

# StreetSCENE

## CUSM delights in its brattiness

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Critic the Unstoppable Sex Machine — the name only hints at the brattiness Jim Bob and Fruitbat are capable of.

"It's not a deliberate thing, but we do like to stir up a little trouble now and then," said co-conspirator Jim Bob in a trans-Atlantic telephone interview. "Like putting up a poster of Jimmy Carter with Carter the Unstoppable Sex Machine name underneath it in New York (on last year's tour with EMF). His office called up and was quite upset about it."

"Anything that winds people up is a bit fun."

Even if it means attracting litigation as CUSM has regarding the use of lyrics from the Rolling Stones classic "Ruby Tuesday." The courts are still trying to sort that one out.

If attention is the sole desire, the London-based band's skittering, breakneck syncopated cross between pop and shards of punk aptly speaks volumes.

A rolling tenor of cynicism underscores a fair amount CUSM tracks on 1992 — *The Love Album*, the band's sardonic attempt to herald in the year of a united Europe. Songs, "Is Wrestling Fixed?" and "Suppose You Gave a Funeral and Nobody Came" enshrine moments of melancholy in a mayonnaise jar

for public viewing.

But Carter is not all bile. By contrast, "England" speaks to an overall restlessness that pervades amid the stagnation of day-to-day life in the economically strapped land of Churchill.

"Look Mum, No Hands" is a poignant — albeit a rather knee jerk — examination of the insanity of paramilitary violence engulfing Northern Ireland. ("He flies through the air with the greatest of ease/That daring young man in the blue dungarees/Struck down by the G-force of a Semtex surprise/He bucks like a sea horse, keels over and dies.")

"I suppose I should have written it years ago," said Jim Bob. "I decided to write it right before we recorded the album with the latest spate of bombings going on in London — that and what was going on in Yugoslavia at the time."

"It's sad. We haven't gotten anywhere in the last god knows how many years. . . . It was sort of a gut reaction to innocent people being killed accidentally through the bombing."

Much of what CUSM performs is an immediate reaction, unedited for profanity and rambling emotion.

Carter the Unstoppable Sex Machine performs Thursday, Sept. 24, at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. Doors open at 9 p.m. For information, call 961-MELT.



**Troublemakers:** With names like Jim Bob and Fruitbat, it's no wonder Carter the Unstoppable Sex Machine is associated with stunts of brattiness.

### STREET SENSE

## Change yourself, not your mother



BARBARA SCHIFF

Dear Barbara, My mother wants to plan my wedding for me. I am 28 and getting married for the first time. My fiancé and I both want a small and elegant wedding. We do not want a lot of people we don't know and like. We both think this is the most important day in our lives and we feel we should have the last word on how things are done.

My mother says that is impossible. We have a large family and many close friends whose special gatherings we have attended for years. She says we must return these invitations.

I don't want my wedding to be a pay back party. I don't want to use this most important day of my life to fulfill social obligations. How can I make my mother understand this. I feel so frustrated that she doesn't.

Jennifer

Dear Jennifer, It is unlikely your mother will change her mind. She is entitled to her point of view although she frustrates you.

You didn't tell me who is paying for your wedding. That is an important detail. If you are paying for it, you can invite or not invite anyone you want. If she is paying for it then she can plan it her way.

It is understandable that in family situations advice like this often seems harsh. When we are infants we control and manipulate our mothers, and that is as it should be, otherwise we could not survive. As we grow and mature we come to understand that we can't always get what we want and that we need to be able to respect the rights of others especially if one of the others is paying for the wedding.

Your question says you want to change your mother. It is inappropriate to change others at any age. It is more mature to change yourself and grow yourself.

May I add a word of advice that you haven't asked for? In all likelihood, differences of opinion between you and your husband will surface during the marriage. Are you going to ask how to manipulate him so you can get what you want or are you going to mature and consider his rights?

In a good marriage, many such problems can be resolved with open communication.

However, there are such things as true dilemmas and some problems are not solvable. Those times will put to a severe test the maturity and wisdom of the spouses. Love is not enough; creative problem solving is also needed.

Barbara

If you have a question or comment for Barbara Schiff, send it to Street Sense, 35251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.



**Logical switch:** As Simon Bonney sees it, going from fronting the avant garde *Crime* and the *City Solution* to country music is a natural progression.

## Bonney swaps punk for country



To hear Simon Bonney, one would think he's from Texas. But not so for this punker turned country wailer. He's from the Land Down Under and he's putting a '90s spin on the traditionally U.S. musical genre.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

The mammoth jump from punk to country is one even Boli Beamon wouldn't contemplate. For Simon Bonney, the leap wasn't as daunting as one would perceive.

In fact, the soft-spoken singer/songwriter will tell you in a reflective moment that it's the most natural path for him to have ventured.

The native Australian fronted the European avant garde conglomerate *Crime* and the *City Solution*, which earned its spurs at the height of music's most nihilistic and rudimentary phase. A host of members flitted in and out while the band released five critically acclaimed albums in the early to mid-'80s.

One of the knocks on Bonney at the time was his lyrics were a tad too serious for a genre largely beset by irreverence. His dexterity and willingness to explore the inner-

depths of pain and sorrow would later become his biggest attribute in his country solo album "Forever."

"That's one of the things I've really come to like about country. It's music written by older people, people like Merle Haggard who can take pain and express it simply in lyrics," said Bonney, who listened to American country music as a kid working on the farm in Australia. "He's using the music to liberate himself from the pain."

"The tradition of music in America is to use it to talk about experience and pain in your life. . . . In England, that doesn't seem to be the case."

So upon leaving England and relocating in Los Angeles, Bonney found a home in country music and it shows on "Forever."

Bonney's sings in a timeless, plaintive tone, sounding more like he's from Mesquite, Texas, than

Melbourne, Australia. His own interpretation of American country comes through in an echoey, desolate landscape created through diverse instrumentation.

This is achieved partly through a haunting, atmospheric guitar sound that resonates throughout the release.

Highly regarded guitarist J.D. Foster performs on "Forever" as does a host of equally lauded musicians that includes Jan-Dee Graham, who performs on pedal steel and dobro, and violinist Bronwyn Adams.

Originally, all through *Crime* and the *City Solution* I'd listen to Hank Williams and Patsy Cline," he said. "But I also listened to the instrumentation of Johnny Cash and people like Ry Cooder. They used it an atmospheric way."

Bonney also credits people like Foster, who has worked with

Dwight Yoakam and Lucinda Williams and who has a keen interest in musical history. He said working with him has been particularly refreshing, especially compared to his punk compatriots who largely vilified the past.

Literally, Bonney has maintained the ability to express woe while disconnecting himself from it by heartfelt analysis.

In the transformation, though, Bonney has connected with rich tradition and has put a '90s spin on it. How much of his musical past — mainly the seemingly European effect of big droning guitars — filters into the fray is debatable.

"I don't know if it's intentional," he said. "I'm not well versed what is correct or what is incorrect in country. I just go for the feel."

*Simon Bonney will perform as part of the Second Annual La Casa Music Festival 7:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 25, at the Birmingham Unitarian Church, 651 N. Woodward, at Lone Pine. Also performing will be Mark Germino, David Rodriguez and Greg Truwer. Tickets are \$15. For information, call 616-4950.*

### IN CONCERT

#### Monday, Sept. 21

**JES GRU**  
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.  
996-2747  
**PARADISE VALLEY JAZZ JAM**  
Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit.  
832-2355

#### Tuesday, Sept. 22

**PRODIGALS**  
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor.  
996-2747  
**CHISEL BROTHERS WITH THORNETTA DAVIS**  
Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit.  
832-2355  
**SPECIAL BEAT**  
Industry, 15 S. Saginaw, Pontiac. Tickets are \$13.50 in advance.  
832-2355  
**MARY MCGUIRE & MYK RISE**  
Mr. B's Farm, Novi Road and 10 Mile, Novi.  
349-7038

#### Wednesday, Sept. 23

**THE CONNELLS**  
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor.  
996-2747  
**REVOLVER**  
With Drop Nine in The Shelter at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit.  
961-MELT  
**THWIST-OFF**  
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.  
996-2747  
**CHRISTIE SLAYER AND LUISD UNIVERSE**  
Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit.  
832-2355  
**SCOTT STERN AND THE TRUST**  
Doug's Body Shop, Woodward Avenue, south of Five Mile Road, Ferndale.  
398-1940

#### Thursday, Sept. 24

**CARTER THE UNSTOPPABLE SEX MACHINE**  
St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. Tickets are \$10.50 in advance.  
961-MELT  
**TANNAHILL WEAVERS**  
The Ark, 637 1/2 S. Main, Ann Arbor.  
761-1451  
**VOODOO HIPPIES**  
With Trustfund at Grif's Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac.  
334-5150  
**WALKY RINE**  
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$5 in advance.  
832-2355  
**HANNIBALS**  
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.  
996-2747  
**MARY MCGUIRE & MYK RISE**  
Hoops, Auburn Hills.  
373-4744  
**ROOMFUL OF BLUES**  
Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, Dearborn.  
846-1920  
**FRANK ALLISON & THE ODD BOX**  
Sully's, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor.  
996-2747  
**FATH NO MORE**  
With Helmet at The State Theatre, 2115 Woodward, Detroit.  
961-5450  
**SHAKESPEARE'S SISTER**  
Industry, 15 S. Saginaw, Pontiac. Tickets are \$10.50 in advance.  
334-1999  
**CROSSED WIRE**  
Lil's 21, 2930 Jacob, Hamtramck.  
875-6555  
**RFD BOYS**  
The Ark, 637 1/2 S. Main, Ann Arbor.  
761-1451

#### Friday, Sept. 25

**BLASPHEMOUS**  
Grif's Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac.  
334-5150  
**J.M. DAVIS**  
Soup Kitchen Saloon, 1585 Franklin St., Detroit.  
259-1374  
**CIVILIANS**  
Cocoon Jos', 225 Jos. Campau, Detroit.  
259-3675  
**ROP HARVEY**  
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor.  
996-2747  
**ASSEMBLY REQUIRED**  
Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit.  
832-2355  
**GIANT METAL INSECTS**  
Finney's Pub, 3965 Woodward, Detroit.  
831-5070  
**MARY MCGUIRE & MYK RISE**  
Hoops, Auburn Hills.  
373-4744  
**BEAUMONTS**  
Moby Dicks, 5452 Schaefer, Dearborn.  
581-3650  
**JIM THACKERY**  
Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, Dearborn.  
846-1920  
**DEE SKIDER'S WIDOWMAKER**  
The Marquee, 8139 E. Seven Mile, Dearborn.  
366-8633  
**ALA DRAMA**  
Grif's Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac.  
334-5150

#### Saturday, Sept. 26

**MORRISSEY**  
The Palace of Auburn Hills, Two Championship Drive. Tickets are \$20.  
377-0100  
**BLUES JUBILEE**  
With The Beaumonts, Johnny "Yard Dog" Jones, Harmonica Shah and the Boogymen at Moby Dicks, 5452 Schaefer, Dearborn.  
581-3650  
**JIM THACKERY**  
Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, Dearborn.  
846-1920  
**MARY MCGUIRE & MYK RISE**  
Hoops, Auburn Hills.  
373-4744  
**WYLDIE RIDE**  
The Ritz, 17560 Frano, Roseville.  
778-6404

#### Sunday, Sept. 27

**MARY MCGUIRE & MYK RISE**  
The Ark, 637 1/2 S. Main, Ann Arbor.  
761-1451  
**WYLDIE RIDE**  
The Ritz, 17560 Frano, Roseville.  
778-6404