



ISSUE 8

JOURNAL

an International Alternative Christian Music Journal

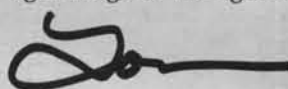
SIMPLE TRUTH

with Tim McLaughlin

It's early April and we're running a little behind schedule, but we expect to have Issue 9 out before Cornerstone. We'll be there, by the way, so if you have the opportunity to go this year, please stop by and introduce yourself. We're driving from Seattle (45 hours) so we may not look our best. The publication has grown a lot in the last year. In fact, it's been a struggle to keep up with the volume of letters and phone calls we receive. We strive to remain a small and personal paper with practical articles, objective interviews, and a few surprises here and there. Sometimes we get distracted and disillusioned. Sometimes we just get tired. Right now we're behind. I work full-time at Boeing, and Anne is working a part-time job. Our editors and contributors help out when their schedules permit. We also work with a loosely organized network of Christians in our region to nurture alternative ministries and encourage local churches to offer programs that young adults will be really excited about.

The Pacific Northwest ranks dead last in the nation for affiliation with a church. We have been wondering how churches can justify spending seventy or eighty percent of the offering on overhead and salaries when so many need so much. If beautiful facilities and well-dressed pastors are what draw people into the church, we should have it made. We are convinced that, to effectively reach youth in this area, it's going to require a new atmosphere where churches discard outdated paradigms, embrace new ideas, pool their resources for local and foreign mission, reduce duplication of effort and competing programs, and meet kids

where they are. That may involve dances, concerts, overnights, drop-ins, coffee houses, clubs, video, film, magazines, concert lines, festivals, art, theatre, rallies, and more. It means a Christian radio station that offers more than a token contemporary show, recycled phrases and gimmicks. And serving youth means providing them with real avenues to serve others - providing meals to the homeless, collecting blankets, assisting shut-ins, working with kids on the street, and every other conceivable ministry. Their ideas and vitality are essential to the future of our church. We must offer them a vision of tomorrow that is realistic, attainable, and founded on biblical principles. I can't be convinced that luxury sedans, vacation homes, early retirement, and lakefront condos are what Jesus died for. The American Dream is a lie. It offers us another goal and reason for life. Tithing isn't giving a percentage of yourself to God, but keeping what you need and giving the rest to God - time, resources, energy, enthusiasm, talent... We aren't expected to live in poverty. Some of us make a comfortable living, and that's fine - but we are accountable for how we use our resources. To those given more, more is expected. And being a good steward means knowing that these resources are going where they are most needed. Your money is not a substitute for personal involvement. Do the right thing, for the right reasons, everyday.



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ANGELS FALL - TAPROOT THEATRE

Review by Jennifer Morison

Theatre and the church. Strange bedfellows? Perhaps. Perhaps not. In the case of Taproot Theatre's production, ANGELS FALL by Lanford Wilson, the drama is in the church. The cool, dim sanctuary of a poor New Mexican mission.

It's a logical place for a play. For most of its history, the evangelical Christian church has glared dourly at the bawdy onstage antics and doubtful backstage morals of theatre folk. But drama itself has always sprung from deeply religious impulses.

Theatre was born in temples and churches. Plays took their form from the

rites and rituals of pagan and Christian worship. Today, when we watch actors on a stage, we see incarnations of our spiritual selves. Admirable. Detestable. Strong. Weak. Human.

The characters in ANGELS FALL are all too human. Each one carries a legacy of loss, failure and self-doubt. At the start of the play, an accident at a nearby uranium mine closes the highways, stranding four people at the mission, along with the resident priest and Don, a young Navaho medical student. Confined by the circumstances and confronted by each other, each one is brought to the edge of a "crisis of faith."

In its best moments the dialogue is at once painful and hilarious. At the heart of the play, though, and in the heart of each character, lurk significant questions: If this is my calling in life, can I walk away from it? And what will happen if I do? It's the same dilemma--for the doctor, the artist, the priest and the tennis player. But Wilson offers no easy answers. At the end of the play, when the roads reopen and the characters scatter, we can only guess where they will go.

Taproot's scenic designers did an admirable job of setting a mood for the production. The lighting was particularly effective. Soft, muted colors inside the

church contrasted sharply with the hot yellow glare outside, emphasizing the meaning of "sanctuary." The director did a fine job of staging the steady stream of entrances and exits--as if the tiny, bare church were the stillpoint at the center of a madly gyrating universe.

If the Taproot production can be faulted for anything it might be for trying too hard. When the actors overplayed, went for the broadly comic, they blunted the play's harsher edges and slowed the pace. This production also added a pay telephone to the set (it was offstage in the original script) and cut the four-letter words (on stage in the original).

Despite the flaws, however, Taproot Theatre has shown itself capable in ANGELS FALL of a sophistication and nerve sadly lacking in most Christian theatre.

Taproot Theatre Company started life in 1976 in residence at Seattle Pacific University. After several years on their own, with no permanent space and an uncertain resident season, the company has now found a home in an abandoned movie house in Seattle. In May of this year they moved into their new offices and, when the necessary funds come in, they will construct a 230-seat thrust theatre and shop on the site.

A theatre, though--like a church--is more than a building. According to Alan Sapp, associate artistic director and director of ANGELS FALL, Taproot is in the midst of another kind of transition. In the past, 75% of their audience has come from the churches; but that will change, Sapp hopes, as Taproot mounts more and more plays outside the typical Christian fare.

"We believe the Lord wants us to be doing theatre that bothers people," Sapp says, "plays that cause them to ask questions about their lives, plays that Christians can bring friends to see--friends that would never darken the door of a church."

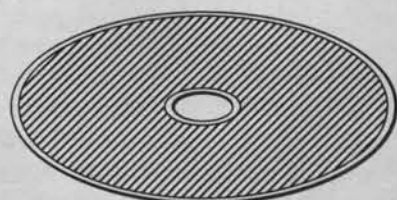
ANGELS FALL is a good example. "I see a lot of Lanford Wilson in the Professor," Sapp remarks. "An agnostic with vague memories of religion that have little relevance to his present problems"

Sapp was first drawn to the play by the character of Father Doherty. Near the end of Act Two, Father Doherty reads his own question in Revelations: "Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"

"That struck me as a powerful message that wasn't a powerful message," Sapp says, "not moralistic. Father Doherty is as fallible as any of the other characters."

Of course, transitions take time. Sapp chose to cut the four-letter words from the script out of sensitivity to an audience barely ready for a play that wasn't straight gospel--much less the rougher edges of the real world. "Deciding what kind of play to do when is much more critical for Taproot than for most theaters," he explains, "because of our audience."

Appropriately enough, ANGELS FALL ends with the holiest of Christian rituals--the Eucharist. The incarnation of grace in bread and wine. A simple offering. Take it or leave it. If pulpits are the best place for sermons, perhaps theatres are the best place for parables. For him who has ears to hear...



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Since we're already late with this issue and our next is due in only two months, our usual product listing will appear in June. It is the most time-intensive aspect of this publication, but we have two months to complete it. Chris Estey and Tracy Jones from Counter Culture will be lending us a hand too.

We have started working through the responses to our 1991 survey. Our feature article for independent artists is an answer to what many of our readers have asked for. We had no idea how long it was going to take to complete it. If you find any glaring errors, please feel free to call them to our attention. If you find it helpful, we would like to know that too. We also received feedback about favorite artists from our compilation cd. Every participating band was mentioned by various readers. In fact, every artist was mentioned by at least several readers, although several favorites did emerge. We also received inquiries from several record companies and many radio stations. Martyr and Elim Hall showed up most frequently on radio playlists submitted to the Ground Floor (Pure Rock Report). Among our readers, it was a virtual tie between Martyr, Tim McLaughlin and Deitiphobia, with the rest following close behind. Almost everyone said Christian radio in their town was irrelevant and boring. I suppose that didn't come as a tremendous revelation.

Rather than reprint the music news from True News (available from True Tunes etc.), we thought we'd let you know about several upcoming compilation projects. We encourage you to take advantage of the unique character of compilations. They are an inexpensive way to sample a variety of artists and styles.

Just out is *Voice of the People* from Slava Productions featuring Deitiphobia, Wigtop, Dance House Children, the Echoing Green, Icon Tack, Love Assembly, the Prodigal Sons, Modex, Global Wave System, X Propagation, Eternal Youth League, MC White E, Exegesis, Toxic Church, and the November Commandment. This should satisfy anyone looking for alternative dance, industrial dance, and industrial noise. It is apparently available through Blonde Vinyl so try a local bookstore or mail order outlet.

Fortunately, Seattle's music scene has a lot more going for it than Bloodgood and the Reach. Dozens of bands throughout the Pacific Northwest play real clubs and perform local shows. Fearless Donkey Records has compiled *Songs from the Rain Factory* with 14 bands from Vancouver (British Columbia), Portland and Seattle. It captures the alternative and grunge of the Northwest with Clan of Jubal, Gloria, Poor Old Lu, Don't Know, Ashes to Ashes, Scott Anderson, Gecko Monks, the Clergy, Shine Bomb, Lookout, Empty Tomb, Shattered Image, Shekiniah, and Solafide. Write to Fearless Donkey Records at 3045 NW 56th Street #5, Seattle, WA 98107 or call (206) 782-5407 for more information.

Sonshine Records and Del Rey Communications are releasing *Rock Revival I & II*. Twenty-nine music pioneers like Agape, Armageddon Experience, Paul Clark, John Fischer, Good News, Keith Green, Hallelujah Joy Band, Phil Keaggy, Liberation Suite, Love Song, Randy Matthews, Barry McGuire, Michael Omartian, Resurrection Band, 2nd Chapter of Acts, Randy Stonehill, Truth of Truths and more. Write to Del Rey Communications at 122 Maumell St., Hinsdale, IL 60521 or call (800) 247-8188 for more information.

Visions of Gray in Atlanta is working on a compilation cd entitled *Enoptic Phenomena* featuring 14 alternative bands from Atlanta and the Southeastern United States. Artists include Healing Instinct, Crossfire, Sunday's Child, Krye, Straightway, Messenger, the Waiting and more. Contact Marty Bush at Visions of Gray, PO Box 724973, Atlanta, GA 30339 or call (404) 319-7064 for more information.

And for the definitive word in underground artists there is a compilation cassette available from *Something For Nothing* featuring Happy to be Annihilated, Group of Individuals, Jason Underground, Lefty and the Loopy Dwadlers, Grease Pot, and more. Write Something for Nothing, 516 Third Street NE, Massillion, OH 44646 for additional information.

We listed many publications on Page 8, but realized we overlooked a few. The following are publications, many of whom faithfully write us, that should have been listed as well:

Counter Culture
1902 2nd Avenue #1103
Seattle, WA 98101

4u Thoughts on Paper
PO Box 442
Indianola, NE 69034

Piggie Tassle
1412 Lincoln Way West
Massillion, OH 44647

Something For Nothing
516 Third Street NE
Massillion, OH 44646

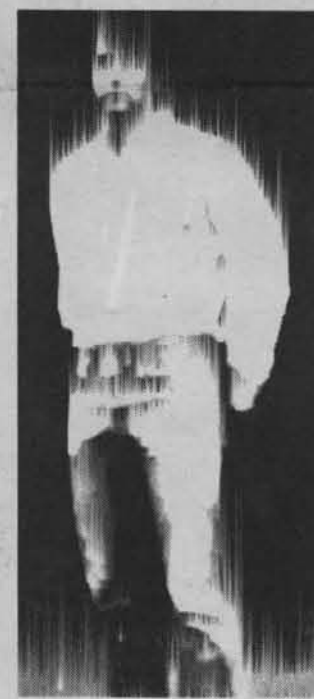
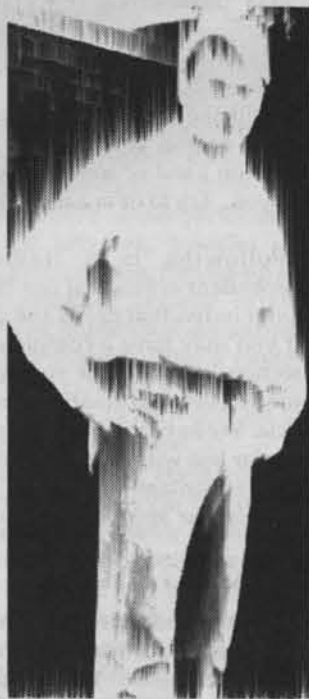
Thieves and Prostitutes
4009 Johnson Street
Hollywood, FL 33021

Virtual Reality
1201 Ebony, Circle
Alice, TX 78332

We'll bring you back up-to-date in June. Thanks for your patience, and we hope to see you at Cornerstone this Summer.

the primaries

new release



chroma

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INDEP'T ARTISTS

THE BIG PICTURE

GETTING STARTED

Another analogy... Independent artists (and many dependent ones) face a twisting and winding path towards recognition. Actually, it's probably more like a traffic circle. While they look for the road to take and go in circles, everyone else tries to hitch a ride or run them down. It's also hard to tell who's leading and who's following. Okay, enough of that...

Besides finding their niche, independent artists must develop their talent and image, provide their own equipment, record and market themselves, rehearse and play regularly, and remain focused on their musical aspirations. Holding down that full-time job, paying bills, and spending time with the family are also recommended. And, of course, you can only spend what cash is on hand or someone will foolishly lend you. Try to fit in a few hours of sleep, too.

Following is a framework for independent artists that can be tailored to fit your individual needs and direction. In fact you may have a completely different direction in mind, but you will still find some excellent information throughout the article. We have tried to emphasize getting more for less without sacrificing quality or taking advantage of others. I hope you take a similar approach in your ministry.

LOOKING AHEAD

Identity and Direction. Choose a name that original, memorable, and fits your style and audience. Once you agree on a name, move on. A good band name may grab their attention, but your music has to hold them. Spend your time and energy working on great songs, not new names. Discuss your target audience and musical direction early and often and make personnel changes if necessary.

Mailing List. One day, when you have a finished cassette you hope to sell, you'll need a list of people who can't wait to buy one. You'll also want to be able to call them when you get a gig on short notice, and mail them a flyer for shows you know about early. In other words, it's never soon enough to start your mailing list and take every opportunity to expand it.

Set Goals. Look down the road. Dream and ponder. Where do you want to be six months from now? Is it realistic? What do you have to do to get there from here?

Compromise but don't Compromise? Come to an agreement about how financial decisions will be made and any income divided or re-invested in product or equipment. Don't compromise on where you're heading or what you're trying to accomplish, but be prepared to be flexible about the route getting there.

GETTING SIGNED

CHASING YOUR TAIL

Table Scraps. Record companies sign artists, develop artists, exploit artists, and dump artists. It happens everywhere, every day, every way. If a record company signs you, you better sell a whole lot of product. If you don't earn them oodles of money, you're history. Period! You are the commodity. And once you've been dropped by a label, you're as valuable as an old lottery ticket. Labels who style themselves as ministries have bills to pay too. There is no free ride. Some labels are better than others. Some are even pretty good. You're still going to do most of the work, you'll just have more to lose.

When Pigs Fly... If a record company really likes your tape they'll want to negotiate a recording contract. They're so impressed that they want you to take some of their money. But wait, there's more... They are going to help you record it again in a state-of-the-art studio with renowned engineers and producers, create a really slick graphic package, and manufacture

thousands of cassettes, CD's, and posters. You have what it takes and they're going to do everything to help you rise to the top. Lose that nine-to-five, you're on your way...

THE FACTS OF LIFE

You're on your own. Most artists struggle for years, contract or no contract. As an independent artist, you finance your projects, set up distribution, handle publicity, and keep the profits. As a signed artist, you'll share in the profits after they get theirs. Eventually... Maybe... And you'll have to pay close attention or the publicity guys might not be do their job, and ads may not run, and radio may not be serviced, and then you'll be back on the street, because you'll still be unknown. Signing with a label doesn't solve your problems, it only raises the stakes of winning or losing. You're on your own...

THE BASICS

MUSIC THEORY

Decibels and SPL. Sound is a wave of energy moving through a medium like air. We can measure frequencies in cycles/second (Hz) and sound intensities in decibels (dB). Pay attention because you'll have a quiz later. Most of us start with a hearing range from 20Hz to 20,000Hz, but lose some high frequency range with age and abuse. A subwoofer vibrating 20 times per second (20Hz) moves a lot of air and requires a lot of power to do it. You'll feel the air move and the floor quake, and your neighbors may express their feelings too. A high frequency tweeter chirping 20,000 times per second (20kHz), on the other hand, requires very little power. You can't feel the air moving, but if you get carried away you'll make your ears tickle and ring. Your dog may want to go outside as well. For plane waves, such as the sounds produced by your speakers, sound intensity (IL) and sound pressure level (spl) are equivalent. Decibels are measured on a logarithmic scale and a change in intensity can be described by the equation:

$$\Delta IL = 10_{dB} \log[\Delta P]$$

where ΔIL is the change in spl or intensity level (dB) and ΔP is a ratio between two power levels, volume levels or the quantity of equivalent speakers. If you double the power to your speaker ($\Delta P=2$) you'll see a 3dB increase in sound. If you use twice as many speakers ($\Delta P=2$) you'll also increase your intensity level by 3dB. For speaker comparison, most speaker manufacturers provide the spl in decibels that the speaker

can produce one meter away from the speaker when driven with one watt, or spl (1w/1m). Time for a story problem...

Fritz, down at the local music store, wants to sell you 2 speakers with an spl of 93dB (1w/1m) and a rated power handling capability of 200 watts (continuous average power). They're only \$499 each list, and if you decide you need more sound later, you can add another pair to your system. Rolf, the dealer across the street, suggests a pair of speakers with an spl of 103dB (1w/1m) that can handle 400 watts continuous average power. They cost \$950 each list, but he assures you they will be all you need for a long time. Buy now or pay later...

Let's see what Fritz is offering. The speakers are probably a B-mark item (we'll discuss this later) so with shipping he paid about \$325 each. With a mark-up of 15% to 20% you should expect to pay about \$375 to \$390 each. We'll start by calculating the maximum spl per speaker and then add 3dB because two speakers make a pair:

$$\begin{aligned}\Delta IL &= 10_{dB} \log[\Delta P] \\ \Delta IL &= 10_{dB} \log[200w/1w] \\ \Delta IL &= 23dB\end{aligned}$$

adding the 23dB change to the 93dB we started with plus 3dB for having two equivalent speakers gives us a maximum spl of 119dB for the pair.

Rolf's speakers are also a B-mark item but he paid \$35 each for shipping (they're heavier), so with a competitive discount you're looking at around \$695 each. As we did before, we'll determine the maximum spl of Rolf's speaker pair:

$$\begin{aligned}\Delta IL &= 10_{dB} \log[\Delta P] \\ \Delta IL &= 10_{dB} \log[400w/1w] \\ \Delta IL &= 26dB\end{aligned}$$

adding the 26dB change to the 103dB we started with plus 3dB for having two equivalent speakers gives us a maximum spl of 132dB for the pair.

Clearly Rolf's speakers are louder, but how many speakers would you have to buy from Fritz to have an equivalent system? We'll invert the equation and solve for ΔP :

$$\begin{aligned}\Delta P &= \text{inv log}[\Delta IL/10_{dB}] \\ \Delta P &= \text{inv log}[(132_{dB}-119_{dB})/10_{dB}] \\ \Delta P &= \text{inv log}[13_{dB}/10_{dB}] \\ \Delta P &= 20\end{aligned}$$

and $\Delta P = \text{No. of Fritz's Speakers} / \text{No. of Rolf's, so...}$

$$\begin{aligned}\Delta P &= \text{No. of Fritz's speakers} / 2 \\ 20 &= \text{No. of Fritz's speakers} / 2 \\ \text{or...} \\ 40 &= \text{No. of Fritz's speakers}\end{aligned}$$

so you're going to need 38 more speakers from Fritz. That is going to look pretty impressive on stage, but it won't sound any better. Be sure to include the cost of 38 more speaker cables, 9 amplifiers, 38 speaker cords, 200 amp electrical service, a road crew of 4, and a very large garage in your cost comparison. Efficiency and clarity are everything in choosing speakers, power handling capacity is almost irrelevant. Math isn't just for accountant's...

Apparent Loudness. The quiz is over so you can relax now. While speakers deliver (in theory) a flat response

throughout the frequency spectrum at every volume level, your ears don't hear that way. At quiet volumes you must add bass and treble to maintain loudness levels you perceive to be equivalent to the midrange. As you increase the volume, less additional bass and treble are necessary. This is described using the Fletcher Munson curves which show equivalent apparent loudness at different volume levels. While this may be a bit detailed for your needs, it underlines the importance of doing your sound checks at the volume you plan to perform at.

Feedback & Reflections. Now that we've hit you with algebra and told you that nothing is what it appears to be, we figure we'll lose the rest of you here... Every room is different. Based on their size, shape and textures, each room absorbs certain frequencies and reflects others. How you position your speakers adds another variable to the equation. And once the room fills with people it all changes again. While you could theoretically calculate which frequencies will be affected and by how much, the resulting simultaneous equations are beyond the scope of this article. Aren't you glad? You can do it by ear by driving the system into feedback and pulling out the guilty frequencies by trial and error or you can use a real-time analyzer. We'll leave you to investigate this further on your own if you're interested.

Hearing Loss made easy. Loud bass levels may not damage your hearing quickly, but high levels of high frequencies will. If you have to play at deafening levels, boost the low end and cut the highs. When you're deaf you'll still be able to feel the beat, but if you lose the high end, you'll have a tough time singing in tune.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Hum, Buzz, & Microphones that bite. Ground loops occur when electricity has more than one path to ground. If you plug your equipment into different circuits you're just asking for trouble. Different circuits typically have small voltage differences. Even equipment plugged into the same outlet can be a problem if one has a 3' cord and the other is connected with a 50' extension cord. Some circuits are even wired with the common and ground are reversed. Using short or balanced cables will help reduce problems with hum, as will power filters and ground lifts, but use caution! If you don't ground your equipment properly, you'll become the path of least resistance. Microphones bite, hangnails tingle or worse...

DOLLARS & SENSE

M.S.R.P. & the square root of -1. Both the Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) and the square root of negative 1 are imaginary numbers. They exist in theory but not in the real world of musical equipment. It would be helpful to know what the dealer paid for the item you are considering buying, but just like shopping for cars, they don't want you to know, probably won't tell you, and will cringe if you ask. In fact, very few stores will even give you a discounted price over the phone, only the suggested retail price. They know that once they get you in the store to test drive their equipment you won't sleep at night until it's yours. Mail order stores and very competitive dealers will sell equipment for 5% to 10% over their cost. Local dealers who think they are the only game in town expect 25% to 30% over cost or more.

Sound equipment typically falls into three price categories. As the quality and price of the item increases, the dealer markup usually decreases. While you may be willing to pay \$20 for a mic cable that the dealer paid \$6.50 plus shipping to get, you probably wouldn't pay \$2000 for a pair of speakers that the dealer got for \$650. Both the dealer and the manufacturer know this too, so they have a pricing game called A-Mark, B-Mark and C-Mark.

A-Mark - Dealer pays 50% of list plus shipping - most speaker cabinets, some instruments, most microphones, microphone cables and speaker/patch cords.

B-Mark - Dealer pays 60% of list plus shipping - highest quality microphones, some higher end speaker cabinets, mixing

consoles and processing equipment like crossovers, delays, reverbs, and equalizers.

C-Mark - Dealer pays 70% of list plus shipping - higher end digital processing, large mixing consoles, and other pricey items.

Products are subject to the pressures of supply and demand like anything else. When a new product is first introduced on the market it tends to be scarce and has little competition. You'll pay top dollar for it the first few months until the market becomes more saturated and dealers become more competitive. But prices fluctuate. What is a B-Mark one month may be a C-Mark the next month. Sometimes dealers receive special discounts or incentives from the manufacturer who take an additional 10-20% off list. This is where you'll start seeing those incredible deals. Patience can pay off in added savings.

Buy it once and buy it right. Don't buy something and plan to upgrade later. You'll outgrow it before you can afford to replace it. Buy the best product you'll really need and pay bottom dollar for it. If you don't call or visit at least eight (yes, 8!) stores to compare prices before you buy an item, I guarantee you'll pay too much. Call stores in other towns and a couple of mail-order stores too. Even for small items you can save a lot. Take an AKG C1000S microphone which lists at \$359. I was quoted prices ranging from \$320 to \$250. Or an EMAX II digital sampler with 4 megs of RAM which on paper lists for \$3495. (Really it should be more like \$2990 list.) Again, I was quoted prices ranging from \$2700 with no sound library available to \$2290 with access to a 1.1 Gigabyte library of stereo samples (that's 1400 720K diskettes!). Isn't it worth \$5 in phone calls to make sure you're not paying too much?

Don't believe everything you're told. Dealers may exaggerate the virtues of product lines they carry and downplay those they don't - another good reason to call or visit many different stores. Research products you're considering by talking to knowledgeable friends, local studios, or trade publications. But again, magazines occasionally say kind things about bad products in pursuit of advertising. Some dealers will also try to steer you towards products that are more profitable. Remember the A-Mark, B-Mark, C-Mark lesson above and incentives from the manufacturers? Most dealers are reputable and want your return business, but if you don't call around, you may learn which dealers are which at your own expense.

Quantity and cash discounts. Dealers pay about 3% when you charge your purchase. That 3 percent is going to be tacked on to their bottom price. Offer cash or check and see if they'll drop their bottom line or split the difference with you. If you are going to buy several items at once, dealers are often willing to lower their profit margin on each item and give you an additional break. \$30 in their pocket on a \$300 purchase may not grab their attention, but \$300 in profit on a \$3000 purchase will. Ask them to throw in a patch cord or midi cable when you buy your guitar or keyboard too. They want to sell you the equipment as much as you want it. Don't be shy - it's your money and you worked very hard for it. Let them earn their money too.

Used & Abused. You can save money buying used equipment but there are pitfalls here as well. Used equipment is often abused equipment. There is no warranty when it sizzles in your rack and certainly no one around to answer your questions. You can also pay more for a used piece than a new one. In a Seattle music publication, an Alesis Midiverb III was priced for \$300 used. It lists for \$349 but you can buy it new for \$295 or less. Would you pay \$5 more for a used Midiverb III with no warranty? Someone who doesn't do their homework will!

We certainly are not going to recommend any dealer, but you are welcome to call or write us for the names of businesses we call in our price and service comparisons and have dealt with before. Price isn't everything. Make sure you're not paying too much, they know what they talking about, and that someone will be there when you have problems or questions.

Allocating Resources. Start with the basics. You probably can't afford the best

of everything, so you'll have to compromise on either the quality or quantity of your equipment. We suggest you buy it once and buy it right. Every time you buy and sell equipment you'll lose ground. Start with just what you must have, and expand as resources allow. You'll probably need a sound board, amp, speakers, and a few microphones and cords to get started. Here's your chance to start off on the right foot. Do your homework, and plan ahead! Choose equipment that is rugged enough to allow you to do a live show, quiet enough to record at home, and flexible enough to expand later.

PUT IT ALL TOGETHER
EQUIPMENT

Speakers. Speakers are everything. Well, they're terribly important. Your system is only as good as it's weakest link, but even the best equipment can never make a bad speaker sound good. Clarity and efficiency are the primary things to consider. The maximum power handling capacity of the speaker is almost irrelevant. You must not exceed it and are foolish to operate near it on a regular basis. The more efficient your speakers, the less power you'll need. That quickly translates into less money spent on amps and fewer circuits you'll need to plug into. You may not mind using more electricity, but you will mind a tripped breaker in the middle of your show. Clarity is hearing what you're supposed to hear. Crisp sounds should be crisp and tight, not mushy. The signal should be clean and uncolored. Compare the speakers you're considering side by side with the dealers best and alone. No subwoofers, no eq, no games.

Amplifiers. Choose an amp that will deliver at least 50% to 75% of your speakers' rated power. It should also be bridgeable and rated for at least 4 ohm loads. If you select an amp that can be bridged, deliver 200 watts a side into 8 ohms, and will drive a 2 ohm load, you'll never outgrow it.

Ever! You can always use it to drive floor monitors later on.

Powered Mixers. Never buy a powered mixer! Period. You'll regret that decision long before you finish paying for it. If you want everything in one unit, buy a home stereo. You'll outgrow the amp and find yourself bypassing it and using a larger amp to drive your mains in no time. You can't sell the amp, and you'll be carrying that extra weight around for a long time. Doesn't that sound fun?

Turn it up and blow it up. Don't overdrive the amp! Don't overpower the speakers! Don't overdrive the amp! Don't overpower the speakers! Okay, one more time... Spend your money on new equipment, not new tweeters! If you overdrive your amp, even just a little, you send fantastic amounts of distortion straight to the speakers. As the output increases, the distortion level rises slowly...until just past the rated power when it goes to infinity. Speakers don't understand infinity, especially tweeters, and they end their life quietly at this point. This can expensive and certainly a show stopper. If you decide to overpower your speakers, push 1000 watts through a speaker rated at 400 watts for instance, something similar happens - the speaker diaphragm tries to move somewhere it can't reach. This also results in a trip to your local equipment repair shop.

Don't strangle your mains. Speaker cable comes in different sizes for a reason. If you plan to put your amp a few feet from the speakers, 10' 16-Gauge wire will probably be okay. But if you're running a 50' cable, it should be 12-Gauge or larger. A 14 or 16-Gauge wire will choke back your power because it acts like a big resistor. Your precious power, which you paid for in a big way in that amplifier of yours, is converted to heat in the wire instead of sound in your speaker.

Getting more for less. The peak power handling capacity of your speakers and the amplifier's maximum power output are your limits. You cannot exceed the lessor of the two without literally paying a price. However you can use a compressor/limiter to increase your apparent volume level

ARTISTS WHO
WISH TO BE
CONSIDERED
FOR ACM
JOURNAL'S 3rd
ANNIVERSARY
COMPILATION
CD MUST
CONTACT US
BEFORE THE
JULY 17th
DEADLINE

INTERVIEW

songs. It does inspire me to try new things. But I also listen to all sorts of music outside the studio. That influences our sound a lot...the music I listen to.

ACMJ: What influences do you have Tim?

Tim: When I started out, I was doing covers of Depeche Mode with a friend of mine. As time went on, he did not want to start writing original stuff, but I was getting to a point where it was boring and going nowhere to do covers anymore. So I started working on a couple of things. Then Brent started getting into recording and he wanted to do something with me to get me into a demo - he wanted to do some recording to see what he could do. That was when we started writing original stuff. It's ballooned from there.

ACMJ: So, where do you fit in Eric?

Eric: It's interesting, because Brent started doing recording about four years ago, and I started working with him on that. When he started to work with Tim, I worked as assistant engineer producing Tim's material. And soon we realized that it was more than just the three of us working separately, it was the three of us working together on a lot of these projects. It started to take on aspects from each one of us. There would be things that were very Brent, and Tim, and I. It made the music a little broader, because we've different musical backgrounds; Tim's very underground dance, Brent's pretty much straight ahead rock, and I've got a hard rock background. So there are different aspects that each of us bring in. I've never played this style before, so it's refreshing for me to do this type of material.

Brent: Eric and I played in a rock band together for a few years too.

ACMJ: So, besides working on your cd project with a second artist, and wanting opportunities to play live performances, what do you hope to accomplish with the product and the shows?

Brent: Well, ...that, ...crud, that's a hard question. Come on you guys.

Tim: It's a way to spread the "good news" (they all laugh)... I hate that term. It's a way of spreading the gospel to people who would not listen to mainstream Christian music. I don't even like mainstream Christian music. So, this is a release for me. I can hear stuff that I would like to listen to, rather than listen to mainstream Christian music. I do listen to other kinds of music too. But, this is something that other people can identify with, and something that I like, and it's not like hymns or anything like that, but it is Christian music, it has a good message. Others who listen to the alternative stuff can listen to this and say that it's cool and that it's Christian at the same time.

Eric: It's a new era for Christian music. It seems that Christian music has a couple of years of lag time before it starts to follow popular trends. Hopefully what we can do is cut that lag time as much as possible, so there's an alternative music style available for anything that people want to listen to. If they like dance, there's Christian dance. If they like contemporary, there's Christian contemporary. If they like underground, then we'd like to provide that as soon as possible, so people have that opportunity. So there's something uplifting out there that's not going to bring people down. I think that's important.

ACMJ: Tim, you're still in high school?

Tim: I'm a senior.

ACMJ: Do you share your music with friends at school?

Tim: I do. I don't talk about it to a lot of people at my high school, though I talk about it with my friends. They know about my music, but haven't heard it much, because I don't have a tape deck and I don't bring it to my school. Any of them who come to my house hear it and they like it. But from anyone from my school who have heard it, I've had nothing but good response. We did the video of *Ritual* at my school. It was played over the announcements a couple of times and they all liked that one. If someone asks me about my music, I don't hesitate to tell them about it.

ACMJ: Is it a tool for talking to people. It's hard to just talk to someone about Christianity because most people don't want to... Do you feel that being involved with music is a good opening line, and breaks down some barriers.

Tim: I have had people ask me what a couple of lines meant. That provides a good door to start talking about Christianity. I haven't gotten much of a response like "hey Tim, tell me about this" because it's not really in circulation yet. As soon as it is, it will be a good tool. It's something I can relate to and other people can relate to... A common ground.

ACMJ: You are heading to college soon, several hours away at Western [Washington University] in Bellingham. Will that put a crimp in future projects?

Tim: Well, a bit. But I'm taking my keyboard. I'm going to write music and plan to come home some weekends too. We don't get together that much now, so it shouldn't be too different.

Brent: We've always been like that. It's not like we have the time to work three or four nights a week. We would usually write the songs on a weekend. Then, when time was available, we'd come in here really late at night to record. It would change performing. We'd do it on weekends only, and not too far away from around here. It won't change recording at all though, because we've always been in school, working on a weekend basis.

ACMJ: Tim, you're getting feedback from the compact disc and you're starting to do more of your material live, with other band members. Now the band, Simple Truth. Where do you see yourself heading in the next few months?

Tim: We're finishing recording for a cd that we're going to release with another artist. Hopefully that'll be done by this summer...

ACMJ: That will be a two artist cd?

Tim: Six songs each, I believe. Besides that, there's not a whole lot planned. We'll keep going with it, but not sure of the direction.

ACMJ: So you're writing more and developing what you have.

Brent: We are basically going to concentrate on finishing up. We have two more songs to finish in the studio. When that's done, we can concentrate on the cd, and then on to playing live. I want to get it done before we play live, to have the cd out of the way. Plus, it gives us something for the people who come see us. We're going to concentrate on that right now.


Eric: It's a good way for us to get to know what we need to do, and as Brent said, it's a great way to leave something with the people when we do play our shows. If they're interested, they can pick up the cd and listen to it. Hopefully, if they liked the show, they'll like the cd as well. Maybe we can get more feedback that way.

ACMJ: Brent, you're an engineer at a recording studio. You work with a lot of different artists on a daily basis. Does that influence the music that you do?

Brent: It doesn't really influence the style at all, but I listen and pick up ideas off of every tape - not just tapes that I do. It influences the things that I try in the studio as far as recording techniques. When I'm doing my own project with this group, I try things that I might not be able to try with other groups - because the clock's running, or something. It gives me a chance to try new things, plus I try new instrumentation that I hear people put on



SIMPLE



Tim: That's one of the benefits of electronically based music. It doesn't take a lot of studio time to record.

ACMJ: Do your parents get concerned that you'll want to pursue this full-time and abandon college?

Tim: They're satisfied now that I'm going to college. They got concerned there for a while when the cd first came out. We were getting so much response, they were scared that I'd just pursue music and skip college and all that. So, I've decided to do the college thing, but music has always been really important to me and I'm not going to drop it. It's just going to be a little slower right now.

ACMJ: I guess Brent told you (with him working with artists and all) if you just do music, you'd go hungry a lot of the time.

Brent: Exactly!

Eric: It's definitely true with Christian music. You have to be willing to work full-time to support your ministry. It is a sad truth. I don't think any of us here would mind being supported by his/her ministry of choice. The reality is that we all need to have a job, go to college, etc. I'm in college, Brent's at the studio, Tim's going to college...it's the way it has to be right now. If the time comes when we can go 100% on something like this I think we will, but we all have to support ourselves until then.

ACMJ: It gives us insights, though, into the people that we're working with. These are people that we're trying to reach as well. That's important. There's definitely a place in the church for that. Let's discuss our area. Seattle has a growing alternative scene, but does this area encourage the electronic scene that you're part of? Does it welcome other new styles of music?

Brent: Not especially. Not our style. We get a lot of response from different areas in the country but not so much here, although the song [Ritual] is popular on a local radio station. Maybe it is accepted around here, but it's a wide variety of people that are

requesting it and calling. I think what is really different about us is the content of lyrics - very straightforward and simple. We're not trying to hide meaning.

ACMJ: Have churches in the area been fairly understanding? Are they a viable venue to do shows?

Brent: Not in the past. We haven't looked into it much yet. In the past, the church has been less than excited about doing concerts.

Tim: There's a volume block. They don't want it to get too loud.

Eric: That's one of the problems with the Northwest. It's difficult for Christian music to grow here. It's always been a challenge. I know several very good Christian bands that have fallen apart because it's too difficult. Hopefully we can overcome that. With the three of us I think it will be easier, because we're family.

ACMJ: The bands that made it here have done it by being successful in other parts of the country first.

Eric: Then they come back here and find out that now they're accepted. With the response that the cd's gotten, hopefully we have a chance with our new cd in other parts of the country. Maybe that will dictate what happens here. We'll see...

TRUTH

Q:

**WHERE CAN YOU FIND MOST OF THE
MUSIC MENTIONED HERE?**

A:



**WRITE OR CALL TODAY
FOR A FREE CATALOG**

If you are in an underground/independent band and want international distribution through our catalog, True News, send us a copy of your tape along with a bio and/or any information about yourself to:

TRUE TUNES DISTRIBUTION 210 W. FRONT ST. WHEATON, IL 60187

TRUE TUNES ETCETERA

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substantially. By limiting or compressing the loudest sound bursts in your music, you can bring the average volume of the music up. You will decrease the dynamic range of your material somewhat, but some artists believe music should stay somewhere between loud and really loud. A compressor/limiter can help protect your speakers from sudden changes in volume, is beneficial in background music applications and helps keep volume levels consistent when recording.

Equalizer. A 1/3 Octave (31 band) eq is all you'll ever need. You can remove the characteristics of each room which amplify certain frequencies, and have the gain-before-feedback you'll need on your microphones. You can also add that room-rattling kick from 80hz down, add presence in your mid-range, and cut your high-end if it gets shrill or harsh.

The mixing console. Just as important as your speakers, almost. You'll need at least 8 channels, but get 12 or 16 if you can afford to. It must have stereo outputs, at least two effects sends and returns, and each channel should have xlr and 1/4" inputs, a channel insert, a 20db pad, input trim, high and low shelving eq, effects sends, l/r pan, a solo or cue button, and long throw fader slides. Bar meters are good, vu meters are better. Make sure the board will phantom power your condenser mics. A sweepable midrange eq on each channel, 3 or more aux sends, 4 or more subgroups, channel mute buttons, and balanced outputs are also important if you can work it into your budget.

PRODUCT

BEFORE YOU RECORD

Develop your Material. Don't rush into a recording project. Make sure your songs are original, creative, interesting, and worth investing in. If you settle for polishing average songs, you'll be an average band. Some average bands get a break, but they usually know someone.

ODD SOCKS

BID LIST 3

NEARLY 3000 ITEMS

Rehearse, Record, Rehearse... Record your rehearsals live to cassette or, better yet, videotape where you can record 6 to 8 hours without fumbling with the tape. Listen to it later and keep anything that's new or worked well for future reference. Also, record your material on a four-track recorder to further develop complex sections and work out the bugs. A cassette four-track makes a good worksheet for capturing ideas and tightening songs, but its narrow bandwidth and high noise floor make lousy tapes. Don't waste your time and money trying to master cassette copies from it. A 1/4" four-track recording can be impressive if you don't bounce tracks and your keyboards, drums and bass are driven by a midi or smpte sync track on track 4. This would leave you with 3 tracks to record vocals and guitar. A few companies offer 1/8" cassette eight-track machines which allow greater flexibility on a small budget and eliminate the need to bounce tracks, but you still lose the punch at the low end and the sizzle in the highs.

Limited Performances. The true test for most material is live performance. If the audience likes your songs, you'll know it. You'll instantly know which songs they really like. You'll also be painfully aware of any songs they don't. And copyright your songs before you perform them.

PRE-PRODUCTION

Pre-production is essential. Do everything possible before you start

recording. That may mean polishing your sequences, making a rough demo to work out the bugs, try different sounds, different styles, whatever... Know where you are going before the meter starts running.

Budget before you begin. Know exactly how much your entire project will cost before you start. For recording, include recording, mixing and mastering time, multi-track tape costs, equipment rental, pizza, DAT tape, studio musicians, and any extras you're considering. Include your costs for duplication and packaging too. The finished project doesn't do anyone any good until it's available for sale. Include costs for artwork; booklet or sleeve typesetting, printing, film set-up and match prints; printing: cassette or cd master conversion, duplication, packaging, shrink-wrap and shipping; and a modest initial advertising campaign. We've included a rough estimate to help you get started in the Worksheet on Sheet 10.

Cash in Hand. Have your money in hand before you begin recording. If you need to do a few more shows to earn the extra dollars, do it before you begin and use it to polish and hone your material. You may write new songs even better than what you have now. It's best to start and finish your project immediately, market your product over the coming months, and move on to new songs and a new project.

Sequencing. This is a great way to do much of your pre-production up front. Sequencing your drums, bass, and keyboards can free up a lot of tracks in the recording process and dramatically reduce your studio time. It can also give you extraordinary control over every aspect of every note for every instrument. But don't quantize excessively unless you're looking for an electronic sound, and vary tempos, intensities, sustains, and other musical parameters just as you would playing live. Use sequencing as a tool, not a crutch.

RECORDING BASICS

Recording Constraints. With any analog recording, there is always a noise floor. A good four-track cassette recorder without noise reduction has a signal to noise ratio (S/N) around 68db while a good 1/2" eight-track with dbx noise reduction has a S/N of 108db. That 40db difference in noise floor is the difference between a trashy garage recording and a CD master.

Digital & Analog. Digital recorders have a signal to noise ratio comparable to the 1/2" eight-track just considered. Unlimited bouncing of tracks is also theoretically possible. Many musicians, however, feel that music recorded entirely in the digital domain lacks the warmth of analog recordings.

Track Requirements. More tracks translate into more recording time, more expensive studio time, and more mixing time, more expensive tapes, and more decisions. If you can work within eight tracks, your project will be fairly inexpensive. Twenty-four track recording could mean a second (or third) mortgage.

Effects and Processing. Record your tracks dry (without reverb.) You can add effects later but you can't take effects out. Use a compressor/limiter as you record instruments and vocals and possibly again when you mix them down. This may be necessary to get a consistent recording level since most people move toward and away from the microphone. Use a high-quality condenser microphone with a large diaphragm and variable pick-up pattern to capture the essence of your vocals and instruments. An AKG 414 is very standard (and very expensive) so rent one if necessary. Use 16-bit digital effects to

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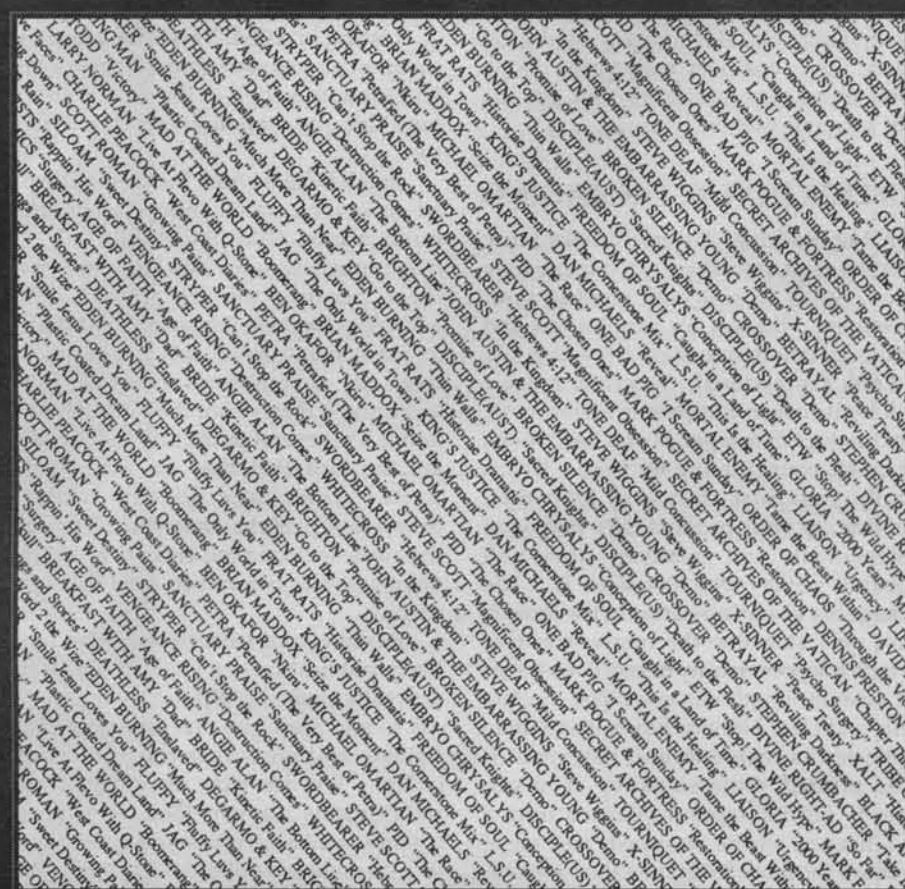
minimize the amount of background noise that sneaks onto your tape. Once it's there, it is difficult to tame.

Mixdown & Mastering. If you have a clean recording console, several digital effects, a DAT, good monitors, patience and some studio experience, you may be able to achieve a satisfactory master. Even with all these, you may still be better off mixing your project in a studio with an accomplished (not necessarily expensive) engineer.

YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN

Recording. If you hope to generate label interest or convince consumers and retailers to purchase your tape, you need great songs with punch and sizzle and professional packaging. Great songs are up to you and we'll talk about packaging later, but the punch and sizzle starts here... If you have time and limited recording experience, good results are possible and relatively inexpensive. You'll need to find someone in your region that rents a 1/2" 8-track recorder. In Seattle a 1/2" 8-track

WHITE THRONE



Now White Throne #11 is out. With more reviews to keep you up late at night...over 90! Interviews with Petra, Sincerely Paul, Mike-E, Altar Boys, Siloam, Uthanda, Brooks Williams, Dynamic Twins, Angelica, Dreamer, and No Longer Music. Alternative, Metal, Rap, Rock, Post Modern, Industrial, Folk, Thrash, Modern Rock, Reggae...it's all here. 68 pages and Holland's No Longer Music on the cover. Send \$3 for your copy of Issue #11. For subscription information, write: White Throne, P.O. Box 20577, Dep't J, Castro Valley, CA 94546.

SUMMARY

ARTIST WORKSHEET

The following is intended to serve as a reference for prices for various items typically of interest to independent artists, and addresses for publications and mail-order outlets. Prices for cassette or cd manufacturing can vary as wildly as t-shirts, printing, and band equipment. If you are interested in knowing who is offering these products for these prices, please call us at 206-863-0632 between 4pm and 9pm PST. We make no manufacturer recommendations and prices may fluctuate, but we hope you'll use this resource to make sure you're paying a fair price for your product.

CASSETTE MANUFACTURING

J-CARD SET-UP

Based on computer generated type, photographs scanned to disc, film output on linotronic or imagesetter. Typesetting runs about \$35/hr, but you can do your own using Aldus Pagemaker, Quark Express or Ventura Publisher and an illustration program like Aldus Freehand or Corel Draw. If you only have access to a basic word-processing program like Microsoft Word or Word Perfect, you can still reduce your typesetting time by typing your J-card text and saving it as an ASCII or RTF file for the service bureau to import into their desktop publishing program. Use a return at the end of each line, use tabs instead of spaces to align text, and type it as one very long column of text, not side-by-side columns. Leave the color separation to the service bureau that will generate your film output.

Typesetting @ \$35/hr
2 photos scanned to disc @ \$12.50 ea \$25.00

J-CARD FILM

8-1/2"x11" 2540dpi film negatives @ \$15 ea (for 2-Panel J-card) or 11"x17" 2540dpi film negatives @ \$20 ea (for 3 or 4-Panel J-cards). One color printing (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow or Black ink on White paper) requires one piece of film. Four color printing (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black on White paper) requires four pieces of film and a match print at about \$50.

1-Color, 2-Panel (\$15 x 1) \$15
1-Color, 3 or 4-Panel (\$20 x 1) \$20
4-Color, 2-Panel (\$15 x 4 + \$50) \$110
4-Color, 3 or 4-Panel (\$20 x 4 + \$50) \$130

J-CARD PRINTING

Based on 2500 J-cards cut and scored, 4-color front, 1-color back, customer-supplied film negatives, 10% over-run.

2750 2-Panel J-cards @ \$27 per 1000 \$74.25
2750 3-Panel J-cards @ \$41 per 1000 \$112.75
2750 4-Panel J-cards @ \$71 per 1000 \$195.25

DUPLICATION

Based on a 60-minute chrome cassette in a clear shell, shell printed, clear box, customer-supplied j-cards inserted, shrink-wrapped, real-time copies from a DAT master.

500 Cassettes @ \$.75 ea \$375.00

COMPACT DISC MANUFACTURING

BOOKLET SET-UP

Based on computer generated type, photographs scanned to disc, film output on linotronic or imagesetter like J-Card set-up above.

Typesetting @ \$35/hr
2 photos scanned to disc @ \$12.50 ea \$25.00

BOOKLET FILM

11"x17" 2540dpi film negatives @ \$20 ea. One color printing (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow or Black ink on White paper) requires one piece of film. Four color printing (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black on White paper) requires four pieces of film. Standard compact disc jewel cases require a booklet and a tray card. Slimline CD jewel cases require only a die-cut booklet. Slimline jewel cases are also much lighter and will save you a considerable amount of money in film, printing, shipping, and mailing costs. The following price is for a CD project packaged in a slimline jewel case. Add \$400 to \$450 for additional film and printing costs with a standard CD jewel case, plus another 50% in shipping and mailing costs. Again a matchprint is required for 4-color film so add \$50.

1-Color Slimline Booklet (\$20 x 1) \$20
4-Color Slimline Booklet (\$20 x 4 + \$50) \$130

BOOKLET PRINTING

Based on 5000 J-cards cut and scored, 4-color front, 1-color back, customer-supplied film negatives, 10% over-run.

5500 Slimline booklets @ \$64 per 1000 \$352

DUPLICATION

Based on a 74-minute compact disc, two-color label, slimline jewel case, customer-supplied booklets inserted, shrink-wrapped, PCM conversion from a DAT master.

2000 discs (min. order) @ \$1.10 ea \$2200.00
2000 jewel cases @ \$.25 ea \$500.00
2000 shrink-wrap @ \$.05 ea \$100.00
PCM Conversion from DAT \$175.00

PRESS KITS & PROMOTION

PRESS PHOTOS

Based on customer supplied black and white photo, camera-ready band logo, and text for typesetting. 100 continuous-tone photographs (1week turnaround) which are the industry standard, or 500 150-line screen litho prints on gloss stock (2 week turnaround). Photographs are usually required by publications and promoters since the photos must be scaled and screened to fit their requirements.

100 photos \$89.95
500 prints \$89.95

BACKGROUND INFO & PRODUCT INSERTS

In addition to a quality band photo (described above), a good press kit should include a one page description of the artist, a sample cassette or cd professionally packaged, all in a 9"x12" envelope with your logo on it. Make sure that your product, your photo, and your one-page bio have your band name, address, and phone number on them since these items often become separated when received. Photocopies can look very professional if your original is clean and crisp, you print on nice heavy text or cover stock, and you take it to a printer with a high-quality machine. Many record companies will discard unsolicited product shortly after receiving it. If you would like your cassette or cd back, send a self-addressed stamped envelope with adequate postage and ask them to return it when finished.

100 1-page background sheets \$12.00
100 9"x12" envelopes \$15.00
200 labels/stickers printed \$10.00
100 first-class postage (5oz) \$121.00

VIDEO MANUFACTURING

VIDEOTAPE LABELS

Spine labels and face labels are standard. Can be printed on an offset press for about \$30 from camera-ready film negatives.

2 film negatives from disc @ \$15 ea \$30.00
1200 Spine labels (100 sh x 12/sh) \$24.00
1000 Face labels (100 sh x 10/sh) \$24.00

BOX PRINTING

Even minimum print runs can be fairly expensive. Unless you intend to mass produce the video, I suggest packaging the video in a white cardboard sleeve and applying stickers, or a clear plastic sleeve with a printed paper insert.

500 White dustcovers \$52.00
500 Plastic dustcovers \$150.00

DUPLICATION - NTSC

Based on a 45-minute vhs video, stock and labor only, customer-supplied boxes, pro-grade tape, shrink-wrapped, 3/4" or 1" master.

100 ntsc @ \$4.80 ea \$480.00

PUBLICATIONS

We are fairly sure these addresses are correct, but our bulk mail items aren't forwarded or returned. We suggest sending each publication a press kit, phone after a few weeks, and ask for a sample issue and rate card for comparison before committing to an advertising strategy.

ACM JOURNAL

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THE REVIEW

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2500 Washington #2
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21370 Pine Ridge Ave
Apple Valley, CA 92307

SPAMM

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Nelson, New Zealand

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PO Box 724973
Atlanta, GA 30339

WHITE NOISE

PO Box 1564
Pt. Roberts, WA 98281

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2 Steps
S-603 34 Galve
Sweden

WHITE THRONE

PO Box 20577
Castro Valley, CA 94546

INTERNATIONAL MAIL-ORDER

There are many other mail-order and retail outlets for independent product, but we've listed a few to start with.

THE ART CLUB

Alternative Records and Tapes
197 South Prairie Ave
Bradley, IL 60915

EMBRYO ARTS

Nonnentaplaan 52
B-3800 Sint-Truiden
Belgium

ESSENTIAL SOUNDS

32-11-681-355
PO Box 27243
Mt. Eden
Auckland
New Zealand

KEY RECORDS

PO Box 427
Lloyd, FL 32337

LONG'S CHRISTIAN MUSIC

2306 Edgewater Drive
Orlando, FL 32854

METAL CROSS PRODUCTIONS

Hallmansv. 26
S-552 59 Jönköping
Sweden

PLANKTON RECORDS

236 Sebert Road
Forest Gate London
E7 0NP England

RAD ROCKERS DISTRIBUTION

370 Greentree Lane
Milan, MI 48160

SCRIPTURE UNION BOOKSTORE

129 York Street
Sydney 2000
Australia

THE SHEPHERD SHOP

431 McCarty
San Antonio, TX 78216

STRESS MUSIC

PO Box 2806-551
Torrance, CA 90503

TRUE TUNES, ETC...

210 West Front Street
Wheaton, IL 60187

(708) 665-FUNN

runs \$300/month. They're a bit less in Portland. Call the larger music dealers in nearby cities (not just your town) to compare prices. A 1/2" 8-track is usually enough, especially if you drive your drums and keyboards with a sync track on track 8. Ampex 456 or 499 tape is pretty standard and 10-1/2" reels (30 minutes @ 15ips) run about \$40 each on the street. If you plan to do much re-recording, you might consider investing in a Tascam TSR-8 or an Alesis A-DAT. You'll still need a good 8x2 mixer (16x2 is better) that is fairly quiet, a good condenser microphone, one or two 16-bit digital reverbs, and either a DAT or Hi-Fi Video deck to master your demo on.

In the studio. Studio rates are about \$15 to \$25/hr for 8-track, \$25 to \$40/hr for 16-track, and \$40 to \$85/hr for 24-track analog recording in the Northwest. Some studios charge more so shop around. You can usually get a block of time at the studio for much less than the hourly rate.

Better recordings and less studio time. Have your material polished before you start. You don't get in a taxi and then try to decide where to go. You darn well better know where you're going before that meter starts running. Have your Ampex 499 and DAT in hand when you arrive or you'll pay a premium to buy them from the studio. Make sure you won't be charged for arriving early to set-up, and then arrive early to tune-up and set-up because the meter will start running at the hour. If you've never been in the studio, pick two songs to start and finish completely before beginning the rest. It will help you to see two songs go from start to finish and inspire you to improve on your remaining ones. You may even decide you need to do more polishing before you come back to finish the rest. Put your best foot forward and keep your songs short and to the point. Skip long intros, lengthy bridges and extended guitar licks. Spend time crafting the song itself - not just polishing the performance. Don't hesitate to cut anything in the song that doesn't work or fit.

Mixdown. If you've done your own recording work, you'll probably end up with the best finished product by taking everything into the studio and working with an experienced engineer. You'll need at least two or three digital effects, a really quiet mixing console, and a DAT to master onto. If you want to try it on your own and rent these items, you're probably looking at almost \$300 for a day. Locally, we found a 15 hour block in the studio for the same price. This price included a Soundcraft board, Eventide Harmonizer, 8 digital effects, DAT, engineer and more. Don't spend more than necessary, but get the most for your money!

DUPLICATION & PACKAGING

All or Nothing. It doesn't make sense to record at all unless you can immediately make copies to sell and recover your investment. Budget for duplication and packaging before you start recording.

Look Professional. You can't judge a book by its cover, but people always will. You can duplicate tapes as you need them, but do all your printing up front. This is usually your first chance to grab their attention. If your product isn't packaged professionally and creatively, they will probably never even listen to it. The package is a visual indication of the project. Don't give someone the impression that the tape is a poor quality demo, even if it is. Use custom length chrome tapes in clear shells and clear Norelco boxes, have them duplicated in real-time, and have your J-cards printed professionally. You can honestly get 500 tapes duplicated from a DAT master, shrink-wrapped, and all of the above for about \$500 if you shop around. If your project is 4 songs or less, put the same program on both sides so the listener doesn't have to keep flipping the cassette in the deck. Again, we make no recommendations about where to take your project, but we would be happy to share with you a step-by-step process for both a cd and cassette project we were recently involved with. Please call or write if you would like more information.

J-Cards. Professional cassette sleeves shouldn't cost you very much. Certainly some printers would like to make it sound expensive and take your money, but you can do almost everything yourself. You need to decide how many copies you will

eventually make of the project. If you plan to make very few, photocopying (<100) or offset printing (<200) may work for you. You'll have to cut and fold every sleeve by hand, though, and this gets old very quickly. You'll probably need a few band-aids too. If you're planning to make 200 or more copies, you'll need to have the sleeves professionally printed, scored and cut.

Cut & Paste Photocopies. Certainly the worst looking of all cassette sleeves and guaranteed to make your project appear unprofessional. However for a low quantity mail-order distribution you may not care. Don't expect any store to put them on their shelf though.

Offset printing. These can look fairly professional if all your type is computer-generated text output on a laserprinter and all photos are screened using a 133-line screen. Again, these will stand out in the store as a custom cassette, but it may suit your needs.

Professional sleeves. You can print your sleeves just like the major labels for pennies a sleeve. You'll need to supply the printer with camera-ready film negatives with a resolution of 1240 dpi or better resolution, but this is very easy to do. You should end up with enough sleeves to last you for the life of your project.

Packaging. For retail sale, shrink-wrapping is a must. Shrink-wrap minimizes damage to the cassette box and holds everything together even when they're broken. This should be included in the duplication process...

Duplication. You can make real-time copies as needed using a Metal cassette or Hi-Fi videotape master and custom length, chrome tape, clear shell cassettes. However, this is not a cost-effective or efficient way to duplicate tapes. If you shop around you can find incredible prices for real-time cassette duplication. Prices for 500 sixty-minute chrome tapes duplicated in real-time and packaged in a clear shell and clear box with printing on the shell and shrink-wrapped start around 75 cents each. You'll have to shop around and supply the cassette sleeves, but why pay someone else to do what you are capable of doing.

PROMOTION

ADVERTISING & PUBLICITY

Listing in ACM. This is the easiest and cheapest way to start getting the word out. Just send us a copy of the tape, a short (1 page) bio and a photograph. We'll do the rest.

Small Display Ads. Run a small display ad in several small independent music publications (like ACM Journal?) for maximum coverage. You know who's out there because we are always listing addresses for these magazines. It's smarter to place many small ads instead of one large ad. If someone's interested they'll write and if they're not they won't. If they notice it in several publications, they might get the idea that they are supposed to write. One large ad can easily be overlooked. Make sure you're reaching the audience you need and ask about their demographics before you send them your money.

Reviews and Interviews. Send one to every publication you know about. If they are really excited about it, they might even ask to interview you. Include your phone number and encourage them to call you collect. We don't do reviews but other publications do. In fact some people actually make purchase decisions based on other editor's opinions. If your cassette sleeves look really good they might even run a picture of your tape in the review. This may be your cheapest avenue for publicity.

Demos Everywhere. Clubs, record stores, local bands, and anyone else who might give you an opportunity to perform, sell tickets, or retail product.

Compilation CD's. Each year we compile a disc of alternative artists who participate by invitation only. We ask participating bands for \$100 to cover the industry mailing and for packaging and printing set-up costs. In return we provide copies to our readers, send 200 more to radio through the Pure Rock Report, send

copies to other publications for review, provide a couple of unique music stores with copies at \$7.98 retail, and the bands get their copies for only \$2 each. There are other individuals around who compile discs to service radio and industry watchers. This can be a fairly cost-effective way to make a song available for airplay, but ask those hard questions. How many discs do they mail and where do they go? Do the stations who will receive a copy ever play your style of music? Shop around because some compilations ask \$700, \$1200, or even more per song!

Mail-Order Catalogues. Mail-Order catalogs almost always offer independent artists in their catalog. In fact, that is probably how they got started. Send them a copy to preview and invite them to call you collect for copies to sell. They may be less interested in your packaging than retail stores, but it is still important. They will probably want to work on consignment and your product may move very slowly so don't send any more copies than you can live without for a while.

Independent Radio. Hand deliver it to someone you know at the station or it may end up in someone's personal collection at home.

Local Performances. Here's your chance to make 100% profit. Take enough copies of your product to every show you are in. No exceptions!

T-Shirts, Stickers, & Buttons. This is the other way to help pay for your recording projects. If you have t-shirts made, use 50/50 or 100% cotton and get all L, XL, & XXL. Don't choose a brand of t-shirt that you wouldn't wear yourself and compare prices on tees just like everything else. Ballpark prices for a good deal is \$3.50 or \$4 per shirt with one color printing for a quantities of 100 or more.

RETAIL DISTRIBUTION

Mail-Order Retail Stores. The Mail-Order stores who run ads in ACM Journal always carry independent artists in their catalog. Send them a copy to preview and invite them to call you collect for copies to

sell. If they are interested in the project (I hope you recorded, duplicated, and packaged it professionally!) they will probably want to take 5 or 10 on consignment. If those 5 or 10 sell well, they may be willing to pay you outright for the next batch and future releases as well. Be reasonable with your pricing or you won't sell any to anyone. For 500 tapes, you should have paid a dollar or less per finished tape plus your studio time, maybe another \$1.25 each if you recorded it yourself on 1/2" 8-track and mixed it in the studio. Figure another quarter for shipping and you now have to get \$2.50/tape to break-even. Quite a few music buyers will be willing to pay 5.99 for a new unknown artist. A few less will cough up \$6.99. Really hard-core music types might part with \$7.99. Stores will pay you 50% of the list price, so at \$6.99 you'll get \$3.50, or a dollar profit per tape. This dollar will offset the demo copies you mail out.

Retail Stores. Same deal as Mail-Order stores only they are less likely to carry independent product. If they do carry

your product it will probably be on consignment only. And get a receipt from them stating how many copies you left and how much they'll pay you per copy for what is sold, shoplifted, or lost.

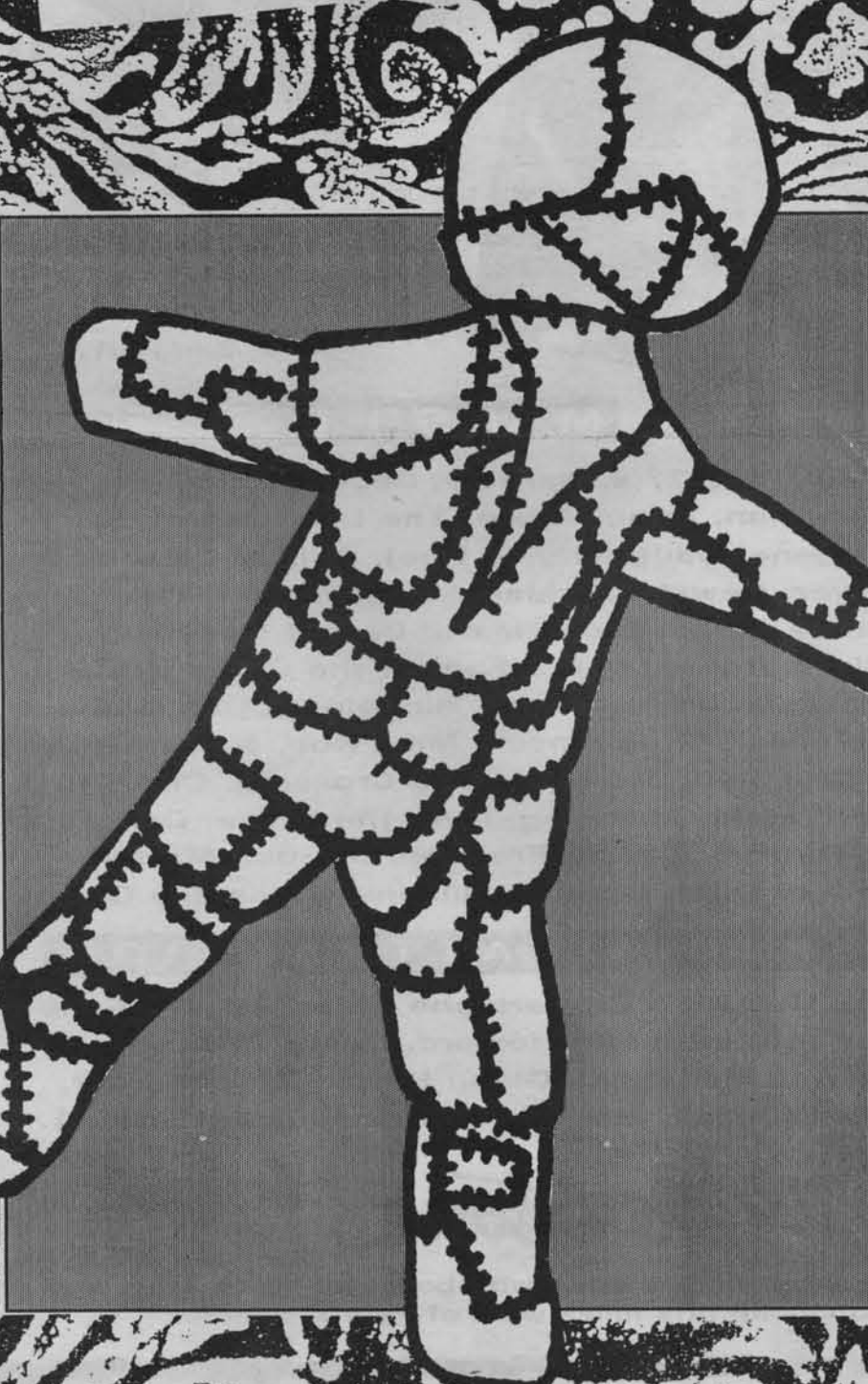
Distributors. These companies may be willing to offer your product in their product catalog for retail stores to carry, but will want to do so on consignment until you have established yourself. They will pay you 40% of the list price if it sells, and resale it to stores at 60% of the list price. They may also expect you to provide evidence of national advertising, radio distribution, and favorable reviews before they'll even take your product. There is no free ride.

IMAGE

Maintain a Professional Image. But don't let image take precedence over substance. Develop a professional look and logo. Offer more than expected. Always follow through on your commitments. Show up early, stay through

COMING THIS MAY

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SCOTT ANDERSON
GECKO MONKS
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SHINE BOMB
PEACE LOVE & DAMAGE
EMPTY TOMB
SHATTERED IMAGE
SHEKENIAH
SOLAFIDE

the end. Help out wherever needed. Be fair. Be reasonable. Don't compromise your values. Be willing to listen. Don't judge. In everything you do, live as Christ teaches us.

Answer letters and return calls. Don't follow our example, we get behind a month from time to time. Okay..., sometimes two. People write because they want more. More information, more music, more involvement, something more. People call because they want it sooner. You appreciate prompt replies, returned calls, and timely information. Your audience will too.

RADIO

WHAT IT TAKES

CD or No... If you don't supply radio stations with cd's, you're probably wasting your time and product. Cassettes are terribly noisy compared to discs. Few stations will bother listening through an entire cassette, transfer it to cart, and then jeopardize losing listeners to competing stations by playing songs that sound substandard. Even if you supply them with cd's, you may still be wasting your time and product. Radio stations play only a fraction of a fraction of a percent of the product they have available - even if it fits their narrowly defined format exactly. Your best bet is to participate in a compilation cd and put your very best foot forward. If your song is good enough to stand out in a collection of 10 to 20 songs, it may be good enough to try once on the air. And by providing them with only one song, you increase your chances of having a single song played by enough stations to show up in a chart somewhere.

DISTRIBUTION

The Pure Rock Report. We distribute our compilation cd's and advertising rate sheets through the Pure Rock Report. We have our own mailing list, but we don't have enough hours in a day to keep it as current or complete as what Kevin has. We know our product is getting the right places, to the right people, on time. If you are serious about servicing radio stations, advertising to retail outlets, or getting advance information out to the industry, there is no better value at any price. If we made recommendations, we'd suggest calling Kevin Allison at 310-83-FLOOR, but you didn't hear it from us...

Alternative and College Formats. There are several trade publications and mail-order outlets for independent product. If you would like up-to-date information on who's out there and addresses and phone numbers, write us and we'll send you a list. Be specific about what you are trying to accomplish and how aggressively you wish to approach the market.

CHARTS & TRACKING

The Ground Floor Update. Also known as the Pure Rock Report. If it's worth hearing and real radio stations with real formats are playing it, you'll find it here. This is the only genuine Chart in the industry and reflects actual trends in the alternative, rap, and rock formats. Anything else is just a light.

CCM Update. Just a light.

Surfs up. CMJ and other college radio publications put it all in perspective. Only the best and most aggressive artists receive airplay in the larger college market. The pulse of college radio and the larger alternative music scene is illustrated here.

PUT IT IN PERSPECTIVE

DON'T LOSE YOUR FOCUS

Why Bother. Music should complement the larger strategy of the church, even if the church isn't ready for it yet... If you are trying to offer your audience an alternative to the world, have a good idea which churches and ministries in your area are prepared to adopt converts. Some churches aren't ready for skinheads to come-as-they-are next Sunday morning and many punks aren't going to buy the American Dream dressed in Christianity. We must offer what Christ teaches without the cultural baggage. Success Theology may help us justify our excesses, but it's irrelevant for someone sleeping in their car or on the street. We need to see people as Christ saw them. Love them, hurt with them, help them, serve them, turn the other cheek, walk a second mile, meet them where they are, ignore outward appearances, and offer them hope. Deal with them honestly, live what you believe, live what you teach, preach what you have read with your own eyes in scripture and don't embellish.

Family Reunion. You can pick your friends, but you can't choose your family. Christ died for everyone. Those who make us uncomfortable. People with different interests. Different tastes. Who dress different, talk different, look different. They may not make an ideal poster boy or girl for our church, but that doesn't excuse us. Everyone needs God and we are obligated to share Christ's message with everyone, encourage everyone, have compassion for everyone, love everyone.

July 25

CORNERSTONE

'92

MUSIC

SPECIAL ATTRACTION

LARRY HOWARD'S CORNERSTONE BLUES JAM: VOLUME 1
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FAMILY SPECIAL (2 parents & their children 12 & under)	\$106	\$112	\$118	\$122

*Official youth groups, age 13 and up, from organized churches ordering 10 tickets or more receive four additional FREE chaperon tickets.

Cornerstone '92 tickets and information, call:
(312) 989-2087 or write: 939 W. Wilson,
Chicago, IL 60640. Tickets also available
through all Family Bookstores.