



Members of Big Daddy are the namesake, Big Daddy (from left), Bob (Lighnin' Bob) Wayne, Damon (Nick Deal) De Grignon, Tom (Bubba) Lee, Don (Donny D.) Raymond, Bob (Guido) Sand-

When the Big Daddy croons, '90 tunes have '50s doo-wop

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

To be Big Daddified is to be knighted or to be knifed.

The reaction depends on the artist, according to Big Daddy vocalist Tom "Bubba" Lee whose band parodies today's hits like "Ice Ice Baby" and "Nothing Compares 2 U" in a 1950s doo-wop style.

"A lot of people interpret what we do in a lot of ways," said Lee, who is a 1970 graduate of Bloomfield Hills Andover High. "It's an involved process. It's more than making fun of the music. . . If a song can be done in another style and it still sounds good — that's a compliment to the artist."

But on "Cutting Their Own Groove," Big Daddy's latest effort on Rhino Records, no style of music could prop up such insipid lyrical fare as "Ice Ice Baby" and "I Want Your Sex." Lee knows this, betraying a sinister laugh.

"Sometimes, there's not a lot there. Sometimes we expose them for what they are."

Legend is Big Daddy is a classic 1950s rock'n'roll outfit that went on a USO Tour of Southeast Asia in 1959 and subsequently disappeared after their plane went down.

THEY WERE taken prisoner by Lation communists for nearly a quarter of a century. Another version has them stranded on a South Sea island until they found out how to repair an airplane engine, according to a story in the Stanford (University) Daily.

Either way, the idea is Big Daddy

missed the boat on the evolution of rock'n'roll. Or are they?

When considering hits like "Like a Virgin" (which is hilarious lyrically when Big Daddy gets ahold of the Madonna hit), one might wonder. But Big Daddy also reveals the lyrical majesty of some numbers such as in the 1950s-styled cover of U2's "Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For."

Bottom line is, Big Daddy makes a big point about today's music.

"I think there's a lot of good music being written today," Lee said. "Too much of the emphasis is put on the production and not the song. Usually, when you strip it down to the bare necessities it can be traced back to the '50s."

Lee's musical roots are traced back to this area. He performed in a short-lived band, Citizens, whose claim to fame was opening for the Doobie Brothers at Charlieoix in 1981.

Primarily, though, Lee performed as a solo artist at area nightclubs before moving to Los Angeles in 1982. He has a bachelor's degree in English from Oakland University. His wife, Wanda van den Ende, is a graduate of Avondale High School.

BIG DADDY was formed in 1983 with the nucleus of Marty Kaniger, Bob Wayne and Lee. The band released a single, "Dancing in the Dark," which was a classic remake of Bruce Springsteen's gem from the "Born in the USA" LP. The song was styled, after Pat Boone's "Moody River."

Big Daddy's version rose to No. 16

on the UK charts, eventually passing Springsteen's version on the way down from the No. 1 spot. Things have progressed from there.

The story of Big Daddy, the one being held captive by Lation communists and all, has even found its way to the stage. "Big Daddy: 'Stranded in the Jungle'" will finish its run Wednesday, June 26, at the Groundlings Theatre in Hollywood.

Band members perform in the production as well as professional actors. The story begins at a high school talent show and covers the group after the '50s group is rescued and dropped into the '90s with MTV, compact discs and Madonna wannabes, sort of like "Gilligan's Island" meets "Grease." Big Daddy's first gig back is at a heavy metal club.

"We think it's Club Satan, but it's actually called Club Satan."

Big Daddy's music is finding its mark as well. The latest release is ripe with take-offs of Dire Straits' "Money for Nothing" and the ditty, boy rave-up of Paul Simon's "Graceland."

So far, Lee said, reaction from artists have been positive. Rick James, whose "Super Freak" was Big Daddy, reportedly laughed hysterically after hearing the band's version and snapped up a copy.

THOUGH NOT every performer has checked in with an opinion, Lee wonders what Sinead O'Connor will think of their "Nothing Compares 2 U" effort, which includes the "National Anthem" being played in the

background as a Little Richard singing voice crooning about how "Nothing compares to me."

"Sometimes we're lucky enough to find a styling to put today's songs in the glove of the past."

But in doing so, some might write off Big Daddy as a Sha Na Na rehab. Lee said some have already mistakenly made the comparison.

"They do, but they're missing the book. We're not just a '50s songs band. We take today's songs and do a met amorphous on them."

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

Nearly 600 people responded to our it's a Brevue contest and now it's time to compare the winners.

GRAND PRIZE
John St. Souver of Livonia was a away with two tickets and limousine service to Paul Simon's concert at The New Pines Knob in September.

RUNNERS UP
John Arter of West Bloomfield and Anna C. Chabot of Clawson both receive CD copies of the new Warner Bros. Atlantic.

REVIEWS

INTERNATIONAL POP OVERTHROW — Material Issue

By now, no doubt "Valerie Loves Me" has been registered in the memory bank as an indecible, hook ridden pop song. The kind of number that looks people blindly to the record store, mumbling about some band with a song about some girl on some radio station.

The station in this case is CIMX-FM, which was the first to play "Valerie Loves Me."

If anything, the impact of this power-chord laden song about unrequited love harks back to when a single receiving a glimmer of air play could break a group. Those were simple times back when CKLW-AM "The Big Eight" would spin a new tune and the response was immediate.

Material Issue has 14 songs like Valerie Loves Me, not in the sense of duplicity. Each number possesses that spark, a surge that is stark yet multicolored in its pop fallout.

Brevity is Material Issue's strength. So, too, is the unrelenting guitar buzz and pop musings of Jim Ellison. He has undoubtedly got a tune for every woman who has crossed his path and got away, judging by the open letters of "Valerie Loves Me," "Diane," "Hence He



mains the Same" and "If I Christine." Either that or he should launch into an autographed copy of "Women Who Love Too Much."

Even in the sultry guitar fermentation of "There Was a Few," Ellison is looking for some girl named Lulu. On the slow, yearning "This Letter," Ellison cites a chapter from the Cheap Trick Robin Zander book of waiting for the wayward women of his heart.

These numbers don't speak of sexual conquests, rather, they scan love's twisting ironies. While these can't be written off as mindless meanderings about syrupy infatuations, there's some oddball poetry in the lot.

But wrapped in Material Issue's electric, three-prong, frontal attack, such is easily forgiven. The books on this effort are process, and isn't that what pop is about, anyway?

Larry O'Connor

LAUGHTER AND LUST — Joe Jackson

The first sounds on Joe Jackson's latest record, "Laughter and Lust," are a cacophony of noise kicking off the "Obvious Song." It's jarring and designed to make the listener perk up his or her ears and take notice.

Making the listener take notice is what a lot of "Laughter and Lust" seems to be about.

Having some listeners paying attention is something old Joe could use about now. Since 1979, he has released some of the most consistently good records around, but he has had trouble from record company execs who don't know how to market his stuff. (They do, conversely, have no trouble marketing Vanilla Ice.)

Or maybe it's Jackson's fault for being too good. The record buying public already has a few good Joe Jackson albums — why do they need to buy more?

The most ominous sign of Jackson's career sluggishness is the radio promo spots for his upcoming show. The songs they play on the ad are "He Really Gonna Out With Him" and "Stepping Out" — ancient history as far as hits are concerned.

His bid for approval continues in his song selection. He sticks toward more traditional pop song structures than in past efforts and injects each tune with a healthy dose of catch-



ness.

His ballads, too, are more straightforward than usual. "The Other Me," a perfectly beautiful song, speaks of lost love without Jackson's usual angry, young lyrics.

One odd addition to the record is Jackson's cover of Fleetwood Mac's "Oh Well" — remember — "I can't sing. I ain't pretty, and my legs are thin."

Another oddity is a photo Jackson includes in the liner notes. It shows him wearing makeup, including red lipstick and artfully applied eyeliner, and staring contemplatively at a rose.

For that photo, plus the usual excellent assortment of songs, "Laughter and Lust" is well worth your money.

Jill Humiston

IN CONCERT

- **BIG DAVE AND THE ULTRASONICS**
Big Dave and the Ultrasonics will perform Monday, June 24, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.
- **JANE OLIVOR**
Jane Olivor will perform Monday, June 24, at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For information, call 961-MELT.
- **PARADISE VALLEY JAZZ JAM**
Paradise Valley Jazz Jam Session will take place Monday, June 24, at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit. For information, call 832-2355.
- **ASSEMBLY REQUIRED**
Assembly Required will perform Tuesday, June 25, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.
- **MORRISSEY**
Morrissey will perform with guest, Phranc, 8 p.m. Wednesday, June 26, at Meadow Brook Music Festival Oakland University, Rochester. Pavilion seats are sold out; lawn tickets are \$12.50. For information, call 99-MUSIC.
- **WAYNE TOUPS ZYDECO BAND**
Wayne Toups Zydeco Band will perform Wednesday, June 26, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.
- **THE HANNIBALS**
The Hannibals will perform Wednesday, June 26, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.
- **WEATHER VANS**
Weather Vans will perform Thursday, June 27, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.
- **WATER FOR THE POOL**
Water for the Pool will perform Thursday, June 27, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.
- **SAMARITANS**
Samaritans will perform Thursday, June 27, at Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti. For information, call 485-5050.
- **DIVINYLS**
Divinyls will perform Thursday, June 27, at the Lumin Quarter, 3067 E. Grand Blvd., Detroit. Tickets are \$11.50 in advance. For information, call 966-2438.
- **WAYNE TOUPS & ZYDECOJAM**
Wayne Toups & Zydecojam will perform Thursday, June 27, at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit. For information, call 832-2355.
- **CHRIS KAIN**
Chris Kain will perform Thursday, June 27, at Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, north of Michigan Avenue, Dearborn. For information, call 846-1920.
- **VUDU HIPPIES**
Vudu Hippies will perform with guests, Boom and The Backlit, Thursday, June 27, at Paycheck's Lounge, 2932 Caniff, Hamtramck.
- **BOBBY KING AND TERRY EVANS**
Bobby King and Terry Evans will perform Friday, June 28, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.
- **STEVE KING AND THE DITTLES**
Steve King and the Dittles will perform Friday, June 28, on the Bobo Moonlight Cruise. The cruise departs the Detroit dock 11 p.m. and returns 1 a.m. For information, call 843-0700 or 843-8500.
- **BRAVE NEW WORLD**
Brave New World will perform with guests, Happy Accidents and Shaggy Speed Bump, Friday, June 28, at Paycheck's Lounge, 2932 Caniff, Hamtramck.
- **INCURABLES**
Incurables will perform with guests, The Tommies, Friday, June 28, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2041 Caniff, off I-75. For information, call 365-2829.
- **MINI HARRIS AND THE SNAKES**
Mini Harris and the Snakes will perform Friday, June 28, at Lili's, 2930 Jacob, Hamtramck. For information, call 875-6555.
- **CROSSED WIRE**
Crossed Wire will perform Friday, June 28, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.
- **PIT VIPERS**
Pit Vipers will perform Friday and

- Saturday, June 28-29, at JJ's Pub, 32611 Ford Road, Garden City. For information, call 523-8450.
- **VIV AKALDREN**
Viv Akaldren will perform with guests, Missed in Diary, Friday, June 28, at Finney's Pub, 3965 Woodward, Detroit. For information, call 831-8070.
- **ROBERT PENN**
Robert Penn will perform Friday, June 28, at Moby Dicks, 5452 Schaefer, Dearborn. For information, call 581-3650.
- **CUPPA JOE**
Cuppa Joe will perform Friday, June 28, at Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti. For information, call 485-5050.
- **FISHBONE**
Fishbone will perform Friday, June 28, at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. Tickets are \$10 in advance. For information, call 961-MELT.
- **BOB MARGOLIN**
Bob Margolin will perform Friday, June 28, at Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, north of Michigan Avenue, Dearborn. For information, call 846-1920.
- **RED C**
Red C will perform Friday, June 28, at the Majestic Theatre, 4140 Woodward, Detroit. Cover is \$4. For information, call 833-9700.
- **TRASH BRATS**
Trash Brats will perform with guests, The Generals, Friday, June 28, at The Hut, 17580 Frasho, 10 1/4 Mile Road, off Gratiot, Roseville. For information, call 778-6404.
- **BIG CHIEF**
Big Chief will perform Saturday, June 29, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.
- **FLASHBACK**
Flashback will perform Saturday, June 29, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.
- **RAINBIRDS**
Rainbirds will perform Saturday, June 29, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2041 Caniff, off I-75. For information, call 365-2829.
- **DETROIT BLUES BAND**
Detroit Blues Band will perform Saturday, June 29, at Moby Dicks, 5452 Schaefer, Detroit. For information, call 581-3650.
- **PRIMAL SHELLS**
Primal Shells will perform Saturday, June 29, at Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti. For information, call 485-5050.
- **FRANK ALLISON & THE ODD SOX**
Frank Allison & the Odd Sox will perform Saturday, June 29, at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit. For information, call 832-2355.
- **DARK THEATER**
Dark Theater will perform with guests, Wrath of Christian and Illusionist Steve DeKramer, Saturday, June 29, at Majestic Theatre, 4140 Woodward, Detroit. Cover charge is \$5. For information, call 833-9700.
- **THE LA'S**
The La's will perform with Straightjacket Fitz Saturday, June 29, at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For information, call 961-MELT.
- **MOTOR CITY BLUES PROJECT**
Motor City Blues Project will perform Saturday, June 29, at Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, north of Michigan Avenue, Dearborn. For information, call 846-1920.
- **STEWART FRANKIE BAND**
Stewart Frankie Band will perform Saturday, June 29, at Lili's, 2930 Jacob, Hamtramck. For information, call 875-6555.
- **NEW DELTA ROCKERS**
New Delta Rockers will perform Saturday, June 29, at the Station Lounge, 32413 Michigan Ave., Wayne. For information, call 721-3860.
- **S.A.M. (ANTI-M)**
S.A.M. (Anti-M) will perform Saturday, June 29, on the Bobo Moonlight Cruise. The cruise departs the Detroit dock 11 p.m. and returns 1 a.m. For information, call 843-0700 or 843-8500.
- **STRANGE BEDFELLOWS**
Strange Bedfellows will perform with guests, Voodoo Chai, Saturday, June 29, at Exit Club, 12 Mile and John R., Madison Heights. For information, call 544-1298.
- **KENNY MILLER**
Kenny Miller will perform Saturday, June 29, at the Airport Hilton, 31500 Wix, Romulus. For information, call 292-3400. Ext. 173.
- **THE GEAR**
The Gear will perform with guests, Liarhead and the Splitters, Saturday, June 29, at Finney's Pub, 3965 Woodward, Detroit. For information, call 831-8070.

LOCAL

Here are the top 10 songs on "Detroit Music Scene," which is heard 4-5 p.m. Sunday on WDR-FM 90.9.

- 1 "Charlotte's Web," Fanhouse
- 2 "You Better Run," Chain Reaction
- 3 "Say OK," The Grins
- 4 "Hog Wild," Country Bob
- 5 "Cold Metal," Call Heroes
- 6 "Weight of the World," Dave Rave
- 7 "Running from You," Fook
- 8 "Lost in Space," Grady Hazy
- 9 "Cracked Streets," Thirsty Forest Animals
- 10 "The Immediate Story," various artists

CUTTING EDGE

Here are 10 releases in power rotation on "The Cutting Edge," which is heard daily on CIMX-FM 88.7.

- 1 "Out of Time," R.E.M.
- 2 "Supersition," Sodaie & Bananers
- 3 "Electronic," Electroade
- 4 "Peggy Sue," Jellao Cope
- 5 "Mighty Like a Rose," Elvis Costello
- 6 "The La's," The La's
- 7 "Real Life," Simple Minds
- 8 "The Reality of My," Fishbone
- 9 "Laughter and Lust," Joe Jackson
- 10 "Mama Said," Lenny Kravitz