

Gavin's Woodpile – The Bruce Cockburn Newsletter

Edited by Daniel Keebler

Issue Number 31

February 1999

Song Pitching Is Paying Off For Bruce Cockburn

From the January 30, 1999 issue of Billboard magazine, by Larry LeBlanc.

Despite his worldwide status as a quality music artist and his reputation for literate and personalized songwriting, Canadian singer/songwriter Bruce Cockburn tends to overlook his songwriting achievements.

Cockburn wrote and performs the theme of Nelvana Production's 2-year-old children's TV show "Franklin," broadcast worldwide. And Tara McLean sang his song "Pacing The Cage" in the Brett "Hitman" Hart documentary "Wrestling With Shadows," which aired December 20, 1998, on the A&E channel in the U.S.

Last year, Cockburn's version of "Lord Of The Starfields" appeared in the Italian film "Radiofreccia," the biography of singer Luciano Ligabue, as well as on the accompanying Warner Music Italia soundtrack. Canadian act The Rankins recorded his song "One Day I walk"; Steve Bell recorded "Can I Go With You"; and American singer Maria Muldaur titled her Telarc album "Southland Of The Heart" after Cockburn's song.

To date, there have been some 100 covers of Cockburn's songs. The most covered are "If I Had A Rocket Launcher," "One Day I Walk," "Wondering Where The Lions Are," and "Lovers In A Dangerous Time."

Among those who've recorded Cockburn's tunes are Canada's Barenaked Ladies, Barra MacNeils, Bob Wiseman, Skydiggers, and Anne Murray; Britain's Ron Kavan and Oyster Band; Ireland's Mary Coughlan; Sweden's Mats Klingstrom; and U.S. artists Jerry Garcia, Holly Near, Chet Atkins, and Dan Fogelberg.

"I'm surprised by how many covers I have," says Cockburn who is preparing to record his 25th solo album, tentatively titled "Breakfast in New Orleans, Dinner in Timbuktu," with co-producer and longtime guitarist, Colin Linden. "I'm honored when people want to do the songs. They are there to be used."

Bernie Finkelstein, Cockburn's manager since 1971 and president of True North Records, which has released all of Cockburn's solo works here, says, "Bruce has never pushed his songs. It's not something he thinks a lot about."

Outside Canada, Cockburn's albums are released worldwide by Rykodisc.

“At the beginning of his career, Bruce had a few covers, but for a long time people didn’t record his material,” says Finkelstein. “Now there’s greater interest worldwide. About eight of his songs have been recorded in Sweden by various artists, and there have been [recent] translations of his songs in German and French.”

“The concept of pitching [songs] is not in my vocabulary,” says Cockburn, who has only rarely co-written with others. “I’ve always been caught between the pleasure at people being interested enough to want to do the songs and [having] my own concept of the songs. Even though I prefer people to take liberties with the songs and be distinct, I have trouble adjusting to it. So I don’t spend my time thinking about it.”

However, he says that artists covering his work have generally been respectful of the songs’ intent, musically and philosophically. “There’s been some slight departures,” he says wryly. “Like ‘Child Of The Wind’ by Salamander Crossing. I had thought the song would make a good bluegrass waltz; they did it uptempo, which works fine. It’s completely different from what I would have imagined.”

Since debuting with Cockburn’s self-titled first album in 1969, Finkelstein’s True North Records has released more than 80 albums by such Canadian acts as Murray McLauchlan (15 albums), Stephen Fearing, Rough Trade, Syrinx, and Luke Gibson. Finkelstein also manages Fearing and Blackie & The Rodeo Kings.

Cockburn’s compositions are published by Golden Music Corp., which he co-owns with Finkelstein. The company is administered by Finkelstein’s True North Publishing, which, overseen by Elizabeth Blomme, has a catalog that also contains songs by Rough Trade, McLauchlan, Fearing, Scott B. Bradshaw, and the Hellbillies.

While Cockburn’s 1960’s bands, the Esquires, the Children, and Three’s A Crowd, performed his songs, he figured if he wrote good enough songs, a major artist would record them.

Finkelstein credits early ‘70s covers of Cockburn’s songs “Musical Friends” and “One Day I Walk” by Anne Murray, then Canada’s top artist, as being the first breakthrough.

“Anne Murray recordings were a door-opener for Bruce,” he says. “It was more than welcome income when Bruce was selling less than 10,000 albums. It was validation of Bruce’s songwriting. It helped us get people to listen to Bruce.”

Another key cover for Cockburn, according to Finkelstein, was Barenaked Ladies’ rendering of “Lovers In A Dangerous Time” for the Cockburn tribute album “Kick At The Darkness,” released by Intrepid Records in 1991. “It meant that one of this generation’s greatest new acts was interested in Bruce,” he says. “It really brought Bruce’s writing to other people’s attention.”

While Cockburn is largely unaware of the nitty-gritty of the publishing activities on his behalf, Finkelstein is aggressive in promoting Cockburn’s catalog.

“We continually send Bruce’s music, but, generally, a lot of artists being fans, they want to record it anyway,” he says. “Jerry Garcia told us he recorded ‘Waiting For A Miracle’ after he first heard the song on a Bay Area radio station. After Dan Fogelberg recorded ‘Lovers In A Dangerous Time’ in 1990, he sent us a letter saying he had wanted to record the song because he both loved it and wanted more people in America to know how great Bruce is.”

The popularity of the “Radiofreccia” soundtrack in Italy brought Cockburn to Naples January 5th to perform “Lord Of The Starfields” for an RAI Broadcast. Finkelstein says, “Luciano Ligabue used Bruce’s [recording of] ‘Lord Of The Starfields’ in his movie because it had been one of the songs which had influenced him when he was starting out in [music].”

Despite his music being included in numerous documentaries, and despite being continually asked to compose for film and TV documentaries due to his international standing as a fervent social activist, Cockburn turns down most feature film and TV offers. He has provided original music for only two full-length films, both Canadian: “Goin’ Down The Road” in 1970 and “Water Walker” in 1983.

To Finkelstein’s surprise, however, Cockburn quickly agreed to write and perform the “Franklin” TV theme. “Nelvana Productions called me asking for Bruce to do [some folk-styled music] like what he used to do. Bruce wrote the song and Nelvana loved it.”

Bruce Plays Old Town School Benefit

Bruce Cockburn headlines benefit concert for old town school of folk music’s children’s center Saturday, March 13 at Chicago Folk Center.

Innovative singer/songwriter Bruce Cockburn takes the stage at the Old Town School of Folk Music’s Chicago Folk Center, 4544 N. Lincoln Avenue, on Saturday, March 13 at 8:00 p.m. for a special performance to benefit the School’s Children’s Center.

This intimate concert, including a pre-show party, kicks off the festivities to celebrate the rededication of the School’s Children’s Center, at the former Old Town School site at 909 W. Armitage Avenue in Lincoln Park. The Grand Opening Celebration for the Children’s Center continues the next weekend on March 20 and 21 with performances, workshops and demonstration classes for families and kids of all ages.

Canadian Bruce Cockburn has earned a place of distinction in the popular music world during his 30-year, 24 album career. With a career that has reaped 10 JUNO awards, 18 gold and platinum records, international songwriting and performance awards, Cockburn’s rich catalogue of material is in demand and has been recorded by such

diverse talents as Jerry Garcia, The Barenaked Ladies, Anne Murray, Dan Fogelberg, among others.

His career began in the 1970s with the release of his self-titled album, followed by numerous JUNO awards as Folksinger of the Year. His 1978 release *Dancing in the Dragon's Jaws* became his first international hit as well as charting the top 20 in the U.S. In the 1980's his music, including the album *Stealing Fire*, reflected his involvement in social issues including a 1983 trip to refugee camps in Central America. His first release of the 1990s, *Nothing But A Burning Light* featured guest appearances from Booker T. Jones, Jackson Browne and Sam Phillips. This was followed by his highly acclaimed recording, *Christmas*, and 1994's *Dart to the Heart*, which earned him a radio hit in the U.S. for the song "Listen for the Laugh." His most recent releases for Ryko, *The Charity of Night* and *You Pay Your Money and You Take Your Chance - Live* have garnered critical acclaim.

Critics have praised Cockburn's body of work. New York Magazine raved, "Cockburn's spent twenty-plus years making some of the most stirring folk-rock on the planet" and People Magazine describe him as, "...at his best, he's a talking bluesman for our time." Toronto Star said, "...he offered one of the most sonically hypnotic and richly textured performances of the year" and Boston Herald wrote, "Dylan and Cockburn now define passion."

The Old Town School of Folk Music Children's Center serves as the central hub for the School's family and children's programming. Recently renovated to create a "kid-friendly" environment, the Children's Center presents children with the opportunity to study, investigate and enjoy music, dance, theater, art and folklore. At the Old Town School, Chicago's ethnic diversity is celebrated and explored in a creative and constructive environment. Here, each child is presented with abundant occasions for self-expression, and the family bond is enriched through shared artistic endeavors.

Tickets for the Bruce Cockburn benefit concert and pre-concert party are priced at \$100 and are now on sale at the Old Town School of Folk Music's Chicago Folk Center box office, 4544 N. Lincoln Avenue, or by calling (773) 728-6000.

SPRING DATES- 1999

February 21 Charleston, WV Mountain Stage

March 6 Randolph, VT Chandler Music Hall

March 7 Keene, NH The Colonial Theatre

March 9 Buffalo, NY Tralfamadore

March 10 Columbus, OH Ludlow's

March 12 Bloomington, IN Second Story

March 13 Chicago, IL Chicago Folk Center

May 7 Chattanooga, TN The Urban Art Institute

Where You Are

Subscribers in: Canada, Sweden, Luxembourg, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, Finland, Norway, Thailand, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Virginia, New Hampshire, Georgia, New Jersey, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Maine, New York, Colorado, South Carolina, Maryland, Oklahoma, California, Connecticut, West Virginia, Illinois, Vermont, Florida, Missouri, Kentucky, Utah, Rhode Island, Wyoming, Tennessee, Michigan, Arizona, DC, Hawaii, Ohio, Idaho, Texas, Delaware, Minnesota, Montana, North Carolina, New Mexico.

Cockburn and Lang Recognized for Contribution

by Susan Fisher, USC Canada.

For many years now singer/songwriter Bruce Cockburn and Robert Lang of Kensington Communications have been teaming up, for USC Canada. As a spokesperson for USC, Bruce has been in front of the television camera shedding light on global issues like food security, desertification and globalization. The man behind the camera lens, responsible for the direction and creativity of the public service announcement, had been Robert.

Their combined efforts, on behalf of the organization, were recognized earlier this fall when the pair were announced as the first recipients of the Harry Bolster Memorial Award for “Outstanding Volunteer of the Year.”

Established by USC’s Board of Directors at their April ‘98 meeting the award is in memory of Harry Bolster, long time friend and champion of international development and USC Canada. Harry passed away on January 17, 1998.

In making the announcement, USC’s CEO John Martin singled out the commitment and contributions of both Bruce and Robert in helping to deliver USC’s important message to Canadians from coast to coast. “Bruce and Robert have given outstanding talent, precious time and endless energy as volunteers for USC, inspiring Canadians to support people in need in developing countries.”

Both Bruce and Robert have long histories of involvement with USC, dating back to the era of Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova. Bruce was introduced to the organization more than 25 years ago when he was receiving royalties from the airplay of his first album. Anxious to share it with those less lucky, he came in contact with Dr. Hitschmanova and shortly

after, began his involvement with USC, lending his time and talents as a spokesperson for the organization on radio and television.

Robert was introduced to USC at the ripe age of 10 when he would help his mother, who was active in volunteering for the organization, pack boxes of relief supplies. His encounters with Dr. Hirschmanova had a lasting impression. "I've always felt very connected to USC as a result..." said Robert in an interview for *56 Sparks* last summer.

For the past two years, the pair has dedicated countless hours to the making of *River of Sand*, a USC and Canadian International Development Agency supported documentary on desertification which focuses on USC's programs in Mali. They spent close to a month last February [1998] filming throughout Mali.

Bruce and Robert were presented their award at a USC gala event in Toronto on February 4, 1999.

Discography

bruce cockburn
high winds white sky
sunwheel dance
night vision
salt, sun & time
joy will find a way
in the falling dark
circles in the stream
further adventures of
dancing in the dragon's jaws
humans
mummy dust
inner city front
the trouble with normal
stealing fire
world of wonders
waiting for a miracle
big circumstance
bruce cockburn live
nothing but a burning light
christmas
dart to the heart
the charity of night
you pay your money & you take your chance

What's Up

Bruce Cockburn was invited by the Franciscan Monks of the St. Chiara's Monastery to perform at a concert in Naples, Italy. The concert took place at the Royal Palace's Theatre on January 5, and will aired in Italy, and internationally, on RAI television on January 6, 1999.

Cockburn was asked to perform his song "Lord Of The Starfields," which is a featured track on the soundtrack of Luciano Ligabue's Italian film *Radiofreccia*. The soundtrack album to the film was released as a double CD and is currently the number one compilation recording on the Italian retail charts, having sold over 100,000 copies in just four weeks.

2 Meter Sessies, Volume 1 (474722 2, Varagram/Radio Records). Released in 1991, this compilation CD contains a live solo acoustic recording of "If I had a Rocket Launcher." It was recorded in Holland on August 29, 1989.

2 Meter Sessies, Volume 7 (846514 2, Varagram/Radio Records). Released in 1998, this compilation CD contains a live solo acoustic recording of "Pacing The Cage." It was recorded in Holland on March 23, 1997.

Broadcasts, Vol. 6 This 38 track compilation double CD includes a live, solo version of "Night Train," recorded at KGSR in Austin, Texas, on October 25, 1997. Proceeds are donated to the SIMS Foundation, which offers low cost mental health services to the entire Austin music community. There was a limited pressing of these CDs and they may well be sold out by now. You might try Waterloo Records in Austin at 512-474-2500.

Second To Nun, a 1997 release by **The Dooleys**, contains a cover of "Cry Of A Tiny Babe." One hundred percent of the proceeds from the sale of this CD go to the Roswell Park Pediatric Research Wing, in Buffalo, New York. To obtain a copy, send \$10 (U.S. funds) to:

Musicians For Kids
27 Hagen Ave
North Tonawanda, NY 14120
USA

Add \$2 postage within the U.S., and \$3 to destinations outside the U.S. Checks and the like made payable to Roswell Park Alliance Foundation.

If the mojo remains good, Bruce is expected to be in the studio in March/April working on his next album. If the mojo continues to remain good, a late summer release will be in order. All bow to The Mojo.

My thanks to all who ordered photos from the last issue. Your consideration is appreciated.

Tune in *Franklin* (theme song written and performed by Bruce) on the Nickelodeon channel. Check local TV listings for the time in your area.

Issue Number 32
April 1999

Dancing in the Jaws of Change

by Ian Pearson- Maclean's, September, 1981. Part One...

What Bruce Cockburn's fingers are doing to the strings of his electric guitar is registered only as the surging of power meters and the blinking of computerized digits on the hardware of the 24-track recording studio. The mute technology of Toronto's Manta Sound merely whirs and shutters, encoding another piece of electronic information onto the tape, but the humans present on this April night are alert to the important musical transformation at hand. As Cockburn squeezes power chords from the neck of his Fender Stratocaster guitar, his manager, Bernie Finkelstein, glances at engineer Gary Gray and grins, "Folk music, eh?" Gray replies, chuckling, "Yeah, folk music." Indeed, the muscular sound is antipodal to the gentle and delicate tunes that won Cockburn his loyal following. Against the band's chopping rock 'n' roll rhythms, Cockburn's guitar stutters frenetically on a new song called *Wanna Go Walking*. Murray McLauchlan, fellow survivor of the Canadian singer-songwriter brigade, wanders into the studio and gawks at the spectacle of his intent peer summoning up oceans of noise through the monitors. "Hey kid," chides McLauchlan, "don't hurt yourself."

The tight-lipped resolution on Cockburn's face and the confidence with which he handles his guitar and body suggests he is in little danger of self injury. He is dressed to defy. The accoutrements of the 36-year-old musician could easily adorn a teen-aged member of a new wave band: his white-flecked mane of red hair combed back into a David Bowie-style ducktail, the black leather jacket and sunglasses, the green khaki army pants and white sneakers, the black T-shirt emblazoned BE-BOP sux. His new music flaunts a similar toughness. The lyrics examine a dissolute world and the travails of "the numb and confused, the battered and bruised,/ the counters of cost, and the star-crossed." The music is loud and fast enough that the onetime master of hushed introspection today exhorts his audiences to dance.

The change is substantial since he is, after all, a musician whose image of vulnerability once enclosed him as snugly as the Cowichan sweater and granny glasses that used to be his trade marks. To the generation of Canadians that came of age in the late '60s, Bruce Cockburn was a pure indigenous alternative to popular music: the bearded mystic who crafted fragile melodies on his acoustic guitar and sang with a voice as ephemeral as mist about spirituality and the wonders of going to the country. But unlike other precious dinosaurs of the era whose warm granola-nurtured blood froze up in the chill of the '80s, Cockburn has always been responsive to new ideas although aloof from the whims of musical fashion.

Whereas his previous changes of direction have been gradual, the breakup of his marriage, a move to the inner city of Toronto and a shaking and reaffirming of his Christian faith have instigated the most radical artistic departure of his career. "There's a sort of struggle that's going on with everyone in their 30s where, as Neil Young says, travelling in the middle of the road is a bore, so it's more interesting to head for the ditch," observes Peter Goddard, popular music critic for the *Toronto Star*. "I think the ditch is the honorable place to be, but the middle of the road is safer. And I think Cockburn of all people- good old High Anglican Bruce Cockburn- went for the ditch and took his leather jacket with him and suddenly became a very virile, handsome man."

Cockburn's transformation comes at a time when he is enjoying the greatest popular and critical success of his career in Canada, the U.S., Italy and Japan. The release this month of *Inner City Front*- the product of his April recording sessions and his 11th studio album in as many years- unveils the most accessible music he has ever recorded and should expand that audience. The American breakthrough for Cockburn was his 1979 album, *Dancing in the Dragon's Jaws*, and the infectious hit single *Wondering Where the Lions Are*. "I heard about eight bars of *Lions* and I said, 'I'll take it,'" recalls Jimmy Ienner, president of New York's Millennium Records, the company that licenses Cockburn's records in the U.S. and the U.K. The album has sold nearly 300,000 copies in the U.S. and 95,000 in Canada, figures that won't rob Rush and REO Speedwagon of their livelihoods, but respectable enough for an artist who sings about eternity when most pop musicians are preoccupied with Saturday night.

The much darker and intellectual 1980 follow-up, *Humans*, did not fare as well commercially (sales of 80,000 in Canada and 125,000 in the U.S.), but its passion and intelligence did not escape the critics. *Rolling Stone* called it "feverishly lovely." England's *Melody Maker* raved, "It's hard to imagine anyone coming across Cockburn for the first time with *Humans* not being won over to the cause." In Italy, his nine-city tour last May sold out; a 1979 concert in Milan attracted 7,200 fans, much more than any indoor concert he has played in Canada. And the prestigious West German jazz label, ECM Records, has been eager to record Cockburn. "I haven't heard any other songwriter who is such a profound guitarist," says Hans Wendl, production coordinator of ECM in Munich. "That unique combination makes him so outstanding."

This success is all the more remarkable because Cockburn stayed in Canada, developing his music to a stature that the world could not help but notice. Although his talent was compared early in his career to compatriots Neil Young and Joni Mitchell, he chose to explore the artistic possibilities of his native country instead of fleeing to California. The exploration included meditations on the wilderness, the incorporation of French lyrics into his songs and cross-country tours during which he would travel in a camper and familiarize himself with the land and the people. Material for his songs came from across the country, from a "shining mountain" in Chilliwack, BC, to the "goin' down the road" lament of Maritimers (which provided the theme song for the Don Shebib film of the same name). "Bruce came out here and got to know the country," says Edmonton filmmaker Tom Radford of the score Cockburn wrote for his film *Ernest Brown- Pioneer*

Photographer. “Even though he was from Ottawa, he was doing the score with as great a knowledge about the West and its landscape as any western composer could have.”

The shift in Cockburn’s music from the pastoral to the urban reflects the fact that the lives of most Canadians take place on pavement, not on forest floors. Like the works of other artists who are concentrating on urban settings (such as Margaret Atwood’s novel *Life Before Man*, Erika Ritter’s play *Automatic Pilot* and Clay Borris’ film *Alligator Shoes*), Cockburn’s *Inner City Front* may be part of a cultural maturation indicating that Canadians have done enough root-gazing to be confident to build their art out of their daily existence. While not subscribing to any flag-waving nationalism, Cockburn does feel part of a fledgling culture: “What part I have in that culture, I couldn’t venture to say, but what seems to be going on in this country is a very slow and only semiconscious development toward cultural nationhood.”

His latest contributions to this culture are the new songs, which are electric, urban and rhythmic where his earlier music was acoustic, bucolic and melodic. The shy, naive bard who would occasionally perform barefoot with his dog, Aroo, curled up onstage beside him now fronts a six-piece band which weaves disparate strands of reggae, fusion jazz, folk, rock ‘n’ roll and new wave into a synthesis that can only be called Bruce Cockburn music. “He draws on so much,” explains his violin player, Hugh Marsh. “He listens to really diverse, insanely different musics- from jazz to Ghanaian music- and takes the best of all of them.” *Inner_City Front* meshes these elements together more seamlessly than his previous work and the lyrics look outward. His visions of “pine-framed space” and the “harmony of kin” have been supplanted by complaints protesting social injustice and images of back alleys, billboards and fire escapes. “Today was a dog licking crap from the gutter of the street,” he sings in *Wanna Go Walking*. “Tonight is a dancer oscillating on weightless feet.”

Aroo might well turn over in his grave but his sentiments would not be shared by the majority of Cockburn fans who openly embraced the new sound on a 42-city Canadian tour last winter. A few detractors could not adjust to the new music as it was presented for the first time. Peter Mautner of Toronto was perturbed enough after Cockburn’s Convocation Hall concert to air his complaints on the letters page of *The Globe and Mail*: “The fundamental approach of most pop performers of limited talent is to turn up the volume, which happened that night.” Similarly, Alison Fletcher of Halifax was unimpressed by Cockburn’s March concert there: “I liked him when he was on his own, but I think his music is commercialized now.” But the majority of the fans appreciated the metamorphosis into electric music. Said longtime fan Mitchell Schurman of the same Halifax performance: “I think he’s improved. I was always a rock’n’roll fan, so for him to do *that* was a nice change.”

The “nice change” in Cockburn’s music came about only after the painful personal upheaval caused by his marriage breakup. In the spring of 1980, he and his wife, Kitty, parted after 10 years of marriage (and a few years together before that). Theirs had borne all the external markings of an idyllic existence; Cockburn’s career was successful enough to allow for extensive travel and plenty of time to retreat to their country house

near the Rideau River south of Ottawa. Their daughter, Jenny, was born in 1976. But as with most intense relationships, the marriage isolated Cockburn from other people. "I've always been friendly with people when I met them, but there's a difference between being involved with people and just being nice to them," he explains. "I was never involved except with my wife and daughter. By the time Jenny came along, things were already a bit weird." He describes the separation as "a strange, shocking and interesting thing to have happen in your life. I guess it's not so strange for some people, but it was very far from my life. In the end, from a purely selfish perspective, I think it will have been a good thing because there were a lot of things about myself that I let go." He once wrote love songs containing lines such as, "In your heart where the world comes from/ there you will find me"; a song on *Humans* describes his behavior, as "fascist architecture of my own design."

Kitty and Jenny repaired to the Yukon, and Cockburn- with his head wrenched out of the star fields- moved to Toronto, relying on friends for support and finding himself astounded by the warmth with which he was treated. "I grew up as a loner without much regard for people at all," he admits. "The last year or so has been a period of a flowering of awareness and interest in other people." He landed in the Spadina and College area of downtown Toronto, a neighborhood of hustlers and bohemians where the term "renovation" applies to spirit instead of houses. The healthy street scene fed his music, as did a return to playing in clubs, backing up such friends as jazz singer Beverly Glenn-Copeland and reggae singer Leroy Sibbles. And he discovered the pleasures of dancing to such modern bands as the Specials and Talking Heads. The awkwardness of body that he displayed when he was shyly hunched over his guitar was replaced by a new physical gracefulness, just as his writing exhibited a new simplicity. "Where some people seem fuzzy, his outlines seem leaner and sharper to me," says Kathryn Moses, who has played flute and reeds for Cockburn since 1976. "It's the process of maturing, of reaching 35. When you're 22, you feel like you're going to live forever and you can carry around all these extra words and feelings and junk. The older you become, the excess just sloughs off. And that's what happened to Bruce."

Part Two Still To Come...

We Interrupt all the Y2K Shit to Bring You 1971

The following comes from a chapter on Bruce Cockburn in the 1971 book, *Axes, Chops & Hot Licks*, by Ritchie York.

"I'm a Canadian, true, but in a sense it's more or less by default. Canada is the country I dislike the least at the moment. But I'm not really into nationalism- I prefer to think of myself as being a member of the world.

"The Canadian music business is not yet as rotten as the U.S. scene. But showing signs of catching up."

Words by Bruce Cockburn, rising young star; a best-selling album behind him; soundtrack of one of the most successful Canadian movies in history; former rock band organist; extremely sensitive lyricist; an artist in full creative control of his career; bound to succeed.

One imagines Bruce Cockburn to be many things, most of which he is not. Bruce Cockburn effectively defies description. He is too elusive to be labeled, possessing little or no image. He is Canada's latest addition to the big-time of folkdom. He has yet to achieve international recognition, though you feel it coming when he plays. Yet he seems disinterested in the fame aspect of music-making.

By late 1971, perhaps 1972, Bruce Cockburn will likely have a steady following in the U.S. or Europe. But he will have been an unwilling partner to it all. He is a sensitive young man in an awfully abrasive industry.

Cockburn has risen slowly and with cautious steps through the ranks of folk music. He has climbed to a position only ever held once before- by Gordon Lightfoot. Surprisingly Cockburn doesn't dig Lightfoot. "I've never really been a great fan of Gordon's. We don't do the same music." Everyone loves Lightfoot. Well, don't they? To not like him and worst still, to say so, seems to indicate an admirable if unwise, rebellious spirit.

Bruce Cockburn left from his hometown of Ottawa in 1964 to attend a two-year music course in Boston. "My first introduction to the Canadian scene was in 1966. I came back to Canada and joined an Ottawa group called The Children. We did some original material; I played organ.

"I began writing songs because the group always needed material. We broke up after eighteen months and I drifted from band to band, played harp in a blues band, guitar in an R & B band. Even had a 'psychedelic' group, the Flying Circus, doing my material. Finally in 1969, I got out of it.

"I'd worked as a solo act in Boston, and also in Europe, when I was bumming around. Going solo again was so much less complicated, a lot easier on my head. It meant, too, that I didn't have anyone to cover my mistakes. It takes much less for one person to survive than four or five. I had no sound equipment. My expenses weren't high." A Canada Council grant was also of assistance.

One of Cockburn's most significant successes in 1970 was the music score he wrote for the highly-acclaimed Don Shebib movie, *Goin' Down The Road*.

"A mutual friend of the producer called me up and asked if I'd like to do it. Apparently it was Ian Tyson and myself, but Ian wanted to use his band. They either couldn't afford it, or didn't want a whole band. So I took it on."

As well, there was the limited (though far-reaching) Top Forty radio play on Cockburn's single of "Musical Friends," from his debut album, and the warm reception given his second album, *High Winds White Sky*.

"Most of what I do is not immediately accessible to most people. But some radio stations have been especially helpful. Ottawa wasn't so good. It's mainly hard-core Top Forty up there, and one of the stations is owned by CHUM. We've also got the Maple Leaf System happening in Ottawa, which stands in the way a bit. CHUM-AM are right into the Ted Randal trip (Randal is a Californian program consultant whose clients include CHUM).

"I believe the CRTC has definitely helped me. It's at least drawing everybody's attention to what's happening with Canadian artists. That can only be good."

The Cockburns (Bruce and wife Kitty) have no fixed abode. "We have a truck that we live in or out of, depending on the weather. Both of our parents have farms just outside of Ottawa, and we spend quite a bite of time with them. Usually when I'm working, we stay with friends."

He played the small coffee houses, such as the Onion in Toronto, but there were a lot of times when he was short of work. "I took jobs I wouldn't take now," he admits. "Two months at the Electric Circus in Toronto for example. First act on the bill Friday and Saturday nights. It was a hard place to play, doing a gig like I do."

Probably the incident which put Cockburn into a position of picking and choosing his appearances was the signing of a record contract with the newly formed True North Records, owned by Bernie Finkelstein.

"I'd been out on my own for about a year when I bumped into Gene Martynec, formerly of the Kensington Market in Toronto. We had a couple of coffees, and got to rapping on our idea of what an album should consist of- he from the production side, me from the musical side. We found our ideas were pretty much the same.

"Gene knew Bernie personally, and also knew he was the only person with enough money to make an album. Bernie also wanted to start True North so it seemed a good opportunity to fulfill all aspirations."

Six months after the album was released, Cockburn still liked it, which indicated that it has been no minor artistic triumph. "Put it this way," he says, "I don't dislike it. I don't listen to it... I'm familiar enough with the songs on it, but I was very happy with the way it was produced."

He gives little thought or respect to ambition. "I don't think in terms of becoming famous or rich. If it happens, great. Otherwise, O.K.

“I’m trying to preserve the smallness of my scene as much as possible. If an audience comes in thinking of you as a star, it destroys the relationship you can achieve otherwise. I’ve seen enough of that already to realize where it could lead.”

Marmot Talk

In January 1999, **Jimmy Buffet** recorded Bruce’s song, “Pacing The Cage,” for his forthcoming album titled *Beach House On The Moon*, to be released sometime in 1999. Look for it.

“Pacing The Cage” was also used in the documentary *Whitman Hart: Wrestling With Shadows*. The song was recorded by Tara McAllen for the soundtrack. Originally airing in December 1998, it aired on A&E as recently as March, 1999.

Bruce has been **in the studio** working on his new album. Word from True North is that recording has been going very well. “Excellent” according to one mysterious BMW-riding motorcycle source I spoke with recently. Toumani Diabate (kora player from Mali) came to Toronto to participate in the recording sessions. Some additional recording will be done in Nashville, and mixing will occur in Los Angeles. At the present time, the album is still slated for a late summer release.

What about **tour dates**? Well, perhaps there will be some summer gigs, festivals and such. This is not official fact or rumor, merely slack-jaw yapping from Daniel Keebler. I’ll report information regarding possible tour dates, and more exact album release date information as it becomes available.

Got *River Of Sand* yet?

Bruce Cockburn’s 25th LP Underway

by KAREN BLISS -- Jam!
February 1999

Breakfast In New Orleans, Dinner In Timbuktu, the working title of Bruce Cockburn’s next studio album, might provide a glimpse of its musical direction. Mali kora player Toumani Diabate and American country singer Lucinda Williams will lend their talents to the Canadian artist’s 25th recording.

“There will be all kinds of interesting things on this record but as we record it will become more apparent,” says Bernie Finkelstein, Cockburn’s manager of 30 years and president of his Canadian label True North Records. “Bruce Cockburn does not record the way Celine Dion does, where everything is mapped out. He just goes in and does it.”

Cockburn will co-produce the album in March in a Toronto studio with Colin Linden, with whom he worked on his 1997 gold-selling album, *The Charity Of Night*.

The album will be done with three separate bands, in a matter of weeks, according to Finkelstein.

“We’ll just keep changing bands,” he says. “One band, we call Colin Linden’s Band. They’re actually people that Bruce had taken out on the road in 1991, John Dymond on bass, Gary Craig on drums and Richard Bell on organ. The second grouping he’s going to use is drummer Ben Riley and bassist Steve Lucas, who are his most recent band with Ricky Lazar on percussion. (Thirdly), he’ll also use another bass player, jazz artist George Kollar.”

African kora player Toumani Diabate, whose work is available on Rykodisc, will be flown to Toronto to play on several tracks. Cockburn met the worldclass world musician last year when he spent eight weeks in Mali making the documentary *River Of Sand*, which just aired on Vision TV.

“He went to Mali on behalf of the Unitarian Service Committee (he’s been its spokesperson for 20 years) to investigate the on-going problem that they have in that country with an issue called ‘desertification,’ the whole country’s slowly eroding into a desert,” recounts Finkelstein. “While he was there he spent time with a lot of Malian musicians.”

Lucinda Williams, a good friend of Cockburn’s will also be on the new album, but her part will be recorded in Nashville after the Toronto sessions are completed.

“I think that we’ll just wait and see what will happen,” says Finkelstein of her contribution. “I don’t think the plan is so much to have a duet, but she’ll sing background on several songs. They’ve already spoken and she’s agreed to do that.”

Cockburn is also planning to record three instrumentals for the album. “Bruce is a very fine guitar player,” says Finkelstein. “On a lot of his records he has instrumentals, but I think we’re going to push that envelope a little further on this record.”

The album will be finished in April/May and Finkelstein hopes to release it in Canada (on True North/Universal) in mid-August/September. Rykodisc will release it around the world simultaneously.

Bruce was presented with the **Harry Bolster Memorial Award** on February 4, 1999. Presenting the award are Peggy Bolster and Lawrence Murphy. The award was given to Bruce by USC Canada as an Outstanding Volunteer Of The Year.

Photo: Susan Fisher

Issue Number 33

June 1999

I wasn't always a Christian.

When I was a kid I recited the Lord's Prayer by rote, but it was never explained, and never meant anything to me—"Our Father Who art in Heaven hell would be Thy Name" - even in kindergarten, that seemed impossible. I had a Sunday School vision of God with purple robes, a golden crown, and Santa's snowy hair and beard.

The childhood mythology was outgrown and left behind, to be replaced in adolescence with adult myths; atheism, the limitless power of reason, and so on. But after living on my own for awhile, and travelling a bit, I began to see the rational, tangible world as transparent. I turned to magic, the tarot, drug visions, in the hope of discovering a landscape beyond the veil. These games were supposed to lend a structure to life, to impose order on chaos. They did allow for scattered, fragmentary insights, but that very fragmentation only reinforced the chaotic reality, and knowing that certain powers exist which could apparently be wielded by occult means gave one many opportunities to be afraid. Throughout all this there was the dim awareness that these were games, that however real the forces involved, the feeling of having them at one's command was a destructive illusion.

I met Kitty when I was coming out of this limbo. She had experienced God deeply while a child, had been involved with Christ, and had drifted away somewhat. She showed me ways of looking at some things in the Bible that made it seem as though it might have some value after all. I had previously written it off as an utterly ridiculous document, without having read much of it except the sex and violence taken out of context.

When we decided to be married, it was in a church, according to Kitty's wish. As we stood at the altar, speaking our vows, I was shocked to find that someone *was there!* Some powerful and benign presence, before whom these promises were being made, was gathered about the nave of the church. It was a long time before it came home to me just what that might mean.

Over the next few years, although I continued to be a sort of spiritual dilettante, many things came my way which I now see drew me nearer and nearer to Christ: the books of C.S. Lewis, an encounter with a Montreal Jesus freak who prayed over me with a laying on of hands, the impact of people like Jean Vanier and Mother Theresa and other Christians either seen from afar or met face to face. I began to think of Jesus as some kind of leader/saviour but I still didn't pray. I needed a kind of "cultural revolution" within, but the catalyst was missing.

Personal troubles, and the failure of the false idol ego and of an illusion of strength of character which had never been put to the test, brought me to my knees. I'd been that

way for some time when it came to me that this was a good position from which to ask for help. I prayed, and I was answered. A gradual pressure was brought to bear on the wall I had built of lies, inertia and inhibitions, until finally a section of it fell. In a room in a *pension* in Stockholm, Jesus came into me with an overwhelming rush of joy and love and faith in the future. I saw the risen Christ in all things – the sea, the sky, the scarred faces of people passing....

All the diamonds in this world
that mean anything to me
are conjured up by wind and sunlight
sparkling on the sea

I ran aground in a harbour town
lost the taste for being free
thank God He sent some gull-chased ship
to carry me to sea

Two thousand years and half a world away,
dying trees still will grow greener when you pray

Silver scales flash bright, and fade,
in reeds along the shore
like a pearl in a sea of liquid jade
His ship comes shining
like a crystal swan in a sky of suns
His ship comes shining

The flashes, of course, aren't constant, and don't last forever, being only temporal/temporary incentives to encourage and strengthen faith. The real growth goes on behind the scenes, glimpsed only rarely, without God consulting us about the work He is doing.

On the edge of a ceaselessly shifting universe our lives wink in and out of being. The Kingdom, though, is always coming, always flowing, for whoever of us will take a chance on being part of it. END

From the book *For What Time I Am In This World – Stories From Mariposa*, published in 1977. Edited by **Bill Usher and Linda Page-Harpa**. My thanks to Bill for permission to reprint this passage regarding Bruce.

Gavin's Woodpile

Working out on Gavin's woodpile
safe within the harmony of kin

visions begin to crowd my eyes
like a meteor shower in the autumn skies
and the soil beneath me seems to moan
with a sound like the wind through a hollow bone
and my mind fills with figures like Lappish runes of power...
 and log slams on rough-hewn log
 and a voice from somewhere scolds a barking dog.

I remember a bleak-eyed prisoner
in the Stoney Mountain life-suspension home
you drink and fight and damage someone
and they throw you away for some years of boredom
one year done and five more to go-
no job waiting so no parole
and over and over they tell you that you're nothing...
 and I toss another log on Gavin's woodpile
 and wonder at the lamp-warm window's welcome smile.

I remember crackling embers
coloured windows shining through the rain
like the coloured slicks on the English River
death in the marrow and death in the liver
and some government gambler with his mouth full of steak
saying "if you can't eat the fish, fish in some other lake.
To watch a people die- it is no new thing."
 and the stack of wood grows higher and higher
 and a helpless rage seems to set my brain on fire.

and everywhere the free space fills
like a punctured diving suit and I'm
paralyzed in the face of it all
cursed with the curse of these modern times

Distant mountains, blue and liquid,
luminous like a thickening of sky
flash in my mind like a stairway to life-
a train whistle cuts through the scene like a knife
three hawks wheel in a dazzling sky-
a slow motion jet makes them look like a lie
and I'm left to conclude there's no human answer near...
 but there's a narrow path to a life to come
 that explodes into sight with the power of the sun.

a mist rises as the sun goes down
and the light that's left forms a kind of crown
the earth is bread, the sun is wine

it's a sign of a hope that's ours for all time.

Burritts Rapids- November 17, 1975

St. Thomas Awards Bruce Cockburn Honorary Degree

FREDERICTON, NB Canadian music legend Bruce Cockburn was one of four distinguished honorary degree recipients at St. Thomas University's 89th Spring Convocation Ceremony May 10, 1999. Also receiving honorary degrees were Nova Scotia writer Dr. Sheldon Currie; writer, editor and CBC radio host Eleanor Wachtel; and Knights of Columbus Supreme Knight Virgil Dechant.

Cockburn is one of Canada's leading singer/songwriters whose 30 year career is decorated with 10 Juno's, 18 gold and platinum records and international songwriting awards.

St. Thomas University President Dr. Daniel O'Brien said Cockburn was recognized with a Doctor of Letters not only for his career as one of Canada's top artists but also for his dedication and commitment to humanitarian causes.

"Bruce Cockburn has played a significant role in the fight for social justice around the world," Dr. O'Brien said. "This commitment is evidenced both in his music and through his volunteer efforts."

Among those volunteer efforts is a 1988 OXFAM fact-finding mission in Mozambique and a 1995 return trip to investigate the post-war problem of land mines.

Joining Cockburn in receiving the Doctor of Letters were Dr. Currie and Wachtel. Dr. Currie is a Cape Breton writer who is best known for his novel *The Glace Bay Miners Museum* which was later adapted into the award winning film *Marget's Museum*. *The Glace Bay Miner's Museum* won the CJCB Fiction Award for 1995. Since 1964, Dr. Currie has been on faculty at St. Francis Xavier University. For Dr. Currie, returning to campus was a bit of a homecoming.

"I began my university teaching career at St. Thomas and since this is my final year of teaching it was fitting to end where I began," he said.

Wachtel is one of Canada's best known broadcasters for her award winning work on CBC Radio's *Writers and Company* and *The Arts Today*. She served as one of the editors of the feminist literary quarterly *Room of One's Own* and the west coast editor of *Books and Canada*. Her works have also appeared in *Saturday Night*, *Homemaker's*, *Chatelaine*, *Financial Post*, *Canadian Living*, *The Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star*. In 1995, *Writers & Company* won the coveted CBC award for programming excellence

for the best weekly show broadcast nationally. The judges noted that if they had to choose one hour of radio to take to a desert island, it would be *Writers & Company*.

Dechant received a Doctor of Laws for his longtime leadership in the Knights of Columbus. Since becoming Supreme Knight, Dechant has sought to involve the Knights of Columbus in implementing the programmes of the Holy Fathers and Pope John Paul II.

Recognizing the importance of continuing education in the Catholic faith, Dechant oversaw the establishment of a series of funds to help priest-scholars pursue advanced studies at Pontifical Universities in Rome and Belgium. In 1983 Pope John Paul II named Dechant a Knight Grand Cross in the Order of Pius IX, the highest honour granted to a Catholic layman who is not a head of state. In 1987 he was accorded the title "Gentleman of His Holiness" by Pope John Paul II, an honor which is given for significant service to the Church.

The Convocation ceremony was held in the Aitken University Centre.

Press Release From True North

TORONTO April 6, 1999- Bruce Cockburn entered the studio this month to record his 25th album. Produced by Cockburn and Colin Linden, the new record is currently in progress in Toronto and set for mixing in Los Angeles later this month. The album is scheduled for worldwide release on September 14, 1999.

To date, Cockburn has 10 JUNO's, 18 gold and platinum records, and numerous international songwriting and performance awards to his credit. As well, Cockburn's rich catalogue of material is in demand and has been recorded by such diverse talents as Jerry Garcia, The Barenaked Ladies, Maria Muldaur, Anne Murray, The Rankins, Dan Fogelberg and the Oysterband, to name only a few.

In related news, American singer-songwriter Jimmy Buffett has covered Cockburn's song Pacing The Cage for his forthcoming Island Records release. Canadian singer Tara McLean has also covered Pacing The Cage- her version of the song appeared in A&E network's highly acclaimed presentation of *Wrestling With Shadows*, a bio/documentary of professional wrestler Brett "Hitman" Hart.

Dancing in the Jaws of Change

Part Two of Ian Pearson's article from Maclean's magazine- September 1981...

"Where some people seem fuzzy, his outlines seem leaner and sharper to me," says Kathryn Moses, who has played flute and reeds for Cockburn since 1976. "It's the

process of maturing, of reaching 35. When you're 22, you feel like you're going to live forever and you can carry around all these extra words and feelings and junk. The older you become, the excess just sloughs off. And that's what happened to Bruce."

Cockburn's Christian faith, however, was too strong to be sloughed off. From the beginning, his music explored various forms of spirituality, from Christianity to Taoism. In 1973, he became a committed Christian. His faith has directed his songwriting ever since, although his strident religious imagery has slowly moved to the background of his latest material. "What I am trying to do in my own mind," Cockburn says, "is to take what I know of the world of the spirit and find some place for it in day-to-day life." His Christianity is much more intellectual than the fundamentalism of recent converts such as Bob Dylan and Cliff Richard. Like writers Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene, Cockburn uses Christianity as a solid footing against the disintegration of spiritual values in the 20th century. Unlike the bullying proselytizing of Dylan- whose statements like "You're going to have to serve somebody" are offered more as threats than as spiritual options-Cockburn's mustard-seed role is presented by him as, "I've got this information; if you want it, here it is."

Nevertheless, Cockburn's faith has been a liability. "I think his Christianity turned off a lot of people," says Gene Martynec, producer of all Cockburn's albums before *Inner City Front* (which Cockburn produced himself with Finkelstein's assistance). "Some people the other day asked me about Bruce: 'How do you deal with that?' And I said, 'You don't have to. It's just not so evident anymore.'" Friends do not consider Cockburn's religious commitment a barrier in relationships. "The Christianity is there," says bass player Dennis Pendrith, who has backed Cockburn intermittently for 12 years. "He's always willing to talk about it, but he'll never bring it up unless somebody else does. Occasionally when we're travelling, he'll read from the Bible or study, but it's never something he'd push on somebody."

What prevents his religious views from being heavy-handed is the tempering influence of his keen intellect. While many pop musicians read nothing deeper than Billboard charts, Cockburn's exotic literary influences range from Christian fantasist Charles Williams and earthy French poet Blaise Cendrars to science-fiction writer Samuel Delany. As Robert Christgau wrote in *The Village Voice*, "Cockburn is like a smart, nice but not especially hip/cool English prof."

Cockburn's faith and his artistic imagination are part of a private world that has been kept separate from his cheerful exterior since childhood. "He talks about himself as a schizophrenic in that he has two worlds that are always fighting for attention," explains Pendrith. "One's a total fantasy world: every once in a while you'll get glimpses of his perception of a situation and it'll be totally bizarre. He says it's a very constant struggle for him to keep that in the back of his consciousness rather than in the forefront. I think that strangeness about him makes him a great artist." Even though one's first impressions of Cockburn are of a thoroughly open and nice person, when he talks of himself a portrait of a loner emerges. "For me, the lack of involvement with people was a gap in my knowledge that has existed from childhood on," he recalls. That childhood was a normal

middle-class upbringing. The eldest of three sons of an Ottawa radiologist, Cockburn was exposed to classical music at an early age. After dabbling indifferently with the trumpet and the clarinet, he settled on the guitar. "I've got this picture of myself when I was 12," he remembers. "I'm standing on my bed as if I was onstage, playing this cardboard guitar that I made. My best friend and I used to fantasize and play these games like we were big rock 'n' roll stars. So obviously what I do now is consistent with what was in my mind then."

A short stint as a street husker in Europe followed high school, then he entered the Berklee School of Music in Boston and studied composition for a year-and-a-half. On his return to Ottawa in 1966, he played what he terms "psychotic rock 'n' roll" with a number of bands. "He was playing electric guitar, spitting blood through his harmonica and singing blues," reminisces Murray McLauchlan. "Bruce in those days was a mean, rotten, aggressive kid. He's mellowed a lot and become a lot more knowledgeable and certainly more measured in his attack on the world. I don't think his ferocity is any the less: Bruce is the kind of person who has ideas about how things should be and uses his art to go out and see if they can't be changed."

Cockburn switched to performing solo in 1969 simply because "everything seemed to go fine when I was playing by myself but it didn't work as well when I was playing with bands." Through Gene Martynec, he linked up with Bernie Finkelstein as manager and in 1969 the album *Bruce Cockburn* became the first release of Finkelstein's True North Records. The small scale on which Cockburn worked allowed him to produce the music he wanted instead of catering to record company dictates. "Bruce doesn't feel commercial pressure because he's always been in the black," says Finkelstein. "He's like Woody Allen in a way. While he doesn't make a lot of money from his art in the sense of being No. 1, he doesn't spend a lot either."

His fourth album, *Night Vision* (released in 1973), featured an electric guitar on many of the tracks and was his first album to receive a gold record (sales of 50,000) in Canada. "*Night Vision* was noticeably more attention-getting than the other albums and that made me a bit nervous," he recalls. "I was afraid of taking the extra step." Instead, he settled into a niche of jazz-inflected tranquil music and by the mid-'70s he could easily sell out 2,000 seat auditoriums anywhere in Canada. But his loyal cult following had built-in limitations. The audiences wanted to be placated- but not necessarily challenged- by the music. "I'd be up on stage playing and I'd have no idea of why I was there and felt totally stupid," Cockburn says of the three-year period before he formed the nucleus of his band in 1979. "I'd lost touch with what it felt like to play for people and why they were there. And I also just got bored doing the same thing over and over."

The cure for his artistic ennui was travel. Tours of Japan in 1977 and Italy in 1979 put him back in touch with audiences who responded to his music not with silent adulation but with singing and dancing. And he was exposed to a world of random violence that was light-years removed from the pleasant house in the country. In 1979, when he was playing near Padua, Italy, a crowd of students started shooting out the windows of the hall. At another Italian concert, the stage was searched for a bomb during the

performance. “The audiences were so completely excitable and wild and noisy and crazy,” he recalls. “As far as I could tell, everybody seemed happy with the shows. We didn’t get killed, which is what happens when they are not happy with the shows.”

The jangled world he witnessed seeped into his lyrics. The humans of *Humans* are paramilitary police and guerrillas; *Inner City Front* espies “private armies on suburban lawns” and the “hollow darkness in which nations dress.” Nowhere is the change more apparent than in two songs written in Japan. *Nanzen Ji*, written in 1977, is a placid haiku about a temple in Kyoto: “white stone lake/ crystal clear/ I walk on the voices of nightingales.” In stark contrast, 1979’s *Tokyo* is a fragmented collage based on a violent car crash: “Comic book violence and escaping steam/ Grey suited business men pissing against the wall/ Cut to crumbling guardrail, slow motion car fall.”

None of this anxiety is evident as Cockburn listens to the complete playback of *Inner City Front* for the first time. On a fetching track called *And We Dance*, Kathryn Moses’ flute soars on a melody line so light it threatens to ascend forever. The words echo the contentment displayed by Cockburn as he relishes a rare calm moment in the studio: “We’ve got this time/ We’ve got this rhythm/ Till the whole thing comes apart/ Like light through a prism.” In a world composed of discordant melodies, which resist any unifying rhythms, the prism of Bruce Cockburn’s imagination is a wider spectrum than most. And though the shafts of light may be bent by his conflicting planes of congeniality and loneliness, faith and morality, rhythm and melody, the fractured lens remains one of the brightest in the dark shadow known as popular music.

Tour Dates

June 4	Syracuse, NY	Styleen’s
June 5	Elmer, NJ	Appel Farm Music Festival
July 4	Breckenridge, CO	Riverwalk Center
August 2	Dublin, Ireland	The HQ
August 3	Dublin, Ireland	The HQ
December 1	Palo Alto, CA	Stanford University*
December 2	Santa Rosa, CA	Luther Burbank Center*

The Greenbelt Festival will be held in Cheltenham, U.K., July 30-August 1. Bruce will perform on at least one of these days.

*These dates are part of the Campaign for a Landmine Free World- Singer/Songwriter Series, scheduled to include performances by Emmylou Harris, Jackson Browne, Steve Earle, Nancy Griffith and Patti Griffin.

News From The Flea

Kings Of Love by **Blackie & The Rodeo Kings** – Contains a cover of Bruce’s song, “You Don’t Have to Play The Horses.” Expected to be released on June 15, 1999, on True North Records.

“Stephen Fearing, Colin Linden, and Junkhouse’s Tom Wilson fill out this Bruce Cockburn song with just the right amount of instrumentation to uncover the ominous edge that the original voice-and-banjo recording hinted at. Simultaneously nimble and hard-hitting. “ -John Sakamoto, JAM!

•••

CORRECTIONS, PLEASE

A ghost in the machine (I’m not saying if that means my brain, my computer, or Doug visiting at midnight) provided a few name-related errors on page four of the last issue. Please note the corrections printed in bold type:

“Pacing The Cage” was also used in the documentary ***Hitman Hart: Wrestling With Shadows***. The song was recorded by **Tara MacLean** for the soundtrack. Originally airing in December 1998, it aired on A&E as recently as March, 1999.

•••

Toumani Diabate did not make the recording sessions for Bruce’s coming album. Instead, Kora player **Daniel Janke**, who currently resides in Whitehorse, Yukon, will appear on the album.

Dan Broome Writes Letter To Editor

Because I am a low-key, soft-spoken, introverted sort, many rumours have been flying that I am no longer around The Big Smoke (Toronto to you Yanks). I think most of the rumours were started by the Notorious Kool Moe Dee Flavour Flave. I’m here to set the record straight... Let this serve as my announcement to The World that I live and breath in the streets of Toronto. I am seen daily by hundreds of people. I answer the phone. Perhaps not as much as I *used* to, but such are the rewards of advancement. That is all... Thank you. Howdy, Bruce!

Issue Number 34

August 1999

Hugh Marsh was born in Montreal in 1955. Being an “Airforce brat” his family moved frequently, finally landing in Ottawa. After finishing high school there he moved to Toronto in 1977, where he has been since. I talked to Hugh by phone in June, 1999.

How did your career with the violin come about?

I started when I was five. I studied classically from the age of five to twenty. When I went to high school I took up saxophone and that got me interested in improvisation. I studied saxophone from around the age of thirteen to the age of twenty. I just got interested in other types of music through playing the saxophone: R&B, funk, jazz. It was actually my father who said 'Why don't you try doing some of that stuff you're doing on the saxophone on the violin?' In the beginning I didn't want to have anything to do with it. One day he just showed up with an amplifier and a pickup and said 'Why don't you put your violin through this?' It was little bit by little bit. I was playing in a rock band at the time. The drummer came over to the house (I had the violin hooked up) and said that I had to play a solo on one of the tunes we were playing that coming weekend. That started me on that. It took over. I had a lot more technique available to me on violin. I was getting frustrated playing saxophone, not so much technique-wise, but my sound. I didn't like my sound. I wanted to sound like Mike Brecker and I ended up sounding like Paul Desmond [laughs]. Then I just decided I'd pay more attention to the violin. I played in various fusion bands; a big band called Solid Brass. I played both saxophone and violin in that. Then everything expanded and I got to a point where I couldn't do anything else in Ottawa, so about three or four of us moved down to Toronto in 1977. The idea was, in my head anyway, to come down here and make it big as a jazz musician [laughs] which didn't really transpire. I was down here and I went up to visit my folks [in Ottawa] at Christmas in '79. While I was there a friend of mine who was a jazz guitar player, a guy named Roddy Elias, phoned me up and said he was doing this benefit for Children's Hospital, did I want to come by. I went and played, and that's where I met Bruce. He was up visiting his folks as well at Christmas. Roddy was a friend of his from years ago. We got introduced and Bruce said he would stick around to see what we were doing. He asked me if I had any gigs and I told him I had a gig here over the holidays with this jazz quartet that I was in. He said he would come down and see me. On that Monday night he came down and called me over at the end of the first set and said 'Would you like to go on the road?' That was the start of that.

Was he getting ready to do an album soon or about to go on tour?

He was going on the road. He had just released *Dancing In The Dragon's Jaws* and it was originally set to be a trio: Bob DiSalle, Dennis Pendrith and Bruce. Then he just asked me to come along. As far as I know he wasn't really thinking of adding anybody. He thought it would be a good sound I guess.

Can you recall what you were thinking or how you felt about this? What did you know about Bruce Cockburn?

Absolutely nothing. I was very entrenched at that time in the jazz scene and I had blinders on. I wanted to play this type of music [jazz] and that's all I wanted to do. I didn't want to do anything else. After Bruce had asked me, friends were saying I should check out some of his records because there were a couple of people who had played on a few of his records who had jazz backgrounds (Freddie Stone, Kathryn Moses). I listened to a couple of the records and I really liked them. I had no idea who Bruce was.

When you finished the Dancing In The Dragon's Jaws tour you went into the studio for Humans.

Yes, while we were doing the *Dancing In The Dragon's Jaws* tour Bruce had already introduced a few of the songs in rehearsal. I think we were actually playing them during that tour—we *definitely* were. Grim Travellers, How I spent My Fall Vacation, Tokyo—we were doing a bunch of stuff that hadn't been released yet on that tour.

Did you tour behind Humans?

Yes. Basically, from that point on until about 1985, I did every record and every tour with Bruce—from '80 to '85.

With the exception of Stealing Fire.

Right.

When you went into the studio to record Humans, was this your first big experience in a studio?

No, I'd done lots of studio stuff, mainly in Ottawa. But it was a first for a *major* artist anyway. In Ottawa I'd gotten myself about as high as I could go in that scene and that involved a lot of studio work with different people— local artists and a bunch of TV stuff. I'd sub for people in the National Arts Centre Orchestra. I was playing gigs with Mel Torme, Anne Murray, Dionne Warwick, and Rod Stewart. They'd hire strings for background for live performances.

Inner City Front: Can you tell me about the cover photo?

It's a restaurant that was directly opposite where the old True North offices used to be on Queen Street East. Everybody used to go over there for lunch. It was a really nice place with a patio and vine yards. They had great sandwiches. I'd drop into the office to see what was going on and then go over there for lunch.

It appears as though everyone in the photo is in some kind of military garb.

Bruce had gotten guys from the reserves to come in for the photograph. I'm not sure if it was Bruce's idea or the photographer George Whiteside's idea.

Italy, 1982:

We did four different concerts. It was a duo tour. It was four shows stretched over two weeks or something like that. Kind of a luxurious way to tour. [laughs] I think Bruce was going to do it solo and at the last minute changed his mind and we toured as a duo. The show in Prato was inside the walls of some weird, old medieval castle. There was a European Cup soccer match on that Italy was involved in so the promoter said he was

going to throw back the start time because there was no sense in having a concert before 10:30pm when there was a soccer match on. Nobody would show up, or they would show up late. So we all went out to dinner, and didn't show up at the venue until ten o'clock. We arrived, and of course everybody was there wondering what the hell was going on and why weren't we on yet. They were getting a bit antsy. We went on and played and I remember them being really rambunctious because we were *really* late [laughs]. I think it was actually slated for 8pm.

This was one of only four dates.

It was like even *now*, Bruce would go out with the band, take a bit of a break and then maybe go out and do two weeks worth of solo shows. His songs work in any format basically. They're still extremely strong songs even when reduced to guitar and voice. It shows the strength of the songs.

Hoop Dancer:

Coming from where I come from with the other music that I play I tended to like the things that were slightly outside for Bruce. I think that was one of the first spoken-word things that I remember being involved with and I really liked the idea of it. It's like some kind of peyote thing. I liked how that tune was put together, and not just because I had the chance to blow on it. I liked the approach to the song. I'm always a little bit on the fringe. Bruce writes some beautiful songs from a singer/songwriter standpoint. The things I enjoyed *playing* on and having fun with were a little whackier.

Was there a time you felt things weren't interesting enough for you?

The only time that ever happened to me with Bruce was, after a two year hiatus, I came back and on that tour [*World Of Wonders*] I ended up playing a lot of keyboards. That was sort of frustrating for me. It took me away from playing violin. The nice thing about Bruce live was that you were allowed to open up and go with stuff. He was always very generous as far as solo space and being able to stretch during the songs. It was a really great working environment for me.

Recording sessions:

It was never a case of introducing new songs just before we went in to rehearse. It was always a case of Bruce having written new songs that would have been performed on the previous tour. So they would always be well-rehearsed before we went in. Bruce's approach, I'm sure even to this day, is that you go in and basically everything is live off the floor. It isn't like bass, drums, guitar—and then add overdub. It's more getting the finished thing down. Then if there are any overdubs to do, do them. The entire band would be on the floor at the same time. Solos would be the same deal—you would just play as if it was being recorded live. Only *then* if you didn't like something would you go back and change it. The idea was to always do things as if it were a live performance. In fact I'm sure that a lot of Bruce's vocals are first or second takes from all of us playing together. It's really quite rare that he would overdub a vocal.

During the time Stealing Fire was being recorded you were working on your album, The Bear Walks, which in part explains your absence from that album.

There comes a time when Bruce likes to switch things up a bit. He would decide he was going to take a different approach, get a new sound, look for other players. I recommended my brother for that gig.

Stolen Land:

I remember working on the tune over at his house. When I was growing up I was heavy into a lot of black music, a lot of funk stuff. *The Bear Walks* was written almost entirely on clavinet. I used to love the way Stevie Wonder played it. I still use that to *write* on today. [Regarding *Stolen Land*] it just came out of me with that funk edge. I like that a lot. I used to listen to James Brown, Parliament, Funkadelic and Sly & The Family Stone. Some of the slant on some of those chords—that's probably what comes from me in that tune. I think Bruce was looking for something a bit different in that song in an aggressive way, but aggressive *groove*-wise.

Tour memories:

We had a double show in LA, and I started feeling really ill. I'd become completely dehydrated. Bernie took me to the hospital afterwards and the doctor said 'Oh my God. Basically you have no fluids in your body.' I remember they stuck me full of all this saline solution and glucose and blah, blah, blah. I wasn't taking very good care of myself. I remember saying to myself that I just had to make it through the show—make it through the show. After the first one I remember thinking I wasn't going to make it.

The things I remember the most about touring is being in interesting places. I still love touring in Italy. I have a fascination with the country anyway. The people have a nice sense of priorities as far as life goes. Taking time for basic but essential things like food, wine, music and conversation.

I mostly remember playing and having fun on stage—the musical interaction.

A fun gig in Germany:

It was a strange, quadruple bill. It was Brian Auger (the Hammond organ player from England), Chaka Khan, The Fixx and Bruce. It was this amazing studio television show. There were four concert stages, one at each corner. In the middle was this huge open bar where the television audience sits and drinks beer. Basically it was set up where Bruce would play a tune, The Fixx plays two tunes, Chaka Khan plays a tune, Brian Auger plays two tunes, and then it switched. It was the most bizarre cast of characters. A strange musical grouping. Pretty far-flung. But, I found that very interesting. It was a lot of fun.

I enjoyed the places we went. I like travelling. I like seeing different cultures. Geographically I like seeing different countrysides.

What were your feelings going into your first album, The Bear Walks, 1984?

It was good. The way I work is I amass a bunch of ideas and songs over a course of time. I'm a bit of a procrastinator, so what happens is I get too much information in my brain and I have to get something out. So I'm happy to get that stuff out of my head. It was also exciting because I got to work with one of my heroes which was Michael Brecker, the saxophone player. I'd actually had that album written for about three years. It was one of those things where it was a good thing to get it out. It was nice to go 'Okay, this is what I do'—separate from how people might have known me as a sideman.

Next was Shaking The Pumpkin in 1987. Was this another case of having some tunes backed up in your head?

Yes, but a little less so. It was interesting because I wanted to get away from the strict jazz fusion thing that I'd done on the first record. There are quite a few spoken-word things on that record. I'm quite fascinated how that can be used in a musical setting. It was adventurous and fun for me. I got a little more involved in the recording process on that one.

In 1996 you released Songs For My Mother And Father and a Nick Buzz CD called Circo.

Songs For My Mother And Father was basically an anniversary present for my parents. My mom feels she could find maybe one tune that she likes on each of my records, and that's it [laughs]. So, we were talking one day and she said it would be nice if I'd make a record of songs that she likes and I said 'Send me down a list' [laughs]. So they did, and I chose a bunch of different things. It was basically done in one day—recorded one day and mixed the next. It was really nice to do. [Players included Mary Margaret O'Hara, Martin Tielli and Jonathan Goldsmith. The CD includes "Amazing Grace," which I first heard live in December 1993 on the CBC program *Hot Ticket* as part of a Cockburn Christmas show.]

Nick Buzz is basically a very strange quartet. You could call it indulgent, too, if you *wanted* [laughs]. The reason it came about is that I got called to do this track for a Joni Mitchell tribute record. The guys I hired were Jon Goldsmith, Rob Pilch and Martin Tielli. We did this Joni Mitchell tune called *The River*. We all really liked playing with each other and we thought it would be fun to do a record. It's a very bizarre record—people either love it or they hate it. It's extremely interesting, I think.

You started touring with Loreena McKennitt in 1990. Has it been steady touring with her since then?

It goes on and off, but when it is on, it's *on* for quite a substantial time. It's like a month in Canada, two months in the U.S., three months in Europe and then a month in

Australia/New Zealand. She's basically popular everywhere in the world right now. If she *wanted* to she could be touring endlessly. Then she's prone to taking like a year hiatus. The last few records we've done at Real World, over at Peter Gabriel's place. They're usually quite long, drawn-out affairs. I think I was there two and a half months myself in total. I think she was there for a year and a half. It sort of goes like that... or we'll get called out of the blue, 'Okay, I'm going to Italy tomorrow. Let's go.' Generally they're pretty large tours. In order to pay for them you've got to be out for awhile. [Hugh has recorded on the last five records with LM.]

You mentioned when we met a few months ago that the long road trips are getting to be old news.

Yes, right now the most important things to me is I'm working on a new record. I'd like to get four tunes in workable order and start shopping them around to see what I can get. That's the main thing right now. I'm also working with a band called the Montuno Police, which is a Latin Jazz band. It's lead by this guy named Rick Lazar who plays on Bruce's new record, which isn't out yet. We just did a CD release last week for a new record of his. There's a lot of really world class players in the band.

Looking back on the last twenty years, what do think about it in regards to your career and your music.

I've been extremely fortunate is what I think about it. I've gotten to play with an incredibly diverse group of people and a lot of extremely talented people. From a musician's standpoint you can't really ask for much more than that. I've been in a lot of lovely musical situations and have had great interactions with people whose work I admire. People who are fun, not only as musicians, but as people. I've been really lucky that way. I can make a living doing what I like to do best. I get to travel, which is an amazing thing. Those are all wonderful things. You can't knock that. It's been fun for the last little while. Let's hope it'll be as fun for the *next* twenty....

HUGH MARSH

...recently played on a Dan Fogelberg Christmas album, expected to be out later this year. It contains original and traditional songs. "The reason I got hired for that is he is a huge fan of Bruce's. He knows my work from Bruce."

...played with Bonnie Raitt at the Sky Dome in Toronto recently as an opener for Eric Clapton.

...toured this year as part of **The Steve Bell Band**. Joining him in the band was his brother, Fergus Marsh. A live CD and video titled *Steve Bell Band Live*, will be released from this tour in September. In Canada try HMV music or local Christian bookstores. Mail order from the label at 800-854-3499 or 204-774-3715, or via their website at www.signpostmusic.com.

...was recently in Turkey with Ishan Ozgen playing at a concert celebrating the 700th anniversary of the Ottoman Empire. He's planning to work on a record with Ishan hopefully the spring of next year.

...is headed back to Turkey for a jazz festival in September, 1999.

...played on the *Armageddon* soundtrack.

Regarding Mary Margaret O'Hara: "There's only one record and I think it's one of the best records ever made. It's called *Miss America*. I think it's now being redistributed by Koch Records in the U.S. If you ever see it pick it up. It's an astounding record." [You'll find Mary Margaret's vocals on Bruce's song "Shipwrecked At The Stable Door."]

To obtain a copy of *Songs For My Mother And Father*, send an email to hugmars@interlog.com, or write to:

Cool Papa Music
336 Palmerston Blvd
Toronto, ON M6G 2N6

Breakfast In New Orleans

Dinner in Timbuktu

The following is a preview of Bruce Cockburn's 25th album, scheduled for release on September 14, 1999. Produced by Bruce Cockburn and Colin Linden. Tracks, in order, are:

When You Give It Away (4:53) · New Orleans barbecue sauce all over this tune. Hop up and get down. Harmonies from Lucinda Williams. "Slid out of my dreams like a baby out of the nurses hands on to the hard floor of day."

Mango (5:00) · The guitar work is reminiscent of Red Ships Take Off In The Distance from *1978s Further Adventures Of*. A gentle, exotic, mesmerizing song with kora playing from Daniel Janke and harmonies from Margo Timmins. "Humid gleaming precious well / Love to drink that water / Parallel worlds when the sun goes down / The atmosphere grows hotter."

Last Night Of The World (4:51) · The album's first single, with harmonies from Jonell Mosser. "I learned as a child not to trust in my body / I've carried that burden through my life."

Isn't That What Friends Are For? (5:31) · A hauntingly beautiful song that includes well-executed vocals from Lucinda Williams placed in just the right places. "Nothing is sure / Nothing is pure / And no matter who we think we are / Everybody gets the chance to be nothing."

Down To The Delta (6:16) · I think of the *Waterwalker* soundtrack when I hear this instrumental. Vibrant and full of energy it takes you on a journey spear-headed with fine guitar playing. Straight forward with drums, bass and percussion.

The Embers Of Eden (5:39) · I remember the first time I heard this song I was standing in the back of the Mt. Baker Theatre in Bellingham, Washington in 1997. The recorded version does not disappoint. Bruce hits all the guitar licks that made it tasty live. Harmonies from Jonell Mosser.

Blueberry Hill (4:58) · Near smack dab in the middle of the album comes this gem. Cheers to Bruce for slipping in this curve. Yup, THE Blueberry Hill. You know, you found your thrill there... The song is reborn, sung as it was likely meant to be, with feeling. Gone is the commercialism that likely made the song a big hit in it's infancy. Margo Timmins sweetens the mix even more.

Let The Bad Air Out (5:49) · To truly understand the reason why this song is so worthy you would first have to have heard the version turned out during the *Nothing But A Burning Light* tour in 1991. It was then more of a romping country blues song. This recorded version is as far to the other end as you could get. One of the hipper tunes *ever* from Bruce and one of my favorites from the album. It's a mixture of subtle rap, blues, cool vocals, acoustic guitar, smooth percussion, jazzy horns and an opening line to get your attention: "The judge said to the hooker / Can you come out to play / I've been condemning people all day long / That's how I get paid."

Look How Far (5:34) · Ronnie Dee's favorite song from the album J. Harmonies from Lucinda Williams. "And I picture us in this light / Friendship a fine silver web / Stretched across golden smoky haze / And this is simple / And this is grace."

Deep Lake (6:49) · When I hear this instrumental I am reminded of Michael Hedges, who passed away in 1997. It's as though his spirit worked its way into Bruce's guitar. In addition to Bruce on acoustic guitar, we find Rick Lazar on percussion and George Koller on Bass and Diruba. (This instrument is one of the most popular stringed instruments of the bowed variety in Northern India. It is a very clever marriage of the Sitar and the Sarangi. Its fretted finger board resembles that of a Sitar. Its belly, upon which the main bridge rests, is covered with goat skin.)

Use Me While You Can (7:12) · I envision this song playing over the closing credits of some epic big screen film made in one of the great deserts of the world. The song is powerful in the same way as Strange Waters from his previous album, *The Charity Of Night*—starting slow and gradually building to the finish. Beautiful imagery in lines such as "Pearl held in black fingers / Is the moon behind dry trees." Another image taken from Bruce's trip to Mali in February, 1997: "Under the wan disc of sand-masked sun / A woman grins- spits expertly into the path of a struggling black beetle" and then casually adding, "Six feet away." It lures a grin from me every time. Giving this song additional

edge is the use of the resonator guitar and the harmonies of Lucinda Williams. Daniel Janke's kora playing lends a fine exotic flavor.

Drums: Gary Craig, Ben Riley
Bass: John Dymond, George Koller, Steve Lucas
Dilruba: George Koller
Organ: Richard Bell
Percussion: Rick Lazar
Harmonica: Carlos Del Junco
Trombone: Stephen Donald
Acoustic, Resonator, 12-string & Electric Guitars: Bruce Cockburn
Electric Guitar: Colin Linden
Kora: Daniel Janke
Keyboard: Janice Powers
Handclaps: Sally Sweetland, Bruce Cockburn
Harmonies: Lucinda Williams, Margo Timmins, Jonell Mosser
Duet Vocal: Margo Timmins

My thanks to Ron Decker and Bernie Finkelstein for the advance CD, making this preview possible.

Daniel

Things You Ought To Know

Wolves is the title of a new IMAX film now showing in theatres on several continents. While Bruce's song **The Whole Night Sky** is not included in the movie, you'll find it on the CD soundtrack released on Silverwave Records (*Wolves*, SD 920). It is available in record stores or through the label's website at www.silverwave.com. They may also be faxed in Colorado at 303-443-0877.

Discover the world of *Wolves* by plane, helicopter, on foot and through time. Meet the pack and find out what really goes on in the wolf world where family members play, hunt, travel, howl and struggle to survive after a 70 year absence from their natural habitat. *Wolves* was filmed on locations that include Yellowstone National Park, Montana, Idaho, Alaska and Quebec. It is narrated by Robbie Robertson.

Sales of the CD help benefit the National Wildlife Federation.

• • •

Bruce was in **Vietnam and Cambodia** from June 12 to June 26. The trip was organized by The Campaign For A Landmine Free World in association with The Vietnam Veterans Of America Foundation. Bruce was part of an entourage looking at ongoing rehabilitation programs for landmine victims and ways to enhance existing initiatives in the region.

• • •

The Greenbelt concert date in the U.K. was July 31, 1999.

•••

North Country, by George Hamilton IV (RCA, LSP-4517). This album, released in 1971, contains a cover of Bruce's song Goin' Down The Road. Liner notes indicate that he also played guitar on "all our Toronto sessions."

•••

The October issue of the newsletter may be a bit late as I will be travelling the last half of September and into the first week of October.

Fall Tour Dates

September 18	New York City, NY	The Bottom Line
September 21	Westmont, NJ	Westmont Theatre
September 23	Boston, MA	The Somerville Theatre*
September 28	Chicago, IL	Martyr's
September 30	Windsor, ON	The Chrysler Theatre
October 1	Waterloo, ON	The Humanities Theatre
October 7	St. Catharines, ON	The Sean O'Sullivan Theatre

* This will be a taping for the radio program E-Town

Bruce will be doing a limited number of solo dates in North America until February 2000. Starting February 2000 there will be an extensive North American tour with a band. Bruce will be back in Europe during parts of October and November 1999 for some solo dates. Details to come.

Issue Number 35 October 1999

Secret location. Private concert. Invitation only. This was the buzz going around Seattle. The local radio station (KMTT) was about to host Bruce as part of a promotional tour for *Breakfast In New Orleans Dinner In Timbuktu*, and they were putting together a small gathering of listeners to attend the event.

Arriving at the secret location, which actually was the Columbia City Theatre, we found a building no bigger than a house. But wait, it was much more than that. The building was an old vaudeville theatre built in 1919 and was only recently purchased by its present owner. In fact, it was in the midst of a remodel. Additionally, its main function now is that of a recording studio.

When I first poked my head in the front door out of the bright Seattle sunlight, my first thought was of The House of Blues in New Orleans, where I had seen Bruce and band a few years ago. Granted, the Columbia City Theatre has a way to go to reach the same level of voodoo atmosphere, but the groundwork is there.

After walking the neighborhood for awhile we entered through the back of the theatre into the recording studio area. There was a large window that separated the studio from the theatre and through that window was Bruce running through a soundcheck on the small stage. Studio folks were setting levels and removing noises from this source and that source. The performance was to be taped for broadcast on KMTT later that same day. Lots of action, as chairs were being set up, food was brought in, and radio station people were milling about. Bruce was accompanied by Ryko's National Promotion Manager from Salem, helping direct the activity at hand.

Eventually 150 people poured into the small theatre and took their seats (half of them in chairs, half of them on the floor). The local DJ introduced Bruce, and he appeared from behind the audience, down the aisle and onto the stage. The format was interview, song, interview, song...

The lighting was low and the feeling in the small setting was personal. The theatre owner told me he was quite excited to have gotten the opportunity to have Bruce play his theatre.

Before the noon hour was over five songs were played: Last Night Of The World, Mango, Isn't That What Friends Are For, Let The Bad Air Out and Use Me While You Can.

All too short for most, the whirlwind gig was over and the house emptied. Bruce retreated to the studio portion of the building and prepared to hit the road.

Cockburn Plays Benefit In Kosovo

KAREN BLISS– Jam! Music Bruce Cockburn has spent the latter part of the summer raising awareness for his own cause, his forthcoming album, Breakfast In New Orleans Dinner In Timbuktu (due September 14), but this week he will head to Kosovo to participate in The Return, a series of benefit concerts, September 10 to 12, organized by actress Vanessa Redgrave.

The legendary Canadian singer-songwriter, whose most recent causes have been desertification in Mali and the landmine treaty (there are 100-million landmines still in the ground), will perform at one of the shows only, in Prestina, Kosovo. The other two concerts are being held in the capital city of Skopja, in Yugoslav Macedonia.

Phillip Glass, Lulu, the Martha Graham (Dance) Company, as well as some African artists are also on the bill. "I'm one of the few artists at the pop end of the spectrum," says Cockburn. "It's a strange hodge-podge, but the invitation was so interesting that I couldn't say no.

"Part of the attraction is to get an opportunity to first-hand glimpse of what we're only able to read about in the newspaper, but the downside is, it's such a short glimpse that it

won't afford very much insight. But at least the smell and feel of the place will be real for me. It's such a newsy place right now and the scene of so much human drama that it's one that I would like to get a taste of."

The benefit is actually in aid of Kosovo artists, the cultural community which was completely demolished. "There are artists, classical players, who lost their instruments, which are virtually impossible to replace," Cockburn explains. "The whole cultural infrastructure was destroyed so I think the idea is to get that back on its feet and, in doing so, that will help pull the society together."

Of all the causes in which he's been involved, Cockburn says he's seen the most tangible results with the landmine issue. "Otherwise, I learned right away with the Central American, and, to a lesser degree, Native American issues, that you're not going to live to see the results of your work.

"The economic system in the world is being changed around us, in a negative way, a little more everyday, but not by people like me, and not by the people who are working on a more just arrangement. That economic relationship is at the bottom of a lot of what goes on. But if you don't have anybody (helping), then they'll never be a difference," he reasons.

"You have to see yourself as part of a continuum, a part of a team effort, and the results of your work will be felt at some point in the future, if everything works the way it's supposed to. We have to trust that. You have to assume the work is worthwhile, even if there are no results. It's better to be working for good than not to be working for good."

You Don't Have To Play The Horses

Cockburn Plays Cheltenham Racecourse
Greenbelt '99 - Saturday 31st July - England
by Richard Hoare

Bruce Cockburn removed his glasses and wiped his face with a towel. Perspiring from the combined effect of the stage lights and the summer heat in the enclosed "big top" tent, he reflected on global warming. Cockburn described having recently visited Cambodia, near the equator, where the temperature was the same as Toronto but in Cambodia the humidity was the same number as the temperature! He had visited the beautiful southeast Asian country with its soft light and 12th century ruins of Angkor Wat riddled with 20th century bullet holes, in connection with landmines. He went on to explain how the Cambodian population has suffered the loss of life and limb through these horrific discs. "I don't know why I'm telling you this stuff," Bruce adds, "other than to get you into a morose state of mind for this song." He proceeded to deliver a sublime *Pacing The Cage* on resonator guitar.

Bruce made a solo appearance at Greenbelt, his first since 1995, with a new Manzer acoustic guitar. The first of the new songs off **Breakfast In New Orleans Dinner In Timbuktu**, still six weeks away from being released, was a strident *When You Give It Away*. Other new numbers included a beautiful *Look How Far* (my favourite song from the new album) and the ventilating street rap of *Let The Bad Air Out* with Bruce's voice in place of the trombone and harmonica on the record.

The set included some trusty stalwarts such as *Creation Dream* with a stinging guitar solo, *Night Train* with a scat vocal ending, a vehement *Call It Democracy* and also *The Whole Night Sky* and *Soul Of A Man* on resonator guitar. There were also two welcome surprises. The first was *Understanding Nothing* which Bruce says he hasn't revisited before because of the hassle of relearning the lyrics from his singing on the CD, which are different from those on the sleeve of **Big Circumstance**. Then there was a stupendous *Dialogue With The Devil* from his 1972 album **Sunwheel Dance** (and live on **Circles In The Stream**) with Cockburn hitting those high vocal notes and wringing the guitar notes out of the new Manzer. Cockburn introduced the latter with..."Every now and again I get people coming up to me saying I liked the set but you don't play any of the old stuff. This hasn't been played for a while but perhaps it is relevant again now!"

Bruce closed with the first single off the new album, *Last Night Of The World*, inspired by Sam Phillips' retort to her enquiry as to what was in Bruce's backpack. The audience brought him back for *Love Loves You Too* with the heavy electric chords from **Dart To The Heart** traded for subtle acoustic guitar.

I don't normally hanker after Cockburn playing old numbers and the new album has a wealth of strong material (by the time Bruce had played the two Dublin dates later in the week he had played the whole album live apart from *Blueberry Hill* and *Deep Lake*) but my abiding memory of that sultry night was Bruce playing and singing the 28 year old *Dialogue With The Devil*.

Rykodisc's Cockburn Serves Up "Breakfast"

NEW YORK-Traditionally, Bruce Cockburn's music has paralleled his political activism, with a call to action resonating from his recordings.

Yet, the awe-filled landscape contextualized on his milestone 25th album, "Breakfast In New Orleans Dinner In Timbuktu," set for worldwide release by Rykodisc on September 14, is a far cry from the worlds of loss and desolation visited on albums past.

"Breakfast In New Orleans Dinner In Timbuktu" is more personable than the material Cockburn is better-known for and it's more observational about emotional relationships than about the world at large.

“It’s harder to find the dramatic things in it,” says the Canadian artist. “Each album had some sort of message-y stuff in it, and there is no end of issues worth paying attention to and writing about, but it would get boring for people if I only did that, too.”

Though the content of his most recent humanitarian efforts is not presented in the lyrics, it is certainly reflected in his musical stylings on the album. While participating in “River Of Sand,” Bob Lang’s documentary on desertification in Mali last year, Cockburn was introduced to Toumani Diabate, who plays the kora, a West African harp.

“He and I play together in the film, and in the course of doing so, it fell together automatically, and that gave me the thought of having the kora on the album,” Cockburn says.

Melding the natural scales of the kora with Arabic and Latin American overtones and the harmonies of guests Margo Timmins, Lucinda Williams, and Richard Bell, gives texture to songs examining love and life and their mysteries.

“Blueberry Hill,” the pop classic written by Al Lewis, Vincent Rose, and Larry Stock, is covered with frank, refreshing sincerity. “Mango,” a celebration of female sexuality, is, as Cockburn describes it, “not as bump-and- grindy as the subject matter would suggest.”

The first single from the album “Last Night Of The World,” which will be served to triple-A and college radio, is similarly expressive, without forming an easily drawn picture. Cockburn just finished shooting the video for the single, directed by Warren Sonoda.

“I’m always interested in the spiritual showing up in son-s from one degree to another,” he says. “This album is more cheerful and isn’t focused on darkness.”

Cockburn is planning a West Coast promotional tour at the end of August and then an East Coast tour upon the album’s release. In December, he will join Emmylou Harris and Jackson Browne for a series of benefit concerts for the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation in California. Cockburn is booked by Steve Martin of the Agency Group.

“We’re certainly looking to capitalize on the intimacy of shows, getting back to Bruce’s roots,” said Ron Decker, director of product management at Rykodisc. “We’re also targeting fan sites out there. We’re going to tap them and build from there.”

This is Cockburn’s third Rykodisc release. He has previously recorded for Columbia, among other labels. His song publishing is administered by Golden Mountain Music Corp., and he is managed by Bernie Finkelstein of Finkelstein Management Co. Ltd.

Billboard August 1999, by Robyn Lewis

Tour Dates- Fall/Winter 1999

October 6	Toronto, ON	Mike Bullard Show (Taping)
October 7	St. Catharines, ON	Sean O'Sullivan Theatre
October 13	Paris, France	Hotel Due Nord
October 14	Paris, France	Hotel Due Nord
October 15	Brugge, Belgium	The Cactus Club
October 17	Stockholm, Sweden	Sodra Teatern
October 20	Amsterdam, Holland	Melkweg
October 23	Glasgow, U.K.	The Fruitmarket
October 25	Leeds, U.K.	Irish Center
October 26	Wavendon, U.K.	The Stables
October 27	Birmingham, U.K.	Ronnies
October 28	London, U.K.	Union Chapel
October 29	Manchester, U.K.	Hop & Grape
October 31	Worpswede, Germany	The Musichall
November 1	Hamburg, Germany	Grunspan
November 2	Koln, Germany	Wartesaal
November 3	Nurnberg, Germany	The Forum
November 5	Friedrichshafen, Germany	Bhf. Fischbach
November 7	Hildershem, Germany	Vier Linden
November 8	Bochum, Germany	Bhf. Langendreer
November 9	Stuttgart, Germany	Schutzenhaus
November 10	Munchen, Germany	Babylon
November 12	Ancona, Italy	Barfly
November 13	Chiara, Italy	Cineteatro Nuovo
November 14	Rovertto, Italy	Teatro Zandanai
December 1	Palo Alto, CA	Stanford University
December 2	Santa Rosa, CA	The Luther Burbank Center
December 5	Santa Barbara, CA	U.C. Santa Barbara

March 25

Toronto, ON

Massey Hall

A full band tour is expected to start in February 2000.

Other Things

Radio Appearances, 1999

9/17– WFUV- NY, NY

9/19– WNEW– NY, NY

9/20– WXPB– PHILLY, PA

9/23– WXRV– HAVERHILL, MA

9/27– WXRT– CHICAGO, IL

9/29– WDET– ANN ARBOR, MI

9/30– CIDR– WINDSOR, ON

...

The Ugly Ducklings have released a CD called *Ducktales* (FRWY 001, Released 1999), which contains a song written by Bruce. The song was recorded in 1971, but is being released for the first time on this 1999 compilation of live and studio songs.

From Tim Perlich of *Now* magazine:

*While rooting around for previously unreleased Ugly Ducklings recordings to complete the forthcoming Ducktales CD package, Ducklings singer/songwriter Dave Bingham turned up a long-lost tape of a Sound Canada session the group cut in 1970 under the name Papa Grey. Among the material discovered on the eight-track cartridge in Oakville is a rockin' homage to the big rigs called Keep Truckin' and, perhaps even more intriguing, a song called **North American Bastard Son**, composed by an angry young folkie from Ottawa named Bruce Cockburn.*

The Ducklings, who shared bills at Yonge Street's old Electric Circus with Cockburn at the time, were impressed enough with the song they received as a demo in 1968 that they added it to their live set, then cut it two years later, but they never released the song.

The CD can be obtained by contacting **Freeway Records** at:

Box 923

Fenelon Falls, ON

Canada K0M 1N0

The price should be equal to \$15 **U.S. funds**, plus postage. Either send enough to be *sure* and cover postage, or call Freeway Records at 705-887-5273. Please mind your time zone manners.

...

'DET LIVE! Vol. 1 (10191, Released 1999). This 16 track compilation contains a live version of "Get Up Jonah" recorded on October 10, 1997 while visiting the studios of WDET in Detroit. The CD is used as a fundraising premium for the station.

...

The last issue of *Gavin's Woodpile* (cover story was an interview with Hugh Marsh) was incorrectly number as issue 33. It should have been issue 34.

My thanks to **Richard Hoare**, honorary co-editor of this issue.

More Radio Appearances

August 20	KBCO	Denver, CO
August 23	KXST	San Diego, CA
August 23	KACD	Los Angeles, CA
August 24	KPIG	Monterey, CA
August 24	KFOG	San Francisco, CA
August 25	KINK	Portland, OR
August 26	KMTT	Seattle, WA

Bruce taped a show for *World Café* on August 19 in Boulder, Colorado. The September 23, 1999 date at the Somerville Theatre near Boston will also be taped for the radio program called *E-Town*. Watch for air dates on your local public radio stations.

Breakfast Review

A superstar in his native Canada for nigh on three decades now, Bruce Cockburn gets better with every album. This, his 25th, is a work of rare intelligence, displaying the controlled power that comes from a performer with complete confidence in his ability to convey complex psychological and emotional musings in a manner poetic and compelling. Set to light, lucid folk-jazz arrangements of distinctly Pentanglish form, occasionally embellished by rolling waves of kora and the harmony vocals of Lucinda Williams or Cowboy Junkies' Margo Timmins, these songs range from political ("Let the Bad Air Out") to intensely personal ("Use Me While You Can), without once breaking step. Particularly effective are tracks such as "Isn't That What Friends Are For?" and "Look How Far," spoken reflections on friendship and destiny that open with brief, scene-setting verses establishing mood and place, before diving into deeper emotional waters.

Throughout, Cockburn writes with the soul of a romantic poet; wouldn't you love to have written lines like: "And you're limned in light, golden and thin/ Looks to me like you're lit up from within"?

Andy Gill—The Independent, September 1999

Issue Number 36

December 1999

*Bass player **Dennis Pendrith** recorded and performed live with Bruce between 1967 and 1983, perhaps a greater span of time than any other musician. He has played with musicians such as Murray McLauchlan, Raffi and David Essig. I spoke with Dennis from his home in Ontario in October 1999.*

How I ended up in Ottawa: I was in a band that wasn't really doing much. It was called Livingston's Journey. We played in the Toronto area; high school's and coffee houses. Bruce Cockburn, at that time, had a band called Flying Circus in Toronto. A couple of the guys in the band - in fact the bass player was a fellow named Neil Lillie (who later became Neil Merriweather) - had been in Livingston's Journey before myself. He, for some reason, was leaving Flying Circus so they were looking for another bassist, at which point I met Bruce. I knew the other guys in the band. Actually Bruce came over to my parents house, where I was living, with his wife and played me some of the songs in their living room. I was quite impressed so I decided to join the band. That band dissolved after a few more months, at which point the 3's A Crowd TV show came along. They needed a singer/guitarist and a bass player. Harvey Glatt, who was managing 3's A Crowd and Bruce's band at the same time, got the bright idea that he could salvage a band out of these two bands that were in chaos. So we went to Ottawa to do the TV show.

This time-frame would have been 1967 or so?

Yes, late '67.

So your first encounter with Bruce was with Flying Circus?

That was the first time I knew anything about Bruce, was with that band.

After the Flying Circus the two of you ended up in 3's A Crowd, which included doing the video The Electrocution Of The Word.

I think that would have been in the summer of 1968, but I'm not sure. The reason I think that is because 3's A Crowd was at the World's Fair in Montreal in 1967 for most of that. I think I would have remembered being there. I would hope so [laughs].

There's a point where Bruce leaves these various bands behind and records his first solo album in December 1969. You played on that first album.

I think I played on one or two tracks on that album. I think, as I recall, most of that record was Bruce pretty much solo, or the occasional overdub. I did play on a bit of the album.

I had actually done some work with Bruce when the Flying Circus, which changed its name to Olivus for a brief time, broke up. Bruce had a few gigs on his own and he asked me if I wanted to join him. I did a few jobs with Bruce. I knew those songs [from *Bruce Cockburn*] because I think they were actually part of his solo stuff. So, when it came time to record he asked me if I would do them.

How did The Ugly Ducklings end up recording North American Bastard Son? [See issue number 35 for more details regarding this song].

Dave [Bingham] and I were starting up a project called The Gnu and it was supposed to be all original material. Bruce had this song that was kind of like a leftover from his Flying Circus - his sort of psychedelic rock-n-roll type - era. He didn't really feel that it worked doing his "folkie" stuff. So I asked him if he would mind if we did that song. He said he would be delighted. I don't know if there was a demo, or if I had a tape of it. We started doing that song in The Gnu. That's how Dave Bingham ended up with that song.

Sunwheel Dance:

Generally, on those early albums with Bruce, there would be possibly some pre-production; maybe a couple of rehearsals to run through the tunes. Then we would go into the studio with Gene Martynec producing and just pretty much play the songs live off the floor. We would do the song maybe half a dozen times. The way we recorded then is we would play the song then we'd go in and listen to it and then we'd go out and try it again. We'd try and better what we had done. Basically it was a pretty organic thing. Bruce would usually do a live vocal. It was very rare that he didn't do his vocals live at that point in time. Gene Martynec was the kind of producer who liked to let the music happen by itself rather than saying 'do this or do that or change these notes or this chord.' He more or less liked to let it come together on its own. We would just roll tape and keep trying until we got one that we thought was good.

Night Vision:

Pat Godfrey and John Savage were on that album. John and I were little kids who were banging on pots and into playing air guitar. We kind of grew up together in and out of a bunch of bands through our teens. We had this band called Simon Caine, and Pat and John were both in it. I think Bruce, for that album, was going for more of a band feel. I think we actually rehearsed a bit more for that than we had for the previous records. We actually rehearsed like a band; we would play the song over and over and over again until it started to sound okay.

Was Simon Caine playing around Toronto at that time?

We made a record that came out on RCA. We played a *little* bit. The band was only together for about a year. There was a bunch of different ideas about what the band should be so nothing really happened with it.

Joy Will Find A Way:

I don't recall rehearsing that much for that one. I think that was pretty much we showed up at the studio and Bruce just played the songs for us and we worked it out. I think it was more like a studio project than a band project.

In *The Falling Dark* was perhaps Bruce's first "break-through" with U.S. audiences. It seems to be on everyone's favorites list.

I know in Italy that it is probably the favorite of Bruce's albums. I think partly - and I don't know if Bruce has touched upon this - but that was in his more Christian leanings. For some reason they really embraced that in Italy. I think, for Bruce, it was a break-through. He had more of a jazz feel on it. There are some very memorable songs on the album as I recall.

There is a gap of about four years, and then *Humans* comes out. An incredible album, and an album that really reflected Bruce's travels outside of Canada.

Millennium Records out of New York was doing some kind of distribution deal with RCA Records at the time. Bruce was one of their higher profile acts. It was interesting because we were getting the red carpet treatment everywhere we went. We were opening shows for Warren Zevon who was pretty big at the time. Everywhere we went the record company guys would take us out to dinner - there would be limousines. All this because RCA Records really wanted to sign up with Millennium so they were trying to impress Jimmy Jenner who was the president of Millennium. When Bruce was on *Saturday Night Live* in 1980 I think there were a lot of strings pulled because we found out that was happening like Tuesday night or Wednesday morning and we had to be in New York for rehearsals on Thursday. That summer after the touring slowed down Bruce had a bunch of songs. He always said he had at least one album's worth of material in advance at all times. He'd been going through a lot of personal stuff with his first marriage and I think that's part of the color of that record. We actually had played some of those songs before they were recorded, which was rare for Bruce. Usually it was the other way around. That was interesting because usually it would be recorded and then he'd go out and tour with it. This was different because we'd already played the songs. We knew these songs would work, but not necessarily the same parts would work in the studio just because things sound different and the arrangements have to be boiled down a little bit. I recall spending maybe four or five days rehearsing for that album. Jon Goldsmith played on it and I think Pat LaBarbera [reeds] played on it as well.

The *Inner City Front* tour represented the beginning of the use of larger bands, something that would continue for a few more albums in the 1980s. Looking back to your first gigs with Bruce in the late 60s and early 70s I suspect they were fairly simple. In 1981 were you thinking "Look how far things have come..."

I have mixed feelings. On one hand we had a tour bus and we were playing bigger venues, but on the other hand now it was sort of "Get up, get in the bus, drive for four or six hours, go to the hall and eat a sandwich, do a soundcheck, check into the hotel, come

back and do your show and go back to the hotel.” It wasn’t a lot of fun. For me it was actually more fun riding around in a station wagon - going to the local restaurant for dinner. Maybe walking around the town for a couple of hours. So, on one hand I guess it was inevitable. Now Bruce had sound and lights touring with all those people. It lost a lot of the immediacy, for *me* anyhow, because I could have been *anywhere*. In fact we went to Italy for two or three weeks (I think it was around the time *Inner City Front* was recorded) and I don’t think we had a day off. It was play, sleep, eat [laughs].

The last album you worked on was *The Trouble With Normal*, on which you played bass guitar and Chapman Stick. It’s interesting to me because everyone knows *Stealing Fire* and Fergus Marsh playing the Stick on that album. But Dennis got there first.

What that was all about was that Tony Levin was doing all the Peter Gabriel stuff so pretty well every bass player on the planet was enthralled with that. I knew that Fergus was playing the Stick. He had been playing for a few years at that point. I had just gotten one. I decided I was going to use it even though I couldn’t play it. A couple of those tunes I never played on bass, I just played them on the Stick. I think it whetted Bruce’s appetite for the Stick. I had been offered this really nice tour with Raffi (in ‘83 or ‘84) and Bruce had something that came up at the last minute. I think it was a TV show out of Hamilton [Ontario] called *In Session*. That came up right in the middle of my Raffi tour, I was a thousand miles away. I didn’t want to blow out what was a really nice gig for me. So they got Fergus to sub for me basically. That was the last time I played with Bruce. I don’t think it was because of that - he was just moving on.

Memorable touring adventures:

I went to Japan with Murray McLauchlan, Bruce and Bernie Finkelstein. That was a lot of fun. We were there for about three weeks. This would have been around ‘76 or maybe ‘77. That was pretty interesting. Bruce was very well received there. He was a kind of cult hero.

When we went to Italy the first time it was lot of fun. That was just a three piece, with Bob DiSalle and myself. We actually didn’t have a hectic schedule. We’d play and then we’d have a couple of days off. We got to hang out a bit, which was fun. I forget what song it is, but there’s a line in it with something about “two guys in leather jackets shivering...”

How I spent My Fall Vacation...

That’s right! I think that was written from that tour of Italy. That line sticks out in my head because Bruce and I - I think we were in Torino - had just finished playing and we thought “Oh well, lets take a little walk around.” It was bout this time of year and it was pretty chilly and we both had leather jackets on, and we were standing there shivering. A few months later I hear this song and I said “Okay, I know where that came from.” I could be wrong, but when I heard that a little light bulb went off in my head that said “Yeah, that’s got to be it.”

We went and saw a few of the higher end art galleries. We went to the Medici in Florence. They had Venus On The Half Shell and the David, I think. I remember going up these huge slate stairs and Bruce's observation was "These stairs were made for sword fighting on."

What year was this tour?

I think that was '79. What I remember about that tour was that for political reasons Italy wasn't allowed to have large gatherings, but for some reason they had just lifted the ban so the promoters were able to book larger venues. We were playing in basketball arenas which held perhaps five to seven thousand people. We were also playing in these big circus tents which held three or four thousand people. It was probably the largest crowds that Bruce had played to at that point in his career. The places were packed, partly because Bruce was fairly well-known as an international artist. But also because it was a bit of an event for people of these cities to get together en masse. I remember playing somewhere - I think it was Milan - in some huge place. They didn't have great technical support at that time in Italy. We had this tiny little P.A. system - a club of two hundred people would have a P.A. system better than this. Anyway we had to try and play to seven or eight thousand people with this thing.

I also remember there was a bomb scare where we were playing. All of a sudden this kind of S.W.A.T. team descended upon us, crawling around under the stage. Glen McLaren, who was mixing for Bruce, said through the monitors very quietly "Keep playing, there's a bomb scare." [Laughs] So we had to keep playing. We all laughed about it, but thinking back it was kind of a hairy moment. But we just kept playing and they didn't find anything. What it turned out to be is - this was in Padua, near Venice - the town next to it was jealous because they didn't get the concert so some people from that town decided "We'll phone in and tell them there's a bomb" and they would have to cancel the concert. That's what it was all about.

What has Bob DiSalle been up to these days?

Bob had been, for the past seven or eight years I would say, working with Roger Whittaker, touring all over the world but more in Europe than anywhere else. Musically he's not thrilled by it, but he's paid well and he's treated well. Every once in awhile he's home where he can get some other things happening.

Presently:

I am a freelance musician working out of Toronto. I play anywhere people want me to. I play in clubs, do concerts and sessions. I've got one band that works every week on Saturday, and a couple of other bands that work maybe two times a month. I usually work three or four times a week. Every week is different. As far as recordings I still do mostly singer/songwriter stuff for some reason. I don't know why that is but that's kind of where people place me. I guess probably because of all the work I did with Bruce and Murray McLauchlan. I haven't done any serious touring since I stopped touring with Raffi.

Is touring something you think you would like to do again or are you satisfied with where you are?

If somebody offered me a nice tour I'd consider it. I did go out for a few weeks a couple of years ago. Touring is fun if you're going to new places but if your going back to Winnipeg for the fourth time that year it's pretty boring. I was finding that the *waiting* was driving me crazy. You're always waiting to do something. Sometimes you're just waiting *to be waiting*. I found that was hard, although I did it for so long and didn't think anything of it I'm sure I could do it if I had to. END

Last Minute News Flash

The single "Last Night Of The World" has gone to number 38 on the Friday Morning Quarterback adult contemporary charts in the USA. The single continues to hold on in the top ten at Triple A and regained its bullet at FMQB. In related news, those of you who might have watched a recent ER on NBC would have seen that the opening three and half minutes were accompanied by Bruce's song "Wondering Where The Lions Are." The episode turned out to be the number one rated TV show of the week during "Sweeps Week."

Rykodisc Plans Its Relocation To New York

*The following article is from **Billboard** magazine, August 14, 1999. Written by **Chris Morris**.*

The Rykodisc label is relocating its sales, marketing, and production departments from Salem, Mass., to New York, where those functions will be intergrated into parent Palm Pictures, which bought the company a year ago.

Rykodisc will operate as an independent A&R entity within the Palm family labels, which also includes Palm Pictures, Hannibal, Rykolatino, and Slow River.

Rykodisc GM Peter Wright says, "We're a year into the merger with Palm, and we realize we need to put our A&R, marketing, and distribuion staff in one place because of the intangible benefits we get from that situation."

Wright says that the consolidation of Rykodisc's distribution functions, previously based in Minneapolis, into the Salem office two years ago "made the point very strongly to us."

Most of the Rykodisc staffers are expected to work out of Palm Pictures' Columbus Circle office in Manhattan. According to a source, some sales personnel will likely work at the new 25th Street offices of Ryko Distribution Partners (RDP), Rykodisc's sister

distribution firm. RDP's shift from Salem to New York, revealed earlier this year, is expected to be complete in late October [1999].

The Rykodisc move won't affect the operations of publishing company Rykomusic or the label's international department, which will remain based in Ardmore, PA.

In its announcement of the move, Rykodisc acknowledged that "there will be some redundancies as a result of these changes." Wright says that while the company has "made a lot of offers to a lot of people," he does not know at this point which workers will remain with the firm or how many may be laid off.

True North Press Release

October 12, 1999

Bruce Cockburn will receive the 1999 **Tenco Award** on October 21, 1999 in San Remo, Italy. The prestigious award is presented in recognition of Bruce's international career and his contribution to the art of songwriting. Past winners include Antonio Carlos Jobim, Joni Mitchell, Elvis Costello and Jacques Brel.

Translated from the original Italian, the citation that accompanies the award states:

"For the passionate coherence with which he has travelled through three decades of songwriting, always updating the fabric of the noble Canadian folk rock school; a beautiful example of bilingual culture, testifying the ideal harmony and meeting of cultures that has always been in the best part of his Country's history."

Cockburn receives the award during a nationally televised program from San Remo and is set to perform four songs during the program.

Cockburn is currently in Europe promoting his new album *Breakfast In New Orleans Dinner In Timbuktu*, and the award ceremony occurs during his European tour, which begins October 13, in Paris, and ends November 15, in Pescara Italy.

Tour Dates For 2000

February 7	Nanaimo, British Columbia	The Port Theatre
February 8	Victoria, British Columbia	The MacPherson Playhouse
February 10	Vancouver, British Columbia	The Vogue Theatre
February 11	Seattle, Washington	The Moore Theatre
February 12	Portland, Oregon	The Roseland Theatre
February 16	San Francisco, California	The Warfield
March 3	Chicago, Illinois	The Vic

March 8	Washington, D.C.	The Birchmere
March 9	Baltimore, Maryland	The Senator Theatre
March 10	New York City, New York	The Town Hall
March 11	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	The Keswick Theatre
March 15	Keene, New Hampshire	The Colonial Theatre
March 18	Boston, Massachusetts	The Berklee Center
March 20	Ottawa, Ontario	The Centrepont Theatre
March 24	Kingston, Ontario	The Grand
March 25	Toronto, Ontario	Massey Hall

Above dates are what were available at print time. More to be added. Check the Woodpile's website and watch for additional dates in the February issue.

Have yourself a hissy fit with all this good news

Breakfast In New Orleans Dinner In Timbuktu (Ryko, VACK-1170) is available as an import from Japan. This release contains the extra track "Rise And Fall," an instrumental running 8:15. Sam The Record Man in Toronto tells me they can import the disc. See contact info on page six. Email at sam347@interlog.com or see their website at www.samscd.com.

E-town Live Two (E-town Recordings, 9901-2) released in 1999. A 14 track various artists CD containing a live recording of "The Coming Rains" from October 27, 1997 at The Boulder Theatre in Boulder, Colorado. A copy may be obtained by phone at 303-443-8696, by email at info@etown.org, or by writing to:

E-Town
Box 954
Boulder, CO 80306

Open Borders: Cutting Edge Canadian Alternative (BMG, D128251) released in 1999. A 9 track various artists CD containing the live version of "Call It Democracy" from *You Pay Your Money And You Take Your Chance*. This release was a bonus CD for members of the BMG record club.

Universal Music Radio Compilation, September 1999 (UMD 99234) released in 1999. A 19 track various artists promotional CD that contains the radio edit version of "Last Night Of The World."

La Vida Folka (Ryko/Hannibal/Slow River, VRCD 9905) released in 1999. A 14 track promotional various artists CD containing the studio version of "When You Give It Away."

Watersongs by Terry Hart, released in 1999. This eleven track CD contains Terry's versions of "Sunwheel Dance" and "Foxglove." The CD may be obtained on the web at

www.mp3.com/terryhart or by emailing Terry at ojo@sympatico.com or through the mail at:

Terry Hart
65 Chatfield Dr,
Ajax, Ontario L1t 2J7
Canada

Strange Tales From The Urban Circle by iO (Dragonfly Productions, DFP 99882). Released in 1999 this eleven track CD contains a cool cover of "Stolen Land." The CD may be obtained on the web at www.iomusic.org or by calling 800-448-6369, or by mail at:

Dragonfly Productions
P.O. Box 55040
Kipling/Queensway P.O.
Etobicoke, Ontario M8Z 6A6
Canada

Car Tunes by Nancy Anthis (Nancyant Music). Released in 1999 this twelve track CD contains a cover of "Mighty Trucks Of Midnight." It may be obtained by mail at:

Nancy Anthis
P.O. Box 151
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92693
USA

KBCO in Denver will present a benefit holiday concert featuring **Tori Amos and Bruce Cockburn** at The Gothic Theatre on December 9, 1999. Proceeds go to the Emergency Family Assistance Center.

Tour dates that have come and gone- including changes of venues, etc...

October 18
Helsinki, Finland
Tavastia Club

October 21
San Remo, Italy
Club Trencò

November 3
(Change of city and venue)
Stuttgart, Germany
Schutzenhaus

November 5
(Cancelled)
Friedrichshafen, Germany
Bhf Fischbach

November 9
(Change of city and venue)
Nurnberg, Germany
Forum

November 14
(Change of city and venue)
Arrezzo, Italy
Storyville

November 15
Pescara, Italy
Theatre Michetti

Daniel Keebler's House
(Cancelled)
The Living Room

Ron Decker leaves Rykodisc after three years as Bruce's Products Manager. It has been my pleasure working with him during this time. Ron's dedication to Bruce's work was always impressive. My BIG thanks to you, Ron. I will miss you sorely. -Daniel