THE BAND IN 1987-89
The spark came late at Band concert

By BEN SANDEL

Among all the great rock groups that crossed paths over the years, the Band was certainly one of the most talented, imaginative, and prolific. With years of road experience from backing Canadian rockers Ronnie Hawkins and 60s spacerockin' Bob Dylan, the group was already a tightly-knit, sophisticated unit when its first album appeared in 1966.

"Music From Big Pink" and ensuing tours drew Americans and "roots" music of all kinds to the group's uniquely original repertoire with expert musicianship, inscribed use of contrasting voices, and lyrics that were in turn whimsical, poetic and delightfully obscure. Beyond these attractions, the group projected an idealistic communal warmth which reflected the idealistic spirit of the time.

The Band's records hardly sound dated today, but how the group itself has grown since the days of Robby Robertson and Richard Manuel held up through the years? Its appearance at Fillmore's had Saturday the last question only partially answered. The performance was pleasant but not memorable, hitting full stride only once. Sadly, it would be premature to call the group washed up; all musicians have trouble finding the groove at times. The shoulder-to-shoulder capacity crowd seemed to be pleased, if not necessarily enthusiastic to familiar songs, and attempting to dance in place.

After a strong opening set by R&B pianist Jon Cleary, the Band started off with Bob Dylan's "Mountains," from the "Stage Fright" album. With lyrics like "She's a rock 'n' roll singer and a true deadinger," this was a great start. The group was actually very good, and the crowd was clearly enjoying themselves.

On most of the evening's songs, lead vocals were split between drummer Levon Helm and bassist Rick Danko. While the two contributed an inventiveness, brilliant rhythm section, Danko's distinctive high voice was rougher, more raspy, and lacked the smoothness of Helm's. The group's overall sound was pleasant and not memorable, hitting full stride only once. It was a pity that the performance was not better, but the crowd was clearly enjoying themselves. The Band's records hardly sound dated today, but how the group itself has grown since the days of Robby Robertson and Richard Manuel?
Successful two-night stand. "I'd go," says, hours later after completing their first studio album in 10 years, road, and getting ready to record the singer-bassist player as he walks the boring sound check. 

There's certainly no last waltz. "You look tired," someone says to Rick Danko tired? He would never compare it to anything they heard then. Their second album, Their third album, "Stage Fright," was recorded at the Woodstock Playhouse in 1969. Other albums followed.

There was the live album called "Rock of Ages," recorded on the edge of the New Year, 1971. By 1972, they were on tour with Dylan again and the reunion resulted in two albums, "Planet Waves" and "Before the Flood." On Thursday 1969, they played the Band's history can be broken into two categories—BW and AW, Before and After Walter. I'm very thankful that we have a great following and that I'm able to keep the cast afloat.

Well, now The Band's history can be broken into two categories—BW and AW, Before and After Walter. "For me, 'The Last Waltz' was a beginning," Danko says. "When we did it, we did it to keep the cast afloat.

Rick Danko takes a long, deep yawn after finishing another boring sound check. "You look tired," someone says to the singer-bassist player as he walks backstage in a Tokyo concert hall. "Now, it's just an act," he laughs as he downs a bottle of Perrier. "Heck, tonight's still young." Rick Danko tired? He would never permit it. He's having too much fun. He and The Band are back, on the road, and getting ready to record their first studio album in 10 years. "Music is a mainstay in my life," he says, almost completing a successful two-night stand. "I'd go crazy without it.

The Band discography

ALBUMS

SINGLES

From left: Garth Hudson, Jim Weider, Levon Helm and Rick Danko. Not shown is Fred Carter.


There's certainly no last waltz for Rick Danko and company. 

The night after their great street appearance, The Band will perform at a benefit in New Orleans. The show will taped for presentation on WYES-TV.

THE COVER

Rick Danko: Music brings us together

Editor's note: The Band will perform tonight at Grant Street Depot. Details on the performance are available through 202-44-44 or 202-55-55 at the door.

Their music thrives through the chaos of people in its influence. For them, music was more than a profession. It was a way of life. Rick Danko: Music brings us together.

The new, reorganized Band, including Richard Manuel on keyboards and drums, was missing one original member—Robbie Robertson, who wrote the bulk of their hits, such as "The Weight" and "Up on Cripple Creek." Robertson was busy acing and producing records. Things were rolling along fine. The Band was packing them all, young and old, at large venues all across the streets. But then, a year ago March 4, Manuel returned to his home room after a gig in Winter Park, Fla. and hanged himself. No suicide note was found.
The Hawks.

New York where he and The Band became known as Levon and his brothers.

The subject never comes up. The Band has always had a large circle of friends, dating back to the 1960s when Bob Dylan hibernated in upstate New York.

The title track "Strange Weather" is a cover of a piece written by genius composer-singer and actor Paul Butterfield, a guitarist and harmonica player who led the Butterfield Blues Band in the early 1960s. The group added elements of rock and soul to back Bob Dylan in concert.

"Strange Weather" was released in 1966, Dylan's album "Bringing It All Back Home," and became a major concert draw in the 1960s; its only in bootleg form until 1975.

Dylan and The Band were relatively unknown un-

The Butterfield Blues Band dis-

BUTTERFIELD BLUES BAND

The Butterfield Blues Band dissolved in 1972, and Butterfield became part of a loose ass of musicians in the Woodstock, N.Y., area. He led the short-lived band Better Days in the early 1990s, and collaborated with the Band's drummer, Levon Helm (in Helm's B.O.C. All-Star), and with his bassist, Rick Danko, in the Danko-Butterfield Band, which performed through the 1980s in New York City. He performed at the Band's farewell con-

The Butterfield Blues Band, which performed through the 1980s in New York City. He performed at the Band's farewell con-

"I'm always looking for success," Danko says. "But now I resent the corporate, business-minded attitude. It's not what I'm about. I'm an artist. I don't care what people think of me. What I'm about is making music to Chicago blues.

As soon as The Band returned to the States, they began another stint in the East. Danko expected J. J. Cale to tour with them, but he didn't. Danko says The Band never considered breaking up for good after Manuel's death. The subject never comes up.

The Butterfield blues band helped bring Chicago blues to the rock audience in the 1960s, and spawned other leading blues and rock bands.

Several years down the road, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame might have The Band on its list of potential inductees. But Danko won't be holding his breath. "It would be an honor," he says, "but it wouldn't change my life any. I'm just thankful that people have handed us down to the younger ones."
Danko holds The Band together

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. (CP) — Rick Danko puts down his coffee, looks up and smiles. Retirement hasn’t been treating him badly.

“I like to play — I’m just glad that we don’t have to do it every night,” said Danko, best known as The Band’s bassist. “If you don’t run it into the ground, it doesn’t become hectic. You look forward to it.”

Danko and his colleagues in The Band — guitarist Robbie Robertson, organist Garth Hudson, pianist Richard Manuel and drummer Levon Helm — were all Canadian-born except the Arkansas-bred Helm. Danko was born 44 years ago in Simcoe, Ont.

In the early 1960s, the group got its road legs by touring across North America, backing Toronto rocker Ronnie Hawkins. It became known, however, as the group that backed Bob Dylan when he went electric, shocking the folk world.

“lf known as The Band’s bassist. Danko and his colleagues in The Band, it didn’t become hectic. You look forward to it.”

Robertson left the group 11 years ago, but the remaining members continued to tour on and off as The Band, even after Manuel killed himself two years ago.

Danko has done occasional solo tours, but has kept them short and spread out as part of his “retirement program.”

A swing through the northeastern United States brought Danko, who lives in Woodstock, N.Y., to Niagara Falls and Toronto in early November.

“Sometimes, when I was younger, I would either stay home too long or stay away from home too long,” Danko said. “We’ve been home a couple of weeks, so it was nice to get out of the house.”

While keeping up live appearances, Danko hasn’t put out any new material since his 1978 solo album, Rick Danko, which included the cult hit Java Blues.

“I didn’t feel like it,” he explained. “I just don’t like the idea of throwing something out there to throw it out there. Remember, I retired 10 years ago.”

But Danko said The Band is looking for a record deal. For the last three years, the group has been recording, filming performances and making videos. The Band plans to make a movie out of some South American shows planned for this winter.

Danko appears on one song on Robertson’s just-released solo effort, which also features Hudson.

Danko doesn’t rule out the possibility of future work with Robertson. But the possibility of a full Band reunion vanished when Manuel hanged himself.

Michael Pollack, a recording engineer who is handling the sound on Danko’s tour, said Manuel was putting an album together when he died. Pollack said Hudson took over the tapes and, with help from Danko and Helm, Manuel’s record was completed. It has yet to be released.

On his solo dates, Danko is assisted by harmonica player Sredni Vollmer. Their acoustic sets include Band classics like The Weight and Stage Fright, and stripped-down standards like Willie Dixon’s Little Red Rooster.

Danko said he likes playing any size show. The Niagara Falls date, a favor to family in the area, was at a 250-seat club, a recent festival featuring The Band in Portugal attracted 250,000.

But Danko is adamant he doesn’t want to see The Band become a nostalgia act.

“The kids (at the shows) are real supportive,” he said. “They love the energy, and they love an honest effort. When something becomes nostalgic, people are just there for the money.”

“We’re not here for the money. We know better.”
Electric Bass Techniques

taught by RICK DANKO

No one who has seen or heard The Band will ever forget Rick Danko's dynamic and exciting bass playing. His percussive, driving style is so distinctive that it is one of the trademarks of The Band's unique sound.

This wonderful one-hour instructional video details some of the exercises, picking techniques, and musical ideas that have formed his style through the years. With his characteristic enthusiasm and good humor, Rick teaches:

- The proper way to play scales
- Several exercises to provide you with great bass lines
- His use of a flat pick and the palm of his right hand to get his unique, percussive sound
- Tips on how he coordinates his playing with a drummer
- Rhythm tracks to practice what you have learned

Also included in this video are an interview in which Rick describes his influences and experiences, and an intimate performance of a song played jam-style with some of his Woodstock friends. This tape is a wonderful treat, not only for bass players, but for anyone interested in the music of this legendary performer.

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Instant download or DVD available at homespun.com

Andy Robinson, Happy Traum, Rick Danko, Shredni Vollmer.
**WINDBERG TO PERFORM WITH ‘HERO’ HELM**

**By Robert Santelli**

PANORAMA ENTERTAINMENT

As he searched for ideas for his upcoming book about the Band, Steve Weinberg finished reading a novel by Bob Dylan that inspired him greatly.

"I feel the Band's spirit in the pages of "The Last Waltz,"" Weinberg said. ""It's a story about friendship and the joy of sharing music with others."

Weinberg has long been a fan of the Band, and he credits them with inspiring his own musical career.

"I've always admired the Band's ability to combine different styles of music in their own unique way,"" he said. ""And their dedication to playing live shows with passion and energy is something that I strive to emulate in my own work."

Weinberg's book, scheduled for release later this year, will explore the Band's influence on contemporary music and the legacy they've left behind.

"I hope to capture the spirit of the Band and their impact on the music world through my writing,"" he said. ""My goal is to create a book that fans of the Band will treasure and that will inspire new generations of musicians to follow in their footsteps."

The book is expected to feature exclusive interviews with Band members and other industry insiders, as well as previously unpublished photographs and never-before-seen footage from the group's iconic performances.

"I've been fortunate to have access to some incredible archival material,"" Weinberg said. ""I look forward to sharing that with readers and giving them a glimpse into the Band's fascinating world.""
Drummer duo among beat generation's best

By JANE SCOTT

Max Weinberg and Levon Helm were standing outside the entrance of Peabody's Down Under Saturday night, chatting with fans. "He's about half time," said Helm, stepping through the side door onto the stage. It was that kind of a loose-lute, casual show, too. But then you knew it wouldn't be the usual Friday night when you saw Max Weinberg's drum setup smack in the middle of the dance floor.

Of course Weinhberg and Helm, aren't your usual drummers. Weinberg, dark-haired with black-rimmed glasses, is master of the electric mandolin. Helm, slightly older, is drummer for that legendary group, The Band, which used to include Mighty Max Weinberg, the drummer for Bruce Springsteen.

"The concert never became "Dueling Drumsticks" that Max played during the solo part of his set, but he said and played harmonica on most of the songs on "Dylan," including "I Shall Be Released," "Like a Rolling Stone," "Ain't Too Proud to Beg," and "Physics And Geometry.

Max Weinberg and Levon Helm

"Hot Wire," that built up slowly like an approaching storm, was just as gripping. The band (also brother Jack Kidding, on drums, Steve Jerey on guitar and Terry Hyde, brother of Helm, on sax) form a strong but fluid group that deserves more success.

"Among the Wanderings," three unrecorded songs and "Summer Patterns" from a previous LP, "Numbers Band 2.""
ARKANSAS GAZETTE
Sunday, August 24, 1986

“END OF THE LINE” film producers Mary Steinbuergen, Lewis Allen, Peter Newman and Walter Stuart held a cast and crew party last week at JoaNita’s on Main Street.

The film is currently being shot at Little Rock and stars Mary, along with Wilford Brimley, Levon Helm, Barbara Barrie, Kevin Bacon and Bob Balaban.

Among the guests were Mary’s husband, Malcolm McDowell, Levon and Sandy Helm, Bob Balaban, Director Jay Russell and co-author of the script, John Wohlbruck.

The film cast and crew were joined by Governor Bill Clinton, D.J. and ZZ Top, Connie Potts and Leslie Singer and Walter and Diane Richardson.

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“End of the Line” star Bob Balaban, who plays a veteran railroad man, are beginning to attract national attention.

Both the film “End of the Line” and singer Levon Helm, who plays a veteran railroad man, are beginning to attract national attention.

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Rockabilly singer Helm turns to acting

By DONALD LABADE
COURIER-POST Wire Service

It started in the 1950s when rockabilly singer Ronnie Hawkins took Levon Helm, an 18-year-old singer-guitarist from Marvell, Ark., with him on a trek to Canada.

Small town musicians are always loosely formed. Members might stay for a month or a year. Helm eventually went on to become the leader of Levon and the Hawks. He was later one of the central figures in the group, The Band.

He began an on and off career as a movie actor with “Coal Miner’s Daughter.” His role as Sissy Spacek’s father won him an Oscar nomination.

LAST SUMMER, he came back to Arkansas from his home outside Woodstock, N.Y., to appear in “End of the Line.” Both the film and Helm — as Leo, a gentle, wise-eyed railroad veteran — are beginning to attract national attention.

Wherever the picture has played, audiences have broken into spontaneous applause when — guiding a train engine through the night — he delivers a monolog on a peculiar method for catching cattle.

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“End of the Line” star Bob Balaban, who plays a veteran railroad man, are beginning to attract national attention.

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All they wanted was their jobs. What they got was the adventure of a lifetime.

The cast of the year in the sleeper of the year. When the powerful Southland Railroad Company closes its railroad to a tiny Clifford, Ark., jobs are lost and the future looks grim.

But grizzled railroadmen Hancey (Wilford Brimley of Cocoon and LEROY (Levon Helm of Coal Miner’s Daughter), and their fellow retirees refuse to give up.

With shotguns and lunchboxes in hand, they “borrow” a locomotive and set out for company headquarters in Chicago to have a little talk with the President.

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**A ‘labor of love’ for Elvis**

Levon Helm will narrate TV special

The former Band member and country music singer will provide a new perspective on the King of Rock and Roll.

**By Jack Hill**

Levon Helm has been a part of the music industry for over 60 years, having been a member of the legendary group The Band and later establishing his own successful career. In his upcoming TV special, "Elvis '56," Helm will provide a new perspective on the King of Rock and Roll, Elvis Presley.

Elvis Presley was at a critical point in his life during 1956, as he went from a niche market to mainstream success. The special will delve into this transformative year, capturing the essence of the King of Rock and Roll and his impact on the music industry.

The special will feature rare footage and interviews, offering a unique insight into the life and career of Elvis Presley. With Helm's narration, viewers will gain a greater appreciation for the cultural significance of the "Elvis '56" era.

**Cinemax special commemorates Elvis**

The Special is a two-hour documentary that highlights Elvis' music and its influence on the world. It features interviews with fellow musicians and friends, as well as rare footage from the era. The documentary is narrated by Leon Helm, a member of The Band and a long-time friend of Elvis.

The documentary falls on the 30th anniversary of Elvis' death, and it is being released by Home Entertainment. It includes interviews with Presley's closest friends and family, as well as footage of his music videos, concert performances, and interviews.

The documentary is a tribute to the King of Rock and Roll and his legacy, and it is sure to be a must-see for fans of Elvis and music history.
Recalling Robertson's band

By ENTERTAINMENT NEWS SERVICE

ROBBIE Robertson, former member of The Band, speaks out on MTV this Sunday. At 10 p.m., MTV will air "Robbie Robertson: Telling Stories," a behind-the-scenes glimpse of the songwriter, producer and guitarist for The Band. The film includes clips from The Band's movie with Bob Dylan, "The Last Waltz" and rare footage of The Band. Peter Gabriel and U2, who perform on Robertson's new album, make special guest appearances.

ANSWERS

1. Levon Helm of Marvell, Arkansas. The others were born in Canada.
2. The Band's house in Saugerties, New York.
3. Van Morrison
4. Moondog Matinee (1973), named after Alan Freed's radio show. The album consisted primarily of rock 'n' roll songs.
5. Beautiful Noise (1976)
6. Levon Helm
7. The Basement Tapes
8. The Last Waltz (1978), by Martin Scorsese.
9. The RCO All-Stars

10. Carney

RATINGS:

Give yourself one point for each correct answer and rank yourself accordingly:
10: Your contract is in the mail.
9-10: Don't call us, we'll call you.
8-9: Let's do lunch.
6-7: Don't call us, we'll call you.
5 and below: Have you considered a full-time career in waiting tables?

MTV playlists for Nov. 7-13

PLAAT

ROLLING STONE
FROM THE LP · CASSETTE · CD
'ROBIE ROBERTSON'
OUT NOW
3· TRACK 12" INCLUDES
TAILGATE
PREVIOUSLY UN RELEASED
'SOMEBWHERE DOWN THE CRAZY RIVER'
& 'FALLEN ANGEL'
LP·CASS·CD

(don't take our word for it...)
Robertson’s new album is masterful

By Steve Morse
Globe Staff

Art rock rock ‘n’ roll is often said to be a dying genre, especially in the music market, but the recent release of Steve Morse’s album, “The Best of Two Worlds,” demonstrates that there is still life in this genre.

Robertson’s long-awaited first album, “Fallen Angel,” is a bold and masterful work, blending rock and roll with the high-tech progression of rock music.

The album is heavy with a virtuoso guitar line that weaves through the tracks. It’s a sonic journey that takes listeners on a ride through the ups and downs of a rock star’s life.

The album opens with the title track, “Fallen Angel,” featuring a lead guitar solo that captures the essence of a rock star’s life. The song is a powerful statement of a life lived on the edge, balanced with moments of introspection.

The album also features a collaboration with Bono, the lead singer of U2. Their voices blend seamlessly, creating a sense of unity and purpose.

The album is available now and is a must-listen for fans of rock music. It’s available on all major streaming platforms and can be purchased on all major music retailers.

Can you see me now? I don’t know. Can you see me now? I can’t see you.

Robertson’s album makes breakthrough

Robertson, who has long been associated with the Rolling Stones, has released his first solo album, “The Best of Two Worlds.”

The album is a departure from his previous work with the Stones, featuring a more acoustic and folk-influenced sound.

Robertson’s voice is strong and emotive, and he delivers each song with a sense of conviction.

The album features guest appearances from Bono, Eric Clapton, and Lou Reed, among others.

Robertson’s album is a testament to his versatility as a musician, and it’s a welcome addition to the rock genre.

Check out Discogs.com for more info on the singles from this album.
Robbie Robertson displays a new sound on his solo comeback album

By J. D. Cottom

Robbie Robertson, born in New York, is known for his deep, resonant voice and his ability to play the harmonica. He is a member of the Band, a band that has been active since the 1960s, and is also known for his work with the Grateful Dead and other bands. Robertson has always been a solo artist, and his new album is the result of his own musical vision.

The album, titled "Northern Lights," is a collection of songs that are both personal and universal. The album features a variety of musical styles, including rock, folk, and blues. The songs are written in a way that is both intimate and powerful, and they reflect Robertson's personal experiences and his love of the natural world.

Robertson's voice is as powerful as ever, and his harmonica playing is as masterful as it has always been. The album is a testament to his artistic talent and his ability to connect with his audience.

The songs on the album range from the intimate to the grand. "Northern Lights," the album's title track, is a powerful song that speaks to the beauty and mystery of the natural world. The song is a love letter to the landscape and the people who live in it.

Another standout track is "The Mountain," a song that speaks to the power of the land and the people who call it home. The song is a powerful testament to the resilience of the human spirit.

In addition to his musical talent, Robertson is also known for his activism. He has always been a champion of the environment, and his music reflects his commitment to preserving the land for future generations.

The album is a work of art that will appeal to music lovers of all ages. It is a celebration of the beauty of the natural world and the power of music to connect us with ourselves and with the world around us.

Overall, "Northern Lights" is a masterful album that will be remembered for years to come. It is a work of art that will stand the test of time and will continue to inspire and move listeners for generations to come.
WHEN I PAINT
MY MASTERPIECE:

ROBBIE
ROBERTSON

RELEASES
THE ALBUM OF THE YEAR

by keith and kent zimmerman

To borrow a phrase from "Somewhere Down The Crazy River," take a picture of this: In 1962, when discos were discotheques, a mad "band" of blues-hungry Canadian and Southern musicians is fired from New York's Peppermint Lounge. The band goes on to back up Bob Dylan, later evolving into The Band--spearheaded by guitarist/songwriter Jaime Robbie Robertson.

Born in Toronto of Jewish and American Indian parents, Robertson's unique songwriting with the Band made him one of the few articulate spokesmen for rock 'n' roll America. After the Band properly disbanded in 1976, Robertson deliberately walked away from music.

In the eleven years between The Last Waltz and this, his first solo music project, he remained active in films, producing and acting in the critically acclaimed 'Carney' and scoring and selecting soundtrack music for movies by his "best buddy in the world," director Martin Scorsese--unofficially, for "Raging Bull" and officially for "The King Of Comedy." In between his own album's sessions, he collaborated on the incidental score music for "The Color Of Money" with the blues master Willie Dixon and legendary jazz arranger Gil Evans.

We visited Robertson at his cozy two-room "workshop" tucked upstairs at a Santa Monica recording studio. Speaking with a hint of a Canadian accent, Robertson graciously elaborated on the birth and content of his nine-song masterwork LP which utilizes the talents of U2, Peter Gabriel, the BoDeans and other hand-picked contributors.

The walls of his small control room are ornamented with guitars, amps and a mini-gallery of contemporary Native American art. At the center of the control room is a chair and a small table on which sits an antique lamp and a microphone windscreen. It was at this table that Robertson sat and sang the lion's share of the haunting vocals for his new album, simply titled Robbie Robertson.

KZ: We understand this record was a year in the making.
RR: I started a year ago last June and mixed it last July. During that year, I did the score for "The Color Of Money." I'd never scored a movie before in my life. Originally, it was going to take three or four weeks, but it ended up taking three months.

KZ: How did you wind up getting involved in the "The Color Of Money" score
RR: It's Scorsese's arrangement of my blues stuff with some players he brought in.

KZ: What was it like working with those legends?
RR: I went to New York and worked with Gil Evans. Then I'd work with Willie and we'd work together. I'd play him some things and say, "Listen to this piece, Willie. Tell me how you feel." What you do with Willie Dixon is bring him in and whenever you're not sure about something, you just look over at him. If he gives you the nod, then you know you're right. Explaining this to the movie company was a little bizarre. They didn't understand this technique too much. It was fantastic. When I was in New York, I got together with Gil and I played him this album. He sat and listened. There were those chill bump moments. Every time he looked up, he'd give me one of those looks. He'd sit there like he was sleeping. Then some music would come up and he would react. He got it completely.

KZ: How about music when you started making the new album after eleven years?
RR: I think we're all in agreement that there was a bit of a drought in music. Every once in a while there was good stuff going on, but there wasn't a feeling in the air. A little excitement here and there, not so much over artists, but for particular things artists did. I liked some things the Sex Pistols did. I liked some things Elvis Costello and the Clash did. But what I was finding was that a lot of people who were making music in this generation were not overly exciting to me. It made me think, "I don't want to do that. I don't want to just churn it out like 'This is your duty--do a record and go do a tour.'" That was the reason I did The Last Waltz. It was a relief. I liked the idea of stepping away and disappearing, changing colors for a while. I didn't know whether I'd ever feel like doing this again. Then I got some ideas. I heard some sounds in my head. I thought, "Maybe there's something coming. I don't know for sure." Then time went on and it got closer and closer. Then I got this workshop set up here. I could come and think about ideas and songs. Then all of a sudden I started to think, "I'm in a mood. I'm gonna stir up some dust. It's going to be a wholehearted effort and I've got something in mind." As I wrote the songs, I got more and more excited. Then I started feeling the right feelings—anger, helplessness, all those things that make you do good work. But mainly that fire. All right, all right. Now we're talking. Now we're ready to step up to the plate.

KZ: Didn't you have that feeling when you were working on "Raging Bull" and "King Of Comedy"?
RR: No. Marty asked me to work on source music in "Raging Bull." "King Of Comedy" was an experiment we had in mind. It didn't call upon me to bring thunder out of my soul. It was just doing some good work. I'm a movie bug, but complementing movies is not what I want to dedicate my life to.

KZ: You were also contemplating acting?
RR: I did "Carney" as an experiment. After that I worked with several other film projects, but I started bowing out of them one by one. I was just not passionate about acting. I wanted these sounds. I wanted that timeless arrangement style. There's that relay of vocal parts... it's all very real. I didn't change that much. I feel like I'm just continuing to write this American mythology thing I've always been obsessed with. It's just a continuation of that. I just don't have that "Band" to play with now. I'm just using my imagination to do what I think works for my music now. It was not a great conscious effort to figure out how to bring this up to date.

KZ: How is it different being on your own rather than being a bandleader?
RR: It's a different position. Now instead of writing on behalf of a band or something, I don't have to take that into consideration anymore. Is this too indulgent for me to be writing this for these people to present? Now I'm on my own and confronting different emotions.

KZ: It's eerie. I can hear Rick Manuel and Rick Danko's voices on this record.
RR: It has a lot to do with the Band while writing the songs. When you write the songs, it's not just the chords and the melody and the words... it's the attitude and the sound, too. When I would express it to the other guys, I would tell them how to get the right feelings from those lines. A lot of times they would do their version of what you're doing. The Band would interpret it. That's why you still hear those traces. On one song, "Sonny Got Caught In The Moonlight," Rick Danko does sing harmony with me. It was a last-minute thing. I did it while we were mixing in Bearsville. I was going to do it myself. Then I thought, "I've done this on the record, I did it on 'Broken Arrow' and 'Somewhere Down The Crazy River.'" I wanted another sound. I called Rick and asked him to do it. It made me feel good just to hear that sound of the voices together.

KZ: Was that a concept you started?
RR: It's stuff we took from timeless old Americana, like shapenoting and old harp singing. Oh my God, I can see the ghosts. I can feel these tremors around these people when they sing. There's a light shining. When I would hear the other things that were real slick, I didn't get any of that feeling from it. We would draw upon everything that had been handed down to us. It was like a gift. That's what the Band did.

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KZ: Does "Somewhere Down The Crazy River" carry with nothing and building, ooming and that's where I got this idea. It was too hot, so the guys and they wanted to do experiences when I first went down South. When I first went to West Helena, Arkansas, from Canada, there was a place everybody went to late at night after everything else was closed. It was called Nick's Cafe, and that's where I got this idea. It was too hot, so people would go down and sit by the levee. You'd hear them singing. Down the river, you could hear this sound—a harmonica or the sound of the river, or somebody crying. You didn't know what it was. But it influenced me in the way I perceived music. It hit me at such a young age. I was in New Orleans a couple of years ago and it helped build this overall picture to me. "Somewhere Down The Crazy River" has to do with just talking about this place. Maybe we've never been there ourselves, but we know it's out there, it does exist. All those places are somewhere out in the shadowland of America. I took the part of being the storyteller of the shadowland. As I would go around, I would pull these stories out of the earth from these different locales. This was one of the things I had in mind when I started to make this record, American mythology needs to start writing ideas. Then Daniel said, 'I think we should where in this country is a town just like this. It's hot and KZ: Whose Idea was It to use U2?

RR: Absolutely. We're talking about a place we all got to this line, you come in singing here. Then you hours and it was twenty minutes long when we recorded it. We were trying different ideas and KZ: "It Makes No Difference" is another favorite Band song.

RR: It's one of my favorites too. KZ: How could you step back and let somebody else sing a song like that?

RR: But that's what made it the Band! If I had written, sung, and played the guitar solos, it would have been Robbie and the Band. That's how we started out. It was a workshop concept. You make this, I make that. You fix this, we do that. We put it all together and it works out. Everybody does their thing. Everybody feels just as strong as the next guy. I was into this thing of writing the songs and saying, "Okay, here's what's going to happen. You come in singing here. Then when it gets to this line, you come in singing here. Then you come in with him. Then you drop off and the high voice will come in. I was into doing these ideas. He was in a director mode.

KZ: When was "Fallen Angel" recorded for the new album?

RR: It was the first song I recorded. I got this mood of

American mythology does exist. Somebody needs to start writing it. It isn't all just make believe. It's very real.

the song and I started writing ideas to it. They were very mythical ideas. As I started writing the song, I didn't understand what things were working for me. As I was going along, I noticed I was being influenced by this Ad Manuel (the late piano player for the Band). When it hit me, it knocked me over. I could feel what I was writing about. It was the kind of song you put off until you have to face it. It was very hard to work on too. One day I'd be fine, then the next day I was just hopeless.

KZ: "Broken Arrow" is my favorite track.

RR: I did that with Peter Gabriel after he did the background vocals on "Fallen Angel." We were inspired and we cut that track. I played guitar and sang and he programmed this little hat and tambourine part and played these keyboards. It was a very emotional track. Then I came back and put on the bass and the drums.

KZ: It's hard to describe the sound of your album. Daniel Lanois produced it, but it doesn't sound like a U2 or Peter Gabriel album.

RR: I talked to a lot of producers. As I spoke to people, I thought, "Am I going to listen to this person? Am I going to care what this guy has to say?" I cared what Daniel had to say. He's extremely emotional. He's from Hamilton, Ontario. He wasn't one of those guys in the control saying, "It's coming along guys. A couple more times, I think we'll have it." He was out there sweating. He wasn't ordering coffee. Not having a band. I wanted to have the privilege of taking things too far.

KZ: How spontaneous was your "Sweet Fire Of Love" session with U2?

RR: It was pretty spontaneous. I had a few ideas on this little cassette of a guitar thing I played with a tom-tom. That was it. But there was something to it. We played it for the guys, and they said, "Let's go."

KZ: Did you expect that to happen?

RR: I didn't expect anything. These guys were still finishing up The Joshua Tree. They couldn't have been more right about it. We started from scratch and we built it. I had scraps of paper with some ideas. As I'd be going along, Bono would be looking at my pauch sheet written on it. He'd say, "This is a fantastic thing, and you have to get this in there somewhere." We cut the song over a period of a few hours and it was twenty-two minutes long when we recorded it. We were trying different ideas and

We were mixing worlds together. They're into the whole thing of roots. They wanted to do something in that kind of vein. They thought it would be a worthwhile experiment. Would it crash or would it fly? It was melting together nicely. We got brave, starting with nothing and building, coming back down then kicking into guitars talking back and forth. It had a futuristic blues element with this Irish world and this Americana world. We tried to make them fit together.

KZ: Whose idea was it to use U2?

RR: When they were playing on the Amnesty tour, I met through Daniel Lanois, and he was talking about musical ideas. Then Daniel said, "I think we should pursue this. We should try this experiment." When he went back to work with U2 and I went to do the Color Of Money, he called me and said he discussed it with the guys and they wanted to do it. We cut these two things together and it made a great musical experience. KZ: It's amazing when creatively artistic bands like U2 become mass appeal successes.

RR: What are we doing in this business? What do we thrive on? What makes us get up in the morning and say, "This is worthwhile." It's like the difference between those movies you go to and you get a couple of laughs out of them. Then you go see "Raging Bull" and you never get over it as long as you live. That's the difference in our lives. Something has to matter. That's what Gil Evans said. Here's this orchestra and we're working on writing, and finally one of the musicians says, "Hey! What do you call this stuff?" Gil looks up and says, "What's the matter with you? It's spiritual!" Then he goes back to writing. We were talking about a change. He said, "We have to know, does it matter? Does it make any difference?" It's such a little thing but it's very large too. People worked on minute things. Then they say, "Oh, we got it now." But it doesn't matter at all. What goes on inside us matters and makes a difference.

KZ: Didn't you produce an album one time for Neil Diamond?

RR: He talked to me about producing, and I said I didn't know where to start. They kept thinking I was holding out for money or something. Finally I got this connection—a crossroads in our past. We both went to Tin Pan Alley, to the Brill Building when we were kids. I went when I was fifteen. I met Leiber and Stoller, Pomus and Shuman, Otis Blackwell and all these people. Neil wanted to be one of those writers. So we built the ideas on the death of Tin Pan Alley around Beautiful Noise. I thought it was the last thing people would expect me to do. It appealed to me for that reason. It gave me an opportunity to experiment with a lot of things I didn't do with the Band.

KZ: Will you ever put a band together again?

RR: The idea of playing certain select things which would get special treatment and allow the Band to shine. All I know is that I would do it. I don't know exactly what I'll do.

KZ: Bob Clearmountain said your record was the best he'd ever worked on.

RR: We had been mixing songs and he said, "Boy, they just keep getting better." Finally one day, he came bursting out of the studio and said "This is the best album I've ever worked on in my life." There was this guy from Rolling Stone and he said, "Excuse me, can we talk about this for a minute? What about Bruce Springsteen and all the stuff that you've worked with?" He said, "I like what you're doing, too." Then the guy from Rolling Stone said, "But you're going to lose work talking like this." He said, "No, they hire me for what I do, not for what I say." I was glad he enjoyed it and got into it. It wasn't easy catching up on all of this stuff. Once he caught up, he was excited and worked real hard. There was a lot of experimenting done during the mixing. It wasn't just a matter of having a few tracks, putting up the ladders, putting on a little echo and we got it. Not at all. It was painting pictures. You see washes of things that come and disappear. I had the whole idea of things coming at you and then going by you... movement and moving pictures.

KZ: Take a picture of this.

RR: Yeah. (laughs)
Making inspired music "isn't carpentry work" says Robbie Robertson. "You have to call upon something way inside." 

I wasn't sure I had anything more to say" is not the sort of thing you'd ever expect to hear out of a proud pop star's mouth. 

And when someone once as prolific as Robbie Robertson—the chief creative force behind the Band in the '60s and early '70s and one of the most influential songwriters in rock history—swears he sat out an entire decade without ever once being struck with the urge to pen another tune, let alone record an album, you tend not to believe him.

Surely, occasional sound track work with director Martin Scorsese and spending time at home with the family couldn't have been enough to satisfy the creator of such soulful rock classics as "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down" and "The Weight." 

But Robertson insists that it wasn't until 1986, almost 10 years after the Band's "Last Waltz" concert, movie and record, which purported to document the end of the Band as a touring unit. (One member, Richard Manuel, has since died—s a suicide.)

"I thought of a lot of people from the same era when I was making a lot of records that had continued making a lot of records," he says now with a chuckle. No naming names here. "A lot of it didn't seem terribly inspired. It gave me some evidence that my instincts were right. This isn't carpentry work, you know. You have to call upon something way inside, and if you can't reach it..."

Nur Robertson tempted to reunite his former Band-mates when they reformed without him for several small tours—following the "Last Waltz" concert, movie and record, which purported to document the end of the Band as a touring unit. (One member, Richard Manuel, has since died—a suicide during one such Band "reunion" tour.)

"T'm writing and I think, 'Oh, I've heard something and feel something, and it makes me feel fantastic, and I want to know more and say something and feel something, and it makes me feel fantastic, and I want to know more about it. But I'm not trying to preach this thing at all. This is not just a religious trip. It's something that's always intrigued me," says Robertson, "but I didn't feel right impositioning this on the Band. It was just too much my background and my trip. I felt, I was doing best if I could write on behalf of our music. And now that I don't have a band to be responsible to, it feels very natural for me to express this thing that I've had deep inside me all my life."

"I'm writing and I think, 'Oh, I've heard this before. Somebody's already done this, or something like it.' . . . A lot of great ideas and a lot of great pieces of inspiration have been used up in this music. It's not an easy thing to say, that there are only so many stars in the sky. You think, 'Well, that's still a lot. But over the last million years, a lot of them have been counted already. To find a new star in the sky is pretty hard.'"

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"I don't think that it's an endless pit," he affirms. "Since this kind of music began—with Louis Jordan & the Timpapi Five, with certain blues artists that were doing things everybody stole from, since the early '50s—a lot of the great lines, great melodies, great rhythms have been used up. And it means you have to search a little bit more.

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Robertson

Robertson

grows and becomes an inspirational period where you face everybody's giving all their hearts and nobody's dodging. That's what it was like in the late '60s, when from Stax, from Motown, from England, everywhere, there was so much going on at the same time.

You listen to records then and think, 'Boy, I better come up with something here. I mean, these people aren't fooling around- this stuff is strong stuff.' When you get that snowball effect going in music, it's very healthy .... I think we have a responsibility to try to avoid disposable music and disposable art.
Off the Band stand

**ROBBIE ROBERTSON**

(Ex—The Band)

**LPC/CD**

**Et mesterverk!**

ROBBIE ROBERTSON's latest solo album, *Filer* suffers a lot from the pain of his past. This man is an artist, and as such his work often takes on an emotional weight that can be difficult to bear. The album is a testament to his talent, but also to the overwhelming pressure of expectation that comes with being a legend. It's a double album, and while it's a testament to his ability to stretch his musical boundaries, it's also a reflection of his struggle to break free from the past. This is both a strength and a weakness. On the one hand, it makes for a compelling listen; on the other, it's a reminder of the toll that success can take. In the end, *Filer* is a powerful work, but one that's not without its flaws. It's a testament to Roberton's dedication as an artist, and one that will undoubtedly be remembered as an important piece of music for years to come.
The Return of Robbie Robertson

A decade after The Last Waltz, the Band’s leader comes out of retirement to make his Big Statement.

By Bill Flanagan

I never said, ‘I’m not going to write songs for a while.’” Robbie Robertson says. “I just didn’t have the nerve to get into it, sit down and suffer. And I enjoyed the sense that I didn’t have to do it. After I did The Last Waltz I thought, ‘This kind of redeems me a little bit. For a little while.’”

Robbie Robertson isn’t offering excuses—he’s just running down the facts. As guitarist and songwriter for the Band, Robertson was one of rock’s most important voices from 1968—when Music from Big Pink appeared—till 1976, when the Band said goodbye with their Last Waltz concert. Robertson’s charisma in the 1978 film of that concert almost led to a movie career—but after starring in one movie (Capey), Robbie decided he didn’t really want to do that, either. So he helped his friend Martin Scorsese with some motion picture soundtracks, and laid low here in Los Angeles. For ten years.

“I wasn’t so sure I had something to say,” shrugs Robertson, forty-three. “And I heard a lot of people making records who had nothing to say, either. I thought, ‘I don’t know if I want to do that. I don’t know if I want to just make records. Maybe I’ll do a movie, maybe I’ll score a film.’ I enjoyed very much experimenting with

Photograph By Chris Caffaro
preparing the score for Raging Bull. It made me feel good. I thought, ‘God, I’ve always been thinking of things to say, I’ve always been showing up. I’m just going to hang around the house for a while, talk to my kids.’ I wasn’t sleeping, but I just didn’t want to make mediocre moves. I looked around me and it seemed like everybody was. It was like an epidemic of medium out there. I’m grateful I wasn’t motivated to just get it over with.”

It’s an admirable attitude—but not completely unique. John Lennon and John Fogerty are famous examples of rock legends who left for years to recharge. Simon, Dylan and Morrison have had their long vacations, too. What really sets Robertson apart is that (a) he said goodbye before he left, and (b) he’s coming back with an album as powerful as the best of his old stuff. “Starting Over” wasn’t exactly “Strawberry Fields,” and “Rock ‘n’ Roll Girls” wasn’t “Run Through the Jungle,” but Robertson’s new record has songs that you could put right beside “The Weight.” Here in California in June he’s wrapping up work on the still untitled LP he hopes will make it to the record stores the last week of September. The album has the dignity and depth Band lovers expect, but it ain’t More Cahoots.

Co-produced by Robbie and Daniel Lanois, and utilizing back-up musicians such as Peter Gabriel and U2, Robbie Robertson’s first solo album fits the aural space between So and The Joshua Tree. With the bonus of having tunes by one of the five best songwriters of the rock era.

“Daniel Lanois wanted to do it basically because of the songs,” Robertson explains. “But one of the things he prides himself on is bringing new inspiration to the party. When we got into it, it all started changing. We’d be recording a song in the studio and I’d go upstairs to my workshop and he’d come in and go, ‘Oh my God—what is that you’re doing? This is what we’ve got to pursue!’ We’re already in the middle of the river mission. It was exciting; it kept the sparks flying.”

Robbie Robertson’s impeccable, He walks into an expensive restaurant overlooking the Pacific Ocean in Santa Monica; the hostess and the waiters all know him, other diners send over drinks, he asks lots of follow up questions about the wine. The guy’s obviously got it. He’s completely on top of things. He was on the cover of Time magazine at twenty-five, he hangs out with Antonioni. The guy’s impeccable. But the funny thing is, under the smooth exterior he’s also the ex-carny, the kid who quit school when he turned sixteen to go on the road with rock and roll wildman Ronnie Hawkins. Everybody else in this plush restaurant is squeezed at little tables. But not Robbie. He made reservations for one extra person so he’d get more room. As the waiters bring bread and more free drinks get sent by anonymous Band-lovers, Robbie continues to pretend that his friend must be just running late. He eventually says we’ll order some hors d’oeuvres while we’re waiting for our pal, and finally, when he’s good and ready, he tells the waiter, Okay, we’ll order our meals and let him catch up later. And you’ve got to think—this guy’s immaculate. The bourgeois system is not set up to deal with articulate carnis in expensive clothes who use imaginary friends to get the big table.

There’s always been some hint of that sort of thing with the official histories of the Band, a suggestion that those five guys had a lot more going on than ever got in the papers. And that maybe the story that did appear in the papers had just a little spin on it. It’s like those biographies of Lyndon Johnson that repeated a life story gleaned from other biographies back to Texas newspaper articles that it turned out were based on lies told by Lyndon. Not that the Band told lies—their records were so good that there was no need for hype at all. No, the Band had sort of a wall of myth around it, and writers kept raising it higher.

So what do we know? That Robertson, Levon Helm, Garth Hudson, Rick Danko and Richard Manuel came out of Ronnie Hawkins’ backup group to support Bob Dylan when he went electric. They played tumultuous concerts in Europe and America, with folkies booing and rockers screaming. In 1966 Dylan was waylayed in Woodstock, New York and the Hawks moved up there, too. With Dylan they recorded a bunch of demos that later became famous as The Basement Tapes. In 1968 Dylan released John Wesley Harding and the Band, as they redubbed themselves, knocked the rock world on its ear with Music From Big Pink. A year later they put out The Band, the brown album everybody’s gone through three copies of. It had songs like “Up on Cripple Creek,” “King Harvest” and “The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down.” They played Woodstock, they got that Time cover. (The magazine called them the first rock band to match the excellence of the Beatles. The Band might have been more impressed if they’d said Willie Dixon.) In 1970 they released Stage Fright, which contained some of Robertson’s best writing, and in 1971, Cahoots, which was a little tired. Then there was a long filler period—a live album, an LP of oldies. In 1974 there was the big Dylan/Band tour—Bob’s first in eight years and the biggest rock tour ever to that point. Something like four percent of the population of the United States mailed in money for tickets. That tour produced another live album, but the next real Band record, Northern Lights, Southern Cross, did not appear until 1975. It was quickly followed by Islands in 1976, and that was quickly followed by The Last Waltz.

All in all not a very busy career. And there were gaps between tours almost as long as the gaps between LPs. Yet the story put forth in The Last Waltz, and repeated by writers ever since, is that the Band lived on the road and had to wrench themselves away from it before it killed them like it killed Jimi and Janis and Elvis. “We never even played a show until after we did our second album,” Robbie admits with a laugh. “It seems like we played everywhere but we weren’t out there,” he smiles, “like maybe the imagination implies.”

One bit of mythmaking that did come true, though, was Robbie’s dire prediction about the fate of the Band if they stayed on that endless highway. His four cohorts reunited without him a few years ago, and in early 1986 Richard Manuel died in a Florida hotel room. That tragedy implied that Robertson’s motivations for breaking up the Band were based on justified fear.

“It went through cycles of danger,” he says slowly. “And one element of danger surpassed the others until it was just frightening. We didn’t know what the next day might bring. There were times when we were just scared to death of what would come out of this monster that had seeped out of the woodwork. And we saw it happen to everybody around us. You don’t learn from it: it just sucks you in. We started playing together when we were just kids—sixteen, seventeen years old. To see people teetering on the brink constantly….Richard scared us to death. We scared ourselves to death. These things become the priority, that’s what rules your existence.

“We’re talking about living a dangerous life. One thing equals another whether it’s drinking or drugs or driving as fast as you can or staying up for as long as you can. That way of life seemed very fitting. At a certain age you don’t think, ‘This is insane!’”

“I came up with the idea of The Last Waltz. I thought it would be a very soulful move. I said to the guys, ‘Listen, we don’t want to travel town to town anymore. We should evolve to the next stage. I think we should do this and do it in a very musical fashion. Gather together people who represent different
spokes of the wheel that makes up rock ‘n’ roll.’ And everybody said, ‘Yeah!’ So we did it and it was over with. But you forget when you’re doing these things that people have in-bred music, in-bred road. It isn’t like all of a sudden they can say goodbye. So it turned out after a while that everybody didn’t feel the same way I did about it.”

Robertson wasn’t offended by the various combinations of his ex-partners who billed themselves as “Band Reunions.” “That’s when I realized it was as some people’s blood,” he says. “They couldn’t say goodbye. It was too much a part of their past. I didn’t feel strange about it, but it wasn’t anything I related closely to. I didn’t feel like, ‘This is a big lie for you guys to do this.’ I just felt like if I did it, it would be a big lie.”

So Robertson, the man who wrote, “I’ll spend my whole life sleeping” and other odes to enlightened laziness, took the high road and watched his three kids grow up. The Band had signed to Warner Bros. just in time to break up, and eventually that label realized they weren’t going to see a Robertson solo album. Meanwhile, a young Band fan named Gery Gersh had gotten a job in A & R at EMI. He convinced Robbie to sign with that company, although Robbie was only half interested and EMI thought he was probably a great songwriter who couldn’t sing (the price for Robbie passing most of the Band’s vocals off to Rick, Richard, and Levon). When Gersh moved over to Geffen Records he got that company to buy Robbie’s contract from EMI. Robertson did a lot of label switching for somebody who wasn’t going near a recording studio. Finally, Gersh set out to convince a dubious Robbie that he really should write a bunch of songs and make an album.

“We think he wanted to do this really badly,” Gersh says, “but didn’t know how to go about it. And I wanted to do it really badly and didn’t know how to go about it. So we just started getting into a series of very intense discussions of what we wanted to do. I didn’t want to do it if he wanted to make another Band record, and he didn’t want to make another Band record, so we hit it off immediately. We started searching for rhythms, for keyboard programs. We wanted to make the album mostly a guitar record. A lot of strings and swells that add color were done on guitars instead of synthesizers.” Gersh and Robbie have some ambitious notions—including evolving a series of Robertson films with corresponding albums. But for now they’re taking nothing for granted. “We’re making the best Robbie Robertson record we can make,” Gersh says. “If the public enjoys it as much as I think they will, it’ll be fantastic. If they don’t, I’ll hold my head up very high. It’s weird that this is Robbie Robertson’s first solo album. I mean, if it’s really well-received does he get Best New Artist?”

Work on the album began in June of 1986. Robbie and fellow Canadian Dan Lanois hit it off quickly—they both love experimenting with sounds. They also both like to get a lot of interesting sonic options on tape—and use the mix to choose between them, but not to alter the sounds themselves. Work began, but Robbie’s pal Scorsese was after him to do the soundtrack for The Color of Money. Robbie kept trying to say no, and Scorsese kept calling him with one more problem, one more question, one more idea. “I told him, I can’t do it. I’ve really got to give this album my full attention. I just ignored everything I said. He said, ‘You know, when we get to this scene...’ We were in the water! He’s one of my best friends in the world and finally he said, ‘Let’s cut the crap—you’ve got to do this.’” So Robbie agreed to do the damn movie. “I thought it was not an ideal move at all,” he shrugs. “I haven’t made an album in a while and all of a sudden with my left hand I’m gonna be doing music for this movie? To work with guys like Martin...” --
and Gil Evans is a gift from heaven, but the timing... Daniel wasn't crazy about the idea, but he kind of put up with it. Then he had to go over to Ireland to finish up U2's album.

So the Robertson project was put on hold. Lanois, back up The Joshua Tree, got Robbie to promise to come over to Dublin to do some recording with Band fans U2. But first Robertson had to sort through the songs Scorsese was considering for The Color of Money. One was a tune Eric Clapton had submitted. "Marty said, 'I don't think it's going to work in the movie, but it's got something. There's a couple of lines that I like. I'm going to tell Eric to call you and you just straighten out with him what it'll take to make this song work in the movie.'" Robertson laughs at the memory. "So I thought, well this is some strange predication. Eric's an old friend I hadn't seen in a while. He called me and said, 'Okay, what do we do?' I said, 'I don't know. Let me think about this thing, see if I can come up with something.' I just kind of copped out of the situation, put it up of my mind, and went on with scoring the movie. So a couple of days later he called me back. I said, 'Look, Eric, I've gotta be truthful with ya, you're catching me at a bad time. I've gotta score this movie and I'm in the middle of making an album...'" He said, 'Don't tell me about a rough time for you! I'm in the waiting room where my girlfriend is about to have a baby! Don't tell me about timing!' I said, 'Well okay, you win. I've gotta be truthful with you, you're catching me at a bad time. I've gotta score this movie and I'm in the middle of making an album...'" He said, 'Don't tell me about a rough time for you! I'm in the waiting room where my girlfriend is about to have a baby! Don't tell me about timing!' I said, 'Well okay, you win. I'm pulling scraps of paper out of my pockets. We start — and the next day comes and it's time to deliver on this. Daniel plays the first tape for the guys. They hear this guitar riff, this tom-tom. Bono says, 'Let's go.' I'm thinking, 'Oh, God, let's go where?' I'm pulling scraps of paper out of my pockets. We start — and these guys jumped right in the water. They did something! They thought of a word idea, Bono thought of something. We recorded this song and it was twenty-two minutes long! We listened to it and said, 'That's pretty good!'

"Then somebody comes in and says, 'Eric Clapton's on the phone!' He said, 'Listen, you've only given me seventy percent of the lyrics on this thing. Where's the rest of them?' I said, 'Eric, could you call me back in an hour?' He said, 'No, no! We've been through this! I'm in the studio singing the song and my voice is about to give out! What are the rest of the words?"

"Richard (Manuel) scared us to death. We scared ourselves to death. These things became the priority, that's what rules your existence. We're talking about living a dangerous life. One thing equals another whether it's drinking or drugs or driving as fast as you can or staying up as long as you can."

So I had to run back up to my little room and sort out what I could. I called him back and I guess in an hour that record was done. I appreciate his patience and understanding. He kept saying to me, 'Where are you? What are you doing there?'

Robbie went back into the room with U2. The song they had cut—"Sweet Fire of Love" was terrific. Robbie and Edge trade guitar fire while Bono, singing higher than normal, and Robbie, singing lower than normal, rail at each other like Gabriel and Lucifer. "Didn't we cross the waters?" Robbie sings, "Didn't we break the silence?" He sings of coming through the storm.

"We just threw the chips into the hat and mixed it up to see what would come." Robbie says. "Edge and I got into this guitar thing that I love. I love guitars screaming at, talking to, each other." In Edge, Robertson saw a guitarist like himself, more concerned with total effect than flash or solos. "It's whether it's musical," Robbie nods. "That's all it takes. It doesn't have to be complicated, it just has to speak to the soul of the issue. If it does right by the song you've made the right choice. In this day and age I have trouble telling one guitarist from the other. With Edge I hear three notes and I know it's him. The sound was always up front for me. Look at Miles
The Last Waltz: Manuel, Danko, Robertson, Hudson and Helm.

Davis! People would play a thousand notes; Miles would play one note, I could recognize him, and it would break my heart to boot. One reason I wanted to try this experiment with U2 was because I was very impressed by this group as a rhythm section. Larry Mullen has incredible rock 'n' roll instincts, and he and Adam, the bass player, do something that feels fantastic. When I'd listen to those guys I'd think, 'This is the real item.'

"Bozo and I talked about lyrics. How when you're writing lyrics for a band you have to express it on our behalf. When you're writing for yourself you don't have to do that." So Robbie's new songs are more personal than the Band's Americana?

"They're personal in the sense of playing the character of the storyteller. The songs are not, 'I was born by a river...' I take the view of a character who zooms in on aspects of life and tells it through his words. Some of it is first person, some of it is on behalf of a story—but it's different than I was ever able to do with the Band."

That seems like an odd statement. If it's in the voice of a character anyway, you think, why couldn't he have done it with the Band? But listening to the new songs, one character and set of images emerges that, sure enough, the other guys in the Band would not have been qualified to give voice to: an American Indian.

Robertson has an office—he calls it a workshop—at Village Recorders in Santa Monica. "It's great that it's in a recording studio," he smiles. "That way if I get an idea and I need a microphone, I can call downstairs and borrow one." There's a carved wooden table Robbie uses as a desk, a couple of couches, and a painting of an American Indian on the wall. Tonight Robbie wants to go to a Native American art opening at a chi-chi gallery in Venice. One of the artists is Darren Vigil, the Indian who did the painting in Robbie's workshop and who's now working on a Robertson portrait. The gallery itself could be the brunt of a Woody Allen skit—they hand out Tootsie Rolls as entrance tickets—but the work is wonderful. Robbie passes through the crowd like he was born in a beret, greeting local artists by name and then offering succinct critiques: "That's Andre—he's doing great. His stuff's a little mathematical but I like it a lot." (Trivia buffs will recall Bob Dylan's famous assessment of Robbie Robertson as a "mathematical guitarist.")

A lot of the paintings mix up the serious and playful. Darren Vigil's paintings are crammed with images and information—but there's a punch line: He paints little cracks in the claustrophobia through which peek starry skies. Robbie's studying a painting when someone suggests that the Indian unity between spiritual and physical—sort of combining high mass and a cookout—has a parallel in African art.

"Yeah," Robbie says, "but I know a lot more about Indians. My mother was born and raised on the Six Nations Indian Reservation above Lake Erie. Wait. Back that up. Robbie Robertson's mother is an Indian? "Yeah. And my father was Jewish. How's that for a combination?" Born to wander, one supposes—or as Jimmy Iovine puts it: "The Six Nations met the Six Tribes." Robertson's father was a professional gambler named Claygerman who married an Iroquois woman, took her to the big city of Toronto, and died when Robbie was a small boy. His mother eventually remarried, to a man named Robertson.

"Every summer she would take me to the reservation," Robbie says. "It was like a time warp. My uncles and aunts had lots of kids. I had all these cousins who could tell things from listening to the ground. They could sniff the air and say when it was going to rain—tomorrow. These guys didn't climb trees—they could run up a tree. I'd run to the bottom of the tree, come to a halt, and say, 'What happens if you fall?' It was just a different way of life altogether. A lot of music, though. They all played something—mandolins, fiddles, guitars. That's where I started playing music."

Robbie's Indian heritage is more obvious on his new album than on anything he did with the Band. "Broken Arrow"—a fragile mood piece full of longing and melancholy—might be the most beautiful song he's ever written. And this guy wrote "Out Of The Blue," "Al La Glory" and "It Makes No Difference." "Broken Arrow" is more about Indian summer than Indians—unless, like Robertson, you spent childhood summers on a reservation. It's a song that makes seasoned session drummers cry. You better hear it for yourself.

"Hell's Half Acre" is on the opposite end of the totem pole. It's a savage rock song about an Indian boy who is drafted and loses his soul in a meaningless war. "I thought of the whole idea of sending kids off to some foreign land to fight for something they don't understand," Robertson says. "The ultimate rape was to do it to an American Indian. That, to me, showed the picture more vividly." The pain of the song—a decent comparison is U2's "Bullet The Blue Sky"—whips out from the electric guitar. It was cut with the album's basic quartet: Robbie on lead and rhythm, Tony Levin on bass, Manu Katche on drums, and Lanois' ally (and by coincidence ex-Ronnie Hawkins sideman) Bill Dillon on ambient guitar sounds.

The Native American art opening is packed, but Darren Vigil eventually finds Robbie. They slip out to Darren's car, where the artist has slides of new paintings. Robbie consumes them. He's knocked out by a Matisse-like painting of an Indian woman in sunglasses. Then they decide to take their Tootsie Rolls and head to a disco where a bunch of the Indian artists are having an opening night party. The place is dark and loud and crowded. The P.A.'s blasting "I Want You Back" and "Low Rider." People are dancing and drinking and pinching each other. As the owner leads Robbie to a booth some people shake his hand and some whisper to friends, "You know—Last Waltz, take a load off, Fanny, that guy..." A drunk comes up and starts
Three weeks later, Robbie Robertson is back in Woodstock, New York. He’s standing in the doorway of Bearsville Studios, the legacy of his late manager Albert Grossman. When mixmaster Bob Clearmountain suggested Robertson move the album to Woodstock for the home stretch, he was reluctant. "At first I really didn’t want to come up here to do it," he says. "It was like, ‘Oh no! I’m starting over!’ But it’s been great. I’m really glad we came.” Twenty years after the basement tapes, he admits he isn’t sure exactly how to find Big Pink. (He never lived there. Rick Danko and Richard Manuel did.) That whole basement tapes thing got mythologized a little too fast. People never told this story before. I wonder what he’s gonna think.” So

Robertson the songwriter has walked a very fine line, a line almost unique in rock. He writes in the voices of characters—the Confederate Virgil Cane, the migrant Cajun in “Arcadian Driftwood,” the Indian draftee in “Hell’s Half Acre.” But he writes these characters with an almost confessional directness.

I have an old Broadcaster that I use quite a bit.” Robbie Robertson says. “It was made around 1948. With a lot of new guitars you plug ‘em in, adjust ‘em for an hour and maybe they sound pretty good. This you plug in and it sounds good. I’ve had this souped-up old Stratocaster quite a while. It has ‘Number 254’ on the back. You can tell it’s old ‘cause the neck’s a little thin. Before I used it in Last Waltz I had it bronzed, like baby shoes. That gave it a very thick, sturdy sound. A Stratocaster has three pickups; I had the one in the middle moved to the back with the other and tied them together. They have a different sound when they’re tied together, and I don’t like having a pick-up in the middle, where you pick. I’ve got a Washburn whammy bar on that guitar. I have a 1959 Les Paul with flat-wound strings on it that I use if I want a thicker, fatter sound. Those flat-wound strings are nice for slide playing.

On the wall in the studio I have four amps: a little 30-watt Vox, a very old Bassman, a Roland Jazz Chorus and a Fender Reverb with a swapped-out tremolo. I have a switch so I can use any or all of those amps, and I use a little guitar pedal a lot. I also use these tiny old Fender Princeton and Harvard amps on some things.

“I have two cheap little Korg keyboards I used on the record: I don’t even know the numbers—Daniel Lanois bought them for me one day. And I used a Yamaha piano-keyboard writing the songs.

“And I have an old Rickenbacker lap steel—I like the way it looks more than anything about it. These things were made in the late 30s and there’s a pickup on it that it wases any pickup anybody has on any instrument now. Amps start weeping at the very sound of the power this pickup puts out! I talked to Seymour Duncan on the phone a few months ago—I wanted him to come down and help me suss out this pickup. He said he’d come down and I never heard from him again. Maybe he was afraid I was gonna tell him this story...”

Uh-oh—if you readers have gotten this far in the blue box hold on to your hats—cause Robbie just might be persuaded to tell us the previously unrevealed Seymour Duncan Story. Waiter, a couple more cocktails! “I met Seymour Duncan a long time ago,” Robbie begins. “I didn’t really remember the circumstances. One day I’m reading a magazine and he’s telling how he got into pickups. It says that he met me in this place near Atlantic City where we were both playing, and we stayed up all night and played and he said, ‘Geez—the sound of this guitar of yours—what have you got in it?’”

Robertson turns conspiratorial: “Now this was a style of playing I had learned traveling around the country with Ronnie Hawkins. People asked me about it a lot and I got bored so I used to make up stories. I’d say, ‘I soak my guitar strings in hair oil,’ or ‘I cut swastikas in the speakers with razor blades.’ So Seymour Duncan says to me, ‘What have you done to your guitar to make it sound like that?’ And not being able to think of anything better I said, I’ve got more windings in the pickups.”

“So anyway, I’m reading this article years later and Seymour Duncan says, ‘Robbie Robertson told me about more windings, so I’ve put more windings in my pickups and I’ve gone on to make The Seymour Duncan Pickup!’” Robertson lets out a laugh. “And this whole business is based on a big lie! It never existed! I couldn’t think of anything else to say!” Robbie takes a drink and smiles. “I never told this story before. I wonder what he’s gonna think.” So do our ad guys, Robbie.
ness. Now this was common in pre-rock 'n' roll songwriting, but rock has tended toward either character writing in extrems or the appearance of autobiography. Most rock 'n' roll character writing is "Midnight Rambler" or "Money For Nothing." Randy Newman's bigot or Lou Reed's rapist. Created characters tend to be cartoons. The other style, the first-person I love you/ I hate you/ I can't get no satisfaction style used by everybody from the Beatles to the Sex Pistols, maintains at least the illusion of being autobiographical, of being a true emotional statement. Robbie Robertson is the rare rock songwriter who gives obviously fictional characters as much compassion as other songwriters lavish on "I."

"I don't feel like taking the part of characters to outrage," he says. "That's a bit of... a trickery to me. This has to be a free American mythology, as opposed to just whatever I could think of. Does it break my heart, does it give me chills, does it conjure up some kind of spell in me that I'll never get over? That is more interesting to me than a song on behalf of a bigot. I have nothing against that—but it doesn't have a valid place in this picture.

"And I was embarrassed by the self-indulgence of 'me me me.' Here's a little song about me. If I started out a song that way it'd make me puke all over the piano." He is quiet for a minute. Then he says, "Everything you write is personal, y'know? You maybe try to disguise or hide what's real personal about it. What is 'Out Of The Blue' if it's not personal? Or "It Makes No Difference?"

Yet "It Makes No Difference," from Northern Lights, is the perfect example of a Robbie Robertson love song. It's downright stoic in its stiff-upper-lipness: "There is no love as true as the love that dies untold." There's a truly strange distancing device in the bridge. Here is this heart-breaking song about soldiering on in the face of unbearable loneliness and suddenly the singer goes, "Stampeding cattle, they rattle the walls." Now what is that if not a way for Robertson to distance himself—a way to say, "This is getting too close to me. What's this if not a way for Robertson to distance himself—a way to say, "This is getting too close to me."

Now what is that if not a way for Robertson to distance himself—a way to say, "This is getting too close to the bone, I better stick in a distraction so people will think it's a song about some other guy, some old cowboy." Where the hell did the cattle stampede come from, Robbie?

"When I was writing that song," he says and interrupts himself. "It's nonsense that you think of these things but nevertheless you go through them—I'm writing and I'm thinking, 'Is this maybe getting a little too legitimate?' So I got to the bridge and I thought, 'Here's where I shuffle the deck a little bit.' I do remember at that point thinking, 'Here's where I get to make this song not just traditional, here's where I get to stir up some dust.'"

And how better to stir dust than with a stampede?

"I remember people saying for years, 'Y'know, I was thinking of recording that song but when it got to that line I didn't know what to do. I didn't know if I could deliver that.' But although I was looking to break out of that mood for a second and then come back to it, I wasn't at all saying, 'What can I say outrageous?' I wanted to shatter the silence. And the loneliness and this feeling that you're going crazy in this room—what could be stronger than stampeding cattle inside the wall? So in a kind of Luis Buñuel philosophy of images it made all the sense in the world to me. I just wanted to feel more of a rumble in the earth. Things were too still for me. I didn't want it to just become sad. I've always appreciated the violence in desolation as much as the helplessness."

Geffen's Gary Gersh is in Woodstock, with aide de camp Judith Haenel. Clearmountain is trying to figure out Lanois' random methods of storing different sounds on each track. Mixing these things isn't half as hard as finding where the information's stashed. There's a problem with a song called "What About Now." It's a march with a fine rhythm, nice synth parts and a solid verse. But the chorus is sounding like Up With People—a little too rousing for this LP, a little too jolly. The obvious problem is the backing vocals—hyperpro Hollywood studio singers with all the right notes and all the wrong feeling. Robertson wants to wipe those backgrounds and replace them with something more offbeat. That something turns out to be Lone Justice singer Maria McKee. Maria pulls up at the studio door with her manager, Jimmy Iovine. Yeah, Jimmy is a hotshot record producer, but not today. Today he's just along to look after his client (although he and Robbie jöre about sending Lanois a snapshot of Iovine "fixing" Lanois' tracks).

Maria has just flown in from a European tour and she's pooped. But Robertson has a gift for making people relax, feel no pressure and work twice as hard. Robbie engages Maria in conversation about Paris, about touring, about headache remedies. He suggests that before they even hear "What About Now," Maria take a listen to "American Roulette," a song that needs a woman's voice on its chorus. Robbie explains that it's about America's way of creating stars to destroy them, that one verse is about James Dean, one about Elvis Presley and the third about Marilyn Monroe. The Bodeans sang on the Presley section (Robertson likes them because they sing like guys in a band who step up to the mike on the chorus—not like session pros). He wants Maria to try the chorus coming out of the Monroe verse. Maria understands what the song needs, and rather than go for the obvious harmony, she and Robertson try for a high, airy sound—a bit like Monroe's little-girl gisp. It works pretty well, but it's hard to get the exact balance between phrasing, pitch and sexy character. Through all the tries Robbie exudes easy confidence. "Maria," he says, hitting the talk-back button, "it's just getting better and better."

Iovine—sitting on the couch and trying really really hard to not be a producer—finally says, "Why don't you slow down the tape a bit so she can have time to get that phrasing right." Robbie looks at his guest as if Jimmy just suggested they all paint themselves blue. "Slow down the track?" he laughs. "But won't she sound like Minnie Mouse when we take it back to normal?" Iovine says try it, and they do, and it works. Then Iovine goes back to being a manager.

It's obvious watching Robertson record that he gets twice as much out of musicians with compliments as other producers do with threats. He goes to the other room to hear Clearmountain's mix of a track called "Showdown At Big Sky." "That's terrific, Bob," he says. "The way Bill's guitar comes up there is great. It makes me wish it started to happen even sooner!" Now another producer might say that as, "The guitar comes up too late!" Robertson's execution is a lot more dignified. Around guys like Clearmountain and Iovine, who are in their early thirties, and Maria, who is in her early twenties, Robertson seems like a great high school coach: He's patient and he emphasizes good values and he works the kids to death. But they feel good about it. (Robertson may retch when he reads that, but it's true.) Of course, the method could only work with people like Clearmountain and McKee, who can do a part twelve different ways on demand. In Maria's case the shorthand gets pretty funny, with Robbie calling, "No—too Linda Roadstedt!"; "The last note of that one sounded like Joan Baez!"; "Not so much like Kate Bush—more like the Ennio Morricone things."

In the other room, Clearmountain and Gersh are working on "Showdown At Big Sky." "The more echo you add, the less they sound like the Bodeans."
"That’s not important, what matters is that it sounds good."

"We got the Bodeans for their character."

This whole studio is full of method actors.

Gersh wanted Tom Verhaime to come up and play a guitar part on another song but nobody can track him down. "What do you think of getting Todd Rundgren in?" he asks Clearmountain. Bob’s face lights up. "Yeah! That’d be great!"

Then he admits, "Well, actually I haven’t heard that song, I’d just love to watch him work." They figure since Todd engineered Stage Fright, it would be fitting.

By two a.m. Maria’s asleep on the floor, the staff has gone home, Lovine’s nodding—and Robbie is sitting at the mixing board with a weary Clearmountain—rocking away.

The next morning at about eleven Maria answers the phone at one of the guest cottages. "Jimmy!" she yells to Lovine upstairs. "The power’s gone out at the studio!"

"I guess we’ll have plenty of time for breakfast," and turns on the TV Contragate hearings. A result of any cutting—it’s a result of bad karma.

"The Last Waltz," a film of the Band’s last show.

The emergence of the excellent "Robbie Robertson" as he deals with war, nuclearism, and Robertson agreed.

"It wasn’t even on my mind, making an album," Robertson said, was organic. And disarming.

"I just didn’t feel like doing it anymore," Robertson, who recently released his new songs share anything with his previous work. It’s the subject matter. Always dealing... All I want is a link to what I did with the Band.

If his new songs share anything with his previous musical life, it’s the subject matter. Always dealing... All I want is a link to what I did with the Band.

But he promised one thing—that it won’t take him another 10 years to make his next record. It’s the subject matter. Always dealing... All I want is a link to what I did with the Band.

He’s still trying to figure out just how far back into the music world has been out. He’s slated to appear Dec. 12 on "Saturday Night Live," and he’ll consider putting together a tour "if I can put together a killer band..."

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But he promised one thing—that it won’t take him another 10 years to make his next record. It’s the subject matter. Always dealing... All I want is a link to what I did with the Band.
Back to normal, only a lot better

By JOHN MACKIE

So, Greatest Canadian Songwriter Of All Time, what have you been doing for the last 10 years, anyway?

Robbie Robertson, former guitarist of the Band, smiles and adjusts his trademark round sunglasses with the orange lenses. Exhaling deeply, he says, "I started when I was 16 years old, and in some ways there was a little frustration, I felt like I was missing something in life," says the 44-year-old Robertson. "Other people take it for granted, but for me, it's special. They feel close to their families and they have these experiences... I feel emotions of that."

"I wanted some of that for myself. I wanted to feel like, 'Here's a guy who just got up in the morning, has some cereal, washes the kids around on the floor a little while.'"

So he did — for going on a decade. But now he's back, better than ever. The recent release of his self-titled debut solo album on Geffen records is one of the major musical events of 1987. It's a mature record, filled with the lyrical insight and musical contributions, and co-producer Daniel Lanois (U2, Peter Gabriel, the Bo Deans and former Band-mates Garth Hudson and Richard Manuel, but at times, he didn't, because when I started writing songs now, I'm not gonna write songs — I really felt like writing songs. I sat down and said 'now we're talkin', now we're not messin' around. I'm gonna be doin' this with passion, with all my might.'"

"I came to a point after the Last Waltz where I said, 'I don't have to write this kind of life. I can do other things too, and I can learn about other things, broaden my horizons as a person.'"

"It was painful, but it gave me a euphoric feeling at times," he says. "I was writing it for a while, and I didn't know what I was writing about, and when I realised it, when I faced the facts, it scared me a little bit. But then I felt like, 'No, this is what I should do, this is what I should try and do it in the light that I see Richard in, try and do it as special as I felt, as I feel about him. I not only want to write it about him, I want to write it to him.' It was a difficult emotional experience, those hymns."

"That idea came from thinking about these people who meant so much in so many people's lives, and treating it like, 'Well, what a waste that was,' " he says. "I was thinking, 'no no no no no, we've got the wrong take on this, this wasn't a waste. These people were martyrs, and they died for a very good reason, and hopefully they're going to save a lot of lives by giving other people an understanding of this.'"

"It's not the same thing, but if you (take) Bruce Springsteen, there's a guy who seems to have his life more in control than an Elvis Presley did. Madonna... it's not on the same scale obviously, but she's not a crazy person taking pills, on the road to ruin consistently. Feeling 'I don't have any more control over this.'"

"One reason the song comes off so well is that Robbie's lived through some wild years himself, and lived to talk about them."

"There's a period of being on the road and playing music in the late '60s and early '70s... where people said, 'Oh, you're in this business.' Well, take some of these and let's stay up for three days,'" he recalls. "It seemed like it was part of the ritual, almost. Kind of a stupid ritual — I don't have a lot of respect for it. I've always hated things that were trendy anyway, and it was trendy then, but it was everywhere."
The Band's guitarist collaborates with U2 on an experimental, eclectic album.

But as career pressure mounted, the Band's records began to seem more calculated and by the mid-70s, the Band's stage shows were beginning to seem cut and dried. Mr. Robertson decided it was time to go out with a bang. The result was "The Last Waltz," the concert in San Francisco that became the Band's swan song and sometimes starting record. The drummers at the beginning are filtered through atmospheric keyboard textures that sound distinctly like Peter Gabriel's work, and in fact, Mr. Gabriel and his band do appear on several songs, as well as artists as identifiable as Mr. Clapton and Mr. Robinson. The former's subtle influence can be heard in the Band's use of electric keyboards, while the latter's role seems more pronounced on the tracks as the album progresses. Mr. Robertson's lyrical approach is also consistent with his other records. The songs are filtered through the Band's typical folk sounds with some horns, vocal riffs, and guitar riffs mixed in. The overall sound is more diverse, with the songs ranging from intense to more laid-back. This album is the Band's last full-length release and was recorded around the same time as the Band's "Hot Rocks 1 & 2" album. The Band's "Last Waltz" is often considered one of the greatest live albums of all time, and has been reissued several times over the years.

The album also features guest appearances by many other artists, including David Bowie, The Boss, Van Morrison, and John Prine. The album ends with an acoustic version of "The Last Waltz," which features a duet with the Band's original member, Robbie Robertson. The album was released in November 1976 and has since become a classic of 1970s rock music.
New LP has Robertson back on track

By John Milward

Robbie Robertson is back on track.
The Second Coming of

ROBBIE ROBERTSON

Eleven years ago, the enigmatic leader of
the Band walked away from the rock
world. Now, after some years of wild living,
he’s joined with U2, Peter Gabriel
and others to make his brilliant solo debut.

By Michael Goldberg
photograph by
Lara Rossignol

A FEW YEARS AGO ROBBIE ROBERTSON DECIDED THAT HE
wanted to make a film called American Roulette. The script
tells the story of a Sixties rock & roll legend who has dis-
appeared for some fifteen years. A notorious abuser of drugs and al-
cohol during his heyday, this onetime guitar hero is believed by many
to be dead, perhaps of an overdose. But no one really knows what has
happened to him. And by the Eighties, no one cares.

The film would focus on this rocker’s teenage son, who is search-
ing for his father. The journey is a coming of age for the boy, who
dreams of someday becoming a big-time rock guitarist himself.
Along the way, he plays in a roadhouse band, gets beaten up in a
parking lot for flirting with the wrong girl, smokes dope for the first
time, loses his virginity and comes face to face with his dad’s
The members of the Band in Woodstock, New York, in 1969, the year they became stars (from left): Richard Manuel, Garth Hudson, Robbie Robertson, Levon Helm and Rick Danko.
Robertson's friends describe him as a very private person. Although Gabriel has known him for five years, he's been out to Robertson's house only once; all their other L.A. socializing has taken place at restaurants and clubs. Gabriel says that he was surprised at how "nervous" Robertson was when he came to Bath, England, to work on songs with him. "He's a very kind person with a wild imagination," says Lanois. "He's got a heart of gold. But he's got a move he was ready for: Robbie Robertson on, now," he adds. "Both his lyrics and his voice sound like they've been lived in."

By this time the film was released, in 1978, Robertson had the film bug — bad. And when film critics started predicting that the handsome guitarist would become another Robert Redford, Robertson ate it up. Now the movie had been ready for: Robbie Robertson, movie star. He liked the sound of that.

He was given an office — Carole Lombard's old dressing room — at MGM. And off and on for a few years, he would drive out to the MGM lot and read scripts. Many, many scripts. But nothing grabbed him. Nothing swept him away. Nothing made Robertson say "blood bad." Until he came across Camp, a 1980 film about a traveling carnival, which he not only starred in, along with Gary Busey and Jodie Foster, but also coproduced. A provocative but flawed film, Camp bombed and none of the acting roles that came Robertson's way after that were quite right. "Several things came up that I almost did," he says. "But something would stop me at the last minute. I would go for meetings with directors, and as I talked with them, I'd end up saying, 'You know, I don't know what I could do here, because you say no every time. Maybe you're just not interested in doing this.'"

In the meantime he was "musical producer" for two Scorsese films, Raging Bull (1980) and The King of Comedy (1983). By 1985 he had pretty much given up on an acting career. "I was working with this agent, and he kept sending me stuff. This is what I did every day for a couple of years: reading scripts, meeting with people, flying to see some director somewhere. Finally my agent said to me, 'You know, I don't know what I can do here, because you say no every time. Maybe you're just not interested in doing this.'"

During the past year, gossip around the music industry had it that Robbie Robertson's album was a runaway project. "There's this vibe going around," Geffen Records A&R executive Gary Gersh said in June. "People start to think that you're dealing with Heaven's Gate." Robertson labored for three long years. Most of the songs were written in the studio. There were months
upon months of musical experimentation, countless rewrites and re-recordings of the songs and even an eleventh-hour decision to bring in Bob Clearmountain (Bruce Springsteen, the Rolling Stones) for a remix.

Robertson began preliminary work on the album in the fall of 1984, prior to signing with Geffen. He spent “at least $30,000” on preproduction, including trips to the East Coast and Europe to meet with a half dozen record producers. Formal recording with Lanois began in June of 1986. Session musicians were flown from Canada, New Orleans and even France. Sessions eventually took place in Dublin (with U2), Bath (with Peter Gabriel), L.A. and Woodstock.

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and poetry. I didn’t want to write Bob Dylan poetry,

Not because I didn’t like them, just because it wasn’t my job. I always felt I had to connect it with this world that was true to the Band’s music. We came in on a different train. We were scrounging, folk music, and it wasn’t poetry. It was rock & roll.”

At some point Grossman — a colorful character who was at the time perhaps America’s most powerful rock & roll manager — suggested that if they wanted to make an album, he was going to do it. After

that, I couldn’t concentrate on anything else. It was the only thing.”

In 1960, after leading some bands of his own, with names like Trumpeter and the Trouborders, the Roben’s and the Conn’s, Robertson got a phone call from the Arkansas rockabilly singer Ronnie Hawkins, who offered him a job in his backup band. “You’ll get more money than Frank Sinatra,” Hawkins told the young guitarist, and that was all he needed to hear. “He was right about it to a certain degree,” Robertson says with a laugh. “What we never got to discuss, on a grand scale, was quality.”

Hawkins’s backup band also came to include Richard Manuel, Rick Danko, Garth Hudson and Levon Helm. The next five years on the road — first with Hawkins, then with the Roben’s and the Conn’s, Le- von and the Hawks, the Crackers and the Canadian Squares — transformed them into the toughest rock & roll outfit around.

In 1967 — word reached Bob Dylan, the folk singer who had decided to “go electric,” and soon they were touring the world, minus Helm, as Dylan’s backup band. The tour was a real trial by fire — audiences weren’t yet ready for Bob Dylan, rock star. “They’d throw bottles at you and boo,” says Robertson. “Sometimes it was very funny, and sometimes it was heartbreaking.”

When Dylan and the Hawks played London’s Royal Albert Hall in 1966, the Beatles were in the audience. “After the show they came back to say hello to Bob,” says Robertson. “‘Hey, honey, why are you scrounging street kids, you know, and we were astonished at how naive they were. How very sweet and nice and everything. They all had on, like, matching boots and matching clothes. And they talked about mystical things that were very corny. From the American side of it, it wasn’t so sweet. It was tougher. Different rules to the game, I guess, it was what it was.”

Soon after they returned to America, Dylan had his infamous motorcycle accident. As he recuperated, the Hawks were encouraged to join him in Woodstock. “It was summertime in New York City,” says Robertson. “It was expensive, and we were just these road musicians that had no road to go on. We were scrounging around trying to figure out a place to work on some music. And Albert Grossman (Dylan’s manager) said ‘This is silly. Why don’t you guys move up to the country up here?’ And it just simplified everything. So that’s what we did. We got this pink house.”

“The scene at Big Pink was casual, like a club house. People would toss a football around in the back yard or play checkers; they were having a good time. Things were just as relaxed in the basement. There, with Garth Hudson manning a reel-to-reel tape recorder, Dylan and the Hawks (who decided to change their name to the Band; that’s how people in Woodstock were referring to them anyway) created some of the greatest rock & roll ever made. “You would experiment,” says Robertson. “And it wasn’t all these weird instrumental

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else came through. Just flavor of the month."

In 1973, at the suggestion of David Geffen, Robe-
ston moved out to Malibu to escape all of that. Soon he
cornered the other guys away from the California sun.
And in that year the Band reunited with Bob Dylan
to cut Planet Waves. "We went in and made that album
in three or four days, just hammered it out," Roberton
says. "It was like making a blues record for us." That
was followed by a major 1974 tour of sold-out arenas
across the country. "That's when the wretched excess
began," says a former Band employee. "Just 'cause
there was too much money floating around. It was
private jets, best hotel rooms, limousines everywhere
and, of course, white powder."

In talking to Robertson, though he never comes
right out and says it, one senses that these problems
contributed to the end of the Band. "That was the first
sense I had of Robben's slight alienation from the whole
thing," says Jonathan Taplin, a former tour manager
for the Band who went on to coproduce Camy with
Roberton. "He'd made a big bit of money. He had a
beautiful house on the beach. He didn't really want to
be the baby sitter."

It wasn't until after the Band split up that Roberson
had what Taplin calls his "midlife crisis." "Once he
got out of being responsible for a whole band and all of
a sudden he was just responsible for himself," says
Taplin, "he just kind of shrank to the wind."

"Marty, can you turn that stuff down?"

It was 1977, and the Sex Pistols' "Anarchy in the
UK," was blasting through the house on Mulholland
Drive, in Hollywood.

It was a sound so loud that Martin Scorsese, the
famous film director, couldn't hear Roberson's plea.
And anyway, it was Scorsese's house, though Roberton
had been sharing it with the director since their mar-
riages had self-destructed following the filming of The
Last Waltz.

Roberton was beginning four years of what Peter
Gabriel describes as "wild living." Cocaine, champagne
and beautiful women—including some well-known
actresses—were always around.

Robertson and Scorsese would work on The Last
Waltz all day, then unwind all night. "We had a kind
of daily ritual," Roberton says one afternoon at his
studio. "Marty had things to do on the film, I had
things to do on the soundtrack album. So we'd get
back to the house at about two in the morning."

Then in the middle of the night we would screen a
movie or two. I'd want Buiesel and Jean Renoir, and
he'd want these sleazy B movies: Sam Fuller films
and these weird vampire movies. We would usually
watch them until it seemed like the sun was going to
start coming up. It was like 'Uh-oh, uh-oh, and we'd
have to scatter.'"

Roberton was separated from his wife, Domi-
rique, a beautiful freelance journalist whom he had
met in Paris while he was touring with Dylan in the
spring of 1966. (They have three children: Alexand-
ria, now 18, Delphine, 17, and Sebastien, 13.) Freed
from his responsibilities as a husband and a band-
leader, Roberton experienced something of a sec-
ond adolescence. "It was a crazy period," he says.
"Marty and I were the 'misunderstood artists,' and
our wives threw us out. We were just kind of lost
in the storm. You are a tame house pet and you get
thrown out in the woods for a while and pretty soon
you're not tame anymore. All of a sudden you are
like a wild dog. We just ran amok."

He stares down at the floor for a moment. "It was
probably to cover up the hurt," he says. "The pain and
the loss in our lives... And drugs were everywhere. It
wasn't that much a part of my life. I didn't drink my
blues away. It wasn't my problem, but everywhere I
looked, there were people doing drugs and alcohol.
"You can't just let me do what I want," says Scor-
sese. "People just searching for things, looking for
things. Sometimes it takes one form, sometimes it takes
another. That's the form it took at the time."

The wild times with Scorsese also included many
highly ambitious jaunts to Europe to promote The Last
Waltz, attend film festivals and pick up awards — trophies
and gold records — garnered over the years but never col-
lected. "Seems like there was always a commotion
wherever we went," says Roberton. "Marty has big ex-
tremes in his personality. One minute he would be
laughing, and the next minute there would be tele-
phones flying out the windows."

As the months of extreme living drifted by, word in-
evitably leaked out. "There was a magazine article,"
Robertson says, and it was called 'Bel Air, Bel Air.' It
said something like 'I went to Martin Scorsese's house.
He and Robes are having these wild parties,
and there are women everywhere, and there are
drugs, and it makes Hugh Hefner's place look like
a kindergarten.' So we get a copy of this article and
Marty goes crazy," Robertson laughs. "He starts
breaking glasses immediately. Smashing things.
Talking with lawyers, ripping phones out. He says,
'Look at this! Look at this article! Read it if you're
seeing these people. I'm taking them to court!' And I
looked at it, and I thought, 'Marty, the only thing incomplete here is that we
don't live in Bel Air.'"

That chapter came to an end when Scorsese, an
asthmatic, suffered health problems brought on by
the fast living. "He got real sick and ended up in the
hospital," says Roberton. "It was either change your
lifestyle or die. I remember seeing him in the hospital
and thinking, 'Boy, this is definitely the end of an era
right here.'"

But not for Robertson. It wasn't until after another
"crazy" period—with Gary Busey during the making of
Camy—that he finally decided it was time to slow
his pace and patch up his marriage. "These rock 'n'
roll ways were getting old," he says. "I smartrned up a
little bit, maybe. I just felt like I just wasn't satisfying
living that way anymore. I just wanted to be with my
family, so I did everything I could to work it out."

Though he reestablished his relationship with his
family, Robertson had no desire to join his old band
mates. Asked what he thought of the group's touring as
the Band without him. Roberton packs his words with
care. "It's hard to say anything against anybody who's just
trying to do what they do and make a living. You can't
say, 'How dare you do this?' So I said, 'I have no problem
with any of it.' My attitude was 'Do it with my blessing'
and I didn't know what else to do."

He admits that the film work he did for Scorsese
didn't bring in a lot of money. So how did he support
himself through the "lost years?" "I don't know," he
says. "I guess just the money I had made before and
the money that I make from publishing or whatever.
I just never got to the point where I was on the street
fortuitously."

Money was a factor, though not the factor, in Rob-
erson's decision to get to work again. "It was a good
time to do something: produce a movie, act in a movie,
make a record, something. I didn't want to do one day
just find that I was in a desperate situation. I mean, I
didn't decide to make a record because I needed money.
It was time to make a record, but it was time to make
some money as well."

In 1985—while cooling out in Rome with movie
producer Art Linson (The Unschakables)—Roberton
made his decision: "We were drunk," says Linson. "I'm
sitting there having wine with one of the great rock
composer-guitarists in the history of rock & roll. I
said, 'Hey, you're not serious about retiring. Why start
at forty? It's as if you're just beginning as a musician.'
Go back and get to work! Make a record!' He looked
at me like 'Oh, I guess I have to.'"

THERE IS A BOOMING CRACK OF THUNDER, THE SKY
opens up, and the rain comes pouring down on Wood-
stock. It's early July. Robbie Robertson closes the door
to an upstairs apartment at Bearsville Studios, where
he's staying for a few weeks while completing the
album. Bringing back in Woodstock is bringing up some
old memories, and Robertson begins to talk about his
lost friend Richard Manuel. "It makes me uncomfortable
to talk about Richard," he says, lighting a cigarette
and taking a seat at a large wooden table. "He's not
here to talk to himself. When I first met Richard,
when he was seventeen, he was the typical kid that
he had been drinking since he was very young. He was
always an alcoholic. And he decided to pursue it,
you know, to the darkest degree that he could at some
point in his life." Robertson glances out the window;
maple and pine trees are swaying in the wind as the
sky darkens. "I can't talk to other people's stories," he
says. "It's not right. You know, they wouldn't say, 'Well, you know Robbie
did this and Robbie did that.' It's like I was in this
drinker's club. All I can tell you is you know it existed. And
it went from bad to worse to the ultimate nightmare
imaginable. And people survived. Got smarter.
Changed. Some people were able to help themselves.
And some people weren't. And you see in a case like
Richard, where you can't help yourself—there's the
poor guy left at the end of the pack who's saying, 'Wait
for me. I can't help myself.' But you don't know that.
You just think, 'This guy's just got to get a grip.' Well,
it's not like that. But how does one go from being
so knowledgable and so smart? Saying, 'Oh, I know
what this fellow needs. This fellow needs to go
to a certain club. Get into a program. And that's his
one chance of getting through this alive.' We don't
know these things. It's too know the things when it's too late."

Robertson is silent for a while. "When he died, I
wasn't expecting it. I guess you should say, 'Well, may-
be I shouldn't be so surprised, because of Richard's past
and everything,' but I was. I was devastated. I couldn't
get over to it. And all you can know are just
just now ready for those things until they happen, and
then you're really not ready for them."

"I FEEL LIKE A BIG WEIGHT HAS BEEN LIFTED," SAYS
Roberton. It's late July, two days after he has com-
pleted his album, and Robertson does see like a different
person. At his West L.A. studio, he sits and talks freely
about some of his new songs. He's asked about the
album's most autobiographical song, "Testimony," on
which he sings, "Bear witness, I'm waiting like the
wind. Come bear witness, the half-bred races again/in
these hands, I've held the broken dream/in my soul,
I'm howling at the moon."

"I'm not gauging at the moon," he says. "I'm not
stumbling beneath the moon. I'm howling at the moon.
It's just part of the picture of someone standing on
the mountain with their arms stretched up to the sky,
screaming in the ceremony of life."

"That's the business, that's the real item," he
says. "It's like some kind of sin when you see some-
body great in a movie and you say they walked through
the movie. And that's only a movie. This is life.
Who wants to grow old and think, 'God, I walked
through it?'"
Fireworks were going off in the Sixties. Music was happening quicker than people could deal with.

In 1966 you and most of the Band backed Bob Dylan at the Royal Albert Hall, in London. Many people consider the bootleg recording of that concert to be the greatest live rock & roll recording ever made. At the time, did you think, "This is really amazing music we're playing?"

We did. We did think that this was fine. But you don't know if you think it's fine because you're doing it or because it's really fine. When we would play at night, we weren't sure. And we would listen to these tapes and say, "Geez, you know, this is very passionate. And it's people doing this with all their hearts. And I don't know what more you want from it." When we listened to it, it gave us courage to move on to the next step. Between that and the stuff we did in Woodstock, in the basement, we felt there was some validity in what we were doing. But it was hard. There were times out there when you were just playing to the heavens, screaming to the top of your... everything you had, you knew, you were laying out. And they'd throw bottles and boo. People acted like it was a sin.

I have great admiration for Bob for not backing out of the thing. His friends, his advisers, everyone said, "Just get rid of these guys, and I think we'll get something right, and it will be fine. The idea's great [playing rock & roll]. These guys: wrong casting. Blow these guys off, and we'll start from scratch, and we'll make it work." And it took a tremendous amount of courage for him to not do that.

After a few years the road lost some of its appeal for you. What happened?

By the time I was nineteen, I started to feel an emptiness and a shallow aspect to my life. We would play at a lot of schools. And I thought, "God, I missed out on a whole portion of my life." I went from being a little kid to being a grown-up person, and there was no in between there. And I got this im...
Robbie Robertson

credible craving for information and knowledge. And I started reading a lot and thinking, "I just gotta know more than what this life is affording me."

So is that why you gave up touring, gave up the Band?

We had done eight years [on the road as relatively unknown musicians] and then eight years on the other side [as the Band]. Which gave a pretty good balance of both sides of the fence.

We were fortunate—or unfortunate—enough to go on to the stage where all of a sudden people are running up to you when you're not thirsty, saying, "Can I get you some water?" Wiping off your jacket that isn't dirty. Handing you a pillow when you're not sleepy. Pampering you to the point that you don't understand what you want and what you don't want. But because it's being presented to you, you go with it. And the next thing you know, you become dissatisfied with things that never even mattered to you before.

What it does is, it says all of this soul that you've got and all these diseases that you paid, the disqualifies that. You are no longer that person. You are now a meaningless piece of dribble that will complain about shit that doesn't mean anything to anybody. And so you have these two rocks in your hand, and you don't know which one means anything to you anymore, which to hold closest to your heart. And you think, "I've been poor, I've been rich, the worse of the two I don't know which—yes, I do." So you hold the rich one closest to you, and you become this person that you've always dreamed of, that you always said "I'll never become part of that." You totally go the other direction.

And it wasn't particularly a learning process anymore. This was a business. This weekend they're shipping you out to here, then you go there. You get bored with the routine: record, road, record, road, record, road. That merry-go-round. You're not going anywhere. The only thing that's changed is a guy saying, "When you go, you had that much money, and when you came back, you had this much money." If that was the case, then I might as well be selling shoes.

It got to the point where I couldn't see the upside. It's like this old Indian, and he goes up to this mountain every year and experiences his annual revelation. Then, at some point, he goes up to the mountain, and he speaks, and the spirits don't speak back to him. He just hears this echo of his voice. So finally he just walks down the mountain and says, "Boy, it's a long way up that mountain. I don't know if I'm going to go up there anymore. I'm just not getting back what I feel in this thing." So as old-fashioned and as simple an analogy like that is, it's kind of like that. I don't mean to make it like this big spiritual experience or anything, but, like, anybody who goes to the well, and then there's no water in the well...

Some people do look at the road as a spiritual journey, as in Siddhartha or the Odyssey. Through the experience, you gain wisdom and knowledge.

Maybe, maybe not. That's my point. Maybe Jack Kerouac gained wisdom... I don't know. But, anyway, that's my opinion. This is a pretty good way of looking at it, though. I'm not just saying that I'm the leader of the Second Coming. I'm not saying, "When you go, you had that much money, and when you came back, you had this much money." If that was the case, then I might as well be selling shoes.

I don't know if it's really changed very much at all in the way that people receive it. Maybe it's not as revolutionary as in certain other periods, but I don't know if it's really all that different. Supply and demand. People say, "We need something. We'll take whatever you're dishing out." That's kind of what it is. And I think that it's great right now. And it was great when I was a little kid and it first came out. I don't know if it's always as all-encompassing and inspiring. There are soft times, and there are times when it's just everywhere and everything is happening.

I was driving along the other day when I heard something on the radio, and it reminded me of the period when the Band made their first album. Monterey was at an all-time height. Stax, unbelievable. Otis Redding. The English thing was fantastic, with the Beatles and Cream and the Stones and the Who. Everything was going on. Country music was extraordinary. Jazz was still in the picture. There were all these elements. And people kept learning things, whether it was Jimi Hendrix or Brian Jones—there were people just trying stuff. And it was coming at you from every direction. You just didn't know what to buy. It was like "Good God, I just don't know what to do with myself. There's so much, so many great songs coming from everywhere you look.

When you go into a record store now, it's like "I don't need this. Maybe I'll get that—I'll get it, but I know I won't listen to it." You feel like "I won't buy into this, but I'll take two pieces. I'll take two shares of this and two shares of that..."

You know what I mean? It's not the same. It's not because the Sixties was my big heyday. I don't give a shit about that. But it was just one of those times in music where fireworks were going off, and it was happening quicker than people could deal with it. You thought, "That's the way it is." And then it goes a few years later, and there's this sense of desperation, people trying so hard—but trying nevertheless. So you buy in, you go along, you coast. Those periods, they come and go, I guess.

I don't think there will be another really great period of rock & roll sometime in the future?

Well, I don't think we should approach it like the Second Coming. I think people should just relax about it—the desperation is what doesn't work. People trying too hard, and it just pisses you off, finally. You go with it, and you think, "Oh, God, somebody's trying something here." But finally you say, "I don't feel comfortable with this. It isn't working. I know this isn't going to go the distance." Maybe you can say, "Well, at least they're trying." But the people who made the classic music we were just talking about—Otis Redding, Percy Sledge and the rest—they just made something so natural out of everything that surrounded them. And there were no lies being told. It was just people pouring their hearts into it. And that's the beginning and the end of it. This is a good song, good artists, good way to do it. Nothing was forced upon them. They found their own way. And it was true and natural, and they wrote their own book and their own rules out of this honest determination to make good music. It wasn't out of desperation. That element—you can hear it in the music when people are bashing their heads against the wall. Eventually, you don't want that in the same room with you. You can get a kick out of it for a minute and think, "This is a gas." Maybe now you're buying into it, but in ten years you just know you're not going to feel that way. I'm kind of a sucker for that timeless element. Who wants to be disposable? Who wants to grow up and become a disposable lighter?

INTERVIEW BY

MICHAEL GOLDBERG
**Boxed sets of compact discs make a perfect holiday gift**

By ROBERT HILBURN  
Los Angeles Times

Gift-giving was easy in the early days of compact discs. Consumers were just starting their collections and eager for almost any album by a favorite artist. Now that CDs have been around a few years, however, many consumers have sizable collections, which makes it increasingly difficult to find just the right gift item. That is why some industry insiders believe there will be a rise in the number of CD boxed sets.

Fete Howard, publisher of the ICN newsletter, said that Columbia Records' success with Bob Dylan's "Biograph" box in 1986 and Polygram's success with Eric Clapton's "Crossroads" box earlier this year alerted companies to the potential of these sets.

"I think the field is wide open," he said. "There are a lot of artists who have a 25th or 35th anniversary coming up and would be ideal subjects. Sourcing a market for special packages, Capitol Records has issued 'CD Gift Sets' spotlighting Frank Sinatra, Nat "King" Cole, the Beach Boys, Pink Floyd and the Band. Unlike the "Biograph" concept — which features a retrospective of an artist's career plus an illustrated booklet outlining the artist's history — the Capitol packages simply offer four regular albums by the artist at a budget price. The 'Biograph' set, for instance, includes "Music From Big Pink," "The Band," "Cahoots" and an abridged version of "Rock of Ages." Where the four CDs would cost around $45 if bought separately, the set goes for approximately $37.

Along more traditional "Biograph" lines are three-disc Clarks Ferry and two-disc Willie Dunn sets from MCA and a four-disc Miles Davis set from Columbia. The MCA packages retail for about $39 and $26 respectively, while the Davis box sells for around $27.

JKE's Howard said that Polygram is already at work on sets by the Bee Gees and the Allman Brothers for next year, while MCA is thinking of Elton John and Who sets. Setting a market for special packages, Capitol

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**NOW ON CD**

Compact Discs of previously released LP's

POPULAR

- **THE BAND: Music From Big Pink**
  Capitol, CDP-46069. The Band.

- **Vanishing Songs**
  Compact discs occasionally carry "bonus" tracks, as compared to their LP and cassette counterparts, partly to ease the pain of the medium's bizzler price tags. But at least one record company has applied this economic theory in reverse. Anyone who's recently bought a new LP copy of The Band has received a rude shock: Two of that classic album's songs, "When You Awake" and "King Harvest (He Sure Came)," are missing.

  As you might expect, money is the reason for this Cripple Creek massacre. The Band's second album, re-released in 1986, is now a budget-priced release LP. To cut down on publishing costs that have risen three times in the '80s alone, Capitol Records sliced out two of The Band's 12 songs.

-- ROBERT HILBURN

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**Stereo Review July 1987**

**Compact Discs**

"Music From Big Pink." "The Band." The Band. Capitol. **Timelessness** was the term critics invariably applied in the late '60s and early '70s to the music of the Band, the roots-conscious rock quintet that first gained attention as the backing group for Bob Dylan. How well does the term apply after all these years? Marvelously. There's a tailoring in the arrangements, soulfulness in the singing and craft in the writing on songs like "The Weight" and "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down" that makes the Band's exploration of the American character just as cleansing and engrossing it was almost two decades ago. Sound quality on these separate CD's is good. Both.

—ROBERT HILBURN

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**The Band:** **Music From Big Pink**

**Side One**

ACROSS THE GREAT DIVIDE/J. R. Robertson  
RAG MAMA HAG/J. R. Robertson  
THE NIGHT THEY DROVE OLD DIXIE DOWN/J. R. Robertson  
UP ON CHIPPY CREEK/J. R. Robertson  
WHISPERING PINES/R. Manuel, J. R. Robertson

**Side Two**

JEMIMA SURRENDER/L. Heim, J. R. Robertson  
ROCKIN' CRAIG/J. R. Robertson  
LOOK OUT CLEVELAND/J. R. Robertson  
JAWBONE/R. Manuel, J. R. Robertson  
THE UNFAITHFUL SERVANT: R. Robertson

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**1988**

Musician, October 1988
ROCK

T THE 1976 concert film 'The Last Waltz' was not the end of the story for The Band. The develop-
ments following that first half of the show. It seems it was to be a farewell concert and a major part of an end to the chal-
lenge of the rest of the Band. Bob Dylan, who was one of the Band's vocalists, and Richard Manuel, was fired
from the band on the occasion of the concert. In 1976, The Band began its final tour, called 'The Last Waltz'.

The Band started recording in New York City in 1975 and was in the studio for four months. The band's
members include former Beach Boys member Blondie Chaplin and pedal-steel guitarist Buddy Cage. Drummer
Levon Helm is not with them.

WHERE AND WHEN: The Band play the Palace tomorrow night and Sunday night. Tickets are available from Bass for $28.

Fish and kids

SMH Metro, Friday, June 10, 1988

ROBIN HILL has a spooky meeting with a reluctant and greying hero of the 60s.

H ERE'S nothing worse than the sight of a someone watching with heavy clouds before
you see the moon, wondering what happened.

Six o'clock at the Sebel Town House, and an original member of the legendary group The Band is due for an interview.

Garth Hudson is the name scribbled on my pad. "I've got a lot of company in the studio," he says. "I'm going to do a solo album." He tells me about the sessions for "The Last Waltz" and the studio.

In the lobby leading to Hudson's room is the wife of another original member, bass player Rick Danko. She's just leaning against a wall in an empty corridor looking lost. "Hi," she says. "I'm Garth Hudson." She sets off for the sound-room. Hudson appears, Camel ciga-

rettes in hand. He looks as he has throughout the years. He's wearing a grey shirt and is plump.

Here is the man who was part of the highly praised rock act that had included acclaimed singer-songwriter Rob-
bie Robertson and Richard Manuel. Manuel hanged himself two years ago.

The Band formed in 1967 follow-
ing a close association with Ronnie Hawkins and Bob Dylan. They

Garth Hudson: saw 'the wrath of God'.

A MESSAGE IN TEA-LEAVES

Touring here with Bob Dylan 22 years ago, Robertson wrote such greats as 'The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down' and 'Up on Cripple Creek'.

When he left The Band in 1976 after touring for 16 years, he bought a large dund rush (a place where city people come to watch the horses and camp), which he later watched burn in a fire, to the tune of $7. It cleaned him out.

"It was spectacular," he says. "I'm glad I watched it. We all plied into the Medici at midday. The middle of the garden and the air conditioning because the smoke was really thick and it washed out the wrath of God," he says.

Then in 1973 came a phone call "Levon Helm [another founding member] and Rick decided it was time to get back together. We called and said, 'Let's go'." He didn't even know what they would say when they called, though, oh, not at all.

He still keeps in touch with the Band. He has a new album coming out in four years. Why didn't Robertson want to rejoin The Band?

"I'm really looking forward to something going on. He produced and acted in a new movie, and I wanted to work in that medium," he says.

Robertson had been a member of The Band for 16 years, but confided that he didn't know what to do with the band.

"There were some old songs, which we call traditional stuff, that I just didn't want to play. But he doesn't look like The Band... we're different."

"I've done some different projects, and it's a little wilder, the sound has changed, we have a pedal-steel guitar now, but it's a little more sound," he says.

"We considered playing the songs so that they would sound like the records, which we could very well do, but we felt it was a bit too... it's a more modern sound," he says.

Although Hudson says he affiliates he with black gospel and 1950s music, there are some contemporary sounds he considers worthwhile. He likes to hear what the message, or protest people in rock have to say.

The Band, with the help of The Clash, I like Simple Minds, Gang of Four, The Clash, and I work occasionally with The Clash, I like the style and the power of their message.
Sad mama said

The Sydney Morning Herald, Saturday, June 18, 1983

The Band is back

URING a career that spanned two decades, The Band lost its distinction as rock's chief purveyors of folk- and country-rock, and became the band that had its way with the results. This was the case with their last album, The Last Waltz, which was released in 1976. But now the band is back, and they are better than ever.

The Band began in the late 1950s as a group of folk musicians who were influenced by the Beatles and other British Invasion bands. They helped to introduce folk music to a wider audience, and they were soon joined by other bands who were influenced by their music.

In the late 1960s, The Band began to experiment with more complex arrangements, and they were soon joined by other bands who were influenced by their music.

The band's most famous album was The Last Waltz, which was released in 1976. The album featured guest appearances by many of the band's friends, including Bob Dylan, Eric Clapton, and The Grateful Dead.

The Band was one of the most important bands of the 1960s and 1970s, and they continue to be influential to this day. They are considered to be one of the greatest bands of all time.
Everything you always wanted to know about compact discs

(by DAVID OKAWOTO)

For Better or for Worse

A digital sampler

at local stores in the Tampa Bay area

charge for selected compact discs

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Artist</th>
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<td>The Beatles</td>
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More Great Moments in CD History

Digital vs. analog

Error correction

Addendum: More Great Moments in CD History

Options for the Bonehead

CDs don't have the same features as the original recordings. For example, the sound quality of CDs is not as good as that of analog tapes. CDs also have a limited number of tracks that can be encoded onto a single disc, whereas analog tapes can have thousands of tracks encoded onto a single reel.

The idea that CDs are more portable than analog tapes is also incorrect. While CDs are more portable than audiocassettes, analog tapes are still more portable than CDs. Analog tapes can be folded in half and put in a pocket, whereas CDs are too large to be folded in half.

The idea that CDs are more durable than analog tapes is also incorrect. CDs are more durable than analog tapes, but they are not indestructible. CDs can be damaged by scratches, water, and high temperatures. Analog tapes are also susceptible to damage, but they are not as susceptible as CDs.

The idea that CDs are more convenient than analog tapes is also incorrect. CDs are more convenient than analog tapes, but they are not as convenient as digital music players.

The idea that CDs are more expensive than analog tapes is also incorrect. CDs are more expensive than analog tapes, but they are not as expensive as digital music players.

Compact discs are a type of optical disc that was introduced in the 1980s. They are used to store and distribute digital data, including music, video, and computer software. Compact discs are made of a thin layer of polycarbonate plastic, which is coated with an aluminum or gold layer. The data is encoded onto the disc as a series of pits and lands, which are read by a laser beam.

Compact discs are more durable than audiocassettes, but they are not as durable as vinyl records. Compact discs are not susceptible to damage from water and high temperatures, but they can be damaged by scratches.

Compact discs are not as expensive as audiocassettes, but they are not as expensive as vinyl records. Compact discs are typically sold for $10 to $15, whereas audiocassettes are typically sold for $1 to $3. Vinyl records are typically sold for $10 to $30, depending on the condition of the record.

Compact discs are not as portable as audiocassettes, but they are more portable than vinyl records. Compact discs can be folded in half and put in a pocket, whereas audiocassettes are too large to be folded in half. Vinyl records are not portable at all.

Compact discs are more convenient than audiocassettes, but they are not as convenient as digital music players. Compact discs can be played on a CD player, but they cannot be played on a computer or a phone. Digital music players can be played on a computer, a phone, or a portable music player.

Compact discs are more expensive than audiocassettes, but they are not as expensive as digital music players. Compact discs are typically sold for $10 to $15, whereas audiocassettes are typically sold for $1 to $3. Digital music players are typically sold for $50 to $100, depending on the type of player.
Woodstock just really ain’t what it used to be

By DAVID BAUDER
Associated Press writer

WOODSTOCK, N.Y. — Record producer Max "Clearymountain is used to the skeptical looks he gets when he invites musicians to this upstate New York hamlet to make records.

"They get this picture in their minds of a gang of hippies running around," says Clearymountain, producer or mixer for Bruce Springsteen, the Pretenders and dozens of other artists.

Woodstock may always be synonymous with the festival that bears its name, the last great party of the flower children before the '70s set in.

But to a new generation of musicians, this town of boutiques and endless back roads has grown in reputation as one of the best places to make a record outside the music capitals of Los Angeles and New York City.

Max Yasgur’s farm, the Bearsville Studio, is not actually in Woodstock. It’s about two miles west, atop a hill reached by a winding, unsurfaced dirt road that in winter sometimes takes two or three attempts to climb by car.

Despite the location, Suzanne Vega found Bearsville to record her breakthrough hit, "Luka." Robbie Robertson returned to the site of "The Band’s" last comeback album. Artists as diverse as Simple Minds, Chet, Allen Ginsberg and Levon Helm have laid down tracks at Bearsville in the last year.

"The big draw? A country ambience and equipment that makes technology disappear," says one of my favorite studios," Clearymountain says. "It’s very versatile. The recording room is very large and it’s very good for recording drums and guitars. It has a lot of space and a lot of ambience.

The other room is one of the best mixing rooms that I’ve ever worked in.

The studio is part of the late Albert Grossman’s mini-empire in the Village of Bearsville, 10 miles north of Manhattan. The one-time manager of The Band, and Janis Joplin bought a restaurant, home and studio nearby that he built the studio before his death two years ago.

The Bearsville record label whose best-known client was Village resident Todd Rundgren, has been inactive since Grossman’s death, but the studio, once used exclusively by Bearsville artists, has seen more action.

"We just kind of intensified it," says Grossman’s widow, Sally, who now runs the company.

Sally Grossman may talk eagerly of the Greenwich Village days she grew up around in the '60s, but her studio has the air of a corporate retreat.

Refreshments wind and paneling and plush furniture blend the modern and rustic. Framed pictures of the cover art of albums recorded in Bearsville during the past year line the walls of second floor offices.

Halfway down the hill is one of a handful of private homes Grossman has converted into apartments for clients to use while recording. A second house, separated by a Catskill mountain stream and wooden bridge, has been converted into a rehearsal studio.

A producer with deadlines also doesn’t have to worry about distractions that cause musicians’ minds to wander. Outside of a ping pong or pool table and a nearby vegetable stand, there’s not a whole lot in Woodstock.

And groups? They’d have to be pretty determined.

Privacy appreciated

"A lot of the groups prefer working here because of the privacy," says Mary Lou Arnold, a former backup singer who’s acting manager of the studio. "We maintain very strict security. I can count on one hand the number of times fans have been able to find this place. And when they do, they quickly go away."

Of course, the isolation can quickly grow old. Clearymountain says artists on extended projects like to split their time between Bearsville and the city. Musicians who need to relax and unwind have to wait longer for it to arrive.

Bearsville’s studio is also the beneficiary of the current trend toward more intimate, less-elevated places to set up and run through songs live.

"Most artists," Clearymountain says, "are very claustrophobic, with lots of wires, amplifiers and drum sets running around that people can trip over. That studio’s so big, you can either set up everywhere or there’s a room to spread everybody out."

Bearsville’s growing appeal is more than technical. When a hit record is produced there, it sets in motion music’s infamous herd mentality.

"We get a lot of calls from people who are new who think if they just come in here, they’ll get a hit record," Arnold says.

A long walk away from the studio, the town of Woodstock is a jumble of small shops and restaurants. Woodstock already had a long history as an artists’ colony before musicians discovered it in the '60s. When Dylan moved there from New York City, it instantly became a magnet for hipsters and aspiring hipsters.

It was in Woodstock, in a house dubbed "Big Pink," that the Band recorded some of its best music, including the famed "bathroom tapes" with Dylan. At the time, Dylan was recovering from a near-fatal motorcycle accident.

Woodstock’s original event, the three-day concert that attracted some 400,000 people and such artists as Joplin, the Who, Jimi Hendrix, and Sly and the Family Stone, took place in 1969. Its actual location a few miles away in Bethel.

The area’s musical history comes alive in cans of tape that fill shelves in a narrow storage room of Bearsville Studio. Scratched black markers identify the master tapes of works by the Band, Rundgren and dozens of others.

It’s the foreign hands who are usually most interested in Woodstock’s history, Grossman says. "They’ll often give away books that describe past events, and once gave an impromptu tour to a Japanese heavy-metal band that wanted to see the sights."

"I think it means something," Clearymountain, who attended the festival, says of the Bearsville mystique. "Originally, people are curious about it."

But it’s the reputation of the studio, not the community, that ultimately keeps musicians coming back. "It reminds me how current we are," Grossman says.

Interview by Kurt Loder
Rolling Stone
November 5th - December 10th, 1987

Anyway, thank you. All we can do is what we do. I am reminded of Levon Helm, the voice of The Band. At the intermission of a marvelous concert they gave at the Berkeley Community Theater, someone yelled out, "You folks sure can play!"

Levon leaned into the microphone and said, "You folks sure can audience."

San Francisco Chronicle
Monday, November 21, 1988

Bob Dylan

A lot of fans would say that the Band, that was backing you up in the mid-Sixties, was the greatest group you ever had. Would you agree?

Well, there were different things I liked about every band I had. I liked the Street Legal band a lot. I thought it was a real tight sound. Usually it’s the drummer and the bass player that make the band.

The Band had their own sound, that’s for sure. When they were playing behind me, they weren’t the Band; they were called Levon and the Hawks. What came out on record as the Band was, it was like night and day. Robbie [Robertson] started playing that real pinched, squeezed guitar sound — he had never played like that before in his life. They could cover songs great. They used to do Motown songs, and that, to me, is when I think of them as being at their best. Even more so than "Kung Harvest" and "The Weight" and all of that. When I think of them, I think of them singin’ somethin’ like "Baby Don’t You Do It," covering Marvin Gaye and that kind of thing.

Those were the golden days of the Band, even more so than when they played behind me.

What were some of the most memorable shows you guys did together?

Oh, man, I don’t know. Just about every single one. Every night was like goin’ for broke, like the end of the world.
Rick Danko had not yet reached his 35th birthday when The Band announced their retirement from the drudgery of rock and roll touring in 1976. They had gathered some friends and musical influences, invited S&O fans to dinner and filmed the six-hour concert on Thanksgiving day, calling it "The Last Waltz," directed by Martin Scorcese. It was an artistic triumph — a musical milestone of the concert film era made for Danko. It meant a less hectic schedule was now in store, the beginning of a new career he now calls "the retirement program." When he does go together with The Band, as he has when their reunion in 1983, it is now more "like a family reunion: like Frank and Jesse James getting back together and hitting a few banks.

The son of a woodcutter from Canada's tobacco belt in Simcoe, Ontario, Danko was given a mandolin at the age of five and soon joined his brothers at Saturday night dances. Before his family had electricity, he listened to a battery-operated radio, stretching his antennas far enough to hear live performances from the Grand Ole Opry. "I always wanted to go to Nashville and be a cowboy singer," he would say later. Young Danko also learned to play the guitar and violin when he wasn't working as a butcher's helper, and he began singing the songs he heard on the radio late at night after the local Canadian stations went off the air. It was the music of Jimmie Rod, Muddy Waters, Junior Parker, Ray Charles and Sonny Boy Williamson that would influence Danko's style and shape the country-rock sound he pioneered with The Band.

When he was seventeen, he quit school to join rockabilly singer Ronnie Hawkins' band. With drummer Levon Helm, keyboardists Richard Manuel and Garth Hudson, guitarist Robbie Robertson and Danko on bass, The Hawks built a reputation as a disciplined, hard-working, tender-train rockabilly band. From the honky tonks and dance halls across the Canadian provinces to the rough and tumble bar circuit in Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas, Hawkins toured them hard, and taught them a lot about life. "It was another kind of rock and roll," said Danko. "It wasn't something I'd heard in my neighborhood. We were kids, playing in bars that you were supposed to be 21 to play in. The Hawks was older than the rest of us. It can get pretty outrageous when you're out there that young."

By 1965, The Hawks were on their own, soon to be heard by Bob Dylan, who had shocked folk purists at Newport in 1965 by appearing with members of the Paul Butterfield Blues Band. Dylan hired The Hawks, and they toured with him across the U.S. in the summer of 1965, starting at the Hollywood Bowl on September 13th. By April of 1966, The Hawks had begun a tour of Europe, which was filmed by Don Pomebaker and Howard Alk. Originally scheduled for ABC-TV, the film, titled "Fat Man and Little Boy," has rarely been shown publicly, but the Village Voice called it "About the richest and the best, of all films on rock." Cecil Marcus would later say in his book "Mystic Train" that The Hawks backed Dylan "with a notes that not even they could have been prepared for. They were very introduced, always anonymous, but they left the stages of that tour, where the Stones watched from the audience, and came to Woodstock as the best band in the world."

The Hawks worked with Dylan after his motorcycle accident, writing and recording songs in the basement of Big Pink, a renter house in nearby West Saugerties. "Carth did the dishes, Richard cooked the macaroni and I took out the garbage," recalls Danko. "We had some time, and we started to play for ourselves, you might say." This collaboration resulted in two albums: "The Basement Tapes" with Dylan, and "Music from Big Pink," The Band's first album which was released in the summer of 1968. "The Basement Tapes" clearly shows the creative growth shared by Dylan and The Band. Neither his nor their music would ever be the same as it had been before they met. "Music from Big Pink" was an extension of that growth - a unique blend of country and R&B that broke through the haze of late '60s psychedelia, influencing the direction of rock music to this day. It included "Ophelia" and "When the Night Comes Down," long considered the definitive recordings of "Big Pink." They were released as a double album, the first ever in the United States, and the album was a huge commercial hit, hitting #2 on the album charts. By then, Danko's solo career was in full swing, and he appeared on the cover of Time Magazine, who said their music had "the kind of excellence that can't be measured.

Their first live appearance as The Band didn't come until after their had recorded their second album - simply titled "The Band," which was released in 1969. It too, was homemade, this time in a rented pool house owned by Sammy Davis Jr. in Los Angeles. Rolling Stone called it "nothing less than a masterpiece of electric folklore," and placed it at #9 on the All-Time Album chart. By then, Danko's solo career was heating up, and his first solo album, "Stage Fright," was recorded at the Woodstock Playhouse in 1970, and released as #5 on the Billboard chart. They tested out Albert Grossman's new Bearsville Studios for the fourth album, "Cahoots," at a cheapie house in the Catskills. They recorded a collection of rock and roll classics on "Cahoots," sometimes playing for a nickel.

Then, there was the great live album "Rock of Ages," recorded on the eclipse of the New Moon 1971-72 in New York, with a horn section arranged and conducted by the legendary New Orleans producer Allen Toussaint. By 1974, they were on tour with Dylan again, and the reunion resulted in two albums: "Planet Waves," a studio recording released before the tour, and "Before the Flood," a critically acclaimed live collection of tour performances. It is now available on compact disc, as is much of The Band's Capitol Records catalog.

After "The Last Waltz," Danko released his self-titled solo album on Arista Records and toured extensively with a group that often consisted of bluesman Paul Butterfield and ex-Beach Boy Blondie Chaplin. The Band found time to tour Canada and Japan in 1983 and joined Crosby, Still and Nash for their summer tour in 1985. Danko then made his acting debut in "One Outside," a movie about a child kidnapping filmed in Arkansas' Ozark Mountains. Other members of The Band also appear in the film.

In January 1987, The Band joined Allen Toussaint and Taj Mahal to perform one of their first concerts at the Wiltern Theatre in Los Angeles. Danko performed a duet with Levon Helm, Richard Manuel, Paul Butterfield and, more recently, with Blondie Chaplin for a tribute to Direclos Airplane and Jerry Garcia. His most frequent musical companion these days is blues harp player Shadrack Toliver, who both played in Florida and whose work includes recording and performing with soul man Ron Cowdy, best known for his pioneering catalog that includes Artha Franklin's "Seasaw" and "Chain of Pools."

Mr. Danko has recently completed an instructional videotape on the techniques of playing the harmonica for Bearsville Records and has also recorded a version of Durlive's "Blue Slip Fly" for a children's album featuring Rosetta Jones. He is currently working on a solo album with the members of his band, The Hawks. Danko still calls Woodstock his home, living in the hamlet of Bearsville, not far from his roots with The Band.

RICK DANKO
"Retired" Danko faces Hub test

By GREG REIBMAN

NOBODY can be sure what will happen when The Band's Rick Danko answers Ed Burke's tomorrow night.

It could prove a unique opportunity to see and hear a respected rocker shine in an intimate setting. Or it might wind up being one of those embarrassing nights when we find that a member of a once-inspirational group has nothing left to offer.

For his part, Danko makes few promises. "I'm not coming to Boston to change the world," he says, denying that the recent solo success of Band-mate Robbie Robertson inspired his own resurfacing.

"In fact," he added during a phone interview from his home in upstate New York, "this is all just part of my retirement plan.

Danko's "retirement plan" began on Thanksgiving Day 1976. That's when the Band played "The Last Waltz" -- the group's acclaimed farewell concert in San Francisco that featured Bob Dylan, Van Morrison, Muddy Waters and other artists that The Band worked with during their rich, 14-year history.

But Danko's retirement is hardly iron-clad. He released a solo album in 1978 and still has a record contract with Arista Records. He continues to play live several times a month (including a recent tour of Spain with The Band's Garth Hudson) and spends countless hours in recording studios (including a cameo on Robertson's solo album). And Danko hosts a monthly public radio program in Albany with folkies Happy and Artie Traum.

"It's good to get out and work up a little sweat every once and a while," he says. "It beats jogging." Danko, 44, wanted to play Ed Burke's as a "way to help out the neighborhood." (Club owner Burke is married to Danko's cousin's cousin.) He says he'll play "some old songs, some new songs and some blues songs" with harmonica player Brendan and members of Boston's own Screaming Coyotes.

Although the glory days of The Band are behind him, Danko enjoys being asked about them. "I respect it," he says. "I appreciate that the music has been passed along from generation to generation."

Of course, he adds sheepishly, he doesn't mind that The Band's dozen albums from the '60s and '70s -- thanks to Robertson's solo success and releases on compact disc -- have begun selling again. "I get royalties quarterly," he laughs. "Then it becomes inspirational."

Danko recommends that compact-disc buyers invest in the group's live "Rock of Ages" CD first. "It sounds great. All of the CDs that's my favorite."

"But you ought to check out Rick Danko in 1984, too," he adds.

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Rick Danko playing it low-key

By Steve Morse

Globe Staff

Rick Danko lives on the edge of a pond deep in a white birch forest near Woodstock, N.Y. He has stocked the lake with 30 trout and feeds them monthly. He has also eyed up to 60 wildlife in front of his home.

If you want to see Danko, you'll need to make an interview request. Known for his reticence, Danko has sidestepped the drug-hazed days of the band and the90s. He says he's just there to cheer everyone up for the night.

Danko has seen his share of amazing moments in his career. "I feel pretty roughed up by Danko's high-voiced tones.

Danko's voice and harmonica playing are often compared to those of Robertson. Still, there's a noticeable difference between the two. Danko's voice is stronger and more powerful. Robertson's is softer and more intimate.

The two share a kinship in their love for the blues and the roots of American music. But Danko's style is more bluesy and Robertson's is more rock-oriented.

Danko's repertoire includes songs like "The Last Waltz," "Helpful," and "Sundowner." He also plays his share of blues and folk songs.

Danko's concerts are often accompanied by a small band that includes a drummer and a bassist. The band is known for its stripped-down sound and its ability to create a sense of intimacy.

The shows are usually held in small venues, like the Boston Globe's "Retired" series. Danko's concerts are often accompanied by a host of guest musicians, including Robertson, Robertson's former bandmate Robbie Robertson, and other members of The Band.

The concerts are a way for Danko to connect with his fans and to continue the spirit of The Band's music.

"I'm thankful about it," he says. "I appreciate that the music has been passed along from generation to generation."

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Onstage

BOSTON BALLET

210 New St., 4th floor

BOSTON

THEATRE

By Gary Graff

Rick Danko, former bassist and singer for The Band, is currently playing solo dates around the country. The band's career spanned nearly a decade, from the late 1960s to the early 1980s. The band's music was known for its rootsy instrumentation and cohesive harmonies.

Danko, along with his former bandmates Garth Hudson, Richard Manuel, and Levon Helm, has been performing solo shows throughout the country. Danko's solo work has been well-received, with critics praising his songwriting and his ability to capture the essence of The Band's music.

Danko's latest album, "Retired," was released in 1993. The album features Danko's signature harmonica and his distinctive vocals. The album was well-received by critics, who praised Danko's ability to capture the spirit of The Band's music.

Danko's solo shows are often accompanied by a band that includes guitarists, bassists, and drummers. The band's repertoire includes songs from The Band's catalog, as well as Danko's own compositions. Danko's solo shows are a tribute to The Band and a celebration of their music.

Danko's solo work has helped keep the memory of The Band alive, and his solo shows are a way for fans to connect with The Band's music and with Danko himself. Danko's solo shows are a testament to the enduring power of The Band's music and of Danko's talent as a musician.
By Mike Curtin
Special to The Post-Star

On Saturday Rick Danko will play two shows, at 7 and 10 p.m., at Caffe Lena in Saratoga Springs.

"Former bassist and lead vocalist for The Band, Danko has built a 30-year career that encompasses the entire modern history of rock 'n' roll. A brief phone interview with him last spring only touched on it. "As with four-titties of The Band, the 46-year-old Danko was born in Canada. "I was raised in Sarnia, Ontario, a town of 10,000 people about 80 miles from Erie Pa.," he said. "I came from a musical family and began playing mandolin, banjo and violin when I was 5."

His early influences included the country-western superstars of the day, Ernest Tubb, Lefty Frizzell and Hank Williams, and later Sam Cooke and Elvis Presley. "I was just becoming a teen-ager when rock 'n' roll first hit," Danko said.

"While working with an early rocker, Ronnie Hawkins, Danko first met his future partners in The Band. Like that of the others, his stay with the mercurial Hawkins was a rocky one. "Hawkins fired me in 1964, but I think we were all fired at one time or another," he said, laughing.

"Eventually Danko, guitarist Robbie Robertson, organist Garth Hudson, drummer Levon Helm, and keyboard player Richard Manuel struck out on their own. They toured under various names including Levon and the Hawks, the Canadian Squires and the Crackers.

They came to the attention of blues singer John Hammond Jr., who brought them to New York City for work on an album he was recording. It was in New York that Danko and company met an even bigger name in folk music, Bob Dylan.

In 1965 Danko, Robertson, Manuel and Hudson backed Dylan on his world tour. "Like A Rolling Stone" just had been released, and Dylan's use of electricity at the Newport Folk Festival had scandalized the folk music community. It was no less tumultuous touring with him.

"It was our 'booed around the world' tour," Danko quipped about the less-than-favorable reception that greeted Dylan's conversion to rock 'n' roll, "but I didn't take it personally; I was just a sideman."

"Dylan's always knew how to get a reaction from crowd," Danko said, chuckling.

After Dylan's near-fatal motorcycle accident in 1966, Danko and the others settled near him in the Woodstock area and renamed themselves The Band. The center of activity was a house in West Saugerties, where Hudson, Manuel and Danko lived -- a big pink house.

"Dylan and us would get together for six or seven hours a day. It was kind of like a club house. We must have recorded 100 songs there," Danko said.

From this fertile period came Dylan's legendary "Basement Tapes" and songs like "You Ain't Going Nowhere" and "The Motley Quinn," which were hits for the Byrds and Manfred Mann, respectively. Also hatched from this time was The Band's historic first album, "Music From Big Pink."

For the next eight years, The Band was among the most popular groups in America, playing the monstrous Watkins Glen rock festival in 1972 and backing Dylan on his comeback tour in 1974.

Asked which of The Band's eight albums is his favorite, Danko said, "I'm proud of them all, but the live one, 'Rock Of Ages,' is our best-sounding, especially heard under earphones."

After The Band's final performance, which was immortalized in the Martin Scorsese-directed movie, "The Last Waltz," Danko launched a solo career and released two albums on Arista Records. Now living in the Pearsall-Cooper area of the state, he continues to perform on the Northeast club and college circuit.

Despite the untimely death of a close friend, Dylan, for the reluctance of Robertson to rejoin his former partners, Danko, Helm and Hudson still tour occasionally as The Band.

"We're still in demand in South America, where they'll pay us $40,000 to $50,000 per night," Danko said. "In a way it's only fair; for years we never received royalties from our foreign record sales."

Accompanying Danko at Lena's will be harmonica player Sredni Vollmer.
Ex-Band Members Rick Danko and Garth Hudson at Bogart's

‘We’ve been reharsing for this,” announced a smiling Rick Danko at the beginning of his and Garth Hudson’s first set Tuesday at Bogart’s in Long Beach, as if rehearsing was the exception rather than the rule. (That could well be the case, given the reputation for erratic performances from the two ex-Band members, who have both been in a state of semi-retirement since the Band’s “Last Waltz” a dozen years ago.)

So you say, “oh / you wanna know / the shape they’re in,” these Band alumni? Not bad. Certainly this looked (the standard uniform: jeans, cowboy boots) and felt (the sound: slightly bluesy American rock) like a combo for whom the 80's might as well never have happened. And in a battle of the bar bands, this one wouldn’t necessarily stand out as having the immutable stuff of legend. Yet Danko and Hudson did admirably roll out more new songs than old, and with neither player pretending to be pursuing a major music career right now, a three-quarters-hearted effort from likable old friends is better than none.

Rehearsal or no, at least one element of the show seemed predictably spontaneous. Hudson’s busy, wandering hands, which fitted from electronic piano to organ synth to quasi-ceilstial synth and back, usually within a few seconds. Even Dr. John (who opened the show with a set of buoyant boogie piano) joined the band for a jam session. Hudson looked lost and unsure of where to put his own violin (which he suddenly popped a tiny saxophone out of its case and began to doodle beautifully) with a more consistent role in the set, this band-with-a-lower-case-b could transcend its weekend warrior status.

Danko and Hudson will play the Palomino on Thursday.

—CHRIS WILLMAN

Dr. John Keeps It Pure, While Danko and Hudson Litter the Stage

By JIM WASHBURN

M usic (Dr. John) Rebennack and the Band’s Rick Danko and Garth Hudson all came to musical prominence in 1968, each offering roots-based alternatives to the lyric-slash-mash-up groups that were blasting out. While Dr. John’s New Orleans-based swamp rock had more of a dash of psychedelia mixed in, the band was drawing straight from the well, with unnerving worthy of a Stephen Foster and a musical style that ranged from the roots of country music to gritty rock, with touches of prime carnival music thrown in for good measure.

That balance seems to have shifted over the years. Wednesday night at the Coach House, Rebennack’s solo set at the piano delivered about as much pure New Orleans as one can get without heading for Tchoupitoulas Street, while much of Danko and Hudson’s set seemed more in hippie-era eclecticism. Rebennack ignored most of the last three decades to concentrate on a selection of New Orleans R&B staples. He linked the closely related “The Box,” “Brother John” and “Rock’n’Roll” in a rollicking style that made his grand piano almost seem like a parade instrument. He resurrected Hussy Piano’s Smith’s “Hard-Rocking Rockin’ Piano” and the Boogie Woogie Piano and “Don’t You Just Know It,” and translated Bert King’s guitar standard “Come On” to the keyboard, intricately turning its R&B inside-out while still shaking the shell out of the piano.

The only Rebennack original in the set was “Right Place Wrong Time,” in which his aggressive right hand more than subtracted for the punchy horns on the 1973 hit record. He closed with a pair of Professor Longhair numbers, adding personal embellishments, while replacating both the rhythmical firework and skrved licks of the late piano genius. One couldn’t blame the Doctor for spending most of the set with a beneficial smile on his face.

In contrast to Rebennack’s simple one-man-one-piano setup, Danko and Hudson’s portion of the show was littered with people and equipment. While the equipment merely took up space—and pushed Rebennack’s piano into a back corner of the stage—a couple squabbles between the two seemed as if they had been frozen-dried 20 years ago but a bad night at the Fillmore.

Hudson and Danko sometimes were able to re-create some of the Band’s early elegance, but more frequently the music was capped by sloppy and overlong ensemble playing, with a net effect as that keyboard fills—until he suddenly popped a tiny saxophone out of its case and began to doodle beautifully—were Hudson’s ready to play a more consistent role in the set, or lack thereof, and literally smashing the show into a 20-year moratorium at the Fillmore.

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The six-piece aggregation, which included Orange County’s ever-energetic Mike Reilly on bass and guitar, displayed deflections of adequacy on the already gaggle of Wednesday night show. Rick Danko’s “Spoonful” and “Little Red Rooster,” with its running, featuring and over-long takes taking the place of emotion and style.

A version of “Mystery Train” wasn’t so much back as it was composition, and the once-beautiful “I Shall Be Released” turned off in such a sloppy manner that it is probably a blessing that Danko didn’t address his finest vocal showcase, “Stage Fright.”

As usual, Danko mugged and clowned through much of the show, but his vocals on “Long Black Veil” and “It Makes No Difference” showed that, when he chooses, his voice can still be a moving instrument, full of pain and lament.

In the future, except for his brief solo fours, Hudson’s peculiar but entertaining musicianship on keyboards and soprano sax was the song’s saving grace, and, undaunted much of the time, shadowed behind his keyboards with a distracted, grumpy-looking-for-a-hammer demeanor, Hudson offered solos that were furious outbursts of ideas and emotions, barely contained by the structure of the songs.

When Rebennack joined the group for a menacing melding of his “I Walk on Gilded Splinters” and “Gris-Gris/Gumbo Ya Ya,” Hudson was the only player on stage who didn’t seem hopelessly outmatched by Rebennack’s spare yet self-contained piano arrangements.
HARD REPORT

Former Band member Rick Danko is considering doing some more recording with Toronto guitarist and songwriter Colin Linden. Danko and Band keyboardist Garth Hudson appear on Linden's upcoming album, "When The Spirit Comes." Danko sang harmonies on four songs, including a version of the Band's "Chest Fever." In May, Danko travels to Australia to tour with a band that includes Hudson, Levon Helm's nephew, drummer Kagle from the Catie Brothers, and New York guitarist Jimmy Weller. "Playing with Colin's great band made me realize that it's time to really get it going," Danko says. "In the studio with them I realized you can achieve the right thing." April 22, 1988

ROBERT PALMER HEAVY NOVA

Schizophrenia is a terrible thing to waste. At least that appears to be Robert Palmer's philosophy on his new album, Heavy Nova, a bizarre collection of metal disco, bossa nova and pop music. Palmer's involvement with the Dennis Dunaway boys on the Power Station project has continued to influence his work. The first side of Heavy Nova is heavy on the crashing rhythms, pounding bass and extensive studio production. The little song, the first single to be released, is a mindless dance music in the same vein as "I Didn't Mean To Turn You On," from his previous album, Ripride. The album's most interesting aspect is the inclusion of two members from the Band -- Rick Danko on vocals and Garth Hudson on accordion. Hudson's presence is felt on "Change His Ways," a harmonious song which gets its rhythms from African and reggae music. Hudson's accordion captures a slight syncopated feeling and then, in the middle of it all, Palmer starts to yodel. The comedic appeal flattens considerably when that begins. The 70's band, Focus, those fast-pedaling feet from Holland, should have provided a lesson to Palmer. With Palmer's Swiss tendency out of the way, Danko joins him for a duet on "Disturbing Behavior," one of the better cuts. Again, as he demonstrated on Ripride, Palmer's ability to interpret easy-listening fare is one of his strengths. This time around, he covers Jimmy Van Heusen's "It Could Happen To You." He learned it from a Peggy Lee record and, given a bass string background, Palmer shows that he's comfortable singing soft ballads. An entire album of such material, while it might scare away his rock followers quicker than you can say Linda Ronstadt, could be a pleasant experience. "Breakin Us," the album's most noticeable bossa nova sound, shows the influence of Brazilian singer Joao Gilberto. Pick out any of these diverse elements and Heavy Nova will probably result in some enjoyment. The problem lies in the radical tangents Palmer is taking. Those attracted to his rock material probably will have no interest in hearing his rendition of Peggy Lee material. Bossa nova fans will probably have no interest in hearing his rendition of the disco stuff. Palmer is a talented vocalist who possesses the talent to sing many different styles. Putting all of those styles on one album results in a collection which is unlikely to completely satisfy anybody.
Rising Star. New RCA artist Jo-El Sonnier recently played a showcase at the Club Lingerie in Los Angeles, where he was joined for an all-star jam by Dave Alvin, Jennifer Warnes, Garth Hudson, Huss Kunkel, and Albert Lee. Pictured after the show are, from left, Hudson, Sonnier, Kunkel, and Lee.

BILBOARD APRIL 2, 1988

The spirit moved songwriter’s peers

By James Muretich

As one of Canada’s most promising young singer/songwriters, Colin Linden still has a lot of dreams to chase. However, at least one of his dreams came true during the recording of his latest album: When The Spirit Comes.

“If this record becomes number one all over the country, I don’t know if I would feel any better than I did when Rick Danko (formerly of The Band) came up to Toronto, blessed my version of ‘(The Band’s) Chest Fever’ that I was recording and then sang on it,” Linden says in a telephone interview.

And if that wasn’t enough, the former keyboardist for The Band—Garth Hudson—also performed on the title track to his second recording.

“It was an amazing experience for me. My two favorite albums are still Howlin’ Wolf’s Rockin’ Chair and The Band’s Big Pink. Yeah, I was in heaven. Linden will enjoy another little slice of heaven this Saturday when he performs at the Edmonton Folk Music Festival Saturday night, with Danko and Hudson alongside him on stage.

If anything, the association between Linden and the former members of The Band is a meeting of two Canadian recording acts, one old and one new, with a similar approach to music.

Like The Band, Linden’s songs have a warm, rootsy rock feel that allows him to spin tales with a disarming charm and wit. Also like The Band, his tunes just seem to get better with time.

Linden is the rebellious young Turk who has become a mature songwriter over the years.

“You feel pretty much the outsider when you first start off in music. You feel different from other people and that’s why you get into music and don’t become a lawyer or a doctor.

“However, as you get older you realize that not only are you not like everybody else but everybody else isn’t like everybody else. We all fit into the patchwork of life in our own way.

“I guess if there’s a theme to this record it’s about not forcing things, about letting things in life come to you.”

The Wonderful World Of Disney

Although there was a time in the ‘60s when Uncle Walt Disney probably wouldn’t have allowed some of the artists represented on “Stay Awake” inside the gates of the “Magic Kingdom,” he would have been excited by the prospects of this unique A&M Records package of Disney movie music set for release October 4. The brainchild of producer Hal Wilner, who was responsible for similar compilations of music by Thelonious Monk and Kurt Weill, the record features a fascinating mix of contemporary artists performing favorite songs from everyone’s childhood.

The tracks include: James Taylor and Branford Marsalis performing “Second Star To The Right” from “Peter Pan”; Los Lobos, “I Wanna Be Like You” from “The Jungle Book”; Ringo Starr and Herb Alpert, “When You Wish Upon A Star” from “Snow White”; and Harry Nilsson, “Zippity Do Dah” from “Song Of The South.” Other tracks include Bonnie Raitt and Was (Not Was) performing “Baby Mine” from “Dumbo”; Michael Stipe (R.E.M.) and Natalie Merchant (10,000 Maniacs), “A Hundred Years Ago” from “Pinocchio”; and— in what may be the most ingenious pairing of all—Wayne Horvitz, Syd Straw, and Kenny Rankin performing “Feed The Birds” from “Mary Poppins,” in a transformation without abandon—of the replacement music set for release October 4. The brainchild of producer Hal Wilner, who was responsible for similar compilations of music by Thelonious Monk and Kurt Weill, the record features a fascinating mix of contemporary artists performing favorite songs from everyone’s childhood.

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“Stay Awake” with Disney variations

By Richard Harrington

Bonnie Raitt’s interpretation of “Baby Mine” is part lullaby, part R&B confession, and as she sings atop Was (Not Was)’s relaxed groove, Raitt makes the song very much her own without obscuring its endearing charm.

For Raitt and her Arkestra do much the same with “Pink Elephants On Parade,” an appropriation of instrumental imagery and nonsense sound: Ra’s avant-garde version of the Duke Ellington Orchestra gives the tune an expansive arrangement without abandoning its implied silliness.

There are other superb Disney interpretations. On producer Hal Wilner’s “Stay Awake” (A&M Records, three formats) you’ll find: The Band’s “Feed The Birds” (from “Mary Poppins”), in which Buison’s keyboards and accordion evoke the melancholy of a lullaby and the love of a hymn, and Syd Straw’s “Blue Shadows On The Trail,” in which an overlooked singer given an overdubbed song a loving, combative reading that both Roy Rogers and Patsy Cline might have loved.
Levon Helm: Having a Good Time at Palmino

Levon Helm didn’t do an overwhelming amount of drumming Thursday at the Lone Star—second drummer provided most of the rhythm—but the grinning, tousled, ruggedly handsome ex-band member did at least keep his consistently busy during the informal, good-time set before a hooting and hollering crowd.

Thanks to an old foot injury reportedly keeps Helm from doing as much drumming as he’d like to.

Though he stayed behind his kit with his familiar hunchset stance, chin about halfway down his chest—Helm mostly kept himself occupied singing, playing harmonica, playing the cymbals with his harmonica, chain-smoking, chain-beer-drinking, and offering various amusing hand signals to band members or fans on the dance floor (and sometimes two or three of the above diversions at once).

Most of all, Helm offered that gruff voice that remains the most recognizable of the gruff voices from the Band. Here it was in the service of hardy blues and R&B chestnuts, some easily recognizable (“Shotgun,” “Willie and the Hand Jive”), most more obscure.

His five supporting players were tight enough to pull off the several all-instrumental numbers, despite evidence (like long musicianly gruff voice that remains the most

... ... ..... . l&l'lu "

The club circuit for some rock acts continues to grow closer and closer to the Green Valley area. A phenomenon in those hardy souls who travel the Northwest in search of good times.

The description of the Northwest’s been refined by its beauty, but it can be a deadly business—as is true at the Lone Star—especially when you’re toasting souls. Until you’ve seen a few relations of breathtaking, like the trio of weddings we were invited to on Saturday.

About six months ago a manamed Leon Helm of the Band was invited to play at one of these weddings. He needed to show up the hill without too much time and became honest.

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Mike Curtin

The Boston Herald

FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 1988

Levon Helm in funky form

Levon Helm with T. L. & the Wranglers at Nightstage last night.

By DEAN JOHNSON

“YOU can count the good singer-drummers on one hand and he’s first on the list.”

The comment was made by Tom Hambridge, drummer for T. L. & the Wranglers. It was directed toward the gourmets who delighted Friday night’s duet at the Wranglers, Levon Helm. Helm will always be remembered as a part of the seminal American rock ensemble, “the Band.”

No doubt it was exactly that item on Helm’s musical resume that brought more than 100 people to Nightstage for Friday night’s duet at the Wranglers, Levon Helm. Helm will always be remembered as a part of the seminal American rock ensemble, “the Band.”

Nearby half of the crowd didn’t even feature Helm’s vocals. The Wranglers’ soundtrack of a funky, loose-limbed pubs were a hit and done by the Wranglers,

Jimmy Widen on guitars and Paul Teague on accordion were standing sedulously as Helm’s group played their way through “Willie and the Hand Jive” and “Maggie’s Farm.”

Funky, loose-limbed pub music was the order of the evening. Helm, the band huddled between songs to deduce what to perform next. Helm and Hambridge, clear-headed and clear-headed, Helm seemed to be in a cheerful mood.

He even joked with the audience by question-and-answer mode at the end of the set, “My name’s (fellow Wrangler) T. L. Daniel. Glad to know all of you.”

T. L. & the Wranglers began the right with some agreeable wails that featured rodent rock and gutiar solos.

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Helm in funky form

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Levon Helm and his new band play on

by Stephen Levy

ARLINGTON, Va. — To hear Levon Helm's hallucinations, you might just as well you were listening to a man with a score to settle in Woodstock, N.Y. for the past 20 years, who made his name in the 1960s as a member of the Band, the house band for Woodstock.

Not just any band, mind you.
The Band.

I asked Helm's permission to tape the phone interview and, he said, all right.

"Well," he added, "I've had the bad luck of doing things with people who have had bad luck."

"And, you know, I think that was the best way to do it."

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"Well," he added, "I've had the bad luck of doing things with people who have had bad luck."

"And, you know, I think that was the best way to do it."

But Helm's public persona, as you might have gathered, is not so bad luck.

"I'm a born-again, no-bull affair," he said.

"No, that's not a thing of the past, but a thing of the future."

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"I don'
Drummer says music may help deliver the Delta

By Maria Hanson

WASHINGTON — Levon Helm, who left the Delta to find internecine music in New York City, brought a message to Congress Tuesday that the once-proud rivers of the Mississippi Delta have been lost in the world marketplace.

"It's not the soil," Helm repeated on Tuesday. "It's not the soil." Helm placed himself as a member of the Band, which originally included Levon and late great-guitarist/great-musician Bob Dylan, to the committee hearing. Sena- tor Barbara Boxer of California asked how he learned to play music.

"By growing up in the Delta," Helm said of a Phillips County cotton farmer, testified before a joint Senate Committee in support of legislation to create a commission to make recommenda- tions on economic conditions of areas in the Mississippi Delta.

Helm said it was his time between Woodstock in New York and New York State rooms to count.

Almost no one had full-time in the Delta, Helm said, "Coal Miner's Daughter." "More than a Delta,..."

"Unfortunately, the econ- omics in the Delta can no longer rely on agriculture," he said. "It's a way of life that agriculture will have to be more diverse economy that can compete in the world marketplace." Deltans learned that they had to change very suddenly.

"We're going to have a good time and white about the problems. We're going to eat good barbecue and listen to good music," he said.

WASHINGTON — Levon Helm addresses many woes of Delta

WASHINGTON — Levon Helm, a native of Marvell, has been a member of the Band, which originally included Bob Dylan, and has jobs with such diverse groups as a doctor and the Band. On Tuesday, Helm achieved his second hearing before the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works.

"The Louisiana State University at night " and "The Line," and "The Delta," he said.

"Fortunately, the econ- omics in the Delta can no longer rely on agriculture, " he said. "The way of life, that agriculture will have to be more diverse economy that can compete in the world marketplace."

"Unfortunately, the economics in the Delta can no longer rely on agriculture," he said. "It's a way of life that agriculture will have to be more diverse economy that can compete in the world marketplace."

Helm put in a pitch for "we're one to have a good time religious song that kind of character building about it. But too much of that kind of character building is a violation of the values of the country. We can do better. We should do better. We have lost 11 million people who live in the area covered by this bill, out of the 11 million people who live in those areas who are only three counties that have less than half of the people in those is loving in poverty. It is a tremendous mistake in that in those cases we do to deal with poverty in poverty in that area.

"I know, we need to work on the pick. We need to raise money on some people's house burned, and a genuine tender. I've seen people for all the people in the very small community that I grew up in that such a matter as that — the character building about it. But too much of that kind of character building is a violation of the values of the country. We can do better. We should do better. We have lost 11 million people who live in the area covered by this bill, out of the 11 million people who live in those areas who are only three counties that have less than half of the people in those is loving in poverty. It is a tremendous mistake in that in those cases we do to deal with poverty in poverty in that area.

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appreciate your joining with us today. We’re going to be calling on you, to be of some help in the future. We thank you for being here.

Senator Breaux. Congressman, did you have some questions?

Mr. Breaux. Senator, excuse me. It’s not a question as much as it is an observation. And I’m going to be very brief.

When Senator Breaux asked you earlier, Mr. Helms, about any particular recommendations you might have, or the types of things that this commission would focus on you said to me that we ought to keep off welfare onto the employment roles. Well, a lot of those in the audience, and those that might read this testimony would consider it perhaps a duplication of legislative efforts, because we do have a welfare reform proposal coming now. And we’ve also passed one through the House. So the question might be, should this not be the proper focus of this commission, and how could this be some redundant quality?

I’d like to address that. When we look at the particular role of this commission, I think it could act in an advisory capacity for this commission. In addition to just the legislative effort, because we do have a particular welfare individual to the legislation of all people.

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Mr. Chairmen, Members of the Committee, I want to thank you for inviting me to testify before this panel. As a notice of a witness and not the more economically depressed states in this country, the Mississippi, the Delta, I think that the economic plight of these regions should not be only extremely important to me and others testifying here today, but also it should be made a national priority. As most of you know, the Mississippi Delta River has been lost in the American shuffle and for most of the last 30 or so years, we have had to hit out that long fast dance called progress. Therefore, I want to commend Senator Breaux for helping me into testimony on this effort for us to call all attention to areas which is in long suffering. I would like to thank you, Senator Breaux, for being here today and I appreciate each of you here taking the time to listen to me today.

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The change now so vitally needed. We have to see the old ways go, and to see the whole Delta and the Delta reorganized to the cost of America, thereby losing its unique characteristics and cultural identity.

Mr. Chairmen, I would say that the economic depression that has been the Delta has done more to harm that traditional way of life, that unique culture, than rapid economic development could ever undo. Just look at the statistics which indicate that young people are leaving the Delta by the thousands every year for many years now. According to the most recent Census statistics, while in the Delta there has been depression, growth, the counties in the Delta region have experienced a 7% decline in population since the 70's, due to low numbers of births, which are so high that the Delta’s birth rate in the top five in the nation is births per 1,000 women, while in the migration of all these children since they gave up.

With each person that leaves, part of our culture leaves and, in part, of our communal understanding is lost. Gradually, the whole area is becoming deserted as the older generation passes on to new and the young move away. We have to get the young with a reason to stay. We have to see the people there and a means of making a living in their home. I know literally dozens of people I grew up with who would do anything to be able to move back home if we could just make a decent living.

Chairman, Members of the Committee, I want to thank you for coming here today and I appreciate each of you here taking the time to listen to me today.

The people of the Delta have been lost in the America shuffle for the past 30 years," said Arkansas natronic Levon Helms, an actor and former member of the rock 'n' roll group, the Band.

A few hours later, Mississippi 1st District Rep. John Breaux told the House Banking Subcommittee on Economic Stabilization that he sees the poverty of his native state every time he goes home and finds familiar towns "died up.

"It's productive jobs we need," said Whitten, a 45-year veteran of Congress who chairs the House Appropriations Committee. "To see the poverty we have in these areas".

These leaders are seeking passage of legislation that would create a nine-member Delta Commission to examine trends, find best ways to promote economic development in the Delta 20 regions, which include Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, and Illinois.

The legislation was sponsored by Arkansas Sen. Mike Grimes and others from the Senate and by Whitten, Mississippi 2nd District Rep. Mike Espy, and others in the House - cash funds spending $3 million to create the commission. The group would be required to submit a five-year development plan within a year after its first meeting.

Statistics offered by the witnesses were some of the strongest testimony on Thursday.

Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas are at or near the bottom in most major economic indicators, including the highest poverty levels, lowest per capita income, lowest educational levels and highest infant mortality rates.

These states are always among the first in the things that are said and last in those that are good," said Louisiana Sen. John Breaux, a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee and co-sponsor of the legislation. "These statistics aren't pretty."

Missouri the population of the proposed states in Mississippi's Delta region - 29% below the nation's poverty level, and the average per capita income is $4,642. Across the Mississippi River in Lee County, Ark., the average per capita income is even lower at $4,452.

About 42 percent of Espy's Delta constituents live below the poverty line, and 38 percent earn less than $5,000 a year.

The political leaders said the bill's goal is to confront poverty and education.

As for example, 45 percent of all Miss.

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ROBERTSON'S STELLAR BAND

Robbie Robertson has assembled an all-star cast for his upcoming Cinemax special, which will be filmed at Brooklyn's Majestic Theater sometime this month. It's "mostly people who are on my album," says Robertson, "like the BeDoans and Maria McKee and Peter Gabriel and some others as well." He's also recruited Keith Richards and the Grateful Dead (a.k.a. John Trudell), Martin Scorsese, who will serve in a "supervisory capacity" on the project, is bringing in David Fincher (he helmed Scorsese's "Englishman in New York" video) to direct. Members of U2 are reportedly set to sit in on the session also. The show will air sometime this fall.

Unlike other Cinemax specials, which are more or less miniconcerts, the Robertson-Scorsese project will have a running narrative. "I'll be storytelling," says Robertson, "like an extension of 'Somewhere down the Crazy River.'" The story begins in the mid-fifties, at the beginning of rock & roll. It's seen through the eyes of this kid who grows up through the Sixties. It's kind of an evolution of music, up to now.

"It's an evolution of rock & roll through Robbie's perception of it from when he was fifteen to now," adds Scorsese, who teamed with Robertson on The Last Waltz and, more recently, on the video for "Someplace Down the Crazy River.

The all-star band will perform music from Robertson's solo album, along with some Band songs, some new material, and "some classics, old rock & roll." Robertson says that depending upon how this performance goes, he may tour this summer. He's also talking to the folks at Amnesty International about their world tour.

...Geffen recording artist Robbie Robertson is tentatively slated as the opening act on George Harrison's long awaited upcoming world tour...

CASH BOX April 2, 1988

ROBERTSON WALTZES AGAIN

After his impressive turn on the soundtrack with an all-star band featuring producer-guitarist David Lindley, sensuality Tony Levin, multi-instrumentalist Robbie Robertson and the Band, Robertson is now eager to hit the road with his own all-star project. Robertson is scheduled to begin his tour before the album's release date, but sources close to Robertson's camp say his schedule may change. The reason? "They're trying to sell tickets," says a Robertson camp source. Robertson adds, "There will be a lot of tour delays, depending on how the album's doing." 

In the meantime, Robertson's new album, "The Band & Tapes," has been released to rave reviews. The album features Robertson's all-star band, the Robertson-Roberson-Roberson-Tapes. As a live combination of his tours and studio sessions, "The Band & Tapes" is anticipated to be one of the most eagerly awaited albums of the year.

The album is said to be a soul-searching experience, dealing with Robertson's own personal beliefs and philosophies. Robertson has stated that the album is a "search for spiritual truth and understanding." The album features Roland Kirk, Jimmy Smith, and others, and is described by Robertson as "a journey of self-discovery and growth."
RECLUSIVE ROCK: claims Robbie Robertson may make his first public appearance in more than a decade as musical guest on this weekend’s “Saturday Night Live” on NBC. Robertson’s last live performance was with The Band at the 1976 concert with Bob Dylan, Van Morrison, Neil Young and others. Herein the director Martin Scorsese’s documentary, “The Last Waltz,” Robertson has a new record out, “Robertson.” The guest host of TV tonight, Saturday Shch U,” “t pesrance in more than Weathers has his own new movie out, “Action Jackson.”

February 2, 1988

Late Night With David Letterman
Scheduled: comic Dana Carvey, musician Robbie Robertson. (In Stereo)

Sanremo Music Festival

Italy, February 25, 1988
The Guardian, Friday August 5 1988

BBC 1

Village Gathering. Robbie Robertson, left, smilés for the birdie with singer Paul Young, center, and producer/engineer Jim Scott at the Village Recorder in Los Angeles. Scott, best known for his engineering credit on Sting’s “Dream Of The Blue Turtles,” served as associate producer/engineer on Robertson’s recent solo album.
When he wants to, Robbie Robertson can disarm you with his candor. Ask him why he stopped making records for ten years, and the creative force behind the Band—the man who wrote “The Weight” and “The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down”—will tell you, “I didn’t have anything else to say.” Ask him how he ended up in L.A. and he’ll tell you, “I was doing a lot of work in film... and I’m not crazy about planes.” But when he starts describing his recording-studio workshop as containing “only the bare essentials,” your skepticism begins to stir. Press the issue and you’re likely to get the impenetrable look the generally genial guitarist reserves for the camera. “For years I wrote all night long, in delirium. I would just grind them out, pulling teeth, bashing my head against the table.”

But this time, when the songs started to flow again, instead of checking himself into a motel as he’d done in the past, he checked directly into this studio, where he labored for two years. “Some amazing records have been recorded in this room.” He’s not kidding—Ray Charles, B.B. King, Sly Stone. And if anything less than this studio would have kept him from adding his own stunning self-titled comeback album to that list, then indeed, this place is essential.

But it is a different type of artist whose presence is discernible in Robertson’s studio these days. For while he was lying low, he became a collector of modern American Indian art. To his left hangs a piece by Darren Vigil, a young artist from the southwestern bohemia of Taos, and behind him, one by Arizona artist C. J. Wells. “In the past everybody felt a lot of guilt about the Indian people. But in these young artists, I get a very strong, dignified feeling.” In the word stout you hear Canadian roots. But what’s his accent won’t reveal is that he himself is half Iroquois. He’s cautious about his connection to the movement, though. “I’m a breed,” he says. “These people are all blood. I don’t want to be waving someone else’s flag...” When you ask about the guitars, fatigue creeps into his voice. “Yeah, I’ve got guitars at home, I’ve got guitars upstairs, you know, a guitar here, a guitar there...” But he keeps his favorites here: the Stratocaster he had bronzed for The Last Waltz; a rare double-necked Gibson guitar-mandolin; and the old Broadcaster he picked up before the Band’s ’74 tour with Dylan.

Ultimately, the paradox is too obvious to go unspoken: How is it that a man whose songs are so rooted in the earth finds asylum in a windowless box in the middle of a sprawling, synthetic city? But he’ll let you push him only so far before his candor wins out again and he brings the whole conceit crashing down. For the greatest stimulus to his writing is not the paintings, nor the guitar, nor the aura of musicians past, but the four walls themselves, an inescapable reminder of the mission that brings him here. “It has nothing to do with atmosphere,” he finally says. “It has only to do with my imagination.” And for all your trouble, could you have expected anything else?
SROODED—On November 15, A&M Records will release the soundtrack for the upcoming film comedy Scrooged. The film, which stars Bill Murray, is a revamped version of Dickens’ classic A Christmas Carol, and will open in theatres on November 23. The soundtrack is a multi-artist, multi-format compilation that should prove extremely successful during the gift giving season. The first single will be Al Green & Annie Lennox’s reworking of Jackie DeShannon’s “Put A Little Love In Your Heart.” Other songs on the LP include: Mark Lennox’s R&B-tinged “Foolin’ Around,” “A Wonderful Life”; a gospel recording by New Voices Of Freedom on titled “Sweetest Thing” (which was penned by U2); Dan Hartman & Deniece Lopes’ dance tune “The Love You Take”; rapper Kool Moe Dee’s “Get Up And Dance”; Miles Davis, Larry Carlton, David Sanborn & Paul Shaffer’s collaborative “We Three Kings Of Orient Are.” Robbie Robertson’s “Christmas Must Be Tonight”; Banter Polesteater’s remake of Van Morrison’s “Brown Eyed Girl,” and Natalie Cole delivers a breathtaking reading of “The Christmas Song,” the timeless standard immortalized by her father, the late Nat King Cole.

A TRIBUTE TO WOODY GUTHRIE AND LEADBELLY

DECEMBER 15, 1988

PERFORMED BY
BOB DYLAN
ARLO GUTHRIE
EMMYLOU HARRIS
TAJ MAHAL
JOHN MELLENCAMP
WILLIE NELSON
LITTLE RICHARD
PETE SEEGER
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK
U2
NARRATED BY
ROBBIE ROBERTSON

Showtime airing video tribute to Woody Guthrie, Leadbelly

To go along with the just-released album, Showtime has produced an inspired video tribute to the folk legends, featuring performances by and interviews with Bruce Springsteen, U2, Pete Seeger, Arlo Guthrie, Little Richard and John Cougar Mellencamp, among others.

“The All-Star Tribute to Woody Guthrie and Leadbelly” premiered Saturday with additional performances today, Sept. 30, 10 p.m. and Oct. 9 and 11. Robbie Robertson is the narrator.

BILLBOARD MARCH 5, 1988

Below is a weekly calendar of upcoming network and syndicated music specials. Shows with multiple dates indicate that local stations have option of broadcast time and dates.

Three Junos for Robertson
Blue Rodeo, Lang win awards

TORONTO (CP) - Veteran rocker Rob-
nie Robertson was honored for both his past and
present at the 1989 Juno Awards yester-
day as he was honored into the Hall of
Fame with his legendary former group The
Band and won three trophies for his new
solo career.

But the weary musician had to share the
highlight at the 15th annual Junos with such
distinguished sopranos as Blue Rodeo — a jury-
led country band from Toronto — and K.D.
Lang, the torch-and-swamp queen from Con-
necticut.

Robertson won the night's top honor, best
album of the year, for his gritty, soul-burned debut
record that has sold more than 300,000 copies in Canada.

He was also named best male vocalist and
shared the best producer prize with
Daniel Lanois.

Robertson was the former folk-rock partners
in The Band — Garth Hudson, Rick Danko,
Lennon Hee and the late Richard Manuel —
who was also named into the Juno Hall
of Fame.

"It's good to come home on occasions like
this to see how much the people care about
the music they're making," said Lang after
winning the top Juno of the night.

She was one of three women honored for
their contributions to the Junos.

Winners of 1989 Juno Awards listed

TORONTO (CP) - The following are the
winners of the 1989 Juno Awards presented
yesterday for excellence in Canadian music:

Entertainer of the Year: Glass Tiger
Best Album: Robbie Robertson, Robbie
Robertson
Best Single: Blue Rodeo, Try
International Entertainer of the Year: U2
Best-selling International Album: Various
artists, Dirty Dancing soundtrack
Best-selling International Single: M.A.R.S.,
Pump Up the Volume
Best Female Vocalist: K.D. Lang
Best Male Vocalist: Robbie Robertson
Best Group: Blue Rodeo
Best Composer: Tom Cochrane
Best Instrumental Artist: David Foster
Best Country Female Vocalist: K.D.
Lang
Best Country Male Vocalist: Murray
McLauchlan
Best Country Group: Family Brown
Most Promising Female Vocalist: Sass
Jordan
Most Promising Male Vocalist: Colin
James
Most Promising Group: Barney Bentall
and the Legendary Hearts
Best Jazz Album: The Hugh Fraser
Quintet, Looking Up
Best Rhythm and Blues Soul Recording:
Emile Sattar, Anger
Best Reggae-Caribbean Recording: Lillian
Alien, Conditions Critical
Best Roots Traditional Album: The Aces
Garrett-Doug Sahm-Gene Taylor Band,
The Return of the Family Brothers
Best Children's Album: The Fred Penner
Fried Fisherman's Place, Connie Kadar
and Carmen Campagna, Lullaby Baroque
Best Classical Album: Solo or Cham-
bar Ensemble: Ole Hanson, Schubert:
Agape Ensemble
Best Classical Album: Large Ensemble
of foil with Large Ensemble: Orchestre
Symphonique de Montréal conducted by
Charles Dutoit, Bartok: Concerto for Or-
chestrals, Music for Strings, Percussion
and Celesta
Best Classical Composition: Alexina
Lauri, Songs of Paradise
Best Video: Blue Rodeo and Michael
Cuddy entry
Best Album Design: Hugh Syme, Lenny
Tan Thomin
Best Producer: Daniel Lanois and Robbie
Robertson
Best Recording Engineer: Mike Fraser
Juno Hall of Fame Award: The Band
Lifetime Achievement Award: Peter Ju-
wan
Walt Grealis Special Achievement Award:
Sam Sniderman
The stars were out at ’89 Juno Awards

Robbie Robertson and Blue Rodeo grab three awards each as Canada honored its best

**And the winners are . . .***

By Greg Barrette

TORONTO — Hall of Fame artists who had some tough times in the past were the stars of Canada’s music industry on Sunday when they picked up a pair of Juno Awards.

Canadian singer-songwriter k.d. lang, described in the Nominations as “one of the finest singers of her generation,” won the Juno Award for Best Female Vocalist and Best Country Female Vocalist. Lang also won the Juno Award for Best Country Album, for her album “Metime.”

Lang was joined on stage by her band, Glass Tiger, as they accepted the award.

The band’s投资人 Rick Danko accepted the award, Robertson said, “I’m so proud of this band.” When the band was formed in 1987, Robertson said, “We were all good friends, and we knew we could make music together.”


The band’s seventh album, “Ashes and Dust,” was released in 1995. The band’s eighth album, “Hallelujah,” was released in 1996. The band’s ninth album, “The Last Waltz,” was released in 1997.


The band’s sixteenth album, “The Last Waltz,” was released in 2004. The band’s seventeenth album, “The Last Waltz,” was released in 2005. The band’s eighteenth album, “The Last Waltz,” was released in 2006.


The band’s thirty-fourth album, “The Last Waltz,” was released in 2022. The band’s thirty-fifth album, “The Last Waltz,” was released in 2023. The band’s thirty-sixth album, “The Last Waltz,” was released in 2024.

The band’s thirty-seventh album, “The Last Waltz,” was released in 2025. The band’s thirty-eighth album, “The Last Waltz,” was released in 2026. The band’s thirty-ninth album, “The Last Waltz,” was released in 2027.

The band’s fortieth album, “The Last Waltz,” was released in 2028. The band’s fortieth and final album, “The Last Waltz,” was released in 2029.
Robertson dominates Juno Awards

TORONTO (CP) — Veteran rocker Robbie Robertson took home the most hardware but quirky K.D. Lang stole the most hearts at the Juno Awards on Sunday.

The bovish country crooner from Consort, Alta., won a standing ovation from an appreciative crowd for her soaring rendition of Crying and later broke down in tears as she accepted her Juno for female vocalist of the year.

"I feel like Wayne Gretzky when he got traded," Lang said after putting herself together. She added that she might win a Grammy Award when he traded. "I think I should go on tour with me," she said. "I think it's the most hardware but the most heart." The boyish country crooner Robertson dominates Juno Awards

The Band " on the top prize for her searing hour-long performance and last month she won a Grammy Award for best country vocal performance of the year.

"I'm glad to have the performance," she said. "I think I should go on tour with me," she said. "I think it's the most hardware but the most heart." The boyish country crooner Robertson dominates Juno Awards

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Hudson, Danko and Richard Manuel who later went out on their own to become The Band. The Band disbanded in 1976 after The Last Waltz and Helm moved into the film business, his most notable role being that as Patsy Cline’s dad in The Coal Miner’s Daughter. He still performs as a musician and, in the past, has gone out with The Band on various reunion tours.

The Band was inducted into the Juno Hall Of Fame this year, but Helm was unable to attend. Hawkins, however, talked him into coming to Toronto for a guest appearance at the Deer Park Inn. It was an added and very pleasant surprise for both Helm and the audience when Hawkins presented him with his Hall Of Fame award.

Hawk fever mounted as the hours went by, with the audience packing the dance floor until the early hours of the morning. Backing Hawkins and Helm were The All-Star Hawks: Terry Danko (bass), Robin Hawkins (lead guitar), Dave Murphy (keyboards), Gerry Baud (drums), Paul Irvine (sax and flute), Rick Morrison (sax), Pete Jeffrey (trumpet), Stan Szest (keyboards), and Jimmy Weider (lead guitar). As the Deer Park Inn’s new owner, Diane Proulx put it: “I've seen some great nights here since Ronnie took over the stage, but this reunion had to be seen to be believed... an incredible happening for our club.”
Band’s Kingdom Come released by Capitol

Capitol-EMI has released the double-CD, double cassette package of The Band — To Kingdom Come (The Definitive Collection). The collection contains 31 tracks, remastered for this reissue by Robbie Robertson. As a bonus, there are three previously unreleased tracks, plus a flip side to a single which never appeared on any past format.

The first two were written by Bob Bowman, Grammy-nominated last year for The Otis Redding Story. As well, there are recent interviews with Robertson, Rick Danko, Garth Hudson and the Band’s first producer, John Simon.

The release is timely in view of the Band being inducted into this year’s Juno Hall Of Fame (March 12).

A DOUBLE-CD ANTHOLOGY chronicking the Band’s colorful history entitled To Kingdom Come is being reissued by Capitol of Canada for North American release this summer. Thanks to producer and project producer Rob Bowman, who was nominated for a Grammy for last year’s excellent three-CD set The Otis Redding Story, On Acid. Another source says this will be the first time the Band’s tapes have been digitally remastered to Robertson’s satisfaction. In addition, Robertson has digitized the set’s repertoire, insisting on the inclusion of “Tears of Rage” and “The River fåys” in the final lineup.

Bowman plans an extensive 13,000-word essay in the accompanying booklet and has spent several hours with Band members Rick Danko and Garth Hudson and original producer John Simon in preparing it. Besides all the best-known tunes and a few obscurities like the studio version of “Get Up Jake” (once a Band B side), the set will include a few unreleased live chestnuts from the Band’s touring days. The Four Tops’ “Loving You Is Sweeter Than Ever” was a group favorite in concert from the early days until the very end, and a version of Chuck Berry’s “Back to Memphis” appears from the summer of 1973. Sadly, most of the Band’s multitrack studio sessions cutaways were the victims of a Capitol Records housecleaning some years back. There is no vinyl version of To Kingdom Come planned.

CD NEWS

THE BAND: Acclaimed Rock at a Lower Price

By ROBERT HILBURN

The reason the compact disc has been such a commercial bonanza for the record industry is that CD enthusiasts — exalted by the format’s superior sound quality and other features — have spent millions of dollars buying albums that they already had in vinyl or cassette.

This resurgence of catalogue items was pure profit for record companies because there was none of the risk involved in re-releasing albums or developing new talent. But how does a company keep the catalogue revenue flowing after most of the choice products from the vocal has already been issued in CD?

One answer is the special edition, “a definitive look at an artist’s career that might tempt both collectors and fans who don’t want to buy an artist’s entire catalogue, but like a tasteful overview.”

The problem with some of these overviews — including David Bowie’s excellent new “Sound & Vision” box set and the Rolling Stones’ “Singles” box set — is their hefty price tag. Both sets cost about $50.

The Beatles’ To Kingdom Come is a practical alternative a less ambitious package (just two discs instead of the three in the Stones and Bowie sets, and regular packaging instead of an art box) and a lower price tag. The album, just released by Capitol Records, is expected to retail for less than $25, yet it offers a satisfying introduction to one of the half-dozen most acclaimed bands ever in North American rock.

The quintet — featuring Robbie Robertson, Rick Danko, Levon Helm, Richard Manuel and Garth Hudson — gained national attention in the late ’60s for its work with Bob Dylan. But it distinguished itself with its own series of albums, including two works — Music From Big Pink in 1968 and To Kingdom Come in 1969 — that were declared in 1987 by Rolling Stone magazine to be among the 50 best rock albums ever made.

About the 1989 album, which was ranked No. 19 on the list, the magazine noted, “As simple as a Chuck Berry roll, yet as rich and complex as history itself, this album is nothing less than a master-
The Band: They just don't make them like this anymore

The songs were fully realized originals that told tales of myth, mystery and history. Not to mention sex. And The Band rendered these tunes with such alacrity, as to blur the instruments to these notes and words like a baby sucking at its mother’s breast. The Band didn't just play these songs, it became these songs.

PHILADELPHIA - The reissue boom allowed The Band a chance to show off the contents of its two albums, Music From Big Pink and The Band, wholly out of print since the late 1960s. The reissue of the compact disc can make a serious case for the idea of bungling the budget. For instance, it’s darn near impossible to sink your teeth into The Band. Capital, Columbia Records, put out two albums of the Band, without altering a cliché like, “Boy, they just don’t make them like that anymore.”

They rarely did. The Band's first two albums, Music From Big Pink and The Band, wholly out of print since the late 1960s. The reissue of the compact disc can make a serious case for the idea of bungling the budget. For instance, it’s darn near impossible to sink your teeth into the Band. Capital, Columbia Records, put out two albums of the Band, without altering a cliché like, “Boy, they just don’t make them like that anymore.”

The Band rendered these tunes with performances that had such grace and unity as to bond the musicians to these notes and words like a baby sucking at its mother’s breast. The Band didn't just play these songs, it became these songs.

**The Band's timeless music continues to touch soul of American rock**

**By Salvador Capote**

**The Arizona Republic**

Music is a rich group with music, that is, a rich band with music. That said, the music of The Band is not like the music of Motley Crue. But that doesn't mean electronic trick orifice music is a poor band with music. That said, the music of The Band is not like the music of Motley Crue.

The Band was blessed with ex-emplary vocalists, but vocal tricks aside, The Band had the way of making the side of music that a rock and roll crowd could not resist. In short, The Band was blessed with vocal tricks, but it did not mean electronic trick orifice music is a poor band with music. That said, the music of The Band is not like the music of Motley Crue.

No, it isn't that The Band was ever a part of a musical present, as it is hard to say that The Band was ever a part of a musical present, as it is hard to say that The Band was ever a part of a musical present, as it is hard to say that The Band was ever a part of a musical present.

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To Kingdom Come tells the story of how five individuals became something greater without having the singular light in each of their hearts shine a blinding bright. America's conflict between live and recorded music was shown to be something greater without losing the way that it has always been.

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The highlight was the second last release, paying homage to the ‘70s ‘Do What You Do’ and ’80s ‘Definitive Collection’. These were songs that defined the band’s sound. ‘Do What You Do’ left the listeners in a nostalgic whirl, revisiting the classic rock vibes of the era. The saxophone and trombone section played harmoniously, enhancing the overall sound. ‘Definitive Collection’ was a medley of their greatest hits, showcasing their versatility.

The band was planning to release a new album, ‘The Last Decade’, scheduled for a summer release.

The Definitive Collection

The Definitive Collection was the band’s most critically acclaimed album, featuring their best-known hits. It was released in 1982 and became the band’s most successful album, reaching the top of the charts. The album featured hits such as ‘Do What You Do’, ‘Definitive Collection’, and ‘80s Classics Live’.

The band was planning a tour to promote the album, with stops in major cities across North America.

The Last Decade

The Last Decade was the band’s most recent album, released in 2020. It was a retrospective of their best-known hits, showcasing their musical evolution over the years. The album featured hits from their classic albums, including ‘Do What You Do’, ‘Definitive Collection’, and ‘80s Classics Live’.

The tour was scheduled to start in January 2021, with stops in Europe, Asia, and North America.

Conclusion

The band was planning a comeback, with a new album and tour scheduled for the next year. The Definitive Collection was the band’s most successful album, and they were planning to release a new album to commemorate their 50th anniversary. The Last Decade was their most recent album, and they were planning a tour to promote it. The band was looking forward to a successful year ahead.
The highpoint comes on the bridge when the piano solo crashes in to the hook: "I want you back in my life."

The song was co-written by McAnally and Allen Shamblin, and was one of the album's most successful singles, spending five weeks at the top of the country charts.

"I Saw Her Again" was also one of the highpoints of the album, with a memorable melody and a driving rhythm section.

The video for "I Saw Her Again" features Faith Hill and her band performing in front of a large crowd, with Hill singing into a microphone and the band playing behind her.

The album was released on March 15, 1993, and was a commercial success, becoming Faith Hill's second consecutive million-selling album.

The album's title track, "The Way You Love Me," was a hit single that reached number one on the country charts.

"The Way You Love Me" was written by Cyndi Lenz and Jim Beal Jr., and features a catchy melody and a driving rhythm.

The guitar solo on "The Way You Love Me" is performed by Marty Stuart, who also played on the album's lead single, "I saw Her Again."
technology, including an IBM computer keyboard, ARP and Roland monophonic solo synthesizers, a Minimoog, an ARP string ensemble and the new Lower Symphonizer. Caruth could paint like Nevin before. On several occasions the keyboard parts alone take eight or a half hour to fill. This must have been a hell of an album to finish.

There were no choices when it came to selecting the three songs on this compilation from Northern Light-Southern Cross: "It Makes No Difference," "Mutton," and "King Harvest." Caruth plays all the horns on the EP including the soprano saxophone part heard responding to Rick's vocal on the final verse. "Dakota," the title inspired by Minnie Pearl's real name is somewhat reminiscent of "Little Edie's Crooked" sung by a good time New Orleans band Led Zeppelin.

Robbie's ability to create a fictitious historical voice that manages to sound "real" despite what is often a rather unadorned musical setting. Rick and Garth play an array of brass, violin and resonator parts. "Acadian Driftwood," is the gem. It is one of Robbie's all-time masterpieces. The equal of anything the Band ever recorded. The song is about a people displaced, the Acadians who were expelled from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in the 1760's. (Most of them went to Louisiana where they became known as Cajuns.) Robbie's ability to create a fictional historical voice that can speak for several thousand real ones is a gift to behold.

Caruth on accordion and guest Brian Bottner on fiddle add to the atmosphere. Robbie played about while Rick does all the vocal, Richard plays clarinet while Robbie adds an acoustic guitar to his discography on so much of the set. Caruth further contributes piccolo and bugle choruses. The net result is a melodic and magical all music experience.

After a such a strong "comeback," it was surprising that the next Band album, but11. the album that sealed the Band's comeback was not released until April 1978. The album contained five sides of live material as well as some side studio work collectively called "The Last Waltz Suite." Included on this third studio side were such gems as "Hammer," with Emmylou Harris, "Old Blue," a senseless of "The Weight" with The Staple Singers as well as "The Last Waltz" and "King Harvest." Caruth plays all the horns on the EP including the soprano saxophone part heard responding to Rick's vocal on the final verse. "Dakota," the title inspired by Minnie Pearl's real name is somewhat reminiscent of "Little Edie's Crooked" sung by a good time New Orleans band Led Zeppelin.

It was almost like a Basement Tapes approach. "It was almost like the Band was in a room with a lot of people listening and everyone got together to finish the album," said Rick. Although the recording sessions took quite a long time, in general, was slicker than what The Band had ever done. Robbie's lead vocals, "Remember the Name," which was released in March 1977, was the lead single off the album. It was a huge hit for the Band and helped to launch their comeback. The album was eventually released in April 1978.

Despite the album's lack of elements, Rick says one of the most significant is that it's one of the few studio albums that The Band ever produced. It was a huge hit for the Band and helped to launch their comeback. The album was eventually released in April 1978.

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THE PRESS DEMOCRAT, WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 1989

A very special reunion of the The Band's Garth Hudson, Rick Danko and Levon Helm will occur at the This Country's Rockin' concert tomorrow at the Pontiac Silver Dome in Detroit. Fellow band member Robbie Robertson has yet not decided if he'll join his cohorts at the mega-event, which will include such acts as Carl Perkins, Stray Cats, Dwight Yoakam, Steven Stills, The Desert Rose Band, Exile, The Marshall Tucker Band, Highway 101, Etta James and David Crosby. This Country's Rockin' is designed to team country artists with rock artists — in acknowledgement of the influence each has had on the other.

MAY 6TH 1989
Pontiac Silverdome

UNDER THE DOME
WHAT: This Country's Rockin',
WHERE: Pontiac Silverdome, I-75 and Opdyke Road.
TICKETS: $22.50, available at the box office and Ticketmaster outlets.
PARKING: $5.
REFRESHMENTS: You can bring your own food, but no coolers or glass containers.
REFRESHMENT stands will be open; liquor will be served.
INFORMATION: Call 645-6666 anytime.

THE ACTS: Ted Nugent; the Gregg Allman Band; David Crosby; the Band's Garth Hudson, Levon Helm and Rick Danko; Etta James; the Stray Cats; Stephen Stills; Dwight Yoakam; Sawyer Brown; T. Graham Brown; the Desert Rose Band; Exile; Foster & Lloyd; William Lee Golden & the Goldens; David Lynn Jones; Highway 101; the Marshall Tucker Band; Carl Perkins; Southern Pacific; Sweethearts of the Rodeo.

Country singer Dwight Yoakam spoke the cold, hard truth early Sunday at the Pontiac Silverdome.

"Do you know it's 2 in the morning?" he asked the several hundred people remaining in the "This Country's Rockin'" crowd. "It's too late to be doing this.

Indeed it was. At almost 13 hours long, "This Country's Rockin'" — which was also being filmed for a July 4 pay-per-view telecast — ran too long and too late, though it was certainly a musical triumph. By the time a handful of fans heard Carl Perkins' "Blue Suede Shoes" echo across the cavernous Silverdome, it was hard to find anybody in that bludgeoned bunch who really wanted more.

That was too bad, because the show's length and ponderous, sloppy production just about spoiled an inspirational day of musical communion. The concept was ambitious, mixing 23 rock and country acts to show how the influence the two musical forms have had on each other and spotlighting several sub-genres — Yoakam's traditional country, the new rock-oriented country of Foster & Lloyd, Highway 101 and Sawyer Brown, the rockabilly of Perkins and the Stray Cats, co-host Ted Nugent's heavy rock and the blues of Etta James and Ronnie Hawkins.

The ambition was realized early in the show. Country singer T. Graham Brown, who opened the show, delivered Otis Redding's "Sittin' on the Dock of the Bay," Sweethearts of the Rodeo, a country duo, covered the Beatles' "I Feel Fine" in their set, and Nugent followed with a cover of the rock roots number "Route 66.

The small crowd — about 15,000 at its peak — certainly appreciated the mixture. Though every country fan didn't turn into a rock freak and vice versa, it was common to find a teenager wearing a heavy metal band's T-shirt cheering for Highway 101 or to see someone in a Stetson hat standing on a chair and bouncing along to the Stray Cats' hits.

The highlights came by the dozens, too. Gregg Allman's sump- tuous acoustic version of 'Sweet Melissa' was an early gem, and the show sustained a prolonged five-hour peak through a string of sets by the Stray Cats, Highway 101, the Marshall Tucker Band, Sawyer Brown, Foster & Lloyd, Stephen Stills, the Desert Rose Band, David Crosby, Southern Pacific, and Etta James. Perkins and David Lynn Jones offered fine sets to close the show, but at a time when much of this country was snoozing.

The biggest disappointment of the day was the much-hyped reunion of Levon Helm, Rick Danko and Garth Hudson of the Band, who offered a sleepy and uneventful set of obscurities. Also missing was a collaboration between acts, particularly those who have worked together in the past like Crosby, Stills and the Desert Rose Band's Chris Hillman. A Nugent-Sawyer Brown jam on Chuck Berry's "Johnny B. Goode" was the only notable surprise.

But the show's sheer length was its ultimate burden, and it was frustrating because it clearly could have gone quicker. Many set changes were aggravatingly long, leaving the audience milling in the aisles and listening to the umpteenth repetition of the Traveling Wilburys' album. And though it would have been nice to make the choice, a couple of acts could have been pruned without affecting the show's message.

Clearly, the producers of "This Country's Rockin'" were more concerned with their TV event than the live crowd, some of whom paid $25 for tickets. That smacked of audience abuse, and if there are to be more "This Country's Rockin'" — and larger crowds to attend them — their makers will have to devise a more attendance-friendly show that will keep headliners around until the end (Nugent split when it became apparent his set would start after 1 a.m.) and finish on a high note rather than with incredulous acts marvelling at their fans' durability.

Too much, too late
Acts keep rockin' when they should be sleepin'

BY GARY GRAFF
Free Press Music Writer

On pay TV

Pay-per-view outlet sells mega-concert

The TV Book, Sunday, July 2, 1989 Page 38
This Country's ROCKIN'
Celebrating the New Rockin' Spirit in Country Music

MISTERED BY TID NIGENT
DAVID CROSBY
EVA JAMES
STEVE COOLEY
STEVEN THOMAS
CARL LEE
NIGER WILSON
BILL REID
ELLE
PATTI DAVIS
SWEETHEARTS OF THE ROGUE

MORNING 1161
DANNY JONES
THE NICHOLAS TURNER BAND
CARL PERKINS
SOUTHERN PACIFIC
WILLIAM D. GRAY & THE SOUTHERNS
RONNIE HAWKINS

SPECIAL PRODUCER FOR THE BAND'S SHANSI HUSON
LEVIN LEM & RICK DUNN

WESTWOOD ONE COMPANIES

This Country's ROCKIN'
4th of JULY! 10 HOUR COUNTRY, ROCK EXTRAVAGANZA ON PAY PER VIEW TV
Ex-Hosted by TED NIGENT

The Greg Allman Band
DAVID CROSBY
ETTA JAMES
STRAIGHT CATS
STEPHEN STILLS
DWAYNE YOUNG
SANFORD ROBINSON
GRAHAM BROWNE

DESERT ROYD BAND
EXIL.
FORDER LINDSEY
WILLIAM L. KORN GOLDEN
THE GOLDS
HIGHWAY 105
DAVID JONES
THE NICHOLAS TURNER BAND

CARL PERKINS & SOUTHERN PACIFIC
SWEETHEARTS OF THE ROGUE

GARTH HUDSON
LEVIN LEM & RICK DUNN

RONNIE HAWKINS

SPECIAL PRODUCER FOR THE BAND'S SHANSI HUSON
LEVIN LEM & RICK DUNN

WESTWOOD ONE COMPANIES

'Woodstock of Country' airs today

ROBERT E. GERMAN

This Country's Rockin' was conceived as a free-air rock country broadcast focusing on the then-fresh rock country radio format. It is a one-hour radio show that was originally aired on 700,000 watts from the legendary WSM in Nashville, Tennessee.

The show was hosted by Ted Nigent, a well-known radio personality who had previously worked at WSM. The show featured a variety of rock country artists, including legendary performers like Dolly Parton, Johnny Cash, and Merle Haggard.

The broadcast was recorded live at the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville, Tennessee, and was broadcast on WSM on February 10, 1989. The show was later released on a limited-edition CD called 'This Country's Rockin', featuring rare and unreleased recordings from the show.

The show's format was designed to capture the essence of the rock country genre, which was gaining popularity at the time. The show featured a mix of country and rock tunes, with an emphasis on the energy and enthusiasm of the musicians.

The broadcast was a success, and it helped to popularize the rock country genre. It was later re-released on CD, and it remains a collector's item for fans of the genre.

For The Band's Rick Danko, all it takes is a little concentration

By Seth Rapaport

O
n Thanksgiving Day 1968, The Band sailed it again in a star-studded farewell concert in San Francisco. Speaking for the group, Robbie Robertson, guitarist and songwriter and occasional leader of the seminal rock band, explained that after 35 years on the road—a small clubs and small venues, a length of halls and arenas—the time had come to leave well enough alone.

The road, Robertson said, had taken its toll on too many great ones—Buddy Holly, Jimi Hendrix, among others—and he didn't want to tempt fate any longer. It soon became clear that Robertson was speaking only for himself. The other members of The Band continued their touring ways alone, together and in various combinations of duo.

Drummer and singer Levon Helm formed the RCO All-Stars and released four albums of his own, while pursuing a film career with a fair amount of success in roles in "Coal Miner's Daughter" and "The Right Stuff," to name just two.

Assumed the mantle

It was bassist/singer Rick Danko, however, who seemed to assume the mantle of keeping The Band alive in various guises. After the release of his only solo album in 1977, Danko became a stalwart performer in small clubs and roadhouses, 8 in large halls and arenas— the time had come to leave well enough alone.

The mantle of The Band

The mantle of The Band, who will be performing tonight at the Iron Horse Cafe in Northampton. After a period of acrimony, Danko and another former Band member, Robbie Robertson, have made their peace. These days, Danko is focusing on a burgeoning solo career and new popularity for the re-formed Band. All it takes, he says, "is a little bit of concentration."

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The Band is a curious case study in rock. Although they never achieved the public acclaim or commercial success of such groups as the Who, the Grateful Dead, or even Creedence Clearwater Revival, they are considered by many to have been the greatest rock band of their time. Their influence is cited by or heard in the music of performers as varied as U2, Graham Parker, R.E.M., and Scully the Cat.

They made their recording debut as "The Band" in 1966 with 'Music from Big Pink,' that album and the follow-up, titled simply "The Band," remain classics in the repertory of rock. Part of their appeal rested in the way they broke down the stereotypical expectations of what a rock band was supposed to be. There was no lead singer. More than once, lead vocals were shared, or more likely, issued around, from Helm's Arkansas twang to Manuel's Moody, Ray Charles-like growls to Danko's nasally, relative-wimbleness. Like their vocals, their music, too, seemingly had no center. At one moment Helm's drums might seem to propel a song along, and as soon as Robertson's astringent guitar would eclipse the beat, Hudson's heavenly, church-like organ would raise the level of musical consciousness from its grounding on earth to someplace akin to heaven.

This mostly Canadian band, too, mystified listeners with its rococo, typically American perspective, from the civil war epic "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down" to the paean to "Look Out Counselor." "It's nice to be influenced and it's nice to be an influence," he said.

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For ex-Band member Rick Danko, life is a musical carnival

By Kelly P. Kissel
The Associated Press

CHALMETTE, La. (UPI) — Rick Danko's life has been a musical carnival since The Band played its last set at San Francisco's Winterland in 1974. And the born player never was known to have his head in the game — he's alive and well and has no intention of quitting the business.

Danko took the low road after the group known loosely as "Bob Dylan's backup band" and sometimes called by a myriad of other names — Levon and the Hawks, the Crackers and the Canadianaires — decided that 14 years on the road was enough. They retired as a group. But not as individuals.

"The last 14 years I've been documenting my shows — every night that I play," said Danko, who recently appeared with the Band keyboardist Garth Hudson on "Mountain Stage." Various Publisher (UP)

"I hope people don't think I'm retired. I'm too young to retire. I'm just beginning. But his band soon took flight with its own distinctive style, a blend of Motown, folk, rock and country.

They caught the eye of the folk singer John Hammond who brought the group to New York's Greenwich Village where Dylan started playing with them. The Hawks, without Helm, toured with Dylan in 1965-66 with Mickey Jones on drums. When they returned, they rented a house in uptown New York, got Helm to come up from the South and wrote some songs. They collaborated with Dylan on "Tears of Rage," but saved some tunes for their classic first LP, "Music From Big Pink."

They later recorded such albums as "The Band" and "Stage Fright," and such songs as "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down," "The Weight," "Up on Cripple Creek" and "Life Is a Carnival."

When the Band decided to retire, they did so with a splash. Their final concert on Thanksgiving Day in 1976 at Winterland, called "The Last Waltz," featured appearances by Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Van Morrison, Dr. John, Neil Young, Eric Clapton, Muddy Waters and Ronnie Hawkins and others connected with the Band's career. It resulted in a documentary directed by Martin Scorsese and a legendary live album of the same name.

The Band will be installed in the Canadian Music Hall of Fame on March 12. Aside from the Arkansas-born Helm, the others were natives of Canada.

"It's a pretty big deal with the Canadians," Danko said.

Rick Danko, a founding member of The Band, still enjoys performing and doesn't intend to retire any time soon. He also recently played a local gig at The Turning Point in Montclair, N.J. He also recently played a local gig at The Turning Point in Montclair, N.J. He also recently played a local gig at The Turning Point in Montclair, N.J. He also recently played a local gig at The Turning Point in Montclair, N.J. He also recently played a local gig at The Turning Point in Montclair, N.J.
By CHUCK PHILIPS

A Band New Perspective

A Reunion With Robertson and Busey’s Enthusiasm Have Recharged Rick Danko

It has been 12½ years since the legendary Band called it quits, going out in style with the equally legendary “Last Waltz” concert.

Since then, songwriter and guitarist Robbie Robertson has pursued film work and a solo recording career. Drummer Levon Helm went into acting. Organist Garth Hudson fronted a country band and scored movies. Bassist Rick Danko has led his own groups and worked on assorted sessions. Pianist Richard Manuel died in an apparent suicide.

Though the remaining members have played together in various combinations, Robertson has always kept his distance from anything smacking of a Band reunion.

But according to Danko, a surprise jam session with him, Robertson and Hudson in April at a tiny Toronto room called the Horseshoe Club changed the pattern.

“When Robbie walked out on stage with me, man, a roar went up like the Coliseum—the roof almost came off,” said Danko recently. “As a result, I think Robbie is going to help me record this next one.”

Danko released his one solo LP, “Rick Danko,” on Arista Records 10 years ago, but he says promotion and distribution problems scoured his enthusiasm to the point that he resolved never to do another album. Since 1980 he has lived on a 150-acre estate in the Catskill Mountains and kept busy touring and performing on sessions. His playing is featured on albums by Robert Palmer, Charlie Sexton, Robertson and the Del Fuegos, among others.

The Robertson reunion changed his view about solo albums, as he plans to begin production in the fall. He said that three labels are interested in the project, which will feature all new material, plus a composition by Manuel, Gerry Goffin and Carole King called “Breaking New Ground.”

“I want this new record to span the entire emotional gamut—something up, something down, something sideways,” Danko said.

“It’s going to be a family kind of show,” Danko added. “We’re not setting out to change the world, just hoping to improve the neighborhood.”

After this week’s dates, Danko and Hudson are scheduled to play the Soviet Union and Italy with John Sebastian, Robbie Robertson and others as part of a ’60s entourage entitled “the 68/89 Woodstock Generation Tour.” In July, Danko is scheduled to open a 30-city tour in Los Angeles with Helm, Dr. John, Joe Walsh and others.

The Southland shows with Busey and Hudson (they will also be at the Strand in Redondo Beach tonight and the Palomino on Friday) came together when Busey phoned Danko shortly after the actor’s highly publicized motorcycle crash. During recovery, Busey spent many hours listening to tapes from gigs that he and Danko had performed in years past.

“Gary called me up and told me about how the Grim Reaper had visited him,” Danko said. “I think the accident kind of alerted him to get back into life and pass those gifts along that God has given him. He was so enthusiastic about us playing some live music together, it really got my wheels turning.

“It’s going to be a family kind of show,” Danko added. “We’re not setting out to change the world, just hoping to improve the neighborhood.”

Rick Danko, Gary Busey and Garth Hudson play Sunday at 9 p.m. at the Coach House, 31157 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano. Tickets: $15. Information: (714) 496-8300.

A Sound of Music

A Band New Perspective

A Reunion With Robertson and Busey’s Enthusiasm Have Recharged Rick Danko

Gary Busey was so enthusiastic about us playing some live music together, it really got my wheels turning.

Rick Danko

Former Band bassist Rick Danko, who plays Sunday at Coach House, relaxes during a rehearsal in North Hollywood.

JOSE GALVEZ

Los Angeles Times

Friday, June 8, 1989 / Los Angeles Times
Busey Wants to Board the Starship Rock 'n' Roll

Gary Busey has never been cast in any of the “Star Trek” movies, but that’s not deterring him from trying to boldly go where no actor has gone before—in rock ’n’ roll stardom.

Plenty of rockers have beamed up to the big screen, starting with Elvis (the Capt. Kirk of rock ’n’ roll himself) to the Beatles up through Tina Turner and Sting. It’s successfully navigating the opposite direction that apparently requires greater warp drive.

Busey—who gained fame playing one of rock’s pioneers in “The Buddy Holly Story”—made his latest bid Sunday at the Coach House in San Juan Capistrano where he joined ex-Band members Rick Danko and Garth Hudson and assorted friends for the final show of a fleeting three-date Southland tour.

Busey was far more believable in the rock singer role than Dennis Quaid, the man who would be Killer in “Great Balls of Fire,” the upcoming film biography of Jerry Lee Lewis. Quaid-watchers will recall that he brought his own rock band, the Eclectics, to Club Postnuclear in Laguna Beach for a dull concert in March, hinting that if he manages to project any charisma or rock authority in “Great Balls of Fire,” major credit will belong to the director.

Unlike Quaid, Busey has a decent singing voice. If he

By RANDY LEWIS, Times Staff Writer

... sounds reminiscent of any rocker, it would be Del Shannon, with a similarly clear, piercing tenor (although Shannon’s power and control are light years beyond Busey’s).

Beyond that, Busey possesses enough basic rock ’n’ roll instincts that they lifted his performance above the level of one who is merely slumming. Busey apparently cares about this music, even if he did flub a lyric here and there. As a front man, he was obviously nervous and a bit stiff at the mike early on, but he soon felt comfortable enough to get a little chatty with the crowd.

Busey shouldn’t start thinking about trading in his Actor’s Equity card for a Musicians’ Union membership. But in the handful of numbers he led, he seemed to have a whale of a good time without embarrassing himself, or those he shared the stage with.

Although he did several of Buddy Holly’s hits, by the way, he made no attempt to invoke the late performer’s persona, as he did so effectively in the 1978 movie. He came across as a man who has spent a few nights in the house of Holly, not taken up full-time residence there.

Rick Danko, acting as master of ceremonies throughout the two-hour show, quickly established a living-room-jam-session-like atmosphere, opening with a couple of sit-down, back-porch blues numbers for which he was joined by Jefferson Airplane stalwart Jorma Kaukonen on slide guitar.

Virtually vibrating with manic energy, Danko’s voice nonetheless diatrymatically colorless, coane and flat—early on. But eventually he hit his stride and illustrated the distinction between a competent rock singer, which Busey is, and a great one, which Danko can be when inclined. He sounded most inclined in garden-fresh readings of “Twilight” and “It Makes No Difference,” pulled from a nostalgia-heavy song list that included a half-dozen Band chestnuts.

Garth Hudson contributed musical bits and pieces on keyboards and saxophones in his characteristically absent-minded-professor manner (in some dead Ian language, Garth must mean “The Bearded One Who Never Utters a Word”). Actually, he looked remarkably like the mysterious gray-haired deity that the crew of the USS Enterprise encounters during its search for God in the new “Star Trek” movie.

In some way, the resemblance was more than coincidental. Hudson created entire worlds of beauty out of primordial chords fashioned by fingers that seemed to hold the musical wisdom of the universe.
'Take the Day Off' Quip Touches a Fan's Nerve

Advice From Rocker Rick Danko Is Called Out of Order by an Apparent Early-Riser

I t was just a passing comment. The guy who made it, rock veteran Rick Danko, probably didn't think twice about it. But it got Irvine stockbroker Scott Flanagan plenty exercised.

The remark came about two-thirds of the way through a recent Sunday night show at the Coach House in San Juan Capistrano. It was kinda late (come in 11), but Danko wanted to keep the fans pumped up, so he looked out at the crowd and suggested:

"Why don't you just take the day off tomorrow?"

Sure, it's one of those cliched exhortations designed to lull the crowd and suggest:

"Hey, try to party all night long when in 95% of the cases you're going to party precisely as usual the performers' contracted time is up and not a time-and-a-half-minute more.

But it was more than Danko's lack of originality that stuck. Flanagan said, "I've got to get up and work in the morning."

Actually, for Flanagan, who had called after reading a review of the show in The Times, the beef wasn't with Danko. It was his perception that the average rock show is "run the same way concerts were run when we were 18 years old."

But Flanagan said he was thinking of times that inspired rock fans such as himself to steal their parents' credit cards, then demand the best treatment, in keeping with their upwardly mobile positions in life.

"What with the graying of America all," he said, "it seems to me it would make sense for these aging rockers to revamp their shows and cut out the kind of lolling around that we all still have a bunch of teenagers.

Actually, I wouldn't care—"he再也不用去听那些老古董了，特别是那些在主轴房里喝着记事米酒的人，"he said. "I'd say, depends a lot on how you feel about your client."

Flanagan's point is that earlier times for weekend concerts would be a nice concession to the rock 'n' roll fan who are the young professionals of their generation—most of whom hope to get old before they die. Not a bad suggestion.

But, for one example, the Coach House already makes that concession. Often as not I'm out of early shows at the Coach House by 10:30 on weekend nights—Danko's show did run long, but that was an aberration.

It's worth noting, by the way, that while most club owners start shows as late as possible so that customers will keep buying drinks as long as possible, Coach House owner Gary Folger not only starts his shows early but actually insists on closing his bar immediately when they end, rather than keeping it going for extra business. He doesn't want people staying late and drinking and then driving off when they couldn't hit a highway safety.

Besides, in my book the spirit of Junior Johnson has overruled all about ultimate comfort and convenience. If that's what you're looking for, grab a martini, sink into the overstuffed management-lounger and tune to The Wave.

It was the tone of Flanagan's swipe at people who work at Balder's Emporium or Handyman that turned me off the most, though. I used to work in a grocery store, and I had a tougher time getting days off than most lawyers and doctors I know.

Rick 'n' roll isn't about career one-occupations. It's about shocking off the bonds of cultural snobbery, it's about celebrating the joy in being part of the human community.

And sometimes—just sometimes—that celebration calls for a day off.
In 1964, the musical world was forever changed by The Beatles' premier world tour.

Now, 25 years later, Ringo Starr will embark on his first solo tour this summer—featuring band members Dr. John, Billy Preston, Nils Lofgren, Joe Walsh, Rick Danko, Levon Helm, Jim Keltner and Clarence Clemons.

Here the announcement of this landmark event when the Westwood One Radio Networks present the Ringo Starr Press Conference, hosted by Dick Biondi live from the Palladium in New York City, Tuesday, June 20, 1989.

TUNE TO:

WESTWOOD ONE
RADIO NETWORKS

North America:

July 23rd, 1989
Dallas, TX
Hoffman Estates, IL
Pembroke, Mass.
St. Paul, MN
Augusta, ME
Augusta, GA
August 1, 1989
Northland Coliseum
August 1, 1989
Olympic Saddledome
August 2, 1989
August 3, 1989
August 4, 1989
August 5, 1989
August 6, 1989
August 7, 1989
August 8, 1989
August 9, 1989
August 10, 1989
August 11, 1989
August 12, 1989
August 13, 1989
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August 18, 1989
August 19, 1989
August 20, 1989
August 21, 1989
August 22, 1989
August 23, 1989
August 24, 1989
August 25, 1989
August 26, 1989
August 27, 1989
August 28, 1989
August 29, 1989
August 30, 1989
August 31, 1989
September 1st, 1989
September 2nd, 1989
September 3rd, 1989
September 4th, 1989

Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Charlottesville, VA
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada
Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
Vancouver, B.C., Canada
Sacramento, CA
Las Vegas, NV
Mountain View, CA
Costa Mesa, CA
Los Angeles, CA
Los Angeles, CA

Park Central Amphitheatre
Poplar Creek Music Theatre
Deer Creek Music Center
Riverfest
Alpine Valley Music Theatre
Greek Theatre
Pacific Amphitheatre
Greek Theatre
Rainbow Hall  
Osaka Castle Hall  
Hiroshima Sun Plaza  
Kyushu Kousei Nenkin Kaikan  
Nippon Budokan Hall  
Nippon Budokan Hall  
Tick, Tock, Tokyo  
Nagoya, Japan  
Osaka, Japan  
Hiroshima, Japan  
Kyusyu, Japan  
Tokyo, Japan  
Yokohama, Japan  

October 30th, 1989  
October 31st, 1989  
November 2nd, 1989  
November 3rd, 1989  
November 6th, 1989  
November 7th, 1989  
November 8th, 1989

Japan:

October 30th, 1989  
October 31st, 1989  
November 2nd, 1989  
November 3rd, 1989  
November 6th, 1989  
November 7th, 1989  
November 8th, 1989

Japan:

Rainbow Hall  
Osaka Castle Hall  
Hiroshima Sun Plaza  
Kyushu Kousei Nenkin Kaikan  
Nippon Budokan Hall  
Nippon Budokan Hall  
Tick, Tock, Tokyo  
Nagoya, Japan  
Osaka, Japan  
Hiroshima, Japan  
Kyusyu, Japan  
Tokyo, Japan  
Yokohama, Japan  

October 30th, 1989  
October 31st, 1989  
November 2nd, 1989  
November 3rd, 1989  
November 6th, 1989  
November 7th, 1989  
November 8th, 1989
For his first-ever solo tour, Ringo Starr has assembled a group of rock’s elite players whose individual contributions could fill all the charts of the music’s history. “I figured if I was going to do it, I wanted to attract as much great music,” Starr said. “It’s really fabulous. They’re supporting me, I’m playing drums behind them. Everyone supports everyone; there’s no ego problems at all.

“I’m just fattened up at the jet and the love they’ve shown me by coming out with me. It’s not that they need this band; they’ve all got great careers of their own.

Here’s a look at who’s in the All-Star band, which has dubbed itself the Ringos by George Harrison’s Traveling Wilburys.

Joe Walsh, Guitarist

One rock of the setlist, ‘Crusader, Walsh, 41, has been held in high regard as a singer and songwriter since he joined the James Gang in 1969. He was a member of the Eagles from 1974-81, and since the early 80’s he’s maintained a sporadic solo career; his last album was 1987’s ‘Got Any Gum?’

Dr. John, Keyboardist

Whether as a solo act or a session player he played the organ part on Aretha Franklin’s ‘Spanish Harlem,’ New Orleans-born Mac Rebennack, 43, is considered one of the most versatile players in the world. He’s had only one hit single — ‘Right ‘Round the Clock. Wrong Time’ in 1973 — but he’s produced a handful of terrific albums and earlier this year released a collection of standards called “In a Sentimental Mood.”

Billy Preston, Keyboardist

Preston’s long list of credits includes working with the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Sly & the Family Stone and gospel singer Mahalia Jackson. Preston, 42, has been a member of the RCO All-Starr band since 1974/75. He recently released his own set, “Right ‘Round the Clock. Wrong Time” and with a career that’s wider than the sky.

Stevie Ray Vaughan, Guitar

Clarence Clemons, saxophone; permit, Vaughan, 38, is best-known for his work with others — Springsteen and the E Street Band, Neil Young and the Gipsy Kings and Crazy Horse. But, he’s also a powerful performer in his own right. He’s just released an album, “96 & Life,” and will be touring with a one-man acoustic show that plays clubs around North America.

Tom Johnston, Singer

The most popular of the one-est for any rock ’n roll who’s who, Johnston’s credits include: the Doobies (individually and collectively), Dylan, the Traveling Wilburys, Tom Petty, Dave Mason, Melanie, Ben Stiller, Bill Withers and Leon Russell. He was also a member of the Attitudes, a short-lived group of session players, who recorded two albums for George Harrison’s Dark Horse label in 1975 and 1977.

By Gary Graff

Fun comes easy to Ringo, All-Star band

Two decades after the group’s dissolution, it seems the draw- ing power of a Beatles depends on where you’re looking. In New York City, the Fab Four are a hit. Rolling Stone, the New York Times and Rolling Stone, the New York Times. But in Boston, the Beatles were a hit. Rolling Stone, the New York Times and Rolling Stone, the New York Times. And in Chicago, the Beatles were a hit. Rolling Stone, the New York Times and Rolling Stone, the New York Times.

The mood was warm, loose and collegial, resembling a live jam session. That made it easy to forgive the short comings, particularly a seeming lack of re-
as great," he says, smiling. "The hotel's Springsteen's seasoned road crew to says he's sunglasses near recent years, seems more overseeing operations, including tour director George Travis and tour manager Max Loubiere.

The tour arrangements so far seem first-class—the best hotels, a private Viscount plane—and Danko, who's played hundreds of unglamorous club dates in recent years, seems more satisfied with how things are going. "The band's great," he says, smiling. "The hotel's great. Of course, I could stand here and complain that the water in the Jacuzzi's as warm as it should be. [Cont. on 133]

Ringo Starr

[Cont. from 109] but then I'd be a real rock & roll asshole, right?"

As Danko dries off and gets ready to go to rehearsal, a tattooed pool attendant approaches him and asks if he's in a band. Danko tells the kid.

"Which band?" the kid asks.

"The Band," Danko says again.

"Oh, yeah, my dad made me go to The Last Waltz with him," the kid says.

"But I wasn't into rock then."

A half-hour later, Ringo and the All-Stars assemble at the S.I.R. rehearsal studios for a room photo session, to be followed by a full day of rehearsal. As the band members struggle in, they wish Starr a happy birthday. A few members of the group—who some of whom have taken to calling their band the Kingsleys—break into a brief chorus of the Beatles' "Birthday." Billy Preston—who has known Starr since his days playing on the Beatles' Let It Be sessions and who played together in the trio's musical direction—is quietly playing an electric organ riff on the right side of the stage, while Joe Walsh hands out buncher stickers bearing his motto, HOW YA DOIN'? Jim Keeltner, who's playing bass and presents Starr with a wicker basket that appears to hold two bottles of champagne. Starr thanks Keeltner but seems a little confused by this alcoholic offering.

"No, Ringo, take a look at the bottles," Keeltner says. Starr lifts the basket and pulls out two bottles of sparkling soda, then gives a big hug to Keeltner—his drum partner of choice since they played together in 1971 benefit concerts for Bangladesh.

Finally, Ringo jumps onstage, sings, "Happy birthday to me," then addresses the group. "Gentlemen, you know why we're here, right?" he says. "We're going to work on the monitors now so that we don't sound like shit later."

Though the set list is still coming together, Starr expects the show will feature almost an hour of him singing his Beatles and solo standards, with the rest of the concert divided among numbers led by the other band members.

"I lose the idea of a band without an ego problem," he says. "I'm not the f*cking star—it's just my name. If you show all these names to a Tibetan monk, he'll probably recognize mine first. But these guys are my favorite musicians in the world, and the show is obviously going to be a complete group effort."

But clearly a lot of fans will be coming to hear Starr sing. Will his voice be up to the challenge?

"The nice thing about my voice," he says, "is that no one would notice if it broke down. Listen, I was never the greatest singer, but I can put a song across in my own way."

The band starts off with Danko leading a moving, mournful version of Buddy Holly's "Raining in My Heart." The group's sound is big, a raw, rough, but beautiful. Starr and Keeltner, often accompanied by Helm (who also plays mando- lin), provide a solid rhythmic foundation.

"Don't worry, I'm not refined like Jim," Starr says to the band. "I just bash the f*ckers."

Next up is Dr. John, whose piano solo on "Such a Night" is so tasty it causes Walsh to break into a spontaneous moonwalk in his direction. Then Walsh steps up to the mike and after a few false starts leads the outfit in a rousing version of his FM chestnut "Rocky Mountain Way" that features some inspired guitar interplay between Walsh and Danko.

They order a lo-cal lunch ("A lot of us are on high-rolling diets," Starr says glumly), and the short break stretches into an informal birthday party. Barbara Bach drops in with some gifts, including a dinosaur kaleidoscope, and works her way around the room, making sure everybody gets some birthday cake. Relaxed as Preston's and Loofgren's also drop by. Just as Keeltner is singing the praises of Starr's drumming—"The guy sold more Ludwigs than anybody," he says—Starr happens by, and Keeltner tells him that when he played with John Lennon in the studio in the Seventies, Lennon told Keeltner, "You know I only have one favorite drummer in the world. But you'll do.""

"God bless 'im," Starr says. Keeltner tells Starr how extraordinary his drumming is on a favorite Beatles bootleg of his. Starr changes the topic, explaining that while moving out of his L.A. house recently, he happened upon a big button next to the fridge that said, "I haven't seen that button in years," Starr says. "I actually got a million votes, you know. People actually got their parents to write me.""

David Fisher drops in and gives Starr a more recent indication of his popularity. Ticket sales, he explains, are generally strong, though there are a few soft markets, such as Detroit. Starr tells Fisher not to worry, because he'll go on the J. Aron Hall Show the next week and that the Piston will be opening for him there.

Walsh then takes the stage and hooks up a local radio station over the PA system in time to hear a DJ wish Starr a happy birthday and play "No No Song," Starr's jokey antidrug, antiacohol 1975 hit. Starr and Walsh stand arm in arm center stage and sing loudly along with the record. "No, no, no, no, I don't drink anymore," they sing. "I'm tired of waking up on the floor! No thank you please, it only makes me sweat! And then it makes it hard to fall asleep!"

Soon the band gets back to work, something Clemmons and particularly Loogren—who are used to Bruce Springsteen's more rigorous rehearsals seem eager to do. Loogren kicks things off with a strong new rocker he's written, called "Being Angry Is a Full Time Job." Finally, Ringo comes out from behind his kit, puts up a pile of lyric sheets, puts on his reading glasses, and leads his All-Stars in completing slightly shaky versions of "Photograph" and "You're Sixteen." Levon Helm takes the band through a rollicking version of the Band's "Up on Cripple Creek," then Clemmons and Preston buddy up for Clemmons's "You're a Friend of Mine."

Around 7:30, things are winding down, and Alan Pariser, a Starr associate, places nine new video cassettes in front of the stage for each of the musicians so that they can contribute to a documentary on the tour. (A major-label deal for a live album of the tour was still in the works at press time, and there's been discussion of a cable special.)

There's still a lot of rehearsing to do before Dallas, but Starr says he's confident things will work out. Indeed, his confidence seems to know no bounds.

Back in 1981, Starr caused a small stir when he told Rolling Stone, "I'm probably the best rock & roll drummer on earth." Looking back at the end of a nearly lost decade, would he like to amend his claim? "Yeah, let's change it," he says, with a laugh. "Take out the 'probably, thank you. That was when he was feeling insecure."
It Don’t Come Easy  
The No No Song  
Iko Iko  
The Weight  
Shine Silently  
Honey Don’t  
You’re Sixteen  
Quarter to Three  
Raining in My Heart  
Will It Go Round in Circles  
Life in the Fast Lane  
Photograph

It Don’t Come Easy  
The Weight  
Rocky Mountain Way  
Act Naturally

Greek Theatre, Los Angeles, CA, September 3, 1989
Greek Theatre, Los Angeles, CA, September 4, 1989
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“I haven’t seen a band as charismatic, loose and muscled since The Band or The Stones — This is real rock ‘n’ roll!”

Victor Baissait’s All-Starr site.
A Supergroup Is Born

Sax master Clarence Clemons, keyboardist Billy Preston, former Band members Rick Danko and Levon Helm, and guitarist Nils Lofgren and Joe Walsh (many of whom appeared on Ringo Starr's recent US tour) have formed a semi-mythical rock 'n' roll outfit (a la the Traveling Wilburys) called "Buck Dollar and the Exact Change Band."

The semi-supergroup is currently working on a "video album" of new songs (written by various band members) for actor Kevin Bacon's production company, Mixedbreed Films, and is simultaneously seeking a record deal. The project -- loosely themed around the band making a "reunion" LP -- should be released in LP, cassette, CD, and home video formats sometime during the fall of 1990.

Incidentally, Helm will "star" as Buck Dollar, and the video will feature cameo appearances from actors Bacon, John Candy, and Harry Dean Stanton.

Helm plans concert to benefit hospice

SPRINGDALE - Levon Helm is taking a break from his tour of Japan with Ringo Starr to return home today and perform a benefit concert for the hospice in which his mother died.

The show will begin at 8 p.m. today in the ballroom of the Springdale Holiday Inn. The Cato Brothers of Fayetteville and studio musicians will provide backup. Tickets are $17.50. All proceeds go to Friends of Hospice in memory of Nell Helm of Springdale, Levon's mother, who died at a hospice operated by Washington Regional Medical Center in Fayetteville.

Helm, originally from Marvell (Phillips County) and later of Springdale, played drums and sang with The Band for 18 years. Eight of those years, The Band toured with Bob Dylan. The Band later went solo, with Helm singing such classics as "The Weight," "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down" and "Ophelia."

Tickets for the show are available at Sound Warehouse and Choice's in Fayetteville, McKinley Drug in Springdale, Freddie's Pharmacy in Rogers and at the door.

Tickets cannot be ordered by telephone and credit cards are not accepted for ticket purchases.
A hit-filled inside look at the making of a classic!

"Will the Circle Be Unbroken," recorded in 1971, sold millions of copies. Viewed as the "album of the year," WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN VOL. I is the superstar sequel. Once again, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band assembled an all-star, all-American cast to lend their hands and raise a voice in tribute to the roots and traditions of country music-the music of the people.

WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN VOL. II, THE MAKING OF THE ALBUM, is an entertaining and personal look at a classic. You'll see and hear sixteen songs in their entirety, filmed right as they were being recorded! It's a collector's dream-a video time-capsule of great American music. Songs and special guests (in order of appearance):

**The Valley Road**, Bruce Hornsby, Bruce Hornsby

Don't You Think About Me, The Bellamy Brothers

Levon Helm, The Band

I'm A Stranger Here, John Hiatt, John Hiatt

Johnny Cash, Johnny Cash

"I'll Fly Away," Rosanne Cash, Rosanne Cash

Life's Railway To Heaven, John Hiatt, John Hiatt

"When I Get To Heaven," Randy Scruggs, Randy Scruggs

"I Stand Alone," Béla Fleck, Béla Fleck

"If I Were You," Randy Scruggs, Randy Scruggs

"Amazing Grace," Roy Huskey, Jr., Roy Huskey, Jr.

Featuring The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and Friends

The Grammy-nominated inside look at the CMA "Album of the Year" and Grammy Award winner.

ISBN 0-02-02-0206-0

CASH BOX MAGAZINE MAY 13, 1989

Levon Helm talks with Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's Levon Helm during recording.
Plodding, dull ‘Staying Together’ falls apart

Meet the McDermott brothers. They live in the small town of their home town, young and handsome, with more good times from they can handle. But they know it’s hard to take off McDermott’s famous chicken when their hard work and make it on their more successful restaurants than they already are – a dream that’s shattered when he sells a local restaurant with the help of younger和 less resourceful new owners.


1. The More Things Change--Paul Cote
(Richard Feldman/Tom Beckett)

2. Kit’s Theme--Kevin Savig
(Richard Feldman/Tom Beckett)

4. Hotel Buick--Levon Helm
(Tim Drummond/Lonnie Mack/Jamie Fullin)
Barn Yard Music (BMI)/Dambled Music (BMI) Produced by Levon Helm

5. Big Love In A Small Town--Levon Helm
(Denise DePinto/Levon Helm/ Paul Bedinger/Bill W.mailbox)
Dambled Music (BMI) Produced by Levon Helm

6. While We’re Young--Melinda Dillen
(8111)
Barn Yard Music (BMI)/Dambled Music (BMI)
Produced by Brooks Arthur

7. Main Title Theme

8. Rest In Peace

9. Staying Together

10. Brian’s Decision

Brian Leaves Home

11. Marathon

12. Off To Vacation-land

13. We Have All Night

Selections: 7-11 Composed, Arranged and Conducted By Mf Goodman, and Published by Dambled Music (BMI)

1. The More Things Change--Paul Cote
(Richard Feldman/Tom Beckett)

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Robbie ROBERTSON

... and Washburn

- washburn one presents -


time: Off the record special - ROBBIE ROBERTSON

show 3811 for broadcast the week of March 6, 1989

show time: 2:00 PM

segment 1 - 9:42

includ: "Washburn One presents -"

content: "Off the Record Special - Robbie Robertson"

commercial: 30 U.S. Army - "Television" - "Washburn One" Radio Network.

local break

segment 2 - 9:42

includ: "The Mary Turner"

content: "Sarah's Song On Crazy River" - "Romeo SNECTIONS Double Eagle" - "Five Days" - "My Love Is True"

commercial: 30 U.S. Army - "Television" - "Washburn One" Radio Network.

local break

segment 3 - 9:42

includ: "If I Had a Million"

content: "My Love Is True" - "Sweet Love Of Mine" - "Written On" - "I've Got A Million"

commercial: 30 U.S. Army - "Television" - "Washburn One" Radio Network.

local break

segment 4 - 9:42

includ: "Washburn One presents -"

content: "Ryleigh Sakamoto - Beauty"

cutout: "Washburn One Radio Network.

TOTAL SEGMENT TIMES - 37:06 3 LOCAL BREAKS

The weight · I shall be released
The night they drove old Dixie down
Up on cripple creek · stage fright
Time to kill · Life is a carnival
Ophelia · Georgia on my mind

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Design: Hotline/Marsean · Art Direction: Rood de Kemp

Dutch compilation, 1989