

"I Should Have Never Walked Back Over The Bridge That I Burned"

The Attractions *All This Useless Beauty* World Tour took a dramatic turn on August 26th as EC and the band gave a historic performance on the *Tonight Show with Jay Leno* in California. In a swipe at perhaps his reunion with the A's or his signing with Warners (another major label after leaving Columbia), Elvis changed the refrain of "You Bowed Down" to the bitter "I Should Have Never Walked Back Over The Bridge That I Burned". He then told Leno "This could be my last live performance. I'm gonna take a little break for awhile and see what happens".

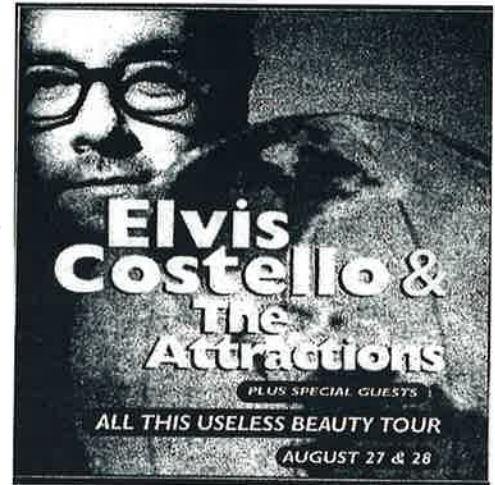
On the *KTLA Morning News* the same day, a disheveled looking EC said of his upcoming LA performance "It'll be my last one for a good while, possibly ever. I'm going to stop touring and possibly stop recording. I want to go do some other things for a while. I don't know. I'll see how I feel after maybe a couple of weeks, couple of months or couple of years. I've got a lot of songs that I feel can exist outside of me performing them and outside of the routine of making records. I've done it every year for 20 years. I think now is as good a time as any to stop."

In a press release the next morning, Warner Bros.' Bill Bentley said "I don't think he'll be working with the Attractions again". However, when he reached Japan, Costello would comment that the talk about him quitting had been blown out of proportion and that after this tour he's just going on a "long" holiday!

While there may in fact be some disharmony amongst EC and the A's, Costello also seems rather frustrated with Warners over the disappointing response to both the *ATUB* album and the tour. Sales for the LP have been poor as were ticket sales in some markets. In fact, EC's Los Angeles' comments may have been more aimed at selling tickets to the two shows at Universal Amphitheatre where lagging sales even prompted a "two for one" offer.

Costello's disappointment was merited as Elvis & the A's playing on the tour was brilliant! For photos, set lists and a complete report on a world tour full of fun and surprises turn to page 6!

**Double Tour Issue
40 Pages!**



New Releases!
See "On The Beat"

★ **4 U.K. Singles in July**

★ **Live Costello & Nieve**

★ **Grace of My Heart**

★ **Shakespeare w/ John Harle**

★ **Later Video**

Beyond Belief Interview

Allan Mayes:
Duetting With Declan in 1973

(starts on page 25)



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From The Editor

The news of another US tour in 1984 was made even more exciting by the fact that the support act would be Nick Lowe & His Cowboy Outfit. This happened to come at a time in my life when my appreciation for Nick's music was at an all time high, fueled by my recent friendship with Bobbi Irwin, his drummer, who had since moved to San Antonio. I even remember choosing to listen to Nick's new LP before *Born In The USA* which was released on the same day.

My wife and I had seen Nick open for both The Cars and Tom Petty at an "Enormo-Dome" in Austin and on each occasion we split after the opening act to mingle with the band at the Driskill Hotel bar. It was there I met Bobbi only to find that he would be marrying a gal from S.A. We hit it off and became pals and I even got to be in his wedding party. Still in the middle of the Petty tour, the shows went on without Bobbi. The Heartbreakers' Stan Lynch sat in on drums and I missed the chance of being in a wedding with Nick! I did get the pleasure however of driving Carlene Carter around S.A. hearing her sing Monkees' tunes!

Well for the first time in my life I didn't need tickets to a Costello show and saw EC & the A's in both Dallas and Austin. (Houston was dropped from the Texas tour.) Unfortunately, I was to miss the highlight of the Texas tour due to a previous business commitment when at the last minute, EC & the A's were added as the opening act for an off-night Nick Lowe gig the next night in Austin at the same venue. The band took advantage of this unique opportunity and played a set of covers. Oh well, you can't make them all.

Or can you? I write as I fly to Nashville for the opening show on the 1996 US tour. With the memories of *Costello & Nieve* still fresh in my mind, I am excited about seeing the full band again. I want to thank everyone who helped with reports on the tour and it was certainly a pleasure to meet many of you in person at the shows.

A final coda is my best to the Attractions: the best band in the world! I somehow feel we'll see Pete, Bruce, Steve and EC all together again once more!

Subscriptions

Beyond Belief is published four times a year. A one-year subscription is \$16 or £12. Please send cash, check or money order to either of our addresses. Please make checks payable to "Mike Bodayle" in the US or "Mark Perry" in the UK. Japan and Australia please add \$1 to the cost of each issue and order through Mike.

Back Issues

#1 (February 1995) - Debut Issue! *Brutal Youth* tour report and set lists. \$6/£4.50.

#2 (May 1995) - Interview with Ryko's Jeff Rougvie. Dylan & "Royal" McCartney concert reports. Costello covers & *Kojak* originals. \$5/£4

#3 (August 1995) - Full *Meltdown* report. *Kojak Variety* live from London. *CyberTalk* interview with EC. Roskilde Festival. \$5/£4

#4 (November 1995) - Rehearsals at New York's Beacon Theater. Cambridge & Edmonton Folk Festivals. McCartney & MacManus. Covered by Costello. \$5/£4

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Back Issue Special!. Complete set of 1-7 for \$28/£22.

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Below: Elvis this past May 21st with two of his favorite fans at the Algonquin Hotel in NYC: Connecticut's Tony Sacchetti (left) and Cal Massaro (right).



To The Editor

LITTLE LONDONER

I'd just like to say how disappointed I was by the late cancellation of the 7th July Roundhouse gig. I'm sure I wasn't the only one left out of pocket by travel and accommodation costs which I couldn't get back. Frankly, being told that the show is off only five days beforehand is little short of a disgrace. If it had been due to illness or some other unavoidable problem, then fair enough. But to "accommodate the screening" of a TV show recorded weeks earlier? Come on, guys. Have you never heard of the VCR? Sadly the whole affair seems a bit typical of the Little Londoner mentality being applied to EC's UK concerts at the moment. Obviously it was just assumed that they could bump the show and people could get a refund or go to the rearranged gig, no problem. Unfortunately when you are only playing London plus a couple of nights in Liverpool and Glasgow you are going to have a lot of fans traveling from other parts of the country for whom such mucking about with dates can be catastrophic. It's bad enough that tickets for EC shows now seem to go on sale following an announcement to Londoners on GLR while the rest of us get to find out (or not) by word of mouth weeks later. If we fans must be treated with such contempt then let's at least have Jake Riviera back to do a proper job of it!

Mr. Angry
The Sticks, England

NEWS FROM NORWAY

I'm a Norwegian Costello fan who has followed EC since 1977. I managed to keep track of his musical activities by reading English music papers but during the last few years articles and interviews have become sporadic to say the least so a quarterly newsletter devoted to EC sounds great to me. Gigs in this country have been few and far between. After the 1984 tour he didn't return until July 1994 when the Attractions did two great concerts in Kristiansand and Oslo. So you see, Norwegian fans are not spoiled when it comes to live action, and I'm sorry to say that matters are only marginally better when it comes to recorded material (especially since the switch to Warner Bros. in 1989). All the albums are released here and have respectable sales, but singles are impossible to obtain due to the fact that Warners in Oslo only import a few copies to give to radio stations for promotional purposes. The new album has been received with the highest

praise in Norway where EC has always been the "critics' choice". It's a shame that this doesn't reflect his position sales-wise!

Sverre Ronny Saetrum
Sandefjord, Norway

ELVIS IS EVERYWHERE

Those two famous American philosophers, Mojo Nixon & Skip Roper, once famously noted that "Elvis is everywhere". After an eighteen-week investigation of my own I can confirm that they are right. I'm currently engaged in a bicycle world tour which was originally planned as a non-musical event. However, I had to change my plans six days before leaving Holland on 18th April after receiving a promo cassette of the forthcoming album. I now knew that I had to take my Walkman with me! Two days later Elvis visited my country for promotional reasons and I was able to meet him. It seemed as if he had come specially to say goodbye and wish me a safe trip. The next "Elvis sighting" came when we reached Poland. In the beautiful town of Krakau I was singing "It's Time" over and over in my head after listening to it that morning. I was still singing it when from a restaurant in an alleyway which we passed came the sound of a radio. And what was the radio playing? The very same song. My fourth encounter happened in Hungary's National Museum, high up the hill on the Buda side of Budapest. In one of the last rooms I visited there was a picture of a crazy red-bearded figure standing by the roadside gesticulating wildly. I looked at the painting and thought: "madman standing at the side of the road saying: look at my eyes, look at my eyes, look at my eyes..." Elvis hasn't showed up again yet, but the chances are that he will as we travel on through Asia, Australia, New Zealand and the USA. At least I hear from him every day, via the Walkman.

Ton Baars
On the road in Greece

THE ELVIS PLEDGE

As promised a long time ago, here is *The Pledge of Allegiance to Elvis Costello*. I've performed this pledge on 3 radio stations I've worked at and for Elvis himself!

*I pledge allegiance to the Man,
Elvis Declan MacManus Costello,
And to his music,
For which it stands,
One artist,
On Warner Brothers, Ryko and Demon
Records,
With albums, extended singles, rare tracks,
and the occasional odd bootleg for all.*

Lee Courtney
Madeira Beach, FL



Dane Wagge (right) with EC in Nashville.
Bruce White is in the middle.

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Dane Wagge, better known to us all as the loveable PapaJuan@aol.com. Papa passed away suddenly after he began classes as a freshman at the University of Louisville where he was studying to be a music teacher or an entertainment promoter. He was also a contributor to the recent "Brilliant Mistakes" project singing "Brilliant Mistake" and providing the backing music for "Strict Time".

*Dane will be remembered for his witty posts on the "net" and by some of us through our memory of EC's recent show at the Ryman in Nashville. It was his first Costello concert and was a very special time for him. Sadly it will also be his last. An educational fund has been set up in his name. All contributions should be sent to:
Kenton County Scholarship Fund
in the name of Dane Wagge
20 Kenton Lands Road
Erlanger, KY 41018*

OSCAR FORECAST

The nominees for the 1996 Academy Awards will be announced in February. For now, here are my predictions for the Best Original Song category.

"Change the World" by Eric Clapton and Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds (from *Phenomenon*)

"Someday" by Alan Menken and Stephen Schwartz (from *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*)

"Good News" by Randy Newman (from *James and the Giant Peach*)

"God Give Me Strength" by Burt Bacharach and Elvis Costello (from *Grace of My Heart*)

and the inevitable winner...

"You Must Love Me", newly penned by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice for *Evita*.

Andrew Neumeyer
Valley Village, CA

Editor: Oh no! Webber and Madonna get even at once!

Once again thanks to everyone who mailed, E-mailed or called in information for this issue: Bruce White, Bill Brown, Olivier Ridolphi, Maria-Elena Buzek, Barry Orr, Richard Arthur, Ted Mills, Chris Carson, Phil Dennison, Mark Schnitzius, Chris Freidrich, Dean Martucci, Pat Mundy, Bill Aho, Wally Ingram, Lee Rousso, Andrew Neumeyer, Colin Wilkinson, Brad Kearns, Brian Hughes, James Wynne, Mark Smith, Jesse Ornoz, Tom Freidrich, Bernard Vasek, John Buckley, Cal Massaro, David Paetzman, T.J. Young, Karl Buhler, Tony Sacchetti, Jill Coleman, Jeff Wong, Alan Ramsey, Steven Sokolow, John Burger, Mark Bartlett, Joel Pollack, Nick Zelasko, Jim Steele, Paul Woods, Tom X. Chao, Aaron Yaras, Bob Starkey, Ida Miller, Mitch Weinstein, John Secia, Greg Waskey, David Stein, Joe McHugh, Marge Grant, Tammy Small, Sheik Khan, James Weinberg, Ellen Druda, Clive Williams, Andy Anderson, John Foyle, Sverre Ronny Saetrum and Patrick Marchant.






Brilliant Mistake

In last issue's "Elvis At The Controls" we erred with regards to EC's 1982 production work with Aussie band Mental As Anything. The LP was entitled *If You Leave Me Can I Come Too?* however Elvis produced a track called "I Didn't Mean To Be Mean". Thanks to Oz reader Dan Driscoll for spotting this.



Housekeeping! Subscribers will be charged two issues (P8 and P9) for this double issue. Those paid only through P8 will be charged for P9 with their subscription renewal.

BB#10 will be out in March 1997 and will feature:

-  *Elvis Live with John Harle*
 -  *Surprise Exclusive Interviews!*
- Also watch for these special features in 1997:
-  *EC at the Movies and in Books*
 -  *Guest Appearances On Record*
 -  *More Past Tour Retrospectives*

Guerilla Marketing

Warners US to
release live
C&N Box Set
December 3rd

Just prior to going to press, the anticipated release of a live *Costello & Nieve* box set was confirmed in a cover story in the October 26th issue of *Billboard*. Calling it "guerilla marketing" much like the releasing of a UK single each week in July, EC continued his active role in managing his career by once again attempting to help the disappointing sales of *ATUB*.

About the record EC said "I'm very proud of these songs, and I think they stand squarely with the best things I've ever done. At the same time I know the [music marketing] game is set up against me in a number of different ways to do with age, image, the way [radio] is formatted, and I don't think you can accept that as the final judgement. You've got to be more ingenious".

The box set will include the five EP's previously released as promos (see page 33) from each of May's FM broadcasts of the *Costello & Nieve* tour. The set will be titled simply *Costello & Nieve* and is a US-only pressing. Warner's Bill Bentley told *BB* that the track listing will be the same as the promos ("hidden" tracks will be listed) and that pressing will be limited to 30,000, "so fans should hurry to pick one up".

As for his opinion of the current state of the record industry Costello noted: "One of the grave mistakes that has been made by the record industry is that they have ceded far too much middle ground between themselves and the audience to consultants and tip sheets - all of which have a role to play, but it doesn't mean it's the ideal reality. I've very rarely tended to talk like this, and this is not a crying-in-your-beer situation. But I think the



industry has made it impossible for bands to go forward into the age that we are now, unless they want to be grand old men taking laps of honor. There doesn't seem to be any will to allow and encourage [older] bands who genuinely want to do new stuff".

Framed & Hung Up!



EC by
Colin
Bodayle
(age 7)



Declan MacManus & Allan Mayes as Rusty in 1973. Beyond Belief's exclusive interview with Allan Mayes begins on page 25.



COULDN'T CALL IT UNEXPECTED: ELVIS AND THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

By Dave Farr

As the 1996 summer tour drew to a close, the rumors were flying that there would be no more Elvis Costello and the Attractions tours. Elvis confirmed the rumors with coy announcements on stage and in television appearances, and by altering the lyrics to "You Bowed Down" on national TV to seemingly imply that reuniting with the Attractions had been a bad idea in the first place. But truthfully, it should be no surprise that this reunion was not for the long haul. I for one never thought we would see it at all. And it ought to be noted that by the time Elvis and the band completed the world tour in Japan, EC was telling folks there would be no more "rock and roll tours". It isn't the Attractions that Elvis is tired of; it isn't Bruce Thomas, or any of that. The music comes first; it didn't stand in the way of bringing Bruce back into the fold in 1994. What Elvis is tired of is rock and roll shows, which at the moment means playing with the Attractions.

Elvis, of course, has a long history of changing his ways, of swearing off things and pledging to not go back. His very versatility and variety are what make him such a fascinating artist. As far back as 1980, the group nearly split up. The Attractions and Elvis had achieved great success (although tempered by the problems in their American tour in 1979), but Elvis could not stomach putting out another record that sounded just like the last one. Thus the songs destined for *Get Happy!!* were passed through the filter of a different genre of music. And Elvis has moved from genre to genre ever since. For a while, the Attractions were his partners in this experimentation. Country music, baroque pop, Cole Porterish song stylings, hit-factory horn pop....the vast range of the Attractions' talents allowed the group to stay together despite EC's insistence on changing styles. But by 1985 Elvis felt constrained.

Eventually he decided to utilize different players, to take advantage of the opportunity to use session musicians he had admired for years, like Burton and Scheff, like Ray Brown and Earl Palmer, like the members of Tom Waits' band that had shaped the sound of the Waits albums Elvis loved. With every new attempt, with every branching out, another link was formed to another musician, another type of song, and Elvis embraced the opportunities offered to him. The reason we

find him on so many tribute CDs or compilations of different types of music is because he is so cosmopolitan in his interests. It is not dilettantism; it is genuine fervor.

The most obvious outgrowth of this branching out was the union with the Brodsky Quartet, which led to a song cycle that is among the best work Elvis has ever done. The tour that followed the release of

The Juliet Letters is often cited by EC as an amazing experience. He learned to sing an entirely different way, with different instruments, different miking, different emphases. It is no accident that stepping outside of the traditional rock and roll concert mode has resulted in a marked increase in the quality of Elvis' singing. His range and his vocal ability continue to grow by leaps and bounds. At the same time, he learned formally how to write music charts. Yet, even as *The Juliet Letters* tour was underway, Elvis had written the Wendy James album and was eagerly contemplating strapping on a guitar and playing it loudly. The reunion with the A's was already nascent. What we have to understand about this reunion is that it was never a long commitment; it was not a return to anything. It was also not a move backward or a rejection of what EC had done since *Blood and Chocolate*. *B&C* was recorded hot on the heels of *King of America*, but was in no way a step back from *KOA*, or anything else. It was a collection of songs that EC felt warranted the full throttle *This Year's Model*-style Attractions treatment. It was a companion piece, a different side of the coin.

In the same way, *Brutal Youth* was the end result of EC's desire after *The Juliet Letters* (and the more baroque *Mighty Like a Rose* and *Spike*) to put on the guitar, crank it up, and play pop combo music. EC is no fool. If he wants to play the kind of music that he and the Attractions did better than anyone else, he will use the Attractions to do it. When the group gradually reformed in the studio, with a little prodding from Mitchell Froom, Elvis did not



Photo by Keiko Sunata

balk at bringing Bruce Thomas back in, despite the harsh words each had thrown about regarding the other. It would serve the songs best to have Bruce play them. It would serve the music. This is the point. The album and tour this year were a noble attempt to mix the Attractions and something other than the pop combo music they are best known for. I think the CD is superbly done. The Attractions, as we all know, can play anything. Still, much of the material was older songs, perhaps because Elvis is not currently writing in the old style. The approach of the tour seems to have changed somewhat over the course of the shows. It started out with a "quieter" approach to rock and roll, with the volume and the pace turned down, and the older songs re-worked in arrangements that sometimes were fascinating and re-invigorating, and sometimes not. As the tour went on, it seemed that the volume was going up and the quieter songs from *ATUB* were being made secondary to the rock and roll. Bad vibrations also seemed to be growing. In the end, Elvis made it clear this was to be the last Attractions tour. This of course has to be taken with a grain of salt; there were plenty of "never again" declarations in 1989 and 1991.

But I do think what IS apparent is that Elvis' desire to play that noisy rock and roll music has ebbed again. In my opinion, Elvis Costello as he is today was center stage at *Meltdown* last summer. I have seen Elvis look really exhilarated twice these past few years; at *Meltdown*, and in the spring shows with Steve.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23

The Final Attraction ?

All This Useless Beauty World Tour

EUROPE: **Mark Perry**
USA: **Mike Bodayle**
JAPAN: **Alfonso Cardenas**

Following the US tour with Steve Nieve at the end of May, Elvis flew home to Dublin and was soon ensconced in The Factory rehearsal studio on Barrow Street rehearsing material for the forthcoming world tour with The Attractions. The tour which would begin in Europe (20 dates), travel through the USA (17 dates) and wind up in Japan (7 dates) may prove memorable in that it may be the last one with the Attractions. The "Leno-incident" and the subsequent "Burned Bridge" anthem heard from thence on, seemed to indicate that Costello would be turning his back on rock and roll and the Attractions for at least a long while.

Nonetheless, musically the tour was brilliant and will perhaps be best remembered for its toned-down sound, both in volume (EC reportedly felt the *BY* tour was a bit too loud on the ears) and tempo. It was a quieter show that peaked almost every night with a brief Costello & Nieve segment. There were also many reworked songs, such as "Chelsea", "13 Steps", "Clubland" and "Green Shirt" that were all given a more laid-back feel. Even the tired old "Pump It Up" was given a new life as Steve played an accordion on it as well as a few other oldies but goodies. This was, let's not forget, the *ATUB* tour although on some nights only a handful of new numbers were played. Surprisingly we would never hear a band version of "Starting To Come To Me", heard only at a sound check in Freiberg, Germany. Like the *BY* tour there was an effort to cover the back catalog and all in all, over 90 different songs were played!

Although no brand new songs were played in their entirety, we did hear two that could be categorized as "works in progress". In Liverpool, EC first played a few lines of what could be called "Far From the Prize" at the end of "Little Atoms", where it would be found several other times throughout the tour. The other is the menacing 2-minute guitar-driven song in which EC repeats its only line several times: "Daddy Can I Turn This?" (see page 15). It will be interesting to see what becomes of this song especially if the A's are history.

This also marked the first time that EC acted as his own manager for a full tour. Perhaps this role tried his patience a bit as the schedule did not completely come together until the last minute. It was also fraught with venue changes (Paris and Seattle), cancellations (Dusseldorf and Santa Barbara), date changes (London Roundhouse) and late adds (Portland and an extra Tokyo date).

As for the tour's start, EC told the *Liverpool Echo*: "On this tour, we are having a bit of a European theme. We play gigs and festivals abroad, then come back for London concerts. The only two outside London are Liverpool and Glasgow - because that's like going to a different country anyway." Two gigs on the tour (Loker and Stockholm) were Costello & Nieve fares without the Attractions. Also the show at Montreux was special as EC also performed with both the Jazz Passengers and the Brodsky Quartet as he had done at the 1995 Roskilde Festival. Omens for this leg of tour were mixed to say the least, with the disappointing sales figures for *ATUB* reflected in a distinct lack of box office interest at some of the venues.

The US tour started off a smash at the Ryman in Nashville but somewhere along the way, EC's attitude began to wane although the music never seemed to suffer. EC told the *Detroit Free-Press*:

"There's a tremendous feeling knowing this may be the last time I play these songs in this way. I'm just not making any plans. Every year I've said 'I'll be back next year'. This time I can't say that. And I'm not just being melodramatic." Almost every night fans would hear EC remark at the end of the show: "We don't know if we'll ever see you again"! There are perhaps a few clues as to Costello's behavior.

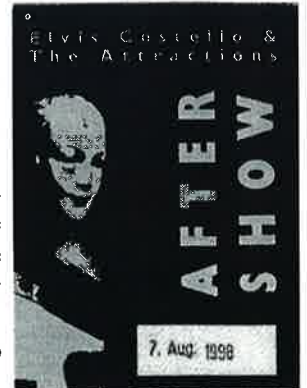
The first is the mediocre response to the tour. In the USA, only New York, Chicago and D.C. were advance sell-outs. The only other gigs to sell out were Nashville, Boston and Seattle on the days of the shows. There also seemed to be a lack of interest from the press. For possibly the first time ever, *The New York Times* failed to review a Costello show. Other markets did the same and EC was often victim of the attention given to the Sex Pistols who seemed to be touring on his heels.

The second clue perhaps is the dismal response to *ATUB*. The album spent only six weeks on the *Billboard* charts (peaking at No.53) and was off the charts by the time the band hit the US shores. To date the LP has sold a dismal 85,000 units and the tour may have seemed to be a futile effort by Costello to stimulate the sales of a dead record. There were his nightly remarks about his new record on "Secret Agent Records" and when EC hit Los Angeles there was talk of some strong words with Warners about their promotion of the record. Perhaps these talks led to the *Costello & Nieve* promo CD's (see page 33) and the untimely release of "You Bowed Down" as a single in late September.

Lastly there was the talk of Costello's incompatibility with the bass player. While it does not appear that he and Mr. Thomas may ever be the best of friends, EC never was the type to go around hugging band members at the end of a performance. It's just hard to fathom that EC would let any differences between he and Bruce get in the way of keeping alive one of the greatest bands in rock history. Costello's difficulties with the A's are perhaps more rooted in his problems with his achieving greater commercial success in rock and roll combined with the continuing growth of his projects outside the genre.

The long flight from Seattle to Japan seemed to have improved matters as the shows in Japan were certainly the tour's best. EC even would comment on opening night in Osaka how all the talk about retirement had gotten out of hand. It did not sound like sayonara!

In addition to the specific reviewers mentioned, *Beyond Belief* also thanks the following for their help with our tour coverage:
EUROPE: Angela Bisi, Phil Dennison, John Everingham, Barrie Francis, Paul Gritton, Isabelle Hamey, Paul Hosken, Brian Jones, Andrew Moorhouse, Barry Orr, Nick Ratcliffe, Connor Ratliff, Olivier Ridolphi, Ian Stewart, Eddie Thornley, Colin Wilkinson and Brian Hughes. **UNITED STATES:** Neil Anderson, Peter Fey, Harris Levinson, Michele Swersey, Woody Taylor and Mitch Trimboli. **JAPAN:** Koji Kumada, Masanori Saito and Chiharu Tsukada.





In D.C. Photo by Woody Taylor



EC in Philly

Photo by Tony Sacchetti



One of the tour's highlights was certainly EC's performance of "That Day Is Done" with the Fairfield Four at the famed Ryman Auditorium in Nashville.

Photo by Libba Gillum

Europe

June / July / August

June 26 National Stadium-Dublin

Inauspiciously, the tour opened in a city still reeling from the shock murder of a leading crime journalist, shot dead on a Dublin street that very afternoon. Later, those arriving at the National Stadium were greeted by the sight of touts virtually giving away tickets as TV coverage of the evening's England vs Germany football match proved a strong diversion. In fact, the football had quite an impact on proceedings, producing a late, late start and some hasty revision of the running order so that the show opened with solo and EC/Steve sections before the remaining Attractions were forced to abandon the backstage TV set. Opinion was divided on both the choice of venue and the quality of performance on this first night, but most people seem to have managed to have a good time...eventually!



Dublin: Peter Fitzpatrick

The ticket said "Doors 7, EC&A's 8" so I took my seat at 7:45, although I was realistic enough to realize that football-mad Elvis would probably want to see the evening's Euro 96 semi-final (due to end at 9:15). My less tolerant side was a bit miffed at having to pay such a high ticket price for a show that would probably be shortened (since it is an unwritten law of Dublin stage shows that they finish by eleven to let the staff get to the pub for last orders). A busy work day and news of the murder had done little to help my mood. Unlike myself, it seems that most other Costello fans are interested in football since the stadium was only two-thirds full by 8:45pm when the jumped up wedding band providing support finished. When 9:15 came and went with still no sign of Elvis, I shouted to a stage hand I know, wondering if he knew the score in the dratted match. He did: 1-1, and into extra time. I slumped in my seat. Then, at 9:25, the lights went down and, glory of glories, Elvis appeared, alone...

After a greeting he tore into "Just About Glad" and as he proceeded with "Red Shoes", I could already feel the outside world assuming an ancillary role. With the introduction of the Attractions, the show was, in every sense, complete. It was a perfectly-paced performance: Elvis taunting the sedentary audience (but not appearing over-concerned when we would not get up), wittily contextualising many of the songs, and generally seeming to enjoy himself as much as we did (word of England's football defeat was shrugged it off with a grin and a comment about basketball being his real game). The group could have been tighter - a particularly unforgivable keyboard error marred "Poor Fractured Atlas" - but the rough edges were tolerable in that they made the songs sound fresh.

Tour Support

June

29 The Beau Hunks

July

2 Austin DeLone & Bill Kirchen

5 Sub-Circus

12 Babe Rainbow

19-21 Jub Jub

26 Ron Sexsmith

Aug.

7 The Fairfield Four

9-18 Ron Sexsmith

Aug./Sept.

20-1 Sleeper

Sept.

6-15 Ron Sexsmith

After an hour we were finally propelled to our feet by the sight of Steve Nieve donning an accordion for the infectious intro to "Pump It Up". The show grew more frenetic. As we roared and swayed along I found myself wishing something over the top would happen just to blow away the tensions of the day once and for all. As "Complicated Shadows" started up, those of us familiar with it went frenzied in anticipation of that sudden pace change, while the unknowing just reeled at the aural barrage of the guitar onslaught. Just brilliant! Sadly, it was now 11.05 and there was only time for a two-song encore. Returning to the all too real Dublin streets, I found myself thankful that, for all of life's tribulations, there were always distractions such as the show we had just witnessed to keep us going. (John Foyle)

June 28 La Cigale-Paris

Our correspondent reports that there was precious little promotion for either the album or the tour in France. It was not surprising,

therefore, that meager advance ticket sales at the original location, LeGrand Rex, should prompt a switch to a smaller venue just two weeks ahead of the show.

As if news of the venue change was not bad enough, I feared the worst when La Cigale was not even half-full by the appointed starting time of 8.30pm. It was a relief when I realized that people who had not heard about the switch were probably still arriving from the original venue. Eventually there were some 900 people in attendance, including French singers Alain Chamfort (soon to release an album featuring Steve Nieve) and Kent (whose last album featured Pete Thomas).

And so my unfavourable first impressions were finally dispelled. The show was dominated by splendid renditions of the songs from *ATUB*, with a much better sound than during the (far too loud) *Brutal Youth* tour, as well as a welcome omnipresence of keyboards. Also memorable were the special treatments for "Pump It Up" and "Chelsea", and the new Steve Nieve co-composition, "Passionate Fight", being performed for the first time on this side of the Atlantic and introduced briefly in a few words of French by the man himself.

The show closed with two encores, the second one featuring a very long "Alison" medley (they couldn't play more songs as they were told to stop at 11 pm - just like any show in this venue). There followed a prolonged ovation, punctuated by the crowd shouting "Elvis - Elvis - Elvis..." for many minutes until all four musicians were forced to come back on stage for a final bow. For me, it was the highlight of a wonderful and unforgettable night. (Francois Drouin)

June 29 Carre-Amsterdam

From Paris, the tour moved on into the Netherlands, where the band were surprised by the sedate nature of the Carre audience, later joking about all those "friends of Lorenzo" in the front rows who were too busy taking notes to get up and dance!

The concert began with the newly-arranged "Opportunity", the first of many surprises (we thought that the accordion was standing there for "Long Honeymoon", but no - it was for "Pump It Up"!). It was a very good show, with only Bruce Thomas appearing a little disinterested. Steve Nieve was fabulous, despite that terrible imitation of the early rock synthesizer sound on "Distorted Angel". Of course, some things did go wrong (notably in "You Bowed Down" where Elvis had problems with the guitar part under the newly-written verse) but

it didn't really matter. Mistakes are all part of the charm of a live show and it was great to hear Elvis at the beginning of a world tour with his voice still in great shape, rather than the croaky version which usually reaches us in Europe after slogging across the States.

For me, the highlights were "Man Out Of Time" (my all-time favourite Costello song), "Poor Fractured Atlas" and "Riot Act" - so even had they played no encores my evening would have been complete! Happily, though, we got a whole lot more. After "Riot Act" had concluded the main part of the set, the house lights went on - an unpleasant surprise! - and we had to clap, yell and whistle for a long time before the band finally came back out. Elvis then asked us to leave our seats ("bring on the dancing horses!") and to come forward and dance in front of the stage. After two lengthy encores, the concert closed with the band returning for a third time to deliver a medley which combined "Alison" with a short history of popular music. (Rein Zylstra)

July 1 Festival-Athens

Elvis and the boys finally escaped the clutches of our intrepid Beyond Belief reporters with this trip to Greece where they appeared third on a big open-air stadium bill headed by David Bowie and Lou Reed. The Attractions' set lasted for approximately an hour and was well-received. An hour was actually pretty good going since the on-stage temperature was 93 degrees and EC was, in the words of one witness "leaking a bit"! There was also some amusement among the Costello party when they later learned of the poor turn-out for the following day's appearance at the same venue by Simply Red who drew no more than a couple of thousand paying customers.

July 2 Zelt-Musik-Festival-Freiburg

More reports of poor ticket sales reached us from Germany where a planned July 10th show in Dusseldorf had already been canceled by the time the tour rolled into Freiburg. There had also been a distinct lack of box office action for this appearance at the 14th Zelt-Musik-Festival, arranged at the invitation of festival regulars Austin DeLone and Bill Kirchen, and the "Zirkus" tent was less than half-full as the band took the stage.

Only 600 of the 3,000 tickets for this gig had been sold in advance. That's a real pity. Obviously, EC couldn't attract a young audience since most of the assembled appeared to be around 40 years old. When the show began, though, they acted as if they were only sixteen! Support act Austin DeLone and the Bill Kirchen Band were

given a warm reception and the crowd went nuts during Elvis & The Attractions' set. What a concert it was, concentrating on songs from *ATUB* augmented by a few newly-arranged classics. The main difference to the *Brutal Youth* tour was the fact that The Attractions played less powerfully, allowing Elvis the space for some passionate interpretations. As a singer he is getting better and better. What's more, he's capable of producing a strange effect on even the most reflective intellectuals. Some female high school teachers were going crazy, screaming like teenagers as they grabbed EC's towel to rub their faces!

We met Elvis by accident the next day as we arrived at the station for our train to Frankfurt. He was in a great mood, holding a red rose like the one my wife had presented to Cait O'Riordan the day before. He said he had had a lot of fun the previous night. (Ulrich Begemeier)

July 3 Grosse Freiheit 36-Hamburg

Having used borrowed sound and lighting equipment the previous night, Elvis and the band were reunited with their own gear in Hamburg. The 800-capacity Grosse Freiheit 36 club is situated at the site of the Beatles' old stamping ground, the Kaiserkeller, and was reportedly only about three quarters full.

The show in Hamburg was great. Elvis was in very good mood and they played for about two hours. EC & the As were very friendly after the show and signed a few records. I asked Elvis why he did not tell the story about the German journalist and the national anthem - didn't he dare? He laughed and said it was only because of the totally different arrangement of the song and that it would not fit....HA! I asked why the Dusseldorf show was canceled and firstly nobody knew anything about it. Steve: "I didn't know that there was a show in Dusseldorf." Elvis said that the show had been canceled because of a television-show they had to do. Oh well - at least Hamburg was a great evening! (Thomas Schlegel)

July 5 Shepherd's Bush Empire-London

No problems with the ticket sales here as a full house which included Sleeper's Louise Wener braved the wet weather to welcome EC back to one of his favourite haunts.

First on stage were Sub Circus for 5-6 numbers. Sounding like a Radiohead / REM cross they were nervous as hell, but I think that helped. Their songs went down well with the slowly filling hall and the band were later to be seen enjoying EC's set from the balcony. A swift change of equipment

following the support meant the lights went down at 8:30pm and EC+As were on. Sound quality was excellent, EC was in good voice and seemed enthusiastic throughout. With the Frieburg set list in hand I knew what to expect and I wasn't disappointed.

A few numbers in, Bruce and Pete retired and EC and Steve played "Pills & Soap" (EC with "hot toddy" mug in hand) and then "Passionate Fight". I look forward to hearing the latter recorded but my less partisan wife felt voice and piano were competing rather than complementing on this occasion. Bruce and Pete came back half way through "Oliver's Army" ("you never know when they're going to creep up on you!") to a rousing reception. Shortly after, there was a real treat with the novel accordion arrangement of "Pump It Up" (although Pete looked slightly embarrassed when he was given the traditional introduction while playing his maraca).

Other highlights included the closing sequence of the main set, the "Alison"-medley (I always enjoy playing spot the song) and a storming "PL&U" to finish. The only low point was a slightly ponderous "Detectives", additionally spoilt by a scuffle between security and a fan taking photos just in front of me. The EC / Steve segment also seemed to take the crowd at the bar slightly by surprise and the volume of conversation from that area was highly audible throughout the remainder of the main set (I felt that EC was about to say something about this at one stage - but that may be my imagination). Nonetheless, a brilliant show. Two and a quarter hours of pleasure. (Richard Arthur)

TICKET NUMBER	13 9
UNRESERVED PLACE	
A-TYPE	ASGARD PRESENTS
	ELVIS COSTELLO
	NO UNDER 18'S ADMITTED
	ROUNDHOUSE
	CHALK FARM RD, LONDON NW1
	SAT 06-JUL-96 7PM
£ 15.50	
SC 3.30	
£ 18.80	
0171 344 0044	

July 6 Roundhouse-London

Elvis had originally been scheduled to play two consecutive nights at the Roundhouse, but with less than a week to go ticket holders were advised that the second date had been postponed. An advertisement placed in Time Out stated, ambiguously, that this was in order to "accommodate the screening" of the BBC TV Later show, prompting cynics to speculate on how many tickets had been shifted. Nonetheless, the place appeared pretty full for this, the first in a series of

concerts arranged to mark the final closure of the Roundhouse as a venue for live music.

And so we head north to Camden, far from the dingy old Empire with its excess of plastic beer-swilling loudmouths and that suffocating atmosphere unfit for any form of life without a 40-a-day habit. Tonight there's no doubt about the star of the show. It's a tall, rounded building with brick walls and a gap at the peak of its wooden roof through which you can look out on the stars. "For those of you who haven't been here before," says an emotional Elvis mid-show, surveying the giant magic lantern that is the (temporarily) resurrected Roundhouse, "It's not a bad old place, is it?"

I'm tagging along with the legendary Lorenzo, the benefits of which include being ushered inside just as rain begins to dampen the early arrivals. The first of many nostalgic misty-eyed ex-hippies we encounter is one Bruce Thomas who points out the still-visible tracks which cross the stone floor of this converted railway turning yard. As EC finishes his sound check, Bruce & Pete exchange hazy reminiscences with original Roundhouse DJ Geoff, who, perched on scaffolding high above the stage, will entertain us with a pre-show selection of '60s platters through his authentically inaudible period sound system.

The crowd is a real mix of ages, more so than at Shepherd's Bush. As well as the EC fans there are plenty of psychedelic survivors turning out for a last look at the old place. A stooping, white-bearded figure with a crooked wooden walking stick is among the first arrivals. Later, a crazed character with an Aussie accent hauls himself through to the front of the stage and hangs his crutches on the barrier, while a group of young girls next to us practice their screaming technique.

Elvis takes to the stage bearing an armful of flowers which he proceeds to scatter into the crowd, setting the tone for the evening. Just what the hell is so funny about peace, love and understanding anyway? In a sense, the music itself becomes almost secondary. Secondary, but magnificent nonetheless. What a relief, after witnessing all those great songs being trampled underfoot during the 1994 tour. Tonight, the amplifier switches have been set at a welcome distance from "11" and the band has clearly put some work in on arrangements which actually allow the music to breathe a little. Highlights? Well, I liked the bit where they released all those bubbles into the air and played the coloured lights on them.

At the end, as the floor slowly empties, I

gaze out across a sea of discarded beer bottles as Tricky's menacing remix of "Distorted Angel" reverberates from the brickwork. Miki from Lush picks her way through the debris. A large chunk of wood falls from the balcony, landing with a sobering thud just a few feet away from me. This place wants doing up! (Mark Perry)

July 9 Miles Davis Hall-Montreux

The postponement of the second Roundhouse gig allowed some breathing space in the schedule before the tour moved on into Switzerland and the 30th Montreux Jazz Festival. Here, the spirit of Meltdown resurfaced as EC staged his own "festival-within-a-festival", performing with three disparate bands in a single evening. All three sets were filmed and recorded for TV/radio.

Montreux

Jazz Passengers w/ Debbie Harry

Swim To Me ✓
Aubergine ✓
Don't You Go Away Mad ✓

The Brodsky Quartet

Deliver Us
For Other Eyes
Who Do You Think You Are ✓
King Of The Unknown Sea ✓
Romeo's Seance
Almost Blue ✓
Skeleton ✓
I Thought I'd Write To Juliet ✓
Pills and Soap ✓
They Didn't Believe Me ✓
I Almost Had A Weakness ✓
Jacksons, Monk and Rowe ✓
More Than Rain ✓
The Birds Will Still Be Singing ✓
God Only Knows ✓

✓ Heard on FM Broadcast

First up in this intimate 1,000-seat hall were the Jazz Passengers, for whom "guest singer" Deborah Harry seems to have become a permanent fixture. Elvis appeared towards the end of their set. Limiting himself to just two numbers as featured vocalist, he crooned a deep, breathy "Swim To Me" before skillfully negotiating the quirky tempo changes of "Aubergine", a song which he co-wrote with Brad Jones of the JP's. There was also a fun duet with Miss Harry on "Don't You Go Away Mad" ("Come on and kiss me just to prove you're glad / Deborah darling, don't you go away mad...!"). The JP's set also included a memorably chaotic rendition of Blondie's hit "The Tide Is High".

Deep Purple and ZZ Top were playing in the same building tonight (thankfully, in another hall) but proof that volume does not equal power came with the appearance of EC & The Brodsky Quartet. This combination is just getting better and better together, and if there has ever been a more moving performance of "Almost Blue" than the one given here - the unsettling tension of the string parts taking the song into much darker territory than the familiar piano version - then I'd like to hear it. The set comprised well-received selections from The Juliet Letters interspersed with such gems as "King Of The Unknown Sea" and "Skeleton" which augur well for the future EC/Brodskys album reportedly on the agenda. They concluded, appropriately, with a show-stopping "God Only Knows", performed in that now-familiar arrangement by Michael Thomas which hovers somewhere between outrageous piss-take and sincere tribute.

A quick toweling down during the interval and EC was back on stage with The Attractions to put the lid on a virtuoso evening. Once again, he was in great voice and the band really seemed to respond to the jazz festival setting. Several of the songs featured extended instrumental workouts at the end, notably "Little Atoms" (where the violent, distorted guitar licks were offset by some delicate piano and bass frills) and "Clown Strike" (which developed into something resembling a free-form improvisation session). There was a Costello-Nieve interlude which began with a memorable "Long Honeymoon", EC's vocal almost overshadowed by the extraordinary drama which Steve was unfolding at the piano keys. The rhythm section staged their usual "surprise" return during "Oliver's Army" and saw us past 2am to closing time, which came in the form of "All This Useless Beauty", complete with its verse of Italian and followed by introductions and ovations for each band member. Now tell me the name of a single other artist capable of staging an evening of such outstanding musical diversity...? (Mary P. Kerr)

July 12 Shepherd's Bush Empire-London

The second show at the Empire featured the first performance on the tour of "Unwanted Number" as well as the dusting off of a few back catalogue favourites. Support act Babe Rainbow drew a good response from the rapidly filling hall (it was another sell-out show). As EC informed the crowd, this weekend marked the 19th anniversary of The A's live debut supporting Wayne County in Penzance, Cornwall.

The band came on stage at 9pm for a blistering two and a half hour set which featured a number of changes from the previous Friday. This week's attractions are...the mid-set "Pump It Up" with Steve on accordion which this time segues into "Slow Down" and is followed by "Miracle Man"; "I Can't Stand Up" with the first two verses sung slowly and soulfully before erupting into the full band version; "Alison" somehow dissolving into "Rocking Horse Road"; and the Elvis/Steve interlude's inclusion of "Just A Memory" (which is nothing of the sort!) complete with additional verse.

The intimacy of the theatre allows for good sound and Elvis is in particularly fine voice. Also noticeable is the good humour and amount of gesticulation which he puts into his performance. For example, the line "as I sit here moping" from "Telescope" is accompanied by a frighteningly accurate moping face, while "Chelsea" has an appropriate visual enactment of the "shake you very gently by the throat" line. And how many performers do you see encore with a new song? Elvis performs "Unwanted Number" ("a kind of "Papa Don't Preach" in reverse") which, memorably, ends with him backing away from the microphone and singing the title.

The band all seem to be enjoying themselves - Bruce and Pete exchange knowing smiles, Elvis radiates appreciation of Steve's contribution. It's just another brilliant night. The only thing I'm not going to miss about these Friday evenings is the price of an Empire pint (£2.45! At least Dick Turpin had the good grace to put on a mask before he robbed you!). (Sheik Khan)

July 13 Conde Duque-Madrid

The band flew straight out of London for a three-date Spanish interlude, beginning with a Saturday night special in the capital city.

July 14 Auditorio San Javier-Murcia

From Madrid, the tour moved south to Murcia for the second Spanish show.

July 16 Velodroma De Horta-Barcelona

The Spanish shows concluded with this return to a venue included on the Rude 5 tour itinerary in 1991. Five years ago there had been no more than 2,000 in attendance but the 1996 visit drew a crowd of around 6,000 (although our correspondent reports that this may have been due to the local reputation of the support act rather than any dramatic surge in EC's own popularity).

Elvis walked on the stage 40 minutes late and started playing "Veronica" by himself.

Steve Nieve joined somewhere before the bridge and they then began "Oliver's Army" during which the remaining Attractions appeared to an enthusiastic response from the audience. After playing some old stuff, Elvis announced they were going to perform a few songs from their latest album. Everything seemed to be going fine but after being on stage for only 35 minutes or so, they launched abruptly into "Pump It Up", Elvis introduced the members of the band and said goodnight. The public stood there rather surprised but still cheering and asking for an encore (although some of the comments I heard around me were rather less pleasant!).

Elvis appeared for his first encore and said something like "I hope we'll start on time the next time we play here," and also "Fuck Johnnie Walker (the sponsor) and fuck Sold Out (the promoter)!" He sounded really angry and I think that this really pissed the audience off. In spite of the requests for more encores, the atmosphere was notably colder from that moment on. I believe that something had gone wrong apart from the delay, which I don't consider reason enough to do such a short concert.

Eventually they completed 3 encores but I was a bit disappointed and so were my friends who had come from Mallorca with me. We are not exactly rich and we had to pay for plane tickets, hotel, concert tickets, etc. I had been looking forward to this event for a very long time. As I write this a month later, I can say that even though he offered a very short performance (not more than 1 hour) it was absolutely brilliant from beginning to end. Knowing what I know now I would still go again! Elvis's singing was brilliant during the whole show and (in my opinion) he has improved his playing. He's never been much of a guitar player but did some solos which were more than acceptable, though he made a few mistakes while playing some licks on "Watching The Detectives". (Xavier Escutia Llambias)

July 19 Shepherd's Bush Empire-London

The third night in Shepherd's Bush was marked by further mining of the Costello archive, including a solo performance of "All The Rage", as well as a welcome tour debut for "God Give Me Strength". Support was provided by Jub Jub ("pretty darn good" according to one BB reader) with playwright Alan Bleasdale in attendance to watch his son play keyboards.

This was my first proper visit to the Empire and my sister Bridget and I were quick to secure our spot right at the front. EC, resplendent in navy suit and polka dot shirt,

was on stage by 9pm, opening with "Telescope". Steve was exceptional on the closing piano segment, playing a dramatic finale which surprised even Elvis himself!

The chat included an account of an interview in a German cake shop (I'm sure you've all heard it by now) - a great moment as everyone realized that EC was in a good mood. He also compared ripping off Beethoven for "Poor Fractured Atlas" to Morrissey's lifting of Oscar Wilde text while poor Steve endlessly recycled the piano intro, looking at EC with a desperate "when are you going to start?" expression.

I was happily surprised by the inclusion of "Oliver's Army" which really got the crowd going as Pete and Bruce returned for the finish. "God Give Me Strength" was also impressive, but surpassed by a blinding medley of "Distorted Angel/Chelsea" which Elvis seemed to enjoy. The accordion-style "Pump It Up" was linked to "Slow Down" which made it an absolute treat. "It's Time" featured some furious strumming, while the extended "I know" sing-along at the end of "Accidents" finished with EC applauding the audience. The first encore produced "a new one about a girl who had a baby when she shouldn't oughta" ("Unwanted Number") with very effective unamplified vocals.

This was the best Costello concert I have ever attended (it even got my sister converted!) with Elvis so close to us - quite literally "spitting distance" away! - delivering some fantastic vocal and guitar work. It really was one night which I didn't want to end. (Stephen Thompson)

July 20 Royal Court Theatre-Liverpool



It was hardly surprising that the tour's only English show outside London should be in a city and at a venue particularly close to EC's heart. Tonight, the prodigal son even found time to help rescue a young child from the crowd and arrange for him to watch the rest of the show from the stage wings. A packed theatre was treated to the partial introduction of a new Costello composition when a fragment of something apparently titled "Far From The Prize" was grafted on to the end of "Little Atoms".

The sun was shining, the birds were singing and the greatest musician alive was about to play a mammoth two and a half hour set. My evening was already off to a tremendous start when I met EC at the stage door prior to the concert and when he opened with "Opportunity", "You Belong To Me" and "Clown Strike" it was obvious we were in for an awesome night's entertainment. Other highlights included a tear-jerking rendition of "Poor Fractured Atlas" (or was that just me?), a new arrangement of "Oliver's Army" to emphasize what a classic the song really is, and a moving "It's Time" which reminded all of us cynics what relationships are actually about. "Distorted Angel" led into a wonderful version of "Chelsea" and the main set reached a crescendo with "Complicated Shadows", following which EC left to a roar of protest.

Three encores followed, the second concluding with "Shipbuilding" - a poignant reminder of what a wonderful voice EC has. The final group of songs opened with "God's Comic", providing the opportunity for some irrelevant, but somehow fascinating, banter about a recent dream where heaven turned out to be the interior of the Royal Court Theatre. "Alison" was the prelude to an emotive "Rocking Horse Road" and the show finally ended with a raising of the volume and some unbearable feedback for "PL&U".

I truly believed that my head was about to explode, and my hearing was impaired for at least three days (perhaps standing next to the speaker wasn't such a wise move in retrospect!) but I wouldn't have changed it for the world. As for my final thought before going to bed that night, I think EC summed it up himself: "How can I tell you I'm rarer than most?" Amen to that! (Alison Scott)

July 21 Barrowlands-Glasgow

The trip north of Hadrian's Wall coincided with an exceptionally hot Glasgow night and the Barrowlands Ballroom rapidly came to resemble a sauna. Even EC took the unusual step of removing his jacket during the first guitar change, playing the remainder of the show in a shirt which, in the words of one of our correspondents, "progressed from damp to dripping". As well as the capitulation to relentlessly boorish demands for "Psycho", the set was notable for an unusual version of "I Want You", which EC played on two differently-tuned guitars ("polytonal" as he called it) as a result of a technical hitch.

I was disappointed with my first glimpse of the stage since Powerful Pierre's drum kit had no plastic parrot. This had proved very popular last time 'round: a string was pulled,

wings flapped, and the masses rejoiced. Tonight the action began with a sharpened "Opportunity", guitar chords piercing its chorus for added fatalism. The guitar later took on psychedelic overtones which benefited extended versions of the early

*There's a tu'penny ha'penny millionaire
looking for a fourpenny one,
And he's afraid and he's contemptuous
of the public imagination.
And his mind is on that mystery train,
He'll drag you down for sure,
That you could stoop to think like him
or let his vanity consume him.*

"Man Out Of Time '96"

songs. A short set by Elvis and Steve, meanwhile, brought stark economy. This included the ever-topical soundtrack of "Pills & Soap" and a menacing "Psycho" (also played here two years ago). The latter was preceded by a "do we remember the chords?" discussion before Elvis once again gave in to a twelve-year hectoring campaign by Glasgow and Edinburgh audiences. This section concluded with "Oliver's Army" (or the Innocent Bystander to Frenzied Humanity converter) which started as a ballad and erupted with Pete and Bruce's arrival. As "I Can't Stand Up" (For Pogoing?) blazed, we entered a time warp and began to audition as extras for the video.

Songs from *ATUB* ("the world's biggest secret") evolved further subtleties and dramatics. The stand-out was the innocence and confusion of "Distorted Angel", its subject matter surely the root of many a Costello song. Another highlight was the teasing slow funk of "Chelsea" with its brilliant segue into the Isleys' "Who's That Lady?". "Pump It Up" had Pete on side drum and maracas with a dancing Steve on Cajun accordion. The acoustic core made it thud and swing as never before.

After two and a half hours and three encores, an imperious Elvis stood and surveyed at the stage's edge, index finger raised. Someone and everyone here was number one. From a sea of adoring flailing arms, stamping, declarations of love and hoarse screams for more, the ecstatic crowd reaffirmed that Elvis Costello & The Attractions are still all-conquering pop stars. (Richard Barrington)

July 23 Catania Festival-Sicily

This week's continental jaunt began with an ill-starred visit to the Catania Festival in Sicily where, although the Attractions' show went well by all accounts, EC contracted a

stomach bug which would have serious repercussions later in the tour.

July 24 Piazze XX Settembre-Fano

*From Sicily to the Italian mainland where the highlight of *Il violino e la selce*, a month-long festival of modern music held in the Adriatic coastal city of Fano, was a visit by "il song writer inglese" Elvis Costello.*

When he came to Italy for his appearance on the 1st of May, EC said in an interview that he would be back to play in the summer with Steve Nieve. This show in Fano however was with the Attractions. (Note: The song list on page 24 was taken from the stage list so it is probably incomplete and does not include the encores.) This was my second Costello gig on this tour, the first in Montreux was unforgettable so it would be hard for this one to be better.

I came in early that afternoon to the square in Fano where Elvis and the A's would play that night at 7p.m. Elvis arrived for a sound check and a person in his organization told me that EC was nervous that he did not see anyone at the sound check. This was probably due to the fact that the square is full of shops and bars. So after he and the group played some fragments of songs we applauded and EC looked happy not nervous. He also signed my tickets and I told him how wonderful the Montreux concert was. I then said I hope that like Bob Dylan he would go on a "never-ending tour" to which he replied "Oh, no!"

It was Elvis concert #12, for me and certainly one of the best. I enjoyed it much more than the *BY* tour which sadly had played for me like a "farewell tour". I enjoyed hearing the songs dilated, rearranged much the same as the way Dylan processes songs. Finally, Elvis has discovered that he has a great pianist, "the Roy Bittan of new wave". Also the group now plays like a group rather than like a bunch of studio musicians. All in all, the concert was really brilliant with persons standing for the entire second hour. The "voice" (after its Brodsky Quartet training) is strong and perfect. Most of all I see Elvis happy to be on stage. (Stefano Parisi)

July 26 Shepherd's Bush Empire-London

Having joined his wife in the balcony to watch the performance of support act Ron Sexsmith, a final, tempestuous night at Shepherd's Bush saw Elvis unearthing a few more old favourites for the regular clientele.

What a great month July was! A welcome return to the Empire with Elvis minus the Secret Squirrel specs and the Attractions

minus about twenty thousand or so decibels. The three earlier shows here had contained a sprinkling of treats for us long-time fans, but even we were taken aback on this final night by the almost nonchalant inclusion of such classics as "Almost Blue", "My Funny Valentine", "Brilliant Mistake" and "New Lace Sleeves". However, the highlight of the show nearly didn't happen at all when Elvis left "Motel Matches" off his hand-written set list. The Thomases were almost off stage for the regular Costello/Nieve slot when a laughing EC recalled them, leading off a blinding version before Pete was even back at his stool.



If the volume was reduced, the passion and power within many of the songs was really to the fore. *ATUB* contains some of Elvis's best vocal performances, and indeed best songs, but the CD doesn't prepare you for the likes of "Why Can't A Man" and "Telescope" live. As for the more up tempo numbers - "You Bowed Down", "Shallow Grave" and "Complicated Shadows" got the joint jumpin' in a way that I hadn't seen since 1983's *Punch The Clock* tour.

Elvis responded to the upbeat and vocal nature of the audience by abandoning the planned set list to include old favourites "No Action", "You Belong To Me" and "Red Shoes", together with "Human Hands" - a song he claimed not to have performed for 15 years (to the surprise of those who had heard it during the *Brutal Youth* tour!). Most surprising of all, however, was the football terrace anthem response of the crowd to a plaintive solo version of "Indoor Fireworks". (Clive Williams)

July 27 Roundhouse-London

Final European stop for The Attractions was this rearranged visit to the Roundhouse where another handful of oldies was sprinkled into the set along with a Costello-Nieve take on the geographically appropriate "London's Brilliant Parade".

Beating the previous night at Shepherd's

Bush wasn't going to be easy, but everyone was expecting big things from the last night of the British tour. The show really got going on the third number - "Waiting For The End Of The World" - and other early highlights were "Little Atoms" (complete with German National Anthem monologue) and a dusting off of "Deep Dark Truthful Mirror". The Elvis / Steve segment included the rarely performed "Black Sails In The Sunset", and we were treated to "Lipstick Vogue" and "I Want You" with the Attractions. The structure and pacing of the show was similar to the previous night, but interspersed with the occasional Doors tribute were such variations as a brilliant solo "All The Rage" and great renditions of "London's Brilliant Parade" and "You'll Never Be A Man" (both with Steve only) along with "Mystery Dance", and God's Comic (with monologue).

Maybe it was the venue, but I thought that the atmosphere at the Roundhouse wasn't as good as at the Empire, and the concert suffered a little because of the surroundings. The most fitting conclusion to the British dates would have been that passionate last Friday in Shepherd's Bush and for me, although still enjoyable, this final date proved eventually to be something of an anti-climax. Nonetheless, let's hope that Elvis & The Attractions will all be back soon to blow us all away once more. (Andy Anderson)

August 3 Festival Meadow-Dranouter

Before setting off for the U.S. leg of their tour with the Attractions, Elvis and Steve turned up at a couple of European festival dates, beginning with the Dranouter Folk Festival in Belgium.

Costello took to the stage alone with his acoustic guitar at 10:15pm following a performance by Canada's Cowboy Junkies. The setting was a large "circus tent" which EC would later compare with heaven during his "God's Comic" monologue. His three-song solo opening concluded with "Little Atoms", complete with the German National Anthem story, Elvis noting that the author of this tune has yet to approach him for royalties! Steve joined in for "Pills & Soap" and the rest of the show was a joint effort with highlights such as "My Funny Valentine" ("an old American folk tune"), "All This Useless Beauty" with a verse sung in Italian, and public sing-alongs during "God's Comic" and "Accidents". EC switched to electric guitar for the two-song encore which featured "Shallow Grave" and an "Alison"-medley which concluded with a rewording of the old Jim Reeves hit to "We'll Have To Go" - an allusion to the time limit

imposed by the festival organizers. A great concert, but too short. (Filip Dejongh)

**Dranouter
Costello & Nieve**

- Just About Glad (solo)
- Red Shoes (solo)
- Little Atoms (solo)
- Pills & Soap
- Why Can't A Man Stand Alone?
- Veronica
- Poor Fractured Atlas
- Shipbuilding (piano only)
- Oliver's Army
- Other End Of The Telescope
- Deep Dark Truthful Mirror
- My Funny Valentine
- God's Comic
- All This Useless Beauty
- Accidents Will Happen
- Shallow Grave
- Alison

August 4 Ridrarholm-Stockholm

The Stockholm Water Festival is an annual event where music is just one of a number of activities centered around the water. Appropriately, the "Blue Stage" where this concert took place was actually floating on a large lake in the city's centre. Since all festival publicity had listed this as a solo appearance, it was a great surprise to most of those present when Steve Nieve followed EC out on to the stage at 7.30pm.



Stockholm: John Everingham

This was what is technically referred to as a "fucking brilliant gig": the Manus himself in perfect voice, old Nieve providing support perfectly keyed to the needs of each song. An admirable selection of material, ranging across the whole span of EC albums, admirably circumventing *Almost Blue*. The pared-down delivery, with instrumental support of just guitar (the guitar make and what-was-the-amplifier enthusiasts will be pleased to hear that it was a wooden one, with six strings, of a very pleasant pale wood colour) and piano, enabled Elvis to show what extraordinary control he has of the material. I'm maybe not supposed to say this,



Stockholm: John Everingham

but I found the *Brutal Youth* gig with The Attractions in Stockholm two years back somewhat lacking in nuance, with most of the songs much of a perception-numbing muchness: this time there were half as many people on stage, and twice as much powerful variation. The setting was perfect (say what you like about the ice-cream but Stockholm is an abnormally attractive city), the audience appreciative, old Costy's rapport with the crowd a natural part of the relaxed precision

Stockholm
Costello & Nieve

- Accidents Will Happen
- Pills & Soap
- Men Called Uncle
- Why Can't A Man Stand Alone?
- Veronica
- Poor Fractured Atlas
- Other End Of The Telescope
- Shipbuilding (piano only)
- Oliver's Army
- Black Sails In The Sunset
- Radio Sweetheart (solo)
- Little Atoms (solo)
- Deep Dark Truthful Mirror
- My Funny Valentine
- God's Comic
- All This Useless Beauty
- Shallow Grave
- Alison
- Watching The Detectives
- I Want To Vanish

of his whole show. Jokes about Andrew Lloyd Webber, though predictable, are always welcome, and we learned that Elvis & Co. were pretty sure that they had now found ALW's missing chord, for which they had been searching since the tour started: "And it's this one - Tzzangg!" There was a dodgy moment as the Greta Unknown set up an audience sing-along, not without elements of antiphon, but he extracted himself before any closet Queen fans could whip out their cigarette lighters and hoist them aloft in swaying adoration. The "Detectives" encore - on a yellow and green guitar, with a pleasant twang about it - was pure incontrovertibility. Life-improvement! (Graham Bowers)

United States

August / September

August 7 Ryman Auditorium-Nashville



Nashville: Mike Bodayle

When Pete did the opening drum roll from "Why Don't You Love Me" during the sound check, we all knew that we were in for something special in the "House of Hank Williams". The 2,100-seat former church sold-out the day of the show as the faithful sat in its wooden pews. However, a solo "Stranger In The House" and bits of "You Win Again" and "He'll Have To Go" added to the end of "Alison" were the only country surprises. EC also played his new original 1960's Magnatone Typhoon guitar (with its Minnie Pearl-inspired price tag still dangling) that he got just before the show at Gruhn's Guitars. (EC walked into the store and pointed at it saying "That's the coolest guitar in here, can I play it?" He did and then he bought it.) Warners hosted a brief after-show "meet & greet" at Tootsies Orchid Lounge behind the venue.

The main set was at least equal to any I've watched EC do, featuring a perfect balance of full-band, solo or duo tunes done with Steve. I'm convinced that playing just with Nieve is

about the perfect vehicle for Elvis. Does anyone else sense that the "crazy bongo music" is almost a concession to the faithful (or the tourists), rather than what he holds dear? The bass and drums (great as Bruce and Pete are) also make it damn hard to hear how he's singing and what he's saying.

Okay, I'm over the hill. Anyway, there were unique moments throughout, as when Elvis hushed the band to let the audience sing who-knows-how-many refrains of "I know" from "Accidents", which seemed to genuinely thrill the guys on-stage."Complicated Shadows" was thunderous, just like on the album. But what made it my favorite gig ever was the Fairfield Four as opening act, and especially their closing "That Day is Done" featuring EC fronting this ace gospel quartet who have been singing together, oh, twice longer than I've been alive. (Editor: Performed at the sound check also.) "That Day" was a singularly inspiring performance, and I'm not in the least embarrassed to have gotten kind of "verklemmt". Something in Elvis's tone as he threw his body into projecting each chorus, there in the "Mother Church of Country Music", with all the good and ambivalent feelings that evokes, well, I just felt lucky to have been present. (Tom Garritano)

August 9 Capitol Ballroom-Wash. D.C.

A club date at a "2000-stander" in the Nation's Capital. Included a rare performance of "Talking in the Dark" during the C&N set again with a snippet of The Kinks' "Dead End Street" at the end.



Washington: Woody Taylor

"With a Handful of Backhanders". After spending the afternoon on the street listening to a muffled sound check through closed metal doors and waiting on line in the rain, we finally crawled into the cave that is D.C.'s Capitol Ballroom. (At the sound check, some of the tunes Elvis rehearsed but did not perform at the show were: "Opportunity," "Honey Are You Straight" and "It's Time").

Elvis emerged from the smokey darkness like a beacon of light in his now familiar bright, blousy, orange shirt and black leather vest. We immediately noticed crib notes from an unidentifiable song scrawled on his

right hand. Opening with "End of the World," and segueing directly into the high energy "You Belong to Me" seemed to promise a special show. He was in an unusually good mood this night, making plenty of humorous facial expressions and smiling throughout.

What Elvis show would be complete without a few quips about the city he's playing, hence several references were made to Bob Dole, secret agents, and the FBI -- this being D.C. and all. He even went so far as to rework a verse of "Brilliant Mistake" to include the fictitious "Washington News" (it rhymed best with "abuse") instead of "ABC News". That night also happened to be long, tall Pete Thomas' birthday, and Elvis led the crowd in singing "Happy Birthday" to Pete.

The musical highlight of the show, hands down, was the ultra-slow, slinky version of "Chelsea" done to the tempo of "Distorted Angel". Following "Chelsea" was a much-needed reworking of the now-tired "Pump It Up." Played by Elvis on his gold Les Paul, Pete on his "birthday present" of a big bass drums and maracas, Steve on accordion, and Bruce on bass, the stripped-down "Pump It Up" achieved something almost miraculous. Even with just maracas and an accordion, the crowd still got whipped up into that frenzy that one would expect could only be achieved by conventional means.

"Daddy, Can I Turn This?"

In a young girl's voice, the last words heard on the black box of a crashed airplane.

"Detectives" received no such reworking, which would have been very welcome. It is a standard part of the set at this point, but it seems to be generally agreed among frequent show attending die-hards to be getting old. Overall, this was a terrific performance, with lots of energy from the band and from Elvis who seemed to be especially enjoying himself. Of course, our satisfaction with this show could have something to do with the fact that we were close enough to Elvis to see his tonsils, particularly during slower numbers such as "Riot Act" and "Rocking Horse Road". When the show ended, the crowd filed out of the club, somewhat spent, but satisfied as the club kids lined up to take their turns at being troglodytes for a couple of hours at the rave that was about to commence in the Cap Ballroom following EC's performance. If only we knew the lyrics that Elvis had on the back of his hand! (The Nameless Ones)

August 10 Mann Music Ctr.-Philadelphia

One of the few "sheds" on the tour and one of the few repeat venues from the BY tour. The seats were fairly well packed but the lawn was empty. World premieres of "Daddy" and the laid-back "Green Shirt" which was worked hard at the sound check. ("I'll Wear It Proudly" also was played.) Funny moment during "Little Atoms" as a woman brought a baby to the stage (EC waved) and then a mad "pogoing-dude" ran on stage (EC said he preferred the baby).



Philadelphia: Tony Sacchetti

A balmy and pleasant evening at Philly's largest outdoor amphitheatre was the scene for this early appearance on the American leg of the tour. An unfortunate 11:00 pm curfew by city ordinance forced the band to be somewhat formal in its approach - so the emphasis was only on the music and not on EC's terrific between-song musings. They took the stage a few minutes past nine, following a fine set by Mr. Sexsmith and co., and slid immediately and easily into "Sulky Girl." Elvis was obviously in fine voice from the beginning and he sang the song beautifully, rarely touching his guitar during the verses and effectively relaying the story with his expressive hand gestures.

The songs from the new LP were right at home in what was otherwise a fairly standard Attractions set. "New Lace Sleeves" was just as wonderful as ever and a mid-set "Pump It Up" that slid into the Beatles version of "Slow Down" was a neat curve ball. Among the surprises was a scorching "Riot Act" which The Man sang as if he had experienced the lyrics that afternoon.

"You'll Never Be a Man" with just Steve made me wonder why it hasn't been a concert mainstay for the last fifteen years. ("Knotty arrangement" nothing - they nailed it! And it sounded great at the end of the *Brutal Youth* tour too.) The brief detour with Steve also provided passionate renditions of "Poor Fractured Atlas" and "Why Can't a Man" in addition to the cool version of "Veronica" they played during their tour earlier this year. "Oliver's Army" offered a great opportunity for the entire band to return for the last verse (right at "But there's no danger...") and the

crowd was on their feet.

After a letter-perfect "Man Out of Time" and a superlative space-age collage of "Distorted Angel," "Chelsea" and the Isleys' "Who's That Lady?", I was on cloud nine. With the last note ringing in my ears, I floated home. A shorter show compared to others but no less satisfying. (John Buckley)

August 12 Beacon Theater-New York City

The 2,700 theater was sold out in advance for both nights. Opening night featured C&N debuts of "Party Girl" and "Love Field" and "It's Time" was used as the transition song for the Thomases to join the band again.



New York: Chip Rollinson

One year ago, this very venue was where EC & the A's first introduced the songs that would ultimately make up the *ATUB* album. Elvis noted this when he asked if anyone in the audience was in attendance last year. He then went on to remark that these were the folks shouting at the end of "Complicated Shadows", further indicating that this was a "trade secret".

During the 2:10 set, the band entertained the enthusiastic audience with 10 of the 12 tracks from *ATUB*, as well as selections from many phases of EC's past. As has been customary, Mr. Costello's wit was in full force. He remarked that the male protagonist of the LP's title track looks like Jack Kemp. This prompted an audience member to shout out "Elvis for President!". EC declined, suggesting that he was unable to consume that much pizza.

The second and final encore of the evening consisted of only one song, a brilliant performance of "Riot Act". At the end of the song, in possible reference to the pending curfew, Elvis returned to the opening line of the song: "Forever doesn't mean forever anymore". Then it was over. (Harold Siegel)

August 13 Beacon Theater-New York City

Night two at the Beacon goes down in history as witness to the only-ever performance of "The Loved Ones" (was EC reading his back issues of Beyond Belief about the songs he had never played live?). About this performance of the song, EC told

the Detroit Free-Press: "There's a line in that one - 'They bitch about your pretty face turning ugly on you'. The audience clicked on it right away". We also heard the C&N debut of "Kid About It".



Washington: Woody Taylor

Monday night had its share of powerful highlights, but Elvis and "the lads" had plenty of treats left for the second show at the Beacon. Along with the strong ATUB material, they offered 12 songs not played on Monday, substantially rewarding those back for a repeat visit. They started earlier than on Monday with a snappy "Sulky Girl".

The appearance of "New Lace Sleeves" and guitar-less "Motel Matches" during the first six songs boded well for the evening. In the duet section with Steve, Elvis announced a song he said they'd never played before: "The Loved Ones." The audience sat stunned by the charming piano rendition of that classic Imperial Bedroom number. A few tunes later, IB resurfaced with a beautiful acoustic "Kid About It." Later, with the full band again, Steve picked up the accordion for "Brilliant Mistake," featuring new lyrics about the Washington News. (Could Elvis have meant the Washington Post?) The "mouth almighty" took a few funny digs at the Republicans between songs.

Several ATUB songs included "space jams," with Steve wailing on his synths, adding techno-rave timbres to "Little Atoms" (with some of the new "Far From The Prize" at the end), and "Distorted Angel" (incorporating the lyrics of "Chelsea," followed by "Who's That Lady?"). I enjoyed the highly-theatrical spectacle of the four "Vari-lights" swirling

around psychedly over Steve's head, often spilling into the audience. For the new version of "Pump It Up", with Steve on accordion and Pete on the "toy kit" with maracas, the audience finally stood up. The altered song seemed at once familiar and completely fresh. (It marked the first time that Elvis and all three Attractions stood to play.) A sterling "Miracle Man" followed, then "Accidents" with the audience singing the "I know's."

The encores began with an unusual slower arrangement of "Green Shirt." Towards the end, Elvis intimated that he would not be back for a long time, adding fuel to the rumors of his "retirement." Then he stunned the audience into awed silence during "I Want To Vanish." With a blistering "Shallow Grave" and "PLU", the quartet clocked out at 11:00 straight up, avoiding the previous night's abrupt closing.

At the stage door, Elvis, Bruce, and Pete rushed by, only pausing to sign autographs for a lucky few. Nevertheless, if this show was the final one that I will see Elvis play with the A's, as some have suggested, it was a spectacular finish to 15 years of attending their live performances. (Tom X. Chao)

August 14 Harborlights-Boston

Not one of 1996's best shows due to a rather lame 4,600 near sold-out audience at a very scenic but not-sonically-suited venue.

Elvis took the stage and launched into a nice, if not completely riveting, version of "Opportunity". "Clown Strike" emerged as a real highlight, even without the wonderful patter that accompanied this tune in 1994. EC then decided to showcase some songs from his latest release available in the US on "Secret Agent Records", perhaps taking a potshot at the lack of effective promotion by Warners, or perhaps a self-deprecating jab in regard to his anonymity.

After a touching "Far From the Prize", a rather flat "You Bowed Down" closed the Attractions "primary" set. The first of the C&N mini-set was introduced as a song written in Minneapolis in 1978 that he doesn't play that much, but felt he should because "I'm trying to get the story straight. I've heard some lies about it", undoubtedly a reference to the erroneously assigned Bebe Buell as the "Party Girl" herself (As it turns out, according to EC it was an art student not a "rock queen").

The Attractions returned triumphantly to tribute birthday boy Bruce whose bass line figured prominently on their next full number, a rare "Human Hands". The crowd, if they were actually paying attention, got to

see some hip swaying by EC during the intro to "Distorted Angel". Some folks in the orchestra were not even awake enough to stand up for rockers like "Pump It Up" and "PLU". Elvis looked confused. (Rich Zito)

August 16 Fox Theater-Detroit

Another move to a theater instead of a shed. Also a direct tour conflict with the Sex Pistols whose schedule closely matched EC's in competing for fans' concert dollars. First tour playing of "Hand In Hand".

EC performed in downtown Detroit at the beautifully and acoustically sound Fox. The theater seats 4,800 and EC sold only 3,000 tickets as the Sex Pistols were also in town. In 1989, EC also played here shortly after it was renovated. He commented at that show about how nice these smaller venues were to play as opposed to the outdoor facilities and said that he would be back at the Fox.

EC and the A's came on just after 9:00 with "Accidents", "Sulky Girl", "You Belong to Me" (played with passion) and "Little Atoms" which he followed with some extra guitar playing. We knew right then we were up for a special evening of some new, in-between and old. Elvis joked about the "hooligans" down the street watching the Sex Pistols. "Why Can't A Man" was next in very animated classic Costello style. As EC was introducing songs his speech stuttered several times, a sign when somebody is exhausted and overworked.

It was then C & N's turn: "Party Girl", "Love Field", followed by the obligatory "Veronica". The Attractions came on for "It's Time" and we were then blessed with the ballad-style "Green Shirt". At that point EC picked up a bunch of white cards with songs written on them. He commented that he usually gets roses and said "somebody threw all these cards with songs on them that we do not know how to fuckin' play." He then said "here is a song that we do know" and in a fun way tossed them in the air and went into a passionate "You Bowed Down". To no one's surprise, after that, no more verbal or written requests were made. Before "ATUB", EC commented on the "Classic Beauties playing down the street" (i.e. the Sex Pistols).

Bonus songs were "Hand In Hand", "Beyond Belief", "No Action", "Miracle Man" and a 12-minute mentally draining and lyrically twisting "I Want You". Thank you EC for the awful truth - you've earned your rest!! (Mark Schostak)

August 17 Rosemont Theater-Chicago

First time on the tour for "The Beat" and "Uncomplicated". Only show outside of New

York City to sell out in advance.

After greeting opening act Ron Sexsmith with apathy by remaining outside the theater or in the lobby during his performance, most of the four thousand-plus fans in attendance at the Rosemont found their seats in time for the opening chords of "Man Out of Time" and witnessed an outstanding performance by EC & the A's. While lacking the punch of the opening numbers on the *Brutal Youth* tour, the first portion of the show displayed the band's versatility. Vintage versions of "The Beat" and "Uncomplicated" alternated with a jazzy "Clown Strike", which included a Costello/Nieve jam that could have been an audition for the ECM label, and "Little Atoms/Far From the Prize", highlighted by an instrumental break that at one point evoked images of Roger Waters-era Pink Floyd.

Following Elvis and Steve's short set featuring stellar versions of "Party Girl" and "Love Field," Pete and Bruce returned to the stage for a second half dominated by new songs from *ATUB* and new arrangements of old tunes, including a stripped down "13 Steps," a dirge-like "Green Shirt", "Chelsea" surprisingly revitalized at half speed, and an unbelievably tight "Pump It Up/Slow Down." The main set concluded with superb versions of "Beyond Belief" and "Complicated Shadows" sandwiching a rendition of "Accidents" notable only for a lackluster "I know" call and response that should have been relegated to an opening encore. Elvis and the band returned twice for encores, highlighted by outstanding performances of "Rocking Horse Road" and "Riot Act" before finishing the evening with a ragged "PLU".

Having given Chicago-area performances in 1991 and 1994 at the cavernous and sonically-challenged World Music Theater, Elvis seemed much more at ease in the smaller venue, quoting Bill Monroe ("I remember the good old days...they're gone"), jokingly rebuking a front row Minnesotan who interrupted EC's pre-"Party Girl" storytelling with several whoops after hearing Elvis say "Minnesota" ("Don't let on...they'll never guess where you're from."), sarcastically dedicating "ATUB" to the Rosemont Theater's architect for "making the theater so...blue," and addressing the aesthetics of the cubist theater and its office park surroundings by asking "Where is this place...Lego Land?"

Those of us opting to attend this show rather than the Sex Pistols' (characterized by Elvis as "classical antiquities") at the Aragon Ballroom across town were rewarded with what was probably Elvis' strongest Chicago

show of the 1990s. (Dave Paetzman)

August 18 Orpheum Theater-Minneapolis

"Just About Glad" gets its first Los Attractions treatment. It would appear in almost every subsequent show since EC really enjoyed the accordion version of this one which began the tour as a solo number.

The evening began on a very high note, as we discovered that the two dollar "restoration fee" we paid with our tickets was money well spent. The refurbished Orpheum Theatre was gorgeous and the perfect venue at which to see EC. Prior to Elvis taking the stage, though, Ron Sexsmith played to a sparse but appreciative Minnesota crowd. To celebrate his final date on this leg of the tour, he and his band played a special banjo/accordion arrangement of "Everyday I Write The Book" that actually bettered the Punch the Clock original as far as I was concerned.

The real fireworks, though, began when Elvis took to the stage and roared though an extensively reworked "Man Out Of Time". As I understood it, the entire second verse of the original was eliminated. The third verse replaced it, with all new lyrics in the bridge and the final verse. In fact, new interpretations of older material was a definite theme of the show, with "Chelsea", "Love Field", "Veronica", "Brilliant Mistake", "Pump It Up" and "Green Shirt" all benefitting from their new arrangements.

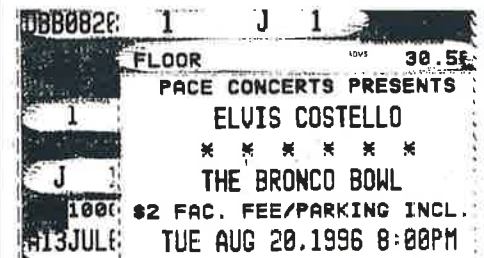
But it was the stunning piano/guitar take on "Party Girl" that really brought down the house. I've always loved the song, but I think that I truly "felt" it for the first time this evening. On a side note, EC cautioned us against believing the "lies" that have been printed about the origins of this Minnesota-born classic. A few songs later, the full band returned to the stage and roared through a series of old favorites and material from the new record. Although a couple songs, such as "Little Atoms" and "13 Steps" seemed a bit clunky, for the most part The A's brought an unmatched energy to the evening, and clearly demonstrated why they will be sorely missed if the rumors of their break-up pan out.

The show climaxed with an apocalyptic reading of "Riot Act" that was unforgettable - both for its ominous tone and the obvious message it sent to the audience. After the show, I was able to meet EC in the autograph line and tell him the story of the Berkeley med student who plays "God's Comic" before cutting into cadavers. He reacted with something between a giggle and a grunt. I couldn't have been happier. (T.J. Young)

August 20 Bronco Bowl-Dallas

Perhaps the first time EC had ever played a bowling alley! Actually this is a great venue but the show was somewhat marred by EC's health. As a matter of fact he came very close to canceling the show! As a result no sound check and no new songs added to the set.

"I've been in my sick bed all day. I hope I can stay on my feet." With this foreboding statement following a rough sounding "Man Out Of Time" Elvis let the collective air out of the crowd. Although he announced a few songs later that "little by little I can feel my strength returning" there was no doubt that we had caught Elvis on an off night. Not that the evening was a total washout. Elvis with a head cold is still better than, well, anybody else with a head cold and most anybody else in the pink of good health.



The 3,100 seat Bronco Bowl (a 48 lane bowling alley and video arcade with a modern auditorium) was only about 2/3 to 3/4 full. But the crowd that was there was appreciative of Elvis' sincere attempt to overcome his obvious ill health. The man is nothing if not professional. During the trio of songs from *ATUB* including "Why Can't A Man", "Little Atoms" and "Shallow Grave" Elvis' voice finally strengthened and the A's produced that liquid perfection of sound that is uniquely theirs.

The acoustic set with Steve was highlighted by a powerful version of "Party Girl" which he introduced as "a song I wrote when I was young and innocent." He then added that he was "still innocent but not so young". The set list for the 2:10 show was little changed from other recent shows. He did perform an unexpected "Love Field" but I was disappointed to miss out on "Riot Act" among others he has pulled out for this tour.

The evening had a couple of funny moments. During the accordion version of "Pump It Up" the microphone over Pete's three piece drum kit got moved. When the roadie (Ernie) ran out and kneeled over to put it back over the snare, Pete played one solid note on his head, clearly audible on the mic. He went off rubbing his head and I saw him wagging his finger at Pete and laughing from the wings. It was funny to both of them

although you could tell it hurt.

During Elvis's intro to "ATUB" when he compared the museum pieces from the song to the "models of human perfection here on the stage" Bruce and Pete pointed to Steve who did a couple of twirls on his piano seat. The first encore began with "You Bowed Down" which he introduced as "a song from my new album on 'Secret Agent Records'". He further introduced the song by saying "In show business this is called our latest single." During the second encore his voice began to get a little ragged again and the show ended with "Alison", "Rocking Horse" and "PLU".

The Dallas show also marked the addition of the British group Sleeper as the opening act. Their record company rep told me that they were a little jet lagged as they had just flown to Dallas from London the previous day. It showed as they were politely but unenthusiastically received by the crowd. All in all it was definitely not one of his better shows but the night was still memorable for me since I did get to meet Elvis briefly after the show. (Lang Zimmerman)

August 21 The Backyard-Austin

Again no sound check and no added songs. It was 90 degrees plus as the band took the stage outdoors. EC stopped during "Veronica" as a girl fainted near the front of the stage in this packed stand-up crowd of 2,850. Noteworthy that both members of Rusty (see Allan Mayes interview) were performing in Austin this night.

After following set lists for four months and anxiously anticipating what surprises EC had in store for us here in Austin, we were treated with one of the shortest shows of the tour (1:58): 23 songs, no debuts, AND NO "RIOT ACT"! Reports of EC being ill may have had something to do with it. The strict curfew in respect to surrounding residents likely was the culprit, as the show was over by 10:45PM. (Editor: Apparently the band was fined here in 1994 for a curfew violation.)

But what we did see was terrific. Faithful to its noisy *IB* opening, "Man Out of Time" started things off. "Motel Matches", EC with guitar in hand, was a real treat. The sound was good, and the band was tight. The set list consisted of a good mix of old and new (6 from *ATUB*, another 4 from *BY*) and EC's vocals were superb. A general observation was how comfortable EC now seems to be as a performer. His rapport with the audience seemed very sincere. Elvis Costello is definitely not angry anymore. All in all, he seems pretty happy with himself and his music. (Brad Garrett)

August 23 Paramount Theater-Denver

The dress rehearsal for "I Should Have Never Walked Back Over The Bridge That I Burned" (see page 1) was heard at this marathon show as was the tour debut of "Shot With His Own Gun".

The Paramount, a converted 1930's Art Deco movie house, was a perfect venue for EC's stop at the "Mile-High City". The show was a perfect mix of new and old, and with four encores, it seemed to last all night. Because I got great seats just a week before the show and because the audience was only half full during the warm-up act, I assumed the hall would look empty to the band. A quick look around during the opening rendition of "Man Out of Time", and the 2000 plus seats were full. Somewhere during intermission, a thousand Elvis fans materialized to see a show few of us will ever forget.

It would take too long to discuss each of the thirty plus songs played that night, but "Distorted Angel", with "Chelsea" worked into the end, was a particular crowd pleaser. EC apologized for a having caught a cold in Texas, but he was in top form for the long evening. If he was sick, it never seemed to affect his singing. During the show, a fan screamed an early birthday wish to Elvis, so the A's broke into a version of "Happy Birthday" and the audience sang along.

The opening set closed with "Riot Act" and, perhaps as humorous answer to the audience's shouting for more, the band returned to the stage and played the same song again at the start of the first encore. The encore finished with "Daddy", a song new to most of the audience, but one which received tremendous applause. With each song, more and more of the audience left their seats to head toward the stage. Security kept moving people back to their seats, but by the start of "Detectives" in the second encore, Elvis stopped the guards, telling them: "Its OK if they stay up here," then asking the audience, "You're not going to hurt me are you?" From that point on it was just one mass of people up front, including a guy with a 70's vintage EC poster on a stick which he kept waving during the final songs.

The third encore included an audience participation version of "Alison" and a superb version of "Rocking Horse Road". The evening ended with a four song fourth encore; each song played with as much energy as the songs from the first set. We were hoping for a fifth encore, but no one was too upset at the band for calling it quits. (Ken Fischer)

August 27 Universal Amp.-Los Angeles

The first "post-Leno" show had all of the die-hard fans on edge, not knowing what to expect. Perhaps the most disappointing sales ever for an LA Costello show.

EC opened the first of two nights in LA with a solo rendition of "All the Rage." Slight changes to the lyrics made it seem especially personal ("The twitching impulse is to speak MY mind..."). This stunning performance was as close as EC would come to clarifying his peculiar remarks on the previous evening's "Tonight Show". He had little to say between songs aside from introducing songs in a straightforward fashion and introducing the A's more often than usual. After hearing the previous night's talk of bridges burned, it was easy to believe that this tour could be a last hurrah for the band.

Fortunately, they put on a fine show, which I considered entirely worthy of being their last. And then I saw the second night's show, which was truly in a league of its own. The first night now seemed a mere warmup in comparison. Nevertheless, it featured terrific performances of "Little Atoms"/"Far From the Prize," "Riot Act," and the "Distorted Angel" medley, as well as several songs not heard the second night, including "Motel Matches," "Party Girl," "Kid About It," and "Green Shirt." (Andrew Neumeyer)

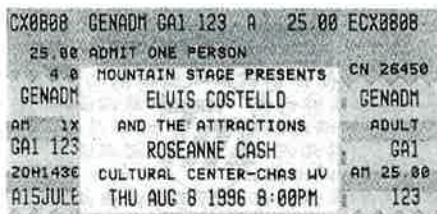
August 28 Universal Amp.-Los Angeles

The second night at the UA saw the unusual one-off solo performance of the apologetic "I'll Make It All Up To You". Also the first tour playings of "So Like Candy" and "Men Called Uncle".

The two shows that EC & the A's played at the UA for the 1994 *BY* tour were almost identical, with perhaps only two songs differing between them. So I was not expecting any surprises for the second UA show this time around. I could not have been more wrong. Everything was different. Elvis seemed in a better mood than the night before, more chatty and more active, coming to the front of the stage for his many guitar soloing efforts. The crowd was larger and more attentive. The Attractions were tighter. But, most importantly, there were the songs.

Nearly half of the set list had changed from the night before. Tonight we were lucky to hear (maybe for the last time ever live) the wondrous "New Lace Sleeves", the biting "Men Called Uncle", the touching "My Funny Valentine", and the stark "Love Field", which was played to a crowd so attentive and silent that one could almost hear the grasshoppers chirping.

Elvis and the boys pulled out all stops this night, trying new approaches to the songs. The square guitar-like instrument for the first verse of "Little Atoms" (Editor: A gift from his buddy Eddie Munoz of The Plimsouls); Elvis alone with his acoustic guitar on Charlie Rich's "I'll Make It All Up to You"; the segue from "So Like Candy" into "You're No Good"; Pete's pounding out of "It's Time" that showed why the Attractions add an extra dimension to EC's songs that is unequaled; and then, the finale. Only one encore was played, rather than the three or four at other shows, but no one would dare complain. There was no way for them to top the haunting, screaming, frightening 15-minute "I Want You", interspersed with "No More Tearstained Makeup" and "Say a Little Prayer" that ended the show. With his guitar still humming from the feedback, EC placed it down, possibly for the last time ever in LA? If this is indeed the end, Elvis went out with not a whisper, but a scream. (Aaron Yarlas)



"Mountainstage" Miss

Elvis again missed an opportunity for national radio exposure when he canceled his scheduled August 8th appearance on the National Public Radio show taped in Charleston, West Virginia. The word was that EC was reluctant to fly in the small plane necessary to get him and the band there in time from Nashville. Previous attempts were made for EC to appear on the show during the Juliet Letters and Costello & Nieve tours.

August 30 Greek Theater-Berkeley

After LA, the band commenced its travel up the coast for a Bay Area show at the Greek. The retirement talk had subsided and EC's voice was remarkably unaffected by his time spent in smoggy LA.

EC & the A's couldn't have chosen a more perfect evening for their return to the Greek. A cloudless sky and relatively balmy temperatures (at least for the Bay Area) provided the perfect backdrop for an incredibly rich and varied two-hour-plus

performance. Amidst rumors that the current ATUB tour may be their last together, EC and company took the opportunity to showcase the length and breadth of their repertoire and stylistic versatility, offering retooled versions of their "hits" as well as a few well-chosen, relatively obscure album tracks. In fact, the show was so complete in its representation of just what EC and the A's are capable of that it almost seemed as if Costello was deliberately offering evidence of just how badly they will be missed if they do indeed stop touring together.

From the first song on, it was obvious that "mixing it up" was the theme of the evening, and apparently of the tour as a whole. The opener, "Man Out of Time" segued quickly into an inspired, rocking rendition of B&C's seldom-performed-live "Honey Are You Straight or Are You Blind," and the energy level remained high throughout the beginning portion of the show, even in the slow but exceptionally powerful "Why Can't a Man" (easily one of the evening's highlights) and an extended version of "Little Atoms" which featured some very quirky improvisational call-and-response interplay between the band members, particularly EC and Steve.

After powering through the first eight numbers, Bruce and Pete made their exit to allow EC and Steve to perform a brief mini-set in the style of their Spring club tour which may have been the highlight of the entire show. Alongside a reworked "Veronica" (in the quieter style of the VH1 Storytellers performance), the duo graced the near-silent crowd with transcendent versions of "Party Girl," "Love Field" and "My Funny Valentine," all rarely played live in the past few years. Then EC began "It's Time" solo, at which point the band raced (literally) on stage to join him, on a dime and perfectly in tempo, for the conclusion of the song. This preceded what would be the most "experimental" portion of the evening, featuring new interpretations of "Chelsea" (straight out of "Distorted Angel") and "Pump It Up" (with Steve on accordion and Pete on a tiny "cocktail" drum kit). The set concluded with a moving "Riot Act" and fine "Accidents" paving the way for two lengthy encores highlighted by BY's "Rocking Horse" and a final, epic rendition of the harrowing "I Want You" which brought more than one attendee, this reviewer included, to the verge of tears. The show concluded with EC throwing his guitar to the ground and the band exiting the stage to the sound of squealing feedback, leaving the crowd stunned, emotionally exhausted, and seemingly

satisfied. (Chris Hoffpaur)

August 31 Civic Auditorium-Portland

In a show added at what seemed the last minute, the band made their first Portland appearance since 1979's Armed Funk tour adding "Big Tears" to the line-up.

Anticipation for the show was high as EC hadn't played Portland in 17 years and rumors were going around that this would be one of his last shows ever. While not a bad performance, the show was not the spectacular finale we were anticipating - it was a straightforward generic EC and the A's show. That said, there were some memorable moments including the reworking of 1978's "Chelsea" - which seemed to flawlessly flow right out of this year's "Distorted Angel".

The highlight of the show for me was the reprise of the Elvis Presley routine from the May mini-tour with Steve Nieve (in which during "God's Comic" EC did versions of EP singing U2, Blondie and Springsteen). For this show, Costello added "Rio" by Duran Duran. I'm sure one day we'll get a whole album of "Elvis does Elvis".

I might also note that the show was punctuated by an Iron Butterfly-esque light show which was projected onto a large white screen behind the stage. This gave a real psychedelic feeling to Elvis' material which I had never picked up on. (Evan Mather)

September 1 Mercer Arena-Seattle

The Mercer Arena was a late replacement for the Paramount Theater as the show became part of the annual Bumbershoot music and arts festival. The last US show of the tour which of course could turn out to be the last US Attractions gig as well.



Seattle: N. Modie

"It's always the beginning of something or the end of something whenever we come to Seattle," said an obviously weary, yet oddly vindicated-looking Elvis Costello, just a few minutes before midnight on Saturday, September 1, 1996. "Tonight's the last date of this tour, so we're gonna play until we don't have any more songs to play," Elvis told the capacity crowd of 6,000 at Seattle's Mercer Arena. Encompassing his 20-year career as a rarefied songwriter and provocative

performer, EC gave a disquieting three-hour performance, peppered with many subtle revelations that might indicate a different future for him, the A's and their fans.

The comprehensive, 29-song show seemed to give credence to the burgeoning innuendo that this would be the final US appearance of EC and the A's -- ever. It was well known that the contract with Warner was soon up. Earlier that week, Elvis announced his unhappiness with record sales (*ATUB* only having sold 85,000 copies despite a spring and summer tour) and with the fact that he wasn't selling out some smaller venues. There were recurring rumors of conflict within the Attractions, not to mention recent gossip that Caitlin O'Riordan (Elvis' wife) fired the tour's entire lighting crew. There were also Elvis' admissions to wanting something "very different" in the near future, such as a song writing partnership with Burt Bacharach.

A few nights before the Seattle show, Elvis appeared on Jay Leno's *Tonight Show* stating, "This could be my last live performance...I'm gonna take a break for a while and see what happens." Jay, looking surprised, said, "You can't quit!", to which Elvis darkly responded, "You never know." Elvis never backed down from the permanency of his statement despite Jay's attempts to cajole him.

Through a series of lyric changes, unusual song couplings with nods to his influences (past, present and future) and conversation with the audience, Declan MacManus repeatedly revealed to the Seattle audience that he had thought things through and was finished performing as Elvis Costello. Simultaneously and rather ironically, however, Elvis loudly confirmed his place as one of the most intensely charismatic performers of the 20th century.

The opening song, an ominous and curiously desperate offering of "Man Out of Time," contained a new second verse -- perhaps alluding to the final, pitiful performing life of Elvis Presley: "He's afraid and he's contemptuous of the public imagination/his thoughts are on that mystery train/it'll drag you down for sure/ that you could stoop to think like him or let his vanity consume him". The evening's second song, "Big Tears" was an obvious emotional release for Elvis and a major surprise for the audience. Elvis' angry intensity during the chorus, particularly the words, "when you're lyin' in your coffin," showered the crowd nearest the stage with a continuous spray of wispy spit.

Seemingly purged and suddenly remembering his audience, Elvis led the ever-ready Attractions through a lengthy but

buoyant version of "Clown Strike," borrowing bits from the classic party favorite, "Tequila." This was the first of many songs featuring Elvis' original material combined with another songwriter's influential material. Elvis then plunged into the new and normally ethereal "Little Atoms" bringing it back to earth with the caustic guitar solo from the MLAR tirade, "Hurry Down Doomsday." Other notable song combinations included the Isley Brothers' "Who's That Lady" with the latest soul-like incarnation of "Chelsea" (Bruce Thomas displaying a fine mastery of the bass guitar); the Larry Williams'/ Beatles' tune "Slow Down" with "Pump It Up" (Steve Nieve thoroughly enjoying his new accordion and Pete Thomas gleefully banging away on a toy drum kit); Lennon's "Instant Karma" with "Riot Act"; and The Troggs' "Wild Thing" with "Rocking Horse Road."

The most revealing moment of the night came during "You Bowed Down," when Elvis repeated the new lyrics he had delivered on the *Tonight Show* several days earlier. Somehow -- and this is one of the qualities that makes him a remarkable songwriter -- Elvis changed the simple, three-word chorus of "you bowed down" to "I should have never walked back over the bridge that I burned" with absolutely no loss of cadence to the chorus. Adrenalized by a three-encore, sold-out show, and seemingly grateful to the almost too polite Seattle audience, Elvis spoke one last time: "You've made our last night in America a very, very happy one...this might be the last time you see us for who knows how long, maybe forever. Anyway, this is the only song we could possibly end with tonight." A more than normally chilling version of "I Want You" had the audience spellbound from beginning to end and contained several interesting lyric changes, most notably that of a line from the Burt Bacharach/Hal David song "I Say A Little Prayer": "And when I wake up, when I put on my makeup, I say a little prayer for you..." in addition to a line from Smokey Robinson: "Today as I look in the mirror I see things a whole lot clearer/ no more tear stained makeup for me."

As the lights came up, it was clear that this was the last US performance of Elvis Costello and the Attractions in a setting like Mercer Arena. It was also clear that if Elvis Costello stops performing and continues writing songs for others, there will be few, if any, who can capture his music as faithfully or as poignantly as he has for the last 20 years. *ATUB* attests to that fact. The final show in Seattle only drove the nail in deeper. (Kathleen Connally)

Japan

September

The Final Solution

*It was apparent early in the US tour that this could be the final tour Elvis Costello would make with the Attractions. Despite some sold out shows on the East Coast & Chicago the indifferent attitude of many audiences coupled with mounting tensions within the tour, made it obvious that the end could be soon. Sure enough a superb *Tonight Show* appearance spiked by EC's "retirement announcement" was followed by the best gigs of the US tour on the West Coast. After a late night-early morning rousing finale in Seattle, EC & band flew off to the "land of the rising sun". The final seven concerts in Japan would be the "final solution" of the man's rock & roll dilemma!*

September 6 Festival Hall-Osaka

"I'LL BE BACK"

It's opening night of the Japanese tour and a fond return to Osaka. Before the show I meet with my fellow EC concert and traveling companion Masanori Saito at the Osaka Grand Hotel where I am staying as Festival Hall is located in the same building. The EC entourage also stays at the Grand, but it is made clear to me that there will be no guests at the sound check nor backstage for this tour. This is the first chance to get a look at yet another superb (2500 yen = \$25) Japanese tour program with its great photos & comprehensive listing of the Costello oeuvre. Ron Sexsmith and his group take the stage exactly at 7pm for an abbreviated 20 minute set as an early curfew will dictate short sets for Ron as well as EC here and in Tokyo.

After a quick set change, EC & the Attractions rush onto the stage with a rusty "Lipstick Vogue" punctuated by the drummer's truncated opening salvo (must have been that lost day going over the international date line that tripped up Pete). During his set with Steve, EC remarked, "I got a very sad letter today. Some people have been reading this thing called the Internet, this computer thing. There is an awful lot of rubbish talk on it. Some people are saying, 'I'm quitting music forever' from some things I said recently in America. I'm going to take a break, I don't want anyone getting sad about it. I'm going to take a very, very, very, very long holiday...But I'll be back". These

stunning words were followed by an equally unexpected reworking of "Veronica" featuring a new solo guitar/vocal intro by EC (trying to sound like Ron Sexsmith remarked the bass player) with Steve joining in on the third verse with his usual keyboard accompaniment. The Zydeco part of the set featured bits of "Subterranean Homesick Blues" & "Going To A Go Go" during "Pump It Up". Because of the curfew, the show abruptly ended with "Telescope". A good start but it would only get better. We all file out of the hall to find a tatami room at a nearby pub to salute the final tour with lots of Kirin beer & seafood.

September 7 Sun Palace-Fukuoka

"OK BOOTS (or did he say Bruce?), START WALKING"

Despite the cold shoulder on the platform in Osaka, I board the Shinkansen (bullet train) for the smooth trip south to Hakata. The sweltering heat welcomes me to Fukuoka where I book into a small hotel to cool off before an expected hot show. Masanori swings by in the taxi and we're whisked away to another modern Japanese concert hall. All the concert halls on this tour are 2000-plus seated-venues with fabulous acoustics and cool smoke-free climate controlled seating area. Tonight the smoke filled lobby has a table with all of EC's catalog for sale on CD (including *Girls, Girls, Girls* in new slimline case with OBI) with a free Demon catalog EC poster with each purchase. Ron performs in Osaka tonight, so there is no curfew to worry about and an extended show is in the forecast.

EC and the A's open with a wallop: "Uncomplicated" followed quickly by a superb "Shabby Doll", highlighted by Bruce's sinuous bass lines and then the pounding of Steve's grand piano during "Lipstick Vogue". The new "Veronica" is featured again as well as "Shot With His Own Gun" with EC evocatively singing sans guitar. Echo is used on EC's voice for great aural effect on "Green Shirt" followed by Pete's great creative percussion on "Detectives", which would become the Attractions' signature song displaying their most inspired combo jamming each night. EC dipped into the past for "Backstabbers" during "Distorted Angel" as well as "Leave My Kitten Alone" during the "Pump It Up" stomp. Tonight "Alison" would segue into "It's Time" (more effectively than "Rocking Horse Road") and a furious version of "No Action" followed by Steve's thumping on the grand piano during "Complicated Shadows" to end the first encore. The Japanese get to hear the new chorus of "You Bowed Down" for the first time and the show

ends with a beautiful rendition of "ATUB". Musically satiated, Masanori and I join our fellow "Elvis-heads" for a stroll down the boulevard to satiate our appetites with more beer and more seafood.

September 9 Kosei Nenkin Hall-Tokyo

"YOU REMEMBER HOW TO HAVE FUN, DON'T YOU?"

After spending the off day in the scenic rebuilt city of Nagasaki, I ride the Shinkansen for the rainy trip to Tokyo. Tonight is the first of four shows (the first three sold out) at Kosei Nenkin Hall in the bustling Shinjuku area of Tokyo. It will be 3rd row center for the next three nights as the tickets Masanori got for me are superb! Again Ron Sexsmith is given a perfunctory 20 minute set because of the 9pm curfew. Tonight "Lipstick Vogue" is the rousing opener followed by "Man Out Of Time" with its new lyrics. "Honey Are You Straight" rolls right into "Mystery Dance" with Steve once again pounding on the grand piano's 88's. Before starting his set with Steve, a guitar less EC with the band perform a sobering version of "Shipbuilding" with the original lyrics. The rarely performed "So Like Candy" deftly segues into "You're No Good" and ends with an abbreviated version of "Shabby Doll".

Prior to his guitar rave up solo in "13 Steps" EC declares "I commence to become groovy" and cuts loose on his 40,000 yen (actually \$400US- with the price tag still dangling from the neck a la Minnie Pearl) Magnatone guitar which he picked up in Nashville at Gruhn's Guitars. During "Distorted Angel" EC repeatedly comes to the edge of the stage to sing without amplification to great effect for those of us in the front rows. While the A's lounge through "Chelsea", EC motions repeatedly with his hands for the audience to bridge the 10 foot gap between the front row and the edge of the stage. It takes a minute or two but the universal sign language EC uses finally prevails with the front rows rushing to the stage. Smash Promotions security staff does not take kindly to this move and proceed to get heavy handed, prompting EC to stop singing and yell some profanities at a security man to lay off.

"Pump It Up" is rejuvenated with a surging crowd in the orchestra pit, but a very worried promoter watching intently from the wings while whispering into Paddy's ear (EC's security man). Bruce also becomes annoyed with security and splashes an overzealous guard with his glass of water. Suddenly Paddy appears center stage to "put a word in Mr. Costello's ear" about what the promoter had told him (sorry no duets tonight with the ex-

Xavier Valentine!). With this EC stops the band to announce that there is (supposedly) a 50 foot drop in the pit and the crowd would have to move back so no one would get hurt. Since there is no drop-off in the pit, this ruse allows a nervous promoter to regain control of the audience! In Japan it is OK to stand up during the show (which occurred at all the concerts), but only in front of your own seat, not in the aisles or the orchestra pit. With order restored, for the first time on this tour the regular set ends with "Pump It Up".



Sexsmith & Costello in Japan: Koji Kumada

The first encore features more scat singing by EC unplugged during "Rocking Horse" with EC fueling those retirement rumours by singing "Bye Bye" repeatedly and then singing "He'll Have To Go" as the audience resoundingly retorts "No"! The final encore begins with EC asking the crowd "You remember how to have fun, don't you?" A slow version of "Accidents" with EC on acoustic guitar accompanied by the A's is another highlight of opening night in Tokyo!

September 10 Kosei Nenkin Hall-Tokyo

"I COMMENCED TO BECOME GROOVY!"

After spending a relaxing day filling various want lists in the multitude of record/CD shops in Shinjuku it's time to take a leisurely stroll from my hotel down Yaskuni-dori (street) to the concert hall. The usual suspects are in line, in the lobby, and in the front rows eagerly awaiting to DAT tape another hot show. Tonight security is tighter with three sets of barricades set up in the aisles of the first ten rows to prevent any repeat of the previous evening's rush to the stage! The gig starts off with a 12-string Rickenbacker trio of "You Bowed Down" (new lyrics), "Red Shoes" and "New Lace Sleeves". The next song finds EC strumming his guitar to a bit of Joe Tex's "Tell Me Right Now": "If you don't love me, tell me right now / Don't hang around until I fall in love with you / Take my heart, break my heart / Do the things that you want to do / Don't hang around." which effectively leads into "Why Can't A Man". This is followed by EC's "Deadhead" song "Little Atoms" with its tape loop and atmospheric instrumental-noodling.

The Steve set features "Talking In The Dark" with EC's Ray Davies tribute of "Dead End Street". During "13 Steps" EC goes into his rap, "I became all peculiar...and I started to play this funny music I never played before, like crazy go-go pajama music or something! I commenced to become groovy! I put something in my tea and said, 'Look out here we go!'" as he rips off a wild distorted guitar solo. "Pump It Up" into "Leave My Kitten Alone" tonight but the real surprise treat is "I'm Not Angry" featuring Pete on his little drum kit and Steve on the organ. After going to hundreds of EC gigs since '79, this is the first time I've heard this song so I'm ecstatic! The set finishes with "Riot Act"/ "Instant Karma" and an "Adios" from the singer. The encore is highlighted by "Alison" / "Tell Me Right Now" reprise and a savage "Daddy, Can I Turn This?". The final encore ends with a shorter, but no less aggressive "I Want You". Tomorrow is a day off so I'm out of Tokyo to do some exploring on my own and relax in an onsen hot springs at a Ryokan (Japanese style hotel) on the Pacific Coast.

September 12 Kosei Nenkin Hall-Tokyo

"I USED TO SLAP LITTLE TWITS LIKE THAT JUST FOR FUN!"

After returning to Tokyo I meet Masanori for a scrumptious lunch in a wonderful neighborhood tempura/sushi restaurant. The third night in Tokyo will be different as Ron Sexsmith gets 30 minutes and the ever-present clock in the hall is turned off so no curfew tonight as a deal has been made with the promoter to play past 9pm. EC hits the stage dressed in his orange shirt/black vest (*Brutal Youth* stage outfit) with a very serious determined look as the A's launch into "Man Out Of Time" followed by a venomous "Shabby Doll" with EC literally spitting out the lyrics. A solo impromptu intro of "Get Yourself Another Fool" precedes "Why Can't A Man". With acoustic guitar in hand EC and band surprise with "Mystery Dance" followed by an effective early set rendition of "Alison" with "Living Laughing/Tear Stained Makeup/Clowntime". EC uses a brand new acoustic guitar to do "I'll Wear It Proudly" with Steve. After doing "I'm Not Angry", EC reveals he really is angry tonight because of a bad review in an English-speaking Tokyo newspaper in which the reviewer stated that EC and A's "boogeying days are over", but EC states "I'm deeply relieved, as that boogeying was wearing me out!" This is just the impetus this show needs as Pete kicks over his junior drum kit, ripping open the drum head during his intro to "Pump It Up" which forces him to play his usual drums for the first

time this tour during this song while the crew tries to resuscitate his mangled little bass drum. The set ends with a flourish as "Beyond Belief" / "You Belong To Me" / "Lipstick Vogue" / "Less Than Zero" / "Oliver's Army" / "PLU" are all played without a pause.



Elvis & Cait in Japan: Koji Kumada

EC returns for the encore and snarls, "Our boogeying still seems to work! I used to slap little twits like that just for fun!" Prior to "Little Atoms", EC tells the audience "I'd like to play a song the way I wrote it for you because you're all so beautiful!" and so he plays the intro on acoustic guitar before the tape loop comes in. The second encore features "Accidents" in which Pete and Bruce stop playing so that only Steve repetitively plays the same few notes while EC coaxes the audience in the "I know" refrain until they are totally out of synch. A great show ends with "I Want To Vanish" and a band intro without a rhythm section (they had already vanished backstage!).

September 13 Kosei Nenkin Hall-Tokyo

"THIS IS OUR CRAZY LOVE VIBRATION"

It's the final night in Tokyo and I'm front and center to experience the spectacle! EC starts the show with, "This is our last night in Tokyo. Let's make this a great night! Anyone here last night or the other two nights? This is for you!" EC and Steve open up with a poignant "Temptation" and the other A's join in for "Opportunity" / "Possession" / "Clown Strike". A solo EC intros "Why Can't A Man" with a powerful "All These Things" which is followed by a 12-string set of "You Bowed Down" / "Red Shoes" / "Hand In Hand".

"Kid About It" with Steve showcases EC's incredible pipes with his singing unamplified at the end of the song. Back in Osaka at the Grand Hotel while checking out, I made a request to Steve for "Passionate Fight" and tonight is the night for my fulfillment! This is followed by stunning renditions of "Almost Blue" and "God Give Me Strength"! "13 Steps" is punctuated by EC's mid-song rap, "Just the other day I went for a walk down the street here in Shinjuku and I heard some people playing some music down in a little

basement. A group called the Drug Onions. Kind of went like this...(starts to play zany guitar solo)...I said, 'What's that?' and they said, 'This is our crazy love vibration!'" (crazed guitar solo ensues!) While doing the intro to "Pump It Up" EC jives, "We've invented a new kind of music: 'Ambient Zydeco'. We're just bullshitting. Steve put his piano in the washing machine and it shrunk. We got Pete this drum kit which he's going to try and destroy again tonight!" The regular set ends with a tense "Riot Act" / "Instant Karma". The encores feature "Little Atoms" in which EC elicits guitar notes like a cathedral bell chiming, which echo from one side of the hall to the other as he smirks in delight at his sonic deed! A crunching "Daddy" closes the run in Shinjuku with a wall of guitar feedback. The audience files out to the hilarious crooning of Tiny Tim doing the Beatles "Girl"!

September 15 Kinro Kaikan-Nagoya

"SAYONARA"

A rain soaked off day was spent viewing Van Gogh's "Iris" and "Sunflowers", followed by a visit to Masanori's neighborhood where I am treated to a delicious sashimi/sushi lunch. After a friendly get together at his home we drive to Rappongi to see Ron Sexsmith perform a complete 90 minute set at Club Quattro. Ron's set is highlighted by his tasteful cover of "Everyday I Write The Book" featuring accordion and mandolin. The following day I rendezvous at Tokyo JR station with Masanori for the final Shinkansen trip to Nagoya. Prior to the final gig we meet up with Mr. Nakamura and many other "Elvis-heads" in front of the venue which seats only a 1000-plus in a very intimate hall with the front row right up to the edge of the stage! Milo and Jimmy (from EC's crew) amble into the venue after spending their last yen at the local bar and pose for a snapshot. The rest of us pose in front of the Japan Tour poster for photos and Mr. Tsukada hand delivers a poster for me in the second row courtesy of the Smash promoter. Domo arigato! There is a buzz in the crowd as it is widely known that this will probably be the LAST TIME that EC will play with THE ATTRACTIONS!

No need for support tonight and EC dressed in the orange shirt and black vest kicks off the finale at 6:33 with the apropos "Oh, I just don't know where to begin." from "Accidents" which steam rolls right into "Uncomplicated" / "End Of The World" / "You Belong To Me" / "Lipstick Vogue". EC's set with Steve features a somber "Favorite Hour". During "Oliver's Army"

Bruce and Pete rush back on stage with towels wrapped around their heads like turbans while EC cracks up trying to sing, "London is full of Arabs". EC intros "Human Hands" as a special request by Pete who is 17 today (not really, but his birthday was back in DC on August 9!). This is followed by a non-stop frenzied set played by a band that knows its time has come to an end with "13 Steps" / "Detectives" / "Pump It Up" / "Just About Glad" / "Beyond Belief" / "Less Than Zero" / "No Action" / "I'm Not Angry" / "Complicated Shadows"! The first encore features EC saying "Magic Moments" during "Distorted Angel" and it certainly was! "Clowntime Is Over" during "Alison" drives home the message as EC repeatedly croons "It's over". Once again a ferocious "Daddy" brings the first encore to a rousing finish.



The Attractions in Japan: Koji Kumada

But they aren't done tonight as a lilting "ATUB" is followed by the A's swan song finale of "The Beat" / "Man Out Of Time" / "Mystery Dance" / "Red Shoes" / "This Year's Girl" / "PLU". In the end EC introduces for perhaps the last time "The Attractions: Bruce Thomas on bass guitar, Pete Thomas on drums and Steve Nieve on keyboards and accordion. Good night. God bless. Sayonnara!" The final note sounds at 8:55pm and I get the expanded Japanese menu gag set list from Jimmy as a memento.

And so the best was saved for the last show and we walked out of the venue slowly not wanting to leave the site of such a satisfying musical odyssey, but all good things come to an end! The night is warm and we are hungry so off to find more Kirin beer and seafood while we talk about "the final solution" in Japan 1996! "I should never have walked back over the bridge that I had burned!" And Elvis probably won't after this, but I'll always be ready to go see ELVIS COSTELLO with THE ATTRACTIONS, my favorite band of all time! We'll miss you guys!

**DOMO ARRIGATO
(THANK YOU)!!!!!!**

Lorenzo

RUMINATIONS

FROM PAGE 5

Meltdown was the perfect place for Elvis to explore his interests. He could walk up on a stage in a room of possibly 150 people and croon "Waterloo Sunset" with a string section; he could sing new songs with an acoustic guitar; sing with Steve on the grand piano; sing gospel; reinterpret his songs with Bill Frisell; have his more well-known numbers orchestrated by his friends and colleagues and performed by a small orchestra; sing Irish-flavored tunes with Irish musicians and a cappella choirs; perform 500 year old tunes with Fretwork; sing torch songs; renew his association with the Brodskys. And it all was great, it was all fine music. *Meltdown* has led EC into many other collaborations and artistic friendships, some of which we are beginning to see the fruits of (the Jazz Passengers, the Fairfield Four, John Harle) and some of which we probably don't know about yet. It was an explosion of eclecticism. Elvis has disdained the word "eclectic", but it does define his approach now, and there is nothing wrong with that. The traditional 2 hour pound-it-out concert format just doesn't work for Elvis anymore. Sure, there are times when he enjoys it, enjoys doing the hits, doing the guitar solos, etc. But they are far between.

Ever since 1984 when the solo tour of the US revealed to him what else could be done with the same material, the same voice (a voice that had been ravaged by the 1983 tour, shouting over a 4 piece, 4 horns and 2 or 3 backup singers), Elvis has been more dissatisfied with the tired old format. I never saw him more unhappy in appearance than in the summer of 1984, when he followed up the solo tour with a loud rock tour (full of great performances nonetheless, but joyless). The next band tour resorted to the Spinning Songbook, and different bands, and solo nights, to break up the routine. Next came entirely different touring bands, and lots of cover versions and the infamous beard. The *Brutal Youth* tour was the first tour in 10 years to fit the formula. But it was not a regression, certainly not a permanent one. It was the result of EC's desire to hear that fast thing one more time, to play THAT music again, with that band, better than anyone else. As such it was a great success. But we couldn't expect it to stay that way, or expect the next tour or the one after that, to remain in that mold. Elvis is too hungry to do that. And so even as EC and the A's toured this summer, the format of 1994 was abandoned. Solo interludes, interludes with only Elvis and Steve, slower versions of the old favorites, were all inserted into the show. The pattern was broken up. In

the end, I think Elvis found himself tired of the standard format all over again. He knows he can do these other things. *Meltdown* and the tour with Steve confirmed for him that there are other ways, better ways, to put his material over. He can vary from the tried and true and it will work. His audience, hopefully, will follow. The crowds at *Meltdown* were very enthusiastic, and EC remarked at the end of the festival that it was the best experience he had ever had playing in London. The tour with Steve was rapturously received. All of this gives EC validation at the same time as it gives him joy in playing. Shouting over the 4 piece has its limits. Singing over a grand piano or a string quartet may have limits too, but Elvis has barely begun to test them yet.

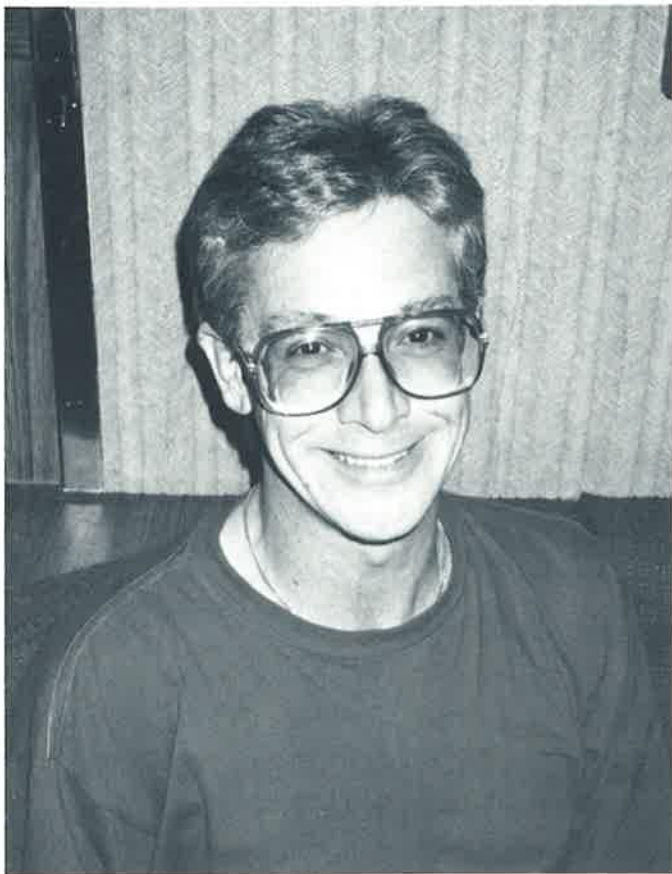
The future is uncertain but it's full of possibilities. It is ridiculous to think that Elvis will cease to produce. He is too full of creative energy to do that. Hopefully he will not make good on his threat to let only others bring his work to us; he has become much too talented a singer and performer to stay in the background while others sing his words. But look at all the things lined up that we even know about....collaboration with Burt Bacharach, the Jazz Passengers, the Fairfield Four. Soundtrack work. Writing for Anne Sofie von Otter and the BQ. More work with the Quartet. And you can bet that the occasional rock and roll song or even a whole CD's worth of "crazy bongo music" will find its way to the fretboard. I wouldn't be surprised to see the occasional Elvis and the A's performance, much like Neil Young & Crazy Horse. I just doubt the unit is going to be together on any long term basis again.

As I write this, the rumors are settling down, though it's agreed that we may never see the Attractions backing Elvis again. Still, EC is already back on stage, touring the British Isles with John Harle, performing songs based on Shakespeare, old folk tunes, and his own "Shipbuilding" with Harle and his ensemble. And in a few weeks, the first real live Elvis collection. But not from an Attractions tour, instead the brilliant Elvis Costello and Steve Nieve shows from this spring. Elvis is proud of this work (and I expect and hope that we will see further collaboration with Steve on a separate album). He should be. He should also be proud of the versatile range of his talents, and the fact that he is able to link and enliven all the various styles of music he pursues. We should be happy about this as well, and as open-minded as Elvis about what constitutes a great song and great music. I am confident that Elvis will be bringing us great songs and music for a long time to come.

Interview:

Allan Mayes

A Duo With Declan in 1972



"I used to do a gig in Liverpool. Me and my partner used to play this "Lonely Hearts Club" cause it was the worst gig you could possibly have. Early in the evening, all the ladies sat on one side of the room and all the men sat on the other and completely ignored each other and anybody that was singing. And once they had about 15 gin and tonics they'd just talk to each other and ignore us. So it was a great gig".

Elvis on stage at the Edmonton
Folk Festival August 10, 1995

I first had the pleasure of meeting Allan Mayes back in 1984. I had become obviously intrigued after reading a small mention in the Austin Chronicle about this guy who was playing in town and had a record that he sold featuring a song co-written with Elvis Costello. A few weeks later I noticed he would be performing in my home town of San Antonio.

Well those were the days when I could still drag my wife to strange places to do strange things. So one week night we took off to the local Chelsea Street Pub, a regional establishment found in large shopping malls that served food and drink and featured live entertainment.

There we encountered a talented performer who played cover versions of popular songs in a pleasant and interesting way. Backed by a guitar, synthesizer and drum machine, Allan easily captivated the young crowd of predominantly air force recruits out for a good time with the hits of the day (The Police, Elton John, etc.).

In between sets, I approached Allan and over a beer I was shocked to hear for the first time of EC's musical career (1972-3) before his pub-rock band, Flip City. We chatted all too briefly and I wrote a small piece at the time for the Elvis Costello Information Service (ECIS). I bought a few copies of his LP which included "Maureen & Sam", an early working of "Ghost Train", credited to Costello/Mayes. Returning to the stage, Allan then played a tasteful "Alison" which he dedicated to "the two nice people" he just met.

Fortunately the story did not end there, as this past April, fate had me stumble across the name "Allan Mayes" appearing at the San Antonio Chelsea Street Pub some 10 years after that first meeting. Approaching Allan before his first night's show, he was most eager to do an interview for the magazine.

What follows transpired over some coffee one Saturday afternoon at a San Antonio diner.

Mike Bodayle

Interview © Beyond Belief 1996

Why don't we start at the beginning. Where did you and Elvis meet?

This morning when I was thinking about this, it all dawned on me that we actually met before we played together. In 1969, I was in a trendy poetry-rock band. I was 16 and the other guys in the band were more like 18. They were from the same high school and ran a poetry magazine called *Medium*. The band was called Medium Theater. I suspect that the magazine had some backing or encouragement from Ross (*MacManus, EC's dad*). I also suspect that Ross had said to Declan: "Look these guys are all quite hip and trendy, you're goofing around in school, you've got these artistic tendencies, why don't you go meet these really hippie guys, there might be an outlet for some of your artistic talents"? I remember meeting Dec very briefly at a house where these guys lived. He said he played, I found out who his dad was, and then he disappeared.

Was your next meeting with him at the 1971 New Year's Eve party mentioned in George Gimarc's book "Punk Diary 1970-1979"?

Yes, we were both invited separately to this party. We both took our guitars and sat in a bedroom on New Year's Eve while everyone else was drinking and chasing women. I mentioned Neil Young, The Band or something to this guy who I still hadn't remembered that I'd met before. For the first time in my life I had met someone who had heard of Neil Young, The Band and Van Morrison. It was like the typical John Lennon and Paul McCartney thing: "You know all that stuff, let's play together". So we just sat on the beds for three hours and it was like: "Do you know 'The Weight', do you know 'I Shall Be Released'". We just sat there and played all these songs and just had a great time. So we possibly exchanged phone numbers.

At this time I had a little three-piece band named Rusty. It was me, a bass player called Alan Brown and a singer called Dave Jago. We had this little trio doing acoustic Neil Young, America and Van Morrison-type stuff and some original material. I phoned Dec a few days later and said we had this little band and why don't you come play with us. He did and we became a four-piece: him and I playing guitar and singing, the bass player and the singer. Within six months the other two had left, leaving Rusty as a duo with me and Declan. We progressed our way through all the obvious cover versions of the time. We also had our own songs that we wrote.

We had a great affinity for harmonizing although our vocal range is so similar. Somehow or other, unless my memory is hazy

and I'm thinking it was better than it was, we somehow used to be able to do a song like Crosby, Stills and Nash's "Wooden Ships" and sounded like four-part harmonies. I guess we both, more by luck than instinct, used to go in the right direction for the harmonies. Without any musical training we used to both know what to sing, and without any planning got this magically-arranged four-part harmony! We started doing both of our own songs and all these cover songs and working these little college gigs.

Did you start right away working professionally?

No, I had a day job. I can't remember whether Dec did as well at the time or not.

Well, by that I meant you were then doing gigs for money?

Oh, yes. At the time, 1972, we would have been getting paid on a good night, £8, which then was not too bad for a part-time musician.

So you would have seen Elvis's first appearance in front of a paying audience?

I suspect so. I seem to remember him telling me stories that he'd played with his dad once. His dad as you know used to play a cabaret thing. So I suspect that around about 15 years old, Declan had gone along and his dad had said "Well you strum some of these chords along with the band". I seem to remember him telling me he'd done one other thing like that before. But as far as him doing anything of his own, he certainly, until he walked on stage with me, definitely had done nothing in front of a paying or even a free audience.

Now was this all based in the Liverpool area at the time?

Totally.

What kind of venues?

Pubs and schools. We used to do poetry readings. The poetry thing was still quite big then. If there were going to be four poets doing a reading somewhere, we'd be asked to do the musical section. We'd go and do our own stuff which was poetic in a way. It was all arty and what seems pretentious now, but at the time it was acceptable for people to be reading their poetry and singing their own songs. Declan didn't have a car and never drove. One night he was getting a cab home from a gig. The cab driver owned a club. Why he was driving a cab if he owned a club I'll never remember. When he saw Dec getting into the cab with a guitar he said "I got this club called The Temple Bar (which is on Dale Street in Liverpool city centre). Oh, you play

folk music? Why don't you come play a night every week in my bar?" Dec phoned me the next day and said: "We've been offered this gig. Guy's never seen us play but wants us to run this place. We take the door money." We did a regular gig every Tuesday for possibly a year. We used to play a set, do a solo set each, play another set together and invite local guys to come play for free or pay some guys a couple of dollars. We met a lot of local folk musicians then. On a good night we used to get 20 people in there. The whole door take would be £5 and we'd split it between us and the other band. It was all very "Mickey Mouse", tiny, but it was great because it was a regular gig. I have cuttings from the Liverpool paper advertising us. We met quite a lot of people, some of which I went on to play with.

Did you develop any kind of a following or was it more of a casual kind of thing?

No, we did, we had a little bit of a following. All bands have little camp followers, but it wasn't 40-50 people, it was more like 7 or 8. Live music at that point was not very strong for the type of thing that we were doing.

Did you have some original things that you were performing at this time?

Both of us had original material. We tended to do more of his because they were way better, or I thought so. Maybe he thought the opposite, that my songs were better. At our age we were too young to be objective about what was a good or a bad song. I always loved doing his songs. They were killer to sing even then. We had one song that we wrote together that we were doing at the time as well, maybe two. One song of his I adapted and one song we actually wrote two separate sections. But apart from that it was like "here's my song, here's what you play, here's what you sing". But I would say that would only be about 30% of our set. The rest were covers.

Was one of those songs "Maureen and Sam"?

Yes, it was called at the time when he wrote it, "Maureen and Dan". I forget what part I had in it at the time we were doing it. It was some time later, long after we parted that this song always stuck with me for some reason. I just thought it was a killer song. Somehow or other I'd taken it and chopped it and changed it around, and I forget how much of it I did at the time when we were together and how much of it I did after we parted.

Did you know that it eventually became a song called "Ghost Train"?

Now you're the only one who's ever told

me that. I've never heard it. I've never forgotten that you told me that. I don't have a version of it. It'll be interesting to hear. I've actually got the original manuscript of that.

Any other of those songs ever develop into something he used later in his career?

You would know better than I would. I've not played a lot of his stuff. I've not been an avid follower. The singles and the first album I listened to quite a lot. Certainly nothing went on the first album that had any bearing whatsoever on the things he'd been doing for what would have only been two or three years previously. So I suspect that if any of them had been used they had mostly been used on the first album. So you say "Ghost Train" was what, three or four albums later?

Actually "Ghost Train" came out as a B-side for the fourth album.

So he's obviously kept things either in his head or on paper that were still coming out. So I'd have to sit and listen to everything. But I've never heard any indications of any lines or titles or anything that he'd used in our days.

Tell me some of the covers that you did together.

Let's refer to some of my lists here.

Note: Here Allan referred to a very meticulous hand-written notebook he maintained of all his professional appearances including the dates, locations, set lists and even what he/they were paid.

So in answer to your question, a lot of Band and Brinsley Schwarz stuff. We used to do "Happy Together" by The Turtles, Randy Newman's "Old Kentucky Home". Also, Crosby Stills & Nash, Neil Young ("Cottonfields", "Heart Of Gold", "Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere") Simon & Garfunkel's "Cecilia". I would say that Neil Young and Brinsley Schwarz were the bulk of our set.

It must be a real special treat that Elvis got to work with most of these people.

Yes, whenever I'd seen the pictures or read about it I've thought: "What's going through your mind? Do you remember and do you know how keen you were about these guys". These were like mega-heroes. *Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere* had only been out a year and *After The Gold Rush* had just come out. These were gods to us!

How about Jerry Garcia and The Grateful Dead?

He was. I never was. We never did a Dead song that I could remember. But I knew that he was into the Dead. Another one that he was really heavily into that I never got hot on was

Jesse Winchester. I can distinctly remember him saying "Jesse Winchester, this is the way to go! Gloom and doom, this is so dark."

You know he just released a covers album that included Jesse Winchester's "Pay Day".

I think there was a song called "Black Dog" or something that I remember him talking about. We never did a David Ackles song, although I remember him having "American Gothic". The Dead, Winchester and Ackles were his people and I was then struggling to get the Brinsley Schwarz thing across to him which I eventually did as we know.

What about Gram Parsons?

Yes, I remember it being mentioned. I remember the *Red Hot Burritos* album and *Burritos Deluxe*, I remember him touting those around. But I could never relate to that far into the country thing. Another album we used to talk about was *Will The Circle*

Be Unbroken by The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, that big triple album, and Joni Mitchell, Graham Nash and David Crosby as well. They were all his favorites whereas I was more of a Neil Young, Steve Stills, Jamie Robertson.

What were your and Elvis's aspirations at the time? Were there plans or was this just fun?

No, it was always super-stardom. I don't remember us ever talking about it, but it was certainly in the back of my mind at all times. I mean not only in 1970-71 at 16-17, but even in 1980 I was still thinking I can still get a break. It must have been the same for him. That was all we cared about. You know, when can we stop doing all this shit and do things properly, the way we want. He did exactly the right thing because it was never going to come to us in Liverpool. There was no way despite the fact we had little local managers chasing us a couple of times. There was nobody with any pull or a checkbook or "Hey, I'm from A&M Records". There was never anything that close. But it was always somebody who said "Hey I could manage you guys and I could put in these four folk clubs. Can we change your name?".

Which you probably could have done yourself?

Yeah, in those days you could walk into a folk club and all you had to do was go and play for free and then the next time around they'd pay you a few dollars. But, yes, our aspirations were for nothing less than what he went out and got. And to do that, then as today, you have to take the mountain to Mohammed and that is, you have to move to London. Cause nobody, but nobody is ever coming up, either on the off-chance, or even if you sent them a killer tape. They're not going



Rusty at an early gig.

to trek to Liverpool, even though its only 200 miles.

Now is the move to London jumping too far ahead in the story?

Apart from the details, it isn't really. What we've talked about carried on for that year (1972-3). It was all pretty much the same. I guess we were only together about 18 months. I don't know what had happened and whether it was a domestic thing. But I just seem to remember him saying "I'm going down to live with my Dad". (This was now February or March of 1973.) I'd been down to stay with him in London with his Dad. In actual fact we'd been down to see Brinsley Schwarz playing in London and we'd stayed at his Dad's apartment.

Now was Elvis married at the time?

No. Not even dating. He said I'm moving down to live with my Dad and I don't think it was ever mooted, "Do you want to go?". If he'd have, I would have said "Don't be ridiculous, I've got a job". Again, I don't remember whether he was working or if he'd stayed out of work since leaving school.

What were you doing?

I was working for the city council, in the offices, a full-time day-job. I just can't recall if he had a job. He may have left school around 17 and went straight onto welfare during that period. And he had no other ties. I had a decent job for an 18-year old. So he said "I'm going down to live with my Dad", and I said "So we're going to finish playing" and he said "Suppose we'll have to". And he went down to live there and we had a couple of commitments, one of which was probably one of our most major gigs. The ex-bass player for our band became the booking agent for Warwick University and he got us a gig down there which was going to be three months after Dec's move to London. So we arranged that "I'll see you at Warwick University in three months time". The last time we actually played together was that gig. He traveled from London north and I traveled from Liverpool south. Right in the middle was Warwick University in Coventry where we played our last gig, supporting, although not on the same stage, Steve Harley's Cockney Rebel, who were still probably unrecorded at that time. And that was the last time we actually played because after that we both went back our separate ways and we were now living 200 miles apart.

Were you always billed as Rusty when you played together?

No. Now that I think about it, one of these agents, or managers said "I want to book you, but Rusty sounds too much like a country band. I want to change your name". He came up with a new name and even after three months we could never remember the name or how to spell it. He called us Procyon, which is the name of a star somewhere in the sky.

That's terrible!

It was horrendous! We humored him and went out under this name because he got us some money and shortly after that when we parted with him or when he didn't know, we went out as Rusty which was the name I had given to the band before Dec had even joined. We never had any other names as far as I remember.

Now back in Liverpool Elvis was living with his mom?

Yes, the whole time. After he moved to

Rusty's Final Gig (paid £17)

June 24, 1973

**Warwick University,
Coventry, England**

First Set:

- Raider (Yester-Henske)
- Tell Me Why (Neil Young)
- Sleeper At The Wheel (MacManus)
- Separate Ways (Mayes)
- Wooden Ships (Crosby-Stills) *Crosby Stills & Nash*
- Your Eyes (Malcom Morley) *Help Yourself*
- Just My Way (standard) *Brinsley Schwarz*
- I'm Ahead If I Can't Quit While I'm Behind (Jim Ford) *Brinsley Schwarz*
- Country Girl (Lowe) *Brinsley Schwarz*
- Up On Cripple Creek (Robertson) *The Band*
- Sunflower Lancers (MacManus)
- Ju Ju Man (Jim Ford) *Brinsley Schwarz*
- Happy Together (Bonner-Gordon) *The Turtles*
- Willie and the Hand Jive (Johnny Otis)

Second Set:

- Hemlock Tree (Mayes/Brown)
- Mighty Quinn (Dylan) *Manfred Mann*
- You Ain't Going Nowhere (Dylan) *The Byrds*
- Old Man (Neil Young)
- Heart Of Gold (Neil Young)
- Nightingale (Lowe) *Brinsley Schwarz*
- Unknown Number (Lowe) *Brinsley Schwarz*
- Old Kentucky Home (Randy Newman)
- Dance, Dance, Dance (Neil Young)
- Dead Skunk (Loudon Wainwright III)
- Warm House (MacManus)
- The Weight (Robertson) *The Band*
- Last Time I Was Fooled (Lowe) *Brinsley Schwarz*
- Nervous On the Road (Brinsley Schwarz)
- Cotton Fields (Leadbelly)
- Wouldn't You Agree (Mayes)
- I'm The Prophet (Mayes)
- Gasoline Alley (Stewart-Wood) *Rod Stewart*
- Stealin' (traditional)

London he came back engaged to Mary. She by coincidence came up to do college in Liverpool, probably within a year of him moving down there. It was like "I'm coming up there, I'm bringing my fiancée, she's staying up here to go to college and I'm going back down to play with Flip City." (or the D.P. Costello thing, I'm not sure how that all went). Then she moved back and Matthew was born.

When he moved to London did you stay in touch at all?

A little bit. A couple of trips up here (Liverpool). I got a letter or a call saying "I'm gonna get a deal, Stiff are putting out a single". Shortly after that I got the single sent

to me along with a three-page letter which I've still got saying "Here's the single ("Less Than Zero") I think it's going to be reviewed in *Melody Maker* this week". I bought the magazine and he got a killer review, "Single of the Week", the whole bit. He was to phone me a few days after that and said "Meet me at my mother's at 6:00. Did you see the review in the music press of my record?". He had *My Aim Is True* with him which was possibly due in the next few weeks and he came up and played the album for me. The most impressive thing for me was the fact that my all time favorite band, Clover, had been his backing band. They are still to this day my favorite band of all time. It wasn't like "Wow, Nick Lowe is producing you?", it was like "You played with Clover, Dec?". Even now that is still more of a big deal than the fact that he's been on the same stage with Bruce and Neil. We used to do some Clover songs. That's another weird twist.

What was your reaction to the record? Did it sound strange to you or was it like you would have expected? Were you able to hear it sight unseen without the punk/new wave image behind it?

It sounded manufactured. It sounded created. It really did, the whole image. The first time I heard anything recorded was off the single which had a picture sleeve. I looked at this geeky guy and said "Where'd the glasses come from; where'd the hair come from; where'd the bow-legs or knock-kneed-look come from?". The *My Aim Is True* cover had been the same and there had been a picture in

the press. So, no, one didn't come without the other, it suddenly came as a package. I immediately thought "this is a whole package deal". They've taken what were potentially some very good songs. They've looked at the market at the time, this is 1977 and The Pistols and The Clash are all breaking. We've got a guy here who could either be Stephen Stills and die, or adapt him enough to be heard". Now whether or not that was his intention when he wrote the songs and he went in with his little folkie, quite melodic songs and Nick Lowe punked them or when he was in London and picked up the punk thing I have absolutely no idea. There was lyrical bite to his songs and I don't know

anything about the Flip City days. There's three years of him being in Flip City and listening to music and seeing bands in London, he may have acquired a punk bite to his music. So whether he went in with "I'm Not Angry" and "Red Shoes" and all that and it sounded just like it did on record or whether Nick Lowe made them sound that way, I will never know.

I always thought that the whole image was a bit tongue-in-cheek myself.

I think so. There used to be a program in England very similar to your *Gong Show*, maybe that's a bad example, and it was called *Star Is Born* or something like that. They used to take guys like me, put them on TV and if you won by audience votes and letters, you'd get another show and you could become a major star by doing these talent show things. The opening credits for the show was this guy playing in the street and then he went through this conveyer belt system..... hat goes on, glitter, new guitar and in the end comes out this shining star, all animated. When I saw Dec's picture that's immediately what I thought of. They'd taken this hefty, long-haired hippie, with *Easy Rider*-type glasses and thought: "I'm sorry we need a name, an image and a mystique. This is the punk era and that's what you're gonna do or you're not gonna do it at all". I would imagine because he and I thought such alike he'd have gone: "You cannot be serious. I'm not gonna do that. I wanna go in a lumberjack shirt, hiking boots and blue jeans". But he must have gone with it either by choice or because he knew that he was onto something. Either way it worked.

In retrospect if you put that album in perspective with some of the other things you mentioned like The Clash and The Pistols, it's relatively tame. But the packaging seemed to make it something it really wasn't. I mean "Red Shoes" could have come off a Byrds record.

Of course it could. DJ's always refer to him being at the peak of the punk movement. I never think of him being punk. It was just on the crest of the punk era.

Remember, it got us out of disco. Punk was really a breath of fresh air.

It was. I hated it at the time but looking back there were some great songs. There was no wonder that he did so well because it was so classy and above the rest of The Buzzcocks and people like that. An aside on that one, another interesting story. The record had come out and had gotten the rave reviews and he started to play a few gigs. A couple of the

music papers had run articles on "Who is this Elvis Costello?". "How come this guy's appeared from nowhere, how old is he, what's his real name, where did he come from, where did he live, what's his background?" A lot of this stuff was coming out in several of the music papers. There was a small local magazine, similar to yours, on what is happening in Liverpool, called *Juice*, it had all the gossip on bands and who was playing where. They said "Hey Allan. We're gonna run a story on the Costello-myth". Now they knew a lot of it and said "Why don't you give us the full story and we'll print it." And I said "Let me talk to Stiff about this." I don't know what made me think of this, there's something weird about this. So I phoned Stiff. I got the phone number out of the book. I had no way of getting in contact with Declan or anybody. I told them who I was, spoke to some secretary and I said here's the story "I'm Allan Mayes, I played with Elvis Costello for a few years. The local press want me to do some revelation about all these questions that the majors can't get. What do you think?" They said we'll get back to you. A few days later, Declan phoned me and he said "I've spoken to Jake" and this is a quote: "If anything like that goes in print, legs will be broken". We laugh now. This is kind of tongue-in-cheek really and I wasn't thinking of my legs but the guys who were going to be printing it! Again this is the mood of the 1977-era, but that's how protective they were at that time.

The reaction Jake Riviera gave to you was very similar to the attitude he had throughout his career with Elvis. "We don't want you to help us".

I have met him I guess. After the record had come out and he had two hit singles, he came to Liverpool and played Eric's, which then was equivalent to the Cavern in the 60's. It was the punk venue. The Pistols; The Clash, they all played there. I went to the sound check. Now whether he phoned me or I phoned him I don't know. Somehow or other he said: "Come to the sound check I'm there at two in the afternoon". I went and I took some photographs and saw the sound check. I was working that night, playing elsewhere in town, so we parted at like four or five o'clock and he went and did a radio interview. Then probably a year or two later he came and played in Southport which was where I lived, which is about 15 miles out of Liverpool. And again how we got into touch I'll never know but I went to the sound check again. I was playing again myself that night and I met up

with him at the hotel afterwards. I guess I met Jake that night. But just how we got in touch I can't remember. I certainly didn't hang out at the back stage but I don't remember having a phone number. And he's certainly not made any effort over the years to return any efforts I made. In fact, the only effort I've ever made was when he played Austin (in 1987). That's how I got in touch with George (Gimarc). George knew about me from the phone call I made. He's the DJ I spoke to when Costello was in town: "Costello's in town tomorrow, if he comes in the studio, give him my number". He made a note of my address in England, Costello didn't get in touch, and I forgot the whole incident until I got this letter from George right out of nowhere saying can you please let me have any information you have as I'm writing this book. We spoke on the phone, I sent him the stuff and the book duly came out and as we said it was a great job. I was very proud and very pleased at long last to have my name in print.

I spoke to Elvis about you in 1989. He was very keen to hear about you and literally stopped dead in his tracks when I mentioned your name. He was on his way out the door and must have stayed another 30 minutes to talk about his work with you. I wish I had a tape recorder. He's also sure to read this in the magazine.

Great, you know I got no feedback from the *Q* thing (see *BB#4*). As much as I've had all this playing and moving countries and all that, my mind has not been as cluttered by events as his probably has from a playing point of view. So it'd be interesting to see how much of it that I know very clearly that he'll even remember. There were so many things going through our minds as 18-year olds as you can imagine.

You mentioned that you too were once keen on superstardom. Do you regret not making the move to London? What would have happened if you would have gone?

Probably we'd have gone down there and I'd have starved to death and given up or we'd have ending up fighting or squabbling, which is not something we did an awful lot of. I'd like to think that I probably made the right decision. But who knows, we could of been Difford & Tilbrook within six months or I could have gotten the record deal. It's a million if's and hypotheticals. I suspect that things would have panned out pretty much the same way that they did. He felt so strongly about his material which was quite rightly so. I assume he knew it was as good as I thought it was. Even the "airy-fairy" stuff of the early '70's. There was obviously an unbelievable

talent.

So the results of his career don't surprise you at all?

No, the only thing that surprises me is that somebody with that kind of talent got picked up. Because so many people with that kind of talent stay in their bedrooms playing. I think it's one of the amazing things of rock & roll that, there's at least one talent out there that somebody signed, got successful and critically acclaimed for the talent that he had. There's another interesting thing that's always preyed on my mind. At the time we were playing these poetry readings, folk clubs and song writers' clubs, there were three of us; Dec, me and a third guy, an acoustic guitar song writer called Terry Doyle. Now both of them blew me away as song writers with originality and style. At the time that Declan went to London, I took the safe path and thought, I could go and make guaranteed money singing John Denver songs. Declan went for the angle "all or nothing-I'll go and I'll starve but I'll at least have had a shot", and the other guy did the same: "I'm gonna go for it, I'm gonna move to London". Costello succeeded, the other guy failed and within a year was giving up playing completely and went back to collecting trash or whatever it was he did. And I chugged along the middle-of-the-road and made a living out of playing. I've done OK out of it and I've never starved. So the three of us were identical, we were all singer-songwriters, eyes set on stardom, two took the chance, one succeeded, one didn't take the chance and chugged along. Now, all three of us could have made it big or all three of us could have failed. Costello could have been the one who stayed at Elizabeth Arden, but he got the break. The guy who was just as talented didn't and he ended up by quitting playing in a few years. So I probably think I did the right move because I don't think I have the talent to do what he does. I think I have the talent to make a record as good as anything Michael Bolton has made by doctoring covers. But as a song writer I don't think I would have ever come close to the talent that he had. I've always thought that I could have been a male Linda Ronstadt or an Ian Matthews. I think that there's a couple of really good records in me of cover versions. But I ain't gonna tell anybody I could write great songs because I can't. I was crap at it.

That's not an acquired talent. It's perhaps something you're born with.

I think so and Declan was born with it.

One thing I remember Elvis saying about you was that when you were together, you were

the good-looking one.

Yeah, well he used to dress kind of geeky. He used to wear these big plaid jackets and big red shoes. He used to call them "clown clothes". He didn't exactly go out of his way to be rock & roll. Then again, when I look at the pictures of me at the time I look like the nerd of the century. We both did. We were no prize!

When was the last time that the two of you met?

It would have been that occasion in Southport which would be in 1980.

Now have you followed his career much?

Not in detail, but I know the surface of everything that happens. I've seen the mood swings, the album swings, the visual swings. I've seen and heard interviews and we talk so alike. I've listened to him speak and even now after all these years, he and I sound alike. Our accents, our vocal tones, the way we speak sounds so alike. I saw a televised interview that I did recently for a little TV station in Victoria, Texas. I thought: "I'm so like Costello". We are very similar individuals really. Now you've seen him more recently so you may not think so. I only know what I see on TV and what I remember. On the same line, he and I play the same guitar style. It took someone else to point this out to me, which as far as I know, we are the only two in the world who do this. We play our bar chords with the little finger above the ring finger. Our right handed style is very similar. We have a similar stance with our hands. Neither of us taught the other. I guess we just both picked it up at a time when we were both very susceptible to learning stuff and what you learned at 17 as a guitar player you're stuck with for life.

How about his diverse musical styles. Have you heard his classical record, The Juliet Letters, for example? Does this surprise you?

Did he have any appreciation for this form of music back then?

I don't remember. There was music in the family from his father, but I think it went back a generation before that. There was no classical influences that I ever saw. I think all that, including his Hank Williams-George Jones thing, is something he found later when he had time to explore. I suspect, knowing him, he'd be in Nashville and go out in a bar one night and hear a George Jones song and have to go buy all these records and listen to them. He'd get hooked on a trend much the same way Neil Young does. I think it must just get boring. If you're going to churn out and be as prolific as he and Neil are, it's like

MacManus originals w/Rusty:

Sleeper At The Wheel
Sunflower Lancers
Two Days Rain
Love Is Like Everything
Warm House
Dull Echoes
Maureen and Dan
For Miles I See
Sweet Convincer
Daybreaks
Goodbye Florence
Morning Changes
Are You Afraid Of Your Children

"Let's go and do a Beach Boy's album" as he calls *Armed Forces* the "Abba-album". I know even then as kids he could write a song to suit any writer. He'd say "I think I'll write a David Crosby-song". I can still hear that song in my head. It was called "For Miles I See", with that Crosby chord progression. He was the same with anybody, like "I need a Robbie Robertson song" and the song would appear. The Brinsley songs, the Nick Lowe songs, the Beatles songs, he'd just throw them together. It was staggering.

Note: We then proceeded to look through Alan's scrapbook together.

This is the original manuscript (in Dec's handwriting) of "Maureen and Dan". This is one of the rewrites here and it was actually called "The Show Must Go On". I remember Dec trying to decide whether it should be that or "Must The Show Go On". Here's another in his handwriting, "Dull Echoes". These look very much like neat copies that he'd given to me for us to learn. I have another original somewhere that is written on computer paper.

Now when you sang things like I see here, "Everybody's Talking" or "Woodstock", did you sing in harmony together?

Yes, very much so, and we played acoustic guitars. Very strangely, I think we sounded sort of like "Nirvana Unplugged". I was listening to that album and I started thinking that. It's probably because they have these really cheap pickups on their guitars.

What do you remember about him writing songs? How would they come about?

I'd turn up and he'd say "I got a new song". He'd play it for me and then dictate it to me and I'd write it out myself or he'd write out the words for me. Then he played it through three or four times while I played

along. I'd sit and follow along and all of a sudden I'd be singing in on the choruses. We're talking about three chord wonders! Every song was three chords so they were easy to play.

Then you'd mix the new songs in your sets with the covers. How'd that stuff go over?

I don't think people could tell the difference between the covers because the covers were all obscure anyway. So "Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere" by Neil Young and "Sunflower Lancers" by Declan MacManus made no difference because it was all new to them. It didn't matter as much then as it would nowadays. Everybody out there was playing originals.

Note: Looking through the scrapbook we look at a list of all the Rusty gigs and also stumble across some song lyrics written on computer paper.

Some nights I played solo. You know, I've got a feeling that maybe he was working. Maybe he did get a job (*the computer paper?*). I played solo some nights so maybe he worked shifts? But I don't remember him ever going to work and I don't remember there being an Elizabeth Arden in Liverpool. I don't remember him being on the welfare like I said. I knew that didn't sit right and the period from leaving school and going to London was too big a gap. He may of had a job in some kind of computer place.

What happened to your musical career after Rusty split?

Around about spring of 1973, after he had moved to London, I entered the *Melody Maker* folk rock contest and I won my heat in the soloist-songwriter category. Then Dec sent me a telegram (in April 1973) because in the same issue as they had the winners, Flip City or D.P. Costello must have had an ad. He wrote "Rusty truckers strike again. *Melody Maker* monopoly! Congrats, Dec."

We split and I played solo all through 1973. Then one of the bands who Declan and I had played with at the folk club contacted me knowing that I was on my own now. They said "Your mate's gone. Come and play with us. We'll jam man!". I went and met these guys, fired a few people, took over the whole band, started doing my own songs and just took over the leadership of this whole band, keeping the nucleus. We changed the name and became a rock band called Restless, which was a Jefferson Airplane-type band. We played colleges and rock clubs. I said to the band "Look, when we're all on holiday from our jobs this summer, why don't we go down to London, phone all the major rock venues,

and say we're from Liverpool and we want to come down and play." Some of them said "Yeah, we'll pay you \$50 or whatever." So we went down and played July 10, 1974 at the Kensington, the same week as Flip City. Dec must have lived around there and he actually came on that night we were playing.

I see that in Liverpool, Restless actually played the Cavern Club, a rather famous place.

Yes, where we played was actually the new Cavern which was across the street. Declan and I went to the old Cavern to see Brinsley Schwarz on the famous "Beatles-stage" you see in all the old footage. That was where we first saw Brinsley Schwarz play.

Do you know if he met Nick Lowe back then?

We would have all met, only as 17-year old groupies. Of course, a band like Brinsley Schwarz, out of town, were impressed that anybody knew their songs and would talk to them. We probably went to see them two or three more times, whenever they came up there. They wouldn't have known our names but they probably remembered those two guys who pestered us every time we're here.

Why don't you give us a short background as to where your musical career went after the band you mentioned, Restless.

Restless went through the mid-seventies. Punk came along and I decided to go solo. I knew that by playing little bistros, cafes and bars, people would give me \$15 a night in 1977 by standing in the corner singing "Fire and Rain". In 1977, despite punk, it was more disco-orientated because at that time in England, everybody was going out. The disco-boom had hit to a degree that everyone went to a bar and then they went disco-dancing. So all of a sudden all the bars, clubs and cafes had plenty of money and clientele so I was working seven nights a week. I'd sit in a corner and sing James Taylor songs and/or little punk songs like "Turning Japanese" and things like that. I was in very big demand because I was self-contained, compact, low-volume, could fit in any corner and played nice big cover versions with a drum machine. So around that time I was able to no longer work a day job as I was making enough money by all this work. I went on the road, got a few good breaks into television, and got more money, about \$100 a night.

What kind of television?

National talent shows which lead to one or two major national variety-type shows. Late night Letterman-type things where I'd do my own songs.

Then how did the Chelsea Street Pub thing come along?

I found an ad saying "American-based company looking for English-entertainers". I wrote to the guy, he wrote back and I sent a tape. After two or three tapes he said "I'm never gonna hear anybody as good as you no matter how far I look. You play the right songs, in the right style and you've got a killer voice. How would you like to come play for us." So in 1983-84, I came over here and did four or five years on the road right across the South, from Florida to Arizona playing 100% cover versions. Come 1988, I'd had enough of it and decided I didn't really want to play at all. I grew to loathe and despise the whole prospect of standing on a stage anywhere. So I quit completely, went back to England, got a regular job and within six months was playing again but with a keyboard partner. All of a sudden it was much more fun because somebody else was with me again. It felt great not only to have someone with me, but someone who was good. He was a good song writer, we wrote and performed a few musicals and after eight years I thought if I'm gonna play this much I might as well go back and play in Texas again. So that brings us right around to January of 1996 when I started a whole new Chelsea Street career.

One last question, looking back how do you feel about his success?

I've been through every type of emotion over this whole thing over the years. It's been over 20 years now. I've been through the jealousy thing. Everything that's happened to him I would have killed for. The only saving grace that's really kept me sane about the whole thing, without me getting really manic about it, is that he's so good. If he'd been really shit and got all those breaks, than I'd probably been pissed off forever. The way I do now about say George Michael. But in Dec's case it was so inevitable because he was so good. I can't really resent the fact that talent came through. If you were talking to George Michael's partner you'd be talking to a much more bitter and twisted man. I'd never ever forget the intensity when he used to show me those songs. If everything else is hazy, it's the way out of normal conversation he'd say "Here's a new song Allan.", click into a three or four minute song, finish the song with his eyes bulging and a wild look in his eye, then switch straight off again and say "I wonder what's on TV tonight?"

This has been fun Allan. You seem very excited and proud of all this.

I'm proud of it all really.



**ON
THE BEAT**

The Latest EC News

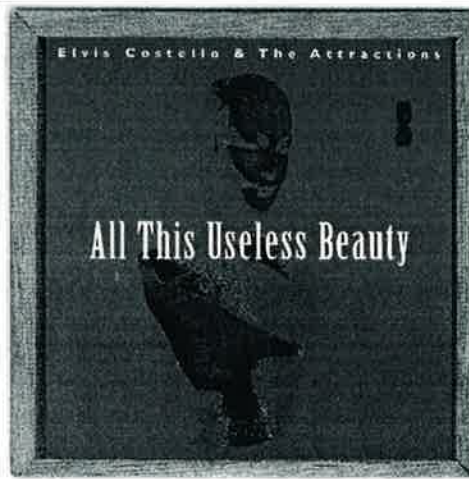
Four Singles in July!

"I just want to find a new way of doing singles," EC told the NME, announcing his self-planned UK summer singles blitz, "they're all the same shape at the moment - I want to make them a different shape." Accordingly, the final four Mondays in July saw the unfolding of what he described as a "pop art project" (a reference to his own close involvement in the sleeve and publicity design work) involving weekly releases of different tracks from *ATUB* in limited pressings of 5,000 CD singles each. The previously-unreleased "Almost Ideal Eyes", recorded earlier this year, was common to all four discs while additional tracks were made up from live performances, remixes and versions of *ATUB* songs by other artists whom EC had contacted to assist with the project. Those who answered the call for help were British bands Lush and Sleeper, as well as remix specialists Tricky and DJ Food.

"Each one will contain different items," EC told Dublin's *Evening Herald*, "some live versions which open up the songs in different ways, some other related material like things which were very nearly part of the album but are rawer versions. The most unusual aspect is to engage other bands to re-cut some of the songs. It's kind of like a forum on the album for four weeks."

Questioned about his record company's reaction to the project, he replied: "It's good for them because we don't know what's on the record until the week before. It's really like a magazine because you don't know what's going in it. Is someone going to deliver on time?" These words would take on an unfortunate ring when it came to the second week's release, "Telescope", where a sloppy mastering error led to the inclusion of the regular album version of "Complicated Shadows" instead of the so-called "Cashbox" home demo recording listed on the sleeve. This error was corrected when WEA issued a 3,000-copy edition of the single in Germany at the beginning of August, although this served only to make the whole affair still more frustrating for U.K. purchasers.

The limited availability of the recordings caused something of a scramble among



Costello collectors with many stores not stocking the singles, and many of those which did charging higher than normal prices. In the USA, the situation was worse, as plans for similar releases were abandoned, although three bonus tracks appeared on a late September release of "You Bowed Down". In Japan, only the "Distorted Angel" single was released to promote the tour.

Apart from the "Complicated Shadows" foul-up, the remixes were perhaps the most controversial aspect of the project among Costello fans (many of whom had lived through the aural atrocities of the RCA years and whose record collections still bore the scars to prove it). "When people first did mixing," EC admitted to Irish magazine *Hot Press*, "it was dismal. I had stuff remixed in the 80s and it was crap." The work of modern remix artists like DJ Food and Tricky was seen in a different light, however: "I love people who paint pictures with mixing. It's become a real form of music. Tricky is doing 'Distorted Angel'. He's going to strip the song away to leave an ambient track. Brilliant." In the U.K.'s *Independent On Sunday*, he added, "I'd put them out even if I didn't like them. It's only a record. My version won't be erased. You can't erase a record by doing a bad version of it."

Returning the favour to some of his collaborators, EC went into a London studio at the end of June to remix one of Tricky's recordings and also found time during the tour to record a slowed-down version of Sleeper's "What Do I Do Now?". The "Imposter's Mix" of the title track was issued on Tricky's UK single "Christiansands" in October while EC's Sleeper song was set to be on the UK compilation series *Volume* (#17) in November. The story continued as Sleeper furthered the plan of "leaving trails everywhere" by including their version of "Telescope" on part 2 of their own UK CD single "Statuesque".

July 8 WO364CD / 9362-43744-2

Little Atoms

Almost Ideal Eyes (Previously Unreleased)
Just About Glad (Live at the Fillmore: May 15, 1996)
Why Can't A Man Stand Alone? (Live at the Fillmore: May 15, 1996)

July 15 WO365CD / 9362-43745-2

Other End Of The Telescope

Almost Ideal Eyes
Basement Kiss (Live in Dublin: December 1, 1994)
Complicated Shadows (Cashbox Version)
UK version was issued with the Complicated Shadows studio version. A special German pressing corrected the error. (carries the extra catalog # WE C795)

July 22 WO366CD / 9362-43746-2

Distorted Angel

Almost Ideal Eyes
All This Useless Beauty (performed by Lush)
Little Atoms (DJ Food Rinse)
Little Atoms (Polished Glass Mix)
Also released September 10 in Japan as "Distorted Angel and Rare Tracks" (WPCR-802).

July 29 WO367CD / 9362-43747-2

All This Useless Beauty

Almost Ideal Eyes
Other End Of The Telescope (performed by Sleeper)
Distorted Angel (Tricky Remix)



September 24 (USA) 9-43777-2

You Bowed Down

Almost Ideal Eyes
Just About Glad (Live at the Fillmore)
All This Useless Beauty (performed by Lush)
Distorted Angel (Tricky Remix)

Live C&N Promos From Warners

Declining to issue the "Four Singles in July" ("that's a British thing") Warners US was not to be outdone, issuing 5 promo CD's; one from each of the *Costello & Nieve* FM broadcasts. The disks came in plain white cardboard sleeves each with different colored information stickers. Only 2,500 of each disk were pressed and although there were some radio station give-aways, the disks became much sought after in the collector's circuit fetching \$20-\$25 per disk. At press time however (see page 4), Warners was busy planning a commercial "box set" scheduled for a December 3rd release. (Wish that they would amend the double-up on "Long Honeymoon" and give us another song!)



The disks covered the entire *ATUB* record sans "Complicated Shadows" and "Little Atoms". Song selection was superb (the project was A&R'ed by EC himself) including most of the rarities performed on this unique tour. There were also "hidden tracks" on each disk (noted below by an *).

Live At The Troubadour: Los Angeles May 14, 1996 PRO-CD-8408

Temptation
Poor Fractured Atlas
I Just Don't Know What To Do With Myself
It's Time
Man Out Of Time*
Shallow Graves*

Live At The Fillmore: San Francisco May 15, 1996 PRO-CD-8411

Just About Glad
Why Can't A Man Stand Alone?
My Dark Life
All This Useless Beauty
Ship Of Fools*

Live At The Paradise: Boston May 20, 1996 PRO-CD-8416

You Bowed Down
The Long Honeymoon
Distorted Angel
Red Shoes
My Funny Valentine*

Live At The Supper Club: New York May 22, 1996 PRO-CD-8427

Black Sails In The Sunset
You'll Never Be A Man
Just A Memory
I Want To Vanish
Alison*

Live At The Park West: Chicago May 18, 1996 PRO-CD-8430

The Long Honeymoon
Starting To Come To Me
Other End Of The Telescope
All The Rage
Watching The Detectives*
Also issued was PRO-CD-8434 which included both the LP and live versions of "Other End Of The Telescope".

Later TV Special

On Tuesday June 18th, Elvis & The Attractions interrupted preparations for their forthcoming world tour to take part in a special concert filmed at the BBC Television Centre in Shepherd's Bush, London. Also helping EC to celebrate his 20-year music career were the Brodsky Quartet and a 7-piece chamber orchestra, plus special guest Clive Langer who joined in on piano for his own arrangement of "Shipbuilding". Despite the slight passivity of the BBC's "rent-a-crowd" studio audience (many of whom seemed more interested in scores from the night's England versus Holland football match which were announced during breaks in the filming) some outstanding performances were captured for posterity, with EC in particularly fine voice.

Music from the show was broadcast in the BBC2-TV programme "Later Presents Elvis Costello In Concert" on July 7th (when viewers were forced to wait an hour past the advertised time due to the Wimbledon tennis over-running!) and repeated in a slightly extended version by the same channel on July 12th. Andy Kershaw also broadcast three tracks from the performance during his

late-night BBC Radio 1-FM show on July 7th, including the only broadcast of Brian Wilson's "God Only Knows" with the Brodsky Quartet.

A commercial U.K. video release by Warner Music appeared on November 11th. Titled *Live - A Case For Song*, it added "God Only Knows" to the tracks aired on TV. A January 14th release is set for the US and a laser disk version is expected in Japan. Warners is also trying to get a one-hour TV version shown on PBS in the US.

"Don't start me talking,
I could talk all night..."

...LATER presents **ELVIS COSTELLO**
A Career Revue

with The Attractions
The Brodsky Quartet
and more

Hosted by JOOLIS HOLLAND

BBC Television Centre
Moon Lane
Leamington

Tuesday
18th June 1996
Doors open 8:45pm
Doors close 3:15pm

ADMIT ONE
Complimentary Ticket
Not for Sale

Attractions:

- Accidents Will Happen
- Little Atoms
- Pump It Up
- Why Can't A Man Stand Alone?
- ▲ You Bowed Down

Costello & Nieve:

- Temptation
- Veronica

Solo:

- ▲ Indoor Fireworks

Brodsky Quartet:

- Pills & Soap
- I Almost Had A Weakness
- The Birds Will Still Be Singing

God Only Knows

- God Only Knows (retake)

Brodsky Quartet & Orchestra:

- Upon A Veil Of Midnight Blue
- Almost Blue

Brodsky Quartet & Orchestra & A's:

- All This Useless Beauty
- Shipbuilding (w/ Clive Langer)

Attractions:

- Riot Act
- Man Out Of Time
- Complicated Shadows
- Watching The Detectives

Costello & Nieve:

- I Want To Vanish

- BBC2-TV: July 7
- BBC Radio 1: July 7
- ▲ BBC2-TV: July 12 (bonus songs)



On September 10th, "God Give Me Strength", the long-awaited collaboration between Elvis and Burt Bacharach, was released on the soundtrack to Allison Anders' film *Grace Of My Heart*. The CD however was initially hard to find as the first pressing of some 19,000 copies was recalled the day before its release since it incorrectly contained Joni Mitchell's version of her composition for the film "Man From Mars". Lacking the copyright as well, MCA quickly reissued a new CD which included Kristen Vigard's intended version of the song. Kristen by the way also provides vocals for star Ileana Douglas in the film, including a version of "GGMS". The film opened on September 13th in a limited release at selected theaters. A planned US single of "GGMS" never materialized and the soundtrack LP even failed to hit the *Billboard* charts. A UK single release remains possible.

"GGMS" was first performed by Costello as a solo acoustic number in Dublin last April. It had also been heard as a band version with the A's at the Beacon last August and of course was a staple of the recent *Costello & Nieve* live set. On record the song manages to capture the Bacharach magic in a very typical arrangement. A surprise to EC-fans is his falsetto vocal on the chorus as opposed to the strong bravado which we heard live and which on record he saves until the last verse.

Grace Of My Heart (September 10)

US CD - MCA Soundtracks

MCAD-11510 / MCAD-11554 (corrected)

Includes "God Give Me Strength" written, performed and produced by Burt Bacharach and Elvis Costello. Also includes the Elvis Costello composition "Unwanted Number" performed by For Real.

GGMS was also released in the US as part of a 5-track promo sampler for the LP. An edited version was also out as a promo CD5 and a promo cassingle was given at the film.

A pleasant surprise on the record is the performance of EC's "Unwanted Number" by the band For Real, done as a '50's girl group number. Although it's a musical delight, this treatment does tend to make light of the tender nature of this song which EC debuted

on the *C&N* tour as an acoustic ballad.

The film opened to fairly good reviews but mediocre sales at the box office. Both Costello songs feature prominently in the film as the mock-Brill Building song writers are seen writing and singing them. In fact, "GGMS" is central to the lead character loosely based on Carole King, played by Ileana Douglas. The song becomes her debut single as a singer / song writer and flops! In the film, a full version of Vigard's treatment of song is heard as Ms. Douglas's character performs the song for its on-screen producer, a Brian Wilson-type played by actor Matt Dillon. (Who adds orchestration to the song, in his own words, "to make it sound big".)

Given its association with two-time Academy Award-winner Bacharach and the sheer power and beauty of the song, it would be a major disappointment for "GGMS" not to receive at least an Academy Award nomination come next February. As EC said at the Supper Club, "I've been waiting 20 years to say I thank the Academy".

Nonetheless, what is real exciting is that this may not be the last we hear from the team of Bacharach & Costello. In the October issue of *Vanity Fair*, Burt had this to say: "We're talking about starting work on an album, perhaps in October. We'd write maybe eight new songs together. Then I would orchestrate two or three of his not-so-well-known songs and he'd sing orchestrations of two or three of my not-so-well-known songs". Let's all hope that this exciting project sees the light of day!

Burt Bacharach & The Oscars

Best Song Nominations:

1965 "What's New Pussycat?"

(from *What's New Pussycat* as sung by Tom Jones)

1966 "Alfie"

(from *Alfie* as sung by Dionne Warwick)

1967 "The Look of Love"

(from *Casino Royale* as sung by Dusty Springfield)

1969 "Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head" ✓ ✗

(from *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* as sung by B.J. Thomas)

1981 "Arthur's Theme (Best That You Can Do)" ✓

(from *Arthur* as sung by Christopher Cross)

✓ Indicates winner of Best Song

✗ Also won for Best Original Score

(Thanks to Amy Giles for this info)

"Terror + Magnificence"

Meltdown has borne further fruit in the form of EC's guest appearance on *Terror and Magnificence*, a new work by respected English classical and jazz saxophone player John Harle. The pair first met during preparations for the 1995 South Bank festival (where Harle performed on the final day) and this, in turn, led to an invitation for Elvis to take part in the recording of Harle's debut album as a composer. *T&M* is an extraordinary programme of five "dreams in music" featuring the voices of Costello, soprano Sarah Leonard and counter-tenor William Purefoy, accompanied by Harle and Andy Sheppard on saxophones, the Balanescu Quartet and an eclectic cast of other musicians.

Terror and Magnificence

John Harle featuring Elvis Costello, Sarah Leonard & Andy Sheppard

Japan CD (August 25) - Argo POCL-1681

UK CD (October 7) - Argo 452 605-2

Features EC on vocals for "O mistress mine", "Come away, death" and "When that I was and a little tiny boy".

The first of the five pieces, *Mistress Mine*, includes three settings of songs from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* sung by EC. "Surrounded by far-off, airy sounds, his voice whispers close to your ear, intense and intimate," noted *The Observer's* critic, while Harle himself, whose liner notes draw witty comparisons between Costello and Feste (the clown character who performs the songs in the play) was effusive in his praise for Elvis's singing: "His voice comes from deep inside his personality," he told *The Observer*, "every single thought that goes through his head is there in his voice." Further PR-friendly comment on the collaboration was provided by an obliging Paul McCartney, who enthused that "the combination of John Harle's music, Elvis Costello's vocals and Shakespeare's words makes for a fascinating listening experience".

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's *Kaleidoscope*, Elvis made the general observation that "songs of Elizabethan times tend to be sung with classical music technique which is at odds with the soul of the songs", describing his own renditions thus: "I'm singing very quietly and very low which tends to make my voice warmer than when it gets shriller and higher. Classically-trained people tend to be able to have an evenness of tone - my voice gets two or three times louder over the space of two or three notes!"

On the Horizon:

♪ JP's & FF4 Releases Delayed

♪ Elvis and Anne Sofie von Otter

Two new releases featuring Costello guest appearances, originally planned for the end of the year, have been pushed back to early 1997. *Individually Twisted* (32 Records 32007), the new album by the Jazz Passengers, will feature lead vocals by EC on "Aubergine" (co-written with lyrics by Elvis and music by Brad Jones of the JP's) and a 1940's style duet with Debbie Harry on a song called "Don't You Go Away Mad" (a jazz standard written by Illinois Jacquet). About the latter, Robert Miller of 32 Records told *Beyond Belief*: "The really cool thing about the track is that no one would ever know that it's Elvis and Debbie singing. It's so far out for them but I know everyone will really dig it! On this track Elvis plays a guy who has cheated on his lover (Debbie) and then pleads with her to forgive and forget".

EC recently had this to say about the former Blondie lead-singer to *eighty-8* magazine: "She's now developed into this wonderfully witty and terribly gifted singer of the music that they (the JP's) do which is very tricky jazz. It's got a lot of wit and humor and is very technically difficult and demanding but she makes it sound really human and brings a great personality to it".

The JP's album was delayed so as not to "get lost in the fourth quarter music-release marathon" and is now scheduled for a Valentine's Day release in honor of the "love song" duet between the two former new wave stars. Elvis recently performed both tracks live with Debbie and the JP's at this year's Montreux Jazz Festival. EC also appeared with the JP's in 1995 at the *Meltdown* festival in London and at the Roskilde Festival in Denmark. Former Rude 5 guitarist Marc Ribot is an occasional member of the band and appears on the new record as well.

Also pushed back was EC's performance of "That Day Is Done" with the Fairfield Four (see *BB#6*) as the band are still seeking out some additional guest artists to fill out their new LP. Those who caught their recent appearance together in Nashville will agree that this recording will be something to look forward to! For those longing to hear this track, a *RealAudio* version played on a June 14th appearance by the FF4 on Los Angeles'

First released in Japan (presumably to cash in on the Costello fever gripping that nation in advance of EC & Attractions' arrival?) the album's release in the UK was quickly followed by a short tour to help promote it. Dates were as follows:

October 19 - His Majesty's Theatre-Aberdeen

October 25 -Royal Concert Hall-Nottingham

November 1 -Symphony Hall-Birmingham

November 4 -Bridgewater Hall-Manchester

November 9 - Royal Festival Hall-London

Coverage of the tour will appear in our next issue.

"Big Al" Anderson

As first reported in *BB#6*, EC and his recent tour mate Ron Sexsmith contributed backing vocals to a track on the new LP by Al Anderson, former guitarist for NRBQ (who by the way opened for EC & the A's in New York City on December 31, 1981). The recording took place in February at the famed RCA Studio B while Elvis and Ron were in Nashville. Although Al has made a great record, Costello and Sexsmith fans shouldn't get too excited since the pair can only be heard in an indistinguishable backing vocal on the choruses of "bang, bang, bang / twang, twang, twang / dance, dance, dance".

Pay Before You Pump

Al Anderson

US CD (Sept. 17) - Imprint IMPCD10004

Features EC and Ron Sexsmith on backing vocals for "Bang Bang Bang"

Naive's "It's Raining Somewhere"

In August, Steve Naive (under this spelling of his ever changing last name) released his third LP of solo piano music. Issued on the Knitting Factory label (KFW #198), the CD was recorded live last December during Steve's dates at the label's famous New York City club of the same name (see *BB#5*).

The work consists of four extended pieces ("before", "the time", "the world" and "black is the color of my true love's hair") that are described as "an exploration of musical themes for an unstaged play of the same name". The label refers to Steve's style of music as "contemplative jazz" and it certainly could fall under the "new-age" category.

Steve has previously released two solo LP's on Demon Records; *Keyboard Jungle* and *Playboy*. He has also released several singles with French artist Steve Allen under the name The Perils of Plastic.

radio station KCRW-FM can be found at their web-site (<http://www.kcrw.org/g/live.html>).

Finally, Elvis was reported to be putting the finishing touches on *Three Distracted Women*, a piece he has written especially for world famous mezzo-soprano, Anne Sofie von Otter (his "favorite singer in the world") and the Brodsky Quartet. Elvis performed with Ms. von Otter in Stockholm in January (see *BB#5*).

Costello Tribute LP In The Works

A tribute LP of Costello covers (other than *Brilliant Mistakes* of course) is finally in the works. Madison, WI-based Mafia Money Records is in the process of getting about 15-20 current "indie" bands to do covers of EC's songs. Label owner David Liebowitz told *BB* "I've tried to discourage bands from doing the 'hits' but am pretty much letting them do what they want."

The project will take at least 9-12 more months to finish. Confirmed bands so far are: Ashtray Boy (Australia), Number One Cup (Chicago), Hugh (San Francisco) and Ex-Action Figures (Madison). Interested bands can contact Dave at (608) 257-5804 or at Almsthuman@aol.com.

EC part of Prank on Howard Stern Show

In early August, a caller to Howard Stern's radio show told of a prank phone call he made to US talk-show personality and "New Age-musician" John Tesh. On the show, which is simulcast to several major US cities, the caller said that he had called up Tesh's record company claiming to be EC and had some lyrics he had written for some of Tesh's instrumentals. The label took his beeper number and got a message right off to Tesh who was in Atlanta covering the Olympic gymnastic competition for TV.

The story goes that Tesh immediately sent his car phone number back to the guy's beeper. He called the number and supposedly Tesh answered "Elvis - how are you?". The guy claims he was immediately caught since he didn't use a British accent. Sounds a little hard to believe (why didn't the guy tape it?) but this is the stuff that "great" radio is made of these days in the US.

Tiny Steps

An Associated Press story on medical students learning to deal with cadavers discussed a memorial ceremony held during which one student played guitar and sang "God's Comic" ☐ A guitar autographed by

EC recently raised \$1200 at a San Francisco charity auction

☐ The September issue of *Movieline* magazine carried a small piece on "LA Eyeworks", a Los Angeles' store of the stars, which mentioned that EC came in twice in one week to buy glasses. The mag noted "if you happened to see him in those star-shaped Theo frames, they were one of his purchases"

☐ In late August, there was an advert in the UK actors and entertainers magazine, *Stage*, looking for an EC look-alike/ sound-alike for immediate work!

☐ The October issue of *Spy* magazine included "Elvis Costello - overweight musician" in a list of people who never made it through high school

☐ In her biography *All You Get Is Me*, k.d. lang mentions that she wanted Elvis to produce her first LP for Warners

☐ **QUOTABLES:** On a recent National Public Radio interview, Randy Newman mentioned *ATUB* as a "beautiful new record"

☐ On the homepage for new band No Doubt, their drummer (I forget his name) mentions Stuart Copeland and "the guy from Elvis Costello & The Attractions" as influences

☐ In the July 3rd London *Time Out*, Jon Bon Jovi offered the following: "Elvis Costello covered 'Bad Medicine' which was a total thrill to me, because he's one of the few living lyricists I hold in high regard". The "cover" was actually just a few (sincere) acoustic lines played on a 1989 radio show, *Timothy White's Rock Stars* (COLLECTORS: Exists on vinyl as a true EC rarity!)

☐ In the November *Q*, this from Phil Collins: "I'm always interested in why the one person doesn't like me rather than the ten people who do. When I'm writing, sometimes I think, maybe this is the song that the critics will like. Maybe they'll finally talk about me like they talk about Elvis Costello"

☐ **TRAINSPOTTING (or Elvis check your royalty statements!):** The opening riffs from "It's Time" were heard in a repetitive loop during an NBC-TV pre-Olympic TV special

☐ Several folks report that some background music used in the hit US TV show "Friends" bears a striking resemblance to "Jack Of All Parades"

☐ On US Cable TV's Comedy Channel, a piece on Oliver North was introduced of course with "Oliver's Army is here to stay"

☐ A snippet from "Pay It Back" was heard on US news and talk channel CNBC after a business segment which discussed paying taxes on mutual fund earnings

☐ "Accidents Will Happen" was played in a segment of VH1's *Fashion Television* to a clip of super-model Naomi Campbell falling on a runway in her platform shoes

☐ On a recent HBO special, comedian

Dennis Miller used the line "he changed his tune faster than Elvis Costello on *Saturday Night Live*" referring to the famous 1977 "Radio Radio" / "Less Than Zero" incident

☐ John Flansburgh of EC's 1995 Beacon Theater opening act, They Might Be Giants, cited EC as an influence in a recent *America On-Line* interview

☐ Clive Anderson's new BBC Sunday night chat show *All Talk*, features "Let Them All Talk" as its theme song

☐ "Distorted Angel" and "Why Can't A Man Stand Alone" were recently heard as background music on US soap opera *One Life To Live*

☐ "Everyday I Write The Book" was heard on US sitcom *Mad About You* which stars EC fan Paul Reiser

☐ Finally, on Delta Airline's October *Alternative Play List*, "You Bowed Down" was included among the in-flight entertainment

☐ **SIDE ATTRACTIONS:** Just before the start of the tour, Pete Thomas sat in as a guest second drummer in Ian McNabb's band at the Olympia in Dublin

☐ Suzanne Vega's new CD *Nine Objects of Desire* features both Pete and Bruce Thomas. It is produced by her husband Mitchell Froom and both Pete and Mitchell are currently part of her touring band

☐ Pete Thomas also shows up playing on two recent releases by French artists: *Casino Music* by Les Homewreckers (Laurence Barma and Martin Stone) and *Nouba* by Kent. On the former he teams up with Paul "Bassman" Riley on two tracks backing their former mate (Stone) from Chilli Willi & the Red Hot Peppers. The latter is a Mitchell Froom/Tchad Blake production

☐ After the recent show in Austin, Pete Thomas dropped by the Hole in the Wall club to "guest-drum" at the end of the Big Foot Chester show

☐ And finally the hard-working Mr. Pete Thomas also shows up on Sheryl Crow's new eponymous LP on its two Mitchell Froom-produced tracks

This was found in syndicated astrologer Joyce Jillson's column:

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Elvis Costello's latest album "All This Useless Beauty" will get plenty of air play through the new year. Costello is another example of hard-working Virgos who commit to careers that can be notoriously short-lived. Virgos are independent and work best when they can control the variables of art.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★



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Here's what else was released in addition to those detailed in "On The Beat":

No.1 Punk Album (July)

UK CD - Polygram 5356.582

UK MC - Polygram 5356.584

Compilation includes *Oliver's Army*.

Girls Girls Girls (August 6)

UK CD - Demon

Reissue of the twin-CD Costello-picked compilation in a slimline pack just to make the retailers happy. No truth to the rumour about a defect in the original release.

Exile On Classical Street (August 13)

US CD - London 452 500-2

This collection of rockers picking their favorite from the classics includes EC's selection of Antonio Vivaldi's "Sposa son disprezzata" sung by Cecilia Bartoli.

Radio Radio

The Difference (US syndicated) Todd Rundgren-hosted show featured live Costello & Nieve tracks and interview bits on three different shows. All were taken from the May 25, 1996 World Cafe radio show: "Telescope", "Little Atoms" and "Men Called Uncle" (aired June 10-16); "Telescope" and "ATUB" (July 29-August 4); "You Bowed Down" (September 9-15). COLLECTORS - these are distributed to radio stations on CD!

Peter Curren (July 4 - GLR Radio - London) Interview with EC discussing the July singles as well as *ATUB* and the tour.

Andy Kershaw (July 7 - BBC Radio 1) Aired 3 songs from the *Later* show (see page 33) including the unseen "God Only Knows."

Montreux Jazz Festival (FRANCE) From EC's marathon show. "Little Atoms", "Opportunity", "Clown Strike", "Long Honeymoon" and "Veronica" are aired plus some from his sets with the Jazz Passengers and Brodskys (see page 10).

Ed Sciaky (July 31 - WMMR - Philadelphia, PA) EC calls from London to discuss his tour and music. Mentions how he and Cait first met Aimee Mann walking down a London street.

Jody Denburg (August 21 - KGSR-Austin, TX) Brief visit with Steve to plug his new CD.

Morning Becomes Eclectic (August 28 - KCRW - Los Angeles, CA) Another Steve appearance followed by a rebroadcast of EC's May visit; this time with the premiere of the studio version of "God Give Me Strength".

Kaleidoscope (October 8 - BBC Radio 4 - UK) EC discusses his contribution to John Harle's *Terror & Magnificence* album. (see page 34).

Television

Later with Jools Holland (July 7 and July 12 - BBC2 - UK) See full report on page 33.

Tonight with Richard and Judy (July 8 - ITV - UK) Live UK chat show with husband and wife team gave us a live "ATUB" with Steve as well as a brief chat. EC sat next to Joanna Lumley (from *Absolutely Fabulous*) on the sofa and the two could be seen laughing and joking as the credits rolled.

The White Room (August 2 - Channel 4 - UK) Solo performances of "Other End Of The Telescope" and "Radio Sweetheart"/"Jackie Wilson Said". Broadcast the next week also ran an outtake of "My Funny Valentine".

Tonight Show with Jay Leno (August 26 - NBC - Burbank, CA) "I Should Have Never Walked Back Over The Bridge That I Burned" with the Attractions and the talk of retirement. (see cover story).

KTLA Morning News (August 27 - Los Angeles, CA) Recorded the day before, more retirement talk and a cut-short solo "I Want To Vanish". (see cover story.)

VH1 (September 20 - U.K.) On "10 Of The Best", Elvis introduces a selection of his favourite music videos, beginning (as is the show's convention) with one of his own.

EC's 10 best videos:

- Elvis Costello - *Veronica* (1989)
- Bjork - *Human Behaviour* (1993)
- The Las - *There She Goes* (1990)
- B.Springsteen - *Brilliant Disguise* (1987)
- PJ Harvey - *Down By The Water* (1995)
- The Specials - *Ghost Town* (1981)
- The Cure - *Never Enough* (1990)
- Tom Waits - *In The Neighborhood* (1983)
- Squeeze - *Some Fantastic Place* (1994)
- Salt N Pepa - *Whatta Man* (1994)

On a later episode of this same show, Richard Thompson picked the video for "13 Steps"

calling EC "a good friend" and "one of the best song writers we've seen".

The Montreux Festival 96 Vol. 2 (October 1 - Japan - NHK-BS) - Included airing of the unrecorded "King Of The Unknown Sea" with the Brodsky Quartet from the July 9, 1996 performance.

Grace of My Heart Elvis was seen along with Burt Bacharach in segments of a VH1 special about the film as well as in brief segments on *Headline News* and CNN.

Upcoming Television

While in Los Angeles for his shows at the Universal Amphitheater, EC filmed another appearance on HBO's *Larry Sanders Show*. Elvis appeared on Garry Shandling's talk-show satire back in 1994, filming his spot when the *BY* tour was on the West Coast. The show will air on November 13th.

NEW BOOTLEGS

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

Elvis Costello

Rest In Peace ?

With recent raids shutting down a major distributor and the New York City stores, will we see a major set back in the production of new boots? Three new titles have slipped through and as expected are hard to find:

Aging Gracefully (DickyPoo) Great sounding double-CD set of the complete May 15, 1996 Costello & Nieve performance at the Fillmore in San Francisco. Packing is rather simple and source of course is the KFOG-FM broadcast.

The Rise and Rise of Declan MacManus (Tone-2) Good recording of the June 15, 1978 *Rockpalast* performance from German TV. Most likely recorded from the recent *Rockpalast Classics* rebroadcast. Also has four "Royal Macca" tracks from March 23, 1995. Missing is "God Only Knows" which thus far can only be found in an incomplete version taken from McCartney's *Oobu Jubu* radio show.

Later (Star) Rapid release of the audio from the June 18th TV show. Though the disc states July 7th, it's actually from the July 12th "extended" broadcast. Quality is decent though the bass gets a bit muddy on the A's tracks.

Upcoming Bookings:

Expected soon on the Doberman label are *Elvis Costello & The Attractions: Back With a Vengeance Parts 1 & 2*. Both are two-CD sets. The first is the complete July 26th London Roundhouse show. The second includes 29 other songs performed by the band in London last July plus 3 from the Beacon Theater in August 1995. Supposedly from the same source as 1994's *I Never Talked To Jim Reeves*, the quality is expected to be great.

In Print

USA Today (June 20) Story on Martin acoustic guitars includes a brief phone interview with EC from Dublin. He recalls how the Martin was the main instrument on his 1984 solo tour, how he recently played one owned by Joni Mitchell (KSCA radio in Los Angeles) and how he handed one down to his son Matthew.

Dublin Evening Herald (June 25) Interview touching on the new album, the July CD single releases and EC's life and career in general. Of his life in Dublin, he notes: "I keep very quiet here. I live here nearly all the time, but I never go anywhere. It's kind of selfish, but I don't want to be hanging out all the time."

Liverpool Echo (June) Brief interview to publicize forthcoming tour. Elvis recalls the helpful advice offered by his old Liverpool schoolteachers: "I was told at my old school on the Wirral that I would never make it in music...I'm not saying I get the urge to drive up in front of my teachers in a pink Cadillac or anything, but it is great to be able to make a living from something I enjoy."

New Musical Express (June 29) Interview with Keith Cameron in Dublin in which EC mentions receiving the *Brilliant Mistakes* CD of Costello-covers by members of the Internet-mailing list (see BB#5) while in the US.

Independent on Sunday (July 7) London newspaper runs interview on the day of the *Later* broadcast. EC refers to himself as a "cack-handed amateur" on guitar but feels he should be on a list of the 100 best rock guitarists: "I as much put the Fender Jazzmaster back on the map as Hank Marvin put the Stratocaster on the map".

Melody Maker (July 20) Includes a great photo of EC and Lush as well as a photo and review of the first Roundhouse gig.

New Musical Express (July 20) Review and two photos from the first Roundhouse show.

Hot Press (July 24) Great Irish music mag interviews EC in his adopted hometown of Dublin at The Factory rehearsal studio. EC mostly discusses *ATUB* but had this to offer about his work with Steve Nieve: "What we've done so far won't be for the Attractions. They're more for a different kind of sound. Steve is living in Paris so they're kind of very French-sounding, that's all I can say. It sounds like they've been translated from French into English. They're story songs. The music is definitely very French in style".

Entertainment Weekly (July 26) EC is subject of "What I'm Listening To" and mentions the soundtrack to Robert Altman's *Kansas City* and the jazz originals found on *The Real Kansas City*, Fugees *The Score* and Anne Sofie Von Otter's *Wings in the Night - Swedish Songs* ("My favorite singer in the whole world").

eighty-8 (July) Phone-interview published by Atlanta radio station WRAS, 88.5 FM. EC mentions that the first song he ever wrote was called "Winter", written in E minor when he was 13 years old. "You can tell I was a pretty cheerful teenager". Also asked about the famous "writing about music is like dancing about architecture" quote, EC said "That's credited to me so often but I don't think I said it. I think I was quoting someone."

Q (July) Reader Jeff Van Gelder of Radio NRW responds to EC's Questionnaire in the last issue as to how EC fictionalized a 1994 interview with him for one of his answers. Perhaps Jeff should also wonder how his 1996 radio interview with EC appeared in the latest *ECIS* as an "exclusive" interview?

Total Guitar (July) Feature "Punk's Greatest Riffs" includes "Chelsea" as #9 in its top 10. Free CD includes instructional CD which includes the "Chelsea" riff.

The Philadelphia Inquirer (August 9) Syndicated interview by Tom Moon via phone to the UK. We learn for the first time about a song EC wrote for Chrissie Hynde: "The song's called 'Twisted Love' and it's not finished yet. It's built around the line 'Stop me before I become irresistible'. I have to hear her sing that".

The Dallas Morning News (August 16) Another phone call from the UK. In this one EC comments on his label's choice of a US single from *ATUB*: "I think the record company is confused to be perfectly frank. 'You Bowed Down' is an admirable track,

but it's far from the best song on the album...There's been too much second-guessing about what radio stations want and not enough attention paid to listeners who are curious to hear songs with strong thoughts and unusual music."

The Detroit Free Press (August 16) Mid-tour interview. See EC's comments on page 6.

Making Music (August) Great EC&A colour cover shot on "Britain's cuddliest musicians' magazine" which features Elvis cradling a pooch. Inside there are more photos, a lengthy interview with EC and a shorter one with Bruce Thomas (all gathered during the Dublin tour rehearsals earlier this year). Elvis discusses *ATUB*, gets slightly tetchy at the mention of Noel Gallagher ("come back to me in 20 years when he's done something"), sings the praises of Bacharach and the A's, and goes into some detail about the band's approach to their repertoire for the forthcoming tour. On his oft-noted musical longevity, he offers this perspective: "I'm only just starting: 20 years is a long time in pop, it's nothing at all in music. Verdi was writing when he was 80 - so watch out. It's all to do with your image. If you don't give a shit about that you can go on forever."

Details (September) Article about album cover art includes the work of Jeri Heiden: *Spike, Mighty Like a Rose* and Madonna's *Immaculate Collection*.

Mojo (September) "The Producers" series spotlights Mitchell Froom who offers this about working with Elvis: "You don't really produce Elvis Costello - he's the general and you're there to assist him".

Q (September) EC is featured twice in "The 100 Best Gigs Ever": May 27, 1977 at London's Nashville Room (his debut as EC) and October 22, 1977 at Leicester University (EC plays double set on Stiff Tour since Wreckless Eric was ill.)

Time (September 9) "People" section includes a color photo of "The New Odd Couple", Bacharach & Costello. Burt says "We've talked about doing an album together. We've even got a concept".

NME (September 28) Issue comes with free Warner Bros promo cassette (WEA NME 3) which includes the Tricky remix of "Distorted Angel".

New York Post (September 28) Short Lisa Robinson interview centered around the release of "GGMS". Asked if his fans were furious about his constantly doing the unexpected: "They're going to get hopping mad by the end of the decade". About the

collaboration with Burt: "Something like this could be like one great event in our careers that we really enjoyed doing and showed a window to another world of music, or it could be the beginning of something else".

Time (October 7) More to say from EC and Burt in a review of the *Grace of My Heart* soundtrack plus another February studio photo. About the movie's "pearl", "GGMS", EC adds "(Bacharach) expresses feeling so much better than the trumped up ballads of today, where the emotions seem to have come off a shopping cart at Woolworth's."

Billboard (October 26) Cover story about the planned release of the live *C&N* box set (see page 4). EC also discusses Lush's version of "ATUB" which he says he suggested: "They actually recorded quite a pretty version of it, which was a nice surprise to me because they did things with it in the vocal harmony that I wasn't expecting".

Bass Player (October) Includes the complete transcription to the Bruce Thomas bass line to "Everyday I Write The Book".

DISCoveries (October) US record-collecting mag offers up a fairly good history of Stiff Records. Several involved on the fringe of EC's first label are interviewed including Phillippa Thomas, Pete's sister, who was the label's fourth employee. Phillippa recounts that on her first day she threw away an important check into the trash bin by mistake! As for the split between Stiff founders Dave Robinson and Jake Riviera, she adds "(Riviera) was the sharper of the two and had the biggest ideas and plans. He could see the potential of Elvis Costello".

As for collectible Stiff records, legendary NYC-proprietor Bleeker Bob notes: "the only thing that's still strong is Elvis Costello, and even his stuff doesn't sell as much as it used to". His top pick was the debut "Alison" / "Welcome to the Working Week" (Stiff BUY 14) with the original punch-out center which goes for \$30.

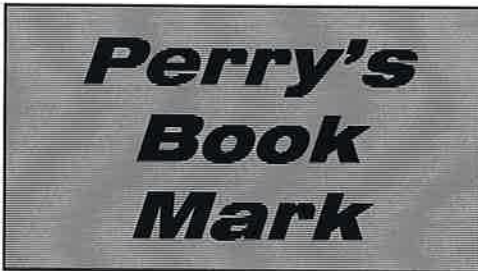
Q (October) 10th anniversary issue includes EC in a mock-*Sgt. Pepper's* collage on the cover and in a joint interview with Elastica's Justine Frischmann conducted on June 17th in West London. The mutual admirers reflect on their past and deep thoughts such as how to organize one's record collection. "That's a librarian thing (alphabetical). It's when you go to someone's house and they've done it by genre. I went to the house of a well-known rock critic and he had sections like traditional African, triple-back flip new wave...I thought it was ridiculous."

Us (October) Burt Bacharach interview and yet another photo from the February session with EC. Burt: "I've always had the utmost respect for Elvis. He's a real risk taker".

Mojo (November) *Girls, Girls, Girls* compilation is included in a guide to the essential CD collection one can get for £1000.

Q (November) Val Jennings from Demon Records answers a reader's question about two "lost" EC songs: "Baby Pictures" and "Having It All". Val was unfamiliar with the former (see *BB #1*) and we learn that the latter was cut from the *KOA* extended play tracks due to time limitations on the CD.

Musician (December) "Songwriting" section phone interview with EC & Burt discussing the recording of "GGMS". Burt: "Part of the appeal of this recording with Elvis was that 90% of the vocal was done to track while the band was playing. They react to him, he reacts to them, instead of some guy coming in and doing the percussion overdub alone with earphones". Elvis: "It is a live vocal. There's one line where my voice cracks in a way that I would have fixed, that Burt insisted on keeping because he said it sounded real".



Here's a look at two recent UK book releases that give EC a mention:

A Year With Swollen Appendices

Brian Eno (Faber & Faber £9.99)
ISBN 0-571-17995-9

Never a dull moment throughout this fascinating glimpse into the mind and world of Brian Eno via his diary for the year 1995. EC fans will, of course, be most interested in the entry for November 22nd, when the pair spent all day (10am to 2am!) recording "My Dark Life". The author confesses to being both "miffed" and "impressed" when Elvis turns up for their supposed day of studio experimentation with a "completely (and minutely) written piece". No problems on the conversational front though: "Man - he can talk. Dublin must be dense with three-legged donkeys."

Richard Thompson - Strange Affair

Patrick Humphries (Virgin £12.99)
ISBN 0-86369-993-6

Humphries was once on the receiving end

of an extraordinary blast from the Costello typewriter after penning a negative review of *The Juliet Letters* in *Vox* magazine. The author clearly remains a fan though, judging from the way he summons up EC's name at the slightest opportunity throughout this interesting biography (even RT's use of the word "shabby" in a song invokes a reference to "Shabby Doll"). A number of rumours have circulated regarding Thompson's non-appearance on *Goodbye Cruel World* and a quote here from Richard himself doesn't quite dispel them ("I think I was just in the wrong country," he recalls vaguely). However, it's clear that there are no hard feelings as the guitarist goes on to pay tribute to EC as "the most interesting songwriter generally in the pop world". Also covered is Elvis's hasty retreat from involvement in Linda Thompson's debut solo album after an unfortunate pub encounter. Linda recalls herself as being drunk and "obnoxious" at their meeting ("years later, somebody said 'What did you ever do to Elvis Costello? He just thinks you're awful.'").

Covers Corner

Here's what we have to report in addition to **Ron Sexsmith's** tour-developed live cover of "Everyday I Write The Book":

Aussie-band **Pollyanna** have released a fairly straight-on reading of "I Hope You're Happy Now" as a B-side to their Oz CD single "Potomac" (Bark GRRR121).

Marti Jones strikes again with her third cover of a Costello song. Having already recorded "Just A Memory" and "The Element Within Her" on past records, Marti, the wife and occasional musical partner of artist/producer Don Dixon, covers "Sleep of the Just" on her new LP *My Longhaired Life* (Sugar Hill SHCD-5503). Showing great taste in music, Marti also covers Nick Lowe ("I Love the Sound of Breaking Glass"), Squeeze ("Black Coffee in Bed") and Aimee Mann ("Put Me On Top") on her new LP.

In the reissue department, "(I Love You) When You Sleep", which was recorded in 1984 by Tracie (Young) on her LP *Far From the Hurting Kind*, makes its first appearance on CD with a Japanese release (Polystar PSCR-5483). The song is an early version of *GCW's* "Joe Porterhouse",



READERS' CHOICE

Last issue we asked you to select your five (5) favorite Costello compositions that were released as either B-sides or extended play tracks (not included as part of an original LP). Here's what you thought:

Black Sails In the Sunset	6%
Just A Memory	5%
Big Tears	4%
Girls Talk	4%
Hoover Factory	4%
Heathen Town	3%
Shoes Without Heels	3%
King of Confidence	2%
Radio Sweetheart	2%
Talking In The Dark	2%
The Peoples' Limousine	2%
Tiny Steps	2%
Turning The Town Red	2%

For next issue:

What is your favorite line from a Costello song?

COMPETITION!

Sorry but no one correctly guessed that the *ATUB World Tour* would open with "Just About Glad". (By the way - so did the *Costello & Nieve* tour!)

However we had four winners who knew the names of the characters EC played in his film appearances: *Americathon* (Earl Manchester), *Straight To Hell* (Hives the Butler), and *No Surrender* (Rosco de Ville): Craig Montoya of Brooktondale, NY, Kjell Magnusson of Hamburg, Germany, Jacek Rataczek of Kaliz, Poland and Peggy Smidt of Cordova, TN. All received a copy of the 1996 Japan tour program.

For next issue: *What Elvis Costello song has been commercially released in the most different audio/video formats?*

GLITTER

GULCH

Free Classifieds To Readers

COSTELLO PHOTOS WANTED!

Looking to expand collection as well as *Beyond Belief* archives. Please contact Mike Bodayle, 110 Granburg Circle, San Antonio, TX 78218, USA.

DAT TRADERS WANTED

Looking for Costello, Cast, DelAmitri, Trashcan Sinatras, Crowded House, etc. Have lots to trade. Dan Timmons, 5814 W. Lake Street, St. Louis Park, MN 55416, USA.

EC TAPES WANTED FOR TRADE

Looking for EC at Cambridge, Edmonton and Meltdown. Swap for 1996 London shows at the Empire and Roundhouse. Write to: Colin Wilkinson, 16 Mayville Rd, Liverpool, L18 0HQ, UK.

RARE EC PROMOS FOR SALE

Elvis Introduces Almost Blue promo LP autographed & numbered (ECCHAT 1) and *A Conversation With* double LP autographed & numbered (EC CHAT 2). SAE/IRC to: Paul Thomas, 107 Chandlers Drive, Erith, Kent, DA8 1LN, UK.

HELP & INFORMATION WANTED

On where to obtain *13 Steps Lead Down & Sulky Girl* CD singles and video tapes of TV & live appearances (preferably in stereo). Also seeking contact with other Scandinavian EC fans. Write or call Sverre Ronny Saetrum, Granholmveien 11, 3230 Sandefjord, NORWAY. Phone: 0047 33458208 E-mail: askalleb@online.no

COSTELLO ITEMS WANTED

Bunch Of Stiffs LP, *1 And Only - 25 Years Of Radio 1* CD, *Live For Ireland* Irish 2-LP. Also any EC bootleg CDs (especially *Red Shoe Imposter*, *Greatest Hits Live & Hidden Charms*). CD boots *Plugging The Gaps* (vols. 1 & 2) and *The Rise and Rise of Declan MacManus* available to trade. Patrick Marchant, 86 Ibscott Close, Dagenham, Essex, RM10 9YT, UK.

WANTED: TOUR POSTERS & LIVE CDS.

I have posters to trade. Peter Horsted, 59 Queenswood Ave, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 8HR, UK.

SONGBOOKS WANTED

Looking for Costello songbooks: *Elvis Costello-A Singing Dictionary* and *Elvis Costello-Everyday I Write the Songs* both published by Plangent Visions. Neil Anderson 465 South Shore Drive Anacortes, WA 98221 USA

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