

# Rockers get their own walk

By Debbie L. Sklar  
special writer

He entered one of metro Detroit's fastest growing night spots bedecked with a pair of black Ray Ban Wayfarer sunglasses ala Jack Nicholson. No doubt, he was on a mission.

Legendary Detroit rocker, Mitch Ryder, made his way through the doors and the vast crowd awaiting his arrival at the Metropolitan Music-cafe recently, to plant his palm in wet cement.

"It's pretty wet and mushy," said Ryder, the first inductee into the Detroit area's first and only "Rock'n'Roll Walk of Fame." He pressed his palms and signed his name.

"Of course, I'm honored to be the first," Ryder said. "Now, I'm ready to go to a Korean massage parlor."

Ryder considered a white soul shooter from Detroit, who reached his peak of popularity in the late 1960s while fronting the Detroit Wheels, still lives in his native city. He's been working on a new album, as well as touring across the country.

"WE WERE out in Montana near the mountains and there was this monstrous storm — the worst they've had this century," he said. "But we still made the show. It was pretty wild."

Ryder had sung with local combos the Tempest and the Peeps before forming Billy Lee and the Riverlars. In 1965, their stage act caught the attention of Four Seasons producer Bob Crewe, who signed them and gave Ryder the name he became famous with (supposedly picked out of a phone book) and christened the Riverlars the Detroit Wheels.

Although he lived in New York for more than two years and had the opportunity to take up residence in Los



Legendary Detroit rocker Mitch Ryder was the first inductee into the Detroit area's first "Rock'n'Roll Walk of Fame."

Angeles, Ryder opted to stay in Detroit.

"My friends are here and this has always been home to me," he said.

The group's first single combined Little Richard's "Jenny Jenny" and Chuck Willis' "CC Rider" into "Jenny Take a Ride," which became a No. 10 hit in 1965, inspiring follow-up medleys "Devil With a Blue Dress on" and "Good Golly Miss Molly." At this point in time, Ryder isn't listening to any artist; he's busy writing his own music.

According to Nino Cutraro, the cafe's proprietor, once Old Man Winter leaves us for good, the two-foot square block of cement will be placed in the sidewalk in front of the

Musicafe. Other blocks will be added to the sidewalk as the list of inductees increases.

"THE ROCK'N'ROLL Walk of Fame is a natural extension of the memorabilia found inside," Cutraro said. "Rock'n'roll superstars will leave their marks here as they have left their marks on modern music history."

"There's no reason why California has to be the only place with a celebrity 'Walk of Fame,'" he said. "Probably, 90 percent of the rockers on the 'Walk of Fame' in Hollywood, are from Detroit."

Cutraro added that he would like to have Bob Seger's along with prints

from Aretha Franklin, Madonna, The Temptations and Glenn Frey.

The memorabilia already on display at the cafe includes an evening gown worn by Aretha Franklin, an outfit worn by Ted Nugent, an outfit worn by Madonna, a pair of gold Porsche sunglasses worn by Michael Jackson and a guitar signed and dedicated at the grand opening in November.

Other memorabilia includes the recently acquired Elvis Presley ukulele, three original lithographs made by John Lennon, one of only 200 guitars ever signed by Lee Paul, and signed guitars from George Michael, Jimmy Page, Stevie Ray Vaughan and J.J. French of Twisted Sister.

## Femmes get back to basics on '3'

By Larry O'Connor  
staff writer

Nearly 2 1/2 years later, the Violent Femmes can be thankful that what might have been never came to be.

After emerging on the alternative music scene in relatively short time with acoustically sparse hits like "Blister in the Sun," the Femmes nearly went bust. The group decided to take a break after their third album, "The Blind Leading the Naked."

A date was never set when to return.

"There were a lot of problems, personal and otherwise," said Gordon Gano, singer and guitarist of the Milwaukee-based band. "People in the group had some differences in what direction they thought the band should go. There were people at odds with one another."

The hiatus proved fruitful, though. Gano didn't fret, spending the time crafting 12 new songs for what later became the band's latest LP, "3" (Warner/Slash).

Without other members not bearing so much as a note, the Violent Femmes entered Carnegie House Studios in Stamford, Conn., to record the disc.

Gano was hopeful his strategy would bring a spark to the Femmes' latest offering — a charge that per-

haps would make the Violent Femmes a cohesive unit once again. It worked.

"TIME HAD a whole lot to do with it," Gano said. "There was a lot of people who could have sat us down and said, 'Everyone is being stupid. Everyone is being crazy. There's got to be a way to work this out.'"

"I don't think we would've been able to do that without a long, long break." The spontaneity sought on "3" was perhaps an attempt to get back to their roots, back to those early days in Milwaukee as teenagers when the Violent Femmes were street musicians.

Back then, Brian Ritchie, Victor DeLeonzo and Gano would strike up a concert whenever, wherever they saw fit. Christie Hynde happened to catch the group's act and invited the Femmes to open for the Pretenders. A debut album followed on Slash in 1983, which later went gold in 1987 (selling more than 500,000 copies).

The Violent Femmes have been a success with a minimalist approach. Whether on a street corner or in a 10,000-seat venue, a pair of acoustic guitars and a drum have been the essence of the Violent Femmes' sound.

At the forefront is Gano, who as a teenage performer once had a ner-



After a 2 1/2-year long hiatus, the Violent Femmes are back again with a new LP, "3."

vous club owner assume legal guardianship so he could play. Basic songs of youth struck a chord with their audience, especially the college set.

If anything, Violent Femmes' songs have gained momentum in popularity through the years.

"I ATTRIBUTE some of that to adolescence," Gano said. "Here you have an 18-year old singing a song about adolescence instead of a 30-

year-old gearing their songs to a younger audience. I think some of the songs capture the sincerity of that."

Songs like "Blister in the Sun" captured the audiences' attention.

The Violent Femmes will perform at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 18, at Hill Auditorium in Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$18.50. For information, call 99-MUSIC.

## IN CONCERT

### HUNTUNES

The Huntunes will perform Monday, March 13, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

### IDYLL ROOMERS

Idyll Roomers will perform Monday, March 13, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

### AND SO ARE YOU

And So Are You will perform Tuesday, March 14, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

### OWAR

Owar will perform with special guest, Slaughterhouse, Tuesday, March 14, at Blondie's, 21139 W. Seven Mile, Detroit. For information, call 535-8108.

### NEW RIDERS

New Riders of the Purple Sage will perform Tuesday and Wednesday, March 14-15, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

### JUGGLERS AND THIEVES

Jugglers and Thieves will perform Wednesday, March 15, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

### ROCK

Rock will perform Wednesday and Thursday, March 15-16, at Slammers in Dearborn Heights. For information, call 565-9290.

### ROOMFUL OF BLUES

Roomful of Blues will perform Thursday, March 16, at Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, north of Michigan Avenue, Dearborn. For information, call 946-5377.

### DIFFERENCE

The Difference will perform Thursday, March 16, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555. They also will perform Friday and Saturday, March 17-18, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

### JODINE RAINCOATS

Jodine Raincoats will perform Thursday, March 16, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

### BLASPHEMOUS

Blasphemous will perform with special guests, The Trip, Thursday, March 16, at Blondie's, 21139 W. Seven Mile, Detroit. For information, call 535-8108.

### ELVIS HILLER

Elvis Hiller will perform Thursday, March 16, at the Dance Club, 1818 N. Main, near 12 Mile Road, Royal Oak. For information, call 589-3344.

### FUNHOUSE

Funhouse will perform Friday, March 17, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Caniff, off I-75. For information, call 565-9760.

### MOTOR CITY ROCKERS

Motor City Rockers will perform Friday, March 17, at Blondie's, 21139 W. Seven Mile, Detroit. For information, call 535-8108.

### NEW BARBITUATES

New Barbituates will perform Friday and Saturday, March 17-18, at Lili's 21, 2330 Jacob, off Jos. Campus, Hamtramck. For more information, call 873-6555.

### SLEEPY LABEER

Sleepy Labeer will perform Friday and Saturday, March 17-18, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

### FIGURE 4

Figure 4 will perform along with Dancing Smoothies Saturday, March 18, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Caniff, off I-75. For information, call 565-9290.

### MARIO BOY SMILING

Mario Boy Smiling will perform Saturday, March 18, at Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, north of Michigan Avenue, Dearborn. For information, call 946-5377.

### SACRILEGE BC

Sacrilege BC will perform along with Savage Steel and Wicked Angels Saturday, March 18, at Blondie's, 21139 W. Seven Mile, Detroit. For information, call 535-8108.

### ROULETTE

Roulette will perform Saturday, March 18, at Jamieson's, 1812 N. Main, Royal Oak. For information, call 547-6470.

### VIOLENT FEMMES

Violent Femmes will perform Saturday, March 18, at Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, north of Michigan Avenue, Dearborn. Tickets are \$16.50. For information, call 99-MUSIC.

### BRUCE COCKBURN

Bruce Cockburn and His Band will perform at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, March 19, at the Power Center in Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$18.50 in advance. For information, call 99-MUSIC.

### BROKEN TOYS

Broken Toys will perform Sunday, March 19, at Blondie's, 21139 W. Seven Mile, Detroit. For information, call 535-8108.

### R.E.M.

R.E.M. will perform at 8 p.m. Wednesday, April 5, at Cobo Arena in Detroit. Reserved seats are \$18.50. For information, call 99-MUSIC.

## COUNTRY

Here are the top 10 songs receiving airplay on WCXI-AM.

1. "Bridges and Walls," The Oak Ridge Boys.
2. "New Fool at an Old Game," Reba McEntire.
3. "There's a Tear in My Beer," Hank Williams, Jr.
4. "I'm a One Woman Man," George Jones.
5. "From a Jack to a King," Ricky Van Shelton.
6. "Don't You Ever Get Tired (of Hurting Me)," Ronnie Milsap.
7. "Baby's Gotten Good at Goodbye," George Strait.
8. "I Wish I Was Still in Your Dreams," Garth Brooks.
9. "Highway Robbery," Tanya Tucker.
10. "Who You Gonna Blame This Time," Vera Goodie.

## COLLEGE

Here are the top 10 songs receiving airplay on WOUX-AM, campus station of Oakland University in Rochester.

1. "Mayor of Simpleton," XTC.
2. "Stand," R.E.M.
3. "Mr. Disco," New Order.
4. "Killing Jar," Siouxsie and the Banshees.
5. "Veronica," Elvis Costello.
6. "Punk Rock," The Dead Milkmen.
7. "Give, Give Me More," Wonder Stuff.
8. "The Great Commandment," Camouflage.
9. "I'll Be You," Replacements.
10. "Into the Groove(y)," Oceome Youth.

## REVIEWS

### STARR STRUCK: THE BEST OF RINGO STARR

Popular opinion is that Ringo Starr's musical career died, for all practical purposes, in the mid-1970s, following two outstanding albums, "Ringo" and "Goodnight Vienna."

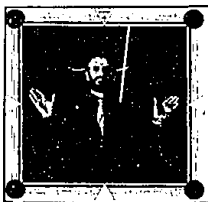
But evidence to the contrary exists on a brand-new Rhino compact disc compilation, "Starr Struck: The Best of Ringo Starr, Vol. 2."

This 16-track CD, of course, may be for Beatle completists only. But it contains several rare and unreleased nuggets, which only point out the prevailing anti-Ringo bias among U.S. radio programmers and record labels — the latter which, until now, decided not to touch the ex-Beatle's music since a 1981 album, "Stop and Smell the Roses."

In fact, some of the best cuts on this post-Apple collection are pulled from "Old Wave," Ringo's 1983 "comeback" that didn't happen.

The set (co-produced with Joe Walsh) was released in October. After listening to the hard-driving hit potential of "In My Car," one can only wonder why it wasn't given a chance in this country.

Other "Old Wave" songs perking up the ears include "Keep Forget It" ("Hopeless" and Ringo's cover of "She's About a Mover"). The other Beatles are showcased on Ringo's latest. The lead-off track, "Wrack My Brain," bears the stamp



of George Harrison all over it. It is a swift-moving Harrison-penned-produced tune from the "... Rosas" album which briefly flirted with hit status in '81.

Paul McCartney contributes two other tracks from that underrated Boardwalk LP, "Attention" and the horn-flavored "Private Property." Combined with "Wrack My Brain," one wonders why nobody took notice of Ringo then, either.

Ringo's then ex-mate, John Lennon, shows up on the partying "Coo-kie (In the Kitchen of Love)" from the 1976 album, "Ringo's Rotogravure."

Some of the drummer's weaker albums ("Ringo the 4th" and "Bad Boy") also are represented on the CD, unfortunately.

Ringo probably will never match the success he had immediately following the Beatles' breakup. But "Starr Struck" at least shows people that he has done some pretty good things in the years since.

— Tim Smith

### BEELZEBUBBA — Dead Milkmen

As Jim Walewander toils away in the Detroit Tigers' minor league camp, he can assess his contribution to major league baseball and be quite proud.

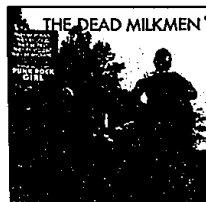
"Wale" couldn't hit a lick, but he made the Dead Milkmen a club household name. Thanks, Jim. This undoubtedly will earn you a Hall of Fame entry on the first ballot.

Yes, the Philadelphia punk group has a winner in "Beelzebubba" (Eagles). Yes, it's funny. Yes, it's perhaps the Milkmen's best offering to date.

Perhaps the Dead Milkmen are one of the last American punk bands. They embody the true meaning of punk music. Like a church softball game, anyone can play.

The Dead Milkmen perform with unbridled intensity. However, there's an alarming trend developing in their music — the Dead Milkmen are actually learning how to play their instruments. A frightening thought, indeed.

Musicianship aside (like maybe to



the North Pole), the Dead Milkmen's forte is the lyrics. Humorous, yes, but the true gift these fellas possess is their ability to get to the heart of the matter.

The Cincinnati on stage and the Cincinnati on vinyl are apparently two different animals. The group seen at the local pub is aggressive and packs quite a wallop. Somehow, somewhere, something is amiss here.

On "Who Goes There?" (Tremor), we wait. We wait for one of the more progressive bands in the area to evolve from something more than a barebones garage rock'n'roll outfit.

Thoughtful and intelligent song subjects can be found as well as meaningful lyrics (There's a need here for printed lyrics). But dressing those numbers up in the guttural guitar sound reminiscent of the late '70s garage scene is the equivalent of plaid bell bottoms and platform shoes.

The meaning of "Industrial Grey," a tune about the massive industrialization of our society, is washed

### WHO GOES THERE? — Cinecyde

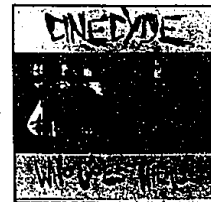
Cinecyde is one of those bands who you see live and say, "Wow." Then you wait for the record and you say, "What?"

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The meaning of "Industrial Grey," a tune about the massive industrialization of our society, is washed



away with continual blasts of guitar. Some songs, like "Love Me, or Leave Me Alone" for example, could be shortened for better effect.

Yet when Cinecyde is firing on all cylinders, it's a force to be reckoned with. "Hojo Man," a song without any deep meaning, really lends itself to the sound of Cinecyde's music.

Perhaps, we're expecting too much. On "Who Goes There?" Cinecyde is probably no better or worse than any other band on the Detroit scene.

But Gary Heichel and the rest of the Cinecyde mates don't seem to be a group that would only settle for that.

— Larry O'Connor