

# On Reflection

---

The newsletter  
of *The APEX*

---

Vol. II, Issue 11  
December 1990

---

## INSIDE:

Relayer	p. 2
Year in review	p. 3
Market Value	p. 4
Review: U Totem/	
Thinking Plague	p. 5
Altair	p. 6

## You can't kill me

# • Canterbury •

## *the scene that wouldn't die*

[Editor's note: The Canterbury scene of the late '60s to mid-'70s bore a great many bands who exhibited not only an unusually high caliber of musicianship and technical ability, but also managed to stay particularly human by virtue of never attaining megastar status and keeping a light and humorous ambience around themselves and their music. Twice before, On Reflection has printed articles on new releases by these bands, submitted by in-touch Canterbury fan Harald Luss of Austria. As 1990 nears its coda, the Canterbury scene is still producing more than its share of news and great music. So here again, I turn your inner voice over to Harald Luss, who will guide us to the vast treasures to be found in Canterbury, Kent.]

by Harald Luss

With days getting shorter, one has more lust to sit beside the fireplace and listen to good old records again. And not only record players are getting a workout as even the electronic TV medium has discovered the potential of '70s rock, at least here in Europe. Among others, Central TV has established a late night rock show called "Bedrock," which specializes in organizing and broadcasting reunion gigs. Already on air were shows of Hatfield & the North, Gong, and Caravan (nearly all with slightly altered lineups) and bands like Curved Air, Asia, Hawkwind and probably Van der Graaf Generator are waiting to be broadcast.

Back to Hatfield. Sophie Domancich replaced Dave Stewart on keyboards; otherwise the old formation played a set of well-known tunes a la "Halfway Between Heaven and Earth" and "Share It," combined with brand new songs. Overall, it was a good show (especially a brilliant Richard Sinclair) although many will have missed the psychedelic Hammond interludes of Stewart.

Gong had Dævid Allen, Gilli Smyth, Didier Malherbe and Pip Pyle from the original band, plus Keith and Steffi from Here and Now replacing Steve Hillage and Mike Howlett, and Twink on synths. To their fans' delight, they played classic ditties from *Camembert Electronique* and the "Trilogy" era, and managed to present them just as tight as in the heydays of the early '70s.

---

*"Music that is  
born complex  
is not inherently  
better or worse  
than music that is  
born simple."*

—Aaron Copland

continued p.7

# Relayer

## A BRIGHTER SHADE OF "RED"

Every now and then, two musical genres will converge at a point and create a big bang of sorts that really floors the listener. For some reason, it is usually jazz and rock that make the mix. Miles Davis and Gil Evans are among the musical mad scientists who have joined those genres with amazing results. The latest venture is perhaps the most remarkable. Just picture, if you will, a big band jazz orchestra performing King Crimson's 1975 instrumental, "Red."

Yes, it's true. But if you're familiar with the Either/Orchestra (and unless you're from the greater Boston area, you probably aren't), it's not all that unbelievable. The Either/Orchestra are an eclectic group that is a favorite among Boston's more adventurous music lovers. Based in Cambridge, the E/O, lead by the superb composer and arranger Russ Gershon, have for several years taken a very unorthodox approach to the art of jazz.

Their new album, *The Half-Life of Desire*, is their third, the second one to be made available on CD. The lineup features Gershon on tenor and soprano saxes and flute; Douglas Yates on alto and soprano saxes; Charles Kohlhase on baritone and alto saxes; Tom Halter and John Carlson, both playing trumpets and flugelhorns; Russell Jewell and Curtis Hasselbring on trombones; John

Medeski on piano, organ, and DX7; Michael Rivard on bass; Jerome Deupree on drums; and John Dirac on guitar.

The album was actually recorded in April, 1989 and some of the members (including Dirac who, as you will see, is our hero here) are no longer with the group. But the E/O is alive and well and has balls to spare. Clocking in at over 55 minutes, this album is a pure pleasure to listen to. The sound is great, the performances are top notch. And then you get to Track 7. "Red."

Arranged by Dirac, "Red" is incredibly faithful to the original, although at 11:21 it is nearly twice as long. Gershon describes the technical evolution of the piece in his very informative liner notes:

"'Red' is John Dirac's concerto for electric guitar and Either/Orchestra. He illuminates Robert Fripp's original, a King Crimson power-trio tune, by expanding the 24-bar interlude into a pocket epic. Opening with a delicate horn passage, the interlude develops Fripp's motif in new harmonic directions; adds rhythm section; introduces a new harmonic sequence and a most psychedelic guitar solo (which found the arranger himself covering the windows of his isolation booth with a thick impasto of steam); intensifies as the trumpets mimic the sound of an echo device; explodes into a free-

blowing frenzy; careens through a 4:3 rhythmic lock and finally returns to the top, which by now has taken on the character of a long-lost friend. John toted around an increasingly dog-eared sheaf of green score paper for several months while arranging 'Red,' but his arrangement proves those ears were no dogs."

In my own words, the piece is incredible. It is an almost perfect tribute to the original and an enormously successful showcase for the E/O. The guitar solo is truly excellent and the drumming is wonderful. And this is coming from a serious Bruford devotee! If you like Crimson, this is a must-hear. If you love intelligent, out-of-the-ordinary music, the Either/Orchestra is for you.

I don't know the extent of the distribution but it's probably not too far-reaching, so here is the address of the label:

Accurate Records, P.O. Box 390115, Cambridge, MA 02139. The catalog number is AC-3242. Tell them *On Reflection* sent you. ☺

## APEX CONVENTION UPDATE

The latest word on the tentative APEX convention in the spring is...no word at all! I'm still waiting to hear from people who would be interested in attending a Boston-area function for APEX members.

This event requires planning and funding. If I am to take the next steps in organizing the convention, I

need to first gauge the interest level. So even if you're just the least bit interested—I'm not looking for definite commitments—please drop me a postcard and let me know.

I hope we can bring this event together and make it an annual thing. The more people we have, the wider our options are. Thank you.

On Reflection is published monthly by the Aficionados of Progressive Excellence (APEX).

P.O. Box 1037 - Kendall Square  
Cambridge, MA 02142

Editor/Publisher:  
Jason M. Rubin

SPECIAL THANKS: Harald Luss, Marc Tucker, and Laura.

©1990 The Rubisher. All Rights Reserved.

## RATES

BACK ISSUES  
• \$2.00 each

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

• \$18.00 - U.S.  
(incl. Hawaii and PR)  
• \$23.00 - International  
(incl. Canada)

## CLASSIFIED ADS

• \$5.00 per 80 words  
• \$12.00 - 3 placements

## DISPLAY ADS

• 1-1/2"x3" - \$6.00  
\$10.00 - two placements  
• 3"x3" - \$10.00  
\$18.00 - two placements  
• Will quote on special sizes and placements.

# 1990: promising, but a long way to go

As 1990 nears its end, the promise that the new decade seemed to hold for fans of progressive music remains out of reach. Still, a few glimmers of light do appear to beckon from a hopefully-not-too-distant horizon.

After gladly swallowing whatever the media and the record labels slopped onto the public's musical plates, said mass audience appears to be looking for something more. Take, for example, the Milli Vanilli controversy. Throughout the year, lip-synching became a bigger and bigger issue, to the point where people finally started to feel cheated for being given nothing more than image and hype.

The '80s made MTV a very rich and mercurially growing enterprise. On MTV, music clearly takes a back seat to image, posturing, visual stimulation and aural simulation. And people begged for more. Now people are angry that performers aren't actually singing on records and in concert. Regardless of the industry or the situation, whenever the masses make authenticity a priority, it's a good sign for artists with integrity and originality.

The continued interest in world music and in assimilating the sounds and styles of other cultures in Western music, championed by such progressive-minded folks as Peter Gabriel, David Byrne, and Brian Eno, among others, bodes well for progressive fans. Whereas the borrowing from classical and jazz was a major element of the progressive rock of the '70s, it seems apparent that the progressive music of the future will borrow from the traditional (classical, if you will) musics of other peoples.

Clearly, this does not automatically elevate artists like Paul Simon to the ranks of the progressive elite. It does, however, offer today's artists a richer and wider palette of sounds from which to choose. The strict, formulaic Top 40 format that

dominated the better part of the '80s was sorely lacking in such timbral options. And while I am confident that there will be good, original progressive music produced this decade that does not incorporate multicultural influences, I think the growth of the world music scene will have a positive effect on the amount of experimentation and differentiation we see and hear in the coming years.

Going back to one of the classic elements of progressive music, jazz, it should be noted that an increased interest in instrumental music is also apparent. Some of the great musicians of the day, notably Jeff Beck, Bill Bruford, Robert Fripp and the League of Crafty Guitarists, Allan Holdsworth, John McLaughlin, and Jan Akkerman have produced wonderful instrumental music in concert and on record in the last 12-18 months. Add to that the successful collections of two of the great instrumental progressive groups, Happy the Man and National Health, that came out this year and you have a number of vocal-less works that speak volumes.

An especially interesting instrumental discovery this year was guitarist Eric Johnson. His first album, *Tones*, released a couple of years ago, was wrongly ignored, but the strength of the cut "Cliffs of Dover" from his followup, *Ah Via Musicom*, has many people looking forward to more music from this great musician. A cut of his can also be found on the first *GuitarSpeak* sampler from IRS NoSpeak.

Johnson has been "the next big thing" for several years and has only recently been a recording artist. *Ah Via Musicom* was supposed to be released by the curiously-reticent Cinema Records, the Capitol subsidiary that was launched to release progressive music from artists like Patrick Moraz. The album instead is on Capitol, with Cinema Records

listed enigmatically as "executive producer."

Having listened to his new album several times, I hear enough to believe that his potential for turning out a truly progressive album is definitely there. The question is, will the record company let him? He has a successful mix of Hendrix, Stevie Ray Vaughan, and Van Halen in his sound, but there is also enough to suggest that he is quite familiar with Holdsworth, Howe and McLaughlin. His playing shows a dramatic lyricism that he is able to maintain even during speedy fret runs. He is definitely a guitar hero for the '90s, regardless of which musical path he ends up on.

The independent front is also going strong, with more activity that I can put into one article. If you are on the mailing lists of such domestic progressive distributors as Round Sounds, ZNR Records, Wayside Music, Progressive Records, Laser's Edge, and foreign ones like Musea, then you can keep up with that action. While conditions look good for the continued creation of new progressive music, it should not be foolishly implied that the record companies and radio programmers will embrace the tenuous trend en masse. For the foreseeable future, as if there really is such a thing, the chief vehicle for progressive music will be continue to be the independent labels. Support them!

As rap music gains in popularity, look for raplike influences to come seeping into more mainstream (read: white) acts. A popular mechanism used in rap music, the controversial "sample" of a previously recorded piece of music, is really the only aspect of rap that could turn more interesting than the present state of the art. At the moment, the samples are largely taken from the likes of James Brown, Aretha Franklin, Rick James, and other funk-soul

# Market Value

## FOR SALE

### Gentle Giant Inflatable Octopus

1973 Columbia Records promo. Inflatable yellow plastic octopus with "Gentle Giant/Octopus" printed on front and back.

Very rare. In very good condition. Will ship deflated. Guaranteed no holes.

Best offer over \$65.00. I will take offers until January 4, 1991. If you want to trade, make it good!

Jason M. Rubin  
c/o The APEX  
P.O. Box 1037  
Cambridge, MA 02142

### PROGRESSIVE ROCK VIDEO ALL VHS — \$17 EACH

1. HOLDSWORTH - Tokyo '84/German TV '86 (145 min.)
2. MARILLION - Utrecht 10/89 (100 min.)
3. ABWH - Jones Beach '89 (150 min.)
4. JETHRO TULL - Toronto '87 (105 min.)
5. YES - Philly '79/Queens Park '76 (115 min.)

Much more available. Send for free catalog.  
Foreign orders - add \$5 per tape for postage.

**JEFF & DENA MORRIS**  
**109 COOPER ROAD**  
**POUGHKEEPSIE, NY 12603**  
**914.471.5841 (5pm - 9pm EST)**

### PROGRESSIVE MUSIC FROM AROUND THE WORLD ON CD!



*Atoll, Banco, Barclay  
James, Can, Eno,  
Flairck, Focus, Gentle Giant, Gong, Hackett,  
Hatfield & the North, Japan, King Crimson,  
Magma, Manfred Mann, Marillion, PFM, Yes,  
plus many others!*

**ROUND SOUNDS**  
419 N. Pacific Coast Highway  
Redondo Beach, CA 90277  
(213) 372-3477 fax: (213) 316-1902

**ZNR RECORDS**  
P.O. Box 58040  
Louisville, KY 40258  
502.933.0783 (after 8pm EST Sun.)

*Progressive music by mail order.  
1000s of LPs in stock, from  
Atoll to Zappa and everything  
in between! Good prices.*

**WANT LISTS RESEARCHED**  
"Famous Guarantee" — money  
back if you don't like the music!

## In concert at LACE

# U Totem/Thinking Plague by Marc S. Tucker

The adoration of the venerated masters (Crimson, Giant, Genesis, et al) is a rapture that can be detrimental. Witness these two groups and the lack of attention paid them and their ilk. They've been around for years (U Totem is a new group comprising members of the old Rotary Totemist Guild and The 5 UUs, both of whom similarly received nearly nil column inches in the proper journals), have released sufficient music to warrant praise from those of us who are charged with such, and yet are virtually unknown.

U Totem is a local combo and, if my information is correct, an "adjunct" of COMA (California Outside Music Association, an aggregate that is one of the precious few organizations pushing intelligent music onto the moribund L.A. music scene). They will soon have a CD out on Wayside Music's Cuneiform label. If you are familiar with owner Steve Feigenbaum's quite excellent tastes in music, then you already have a ballpark idea of what U Totem is like. If you don't, here's a closer inspection: complicated modern avant-chamber ensemble music, executed with colorations rarely found in any facet of modern music, by a clutch of highly talented overachievers and conducted (yes, conducted) by an eccentric bass player.

If U Totem's music were a painting, there would be nothing hanging in the present banker-courting museums to draw an analogy to. But if you're familiar with the fabulously demented paintings of the underground cartoonist Robert Williams, then you have a reference. Many contrasting moods splash against each other, forming snapshots that would exist only in the brain of an artistic madman. Most striking is their use of punctuation, a musical device mostly unheard of in the art, and weakly used even among

the larger share of that minute pool that is aware of it. Every event in each composition is brilliantly set off not only for its own merits, but as a method of defining it within the context of the "story" being told. Picture the Canterbury sound by way of Henry Cow and you'll have the flavor; you'll just need to add a more literary bent.

Though bassist James Grigsby seems to be the core of the group, flutist/vocalist Emily Hay tended to be the center of attention. The range and pliancy of her voice was striking and, at times, both disconcerting and startling (the intended effect, I am sure). This almost Weill-ian preference among art rock chanteuses a la Dagmar, provides no comfortable reference for radio-rock ears, which is only as it should be, and, at times, careens headlong into territories previously only explored by Meredith Monk and the more *outré* singers. As voice was, historically, the first instrument, it's odd to reflect that it is still highly ignored in its potential nuances except in the perimeter-group settings like this one.

Even more intriguing, though, was drummer and percussionist David Kerman, who also sat in for Thinking Plague's absent stickman. Having seen the drummer for Doug Michaels & The Outer Darkness, I had thought that I had already seen L.A.'s premier skins-pounder. Kerman has me rethinking that position. With the lion's share of mainstreamers now passed into musical sterility (Moon's dead, Collins is preferring to play the rancid blue-eyed soulster, and jazzers Tony Williams and Billy Cobham have been creatively "safe" for many years), drums have suffered greatly. Not surprising, then, that it's taking dervishes like Kerman, from the indies, to save the instrument from

artistic atrophy and the otherwise critical ravaging that it tends to receive.

U Totem was the first act and I found it hard to imagine that LACE (which is an acronym for Los Angeles Contemporary Art Exhibitions, or something to that effect) had found a headliner that could match these musicians. But indeed they had. Thinking Plague, live, is a tour de force and an extremely welcome sound to progressive-starved ears. Exhibiting the same compositional strengths as U Totem, as well as an even broader sense of humor, this sextet came on like a Herculean amalgam of King Crimson, Shylock, Henry Cow, Soft Machine, Zappa and God knows how many other of the truly cerebral groups.

Still, Thinking Plague is one of those rare groups who use the above-inferred elements because they are, inevitably, the right modes to use, but within the framework of their own thought. The Plague's style is similar to a heavy version of U Totem's, just as complex and with a propulsive idiosyncrasy that is literally a new wrinkle in that borderline that has formed between art rock/progrock and the avant garde/neoclassical. If there is to be an evolution to art rock, this is where it lies. Perhaps it would help to also toss in a reference to Art Zoyd; that, I think, will leaven the perhaps too-broad reference to classic progrock.

All small venues seem to be plagued with sound problems. At LACE, the only real grievance seemed to be in the mixing board. Mark Harris, who handles the group's winds, was woefully undermiked, which detracted terribly from the full impact of a few of the songs. Too bad, too, as his lines were unique when they could be properly heard. Equally unique, and quite subtle, were the odd colors keyboardist

# Spain's Altair: a Lake-less ELP

If you've ever fantasized about an Emerson, Lake & Palmer without Greg Lake, then Spain's Altair may be just the thing you're looking for. This keyboards/drums duo plays instrumental music with enough dramatic flair and love of classical and jazz to satisfy those who most appreciate the times that ELP just plain crank out.

In fact, much of the music on Altair's eponymous debut seems more suited to being instrumental jams within the context of a larger piece than just songs in themselves. But if the pair's compositional abilities are a little suspect, their talent and commitment to progressive music are obvious.

Altair consists of Isabel Muniente on a variety of acoustic and electric keyboards and Alfredo G. Arcusa on drums. The two musicians wrote, performed, and produced all the music on the CD. Muniente, 26, has been playing for 17 years and her influences span the spectrum from Chopin, Debussy, and Grieg to Emerson, Patrick Moraz, and Josef Zawinul. Arcusa, 30, has been

playing for 19 years and owes his musical and percussive sensibilities to Emerson, Robert Fripp, Buddy Rich, Bill Bruford, Carl Palmer, and Neil Peart.

The album itself is dedicated to Keith Emerson but it is to their credit that only a few tracks really sound ELP-ish. The six tunes add up to a little more than 35 minutes of keyboard/drum interplay. Because of the layers of keyboards, it doesn't have the feel of true duet music like the two excellent Moraz/Bruford albums. The drumming, not unlike Palmer's, is all over the place, filling as many spaces as possible (not my favorite style).

But there are very satisfying moments, particularly "Sin Presente," which has the feel of ELP's "Karn Evil 9, 2nd Impression," and "Eddy's Prelude," in which Muniente performs solo, mostly on acoustic piano. Her best writing is on this song but I couldn't shake the feeling that she had been listening to Emerson's "Piano Concerto No. 1" just prior to composing it.

There is an obligatory drum

solo on "Placido Paseo," the album's closer. Arcusa has good chops but sometimes leaves the songs without a bottom as he journeys around his tom-toms and cymbals. When he does provide complementary support, it is effective and just as exciting as he intended his soloing to be.

In summary, I like the concept of Altair and think that on their first album, they've shown who they like and what they can do. In future recordings, their composition and arrangements would do well to show some added maturity and good judgment. In all, a good effort. I'll play it again.

The album is the first original release for Spain's Sirius label, founded by three progressive music aficionados, one of whom, Paco Barroso, also publishes a progressive magazine called *Aristillus* in Spanish.

For more information on ordering Altair's album, the Sirius catalog, or *Aristillus*, contact Paco Barroso at Sirius Records, Apdo. Correos 971, 11480 Jerez de la Frontera (Cadiz), SPAIN. You can also fax him at 956-32-03-33. ☺

## How 1990 progressed, continued

artists. There have been a few jazz samples and time will tell whether more acts will delve into more complex snippets of music to add to their jigsaw. The closest to a progressive sample has been Vanilla Ice's use of the Queen/David Bowie tune, "Under Pressure" in his signature "Ice Ice Baby" hit.

Why do I dwell so much on rap? For one thing, never have lyrics so dominated the focus of a particular kind of music. This is a different

situation from the time that the lengthy lyrical sojourns of people like Jon Anderson and Peter Gabriel were beginning to be eschewed in the late '70s. With rap, people are listening again to what artists are saying. It's a good opportunity to stretch the lyric muscles and make some worthwhile social and political statements.

Also, I think that once, if ever, all the controversy dries up and the more talented artists get the attention, there will be found some

complex rhythms and interesting uses of space and tempo that can be used with any of the world music influences or instrumental styles that are growing at the same time. The last time a form of black urban music was at the top of the charts, it was disco. Dan Quayle is no Jack Kennedy but rap is no disco. I'm not a fan, but I've listened. As any artist or sculptor will tell you, it's not the material, it's what you *do* with it that makes it art. In these times, I

*continued p.8*

# Canterbury: you can't kill me, continued

Not to be outdone, Caravan, featuring the original lineup, dazzled their audience with their standards, climaxing in "For Richard," where the flock went wild. And the best news is that they've decided to stay together for a while. There may even be a new album soon. It might be part of a newly founded label centered around Canterbury rock with new material by Hugh Hopper, Richard Sinclair, and Rick Biddulph expected. More on that later on.

Soft Machine, mother of the Canterbury scene, will definitely not reform but the good old stuff is as good as ever. Just give a listen to the rather new "Oh Boy" label, which has paid tribute to the band by releasing two CD-only titles, *In Concert* and *Live*. Both contain previously unreleased stuff from the prime days of the band, between 1967-70. This label may also be of interest to fans of other progressive bands, as they offer rare stuff by King Crimson, Man, Zappa, Tull, Hendrix, and Traffic, to name a few.

Back to Soft Machine. There is a new jewel new on the shelves. Strange Fruit, the label that brought us rare BBC recordings of folks like Syd Barrett, Nico, Bonzos, etc., has

just released a double LP/CD set of exclusive Soft Machine material. Everyone luckily in possession of these tapes knows that Soft Machine played exceptionally well at the BBC studios. It is evident in their splendid versions of Wyatt's "Moon in June," variations of standards like "Facelift," "Out-bloody-rageous," "Drop," "As If," and the smashing version of "Dedicated to You" with Wyatt going Dada. It's also the first time we hear lengthy examples of the short-lived 7-piece lineup, if you forget the samples on "Triple Echo." This is highly recommendable and it is to be hoped that more will follow, as the BBC vaults haven't yet been fully robbed.

For those of you interested in the jazz section of Canterbury, be guided to Elton Dean's new releases. First came a new cassette called *Elton Dean Quartet Live* and a brand new CD of the Unlimited Saxophone Company is soon to be released on Ogun. Pip Pyle, the aforementioned drummer divine, has been active in the French jazz scene with Faton Cahen; namely, the album *Colour Rubis*, which features fusion music in the mood and mode of Mahavishnu Orchestra and John McLaughlin.

Staying in France, there is also a new release by Christian Vander, the founder of Magma. Fans should note that *Jour Apres Jour* contains mainly Coltrane interpretations and has nothing in common with the dark and moody world of Magma. Another matador of the scene, Lol Coxhill, has also been active after a lengthy silence. He has a new album out on Shock Records; I haven't heard it but it is said to be in his typical improvisational style.

Change of moods. I'd like to guide you to the new album by Peter Blegvad, *King Strut*. This is his latest work full of weird philosophical, dadaistic lyrics wrapped in charming tunes. If you liked his last album, *Downtime*, you'll love *King Strut*.

For those of you who are interested in the latest news on these and other great bands, I recommend the magazine *Facelift*, published by Phil Howitt, Flat 5, 104 Clyde Road, West Didsbury, Manchester M20 8WN ENGLAND. Send a couple of dollars and you'll receive a sample copy of this nice fanzine plus details for a subscription.

And now go on and let the turntable rotate.... ☺



## ANNIE HASLAM 1990 CONCERT "T" SHIRTS

Printed In Powder Blue On Black  
Available In S, M, L, XL

**Price \$18.00** EACH  
POSTAGE & HANDLING INCLUDED

PLEASE SEND ME THE FOLLOWING T-SHIRTS:

\_\_\_ SM. \_\_\_ MED. \_\_\_ LG. \_\_\_ X-LG.

I have ordered \_\_\_ T-Shirts @ \$18.00 each.

Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

SEND MY T-SHIRTS TO:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:  
MERCHANDISING c/o CHARLES ABBATE  
P.O. BOX 690, NEWFOUNDLAND, NJ 07435-0690

BACK

## U Totem/Thinking Plague *continued*

Shane Hotle threw into the melee. One of the more offbeat keyboardists around, his tonal palette is eccentric and at times, it was impossible to discern from whom some of the weird half-familiar strains were emanating until one watched his hands and realized he was playing the lines. Hotle seems to take a secret delight in not standing out.

The rest of the group, save for the singer, were an animated bunch, not at all shy to express their involvement in body language. It was refreshing to see non-self-conscious playing and interaction with the audience. Dramatics are all well and fine, as with Queensryche and concept-rocking, but a comfortable and completely non-affectatious group is a rare sight to behold.

Keep in mind that their CD release on England's Recommended label, is a much more mannered reflection of their live side. The vocals especially come through in proper tone, doing much to dispel the curiosity as to why their dour singer was even there in the first place, seeming much out of her element and curiously bored amid the barrage of furious musical activity surrounding her. It would be great if Recommended would release a live CD by this group. It would be a definite killer and would go a long way toward selling their studio material. ☺

### *The APEX*

P.O. Box 1037  
Kendall Square  
Cambridge, MA 02142

## How 1990 progressed *continued*

wouldn't throw anything out until I've tried it.

Many musical masters have left us recently: Stevie Ray Vaughan, Leonard Bernstein, Art Blakey, Aaron Copland. And who knows, in 1990 there may have been born a man or a woman who in 20-30 years will turn the world of music on its head, and will chart a musical course entirely inconceivable at the present time. I can't help but have hope for the future. Mediocrity makes money and headlines, but excellence must always exist, if only to demonstrate to those who would listen what mediocrity is. ☺

**Season's Greetings**  
*from The APEX!*

*We know progressive music when we hear it!*