

Global Sampler: Music That Crosses Boundaries • Cool Summer Gear

ROAM

TRAVEL AND THE GLOBAL GROOVE

SUMMER 1998

A man and a woman are embracing on a cobblestone street at night. The woman is wearing a black sequined dress and high heels, and the man is wearing a black jacket and pants. They are looking at each other. In the background, there are cars and buildings.

Summer Getaways

Paris

An Intimate Look

London

Scene From Within

Zimbabwe

The Struggle Continues



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On the road to Bayon Temple, Angkor Wat, Cambodia. Photographed by Matthew Sutcliffe.

From the Editor

Certain summers have a way of standing out. I'll never forget the summer I spent on Miami Beach. My timing was all wrong—the heat was sweltering and the beach was deserted. I spent the summer in an Art Deco hotel on Ocean Drive and watched time pass on its front porch—sipping beer, reading, meeting new faces and thinking. There was something about the emptiness and sense of time and space that I loved. The days drifted by like the little clouds that floated over my head. I had the time to feel time pass and to live freely. Since the seasonal population had cleared out, the beach belonged to the locals and I quickly adapted to their patterns. Days were spent on a near-deserted beach and nights were spent soaking up the nightlife. It was an idyllic way to spend a summer—none of the usual pressures of career, status or place ever entered my mind. I lived completely in the moment. And that is the essence of summer isn't it? To live freely, with no stress or concerns? This summer I intend to do as little as possible. My agenda goes like this: travel, enjoy the company of friends and family, read, eat and drink, and enjoy life. Oh, and work as little as possible. Of course, it probably won't be that easy and it'll be over all too quickly. But just for a brief moment I'd like to return to the space I was in five years ago during that hot summer on Miami Beach. I could live with that.

No. 2

Summer 1998



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Crossing boundaries with music

Cover photographed by Wes Bender in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico

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Copyright ©1998 by ROAM Publishing Company. All rights reserved. ROAM magazine is published quarterly. Subscriptions: four issues—\$16 (\$36 air-mail outside U.S.). Domestic single copies \$3.95. Printed in the U.S.A. Material in this publication may not be reproduced in any form without permission from the publisher. ROAM will not be responsible for the return of any unsolicited manuscripts or photographs.



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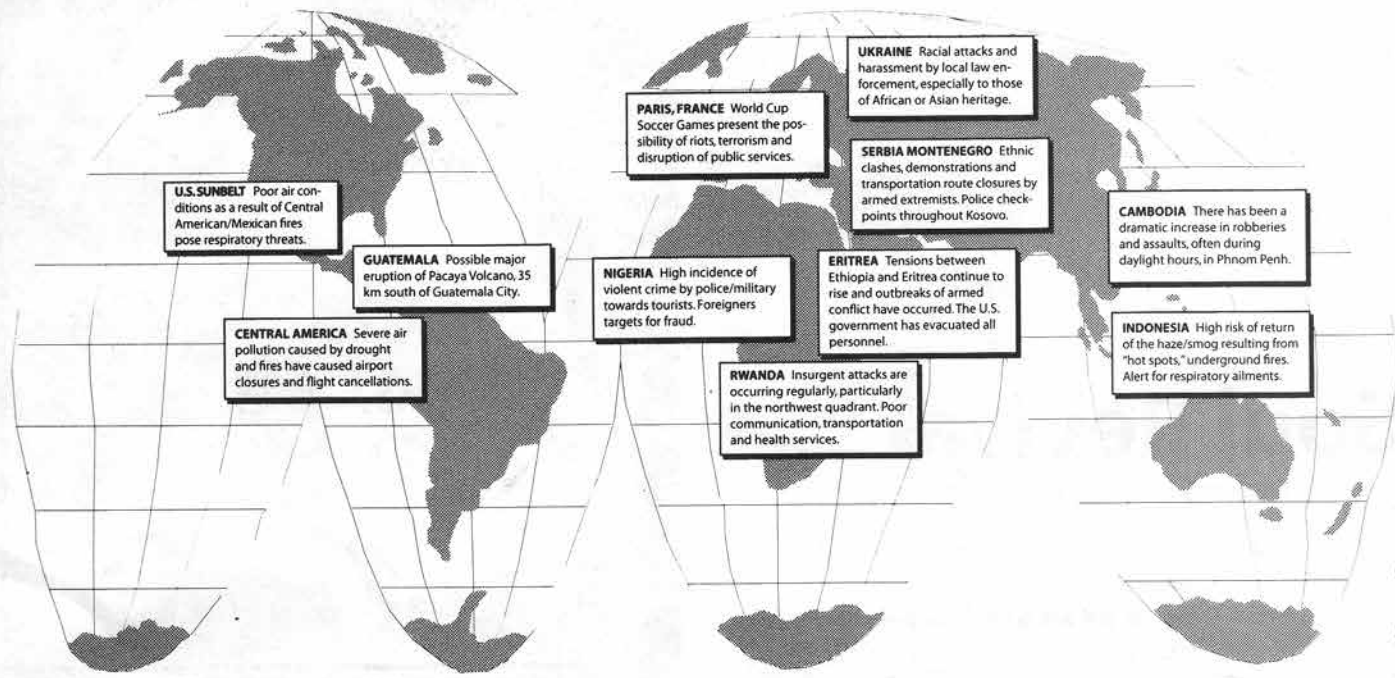
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SAFETY ZONE

A global guide to dangerous destinations



Source: U.S. Department of State, news reports.

THINGS TO DO IN NEW YORK

Hear

Linton Kwesi Johnson,

Dub poetry is the genre—provocative and laid back is the mood. Words over the smoothest of reggae. L.K.J. is London's premiere dub poet and this performance is in collaboration with guitarist Vernon Reid.

August 6, 8:30 p.m., Central Park

Jessica Care Moore

Young, afroed, poetess from Detroit. Can't get the word out fast enough. Alongside Roger Guenveur Smith, Obie Award winner for *A Huey P. Newton Story of Black Panther Party*.

July 23, 8 p.m., Rumsey Playfield, Central Park

Lyricist Lounge

Hip Hop was born in New York, and some would argue that its slowly dying here as well. But not at the Lyricist Lounge. An interactive, spontaneous, live, Hip Hop party, and venue for MCs to grab the mike and rhyme with live music.

Tuesdays, *The Cooler*, 416 W. 14th Street

See

Pilgrimage To Spiritual Asia

Images from Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand, Bali, Java and India by photographer Jon Ortner.

Paul Weinschenk Gallery
15 West 20th Street, New York City
(212) 873-1950

Half Past Autumn: The Art of Gordon Parks

Highlights of Park's career, include photographs of gang warfare and poverty in Harlem for *Life* magazine, and directing "Shaft," arguably the "blackest" movie of all time. Half Past Autumn is "a tone-poem that impressionistically tells his own story." Opens July 1.

The Museum of the City of New York
1220 Fifth Avenue

Dance

Lotus Music and Dance Studios

Dance across cultural borders with this non-profit educational and cultural organization. Dance instruction from the cultures of Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas. Learn Flamenco, Burmese, Bharata Natyam (South Indian) and many other traditional forms.

109 West 27th Street, 8th Floor, (212) 627-1076

Volunteer

The International Center in New York

This community center for recent immigrants and those learning the ropes of life in the U.S. could use your expertise. Assist the newly arrived in learning English, job search skills, and how to survive. The Center also sponsors trips and activities to Ellis Island, the Federal Reserve Bank and Belmont Park—places many native born Americans have never even been.

50 West 23rd Street, 7th Floor, (212) 255-9555

—Compiled by Gia McKenzie



Pilgrimage To Spiritual Asia at Paul Weinschenk Gallery

Soul Revival

Releasing the pressure of city life at Kripalu Center

It was late afternoon Friday. The goal was to have a truly refreshing weekend away from the city. I knew I needed to go somewhere to leave my responsibilities behind. But I also knew that vacationing for the weekend could involve more hassle than it's worth. Traveling to a destination, switching gears, finding entertainment, and arriving home refreshed is a lot to expect from any two-day venture. I decided to try a place which promised the epitome of a low-stress escape—Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health, a spiritual retreat nestled in the misty Berkshire Mountains of western Massachusetts. Don't get me wrong. I'm not a yoga or meditation expert. In fact, I'd never tried either before attending Kripalu's *Retreat & Renewal* program.

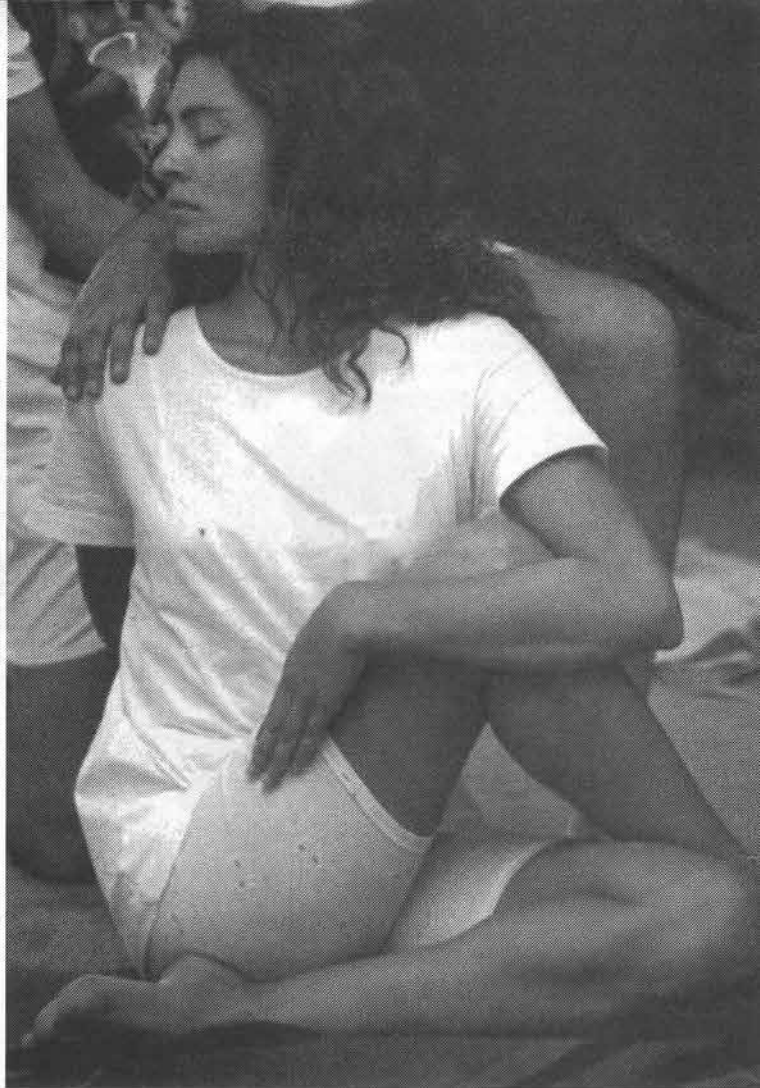
DAY ONE My first lesson in mindful meditation began at 7:30a.m. with a silent breakfast in the cafeteria. Not having to make small talk with the strangers beside me I was able to consciously take my first breath of the weekend. It seemed others were doing the same, and somehow that felt good.

After breakfast I joined fellow R&R participants for a sharing session, facilitated by Lorraine "Bhavani" Nelson, whose sanskrit name means "keeper of the heart." The group discussion focused on why we came and how we felt at the present moment. Participants included a woman from Ft. Greene, Brooklyn who returned to Kripalu for self-reflection before giving birth to her second child; a thirty-something man from New Jersey who came to connect with a spiritual community in the midst of several life changes; and me, a frazzled twenty-something in need of a rest.

An experiential chanting workshop followed sharing. After short, colorful lessons about the Hindu deities, Ram, the creator and Shiva, the transformer, we sang to them, using simply their names as the words to the songs. Bhavani's eyelids drooped and the corners of her mouth curved up as she joyfully played the harmonium, an ancient Indian instrument which is part keyboard, part accordion. I left the room smiling, partly because I felt a little silly, and partly because I was pleased I had begun to relax.

The meditation workshop introduced me to *pranayama*, conscious control of the breath. The instructor guided us through three meditation exercises: breath counting, focusing on the breath, and mantra repetition. One guest asked, "When does the mind shut off?" The instructor replied, "Meditation has no agenda. We just sit to be in the present moment."

After lunch I remembered his words on a tour of the grounds. Slabs of stone jut out of the earth here and there to form steps leading to nowhere. They are most of what remains of the original structure, an 1893-built mansion. Jesuits constructed the no-frills main building in 1957 to serve as a seminary. I found the heating system somewhat lacking; most rooms were so cool I wished I had brought a sweater.



Photos: Kripalu Center

From the varying levels of yoga offered before dinner I chose Gentle Yoga, and joined about forty people, mostly women, in the main chapel. Mats and blankets were already laid out on the floor. The lean, balding instructor modeled beginning yogic postures, none of which involved pretzel-like contortions. He whispered into a microphone, "Om shanti shanti. Peace, peace."

By dinner I was tired of peace and quiet, and ready to take some noise. The Drums of Passion concert by Babatunde Olatunji, known internationally as the "grandfather of the drumming revival," hit the spot. Loud and raucous, the frenzied drumming and dancing went on for two glorious hours while the audience joined in.

DAY TWO Sunday morning began with an unwelcome cold shower. But whatever lack of warmth I felt quickly dissolved during the Walking for Health workshop. Led by an older Albanian man named "Dashrath" Endel, the workshop stressed aerobic walking (which means you shouldn't feel out of breath). The group followed as Dashrath enthusiastically demonstrated how to speed walk by placing one foot directly in front of the other, pumping his arms, and swinging his hips. The workshop concluded with lessons on the proper way to spit (a guttural precursor is necessary) and the tissue-less "runner's blow."

After speedwalking I felt ready for some bodywork. I tried to schedule a massage, but all the therapists were booked. I chose acupuncture instead, a health service recently added to Kripalu's wide range of offerings. Performed by John deKadt, a youthful acupuncturist and herbalist with a private practice in Connecticut, the acupuncture was pleasant until I felt pain inflicted by a misguided needle. Even this unexpected (and unintended) interruption, however, could not totally jar me from my carefree state.

By my departure Sunday afternoon I was not only relaxed and refreshed but also more in touch with how to stay that way. I can't say that I'm a new age convert—you won't find me practicing yoga or meditation in my Brooklyn apartment. But you may find me back at Kripalu.—ALEXANDRA N. TINARI

For more information on Kripalu Center call 1-800-741-SELF.



Foreign Exchange

The dish on "doing it" on the road

Never mind learning Spanish or seeing the world's great masterpieces.

The real reason for travel—or let's face it, anything at all—is the possibility of hooking up. Nothing turns a trip into a successful outing quite like a spontaneous immersion course in the ancient language of love. This should be news to no one. In the nineteenth century all the proper British folk were heading to Italy for adventure and love. And in the 1970s, Erica Jong launched a whole generation of American wanderlusts with her tales of zipless fucks and Mediterranean strangers all across Europe. Thirty years later, anyone who ever saw ten cities in thirty days and left a trail of broken hearts and empty condom wrappers can relate.

So why do we leave our usual prudish morals behind when we set out for points unknown? Right away, there's the fact of an instantly widened dating pool, which is always hard to resist. Then there is the undeniable fact that no aphrodisiac in the world has ever been proven quite so effective as a foreign tongue in your ear. There's just something about it. And then there are those neat goodbyes, unlike anything we've ever found at home, as Kimberlee, one of our willing participants in the worldwide game of love, attests: "The fact that there was a definite ending in sight made it possible for me to dive in, emotionally."

That's right: hooking up is easy when you're on the road, and it's fun. Luckily for all of us, the world is currently overflowing with aimless backpackers, adventurous college students, and those ever-abundant friendly natives. Luckily, too, these adventures come any way you like them:

JENNIFER, 24, WAITRESS: My best friend and I were in Barcelona on New Year's Eve, and there was an insane outdoor concert going on in one of the squares. Everyone was dancing like crazy and pouring champagne on each other and going wild. My friend and I got separated, basically because I went off with this Catalonian bohemian actor named Lolo who was working the lights at the concert. We went up to the roof of a building overlooking the square and hung out there until daylight, fooling around and talking, and then a few days later I went back to Barcelona and stayed with him for a week. We had a really fun affair. We would go out to bars and smoke hash, and we had lots of sex. I remember he said to me, really earnestly, in his heavy accent, "Making love is like a carnival—anything goes." He was Spanish, so he could get away with it, and I was in Spain, so I could get into it. And I definitely did get into it.

JOSH, 32, PRODUCTION MANAGER: I was washing dishes and short-order cooking in a strip club in Israel. There was a waitress named Sarit—an Iraqi Jew who had emigrated to Israel—who was really cute. She barely knew English, so we would speak a mixture of Hebrew and English. The first time we fooled around was on a picnic table in the middle of the beach. She was sort of sitting on top of me, and I could see the stars encircling her face, and her shirt was half open. We were right off the Mediterranean Sea. It was beautiful. It was just great. That moment would have been great anywhere, but it was much better because I was in Israel, I was with this girl, and we were fooling around 50 feet from the Mediterranean.

JOHN, 30, LAWYER: I unexpectedly had to go to close up my uncle's summer house on Martha's Vineyard, so I spent a weekend out there by myself. I had nothing to do at night, so I went out to eat. My waitress was really pretty and friendly, and even though I don't usually do things like that—pick up my waitress—I asked her when she got off work, and she said I was her last table. We went out for a beer, and then we went to a rowdier bar, where there was a band playing. We'd had a total of about an hour and a half of get-to-know-each-other time when the bar closed, but when I offered the lame pretext of showing her my uncle's house, she agreed. Two minutes into my "tour" [of the house], we started fooling around. We had really great sex and when it was over, we talked for a few minutes, and then she asked if I would mind driving her home. So I did, and we kissed goodbye like we were old friends, and I came back to New York in the morning, and we never saw each other again.

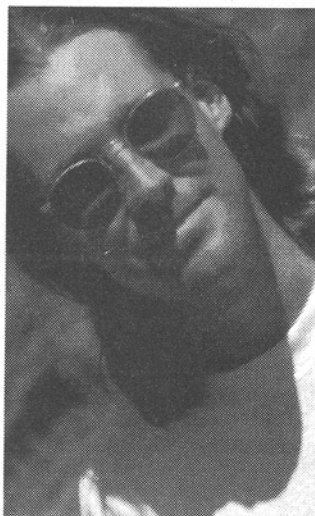
MARTA, 25, STAND-UP COMIC: I spent a few days at a place in Belize called the Maruba Resort and Jungle Spa. It was in this lush rainforest setting. My room had a real leopard skin spread, and there were candles burning all over, and they would drop rose petals everywhere. It was sort of tropical and primitive. There was a guy who worked there (whose name I cannot for the life of me remember). He would flirt with me, but I wasn't planning on doing anything with him. But then the last night, he was like, "Do you want a massage?" It started out as a regular massage...and he took it from there. I didn't even have to kiss him. It was a totally satisfying experience. It was so amazing. It was the kind of thing that you can get away with when you're traveling.

KIMBERLEE, 25, COMPUTER PROGRAMMER: I was in Oaxaca, Mexico, for the Day of the Dead. The first night we were there, this amazingly beautiful waiter came over and brought me more quesadillas, and my friend Joan said, "Oh, he loves you; you have to have an affair." She invited him to the cemetery with us, which led to a night of salsa dancing and a lot of kissing, and then we completely had an affair. He spoke no English. I would get out the dictionary when we were in bed, and we would just burst out laughing. We were together for three weeks, basically every day. I would come by the hotel where he worked, and he would make me tea, and we went salsa dancing a lot, and we had amazing sex. The fact that we couldn't talk made me realize how much you can know about someone just by looking into his eyes. It was incredibly romantic.

DAVID, 32, ACTOR/WRITER: I went to Europe for a month, and I basically had my own sexual revolution. Instead of going to museums I would go to these gay saunas. People are less uptight about sex in Europe, so the saunas weren't at all sinister. It was like, here's the sauna, the showers are there, the hot tubs are over there, and here's the food counter, with the TV going on behind it. And all these guys are just walking around in towels. There's a room with a movie theater, and there are all these cubicles with mats. It's like being in a candy store—you just pick a flavor, go find a booth and do your thing. It was a really liberating experience. I also didn't have one person there try to have unsafe sex with me.

CARA, 23, GRADUATE STUDENT: My friend and I were taking trains around Europe and for a few days we met up with her parents. Every day we would ski with them, and by the end of the day we would have to race down the slopes to make happy hour. It was a decadent resort town, with a really chi-chi disco nightlife. At night we'd go eat schnitzel with her parents, and then afterwards we would go out and drink and dance with all these gorgeous Euro-ski bums. I kept dancing with an American guy named Al, who was a ski guide. Our last night there, after the bar closed, we all went sledding on the hill behind the bar, and Al and I were making out in the snow, and then we went back to his room and had a one night stand. My friend and I left the next day.

That's right: no awkwardness, no small talk, no strings. So go on, everybody, and get busy. Have some real fun on your next trip. But don't let the passion get to your head; it's a big, dirty, disgusting world out there, and you know what you're supposed to do. You're sick of hearing it. Everyone's sick of saying it. Just pack 'em and wear 'em.—**LARISSA PHILLIPS**



CHINA THRILL

When it comes to China, Nico Goncharoff (co) wrote the book. "The Lonely Planet Guide to China," that is. Goncharoff has experienced this nation's rise from an impenetrable culture to a popular tourist destination. With a new edition of "The Guide" out in July, Goncharoff shared his observations of the new China with Claire Szeto.

Claire Szeto: Why is China one of the most popular places in the world to travel to?

Nico Goncharoff: I think that China is a mystical destination. It's something that everyone grows up with. You go there to see one of the world's oldest civilizations, or the world's most populous country or even just to see the Great Wall. It is also a land of vast natural beauty. China has over 100 minority cultures with these different nationalities existing in one country. Some people like the rigor of going there, though its much easier to travel there now. It used to be an adventure. Tourism has really taken off in the last few decades, and even remote parts are now very used to seeing foreigners.

Is China a friendly place to visit?

China is generally characterized as a unfriendly place to travel, but that's an unfair criticism. Although Chinese government officials and state run agencies tend to treat independent travelers with less politeness than should be, the people as individuals generally give you a positive experience, with many friendly folks who are willing to help you out.

Which places are best to travel in and in which seasons?

The best times to travel in China are April to June and September to November when you get the nicest temperatures. However, many attractions are closed at this time because the Chinese authorities view summer as the peak season. For example, the city of Terpan in Xinjiang province has the distinction of being one of the hottest places on earth, with recorded temperatures of over 147 degrees Fahrenheit occurring in July and August, yet these are the months in which the official fes-

tivals are held.

Summers are beastly in general, with the exception of the provinces of Szechwan and Yunnan. There is a saying about Yunnan that characterizes Yunnan as "a place where all seasons are like Spring." It's a remarkably temperate climate with cool evenings. The plains between Chongqing and Chongdu in Szechwan province are remarkably hot, but the mountain areas west of Chongdu (Himalayan range) are only accessible in summer because of the amount of snow.

Is travel to some areas restricted by the government?

The number of restricted areas has dropped dramatically in the last seven years. Restricted areas today consist mainly of military installations and political border regions especially at the border between China and Tibet, Vietnam, Myanmar, but even these are more open than they used to be.

What is traveling in China like for the independent traveler? Is there infrastructure to support it?

It does exist, but I wouldn't say it's easy. It largely depends on which part of the country you're traveling in. Commonly traveled places might have English signage and English speakers, but at other places you may have to depend on somebody else figuring out what it is that you need. Nearly all the people I've met who don't speak Chinese end up being able to get to where they want to go.

What can we expect for lodging?

There is a wide range; most cities do have the lowest cost, dormitory style lodgings, with private rooms and a shared hallway bath. The places that cater to Western tastes generally have

cleanest bathrooms. These cost from \$US 3-10 dollars per night. Hotel style lodgings with private baths can really vary depending on the city, the local economy and cost. They can be a hole-in-the-wall or they can be a bright airy room with modern fixtures costing from \$US 13-25 per night.

What about transportation?

The cost for trains and planes are the same for foreign travelers and natives. The cost of buses varies from provinces to town. Something to be aware of is that bus stations and taxis will sometimes charge foreigners more than natives. Hotels too. This practice, though, like many things in China, is inconsistent. Some places will charge you double, some a percentage and some even a discount. Often the standard fares are written on the wall. How much you pay sometimes depends on how willing you are to argue about the issue. Natives tend to view travelers as having more money and thus should pay more.

What has been your best experience?

Once I met a bunch of local rock and roll musicians in Xian in a small club and ended up spending the next five days playing guitar with these three guys until five a.m. every night, and then getting up to go to work the next day.

What's the music scene like in China?

It's mostly happening in Xian, Beijing, Wuhan, Shanghai and Guangzhou. One nightclub in Xian was like a Manhattan club, with iron catwalks, and three bands. The influences in music tend to be along the lines of rock, specifically folk and western heavy metal, but songwriters also draw upon Chinese melodies and scales. Lyrics are very national, with songs about love, homeland and the people, or they can contain Chinese poetic themes.

Do Fries Go With That Shake?

Sushi chefs aren't packing up yet but retro diners—some so convincing they don't serve espresso—are the late night and early morning places to be in Los Angeles. For a short stack or grilled cheese, here's a look at some hot spots:

Ed Debevic's, 134 N. LaCienega Blvd.

The scene: wacky singing waitresses reel 'em in.
Gotta get: the cheeseburger, chili on the side

Hollywood Hills Coffee Shop, 6145 Franklin Ave.

The scene: a mix of locals and motel guests, the diner's inside a Best Western.
Gotta get: the grilled cheese with chips

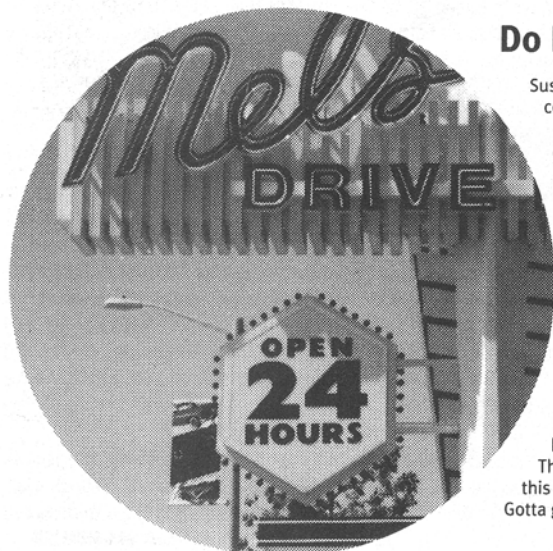
Mel's, 8585 W. Sunset Blvd.

The scene: just a hop, skip and a jump from the Sky bar—tons of beautiful people.
Gotta get: the chocolate malt shake

Rae's, 2901 Pico Blvd.

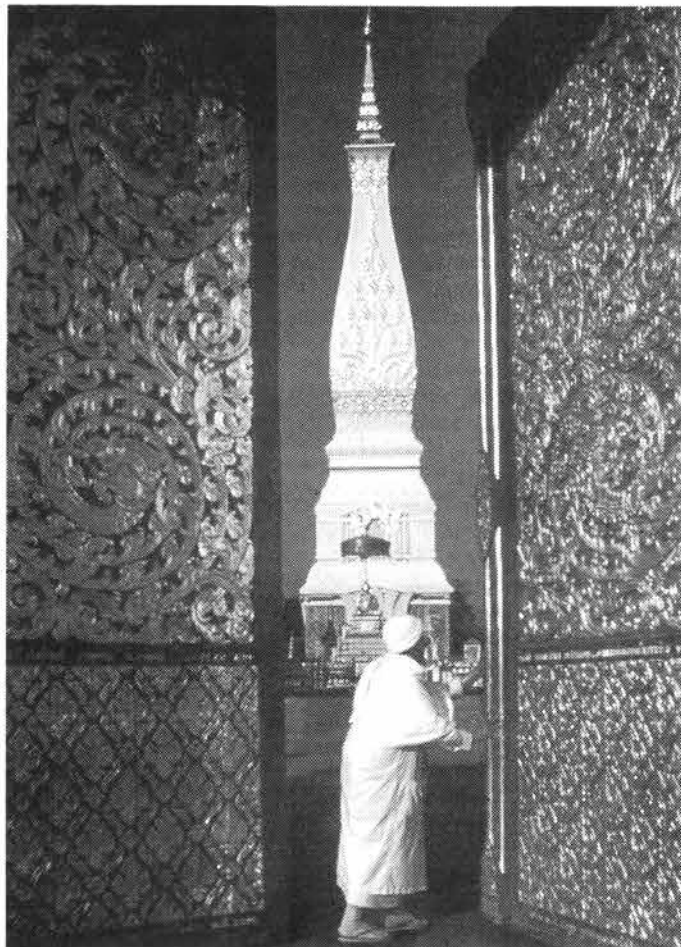
The scene: UCLA students, musicians and trucker-types give this diner a gritty feel.
Gotta get: the deluxe cheeseburger

—LIA HABERMAN



Electric Boogie

Getting around has never been cooler and more efficient than on South Miami Beach's "Electrowave" shuttle bus. The free electric-powered bus breezes riders through the beach's popular thoroughfares including Washington Avenue and Lincoln Road. With 29 stops along the way, you're sure to get where you're going. The only gripes thus far are from local cabbies who are getting soaked by "The Wave."



Thai Festivities

Get into the spirit of "Amazing Thailand," a yearlong celebration of this magical nation sponsored by the Thailand Tourist Board. Below is a sampling of some of this summer's special events.

ASALHA PUJA

July 8, 1998
The full-moon day of the eighth lunar month commemorates the Buddha's first sermon to his first five disciples after attaining Enlightenment more than 2,500 years ago. Evening candlelit processions are staged in all Thai Buddhist temples.

KHAO PHANSA (BUDDHIST RAINS RETREAT)

July 9, 1998
This day marks commencement of the annual three-month Rains Retreat when Buddhist monks customarily stay inside their monasteries to study and meditate. Phansa is the most auspicious time for Buddhist ordination since it comprises a period of renewed spiritual vigour.

CANDLE FESTIVAL

July 31-August 4, 1998
At City Hall Stadium, Ubon Ratchathani
The commencement of Phansa, or the Buddhist Rains Retreat, (known in Thai as Khao Phansa) is observed in the northeastern city of Ubon Ratchathani with this lovely festival that displays artistic skills as well as piety. Beautifully carved beeswax candles, some of

them several meters tall, are exhibited in colorful parades before being presented to local temples.

RAMBUTAN FAIR

August 1-8, 1998
At Amphoe Muang, Surat Thani
The first rambutan tree was planted in Surat Thani in 1926, and this fair celebrates the delicious fruit, which now grows widely in the area. Highlights include exhibitions of local products and ornamental plants, floats adorned with rambutan and other fruits, and demonstrations of trained monkeys who harvest coconuts from trees.

H.M. THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

August 12, 1998
Nationwide
Throughout Thailand, public buildings are decorated to honor Her Majesty Queen Sirikit on the occasion of her birthday. The most splendid are to be seen in Bangkok, particularly along Ratchadamnoen Avenue and in the area around the Grand Palace, where both government offices and streets are garlanded with colored lights.

Passport Hell: Getting Out Alive

Uh oh. Packing for that romantic getaway and suddenly can't find the one essential element of all foreign travel: your passport? Never mind the neatniks in your life smirking about how unorganized they always told you were. Show them how to take care of business: get a brand new passport in less than 24 hours. That's right, thrill-seekers and messy people: important stuff really can be left to the last minute. You might have to pay two or three times as much as the organized people do, but think of the satisfaction. Here's how:

U.S. Passport Office

Anyone with a few free hours, and a departure within two weeks, can go straight to the government's 24-hour passport office in Manhattan. Call the automated phone system to make an appointment. You'll be billing your nails to the quick and barely staving off panic when even 15 minutes of recorded instructions fail to promise that your passport will be delivered in any sort of good time, but short of espionage affairs or a lost birth certificate, it will. And not only that, a surprisingly cheerful and organized experience awaits you. A 12 noon appointment might have you back on the street within the hour, and your passport ready by 3 p.m. Lack of planning was never so well rewarded. Total cost: \$95.

Passport Express: <www.passportexpress.com> or call (800) 362-8196
Important, busy, and slightly more organized

people can use a private agency like this one. FedEx all the right stuff (forms and general passport information at the above website), along with an additional fee of \$115 to the right place, and your passport will be FedExed back to you the next morning. Total cost: \$190.

The Old-Fashioned Way: Most U.S. Post Offices and many U.S. Courthouses

Of course, there are those few among us who take care of these things in time-through the mail, saving on expediting fees, stress and panic. Good for them. If you're one of them, and already getting ready for a trip next spring, send everything - two photos, your old passport (you know you didn't lose it), a completed DSP-82 application and a check for \$55 to the National Passport Center.



Things you'll probably need:

- Two passport photos
- Proof of U.S. citizenship: a previous passport or a certified copy of a birth certificate
- Checkbook
- Airline tickets or other proof of impending travel (for express service).
- Proof of identity
- Social security number

For details about passport applications, and even more options, go straight to the source: the government. <<http://travel.state.gov>> or call 888-362-8668.

—LARISSA PHILLIPS

Buffalo Express

There goes your craving for kangaroo steaks, and you're stuck on the internet again, right? Or maybe it's time for your monthly fix of fois gras, but you just can't face the crowds at Balducci's. Suffer your extravagant food needs no more. Caesar's Palate, epicurean website galore, is providing overnight delivery of an astonishing array of specialty items, from squid ink to buffalo steaks to the famed gray salt from. Who says you have to go off-line—or even out of your apartment—to eat well? www.caeserspalate.com

—LARISSA PHILLIPS



Reggae Classics

Vinyl is back with a vengeance, and leading the way for roots and dub reggae is Manchester's Blood and Fire records. Run by reggae expert Steve Barrow, the label has been blowing away critiques and reggae collectors alike with their reissues of long lost classics by The Congos, King Tubby, Horace Andy and others. Simply the best in sound and design, find them at any worthwhile record shop.





Lia Haberman

Santa Monica

WE'RE HOOKED. DIE-HARD EAST COASTERS, WE DIDN'T PLAN ON staying in Los Angeles any longer than required after relocating here for work last year—lots of friends have already left. But one mild winter later, we're weeding the black out of our wardrobes and signing up for swing dancing classes at the Derby. And we moved to Santa Monica—it's like the Village by the Pacific. Forget everything you've ever read about Los Angeles' 800 miles of freeways; Santa Monica is a pedestrian's paradise. So leave the rental car behind and enjoy a stroll along Main Street, by far the hippest spot in Santa Monica.

Eating and drinking on Main has become a weekend ritual and every time we go, we discover a new bar or find a new favorite restaurant where the patios are surrounded by palm trees and exotic flowers. That's the beauty of Main—you can't even see the best stuff, like **Schatzi's**, Arnold Schwarzenegger's restaurant, which is tucked behind an optometrist and a cigar bar. You can actually spot the he-man himself eating here with family and friends on Sunday night.

But start the day with scrambled eggs at **Joe's Diner** where you can sit at the Formica counter and watch your breakfast being made (not always fun when

you watch your food get cold while the waitress flirts with the single guy reading The New York Times book review section). Joe's competes every weekend with the **Omelette Parlor** across the street, where people line up for a booth seat and some great French toast. Both breakfast restaurants have sunny patios out back. If the wait at either place kills you, there's always the nearby **Coffee Bean**, California's answer to Starbucks. The Coffee Bean has become the place to get coffee for every script-toting, doggie-walking, cell-phone-posing Los Angeleno. Only your parents get coffee at Starbucks now, you know.

The weekly **Farmers' Market** is a must on Sunday mornings where local produce growers set up behind the tiny **California Heritage Museum** (the 1894 Victorian home of Santa Monica founder, Senator John Jones). Kids ride ponies and gulp down chocolate crepes while the adults stack up on wildflowers, organic potatoes, and asparagus, then sit around listening to folk bands. There's something about walking home with a bag of hand-picked potatoes that makes you feel much closer to the whole food chain cycle.

While there are plenty of affordable hip boutiques—**Vamp, Betsey Johnson**—and sandwich shops—**Napoleon, P&R European Bakery**—Main Street's got its share of outrageously expensive this-is-where-I'll-go-when-I-sell-my-script spots, like the **MAX Studio** clothing boutique with its more-gorgeous-than-thou staff and Wolfgang Puck's **Chinois on Main** Chinese/American fusion food. Course, if you want star status without the outrageous price, you can always try out **Star Wares** for second-hand celebrity clothing and collectibles.

The **MOCA** store offers a great combination pop art/Urban Outfitters'-type kitsch. After picking up some 50's-style milk glasses one weekend, we stumbled into the curved courtyard behind to find the fabulous **Form Zero** gallery and architecture bookstore. The only other bookstore around is the second-hand treasure trove **Novel Cafe** at the other end of Main Street. After all, this area is more about the body and soul than the brain: there's the **Herb King** shop filled with row upon row of jars stuffed with exotic-looking Asian herbs, the **Yoga Works** studio, the **Shiatsu Massage School**, and enough juice bars to choke a health nut: **Robeks Juice, Jamba Juice, The Ultimate Smoothie**... And don't forget the beach, only two blocks away; you can pick up your own surf board at **ZJ Boarding House**—or do like I did, wimp out and buy a bikini instead.

If you prefer to forego the pleasures of wheatgrass and carrot juice, Panini offers great grilled sandwiches with fillings like fresh tomatoes, grilled red peppers, mozzarella, prosciutto, and fresh basil leaves. But the real beauty is their patio in the back, complete with gurgling fountain and wildflowers—it's almost enough to make you feel like you're lunching in Italy or the south of France.

If your thirst is calling for a couple of pints, there's always the raucous **O'Briens** Irish pub (they put on a hell of a Saint Paddy's Day party) or the **Library Alehouse**, which serves up 27 different varieties of microbrewery beers and pub food—and there's absolutely nothing literary about it. A little more trippy is **Wednesday's** coffee house, a piece of '70s heaven where the walls are hung with posters of John Travolta and Charlie's Angels and the room's divided by a curtain of glass beads. You can catch live jazz acts here almost any night of the week. And a visit to Main wouldn't be complete without a visit to **Lula's** for great margaritas and giant bowls of guacamole. Park yourself at the bar or outside on their terrace, grab a basket of tortilla chips and salsa, and keep the drinks flowing.

Finally, stroll two blocks down to the beach, dig your toes in the sand, watch the sun set, and laugh at all the friends who went home.—LIA HABERMAN

Santa Monica Watering Holes

Voda. 1449 2nd Street

Hip lounge scene, where they serve up 20 designer martinis accessorized with edible flowers and Godiva chocolates.

Rbx. 1413 5th Street

Part restaurant, part lounge, with live music and a fantastic terrace; ask to be seated upstairs in one of the curtained booths.

My Father's Office. 1018 Montana

The first local bar to serve up microbrewery beers, this low-key spot is best for brewski lovers.

The Pink. 2810 Main Street

So cool they don't have a sign, everything from hip-hop and funk to electronica and house are in the mix.



It's all in the motion: Middle Eastern night at Küsh. Photograph by Amy McCafferty

Küsh

In New York nightlife these days, all roads lead to the Lower East Side, or more specifically, Orchard Street. There, lounge-y vibe predominates. A recent addition to the street is Küsh, a Middle-Eastern themed club opened by Mark Osborne. Tangier is the source of inspiration and materials for Küsh. Osborne used family connections there to supply its exotic fixtures which he combined with his imagination to create the space from scratch with brother-in-law Mark O'Neal. Osborne has created a space that is quite literally a world apart and since opening this spring the joint has been jumping with a polyglot clientele. Küsh seems to have a night for every worldly taste, with a mix of DJs and live music. Sundays feature jazz artist Ben Allison, Tuesdays are Middle Eastern night with live belly dancing, Mehndi painting and a buffet, and Wednesdays feature "Organic Grooves" DJ Sasha. And then there's the fresh Middle Eastern dishes from its kitchen—making Küsh a feast for the ears, eyes and stomach.—JT

Island Finder

Roatan, Honduras

Choosing the ideal destination for a tropical getaway can be tricky. Glossy brochures of tranquil paradise resorts in Mexico and Jamaica bear little resemblance to the actual thing. And all-inclusive packages often feel all-confining. That's why an unusual, and unspoiled Caribbean hideaway may be exactly what the doctor ordered.

Roatan, largest of the eight Bay Islands off the coast of Honduras, is just such a spot. Forty miles long and a few miles wide, Roatan is fringed by warm turquoise waters and the world's second biggest barrier reef. Factor in fairly cheap scuba diving and it's clear why this island is popular with divers from all over. And talk about snorkel heaven—you need only swim 50 feet from the beach to feast your eyes on a mind-boggling assortment of corals, sponges and brightly colored fish.

From east to west, villages stud the north and south coasts. Each community has its character and sensational history, including pirate tales and sunken galleons. One main road runs most of the island's length and no matter where you stay you're always within reach of other spots of interest. Because many islanders have Afro-Antillean roots, English with a rich Caribbean accent is widely spoken. Mix in Spanish, British, Central American Indian and Carib Indian ancestry and the result is a unique culture and a tendency to forget that you're technically in Honduras.

At its northwest tip are Roatan's most popular areas, West End and West Bay. West End's rutted dirt road hugs the shore, winding past dive schools, hip restaurants, bars and moderately priced lodgings. This is the spot to eat, socialize and watch an idyllic sunset.

From there it's just a 10 minute water taxi ride, or a mile and a half walk along the beach, to West Bay. West Bay's beach is the island's biggest and one of its best, yet it's far from crowded. Towering coconut palms and other native trees stud the white sand and tucked behind the fauna are some of the island's most exclusive resorts. Here spectacular snorkeling is mere fin strokes away and horses can be rented for a gallop in the surf. Part of Roatan's charm is that no high-rises lurk upon the beaches, with laws preventing that phenomenon. It's a sleepy island that's super casual but with a budding tourism industry catering to all types of travelers. Not only can you choose lodgings to fit your pocketbook, but since some areas allow seclusion while others hum with life, you can further decide how many people you'll bump into!

If you go, all you really need to pack is your bathing suit, sandals, light casual clothing and some insect repellent. You can fly direct from Miami or Houston on several large airlines. Honduras Air is an affordable option. Phone 800-599-0014. Or you can land on the mainland (in La Ceiba or San Pedro Sula) and catch a domestic flight or ferry to Roatan.

—CAROL A. SMITH



SUMMER BOOK LIST

ATOMIC ENERGY

Start the summer's parties off with a bang, with **Atomic Cocktails** (Chronicle Books), a bright new collection of drinks, vintage graphics and detailed bar-side reference. Surefire hits like the Brazen Martini (violet liqueur and an orange twist in the place of vermouth), Neon Watermelon Margaritas and the fearsome-sounding Angry Red Planet (bloody mary with wasabi), just might wreak everlasting havoc on cocktail life as we know it.

—LARISSA PHILLIPS

THE OTHER SIDE

Yearning for something a bit more entertaining, but just as educational, as the MoMa? **Offbeat Museums** (Santa Monica Press) is a funky, jam-packed volume of insane Americana that describes 50 museums outside the mainstream. The book confirms that, no you have not seen it all.

How about strolling through the corridors of the Museum of Menstruation, the Cockroach Hall of Fame or Mister Ed's Elephant Museum? **Offbeat Museums** exhaustively illustrates that museums aren't always stuffy establishments—that they can be both amusing and enlightening.

—GA MCKENZIE

SKIN COME

Fashion photographer Gian Paolo Barbieri has captured the essence and purity of the tattoo in **Tahiti Tattoos** (Taschen), a compelling study of the island's traditional practice which has a religious (not trendy) source. The 128 page book includes beautifully reproduced photographs of male Polynesians in indigenous attire and essays which describe the history of tattooing which experienced a renaissance in 1982 at an important Tahitian celebration, the Tiurai.—JT

SIGNS OF PAST TIMES

The glory days of hand-painted signs may have passed, but they are still very much a part of our urban environment.

Designage: The Art of the Decorative Sign (Chronicle), offers colorful examples and histories of signage. Each chapter provides a brief history and colorful photos of signs. With a vast array of materials, styles and locales, **Designage** is a great reference for designers and sign lovers alike.—JT

BRIEFS

New travel guides from **Rough Guide** for summer 1998 include South Africa, Brazil, and the USA... **The Time Out Book**

of New York, compiles 23 short stories by known and unknown, native and non-native New Yorkers... Chronicle Books have released new editions of Sandra A. Gustafson's **Cheap East in Paris** and **Cheap Sleeps in Paris**, guides for staying within a budget in the City of Light... **Lonely Planet Deep South** is a new edition, covering Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.





Prime Time/No Time, New College School of Law, San Francisco. Mural by master muralist Ray Pallan

San Francisco's Wallflowers

"The ultimate gig," mused Kenneth Huerta, recipient of the Urban Youth Muralist Award for 1998, "would be the Transamerica Building." Twenty-seven year old Huerta has not yet been commissioned to paint that famous pyramid, but neither has any other artist in San Francisco. This a rarity in a city teeming with countless murals on walls, fences, towers, schools—you name it and it has fallen prey to paint. The Mission District alone has over 200 murals. Perhaps San Francisco's tolerance for different views and lifestyles is what makes it their perfect environment for mural artists to express themselves, suggested Huerta.

The city recently celebrated its eighth Annual Mural Awareness Month. Sponsored by the Precita Eyes Mural Center, this event offered a series of free and low-cost festivals, educational and participatory programs like the Mexican Buss mural tours and "Meet The Artist" mural walks. But the beauty of this art form is that they are a permanent part of the city's landscape and will be there no matter when you visit.

Many murals were first painted in the 1930s, funded during the Great Depression by Roosevelt's New Deal program. Local artists depicted such themes as the working class and California's riches. Then along came Mexican artist, Diego Rivera, who revived fresco painting during that time. Rivera's themes often centered around politics and unity. During the 70's the city paid young people to create works of art in public spaces. And today there is a mini-renaissance centered around street artists.

Huerta is currently working on a piece at the Galería de la Raza, a pioneering institution of Chicano art. His top picks for a true sense of the diversity of San Francisco's murals are the Women's Building in the Mission and Rigo's One Tree, painted on a billboard near 10th and Brannan Streets.

For more information about San Francisco's murals call the Precita Eyes Mural Center at (415) 285-2287 for details about mural happenings around the city.

Jeannie Hopper's World of Music

No one lives for the music quite like Jeannie Hopper. With roots that go deep in the New York music and club scene, she's created a unique role for herself as radio host, DJ and promoter. This spirited impresario thrives on the eclectic and takes pleasure in turning ears onto new, soulful sounds.

Every Saturday Hopper sets airwaves abuzz with WBAI's "Liquid Sound Lounge" now in its fifth year of broadcast. The show reflects Hopper's varied musical influences

and features everything from world music, to house music to spoken word. "When I got the show I brought all of the flavors of music I was into. It was quite a mix but I found that a lot of people want that," she said.

Her audience is as diverse as the music she spins, crossing generations and cultures. They all tune in for the same reason—to listen and to connect with Hopper's positive and spiritual vibe. "Music has to have some sort of a soul in it. I play spoken word because to me it's a real mirror of your soul. You can really feel what's going on with people through poetry," she said.

Liquid Sound Lounge has been a springboard for Hopper's other pursuits and she is now a force to be reckoned with in music promotion. Like the music, her approach is unique. "My thing is organic, I let the music grow on people. I get the music to DJs in different places like cafés and boutiques."

Her approach is paying off. Hopper's client list has grown to include Giant Step records, Groove Collective, New Yorican Soul, Jamiroquai and Finley Quayle.

This self-described musical activist isn't slowing down—she wants you to hear the music. In this case it really is the message.

Liquid Sound Lounge airs Saturdays, 6p.m.-9p.m. on WBAI-FM 99.5. Check out the website at www.liquidsoundlounge.com

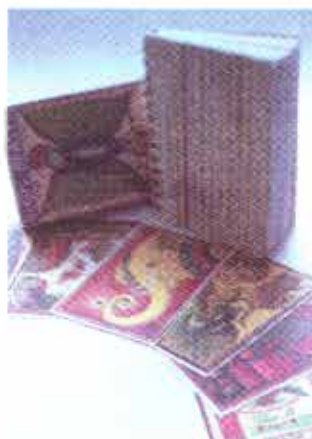


Amy McCafferty



Pelican Brief

On South Miami Beach you can never be too over-the-top. And for those who like to walk the line, the ultra-hip Pelican Hotel will set your taste buds on fire. Owned by Diesel "For Successful Living" Jeans this hotel is beyond trendy—in George Wayne's words, "it's fagulous!" Many a fantastic moment has undoubtedly occurred in the hotel's wildly themed rooms and suites. The Pelican has rooms for every taste and desire, each assigned an appropriate name. For example, the hotel's most popular room (#215), named "Best Whorehouse," is everyone's fantasy of what a bordello should be—red, red, red. All 25 rooms have a theme and no detail has been spared in putting them together. Swedish designer Magnus Ehrlund spent months combing garage sales, thrift stores and flea markets throughout Florida to furnish the Pelican. If you're going to do kitsch, do it right! The Pelican is the kind of hotel that only works in a place like Miami and it's only for, well, you know who you are. For those who just want to soak it all in, the Pelican Café doesn't have themed entrees but it does have the talents of chef Stefano Zen cooking up world cuisine. For reservations call 1-800-7PELICAN —JUAN CARLOS BENITEZ



Reberto D'Alfonso

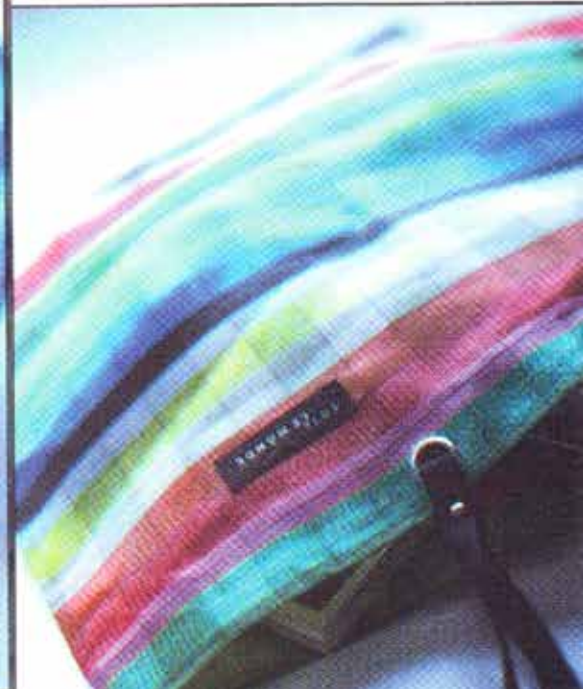
Redstone Matchboxes

Upside-Down Heads and Birds, Beats and Butterflies (Chronicle) are postcards illustrated with authentic nineteenth and early twentieth century label art taken from matchboxes from all over the world. The matchbox was a disposable medium in which artists displayed work depicting political views, celebrations of the natural world, beguiling puzzles, and personal jokes. Postcards don't get much more exquisite than this—in fact you'll probably want to keep these for framing.



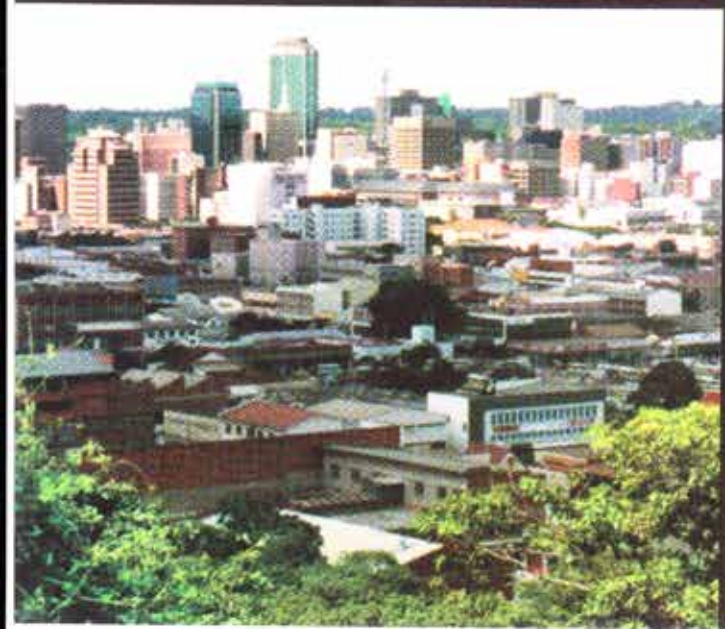
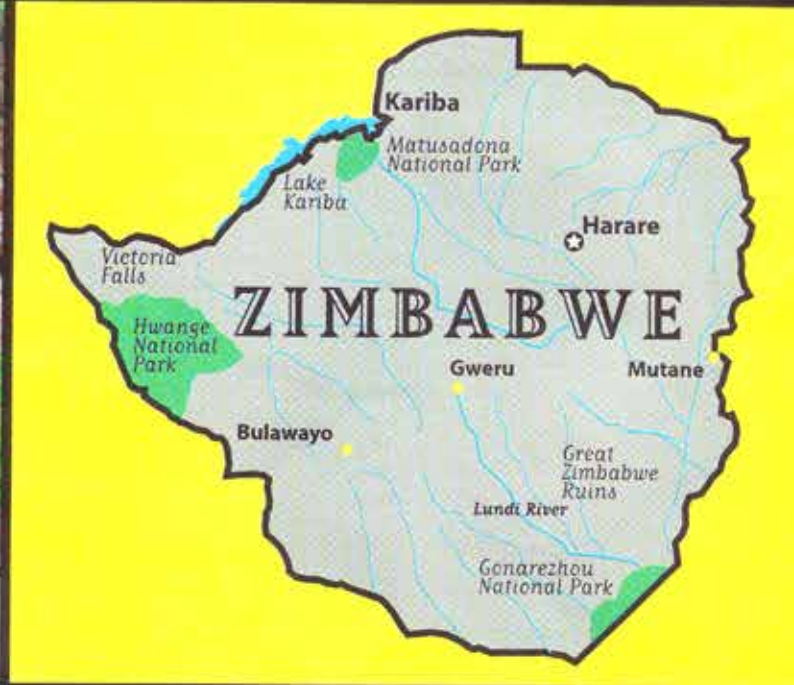
cool summer

photographs by
roberto d'addona



Summer's here, so get casual and colorful. And remember, relax...

Clockwise from top: Thermos (\$14.95) and cups (\$3.95) from Eclectic Home, 224 Eighth Avenue, New York; Goldfish blow-up pillow (\$15.95) from Mxyplyzyk, 125 Greenwich Avenue, New York; Sandals (\$4.95) from Pearl River, Chinatown, New York; Plaid tote (\$38) from Mxyplyzyk; Hat (\$22) from Mxyplyzyk



Which Way Zimbabwe?

A study of absolute extremes—unspoiled wilderness contrasting with urban slums—Zimbabwe faces a future as troubling as its past. With its colonial history of plunder and meddling barely resolved, this young democracy now must balance the needs of a growing population with the desire to preserve its natural resources. With conditions like this, does Zimbabwe's nascent tourism industry stand a chance?

Christopher Harrall reports on the rough waters ahead.

Accidents invariably happen at the worst times and without warning. This incident was no exception. The victim, a fellow journalist, in his attempt to leap atop a granite boulder had slipped and torn a deep gash in his knee. He clutched his leg, and the blood poured out between his fingers at such a prodigious rate that everyone present knew it meant stitches—many stitches.

Despite the fact that you might be staying at a four-star safari lodge, as we in fact were, with all the amenities of a fine hotel, an event like this reminds you where you, in fact, are. This is Africa. There are life and death matters to consider here—such as where is the nearest doctor? Is that needle sterile? How do I prevent insects from laying eggs in my warm, moist wound? Zimbabwe, despite all its exotic charm and the luxury of many of its safari lodges, is still immensely lacking in the basics. What health care exists is limited and the specter of AIDS looms ominously—the traveler's first instinct is to balk at seeking local medical aide.

But an injury or illness left without care in this part of the world can have serious consequences. Consequences which, in the case of our companion's injury, the local guides referred to as "going septic." A review of our options and an inventory of the first aid kit brought little hope, so we did what any group of writers would do; we dragged our companion inside, drowned the wound in hydrogen peroxide, and collectively scratched our heads. Fortunately, there was a doctor who never left home without his field bag vacationing at the lodge, and our companion received five neat and rather painful sutures. He didn't go septic. Crisis averted.

Zimbabwe may not be so lucky. Since gaining its independence in 1980, the country, plagued by a multitude of internal problems, has struggled to maintain its hopes of becoming an African success story. A struggle, in light of recent events, that is proving more and more difficult, to the extent that a major crisis may be unavoidable.

In mid-January of this year, the capital city of Harare was rocked by three days of rioting. The rioters, angered by a twenty percent increase in the cost of basic commodities such as bread and mealie-meal (milled corn, the main dietary staple for most Zimbabweans), set up barricades throughout the capi-

tal. There were reports of motorists being stoned and vehicles being burned and overturned. Shop windows were smashed, and looters plundered businesses until the Zimbabwe National Army was called in to put down the insurrection. Besides price hikes and food shortages, accusations of widespread corruption within President Mugabe's political circle and increasing unrest among the labor unions are causing tensions to mount.

Though unusual for a country that has enjoyed relative peace in recent years, the January riots are symptomatic of deeper problems, the roots of which can be traced as far back as 1923, when Zimbabwe was a self-governing British colony known as Southern Rhodesia. Named for businessman Cecil Rhodes, the colony broke away from the Commonwealth in 1965 but continued to be governed by the white minority under the leadership of Ian Smith. Resistance from black nationalists began in 1966, and the country was soon embroiled in a conflict which would last until 1979, when an agreement was reached between opposing parties and free elections were held. At the close of 1980, now president Robert Mugabe had been elected prime minister, and Zimbabwe had taken its first steps as a new independent nation. Though strides have been made since the early days of independence, just how different the Zimbabwe of today is from that of long ago is up for debate.

Dinner at one of Zimbabwe's many lavish and decidedly un-Third World safari lodges was, like the lodges themselves, not what I'd expected. The food was hearty and sumptuous, and the years of British rule had left an indelible mark on the menu. There was a surfeit of potato-based dishes, and the meal came in courses. I was somewhat disappointed with the high comfort level—before arrival I had resigned myself to eating out of camp tins and digging a hole for a toilet. I soon realized that "roughing it" would not be necessary. Seated across the table from me were a white farm owner and his wife. Just past middle age, they sat side by side and spoke as if they'd been married a long time; one picked up where the other left off and filled in the blanks, and together they told their story. We talked of the usual stuff: the work we did, where we were

from, what we'd seen so far. They were surprised that we were American. "We don't see many of you here," he said. "Canadians—a few, in fact," she said. "But seldom Americans," he added. "Well, it's awfully far for you to come, isn't it?" she asked. We nodded and told them how beautiful the country was and that it was well worth the long flight. Though friendly, they had a troubled air about them. I asked about their farm. It was of moderate size. The man's father had owned it before him. He'd grown up there but had spent time living in South Africa during the war. He liked farming, liked it enough to come back and make a life of it. His father had died not too long after the drought of 1992. At mention of this, his wife sighed and said she hoped the rain, which hadn't fallen for several weeks and was causing concern, would return. And then her husband made a curious remark. He looked at his wife and said wryly, "It might be better if they did divvy up the land. That'd save us a bit of care, wouldn't it?" She merely rolled her eyes and gave him an affectionate slap on the shoulder.

The government's plan for land reform remains a thorn in the side of farmer and peasant alike. Pre-independence, Zimbabwe was literally a country divided. The ruling class, primarily rich white farmers, had a monopoly on the most productive farmland, while members of the peasant class were restricted to farming marginal plots. Post-independence, this situation has changed little: currently, 26 million acres, almost one-third of Zimbabwe's land, is owned by about 4,000 mostly white farmers. Mugabe, in an attempt to increase the amount of arable land for the nation's 8 million peasants, proposes unilateral expropriation of farmland—in essence, taking back what was taken from the native people of Zimbabwe so many years ago. The government claims this will rectify inequities dating back to the colonial period. But what is an attractive moral course, many view as economically unwise, and they believe the plan will ultimately do more harm than good.

It is difficult to imagine that a country as beautiful and unspoiled as Zimbabwe has any troubles at all. The landscape has a way of making your jaw drop.

Headstones threw long shadows on the ground in a cemetery located in the outskirts of Harare. It was midsummer, the rainy season for southern Africa, and the grass had grown high. A group of black workmen walked among the graves. Each man held a scythe which he swung back and forth like a pendulum, letting the weight of the blade do the work. I watched as they cleared small plots in a piecemeal fashion, working dangerously close to each other, pausing to talk in their first language, Ndebelian, and to watch the traffic slow at the intersection. A woman with a baby wrapped tightly to her chest and another child in tow approached

the cemetery gates. Immediately, two young men, their hands filled with flowers, fell in step beside the young mother. The men thrust the flowers at her and gestured imploringly as they pursued her to a freshly covered grave. Wishing to be left alone, the beleaguered woman reached into her pocket and handed one of them some coins in exchange for a small bunch of flowers bound with thick wire. Their sale completed, the men returned to the gate to await the next mourner.

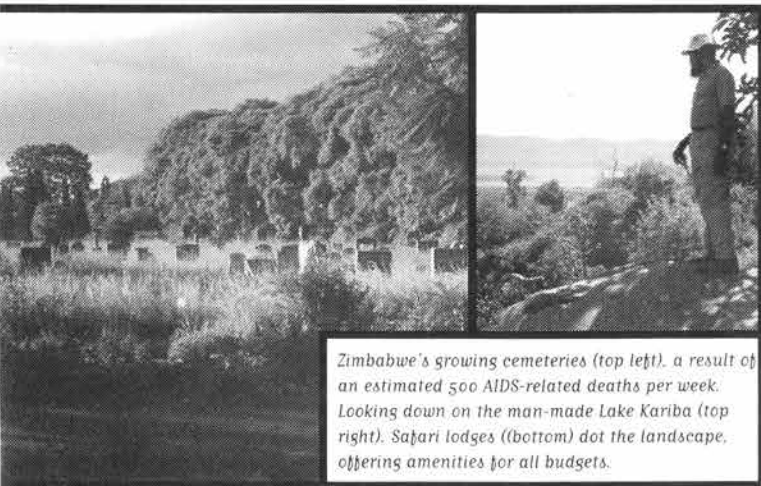
This transaction is one of the so-called silver linings of the AIDS crisis currently gripping Zimbabwe. An estimated 500 AIDS-related deaths occur each week, and in a country where jobs are scarce, hard-selling flowers to mourners, however callous, is an opportunity not to be overlooked.

Later that day we were parked outside the immigration office downtown, awaiting approval of our press passes. It was warm but by no means oppressive—Zimbabwe sits atop a high plateau, and the climate for much of the nation, even in summer, is comfortable. Only the low-lying areas sheltered from the breeze, become what one thinks of as "Africa hot." A young man approaches our minivan. He offers to watch the car while we run our errands. Vehicle guarding is a competitive industry in the capital. One person will watch over three or four public parking spaces. "No parking tickets," he advertises to us before running to intercept a woman returning to a car parked in "his" area. She hands him some money, and he waves her out into traffic. Though more lucrative than begging, selling flowers to mourners or protecting vehicles is hardly the meaningful participation in Zimbabwe's economy Mugabe has envisioned for his people, but for now there remain few alternatives.

Dollar, our guide for the afternoon, cut the outboard motor a few yards from a tiny island in the middle of man-made Lake Kariba and took an apple from the bag at his feet. "How did you get the name Dollar?" I asked him as the boat drifted toward the shore. "My mother and father," he answered, bearing a huge grin of perfect, white teeth as if to say, what a silly question. The boat slid gently onto the sand. "Say hello to my friend," said Dollar, pointing to a small animal running toward us along the shore. "His name is Omega. He lives alone on this island. No one knows how he came here." The animal, a small gray monkey, leaped cautiously to the bow of the boat, hesitated for an instant, and then with the astonishing speed exhibited only by wild animals, snatched the apple from our guide's outstretched hand and bounded back to the narrow beach. We watched for a while until our guide tossed another apple to the monkey and bid him goodbye.

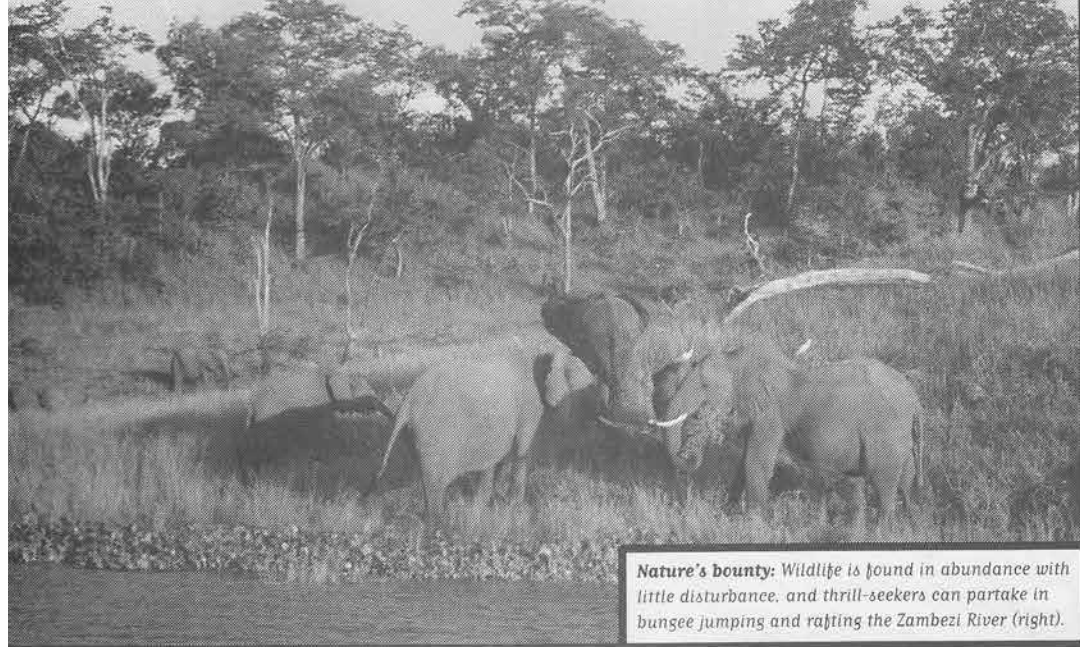
Dollar has been working at Kipling's Lodge for nearly a year, and he is closer to what Mugabe has in mind when he speaks of his people's meaningful participation in the nation's economy. Indeed, he is studying to join the ranks of Zimbabwe's knowledgeable and highly skilled safari guides. Nearly all the lodges in the country employ these professional guides to lead groups into the bush. Though the pay is low—lower still now because of the country's falling dollar—and the days are long and filled with a tremendous burden of responsibility, not the least of which is ensuring the safety of their groups, the guides are lucky. They have a place to live, regular meals, and a salary, and in most cases, they take great pride in their work.

Out in the bush, reminders of the country's problems are scarce. It is difficult to imagine that a country as beautiful and unspoiled as Zimbabwe has any troubles at all. The landscape has a way of making your jaw drop. Your senses become numbed with awe and the images of



Zimbabwe's growing cemeteries (top left), a result of an estimated 500 AIDS-related deaths per week. Looking down on the man-made Lake Kariba (top right). Safari lodges (bottom) dot the landscape, offering amenities for all budgets.





Nature's bounty: Wildlife is found in abundance with little disturbance, and thrill-seekers can partake in bungee jumping and rafting the Zambezi River (right).



Harare's crowded streets and shantytowns almost disappear.

With the economic stability of Zimbabwe in question, resources such as Lake Kariba, Hwange National Park, and the ancient ruins of Great Zimbabwe are invaluable. Tourism is the fastest growing segment of the nation's economy, and with that growth come jobs. The government has invested 2.5 million dollars this year to promote tourism. It's estimated that 1.8 million people will visit the country in 1998, a number that is likely to increase due to the fall of the Zimbabwe dollar. Yet, compared to other destinations within Africa, crowds are few. The nation remains largely overlooked—a huge plus in a world where the beaten path leads almost everywhere. Unlike those of a country such as Kenya, you won't find yourself sitting in bumper-to-bumper traffic inside Zimbabwe's national parks. Nor will you find a shortage of sights. The parks overflow with wildlife. Lion, elephant, white and black rhinoceros, hippo, and giraffe are in abundance. Impala and buffalo are around every turn. Even during the rainy season, when water is plentiful and the animals need not congregate at watering holes, encounters with game are frequent and fulfilling.

Vast natural resources and the past eighteen years of relative peace have allowed the tourism industry to blossom. Safari lodges, offering an array of activities and catering to all budgets, have sprung up throughout Zimbabwe. Depending on your tastes, you can spend your time in the bush in luxurious comfort, eating delicious, though fairly westernized, dishes or opt to "rough it" in one of the tree lodges with no private bath or electricity and no electric fence to keep the animals out. In such places

it is not uncommon to find an elephant using your tree lodge as a scratching post. Traditional tent safaris are also available. There is a lodge or camp to suit every taste.

Expedition outfitters, too, have prospered. Shearwater, a market leader and pioneer of adventure activities, has been operating in Zimbabwe since 1982. They offer an assortment of activities from bungee jumping at Victoria Falls to canoe safaris to rafting the notorious Zambezi River. Through the years they've grown bigger, and the things once taken for granted are no more. They now have competitors where they used to have none, and their commitment to the growth of their company in a depressed economy remains paramount. "Our goal is to keep the company productive and our people employed while providing a First World experience in a Third World country," says a company spokesperson. In a nation where eighty percent of the businesses are foreign owned, Shearwater is a wholly owned Zimbabwean company. Their rafting business has developed a river guide pool which is now ninety percent local, and they continue to train more individuals. Even under ideal conditions, operating a company like Shearwater would be a challenge; but to succeed in a country struggling to move forward is evidence that Zimbabwe is not without its success stories and that, yes, there is a right way of doing things.

Today, the future of Zimbabwe remains uncertain. Its people are divided. The government is viewed as largely corrupt. The economy is suffering. Investor confidence is flagging. There is civil unrest and frustration. The country has watched its own prospects diminish while its neighbor, Mozambique, a war-torn country once considered to be light years behind Zimbabwe in its development, enjoys peace, renewed confidence, monies from foreign investment, and the hope of prosperity. The recent crackdown on trade union demonstrations and Parliament's publication of the Public Order and Security Bill, which prohibits public gatherings without three days' written notice to a regulating authority, is a blow to the country's ailing image. Human rights infringements such as these are what many understand to be the reasons why Clinton dropped Zimbabwe from his African itinerary and opted instead to visit Botswana, another country on its way up. All are clues that Zimbabwe may be headed in the wrong direction and a quick turnaround is imperative.

There's a rafting term called "short swim." I learned it while shooting the rapids of the Zambezi River. The term refers to the moment you become separated from your raft, but are able to climb back aboard. The alternative term is "long swim." If you're on a long swim you aren't getting back on board any time soon. You're going to have to ride out the rapids alone, hoping your life jacket does its job while you wait to be picked up. It's a harrowing experience, I assure you. Zimbabwe can only hope for the former. ☐

When To Go

Peak season is winter (May–August), off-peak is summer (November–March). Lodging rates are slightly higher during peak, with game plentiful. Off-season brings plentiful game and lower rates.

Before You Go

Check with the Center for Disease Control for updates on disease outbreaks in the area and get any necessary vaccinations.

Anti-malaria prophylactics (Lariam) are required of all visitors.

Hotels

Harare

Best Western Jameson Hotel

Phone: (263-4) 796641

Fax: (263-4) 794655

Mieikels Hotel

Phone: (263-4) 795655

Fax: (263-4) 707753

Email: meikels@harare.lafrica.com

Safari Lodges

Kipling's Lodge

Lake Kariba

Phone: (263-4) 757831

Kanondo Tree Lodge

Hwange National Park

Phone/Fax: (263-9) 74589/229088

Email: touchwild@harare.lafrica.com

Big Cave Camp

Matopo Hills

Phone: (263-9) 77176

Email: bigcave@harare.lafrica.com

Website: www.bigcave.co.za

Adventure Outfitters

Shearwater

Phone/Fax: (263-4) 757831/757836

Email: shearwat@harare.lafrica.com

Adrift

Phone: (263-1) 13 4502

Fax: (263-1) 13 2014

Email: adrift@coldfire.dnet.co.zw

Website: www.adrift.co.zw

Paris Perused

The City of Light as photographed and lived by **Edward Hillel**

You're only as good as your shoes," was the advice given me by the late Robert Doisneau, quintessential photographer of Paris's human frailties, when I first arrived here in 1990. Many pairs later, I still get around without a car and love it, chalking up the miles in this *ville-musée* which sometimes hides, sometimes exposes its layers of history and magic.

1998 has been named "The Year of The Promenade," and for good reason. Paris, despite France's sputtering economy and an anxious tango with the xenophobic National Front Party, is constantly looking in the mirror and refreshing its makeup. Its monuments and building façades are busily being cleaned; its 400 public gardens are being invested with an astonishing mix of greenery and high tech; its twenty neighborhoods, called *arrondissements*, will each seduce you with new art galleries, street fairs, and public projects. The refurbished Champs-Élysées once again favors pedestrians over cars, with new extrawide

tish woman of all, with the rest of us scrambling like jealous lovers to keep her to ourselves. And yes—she certainly is a kept woman: the annual budget for my neighborhood garden is higher than the GNP of many small nations. So next time you meet a gruff Parisian, remember not to take any of this personally. You may even kindly explain that without your tourist dollars, his or her gorgeous *dame* would likely sink into the Seine. Try it and you may be surprised by how much respect it will get you.

I have come to realize that Paris, perhaps more than any other city in the world, lives in our modern sensibilities as an imaginary place, rather than a specific set of historical and social references. When I photograph, it is with a small pocket camera, nonchalantly, with no specific goal in mind. I wander the streets aimlessly, neither a tourist hoping for that great postcard shot nor a photojournalist covering a specific story. I don't look for a photographic opportunity. Rather, I wait for *satori*, that moment of illumination or self-

I have come to realize that Paris, perhaps more than any other city in the world, lives in our modern sensibilities as an imaginary place, rather than a specific set of historical and social references.

sidewalks. And beneath its snobbish French flair, Paris, always a magnet for exiles and artists, today boasts a multicultural mix (75 ethnic groups at last count) that is perhaps unrivaled in any other European capital.

With twenty million visitors last year, the city is the number one tourist destination in Europe—this, despite its being far from a cheap date, coupled with the Parisians' reputation as mean-spirited and rude hosts. French author Philippe Meyer suggests that Paris is best observed during a "fifth season," lasting anywhere from one day to two weeks, just after the locals return from their summer holidays and recall once again that their city is indeed a miracle. This is ironic since only one-third are actually natives, the rest émigrés from elsewhere in France and abroad. So why the "attitude"? It's simple: in a country where PC only refers to your computer and where half-naked women advertise products on TV, Paris is the most beautiful, willful, and coquet-

recognition, to appear before me. I have learned to ask nothing from Paris other than just to be there.

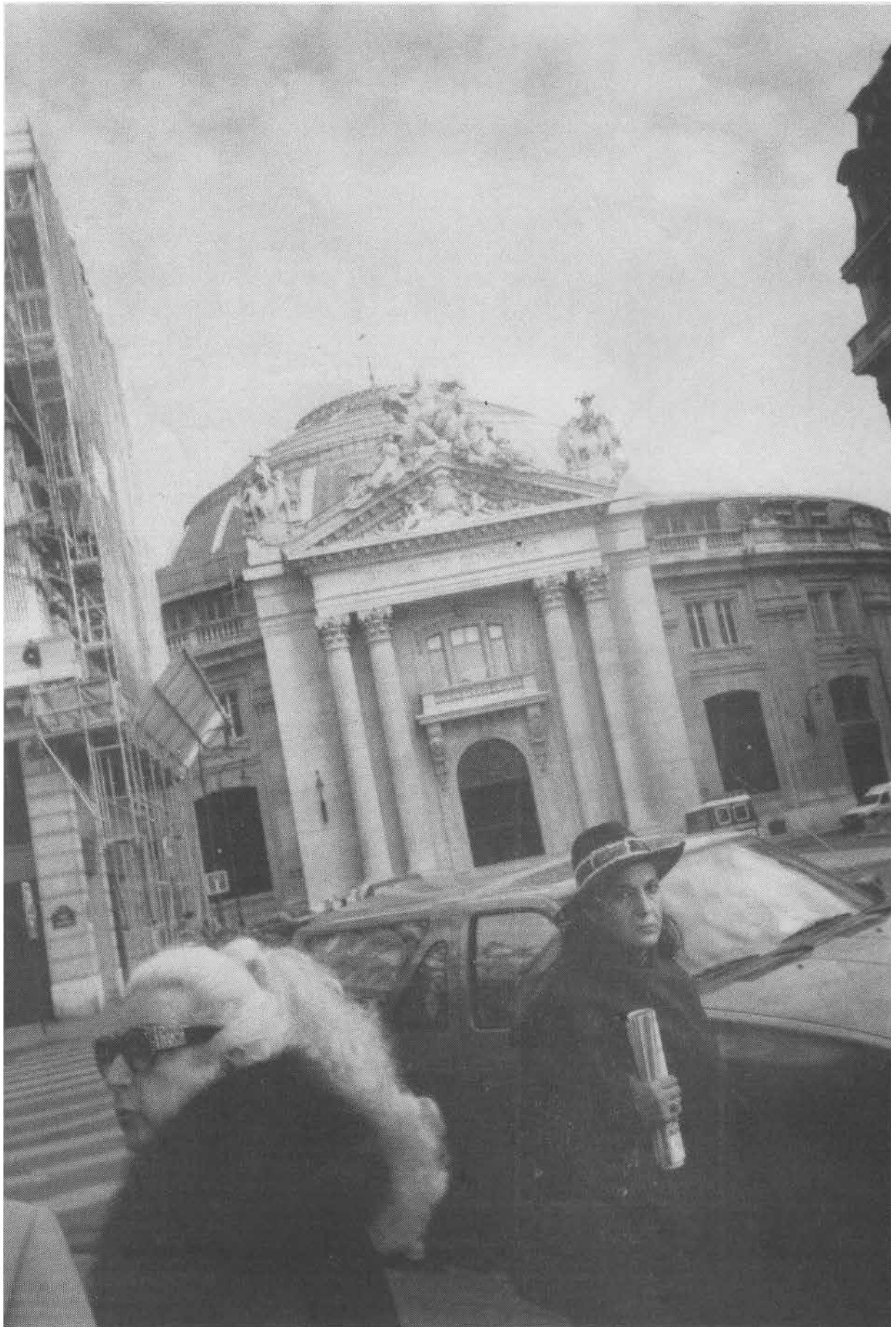
Recently at the photo lab, I met Edouard Boubat, another legendary photographer of the city, now in his eighties.

"Are you still taking pictures?" I asked.

He threw his arms up as if to say "what else?" and his eyes sparkled. Then he showed me a photograph the lab technician had just given him. A couple kissing on the quai of the Ile-Saint-Louis as a *bateau mouche* filled with tourists sailed by on the Seine. To Boubat, Doisneau, and others like Cartier-Bresson, Paris would always be a place of nostalgia and falling in love. I wonder whether they knew they were creating myths, or did they really believe that this is Paris? No matter; the myth should live on, even as the encroaching asphalt jungle and global uniformity threaten our romance. Paris, like the Garden of Eden or a sweet dream, should remain the Promised Land.



"Happy Birthday, Eiffel!" The 19th century scribe Guy de Maupassant deplored the modernist pretensions of the Eiffel Tower. Asked why he dined every day in its second-floor restaurant, he answered, "This is the only place I know in Paris where one cannot see it." He did not have to endure this too long, dying only four years after its completion.





Monuments. The old stock exchange, left. "The Kiss (homage to Robert Doisneau), Métro Montparnasse," top. "Paris My Muse" (shop window in Le Marais), above.

Neighborhood Notebook

Distinct from districts or boroughs, Paris's *arrondissements* were sewn together from many villages and attest to a sensual and fluid idea of neighborhood based more on spiritual notions of the circle than on the efficient logic of urban planning. Twenty of them fan out from the center (1st *arrondissement*) in a clockwise spiral hugging the Seine River, which divides the city into the right and left banks. Their population of about two million residents often bulges to ten million passing through daily, making Paris the densest capital in Europe. Each area has its simi-

Vibrant street life offers enough signature restaurants, galleries, grands couturiers (designer fashions) and ambience to convince you that Paris may indeed be the only place for a civilized person to live.

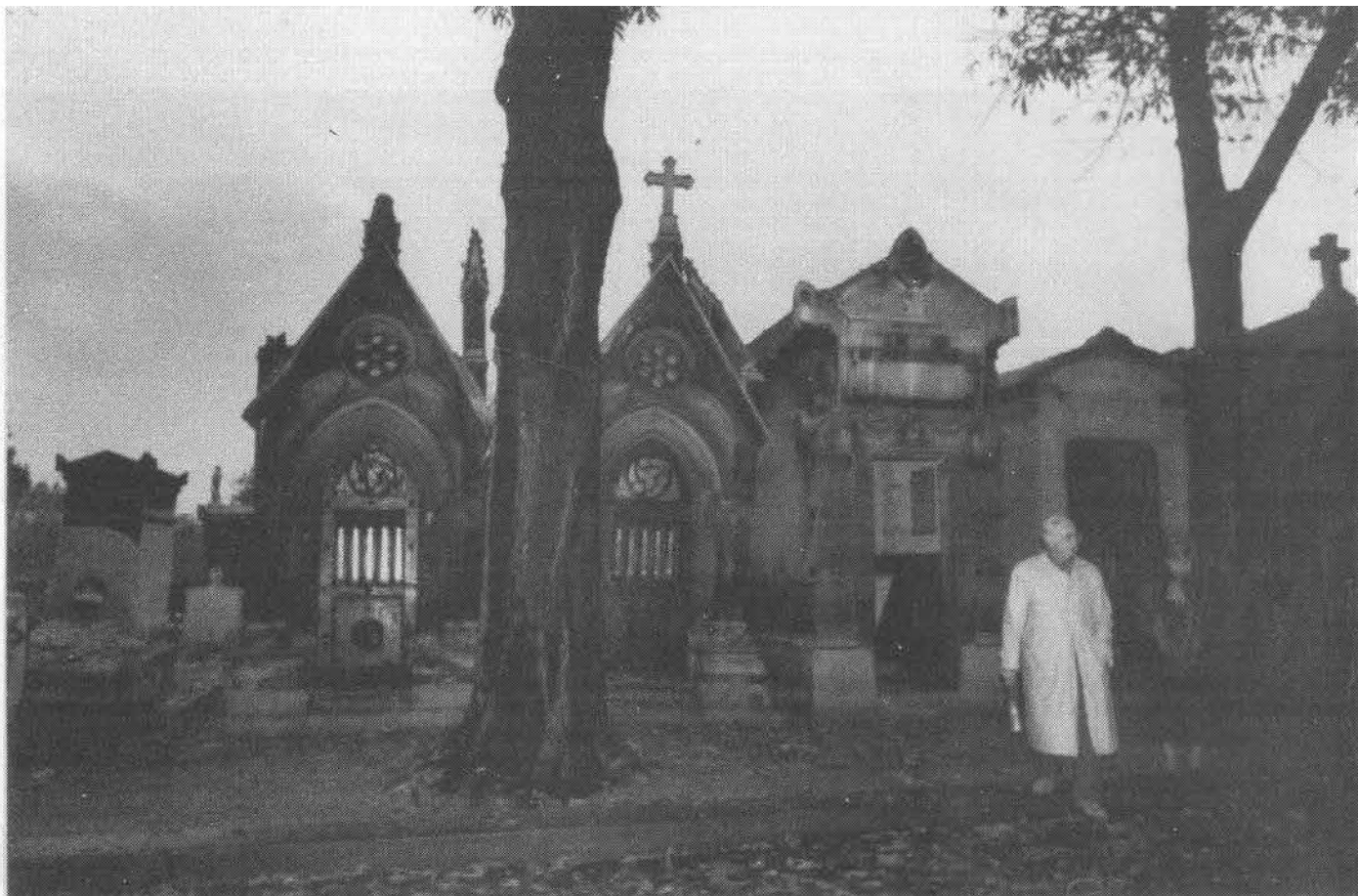
larities (churches, city hall, old town square), but also its particular traditions and reputation to uphold. Some suggestions:

4th or Le Marais *arrondissement* (marshland). Its narrow streets and buildings dating back to before the twelfth century evolved into a proletarian prewar Jewish ghetto (much of it liqui-

dated during the Nazi occupation), now gone chic. Gay village, local designers' boutiques, the exquisite **Picasso** and **Carnavalet Museums**, and the famous **rue des Rosiers**, where everything kosher still tastes better—these are just some appetizers to an area where the grandeur and density of French history can be virtually spooned off the streets.

5th and 6th *arrondissements* straddle Paris's most elegant and popular **Jardin de Luxembourg**. Here is the essence of the *Rive*

Gauche—now referred to as the *Gauche Caviar*—boasting those famous names like the boulevards **Saint-Germain**, **Saint-Michel** and **Montparnasse**; the cafés **Deux Magots**, **Flore** and **Closerie des Lilas**; the **Sorbonne** and the **Institut de France**; the grand old publishing houses **Seuil**, **Flammarion**, and **Gallimard**. In short, this is the cradle of the



new French Enlightenment, where ideas are born, debated, destroyed, and reborn, where the *discours* sometimes turns into a heated *polémique* and at other times is plain boring. Vibrant street life offers enough signature restaurants, galleries, *grands couturiers* ("designer fashions"), and ambience to convince you that Paris may indeed be the only place for a civilized person to live. Ponder the possibility at the *salon de thé* at **La Grande Mosquée de Paris** (1-2 place du Puits-de-l'Ermine), where mint tea and sweets are a traditional must.

13th arrondissement. This is the heart of Paris's resurging "east end," recently crowned with the ostentatious quadruple glass towers of **La Grande Bibliothèque** (*quai François Mauriac*), where people sit underground while the books rise up to the heavens. Mind over matter—or matter over mind, if you insist. The area offers an impressive **Chinatown**, in reality full of Vietnamese restaurants reflecting France's colonial past (rue Tolbiac), a row of very contemporary **art galleries** (rue Louise Weiss) and a high-tech, laser-generated giant movie screen, **Gaumont Grand Ecran Italie** (place d'Italie). Around the old train tracks of the **Gare d'Austerlitz**, an abandoned warehouse or two, adorned with graffiti, are still standing. Here squatters make art and giant rave parties, like defiant sen-

tinels to the relentless expansion of the *métropole*.

18th arrondissement. Crowned by the **Sacre-Coeur Church**, built on an escarpment 1,000 feet above sea level, **Montmartre** offers the cleanest air and a heart-stopping sunrise over Paris. Misty chateaux, alleys, and vineyards (metro Lamarck-Caulaincourt) have made Montmartre a magnet for artists now as then, when the Dadaists Tristan Tzara and Max Ernst (rue Junot) and others lived here. Down the hill, the streets around **Place Pigalle** were the haunt of Henry *Quiet Days in Clichy* Miller, who frequented the seedy parlors and *caf-conc'*-like **Folies Bergères** and **Moulin Rouge**, which this year celebrate their 100th birthdays.

19th and 20th arrondissements. An aromatic crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa is to be found around the **Belleville** metro. Here Hasidic and Tunisian Jews, Malaysians and Vietnamese, Algerians and other Muslims share the bustling sidewalks, stores, and sinewy streets of this quickly—alas!—gentrifying area. At **Père Lachaise**, the most visited cemetery in the world, lie Maria Callas, Colette, Jim Morrison, and other famous names. Indeed, a most exquisite place to take one's own life can be found minutes away at "suicide bridge" in the majestic **Parc des Buttes-Chaumont**. Or stay around and catapult yourself into the twenty-

first century at **La Villette**, with its year-round presentations of avant-garde music, high-tech science, and arts.

For further information. Parigramme, a young, independent publisher, specializes in guidebooks. A few titles in English (59 rue Beaubourg, 75003 Paris/fax: (331) 4454 2420).



Dining

The myth of Paris's gastronomical prowess is surpassed only by the reality. And—happy surprise!—you can eat fabulously well without skipping next month's rent. Recent personal picks (all prices per person):

Julien. Arguably the city's most beautiful dining room. Its theater and entertainment crowd will say that you don't know Paris until you have dined at Julien. Three-course menu \$28, after 10 p.m. \$20. (16 rue de Faubourg St-Denis, 10th/0147701206)

Terminus Nord. A period piece off the beaten path, this moody brasserie with low lighting, red velvet, and surround mirrors is a set for a Dashiell Hammett polar. Share a meal-in-itself sumptuous seafood platter and a bottle of wine, about \$30. (23 rue de Dunkerque, 10th/0142850515)

Le Square Trousseau: A good bet near the Bastille, this *bistro du quartier* is a magnet for lucky locals and the glitterati, who have made it a regular stop. A divine outdoor terrace on the square and seasonal French cuisine cho-

sen daily. Lunch menu with wine about \$26, add \$10 for dinner. Book a week in advance. (1 rue Antoine-Vollon, 12th/0143430600)

Le Grand Café Capucines. Elegant dining with the touch of a master chef. Here you're in an extravagant art nouveau decor on one of the city's famed *grands boulevards*. Fresh seafood from the kitchen's own fish tank is the food of choice—and it's open 365 days a year. Between \$20–\$50. (4 boulevard des Capucines, 9th/0147121900)

Susan's Place. Best Tex-Mex east of Houston, first prize for chile con carne in Europe. Birds serenade children and lovers in a down-home ambience while owner Suzanne and her cheery staff dish out copious servings and all-fresh ingredients with a smile. Lunch or dinner with a margarita for under \$25. (51 rue des Ecoles, 5th/0143542322)

Poullé'aïlle. Canary Islands cuisine specializes in a delicious variety of marinated chicken in generous helpings. If the mood is right, waitress Martine will sing for you (Barbra

Streisand, Celine Dion) as she serves, while owner Jean-Luc (former jazzman) plays the piano. Three-course menus \$15–\$30. (12 rue Castellan, 1st/0142659052)

La Verrière. Hidden in Paris's northern outskirts is the Danube, a quaint turn-of-the-century village worth a visit, even if only as a pretext for eating at this bistro owned by star chef Eric Fauchon and his wife. Classical French cuisine, four-course meal \$30. (10 rue du Général-Brunet, 19th/0140400330)

Le Méridien-Montparnasse. After dragging your kids through round-the-clock sightseeing, reward them (and yourself) with a festive "Baby Brunch" (hardly for babies). Clowns, games, parades, and prizes keep them enchanted and fed while you sample a great variety of food, from fresh oysters to salads to meats, and an endless choice of French desserts. Forget your calories during this all-you-can-eat party. Sundays only between 12 p.m. and 3 p.m. Adults \$35, children age 4–11 \$18, under 4 free. (19 rue du Commandant-Mouchotte, 14th/0144364400)

"The Man In White" (the Père Lachaise cemetery after the rain), top left. "For Pablo Casals," bottom left. "The Ghost of Colette," below.





Nuits Blanches ("All-Nighters")

You need more than 1,001 nights—not all Arabian—and an up-to-date guide to conquer Paris's fast-changing club scene. It is a vibrant, truly global crossroads of musical tastes, boosted by the old truism that musicians love to play here. But attention! This is where the city really bares its latin roots—most places (some exceptions) don't get going until midnight and then keep going until dusk. Key word these days is *looké* (outrageously dressed, preferably with colored hair). Entrance fees usually include one drink.

New Morning. Paris is home to African world music, and this is its proud nest. From blues to bikutsi and ziglibhity to zulu, live concerts nightly. Entrance \$12–\$18. (7-9 rue des Petites-Ecuries 10th/0145235141)

Duc de Lombards and Sunset. The city's jazz alley has taken root here. Big names and new discoveries every night. Prices vary. (42 and 60 rue des Lombards 1st/0142332288, 0140264660)

La Chapelle des Lombards. The reference for salsa, zouk, soukous, ragga, and other tribal sounds. Live concert Thursdays. (19 rue de Lappe, 11th/0143572424)

What's Up Bar: CD launchings and hot DJs make this the place to discover the newest music. Have you heard "intelligent jungle"? Admission \$8. (15 rue Daval 11th/0148058833)

Elysée Montmartre. Rock 'n' roll, yé yé and java en famille, Goa-trance nights and good DJs make this an unpretentious funhouse multiplex. Admission \$12–\$16. (72 bd Rochechouart 18th/0144924542)

La Coupole. Tuesday night salsa (lessons \$6 per hour) is all the rage with the city's expat community in this *grande dame* of Paris bistros. Entrance fee \$15. (102 boulevard Montparnasse 14th/0143201420)

Peniche Makara. A true alternative experience on this (moored) boat. Cheap beer (less-than-\$2 happy hour), cheap concerts (\$5–\$8), and eclectic bands. (Quai de la Gare 13th/0144240900)

Check Hair. For that last-minute coiffeur, until 2 a.m. With a tequila on the house. Men \$25, women \$32, hair color add \$15–\$30. (75 boulevard Beaumarchais 11th/0148879000)



Summer Highlights

Saint-Denis Music Festival: All forms of music, new and established talent in this northern suburb of Paris. June 10 – July 12. (0148130607)

Football World Cup (otherwise known as soccer) invades Paris. Tickets to the event at the new Stade de France have long been sold out, but giant outdoor screens will broadcast the event live to many outdoor locations June 10 – July 12.

La Villette Jazz Festival: Annual jazz fest with Big Names (to be announced). July 1 – 12. (La Villette 19th/0144844484)

Gardens. All the city's gardens are a feast for the senses. A recent discovery is the Parc André Citroën, a former ammonia plant transformed into a postmodern (glass, concrete and water) multitiered "garden of Babylon" (Metro Balard, 15th). At the Bagatelle Gardens, international sculptors Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne show 160 monumental works March 14 – August 2. (Bois de Boulogne 16th/0145012010)

Visual Arts. Hundreds of exhibitions to choose from. Best guide is the weekly *Pariscope*, which includes a succinct English-language section (50 cents, published every Wednesday).

Further Information. Paris Tourism Office, 127 avenue des Champs-Élysées 8th/0149525354, www.paris.france.org

Paris.Net

The internet bug has swept over the city, leaving behind a wasteland of junkies gone broke and love stories galore. Useful (and bilingual) spaces to plug into:

Web Bar—Internet café (\$6/hr.), three-level multimedia gallery and a world music concert with your Sunday brunch. (32 rue de Picardie, 3rd arr./webbar@webbar.fr)

Café Orbital—with the fastest machines in Paris, this pioneer of the genre is mostly for serious geeks. But they do serve coffee. (13 rue de Médicis, 6th arr./info@orbital.fr)

<http://eandw.com>—catalog of latest work by Paris designers. You can even stay home and order by credit card.



"Sleepless Night in Pigalle," top left. "Bird in Flight" (art nouveau iron and glass) in Montmartre, bottom left. "From Balzac to Beaubourg," above: two centuries of Paris history meet as a section of the Centre national de l'art et de la culture Georges Pompidou juts over Les Halles, former food market to the masses.

www.cnac-gp.fr—art exhibitions, permanent and temporary, plus museum history and facts.

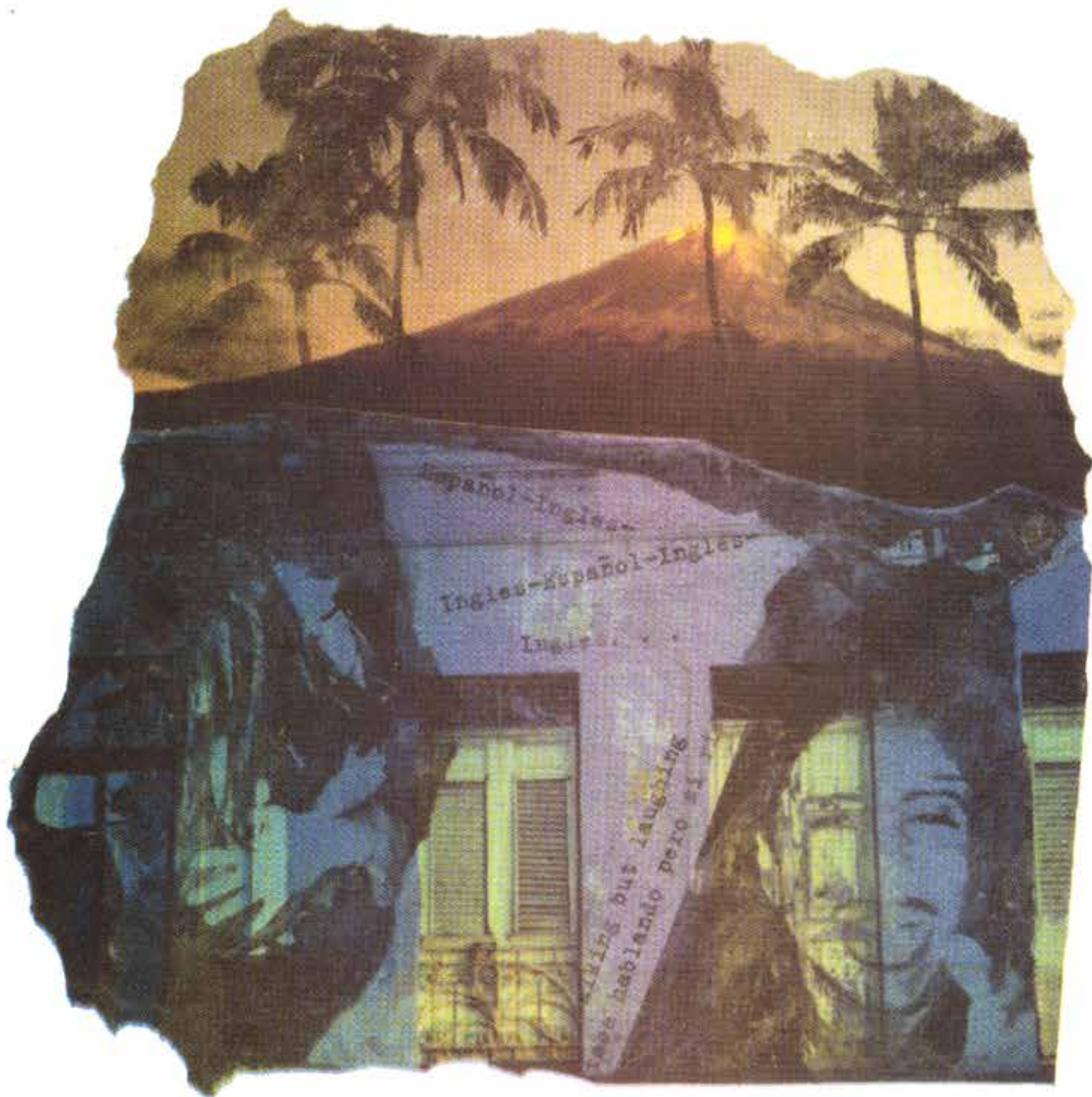
www.elysee.fr—a VIP visit to the presidential palace rooms, in several languages.

<http://nivanet.net>—electronic culture and techno music from Paris and Brussels.

www.jazzfrance.com—jazz clubs, concerts, reviews, and schedules.

www.timeout.co.uk—TimeOut Paris, listing hotels, restaurants, and the arts.

www.smeth.demon.co.uk/index.htm—from Edith Piaf to you.



Language Lessons

By Kendra Hurley

Illustrations by Cristina Casañas

The idea of studying Spanish in Antigua, Guatemala, occurred to me in a gray New York winter. No matter how many hot baths I took, I felt bone-cold, and I began indulging in long, clichéd daydreams involving a Latin American village, a hot sun, and me on the beach. Studying Spanish wasn't part of this picture. In my daydream, I imagined myself not talking, but laughing a lot. But my graduate school had a foreign language requirement, so my thinking ran, why not study Spanish in Latin America? What better excuse to actualize my daydream?

Antigua, I knew, was hot in the summer, and not very near the ocean. Still, it sounded like a reasonable destination because the city had made an industry of cheap Spanish schools—I heard there were over seventy schools in Antigua alone. For about one hundred and fifty dollars a week, these schools provided room and board with a Guatemalan family, plus seven hours a day of informal, private tutoring. (This tutoring often took place in breezy courtyards.) Besides all this I had distant family there. When I signed up with an Antiguan school I found on the Internet and bought a ticket to Guatemala, I fished out this family's address as a sort of safety net. I didn't expect to use it. After all, I would only be in Guatemala three weeks.

The plane ride to Guatemala City was long, finding my ride to Antigua was confusing, and the family I was placed with seemed to consider me and the three other student boarders more an economic asset than anything they wanted hanging around. (This was understandable; only one of us—and it wasn't me—was any good at Spanish.) To make things worse, my first week in Antigua I became sick from the food. In this state, the whole city felt like an intricate maze of cobblestone streets and stout, flat-faced houses. The houses' bright colonial surfaces seemed to taunt that whatever they held was both better than the hot, dusty street and off limits to me. (That first week, even the hills and volcanoes surrounding Antigua looked ominous in their deep shades of black and green.)

On my fifth day, however, I was on a walk when a foreign woman called my name. She was Erika, my second cousin from the States. Erika was also visiting Antigua. She was staying with her aunt, Maria del Carmen. It was Maria del Carmen's address I had brought with me. Walking back home, I had trouble believing this chance meeting had actually happened.

I went to Maria del Carmen's house the next night. She and Triny, the family's young Mayan nanny, had prepared a farewell dinner for Erika, who was leaving the next day. Like my encounter with Erika, the hours that followed were hard to believe. I was thousands of miles and two country boarders from my home, yet the mannerisms and charged talk of Maria del Carmen and Erika were as familiar as my face; the atmosphere reminded me especially of my mother's side of the family.

When I prepared to leave, however, this closeness didn't stop me from becoming flustered when Maria del Carmen stood squarely before me, a full head shorter than I, and asked, "Would you like to come live with us?"

I stammered in response. I couldn't tell if her offer was sincere. It didn't feel right for me to appear from nowhere, then impose on her life. Still, I was weary of transience, travel, and airports with no familiar faces. I had subtlet my apartment in New York for the summer, and my boarding during the last few months had been a blur of uncomfortable temporary homes. So I decided not to question the source of Maria del Carmen's offer. After all, any conclusions I reached would be speculation; I had no understanding of giving and taking in her culture. "I'd love to," I said.

"Good then," she said, sounding, I hoped, pleased.

The next day, Antigua no longer seemed a maze, but friendly, beckoning. In the evening, I ventured into its nightlife with a group of students and teachers from my school. We went to a *discoteca*.

Inside, the *discoteca* was dark, smoky, and crawling with people, mostly wealthy *Guatemaltecos* dressed for the evening. The men were strongly scented, gold-chained, and often sported several rings. For women, the material of choice was spandex. These styles surprised me, since during the day everyone in Antigua dressed conservatively.

The bar itself was two-storied and glossy. On the second floor was a balcony overlooking the dance area. Neon lights striped the air between the balcony and the dancers. Smoke hovered in the changing lights.

From this balcony, it was easy to distinguish the foreigners in the bar. Unlike the Guatemalan couples, the foreigners tended to clump into groups. I could understand their desire to cluster. Regardless of what language the disco song of the moment was in, the Guatemalans deftly incorporated the quick, hip-centered salsa and partner-dance merengue into their movements. The foreigners like me, accustomed to dancing solo and to bouncing rather than maintaining contact with the floor, bopped along, heads above the Guatemalans. We stood out like frogs.

I spent most of the night happily embarrassing myself dancing with Holgar, a tall, blond German from my Spanish school who, I suspected,

squandered more time than should be allowed in one dance club or another. (He knew all the words to every song and mouthed each one intently as we danced.) And although Holgar had a penchant for punching the air in time to the beat, I felt nostalgic for the era when partner dancing was the norm in the States. It felt wonderfully, physically frivolous.

But Marvin, another North American from my language school, didn't consider it frivolous. He wanted talk and interpretation. Although we students often tried to speak to each other in Spanish, Marvin's intentions were so earnest that he used English when pulling me aside with an unsettling smile. Was something going on between me and Holgar, Marvin wanted to know. It was a strange question—Holgar was his friend; I wasn't. "We're dancing," I shrugged, using Spanish.

Walking home, Marvin veered me aside for further confrontation. He lit a cigarette as he talked. "So now is probably not the proper time to say this," Marvin said. He had a strange way of inflecting his words which made him sound like an aspiring politician—and made me recoil. I wished he were using Spanish. Spanish, for us students, had become a kind of game. Its goal was simple: understand, be understood. Never mind nuances, never mind degrees of sincerity, never mind underlying implications. You get the literal meaning, you win.

Alas, speaking English, Marvin was insisting on precision.

"But the reason I was asking about you and Holgar," Marvin continued, "is because I've been interested in you."

"Interested?" I barked. It was news to me. We had barely exchanged two words before now. This was not from lack of opportunity.

Spanish, for us students, had become a kind of game. Its goal was simple: understand, be understood. Never mind nuances, never mind degrees of sincerity, never mind underlying implications. You get the literal meaning, you win.

"When I first came here," Marvin went on, switching to a campfire, storytelling tone that made me as wary as did his politician mode, "my friend told me that if there's one thing I learn in Guatemala, it's to say the stuff I normally wouldn't at home."

"Huh," I said. It was the kind of Travel Talk I hated. The talk of someone who has read too much Hemingway, who believes

that just being outside of your usual, monotonous environment insures that your every interaction is drenched with meaning, a True Learning Experience. In Travel Talk, the toothless bus driver becomes some sort of prophet, the touristy Catholic church service your redemption. The idea is always that travel makes you a Changed Person. Of course, I secretly like this thought, but articulating it, as Marvin was doing, was the same as telling someone on a first date that you're destined to be married. It jinxes everything.

"So," Marvin said as we approached my house, "I just thought I should say that, though I will probably regret it tomorrow."

"But Marvin," I said, "I always hear you talking about your girlfriend. Isn't she still in the picture?"

"Wel-I-I." He drew out the word in a purposefully squeaky manner. "That's a long story. Technically, yes. Off the record, who knows. Anyway, goodnight." He scurried down the darkened street towards his home.

The next day I had dinner at Subway (equipped with NYC subway maps on the walls) with Rachel and Steve, two other Americans, Rachel's friend Antonio, and two of Antonio's friends. Antonio and his friends were from Guatemala City. Except for their silver-ringed fingers and black, slicked-back hair, the three of them looked like frat boys with their baseball caps, American t-shirts, and baggy jeans. They discussed the sandwich menu very carefully and with the intimacy of close girlfriends.

At first, Antonio talked for his friends. Not only did he speak good English, but his friends seemed slightly uncertain in the company of three outsiders to their group. They leaned back in their seats, passed each other cigarettes, and listened to Antonio's conversation with small, wry smiles. They chimed in only to correct or embellish Antonio's stories about the previous evening.

Steve became Rachel's and my spokesperson, probably because he was male—which seemed to set Antonio's friends at ease—and because his Spanish was excellent. (He delighted in correcting Rachel's and my verb tenses.) Eventually, however, Antonio's friends, Rachel, and I also ventured into the conversation, trying out each other's languages as though they were fancy hats we couldn't wear without feeling silly. What started out sounding like the introductory chapters of a language textbook gradually gave way to more natural talk and laughter. Soon it was fun. Simple concepts became exciting—the excitement lay not in the idea itself, but in the telling and understanding of it, the carefulness and encouragement with which we all listened to each other, the nodding, conferring, and sharing of slang which sometimes required several interpreters before everyone at the table released a unified, bright-faced “ah!”

After dinner, we went to a *discoteca* which I liked better than the other one. This one was more of a dive, with only the barest of the elements required to call it a club—the flashing lights, the bar, the relentlessly upbeat music. I also liked the crowd better. They were younger, less self-conscious, less stylish and on display.

As we sat in the crowded room, friend after friend of Antonio's visited our table, initiating a round of introductions, hugs and cheek kissing. At one point, there was a shattering of glass on the edge of our table. It looked to me like an overheated light bulb. Antonio and his friends eagerly thought otherwise. Gallantly, they leaped from the table to find and fight the culprit who had thrown a glass. Steve shot me a glance and muttered something about misguided machismo. Rachel and I, however, were quietly delighted. We had been dancing all night and couldn't remember the last time we'd gotten so much attention.

When Antonio returned, he asked me to dance. We went to the floor. At first, Antonio felt obliged to keep up the kind of conversation which, again, sounded like a language text. A few songs later, however, we heard the slow, opening chords of a cheesy song we both knew and loved—“Down Under,”

one of my favorites straight from junior high. Antonio threw his head back in a great display of disbelieving happiness that they would play this song at this time. I couldn't have agreed more. With lyrics like “I asked ‘do you speak my language?’/He just smiled and gave me a vegemite sandwich,” the song is about being both disoriented and enchanted by a foreign world. That was about how I felt. My Spanish vocabulary was that of a three year old, and I certainly couldn't brag of a thorough understanding of Guatemalan culture. And yet, what came from this disorientation was an incredible feeling of freedom—I could no longer assess people and situations with my usual standards or cynicism. Free of the burden to assess, I was forced into accepting the world before me at face value. And when disorientation works its magic, I figured, it makes way for enchantment.

Enchantment was all I felt as Antonio looked me in the eyes and informed me in a husky voice that he would show me how this song was danced in Latin America. Several songs later I couldn't say I knew everything about how dances are danced in Latin America, but I did have an inkling of what it felt like to be the unlikely heroine of a bad romance novel. Feeling perfect for the part, I praised Antonio again and again on his fine dancing abilities. “Only with you,” he insisted, pronouncing the *y* like a *j*. “It's you that makes me a good dancer.” Before I left, we made plans for the following Wednesday evening.

My next day at school, Marya, my teacher, wanted to talk about Guatemalan men. The thing she couldn't stand about her country, she told me, was the machismo. If you are a Guatemalan woman, you cannot even drink a coffee alone. It is a small country, and if you are out alone,

people will see you and tell your husband. He will be very angry. He will say you are soiling his reputation. Even so, it will be all right for him to have many girlfriends.

Unless I move to the United States, Marya said, I will never marry again. I have children by another man, and Guatemalan men will have none of that. Besides, she said, her face filling with disgust and looking incongruous beneath the pink bow in her hair, I would not want to marry a Guatemalan man. They are good to you before marriage, then they change.

As Marya said this, I thought, of course, of Antonio. How could I not? I had been thinking of little else since our giddy night of dancing. Listening to Marya, however, I wondered what would happen if I stayed on in Guatemala. How long could you take people at face value before things became complicated? Worse, I wondered if my flirtations with Antonio were encouraging, in some roundabout way, the machismo Marya hated. As with so many things in Guatemala, I had no idea what to think, and thinking didn't seem to get me very far.

After school, Marvin, the American student, caught up with me in a corner tienda where I was drinking beer with Marya and some other teachers. Marvin joined us briefly, then insisted on walking me home, where I would gather my things and bring them to Maria del Carmen's house. I was moving in with her that day.

“Well, I've been thinking about our talk last week,” Marvin began. Again, it was the deliberate tone of a politician, or maybe a salesman, though his pitch, I knew, would be horrible. “And, well, let me tell you: am I embarrassed.” He pulled out a pack of cigarettes from his shirt pocket and shook his head, then the pack. “But one thing's for sure. I don't regret it.”

“That's good,” I said amiably. “Regrets are bad.”

“I do know one thing,” Marvin said, “and that's that you can't predict much in this life, but it's better to speak what's on your mind, to get it off your chest, so to speak.” He made the quick, sweeping motion of getting something off his chest.

“I don't know, Marvin,” I said. “Me, the few times I have to voice something that would otherwise go unspoken are because I've worked myself up into some sort of frenzy, and speaking it is the only way to exorcise it. I'm never conveying any new information.” Marvin exhaled a long stream of blue smoke which mingled before our faces. I waved it away. “Anyway,” I continued, “I'm coming to think that dignity is often saved by keeping my mouth shut. Which is why it's nice if you're really understand the language being spoken. I mean, even if you're speaking your own language there will always be misunderstandings, but when you think you know what's going on, you feel a responsibility for controlling the situation which you wouldn't feel otherwise.” I sighed a bit melodramatically. “Not knowing a language is how I imagine it feels to have glasses and take them off at night. Things are a little blurrier, a little softer. You could either panic about it or enjoy it.” Marvin smiled and nodded, indicating an understanding. Turns out there was none.

“Well, I e-mailed my girlfriend,” he said, “and she hasn't responded. So I'm still waiting. But meanwhile, I'm here, almost a free man, time ticking away.” This last part he said almost suggestively, as though we were both waiting for the go-ahead from his girlfriend to jump into bed. I sighed, then changed the subject.

Maria del Carmen's house, being two stories tall, is unusually large for Antigua. From the street, however, you can't tell its size as it is blocked by the same flat wall that masks most of the Antiguan homes. Maria del Carmen's section of this wall is made of the same bricks as the ruins across the street.

The house itself is sparse and modern, decorated with plants, flowers, and tall, spiraling, brightly dyed candles. My first night there, I helped Maria del Carmen cook while she talked about how important cooking was for her and Manuella, her daughter, who was currently in the States. I asked if she had seen *Like Water for Chocolate*. “Yees,” she said, drawing the word out purposefully. “Yes, I think that movie really helped Manuella understand what was going on when we were in the kitchen together.”

I was touched by how unabashed she was to be comparing her life to a tragically romantic, magical realist movie. I was embarrassed to realize that had Marvin—or possibly anyone else born and raised in the States—said this, I may have rolled my eyes.

After dinner, Maria del Carmen boiled water for tea and brought her ashtray and pack of Marlboro reds to the table. She lit a cigarette, then began to talk about her family and life. She talked about her mother, who had given birth to her at fifteen; about her friends who had been killed in Guatemala's revolution; about her ex-husband, Steve, my mother's cousin; about the baby girl they lost to crib death; and finally, about Steve's affair, which ended their marriage. Nearly two hours passed as Maria del Carmen talked. When she finished, I was dumbfounded. Her frankness and candor were not things I was accustomed to. I felt like I had just sat through an intensely emotional epic movie. Seeing my expression, Maria del Carmen smiled and patted my hand. "It's late," she said. "We must sleep."

As we cleaned up the kitchen, Triny appeared in the door looking disturbed. She told me that someone named Antonio was here to see me, all the way from Guatemala City. Horrified, I tried to explain in Spanish, so that Triny could understand, that this visit was entirely unexpected. As I searched for my shoes, I apologized repeatedly.

Antonio and his friend Rizzo stood in the street behind the thick wall blocking Maria del Carmen's house from sight. They leaned against Rizzo's car, a sleek black thing with tinted windows. There was music playing loudly, and I fought the urge to tell them to turn it off. Smiling but feeling frantic, I attempted to explain that everyone was going to sleep, and I should be as well. I felt bad that they had driven so far to visit, but worse imagining what Maria del Carmen might be thinking about me at the moment. It was becoming exhausting to always worry about what was and wasn't acceptable behavior for me, an American woman in Guatemala. I was torn between liking how significant it made my actions feel and feeling burdened by a responsibility I didn't always understand.

I decided it was better for me to leave Maria del Carmen's house than to stand outside it with music blaring. We agreed to be gone only a half-hour. As Antonio got in the backseat with me, I remembered that I barely knew him. (Something I had forgotten in all the excitement.) To elicit sympathy, I went through an elaborate explanation of my situation: it was my first night in my aunt's house, she didn't know me well—and did they think she was not thinking highly of me for having left? I didn't know whether to be relieved or dismayed when Rizzo agreed that since it was my first night, I probably should have stayed home. "But as long as you think we are responsible," Antonio assured me, "I am happy." I smiled half-heartedly.

Once outside of the car and in a bar, a public space, I felt calmer. In fact, it seemed we had barely sat down before the designated half-hour was up and I was back at Maria del Carmen's house, feeling a little silly for the drama I had caused, a little sad to be back so soon.

Wednesday, the night Antonio and I planned to go to Guatemala City with his friends, I got sick and cancelled our plans. In the early evening, as I lay in bed clutching my stomach, the doorbell rang. Antonio, Triny told me, trying not to laugh, was back, this time with a gift.

Rizzo and Antonio were on the street again. Soon I was with them, holding Antonio's gift of crepe paper flowers and two tiny silver balloons contained in a small

"Anyway," I said, "pretend we had gotten together. That would have only caused a flurry of distraught e-mails between you and your girlfriend. Within two days we'd be having some conversation about how you don't regret anything, but this has really put your priorities in line, et cetera."

friends at home, it might have been a small joke. It was that kitschy. Coming from Antonio, I was moved.

Bursting from the gate, Maria del Carmen appeared. I was beginning to suspect that her casual manner, including this seemingly spontaneous meeting with Antonio and Rizzo, was really her deliberate attempt to put others at ease without the embarrassment of their realizing it. Now, wearing plastic sandals and black leggings and holding a pack of cigarettes, she shouted cheery greetings to us all. "*Pobrisita*," she called from across the street; "she has been sick all day."

Feeling completely ridiculous, I held the bag of balloons high for her perusal and smiled goofily. "Look," I shouted back, "a get well gift."

"How nice," quipped Maria del Carmen, and then, shouting over her shoulder in Spanish as she disappeared down the street, she urged Antonio and Rizzo to visit often.

The next afternoon, my last day of school, Marvin approached me during break. "So I'm just trying to learn about these things," he said. "Tell me, where did I go wrong? I mean, it's not that I'm smitten with you, it's just that it's unusual when a person doesn't repulse me in some manner, and you haven't."

blue bag decorated with Minnie Mouse and pink, bubbly words like "Wow!" "Ha!" and "Oops." The balloons matched this bag. One, with a pink teddy bear on it, read "Get Well Soon." The other showed Minnie and Micky Mouse bowing to each other. That one said "You're Special." Antonio had also brought a tiny postcard with "Get Well Soon" printed on it. Underneath, he had written "Is my wish." Had this gift come from one of my



"Marvin," I said, suddenly aware of the difference between Antonio's courtship and his own, "getting involved with people just because you aren't repulsed by them is pathetic."

"Whoa now," said Marvin, "maybe I used the wrong word."

"No," I said, "I think it's true. I mean, the only time you and I have ever talked is to have these conversations about us getting together. If we didn't have these conversations, I would think you didn't know my name."

"I guess I'm unconventional," Marvin suggested hopefully.

"Anyway," I said, "pretend we had gotten together. That would have only caused a flurry of distraught e-mails between you and your girlfriend. Within two days we'd be having some conversation about how you don't regret anything, but this has really put your priorities in line, et cetera."

Marvin sighed. "It's funny you say that," he said, "because my girlfriend and I have been e-mailing over this. And now I have every intention of marrying her. And I hope it doesn't make you think less of me for saying that, for being that typical"—he made quote signs in the air—"type of guy. It's just hard because we're so far apart...." As he continued, I zoned out because I'd heard this so many times before, this stupid dance of offering and retracting, of using language in such a sloppy way, words backed by nothing. And how preferable it suddenly seemed to use language not for meaning, but for mystery. If I were to stay on in Guatemala, how long would it take before its newness faded? How long before I could read nuances and people as easily as I could read Marvin? And once I could understand and articulate precisely, would I feel just as despondent as I now felt having this stupid pseudodiscussion with Marvin? And how silly and useless it all felt, as I watched Marvin drone on and on, that we should share this language at all.

The day before I left was Saturday, market day for Maria del Carmen. Her kitchen was filled with several huge wooden baskets, each one overflowing with food. There were bananas, papayas, mangoes, plantains, strawberries, carrots, tomatoes, squash, garlic, peppers, chiles, onions, flowers, coffee, and several plastic bags of meat. "Because you leave tomorrow," Maria del Carmen said, "today we will make salsa and strawberry jam for you to take with you and remember me by."

Soon Maria del Carmen, Triny, and I were settled in the kitchen, working. Triny chopped and fried vegetables. Maria del Carmen hummed as she replaced the flowers in the house with white, long-stemmed fresh ones. I sat at the counter plucking stems from tiny green chiles.

The doors on both sides of the kitchen—one leading to the driveway, one to the central garden—were open, and a lazy cross-breeze fluttered through. Charro, the golden retriever, flopped on the floor and Kipling, the cat, joined him.

Halfway through our preparation, Maria del Carmen's father stopped by for a glass of whiskey. Maria del Carmen explained to me in English, so her father couldn't understand, that he had a heart condition and wasn't allowed to drink at home. He comes round on Saturdays, she said, for a drink.

He was a gruff man who sat on a stool apart from but facing us. His hair was gray and his face thickly wrinkled with an agreeable mixture of contentment and embarrassment at being confined to drinking in the kitchen as the women worked.

Soon Maria del Carmen's brother appeared at the gate in his red pickup truck. He brought some sort of a salsa with cow organs—a special treat—and sauntered into the kitchen to dish out small bowls for us to sample. Everyone acted delighted in a quiet sort of way, especially Maria del Carmen's father, who was relieved, I imagine, to have another man in the kitchen.

The afternoon passed like this, with smells of simmering vegetable, meat, and spices, and visitors breezing in and out, talking to each other in loud and rapid Spanish. And all afternoon as I sat there peeling the peppers and plucking the stems from the red, ripe berries, I smiled maniacally while listening to the sounds of cooking, talking, and laughing. And when I remembered where I was, and where I wouldn't be tomorrow, my eyes filled.

I am always conflicted by the sight of other people's families, friends, and lovers crying goodbye at airports. I can never decide whether to be relieved or upset that I don't have my own bevy of mourners in that sterile setting.

Leaving Guatemala was no exception. Large and crowded, the international section of Guatemala City's airport had what seemed to be an average of ten well-wishers for each ticketed passenger. Antonio had said he would try to meet me there, but it seemed doubtful that we would find each other among the crowds.

As the time drew closer for my plane to leave, I looked for Antor while walking quickly back and forth between my flight gate and the area where ticketed passengers must say their final farewells to unticketed friends. Finally, I gave up. I was boarding the plane when a voice announced that anyone volunteering their seat would receive \$400 in travel fare and would fly out on the next plane. I took the offer, then called Antonio's house. No one answered. A while later, I tried again. Antonio answered. He said he'd spent the morning at the airport looking for me. "My plane leaves in an hour," I said, sadly. "I'm calling to say goodbye."

"Voy aya!" he barked.

"Si?" I said, excited.

We picked a place to meet. As I sat there with the minutes ticking away, I realized it was unlikely that he would make it in time. Eventually, I returned to the gate. I was gathering my bags to board the plane when an officially dressed man asked for the woman friend of Antonio. It was in Spanish and I leaned forward, squinting my eyes, to see if I'd heard right. He repeated this announcement. I looked frantically around, wondering if I was recognized. I can't identify myself, I thought, I'll miss the plane.

Then someone called my name. It was Antonio. He was standing among the few passengers still waiting to board. "How did you get in here without a ticket?" I yelled.


"How's my father?" he said, looking panicked as he moved towards me. The other boarding passengers turned to stare.

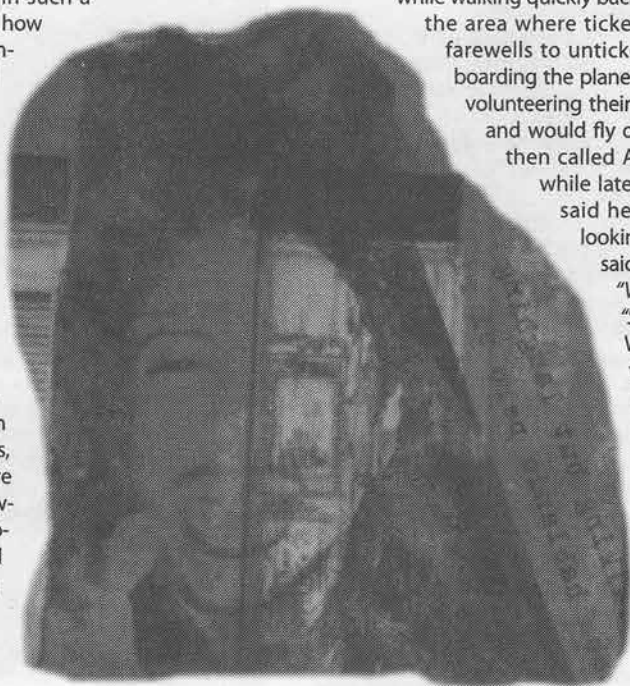
"Your father?" I gestured him away from the passengers. As we moved towards the side of the room, I noticed some armed men moving with us.

"I think we're in trouble," Antonio whispered, looking quickly from side to side. "I told them a story about my father being sick."

The guards were approaching. We hugged quickly before being whisked to opposite sides of the room. I think they suspected we'd done some sort of illegal transaction. Two of the men took my passport, making painstakingly slow efforts to copy down its information. Antonio stood on the opposite side of the room in the center of several guards. When I listened closely, I could hear bits and pieces of the sad story he was telling. A few men looked skeptical, the rest sympathetic.

Before I rushed to meet my plane, I turned to wave goodbye. My last sight of Guatemala: Antonio waving slightly so that the guards couldn't see, smiling forlornly.

Stumbling down the plane's aisles, I received several pointed glances. A few women, it seemed, pulled their children closer. The men smirked ever so slightly. Me, I was shameless. I couldn't stop grinning. 



HOTLISTS & TIPS

AREAS

Westbourne Cross

Solange Azagury Partridge—jewelry, Agnes B, Space, Toms, Themes and Variations, Wild At Heart—the most beautiful flowers on the turquoise island, Palio—restaurant, Washeteria, Dinny Hall, Paul Smith.

Leading into Portobello

The Dispensary, Hapers and Toms, Mr. Christians, Graham and Greene, The Spice Shop, The Travel Book Shop, Books for Cooks, Sausage and Mash, 192, Cafe Med, Casa Frattini, Westbourne, Cow, Elbow Room, Japanese Canteen, Nakedly Nothing, Verandah.

Southall

- Indian tip: listen to *Cornershop* on Wilija Records and *Bad Marsh* on Outcaste Records.
- Hear the best new Asian beats every last Saturday of the month at Notting Hill Arts Club. Covers all new British Asian art: B-movies, dance styles, tabla players and musicians. See *Time Out* listings under "Other Moves and Grooves".
- Club Automatic at WKD Cafe, NW1. Jeff, Richard, Simon Subsonic, and Lee's set of indie dance and guitar grooves (from *Cornershop* to Propellerheads).
- *Bangra*—look out on FM/AM dials for pirate *Bangra* stations—Sunrise Radio on 1458AM.
- Club Equator, 20-22 Hewer Street, W10. Every month—from Rio to Dakar, Havana to Goa. DJs Mo, Jo Hagen, and Andy Kershaw play worldbeat.
- Head to The Broadway for Rainbow textiles and eat in The Brilliant and Karamphuli for delicious curries.

Hotels

- Hazlitts—the middle of Soho.
- Millers—full of antiques.
- Generator—simple and cheap rooms but a futuristic, neon bar.
- Metropolitan—absolute class and hipness.
- Berkeley—center of the Knightsbridge scene.
- The Gore—traditional class.
- Portobello—popstar spotting.

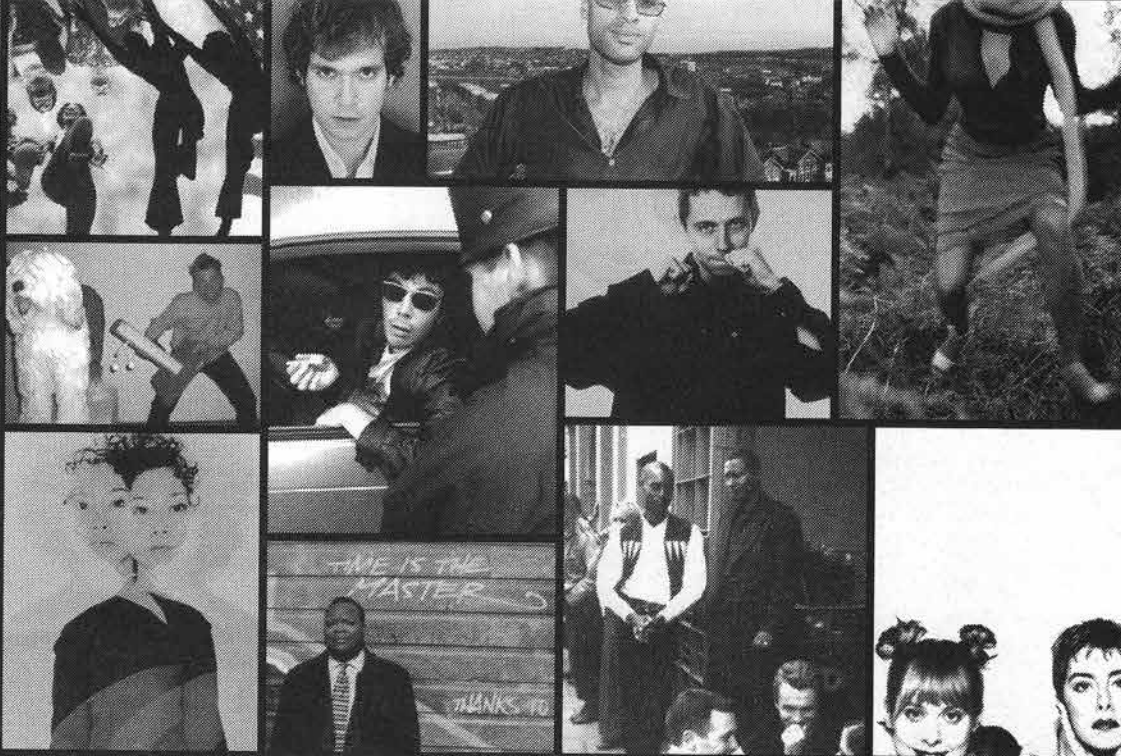
Other Shops

- World, 27 Litchfield Street, W1 (off Charing Cross Road—next door but one to The Ivy).
- Treasures From the World. Its proximity to the famous Ivy ensures a lot of Power-lunchers shop there. Full of international T-shirt prints, temple headaddresses from Thailand, feather jewelry from the Amazon, etc.
- Duffer of Street George/Plum/High Jinks—the prime of streetwear in Soho.

Clubs

- Starsky and Hutch at Ronnie Scots (47 Frith Street, W1). Wednesdays.
- Vogue, 201 Tottenham Court Road, W1. Thursdays.
- The Arches, 53 Southwark St, SE1. Fridays.
- The Bunker Bar at Bagleys, Kings Cross. Saturdays.
- Asia city at Photographer's Gallery, W1.
- Blackmarket at The End, with MCs Stevie Hyper D and Skibadee and fearless DJs Niki Blackmarket, Ash Attack, Peshay, Clarky, Ray Keith, Brockie, Rap, and Milckey Finn.
- Rotation at Subterranea, W10. Fridays.
- Whirl-y-gig global underground at The Forum, 9 Highgate Road, NW5.
- Indigo at Madame Jojos, W1. for your easy listening lounge music. DJs: Count Indigo, James Karminsky, Felchley B Hawkes.
- Club Equator, 20-22 Hewer Street, W10—world beats.

Continued on page 38



Alt.London.1998

London is bustling with a vibe that bespeaks a new sensibility—underground, multicultural, inclusive, cutting-edge and optimistic. It's a London of many vibrant microscenes, trends, faces, and places.

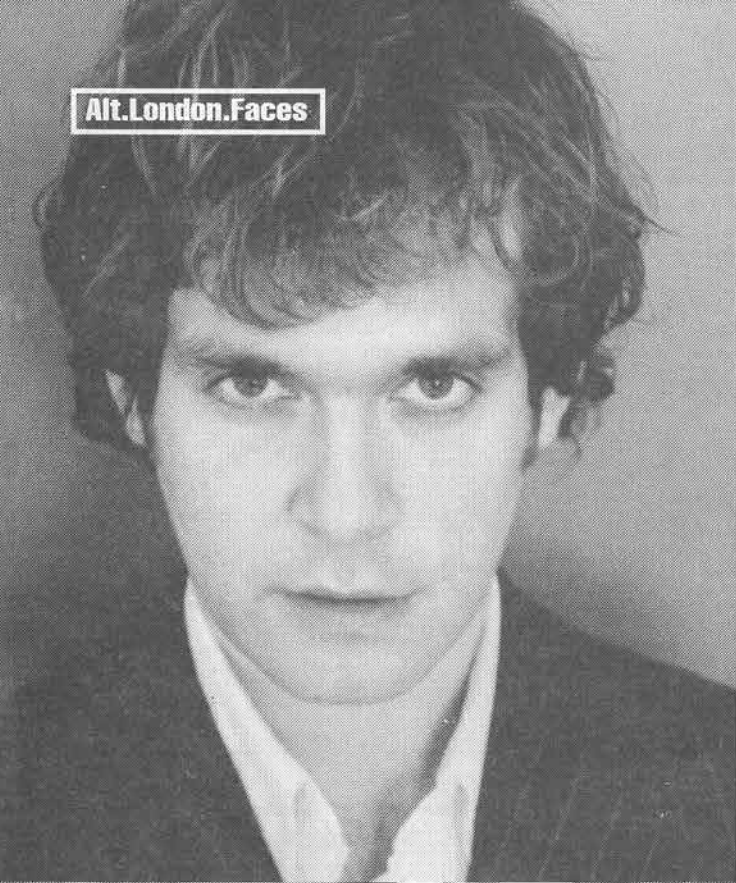
Rachel Collingwood and Jenny Palmer take us on a tour of their town

Our London

London is a city of neighborhoods, both physically and socially—an attempt to create a village mentality within the metropolis. Each area is a breeding ground for diverse underground cultures, forming a unique and rich network of creators and purveyors of life and art. Everyone has their favorite area—we are Notting-Hill based and love the media-centered cultural vibe that surrounds the Portobello Road (if you find the following a bit West London biased, well now you know why!).

One of the most exciting things about London are the arts clubs, such as Notting Hill, which serve as centers for music, art, and performance, with an emphasis on experimentation. The clubs allow people of like mind to get together and have their culture heard, discussed, developed, and exposed. Seeds of thought and creativity are cross-fertilized at the most inspiring places and times. That's London now—an organic germination of talent and inspiration.

Now is a time when the street scene and underground alternative cultures are attaining more power and stronger, more respected voices—politically, socially and economically. London is a breeding ground for the sounds, shapes, and lifestyles of the future, and it's packed with a host of visionaries: Stella McCartney and her assistant Phoebe Philo; Bella Freud; the stylists Edward Enniful (*i-D* magazine), Katy England (Alexander McQueen), Seta Niland (Owen Gaster), and Amanda Harlech (John Galliano) are just a sampling. The following pages are our guide to some of the upcoming faces and places of London '98—enjoy and peace!



TOM HOLLANDER, ACTOR ☹

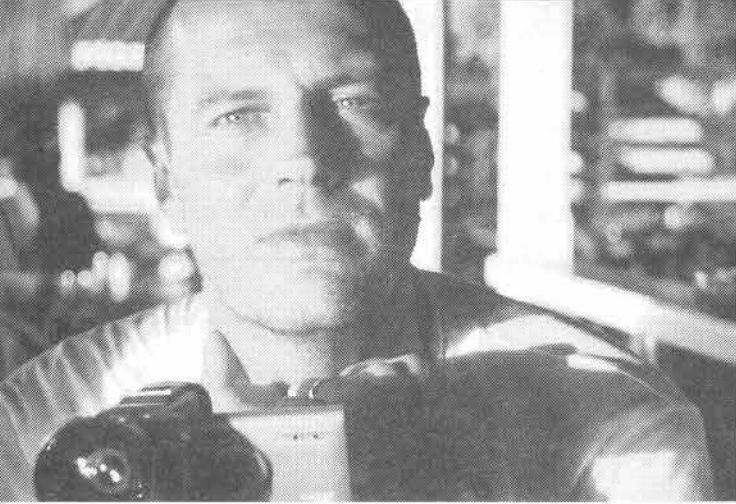
In writer/director team David Hare and Richard Eyre's *The Judas Kiss*, with Liam Neeson, at the Playhouse Theatre. Plays Oscar Wilde's (Neeson) seductive young lover, Bosie, whose betrayal led to Wilde's imprisonment for sexual deviance.

In two forthcoming films: Rose Troche's *Bedrooms and Hallways* and Nick Ham's *Martha Meets Frank Daniel and Laurence* alongside Jo Fiennes, Rufus Sewell, and Monica Potter.

On May/June cover of *Tatler* with Rachel Weisz, Rufus Sewell, Anna Friel, and Jo Fiennes.

Hideaways

- Porchester Baths—for a Turkish bath on Sunday, the day for couples—and you're allowed to smoke.
- The Little Prince—a jewel of a restaurant on Holmes Road in Kentish Town. Moroccan food, etc., with Aubrey Beardsley prints.
- Rose's Cafe on Westbourne Park Road next to Crucial Trading (the rush matting people).
- The Kensington Gardens Cafe.
- Up the canal—"the little stream that trickles through the heart of the metropolis." Very near the Almeida theatre. The nicest bit, says Tom, is behind King's Cross, where the club The Cross is. Here is a church and some Victorian gas cylinders which are rumored to be an ancient pagan site and are full of atmosphere.
- Loves Hampstead Heath, too.



ALEXIA, JAZZ BAND ☹

A young, modern band with a jazz soul and a Latin flavor. Band name derived from singer Alexia Masardo, who lived in Paris, performing in the jazz bars of the city.

Lyrics in Spanish and French; they also perform many favorite popular jazz songs from the 40s and 50s—Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Jerome Kern.

The players: Jonny, drums, has spent much time in the south of Spain performing in various bars and clubs; Jerome, bass, and Jeremy, piano, are both well-known performers in their own right on the London jazz scene.



ANDREW SUTTON ☹
CREATIVE INTERACTIVE STRATEGIST

Err... yeah, can I have it strong, please?
So, it was tea and toast at the local cafe with one the "virtual team" members. Local policemen and market traders popped in and out to collect cardboard trays of hot liquid refreshment, leaving only three evenly spaced groups of diners. And as usual it was raining. I must admit to getting a rush of excitement when any of "the group" meets IRL (in real life). Usually, it's over a laptops wearing headphones and wires, looking more like creatures out of a 1950s comic book than hardened web professionals.
We talked endlessly about "new kit," really cool sites, and the development of digital dis-

tribution systems, but I was particularly halted by the subject of *warez* groups. In short, a *Warez* group is where people download free illegal software and a whole heap of other info. Mmmm... *warez*, on the dark side of the net (along with pornography), will get you incarcerated for six years, with a hefty fine to boot, if you're caught!
Well, our discussion that day wasn't really about participation, but had more to do with our general views on the "availability" of software and how people often had to resort to illegal methods in order to obtain knowledge. This was a sore subject for me as two years prior I had been running a design studio—

which I hasten to add was run on very expensive legal software—and I had a big problem with internal security.
My companion this day proffered a simple question—"How is anyone supposed to know what software they are going to buy if they haven't tried it?" My answer was simple too: "Cover mounted discs, educational establishments—schools, colleges... dammit man, there are plenty of places where you can try this stuff out."
"And what about those who have a natural gift—but don't know about it? How do they get a chance, how can they afford the time to explore? After all, when you get to these so-called semi-

nars, they don't let you touch their software!"
That response touched a raw nerve—three weeks earlier, I had been one of the privileged few sitting in a lovely Costa del Sol lecture theater listening to the Gods of the gaming industry talk about...themselves. In particular, one youngish man who was now a "multi-multimillionaire" spoke the words, "I used everything I could get my computer terminal into to get my work done." And someone at the back of the hall heckled, "*warez*?" He leaned back—a picture of his latest Ferrari was next in the slide show—"Don't you?" he smiled back.

ANDREW THOMPSON, WRITER ☉

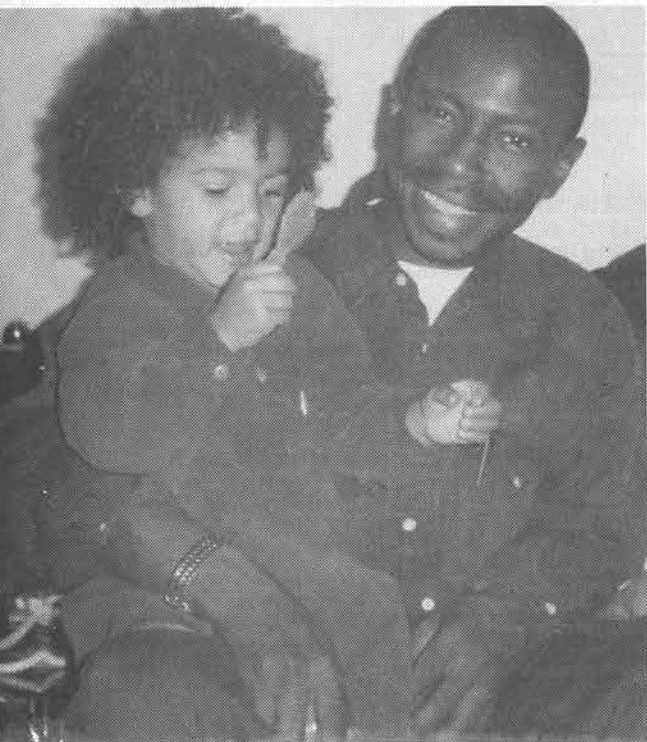
Born in Liverpool, he spent three years holed up in Amsterdam before returning home for "self-contemplation." He got a break writing for dance music magazine *MixMag*, which has led to bigger and better things, although his financial position remains "humorous."

Currently a resident of Bethnal Green, he says that "variety is the spice of life" is his credo, and he rates it as London's greatest strength.

"It's the one town in this septic isle where you can always get a drink, you never get bored, and you do almost exactly what you want to do. Apart from saving money." You can't take it with you when you go. But he wouldn't mind trying.

Top Ten—Bars, Gigs, Clubs, Et cetera

1. The Embassy, Essex Road, N1.
2. Metalheadz, Blue Note, N1, Sundays. Still the best jungle night in London or anywhere.
3. Heavenly Social, Turnmills, Saturdays. Absolute mayhem—the most musically diverse club in London—and the friendliest.
4. Monkey Mafia, the hottest live act this year. Breakbeats, hip-hop and ragga in combination, to full effect.
5. Two Floors, Kingly Street, W1. Top bar; looks like an airport lounge, but thankfully has a better ambience.
6. The Junction, Coldharbour Lane, Brixton. Refurbished bar/club with good music. Spacious—big dance floor.
7. Leftorium. New Friday nights at Smithfields. Musically eclectic and pretty damn hectic. Everything from northern soul to jump up jungle.
8. Basement Jaxx. Fantastic deep house duo. In demand as remixers, and DJs are at the forefront of everything good in London dance music.
9. Kontraband. New dance label. Funky house/breakbeats. Top artists are Bronx Dogs, on major release through Heavenly.
10. Death In Vegas. Been around awhile but still at the forefront of dance music. Just finished their second album, guaranteed major news for the second half of the year.



ALBERT ROGERS, A.K.A. AL.R. ☉

31, born in Hammersmith, West London—lived with his grandmother in Sierra Leone, West Africa, from the age of four til he was eight. Pictured with his three-year-old daughter, Mariella.

Performs for A Few Brave Men ("We tread where others fear to follow." A modern, funky poetry/arts/dance/film evening on the first Sunday of every month from 7 p.m. at Janets Planet on Turnham Green Lane). Has had work published in various anthologies and magazines. Studying acting and writing two scripts—a feature length movie, "Killer Child," and a short stage play called "The Burn."

BUGGY & RIPHEAD, DIGITAL IMAGIST ☉

Exhibited at the Barbican, worked for MTV for years. Now concentrating on advertising—has completed work for Reebok.

Developing a book of "image poetry" taken from his immense collection of visual information collected in London, India, South America, and Malaysia.

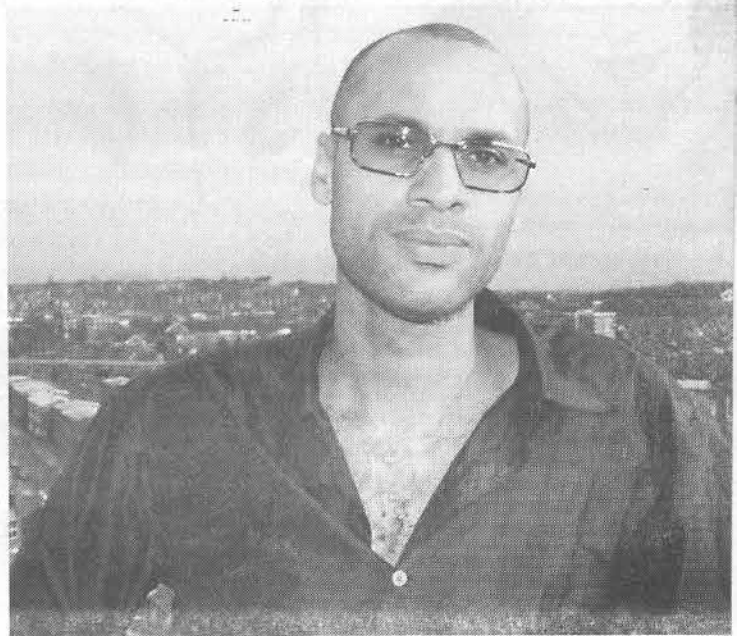
Reading: *Polaroids From the Dead* by Douglas Coupland and *Cool Memories 2* by Jean Baudrillard.

Next off to south India—Tamil Nadu—and then to Madagascar.

Has lived in Peckham for 10 years.

List

- Functional cities: London, Tokyo, New York. Novelty cities: Jaipur, Honolulu, and Caracas.
- Square on Bruton Street—modern European food with a French tinge.
- The Quality Chophouse, EC1.
- Kensington Place on Kensington Church Street.
- The Blue Mountain Tea and Coffee in Dulwich for fantastic breakfasts and fabulous cakes.





WARA, STAND-UP COMEDIAN ☺

"Anglo-African Jack The Lad with a silky style and an acerbic perspective on race relations."

—William Cook, *The Guardian*

Winner of the *Hackney Empire Newcomer Award* for comedy.

Dresses either extremely smart—Ozward Botaeng, Dexter Wong from Hype on Kensington High Street—or extremely rough, depending on his mood.

Wara's Spots:

- Favorite bars in his Islington neighborhood: The Medicine Bar (Upper Street); Bar Room Bar (Hampstead High St); The Lansdowne (Pembroke Road), NW3 for brilliant pub-grub, chilled-out atmosphere, no pretensions and not too many combat trousers and fleeces.
- Czech Social Centre on West End Lane, NW6, for the greatest lager.
- Bar Rumba (W1) on Mondays for "That's How It Is" with DJs Gilles Peterson, James Lavelle (Mo'Wax), and Patrick Forge (KISS FM).
- The End (Hanover Grand) Wednesdays for fresh and funky and Saturdays for Malibu Stacey; and of course, The Blue Note at Hoxton Square.



JOHN SPENCER, ARTIST AND DJ ☺

After working in the fashion industry for a couple of years ("too long"), John Spencer decided to concentrate on art (natural) and music (wild).

Opened the John Spencer Art Gallery in his home (7A Mostyn Gardens, NW10), showing his and other local artist's work. Write to get on the mailing list.

A solid member of the Gaz's Rockin Blues crew since '94. Spins throbbing rock 'n' roll, ska and R&B at Street Moritz club Thursdays.

Looking for a 45 by Sanchez called "Rock Bottom" on Tappa Zukie label and a pair of trousers that fit.

Alt.London.Faces

GRAHAM BROWN-MARTIN, DIGITAL ARTIST ☺

Managing Director of Digital Arts, London's longest-established computer graphics company. Way cool SOHO office on Dean Street.

Designed ship's computer seen in *Lost In Space* starring Gary Oldman, William Hurt, and Heather 'Rollergirl' Graham.

Developed CD-ROMs with the Orb, Shamen, Peter Gabriel, U2 and Nine Inch Nails.

With *exp* (bought by Virgin), created a music label that worked across the media.

Working with Leavesden Film Studios, where George Lucas is making the new *Star Wars*.

Inside Scoop:

- Lives on Old Kent Road in up and coming Southeast London.
- Shops for streetwear high jinx at Neal's Yard, WC2.
- Loves Plum on Berwick Street, W1, Oxo, Butler's Wharf, Clink Street, Castello—Italian at Elephant & Castle.
- Recommends scenery East Street market, SE17—a growing artistic community.



MEL GIEDROYC AND SUE PERKINS, COMEDY DUO ☺

The most exciting new comedy duo in London is creating a huge buzz with *The Light Lunch* on Channel 4. A full course of chat, bad puns, cooking, hilarious bloopers and name guests preparing food is served up. Meanwhile, the audience sits close to Mel and Sue and gets to sample the fare. Ratings have soared, and their bright enthusiasm has won over London. Now their new show, *Late Lunch*, starts at 6p.m. for all those who missed the lunchtime slot.





COPPERWHEAT BLUNDELL ☉

Lee Copperwheat and Pamela Blundell joined forces five years ago upon meeting at Street Martin's School of Art, where they both taught. Copperwheat Blundell has distinguished itself with the cut and construction of its garments. Mixing traditional tailoring techniques and fabrics, the team creates new interpretations of classic garments.

With clients like Harrods, Harvey Nichols, and Liberty in London; Bergdorf Goodman and Neiman Marcus in New York, and Space in Japan, their formula is proving a tremendous success.

The inspirations for their sophisticated, sexy, and desirable clothes are the elements which surround both Pamela and Lee. London's multicultural environment has always been a Muse to them—the Asian community is right on the doorstep of the Copperwheat Blundell studio. In addition, both Pamela and Lee travel overseas regularly. Visits to New York, Tokyo, Asia, and South America create a broad palette of fresh ideas. Shopping is done mostly in New York and Paris.

Last year saw the launch of CB OUTLINE, a sports-influenced collection using Polartec polar fleece and nylons, which has been embraced by the *ragga* set. Look out for the CB chunky rings.

CB's Selections

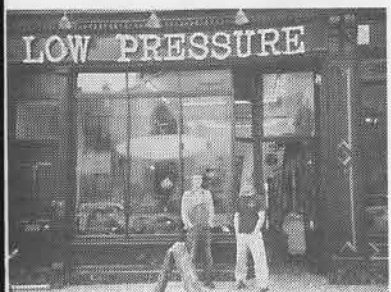
- Met Bar, Brown's, and bars on old Compton Street, Soho.



LOW PRESSURE, STREETWEAR ☉

Just moved across the road on Kensington Park Road, W11, to bigger, better premises.

Stocking everything you need to ride any type of board: Quiksilver, Oxbow, Simple, Stüssy, Ripcurl, Reef, and other fresh lines.



KIERRA ☉

True to its punk roots, Kierra, Christine Atkinson's trend-setting boutique, is on the rawest street in London—31 All Saints Road. Atkinson began her career creating clothes for The Clash and has parlayed that experience into work for film, television, and stage productions. The Kierra clientele is diverse, ranging from Riverdance to Madonna. All come for Kierra's unique, inspired creations.



HEATHER FAVELL

Setting trends within the fashion business with her unique ability to express a model's character through movement and photo style.

CONSCIOUS EARTHWEAR ☉

Clothes to protect.

"Modern living for city dwellers means a need to protect themselves from the harsh backdrop of crime, overcrowding, traffic, and pollution. The need for sanctuary against all this is growing and is reflected in the clothes we choose to protect and cushion us from these problems."

Reflective fabrics so you are seen in the dark, anti-slide dresses, using fabrics that don't cost too much. Conscious Earthwear's Sarah Ratty is committed to using fabrics with the newest technology that make a difference—hemp, eco-spun fleece. Plastic bottles are melted and respun into polyester fiber to produce a polar fleece that takes less energy to wash and dry.

Sarah's Best

- Best restaurant: The Pullens
- Best club: Bar Rumba
- Best park: Richmond Park





HOXTON SQUARE/BLUE NOTE ☺

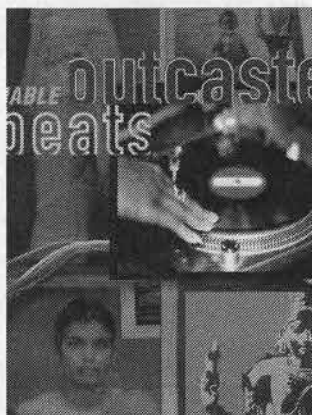
Hoxton Square—with not only the hip Blue Note Club but the office of fashion guru Alexander McQueen. The crowded and tiny Blue Note has the best DJs, the best atmosphere, and the hippest people of all ages every night.

Alt.London.Music

OUTCASTE RECORDS ☺

Things are on the upswing for Outcaste Records, the seminal Brit-Asian label/club that has broken new ground with its hypnotic mix of sitars, tablas and wicked beats.

Their Notting Hill Gate club nights are legendary, and this summer, what Londoners-in-the-know have been onto for a few years will be heard in the U.S.. Outcaste has signed an exclusive marketing and distribution deal with U.S.-based Tommy Boy records, which will release the compilation *Untouchable, Outcaste Beats, Volume 1* in July, followed by an Outcaste club tour, with performances by artists on the compilation as well as DJs spinning their distinct and infectious sound.



WALL OF SOUND ☺

Mark Jones and Marc Lessner met on the club scene in London in the mid '80s at the Special Branch, a hangover from the days of the "soul mafia." Jones was projecting visuals and Lessner selling records off a table while Gilles Peterson, Nicky Holloway, and Pete Tong were spinning.

In the summer of '88, the *Balearic* spirit of Ibiza blew Mark's mind, and later his visuals at Shoom blew everyone else's. Meanwhile, Marc was busy building his own distribution company, Soul Trader. The two found their outlet with Wall of Sound records formed "to encompass everything that was going on."

From then on the only way was up, and the momentum hasn't ceased. With the compilation *Give'em Enough Dope* and the hits "Maracana Madness," "Phatty's Lunchbox" and "Spybreak"—and sound-barrier breaking artists like Rootless, Hustlers of Culture, Les Rhythmes Digitales and, of course, Propellerheads—under their belts, Wall of Sound has arrived.



GILLES PETERSON ☺

A pioneer in bringing jazz into dance, coining the term "acid jazz" and connecting with drum and bass and future music.

Currently playing at Bar Rumba and Far East at Blue Note and on radio stations Jazz FM and KISS FM. Connect the dots with *Gilles Peterson Worldwide*, an internationally syndicated radio show.

Website: gillespetereson@clubdjs.com

Loves the crossover aspects of London's music scene—the free association vibe. Completely excited by life and his recent developments, including 4-hero, Terry Callier and DJ Krust.

DAVID RODIGAN KISS FM ☺

In 1966 David Rodigan was a mod in Margate, listening to ska, the Wailers, and rock steady. These were formative days, and Rodigan stayed with the reggae vibe. He developed his radio presence on Capital radio in the '70s and '80s and now hosts two reggae shows on KISS 100 FM: 1p.m. –4p.m. daily and Monday nights 8–10PM, just before Jazzy B. It's a definitive show with a wide audience. Its influence is global, since many record it and send tapes to friends in the West Indies.

In fact, Rodigan is a reggae legend and receives great respect where it is due—Jamaica. He visits the island at least once a year for Sun Splash and also competes in "sound clashes," boxing matches with records held on the island, as well as in the States.

On Saturday nights he spins, as he has for the last 18 years, at the only reggae club in London—Gossips, 69 Dean Street. Alongside Natty B, Papa Face, and Captain Ken, he serves up front dub plates, dance hall classics, and revival.

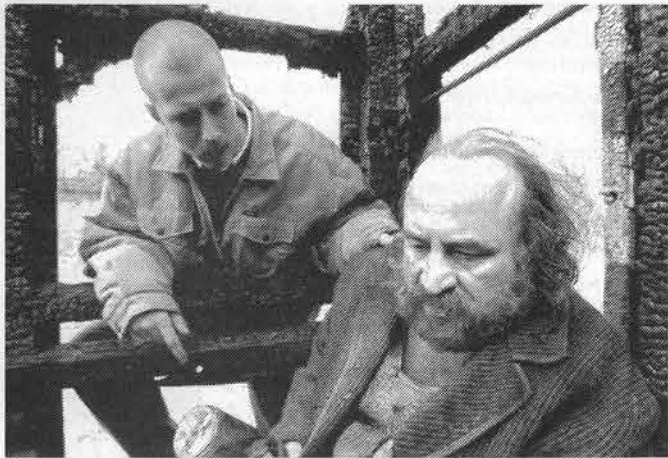
Watch out in the listings magazines for this summer's appearance on the London Reggae



Splash and for gigs at Brixton Academy.

Other KISS 100 FM listening

- Each night features a different specialty dance sound. See *TimeOut* radio page for details.
- Tues/36day: Steve Jackson, 8:00p.m. with the house chart.
- Wednesday: Max LX/Dave VJ 8:00p.m. with the rap chart.
- Sunday: Patrick Forge at 8:00p.m. and Gilles Peterson at 10:00p.m.



TWENTYFOURSEVEN ⊕

Black-and-white movie, cast with the most believable young actors, about boxing in the Midlands. Starring Bob Hoskins, Frank Harper, and Bruce Jones and directed by Shane Meadows this is a Scala BBC production.

Written by Meadows and Paul Fraser, *TwentyFourSeven* features Bob Hoskins as Darcy, who sets up a boxing club to give the local lads a place to call their own and an opportunity to knock sense into one another. Fantastic black-and-white photography from cinematographer Ashley Rowe.

THE MISADVENTURES OF MARGARET ⊕

The first film for director/producer team Brian Skeet and Ian Benson, starring Parker Posey, Jeremy Northam, and Brooke Shields, *Misadventures of Margaret* is a romantic comedy set in two time frames—contemporary New York and 18th century France.

A young American academic begins translating the erotic diaries of a French philosopher and finds the subject matter inspirational. The diary records a young girl's seduction by the philosopher and her gradual undermining of his opinions on life and love. His views lead her to question her own philosophy of life. She sets out on a series of sexual encounters and adventures, possibly to end the story with a marriage.

This is a film dealing with very real issues—love, sex, relationships, and commitment—within a framework of witty, stylish modern comedy. With a superb performance by Parker Posey.



Alt.London.Arts

MY SUMMER WITH DES ⊕

One of the first productions by Pippa Harris, BBC1's new development executive for single drama. *My Summer With Des* is a warm-up to the World Cup starring Neil Morrissey (*Men Behaving Badly*), Des Lynam, our beloved sports commentator, and the beautiful Rachel Weisz (*Stealing Beauty*).

Written by Arthur Smith, this is a vibrant comedy-romance about love and football. Martin (Morrissey) is an English football fan swept up by that glorious summer of Euro '96. Unsuccessful in his love life and unhappy in his job, his life is transformed by the euphoria of England's progress and a chance encounter with a mysterious beauty (Weisz).



BULLIES BALLERINAS

Bullies Ballerinas aim to make dance accessible to all.

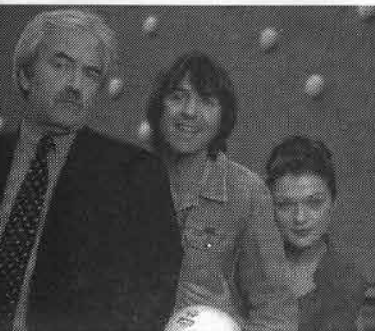
It is a vibrant, energetic, multicultural dance company which synthesises a wide variety of musical and dramatic styles—from 1920s to contemporary dance. The troupe is widely recognised for its work in education and in the

community. Bullies runs workshops for all ages and offers a space for creative development. Pearl Jordan and Jeanefer Jean Charles are founders.

Jeanefer's Choices

Favorite shop: Karen Millen

Favo. rite venue: Percalle rooms at Southbank



HOTLISTS & TIPS

RESTAURANTS/BARS

Sausage and Mash, W11
 Vibe Bar, E1
 Pizza Castello, SE1
 Bank, WC2
 Square, W1
 Le Petit Prince, Kentish Town
 Pasha, SW7
 Mash, W1
 Medicine Bar, N1
 Casa Fratini, W2
 The Lansdowne, NW3
 Czech Social Centre, NW6
 Bar Room Bar, NW3
 Beigo, NW1 and WC2
 Oxo, SE1
 Mezzo, W1
 Café de Paris, W1
 Pharmacy, W11
 K Bar, SW15
 Coast, W1
 Momo, W1
 Moro, EC1
 Sugar Club, W11
 Ortery, W1
 Andrew Edmunds, W1
 La Porchetta Pizzeria, N4
 Roses Café, W2
 Bar Rumba, W1
 The Brilliant, Southall
 Karnaphull Indian, N16
 Assaggi, W2

Records

Blackmarket Records, W1
 Honest Johns, W10
 Dub Vendor, Ladbroke Grove,
 Rough Trade, W11

MASH, RESTAURANT & BREWERY ☉

A fresh new restaurant, bar, deli, and brewery, opened by the creators of Manchester's Mash & Air.

Serves healthy food, including very thin pizzas cooked in wood-burning ovens.

The special feature is the Love Machine created by Murray Partridge. When the front door opens, a sensor activates a computer linked to the sign. The machine makes a flicking noise, and your entry produces your own unique message.

The messages are random—a few samples:

Love is hot, but you can't toast muffins on it.

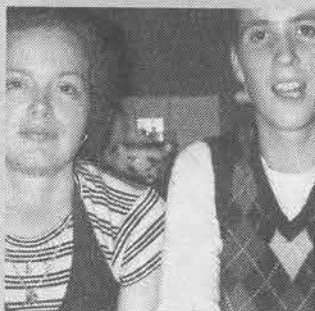
Jesus loves you, but will never leave his wife.

In the dark it was easier to believe her.

The deli offers takeaway and breakfast options. The beautifully designed Mash Bento takeaway boxes are a must to carry.

Mash has its own visible brewing equipment, making flavors like wheat and peach beer. Minikegs are available to go.

Mash
 19-21 Great Portland Street W1



COLLINGWOOD & PALMER LTD. ☉

After 28 years of combined experience in London media, Jenny Palmer and Rachel Collingwood fused their knowledge of fashion, music, theatre and film and formed Collingwood & Palmer Ltd. "London Trends" became their forte and the city's "scene" became the basis of their work. This special feature—a mixture of all the best bits of London, not overtly publicised in the general press—is a natural for this dynamic duo. You can reach Collingwood & Palmer at rachatrcollingwood.demon.co.uk

RAILTRACKS GRAFFITI ☉

The idea: specially designated walls for graffiti. A contradiction? Not if it means empowering youth, encouraging safety, and keeping other walls clean. With this concept, organizers Debra Macintosh and Rutherford Oddoye have forged a radical link with London's youth—and it's working.

Even though the element of danger is not there, the artists can have their work viewed by the public without feeling that they've sold out to a gallery. Now it is worth the extra effort to create a mural—using proper paint and many colors—whereas before some only bothered with a "two can job" because it was temporary.

Project organizer Darren worked at drug units and harnessed his own talent for graffiti to teach and encourage young people.

Guidelines—the images have to be nonthreatening and not racist, sexist, or obscene. In return, safety-assessed paint and masks are provided. And since the paint for each piece costs a small fortune, this opportunity is a writer's dream.

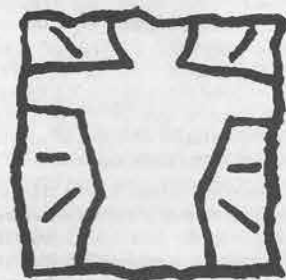
With a project at Wallington with Connex South Central, and the long wall at Vauxhall's Platform 8 already completed, the next wall is at Clapham Station.

The results have been positive—the railways have cleaner walls while the youths and the public enjoy the creativity on display at the designated spots. Plus up-and-coming "writers" work with people they respect and who's work they admire and learn from.

There is a whole culture surrounding graffiti. Magazines such as *14K*, *Emotive Clockwork* and *Explicit Graphics* are found at any Tower Records and at specialty shops.

There is also a graffiti language: tag—a writer's initials put up to show they've been there; throw-up—a large, quick piece of work created on the fly; dub—a full-color piece, more possible and durable now that this project is up and running.

To see photographs of the best new creations around London and the world, visit www.graffiti.org/dj.



THE VITAL TOUCH, MASSEUSES ☉

The Vital Touch's on-site service is a clean, unfussy way to receive a relaxing, tension-releasing massage at the workplace. Created by Suzi Cinalli and Nunu Roney, the 20 minute treatment uses an ancient Japanese acupressure technique.

The real advantage of The Vital Touch's technique is their emphasis on the arms, hands and fingers of the office worker. A great relief for the repetitive stress of computer use. Pressure on the meridians stimulates various acupressure points, releases energy, and restores health.

Virgin Records is one of The Vital Touch's longest-established clients. Also Diesel Clothing—they were so impressed by the team, they have signed a sponsorship deal with them, provides them with Diesel clothing. And to prove their tender touch, the companies with Vital Touch contracts have noticed an increase in their staff's productivity!

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G L O B A L



S A M P L E R

The best world music is that which crosses boundaries and mixes up styles. And when it comes to blending influences—the bands featured on these pages have a whole new recipe.

Summer Scene: Festival d'été de Québec City

It's an unusually sweltering, sticky afternoon in Québec City—the sort of day that sends the masses fleeing to the mountains and beaches. But on this particular day 100,000 people have gathered to listen, dance, and celebrate to the music of some of the world's finest musicians. And that's more than enough reason to get sweaty. For this group it doesn't matter that the songs are sung in lyrics they don't understand—although some sing along in their native tongue—the message comes through loud and clear. Everyone is having a good time—the children holding hands, spastically jumping up and down, the teenagers, dancing and checking each other out in quick glances, the adults, nodding their heads and swaying— even the dogs have caught on that this is happy music. And for a singular moment it seems that there are no global divisions, no disparities, no language barriers, no racial tensions. As clichéd as it may seem, music has this ability to erase our differences. It seems that if there's one thing we can all unite under it's a good rhythm and melody—no matter what the style of music or the language. Which is why we've put together this "Global Sampler"—to show just how small the world is and how music brings us together. We're connecting some of the dots—visiting places geographically and culturally far apart. All of these musicians show the same love for music and its power to communicate a positive message. And who on earth doesn't want that?

Illustration By
Christian Lechert

Los Amigos Invisibles

Photographs by Roberto D'Addona

Los Amigos Invisibles bring the simple tenets of life *to life* and want you to sing along—in Spanish, of course. On *The New Sound of the Venezuelan Gozadera* (Luaka Bop), this six-member band from Caracas, Venezuela make music to dance, love and live to. A "salsa" of funk, jazz, bossa nova, rock and lounge, it's party music with a wink. Feel its infectious vibe—you'll be smiling and dancing to the *gozadera* beat in no time.



JOSÉ LUIS PARDO, GUITAR

"Don't try to be important. You only came to this planet to have a good time." **BEST THING ABOUT VENEZUELA** "The thing I love most is the chaos. If you pay attention you will find funny things happening all the time. You can be stressed, but if you watch the people you'll have fun." **IDEAL WOMAN** "Just like my girlfriend, who loves acid jazz music, who loves to dance, and who knows how to smile." **ON CARACAS** "In Caracas we have a mountain called Diabalo. For spiritual people it is said to have the strongest energy of any mountain in South America. It will heal you."



JULIO BRICEÑO, VOCALS

"Have fun with everything. The meaning of life is to have fun in what you do, no matter what it is—that's the best way to get on with life." **FAVORITE PLACES** "Caracas. I love the people who live there and the beaches around Caracas—Los Caracas is the best beach. And the island of Margarita. I go there when in March or February when it's empty." **INSPIRATION** "I compose lyrics, which are inspired by girls. We're still single or trying to stay single."



JUAN MANUEL ROURA, DRUMS

"Eat good and respect yourself. Listen to music that makes you happy and don't look too far ahead of where you are now or you'll get lost." **FAVORITE PLACES** "New York City and Caracas. There is always drama on the streets in both places." **INSPIRATION** "Clean air and water, friends, old records." **ON VENEZUELA** "We have everything—mountains, rainforest, beach, sea and beautiful people of all races. We not just beauty paegant models."



ARMANDO FIGUEREDO, KEYBOARDS

"Dance a lot and remember not to make life a task. Dance and laugh, it'll go easier that way." **FAVORITE THING ABOUT VENEZUELA** "The geography—rainforests, beaches, mountains." **INSPIRATION** "Life, music, my wife, crisis—I makes you move on." **FAVORITE CARACAS CAFE** El Trote in Altamida. It's a NY style cafe with good music and drink. **KEYBOARDS** Yamaha SK20, Oberheim, Yamaha TG33 and a Wurflizer. "I like old sounds."



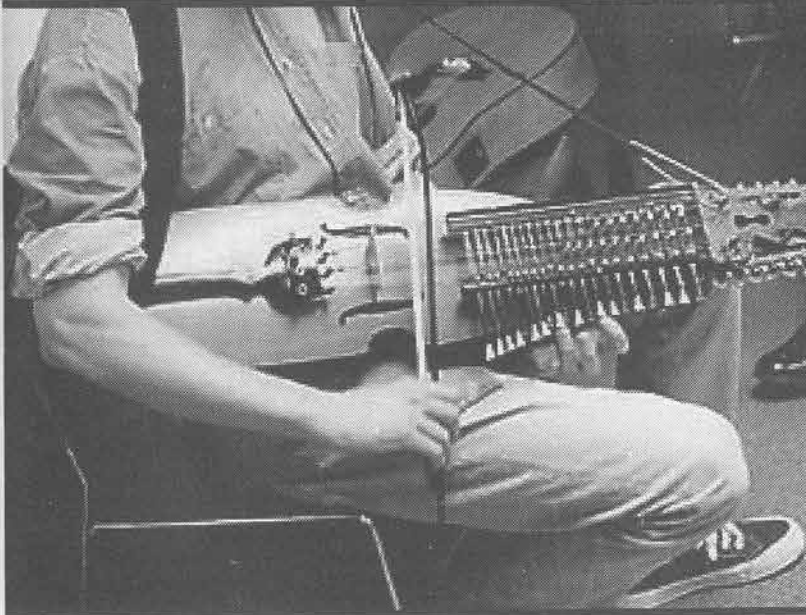
JOSÉ RAFAEL TORRES, BASS

"The most important thing is to be honest with your friends, your music and your culture." **FAVORITE VENEZUELAN DISH** "Cachapas. It's like a pancake but you eat it with cheese and butter and it's made with corn." **FAVORITE BANDS** "Brand New Heavies have been the greatest influence—we discovered acid jazz thanks to them. And Groove Collective—when I saw them for the first time it was amazing."



MAURICO ARCAS, PERCUSSION

"Don't waste time on what you don't believe in." **BEST THING ABOUT VENEZUELA** "The beautiful women." **Salsa FAVORITE FOOD** Japanese **FAVORITE VENEZUELAN DISH** Babellon crioles **FAVORITE CITY** New York, Los Angeles **MUSICAL INFLUENCES** "We learn a lot from listening. You have to listen and keep an open ear. We listen to everything, from our parents bossa nova records, to salsa, to trip hop. Then we make our own music."



Nordic Expansion

The Scandinavian music revival may not be as hip as, say, drum'n' bass, but that doesn't mean it's not burning up the house. With a great musical tradition behind them, musicians of the region are developing a musical language that combines the best of old and new.

Cliff Furnald checks out the scene

Traveling to other countries is often a sterile process: you can read a guidebook and get ideas, take a tour, or just see the "sights." But let's face it, understanding a place involves a lot more than looking around. You've got to taste it, smell it, and hear it.

Nowhere are you more likely to *hear* the place you are visiting than in Sweden or Finland. All year-round there is music to be heard, local and international, professional and street level. In recent years, all of the Scandinavian countries have been undergoing a renaissance of local culture, celebrating their distinctive sound rather than subordinating it to the latest Euro-American pop fad.

Falun, Sweden

Falun is located just a short train ride from Stockholm, northwest of the busy cosmopolitan capital in a region known for its serene scenery and its fiddlers. It's also becoming known as one of the cultural hubs of Sweden. Every year in July (this year it's July 15 to 18), the music of Sweden and the world is celebrated at the **Falun Folk Festival**. It spreads out all over the town, bringing Indonesian dancers to the town green and folk fiddlers to the town hall. And every winter Falun hosts a special preview and networking conference called Norrsken ("Nordic Nights"). Amid five days of music from Scandinavia and the world,

organizers and musicians gather to make plans and exchange ideas. They have a lot to tell about where Sweden is going, musically and beyond.

Finding a unifying theme in the Swedish

Trying to find a unifying theme in the Swedish musical revival is impossible. There is a frenzied search for "roots," a longing for recreated history which many of the world's cultures are perusing in the late 20th century. But Sweden's "folk" scene is also aggressively looking forward.

musical revival is impossible. There is a frenzied search for "roots," a longing for re-created history which many of the world's cultures are pursuing in the late twentieth century. But Sweden's "folk" scene is also aggressively looking forward, with two generations of Swedish musicians making it explode.

First is the crew who came of musical age in the '60s and '70s, probably best exemplified by jazz-musician-turned-roots-man Ale Möller. "Jazz was my first real love story in music—swing music and bebop music. Clifford Brown was my hero," says Möller. But when he was in his early twenties, he met Christos Mitrencis, a Greek musician living in Malmö, Sweden, where Möller grew up. Möller listened to him playing the bouzouki, and a new musical world was revealed. "I really, really liked the sound. I asked him if he would teach me to play the bouzouki.... I spent a lot of time learning the music, rembetika music especially." Around the same time, Möller moved to Dalarna, the folk fiddling center of Sweden, and, armed with this new instrument, began to shake up the folk music scene with new ideas, infusions of jazz and improvisation. The resultant music has become something of a legendary new sound. Along with likeminded musicians of his generation, like fiddler Mat Edén, singer and fiddler Lena Willemark, and saxophonist Jonas Knuttson, he has redefined folk music to include an adventurous, more worldly vision.

But there's another generation at work, one raised on rock and punk and MTV and its Euro-offspring, that is setting the musical world on its ear with its own new ideas. The aggressive rock music of bands like Garmarna are altering



the landscape. This band delves into medieval culture and comes up swinging, electrifying the hurdy-gurdy, giving drums and bass an integral position in the mix, bringing a rock attitude to the singing. Then there is Väsen, a quartet of guitar, viola, percussion, and nyckelharpa (a traditional keyed fiddle) that is turning the folk music of Sweden inside out and making some fair inroads into the rest of the world as well.

The nyckelharpa has been played in Sweden since the 1300s. It is related to both the violin and the hurdy-gurdy, using a bow instead of a wheel and adding sympathetic strings under the main playing area. The musician plays on three melodic strings and a drone, pressing mechanical "keys" against the strings instead of pressing them against a neckboard. "There are pictures in churches with angels playing nyckelharpa," Väsen's nyckelharapist Olov Johansson says, adding in jest about another popular folk instrument that there are also people depicted in the churches, "the ones who have tails and feet like goats...they play bagpipes."

Väsen performs with the attitude of a young rock band, and their audience in Falun last February certainly received them as such. Without resorting to smoke bombs and staged lighting, they evoked a visceral response by taking old forms like medieval reels and turning them into something as relevant as tomorrow. When they play in the U.S., they are an art band playing music that is interesting, even curious, to their listeners. But here in Sweden, they are the hometown rock band, and the crowd (which was dominated by young girls with pins in their noses and teddy bear knapsacks) cheered and danced and made it clear that this was THEIR music. Watching a crowd explode for a band playing a 200-year-old fiddle tune really brought home to me that the folk scene in Sweden is much more than just a revival, but a place for new music to grow out of old roots without bowing to popular American or British pop whims.

Triakel is a trio that premiered its new sound at Norrskén. Emma Härdelin, vocalist for Garmarna, fiddler Kjell-Erik Eriksson, and harmonium (pump organ) player Janne Strömstedt gave a performance that was 180 degrees from Emma's rock roots, playing a traditional-sounding set that had passion and soul. It's a little early to tell how fine a band they will be, but the potential was abundant.

The music of Anders Hagberg points out one of the trends in Scandinavia: a movement

While there has always been a lot of immigration from the nearby countries around the Baltic, the new wave of Finnish immigrants are now coming from Africa, Asia and South America. Their numbers may be small but their music is big.

toward a fusion of light jazz and folk roots. In the premiere of his new album, *Earth Songs*, his band gave a varied performance that highlighted Hagberg's smooth and reverbed saxophone and flute and featured Ingrid Brännström, a good singer of both straight jazz and some traditional herding calls. The album also features stellar percussionist Tina Johansson, joiker Inga Juuso and a large group of backing vocalists.

This light, jazzy trend was also in evidence in a Saturday performance by nyckelharpa player Johan Hedin. He did two sets. One was an improvisational and interesting trio set with saxophonist Jonas Knutsson and Den Fule fiddler Ola Bäckström that was quite extraordinary. The other was a "solo" set with an-

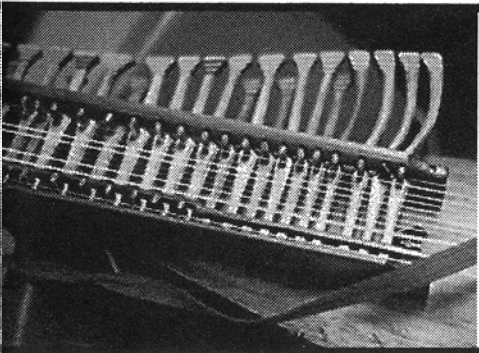
other band, and they again explored the jazz-fusion territory. This set, and indeed the record it was touting, was less inventive, running to the safety of easy pop and avoiding the pitfalls and excitement of taking chances and exploring boundaries.

Kaustinen, Finland

Meanwhile, just a few hundred miles east of Falun lies Kaustinen, Finland. Again, the roots of the revival lie in a region known for its folk fiddle tradition, but also for its willingness to expand and sometimes obliterate that tradition in the name of finding a unique cultural identity independent of the industrial trends of the international music corporations.

Kaustinen lies in the heart of Finland and over the years has become the musical heartbeat of each succeeding generation of folk musicians. The Kaustinen Folk Music Festival (July 18 to 26) is one of Europe's biggest and brightest, with an international roster of artists that rivals anything to be seen anywhere in the world. But again, at its heart, it is about Finland and its people. This year's festival theme is "immigrants" and for a small country, Finland has a lot to celebrate on this front. While there has always been a lot of immigration from the nearby countries around the Baltic, the new wave of Finland's immigrants is now coming from Africa, Asia, and South America. Their numbers may be small but their music is big. Probably best known in Finland is *Galaxy*, a band founded by a Finnish guitarist and a group of Senegalese musicians who moved to Finland to play the popular *mbalax* music, a style made most famous by Youssou N'Dour. By highlighting the music of local gypsies, Africans, and Asians, the festival can create better understanding in a world growing continually smaller.

The festival is a hotbed of Finnish music, too. This is a country so involved in its cultural heritage that it now has a full-time program in folk music at the prestigious Sibelius Academy of



Roots Revivalists (l to r): Väsen, Ale Möller, Guy Klucevsek, Anders Hagberg, Galaxy, nyckelharp, Troka, Triakal, Maria Kalaniemi

Music in Helsinki and a major folk music institute based in Kaustinen. Folk music, for the Finns, is again more than just a romantic backward glance at the old ways. More and more, Finnish folk music is driven by innovation and experimentation rooted in, but not bound to, older traditions.

No discussion of Finland's new routes can take place without the mention of **Timo Alakotila** and **Maria Kalaniemi**, two of the major creative forces in the country. Both are deeply rooted in folk traditions, but both are also innovative composers and instrumentalists who push the music to the limit.

Alakotila is probably best known as harmonium player for the folk fiddle orchestra JPP and the quintet Troka. JPP plays a blend of traditional fiddle tunes and Finnish tangos and in the last few years has begun to explore a variety of new melodies and rhythms in original compositions by members of the group. Alakotila has contributed much to this effort, adding classical and jazz motifs, as well as uniquely romantic drama, that set his music apart from many "new music" composers.

Kalaniemi is an accordionist who is redefining the instrument, not just in her work in Finnish music but in her collaborations around the world. Her most recent collaboration was with four other accordionists of some renown under the name Accordion Tribe, whose members include Sweden's Lars Hollmer and New York's Guy Klucevsek. Kalaniemi is a remarkable artist who, like Alakotila (who plays piano in her group, Aldargaz), lends an uncommon romanticism to

the avant garde. Her playing is provocative without ever displaying harshness, ardent and full without ever flowing over into lushness. Her choice of material, both original and from folk sources, blends together into a singular body of work.

If there is a band that exemplifies the spirit of the new Scandinavian music, it may well be **Gjallarhorn**, a quartet from Ostrobothnia, a Swedish area of Finland. They are aggressively modern while still being very closely tied to both folk musical traditions and ancient mythology. The heart of the band is a mixture of fiddle, didgeridoo, percussion and mandola, fronted by the sometimes ethereal vocals of Jenny Wilhelms.

Their songs deal with mystical events, witches, and gods, and the woes of the sea, but they are carried on a contemporary sound. The old minuets, ballads, and waltzes of Sweden and Swedish-speaking Finland are given new life in the hands of this band. Instead of synthesizers, they rely heavily on the droning rasp of the didgeridoo, which lends both a modern feel and an ancient tone to most of the songs. Wilhelms' voice is splendid, beautiful, but with a slightly sharp edge that befits both the subject matter and the music. Gjallarhorn speaks in tongues and its music reaches you though the language barrier with effortless beauty and strength.

A special enticement of this year's Kaustinen Festival is the International Competition. After a first round of jurying of dozens of

bands this spring, six young groups from around the world will be invited to perform at Kaustinen this summer to compete for "best of the festival." This will offer the audience a chance to hear some of the new wave of roots music first, before they are tempered by fame or marketing.

It is this spirit of adventure, this exploration of possibilities and new ideas, that makes musical tourism in Sweden and Finland so compelling. Each nation has something special to offer, both from its own deep well of inspiration and from the rest of the world. 📺

Resources

Recordings

North Side Folk Music
530 North 3rd St.
Minneapolis, MN 55401
www.noside.com

Digelius Music,
Laivuririnne 2,
00120 Helsinki, Finland
www.digelius.com

Festivals

Kaustinen Folk Music Festival
P.O. Box 24
69601 Kaustinen, Finland
Fax: +35868611977
www.lesti.kpnet.fi/kaustinen/ktk/kfmfeng.htm

Falun Folkmusic Festival

Box 387
791 28 Falun, Sweden
Fax: 46 23 633 99
www.falunfolkfest.se

There is a very complete listing of international music festivals available on the Folk Roots website at www.roots.demon.co.uk

Reviews of hundreds of recordings from Scandinavia can be found at www.rootsworld.com



From The Heart Of The Forest

Baka Beyond blend many worlds into one—providing hope for Cameroon's Baka Pygmies in the process.

By JC Tripp

The members of Baka Beyond have many stories to tell of their travels around the world. As seasoned "buskers" (street musicians) their experiences on the road attest to music's universal powers of communication. Once, while traveling in Columbia, they entered a small village and came upon a group of traditional people dressed in beautiful clothing. Wanting to get a closer look without being disrespectful they picked up their instruments. "The men had blue skirts and the women had these beautiful beads. You really wanted to look at them, but you knew they didn't want you to," said Baka Beyond's Sue Hart. "So, we started to play some music, simple busking and they were just dumfounded and started looking at us. And since they were looking at us we could look at them—it was a fair exchange."

Music has been a passage to other cultures for Hart and Baka Beyond's leader, Martin Cradick. "If you're travelling, then you're a tourist—a lot of places people don't understand what you're doing because that's just outside their comprehension. They couldn't imagine just getting up and going around looking at places," explains Cradick. "Whereas, as a musician you can turn up and play and you're giving something to the people. And in virtually all cultures that's an acceptable way to make a living. So, then you get accepted and can experience the culture from within."

If crossing boundaries and uniting cultures is the basis of "world music" then the genre belongs to Baka Beyond. There is nothing

quite like them—a melding of Northern European and West African musical traditions—a gathering of tribes, if you will. Their recordings piece together African rhythms, Celtic melodies, and the effervescent songs of their namesake—Cameroon's Baka pygmies. It's a unique and uplifting music that sounds live but isn't, utilizing today's technology to create a seamless blend of worlds. With this approach Baka Beyond have pioneered a new "global fusion" from which the likes of Deep Forest and any number of ethno-techino groups have risen.

Sipping *café con leche* in a Cuban cafe on New York's upper west side, Cradick and Hart, with violinist Paddy Le Mercier, were in town to promote their latest outing, *Journey Between*, a continuation of a project that began with 1992's *Spirit of the Forest*. They spoke passionately of the Baka people, whom are not only a key element of their music but also their lives.

Cradick and Hart have been involved with the Baka since first travelling to Cameroon in 1992 and living amongst them in the forest, an experience that deeply affected them. The whole adventure began with a TV program on BBC. "We were watching this program about the Baka, and what struck us was how central the music was to their lives," explained Cradick in his soft Cornish accent. "At any moment it's quite possible for all the Baka to sit down, start singing and playing music together. In England we really love just sitting around playing music. So, to see this group of people where it was so central caught our

fancy. We said, 'we must go there.'"

As circumstances would have it, Cradick and Hart were destined to have their wish fulfilled. "A year after that program, I was running some percussion workshops and this guy came in with a very interesting drum that was from the Baka. He was an anthropologist and had lived near them. Suddenly we thought, 'this could be reality' and then we soon discovered that the River's Museum of Anthropology in Oxford had a sponsorship for people to study pygmies. So, we wrote them saying, 'though we're not anthropologists we have experience as artists in communicating non-verbally, since Sue is also a visual artist. And they paid for us to go there on the first trip.'"

This wasn't the first time Cradick had crossed boundaries with his music. Before forming Baka Beyond he'd been a member of the groundbreaking band Outback, which had done for the didgeridoo and Australia's Aboriginals, what they were about to do for Cameroon's Baka pygmies. Their two releases, *Baka* and *Dance the Devil Away* paved the way for Cradick's future musical vision.

Western Africa may have been a long way from London but Cradick and Hart had their instruments and their music to connect with the Baka people. The two went with little more than a tent, some instruments and recording equipment. They slept, ate and gathered as the Baka did and Cradick spent as many hours as possible playing with them, learning just how integrated the music is with their lives. "Sometimes they fish by building a



Su Hart/Ant Design



dam and emptying out the river. There were some kids doing this, playing really. But when they're emptying it with buckets, it's totally in rhythm. And then you start hearing someone in the distance singing along to the same rhythm. So, other people are singing along to it and all the activities in the camp are joined together. In a normal day, where there are people sitting around in a camp doing their jobs, they'll almost subconsciously be doing it in rhythm, so that this music starts coming out of it. In playing music there's always an element of telepathy and I'm sure they use music to enhance communication within the group," said Hart. The rhythm of life indeed.

But the music is fading, since the Baka, like most indigenous people, are threatened by outside forces beyond their control. The forests are being chopped down by logging operations, brought on by massive debt incurred by the Cameroonian government. "It's changing rapidly. The forest is broken up and the intensity is going. That magic singing they do in the forest to make animals come so they've got food—they don't do it anymore because of all the disturbance. As it breaks up, their whole knowledge and way of life is being dissipated," explained Hart, showing visible concern.

"The forest people's situation is like the Aborigines. They had the land and lived in a natural way and then someone's come in and taken it over. They have no land rights, even though they've lived in the forest before Cameroon was even a country. By law they're

not even allowed to chop down a tree or kill an animal, which has been their way of life for thousands of years," she said.

But there is some hope, as futile as it may be. Unlike many Western musicians who use indigenous recordings and samples in their music, Hart and Cradick actually pay royalties to the Baka people under a charity termed "One Heart." These monies are a source of empowerment that allow the Baka some dignity and reinforce their traditions. "We set up a charity and the royalties go back to them. This helps them set up things to make their lives better. It's made it possible to have the worst things in their lives changed—like not having identity cards. If you have a card then you're a citizen, so now they can go into town without being arrested. What we're trying to do with our charity is give them a choice so they can have control over their lives," said Hart.

Their mission doesn't stop there. Hart also runs a "Rainforest Workshop," a one-day multimedia session of music, dancing and performance that involves participants in the culture of the Baka people. Working mainly with school children, the workshop engages and educates and hopefully enlightens a future generation.

The spirit and sounds of the Baka people have been an integral element of the music, but as the band's title suggests, Baka Beyond is a continually evolving unit, embracing influences and musicians from Africa and Europe. *Journey Between*, their most ambitious recording yet, utilizes Ghanaian percussion performed by the band Kakatsitsi and vocals by Senegal's Alassane N'Gom. Resident members Paddy Le Mercier's Breton- and vocalist Kate Hardy's Gaelic- and Swahili-influences are also strong elements of the music.

There's a simple but crucial message in Baka Beyond's music—everything is interconnected. "There is a sharing of simple things—each little thing given by somebody and it fits in. Using that as the basis, you can bring in musicians from different places and it fits together." That is the Baka way," explained Cradick. In this incredibly shrinking world, could Baka Beyond be the future of music—a collection of global elements recombining as something entirely new? And by channeling back some of the funds to the people from which the music is born—does this signal a new direction for other musicians to follow? For the future of the Baka and all indigenous people, let's hope so. 📻



Our Woman In Havana

Jane Bunnett first caught the spirit of *la música Cubano* in 1984. Her subsequent collaborations with Cuba's folkloric musicians are music history.

John C. Tripp gets the lowdown

Inspiration strikes at the oddest moments and for Toronto-based alto saxophonist and flautist and Blue Note recording artist Jane Bunnett it came in a hotel room on Cuba's southern coast. Vacationing in Santiago de Cuba, Bunnett was resting on her hotel bed when the sweet sounds of salsa drifted through her window. "It was like 'wow!' I was lying on the bed and I heard this band, which at first I thought was a record, they sounded so good. I got up and walked up the hill and I saw these guys dressed in white. It was this 18 piece group from town and it was just incredible, it was like an apparition," she said in a phone interview from her hometown of Toronto.

Up to that point her exposure to Cuban music had been limited to playing a few salsa tunes. She'd never dug deep into the roots of Cuban music and her exposure to it while vacationing was a revelatory and pivotal experience. "A few days later we went into Santiago de Cuba to Casa de Trova (House of Music), a musician's union hangout. There were lots of basses standing up in corners and people would come in and borrow an instrument. There was an old guy serving shots of rum for a couple of pesos. And these guys playing *son montuno*," said Bunnett.

It was at moments like this, where the music and its culture united that led Bunnett to record with Cuban musicians. "As I got involved in the music and learned more, I saw the incredible depth and richness of the heritage, and that's

what really impressed me and got me going," she said. "And then to meet all of these young musicians that are all coming up too, and have such a sense of the history of their music. They have an incredible legacy."

Bunnett's history with Cuban music may have been limited at the time but her tradition and training were rooted in exploration. Studying under pianist Barry Harris and saxophonist Steve Lacy she had already established herself as a jazz explorer. Her notable collaborations with Don Pullen and others had prepared her for this new Cuban phase.

On subsequent trips to the island Bunnett, along with trumpeter and husband Larry Cramer, continued absorbing the music and meeting the musicians. She befriended a number of legendary musicians like pianist Frank Emilio Flynn and vocalist Ernesto Gatell, who opened their homes and the music to her. All the while Bunnett was drawing connections with her music and Cuba's folkloric traditions.

In 1992 her efforts bore fruit with *Spirits of Havana*, a recording which went on to high critical praise. Bunnett had found a new voice in the music and

continued her quest with *The Cuban Piano Masters*, recorded with a drummerless ensemble in 1996. "Cuban Piano Masters had a European influence to it, it was strong in the *danzón* (a rhythm evolved from the 18th-Century French *contradanse*-Ed.). I love listening to *danzón* groups but the folkloric music really hit me because nobody seemed to be working with it," she said.

Her interest in Cuba's folkloric music is at the center of her most recent, and most achieved recording, *Chamalongo*. Bunnett and Cramer recorded it in Havana, with an impressive lineup of old and new artists: rising saxman Yosvany Terry, conga master Tata Guines, vocalists Gregorio "El Goyo" Hernandez, Ernesto "El Gato" Gatell and the late Merceditas Valdes, as well as pianists Hilario Duran and Frank Emilio. Recording *Chamalongo* was an organic process, with Bunnett and band gathering for afternoon sessions in musician's homes. The process took over two months with just four days spent in the studio. "When we first went there it was really behind closed doors, in peoples homes and in certain *barrios*. It was there that I got the oppor-

tunity to hear the music and jump in with my saxophone," she said.

Imagine, if you will, a white blond woman from Canada jamming in a *descarga* (jam session) somewhere in Havana and you get a picture of how foreign the territory was—for both Bunnett and the Cuban musicians. But Bunnett never flinched. "It was very unusual for them to see this," said Bunnett chuckling. "At first it was a big surprise, but it didn't take long before they were like, 'this is different, and it's from the outside.' Cuba has been cut off and dialogue with anybody from the outside with positive intentions and a real desire to share common interests is accepted positively."


Of course, that isolation is disappearing fast, but at the time, before the onslaught of musicians from the U.S., there was little contact between Cuban musicians and outsiders. To Bunnett the music benefited from this. "Because it's been cut off from outside elements, it's remained pure—unlike places like Brazil and Africa, where the music has become very producer manipulated. And the Cuban audience is really critical—they can't get away with stuff there that they can in other countries. If you mess up a *clave* (rhythm) there, people will rush up on stage and give you hell."

Not all has gone so smoothly for Bunnett in this exchange though. Because of the U.S. policy toward Cuba, it's been a continual challenge to get musicians into the country to tour. In fact, Bunnett's 1996 tour with Cuban musicians was halted by political fallout caused by the Helms-Burton act. The current tour for *Chamalongo* isn't any different, with only the most delicate negotiations allowing her full ensemble entrance.

Bunnett has no intention of discontinuing her

"Because it's been cut off from outside elements, it's remained pure—unlike places like Brazil and Africa, where the music has become very producer manipulated."

love affair with Cuban music, and in particular with the folkloric rumba music, which has its roots in the Santería religion. "I really love the openness and the rhythmic qualities of the music that lends so much

to improvisation. Like the experimental jazz of John Coltrane, there is a real spiritual quality to this music—a searching, a reaching out and expression that trigger emotional qualities." And if that isn't the essence of music, than what is? 

Jane Bunnett's Cuban Hangouts

Uneac, Havana. The writer's union. Live music every Wednesday and Saturday. "It's incredible, you'll hear some of the best groups in Cuba play there. When there isn't music there are people reading their poetry or reading books. There's such a history of culture there and the age group is multi-generational."

Teatro Mella, Havana. Live folkloric, rumba music.

Placio de Salsa, Hotel Rivera, Havana. "It's a total zoo and you have to be prepared to have a million people come on to you, but the top salsa bands play there, like Los Van Van."

Tropical, Playa. "One of my favorite places is this renovated beer factory. It's just outside Havana and it's outdoors under the palms. It used to be just the older guys, but now it's the big groups too."

reel whirled

UrbanFolk

Recent critical releases by Olu Dara, Juan-José Mosalini and Wimme Saari

Many, many years ago there was this guy named after an Indian monument who fused the urban blues with a gritty rural folk music, a dash of Caribbean rhythm, some proto-African funk and created a couple of stunning albums in his multi-decade career. There haven't been many others like him since.

Olu Dara is not Taj Mahal, but the mixture of sensibilities that brought him to this record are similar. Born in Natchez,

Mississippi, slow baked in New York City, Dara has created a cityscape that includes immigrant Gambian vegetable vendors, Duke Ellington club

dandies, displaced country blues street singers, downtown beboppers, Broadway showstoppers and uptown hip-hoppers. There's no pegging this man down, this singer with the gritty hometown voice, the raspy cornet, the musical milieu that seems to include art music and raw, indefinable folk as equal partners.

In the World: From Natchez to New York (Atlantic) is no concept album. Each song is a separate story, a vignette with a unique character (and characters) and flavor. There's the Harlem blues of "Bubber (If Only)" with its muted trumpet and a great moaning guest vocal by Mayanna Lee. "Okra," the opener of the album, blends a funky down home picking attitude with a Highlife guitar groove. He sums it up in "Shopping." "I bought my mind and soul on the river...my heart in Nashville, Tennessee...my legs on the ocean...my eyes in Brooklyn on Herkimer Street..." Field hollers here, cool jazz there; this album never stops searching the streets for a new groove.

In The World is a success because it is so in and of the world, determined to chart its own course, paying tribute to its roots but never becoming locked into any one idea of genre. This is melting pot music, New York, 1998.

Astor Piazzolla's tango was about the dangers of life. Juan-José Mosalini's tango is about the romance of life. This Parisian expatriate plays the Argentine urban life filtered through a veil of remembrance, a haze that reveals the outlines but leaves a lot of space for the imagination.



Olu Dara



Mosalini was born in Buenos Aires in 1943, and by the time he was a teen was already well established as a student and artist of the bandoneon. In 1977 he moved to Paris, and there found himself steeped in both Argentine music (he was soloist for the Piazzolla opera, *Maria De Buenos Aires*) and in the avant garde (his trio work with Gustavo Beytelmann and Patrice Caratini). He has worked with large ensembles with multiple bandoneons and in the now classic quintet style.



One Man's Tango (Shanachie) is a collection of work from his many endeavors, from intense solo work to fuller orchestrations, selected from his work over the last two decades. Most notable in the collection are two tracks from his amazing *Chè Bandoneon* album (Label Blue/France), both duets with violinist Antonio Agri. Here is music that is steeped in tradition, unfettered by tradition, full of open space and dense complexity, driven by unexpected rhythms and syncopations.



Wimme Saari

If the recent American reissue of Wimme Saari's self titled album on Northside grabbed you and pulled you into a sense of deep wonder, *Gierran* (Rockadillo/Finland) is going to shake you and rattle you. Here we have Wimme as front man to Tapani Rinne and RinneRadio, a high tech, often gritty band of percussion, woodwinds,

strings and lots of electronics. They produce sampled nature sounds, ambient synth-noise and some pretty funky bass clarinet-driven rock music to frame the joinking of this singer from northern Finland's Saami lands. Wimme gets to stretch out more than he has on previous recordings, pushing into more song-oriented territory, expanding the traditional sounds in more aggressive, sometime humorous, ways. There are a few stunning solo pieces in the tradition, but most of the work here has a fine edge of modernity that will appeal to folksy and techno-mixer alike. It's to the credit of singer and musicians alike that the music never imitates folk, never emulates more popular pop, and always strives for its own sound. This honesty may hold it back from mass popularity, but it thrusts it forward as art, and that is the far better course. —CLIFF FURNALD

groove guide

NEW YORK CITY

Brooklyn Performing Arts Festival
Ninth Street Bandshell, Prospect Park
(718) 855-7882 X52

BeauSoleil Avec Michael Doucet — June 25
El Gran Combo de Puerto Rico — June 27
The Jazz Mandolin Project — July 3
Burning Spear — July 10
Baaba Maal — July 19
Ray Barretto, Yomo Toro — August 8
Bang on a Can All-Stars — August 14
Rikki Jai — August 22

Central Park Summer Stage '98
Rumsey Playfield, Central Park
(212) 360-2777

O Rappa, Karnak — June 21
Odadaa!, Malik Yoba — June 27
Machel Montano, Xtatik — July 26
David Murray's Fo Deuk Revue with
Doudou N'Diaye Rose, Amiri Baraka,
Groove Collective, Dieuf Dieul — August 2
Abida Parveen, Junoon, Badar Ali Khan — August 9
Willie Colon, Ricardo Lemvo, Makin Loca — August 16



QUÉBEC CITY

Festival d'été de Québec
July 9-July 19
(418) 692-5200

Africa Fête: Salif Keita, Papa Wemba, Cheikh Lô
Maryam Mursal, Baaba Maal
Tarf de Haïdouks, Touaregs de Tartit,
Frères Guissé, The Herbaliser, Los Lobos

SEATTLE

WOMAD Music Festival
Marymoor Park — July 31-August 2
(206) 281-8111

Thomas Mapfumo & The Blacks, Unlimited,
Ayub Ogada, Márta Sebestyén
César Strosio & Esquina, Terem Quartet,
Tuatara, Ulali, Justin Vali, Yungchen Lhamo,
Hukwe Zawose, Ashley Macisaac,
Bela Fleck & The Flecktones,
Eva Ybarra y su Conjunto,
King Sunny Ade and his African Beats,
The Klezmates, Ndebele Artists, Passo a Passo,
Ravi Shankar, Shikisha, Waldemar Bastos,
Wilco, Zakir Hussain



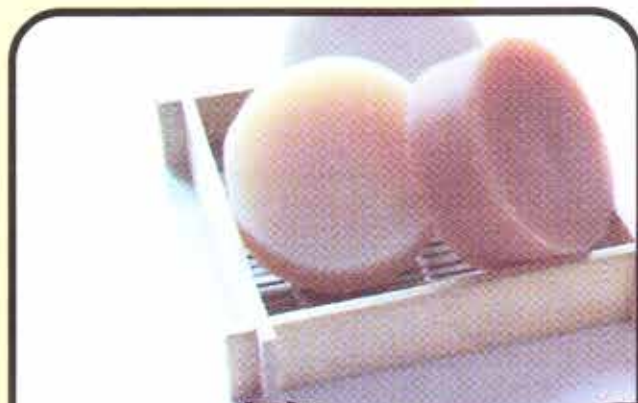
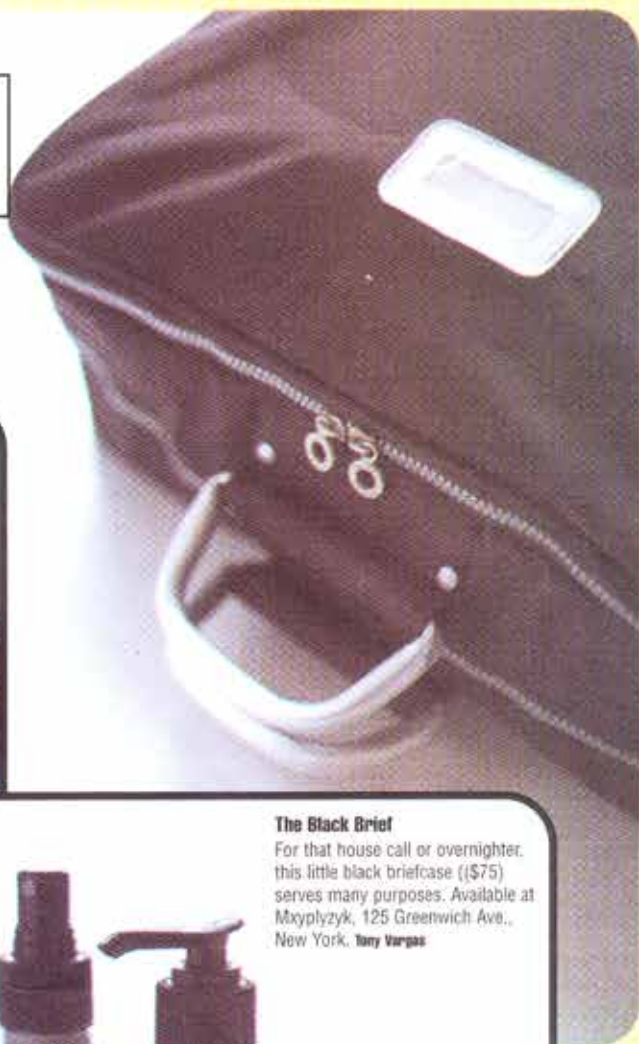
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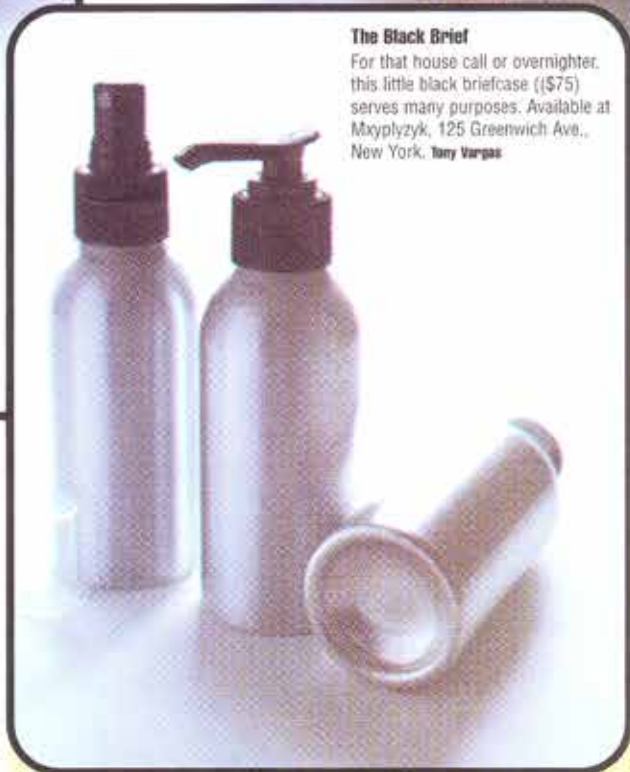
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roaminations

**A Turkish Bath Experience, Eating Offal in Rome, High Culture L.A. Style,
Getting Massaged in Foreign Places, The Perfect Moment In Fiji**

Bathing Rituals

On my last night in Selçuk, Turkey, 18 hours south of Istanbul by overnight train, I experienced being a naked 21-year-old American woman in a coed Turkish bath with a male masseur in a country where no "respectable" Turkish woman would allow a man to bathe and massage her. Near my hotel, Kalehan, an Ottoman descendant's version of a New England bed and breakfast, not far from the barber and across from a rare Shell gas station, I approached the obscure garage with the discreet sign "Hamam Turkish Bath." I greeted the masseur who, smoking a home-rolled cigarette, stood behind the counter naked, except for a plaid loincloth wrapped precariously around his waist. Conscious of my foreignness, with the nicknames—"Hey! Charlie's Angels! Excuse me? Spice Girls?" used by merchants at Istanbul's Grand Bazaar echoing in my head, I had no way of knowing what this stranger's attitude toward women, and particularly young, foreign women who paid to have an intimate therapeutic relationship with him, was. I prepared to relinquish self-consciousness but to keep my propriety and reputation intact, while simultaneously surrendering myself to the luxury of the hamam.

You cannot know the hamam experience until it is yours, and every hamam will subject the visitor to a different experience. From word of mouth, I knew that in Istanbul the traditional bath involves a certain negotiable level of nudity in a single-sex setting and usually follows a similar routine: First, you rinse yourself in either a center tub or hot springs, or under a faucet and basin that line the wall. Then, you toast yourself on a scalding marble block until it is your turn with the masseuse, usually a Sumo-sized woman wearing only a thong. After the shampoo and massage, you return to the running water for a final rinse.

For days I prepared for the hamam experience by conducting long surveys with experienced American bathers. No one argued that

the hamam wasn't an incredible exercise in relaxation, but women and men alike had difficulty abandoning their self-consciousness. One traveler said that other women stared at her nipple rings. Another woman decided to go alone to avoid the embarrassment of the imperfections of her lithe, 125-pound, 5'9" frame. An Indian-American Muslim woman chose not to experience the baths at all. The hamam meant public nakedness, and ordinarily she remained fully covered, including her wrists and ankles. Men unaccustomed to the



hamam do not worry about nakedness like the women do. They reported that while men don't take their linen off, they endured a painfully rough massage.

The last day of the trip, I discovered that Selçuk had only one local bath. Selçuk Hamami, as it was called, allowed women to bathe on Friday. Every other day this local hamam was co-ed, which means Turkish men and tourists of both sexes. This hamam represents a trend toward the closing of many Turkish baths. Ranging from \$4 to \$25, baths can cost less than a manicure, but as they grow

more expensive for tourists, they become unaffordable to Turks. Unfortunately, the hundreds of baths constructed to celebrate the pleasure of bathing and honor the importance of strict personal hygiene in Islam are closing. Those available to women and men separately are the first to close because of the Islamic belief that women do not need access to such luxuries, especially those outside of the home.

After I payed my \$8 U.S., the masseur handed me a wrap like his and ushered me into a cement changing room. Before leaving the hotel, I had strategically worn dark underclothes that I planned to keep on throughout the bath. The guidebooks said to keep clothing on until you assess the situation inside the bath. From my dressing room, I couldn't know what lay behind the door to the bath. "Are there any Americans in there?" I asked. If any American men were there, I planned to reconsider. From behind the curtain, afraid of appearing immodest, I tugged at my bra strap with a questioning look. Whether the masseur thought I was asking to leave it on or take it off, he responded, "It's okay. It's okay." I took that to mean it's acceptable to take it off. I rewrapped myself in sparse swaddling and entered the chapel bath. All at once, I was self-conscious, standing in front of a strange man, unsure of the hamam events and relieved to see the low-lit room empty.

He escorted me to a bath stall, where he stripped me of my linen, drew the curtain on the shower stall, and demonstrated how to douse yourself with the warm and cold water that overflow in a marble basin. Once completely rinsed, I put my linen back on and walked the two steps to the heat block, where you lay like a religious sacrifice on a marble slab that reaches 96°F. My skin flushed and became dewy with perspiration as I stared up at the domed, aerated ceiling. With my eyes gently, shut I saw the bright spot left by the solitary light bulb that dangles from the center of the dome. My breath condensed in the humidity, and the hum of running water echoed like a seashore lullaby. I was no longer an

American woman with beauty-standard baggage. I was living in Ephesus, wearing a toga in summer and spending civilizations transcribing the resident philosopher's words, "A man never enters the same river twice."

My masseur scrubbed my skin relentlessly with a loofah hand mitt (my first purchase once back in the States and a permanent addition to my own bathroom amenities). He proudly showed me the black beads of epidermis I didn't even know I had. Then he sent me walking naked across the room back to my shower to rinse the dirt off. (I carried my linen in my hand to put on after I rinsed.) After I roasted a second time, he drew me to him, lathered me with silky lavender soap, and shampooed my body beside a tub of bubble bath. While covered in lather, I received a divine massage. My weary legs that had hiked for days were kneaded to perfection. My spinal vertebrae, stressed from backpacks filled with jugs of water and guidebooks, were separated, cracked, and revitalized. My shoulders experienced a new range of motion when with the weight of his entire body, the masseur flattened me until my spine met my breastbone. Like a surgeon of plate tectonics, he corrected every hazardous crack and rift in my weary traveler's body. With two performative slaps on the thigh, causing an eruption of suds, I was brought to the sitting position, where the weight of my head offered my spine a deep stretch and my neck, temples, and skull received the last luxurious sensations.

My masseur again escorted me to my shower stall, where I rinsed myself free of the silk suds and like an addict found the block for the last time. From behind my private curtain, I watched him as he performed the ritual on my friends. He did not look at them in a scrutinizing, aroused way. He looked like he was at work. While at his mercy, I had kept my eyes closed. To open my eyes would have acknowledged that scary public nakedness. Keeping my eyes closed, I lost myself in the physical sensations and awakening viscosity. At the last station, a stand-up shower with a linen wrap doubling as a curtain held up by the masseur, he told me to take my soaking underwear off and wear a dry linen. The bathing ritual over, I noticed a Turkish man, toweling like the masseur, laying eyes-closed on the boiling marble block. Judging by the flush of his Mediterranean skin, he must have been roasting about half the time that I had been in the hamam.

The glamour of the Turkish spa gone, I sat in what is called the cold room, outside the hamam, on a cheap plastic couch. My pastel-striped head towel wrapped like a turban, my plastic drugstore sandals propped up on the coffee table, I sipped the staple Turkish hospitality drink, apple tea. My masseur's partner covered my shoulders with another towel for modesty and warmth. As it is the local custom to socialize (in towels) after you bathe, the masseur sat beside me, where there wasn't enough room for two. With a sigh he extended

his arms and rested them around my shoulders. "Boyfriend?" he asked. From experience I knew the operative answer. "Yes," adding, "at the hotel" for emphasis. When a group of teenage boys not yet above giggling at the sight of a toweling American woman entered, I made my exit—clean and liberated.—KRISTEN SCHULTZ

Ancient Organics

The gluttony of ancient Rome would have made mincemeat of our 20th century New York City standards. Sure, we've got stockbrokers celebrating their bonuses with \$23,000 dinners, and drinking oneself into oblivion is a national pastime. That's nothing. Ancient Romans had naked virgins leaping out of tarts. Wine was served in golden troughs, and Nero regularly hosted 24-course banquets. And of course everybody knows about the vomitoria.

But I wasn't thinking about all that crazy ancient gluttony when my boyfriend and I agreed

to meet my father and his wife in Rome for a week's vacation. I was thinking about my own modest brand, the kind that goes crazy for extra-virgin olive oil and prosciutto di Parma, for oily focaccia covered with fat grains of salt, and for those sweet, sweet, sun-baked Italian tomatoes. I

lived in Tuscany for two years, and I've got quite a taste for that kind of thing. The only problem was, I didn't know food is a different story down in the capital city. I didn't know that in many ways ancient tastes still rule the late 20th-century Roman table—and I'm not talking about the taste for golden goblets and honeyed figs.

As it turns out, while the rich were hunting phoenix and importing trout from the other side of the world, the peasants of Ancient Rome were making do with leftovers and table scraps, coming up with less prosaic specialties such as "Vegetable and Brain Pudding," "Spayed Sow's Womb," and "Livers and Lungs."

Ancient habits die hard in the old country; two thousand years after the fall of the Roman Empire, our modern-day vacation was well seasoned with offers of organ meats of every kind. Which—as adventurous, cosmopolitan good eaters, the lot of us—we obviously had to accept.

Initiation began immediately. Our first night, we squeezed into a tiny cave of a place, Osteria del Rione, and began devouring each new dish the kitchen set before us. Bruschetta with tomatoes and a healthy jug of red wine greeted us. From that auspicious beginning through the white beans in pungent olive oil,

the fried zucchini flowers, the delicate little polpette (meatballs) and onward, our faith in the kitchen only grew.

We'd just finished pesto pasta when our curly-haired waiter paused a moment before leaning in and asking the question we were to hear again and again in the next week: "*La trippa Romana, la volete?*" He seemed to think we wouldn't.

But my father is an adventurous eater—and even more to the point, entirely vulnerable to the infection of a good time. "Of course!" he cried generously once I'd translated. "Bring it on!" And so they did: neat white strips nestled in red sauce. I admit I hesitated. I am a recently recovered vegetarian. But so what: we were in Rome! It was a simple matter of turning off the side of my brain that blanches at certain aspects of carnivorousness and of ignoring my boyfriend, Chris, as he peered inside one of the strips. "That's tripe, all right," he was saying with interest, displaying the honeycomb texture hidden inside. "Look."

It turns out tripe is fine. I wouldn't say deli-

cious. It's as fibrous and bland as you might expect stomach lining to be, but a worthy vehicle nonetheless for a good tomato sauce. I even had a second helping and mentally patted myself on the back, figuring it would be arugula salads, and risotto of zucchini flowers from then on.

But we didn't learn our lesson. The next night we went from gazing at the remains of a colossal marble head of Constantine—and nearly getting lost among a dizzying collection of naked statues—to dinner in the Testaccio district. "Testaccio never changes," our hotel clerk had said. "There, one finds typical Roman food." Ahh, typical Roman food, we thought, and eagerly marched into "Da Oio" Casa Mia promptly at 8 for our reservations, hungry, like any good tourists, for typical Roman food.

It was a calm neighborhood trattoria: no opera singers or models, no cell phones or tourists, save ourselves—just nice-looking couples and groups of friends sitting at closely set tables. Our teenaged waiter greeted us with mineral water, olives, and bread and offered to bring an assortment of antipasto. "*Ma certo,*" I said, not remembering that in old town Rome antipasto might mean something other than olives and chick peas.

In fact, it did mean something different; it meant thin slices of tongue and tiny squares of gelatin containing bits of meat. "That's head cheese!" Chris said brightly. I myself have never eaten head cheese, and its name alone has never left me feeling in want. But we were in Rome, and I am an adventurous eater—even if I was beginning to need to remind my-

"We'd just finished pesto pasta when our curly-haired waiter paused a moment before leaning in and asking the question we were to hear again and again in the next week: "*La trippa Romana, la volete?*" He seemed to think we wouldn't.

self of that fact. I filled my plate with everything, unmindful of my father's wife, Rebecca, who grew up in farm country and, good sport though she was, didn't consider all these organs and offal such exotic fare. But she guessed the tongue would be excellent, and so it was, sliced and spritzed with lemon and parsley and quite delicious. The head cheese was the real surprise. A firm, salty gelatin that, yess, comes from the cartilage and hooves of slaughtered animals. It had chopped meat and vegetables suspended in it, and it was amazing. All around the table, we were thrilled.

"Primi?" The waiter was back for our first course orders, still with no menus to offer, just as we were finishing the olives and settling into fullness. I floundered through confused negotiations with him before finally giving up and asking that the kitchen choose. Beautiful. My family looked impressed, and the waiter nodded happily and rushed off. *Brava* to me—except that I forgot to specify a limit. The truth was, we were already sort of full. I also forgot to request a moratorium on the organ meats.

But no matter. He brought pasta: cavatappi with a lemony basil pesto and then rigatoni in the ubiquitous Roman tomato sauce. We ate happily, despite noticing uneasily that patrons all around us had gone from pasta dishes to Flinstonesque cuts of meat: huge knuckles and rail joints. And suddenly the waiter was back, asking about our *secondo*. "*Va bene, va bene*," I said, in a haze of fullness. *Secondo* course just like the first. Sure, why not? And this was where we really got a taste of old Rome.

He brought four enormous meat dishes: a hunk of ox tail. A platter of tripe. Thick slabs of lamb. And light brown, kidney-shaped slices of mysterious organs, which were mushy and weird and tasted too rich and viscous and soft to really enjoy—although I ate some, goddamn it.

Finishing that meal was like climbing Mount Vesuvio, but we did it, we really did it. We even had strawberries for dessert. And smiled and talked and felt easy and groovy the whole time—although getting to sleep that night was another matter. After that, we had to tone it down a little. We had pasta, pizza—and just cured meats.

Not until the last night did we face organs



again, this time with a dish that transformed me from mere dilettante to full-fledged convert. A whole day of flea markets and Bernini-gazing left us starving and exhausted at a time of day when most restaurants were closed. No problem; my father—always the master at such tricks—left the hotel room and reappeared with a feast, which we spread over the bed: olives, salami, marinated mushrooms, roasted chicken, sharp cheese—and the very best of all, tagliatelle with chicken livers. Now, liver has never been a personal favorite, but take enough exhaustion, hunger, red wine, and pasta, add some chicken livers, and get ready for a revelation concerning the nature of organ meats. I bit only tentatively at first. Liver? Tender and salty and earthy? Tucked into broad ribbons of seriously *al dente* pasta? Delicious. Maybe one of the best things I have ever tasted.

Actually, I can't stop thinking about it, any of it. Call it offal, variety meats or throwaway scraps, those Romans know a good tradition when they taste one. Damn the coming of the millenium; I'll stick with the ancients. Although next time I might skip the tripe. —LARISSA PHILLIPS

Western Landing

Moving out West for the art scene might have seemed like an oxymoron were it not for the fact that our arrival in Los Angeles was marked by the growing frenzy over the opening of the new Getty Center. L.A. has never really been considered a place for high culture, or any culture for that matter. David Geffen once described it as "the land of no taste." But the Getty's investment of one billion dollars and 14 years of labor was supposed to solve this problem. Richard Meier designed the buildings, Thierry Despont created interiors suitable for old art, and Robert Irwin conceived the gardens for what was planned as an elitist palace to the highest of culture.

I booked early in the fall for parking reservations in December, as soon as my family announced they were going to visit L.A. two weeks after the Getty's official opening. The ads for the Getty said there were stops for public buses, but public transportation is a notion many people in L.A. do not really grasp. This is car country—lonesome cowboys riding the Wild West. The sons and daughters of the pioneers, adventure seekers, and immigrants who traveled in covered wagons to find gold or a plot of land aren't going to wait for the bus! It's always been part of the American Dream: you work hard for yourself, and then you have it all. A homestead or a piece of farmland was the pot of gold for the early settlers. To their spiritual descendants, it's selling a first screenplay or directing a studio movie. And of course, driving your own car is part of this ideology, because you're in control. You are the captain of your destiny, and you'll run over anyone who

gets in your way. Car pooling may be encouraged, but that would mean helping your competitors. As for public transportation or the new metro system, nobody uses it.

With reservations safely in the Getty computer system, I was set to welcome my family to this place where dreams and fortunes are made. By this time, the rest of the world was noticing that L.A. was about to open this insti-

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tution for high art. National Public Radio featured stories about the architect, the director of the museum, and the landscape artists and interviewed anyone who had a viewpoint. I told my parents about the reservations, and they were excited about going after so much coverage. Their friends were impressed that we even had reservations. They told my parents that the waiting list was three months, so their daughter must be well connected to get a reservation so soon. I thought my parents were worth three days of non-stop calling. And I couldn't wait to see what all the fuss was about.

The day of our appointed visit, everything is fine until we actually get to the entrance of the parking lot. We can just see the pale modern fortress that's the Getty looming atop a large foothill of the Santa Monica Mountains. It's bumper-to-bumper traffic, and we wonder if we'll ever get in there. This has been a major feature of my parents' visit—traffic at all times of the day and night all over this huge city. We watch hundreds of visitors waiting for public buses and taxis as we wait the 20 minutes or so it takes to reach the gate. We start to argue that we should have left earlier because this traffic is eating into our museum-viewing time. There are parking spaces available at a nearby Holiday Inn, and I've heard that some Brentwood residents are selling parking spaces. We have the priceless reservations and the essential patience that we've acquired living in Los Angeles.

I give the gatekeeper our reservation information. We have reserved spaces for two cars because we hoped to meet our friends in their car at the entrance. After seeing this mess, I know that will be impossible. I ask the gatekeeper about the other car we were supposed to meet, but he seems unsure whether he'll be

able to let them in. We decide to wish them luck finding us. Once you enter the gates to this pearly palace, it's everyone for themselves.

Finally, we reach the parking garage. Finding a space is easy enough, and I tell my parents that I really want to ride the tram to the museum. The tram was part of architect Richard Meier's conception: he wanted to remove all cars and buses from the museum's landscape, making it like a Zen experience. This center free of cars would give the museum grounds purity and serenity, which is hard to come by in Los Angeles.

At the platform, the guard tells us there will be another 20-minute wait for the tram. It makes sense that all these lines have a 20-minute waiting time. Everyone always says that it takes 20 minutes to get anywhere in Los Angeles. It doesn't matter if you are driving to Santa Monica or the Valley. Somehow it always takes 20 minutes. Maybe it has something to do with the smog and human stamina.

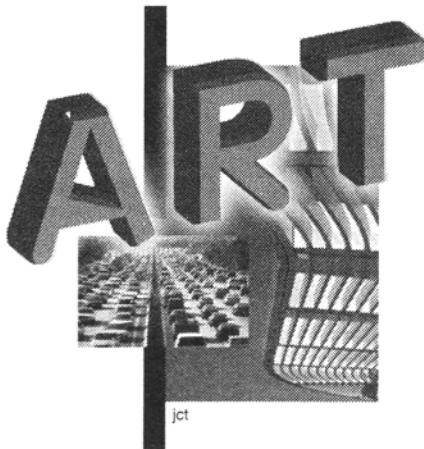
We decide instead to take the bus, with its shorter line. The museum did not anticipate the huge numbers of visitors it has attracted. Tens of thousands of people have visited the center every day since it opened, and the crowds do not seem to be thinning out. The peaceful scene that Meier envisioned has been polluted by the buses and the throng walking up and down the winding road that takes you from the parking lot to the actual buildings. I suppose painting the buses white helps a bit, but enforcing a dress code may be difficult.

There are really long lines for certain galleries, and the artwork, when we finally see it, is disappointing. The center boasts a Van Gogh, a Manet, a Monet, a Michelangelo, and other mighty pieces. But my father articulates it perfectly when he says that the setting looks like someone's garage sale. The eighteenth-century paneled interiors in combination with such modern structures have a strange kitschy feel that I know the designers did not intend—it's an amazing building plan: five two-story buildings with gardens and a large courtyard; fountains dot the center, and everything is made of the same rusticated travertine stone. The collection also contains the works of many students of great masters, and even the highlighted pieces are not the best works of the great artists represented. This would not matter so much in a less publicized establishment, since most of the great masterpieces already have homes. But after all the money and time, there were so many expectations for the Getty.

The Getty is a clash of contradictions. Long stretches of anticipation for moments of dubious pleasure. Carnal crowds milling around pricey second-rate art. Jam-packed "tranquil gardens." Gum wrappers splashing down cascading fountains. An ambitious jumble of periods and styles set against the drama of nature done in painterly hues. Yet somehow the cen-

ter captures the ineffable riddle that is Los Angeles.

The whole history of this area has been filled with glorious hopes and dreams. Many were fulfilled, and many great myths were created. Every time I drive around Beverly Hills or one of the other well-manicured neighborhoods, I can hardly believe that in reality this should all be desert. Massive underground irrigation is set in place to create the illusion that all unpaved areas are green year-round, with water taken/stolen from other states. Los Angeles is where dreams are supposed to be



fulfilled and since its foundation, it has always battled nature and the elements. The desert was the easiest to conquer. Central California unwittingly surrendered water in the early days of Los Angeles. Houses were built on fault lines and unstable coastlines. This was a city made for the industrial and automobile boom during WWI. By the 'thirties, environmental offices had opened to cut down on smog, and by the 'fifties, freeways had brought this huge landscape into the "20-minute" territory we see today.

The Getty Center is part of this constantly shifting, uncontrollable city. It may not have good taste or culture, but there are other places in the world for that. And the view from the second-floor patios of most of the buildings is what makes the Getty so spectacular and worth the trip. You can see the entire city and the Pacific Ocean when the sky is smog free. It really is the city's newest theme park, with long lines even at the gift shop. Los Angeles, after all, is very much about living the capitalist dream and loving it, though we all bitch about the unbreathable air and the horrendous traffic. New Los Angeles is such a bizarre place. You can never fully understand or get a real grip on this city. Many locals believe Los Angeles has a feminine energy, unlike the phallocentric New York. But the environment is in a state of angry unrest that could explode at any moment. And though city planners have tried their best to connect everything by free-

way, all the neighborhoods are little centers of their own. Residents are territorial, believing their area to be the best, while rivals proclaim the opposite.

The Getty planners hoped to put L.A. on the art map; but they have done more than that. Citizens have begun to use public transportation (though using it doesn't guarantee entrance into the museum), and they have been forced to realize that "art" is worth the three-month waiting list. The Getty has not made L.A. into the next New York. But it has epitomized Los Angeles culture in one place.

More, the museum is so removed from any residential or business area, atop its high foothill, like the fabled Celestial City, that it perfectly captures the yearnings of our time. It's that great dream we all hope to achieve one day—after we have run in the rat race, fought our way through the traffic jam. Once we arrive, we often discover it is really all pastiche.

—CHARONG CHOW

The Foreign Touch

Many people judge a city or place by their taxi drivers or bus drivers. I, on the other hand, judge a place by the massages I receive. Strange as this may seem, many truths are shown through the careful manipulation of soft tissue. Let me take you on this journey through many different destinations and tell you of my experiences first hand.

Bagni di Lucca (City of the Waters) with its lime sulfate springs, is one of Europe's oldest spa towns. It is set in a lush green valley situated high in the Apennine mountains of

My masseuse, a Vietnamese woman with tiny hands, looked fairly harmless. I only wished that those tiny hands molded to my beaten muscles when, one minute into the massage, she somersaulted onto my back. I lay there on a piece of plywood, with no pristine linens, or white fluffy towels.

Northern Tuscany. Last year my boyfriend and I covered 2,400 km of hair raising-roads at dangerous speeds, in our little Fiat Punto with its stick shift and four-cylinder engine. I, the designated driver for most of the trip, suffered greatly with my neck and shoulders. When we reached Bagni di Lucca I decided to hand my body over to the spa for a tune-up of sorts. After immersing myself in the warm sulfate waters I then led into a massage room and told

to undress and get on the table. I promptly obeyed, only to find that there was no sheet or towel to cover my humble body. I decided it was best to lie on my stomach and face the world at large. My therapist entered the room. He was every woman's dream: tall, dark, with not one word of English. He proceeded to give me a magnificent massage, and I just melted in his hands. My boyfriend was sitting just five feet from the door, oblivious to my state of relaxation. When Sergio finished my back, he flipped me over like a pancake—still no towel. At this stage I said to myself, "When in Rome..."

In Roman times, massages were given to gladiators before and after the games; they were anointed with oil and rubbed until they were red. I doubt if we would take such a vicious approach today. Julius Caesar was massaged daily to relieve neuralgia, and there are many references to massage in Greek and Roman literature where it was advocated before and after sport and during convalescence.

Massage is greatly valued in such places as India. Mothers massage their babies and later these children are taught to do the same for their parents.

I remember the first massages I received during my backpacking around South East Asia. The stresses of carrying a huge backpack had taken their toll on my back so I was in bad need of deep tissue massage. I spent many weeks discovering various islands in Indonesia, including Lombok, just four hours east of Bali by ferry. During my stay there I decided to plunk myself on wooden huts by the beach. Daily, I succumbed to massages on the beach for little more than a dollar. (A backpackers budget does not allow for many if any luxuries.) The massages I received were a rub down of sorts, not that these women could distinguish my rectus abdominus from my piriformis. They would pound my skin with a dubious oily substance incorporated with a few particles of sand made for a merciful rub down. My moans and groans fell on deaf ears and my fellow travelers would look on with much amusement thinking I possessed some masochistic tendencies. I on the other hand relished in the pain.

But I do have my limits and I was about to meet my Waterloo of massages at a place called Hue in Vietnam. Hue is located on the central coast of Vietnam, to the north of Danang and midway between Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. In the 19th century it was the cultural and intellectual center and home to the emperors of Vietnam. Today there is much for the traveler to discover in Hue and the surrounding countryside. The imperial walled city known as "The Forbidden Purple City" is a major landmark and unique in Indochina. In Hue I sampled the local variety of massage, not for the faint hearted. My masseuse, a Vietnamese woman with tiny hands, looked fairly harmless. I only wished that those tiny hands molded to my beaten

muscles when, one minute into the massage, she somersaulted onto my back. I lay there on a piece of plywood, with no pristine linens, or white fluffy towels. As I stared out onto the attached courtyard and watched the rats dart back and forth, I counted the minutes until my masseuse leaped to safety on the ground and left me, I was sure, for black and blue. My backpack felt much lighter the following day.—**MIAMI HARTNETT**

That Magic Moment

I got the idea from cable. HBO was showing this movie called *Pontiac Moon*, in which Ted Danson played this high school teacher in 1969 who decided it would be a "single perfect act" if he drove to the Craters of the Moon National Park and watched his odometer hit a quarter million miles just as Neil Armstrong made history. It wasn't a very good film but the concept of a "single perfect act" stuck with me. A moment of pure bliss when I'd know that this once, I'm doing exactly what I want to be doing.

Forty was approaching and so was winter. It hit me: a single perfect act. Spending my



fortieth birthday on a tropical paradise in the South Pacific just sitting on the beach with one of those fruity drinks in my hand, watching some beautiful babes get a tan.

For years I'd dreamed of something like Rarotonga, largest of the Cook Islands, a smaller version of Tahiti, where everyone speaks English. I'd come into some money in a way I didn't want. Mom would have wanted me to spend it like this, as a birthday present to myself: a grand tour of the South Pacific, eastern Asia, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia and Japan!

But things didn't go quite as planned. The first problem was the itinerary. Going where I wanted when I wanted would cost five and a half grand for the airfare alone. Guam went, then Hawaii. Rarotonga, the jewel in the crown, went too.

Fiji, the travel agent said, would be an acceptable substitute. It's an archipelago of three hundred islands in the sun, which sounded perfect. Fiji it would be.

As the days till blastoff grew fewer, other things went wrong. The timing of the other

destinations wasn't working out. A business deal threatened to scuttle the whole thing. I was told that I had to get to eastern Asia via Auckland, New Zealand—the equivalent of going from Boston to Chicago via Mexico City. But I kept my eyes on the prize.

The day finally arrived. I got to the airport full of expectation. But the plane was delayed. We got off the ground four hours late. L.A. was pretty much ruined. Two days cut to one. Worse, the guy I was going to visit got the flu.

The plane arrived in Tahiti late, too. Just enough to miss the last bus into town. The taxi cost more than the hotel. I was going to go to Tetioroa, where Marlon Brando has his famous hideaway. I couldn't get a flight. But Tahiti wasn't a disaster by any means.

God intervened. Don't laugh. Sometimes things happen that you can't explain any other way. The island of Moorea is only about ten miles from Tahiti, and the beaches are better. I took a ferry over. At first my bad luck followed me. Moments after we shoved off the left shoe of my expensive sandals began to disintegrate. Things got more painful when I arrived. I made the mistake of sitting toward the back of the bus. The thing was so packed, I couldn't get out till halfway across the northern shore, at a place called the Cook Bay Resort. Here that my left sandal gave up the ghost.

Walking barefoot on hot asphalt and bemoaning my fate, I heard someone calling my name. It turned out to be a woman I had met the day before in L.A.. Oh, the trip was wonderful so far, she said, as we sat down at the bar. She'd met this fellow who gave her his spare room. In the morning, a friend of his gave her a free boat trip to the resort. I told her about the expensive taxi ride and Marlon Brando's island and showed her the pitiful remains of my sandal.

"It's God's will," she shrugged.

"Yeah, sure," I retorted.

"No, you must never joke about these things; the Lord will provide!"

"Uh, huh," I said and thought some heretical thoughts as she left.

I went on my way, trying to stick to the grass. Then I saw it. A sandal. Right in the middle of the road. It was a left sandal, and the thing fit perfectly. God, it seemed, had indeed provided. As I started hitching my way to the ferry dock, I got a ride immediately.

Then I actually got to Rarotonga! For an hour between planes.

The plane was never to leave Tahiti for Rarotonga—where I'd catch a connecting flight to Fiji—at 3:30 a.m. A few dozen people, including me, began camping at the airport at seven on the evening before the flight. The place was shut down, except for one snack bar. There we talked, played cards, drank, stared at each other, and tried to nap. The snack bar made out like a bandit.

We arrived at Raro at 5:30 a.m. As dawn

came up, the sky I saw a kind of wonder—one of the scariest sights of the trip. In the mountains, black against a blue-black sky, was the profile of Newt Gingrich! Other passengers concurred. So much for Rarotonga.

But after we took off for Fiji a true wonder appeared. The sea was calm as glass. Reflections of wispy clouds shone from its mirrored surface. A lone rain cloud, poured like a heart out. The sun glittered through this microstorm, producing a rainbow from cloud to sea. The scene seemed a greater miracle than the sandal had.

The main island of the Fiji archipelago is called Viti Levu. It's larger than the "big island" of Hawaii and roughly shaped like a lemon. Tourists tend to forget the first bit. I learned the hard way.

At the bank a clerk said it would take about three hours by car to get from the airport at Nadhi to the capital of Suva. I filed this away as I headed to the bus stop.

When I got on the bus I encountered some of the people I had camped with at the Tahiti airport. "We're going to Suva," one of them said. "Wanna come? It'll take about an hour."

"I heard it was three," I replied.

"I can live with that," another said.

It took seven. We had gotten on the local. We stopped at pretty much every village along the west and south coasts of Viti Levu. Most noticeable about the island is its weird vegetation. It looks like giant moss. And except for the palms the trees seem topped with cauliflower.

The second most noticeable thing is the people. Fiji is Melanesian, not Polynesian. Its people are descendants of the preindigenous people of Asia, the Papuans of New Guinea, and Australian Aborigines, and they look like West Indian blacks. It's Jamaica writ large.

After a much needed sixteen-hour nap, I went off to look at the city and make final preparations for perfect moment. The city of Suva is easy to get around in. Just follow the coastline and you can most of it on foot in around three hours. The market's fun. There are some okay bars, a multiplex cinema and a mediocre museum with a delightful verandah. There's one public beach, but I'm not sure if swimming is recommended.

But the best thing about Suva is the view. Walking along the seawall, you can see half a dozen islands and some extraordinary mountains. It was here that I came across an interesting phenomenon. The sunsets are different.

In the northern hemisphere, sunsets are all approximately the same. The sun cools down and the sky becomes orange and pink. You know the drill.

But in Suva the sun remains bright as noon even as it kisses the ocean. It burned my retina, and it was almost an hour before my sight was back to normal. When the sun is halfway into the ocean the sky turns for a short time as golden as a newly minted twenty-dollar piece.

Time was getting short now. It was B-minus-two-days, and my flight out of Nadhi Airport was the next day. That left time for the Manauca Islands, near enough to the airport and far enough away to create my moment.

The Manucas contain about twenty resorts, ranging from Daydream Island, which is really only a restaurant with a beach, to the ultra luxurious Yasawa Lodge, which costs U.S.\$450 a night for a single. I was looking for something cheap enough for my budget and

As the conversation faded into gibberish, I saw two absolute beauties oiling themselves down with suntan lotion. I slowly came to realize that this was indeed IT. This was what I had traveled almost ten thousand miles and spent almost three thousand dollars to experience.

swanky enough for the effect I wanted. The perfect spot was the one with the biggest advertising budget. A glorified sandspit called Beachcomber Island.

Beachcomber Island was invented by a rancher named Dan Costello, who would go out to the then-uninhabited isle to party with his friends. Around 1965, he bought the place and built a resort. The difference between Beachcomber and the others is that Costello decided to put a youth hostel among the U.S. \$250-a-night bungalows. But this is no ordinary youth hostel. One night at this place costs U.S.\$100. Fifty bucks for the room and fifty for the boatfare. This makes it the most expensive hostel in the world. (There's a nasty rumor that the most expensive is really the Hong Kong YMCA, at 110 pounds a night, but I checked. It's only fifteen.) But at Beachcomber's hostels you get to use all the facilities, and the bed comes with meals. All that's missing is a private room. I could live without that.

The bus from Suva made it with half an hour to spare. The just after my boat left the harbor, the heavens opened up. The rains stopped right after I checked in. I stepped onto the beach thinking I might just make it after all.

Beachcomber Island is a small place—twenty feet of beach girding a complex of plant life and bungalows. Ten minutes to circle the whole thing. You couldn't get lost if you tried (which I did). The largest spots on the island are the bar and the youth hostel. Just the

thing for spring break.

It was antipodal summer now. The place was full of Aussie and Kiwi Gen Xers lounging about and recovering from the storm. I introduced myself and explained the nature of my mission. Everyone was glad to help out. The only thing you had to pay for was booze, and everybody insisted on buying me drinks. Forty wouldn't be so bad after all.

We spent a lot of time at the Jacuzzi doing astronomical observations. The sunset at Beachcomber looked exactly the same as the one at Suva—daybright sun and golden sky. The clouds were fascinating too. Layers of them would scoot at high speed in all directions. We formed a scientific hypothesis to explain this phenomenon: "How the hell should I know? Pass me a beer!"

Dinner was barbecue and all-you-can-eat. Still in a scientific mood I decided to see how much that would be. People bought me more beers. We spent time trying to name the constellations of the southern sky, something nobody could do, except for the Southern Cross. The band was playing a Melanesian version of the Macarena as I headed off for bed.

Breakfast was at eight. Checkout was at ten, but I kept my stuff in a locker until it was time to leave for the boats. The snorkeling wasn't the best. But that was okay. I knew my dream moment would arrive.

The moment came just after lunch. We had returned to the bar, where we sat at a table overlooking the beach. We'd had a couple of beers (one of which I had unsuccessfully tried to pay for) when one of the gals, a fourth-year medical student went off to the bar and returned with some pink rum-and-citrus concoction with orange slices on top. "Here," she said, "try this."

I took a sip and turned to check the view. As the conversation faded into gibberish, I saw two absolute beauties oiling themselves down with suntan lotion. I slowly came to realize that this was indeed IT. This was what I had traveled almost ten thousand miles and spent almost three thousand dollars to experience.

A feeling of Zen-like calm came over me as I took another sip of the rum punch. Yeah, this is perfection. Bliss. Babes, beach, and booze. A single perfect moment resulting from a single perfect act. I had done it.

The spell was broken by a poke from a friend, who was heading back to the mainland. I saw that rain clouds were heading straight for the island. I knew something magical would be washed away forever in the coming downpour.

The rest of the afternoon was a letdown. I got on the boat back to Viti Levu not exactly depressed, but wistful. "Sad to go?" someone asked me. "No," I replied. "Just tired." The trip was only half over, and there'd be lots more wonderful experiences I'd hate to have missed. But nothing could quite match those ten minutes in Fiji. It couldn't get better than that.—ERIC LURIO

roam WITH A view

books

LOVELY PLANET JOURNEYS



Brief Encounters

stories of love, sex & travel

BRIEF ENCOUNTERS: STORIES OF LOVE, SEX AND TRAVEL

Lonely Planet Journeys

Brief Encounters: Stories of Love, Sex and Travel is neurotic and raw; the stories featured in this varied collection are about sanguine longing and hollow disappointment. And no one is sleeping in separate beds.

It's all about being young and daring (or desperate, as the case may be). Though each author's style is very distinct, these stories seem related in that none of the main characters seem to belong anywhere. Wherever they came from has ceased to matter, and they live purely in the moment.

Do not take the subtitle of this book too literally. The stories do not each feature "love, sex and travel". Some seem to highlight only one or two of these aspects. One, in particular, was only about sex. Did the fact that it took place in a motel make the segue into "travel"? What the book really wants to be about is adventure, about sinking into a lifestyle that is utterly new. If you get a thrill from phrases like "I had lunch near the hot springs on Hua Quing" and "...we left Cairo in a circle like a maze and drove north into the horizon of cypress, eucalyptus and olive trees", you will enjoy immersing yourself in this collection. Such passages make even the stories without sex sensual. There are tales included that offer

writers' fantasy ideas of: What would happen if you proposed to a stranger and they accepted? What is it like to live in the *gurdwaras* of Calcutta? To backpack in Prague? Foreign lands and sandy landscapes and exotic fruits fill these pages; several journeys are in this one book.

If a moral is to be found in this book, Sarah Wheeler summarized it in her short story "The End of the Bolster": "I had somehow absorbed the idea that traveling occurs in a separate moral universe, outside the confines of normal life. I know differently now." RANI LONG

GOLD BY THE INCH

Lawrence Chua

Grave Atlantic

As the narrator of Lawrence Chua's first novel journeys from New York and Paris to Bangkok to Malaysia, fragments of history and sex reveal stories of commerce and collapse. Throughout, the search for a romanticized home leads the narrator to strive for love where prostitution is the rule, to procure memories where silence prevails, and to engage in sexual exploits that push the limits of submission and possession. With cosmopolitan sensibility, Lawrence Chua flashes between apoplectic drug-induced frenzies, vignettes of development in decay, and honest yearning for fulfillment in a migratory world.

Refreshingly, *Gold by the Inch* exposes all that cropped from the borders of postcards of New York, Bangkok, and beyond. THOMAS ULDRICK

A FAR VALLEY: FOUR YEARS IN A JAPANESE VALLEY

Brian Moeran

Reprinted by Kodansha America, Inc., 1998

First published by Stanford University Press,

In *A Far Valley*, British anthropologist Brian Moeran chronicles the four years he spent in the Oni valley of Japan. He first went to the valley to work with, and write about, a community of potters. Circumstances compelled Moeran's book to become instead a study of the tension of being a perpetual outsider—of functioning in a culture not his own, and of struggling to become part of a place where he can never belong. With his Japanese wife and their two sons, Moeran tries to adapt to the rhythms and rules of life in a coun-



A FAR VALLEY Four Years in a Japanese Village



try village. This book documents both his adjustments and his ultimate failure. He cannot in the end fulfill his fantasy of living out his life in the valley. His struggle to buy a house according to the Japanese rules of negotiation fails, and when his son breaks his neck in a swimming accident at school, Moeran finds he cannot deal with the accident in the way other members of the community would. Added to the loss of his dream of a new life is the weight of a particular grief, that of betraying his calling by being unable to be "at one" with his community.

This reprint is valuable for returning this intimate, honest work to the public view, and for giving the reader an update on the survival of Moeran's son. Since his fieldwork was completed in the late 1970's and early 1980's, however, it would be helpful to know if Moeran returned to the valley and how it had changed. While some of the more particularly anthropological sections may bore the general reader, the work's glimpses into a different world and time, and the clear simplicity of Moeran's writing, will repay the reading. Further, in illuminating the struggles of the anthropologist, *A Far Valley* triumphs over ethnographies that ignore the inevitable distance between studier and studied. KIMBERLY DUKES

HULLABALOO IN THE GUAVA ORCHARD

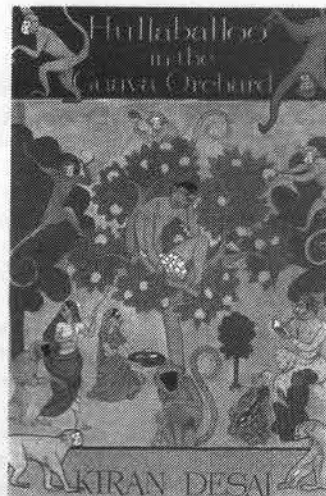
Kiran Desai

Grave Atlantic

If you're in your twenties, hate your job, and still live with a disapproving parent, you have a surprising amount in common with Sampath Chawla, the unlikely hero of twenty-six year old Kiran Desai's debut novel, *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*. Sampath, a disgruntled postal worker, lives in small-town India and spends his days reading other people's mail. When Sampath's boss fires him for exposing his rear end at a wedding party, Sampath's father becomes outraged. He demands that Sampath get a new job fast. But alas, Sampath doesn't want another job. He wants out. So he does what most drifting youngsters only fantasize about—he climbs a guava tree.

Sampath's ascent in the guava orchard marks where the novel becomes stranger, more surprising and magical. It is also where the book gains momentum. Villagers begin worshipping Sampath as a god. Pilgrims travel from afar to be touched by Sampath's toes. Even Sampath's enterprising father reconsiders his son's potential. Then, aided by a cast of impassioned eccentrics, events spin out-of-control. Monkeys turn alcoholic; an ice cream vendor swoons with love; Sampath's mother-turned-chef stocks the orchard hills for the ultimate ingredient to feed the guava deity. Always, the surprising eye of the storm is the deity himself, a dreamy-eyed Sampath frolicking in the trees.

While the novel's early chapters can stump impatient readers—I, for one, wanted Sampath in the tree much earlier—Desai's rich writing saves the book's somewhat slow start. Her social satire is funny and acute; her descriptions—whether of India or a fly (rubbing its "thin black hands together like a greedy business man") are fresh and believable; her characters appealing; and her language often po-



etic. And sure enough, soon as Sampath leaves ground, the ensuing pages also take off, resulting in a, uh, hullabaloo of a read. KENDRA HURLEY

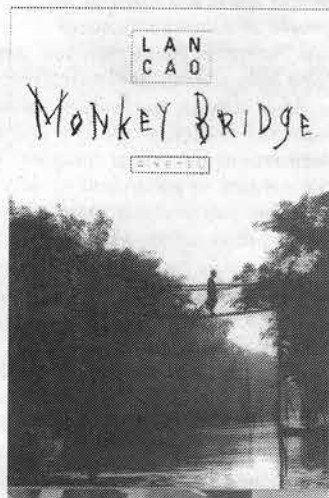
MONKEY BRIDGE

Lan Cao

Penguin Books

In *Monkey Bridge*, one of the first novels by a Vietnamese-American about the Vietnam War, Lan Cao explores notions of home. In doing so, she maps the exile world of loss and longing, hopelessness and hope, and examines honestly the desire to leave behind those one loves the most.

Mai Nguyen, the narrator, and her mother, Thanh, fled Vietnam just before the final blood-soaked days of the U.S. evacuation. Their relationship in a new country, and how it changes both of them, centers the novel. Mai becomes in some ways her mother's mother, translating Thanh's desires into acceptable American



paradigms and caring for her after a stroke.

The monkey bridge of the title is a "thin pole of bamboo no wider than a grown man's foot," used by landless Vietnamese peasants to cross rivers. As a young woman, Thanh floated across this frail bridge with ease. But as her daughter sees it, she refuses to adjust to a new reality in Falls Church, Virginia—an adjustment Mai finds almost as simple as her mother

finds crossing the bamboo pole.

The surprising revelations at the end of the book satisfy some questions and provoke others. All along, Thanh has offered her daughter a fairy-tale version of her life and magic ears. It's a story meant to be redemptive in creating a new karma for her daughter. Instead, the story leaves Mai longing to know the truth and struggling to bring her mother a happiness the truth would make impossible. When Thanh finally yields, the revelations seem so dramatic as to be unreal: a soap-opera ending to a tender and true story.

In *Monkey Bridge*, Lan Cao reveals an uncompromising vision of the brutalities of war and of family, without neglecting the beauties. Her honesty in examining everything Mai and her mother most want to forget makes the novel both compelling and moving. Perhaps the story might have more satisfying as a memoir: the everyday details of Vietnamese-American life are far more fascinating than the melodrama that ends the book. Still, Cao's subtle, luminous writing brings to vivid life the Nguyen's world in both Vietnam and the United States, and sweeps the reader into discovering, with Mai, that there is more than one way to be a stranger. KD

CENTRAL ASIAN PHRASEBOOK

Lonely Planet Books

Unless you're a polyglot with a flair for differentiating dialects, you don't want to be caught in Central Asia without a copy of Lonely Planet's *Central Asia Phrasebook* tucked securely in your back pocket. Covering six different languages as well as the ten you're likely to encounter along the Silk Road, this palm-sized reference book will help you find out if that bus you've been waiting for is ever going to arrive or explain that the toilet in your hotel room is blocked. For each language there is a brief introduction to the region in which it is used, as well as tips on pronunciation and helpful hints regarding transportation, lodging, emergencies, health care, food and shopping. And should you find yourself on a train in Kazakhstan unable to scratch that spot between your shoulder blades, simply turn to your neighbor, point at your back and say, "Mening qyshu." You won't be disappointed. CHRISTOPHER HARRALL

LONELY PLANET— NEW YORK CITY

David Ellis

Lonely Planet, New York, 1997

A Western backpacker climbing the steps of Kathmandu's Swayambunath or threading through the narrow alleyways of Varanasi almost always clutches a tattered Lonely Planet guide. Its reputation as an indispensable guide for young and low-budget travelers is the reason that the first New York City edition is somewhat of a disappointment.

Residents claim you can find anything in New York City. While no guidebook can be comprehensive, 9½ tiny pages can't begin to cover shopping in the largest, most energetic city in the U.S. The guide also skimps on cheap options, especially those for restaurants. Pricely it can be, but New York City also offers a vast number of eateries that would help the budget traveler to stay a little longer.

These gripes aside, the information *Lonely Planet New York* does offer is excellent, honest, and accurate. The guide's even coverage of the attractions of the outer boroughs and New Jersey may even entice visitors into an out-of-the-common-way day trip. Also particularly helpful are the 20-page map section and articles on internet sites, diners, and bars.

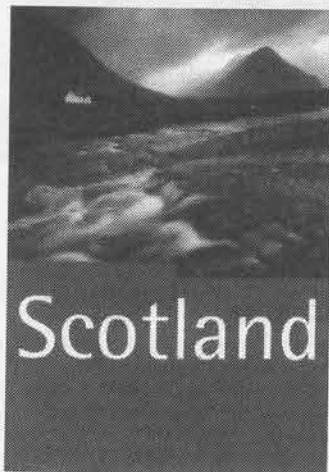
David Ellis is also a refreshingly opinionated guide. A longtime New York resident, he skewers the city's eating-out customs, badmouths theme restaurants, and emphatically disapproves of Harlem bus tours ("if you're too scared to go on your own, stay in Midtown"). KD

THE ROUGH GUIDE TO SCOTLAND

Rough Guides/Penguin

The editors of the updated third edition of *The Rough Guide to Scotland* trumpet its prominent new feature: twelve pages of color photographs of hills, lochs and harbors. While the photographs are indeed beautiful, any prospective visitor to Scotland can conjure up similar images in his or her head. What makes this guidebook truly valuable is its wealth of information, imparted with wit, whimsy and intelligence. Its forthright native writers don't hesitate to brand sites bleak, forlorn or even superfluous. The guide explains how *simmer dim* twilight makes Shetland summers so special, what ghosts live in which rooms of which castles, and where to find everything from world-class waves to whiskey to remote mountain paths.

Chapters on Scottish history and culture allow the reader to put sites in context. Frequent, detailed maps accompanying relevant sections prevent repeated flipping to the back of the book. A helpful section in the back of the book offers the rudiments of Gaelic grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary, while a Scottish glossary solves the mystery of the sport of *munro bagging*. Attention to the needs of a wide range of travelers in every budget and interest category, as well as special sections of festivals and contemporary music, further enrich the guide. In addition, *The Rough Guide's* small, narrow font, printed on lightweight newsprint, allows for a lot of information for its weight.



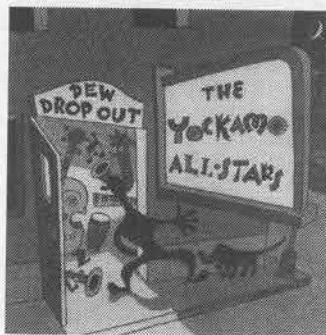
recordings

ROCK AND ROLL

Various Artists

Jungle Sky

An eclectic compilation of percussion based music and creative sampling, *Rock and Roll*, a recent double CD released by Jungle Sky Records is pushing the envelope of contemporary jungle. With songs like "The Return of Shaft," slightly reminiscent of the Beastie Boys and "God is a Lobster," which samples freely from Rock Lobster by the B-52's, the roots of this mix grow deep and wide. It's a sure bet for anyone with a "jones" for choppy bass. CH



DEW DROP OUT

The Yockamo All-Stars

Hannibal

Hannibal Dew Drop Out is an energetic, fun recording of New Orleans-style rhythm and blues. The impeccable arrangement and skilled musicians make this album a pleasure, but more importantly, The Yockamo All-Stars spice sometimes familiar refrains with grooving, good-time attitude. The liveliest tracks are the strongest, for instance, their delightfully danceable renditions of "Ain't Got No Home" and "Bhang Bhang."

The All-Stars seem to rein in their exuberance on some tracks, leaving the listener wishing at times that they let themselves go wild on the whole album. However, even the more subdued tracks, like the nostalgic "Falling in Love," are sincere. The All-Stars don't want to make merely toe-tapping, conversational bar jazz; these top players are bent on getting their audience to their feet. On most of the album, if you know how to swing, you'll be swinging. If you don't, and you're home alone, play this album and tackle some big job you've been postponing—refinish your floors or paint the living room. KD

REFUGE

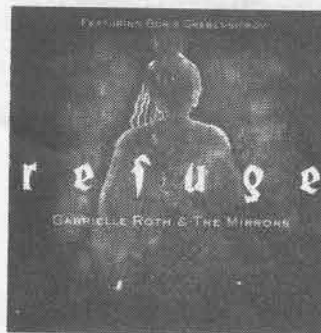
Gabrielle Roth and the Mirrors

featuring Boris Grebenshikov

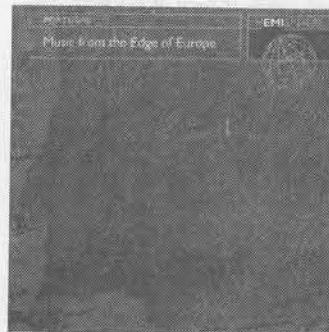
Raven

On *Refuge*, Gabrielle Roth and the Mirrors provide a mostly percussive backbone for Tibetan Buddhist chants sung by Russian pop star Boris Grebenshikov. This album fits snugly into the comfortable yet vague niche of ambient "tribal" music Roth and the Mirrors have occupied in the past, but with the addition of the Tibetan connection and the promise of donating all royalties to "Tibetan causes."

Roth and her husband, percussionist Robert Ansell, founded Raven Recordings (which produced this album) partly to



make music to use in the cathartic movement and ritual theater workshops she teaches; Roth also writes books and makes exercise videos. Grebenshikov, often called "Russia's Lennon" by the foreign press, spent 26 years making illegal rock records with the band Aquarium. A practicing Buddhist, he asked his teachers for permission before agreeing to do this album. Roth and the Mirrors' music, which features such unexpected instruments as congas, an accordion, and a rainstick, is inventive and surprising, especially in combination with Grebenshikov's strong, evocative voice. The seven-song album they've made together does inspire a contemplative mood, and Grebenshikov's resonant chanting is somehow hypnotically settling. However, while *Refuge* is a good album, for real Tibetan chants, why not listen to one of the excellent recordings of the multiphonic monks of Gyuto monastery, who can sing three notes at once? KD



PORTUGAL: MUSIC FROM THE EDGE OF EUROPE

Various

Hemisphere/Capitol

Even if you don't understand the Portuguese lyrics, the instruments and voices on this album stir up longings for things long forgotten and maybe unidentifiable. This near-inexpressible feeling is part of what is called *saudade* in Portuguese: a sweet melancholy that swells the heart with the awesome largeness of existence. The distilled sense of longing evident in most of these songs calls forth remembered sorrow and remembered joy, and marks them as particularly Portuguese.

The diversity of music on this compilation allows a broad view of contemporary Portuguese music. On "Cantiga da Ceifa" ("Song of the Harvest"), Lua Extravagante demonstrates the influence of the regional music of Alentejo, home of brothers Vitorino (also featured as a solo performer) and Janita Salome, founders of

the group. This traditional music resembles Welsh choral traditions, focusing on polyphonic unison singing by large choruses. At times the song sounds like the buzzing of bees, almost jarring to the American ear, yet the combination of voices is moving and beautiful. The album also offers an introduction to other intriguing and popular performers: once you get a taste of the precise playing of Carlos Paredes on the *guitarra portuguesa* (a pear-shaped guitar with steel strings), the surprisingly rich concertina music of Danças Ocultas, or Madreus' mix of chamber music and fado, you may want more. The voices on this album are stunning, particularly the women's voices: from the *fados* of the fabled Amalia Rodrigues to the searing voices of Né Ladeiras and Teresa Salgueiro (of Madreus).

Portugal: Music from the Edge of Europe is an excellent introduction to the earthy, emotional music of Portugal. More than that, it may introduce you to some artists you'll love. KD

BEAUTIFUL WASTELAND

Capercaille

Survival

Capercaille has been making innovative albums since 1984, and 1997's *Beautiful Wasteland*, released after a two-year hiatus, is a gorgeous example. You may recognize the distinctive sound of this Scottish folk-pop group from the film *Rob Roy*, which starred Liam Neeson and featured vocalist Karen Matheson singing a Gaelic lament. The album begins with the appealing "M'ionam" and unfolds in a surprising, layered shimmer. While the Gaelic lyrics of most of the tracks may leave the American listener lost, the soaring clarity of Matheson's voice invites fantastic imaginings of possible meanings. The deft layering and bouncy sound of songs like "Hebridean Hale-Bopp," a medley of three *puirt-a-beuls*, further unsettle the listener's expectations of Celtic sound. With *Beautiful Wasteland*, Capercaille continues to interpret the possibilities of Celtic music with a contemporary and international sensibility, adding catchy pop threads and skillfully interweaving African and Latin rhythms. Here, the techno influence of Calum Malcolm (Prefab Sprout, Blue Nile), and the voices of Paloma Loribo and Piruchi Apo (of the group Sibeda, from Guinea in North Africa) on two tracks also aid the group in transgressing the limits of both traditional Celtic music and the category of "world music." KD

THE DISCOTECA COLLECTION: MISSÃO DE PESQUISAS FOLCLÓRICAS

L.H. CORRÊA DE AZEVEDO:
MUSIC OF CEARÁ AND MINAS
GERAIS

Rykodisc

These two collections of historical field recordings are co-produced by Alan Jabbour, Director of the American Folklife Center, and Mickey Hart, once member of the Grateful Dead. Both collections are culled from numerous hours of restored and re-mastered source masters, so the sound quality is excellent. Both also in-

clude detailed liner notes in Portuguese and English by ethnomusicologist Morton Marks. For instance, on the first title, *Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas* (Folklore Research Mission), Marks offers not only the history of the Mission, but an illuminating description of various religions, dances and instruments, that enriches the listening experience.

In 1938, the Discoteca Pública Municipal (Municipal Public Recordings Collection) in São Paulo sponsored a team to document the many local cultures of north and northeastern Brazil: Portuguese, Afro-Brazilian, and Amerindian. Much of the music on *Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas* accompanied ritual, dramatic, or social dances. The minimal instrumentation (including strings, shakers, drums, and rattles) is overshadowed by the real magic in the voices of worshippers. The diversity of music on this album also gives the listener some insight into the geography of religions in Brazil.

In the early 1940's, Luis Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo recorded the music of Ceará and Minas Gerais as part of his ambitious plan to plot the "other" music of Brazil. He sought to document other, more local genres of music. The performers he recorded in north and central Brazil used not just drum and guitar but more unexpected instruments like bells, wooden boxes and handclaps. His



recordings demonstrate the complicated connections between cultures at the time, and illuminate continuities between religious and popular song. The songs on this album encompass the waltz, Afro-Brazilian professional dances, and *viçungos*, work-songs. Corrêa de Azevedo made these recordings at a time when, metaphorically and unusually, Carmen Miranda and Bing Crosby samba'd together. Brazilian President Getulio Vargas had rescinded his pledge of neutrality after Germany sank five Brazilian ships in 1942. Walt Disney organized a goodwill tour of Latin America, and Brazilian dance numbers surfaced in Hollywood movies. Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal, Good Neighbor" policy also influenced the cooperation between Brazilian musicologists and the Archive of American Folk-Song at Washington's The Library of Congress, which lent Corrêa de Azevedo the equipment to begin this set of folk recordings.

Clearly, the cooperation between the United States and Brazil was not the only element that made these recordings possible. The '30s and early '40s in Brazil saw a surge in nationalism and a profound pride

and interest in what constituted Brazilian culture. Scholars devoted themselves to studying Afro-Brazilian culture. Important composers sought to incorporate elements of traditional melodies and rhythms. At the time, these recordings helped fulfil only the national interest in Brazilian culture and provided a treasure trove of material on various cultures and musics of different Brazilian states. They are still valuable and enjoyable today, offering a rich sense of how this music has surfaced in and influenced popular music in the half century since they were recorded. KD

JOURNEY BETWEEN

Baka Beyond

Hannibal

Martin Cradick and Su Hart, the principal original members of Baka Beyond, are husband and wife musicians who travel in part to glean songs and musical traditions from other cultures (see "Global Sampling" feature in this issue—Ed.) After the 1992 breakup of Outback, the group composed of Cradick and Graham Wiggins (also known as Dr. Didg), Cradick and Hart returned to the Congo-Cameroon border to live with the Baka people who originally inspired the successful albums *Spirit of the Forest* and *The Meeting Pool*, as well as a wonderful companion album of field recordings.

While neither as compulsively listenable nor as immediately likable as Outback's albums (in particular, 1991's *Baka*), *Journey Between* grows on the listener. Here, Cradick and Hart have made an album for a different mood: mostly wistful and moody, with mysterious vocals. Multiple listens offer a richer understanding of Baka Beyond's offerings. Seemingly contradictory impulses lend interest to various tracks. For instance, on "Mbe," lively percussion flirts with the more melancholy violin and flute. The jaunty "Konti" and the merry "Queen of Ngorongoro," with its Breton-influenced fiddling, ask for foot-stamping participation. The rich layered sounds combine with haunting vocals for the memorable "Mountain Song."

Baka Beyond started out with Cradick, Hart, ex-Outback violinist Paddy Le Mercier, and members of the Baka tribe who lived with Cradick. Since then, the group has expanded to include musicians with Senegalese, Gaelic, and Swahili influences; for this album, the Ghanaian band Kaktitsi contributed the percussion which holds the album together. KD

CIRCLE OF THE SUN

Aine Minogue

1998 RCA Victor

According to legend, the Thuatha-De-Danaans, wandering harpist-bards who preserved histories in their songs, brought the harp to Ireland. Born in County Tipperary, Ireland, Celtic harpist and vocalist Aine Minogue interprets their tradition with an emphasis on natural rhythms and their circularity. She builds *Circle of the Sun*, her lyrical second album, around the changing seasons, using a traditional Gaelic calendar. This gives *Circle of the Sun* an almost magical quality of seeming rooted in the past yet

still captivating to a contemporary audience.

Though she now lives to New England, Minogue still focuses on the traditional music of Ireland, and enriches her contemporary interpretations with references to Irish poetry and mythology.

Joy and sorrow mingle in these songs, expressed by Minogue's clear voice and the instrumentation, which includes not only the expected harp and fiddle, but whistles and even a didgeridoo. The tracks, chosen to accompany the traditions and celebrations of a year in the Irish countryside, further reflect Minogue's debt to the tradition of the Thuatha-De-Danaans, who played three types of music: *goltraí* (sad), *geantraí* (happy), and *suantraí* (sleep). *Circle of the Sun* offers all three types. The versatile sound of the harp strings on this album, complemented by Minogue's silky voice, allow the tracks to vary from the lush, precise "The Butterfly" or the fragile "A Winter Story" to country dance songs, like the charming celebration of brandy, "Ó Boro Braindí Braindí," sung for the month of the vine harvest. The listener will want to sing along not just with the English lyrics of the hummable paean to Pan, "Fill It to the Brim," but with the merrier wedding songs in Gaelic too. KD

DOUBLE BARREL

Jazz Jamaica

1998 Hannibal Records

Back in 1991, Jazz Warrior double bassist Gary Crosby founded the group Jazz Jamaica. He wanted two things: to recapture in some measure the spirit of the early days of 60's ska, and to enliven the music further by fusing it with jazz, reggae and mento. He collected some of the best jazz, reggae, and ska musicians in the world—all with amazing musical pedigrees and backgrounds. The unique sound of these skilled performers makes Jazz Jamaica one of the world's most loved "skazz" bands, hugely popular on the international festival circuit.

Jazz Jamaica's precise, distinct take on familiar songs intrigues. The music is



smart, engaging and appealing, and though not as charismatic as the band live, would be perfect music for a relaxed gathering.

A while ago, Jazz Jamaica contributed a track to *Regatta Mondatta: A Reggae Tribute to the Police*. With *Double Barrel*, they go farther with an all-tribute album, remaking beloved songs from different musical worlds—jazz, pop, ska—with instrumental skazz flair. The playful remakes from "Monkey Man" to "Walk on By" make *Double Barrel* fun and funky from beginning to end. KD

Let's start out this column with a good groove—and fortunately the summer of '98 delivers the heat (please don't blame it on El Niño). There's no better way to begin than with that ultra-funky and talented trio **Medeski, Martin & Wood**, who've managed to elevate the groove to new levels on *A Go Go* (Verve), their



smokin' Grant Greene-esque collaboration with guitarist John Scofield. This is newschool rhythm that'll impress your jazz- and beat-heads alike and will set your next barbeque on fire...Steppin' up on the good foot are New York's **Groove Collective**, who don't disappoint on *Dance of the Drunken Master* (Shanachie). It's that live jam thing they got goin' on, with a dash of this and that, making up fourteen tracks of pure jazzy grooves that cover the rhythm map. If you can't check them live, this'll do quite fine...Over in left court is that wacked-out keyboard maestro, **Money Mark**, feeding our heads with a smorgasbord of sounds on *Third Version* (London). This former Beastie Boys collaborator soaks up and reconfigures out the sounds of eras gone by, including funk, electro, hip hop, and Squeeze-like ballads...**Big Muff's Music From The Aural Exciter** (Snapt) is a quirky and funky jam for that next summer pool party. It's high energy and sexy funkiness. Groove Collective's Itaal Shur is the man behind the muff—if you don't know the name already, then look out for it...**DJ Andy Smith's** mix-CD, *The Document* (MoWax), is an outstanding integration of dance-music genres. Portishead's travelling DJ lays down an eclectic but seamless mix of everything from Marvin Gaye and Grandmaster Flash to Peggy Lee...On the Latin groove, two of Cuba's superstars have new CDs. Overnight sensation **Manolin's** slick and sexy *De Buena Fe* (Metro Blue) is Cuban salsa that stands on strong arrangements and sincere lyrics—"Que le illeque mi mano (Mami...ya tengo amigos en Miami." **Los Van Van's** (Metro Blue) *Esto Te Pone La Cabeza Mala* is another strong offering of *songo* from Cuba's #1 dance band. Tight and delicious arrangements keep this CD churning from the start...for a more jazz inflected, but no less grooving sound, legendary Cuban pianist **Chucho Valdés' Bele Bele** (Blue Note) is a varied selection of Cuban classics ("Son Montuno," "Tres Lindas Cubanas" and "El Cumbanchero"), along with new Valdés arrangements. Simply an astounding recording...For those with crazy feet the compilation *¡Que Rico!* (Hannibal) will keep the floor moving with "hot stuff" from the likes of **Alfredo Rodríguez**, Jesús Alemañy's *¡Cubanismo!*, and others...**King Sunny Ade's Odu** (Mesa/Atlantic) is another fine selection of the best in African *juju* rhythms, recorded in a live setting, allowing Ade's songs to build momentum and breadth...**Martyn Bennett's Bothy Culture** (Rykodisc) is Scottish triphop that'll change your idea of what to expect from that country...and for some fabulous Brazilian arrangements, **Daniel Taubkin's Brazil** (Blue Jackel) delivers a lush, varied and exotic tribute to that country's natural beauty. The perfect companion to that late summer eve...for early mornings **Lisa Gerard and Pieter Bourke's Duality** (4AD) is a deep and tranquil collaboration that will put you in that special place...**Soulfood's Breath** (Rykodisc) is a double CD of sampled Native American chanting, mixed with electronic soundscapes and tribal percussion. Perfect for that morning tea...and finally two gorgeous flamenco recordings from the 1950's: **El Niño de Ronda's The Real Flamenco** and **Montoya, de Alicante & Flamenco Ensemble's Flamenco Fire** (Tradition) will keep your soul burning and your spirit alive... PAUL THOMPSON



King Sunny Ade

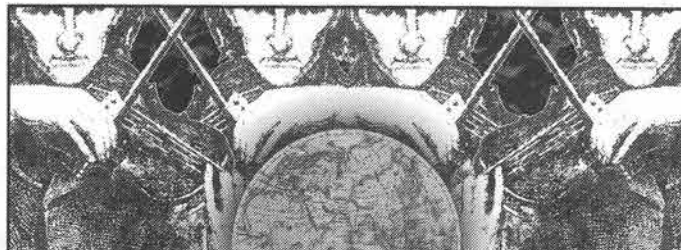


Martyn Bennett

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Lisa Gerard & Pieter Bourke



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The Tourism Paradox

Rethinking tourism as a tool for change and empowerment

Over the past few decades, the world has truly shrunk, in a large part because of tourism. As citizens of the global North, we can fly to Rio de Janeiro tomorrow and float down the Amazon the day after. Our ability to see the world close up has made us more concerned about international problems. News about environmental threats to the rain forests, the plight of the people who live there, human rights abuses around the world, and the increasing poverty and economic gaps between citizens reach us speedily each day. Issues like the uncontrolled political power of transnational corporations and the destruction of the planet have become central in many of our lives. Yet in some ways the rapid rate at which information is being thrown at us makes it almost too much to comprehend. We feel overwhelmed, sometimes jaded, by the surplus of information. We see the problems but remain unsure how to effect change.

Numerous "alternative" types of tourism are evolving, and the real danger is that travelers will simply consume these new products, places, and peoples without recognizing the urgent need for a critical reevaluation of global tourism and their participation in it. To rethink tourism is to challenge the travel industry at every level, including the booming new forms of travel, which, even if well intended, have many of the same detrimental effects as conventional tourism. Olivier Ponillon, a tourism activist who works in Indonesia, warns, "Stop looking for alternatives or technical solutions to tourism. When you scream ecotourism, agritourism, and alternative tourism, it makes people forget to look at what is wrong with tourism."

In rethinking tourism, we must analyze the role we tourists play in promoting current destructive practices. With pressure, the industry can be reshaped so that profits from tourism are distributed more equitably. We must reduce consumption and respect natural limits rather than merely think "green." Technology is not neutral but interacts with society and nature. It is essential to replace environmentally and socially obsolete high technology with more appropriate, less-consuming, and traditional technologies.

We need to take a hard look at the travel industry, at the self-exploitation of communities, and the roles we play as individuals. This inner journey of reevaluation won't be easy, but it is essential.

So where do we start? With ourselves. We can read, learn, make personal changes, be more involved in our own communities, pressure governments and corporations, denounce exploitation, change policies, and investigate the global forces transforming our lives. We can discuss, educate, and organize.

You and I are tourists, even if we are traveling to learn about or change the world. Unless we are willing to stay at home, reject the transportation systems, communication lines, and technologies and the tremendous amount of resources that we consume each time we travel, we need to understand not only our participation in the promotion of the global tourism industry but also its importance and potential as a tool for change. Tourism can raise awareness of and action for the global nature of problems like poverty, pollution, and cultural erosion. Close human relationships and activities liberated from preoccupations with profits and bottom lines are crucial to this awareness.

In the past three decades, there has been a return to social responsibility and social idealism. This value shift is reflected to a small degree in the tourism industry (in the tourism-for-peace movement, for example) in the cross-cultural impact a travel experience has for both a visitor and the communities visited. The trend in travel is for more tourists and locals in alliance with schools, NGOs, religious groups, the media, cities, and governments to work to stop the paving of paradise.

Tourism has become politicized within global institutions, nations, communities, industry, the environment, and within almost all of us, whether we are tourists or person affected by tourism in their community. The field begs for more research, monitoring, linking, policymaking, and change. Meanwhile, global tourism is growing at a phenomenal rate. There is an urgent need to rethink

tourism and ecotravel and stop the paving of paradise. Throughout the world, among different cultures and classes, people are looking for self-determination. The world as we are now born into and the society we know measures humans in terms of their economic worth. Human potential is enormous and largely unrealized. Western-style capitalism and consumerism have undermined the possibility for people to make their own choices about their lives and to have opportunities for their futures. Tourism continues to play a tremendous role in spreading the corporate empire. However, it is an industry that is different from many others. One of its primary functions is to develop human relationships. I see that as a chance to rethink and change. *That would be paradise.*—DEBORAH MCLAREN

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Excerpted from Rethinking Tourism and Ecotravel (Kumarian Press), by Deborah McLaren. The book can be ordered through Kumarian Press, 14 Oakwood Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06119. Call toll free 800-289-2664 or fax 860-233-6072. Internet orders at www.kpbooks.com

Deborah McLaren is the Director of the Rethinking Tourism Project, a non-profit education and networking project that supports Indigenous self-development.



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