

Slow Turning

John Hiatt Fanzine



Issue 8

Welcome to Issue 8!

So, we haven't all seen each other since the last tour and *Beneath this Gruff Exterior*. Now, John's summer dates are filling in - still touring at a pace that would make younger musicians whine - and *Master of Disaster* has hit the shelves. This marks John's 18th official release, and I've been feeling downright introspective.

Actually, yours truly fanzine girl has been on the slug line for a while, and with all that exposure to the corporate world and "proper business practices," I decided it was high time for *Slow Turning* to have a mission statement so, here it is: *Slow Turning, The John Hiatt Fanzine* is a sometimes publication (be it about once every year or so to go along with a new Hiatt album when it is released) devoted to the music of John Hiatt and related areas of interest to John Hiatt fans. To borrow a distinction from Charles R. Cross, founder of the *Backstreets* Springsteen Fan Magazine, it is not "about" John Hiatt" so much as "for fans" of John Hiatt. However, whenever biographical elements of John's life shed light or give more meaning to the lyrics of his songs, they may be printed here. This is a non-profit (actually downright budget draining, at times) enterprise meant to spread the word to current and future fans. More than anything, *Slow Turning* exists to be fun for the reader and the writer. Thank-you very much to all who make that possible, including Traci Thomas of New West for providing information and this issue's cover photo, John for providing so much joy to all of his fans, and my mom for continuing to support *Slow Turning* in all ways possible. And, a special personal thank-you to my fiancé Patrick for promising to love me forever, even when I completely ignore him for weeks and type madly into our computer in the name of Hiattism.

Well, that's more than enough business for now. How about getting to some of that info of interest to Hiatt fans? As I'm sure many of you know, John has had many jobs over the course of his life: from bag boy at a grocery store in Indiana, to professional songwriter, to producer, to studio and touring musician, to race car driver. It seems, however, our hero also may have a future as a caped crusader! It was reported by John Leyden of *The Register*, a London newspaper, that Hiatt indirectly caught a criminal. An American woman named Karen Todd had the lyrics of "Have a Little Faith in Me" inscribed into her iBook laptop before it was stolen. Low and behold, when searching for a similar computer on ebay, there was the very same item with the words "When your back is against the wall, turn around and you will see..."

This, however, is probably the only way John's lyrics will end up on a consumer product. As Mr. Hiatt said to *Acoustic Guitar Magazine* a few years back: "*I'm hooked up with BMG Music. But that's a lease deal as well. Eventually—in about 15 or 20 years—I get back my copyrights. I'm trying to have something to leave my kids. I like the fact that they'll control copyright, because I don't necessarily want my songs used for Nike ads [laughs]. I know we're all for sale, but I still don't think Jimi Hendrix intended for his song to be selling Hyundais!*" Hmm... I assume Mr. Hiatt knows that his lyrics have been used for greeting cards. Recently I picked up an American Greetings Father's Day card with an interesting graphic, only to read inside "You're a chip off of the old block, why does it come as such a shock that every road up which you rock, your dad already did." Hallmark move over!

More business... bravo to those of you who completed the crossword puzzle from Issue 7! For those of you who may not have earned the full rank of obsessed Hiatt-listener, or maybe feel that I had one or two trick questions, the answers are included on the back page of this issue. If you think you're up for a new challenge, a brand new puzzle is also on the back of this fanzine.

For those of you who may be interested, John supports a variety of charitable organizations (and, personally, I feel a charitable gift is a more socially responsible gift than, say, a cigar - we want the Man to stay healthy, right?). One favorite is Cumberland Heights, a foundation devoted to the treatment of addiction. You can even make donations to the "John Hiatt Fund" for Cumberland Heights, which, John explained: "...is earmarked for a program which treats the whole family, not just the addict. Addiction is a family problem, and one in three children is affected by it in some way." John is not only on the Board of Directors for this organization, but was the host last year of a special benefit concert at the Ryman Auditorium. So, not only does Cumberland Heights help others who, like John, are trying to recover from drug and alcohol addiction, but by staying in tune with them, you may also hear about special concerts. Be sure to check out the website!

Enjoy Issue 8!

Fitting a Star Peg in a Square Hole...

Ever since his beginning as a musician and performer, rock critics (and even his fans!) have been trying to figure out how to describe this unique talent. Take a look at the many attempts to define the man and the music. The question is, will the real John Hiatt please step forward?

"I admit to a weakness for loony lyrical surrealist protest rockers. And I admit that this one tends to go soft when he tries to go poetic. I even admit that he has a voice many would consider worse than no voice at all (although that's one of the charms of the type). But I insist that anyone who can declaim about killing an ant with his guitar 'underneath romantic Indiana stars' deserves a shot at leading man status in Fort Wayne." - **Robert Christgau, 1975**

"A folkie with a gift for the pop hook, a handsome young man whose face becomes distorted beyond recognition the moment he starts to sing, a Catholic with more hang-ups than I ever reckoned a high church could inculcate, Hiatt has scared me worse than any artist on the scene." - **The Terminal Zone, 1977**

"American rock has been sorely lacking in qualified songwriters. The groups inhabiting the envied chart positions may be having mammoth hits, but almost all their appeal is in the presentation, not the material. Hiatt is first and foremost a writer, but his ability to make his songs work on vinyl can match anyone note for note. All of a Sudden is an apt title for someone who's been knocking around for a decade and might just be on the verge of overnight success." - **Ira Robbins, Trouser Press, 1982**

"In John Hiatt's territory he has no peers, and the grace and nerve of this performance translated directly into the hopes and illusions of everyone present. Hiatt squeezes the part of American songwriter like putty, and the role oozes a peculiarly bitter fluid. ... It takes singers like Percy Sledge and Tyrone Davis, men imprisoned by their art, to make the flesh of the heart bleed so badly; John Hiatt must be accounted among the select number. His voice is a devastating instrument, lungs like ashtrays one moment and a cruelly sweet falsetto the next... Every other songwriter of today is either scribbling a diary of reassurance or painting sketches at an easy arm's length. John Hiatt's the only one who consistently forces response, who impels me to prove I'm alive." - **Richard Cook, NME, 1983**

"For most of Hiatt's career, however, it appeared as though the curtain had gone halfway up, got stuck and was about to fall on his head. His tunes are all singed with regret and memories of a hard, desperate life. It is a familiar story with musicians, especially ones who, like Hiatt, have spent years slipping through the cracks of a spiritual fault line: too many drugs, too much to drink, too much talent, a sufficiency of excess and not enough success." - **Jay Cocks, Time, April 1988**

"The shadows of Hiatt's nearly 20-year battle with alcoholism, and the vocabulary of recovery, flicker in and out of his lyrics against a panorama of sons, fathers, kitchens, wives, kids and barstools-I-have-known. With its emphasis of forgiveness, faith and acceptance, Hiatt's music provides solace to a generation of men and men in their mid-30's who, like him, have endured turbulence in the last two decades." - **Peter J. Smith, NY Times Magazine, 1988**

"A skinny troubadour with a throaty, abrasive growl of a voice, John Hiatt slides in to the American rock dream somewhere between Ry Cooder at his more esoteric and John Cougar Mellencamp at his most demotic. Hiatt is one of the new survivors: a growing band of once-tormented hellraisers who have sobered up and found a new lease of life in the rock marketplace. The music remains boozy, but it is no longer inebriated, and Hiatt suddenly finds himself performing as an affable elder statesman of rootsy, soulful, country rock 'n' roll, introducing his songs with hard-won wisecracks, comic routines, and spasmodic duckwalks. He has become a marvellous showman." - **Barney Hoskyns, New York Times, 1990**

"Hiatt is a musical traditionalist, which means that he draws on classic rock, blues, soul and country in the manner that rockers in the '60s and '70s did. His music is pre-hip-hop, pre-electronic, pre-alt rock. If I played you this album and said it was a lost gem from 1971, you'd believe me. That isn't to say that it's some retro exercise; what I'm saying is that there's nothing trendy about Hiatt's music. He's been recording albums for 28 years now; at age 50, doing anything trendy would seem disingenuous and, well, silly." - **Michael Goldberg, Neumu, 16 February 2002**

"No longer a poor man's Costello, or a thinking man's John Mellencamp, Hiatt is simply himself. And while he may not always seem comfortable in his own skin, the fit is hard to beat." - **Russell Hall, Goldmine Magazine.**

"You do not listen to John Hiatt for easy-going likability. At 38, he is rock's bard of early-to-mid-life crisis, a survivor who has been to the brink of self-destruction and returned with a bellyfull of hard-won insights and equal measures of bile and hope for a new beginning. A real bad advertisement for giving up drinking, opines his former collaborator Nick Lowe, but it is precisely that uptight attitude enlivened by the occasional shaft of vicious wit that makes the former alcoholic from Indiana so compelling should one yield to his hard bitten confessions of spite, regret and romanticism." - **Matt Snow, Emap consumer magazines**

"John Hiatt's detractor's have their points: Sometimes he does a hell of a lot of thrashing around before he gets to the meat of things, musically and lyrically. And then there's his singing-you have to cultivate the sound of a dying black man, especially if your legs are whiter than duck down. ... But Hiatt still knows how to get pithy in a sneakily seductive way - how to administer the medicine before you ever see the needle. After that, he can thrash around all he wants." - **Alanna Nash, Stereo Review, 1993**

"...the former bag boy at Atlas Supermarket on College Avenue..." - **David Lindquist, Indianapolis Star, 1999**

Master of Disaster

Mr. Hiatt's latest album features a collaboration that not only spans generations, but taps into a sound that is cross-generational. Below is information from John Hiatt and Jim Dickinson all about how this great music came to be, and how they finally got together for what is a musically fulfilling partnership for them and for all of us!

JOHN ON MOD: "I see this almost like a Fathers and Sons type of project, similar to what those guys did in Chicago with the Chess legends and the young rockers. Jim's sons Luther and Cody brought in that youthful assertiveness, that rocking feeling, and Jim and I were the old guys, just grabbing hold to the grooves they were laying down and doing something else with them."

JOHN ON HIS PRODUCER: "Jim Dickinson is a musical shaman. He not only understands and knows music, he knows and understands the people who make it. It was kind of freaky sometimes, because he would seem to know what we were thinking musically before we played it, then he'd articulate it in a way that made more sense than how we envisioned it."

JIM ON JOHN: "Well, because we've known each other for so long and, as the wrestler's say, 'been up and down the road together,' some of it was easier, some of it was harder. But John and I have talked about doing a record together several times. In fact, the record that turned into *Bring The Family*, we discussed doing that in Memphis with the Hi rhythm section. We would've made a real good record but he's lucky he didn't do that! Also, he's known of my sons since they were real young, playing punk rock, and was interested in working with them years ago. But back then it wouldn't have really worked, ya know. And of course his management, they had a publishing contract on my boys from way back, so it wasn't like we were an unknown factor. But Hiatt, for me personally ... I mean I just did some of the best work of my so-called career with him. It was a privilege to get to do it. I thanked him profusely for the opportunity 'cos he's a real artist. I've seen him do serious work before and I knew we could achieve a certain depth. I gotta say, we went further than I thought we would. I'm real proud of the record, it's one of the best I ever made." "His quality control was a real pleasure for me. As long as you're making the record better, I say 'Let's try that one again' and a lot of artists don't want to do that. They're willing to accept a take once you're basically happy. But we really went for a perfection that I think we got."

JOHN ON THE FEEL: "I was trying to cover the great American musical experience with the songs on this album. We were influenced by the blues, by country music, by ragtime, jazz, everything. But we were also reflecting the sense of the frontier, the whole Southern experience of different cultures and sounds bumping up against the Mississippi River."

JOHN ON RECORDING IN MEMPHIS: "I wanted a little different flavor, a different vibe with this recording. We got a real funky quality working at Ardent. Cutting in the same room where they made ZZ Top, recording in the R&B room, you could really feel the whole soul, the blues sensibility in the place. The session had a great old school feeling, yet it was also the most incredible, honest sound quality and reproduction that I've ever heard doing a recording."

JIM ON THE SOUND: "The exciting thing about it was this digital process that he brought in, this Sonoma thing (The Sonoma-24 Direct Stream Digital Recording and Editing System). I mean, I've been working pro-tools like everybody else and after you work pro-tools all day long, you feel like you have your head in a bucket and somebody's hitting it with a hammer. This Sonoma System, it's not like sound reproduction, it's like being in the room with first generation audio. It is the best sound I ever heard. Not only for digital media, it makes analog sound silly."

JIM ON THE RESULT: "Hiatt likes to go fast and I like to go fast. You know it's my theory that misery sticks to tape, or digital media in this case, and the shorter time you can do it in, the less misery is gonna be there for the listener. So we worked fast and I think that helped to homogenize the concept. We started out with 30 songs and got down to what we ended up with, which is very geographically specific. This album is about times and places and people. He's such a fine songwriter that if you get him wound up and let him tell the story, you're gonna want to listen."

JIM ON THE OTHER MUSICIANS: "On the last song, of course, they're supposed to sound like a Salvation Army Band but for one of the others I said, 'Alright, you're in a whorehouse in downtown Memphis in 1930-something and the music is in one room and you're in the other room' and they really got it. It's a trombone player from Oxford, Mississippi, Jeff Calloway, that I heard on this little radio show that I do down there and the rest of 'em are just my Memphis guys. It was the first time I'd used this tuba player, Joe Sallmanberger, he was quite good. Saxophone and clarinet are played by Jim Spake and the violin player is Tommy Burroughs - they are my two favorite soloists in Memphis. They're players I love to use. I put 'em on a lot of records. You can hear Tommy's heart break in every note he plays. And Scott Thompson is the trumpet player. He plays on the new Al Green records."

JIM ON "LOVE'S NOT WHERE WE THOUGHT WE LEFT IT": "You see, in that song, no one defines the minor chord. Although it is minor, no one plays the minor 3rd and in the solo Tommy hits the minor 3rd one time and it makes your knees bend, he's the only one that takes it all the way to the minor chord."

JIM ON THE COVER: "I don't know where it came from. I'm a wrestling fanatic. I do talk about it a lot. But it was John's idea and I'm delighted by it. He sees it as a character and I like that aspect too. I work with a lot of artists who work in character. John's borderline. He's not quite in character but I think he sees this record as being a character."

The Tools of His Trade

We know how well he plays and writes, but what about what he plays on? For guitar groupies, here's word from the horse's mouth on what gets the Hiatt seal of approval.

THE FIRST: "Within a year of starting to play, my father bought me a Gibson ES-175, single pickup from the 50's, so it was already vintage! He bought that with an ancient tiny Gibson amp with an 8" speaker, \$100 the combo. And within about two years, it got stolen. That was traumatic!"

OLD OR NEW: "On the acoustic side, most of the guitars that I play live are newer Gibsons. Len Ferguson at Gibson has really been responsible for them making great acoustic instruments again. One of my J45's is from the late '80's Bozeman period, and it's just great. Most of the acoustic stuff I'm doing is with these newer Gibsons...For the electrics, I've played the same one since 1983, it's a 1957 Fender Telecaster, all original except the pickups have been gone over. Nick Lowe actually gave me that guitar, and it's white with a white pickguard and a maple neck. It's a great guitar..."

VINTAGE: "I was really on a tear four or five years ago buying old low-end stuff... I've got a few old Harmonys, both a Stratotone and Meteor. These guitars have great pickups on them, the ones with a gold mesh grille underneath three chrome stripes. These pickups are real howlers! Ry Cooder uses one of these on one of his slide Strats. They just scream. Also, I've got a few old Silvertones with the lipstick tube pickups, an old Kay from the '50's that's two tone and it's just like a chunk of wood in a small Les Paul shape, with just one pickup and it is also quite a howler! I've also got a Silvertone hollowbody that looks like a Country Gentleman, and it's got two DeArmond pickups on it. I've got a couple of Danelectro convertibles, which I call my 'kitchen table guitars...my main 'writing' guitar is my 1947 Gibson LG-2. I didn't know until recently, but this stands for 'Lady Gibson'...for the girls! So I play a 'girlie-man' Gibson!"

FOR ON STAGE: "For the acoustic live, I use the Fishman pickup system on the Gibsons. I have for about 10 years, and I'm really happy with it. I use the little Fishman outboard preamps going direct into the board. In the studio I'm also using the Gibson acoustics, mic'd. For the microphones, I use Shure 57's for a scratchy, Rolling Stones type of acoustic sound, but we've also used Shure SM7's, Shure M49's, and old Neumanns. We also use a number of different vocal mics and we've been running a lot of them through an old RCA tube mic mixer, which looks like a piece of military gear with big knobs and one huge VU meter on it. This works great particularly with ribbon mics... what a wonderful sound! I found out about this mixer through Michael Wadd, a guy I buy a lot of old mics from. He befriended Les Paul at one point, who said that these old RCA mixers are the key ingredient in getting a great sound out of a ribbon mic. My electric setup for live and the studio is just the '57 Tele through a reissue Vox AC-30. We did a few mods on it to help it out a bit. I love this amp, especially with the Telecaster. That great Tele midrange rhythm punch really comes through with it. I've also recently used Ampeg Rockets, but they are just not quite enough watts so we went to the AC-30."

THE DREAM GUITAR: "I'd love to have another 1957 Tele, and I've been on the lookout for one for awhile. It doesn't have to be perfect, I want a player. I'd like to get another just like the one I have, white pickguard on a off white body. Acoustically, I'd love to have an old J200, a buddy of mine's got a '57 tobacco sunburst one, and it just sounds incredible. And maybe another Gibson LG-2."

LOW & HI-TECH FOR CROSSING MUDDY WATERS: "... a metal folding chair on a couple of songs for a little backbeat. The only overdubs were metal folding chair and the harmony vocals. Everything else was live. Very hi-tech. This was actually my first digital recording. I've been a tape guy all my life. But Justin Niebank, the engineer, talked me into recording on this Atari hard-disk system that he's quite fond of. It's a 24-track, 24-bit, hard-disk recorder... The only thing missing is the tape compression you can get on analog, but you can do other kinds of compression to make up for it. I think it sounds really good. I was kind of surprised. I never thought I'd hear a multitrack digital machine that I thought sounded right. I think they're getting it figured out."

CO-WRITERS: "I don't do it very much. And it's pure selfishness. I just enjoy the process of songwriting--just me--so much that I don't think of taking the time to cowrite. It doesn't ring my bell. I'm sure I could write some great songs and probably make a whole lot of money, but it just doesn't appeal to me as much as the way I write songs. It's so thrilling for me to sit there and make something out of nothing. I'm singing something and it's starting to add up to something, and I always feel underqualified, like I've never written a song before! It's weird. But I love that. It's exciting. I've written songs and gone out into the yard afterwards and wept and thanked whatever the great spirit is for putting me in touch with this thing."

After All This Time

Keeping with this issue's retrospective theme, we're looking back at more than just one moment in Hiatt history. Even John himself has had to come up with ways to define himself and his musical direction over the years. If you're curious over whether that definition or the direction of his career and vision have changed with each album, take a look at the quotes from John that we've gathered over the years.

HANGING AROUND THE OBSERVATORY - "It used to worry me, having so many sides. I just had to stop worrying and do what I must do." - quoted in *Playback* publication from Epic Records, 1974

ALL OF A SUDDEN - "It was my first experience working with a bona fide record producer and it was a good one. It took us a while to know how much we could get away with, but by the end I felt we'd really only scratched the surface of what we could do together. It's a lot more than just turning dials. A real producer can help you weed out the stupid stuff in your music and really inspire you. That's exactly what Tony did. I was anxious for someone to be really honest about what I was trying to do. Tony was a great help vocally as well as musically. When we first started recording I'd wanted to bring in another guitarist. He advised against it and was able to draw things out of me on guitar that I didn't know I had. In terms of style, I wanted to try and change things up a bit and I needed a producer who wouldn't be thrown by the diversity. Tony was able to take the material and present it coherently. It's pretty slim pickings as far as producers go. You either get something completely overblown or have to settle for pot luck. Tony knew what he was doing." - quoted in *Geffen press sheet*, 1982

RIDING WITH THE KING - "I'm always hopeful. It's pointless going to the trouble of making an album that nobody's going to hear. You want to make a hit, and I think the material for this album is the best I've ever done. But I'm not about to get hyped up that it'll be a monster hit, because I've done that before and been cruelly disappointed. I'd be happy as long as I can keep making records." - quoted by Larry Kelp, *Oakland Tribune*, 1983

WARMING UP TO THE ICE AGE - "At that point my alcoholism and drug addiction had gotten so out of control that I couldn't sustain the artistic integrity that I stumbled on with RWTK. The wholeness got dissipated by my personal problems and I think that kind of showed up in WUTTIA. There was some good stuff on it, but I was just in such a crazed state that it was hard to know exactly what I was doing." - quoted by Scott Schinder, *Anthology*

BRING THE FAMILY - "I was writing about what I was going through and living through, being newly married with kids and a family, all that stuff that I'd never known about before. We were punting, my wife and I, we really didn't have a lot to go on. We both came from families that were kind of screwy, so we were kind of making it up as we went along. That's where those songs were coming from, and I guess that there were a lot of other people who were going through the same thing. I think it had a certain feeling of being genuine, and maybe that's what people responded to." - quoted by Scott Schinder, *Anthology*

"When you have a stable environment going for you, it gives you the courage to look at yourself and put what you see into your songs. That takes balls, creating art informed by your life. A lot of people don't want to know who they are. When they look in the mirror, they look past themselves. But what are the tough times good for if not to learn something, if only that you don't know shit?" - quoted by Llyod Sachs, 2000

SLOW TURNING - "I've changed my focus... I'm not sitting at the bar like I used to, writing about the creatures at the other end. Short stories- that's still the kick for me. On BTF, I could see the light at the end of the tunnel. Now I'm out in the light - between tunnels." - quoted in *A&M press sheet*

LITTLE VILLAGE - "The funny thing was that when we were doing it, we thought we were onto a brand new thing. The grooves we were coming up with were really exciting to us. However, the atmosphere eventually became super-cautious and that really affected the music. I think if we'd taken a few more risks the music would have been better. Unfortunately, we started out with something really great and thought it to death. It got lost in overdub hell." - quoted by Barney Hoskyns, *Mojo*, December 1993

PERFECTLY GOOD GUITAR - "In the past, I looked at record making as something you had to do so you could go out and play songs, and I just didn't get involved enough. This time I was really focused, and I think we finally got a little closer to what we do live on record." - quoted by Matt Ashare, *Boston Phoenix*

WALK ON -“I don't tend to steer a song in one direction or another. They tend to steer us. When we got together to make this record, even though I had these sort of woody, back porch, kind of hearth and home, mom's on the dulcimer, grandma's on the pump organ kind of songs, we were set to go into the studio with the Guilty Dogs, the band I had out on Perfectly Good Guitar. However, the guitar player quit two weeks before we were ready to record. So we scurried about and found Dave Immerglück, who came in with pedal steels and mandolins all this stuff. So this was not a plan. But it turns out, of course, it suited the songs. So maybe there's somebody or some power looking over us.” - quoted by Mary Huhn, Rolling Stone online

LITTLE HEAD - “The phrase comes from our tour manager of a few years back, Robert Bennett, who'd talk about always getting into trouble "when the little head does the thinking". The few times we've played that song live, the women laugh out loud, but the men – the men are still in denial, I think.” quoted by Andy Gill, Mojo, July 1997

“... is about sexual playfulness being for the young - and me being an old fart who wants it.” -quoted by Katherine Monk, Vancouver Sun

CROSSING MUDDY WATERS - “My manager called me up one day and said, ‘Hey, you want to make an acoustic record?’ And I said, ‘Whoa, I've always wanted to do that.’ And he said, ‘Well, Emusic would love to do something, and Vanguard Records would love to do something. You can own the master and they'll put it out.’

“I got back together with Dave Immerglück, who played on Walk On, and also Davey Faragher, who played bass with me for about five or six years. I had all these songs, a bunch of new stuff and some older songs that I'd always wanted to put on a record and was never able to. It was like Bring the Family in that regard. That happened under similar circumstances. I was between labels, and a small company put up the money to make a little record, which we made in the same amount of time—three or four days. It seems to be a good amount of time for me.”

“When we were recording, we kind of visualized the sound. When we're talking about what we're doing, we don't say, you know, ‘Play a B-flat in the third bar of section 32.’ We don't know about that stuff, so we just draw pictures for each other. We imagined ourselves on the porch making this record. We felt like it was a real back porch sound, the wood, stomping on those boards you have on back porches. We imagined that the door was open and there was just a screen door and there was a thin-lipped, Presbyterian woman who was the wife of one of the guys playing on the porch. We were out there carrying on, and every once in a while she'd hear something she wanted to join in on, so she'd bring out her little church harmonium and jam with us.” -quoted by Simone Solondz, Acoustic Guitar Magazine

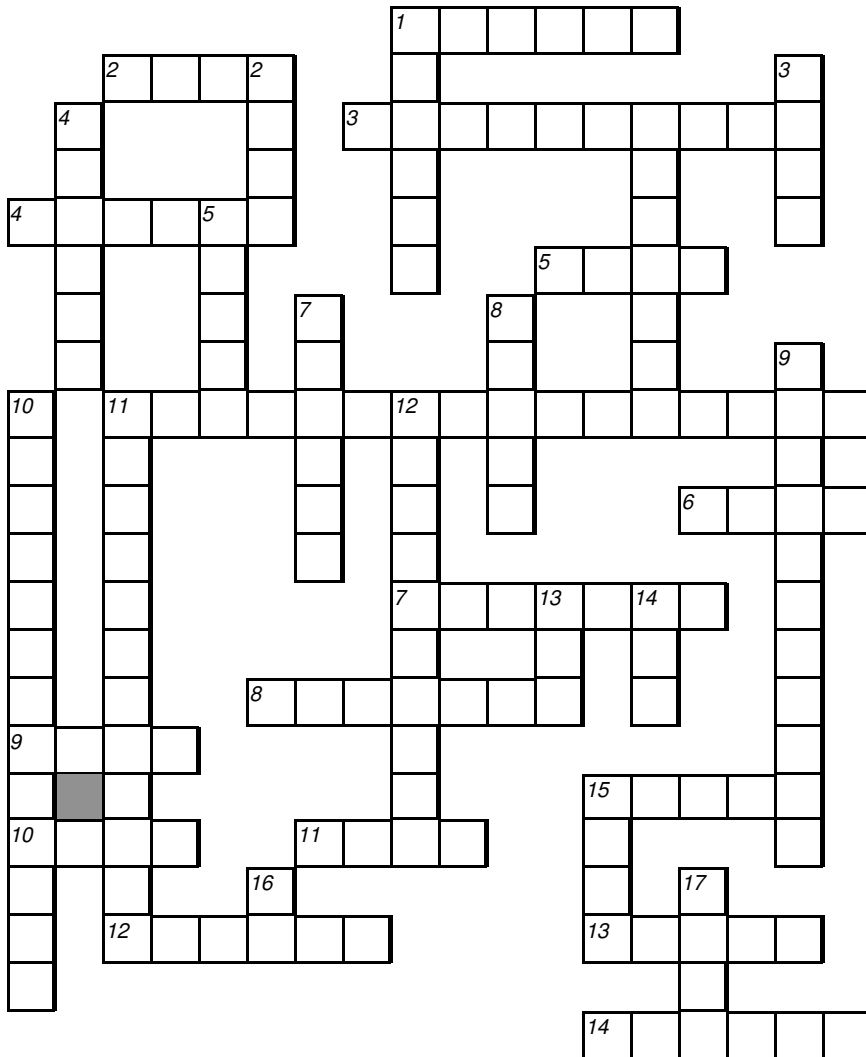
THE TIKI BAR IS OPEN - “Once I got The Goners back together I wrote about 4 or 5 more songs, so the band really influenced a lot of it...so I guess the common thread musically is working with that band again. We have a good thing when we get together. Coming from Louisiana, they don't have the same boundaries as far as music as the rest of us. Down there, the fact that it is so multi-cultural has influenced music in so many different ways. And it definitely seems that Louisiana musicians tend to mix it all together. This serves my music well, because I work in four or five different styles.” - quoted at tomguerra.com

THE BEST OF JOHN HIATT - “As everything in my career seems to go, the immense planning was exactly this: [former Capitol exec] Gary Gersh and I sat down and wrote on a cocktail napkin what we thought ought to be on it. There you have it. I'm one of these people--and I know there are people who don't suffer from this affliction, that lots of planning and pre-production and lots of time and energy adds up to a brilliant result--[but] it never adds up to a brilliant result for me. The more time I have to stew about shit, the more apt I am to fuck it up, so I tend to fool around with stuff less and less as I get older. He [Gersh] thought it was a great idea to get these songs together under one roof, so to speak, and I thought it was too, so I said, ‘Have at it if you think you can get 'em,’ [because] A&M had a lot of the stuff, and there's some stuff from Geffen and MCA, but he pulled it off. That's the kind of guy he is--a real music man who really is in it for the right reasons. He's no longer in it at Capitol--probably for the right reasons--but, um, he thought it would be a good thing, and I think it came out pretty great. I was really quite tickled...Once it gets put together and you've listened to it, that's when it gets freaky. Remembering the sessions and the people involved. You can start to get kind of goofy and sentimental about it, if you're that kind of person.” -quoted by Michael Gelfand, Yahoo! Music

BENEATH THIS GRUFF EXTERIOR - "The demos were not well developed at all. They were simple. It was just vocals and guitar. I hate doing demos, but I went and did those so I could learn the songs, so that I would know the song when we went in to perform it. I didn't want the Goners to know the songs because we're better when (they) don't know what you're doing. But I wanted to know the songs because I wanted to be able to get a take and not have me screw it up. Typically I would show them the (chord) changes, I would play the demo once and then we'd go out and start rolling tape. And because we've established a language among ourselves, all they need are the changes to be able to improvise within those changes." - quoted by Alan Sculley, Boulder Weekly

Crossword

Time to put Master of Disaster in the ol' CD player and test your listening skills. Below is our latest crossword puzzle, with a whole slew of clues based on lyrics to songs on MOD and a few other Hiatt albums. If you can complete it, give yourself a pat on the back and sit back and enjoy the glory of being a Hiatt fan of the top calabur.



DOWN

1. Monster to chase to M. Wong's (MOD)
2. Current home of my baby blue (BTGE)
3. Taught old school lesson (MOD)
4. On trees and wires (CMW)
5. Birds of gravity-free forest mock (MOD)
6. Source of so-tall trees (TCB)
7. Waste of time to search for (MOD)
8. 1st name of Bond's sidekick (BTGE)
9. Free when you least expect (CB)
10. Loved more than apostles (MOD)
11. Welsh men of words call home (MOD)
12. Master of Disaster tangling instrument
13. 1st word -Grammy nom. song (WO)
14. Liquor taken on bus from town you ain't goin' back to (MOD)
15. Condition of leather boots (MOD)
16. Type of news that's good (MOD)
17. Cost of my dog's dreams (BTGE)

ACROSS

1. Breaks when we fight (CMW)
2. Taken with TV and arms (BTGE)
3. State loved-crossed desert touches (MOD)
4. Corner tip (MOD)
5. Silk hope lining (MOD)
6. Made while on backs (MOD)
7. "Cold River" city setting (MOD)
8. Sense of doom thief (MOD)
9. Red Man hat wearing man (ST)
10. Crooked thing sung about(MOD)
11. Building Thunderbird (MOD)
12. Stiff ex-VP (MOD)
13. # hrs daylight in Winter (MOD)
14. Type of shade over drawn curtain (BTGE)

How to Reach Slow Turning

We love to hear from other Hiatt fans, so if you like what you've seen in Issue 8, feel free to drop us a line. Let us know what you liked, what you think we could have done better, or just share some thoughts about John and his music!

Send all your comments to:

Slow Turning:

John Hiatt Fanzine

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You never know when we might be putting a new issue together, but you can be sure if you send us your snail mail, we'll keep you on our mailing list for when it does become available. In the meantime, if you would like any back issues, feel free to send along that request, and we'll get them out to you ASAP.

Time between issues, you can catch up with us in cyberspace: check out the Shot-of-Rhythm e-mail discussion list on yahoo groups, and of course keep your bookmarks on www.johnhiatt.com.

Answers to Issue 7 Crossword

DOWN:

1. jukebox
2. hand
3. chapel
4. Dave
5. Backbone Ridge
6. away
7. dreams
8. basement
9. depression
10. shoulder
11. Aqualung
12. voodoo
13. Kennedy
14. Indiana
15. brain
16. dust
17. hope

ACROSS:

1. curls
2. highway
3. Landreth
4. redbtail hawk
5. Topeka
6. mail
7. ear
8. cocunut
9. eyes
10. Ted Bedderhead
11. Norton
12. bitter
13. woman
14. Learning
15. letters