

MONDAY, JANUARY 3, 1994

## MUSIC NOTES



CHRISTINA FUOCO

You could say that The Indiana's Angellique Blannen is a big "Ren and Stimpy" fan. So much so that she got her own little Ren — her now 5-month-old Chihuahua. "When I walk down the street, people ask 'Is that Ren?' Actually, it is. . . I call her Renny though since she's a girl to make it more feminine. Renny will be in the house on Thursday, Jan. 6, when The Indiana's play Industry, 15 S. Saginaw, Pontiac, as part of 89X alternative dance night. It's a fitting night since The Indiana's — which also includes bassist Chris Wilson and guitarist Zeb — blend Blannen's hip-hop, funk, and rock influences into a danceable sound. "I basically grew up in junior high listening to a lot of different kinds of music — black music and rock music. . . I got the best of both worlds," she said. She began writing raps for other artists then out of frustration started her own band. She keeps the raps to a minimum on her band's debut release "Indianism," instead choosing to go a more musical route. "It's really like a mix of everyone's influences." Raps may be in the future for her though.

Bloomfield Community Television has begun its weekly music series "Metro MusicScope." Guests so far have included acclaimed local rocker Kristin Sayer, gallery owner David Klein and jazz saxophonist Keith Saxton. The half-hour show also includes reports on local music news with Lisa Bica, manager of Berkeley's Harmony House superstore, and Bill Close, manager of Harmony House's classical store in Royal Oak. Bands wishing to be interviewed can send music and a press kit to the show's host Mary Ann Verdi, Bloomfield Community Television, 4200 Telegraph, P.O. Box 489, Bloomfield Hills 48013.

Sometimes Why will release the single "Perpetual Love" with the B-side "Forever" on Jan. 11. The single, recorded at The Disc in Eastpointe, will be available at Sound Warehouse and local independent record stores.

The Tuesday, Jan. 18, performance of The Who's "Tommy" has been rescheduled for Monday, Jan. 31. Tickets will be honored on Jan. 31. Refunds are available at the Fisher Theater or Masonic Temple box offices. For more information, call (313) 872-1000 or (313) 832-2332.

Blue Nation and SisterSoul drummer Benjamin Ridley has opened "The Boneyard," a 24-track digital recording studio in Warren. Ridley said his studio is musician-friendly — monetarily speaking. "The whole premise is, I know how hard it (recording) can be on bands. I know how to spend 500 bucks a day to record. Basically, I'm trying to do it for half." He said he can do it without swallowing other bands' costs. "Basically, I'm not going to be greedy. I don't need a million bucks to live on." So far, both of Ridley's bands as well as the rock band LemonJulee have recorded there since it opened two months ago. For more information, call (810) 755-2589.

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## LOCAL SPINS

Here's a sampling of top 10 recordings, in no particular order, being played on Detroit Music Scene, heard 4:30-5:30 p.m. Sundays and 5-6 p.m. Thursday on WDR-FM 90.9.

1. "Mr. X and Drain-O," Mr. X and Drain-O (Bam Boom)
2. "Dancing Dope," Tiles
3. "No Telling Why," Satin Steel (Sheppard)
4. "Mumbo Jumbo," Jes Gru
5. "McFly," Spanking Bozo (44 Caliber)
6. "Father Christmas," Jimmy G.
7. "Steve Gornall and the Blue Collar Blues Band," Steve Gornall and the Blue Collar Blues Band (Blues Factory)
8. "Real Live Love," Deborah Veda (Nebula)
9. "Lingo," Hope Orchestra (Deep Screen)
10. "Scott Shipmann," Scott Shipmann.

## CUTTING GROOVES

The 10 most underrated albums released in 1993, according to music coordinator Christina Fuoco (they're listed in no particular order):

1. "Transnational Speedway League: Anthems, Anecdotes, and Undeniable Truths," Clutch (East West)
2. "Purefuntalia," Pure (Reprise)
3. "This Midwestern," Hannibal (Hogwash)
4. "Give a Monkey . . .," Fishbone (Columbia)
5. "Pop Smeat," The Verve Pipe (LMNOPop Music)
6. "Meek Avenue Skull Game," Big Chief (Sub Pop)
7. "Bein' There," Best Kissers in the World (MCA)
8. "Primary Colors: A Rain Forest Rock Musical," various artists including dada, Mary's Danjah, Chad Smith, Adam Horowitz, School of Fish, Toad the Wet Sprocket, and X (Kid Rhino)
9. "Midern Life is Rubial," Blue (ERG)
10. "Candlebox," Candlebox (Maverick)

## LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Street Scene next week:

- The latest concert listings on 1994 happenings in the metropolitan Detroit area.

# Kid Rock fires up his career

■ Kid Rock has known since high school that he was going to be a rock star. After selling 100,000 records through word-of-mouth referrals, he's proving that he wasn't all talk.

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO  
STAFF WRITER



Everybody had someone in a high school class who kicked their feet up on the desk, didn't pay attention and said they didn't need to study because their music was their ticket to success.

Romeo High School had one of them — Kid Rock. When his teachers would tell him to shape up or else he wouldn't have a future, he had a stock answer.

"I'd tell my teachers, 'I'm gonna be a rock star baby. I'm gonna rock. I knew I had a deal comin'," said Kid Rock, a.k.a. Bob Ritchie, who plays The Ritz in Roseville on Friday, Feb. 11.

His counselor and mother both told him he needed something to fall back on.

"I have something to fall back on. I'm gonna fall back on my . . ."

So far, his dreams haven't failed him. Kid Rock's first album "Grits Sandwiches for Breakfast" sold

## STREET BEATS

100,000 copies — mostly through word of mouth — for RCA/Jive and he subsequently toured with Ice Cube and Too Short.

Now signed to New Jersey's Continuum Records, Kid Rock's latest EP, "Fire It Up," is selling briskly and about 300 fans showed up for his record release party in November.

The six-song EP mixes tumultuous guitars, funky basslines and Kid Rock's ghetto-born rap style, immediately bringing to mind comparisons to Rage Against the Machine or the Beastie Boys. The first side of his tape ends with a shocking diversion — a befitting acoustic cover of the Hank Williams Jr. song "A Country Boy Can Survive."

"The self-proclaimed 'semi-hick, semi-city slicker' is even considering temporarily departing from rap to do an album of Williams songs. He said he admires singers like Williams for their stage presence.

"Those are the last of that generation of entertainers," he said. "Hank would come out in his black suit and a guitar with Hank on it. They build themselves up larger than life. I like to do that."

Aside from being a competent rapper, Kid Rock has a keen busi-



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ness sense. He started and incorporated a record company, Top Dog. Known by his friends as the "merchandise king," Kid Rock markets his own "trinkets." Through his catalog, fans can order three different kinds of T-shirts, a "light weight" windbreaker, waterbottles, socks, Thermux winter hats and patches.

He said that if people see a name enough times, it'll pique their curiosity.

Since the release of "Grits Sandwiches" Kid Rock has earned a reputation as the bad boy rocker of Detroit. Rumors about drunken bar fights, drug use and backstage vandalism have travelled around faster than Snuggly Dog rap dogs. But the slight, blonde-haired blue-eyed man said he's just misunderstood.

"It's just jealousy people hate that (success), man," he said. "There's enough money to go around. There was a time when I had an (attitude), but I've learned to be humble."

On the other hand, he said, "If you're gonna make change, you gotta be a part of the problem."

"I know I've changed tons of kids. When they listen to 'Oedipus Complex,' they know I have problems, too."

The song re-creates a father/son battle: "You never loved me/You never held me tight/Instead you shook me like a fist and woke me up at night."

Closed-minded people, he said, won't be able to wade through the sometimes explicit lyrics to see that he's just like any other kid. Those who can see that learn a lot about Kid Rock, primarily that he worked hard to get where he is, he said.

"I'm sure parents aren't thrilled to have their kids listening to my stuff. But unfortunately every parent can't meet me before their kids buy the record so they can see I have good manners and stuff."

Kid Rock began rapping and DJing when he was the same age as

most of his fans — in high school with his "two creepy friends from Romeo."

"They'd cart me down to the middle of the projects in Mount Clemens. I'd sit there and scratch (records). People would tell me I could DJ a wedding at Club Monte Carlo and make a hundred bucks. Instead, I came home drunk with \$30 in my pocket. I still like to do that."

His mother wasn't exactly approving of his hobby, but the practice earned him offers from record labels before he was finished with school. They were tempting, but he decided to give in to his mother's threat.

"She said if I signed it I'd get kicked out of the house, so I decided to stick it out until graduation."

He had six offers but opted to sign with RCA/Jive because of Jive's rap history. By the time he was 19 he was touring with Ice Cube and Too Short. Being from Romeo, he didn't know much about gangs and was intrigued by his tour mates' lifestyles.

"I ask them about gangs and stuff and they'd say, 'What do you mean, you're from Detroit? You have gangs in Detroit. I'd say, 'No man, I'm from Romeo. I had corn fields in my backyard. I used to ride horses.' I was just a little hick from Romeo with these big gang guys."

Due to lack of support, Kid Rock battled to get out of his contract. Turning down offers from Tommy Boy and Profile, he opted to go with the little-known label Continuum, which now works with Roger Daltrey and Rolling Stones' Ron Wood.

"They said, 'We have tons of cash and we want to put it all behind your record.'"

In March 1993 he released "The Polyfuzz Method" on Continuum. One video "You Don't Know Me" received 1,200 calls a week on the Jukebox video network. "Prodigal Son" was in the top five on large college metal stations across the United States.

With the release of "Fire It Up," Kid Rock has established himself as the spokesman for trouble teens. That's one job he doesn't mind having.

"When I look out from the stage, I see me all over the audience. That's cool. If I was gonna get a call from a kid who said he saw me at St. Andrew's and was in jail, I'd probably go get him and build him out. If kids call me, that's flattering."

Kid Rock performs at The Ritz, 104 and Griswold, Roseville, on Friday, Feb. 11. Doors open at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$10. Must be 18 to enter. Call (810) 778-6404. For more information about Kid Rock merchandise and releases, write Top Dog Records, P.O. Box 102, Mount Clemens, MI 48046-0102.

# This time Kiara's doing it their way



On their own: The rhythm and blues duo Kiara (Greg Charley and John Winston) — co-owns DCI Records with Don Barden.

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO  
STAFF WRITER

When Kiara formed in the mid-1980s, they experimented with a string of genres from rock to rhythm and blues. They also tried out a seemingly endless line of musicians. But when Greg Charley came into the group, John Winston knew he was looking at his band's future.

"We recorded, and then we decided to kick out the rest of the group," said Winston, a Southfield resident.

As a duo, Kiara had a string of smooth yet funky rhythm and blues hits in the late 1980s through the early 1990s. When creative differences plagued their relationship with Arista Records, the duo decided — once again — to try it on their own.

With a help from Don Barden, Kiara has resurfaced with a new single, "Tell Me," from their upcoming release "Condition of the Heart." The album will be released — appropriately enough — on Valentine's Day on the Detroit-based DCI Records. The label is co-owned by Kiara and Barden, giving the group a sense of freedom they haven't had before.

"It (the album) was produced, written and mixed by us in our own studio," Winston said. "It was more relaxed and much more honest."

The single was released in November to radio and to record stores. Meanwhile, the video, directed by Andras Mahr of New York, has been airing two to three times a day on

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## IN CONCERT

Monday, Jan. 3

PARADISE VALLEY JAZZ JAM  
Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit. (jazz)  
(313) 832-2355

MARY MCGUIRE AND JULIE KOVACH  
Four Greenfields, 3333 N. Woodward Ave.,  
Royal Oak. (acoustic rock)  
(810) 282-2902

BIRD OF PARADISE ORCHESTRA  
Bird of Paradise, 207 S. Ashley, Ann Arbor.  
(big band)  
662-8310

DUNNAN DUNNAN  
With James at The Palace of Auburn Hills, 1-  
78 and Lapeer Road, Auburn Hills. (pop)  
(810) 377-0100

CINSEL SIBOS. WITH THORNTON DAYIS

Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit. (rhythm and  
blues)  
(313) 832-2355

MICHAEL ZAPORSKI  
Followed by Paul Keller/Cary Kocher quartet  
at Bird of Paradise, 207 S. Ashley, Ann Ar-  
bor. (solo piano)  
662-8310

NAL  
With IEC at Bird Pk. 206-208 S. First St.,  
Ann Arbor. (instrumental rock)  
996-8555

2 SQUADERS FROM EARTH  
Avon Bar & Grill, 3982 W. Auburn Road, Ro-  
chester Hills. (acoustic)  
(810) 852-2707

Wednesday, Jan. 5

FERRADIA TONIGHT  
With host John O. Lamb at the Magic Bag,  
Woodward at Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. (vari-  
ety)  
(810) 544-3030

BOUNTIES WHY  
Planet Art, 2357 Canfield, Hamtramck. (alter-  
native rock)  
(313) 365-4048

MICHAEL ZAPORSKI  
Followed by Ron Brooks Trio at Bird of Para-  
dise, 207 S. Ashley, Ann Arbor. (solo piano)  
662-8310

ASSEMBLY REQUIRED  
With The AIDS Babies (members of BOP har-

veyist Bird Pk. 206-208 S. First St., Ann  
Arbor. (alternative rock)  
996-8555

Thursday, Jan. 6

SOMETHING'S WHY  
Gotham City Cafe, 22848 Woodward, north  
of Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. (alternative  
rock)  
(810) 358-7430

SOME PEOPLE'S CHILDREN  
Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit. (alternative  
rock)  
(313) 832-2355

FOUR HANS  
Espresso Royale Cafe, 324 S. State St.,  
Ann Arbor. (acoustic)  
(313) 662-2770

See IN CONCERT, 6A