

THE SPEAKEASY

The Valentine Issue



Hello Again Friends, Family, Fans and Readers-We-Hope-To-Become-Friends-and-Fans! Welcome to the Valentine Issue of the Speakeasy! In recognition of this, albeit Hallmark, holiday, we have included an article by Yoko Kusama reminiscing about her meeting with a bassist she loves; also featured, an article by Liz Walker asking: whatever happened to the mixtape, the ultimate musical expression of love... and patience. And, as you know, featured in every issue, we let guitarist Peter Hodes introduce you to a new piece of musical equipment that he loves in his column "Pete's Pedals!!" In addition, our "Flashback" column will bring you along

on our reflection of our first international experience-- Germany 2007: The Poor, But Sexy Tour. Finally, as always, we'll include a quick sidebar noting the 'Albums We're Loving Right Now' - those CD's that are currently getting played, replayed, and overplayed in our cars and on our iPods. We hope you'll enjoy this newsletter as much as we enjoy putting it together - and if you have any suggestions for future articles and/or columns, or want to be a Guest Contributor of an article or column (music-related of course!), please let us know by sending us an email at eversojake@eversojake.com, or visit our blog at eversojake.blogspot.com

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*"I said, Welcome! to my real world, where your
roses only die once they're given" --Dreamer*

Revival of the Mixtape: The Thoughtful Playlist

By Liz Walker

"First of all, you're using someone else's poetry to express how you feel. This is a delicate thing." -- High Fidelity

So I sat down the other day to make a workout mix and found myself creating what I believe to be a pretty kick ass mix of older and newer hip hop and rap tunes that might offer that little extra "umph" I need when climbing that revolving staircase sent up from the depths of hell to my local gym. While I thoroughly enjoyed putting raunchy song after angry song after more raunchy song on my "Pre-Beach Workout Mix", the exercise was vaguely reminiscent of my junior high days. Sitting in my bedroom with my pink Radio/Double-Cassette Player... desperately

trying to time my start/stop, play/pause to make my finished mixtape sound as professional as possible. With every "older" song I screened for my workout mix, I found myself immediately transported back to high school, or college, or the pool, or the gym, or the road trip. Which got me thinking: whatever happened to the beloved mixtape?

Now, obviously, I realize that cassette tapes are artifacts of the days of yore – back when people actually said "yore" outside of the expression 'days of yore' – and now the more proper phrase is likely, the 'mix-CD' or the 'playlist'. I get that. But still, the idea seems to have gotten lost along our journey to a more technologically advanced and, therefore, more instant-

gratification musical world. I also realize that we still make playlists and burn CD's; however, it's somehow less romantic, don't you agree? As noted on the Web Diversions blog in the post entitled: "The Lost Art of the Mixtape: Maybe Not So Lost After All?" it is opined that perhaps what made the mixtape such a beautiful piece of lost art was "the knowledge that someone spent 90 minutes or so sitting on the floor in front of their stereo thinking of you instead of dragging and dropping some files in iTunes in 15 minutes. Maybe it's just the warm glow of analog. Either way, it just ain't the same."

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Albums We're Loving Right Now



Sharing with you what is playing non-stop on our iPods and in our heads...

Liz:

"Magic Potion" by The Black Keys

Dennis:

"Live in Amsterdam" by James Hunter

Yoko:

"Lay It Down" by Al Green

Pete:

"All Night Long" by Junior Kimbrough

A Chance Encounter with Donald "Duck" Dunn: *Candy Apple or Bust!*

By Yoko Kusama

In November 2008, Dennis and I had the unbelievable opportunity to meet the legendary Donald "Duck" Dunn and Steve Cropper at a Booker T & the MG's concert. They were extremely gracious and friendly and invited us backstage. Donald "Duck" Dunn even let me play his signature Lakland bass!

Donald "Duck" Dunn has influenced so many music genres for over forty years, primarily as the groovemaster with the Grammy-winner Booker T. & the M.G.'s who became the house band for Stax Records. Their sound epitomized the culture of Memphis rhythm and soul, gospel, and southern blues during the 60s and 70s. "Duck" Dunn's "feel and groove" sound and riffs inspired and influenced so many bassists. I, for one, remember playing over and over again recordings of Otis Redding, Sam and Dave, Albert King, etc. so that I could learn the "Duck" styles. My fondness for soul music, especially the Memphis sound, was definitely shaped by "Duck" Dunn.

So, to meet one of my bass heroes was very gratifying as this encounter validated my long-held belief that "Duck" is a very modest, southern gentleman behind that gritty, funky groove!

"Duck" Dunn's original sound comes from a '58 Fender Precision bass. In the late 90's, Fender produced a limited edition signature Precision Bass, similar to his original Fender with humbucking pickup and vintage hardware, but with a custom-candy apple color, which "Duck" preferred.

Between 2002 and 2004, Chicago-based Lakland



Yoko playing one of her Lakland basses in Altes Lager, Germany 2008



Yoko and Dennis with Donald "Duck" Dunn and Steve Cropper

issued a limited edition signature Donald "Duck" Dunn model. It was also modeled after "Duck's" original Fender bass. In late 2004, Lakland began marketing a wonderfully lighter (with good weight distribution) version of its earlier model with a narrow jazz neck that met Duck's complete approval! "It was such an honor to be working with one of the original architects of the bass line," stated Dan Lakin, Founder and CEO of Lakland. The newer Lakland model uses Lakland pick-ups that allow the tone to be opened up to a wider frequency range. The trademark "punchy yet round sound on the bottom with a brighter sound on the top" is even better - perfect for playing R&B and soul. "Duck" continues to play his candy apple Lakland bass on his tours and live performances.

I told "Duck" that I own a Lakland "Duck" Dunn bass -- but in teal. I believe that he was a bit confused -- I guess that it is sacrilegious to play anything but the candy apple!



PETE'S PEDALS!!

Ode to that Cute Little Pukey Green Tube Screamer

By Peter Hodes

Greetings everyone out there and hope you are all staying warm and cozy.

It's been a real cold one in the Windy City. With record snow falls and minus degree temperatures I try not to venture out as much as I usually do, except of course to go to work, play with my favorite band EversoJake, and seek out a new guitar show in town!

I hope you all enjoyed my article last month on my brand new Gibson Johnny Winter Firebird replica.

This month I'd like to introduce all of you to that ever so cute little green pedal that Johnny uses to get his cool overdriven sound. Just listen to his rendition of Bob Dylan's "Highway 61 Revisited" and you will hear what an Ibanez Tube Screamer can do with a Firebird and a tube amp.

Since the 1970's every serious rock and roll guitarist has used Ibanez's Tube Screamer overdrive pedal. I've played with an original vintage tube screamer and also used some of Ibanez's later models.

Let me tell you that the original still remains the king. It has a level control, tone control and drive control. I find that you can get a very 70's tube-y Hendrix sound with the level and tone controls way up and the drive set to

zero. With the drive all the way up you can obtain that creamy tone that is ever so pleasing to the ears.

Stevie Ray Vaughn relied on the original TS-808 for his trademark juicy strat tone. When he used smaller Fender amps that had natural overdrive he used the tube screamer set clean (low drive setting) with the level up high to push the amp for more distortion. When he played through big clean amps such as his elusive Dumble amp, he turned the pedals' drive up more, about 1/2 way, with tone on about 3 and level about 7 to get the classic TS-808 distortion effect.

A good example of this sound with a Fender Stratocaster is the SRV song "Texas Flood." It almost sounds like his amp is about ready to either explode or grow wings and fly!!!!

Unfortunately the remaining tube screamer pedals from the 70's do not come cheap. E-Bay is demanding prices in the range of \$450 to \$600 for these little cuties.

The good news is that Ibanez has recently re-issued the original TS-808. It even looks exactly like the original Holy Grail but does not quite sound the same. The bass response is limited and the gain response is not what it used to be. It also does not quite have that incredible degree of transparency with the drive set low like the original ones from the 70's.

But wait, help is on the way, really!! Robert Keeley Electronics through their special magic has been able to modify the new re-issue tube screamers into time machines from rock and roll's screaming 70's.

Robert and his associates actually upgrade the capacitors and chips in the reissue's circuit to improve upon the much needed sound response. They even replace the resistors and

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PETE'S PEDALS!! ... (Continued)

offer a choice of original Texas Instruments RC4558P chips or vintage JRC4558 chips just like the originals.

How do they sound?

When I was recently at a well known music store in Chicago that sells vintage tube screamers, I compared six different vintage models with my Robert Keeley modified screamer. Only one vintage screamer actually came close to the Keeley one.

The asking price for the vintage screamer was \$650. I decided that my \$245 modified pedal was a fabulous deal, especially in these crazy financial times. And it sounded like Johnny Winter was in the room with me because guess what, I also brought in my Johnny Firebird for the taste test.

Seriously, Robert Keeley is one of the nicest guy's you can ever meet and he has been through a real tough time this year. His facility in Oklahoma experienced a terrible fire about two months ago. The good news is that their operation is almost up to full capacity again and that makes me so happy because I want nothing more than to purchase additional effect pedals from them. They also have their own line of effect pedals and each one has a

The Mixtape... (Continued)

We have all burned CDs for our friends. But how many of us still sit down and take the time to create a High-Fidelity mix for someone we love, either romantically or platonically or familiarly, for that matter? Today's mixes are focused on ourselves: what do I want to listen to during my workout? What do I want to listen to during my dinner party? What do I want to listen to during my road trip to Minnesota? When is the last time we sat down to create a compilation of songs that tells a story, writes a love letter, sends a message through not only the songs chosen, but the order in which they are arranged? And all with one person in mind. An entire effort dedicated to our feelings for another human being - the lucky recipient of our musical blood, sweat and, most often, tears?

But alas, ours is a society that can actually shop for love online. Why take the time to compile a list of songs flowing seamlessly from one to the next when all you really need to do is point and click? Perhaps everything is so easy now that the effort it takes to create a mixtape is simply a waste of our precious, precious time. Of course, a mixTAPE would be a veritable

waste of time given that no one has a cassette player anymore. I submit to you, dear friends, the satisfaction of a well thought out mixtape-turned-playlist is something to be treasured. Perhaps the same satisfaction felt by those in the scrapbooking trade - this being a digital scrapbook, if you will. I choose to believe that the creation of a playlist in my iTunes will not cheapen the task as long as I put the thought into the songs and the order in which I produce them. Something with a theme, a message. Maybe a "help you through a breakup" call to arms for a friend; or perhaps an ode to the lost mixtape, something like an "I've missed you while you were away, dear mixtape" medley with a message in the song titles. Something like:

1. "Consider This" by Anna Nalick
2. "Old Friend" by Catherine Feeny
3. "Can't Stop Thinkin' About You" by Martin Sexton
4. "Forgive Me" by Missy Higgins
5. "Mama You Been on My Mind" by Jeff Buckley
6. "Bleeding Through the Keys" by EversoJake
7. "Wake Up Sad" by Wild Colonials,
8. "Miss you love" by Maria Mena

The Mixtape... (Continued)

9. "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood" by Nina Simone
10. "Message of Love" by Jimi Hendrix
11. "For you" by Bilal
12. "One More Try" by George Michael

If anyone would like to join me in my efforts, I came across an article entitled, The Lost Art of Meaningful Mixtapes, written by Richard Esguerra. He offers the following tips for completing a proper mixtape:

1. Pick a theme, whether it's girls names, types of food or indie rock, you need a solid basis for any mixtape to truly work. (Of course your theme can always be 'Random'!)
2. No songs over 5 minutes or you won't have room for anything else;
3. The most important songs are the first and last -- Pick an upbeat tune with a strong intro to start and a mellow acoustic number to close;
4. Never have the same artist twice. Variety is the key;
5. If you are choosing songs by artist, then chose something obscure, not the most obvious ones. This is your chance to educate people musically, so don't always go for 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' when you could chose 'Lovebuzz';
6. Although obscure is invariably best, mix it up with the odd 'crowd pleaser', your potential listeners won't regret it;
7. If you are making the tape for someone, make sure to be as thorough as possible with the tracklisting. This may be the first and only time they hear this song, so make sure they know what it is. This is especially important if you are trying to impress a 'lady'.

So please, join me in Revival Movement to resurrect the Mixtape turned Thoughtful Playlist. And if you feel like sharing, please visit our blog: eversojake.blogspot.com and share your creations!

Sweet 16 Roadtrip Mixtape Game

- (1) **Collect (via iTunes download), the top 10 billboard chart hits in the year of the 16th birthday of each member of your road trip. Put these in a playlist.**
- (2) **During your road trip, play your collection on shuffle mode.**
- (3) **As the songs play, points go to the person who guesses in whose Sweet 16 year, the song was a Top 10 hit.**

SAMPLE MIXTURE OF SONGS FROM A ROADTRIP WITH MY PARENTS:

- (1) HEY JUDE, BY THE BEATLES
- (2) JUMP, BY KRISS KROSS
- (3) ONE BAD APPLE, BY THE OSMONDS
- (4) PEOPLE GOT TO BE FREE, BY THE RASCALS
- (5) UN BREAK MY HEART, BY TONI BRAXTON
- (6) MAGGIE MAY, BY ROD STEWART
- (7) END OF THE ROAD, BY BOYZ II MEN
- (8) NO DIGGITY, BY BLACKSTREET AND DR. DRE

***extra points to the player who can correctly name the song and the artist**

FLASHBACK: GERMANY 2007 – THE POOR, BUT SEXY TOUR

Journal Chapter Two: What Tomorrow Brought

We began the day at Das Haus where I found Steve, Pete, Dennis & Volker setting up, drinking coffee and eating the food brought in by our Favorite Restaurant. We drank our coffee and generally worried about the performance to come, set lists to be made, the sound mix (as we were playing inside instead of outside, as originally planned), and the potential turn-out. Today is a German holiday, or Holy Day: The Day of Ascension, a "religious" Father's Day called "Vatertag." This holy day is celebrated by a male 'pilgrimage' by bike from town to town, stopping only to drink a celebratory (and mandatory) beer at each town pub.

So: we played our 3 sets and the following occurred throughout and in between: Everyone listened intently. And I truly mean intently. They were a fabulous audience that were genuinely intrigued by the music. We sold 17 CD's and were asked to sign most of them... we made 80 Euro in tips. We signed a "West Coast Choppers" hat--owned by a very drunk and gregarious local fireman, pictured above right. Simone introduced us to the Mayor of Altes Lager! The Mayor then invited us to spend Saturday with him and his friend, Jurgen, who offered to give us a guided tour of Altes Lager and Juterbog! Shortly thereafter, Simone translated that the Mayor offered to take us go-karting at a nearby go-kart track and offered to let us fly with the dragons. Being the enthusiastic and ever-agreeable foreigner that I am, I agreed on behalf of all of us. I then went straight to Volker to translate for me the phrase "to fly with the dragons." Apparently, it involves a parachute of some sort--maybe hang-gliding? Not sure I should have been so agreeable. I really don't have a specific desire to be in the sky outside of a commercial airliner. We'll have to see how that pans out.

After the show, we went to Berlin -- specifically to the Olympic Stadium-- to meet German soccer celebrity: Falko. Falko is a beautiful man! And so gracious! He was a pro soccer player for 17 years, then went on to coach a team in Berlin. He was actually fired from the position only 11 days prior to our meeting. He was very up front (and very cool) about telling us how it was difficult for him to be there at the moment--but that he still wanted to come meet Simone and the band-- kinda' surreal to say the least. The stadium was breathtaking, and it was quite something to see Jesse Owens' name etched in stone. After Berlin, we returned to Das Haus to take down the equipment and then went to dinner at our favorite place again! It was a great time -- full of laughs and drink. We met some people who had been overhearing our conversation. They were from Hanover and Hamburg. They told us they visit Altes Lager every year for Vatertag and to in-line skate the courses at Flaeming Skate (nearby). They also told us they usually expect to overhear some old Russian, Eastern German men--and instead found us: "the opposite" they said. (I think by "opposite" they might have meant "loud boisterous Americans" -- just a guess). They bought us all a round of shots!

After a while Simone and Yoko and her family left for bed and the remainder (Steve, Pete, Lisa, Dennis and I) had another round of shots, one more beer, then embarked upon our walk back to Das Haus! As Steve said, "I am really going to come to miss these long walks home." Tonight's was less "unreal" and more wonderful. The idea of walking was actually an attractive one to all of us and we quite enjoyed the dark scenery. I have to say: days like the two we've had thus far make journaling a quite intimidating prospect. But I'll do my best with the energy I have!



Our New Fan



Olympic Stadium



Falko & Simone



Our favorite dinner spot