



Twentieth-century boys: Placebo's Brian Molko with David Bowie in New York

The fifty-two-and-fabulous **DAVID BOWIE** has found new friends in English gloom-and-glam rockers **PLACEBO**. Bowie interviewed the lads for a Web chat in New York before showing up for a surprise encore at the band's Irving Plaza gig. They performed T. Rex's "20th Century Boy," which Placebo covered for the *Velvet Goldmine* soundtrack, and Placebo's "Without You I'm Nothing." "Sharing the

stage with him is such a pleasure. He's such a gentleman, just so genuine and giving, that it's hard not to fall in love with him," gushes Placebo's **BRIAN MOLKO**. And then he gushes some more. "David's an inspiration, really. He's continually and successfully reinvented himself. I hope at fifty I can look as good as he does and have all of his energy and drive." True enough—how many fiftysomethings have even heard of Placebo?



They're an American band: Tom Petty and bassist Howie Epstein.

There's no reason to change a good thing: Two years ago, **TOM PETTY AND THE HEARTBREAKERS** preceded their world tour with a twenty-night residency at San Francisco's intimate Fillmore Auditorium. So they decided that before getting lost in the blur of this year's summer stadium tour, they'd return to San Fran—this time for seven nights—packing quality opening acts: **LUCINDA WILLIAMS, WAR, TAJ MAHAL** and **BO DIDDLEY**. Petty and the band covered every phase of their twenty-year career as well as tunes like J.J. Cale's "Call Me the Breeze,"

the Tornadoes' 1962 surf classic, "Telstar," and "Little Maggie," by pioneering bluegrass pickers the Stanley Brothers. "It's hard to play a Stanley Brothers song to a crowd of 20,000," Petty said. "But in the Fillmore, you can get it over." The Heartbreakers also debuted songs from their latest, *Echo*, including "Swingin'," a slow harmonica blues, and "Free Girl Now," a Petty rocker that will be the album's first single. "Residencies are kinda cool—it's a good thing for your band," he said. "It really unified us, let us hone our material and try lots of things we wouldn't have been able to do in a hockey rink."



Now that's a guest list: Bob Dylan, Madonna and Chris Rock at Sony's pre-Oscars bash at the Mondrian hotel in L.A.

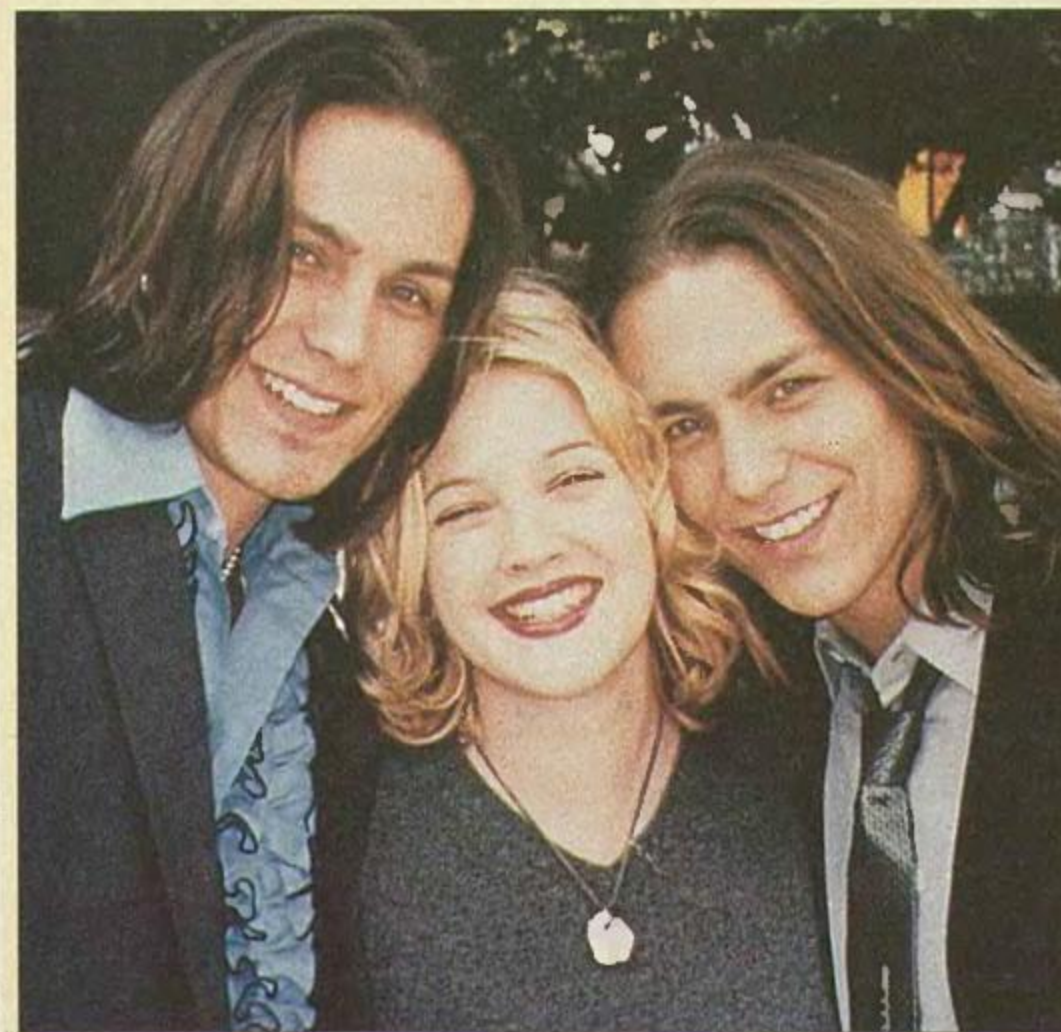
It was a history-making moment at Sony's pre-Oscars party in L.A. when rock icon **BOB DYLAN** met pop icon **MADONNA** and wise-ass icon **CHRIS ROCK**. "I was like, 'Why am I in this picture?'" the comedian says. Rock spent the night hanging with Madonna as everyone from **ROBERT DE NIRO** to **UMA THURMAN** milled about. It may have been Hollywood's big night, but Rock felt like talking music. "I love Lauryn; I'm listening to a lot of OutKast," Rock says. "This DMX thing isn't bad. You wanna feel like a tough guy? Jay-Z, man. If you wanna get in a truck, bop your head, be kinda mad and aggressive, thinking about shootin' somebody, Jay-Z's for you."

Let's see . . . I listen to Alanis Morissette's 'Uninvited' every day—it's really deep. And the Smashing Pumpkins' *Adore* I love. I was at a Mets game with Billy and I told him, 'Just because an album doesn't sell, doesn't mean it's not good.' If you have a mansion in a bad neighborhood, it's still a man-

sion." Rock has also been catching up on the past. "I like discovering artists that have already been around for, like, ten years," he says. "It's great being black in that aspect. I've, like, just heard the Beatles and Queen and the Stones. I just bought, like, twelve Elvis Costello albums."

RANDOM NOTES

BY ANTHONY BOZZA



DREW BARRYMORE LENT herself and her likeness to Swirl 360's video for "Candy in the Sun," from the soundtrack to her new film, *Never Been Kissed*. Drew helps the band evade a mob of fans dressed like her character in the film. "Drew is totally cute," says the L.A. pop band's Denny Scott (left). "I couldn't believe it when I first saw her. She's twenty-four, but she looks twelve, and she did stuff at eight that I hadn't dreamed of." Swirl—twin Floridians Denny and Kenny—both sing and play guitar. "My dad was in the Navy," says Denny, "so we moved around a lot. One cool thing about being twins is that you never have to worry about making new friends." How about new fans? "Everywhere we go—Canada, Asia, the U.S.—there's a set of twins that want to meet us," Denny says. "But we'd rather be thought of as brothers in a band, like Oasis or the Kinks. I guess we'll have to start fighting onstage."

JAY BLAKESBERG (PETTY); JOHN BELLUSSIMO (BOWIE); DAVE ALLOCCA/DMI (DYLAN, MADONNA, ROCK)

Alternative



gloom and glamour. Accused of not being punk enough, Corgan showed on *Mellon Collie* what punk might be if Steven Spielberg got hold of it. The angry songs distend rage and alienation via beautifully ugly guitar-drum attacks, while the wistful ballads flip hate around and turn it into exquisite, unquenchable longing. Take that, hipsters: Ordinary angst can be grand.

Sleater-Kinney

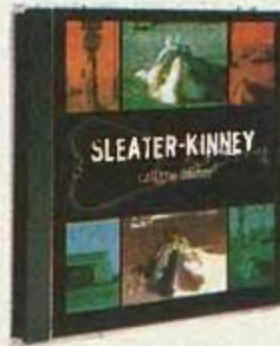
Call the Doctor

CHAINSAW. MARCH 1996

"It's fine 'cause it's all mine," sings Corin Tucker in "I Wanna Be Your Joey Ramone," and nobody can argue as this righteous college girl lays claim to rock's

"Sometimes I wonder if I'm a character being written or if I'm writing myself. It's confusing."

—Marilyn Manson
RS 752. JANUARY 23RD, 1997



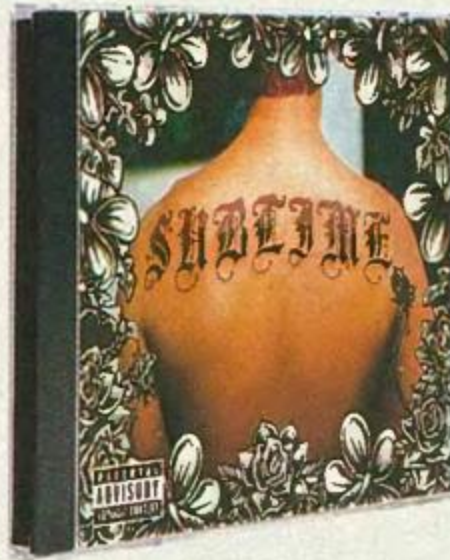
raw heart. Sleater-Kinney made good on the promise of the early-Nineties riot grrrl movement, linking punk anarchy and radical feminist insurrection. On *Call the Doctor*, Tucker, Carrie Brownstein and then-drummer Lora McFarlane careen around in songs like "Hubcap" and "I'm Not Waiting," moving at warp speed from pretty to terrifying, from earnest observation to nearly incoherent rage. These weren't the first band mates to focus female fury and desire to the beat of a kick drum, but they could make music as fully arresting as their ideas. And no other rocker has Tucker's voice—a bloody wail that goes soft at the center, a voice that feels like flesh pressing against you.

Beck

Odelay

GEFFEN. JUNE 1996

The Woody Guthrie of the Pizza Hut proves he can do it all on *Odelay*, as the Dust Brothers slip him a funky cold medina and set the stage for him to get real, real gone for a change. Beck shimmies in and out of his musical guises, whether he's strumming his folkie guitar in "Ramshackle," rocking the Catskills hip-



Sublime

Sublime

GASOLINE ALLEY/
MCA. JULY 1996

One of the decade's strangest hits, *Sublime* came out shortly after the death of singer-guitarist Bradley Nowell but kept spinning off one hit after another, with a loose, friendly California-pop sound inflected by ska, dub, punk and folk. These Long Beach riddim kings get sloppy but keep the tempo chugging, especially in the head-spinning acoustic skank of "What I Got," which somehow fuses the English Beat with the Grateful Dead. The success of *Sublime* was a compliment to Nowell's memory and an even bigger compliment to his rhythm section.



hop style in "Where It's At" or blaming it on the bossa nova in "Readymade." *Odelay* could have come off as a bloodless art project, but Beck gets lost in the jigsaw jazz and the get-fresh flow until his playful energy makes everyone else sound tame. That is a good drum break, indeed.

Fiona Apple

Tidal

THE WORK GROUP/SONY. JULY 1996

In the aftermath of Alanis, the airwaves were crawling with troubled ingénues



singing tragic ballads about their haunted eyes, but somehow Fiona Apple stood out as a bad, bad girl. Apple's husky voice and jazzy melodies give an unexpected weight to her confessions on *Tidal*, as the nineteen-year-old New York art waif broods over adolescent malaise in off-kilter, insinuating piano ballads like "Never Is a Promise." She also comes up with a knockdown theme song in the anomalously hard-rocking "Criminal," the anthem of a young woman who's been careless with a delicate man and even more careless with her delicate self.

Rock + Roll

roaring through Elmore James' "It Hurts Me Too," incinerating Freddy King's "Someday After a While" and wringing the anguish out of Lowell Fulson's "Sinner's Prayer." Clapton generously becomes a signpost to the deep blues on *From the Cradle*—a fan preaching the gospel of his idols to anyone willing to hear.

Tom Petty

Wildflowers

WARNER BROS., NOVEMBER 1994

At a time when most rock veterans were stagnating, Tom Petty and producer Rick Rubin made *Wildflowers*, the most organic, cohesive record of Petty's career. Compared with the pleasingly slick textures of



Petty's work with Jeff Lynne on 1989's *Full Moon Fever* and 1991's *Into the Great Wide Open*, there is a timeless grace and folksy subtlety to the material here, including the haunting title track, the soulful stoner rock of "You Don't Know How It Feels" and the orchestral delicacy of "Wake Up Time."

Jewel

Pieces of You

ATLANTIC. FEBRUARY 1995

This barely retouched debut contains the songs responsible for the mighty Jewel dynasty. "Who Will Save Your Soul" is a coffeehouse sing-along on which her voice gorgeously liquefies and scats at the drop of a hat; "You Were Meant for Me," the melodic marvel she wrote with Steve Poltz, lets loose her spiritualized romanticism in the pop-culture mainstream—alongside movies and toothpaste. But Jewel's extraordinary "Foolish Games" clinches it: the heart, the soul, the all-American Edith Piaf strivings, the irresistible feeling of a pop hit as literary lingerie.



The Wallflowers

Bringing Down the Horse

INTERSCOPE. MAY 1996

Sure his dad is Bob Dylan and he both sounds and looks like a heartbreaker with a capital H, but don't hold that against Jakob Dylan. On their second album, the Wallflowers came back new and radically improved: Produced by T-Bone Burnett, *Bringing Down the*

Prodigy

(DANCE/POP):

ESSENTIAL ALBUM: *The Fat of the Land* (1997)

Prodigy brought one of the decade's most debated sounds—techno, electronica or whatever you chose to call it—onto the American pop charts, radio and television. They attacked their music with brutal inventiveness and harnessed rock rage to compulsive dance beats. "I don't think kids in America should be told to forget about rock music, because all this is is another form of rock music." —Liam Howlett

RS 767. AUGUST 21ST, 1997

