

JESUS LIZARD

Story By David M. Earle



ANYTHING BUT DIFE

Jesus Lizard, with members' past trophies hidden in the closet, bust into *PURE* and out of your speakers with a knowledgeable muddy fury. Five songs, jumping from the thick and morose to the acoustically heavy, make this debut tighter and more diverse than most albums. What else can you expect from a personnel that consists of the talents of such bands as Scratch Acid, Rapeman, and 86?

Years ago (early 1987), back in Austin, Texas, Scratch Acid broke up. Bassist David William Sims and drummer Rey Washam split to Chicago to jam out with Steve Albini in Rapeman. Before this, Sims and Scratch Acid lead singer, David Yow jammed out with guitarist Duane Denison. It quickly fizzled out due to the draw of the mid-western mecca and Rapeman. Dave Sims and Rey split, and David Yow was next to split to the windy city because Rey promised him the position of "the drum tech roadie kinda guy" for Rapeman. "I'd be traveling to Europe and Japan," said David Yow over the phone from Minneapolis where they were preparing for a tour with Flour. "I was going 'yeah, that'd be cool' but it turned out that Steve didn't want a roadie, so I got to get a job in a restaurant. I punched Rey out because of it."

When Rapeman dissolved after an Ep and album, it seemed logical to look back to the Jesus Lizard. Duane Denison moved to Chicago and the trio

began writing material. The fourth member of the group that recorded turned out to be a drum machine. Logically Steve Albini produced the Ep. David Yow explained how that came about: "In January, since we had all these songs and no drummer, we decided to go ahead and record with a drum machine. I'm pretty good friends with Steve and he seemed to know how to make a drum machine sound good (i.e. Big Black). And then we decided that the drum machine wasn't exactly what we wanted for several reasons. I knew Mac McNeilly since his days in 86, and I called him in Georgia and he came up to see if he liked it and if we liked him and he did and we did, so he moved to Chicago."

David William Sims agrees that the drum machine was "definitely the weak link. I've never really seen a band with a drum machine live that I thought was very entertaining to watch, and it's just more fun playing with a real drummer. At the time we wanted to record these songs and we didn't have a drummer, so we went with the drum machine." Since the limitations of the drum machine are the only things that slighten the power of *PURE*, Mac McNeilly was the final member to make the initiating move North. Three quarters of a year later found Jesus Lizard embarking on a five week East Coast/Midwest tour.

This tour is a welcome change to David Yow, who hasn't toured since Scratch Acid days. Back on the road

was "largely one reason I was willing to do this again," says Yow. "I didn't really want to do a band for awhile after Scratch Acid broke up, but then I kinda got the urge to get on the com-mode again...road again." Yow also reported that the tour had been going good (apart from most of the band being "pretty close to sick") with a surprisingly large amount of the audience knowing the material off the recently released *PURE*.

David William Sims knows that much of this is due to the personnel's past credits, but says, "it doesn't really bother me at this point. Being a new band, I'm pretty much happy for anything that'll get people to come to the first show and the first record and then stay with it on the merits of the band."

Directly following this tour, the band hopes to record the 11 or 12 new songs that they've been working on. This includes those that the band has worked on as a whole, as well as songs that have been written individually, like an instrumental that David William Sims wrote back during the Scratch Acid days. David Yow says that the direction that the LP will take will probably be more in the vein of "Bloody Mary" because they have more "dynamics." "I think it's better than Scratch Acid and I think our next record will be a lot better than the Ep," says Sims. Following the recording of the album, Jesus Lizard hopes to get over to Europe where *PURE* is on Southern Records.

The next record will be consistent with the diversity of the Ep with the added creative input of a drummer, with a little of the same experimentation. "We have access to Steve (Albini)'s studio when we want," says Sims. "And the 4-track at my place (for experimenting). It's just always fun to try new stuff like that. Otherwise, it gets redundant pretty quickly. You just start to rewrite your old material like the Psychedelic Furs."

Both of David William Sims' other bands, Rapeman and Scratch Acid, were successful as far as making a name for themselves. Sims says that of the three bands, Jesus Lizard has been the most fulfilling. "I pretty much get to do what I want. If I want to play a song, these guys are pretty easy going about it. They're pretty easy going in general. The whole touring and traveling and spending a whole lot of time with these guys has been really pleasant, which it hasn't always been in all my bands and that makes a difference."

Heavy and fresh, seething with muddy rhythms, guitars that vibrate between nice and nasty, and songs that are anything but pure. That's Jesus Lizard. David William Sims and David Yow have proven themselves before and are doing it again with an outfit that is sure to please the cravings of those who need a little bit of buzzsaw flossing in their lives. □

Perfect Sound Forever
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The Legacy Of The Jesus Lizard



photo courtesy of Touch and Go

A Look Back Through My Own Urine By Steve Funderburg

My favorite band is cooler than yours. I'm sure of it. In fact, I'm so confident of this argument that I will proffer it in the face of the fact of it's completely subjective stance. I KNOW I'm right because my favorite band is The Jesus Lizard, Amen!

This is not a frivolous declaration in the least and I am using the same rigid standards by which I would select a wife. And if The Jesus Lizard were a girl I would marry her.

The first we heard of these jokers (by we, I mean underground music fans outside of Chicago) was in a few independent press media radar blips which surfaced in 1989 in the form of interviews with old-school punk rags like Flipside. In fact, it was in one such story that I initially received the news that the singer and bassist of Scratch Acid (the two David's, Yow and Sims) had put together a new project and apparently, the live show involved Yow's testicles being used as a sonic stage prop the likes of which you ain't never seen before. Well, obviously I had to check these guy's out. Hell, I had already found Scratch Acid's "She Said" to be fairly intriguing and as a bonus, Yow had evidently developed an increasingly perverse and demented stage presence, what was there to lose? Nothing.

The first Jesus Lizard release is an EP called *Pure* (Touch & Go, 1989), or as I like to call it, 'book one of the revealed word.' At once you hear stylistic elements of Chicago contemporaries and predecessors such as Big Black and Ministry and of course, there's the Steve Albini production. But no other band (saving

ones including him as a member) would ever be as closely or intimately associated with Albini's particular studio bearing. For an introductory course, I suppose *Pure* does its job, which is to just give the listener a tease, or blink at the greater picture which could ultimately manifest itself. It also contains one perfectly conceived certified masterpiece in the form of "Blockbuster" and, not surprisingly, in this we find the first great look at the trademark Yow psyche. By all signs, he has tapped a muse perfectly suited to fit the twisted, uneasy music served up by Sims and classically trained guitarist Duane Dennison all to the beat of a steady if un-dynamic drum machine. However, none of this prepares the listener for what's next.

The following year, the first full-length album (*Head, Touch & Go* 1990) hits the stores and the revealed word is kicked up to regions well beyond eleven. The radical difference is quickly apparent and boils down a very important things: A human drummer by the name of Mac MacNeilly who to the bands good fortune happens to be the greatest drummer of all time. He's a human dynamo incorporating jazzy smoothness and precision and devastating rock steady grooves. How, I have no idea. This immediately gives Albini (returning to the producers chair for the first of four more Jesus Lizard sessions) the ability to do his "thing" properly. And his "thing" is all about the drum sound, and the knowledge that if the drums' full sonorous essence is captured, it can completely fill up any sparseness in the recording. Rob O'Connor, who is a writer on Yahoo's Launch music guide, describes Albinis production technique as having the effect of ensuring "their records never rise above a glorious din." This is horseshit of the highest order. The power is captured in glorious clarity, the perceived murk is more a quality of the music's swampy nature than any mixing inadequacies. Mac is a vitalizing aspect and his addition to the ranks coupled with the tender loving care of Albini makes it possible for the band to show themselves to us in full. Musically, there are still faint details of prior post punk pioneers in the overall sound maybe a little Fall lurking around in the mix, but it's the trademark Jesus Lizard rhythms that fully surface now and transform this band into something legitimately other. To be honest, the best description for it comes from drummer Mac himself: "we write the rhythms then twist them around to make them somehow uncomfortable."

But equal to the discomfort of the music itself is the highly unsettling abstract snapshots created in the lyrics of Yow. Tales of degenerate sexuality that might be appropriate for some stream of consciousness art house film swim in perfect disharmony with the precise and ominous guitar riffs and snake like time signatures. But it's a snake of a particular character, a sidewinder perhaps.

At this point, I can claim to have backed up my opening assertion, but more evidence is available. Inevitably, the Lizard DID eventually create a buzz, the kind any wanna-be alternative rockstar would sell his rare Weezer and Fugazi demo's with alternate Canadian artwork for. This is as it should have been and I remember being completely assured (spiritually comfortable) that it was NOT going to pass a certain ceiling in terms of actually effecting the popularity of the band on a commercial level. I understood this because the Jesus Lizard made it manifestly clear to anyone in 30 seconds that their music was inherently unpleasant and unlikeable and thus, alien to any radio format. And this is my

point, the Jesus Lizard are one of a hand full of musical artists to be a genuine example of genre pioneer, or at the very least the definitive example of Chicago post-punk as a sub-genre. By the time their second LP (*Goat*) came out, it was beyond argument that this would be the greatest band of the particular decade that know one would care about once the decade was done. It even got to the point where The Jesus Lizard was included in a privileged ring of three American bands to be granted the active patronage of Kurt Cobain, which to me is easily the biggest proof of his importance. Why, he even singled them out for the singular superlative of being "THE Band," proving that Kurt Cobain put his money where his mouth is when it comes to keepin' it real back in the underground. He actually puts them on a split 7" with Nirvana. The absolutely astounding haunted house slide guitar on *Goat's* "Nub" was probably key in convincing him The Lizard deserved the shot.

Goat is truly the quintessential Jesus Lizard album and goes a good way in helping the hapless listener to understand them by literally giving the listener a language with which to describe the experience. By exerting a more consistent control of the pace of the album-in contrast to *Head-one* can really examine the parts that make up the whole of the bands sound. And lo and behold, on track four we actually have a song called "Seasick", providing the only fitting title for the sensations the rhythms are meant to induce, whether you love it or not. I happen to love, love, love it and "Seasick" itself is a great marriage of Hemingway and too much cough syrup late at night.

In '92 we were treated to album number 3, *Liar* (Touch & Go 1992). This is easily the sharpest and harshest (not to mention heaviest) Lizard album of them all and kicks off with the ingenious "Boilermaker," which also ranks as one of the bands 5 best tunes. What a beautiful meditation on discomfort, distrust and suffocation. Also present is "Puss" from the split 7" with Nirvana.

Well, to make a longer story shorter, let's just add that for the next six years The Jesus Lizard managed to swim at nearly the same level of John Spencer managed to swim at between '94 and '95, and, mind you, without any thing even approximating Spencers girl friendly booty shakin' mojo.

Let's briefly review the rest of the official catalog of the revealed word. Albini's final foray into Lizard country was 1994's *Down* (Touch and Go), a quieter more reflective LP with a larger range of emotions and anti-colors than it's three predecessors. Although Albini chose a tinny bass sound for this album (a sound he has used on some of his own Shellac albums) songs such as "Horse" where the use of organ is an incredibly effective mood setter, and "Elegy" show a new lush elegance not heard on prior OR future recordings. Then on to 1996, a major label contract with Capitol records and my personal favorite, *Shot*. Here, the guys opt for a conventional producer and bring in GGGarth, who's credits include everyone from Rage Against The Machine to The Melvins. I think the deal with this record was to show that even though the band is bathed in "clean" conventional studio mix, they are still the Jesus Lizard and that means dark, ugly and weird. In classic JL fashion, a ditty of pure rhythmic lunacy called "Thumper" is our introduction. I could not tell you what time this is played in but trust me, straight-four it's not. But there ARE some great grooves on this record: check

out "Trephination" and "Now Then." By this time, JL had also played European festivals and even had a slot on the Lollapalooza tour. But no big label or heavy exposure could do much to save the Lizards' life. But it sure delayed their death.

In the interim, between '96 and '98, the band experienced the crucial loss of Mac. As a huge fan, I am a little surprised that I have never really gotten a substantial explanation of his parting but I have heard things about grueling tour schedules and family obligations. Regardless of why, the guys had to know they had hit a road bump after his departure. During the life of the Jesus Lizard guitarist Dennison had been doing a jazzy little side project, The Dennison/Kimball trio, and it was from this project replacement drummer Jim Kimball was selected. Was he as good as Mac? Hell no!

Don't get me wrong, he's a fine drummer but could not live up to the power and precision of the attack known as Mac. But the closest he would ever come to doing just that was "I Can Learn," the first song of the last JL studio album *Blue* (Capitol, 1998). With *Blue*, the Jesus Lizard were giving us a conscious last will and testament and they employ the production talents of Andy Gill (Gang of Four) to bring this fatal vision to life. There are some interesting things going on in the mix here, but a lack of focus and consistency as well as the loss of Mac's propulsion are undeniably harmful. To be fair, there is an EP worth of viable material here. I would even admit that lyrically "A Tale of Two Women" is the bands greatest moment. But overall, not a proper end for my favorite band AKA the best band ever.

Thankfully, it doesn't need to be. You see they had recorded another album. But this album was *Bang* (Touch & Go 2000) and it was put together by culling B-sides and rare material. Now here we have a proper ending AND a great anthology style overview of the bands career. If you want to dip your toe in the water than this is the album to do it with.

But these guys were never meant to be The Lizard indefinitely and now with them gone forever, I can settle into the comfortable assurance that my favorite band will never disappoint or embarrass me. They will never pull a Bauhaus and reform to cash in after a slew of questionable projects fail to bring long standing success for individual band members. This ain't gonna happen because there are probably less than a few thousand hardcore Jesus Lizard fans left in North America and that number probably dwindles every year. Good. This band is what used to pass for a hip rock critic's wet dream back when music writers were expected to be more adventurous than putting all their money on the goddamn White Stripes. So I will enjoy them in happy solitude and I don't care if you think it's ridiculous posturing to champion a band based on their inaccessibility. I will tell anyone to their face that Cheap Trick are an incredible band and at their prime. THOSE guys could fill entire stadiums with hysterical teenage chicks. Big deal.

But you see, Cheap Trick are, even at their most Godly, a Rock'N'Roll band. The Lizard, by sheer fact of their rhythms and song structures, were NOT a rock band. They had guitar, bass and drums as well as an energetic charismatic icon in Yow, but were discernibly "un" rock, "un" punk, "un" metal and "un" any

comfortable pigeonhole which comes with the luxury of a pre existing audience. Now that I think of it, the choice of Yow as frontman alone constitutes independent evidence. He is not young, but old (by the time JL got signed to a major, Yow was in his mid thirties). He is not handsome, but majestically ugly. He does completely inexplicable things like claiming his love for Led Zeppelin publicly and directing an Offspring video! So you see, the only band to righteously approach the phenomena of '60's bands like Captain Beefheart, the Velvets and the Stooges is the Jesus Lizard. But no one REALLY noticed that because modern writers and music purists are way more pedestrian then they can ever admit to themselves and they need to hear the familiar trail map provided by pop music, or they can't dig it. The Pixies, Husker Du, and Smashing Pumpkins were significant bands, but only in the context of being tremendously creative and original pop music. The Lizard is interesting because all these bands spent the late eighties and or early nineties receiving critical praise but JL was not interested in making pop or rock music in any recognizable form. That, in my opinion, makes them MUCH more worthy of praise and less likely to capitalize on it.

As I said before, the Jesus Lizard are cooler than your favorite band, and now I've proven it. Why else would a grown man rub his shriveled ball sack on a live mic and call it art?

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[MAIN PAGE](#)[ARTICLES](#)[STAFF/FAVORITE MUSIC](#)[LINKS](#)[E-MAIL](#)

these songs were performed), he released a bunch of cassettes and 12"s on a bunch of dodgy overseas labels (dodgy because they've sent us nothing for free). Hans' songs remind me of the exuberance of the best Modern Lovers stuff, combined with single-minded percussion heard on Big Black's *Atomizer*...although I would never say something as stupid as "Jonathan Richman meets Big Black", 'cause if Jonathan Richman did meet Steve Albini, it's doubtful the two of them would have very much to say to each other (and that wouldn't make such a great record, now would it?). Hans is as self-assured as the former, but nowhere as self-aware as the latter. Like that other goofy-accent band, Lul, Hans Platzgummer uses the speech barrier to his advantage, although the translation for "can I sleep on your floor" couldn't have been too hard to figure out. U.S. 7" releases coming soon (if Chris Lombardi ever gets the crack pipe out of his mouth). (Muhelstrasse 12, Ch-9000 St. Gallen, Austria) - Gerard Cosloy

HARD ONS *Dickcheese* (red or green vinyl) LP

LEMONHEADS *Hate Your Friends* (blue, yellow, or clear vinyl) LP

MISSION OF BURMA *s/t* (red or green vinyl) LP

All titles on Taangi

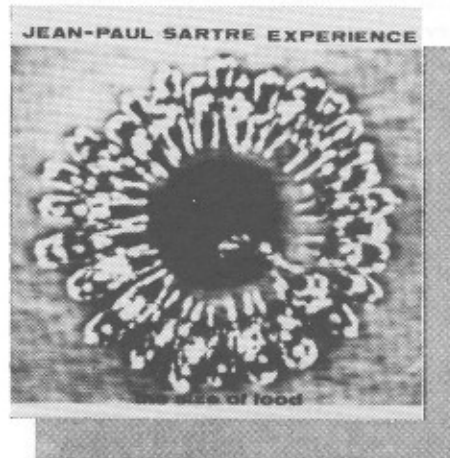
Well, I listened to all my new Taangi records, which I bought, being collector scum like I am, for their coloredness. They all sounded just the same as the black ones! I knew they would of course, but it's cool to have the colored wax. Then I sighed big because how will people know how cool I am like this? Sometimes somebody might come over and actually take all my records out of their sleeves and say, "ooooo" when they see color, but hardly ever does this happen. So I got out all these masonry nails, left by my apartment's former tenants, and I nailed all the new Taangi yellow, clear, blue, red, and green stuff all over my walls in clever patterns. They look really beautiful and now all the people who come over will see my cool collection of colored wax. (Taangi P.O. Box 51, Auburndale, MA. 02166) - Vicky Wheeler

JEAN PAUL SARTRE EXPERIENCE *The Size of Food* LP (Communion)

On their second album, JPSE come outta the blocks like Ben Johnson after his first set of special flu shots; by comparison with last year's *Love Songs*, this is a completely different band, and one ready to be re-

garded among New Zealand's finest. *Love Songs* compiled the sublime (their '86 debut EP) along with the ridiculous (their plodding follow-up NZ album, plus a pointless cover of "Bo Diddley") proving to be a rather spotty introduction. This album, however, follows three years of touring, break-up rumors, aborted studio work, more touring and rumors and benefits greatly from same. This is now one tough outfit.

The Size of Food is the nicest surprise I've heard from Kiwiville since the Bird Nest Roys' album. Finally, JPSE's three songwriters appear less at odds with one another and better able to transmit tension



into the grooves. Gone is pastoral evocation for its own sake, replaced by a renewed ferocity. Like their debut EP, some of these songs tend to creep along the perimeter of your skull before sliding in for the kill, but the real kick here is how impolite these fellows have become, nicking riffs (hell even entire song structures) from such warhorses as Television, New Order and Wire, running 'em through the Sartre-o-matic, and spitting out perfect julienne pop songs everytime. If B.A.L.L. were on Flying Nun, if Galaxie 500 really lived up to all that hype, they might sound like this. (P.O. Box 95265, Atlanta, Ga 30347) - Jeff Gibson

JESUS LIZARD *Pure* LP (Touch & Go)

So, you've just completed a good, hefty poop. You wipe, flush, and get up. Except...rather than see the happy swirl of the successful workings of plumbing and gravity, the loggers are swimming in a slow moving circle of translucent, almost cute toilet paper, and ponderously rising water. With the water level almost up to the rim of the bowl, the usually friendly pot looks as big as an olympic-sized swimming pool—an olympic-sized swimming

pool of poo, paper, and doom. Now, anyone in this situation could easily remove the tank lid, reach in, and pull up the float or the retaining road, and stop the flow of water, thus ending the swell in the bowl. But no, in the grip of panic and illogic, you push the flush handle one more time, letting yet more water into the bowl; plip, plip, ploosh...you're wading in it. Predictable and very fascinating. It was with this same feeling of anticipation that I viewed the debut release of Chicago's Jesus Lizard. All of the right people are present: David and David from Scratch Acid (obviously relocated from Austin), Duane Denison from Cargo Cult, and Steve (Spielberg) Albini in the directors seat. Um...what are the chances that this will sound like Scratch Acid and/or Big Black? Well, it might. David Yow is easily the best of the chunk rock vocalists, and his singing on this record, while still Yow, is a bit lower-key than most Scratch Acid efforts. Duane Denison's guitar is both solid and inquisitive, and the rhythm section of David Sims and drum machine make for a dirt-tough record. This is real atmospheric, going a bit beyond the expected pigfuckin' whump. Yow sounds frighteningly sad and frayed when he yells "Mary!" in the cut, "Bloody Mary," and the minor key guitar progressions over the coliseum-echo drum of "Breaking Up Is Hard To Do" is positively beautiful. Strange, but Yow sounds quite like Steve Bjorklund (Breaking Circus) on the opener cut, "Blockbuster," manly yes...and don't you dare cut out my dimples. Typical high Touch & Go levels, great non-crass Jane's Addiction cover nod, and an extraordinary (and hopefully long-lived) line-up. An eminent and imminent record, crud...I gotta go get some towels. (P.O. Box 25520, Chicago, IL. 60625) - Lori Carlson

LA MUERTE *Death Race 2000* LP (Play It Again Sam U.S./Wax Trax!)

These Belgian dirgemeisters were best known for their forward and backwards cover of "Telegram Sam" a few years ago, and attracted a lot of doomy Nick Cave fans with their subsequent releases. But they are no longer dirgemeisters; in fact, they seem to have been listening to a lot of Raging Slab or something, and taking the motorcycle inspired theme of this record very much to heart with quite a few chunky cock-rock riffs popping up. They may well be the first Belgian band to play lots of guitars. This change in sound is a little abrupt, and at times they come off as no more substantial than Gaye Bikers On

\$2.00

HELLO!
MY NAME IS —

No. 2

William Hooker Orchestra The Color Circle (Cadence lp) '89
I first encountered William Hooker's "stamina" drumming technique a couple of years ago, when I saw him play three raving duets with guitarist Donald Miller in a NYC record store. This is Hooker's third and newest LP, a live

ass to bother with. (5271 S.E. Laguna Ave, Stuart FL 34997)
choose from, needle hopping is just too big a pain in the ass to bother with. (5271 S.E. Laguna Ave, Stuart FL 34997)
inspired with the redundant, and with so many tracks to the other hand members. The Band That Would Be King sounds more like a compilation of song ideas than any sort of record you'd actually want to listen to. Over as soon as they begin, the interesting melds with the stupid, the more like a compilation of song ideas than any sort of record you'd actually want to listen to. Over as soon as they begin, the interesting melds with the stupid, the in the absence of valuable songwriting contributions from the other band members. The Band That Would Be King sounds more like a compilation of song ideas than any sort of record you'd actually want to listen to. Over as soon as they begin, the interesting melds with the stupid, the Krew But Me, in the absence of his much missed brother, and completely harnesses some wicked lightning bolt of emotion and get it on tape before it disappeared forever. So, in the absence of the great pain that seemed to inspire Everyone of covers, and was recorded time when Jad was able to

initially these songs seem odd and half formed, but as you listen to them more and more, they grow on you like a mold (Boy that sounds appealing!). Galbraith had some now out of print records on Flying Nun, is now a member of the soon to be legendary Plagal Grind (w/ Peter Jeffries), and if you have any interest at all in excellent, expressive songwriting, then you'll thank yourself later for checking this out now. This half live, nearly all solo acoustic (Graeme Jeffries plays guitar on one cut and H. Hunk adds piano/accordion on a few others) document consists of seventeen short songs, with nearly all of them appreciably different in scope and feel. Some stories, some laments, and some observations that span the range from the plaintive to the uh, less plaintive, with total ease.

and fucking in the streets to an audience more inclined to go to San Francisco wearing flowers in their hair.

16

CRUSH

recording with trumpeter Roy Cambell and saxophonist Booker T. The energy is high, but Cambell takes up way too much solo space (admittedly, I'm not too keen trumpets to begin with) and Booker sounds good but never gets the space to really take off. Nothing on The Color Circle approaches the reeling, fire-spitting invention of his duo with David S. Ware or the amazing sandstorm of percussion that materializes on the fourth side of his first album, Is Eternal Life. but if you've got Hooker's other records, you'll probably want this one too. There's an incredible enthusiasm in his playing (his technique seems rather limited) and he does have a commitment to free jazz lacking in the Zorns and Horvitzes currently wasting space in the NYC avant scene. (Cadence Building, Redwood NY 13679) - Alan Licht

nothing to me, because the music that comes out of the grooves simply doesn't lie. The people who tell you that music like this or jazz or country or gospel or folk are irrelevant to their music and their lives today in 1989, on the other hand, do. (write for a free Yazoo catalog: PO Box 810, Newton NJ 07860)

Michael Hurley And Pals Archchair Boogie (Raccoon lp) '71

This, Hurley's second solo lp a haunting, beautiful masterpiece and one of the essential works of seventies folk music, but good luck finding it. The two records that Hurley recorded for Raccoon (a Jesse Colin Young related subsidiary of Warner Bros.) are very rare and rumor has it, had pressings numbering in the hundreds. So, I'm one lucky dog, no doubt about it, because not only did I find this record (at the very hep Record Collector, in Iowa City) for a mere \$10, but my copy is also in excellent/excellent condition and doesn't have the vulgar promo sticker I hear most extant copies of this album are plagued with.

Jesus Lizard Pure (Touch and Go 12" ep) '89

Two ex-Scratch Acids and an ex-Cargo Cult get together and make a Touch and Go tribute record. Side two sucks shit, so let's forget the Butthole induced indecipherable megaphone/ electronically altered vocals and Big Black homage rhythms of "Starlet" and the throwaway Arsenal-does-it-better instrumental collage of "Breaking Up Is Hard To Do" and look at the naked lady on the front cover instead. . . Side one is nearly minimalistic, jittery, fairly dynamic, and pretty boring. Surprisingly, Yow is a relative non-presence here, although his vocals are clear and strong, they're neither especially manic nor compelling. Take away the simple drum machine and the 'heard-it-all-before' rhythms and you're left with one interesting thing: Duane Denison's guitar. His alternately ringing and slashing tones are really pretty great, almost like a one man version of the Band of Susans, if the Band of Susans didn't suck. . . The addition of real live drummer Mac McNeilly ought to add some much needed spice to these guys' formula and I could imagine this group being really good live, but, who knows, and, more honestly, who cares? (address elsewhere)

I DON'T KNOW what bearing that may have had on my life but I thought it was funny.

The town I grew up in was called Dumont, a pretty much unheard of little town in Bergen County. It was a really

PHIL MILSTEIN INTERVIEW CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

Winter 1990!