

Everything is Happy Underground

by Ben Christie



Ahh, nothing like a little bit of **Radiohead** news to help us count down the days until they arrive on our golden soil. Thom Yorke's middle finger appeared up for auction on eBay last month. "What!" you say. Well, not literally his *middle finger*, but the middle finger from his NME award. Yorke broke off the finger from his award after receiving it because he found it 'offensive' (Jonny Greenwood, who was with him at the time, did likewise). A fan, who had got a hold of it from a friend who witnessed Yorke break the award, sold the odd piece of Radiohead memorabilia at the hefty closing bid of 248 quid.

'Loud', 'seminal', 'inspirational' and 'enigmatic' are some adjectives that are heavily associated with the band **My Bloody Valentine**. So are 'secretive' and, well, 'lazy'. While there's no need for us holding on to any hopes of a new MBV album in the near future (although front man Kevin Shields' contributions to last year's excellent *Lost In Translation* soundtrack was close enough), what we can look forward to this year is a major re-issue of their numerous EPs, along with some rarities, on a two-disc set. The *You Made Me Realize*, *Feed Me With Your Kiss*, *Glider* and *Tremolo* EPs will feature on the first disc, while the second disc features six previously unreleased

tracks, plus both sides of the hard-to-find all-instrumental 7" that came with initial copies of their *Isn't Anything* album. And all the tracks are lovingly remastered, so yeah, while it's not quite new material, it's still very exciting news indeed.



Someone who does have some belated new material in the can is **PJ Harvey**, who hasn't put out anything new in nearly four years. On what will be her sixth studio album, Polly Jean handles most of the instrumental duties (with Rob Ellis helping out on percussion), and tackles the much of the producing, mixing and recording under the aid of long-time producer, Head. But those who enjoyed the lighter, accessible tones of *Stories From The City*, *Stories From The Sea* are in for a nasty shock. "It's a much more simple, rough, raw-sounding record," Harvey hints, "It's brutally honest, there's not a lot of beautifying of anything. Quite an ugly sounding batch of songs. Quite disturbing, quite dark, quite bluesy."

Oh **Courtney Love**, what have you done now? Still awaiting a verdict for her various charges from last October, she has already managed to add to her extensive criminal record after one eventful night in the Big Apple. During a secret gig at the small Plaid nightclub (following an appearance on *David Letterman* during which she bared her chest away from the camera), she recklessly threw her mic stand into the audience, hitting and injuring a 24-year-old man. She was then charged with reckless endangerment and third-degree assault. While that did not stop her from carrying on with her headlining show at the Bowery Ballroom the

following night, it looks as if we'll be seeing more of her in court (that is if she bothers to show up and behave herself in the process) rather than on stage this year.

Well, the people of Detroit certainly got a surprise after Bob Dylan breezed through the last of three shows he did in the Motor City last month.



During his final encore, **Jack White** appeared out of nowhere and helped Dylan throughout a cover of the White Stripes' "Ball and Biscuit".

TOUR UPDATES

In what has so far been an amazing year for international sensations touring our land, it's looking to become more surprising and exciting as it goes on. None other than **Sonic Youth** have chosen to launch their forthcoming album here in June before anywhere else. The indie rock pioneers haven't been here since late 1998, so I'm sure the tickets will sell out fast. And they'll be bringing some company – in the form of regular visitor **J Mascis**.

The Get Up Kids last toured here in early 2000 as special guests for Jebediah, making themselves more familiar to us in the process (we can also credit the mighty Jebbs for helping break Jimmy Eat World and Idlewild here). Now with their very impressive new album *Guilt Show* in the stores, they're making a long-awaited return trip at the end of this month. Coming along for the ride is label mates **Saves The Day**. Emo kids, unite!

The sounds of Californian underground darlings **Granddaddy** have been hovering around in our minds for the last few years, thanks in part to Triple J's strong endorsement of them. But they've never found the time to tour Australia – until now. They will arrive around May, and in the meantime get yourself familiar with their gorgeous new album *Sunday*, which one critic described as sounding like a cross between Gram Parsons and the Alan Parsons Project(??).



If good-time garage rock is your perfect compliment to a good night out, **The Von Bondies** are worth checking out when they touch down this month.



Alternatively, our boys **Rocket Science** make their big live comeback over the next few weeks as well. Direct all comments/encouragement/criticisms/suggestions/death threats/love letters etc. to benjysponder@yahoo.com.au.

April Playlist:

1. John Frusciante – *Shadows Collide With People*
2. The Von Bondies – *Pawn Shoppe Heart*
3. Sigur Ros - *Ba Ba Ti Ki Di Do EP*
4. The Vines - *Winning Days*
5. Snow Patrol - *Final Straw*



Progressive Music and Beyond

A discussion with Ivan Bertolla

Merging Classical Music Into Electric Guitar

This month I wanted to introduce some picking techniques based around some of the music I have written. There is nothing new in using classical type techniques and ideas into electric guitar, but I thought it would be useful to bring up an exercise this month. You can use it purely as a warm up piece or a device to determine how tight your playing is. The above example is an excerpt from my CD "Beyond The Skies Eternity". The melody is in fact a string arrangement for just a violin ensemble, which

I have now transcribed to electric guitar. It is rhythmically simple but technically difficult when played at the correct speed.

The beginning phrase is written in the key of E minor and is rather difficult because it involves doing alternate picking, jumping between the E and B strings. Since I have included the chords underneath the guitar line it would be very beneficial to get a friend to play the accompaniment on either piano or rhythm guitar so that you get an idea of how the piece sounds.

It is a very simple idea and well-known chord progression and idea. So I think you will enjoy it very much. Make note of the huge position jump when you play over the Bsus4 chord. This section is very challenging because you will notice that it is

difficult to play notes without overlapping the previous note. So a lot of work needs to be done on your posture and how you use your palm in your right hand. Refer to my previous articles on how your right hand posture should be. The real challenge is playing over the last diminished chord section at the end. I think those of you who are advanced players will find that challenging as well at the written speed. Be sure to make it articulate, clean and without leaving noise behind from previous notes. I know that my private guitar students love playing this. So would love to hear how you all went with it. I would like to very much thank the people who have sent me emails supporting more of these type of articles.

Until next month ..Have fun with this. Stay progressive!

Ivan Bertolla is a Melbourne based composer/producer/guitar instructor who has released his debut CD worldwide of cinematic music "Beyond The Skies Eternity". He runs Mastermind Productions and Macleod Guitar School and can be contacted at his web site www.bertolla.com

130 Eminor Dmajor

Cmajor Bsus4 Bmajor

Eminor Dmajor

Cmajor Bdim