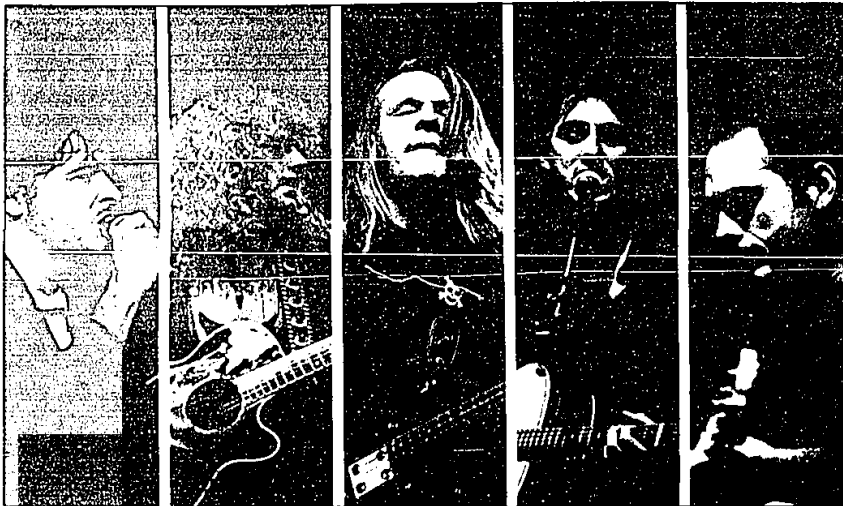


# Street



Fleshing it out: They may call themselves Skelton Crew, but there's nothing lean and bony about the music being produced by Chris Badynee, Scott Christy, Bill Pilipchuk, Russ Epker and Dan Hess. All of their songs are derived in an acoustic setting and encompass elements of folk, rock, jazz and country.

## Nothing lean about this Crew



A five-man band that doesn't have a drummer? For some groups, that may be like going to the beach and forgetting the swimsuit. But not so for the Skeleton Crew. With guitars, a keyboard and strong vocals and lyrics, the group has come up with a sound that is anything but lean and bony.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

According to members of Skeleton Crew, the most formidable task for a band is merely surviving.

This is a group, whose collective resume includes memberships in Bitter Sweet Alley, Cadillac Kids and Second Self, that appears to be preparing towards this goal.

Musically to the five people in Skeleton Crew is not about performing a glut of local gigs or in quest of a bonanza record deal or be tied to some fool.

Rather it's about harmony — whether being in a band, writing music or performing live. A local derivative of Up With People? Hardly.

"We're not pushing anything," said bass guitarist Chris Badynee, 33, who lives in Westland.

This feeling is evidenced in the timelessness of Skeleton Crew's vocal epiphany. All of the songs are derived in an acoustic setting, encompassing elements of folk, rock, jazz and country while being cemented in seemingly effortless

harmonies.

A cursory comparison to Crosby, Stills and Nash would be haphazard, but not without some substance since the Skeleton Crew also performs minus a drummer.

Going drummerless just sort of happened, much like the formation of the band itself. As the story goes, guitarist Scott Christy penned a song a couple of years ago and had friend and former member of Bitter Sweet Alley Bill Pilipchuk do the vocals for it. The two began collaborating on material and then added another former BSA member Russ Epker, who lives in Bingham Farms.

Keyboardist Dan Hess, who was a member of Second Self, and Cadillac Kids luminary Badynee joined 16 years ago.

Skeleton Crew has kept a tight profile, performing a selected number of shows that usually turn out to be rather special affairs.

Gigs have ranged from opening for the likes of Foreigner, Kenny Loggins, the Smithereens and Robert Palmer at Pine Knob or The

Ritz to performing at cozy venues such as the Java Coffeehouse in Rochester. The group has also garnered a reputation for rousing renditions of the National Anthem, performing Francis Scott Key's number at The Palace and Tiger Stadium.

The reason for so few shows? For one, they don't have to perform regularly.

Said Badynee with a laugh, "We all live too comfortably to starve."

That's not to say Skeleton Crew is an exercise in weekend musical muse. The outfit is quite serious about how it tackles its craft.

In the course of a week, Christy will meet with various members of the band to work on material for new songs. Then, they gather collectively to whittle the tunes to perfection.

"We approach a song on a song-by-song basis," Christy said. "If a song calls for piano and a trumpet, then that's what we'll use on it. If it calls for a kazoo . . . we'll use that too."

Encased in flawless harmonies

## Triffid's newest is a wall climber



LARRY O'CONNOR

"Satin rules," screams Kurt Serbus with all the demonic rage he can muster in his toxic-laced larynx on his band's metal release of equally noxious proportion "Touch the Monkey."

Now before parents confront themselves in Church Lady-like facial seizures and start writing letters to get a warning sticker on this six-song CD, that's Satin as in sheets, not in Satan as in the holder of the pitched fork. Get it? We did looking at the song title, leaving the 12 minutes of Serbus gurgling and ensuing grunge ballistics rather unnecessary.

Part of the inspiration for the number is said to come after Serbus saw "Satin rules" scrawled on the wall. He is poking fun at the illiteracy of those behind it.

Serbus and the rest of his Mol Triffid mates (including drummer and Birmingham native Scott Mast) prefer to romp in the darkest domain of the human psyche, sardonically worshipping lenses of schlock in "William Shatner Sleeps on the Eve of the Harmonic Convergence: He Dreams . . ." and "The Devil and Sammy Davis Jr.," while vividly describing the distasteful sights and sounds in "I Wanna See Pretty People Doin' Ugly Things."

But one suspects Serbus' skewed vision wouldn't be half as shocking if it weren't for the gallery of guitar sounds gushing from one Kimu Ball. His angular style of play ranges from enough overpowering grunge to scatter the fray in "Love Mystery" while being sinuous, and alluring, in the opening of "Love, Dave." Ball singularly creates a fort

of sound, which borders on claustrophobic at times.

Six songs of darkness covering 48 minutes fully intends to leave one climbing the walls.

(Available at Schoolkids Records in Ann Arbor or by writing Casting Couch Records, Box 476669, Chicago, Ill. 60622)

"The Color-Line," Terminal White — Another outfit that has a tenuous connection to this area, namely a 12-inch single entitled "Hamtramck" to its credit, Chicago-based Terminal White provides a steady course of jaunty techno-dance numbers on their latest release.

More so, the creative tandem of vocalist and guitarist David Piatral and bassist and keyboard player Phil Rainey appear to have wrestled the techno beast into submission.

Unlike "Worker," which was a mish-mash of techno inspired ideas, this effort is far more focused, using traditional elements of funk, rock and jazz to guide them through. Keyboards are spritely and samples are used sparingly, and as result, more effectively.

The end result are some indelible dance beats, which infest the ear seeking permanent asylum. "Love Is Like Oxygen" is a culmination Terminal White's acute pop sensibilities spurred up by bracing technology and instrumentation.

A number like "This Girl" would sound like the same lame number in any band's repertoire, but Rainey rescues it from the clutches of banality with a jazzy xylophone interlude.

Such deft musical talent almost makes the cartoonish "Alley Cat," featuring an unnamed human punning like a feline, almost forgivable.

(White Records, Box 146537, Chicago 60614)

### STREET SENSE

## What daughter did is acceptable today



BARBARA SCHIFF

Dear Barbara, I am writing this letter in an agitated state. Yesterday, a mother of one of the boys in my daughter's seventh-grade class called me. She said that my daughter had been calling her son at all hours of the day and night and was, in effect, harassing him. She said that her son says that he has not encouraged her and in fact asked her to stop many times.

I am frustrated, embarrassed and angry. I am a single mother and feel totally at a loss as to how I should handle this. Is there a certain kind of punishment you think would be right?

Michelle

Dear Michelle, I do not think this situation calls for punishment. It calls for discussion and understanding.

The phenomenon of young girls aggressively calling boys has become a national epidemic. In the past few years there have been many media stories on it. I assume that you are somewhere between the ages of 30 and 50, the older you are the greater the likelihood that you are uncomfortable with your daughter's behavior.

The civilities while you were growing up would have been very different from the ones your daughter lives with. I, too, remember when calling a boy was a sign of

weakness and/or desperation, besides being just plain bad manners. In those times a woman's role in all areas was different than it is now. For women, coyness and even passivity was admired.

There are no longer admirable traits for many reasons, not the least of which are the high divorce rate and the need to be competitive in the workplace. Surely, the need for women to be independent and aggressive has filtered down to our teenagers.

Your daughter's behavior is within the normal limits of current teenage mores. And at her age, peer group acceptance is appropriately more important to her than your approval or your friend's approval.

You must ask yourself what has greater importance for you — your relationship with your daughter or whether she is acceptable to other adults who, by the way, you have little understanding of.

It is important not to feel frustrated, embarrassed or angry. If the mother who called you intended to make you feel that way, do not let her be an accomplice to your loss of self-esteem. When you talk it out with your daughter, it is important that you understand what she is going through and that you tell her you will support her through these difficult years. This would be a victory for both of you.

Barbara

If you have a question or comment for Barbara Schiff, a trained therapist and experienced counselor, send it to Street Sense at 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

### IN CONCERT

Monday, July 6

**UNCLE CHUNK**  
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.  
996-2747

**PARADISE VALLEY JAZZ JAM**  
Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit.  
632-2355

**MATERIAL ISSUE**  
With Caveados and The Veldt at Indus-try, 15 N. Saginaw, Pontiac. Tickets are \$6.50 in advance.  
334-1999

Tuesday, July 7

**REGGAE SUNSPASH '92**  
With Aswad, Lucky Dubz, John Holt, Bannington Levy, Papa San and Shook with McTommy Cowart at Chene Park, 2600 E. Washtenaw, Detroit. Tickets are \$20 and \$15.  
393-0066

**MAITRES**  
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.  
996-2747

**YUDU HIPPIES**  
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor.  
996-8555

**BELA FLECK AND THE FLECKTONES**  
The Ark, 637 1/2 S. Main, Ann Arbor.  
761-1451

**CHISEL BROTHERS WITH THORNETTA DAVIS**  
Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit.  
632-2355

**ALL (CRUZ)**  
With The Exceptions and My Name at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. Tickets are \$7.50 in advance.  
921-4617

**OSZY OSBOURNE**  
With Ugly Kid Joe at Pine Knob, I-75 and Sashagaw Road, Clarkston.  
377-0100

Wednesday, July 8

**PALACE SUMMERFEST**  
With Rare Earth (7 p.m.), John Kay & Steppenwolf (8 p.m.) and Bachman Turner Overdrive (9 p.m.) at the grandstand area of The Palace, Two Championship Drive, Auburn Hills. Tickets are \$20.  
377-0100

**STEVE SOMERS BAND**  
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.  
996-2747

**MISSIONARY STEW**  
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor.  
996-8555

Thursday, July 9

**CROSSED WIRE**  
With Cinderhead and Holy Cows at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit. Show is part of the Earliest Benefit '92.  
812-2355

**CHAIN REACTION**  
Token Lounge, Middlebelt Road, east of Jay Road, Westland.  
522-0245

**FRANK ALLISON AND THE ODD BOX**  
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.  
996-2747

**WIG**  
With Whasem at Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor.  
996-8555

**THE STORY**  
The Ark, 637 1/2 S. Main, Ann Arbor.  
761-1451

**LATINITY**  
Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti.  
485-5050

**PALACE SUPERFEST**  
With Guess Who (8 p.m.) and John Kay & Steppenwolf (9 p.m.) in the grandstand area of The Palace, Two Championship Drive, Auburn Hills. Tickets are \$6 adults; \$4 for children.  
377-0100

Friday, July 10

**DEAD MILKMAN**  
Phoenix Plaza Amphitheatre, 10 Water St., Pontiac. Tickets are \$7.50 in advance.  
623-2355

**SNAKE OUT**  
Lil's 2130 Canfield, Hamtramck.  
485-6555

**FRANK ALLISON AND ODD BOX**  
Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit.  
632-2355

**THE ERJ**  
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.  
996-2747

**LAUGHING HYENAS**  
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor.  
996-8555

**LOUDON WAINWRIGHT**  
The Ark, 637 1/2 S. Main, Ann Arbor.  
761-1451

**CLAIM TO FAME**  
Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti.  
485-5050

**DETROIT ALL STAR REUNION JAZZ QUARTET**  
Bird of Paradise, 207 S. Ashley, Ann Arbor.  
377-0100

**662-8310**  
**PALACE SUPERFEST**  
With MC Breed (7 p.m.), Co. Ce Peniston (8 p.m.) and Lanier (9 p.m.) in the grandstand area of The Palace in Auburn Hills. Tickets are \$6 for adults; \$4 for children.  
377-0100

Saturday, July 11

**EDDIE 'THE CHIEF' GLEAWATER**  
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.  
996-2747

**BIG DAVE AND THE ULTRASOUNDS**  
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor.  
996-8555

**PARK THE KARMA**  
With Furhouse and Claim to Fame at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit.  
632-2355

**RESTROOM POSTS**  
Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti.  
485-5050

**STRANGE BEDFELLOWS**  
With Weeping Rachel at Lil's 2130 Canfield, Hamtramck.  
485-6555

**DETROIT ALL STAR REUNION JAZZ QUARTET**  
Bird of Paradise, 207 S. Ashley, Ann Arbor.  
377-0100

**PALACE SUPERFEST**  
With Steve Morse (8 p.m.) and Kansas (9 p.m.) in the grandstand area of The Palace, Two Championship Drive, Auburn Hills. Tickets are \$6 for adults; \$4 for children.  
377-0100