



Issue #20 / #21

"I live the life!"

Spring 1999

## Costello wins a Grammy!

**"I Still Have That Other Girl" wins for Pop Collaboration With Vocals**

LOS ANGELES - On February 24, Elvis Costello won his first Grammy Award and fulfilled his prediction of "kicking Celine Dion's ass" as he and Burt Bacharach took home trophies for their "single release" from *Painted From Memory*. Both were in attendance for the ceremonies although their award was presented prior to the televised portion of the event. While accepting the award, Burt thanked "everybody that's left at the label" referring to the recent cutbacks as



result of the recent Universal / Polygram merger.

After receiving their award, both appeared on a pre-awards show on the E! cable channel. Burt said: "It's very gratifying winning this with Elvis and having this acknowledge and validate our work. It's great." Said Elvis: "It shows that the story is getting through to people. It's an exciting moment."

Costello was also a participant in another Grammy winner as The Chieftains' *Long Journey Home* won for Best Traditional Folk Album (EC sang and co-wrote the title track.) Although not seen on the awards show itself, EC appeared on Grammy specials on several cable channels. He also told *USA Today* that "he and Burt Bacharach made a record yesterday. A version of 'I'll Never Fall in Love Again' for *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*. It was great to sit at the piano and write music together." The soundtrack is released June 1 and the film opens June 11.

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## Elvis & Steve On Tour

HAVING JUST COMPLETED A 17-DATE TOUR OF THE FAR EAST, interrupted by EC's sudden illness, Elvis Costello and Steve Nieve kicked-off "The Lonely World Tour" on April 12 at the Carre Theatre in Amsterdam. Apart from their February 1998 tour of Italy and some scattered dates in Scandinavia, this marked the first full-fledged European tour for the duo. And outside of their performance at 1995's Meltdown festival, it also was their first appearance together in the United Kingdom.

As in the Far East, fans got to hear *Painted From Memory* tracks in sparse C&N arrangements. While clinging to expected favourites, a few old songs however were brought out for their first C&N treatment (such as "Little Triggers", "Rocking Horse Road" and "Brilliant Mistake"). A new C&N composition entitled "You Lie Sweetly" was also premiered. Shows in Rome (injured hand) and Frankfurt (poor sales) were cancelled and, in general, European fans complained about high ticket prices. Ron Sexsmith opened the European dates and he and Elvis performed a duet of "Everyday I Write the Book" at the Berlin show.

Prior to the start of the tour, Elvis appeared along with Paul McCartney and The Pretenders at the April 10 *Here, There and Everywhere - A Concert for Linda* tribute to Linda McCartney at London's Royal Albert Hall. (See *On The Beat* for more.)

Following their 18 dates in Europe, Elvis and Steve returned to North America where they previously toured together in 1996. Playing this time in small theatres (including EC's first visit to Las Vegas), Elvis is also one of the feature artists at the Guinness Fleadh festival. This four-city Irish beer and music fest will play to large crowds and also features Van Morrison; Shane McGowan, Lucinda Williams and a host of others.

After North America, the duo returns to Europe where they will play some summer festivals. All tour dates can be found in *On The Beat* on page 34. Full first-hand coverage comes next issue.

# LIP SERVICE

From The Editor

I LOVE NEW YORK. After spending my first 24 years growing up in the shadows of the greatest city in the world, I was fortunate that my business career brought me back to the Big Apple on a rather regular basis. I have always said that no matter what your passion is in life, New York City offers you the ultimate opportunity to pursue that passion. For me, that ranged from hearing live music to buying hard-to-find CDs, bootlegs or the latest UK music mags.

While living in San Antonio, I had a business associate whose son-in-law was a big muckety-muck at MTV. Although at this point, the channel had drifted far from my musical tastes, in April 1994, I was able to seek a favor that would be conveniently coinciding with a business trip to the City.

*"Welcome to New York! Here's your ticket to tonight's Tony Bennett Unplugged taping. You should get to Sony Studios at 6:15 or so. They should start letting people in around 6:30 but I'm sure it's going to be a mob scene... this has turned into a hot ticket!"* So read the letter accompanying the ticket that MTV had delivered to my hotel. Boy, did I feel important! I was fortunate to have read about the show in *USA Today* and was truly grateful for this opportunity to see EC, although it would only be for a single song.

I didn't waste any time and got to the studio on West 54th Street (now the home of *Sessions at West 54th*) on time to be first in line. There I saw Tony arrive and I also snuck a peak at the guest list where I spotted EC's name, thus dispelling any doubt I had about his appearance. We were soon led inside and seated quickly by ushers. I got a spot behind the stage that would ultimately find me in view both on MTV and on the CD jacket!

While walking in I spotted actor Michael McKean of Spinal Tap fame. Oddly enough, he had just recently portrayed EC in a *Saturday Night Live* "We Are the World"-type parody of the Clinton/Whitewater scandal. I jokingly asked him if he would be playing EC tonight rather than the real one! I also sighted Elvis and his wife seated directly across from me on the other side of the stage where they sat to watch Tony's hour-long set.

It was then time for the guest segment of the show where k.d. lang, Elvis, Evan Dando (Lemonheads) and J. Mascis (Dinosaur, Jr.) would appear with Tony. Although the papers had said they would be doing "My Funny Valentine", EC and Tony opted for the more duet-friendly "They Can't Take That Away From Me." From my position, I was even able to follow along with the lyrics on the giant Teleprompter in the rear of the studio. A nice performance, one take and it was over.

As I was leaving I managed to spot Elvis and made my way over to congratulate him. With the *Brutal Youth* promotion gearing up, I asked him if he would be doing any radio appearances, like he had been doing recently in Europe. He said no as he and the Attractions would be getting right on with their tour rehearsals. Well, he could have at

least told me that he and Tony would later that evening be appearing on *Modern Rock Live*. A tape of their interview still has yet to find its way into my archives!

On the walk back to my hotel, I recall picking up *Billboard* magazine which was running a piece on *Brutal Youth*. Back then this was a treat as *Billboard* was nowhere to be found in San Antonio. Now, in Nashville, I can even find it in the supermarket!



<http://come.to/beyond-belief>

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Japanese reader Masahiro Yoshida with Elvis during the 1996 All This Useless Beauty tour of Japan.



## To The Editor

### WE THOUGHT IT WAS A SONG

"Beyond Belief!!" is both trademarked and copyrighted in the EEC and United States by Tintagel U.K. Ltd. "Beyond Belief!!" and its spin off "Would You Believe It?" has been a successful television series in the United States as well as internationally, airing first on Nickelodeon, 1992-94, then The Discovery Channel 1995 - present. "Beyond Belief!!" is also the basis for a series of books, the first of which was published in the U.K. by Random House (1993), under the Stanley Paul imprint. Use of "Beyond Belief!!" as a trademark or title is an infringement of Tintagel's rights. Please contact Jenny Paschall or Ron Lyon in the States (Eastern Standard Time) to discuss this matter. Sincerely,

**Jenny Paschall, Managing Director  
Tintagel U.K. Ltd.**

*We're happy to report that this matter was quickly resolved... after we agreed to change our name to "Fish 'n Chip Paper" and Elvis agreed to re-title his song ... just kidding!*

### OUR HAPPY STAFF

The new issue just arrived and all I can say is WOW! Very nice job, as always. (and I'm not just talking about my contribution [smile]). Really, it's an honor to be associated with *Beyond Belief*. The always-great writing just keeps getting better and better from you, Dave, Alfonso, and Tony. Your editorial cracked me up because I saw my "collecting" self in all your obsessive details. My girlfriend can't understand it, though she's a bibliophile and has more books than I do CDs. Anytime I can contribute you let me know. Here's hoping that Elvis and Steve tour the states this summer so I get the chance. Cheers.

**Tom DeMarchi, Vestal, NY (USA)**

### PLEASE DON'T SUE US!

Arrived home today with a serious case of the post-vacation blues (poor me, I know) and mixed in with the various bills and junk mail was another exciting issue of *Beyond Belief*. Although I've only leafed through it, it looks like another great one. AND a picture I took of Paul "Loki" Cahill at Virgin Records is prominently featured on page 2. (No photo credit Mike, you will be hearing from Jacksons, Monk and Rowe soon!) Great work once again Mike and contributors. It's always my favorite piece of mail.

**Mario Artecona, Miami, FL (USA)**

### A RANDY COLLECTOR

Just wanted to say how impressed I am with the newest issue of *Beyond Belief*. I really enjoyed your opening letter regarding collecting. As Randy Newman's archivist, and

an ex-Beatles fanatic/collector, I can certainly relate to your plight. Collecting is a passion, but one deeply associated with a great love of music. I was fortunate enough to get to know Randy personally, something I probably could have never done with the Fab Four. Randy's music/career takes up a great deal of my time, but I love it. The stacks of Randy-shit just keep getting bigger every week.

I often wish I could put together a newsletter of the class and magnitude that you fellows have, but I don't see it in my future. I do have a wonderful bunch of Little Criminals at randynewman.com that help me, and inspire me to continue my zealous pursuits, but a newsletter is such a well documented, lasting form.

I have three songwriters up on my pedestal, and they are: Randy, Declan, and Tom Waits. There are certainly many great songwriters, but for my money, they are kings. Your work for Declan is necessary and extremely important, in that non-musical, anal retentive sort of way, and I salute you guys for doing it. Keep up the good work, and I look forward to future issues, and some past issues I have to order from you as well.

**Gary Norris, Shoreline, WA (USA)  
Randy Newman Archivist and Collector**

### OBSCURE HECKLE

Thank you for the recent mention in BB17. Things like that really do give us a boost as a lot of what we are doing involves rejection and disappointment. The recent EC & Burt concert at the Royal Festival Hall was fantastic. When it's a new set-up like that you never know what to expect. It turned out to be one of those nights when I was into everything. I attended the show with my sister and just before 'Veronica' she bellowed out "Collins & Tall!" which is an obscure heckle by any standards. EC looked pretty confused. He was probably wondering when he had ever written a song with a title anything like that!

**Trevor Tall, 4 Misbourne Drive,  
Great Missenden, HP16 0BL (England)**  
*Trevor is one half of the duo Collins & Tall whose highly recommended CD Filthy Con is still available for a paltry £6 (UK) or £7 (elsewhere) from the address above.*

### THE LONG HONEYMOON

We spent a week in "that Spanish Citadel" (Toledo) on our honeymoon. It was oppressively hot in a hotel with no swimming pool or air conditioning. El Greco couldn't maintain our interest for a full week and the sight of all those silver swords proved tiresome, to say the least. Is Ohio less interesting? God knows! But I do like to hear Elvis playing with American place names in this track and "My Dark Life".

**Andrew Moorhouse, Rochdale (England)**

### EC WANTED IN SIBERIA

Hello from far Russian Siberia. I've learned about your magazine from an advert in *Q* and decided to write hoping you can help me a bit. I'm a 36 year-old married father of two children working as a PC operator in a local government office. I'm a big fan of Elvis Costello's music. I'm trying to collect some of my favourite CD albums but it's almost impossible in this country. Even if you find them, which is very rare, the prices are so high that your hair goes up to the sky! I wonder if you or any of your readers have old used/second hand Costello CDs which they no longer require? I would like to be able to pay something for them but unfortunately my monthly salary is equal to \$50 or so in value so my family can't afford for me to spend money on CDs. Trading is also difficult as postal prices here are virtually the same as your own, but wages aren't! If anyone is able to help, please write to me as soon as possible. I just can't see a way to get this music without your help...

**Boris Ignatov, PO Box 180-1,  
Uporovo, Tumen Region, 627180 (Russia)**

### KEEPING ELVIS ALIVE

I've just been listening to the *J-Files* tonight and heard them talking about the newsletter. So I thought I'd get online and do some searching and found your great web site. You're doing a great job at keeping Elvis alive in Australia. Keep up the good work. Incidentally, I work as a musician in Sydney and in January went over to perform in New Zealand at the festival called Sweetwaters, the one that Elvis was at also. Needless to say, we didn't get paid either. Take care!

**Goby Catt, Sydney (Australia)**

### FEW DUDS

Elvis has been the greatest influence on my taste in music. There have been many highs, *Imperial Bedroom*, *This Year's Model*, *Taking Liberties*, *King of America* and a few duds like *Goodbye Cruel World* and *Mighty Like a Rose*, but there is not an artist that I look forward to hearing or seeing like Elvis. Long live the king. When is he due in Boston again?

**Marc Mespelli, Hopedale, MA (USA)**

### IMPORTANT SCENE

I saw two Japanese shows. They performed amazing! Especially the thing Elvis sang without microphone. It was the most important scene in my life!

**Tetsuya Wakamatsu, Osaka (Japan)**

*Congratulations!*

*To BB-reader Steve Talkowski for winning an Academy Award for Best Animated Short Film*

### THANKS, AMY!

I have been a subscriber of *BB* for several years and a follower of Elvis Costello since the late 1970s. I always enjoy reading *BB* and only have praise and admiration for your work in producing it.

Having followed Elvis on all his UK tours, I have collected many tour magazines and t-shirts which remind me of these times. He is truly a great artist and entertainer who deserves the praise and recognition given to him in your publication.

Last year on a family holiday to the Isle of Man (just off England) we visited a world-renowned "junk shop" called Jurby Junk - a large warehouse-type building full of, well, junk - including six large bins of lapel badges. Amazingly, my daughter Amy found the enclosed badge.

I have sent it to you as a small gesture of my thanks for the enjoyment of *BB*. I guess it's a promotional badge, supporting the release of *My Aim is True*, so its a bit tatty. I hope it "adds to your collection".

**Roger Page, Derbyshire (England)**  
*I loved it! Thanks so much for your kindness.*

### CHEERS FROM OZ

My, my Michael...just loved that "look at the size of mine" editorial. Now we know what you've been doing in the attic!

**Dan "Stonedead" Driscoll, Austinmer (Australia)**  
P.S. Binders? I'm glad I asked you to send me two - filled with cement they make splendid bookends!

### GUESS WHO'S PICKING ON EC?

Here's my US\$20 to renew my sub to *BB*. I'm hooked! The mag adds so much to my enjoyment of EC's music. It's great to have such a good resource close at hand when listening to EC. Keep up the good work!

**Robert Lawson, Toronto (Canada)**  
P.S. I don't know if you are aware or not, but Canadian Burton Cummings (ex-Guess Who) has a slag against EC on his 1990 album *Plus Signs*. The record is on EMI and had one hit single (up here anyway) "Take One Away". The song in question is called "Bridge in Time" and features the lyrics:

*There's a would be intellect with nothin' new to tell us*

*Somehow got nerve enough to use the name Elvis*

Burton is a great Canadian musician but unfortunately is also often quite embarrassingly uninformed. Sometimes he's just plain cruel and mean. (You should hear how he talks about his old band mates!) Anyway, if you need more info please don't hesitate to ask (i.e. A tape of the offending song and photocopy of the lyrics.)

### MORE TOUR RETROS

Enclosed is a check for renewal of my *BB* subscription. Thanks so much for the amazing job you do on every issue - it just keeps getting better and better. We Costello fans are real lucky to have such a valuable resource.

I know no one turned on the request light, but I want to get a suggestion in for something I'd love to see in upcoming issues of *BB*. One of my favorite features of past issues has been the tour retrospectives. The articles on the *Costello Sings Again* tour were especially entertaining and useful. I'd really like to see similar articles on the 1989 and 1991 tours. As a tape collector/trader, having all of the set lists together in one place is extremely helpful, and since those two tours (and the 1987 solo tour, come to think about it) haven't been covered in *BB* or the *Going Through the Motions* book, there is a real need for that information. Just a thought.

**Craig Montoya, Brooktondale, NY (USA)**

### Brilliant Mistakes

Apologies to Mark Perry for a last minute edit we made to his *It was 20 Years Ago Today* piece in our last issue. The December 30, 1978 show was at the Odeon Canterbury (not Hammersmith).

Also a correction to the photo on page 4. Letter writer and Irish correspondent John Foyle is pictured, not Michel Laake.



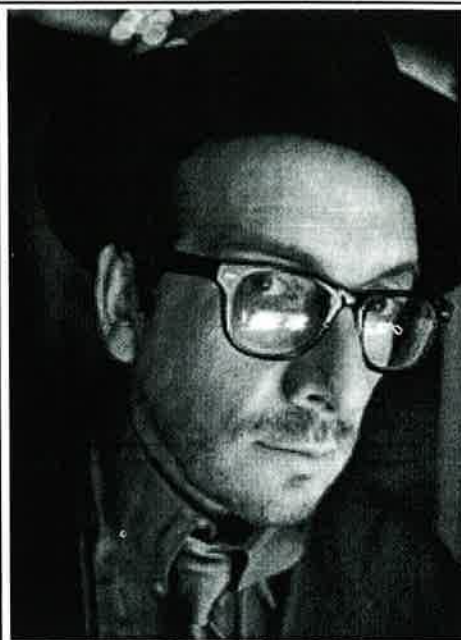
### BB-Binders

Designed exclusively for *Beyond Belief* by the Jesse Jones Box Corporation, this attractive slip-case binder is embossed with the *BB*-logo and will hold up to 7-years worth of your favorite Costello fanzine. Please send your payment as per the subscription instructions on page 2. Kindly allow time for surface delivery to Europe and the Far East.

	Cost	Postage
USA	US\$15	\$3
Canada	US\$15	\$4
UK/Europe	£10	£3
Australia	AUS\$20	AUS\$7
Japan	US\$15	\$5

### Back Issues

Issues 1 to 19 are all available although some quantities are getting limited. Back issues can be purchased at the regular issue price: USA and Canada \$4, UK/Europe £3, Australia AUS \$7 and Japan US \$5. *Note: Issues 8/9, 13/14 and 18/19 are double issues and cost twice the single issue price.*



*This Year's Model*

## About This Issue

*When we started out putting this issue together, it wasn't our intention to have this be another double-issue. However, with both the flurry of Costello activity and the volume of information that we had to offer - we felt that we had no other alternative.*

*If it's true what you tell us, you are happy with what we are doing and you'd love to see us more often, then we figure you won't mind. The bottom line however is that we are not shorting you on value as you are getting the same amount of pages for your money.*

*Our only concern now is whether it will take a another double issue to cover the current tour!*

**Thanks:** Dean Martucci, Richard Arthur, Karl Buhler, Robert Sabat, Andrew Neumeyer, Tom DeMarchi, Jennifer Senft, Dan Deleo, Peter Fey, Eddie Thornley, Connor Ratliff, Andy Anderson, Vince Goldband, Peter Gale, Clive Williams, Jeff van de Perre, Thomas Schlegel, Martin White, Joe Cassells, Charlie Charas & Eleanor Spicer.

**Special Thanks:** Mark Brown, Jenna Mammina, Pete Thomas, Harriette Goldsmith, Mike Hales and Michelle Knight.



# It was... 20 YEARS AGO

Part 7: January to May 1979



The fateful year of 1979 opens with the Attractions out on the road during Britain's worst winter for many years. As they battle through the snowstorms, Armed Forces, the album widely expected to propel EC to superstar status, hits the shops. Meanwhile, a storm of a different kind awaits in the USA...

## January 1979

• 2nd - EC & The As, supported by Richard Hell & The Voidoids and John Cooper Clarke, continue their UK tour at the **Pavilion, Hemel Hempstead**. • 3rd - "Elvis Plays For Dancers" reports *Melody Maker*, announcing an additional concert at the 3,000-capacity Hammersmith Palais dance hall which, it seems, is a direct result of the band's dissatisfaction with their all-seater Dominion dates in December. • 4th - **Gaumont, Ipswich**. • 5th - As the tour party heads for the **Birmingham Odeon**, Radar Records issue the much-heralded *Armed Forces* LP in the UK. Resplendent in a gloriously mad Barney Bubbles-designed foldout sleeve, it comes complete with free postcard pictures of the band and a bonus EP (*Live At Hollywood High*). EC: "The sleeve was very involved. I loved it. It was very funny. We wanted to make it as impractical and ghastly as possible." Provocative press adverts appear depicting EC with a gun to his mouth alongside the slogan *BE MERCENARY. GET ARMED FORCES*. *NME*'s Charles Shaar Murray has reservations about the fact that EC's "running for President with this album" but hears "what I suspect to be some of the best rock music we'll hear this year". • Although *4F* is the first EC album to have a (reasonably) co-ordinated release schedule on

both sides of the Atlantic, there are, once again, arguments about the track listing. Columbia insists on the inclusion of potential single "Peace, Love & Understanding" in place of "Sunday's Best" - deemed "too English" -

on the US version. "What's most striking about the album is the change in Costello's music," notes Kit Rachlis in *Village Voice*. "Going after a grander, more heroic sound he has opened the music up without sacrificing its density... Costello offsets his new epic style with arrangements that are as witty and sly as his lyrics." • 6th - "I was utterly disgusted and dismayed at the over-reaction of the bouncers," complains fan Tony Fisher in a letter to *NME* concerning tonight's gig at the **Assembly Rooms, Derby**. "They continually harassed the kids for standing, dancing and trying to take pictures." Earlier in the day, Elvis is all sweetness and light as he demonstrates the complexities of the *Armed Forces* sleeve during an interview on Central TV's Saturday morning children's programme *Tiswas*. • 7th - **Empire, Liverpool**. • 8th - **Free Trade Hall, Manchester**. • 9th - **St. George's Hall, Bradford**. • 10th - A frustrating "day off" as a scheduled flight to the Netherlands for an appearance on Dutch TV's *Toppop* is unable to take off from snowbound Heathrow. • 11th - A miserable early-morning drive through the darkness and snow to Lancaster airport, where the band catches a flight to the Netherlands (they are due at NOS studios by 8:45am to record their *Toppop* appearance). With filming completed, there's a further mad dash to catch a flight back to England in time for the evening's gig at **Newcastle City Hall**. • 12th - EC & The As guest on a BBC Radio Clyde phone-in show, prior to their evening appearance at the **Glasgow Apollo**. Meanwhile, Dutch TV's *Toppop* transmits "Senior Service" and "Radio Radio" from yesterday's session. • 13th - **Capitol, Aberdeen**. • 14th - **Caird Hall, Dundee**. • 15th - **Odeon, Edinburgh**. • 16th - As the band prepares for a second night at the **Odeon, Edinburgh** they learn that *Armed Forces* has entered the UK album chart at number 2. (It will remain on the chart for 28 weeks, becoming EC's best-selling LP to date and his first to achieve gold record status.) • 17th - **Guildhall, Preston**. • 18th - *NME*'s Nick Kent travels up to witness tonight's "magnificent" show at the **City Hall, Sheffield**. His unsuccessful attempts to weasel his way past a strict "no interviews" policy are reported in the paper's January 27th issue. "I don't like the *NME* much any more and I particularly don't like some of the things which have been printed about my personal life," EC complains. "He is a workaholic,"

observes Bruce Thomas. "The only thing I'm worried about is him having a heart attack at 26. He's driving himself insanely hard." • 19th - **Victoria Hall, Stoke-On-Trent**. • 20th - "As a modern music combo, they proved once again that they are peerless," reports Des Moines from tonight's gig at **Leeds University**. "It mattered little that Costello's huge repertoire of memorable classics was needlessly hurried, many of his songs' subtle nuances sacrificed because of his apparently obsessive desire to impress." • 21st - **Coventry Theatre, Coventry**. • 22nd - **De Montfort Hall, Leicester**. • 23rd - **Civic Hall, Oldham**. • 24th - EC guests on Nicky Horne's Capital Radio show *Your Mother Wouldn't Like It* playing some of his favourite records. His choices include the Bay City Rollers' "Rock & Roll Love Letter", Sandie Shaw's "Girl Don't Come" and the Left Banke's "Walk Away Renee" - alongside tracks by the Jam and the Pretenders. • 25th - **Odeon, Taunton**. • 26th - **University, Exeter**. • 27th - Dave Edmunds makes a guest appearance for "Mystery Dance" at **Sophia Gardens, Cardiff**. • 28th - **Locarno, Bristol**. • 29th - **Gaumont, Southampton**. • 30th - Back in London there's a visit to the BBC TV studios to film "Oliver's Army" for *Top Of The Pops* before this evening's much-anticipated **Hammersmith Palais** gig closes the British tour. Included in the set are a new song - "Opportunity" - and Steve Nieve's "Sad About Girls". During the encores, Martin Belmont guests on "Pump It Up" and Dave Edmunds on "Mystery Dance" but Charles Shaar Murray observes that "Elvis and his boys are completely dead on their feet. Shagged out, wiped out, drained. Trying to be dynamic, but the starter won't start. There's only so far you can pump it up." • The close of the UK tour finds EC in dispirited mood: "I suppose it was naivety and a slightly puritan streak I had early on when I saw people just responding without any kind of understanding or consideration. We'd play a set where we'd play brilliantly all night, and we'd do our hit single which had been on *Top Of The Pops* and people would go crazy. Yet they would be bewildered by the rest of what we were playing, and that just seemed to me like, well, you're being tricked into it because you've seen us on TV. It felt like a trick... I nearly walked away from it. I remember Pete Thomas trying to talk me out of it." (PT remembers this as a regular occurrence: "He was always going to pack it in. About three times a week since the word go. I said once 'You can't give up, because all people will have then is the Boomtown Rats!'")

## February 1979

• 2nd - Radar issue "Oliver's Army" b/w "My Funny Valentine" as a UK single. It



swiftly becomes EC's biggest hit to date - "my pop star moment" - eventually racking up sales of 400,000. "The Attractions get better and better all the time, while Nick Lowe's knowledge of the subtler areas of production grows apace," notes *Melody Maker*. • With their album already climbing the US charts, the band flies out to America for the infamous *Armed Funk* tour. The stakes are high, with Jake Riviera observing that "we either make it all the way with *Armed Forces*, or we don't. If this album doesn't break in America, then Columbia will still keep us but we'll be considered pretty much a spent force." With the record company looking to make EC the next Bruce Springsteen, press ads herald *AF* triumphantly as *WORLD ELVIS COSTELLO ALBUM THREE* ("Where Are You During The Big One?"). "A mixture of paranoia and arrogance made the tour party as mean and squirrely as any platoon of marines trapped behind enemy lines," writes Fred Schruers later in a perceptive *Rolling Stone* article cataloguing those aspects of the tour which turned it into an accident waiting to happen: a punishing schedule (57 shows in just 68 days); provocatively short sets; open hostility towards the press ("I'm not interested that you're interested," snaps Jake to Schruers at one point); tour manager Des Brown leading a violent "no photos or tape recorders" policy; a belligerent road crew decked out in combat fatigues. Even the tour bus claims to be heading for *CAMP LEJEUNE NC* (a reference to the notoriously brutal Marine Corps training camp) but "Elvis and his troops did not seem equal to the grand military metaphors of the promotional campaign that preceded them," concludes Schruers sadly. "They seemed, rather, to be conducting a messy police campaign bound to make doubters and enemies out of his strongest American partisans." • 6th - An inauspicious start at the **Paramount Northwest Theatre, Seattle WA** where a 50-minute set leads to angry crowd scenes, obliging the road crew to empty the hall by playing loud feedback through the PA. Outside the hall, EC posters are torn down and set ablaze. • 7th - **Paramount Theatre, Portland OR**. • 8th - BBC1 TV's *Top Of The Pops* includes "Oliver's Army". The US tour party reaches **Eugene OR**. • 9th - "Costello barely played 40 minutes before lock-stepping offstage with no intention to return," records Schruers of tonight's gig at the **Community Theatre, Berkeley CA**. Afterwards, respected critic Greil Marcus encounters a hostile backstage reception from EC and Jake and notes that "the concert was meant as an insult and performed as such, and people caught on. When I came out they were jumping up and down in the balconies. An hour later people tried to break into the box office." Seats are

ripped out of the theatre and the tour bus suffers broken windows. • 10th - **Community Theatre, Berkeley CA**. • 11th - **Civic Auditorium, Santa Cruz CA**. • 12th - A week of sold-out shows in Southern California begins with an appearance at the **Fox Theatre, San Diego**. • 13th - More audience complaints after a 35-minute (!) set on the first of two nights at the **Long Beach Arena, Long Beach CA**. • 14th - "From the moment Elvis scuffled on stage at the spiffy, cavernous **Long Beach Arena** (curtained in half so he could play to a smaller crowd), he seemed like some leering, jerking marionette being strung along through its scenes," reports Mikal Gilmore in *Rolling Stone*. New song "Motel Matches" is premiered and a free



Valentine's Day promotional single "My Funny Valentine" b/w "Peace, Love & Understanding" (on red vinyl!) is distributed to the audience. •

15th - Nominated in the "best new artist" category at the US Grammy awards, EC is beaten to the prize by, er, A Taste Of Honey (don't ask!). • 16th - Another tour highlight as pedal steel guitarist John McFee augments the band for two sets at the country-orientated **Palomino Club, Los Angeles CA**. Jim Reeves's "He'll Have To Go" and George Jones's "If I Could Put Them All Together (I'd Have You)" are appropriate inclusions. So too is "Psycho", a chilling Leon Payne song destined to become a favourite among the more sweaty-palmed of EC's audience when an over dubbed recording from this gig is issued as the B-side of the 1981 "Sweet Dreams" single. "For the first time, I came away from an Elvis Costello concert with the feeling that something had, after all, been revealed," observes Mikal Gilmore, but for Paul Grein "the show ended on a puzzling note, with Costello declining to appear for a second encore despite overwhelming demand." • 17th - **Arlington Theatre, Santa Barbara CA**. • 18th - **Fox Theatre, San Diego CA**. • 19th - **Dooley's, Tucson AZ**. • 20th - **Dooley's, Phoenix AZ**. • 22nd - BBC1 TV's *Top Of The Pops* includes a repeat showing of "Oliver's Army" - still climbing the UK charts. • 23rd - Despite EC having consistently introduced "Peace, Love & Understanding" as his new single during the tour, Columbia decide to issue "**Accidents Will Happen**" b/w "Sunday's Best" (it just fails to crack the Hot 100, stalling at number 101 in early April). **Opera House, Austin TX**. • 24th - **Opera House, Austin TX**. •

25th - **Cullen Auditorium, Houston TX**. • 27th - **Convention Center, Dallas TX**. • 28th - A scheduled show at the Kingfish, Baton Rouge LA is cancelled due to EC having picked up a stomach bug.

## March 1979

• 1st - **Brother's, Birmingham AL**. • 2nd - **Municipal Auditorium, Mobile AL**. • 3rd - **Agora Theatre, Atlanta GA**. • 5th - **Memorial Hall, Kansas City MO**. • 6th - More controversy at the **Henry W. Kiel Auditorium, St. Louis MO** where EC delivers what *Billboard* describes as "one of the biggest slams ever hurled by a performer at a concert host". Local radio station KSHE - chosen by Columbia as the concert sponsor - are more than a little miffed when Elvis, having already name checked the allegedly more supportive rival station KADI, introduces "Radio Radio" with a dedication to "all the local bastard radio stations that don't play our songs - and to KSHE". Costello's albums go from "heavy rotation" to no rotation on KSHE until Alan Frey of EC's US management company (ARSE!) manages to smooth things over. • 8th - Another new song - "B Movie" - is unveiled at the **Civic Center, St. Paul MN**. It remains a regular in the set for the rest of the tour. • 9th - Yet another *Top Of The Pops* showing for "Oliver's Army". The record has now climbed to number 2 in the UK chart where frustratingly, it stalls for three consecutive weeks (thwarted by an unholy alliance of the Bee Gees' "Tragedy" and Gloria Gaynor's "I Will Survive"). **Uptown Theatre, Milwaukee WI**. • 10th - **Aragon Ballroom, Chicago IL**. • 11th - **University Of Indiana, Bloomington IN**. • 12th - **War Memorial Auditorium, Nashville TN**. • 13th - Elvis and George Jones complete their postponed duet recording of "Stranger In The House" at CBS Studios in Nashville. "He was in really excellent health," notes EC. "I felt really comfortable being around such professionals." • 14th - **Park West Club, Chicago IL**. • 15th - An unremarkable show at the **Agora Club, Columbus OH** is the prelude to one of the most notorious nights in EC's career. Peter Thomas: "There was this Holiday Inn in the middle of nowhere. I can remember seeing this other bus and the general feeling was *another group!* It was as if sailors came into harbour and saw another boat there - and then whooaaah, *it's Steven Stills!*" Trying to piece together what actually happened is even more futile now than it was at the time, but the version which has passed into legend is that returning to their hotel after a "distressing routine set", EC and Bruce Thomas are involved in a drunken argument with member of the Stephen Stills band -including back-up singer Bonnie Bramlett. The contretemp



rapidly escalates and some unfortunate remarks are attributed to EC, who seeks to outrage his opponents with insults both to America and its music. Ray Charles is reportedly dismissed as "nothing but a blind, ignorant nigger" and James Brown as "a jive-ass nigger" while Stills himself leaves the scene of the quarrel with the words "Fuck off, steel nose!" ringing in his ears (a reference to the nasal reconstruction surgery he required to repair damage allegedly inflicted by cocaine use). Finally, there is a scuffle, from which EC emerges with an injury to his arm caused either by Bramlett alone or by a whole group of Stills's roadies, according to whose story you wish to believe. "I only remembered that the thing had even taken place when I returned to my hotel room and discovered that my arm hurt somewhat," EC tells *NME*. • 16th - As an infuriated and vengeful Bonnie Bramlett gets busy calling up every reporter she knows, EC and his tour party hit the road bound for the **Masonic Temple, Detroit MI** unaware just how serious the repercussions from last night's incident will prove to be. • 17th - **Victory Theatre, Dayton OH**. • 18th - **Memorial Auditorium, Freedom Gardens, Louisville KY**. • 19th - On his night off, EC attends a Nicolette Larson gig in Cleveland, still nursing his arm in a sling. • 20th - **Agora Ballroom, Cleveland OH**. • 21st - En route for the **Forum, Harrisburg PA** the tour party are cheered by the news that *Armed Forces* has reached the *Billboard* Top 10. "Idle Hands" - an early version of "Temptation" - features in the set for the first time. • 22nd - **Shea's Buffalo Theatre, Buffalo NY**. • 23rd - **Landmark Theatre, Syracuse NY**. • 24th - As the tour ploughs on through New York state, the storm over EC's alleged racism begins to break. Tonight's set at the **Auditorium, Rochester** opens, as do most of the remaining shows, with a heartfelt "I Stand Accused". • 25th - Another new song - "High Fidelity" in a much slower arrangement than the recorded version - is premiered at the **Palace Theatre, Albany NY** and remains in the set for the remainder of the tour. • 28th - *Village Voice* runs a story on the "Columbus incident" which is now escalating alarmingly out of control. Amid accusations of racism, EC's records are dumped from radio play lists and withdrawn from record stores. "There were elements of the liberal press in New York that was waiting for this kind of thing," EC observes later. "They proceeded to get the wrong end of the stick and beat me about the head with it." While the press frantically try to track him down, EC remains "unavailable for comment" as he prepares for tonight's gig at the **University Of Vermont, Burlington VT**. • 29th - "Looking a bit clownish in a checkered coat and pink tie, Elvis steams with the kind of fervour that turns his four-piece



NYC Press Conference

band, which can often sound as raw as a clockwork toy, into an insistently kicking mule," observes Fred Schruers of tonight's gig at the **Orpheum Theatre, Boston MA**. Backstage, the atmosphere remains tense, despite EC's feeling that this is the best show of the tour so far. • 30th - By the time he arrives in New York for "Elvis Costello Weekend" EC has, reportedly, received over a hundred death threats - prompting him to employ the services of two burly bodyguards ("There were two guys with guns with him at all times. A car would backfire and everyone would hit the floor. It really was that bad," recalls photographer Roberta Bayley.) With the story now breaking big time in the national press and civil rights groups clamouring for a boycott of his shows, EC decides to tackle the problem head on. Around 50 journalists answer the call to attend a hastily-arranged press conference at CBS Headquarters in Manhattan which Elvis describes as "the hardest thing I've ever had to do". "You could see straight away how nervous he was," recalls Kurt Loder. "He was shaking, all clenched up, real tense ... it was real obvious from the moment he walked in, man, that whatever was gonna happen was gonna be just awful." Sadly, EC's apparent determination to explain ("I was misquoted out of context ... it became necessary for me to outrage these people with the most obnoxious and offensive remarks I could muster, to bring the argument to a swift conclusion and rid myself of their presence. It worked pretty good - it started a fight...") rather than just offer a simple apology and get the hell out serves only to fan the flames. "The press conference was unsuccessful because I was *fried* on that tour. It was at that point that everything - whether it be by my self-perpetuated *venom* - was about to engulf me. I was, I think, rapidly becoming not a very nice person. I was losing track of what I was doing, why I was doing it, and my own control." Elsewhere in the same building, CBS bosses are surveying the wreckage grimly; one observer records that they "made it official, albeit unstated, policy to let Elvis die a quick death and take the heat off the record company. A high ranking source within Columbia said later that 'the big guys were very upset' and weren't willing to weather the storm of bad press that would accompany bigger sales. No further singles were released

and the album quickly vanished from the charts and play lists. There was even talk within the company of dumping him from the label." Meanwhile, the show must go on, in tonight's case at the **Capitol Theatre, Passaic NJ**. • 31st - In the light of recent events, posters which have adorned the streets of New York for the past few weeks have taken on a chillingly prophetic ring: "*ARMED FORCES LAND IN NY!!! MARCH 31- THE PALLADIUM. APRIL 1 - NOWHERE*". However, despite continuing calls for the shows to be banned, and the presence of Rock Against Racism pickets, the band proceeds with two sets at the **Palladium, New York City NY**. "The shows were awesome," reports Gorman Bechard. "Elvis's vocal ability was in top form. He was appreciative of the audience, thanking them many times..." Another witness to the 75-minute second show recalls "a strange performance, indeed, as Elvis was on the floor at times and swinging his microphone cord around à la Sinatra. He was either totally smashed or really enjoying himself (or both!)" [Answers on a postcard, please - Ed.] "Mr Costello's voice is extremely unpleasant," records the *New York Times* rather less enthusiastically.

## April 1979

• 1st - The notorious "April Fools Day Marathon" sees the band play three separate club dates in a single day ("more a matter of stamina than creativity" according to Bruce Thomas). The 1,200 tickets are distributed in a radio give-away which provokes such an overwhelming response (250,000 according to one report) that Jake Riviera is prompted to ask CBS for money to book Shea Stadium. When the record company refuses, Jake - ever the diplomat - arranges delivery of a truckload of shovels to the executives concerned. "If you *really* want to bury my act," runs the accompanying message, "I thought you could do with some more help." On stage for his early evening set at the **Lone Star Cafe**, EC half-jokes that "this idea of playing three clubs in one night is somebody's idea of an April Fool joke - and I think I know who that fool is!" Ruth Polsky is among 60 lucky souls crammed into the tiny venue and claims to have detected a change in EC's stage persona: "Sullen glares and an infuriatingly aloof emotionality were replaced by an abundance of startling smiles and a look of real pleasure to be interacting so closely with the crowd (augmented by hundreds of sidewalk viewers straining for a glimpse through the glass window)." A little later in



the evening Mick Jagger is part of another tightly-packed audience at the **Bottom Line**. "With the audience close enough to see the bug-eyes he was making at them, Costello came out with his fists up," reports Richard Grabel. Outside the club, Fred Schruers encounters one of the Rock Against Racism pickets "I address one bearded fellow who's holding a banner saying, KICK 'IM AGAIN BONN. 'Aw, he's still cool with me,' says the picket. 'I think it'll be best if Elvis finds he doesn't have loyal fans, but fans who keep an eye on what he says.'" Six hours after opening at the Lone Star, EC & The As take the stage at **Great Gildersleeves** where the intrepid Ruth Polsky observes a band which now looks "10 leagues past exhaustion (Steve Nieve had circles under his eyes practically reaching his mouth) and Costello was worn down to raw passion. He prowled and pounced like a wolf, thrust his guitar toward different parts of the audience, drove the band on relentlessly." The set ends at around 3.30 am, and as the crowd files out Riviera-Global staff - as they have done at all 3 shows - hand out copies of "Talking In The Dark" / "Wednesday Week"



(a present from Elvis - thanks for coming"). • 5th - **Men's Gym, State University, Binghamton NY**. • 6th - **McDonough Arena,**

**Georgetown University, Washington DC**. • 7th - "I suppose they'll clear the Yanks out first, wot?" observes Jake Riviera, musing on the possible dangers of tonight's gig at the **Tower Theatre, Philadelphia PA** - within range of the Three Mile Island nuclear reactor. • 8th - **Tower Theatre, Philadelphia PA**. • 10th - **Calderone Concert Hall, Hempstead NY**. • 11th - **Hard Rock Cafe, Hartford CT**. • 12th - **Grace Hall, Lehigh University, Bethlehem PA**. • 13th - **Dillon Gym, Princeton University, Princeton NJ**. • 14th - Final show of the tour is at the **Walsh Gym, Rhode Island College, Providence RI**. • 15th - Easter Sunday, and the end of the road for EC's relationship with Bebe Buell: "Elvis and I met in LA, in the summer of 1978, and parted very painfully within a year. It was devastating. I adored this man. To me, this was Clark Gable, this was Humphrey Bogart. Humphrey Bogart with an Irish temper and a penchant for drink. And stardom and cocaine and drink and rock & roll just turned him into someone I didn't know anymore. I think he was afraid of his own shadow at that point and he went back to his wife. On Easter Sunday, 1979." • Elvis (or

"Earl Manchester") films a brief cameo appearance - miming to "Crawling To The USA" outside the gates of "Buckingham Palace" - for the movie *Americathon*. • As the tour party retreats back to England, the controversy over EC's alleged racism continues to rage in the US press (surprisingly, little is made of the incident back in the UK). "I suppose if you allow uncontrolled anger to run away with you," Elvis later reflects, "and if you make a career out of contriving anger, up on stage, whether you're feeling angry or not, sooner or later you'll find yourself saying things, using words you don't mean. It'll all come back at you ... I have to live with the fact that people hate me because of it. You work hard, and then you become best known for a confused, idiotic incident." Ross MacManus is moved to write to *Rolling Stone* defending his beleaguered son: "My own background has meant that I am passionately opposed to any form of prejudice based on religion or race ... This is the water that Elvis has been born and bred in, and he swims in it as naturally as a goldfish. His mother comes from the tough, multi-racial area of Liverpool, and I think she would still beat the tar out of him if his orthodoxy were in doubt." Final word on the subject goes to Ray Charles himself who offers this admirably restrained view to the press: "Anyone could get drunk at least once in his life. Drunken talk isn't meant to be printed in the paper and people should judge Mr. Costello by his songs rather than his stupid bar talk."

## May 1979

• 4th - UK release of the single "**Accidents Will Happen**" b/w "Talking In The Dark" and "Wednesday Week" on Radar. The latest Barney Bubbles brainwave is to have some copies of the original cartoon picture sleeve manufactured inside out (a more conventional "photo" sleeve is used on later copies after complaints from retailers). Despite all this, and a much-acclaimed animated video, the record stalls at a disappointing 28 on the chart. • 5th - EC & The As appear live on BBC1 TV's Saturday morning *Multicoloured Swap Shop* to perform their new single. • UK release of Dave Edmunds's *Repeat When Necessary* album on SwanSong. It includes "Girls Talk" written by EC. • American singer Jo Marshall spends 10 days in England at the invitation of Jake Riviera. During her stay she attends a J. Geils Band gig in London with Elvis and his wife Mary, and eventually records some demos at Eden Studios backed by EC (guitar/vocals), Steve Nieve, Pete Thomas and Nick Lowe on fretless bass. Two specially-written Costello songs - "Mighty Man" and "True Love" - are recorded, along with her own "Big Brown Eyes" and "Talk To Me" but plans for Nick Lowe to produce an

album fall through and Marshall is asked not to use the EC compositions. • 22nd - EC & The As make a surprise appearance supporting Clive Langer & The Yachts at a Radar Records party ("The Cruise of the Century") on board the River Mersey's **Royal Iris** ferry "Hi there," says Elvis to a crowd of some 400 "We're a little nervous because we haven't played for a while, but we thought we'd come and surprise you..." *NME*'s Kevin Fitzgerald comments that the band "look anaemic and unhealthy" while Marcus Featherby records the scene picturesquely for *Record Mirror*. "The lurching swell caused the DJ's needle to go scudding over his records, and one burly roadie was seen heaving over the side. The boiler rooms under the middle deck made us feel as if we were in a jungle and sweat was trickling down the back of our necks..." • 24th - BBC1 TV's *Top Of The Pops* features "Accidents Will Happen". • 25th - Elvis appears on BBC Radio 1's *Roundtable* reviewing the week's record releases with Mike Read and The Tubes' Fee Waybill. • 27th - EC & The As go into the legendary EMI Abbey Road studios with producer Nick Lowe, intending to cut "So Young" as a summer single. EC: "This song was borrowed from the great Joe Camilleri, then of Jo Jo Zep and the Falcons, after our first trip to Australia. Unfortunately our only Abbey Road session fell on a Bank Holiday and was blighted by flying coffee cups, technical resistance and overwhelming blueness." (The track remains unreleased until 1987's *Out On Our Idiot* compilation.) • 30th - European promotional tour opens with a special concert recorded for the Dutch TV show *Countdown* at **De Flint, Amerfoort** which includes a first public performance of "So Young". The event is limited to an audience of 60 - all winners of a TV and radio competition inviting people to send in items they think EC might like (imitation glasses and bike chains are among the submissions). Each song is played twice in case of technical problems but as the TV signal is being relayed to tape recorders 30km away in Hilversum, the band are unable to review the results of their labours. Jake Riviera reportedly throws a mike stand at someone during the ensuing arguments...

**Sources:** Pete Frame & Kevin Howlett: 'Elvis Costello' (BBC Radio 1), *New Musical Express*, *Rolling Stone*, *Melody Maker*, *Sounds*, *Record Mirror*, *Creem*, *Village Voice*, *New York Times*, *New York Rocker*, *Spin*, *Details*, *The Aquarian*, *Imagine*, *Uncut*, *Elvis Costello: 'Get Happy!!'* (liner notes), Richard Groothuizen & Kees den Heyer: 'Goin' Through The Motions', Richard Groothuizen: 'Elvis Costello - So Far', *ECIS* (fanzine), *O The Beat* (fanzine), *Radio 3JJJ* (Australia).



# ELVIS PLAYS WITH THE SWEDISH SYMPHONY... AGAIN

by John Everingham

## *Trettondagskonsert*

5 January, 1999; 16:00 and 20:00 (broadcast on radio P2)

*Berwaldhallen, Stockholm*

*Elvis Costello With Steve Nieve and The Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra*  
Conductor - Ion Marin

ELVIS HAS PLAYED PREVIOUSLY WITH the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra (SRSO) for the "Trettondagskonsert", in the concert billed as The Meeting of Masters. On 6 January 1996 he shared the stage with Anne Sophie von Otter and the SRSO, in a performance that was highly charged and exciting. The experience was so enjoyable that the SRSO invited Elvis back to Stockholm, but this time with Steve Nieve sharing the stage.

As on the previous occasion, there were to be two concerts: a matinee at 16:00 as a kind of warm-up for the 20:00 concert which was to be broadcast on Swedish radio. After a brief introduction by the concert host, the SRSO played an assortment of short pieces written by Leonard Bernstein, which set the scene for

the diversity of the evening.

At both concerts, Elvis' first appearance on stage was greeted by a huge applause of appreciation. For the early concert, Elvis wore a black suit and tie, and dark purple shirt. For the second concert he wore a tuxedo, immediately joking that he never imagined when he started playing music that he would ever be playing a guitar wearing a tuxedo. He continued, saying that they had rearranged some of the concert from that in the printed program, but he was sure that we trusted him.

He further won the hearts of the crowd when introducing "Accidents Will Happen," saying, "If you feel screaming mayhem coming over you during the number, please feel free to give forth to your feelings. (Scream from crowd.) See, I told you! (Chuckles from crowd)." Steve had provided the orchestration for the song, and it included several lines from the Bacharach song "24 Hours From Tulsa." Elvis was in good voice for this very nice arrangement.

He put down the guitar, and launched into a powerful version of "Painted From Memory." The orchestra supported the song

## **SRSO:**

1. Leonard Bernstein selection

## **EC, SN + SRSO:**

2. Accidents Will Happen  
- EC on acoustic guitar
3. Painted From Memory
4. All This Useless Beauty  
- EC on acoustic guitar

## **SRSO:**

5. Mahler: Adagio from Symphony No. 5

## **EC + SRSO:**

6. Upon A Veil Of Midnight Blue
7. Put Away Forbidden Playthings

## *Intermission*

## **SRSO:**

8. Tchaikovsky: Waltz Of The Flowers  
(from Nutcracker Suite)

## **EC, SN + SRSO:**

9. I Still Have That Other Girl
10. What's Her Name Today
11. Almost Blue

## **EC + SN:**

12. This House Is Empty Now  
(20:00 concert only)

## **SRSO:**

13. Ravel: Bolero

## *Encore*

## **EC, SN + SRSO:**

14. The Birds Will Still Be Singing



very well, together with Steve's gentle piano. The greater range of this song, showed how powerful yet controlled Elvis' voice has become. It was a very dramatic performance.

On "All This Useless Beauty," we heard an arrangement by Rob Schrock of Burt Bacharach's band, performed for the first time in Stockholm. For this song Elvis again took up his guitar, and gave us a controlled yet dynamic version of this song.

As in all songs, the audience listened intently to the every last note of every song. The printed program, together with Elvis' introductions of the songs, meant there were no annoying claps of recognition at the start of each; and every song was followed with very long applause.

Elvis and Steve then left

the stage and the Gustav Mahler piece from the SRSO was lilting and peaceful. It was a good counterpiece to the previous Costello work.

"Upon A Veil Of Midnight Blue" was introduced by the same anecdote as at the 1996 concert, of how Elvis had written the song for Charles Brown, and how Charles had edited a verse down to one line "I find it hard to think when I drink". The version played was orchestrated by Bill Frisell.

The next piece, "Put Away Forbidden Playthings," was written several years ago by Elvis for the Meltdown Festival. It was originally written for viol, and has been released by Fretwork. Elvis said he had "No intention to sing it as a counter-tenor or soprano". The song is about putting away the beautiful things of the past and not recognising them for what they are.



Elvis was very reflective during the introduction, holding his head, feeling the music and looking into space. It is a very dramatic piece, with an unusual vocal line. It certainly was a thrill to hear it performed by Elvis for the very first time.

Most people took up the offer of free



champagne which was served during intermission.

The second half of the concert was introduced by the SRSO with the well-known "Waltz Of The Flowers" by Tchaikovsky.

The song "I Still Have That Other Girl" was introduced by the presenter saying, "Unfortunately Burt Bacharach couldn't be here tonight, but EC and SN could". Another fine performance, at the end of which Elvis recognised Steve's contribution, inviting him to take a separate bow.

Burt and Elvis wrote the next song by "fighting over the white notes and black notes on the piano". The person in the song asks himself the musical question "What's Her Name Today?" Elvis was in full voice for this delivery, and Steve was also in top form.

"Almost Blue" stole pieces from an earlier Brodsky Quartet arrangement, and also stole the show. The violin piece at the beginning and the piano were both tasteful, with the orchestra swelling in and out, but never interfering with the mood of the song. There was thunderous applause after this song. It was the last Elvis song listed in the program, and after the first call-in, when it became obvious that the audience were not going to be satisfied with that, Elvis and Steve came back again, Steve clutching his song folder. We knew that they would play another song, but since they had not arranged any further pieces with the orchestra, we were treated to only voice and piano on "This House Is Empty Now." And what a treatment it was. They certainly were free to go wherever they wanted, without the confines of the orchestral

arrangement, Steve responding instantly to suit the mood; the ending being a fine example of this.

"Bolero" is a stirring piece from Ravel, and the SRSO performance was well received by this now highly charged audience.

For an encore "The Birds Will Still Be Singing" was replayed from the previous Trettondagkonsert, in an arrangement by Richard Harvey. It surpassed that previous performance in both beauty and power. Elvis' voice seems to increase in strength and quality as his career continues.

They took many bows, as the applause continued. As is the Swedish custom, the main performers were presented with flowers. Elvis was used to this after his previous concert in 1996, and clutched his bouquet, smiling widely. The audience wanted more, and tried in vain to get another number, but without success.

The rare performances of "Put Away Forbidden Playthings" make these concerts memorable, with other highlights being "Almost Blue" and "This House Is Empty Now."

Having a front row/centre seat gave me an even closer feeling of involvement in the performances, not to mention the frequent eye contacts with Elvis, and also with Steve after each song. Meeting Elvis after the concert, getting his autograph and chatting briefly with him, provided the finishing touches to a wonderful day for me.

*All photos by John Everingham.*





## Stockholm Press Conference January 4, 1999

*Breaking rank with local reporters who asked questions about the upcoming concert, BB reporter and EC webmaster John Everingham (or the "Gentleman from Australia") asked EC about the release of a B-sides compilation and about the pre-My Aim Is True material he once talked of releasing.*

"I tried to persuade Warner Bros., just before I left them, to collect those which they had the rights to as a companion to the *Extreme Honey* album. In other words, maybe make a second disc at a budget price. But they had very little imagination at that stage of my career, so, unfortunately that didn't get done.

"As for the early material, I didn't feel the time was right. I don't know whether it will ever be right. It's very naive material. (I apologize, it's a very particular corner of my repertoire and has absolutely no purpose to the event.) It may see the light of day one day, I don't know. It's stuff that I wrote when I was 19 or 20."



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# Elvis and Steve Down Under

By David Pannell and John Everingham

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CONSIDER THE SITUATION for Elvis in Australia before this tour. Through most of the 1990's, Elvis has had a vanishingly small media profile, at least in Oz (we can't speak for NZ). Even *Painted From Memory* was barely noticed on release, despite the media frenzy elsewhere. Through the decade, album sales have been small and diminishing. There had been a very long gap since the last tour (1991), which was, in any case, not his most successful. Crowds were down, the reviews were mixed, Elvis was perhaps under pressure to fill all the guitar duties as the Rude 5 shrank alarmingly to three, and to top it all off, he was wearing that beard.

What a difference a tour makes! Considering where we started from, the media interest, the unbridled enthusiasm of the reviews, the response of the crowds, and the ease with which venues were sold out repeatedly were extraordinary. There can scarcely ever have been a series of serious concert reviews in Australian popular newspapers to rival the unstinting praise heaped on Elvis and Steve during this tour. NZ wasn't quite the same, but we'll come to that. At present, to be an Elvis fan in Oz is as cool and respectable as it has ever been. It was achieved by wit, charm, generosity, and a series of breathtakingly brilliant performances. Here's how it unfolded.

## New Zealand

**Dave:** When the New Zealand show at the Sweetwaters Festival was announced in July 1998, I pondered the possibility of an Oz tour being tied in. As the months passed, it seemed less likely, and I couldn't help remembering the way he flew in and out for a one-off show at the first Sweetwaters Festival in 1980 - a show that seems to have passed into New Zealand music folk-lore, and is described so amusingly by Bruce Thomas in *The Big Wheel*. Eventually I had to make a decision. New Zealand is not exactly around the corner. In fact it takes eight hours of flying time over four legs to get there from my home in Albany, Western Australia. But this did seem like my best, and maybe only, chance of seeing Elvis for the time being. When I'd finished making all the arrangements (November), the Australian tour was announced. As I flew into Auckland, the following event was taking place.

## 22 January: Sheraton Hotel, Auckland

*Charity Show, Elvis Costello  
joins Neil and Tim Finn*

**Dave:** This exclusive (200 ticket) charity show was held as a prelude to the Sweetwaters festival. Elvis played a brief set together with Neil Finn and Tim Finn, formerly of Crowded House and Split Enz. According to the *Sunday Star Times* of Jan. 24, "the truly magical moments came in the finale when our own Finn brothers stepped onto the stage to rapturous acclaim. Neil Finn announced 'Elvis is in the building' - and a beaming Elvis Costello stepped on to the stage. They raced through a medley from their combined repertoires."

On January 25 I met Elvis and asked him about the show. He said that he had gone at the invitation of Neil Finn. According to Elvis, the set list was short and included "So Like Candy" (Elvis said the three of them sang one verse each), "Better Be Home Soon" (a Crowded House song), The Verve's "The Drugs Don't Work" (which Elvis felt has more than a passing resemblance to "Better Be Home Soon"), "Little Sister" ('it was one we all knew'), and "He'll Have to Go" (a special request by the Finns, on account of Elvis having performed it almost 20 years ago at his first Sweetwaters appearance). Elvis praised the beautiful voices of the Finn brothers and said how much he had enjoyed singing vocal harmonies on stage, as it is something he doesn't often get a chance to do. I'm not sure of the actual order of songs, and I'm not certain that this song list is complete. Notwithstanding the newspaper report, it doesn't sound like it was done as a medley.

## 24 January: Sweetwaters Festival, Puhinui Reserve (near Auckland)

*Due to start 11pm Jan 24, started 12:05am, Jan 25*

**Dave:** The Festival was a very amiable and family-friendly affair. The newspaper described it as "more happy than hippy." It was short on nudity, but had plenty of huge Maori bikies, who caused no trouble at all that I'm aware of. If it had rained, the place would clearly have been a swamp, but thankfully, it held off despite threatening skies.

They had planned on a crowd of 45,000 but fell well short - something like 30,000. They also spent a fortune trying to swamp-proof the place by trucking in gravel, but it would have been dreadful anyway if it had rained. So the



*Elvis with the Brothers Finn.*

Photo c/o News Media (Auckland)

bottom line was ... red. No money. We were happy (I wonder was this ignorance or bliss?) that the queues for the facilities were nice and short. But I came crashing down to earth when a rumour reached my ears on the afternoon before his scheduled late-night show. "Elvis is threatening not to play. He hasn't been paid." This came from someone with the claimed authority of someone knowing someone who was in one of the bands, and had first (or maybe second) hand knowledge from discussions back stage. I went into denial. He insisted. I felt ill. The main stage was in action all day, but no dire announcement was made. As Paul Kelly finished his entertaining set, the stage was cleared and a grand piano appeared. Relaaaaaaax.

It was a huge outdoor stage area, which is not ideal for the intimate delights of Costello and Nieve, but they performed with energy and enjoyment. Right from the start, Elvis was in great voice, and Steve was as delicate and creative as we know to expect (and Elvis started the trend of introducing him as "Professor" right here). The set list was, for the most part, highly predictable. This was, after all, a festival crowd, so only a minority would have had any allegiance to the man.

I really appreciated the wisdom of wheeling out all the hits when half way through the 18th song ("Oliver's Army" - probably his biggest hit in NZ) the guy next to me said, "Is that Elvis Costello? Awesome!" The two most obscure songs played were "Talking in the Dark," which he played early on in every concert of the tour, and "Blue Chair." They played only three tracks from *PFM*, and they went down very well. A funny moment was when a guy at the front called out "George Jones" just before "Toledo." Elvis looked amused and said, "Patience comes to those who wait. ... He doesn't know what's coming next." And sure enough, the following song was "Good Year for the



Roses." This was planned (it's there on Elvis' set list), not a response to the request.

Elvis made only one mention of the financial problems, saying that "nearly everybody" was not being paid and casting aspersions about the promoter. It was VERY clear that there was no love lost between them. It seemed that the rumours had nearly been right. I thanked Elvis in my head for going ahead and playing.

Later that day, I got to thank him in person! We were in neighbouring departure lounges at the airport. I was holding my copy of the local newspaper with Elvis on the cover (running the story about the dodgy promoter) when he strolled by. There he was, talking with Cait and Steve. (The sort of thing you daydream about in airports. Well, I do anyway.) We had quite a long, uninterrupted and very amiable chat, in which he held forth on ... the evils of the festival's promoter. Elvis still hadn't been paid, and was ready to bring on the lawyers. He told me that he had done several lots of media to blast the guy, including some more that very morning. Elvis had been on the TV news the night of his show, threatening not to play. The promoter accused him of sabotaging

## Australia, Phase 1

In all the shows, accompaniment for most songs was piano plus acoustic guitar, some songs were piano only, Steve left the stage for a short set (centering around "Radio Sweetheart"/"Jackie Wilson Said"), and there were two or three songs where Elvis donned an electric, either a semi-acoustic ("Detectives," "Shallow Graves") or a beautiful red telecaster-shaped "Girl" guitar ("Peace, Love and Understanding"). Also in all the Oz shows, the last number was performed with the microphones switched off - a simple but incredibly moving and effective device. Most acts build up to something loud and frantic. Elvis built up to near silence.

## 25 January: Queensland Performing Arts Complex, Brisbane

This is the only show on the tour that neither of us saw. There is only one *BB* subscriber in Queensland, and he was stuck 1000 km away from the show with a work commitment. So our knowledge of the show is limited to the newspaper review. However, the review set the tone for the whole Oz tour: hugely enthusiastic and complimentary.

voice and piano, with the occasional guitar accompaniment. The songs had much more power and immediacy than the recorded versions. It was at times unbelievable that there were only the two of them up on stage; it was just so intense.

Part way through the show, Steve leaves the stage and Elvis stands there clutching his guitar, and sings "Radio Sweetheart," combining this with "Jackie Wilson Said." The back-up vocals for both of these were supplied by a very enthusiastic Sydney audience. Elvis had a rapport with them; it was pure magic! Throughout the concert, Elvis joked with the audience, winning them over immediately. "Blue Chair" was a feature of the show, but it was "I Want You," delivered with enormous intensity, that I thought was the overall highlight.

There were three encores and numerous standing ovations. We thought that there could be no way of finishing this concert of greatest hits, but after he had belted out a magnificent version of "God Give Me Strength," he asked for the microphones to be turned off, and he steps to the front of the stage and sang "Couldn't Call It Unexpected No. 4." His voice, again strong and powerful, filled the hall. It was an incredible performance. It was with surprise that we realised that we had been treated to 27 songs.

## 28 January: Capitol Theatre, Sydney

**John:** Another amazing concert. Elvis asked if there were any people there who had been at the previous night's concert. There was a huge chorus of "Yes", Elvis promising us, and everyone else, some changes and surprises during the night, as indeed there were. This is the beauty of Elvis' concerts - they vary from show to show as the whim takes them. Later, viewing the written set list that they were working from showed that they had many options and possibilities to include different songs throughout the night.

Elvis started out rather hoarse, presumably from the previous night's fine concert. His voice was a little shaky in some places, and he even commented on this during the early part of the concert. Despite this, he did manage some very respectable performances of the early songs. Steve worked in a short segment of "Waltzing Matilda" (Australian folk song and unofficial national anthem) into "Chelsea," which brought a big chuckle from the audience.

After some time, Elvis largely overcame his hoarseness, and his voice sounded extremely good thereafter, throughout the four encores. He was in great spirits, and didn't seem to want to leave the stage. "Shallow Grave" was a raucous affair. In "American

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attendance at the show by this, but nobody who was going would have even seen the news; we were already all out there waiting.

He was interested in my perceptions about the show, and I asked him about the charity show, as described earlier. He'd had a couple of day's holiday in NZ prior to the show, but he found it too hot. I was rather struck by this, as it had been very mild by Oz standards. He was going to get a LOT hotter in the next week. I suggested this, but he didn't seem totally convinced. Later I realised that none of his previous tours of Oz had been in summer. As it turned out, he didn't cook through the whole tour, just part of it. Finally I said that I was grateful to him for going ahead with the show as I had come from Western Australia. He said, "It's a good thing we played then." I can't help wondering whether this conversation influenced what happened later in the tour. Probably not, but I can dream.

## 27 January: Capitol Theatre, Sydney

**John:** I was thrilled to be seeing Elvis again, after seeing him twice in concert with Steve Nieve and the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra in Stockholm earlier in the month. He and Steve were to be performing six concerts in Australia. As it turned out they had nine concerts. I was lucky enough to be able to attend seven of them.

The first Sydney show saw Elvis bounce onto stage closely followed by Steve, and they launched straight into "Accidents" which was their opener for the first phase of the tour. Elvis was in fine voice, and he introduced Steve at every concert as Professor Steve Nieve, showing the great respect that he has for him, as is indeed warranted.

All of the songs from *PFM* were a showcase for Elvis' voice. His voice filled the theatre and really showed how great those songs are, especially in the cut down format of

Without Tears” we were treated to Elvis on harmonica, worn on a stand around his neck, a la Bob Dylan. The treatment of “Any King’s Shilling” was just brilliant, being very tender. For me “Peace, Love and Understanding” was one of the many highlights on the night, played very loud with electric guitar accompaniment.

(After the Sydney concert, I’m told that EC went to a doctor to discuss his throat situation. He was advised not to play Melbourne, at the risk of long term damage. - Dave)

### **29 January: Melbourne Concert Hall**

**John:** At the Melbourne show, Elvis was a real fighter, refusing to give in to whatever he was suffering from. His voice was very husky, and on many occasions he would cough away from the mic, between lines of a song. He really wanted to give a good concert to the audience, and soldiered on. This did mean that on some songs he didn’t attempt some of the higher notes and instead dropped to a lower register. This gave a different interpretation to these songs. There were still some powerful moments, but they were fewer than when he was in full voice.

Some songs, however, were ideally suited to the huskiness, notably “Almost Blue.” Some did not fare so well, though. The crowd stayed throughout the whole performance, perceiving the effort that Elvis was making on stage, and rewarding him with enormous applause and ovations. Elvis really sang through his voice problem and after six to eight songs his voice starting getting better and he sang with even more determination. He apologised several times, and commented that he hoped to return very soon. Little did we know just how soon that would be.

Everyone I spoke to after the concert all thought the same thing: that it was an amazing experience given by a true performer. In a survey of them, about 50% voted “I Want You” as their personal highlight. Steve was just unbelievable, as always - truly earning the title given him by Elvis of Professor. I shook both Elvis’ and Steve’s hand during the encores, and scored a plectrum after the show.

### **31 January: His Majesty’s Theatre, Adelaide**

Elvis finally had to give way to reality, and canceled this show.

### **1 February: Perth Concert Hall**

**Dave:** Also canceled, but not in time to prevent me making the 1000 km round trip from Albany to Perth. Although very disappointed, I at least had the memory of New Zealand. There was talk about the canceled shows being rescheduled, but I thought this was about as unlikely as an Attractions reunion. Elvis’ schedule is so

packed, why would he come all the way back from Japan to play two small cities. So I was stunned when we got confirmation of the rescheduled shows. He must have been really enjoying Oz, because he added on three more shows: another one in Melbourne and two more in Sydney. This obviously helped make the return trip worthwhile.

### **Australia, Phase 2**

### **13 February: Perth Concert Hall**

**Dave:** It was a fabulous show - certainly the best concert I’ve seen. Elvis was happy and relaxed throughout. There was little sign of the sore throat that caused postponement of the show two weeks before. Elvis must have remarkably resilient vocal chords, because the tour of Japan really didn’t allow him much of a break, and he returned to give a vocal performance that thrilled the audience with its power and passion. It seemed a little fragile only on a couple of the quieter songs mid concert. And he couldn’t quite reach the top notes in “Such Unlikely Lovers,” but otherwise, he had the audience in raptures.

There was lots of good-humoured talking, and some unusual song choices (“Passionate Fight,” “Girls Talk”). “God Give Me Strength” was particularly powerful and moving, with Elvis straining to reach the limits of his vocal and emotional range. “Shipbuilding” was also superb, with an extended, richly atmospheric ending, which infused the song with a more optimistic feel.

The highlight of the night for me was “Couldn’t Call it Unexpected No. 4,” where microphones were switched off. There is something quite magical about this trick. The song was somehow even more human and more intimate than the show had already been. It was a stunning conclusion to an amazing evening.

Afterwards, at the stage door Elvis was in a buoyant mood, his delight at the concert obvious. He remembered me from NZ, but didn’t accept an offered copy of *Beyond Belief*. His response, a friendly “No thanks, I live the life.” He certainly does.

### **14 February: Festival Theatre, Adelaide**

**John:** A front row seat right so close that I could almost reach out and touch Elvis, made for a very intimate experience at the rescheduled Adelaide concert. Elvis was back to fine voice. Steve was very dapper in white shirt and black waistcoat.

The weather outside was hot, and inside Elvis and Steve were cooking too. The Adelaide crowd went berserk when he raced onto the stage. He joked, “It seems like only yesterday ... that I should have been here.”

The songs from *PFM* were the most impressive, Elvis’s voice filling the theatre

during them. “All This Useless Beauty” was, well, beautiful. There was great interplay between Elvis and Steve; they really looked like they were having a great time up there. At the end of “Talking In The Dark,” Steve went mad, and finished with Elvis laughing; he commented “I’ll get out of the way of that.” They cut the number of encores down to two but still provided us with 28 songs in all, which seemed a more sensible arrangement. There were standing ovations at numerous places, but handshakes for the crowd only at the very end.

Being Valentine’s Day, Elvis joked that it was Hallmark Card Day, and appropriately played “My Funny Valentine.” During the “God’s Comic” spoken interlude, God asked, “Isn’t it bad enough that you have this group Hansen, without having to have this politician Hanson also,” referring to a new red-neck politician in Australia.

In the introduction to “Toledo,” he told a new little story about visiting the Gents in Adelaide airport, and seeing a sign on the wall that said “Practice Safe Sex”. Someone had crossed this out and written “Dear God, Don’t commit adultery.” Elvis was tickled by this.

There was an extended acoustic guitar “solo” fade out at the end of “Chelsea,” featuring distorted feedback. Elvis seemed to get a bit lost, and halted abruptly, laughing. Being front row, during “Couldn’t Call It Unexpected No.4” he was initially standing right in front of me. He sang beautifully. But perhaps the best for me on the night was “another cheerful one”: “This House Is Empty Now.”

### **16 February: Athenaeum Theatre, Melbourne**

**John:** Elvis’ return to Melbourne, Victoria was greeted with a huge round of applause as he took the stage at a different venue. With his voice at full strength, he wanted to make amends for the previous concert. He asked if there was anybody who was at the Concert Hall show, and told us that he had a few surprises in store. We were treated to an amazing show of 30 songs.

“Everyday I Write The Book” was slow and delicate. Immediately after it, a girl called out “Beautiful”, to which Elvis replied, “Do you think so? I thought it was a pile of shite.” He called it his 10-minute song, which possibly confused some in the audience.

Several new or rare songs were played: “Passionate Fight,” “Dirty Rotten Shame” and “O Mistress Mine.” They were quite interesting to hear, but obviously did not have the polish of many of the other songs that Elvis and Steve have been performing often on stage, such as the “Radio Sweetheart”/ “Jackie Wilson Said sing-along cum story telling epic”.



Initially during this, the audience was rather low-key in their singing parts. "This is taking Victorian to extremes," Elvis jibed to evoke a greater response. "Next you'll be getting out the cucumber sandwiches!" It had the desired effect, and from then on the audience was totally involved.

"God's Comic" was another song that is performed flawlessly every night. On this occasion Elvis was singing to the audience, and unbeknownst to him, Steve was standing up and leaning inside his Steinway as he played and suddenly plucked one of the high strings inside it. This caught Elvis by surprise, making him laugh mid-song.

After a fine rendition of "I Want You," always a crowd favourite, Elvis said that some people ask where the rhythm section is. He brought out a wind-up drumming toy, no doubt acquired during his recent time in Japan. He played it into the mike, and someone called out, "What about Bruce?" Elvis quipped back, "I said a rhythm section!" obviously still at odds with his old bass player.

The two standout performances for me were "This House Is Empty Now," and a chilling version of "Any King's Shilling," to which Steve's accompaniment was remarkable. The show was nicely rounded off with the unmixed "Couldn't Call It Unexpected No. 4."

### **18 February: Her Majesty's Theatre, Sydney**

**John:** The final two shows of the Australian tour were held in Her Majesty's Theatre, Sydney. It was another intimate venue where nobody was far from the stage. "Why Can't A Man Stand Alone," the standard opener for the second phase of the tour, got the show off to a great start. After establishing that many people in the audience had been at one of the previous Capitol shows, he promised to play some songs that we didn't know, and even some that he and Steve didn't know either.

He marveled at how Australian audiences seemed to like the melancholy songs. I thought all his songs were melancholy. He said that when we left the theatre we would be given a badge of membership to the Melancholiacs Club, and we would meet again annually. Could this be a round-about way of saying that he would be coming back soon? We can only hope so.

During the "Adelaide" story introducing "Toledo," Elvis embellished it a little. "Dear God (comma), Don't commit adultery'. (Aside: They might be sinners and murderers but they've got good punctuation.)"

"Girls Talk" was very enjoyable, immediately followed by a nice version of "Hand In Hand." The song with music by Steve Nieve and words by Elvis, "Passionate

Fight," was played to enthusiastic response. A rough version of "Just A Memory" followed. Indeed, Steve and Elvis got out of synchronism and Elvis came in too early in one part and then tried to fit in again later, but it didn't work, so he called out to Steve to stop right there. "See, I told you we didn't know some of the songs." He certainly made amends with the next song "Painted From Memory."

The song co-written with "Screaming Mac McCartney", "Pads, Paws and Claws," was excellent. "Dirty Rotten Shame" was sung solo by Elvis. This song was recorded by Ronny Drew of the Dubliners, and is about a boxer who had knocked out Cauliflower Ear O'Shea, and finds himself endlessly recounting the tale in the pub, when he would much rather be sitting quietly drinking his beer.

The first encore was a fine performance of "Inch By Inch," with everyone joining in with the finger-popping. This was neatly combined with a brief excerpt from "Fever." A girl from the audience presented Elvis with a large bunch of red roses before encore number two, which saw the airing of "Unwanted Number," indeed a rarity. This was followed by a cavalcade of audience favourites: "Almost Blue," "I Want You" and a particularly tender yet powerful "Shipbuilding." He then strapped on his red "Girl" electric guitar, set the switch on it to "cruel setting" and delivered a rip-roaring "Peace, Love and Understanding."

Encore three started with "I Still Have That Other Girl," followed by "God Give Me Strength." Then Elvis said that he wanted to come down and see us, signaling for his mic to be turned off. What followed was unexpected: it was not "Couldn't Call It Unexpected No. 4," but "Favourite Hour." Steve later confirmed to me that this was the first time that he could remember them finishing with that song, sung without amplification. It certainly was a special moment.

After 32.5 songs (remember that they only played half of "Just A Memory") the audience still wanted more, and Elvis didn't want to leave either. Instead he brought out the wind-up toy and comically tried to get everyone to sing along with it.

### **19 February: Her Majesty's Theatre, Sydney**

*Recorded by JJJ radio station for later broadcast*

**John:** This was to be the last concert of the current tour, and Elvis and Steve were determined to make it a special, yet fun night.

*Advert for canceled Perth show.*

To signal this change, the opening song was changed to Steve's rearranged version of "Temptation." As an indication of the merriment up on stage, during "Red Shoes" Steve sang a few lines of backing vocals. "Love Field" and "Man Out Of Time" formed a magnificent combination of less commonly played songs. The latter of these was a standout for the night, with a spine-chilling vocal performance by Elvis.

After "Chelsea," Elvis announced that the rest of the night was Ladies Night, to which a woman close to the stage called out, "Pucker up, Elvis!" "Town Cryer" was the next surprise for us, and indeed it was something to almost cry about. The audience then got to accompany Elvis in singing "Happy Birthday" to Steve. The excitement continued to build with "Painted From Memory," "The Other End Of The Telescope" and "This House Is Empty Now."

A change in mood was created as Steve left the stage, and Elvis launched into "Just About Glad," followed by a delightful version of "Mystery Dance." He brought the pace (and the place) down again with the best version of "Indoor Fireworks" that I have heard. During "God's Comic," when Elvis sang "God bless and put out the light", the stage lighting dropped to an eerie blackness and Elvis let out an evil cackle. The remainder of the show consisted mainly of songs that Elvis and Steve have honed to perfection through numerous stage performances, showcasing what a fine duo they are. The closing number was the usual closer, "Couldn't Call It Unexpected No. 4," unmixed. What a magnificent way to end a truly incredible concert tour of Australia: Elvis singing with all his heart and soul directly to his audience. Neither side wanted it to finish.

I am left with a combination of joy and awe: joy from the great performances I attended, and awe at the absolute genius that I was privileged to witness.



*Steve Nieve at the Festival Theatre in Adelaide on February 14.*



*Elvis at the Melbourne Concert Hall on January 29.*



## Quotes and Comments (from fans & the like) on the Australian Tour

"a spellbinding two hours that transcended mere entertainment. ... This is music that swings from the deepest shade of blue to the rapturously uplifting."

**Noel Mengel**, *The Courier-Mail, Brisbane* (referring to the show on Jan 25).

"It was a genuine pleasure to hear so many pop masterpieces presented in such a sophisticated, stripped-back manner."

**Dino Scatena**, *The Daily Telegraph, Sydney* (Jan 27).

"There were no bad performances here, just degrees of greatness."

**Iain Shedden**, *The Australian* (Jan 27).

"Costello delivered a thrilling vocal performance."

**Duncan Kimball** (Jan 28).

"Elvis related how he was quizzed by God on his opinion of the relative coolness of Presley and Sinatra - Elvis's response being that 'Frank might have eaten clams once in a while, but he sure as hell never sang about them.'"

**Duncan Kimball** (Jan 28).

"They say that the best concerts are the ones when both the audience and performer connect in a special way, both feeding off the energy of each other. So it was Friday night. ... It was apparent that he was not in the best of voice. ... funnily enough, I think, everyone listened more intently, for the songs were running now on pure emotion."

**Daniel Deleo** (Jan 29).

"You could have heard a tear drop as Elvis Costello sang his last number with neither his voice nor Steve Nieve's piano amplified, strolling across the front of the stage like a comedian delivering a soliloquy. ... Surprisingly for most, Costello is a great singer. His range and expression were extraordinary. ... Elvis Costello is only now getting around to his finest work. Sure critics have been saying that for 20 years. But few could have imagined his talents as a performer reaching the same heights."

**Michael Dwyer**, *The West Australian, Perth* (Feb 13).

"There is a masterful intuition between Costello and Nieve, each knowing when to add a flourish or a silence for maximum effect."

**David Sly**, *The Advertiser, Adelaide* (Feb 14).

"In stunning voice and high humour, he plundered his extensive catalogue and we got the treasure."

**Ian Bell**, *Rip It Up, Adelaide* (Feb 14).

"The best concert I've ever been to."

**Matthew Riddle** (Feb 16).

"Although Elvis Costello is hardly your typical sexy performer I have rarely seen so many people with post-coital expressions after a concert."

**Paul Inglis** (Feb 19).

### About Steve Nieve:

"Nieve was a revelation throughout, effortlessly mixing classical technique with funky rock'n'roll piano, sometimes in the course of a few bars."

**Noel Mengel**, *The Courier-Mail, Brisbane* (Jan 25).

"Nieve frequently impressed. It was as if he was single-handedly taking responsibility for replacing a whole darn symphony orchestra and two remaining Attractions."

**George Huitker** (Jan 27).

"Nieve masterfully created the dynamics on the keys. The former Attraction, given that he had to act as the foundation and the melodic counterpoint to his partner, occasionally crossed the line into Rachmaninovian melodrama (although he looked more like John Cale) but his arrangements were assured and powerful."

**Iain Shedden**, *The Australian* (Jan 27).

"But though Costello and his songs were ultimately the stars of the evening, Nieve was the revelation. His baroque excursions around and across the melody line were a highlight, his constant small inventions making every turn an unexpected and delightful surprise."

**Jon Casimir**, *Sydney Morning Herald* (Jan 27).

"'Accompanied' doesn't really begin to describe the brilliance of Nieve's playing."

**Duncan Kimball** (Jan 28).

"Nieve supplied not just the underlying beats and melodies but the points of return and departure for Costello who, like us, stepped back to listen to Nieve."

**Michael Grau** (Feb 13).

## Confessions Of An Elvis Disciple, Fan And Boy

**Jon Casimir**

25 Feb 99, *Sydney Morning Herald*

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Half a life ago, on a warm winter night in Canberra, a 17-year-old me stood at the back of the Australian National University refectory, arm in arm with two sweaty friends, hollering the lyrics to Elvis Costello's (I Don't Want To Go To) Chelsea at the top of our lungs.

Costello and his band The Attractions had just left the stage after a blistering 2-hour set, in which they rampaged through their catalogue, playing every song my fanboy heart was so desperate to hear.

Except, for whatever reason, Chelsea. And so it was that the three of us took it upon ourselves to complete the task, hoarse and out of tune, as punters filed out the doors and cleaners began to pick their way through the beer cans and plastic cups. We three were raucous. We were uninhibited. We were sooooo happy. We were fans.

Looking back at that concert now, I remember an avalanche of movement and sound, Elvis's red shoes and black suit, his signature guitar (with name engraved between the frets on the neck) and the strangely joyful feeling of being trapped against the stage, of losing my sense of individuality in the herd.

I remember shouting. I remember singing. I remember not caring about being close enough to be sprayed with sibilant spit. I remember thinking that, for this night at least, Canberra could well be the coolest place in the universe for me to be (as you may understand, I didn't get to think that way often).

Afterwards, I spent half an hour carefully peeling a pink tour poster from a wall in Garema Place, in the middle of town. I still have it, framed and looking for a stretch of bare wall that my partner won't have to look at every day - inexplicably, she can take or leave Elvis. Actually, to be honest, she quite likes him, but next to my devotion it comes over as an indifference that borders on cruel neglect.

I try to be sensitive to it, but I fail more often than I succeed. She puts up with my forensic descriptions of his concerts, my overblown estimations of his albums and my dearly archival interest in bootleg recordings. ("But honey, I had to buy it: he played a different chord in Alison!") NB: Those who have read Nick Hornby's *High Fidelity*, a novel about sadly obsessional men, may remember that it was named for an Elvis Costello song.

On Friday night, I saw Elvis, along with pianist Steve Nieve, play his fourth Sydney show in the past month. I went to all four. If he'd played Wollongong, Newcastle or Canberra, I would have been forced to canvass those options as well (the 1987 road trip to the Shellharbour Workers Club is another bronzed memory).

This follow-the-tour behaviour may be construed as very adolescent for a man of my age. It may also be construed as dangerously nerdy, but as the friend who accompanied me to all four shows said when I levelled the nerd accusation at him: "Yes, and your point would be?"

Perhaps I should have grown up by now. Perhaps the fact that I haven't explains why I'm still a rock critic. Professionally, I can rationalise that the ability to reconnect with the fan's experience, the foundation of music culture, is invaluable (as Barry Divola observed in his recent book, *Fanclub*, it's a fan's world - pop stars just live in it).

I can also console myself by pointing out that, unlike most rock icons, Elvis has matured as well as aged. God forbid that I should still be traipsing pathetically along behind one of the previous generation of rock heroes (don't get me started on whether he's a better writer than Dylan ... not as historically important, OK, but better...) And supporting my decision to see every show was the fact that, unlike most rock icons, Elvis varies his set list each night, changing around half the songs; we saw and heard about 70 across the four shows.

But the truth is, I'd probably go if none of the above were true. It's good to be a fan. It's great to love something just because you love it. As a critic, used to having to evaluate, substantiate and justify, to think while I watch and listen, it's a rare, sensual pleasure to just let go. And though I am by no means nostalgic for my youth, I recognise that there are bits of me it's nice to visit from time to time - bits of a life that was ruled by dumbly happy things such as what records I listened to, rather than jobs, kids and mortgages.

On Friday, after Elvis's final show, I may not have had the raucous friends around me, or the youthfully exuberant lack of inhibition required to sing in the foyer of Her Majesty's, but I was warbling all the way home in the car, my aging fanboy's heart sooooo happy.

And this time, Elvis played Chelsea every night.

## Sweetwater Set List

ACCIDENTS -

RED SHOES

TALKING IN THE DARK

BLUE CHAIR

I STILL HAVE THAT OTHER GIRL

CHOLERA - / DARKEST PLACE

TOLEDO

ROSES / PAINTED FROM MEMORY

THIS HOUSE -

I WANT YOU / ALMOST BLUE

RADIO SWEETHEART / LESS THAN ZERO

GOD'S CANIC

ALL THIS USELESS BEAUTY / MAN OUT OF TIME

VERONICA

ALISON

GOD GIVE US STRENGTH

SHALLOW GRAVE - DETROIT US

ON UNLIVING LADIES - SHIPBUILDING

DEEP DARK TRUTHFUL MURDER

WORK'S MIND - EVERYDAY

P.L.U.



## Costello & Nieve - 1999 Far East Tour

	January						February											
	24	25	27	28	29	31	1	4	5	7	8	10	13	14	16	18	19	
	Auckland	Brisbane	Sydney	Sydney	Melbour	Adelaide	Perth	Osaka	Fukuoka	Tokyo	Tokyo	Tokyo	Perth	Adelaide	Melbour	Sydney	Sydney	
Accidents Will Happen	1	X		1	1			1	1	1	16	2	2	2	2	2	30	
Red Shoes	2		12	2	2	C	C	4	11		3	7	13	12			2	
Talking in the Dark	3		2	3	3	A	A	2	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Blue Chair	4		3			N	N					8						
I Still Have That Other Girl	5		4	4	4	C	C	6	19	22	25	26	26	26	27	31	31	
Chelsea	6	X	6	6	6	E	E	7	7	7	8		7	7		9	9	
Toledo	7		8	8	8	L	L	10	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	5	6	
Good Year for the Roses	8		19			L	L											
Radio Sweetheart	9	X	11	14	11	E	E	13	14	13		15	17	17	15	17	19	
God's Comic	10	X	13	16	12	D	D	14	15	14		16	18	18	16	18	20	
All This Useless Beauty	11		14	17	13			15	16	15		17	19	19	17	19	21	
Veronica	12		15		16			16	17	16	18	18	20	20	18	20	22	
Alison	13	X	16	18	14			18	18	23	19	19	21	21	19	21	23	
God Give Me Strength	14		26	28	23			26	25	24	26	27	27	27	29	32	32	
Shallow Grave	15			19	18			22	21	20	22	22	23	24	22	24	26	
Watching the Detectives	16	X	24	20	19			23	22	21	23		24	25	23	25	27	
Everyday I Write the Book	17		18		15				2	2					8		29	
Oliver's Army	18		22	24	24				27	26								
Peace, Love & Understanding	19			26												30		
Temptation		X	7		7				8	8			9				1	
This House is Empty Now		X	10	11	21			11	12	17	10	12	14	14	12	14	15	
Almost Blue		X	25	27	22			25		18			11			27		
Tears at the Birthday Party			5		5				6	6								
The Long Honeymoon			9		9			9			9							
In the Darkest Place			17					19			20				6		24	
Such Unlikely Lovers			20									6	6					
I Want You			21		17				24		14			23	20	28		
Shipbuilding			23	25	25							24	25		26	29		
Couldn't Call It Unexpected No.4			27	29	26			27	28	27	27	28	28	28	30		33	
What's Her Name Today?				5								11		6		6		
Still Too Soon To Know				7							17							
Just a Memory				9					9							12		
Baby Plays Around				10								9		11	9	10	11	
Little Palaces				12	10					9								
New Amsterdam				13							13							
Indoor Fireworks				15						12			16	16			18	
Painted From Memory				21				24			24			13	11	13	13	
American Without Tears				22					26									
Any King's Schilling				23											24			
Pump It Up					20				23			23					28	
Party Girl								3	4	4			4					
My Thief								5			7						7	
Love Field								8			5			9			4	
Pads, Paws & Claws								12	13	11	12	13	15	15	13	15		
All the Rage								17										
Deep Dark Truthful Mirror								20				20	22			22		
Inch By Inch								21	20	19	21	21			21	23	25	
I Just Don't Know What to Do									10									
Other End of the Telescope										10							14	
Man Out of Time										25				10			5	
Why Can't A Man Stand Alone											1		1	1	1	1		
I Hope You're Happy Now											2							
High Fidelity											11							
Girls Talk											15		8	8	7	7	8	
Shot With His Own Gun												1						
Poor Fractured Atlas												4		4	4	4		
Passionate Fight												10	10		10	11	12	
Stranger in the House												14						
The Birds Will Still Be Singing												25						
My Funny Valentine													12	22				
Dirty Rotten Shame															14	16		
Little Atoms															25			
O' Mistress Mine															28			
Hand In Hand																8		
Unwanted Number																26		
Favourite Hour																33		
Town Cryer																	10	
Just About Glad																	16	
Mystery Dance																	17	

# ELVIS COSTELLO

with

フジロック・フェスティバルでのライブも記憶に新しい、世紀のエンターティナー“エルヴィス・コストロ”の来日公演が急遽決定しました。60年代ポップスの至高といわれる、“バート・バラック”との共作アルバム「ペインテッド・フロム・メモリー」でも、その懐の深さ、メロディー・メイカーとしての資質の高さを見せつけてくれた我らがコストロ、今回も僚友スティーヴ・ナイヴとのステージで、再び私たちの期待と予想を見事に裏切ってくれる、素晴らしいステージを演じてくれる事でしょう。

# STEVE NIEVE

**2.7(SUN) 8(MON) 中野サンプラザ**

2/7-OPEN17:30 START18:00 , 2/8-OPEN18:30 START19:00

**2.10(WED) 渋谷公会堂**

OPEN18:30 START19:00

各公演:(全席指定) S席¥7,000(税込) A席¥6,500(税込)

**12.5(SAT)10:00~先行電話予約受付開始!!**

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# ELVIS COSTELLO with STEVE NIEVE JAPAN TOUR 1999



by Peter Redin

AT THE BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY, Elvis Costello and Steve Nieve played five dates in three Japanese cities: Osaka, Fukuoka, and Tokyo, in that order. Up until the date of the first show on February 4 in Osaka, the tour was in doubt due to the fact that two dates of the Australian tour only days before had been canceled because of complications with EC's voice. Our fears were proven unnecessary, as the Osaka show went on as scheduled, and the following four dates in Fukuoka and Tokyo were not only performed, but performed admirably.

There were many highlights and surprises on this tour. As expected, the duo performed several songs from the EC w/Burt Bacharach album, *Painted From Memory*, in simpler and stripped-down arrangements, unlike the performances on their mini-tour in 1998 where they performed with an orchestra, band, and background singers. Additionally, they pulled out a handful of great songs from the back catalogue, a few of which had never been performed in their EC/SN arrangements.

Personally, I was only able to attend three of the five shows, all of them in Tokyo. There was a glimmer of hope of me attending the Osaka show, but it was soon shattered when the promoters shuffled some of the dates, causing a conflict in my work schedule. There wasn't a "hope in Hades" of me going to Fukuoka, although several of my friends were able to go to both Fukuoka and Osaka. Either they are very rich with lots of free time, or they have seriously messed up senses of priorities! More than likely a combination of the two, which seems to be pretty common amongst our ilk.

The venues where they played, with the

exception of Fukuoka, were places Elvis has played in the past. In '94 and '96 he played the Kouseinenkin Kaikan in Osaka with The Attractions. Also on the '94 *Brutal Youth* tour The Attractions played Nakano

Sun Plaza in Tokyo. And Shibuya Kokaido was the location of a blistering show with The Attractions in June of 1984, which was broadcast on a Tokyo FM radio station. This tour marked the first time he has played at a small club, Drum Logos, located in Fukuoka City on the southern island of Kyushu.

As might have been expected, there were very few souvenirs sold at these shows. The only thing available was a nice 24-page tour program, printed in both color and black and white (cover photo at left). It contained several articles written in Japanese, a complete album discography, and set lists from every show played in Japan from 1996 through 1998, compiled by Masanori Saito and Koji Kumada. I was pleased to get a program, but was a bit disappointed they did not have anything else for sale.

There was one review published in an English newspaper (*The Daily Yomiuri*) for the February 10 show in Tokyo, which was quite favorable. There were also some brief reviews published in the Japanese music magazines *Crossbeat* and *Rockin' On* with only black and white photos.

## **4 February: Kouseinenkin Kaikan, Osaka 7:00 pm**

Despite the worries that he might have to cancel the Japan tour, Elvis Costello and Steve Nieve showed up for this, the first show on the tour, and so did Costello's voice. While I might not be able to say his voice was tip top on this night, he was able to sing well even if he couldn't hit all the high notes so common on his new material on *PFM*.

Customarily opening the show with "Accidents Will Happen," moving into "Talking In The Dark," and a few other classics, he then sang the first *PFM* song of the night, "My Thief." While I do not consider *PFM* to be a great album, I was pleased with the simpler arrangements of its material on this tour. Although he played a lot of the standard classics on this tour such as "Alison" and "Detectives," he also dug up a lot of gems which are rarely heard live anymore. For me this was the real meat and potatoes of the performances, and on this



night he played such greats as "Love Field," "The Long Honeymoon," "Deep Dark Truthful Mirror," and "Inch By Inch."

Elvis must be proud of the songs from his album *Spike*, because he performed several songs from that album on this tour. While I am a big fan of *Spike*, I wish he would give "God's Comic" a rest for awhile. It has begun to sound trite to me, and at five minutes in its current form, it's two minutes shorter than it was on the *ATUB* tour, but still two minutes longer than it needs to be. To disappoint me further, he played it at every show of this tour with the exception of the February 7 show in Tokyo.

I was also pleased that he chose to perform some material from his *ATUB* album, and tonight he did a great version of the title track. He also performed "Shallow Grave" tonight and almost every night, but I wish he had replaced this somewhat lifeless song with either "Starting To Come To Me" or "Distorted Angel." I was also disappointed that they only played "All the Rage" from *Brutal Youth* on this tour, especially considering the fact that he did very similar encores all five nights. Oh well, I don't suppose it's possible to please everyone.

## **5 February: Drum Logos, Fukuoka 7:30 p.m.**

From the reports I've heard about this show, it was a very special one. I can confirm this from hearing tapes of it, but I really wish I could have seen this show for myself. First of all the venue is a nightclub with a capacity of only about 700 people. Even though Costello does not draw like he used to, the opportunity to see him in such an intimate setting does not often present itself. What's more, his choice of songs for this show was a bit different from what he did at the larger venues in Tokyo and Osaka. Most notable was a rare performance of "American Without Tears," complete with strap-on harmonica, during the final encore. This has always been one of my favorite songs from one of my favorite albums. This song followed by "Oliver's Army" and "CCIU No. 4" made for a really nice finish to a very remarkable concert.

**7 February: Nakano Sun Plaza, Tokyo  
6:00 p.m.**

This was my first opportunity to see him on this tour, and the anticipation had built up to the point where I was positively nervous up until the time came for the show to begin. Because this show started an hour earlier than the rest, I was hoping it would mean a longer performance, but this was not to be. They came out about ten minutes late, and played their normal two hour set.

Overall I would say that this show was a little bit lacking in smoothness, but the inclusion of such songs as "Little Palaces," "The Other End Of The Telescope," "Indoor Fireworks," and "Man Out Of Time" were more than enough to make up for it and send this fan home a happy man. By lacking in smoothness, I mean that there were some mistaken lyrics and missed chords along the way, and in some ways the performance lacked intensity. But as most of us know, Elvis Costello on a bad night is 100 times better than many artists on a good night. And, this was not EC on a bad night. I've seen him about twelve times now, and I've yet to see a bad show. Also, Elvis seemed a bit nervous or distracted. Perhaps this was not the case, but he seemed just ever so slightly off tonight.

I almost forgot to mention that he played "Temptation" with only Steve on piano as accompaniment. When I saw them play this as part of the Attractions tour in '96, it really impressed me. At that show (September 13, 1996) EC & SN came out to open the show with this song, Elvis holding a cup of tea as he stepped up to the mic to sing. At that time and also this evening I got goose bumps from such a beautiful arrangement of the song. In this form it is a completely different song from the pumped up version on *Get Happy!!*

After the show several of us assembled at a watering hole near Nakano Station. This place was great for its atmosphere, if somewhat lacking in menu. It didn't really matter, though, as we were only drinking. The coolest thing about this place was that they had a record room where they played records (not CDs) on their sound system. They must have known we were coming because as soon as we sat down they began playing *King Of America*, in it's entirety. It's funny to me that even though I've heard Costello's records about a million times, it is always a special rush to get a dose when I'm in a public place. And, when it's *KOA*, well... what can I say?

**8 February: Nakano Sun Plaza, Tokyo  
7:00 p.m.**

This was the best performance of the three nights they did in Tokyo. My reason for thinking this might have been that I was in a

good mood, or that my wife was there, but I don't think so. This night EC had such an intensity as he performed, from the opening number, "Why Can't A Man Stand Alone?," all the way through the encores. Mesmerizing versions of "I Hope You're Happy Now," "High Fidelity," and "I Want You" drove this home with an exclamation point!

The best way I can describe this experience to someone who wasn't there is to say that it's like holding your breath on every word, every note, every melody. In the silences during "I Want You," where there is no music and it's just EC gasping out the last words of the song, I swear you'd have been able to hear a pin drop. The spell cast upon the audience made them afraid to swallow lest the sound of it fill the hall and drown out this beautiful sound. Those who have been to this kind of show know exactly what I mean.

I appreciated the fact that he chose to open the show with "Why Can't A Man..." instead of the predictable, "Accidents Will Happen." "Accidents" is a great song, but I think I've seen him open his set with that song about a half-dozen times now, so it's refreshing when he doesn't. He did play it tonight, but he saved it for about halfway through the performance. Also, he didn't play "God's Comic," instead choosing "New Amsterdam" and "Girl's Talk." The encores of this show were the standard formula of "Shallow Grave," "Detectives," "GGMS," and "CCIU No. 4," interspersed with two other numbers from *Painted From Memory*, the title track and "I Still Have That Other Girl."

Despite the formulaic approach, tonight's renditions were much more inspired and emotional than in previous nights. They made only one mistake, on CCIU No. 4, when apparently Steve couldn't hear Elvis, and played the piano in the wrong key. This type of mistake is bound to happen occasionally. With E facing away from the piano, and often jumping from the stage to sing in the audience, it's a wonder this song is done so smoothly almost every time. To top



Photo by Masahiro Yoshida.

everything off, EC's voice was as good as I've heard it live, which seemed to give new life to the songs, and left me with the impression that I had just witnessed something historical.

After the show, my wife and I stepped into the windy and freezing cold Tokyo night wondering where we would go next. We found out that a group of fans was gathering near the stage exit for autographs, so we decided to join them. After about 20 minutes, EC & SN stepped out and began signing. He was bundled up tight in his coat and muffler, wearing a gold parka, a navy blue wool hat, and sunglasses. He took time to sign for everyone, and then jumped into a mini-van and sped off. We were unable to meet Steve Nieve, as he only came out just as Elvis was getting into the car, and he didn't seem to want to hang out with fans.

**10 February: Shibuya Kokaido, Tokyo  
7:00 p.m.**

Expectations had built up around this, their final show of this tour. Several friends told me that the last show of the tour is always the best, so I was filled with anticipation of something great as the dynamic duo came onto the stage. While it wasn't quite as awesome as I had expected, tonight Elvis and





Photo by Masahiro Yoshida.

Steve hammered out and crooned a total of 28 songs, bringing the tour to a finish in satisfying, if not ultra dramatic fashion. Elvis' voice was in good shape, and especially, Steve seemed to nail every note and chord.

There were several pleasant surprises tonight. They opened with "Shot With His Own Gun," and a few songs later played "Poor Fractured Atlas." Shortly after that Steve left the stage and EC played an excellent rendition of "Baby Plays Around," a song I had never heard him do live. Next, Steve returned and they played "Passionate Fight," which may never make it on a record but is always fun to hear. Another nice surprise was "Stranger In the House," which I also had never heard live. He followed this with the "Radio Sweetheart/Jackie Wilson Said" medley, which I never get tired of hearing, and then launched into "God's Comic," which, well... I think you already know my thoughts on this one.

They played one of my favorites, "All This Useless Beauty," and a rarity for this tour, "Deep Dark Truthful Mirror." The only other surprise after this was during the second encore they played and played well, "The Birds Will Still Be Singing." Oh, and did I forget to mention that they played an awesome version of "Blue Chair," reminiscent

of the equally great rendition of this song performed at last year's Fuji Rock Festival?

This was a great show. The set list was good, and the performances were not at all shabby, but after their magical performance of two nights previous, it was not quite as great as I was expecting. This might also have had something to do with the change of venue from the more modern and acoustically correct Nakano Sun Plaza, to the dingy and cramped Shibuya Kokaido. If I have had my druthers, I'd prefer that they don't play here in the future. There are many other great venues in Tokyo, so if scheduling permits, it might be better to experiment a bit more.

On the '96 tour with the Attractions, the final date of the tour in Nagoya is a now legendary show, as they played for nearly two and a half hours,

throwing the set list away and playing an inspired and spontaneous show. I guess I had kind of hoped for this in tonight's performance, but it wasn't to be. Instead they played a very solid, sometimes magical, and never boring concert which tastefully brought their tour of Japan to a close.

After the show it was off to a Japanese style pub for dinner and drinks. A large group of about 12 people gathered, all of them (including myself) associates of Masanori Saito. Hanging out with these people, most of them strangers, was very easy for me as they all seemed like good friends. Something I have discovered since I became a fan of Elvis Costello's music is that Costello people are good people. Their kindness, generosity, and good friendship have, like Costello's music, changed me. I'm not talking about a religious conversion, but I think it is rare when a performer not only brings people toward his or her music, but also brings people together as friends. Perhaps EC's music is a recipe for world peace. Well, maybe not....

### The Encores

These shows were heavy on encores; three in every show, and four in one of the shows. I am always pleased when a group does more than one encore, so three or four are extra

special. EC varied the encores only slightly. The songs he played all five nights for encores were "Shallow Grave," "GGMS" and "CCIU No. 4." He also played "Detectives" and "Inch By Inch" every night but one. The extra gems that he threw in to everyone's delight were "Almost Blue," "Man Out Of Time," "Oliver's Army," "American Without Tears," "Shipbuilding," "The Birds Will Still Be Singing," and "Pump It Up." Each night they played for about two hours, and about 30-40 minutes were saved for encores.

### The Unforgettable Encore

Speaking of encores, the pinnacle of these performances had to have been the very last song (the same at all five shows), where he sang "Couldn't Call It Unexpected No. 4" with no amplification. This had been done before on both the Italian tour last year and the Australian tour this year, so it was not a surprise, but the impact of being there and the subsequent rush which accompanied it was something I hadn't expected.

Thanks to my favorite EC guru, Masanori Saito, my seats were third row, dead center, so when Elvis jumped down from the stage to sing this number, standing not ten feet in front of me, it was something to remember. I was at neither the Osaka nor Fukuoka shows, so I can't say firsthand what they were like, but the three times I saw this song performed in Tokyo were amazing, save for the February 7 show where two noisy idiots were singing very loudly along with EC, at times drowning him out. Don't get me wrong, EC's shows have always had an element of fun, and that means singing along sometimes, but when El is not using a mic, it is really distracting. I can only wonder if the people in the balcony were able to hear well enough to be as impressed as we were in the front. At any rate, doing this song with amplification would have been awesome, but the fact that he chose to give it to us in its purest form is one of the things which makes going to an Elvis Costello show an event.

### Conclusion

This tour was a successful and enjoyable one. I think the Japanese people are very lucky to be treated to an appearance by Elvis Costello on nearly every tour he does. This time around we had a chance to hear some of our favorites, some of the new songs, and maybe one or two that we've never heard him perform in Japan before. Add to this some excellent and inspired performances and you have a mixture which just might be unforgettable. I can honestly say that I am looking forward to the next time I can catch their act, even if it's not in Japan. Perhaps another tour with the Attractions is too much to ask for? I won't hold my breath for this, but I won't stop hoping for it either.

# TIME TO DANCE AND SING

by Paul Hosken

**THE JULIET LETTERS** continues to have a life all of its own. *Elvis & The Brodsky Quartet's 1993 album has defied all expectations by steadily racking up sales of over 300,000 copies world-wide while requests for concert performances have flowed in from all parts of the globe. Now the acclaimed "song sequence" seems to be providing a source of inspiration for other artists. Following its stage adaptation by the Gothenburg Opera a few years back, the most recent incarnation of the work comes in the form of a ballet production mounted in Munich this year. BB's German correspondent Paul Hosken couldn't resist popping along to see how well the work had survived its latest transformation:*

It was the album *The Juliet Letters* that reawakened my interest in Elvis Costello back in January 1993, and therefore I have a special affection for this song-cycle. Naturally, when I heard that a ballet company was performing a dance version here in Germany (a country usually starved of Costello appearances) I jumped at the chance of getting tickets.

The Cuvilliestheater is a small theatre in the heart of Munich, in the true old-fashioned style with three tiers of balconies, plush seats and gold decorations. The evening we attended (March 18) was the premiere of the second set of dancers and therefore it was a full house consisting mainly of relations of the company and regular season ticket holders. Because of this, the audience was enthusiastic from the start and responded warmly to the performance.

The songs were performed in the order that they appear on the album, except for "Damnation's Cellar", which was omitted. As the first song, "Deliver Us", started it was only natural to compare singers and musicians to Elvis and the Brodsky Quartet. The Nicolay Quartet were able to match the Brodskys note for note and it was fascinating to hear classically trained voices replace Elvis' faltering, but emotionally more intense vocals. In fact, the combination of male and female singing even helped to add a little more colour and variation to the lyrics. But of course, this performance had the added dimension of dance and visual interpretation.

The stage was very sparsely decorated. The quartet were set on a slightly raised platform, covered with a plain white sheet, and set against the bare wall at the back of the stage.

On the sides hung long thin white vertical drapes and the overall effect reminded me of the album cover for *The Juliet Letters*. The dancers were dressed equally uniformly, presumably to avoid distracting attention from the choreography, which contained classical elements and which I would describe as "modern" rather than "avant garde".

## THE JULIET LETTERS

a ballet by Philip Taylor

Music by Elvis Costello & the Brodsky Quartet

Performed by the Balletensembles des

Staatstheaters am Gaertnerplatz

Sung by Marianne Larsen & Michael Gann

Music performed by the Nicolay Quartet:

Nikolay Marangozov - violin

Albert Ginthoer - violin

Ludwig Hahn - viola

Hans-Peter Besig - violoncello

Cuvilliestheater Munich

Premiere: 21st February 1999 (Further performances at irregular intervals until July 1999, and possibly beyond)



Rehearsal photo.

After the first few songs, a lack of dance variation combined with the visually uninteresting stage set meant that the focal point of the performance returned to the singers, the lyrics and the music. The dancers were relegated to the position of a side attraction and, at times, were even a distraction. This was a disappointment. I feel that some of the songs are open to imaginative interpretations, but Taylor's choreography was either independent of the song, or was too literal to contribute new ideas.

What I did find positive though was the way the singers interacted with the dancers and acted out small cameos to illustrate the text. In this respect the performance was very successful and Larsen & Gann managed to impose their personalities upon the songs. The one song that I was very disappointed with was "This Sad Burlesque" where I had the feeling that Philip Taylor hadn't done his homework, creating a performance that was totally unrelated to the meaning of the lyrics. The end result was a very flat performance with an unfocused visual image.

Towards the end of the evening I was hoping that Marianne Larsen and Michael Gann would sing the lovely melody of the final song, "The Birds Will Still Be Singing" together. Although this wasn't the case, they did alternately share the vocals and as a duet the song worked well. As a form of introduction to this song Marianne recited the first verse unaccompanied, a nice touch that helped form a climactic close to the evening.

After the ballet was over I was left with the feeling that "this bloke Costello can sure write some good lyrics" - which I'm sure wasn't the reaction that the dancers were hoping for. Despite it's many failings, the ballet was entertaining and I was happy that I'd seen it. However, the high point of the evening didn't come from the singers or dancers, but from the excellent Italian restaurant we discovered after the show!

Excerpt from Southern Germany's leading newspaper *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 23rd February 1999:

## Frau Larsen Hits The Note

...It became increasingly difficult to concentrate on this 75-minute performance because the thin relationships and flat emotions had no weight of their own. In three scenes Taylor interpreted the lyrics literally, which came across as silly. When the singer in 'The Letter Home' thought about his childhood and his first love, two dancers with rolled up trousers fought like school kids over a girl. When the dance wasn't paraphrasing what you were already hearing, you had absolutely no idea what they were trying to say, because each number was fully interchangeable and could have fitted any of the other 20 songs. And then there's the question of costume - why the women wore transparent leggings and jackets when the piece was neither a revue or neo-classic, or why grown men were obliged suddenly to jump about in just bathing trunks and a tie. If *The Juliet Letters* consisted only of the dance then you would soon become very bored and start ticking off the dances, calculating how long there was to go. The saving grace is the musical quality of the piece. One willingly lets oneself be surrounded by the soft cultivated sadness of the songs, the unobtrusive lament of the string instruments, and the brilliant sound of tenor Michael Gann. But only Danish singer Marianne Larsen is able to arouse deeper feelings with her breathtakingly changeable voice, at times as clear as a bell and angel-like, then, a moment later, a deep and dirty blues roar. With Marianne Larsen you heard what this version of *The Juliet Letters* was missing: pop, the out of place note that momentarily wakes you from the darkness of a small theatre. It was the musicians, and especially Marianne Larsen, who received the greatest applause of the evening.

(Eva-Elisabeth Fischer - translation by Paul Hosken)

## Juliet Letters in Canada

On April 21, the Blue Engine String Quartet and singer Chris Church performed *The Juliet Letters* at The Velvet Olive, a bar in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Stephen Pedersen of the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* had this to say about "giving a classical concert in a bar":

"And yet the general effect of this interesting and emotionally intense hour of imaginary letters to a star-crossed lover still conveyed a powerful sense of the anguish, distress and passion of balked love."

"The final effect: an enjoyable evening. Church encored "Romeo's Seance" from the Letters to enthusiastic shouts and cheers".



# BRUTAL ELVIS

Mark Brown talks with  
Elvis Costello



*IT WAS THE SPRING OF '94 and Elvis Costello had his hands full and knew it. The Juliet Letters was his most recent and arguably one of his more difficult releases; paradoxically, it went on to be one of his biggest sellers. And in the liner notes for that album, he sketched out what else he had going on. He had an album in the can comprised of cover versions of his favorite songs, but he wasn't sure when he'd be able to put it out. He had a new album on tap, Brutal Youth, (formerly called Idiophone) a return to his classic form; he had a burgeoning reunion with his band The Attractions; he had vague notions of working with Burt Bacharach; he was waist-deep in not just reissuing his body of work, but re-evaluating and adding to it; and finally, a "musical drama" that he'd originally hoped to have on stage by the previous fall.*

*We know now, of course, that Kojak Variety eventually came out; the Rykodisc reissue program was completed with breathtaking sound and outtakes; Brutal Youth and its follow-up All This Useless Beauty were artistic triumphs that got commercially ignored, leading Costello to leave Warner Bros.; the Attractions reunion imploded again; the Bacharach collaboration happened, and the musical drama is still a mystery.*

*Costello, speaking from New York by telephone and nursing a cold, spoke for about an hour.*

**Q:** So give me a rundown on all these projects you have: *Kojak Variety*, the musical drama, *Idiophone*?

**A:** *Idiophone* was just a working title for the record that started being *Brutal Youth*. By the time I had the *Juliet* record in a sleeve, in my hand, we were getting ready to release that and tour the world. I'd already started some of the recording that turned out to be this record. The record called *Kojak Variety* is covers - a record of my favorite songs that I mastered just the other day. And I think I'm going to have to pick exactly the right moment to release it. You don't want to have it come out with a huge roll of the drums and you certainly don't want to release it two weeks before you've got an album of new

songs. So obviously that's not gonna come out in the next couple of months. Maybe it can come out end of the year. But having waited this long to release such a record, I don't suppose it really matters. It's not such an urgent matter as when you've got new songs and can't wait to get them out.

**Q:** So it's still on tap?

**A:** Oh yes. I can now hear the proper version of it. Unfortunately it got pirated; the quality of those are very poor. Even if you can find the (bootleg) record, you're giving the money to gangsters. I'd much rather (people) bought the proper record as it was intended to be heard. However long it ends up being between the recording and release, I don't think it matters. As far as those (*Juliet Letters*) liner notes, it was always a little ambitious; when I wrote that, I knew I was making promises. And I'm still working on it. (The musical drama) will still happen eventually; it's an ambitious thing to do. Not many people write a script and the lyrics and all the songs. There's not any example of anyone doing that. Usually somebody gets a good story and somebody else writes the lyrics based on that story, and in some cases someone else orchestrates. It's a lot of stuff, a lot of stuff I've got to learn before I'm really confident to go forward. It could be some time. I'm hoping it's towards the end of this year.

**Q:** Can you say what the basis of it is?

**A:** Oh, it would take a long time, probably more time than we've got. It's better speaking about something people can actually see or hear.

**Q:** OK. So what about *Brutal Youth*? How'd that come together?

**A:** Well, I went into the studio with some songs as I was about to finish *The Juliet Letters*. I went in with Pete Thomas and about six songs. I didn't tell the record company or anybody that I was starting to make a record because obviously *The Juliet Letters* was about to come out and that was very different kind of music. I wanted everybody to concentrate on that record even if I was working on another one at the same time. And also the way in which we were working was somewhat experimental in that it was just Pete and I in the studio. We recorded in a very small 8-track studio which happens to be the one in which I made my first record. He and I were playing the songs live, with him on drums and me on electric guitar and singing live. Then I would just double anything else that it needed. Obviously when you're recording in an eight-track studio you don't have to want very much else because there isn't any more room. So we did a few things like that. But I realized that as much as I enjoyed that, there were other kinds of songs that I was in the process of writing that wouldn't suit that kind of recording; we needed more musicians to play them properly. I also thought if that was the case, I'd probably need a producer as well - somebody to sit in the control room and make some judgments. So I asked Mitchell Froom to come in and I asked Nick Lowe to come in. Steve Nieve had come in to play some piano. Shortly after that Mitchell said "You know, there's a couple of these songs that Bruce Thomas would play very well on." The next thing I knew it was the Attractions in the studio again, without anybody really noticing. It sorta just happened. I think people, the few people I've spoken to already, were surprised that it wasn't automatic. But it isn't. It just seemed to be the right thing to do. We gathered them gradually, which is why I don't even think of it as a reunion. We haven't been anywhere; you know, all of the guys have played together on other people's records, Pete has played on all of my albums, he's played on my tours with me since the last time I toured with the Attractions. It just sort of built through necessity. This song needed this musician. Really, in that respect there isn't a lot of difference in the way things developed on this record and the way things developed on *Mighty Like a Rose*, where we'd bring people in because we thought they'd do a

good job on a song. What's different about this is we just brought less of them in; instead of having different musicians on every track, it's almost the same, it's a group of musicians. Even I get to play bass.

**Q: Did recording *Brutal Youth* come as a reaction to *The Juliet Letters*? When you did *King of America* you used very different players, then came back and recorded *Blood and Chocolate* as a roaring, classic Attractions album. After *Juliet Letters*, was *Brutal Youth* just a comfortable way for you to make an album?**

A: No, I don't think so, for two reasons. One, I don't think a lot of the music could easily be described as comfortable - or necessarily is the personal thing of playing together. It wouldn't necessarily be an easy option just because we hadn't done it in some time. And also, you know, a couple of us haven't been getting along terribly well, and to be honest I don't think very many people, including myself, ever expected us to play together again. And so when you think about what's positive about playing together against such a small squabble you may have had some time ago, you start to think 'Well, is it really worth letting that stand in the way of playing?' So it wasn't like I've gone on my holidays, now I've come home and I'll put on my comfortable shoes. It wasn't anything like that. If anything, this is gonna be a little bit more edgy; all things you do should have an element of risk in them. It's how much they benefit the outcome and how much they hinder it really.

**Q: Your voice has gotten better over the years. Early reviews pointed out your vocal limitations, but that changed after *Imperial Bedroom*. On *Juliet Letters*, you took your voice places it hadn't been before.**

A: Well, it's kinda good to think you could get better at something as you get older. (laughs) You learn a bit more and you learn maybe not just to sing things that suit you just so you stay safe. Sometimes you hear great singers and you go see them and you notice they're ducking all the high notes - not because they don't have them anymore, but because they're a bit more fallible on those high notes now and they don't want to run the risk. So they tend to kind of change the melodies to avoid those bits. Funnily enough, I've got this quirky thing where my voice is actually getting higher. I don't suppose it's going to go much higher, but it's actually gotten higher. My range has increased as I got older. Maybe because I just didn't push it up there very much before. But it's not just a question of how high or low you can sing, or how loud. It's down to how much you listen

to what you're thinking. Early on, at least, the first five albums, the delivery is very quick. There were only a few songs with any long, sustained notes in them. There's a lot of words and therefore it's a lot of rattling syllables going by. The way you'd judge the singing is how the attitude of the singing strikes you; you wouldn't exactly say it's very melodious or tuneful, although there are some good melodies on some of the songs. I've had to listen to descriptions of my voice as being 'limited' and 'reedy' and have the words alter my career, particularly when it came to doing the country record. I imagine because people thought I was doing country that I should naturally sing through my nose. Whereas I wasn't trying to pretend I was born in Tennessee; I was singing the songs because they were good love songs, heartfelt songs that I really dug. And if people didn't like them, too bad. I enjoyed recording them, and a lot of people did like them. But obviously from singing them, you learn a little bit more how to control your voice. It perhaps gave me a little more expressive quality when I came back to singing my own songs. I suppose the same could be true now with *The Juliet Letters*. Obviously that was a challenge to find the blend with the Quartet. It was tricky - just technically there were some tricky intervals to sing, and the melodies don't always leap off in obvious ways. They make some quite difficult moves which I had to concentrate on, but at the same time not make it sound like I was doing an exercise or juggling. I still had to communicate what the song was about.

**Q: *Brutal Youth* has full-on rockers like "20% Amnesia" and other songs with delicate, falsetto backing vocals. Did you do all of them?**

A: Yeah, it's all me.

**Q: A lot of Costello fans feel the same way Neil Young fans do - that you CAN toss out a "classic" album anytime you want to, but you choose not to - you explore other avenues instead and don't give them the album they want.**

A: I've heard a little bit of this kind of talk before. Maybe those people have a traditional or conservative view of what I do. They don't like me to deviate too much from that. In some cases it's people who listened to me when I started and that was their ideal of what I should do - maybe the first two, three, four or even five albums. And then after that they started to get a bit perplexed because of the detours. But without doing those things, I think they'd be equally tired of you - aw, he's just trotting out that same old formula, you know? So you really can't have it both ways.

On the other hand, I do understand that attitude - I've had that same attitude about people. I don't like every Neil Young album, and I'm a big Neil Young fan. My favorite stuff is *Ragged Glory* and when he's doing that, I love it. But I went to see him play in a big festival in Dublin last year and he did "Harvest Moon," which I didn't really like that much as a song when I heard the album. It was really beautiful when he sang it; it hadn't struck me what a beautiful tune it was. So maybe sometimes you don't let yourself like something so much because you have it fixed in your head that "Oh, the thing I like about that guy is really that."

**Q: On the other side, do you worry about putting out something that could be perceived as just another Elvis Costello album?**

A: Oh no. Again, you can't have it both ways. Although I'm aware of those people, maybe they get exasperated sometimes by me following my instincts about music and trying to do things that I think are interesting. I believe in the long run you bring something richer to the next music you do, even if it's not as obviously different. There are also people who enter the picture; there are some people whose favorite record of mine is the country album, who would never listen to anything I did prior to that. It never occurred to them that I might have been able to sing. The fact that I was working in collaboration with other musicians opened up the possibilities of the songs. It's not just my songs but songs that we wrote together or in collaboration. I just don't sit around worrying about it because I'm too busy making the records. I can't worry about whether people are gonna be thinking that I'm taking some easy option. It's as easy or hard as it is to make the record; I'm not worrying about how people are gonna perceive it; I'm worrying about whether people are gonna like what they hear. Or get something from it.

**Q: How prolific are you? Your pace in the past few years has been a bit slow by your own standards, yet you're still releasing more music than almost anyone.**

A: I think it's probably a question of ... well, the intense period of releases (I did) simply wouldn't be tolerated now. They just couldn't spare the resources. We recently reissued this box, *Two and a Half Years*, which includes the first three albums. The title reflects the time that those albums were originally made in. That would be unacceptable to a record company now - to expect them to do a really good job on three albums in two and a half years. But it happened then. I think it's probably that I'm working even harder than I



had been. My work rate was less then because I was touring so much. But you don't necessarily hear about all the things I do because some of them are in films and I like to do the things that are interesting to do. Like for a long period I was working on *The Juliet Letters* in the rehearsal and writing process before we got in there and produced the album for the record company. I know I've written over 300 songs now, a lot of those are for other people, and not all of them are on big hit albums. It'd be great if I just wrote for huge successful artists. But on the one hand you'd have to fit in with certain rather limiting styles in order to write for them. And on the other hand I wouldn't have the opportunity to write for other people who are perhaps not at the top of the charts but are great singers. I'm probably working much more now. In the year of *The Juliet Letters*, I actually wrote 50 songs.

**Q: So is there a huge backlog like Prince has in his vaults?**

A: No, because there's a few for myself but most of the songs are meant for other people. I took a weekend and my wife and I wrote a record for this girl, Wendy James. And then I wrote some songs for June Tabor, I wrote a song with Aimee Mann. I don't just work with anybody, but if something comes up and it seems like "Oh, I can do this in a couple of days" and it seems like something I want to do...

**Q: You do a lot of one-off work; there was an extended thing with McCartney, but many one-time-only things with Aimee Mann, John Hiatt, Madness...**

A: Yes. As you meet people and become friendly with them, you fall in some sort of place where you know them. Sometimes it leads on to something else, sometimes they don't. You get invited to be involved in certain projects. I did a track for the Charles Mingus album. I've just been up in Toronto, recording and filming with the Brodsky Quartet, a piece for a film. Those sort of little things, they also help add into your mix of music in your mind when you come to make a record. Rob Wasserman has a record called *Trios* where I did a song with him which we recorded two years ago. Because it's a project that's all collaborations it's taking a while to assemble. So you might do something and it doesn't even appear for two years.

**Q: Has the massive reissue project with Rykodisc changed your relationship with your body of work?**

A: I think when you listen and hear it mastered properly for a change - because it wasn't really when it was initially issued on

CD - we were able to go back and hunt down the best possible rolls of tape and then do the proper job. We weren't trying to update it - if anything, we were trying to make it sound blatantly like those days.

**Q: But did it change the way you felt about the music?**

A: Absolutely. You find that one song stands out better than you remember and another one not quite as well. Obviously I wouldn't have released them, I wouldn't have gotten involved in it, if I didn't think they were worth releasing. They're not obviously going to dominate people's lives; they're 17 years old. But if people still want them, that's great. I was quite happy to get involved and working, doing the annotating to some extent, without trying to judge it all retrospectively. And also to maybe put a few things on there at the end, provided they didn't detract from the original album. Really, you're paying the money for the original album; the extra stuff is a glimpse at maybe what came before or what might have been. And we took this decision to make the extra tracks banded away from the album by some silence. I don't know about you, but I don't like it when it doesn't end the way you remember it ending. It sort of messes with your memory of it.

**Q: Was there a bit of beating the bootleggers in there too? The Flip City demos have been out on CD...**

A: Well, I'm not really aware of them. I don't really comb the world to see if any of these things are actually available. I just know that there have been some. I'm not bothered about it really. I'm sure they're very very low level in terms of sales. It's just not important.

**Q: In listening to the albums again, I noticed that the first three albums all start off with just your voice; it's the first thing you hear on each album. Was that intentional?**

A: I shouldn't think so. It's the first time it's ever occurred to me, actually.

**Q: Demos like "Green Shirt" and "Veronica" are very close to the finished product, but in the past you've talked about extensive rewriting on things like *Imperial Bedroom*. What tends to be the norm for you?**

A: Well, the extensive rewriting might have gone on before you even got as far as demoing. But those songs are obviously recorded quite like the demos. "Green Shirt" I was quite surprised when I found out when that was recorded. It was actually recorded during the *This Year's Model* sessions and I

didn't have a memory of it. I thought maybe I wrote that song close to the recording (of *Armed Forces*). But because it's all so squashed together it all gets a bit confusing, particularly all this time afterwards.

**Q: It's hard here in the States to judge your level of success worldwide.**

A: It's sort of changing. Of course, it's like a big tidal wave, a big ebb and flow. You'll be down in one place and up in another. Coincidentally, *Juliet Letters* was the biggest selling album with my name in Japan. It's already outsold *Spike* and *Armed Forces*, the other two big sellers.

**Q: Did that surprise you?**

A: I was very pleased. It wasn't an expensive record to make, actually. It was all written ahead of time. The only unpredictable part was whether I could get the good performances down in two weeks recording. It was budgeted to sell 100,000 copies and it sold more than twice that around the world, which is a hell of a lot for a chamber music record. And you have to admit that it's not gonna be everybody's speed; it's gonna be difficult for some people to find the time to involve themselves with it that much. And even if they were interested, it was difficult for people to even hear of it, because radio found it very difficult to program. We didn't make it like a pop record: hey, what format is this gonna fit into? I mean, I've never made any record with that in mind, but in this case we just had to hope there would be somebody somewhere who would be brave (and play it). And there were a few. I think Barbra Streisand should record one of the songs.

**Q: Which one?**

A: "Taking My Life in Your Hands." I think she could do that great. There are a few of those songs that you have to think of a different arrangement of the music, different orchestration. Tony Bennett could do some of them.

**Q: Back to *Brutal Youth*: Why tour with the Attractions? Everyone's gonna wanna see that now; there's an appreciation now of things that are gone.**

A: Let's hope so. Fantastic. Where we ended the album, the final recording session, where we mixed it, were with the Attractions. And Nick has his own career. (So a tour) just seemed logical with the four of us in a room together. We were getting along, it sounded great, so let's do it.

**Q: When you play live is there a tendency for the Attractions to overplay? Do you**

have to restrain them?

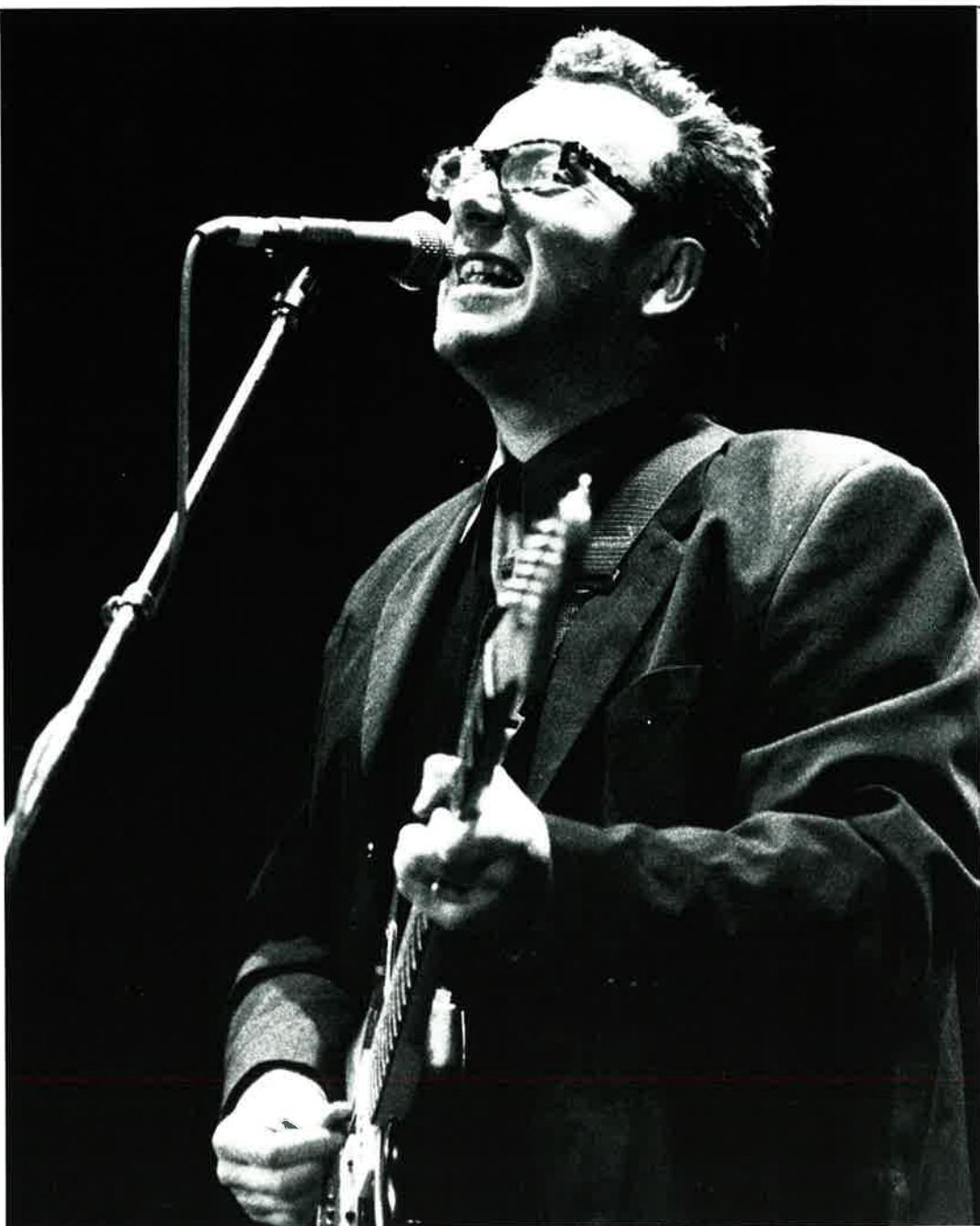
A: I think there were times when we did overplay. Perhaps it can almost be turned into a thing. You can hear it on the (*Brutal Youth*) album; it might be interesting to see if you can even guess (who's playing what). But the balance of the music on this record works. What gives it good pace inside the album is Nick Lowe's style; it's very spare and deep. Then when Bruce is playing it's very melodic, a much more active style. Obviously on those songs where Nick is playing, you hear more of me playing guitar. Live we know that the guitar is part of the sound, but on record it was often buried.

**Q: Did you decide at some point to work on your guitar playing? You're not known as a guitarist, but stuff like "Baby Plays Around" shows you can do some intricate work.**

A: I could always play if I was calm. If I'm not nervous I can play all right. But I do get nervous when I'm playing. Therefore I tend to get a bit frozen up. Some of the lines turn into noise, but sometimes noise is exciting. The fine things just need some concentration. I mean, I never took any lessons. Obviously the guitar style on this album is a lot more towards the noise end of thing. It's not dominating; something like "Rocking Horse Road" is an ensemble piece; there's not one instrument dominating it.

**Q: I interviewed Carlos Santana and he said he helped Bob Dylan before the recording of *Blood on the Tracks*; Dylan had told him he wanted to do with guitar what he was already doing with words.**

A: I sort of know how to do certain things that just fit inside my songs. Sometimes they're unexpected. Sometimes you make a song about negative impulses, like "Thirteen Steps Lead Down." I mention ugly drug music, so we made ugly drug music at the end of it. There's nothing more to it than that; it's completely unambiguous. On the other hand, a song like "All The Rage," the story is more or less being told vocally. Right at the end is a little interjection by the guitar that's quite unexpected; I just picked up the guitar and it just happened. I think that it fits, and that's



*Irvine, CA - May 14, 1994*

*Photo by Kelley A. Swift*

where it is. Obviously someone like Steve Nieve has got a tremendous amount of technique and he can give you any number of options in a way to approach a phrase or a part. And Bruce is the same. And increasingly, Pete as well; he listens much more to the other players and is much more concerned with the tone of his drums. With Tchad Blake, he makes sure that the drums don't sound like something that's just been stuck on. They're actually an instrument that's given a character as well.

**Q: I'm struck by the way you've reworked songs, from the different live version of "Accidents Will Happen" to the acoustic and electric takes of "I Hope You're Happy**

**Now."**

A: There was always another approach to take. Perhaps I'll make an entirely acoustic album someday; it would be a good record to make with just the right songs. I'm always thinking of the records I want to make; there's always another record you can think of to make.

**Q: On this tour, are you throwing in any surprises? There'll be songs people expect to hear, but has the reissue project given you new inspiration for song selection?**

A: Well, I think one thing we did talk about was a discussion to put together (a set). We did used to have a massive repertoire, but after



a seven-year layoff of live work, it's difficult to build that back up again in just a few months. We'll have to be selective about which tunes we try to learn. And we also think it's gonna be interesting for the Attractions to play some of the songs I've recorded in between. They'll obviously give it a different flavor. I personally want to play a few tunes that, in the past, we've played the first few dates of the tour, then they'd get a little bit too difficult, you know. Some of our early tours were fairly abandoned efforts. We sometimes wouldn't exactly be disciplined enough to play certain songs, even songs that seemed on the face of it to be simple. But they need a little bit of thought to be played well. Perhaps we weren't that concerned with that end of what we were doing. We aren't going to come out and pretend to be 23 again - "let's drink a bottle of vodka before we go on stage because that'll make us play better." Whereas it might conceivably make you lose your inhibitions at 23, it'll just make you sick at 39. Therefore we might be able to play some songs that haven't been heard before, for those reasons."

**Q: Any in particular you'd care to reveal?**

A: Oh no. That's what makes the people buy the tickets. There'll be some good ones. I also think that over the years of playing with the Confederates and the Rude 5, I went through some very radical reinterpretations of the songs. I sort of feel now, listening to the music again off the original records, I feel as though they have a place as they sound. Obviously it won't sound exactly the same because voices change, people's approach to their instruments change. But I feel as if it would be almost better to play the arrangements in the more concise form that they were written rather than always be looking for yet another new arrangement of "Watching the Detectives." I feel I've explored a lot of those songs to the extent I care to; I've done "Watching the Detectives" acoustic and I've done it with a swing feel, a very strange hypnotic guitar break with Marc Ribot and I. Some songs stand being picked apart like that and being put back together; some people like hearing you do that. Other people just say "Why don't they play it the way it goes?" So I don't wanna do like an oldies show, because I don't think it'll ever be like that. But I want to approach the songs. If people wanna hear them, they wanna hear them; they wanna hear what they know. It'll be down to how much heart and soul we can put into them to see if they're alive now, or if it's like when you go see a band sometimes and they're just going through the motions. I don't think we'd be doing anything at all if we were just going through the motions.

**Q: What are you listening to these days?**

A: I always try to keep an open mind about everything. I listen to lots of things. I'm always hearing a record I like and it's like a surprise; a dance record I like because of some figure on it or something about the singing. Sometimes you see somebody on TV and you go buy the record and it's different. New groups and stuff like that, I don't know how new any of the things are. By the time they reach the island, they might have been around a while. Of the last year's releases, it would be Bjork's record, I liked Aimee Mann's records, I liked a lot of PJ Harvey as well. They're very contrasting approaches, but I thought they were all very good records. I saw Vince Gill singing a song on TV that was very beautiful, but when I bought the record, I thought the production was very slick. He sang really beautifully; there's a guy I wish would record just a record to hear his voice. They kinda weighted him down in too many other things.

**Q: Can we go over your albums and get your thoughts on them since doing the reissue program?**

A: Oh God, I can't do that. I can't do two words on the things, put in the newspaper my judgment. That's not for me to say, to be honest. It's too personal; even though it's so far away from me, inevitably I'm reconfronted with it. I will inevitably find more fault with that first record because it was the first time in the studio. You can hear all the mistakes but you also hear the enthusiasm. I've always liked the second record. And *Armed Forces*, that was not a record I thought I liked as much, but now I like it even better. Of the upcoming ones, *Trust* was a big surprise to me when I heard it again. In a peculiar sort of way I think it has things in common with the new album, not just because of the Attractions being there. It's the mix between full-out singing rock and roll and the more elegant ballads. On that record you've got something like "Luxembourg" that's certainly pretty wild sounding, then you've got "Shot With His Own Gun." On this record you've got "Amnesia" versus "London's Brilliant Parade." They're the two sides of how to approach songs. One is obviously very, very .... makes some people excited, makes some people jump out of their skin. And the other one of course is more thoughtful, more of a story.

**Q: How does *Imperial Bedroom* hold up for you?**

A: That's the next one I have to listen to. I haven't listened to it in a while and I'm looking forward to hearing that one. I obviously have copies of all my albums, but I

don't play them. I haven't really had any spare times. And when I have spare time I listen to new records or other kinds of music I wanna learn about. I don't sit around like Elvis Presley, listening to my old albums. Or an old movie star, screening his old films. I listen to them when there's a purpose, like going on tour.

**Q: Some of the mastering on the Columbia CDs is just awful. *Imperial Bedroom* really needs help.**

A: I think that'll be the revelation. It's an extremely well-recorded album. The English vinyl version is tremendous. Of all of the records, it'll be the most startling. On each record there are other little additional things, obviously not intended to be listened to every time. Just odd little things that we found that we'd forgotten about. It reminds you of things then sets you off in another direction.

**Q: Any plans for a live album?**

A: I've always said this - it's like an insurance policy, the live album. If anything were to happen to me, my family can put out live albums until the next millennium - I mean the one after this one coming up. But sure enough one day we will. We have a lot of records to reissue first. Plus I have this record of favorite songs, songs that I really like, and I have a couple of other albums I'm thinking about making already, even though we haven't even released this one. There's a lot of music to be made, and I don't know if I'd have the patience myself to wade through a retrospective and live versions. There are also some extra live things appearing on these reissues. We're reissuing the *Hollywood High* with *Armed Forces*. And in the case of *Almost Blue*, we have a very funny few songs from a live set I played at a real hardcore country and western bar in Aberdeen in Scotland where we were presenting our *Almost Blue* set to a bunch of extremely disapproving, real fierce bigoted country and western fans, which was a very funny culture clash. You can even hear the audience grumbling, but we eventually win them over. That was the kind of the way that record was. It wasn't a pushover. I tried to make a point of trying to tell a story around it. Someone coming across it out of the blue, they'd probably be more perplexed by it than when it first came out.

© Mark Brown

*Mark Brown interviewed EC while he was music critic for the Orange County (CA) Register. Portions of this interview were used in a syndicated story but it has never before been printed in its entirety. Mark is now Arts & Entertainment Producer for Microsoft's Denver Sidewalk.*

# ELVIS COSTELLO

Part 8 of  
a continuing journey  
through the  
Costello songbook

## A TO Z

by Dave Farr

*BEING an idiosyncratic journey through the recorded output of Elvis Costello, bounded only by the order of the alphabet, forming a perpetual circle, with allowance for personal opinion, healthy irreverence, and always a request for further information or correction . . .*



### CONGRATULATIONS

One of the surprising choices in the group of songs Elvis recorded and sent to George Jones as cover suggestions, not only because the original lacks any pronounced country feel but also because Elvis had never expressed any opinion of Paul Simon's work. What EC may have focused on is the strong gospel feel in this track from Simon's solo debut.

The arrangement is quite simple,

with a very straight-ahead piano melody, probably played by Elvis himself, and a simple rhythm section (Pete Thomas and Paul Riley). Elvis gives it the Jones touch by adding syllables in lines like "Seems like you've dun-un-un it again-in-in" and dropping the "g" on words like "learning". The over dubbed high harmonies work less well here than on a track like "Brilliant Disguise", distracting somewhat from the simple tone of the track (in the initial lines of the 2nd verse, for example, or the final "woman"). When the harmonies dovetail more closely with the main vocal line ("and many more waiting in line", for example, and on the bridge) the effect is much more pleasing. The vocals are quite effective on phrases like "needless to say" and "won't you answer me please". Overall, the track has a nice atmosphere, reminiscent of a long-lost Charlie Rich out take. It also really sounds like a demo, as vocal breaks and lyric flubs remain.

In a perverse move, "Congratulations" was issued as an extra track to the "London's Brilliant Parade" single in November 1994, but not on either of the two CD singles; it was added only to the 12 inch vinyl version! A CD version has not been released to date. The song has also not yet been performed live by Elvis.



Paul Simon's 1st solo LP.

### COULDN'T CALL IT UNEXPECTED NO. 4

One of the most beautiful songs in the repertoire. This one was premiered at Neil Young's Bridge School benefit in October 1990. Elvis, appearing for the first time on stage with long hair and a full beard, sat at the piano and played this lovely ballad which, though its

lyrics were hard to hear at first listen, seemed filled to its considerable depths with both sadness and hope. At this point, the album version had already been recorded and was released in May 1991 as the final track on *Mighty Like A Rose*. The great accomplishment of this song is its balancing of tragedy and comedy, of despair and hope, which often turn on a moment's breath, on a split second's decision, just as the pause (and the way we choose to hear it) in the last line ("I can't believe/I'll never believe") is the border between faith and agnosticism.

The album version has been criticized for its musical setting, but it is one of the best tracks Elvis has ever released. It's too simple to call the arrangement "circus music", though even Elvis himself has called it a "circus waltz." As with many of the *Rose* tracks, the production is full to overflowing, and there isn't a lot of space for the song to breathe. It's as if "New Amsterdam," another of EC's best waltzes, was recorded with full instrumentation and at a faster pace. However, the later, spartan arrangement of the song in live renditions has tended to make the album version seem faster and more ponderous than it really is. Rather than a circus atmosphere, the song sounds more like a marching band teetering on a brink, a parade that is wandering on a tightwire between darkness and light. The influence of Tom Waits' mid-1980's work can be heard here, as an almost--almost--comical feeling frames vignettes of great seriousness. In the recent concerts with Steve, this blurring of comedy and tragedy has again been underlined, as Elvis' lovely rendition has led into a wordless audience sing-along which is delicate and lovely, only to be intentionally broken by Elvis either leaping way too high for a mock operatic note, or shooting into a falsetto which leaves the audience laughing.

It's a strange assortment of instruments heard here; what sounds most like a horn section is not. There is a tuba, played by Jerry Scheff, and Marc Ribot on E flat horn, but the bulk of the melody is played on a brace of unusual keyboards: a toy piano, a Celeste, a chamberlain, and a calliope. Ribot's banjo also needs to be singled out, as this instrument is rarely used for this kind of coloration, but there it is picking out the notes (no guitars on this track, other than the heavy bass Scheff uses to set the waltz in motion, starting with a thunderous note on the second verse). You hear the toy piano keys being struck, you hear Ribot's horn swirling like a "Penny Lane" solo in the last verse, but for the most part everything is mixed together into a sound like soft trumpets, sounding sad refrains. All of this is set to a very deliberate and almost too precise waltz beat, with a rather flat drum sound.

Elvis' vocal, meanwhile, is one of his best ever. You can hear the beginnings of the open-throated *Juliet Letters* vocalizing on this track. It's startling how liquid the vocal is, how Elvis never seems to stop for breath, never tightens up, never breaks the flow of his vocal line (an unusual thing at the time for this singer). He goes up and down the scale without pausing, and it's a powerful performance. Listen to the way he wistfully sings "sky" in the second verse, or the tearful roar of "orrrr rock the cradle" in the last one.

After the album was completed, Elvis and Richard Harvey, recognizing the beauty of this track's melody, used it for the award-winning *GBH* score, which was recorded in early 1991. The opening and closing titles to the score, as well as the "Pursuit Suite," quote this song extensively. When Elvis toured in the summer of 1991, the song was played in a much more austere style, based around EC on the piano, with the tempo slowed considerably. A recording of this version (from Mansfield, Massachusetts June 21, 1991) was issued as a B side to the "So Like Candy" single. Elvis inserted some other music into the live version; the introduction normally featured a melody which would later be used as the melody to "The Letter Home" from *The Juliet Letters*. (This was edited off the B side release.) In the song's bridge, he included a section out of *GBH*,



which can be heard interpolated with this melody in the "Pursuit Suite" and the closing titles. Elvis opens the live version delicately, with no other accompaniment besides his own piano. Bass and a keening Ribot guitar join in. EC's vocal is more halting than on the album track, the phrases are cut up into three or four word pieces, as the waltz tempo is shaped more by EC's breathing than the music, which avoids the waltz setting. The live bridge was often a curious moment, as EC brought one hand up to "conduct" the Rude 5 in the *GBH* quote, while he continued to play the keyboard with his other hand. Here, Larry Knechtel gets to add organ coloration. The song then returns to a slow tempo, with a plaintive finish, as Ribot's guitar wails behind Elvis.

This was a highlight of the set throughout the year. At the end of the tour in Australia, sound check rehearsals found the more up tempo version working its way back in. In at least one show (Melbourne September 23, 1991), the slower version was played but then the song was played out in the tempo of the album version. It is possible that a complete up tempo version may have been performed during this leg of the tour, but no reports have surfaced.

This song disappeared from live shows for several years thereafter, resurfacing in the Costello/Nieve shows in Italy in 1998, wherein Elvis would conclude the show by walking down into the audience and singing the song unmiked, belting out the tune (with a few minor lyric changes) the natural way. Steve's accompaniment, incidentally, was more the up tempo version than the slow one. Perhaps as a result, Elvis' vocal became unchained again, as he sang the lines operatically, approaching the magic feel of his recorded version. This rendition has continued to be featured as a set closer in the recent 1999 Costello/Nieve performances.

## CRAWLING TO THE USA

Although this track did not gain release until it appeared on the *Americathon* soundtrack in the summer of 1979, Elvis had performed it live in the earliest sets with the Attractions, immediately after the band was formed. The 1977 version, with a drum intro which was subsequently used to play in "Mystery Dance" live, was quite a bit faster and "punkier", with backing vocals by the Attractions, several different lyrics ("you had better not go too far / Don't go sleeping on the subway / you don't know who they are / Crawling to the USA") and a raw attack. It actually sounds a lot like the Ramones, and EC even does a "1,2,3,4" count-in. After the first early tour of the UK, however, the song vanished until Elvis was asked to contribute to the *Americathon* soundtrack in conjunction with his brief appearance in the film. While in Australia at the end of 1978, the band went into the studio and recorded the track, produced by EC himself in the first Elvis and the Attractions release to be produced solely by Elvis.

The song is a solid up tempo late 1970's Elvis song, and it's filled with clever production touches which show that Elvis had learned from Nick Lowe how to make a song interesting. The first verse rolls in on a drum attack which has the drums churning in both channels under double tracked vocals, while Steve's organ bubbles up in the right channel. Bruce contributes a very animated and clever bass. The vocals are a bit too shiny and hissy, and the metallic guitar flailing underneath adds to this distraction. Megaphone harmonies are added and provide a link to the chorus with an elongated "US Aaaaaaaa..." The 2nd verse and 3rd verse take the big drums and the double tracked main vocal away but substitute a cute little guitar lick. The drums and double tracking return for the last verse, followed by the same figure that started the song, thus completing a circle. The song ends with faux Beach Boy style harmonies.

A lip-synched version of the song provided perhaps the only thrilling moment in the film, although unfortunately only about 1/3 of the performance was shown. After its 1979 release (followed by

inclusion on the *Taking Liberties* and *Ten Bloody Marys* compilations), the song never found its way back into the live set, and has not been played live by EC since 1977.

## CRIMES OF PARIS

"Crimes of Paris" cannibalizes part of its chorus from "Suffering Face", a song left off *King of America* and recorded around the same time. The *Blood and Chocolate* track has an irresistible melody, and some very memorable and intriguing lyrics. The lyrics also feature a strange assortment of pop references, from Little Willie John to Hank Williams. Another highlight is a great harmony vocal from Cait O'Riordan. The production could serve the song better; the instruments are for the most part squeezed behind EC's vocal in the center of the sound stage. It's a very mono-sounding track. The CD especially accents the hissy, compressed nature of the recording.

An acoustic guitar is pounded by the little hands of concrete until EC enters with one of the most sneering vocals he has mustered since the 1970s; however, though the vocal style is right off *This Year's Model*, the emotion conveyed is of humor rather than any forced or tightly wound anger. The sneer is casual, and may be with a smile. A very simple rhythm track backs him up, and there are hardly any keyboards to hear. The over dubbed, very loud "oooo's" open up and warm the sound at each chorus. The bridge is quite strange, as EC and Cait do a bit of "Magical Mystery Touring" with their backing hoots and hollers. Nick Lowe, as producer, nudges the volume up gradually on these shouts and spreads them out into the left and right channels, finally getting to a stereo sound just as the bridge ends. The ensuing verse is a bit warmer and louder, as Elvis sounds closer than before.



*Elvis & Cait from 1996 in Japan.*

"Crimes of Paris" was first played live during the 1986 Spinning Songbook tour, when it was a staple of the *Blood and Chocolate* nights in each city, and also sometimes placed on the Songbook itself. The live version was more delicate, with the rhythm section more fluid and quiet. Highlights were the occasions when Cait would join EC on stage to harmonize on the song as on the record (occasionally even doing the shouts on the bridge), resulting in a lovely duet on the refrain. Towards the end of the tour, this duet would tail off into magic choruses of "Purple Heather" and "Wild Mountain Thyme." EC also played this one solo during the 1986 tour, again sometimes joined by Cait, and reprised it once as a solo number during his short stint opening for Bob Dylan in 1995.

## CRY CRY CRY

What seemed like a natural choice for inclusion on the *Almost Blue* LP never quite made it. A big Johnny Cash fan, Elvis went into the Nashville studios with this one in his bag, and it was recorded several times. The up tempo flavor of Cash's template might have made for a nice contrast to the somewhat lugubrious nature of some of the other tracks being cut. Actually, EC and the Attractions recorded it at varying tempos in different takes. The version released as a B side to the live version of



Johnny Cash

"I'm Your Toy" in April 1982 is a rather bluesy one which leaves out most of the Cash trademarks. We start with Billy Sherrill's voice ("Rolling!") and then Steve's very bluesy piano sets the tone. John McFee does a nice howling pedal steel throughout. Elvis is singing a very slowed down blues version here, and it's no surprise that a medley of "Cry Cry Cry" and "Blues Keep Calling" (see *BB16*) was also taped during these sessions. The pace picks up a bit in the chorus, a bit more of a boogie woogie feel. EC's vocal is a little overextended at times, but only becomes annoying when the title is repeated several times at the conclusion. For whatever reason, the finished track was left off the record. Nevertheless, when EC and the A's (with John McFee) played their country western show in Aberdeen, Scotland at the end of July 1981, "Cry Cry Cry" was in the set (and given its live debut). The song was also played over footage of Nashville in the South Bank Show, promoting the album release in November 1981. After the album's release, EC again played the song live at one of the *Almost Blue/Almost 82* marathons, in Los Angeles. After that, it vanished again and has not been played since.

When *Almost Blue* was reissued in 1994 by Rykodisc, it was the most augmented of the collection (the original album barely lasted more than 30 minutes). Strangely, however, not all of the extant B sides were collected onto the new disc. One of those left off was the studio version of "Cry Cry Cry." However, a live version from the Aberdeen show was included in its place. It is much more successful, and adds back much of the Cash sound, as McFee plays rhythm guitar and plays the Tennessee Two style rockabilly licks from Cash's version, including a short instrumental bridge and coda. EC's vocal is much faster and more animated (with echo on it for good measure); overall, the effect is much like the cover of "Why Don't You Love Me," which can be heard to follow this cut in the live version (presumably this was towards the end of the set). This is how it was played in Los Angeles, but strangely it was not made a regular part of the set on that tour.



## DAMNATION'S CELLAR

Many, if not most, of the songs in *The Juliet Letters* are not so much "classical" as they are ballads, using string instruments. Unlike some of the more formal pieces EC has written for classically trained singers, the *Juliet* songs are more easily accessible, melodic numbers which happen to use a string quartet in place of a larger ensemble. Some of the selections have their roots in music hall or light opera, and

"Damnation's Cellar" is a good example of this. Set in the middle of the most somber series of songs in the cycle, "Damnation's Cellar" lightens the mood for a few moments. The strings keep it light and airy throughout, almost bouncy, and the cello, the instrument of

solemnity, often plays a humorous bass part here, even going into a kind of walking bass line in the last verse. In the second verse, the strings become more active, lending even more effect on the back end of the verse when the instruments drop off to the bouncing cello notes. (A moment heightened by the expert way in which Elvis' vocal rises and then drops off on phrases like "or at LEAST remove the BLAME"). The final verse gets even sprightlier with the smaller instruments being plucked all the way through. EC's vocal is pitched higher than most of the songs in this cycle, and requires him to spew out a lot of words in a short time (an operetta hallmark) but he does a sterling job of communicating while enunciating, and he navigates expertly through keys (even alluding to the "major" and the "minor" in the style of "Every Time We Say Goodbye").

All of the Juliet Letters were performed, in sequence, in all of the concerts on the 1993 tour to promote the record. EC and the Brodskys also performed "Damnation's Cellar" live on a UK radio chat appearance in January 1993. Since the tour, this song has not appeared in the various programs EC and the Quartet have played.

## DARLING, YOU KNOW I WOULDN'T LIE

This cover of a Wayne Kemp/Red Lane song originally recorded by Conway Twitty was recorded for *Almost Blue* in May 1981 but not released until it was added as a bonus track on the Ryko reissue of the LP in 1994. (A different studio take had previously surfaced on bootlegs.) It's not a memorable song, notable mainly for the fact that Steve plays organ rather than piano, a rarity in these sessions, especially on the slower numbers. The lyrics are pretty clever, but EC's delivery is a bit too earnest and lacks some of the deadpan humor from which it might benefit. It has never been performed live.

## DAYS

This Ray Davies number was first performed acoustically with Chrissie Hynde at the AIMS Gala in February 1988, along with "The Windows of the World" and "There's A Place." Hynde had agreed to do a short opening set for the benefit and asked Elvis to help her out. They worked up these three covers. That version was eventually released on a commercial video of the concert. It's a lovely acoustic duet. Elvis began performing "Days" solo during his 1989 solo tour, and continued to insert it into his solo spots in the Rude 5 tour that summer. Often it was performed back to back with "Alison," and the renditions from those tours are delicate and lovely.



Ray Davies

A full band version was recorded in 1990 in Barbados for the *Kojak Variety* sessions, although the track was released prior to *Kojak*, because of its inclusion on the 1992 soundtrack to Wim Wenders' *Until the End of the World*. The album track is quite interesting, a multilayered piece that never forsakes the simple melody at its heart. EC is credited with playing "feedback guitar", and indeed a kind of distant screeching circles around the track, bringing to mind seagulls calling. An interesting drum pattern is set by Pete Thomas, and Marc Ribot plays chiming electric guitar notes in the right channel. EC's vocal is slightly echoed in the left channel. It's a heavy production, (by EC and Kevin Killen) but never overbearing.

The chorus is more pristine, as the feedback washes back and we have a Wuritzer and Hammond pulse under EC's vocal. The drums drop back in on "I wish today..." and over dubbed harmony vocals by EC join in. Elvis adds further background harmonies in the



2nd verse, as the harmonies begin to do a repeat chant of the main lines. Ribot does a marvelous trailing guitar line in this verse, following EC's vocal with sweet notes. The stacked harmonies continue in the chorus. Elvis' vocal gets very quiet and breathy here.

The last verse swirls up from these very quiet moments, as the bass becomes more prominent and we head towards an ending that reminds one of "A Day In The Life", as the instruments swirl to a common note, the aftermath of which is flashing feedback and some random guitar blasts, all played rather low. It's a very effective track, taking a simple and lovely song and making it sound rather epic (and avoiding any boredom caused by repetition) without sacrificing the inherent beauty of the song to production tricks.

"Days" was not played live again until 1995, when EC, the Attractions, and James Burton and Marc Ribot played a one-off in London to promote the release of *Kojak*. This marked the only full band performance of the song. Since then, it has not been played live.

## DEAR SWEET FILTHY WORLD

In introducing this song at the *Juliet* concerts, Elvis would say that he and the Quartet members each composed "suicide notes" separately and then these were woven into one song. The music seems to have been done the same way, yet it is credited entirely to Elvis. Perhaps because he was stitching together different types of narrative in the lyrics, Elvis has used an overture style here, as the melody and arrangement change several times during the song, so that we seem to be hearing several different songs combined into one piece.

The introduction is a lovely melody line, with one of EC's best vocals on the record. The short, sweet swell of "but there is a VEIL drawn....over...all of that" (echoed then by the strings) is one of the loveliest moments in all of EC's music. A brief quote from Gershwin leads up to a different theme ("I know you'll probably say...") and then a third section, where the music gets more agitated and the lyrics a bit awkward ("my hands, your neck, I might have wrung"). But before you can worry too much about that lyric, the strings all unite to announce the next theme, which Elvis then repeats in the vocal line ("Don't try to find me...") whereon we are treated to a different theme ("I am not leaving you...") with a buildup on the cello, then the chilling lines "life is dark, and cold as the sea..." A final theme begins here ("Embrace me"), accompanied by a winding cello, as Elvis hits a crescendo on "I can't go on", repeating it and then dropping down precipitously (shades of "I Still Have That Other Girl", and more heart wrenching), on the last "can't...go..on", ending with a delicate "I must close now." The cello repeats his line, and then a somewhat jarring quartet sequence plays us out, seeming too active and robust (although it perhaps should be viewed as the aural equivalent of the plunge into the ocean that is hinted at in the lyric), but it is redeemed by a very sorrowful violin line which ends the song.

All of this may read as quite confusing and patchwork, but it doesn't sound that way; instead it is a beautiful suite of music that plays perfectly well and is one of the highlights of the song cycle.

As with all of the *Juliet* Letters, this was played in all *Juliet* performances on the 1993 tour. It has not been played since.

## DEEP DARK TRUTHFUL MIRROR

Recorded mainly in New Orleans and featuring not only the Dirty Dozen Brass Band but an incredible performance by Allen Toussaint on piano, this song is one of the standout tracks on *Spike*. It was not previewed live but was first performed when EC was promoting *Spike* solo in Europe in early 1989. A live in-studio solo session was also played for Richard Skinner's BBC radio show.

The album version is one of the best recordings EC has made. As with most of the *Spike* tracks, different parts were recorded separately, with Elvis traveling to different studios and different

nations to gather the part and the player he was seeking. In New Orleans, he had the Dirty Dozen Brass Band record their horn charts and brought in New Orleans piano legend, and producer/songwriter, Toussaint to play grand piano. (EC had previously worked with Toussaint on his cover of "Walking on Thin Ice", and had played several Toussaint songs live, such as "All These Things".) Toussaint's playing is simply fabulous on this track, elegant and warm, never repeating the same line twice, and crystal clear.



Allen Toussaint

Michael Blair adds some percussion with a "parade drum" (which sounds like its name). The arrangement leaves all kinds of space for EC, which makes this a great live number, as each line can be sung so many ways. On the chorus, the Dirty Dozen shake the song out with a quick figure, then hit two short and three long notes over the title. Drums edge us into the next verse, with Toussaint hitting higher notes. Here's where you start to note the absence of a bass part. After the recording was finished in New Orleans, Elvis scrapped plans to add bass; it seemed superfluous. (The drums are given a low profile as well).

On the bridge, Toussaint hits high, dancing notes, then a great couple of lines under "and it's his story you'll flatter..." The horns rise up but never overwhelm. Toussaint then shifts to widely spaced, pinpoint notes on the last verse, as the song's subject wanders into delirium. The horns slide through the verses, a New Orleans dirge quality to them. Cymbal crashes light up the last chorus. Elvis belts out the final words, and then Allan Toussaint is allowed, quite properly, to play it out, with firm and delicate notes. One cannot tire of listening to the music on this cut.

Live, "Deep Dark Truthful Mirror" became a staple. It was played at all of the 1989 solo shows. In the summer tour with the Rude 5, the track became a major number, sometimes used to introduce the band members while the instrumentation carried on. Jerry Scheff played the tuba on stage, and Ribot his E flat horn, and an extended coda was added (with Elvis singing "la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la") over a New Orleans style march. The elegance of the album version has never been matched live, but a more muscular version now emerged. EC's vocals on the album sometimes seemed a little rushed, or too jubilant. Live, they stretched out more slowly and became more and more dramatic. The song continued to be featured in the 1991 set, although this one lacked some of the coloration of the larger 1989 band; a live version from the *MTV Unplugged* appearance that year was issued on a compilation of songs from the series (*The Unplugged Collection, Volume 1*). Here you hear the acoustic intro that has started the song since 1989, and the more standard arrangement necessitated by a full band version. Although there is less space in the arrangement, it remains a song where the vocal melody line can be twisted and shifted at whim, and this makes it exciting to hear every time. One would love to hear Van Morrison do this song.

Obviously dear to EC's heart, "Mirror" was one of the few songs from *Spike* (or *Mighty Like a Rose*) to be included in the reunion tour with the Attractions in 1994. Highlights here were Steve's keyboards, switching from horn-like synths to the grand piano. It stayed in the set through 1995 solo appearances, 1995 Beacon Theater shows (prefaced by a bit of "Speak Darkly My Angel"), the 1996 band tour, and subsequent tours with Steve in 1996, 1998, and 1999. Of particular interest was the version in Nashville in 1997, at a tribute to the Fairfield Four, where Elvis inserted a verse of Smokey Robinson's "You've Really Got A Hold On Me" into the song.



The Latest EC News

## Costello & Nieve Tour Europe

### April

- 12 Amsterdam, Netherlands - Theatre Carre
- 14 Liverpool, England -Royal Court Theatre
- 15 London, England - Royal Albert Hall
- 16 Birmingham, England - Symphony Hall
- 18 Manchester, England - Apollo Theatre
- 20 Belfast, Northern Ireland - Waterfront
- 21 Dublin, Ireland - National Concert Hall
- 23 Glasgow, Scotland - Royal Concert Hall
- 25 Zurich, Switzerland - Kongresshaus
- 26 Milan, Italy - Teatro Nuovo
- 27 ~~Rome, Italy - Palagisalfa (CANC)~~
- 30 Copenhagen, Denmark - Falkoner Th.

### May

- 1 Stockholm, Sweden - Circus
- 2 ~~Frankfurt, Germany - Alte Oper (CANC)~~
- 4 Barcelona, Spain - Teatro Tivoli
- 5 Hamburg, Germany - Musikhalle
- 7 Vienna, Austria - Konzerthaus
- 8 Cologne, Germany E-Werk
- 9 Munich, Germany - Muffathalle
- 10 Berlin, Germany - Sendesaal

## North America

### May

- 24 Vancouver, BC - Queen Elizabeth Theatre
- 26 Seattle, WA - Paramount Theater
- 27 Eugene, OR - Silva Concert Hall
- 29 Las Vegas, NV - The Joint
- 30 San Diego, CA - Copley Symphony Hall

### June

- 1 Los Angeles, CA - Wiltern Theater
- 2 Los Angeles, CA - Wiltern Theater
- 4 Santa Rosa, CA - Luther Burbank Center.
- 5 San Francisco, CA - Guinness Fleadh
- 6 Phoenix, AZ - Celebrity Theatre
- 9 Denver, CO - Paramount Theater
- 11 Milwaukee, WI - Riverside Theater
- 12 Chicago, IL - Guinness Fleadh
- 13 Minneapolis, MN - Orpheum Theater
- 15 Rochester Hills, MI - Meadowbrook Pav.
- 16 Toronto, ONT - Massey Hall
- 18 Montreal, QUE - St. Denis Theatre
- 19 Boston, MA - Guinness Fleadh
- 20 Baltimore, MD - Pier Six Concert Pav.
- 22 Cleveland, OH - Nautica Stage
- 23 Vienna, VA - Wolf Trap
- 25 Philadelphia, PA - Tower Theater
- 26 New York, NY - Guinness Fleadh

## European Festivals

This summer will find Costello & Nieve performing at the following events:

- July 8 - Montreux Jazz Festival
- July 10 - London Fleadh Festival
- July 11 - North Sea Jazz Festival - The Hague, Netherlands
- July 12 - Oostende - Belgium
- July 17 - Pori Jazz Festival - Pori, Finland

## New Costello Recording on Movie Soundtrack

In May, a new Elvis Costello recording of a classic love song will grace the soundtrack to a new film starring Hugh Grant and Julia Roberts. *Notting Hill: Music From and Inspired by the Motion Picture* will be released by Island Mercury Records and will include EC's version of "She", a song by French vocalist/songwriter Charles Aznavour. EC's recording will feature during the opening and closing sequence of *Notting Hill*, the latest production by the team responsible for *Four Weddings And A Funeral*, which opens on May 28.

EC told GLR DJ Pete Curran the story of how he came to be involved: "It's not hard to go into the studio with a 96-piece orchestra and giant pictures of Julia Roberts to sing this pretty hip song. I had a go at singing live with the orchestra, but for technical reasons I had to be isolated. But at least I had the experience of singing a take or two with the orchestra to get the feel of it. We had to really get the timing because the sequence of the film that opens the movie had already been put together and they had used the original Aznavour recording as their cutting template. Then they had tested the film in America and I think that some of the American audience had a problem with understanding Charles Aznavour's accent. That's obviously the way the film will open in France because the song is so famous there by Aznavour. But they decided to give it a go having somebody who could enunciate in English. It allowed me a little bit of license to interpret it my way but the arrangement is largely the same as Aznavour's. It gives it a freshness, a brand new version. I don't think I'm going to do a whole album like that in the future, but it's a great place to visit."

Thanks to the late cancellation of his



Photo: Kevin Mazur

Rome concert on the same night, EC was able to attend the world premiere of the film at London's Odeon, Leicester Square on April 27. Elvis is seen here with Shania Twain and the film's stars Hugh Grant and Julia Roberts.

## LP Titles Once Considered

### This Year's Model

The King of Belgium  
Girls Girls Girls

### Armed Forces

Emotional Fascism  
Platinum Project

### Trust

More Songs About Fucking and Fighting

Crank

Cats and Dogs

### Imperial Bedroom

A Revolution of the Mind  
P.S. I Love You  
Music To Stop Clocks

### Blood and Chocolate

The Christian Ghost of Lenny Bruce

### Spike

The Beloved Entertainer

### All This Useless Beauty

A Case For Song

## TV Star Pete Thomas Moves to LA

Back in February, Pete Thomas moved house from London to Los Angeles to take up a new job working on Fox TV's legal comedy/drama series *Ally McBeal*. The position, scheduled to last for 3 years, involves Pete in one day's work per week at the TV studio, leaving him with plenty of time to undertake any session work which might come his way. He will actually be seen on screen - "unless the audience reacts badly and they send me home!" - as part of the backing band for the show's regular singer Vonda Shepard (she plays the house performer at the local nightclub frequented by the program's title character and her co-workers).

Naturally, when it came to putting together a portfolio of press cuttings to help convince the US immigration authorities that he was a worthy addition to the workforce, Pete turned to *BB* for help. We managed to stitch together a page or two of glowing reviews and, at Pete's personal request, made sure to leave out the one which mentioned "cymbal-crashing ineptitude!"

Pete, incidentally, remains in regular contact with EC, but has been advised that his services will probably not be required for a while; Elvis wants to carry on working with Steve Nieve for the moment and has not really decided what he wants to do thereafter. "I can't imagine us not ever working together again at some point in the future," Pete assured *BB*.



## 200 Cigarettes

Elvis makes another of his many cameos in this film, this time playing himself. The film is set in New York on New Year's Eve 1981, a date on which Elvis actually was in the Big Apple playing the Palladium. EC makes a very brief appearance in the first part of the movie, walking between characters played by Courtney Love (her second film with Elvis!) and Paul Rudd, and muttering "Gangway!". Throughout the narrative, it's mentioned that a "band" is playing somewhere, and eventually it turns out that the band was Elvis (and presumably the Attractions), whom we are told came to the party thrown by Martha Plimpton's character, and danced the night away.

Elvis is seen in Polaroids in the film's closing sequence partying with the rest of the characters, and in the most memorable sequence, the character played by Janeane Garofalo wakes up New Year's Day with Elvis in her bed. Here we see only EC's feet (actually Elvis told *E!* that he used a "foot double" for the scene), while Janeane, lying between the feet, listens to EC mutter and curse because his glasses are missing "again." The glasses turn up in Plimpton's apartment, where she, an EC fanatic who has had her copies of *My Aim is True* and *Armed Forces* on display, voraciously licks party dip off the lenses. EC's music is prominently displayed in the film as well, with "Pump It Up" used for a dance scene in a bar and "Peace, Love and Understanding" as the backdrop for the climactic rush to the party.

MTV's Chris Connelly summed it up nicely at the close of MTV's *200 Cigarettes Premiere Party*: "Thanks to Elvis Costello, who looms like a god over this film, for his talent, his artistry and the fact that he's gained almost as much weight since '81 as I have".

## EC Attends Dusty's Funeral



On March 12, Elvis had the sad duty of attending Dusty Springfield's funeral in Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, where the 59-year-old singer had died, after a five-year battle against breast cancer, on March 2. Speaking during that part of the service reserved for "A Tribute From Her Peers", EC told a packed congregation at St. Mary the Virgin Church that Dusty used to sing in "a

voice so unique and precious," adding that "it was always the voice with its sense of longing that demanded your attention." He also read the following tribute from Burt Bacharach: "You could hear just three notes and you knew it was Dusty. It was such a rare and beautiful voice. I just want to add my thanks for every beautiful note Dusty sang."

Neil Tennant of the Pet Shop Boys and



Elvis at Dusty's funeral.

Lulu also spoke during a service which featured Dusty's music prominently and which was relayed to hundreds of fans gathered outside the church via a live video-link. Although EC confessed to being "kind of surprised" at his invitation to speak at the service, he told John Kelly that "it does no harm for people who have made a lot of records to show that they're fans". *BB* readers should need no reminder of just how big a Dusty Springfield fan he was since Elvis has missed few opportunities to champion her music (and, of course, has performed "I Just Don't Know What To Do With Myself" from the earliest days of his professional career). It is a shame to report that the only musical collaboration between the pair turned out to be something of a disappointment.

Following her early breakthrough with folk trio The Springfields and her massive international success as a solo performer, Dusty's career fell into something of a slump after the critically acclaimed but poor-selling *Dusty In Memphis* album was issued in 1969.

There were several failed attempts to resurrect her commercial fortunes before her rescue by the Pet Shop Boys in 1987 and, sadly, one of them was the 1982 Casablanca album *White Heat* for which she elected to record an Elvis Costello song. It was a song which he, ironically, had written with her in mind years earlier. "I wrote 'Just A Memory' in 1978 and my only contact with her really was over that song. She was really funny. I had occasion to sing her a new verse I'd written specially for when she got to record it in about 1982 and she teased me a little bit because I had a sore throat." Regrettably, the album fell victim to the musical fashions of the early 80s and is never likely to be counted among Dusty's best work (one recent correspondent to *BB* noted, succinctly, that the sleeve credits no less than four hairdressers...). At

Nonetheless, EC's official C.V. rarely fails to list Dusty Springfield proudly among those artists who have recorded his songs. Dusty was given an OBE in the UK New Year's Honours List, while she was in the final stages of her battle with cancer, and was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame just days after her death. Perhaps a more meaningful tribute to her memory, however, is the loving restoration and reissue of her fabulous music currently being undertaken by Rhino Records.

## Elvis Caught Watching Chicks

Irish schoolgirl band Chicks marked the release of their new EP *Little Monkeys With Lots Of Money* at the end of March by playing an in-store set at Dublin's Virgin Megastore. Who should happen to be passing and find himself attracted into the store by the noise but "Eighties new wave singer/songwriter" (description courtesy of *Melody Maker*) Elvis Costello. Chicks' Nineties singer/guitarist Annie Tierney reported that EC was spotted "gettin' jiggy with it and bopping about" in the audience. She added: "We wanted to get his autograph afterwards, but we couldn't get through the crowd to get to him. He bought the record and then left." EC swiftly put his new purchase to good use when he played a track from it ('Daria') during his visit to John Kelly's RTE Radio 1 show *The Mystery Train* a couple of days later. "I was just walking down by the Liffy and there they were, in a shop, playing for the people," he told radio listeners, passing on the admirably sensible advice that the girls should "stay in school and then rule the world".

## Book News

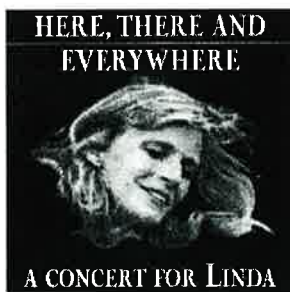
Brian Hinton's much-delayed *Let Them All Talk: The Music Of Elvis Costello* was finally published in the UK by Sanctuary Press on May 27 (ISBN 1860741967). A change to the publisher's distribution arrangements meant that Brian's original manuscript had been gathering dust for many months, obliging him to return to a project which he had thought completed to bring the text up to date. Bet he was pleased! A full review of the book will appear in *BB21*.

Meanwhile, the slightly-revised paperback edition of Tony Clayton-Lea's *Elvis Costello: A Biography* was published in the UK by Andre Deutsch on January 31 (ISBN 0233993398). At



least the book now has a decent cover, although of course it shouldn't be judged by that [*Ouch!* - Ed.]. Mr Clayton-Lea's tome was also published for the first time in the USA in April by Fromm International.

## A Concert for Linda



Shortly before setting out for Amsterdam to open the European leg of their *Lonely World Tour*, Elvis & Steve took part in a special tribute concert

dedicated to the memory of Linda McCartney who succumbed to breast cancer last April. *Here, There and Everywhere - A Concert For Linda* took place at the Royal Albert Hall in London on April 10, 1999. "This is the show that Linda, myself, and our friends talked about often," said organiser Chrissie Hynde. "It was [writer] Carla Lane who suggested we finally do it now, for Linda. We hope this show will reflect something of Linda's personality and her upbeat sense of humour." All 4,000 tickets - priced between £25 and £75 - were snapped up within an hour of going on sale in March, with proceeds going to various animal welfare causes that Linda was involved with. Among those offering their services were The Pretenders, Johnny Marr, Tom Jones, Neil Finn, Marianne Faithfull, Sinéad O'Connor, Ladysmith Black Mambazo and George Michael. Elvis had been one of the first performers to commit himself to the project when Hynde was setting it up last year, and deliberately planned his 1999 activities to keep the date free. On the night, Costello & Nieve performed a three-song set, opening in the company of the Duke String Quartet with "Warm And Beautiful" (a song which Paul McCartney wrote about his wife from his 1976 album *Wings At The Speed Of Sound*). This was followed by the McCartney-MacManus composition "That Day Is Done" - performed by C&N alone - and, to close, a rousing "Peace, Love & Understanding" for which the dynamic duo were augmented by The Pretenders (minus Chrissie) who were serving as "house band" for the night. Elvis took time to pay a heartfelt tribute to Linda from the stage, speaking movingly of her efforts to put him at his ease when he first undertook the daunting task of writing songs with Paul. ("Elvis Costello provided the night's most open-hearted testimonial with his reminiscence of Linda's kind attentions while he was working with Paul some years ago," reported *The Times*.) After George



Elvis and Macca play for Linda.

Michael had closed the official bill, there was a tumultuous reception when the unbilled Sir Paul himself took to the stage. Although he had attended rehearsals beforehand, he had remained unsure whether he would be able to perform right up to the last minute. An emotional rendition of "Let It Be" saw him backed by a chorus featuring EC, Chrissie Hynde and George Michael. This was followed by the old Ricky Nelson hit "Lonesome Town" (a favourite of both Paul and Linda) and, finally, "All My Loving" - both of which featured Elvis playing guitar and singing harmony vocals (which must have been a pretty surreal experience for a one-time Fab Four fan club member). The concert was recorded by the BBC for TV and radio transmission a week later.

## More in Passing: Ackles / Bernelle



American singer-songwriter David Ackles died of cancer on March 2 at the age of 66. Between 1968 and 1974, he released four commercially unsuccessful albums (on Elektra and Columbia) but enjoyed a cult following in Britain which included Elvis Costello among its ranks. In the June 1995 issue of *Q*, EC selected Ackles' "Down River" as his "Record That Changed My Life". In an Reuters obituary, Costello said "It is a mystery to me why his wonderful songs are not better known." Elvis also sang a verse of Ackles' "Sonny Come Home" live in 1989, as part of "Alison".

German cabaret singer Agnes Bernelle also recently passed away. In 1984, Elvis served as Executive Producer for her LP *Father's Lying Dead on the Ironing Board* (produced by Philip Chevron), the first release for Costello's IMP Records. Elvis, Agnes and Phil graced the cover of the May 11, 1985 *NME* for an interview the three did with writer Mat Snow.

## Grammy Award TV

Although Elvis' first-ever Grammy win was not televised, having been awarded prior to the big broadcast, EC was present at the ceremonies and did manage to make it on camera for several interview shows. *Entertainment Tonight* interviewed him outside the auditorium for a quick chat during which Elvis plugged his upcoming Austin Powers cameo. The *E!* entertainment cable channel interviewed EC outside before the ceremony, announced his and Burt's win live on-air, and then had the duo in the studio for a chat with their hosts, including Joan Rivers' daughter Melissa, who claimed that Elvis' music had been on her car stereo since she could drive. EC and Burt seemed very pleased with their Grammy win. When Rivers suggested that it was old hat for them to win a Grammy, Elvis replied, "Not for me!"

Perhaps the strangest interview was with Johnny Lydon (Rotten), interviewing stars outside the auditorium to promote his upcoming VH1 series. Elvis told Johnny he felt he had "not a hope" of winning his category. As the show was based around VH1's "Before They Were Rock Stars" series, Rotten asked Elvis what he did before he hit it big. Elvis talked about how he nearly worked as an admiralty clerk, then became a computer operator; at this point Rotten laughed and shouted "BORRRR-innngg!", shaking his head in disbelief.

## More Awards for PFM

*Painted From Memory* placed No. 18 in the prestigious Pazz & Jop Music Poll by New York City's *The Village Voice*. Some of the music critics polled who voted for the LP (43 out of 496) were *BB*-readers Chris Willman (*Entertainment Weekly*) and Jeff Tamarkin (past editor of *Goldmine*).

Reader Jacek Ratajczyk tells us that Polish monthly magazine *Machina* (music, film, arts; a kind of Polish *Rolling Stone*) included *PFM* in their nominations for the Best Foreign Album of 1998. The other nominees were Jeff Buckley's *Sketches For My Sweetheart The Drunk*, Beck's *Mutations*, Bob Dylan's *Live 1966* and REM's *Up*.

## EC Wins Edison

The awards for Costello continued as he and George Michael shared the award for Best International Male Singer at the 39th annual Edison Music Awards held on March 4 at John de Mol Studios in Hilversum, Holland. Elvis appeared at the ceremonies (which were also televised) performing "This House is Empty Now" and "Toledo". EC's mantel also includes a *Q* Magazine Award, two Ivor Novellos and the coveted Nordoff-Robbins Silver Clef Award, in addition to some previously won Edisons.



# Tiny Steps

**Quotables:** Chris Willman, *BB's* favorite rock journalist, recently chatted with Soundgarden's **Chris Cornell**. He told Willman that EC is one of the two people he's ever met whose greatness made him nervous, the other being Johnny Cash. And his favorite EC album is... *Goodbye Cruel World*. When told "That's the one even most fans can't stand.", he replied "Really?".

■ Singer-guitarist **Butch Walker** of the hot new Atlanta-area band *Marvelous 3* said in the February 18 *Rolling Stone*: "Elvis Costello is definitely the god of the moment. My favorite songwriter ever. Nobody can tell him he's not the king." (Check out their debut LP *Hey! Album* on Hi Fi / Elektra.)

■ Actress **Martha Plimpton**, one of Costello's co-stars in *200 Cigarettes*, said this in the March 19 *Entertainment Weekly* about meeting the Man: "I had a whole list of great questions I wanted to ask...and things I wanted to thank him for - but the second I got in front of him I was just a heaping, shaking sick fan."

■ "I'm not Elvis Costello, I can't go to the bog and come back with a triple album. I can't sit down and craft a song." - **Sir Bob Geldof** to Allan Jones back in 1990, as recalled in May's *Uncut*.

■ In the May 13 issue of *Rolling Stone*, US comedian Chris Rock on catching up with music that he has missed: "I just bought, like, twelve Elvis Costello albums".

■ **This 'n' That:** The March issue of *Publish* magazine's cover story on digital cameras is titled "This Year's Models" and features a take-off on the famous 1978 LP cover for *TYM*.

■ "Complicated Shadows" was heard over the closing credits of HBO's *The Sopranos*. The US cable channel's show about organized crime features E-Street Band member Steve Van Zandt in a recurring role.

■ Our mention last issue of the "Costello" category in VH1's *Rock 'n' Roll Jeopardy* failed to mention that the contestants involved were a celebrity panel of Joe Walsh, Graham Nash and last but not least Sugar Ray's Mark McGrath who correctly answered all five EC questions.

■ Costello & Nieve was named one of the best concerts of 1998 by the *Boston Herald* for their stormy performance at the Mixfest.

■ In April's *GQ's* piece on personal charm, Elvis is listed under "Surprising Charm" along with Snoop Dogg and Keith Richards.

■ Part of "This House Is Empty Now" was used in the background of a BBC Radio 4 play called *Coat* broadcast in February.

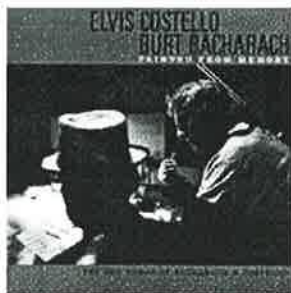
■ **Friends of Elvis:** The *Fairfield Four* were inducted into the Gospel Music Association's Hall of Fame in April.

■ **Attractions:** New LA resident Pete Thomas joined Jon Brion's "Kinks Karaoke" set at Largo on April 2.



## READERS'

## CHOICE



*Last issue we asked you to rank the songs from PFM from favorite to least favorite. Here's the consensus ranking of what you thought:*

### 1. God Give Me Strength

2. I Still Have that Other Girl
3. This House is Empty Now
4. Toledo
5. In the Darkest Place
6. The Sweetest Punch
7. Painted From Memory
8. What's Her Name Today
9. My Thief
10. Tears at the Birthday Party
11. Such Unlikely Lovers
12. The Long Division

*Five lucky readers who replied were selected at random and received a copy of the Because It's a Lonely World: The Interview with Elvis Costello and Burt Bacharach promo CD, courtesy of some of our now departed friends at Mercury Records. Incidentally, this CD was not widely distributed and is sure to be a rare item indeed! The winners were:*

1. Steve Tomlinson-Worcestershire, UK
2. Petra Alfredsson - Avrika, Sweden
3. Mark Pawlowski - Gloucestershire, UK
4. David Van Fossen - Brooklyn, NY
5. John Edmisten - Glendale, CA

### Liverpool Festival

The *Liverpool Echo* reported that Stevie Wonder is being lined up to head an international festival in Liverpool, featuring some of the world's biggest stars. The 50,000-capacity World Music Festival takes place at the Pier Head over the August Bank Holiday. Some of the world's top artists, including James Brown, Dionne Warwick and Elvis Costello, are also tipped to perform. Organisers Music Associated Business Limited (MAB) are putting the final stages together for the 4 day event which starts on August 27.

*Some time ago, we asked you to suggest some artists and the Costello songs that you would like to see them cover. Here's some of them:*

Pads, Paws and Claws - Michael Penn  
 ...This Town - Stan Ridgway  
 Uncomplicated - Garbage  
**DeWitt Shainline - Hamilton, ON, Canada**

I Want You - Bob Dylan  
 Shipbuilding - Ron Sexsmith  
 Brilliant Mistake - Bruce Springsteen  
**Jacek Rataczek - Kalisz, POLAND**

Almost Blue - Terry Hall  
 I Want You - Paul Weller  
 Pump It Up - Little Richard  
**Stephen Thompson - Cambridge, ENG.**

I'll Wear It Proudly - Willie Nelson  
 Sneaky Feelings - Dwight Yoakham  
 Couldn't Call It Unexpected - Jimmie Dale Gilmore

**Andrew Moorhouse - Rochdale, ENG.**

Rocking Horse Road - Paul Weller  
**Paul Clayden - Grays, ENG.**

Hurry Down Doomsday - Beck  
 Town Cryer - The Divine Comedy  
 I'll Wear It Proudly - Radiohead  
**Mark Perry - Taunton, ENG.**

Couldn't Call it Unexpected - David Byrne  
 My Mood Swings - Suzanne Vega  
 Miss Mary - Ray Davies  
**Neil Anderson - Anacortes, WA, USA**

Red Shoes - Roger McGuinn  
 Clubland - Roddy Frame  
 Everyday I Write the Book - Nick Lowe  
**Mike Bodayle - Franklin, TN, USA**

Scotty Mead, one of the directors of World Music Festival, which works in conjunction with MAB said "We are in the midst of finalising everything. We are in final contact stages with representatives for the likes of Stevie Wonder and several other names. We are looking at James Brown, Elvis Costello and Dionne Warwick. We have got comfort letters which indicate that they are available and would like to do it and we are waiting for the final documentation to come through."

Elvis and Dionne together? Maybe.

## Catch it on the Up-beat

I went down to the Picturola House  
 Watched in disbelief  
 Fell asleep in the second feature  
 While waiting for a little relief  
 Doodling the down-beat snap-frost-lanes  
 This a regular Saturday night  
 There's a knife throwing act  
 They are the main attraction  
 Starring in a bar-room fight  
 All this repetition is inclined to  
 Make you fade  
 If you're the only head-strand man  
 In the head-strand parade  
 ———— Chorus ————

Can you Catch it on the Up-beat?  
 Send me down to turn a the flash-light  
 You better lose those hands  
 Can't band to lose the chains  
 Can you Catch it on the Up-beat?  
 Send me down to turn a the flash-light  
 Well I'm on my way

## But I feel like I'm running lame

I know that I'll never lose my memory  
 If I never place a bet  
 But I've got this slot-machine arrived  
 And a newer ending debt  
 Matinee fans playing western gambler  
 Shoot it all in the night arcade  
 Gambling chances have to harbor  
 To the sound of a serenade  
 Tonight I would the lost say  
 "This the trick of the vicar's  
 "There's no return"  
 "There's no replay"

On a road of notoriety approaching  
 Half past four  
 I'd like to walk here all night long  
 But I'm nervous of the law  
 All the money has gone already  
 And I only just got paid  
 And this boosting boy

### EC under the Hammer



Elvis was among a vast array of artists donating memorabilia to the recent *Hits Under The Hammer*

auction of song lyric sheets in aid of children's charities Nordoff Robins Music Therapy and Norwood Ravenswood. Included in the catalogue alongside items as diverse as two sheets of unpublished Hendrix lyrics, The Prodigy's "Firestarter" scrawled by Keith Flint on an electric heater and the words to "Touch Me" written on Samantha Fox's "purple lace bustier" were the following:

#### Elvis Costello: Unpublished

Sixteen various sets of lyrics contained in a notebook.

Estimated value: £3,000-£4,000

#### Elvis Costello: "Red Shoes"

A modern draft on a 1975 Mersey rail timetable.

Starting bid: \$740

Project co-ordinator Harriette Goldsmith told *BB* that the arrival of the notebook containing EC's handwritten lyrics had caused

great excitement in her office. Even Elvis's own management had not been able to date the book precisely, although it certainly preceded any of his record releases and was thought to be of mid 1970s vintage. Harriette told us that the lyrics included at least one song which later appeared on a Costello album. It also featured a song titled "Catch It On The Up Beat" the words to which were clearly displayed in a photograph within the catalogue (see reprint above).

*I went down to the Picturola House  
 Watched in disbelief  
 Fell asleep in the second feature  
 While waiting for a little relief...*

The notebook was scheduled to be sold at a £120-a-head "international gala evening" at London's trendy Sound Republic on Monday 22nd March. Just a few days before this, however, *BB* was mysteriously informed by a spokesman choosing his words with great care that the Costello notebook would not now be among the lots auctioned. "Er, I can't really say any more than that," he stonewalled when quizzed further by our crack reporter. Whether this means that the item was simply withdrawn, or whether somebody put in a bid large enough to secure it in advance, we may never know. Meanwhile, the words to "Red Shoes" scrawled haphazardly over every



available space on a 1975 Mersey rail timetable formed part of a separate internet auction ("the largest online auction of music memorabilia ever") which

closed March 29. Constant front-runner "tone" succeeded in finally outbidding "Steven" to secure the item for \$3,240. This sum represented the second highest price fetched among a total of 115 internet lots sold, with only the lyrics to 'Please' by U2's Bono fetching more at \$3,600.

Elvis Costello was my first celebrity, and Elvis fully lived up to expectations. During college, a couple friends and I snuck backstage at a concert and ended up in the greenroom, where Elvis sat on a couch, looking famous. We pressured one friend's 12-year-old brother to ask the singer a question, since we were too humiliated to do it ourselves. "Elvis" said the rude little bastard, "what do you think when people say you've lost your anger?" The keyboardist snarled, "Why don't you fuck off, kid." But Elvis just stared at the boy, saying nothing, his eyes a thousand years old, then reached into his back pocket and produced a comb emblazoned with the words I BITE. With this, Elvis gave us a small display of his public persona as a punk and a wit. That was how to be famous, goddamn it! **Stephen Talty Time Out New York**



## Covers Corner



Athens, GA based singer-songwriter **Vic Chesnutt** has been performing "**Beyond Belief**"

on his recent tour with Nashville's Lambchop. Vic told *BB* that *Imperial Bedroom* was always one of his favorite records and that he recently rediscovered it when a friend went out and bought a bunch of vinyl LPs. As for this track, Vic said "It was the only song that I could figure out the chords to". Lambchop also back up Vic on his new CD *The Salesman and Bernadette* (Capricorn).



San Francisco Bay Area singer **Jenna Mammina** includes a tasty cover of "**Watching the Detectives**" on her *Under the Influence* CD (Mamma Grace Records). Jenna's musical mentor is the great Abbey Lincoln and her

CD features the playing of keyboard wiz Matt Rollings. Jenna told *BB*: "I have about six Elvis tunes that I cover but this is my fave. Besides when I was a little girl I loved to watch *Kojak*, *Barnaby Jones*, and an occasional *Cannon* episode with a little *Rookies* on the side". Her CD can be ordered from MGR, PO Box 5205, Berkeley, CA 94705 for \$16.99 (add \$4 outside the USA).

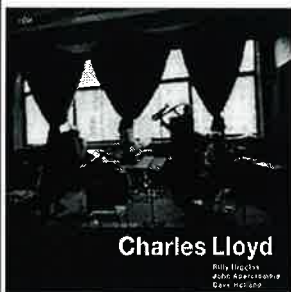


British jazz vocalist **Claire Martin** has recorded a version of "**Baby Plays Around**" backed by a string section. The cut can be found on her UK LP *Take My Heart* (Linn). Claire is a three-time winner of

the British Jazz Award and also covers Lennon/McCartney's "Help" with a guest appearance by Noel Gallagher on guitar.

In *The Independent* (UK), Claire had this to say about *Painted From Memory* (the latest record she bought):

"How they wrote this album is interesting. They just sat opposite each other, at two facing pianos, which is collaborative in a way I have never thought of doing. It's basically new Bacharach songs with Costello lyrics, and as a brand-new collaboration it really, really works. I have always been a big Costello fan, and I think he has reached a peak as an artist on this album. It's not easy to follow in the footsteps of Hal David. The Bacharach and David songbook introduced me to so many great songs, and singers, such as Aretha Franklin, Dusty Springfield. It's a surprising album, as well, because you wouldn't expect the contemporary, evocative and movingly edgy lyrics to work with the swish, elaborate Bacharach orchestration. But they complement each other like light and shade. I have just recorded a Costello track, and will sing some of these new songs at my concert, and hope that Costello will really like it and tell me he loves me."



**Charles Lloyd**

Veteran tenor saxophonist **Charles Lloyd's** new LP, *Voice in the Night* (ECM), features a heavy jazz instrumental version of "**God Give Me Strength**".

Completely unrecognizable for the first full minute, the track meanders about with an occasional familiar riff catching your ear every so often.

A live cover reported back in *BB16* has been made available in a most unusual way. As you may recall, "**Almost Blue**" was performed by No Doubt's **Gwen Stefani** on April 16, 1998 at a benefit concert for Don Henley's Walden Woods Project at LA's Wilmet Theater. Well, this track, along with nine other standards sung by current female artists, can be found on a CD entitled *Stormy Weather*. The thing is however that this CD is part of Internet software mailed out free by AT&T promoting its new AT&T Personal Network service. It appears to have been part of a promotion geared towards women and *BB* had no luck whatsoever trying to get one through AT&T. (Thanks go out to reader Kevin Lisanke whose wife received two for getting us a copy.)



Philadelphia area jazz vocalist **Mary Ellen Desmond** has recorded "**Almost Blue**" for her debut CD *Darn That Dream*. Mary recently told radio station

WPRB in Princeton, NJ that she was a big fan of EC. Her disc can be ordered directly from Front Row Records, P.O. Box 39876, Philadelphia, PA 19106-9876 for \$16.50.

As mentioned last issue, Hannibal has now released EPs by **Robert Wyatt** (HNCD 1440) in the UK. This nicely packaged box set contains five separate ep-length CD's which document different stages in Robert's career and contain material that never appeared on his original albums. Included is a 1998 remastered recording of "**Shipbuilding**" as well as the promo video of the song which features the *Punch the Clock*-era Elvis Costello strumming an acoustic guitar all too visible in the background. Included on an EP with songs by Eubie Blake and Thelonius Monk, Wyatt comments about the songs in the liner notes "Some are of course standards. The others ought to be. I think."

(See page 44 for Costello's NME review of Wyatt's new release.)

Reader Jeff van de Perre reports that **Mathilde Santing** recently performed "**In The Darkest Place**" on the Belgian TV channel VRT. In 1983, the singer released a version of EC's "Hand in Hand" as a single in her native Holland.

**Burt Bacharach** continues to tour with his ensemble. A report from New Haven, CT includes "**I Still Have That Other Girl**" among the songs that were played. The lead vocal on the song was performed by **John Pagano** who has also sang "God Give Me Strength" with Burt and his orchestra.

In the update department, the **Holly Cole Trio's** version of "**Alison**", previously available only in Japan, is now available in Canada on Alert Music. Cole recorded the track in 1993 with pianist Aaron Davis and bassist David Piltch.

And finally, a report from *Rocktopolis* ([www2.rocktopolis.com](http://www2.rocktopolis.com)) mentions that on

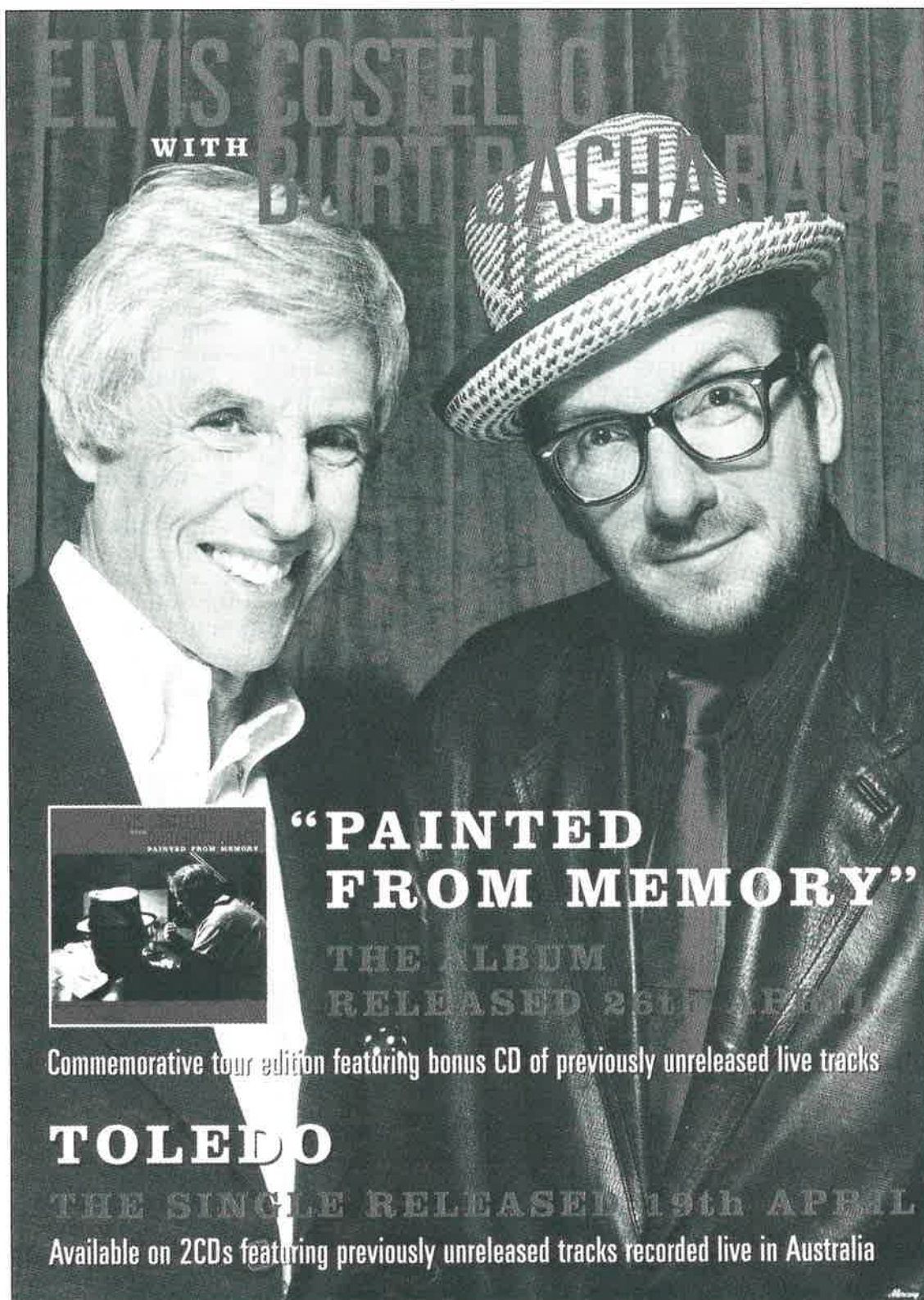


**MxPx Logo**

August 26, Vagrant Records will release *Before You Were Punk 2*, a compilation of today's punk bands covering new wave hits. Included will be "**No Action**" by Bremerton, WA band **MxPx**. The Christian punk-pop band was formerly known as Magnified Plaid and is popular with the skate/surf community as well as the punk underground. They also appear on the recent Clash tribute LP performing "Janie Jones" and in a recent on-line chat session picked EC and The Clash as their favorite bands of the moment.

Visit our web site for an up-to-date listing of all known Costello covers.

ELVIS COSTELLO WITH BURTON BACH



**"PAINTED FROM MEMORY"**


THE ALBUM  
RELEASED 26th APRIL

Commemorative tour edition featuring bonus CD of previously unreleased live tracks

**TOLEDO**

THE SINGLE RELEASED 19th APRIL

Available on 2CDs featuring previously unreleased tracks recorded live in Australia







## Spotlight On New Releases

### New Live Euro Releases:

To coincide with the C&N tour of Europe, Mercury released three different "Toledo" CD singles with bonus tracks on April 12 followed by a rerelease of PFM with a bonus live CD on April 26. Here's the rundown:

#### CD (Europe) 870 964-2

1. "Toledo" (radio edit) 4:06
2. "Tears At the Birthday Party" (live) 4:41  
*Track 2 recorded live at Sydney, Capitol Theatre, 27th January, 1999.*

#### CD (UK) 870 965-2

1. "Toledo" (radio edit) 4:06
2. "Tears At The Birthday Party" (live) 4:41
3. "Inch By Inch" / "Fever" (live) 4:03  
*Track 3 recorded live at Sydney, Her Majesty's Theatre, 19th February, 1999.*

#### CD (UK) 870 967-2

1. "Toledo" (album version) 4:35
2. "Such Unlikely Lovers" (live) 3:11
3. "Baby Plays Around" (live) 3:50  
*Track 2 recorded live at Perth, Concert Hall, 18th February, 1999.*  
*Track 3 recorded live at Sydney, Her Majesty's Theatre, 19th February, 1999.*

#### Bonus Live 5 Track CD 870 963-2

1. "This House Is Empty Now" 4:12
2. "I Still Have That Other Girl" 3:18
3. "In The Darkest Place" 4:40
4. "Painted From Memory" 4:26
5. "What's Her Name Today?" 4:31  
*Track 1 as performed on Late Night With Conan O'Brien on 27th November, 1998.*  
*Tracks 2 and 5 recorded live at Tokyo, Shibuya Hall, 10th February, 1999.*  
*Tracks 3 & 4 recorded live at Melbourne, Athenaeum, 16th February, 1999.*

**Toledo Promo:** In addition promo CD singles were also released.

- "Toledo" (radio edit) 4:06  
UK CDPromo Mercury 566 996-2  
*Picture cover same as US advance for LP.*  
US CDPromo Mercury MECP 468  
*Clear plastic CD case with stickered cover.*

**200 Cigarettes:** Slow in hitting the stores as result of the record industry mega-merger, the soundtrack CD trickled into the stores in late February. (See *On the Beat* for more about the film.)

*200cigarettes: Music From the Motion Picture*  
US CD Mercury CD 314 538 738-2  
*Includes Elvis Costello and the Attractions' 1979 recording of Nick Lowe's "(What's So Funny 'Bout) Peace, Love and Understanding."*

*Mercury Records Group: January/February sampler 1999*  
US Promo CD MECD 185  
*Includes EC & the A's track from the 200 Cigarettes soundtrack.*

**Sweetest Punch:** While some advance tapes (Verve 314 559 865 ADV) of *The Sweetest Punch: Songs of Elvis Costello and Burt Bacharach Arranged by Bill Frisell* (see BB18/19) have circulated, its release is now set for September. In fact, rumor has it that it may not even see release this year. Reaction from those hearing the record has been lukewarm. Also, the Verve label may give way to GRP as the Universal/Polygram assimilation continues. (By the way, the Mercury label has also given way to the Island name marking a return for Costello to the manufacturer and distributor of his debut LP *My Aim Is True* on Stiff Records.)

**Parsons Tribute:** Amid rumors about the possible demise of the label, Almo Sounds will release *Return of the Greivous Angel: A Tribute to Gram Parsons* on June 15 in the US. As previously reported in BB, Elvis will be represented by "Sleepless Nights", a Felice & Bourdreaux Bryant track recorded by Gram when he was with The Flying Burrito Brothers. And despite pessimism that we could simply see a rehash of Costello's live solo version of the song, found on the *Goodbye Cruel World* reissue, EC has recorded a new version of the song which was produced by Glyn Johns (Eagles, The Who).

**Tidbits:** A jewel box version of the three track "This House is Empty Now" CD single has been released in Australia (Mercury 5665812) ☺ The Mark Knopfler soundtrack *Music From the Film Metroland* which includes EC's original 1977 version of "Alison" was released in the US (Warner Bros. 9 47006-2). ☺ The album version of "I Still Have That Other Girl" is the lead track on the *WXPN New Music Sampler: Rhythm Garden*. The CD is available as a membership premium for the Philadelphia-based public radio station (home of *The*

*World Cafe*) at [www.xpn.org](http://www.xpn.org). ☺ *Bringing It All Back Home*, the collection of Irish music released in the UK in 1991 which includes EC's "Mischievous Ghost", is being reissued in the US in separate volumes by Valley Entertainment. ☺ The *Brian Wilson Imagination* video which includes some EC interview bits was released on VHS in the US (Warner Reprise Video 38508-3). ☺

**Old Stuff:** Some things that we missed first time around but have recently come across: "Full Force Gale", EC's contribution to *No Prima Donna: The Songs of Van Morrison*, can be found on a 1994 promo compilation CD entitled *A&M Records Convention Relief* (A&M 31454 8057 2) ☺ *il grande pop inglese:26* is a 1995 Italian compilation CD (la Repubblica) that includes Elvis & the Attractions version of "Shipbuilding". The real treat with this disc however is the accompanying beautiful 50-page color booklet. Although written in Italian, there are seven gorgeous color photos of EC, some of which have not appeared elsewhere. ☺

## NEW BOOTLEGS

"Live bootlegs can be funny;  
studio bootlegs are the work  
of gangsters and thieves."  
Elvis Costello

**Forbidden Playthings** (Doberman 187/188) Boy these guys do great work! A splendid sounding and sharp looking 2-CDR set combining EC's January 1, 1996 and January 5, 1999 appearances at Stockholm's Berwaldhallen with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and guest vocalist Anne Sofie Von Otter (in 1996). Both sourced from FM broadcasts with the 1996 show sounding a tad better. A real treasure to have on disc.

**Coming:** The April issue of *Ice: The CD News Authority* lists the following upcoming releases in its "Going Underground" column: (1) *Berwald Hall* (the May 1, 1999 show mentioned above), (2) *Enchant Live '98* (a soundboard of the Fuji Rock Festival in Tokyo from August 1, 1998 plus the BBC-FM broadcast of the October 29, 1998 London RAH show) on Japan's Faith label, (3) *Hallfull of Songs* (Tokyo February 10, 1999) and (4) *Hot Club Philly* (WMMR-FM broadcast from Philadelphia's Hot Club from December 7, 1977) on the Gold Standard label. News heard elsewhere is the release of *Daze of Glory* (Toronto's Heatwave Festival from August 23, 1980).

## Television

**ZTV** (January 24 - Sweden) This 22-minute profile on Elvis blends rare archival footage with a current interview providing some entertaining moments. The show opens with Elvis performing "Detectives" during his first Swedish TV appearance on the program *Nojesliv* back on Sept. 30, 1977. This solo electric rendition is cut about half way through to focus on Elvis circa 1999.

Talking about his work with Burt, EC expresses his happiness that the CD has been well received throughout the world. He is thrilled to continually travel the globe playing music because "there's only one other job that affords you the opportunity to travel the world and that's joining the Army and you have to kill people so this is much healthier".

The real treat however is the complete performance of "Mystery Dance" by Elvis and a Swedish backing duo from the 1977 *Nojesliv* show. The screen erroneously displays the song as "Mystery Days" although that title seems a lot more appropriate now than it did then. This high energy performance has been a coveted clip and is a surprising treat to witness after all these years.

Asked if he ever listens to any of his old stuff, he replies that many of the songs over the past 20 years still have a lot of life left in them. Mentioning his fondness for "Detectives," the show concludes by fading in to the second half of the 1977 performance of the same song that opened the program.

**Holmes** (January 25 - New Zealand) TV news show carries a live discussion between EC (in Brisbane) and a Sweetwaters representative over their failure to pay EC for his services (see *Newspapers*). After being accused of being "self-serving and money-hungry", EC seems to win in the end after noting that the show was indeed a commercial venture. This didn't sway a member of UK band The Stranglers who called EC a "moaning pom."

**60 Minutes** (February 14 - CBS-TV - USA) Lesley Stahl profile on Burt Bacharach includes footage from the EC/BB live debut at NYC's Virgin Megastore on October 3, 1998 and some comments by Costello:

**Burt's voice:** "It's a composer's voice. Have you ever heard a tape of Cole Porter singing? You know, Cole Porter couldn't sing a lick."

**Dark songs:** "He's a composer who's written some light songs and some - some of the darkest and most deeply felt ballads written in a number of years, you know? Well, 'Anyone Who Had a Heart,' say, take a really famous one. That's a pretty torrid sort of song; it's a very grown-up sort of song."

**Scene in My Best Friend's Wedding:** "The reason

it's funny, and the reason that it's charming, is it works on the premise that you believe that all of those very disparate characters all know that song ['I Say a Little Prayer'] enough to join in. Of course. So what does that tell you about the song, you know?"

**The Sound of the Grammy Awards** (February - E! - USA) Cable channel's preview show featured a brief profile on EC which included some rehearsal footage of EC & Burt's January 11 appearance on the rival *American Music Awards*. Some chat with EC is followed by Burt quipping "My 13-year old son's not playing the album!" EC's reply: "He'll play the dance mix though."

**Live Grammy Awards Pre-Show** (February 24 - E! - USA) Costello is briefly interviewed outside the Shrine Auditorium before the awards show. He talked about *PFM*'s great publicity, and got to plug his summer tour with Steve, his cameo and songs in *200 Cigarettes* and his song with Burt in the upcoming Austin Powers flick. EC also said "I hope to do more shows with Burt in the future." After their win is announced both Elvis and Burt are congratulated and interviewed by the show's hosts.

**Comic Relief** (March 12 - BBC1 - UK) EC takes part in the BBC's annual *Comic Relief* fund-raiser, performing a heartfelt version of Rogers and Hammerstein's "You'll Never Walk Alone" - the *Carousel* number later popularised by Gerry and the Pacemakers and adopted as the anthem of Liverpool Football Club - with the Brodsky Quartet and pianist Simon Chamberlain.

**TFI Friday** (March 12 - BBC1 - UK) More *Comic Relief* fun as Elvis nips across to the Riverside Studios to take part in a special edition of Chris Evans' show (loaned to the BBC specially for the occasion) performing a ragged-but-right version of the old Ben E. King hit "Stand By Me" featuring All Saints on backing vocals, Jools Holland on piano, Pink Floyd's Nick Mason on drums and, adding a nicely-judged solo, racing driver Damien Hill "and his Formula 1 guitar."

**The Big Breakfast** (April 8 - Channel 4 - UK) EC is up early (earlier than BB!) to chat amiably with host Johnny Vaughan and to lead audience and crew through a rousing acoustic singalong version of "Pump It Up".

**TFI Friday** (April 9 - Channel 4 - UK) After a fun knockabout "interview" with host Chris Evans ("So, Elvis, what's the score?" "Er, 3-0?") during which he is asked to give his opinion on some scabby-looking vinyl copies of his albums (each one is "a cracker" apparently) Elvis delivers a stunning and timely solo version of "Peace, Love and Understanding" while Evans distributes the records among the audience.



EC charms the crowd on TFI Friday.

**Here, There and Everywhere - A Concert For Linda** (April 18 - BBC2 - UK) Kevin Godley's 95-minute TV film of the event includes EC's moving tribute speech plus "That Day Is Done" and "Peace, Love and Understanding" from his set and "Lonesome Town" and "All My Loving" from Paul McCartney's set (featuring EC on Jazzmaster and harmony vocals).

## Radio Radio

**Steve Wright's Saturday Show** (October 31 - BBC Radio 2 - UK) Here's one we missed from last year. EC pops in for a fun chat with the enthusiastic Wright and friends. As the conversation turns to being "too old" for Radio 1 (a subject dear to both men's hearts!) Elvis notes:

"You can't really argue with it. I was all over Radio 1 at the start of my career. You can't expect to be there for the whole of your life. I think it's a little sad when older artists get on their high horse about it because most of them have had plenty of time in the spotlight. It's like, move over, Rover, let a new dog come in."

**RRR - Off the Record** (January 23 - Australia) Interview with Brian Wise in Melbourne which covered the usual topics along with an interesting comment about the *American Music Awards* performance. EC said he had a lot of fun despite the fact that they were less known than the other acts. He was pleased to look into the audience and see Whitney Houston "grooving along" with his performance and thought that if she chose to, she could do an interesting cover version of one of the EC/BB songs.

**Breakfast With JJJ** (January 27 - Australia) Interviewed by Adam Spencer, Elvis discusses being raised in a musical household, the influence of Grandmaster Flash on "Pills and Soap," his arrest in 1977 during the Columbia Records convention in London, and his collaboration with Burt Bacharach. Adam Spencer describes the Elvis of 1978 as a cross between "The Sex Pistols and Marilyn Manson."

**Elvis on success:** "If you just want to rule the world, if you just want to increase your audience, bigger



and bigger and bigger, that's what the corporate rock thing is all about and that's never interested me."

**Elvis on five-part harmony groups like the Backstreet Boys and N'Sync:** "I think what you usually find in those lineups there'll be one or two guys who know music and the rest look good in trousers, then you rule the world...they've got to work hard, look good all the time, that's a tough gig."

**JJJ - Creatures of the Spotlight** (February 21 - Australia) Interviewed by Francis Leach, Elvis discusses songwriters that have influenced him. Joni Mitchell ("light-years ahead of people like Jewel"), Bob Dylan ("the greatest songwriter of the last 40 years by far"), Ira Gershwin ("brilliant lyricist"), Noel Coward (Elvis cheekily recites the lyrics to "The Stately Homes of England"), Lorenz Hart ("gotta be the greatest [lyricist of his time]"), Shane McGowan ("he knocks himself around quite a bit, but he'd come in with these incredible songs"), Smokey Robinson ("has that incredible ability to have really memorable lines").

**Elvis on the time surrounding the recording of Imperial Bedroom:** "During that year I listened to nothing but Miles Davis and Frank Sinatra."

**Elvis on Morrissey:** "I think that people really rate Morrissey a lot. He's written some witty lyrics, but there are no tunes. It's the same tune over and over again. There are some good hooks and cadences constructed around them, but they are the same tune."

**Radiosonic** (February 6 - CBC-2 - Canada) Bacharach special includes a lengthy phone call from Elvis Costello in New York City. EC chats about his early musical training ("brief and unsuccessful violin and classical guitar lessons"), his impression of Burt's career ("more kindred to the best of Motown than the opposite of the Rolling Stones") and working on PFM (setting the record straight - he was just lyricist on two songs).

**JJJ** (January 27 - Australia) Nationally broadcast airing of excellent quality recordings of 26 of the 33 songs played by Elvis and Steve at Her Majesty's Theatre, Sydney on February 19, punctuated with interviews with Elvis, as well as with prominent Aussie fans, including Dave Pannell (BB's Oz correspondent), Matthew Riddle (the web master for Elvis Costello Online), Dan Driscoll and Tim Hallam. JJJ also played a couple of songs from the Sessions video ("My Little Red Book" and "Anyone Who Had a Heart") and a sample from The Sweetest Punch ("In the Darkest Place"). The three-hour broadcast went out simultaneously on the Internet. Accolades are due to JJJ's Richard Kingsmill who put the excellent show together and obviously has a knowledge and appreciation of EC's work.

**A Girl Called Dusty** (March 28 - BBC, Radio2 - UK) Elvis contributes to this star studded tribute to the British soul diva along with Lulu, Burt Bacharach, Jerry Wexler and Neil Tennant, giving an insight into Dusty's

feisty spirit. Here's what Elvis had to say:

"Along with Aretha, she is in the top five of all female vocalists ever, among all the greats". "I think she made some sensational records in England [in the 60's] - 'I Close My Eyes And Count To Ten' is one of my favourites. But when she went to record in America, with the quality of engineering, the clarity of sound and the arrangements got better - 'Dusty In Memphis' is my favourite record".

**The Mystery Train** (March 31 - RTE Radio 1 - Ireland) "Hello, this is Elvis Costello here on The Mystery Train with John Kelly and we'll be coming around with some refreshments later..." Armed with the usual box of records, EC pays his first visit to Kelly's new home at RTE.

**Access All Areas** (April 9 - Talk Radio - UK) Interview.

**Peter Curran** (April 10 - GLR - UK) Return visit to this Costello-friendly show hosted by the man who asks the longest, most rambling questions in the business. EC is looking to talk up the C & N concerts ("we can still kick up a fuss when we want to - it's not all ballads") and the new single ("the record company have taken a while to release it - but they've finally got around to it"). Most entertaining is the anecdote explaining how, in 1982, EC & The As became the first rock act for years to appear at the Royal Albert Hall, ending the lengthy ban imposed after "a member of the Mothers of Invention crawled up on the organ" in the early 70s:

"We had to send the album (Almost Blue) to this committee and it was vetted to see whether it was too loud. There were a couple of rockabilly sides on there, so we edited those off the tape and sent them all the ballads."

**Johnnie Walker** (April 10 - BBC Radio 2 - UK) Programme broadcast live from backstage at the Royal Albert Hall where final rehearsals for the Linda McCartney tribute concert are taking place. EC is among the performers interviewed.

**Danny Baker** (April 11 - Virgin Radio - UK) EC spends an hour visiting Baker's chaotic Sunday morning phone-in show. By the end of it he is speaking at twice his normal speed as he struggles to get a word in edgeways under the host's usual machine-gun onslaught. One enterprising caller invites Elvis to record an answering machine message for him ("there's no need to sing it," he instructs) while a stomach-churning discussion of "Things Pets Will Eat" has our hero wistfully recalling his childhood pet Jinx the dog who, it turns out, had to be given away because of complaints from the neighbours. As the conversation moves on to cannibals whose tradition it is to eat the mother-in-law at weddings (fact!), EC does his best to slip in a little promotion for his forthcoming single and tour, and trots out his anecdote about meeting Jerry Lee Lewis at an

LA recording studio. Introduced to ol' Jerry Lee, Elvis - nervous at any possible reaction to his appropriation of Mr. Presley's first name - responded to a good-natured "How are you?" with the extraordinarily



inane "Great - I feel like a ball of fire!". At this point, Jerry Lee apparently shot him a look which Elvis hasn't forgotten to this day. (Listen to Virgin at [www.virginradio.com](http://www.virginradio.com).)

**The Mystery Train** (April 12 - RTE Radio 1 - Ireland) A suspiciously swift ("it seems like only yesterday..." notes EC). return to RTE's Dublin studios (apparently on the same night that the Lonely World tour opens in Amsterdam). The show includes a first public airing of "Sleepless Nights" from an advance copy of the forthcoming Gram Parsons tribute album. Full details on both recent Mystery Train appearances in our next issue.

**Here, There and Everywhere - A Concert For Linda** (April 17 - BBC Radio 2 - UK) Included in a 90-minute broadcast of concert highlights are "Warm and Beautiful" and "Peace, Love and Understanding" from EC's set, plus "Lonesome Town" and "All My Loving" from Macca's set.

**Royal Festival Hall:** Portions of the Elvis Costello & Burt Bacharach show from London's Royal Festival Hall on October 29, 1998 have now been broadcast in differing segments in five different countries. For a rundown on what was aired where see the list on page 45.

## Elvis & Vin



Elvis with Vin Scelsa during EC's September 27, 1998 visit to the WNEW-FM studio (see BB18/19).

# In Print

## Magazines:

**Performing Songwriter** (January/February) A *Brutal Youth*-era photo graces the cover of this US mag devoted to the craft. A collection of eight other color photos (including ones with Neil Young, Jerry Garcia and Ron Sexsmith) make this a must for the collector. Robert Wilonsky, who ran an extensive syndicated interview with EC back in September, manages to put together another five pages of Q&A with El. On *PFM*'s lyrics:

"I'm less driven by lyrics than before. I think the music has the ability to suggest things to you if it is handled properly, and words just reinforce that feeling, and that was what I went for in some cases. I wasn't so concerned to dazzle people with my wit. Who cares? Wouldn't it be better to touch you with something, that you're feeling it before it's explained to you?"

Also some interesting news:

"I wrote with Carole King last year. It sounds like I'm going through my favorite songwriters. But we just met and wrote this lovely song, and we're just looking for the occasion to put it out, and it would be somewhat confusing for it to come out in the midst of me working with Burt Bacharach."

(For back issue information try 1-800-883-7664 or [www.performingsongwriter.com](http://www.performingsongwriter.com))

**Q** (January) Mention is made of EC getting caught in traffic and missing the chance to present the *Q* Award for Best Single to Welsh band Catatonia ("Road Rage"). Pictured are Costello's speech notes: a list of names (Dave Edmunds, Dylan Thomas, Tom Jones, Richard Burton, and others) of "just some of the people Wales has given to the world".

**New Zealand Listener** (January 16) Nick Bollinger chats with EC in a piece promoting the upcoming Sweetwaters gig. Here's the latest on "biting the hand that feeds you":

"We had hoped that it [PFM] might do better at radio, but the truth is it hasn't been played very much, because those people have worked out their specific formula for reward and they're not in the business of taking risks. The false science of radio programming has told us that, just as fluoride is good for your teeth, separating all music is somehow healthy."

**RTE Guide** (Jan. 30 - Feb. 5) Weekly guide to Irish TV includes several great color live photos of EC&BB accompanying Costello's chat with Alan Corr. The Rathfarnham Co Dublin resident gets another chance to defend his singing on *PFM*:

"For every person who finds my voice grating there's someone else who finds it a thrilling sound. Come to the concerts and you'll see the evidence - there's no one sitting there with fingers in their ears, only snobs and fops. Luther Vandross may be able to get through these songs without the same degree of physical effort that I can, but will he sing them better emotionally?"

**Mojo** (February) Blondie feature includes a

color photo of EC and Debbie Harry with the Jazz Passengers at the Supper Club in New York on February 12, 1997.

**Rolling Stone** (February 4) *Random Notes* section includes a photo of Elvis and Brian Wilson with filmmaker George Hickenlooper. A documentary on LA's KROQ disc jockey Rodney Bingenheimer (titled *The Mayor of the Sunset Strip*) features both and premieres at the Sundance Film Festival in 2000.

**NME** (February 20) Alongside a review of the new box set of EP's, Elvis offers this piece on Robert Wyatt:

"What can I say? Robert Wyatt has one of the greatest human voices. You can hear it in the tender regret of 'O Caroline', in the way he finds new things in 'Red Flag' and Chic's 'At Last I Am Free'. Perhaps the same thing. Meanwhile, his own songwriting is fearless and full of unique and hard-won humour."

It is only daunting to write for Robert because you must accept that you will never actually 'own' the song once he has performed it. Consider the way in which he actually surpassed Victor Jara's original performance of 'Te Recuerdo Amanda'. In 1982, I wrote lyrics for a Clive Langer melody which became the song 'Shipbuilding'. Clive prepared the basic track and somehow I was given the task of being 'producer', my only contribution being to sit in a chair while Robert sang flawlessly and with a beautiful feeling for both words and music.

Later we appeared together on various TV and radio arts programmes talking about the song that had very nearly slipped into the hit parade. I still picture Robert sitting in the lobby of Broadcasting House quietly reading the Morning Star, waiting for one of his occasional brushes with pop stardom (you may recall 'I'm A Believer') to blow past. Entirely in his own time, entirely on his own terms."

**Total Guitar** (March) UK mag combines a Henrik Tuxen interview with a guitar transcription of "Watching the Detectives." Instrumental portions of the song (almost qualifying this as a cover version) also appear on the free tutorial CD (Vol 54) that comes with the mag. Here's EC on his fave records:

"I didn't have very much money when I started out - just my favourite records. I had Revolver, Dusty Springfield's greatest, Phil Spector's greatest, a George Jones and the first Clash album, a couple of Sinatras, some Byrds, Randy Newman and a Grateful Dead album. When you have no money and a few records, each one is special. I may have six or seven copies of I've Never Loved a Man the Way I Love You by Aretha Franklin. I've had this record since '67-'68, and it's become one of those records which all of a sudden I have to hear. So if I'm away on the other side of the world I'll buy another copy. Now I can afford it, and it's a fantastic luxury. I know every track on that LP, but all of them have a very specific personal significance."

**Entertainment Weekly** (March 12) Costello makes a comment in a feature on MP3, the new technology of downloading songs from the Internet:

"The Net allows me to satisfy a creative urge by releasing songs and live stuff more often. It connects me with my fans. I wish I could tour by sending a hologram. Either that or send a good-looking young look-alike."

[Editor: If it wasn't for the photo I would have thought that it was a different Elvis Costello talking? Given his past contempt for the Net ("a boomtown for obsessives") and his inactivity thus far - was he trying to put one over on the writer?]

**High Life** (April - UK) In-flight magazine for British Airways carries an interesting interview feature in which EC discusses, among other things:

"*Burnt Sugar Is So Bitter*" - the "killer song" he has co-written with Carole King. "I didn't tell anybody about it because it was beginning to sound like a joke - like I was trying to collect the set."

On his relationship with his fans: "It's tremendously arrogant to think you govern the audience's life ... For the price of admission they get access to your imagination, they don't get to dictate policy."

On the resistance to new music technology such as samples and loops which contributed to his decision to disband the Attractions: "I felt constrained by the ... failure to understand the potential of that idiom of that rhythm section. When you're working with a band you can dictate a lot of things, but short of taking the instruments off them and playing them yourself you have to go with their contribution."

## Newspapers:

**The New Zealand Herald** (January 25) Page One boasted a color photo of Costello in Downtown Auckland under the banner "Cash-Strapped Show Goes On." The story detailed EC's decision the morning of the Sweetwater's show not to play as his full fee was still outstanding. Festival organizer Daniel Keighley claimed cash flow problems caused by a 25,000 dip in attendance and some last minute work at the site.

EC of course played (after a promise that he would get paid) and announced that his first song would be The Beatles' "You Never Give Me Your Money." Signed in May to draw other acts to the Festival, EC threatened legal action and said "It's just become increasingly obvious that they don't have any money." (Note: On January 27 the Sweetwaters entity was put into liquidation with \$750,000 in debt.)

**The New York Times** (January 31) Sunday magazine section runs a short Q&A with legendary Bacharach lyricist Hal David. Here's a bit of interest:

Q: What do you think of Painted From Memory, the recent Grammy-nominated album by Bacharach and Costello?

A: The song "God Give Me Strength" is very good. I haven't heard the rest.

**The Mirror** (April 9 - UK) Entertainment guide *The A List* features a colour cover shot and an interview feature in which EC reveals that he turned down a million quid offer from Nike who wanted to use "Pump It Up" in a TV ad.

"I can't even say I was tempted. I've always had a golden rule that none of my records end up as the backing tracks to adverts for cornflakes, training shoes or, for that matter, anything else. When people buy my records I'm entering into a kind of contract with them. Allowing my music to be used in commercials is like saying, 'Here's a record I've made. Dig into your pockets, even though pretty soon everyone will be listening to it for free while they're being persuaded to get Nike trainers.'"

Elsewhere, EC allows the *Mirror* hack a



# Radio broadcasts of Elvis Costello & Burt Bacharach at the RFH London 29 Oct 98

	BBC Radio 2 (UK) 28 Nov 98	Radio 2 (Italy) 10 Mar 99	P3 (Sweden) 17 Mar 99	RTBF (Belgium) 18 Apr 99	NDR2 (Germany) 19 Apr 99
Baby It's You					
What the World Needs Now Is Love	1	1	13		
Toledo	3	2	1	1	1
Such Unlikely Lovers	4	3	2	2	2
This House is Empty Now					
Tears at the Birthday Party	5			3	3
I Just don't Know What to Do With Myself					
[Burt's Medley]					
Make It Easy on Yourself			3	4	4
Painted From Memory	6	4	4	5	5
What's Her Name Today	7	5	5	6	6
Accidents Will Happen	2	6	6		
Veronica					
Still Too Soon To Know					
Just a Memory		7	7	7	7
Almost Blue					
Alison	8	8	8	8	8
In the Darkest Place	9	9	9	9	9
The Long Division					
My Thief	10				
I Still Have That Other Girl	11	10		10	10
The Sweetest Punch			10		
My Little Red Book		11	11		
Anyone Who Had A Heart	12	12	12	11	11
God Give Me Strength	13	13		12	12

glimpse of his rock & roll lifestyle:

"I used to be a night guy – up all night, sleep all day, but as I've got older I do it the other way around and, I have to say, I much prefer it."

**Daily Express** (April 10 - UK) "Weekend" section includes a full-stubble close-up cover shot and an interview with EC:

**On seeking public adulation:** "There have been times when I was looking for some affection on a personal level, but I wasn't looking for it from 2,000 people all at once. There are people in pop who have an obsession with being loved. I'm not like that and I think it can make me seem rather cold."

**On past excesses:** "There were things that were not too clever, but I haven't killed anyone yet".

**On Mrs. Thatcher & Pinochet:** "She continues to disgrace the country by taking tea with a mass murderer".

Elvis also expresses sympathy with Liverpool footballer Robbie Fowler, recently banned for his "highly amusing" coke-snorting goal celebration.

**Sunday Herald** (April 11 - Scotland) Unusually interesting interview feature by Pat Kane which finds EC in reflective mood.

**On his approaching 45th birthday:** "What age means to me is that now I worry about spending two

you have to work twice as hard. But the great thing about my kind of music is I always feel the quality of listening is better. What I mean is that people who go to the concerts are really there because they want to listen - not because they like my haircut or I used to be in a soap opera."

## Books:

### Elvis Costello - A Bio-Bibliography

(James E. Perone - Greenwood Press)

ISBN 0-313-30399-1

Price \$65.00

Mr. Perone's pricey book succeeds in elevating the treatment of Costello's work to a scholarly level. On the other hand it falls short of something a fan would want.

This book is meant as a reference piece for those interested in researching EC's work. A short, well-written but sometimes lacking bio, is followed by a photo-less and less than perfect discography. But the real shame here are the bibliographies of articles and books written about EC. They are nowhere near complete and while some are descriptive, some are also merely mentions of things the reader could probably never find. The book

years on something, and it might not be worth it in the end. So much is just about making sure that the next choice is the right one."

**On where he lives:** "I have no real loyalty or identity to anywhere, really... I go back to visit my mother in Liverpool, I go to London to see my son. Even though my father's family was born in Dungannon, I can't say I feel all that Irish. But I've always preferred the tricolour to the Union Jack - it's a more beautiful flag. And I don't think the tricolour has ever been run up over any dead colonial bodies."

**On political songwriting:** "There are people who believe, in an almost Jesuitical way, that it is your duty to write politically. 'Where's your political song on this record?' Like it's tattooed on my wrist that I must write in response to every political event. Life isn't like that. I always write from an emotional trigger. The thing about a troubador, is that they see you coming. I don't like them to see me coming."

**Belfast Telegraph** (April 15 - N. Ireland) Interview feature designed to drum up interest in C&N's Belfast concert.

"I'm obliged to accept certain realities. I know certain types of radio are closed to me, for example, just by virtue of my age. But you can either get fed up with the rules, or you can go round them. Sometimes it's the long way round and

also contains some factual errors that will jump right out at the knowledgeable fan.

Nonetheless, the book is very professionally done and does have some future reference value... until someone comes along and finally publishes the essential Costello discography, including foreign releases and photos. For now, we recommend Paul Hosken's web page.


The book can be ordered with a credit card by calling 1-800-225-5800.

### The Chieftains: The Authorized Biography (John Glatt - St. Martin's Press)

Head Chieftain Paddy Moloney reminisces about working with EC on 1991's *The Bells of Dublin* LP which featured their co-composition "St. Stephen's Day Murders":

"Elvis reminds me of James Joyce since he's moved to Dublin. I sent him an old cassette where I was banging out the music on a piano ... Anybody would think, 'Ireland. Murders. Oh my God'. It is about a typical family celebrating Christmas together in the old Dublin-style. Everything in the garden is sweet and rosy but things can get pretty hot around St. Stephen's Day. Maybe there might be a bit of an old argument, a schimozzle, that could lead to a blow or two."

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**200cigarettes**

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### 200cigarettes

(A Novel by Spencer Johns. Based on the Screenplay by Shana Larsen - MTV Books)

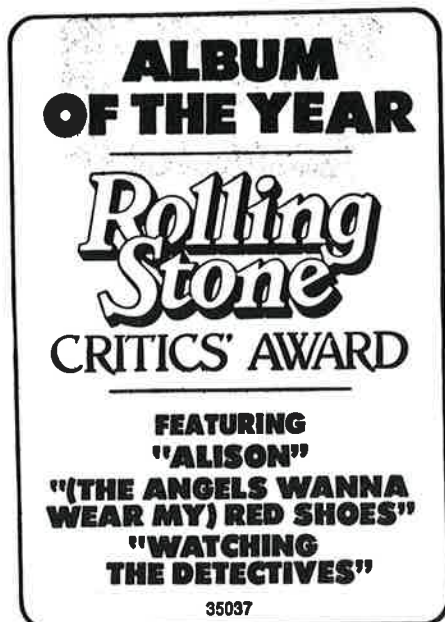
This novelization reads like a soft-porn romance novel for teenagers. Nonetheless, Elvis Costello's "presence" in the film is portrayed here as well. Here's a choice cut:

Monica looks up and snaps, "No. You have to tell me everything about Elvis."

"All right... just relax. What can I tell you? He has these thick glasses...Oh, there's one thing - he was hungry and this Hillary chick gave him some crab dip, she fed it to him on a cracker, and he made up this song right in the moment about loving the crab dip and wanting the recipe."

## "Cellophane shrink-wrapped, so correct": PART 1

This is the first part of a rather obsessive look at the promotional stickers that have graced the covers of Elvis Costello's LPs. **TOP LEFT** Sticker for later issue of *US MAIT* after winning the *Rolling Stone* award. Note it overlays a "New From Columbia Records" sticker. **TOP RIGHT** Testimonial from *US MAIT*. **MIDDLE LEFT** UK sticker for *TYM* joking about the inclusion of the free "Stranger in the House" / "Neat, Neat, Neat" single. **MIDDLE** Round and rectangular stickers are from the *US AF*. **BOTTOM** From the Canadian *AF*.

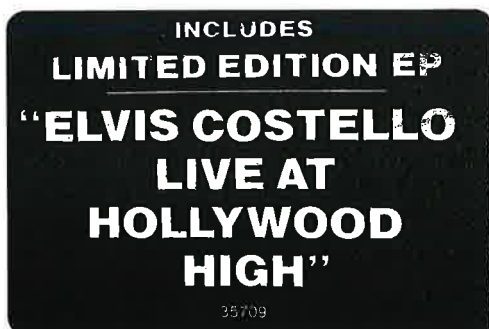


"Who is Elvis Costello? Good question, and unfortunately I haven't a clue about the answer. I do know that the tunes on his album reveal him to be a particularly strong songwriter with an ear for musical and lyrical hooks..."

"My Aim Is True is the name of the album, and when CBS unleashes the thatch-haired, cuffed-jeaned Costello on the unaware American market, he should rightfully strike a bull's-eye with his emotionally cryptic songs. He's already gotten me through the heart, and the pain is as sweet as it is sharp."

—John Milward, *Chicago Daily News*

35037

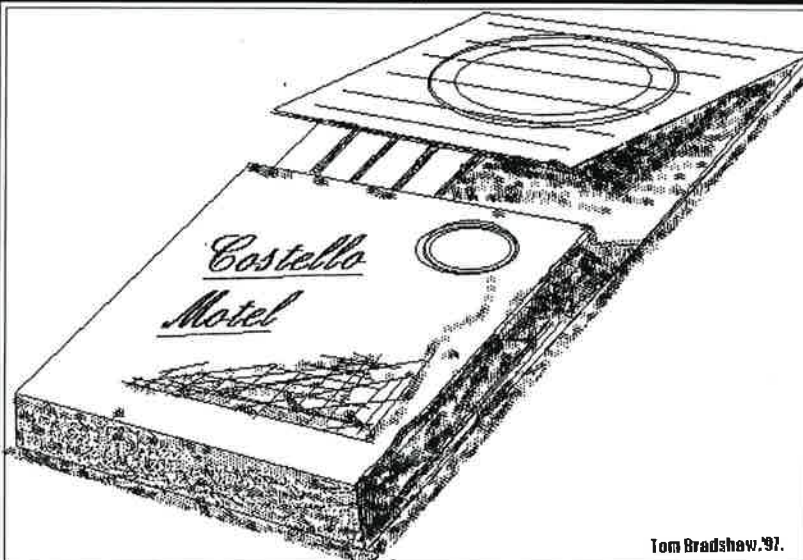




# Framed and Hung Up: by Lainey and Tom Bradshaw (Birmingham, UK)



Lainey Bradshaw. '97.



Tom Bradshaw. '97.

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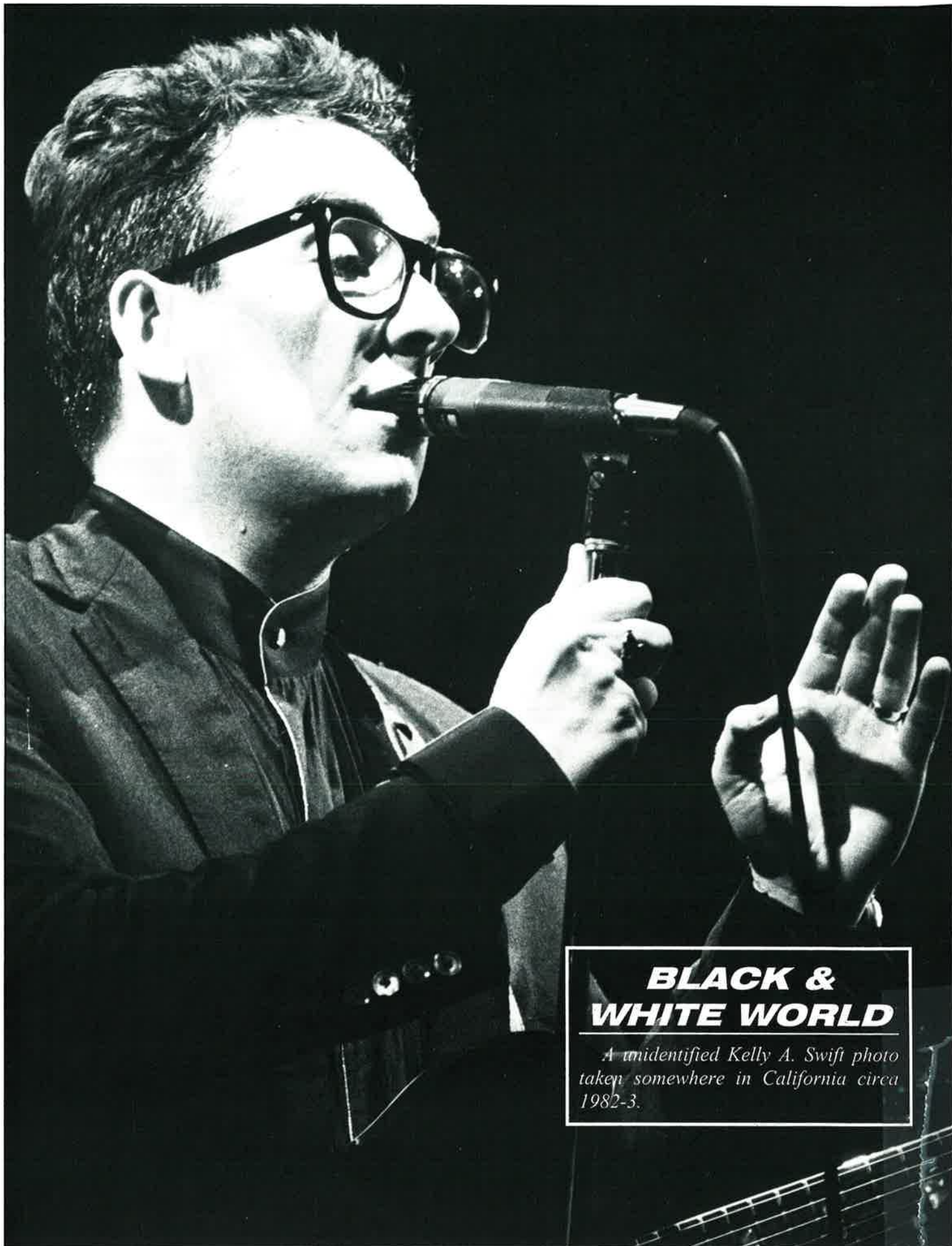
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*A unidentified Kelly A. Swift photo  
taken somewhere in California circa  
1982-3.*