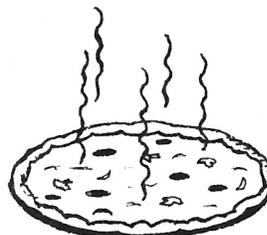
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