

Mrs. J. B. Jones

A SOURCEBOOK FOR CYBERPUNK

ROCKERBOY

ROCK & ROLL • CHROMATIC ROCK • VIDEO • BRAINDANCE
• PRODUCTS • ENTERTAINMENT & MORE!

Backstage Bob Rosewood
**IN CONCERT:
BLOOD & ICE!**

KERRY EURODYNE
The Exclusive Rockerboy Interview

**SPECIAL REPORT:
MEDIA TODAY**
Focus on the NET 54/DMS War! Plus: Media Practices—the Inside Story!

ANDERSEN '89

Backstage Bob Rosewood

**IN CONCERT:
BLOOD & ICE!**

KERRY EURODYNE

The Exclusive Rockerboy Interview

The Rockerboy gyrates at the edge of the stage, the hypnotic beat throbbing from the speaker stacks at either side of him. Driven by energy and fury, he bears his soul to the audience. Captivated by the rockerboy's fire, the crowd's emotions become his personal plaything, to be directed at will. His word, delivered as lyrics thundering over the band, becomes gospel for those caught in his spell. Another group of people has been swayed by the rockerboy's message, and joined him in his rage, passion, joy or anger.



The Media looks confidently into the camera. The surrounding action and chaos elicits no reaction from her...she has a job to do, and she's going to do it. On the other end, you see her on your wallscreen on the evening news at six-thirty. Her poise and confidence are infectious, and despite the camera, TV, and fifty-thousand miles of cable and satellite transmission between the two of you, her eyes seem to find you. There is honesty and candor in that gaze, backed by a wisdom which belies her young age. You can trust this woman. Whatever she is about to say is true, and important. You lean forward to make sure you catch every word of the investigative report. Your mind belongs to her.

ROCKERBOY. The complete sourcebook and background guide to the world of Rock-and-Roll in 2013. Covering—

- Night City's feral club scenes, bands and trends
- The Braindance, the ultimate entertainment
- The decadent haunts of the superrich
- The inside scoop on the deadly skirmishes of the media megacorps

— and more! It's all here in **ROCKERBOY**. Because even in the Future, they still know how to Rock.

**R. TALSORIAN
GAMES INC.**

#3401

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ROCKERBOY: The Cyberpunk™ Entertainment Sourcebook

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EDITORIAL

This is the second magazine style "supplement" for the game *Cyberpunk*. Like its predecessor, *SOLO OF FORTUNE*, *ROCKERBOY* is an expansion on a specific character class in *Cyberpunk*. This time however, we've included a special section, *MEDIA TODAY*, to expand on a second, and closely related class of character.

Like many other magazines of 2013, *ROCKERBOY* is distributed in several ways. Subscribers can have it direct mailed to their home PC via modem or have it beamed in through satellite relays into their home entertainment system. The video version is a five hour long program that includes network-style news reporting, a live concert and guitar instruction from a famous name in the industry. For the price, who could turn down a half hour lesson by a well known professional?

SO WHY ROCKERBOY?

Since its conception, *Cyberpunk* has generated a lot of questions in several areas. One of these has been, "How do I incorporate my Rockerboy into a campaign without focusing all of the events on him/her?"

We're not going to announce that this will be the solution to all of your problems, but we hope it will give you more understanding into the world of Rockerboys and Medias.

SO WHAT'S IN THIS THING ANYWAY?

In *ROCKERBOY*, you'll find a

lot of useful things for the Referee who wants to better understand and use the Rocker and Media characters in their games. There's Hitler Was a Rockerboy, a modern look at what makes a Rocker, and an interview with a Rocker who isn't in the music industry. There's an article on the difference between Rockers and Medias, what defines each, and how some characters cross the lines into the other class. In addition, you'll find a new type of Media, the Braindancer, and suggestions on how to use this new character to bring a campaign together.

To get you some hooks into game ideas, we've given you an Entertainment News section, and a backstage talk with major 2013 Rocker Kerry Eurodyne. We've also got the history of the Network 54/DMS wars, with a profile on DMS. There's Filthy Rich, a look at what the hideously rich and idle do with their time and money and a Call Board for musicians.

We've given you Night City, and now the world. You've got the plugs, the music and the message; it's time to take it to the streets and let the common man know what's happening out there. If someone gets in your face, you stare them down or take them out, because—

YOU'RE CYBERPUNK.

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Jack Bennett in Big Trouble? Page 55



Blood & Ice: A New Ice Age? Page 76

LETTERS

Got something to tell us?
Please address your letters to Rocker Rap
C/O Rockerboy Magazine
On Time Publications, P.O. Box 2121
Los Angeles, CA. 90521 (Fax 252-526-0112)

RELIGION IN ROCK

Dear Rocker Boy:

I would like to thank you for your March article about the history of religion in rock. Although I knew of the existence of some of those bands, the entire punk side was a facet I was not aware of. I commend Max Jenkins for his extensive research and factual reporting.

A Soldier of the Lord,
Mary Danvers

Mary:

We're glad you liked the article, and think you will like the upcoming feature on the Christian bands, House Under God and Defenders of Our Faith. If anyone else has an idea for an article, or feature they would like to see us do, feel free to fax it to our Suggestions Line at (800) 555-2955.

HOSTILE TAKEOVER

Dear Rocker Boy:

I am compelled to write and suggest you never do another article about corporate practices without first doing extensive research into the topics you are reporting. In your May issue, Rockerboy reporter Kelly Odmeyer incorrectly suggested the reason for the hostile takeover of Dino Records by Universal was due to a personal dispute between myself and Dino CEO Harold Velazques. The takeover was purely a business decision, based on market reports and financial resources. The fact that I have been in opposition to Mr. Velazques for many years was never part of the issue. Although I do not consider your magazine to be of tabloid status; it has certainly lost a certain amount of respect from myself and my peers for this mistake.

Thank you for your time,
Karla Mastrolinka
Vice President of Acquisitions,
Universal Records

Ms. Mastrolinka,

Naturally we did not mean to imply such allegations, but you must admit that many sources around your personage were

more than happy to suggest, or even state; that your decision was personally based. The evidence also suggests your vendetta against Mr. Velazques will not be satisfied until you run him out of the music business. Although we do not like making such accusations, when you refuse to see our reporters, let alone talk to them over the phone, we have no choice but to show the story from the view we can see. Perhaps you will be more cooperative the next time one of our reporters tries to get in touch with you.

UNDER WARRANTY

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter to thank you for your warning about the JPB 4508 effects system. As soon as I brought my unit in to be checked out, the transformer exploded, just as you said it would. Because it was still under warranty, the entire unit is being rebuilt for no charge.

A dedicated and thankful
reader,
Luz Kawanami

Luz:

We're glad you were able to have the problem manifest itself before it wound up costing you any money. We are also happy to pass the word from JPB that the 4508 transformers have been moved, so they will not overheat like they did before. For those of you who still own the unmodified 4508, JPB is willing to exchange for the improved model one. All you have to do is send your old unit to them at:

Box 458,
New York, New York 10023.

OBSESSION

Dear Rockerboy:

I am writing this letter as a warning to many of your readers. Recently I came to a realization about my life which

disturbed me. You see, every night, I would follow this local band around because I thought they were the greatest thing to happen to the world since cyberoptics. Their music, lyrics, and way of life were all I knew for two years. I am sure they appreciated my support, but not to the point of fanaticism, which was the case with myself.

Two days ago, the lead singer/guitarist was killed in a street fight outside of his apartment. The sad thing is that he didn't even start it. A bunch of boosters were assaulting a young girl and he jumped them to give the girl time to get away. In the process, he was slashed over forty times by the boostergang's rippers and bled to death before anyone could help him.

When I heard the news that he had been killed, and the band was breaking up, I felt my life was over, so I tried to kill myself by overdosing on Widow's Breath. The doctors say

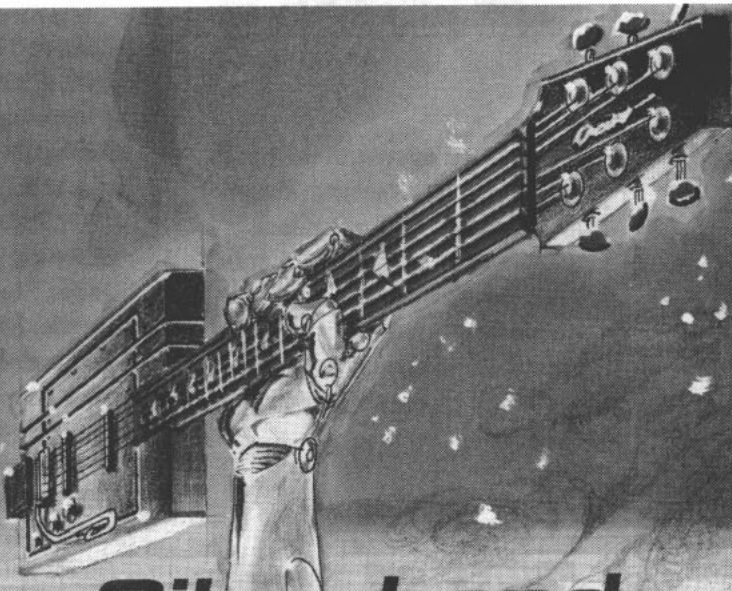
that I will never see again, and I may not be able to ever walk again either, because of the nerve damage, but I will live. I realize now that admiring a band is one thing, but to devote your entire life to the worship of them is ridiculous.

I know most people who read this letter are going to think I'm an idiot, and they'd be right, too. What I hope is that, even if it is just one person, my message and story will be heard and understood.

Thanks for your time,
David Oliver

Dear Dave:

Thanks for your timely and honest letter. As many of our readers know, the problem of "over identification" is growing. We hope your letter will encourage others in your situation to seek help.



Johnny Silverhand
A COOL METAL FIRE

Featuring: Dancing With My Axe • Never Fade Away • (Out of) the City • Chippin' In
A Universal Media Release. Available in all video, CD and chipware outlets.



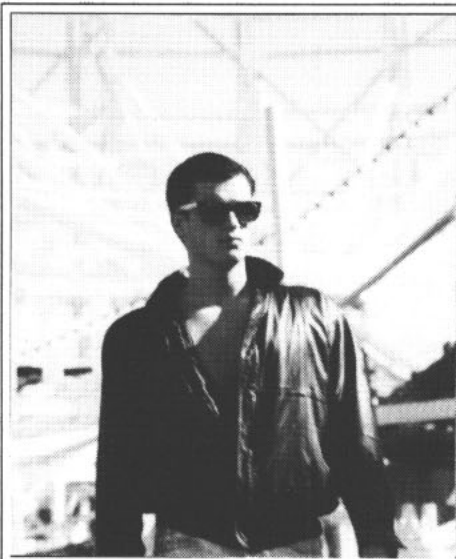
INSIDE NEWS

by Aaron Lavender

HIDING OUT AT THE BEACH As the warm days rapidly fade from North America, many stars escape to the lower latitudes. Not so with Braindancer **Slade McCallahan**. He decided to take a break from the public eye and vacation in Santa Cruz, California. Although it was cold and windy there, McCallahan, a former IRA terrorist, reminded us that he grew up in nearby Salinas. He also suggested it would be the last time for a while that he would visit his hometown area, since the British government is still demanding his extradition for crimes against the Crown.

AROUND TOWN Seven months after the whirlwind engagement and marriage of rocker **Bridget Bash** and film sensation **Daryl Potter**, the two finally emerged from their seclusion in the Bahama Islands. **Rag Dolls**, the couple's publicity firm, made a public announcement concerning their return only four hours before their scheduled appearance at the Night City club **Barsoom Rendezvous**.

It seems the two have become so entrenched in each other's lives that Mrs. Bash-Potter will appear as



the romantic interest in her husband's next film, *Airborne Ranger of the Columbian Hills*, a fictional account of a hero from the Central American conflict who must rebuild his life after sustaining a crippling wound. It is also rumored that Potter will appear as guest artist on Bash's next album.

PROTESTING Knifedge, the lead singer/bassist for the chrome band **Cutthroat** was arrested last weekend in Lone Pine, Ca. According to sources, Knifedge discovered a government plan to erect a massdriver on Mount Whitney, the

highest mountain in the continental United States. When interviewed in his cell, Knifedge was adamant about his stance, saying "They just want to get America rocked again. There's no way the ESA wouldn't notice, and then this place would just be another hole in the ground, reminding us how bad off we are."

Before he could be arraigned, a small commando force believed to be fellow bandmates and roadies, broke into the town jail and freed the lead singer. When last seen boarding an unmarked AV-4, he turned to the crowd gathered around the jail and thrust a fist in the air.

The escape route of Knifedge is unknown, but the radar at China Lake Air Force Base failed to pick up any sign of them, not ten minutes after the daring escape.

SAMURAI SAGE Several years after their sudden breakup, many bands still try to imitate the style and substance of **Samurai**. Former singer/lead guitarist, **Johnny Silverhand**, says he's not surprised at the amount of clonebands which formed in the wake of **Samurai**.

"Take a look at the past. In the sixties, people were imitating the Beatles, Stones and the Who. The seventies brought about much of the same, and the eighties were the years of Led Zeppelin ripoffs. The beginning of the century saw many people following in the "Rockerboy's" footsteps. I guess we set the pace for the 2010's."

When asked if all the attention and copy bands bothered him, Silverhand replied, "It bothers me a little, but it's also flattering. After all, Warhol suggested everyone has their fifteen minutes, mine's just lasting a little longer." ●

BACKSTAGE

with Kerry Eurodyne

by Landon P. Smythe

The ex-club rocker bares his turbulent past and faces an expanding future.



The original Radio City Music Hall in New York stands empty, except for the young man sitting in the front row staring at the enormous amount of equipment hastily being set up by anonymous roadies.

"I go through this every time I play a major arena. You'd think that I'd be used to it after seven years, but I sometimes still can't believe I made it."

So says Kerry Eurodyne, one of the biggest names in the music industry ever since he and former band-mate Johnny Silverhand, burst into the hearts and minds of fans everywhere in an ex-bar band known as **Samurai**.

"Samurai was what made both Johnny and me. It still wires me out to think that only ten years ago Johnny and I were jammin' together in clubs down in Night City. The Palladium, Destiny, Nexus; we must have played every backstreet bar there was. Then we got our break.

"We had just finished a late night set at the Rainbow Cadenza, and I was about to chip into an old zone program I had, when this skinny, wild-eyed, dorph-head comes up to us and says, 'You guys were great. I have to book your act.'"

"Naturally, we all thought he was so doped out that he didn't know what he was saying, let alone who he was. Denny, our drummer, got up and prepared to beat the living sh-t out of him with the chair she'd just picked up, when the guy tossed a card down on our table. I couldn't believe what it said. The guy she'd almost trashed was none other than Jack Masters, head of Universal Music.

"Why the hell he was dressed the way he was, I'll never know, but he didn't lie; within three weeks, we were signed to Universal, racing a record through production, and getting ready to tour every major city in the world."

It took Samurai only three weeks to achieve number one on the EuroRadio charts with their single, "Blistering Love." The album followed suit two weeks later, one of the few times a debut album was to achieve such status in such a short time.

"I don't know why people took to Samurai the way they did. I'm not complaining, but it sometimes makes me wonder. After all, so many people try to make it to the top, but only a few really get there."

"The really shocking thing about the whole deal was the transition we had to make. One minute we're chugging through our old num-

bers in some small, no name club to the same crowd; the next we've sold out Wembley Stadium and there are a hundred thousand killing each other to get a look at us.

"It's scary. I mean, to think that one hundred thousand people are selling their souls to see you, and you've got them hanging on your every word. That puts things like the Cincinnati Who concert or the Amnesty disaster into perspective. I mean, who could stop you if you decided that something needed to be done about a certain corporation or governmental situation that was

“The whole idea that I’m jealous of Johnny’s career is just something the screamsheets have played up...

bothering you?"

There is a certain responsibility and caution that needs to be exercised when someone like Kerry is always in the public's eye.

"Once you've made it to the 'Big Time', you really do have to be careful. I remember one incident where the lead singer of an Afro-pop band made some comment in a large restaurant where a member of the print media was also eating. The next thing you knew, this singer was quoted as making a political statement, and his fans, trying to imitate their idol, were all displaying the same sentiments in a violent fashion. I know for a fact that more than one fan death was associated with that incident, all because the singer made a comment that was overheard."

Early in 2007, Samurai suffered a blow that would split the band apart. Although a small faction pointed to the entire trial as an example of the violence that was indicative of rock, Kerry disagrees.

"Samurai's breakup wasn't at all like the media portrayed it, and certainly not what the reformed Moral Majority decreed it to be. There was no internal politicking or hatred toward Nancy, our keyboardist, because of what happened. Nor do I see her reaction coming as a direct result of her being involved in music. Her actions were extreme, but I still agree it was the right thing to do.

"We all knew that Nancy was getting really involved with this guy, but we never guessed that she wanted to marry him. It only took about ten weeks after the ceremony for us to realize that she was 'faced with some 'dorph corp that got his kicks out of slapping her around. Finally she came to us and said he was making her quit the band. To us, that was the last straw.

"Johnny and I started over to her place with the intent of rearranging the dorph's head, but it was over by the time we got there. The guy had started beating Nancy again when she finally decided that true love didn't mean being a sadist's punching bag. I guess he never knew she used to be a kicker for a local Booster gang, but he sure as hell found out. His mistake..."

"The coroner said he must have flown at least a hundred yards after being thrown from their eighty-third story penthouse. After the trial, Nancy came back to us again, ready to play. The only problem was that the seven months she spent in jail were enough to put a split in the band that we just couldn't heal, so we went our separate ways.

"I still see Nancy occasionally; she's changed her name to Bes Isis

and has a great career in the media working for '54. I guess she never got over her love of the spotlight.

"Henry stopped playing bass a couple of years ago after a MIDI accident shorted him out. He was working with Blazetech on one of the human interface prototypes when a spike in the voltage jumped circuits and fried some important connections. He's slowly regaining his memory and is now able to use some basic motor skills, but his nervous system was apparently rewired and they haven't figured out exactly how he's ticking.

"Denny has a new band called Mastermind that's being recorded by DMS. She knows how I feel about them, but the contract they've got is suitable for her, so I'm not going to interfere as long as she's happy."

Kerry Eurodyne's problems with DMS are well known, but not too many people know the origin of the difficulties.

"Right after Samurai broke up for good and I was looking for a decent solo deal, DMS came right out and offered me one. I was about to go for it when Universal decided they could package Johnny and I together, and give us a better deal doing it. Johnny and I decided it was the best thing that could happen to both of us so we went for it.

"It was right after the Universal offer that DMS thugs started to hassle my friends and me. First it was physical intimidation, then they were threatening Johnny and I with things like governmental investigations and stuff. By the time that threat was made, we'd already signed with Universal and felt very good about it.

"Even now you won't find Johnny or I saying anything remotely positive about DMS. Back then, we were wired enough to really make enemies of them. I'm just glad no

one was listening when I made certain comments or some of my fans might have taken those rash words to heart and we might have had some serious problems."

It was Universal's package deal that allowed Kerry Eurodyne and Johnny Silverhand to become brothers in fame as solo acts. Although it wasn't originally part of deal, they often tour together and are virtually inseparable.

"I'm not sure that Johnny and I are 'inseparable,' but we do a lot of the same things and have many of the same beliefs. The package deal worked out by Universal gave more to both of us, because we were both well known from our *Samurai* days. By re-signing us both, they guaranteed us concessions normally only offered to major bands or superstars.

"I suppose you could call us superstars now, certainly Johnny is, but back then we were a couple of new-boy guitarists who had some success with a band. Buying us on contract was a risk, but I don't think they're complaining."

Some people might think that Kerry Eurodyne would have some negative feelings about Johnny Silverhand's popularity, even suggesting that it might overshadow his own career.

"I don't think Johnny's success had anything to do with my making it big. I think we are both talented individuals who were lucky enough to get the big break when the time was right. I wouldn't care less if Johnny were to get top billing on every show we did, instead of switching off every night like we do.

"The whole idea that I'm jealous of Johnny's career is just something the screamsheets have played up because it sells. If anything, I think Johnny may be more disgusted with the stardom than I am. It really isn't easy to be under

public scrutiny twenty-four hours a day."

When asked about the future of his professional relationship with Johnny Silverhand and the rest of the music industry, Kerry is realistic about his goals.

"I don't know what's going to happen in the business, no one ever does. I can think of many bands who've hit it big for three albums and then disappeared without a trace. Others will last for just one album, or maybe six. You never can tell how the public will react to what you play. Who knows, in a year I may be back to playing clubs. I don't think it will happen, but you never can tell.

"As for Johnny, I intend to keep touring with him as long as it suits us both. Besides a few guest appearances on albums, I doubt we'll ever really play together again. We've both changed musically, and I think our egos would cause enough stress in a band to totally destroy any working relationship that we might have."

Kerry's next album is going to be a change of pace from his normal anthem-style songs.

"The next album is going to be slightly off-center. It's more political than my last ones, and I'll be going back to an old format: the concept album, which tells a story without breaks between songs. The story is something Johnny and I had talked about many years ago; our experiences in the Second Conflict. I don't know if it will sell as well as some of my others, but it's something I feel strongly about."

With that, Kerry lapses into silence, once again staring at the rapidly growing monolith of speaker towers on the once bare stage. Where the future will take him, he doesn't know, but he seems content with his position right now. ●

IN THE LISTENING ROOM

Hot neo-funk vocalist T.C. McBride of Kilimanjaro gives us his opinion on a few classic and current tunes.

With his new band, Kilimanjaro topping the counterculture charts with its exotic, funky blend of African and Latin influences, T.C. McBride is riding high on success. In order to get an idea of where his chip's at, we asked him to take time out from his busy tour schedule and lend an ear to a few tunes in the *Rockerboy* listening room. Here's what he had to say.

ROCKERBOY: HOW ABOUT THIS ONE FOR STARTERS?

T.C. McBride: Oooh, punchy. These guys have got some energy. Sounds really chromatic. Music's wild for three chords, and I love the bodily-function noises. Really makes you want to bang your head into something. I guess that's what the chromers dig in their music. The lyrics are kinda buried in the mix...I can't tell if they're trying to make a point or not. Sounds like Pervert Cupid.

ROCKERBOY: CLOSE...ITS BY DAY-GLO BRAINWAVES.

T.C.M.: Oh right! This is *Eat My Wigwam* off of their new album! No wonder I can't understand it, I'm not on enough drugs. You know, I admire their energy and the music's appealing in a hormonal sort of way, but I wouldn't want the lifestyle that goes with it. Whew! This is definitely the kind of music I'd play in *baaad* rush hour traffic. You know...help me ignore my conscience as I plowed through the innocents.

R.B.: "EVERY DAY I HAVE THE BLUES" BY B.B. KING?

T.C.M.: Hey, Blues Boy! One of my

all time favorites. Boy, this guy wrote the book on urban music! Zero guitar technology by modern standards, but he could conjure more expression out of that old Gibson than a dozen of today's guitar whizzes put together.

R.B.: THERE'S A LESSON IN THERE SOMEWHERE.

T.C.M.: No doubt about it. Kids singing about their troubles these days could stand to learn something from King's expressiveness. Fifty years later, and that music still has meaning. I grew up on this stuff...my dad played guitar in Oakland, and he introduced me to B.B.'s records. He had a stack that high... [*holds hands a foot apart*] of original vinyl records!

Those were my earliest influences. I used to play straight blues before I developed the more ethnic sound we use in Kilimanjaro. Covered some of these songs. This is music that'll never be forgotten.

R.B.: "STREETS OF PASSION" BY SKYRIDER?

T.C.M.: Oh god. This music embodies just about everything that's been wrong with the industry since it began.

R.B.: YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT COMMERCIALIZATION ?

T.C.M.: How'd you guess? This stuff has no personality. It sounds like it was bought on the songwriting market and engineered with nothing but gloss in mind. The kids'll eat it up, but no self-respecting rockerboy can listen to it without cringing. This could *only* be Skyrider...or the new Crimson Steel. They're both owned by one of the corps...EMT is it? DMS? Sounds like an ad jingle! I can

practically hear soft-drinks fizzing in the background. If all music goes this direction, we're gonna be up sewage creek without a nose-plug. Who's that singing...Bugs Bunny? [*makes gagging sound*] I'll take the chromatic stuff!

R.B.: "NO WIRE SOUL "BY BLOOD AND ICE?"

T.C.M.: Now *that's* better. You know, speaking of CrimsonSteel...Ice Waxman was the only good thing to come out of that band. I'm glad he split up with them when they went corp. It would've been a shame to waste his talents on something like that last piece we heard.

R.B.: YEAH, THESE GUYS ARE MAKING IT PRETTY BIG IN THE UNDERGROUND CLUBS THESE DAYS. BACKSTAGE BOB JUST WROTE UP ONE OF THEIR CONCERTS...IT WAS A GLOWING REVIEW. IT'S GOING TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE SAME ISSUE AS THIS, I THINK.

T.C.M.: Well, my words'll be in good company! I admire just about everything about these guys. They have a message, and they refuse to sell it out. What's more, they can put it across with good musicianship and great stage moves. They're a little bit too gung ho, perhaps. Some people might be intimidated by that. Listen to that voice, though. Does this guy have passion or what? The whole band holds together well. It'd be fun to double gig a club with them.

R.B.: THINK YOU CAN HANDLE THEIR CROWD?

T.C.M.: Think their crowd can handle *us*? [*laughs*] ●

HITLER WAS A ROCKERBOY



A teeming multitude of humanity swells the fire-lit street. Overhead, searchlights sweep the crowd, silently checking for the first signs of trouble. The people start to chant. At first, it is only a small, isolated group, but soon the anthem rises in volume as the entire gathered mass starts to call out to its chosen leader.

by Kelly Odmeyer

The pyres reach toward the sky, seeming to foreshadow the coming of the leader, who is still nowhere in sight. The pleading cries of the masses reach a fevered pitch, imploring the idol whom they all worship to show his visage. Just when it seems the noise can become no louder, a small figure climbs to the

top of the podium, right arm thrust at a thirty degree angle from his chest, and the pandemonium reaches a new plateau.

The swastikas on either side of the platform wave silently in the night air as the small man, now in control of the mob that has gathered, raises his arms for silence. Within seconds, the once riotous horde

In death, Rockerboy Manson became a legendary figure who was silenced by a government ...

quiets down to the point of absolute vacuum. "DEUTCHLAND UBER ALLES!," bursts from the figure perched atop the podium and the crowd replies with a resounding chorus, "SEIG HEIL!"

Such was life in Berlin during the Second World War. One man controlling millions. Convincing them that they were the chosen race under God's rule, and should take the birthright given to them by the deity. An evil destiny created by a twisted, ambitious mind, yet, with his skills of oratory and presence, Adolf Hitler knew what the German people wanted, and he gave it to them.

Hitler was a Rockerboy.

Throughout every generation, there have always been charismatic leaders with a message to be heard, be it political or charismatic, good or evil.. These are the forefathers of the Rockerboys of today. Hitler was such a man.

So what makes a Rockerboy? Der Fuhrer certainly didn't play a guitar or wear tight leather pants. He didn't sing, or dance around in front of crowds with his shirt off, grabbing his crotch. Yet he was, without possibility for argument, a Rockerboy.

To consider the last statement as an axiom, I suggest we first need a set definition of Rockerboys. How did they come into being? Who can be/has been one? How do you become a Rockerboy?

In many ways, the term Rockerboy is misleading. Today's political force is split in many directions, but the ones who tend to get the most press are the musicians with a message. This is not to suggest the term has been used since the beginning of time—far from it. The term *Rockerboy*, or *Rocker* (in the political sense, since the word *Rocker* has been around since the early sixties), entered common usage in the early nineties with the now deceased James (Rockerboy) Manson (no relation to the mass murderer of the sixties).

Manson, a political entity in his own right, cited his roots as coming from several bands in the sixties, seventies and eighties. His crediting such groups as U2, The Dead Kennedys, Crosby/Stills/Nash and Young, Arlo Guthrie and a lesser known band, Marillion, gives us insight into how he evolved from a mainstream rock star, to that status of Rockerboy.

In what seemed to be an overnight transition, Manson became a political figurehead who would lead a generation to a new state of awareness. Although he claimed his political awareness was always prominent in his songs, examination of his first album revealed many songs with no real content, let alone political implications. Manson's reply had always been that his subtle

attempts at satire failed, so he was forced to state what he believed with absolute candor.

The debate over "Rockerboy" Manson's political state of being before his second album has lasted for the past twenty years, and to rehash the debate would be pointless. Rather, we should examine the phenomenon of his popularity and ability to move crowds after his second album's (*Bum's Rush*), release.

The album itself can be considered slightly subtle in the parody that is part of the record's title. When first examined, the title gives no indication it is making a political statement, but deeper analysis, combined with clues given in the lyrics of several songs, shows the true nature of the title.

Most people who survived the period in which the Gang of Four ruled never knew how they managed to gain control of the President of the United States. While many theorists of the time suggested it was a lack of force in the president's personality that caused such a junta to form, Manson, by being tipped off, or actually researching the topic, discovered the president's habit of having a glass of rum before he slept.

As he suggests/informs the listener in "Bedtime Snack:"

Its become a habit that is very hard to break.

Every night just before sleep, you engage in your pastime, of some twenty odd years.

But tonight is different, something is wrong.

Your trusted friends, who are supposed to guard you, have taken the liberty of addition.

Something you'll never suspect.

Although it has never actually been proven, the evidence strongly suggests the Gang of Four did drug the president's rum early in his term, or perhaps when it became obvious he would be the next president. In any case, the pliable chief of state was maneuvered into isolating the United States from the rest of the world.

This subtle album title, with not-so-subtle lyrics, is part of what made James Manson the Rockerboy. Another major part, if not the most significant, was what is widely known today as the Amnesty incident.

While performing on stage at Wembley Stadium during an Amnesty International benefit on August 3rd, 1997, British officials became worried that Manson was provoking the crowd into a riotous state. To prevent any injury or disruption, a high ranking official in the

British government demanded his portion of the show be discontinued.

The stage lights went out, and Manson found himself accosted by several police officers who tried to escort him offstage. Unfortunately for the concert promoter who was suggesting that the Rockerboy had taken ill and would be unable to continue his performance, a lighting technician (who was a fan of Manson's and generally disgusted at what was happening), turned the lights back on at the precise moment one of the policemen brought his flashlight down on Manson's head.

The resulting riot took several hundred police officers over two days to quell. The total deaths were estimated to be over five hundred, with more than seventy-five hundred injuries. Among the dead and wounded were members of British

nobility, as well as several diplomats' children and James (Rockerboy) Manson.

In death, Rockerboy Manson became a legendary figure who was silenced by a government as the penalty of political freedom.

Does this mean to suggest that to be a Rockerboy, you have to die in the name of your cause? Is martyrdom truly a requirement? We think not.

A Rocker doesn't have to die for his cause, just believe in it. Today's Rockers try to live up to the standards that were inadvertently set by Manson, but by no means should that limit our definition of what a Rockerboy is.

What makes a Rockerboy a Rocker, and not an ordinary media figurehead?

Setting an exact definition is difficult, but not impossible.

Hearts and Minds... Rockerboys and Medias in the Cyberpunk World.

The rockerboy gyrates at the edge of the stage, the hypnotic beat throbbing from the speaker stacks to either side of him. Driven by energy and fury, he bares his soul to the audience. Captivated by the rockerboy's fire, the crowd's emotions become his personal plaything, to be directed at will. His word, delivered as lyrics thundering over the band, becomes gospel for those caught in his spell. Another group of people has been swayed by the rockerboy's message, and joined him in his rage, passion, joy or anger.

The media looks confidently into the camera. The surrounding action and chaos elicits no reaction from her...she has a job to do, and

she's going to do it. At the other end, you see her on your wallscreen on the evening news at six-thirty. Her poise and confidence are infectious, and despite the camera, TV, fifty-thousand miles of cable and satellite transmission between the two of you, her eyes seem to find you. There is honesty and candor in that gaze, backed by a wisdom which belies her young age. You can trust this woman. Whatever she is about to say is true, and important. You lean forward to make sure you catch every word of the investigative report. Your mind belongs to her.

Rockerboys and medias...accomplishing similar ends by different means.

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First, we must decide who were the Rockerboys of the past and examine what made them what they were. Let's look to the annals of history for examples.

The earliest and probably the most famous Rockerboy of all time was Jesus Christ. With extraordinary skill and charisma, he could gather thousands together in the middle of a wilderness to just listen to him. His words also contained the political and moral imperatives required of the true Rockerboy; a message of brotherly love, combined with the power of rebellion against Judea's oppressive Roman overlords.

In the late 1920's and early 30's several Rockers can be seen. The outstanding Rocker of the period was Franklin Delano Roosevelt, whose masterful use of radio "fireside chats" gave hope to millions through the Depression and the World War to follow. Another was John Edgar

The punk rock movement, started in the early '70's, is where much of the heritage of modern Rocker's can be seen.

Hoover, director of the FBI, whose crusade against organized crime lead thousands to battle the gangsters terrorizing their lives. Hoover's opposition was the infamous Alphonse Capone; a notorious gangster boss who skillfully manipulated the news media to give himself the image of upstanding businessman and champion of the common man.

In the forties, the aforementioned Adolf Hitler was a prominent force. But he wasn't alone—his skills of oratory often met their match in

other leaders such as FDR, Stalin, Mussolini and the indomitable Winston Churchill.

The Rockers of the fifties were often the political leaders of the prominent nations; Kruschew and Mao, for example. The most visible Rocker of the period was Sen. "Joe" McCarthy, whose rabid rhetoric sent an entire nation into a hysterical Communist witch hunt.

It was not until the mid-1960's that musicians really began to make their politics clear. The first were

Cont. from pg. 13

Many people in the twenty-first century have a message or a cause. Some internalize it, unable to successfully transfer it to other people. Some deal with it independently. They become solitary tools for the advancement of their causes; solos, nomads and netrunners driven by their individual beliefs. Some are not content to go it alone. They find it necessary to recruit others to their cause, and convince others of their beliefs, either as a means or an end. They thrive on attention, and are most at home under the critical eye of a jaded public. They frequently find that two careers and lifestyles are most conducive towards fulfilling their need to reach the masses. They become

rockerboys or medias.

Yet, for all of the similarities in intent, there are fundamental differences between rockerboys and medias. (For the sake of this article, we shall consider rockerboys in the expanded sense proposed by Ms. Odmeyer in the companion article.) Rockerboys tend to be specific. Music oriented ones frequently have a particular point to make, and gear much of their music and performance towards the illustration of that point. Ice Waxman of *Blood and Ice* protests corporate rock and commercialized music, Lee Beyer of *Tornado* is big on anti-war messages and Rane Van Dameran of *Van Dameran* sings several songs about industrial despoilation of the

planet. Frequently with these musicians, their causes reflect some personal experience. (See concert review of B&I this issue.)

Even the non-musical rockerboys (read Kelly Odmeyer's article for example), tend to be focused on one concept, or a group of similar concepts. Perhaps the explanation for this lies in the amount of energy expended by rockerboys. One who tried to diversify too much would find him or herself either spread too thin, or prematurely burned out.

The next thing that makes rockerboys unique is that their technique, musical or not, relies heavily on emotion. While any argument should be logical and substantiated, rocker-

folk singers like Joan Baez, Arlo Guthrie and Tom Lehrer, but politics soon spread to electrified bands, such as Crosby/Stills/Nash and Young, the Jefferson Airplane and the Who. Many people agree that the counter-culture which was so exemplified by these bands and others came to a head in the middle of August at a farm in upstate New York.

There had been many large festivals before, but the three day long Woodstock festival still stands supreme as a symbol of changing times. Though not originally intended to do so, the festival aroused many people to the political state of the nation.

In the battle for civil rights in the 1960's, two men stand out as polar opposites of the Rockerboy heritage— Martin Luther King Junior and Malcolm X.. Both men both fought for the same cause, equal rights, but did so in entirely different

ways. Malcolm X was a fiery militant, who not only believed that freedom of the soul and body should be seized by force, but also felt this could be achieved by total isolation from the white community.

King saw things differently. He led marches, protests and sit-ins to achieve equality by politically and peacefully integrating into a society that did not want him. By showing that he could fight the equality battle without polarizing black against white, many felt that King was the more successful of the two.

The 60's also introduced other notable Rockers such as John F. Kennedy, Abbie Hoffman, Alvin Toffler, Fidel Castro, Che Guevera, and Ho Chi Mihn, sociologists, rebels and politicos all.

The 1970's had their share of Rockers, most achieving status

through music—David Bowie and Sid Vicious for example. The punk rock movement of the early '70's, is where much of modern Rocker heritage can be seen. Most historians generally agree that the punk movement began with groups such as the Fugs and the Sex Pistols. Their anti-establishment messages were the guidelines for many a disgruntled youth. Although later groups would turn from the political heritage from which the music was spawned, the earliest punk groups were quite radical in their political message.

The 1980's brought another prominent decade of political musicians, with such names as Sting, Peter Gabriel, and U2 at the front of the crowd. However, the eighties were also dominated by such names as Reagan and Gorbachev on the national leadership front and

boys rely on emotion and energy as their hook. The emotional involvement is what makes a song or a concert attractive, certainly not the flawless logic. Likewise for non-musical rockerboys: successful ones like Martin Luther King Jr., Hitler, and Lao Chen Peng had the ability to whip a crowd into an emotional frenzy and to sustain that energy level for several hours. It didn't matter if what they were saying was subjective or objective, documented or fanciful; their words had a power and a sway over crowds on a level somewhat nearer the gut than the brain. Although it is by no means an expansive generalization, rockerboys are generally much more the "hearts" side of the hearts

and minds coin.

Medias, on the other hand, are the "minds" side of that same coin. Medias are frequently also driven by a cause. That cause is usually somewhat more expansive than the one driving a rockerboy, and in my experience ranges from busting open stories of corporate scandal, to war reporting, to getting at "The Truth", whatever that may be. Medias are hampered by a couple of things: even if a media has a specific cause, that person must present it without appearing biased. Objective impartiality is the rule, otherwise credibility is compromised. This forces the media to come up with hard facts, evidence and proof. It is one thing to make claims

of corporate wrongdoing, it is quite another to go in and get the film. That desire to present incontrovertible evidence, and bring about change by uncovering the bare facts is what a devoted media lives for, and few of them argue about the rigors of their jobs.

The trade-off for the media's hard work comes with the impact of their delivery. Although lacking the emotional fire of a rockerboy presentation, a major news story on a big network or journal is frequently more far reaching and carries more weight in terms of long range, bureaucratic effects. No rockerboy could have uncovered the Watergate scandal of the last century, although one could have formented enough public inter-

preachers like Oral Roberts, Jesse Jackson, Pat Robertson and Jimmy Swaggart in the religious arena.

The eighties were the time when rock promoters came upon the idea of concerts in the Woodstock tradition, but with a political/social overtone. Though a musician and not a promoter himself, Bob Geldorf conceived of the Live-Aid benefit for starving Ethiopians. This started a trend toward albums devoted to various causes, along with other large showpieces, including the previously mentioned Amnesty benefits (which had a major part in the creation of the father figure of modern Rockerboys).

During the nineties, there were very few new faces in the political scenes of the world. Gorbachev's successor, Gorborev, controlled the Soviet Union, and the Gang of Four,

though not Rockers, controlled the U.S. The music industry showed many older faces, and Hiram Kalakari came out of Panama. China had it's first popular leader since Mao, when a young (in political terms) gentleman took power after the death of the Premier.

Lao Chen Peng, though considered by many to be the second most popular leader in Chinese history, tried in vain to change his country to a democratic republic. In convincing his nation of the radical changes which he felt were necessary, Peng must be held in the highest esteem as a Rocker, even though he failed.

By now, there is one very obvious trait that can be seen in all of the aforementioned people: that of charismatic leadership. To be a Rocker, you need the ability to sway public opinion. This doesn't mean that you have to be good looking

either. Many of history's Rockerboys haven't had good looks and lived in societies that based their opinions on a person's appearance. As an unknown twentieth century sage once wrote, "It is not he who dances in the moonlight who shall receive favor, but rather she who plays the music controlling the dance."

To have this leadership implies that you have power over others. Although all Rockers use this power to deliver the message they wish, many have abused it, as with Hitler and Stalin. Both had the power to control crowds, even nations, but in their horrific abuse of it, many were killed. Even in their madness, they still managed to keep control of the power they held. For Rockers good or evil, if control is lost, all is lost.

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est to spur the investigation. The other advantage for the medias comes in the public's long-term retention of the relevant topics. A strong media trades the spur-of-the-moment, anything-is-possible, emotional high of a concert or speech for the long-range effects and satisfaction of an objective, documented presentation.

So what determines who is a media and who is a rockerboy? Its a matter of choice for those who decide that they want to deliver a message. Different people have different communications skills, and will approach the same issue in different ways. A rockerboy may not have a medias' tenaciousness, logical and deductive abilities, and cool

objectivity, but he makes up for it through energy and emotional fire, and an inborn talent to bend a crowd to his will. A media lacks the rockerboy's fire, but has investigative and demonstrative skills, and the necessary powers of intellectual persuasion to make a point and give a presentaion that will stick in your head and force you to form your own opinion.

**Two modes of communication.
Two styles of persuasion.
Emotion and energy,
logic and proof.
Rockerboys and medias.
Hearts and minds.**

Kyle Arizona

Although widely covered when it happened, few people today remember what happened to Hiram Kalakari. On November 3, 1991, Kalakari, a general in the Panamanian army, summoned a group of over one hundred thousand Panamanians to a central lock in the Panama Canal to protest the Noriega regime and the reduction of American aid to their economy. The ensuing demonstration lasted several days and boosted Kalakari into a position of power over the masses. Finally, on November 9th, the Noriega government, in a situation similar to the Chinese some years earlier, chose to invade the area with air and ground assaults; reports suggest more than ten thousand casualties.

Throughout the slaughter, Kalakari was shouting for the people to rebel and disarm the many soldiers who were not firing upon civilians.

“To live in ignorance of the political state around you is no excuse.

Whether it was the chaos around him, or the lack of attention by the masses (who were busily engaged in being killed), few acted upon Kalakari's words and the uprising was crushed.

Hiram Kalakari was put on trial for attempting to overthrow the government and convicted.

His sentence was death. However, several hours before he was executed, one enterprising reporter managed to slip or bribe her way past the guards. The final interview with Kalakari, though brief, will always be remembered for his outbursts of sobbing anger in which he blamed himself for not retaining control of the crowd.

It must be pointed out that the journalist, Peggy Saunders, received the Pulitzer Prize for her interview, beginning the Kalakari legend. Unfortunately, peoples' memories are short and Kalakari's name disappeared from the minds of most until this summer when Slashing Steel, a chromatic rock band, chose him as the topic for their top ten hit, *Kalakari*.

The father of modern Rockers knew full well what he was facing that

fatal evening in August. Only hours before he would be gunned down in a police charge against the rioters' positions, James Manson made his final speech, a ringing declaration of rebellion now nearly as famous as Marc Antony's "Friends, Romans, Countrymen."

"To live in ignorance of the political state around you is no excuse. It is your responsibility, as well as mine, to spread the word. One great nation is dead; will yours be next? If you have something to say then don't keep quiet; tell them how you feel. Don't let their oppression silence you!"

Above all, it is these words that have become a talisman for the Rockerboys of today. Be they musicians, street philosophers, comedians, or political figures, by being who they are, they are keeping the tradition alive. ●

Kelly Odmeyer is a regular Rockerboy contributor. He is the author of Mass/Media in the 90's, Fire in the Steel: A History of the Central American Wars, and the best-selling rock history Magic Time.

WHAT MAKES A ROCKERBOY?

You don't have to play a guitar to be a Rockerboy in Cyberpunk. There are a lot of ways to get out on the Street and make an effect on the People. Here are just a few novel options that all fall into the general "Rockerboy" role:

Street Poet

The street poet is much like the rock singer, in that he performs in front of an audience. His medium is pure words, propelled by driving oration and theatrical flair.

Performance Artist

The performance artist makes his or her statement by staging media events, plays, skits or visual presentations in public situations.

Social Leader/Activist

As a social leader, you are directly on the firing line for change. With your charisma, you can influence change in grassroots movements or national governments. Malcolm X, Martin Luther King or César Chavez were all activists.

Politician

Contrary to what the Medias tell you, not all Politicians are corrupt, selfish wheeler-dealers. As a Cyberpunk politico, you draw your source from crusading heroes like John or Robert Kennedy, FDR, or Winston Churchill.

SUGGESTED ROCKER SKILLS:

Human Perception, Streetwise, Sing, Play Instrument, Compose, Persuasion, Wardrobe, Cadre, Photo & Film, Teach.

ON THE STREET WITH...



Maz Despair

by Jeff Daniels

In the time-honored tradition of political satirists, Maz Despair sees herself as a social critic and humorist, rather than the renegade outlaw the government has portrayed her to be. Through various contacts, I was able to track her down and find out her side of the story.

JD: You call yourself a Rocker, but you play no instrument. Why do you think you have claim to such a title?

MD: Simple. Most Rockers today have a message; so do I. You don't have to have some screaming guitar behind you to emphasize your ideas. People like Johnny Silverhand or *Destiny* use their instruments as a vehicle to carry their message,

I use humor. It's like Martin back in the 1960's. He used speech to carry his message to the public and would gather larger crowds than most rock groups of those days. If you want another example of someone like myself from that era, try Lenny Bruce.

JD: You have made some very controversial statements while performing. Is this the reason you're wanted by the police?

MD: I'm wanted by the police for the murder of a politician, Jennifer Diaz, in the Houston area. The only connection I have with her is the assassination of her character and political reliability during a show. I received some evidence proving the congresswoman was more than a

little crooked. Arrow Petrochemicals, which is a subsidy of Arasaka Limited, which is owned by Arasaka International, gave congresswoman Diaz a "gift" of over one hundred thousand euro for several years in exchange for some creative oil legislation which would give Arrow the sole rights to drill in the Gulf of Mexico.

That night, after researching the claims against Diaz, I did a sketch about buying a congresswoman for political favors. The networks caught wind of it, and I gave them the evidence after my show. I guess I p-----d someone off, because Diaz was murdered that night, and my fingerprints wound up on the

gun, which happened to be registered to one of my roadies.

JD: Under the current law, wouldn't that make the roadie responsible, since it was his gun?

MD: He produced a bill of sale dated the afternoon of the shooting with my signature on it. Since there is a registration grace period, I was held responsible, though the police have never actually been able to find me to question me about the incident.

JD: Are you saying you were framed?

MD: Like I said before, the closest thing I come to murder is character assassination. The public can and will believe what they want.

JD: With this warrant for your arrest, combined with your public visibility, how do you manage to perform shows?

MD: It's very simple really. I have several trusted people go into the streets of the city I want to perform in and they spread the word that I'll be showing up at a certain place at a designated time. Once I'm actually on stage, they would have to be idiots to drag me off in front of a large crowd. Trying that would just lead to another Amnesty concert disaster.

JD: When you say that you have people spread the word in the streets, where do they go?

MD: It's no secret that I'm a lesbian, and I have a large following in the gay community. That's generally where the message starts, but it gets spread over the Street throughout any city I'm appearing in.

JD: Why wouldn't the gay bars not be enough?

MD: Surprisingly enough, the number of bars didn't radically

increase after the Second Sexual Revolution.

JD: Why is that surprising?

MD: The gay community unified after the assassination of comedian Kate Clinton and Senator Gerald Matthews (Speaker of the House of Representatives) while they were at the 2002 Gay Pride Parade in Washington DC. When the Gang of Four killed two of the 90's most outspoken proponents of gay rights in front of a crowd of two million people, the community had martyrs to rally around. All of a sudden, a once split group of outsiders was demanding to be heard. The assassination pushed even the most reclusive gays into the open, because they were all angry. With this sudden openness, I would have expected to see a multitude of gay oriented places opening up, but the infusion was so widespread, they just assimilated into society and people just did their business as usual.

JD: Would you say your politics come from this anger?

MD: I think that a lot of it does. I was twenty-two when they killed Kate and the Senator...

JD: (interrupting) I thought you said he was Speaker of the House.

MD: He was, but we all called him the Senator. Anyway, I was there at the parade, not one hundred feet away, when the assassins opened up with automatic rifles on the bandstand. Kate had always been a hero of mine, and watching her get shot before my eyes was enough to really drive me crazy. It took me about five years to develop any sense of humor about the whole revolution, but

then it all came out in a rush. I was sitting around talking with a couple of friends when someone mentioned the parade.

The usual rush of anger started to burst out, but when it did, I started laughing at myself and thinking about what Kate would have done. That's when I knew what I had to do.

JD: Your humor is politically based a lot of the time, as well as being very serious.

MD: I know Kate wasn't really a political satirist, but everyone develops their own style. I certainly think of, and publicly recognize, Kate as being the guide for my humor, but I also see things in a different light than her. I don't know how she might have reacted to her own murder, but I think hers was a gentler humor and she would have shown another side of things than I do.

JD: So you think your humor could be perceived as overwhelming?

MD: Sometimes I overwhelm myself. I know what I do and say is intense, but I think I also make people laugh, which is why I keep doing it. If only one person likes and remembers a joke I made about a political situation, then I've succeeded, because they will repeat it to everyone they know. That's why political humor is so powerful: if you give the public something to remember or identify with, then the whole issue will stick with them. ●

SOUND TODAY:

THE STATE OF MODERN MUSIC TECHNOLOGY WITH CAMERON RIDE

We've come a long way since a length of wire was first wrapped around a magnet and placed under the strings of someone's old hollow-body guitar sometime back in the late 1930s. That first, primitive electric guitar was built so that the sound of an acoustic could be amplified and made to stand out more with a big band. Little could its inventors foresee the appearance of the pioneers who would elevate electric guitar beyond the role of accompaniment, and define a new medium where the instrument could truly shine. These pioneers have names like King, Hendrix, Clapton and Van Halen, and they did more than bring one amplified instrument to the forefront of a new style of music. They redefined the element so completely that, for the first time since two rocks were

banged together with a consistent beat, the development of music went hand in hand with developing technology. Thus was it possible for electric bass, keyboards, and the drummer's trap-kit to find a niche for themselves. Around that core, the roles of instruments that had traditionally been used in unamplified classical, jazz and ethnic music were redefined. Electric music came into being, encompassing rock, jazz fusion, latin, funk, and a myriad of other forms, popular and counterculture. The rest is history.

Now, seventy years after music and technology's humble marriage, where do we stand? Where are we going? What new forms and pioneers will we see? The answers to these questions are as elusive as the solution to the Schrödinger equation: in the time it takes you to solve the problem, the factors have shifted sufficiently to render your answer obsolete. Some of the factors are tangible however, and the equipment available to the musicians is one of them. Although there is no substitute for imagination, the limits of modern



SINGLE COIL IS BACK!

Rockers trying to get a band together?
Here are a few examples of common musical hardware in 2013:

Standard Electric Guitar	2-400eb
Classic Telecaster or Rickenbacker	10,000eb+
Yamaha "SmartMIDI" Guitar (+2 to Play Instrument Rolls)	1600eb
DPI "Cybertechnic" Guitar (+1 to Play Instrument Rolls)	1200eb
Electric Bass	400eb
Standard Drum Kit	1500eb
Electronic Drum Kit	500-1000eb
Bass Synthesizer	200eb
Drum Synth-box	150eb
"Single Stack" Amplifier (500 watts)	500eb each
MiniAmp® (6x12x2, 10 watts)	220eb
Congas, Taikos or other Exotic Percussion	50-300eb
Lyridon2™ Cordless microphone (range 1000 ft)	100eb

music are largely defined by the technology available to its creators. With this in mind, we at the *Rockerboy* tech department have compiled a brief breakdown on the history, state, and applications of modern music technology. Take a seat and soak it up!

GUITARS

Electric guitars and basses have come a long way since the Fender Stratocaster became the archetype for a rock axe back in the 1960s. Yet for all the innovations, some things haven't changed much. The old standard double cutaway, contour body with a twenty-one to twenty-four fret neck is still the most popular configuration. Most of the progress in guitars and basses haven't been in what the instruments look like, but in what they're made of and how they're wired. In the late 1970s and early '80s, luthiers discovered that wood wasn't the only thing you could make a good guitar or bass out of. Aluminum necks popped up briefly,

but were supplanted by a much more popular and useful medium: graphite composites. Certain companies found that necks made of a graphite-epoxy blend often produced a sustain superior to that of an equal mass of wood. The tone, although somewhat different than that of a wood neck, was comparable in quality. Graphite necks became a common option.

The companies using graphite came across a second discovery shortly thereafter: with composite necks, a large body became optional. With a little rearranging, the mass of an instrument could be substantially reduced, making stage handling much less tiresome. Thus came into being Steinberger Sound, the company that popularized the first of the radically different guitar and bass configurations. With a headless, graphite-blend neck running through a body the size of a large book, and a patented bridge tuning system, the Steinberger guitar or bass was an unusual instrument to behold. It was

a while before the music community accepted the Steinberger, but once they discovered its light weight and superior tone the precedent was set for a new generation of stringed rock instruments. These days, graphite is just one of the many artificial materials used to make guitars. Although traditional wood styles remain most popular, musicians can now choose, according to their taste in instrument weight and tone, from axes in a dozen configurations, fashioned from any of a multitude of advanced composites.

Progress hasn't just been made in the design of the instrument structure; significant changes in pickups have also come about since the origin of electric instruments. In the old days, a pickup was a bar magnet with a coil of wire around it. Various modifications in magnet arrangement and wire wrapping gave rise to several different types of pickups, each with a distinctive sound. The fundamental design, however,

remained consistent. Then, in the late seventies, came active pickups. Active types used a battery to power a small onboard pre-amp, boosting the frequency-response of guitar and bass pickups, and creating a higher signal output with none of the buzz and hiss that had been the bane of the electric musician for so long. With the introduction of powered systems to pickups, it wasn't long until manufacturers found that you could add onboard equalizers, radical tone control, and a variety of other conveniences.

Although traditional pickups remain common, many modern guitars feature powered systems with onboard computers that monitor and process the signal before it leaves the instrument. The most sophisticated of these are the "smart" systems produced by Yamaha and DPI. These allow a musician with interface plugs to jack into his instrument and exert hands-free, instantaneous control over volume, tone, equalization and pickup on/off configuration. One system by Bowman-Task doesn't even use magnets or vibration sensors, but bounces a laser off of the strings to read the pitch and overtones. Claiming to eliminate all magnetic interference with string action, laser pickups have yet to find widespread acceptance. Most musicians consider them to produce a cold, somewhat artificial sound. Nonetheless, they remain a hallmark of the radical changes in guitar wiring.

DRUMS AND PERCUSSION

Percussion was the first music created by man that didn't require him to use his voice. As the oldest of instruments, drums have remained the least dependent on technology. Despite what the paranoids were saying thirty-five years ago, computers and drum machines have never

replaced real drummers. The old-fashioned acoustic trap-kit, with some variations, remains the most popular percussion set in modern music.

Changing times in amplified music have been reflected not so much in the incorporation of technology into drums as in the addition of exotic instruments and styles. The avant-garde popular and counterculture bands have frequently added such things as Asian gongs, taiko drums, and African or Latin percussion sets to their drummer's kits. As early as the 1960s, many groups had two or more percussionists: one for the standard drum kit and one or more for exotic percussion. A bonus included with the incorporation of exotic instruments was the absorption of the ethnic percussion styles that came with them. These days, good bands switch from standard, European based rhythms such as 4/4 ("common time"), to African polyrhythm to taiko drone to something totally original as demanded by whatever the song. This trend, along with the increasing use of non-European melodic instruments, has contributed heavily to the diversifying sound of popular music.

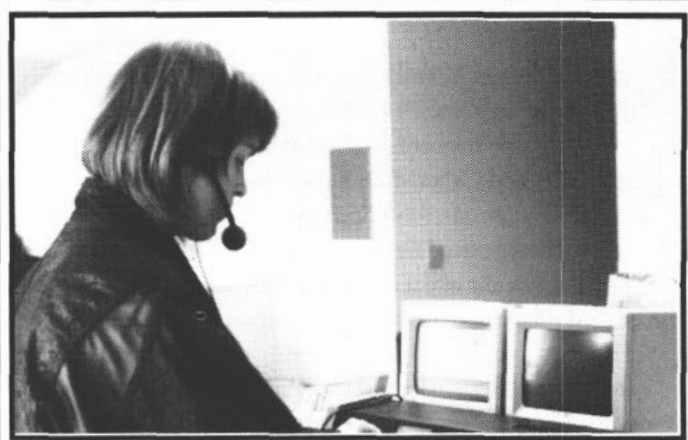
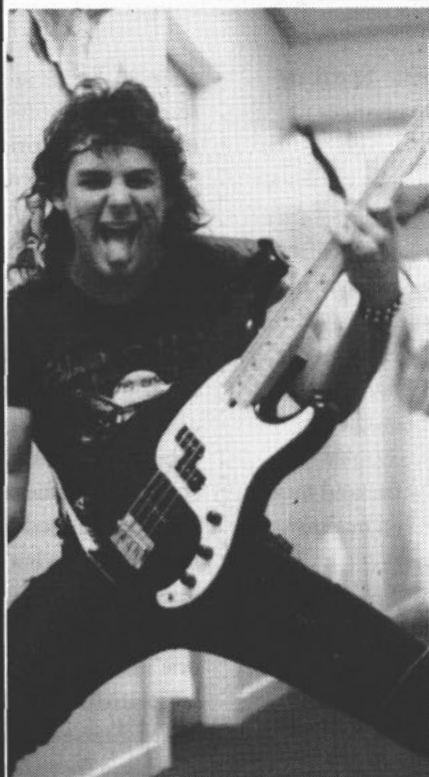
Despite the consistent popularity of traditional drum kits and exotic, acoustic percussion, technology has by no means passed drums by. Digital sampling technology refined during the 1980s made electric drum kits possible. In an electric drum kit, striking a rubber pad with the stick triggers a sample of a specific percussion sound. (A sample, for those of you not in the know, is a recording of a sound held in digitized form in computer memory. It sounds exactly like the real thing, but must be

played back through a speaker.) The drummer can arrange these pads round himself exactly as he would place acoustic drums. Each pad, when struck, will trigger the sample of the corresponding drum. Footswitches at the drummer's feet trigger the sounds of instruments normally operated by pedals. In this way, an acoustic kit can be completely duplicated. The boon of electronic drums is that the samples are not stored in the pads; they are stored in a computer hooked to the pads. These rackmount sampling units usually have enough memory to allow the drummer to store hundreds of sounds, frequently in several pre-arranged "kits". A typical use of this kind of setup is to instantly switch from a standard rock kit to a Latin or African instrument assortment. Even non-percussive sounds, such as horn-hits and guitar riffs, can be stored and triggered by the drummer. In the space of one kit, a drummer can now have several different ensembles at his disposal. These days, a drummer can jack into a cybernetic sampling deck or a CyberMIDI deck hooked to his rig, and exert hands-free control over the kit arrangement and selected sounds as he plays. Alternatively, he can set up a repeating pattern and improvise over it, or record and trigger subvocalised sounds. This allows an incredible amount of freedom and expressiveness in a space comparable to, if not smaller than, a normal drum kit. Only cymbals are infrequently sampled. Limitations in duplicating the range of sounds one can get from acoustic cymbals have made samples unpopular, and most electronic drummers still use real cymbals. CyberMIDI effects decks may change this in the near future, but old habits die hard.

As there are many pros and cons to sampled drums, the choice of

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whether or not to go electronic has plagued many a percussionist. Advantages to samples include the incredible range of possible sounds, the ability to customize, ease of recording, light weight and portability. Disadvantages include lack of "organic sound" (an intangible, but very real concept to all musicians), price, power requirements, and artificial feel of the striking surface. Most drummers appear to have found a happy medium, with a moderate sized acoustic kit and live cymbals complemented by several electronic drum pads. Cybernetic hookups have become popular among those who can afford it. This combination setup offers the ultimate in authentic sound with electronic flexibility to the modern drummer.

KEYBOARDS

Remarkably enough, keyboards have changed little over the last twenty-years. Most of the progress in keyboards appears to have been in expansion of onboard memory, sequencing and digital linear synthesis capability. With keyboards having relied on computers, digital synthesis and sampling for the last thirty-plus years, there wasn't much that could happen to them other than to update their internal systems in concurrence with advances in computer engineering. A modern synth will store forty or fifty complete songs in its sequencer, and up to a thousand sounds in on-board RAM or ROM. Most good ones have laser-optical disk drives from which additional patches can be loaded, and full programability which allows the user to create and save their own patches. Sound

synthesis is more accurate than it was twenty years ago, with clearer instrument reproduction and fantastic artificial sounds. Programming of custom patches is considerably simpler on new boards, with algorithm construction having been simplified to a process not requiring more than a few moments.

Sampling keyboards also remain popular, with digitally stored reproductions of various instruments and random sounds. A good sampler can sound like a hammond organ, a piano, trumpet, violin, or even a sneeze in 88 pitches. Sampled sounds are almost always superior to synthesized ones, but synths remain common because artificial sounds can be created on them. As with synths, most samplers will store songs and several hundred sounds at once. Almost all accept digital disks with

additional sounds, and many allow the user to create their own samples.

In new keyboards, cybernetic interfaces and CyberMIDI allow the user to change patches hands free, split the keys into different sounds and implement effects and organic touches on the sounds *while* playing. This can give digitally reproduced sounds a more human and spontaneous sound than was possible fifteen or twenty years ago. The upper end models have touch sensitive keys for subtle shades in volume and an action indistinguishable from that of a fine piano. A typical modern setup includes two keyboards hooked to rackmount processors by fiberoptic connections. With one board hooked into a synth module, and the other into a sampler, modern keyboardists have all of the sounds they need literally at their fingertips. Cybernetic control on more expensive models completes the arrangement.

As with drummers, there are many keyboardists who prefer to use old-fashioned equipment. I know a few old-guard types and retro-hip young guys who won't use anything except for real pianos, old electric pianos and authentic hammond organs. Well, there's a place for everything in the world.

ACCESSORIES

There has been more consistency in amplifier design than in just about any other aspect of the electric music world. While many guitarists still use tubes, modern, durable, solid state amps boast purer sound reproduction thanks to computerized noise reduction and signal monitoring. The new Sony-Matsushita collapsed-ratio coil technology produces almost no waste heat, and has allowed designers to squeeze more power and reliability into a smaller space. Other than that, the application and design of power amps and integrated instrument amps

has remained consistent. Speakers have undergone subtle changes in magnet, coil and cone design. Aluminum and reinforced copolymer cones are the norm these days, making for accurate, distortion free sound reproduction at volumes and tolerances previously unheard of. Some distinguished experts contest the need for more volume, but you know rockerboys. Cyberaudio is becoming increasingly popular among musicians as more and more organic ears are destroyed by outrageous gig volumes.

Digital processors are smaller, and produce clearer sound than they did twenty years ago, but the actual effects are fundamentally the same. Changes have come about not in the processors, but in their implementation: cybernetic control is now more popular than footswitching or pre-programmed MIDI control. DPI has just introduced a revolutionary CyberMIDI deck, representing the ultimate in hands-free electronics control. (See review pg.25) Among those who don't use wireless, optical fibers with zero signal attrition are fast replacing metal cables as the standard in signal transfer between processors, amps and instruments. For obvious reasons, amp to speaker connections remain wire based.

RECORDING

Major changes have been made in recording technology. In the old days, enormous mixing boards, huge 24-track tape decks and warehouse-sized production facilities were needed to produce a quality album. Street rockerboy demands for small, portable, easy-to-use recording systems put pressure on several of the equipment companies, and by the turn of the century things began to

change. The results have become the standard for non-corporate-backed music production. A band can now cut a disk by running the instruments and vocals down into a read-write laser disc with anything from 4 to 48 tracks. The recording decks are cheap and small, and the disks are saucer sized. A mixing board the size of a lap-top computer can be used to add effects and bring multi-track recordings down to standard two-track stereo. From there, another small unit can be used to copy the master disk onto standard sound-chips and mass market CDs. The whole shebang is frequently marketed as one unit, not much bigger than a large suitcase or old full-sized mixing board. Since easy, mobile recording is necessary for their success, most street bands own systems such as this or know someone who does. These days, cover art is more difficult to obtain than copies of an album.

Such is the state of modern music technology. If more space has been devoted to the instruments, that's because the instruments are the origin of the sound...everything else is gravy. It's also because that's where the dehumanizing effects of music technology are most telling. The technophile is agape with wonder at the panoply of toys available today, but the wise musician knows that technology is a tool. If used carefully, it opens the doors of creativity wider than they have ever been before. If used with abandon, it creates music that is soulless, cold, and empty. There is no reason to avoid modern sound technology...indeed the advantages are countless, yet the creator must always remember that music ultimately springs from humanity. Bury it in technology and that humanity is burned away. Then you have no music at all. ●

PRODUCT REVIEWS

by Cameron Ride

HEY THERE TECHNOPHILES, WE'RE BACK AGAIN THIS MONTH BRINGING YOU COMPREHENSIVE REVIEWS OF THE HOTTEST NEW MUSIC AND MEDIA EQUIPMENT OUT. THIS ISSUE, A SPECIAL TREAT FOR ALL OF YOU COMPUTER ROCKERS OUT THERE: FUZZBOX FELDSTEIN AND I GOT AHOLD OF ONE OF THE NEW DIGITAL PRODUCTS INC. CYBERMIDI EFFECTS CONTROLLERS. WE PUT IT THROUGH ITS PACES, AND THIS MONTH, WE'LL GIVE YOU THE FULL RUNDOWN! THIS IS THE HOT NEW ITEM THAT'S HAD THE MUSIC INDUSTRY HANGING ON THE EDGE OF ITS COLLECTIVE SEAT IN ANTICIPATION FOR SOME TIME NOW. BILLED AS THE NEW REVOLUTION IN DIGITAL PROCESSING AND MIDI CONTROL, THE DPI CYBERMIDI DECK OPENS NEW VISTAS IN THE REALM OF SOUND CUSTOMIZATION, RECORDING AND PERFORMANCE FOR AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL MUSICIANS AND ENGINEERS.

According to DPI, the prime functions of the cyberMIDI deck are twofold. First, it enables a musician or mixing board tech to enable and disable several effects cybernetically. This means effects can be turned on and off, and their levels adjusted while keeping hands free to play the instrument and feet free to move about the stage. While conventional MIDI units can already do this, they are bound by a preprogrammed sequence and must be activated by foot or by a signal from a computer, keyboard or drum machine. These restrictions limit on-stage spontaneity and creativity in a way that the DPI unit has solved. The deck has

superior on-board algorithms for all of the standard effects and several non-standard ones. It's also fully programmable, allowing for creation of whatever new sounds and effects the operator can imagine. Nice frills include a sampling and playback program, and beat-quantization for delay patches. (This makes up for the musician's lapses in rhythm.)

The second major function of the deck is to tie the user cybernetically into any other MIDI unit being used. This allows the musician or engineer to sense and exert hands-free, instantaneous control over click-tracks, sequencing programs and outboard MIDI control units tied into the cyberdeck. The deck will run any combination of up to six MIDI sources or instruments in addition to its on-board effects. Anything more would be too difficult to keep track of. Although learning how to sort and control all of this information can be a little difficult at first, it becomes automatic with time and creates a range of possibilities previously undreamed of for the electric musician or engineer.



Fuzzbox and I hooked the cyberMIDI deck up to a variety of setups, including standard guitar, bass

and keyboard rigs, and studio and concert recording and mixing systems. The results were phenomenal. When you jack into the system, you immediately sense which effects are on line and what levels and mixes they are set to. You also get input on what other MIDI sources the deck is hooked into, and what their status and signal is. In it's most basic application, I was able to use the deck as the ultimate effects box. With instant control over the onboard effects, I was able to take my guitar through a variety of sounds, from plain to grand and sweeping, in seconds. Whatever processing I heard in my head was imposed on my guitar signal by the deck's computer, yet the natural guitar sound was sacrificed only at my command. The range of expression possible was unbeatable. I achieved similar effects on bass, drums and keyboards. Even within one riff, I could subtly or radically change the output sound to mirror whatever emotion or substance I wished to project.

When I was done fooling with my instruments, Fuzzbox took the deck into the *Rockerboy* recording studios to try it out with the mixing boards, Public Address systems, and a

full MIDI rack. His review was no less glowing than mine. Although the unit won't alter instrument levels in playback, it can be used to simultaneously adjust the effects processing on up to six tracks at once. Recording and PA effects were never easier! Fuzzbox produced a variety of brilliant PA and recording mixes in record time. Although no replacement for hands-on twenty-four track engineering, the potential for the small time recording artist, or the big studio looking for a convenient all-around processor are considerable.

An additional bonus is the system's ease of use. For instrument application, simply plug your axe (or whatever) into the wireless strap pack provided with the unit. A second line goes from the pack to the users interface plugs. All requisite chipware is contained in the unit. The pack broadcasts the instrument signal along with the users commands to the main two-space rackmountable deck. A patchbay in the back of the deck has six MIDI in, out and thru jacks for connection to other instruments or sources. (Although only five can be used if the deck is run wireless.) The unit is compact, and easy to set up. Options

included are a non-wireless kit for mixing board use, and a setting which enables all information to be projected visually if the user has a cyberoptic marquee.

One word of caution, inexperienced musicians and techs will be tempted to overuse the effects because of the novelty and simplicity of operation. Avoid this trap! There is no substitute for good, old-fashioned chops, no matter how fabulous the tech is! Other than that, this unit gets my highest rating. Check it out at your local DPI outlet. I personally guarantee hours of fun! Next month we'll look at the new line of Yamaha instrumental skill chips. Until then, *happy jammin'!*

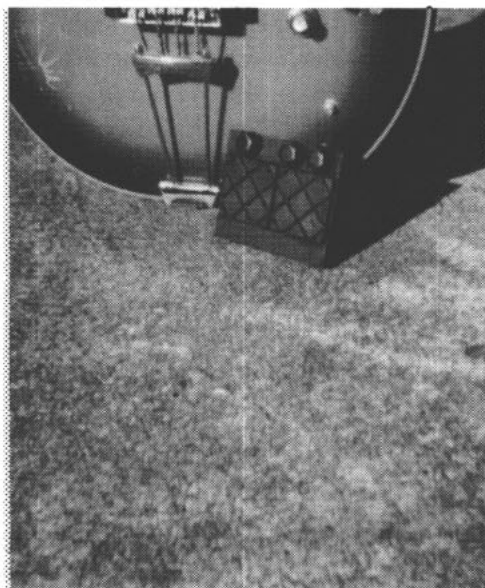
THE DECK IN GAME TERMS:

For instrumental use: +INT/4 to unchipped guitar skills. +INT/5 to chipped guitar skills.

For recording or concert mixing: +INT/4 to the tech's roll if he is unchipped, +INT/5 if he is chipped. Round all decimal values down.

The reduction for use with chipped skills is because too much chipware producing the music lends it an artificial quality. Using INT to figure bonus reflects the individuals ability to handle the amount of data input.

-1 to all rolls for use without 4-8 hours practice time.



Item: CyberMIDI Effects Controller

Manufacturer: Digital Products Inc., La Jolla, California.

Type: Chipware controlled digital signal processing and MIDI operation.

Price: \$2000 suggested list.

Final Word: Yowsa!

FILTHY RICH

AN IRREVERENT LOOK AT SUPER-AFFLUENCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

By Stenn

They own property around the globe: Los Angeles, Monaco, Jakarta, Marseilles. They have cars as big as yachts, yachts as big as mansions, mansions as big as castles. They spend what you'd earn in ten years on an afternoon shopping spree, and don't even bother entering it into the books.

Some are eccentric: hidden away in mountain fortresses guarded by private armies, or supporting their bodies artificially, while they live out their lives in customized braindance universes. Some are flamboyant, pursued by enormous entourages, driving in fifteen meter-long red limousines and making brash entrances wherever they go. Some are as close to normal as you could possibly expect a person with a one-hundred-billion eurodollar fortune to be, going about their business quietly in 125th floor offices, doing whatever it is that has enabled them to become a member of the power elite. These are the modern wealthy: boasting fortunes and estates that make those of yesteryear's rich and famous look paltry, and plumbing levels of decadence that would choke old fashioned rock-stars and skin magazine publishers. This month we at *Rockerboy* take a look at life-styles of the filthy rich, and you, our loyal readers, are invited along for the ride. Enjoy the article, it's probably as close as most of us will ever get to this kind of fortune.

Before we go poking our nose into someone else's pockets, we must ask ourselves "how on earth did these people get so unbelievably rich?" There seem to be a few basic methods. Here are our tips (free of charge) on how to become filthy-rich:

1) INHERIT

Always a popular method with the kids, as it does away with the niggling inconvenience of having to build one's own fortune while simultaneously eliminating adult supervision. Many of the super-decadent modern playboys and girls gained their fortunes through inheritance. It seems that never having done anything except breathe for their money gives people that little extra edge when it comes to contempt for all things moderate and sane.

2) BE HEAD OF STATE FOR A BANANA REPUBLIC OR OIL-RICH NATION

Yes, you too can appropriate the treasury of an entire nation. Just make sure you consolidate your power well so you are not ousted by the next coup. Alternatively, the sheiks, sultans and kings of the few remaining oil-rich Arabian nations (that haven't been reduced to glass) usually have personal fortunes that make the Swiss accounts of a banana republic look like a piggy bank. The destruction of half the world's oil reserves as only served to make those in possession of the remaining resources wealthier than they once were. And they don't even have to seize the national treasury to do it! Unfortunately, gaining entrance to that rarefied circle usually requires some prerequisites, like being

born into Arabian nobility. But hey, nobody ever got rich by letting a little obstacle like that stop them!

3) BE AN ENTREPRENEURIAL GENIUS OR CORPORATE MEGA-HONCHO

Got a few bucks in your pocket? Got a deep understanding of high finance and investment? Maybe you can parlay your pittance into a pile. Don't invest in the wrong scheme though, or you could end up with your pittance in a pitiful portfolio, and then you'd be living in poverty. Pick well, and you could end up like Texas corp-raider Buckley T. Grossman who turned five thousand U.S. dollars and a little savvy into a thirty-billion eurobuck commercial empire. Of course, if you don't want to risk it all, you can get the appropriate college degree, join the right corporation, and work your way up the company ladder. Get high enough and you could have a 240 million eurobuck annual salary like Jonas Weidlin at EBM. Of course, Jonas Weidlin is eighty-four and bedridden, so whether or not he's enjoying the fruits of his labors is debatable.

4) BE A BIG MEDIA OR SPORTS STAR

Yes! This is it! Far and away the most popular method for achieving mega-success in today's cold world. This is the one all the kids dream about. If not quite as wealthy as the oil sheiks, the media stars make up for it by being the most flamboyant and peculiar of the ultra-wealthy, and by having what looks like more fun than just about anyone alive. Yes, everybody wants to be loved

by the masses...and paid for it. How much better could you do? And you can get away with anything! How about Italian movie stud Pino Lauretes who always wears transparent clothes? How about superstar entertainer Bo Cervantes? 225 million eurobucks a year for eighty or ninety days work? That's the life!

We at *Rockerboy* weren't content to let these beautiful people continue their lotus-eating existences without a little hassle, so we pried into their lives for your pleasure. Enjoy, or turn green with envy, or scoff with laughter. They don't care.

Of course, we must ask ourselves what it means to be rich? What defines rich? Merely well-to-do? Is that *filthy* rich? Well, for our purposes, we at *Rockerboy* have come up with a precise, technical definition of filthy-rich that will aid you in your classifications: filthy-rich is someone with so much money that you want to vomit. Projectile vomit. On the spot, eagerly, and preferably upon the offending party.

These people can have anything and anyone they want. They don't have to work. They don't even have to play. They don't have to do anything. Armed with this definition, we now enter the world of the filthy rich. As there are fundamental differences in our generalizations of the four types of filthy-rich people described above, we will examine the categories individually. After all, it would be tragic to assume that the filthy rich are all the same, wouldn't it?

1) THE INHERITORS

In my observation, these people are the lowest form of life on earth whatsoever. They have absolutely no

Her body guards finally heaved me out of the casino for standing too close to her eminence in a suit worth less than 2000eb

respect for the value of the money they possess because they never had to earn it. Even a cyberball player who earns a million eurobucks per game is gifted with a simpleminded means of equating money with value in terms of human cost: 4hrs/week of pain + suffering + bashing skulls = 1,000,000 eb (plus scoring bonus). No, the inheritors have no way of relating the money they earn with any output of effort. I've been to Monte Carlo, Marseilles, New York and London, and seen them arrive in their yachts and head straight for the casinos. I watched Carmelle Lobertini, (Late military goods exporter Carl Lobertini's daughter), gamble away four million eurobucks in one evening in Monte Carlo. Her body guards finally heaved me out of the casino for standing too close to her eminence in a suit worth less than 2000 eb, thus threatening her personage with lower-class airborne lint. Consequently, I didn't even get to see how she finished out the evening. Her entourage consisted of thirty people, and they *weren't* guests. These peoples' salaries, (and God only knows how many others,) are being paid out of the Lobertini fortune. Not that they make any difference compared to her ladyships' gambling and shopping bills.

Somewhat incensed by the treatment I'd received at the hands of

her goons, I did a little journalistic prying into Carmelle's private matters and discovered that she makes these little soirees into the Riviera about once a month, to the tune of roughly thirty million eurobucks a pop! But since she's drawing on an estate and holdings valued at 50 billion eurodollars, she has a ways to go before the till runs dry. In fact, at her current rate of spending, and assuming for the sake of argument that her fortune produces no new income (although it does), Carmelle can afford to continue these monthly episodes for approximately 133 years before she has to worry about social security. Now *that's* filthy rich.

After my observations, there can be no doubt that the inheritors are the most extravagant of the filthy rich. There's just something about never having worked for their money that makes them that much more outrageous in their spending. Remember six or seven years back when Avery Rodman spent \$2 billion in old, family money buying that Carribean island where he established his "perfect society?" Then the whole thing got eaten alive by Hurricane Bailey. Somebody forgot to tell him that they had those things out there! No matter. He just the entire island, hurricane proof this time, and started over. It's still there,

forbidden to all except those permitted by "Leader Rodman."

2) THE HEADS OF STATE AND OIL-SHEIKS

Actually, this could have been two categories, but since I work for my paltry salary (sorry, boss) I collapsed it into one. Although the few sheiks who survived the Middleast Melt-down and the heads of small nations are both ultra-wealthy political figures, they are notable for different reasons. The sheiks have the largest personal fortunes of any people on earth: up to half a trillion euro. The African and Banana republic types are notable because they are largely comical (as long as you don't live in their country, that is) and because they frequently rape their countries for their fortunes. Since they frequently die in wars, coups and assassinations, the heads of state are also in the most tenuous position of the filthy-rich.

The Arab peoples, through no fault of their own, settled upon the most oil-rich lands on the planet. Later in history, when such things became important, they discovered that they could make big bucks selling it to the rest of the world. Not believing in communism as a viable economic system (does *anyone* these days?), the wealth generated by these fantastic reserves became concentrated in the hands of the nobility. As oil became scarcer the world over, those with large reserves became wealthier, and the Saudis and their neighbors were, without a doubt, the richest of all. Isn't that a nice story? The upshot of this whole shebang is that the Arabian rulers and oil merchant families became filthy-rich—the ones who survived the Mideast Meltdown at the end of the 90's, that is.

I have found in my travels that the Arabs are extravagant, but in a somewhat more understated way than the inheritors. There is an elegance to their excess that is lacking in other filthy rich types. Everything with the Arabs is opulence: Rolls Royces, one hundred meter long super-yachts, palatial, elegant mansions and castles. Filthy rich, but pretty. To live in the household of one of the wealthy oil merchants is to live in paradise. They have every need catered to, every comfort provided, every wish satisfied, yet achieve this with out decadence. When I flew to the Mideast three years ago to interview Ali Ben Hassad for this magazine, I stayed in his mansion for a week. They had to pry me out with a crowbar when it was time to leave. The hospitality is unbeatable. If heaven exists, they won't send you to the Pearly Gates any more, they send you to an Arabian mansion. Their European villas and American estates are much the same, and the wealthy merchant or ruler who doesn't have one of each is a rare one indeed. Business is frequently conducted from aboard their yachts, or whatever port of call they happen to be making at the time.

But there is a dark side to the Arabian filthy rich...a ruthlessness and coldness that belies their joviality. They are the most powerful non-corporate individuals in the world, and they know it. The power of life and death is incidental to their wealth, and that power is wielded in a casual manner that shocks most westerners. The Arabs are individuals with the resources of corporations... and their decisions need not be subject to the approval of board of directors.. That's filthy *powerful*.

The banana republic dictators are a somewhat different story.

You've read about Carribean, South American and African nations under the control of despots. It happens all the time. Some charlie in the army gets tired of just being "General Jose" and decides that it's time to become "El Gran Presidente General Jose." So they scrape together enough loyal officers to stage a halfway decent coup, and next thing you know, they're the top banana in the sweaty republic. And these guys are so un-original. The first thing they do is sieze control of the national treasury, or otherwise misappropriate state funds for their own personal use. Of course, depending on the United States' public opinion, we will spend billions of our own dollars either supporting them, or doing our best to overthrow them with other wannabes more sympathetic to the American Dream.

What does that have to do with being filthy rich? The treasury of even an impoverished nation will have enough in it to constitute a fairly amazing personal fortune. The minute these guys execute the last of the troublemakers, they're gambling away state funds on the Riviera, or buying Alpine ski chalets and ocean-front villas. Meanwhile, more and more of the national treasury leaves the country to pop up in exclusive German and Swiss accounts under sole control of our hero.

Now, if there's one thing I've learned, it's that there isn't a Third World dictator anywhere who doesn't love to strut his stuff and show off his wealth. These people come close to the inheritors in their level of extravagance. They tend to be a little bit more restrained, however, since most of them have at least a modicum of practicality from

military backgrounds or political necessities of their job (i.e. such tasks as not being assassinated, or deposed by the next coup). Consequently, the biggest expenditure of guys and gals like this, after property and recreation, is security. Because of the constant threat of coup or assassination, the security fund of these bozos is typically 25-35% of their net worth. That includes vehicle, house and communications security, and typically a mercenary force. Mercenary forces will remain loyal to their paycheck, whereas national troops' loyalties are fickle, depending largely on which side of the bread appears to have more butter on it. Note that annual security budget of 10-20 million eurodollars per year, that qualifies these people as filthy rich.

3) **ENTREPRENURIAL GENIUSES AND CORPORATE MEGA-HOCHOS**

These people can be jerks, but you've got to respect them because their money is earned, after a fashion. While its true that many started off in the *inheritor* category, a substantial number of them, such as Buckley T. Grossman, whom I mentioned earlier, were just like you and me when they started out (only smarter, it would seem). For some reason, Fate smiled on these people and gifted them with either unbelievable business acumen or incredible career opportunities.

Despite their varied approaches to careers, the entrepreneurial geniuses apparently have one thing in common. No matter how much wealth and property they amass, and no matter how many companies' ownerships can be traced back to them, they always want more. Remember how impressed everyone

Toys of the Filthy Rich, or: Now That You've Got It, How Do You Flaunt It?

You've finally made it. You're filthy rich. Billions in euro, assets the world over, fame, fortune and power at your fingertips. So, now what? Buy some toys! You can't be considered for membership in the elite classes of humanity without at least one each of the following!

A PRIVATE ISLAND!

A square km or five, of tropical oceanfront property is just what you've been looking for. For that extra bit of security and privacy, why not make it an island out in the middle of the ocean? With a little radar coverage, a small private airforce, a crack security team, and the patented SonarNet waterborne intrusion detector from Arasaka Security Systems Inc., you'll be happy as a clam in your impervious tropical paradise. Add a cozy villa, some

guest facilities, and a few natives for color and then you can invite a few friends over for tea. Party for 500, anyone? All this can be yours for a mere billion euro-bucks.

What, no island available? Well, for a mere one quarter million per square kilometer Bio Marine Engineering Inc. will *build* one for you custom designed topography, landscaping and even wildlife. Build a totally wacky island populated entirely by ducks and naked women, or one entirely covered with pink chiffon. It's up to you, after all, you are filthy rich!

A SUPER YACHT TO GET TO YOUR PRIVATE ISLAND!

Yes, we know you have an airstrip on your island, but it's so much more stylish to arrive in your Icelandic built superyacht-100m of ocean going, nuclear powered luxury. Be sure to get one with a

heliport, multiple swimming pools, and a below-the-waterline ballroom with transparent walls so you can throw chic dances with undersea themes! A twin hulled design with extra deck space is available for those who enjoy their place in the sun just a little bit more. For a moderate fee, Marine Personnel Inc. in London will provide you with a loyal crew of expert seamen. Marine-trained security personnel will ensure no unpleasantness erupts. Naturally, you'll need to be able to sleep forty or fifty guests in stateroom comfort. You needn't worry, Shuchimoto Shipyards in Tokyo will be happy to send a representative to meet you anywhere in the world with brochures and film illustrations of their models, designs and options. Sorry, prices aren't printed in the brochures. If you have to ask, you can't afford it! (Best guess, 50-400 million eurodollars, depending on the size and model.)

was with Donald Trump back when we were kids? Trump this, Trump that, Trump the other thing? An amateur. Remember Charlotte Hoffmann back in the nineties, and Gerhardt Lieberman fifteen years ago? Kid stuff.

Course the Japanese outdid us at our own game, with people like Saburo Arasaka and Gen Ishikawa amassing holdings that made most of the American venture capital and

corporate raider portfolios look like *Monopoly* money. The Japanese super-investors put together holdings so vast that everything from the Chinese laundry down the street to the latest United States aircraft carrier or scramjet could trace its ownership and production lineage back to these people. I'm suprised that they didn't edit the famous giant Hollywood Hills sign to read:

HOLLYWOOD(WE OWN IT).

Maybe next month. This is not to say that the U.S. and EEC can't compete with the Japanese. We have a few of our own, including Jurgen Judd, Harris Goldberg, Beverly Schantz, François D'Albert. In fact, most of the individual corporate ownerships out there can be traced back to one or two hundred people, mostly German, American, Korean and Japanese.

Kin to those who own the cor-

SECURITY GADGETS FROM ARASAKA SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CONTROL INC. TO PROTECT YOUR YACHT AND ISLAND!

Nothing is safe these days. Police are ineffective and have no social graces when it comes to dealing with people as important as yourself. What can you do? You can be responsible for your own protection. That's where the friendly people at Arasaka and CCI come in. They are ready to provide you with crack security troops, electronics to foil intrusion and surveillance, and armor and weapons to protect personal property. For a small fee, they will also send a consulting team every few months to do an exhaustive assessment of all of your security measures and ensure they are all up to date.

Items that you are liable to purchase include chemical, photoelectric, seismic, magnetic and sonic detectors, remotely operated deterrent systems, attack dogs, bulletproof kevlar weave between the inner and outer walls of your house, visible and infrared camera systems, secure tele-

phones, fax and computer lines and halon fire-protection systems. Prices run from 1,000 to 1,000,000 euro per system, depending on the models, and the extent of coverage. Don't forget to have a security center added to your home, so your expert staff can monitor all of the equipment.

And we can't forget your vehicles! For 50-500,000 euro you can either company will bring your car up to modern security standards, with bullet and fireproof walls and windows, solid, flame resistant tires, gas, oil and smoke ejectors, caltrops, machine guns and/or grenade launchers, fuel reserves and several hours of internal oxygen. Auto-communications systems will also be made secure. Now you're travelling in style!

FANCY CLOTHING TO WEAR ON YOUR YACHT, ISLAND, AND IN YOUR SECURE HOME!

Hey, if you're going to be filthy rich, you'd better dress the part! Many European and Japanese designers have produced stylish clothes with you in mind. How about a raw silk suit from Schroeder's of London: 10,000

eurobucks cheap! A leather jacket from Tokyo's Yuki: a mere 1200 eurodollars. Fiorucci of Italy will sell you their exclusive shoes for only 600 euro a pair, and they go perfectly with a gold Swiss Geneva watch.

Ladies! Gilbert Foss of Paris has the dress for you! No, those aren't sequins, they're thousands of diamonds. All yours for only 12,000,000 euro. Carefull (Dryclean only). If that doesn't turn you on, Shin Masahiro has a dress made out of what appears to be frayed ropes knotted together in an extremely coarse fishnet design. I don't know what the attraction is, but in Tokyo and Osaka, they're selling for 25,000 eurobucks each. Make sure you're not ashamed of your body if you plan on wearing one.

Like to stand out in a crowd? Laura Riley in London will sell you suits and dresses made of metallic cloth so finely woven that reflections are visible in it. She will custom design clothes for you with these fabrics, but be careful, the tag is about 30,000 eurobucks per outfit. But shoot, if you could afford the island, you might as well have Ms. Riley make a suit for your dog. It won't show on your books because you're filthy rich!

porations are those who run them. While not quite so disgustingly affluent as their employers, the responsibility of managing a major corporation like EBM or Network News 54 can carry what we would loosely term a godawesome salary. We already mentioned Jonas Weidlin of EBM and his 240 million per annum. Weidlin is one of the elite, but upper level executives and presidents of many of the other big

corporations take home paychecks comparable to his.

Naturally enough, the corporate execs work harder for their money than any of the other filthy rich types. I spoke to a couple of head executives from American corporations, and it turns out that they're planted in boardrooms and offices eight or twelve hours a day, five or six days a week. Of course, these are offices on the 120th floor with

marble floors, private bars, sleeping quarters, gyms, spas and so forth. Their income is also somewhat more tenuous than many of the other rich, as they can be fired without notice. Of course, five or six years' work at forty million dollars a year will not leave you standing in line at the welfare office if you lose your job.

Aside from not being their own boss, and probably not enjoying their jobs quite as much as the media stars,

ULTIMATUM

By Main Gauché



*When a Promise
Isn't Enough...*

there is one more problem that corporates have to deal with. They are targets for corporate hits and extraction. This is, of course, one reason why they (and top R&D people) get paid so much. In order to entice somebody into sitting in an office that may be napalmed at any moment, you have to wave a fair amount of green in their face. But when you're being paid enough to make risks like that seem negligible, you become filthy rich.

4) MEDIA AND SPORTS STARS

Ask somebody what they think of when you mention rich and famous, and chances are it will be media or sports stardom. The glamour, the recognition, the devotion... corporate raiders and oil brokers don't get this. Braindance, TV, music and athletic stars do, and they have fun to boot. Media stars also seem to produce the most eccentric of the filthy rich. Take comedian/talk-show host Leo Schild, who now refuses to leave his sealed, germ-free fortress in the rocky mountains. His vid-show is broadcast from there, and his interviews are conducted with a sheet of clear, 1" thick, bullet-proof lexan between him and his guests and camera crew. He can get away with this impersonal treatment because he is filthy rich.

How about actress Rin Silver, who has all restaurants, clubs, and so on sprayed with perfume before she enters them, and has a red carpet unrolled before her *everywhere* she walks. (Actually attendants use four or five twenty foot carpets, and unroll and roll them respectively on either side of Silver.) Then

there is famous writer Norman Polowski, who now lives his life in a computer-generated braindance, his body kept alive through medical means. All of Polowski's books are transcribed out of braindance by computer. It costs \$30,000 per day just to keep Polowski's body alive, and the computers that maintain his personal universe running. Of course, he doesn't mind, since he's filthy rich. People he wants to meet (or who want to meet him) jack into his braindance universe via a remote station owned by his estate. The remote is portable, and communicates with the main computers by satellite.

Let's not forget the athletes and musicians. There's baseball player Ray Isaac, who owns a car for every week of the year. And who could ignore cyberball player Reese Washington? In a move that angered Christian institutions around the globe, he had his name legally changed to God. There is corporate pop singer Montana Blades, who moved to a private island out in the pacific where he is legally married to thirty-two women, and planning to wed three more next month.

Of course, these examples represent some of the more bizarre and ostentatious demonstrations of wealth. There are many entertainers and athletes who limit themselves to more mundane pleasures, such as fifty-room villas and Arabian super-yachts. But being outrageous and bizarre is just one of the privileges enjoyed by becoming wealthy. When you can behave in a supremely pretentious and offensive manner to everyone in the world and still be loved and admired by millions, that's filthy rich.

And that's our story, such as it is. A little peek at who these filthy rich are. Why our perpetual fascination with people more wealthy and powerful than ourselves? Personally, I put it down to pure, gut level, hormone-induced envy. I don't know about you, but I would like to have such affluence that when I say "Jump!", all the people in my immediate vicinity begin moving up and down. I'd like to have five Porsches and a mansion on the Mediterranean. Unfortunately, as with most of you, these things are beyond my means as a simple journalist.

So, if I can't become one of the beautiful people, the least I can do is slander them. I hope you've enjoyed my efforts. Of course, I'll probably be sued by all of the people that I've named in this article, and then I'll be dirt-poor. But if they can afford to hire better lawyers than me and sue me for everything I own, well that's one of the privileges of being filthy rich. ●

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A ROCKERBOY SPECIAL REPORT



CORPORATE MEDIA



AND THE RISE OF **NETWORK NEWS** **54**

**MEDIA—
LIFE IN THE 21ST
CENTURY—**

Two things intricately and inextricably intertwined. We are all children of the media from the day we are born. It shapes our lives in

by Spin Wildmon



recreation, advertising, business and academia; through radio, video, print, billboard and the Net. Only in death are our minds free from the institutionalized attempts of others to shape our thinking and affect our consciousness.

The efforts of armies and governments pale before the effects of mass media on modern populations. Could a force so potent possibly be ignored by the corporations whose powers drive the modern world around the sun? No chance. As early as the beginning of the twentieth century, technology has allowed media to come into its own, concentrating its power in the hands of a few large broadcasting corporations controlling radio stations, movie and recording production studios, newspapers, periodicals and publishing houses. The emergence of new technologies such as television allowed the power of corporations controlling media to expand until no industrialized household was untouched. Historically, it has been the development of technologies allowing for wider and more appealing dissemination of information that has allowed the mediacorps to achieve such staggering levels of success.

Throughout most of the twentieth century, large blocks of media control were wielded by corporations as diverse as Coca-Cola, Gulf-Western and General Electric. However, by the mid 1990s, sales, shakeups, mergers, and changes in technology and corporate structure gave rise to more media-dedicated conglomerates. These corporations could concentrate all of their resources on the development of new media-related technologies. Such was the fertile breeding ground that gave rise to what is arguably the most powerful mediacorp in the world today: Network News 54.

As the dominant force in the field, what better corporation to illustrate modern corporate media technology. Network News 54 (or Net 54) was born in 1991 as a cable news service similar to the venerable CNN. Known then as CableNews 54, it gave CNN and C-SPAN rough competition, developing a reputation for tough, accurate, hard-hitting journalism. CableNews 54's quality earned it spectacular success, from which it was able to diversify and expand. As a fledgling corporation, CN 54 gained control of several smaller cable networks and pioneered the small-scale development of several new broadcasting and production technologies.

54'S BUYOUT OF NBC

The real big break, however, came in 1998 when CN 54 bought the ailing NBC from General Electric, thereby expanding its influence from cable to the broadcast airwaves. With this action, CableNews 54 became Network News 54. Under the guidance of a young programming

In 2002, Net 54 turned the way Americans received their daily news upside-down

genius named Howard Wong, Net 54 diversified its programming into all varieties of entertainment, becoming the first media corp to exert *major* control over both the cable and broadcast domains. Although the reputation for outstanding video-journalism continued, "News" became an anachronistic word in the title, kept for style only.

This expansion is what really gave Net 54 the resources to compete with dedicated technology corporations in the development of new media tech. Until the NBC buyout, Net 54's tech research and development had been small-scale and largely theoretical. The corporation's broadcast and production

facilities had never relied on cutting edge tech as cable and broadcast video had been established long before the corporation's birth. Although such things as first generation HDTV broadcasting and read-write digital video disc production were used, these technologies had been imported from corporations such as Sony, Microtech and Nippon-Gakki. This changed with Net 54's financial maturity. Using profits from the broadcasting, advertising and recording divisions, as well as several other departments, Net 54 financed the creation of a new subsidiary: International Media Technologies (IMT). This was the move that catapulted Net 54 into the ranks of major world corporations, and earned it the throne of king of the mediacorps.

YOU ARE THERE!

**This Month:
Tour the city on
the night shift
with a Network
News 54
roving media
team!
With Robert
Tam**

1930hrs: N54 corporate liaison introduces me to the team. Cruise, AV-4 pilot; Weed and Nehemiah, team solos; Glass, Cameraman; Twist, techie; Dana Flash, News 54 correspondent. Team is young, but experienced and quick.

2000hrs: Team goes on duty. We lift off from the Network News tower and start a cruise through those areas of the city which Dana considers "hot" tonight.

2045hrs: Boostergang turf war crosses under freeway and rages through Charter Hill residential area causing deaths of several innocents. Dana has team dropped in middle of battle to capture exclusive footage of gang members killing residents. One gangleader orders subordinates to kill mediateam and reclaim video tape. Weed and Nehemiah kill several, including the leader. Chief of rival gang is impressed and of-

IMT'S ROLE

IMT was extremely well bankrolled by its parent, giving it unlimited freedom to pursue any developments showing potential. This investment paid off particularly well for Net 54. Three IMT departments in particular received special attention. One was a think tank, where several prominent research and analysis teams devoted their time to predicting what technological trends and developments were worth pursuing. Another was the technology research department itself, where the actual labwork was done. A third was the special operations department. Industrial espionage and extraction of competitor's researchers and executives played a large part in the development of new media technology. The end result was that Net 54 became the first mediacorp with a really strong in-house technology research

and development capability. Other mediacorps were still buying new tech from other corporations, and this made them slow. Although competitors eventually caught on, Net 54's head start established it as the dominant force in mediatech development. It has been on the cutting edge ever since, with most other mediacorps following its lead.

With IMT under full steam by 2001, Net 54 became the vanguard of mediatech development. Those technologies that were developed by other companies were usually commercially implemented on a large scale by Net 54 first. Thus a history of recent developments in electronic media is easily studied and understood through examining the recent progress of Net 54.

NET 54 AND PRINT MEDIA

The first shake-up created by Net 54, via IMT research, was in the venerable newspaper trade. In 2002, Net 54 turned the way Americans received their daily news upside-down. The initial developments affected people who received printed news at home. A program was offered under which individuals subscribed to the Network 54 printed news service. For one low, monthly fee, subscribers gained access to a news database through the phone system (and later the Net) which allowed them to call up text and photographs from any Net 54-owned newspaper on their television or home computer. A hardcopy printed out on demand. The first advantage of the computerized newspaper service was that the news was always current, as it was constantly updated at the

fers Dana exclusive interview. First time boostergangers get their say on the air. Report is filed.

2350hrs: Call from newsroom: A military strike team has extracted Antonio Zamora, one of the leaders of a powerful American drug cartel called "The Corporation", from his hideout in the Carribean. He has agreed to talk in return for judicial clemency. His arrival is supposed to be secret, but an anonymous tip says that his plane will arrive at airport at 0015hrs for his arraignment in Superior Court next day. Media team dispatched to airport to film arrival.

0015hrs: Team has arrived at airport and is waiting at ap-

pointed terminal. Now that the story is out, police have arrived and cordoned off an area for press. Newsroom transmission to our AV-4 must have been intercepted, as teams from other networks are also present. Zamora deplanes, escorted by military and judicial personnel. Reporters call for a statement. Before Zamora can speak, one of the judicial guards puts his machine pistol to Zamora's head and says: "This is what happens to those who betray the Corporation! This is a warning to others!" He pulls the trigger, literally blowing Zamora's head off, and then sweeps his fire through the media teams and guards. No one on our team is hit. Others aren't so lucky. Nehemiah puts a slug through the man's chest

before the military can unsling their guns. Dana drags Glass under the cordon. Before he dies, the assassin tells Dana that he leaked the arrival of Zamora so media teams would be present to film the execution as a warning. The guard has been a mole in the Justice Department for the Corporation for years. Unfortunately, he dies before he can name any accomplices. His confession serves to underscore the extent of the drug cartel's power and the fanatical loyalty of its followers. Report is filed.

0200hrs: Call from newsroom: extraction apparently underway at Euro Business Machines building downtown.

company end. In addition, the subscriber could call up video footage pertinent to subjects of interest. Any sections that the subscriber was not interested in could be deleted. In this way, the information content and diversity of a newspaper came with the excitement of a newscast, and without excess garbage.

Shortly thereafter, a small, portable unit was introduced that could hold up to several thousand pages of print and photos in RAM, and project them on a small flat-screen. With a cheap, home attachment, subscribers to the Net 54 printed news service could transfer whatever information they wanted from their home decks and take it with them on their commute. In addition, old-fashioned newspaper

vending boxes were replaced with small stations where subscribers could plug in their newsdecks and receive free updates and the text of any paper carried on the service. For a quarter or two, non-subscribers who owned any of a number of deck types and laptop computers could purchase the same information. Our modern digitized newspaper and magazine services are merely refined versions of this process. After the Net came into being, and other companies started getting on the bandwagon, we reached our present system where anyone who owns a standard portable, personal computer deck can copy the news or a magazine by paying the correct amount at an automated newsstand and plugging in their unit, (You may even be reading this issue of *Rockerboy* that way.) For home subscribers, things have remained much the same, except that

many companies now offer services competing with Net 54. As a result, the old-fashioned printed newspaper has faded into oblivion, although for those who prefer to get their facts on newsprint, the automated stands do offer a fax-style output.

NET 54 ENTERS THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

In another expansion from its television roots, Net 54 established a foothold in the music industry in 2005 by introducing Soundchips. Popular with today's interface-equipped youngsters, these are small ROM chips available in vending machines, stores, in promotional giveaways and even as gifts in cereal boxes. Commercial ones usually contain from one to three songs and an obligatory advertisement. The chips are cheap because, unlike reflex chipware, they are one-way, and

0215hrs: We arrive at the scene. Several news vehicles are orbiting building at a safe distance. An unmarked Osprey is parked on the roof of the building with engines running. Weed's prediction based on the situation: a six to eight man crack extraction team and a willing extractee located on one of the top two floors. An orbit of the building reveals explosion damage on the top floor. Thermograph shows EBM guards in combat with extraction team inside. Dana elects to go in. Cruise brings us to the side of the building and Dana and team enter through a broken window. Cruise stands by to dustoff. Glass captures exclusive indoor footage of the battle.

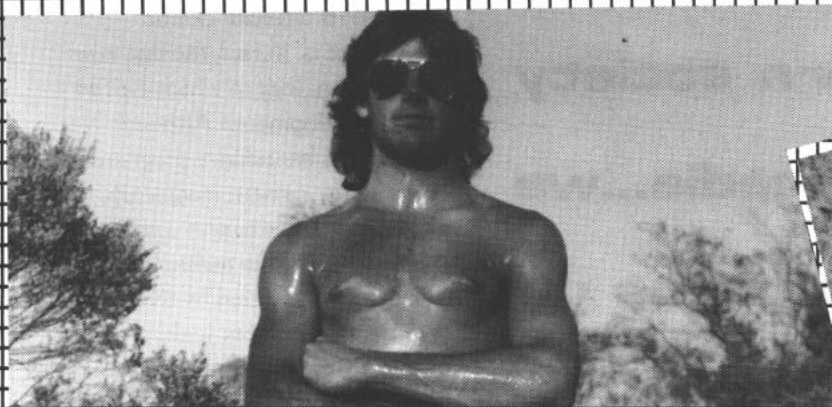
0220hrs: The small, unprepared contingent of EBM guards is overpowered. Dana orders retreat as extraction team opens fire on us. Weed takes a hit, but her armor soaks up most of the damage. Back on board the AV-4, Cruise explains that he had to shoot down the Osprey, as it's crew apparently thought he was an EBM reinforcement vehicle and attacked. Dana has Cruise put us on the roof to intercept the extraction team, who is unaware of the fate of their vehicle.

0225hrs: Extraction team overpowered with vehicular weapon. Dana has solos pick up extractee for exclusive interview. Extractee, a top R&D technician,

declines to interview at first, but capitulates under duress of ejection from vehicle at altitude. He reveals that he arranged for his own extraction by Microtech. Dana thanks him for interview, denies his request for transport to Microtech and returns him to EBM, where he is happily received by surviving guards. Report is filed.

0300hrs: Take stock footage of city at night for use behind weather statistics.

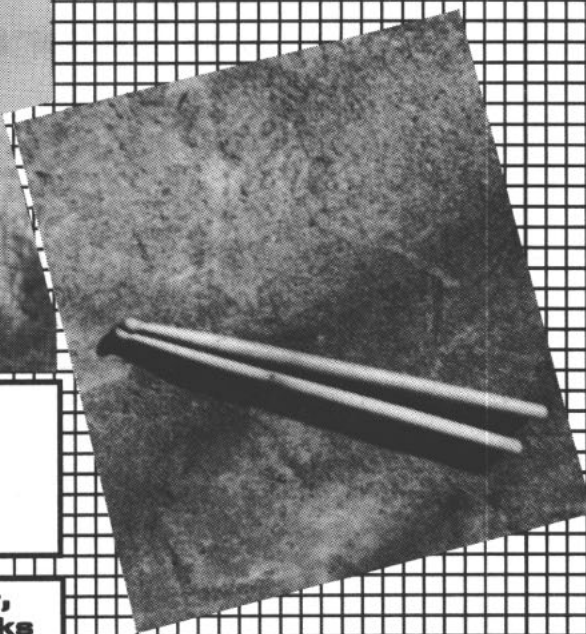
0400hrs: Call it a night. Break for coffee and donuts. Adequate reward for pretty slow night's work. ●



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don't interact with the user's brain. They just send out their signal when plugged in, enabling the wearer to experience the music in flawless, digital, 360 degree stereo brilliance (basic cyberaudio or Wearman required).

Soundchips are gaining popularity with many large mediacorps because so far, most underground rockerboys can't afford the production set up. Digital discs are easy to produce, and the equipment needed to do it isn't very expensive. Sound chips are even cheaper to mass produce, but the facilities to do it are still beyond the reach of street rockerboys. This appeals to corporations, who don't like their sponsored bands having to compete with the street 'boys. Although an entire album can't be stored on one chip, Net 54

and other mediacorps will use the chips as saturation advertising. Teenagers buy the singles, or get them free, and hopefully are enticed into shelling out for the entire album.

Other than soundchips, IMT's developments in new music technology have been fairly limited. Net 54 has been party to some refinements in the industry, but development of music recording and playback technology has remained fairly consistent since read-write laser disc and direct digital RAM storage recording (super-sampling) rendered tape obsolete. In bringing music to the public, however, Net 54 has been a leader. Net 54 owns several music-oriented subsidiary stations across the nation and around the world, and is a major force in commercial radio. Their only flaw is that they tend to

overemphasize material recorded on their own labels, but to them it's free ad time.

THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION

Despite their forays into music recording, print services, and even radio, video technology has always been Net 54's mainstay. They remain first and foremost a broadcast corporation, and that is where the bulk of their development is concentrated. Most modern home reception is fiberoptically carried, negating interference, but portable receivers still require electromagnetic transmission. IMT was responsible for the development and adoption of digital signal transmission. This was the technology that preceded the development of modern radios and televisions which are nowhere near as prone to interference and fade out problems as their progenitors. Al-

Modern society is fueled by the media...we thrive on what it offers us.

though analog signals are still broadcast, few analog receivers are in use anymore, and most experts expect that all analog transmission in the United States and Europe will have ceased within the next ten years.

Digital signal transmission made second generation high definition television possible. This is why modern TV screens have such a clear picture, while their antecedents had visible scanning lines on the screen. Digital signals make the electromagnetic transmission of larger amounts of data possible, enabling a picture to carry more visual information than ever before. A side effect of this was to remove the size constraint on video screens, making wall TVs and superscreens possible. From this we get modern televisions, movie screens, and of course, the infamous video-billboard advertisements which have become so popular in the last few years. Digital transmission also made it possible to squeeze many more broadcasters into a tighter bandwidth. That is why we have upwards of several hundred stations per area these days, instead of ten or fifteen.

CYBERWARE RESEARCH

Despite the emphasis on traditional broadcast technology such as radio

and television, Net 54 has not ignored the possibilities opened up by the development of cybernetics. In addition to soundchips, there are several other media services which involve interfacing. IMT developed the systems which made it possible to use interface plugs as glorified headphones. Many companies now market personal stereo systems which read standard laser disks, but deliver the music in a form of aural simulation, similar to sound-chips. You hear it in your head, via your interface plugs. The advantage to this system is that the reproduction is flawless, no one else can hear it, and the listener can still hear what is happening in the world around them. The drawback is that, as with soundchips, users sometimes note that the music has an ethereal or "unreal" quality about it, since there is no corresponding physical stimulation.

Even video can be received over interface these days, although the systems necessary for doing this are, as yet, not portable and limited to home use. Interfaced reception of video is not interactive, and does not affect the users emotions like braindance does, it simply projects a simulated image instead of a real one. Unfortunately, this technology is being largely ignored in the face of the recent advent of

braindance, which carries simulated reality to its ultimate extent. Braindance is, in fact, the one new media technology in which Net 54 did no development. Although Net 54 produces braindance programs as much as any modern mediacorp, it missed its chance to play a part in the development of the technology when it was outmaneuvered by rival media corp DMS. (See Max Jenkins' article on the history of braindance this issue!)

So we see how far the influence of a modern mediacorp reaches. Technology has made it possible for companies like Net 54 and DMS to reach us at home, in the office, in the car, in public, just about everywhere you can think of. The development of technology is paralleled by the mediacorp's ability to reach us at all times. Chances are that sometime today you will pay attention to a Net 54-owned broadcast, newspaper, or advertisement. When any company has the power to touch us all the time it is frightening, and we live under the umbrella of several. Modern society is fueled by the media; we thrive on what it offers us. But remember, although the media was once a tool of freedom and independence, it now has the power to enslave, encompass and enrapture. Make sure the media enriches your mind, and doesn't control it. Use it as the tool it is, and enjoy it for the pleasures it offers, but take a little time out every day and ask yourself; could you escape it if you wanted to? ●

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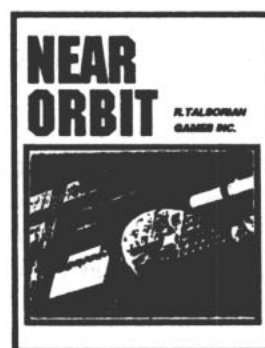
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Extortion. Bribery. Kidnapping. Brainwashing. And Other Nasty Tricks

It's happening now, out on the Street. Today's modern media machine demands a constant stream of victims for its insatiable maw. But where do you find that talent and how do you get the exclusive lock on it once it's located? Like Corporate lifetime contracts, Media contracts are legal beartraps, filled with hidden clauses. Once signed, the mediacorp owns the musician. The trick is getting him to sign.

Under the constant pressures of the cutthroat entertainment business, more and more mediacorps are using dirty tactics to secure new talent. These recent alarming trends towards the tactics of extortion are turning the entertainment industry into a modern-day equivalent of the Mafia.

One of the most popular tactics available to unscrupulous mediacorps is blackmail. It's quiet, subtle and involves minimal legwork. With the kind of lives musicians and artists lead on the Street, often the subject is already under investigation by police, private detectives or the government. The mediacorp merely steps in with the threat of exposure.

For example, in 2009, an attempt was made by EBS Records' executives to blackmail Johnny Silverhand, lead singer of the phenomenally popular band *Samurai*. Hoping to force Silverhand into signing a solo contract with EBS, the mediacorp threatened to reveal that the singer was in reality an AWOL U.S. Marine who had deserted during the Second Nicaraguan Conflict.

THE ATTEMPT BACKFIRED—

Silverhand went public with his now famous *Sins of Your Brother* album, which revealed his secret and brought to light the plight of veterans of that covert war. Not only was EBS' threat blunted, but the album triggered a wave of sentiment that resulted in the national amnesty program for AWOL Central American Conflict Vets. As Silverhand himself has remarked, "If you can face the truth, you can face anything. So I faced the truth."

Some groups aren't so lucky. The Austrian band *Elvis of the New Church* was locked into a ten-year exclusive with now defunct Euro-Grammafón DDR when officials threatened to leak the location of lead singer's daughter to her ex-husband, a violent child molester. Says singer Cecile Dorvack "I was in terror. I could do nothing except comply. Finally, when Grammafón was convicted in a tax scandal, the company collapsed and we escaped. But how many other bands have been so lucky?"

MASS CONTRACT BUYOUTS

Another favorite mediacorp tactic is mass contract buyouts. In this strategem, the most powerful corporations approach smaller labels seeking contracts for sale. Through bribery, economic coercion, or sheer threat, these corporate raiders can acquire hundreds of contracts, skimming the best new talent off the

top. As many as a thousand contracts a year change hands in this rapacious looting of the music industry.

Trapped by previous contractual agreements, many promising bands find themselves re-shaped to fit the corporate agenda. Others which may be out of favor with the corp find themselves backshelved, unable to do albums or gigs. In 2010, the group *Shatteredfax* signed with the underground BMR label. *Shatteredfax*'s five-year contract was later picked up by multimedia giant DMS, who, angered by the group's earlier hit *Wong Moves*, deliberately refused to release the band's material. Their prior contracts made it impossible to fight back, and *Shatteredfax* eventually faded into total obscurity.

IF I CAN'T HAVE HIM, NO ONE WILL

Like a jealous lover spurned, many media corporations embark on bitter acts of retribution against those who have thwarted them. While outright assassination is rare because of the visible nature of the target, it's not uncommon for a mediacorp to employ methods more commonly used by organized crime. Every year, media stars are maimed, injured, or drugged to keep the opposition from them. Take the case of drummer Speedmetal Thrash, who was kidnapped and had both hands smashed by a sledgehammer in a supposed gang-related incident. Later police investigation revealed the boostergang to be in the pay of a

media corp who had been courting Thrash until rival DMS signed the band a week before the incident. Although Thrash was eventually able to to play with the aid of cybernetic replacements, no one was ever arrested in connection with the incident and the case is still "unsolved."

But Thrash knows.

STRUNG OUT

Top synthstar Johnny Riden was strung out on an incredibly addictive designer drug supplied by now-defunct FTL Music. "Hell on earth" he says shortly. "They wired the scag to interface with my immune system. If I stopped taking it, it became a sort of specially-designed AIDS for one." Luckily, Riden jumped contracts to FTL's rival, MetalMaxx Production, who hired a netrunner assault team to penetrate FTL's data system and retrieve the drug formula. It was later revealed that FTL had almost twenty artists and technicians virtually enslaved to the drug. They all deserted to MetalMaxx in a mass exodus. "It was like breaking out of Dachau" says Riden.

There is the now-famous case of Strike Heron of the band *Bilox*. In the AV-7 crash which killed Heron's pilot and put the guitarist in a coma for year, the first ruling was equipment failure. An exhaustive investigation later revealed tampering with the guidance vector controls, which was partially traced to Grammafond DDR.

Terror tactics reach other stars besides musicians. In 2013, braindance superstar Sherri Glass was set up for a spectacular "accidental" on-camera death by her ambitious producer, Ron Gollard. With her contract about to expire, the temperamental star was planning a jump from Tadashi/Gilberto LTD to DMS. DMS solos, planted in the Glass filmcrew as bodyguards, discovered

tampered brake lines moments before Glass was about to perform her now famous *Banzai Run* braindance.

“Get the
best help you
can find.
Have a solo
friend cover
your back

RETURNED FOR REGROOVING

Oftentimes, mediacorps go after the output of talent, rather than the talent itself, as in the *DemonSied* case of 2010. In this well known legal battle, DMS executive Dave Stein was convicted of bribing a copyright official to "lose" records of copyright submissions by up-and-coming songwriter Lou Deveronica of the band *DemonSeid*. The practice went on for nearly five years before being discovered by an alert copyright clerk. Stein was sentenced to 15 years in prison and DMS was forced to renounce it's copyrights and pay Deveronica some four hundred thousand dollars in restitution.

Until recent revisions of copyright code made it impossible, officials could be bribed to hold up a copyright filing and send a copy to an interested mediacorp. The mediacorp would then file the song under one of it's stable of writers, sending in an application with a doctored postmark. In an earlier case, the band *Godhammer* naively signed a contract allowing Fugitsu World Entertainment to let other artists do covers of an unreleased song scheduled for

it's first album. FWE paid the band a royalty only, keeping the album on ice while it's idol-singer Kittiyasu Rose brought out an insipid, heavily altered cover.

ADVICE FROM THE PROS

So far, we've only covered the horror stories. But what options are available to the new band on the rise? Here are a few tips from the pros who've been there before.

"Be prepared to have your private life open to the world," says rocker Johnny Silverhand. "If you've got it all up front, there's nothing they can hang you on. And it will make your music more real, too."

"Cover your ass on your social life" adds Silverhand's compadre Kerry Eurodyne. "The mediacorps are capable of setting you up bigtime in compromising situations. I know people who have been set up on bum murder or smuggling raps just to get their signature. Make sure you know who you're hanging out with, and something about their friends. You could be walking into a setup."

"Have a lawyer check out your contracts," advises Derek McDonald of *Hikaru Flash*. "There are a lot of good legal techs out there, not to mention a couple of firms handling entertainment law for the artist. Don't just let the money dazzle you. Make sure you can't get traded to another mediagroup, or if you can't get that, try to have some control on who can buy out your contract."

Finally, a word from Kazaki Shinobu, Japan's top braindance star. "Get the best help you can find. Have a solo friend cover your back, and a netrunner buddy check your computers. It's worth it to carry them with you on the way up, and to put them on the payroll when you make it. Because in the end, all you've got are your friends." ●

*"Howard Wong
made a lot of
changes at
DMS... The only
thing he didn't
make was
friends..."*

*—Johnathan
Houghton III*

*"We're never
going to know
how much
Houghton had to
do with Wong's
assassination.
But the blame
has been laid at
our door, and we
intend to clear
our name one
way or the
other."*

*—Rayce
O'Bannon,
Net 54 Security
Director*



Time was when Network News 54 was the uncontested king of the airwaves. With 25% of the total broadcasting power of the nation in its pocket, contracts for all of the hottest stars and shows, and the best news department in professional media, it seemed like nothing could threaten the rule of Net 54. Suddenly, trouble in paradise. In 2005, Net 54 programming genius Howard Wong was wooed away by a staggering offer from an upstart media-corp out of L.A. As new CEO, Wong shrewdly annexed a series of key stations, industries and bureaus from throughout the world and turned the previously inconsequential Diverse Media Systems into Net 54's only real competition.

DMS and Network News 54 slug it out in a battle for first place.

GIANTS AT WAR

Threatened for the first time in its history, Net 54 reacted with vehemence. There ensued a furious and frequently destructive race for consolidation of the few remaining independent stations and communications industries. In one of the first of the classic corporate extractions, Net 54 kidnapped Howard Wong from DMS' head office. DMS shot down the aircraft escaping with Wong, killing him rather than let him fall back into Net 54's hands. There followed a series of retribution extractions and assassinations on both sides that nearly exploded into full blown corporate war.

With the passing of time, the rivalry between DMS and Net 54 has shifted from the battlefield to the boardroom. Now each company attempts to outdo the other in the development of new technologies, series, stars and in the breaking of major news stories. The competition for acquisition of smaller companies continues unabated. Although the two companies regularly blame incidents and extractions on each other, the bulk of the casualties these days are on paper. This doesn't make this king of the corporate rivalries boring however. What developments can we expect in the future? Stay tuned!

Spin Wildmon

DMS

DIVERSE MEDIA SYSTEMS

CORPORATE PROFILE FOR ROCKERBOY BY OMAR VELLESCO AND THE STAFF

DIVERSE MEDIA SYSTEMS

Main Office: Los Angeles

Regional Offices: Anchorage, Arizona, Atlanta, Boise, Chicago, Cincinnati, Columbus, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Dubuque, Honolulu, Kansas City, Las Vegas, Minneapolis, New Orleans, New York, Portland, Sacramento, Seattle, Washington, D.C., with subsidiary stations in many other major cities.

Stock: 324,178,000 shares

Available on Market: 33,211,045

Name & Location of

Major Shareholders: Jonathon Houghton II, Palm Springs, holding 23.8%. Blackwell Pension Fund, Newark, holding 22.5%. Jonathon Houghton III, Los Angeles, holding 19.3%.

Troops: 1,575 combat ready:

1,405 combat personnel are assigned as guards for news crews and offices.
170 combat personnel have been reserved for short-notice activities in the DMS/Network 54 conflict.

Covert Operatives: 122 total, 97 engaged in covert news investigations. 5 are infiltrated into other news networks. 20 are divided into two 10-man sabotage teams currently in the field against Network News 54 and other competitors. DMS also periodically engages the services of the Calhwa-Mexica booster gang for LA area proxy assignments.

Equipment and Resources: Diverse Media Systems owns 31 AV-4s, which are spread out among the various regional offices. These vehicles are used for on-location broadcasting when they aren't needed for combat assignments. DMS also makes use of 23 helicopters for those hard-to-photograph stories. They have been building a fleet of corporate jets, and are up to five at this point. The jets normally are used to transport company executives between offices. DMS' troops are outfitted with standard equipment. DMS owns no access to larger military weaponry, which they must hire from Militech like everyone else. They have no airlift capability beyond the vehicles listed here.

BACKGROUND: THE ORIGINS OF DIVERSE MEDIA SYSTEMS

Time was, nobody had heard of Diverse Media Systems. It wasn't that long ago when DMS, owned almost in full by the Houghton family, was a drop-in-the-bucket start-up company struggling for a share of the Los Angeles market. That was, until 2005 when DMS made Howard Wong a deal he couldn't refuse. Wong did for DMS what he had previously done for Network News 54 — annexed, stole and cajoled to build the corporation into a national media contender. In his brief tenure as CEO, Wong was responsible for DMS' aggressive exploitation of new technologies, which made them leaders in the high tech territories of braindance entertainment and computer imagery. Simultaneously, he pushed the company into the high profit fields of movie production and rockerboy promotion. In a few short years, DMS was a major player in the arena of media mega-corporations. Wong's success put a major slump into Network News 54's balance sheet, which they tried to correct with a bungled extraction attempt in 2009, in which Wong died in a fiery plane crash. Net 54 maintained that DMS shot the plane down to prevent the repatriation of Wong, but the DMS legal department countered that Net 54 never could have used Wong in a prominent leadership position because he was still legally under contract to DMS, so Net 54 purposefully killed him in a manner intended to cast suspicion on their rival. In the four years since the death of Wong, business has never been better at DMS. They have acquired the affiliates to make them the second largest national media network (behind Net 54). The movie division has recently scored a major box office hit with their 100%



**"If you can't afford to push the envelope, you can't afford to stay in business."
—The late Howard Wong, wunderkind of DMS**

computer generated special effects spectacular *Techno Samurai*. They have a strong hold on the braindance market with the world's premier editing facilities and the most extensive braindance chip distribution network, and the success of their bands like *Crimson Streets* has firmly established the DMS recording label in the music world.

WHO'S IN CHARGE NOW?

After Wong's death DMS put up a solid corporate front, but insiders knew that behind the placid facade the shareholders struggled for control. At first the company was run by Jonathon Houghton II, the original founder of DMS. Houghton II proved more conservative a CEO than Wong. He continued the new directions Wong had begun, choosing to solidify his position within those new markets rather than diversify into any further areas. He also scaled down the conflict with Net 54, preferring to fight in the boardroom rather than on the streets. Others in the company, notably his son Jonathon Houghton III, disagreed with the new CEO and wanted DMS to continue the aggressive stance it

had under Wong. Last year the legal issues surrounding Wong's complicated death were resolved. Much of the legal bickering revolved around the question of whether Wong had planned his extraction with Net 54, which according to his contract would mean his shares revert back to the senior Houghton. At the end, the probate judge determined there was no evidence that Net 54 had contacted Wong prior to his extraction, so Wong's stock in DMS remained in his estate. In a surprising move shortly after the settlement, Jonathon Houghton III announced that he headed a majority coalition of DMS stockholders. He placed himself in the positions of CEO and chairman of the board, and announced that his father was entering retirement at Palm Springs. While the actual boardroom records are private, industry analysts contend that the younger Houghton could not control a majority without the support of Wong's shares. *Rockerboy* has learned that Wong's estate sold its shares to Blackwell Pension Fund immediately after the probate settlement, which makes Blackwell into Houghton III's hidden partner. While there is no hard evidence, the facts do seem to

suggest that Houghton III planned his usurpation from the time of Wong's death, sharing inside information with Blackwell Pension Fund in return for their support of his power grab. Or maybe he had planned it even earlier — there is still a cloud over Wong's death. Some who were there say DMS purposefully shot down Wong's plane. Still others contend that Wong was coerced into helping with the extraction, but the probate court concluded that the coercion didn't come from Net 54. Wong, unfortunately, isn't here to tell us what really happened.

A FACE-LIFT FOR A FAMILIAR NETWORK

You've probably noticed the new attitude at DMS' network in the last year. The driving force behind Diverse Media Systems' energetic and contemporary programing is the CEO and chairman, Jonathon Houghton III. Under the direction of the new CEO, DMS is no longer content with operating the second place network. They have revamped their programing with a new line of exciting and sensationalist shows designed to attract the dominant younger audience. They have new live-footage blood and guts shows like **CyberSquad** and **TraumaTeam**, and a soap opera spin-off of the extremely popular **You Decide! Court Date** audience participation format called **You Decide! Soap Opera**. Also new every Sunday night is **Weekly World Enquirer**, the tabloid news show the critics love to hate but the audience can't get enough of. On **CyberSquad**, DMS cameramen ride with the Night City police cyberteam on psycho terminations. Featuring actual film of real crisis events, **CyberSquad** is every bit as exciting as it sounds. **TraumaTeam** makes use of the same live-

action reporting format as **CyberSquad**. The cameramen film the exciting rescues of **TraumaTeam** subscribers. DMS likes these kinds of shows because it costs them very little to film live action compared to the costs of traditional TV shows. And the audience likes the thrilling blood and guts. Viewers who are already fans of **You Decide! Court Date**, should be familiar with the participation format of **You Decide! Soap Opera**. **Court Date**, in case you've just left your cave and don't

after the commercial the show continues — following the winning plot direction. **The Weekly World Enquirer**, a tabloid style television show, broadcasts every Sunday evening. It features the most outrageous stories from around the world. Stories about Vampire killings, Elvis sightings, UFOs, and slanderous gossip about Network News 54's stars. DMS doesn't care that the critics blast it for not verifying its news items; in its first season **WWE** is already the most watched televi-

DMS likes these shows... It costs little to film live... compared to traditional TV...the audience likes the thrilling blood and guts...

know what the fuss is about, is a viewer-interactive show in which the viewers call in votes during the commercials to determine the outcome of actual live court cases. The show has been so popular that DMS has premiered **You Decide! Soap Opera** and is working on a **You Decide!** format cliffhanger adventure series. The **You Decide! Soap Opera** is the first fully computer generated television series; not a single human actor appears in the entire show. The format works like this: first, the producers prepare possible story lines ahead of time. At key decision points, the show flashes 1-900 numbers to call to vote for one of several plot choices, then breaks for commercials. The votes are tallied, then

sion news program. Besides a slew of new shows, DMS has kept many of its old favorites: game shows like **CyberSoldier**; **Fashion in Modern**, the fashion show featuring the latest in clothes, body sculpting, and trendy weapons; and **Competition Laser Sport** with the National Laser League.

WHAT'S NEW AT DMS: AT THE MOVIES

Perhaps like 15 million other cyber-punks you've already seen **Techno Samurai**, or maybe you decided to wait until the lines aren't so long. Either way, you can't help knowing that the movie is 100% computer generated using "amazing new animation techniques." What you may

not know is that *Techno Samurai* is an outgrowth of DMS' made-for-tv movie productions. The same studios that animate *You Decide! Soap Opera* and create the special effects scenes from so many TV movies are also creating feature-length movies. The tight security at the animation studios prevented *Rockerboy* from learning what new movies are in the works, but judging by the box-office appeal you can be certain that *Techno Samurai* will not be the last. Making an animated movie takes nearly the same amount of time, money and effort as a traditional film. Why does DMS do it, then? For the answer, take a closer look at the appeal of *Techno Samurai*. People aren't seeing it for the plot, or the acting, or the gritty realistic settings. They're going because of their fascination with technology, and a fully computer animated film that you can't tell from the real thing is the cutting edge of that technology. Who can say if animation will have the same appeal next decade or even next year? For now, for DMS, animation offers a way to break into the national movie distribution scene.

MUSIC PROMOTIONS

DMS has also made impressive inroads into the rockerboy recording scene. In 2008 they signed *Crimson Streets* to their corporate label when DMS needed a hit band and *Crimson Streets* needed the money. Their hard-core fans, who were with them from their Night-City club days, predicted the band would lose its distinctive hard-edged sound when they went mass-media. With *Crimson Streets*, some said, the rough edges are what the band is all about. While their detractors may even be right, whatever the band lost of their original following has been made up ten-fold by the fans who swarmed to

hear the newest DMS recording stars. Look for a preview of *Crimson Streets*' third DMS label release here in the August, 2013 issue of *Rockerboy*. By signing vigorous new bands like *Crimson Streets*, Diverse Media Systems has expanded their music promotions division into an international recording label. Combined with their experience in live and animated video recording, DMS is able to produce top-rate music videos for their bands, music videos which they now distribute in their proprietary Music Video Chip (MVC) format. (For the un-hip, MVC format chips can plug into any standard stereo system. Customers wired for high quality audio and optical input can plug directly into a portable replay unit to see and hear their favorite music at the same time. Anyone can zone out and tune in whenever they want, wherever they want.)

HOLOSTIM BRAINDANCE

Speaking of zoning out, there's nothing better for it than the *Braindance*. Shortly before his death in 2009, Wong recognized the potential of a whole new entertainment media. He organized the joint venture with Militech and *Braindance Inc.* (the inventors of the *Braindance*) to create and distribute a commercial chip, but he died before the first *Braindance* was available to the public. DMS now makes *Braindance* chips in their LA facility and distributes them in the largest North American distribution network.

BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE DMS SPORTS PRODUCTION STUDIOS

For an in-depth look at the many studios that make up Diverse Media Systems, *Rockerboy* starts with an inside tour of the sports studios that

produce *NLL Competition Laser Combat*. When most people watch The San Jose Blasters take on the Denver DrillTechs at home, it never occurs to them how many people and what kind of technology it takes to cover such a fast-paced sport. Take a look at the *Laser Combat* field. It's a hundred yards of mazes, reflective walls and strobe lights. Old-style long range camera work would never work here; the cameras would be unable to cover all the nooks and crannies, and get up close to the action. Modern laser combat coverage makes extensive use of remote mobile cameras and numerous audio pickups. Because the cameras are so close to the players, they have to be automated. A miniature camera can be hidden out of the way where a live cameraman would certainly impede the action. In fact, the only broadcast personnel at the field are the DMS technicians who repair the equipment and monitor the satellite uplink to the DMS production facilities. While the teams are playing in Denver, the director, producer, even the sportscasters and the camera operators are a thousand miles away at the DMS studio in LA. At first impressions, the studio looks more like an Orbital Air launch control than a sports production facility. Up front are banks of screens showing live video from the field mini-cams. Still more screens display players' movements on the Infrared tracking system. A dozen cameramen sit at their consoles from which they control their assigned cameras arrays. Behind them statisticians and video technicians constantly generate video scoreboards and statistical breakdowns. To the side the newscasters sit in their sound-proof booth doing the play by play and color commentary. Overseeing everything is the director, who conducts the production crew like they were an

orchestra. The end product is exciting real-time coverage of the fastest growing team sport, from a news crew that isn't even at the game! The DMS sports studios are generic, in that the same facility that produces a National Laser League game in the morning can produce an old-fashioned baseball game in the afternoon. This allows DMS to cover more sporting events with less effort and equipment. DMS is now using the new technology in other sports besides laser combat.

The mini-camera's small size lets it get close to the action and be unobtrusive at the same time. This lets technicians put mini-cams on contestants to record the events from their perspective. That's how, in a boxing match, the audience can see the blows coming directly at them from the boxer's perspective.

INSIDE DMS ANIMATION

When people first hear about computer animation, they think it must make movie-making as easy as pushing a button. That's not true, though. A computer is good at drawing pictures of the main character over and over again, but it has no talent for inventing a good plot. Movie-making still requires producers, a director, storyboard artists, set designers, costume designers, and everyone else who must design in exacting detail everything that the computer animates. In the beginning, film artists hand-drew hundreds of thousands of pictures to create a single animated movie. It was a lot of work and very expensive. And then almost as soon as there were computers, there was computer animation. From the first crude line drawings, to people and places you can't tell from the real thing, computer animation has come of age. Diverse Media Systems has been at the forefront of

the computer animation movement, just as it has been in the lead of many other new entertainment technologies. Computer animation allows spectacular special effects, and eliminates need for fickle actors. We've seen some protest by the Screen Actors' Guild, but with little success.

The animation studios at DMS can create a wide range of animation. They make TV commercials for numerous manufacturers: these are broadcast on their network and others. They make weekly and daily TV series like *You Decide!* *Soap Opera*. They create animated special effects sequences used in their made-for-TV movies and DMS feature release movies. They re-create crime scenes using the likenesses of the alleged perpetrators and victims, which they show in their newscasts. And now, they animate entire feature release movies.

A LOOK AROUND THE ANIMATION STUDIO

The first thing a visitor notices at the DMS animation studios is that while they have eliminated the need for actors, they have more than replaced them with an increased technical staff. Looking around, the casual observer might mistake this for a super-computer animation research lab, and they wouldn't be wrong. Here you'll find no old movie scenery or aging props, but rather fields of networked white office cubicles and their resident animation specialists.

To give a better idea of how the animation studio operates, *Rockerboy* followed the movie *Techno Samurai* through production. The movie begins as a script two years before its release date. The producer Bill Thingould lines up financial backing and a commitment from DMS, then selects a director. Ordinarily the producer would also

assemble a movie crew for filming, but for an animated film he just uses the people at DMS studios. The director takes the script for *Techno Samurai* to a story-board artist who uses a computer sketching program to design the duration and composition of each scene. The scenes are then broken down into individual "camera angles" for each shot. At this stage there is no animation yet; if we were to watch the movie now it would look like a slide-show presentation with no dialogue. The storyboard is distributed to the many animation specialists who begin designing the different elements of the film. At the scanning lab technicians use 3-D scanners to translate real-life objects into computer images. They scan images because it is simpler and quicker to scan a common object, like a pistol, than it is for an artist to render it in 3-D. Once an object is scanned, the computer can manipulate it in three dimensions as though it were real. As DMS makes more movies, the library of scanned images continues to increase. For *Techno Samurai*, the technicians scanned an actual Porsche turbolift 945i to use as Leiko's car. Sure, his car in the movie doesn't look much like a t-945i; once an object is digitized, the artists can customize all they want. A nip here and a bulge there; we're sure you'll see the original underneath. You're never going to meet the real Leiko, because there isn't one. He is a composite animation of fifteen different people. To begin, human models are scanned and their scanned images put into the body library. Artists select different body parts from the library to design the characters from head to toe. They add on the hair styles and clothes, and then generate over a hundred standard poses and expressions. Next, any moving object, which includes people, is animated to fit the activity

required by the storyboard using a technique called "betweening". The artist tells the computer where he wants the image to begin and where he wants it to end, and the computer fills in all the between frames. Specialist artists hand-tailor unique body movements and facial expressions to avoid repetition and give the movie a realistic feel. The scenery lab generates stationary scenery in a Computer Aided Design (CAD) program using standard elements. Artists then design whatever unique elements they need. For *Techno Samurai*, technicians shot actual footage of Night City, digitized it, edited out all the people and added a few special buildings called for in the script. Finally the special effects: artists add explosions, blood and guts — whatever they need from the special effects library, and design unique elements as they are needed. Once the movie is fully animated it goes to a traditional movie sound department where actors lip-synch the lines of the characters. The sound effects for each scene are added last, and the movie is complete.

SINGING FOR YOUR SUPPER AT DMS RECORDING

DMS' recording studios oversee three basic functions of Rocker promotion. They record the music, film the videos, and publish the recordings in all the usual musical formats. But that is by no means all that takes place at the newest of DMS' divisions. Behind the scenes executives toil to build DMS Recording Studios to a position where it can hold its own against the other recording giants. They have bought up numerous smaller recording operations, built an impressive stable of pop bands, even created their own Music Video Chip playback technology.

DMS doesn't like to admit it, but they often make use of professional actors and constructed scenery to enliven a Braindance recording

What's it like being a corporate slave? Why not try it on for size? When a new band signs with DMS, it gets the red-carpet treatment all the way. Six figure salaries, limousine service, paid-for luxury apartments, clothes up to here, personal servants, and only one string attached — you have to record the music like they want it. Still not a bad deal, some would say. They usually don't want much, just a dancier rhythm or clearer lyrics, maybe a little less guitar screech. Certainly you know many people who would give up their work-a-day world for the life of a corporate Rockerboy. Maybe you would too ... In the morning the limo driver drops you off for a recording session at the studio.

The drummer, bassist and guitarist have already been in earlier to lay down their own tracks. You put on the headphones and sing the lyrics, reading them from a neatly lettered card on the stand in front of the mike. The producer has you sing it once, twice, then a few times more. He wants more punch here, better diction there. Finally you break for lunch. Afterwards you are driven over to the film studio to record videos for the singles targeted for "maximum marketing effort," as the suits call it. The director tells you where to stand, when to wiggle your

hips. Eventually the other band members arrive and you shoot some group footage. If it's going to be animated, you might even spend a day being digitized at the DMS animation studio. Not bad, huh? A little impersonal, but good work if you can get it.

BRAINDANCE STUDIO

Compared to most of the other DMS studios, the Braindance studio is a lonely place. Once a Braindance has been recorded in raw format, it only takes an editor and a supercomputer to cut it into distributable format. Most of the work comes before and during the recording. First DMS has to decide what Braindances to record. Ideas can come from marketing or some other department, one of their numerous writers, or from a Braindance recording artist. Then the Braindance studio teams the Braindance artist with a recording technical team leader and his assistants. They wire up the artist with the the neural feeds and start recording. Sometimes recordings can go on for days or much longer, with the artist only wiring up for the important sections. DMS doesn't like to admit it, but they often make use of professional actors and constructed scenery to enliven a Braindance recording. They would rather the

Media Technology

Common tools & gadgets of the 21st Century

MultiFormat® NewsCam

The standard in Media reporting cameras, the MultiFormat® can transmit images to a base station up to 20 miles away, record on 6 hour video tapes or download to laserformat discs. In addition, the MultiFormat® can transmit and receive real time communications information, such as maps, interview data-base information, and graphics, allowing a media to have access to the full facilities of the main office in the field.

Price: 2,600 eb

MiniCam™14

An extremely small transmitter-based video with only 10 minutes of internal storage time, the MiniCam™ can be set to continuously send video images to a base station or MultiFormat® NewsCam. MiniCams can be velcro attached or mounted in armor, on weapons or other unobtrusive places.

Price: 1,500 eb

Braindance Chip

Braindance chips can be inserted into bartop vending decks (2,000eb), cybermodems, or home braindance entertainment systems (1-2,000eb). Each chip contains up to 60 minutes of experiential data, often broken into a series of braindance "shorts".

Price: 20-60 eb, depending on popularity, artist, etc.

Music Video Chip

These chips can be used by anyone wired for a standard Wearman™ and cyberoptics. The chip projects sight/sound images over the user's cyberwear, giving the impression of being in the video. Only touch, taste and smell are missing.

Price: 10-20eb, depending on artist.

A beating can be made to feel like a Swedish massage, or an orgasm like an H-bomb explosion.

buying public didn't know that they were experiencing a staged event, so they down-play the staging in their advertising. The original entertainment Braindances were totally ad-libbed, but any Braindance you see these days from DMS or another big corporation is scripted to some degree. While a recording session must be spontaneous enough to excite the artist so that the emotions carry over well, the producers know that to make it play like a good story they have to add in standard plot elements, like the love interest, a major villain, etc.

To keep the spontaneous feel, the artist is usually not shown the full script, rather he is given guidelines to keep him within the storyline. Because of this the script is not as detailed a movie script. The recording artist has no pre-planned dialogue or concrete staging instructions. Often the dialogue for secondary characters will be pre-written to make sure they have something interesting to say at the moment of truth. Still, the heart of Braindance recording is spontaneity. Even at DMS large portions of a Braindance are left unscripted on purpose. And if something unplanned should interfere in a session, the motto is "never stop recording." The most memorable scenes happen completely by accident. When the

original recording is completed it is handed over to the editor at the DMS studios. Modern editing decks are sophisticated affairs, with sensory gain controls to limit the amount of sensory input and automated kickout switches to detach the editor from dangerous events. The editor can mix and match different scenes. At DMS, they have developed a

technique for overlaying stock sensory tracks on top of the original. Which means that when the recording artist is shot, the editor can substitute a pin-prick for the actual bullet wound. The idea is to entertain the Braindancer, not to hurt him so much he won't come back. The editor starts with the sensory effects detached. First he runs through the entire length, then begins sampling the sensory effects of various scenes. He uses the gain control to decide at what level to record the final sensory effects. A beating can be made to feel like a Swedish massage, or an orgasm like an H-bomb explosion. Once the editor has a finished hour of Braindance, he lays in stock sensory tracks where needed and calls it a day. Often DMS will make two or more versions of a Braindance and test market them before committing to a final version. They want to make sure that what they distribute will have the maximum market appeal. After the marketing department approves the final Braindance, it's recorded back to chip in final form, duplicated and packaged for distribution. Finally the advertising department designs the ad campaign for the new Braindance. When the ads are in place, the chip is released, and DMS sits back and rakes in the money. ●

OPTICAL SCANNER



Say hey, crew! Well, I know I'm lagging on my review of *Nosferatu in Silicon*, but I've been on a mission. The kid has been living a little melodrama of his own as you may have heard, and you might already be a part of it...

By Jack (Scanner) Bennett

Normalcy ended last Tuesday morning. It was about 2:00 AM, and having just vidded the late night preview of *Terror by Design* at the HiteFlite (If you've already seen it, you'd better keep readin'), I decided to stop for a coffee and wait for the

barricades to lift. My attraction to theaters in the Combat Zone often strands me behind the roadblocks after curfew, so I kill a couple of hours scamming the scene and drinking espresso at Warp Zero Cafe.

I found a table and settled back against the wall, with its multi-layered skin of old handbills. As Victor returned my change with my espresso, I bit my Wearman on. Had to drown out the synthobop back-

ground music. I checked the tab and noticed the change was way off, like ten bills worth. Man, that got me steamed. I hate it when these Zoners try to treat everybody like a fix-hunting tourist who doesn't know his interface jack from his anus. I figured it was about time someone showed these squids what an Uptowner could do. The rippers slid out cool and smooth as I reached up and pulled Vic down so the blades rode right under his solar plexus. I made it clear that I was not satisfied with the service and would take great pleasure in surgically removing any excess weight Vic might have to prove my point.

Now let me make one thing perfectly clear here: Victor has been my compadre for two years and has never cheated me or skimmed change. Suddenly, I believed he was treating me like a mark and I was ready to gut him. Luckily, Vic has been in the Zone a lot longer than I have, and has Hamburg-wired reflexes to boot. He only sprained my wrist and broke my Wearman showing me the door. He yelled after me to try a different drug next time I touched down in the Zone.

Crouched over my car, nursing my wrist, I slowly reckoned with what I had done. The why of it still didn't hang. I doublechecked the change Vic had thrown out after me and found it was right. Something was messing with my head that I hadn't asked for. Time to see my Demon Doctor. I headed uptown.

One wrist tape, one full body scan, and one fluid check later, Doc Arlington gave me his prognosis:

"Amongst other things, you've got traces of Purple Pause in your

blood. It's a synthetic derivative of the Dimethyltryptamine group. This stuff won't turn you into a cyberpsycho, but it does make you susceptible to a hypnotic state. The ride only lasts about 45 minutes, but you become silly-putty for unconscious programming. You may've been given a button for unreasoning aggression. That will be \$300."

Well, kiddies, no one sets me up for "brain crash" and walks. There was no point in going to the cops since the incident had gone down in the Combat Zone. They figure if you're down there, you

Rent-A-Cops with frozen faces. No access to the service areas, and no, I could not talk to the projectionist. If this was 21st Century Films' idea for a publicity stunt, its attraction lost me. This was no way to treat the press.

I decided on another tactic. Since I was down in the Zone anyway, I looked up a 'runner friend who might be able to get more done than my credentials could. Easy Dee had ways of getting at things that went around security guards and locked doors. He made his living writing intrusion programs for "new boot"

'runners down here. Once in a while, he would try some of it himself, just to keep in touch and make sure they worked. Dee buzzed me into his crib in a fourth story walk-up with armored shutters. I made myself comfortable amongst cases of CDs containing old movies and piles of unwashed plastic dishes. The monochrome flicker of the video player regurgitating a Marx Brothers' flick provided

light. He listened intently to my "game," smoking cigarettes as if his brain would seize up the second the ember tip went out. When I finished, he spoke. "It'll be \$1000, half now," He slid my Expense card through a slot on his deck. "and the rest when we crack 'em."

With this, he inserted the plugs in his neck and went on-line. I don't pretend to understand much of what Easy Dee does when he's in the Net. All I see is this 29 year-old, anemic black man seated in a lotus, looking like he's having a bad dream. Ever watch a 'runner's eyes while he jinks? They twitch back 'n forth like in REM sleep, always active with paranoia; watching for dangers that

For the uninitiated: a lot of film footage made these days never involves actors or real studios.

deserve what you get. Time for some investigative journalism. What followed was a progression of faces and places as I tried to retrace my path to get a clue on who did this. No doubt I pissed a few people off, but then I was riding the rage-wave myself. I felt like William Cary in DOA; that kind of savage indignation with a touch of desperation. I didn't know what would set me off again. After 6 hours on the prowl, digging hard, I was back at the HiteFlite Theater.

Something in my head said, "Bingo." When I tried to get ahold of the manager, he was out; my press pass, which usually opens more doors than a CodeCracker X, was met by

they can never see. Sort of like the rest of us, huh?

Every half an hour or so, Dee would come out, drink a glass of bottled water, and let me know what was going on. First off, I had him gloss over the 21st Century Pictures mainframe to see if this could be some kind of weird publicity gig. This was a no-go; their walls were too tight for a casual run since they keep all their footage on file. Still, he couldn't find any link to the theater other than the transfer of the print copy. Whoever hired all the muscle did it from the outside. This looked like a dead end for the moment, so Dee tried to trace the records of shipping and receiving to the theater. He hoped to track something unusual incoming, but had way too much trouble even scoping the system. The HiteFlite and several other theaters in the area had serious ICE. Much tougher than they should have. What do a bunch of Combat Zone theaters have to hide??

This seemed way out of line. I only had one suggestion: "Maybe you should look up; step back. Don't break the ICE; trace it back to its source."

This turned out to be harder to do than to talk about. After another half hour stint in the Net, Easy Dee was starting to seem nervous. He was piecing together part of a webbed trail, and he didn't like where it was leading.

"Look," he explained past gulps of Arrowhead, "the theaters aren't officially part of a chain, right? But it's beginnin' to look like a single corp's been buying them up. Been doin' it through a bunch of proxies, but it all tends to converge down the line. I've got a friend checking to get a name. Whoever it is, they went to a lot of effort to cover their tracks. That kind of power means trouble."

This was getting out of hand,

and I was seriously losing track. "All this can't have anything to do with what happened to me then. Nobody'd go to this much trouble just to tweak my synapses."

"I agree." Dee nodded "Which means somethin' else is goin' on. How far d'you want to go?"

"Get me a name." I needed something to hang a handle on.

Sirens and screaming sounded from the street below. I glanced out the window to a typical sight in the Zone: a fair-sized riot. I headed downstairs to scope it out. Not that the details mattered; whether they were protesting food rations or the latest drug raid, you could track on some interesting things in the chaos. Always want to be there for a story.

The noise and energy were like a wall blocking the front door. I shoved my way out, and found myself up against a fax-paper clad squatter. He smelled like vomit and filth, so I chopped him down with a backhand move that would have done Charles Kuan proud. The guy folded like bad origami. I waded out into the crowd, blades and boots workin', loving the rhythm. Somewhere in the heat, it occurred to me that this was not what I had started out to do. Seemed everyone else was jacked-up the same way. Street punks and normals were tearing up left and right, without pattern.

A random gas mask and riot shield appeared out of the mass; signs that the police were the first ones scragged. Any minute now, the Robos were going to respond with riot gas or napalm, depending on how badly they needed to snuff this. I was able to pull myself back into Dee's building, slamming the steel door; shutting out some of the madness. It took a full minute before I could retract my rippers. I knew my

button had been pushed again, and that I wasn't the only one being pumped.

The hum of copter blades brought me back to the slit window. Arasaka Security choppers hovered over the crowd, hosing them down with water, and broadcasting with loudspeakers. I poked my head out to get a listen, and suddenly found I couldn't do much else. I stood there, locked into the blare of the loudspeakers, not wanting to break away. Something in the broadcast dragged me, kicking and screaming, into passive calm. Hands grabbed me from behind and I didn't resist (you know I was out of it) as they pulled me into the doorway.

The next thing I know, Easy Dee's face is in front of me, trying to be a focus for my eyes. The Edge came back from wherever the loudspeakers had driven it, along with the righteous rage-wave. They had put an on/off switch in my head, and now I knew who they were...

"You all right?" Dee's eyes asked. He obviously hadn't been touched by the broadcast.

Outside, the riot was quickly breaking up; people milling away like stunned cattle.

"I've got our name.." he started.

"No." I stopped him as clarity hit, asphalt hard. "Let me guess... Arasaka."

The next morning, I hit my office to dig some recent dirt on the "Cherry Blossom" Corp. Nobody around the home desk had much, but the City Editor at the Chron came across with the piece I needed. Seems Arasaka has put in a bid with the city to provide cops for patrol of the Combat Zone. The contract may not mean a lot of money, but it did imply complete control of the Zone. This was damn good reason to stir up

A string of 9mm rounds formed a trail of white flowers on the doors as they impacted a split second too late. Thank God for bullet-proof glass.

trouble in order to quell it as only Arasaka could, of course. Makes them look real competent. I was really beginning to want these guys. To burn the buggers though, I had to 'scope some of the mechanics. It was back to Easy Dee's.

Dee wasn't real keen on messing with Arasaka, but he had tracked one lead: Whole Cloth Images, Inc. This computer imagery company had evidently done some work for A.S. proxy recently, and had also sent materials to each of the theaters implicated. I decided to drop by and say hi.

For the uninitiated: a lot of film footage made these days never involves actors or real studios. Much of it is created in the computers of companies like Whole Cloth who generate them with graphic programs. The generated footage is later integrated with live footage for the complete effect. That's how Jimmy Lockart gets his head blown off so realistically in *Steel Streets*, and how the Irendi nuke Europe from orbit in *Under The Hammer*. This technology allows the movie-makers to exactly design every bit of a flick. If you've got the money, you could do a whole movie this way, as they did with *Electron*

Dreams. Arasaka may have only wanted some new vid for the commercials, but my instincts said otherwise.

WCI was in a converted warehouse in the South City District. It was full of middle-class zombies, and 'trode-heads who were more into machines than humans. A squib-looking PR man named Tarkington greeted me in the lobby. I fed him a line about doing a special piece on computer imagery, and he gladly started his tour spiel. My recorder went on in my coat pocket.

"Of course, WCI is a relatively small company so we have to specialize." The words flowed like bad soya, plentiful but with an artificial flavor. "We have managed to carve a fair niche in the field of impression imagery tech."

That hit a cord. "You mean subliminals?" I asked.

"Sort of." He didn't really want to be interrupted, but wouldn't be rude to the press either. "We feel it is a bit more sophisticated than that. Everyone uses sublims these days."

"Our aim," he continued, "is to bring the subconscious more directly into the perception of the event or image. Using a combination of subtle images laid onto the actual footage and ultrasonic tones, we create emo-

tional states which would be hard to achieve naturally. Suspension of disbelief and that sort of thing." He seemed damn proud of this.

The back of my neck was burning. "You know that could be used for other things, like brain-washing." The words came out tight.

He must've sensed my tension. "All our work is screened by the FCC for content and is approved for public viewing," he clipped.

Except for little private jobs done for particular security companies on the sly, I thought.

He offered a demo vid and I accepted in order to make him more comfortable. He was pleased with the chance to show off, and took me into a special viewing room where I was treated to a disc of a "romantic" (i.e., no sex) love scene. The first viewing was unaltered, and was as bland as most love scenes are. The second was the same scene though "enhanced," and I've got to admit kiddies, it got me hot. Nothing was obviously changed, but every move and word suddenly had impact. It was like I was personally involved in the sequence. Afterwards, I knew every emotional string had been viciously yanked. Worse than seeing an old Spielberg movie. I felt dirty.

This whole bit had shaken me up, and on the way out, I had to fight to control my anger. But as I shook Tarkington's pasty hand, the rage-wave climaxed and I whipped his arm around behind his back. He yelped in surprise and pain as I started to torque his arm in a controlled hold position. I was about to break his humerus when I glimpsed a security guard drawing down on me with a HK 225. An Arasaka Security guard.

I'd been a damn idiot. Who else would be patrolling this place? And they evidently knew I had been

programmed since they were keying my rage button to set me up for a legal kill. Think, chump, think.

As my own obituary ran through my head, a bike messenger opened the lobby doors directly behind me. The guard's red-lit optics shifted for a second as he gained target acquisition on the new element; I moved.

I threw Tarkington at the HK and dove backward out the still-closing exit. A string of 9mm rounds formed a trail of white flowers on the doors as they impacted a split second too late. Thank God for bullet-proof glass.

I didn't break stride 'til I got back to the Zone. Realizing that journalistic immunity no longer held, I decided to get some specialized help. I'd done some real reporting about the Zone early in my career. During that time, I'd earned a juice card with the Black Chip boostergang. Their 'hood was in the Rack, a besieged housing project on Tamerack and Juniper. The tough part was getting there past the Jumpin' J's, a rival gang. These two were usually fighting to control the flow of "Cube," a mixture of N-leaf cocaine and black tar heroin, through the Zone. My main concern was whether the Black Chips could spare me some manpower.

This was bad turf, and I dodged Posers and Tongs all the way from 33rd to Larch. About four blocks from the Rack, I flashed the gang sign to a known BC, and was picked up a few minutes later. After being let in (through the back door, of course), I got to speak to a Bloodboy named Mito. He listened to my line and nodded when I got to the part about the riot. They had lost a couple of people to the A.S. narcs already. Through a haze of ganja, he motioned for two razorboys, T-Mac and The Roach, to be my hard cover.

I'm modeming this story in from my bolt-hole. As I sit here and type, I can see the vid-set broadcasting a story where one Jack Bennett is wanted...

T-Mac was a big, sleek cutter with boosted reflexes and crazy eyes. The Roach was a wiry gunner, and packed an Ingram Mac15 with a smart-link. He didn't talk much, but when he did, he made sure you listened.

My next favor was a bit trickier. I needed the BC's to do some recon for me at the HiteFlite and the other theaters in the neighborhood. All the names on the list were in the Zone so we could at least scout them out. Mito said he'd "put his fellows to work." They "escorted" me to a basement alcove loaned out by T-Mac and I waited, tossing beer and trying to keep from getting lice.

Tidbits of information started to filter back to me over the course of the next couple of days. Mito told me that all the vid-houses are serviced by the same air conditioning company, who guard their trucks better than usual. When a couple of kids tried to sneak around to get behind the screen in the Revue Theater, they were met by a "technician" who was too big and too boosted to be real. They also said that they saw a weird "shimmering line" in front of the regular projection screen. The big one came in after about three days. The Neon Claw tong had ripped a

truck heading out of the Zone after stopping at one of the marked theaters. Part of the haul was some serious tech which they took to a local fixer. He ID'ed the stuff as holographic equipment. That wasn't too odd coming from a theater, but the lenses were weird. I asked if I could see one, and sure enough, had it in my lap within 3 hours.

The lens sure was strange. Most theaters can project a semi-holo image using holo equipment. True projected 3-D stuff hasn't been perfected yet, but some dimension can be had. This lens though, was designed to project a very narrow, intense image across a wide-angle plane.

The "shimmering line" the kids saw could have been a holographic image projected up along a narrow plane, just a few inches from the screen. Things began to fall together. My theory went like this:

Arasaka buys up theaters in the Combat Zone, installing special holographic equipment in front of each screen. They set up air conditioning systems which allow them to dump Purple Pause into the air during each showing. At the same time, they use the holo-projector to put up subliminal programming imagery from WCI directly in front

of the movie. This imagery is designed to program an unreasoning aggression in response to one stimulus, and passive submission in response to another. People come out primed for crime. Arasaka can turn riots on and off as they want.

The details are a bit more vague. They can't alter the original film print because it has to go back to the studio at the end of the run, so they project their stuff over it. The key they use to set people off is probably some ultrasonic tone, similar to the white noise of a dead FM frequency (which is why my Wearman turned my crank at Warp Zero). They could use a film's demographics to target the age group and type of people they want to mindkink.

All this guessing was fine, but I didn't really have any hard evidence. I hoped Easy Dee might be able to dig up something more substantial and incriminating. So I headed out with my two "loaners" to give him a call.

My gut started to tighten up the minute I realized Dee wasn't answering the intercom. I knew he'd be home; he rarely left. I conned the landlady to let us in (she always liked me), and headed upstairs. I knew he was dead the second I saw that the disc-player was turned off. He always had a vid going, even when he was asleep. I still had to see him, just to be sure. Dee was on the couch. He'd been long-veined; the brachial, femoral, and carotid arteries systematically opened with a ripper. Use a local anesthetic, and the victim stays awake as he pumps out his own juices. The murderer used it in *Killer in Twilight*, one of my favorite films. They even knew about that. They'd done their homework. The bastards used it on Dee just 'cause I liked the movie.

I didn't need a signal to make

me crazy on this one. It took everything I had just to walk down to the street with Roach and T-Mac. Once out of the building, I was shaking with nausea as I realized how far out of my league I'd gotten. Heaving over to lose it, I felt both the BC's go tense. A black car rolled up right behind us as I stood up. T-Mac pulled me behind him and started to back up.

"Let's bombshell," he grunted.

A non-descript man in a dark uniform stepped out of the car and called, "Arasaka police. You are under arrest. Drop your..."

That was as far as he got when Roach busted a cap on him. The suit jerked up with the force of the rounds, and fell backwards like a statue. T-Mac shoved me forward and spun around to face another vehicle across the street. A gunport had opened in the driver's window and a blunt muzzle protruded. T-Mac cleared leather with his pistol as the car weapon flashed with silenced violence. The big razorboy was thrown against the wall and ripped by armor-piercing talons. I slid behind a parked car, Roach joining me. I could feel it shake with the impact of bullets against the engine block. Why don't I pack a piece? Roach smoothly switched clips and looked at me, eyes narrowed.

"When I cut loose, you ghost, comprende?" Lead rain was no place to debate. Roach popped up and let go a long burst. AP rounds rang off the angles of the Arasaka vehicle, raining sparks and metal fragments everywhere. I made tracks. Bobbing and weaving between garbage and parked autos, I moved like a rabbit on methamphetamines. I never saw Roach again.

There was nowhere to go, though. The barricades had fallen

for the night, and there'd be Arasaka people at every checkpoint. Anyone I met could be a plant with a hidden Slice-n-Dice or a poisoned Scratcher. I went low and slow, trusting no one...talking to no one. While covering myself with old paper and crud like the other derelicts, I also plugged my ears with silicon putty in case they tried broadcasting the passive signal again. You never think how long a night is until you have to live it second by second. When the curfew lifted at 0530, I scrambled out into the real world. It all seemed like one big C-Zone now. Except in the Zone, they have no illusions...

I have since found friends who've hidden me. I'm modeming this story from my bolt-hole. As I sit here and type, I can see the vid-set broadcasting a story where one Jack Bennett is wanted in the murders of James Edward Devar and Joseph Tarkington, WCI exec. Arasaka and city police would appreciate any help in locating this felon. Well, crew, I'm scared. I've been stupid and three people have died. They have me pinned down tight. Help...●

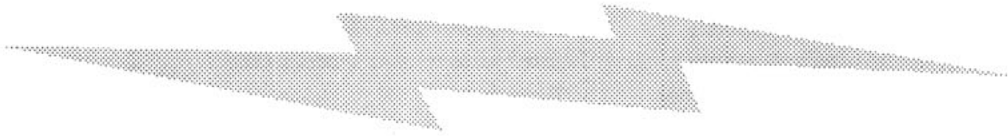
ROCKERBOY NOTE: *Rockerboy Magazine is commissioning operative teams to investigate Mr. Bennett's story, independent of police activity. We are willing to pay \$3,000 each (and all expenses) to qualified team members. Interested groups should immediately contact:*

Rockerboy Magazine
SOF code# 45637

WCI Subliminal Imagery System

Required Equipment: Video projector, sound system, Purple Pause in gas form. Victims must make a COOL roll vs Difficult or be receptive to directives programmed on the tape. Price: not available on market. **Purple Pause** available at 420eb per 100 dose cannister, lasts 45 min.

A Close Up Look at the **BRAIN DANCE**



The night is cold and
uninviting; there's nothing
doing in the co-op, so you
decide the bar scene might
be where things are
happening. You slide into
your kevleath overcoat and
hit the streets in search of
action.

by Max Jenkins

Six bars and forty euros later you realize it just isn't there. You need something new, but where are you going to find it on a Tuesday night?

Just as you choke down the last of whatever fruit drink it was that you ordered, the wirehead at the end of the bar, the one you thought had passed out, rises from her chair, ripping jacks from her plugs, and heads for the door. Sitting on the counter is a black box that had been concealed by her considerable bulk, so you check it out on curiosity.

It looks like a box with two interface jacks coming out of it, plus a slot for a card at the top. When you ask the 'tender what it's for, she shrugs her head and says "It's the 'dance."

Maybe it's the drinks, or just plain boredom, but something tells you this is what you've been looking for. With a practiced motion, you slide your cash card through the sensor; then jack in.

Immediately, you're shunted elsewhere. There's a forest surrounding you, and in the distance, you hear the shouting of Colombian drug warriors. You move quickly through the foliage, your engorged biceps brushing against outlying shrubs as you come to the perimeter of the processing plant. Taking a deep breath, you grab the assault shotgun from its place on your back and get ready to rock.

WHAT IS THE BRAINDANCE?

The Braindance is similar in nature to the Netrunner's interface, in that it allows, via neural transmission, a person to fully and realistically experience an alternate reality. Unlike the interface a Netrunner uses, the perceptions are not created from the user's brain, but rather from the recorded thoughts, memories and physical sensations of another person.



Originally developed as a method of aversion programming for convicted criminals, and later as a military simulator, the Braindance is fast becoming the most popular form of entertainment in today's media oriented society.

Several companies, including DMS, Braindance Inc. and Home Braindance Organization, have many employees whose sole purpose is to go out and get involved in situations that normal people only dream of. As they confront these dangers, a technician records the entire experience and will later edit them for the viewing audience. After all, who really wants to feel how the hero waited twenty minutes just to get transportation to the airport?

Once a suitable length chip has been compiled and edited, the chips are distributed to various locations for mass production.

These days, the public has three ways to gain access to the Braindance.

The first is at an arcade: a multi-level room consisting of private booths in which a person can experience the Braindances which

BRAINDANCE VENDING UNIT

Found in most upscale bars and clubs, the Braindance unit can play a selection of up to seven braindance chips. Chips can be changed via an access port in the back. Bartop units like this one run about 2000eb, which is made by by charging customers between 2-5eb per use.

are currently being offered by the distribution services. Of course, there are many bars which now have one or two Sony-Matsushita Black Boxes™, and subscribe to a distribution service. The third and most expensive way is to buy your own Black

Box™ (about 2,000eb at the time of this writing) and rent chips from an arcade or subscribe to a service yourself.

The processing plant's guards are relaxed, not expecting anything like the trap you've set. Shotgun in one hand, you thumb the detonator, setting off the first of a series of eight charges. Only when the flames are reaching to the heavens, do you actually come out of hiding.

The chipped shotgun roars as you confront two guards who are running around aimlessly. The searing heat from the flames is starting to irritate your skin, but you press on, determined to reach your goal.

Another pair of guards stands in your way as you reach the entrance to the farm house. Recognizing the need for stealth, you approach them from behind and cut their throats. Without a sound, you slip into the drug lord's house, knowing he won't be there.

You gather the necessary documents but, before you can leave unnoticed, a slender young woman, whom you recognize as Cartal's girlfriend, comes into the room. Without warning, she grabs your free hand and pulls you to her.

HISTORY OF THE BRAINDANCE:

The Alternative Reality Process, or Braindance as it is more popularly known today, was invented by Yuriko Sujimoto, a graduate student at the University of California at Santa Cruz in 2007.

Using an extrapolated Moss equation, the basis for neural response translation, and a Netrunner interface as a base, Sujimoto managed to record her thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations into a standard information chip. When she plugged the chip back into the modified cybermodem she was using as a recorder, Sujimoto was able

to experience what she had recorded in exact detail.

Upon receiving her PhD from Santa Cruz, Sujimoto went to work for the State of California as a researcher in penal reform. It was here that she and Norman Lassimer, a noted penal psychologist, began to realize the implications of her discovery as pertaining to penal reform.

Psychologists had often discussed the desire and need for criminal reprogramming. Many felt that a criminal had forfeited his or her rights upon breaking the law, and should therefore be subjected to adverse conditioning against the crime they had committed. On December 5, 2002, the Supreme Court, by unanimous vote, approved criminal reconditioning for certain "anti-social" crimes.

The victory was bittersweet, as reconditioning methods were primitive and generally ineffective until Sujimoto's discovery. With the introduction of the Alternative Reality Process, psychological reconditioning could be rendered cheaply and effectively removing prisoners from the prison population. This last point is what sold the State on this system. By reconditioning prisoners, the State could relieve the overcrowded prison conditions that existed.

In order to achieve the desired effect of the Braindance, as most people were now referring to the Process, Lassimer and Sujimoto had to create a nightmare-like situation in which the offending subject would be placed. They reasoned the sought after aversion would come from the offender experiencing repeated instances of their crime being foiled and severe harm coming to the criminal in the attempt.

Though they had no database to work from, as few criminals were

actually filmed committing a crime, and none whose sensory nerves were being rerouted into a recorder, the researchers were undaunted. After several setbacks, Lassimer and Sujimoto managed to convince the California State Senate to partially fund their project, and to offer sentence reduction for project volunteers. The final step in convincing the Senate came when Militech offered to help with the funding and offer jobs to those who were released early in exchange for a license to market the Braindance machines as a military simulator.

With the combined offers of Militech and the State of California, there were some "volunteers," but not enough to compile one database, let alone the seven they wished to have. It would not be until March 7th, 2009, that their big break would come.

Harold D. MacLeroy, a convicted mass murderer, was due to be executed by the State when he made an unusual request: if Militech would give compensation to his family, then MacLeroy would allow himself to be killed while recreating one of the scripted crimes of Lassimer and Sujimoto. Once a set amount of money was agreed upon and a contract signed, MacLeroy allowed his death to be recorded.

Once the deal was announced, the general public became outraged at the nature of the bargain which MacLeroy struck, though Lassimer, Sujimoto and Militech felt it was a critical turning point for their project. They were correct. Soon thereafter, eight inmates who were scheduled to be executed within the year made similar agreements with Militech, and their deaths were recorded as well.

Although the initial database was small, and the first correctional Braindance ran only an hour and a

half, the program was successful. After much experimentation, in which three inmates who had volunteered for the project were rendered brain-dead by machine dysfunction, the Braindance was introduced into the San Quentin Correctional Facility.

The first inmate to undergo the Braindance, Gerald Weisenheimer, spent nine hours a day, for one week, living inside the Braindance. Although he admitted the actual experience needed to be lengthened, Weisenheimer announced he would never commit robbery again. When pressed to describe the experience, he would elaborate no further than, "I'm never going to touch another person's money as long as I live."

This first success was a great incentive to the State of California to further fund the program, which had drawn flak from all branches of the government until it was proven to work. With increased funding in 2009, combined with a national government contract to produce more machines and tapes, Lassimer and Sujimoto formed Braindance Inc.

Soon after the formation of Braindance Inc., Militech, who had been independently producing its own military simulator, announced a joint venture with Diverse Media Systems (DMS) and Braindance Inc. to investigate the market value of Braindance as an entertainment form. Within seven months of their venture, the first publicly accessible Braindance was released.

The night air feels cool on your bare chest. The dying flames from outside reflect against the naked body of Cartal's woman; your woman. You wait until her breathing evens out, and little snores escape her mouth, then, without disturbing her, you get dressed and leave without knowing her name; it's probably better that way. You take

BRAINDANCE RECORDING UNIT

Linked to the 'dancer's nervous system by a spinal plug, the recording unit converts nervous signals, subvocalized conversations, and physical sensations to psuedo-interface program data. Advanced units can link physical data with scripted information (text, graphics), to create special effects.

Price: 12,000eb



one last look at the now destroyed drug plant before hitting the trail.

Two miles from the target, you spot an ambush in the trees. A couple of armed men are waiting to kill anything that moves down the trail. The euphoric feeling you had from taking the woman dissipates as you decide on a course of action.

Taking a Willie Pete in one hand, you steady the shotgun with the other, just in case. Pull the pin, count to three and toss. They never know what hits them as the superheated phosphorus covers their ambush position. After a quick detour through the woods, you're back on the trail toward the LZ.

CREATING A BRAINDANCE:

The process used in creating a Braindance for mass-market release is fairly simple and the set-up is basic: one Braindancer, a video technician, a Braindance technician for the neural feeds, the neural feeds themselves and the recording box which receives the neural signals. Oh yeah, you may want a solo or two to get the Braindancer out of a situation they can't handle. After this, it gets a little more complicated.

There are two methods of recording Braindance tapes; scripted and not. The scripted ones are less popular as many people feel they are more rigid and less spontaneous. The unscripted are generally more exciting, as the action is left to the dancers' whim.

Once the Braindancer has compiled enough material to make a one hour Braindance (usually about five hours of raw material), the product is left in the hands of the technician who must then edit the material.

The editing deck is almost as important as the neural reception deck, because it has a switch which allows the technical editor to view the recorded material, but with the actual sensory experiences cut off to prevent injury or damage to the editor.

Once the completed Braindance has been edited, it is submitted for approval by both the Braindancer and the corporate marketing team. Assuming the package is approved, the chip is then introduced into a test market, where it is viewed and commented upon. If the chip is well received, it is brought to the open market for the general public.

At the LZ, it's business as usual. You pop smoke, the pilot calls, and then it's in and out, as if you were never there.

As the AV-8 cruises at 200 feet, you see a glint of sunlight reflecting off metal and a fighter of some type strafes the 8. Cursing, the pilot tries to keep it up, but it's not going to happen. You're auguring in at 300 clicks per.

Luck is on your side as the AV hits the water with bone shattering impact: you're still alive. Bruised and shaken, but still kicking. First things first; you jump into the warm water of the South Pacific before the sinking craft can take you with it.

As you swim for the not too distant shore, you get a glimpse of the U.S. Air Force insignia on the fighter as it makes a pass to check for survivors.

Normally being sold out by your country would piss you off, but you're too concerned with the sharks that are heading your way.

PRACTICAL USES OF THE BRAINDANCE:

Although we have discussed the two primary functions the Braindance fulfills, those of entertainment and reeducation, there are other uses for this new and exciting process.

One, which was previously mentioned, was the use of the Braindance as a simulator. By collecting a large enough database, a company could actually train new employees by shunting them into the Braindance for training. Although their bodies would need to adjust to the skill, the person would already have the knowledge of how a certain function is supposed to be performed, without the waste of manpower to supervise the training.

Psychologists are already talking about the possibilities of therapy via Braindance. Instead of spending hours of therapeutic conversation, which may not be totally

successful, a therapist could have the patient undergo the Braindance for rehabilitation of their problem.

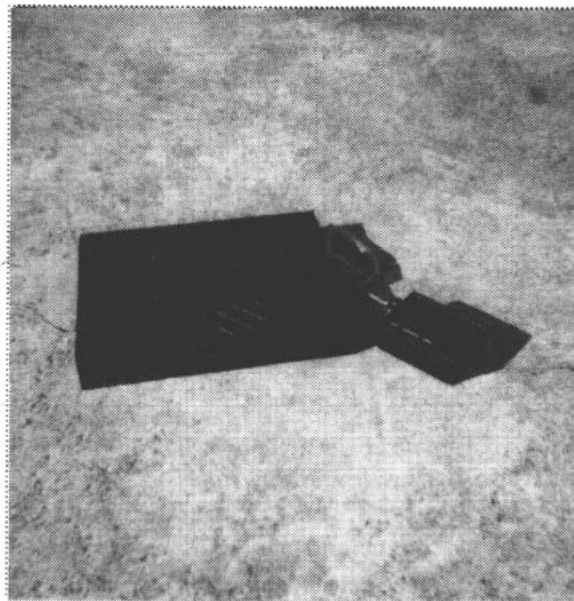
The medical profession is already talking about the potential uses for the Braindance as well. It has been suggested that a Braindance could be used in place of drugs for anesthesia, thus reducing the danger to the patient. They have also suggested experimenting with the Braindance to see what results it might have on patients who are clinically brain dead or in comas.

Lastly, the space industry has already requested that extremely long Braindance tapes be made for the next long range mission to Mars. There has been some research which implies that the mind may start to atrophy after such a long time in hibernation. Now, with the Braindance, the Mars exploration team can make the journey with their minds occupied and active.

You lie, gasping for breath, on the sandy beach as the warm waves lap over your exhausted body. And you thought you were in top shape. Although you reason that you must have been, since you were the only one to make it to shore, you also feel like your body has been run through a turbine.

After a short rest, your survival urge forces you to find cover. Just in time, too. At the opposite end of the beach, a jeep appears, shooting rooster tails of sand as it races across the now deserted beachfront.

You count three men in the jeep as it slides to a halt not twenty feet from your hiding position. Although they are armed with fully automatic weapons, you aren't concerned. After all, they may live here, but you've got the element of surprise.



BRAINDANCE EDITING UNIT

Shown here with a Braindance recording unit attached, the editing unit allows the 'dance editor to compile, edit and enhance raw data. There is no keyboard, actual manipulation of the media is done via interface by the editor.

Price: about 26,000eb

THE BRAINDANCE TODAY:

As the Braindance becomes a more socially acceptable form of entertainment, there are also dangers which must be realized. As with most forms of mass-market entertainment, there is a problem with illegal duplication and distribution of the Braindance chips. There are many dangers in purchasing these illegal chips.

Although the mass produced chips are carefully screened for acts which may cause disruption of a person's mental or bodily functions, and those which may not be suitable for some are labeled with a warning, home produced Braindances are under no such jurisdiction. There have been many reports of illegally produced tapes in which the recording contains the death of the 'dancer. The bodily shock of dying, even when in recorded form, is enough to stop the heart of a viewer.

There are also reports of sado-masochistic acts which usually result in the death of the subject. Needless to say, these are not mass market chips, and the Braindance recording industry does not condone such acts.

As previously hinted at, the Braindance has only recently become

socially acceptable as entertainment. Most of this is due to its origins; after all, who wants to experience the same thing which has been used to punish criminals?

Another common fear associated with the Braindance was that of subliminal suggestion. When the Braindance became available to the public, there was a rumor spread that people's personalities were being altered, or even overridden by the Braindance.

It was soon discovered that there were several black market chips that were doing just that. The person would jack into the program and find themselves as a Netrunner, just as his personality gets overwritten by a liche program. The liche programming was strong enough to actually overwrite the person, even though they were receiving the programming from a source other than the Net.

Despite the drawbacks of negative rumors and the illegal and sometimes dangerous black market chips, the Braindance industry is growing with amazing speed. Although it may be too early to tell for sure, the Braindance may soon surpass the movie as the preferred entertainment choice for this generation.

Taking the jeep was no problem; they never knew what hit them. The border gate in front of you, now that's going to be difficult.

No way to wetback your way across, since there are infrared sensors every three feet, not to mention the razor wire at the top of the forty foot high wall. The road is well guarded; a tank on one side and a minigun emplacement on the other. You've got no choice.

The wagon in front of you has been stopped, and now the passengers are getting out. Without hesitating, you slam your foot on the accelerator, and punch through the gate, past the stunned guards and the stopped wagon.

Although shots are peppering the ground behind you, you know you've made it home. Once they get a look at your papers, they'll understand, but you don't intend to stop.

BRAINDANCERS AS PLAYER CHARACTERS

Although the Braindancer is a media star, and it can be argued that they have some of the same crowd control as Rockerboys, the character class for a Braindancer doesn't matter. In effect, you can give them any character background you want, though you should first consider how they

...not everyone is going to want to be Rambone...

came to be a Braindancer, and why they are doing it.

Playing a Braindancer as part of a team is no problem as well. If you want to make the dancer a central part of the team, then the campaign should probably focus on their profession and have the other characters be the support team.. As described earlier, the Braindancer's team should consist of at least one solo and techie, though a corp to manage finances and a fixer to straighten out bad situations is helpful, nor would a med-techie or cop/nomad bodyguard be unheard of.

If you don't want to deal with the whole corporate set-up, then there is no reason the Braindancer can't fall back on their original character role. After all, when one enters a Braindance you are inside the

dancer's body and, unless he/she happened to pass by a mirror and took a nice long gaze at themselves or the advertisements show their picture, chances are no one is going to know the Brain-dancer's true identity.

Stats for a Braindancer will vary from person to person; it should all depend on what your Braindancer does. After all, not everyone is going to want to be Rambone, heroic chainsaw-wielding, sex maniac of the future. You may want your Braindancer to be part of a never-ending corporate drama involving embezzlement, or you might want to send them to the Great Barrier Reef to play shark tag; it's all up to you.

As a general rule, though, Braindancers should have an above average Cool and Reflexes. It would also be advisable to have a fairly high Luck in case you put yourself into some desperate situation where only the grace of whatever gods you believe in is going to save you.

When it comes to cyberware, the only thing necessary to the Braindancer is a special set of interface plugs which are implanted at the base of their neck. The cost and Humanity loss are the same as normal, but these plugs can't be used for normal applications as they directly tie into your central nervous system and the danger of overloading the nervous system is too great.

The bar is empty, except for the tender, who is polishing glasses. You glance at the clock and realize it's only been an hour. The tender smiles at you, and your face widens to a stupid grin. With a little laugh, she goes back to polishing glasses. You grab your coat and head into the night. ●

Transcription of "Allen Ramstien and the Columbian Cartel" courtesy of Diverse Media Systems. All rights reserved.



BRAINDANCE RECORDER INTERFACE JACK

The braindance recorder inputs to the base of the neck, directly linking into the central nervous system. Because the braindance is perceived from the dancer's point of view, the cables and recorder can be edited out of the viewer's perception.

BREAKING GLASS

A BRAINDANCER MINI-ADVENTURE

THE SETUP (You can read this aloud if you want)

World Entertainment Network is a megacorporation specializing in producing braindance programs. These programs allow the interfaced viewer to vicariously experience the life and emotions of the star of the production, who is wired with special recorders to pick up his or her physical reactions and emotions..

Braindancers are, by the nature of their jobs, pretty all out, hard-living people. They live on a roller-coaster of emotional highs and lows, making the very act of existing a form of art. After all, a quiet day at home makes for dull entertainment. With nearly unlimited expense accounts, braindancers spend life screaming through on overdrive, packing the maximum into every experience for their fans.

The braindancer's performance can be enhanced by the use of a feedbacker, a rare and illegal device which can amplify the dancer's emotions on command. A recent invention, the feedbacker is usually controlled an Editor, who runs not only the feedbacker, but also edits the Braindance.. The Editor also edits the final braindance recording.

The top braindancer is the infamous Sherri Glass, the star of WEN. Her programs and vids have been consistently at the top of the charts for the last year. Tonight, Lucas, her producer, has invited her and several other corporate types to view the final cut of Sherri's latest braindance, *Breaking Glass*. It's a private party in his lavish corporate office on the top floor of the 60 story

WEN building in Los Angeles. At the party are:

- 1) **Sherri Glass (Rockergirl):** braindancer and media star. ex-video and pop star. Sherri is beautiful, vain, wilfull and somewhat suicidal.
- 2) **"Spielberg" (Techie):** Glass' editor. A shameless manipulator of Sherri's emotional state, he has propelled her into several self destructive adventures for the sake of his "art".
- 3) **Lucas (Corporate):** Glass' producer at WEN. He is a coldblooded type who is planning to replace Glass with an even more masochistic and vulnerable understudy, Ulla.
- 4) **"Cooper" (Solo):** One of Glass' bodyguards, he is secretly in love with his client, and would give a lot to get rid of Spielberg. If only he could do it without bringing WEN down on his neck.
- 5) **"Stewart" (Solo):** Glass' other bodyguard. He is a professional. He is also riding the very edge of cyberpsychosis.
- 6) **"Streep" (Netrunner):** Lucas' personal runner and occasional lover. Not too fond of Sherri, who is Lucas' other diversion on occasion.
- 7) **Ulla (Nomad):** Sherri's understudy, she was a very young nomad brat picked off the Street when WEN teams anihilated her Family (she doesn't know this). She has been raised by WEN psych specialists to be absolutely pliant and obedient to Lucas' orders. She may only disobey him on a COOL roll of +20 or better.

NOTE: The Referee should

select any one of the above people to play as his "ringer" character, who keeps the action moving. We suggest any character except Sherri (too obvious). The usual choices are one of the Solos (to bail things out), or Ulla (the most helpless of the PC's).

PLUS: 20 random Beautiful People of all sexes, without weapons or armor, body type Average, who exist only to be mowed down like grass when the attack starts.

THE TIME TABLE

9:00 The party starts

9:30 The first team of 5 goons hits the security shack. The guards are killed, and the Netrunner station taken over. All elevators are locked down and all phone/fax lines cut. An enemy Netrunner will take over the system, activating all cameras. Four enforcers will hold the lowest level. A jammer is activated, isolating the building.

9:45 An AV-4 moves into the building area. It acts as though it's a photographer's vehicle attempting to snap pictures. It then moves away to hover above the roof.

9:50 The AV-4, having determined where everyone is, dives out of the night and sprays the building with fire. Kill off 1D20 of the 20 random party guests, wound another 1D20, and have all PCs dodge an attack roll of 16. Those who fail are hit once, taking 6D6 in damage, randomly applied.. This attack is mostly to eliminate the screaming spectators. **No matter what happens, Sherri will not be hit.**

The AV-4 will make a strafing pass at the building, alternating sides. It will strafe for five passes (targets must roll 16 or better to dodge), then land on the AV pad on the roof..

10:00—It Gets Serious. The second wave of goons starts downstairs. Pick any six goons. Have them start down the stairwell. Their mission—to go through the building like Attila the Hun, killing everyone in the way. Except Sherri Glass.

REF NOTES

This scenario is a fast, dirty banzai run, designed to introduce players to the concept of a braindance scenario. The plot is simple—six people, none of whom like each other, are thrown together in a life or death situation. Each person has several hidden agendas—for example, Stewart might try to use the firefight to get Spielberg killed; Spielberg might see this as a chance for a new hit braindance and use the feedback to make Sherri do risky things, the solos have to protect Sherri and maybe Lucas and Spielberg, or Ulla might betray Sherri to get rid of a rival. Player paranoia springs from the fact that no one knows whos' instigating the attack. Feel free to drop as many red herrings as you want; it won't matter, and it'll keep them hopping.

Players can try to play several different angles. The Netrunner may try to out think her opposition and get control of the Net—this will

give her access to phones, monitor cameras and elevators. The Solos may try to take out the opposition and make it to the roof and the waiting AV-4. The Corporate may try to make a deal. The Techie might try to sabotage the building or rig a trap for the approaching enemy goons.

A FEW OTHER NOTES:

- 1) It takes two turns to run between floors. Elevators will not work unless the enemy Netrunner is secured.
- 2) The AV-4 on the roof can be hotwired on a tech roll of 20 or greater.
- 3) Cellular links will only work between one intervening floor at a time, due to the jamming. Forget about calling more than a floor away.
- 4) The AV-4 has a base chance to hit of 16. It can approach no closer than long range to the building, causing 6D6 damage.
- 6) Signals to other buildings will work on a roll of 20 or better. However, the goons have given themselves an alibi by informing the police and fire departments that WEN is filming a Sherri Glass braindance that evening.

WHAT'S REALLY HAPPENING

Sherri has decided to renegotiate her contract. Tired of being manipulated by Spielberg and cowed by Lucas, she has arranged to have a mercenary group blow both of them away in what looks like a corporate hit. The goons can also get her understudy while their at it, and she can always get new bodyguards. Besides, as suicidal as she is, does she really care about dying anyway?

If she survives, she will be "kidnapped" for a few days in Baja, then "escape" and return to WEN, with a whole new producer/editor team, no understudy and lots of publicity.

REF'S NOTE: Take Sherri's player aside at the start of the game and tell him/her the real situation. Sherri's job is to pretend to be as terrified as the other people in the scenario—if they got wind of the plot, they would force her to call off her dogs, or maybe even ice her themselves. Disguise this subterfuge by taking two other players at random aside and asking them some trivial and useless things like how they will play their character, etc.

Ready? Let's rock n' roll!

BREAKING GLASS CHARACTERS

"STREEP" (Lisa Sperrin) NETRUNNER

INT:9, REF:7, TECH:8, COOL:5, ATT:6, LUCK:3, EMP:6 (4), MA:5 BODY:5 (average)

Cyberware: Interface plugs, Reflex Processor w/ Martial Arts +2 & Music Theory +1, Cyberaudio w/ Radio splice.

Skills: Interface+3, Awareness+6, Streetwise+4, Seduction+4, Brawling+2, Cyber Tech+2, Computer Tech+2, EBASIC+2, General Knowledge+2, Play Instrument+2, Stealth+2, Pistol+2, Drive+1, Wardrobe & Style+1

Outfit: Street clothes, Lang Cybermodem w/ cables, Program Kit: Codecracker III, Worm, Invisibility, Succubus, Killer III. Portable Synthesizer, Typically uses 9mm pistol.

Notes: Streep started on the streets and, even after college, decided that was where she was the most comfortable. She sells her computer services mainly to local fixers and has a high rep as a 'runner. Recently, she's been doing contract work directly for Lucas—security checks, searches, and other small jobs he doesn't want the head honchos to know about. She doesn't trust him, but who does?

"STEWART" (Sean Monnehan) SOLO

INT:6, REF:7, TECH:4, COOL:6, ATT:7, LUCK:8, EMP:5(2), MA:9, BODY:7 (average)

Cyberware: Interface Plugs, Reflex Processor w/ Motorcycle+2, Cybertopic x1 w/ Image Enhancement, Cyberaudio w/ Radiosplice & Wearman, Cyberarm w/ Kevlar Armor & Rippers.

Skills: Combat Sense+2, Martial Arts+4, Persuasion/Lie+4, Stealth+4, Rifle+4, Awareness+4, Athletics+2, General Knowledge+3, Spanish+2, German+2, Human Perception+2, Gamble+2, Streetwise+2, Shadowing+2, Intimide+4, Cyber Tech+4, Melee Weapon+3

Outfit: Functional Clothes, Armor Jacket, Heavy road motorcycle, uses assault rifle on ops, but prefers cybernetics

Notes: Sean's father was one of the first cybergrunts and had a good portion of his head replaced by metal. When he died, Stewart had his dad's cyberoptic adorned with an Irish flag and made into a lucky charm. Stewart became a cybergrunt as well and, once discharged (under questionable circumstances), became a street samurai. He has used every chance to add new "components". Stewart is slowly replacing himself with steel and plastic, and unless he stops soon, is bound for extermination. He's aware of his condition (he's not stupid), but can't seem to stop himself.

"COOPER" SOLO

Int:8,Ref:8(10),Tech:4,Cool:7,Att:7,Luck:4,Emp:7(6),MA:6,Body:7 (average)
Cyberware: Reflex Booster (+2), Biomonitor, Interface Plugs, 1x Cyberoptic w/ Targeting

Skills: Combat Sense+2, Awareness+4, Athletics+3, General Knowledge+4, Japanese+1, Rifle+4, Martial Arts+6, Pistol+4, Stealth+2, Persuasion/Lie+4, AV-4 Pilot+2, Seduction+4, Drive+2, Shadow/ditch+2, Intimidate+4, Write+2, Specific Knowledge (Film & Directing)+2, Streetwise+3, Wardrobe & Style+2

Outfit: Armor Jacket, sets of clothes ranging from street to full evening wear, CD player w/ 30 CDs, Microreader w/ 50 books on file (mostly on old filmmakers), likes to carry a heavy pistol but he's flexible.

Notes: Cooper is a solo in the private sector. His techniques can range from a swift hand-to-hand kill to sniping at a target from a rooftop. If only he could get rid of that idealistic streak, he'd be a lot happier. He prefers to think of life as it was in simpler, happier times, like in the old movies he's obsessed with watching. He joined WEN hoping to get close to the whole entertainment thing.

ÜLLA LASIER NOMAD

INT:7, REF:6, TECH:2, COOL:9, ATT:10, LUCK:8, EMP:9(8), MA:8, BODY:7 (average)
Cyberware: Cyberoptic x1 w/ Micro-camera, Antidazzle & Low-lite Enhancement, Interface Plugs, Processor w/ Aircraft Pilot+2 & French+2

Skills: Family Status+2, Awareness+7, Brawling+6, Athletics+4, Rifle+5, Drive+6, Streetwise+7, Knife+4, Persuasion/Lie+4, Basic Tech+3, Thief+5
Outfit: Street clothes, small personal possessions

Notes: Ulla is the latest find by producer Lucas. He discovered her several years ago as the 10 year old Ulla was trying to steal his BMW5600 sedan from the WEN parking compound. Attracted by her looks, he decided to take her on as a lover instead of having the guards beat her to a pulp. Now that Sherri is becoming a liability, Ulla is Lucas' next star in the making.

HARRIS LUCAS CORPORATE

INT:9, REF:7, TECH:5, COOL:8, ATT:8, LUCK:8, EMP:8 (7), MA:7, BODY:9(strong)
Cyberware: Interface Plugs, Processor w/ Melee Weapons+2 & Pistol+2, Skin-watch

Skills: Resources+3, Awareness+6, Athletics+4, General Knowledge+7, Teach+3, Japanese+4, Martial Arts+4, Driving+3

Outfit: Laptop computer, Cellular phone, tape recorder, 9mm pistol

Notes: This guy is scum. Give him a chance and he'll shaft his own mother. Right now, on top of the network with his current star, the temperamental Sherri Glass, Lucas is planning to doublecross her by bringing his new lover into play. Watch out— if Sherri survives this, he's got a little job for the solos when it's all over...

"SPIELBERG" (Richard Lannian) TECHIE

INT:8, REF:8(10), TECH:7, COOL:8,

ATT:8, LUCK:6, EMP:8, MA:8, BODY:6 (average)

Cyberware: Interface Plugs, Biomonitor, Reflex Booster, Memory Software (Film & TV History +2)

Skills: Scrounge +5, Pistol +2, Basic Tech +6, Streetwise +5, Cybertech +9, Awareness +4, Wardrobe & Style +2, Human Perception +2.

Outfit: Cellular phone, tape recorder, 9mm pistol, armored suit jacket. Feedback-augmented braindance editor, about the size of a laptop computer, which can be controlled by his wrist mounted interface plugs.

Notes: Spielberg is a would-be filmmaker (hence the nickname), who enjoys manipulating others emotions. His main victim is Sherri Glass, who was merely a little confused until he got ahold of her (he's used the Feedbacker to drive her to edge of suicide several times, just to get the "ultimate experience" on tape). Sherri must make a COOL roll greater than 17 to resist minor emotional tampering, and a roll greater than 12 to resist directly suicidal or dangerous impulses.

FACELESS, INTERCHANGEABLE KILLERS SOLO

INT: 5, REF:5(7), TECH:2, COOL:5, ATT:5, LUCK:2, MA:10, EMP:3, BODY:9(strong)
Cyberware: Interface plugs, Cyberoptic x1 w/ Targeting, Reflex Booster

Skills: Combat Cool+2, Pistol+5, Awareness+5, Melee Weapons+5, Martial Arts+5, Athletics+7

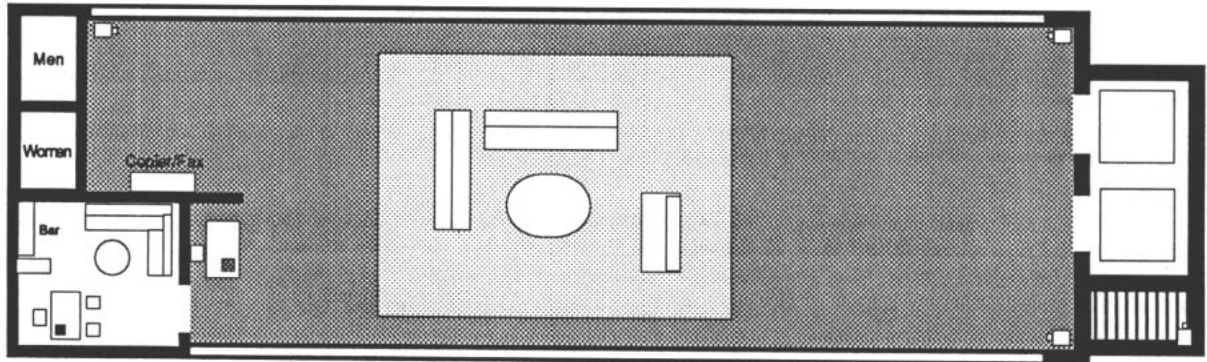
Personality: Very competent, aggressive; "I Live for Combat! Combat is My Life!"

Outfit: Armor jacket, Chipped smartgun (pistol), two grenades (any type), knife, garrote, 50% chance of 9mm SMG

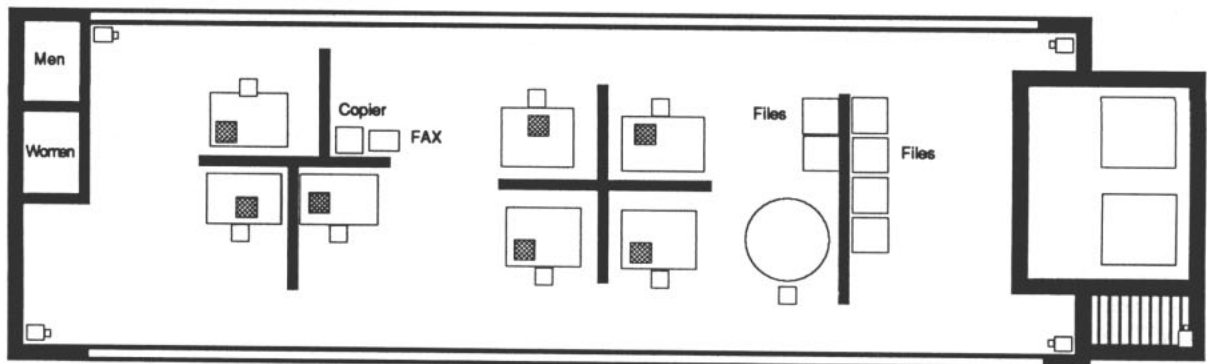
Notes: These are interchangeable soldiers designed to be crunched down like corn chips at a party. Go ahead and abuse 'em. We'll make more!

The WEN Black Tower Building

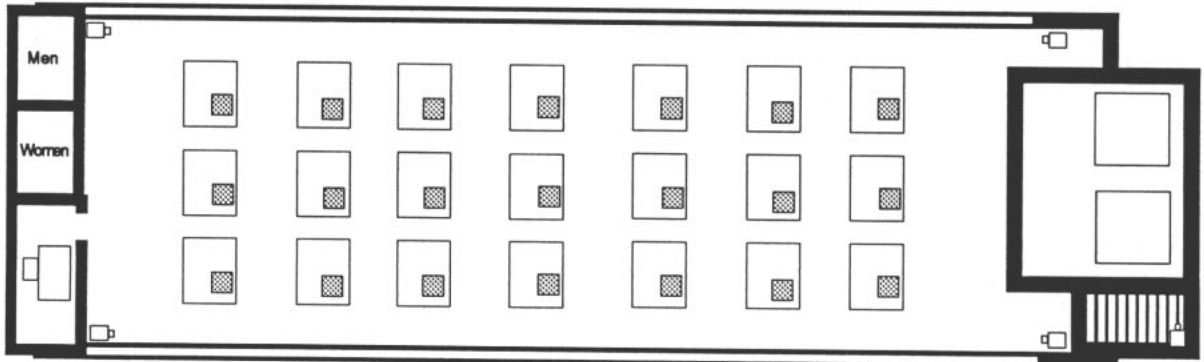
EXECUTIVE SUITE LEVEL 60



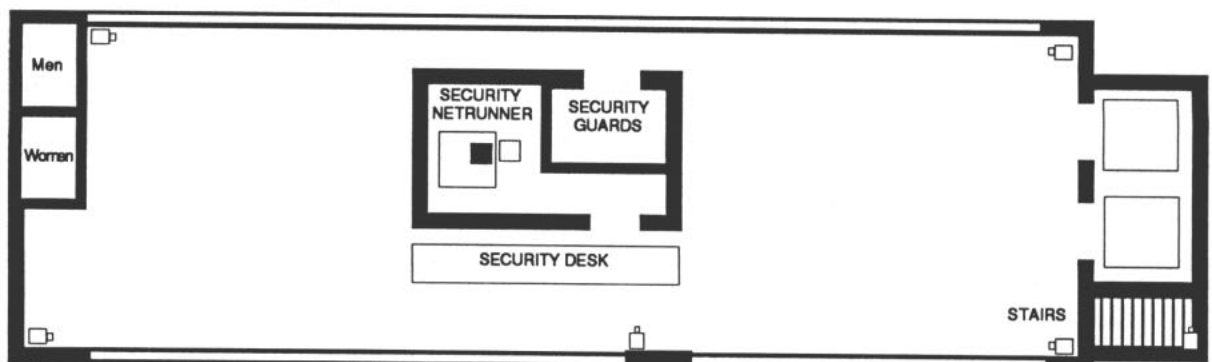
EXECUTIVE LEVELS 27—59

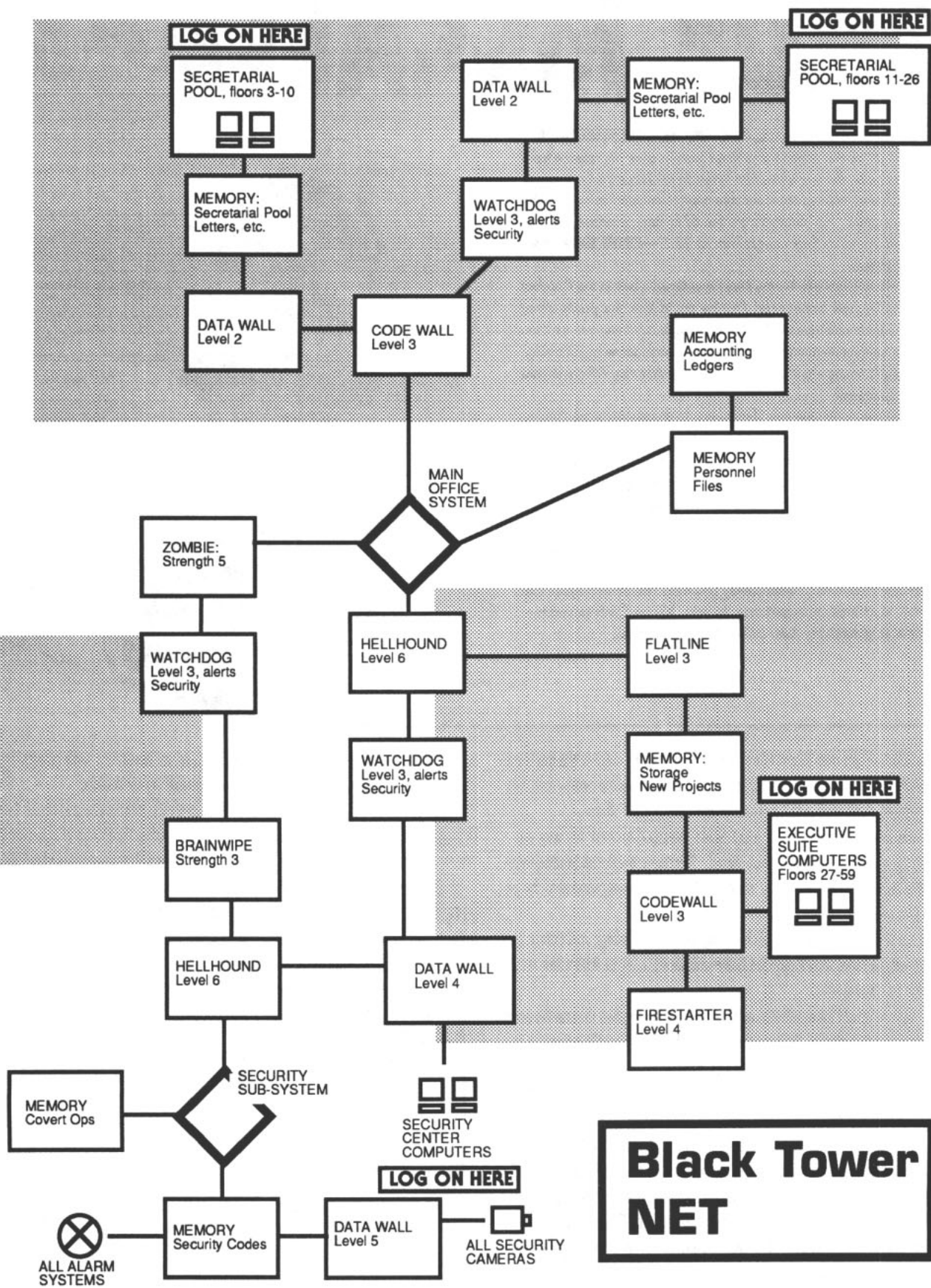


SECRETARIAL LEVELS 3—26



GROUND FLOOR LEVEL 1





SLADE MCCALLAHAN

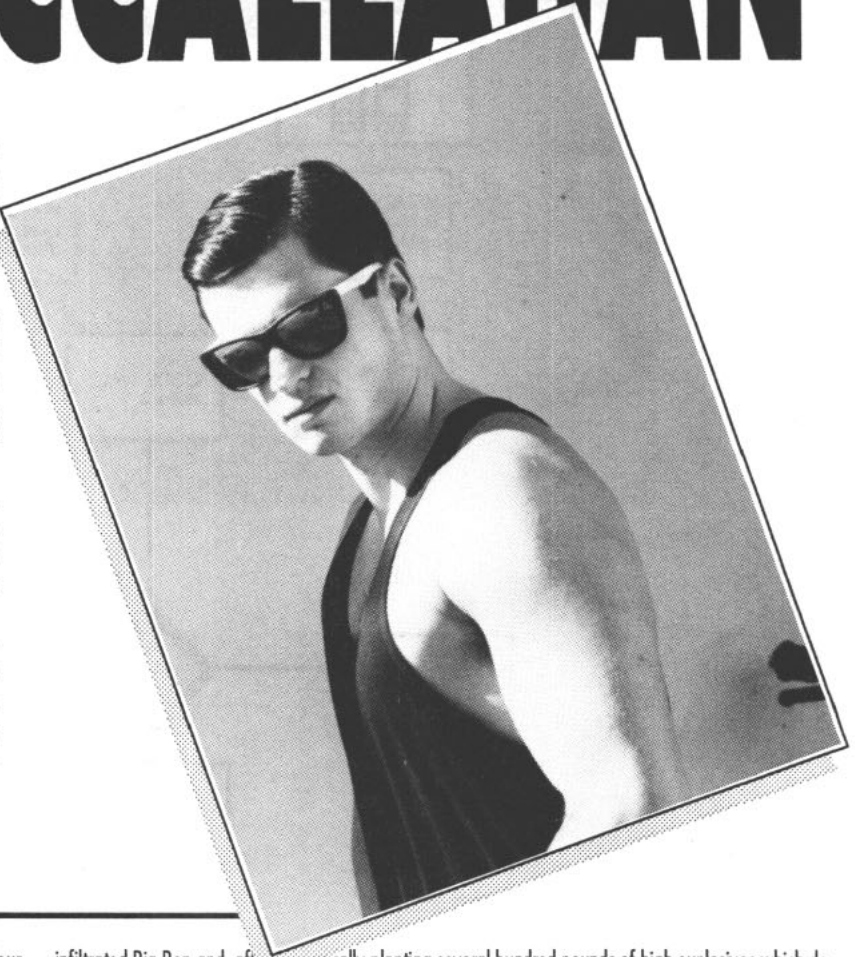
THE SLADE MCCALLAHAN EXPERIENCE!

"Slade burst into our office some three months after his release from prison. He demanded that we allow him to return to his comrades in arms. Naturally we refused, having considerable capital invested in him, but he was not to be stopped. He jumped from the 67th story window, and the nets barely held up when they caught him at 23." —**DMS Executive Harold Silverman**

"I guess it would have to be the time he entered a bar in the Combat Zone of Night City and announced that he could kick the pants off of anyone there. Seven solos jumped to the challenge, and were more than annoyed when he shot them with paint pellets. It took some quick doing, but we managed to escape to the waiting AV-4." —**Marky Allyn, Video support technician:**

"The Braindance can be very dangerous to those with weak hearts. I was editing a sequence where Slade was shot five times in the chest when the interface cables switched from the Neutral to Active positions on my deck. Reliving the pain of getting shot five times is enough to put anyone into shock." —**Karen Lassiter, Neural Interface Tech/Editor**

Experience these incidents and much more as DMS Studios introduces their newest Braindance star, Slade McCallahan. Witness the explosions and shootouts as we recreate Slade's past. Feel the pain as Slade's lover and comrade, Diedre Kelley gets killed before his eyes. Get ready for the most intense experience of your life as DMS presents—**SLADE MCCALLAHAN: AN OUTLAW IS BORN!**



Slade McCallahan was born James Allen Johnson on March 3, 1982 in the then flourishing city of Monterey. He spent much of his first fifteen years around the nearby racetrack, Laguna Seca and was a qualified race mechanic at the time of the Collapse.

With a little foresight (and a lot of luck) Slade managed to work his way into a European racing team two months before the Collapse. This team, the British Sterling team, decided that the "American", as they were wont to call him, was being wasted in the pits and promoted him to driver.

For the next seven years, Slade made his living racing for Sterling, until February of 2005, when he left the team after Pinewood Communications, a major British film studio, offered him a job as a stunt driver.

The two years spent at Pinewood were good for Slade, allowing him to learn the entire stunt trade, rather than just driving. His fame as a stunt artist was unparalleled and he was often more sought after than some of the major film stars.

On July 27, 2007 Slade was introduced to Diedre Kelley, an IRA bomber, though her identity was kept a secret from him until later that year when he would follow her to a pub which was subsequently destroyed by a three pound package of plastic explosives. During the blast, Slade was rendered unconscious and secreted away to a small IRA outpost in Glasgow, Scotland, where he was subjected to intensive brainwashing and reprogramming.

When he awoke, James Allen Johnson no longer existed and Slade McCallahan was born in his place. For the next two years, Slade McCallahan and his lover, Diedre Kelley, were to train as two of the most deadly terrorists in the world.

They made their presence known to the world on December 24th, 2009 when the two

infiltrated Big Ben and, after strategically planting several hundred pounds of high explosives which destroyed the famed London attraction, claimed responsibility for the act.

Within seven months, the pair had destroyed no less than three additional British landmarks, including the remains of the Globe Theater. Eight months after their reign of terror started, on July 10th, 2010, the two were confronted by local police at their safe house in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

During the ensuing gun battle, Diedre Kelley was shot and killed, while Slade suffered the loss of his right hand and eye. We at DMS rescued him where he was languishing in jail, awaiting deportation to England for crimes against the Crown. After several months of rehabilitation and deprogramming, we at DMS bring you the new Slade McCallahan—man of danger, mystery and action!

SLADE MCCALLAHAN

BRAINDANCER/SOLO

INT:8 , REF:10 , TECH:4 , COOL:9 , ATT:78 , LUCK:8 , EMP:5 (2) , MA:9 , BODY:10 (V.strong)

Cyberware: Wrist Interface Plugs, Reflex Processor w/ AV-4 Pilot +2, Cyberoptic x1 w/ Image Enhancement, Cyberaudio w/ Radiosplice, 1 plug at back of neck, cyberarm w/o attachments.

Skills: Combat Sense+5, Pistol +6, Persuasion/Lie+6, Stealth+4, Awareness+5, Athletics+8, General Knowledge+5, Japanese +2, German+4, Human Perception+6, Gamble+2, Streetwise+2, Demolitions +6, Driving +9, Melee Weapon+5

Outfit: Functional Clothes, Armor Jacket, Bimoda Cyberbike, .44 caseless automatic, Braindance recorder unit.

Harmonic Vibrations & Digital Distortions

Reviews by "Slate" Tidwell



EL TEMPESTO GRANDE

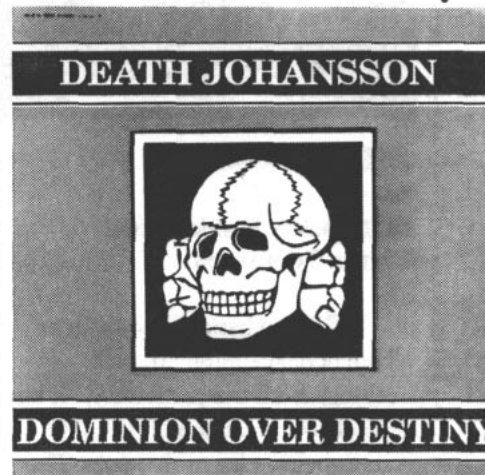
★★★★

Julio Villareal and Salsa Magica
MSM Records

Julio's band does it again. This is a solid recording of Latin-flavored dance music. Consisting mostly of instrumentals, this band again breaks new frontiers with their famous "Immersive Sound" first pioneered by producer Sylvester Escobedo. Particularly haunting is the title track, "El Tempesto Grande". Nearly symphonic in its depth, this piece truly evokes the majesty and the fearsome energy of a Caribbean

hurricane. It is one of those pieces of music that has enough energy and rhythm to get the terminally white and rhythmless out on the floor and moving. Sadly, the future does not look bright, as I see this tune mercilessly butchered for car and vacation ads, or fading into the background of numerous "Sports Wrap-ups" on the locals across the country.

Two exceptions to this all-instrumental trend are "La Luna y La Playa", a slow dreamy ballad, and "Street Glide", both sung by the crystal-clear vocals of Maria Moralés. As it shows at the beginning of the entry, I give this effort four stars. Buy it, or at least listen.



DOMINION OVER DESTINY

★★★★

Emil "Death" Johansson
Steel Rage Records

It must be that Emil Johansson is smarter than the rest of us. Though I disagree with his message, I can't get enough of his music. Then I feel soiled and ashamed when I finish. Johansson has admitted to studying mass psychology, advertising, and the history of Fascism at various times before embarking on his musical career. Education can not completely explain the power that this man wields. His rhythms are driving, his chords...powerful, and his lyrics, if one bothers to listen, are frightening in their misanthropy. Johansson says it's all a joke, which gives evidence of an even more foul attitude. He lives in contempt of 90% of his fans and calls them sheep. They revel in this treatment.

His new album, Dominion Over Destiny, was recorded soon after the death of his fifth wife, the model/actress Ashley Simmons. Emil is only thirty-five. The first cut is a stylistic homage to the "Heavy

LIVE LINK-UP



Metal" bands of the 70's, 80's and 90's. The song, "Riot Rollout", exhorts the listener to commit acts of malicious mayhem, while coaxing an active, nihilistic mood with the power of ancient electric bass and guitar chords. The rest of the album, though not as striking as the first cut, is a somber forging of one will and spirit to serve only Death Johannsen. The final cut, "Autobahn Suicide" is a soundtrack for all those Freeway Fastlane Predators and Midnight Banzai Runners. Its tempo and tune is very evocative of the 350+kph runs on the concrete slabs that crisscross the deserts of the Southwest.

I have heard that Johannsen and his band will be touring this winter. Once again we will see reports on the news services decrying the maiming of his fans by his security forces. If you ask me, I believe the fans wanted it. I will give this record a very guarded four stars, but you should listen to it in fear for the safety of your soul.

LIVE LINK-UP

★★★★

Fingers and the Outlaws
Eye-Land Records

This is the album recorded during the "Fingers and the Outlaws" club tour through the 'States and Canada last year. This album contains all your favorites from JG52 and The Outlaws, as well as the two hits by "The Corporate Spies", released when lead man Stephen "Fingers" Smythe was still NGL 070, a corporate ninja for the Northwest Mineral Assay Corporation.

His good time slip comes across very well, and Fingers even sings the old JG52 hit with obvious enthusiasm (considering he may have crossed into lawsuit territory with the other ex-members of JG52); the whole album is a fine piece of work. I especially like this version of "The Ballad of Nigel". I give it four stars and a recommendation.



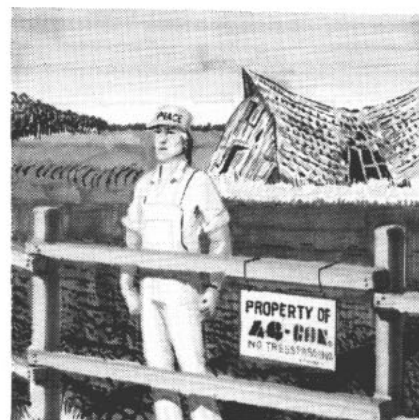
MOVE SOUND

★★ 1/2

High Society Fashion Band
Nippon Telefunken

This is a basically competent album of dance music, though nothing stands out particularly. It has a couple of cuts that will probably receive heavy play in the clubs. The vocals, by Yumiko Tanaka, are that

piercing, conic attack that has characterized Japanese pop for the past decade. I can't see how they've found all these girls (with such high voices) in the volume needed to fuel the flood of short-lived dance bands that dominate the music charts in Japan. They must grow them in vats or something. Thankfully, the ears must endure only three cuts with vocals (two slow ballads and a screecher that would go over well at a thirteen year old girl's party), the rest is simply competent musicianship by Hanako Sorayama and Tetsuo Yamaguchi. Competent, but not spectacular. I give it two and a half.



FIGHT FOR YOUR FREEDOM

★

Dusty Fields
Amerecords

Sigh— Well, he hasn't been killed by the zaibatsus yet, but I can only hope. Actually, the reason he hasn't been killed yet is probably because his existence throws the whole genre of "social rock" into the dumpster. Listening to any album by Dusty Fields makes me understand why my grandfather hated "folk" music so much.

The singer tries to put this plaintive tone into his voice to express his sorrow, but to me, it comes across as a whine. He is always

whining about the poor, the pollution, economic injustice, and the rape of the land. Aside from the distinct lack of quality in his presentation, he doesn't seem to realize that with a system based on economic opportunity, there will be those who are just too useless or stupid to exploit these opportunities; becoming a burden to society. The only way to get economic equality is to hand out \$12.50 an hour to everyone regardless. Russia before the reform and England before the consolidation showed that while socialist systems worked somewhat, they were demotivational and economically crippled, due to the low productivity.

I'm sorry to get on a soap box here, but Dusty Fields makes me very angry. I suppose he advocates the wearing of those shapeless industrial clothes so that all humanity may be equal of form. The announcement that the proceeds of this album would go to aid the victims of the war in Peru just turns my stomach. I would think that the victims would have a little more pride than that. The musicians are lousy. It is very hard to learn digitally unassisted instruments, but these people seemed to have stopped learning and are just making noise. You can hear the producer straining to keep this album at least barely listenable, if not entertaining. He failed. Of course, I say ...NUKE IT!

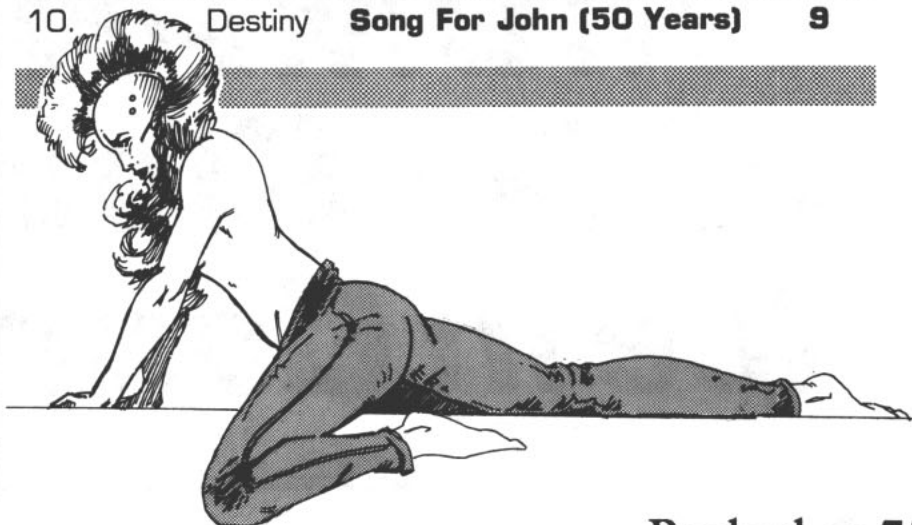
UNDERGROUND PICKS

The pick for this time was sent to me by Rob Delacorte, of Half Moon Bay, California. The band is **Eastern Wire**. The band seems to consist of three synthesizers and a Taiko drum. It has a great sound. Perfect for listening to in the car. I wish them success, and if you want a copy, send \$20.00 to Net Node 876, Sub node 2899, E-Mail: Nishizawa, and tell 'em Slate sent you. ●

EURO RADIO TOP 10

Weeks on
Charts
●=First Week

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Johnny Silverhand | Never Fade Away | 18 |
| 2. | Kerry Eurodyne | Holdin' On | 12 |
| 3. | Lost Boys | Back From Nowhere | 7 |
| 4. | Cutthroat | Kalakari | 4 |
| 5. | Artificial Kids | Hand Of Fate | 9 |
| 6. | Blackheart | Blast Off | * |
| 7. | Brutus Backlash | Little Sister | 11 |
| 8. | Sarah O'Conner | Loving At the Speed of Light | 3 |
| 9. | Pipin' Hot | You Said You'd Never Leave | * |
| 10. | Destiny | Song For John (50 Years) | 9 |



IN CONCERT!

With "Backstage Bob" Rosewood



Cover Story:

TRIUMPH OF ICE—Blood & Ice in Concert!

So, the other night I had put a few away with my old buddies and *Rockerboy* cohorts Spin Wildmon and Cameron Ride, and was feeling in the best of spirits. We were comfortably loosened up, but the babe scene at the Dresden Bar was definitely not happening, so I suggested that we slide on over to the Maelstrom and take in the evening's show. That turned out to be a choice maneuver, as we shortly discovered **Blood and Ice** was booked to play that evening.

Now, if you've not heard of **Blood and Ice**, chances are that you're reaching for "Better Homes and Conapts" and picked up this magazine by mistake, in which case—God help you. Alternatively, you've been spending too much time indoors with your brain wired to the commercial music networks, absorbing that mass-produced corporate-rock drivel with sheep-like passivity as you graze on your potato chips, in which case—God help you. **Blood and Ice** have been turning heads and toasting eardrums south of the freeway for several months now, as they pack the kind of raw, high energy, fire driven, hot off the streets, kick-in-the-rear, door-slamming, bitch-yer-parents-out energy that the manufactured bands cannot begin to understand, let alone produce. If you like to sit at concerts, the Night City Symphony is the place to be, not a **Blood and Ice** concert.

There was a big crowd outside the Maelstrom when we showed up. Apparently we weren't the only deviants who had decided to enjoy the noise that evening. I wanted to get in early so I could rap with the band, but the girl at the booth got off on exercising her petty authority and wouldn't let us in until we flashed our *Rockerboy* press credentials and fifty Eurobucks. Once inside we navigated our way to the backstage

doors where four large roadies told us in no uncertain terms exactly where we could put our credentials. Well, if there's one thing I've learned in my years of dealing with the music scene, it's that money and drugs talk. Now I won't touch Lace, but the roadies of some of the rougher bands are big on a cut version of it called White-lace. It's not quite the kick in the cortex that its big brother Black is, but it retains the combat characteristics and helps the roadies deal with the whacked-out boostergangers, heavy lifting and other curses of the club music scene. I always keep a little on hand for diplomatic purposes. After I had spread the largess and intoxicants around somewhat, they were more than happy to escort us to the band's manager, Gigshot Jones, who agreed to intro us to the boys.

The band was in the middle of resolving a bet when we walked in. The drummer, Hardy Satellite, has a chromed skull, and it turned out he had bet the bassist twenty Eurobucks and a six of Smash that he could stay vertical after having a full bottle of Jack Daniels broken over his head. We were ushered in and told to stand aside and watch until this delicate matter had been resolved in the presence of the remaining Maelstrom staff and roadies. As Satellite stood there smiling, bassist Bo Tasmania wound up and let him have it with a glass bottle filled with a liter of the precious amber. We all got soaked, and Satellite just stood there smiling for a few seconds. Then his grin got a little wider, his eyes crossed, and he went over bass-ackwards like a ton of bricks. This seemed to concern the rest of the band and the staff not at all, and there was much hooting, clapping of backs and settling of wagers as Gigshot introduced us to B&I frontman and guitarist, Jamie

"Ice" Waxman.

For a leather-clad, street-thrash rockerboy with a wire mohawk (no kidding!), backlit eyes and vampires that would scrape the ground if he looked down to buckle his boots, Ice turned out to be a pretty together guy, in that he was coherent and didn't try to impale me on the headstock of his guitar like **Death-wheez Dioxin's** axeman did last year. (See article and photos in Feb. 2012 issue.) He said that Satellite would most likely be conscious in five or ten minutes, and not to worry. So I rapped with Ice about this 'n' that for a few minutes, and then got around to asking him about his band's background.

Turns out Ice earned his stripes as lead guitarist for current corp-hit **Crimson Streets**. They made it big south of the freeway, but sold out to Diverse Media Systems back in 2008 when their founder and vocalist Slick Saigon decided he'd rather be a rich corp-slave than a poor street rocker. There was a big, nasty scene when Ice explained to the rest of **Crimson Streets** how he would rather be pickled alive in used motor oil than sign with DMS, as DMS had shut down his father's small time radio operation (along with most of his father's bodily functions) with a napalm strike a few years earlier. Rather than betray everything that drove him into music, Ice explained in graphic detail to his former bandmates just what a bunch of hypocritical, worthless dung-beetles they were and struck out on his own. With his talent, it didn't take him long to assemble a cadre of energetic, experienced bandmates, most of whom have had bad experiences with one or other of the media corps. (For instance, Satellite's chromed skull replaces a real one that was destroyed when the anti-establishment garage label he was working for as a tech

some years ago was bombed by EMT Recording.) At any rate, B&I have been tearing up the stage for the past four years with their heartfelt anti-mediacorp and anti-processed music theme. In the process, Waxman has survived several hit attempts courtesy of DMS, who he is, understandably, particularly fond of trashing. So far, those hits have served only to lend fire and credibility to B&I's music.

After Ice had filled me in on the band's past, it was almost gig-time. I was offered the privilege of watching from backstage, but I like to catch a show from in front of the stage. Surrounded by drug-addled, sweating, slamming, leather-clad rockers down in the pit in front is the only way to truly appreciate a gig. The rest of the audience had been admitted while we were backstage, but with a little pushing and shoving, and the help of Cameron's cyberarm, we were able to wade through the pack of boosters, punks, chromers and rockers until we found a choice vantage point in the center of the floor.

There was no opening act that night, as there were no bands stupid enough to be caught playing an opening set in front of a B&I crowd. Judging from the reaction when the emcee introduced the band, that was just as well. His plexiglass booth protected him from the onslaught of bottles, rocks, hunks of metal and saliva. The cheering was in full swing when all of the stage lights were killed. There were a few seconds of confusion in the blackness, then the noise of the crowd faded away, and the only audible sounds were breathing, the click of rippers being extended, and the thuds of people who were too drugged to stand without visual reference. Satellite must have regained consciousness at some point, because suddenly the

silence was broken by a slow, heavy bass-drum beat. The bass guitar picked it up and joined the drum. Then, two small red lights recognizable as Ice Waxman's cybereyes appeared in the blackness of the stage, weaving back and forth to the rock steady beat and casting narrow beams through a thin curtain of fog that had been released in the dark. As the beat continued, the disembodied eyes continued their dance, fading from red to blue to green to yellow and back to red. The effect was hypnotic, and the hold over the crowd consummate. Suddenly, the beat stopped and the eyes winked out.

We were all just catching our breath wondering what was next when WHAAAM! The entire band burst into action and the stage lights winked on just in time to catch Ice sliding on his knees towards the edge of the stage, head thrown back, guitar in hand and an animal scream rising from his throat. Just before he would have pitched into the crowd he leapt to his feet and started belting out the lyrics to the first song, "Backstreet Burnout." It was all uphill from there. Waxman commands an audience like few performers I've seen. His voice projects power, rage, hate, sadness, betrayal, triumph and love with equal facility, and his songs are consuming in their simplicity and drive. He took all of the emotions reflected in the eyes of his audience and held them up as an ugly montage for the motley crowd to see. Held in the sway of the beat, and fired by the power of the Iceman, the crowd was his toy for the evening.

Credit is also due the rest of the band. Waxman is supported by one of the most butt-kicking traditional power-rock ensembles that I've experienced to date. In addition to Satellite and Tasmania, B&I boasts backing guitarist and exotic percussion instrumentalist Kenya Msawi, and keyboardist and computer operator Omo Kenkyusha. Together, they produce the raw, unchipped sound that Waxman's biting, stripped down vocals demand. Thumping out of the Maelstrom's 10,000 watts per channel they definitely produce an encompassing, beat-driven storm that'll make even the most battle hardened music veterans, such as myself, switch off their audio enhancements. A minimalist light-show and energetic, spontaneous stage dynamics round out the performance nicely.

For two hours Blood and Ice owned the stage and enthralled the audience with no diminution in energy. Waxman barraged the crowd with exhortations of violence and rage and condemnations of corporations and modern manufactured music. He swept through a collection of songs from the two previous B&I albums including "Damnation Day", "No Fear in Death", "Cold Snap" and the now infamous riot inciter "Hell's Parade". The last hour was a selection of pieces from the upcoming *No Way Back To Innocence* album including the song that has lit a fire under DMS' can, "Diverse Murder Systems".

The crowd brought the band back for two encores, and the evening culminated in an anthemic rendering of B&I's theme song "Music isn't Money" with Waxman taking a stage dive into a crowd of boosters and singing and soloing by wireless as they passed him hand over

hand across the front of the stage. Most other performers who attempted this would have either been dead or stripped of all of their clothes and equipment by the time the roadies rescued them, but such is the sway that Ice holds over his south of the freeway audience that not a pick was taken from his body as near as I could see. When the song was over, he was placed back on the stage, and the band made their final exit. Even with the house lights on it took half an hour for the club to empty out

I stuck around with Spin and Cameron to assess the damage after the crowd had gone, and it was what I'd expected after a night of high energy music. Out of an attendance of two thousand, there were five dead

bodies left when the crowds were gone: two stabbings, a gunshot victim and two drug overdoses. One of the ODs had a Trauma Team card in his hand, but hadn't had the strength left to break it. Guess he couldn't afford a bio-monitor. That was a pity for him, but perhaps not so bad for the Trauma Team who might have gotten lynched if they'd interrupted the show. Twelve unconscious people were carted off to the first aid rooms backstage. The floor in front of the stage was carpeted with alcohol, blood and discarded clothing and jewelry. Overall, it was about what I'd expected, and it will give those of you out there who are interested in B&I an idea of what to expect at their concerts. I'd advise at

least light t-shirt style body armor, tailored for tropical climates as it gets rather hot in the club. Druggies: hallucinogens are a no-no, stick to uppers. Avoid the stage-front area, as that's where the boosters conglomerate and most of the injuries occur.

With the concert safely under wraps, my buddies and I returned to the Dresden to see if things over there had picked up in our absence. Not really, but after a Blood and Ice concert, any more excitement is asking for a coronary and a ride with a trauma team. Definitely worth your six Eurobucks. Until next month, this is Backstage Bob saying recorded music is for wimps, so get out there and live the experience! ●

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CALL BOARD

The Call Board is free. Just fax your message in and include a return address.

Guitarist looking to jam with others, or maybe to join an existing band in the Dallas-Fort Worth Area. I have my own equipment, professional attitude and vehicle to travel with. I've been playing for three years and practicing about 5-7 hours daily. My influences are Silverhand/Eurodyne, Samurai, Buzzsaw Harris, and 1990's rockers like Lying Eyes, Midnight Massacre and Joanne Ford. Anyone interested should get in touch and we'll see if we've got the magic.

James Marshall
239 S. Davis
Lindmast, Tx 76053
(817) 555-1563

I'm a sixteen year old bassist who is looking to correspond with BIT graduates from the class of 2002. Would appreciate information about a student from that class.

Harold Chen
Box 482
Palo Alto, Ca 94306

Tired of all the wimps who think they can blitz? Alienation Inc., a signed band, is looking for a rhythm guitarist who can tear the chrome off a building with one power chord. If you think you've got what it takes to

burn past the competition at 300 bpm, then we want you. Auditions for the band are going on now, so don't be left in our dust. Contact Alienation Inc., for the future in power rock.

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color photo of yourself and/or your band, and a cover letter stating why you think you deserve a shot in the Battle for the Stage.

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