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TEMPO

*Rockers recall their . . .*

# First musical memories

**By Frank Rizzo**
The Hartford Courant

For Tom Petty, it was Rock Around the Clock.

For Martha Davis of the Motels, it was being taught how to play Hang Down Your Head, Tom Dooley.

For Brian Setzer of the Stray Cats, it was hearing the Beatles for the first time.

In the following interviews, pop stars recall their first musical memory.

**David Lee Roth**, 28, lead singer of Van Halen (Jump, Jamie's Crying):

"My first musical memory?" (Singing) "My name is Mister Bookworm — I hope you like to read."

"Now my second musical memory is Al Jolson. I can sing you all that stuff. My father gave me my first collection of Al Jolson on those breakable 78s. It was everything to me."

**Tom Petty**, 32, (Don't Do Me Like That, Here Comes My Girl, Refugee):

"I remember being very young, maybe three, and listening to my parents play Rock Around the Clock. I remember it because it had that rhythm: 'One o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock, rock.'"

**Rick Danko**, 40, of The Band (The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down, The Weight, Up on Cripple Creek):

"I think it was a Walt Disney cartoon about a grasshopper and the ant. The grasshopper kept singing, 'Oh, the world owes me a living. Poop-a-loop-a-loop-a-loop.' And the grasshopper kept playing his fiddle and the ants were just storing the food for the winter. And they said, 'You can't act that way.'

And sure enough, man, wintertime came and he ended up knocking at their ant hill door and when they brought him in, he was in a block of ice. But when he thawed out, the first thing he did was pick up his fiddle and started playing again and singing this poop-a-loop song because they were having this big wintertime banquet. It was great."

**Joe Strummer**, 30, of The Clash (London Calling, Should I Stay Or Should I Go?, Rock the Casbah):

"It was Michael (Row the Boat Ashore), and it was number one in the British charts. I was about seven or eight.

"But the next blast that I remember was was the Rolling Stones playing Not Fade Away. From then on, I took nothing else seriously. I was in an English boarding school and it was pretty frightening for a nine-year-old. It was very brutal, very physical, just like *Tom Brown School Days*. I remember suddenly hearing this sound from someone's radio in another room: 'Chinka-a-chinka-chicka-juuuung.' And it was the most opposite feeling to what I was suffering. That was reality for me from then on. And it was then that I realized that life could be fun."

**Mitch Ryder**, 37, (Devil With a Blue Dress, Jenny Take a Ride, Sock It To Me Baby):

"I was a young child, about four. I remember my father lying in bed at night and singing with the radio for a long, long time. He was crooning, mostly ballads that were popular at the time. He did it so much that it went from being awesome to annoying. During the day, my mom would sing around the house, country and western songs mostly, 'cause she's from the South.

"Soon after that I discovered my father's record player and his collection of records. And I destroyed those, and, oh, was he mad. I got a lickin'. That was my first suggestion that music could also bring pain. I made a direct link between that spanking and the music. It's like Pavlov."

**Don Felder**, 37, formerly of the Eagles, (Best of My Love, Lying Eyes, Hotel California):

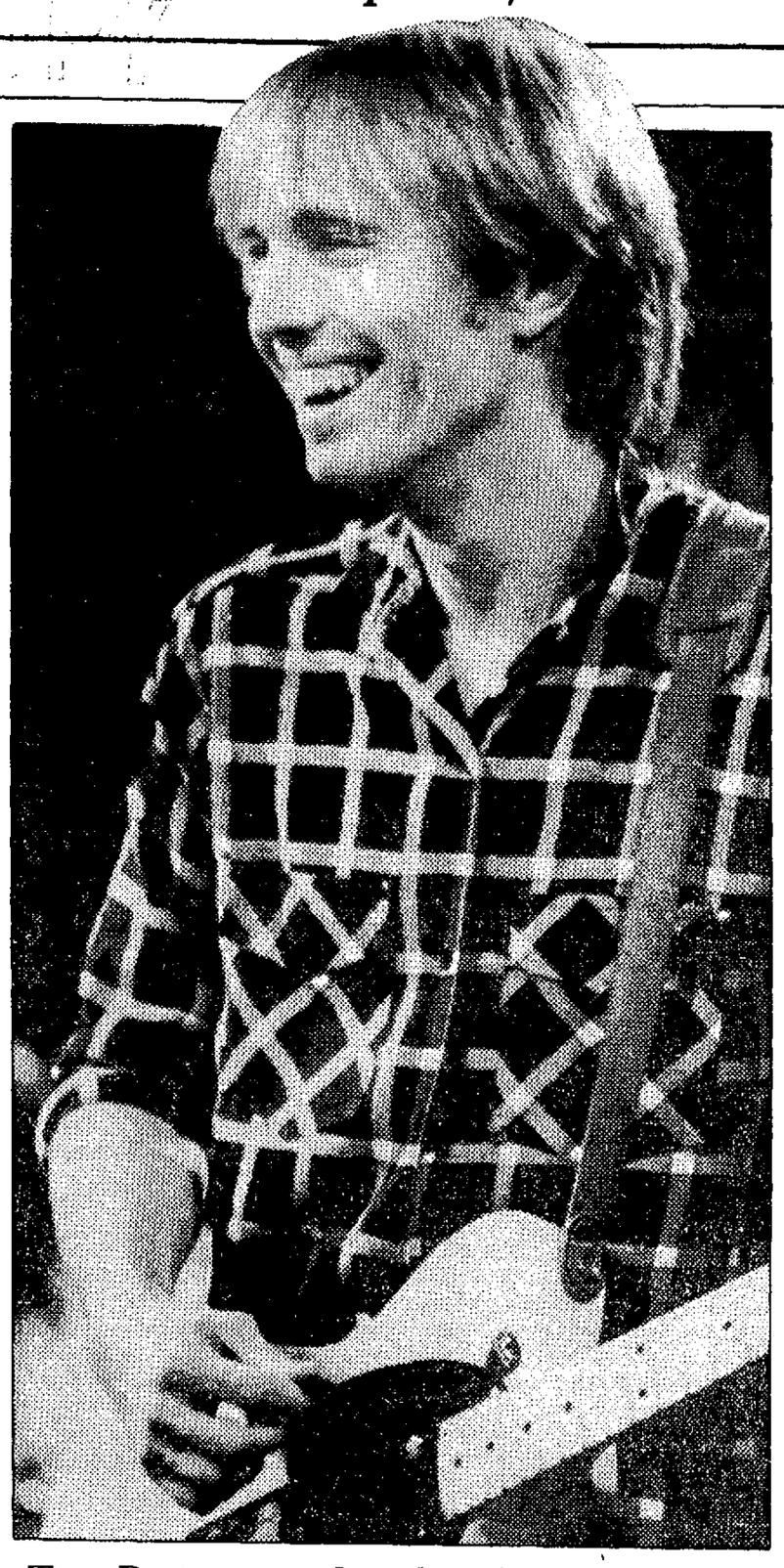
"I was seven and my father bought a Voice of Music tape recorder with 'sound on sound,' which was an extra speaker which went on the other side of the living room. It was the first dimensions of stereo. I remember when he brought it home it had like a demonstration tape of stereo, like trains that went by. I said, 'Wow, that's incredible.' I lost my mind. About two years after that when I got my first guitar, I plugged in to the back of this big RCA TV. I would sit in the living room, plugged into the TV, and when you turned up the volume, you didn't hear the TV, you'd hear the guitar.

So I would watch The Lone Ranger or Winky Dink and play guitar until I started trashing the TV speakers."

**John Cougar Mellencamp**, 32, (The Ballad of Jack and Diane, Hurt So Good, The Authority Song):

"There was a guy who lived down the street from me named Hubie Ashcraft. I was about four or five and he was about 13 and he was playing Peter Gunn on his Mom's front porch. And I heard it from my house and it was like 'Jesus, this is so cool. Der-der-der-der-der-der-der-der.

**Davis: plunked at guitar**



*Tom Petty remembers hearing parents playing hit song Rock Around The Clock.*

God, what is this?'

"And I ran down the street and there was this pimply faced kid with an old guitar and a Gibson amp. And it was like, 'Where did you learn how to do this?' And that was my first musical recollection."

**Martha Davis**, 33, lead singer of The Motels, (Take the 'L' Out of 'Lover,' Suddenly, Last Summer):

"I think I was eight and my babysitter was this young black guy from Berkeley (Calif.) and he showed me how to play three chords in a guitar and how to play Hang Down Your Head, Tom Dooley. A, E and D. Those three chords, and especially the D, got me through five years of performing."

**James Taylor**, 36, (Fire and Rain, Sweet Baby James):

"I can remember when I was a three-year-old child and listening to recordings of Woody Guthrie. I also remember listening to Scheherazade by Rimsky-Korsakoff and I can remember listening to a recording of Appalachian Spring because my folks used to play that. I remember when I was in kindergarten there was a woman named Mrs. McCally and she used to pass out instruments to play. The regular stuff.

I remember in the mountains of North Carolina a wind-up phonograph in a cabin in which the family of my father sometimes shared, and there was a wind-up record of a strange sexist song called Slap Her Down Again, Pa. And if I'm not mistaken the flip side was C'est Si Bon. It was sort of a musical cole slaw, I guess."

**Michael Stipe**, 24, lead singer of R.E.M. (Radio Free Europe, S. Central Rain):

"It was Moon River. It used to make me cry when I was a kid. I liked it a lot because there was a line in it about 'Huckleberry friend.' But I thought it was about Huckleberry Hound which would you give you an idea of how young I was, about five."

**Robert Plant**, 36, solo performer and former lead singer for Led Zeppelin (Whole Lotta Love, Stairway to Heaven, Big Log, In the Mood):

"I was a young lad playing a washboard with eight thimbles on my fingers. I just had this infatuation for black music. I never even tried to sing then. I was just playing a washboard, and sometimes harmonica. I still have the washboard and thimbles. You never know when you're going to need them."

**Brian Setzer**, 24, lead singer of the Stray Cats (Rock This Town, Stray Cat Strut):

"It was the Beatles. I was about five and I thought they all played guitar so I just had to have a guitar. And when I was seven my parents bought me one. I liked everything about them. I thought the Beatles looked cool, too. I remember my mom buying me Beatle boots that didn't fit cause I still took a child's size and they only came in adult sizes. She stuffed cotton in the toes."

# Performers brilliant in story of emotions

**By Reg Skene**

**REVIEW**

Old World, Manitoba Theatre Centre, Nov. 15-Dec. 8.

Manitoba Theatre Centre's production of Aleksei Arbuzov's Old World is a finely acted evening of quiet theatre.

The story unfolded is a simple one. An aging surgeon meets a vital and eccentric female patient also no longer young. He is intrigued and irritated. She balances her interest with a persistent fear of involvement acquired in a series of disastrous marriages.

A relationship develops. But the doctor is held back by a resolve that he will remain faithful to the memory of a wife killed in the Second World War. The patient, meanwhile, clings to the fantasy that she is still married to a husband who deserted her for a younger woman.

The play involves the subtle, painful, but unspectacular adjustment of the couple to each other, and their simultaneous accommodation to the fact of age and the approach of death.

The strength of Arbuzov's play is that it explores with precision the possibility of a love which issues from human needs deeper than sex or sentimentality, and that it affirms that human beings have resources to cope with the desolation of age and loneliness, if only they will reach out and allow their lives to touch the lives of others.

## Added interest

That the source of such an exploration of the subtlest and most intimate aspects of emotional experience is a contemporary Soviet playwright adds to our interest.

The MTC production is true to the objectives and strategies of Arbuzov's script. Within the terms set by the structure and tone of the play, director Brian Rintoul and his cast sound every emotional note in the complex melody of the developing relationship. The show has an intimacy of focus which we have seldom seen on MTC's main stage. There is no physical extravagance. The play is short — running an hour and a half, without intermission.

The opening night audience of 800 seemed divided in its response to this kind of play on the MTC mainstage. The total absence of big effects, the lack of physical excitement, and the brevity of the performance left some patrons asking: "Is that all there is?" For others, the gain in truth and emotional relevancy seemed to more than compensated for the loss in razzle-dazzle.

Certainly what you get for your money this time around are two of the finest performances ever to grace the MTC stage. Florence Paterson is brilliant as the aging ex-circus performer who complicates and eventually enriches the life of the lonely doctor. She is by turns aggressive, wary, glowing, frightened, defiant and crazy — her characterization at once miraculously coherent, varied and totally credible.

## Emotional truth

Eric House's portrait of the doctor is marked by solid believability, remarkably detailed texture, a presence that excites and a sense of emotional truth that holds our sympathy throughout.

Director Rintoul most of the time makes the play move well, although most of the action is internal. About a third of the way through the forward thrust fails and one is gripped by desire to doze, but as the relationship begins to develop in earnest the problem rights itself.

A major source of joy is the combined effect of Douglas McLean's sets and Jeffrey Dallas's lighting. Using a combination of stage revolve and rear-projected scenery, McLean creates an environment which has the lyric effect of a series of impressionistic paintings. He manages to make each scene beautiful in itself, but contrives that it mirror the emotional state of the characters.

# WAG sets Mexican mood for fundraising Fiesta '84

The Winnipeg Art Gallery is going great guns — probably more than it realizes — to achieve authenticity with tonight's fundraising Fiesta '84. Mexico is the evening's theme, complete with Mexican costuming, Mexican food and Mexican music, even **Laurie Mustard** as Head Honcho. But the piece de resistance that will appeal to any who have ever vacationed in Mexico is one item among the $20,000 worth being auctioned off at the Muy Grande Silent Auction: a year's supply of toilet paper.

## Breau clues elusive

More than three months after jazz guitarist **Lenny Breau** was found at the bottom of his Los Angeles apartment block's swimming pool police are still hunting for a lead, a motive and a suspect.

"We have nothing to go on," said Det. **Larry Bird**, one of the investigating officers on the case. "The longer the investigation goes on the less chance we have of solving it. But there is no statute of limitations either."

The detective said the investigation remains active although the police have been stymied in their search for a reason for the killing.

Breau, 43, whose career blossomed in Winnipeg during the '60s was murdered Aug. 12 and was discovered in the rooftop pool by a maintenance man. Although cause of death was initially thought to be accidental drowning, an autopsy revealed he had been strangled.

## Arlo silent on future

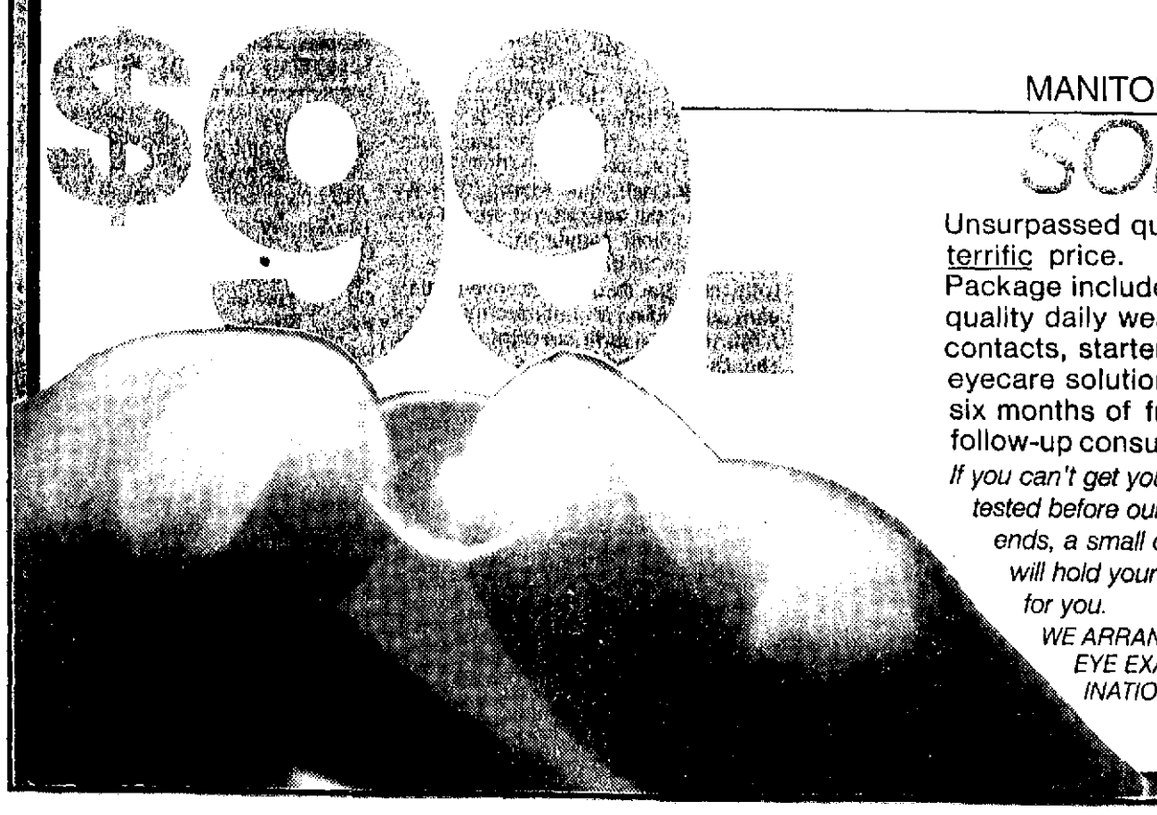
These are troubling times for any folksinger. But **Arlo Guthrie** has some very personal worries these days. In his late 30s, he is approaching the age where signs of a debilitating and slowly fatal nervous disorder may start turning up. His folk-singing father, **Woody Guthrie**, died of Huntington's Disease, and the offspring of any Huntington's victim have a 50-50 chance of developing the disease. The local Huntington's Society was trying to reach Guthrie while he was performing in town last week, to have him speak about the disease and his own worries. But Guthrie's road manager frankly told the *Free Press* that Arlo doesn't like to talk about it.

**BACKSTAGE**

## Musical menu offered

A full music menu is being served up in Winnipeg during the weeks to come. Choice items include: Metal maniacs **Krokus, W.A.S.P.** and **Helix** Nov. 24 at the Winnipeg Arena; Winnipeg's First International Blues Festival starring **Otis Clay** and **Chicago Fire, Lonnie Brooks Blues Band** and **Luther "Guitar Jr." Johnson** and **The Magic Rockers** Dec 7 and 8 at Le Rendez-vous and Scottish rockers **Nazareth** Dec. 9 at Le Rendez-vous. **Parachute Club** has added a second show at Le Rendez-vous Saturday.

MORE ENTERTAINMENT/35

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