The Encyclopedia of Record Producers

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An indispensable guide to the most important record producers in music history
Walter Afanasieff

Walter Afanasieff has been involved in some of the biggest-selling records of the '90s, including titles by Celine Dion, Michael Bolton, Kenny G, Luther Vandross, and the artist he is most closely associated with, Mariah Carey.

As a producer, he is deeply involved in all stages of the records he makes: he writes (or co-writes) the songs, creates the musical arrangements, and records all of the backing tracks before he brings the singer in. This style of working is far from the norm in the now-fractionated record business, and most closely emulates the work habits of Richard Carpenter, David Kahne, and Walter's own mentor, Narada Michael Walden (see entries).

"The way to make money in this business," Walden said in 1988, "is to find white artists and make them sound black." Afanasieff seems to have taken this advice to heart.

Born February 10, 1958, in São Paulo, Brazil, Afanasieff began as a keyboard player touring with Jean-Luc Ponty.

"I don't really like being on stage," he says. "It was
cool playing with Jean-Luc because of the intelligence of his music, but I'm so shy, I can't do that on-stage thing. When I got off the road, I was lucky enough to hook up with Narada, who hired me to do sessions for him. Before that I was just playing weddings on weekends, so that was a very lucky thing. Then one thing quickly led to another. I started playing with his fusion band, the Warriors-Mahavishnu Orchestra type of stuff." Afanasieff was writing tunes for The Warriors, and Walden suggested they co-write pop songs together.

Afanasieff began working as a staff producer, arranger, and session keyboardist in Narada Michael Walden's Marin County Tarpan Studios. This was the heady period when Walden was one of the country's most sought-after producers because of his successes with the debut album by Whitney Houston and Aretha Franklin's mid-'80s comeback album Who's Zoomin' Who (No. 13). Afanasieff's keyboard parts are heard on the Walden-produced records by these artists as well as by Lionel Ritchie, George Benson, and Barbra Streisand.

For several years, Walden tutored Afanasieff on all aspects of record production and the record business. Although they split bitterly over album credits after Carey's debut album, Afanasieff still feels indebted to Walden.

"I owe him everything," says Afanasieff. "If it wasn't for Narada Michael Walden moving to S.F., taking me under his wing, showing me everything about writing, the economics of music, and producing, I wouldn't be anywhere. And Narada has done some incredible stuff, produced and written some beautiful songs."

Afanasieff's "start-to-finish" production approach is ideal for the types of artists he works with, typically singers who are not themselves known for their writing. Afanasieff usually writes the song, sequences it using Apple Macintosh computers with Vision software, and brings in a stable of musicians to record the tracks. The singers overdub their vocal parts after all the tracking is done.

He is famous for his vocal sounds, with a rich, fat texture that cuts through the instrumental accompaniment; and for the layered keyboards and high-end "sparkle" on most of his tracks. — DANIEL J. LEVITIN


**Johnson, Puff**: Mirage, Columbia, 1996.


**Lorenz, Trey**: Trey Lorenz, Epic, 1992.

**Murphy, Eddie**: So Happy, CBS, 1989.


**Streisand, Barbra**: Higher Ground, Sony, 1997.


**COLLECTIONS**

Aladdin soundtrack, Disney, 1992.


Hunchback of Notre Dame soundtrack, Disney, 1996.

Hercules, soundtrack, Disney, 1997.

A Smile Like Yours soundtrack, Elektra, 1997.
“Something would happen where I would be the center of attention. So you create things like that once in a while to take the pressure off the artist.”

Ahern fancies himself a detail-oriented producer, but admits sometimes the best results come from being sloppy. “Most of the George Jones record I did at Bradley’s Barn, almost all of that was first or second takes,” he says. “The concept there was to get all these luminaries all in one room and not give them time to learn the song and get really polished and start thinking about their snow tires, which a lot of them do, a lot of them play on automatic. I wanted to get their attention the first or second time through, so I guess that’s an example of when sloppy is good.”

Ahern has no regrets when it comes to his career. “I can’t think of anything I would do different,” he says. “At one point I regretted not learning to read music, but then I realized I made a lot of unorthodox decisions because of it that were good.” —DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

Campbell, Glen: See Murray, Anne.
Place, Mary Kay: Tomite! At the Capri Lounge, CBS, 1976 • Ainin’ to Please, CBS, 1977.
Williams, Don: Lord I Hope This Day Is Good, MCA, 1993.
Winchester, Jesse: Nothin’ but a Breeze, Bearsville, 1977.

Ron and Howard Albert

Brothers Ron and Howard Albert have been in the recording industry for 30 years. Ron began his career as an assistant engineer at Miami’s premier Criteria Recording Studios while still in high school. Howard played keyboard in various local bands and, after serving in Vietnam, returned to Miami to join his brother at Criteria.

Eventually, through time and skill (and a little luck) they worked themselves into being one of the most respected engineering-production teams of the ’70s, producing acoustic-oriented rock artists such as Crosby, Stills and Nash; Firefall; Roger McGuinn; Clark and Hillman; Pure Prairie League; and John “Cougar” Mellencamp.

The engineering style for which they are known is clean, straightforward, and gimmick-free. Their typical rhythm section sound no doubt owes as much to the acoustics of Criteria as to any particular engineering decision: the drums often sound well-contained, and the bass guitar direct-injected with a warm, round resonance.

The Albert brothers’ unobtrusiveness as producer-engineers allows the vocals to shine through the mix. Among their high points is 1977’s CSN (No. 2) by Crosby, Stills and Nash, which featured the No. 7 hit “Just a Song Before I Go.”
Graham Nash cites their "passion, humor, and an innate knowledge of what would work well on the radio" as the Albert brothers' strengths. "After I wrote 'Just a Song,' I played it for them and they immediately thought it would be a hit," he says. "Who the fuck knows what's going to be the hit? I don't think we've ever really known. But Ron and Howard knew. Also, they did a great 'good cop, bad cop' thing, and they could always figure out what to say to us so that we would accept it. They were very fast, and mostly I remember it being very fun. They were very involved musically as well, such as arrangements."

Nash adds that it wasn't easy working with CSN, "because we produced some pretty fine records ourselves. The problem was that we started to get in each other's way, so it was very nice to hand over that part of the process to someone else that we respected. They walked a tightrope between thrilling us and pissing us off. Ultimately, they love music and it shows in their body of work."

Today as partners with Steve Alaimo in Vision Records, Ron and Howard Albert continue to be a driving force in Miami music, and as captains of their boat the Fantast they continue to be a driving force in the recreational fishing industry. —Daniel J. Levitin

Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young: Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, Atlantic, 1991.
Mink De Ville: Where Angels Fear to Tread, Atlantic, 1983.
Wyde, Zak: Book of Shadows, Geffen, 1996.

Steve Albini

Punk-rock provocateur or rigid dogmatist? Indie idealist or raging hypocrite? Opinions tend to polarize on the relative merits of Steve Albini, although few can deny that some of the most epochal albums of the alternative age benefited from the man's hand. From the Pixies to Nirvana, from PJ Harvey to the Jesus Lizard, Albini's blunt, take-no-prisoners approach helped throw into bold relief the virtues of a who's who of full-on rock bands.

As the leader of the seminal industrial-strength rage band Big Black and the meaner and less-than-seminal Raperman, Albini was an acknowledged avatar of hardass post-punk values in the late '80s. As a burgeoning record maker, he became renowned not only for his aesthetic convictions and technical know-how but his suffer-no-fools attitude and unstinting protectiveness of bands' artistic and financial welfare. Not content to simply counsel against extramusical influence and corporate bias, he walked his talk by declining to take a percentage of an act's album sales and even disclaiming the title of "producer," preferring a "recorded by" credit instead.

In 1987, Albini "recorded" the album that more than any other laid the template for mid-'90s modern rock: the Pixies' Surfer Rosa. True, the band's bent pop-punk genius was evident from its first EP and on several

Anne Dudley and J.J. Jeczalik

J.J. Jeczalik

Gary Langan
Big Country: Eclectic, Castle, 1996.
The The: Infected, Epic, 1986.
Then Jerico: The Big Area, MCA, 1989.

Peter Asher

Peter Asher’s productions are known for their clear sonic quality and their enviable ability to yield hits that don’t compromise artistic integrity.

Born June 22, 1944, in London, Asher grew up in a musical household, his mother having been an English horn player with the London Symphony Orchestra. As one half of the duo Peter and Gordon (with Gordon Waller), Peter Asher had a taste of pop stardom when his sister Jane’s boyfriend, a certain Paul McCartney (see entry), wrote the group its No. 1 "A World Without Love" in 1964.

In all, Peter and Gordon had ten Top 40 hits, four of them written by McCartney (nominally in collaboration with John Lennon); the other three were "Nobody I Know," "I Don’t Want to See You Again," and "Woman."

Had it been only for those hits, Asher might have remained little more than an interesting footnote in pop music history. But in 1969, while working as an A&R man for the Beatles’ Apple Records, Asher produced the self-titled debut album for the then-unknown James Taylor that was to set him on the road to production superstardom. Although the record was not a huge hit, it gave Asher the experience he needed for the work that would soon follow.

The producer on more than 50 albums by artists as diverse as Diana Ross, Randy Newman, Cher, and Tony Joe White, Asher is best known for the string of hit albums he produced for Taylor and Linda Ronstadt, two artists he also represented through his management company. The second Asher-produced Taylor album, Sweet Baby James (No. 3), has worn well with time, and has the same sort of home-grown charm of McCartney’s solo debut album, with Taylor singing most of the background vocals by himself, assisted by only a small number of musicians. The album itself formed something of a blueprint for nearly all of Taylor’s later albums, combining ballads with straight-ahead rock tunes, and a carefully chosen cover or two.

Besides propelling Taylor on a three-decade career marked by spectacular commercial success and volumes of critical acclaim, Sweet Baby James spawned the Amer-
american singer/songwriter movement and inspired generations of like-minded artists, from Jackson Browne in the ‘70s to Tracy Chapman in the ‘80s to Shawn Colvin in the ‘90s.

Among Asher’s most inspired works was Taylor’s 1977 opus JT (No. 4), a gorgeous, lush production that featured multiple layers of instrumental and vocal harmonies and some of Taylor’s best compositions. During this same period, Asher produced a series of albums that comprised Linda Ronstadt’s commercial peak. Heart Like a Wheel (No. 1) featured the No. 1 single “You’re No Good.” Subsequent singles put the Asher-Ronstadt team on the map: “Poor Poor Pitiful Me,” “Tumbling Dice,” and “That’ll Be the Day” (No. 11) proved that Asher could make as hard-driving a rock record as anyone, while “Blue Bayou” (No. 3) and “Ooh, Baby Baby” (No. 7) showed his depth and proved that his successes recording the deeper, more introspective side of Taylor were no accident.

After playing a prominent role in the music of the ‘60s and ‘70s, Asher proved himself ever capable of adapting to the times: he produced 10,000 Maniacs‘ In My Tribe and Blind Man’s Zoo (No. 13), the first of which yielded the radio hits “What’s the Matter Here?” and “Like the Weather.” These albums combine the three elements that have become trademarks of Asher’s style: careful craftsmanship, a relaxed atmosphere, and a compelling immediacy that draws the listener and the performers closer together.

Ronstadt says of their work together: “When I worked with Peter, I chose all the material, and I had a great deal to do with the arrangements. I think the producer’s job is to listen to the sound in great detail and then make thoughtful adjustments. And sometimes that means you don’t make any adjustments at all and sometimes you make a lot. For example, Burt Bacharach (see entry) would write the song, the arrangement, do all the background vocals—it was his picture and you colored it. With Peter it can be his picture and you’re the crayon, or you can be the crayon and he holds it. . . . There was a project we started together and we eventually abandoned—the song ‘Oh No Not My Baby.’ Peter later did it with Cher, and I ended up recording it and producing it myself. If you listen to that song, you can hear what it was that Peter brought to our partnership: my version was done without him, and Cher’s was done with him.”

Ronstadt adds, “Peter is as good as they come. He has excellent ears. He can hear sound in greatly magnified detail. It is comparable to sitting around in the rain forest with a bunch of natives and all of a sudden they all get up and pick up their spears and run out and come back later with a pig, and you didn’t hear anything at all. In any mix, there are lines and colors moving against the general soundscape and you become amazingly sensitive to detail. Like how the bass and drums fit together, or how the guitar tones have changed.”

Besides producing her signature hits, Asher inspired Ronstadt’s own production. “In terms of listening and how to layer on things and careful, practical, pragmatic considerations, Peter taught all of us—me, [collaborator] George Massenburg (see entry), [guitarist/songwriter] Andrew Gold, and [guitarist/producer] Waddy Wachtel. We all learned from his production and his careful organization. Now as a producer myself, I feel I benefited enormously from the Peter Asher school of record production.”

Cher praises Asher for his even temperament. “He is so calm,” she says. “He gives you the feeling that everything is fine and that if you make a mistake it’s OK. He makes you feel really relaxed with him so that good things can come out. In the studio, you have this feeling that he is only doing your album, that there is nothing else going on in his life. Of course, you know that is not true, but he gives you that feeling.”

Asked how he achieved intimacy in the artificial environment of the recording studio—particularly on Taylor’s albums—Asher says, “I don’t do anything deliberately to engender that intimacy. That’s James’ skill as a singer. I do try to make the artists feel at home in the studio so that they don’t have to worry about other things such as, ‘Are the musicians going to play the right parts?’ ”

Although he has made many “serious” albums in his career, Asher still has a predilection for pure pop. “I like serious albums, but I also really like catchy hit singles even if they are ephemeral,” he says. “Sometimes as a business we’re in danger of taking ourselves too seriously. It is just pop music. It’s supposed to be ephemeral.” —Daniel J. Levitin

Blakeley, Peter: Harry’s Café De Wheels (7 tracks), Echo Chamber/Capitol, 1989.


Jo Mama: Jo Mama, Atlantic, 1970.


Ronin: Ronin, Mercury, 1980.


Ross, Diana: "If We Hold on Together," MCA, 1988 (Land Before Time soundtrack) • Force Behind the Power (6 tracks), Motown, 1991 • Diana: The Ultimate Collection, Motown, 1993.


Taylor, Kate: Sister Kate, Cotillion, 1971.


Williams Brothers: The Williams Brothers (1 track), Warner Bros., 1991.


Jon Astley

Jon Astley is one of the most successful producers of reissues and compilations. Yet, because he concentrates primarily on that market, he enjoys far less recognition than his exploits deserve.

Astley is largely responsible for the superbly crafted reissues of the Who’s classic canon: from The Who Sell Out and Live at Leeds to Who’s Next and Who Are You. Moreover, he produced My Generation: The Very Best of The Who, co-produced The Best of Pete Townshend, and was one of three producers who compiled The Who: Thirty Years of Maximum R&B.
turned the sound down and I hear him singing 'Like a Virgin.'” —DAVID JOHN FARINELLA


Babes in Toyland: “We Are Family” (remix), Reprise, 1995.

  • Merge, Breakout/A&M, 1989 • “Talk It Over,”
  Breakout/A&M, 1989 w/ Al Green, “The Message Is
  Love,” Breakout/A&M, 1989 • “Last Thing on My Mind,”
  Breakout/A&M, 1990 • Give in to the Rhythm, RCA, 1991 •
  “Let There Be Love,” Arista, 1991 • “Leave the Guns at


Bambaataa, Afrika: w/ Soulsonic Force, “Looking for the
Perfect Beat,” Tommy Boy, 1982 • w/ Soulsonic Force,
“Planet Rock,” Tommy Boy, 1982 • w/ Soulsonic Force,
Planet Rock: The Album, Tommy Boy, 1986 • Don’t Stop . . .

Beck, Jeff: Beckology. Epic/Legacy, 1991, 1995 • Flash, Epic,


Brooklyn Funk Essentials: Cool and Steady and Easy, Dorado,
1994.


Circuit II: Can’t Tempt Fate, Elektra, 1985.


Face to Face: Face to Face. Epic, 1984 • Confrontation, Epic,


Harry, Debbie: Def, Dumb and Blonde (1 track), Sire/Reprise,
1989 • “Sweet and Low,” Sire/Reprise, 1989 • Debravation
(1 track), Sire/Reprise, 1993.


Hugh, Grayson: Road to Freedom, MCA, 1992.

Naked Eyes: Fuel for the Fire, EMI America, 1984 • “(What) in
the Name of Love,” EMI America, 1984.

1, MCA, 1991.

New Kids on the Block: No More Games (remix), Columbia,

New Order: “Touched By the Hand of God,” Qwest, 1987 •
Substance, Qwest, 1987 • “Confusion,” Warner Bros., 1991
(Volume One) • 1963” (remix), London, 1995.

Pet Shop Boys: “In the Night” (remix), EMI America, 1986.

Planet Patrol: “I Didn’t Know I Loved You (till I Saw You
Rock and Roll), Tommy Boy, 1983 • Play at Your Own Risk,
Tommy Boy, 1983.


Rockers Revenge: “Walking on Sunshine ’89,” FFRR, 1989
(Silver on Black).

Ross, Diana: Greatest Hits: The RCA Years, RCA, 1997.


Soulsonic Force: See Bambaataa, Afrika.

Springsteen, Bruce: “Dancing in the Dark” (remix),

Tom Tom Club: “Call of the Wild,” Reprise, 1989 (Follow Our
Tracks, Vol. 2).

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Roy Thomas Baker

By producing the best albums of Queen and the Cars, the versatile Roy Thomas Baker played an essential role in ushering in two very different rock movements: pomp rock and new wave. Baker also produced pivotal albums by Be-Bop Deluxe, Dokken, Ozzy Osbourne, and Foreigner and brought the much-maligned corporate rock band Journey its first commercial success.

While Queen’s albums are sonically and musically challenging epics, densely produced, the first four Cars albums are significantly sparer and more open-sounding, with an emphasis on high-gloss minimalism. What Baker’s tracks share is his unfailing ear for taste, hooks, and musicality. Cutting-edge engineering plays an important role in the presentation of the songs, so in many cases the engineering and the songs become inseparable.

Baker’s five Queen albums and the singles they spawned—including “You’re My Best Friend” (No. 16), “Sheer Heart Attack,” “Killer Queen” (No. 12), and “Bohemian Rhapsody” (No. 9)—are among the best-produced recordings in rock. The unique guitar tones on the solo for “Killer Queen,” for example, (a sort of ultra harmonically distorted faux-violin tone) were utterly fresh at the time and have not been duplicated. The tongue-in-cheek “Bohemian Rhapsody” is an ambitious, boundary-stretching, meter-shifting opus that bathes the listener in dozens of Freddie Mercury vocal overdubs.

For The Cars (No. 18), Baker’s instrumental layerings were more subtle, emphasizing the repetitive eighth-note rhythms that were to become a signature of the
new wave sound. Their eponymous debut was recorded in London in just two weeks and produced three hit singles; the release of the follow-up had to be delayed until sales of The Cars subsided.

The high point of the Baker-Cars collaboration was their second album, the brilliant Candy-O (No. 3). This 1979 LP combined the urgency of the then-burgeoning punk movement with unabashedly pop arrangements and Beatles-like melodies, all delivered with quirky aloofness by frontman Ric Ocasek (see entry). Baker and the Cars repeated their success with two more platinum releases, Panorama (No. 5) and Shake It Up (No. 9).

The Cars notched their biggest sales with their fifth album (with producer Mutt Lange; see entry), the multiplatinum Heartbeat City. Yet Heartbeat, for all of its slick production and hit singles, failed to capture the brashness of the younger Cars, which Baker so deftly brought to vinyl. It is a testament to Baker’s style that he was able to turn the minimalist arrangements of the Cars into records that sound so huge.

In both Queen and the Cars, Baker found brainy artists who appealed to college audiences and intellectuals. (All the members of Queen held Ph.D.s, while the Cars’ often-cryptic lyrics provided hours of entertaining analysis for their legion of college fans.) As if to prove that he could simultaneously embrace the intelligentsia and the great unwashed, Baker spent part of 1978 and 1979 producing Infinity and Evolution (No. 20), the albums that established Journey’s commercial viability. Had it not been for Baker, Journey might have disappeared into generic rock oblivion; sales of their first three albums had been disappointing, and their days at CBS were undoubtedly numbered. Baker brought the group two hit singles: “Lights” and “Wheel in the Sky.” The two albums stayed on the Billboard charts for 123 weeks and 96 weeks, respectively, and each went triple-platinum.

Buoyed by such profits, CBS did what it is best at—capitalized on its vaults. The patchwork In the Beginning was released while Infinity and Evolution were still on the charts, combining previously released tracks from the first three Journey albums.

Baker’s ill-conceived Foreigner collaboration resulted in their third album (and its hit title track), 1979’s Head Games (No. 5). Never known for production quality, Foreigner albums had a sort of garage quality that lent itself to such frat-rock songs as “Hot Blooded” and “Cold as Ice.” But on Head Games, it sounded as though the garage band had moved into an even danker venue. What little clarity the instruments had had was now lost in dark, bleary engineering. The guitar tones are dull, the arrangements unimaginative. —DANIEL J. LEVITIN

Be-Bop Deluxe: Futurama, Harvest, ’77.
Calvert, Robert: Captain Lockhead and the Starfighters, UA/Passport, 1974.
Cheap Trick: One on One, Epic, 1982 • Sex America Cheap Trick, Epic, 1996.
Man: Rhinos and Lunatics, United Artists, 1972.
Michael, George: See Queen.
Osbourne, Ozzy: No Rest for the Wicked, Epic, 1989.
Straker, Pete: This One’s on Me, EMI, 1977.

Glen Ballard

A disciple of Quincy Jones (see entry) and a budding songwriter/arranger/producer in the late ‘70s and ‘80s, Glen Ballard made a big splash as a producer in 1988, when he collaborated with a Los Angeles Lakers cheerleader named Paula Abdul on her debut album, Forever Your Girl, which would reach seven-times platinum and occupy the No. 1 position on the Billboard 200 for 16 weeks.

Less than two years later, Ballard hit the jackpot again on the debut album by Wilson Phillips, a female trio made up of offspring of L.A. rock icons Brian Wilson (Carney and Wendy Wilson) and Michelle and John Phillips of the Mamas and the Papas (Chymna Phillips). The group’s self-titled album sold 5 million copies in the U.S. and reached No. 2 on the Billboard 200.

If those two associations brought Ballard acclaim as a hit-making producer/arranger/songwriter, his next collaborator, Alanis Morissette, would catapult him to superstardom among pop music producers.

Not only did Ballard produce Morissette’s No. 1 smash debut, Jagged Little Pill, he also co-wrote much of the material with the singer, arranged it, and performed on the album. To date, Jagged Little Pill has sold in excess of 15 million copies in the U.S., nearly matching Boston’s record for the top-selling debut album of all time.

Because most of Jagged Little Pill was recorded on Alesis Adat modular digital multitrack (MDM) recorders, Ballard became associated with the “MDM” revolution of the ‘90s. Because of their affordability, portability, and modular design, MDMs allow artists and producers to make high-quality recordings at home or in small, so-called project studios, thereby saving money on studio bookings and enjoying the freedom of working at a leisurely pace.

“I think it’s great, and there’s no stopping it,” Ballard says of MDM recording. “There’s a great depth and character to analog recording that won’t be replaced by anything, but I’m always the first person to get something new. [Alesis] Adats have made my work so much easier. The Alanis record was 98 percent Adat, and I’ve done 10 or 12 other records that were 98 percent Adat. I’m not a purist in that if it’s not analog it can’t be good. I’m into capturing emotions. I try not to be too precious about it, because at the end of the day if what you’re hearing in the studio is great and you put it on Adat, I don’t think it’s going to be any less great. As long as the technology isn’t driving the boat, you’re OK.”

Asked if he considers himself primarily a producer, a songwriter, or an arranger, Ballard responds: “It’s hard for me to delineate sometimes, because one bleeds into the other. As a record producer, I think of the song first, whether I’m the writer or not. It’s all predicated on the song for me. That’s no great secret, but oftentimes the way the marketplace is, there’s an assumption that you can get by with a great track but not a great song. And you certainly can get by that way, but for a record to go all the way and have real resonance and quality, you better have the song. I always feel like if you get the great song, it’s almost impossible to ruin the production.”

Ballard defines the role of the record producer as “being a film director and a film producer, because you have the creative responsibilities and the financial responsibilities to make it happen.”

He adds that people are often “mystified” by the title of record producer, and acknowledges that every producer regards his or her job differently. “For as many record producers it can mean as many things,” he says. “For me it’s a hands-on process that involves, long before you go into the studio, a preproduction process. That’s where you make a hit record, in preproduction. So when you go in the studio, you’ve already got your genetic information to make something beautiful.”

Following the release of Jagged Little Pill, Ballard worked on Aerosmith’s Nine Lives album, but most of

Steve Thompson


Steve Barri

Steve Barri was the King Midas of AM radio pop from 1968 to 1974, his string of hits often skirting the fragile line between pop and bubble gum. His discography reads like a Top 10 list from junior high school dances of that period: he produced all the hits by the Grass Roots (including "Midnight Confessions," No. 5; "Temptation Eyes," No. 15; "I'd Wait a Million Years," No. 15; "Don't Pull Your Love," No. 4, by Hamilton, Joe Frank and Reynolds; and "Billy Don't Be a Hero," No. 1, by Bo Donaldson and the Heywoods. All are textbook examples of formula pop, well-crafted and carefully assembled.

Born Steven Barry Lipkin, in Brooklyn, New York, on February 23, 1942, Barri found his finest vehicle in Tommy Roe. His best work came from his sometimes uncomfortable collaboration with Roe, which resulted in the singer's return to the charts and six hit singles. "Dizzy" featured a wild string arrangement by Jimmie Haskell and was a No. 1 record for four weeks in 1969. Further chart success followed with "Heather Honey," "Jam Up and Jelly Tight" (No. 8), and "Stagger Lee."

The Barri production team included Ben Benay on guitar (who has recorded with Steely Dan, the Beach Boys, and Joe Cocker), Don Rađi on keyboards (Linda Ronstadt, the Righteous Brothers), Larry Knechtel on keyboards (Simon and Garfunkel, Duane Eddy, Bread, the Carpenters), Joe Osborne on bass (Simon and Garfunkel, the Carpenters, the Mamas and the Papas), and Hal Blaine on drums (see separate entry under session musicians).

During the '70s, Barri worked in A&R where he guided the careers of the Commodores and Lionel Richie. In 1989, after an absence from the charts of more than a decade, Barri formed a production team with session guitarist Tony Peluso (the Carpenters, Paul Revere and the Raiders, Seals and Crofts) and produced the No. 9 hit "Room to Move," by techno-pop quintet Animotion. In 1991, the team produced the debut album by the Triplets, three Mexican sisters born seven seconds apart, yielding the No. 14 hit, "You Don't Have to Go Home Tonight." —Daniel J. Levine


Corbetta, Jerry; Jerry Corbetta, Warner Bros., 1978.


Fantastic Baggies: Tell 'Em I'm Surfing, Imperial, 1964.


Friedman, Kinky: Kinky Friedman, ABC, 1974.


Kennedy, Mike: Louisiana, ABC, 1972.


King, B.B.: See Bland, Bobby "Blue."


Lawrence, Joey: Joey Lawrence, Impact, 1993.


Shannon, Del: Greatest Hits, Rhino, 1990.


Weaver, Patty: Patty Weaver, Warner Bros., 1982.

COLLECTIONS
Beautiful Thing soundtrack, MCA, 1996.

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Jeff Barry

Jeff Barry has made a career out of writing and producing some of the greatest pop music ever recorded. With partner, and later wife, Ellie Greenwich, Barry wrote Phil Spector’s (see entry) most luminous vehicles: the Ronettes’ “Be My Baby” and “Baby I Love You,” the Crystals’ “Da Doo Ron Ron” and “Then He Kissed Me,” Darlene Love’s “Christmas (Baby Please Come Home),” and Ike and Tina Turner’s “River Deep, Mountain High.”

These songs perfectly balance anticipation and fulfillment, capturing the tender and tingling moment between childhood and adulthood. They gave Spector the ideal bones on which to flesh out his momentous, ornate creations.

Barry and Greenwich also wrote the No. 1 hits “Do Wah Diddy Diddy” for Manfred Mann and “Hanky Panky” for Tommy James and the Shondells.

As co-owners of Red Bird Records from 1964 to 1966 (with Jerry Leiber, Mike Stoller, and George Goldner—see entries), Barry and Greenwich helped define the girl group sound by writing and producing for the Dixie Cups (“Chapel of Love,” No. 1; “People Say,” No. 12; “Iko, Iko,” No. 20); the Jelly Beans (“I Wanna Love Him So Bad,” No. 9) and the Butterflies’ (“Good Night Baby”). The pair took it a step further by writing, producing, and singing as the Raindrops (“The Kind of Boy You Can’t Forget”).

They also wrote and produced with Shadow Morton (see entry) for the Shangri-Las (“Leader of the Pack,” No. 1; “Remember (Walkin’ in the Sand),” No. 5). All but five of the first 20 Red Bird releases charted. The Barry-Greenwich team was elected to the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1991.

Barry and Greenwich left Red Bird in 1966 to manage and produce Neil Diamond and ran up another
worked. We finally put the song in the form it is now, said 'Ah, this is fine,' and went home. We turned up the next morning, and Paul Carrack, who had just joined the band, said, 'I have an idea. Do you mind if I sing it?' I threw a mike up, and he went up and sang against it, and it was this magical transformation. It's like the song just came alive." —ERIC OLSEN AND DAWN DARLING

Attractions, The: Mad About the Wrong Boy, F-Beat, 1980.
Byrne, Simon: Dream Crazy, Epic, 1986.
Carter, Carlene: Be My Guest, WB, 1977, 1981 • C'est C Bon, Epic, 1983 • Best Of, Columbia, 1985 • See also the Attractions.
db's, The: Stands for Decibels, IRS, 1981.
Slousse & the Banshees: "New Skin," Virgin, 1996 (Strip tease soundtrack).
Trash Can Sinatras: Cake, Go!, 1990.
Huang Chung: Huang Chung (3 tracks), Arista, 1982.

Walter Becker and Donald Fagen

Walter Becker (born February 20, 1950, in Queens) and Donald Fagen (born January 10, 1948, in Passaic, New Jersey) were the brains behind Steely Dan, whose discs are among the most high-fidelity recordings ever. Although Gary Katz (see entry) received sole production credit for their seven albums, engineers who worked with them say Becker and Fagen were very hands-on producers throughout their Steely Dan careers.

Becker and Fagen met at Bard College in upstate New York and played in a variety of bands, including Chameleon Church, which sported Chevy Chase on drums, and the popular Boston band Ultimate Spinach. A&R executive Katz found jobs for the duo as staff songwriters at ABC/Dunhill, where they wrote songs for and toured with Jay and the Americans.

After a period in which they'd placed only one song (the long-forgotten "I Mean to Shine," with Barbra Streisand), Katz suggested they form their own band. The original Steely Dan lineup included Jim Hodder (drums), Denny Dias and Jeff Baxter (guitars), David Palmer (keyboards and vocals), Becker (bass), and Fagen (keyboards and vocals).

"I was a reluctant vocalist at first," Fagen explains, "but we never found anyone who could do the tunes. My mother sang pop standards with a band; she actually used to work up at the Catskills. Her stage name was Ellen Ross. She quit singing when she was 18, but sang every summer during the Depression to make money. She used to sing around the house all the time, so I grew up knowing all the standards."

Fagen's voice has an unusual timbre, but his expressiveness, phrasing, and sense of pitch are exceptional; he credits his mother for all those qualities.

While Fagen was a vocal constant, it soon became apparent that a fixed lineup wouldn't serve the songwriters' musical ideas. Gradually, Steely Dan became the working name for a constantly changing group of studio musicians, brought in for their ability to accommodate individual songs.

The group hired the best guitarists in the world: from early members Baxter and Dias to Mark Knopfler (Gaucho; see entry), Rick Derringer (Countdown to Ecstasy), Lee Ritenour (Aja), Elliot Randall (many tracks, includ-
ing the solo in “Reelin’ in the Years,” which Jimmy Page (see entry) once called his favorite), Larry Carlton, Dean Parks, Steve Khan, Hugh McCracken, and Ben Benay.

A tour of the Steely Dan repertoire also features the greatest drummers of the day, including Jeff Porcaro, Hal Blaine, Steve Gadd, Rick Marotta, Bernard Purdie, Ed Greene, Jim Keltner, and Jim Gordon.

Fagen’s vocals were typically double-tracked to obtain the distinctive Steely Dan vocal sound. Rather than split-panning the unison double, as the Beatles often did, or panning them together in the stereo field at identical volume levels, Fagen’s unison-dubbed vocals were most often mixed so that the second part was at roughly 75 percent of the volume of the first. This gave the vocal the thickness of a unison double without the in-your-face obviousness of one.

The sonic clarity of Steely Dan records was made possible by Becker and Fagen’s attention to detail and the enlistment of Roger Nichols, a former nuclear engineer turned recording engineer.

The group’s first two releases, Can’t Buy a Thrill and Countdown to Ecstasy, were experiments in equalization, or more accurately, in the lack thereof.

“Roger didn’t use any EQ on those albums,” recalls Jeff “Skunk” Baxter. “He believed that the records would sound more natural if we just concentrated on good mike placement.”

Audiophile Becker pushed the recording team to greater and greater clarity. From the opening jangle of glass chimes on Can’t Buy a Thrill to the last chord of Gaucho, listeners knew they were in for a hell of a sonic ride, each album sounding better than the last.

Their fourth release, Katy Lied, was an unprecedented sonic masterpiece. At the beginning of one session, Nichols reportedly walked into the studio to find the assistant engineer recording test tones to calibrate the machines for that day’s recordings. Nichols asked the assistant where he got the tape for setting up the tones.

“From over there,” the assistant said, pointing to a corner of the room.

The story goes that Nichols’ face turned ashen as he recognized that the assistant had just recorded over—and erased—one of the 24-track master tapes. A further disaster befell the project when the DBX noise reduction unit malfunctioned. Yet, when it was finally released, Katy Lied still sounded better than any other record on the market.

Each of the two best-selling albums, Aja and Gaucho, won much-deserved Grammys for best recording, in 1977 and 1980, respectively.

After Becker and Fagen decided to break up “the band,” Fagen recorded a solo album in 1983, The Nightfly, which Katz nominally produced. It remains a standard by which audiophiles evaluate the performance and clarity of high-end equipment.

Fagen’s 1993 release, Kamakiriad, was reportedly 10 years in the making. According to Nichols, two of those years were spent programming the drum machines and trying to get “just the right feel” to satisfy Fagen’s increasingly exacting standards.

Becker and Fagen continued to produce outside projects throughout the ’80s and ’90s, both together and separately. Becker produced Rickie Lee Jones, China Crisis, and jazz artists Bob Sheppard and John Beasley. Fagen produced David Sanborn and a live Steely Dan reunion album, Made in America. —DANIEL J. LEVITT

Walter Becker
Beal, Jeff: Objects in the Mirror, Triloka, 1991.
Fagen, Donald: Kamakiriad, Reprise, 1993.

Walter Becker and Donald Fagen

Donald Fagen

Curt Bedeau
See FULL FORCE
and turning on a tape recorder," he says. "When you record records, you have to set up a work scene, or, in some ways, an artistic vibe. Some people might misunderstand it, but sometimes it might be appropriate to have incense and candles burning and the lights down. Sometimes it works better to have all the lights on and have everybody going ‘yeahhrrrgghh’ and drink a lot of coffee and be screaming at each other and all revved up so they rip through their songs, or whatever. Everybody is different."

Although he appreciates the innovations of the ‘60s, Bloch thinks today is the best time for recording because "there is so much technology available. You have more choices and more ways to do things than ever today. Ten to 30 years ago nobody had the option of having a digital 8-track recorder at their house. Now you can buy reissues of vintage gear, so you can have the best of both worlds. But you have to let the music dictate what you do, and not let all the new technology dictate the music. All the technology in the world is secondary to great music."

Bloch likens capturing a magical musical moment to a "snapshot, frozen in time." It's not the same as a great live show, but a record lasts. The magic "almost always starts with the song," Bloch says. "If there's a genius piece of songwriting and there's something special about the way the singer is singing it, the song is the dynamite, the singer is the fuse, and the band and the recording situation are the match." —DENNIS DIKEN

Niko Bolas

The publicity-shy Niko Bolas (born June 10, 1957, in Los Angeles) is known for bringing out unparalleled raw power and energy in a series of excellent recordings.

An expert in vocal production, he owes part of his technique to the artful use of tube compressors to tightly package and position the voice so it won't be swamped by a guitar army barrage.

Among Bolas's standout productions are Neil Young's This Note's For You and Freedom and the puissant 1987 Warren Zevon album Sentimental Hygiene, which featured otherworldly drum sounds and backing tracks by Bill Berry, Mike Mills, and Peter Buck of R.E.M. The Zevon-R.E.M. collective was later formalized under the moniker Hindu Love Gods, which recorded a highly acclaimed album with Bolas in 1990.

Bolas, who can make everything seem extra-loud and intense, has been called the "Viscount of Volume," a nickname justified by his productions of New Model Army and the Circle Jerks. —DANIEL J. LEVITIN


Scott, Mike: Bring 'Em All In, Chrysalis, 1993 • Thirst Through the Wire, Iguana, 1996.


Zevon, Warren: Sentimental Hygiene, Virgin, 1987 • I’ll Sleep When I’m Doad (An Anthology), Rhino, 1996.


Gas Huffer: The Inhuman Ordeal of a Special Agent, Epitaph, 1996.

Lex Thugs: As Happy As Possible, Sub Pop, 1993.


Bowie’s own *Hunky Dory* disc (with Scott).

Both as producer and artist, Bowie has been willing to experiment with electronics. Along with Eno, who has continued to contribute to Bowie’s work (including his 1997 release *Earthling*), Bowie has blended synthesizers and “real” instruments to create every kind of sound. —DAVID JOHN FARINELLA AND ERIC OLSEN


**Cherry, Ava, and the Astronettes:** *People from Bad Homes*, Griffin, 1995.

**Eno, Brian:** *Eno Box 1*, Virgin, 1994.

**Gillespie, Dana:** *Weren’t Born a Man* (2 tracks), RCA, 1973.


**Mott the Hoople:** “All the Young Dudes,” Columbia, 1972 • *All the Young Dudes*, Columbia, 1972 • “All the Young Dudes,” Epic, 1972, 1981 (England Rocks 3).


**Stooges, The:** See Pop, Iggy.

**COLLECTIONS**


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**Tommy Boyce and Bobby Hart**

Tommy Boyce, born September 29, 1939, in Charlotteville, Virginia, and Bobby Hart, born February 18, 1939, in Phoenix, Arizona, were songwriters who primarily produced their own recordings. They also had a successful performing career with their own recording of "I Wonder What She’s Doing Tonight," which reached No. 8 in 1968. They wrote more than 300 songs and were responsible for sales of more than 42 million records.

Their first hit as songwriters came in 1964 with “Come a Little Bit Closer,” recorded by Jay and the Americans (No. 3). Boyce and Hart were subsequently offered jobs as staff writers for Screen Gems, the future home of the “pre-fab four,” the Monkees. Boyce and Hart wrote and produced four of the Monkees’ hits: “(Theme from) the Monkees,” “Last Train to Clarksville” (No. 1), “(I’m Not Your) Steppin’ Stone” (No. 20), and “Valerie” (No. 3). While much of the Monkees’ repertoire was mined for clunky mediocrity, these are well-crafted compositions. Under Boyce and Hart’s direction, the four Monkees (and an assortment of top studio musicians) performed the tunes with the right balance of tongue-in-cheek enthusiasm and innocence.

Production tricks abound on Boyce and Hart records but miraculously never sound like gimmicks. The “(Theme from) the Monkees” begins with the

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tritest high-hat shuffle imaginable, but at just the right instant the song explodes into a frenzy of cheerful narcissism: "Hey hey, we’re the Monkees / So come and watch us sing and play / We’re the young generation / And we’ve got something to say." While it may have been too obvious and pandering for late teens, the 10- to 13-year-old crowd bought it in droves.

"Last Train to Clarksville" was a clear Beatles rip-off, its obligato guitar hook straight from "Help" and background vocals that would have sounded completely at home on Rubber Soul. Among other production devices, the song featured one full stop (all instruments stop playing completely before coming in again after stark silence), several instrumental stops (the band stops playing, leaving the lead vocalist to sing expressively over silence), and a section where Mickey Dolenz performs a double-tracked scat over the chords. Throughout the song, guitars ring like the bells of Rythmney and the snare drum and guitar backbeat drive with solid urgency.

"(I’m Not Your) Steppin’ Stone" (the writers apparently had a penchant for parentheses) had scornful lyrics (a nod in the direction of Dylan’s "Like a Rolling Stone") and more hooks than hell’s coatroom. The modified modal chord progression was unusual for rock in 1966, and the background harmonies simply hypnotic. The record was made with rich, springy reverbs and is so utterly distinctive that it sounds like no other record made before or since. "Valerie" was a tour de force of harmony and background vocal production. By its 1968 release, Monkeemania was subsiding and its album (the Monkees’ fifth) was their first not to reach No. 1.

Boyce and Hart joined the group for tours in the 1970s, and in 1976 recorded an album with two of the Monkees as Dolenz, Jones, Boyce and Hart. Boyce produced records for British band Darts and worked with Meat Loaf, Iggy Pop, and Del Shannon. Hart co-wrote "Over You" (recorded by Lane Brody, nominated for an Academy Award in 1983), the 1985 New Edition single "My Secret," and Robbie Nevil’s 1988 hit "Dominoes."

Boyce, after battling depression for many years, committed suicide in 1994 at his Nashville home.

—DANIEL J. LEVITIN

**Tommy Boyce**


Late Show: Snap, Decca, 1979.


**Tommy Boyce and Bobby Hart**

Boyce and Hart: "Out and About," A&M, 1967 • Test

Joe Boyd

Joe Boyd likes to emphasize the organic in records he produces. He’s never worked with MIDI, deployed a sampler, or used a drum machine. He’ll use computers in the studio to “remember the moves” and to mix, but his emphasis is on the natural and the vivid.

Boyd, who owns Hannibal Records—a Rykodisc-distributed label that specializes in the exotic and in world music—is known for his productions of Nick Drake, the Incredible String Band, Richard Thompson (with and without former wife and musical partner Linda), and Tournianni Diabate, master of the kora, a multistring bow, gourd-based African guitar. The intellectually restless Boyd has worked primarily as an independent producer, and that’s the way he likes it. Records he produced for hire in the early ‘80s for such superstar-to-be as R.E.M. and 10,000 Maniacs aren’t ones he views with particular favor.

Born August 5, 1942, in Boston, Boyd studied piano when he was a teenager; his grandmother, Mary Boxhall Boyd, was a concert pianist who had studied with Artur Schnabel and Theodor Leschetitzky, the legendary Galli-

Wynette, Tammy: See Parton, Dolly.

COLLECTIONS
Coal Miner's Daughter soundtrack, MCA, 1980.
Rock Around the Clock: The Decca Rock and Roll Collection, Decca, 1994.

**David Briggs**

avid Briggs (born February 29, 1944, in Douglas, Wyoming) was a recurring presence in the music of Neil Young and Nils Lofgren. He arrived in Los Angeles on Christmas Day, 1968, and within a few years was a staff producer at Bill Cosby's Tetragrammaton label.

Young reportedly met Briggs while hitchhiking in Malibu in the late '60s, and the two struck up a lifelong friendship. Briggs co-produced 18 Young albums, both with and without Crazy Horse, beginning with Young's first solo LP, Neil Young, up through 1994's apocalyptic Sleeps with Angels (No. 9). Many songs considered definitive for Young were co-produced by Briggs: "Cinnamon Girl," "Like a Hurricane," "Only Love Can Break Your Heart," "Southern Man," "Out of the Blue and into the Black," and "Tonight's the Night." Briggs died November 26, 1995.

"David was more of an alchemist than anything," recalls Graham Nash. "David was into capturing the moment and fully knowing when that moment was and when that moment had passed. So he was perfect to work with Neil. Neil knows exactly what he's doing at all times and has a vision of what it should be, but I don't think he has been 'produced' no matter who he's had helping him. Neil just needs help to get it on tape—a sounding board, a friend, someone to allow him to be the artist. David was all those things. Neil really trusted David."

Commercial success has unfairly eluded the talented Lofgren, who makes consistently high-quality albums. It is hard to fault Briggs, who presented Lofgren's material and performances in the best way possible on six albums, first with Lofgren's band Grin and then as a solo artist.

Briggs' broad musical tastes also showed in his ability to work with artists ranging from Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds to Alice Cooper and Willie Nelson. In the 1990s, Briggs worked with artists such as Cave, 13 Engines, the Sidewinders, and Royal Trux and on a number of unreleased recordings by John Eddie, Blind Melon, and the Sweet and Low Orchestra.

A session keyboardist and producer from Nashville, also named David Briggs, should not be confused with this David Briggs. The Nashville Briggs produced Marty Haggard, Willie Nelson, Elvis Presley, Murray Roman, Tom Rush, Rob Ruzicka, and Troy Seals. —Daniel J. Levitin

Crazy Horse: Crazy Moon, RCA, 1978 • See also Young, Neil, and Crazy Horse.
Low and Sweet Orchestra: Goodbye to All That, Interscope, 1996.
McDonald, Kathi: Insane Asylum, Capitol, 1974.
Williams, Jerry: Jerry Williams, Spin, 1972.
Bron came to handle Pitney’s publishing for Europe, and they began discussing making records together. Bron made all of the demos for the publishing company, and they were good enough that people often mistook them for masters. This gave Bron the clue that he had “some ability in that area.” Also important to Bron’s development were the arrangers on staff at the publishing company, particularly Ron Goodwin, who scored many films and had a recording contract with EMI. His producer was George Martin (see entry).

Bron watched Martin produce Goodwin’s orchestral music at Abbey Road, and thought, “I like what George is doing. That’s really what I want to do.” As Bron came to function as Pitney’s European manager and occasional producer in the mid-’60s, he also began to manage Marianne Faithfull. Manfred Mann often appeared on the same TV shows as Pitney and Faithfull, and on their recommendation, Bron came to manage him as well. When Mann ran into difficulties with his producer, Bron also assumed those duties, producing the hit singles “Ha Ha Said the Clown” (No. 4 U.K.), “My Name Is Jack” (No. 8 U.K.) and “Fox on the Run” (No. 5 U.K.).

“I found myself producing pop records, and then found myself producing the heavier type of music, namely Colosseum and Uriah Heep,” Bron recalls. Led by ex-John Mayall drummer Jon Hiseman, Colosseum was a pioneer of jazz-rock fusion in the U.K., and had three Top 20 albums there (Those Who Are About to Die Salute You, Valentyne Swite, Live). With the Nice and Yes, they helped usher in the progressive era in the late ’60s.

Manfred Mann induced Bron to see the Bonzo Dog (Doo Dah) Band at a club in Manchester in 1968. “There was only one true musician (Neil Innes, later of the Rutles) in a band of seven. They were one of the greatest stage acts you’ll ever see. They were so funny. I went into the studio with them to record some demos, and midway through a song, I noticed that the banjo of Vernon Dudley Bowhay-Nowell was painfully wrong. I asked him what he was playing in the chorus, and he said, ‘I don’t know.’ I said, ‘You’ve been playing that on stage for three months,’ and he said, ‘They won’t tell me what the chords are.’ They were trying to get rid of him. That’s the way most things went with them. They really needed beating around the ears when it came to getting it right. On the other hand, if they got it too right, it was no longer funny. You had to steer a rather curious course between too good and too bad.”

Bron discovered an embryonic band with heavy leanings called Spice in 1969. Their name soon changed to Uriah Heep. Bron and the Heep put out seven Top 40 albums in the U.K. and five in the U.S., and although the


Winette, Tammy: See Jones, George.


COLLECTIONS

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Cleveland Browne
See STEELY AND CLEVEIE

Daniel Bressanutti
See FRONT 242

Lindsey Buckingham

Fleetwood Mac became one of the largest-selling groups in the world in 1975, the year they hired Lindsey Buckingham as a guitarist, singer, and songwriter. It is no accident.

Although he has generously shared production credit with colleagues Richard Dashut and Keith Olsen (see entries), the group themselves and other industry insiders, including Lenny Waronker (see entry), cite Buckingham (born October 3, 1947, in Palo Alto, California) as the production force behind five studio albums: Fleetwood Mac Live, Rumours, Tusk (No. 4), Mirage (No. 1), and Tango in the Night (No. 7).

Buckingham is regarded as one of the finest and most intuitive arrangers in pop music, alongside Brian Wilson (an early inspiration) and Richard Carpenter (see entries). In particular, Buckingham’s genius lies in his ability to take skeletal outlines of songs—often little more than amorphous ideas—and turn them into artfully arranged pop classics.

“If I were to pick one thing as my main contribution to the group,” Buckingham states, “it wouldn’t be as a guitar player, a singer, or a songwriter. It would be as someone who can take raw material and forge it into something complete—I guess to some degree with more success than I can do with my own material.

“If you heard the way some of their [Christine McVie’s and Stevie Nicks’s] songs sounded in their raw state, and tried to make sense out of them. . . my contribution was to give them form, and balance these things with what the players would all have to offer the song, and make hit records out of them.”

Buckingham learned his craft as a teenager in the San Francisco Bay area experimenting with a 4-track tape machine: learning how to stack parts “and to make them fit, like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle.” Buckingham’s production style emphasizes this “jigsaw” puzzle metaphor for carefully arranged parts. On the tracks he produced for Dream Academy, Walter Egan, and Ssemi Twang, his personal stamp is clearly heard in contrast to the other producers’ contributions to these albums.

Buckingham’s brilliant solo album, Out of the Cradle, contains some of the best material and production of his career, including the standout tracks “Countdown,” “Don’t Look Down,” and “Soul Drifter.” He pays homage to an early influence on his version of the Kingston Trio’s “All My Sorrows,” massively overdubbing his own four-part harmonies. —DANIEL J. LEVITIN


Steve Buckingham

To pigeonhole two-time Grammy winner Steve Buckingham as only a country producer would be to deny all the work he's done in virtually every other genre of music, including pop, R&B, jazz, Latin, contemporary Christian, and even disco. All told, he's produced at least 27 No. 1 hits. It was under the twinkle of a glittering, spinning disco ball that Buckingham had his first success, as producer of Alicia Bridges' 1978 smash "I Love the Nightlife" (No. 5). As part of the late '70s Atlanta scene, where he was also a noted session guitarist, Buckingham unwittingly jumped on the hot dance scene.

"Alicia was bizarre by today's standards, not to mention 20 years ago," he recalls with a laugh. "People just didn't know how to take her. She was a really ballsy chick with a blonde crew cut. The first thing we cut on her was a song called 'Disco Round.' None of us knew anything about disco, all I was trying to do was make an Al Green record. 'Disco Round' became 'I Love the Nightlife.' It came out on PolyGram and the next thing you know, it became a monstrous disco record. None of us had even set foot in a disco!"

Buckingham's path to Atlanta started in Richmond, Virginia, where he grew up. As a guitar player, he played in a number of beach music and R&B bands, ending up in a group that signed to Columbia, although the outfit never had mainstream success. Buckingham eventually hooked up with publisher and studio owner Bill Lowery and moved to Atlanta, where acts like Atlanta Rhythm Section and Joe South were thriving.

After the international success with Bridges, Buckingham expected projects to beat their way to his door, "and nothing happened," he says with a laugh, so he started making calls, eventually hooking up with Arista head Clive Davis and producing a string of hits for artists like Melissa Manchester, Dionne Warwick, and other hitmakers.

"For a number of years there, it just seemed like, "Wow, this is easy. You make records, other people call you, they all become hits, there's nothing to this." After a few years, reality set in and by that time I'd moved to Nashville," Buckingham recalls. "It wasn't necessarily to do country music, but I didn't want to have to be on the road all the time to go to other cities to use studios, and I wanted a farm, I wanted land."

Buckingham worked on non-country projects, like the Grammy-winning Follow That Bird soundtrack. However, eventually he turned to country music when Rick Blackburn, who was then the head of CBS in Nashville, asked him to produce Tammy Wynette. That led to Buckingham's being hired as head of A&R at CBS, where he produced acts like Sweethearts of the Rodeo, Ricky Van Shelton, and Ricky Skaggs. "I'd produce two or three acts and then we'd get [outside] producers to produce other things," Buckingham says. "Now it seems like the trend is if you're given an A&R position, everything's almost always done in-house. And I question the vision of that."

Although most active in country, Buckingham has by no means been limited by the genre. Through the years, he's continued to produce albums by artists in a variety of genres, such as jazz saxophonist Kirk Whalum and gospel greats the Winans, with whom he won his second Grammy Award.

He also stretched the boundaries of country when he began working with Mary Chapin Carpenter, whom he produced with John Jennings. By the time they began work on Come On, Come On in 1992, he was beginning to chafe at the confines he felt Sony put on him and some of its more creative artists. "She turned in that album and it was very very dark and it was rejected by the company," he says. "I thought it was very artful in creative ways, but the company thought there was nothing they could do. Roy Wunsch [then head of Sony Nashville] takes her to dinner. She goes to dinner thinking she's done the best piece of work in her life and leaves with the realization that this album has been turned down. It was the worst."

Buckingham went into the studio with Carpenter and Jennings and recut "I Feel Lucky" (No. 4 country), which turned into one of the biggest hits of her career, and added a few songs, including the snappy "The Bug" (No. 16 country), written by Mark Knopfler (see entry). The album that was initially rejected turned into a 3 million seller.

But the artist with whom Buckingham formed his greatest alliance at Sony is Dolly Parton. Their association began when he worked with her as an A&R exec in Sony Nashville, which led to his producing her albums for the last six years. Eventually, he left Sony to form a
Having set up the listener with a series of body blows, the final track, "The Not Knowing," delivers the knockout punch. Gone is Staples' mumbling as he sees and speaks with the diamond clarity that arrives just before the hangover.

Over woodwinds, Staples croons: "The not knowing is easy/And the suspecting, that's okay/Just don't tell me for certain/That our love is gone away." Self-deception vies with self-loathing for the singer's soul.

As Caple recalls the session, "They played it a few times and we couldn't quite work it out the tempo. At some stages, it looked like it might be scrapped. It was a fairly tense atmosphere; then they recorded this one take and it was perfect. With a song like that, we were really nervous about changing anything, so we left it as it was." Perhaps a producer's most important talent is knowing when to leave perfection alone. —ERIC OLSEN AND DAWN DARLING


Tricky: Pre-Millenium Tenison, Island, 1996.

Richard Carpenter

In the course of conducting interviews with other producers for this volume, artists and producers ranging from Paul Simon to Matt Wallace, Stevie Wonder, and Denny Diante (see entries) cited Richard Carpenter (born October 15, 1946, in New Haven, Connecticut) as one of the most brilliant producers of the '70s, and someone whose work they admire.

Richard's contributions to the Carpenters made them one of the top-selling American acts of all time, with over 100 million albums sold. Although Jack Dougherty received credit for producing the first four Carpenters albums, it is widely known that the albums were produced by Carpenter, and that Dougherty’s principal contribution was to book the studio time and pay the bills.

The skeptical reader need look no further than the several songs included on From the Top (the Carpenters' 4-CD boxed set) that were produced by Carpenter before he even met Dougherty. All of the elements of the Carpenters’ sound are there: the lush, multitrack vocals, the meticulous arrangements, and the overall Carpenters gestalt.

Carpenter was nominated for a Best Arrangement Grammy five times. Artists as diverse as Sheryl Crow, Sonic Youth, Axl Rose, Redd Kross, and Chrissie Hynde have cited him as a major influence. "They are the best group ever," k.d. lang says. "Karen inspired me to become a singer, and Richard's production has influenced [co-producer] Ben Mink and me."

The rapid and vast commercial success of the Carpenters catapulted A&M from a small middle-of-the-road label to a major radio force, ushered in a new era of signings at A&M, and bankrolled a number of artists, including the Police, Joan Armatrading, and Supertramp.

"When Supertramp first went out on the road," Richard recalls, "the then head of marketing for A&M U.K. said to them, 'Whatever god you believe in, bow down to him before your shows and thank him for the Carpenters—because without them, you wouldn't be here."

Richard Carpenter's ability to predict hits is legendary. In 1969, Crocker Bank (since merged with Wells
Fargo Bank) featured a Paul Williams tune as part of a
statewide advertising campaign emphasizing the bank’s
willingness to loan money to young couples. When
Richard heard the ad one night on television, he knew
instantly that it could be a commercial hit. “I recognized
Paul Williams’ voice on the song, and I assumed he had
also written the song. I saw him soon afterward on the
A&M lot and asked him if the song had other verses and
a chorus. He assured me that it did, and so Karen and I
recorded it.”

Every A&R executive and musician in Los Angeles
had heard “We’ve Only Just Begun” dozens, if not hun-
dreds, of times; industry pundits had scoffed at the idea
that a bank commercial could be turned into a rock sin-
gle. The Carpenters’ version of the song reached No. 2
in 1970 and stayed on the charts for three months.

Carpenter believes that the most important things to
bring to a session are the song and the arrangement.
“The arrangement is everything that makes a hit
record,” he explains. “You can have the best singer on
the planet and the best song, but if you don’t have the
right arrangement for that song and singer, the singer’s
going nowhere and so is the song.”

The best arrangements become inseparable from
the song itself. Subsequent artists who cover such a tune
find themselves keeping these arrangement ideas
because performing the song without them is unimag-
nable. Artists who have covered Carpenters songs tend
to stay very close to the original arrangements, as on
the Carpenters tribute album If I Were a Carpenter.

One trademark of Richard’s arrangement style is the
use of “call-and-response” parts (where a horn, violin,
or background vocal “answers” a line of the lead vocal).
On “Superstar,” for example, the violins echo Karen’s
line “Long ago…” with a parallel melody; on “Rainy
Days and Mondays,” the background vocals echo
Karen’s line “hanging around,” filling in the space in the
melody.

Another Richard Carpenter arrangement device is
the introduction of completely new music to the song.
His piano intro to “Close to You” is an example of new
music he added to a song, thereby creating one of the
most instantly identifiable intros in all of pop music.

Carpenter has worked more or less continuously
since Karen’s death, in addition to reorchestrating,
sequencing, and packaging a number of Carpenters
compilation and greatest hits albums, he has released
two solo albums: 1987’s Time, and 1997’s Richard
Carpenter: Pianist, Composer, Arranger, and Conductor. Car-
penter has also produced the MOR teenage singer Scott
Grimes, Canadian popster Veronique, and Japanese pop
star Akiko Kobayashi. —DAVID J. LEVITIN

Rob Cavallo

Rob Cavallo is one of the young lions of the music
industry as senior vice president of A&R at Reprise
Records and as producer of the wildly successful
pop-punk band Green Day, as well as the Muffs, Goo
Goo Dolls, L7, Jawbreaker, and the Dance Hall Crash-
ers. Green Day’s Dookie (No. 2) is by far the best-selling
punk album of all time, with sales topping the 14
million mark, and the band’s follow-up, Insomniac (No. 2), is
probably second, with sales over 4 million.

Cavallo was born in the Washington, D.C., area in
1963. His father is Bob Cavallo, who at the time owned
the Shadows Club (later the Cellar Door) in D.C., and
who went on to manage Little Feat, Weather Report,
and Prince. The elder Cavallo was installed as chairman
of the Walt Disney Music Group in early 1998, and still
owns Atlas Third Rail Management (clients: Alanis
Morissette, Green Day, Seal, Savage Garden, Weezer,
the Goo Goo Dolls, and Earth, Wind and Fire).

Cavallo was literally baptized at the Shadows Club
and raised on music. When he was around 10, the fam-
ily moved to Los Angeles, and one of his first memories
of L.A. is accompanying his father to a studio to watch
Little Feat record. Lowell George (the late, great Feat
guitarist) gave him his first guitar lesson.

Rob’s father told him that music was a “kind of
sucky” business, and didn’t particularly encourage him
to pursue it, but Rob spent untold hours in his room
with his guitar and records (in succession: Beatles,
Stones, Who, Motown, his father’s clients, metal, and
punk), learning songs by ear. By his midteens, Cavallo

Carpenter, Richard: Time, A&M, 1987 • Richard Carpenter:
Pianist, Composer, Arranger, and Conductor, PolyGram
(Japan), 1997.

More,” A&M, 1973 • “I Won’t Last a Day Without You,”
A&M, 1975 • “Only Yesterday,” A&M, 1975 • “Please Mr.
of Hush, A&M, 1976 • “There’s a Kind of Hush (All Over
the World),” A&M, 1976 • “Touch Me When We’re


Kobayashi, Akiko: City of Angels, Funhouse (Japan), 1990.

Bob Clearmountain

ever since he mixed Bruce Springsteen’s Born in the U.S.A. album and introduced the cannon-like snare drum that explodes throughout the song of the same name, Bob Clearmountain has been primarily known as one of the top mixing engineers in the world. Bands sometimes schedule his services a year or two in advance and plan release schedules around his availability. Although generally not known for their high fidelity, Clearmountain’s mixes are always the epitome of musi- cality, and he seems to have a sixth sense for how to make a song sound good when played back over the radio. (To give his hi-fi its due, Clearmountain did mix Aimee Mann’s Whatever, a truly outstanding hi-fi recording.)

Clearmountain was born January 15, 1953, in Greenwich, Connecticut, and came up as an engineer. What separates him from many engineers who make the transition into production is his very solid musical sense. An aspiring engineer who recognized him in a bar one night pestered the mix master with questions about equipment. Finally the engineer asked, “What do you listen for in [a certain kind of] wire?” Clearmountain answered, “I don’t listen to wire, I listen to lyrics.” Both in mixing and producing, Clearmountain’s strength is that his decisions are always in the service of the song.

“to Bob,” producer Jon Brion says, “the song is a puzzle, and everything is on tape for a reason. Bob likes putting it all together the best way possible—never forgetting that the vocal is the most important piece.”

Clearmountain recalls, “After I finished mixing Whatever, I played it almost every day for six months—not because of me but just because I love the music so much.”

“We had recorded all kinds of parts, all kinds of instruments,” recalls Aimee Mann, “and Bob had a good sense of which ones to leave out; if a part wasn’t working with the overall arrangement, he just wouldn’t use it. He was very valuable that way.”

“He’s a super talent,” says engineer Jeffrey Norman. “He’s fast, he has a great sense of balance. As a producer he’s very good at directing without being a megalomaniac. He was a drummer at one time and so in the sessions I worked on with him, he was able to give specific ideas to the players and make it work. He was also able to work within a very tight budget. Of course,” Norman adds, “he is a good engineer and an excellent mixer.”

How did Clearmountain make the transition from engineering to production?

“I was an engineer,” Clearmountain recalls, “and worked at Media Sound in New York until the summer of 1977. When Tony Bongiovi [see entry] was putting together the Power Station studio he asked me to work for him, and I said I would if he’d let me help him design it. So I did, and I was chief engineer there. Now he had a production deal with Seymour Stein at Sire and I was a big punk fan. I was down at CBGBs and Max’s Kansas City and Mud Club all the time, and Seymour had all these punk bands and Tony knew I was into that, so he asked me to co-produce some of those with him. We produced the Tuff Darts, Ramones, so I started getting into producing from that.

“It just went on from there. I had done a couple of things for David Kershenbaum [see entry] when he was in A&R at A&M, and he put Bryan Adams and me together. Plus I was remixing things: the Rolling Stones wanted a dance mix of “Miss You,” and because I had done all these Chic records, the Stones asked me to do their mix. Mick liked what I was doing, so he asked me to mix Tattoo You. Then Roxy Music came in because they were also on Atlantic.

“When we did the Tuff Darts, one of those Sire punk bands,” Clearmountain continues, “they were friends with Ian Hunter. He really liked the studio [Power Station] and so he did one of his solo albums there, You’re Never Alone with a Schizophrenic. Ian hired the E Street band to play on it and the band just loved the studio, so they suggested to Bruce that he come over and try the studio. I had done some work on and off for Bruce—I mixed ’Hungry Heart,’ for example—so that’s how I came in to work on Born in the U.S.A. The single sort of mixed itself.”

The snare drum sound didn’t wash with everybody, it seems. It even felt a bit over-the-top to Clearmountain himself. “When I went to mix Robbie Robertson’s first solo album, Daniel Lanois [see entry] had produced it, and Daniel apparently said to Robbie, ‘Oh, you don’t want him—he’s just going to do that Born in the U.S.A. snare drum thing,’ which is ridiculous because I don’t have one sound I stick on every record, but that’s all he knew about me.

“I think I have a sense of pop music—I’m aware of the pop song and what cuts through—what is memorable, what would make a record appealing to listen to by the general public. I like to feel that I am one of the general public, so I try to not let things get too obscure. Mixing is the same thing—I try to make the most out of what is the most fun to listen to.” —Daniel J. Levitin


Harris, Joey: Joey Harris and the Speedsters, MCA, 1983.


Keene, Tommy: Run Now, Geffen, 1986.


Rolling Stones: "Miss You" (remix), Rolling Stones, 1978.


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**Jack Clement**

You’d be hard-pressed to find a producer who has worked with a wider variety of acts than Jack “Cowboy” Clement. From the 20 albums he produced for Charley Pride to revisiting his days at Sun Records at the request of U2 when he recorded sessions
Don Costa

Primarily known as an arranger, orchestrator, and conductor, the late Don Costa (born June 10, 1925, in Boston; died 1983 in New York) was known as one of the premier arrangers of the pop era, alongside Billy May, Nelson Riddle, Jimmy Webb, Quincy Jones (see entry), and Jimmie Haskell.

Costa’s orchestrations are lush without falling prey to the saccharinity that often characterizes string dates, showing that orchestras don’t have to sound trite to fit into a contemporary pop format. In the late ’50s, he produced two Paul Anka hits, “Diana” and “Lonely Boy” (both No. 1). A decade later, he produced one of Frank Sinatra’s biggest hits, Anka’s “My Way.” Along with Mike Curb, Costa was responsible for some of Donny Osmond’s biggest hits, including “Young Love” (No. 9) and “Puppy Love” (No. 3).

Costa’s 1977 collaboration with Kenny Rankin, The Kenny Rankin Album, represented a peak for both artists. The album combines well-chosen standards (“When Sunny Gets Blue,” “Here’s That Rainy Day”) with first-rate Rankin originals (“I Love You,” “Through the Eye of the Eagle”) in an atmosphere that shows off Rankin’s formidable vocal skills.

The owner of one of the most liquid, velvety voices this side of Mel Tormé, Rankin is a poor judge of material. But that Costa-Rankin collaboration produced an album with no bad choices and soaringly beautiful performances. “Very simply, Costa was a genius,” says producer Denny Diente (see entry). “He had great production ideas as well as being an incredible arranger. He had a tremendous commercial sense, and great song knowledge.”  —DANIEL J. LEVITIN


Elvis Costello

Elvis Costello (b. Declan Patrick Aloysius McManus) hasn't produced many records, but the ones he has have been hits, influential, or both. In addition to important productions for the Specials, the Pogues, Mental As Anything, Squeeze, and Paul McCartney, Costello has co-produced most of his own records since 1981, when he felt confident enough to step out of the shadow of Nick Lowe (see entry), the "basher" who produced Costello's first five albums.

Costello says he effectively gave up production of other people in 1986, when he married former Pogues bass player Caitlin O'Riordan. But Declan Patrick Aloysius McManus also says he plans to return to record production in 2000, when he will produce a pop record by a classical female singer for Deutsche Gramophon. That's all the specifics this canny musician will give on that project.

Born August 25, 1954, into a musical family, Costello worked as a computer programmer until the mid-'70s, when he turned his attention to music. Although he first performed in public in 1969, it wasn't until 1976 that he released his debut album, My Aim Is True, one of the keystones of new wave. Since then, he has released more than a dozen albums and appeared on numerous others, from classical records to soundtracks. His solo albums are among the most influential in modern rock. Besides My Aim, they include This Year's Model, Imperial Bedroom, Blood and Chocolate, Spike (No. 5 U.K.), The Juliet Letters (No. 18 U.K.), and Brutal Youth (No. 2 U.K.).

His three main labels have been Stiff, Columbia, and Warner Bros. He released most of his early work on the first two, switching to Warner in 1989, when he released Spike, one of his best efforts. The single "Veronica," which Costello wrote with McCartney, became his first Top 20 U.S. hit. Costello says Spike was by far his biggest U.S. effort, selling 750,000 copies.

Costello signed a multilabel, PolyGram-based deal in early 1998 that will give him outlets in his various modes: classical, pop, and rock. He says he left Warner Bros. because its marketing department seemed "to have run out of ideas." Once this year's model, Costello is now an influence, which makes him hard to market.

"You have to use a little ingenuity to intrigue members of the public," he says. "I have a pretty good, faithful audience, but if the record company is not prepared to be ingenious in their way of presenting [the product] and to be tremendously enthusiastic and to spend some
Richard Dashut

Richard Dashut is best known for his production role in Fleetwood Mac's Rumours, one of the best-selling records of all time, with U.S. sales upward of 13 million, and widely acknowledged as one of the best-produced.

Dashut, born in 1951 in West Hollywood, California, began as a janitor in a Hollywood recording studio where, he recalls, he 'wasn't even allowed in the control room except to vacuum and empty the ashtrays.' He was saved from further custodial humiliation by friend Keith Olsen (see entry), who hired him as an assistant engineer at the Sound Factory, where Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham (see entry) were recording their album Buckingham Nicks. Although the album's sales were disappointing, it caught the attention of Mick Fleetwood, who invited the duo to join his band Fleetwood Mac, which had just lost its principal vocalist and songwriter, Bob Welch.

After the album Fleetwood Mac was released, the group went on tour to support it and Dashut was invited to engineer the monitor mixes. When the group returned from the road and began recording their follow-up, Rumours, at Sausalito's Plant Studio, Dashut was asked to produce, which he did with the assistance of his friend Ken Caillat.

The phenomenal success of Rumours is probably a result of solid songwriting and great performances, but it is tremendously well-produced and engineered as well.
The transparency of the recording was created by the producers' incredible attention to acoustic detail and their ability to find a unique place in the frequency spectrum for each instrument. Dashut's, Caillat's, and Buckingham's (uncredited) genius assures that the instruments somehow blend with each other musically while remaining separate sonically. The drums are recorded up close and dry, with nonpareil naturalness. The bass, round and deep, plays in near-perfect rhythmic synchrony with the kick drum, creating unanimity and cohesion in the pulse of such tracks as "Dreams" (No. 1).

Buckingham's guitar tones run the gamut of hot-summer-afternoon-on-the-porch acoustic to out-of-control, screaming, and distorted leads. The solo in "The Chain," played almost entirely on one note, is a powerful example of economy and force. On "Don't Stop" (No. 3), the producers equalized and compressed Buckingham's and Christine McVie's voices to make them so stunningly similar that many listeners are surprised to learn that there are actually two singers on the song.

Throughout the landmark album, parts swim in and out of consciousness effortlessly. While the Beatles were famous for the technique of bringing in instruments to play a crucial part and then disappear, Fleetwood Mac perfected it.

Rumours required so many overdubs that the 2-inch analog tape fell apart on several occasions as the adhesive backing gave out. Various reports have it that the massive overdubbing was either the result of the dogged perfectionism of the production team, the reduced musical efficiency resulting from the drug-fueled party atmosphere of southern Marin County in the '70s, or the inability of the band to decide on the arrangements.

The experimental Tusk (No. 4) though less commercially successful than Rumours, was musically just as rewarding, if less immediately accessible. Mirage (No. 1) has not worn well (save for Buckingham's wonderful Ricky Nelson tribute "Diane"). But 1987's Tango in the Night (No. 7) reached another production and musical peak for the team, with Buckingham playing an increasing role in arrangements and Nicks playing less of a role creatively.

Dashut also produced Buckingham's first two solo albums, yielding the catchy hits "Trouble" (No. 9) and "Go Insane." "Because he's not a musician," Buckingham notes, "Richard is great with the big picture. I can get lost in details sometimes, and he'll walk in and cut through that. Also, he can sit down with a guitar and come up with a great seed for a song. He just has a general, good sensibility about things. He's also my best friend, and that helps a lot."

Dashut also helmed two particularly fine releases by other artists. Tongue Twister by Shoes was easily their best-produced album, and the song "Girls of Today" has all the youthful, brash energy and infectious hookiness of Cheap Trick meets Brian Wilson (see entry). Matthew Sweet's Altered Beast brought the Lincoln, Nebraska, native into the studio with sometime Rolling Stones pianist Nicky Hopkins, Attractions drummer Pete Thomas, and Mick Fleetwood. —DANIEL J. LEVITIN


**Dream Academy:** Remembrance Days (1 track), Reprise, 1987


**Fleetwood, Mick:** The Visitor, RCA, 1981 • I'm Not Me, RCA, 1983.

**Shoes:** Tongue Twister, Elektra, 1981 • Shoe's Best, Black Vinyl, 1987.

**Sweet, Matthew:** "Superdeformed," Arista, 1992, 1993 (No Alternative) • Altered Beast, Zoo, 1993 • Son of Altered Beast, Zoo, 1994 • "This Moment," Thirsty Ear/Chaos/Columbia, 1993 (Sweet Relief).

**Welch, Bob:** Three Hearts, Capitol, 1980 • Best Of, Rhino, 1991.

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**Terry Date**

Terry Date's star rose with the Seattle scene, but he was never associated with that scene to the same degree as fellow Seattleite Jack Endino (see entry). He was, however, responsible for some of the scene's high points and defining moments: Soundgarden's 1989 major-label debut, Louder than Love, and the group's
"Love me for my mind") over his own monster guitar riff. "My Only Love" captures a suspended moment before love's loss becomes unbearable and features pungent solos from Manzanera and saxophonist Andy Mackay. "Over You" pours out after that moment is lost and then tries to look to a hopeful future when "Some day, yes it might come babe / When I'll be babe—over you." In that future lies a stunningly simple, elegant piano line from Ferry and an aching, soaring sax solo from Mackay. Avalon followed Davies' "groove theory" even more closely. "I would get to the studio about 10 in the morning and I would set rhythms up—get interesting grooves going, weird things happening, and have the keyboard hooked in, ready to go," he explains. "Bryan would saunter through the door about 1 o'clock and this vibe would be happening already. Bryan would just come and sit down at the keyboard and work a chord progression, or whatever, to go with that. It was a fantastic way of working, and working down at Phil's studio was brilliant. They were paying for Phil's studio, but nowhere near top rates, so a looseness was there."

The perfect mate to Flesh and Blood, Avalon rides a mid-tempo groove through a world where love's death throes have given way to a languid acceptance of the inevitability of romantic failure. But the denizens of this Avalon (the isle of the heroic dead in Celtic legend) savor the temporary triumphs and meaning that romantic struggle brought to their lives and, as disembodied wraiths, swirl eternally together under a distant, shimmering pale moon.

In 1990, Davies left music to become partners in the most successful golf driving range in Europe, located in the heart of London. Five years later, he sold out and returned to music, albeit on a personal scale. Davies is now composing "picture rhythms," as he calls them, "happy to be creating" regardless of whether "anyone else ever hears them or not." —ERIC OLSEN AND DAWN DARLING

**COLLECTIONS**

Legend soundtrack, MCA, 1986.

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**Jean-Luc De Meyer**

See FRONT 242

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**Denny Diante**

Denny Diante (born June 21, 1943, in New Kensington, Pennsylvania) has been involved with records for 30 years as an A&R man and producer. In that
time he has worked with artists as diverse as Elton John, B.B. King, Johnny Mathis, Ike and Tina Turner, Paul Anka, Neil Diamond, Bill Withers, and Barbra Streisand. He engineers, produces, arranges, contracts the dates, and has worked in all genres: from R&B to pop, rock, adult contemporary, and soundtracks.

Diane began as a drummer and singer with surf bands the Cornells and the Sentinels. From 1965 to 1972, he worked in music publishing, gaining valuable training for A&R and production, which comes down to being able to recognize a good song under the most difficult conditions. In 1972, Diane was hired as vice president of pop A&R and staff producer at United Artists Records. During his tenure, he worked with War and produced a string of gold records for Paul Anka, including "One Man Woman/One Woman Man" (No. 7).

When Al Teller replaced Mike Stewart as president of UA, he and Diane began an association that would last for two decades. When Teller left UA to take over the presidency of RCA in 1978, he brought Diane with him. In 1980, Stewart brought Diane back into publishing, making him vice president and creative director of CBS Songs. One year later Diane was promoted to vice president of A&R for Columbia Records. When Teller, who briefly was president of Columbia, left to head MCA Records in 1989, he brought Diane with him as vice president of A&R. In November 1996, Diane left MCA to start his own label, OutWest.

"Denny does a little bit of everything," says MCA A&R executive and archives specialist Andy McKaie (see entry). "He knows how to press the emotional buttons of the players to get the right performances. He brings enthusiasm and intelligence to anything he does."

While working in A&R, Diane earned the nickname "Dr. D." for his ability to salvage troubled projects. "Whenever a record was problematic," Diane explains, "Al Teller would just call me and say, 'Go fix it.' I never thought about what I do, I just did it. To me, 88 keys are still 88 keys. From my years in music publishing, I've got a good song sense. The best thing a producer can do is hire the right players and the right engineer. That's what I've always tried to do—that's what I'm doing on the new T.G. Shepard record—I've hired a bunch of good pickers, then I sit back and look busy.

"The most fun I've had in the studio was with B.B. King on the Blues Summit album. The Beebler has no ego. You ask him what to do, point him where to go, and he has no problem. It was a tremendous amount of work but it was an uplifting experience, like going to a singing church, with B.B. as the Rev." —DANIEL J. LEVITTIN

Anka, Paul: Anka, United Artists, 1974 • w/ Odia Coates,


Bofill, Angela: Teaser, Arista, 1983.


Kingfish: Kingfish, Grateful Dead, 1976.

Mancini, Henry: See Mathis, Johnny.


Turner, Tina: Acid Queen, United Artists, 1975.

Vartan, Sylvie: I Don't Want the Night to End, RCA, 1979.

Ventures, The: Rocky Road, United Artists, 1976.


COLLECTIONS

acoustic number "Dollar Bill," and groovy rocker "Butterfly." Lanegan's husky vocals and Gary Lee's guitar shine throughout.

The Posies' *Posing on the Beater* carries pop rock to its heaviest conclusion, with Jon Auer and Ken Stringfellow's ringing British Invasion harmonies chased by their own slashing guitars down a path both sweet and pungent on the sensational "Dream All Day" and the Badfinger-esque "Solar Sister" and "Flavor of the Month." The latter two, as well as many other Fleming productions, were at least partially recorded at Fleming's favorite studio, the "analog heaven" of New York's Sear Sound. Sear and Fleming neatly coincide: the best of the musical past filtered through a modern mentality, delicately balancing power and grace.

Fleming's best work as a musician is to be found on *Gumball's Revolution on Ice* (co-produced by John Agnello); Fleming's reedy vocal and guitar power the excellent title track and "Freegrazin." A nice organ intro from Malcolm Riviera provides variety on "With a Little Rain." Fleming's tunes are memorable and his production, built from the drums up, never gets in the way—an apt summation of his fine career. —ERIC OLSN

Bracket: 4 Wheel Drive, Caroline, 1995 • *4 Rare Vibes* (EP), Caroline, 1996.
Gravy: *After That It's All Gravy*, Fused Coil, 1996.

John Fogerty

John Fogerty (born May 28, 1945, in Berkeley, California) is the Grandpappy of swamp rock, paving the way for bands such as Lynyrd Skynyrd, ZZ Top, and the Eagles by making country influences palatable to a mass audience in a way no one had done since Elvis Presley. As a band, Creedence Clearwater Revival was scarcely more than a convenient fiction, a marketing tool on which to hang Fogerty's prolific songwriting and production ideas.

With their swampy grooves, CCR's albums seem to be the epitome of laid-back front-porch casualness, but they are in fact impeccably produced and carefully orchestrated. Fogerty wrote every note that was played, and in many cases played most of those notes himself, alternating between guitar, dobro, saxophone, harmonica, and vocals. Fogerty's vocal scream is one of the most energizing, powerful, cutting, and sincere sounds in rock music.

Fogerty's production brilliance is his knack for finding the simplest statement of an idea—its pure essence—and then presenting it without any clutter. Fogerty's parts are simple enough for any bar band to play and sound good doing it, but his performances of them are subtle and intricate enough that no one has ever bettered them.

The first album, *Creedence Clearwater Revival*, carries the credit "Produced by Saul Zaentz"; the remaining albums carry the credit "produced and arranged by J.C. Fogerty." But there is such overwhelming consistency between the first and subsequent albums that it is difficult to imagine that Zaentz did anything more than sign the checks for the studio time.

Fogerty's production peak occurred on *Cosmo's Factory* (No. 1), in which he presented his guitar with a fuller sound than on previous records and layered even more instruments than usual to create more complex soundscapes, such as on "Who'll Stop the Rain" (No. 2) and the mind-splitting "Ramble Tamble."

Fogerty's ear for hits was infallible: during its first six albums, every single that CCR released charted in the Top 40. Although uncredited at the time, engineer Russ
Gary is responsible for getting all of the magic on tape. 

Fogerty didn’t just write, arrange, and perform the songs—he was also a savvy marketer. Inventing the image of Southern hillbillies, he spoke with a drawl in interviews and tended to wear the plaid shirts at the time associated with farm boys. Realizing early on that CCR’s core audience was 10- to 14-year-olds, he made sure that the band appeared wholesome enough to draw regular coverage in Teen magazine and other fanzines.

After CCR disbanded, Fogerty released two solo albums: 1973’s Blue Ridge Rangers and 1975’s John Fogerty, on which he played all the instruments. The albums were disappointing.

Fogerty spent the next 10 years writing and rehearsing what was to be his comeback album, in 1985, Centerfield (No. 1). During this time, Fogerty taught himself to play drums, and he made countless demos of the record. By the time he set foot in Sausalito’s Plant Studios with engineer Jeffrey Norman to record, Fogerty knew every note he was going to play, every amplifier and guitar pickup setting, and he recorded the album quickly and efficiently. The resulting album was a commercial and critical hit. For the follow-up release, Eye of the Zombie, Fogerty hired players to join him, but the album sounded disjointed and scattered, and sales were disappointing.

In 1997, Fogerty released Blue Moon Swamp, reportedly five years in the making. For Swamp Fogerty used backup musicians as he had on Zombie, but this time he got it right, with the band evoking the sound of the original CCR, Ricky Nelson, and Roy Orbison’s bands all rolled into one.

Norman describes Fogerty’s strength as a producer: “I always think of a producer as someone who goes in and helps interpret someone else’s art. But as a self-producer I can’t think of anyone who is any better at it except maybe Paul McCartney [see entry].” Fogerty really gets out of himself the best performances he can deliver. From the beginning he knows where every part is going to be—all the attention to detail and the scat lines and things. For example, in the 13th bar on the seventh 8th note he knows there’s going to be a little ‘yeah,’ and it sounds completely spontaneous but it’s all been planned.”

Fogerty was heavily influenced by Orbison, the Ventures, and Duane Eddy. “The thing is,” Fogerty explains, “as good as those guys are, there’s not a lot of technique there, which is why they sound so good by garage bands. That’s the same secret of Creedence. All the arrangements I did were for four people who were kind of mediocre or less on their instruments,” he confides.

“I arranged everything, quite specifically, very much in the same way that Benny Goodman did with his swing band.” Fogerty reports. “There are only a couple of right ways to play a song, and there are a whole lot of wrong ways. . . . I would know what parts were going to work long before we went into the studio. That was my job as the producer. I knew how to resolve those musical questions, and that’s all arranging is: you’re resolving those musical questions in a way that works so that you can go on.” —DANIEL J. LEVITTIN


David Foster

David Foster’s career is best exemplified by his massive chart success in the ’90s. Winner of multiple Grammy Awards as well as Billboard’s Producer of the Year citation, Foster produced three of the decade’s biggest pop hits, all No. 1 on the charts: “Because You Loved Me,” by Celine Dion; “I Will Always Love You,” by Whitney Houston; and “Un-Break My Heart,” by
Denzil Foster and Thomas McElroy

The Oakland-based Foster and McElroy have had huge successes with En Vogue, Tony! Tonii Tonii!, Club Nouveau, and Timex Social Club. They are producers in the old-fashioned, classic, full-service sense: they write the songs, find artists to perform them, and then conduct the recording sessions.


Their 1990 production of The Revival for Tony! Tonii! Tonii! went platinum and spawned five singles, including the Top 10 "Feels Good."

While still working with Tony! Tonii! Tonii!, Foster and McElroy envisioned an all-girl group that would combine modern R&B with hip-hop and new jack swing. They held open auditions and handpicked the members of En Vogue, wrote and arranged the material, and recorded them. "Hold On," from the group's debut Born to Sing, quickly reached platinum and No. 2 on the Billboard chart. The follow-up, Funky Divas, No. 8, went triple-platinum.

Foster and McElroy albums are characterized by solid musical arrangements and a special attention to vocal harmonies and catchy, infectious urban grooves. First-rate engineering and mixing are often provided by Ken Kessie, himself a producer and songwriter (e.g., Sylvester, Until December, Tower of Power, the Tubes).

"Denny and Tom have excellent grooves and unique arrangements," Kessie explains. "They often use unconventional instruments to cover traditional parts, or they'll have different instruments each doing fragments of parts and then bring them together. They do great background vocal stacks—they do that better than anybody today. And lyrically, they are a bit off-beat. Everything has a lyric twist. That's what makes them good pop tunes." —DANIEL J. LEVITT

To Be Continued: Free to Be, EastWest, 1993.

Fred Foster

As founder, owner, and chief producer of Monument Records, Fred Foster is responsible for some great moments in pop, rock, country, light jazz, and folk from the '60s through the '80s, working with Roy Orbison, Willie Nelson, Boots Randolph, Dolly Parton, Kris Kristofferson, Ray Stevens, Larry Gatlin, Tony Joe White, Joe Simon, and Billy Swan.

Fred Foster was born in 1931 in Rutherfordton, North Carolina, and after high school he moved to...
Jim Gaines

Jim Gaines (born October 2, 1941) is a producer/engineer whose biggest successes have come from collaborations with a core group of northern California artists, including Huey Lewis and the News, Santana, Pablo Cruise, Tower of Power, John Lee Hooker, Paul Kantner, and Journey.

A familiar fixture at the Plant (formerly the Record Plant, Sausalito), Gaines’ relaxed, Southern gentleman presence, sense of groove, and solid engineering have given his artists the freedom to be themselves on mike. Although his engineering and mixing are not known for being high-fidelity, they are very musical.

“Jim is the best tracking engineer I’ve ever worked with,” says engineer Jeffrey Norman. “When he’s producing, he can get laid-back with the artist and make them feel comfortable. And he’s got the greatest sense of EQ of anyone I know. His tracks are a pleasure to mix.”

Gaines’ collaboration with Huey Lewis resulted in sales of more than 10 million albums, and covered the three most successful of the artist’s career: Picture This, Sports, and Fore. Together, the three albums spawned 13 Top 40 singles. Sports and Fore each had an astonishing five Top 20 hits, and each reached No. 1 on the Billboard album chart (in 1983 and 1986, respectively, although Sports stayed on the chart for 158 weeks), making Lewis one of the most successful artists of the decade.

Gaines produced Tower of Power’s only gold album, 1973’s Tower of Power, and the group’s only Top 20 hit, “So Very Hard to Go.”

Gaines’ Santana records coincided with a commercial dip in the band’s career, but together they released a series of five excellent albums, including Spirits Dancing in the Flesh, featuring guest appearances by Vernon Reid (Living Colour lead guitarist) and Bobby Womack. In the ’90s Gaines has focused on the blues, producing albums by such luminaries as Luther Allison, Lonnie Brooks, Albert Collins, the Eric Gales Band, and Jimmy Thackery and the Drivers. —DANIEL J. LEVITEN

FreeWorld: You Are Here, Real Beale, 1996.
Hole, Dave: Steel on Steel, Alligator, 1995.
James Solberg Band: One of These Days, Atomic Theory, 1996.
Albhy Galuten

A n apprentice of the fertile Ardent Studios in Memphis, Albhy Galuten was lucky enough to land a job as an assistant to legendary producer Tom Dowd (see entry) at Criteria Studio in Miami at a time when that historic facility was turning out some of the most momentous records in modern history, albums like the Allman Brothers Band’s Eat a Peach, Derek and the Dominos’ Layla, the Eagles’ Hotel California.

By the mid-’70s, the multitalented Galuten had worked with all of those artists—plus Kenny Loggins, Rod Stewart, Peter Tosh, and others—as a producer, engineer, assistant, musician (he plays guitar and keyboards), string arranger, and songwriter.

While many would be satisfied with such enviable laurels, Galuten’s best days were still ahead of him. In 1976, he hooked up with engineer Karl Richardson and Barry Gibb to produce the Bee Gees’ Children of the World (No. 8), which set the stage for their work on the Saturday Night Fever soundtrack—an album that, on its way to becoming the best-selling soundtrack of all time at 25 million units worldwide, epitomized the disco craze of the late ’70s.

The phenomenal success of Saturday Night Fever—which spent 24 weeks at No. 1— catapulted Galuten’s career to such an extent that, in 1978, he aced out legendary producers Phil Ramone, Quincy Jones, Peter Asher, and Alan Parsons (see entries) for the coveted Best Producer of the Year Grammy Award.

Naturally, Galuten’s association with the Bee Gees put him in contact with other top talent of the day, including Andy Gibb, Barbra Streisand, Kenny Rogers, Diana Ross, and Dionne Warwick. During those heady days when Galuten was on top of the world, he scored an unprecedented 11 consecutive No. 1 singles, and in one auspicious week produced each of the Top 3 hits.

As disco gave way to new wave and a horde of synthesizer-based bands, Galuten grew increasingly frustrated with the state of the industry and decided to return to his first love: rock ‘n’ roll. He produced albums that earned heaps of critical acclaim, if not commercial success, including Jellyfish’s gorgeous debut, Bellybutton, and its follow-up, Spilt Milk; and Minneapolis all-female
Quincy Jones

Even producers who are revered as among the greatest in the field—Phil Ramone, George Martin, Jerry Wexler, Arif Mardin, Tom Dowd [see entries]—hail Quincy Jones as unique in his achievement. Jones’ most famous client, Michael Jackson, calls him “the king of all music.” Among his distinctions are producing the top-selling record in history (Jackson’s Thriller); winning the most Grammys of anyone outside of classical music; and a credit list that epitomizes popular music at its best: Ray Charles, Lionel Hampton, Count Basie, Sarah Vaughan, Dizzy Gillespie, Billy Eckstine, the Brothers Johnson, Lesley Gore, Aretha Franklin, Frank Sinatra, George Benson, Rufus and Chaka Khan, Patti Austin, Donna Summer, Paul McCartney (see entry), and Jackson, just to name a few.

Beyond the scope of his productions Quincy’s persona itself serves as a paradigm for anyone wishing to make a mark on the entertainment world. In fact, the highest compliment that can be paid to a rising star like Babyface (see entry) is to be called a modern-day Quincy Jones.

And while many producers would trade a limbo for Jones’ studio career, the man’s activities beyond recording are just as impressive. As a label executive, Jones presided over A&R at Mercury during that label’s jazz heyday in the ’50s and ’60s; he later joined A&M, where he was also instrumental in talent acquisition; and, in 1980, Jones formed his own imprint, Qwest, under the auspices of Warner Bros. Records.

As a film-score composer, Jones was responsible for In Cold Blood, The Out of Towners, The Color Purple, and his own Listen Up: The Lives of Quincy Jones; for TV Jones scored the ground-breaking miniseries Roots and wrote themes for Sanford and Son, Bill Cosby Variety Series, and NBC Mystery Series; as a publisher Jones created Vibe magazine, one of the most highly respected pop and urban music periodicals in the country. Furthermore, Jones executive-produced a raft of TV specials, including An American Reunion (covering Bill Clinton’s first inauguration), Nashville Salutes the Ryman, and the series Fresh Prince of Bel Air. In short, Jones is an icon of American entertainment, a self-made entrepreneur whose power and influence cannot be overstated.

Born Quincy Delight Jones Jr. in Chicago on March 14, 1933, Jones was raised in Seattle, where he began his musical career in his teens playing in a group with Ray Charles. In 1950, Jones received a scholarship to the Berklee College of Music in Boston, where he attended classes during the day while playing in local strip clubs at night. The following year, he toured Europe with Hampton and Gillespie and decided to stay in Paris. There, Jones studied classical composition with pianist Nadia Boulanger, a former teacher of Stravinsky.

Returning to the U.S. in 1961, Jones was hired as vice president of A&R by Mercury; he was the first African American to hold that position with a major record label. He stayed with Mercury until 1968, producing, performing on, and arranging countless pop records by the likes of Gore, including her signature smash “It’s My Party,” “You Don’t Own Me,” and many others.

Featuring double-tracked vocals and full orchestral backup, those tracks leaped out of the radio in 1963, establishing Gore as an irresistible teen idol and Jones as a jazz- and classical-schooled producer with an uncanny ear for pop music.

For the next 20 years, Jones turned his attention to writing soundtracks and TV themes and recording numerous solo albums, of which Sounds . . . and Stuff Like That, The Dude, and Back on the Black all went platinum.

On his albums, Jones typically covers the entire musical spectrum, blending jazz, R&B, fusion, funk, rock, pop, and Latin music. On the songs with vocals, he has had the luxury of calling on his many friends in the business, including legends like Fitzgerald and Vaughan as well as contemporary stars ranging from Bobby McFerrin to Bono to Phil Collins. Although he sang as a kid, Jones decided he didn’t want to sing on his solo records.

“As you start to work as an arranger for Ray Charles, Frank Sinatra, and Billy Eckstine, you don’t kid yourself anymore,” he says. “Tony Bennett, Aretha Franklin—give me a break. You’re working with the greatest
singers in the history of American music, and you're not out there trying to prove that you can sing, too. Next to Ray Charles, it's futility, man."

In 1984 Jones produced and arranged Sinatra's *L.A. Is My Lady*, featuring a big band, Las Vegas–style arrangement of "Mack the Knife." Many consider that work among the finest of Sinatra's long, illustrious career— one in which Jones' band (featuring the Brecker Brothers, Benson, Hampton, and others) and the Chairman of the Board shared a strong rapport.

"The better you know the artist as a person," Jones explains, "the easier it is to develop a musical sense." For Jackson's *Off the Wall*, for example, Jones and Jackson decided to showcase the young artist's maturity. The sentiment was it was time to grow up, "not to be a bubblegum singer anymore, to go out and feel everything you're supposed to feel at 21 years old," Jones recalls.

Although his career has been characterized by a Midas-like ability to turn music into gold, Jones says he never pays attention to the commercial potential of a project. He operates by "trusting the goose pimples," and he advises aspiring producers to "lead with your instincts and support them with your craft." —Paul Verna and Daniel Levitin

**Austin, Patti:** *Every Home Should Have One*, Qwest, 1981 • w/ James Ingram. *Baby Come to Me,* Qwest, 1983 • *Patti Austin*, Qwest, 1983.


**Davis, Miles, and Quincy Jones:** *Live at Montreux*, Warner Bros., 1993.


**Eckstine, Billy:** *Compact Jazz: Billy Eckstine*, Polydor, 1991.


**Horne, Lena:** *The Lady and Her Music: Live on Broadway*, Qwest, 1995.


Tamia: Tamia, Qwest, 1998.


West Coast All-Stars: “We’re All in the Same Gang,” Warner Bros., 1990.

Williams, Andy: I Like Your Kind of Love: The Best of the Cadence Years, Varese Sarabande, 1996.

Wizans, The: All Out, Qwest, 1993.

COLLECTIONS

Richard K. 23
Jonckheere
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David Kahne

Don’t be surprised if David Kahne’s name starts popping up on classical productions. Accustomed to working in a compact pop format, the California native would love to work on a larger, more leisurely scale. “I think about working with an orchestra,” says the head of A&R at Reprise Records. “I think I have kind of an interesting combination of working on pop and rock and R&B stuff, and I think about scoring a film.”

Not only was Kahne instrumental in shaping San Francisco new wave at the dawn of the ’80s, he’s continually seeking new ways to scramble genres and come up with intriguing sonics. Less influenced by producers than by specific records, Kahne cites Public Enemy’s Fear of a Black Planet, the first Talking Heads album, XTC’s Black Sea, and Sly and the Family Stone’s album Fresh, with “Family Affair” on it, as inspirations. And Bartók’s Concerto for Orchestra.

“Those are records that make me feel like getting up in the morning,” Kahne says. “People think you’re acting highbrow if you mention Bartók, but that piece makes you realize the infinitude of your task.”

Born November 21, 1947, in Sacramento, California, Kahne is an Air Force brat. He entered music via the banjo, then learned to play piano, guitar, and bass. He studied bass and took a course in harmony at Cal State Sacramento. He worked in various bands in Texas and Sacramento and, in the mid-’70s, recorded for Capitol as part of Voudouris and Kahne.

Gary Katz

Gary Katz produced the entire recorded output of Steely Dan, rated by audiophiles and production experts as among the highest-fidelity and best-produced records in the history of tape recording. His role in the production of these recordings was primarily organizational, inspirational, and logistical, leaving the musical decisions up to the principal members of the group, Walter Becker and Donald Fagen (see entry), and the recording and technical decisions to a team of the best engineers available, including Elliot Scheiner, Al Schmidt (see entries), and Roger Nichols.

Before Steely Dan was even a group, Katz was the A&R man who got Fagen and Becker their first job as songwriters for a publishing company. (Those song demos are available on several bootleg recordings, most prominently a two-CD set being sold by Catalyst Records without the band’s permission.) When they had difficulty selling their songs to other artists, Katz suggested Becker and Fagen form a band of their own, and he got them their deal with ABC/Dunhill.

The work of the Katz-Becker-Fagen team is discussed in more detail under the entry in this volume for Becker and Fagen. Singly and in combination, Katz, Becker, and Fagen have continued to produce records, but most of the efforts have been relatively undistinguished. The most likely interpretation is that the trio brought a special chemistry to their records that could not be duplicated unless all the members were in place—not unlike the Beatles and George Martin.

However, Katz has had a role in some fine work by Dirk Hamilton, Laura Nyro, and the outrageous Root Boy Slim and His Sex Change Band, in addition to recent groove-oriented music by the Brand New Heavies and the Groove Collective. —Daniel J. Levitin
Matthew King
Kaufman

A
s owner and chief producer at Beserkley Records from the mid-'70s through the mid-'80s, Matthew
King Kaufman created one of the coolest indie
labels and helped create some of the finest power
pop of all time. On a shoestring he produced or co-produced
(with engineer Glen Kolotkin and Kenny Laguna; see
entry) enduring albums by Earth Quake (Rocking the
World, 8.5), Jonathan Richman—with and without the
Modern Lovers—(Jonathan Richman and the Modern
Lovers, Rock and Roll with the Modern Lovers, Modern
Lovers Live), the Rubinoos (The Rubinoos, Back to the
Drawing Board), and most popularly, Greg Kihn (Greg
Kihn Again, Rockinroll, Kihnspiracy). In addition, he co-
produced and compiled one of rock's great collections,
Beserkley Chartbusters, with hits by all of the above
artists.

Born in 1946 and raised in Baltimore, Kaufman
graduated from law school but never took the bar exam.
Instead, he went to California to co-manage (with Allan
Mason) the San Francisco rock band Earth Quake. Con-
vinced they were to be the next Beatles, Kaufman
helped the band get a two-record deal with A&M in
1970 and hung around the label picking up production
tips from some of the greats, including Lou Adler and
Glyn Johns (see entries).

After a few years Kaufman became frustrated with
what he felt was A&M's ineptitude at marketing a hard
rock band. "Earth Quake wasn't quite as good as anoth-
er band on the label—Free—and A&M couldn't even
break them, I told the band that A&M didn't understand
them, and that we could do better on our own," he says.

There was one small problem: money. "I was watch-
ing TV late one night in 1973, and Reverend Ike came
on and said, 'A guy drives by in a Cadillac and you can
either love him or curse at him. If you curse at him,
you're never going to get a Cadillac.' I loved it—this
power of positive thinking line—and I wanted to
encourage it, so I sent the man $10.

'A little later, I got back in the mail this cheap red
cloth cut out with pinking shears, which was supposed
to be a prayer cloth. The note with it said, 'Put this in
your mailbox and money will show up.' I figured, 'What
the hell' and put it in my mailbox.

"That night I was staring at Alcatraz and it turned
Interview with Orrin Keepnews

Daniel J. Levitin: You said in your book that you've tried to maintain the attitude that it's the artist's album and not yours. But at the same time, it's your job to manage the recording session, so there's potential conflict there.

Orrin Keepnews: Yeah, but it's the kind of thing that tends to be more potential than actual. What you need to accomplish more than anything else is a very real working partnership between the artist and the producer, which means a recognition on both sides, sometimes implicit and sometimes explicit, that each has his areas of being the decision maker. I am never going to say to an artist: "That was the take, I'm not going to let you lift your horn on that tune again," but I'm not going to let somebody say to me, "Yeah, that was good enough, let's go on," if I don't believe it was. If you are able to establish a workable, creative relationship with the artist, you're going to come out pretty good or better. If you're not able to establish this, then neither of you belong in the studio.

DL: How do you relate to the technology of recording? How involved do you get with sounds, for instance?

OK: First of all, you have to realize that in my production work, I go back to 1-track: professionally, I'm a little older than stereo, so I've been through a lot of technological change, and I'm a passionate believer in using technology rather than letting technology use you.

DL: Could you give me an example?

OK: I think there are instances in which I will believe in the validity of overdubbing and layering, but I also believe that it can be drastically overused and do away with the spontaneity that's a very important part of jazz. A lot of that comes out now that so many people are recording live to 2-track again with digital, because multitrack digital still remains incredibly expensive. It gives me great pleasure to be able to tell a bass player, "No, you can't repair that part, it's there. Everybody else was playing great, you got a bad note or two, that's tough. We're going with this." Because a lot of musicians, particularly musicians who are playing instruments that can just be plugged in and taken direct, are aware of the fact that they don't really have a sound in the room—musicians get aware of these things very fast—so there are a lot of piano players, guitarists and bass players who for years have relied on being able to punch in and fix notes. And this sometimes has a very negative effect on performance. But on the whole, progress is a wonderful thing.
DL: There is a remarkable consistency of engineering in your albums in that the balances and the sounds are all very true. The drums always sound like drums, the piano like a piano . . . .

OK: I must confess at being a bit surprised about that. I know I've had a consistency of attitude; I didn't know I had a consistency of sound as well. I'm not denying it, I just didn't know it. I was doing an RCA reissue with a fabulous veteran engineer named Ray Hall recently, and he was trying to remember if he had ever done a session with me back in the old days, in the '50s. He was remembering one particular session which was a possibility, and he said, 'All I remember about that session is that the producer wanted no echo.' And I said, 'If the producer wanted no echo, it must have been me.' I have a feeling about natural sounds. If anything, I can be accused of being too dry. My philosophy of sound with jazz is that the sound is only a means to deliver the performance.

DL: You say in your book, The View from Within, that club owners are the last to know talent.

OK: Yes, although I might want to revise that and say that although they are the last, they may still be a little bit ahead of the critics. I've always been very suspicious of record reviewers and critics. As a producer I consider most reviewers my natural enemy. I'm aware that it's much more attention-getting to be negative; people remember bad reviews a hell of a lot more than they remember good reviews. And a good review is just saying an artist and the producer were effective, whereas in a bad review, [the reviewer] is saying 'I am more discerning and I am more clever than either the artist or the producer.'

DL: You are a big discoverer of talent . . . .

OK: I'm a pretty good developer of talent, I'm a pretty good accepter of recommendations for talent when it's in the early stages, but on principle, I don't know that anyone ever really discovers anybody.

DL: There are people who are known throughout the world as major forces in jazz, whom you are responsible for having brought to the world. My question is, do you find them yourself, or do they find you, as was the case when Cannonball ran into your office and said, 'You have to go to Indianapolis and hear Wes Montgomery.' When you first hear them, how do you know that they're going to be big? What do you listen for?

OK: I knew Cannonball and knew he was not the type to go running off at the mouth about anything. So I knew it was a very serious recommendation. I flew out to Indian-apolis and sat down at the bar where Wes was playing, and I would say that it took me between 14 and 20 seconds to realize that I was in the presence of something goddamned important. The first time I heard Thelonious Monk, I heard a test pressing of his first session for Blue Note, and I knew I was in the presence of something special.

DL: How?

OK: Invariably, it is someone with an individual voice, somebody who sounds like himself on that instrument. I would also say that it's someone whose obvious passion for what he's doing makes itself known to you; you just hear the music and you are hearing passion, you are hearing creativity, you are hearing the cry of an artist. So it seems like it's all happening instinctively and swiftly, like a flash of lightning, but what's actually happening is that your taste, your experience, your judgment, are all constantly operating within you and then something comes along that strikes you as being an embodiment of all these things together.

DL: Have you ever missed the boat on anybody who later became really big?

OK: I did pass on Coltrane at one point, although everyone else did at the time, too. I heard Coltrane in the Miles Davis Quintet of the mid-'50s, with Red Garland [piano], Paul Chambers [bass], and Philly Joe Jones [drums], and I heard what was really a rather ordinary, young bebop tenor player—which is exactly what everybody else was hearing at that time. I was really very busy listening to Miles for the first time, and listening to Philly for the first time, and that was about all I had room for.

DL: Was there anyone whom you heard and said 'That's it!' but it didn't happen? Famous failures?

OK: There were a number of people I thought would be wonderful and they weren't, in the sense of their not becoming major stars. I still have not figured out why the very first person I ever recorded, Randy Weston, never got bigger. Now Randy Weston has been on the scene for upwards of 35 years, and he is recognized as a superior artist, but he's never been a star, he's never been famous to people outside the jazz world. And I never could understand why. I thought Randy had absolutely everything. There are really two steps to the discovery of genius. One is to hear it for the first time and to know it, and the other is to eventually have a significant amount of public and or critical agreement about your excitement.

—Daniel J. Levitin
nently in the careers of Cannonball Adderley, Thelonious Monk, McCoy Tyner, Sonny Rollins, Stanley Clarke, and Flora Purim. He started three distinguished jazz labels: Riverside, Milestone, and Landmark.

While it is difficult to find a common sound throughout his work, it is easy to find a common vibe: Keepnews' genius is in his ability to capture jazz artists at their most comfortable, relaxed, and creative. In a medium that is primarily a live art form, Keepnews has managed to record some of the classic, definitive performances of the genre. Although it is difficult to single out highlights in Keepnews' long recording career, one particular session at the Village Vanguard in New York yielded two stunning CDs, the Bill Evans Trio's *Sunday at the Village Vanguard* and *Waltz for Debbie*. The recordings capture Evans in an intimate setting, his improvisational skills at their peak. Monk’s *Brilliant Corners* and With John Coltrane CDs are also must-haves, true classics in the jazz repertoire. These four albums are prototypes for what a generation of jazz artists have tried to achieve on tape.

—Daniel J. Levitin


Byrd, Charlie: Trio and Guests, *Byrd at the Gate*, Original Jazz Classics, 1963 • *Byrd Man*, Riverside/ABC, 1969 • See also Tjader, Cal.


These are all self-produced hits. Meanwhile, Kelly has successfully joined the ranks of Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds and Teddy Riley (see entries) as one of R&B's premier producers, creating hits for Toni Braxton ("I Don't Want To"), Aaliyah ("Age Ain't Nothin' But a Number, No. 18), Changing Faces ("I.G.H.E.T.O.U.T."), the Isley Brothers ("Let's Lay Together"), Hi-Five ("Quality Time"), and the Winans ("Payday"). And it was Kelly who provided Michael Jackson with what was easily the best song on his HIStory epic: the tender, understated ballad "You Are Not Alone" (No. 1).

Kelly first flexed his production chops on the 1992 Born into the '90s album by R. Kelly and Public Announcement (which includes co-production from Mr. Lee and Wayne Williams). Its first single, "She's Got That Vibe," didn't seem to leave much room for a promising future, with its moldy new jack swing sound, though Kelly's voice easily broke through. Follow-up singles "Slow Dance" and "Hey Love" better reflect the style that would become known as Kelly's: slow, smooth, sexy beats, thick and creamy and doused with old-school funk.

The very next year, Kelly, still bearing his trademark beats, returned with 12 Play (No. 2). Singles such as "Sex Me," "Bump n' Grind," and "Your Body's Callin'" (No. 13) and telling album cuts "Freak Dat Body" and "I Like the Crotch on You" firmly established Kelly as R&B's Freak of the Week.

The success of 12 Play helped pave the way for other Kelly productions that would come that same year and the next, such as "Payday," "All You Ever Been Was Good," and "That Extra Mile" by the Winans; though his sound was more evident on his work with Changing Faces on songs like "Stroke You Up" (No. 3) and "Foolin' Around," Janet Jackson's "Any Time, Any Place" remix and on Aaliyah's "Age Ain't Nothin' But a Number" album, which included songs like "Back and Forth" (No. 5) and a remake of the Isley Brothers' "At Your Best (You Are Love)" (No. 6) and the title track. It was widely reported that Kelly married the then-underage Aaliyah, which brought on tons of bad press for the pair.

His sound wouldn't change much with 1995's R. Kelly (No. 1) album, and that was just fine, as evidenced by songs such as "I Can't Sleep Baby (If I)" (No. 5), "Down Low (Nobody Has to Know)" (No. 4), "Step in My Room," "Hump Bounce," and "Religious Love." (It's probably better to forget "You Remind Me of Something," No. 4.)

That album revealed the first real hint of a change in direction for Kelly. The song "Trade in My Life," featuring gospel music's Kirk Franklin and the Family, showed a more spiritual side. And in 1997, under the guiding
one way of expressing myself about music, but it really had its limitations because you’re writing about some other people’s music. When you’re producer you really have a chance to participate in the creative process itself and to leave some footprints of your own on those records.” —Eric Olsen and David John Farinella


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Robert John “Mutt” Lange

The reclusive and publicity-shy Mutt Lange is known for his arranging prowess and decided penchant for massive overdubbing. His doubled electric guitar sound (sometimes tripled, sometimes quadrupled) graced such prominent power-metal purveyors as Foreigner (Foreigner 4, No. 1), AC/DC (four albums including the 12-times-platinum Back in Black), and Def Leppard (also four albums, including Hysteria, No. 1, and Pyromania, No. 2).

With AC/DC, Lange helped to define not just a sound for ’80s metal but a persona as well: the metal band as bad boys, teen ruffians with preadolescent humor (e.g., “Big Balls” and “The Jack”) and a fuck-the-neighbors predilection for eardrum-bleeding volume levels. The songs “Back in Black,” “You Shook Me All Night Long,” and “Highway to Hell” are carefully crafted, near-encyclopedic compendia of electric blues licks “borrowed” from a diverse collection of American bluesmen, yet they are played with such look-at-me bravado even the most conservative copyright counselor would probably look the other way. Although Back in Black is generally considered to be the band’s best, the entire AC/DC-Lange discography is dominated by the one indispensable attribute of heavy metal that it is impossible to fake: the fire of raging hormonal adolescence. The recordings are not particularly clean (clean recordings are not necessarily incompatible with distorted guitars, as has been shown by Ted Templeman and Chris Thomas; see entries)—in fact, they are often disturbingly low-fi—but there is no question about the high energy they convey, which Lange cleverly captured.

Lange joined forces with the Cars during a critical period. Six years earlier the group had been in the forefront of the new wave movement, but sales were sagging. The Cars were in the midst of an identity crisis: the eighth-note bass lines and quirky synths that had seemed so alternative when the group first appeared were so heavily copied by 1984 that it rendered them ordinary. With Lange, the group reinvented itself as mainstream pop artists, scoring an astonishing five hit singles and U.S. sales of more than 3 million for Heartbeat City (No. 3). The heavily produced recording featured digitally sampled voices (a relatively new innovation and sound at the time) and multilayered digital syn-
thezizers and samples, all varnished with a high-gloss (though not particularly hi-fi) sheen. Longtime fans of the Boston band lamented the lack of energy on Heartbeat City, but it is not clear with whom the fault lies. Lange had never been accused of sapping energy from AC/DC.

Between Back in Black and Heartbeat City, Lange recorded Def Leppard's Pyromania, establishing that band as one of the most popular metal groups of the '80s—with sales of 10 million. The follow-up took six years to make and sold 14 million. Hysteria, a densely layered magnum opus, had been painstakingly demoed by Lange part for part on a Portastudio, with Lange playing all the instruments and singing all the parts himself. "It was a great-sounding demo," recalls engineer David Thoener, one of several to work on the album, including Nigel Green and Neil Dorfsman. "It had all the guitar layering, the 30 voices in harmony and everything. Mutt wasn't there for all the recording because of prior commitments, and the plain fact that the record took six years. But we spoke on the phone while I was doing the sessions, and he told me, 'Just stay faithful to the demo. Just re-record everything professionally and you'll be okay.'" And okay it was. Although some critics have slagged Def Leppard's latter efforts as bubblegum metal (a term this reviewer finds contradictory), the band's records are marked by carefully orchestrated arrangements that convey both power and melodicism.

Lange also worked with a Nobel Peace Prize nominee. The Boomtown Rats brought Lange together with Bob Geldof, a neo-punk Irish peacenik whose band mixed traditional Irish themes with a Sex Pistols sensibility. The three albums they made together were all large successes in the U.K., but the group remained relatively unknown in the U.S. until Geldof spearheaded the famous (and much imitated) Live Aid concerts. The biggest American success was the frenetically tongue-in-cheek "I Don't Like Mondays," based on the true story of a San Diego teenager who explained a murderous rampage by simply reciting the phrase that was to become the title of the song. Geldof managed to get the song to market before the girl's trial, prompting her parents to file a lawsuit claiming adverse pretrial publicity.

After a few years out of the limelight, Lange reemerged in Nashville, producing country-pop singer Shania Twain (his wife). In 1997 Lange produced one of Bryan Adams' most recent comeback albums, the somewhat obscure 18 Till I Die.

Thoener adds, "Mutt is a brilliant, brilliant man. Of all the producers I've worked with, he's the one I admire the most. He's a really terrific person. His philosophy is to be very low-key about the music business, not to do interviews . . . . He told me, 'Don't let anyone know what you think. If you don't do interviews, there's kind of a mystery about you. No one really knows what you think or why you think it.'" —DANIEL J. LEVITTIN


Coyne, Kevin: In Living Black and White, Virgin, 1976.


Mallard: In a Different Climate, Virgin, 1977.


Clive Langer and Alan Winstanley

The production team of Clive Langer and Alan Winstanley is among the most important and successful of British modern rock. Their hits span the ’80s and ’90s and virtually define the parameters of the genre. Best known for their career-long association with the London pop-ska band Madness (One Step Beyond, No. 2 U.K.; Absolutely, No. 2 U.K.; “House of Fun,” No. 1 U.K.), the pair have also produced David Bowie (“Absolute Beginners,” No. 2 U.K.; see entry), Bowie with Mick Jagger (“Dancing in the Streets,” No. 1 U.K.), Bush (the five-times-platinum Sixteen Stone), Lloyd Cole (Easy Pieces, No. 5 U.K.), Elvis Costello (Punch the Clock, No. 3 U.K.; Goodbye Cruel World, No. 10 U.K.; see entry), Dexy’s Midnight Runners (Too-Rye-Ay, No. 2 U.K.; “Come On Eileen,” No. 1), Morrissey (Kill Uncle, No. 8 U.K.), They Might Be Giants (“Birdhouse in Your Soul,” No. 6 U.K.), and many others.

Alan Winstanley was a London lad who, like so many others, was inspired by the Beatles to pick up a guitar. By 16 he was playing in bands, even recording with one for a French label. “When I was about 18 I realized that I wasn’t going to be a great guitarist. I figured out that maybe production was a good thing to get into. Records by the Beatles, Motown, and Phil Spector [see entry] always sounded good to me and I put a lot of that down to production, as well as the songwriting.

“In 1970 I got a job at a tiny 4-track demo studio here in Fulham [London], TW Music. By the time I left in 1978 it was a 24-track studio. We did quite a lot of punk: Stranglers, Buzzcocks, Generation X. So that was my engineering background, though I would never class myself as a proper engineer,” he says modestly. “I just sort of twiddled the knobs until it sounded good.

“Clive was in a band called Deaf School,” Winstanley continues. “They came in and recorded their demos at TW, and that’s how I met him. Then in 1978, I decided it was time to become a freelance producer, so I proclaimed to the world ‘I am now a producer.’ Luckily, I
**Untouchables, The**: *Wild Child* (9 tracks), Stiff/MCA, 1985 • *Dance Party* (1 track), Stiff/MCA, 1986.

**COLLECTIONS**
*License to Kill* soundtrack, MCA, 1995.

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**Terry Lewis**

See JIMMY JAM AND TERRY LEWIS

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**Henry Lewy**

Henry Lewy (born in Magdeburg, Germany, in 1926), is regarded as one of the top recording engineers of the '60s and '70s. He also played an important role in producing key recordings by Joni Mitchell, Neil Young, Stephen Bishop, Leonard Cohen, and others. A kindly, gentle presence in the studio, Lewy had the ability to cultivate a mood and set his artists at ease.

Lewy came to the U.S. in 1940 at the age of 14, fleeing the Nazis. He worked as a radio announcer for many years in San Diego, Los Angeles, and Las Vegas. “I got tired of radio announcing, so I started going to class to become an engineer. I got a job at Liberty Recorders and I was an engineer there for a while. United/Western bought them and I engineered recordings there for many years,” he says.

At Liberty, Lewy lent his luster to music by the likes of Sergio Mendes (“Fool on the Hill”), Jimmy Webb (Letters), Boyce and Hart (see entry; “I Wonder What She’s DoingTonight”), the Supremes, and Phil Ochs.

In 1967, when Herb Alpert opened up A&M studios, he hired Lewy as a staff engineer; he remained there until 1977. Lewy eased from engineering into production in the late '60s, culminating in his work on seven stellar Joni Mitchell albums in the '70s, including *Ladies of the Canyon*, *Blue* (No. 15), *For the Roses* (No. 11), *Court and Spark* (No. 2), *The Hissing of Summer Lawns* (No. 4), and *Hejira* (No. 13). (There is no production credit on most of these albums, and Lewy’s title ranges from “engineer,” to “engineer and advise,” to the somewhat whimsical “sound and guidance.” Co-production credit is generally now given to Lewy and Mitchell.) *Court and Spark* is among the finest engineering jobs of the '70s.

Lewy also worked on Neil Young's *Harvest* (No. 1), considered by many to be Young’s finest album. *Harvest*, along with Lewy-produced LPs by the Flying Burrito Brothers, David Blue, and the Dillards, set the standard for the California country-rock sound that the Eagles would cash in on.

Lewy also worked on another audiophile favorite. Although his participation in 1983’s *Famous Blue Raincoat* by Jennifer Warnes is obliquely credited (he is acknowledged only as the recording’s “guardian angel”), there is little doubt that his technical guidance helped to establish its reputation as one of the best recordings in history—a CD often used for demonstration purposes in high-end audio stores.

“On the albums I produced, I got completely involved in the production,” Lewy recalls. “I was a French horn player, but I never did arrangements myself—I hired the arrangers, booked the players. And I followed through on all the details of getting the album done—the mastering, cover art, you name it. Now I’m retired. I haven’t done any music in years. I enjoy sitting in Pacific Palisades looking at the ocean.” —DANIEL J. LEVITT

**Blue, David**: *Stones*, Asylum, 1971.
**Honk**: *Honk*, Epic, 1974.
**Kittyhawk**: *Race for the Oasis*, EMI America, 1981.
Lillywhite’s sparkling, radiant sound jumps from the grooves from the first note of U2’s spectacular debut, Boy, as “I Will Follow” rides on Larry Mullen’s drums and the Edge’s angular guitar into history. While neither Boy nor its follow-up, October, tore up the charts at the time (though both are now platinum), War (No. 12) with “Sunday Bloody Sunday,” “New Year’s Day” (No. 10 U.K.), and “Two Hearts Beat As One” turned U2 into a worldwide phenomenon in 1984.

Another band Lillywhite effectively nurtured was Big Country, whose tartan “In a Big Country” (No. 17) and “Fields of Fire” (No. 10 U.K.) from The Crossing (No. 18) became ’80s staples. If Lillywhite’s work with U2 and Big Country emphasized rock guitar, his work the Thompson Twins (In the Name of Love) showed an affinity for synth-pop.

In the middle of the decade, Lillywhite oversaw Simple Minds’ best album, Sparkle in the Rain (No. 1 U.K.), with “Waterfront” (No. 13 U.K.), “Up on the Catwalk” and “Book of Brilliant Things.” He also helped move the Rolling Stones into a tough, almost metallic sound with Dirty Work (No. 4, co-produced with Jagger and Richards; see Glitter Twins entry) in 1986. “Harlem Shuffle” (No. 5) was the band’s biggest hit in five years, and “One Hit (to the Body)” just rocks.

In the late ’80s Lillywhite worked with punkish Celtic neo-traditionals like the Pogues, poppy new wave from the Thompson Twins and XTC, slamming hard rock from the Rolling Stones, jazzy alternarock from the Dave Matthews Band, or confessional modern rock from Morrissey, Steve Lillywhite has been one of England’s most important producers for over 20 years.

Lillywhite was born in 1955, and at 17 became a tea boy at PolyGram’s studio. He graduated to engineer, and followed a common route into production when his demo for Ultravox was snapped up by Island Records in 1977. He produced the band’s classic self-titled debut with Brian Eno (see entry) and was offered a staff producer position with Island.

Lillywhite became a new wave whirlwind, churning out essential music by Eddie and the Hot Rods (with Ed Hollis, the smoking rattle-rouser “Do Anything You Wanna Do,” No. 9 U.K.), Siouxsie & the Banshees (The Scream, No. 12 U.K.), and XTC (Drums and Wires) before the end of the ’70s.

With the arrival of the ’80s, Lillywhite stepped up with the third Peter Gabriel (No. 1 U.K.) album; five tracks on the Psychedelic Furs’ self-titled debut (No. 18 U.K.); their second album, Talk Talk Talk, with the original “Pretty in Pink”; and most importantly, a group of very young men from Dublin, U2.

Steve Lillywhite

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Lillywhite also hooked up with modern rock icons Talking Heads for their last album, the Afro-Caribbean-influenced Naked (No. 19), and for Head singer/guitarist/songwriter David Byrne’s solo album Rei Momo.

The ’90s has seen continued excellence from Lillywhite in the form of the La’s’ brilliant neo-British Invasion debut, The La’s (with “There She Goes,” No. 13 U.K.), three energetic Morrissey albums (Vauxhall and I, No. 1 U.K.; Southpaw Grammar, No. 4 U.K.; Maladjusted), and some lovely music from Kirsty MacColl (Kite, Electric Landlady). In addition, he has produced the hugely popular American rhythm-and-jamming Dave Matthews Band (quadruple-platinum Under the Table and Dreaming; Crash, No. 2; Before These Crowded Streets) and executive-produced the AIDS benefit album Red Hot + Blue. —David John Farinella and Eric Olsen

Armatrading, Joan: Walk Under Ladders, A&M, 1981 • The
There are moments on several McCartney-produced albums in which he captures the Beatles sound and vibe better than anyone (for example, "Dear Boy," "Bluebird," and the Lennon-inspired "Let Me Roll It"). One of McCartney's famous aspirations in the Beatles was to authentically reproduce the sound and composition style of a '30s show tune. Attempts included "Your Mother Should Know" and "Honey Pie," but on 1975's "You Gave Me the Answer" (from the album Venus and Mars, No. 1) McCartney captured it perfectly and has not tried again since.

In 1984, McCartney collaborated with George Martin (see entry) to produce Give My Regards to Broad Street, which included re-recordings of McCartney's Beatles songs. For new renditions of "Good Day Sunshine" and "Eleanor Rigby," McCartney and Martin went back to the original Beatles master tapes and transferred the horn and string parts to multitrack, where McCartney overdubbed new vocals and occasional instrumental accompaniment.

Other production highlights include the 1977 album Thrillington, on which McCartney arranged, produced, and conducted a nightclub-style instrumental version of the entire Ram album under the pseudonym Percy Thrillington. The single "Country Dreamer" (available as a bonus track on the British and U.S. versions of the CD Red Rose Speedway, No. 1) forms the final part of an ode to the country trilogy begun with "Mother Nature's Son" (the Beatles' White Album), and "Heart of the Country" (Ram).

On Band on the Run (No. 1), McCartney experimented with the type of theme development and composition style he had employed on side 2 of the Beatles' Abbey Road: themes from the songs "Band on the Run" (No. 1), "Jet" (No. 7), "Mrs. Vanderbilt," and "Picasso's Last Words" are brought together in a finale at the end of the album.

The big thing McCartney lost when he left the Beatles (and began producing himself) was the objectivity and "sounding board" that he had in the other Beatles and in George Martin. As a result, although his best-quality material is as good as his Beatles output, the minimum is considerably lower and as such, so is the mean (average) of his solo output. In Joan Goodman's Playboy interview, she asked McCartney how he judges the good material from the bad, and McCartney replied that he ran it by Linda and the kids. So Paul went from using George Martin and three of the best musicians in the world to advise him to his wife and children.

As McCartney admitted to interviewer Steve Grant: "I know I've lost my edge. . . . I do need a kind of outside injection, stimulation, and it's not there anymore."
And remember, the edge came from all the Beatles. If Ringo or George didn't like anything—it was out. My stuff has gotten more poppy without that outside stimulus."

Perhaps it is this change in work habits that accounts for the wide quality range in the McCartney solo catalogue. Each album he has produced has at least one or two gems, and some of them many, many more. The frustration is in having to wade through the tunes that might have been better left off, such as "Cook of the House" from Wings at the Speed of Sound (No. 1), or "Only Love Remains" from Press to Play.

Then there is the problem of a seemingly endless string of cloying throwaway ditties such as "Listen to What the Man Said" and "Silly Love Songs" (both No. 1), for which we can only blame ourselves. If it weren't for their annoying and overwhelming popularity. Sir Paul might get the message that these are not an acceptable use of his prodigious songwriting talents. —DANIEL J. LEVITIN

**COLLECTIONS**


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**Buzz McCoy and Groovie Mann**

(MARSTON DALEY AND FRANK NARDIELLO)

A flaming disco ball of unknown origin slammed into a drive-in theater showing *Christian Zombie Vampire*, fusing unspeakable screen characters, molten squares of glass, guzzling revelers, backseat groppers, and the shrieking theater sound system into an alloy known as My Life with the Thrill Kill Kult.

Buzz McCoy (aka Marston Daley) and Groovie Mann (aka Frank Nardiello) are the creative forces behind this bizarre union of disco-industrial music, sleazy omnisexuality, and B-movie horror. Inadvertently created and self-produced, Thrill Kill have released a slew of dance club hits since 1988 with such expressive titles as "Kooler Than Jesus," "Devil Bunnies," "The Days of Swine and Roses," "Cuz It's Hot," "Waiting for Mommie," "The International Sin Set," "Leathersex," "Sex on Wheels," "Blue Buddha," "Glamour Is a Rocky Road," and greatest of all, "A Daisy Chain 4 Satan." Their back-to-back albums *Confessions of a Knife* and *Explosion!* stand with the best that either the disco or industrial genres have produced.

Buzz McCoy grew up in a small town in Massachusetts in the '60s and '70s and moved to Boston after high
The album "Houses of the Holy" marked a significant departure for the band, as it became their first release to feature the contributions of John Bonham's drumming. The album's closing track, "D'yer Mak'er," became a signature piece, showcasing the band's ability to blend heavy metal and folk influences.

Page's guitar playing on "Stairway to Heaven" was revolutionary, combining elements of blues, rock, and folk music. The solo is considered one of the greatest in rock history, with its intricate melody and dynamic range.

The success of Led Zeppelin's albums was unprecedented, with sales surpassing 50 million copies in the U.S. alone. The band's unique sound and style have had a lasting impact on rock music, influencing countless musicians and bands in the decades following their peak years.

Led Zeppelin's legacy continues to be celebrated, with their music remaining a cornerstone of the rock genre. Their influence can be heard in countless genres and artists, making their impact on the music world profound and enduring.
Before reuniting with Page, Plant had a largely successful solo career, highlighted by *Pictures at Eleven* (No. 5) and *Now and Zen* (No. 6). —Daniel J. Levitin

**JIMMY PAGE**

**Coverdale/Page:** Coverdale/Page, Geffen, 1993.


**Lord Sutch:** Lord Sutch and Heavy Friends, Cuollion, 1970.


**Page, Jimmy:** Death Wish II soundtrack, Swan Song, 1982 • Outrider, Geffen, 1988.

**JIMMY PAGE AND ROBERT PLANT**


**ROBERT PLANT**

**Amos, Tori:** "Down by the Seaside," Atlantic, 1995 • *Encomium: A Tribute to Led Zeppelin*.


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**Tim Palmer**

Tim Palmer has produced or co-produced an exceptional range of modern rock groups and music since the mid-80s, including *An Emotional Fish* ("Celebrate"), the Mighty Lemon Drops, the Mission (God's Own Medicine, No. 14 U.K., *Carved in Sand*, No. 7 U.K.), Robert Plant, Tears For Fears (Elemental, No. 5 U.K., *Raoul and the Kings of Spain*), Texas (*Southside*, No. 3 U.K.), David Bowie's (see entry) Tin Machine (*Tin Machine*, No. 3 U.K.), and Wire Train. Palmer is also a top-shelf mixer, working with Concrete Blonde, the Cure, Cutting Crew, Duran Duran, James, Mother Love Bone, and Pearl Jam, and recently Sepultura and Red Big Fish.

Tim Palmer was born in 1962 in the north of England, near Scotland, and moved with his family to London when he was about 10. He became a devotee of punk as a teen, playing bass and guitar and singing in various unruly outfits. "We weren't that good, and that's probably why I decided to go to the other side of the glass," he says.

Palmer visited producer Phil Wainman's Utopia studio with his father, and a few weeks later got called to be a tea boy. "I think I've been in a studio ever since. I feel that way anyway, because I've worked pretty consistently." Palmer did the usual schlepping and observing, then moved up to assistant engineer.

In 1983 he worked as an assistant on the *Local Hero* soundtrack for producer/performer Mark Knopfler (see
Rope, a record that has earned such bipolar reviews that critics say it is either far and away the best album ever made by the English group or its absolute nadir.

Pearlman has owned his own recording studios for two decades, veritable confection shops of the latest and most exotic outboard equipment on the planet. He was one of the first owners of the Pultec reverb and keeps his room stocked with an eclectic balance of old tube gear and API console modules and the newest solid state or hybrid signal processors. —Daniel J. Levitin


Pavlov's Dog: Pampered Mental, ABC, 1975 • At the Sound of the Bell, CBS, 1976.

Shakin' Street: Shakin' Street, CBS, 1980.

Dan Penn

Although Dan Penn hasn't produced many records, the ones he has done define not only Southern soul, but blue-eyed soul. They were the first few hits by the Box Tops, the legendary and short-lived band led by reluctant pop icon Alex Chilton. In the twilight of 1967 and the spring of 1968, such Penn-produced Box Tops smashes as "The Letter" (No. 1), "Neon Rainbow," and "Cry Like a Baby" (No. 2) staved off at least some of the second British Invasion even as they defined a new kind of all-American music.

Born November 16, 1941, in Vernon, Alabama, Penn (whose real name is Daniel Pennington) lives in Nashville, where he's building a studio in his basement. He made some good money in his glory days. For some
Paul Simon

Paul Simon is one of an elite club of artists that includes Stevie Wonder, Paul McCartney, Prince, Richard Carpenter, Brian Wilson, and John Fogerty (see entries): all of these artists have successfully produced themselves. Simon’s production style is marked by sonic clarity, imaginative arrangements, and the integration of world music with mainstream popular music. As half of Simon and Garfunkel, and their principal musical arranger and sometime producer, Paul Simon oversaw the creative activity of one of the most successful duos in pop music history.

Simon has embraced both musical and technical innovations throughout his career. In 1966, Sounds of Silence (produced by Bob Johnston and Tom Wilson; see entries) was the first album to be recorded with eight simultaneous tracks, accomplished by synchronizing two 4-track machines to one another. By contrast, the Beatles recorded Sgt. Pepper the following year with only four simultaneous tracks (they increased the available tracks by bouncing down between two 4-track machines). Similarly, “The Boxer” (No. 7, with Art Garfunkel and Roy Halee; see entry), recorded in 1969, was the first commercial 16-track recording, accomplished by synchronizing two 8-track machines.

Through his use of Latin American polyrhythms and other third world influences, Simon presaged the world beat movement by over 20 years. His 1970 “El Condor Pasa” (No. 18), based on a Peruvian folk melody, featured Latin American musicians Los Incas. The following year Simon recorded the Latin-inflected “Me and Julio Down by the Schoolyard” with Roy Halee and traveled to Jamaica to record “Mother and Child Reunion” (No. 4) with members of Toots and the Maytals. In 1986 he was the first mainstream pop artist to incorporate traditional African rhythms with Graceland (No. 3), an album primarily recorded in South Africa.

Simon, born October 13, 1941, in Newark, New Jersey, began his recording career at 15 as a musician and singer on demos for a variety of songwriters, including sessions with Burt Bacharach (see entry). Typically, Simon sang a number of vocal parts, including background doo-wop–style harmonies, and played guitar and bass. Carole King on drums and keyboards was a frequent collaborator on these early demo sessions.

While still in their teens, Simon and classmate Art Garfunkel recorded an album under the name of Tom and Jerry. A few years later they were signed to Columbia Records. “In the early days of Simon and Garfunkel,” Simon explains, “the record label had assigned us producers because that’s how things were done. But really, between Roy Halee, who was the engineer, and Artie and me, we knew how to make records. I had already been making records since I was 15, and Halee and Garfunkel both had training in classical music.”

Bookends (No. 1) in 1968 was the first recording on which Simon received a production credit. It also signaled his new maturity as a songwriter and producer. The album is resplendent with ear candy, sounds and aural images that enhance Simon’s molecular melodicism. “Fakin’ It” (produced by John Simon; see entry), in particular, showcases high production techniques we now take for granted because they’ve been imitated so often: organ parts and vocals flying in and out, echoed claps supporting the snare drum, strings and background vocals doubling each other, a string quartet in the third chorus punctuated with trumpet and trombone hits. The multiple vocal and guitar layerings of “Mrs. Robinson” (No. 1, with Garfunkel and Halee) and “A Hazy Shade of Winter” (produced by Johnston) cre-
ated new and exciting sonic textures, a distinctive sound that listeners and radio crave.

The Halee-Simon team were geniuses with echoes and reverbs. Beginning with Bookends and continuing through Bridge over Troubled Water, they introduced some of the most musical and tasteful echoes ever committed to tape. Bridge over Troubled Water took two years to make; it sold 5 million U.S. copies and was the No. 1 U.S. album for 10 weeks in a row.

Part of Simon’s production expertise was knowing when to sing and when to give the vocals to Art Garfunkel. “I never had a particular feel for [singing] that song,” Simon says regarding the title track, although he performed it often in concert after the duo broke up. The song was perfect for Garfunkel’s angelic tenor, and Simon gave it a dramatic presentation: the song begins with solo grand piano, followed by a gradual buildup and the addition of instruments until it reaches a crescendo with full strings—and an enormous cannon-like snare drum recorded in an echo chamber—to augment its already ethereal sound. “Cecelia” (No. 4) was built on top of a demo tape recorded at Simon’s house, with Garfunkel and him clapping the rhythm track on a piano bench. “The Boxer” featured a snare drum recorded in an elevator shaft, a bass harmonica, and massively layered vocal parts that create the illusion of an entire chorus of Simons and Garfunkels. “Baby Driver” was rendered with double-tracked baritone saxophone.

Paul Simon (No. 4), the artist’s first solo album, was primarily a showcase for the songs, a respite from the heavy (and at times compulsively detail-oriented) production of Bridge. One highlight is the enchanting Simon-Stephane Grappelli instrumental collaboration, “Hobo’s Blues.”

With the release of his second solo album, There Goes Rhymin’ Simon (No. 2), Simon was back to not just recording records, but producing them, in a release whose influence is still felt today. Rhymin’ (with Halee and Phil Ramone; see entry) was one of the first commercially released vinyl albums to be produced in a quadraphonic version (the additional two channels were encoded on the disc and could be reproduced at home using quadraphonic amplifiers and decoders). Working with engineers Jerry Masters and Phil Ramone and session players drawn from the Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section, Simon created an album that still sounds fresh. The snare drum and vocal echoes on “Kodachrome” (No. 2) are beautifully balanced, chamber-created sounds that must have required hours of exacting microphone and speaker adjustments. Continuing his quest to integrate a variety of musical styles, Simon employed the Dixie Hummingbirds to sing mel-

luous background vocals on the gospel-inspired “Tenderness.”

“Something So Right” provided the road map for how ‘70s singer/songwriters would approach the rock ballad. “Was a Sunny Day” married calypso and reggae to rock five years before the Police. “St. Judy’s Comet” was a lilting, shuffling lullaby that John Lennon paid tribute to in 1980’s “Beautiful Boy.”

The production of Still Crazy After All These Years (No. 1, with Ramone) was also high-quality and high-gloss (and was also released in a quadraphonic vinyl version). Decidedly more mainstream than Rhymin’ Simon, it netted Simon a Grammy for Album of the Year and yielded the No. 1 single “50 Ways to Leave Your Lover,” as well as three other hit singles, “Gone at Last,” “My Little Town” (No. 9, a duet with Garfunkel), and the title cut.

Graceland also won Simon a Grammy for Album of the Year. One of the most surprising, rewarding, and enjoyable albums ever, it is also on many scholarly lists of best-produced albums of all time, alongside Sgt. Pepper and Pink Floyd’s Dark Side of the Moon. Graceland combined traditional African rhythms, harmonies, and musicians with Simon’s perspicacious lyrics and melodies. The production itself was an engineer’s nightmare: African instruments recorded live with little or no separation, multiple triggered inputs, songs that were created out of jam sessions and edited together via 24-track tape. Halee rose to the occasion.

The Rhythm of the Saints (No. 4) used a similar approach to composition: Simon essentially jammed with a group of musicians, and from those sessions edited tape until he had the basic tracks for a dozen songs. He added lyrics and melodies and the overdubs of traditional instruments and vocals later. The album experienced disappointing sales compared to Graceland (2 million versus 5 million). Simon’s theory is that the public found it hard to embrace because there was no drum kit on the entire record. Other speculations are that the vocals were merely mixed too softly or the timing of the release was off.

In 1994, Simon produced Picture Perfect Morning for his wife, Edie Brickell. One of his most prominent productions for another artist, the album has the expected high production and sheen and shows a tasteful regard for the role of production in framing the songs, not overshadowing them. It is very much Brickell’s album, not Simon’s; the producer creates a gentle, supportive frame for her easy, flowing songs and expressive, unlabored vocals.

Simon’s latest production is 1997’s The Capeman, his first attempt at a Broadway musical. Despite high musi-
cal values (and lyrics by Nobel Prize-winning poet Derek Walcott), the album stuffed and the musical failed.
—Daniel J. Levitin

Perkins, Carl: Go Cat Go, Dinosaur, 1996.
Roche, Terry, and Maggie Roche: Seductive Reasoning, Columbia, 1975.

Mike Simpson

See Dust Brothers

David Sinclair

See Tappa “Tapper” Zukie

Sean Slade

See Paul Q. Kolderie and Sean Slade

Sly and Robbie

(Lowell Dunbar and Robert Shakespeare)

As reggae’s best-known rhythm section, Sly and Robbie backed the best in the business: Peter Tosh, Black Uhuru, and Ini Kamoze are but a few of the touring acts whose live presence was made all the more formidable by their distinctive drum and bass interaction. They backed—in their case you could almost say fronted—hundreds of other Jamaican artists on thousands of sessions as well, cutting tracks for nearly all the major reggae producers before becoming producers themselves. They have produced and played for major nonreggae acts like Bob Dylan and Grace Jones as well.

Lowell “Sly” Dunbar (born May 10, 1952) played drums for Skin Flesh and Bones, one of the hottest stu-
the reason I built my studio. If we go over two or three weeks, there’s no pressure. For art, it’s positive,” he says. “I got a reputation for being an expensive producer. It wasn’t me, it was the studios.”

He prefers a consistent studio environment, saying “every studio has little flaws, little good things. As long as you know the situation, you can deal with it.” And he’s completely sold on digital. “I started using digital early, in 1981, in Germany. I was fascinated by the clearness and the way the drums came back very powerful. I like the storage medium to be neutral. If I want distortion, I insert it. If you want analog sound, a bit of tube gear you gives you the sound before you put it on tape, warms it up. I never leave the digital domain anymore.”

He describes his production philosophy: “The band is the bible of what they want to do. If it’s completely out of line with what I want to do, then I shouldn’t be doing the project. I try to keep them on track for their direction. I think being able to keep atmosphere in the studio at a positive level is one of the most important things.”

Though Wagener continues to work with a lot of metal-oriented music, including his friends from Skid Row and Accept, he’s recently done adult contemporary and pop projects and says, “If it’s good music I wouldn’t shy away from anything. My heart is in rock music. I grew up with Deep Purple and Accept. [But I like] the Wallflowers, No Doubt. It’s different music but it’s quality.” —ANASTASIA PANTOS

Accept: Restless and Wild, Portrait, 1983 • Predator, Sweat

Alice Cooper: Constrictor, MCA, 1986 • Raise Your Fist and Yell,


Dokken: Breaking the Chains, Elektra, 1983 • Dokken, Elektra,
1983 • Under Lock and Key, Elektra, 1985 • “In My
Dreams,” Elektra, 1986 • Back on the Streets, Elektra, 1989
• Dysfunctional, Columbia, 1995.


45 Grave: Sleep in Safety, Enigma, 1983 • A Tale of Strange
Phenomena, Enigma, 1984 • “Partytime,” Enigma, 1984 •
“Partytime” (remix), Enigma, 1984 (The Return of the
Living Dead soundtrack).


Raven: All for One, Neat, 1983.


Skid Row: “18 and Life,” Atlantic, 1989 • “I Remember You,”
Atlantic, 1989 • “Makin’ a Mess,” Atlantic, 1989 • Skid
Row, Atlantic, 1989 • “Youth Gone Wild,” Atlantic, 1989 •
Slave to the Grind, Atlantic, 1991 • “Wasted Time,”


Stryper: Soldiers Under Command, Enigma, 1985 • Can’t Stop


Testament: Live at the Fillmore, Megafonorge, 1995 • Signs of

Warrant: Dog Eat Dog, Roadrunner, 1992 • Best Of, Legacy,
1996.

• “When the Children Cry,” Atlantic, 1988 • Big Game,
Atlantic, 1989 • “Little Fighter,” Atlantic, 1989 • Pride,
Atlantic, 1989 • “Radar Love,” Atlantic, 1989 • Best Of,

X: Ain’t Love Grand, Elektra, 1985 • “Burning House of Love,”
Elektra, 1985 • Beyond and Back: The X Anthology, Elektra,
1997.

Narada Michael Walden

Narada Michael Walden (born April 23, 1952, in Kalamazoo, Michigan), a singer, songwriter, drummer, studio owner, and producer, played in John McLaughlin’s Mahavishnu Orchestra from 1974 to 1976, and with Jeff Beck in 1975. After moving to the Bay Area in the late ’70s, Walden began producing records at David Robinson’s (see entry) Automatt Studios, working with artists such as Stacy Lattisaw, Angela Bofill, and Patti Austin and perfecting a smooth, high-gloss R&B sound that was to make him one of the most sought-after producers of the ’80s and ’90s.

In 1985, he worked on demo tapes with a then-unknown Tori Amos, although the direction they were
taking failed to bear fruit. (Those who have heard the tracks compare them to early Madonna, with sped-up and double-tracked vocals.)

In 1986, Clive Davis asked Walden to produce a new Arista Records artist, Whitney Houston. Walden and his stable of writers contributed the songs, Walden produced, and the resulting debut was one of the most successful in history, with U.S. sales in excess of 10 million and a stunning three No. 1 hits: “How Will I Know,” “Greatest Love of All,” and “Saving All My Love for You.” The album stayed at No. 1 for 14 weeks and on the Billboard album charts for three years. While Whitney Houston was still on the charts, the team released her second release, the Walden-produced Whitney, which yielded four top hits: “Didn’t We Almost Have It All,” “I Wanna Dance with Somebody (Who Loves Me),” “So Emotional,” and “Where Do Broken Hearts Go?” The album sold over 6 million units in the U.S., was No. 1 for 11 weeks, and stayed on the Billboard charts for 85 weeks.

In July 1985, Arista released the Walden-produced comeback album for Aretha Franklin, Who’s Zoomin’ Who? (No. 13), featuring two smash co-written by Walden, the title track (No. 7) and the No. 3 hit “Freeway of Love.” With funkier grooves and mesmerizingly catchy rhythms, Zoomin’ was a tour de force of production technique, harkening back to the glory days of Motown and Atlantic soul records, but with a stamp indelibly and deliciously Walden’s own. As on many of his records, Walden added his own distinctive and ebullient drumming and keyboards to the tracks.

Walden subsequently worked on projects with Clarence Clemons and Jackson Browne (the hit “You’re a Friend of Mine,” No. 18), Barbra Streisand, Eddie Murphy, Kenny G, Starship, Elton John and Kiki Dee (“True Love”), George Benson, and Al Jarreau.

Walden has continued to produce and record his own solo albums, beginning with his 1976 debut, a fusion album that expanded on the sounds he had perfected with Mahavishnu Orchestra. As fusion waned, Walden moved into more traditional pursuits, performing more pop-oriented songs and singing them. Four of his solo releases have made the Billboard album charts: Awakening, The Dance of Life, Victory, and Confidence.

Walden’s Tarpan Studios, in the Marin County foothills, has become one of the premier private facilities in the world. Throughout Walden’s career, the immensely talented engineer David Frazier has manned the boards, contributing to Walden’s famous vocal sound and polished mixes. —Daniel J. Levitin

Austin, Patti: Patti Austin, Qwest, 1984.


Color Me Badd: Now and Forever, Giant, 1996 • “The Earth, the Sun, the Rain,” Giant, 1996.


Dorsey, Marc: “People Make the World Go Round,” 40 Acres and a Mule, 1994 (Crooklyn soundtrack).


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Germaine, Nikita: Sweet As It Comes, Motown, 1993.


Hancock, Herbie: Lite Me Up, Columbia, 1982.


Hicks, Taral: This Time, Motown, 1997.


Knight, Gladys: “License to Kill,” MCA, 1989 (License to Kill soundtrack).


Rawls, Lou: It’s Supposed to Be Fun, Blue Note, 1990.

Richie, Lionel: Dancing on the Ceiling, Motown, 1986.


Winwood, Steve: Junction Seven, Virgin, 1997.

COLLECTIONS

Matt Wallace

Since the late ’80s, Matt Wallace has been one of the heroes of modern rock, producing records that balance profitability with artistic integrity. In a survey of unsigned bands, more artists said they hoped someday to work with Wallace than any other producer (second on the list was Mitchell Froom; see entry). Wallace is especially sensitive to an artist’s sound and image, and has never been accused of causing a group to “sell out” or of making them sound too commercial.

Wallace (born January 10, 1960, in Tulsa, Oklahoma) cut his teeth producing demo tapes and independent LPs for new wave bands in the San Francisco Bay Area in the early ’80s. Wallace would often work 20-hour days. It was not atypical for him to work several sessions a day for different bands at different studios. As an engineer, he was admired for his speed and ability to capture the energy of a band with minimal setup, and in the first take.

Shortly after the success of Faith No More’s indie debut We Care A Lot, Wallace moved to Los Angeles, where he continued to produce that group’s efforts, including 1987’s Introduce Yourself (co-produced with Steve Berlin; see entry), with a remake of “We Care a Lot,” and the million-selling album The Real Thing (No. 11), with the heavily rotated MTV hit “Epic” (No. 9).

In 1989 Wallace produced the Replacements’ classic Don’t Tell a Soul, with their only charting single, “I’ll Be You.” He subsequently worked with their ex-singer Paul Westerberg on his solo album 14 Songs in 1993. Also in 1993, Wallace was making records of complexity and polish: John Hiatt’s Perfectly Good Guitar and School of Fish’s Human Cannonball.

At the same time, Wallace kept his reputation with the alternative camp by producing several tracks on If I Were a Carpenter (the 1994 tribute to the Carpenters that he conceived with journalist David Konjoyan). Wallace produced cuts by 4 Non Blondes, Sheryl Crow, Dishwalla, Matthew Sweet, and Redd Kross. —Daniel J. Levitin

COLLECTIONS


4 Non Blondes: “Bless the Beasts and the Children,” A&M, 1994 (If I Were a Carpenter),

is concerned, I’m not a techno-crazed person. The room doesn’t have to have the ultimate outboard gear. I’ve worked with live players. I’ve worked with just machines and sequencers and I’ve combined the two,” he says. “I don’t find it at all threatening.” —Anastasia Pantziou

Alice Cooper: The Last Temptation, Epic, 1994 • Classics, Epic, 1995.


Hoffs, Susanna: Susanna Hoffs, Mercury, 1996.
Howlin' Maggie: Honeysuckle Strange, Columbia, 1996.
Satchel: Family, Sony, 1996.
School of Fish: Human Cannonball, Capitol, 1993.
Sweet, Matthew: "Let Me Be the One," A&M, 1994 (If I Were a Carpenter).
Wildflowers, The: Tales Like These, Slash, 1990.

Lenny Waronker

Lenny Waronker's father, Si Waronker, was a violinst in the 20th Century Fox Orchestra, working with award-winning conductor Alfred Newman (Randy Newman's uncle). Young Lenny (born October 3, 1941) spent his early years on the soundstage watching his father play. He graduated from the University of Southern California, worked for Metric Music Publishers, and later as a publicist at his father's record company, Liberty. He was hired as an A&R executive at Warner Brothers in 1966; he eventually became label president, a position he held until 1996. His avuncular presence in the studio, both for artists he has produced and the scores of additional artists under his A&R tutelage (George Har-
people and they’re bouncing off each other, if you give them a chance to be who they are, then you have a better chance than not of coming up with something interesting and creative.

"Russ [Titelman] and I had a real feeling for James Taylor, as I think he had for us. And if that got onto the record, that’s great. In the case of Cooder and [Randy] Newman it is sort of like family—people we’ve both spent a long time with. Those were far from being casual records. Though there was lots of laughing and lots of joking and trying to keep the environment as light as possible, it was a fairly intense scene." —Daniel J. Levitin


Stewart, Rod: Vagabond Heart, Warner Bros., 1991 • If We Fall In Love Tonight, Warner Bros., 1996.


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**Don Was**

Unlike many producers who succeed in only one genre, Don Was has produced hits for artists of virtually every musical stripe: from pop, rock, and alternative to country, jazz, and Latin.

Don Was (born Donald Fagenson on September 13, 1952) told *Billboard*, in a 1997 special issue dedicated to him, that he attributes that ability to his formative years in Detroit in the ‘60s and ‘70s, where, in addition to learning how to produce records, he was a working musician. “I was playing five nights a week,” he says. “It was the nature of the gigs to be playing with Hungarian gypsies one day and then a heavy metal band the next day. It was an amazing experience that I think really permeated all the subsequent records I’ve made.”

He also began making quirky funk-rock records with partner David Was (born David Weiss) under the moniker Was (Not Was). “There was a street in Detroit...”
When Saginaw, Michigan, native Steveland Morris (born May 13, 1950) was signed to Motown Records at age 12, Berry Gordy (see entry) dubbed him "Little Stevie Wonder." He was not only one of the first artists to be given creative control over his records (beginning in 1969); he was also one of the first to produce himself, along with Brian Wilson, Paul Simon, and John Fogerty (see entries).

An accomplished multi-instrumentalist, Wonder could easily have parlayed his talents into a career as a session drummer, keyboardist, harmonica player, or vocalist. But his soaring compositional skill and ability to create records with ear-friendly hooks and harmonic depth have made him one of the major artistic forces of the last 40 years.

As a producer, Wonder has exerted an enormous influence. Beginning with 1972's Music of My Mind, and on his collaborations with synthesizer pioneers Bob Margouleff and Malcolm Cecil, Wonder has emphasized seamlessly layered arrangements and a painter's attention to minute details in the stereo mix: repeated listenings to Wonder's mixes reveal previously hidden parts and tonal colors. Wonder and his team use the stereo mix as another instrument, not just to blend or separate sounds but to create intricate soundscapes; they have consistently pushed the recording envelope, creating some of the cleanest and most natural productions in recording history.

Wonder's forte as a producer is arranging. While packed with musical ideas, his arrangements never seem crowded and the groove is never buried. His distinctive horn parts are Motown-meets-Ellington: prime examples are on the No. 1 hits "You Are the Sunshine of My Life" (horns are only on the single version, not the album track), "I Wish," and "Sir Duke." Most of all, Wonder sets a vibe, a studio presentation so vivid his fans feel personally connected to him through his recordings. A key factor is his supple voice, which exudes a warm and joyous familiarity.

His 1971 Where I'm Coming From, the first album on which Wonder got production credit, was fundamentally transitional; no one could have anticipated the breakthroughs that were to follow. Music of My Mind and Talking Book (No. 3) were records in the truest sense, each a carefully sequenced album of material that flowed gracefully from track to track, deftly balancing tempos, keys, instrumentation, and mood. On the No.
Daniel J. Levitin: Starting with Talking Book your recordings started to sound a lot better. How did this change in recording quality come about?

Stevie Wonder: The two people who started with me in the beginning of all this, from when I did Music of My Mind, were Bob Margouleff and Malcolm Cecil. And they were very innovative in their thinking. They had their own album out [Tonto’s Talking Headband], working with the Moog synthesizer and the Arp and all that kind of stuff. What they were really doing was making colors and creating pictures—sound pictures—if only for the fact they were working with a synthesizer at that time. And being from England influenced Malcolm; the English had another way of thinking about engineering: “image-engineering.” You know, they would have the drums on one side and the voices on the other side, and their concept of stereo was just discrete channels of different things. Malcolm would say, “Well, listen, let’s have the drums like, facing the drummer.” And I said, “No, let’s have it like I’m sitting at the drums . . .”

DL: Yes! With the high hat on the left and the toms sweeping around . . .

SW: So it’s like the listener is actually a part of it, like they’re sitting behind the drums. We would go back and forth and talk about different ideas of creating song pictures, and that’s really how it began. So it was the talents of these incredible engineers. Bob and Malcolm, and then later, Gary Olazzabai and John Fishback, with Songs in the Key of Life.

DL: I’m interested in your process of building songs up. In a lot of cases you’re playing all the instruments yourself, did that come from your making demos by yourself and then realizing that the demo was good enough to release, or did you just say, “Hey, I’m just going to do it all because I can play the part I want and make it sound the way I want”?

SW: It is a combination of both. I started out [making records] with other producers, and they did the best they could with lots of songs. But once I got into producing, I realized that my songs didn’t have the rawness I wanted.

DL: When you sit down to record a new song and you’re playing all the instruments, do you hear all the parts in your head before you do the drum track, or does it build up gradually? How does all this come together?

SW: Sometimes I start with a sequence of the song and use that as a base; I can play the drums or whatever over the sequence. But for the most part, once I start playing, I usually know what I want and I mess around and do it a couple different ways until it feels it’s in the pocket of that song.

DL: So you record just the drum track by itself? With all the fills and everything before you record anything else?

SW: I played the drums first on “Superstition.” On “Higher Ground” I played the clavinet first.

DL: And then you added the drums to the clavinet?

SW: Yes.

SW: With “Superstition,” I started the drums first. And I was just humming the melody and stuff.

DL: So you had it all in your head, like Mozart, right? You had the whole song in your head and you’re just playing it out. You knew where every fill needed to go.

SW: Right. And if you’re hearing it in your own head, you get very excited, and [sings “Superstition” and drum fills] you hear all the different beats, all the breaks and stuff that you do. So I was thinking about the beat and I was thinking about Stax, you know, the drums and everything, and the groove. Sometimes I would rush a little bit, but it’s all part of the whole feel.

DL: I’d like to talk about your horn arrangements. In “You Are the Sunshine of My Life,” the version on the album doesn’t have any horns, but the single version does. Did you record horns for the album and decide not to use them later?

SW: After, after . . .

DL: Did the record company come to you and say, “Hey, Steve baby, we’re going to release this as a single, we need to goose it up somehow,” or . . .

SW: I just thought of doing it. It’s funny. After [Talking Book] came out, I wanted to put horns on it—I thought it would be great because there were some spaces in there that needed something—and it kind of worked well, like a pocket you know, like a hand in a glove. You have the voices in there, in the background [sings background vocal part]—so again, it was kind of being an architect, building that building, being an artist, and creating the sculpture.

DL: With Conversation Peace you used drum machine tracks . . .

SW: Actually, we had a combination of drum machine and live drums. But let me ask you a question: You know you can sequence, but you can also put a drum sound in a computer and you can have it without the quantization. What do you think about that?

DL: You mean, you sequence the part but you turn off the quantization . . .

SW: Right.

DL: And you let it drift.

SW: Right. You let it do whatever.
DL: Well the thing that I don't like about that is that you don't get the subtle changes in sound that I would hear when you're physically hitting a snare drum. Each time the stick hits the skin, it's going to hit it with a little different velocity and a little different pressure, so you have this wealth of sound coming off the . . .

SW: Go ahead.

DL: Well, coming off the instrument itself, the snare drum, the kick, the cymbal, whatever it is, there's this human variability, you could call it error, you can call it mistakes . . .

SW: Let me ask you this though, because, I mean, this is a great discussion because obviously people have been saying to me for years, "Look, Stevie, do it all like you did it before. Play all the stuff, don't sequence anything." But actually you can't do things the same way because people are tied into a time clock kind of thing.

DL: What do you mean?

SW: Well, I mean people nowadays want to hear a precise rhythm. So, for instance, with Songs in the Key of Life, I used a click track. On a certain level, I would have to use some kind of time reference because it gets sloppy if you don't.

DL: There are two things the machines are doing. One is, they're making the time more precise; rigid, some would say. The other is, they're getting rid of the variability in the tones you get from the drums unless you can somehow get like a hundred different snare samples . . .

SW: Collect all the samples, right. And obviously they're writing software everyday to do more and more of this kind of stuff, so it is possible. But there is a great challenge in playing this stuff. You really have to have engineers who have the patience and are willing to get that live drum sound the way you want to get it. Because, you know—[laughs]—all you have to do is go to a library of different samples and say, "Hey, that's exactly what I want."

DL: What did you do in the old days?

SW: You know, I wouldn't wait. [laughs] Basically, I think what happens is when the technology is there, you use it, right? So you have to make sure the people you're working with are all the way in tune with what you want to do. If they want to take the time to really do it, you can feed off each other with that. When I do a sequence at home I bring it into the studio and it's all there, and I have gotten comfortable with the way it sounds. Sometimes, once I've brought it in, the engineers will say, "Why don't you do this live?" or whatever. Often, then, we will sample me playing a drum, and substitute that sample into the sequence.

DL: You're saying it feels like a waste of time to you and the engineers to take all the time to get a live drum sound and to get it locked in with the click track, when all you have to do is turn on a box.

SW: I think that what is happening with me lots of times and with the finest of engineers is, I might want to do something at 9 at night which gets me maybe finishing at 5 or 6 or 7 in the morning. Some people just don't want to do that anymore; they get tired, or they've got families. So you've got to get a new crew of people in at 7 and you've gotta get, you know, you gotta stay with the whole thing. 'Cause, I mean, I'm just as excited about music as I was when I was 18. —DANIEL J. LEVITIN

I hit "Superstition," originally written for guitarist Jeff Beck. Wonder layers three parts, coaxing the sounds of a distorted wah-wah guitar from his battery of keyboards, resplendent with guitar-like articulation and tones. "You Are the Sunshine of My Life" was an instant jazz standard, one of a handful of songs from the rock-pop era likely to be played at weddings and jazz clubs alongside such compositions as "Yesterday," "My Funny Valentine," "Misty," and "Close to You."

Innervisions (No. 4 in 1973), which many consider his peak, is a textbook case of tasteful and innovative production. The aural collage, "Living for the City" (No. 8), evokes the sights and smells of a rural Mississippian's trip to Manhattan and its tragic consequences. It is Wonder's unique gift that he can tell poignant, thought-provoking stories in a completely un-self-conscious way, and with an insistent backbeat.

The two No. 1 albums, 1975's Fulfillingness' First Finale and 1976's two-record Songs in the Key of Life, complete the trilogy begun with Innervisions. All three earned Grammy Awards for Album of the Year. Indeed, 1977's Album of the Year Grammy winners Fleetwood Mac quipped in their acceptance speech, "We'd like to thank Stevie Wonder . . . for not releasing an album this year." While all of Wonder's albums are experimental, these three are especially packed with artistic creativity, evoking the Beatles from 1965 to 1969 or John Fogerty from 1968 to 1971.

Songs in the Key of Life may best represent Wonder's breadth as an artist and producer; it is his personal favorite. Crisper than the dark-sounding Fulfillingness', the album covers an enormous musical terrain—spiritual, fusion instrumental, old Motown, pop, ska, ballad, rock, R&B, and genres that are Wonder's own, exemplified by the unclassifiable and powerful "Village Green Quartet" and "Pastime Paradise."

In 1979, Wonder released Journey Through the Secret Life of Plants (No. 4), a meandering and lugubrious two-record
set designed as a film soundtrack. Wonder's analog to George Harrison's "Wonderwall Music," this was a release even diehard fans had trouble getting their hands around.

In "Square Circle" (No. 5 in 1985) was one of the first all-digital recordings of an American-made pop album. Unfortunately, its first-rate material was marred by harsh engineering and bristle tones. And 1995 found Wonder experimenting with digital sampling and sequencing on "Conversation Peace" (No. 16), a collection of excellent material that sold only marginally. "I'm New" featured innovative vocal harmonies and recording techniques with the group Take Six. That same year, Wonder released a two-CD set of live performances, "Natural Wonder," featuring rearrangements of many Wonder staples. In late 1996, Motown released a two-CD set of greatest hits spanning the artist's 35-year career, "Stevie Wonder Song Review," along with some new and previously unreleased tracks.

More than most other self-producers, Wonder has produced a number of outside projects over the years, most notably Minnie Riperton's "Lovin' You" (No. 1), Spinners' "It's a Shame" (No. 14), Jermaine Jackson's "Let's Get Serious" (No. 9), as well as albums by his then-wife Syreeta Wright, Third World, and Whitney Houston.

—Daniel J. Levitin

John, Keith: "I Can Only Be Me," Manhattan/EMI, 1988 • (School Daze soundtrack).
Robinson, Smokey: "Warm Thoughts" (1 track), Tamla, 1980.
Supremes, The: "Greatest Hits and Rare Classics," Motown, 1991 • See also Ross, Diana.

COLLECTIONS
Get on the Bus: Music from and Inspired by the Motion Picture, Interscope, 1996.