



RAW POWER

THE BEAT OF THE STREET

BY KATHERINE TURMAN

When I interviewed **Robyn Hitchcock** not too long ago, he hit the proverbial nail on the head: Each and every one of us has a separate antenna that picks up certain things...or, in other words, there's no accounting for taste. So while my antenna may not be tuned in to receive **Roxy Blue** or **Def Leppard** (any more), it's sure been busy swiveling around to catch some interesting stuff—(do yourself a favor and check out **Barkmarket** for a very visceral, industrial-tinged assault).

Anyway, I've been spending an inordinate amount of time at **Raji's** in Hollywood lately (maybe 'cause the booker's antenna shares my wavelength?). That club has had some way-cool bills recently—ranging from **Raging Slab** and **I Love You** (two of the most wondrous bands currently in existence; I even paid full admission price—that's how much I like 'em) to **Dead, White and Blue** and **Kyuss** (ditto) to **Eleven** (ditto, and woefully underexposed). Plus, **Raji's** rules for two other reasons: its **Funhouse** pinball game and its proximity to **Dos Burritos**.

Speaking of burritos, I took the junket train (along with half the bands in LA, including **Johnny Crash**, **Rhino Bucket**, **House of Lords**, **Kik Tracee**, **Dramarama**, **Bangalore Choir**, **Bang Tango**, and **East of Gideon**, among others) down to Tijuana for the recent opening of the **Hard Rock Cafe**, and ended up making tons of new friends, as well as getting to see who performs best while under the influence. Interesting... (Monies raised from the event went to the

T.J. Martell Foundation.)

But onto the part of this column you've all anxiously been awaiting: tapes (and my heartless, unfair, mean-spirited dissing of 'em): **Setting Sons'** new tape is a three-song affair that's more melodic and pop-oriented than previous efforts, and it suits 'em just fine. The soaring production and lilting feel of "Easier Said Than Done" is great, while the catchy "Goodnight St. Jane" is a sure sing-along feast. Contact their attorney, **Jeffrey Light**, at (213) 205-8340.

From Georgia comes **Michelle Malone**, who was described as a cross between "**Patti Smith** and **Paul Westerberg**." I quickly popped the pup in the player to find that she's more, well, streamlined and gentle than either of those artists. Malone had a deal (and a **Lenny Kaye**-produced disc) on **Arista** last year, but she's now on her own. Although the material (sparse, edgy, and passionate) didn't blow me away (granted, it might be one of those **Cowboy Junkies** things where you have to be *in the mood*), her voice is pure and gutsy, and it's clear she could go far. This tape is another link that proves there are (finally!) some cool female rock singers coming up at the moment (**Tori Amos**, and the sure-to-be forthcoming success of **Carrie Hamilton & the Neighborhood Dogs**). Anyway, Malone's recent scheduled LA gigs were postponed, due to rioting, but for more info, contact **Patti de Vries** at **Sony Music**: (212) 445-3665.

And I really dig the new **Nag Nag Nag** demo. The **Dean Chamberlain**-produced quintet of songs is like



House of Lords regrets swallowing the worm during its recent (under the influence?) performance at the new Hard Rock Cafe in Tijuana

a more aggressive, raw **Cheap Trick**, with a dash of underground **Dramarama** thrown in for good measure, maybe. Cool vocals from **C.J.** and some just plain ol' hard-rockin' passion, plus some of that all too often elusive energy and freewheeling enthusiasm. Picks to click? "Charmed Life" and "When You Sweat." Major possibilities. Contact the Nagsters at: (213) 656-4079.

In case you hadn't heard, **Rage Against the Machine** recently inked with **Epic Records** and has already started recording up in Canada with engineer **Ronnie Champagne** (who wrote a well-received guest column on the death of rock 'n' roll here last year).

Our apologies to **Sister Smack**, whose contact number was incorrect in the last **Raw Power** column; the correct line for this death-like, gloom band is: (818) 503-7571.

Finally, I've been getting calls from many talented musicians who are outta gigs and looking for new ones. Unfortunately, what usually happens is I know a glut of drummers if it's a singer they need at the moment or vice versa. But keep calling, 'cause I'll make a match somehow one of these days! ■

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