

9) Caporegeine

The era of “corporate rock” was fully upon us. Tours were beginning to have sponsors, and being utilized in product endorsements. The Rolling Stones were the first, with Jovan perfume in 1981. And Michael Jackson had a huge deal to introduce the “Pepsi Generation”. We thought we could live without the sponsorships. Boy were we wrong. More than anything, having major corporations involved in the rock and roll business ended up costing everyone. Ticket prices went through the roof, facility rentals doubled, and labor costs went crazy. We had to get into the game just to keep the playing field level from an economic standpoint.

Although rather soon after Melanie’s death, we played at Willie Nelson’s New Years Eve bash at the Summit in Houston, and then headed off for a Japan Pop-Op Tour. Willie offered to let us out of our commitment to his show, but R.L. simply refused. Things went ahead as scheduled. He wasn’t going to let that “stupid bitch” change anything. Some of the hysteria from earlier years in Japan had settled, and we were able to do a bit of traveling, and see some of the sights in and around Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya. We saw Shinto shrines, royal palaces, and busy, busy streets. We spent a few days in the city of Numazu, near the foot of Mt. Fuji, and Leah and I hiked around the national park at the base of the mountain.

While in Numazu, Patty, Greg and Mike brokered a real estate deal to procure a three story townhouse for “Love’s Labour – East”. My partner is such a bright guy. Knowing that we wanted to purchase for current need, but at the same time prepare for expansion, Mike looked at properties until he found exactly what he was looking for – a set of three townhomes on a small block just a brief walk from the train station. He bought the one in the middle, knowing that he could then leverage the owners of the buildings to either side, as needed and available.

I was also involved in a public karate-do exhibition while in Japan. It wasn’t something that I particularly wanted to do, but it was required in order to achieve black belt status. The thinking was that it would be better to do the event in Tokyo, where it would be considered an honor and a respectful gesture by the Japanese people, compared to somewhere in the U.S., where the press would label it a “publicity stunt”. At first I resisted, based upon our past experiences and not wanting the possibility of creating an incident. But when Mike was informed that Master Sergeant Winters from Okinawa was selected to referee the match, I decided to go ahead with the event. The money raised at the exhibition was used to purchase the property in Numazu, where we had already hired a director (who was a registered nurse, mother of two and a widow) and there were two Japanese children awaiting final judicial processing that would become its first residents. The home would hold seven currently, and Mike was already eyeing one of the townhomes next door as well which would nearly triple our capacity. Because of the ZigZag name recognition, my match against Lance Corporal Howard James of

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the United States Marine Corps was the featured event of the day. I got my ass kicked, mostly because the Marine, one of Master Sergeant Winter's students, was both larger and younger than I. But my kata was deemed excellent and I scored high enough in the kumite that I was awarded my black belt at the conclusion of the match. My form was solid, but I still think they were just doing me a favor. It did make for a great ending to the day.

We really enjoyed doing the Pop-Op show in the three thousand to five thousand seat arenas in northern Japan. From my perspective these were easy shows. I know Simon and Leah and Mike were still working there butts off behind the scenes to create my illusion. Unfortunately, the Japanese promoters were pressing for more concert shows, and in much larger venues. Baseball stadiums and basketball arenas. Particularly, the city of Osaka had a new domed baseball stadium that had opened in 1988. With seating on the field it could easily hold forty thousand spectators. I wasn't much in love with the idea, but in the end we signed a contract for a show in November 1994, which would follow the release of our next studio project "Contradiction of Terms" and subsequent U.S. tour. The positive was that we could limit the number of performances, and perhaps eliminate the need for the Pop-Op entourage the next time we came to Japan. I thought this would be a great place to relax for a few weeks in the fall and cash out with a few big events.

We got back from Japan in time to participate in Farm Aid V in March. There were almost twenty acts at the event, and we got to see and meet some incredible people and watch them do some incredible things. The music was pretty good too. Aside from totally being managed by Willie Nelson, Neil Young, and John Mellencamp, the quality of the overall organization and mission tied to this event made it a real no brainer for us, and besides it was being held at Texas Stadium in Irving, and we got to see a number of our Texas friends that weekend.

This was an amazing show for us to be part of for a number of reasons. First, wait, before first if that is possible, Neil Young joined us onstage and blazed the hell out of "Barber's Hair" for about ten minutes. And meeting him was far more special than playing with him. We chatted with Willie and his people for only a very few minutes. He was very, very busy. We had committed to the Farm Aid event when we played at the New Years Eve show the previous year in Houston. He joined us for one of my favorite songs, "The Red Headed Stranger", which contains perhaps my all time favorite lyric. We didn't even tell Willie we were going to play it. He introduced us, and I started singing the first verse. Willie sang the second verse and had his guitar on by the end of following chorus. And that lyric....

"The yellow haired lady was buried at sunrise,
The Stranger went free of course.
'Cause you can't hang a man for killin' a woman,
'Who's tryin' to steal your horse.'"⁴⁴

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These guys do a lot of work and bust their butts to keep the expenses as low as possible. This is all about making a difference for the American Farmer.

I joined John Mellencamp onstage for “Jack and Diane”. John and I really come from the same background. The difference between southern Indiana and northern Kentucky is just a river. Much of the area is farmland, and all of the small towns and most of the local businesses are tied to the farmers who purchase their goods and services. I grew up about the same distance from the University of Kentucky as John did from Indiana University. He just stayed home, and I moved to Texas.

I know a little bit about farming. My grandfather on my mother’s side owned a little over a hundred acres of farm land right on the Ohio River about fifty miles downstream from Cincinnati on the Indiana side of the river.

My grandfather – we called him “Poppy” was a spark plug of an Irishman. Hard working, God fearing, and salt of the earth. At one point or another during my childhood he had cows, pigs, and chickens and grew tobacco, soy beans, and corn. Being a dairy farmer is one of the most difficult and demanding occupations on the planet. No matter what the circumstances or situation, the first priority every single day is to milk the cows. Every day. Twice a day. Usually at around 5 a.m. and again at 5 p.m. The dairy farmer’s entire existence revolves around the milking schedule. No vacations or long weekends away. On a very rare occasion one of the neighboring farmers would agree to do the milking one morning so he could attend a family gathering - like seeing your youngest daughter get married. Those events were few and far between.

Poppy was a proud man and very diligent about his occupation. I remember him walking the soy bean crop to remove the weeds by hand. He didn’t like (or want to pay for) herbicides. And there would be no weeds in his soy beans. Period. He was an elder in the church, a member of the local school board, and well respected in the community.

I also learned a lot about baseball in the early years on Poppy’s farm. After the cows were milked and supper (not to be confused with “dinner” – which meant lunch) was digested, we sat most evenings either in the front room of the farmhouse or, if the weather was nice, in lawn chairs under one of the two big oak trees in the front lawn. And we listened to the Cincinnati Reds broadcast on WLW radio. Physically “The City”, as the locals all called the Ohio riverside community, was only about fifty miles from the farm. But in many regards it was a million miles away. Life on the farm was very consistent. The cows insisted. I listened to dozens and dozens of baseball games in the early and mid 1960’s. And learned a lot about the game, and life. Today the land that was Poppy’s farm is a golf course. There is a casino and hotel where the farm next door used to be. One

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of the huge oak trees from Poppy's front lawn is all that remains. About half way down the right hand side of hole number four.

My uncle Roy and his son D.L. tried to make the farm work with about three hundred acres and a more up-to-date dairy process. They couldn't earn a decent living. With the cost of modern equipment and loans against the land and the crops, the only people making any money were the bankers. Through their struggles, I became aware of the plight of the American Farmer.

A few "family" events kept the year from being a total loss emotionally. First, my father the Judge celebrated his sixty fifth birthday. Dad's Birthday Bash started out as a small family gathering at the country club. Then the phone started ringing at the house, and mom was resistant to tell anyone "no". Pretty soon we had nearly four hundred requests for a room that would only hold a hundred and fifty. This led to Plan B. Two celebrations, the first a private affair for seventy five of the Judges family and closest friends. The second was to be a public observance at the high school gymnasium. My father wasn't thrilled by either plan. Dinner at the country club went off pretty much as planned, with the number swelling to closer to one hundred. The public festivities were quite another story. It seemed the entire county wanted to celebrate with the Judge. Hundreds of folks who had voted for, met on the streets, or had cause to come before the Judge in his courtroom came to share their admiration and congratulations. For the first time in my life, I caught a glimpse of the humble civil servant that was the man underneath the black robes. Dad still contends that a major part of the attraction that day was my celebrity and not his record of service. There were proclamations from the governor of Kentucky and the president of the University. I played a couple of songs, but nothing from the ZigZag catalog. This was my dad's day, and these were his songs. "Wichita Lineman" by Glen Campbell and "Ring of Fire" by Johnny Cash. Just me and a guitar. Afterwards Heather and I worked the crowd and I talked to a number of folks that I hadn't seen or heard from in years. They all had regular jobs and regular lives. I could still remember those days, but it was difficult to relate.

We left Kentucky and jetted to Italy where Scott and Francesca got married. This was quite the formal affair. A full week of dinners, cocktail parties and other pre-wedding events. We all spent sixteen days in Venice, and then Leah and I snuck away for a week at Ganjivecchio. She was two and a half months pregnant with our third child, another girl, and we mostly relaxed and ate real well from Wanda Tornabene's kitchen. I tried to write, but it just wasn't working.

After the wedding, we returned to Topanga Canyon and began the tracking process for "Contradiction in Terms" - just three months after Melanie's death. The entire band was dispassionate and calculating and it showed. Aside from "Bittersweet", which only went as high as number fourteen on the Billboard charts, the project was rather uneventful. There wasn't a lot of new music amongst those tunes; in fact, all but three were castoffs from one of the last two

projects. We weren't ready mentally or emotionally to enter the recording studio. We just needed the distraction, and although "Contradiction in Terms" wasn't considered a commercial or artistic success, there were several auxiliary benefits. First, there was a spike in sales on all of our prior projects, and the first three albums were re-released on compact disc. Also, the subsequent tour and Pop-Op shows had no substantive changes from the prior tour's set list. There wasn't an ounce of inspiration to be found in the lot of us, and Tom Dowd just allowed the bloodletting to occur. The ZigZag persona was reduced to a bare boned replica of our former selves. At that point in time we didn't have anything else to give. Eric was actually at his best in a couple of years. The steel drums on "Bittersweet" were a thing of beauty, and for the first time we included an instrumental, written by Eric, called "Opus on Purpose" that the critics seemed to like. Scotty couldn't utter two sentences without the word "Franchesca" coming out of his mouth. He was puppy dog in love, and there was indeed no cure. His playing, though solid, wasn't by any means spectacular. Greg was his normal, steady, understated self. Nothing seemed to ruffle his feathers. R.L. was still the barking drill sergeant, but these days there weren't any teeth showing and as much as he talked about "not settling", he still did.

Leah and I welcomed our third child, Jessica Susanne, into the world on November 11, 1982. She was smaller than the other two at birth by nearly half a pound and arrived three weeks early. Not a "preemie" by definition (born at thirty eight weeks), Jessica came from the womb with a gentle nature that was obvious just from the look on her sweet little face. Leah made it clear to everyone within earshot – this was to be our last child. Heather became the spokesperson for her mom's cause, even to the point of informing total strangers that "she was the first, and Jessica was the last". Billy wasn't mentioned at all, and was quite oblivious to the entire occasion. As long as he had dump trucks and dirt, life was good from his perspective.

We released "Contradiction in Terms" to minimal fanfare and mediocre critical review. Then ZigZag joined Willie Nelson on New Years Eve at the Summit for the second year in a row. This show was really a lot of fun, and we got to hang not only with Willie and the Family, but also with our heroes Billy, Dusty, and Frank of ZZ Top. And being at home in Houston was always a great time. Lots of friends from the "old days", staying in our own places, and good crowds at every show. We were always going to sell in Texas. We were part of them. New Year's Eve is just a love fest. By the time Willie strikes up the opening chords on "Whiskey River" the entire place is electric.

We then embarked on a U.S. tour that was primarily going to be stadium shows, with only four weeks devoted to Pop-Op – all on the east coast (Baltimore, Boston, and New York) and ramping us up for our next trip to Europe. Ticket sales were surprisingly brisk, even though prices were now in the thirty dollar range per seat, and the entire tour was sponsored by an up and coming soft drink

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company. Accordingly we were also contracted to provide music and video for a couple of television advertisements that marketed both the product and the tour.

A new precedent was set at the very first show of the tour. Entering the stage extension from the backstage stairs, Franchesca took a glass of white wine from a tray sitting on the bar and proceeded down to the opposite end of the stage extension. She sat in the next to last seat in the first row. That became from that point forward Franchesca's permanent seat. Before the next show, the end seat was replaced with a table that allowed for storage underneath. When Scotty was standing on the far left side of the stage, she was only about fifteen feet from him. He blew her kisses and she tossed rose petals in his direction.

When David Letterman moved to CBS and relocated to New York, I got a call from Dave, who wanted ZigZag to be one of his first guests on the new show. We were scheduled to be in the midst of our two week Pop-Op run at the Beacon Theatre when the "Late Night with David Letterman" went on the air from the Ed Sullivan Theater, and we were thrilled to be asked. Along with providing the musical selection for the taping, we were also asked to assist with delivery of that night's Top Ten List. All five band members got into the act, taking turns reading the entries.

The Top Ten Reasons Dave was asked to leave Los Angeles:

10. He had made remarks on the air about the pizza in New York City being better than Dodger dogs.
9. Charles Bronson decreed that staying would mean Dave surely had a "Death Wish".
8. Calling the Whiskey-A-Go-Go a "dive".
7. He was seen wearing a Larry Bird Celtics jersey at a Lakers game.
6. The day Dave commandeered a party boat on the way to Catalina Island and insisted on pointing out all of the beachfront homes owned by NBC executives.
5. Holding an on air Tommy Lasorda lookalike contest, and crowning a Bassett hound as the winner.
4. Rumors about unauthorized digging in the La Brea tar pits, with footprints leading into Burbank.
3. He kept confusing Manhattan Beach with Manhattan Island.
2. Mayor Tom Bradley claimed that the city wasn't big enough for the both of them.
1. One too many nights when the Hollywood Police had to physically remove Dave from Johnny Carson's star on the Walk of Fame, where he was found weeping and repeating "it's not fair, it's not fair, it's not fair."

While in New York, Leah and I (with the assistance once again of Leah's mother and Stephanie) went apartment hunting. We found a small (but still incredibly expensive) five room suite on the fourteenth floor of The San Remo with an

incredible view of Central Park. The girls had fallen in love with a unit in the Dakota building, but I flatly refused to live there. One too many bad memories.

After concluding the first half of our U.S. tour (which was also the first leg in a world tour that would consume most of 1993 and 1994), we headed to Paris and spent a week on the French Riviera. Since our last visit to Europe had been a strictly stadium tour, this time we did almost nothing but Pop-Op shows. This worked out well for Scott, as he and Franchesca really wanted to spend most of their time in Italy, setting up their new home in Venice. We would do a week in Lisbon, Paris, Stockholm, Munich, and then two weeks in London and a week in Edinborough. In between each set of shows, Scotty and his new bride would jet back to their home and then we would reconnect a week or two later when the next engagement started. This was also the first tour without Greg, as he opted to stay in Montecito with Patty and the “family.” I hated to see this happen, and Mike tried diligently to talk him out of it, but in the end we all understood that Greg’s priorities were shifting and he was needed in California. He did fly in to London for the shows there and in Edinborough, as he and Patty took a well deserved “working” vacation. By now Sissy and Alicia (along with a corps of volunteer nurses and doctors who had willingly come to our door after Patty’s interview with “Uncle” Ed Bradley) were more than capable of managing the house and we were talking of opening a home in Scotland as well. Our pal Dougie MacLean was opening all of these shows, and with the assistance of his wife Jenny, Patty had found a small hotel in Perth that could easily be converted into “Love’s Labour – Scotland”.

The operation in Montecito had seen some tremendous gains, and a couple of losses, during the prior year. On the down side, little Izzy Compton lost her battle with AIDS and died just prior to her second birthday. Her poor little lungs never could manage to recover from the pneumocystis that she had suffered from almost since birth. Her sister Lizzy was doing quite well, on the other hand, and the doctors were fairly optimistic about her chances of survival. Of course, one never knows with the HIV virus what perils might lay just around the next corner. There were a total of twelve children in the home at present, and some of the stories were just incredible. The one closest to my heart was a young boy of seven named Pablo. His mother, father, and older sister had perished when, in a drunken rage, his father had set fire to the shack the family was living in just across the border from Tecate, Mexico. They had all entered the country illegally, and there was no documentation to be found in the rubble. Pablo sustained second and third degree burns over about half of his body, but was stable and alert when he came to live in Montecito. He was named after our friend who had written a personal check to cover the legal fees – Pablo Devadip Santana.

Caporegime, or simply “capo” as it is most commonly referred, is the title of a mafia member who manages a crew or crews within a “family”. A capo is the organized crime version of middle management. He takes orders from the boss (normally the Don or the Consigliere), and manages the workers (crew) who carry

out these orders. This could be anything from collecting protection money to committing murder. Many of these crews had specialties, such as robbery, drugs, or gambling, and there might be geographic constraints to their realms as well. A capo who is a good “earner” will have a number of crews involved in an assortment of illicit and illegal activities, and will respectfully provide the boss with a cut, or “taste”, of the payout on these activities. The capo also provides a “buffer” between the boss and criminal activities that are carried out by the crew at his request, keeping the boss above recrimination should the plan go awry.

The caporegime is normally a seasoned, and trusted, veteran of the mafia family. He will have attained his position by providing years of loyal service to the family and its operations. It is the capo’s responsibility to carry out ongoing operations (usually assigned by the Don), come up with new money making schemes, recruit the necessary personnel to carry out these plans, and to make sure that the family is always protected, should any of these business ventures come under legal scrutiny. The capo can have varying amounts of power, usually based upon their relationship with the boss. Many are either relatives or long time friends of the head of the family. A good capo will also find ways to integrate illegal income into legitimate businesses in order to protect the bulk of the earnings from the Internal Revenue Service. Examples of fictional caporegimes include Peter “Fat” Clemenza and Salvatore “Sal” Tessio, who were both long time friends and criminal associates of Don Vito Corleone in “The Godfather”.

“Lights Out” was a tune from our 1983 album “Uneven Stitches”. Since its release, we have used this song as the show closer (before any encores) to nearly every stadium concert since. It starts with a slow buildup of drums and bass, and I usually spend a couple of minutes working the crowd and prowling the entire stage area.

Lights Out

I’m runnin’,
But there’s nowhere to hide.
Somebody,
Won’t you let me inside.
I’m lookin’.
Still I’ve no place to turn.
Get ready,
For the whole thing to burn.

Lights out,
In the cold, cold city.
No doubt,
You’re livin’ a lie.
Lights out,
Oh it seems such a pity.

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To have to say goodbye.

From the title alone, we knew that this song was destined to be a lighting and (later on) a pyrotechnic spectacle. Technically, this is a simple tune. Mostly just moving back and forth between a set of G and A major chords followed by a set of C and D chords. My guitar sound had lots of reverb to help fill up the space sonically.

Thinkin' still thinkin',
That I've done nothing wrong.
No frettin' or regrettin',
All I possess is a song.
Reachin' ever reachin',
Gotta go for some higher star.
Hopin' just hopin',
This game can take me that far.

Lights out,
In the energy city.
No doubt,
There's no use to cry.
Lights out,
Oh it seems such a pity.
To think you have to lie.

To be honest, I don't specifically recall the inspiration for these lyrics. The song itself dates back to the early days of practicing in the warehouse in Pasadena, and may have come from one of many nights where we arrived to find that the power to the building had been cut off due to the fact that we hadn't paid the electric bill (which in the beginning happened on a fairly regular basis). From there it morphed into some fantasy that was generated in my brain, partially driven (I seem to remember) from stories about the air raids in London during World War II.

Wishin' yes wishin',
That you might hear what I say.
Save it just save it,
My words may help you someday.
Don't praise me or upraise me,
Like I can do no ill.
Hear me please hear me,
Know you can think what you will.

Lights out,
In a dead end city.
No doubt,

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To breathe is to die.
Lights out.
Oh it seems such a pity.
To have to say goodbye.

Light out.”⁴⁵

And with a final reverberated set of guitar chords, everything went black.

By 1993, the landscape within organized crime had changed dramatically both in Brooklyn and in Sicily. The U.S. government was finally grasping a clear understand about what the RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) Act afforded as a way of prosecuting organized crime. Basically the act, which though placed into law in 1970 (but took over twenty years for the scope to be fully understood and utilized), allowed for prosecution based upon “complicity” in a criminal act. In other words, the man who gives the order to murder someone is as criminally liable as the man who pulls the trigger. The provisions of the act also allowed for a “trend” of criminal behavior to be considered “organized”. The biggest wallop came from the latitude federal litigators were give to seize and sell off the assets of criminal operations.

A young Rudolph Giuliani (the current mayor of New York City), then a prosecutor in the United States Attorney’s office, was the lead counsel in the famous “Mafia Commission Trial” in 1985-86 that led to the arrest and conviction of eleven known mafia associates, including the heads of all five of the New York crime families. This created a leadership void in the mafia, and considerable reorganization and infighting ensued.

Christy Tick Furnari was among those indicted in 1985, along with Anthony “Tony Ducks” Corallo – the current boss of the Lucchese family. The information that led to their arrest, and eventual conviction, was based primarily on a listening device (bug) that was placed by the FBI in Corallo’s Jaguar. They had hours of tape of Corallo with Furnari and other family leaders conducting business in the car. The fruits of their labor were charges of extortion, labor racketeering, and murder for hire. On November 19, 1986 Furnari, Corallo, and seven other New York mafia leaders were convicted under the RICO Act, and sentenced to one hundred years in prison with no possibility for parole.

When Furnari ascended to the post of consigliere in the Lucchese family, Anthony Casso’s influence within the family also increased. He and his partner Victor Amuso became involved in organized crime at its highest levels, with major interest in drug trafficking, including massive amounts of marijuana, cocaine, heroin and Quaaludes. These connections made Gaspice a very wealthy man. He also had New York police detectives and an FBI agent on his payroll. Anthony Casso had become as well connected as any member of organized crime

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in the late 1980's and early 1990's. He was even involved in the planning for a failed attempt to assassinate Gambino family boss John Gotti, Jr.

With the convictions of Corallo and Furnari imminent, Anthony Casso and Vic Amuso were called to a meeting where Corallo selected Gaspipe to become the new boss of the Lucchese family. Casso declined, and recommended that Amuso be given the position. With Gaspipe, his involvement with the mob was never about power – only money. As the underboss of the Lucchese family, cash seemed to just fall from the sky. His “taste” from all of the family's illegal activities was in the hundreds of thousands of dollars a month. He became accustomed to a “rock star” like lifestyle, wearing expensive clothing and jewelry, the purchase of a mansion in an exclusive Brooklyn neighborhood, and a penchant for extravagant spending sprees.

This all came to a sudden end in 1990, when Amuso and Casso became fugitives to avoid prosecution in what was known as the "Windows Case." In 1978, a cartel was formed between several of the New York organized crime families and Local 580 of the Iron Workers Union (which was controlled by the Lucchese family). The cartel “managed” over one hundred and fifty million dollars worth of contracts with the New York City Housing Authority and on average netted two dollars for each and every replacement window sold in New York City.

Through the use of an informant who was a member of the cartel, data was gathered over a two year period that led to sweeping indictments. Members of the union, as well as mafia leaders involved in the cartel were charged with bid rigging and extortion. Vic Amuso was arrested in 1992, and convicted of charges stemming from the Windows Case and other crimes, including murder, and sentenced to life in prison. Anthony “Gaspipe” Casso eluded the authorities for nearly three years, but was eventually apprehended at the home of his mistress. Once he came to the realization that the government had an enormous amount of evidence against him, Casso took a plea bargain and became a government informer. At one time known as the “rat killer” within the mafia, Gaspipe was now a rat himself. He hadn't seen Connie Leggio in over three years. When she heard of his arrest and deal with the government, Connie expressed her concerns to The Handler, who in turn sent a cryptic message to Don Amaritto via The Voice. The reply from Cleveland – “stay the course”.

Luciano Leggio would spend the final years of his life imprisoned, but living in fine style, as Italian law did not allow for seizure of his assets. He wrote poetry, studied philosophy, and smoked fine cigars that were delivered weekly to him in prison. He became an avid painter, selling a number of his pieces in a Palermo gallery for as much as thirty thousand dollars each. Galleries in Spain, Germany, and New York were all interested in obtaining his work.

Nothing about what he had done in life was truly “honorable”, killing without cause or conscious. Perhaps as many as five hundred human lives were taken by

his hand or at his bidding. That just makes Luicano Leggio a mass murderer, nothing more. Leggio died in prison of a heart attack on November 16, 1993.

While we were in the process of recording “Contradiction of Terms” I came to the realization that I needed a new artistic outlet. The tracking for this project was a bit rote for my tastes, as there wasn’t anything truly “new” here. Add to that the fact that, aside from a couple of new Pop-Op sets, the live shows being planned were pretty much rehash as well. I needed a reason to practice. Enter “The Beefeaters”. More or less a cover band, The Beefeaters (so named for the fact that three of us – Big Bob wasn’t much of a drinker, walked on stage nearly every night with a gin and tonic in our hands made with Beefeaters Gin) consisted of Tiny on bass, my old friend Glenn Martin on slide guitar and mandolin, and a childhood friend of Tiny’s, “Big Bob” Winters on drums. I was still the “front man”, but in more of a laid back role. We were all sitting in chairs or on bar stools onstage (just like at rehearsal), and playing a lot of traditional folk and blues numbers, as well as some of our favorite early rock classics. Songs like “Turn to Stone” by Joe Walsh, the Allman Brothers “Melissa”, and “Simple Man” and “Mississippi Kid” from Lynyrd Skynyrd. Occasionally, we would bring in a local girl named Deb Sutton on vocals as well. The Band’s “The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down” was one of her staple songs. The whole thing was a change of pace for me, and a bit of a distraction from all that was ZigZag. In fact, I would describe us as the antithesis to “The ZigZag Sound.” We played small clubs and auditoriums on college campuses up and down the California coast. Santa Clara, San Luis Obispo, Palo Alto, Escondido – as far north as San Francisco and south to San Diego. We avoided L.A. completely, and were very low key with regard to promotion and advertising. Anything that would smack of a ZigZag show.

Aside from the fun and adventure attached to this endeavor, I had a few ulterior motives as well. First was to spend more time with Tiny. He is a cherished friend, and great to be around. For the nearby gigs, we would drive the Aston-Martin with the top down and cruise the state highways, sometimes arriving a day or two in advance so that we could just hang out. Although he will never be considered a “world class” bassist, Tiny holds down a solid bottom end and creates (along with Big Bob) a firm foundation for what we were trying to accomplish musically. His harmony vocals are solid, and a breath of fresh air from our standard ZigZag vocal format.

The second reason for forming The Beefeaters was to showcase Glenn Martin’s considerable talents, especially on slide guitar. Glenn, for whatever reasons, has never been able to find a vehicle that displays what he does so very well. I’m content to sit there and play rhythm for him all night. I’ve already met my lifetime’s quota for being in the limelight. Personally, I hoped this little endeavor would help launch Glenn on to bigger and better things. He’s got the chops to make it at the highest level. Hell, he’s a way better instrumentalist that I could ever dream to be.

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Lastly, but probably most important, was to create a revenue stream for Big Bob Winters to assist with his considerable medical bills. Bob has what is called an “Alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency” (AAT). This condition is created because Big Bob’s body doesn’t create enough of a protein that protects his lungs and liver. A genetic defect most common among people of European descent, it can lead to cirrhosis of the liver, and in extreme cases, emphysema. Tiny tells me that Big Bob has been sick off and on ever since he was a kid. And the sad thing is Bob can really play. He’s just not healthy for long enough periods to sustain any sort of band relationship. Bob had been working with another musician with an illness. Mike Hartman, an incredible mix of Joe Satriani, Steve Vai, and Eddie Van Halen, was a shredder supreme. He was also born with cystic fibrosis. Although nearly fifteen years Bob’s junior, Mike had grown up just a few blocks away from Bob in a small Indiana town, and Bob watched Mike blossom as both an instrumentalist and a songwriter. Big Bob had a drum kit set up in his living room and one day the teenaged Hartman knocked on Bob’s door and asked if he wanted to “jam”. Bob was blown away by what he heard, and a musical friendship evolved. After Mike graduated from high school, he moved to Los Angeles, attended the Music Institute of Hollywood, and befriended Steve Vai through the Make-A-Wish Foundation. A solo project was being planned at Steve’s home studio, and Mike had called Big Bob. Bob flew to L.A., and promptly got sick again. He moved in with Tiny after being released from the UCLA Medical Center, and became part of the ZigZag family. The Beefeaters played about a dozen gigs that spring, and Bob only missed one. R.L. sat in with us that night.

Another part of The Beefeater’s repertoire came from my experiences at a little folk club in Houston back in the early ‘80’s. Anderson Fair, located just off Montrose Boulevard on the near west side of downtown Houston, has been host to the local folk and counterculture scene since the late 1960’s. The Kings of the Texas troubadours honed their individual and collective craft on that tiny stage on Grant Street. Many other regional and national artists as well graced that venue, often forsaking the opportunities and financial benefits that larger clubs could afford them in favor of “AFair” as the establishment was affectionately known. Lyle Lovett, Lucinda Williams, Dave Van Ronk, Shake Russell, Don Sanders, Bill Cade, and the incomparable Townes Van Zandt were among the hundreds of singer/songwriters who have passed through those hallowed doors – and have eaten some incredible home made spaghetti as well.

This will come off a bit like an interview in “Tiger Beat” magazine, but these are questions I get asked all of the time. Who is my favorite this, or who do I think is the best at that...here are my “Top Five Lists”. The hardest part of this exercise is reducing the vast number of excellent bands, musicians, and recordings to just a few. And in most cases I love numbers six, seven, and eight just as much as the five listed. Sometimes these lists are in a preferential order, but most are random as they come to my mind. Of course my friendships with some of these folks enter into the equation as well. Well here goes...

Bands(all time) - Mostly “no brainer” stuff here.

The Beatles -The Fabs are who they are for a very good reason. Somehow, four of the very best musicians and songwriters of all time were placed on this planet at exactly the right time, in exactly the right place, and POW... They are individually all in the top five on their instruments and vocally and songwriting are at the very top. At the end of all things, there will be but one refrain and Mr. Lennon will have the honor of the introduction...

"That was 'Can You Dig It' by Georgie Wood and now we'd like to do 'Hark, the Angels Come'.

Let It Be."⁴⁶

Led Zeppelin -We start damn near every one of our concerts with one of their songs. Enough said. See why individually below.

Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young - I guess I'm cheating here a bit. Individually, or in some iteration of some or all of the above: The Byrds, The Hollies, Buffalo Springfield, Manassas, CSN, CSNY, Crosby-Nash, plus all of the solo work, especially Neil Young and Stephen Stills. That's a good chunk of my record collection right there. Lots and lots of wonderful songs. Angst and anger on one tune, then contrition and beautiful harmonies on the next. What a tremendous depth of character and variety of styles.

The Rolling Stones - I wish I had the guts to attempt to do what Mick Jagger does. Although it doesn't play out much in the ZigZag persona, the Stones establish the playing field on which all other live acts attempt to perform. This is what rock and roll is supposed to be about. Individually, these guys are highly underrated. Keith Richards is the butt of all of the junkie jokes, but he really is a good “songwriter's guitarist” finding the right sound and right lick again and again. The Stones make the definitive statement on the entire genre:

“I know it's only rock and roll,
But I like it.”⁴⁷

Firefall - I'm sure most of you find Firefall a bit of a misfit on this list. I just really like this band. There's an openness and newness that Rick Roberts has instilled into their sound that still makes it amazingly refreshing to listen to even after all of these years. In my mind Firefall is a cross between America and Stephen Stills' Manassas. Subtle, and yet powerful at the same time. I think some of it is the flute. One of the

reasons I like the Marshall Tucker Band a lot as well. And the understated percussion is infectious. Heather loves the song “You are the Woman.” I play it for her and we sing the chorus together. Billy sometimes bangs away at the Lil Tykes drum kit that “Uncle R.L.” got for him. My backbone’s only advice to my son – “hit them harder”. Jessica mostly lays on the floor and smiles. I’ve never seen a child with such a great disposition. Heather thinks I’m singing the lyrics to her, which in part may be true. But sitting on the sofa across the room is the woman that knows the truth of the matter. One of those lines that I wish that I’d written:

“I saw your face and that’s the last I’ve seen of my heart.”⁴⁸

After looking over this list as I’ve been reflecting on these bands and players, I cannot believe that I left off the E Street. So...

Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band - Gotta love The Boss. In fact, I think the slogan needs to change:

“As American as apple pie, Chevrolet, and The Boss.”

Five hundred years from now the youth of this country will want to know what it was like here in the late twentieth century. They can put down the books and stop watching the documentaries. Five minutes of “Thunder Road” says it all. For a long time now it has been difficult for me to “enjoy” attending a concert. It’s all too business related and I have to evaluate everything. Not so when I go to a Springsteen show. Absolutely the ultimate stadium concert experience. Max and Clarence hit you right in the face, the rest of the band just piles on from there, and that’s all before you get to Bruce himself. A songwriter of the highest caliber as well. Another one of that handful of lyrics I can quote on cue.

“Sometimes it’s like someone took a knife,
Baby edgy and dull,
And cut a six inch valley through the middle of my soul.
At night I wake up with the sheets soakin’ wet,
And a freight train running through the middle of my head,
Only you can cool my desire.
Oh, oh, oh, I’m on fire.”⁴⁹

Bands (when I was a teenager) - Take me back to the old portable RCA record player in my bedroom, and hours and hours of listening down in Dave Brubaker’s basement. Before we got high or even smoked cigarettes, it was just us and the music. Like panning for gold at Fort Knox. Maybe they say something about who I became, and maybe they say I had lousy taste in music. I don’t know maybe both.

Bachman-Turner Overdrive - Power chords, cowbell, and a lot of unison chanting. I was over the moon for B.T.O. Bought at least their first four albums and used to wail the cassette copies we would burn in my mom's Volkswagen. Two great things about European cars in the 1970's; they were great on gas and had killer stereos. For two bucks I could buy a pack of cigs, put some gas in the Bug, and cruise all night, just "Takin' Care of Business."

Deep Purple - I'm sure we played "Smoke on the Water" a million times back then, both on the stereo and with the garage band that I think Brubaker named "Moonstone" at one point or another. That chord progression will live forever. Also the first band I was interested in that really had keyboards. I thought Jon Lord was a great name as well. Ian Paice was the first drummer I tried to imitate.

T. Rex - Marc Bolan was like a shining light within the darkness of adolescence. I wore the "Slider" record out and we played three or four songs (poorly) off that project. Most of the lyrics didn't make any sense, but they didn't have to. Another favorite line:

"Me I funk
But I don't care.
I ain't no square
With my corkscrew hair".⁵⁰

Alice Cooper - In ninth and tenth grades, Alice Cooper was my hero. He was outrageous, and provided posters in the albums I could hang on my bedroom walls to prove it. I'd sing "I'm Eighteen" at the top of my lungs like I couldn't wait for that day to arrive. By the time "Billion Dollar Babies" came out I was a full fledged member of the Alice Cooper fan club. It was all good...except for the snake. Don't like snakes, never have never will. I worked for a guy part of one summer installing flooring in big buildings like churches and schools. His name was Dicky Marion. Dicky hated snakes more than I did. But he was a first-class guy and always bought lunch at some country café that was usually really good, and the beer after work – even if it was Falstaff. Dicky had a line that I have stolen that indicates my level of hatred for snakes. "I don't like snakes. I don't even like big night crawlers." Otherwise, Alice was the Man.

Grand Funk Railroad - One of the coolest album covers ever is E Pluribus Funk. Round like a coin and covered with a metallic finish, it really does look like a very large quarter. When Marty started playing keyboards with us down in Brubaker's basement, we were soon doing "Footstompin' Music" and "Feelin' Alright". Of course EVERYBODY

played “An American Band”. Mark, Don, and Mel may not have been the best musicians in the land, but they had a great sound (sans “Loco-Motion” which I loathe) and I think I liked a lot that the drummer was also sometimes the singer.



Guitarists you have heard of

Eric Clapton - I've listed E.C. first, but I think the top spot on this list is really a three way tie. I've had the pleasure of Eric's presence both on and off the stage, and thoroughly enjoyed both experiences. His depth of musical knowledge and playing styles make him a good fit in any environment. Cream defined the "power trio", and Derek and the Dominos was a great band in its own right. Blind Faith was an awesome mix of Eric and Steve Winwood (more below). The early solo work is underrated, and the whole "Clapton is God" thing got way overblown. Perhaps...

Jimi Hendrix - James Marshall Hendrix was certainly one of a kind. Technically talented, experimentally inclined, and full of emotion. The master class textbook for electric guitar. He intrigued my ears as a teenager, and I continue to marvel at the incredible works he produced in an all too brief lifetime. "Little Wing" is one of those songs that I've been playing forever and still enjoy. A "stranger than fiction" note: The Jimi Hendrix Experience was the opening act for the 1967 tour of...wait for it...The Monkees.

Jimmy Page - Jimmy is without a doubt the father of "heavy metal" guitar. But when you listen to the Zeppelin catalog in its entirety, he was so much more. Layering guitar tracks to build an army of sound like on "Kashmere", to sweetly strumming the mandolin on "The Battle of Evermore". Page is the ultimate master of contrast. He created the music for "Stairway to Heaven", from the acoustic finger picking in the

beginning, to the lush chord structures of the interludes, to the full on power chords and raucous solo at the end. Several great songs worth of playing in one tune. Probably the best song ever written. Scott McNaughton and ZigZag owe our very existence to the work of Mr. Page.

George Harrison - I think I've fairly well documented my feelings about Mr. Harrison, both as a person and also as a musician. It is through George that we understand there can be mission within the madness. Only George could come up with a slide guitar style that was uniquely his own. And he plays a mean ukulele as well.

Jerry Garcia/Dickie Betts/Carlos Santana - Another move to stay with my "top five" theme. I love all of these musicians about equally. Three very distinctive sounds coming from three very distinctive men. The Dead is The Dead. And Jerry is Jerry. Melodic, sarcastic, and very much his own muse. Another memory verse:

"I'm Uncle Sam,
That's who I am.
Been hidin' out,
In a rock and roll band."⁵¹

With the Brothers, most guys I know favor one of the guitarist styles and are loyal. There are "Duane Guys", "Dickie Guys", and "Warren Guys". No disrespect to Mr. Allman or Mr. Haynes, but I'm definitely a "Dickie Guy". "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed" and "Jessica" are two of the most beautiful guitar instrumentals ever written.

And speaking of instrumentals, I still remember the first time I saw Santana do "Soul Sacrifice" live. Michael Shrieve playing the hell out of the drums, all of that percussion, and then this driving guitar. And with Carlos it's not just tone, or voicing, or passion – although his playing certainly contains all of these qualities. With Carlos it's, well, something more. Carlos Santana and his guitar playing may be one of those "unexplained phenomenon." Live Santana is a good as it gets.

Guitars you may not have heard of - None of the players listed here are mainstream artists. They are all just very, very good musicians, and in my opinion, worthy of mention. Check out one (or more) of these incredible people. I promise you won't be disappointed with what you find.

Phil Keaggy - I'm going to make a very bold statement here, considering the number of accomplished and acclaimed musicians that have been listed previously. Phil Keaggy is the absolute BEST guitar player I have ever heard. Don't believe me, take a listen to one of Phil's dozens of solo acoustic and band related projects. Phil started his career with an Ohio

band called Glass Harp. They toured as backing artists for a number of rock and roll legends, including Yes, The Kinks, Traffic, Iron Butterfly, Grand Funk Railroad, and Chicago. After his mother died in an automobile accident in early 1970, Phil turned his life and musical abilities toward serving God and is one of the pioneers of the Contemporary Christian music scene. He has received numerous Dove Awards (the Christian music business equivalent to the Grammys). Or maybe believe a story that has been tossed around in the industry for years: Jimi Hendrix, appearing on The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson was asked by the host "Jimi, how does it feel to be the world's greatest guitar player?" To which Hendrix supposedly replied, "I don't know, you'll have to ask Phil Keaggy!" Keaggy humbly denies this quote, but Guitar Player magazine reader polls still place him near the top finger style guitars year after year. He is equally talented with the electric guitar as well.

Michael Hedges - I don't throw this word around lightly – Michael Hedges is a genius. Classically trained, but inclined to create music in a more popular style, Michael can wear you out just watching him perform. Slap harmonics, alternate tunings and the use of incredible left hand hammering techniques make him one of a kind. He has pushed the envelope of guitar playing beyond the boundaries of most normal human beings.

Leo Kottke - The master of the twelve string acoustic guitar, to see Leo in person is an amazing sight to behold. Finger picking an instrument that was never designed for such treatment, Mr. Kottke makes the task look like child's play. A natural story teller, his comedic personality and onstage antics augment his instrument and occasional vocal performances.

Roy Buchanan - The "King of the Telecaster", may well be the most unknown of the unknowns. Using a basic setup void of pedal boards or sophisticated recording techniques, Roy gets the most incredible tone and natural "effects" out of just a guitar plugged into an amp. His "chickin' pickin'" technique has been often imitated. If you like the way Jeff Beck plays a Telecaster, thank Roy Buchanan.

Pierre Bensusan - This is a guitar player's guitar player. Pierre is a French-Algerian, and his name is synonymous with the DADGAD guitar tuning. His highly acclaimed debut album "Pres de Paris" won Bensusan honors at the Montreux Music Festival at the tender age of seventeen. His diverse list of influences include Django Reinhardt, Mississippi John Hurt, Doc Watson, Wes Montgomery, and Jimi Hendrix. And he can play them all.

Rhythm Guitarists - I include this category mostly because in ZigZag, I am the person in this role. Sometimes the driving force, sometimes the subtly

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understated accompanist. These guys are all solid players who don't get near their due. I'll just list their band affiliations. You listen for yourself and see what I mean.

John Lennon – The Beatles. **Brad Whitford** – Aerosmith. **George McCorkle** – The Marshall Tucker Band. **Tom Petty** – The Heartbreakers. **Bob Weir** – The Grateful Dead.

Bass Players - Rather than heap platitudes upon these bassists and make any attempt at analyzing their playing, I think it will suffice to reference a song that highlights their playing and let their music do the rest for me.

Paul McCartney – “Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds” (Sgt. Peppers). **John Paul Jones** – “Ramble On” (Led Zeppelin II). **Phil Lesh** – “Unbroken Chain” (From the Mars Hotel). **Stanley Clark** – “Spain” (Light as a Feather). **Donald “Duck” Dunn** – “Respect” (Otis Blue).

Keyboardists - Ditto for these five “ivory ticklers”...plus one

Steve Winwood – “Gimme Some Lovin’” (Welcome to the Canteen). **Bill Payne** – “Dixie Chicken” (Waiting for Columbus). **Elton John** – “Honky Cat” (Honky Chateau). **Billy Joel** – “Captain Jack” (Piano Man). **Ray Manzarek** – “Rider’s on the Storm” (L.A. Woman). **Billy Preston** – “Get Back” (Let It Be).

Drums - I really bent the rules here. Five was never going to get the job done. I love drummers and always have. I know who I like the best, but beyond that these are in no particular order.

John Henry Bonham - In my mind Bonzo has no equals. Period. End of discussion. The driving force behind the most high octane sound of all time. I think the thing I love most about Bonham’s playing is that he is always on top of the beat. Unlike most drummers who slide into “the pocket” of the sound, John is out front and forcing the issue. Seeing him play live was a great experience. Pounding out the solo in “Moby Dick” with his bare hands, and then a few minutes later sweetly adding the bongos to “Goin’ to California.” With all respect to Messrs. Plant, Page, and Jones - without Bonzo, there is no Zep. No one else comes close.

Neal Peart - Neal has to be very, very good. Because I just don’t enjoy Rush all that much. It has nothing to do with their musicality or their songs. I just never liked Getty Lee’s vocals. I’m sure that there are plenty of folks who don’t care for mine. To each his own. But Neal is the real deal. A cross between a couple of guys on this list. Very technical, and yet very dramatic. This is a “drummer’s drummer”. And a man’s man.

Ringo Starr - I guess it's easy to be underrated where your band mates are all considered to be the best of the best, and your band the best of all time. Ringo is a man that is very comfortable in his own skin, from what I can tell. I met him briefly at a benefit show a couple of years back. There are two things that I think are underappreciated about Ringo. First, listen to the early records. Ringo Starr is as solid as a fine Swiss timepiece. Honestly. Someone even said out loud while I was standing in the wings watching Ringo do "It Don't Come Easy" that evening in Toronto (we had already played) – "damn you could set your watch to Ringo." The funny thing is I was thinking just about the same thing at the time. Second, is Ringo's ability to put his "signature" on a song. Even with the tremendous lyrics and melodies in the forefront of nearly every Beatles tune, and usually an infectious guitar or piano line as well, Ringo still somehow managed to adjust the drum part to the given piece and create his own space. R.L. Chambers is a big Ringo fan. (He will also be pissed that Nick Mason of Pink Floyd isn't on this list). We have had numerous discussions about Ringo and his impact on the Beatles sound. I bet he would tell you that one of the highlights of his career was that night in Toronto when he got to shake the hand of one of his idols.

Gene Krupa - I remember watching Gene Krupa in the movies. Big band numbers like "Drum Boogie" were my first exposure to a drummer being a featured member of the orchestra. His flair and charisma elevated the position of drummer in the eyes of the viewing public. With extensive use of the "press roll", made popular by New Orleans jazz drummer Baby Dodds, and use of a full drum kit in the recording studio, Krupa revolutionized the art form of drumming. Joining the great Benny Goodman in the 1930's, Krupa was a featured member of Goodman's orchestra, and his tom-tom interlude on "Sing Sing Sing" was among the first commercially recorded drum solos. He is also credited with contributing to the invention of the bass drum pedal and high hat cymbals.

Buddy Rich - Buddy Rich may well have been my first musical hero. Rich was a natural. He first began performing in vaudeville at eighteen months of age. Unlike most jazz and big band musicians of his era, Buddy had no formal instruction and insisted that he never practiced and could not read music. First coming to national acclaim as a member of the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, Rich later formed his own big band - partially underwritten by his friend and Dorsey singer Frank Sinatra. Brash and flamboyant both behind and in front of his drum kit, Buddy became a frequent guest on many television talk shows in the 1960's and 70's, and my introduction to Mr. Rich was on The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson. My first impression was one of amazement, especially at the speed of his hands and the lightening fast over (and under) arm cross riffs. He was also a master of tempo and dynamics. His arrangement of the "West Side Story" medley is a showcase of drumming technique at it's

very finest. According to the aforementioned Mr. Krupa, Buddy Rich was “the greatest drummer even to have drawn breath.” Of note, at least to me – Buddy Rich also held a black belt in karate-do.

Max Weinberg - The “Mighty Max” is the driving force behind the sonic bombardment that is the E Street Band. Solid as a rock, and full of energy, Max is the epitome of what a rock and roll drummer should be. Brash, loud, and powerful. I especially like his work on Springsteen’s “Born in the U.S.A.” project. Although understated compared to “Born to Run” and other earlier works by The Boss, Weinberg’s solid bass drum and highly reverberated snare are the focal points on songs such as the title track, “Dancin’ in the Dark”, and “Glory Days.”

Stewart Copeland - Without Copeland, The Police would be just another band. His touch, and especially his cymbal work, are a thing of beauty. A master at moving the beat, and making the unexpected sound natural. And a damn fine soundtrack composer as well.

Ed Shaughnessy - It was also through The Tonight Show that I was introduced to the incredible talents of Eddie Shaughnessy. A member of Doc Severinsen’s Tonight Show Orchestra, Shaughnessy showed a versatility of styles and genres that is unparalleled among modern drummers. In his early career, Ed played with many of the great orchestras of the day – George Shearing, Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, and Count Basie. He was also a member of the house band at Charlie Parker’s “Birdland” club in New York. During his tenure on Carson’s show, Ed performed with musicians of many different musical styles. When Jimi Hendrix was a musical guest on The Tonight Show in 1968, his regular drummer at the time, Mitch Mitchell, was unavailable, so Shaughnessy sat in as a member of the Jimi Hendrix Experience. Among my favorite Shaughnessy highlights are the “drum battles” he would engage in with Buddy Rich.

Although an omission from my “top ten”, I also want to give a shout out to my friend and Late Show with David Letterman drummer **Anton Fig**. As with Shaughnessy, Fig’s position in the CBS Orchestra on the Letterman Show requires a tremendous amount of diversity in styles and musical genres. Dave often introduces Anton as “Buddy Rich, Junior”. I second the motion.

Stan Lynch - I’ve said this to my friend Tom Petty’s face, so I feel no need to pull any punches here. The Heartbreaker’s will never be as good as they were with Stan behind the skins. He could be a real prick, but most of the time he was also right. Sometimes you need a boat rocker to help you remember that you are out to sea. Stan pushed a talented bunch of musicians to be more than the sum of their parts. I think the record(s)

speaks for itself. I hear that these days Stan doesn't even own a drum kit. As a reminder to you Stanley, Tom said it himself – “you don't have to live like a refugee...”⁵²

Tommy Riddell - Some of the finest drumming I've ever heard was one night watching Tommy warm up backstage prior to a Marshall Tucker Band show. Fast and tasteful, he can just flat out play.

Other Instruments

Clarence Clemmons

Clarence Clemmons

Claren.... - Ok, so maybe I'm just trying to be funny here. Then again... The Big Man is larger than life in more ways than mere size. Without him, the E Street would still be a killer band, but only half as fun. And if you think watching Clarence is a great time, playing with him is an almost unparalleled joy.

Jerry Douglas - Many of you may not know of Jerry, or his pedigree. But I guarantee that if you listen to music at all, you have heard his playing. Considered the world's finest dobro player, Jerry has done sessions with a huge and diverse list of artists, including Ray Charles, Clint Black, Paul Simon, Dolly Parton, James Taylor, and many, many more. He is also a featured member of Allison Krause and Union Station. Need a dobro player, call Jerry Douglas.

Roy Clark - I know. You see the name Roy Clark and immediately think of the television show Hee Haw. He's funny (remember him as the desk clerk at the “Empty Arms Hotel” ???) and he's stuck in that mindset with most Americans. But Roy is a damn fine banjo picker. A two time national champion by the time he was fifteen. He is also the first country musician to be the guest host of The Tonight Show.

Charlie Musselwhite - Want the formula for becoming a blues legend ??? Charlie was born in Mississippi, grew up in Memphis during the 50's and 60's and honed his craft on the streets and in the bars of Southside Chicago. He was a white man living in a black man's world and his talent and personality made him a favorite among both the old guard bluesmen and the white beat generation. His phrasing and tone are masterful, with a combination of power and restraint. Just one listen and you'll know for sure. Charlie doesn't just play the blues, he lives them.

Male Singers - There's no “pecking order” in this category either. Five numero uno's in my book. Let me try to focus back on the song that first made me say to myself “damn this guy is GOOD”.

John Lennon – “Stand By Me” (Rock ‘n Roll). **Robert Plant** – “You Shook Me” (Led Zeppelin). **Mick Jagger** – “Jumpin’ Jack Flash” (Get Yer Ya-Ya’s Out). **Paul McCartney** – “I Saw Her Standing There” (Please, Please Me). **Bob Seger** – “Katmandu” (Live Bullet).

Female Singers

Aretha Franklin - The “Queen of Soul” has no equals. When this woman asks for respect, you’d better give it. I don’t know how the Lord managed to put so much voice into one earthly body. I like the other singers on this list for various reasons, and some for specific tunes, but Aretha stands at the head of the class.

Christine McVie - Let me start here by placing a disclaimer: I AM NOT a Stevie Nicks hater. Her’s is the image I get when I hear The Eagles “Witchy Woman”. I really like Stevie on “Buckingham-Nicks” which she and Lindsey recorded prior to joining Fleetwood Mac. I just happen to like Christine McVie more. Her voice, I think especially along with her piano playing, suits my ear perfectly. “You Make Lovin’ Fun” and “Oh Daddy” are among my favorites. She had a really good rhythm section too. Their off the stage antics and sexual discretions make ZigZag look like a bunch of choir boys.

Ann Wilson - Now that I’m halfway through the list, I have a confession to make. By and large, I don’t like girl bands. Heart (and The Pretenders – see below) are the exceptions to this rule. Dreamboat Annie has got a serious set of pipes...if you have any doubts, take a listen to “Barracuda” at a high volume.

Chrissie Hynde - I don’t really consider The Pretenders a “girl band” even with a female lead singer. Chrissie’s style is tough as nails. “Talk of the Town”, “Brass in Pocket”, and “Back on the Chain Gang” are all wonderful songs. I’m not crazy about everything this band does, but the “Learning to Crawl” album specifically is an outstanding work.

Janis Joplin - It’s a bit of a stretch to include Ms. Joplin in with the women. She’s had more balls than most of the male singers I’ve known (myself included). If you need a reminder, take a listen to her cover of Big Mama Thornton’s “Ball and Chain”. Janis certainly lived her life very much “out loud.”

Songwriters - Rather than say much here, I think I’ll just quote a lyric or two and let the genius speak for itself. Again, in no particular order...

Neil Young

Long Live Rock And Roll

“If I was your junk man sellin’ your cars,
Washing your windows and shining your stars.
Thinkin’ your life was my own in a dream,
What would it feel like and how would it seem.”⁵³

Lennon/McCartney

“The clouds will be a daisy chain,
So let me see you smile again.
Dear Prudence,
Won’t you open up your eyes.”⁵⁴

“Penny Lane the barber shaves another customer,
You see the banker sitting waiting for a trim.
And the fireman comes rushing in from the pouring rain,
Very strange.”⁵⁵

Jim Croce

“But there never seemed to be enough time,
To do things you want to do once you find them.
I’ve looked around enough to know,
That you’re the one that I want to go through time with.”⁵⁶

Bob Dylan

“I was in another lifetime, one of toil and blood.
When blackness was a virtue and the road was full of mud.
I came in from the wilderness a creature void of form,
Come in she said I’ll give ya shelter from the storm.”⁵⁷

J.J. Cale

“Travelin' light, is the only way to fly.
Travelin' light, just you and I.
One-way ticket to ecstasy,
Way on down, follow me.
Travelin' light, we can go beyond.
Travelin' light, we can catch the wind.
Travelin' light, let your mind pretend.
We can go to paradise,
Maybe once, maybe twice.
Travelin' light, is the only way to fly.”⁵⁸

Bruce Springsteen

Long Live Rock And Roll

“Well, I got this guitar and I learned how to make it talk,
And my car's out back if you're ready to take that long walk.
From your front porch to my front seat,
The door's open but the ride, it ain't free.”⁵⁹

Townes Van Zandt

“Oh does she actually
think I'm to blame?
Does she really believe that some word of mine
Can relieve all her pain?
Can't she see that she grieves
Just because she's been blindly deceived by her shame?”⁶⁰

Album - Yes, I really did list three Beatles albums in a row.

Sgt. Peppers Lonely Hearts Club Band - Sergeant Peppers breaks new ground in so many different directions that it's nearly impossible to do justice to the details. George Martin doesn't get near enough credit for his part in this process (and in my mind is in reality the fifth Beatle). From the title track on the first side to “A Day in the Life” as the final overture, this record is perfect. And to think they did it all on a four track tape machine. These days we have pretty much as many as we need.

Rubber Soul - This is in my opinion the very best of the Beatles – part 1. See below for part 2. The songwriting really starts to expose the genius of Lennon and McCartney on this record. The imagery of “Drive My Car” (all the way down to the “toot-toot-beep-beep-yeah” in the choruses), the eeriness of Lennon on “Norwegian Wood”, to Paul's sweet “Michelle”. The influences of Dylan and drugs are starting to enter the equation. And for those of you who just ran to the closet to find that “Drive My Car” isn't on your copy of Rubber Soul – that's the U.S. version. Thanks to George Bennett's record collection, I have the U.K. release.

Revolver - Revolver is worth the price of admission just for “Eleanor Rigby”. The precursor to the Sergeant Pepper's sound. And I've told George on more than one occasion that “Taxman” is my favorite Beatles era Harrison song. “Here, There, and Everywhere” is one of the songs that started my journey into finger picking style guitar.

Blood on the Tracks - This is the perfect Dylan album. Every song is clear and vivid and insightful. The storytelling in “Lily, Rosemary, and the Jack of Hearts” is as good as it gets, and only Mister Dylan could get away with fifteen verses.

Led Zeppelin 4 - This record starts with “Black Dog” and “Rock and Roll” - the defining song of the genre, and ends with “Stairway to Heaven”, the best song of the genre. In between are nuggets of pure gold.

My number one all time favorite song ??? Maybe not what you would think. Not the Beatles or Zep, Clapton or Hendrix – although those are the other four (“Blackbird”, “Goin’ To California”, “Layla” and “Voodoo Chile” respectively). Nope, for my money it’s “Long Cool Woman in a Black Dress” by The Hollies. To me this is the perfect rock and roll song. The guitar intro is great, the lyrics, though almost indecipherable at some points, get the message across.

“Well the DA was pumpin' my left hand,
And she was a hold of my right.
Well I told her, don't get scared,
'Cause you're gonna be spared.
Well I've gotta be forgivin',
If I wanna spend a livin',
With a long cool woman in a black dress”⁶¹

Almost everyone in the world will disagree with me on this, but these are MY favorites, remember. It would be easy to say “Stairway to Heaven” (which isn’t even my favorite song on that album) and just move on. And for the record, the lyric is “bad men” not “Batman”...

And speaking of women, on the list of “unhealthy” relationships that I have been in throughout my life, there are two that definitely stand out. The first I have never spoken of to anyone before. The second I immortalized in song.

Nita walked into my life totally unannounced one afternoon. I was living in the apartment on the north side of Houston back when we were recording the first album, but before Leah and Steph moved in upstairs. I was sitting on the couch playing guitar and looking out the window at the bodies in and around the pool. Suddenly one of them got up and headed straight for my door. She knocked. I opened the door and let her in. She was wearing a one piece bathing suit that left nothing to the imagination. She came in and sat down. She looked young, young, young. I introduced myself and asked her name as I offered her a seat, and then a beer (which she declined). We chatted for a few minutes about the pool and where she lived, and then I asked why she was there. Did she need something ??? Nita made it very clear in very short order that indeed she had a need. And while she was verbalizing her request, she also began rubbing her hand on my crotch. Five minutes later we were in the bedroom. She stayed until well after dark and we had sex again. Then she said something about meeting someone and left. She came back two days later and we had sex on the couch. She made some excuse and left. It was probably a week before she returned the next time.

Long Live Rock And Roll

Her real name was actually Juanita, and she was seventeen years old. Married to a truck driver who was only in town a couple of weekends a month, Nita spent the rest of her time on the prowl. She had been sexually abused by both her step father and her brother and thought that was how all men treated women. She had also been raped by a neighbor boy. All of this culminated in a condition that made Nita crave nothing but sex. I'm fully convinced that she was a nymphomaniac.

Nita never made any sound while we were in the act. At first I was concerned that she wasn't enjoying the experience, but after she assured me a couple of times that indeed she was having a good time and getting what she needed out of the encounters I quit questioning her silence. Over a six week period I had sex with Nita a number of times. I could tell that sometimes I was her first encounter of the day, and other times I was not. I never asked, and she never said. I thought the whole thing was harmless fun until one morning I realized that it hurt to urinate. And there was drainage coming from the end of my penis. Nita had contracted, and then passed on to me, "the clap" – gonorrhea. I had dealt with this affliction once before, during my sophomore year at the University of Kentucky. Unfortunately, I never knew the source of that initial infection (another very long story), but I did know the cure – antibiotics. My first response was to drag out the Yellow Pages and find a free clinic that treated sexually transmitted diseases. I certainly didn't want this in the records of my "real" doctor. I located a clinic just a few miles from the apartment that guaranteed "confidential screenings" and called to see if I needed an appointment. They urged me to consult with "my partner" and to bring her in for treatment as well.

I wasn't sure how to approach this subject with her, but I knew one thing for certain. I needed to stop having sex with Nita. I was also concerned that I might not see her for a few days, and wasn't keen on waiting to start the regimen of penicillin. Fortunately, Nita appeared on my back patio a few hours later. Of course, she was anxious to have sex. Immediately. In one of those cases where I let my "little head" do all of the thinking, I did have sex with her one last time. I was rough and abusive, and took out my pain on that teenage girl. Afterwards, I told her what was going on (she didn't seem to have a clue that she was infected, and was fairly ambivalent about the entire ordeal), blamed it on her truck driving husband, and when I mentioned the clinic she absolutely refused to be treated. I had to literally put Nita in the car and drive her to the clinic. The trip was short but not without incident. Twice she tried to get out of the car at a stoplight. Both times I grabbed her by the arm and held her in the vehicle. When we got to the clinic she wouldn't go inside. I picked her up and carried her in, kicking and screaming. It was quite a scene. When they called us to the back, we were separated. I got a shot and a prescription and left. I don't know if Nita got tested or treated. She came by the apartment once after that, and I was cordial, but refused to let her in. I was thinking I was going to have to move to get away from this girl. But I never saw her again. I wonder from time to time what might have become of her. Probably nothing good. I think that Nita just needed love so

badly that she became consumed by the idea that having sex was being loved. I don't think I ever even knew her last name.

Trudy McDermot slept around, but she had a purpose to her plan and she stuck with it. You've heard of men being called "womanizers". Trudy was a "manizer". She knew what she wanted and went after her prize with great zeal. I met Trudy through our mutual friend Cathy Thomas. She and Cathy worked for the same doctor in the Houston medical center and rode to work together. I worked a Hillborn with Cathy's husband Scott. Eric and I used to party at their apartment after work and on weekends we would bar-b-que on their patio. Trudy was divorced and had a three year old daughter. It seemed like every time I saw her she was with a different guy. Cathy had told me on more than one occasion that Trudy was "interested" in me. At the time I was indifferent to anything but casual relationships. It was all about the band in those days. And feeding my head.

One night after a weekend cook out there was discussion about skinny dipping in the apartment complex pool. Trudy was one of the leaders in this discussion, and one thing led to the next. She had another guy with her that night, but somehow dispatched of him. We made love for the first time on the pool deck. I'm sure there were onlookers, but we didn't (or were too drunk to) care. The following weekend we went to see B.B. King at Rockefeller's in Houston. It was my twenty-fifth birthday and my grandmother had sent me a nice check with my birthday card. We celebrated with a reserved table just a few feet from the stage. The next time I was that close to the "King of the Blues" I was sitting between he and Eric Clapton at a festival in Memphis. Trudy was from a rural Texas background and cared little for the blues, or for that matter African-Americans in general. Afterwards she thanked me, and said she really enjoyed the show. We went back to her apartment and she thanked me again. Her "birthday present" to me was a little red nightie that didn't stay on very long. We had sex while her daughter slept on the floor just a few feet away. I thought I was in love. I was about to get my world turned upside down.

Trudy Be True

What can I say what can I do,
Think of your love will it pull me through,
I keep on tryin' but you let me down again and again.
Inside I'm hearin' that you've something to hide,
Don't try to think you're takin' me for a ride.
I've been this high before but girl I just don't know when.

Trudy be true if you really need me.
Trudy be true right from the start.
Trudy be true and don't you ever leave me.
Trudy be true, Trudy be true to my heart.

Long Live Rock And Roll

I didn't see Trudy for a couple of weeks after that night. ZigZag had engagements in Lake Charles and Dallas, and she went to visit her mother and step dad in East Texas for a long weekend. She also had a couple of prior "commitments" that she felt she needed to keep. The next time we were together something was very different. She was aloof, and pretty much intent on maintaining her distance from me. In private she was intimate and filled with passion. In public, she treated me as if we had just met and were mere acquaintances.

Now one good woman is all I need,
For her love I would be willing to bleed,
Inside her heart I could make my final stand.
I've got this feelin' though I hate to admit,
Sometimes girl I think you'd just like to quit,
I can't turn my feelings on and off with some mental command.

Trudy be true, if you really need me.
Trudy be true, right from the start.
Trudy be true, and don't you ever leave me.
Trudy be true, Trudy be true to my heart.

The whole thing came to a head a few weeks later. A bunch of us had tickets to see The Police at the Summit. We had purchased these tickets a month or so earlier, before Trudy and I were (at least in my head) an "item". I had two tickets, Scott and Cathy had two, and Trudy had two. She also had a date that had been previously arranged. I asked her to cancel and she refused. I asked another of our buddies, Leo to take the spare ticket. We went to the show and I got to spend most of the evening watching Trudy dry hump this guy right in front of me. It made me sick to my stomach. After the show she even made a pass a Leo. We had all ridden to the show together. I took a cab home. Most of these lyrics were scratched out on the back of an envelope during the ride back to Pasadena.

Girl you've got me down on my knees.
Hear me darlin' I'm begin' you please.
Change me mold me make me into just what you need.
But don't ever leave.

Trudy be true, if you really need me.
Trudy be true, right from the start.
Trudy be true, and don't you ever leave me.
Trudy be true, Trudy be true to my heart.

Trudy be true, if you really need me.
Trudy be true, we can make a clean start.
Trudy be true, and don't you ever leave me darlin'.
Trudy be true, Trudy be true to my heart."⁶²

Long Live Rock And Roll

I had to give Cathy Thomas credit – she tried to warn me about becoming too serious with Trudy. She just wasn't that kind of girl. Maybe it was about sex being more important to her than a relationship or commitment. I did learn one very valuable lesson from this ordeal. I swore to myself that if the "right girl" ever did come along, I was going to be faithful and honest with her. I was also going to make sure of her intentions before I got too involved. I did have a couple of more encounters with Trudy. The sex was good for both of us. But I didn't get emotionally engaged again. To me, she became just another girl. Like many others I would meet over the next couple of years. Until Leah came along and changed everything.

Like anything else in life, your view on the mafia and their impact on American culture is a matter of personal perspective. Part of the "lens" that is used by a considerable portion of the American populous is what I would call Post-Puzo thinking.

With the release of his novels and the subsequent movies, Mario Puzo has almost single handedly changed the way we think about the mob. Violence in the name of Honor. Vengeance as a means to preserving Respect. Mr. Puzo may be more right than wrong in his portrayals, but the mere sensationalism created by the release of "The Godfather" (parts I and II - the third is a mediocre piece of cinema) has forever changed the American public's view of the mafia. I've seen pictures of more than a few real life gangsters, and some up close and personal. None of them look as good as Pacino or De Niro. Sitting in the theatre with a bag of popcorn in your lap it is easy to rationalize that these are fictional characters, but over the passage of time the lines between fact and fiction tend to blur.

The biggest difference between the mob and a "legit" business isn't the strong arm tactics. It's the focus on the margin. The mafia attempts to remove all outside overhead on all of their "products". Not just the middleman. They want to control the entire process from beginning to end.

The government, especially through the use of the RICO Act, has made significant inroads into abolishing organized crime in America. But the notion that the mafia no longer exists in this country is absurd. Different than in its hayday – yes. More discreet and conscious of media and law enforcement exposure – absolutely. But gone – not a chance. Besides, who would believe that something as massive as the control the mafia held over the city of New York could be removed so easily. Especially when there is that much money involved.

Let's be real. It's as Mr. Dylan so accurately exclaimed:

"You don't need a weather man to know which way the wind blows"⁶³