

**BOWIE  
TALKS**

**PLUS: STEVE MORSE • SHEILA E. • THE FIXX**

# MUSICIAN

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## DAVID BOWIE

*Under Pressure:  
Ziggy and Iggy Defend Tonight.*

*by David Fricke*

**ANDY SUMMERS  
ROBERT FRIPP**

*A Cop & a King on the Lam*

**YOKO ONO**

*The Artist in Her Own Write*

**HOME RECORDING**

*Part 2: Low-Tech Fundamentals*



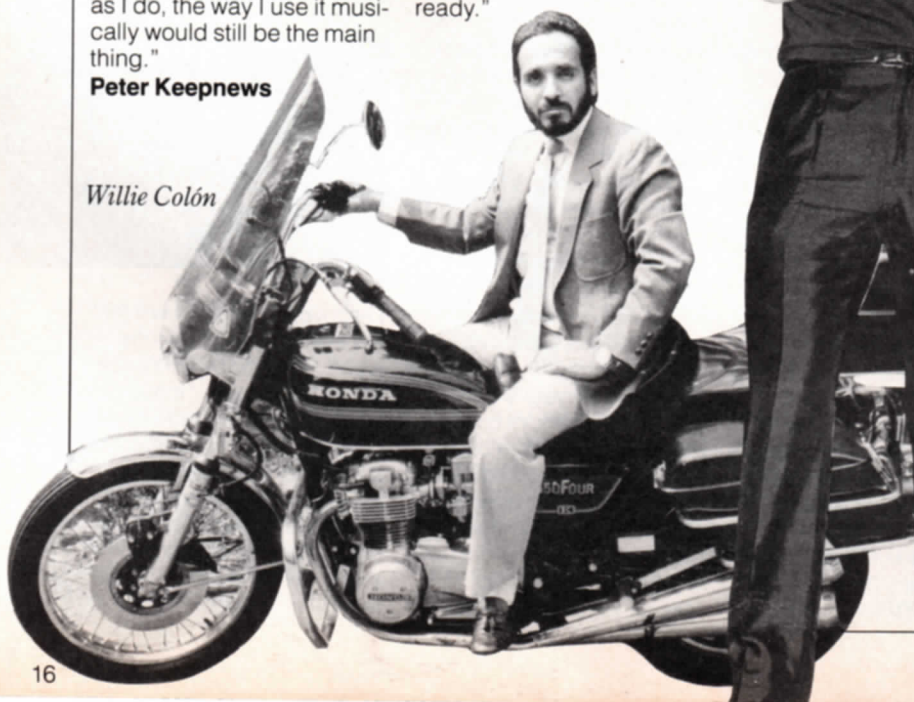
the instrument, he has developed a way to play counterpoint by using each hand independently to hit the strings against the frets rather than picking or strumming—although he does pick or strum occasionally for rhythmic effect. Performing unaccompanied, his dazzling array of sounds creates the pleasant impression that he is duetting with himself.

Jordan is a 1981 graduate of Princeton, where he studied composition and electronic music as well as guitar. He released one album on his own label but was virtually unknown when he appeared unbilled at a Kool Jazz Festival concert in New York this summer and wowed crowd and critics with a fifteen-minute solo set. Now he's signed to the newly reactivated Blue Note label, with an album due in January.

Jordan acknowledges his guitar neck-playing is not unique—Eddie Van Halen, he notes, uses a similar approach—but he maintains that no other guitarist uses it as extensively as he does. And he makes another point: "Musically, I think I'm an original player. It doesn't just have to do with the technique; it's the music that got me interested in developing the technique. Even if somebody understood the technique ten times as well as I do, the way I use it musically would still be the main thing."

**Peter Keepnews**

Willie Colón



## RUBÉN BLADES AND WILLIE COLÓN

### *The Beat Goes North*

We have twenty million people here. You can no longer ignore the Latin presence in this country." So says Panamanian singer/songwriter **Rubén Blades**, whose Elektra Records debut, *Buscando América* (*Looking For America*), may be the first step by a major label toward recognizing Latin pop music.

Blades' former collaborator, **Willie Colón**, may represent the second step. Colón just released *Criollo*, his debut album for RCA.

"A lot of the major labels are looking at salsa now," Colón explains. "The numbers look interesting to them." Interesting indeed. Colón, "el Malo," came to RCA with impressive South American sales figures, including one platinum and nine gold albums. But the majors also want to build an Anglo audience for salsa. "It's been permeating jingles," Colón continues. "All of the rock bands have congas and Latin percussion. It's been seeping in slowly, but the American non-Spanish-speaking public is ready."

For Bruce Lundvall, the former Elektra president who signed Blades, *Buscando América* "was a test case, but the results so far are commendable." Although the album initially shipped under 10,000 copies, it has sold over 70,000, Lundvall says. More importantly, Elektra's dive into the Latin market reflects Lundvall's belief in Blades as a major artist irrespective of style. Now president of Capitol-distributed Manhattan Records—where he expects to sign other Latin artists—Lundvall admits Latin music is "a very specialized market for a general rock 'n' roll/black music (record) company.... It'll take time before a company like that will really know the Latin market." Latin artists seem eager to

*Rubén Blades*



leave the *barrio* of Fania Records, which until now has held a virtual monopoly on salsa artists. "Fania is a bodega acting like a record company," Blades says. "It's a contradiction: North American labels will be the ones to

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### *Audiophile But Not Compact*

Chances are someone on your Christmas shopping list will appreciate **The Rolling Stones**, the latest coffee-table boxed LP set from Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab. This "Limited Edition Library of Original Master Recordings" houses eleven Stones albums recorded between 1963 and 1969; two of those discs form a compilation album, half of which reprises material from the other records. And it's all yours for \$250.

Now that the laser-read compact disc has established itself as the audiophile medium, one might question Mobile Fidelity's continuing commitment to analog records. Senior vice president Mark Wexler admits the CD has challenged conventional audiophile records for sonic excellence. (Mobile Fidelity markets CDs themselves, but the company wasn't licensed to release the Stones set in that format.) He argues, however, that "a lot of our selections aren't available on compact disc at this point." Also, there's the investment factor: Mobile Fidelity's similar boxed set on the Beatles, issued two years ago, has been known to change paws for upwards of twice its original price. Can the Franklin Mint make such a claim?

keep Latin music alive."

It makes sense for Blades and Colón to lead the way in expanding the audience for Latin music. Both have broken away from traditional, folkloric salsa, which has remained static since it was first handed down by the Cubans in the 1940s. "I was born here," says Colón, a native of the Bronx. "I grew up on rock and the Beatles. I use all of the different sounds around me."

Like Bob Marley, the man who popularized reggae in the U.S., Blades and Colón are social as well as musical figures. Colón describes their ground-breaking 1979 collaboration, *Siembra*, as "a unification message to Latin America." Yet Blades insists he is not a political singer: "A political singer sings to an ideology. I write city songs about people whose lives are affected by political circumstances."

What's in store for Latin music in this country? Colón, whose first language is English, foresees salsa with English lyrics. Blades is indeed planning an album in English, possibly to be produced by influential fan Joe Jackson. Currently, though, Blades is getting a master's degree in international law at Harvard. He intends eventually to return to Panama to seek political office. And for Colón? "Maybe an album with Michael Jackson, some duets with Willie Nelson," he jokes.

Stranger things have happened. — **John Leland**



### Those Oldies But Goodies

The **Flying Lizards**, who did a swell demo (as in "demolition") job on "Money" five years ago, are back with a vengeance. On *Top Ten* the group—David Cunningham with vocalist Sally—deconstructs "Sex Machine," "Tutti Frutti," "Purple Haze," "What's New Pussycat" and six other biggies. Great for parties, especially when you want to end one.



*No, it couldn't be... could it? But it is: Lou Reed smiles. He may look like he's hosting a TV quiz show, but the occasion was a poetry reading in Toronto. Jim Carroll, who shared the lectern, convinced his friend and idol to mumble song lyrics indifferently. Reed's last reading, also with Carroll, was in 1974. The line forms now for the Doomy Duo in 1994.*

## JIMMY JAM & TERRY LEWIS

### *It's (Almost) Jam-Up Time*

If Prince is the focus of Minneapolis' musical earthquake, keyboard player "**Jimmy Jam**" Harris and bassist **Terry Lewis** must be near the epicenter. Since leaving the Time last year, the two have become pervasive producers, working with Klymaxx, the S.O.S. Band, Change, Cheryl Lynn and Cherrelle. Recently they were in Los Angeles to finish two projects: Thelma Houston's next album, and Minneapolis buddy Alexander O'Neal's first.

"We always figured that we'd start producing when we got older," Harris says during a mixdown break. But he and Lewis haven't abandoned the other side of the studio. After helping out former Time-mate Morris Day with his first solo recording and writing the tunes for the second Cherrelle album, the dynamic duo will finally

finish their own LP.

"Our own stuff is top secret," Harris remarks. "It'll be more off the wall than what we're doing with other people, but it'll still be commercial, 'cause hearing your records on the radio is what it's all about. We've been slowly laying down tracks over the past few years, 'cause we know people are gonna compare it to the things we did when we were in the Time. That was a great band and we don't want to let anybody down, least of all ourselves."

What can we expect? Harris isn't giving anything away, but he reveals that he and Lewis usually start with a melody, adding lyrics (mostly by Lewis) and percussive doodads later in the mix.

"Rhythm is important," Harris says, "but lots of the records out these days wouldn't be much if you took away all the drum effects. I may be old-fashioned but I like a melody you can hum." — **j. pfunk**

## Obscene And Not Heard

For Graham Cheadle, England swings more like a noose than a pendulum. In early September, police, acting on an obscenity complaint, raided his record store in Northwich, Cheshire, and seized albums by the Dead Kennedys, Crass, MDC and Icons of Filth, among others. Cheadle forfeited stock of seventeen titles and had to pay court costs when a judge ruled the records were obscene. He is appealing the verdict.

Crass Records, who provided legal assistance to Cheadle, feel that politics, not four-letter words, are upsetting the authorities. Cheadle argued in his defense that the police passed over records by Iron Maiden and Frankie Goes To Hollywood that could be considered equally "obscene." Record retailers throughout the U.K. are understandably upset, fearing they could be next to lose their supplies. The British Phonographic Industry was asked to investigate the case.

But don't worry; it can't happen here



Now here's a comeback: **Mamie van Doren**, the B-movies' answer to Marilyn Monroe. Mamie's 1950s experience with rock 'n' roll in B-movie masterpieces like *Untamed Youth* and *Vice Raid* has led to a return to recording activity with a twelve-inch dance single, "State Of Turmoil," and an album to follow. The stuff of oedipal fantasies at age fifty-one, Mamie is riding the 50s nostalgia wave that aided **Ronald Reagan's** career.