

# STREET BEATS

## Mario's music is something to smile about

By Jocelyn Morin  
special writer

Mario Resto, one of the many talented young song writers to perform for pop rock audiences, and Boy Smiling pump good ol' rock'n'roll full of new energy.

This is genuine stuff, folks, all written and arranged by Resto himself. But you won't find his music in mainstream clubs.

"When you play originals, you sacrifice a majority of clubs," said Resto.

Resto's music also has been sacrificed on area radio. His single "Miami (Can We Love Again)" on Atlantic Records has received air play in Alabama and Mississippi. But nary a scratch in Motown.

In the midst of an industry in which artists can go from unknown to superstardom overnight, Resto does not lack ambition or perseverance.

On keyboards is Luis Resto, Mario's younger brother. Luis has recorded with Was Not Was, Helen Terry, The Buzztones, Mitch Ryder, Michael Henderson and Ron Banks. He's also toured with Gladys Knight as well as Was Not Was and Henderson.

Danny McCann, on the Detroit club scene for 25 years, is the drummer for Boy Smiling. Dan Oestrike plays bass and sings background vocals and has toured with Derek St. Holmes (former vocalist with Ted Nugent).

Christal Hamilton covers background vocals and percussion and sings professionally in top-40, rock, jazz and gospel groups, as well as commercial spots.

SO WHAT'S the music all about? On the political side, Resto bounces some lyrical criticism off the media for prying into private lives.

"Starting through our TV eyes  
We go searching for the truth  
Don't make a move, we can see you  
Don't make a sound, we can hear you"

And then there's love. Of love and relationships, Resto said he never tires.

One thing Resto won't do is covers. "I've been writing so long that doing covers really messes my head up. I ask myself, 'Why am I doing this?'"

He said he's been in too many clubs where owners just want people "dancing, sweating, getting thirsty and buying drinks."

**"When you play originals, you sacrifice a majority of clubs"**

— Mario Resto  
singer and songwriter

Resto, 30, got his start just like the rest of them — in the basement. He began playing guitar at 6 and started playing in a band when he was 8.

He studied music composition under William Bolcom, one of the nation's foremost contemporary composers, for three years at the University of Michigan School of Music. Bolcom then promoted Resto's classical guitar playing in New York City via a series of club dates and coffee house appearances.

"I would advise any musician who has any kind of ambition and wants to see what it's all about to go to New York or California," Resto said, "because you see that everybody and his mother is trying to make it, and it makes you want it even more."

AFTER A YEAR in New York, Resto returned to Detroit and played rock'n'roll all over southeastern Michigan. He spent two years doing shows with Norma Jean Bell and the All-Stars.

It was with them that he had one of his best concert experiences.

"People were coming there to listen to music. I mean there wasn't a dance floor, and if you came late, you're standing in line outside."

Now Resto plays live concerts with Boy Smiling and works on putting together another single. On the work-for-pay front, he'll soon start a job writing music for commercials and industrial films at Song Bird Music House.

Also, record companies have been calling him of late, asking him to write songs for several black recording artists.

What next? "Videos," he said. Resto's got his hands into everything.



Members of Mario & Boy Smiling include (top left) Christal Hamilton, Dan Oestrike, (bottom left) Luis Resto, Mario Resto and Danny McCann.

## IN CONCERT

### ● MAYNARD FERGUSON

Maynard Ferguson, trumpeter and three-time Grammy nominee, will be performing Thursday, Dec. 31, at the Dearborn Hyatt Regency.

### ● FLASH

Flash will perform tonight through Thursday, Dec. 27-31, at Juggers, 3481 Elizabeth Lake Road, Pontiac. For more information, call 681-1700.

### ● SEDUCE

Seducer will perform with Impakt Thursday, Dec. 31, at Harpos, 14233 Harper, Detroit. Tickets are \$6.50 in advance (\$8 at the door). For more information, call 823-6400.

### ● SECOND SELF

Second Self will perform Thursday, Dec. 31, at St. Andrew's Hall in Detroit. For more information, call 287-8090

### ● TED NUGENT

Ted Nugent will perform Thursday, Dec. 31, at Cobo Arena in Detroit.

### ● CHARITY ROCK

Ten groups will perform five hours of live music starting at 9 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 2, at Saint Andrew's Hall, Congress and Beaubien, Detroit. Performing will be Before Or After, Scott Campbell, Colors, Funhouse, Jugglers & Thelvis, Junk Monkeys, Last Cavalry, New Barbilutes, Polish Muslims and Tanjant Mami. Special guests will include Bootsie X and Jerry Vile. Master of ceremonies for the event will be Greg St. James of WRIF-FM. All money collected will be given to the parents of a baby with a rare blood disease, helping them cover travel expenses to and from Saint Jude Children's Hospital in Memphis, Tenn.

Admission is \$6 (\$3 before 9 p.m.). Doors open at 8 p.m. For more information, call 287-8090.

### ● ECHO & BUNNYMEN

Echo & the Bunnymen will perform Friday, Jan. 25, at Hill Auditorium in Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$16.50 and \$15 and available at TicketMaster Outlets. To charge tickets by phone call 423-6666.

### ● WHITESNAKE

Whitesnake will perform Saturday, Feb. 13, at the Joe Louis Arena in Detroit. Tickets are \$17.50 and available at TicketMaster Outlets. To charge tickets by phone, call 423-6666.

### ● STING

Sting will perform Friday and Saturday, Feb. 19-20, at the Masonic Temple Theater in Detroit. Tickets are available at all TicketMaster Outlets. To charge tickets by phone, call 423-6666.

## CHRISTIAN

Here are the top-10 songs being played on WUZZ-FM 103.5, a Christian radio station in Detroit.

1. "When the Son Begins to Reign," DeGarmo & Key.
2. "Marvelous," Philip Bailey.
3. "Here Am I, Send Me," Keith Green.
4. "In Your Light," Tata Vega.
5. "Watercolor Ponies," Wayne Watson.
6. "I'll Be Riding With Him," Phil Driscoll.
7. "Devoted to You," Imperials.
8. "I Am Available," Petra.
9. "Humble Yourself," 2nd Chapter of Acts.
10. "No One But You," Leslie Phillips.

## COUNTRY

Here are the top-10 songs being played on WWW-FM 106.7, a country and western station in Detroit.

1. "The Last One to Know," Reba McEntire.
2. "Somebody Lied," Ricky Van Shelton.
3. "Crazy From the Heart," The Bellamy Brothers.
4. "I Can't Get Close Enough," Exile.
5. "Linda," Steve Wariner.
6. "You Haven't Heard the Last of Me," Moe Bandy.
7. "Those Memories of You," The Trio.
8. "Love Me Like You Used To," Tanya Tucker.
9. "She Couldn't Love Me Now," T. Graham Brown.
10. "Do You Believe Me Now," Vern Gosdin.

## REVIEWS

### SCREAMING BLUE MESSIAHS

— Screaming Blue Messiahs

What we have here is a healthy serving of house-shakin' music. Send-the-neighbors-packin' music. Somebody-call-the-police music. Not heavy metal. No, no, no. It's boogie music, party music. Make-me-weak-in-the-knees music.

Serving up the stuff is The Screaming Blue Messiahs, a British trio which, with a few exceptions on this album, seems to understand the essence of house shakin'.

Chris Thompson on bass and Kenny Harris on drums lay down a simple but jagged beat. It is strong but not fancy.

Bill Carter plays guitar and sings in the style to match the quirky,



oddball songs he has written. Most of the LP's 11 tunes are solid but a few are forgettable.

On the album's first side where the pickings are slim, there's a good one called "Bikini Red," a spacey little tune about about a fellow waiting on a no-show, extra-terrestrial date. (Don't be afraid/I only glow like this after midnight). Carter's show off hyper-voicings on "I Can Speak American." These Brits take a shot at us in more than one tune.

Anyway, side two is solid. There's a "I Wanna Be A Flinstone," (WILL-MAA-AAA...), poppin' on the college circuit, and Jesus Chrysler Drives a Dodge," which will really shake the chandeliers. It's good to know He buys American.

The album's final offering is a lovely 1-2-3 number called "(London) Walkin'" (Put on your dress/Put on your rings/Put on all your finest things/And dance to love and life). It slows the pulse back down

### KICK

— INXS

In INXS' latest album, the group tries to answer the musical question: Can a bunch of boys from down under play funk?

You bet your Foster's Lager they can.

"Kick" attacks the premise that funk and rock 'n' roll go together like oil and water. The guttural mutterings combined with a groovin' bass on the opening number, "Guns in the Sky," kicks that notion out the window.

Produced by Chris Thomas (The Pretenders, Sex Pistols), "Kick" delves into various avenues of musical influences and intersects them quite well.

In "Mediate," INXS' lead singer Michael Hutchence sounds like the frontman for RUN D.M.C. Rattles off Hutchence, "Hallucinate desegregate/mediate alleviate/Try not to hate/Love your mate..." Yet the melodic guitar gives this number a very surreal texture.

"The Loved One" is a swaying ballad, full of life and richness. "Devil



Inside" is a pure rocker by any guitar gasher's standards.

"Never Tear Us Apart" is a love song, which Hutchence turns out in a slow yet heartfelt fashion. A haunting saxophone gives this number a soulful edge.

But funk and rock prevail. "Need You Tonight," the song which has received the most air play, is a Prince-like number that showcases all the funk/rock elements at their finest.

At this stage, INXS is a band with undaunted confidence. With this, their sixth album, the Australian act has hooded their sound to a fine art.

No two songs sound alike on "Kick." And INXS succeeds where some other bands fail. After all, just doing James Brown covers doesn't mean you have soul.

INXS reaches down under for it.  
— Larry O'Connor

### BO DAY SHUS

— Mojo Nixon & Skid Roper

Darn, Mojo Nixon & Skid Roper are right. Elvis is everywhere.

Listening to the first few minutes of "Bo Day Shus," it's hard to believe otherwise. Elvis is probably in our jeans, in our moms and in our cheeseburgers like the song "Elvis is Everywhere" emphatically states.

And Michael J. Fox, who Nixon refers to as the "anti-Elvis," is kind of suspicious looking when you think about it.

So understand, these aren't mindless meanderings from a madman gone amuck. Nixon, with his sidickick percussionist Skid Roper, has something meaningful to say about the current state affairs. Or in his case, something meaningful to scream about.

Drug testing, Lincoln Logs, foo-foo haircuts all come under the heading of what's bugging Nixon these days. The problems of today's music is clearly spelled out in one number on the album, "We Gotta Have More Soul."



In "B.B.Q. U.S.A.," Nixon makes a soulful stab of sounding like James Brown and does quite nicely. Nixon shows the true rebel that he is in "Wash No Dishes No More." In this ditty, he makes his proclamation of things he's not going to do, like mowing the grass, paying taxes along with doing the dishes.

An attempt to unravel the major mysteries of life is made in "Lincoln Logs." Asks the song, "What happened to my Lincoln Log?/Momma did you throw them out?/I gotta know."

In "I Don't Want No Foo-Foo Haircut on My Head," Nixon warns the masses about not becoming a prisoner of their hair like Charlie Sexton.

Double negatives accepted, Nixon is perhaps the grand philosopher of our time. You can't help but laugh at his observations.

And we all could use a little bit of that.  
— Larry O'Connor