

ISSUE 11
THE TORI AMOS
INFORMATION SERVICE

TAKE TO THE SKY



The recent spell of unbearably hot weather has certainly had a numbing effect on my brain (well that's my excuse....), but the imminent release of Tori's next creation in conjunction with another World scale tour makes the hairs on the back of my neck stand on end, and re-kindles my enthusiasm.

The venom of Pele has inevitably been quelled, but not forgotten, only to create an opening for it's successor which at this moment is currently nameless. On the surface all things Tori appear to be very low key, but out of the media eye wheels are very much in motion. Tori spent the early part of the year in the sunshine state of Florida (which I can very much recommend.... see issue #5), where she wrote the backbone of what is to be her fourth solo album. Simultaneously she made regular trips across the pond to a tranquil part of Cornwall, not to partake in afternoon cream teas, but to prepare her boyfriend's recording studio for her return in the autumn when the new material will be recorded. In the meantime, Tori returned to the warmer Florida climes to put the finishing touches to the songs lyrically, and to spend some time with her parents.

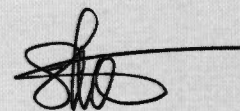
We all know that Tori is the creative force behind all the work, but let's not forget every luxury cruise liner (for want of a better comparison), has a reliable, hardworking engine to propel it. Tori's engine is none other than Mr Johnny 'The Spoon' Witherspoon. I'm sure you are all aware that every finely tuned mechanical device needs care and attention and John is no exception as he requires servicing on a regular basis.

Johnny will be taking the helm at Tori's next World Tour, scheduled to take to the road early in the new year, in the meantime he is on tour with the lovely Sinead O'Connor. He seems to have his work cut out, as is the norm, but additionally they had to make a hasty retreat to the UK following death threats Sinead received whilst in Israel. However, all in a days work and nothing that our gallant hero could not handle.

We managed to catch up with Johnny briefly at Sinead's London date (The Forum, Kentish Town), where he told us that a good friend of his, Richard Jones, similarly manages two female artists, namely Bjork and PJ harvey. Johnny thought it may be a novel idea if he and Richard got together to form an all female supergroup of Tori, Sinead, Bjork and PJ, or collectively the 'NICE GIRLS'.... *batten down the hatches and lock up your sons.*

Finally, if anyone is interested in purchasing a very reliable used VW GOLF still parked outside a farm in Southern Ireland, then please direct all enquiries directly to Johnny 'The Spoon'.... thanks. Hats off to all who have sent in articles, photos, ideas etc. please keep them coming, ultimately *Take To The Sky* is what *you* have made it, proceed to the next page.

Hopefully we'll meet in the new year.



Great Expectations

In June Tori spent some time in London's Air Studios recording two songs to feature on a forthcoming film soundtrack. The film *Great Expectations*, was directed by Alfonso Cuaron and stars Gwyneth Paltrow, Robert De Niro, Ethan Hawke and Anne Bancroft. It is due to open in the U.S. at the end of the year which, generally speaking, means the U.K screening will follow early in the new year.

One of the two tracks which Tori recorded was done with the backing of a full orchestra led by composer Patrick Doyle (who composed the entire film score). The other track is not quite so elaborate as it is purely Tori's voice/spoken word. Besides Tori the soundtrack also includes contributions from Jarvis Cocker's Pulp, Scott Weiland of Stone Temple Pilots, Verve Pipe, and Chris Connell of Soundgarden fame.

Right: Tori preparing to record her vocals with the orchestra at Air Studios, London.

Below: Conductor Patrick Doyle.

Below right: The members of the orchestra take a breather.



LIVE FROM NEW YORK SET FOR NOVEMBER RELEASE

After much speculation and rumour, Tori finally releases a live video in early November. Filmed in January at New York's Madison Square Garden, the video captures her R.A.I.N.N. (the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network which was co-founded by Tori) benefit concert in full. The show raised \$250,000 for R.A.I.N.N. and helped to heighten the profile of the charity which has come to the aid of over 142,000 victims of sexual assault since it began.

The November 3rd release date for *Live From New York* is still uncertain as Tori has rejected the first draft of the sleeve artwork. A detailed tracklisting wasn't available as we went to press.



Being a Tori fan since the release of *Me & A Gun* I've had to contend with seemingly endless questions regarding Ms Amos's state of mind. In this article I'd like to point out that most artists, or those with an artistic bent, have to contend with a certain degree of inner conflict: as Jung pointed out, the creator displays certain traits to the title, that typically innate English conservatism is at the root of much of Tori's popularity and notoriety.

Tori Amos is not the first female artist to express opinions on taboo subjects; the arts are littered with fine examples: Sappho (b. 7th Cent. BC), Aphra Behn (1640-89), Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-97), Emily Bronte (1818-48), Radclyffe Hall (1883-1943) to name just a few. What makes Tori special, historically, is timing. Her brand of soul searching arrived on the scene after we'd all been sickened by the manufactured dribble of so-called 'pop gurus'. It's rather sad that Tori has developed a liking for dance remixes, no doubt to make a few quid from the club scene, but nevertheless it's depressing to listen to great songs turned into what sounds like, in the words of John Betjeman, "two skeletons copulating on a tin roof."

Part of Tori's appeal is her ability to handle delicate subjects and bring them to the fore. This I believe accounts for her success with the English. A race of people who have been institutionalised, and conditioned to believe in emotional suppression - which is still evident in our attitudes to the mentally ill and those with alternate life styles. Tori Amos was at first perplexing, then refreshing and in a sense liberating. The uncompromising honesty of songs like *Precious Things* and *Here In My Head* are a panacea for a generation coming to terms with the socially damaging influence of Thatcherism and its legacy of personal attainment above all else. This also accounts for the popularity of Nirvana's *Smells Like Teen Spirit* - the anthem of the young and dispossessed. It's poignant, and a testimony to her sensitivity, that Tori chose to cover this Nirvana classic when she did, obviously drawing on the discontent of those who came to see her play live.

The influence of far-right politics on the public seems to be evident by the apathy of much of Britain's youth. I've found, instead of a

sense of union, there's a prevailing indifference to the fortunes of others: life in many of our inner cities has become a Darwinian struggle for the bare necessities of existence. However, the cool English reserve still prevails - a relic from the Victorian era. Tori's work challenges many of the assumptions we hold dear as a nation and as individuals i.e. gender roles, sexuality and emotional poverty.

The idea of madness is a nonsense: I myself have been labelled as such, although I prefer 'eccentric'. I believe we tend to label anybody who refuses to toe the line, or just farts in a different key. As I've already said, Tori's frame of mind is part and parcel of the artistic temperament - although the headline

Tori & The English Stiff Upper

'She's Mad!' is commercially far more profitable than 'She's Perfectly Ordinary!'. I believe the definition of madness by those in authority is highly suspect anyway.*

Many of the songs for me are cathartic. Tracks like *Me & A Gun*, *Baker Baker*, and more recently, *Hey Jupiter* and *Putting The Damage On* help the listener to realise their own sense of being and enable them to deal with a world which becomes increasingly harrowing by the minute. And I figure in the wake of everything I've been through these last few years not only does a little of what you fancy etc etc, but Tori's music makes a wonderful Prozac accompaniment; or is it the other way around? I forget.

So, here's a toast to our very own *transatlantic Feel-Good-Factor*. Cheers!

BARRY ROBINSON

It's depressing to listen to great songs turned into what sounds like, in the words of John Betjeman, "two skeletons copulating on a tin roof."

* C G Jung - *Psychology & Literature* (1930)

* An idea propounded by Michel Foucault's *Madness & Civilization*

A short history of Bösendorfer

Some time ago we were promised an insight into the Bösendorfer piano by Eric Thelen. On arrival it proved a weighty and worthy document due to a rich history tied to the company's native Vienna. It is amazing to think that what began as a small family business could withstand bombs, war and occupation to continue to serve the pianists of the late 20th century.

The Sky team are eternally grateful to Eric for his sterling effort. His research went further than a dusty library and he even made the time to travel from his home in Germany to Austria and the Bösendorfer showrooms themselves. To have published all that Eric sent would have demanded an entire issue of Sky, so what follows is a *greatly* edited version to give an impression of these instruments impressive survival record. An essential credential for any piano that has to follow Tori around the world on tour.

In 1828 Ignaz Bösendorfer was granted a permit to start his own piano manufacturing business, following a successful apprenticeship with Joseph Brockmann. Simultaneously the young Franz List was shattering every piano put at his disposal due to a monumental technique that excited and electrified audiences. On the recommendation of friends List turned to Bösendorfer, the cabinet makers son, and performed on his instrument beyond even it's makers expectations. In one sweep, Bösendorfer became famous as a concert grand.

It was an auspicious start that was followed by further accolade. 1830 saw Bösendorfer the first to receive the title of, "Court and Chamber Piano Maker". In 1839 and 1845 he took the gold medal and first prize at the Industrial Exposition in Venice. With Franz List's endorsement Bösendorfer's reputation grew rapidly in Europe. Demand for his fine instruments increased and lead to the planning of a new, larger factory. Ignaz was not to see this completed and it could have been the end of a majestic rise to fame, however he was a man with great foresight and by the age of 24 his son, Ludwig, was fully acquainted with his fathers secrets and production techniques. To this Ludwig added the ear of a highly talented musician and made considerable improvements on his fathers designs.

Between 1860 and 1870 Ludwig supervised the continued expansion of the firm and a further factory was soon needed, and is still used to this day. It can be found on the Graf-Starhemberg-Garne of Vienna's 4th district. The relocation also applied to the offices and showrooms, which moved closer to the city.

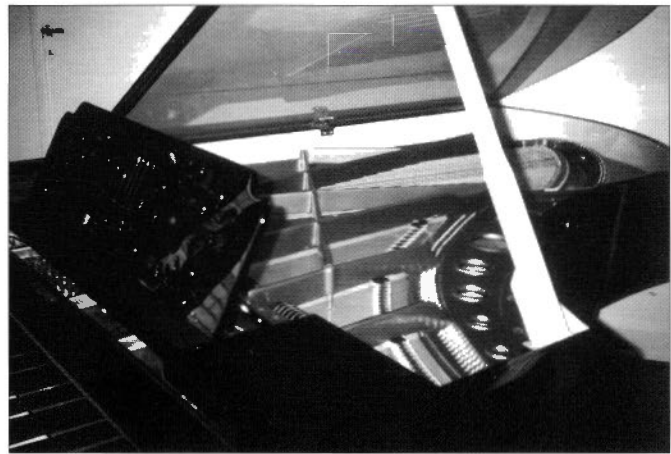
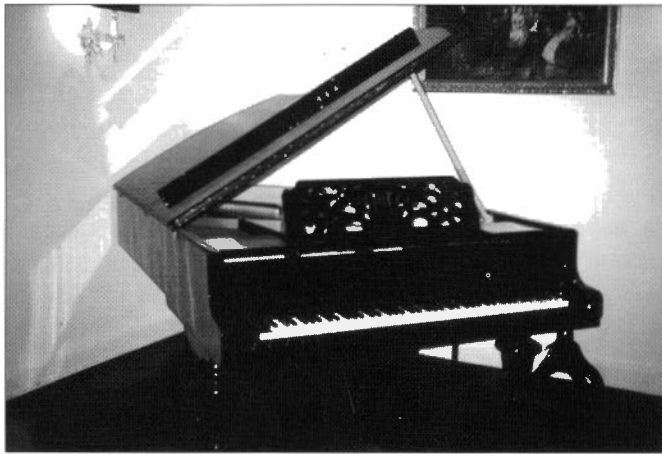


Vienna was, at this time, experiencing a similar boom and became the metropolis of the Empire. Ludwig involved himself in Viennese musical society, becoming a respected and colourful personality. His promotion of music benefited The Conservatory of the Society of Music Friends with 14 grand pianos, presented to them on the acquisition of new premises in 1869. Eager to recognise the promise of the future, the most talented graduate of the piano class was to be awarded a Bösendorfer grand. This tradition is upheld to this day with a bi-annual competition taking place for this highly desired prize.

Ludwig Bösendorfer's influence even spread to royalty. Prince Lichtenstein's riding school was found to have remarkable acoustics and Ludwig succeeded in convincing the prince that the academy should become a concert hall. It opened on November 19th 1872 beginning a tradition of over 4500 per-

high gave way to depression, uncertainty and once again, war. The early 1930's saw production slump from 219 pianos in 1930 to a meagre 52 in 1934. It took the international breakthrough of the BBC ordering 13 concert grands for all its British studios (against stiff competition from rival manufacturers) to steady the falling production figures at Bösendorfer.

Production in the second half of the 20th century started to head towards figures fitting for a quality instrument that the world had come to covet. But survival in the modern age is reliant on outside investment and the one-time privately owned business was put on the market in 1966. That year, Bösendorfer was bought by Kimball International Incorporated. Established as a furniture company in the U.S.A. in 1949, this world-wide organisation is the largest manufacturer of keyboard instruments in America. It's



formances by the most brilliant names. Bösendorfer's instruments were also to be found in the salons of royal households across the globe.

The company made steady progress and there followed no further significant events until 1909 when Carl Hutterstramer succeeded Ludwig and became the man to continue the Bösendorfer spirit. The company reached new highs in production, but success wasn't enough to prevent a hard blow in 1912 when the Bösendorfer Saal was to make way for a large building project. In quick succession the first world war added more unwelcome news. The toll of the fighting made production drop and in 1919 Ludwig died, finding the strain too much.

It was a brief, if deep, dip in the firm's fortunes, but post-war inflation brought a rapid upswing in the economy. From 136 instruments in the first year of the war, the decade from 1919 to 1929 saw a climb from 250 to 310 instruments produced per year.

Bösendorfer's fortunes were always inimicably tied to those of Vienna and the post-war

involved in everything from the raw wood and saw mills to specialist veneer factories. The American side of the company works with the existing factory in Vienna and with factories in England and Mexico to aim for the, "instrument that comes nearest to their high expectations." This is still the motto of the house of Bösendorfer.

ERIC THELEN

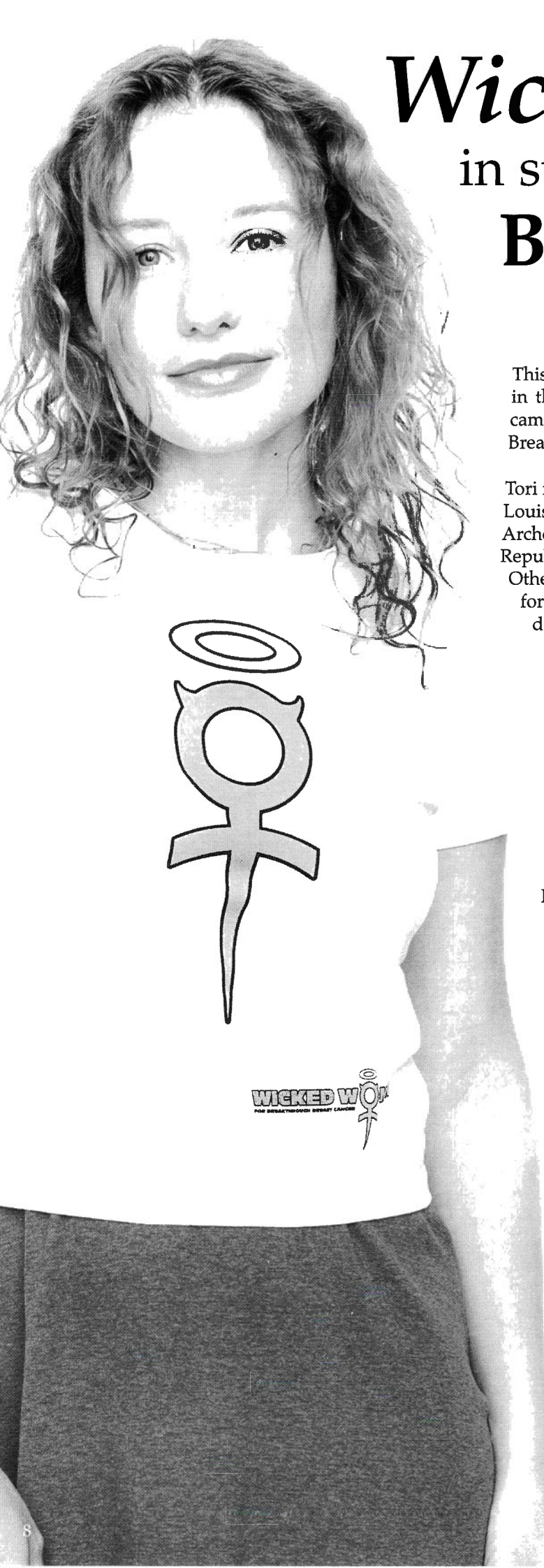
Previous page - top: The Bösendorfer offices and showroom in Vienna, Austria.

Previous page - below: Eric Thelen and Tori.

Above: Instruments on display in the showroom.

Right: Eric plays a chord or two on the Bösendorfer.





Wicked Women

in support of

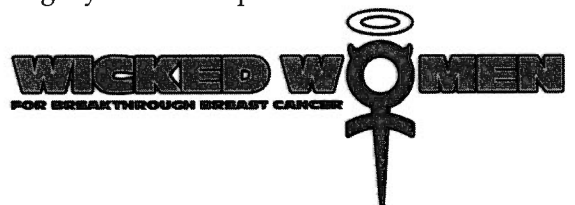
Breakthrough Breast Cancer

This Autumn some of the most successful and influential women in the world of music join together to support an industry led campaign to fight breast cancer in aid of the research charity Breakthrough Breast Cancer.

Tori is involved, along with kd lang, Neneh Cherry, Alisha's Attic, Louise, Dubstar, Lush, Lisa Stansfield, Kenickie, Feline, Tasmin Archer, Sleeper, Eternal, Sharleen Spiteri of Texas, Saffron of Republica, Kelli of Sneaker Pimps and Skin from Skunk Anansie. Other artists are expected to add their backing to Wicked Women for Breakthrough Breast Cancer. Many have also agreed to donate tracks for a special compilation CD which will be released early in 1998 - more details in future issues of Sky.

Throughout the Autumn, these artists will be calling on women everywhere to support the campaign by wearing a collection of limited edition t-shirts sporting a cheeky angelic design (as worn by Tori on the cover of this issue). The t-shirts are available from mid-September in a range of styles from selected high street stores nationwide including Knickerbox, Kookai, Red or Dead and Long Tall Sally - priced £9.99 to £14.99.

Knickerbox are also demonstrating their commitment to supporting Breakthrough by designing an exclusive range of Wicked Women white lycra crop-tops and hot pants (priced at £10.00 each). The range is only available for a limited period at selected Knickerbox stores including London, Brighton, Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, Guildford and Windsor. Take To The Sky wishes the campaign great success and urges all Wicked Women (and Wicked Blokes) to get out there and get your t-shirts pronto.



"We cannot ignore the fact that the UK has one of the highest mortality rates from breast cancer in the world. It will affect one in twelve women in the UK at some point their life.

So it is fabulous that so many wicked and wonderful women in the music industry are willing to come together to raise money for research and raise awareness of the need for a cure for this devastating disease."

Delyth Morgan,
Chief Executive,
Breakthrough Breast Cancer.

The Double Edged Pen

For the completists amongst us we have news of another publication which is Tori related. The item in question is a compilation of poems in a book entitled *Double Edged Pen*. The poems are the work of a young author by the name of Jason Stoneking. Jason originally comes from central New Hampshire in the U.S., but has spent most of his time thumbing his way across the U.S. to perform his poetry at various venues. In July of 1994 he appeared to an audience of 25,000 at the MTV produced Lollapalooza festival in Denver Colorado. His performances have earned him much critical acclaim mostly on a local scale due to his nomadic lifestyle. It was whilst he was on his travels that he made acquaintance with Tori and her entourage. Jason obviously made an impact on Tori as she has contributed the foreword to this collection of poems which Jason is currently in the process of publishing. We are fortunate enough to have a promotional copy of the book, supplied by Jason, to both review and illustrate. *Double Edged Pen* is published by Fresh Hell Books and is priced at 8.95 US Dollars. If you would like to obtain a copy of the book you can do so by writing to:

FRESH HELL BOOKS. c/o chez BRULATOUT, 15 rue de Petit Musc, 75004 Paris, France.

Jason Stoneking is '....a true adventurersmoking on a vortex....' - Tori Amos 1996.



THE PROS AND CONS OF BOOTLEGGING

In response to the rigorous documentation of Tori bootlegs that regularly feature in Sky, here is a personal angle on the legal and ethical dilemmas posed by the practice.

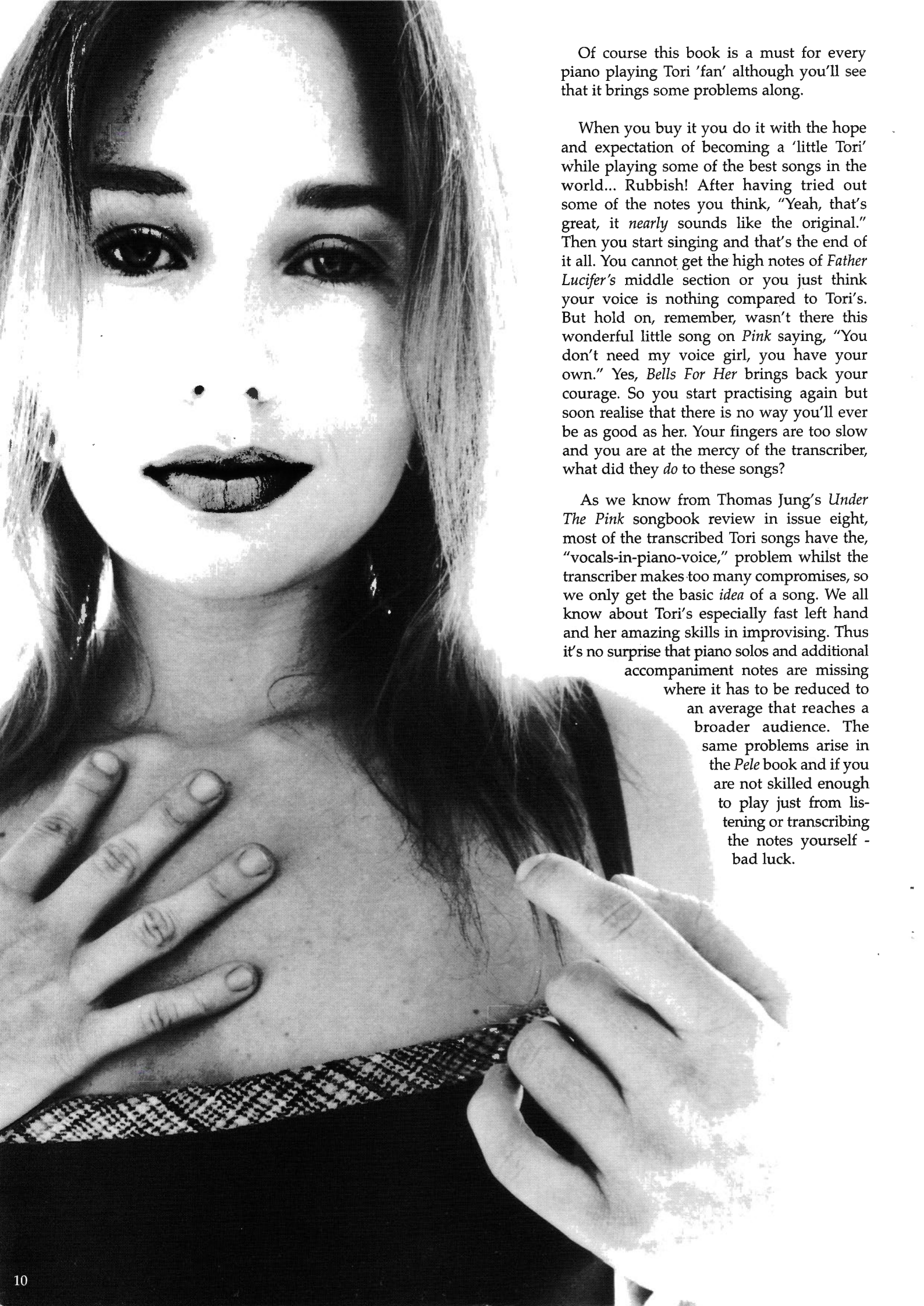
I speak as someone who has never felt the strong desire to buy a bootleg recording, although I own a couple of bootlegged bootlegs, if you get my drift. I must admit to being tempted by a Tori cassette on a recent trip to Dublin (good range, reasonable prices, in Temple Bar area!), but I resisted the urge despite a strong wish to own Tori's version of *Smells Like Teen Spirit* - now commercially unavailable - that was on the track listing.

My reasons for not buying bootlegs are based on potential quality, rather than on moral grounds. Bootlegs are invariably inferior to both studio and official live recordings, being at best blurred snapshots rather than intimate portraits. Regarding their moral status, they are illegal artefacts, and should remain so, as on a number of levels they constitute theft and a denial of legitimate income for many parties. Having said that, in almost all cases the financial damage is surely negligible. Bootlegs usually follow a commercial release, typically being the record of a concert that is partly functioning to promote an already existing body of work. This means that artists, publishers and record companies have already taken the first, and biggest bite out of the commercial market - that's us, the ordinary punters. Secondly, most potential bootleg buyers will be the committed, if not downright fanatical fans, who will already own all the legitimate releases and anything else bearing the personal imprint of their chosen pop object of desire.

Whilst accepting that most bootlegs are produced to make someone (maybe someone pretty dodgy) a profit - so what? No one ever accused the record industry of being run on altruism. It's not a free world or a free market, but to buy or not buy a bootleg is still largely a matter of free will, and as there is no proof that many fans will buy a bootleg instead of a legitimate release, where is the problem? Sky has adopted a quite stuffy and downright naive approach to Tori's bootlegs in the past, rather smacking of the "I smoked but I didn't inhale" response to naughty activities, but in issue 8 the approach (and 'moral health warning') seemed to soften somewhat.

Tori's great; she's sold stacks of records, owns her own publishing (which is where the real income lies) and is, or should be, pretty damn rich in most people's terms - and I don't begrudge her one cent. But I also don't begrudge a few crumbs of the cake to anyone who for any reason is associated with bootlegging; whether recorder, marketer or purchaser. Anyone disagreeing with my stance should scan their own cassette racks before blowing a moral fuse (just what are most blank cassettes used for - spoken letters to Aunt Gladys in Melbourne?!). If you haven't broken the home taping rules then you're one of the very few who is not already a bootlegger.. and I'm the ghost of Anastasia.

RON MAY



Of course this book is a must for every piano playing Tori 'fan' although you'll see that it brings some problems along.

When you buy it you do it with the hope and expectation of becoming a 'little Tori' while playing some of the best songs in the world... Rubbish! After having tried out some of the notes you think, "Yeah, that's great, it *nearly* sounds like the original." Then you start singing and that's the end of it all. You cannot get the high notes of *Father Lucifer's* middle section or you just think your voice is nothing compared to Tori's. But hold on, remember, wasn't there this wonderful little song on *Pink* saying, "You don't need my voice girl, you have your own." Yes, *Bells For Her* brings back your courage. So you start practising again but soon realise that there is no way you'll ever be as good as her. Your fingers are too slow and you are at the mercy of the transcriber, what did they *do* to these songs?

As we know from Thomas Jung's *Under The Pink* songbook review in issue eight, most of the transcribed Tori songs have the, "vocals-in-piano-voice," problem whilst the transcriber makes too many compromises, so we only get the basic *idea* of a song. We all know about Tori's especially fast left hand and her amazing skills in improvising. Thus it's no surprise that piano solos and additional accompaniment notes are missing where it has to be reduced to an average that reaches a broader audience. The same problems arise in the *Pele* book and if you are not skilled enough to play just from listening or transcribing the notes yourself - bad luck.

So forget about becoming Tori Amos for a while, it's no use trying to be another person anyway. You will stay yourself until the end of your whole damn life - but you can make something of it...

Here's what you can do with this album without becoming frustrated and fed up with yourself.

This songbook at least gives us an *impression* of what the woman does. She is fond of utilising keys with many accidentals (*fiddly bits to the likes of me - Ed.*) but she also composes pieces in less complicated keys. *Putting The Damage On* is a good example. This consists of a simple C-major cadence just modulating a few times into A-minor and D-major (both consecutives to the others). So even if, like me, you only have a few piano skills you can

songs like *Muhammad My friend* or *Twinkle* have such characteristic rhythm patterns that I think they should not be changed. But of course, that's up to you.

If you have a synthesizer you can do even more with these notes. You have the opportunities to choose different instruments, to lay a drum pattern under an accompaniment or try to instrumentalize the songs as on the album. Maybe you want to try out a completely different version of *Professional Widow* showing how *you* would have mixed it. I bet my life it would be better than Armand van Helden's "*It's Gotta Be Big*" versions.

All these possibilities would not have been open to me without the songbook. Although I was disappointed at first, it has helped me to understand Tori's music, to

*"You don't need my voice girl,
you have your own."*

Interpreting Tori with the *Boys For Pele* songbook.

choose the easier songs, improvise on them and make up your own versions. I think this is a much more demanding and exciting task than just reproducing the given stuff. In addition you can relax and involve your fantasy - you *can* become Tori.

I guess this is another reason why the transcription is not absolutely exact. Missing dynamic signs or tempo advises leaves space for different interpretations. Of course, our first aim is to adopt our idol's style, but we can do that by listening to the originals intensively and copying the style of playing. Yet, in my opinion, we should really think about *all* aspects of a song, music, lyrics and message and try different variations without changing the song's general idea.

What about a 'rocky' version of *Horses* for example? This sounds rather brutal to abuse this wonderful ballad for unprofessional experiments, but it depends on your mood, your *own* understanding of the lyrics and how you create the music. So why not? What did Tori herself do to the complex *Talula* and *Professional Widow*?

Having abandoned the fear to ruin Tori's work by dilettante improvisation, the world of music is now open to you.

Blood Roses, *Marianne* and *Hey Jupiter* are well suited for average improvisation skills, they're not too complicated as they consist of not more than six or seven basic chords written as guitar chords above the piano voice. Other

learn to compose for myself and to get a feel for transcribing notes.

The transcribed versions in the book really don't do any justice to *Blood Roses*, the fascinating baroque-like harpsichord scheme is completely missing, *Mr Zebra*, more piano than in the original, *Caught a Lite Sneeze* (does Tori really repeat the first two bars throughout?), *Hey Jupiter*, *Talula*, *Voodoo* to my mind the worst of them all, and *Damage*. *Little Amsterdam* could become a little boring while playing it only solo. It should be fun to listen to the other instruments on CD and try to imitate them on your keyboard or synth.

Way Down and *Damage* have interesting, though not complete, 'gospel choir' and 'brass-in-piano' transcriptions. If you have a synthesizer...

My favourites, which are very close to the originals, are *Father Lucifer*, *Not The Red Baron* although the intro is missing, *Agent Orange* and *Twinkle* which are nearly perfect. Another positive aspect of the book is that we get to know the exact lyrics of *Agent Orange* and *Way Down*, both missing in the CD booklet.

Unfortunately there are no B-sides transcribed in here, but I think we should be satisfied with '18 songs for the price of 14'.

Happy interpreting.

CAROLINE KIRBERG

ROBIN EVANS' RECOLLECT COLLECTORS PAGE

While we sit back to wait for the new album from Tori (see details in the introduction to this issue) it seems like a good time to take a look at the variations of *Boys For Pele* which are available. This article has been inspired by letters from many of you who seem bewildered at the different copies which have appeared.

Firstly, however, it's off with the collector's hat and time for a bit of literary stuff. Hey, I know, it's not what you expect from me. Nevertheless, I'll soldier on. The *Pele* album has caused more strong reactions than any other of Tori's work. Not just the pig photo (a tabloid journals delight), I'm talking about the music. Unsolicited opinions given to me have ranged from, "it's got no tunes" (whaaaat!), to "the best album EVER made by ANYONE". Not everyone's opinion is quite that extreme, but most are pretty close one way or the other.

Brief advice: I'm sure Tori and East West/Atlantic won't thank me for this, but if you don't understand the album then please don't try to. It is a very moving collection of songs, but there aren't many 'laughs' to be had. Just listen to the tunes you like and wait for the next one to come along. If one day you find yourself listening to the album and really understanding it then perhaps your life isn't quite what you thought it was. Maybe ignorance is bliss after all. Lecture over, we come back trainspotters. This issue's summary is as easy as one - two - three:

One

Boys For Pele appeared in January 1996, with copies available on CD, cassette and double vinyl in the USA (82862-2/4/1) as well as Europe (7567-82862-2/4/1). Promo copies include the German pressed promo CD (PROP100; pink sleeve/disc; slimline case), the UK promo cassette (full colour picture sleeve; no catalogue number) and the USA promo cassette (82862-4; white inlay card with titles; no picture sleeve). Japanese copies of the CD (East West Japan AMCE-918) add *Toodles Mr Jim* as a bonus track in addition to the 18 tracks on other copies.

Two-Lula.

The first reissue of the album replaced the 4.08 album version of *Talula* with the 3.43 *Tornado Mix* of the same song. In the UK this appeared on both CD and cassette (7567-80659-2/4). However, just to make things interesting, I have a BMG record club copy from the USA with the *Tornado Mix* but the 82862-2 catalogue number.

Three

To celebrate (hey, you at the back. Who said "to cash-in on"?), the number one single success of *Professional Widow* in its new super-funky-dance version, the *Pele* album was reissued again as a SPECIAL EDITION adding the 8.08 *Armand's Star Trunk Funkin' Mix* to the 4.31 album version of *Professional Widow*. The number this time around is 7567-80696-2. For the many, many people who have asked me whether I prefer *Pele* to *Earthquakes* or *Pink* (or even YKTR) I have but one honest answer. I DON'T KNOW. They are all so different. Isn't it a bit like asking me which of my children I love the most?

TORI AT CHRISTIES

On May 28th of this year Christies of South Kensington held their bi-annual rock and pop auction/sale. One of the lots included in the sale was an item of 'Tori-bilia' which rarely surfaces in any of the major auction houses. The item in question was a black ribbed woollen polo neck sweater autographed on the front by Tori in silver ink. The sweater featured early on in the sale and realised a hammer price of £250 which was the top end of the catalogue estimate price of £150-£250.

Giles Moon of Christies, when giving the provenance of the sweater, explained that the item was given to the winner of a competition held on US radio. The prize included tickets and limousine transport to one of Tori's shows on the Pink Tour. However, it was not presented by Tori in person and although part of her wardrobe, it was never worn on stage.

The opinion of all the Sky team was one of the same, items of this nature are few and far between but, we felt that in this instance it did not warrant the price tag it commanded. Hands were kept firmly in pockets

The Unauthorised Edition

Interview CD Review

With Tori's latest chart success a whole slew of fresh imports and books has appeared on the shelves for the ardent fan to blow his/her money on. Of the interview discs currently floating around, *Tori Amos - The Unauthorised Edition* (SAM 7017) is one of the better efforts. It is attractively packaged in a slipcase with a 120 page CD sized book.

The book, written by Mick St Michael and published by Carlton (mentioned previously by Sky), contains little new information for the die-hard fan, the material reading as though it were drawn heavily from *All these Years*. However, it is lavishly illustrated with both the standard press shots and one or two previously unseen pictures. In addition to the Tori pics there are a range of photos of Sixties icons such as Jim Morrison, Joni Mitchell, Janis Joplin and, of course, Robert Plant. A standard discography is also included at the rear, along with a very sketchy chronology.

The disc itself contains just over thirty minutes worth of interview material culled from a series of local American radio stations. As these seem to have been conducted on the same morning, there is a degree of repetition in the earlier interviews largely concerning the delights of New York bagels with cream-cheese and butter, and the origins of Pele - "No, it's not a soccer reference".

Despite a disclaimer stating, *This Interview CD Does Not Contain Music*, the disc does in fact contain two accapella snippets. The first comes from *American Pie* as Tori explains her tribute to Kurt Cobain; while the latter is an excerpt from *Caught A Lite Sneeze*, a performance prompted by the interviewer's attempt to obtain an advance copy of the single. Both are delivered with Tori's inimitable spontaneity, and while not complete, greatly enhance the disc as a whole. A further highlight is Tori's explanation of *Sneeze*, "Men like to think they're the flu, but often they're just a little achoo!" It certainly puts an entirely different slant on my previous interpretation of the lyrics.

Whether or not the above justifies the £7 you can expect to pay remains, as always, at your discretion.

DON F ROBERTSON



The shoes of Goddess Kring

I have my own cable tv show doing stream of conscious experimental speaking, dancing, singing, painting, photography and music. I have been on the air here in Seattle for about 2 years. It's free to create cable access tv shows here. I don't get paid, it's just free creative expression. Do you guys have that in the UK or Europe in general? I love to "spread the Kring" as I put it. My shows are about following bliss and I hope to inspire, entertain and connect with as many people as possible through my cable show and videos around the globe.

I am a very moody fragmented artist person and Tori's music has touched me so deeply. It's like a potent medicine that aids me in facing my inner demons and becoming whole again.

I had the dream of meeting Tori Amos come manifest backstage in Seattle in July 1996 when I gave her a pair of shoes I had painted for her (see picture). I also gave her a videotape of Goddess Kring. She was generous enough to wear my hand painted shoes on stage that night and thank me for them in front of the whole crowd. I wanted to come up on stage with her... but I didn't have the guts to ask for that! It all started when I sent a colour postcard of shoes I painted to Tom Richards at the Florida Tori fan club *Upside Down*. I wrote, I would love to meet Tori and

give her the shoes I paint on to share some of my art... a trade if you will. Tori gives so much in her music that I wanted to give back some creation to her. To my delight Tom wrote back and we spoke on the phone several times. He gave me her shoe size and set me up with a backstage pass. I shared my Goddess Kring videos with Tom and he thought Tori might enjoy one, so I gave her a sample along with the shoes. She said, "We've been hearing about your show, we hear it's the antithesis of Rush Limbaugh, and he's the antichrist 'ya know." Great line Tori!

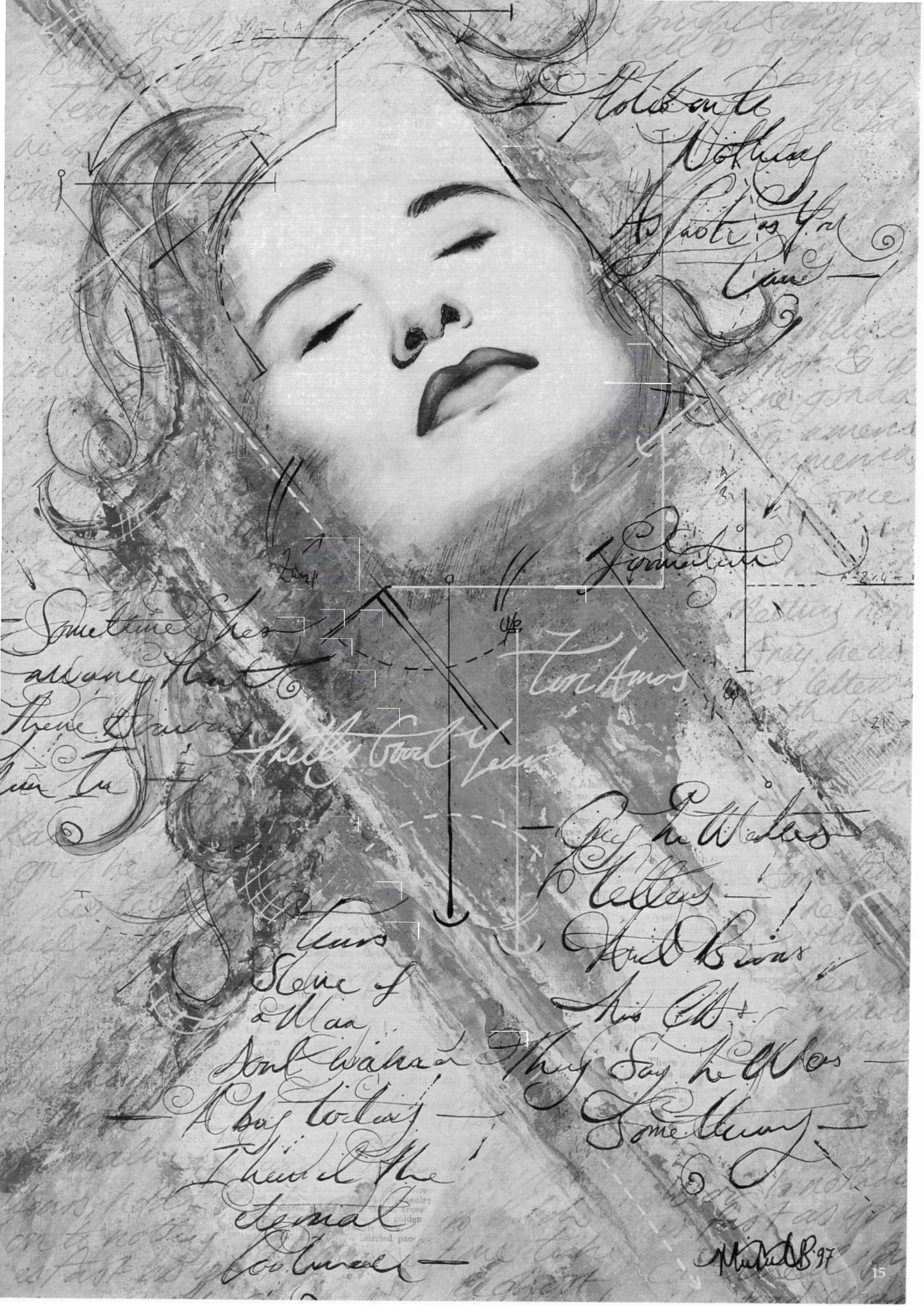
I must be honest and say meeting Tori was a bit upsetting for me. I wanted to *connect* with her *so much*, but when I met her I clammed-up and hid behind a wall of detached calm. Underneath I was full of desire to say to her, "I have no women friends... I feel so competitive and jealous with other women." I was feeling very ashamed of my own envy towards Tori. I see her as a very strong artist who has worked very hard and deserves all the attention she gets, but I am *so jealous*. I too want to tour the world and share my art with as many people who want to share it with me.

I want to share this story with you in the hope of connecting with other Tori fans of like mind. I still look forward to speaking with Tori again on her next tour if possible. To share another pair of shoes if she likes and to bring up the issue of women's jealousy towards each other, but then as I write this, I think, where is *my own personal power*? Why do I feel I need a famous artist to acknowledge me? We are all equal on this earth. Experiencing Tori Amos live in concert is an intense experience, especially after meeting her and seeing her wear the shoes I made for her. I was feeling this intense inadequacy. "Why can't I be on stage," I was thinking. Why did I let this jealousy eat me up? That's an issue her music brings to the surface in me - the tension between women. We need to support one another facing these dark facets.

I want to be more than a *mosquito* fan of Tori. I'll try not to be too dark, but I see brilliant performers as people who put themselves *out there*, and the audience can project onto that artist and feed off their energy like mosquitoes, or let the love they are sending out inspire creativity in them. I hope to learn to transcend the envy I feel towards Tori and love her music and use it to fuel my own art. All artists must look within to find their *own* fire.

SHANNON KRINGEN
(GODDESS KRING)





Hold onto
Nothing
As fast as you
Can

Formulate

For Amos

Happy Good Year

Big in Water
Letters

And Browns
His CB

They Say he'll
Some thing

Some of
a Man
Don't wanna
A boy today
I heard the
eternal
columns

Michael B 97

When is a song not a song? No, it's not a riddle. Just a question. When does a song become a song? And when does it stop being the song you know? How far can you go in changing it? In an interview for electronic music magazine *Sound on Sound* years ago Peter Gabriel admitted that to him a song is never finished, and if it was down to him, he'd keep on changing and altering and the songs would probably never be released. This organic attitude - songs grow, develop and change like people - is something that Tori too seems to support, with her references to songs as friends who, "put on their party hats," or come to play.

We all know where this is leading, don't we. Namely, the recent chart-topping *Professional Widow*. For the first time, we've

any more (as Don Estelle and Windsor Davies once sang, but that's another story, and Tori Amos has left us behind in the playground while she's gone on to play with the grown-ups.

Or has she? Until we hear the next new piece of work, be it album or single, it's going to be hard to say. But I'd point out a time when this has happened before. Anyone remember all the different versions of *God* that hit the shops? Once again, we were buying dance mixes with only a passing resemblance to the original song, a spot-the-difference competition that cost five quid to enter. And to be honest, I have a lot of time for some of the versions of *God*, but I wonder if my opinion would have been the same had they hit number one.

Because that's what this is all about. It's not that *Professional Widow* is a pretty terrible single, it's not that there's nothing about it that stands above the other dance singles we hear

Hello Boys - Looking For A Good Tori Amos as 'dance diva'? Twelve Inches?

*Aren't we
getting a
little bit
'precious'
about this
remix thing?*

seen Tori Amos at number one. Who hasn't wished for this achievement? But with what? Is it actually one of her songs? Or is it, like the video that accompanies it, just a hacked up assembly of past work? I have to confess to an immense unease at the thought of Tori Amos: Dance Diva. *What the bloody hell is going on?*

One of the most interesting things I found over the whole period that *Widow* was doing so well was the release of Lisa Stansfield's similarly butchered *People* single, which even shares the same bass-line and rhythm. It just underlined the fact that songs sell when they have been stripped of all feeling and emotion and that selling songs is the number one job. You can't argue with that. You might as well deny that the sky is blue (sometimes). It's a phenomenon that's created all the teeny boy bands, the hypes, the money-spinners... the Spice Girls, for God's sake. There is no denying that the calculation works, and the numbers it comes up with have lots of noughts on the end. Artists who slip into public attention without this soulless manufacturing, like shy people at a party, are few and far between. Tori was one of them, and a lot of us spread the word with a pride at our little private secret. But suddenly the secret's no secret

in a year (just ask Lisa Stansfield). What it's about is that in *Little Earthquakes*, *Under The Pink* and *Boys For Pele* we've had three albums of songs that by-golly, *do* stand above other songs we're familiar with. They are friendly works of genius. We're scared of losing them. It's a justified fear.

But hold on. *God* was followed by the excellent *Caught A Lite Sneeze*, and then *Boys For Pele* and *Talula*. Fears were abated, we were back in comfortable, familiar ground. People have professed a dislike for the *Talula* release, and I must confess to being sickened at the cynical re-release of a new *Boys For Pele*, but no one can deny that there were good songs there, the re-mixes are a matter I'll get onto in a moment. Basically, what could have been a worrying left-turn onto that motorway of musical inanity named "dance music" was just a quick diversion. It's probably naive, given the success of *Widow*, to expect a second diversion to be just as short. But that's not the problem. I can handle dance-mix releases if they're based on original songs. Let people put *Professional Widow* to number one. I don't care. I've got the original source material on CD and I think it's much better. What really scares me is the thought that we won't get the originals, just

the end result. But at the end of the day, Tori Amos's albums are shifting in sufficient units (sorry to lapse into Industry-Speak there) to make them still worth releasing in their original forms. And on top of that, they then provide an excellent source of raw material for the remix artists. So everybody's happy.

Moneys made, we get the album we want, the dancers get the singles they want. Sure, I'm disappointed that singles released are going to be collections of seven minute bangs and crashes with no new songs, but if that's the price I have to pay to get a new album every other year then I'm prepared to pay it. To criticise and complain really is a touch selfish. *Who do we think we are?*

To my mind, the biggest worry over the whole re-mix matter is that some songs were released as still recognisable versions of their album counterparts only much better. The rough diamonds found on *Pele* suddenly became glittering, sparkling little gems. I personally felt that *Talula* worked a lot better with the additional instrumentation and time taken over it, and the *Sugar*-like *Hey Jupiter* is sky-kissingly beautiful. How has this happened?

When *Pele* came out, I worked hard to get people to listen to it. Guess what some people got for birthdays that year? Partly this was to defend my liking for an artist that strikes some people as odd, and partly it was to cheer the home side, because we all like to wave a flag occasionally. But the complaint I got from everyone who wasn't already a Tori fan was that it was "too samey". It's a long album in the first place, and has a hard time defending itself from such a charge. Mainly because it's true.

Yes, all right, throw your hands up in horror or outrage, or whatever. Well written and performed as the songs are, some of them needed the extra touch that *Talula* and *Hey Jupiter* eventually got. I might also humbly suggest that *Doughnut Song* could have been an all-time classic if the album version had been a lot closer to the live version we heard at the Albert Hall last year (with the emphasis on the poignant "you can tell me it's over" chorus). *In the Springtime of His Voodoo* is just begging to be covered by someone like R.E.M. because it needs guitars.

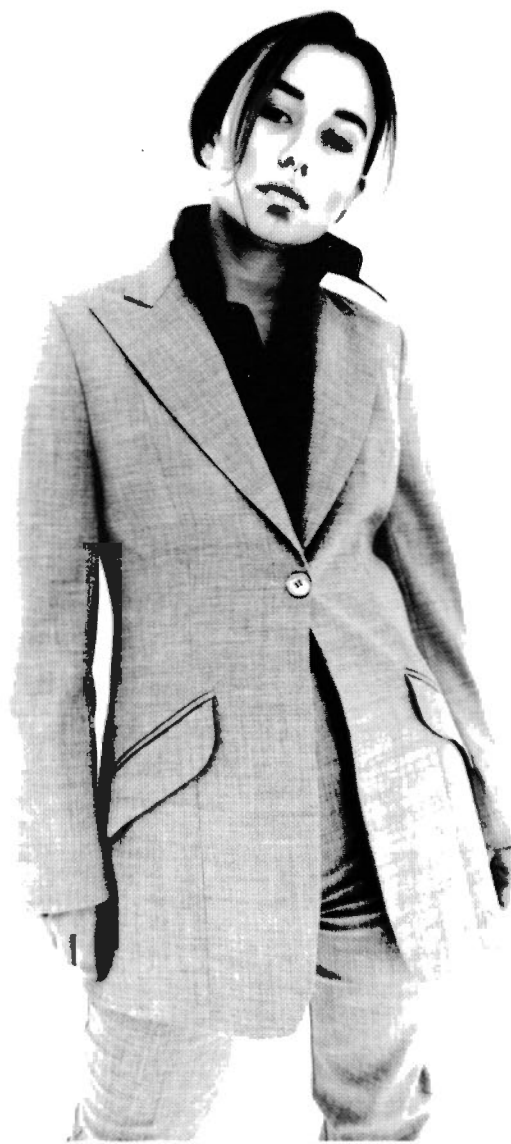
Boys For Pele seemed to come out too soon. It worries me a lot more than anything they did with *Professional Widow*, that there seemed to be retrospective reappraisal of the songs that led to all the alterations we heard. A couple of questions arise: Who wasn't happy with the end result? And why then

did it come out when it did? As long as the reason was anything other than the money-men getting impatient, I can deal with it. But if *Boys* came out when it did, as unfinished as it did, because people wanted money in the bank then we're in trouble. As it turned out, if you take your taped copy of *Boys*, replace the original versions of those songs that have been remixed (except *Widow* obviously!) you have a classic album without any argument. "Samey" is not an accusation that can be levelled. It could have been huge. *Jagged Little* what?

We may never know the answer. Maybe you think *Boys For Pele* is the most complete album so far, and that the re-mixes are blasphemies.

I think they're warnings. But hey, no point in crying over spilt vinyl. All we can do, in the matter of remixes, is realise that as people who have recognised Tori's ability and genius, we're no longer alone. There are people with us now and they wear suits. They write contracts just as we write letters and articles.

The world might be big enough for the both of us. The jury's still out.



Thoughts

Tori recently appeared in UK women's fashion magazine *Elle*. Photographed by none other than David Bailey, she appeared alongside Sharleen Spiteri, kd lang, Justine Frischmann and Louise Nurdning under the banner *Girl Power*. Each artist talked briefly about themselves. "If you were a sensual woman you were in league with that which is un-Christlike," said Tori of her growing-up. "Some of my lyrics upset my father."

A version of *Crucify* by Michigan band Oriental Spas can be found on their *Pain* album. Released in 1994 on Overture Records (34010-2), the band are a grungy rock outfit with two female lead vocalists. The liner notes for the track read, "I love this song - kind of a tribute to her genius." The album is available from Overture Records, 23309 Beck Road, Novi, MI 48374-3625 USA.

American figure skater Michelle Kwan often dances to Tori's *Winter*. Her outstanding routine at the World Championships in Lausanne was one such occasion.

Many Happy Returns to Tori for her birthday which was on August 22nd.

Alice Sordini from Rome in Italy, points out the striking resemblance between Tori and Italian politician Giovanna Melandri. Giovanna has been elected to parliament twice (in 1994 and 1996) representing ULIVO - the Italian parliament's left wing.

Elsewhere in this issue you'll find an article by Caroline Kirberg on the *Boys For Pele* songbook. Accompanying the article was a tape of Caroline's interpretations of, and experiments with, some of Tori's songs. For instance, inspired by Armand Van Helden's dance reworkings, Caroline set about creating a drum 'n' bass version of *Father Lucifer* retitled *Small Talk With Lucifer*. Other experiments include *Funky Widow* (a lighter, funkier dance working of *Professional Widow*), *Deep Blood Thought* (a slower piano version of *Blood Roses*) and *Just A Hatchou* (a drum 'n' bass *Caught A Lite Sneeze*). Her own vocals and piano echo those of Tori remarkably well, whilst she also displays an imaginative use of the synth drum machine.

Comic book creator Terry Moore, artist and author of *Strangers In Paradise* (available from any good comics shop) is a big fan of Tori's. He listens to Tori whilst creating the artwork and gives Tori a mention now and again.

SILLY MONEY: Kevin, a UK record dealer and friend of Sky, reported a copy of *Baltimore* up for grabs at a Tampa record show for a cool \$5000. Makes the \$1000 minimum bid for a digipak promo copy of the *Under The Pink* CD auctioned in *Goldmine* magazine seem almost reasonable! The ad mentioned that there are apparently only three copies in existence - questions which spring to mind are (1) How do they know that? (2) Does that include the copy we featured in Sky, or are there four? Or forty? Who knows...!

Tori's excellent gig at Exeter University in 1996 was no help to Exeter's opponents, Robinson College, Oxford, in a recent heat of *University Challenge*. When a clip of *Caught A Lite Sneeze* was played in a music round, the Oxford team named the song as *Constant Craving*. Too much R.D. Laing and not enough kd lang! Perhaps Tori should play at Oxford next time around as they are clearly in need of some culture.

We have received many letters from you regarding what is happening with Tori's 'fan club' based in the USA.

Her management recently released the following statement;

TO ALL TORI AMOS FANS
October 1, 1997

We have recently been made aware of some troubling problems with the Tom Richards run fan club, UPSIDE DOWN. We have seen various letters, e-mails and website postings regarding the dissatisfaction of many of you in trying to correspond with Tom and join Tori's fan club. For those troubles and the inability of the fan club to function properly we sincerely apologise.

It is because of these problems that we can no longer sanction Tom Richards and Upside Down as the official Tori Amos fan club and are removing our support from his operation.

Tori and her management will continue to support *Take To The Sky* and *Really Deep Thoughts* with interviews, pictures and other insightful information.

Elton John was interviewed recently on the BBC's *The O-Zone*, and named Tori as one of his favourite piano players and current artists. He mentioned that he particularly admires her left hand. Non-piano players can feel free to make your own joke here.

With both regular and promo copies of *Silent All These Years* (1997 issue with CK sleeve) in plentiful supply, Sky was surprised to find a promo CD featuring *Me And A Gun (Live Version)* and *Putting The Damage On (Album Version)*. Numbered PRCO 6995-2, we have not seen this item offered through the "usual outlets" of such goodies, although we suspect many more than three exist. See "SILLY MONEY" above.

Collectibles by Paul Campbell (Omnibus Press) - is a very comprehensive round up of Tori CD's, tapes, vinyls, videos and more from around the world. A trainspotters wet dream. Don't just sit there, buy it! Or buy two and give one to a friend. Very highly recommended both by us at Sky and several of our subscribers who have written to praise this book. A big thank you to Paul for all his hard work in getting the book together...

To our U.S. friends: Please, please, please don't send any more Sky related mail to Jack Schwab in Sacramento. The poor chap couldn't handle the pressures of being part of the Sky team so ALL mail to us please at: TAKE TO THE SKY, PO BOX 632, BEXLEYHEATH, KENT, DA7 5TE, ENGLAND.

For supplying various Thoughts in this issue our thanks go to Steve Moore from Littleton, Colorado, Alexander Garthe from Hagenheim, Tina Ellis and Alice Sordini. Thanks also go to all of you who sent articles that didn't make it into the mag yet; David-Anthony Phoebe, Simon Dodd, Michael Braun and Don F. Robertson.

Please note that it is not Sky policy to give out phone numbers in its pen-pals, trades and exchanges ads.

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OCTOBER 1997
PO BOX 632,
BEXLEYHEATH, KENT,
ENGLAND, DA7 5TE.

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DISCOGRAPHER

THOSE WITHOUT WHOM
WE ARE NOTHING;
TORI (as always of course),
LEE ELLEN NEWMAN,
ED AND DOMINIC AT EAST
WEST RECORDS,
JOHN WITHERSPOON,
MICHAEL BROAD,
ANGELA HARDING,
BRYAN MULTANEY,
JIM AT JANSET,
CLAIRE 'ROCKY' REYNOLDS.

GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
TO REG TAIT, RAY & DEE
AT ROCK-PIX, GARY HUDSON,
EMMA TAYLOR, NORMA & STAFF AT
NORTHUMBERLANDHEATH P.O.,
KRYSS THOMAS, JOSEF, NIK BUCK,
RICHARD LANE, GARY HARVEY,
MARGARET WOLSTENCROFT.

This issue was produced to the sound of
*The Verve, Radiohead, Veruca Salt,
Teenage Fanclub and Stereophonics.*

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OCTOBER 1998

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REPRODUCED IN ANY FORM WITHOUT
PRIOR PERMISSION TO DO SO FROM THE
MAGAZINE'S FOUNDERS (SEE ABOVE).

Illustrations on page 15 and
back cover by Michael Broad -
more of his work next issue.

Left: *Tori in the vocal booth at
Air Recording Studios in June.*

PENPALS, TRADES & EXCHANGES

Hi everyone, I'm a Norwegian Toriphile, looking for some nice pals from around the world. I'd love to write lots of letters about music, life, thoughts etc. and share news and views on Tori. I'm 16 and also into Belly, Björk, PJ and Lisa Germano. Write soon to **Stian Sandberg, Karisveien 167, 2013 Skjetten, Norway.**

Kate Bush fan has huge list of worldwide rarities to exchange for similar or money. Please send your lists, SAEs/IRCs to **Brent Reid, 47 Canterbury Road, Radford, Nottingham, NG8 1PQ, England.**

Hi! I'm a HUGE Tori fan who would like to communicate with other fans. I'm 21 and would like any rare Tori stuff I can get - is there is any USA stuff you want? Write to me; **Jessica M. Justice, 8081 Holland Dr., 17F Huntington Beach, CA 92647, USA.**

Hi! I'm looking for Sky subscribers in the

Lancashire, Yorkshire or Greater Manchester areas to write to, phone and meet. All my friends are Boyzone fans and it's starting to depress me. Write to; **L. Fox, c/o Take To The Sky, PO Box 632, Bexleyheath, Kent, DA7 5TE.** Sky will only pass your letters on if you mark them 'FOX'.

COMPETITION WINNERS

Many thanks for the hundreds of entries in response to last issue's Neil Gaiman competition. The question was; **Which three Tori songs is Neil mentioned in?** The answer was *Tear In Your Hand, Space Dog and Horses.* Easy or what? Hence we received our biggest competition response yet. The winner drawn from all the correct entries was Ruth Echmillek of Cardiff in Wales. Well done Ruth.

The prize winning article this issue is by Barry Robinson. A *Boys For Pele* poster signed by Tori and Steve Caton is yours Barry. Others who have articles printed in this issue will receive whatever we have left in the goodie box, probably pink vinyl *Under The Pink* albums or promo only *Cornflake Girl* CDs. Thanks for all your effort! Keep all your pieces coming folks!



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Allyson

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