

# RANDOM NOTES

BY CHRISTOPHER CONNELLY

## DID ARISTA BREAK UP THE ALLMANS?

After fifteen years of erratic, often inspired musicmaking, the Allman Brothers Band has split up again—and this time, it might be for good. Gregg Allman has left the group to pursue a solo project, and three other members—Butch Trucks, Dickey Betts and Chuck Leavell—have teamed up with ex-Wet Willie vocalist Jimmy Hall and are playing some scattered dates. “It just all fell apart,” says Leavell of the Allmans. “And there’s always the Clive Davis factor.” Under the terms of their now terminated contract with



Gregg Allman

Arista Records, Davis’ label, the Allmans were given \$500,000 to make each album. The only creative control that Arista had over the band—whose album sales have slumped in recent years—was the right to choose a producer. “I wanted them to work with an established, independent producer, not an engineer,” says Davis. Davis thus asked the band to send him material that he could play for potential studio men. At first, the Allmans balked, saying that their best material is written in the studio. When the group finally relented and sent some demos, says Davis, “the producers to whom we sent them didn’t think they were strong enough.”

But the Allmans’ manager, John Scher, says that Davis vetoed veteran producer Tom Dowd, among others, and has “improperly tried to censor” the group’s music. “By Clive’s locking us out of the studio, he kept Gregg and Dickey and everybody else from being able to make a living. He forced everybody’s hand—and freed Arista from some serious financial obligations.” Scher asserts that the band is “on hiatus” and will record again when the legal situation is resolved.



No, Joe Strummer is not available for weddings and bar mitzvahs; he’s hiding out in London, writing songs for the Clash’s followup to ‘Combat Rock.’

## Clash credit money woes for U.S. success

**A** Clash record going platinum? Still Top Ten after six months? What does it all mean? “It shows that American kids aren’t willing to put up with the same old rubbish that people have been shoving down their throats for years,” says the group’s bassist, Paul Simonon.

He doesn’t credit the Clash’s surprising breakthrough to their acceptance by AOR radio or to video exposure via MTV. “I put the success of *Combat Rock* down to the kids rising up and the recession hitting harder.” The Anglo agit-propsters are currently holed up in London, with Joe Strummer and Mick Jones batting out songs for an LP that should be recorded later this year.

## POP BAND TO RECORD POPE’S POEMS

And you thought you’d heard everything. The Manhattan Transfer—the vocal quartet that scored with a remake of the AdLibs’ “Boy from New York City”—say they’ve been asked to translate ten of Pope John Paul II’s poems into eight different languages, set them to music and sing them at a Concerto for Peace concert to be held in Vatican City. Why the Transfer? “They played Poland a few years ago, and the pope saw them and loved them,” said a spokesman for the group. Titles of the poems include “Girl Disappointed in Love,” “Actor,” “The Negro” and “The Armaments Factory Worker,” the last described by the Transfer spokesman as “the single.”

The project is reportedly the brainchild of Italian entrepreneur Gigi Campi, who hopes to mount the concert by this summer, despite scheduling difficulties that may push it back a year. The Pontifical Commission for Social Communication said it had no knowledge of the extravaganza.

## LOOSE TALK

“Older men have been through everything before. You’re like a car they need gasoline from.”

—NASTASSIA KINSKI

“We take hockey very seriously in Minnesota, more seriously than Washingtonians take politics. After all, hockey is more important to the future of the nation.”

—Representative GERRY SIKORSKI D-Minnesota

“I feel like Nathan Hale—I regret that I have but one wife to give to my country’s infrastructure.”

—Senator ROBERT DOLE (R-Kansas) on his wife, Elizabeth, at the transportation secretary-designate’s confirmation hearing

## Marilu Henner puts ‘Taxi’ in the fast lane

**T**axi star Marilu Henner says that when the sitcom was booted last year by ABC and picked up by the racier Home Box Office (before finding a slot at NBC), producer James Brooks had an idea to boost viewership. “He said, ‘The first shot of the new season is gonna be your tits,’” she says, laughing. It’s been an unsettling year for the talented Henner: *Hammett*, in which she starred, was a financial flop; she divorced her husband and film’s costar, actor Frederic Forrest; and one of her favorite parts of the movie, her love scene with Forrest (with whom she remains friendly), was cut from the Wim Wenders-Francis Coppola effort. In addition, *Taxi*, which she calls “the ideal working experience,” is fighting hard for ratings. Henner remains undaunted and, in fact, has a new project in the works: a song-and-dance act she hopes to premiere at a New York club later this year.



Henner: ‘I don’t feel you have to be miserable in order to be happy later.’



on, Zilinskas, Hoffs, Vicki Peterson