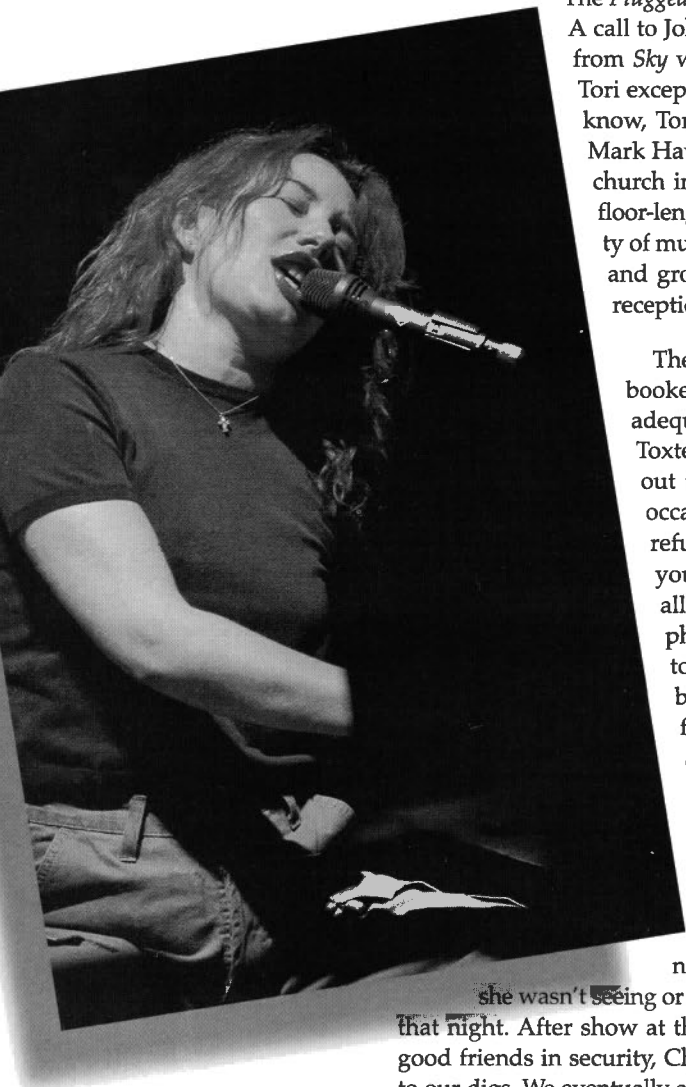


TAKE TO THE SHY

ISSUE 12

THE TORI AMOS INFORMATION SERVICE





The *Plugged 98* tour officially kicked-off in the UK after several warm-up shows in the US. A call to Johnny 'The spoon', a packed ruck-sack and a very large wallet meant the crew from *Sky* were back on the road. The scheduled 200 date global tour is nothing new to Tori except that this time she hit the road as a married woman. As I'm sure you already know, Tori took the plunge and tied the knot with Lincolnshire-born sound engineer Mark Hawley. They were married on February 22nd this year at ST. Lawrences, a little church in West Wycombe, England. Tori wore a traditional white dress and a stunning floor-length silver cape when she was given away by her father Dr Ed. There was plenty of music during the service from Bach to Irish pipes. Two torch bearers led the bride and groom to a horse-drawn carriage, which then whisked them off to the nearby reception.

The opening night of the tour saw *Sky* in Liverpool with our accommodation pre-booked at the Embassie Youth Hostel - a great place to stay, providing you have adequate personal insurance. We were reliably informed by a local tradesman that Toxteth was not the first choice for most visitors to Liverpool, and we later found out that the proprietor of the hostel had been mugged on his doorstep on three occasions. Inside, the digs weren't a whole lot safer as it was in various stages of refurbishment. Taking a shower was an experience that left the skin tingling, if you escaped electrocution. However there were plenty of candles at hand when all the lights failed, but all said and done the Embassie has a great relaxed atmosphere and we were made to feel most welcome with endless supplies of tea and toast (if you had time to spare, as the toaster could handle only one slice of bread at a time). Later we found out that half the residents of the hostel were in fact going to the gig that evening, making it a very cosmopolitan affair as accompanying us we had several Americans, a German, an Australian, some Irish a Scouser and a very mysterious Finnish guy.

The next day we vowed no more beer, but at two o'clock we found ourselves back in the pub after the traditional stop at Manchester's Rusholme for Indian food. This set us up for what in the past has always proved to be one of the best shows of the tour, and that evening at The Labbatts Appollo was no exception. For some reason Tori was disappointed with her performance, but she wasn't seeing or hearing it from our view point, and our opinion was no different from all present that night. After show at the Appollo is always a good time to shoot some pool and catch up with our good friends in security, Chris and Sarge. Chris, who is a local to the area, kindly offered to take us back to our digs. We eventually arrived safely back after several stops and U-turns having got a little lost... Cheers Chris, see you next tour.

From the choirgirl hotel... to the cheapest B&B in town

The production of the tour and the introduction of the band has given the show a complete face-lift (see reviews later in this issue). The touring entourage has grown considerably with the addition (amongst others) of two new band members, namely Jon Evans on bass and Matt Chamberlain on drums. The lead guitar slot is filled as usual by Steve Caton who, in between playing guitar, can be seen sitting with his rod in his hand. Yes, you guessed it, Mr. Caton is a very keen fisherman. Being a man of many talents he is also a connoisseur of fine wines and highly recommends a good Chardonnay, infact he has promised to put together, *The Caton Guide To Fishing & Fine Wine* exclusively for *Sky*. We joined Steve on several occasions for a tippie before and after shows and I hold him responsible for losing my bag of records. The *Sky* crew have never been known to shirk at a free beer, and we considered it very unsociable not to participate in the Albert Hall after-show 'celebrations'. Heavily influenced by Mr. Caton the drink flowed freely, but somewhere along the line my bag disappeared and I never saw it again. If any-one has found a bag of records and CDs (Tori ones) somewhere between the Albert Hall and Charing Cross Station, then they are probably mine.

It was good to talk to Tori again, who incidentally, has taken to consuming after each show a brew of herbs and ginger. For some strange reason we seem to amuse her with our 'loose' banter (see Tori's note opposite). John on the other hand has given us up as a lost cause. Mr. Witherspoon can be seen flying around at each show, sporting a wide selection of checked shirts, in fact he must have a whole wardrobe full. It's quite evident that John did not carefully plan this tour as it clashes with the World Cup Finals. But on reflection, being an Everton supporter, he obviously is not a big football fan.

Mid-way through the UK dates Tori went into the studio in Twickenham to record a new version of *Jackie's Strength*, (some twenty seconds shorter than the album version) as her new single. Tori told us that the choice for the next single was either *Jackie* or *Raspberry Swirl*, and it looks like *Jackie* will win. We voiced our opinion to Tori that *Swirl* should *definitely* be the choice. She was very interested to hear this and said that we should try and persuade Lee-Ellen. Somehow I don't think we will have the final say over East-West... but we'll still try. Whenever Tori plays *Swirl* it's always greeted with a rapturous reception. The most memorable instance was the first night at the RAH. Bryan and myself were in hysterics when we spotted two guys (very worse for beer), in one of the boxes frantically dancing semi-naked, mimicking a martial arts duel and, at one point, 'humping' the wall. I could go on forever about events on the tour, but if this piece gets much longer it won't fit into Mark's proposed layout. So I'll finish off by saying a **HUGE** thanks to all our friends on the *Plugged Tour*, especially John Witherspoon, Joel (the main man) Hopkins, Steve Caton, Jon Evans, Matt Chamberlain, Lee-Ellen, Chris and last, but by no means least, to Tori for her tolerance and backing. Please enjoy the following pages and thanks to you all for your letters of praise and continued top quality contributions, keep them coming.



Hi ☺
Steve is full
of Bollocks ☺☺☺
and we love him
Hugs to everybody
see you on the Road
Y
Tori.

from the *Choirgirl*

From the choirgirl hotel is Tori's fourth album proper, following on from the multi-million selling *Little Earthquakes*, *Under The Pink* and *Boys For Pele*. We all know that no-one writes songs, sings songs or plays piano quite like Tori, but now she is approaching her music from a new angle. What follows is a brief chat shedding some light on the new material and what's been happening in her life since the last album and tour.

From the choirgirl hotel, though unmistakably Tori, is unquestionably different. "I developed this record around rhythm. I wanted to use rhythm in a way that I hadn't used it before; I wanted to *integrate* the piano with it."

"The whole record had piano and vocal cut live with a drummer and a programmer.

"I wanted to use rhythm
in a way that I hadn't
used it before;
I wanted to *integrate*
the piano with it."

I didn't want to be isolated this time round - I've done the 'girl and a piano' thing - I wanted to be a player with other musicians, with guitar, bass and drums. The piano was excited - so excited because she didn't have to masturbate

for the first time in a long time! This was our chance to go to the playground and meet the other kids."

Her trademark compelling lyrics are coupled with pulsing, polyrhythmic patterns of beats to dramatic and sometimes disorienting effect. And although ultimately still more of an evolutionary musical change than a revolutionary one, this self-imposed shift of focus has certainly been one to keep Tori on her toes.

"The piano player knew her head was on the chopping block with this one," she says with a smile. "She really had to practice hard to be able to play with these guys!" The lineup of musicians on *from the choirgirl hotel* includes long-time collaborator Steve Caton on guitar, Matt Chamberlain on drums, George Porter Jr. and Justin Meldal-Johnsen (from Beck's band) on bass. The touring band will be the same, apart from the bass duties which will be handled by Jon Evans.

If Tori had long known that she wanted to use rhythm and live recording in a way she hadn't before, she couldn't have foreseen the wider source of inspiration for her new songs. Nor would she have wanted to. "I wasn't going to write this record as soon as I did, but at the end of 1996 I was near the finish of a tour and I was pregnant. I had known from very early on - within a week - that I was pregnant. So I lived with the feeling and got attached to the soul that was coming in. And then at almost three months, I miscarried. It was a great shock to me, because I really thought I was out of the woods and I was really excited to be a mom."

"I went through a lot of different feelings after the miscarriage - you go through everything possible. You question what is fair, you get angry with the spirit for not wanting to come, you keep asking why. And then, as I was going through the anger and the sorrow and the why, the songs started to come. Before I was even aware, they were coming to me in droves. Looking back, that's the way it's always happened for me in my life. When things get really empty for me - empty in my inner life, the music world, the songs come across galaxies to find me."

This event was the seed of the new album. The loss of her baby was what Tori calls "the egg" of her music. "People had a very hard time talking to me about what had happened," she says. "And I had a hard time talking about it. But the songs seemed to have such an easy time talking to me. And I began to feel the freedom of the music."

That freedom revealed itself in a variety of ways. "Each song would show me a certain side of herself because of what I was going through," Tori says. "So a song like *Cruel* came to me out of my anger. *She's Your Cocaine* and *iiii* came out of a sense of loss and sacrifice. And other songs celebrated the fact that I found a new appreciation for life through this loss."


Perhaps it's surprising, but *from the choirgirl hotel* - as spiky and even barbed as it often can be - is never sombre in the way that Tori's last album, *Boys For Pele*, was. "I crossed the river Styx on that record," she says of an album that charted what she calls "a change in my relationships with men for good."

from the choirgirl hotel emerges somehow as a much more complete record than she has made before. Tori agrees: "Each song to me is complete. They're not interconnected; they're not dependant on each other to work. They get to hang out together and you get to know them together, but they exist quite happily without each other."

Perhaps what does unite the songs here is their passion. "There's a deep love on this record. This is not a victim's record. It deals with sadness but it's a passionate record - for life, for the life force. And a respect for the miracle of life."

from the choirgirl hotel marks further changes in the career of a star whom so many have, in the past, encouraged to court controversy. Listeners and observers straining to hear or see the effortlessly provocative, apparently 'kooky' (stand up Q magazine) Tori Amos of legend may be a little unsettled today with the eloquent, honest woman before them. Tori no longer seems interested in playing up to people's expectations or seeing her words twisted into oddball shapes for the amusement of others. "I've already given God a blow-job. After you've done that there are other things that interest you."

Now a happily married woman - Tori was married to Mark Hawley, her long-time sound engineer, at West Wycombe on February 22nd of this year - her definition of 'girl power' is simply: "The power is in the people being moved."



"This is not a victim's record. It deals with sadness but it's a passionate record."

"This record got me through a real bad patch," she concludes. "But I can laugh with this record, and I can move my hips to this record, which is really good for me. It's very sensual - that's the rhythm." Long may the beat go on Tori.



City Hall, Newcastle 24.5.98

I think we all knew that this time around things were going to be different but until Tori took to the stage with her band and *Black Dove* began (and with *what volume*) I wasn't sure *how* different.

Tear In Your Hand worked particularly well, although *God* and *Cornflake Girl* both seemed to fit their new shoes quite comfortably. Of course, *Winter* had to be between Tori and her piano. It was, for a moment, as if *From The Choirgirl Hotel* had never happened, but when the band returned, the delirium of *Raspberry Swirl* danced like a whirling dervish. *Liquid Diamonds* was stunningly mysterious with a layered sound deep enough to be on the ocean floor.

Tori and her Bösendorfer look very happy with their new companions. They are both enjoying an interaction they haven't had before on stage and the energy it produced was wonderfully contagious. There always comes a time when you have to move on, but it doesn't mean you have to forget what's been before. It would have been easy for Tori to stick to the beaten track, but she hasn't - she has opted for the road less travelled. Here's to whatever lies behind the bend in the road.

SARAH STUART-SMITH

UK Tour '98

Where were you?

The following are a few excerpts from some of the many concert reviews we've received from readers as the tour played through the UK. Keep them coming, especially from Europe and beyond, more next issue.

Clyde Auditorium, Glasgow 22.5.98

This was to be my first visit to the 'Govan Opera House' or 'Armadillo' as it's correctly known. Located on the riverside, Glasgow's new Clyde Auditorium is an attractive alternative to the adjoining SECC. The exhibition and conference centre had become known as the 'big red shed' until, that is, the management decided to paint it battleship grey! On a hot summer evening, it was nice to get inside and meet other fans.

Although I had been issued with my photographers pass, imagine our pleasure when we were told that the whole front block were to be allowed to stand. This little bonus would move everyone right up to the edge of the stage since there was to be NO pit!



Tori looked as though she was looking forward to this show as she strode confidently to the front of the stage. Opening with *Black Dove*, the hall seemed to fill with energy as the band performed one of the *Choirgirl* highlights. In the middle of all the commotion and crush was a little Glaswegian photographer. I was frantically swapping two cameras and changing films, whilst trying to secure at least one decent shot of each musician. *Here* shook the house with Matt Chamberlain's powerful drumming and before you knew it, the first two tracks were over and cameras had to be put away.

With a ridiculous amount of film now safely back in the car, I could enjoy the rest of the evenings performance. The next song up was *Cornflake Girl* and although performed well, something for me just wasn't right. Tori will have to go a long way to improve her performance with Steve Caton at the New York R.A.I.N.N. benefit. If you haven't already seen it, rush out and buy a copy of the *Live from N.Y* video which is such a treat. The night's show wouldn't have been the same without a tremendous rendition of *Raspberry Swirl*. I swear there must be a hole in the stage where Tori's high heel pounded relentlessly through this number. From the very first time you hear it, this song's primal beat just grabs you and makes you want to dance.

With 'too many stars and, not enough sky', Tori simply brought them indoors. That was how it seemed when *Waitress* was performed with scores of tiny blue spotlights as a beautiful backdrop. Stage lighting for this tour was mightily impressive throughout, with numerous dynamic spots adding to the atmosphere without becoming a distraction.

As a second and final encore, Tori performed *Horses* surrounded by hundreds of moonbeams. This effect was provided by two huge glitterballs, each of which had multiple lights. Rather than the usual circling dots, light was reflected as narrow beams that played across the stage and out over the crowd. This was an amazing effect from our viewpoint at the front of the hall.

GARRY WHITING

**Clyde Auditorium,
Glasgow 22.5.98**

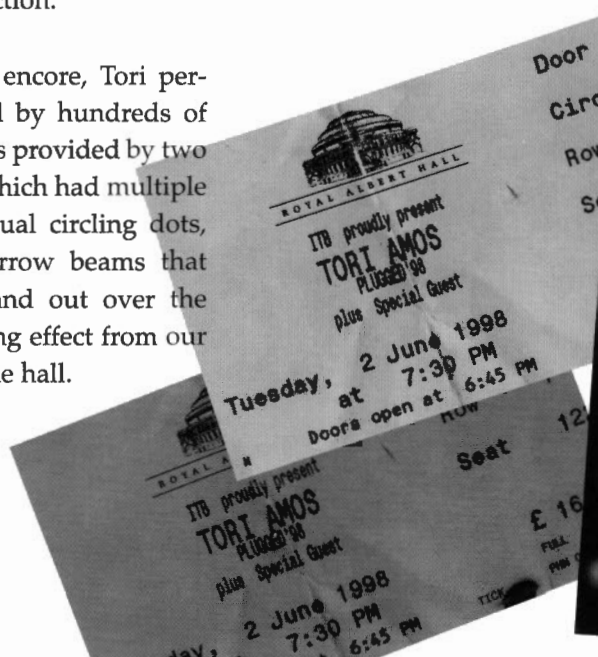
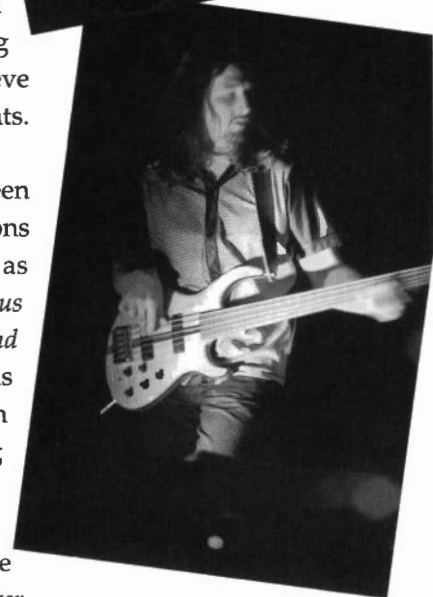
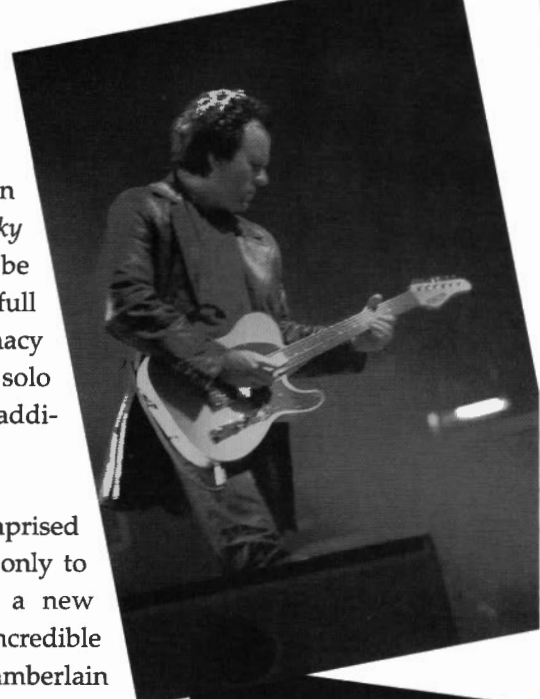
I felt a little trepidation upon receiving a mailer from *Sky* announcing that Tori would be supported this time out by a full backing band. Would the intimacy I'd come to expect from the solo piano performances survive the addition of a drummer and a bassist?

Songs from the new album comprised roughly fifty percent of the set, only to be expected when promoting a new album. Less expected was the incredible tightness of the band. Matt Chamberlain and Jon Evans laid down a pounding rhythm section over which Tori and Steve Caton weaved their magical embellishments.

There was a real synergy present between them on stage as they gave interpretations that evoked the spirit of the songs, as opposed to note-for-note recreations. *Precious Things, God, The Waitress, Tear In Your Hand* and *Cornflake Girl* all benefited from this treatment, making radical departures from their recorded form, the songs breathing with a fresh vitality. That said, perhaps no gig would be complete without at least one solo vocal/piano performance, in this case a splendid pairing of *Leather* with *Baker Baker*.

DON F. ROBERTSON

The fantastic live photos featured in this issue were taken by Garry Whiting at the Glasgow show. Cheers Gary!





Show me the meadow



Unlocking the silence live from Madison Square Garden - The RAINN Concert Video

I waited a long time for Tori's RAINN concert video. I saw the review in *Q* magazine and naturally assumed that the video would be available to the masses some time before the completion of the Millennium Dome. Unfortunately I hadn't made allowances for the time warp that is my local HMV store...

Needless to say, the product itself was well worth the wait. It features a sell-out benefit concert that took place on January 23, 1997 at Madison Square Garden Theatre in New York which was intended to launch a fund-raising campaign and raise awareness of the RAINN organisation. In reality it is much more than that. It stands as an example of how far Tori Amos has come since the early days when she herself was without a voice. It serves as inspiration for those who feel they need it. And it is as fine an example as you are likely to find; Tori at her peak, among friends and doing what she does best.

The stage is awash with blue lighting as she starts with *Beauty Queen*. The Bosey sounds angry and Tori looks and sounds nervous for the first few minutes. There then follows a wonderful contrast as she floats into *Horses*, alternating between ferocious playing and a feather-light touch. There's bound to be a technical musical term for this, but I'll be damned if I know what it is. Anyway, when it sounds this good, who cares? The song serves as her introductory plea to her audience. It's almost as if she's saying, "I'm not just the girl with the man on her back anymore - I've got me some horses to ride on." It's a bright start, as though she wants to show the audience where she's at now.

The first thing that struck me about Tori was the fact that, perhaps symbolically, she wears what can only be described as a 'slinky red thing'. I'm not sure whether this was intentional but, if it was, it fits with the whole tone of her performance.

Leather is dedicated to the first person she ever played it to, who is actually in the audience. The song is performed with such

confidence after the nervous start, actually stopping to smile to the audience at one point. Naturally, they go wild - she has them eating out of her hands at a very early point in the show.

It was a good point to turn to the harpsichord for *Blood Roses*, during which she is filmed from every conceivable angle. Again, it's a clear indication of how far she's come. No matter how you look at it, she towers head and shoulders over her contemporaries in the industry.

Tori uses Steve Caton's guitar intro to *Cornflake Girl* as the backing for a very odd dance, which would appear to be some kind of fertility jig. It is the sort of thing that would launch a million 'kooky chick' articles and as far as I could tell has something to do with having a baby. It still whips the audience into a frenzy as Tori finds herself swimming in flowers when she gets close to the front of the stage. The song itself sounds as fresh as ever with a slight change to the riff in the verse.

Unrecognisable to begin with, *Waitress* sounds reminiscent of *Song For Eric* as Tori delivers the haunting melody. When the familiar body of the song takes shape, Caton's guitar provides a serrated edge as Tori seems to take on the persona of a spurned, homicidal axe-murderer. Her intensity and extraordinarily expressive face are sometimes lost to those who are beyond the first few rows. All are captured here perfectly in close-up.

Next, *Little Earthquakes* serves as a constant reminder of how fragile we all are. Beautifully accompanied by Steve Caton, the message in this context would seem to be 'go easy on yourself - you've come through so much and it doesn't take a lot to rip us to pieces.' The camera shows tearful eyes in the audience which could just as easily be mine. The tears aren't lost on Tori who looks down on her flock as she delivers her wise words with the facial expression of one who has tasted her own tears many times. She looks confident

yet reassuring, all-knowing yet innocent - you wonder if she realises how each and every one of those people are hanging on her every word. This is the best live version of the first album's title track as you are ever likely to hear.

Upside Down is a Caton-free zone. As I watched this performance of one of my favourite tracks, it occurred to me that this is one of the few Tori songs that is not written in codes and riddles. It is raw and explicit and it makes me think, "I can take this stuff any which way she wants to give it." It is perfection personified.

What can you write about *Winter* that hasn't been written a million times before? All that can be added here is that the words, "You must learn to stand up for yourself, 'cause I can't always be around," are even more poignant here. There are many who use Tori and her music as an emotional crutch and the message is that we all must learn to be strong, just as she has done.

Tucked inside the heart of every nice grrrrrrrrrrlllllll." *Precious Things* takes on the appearance of an exorcism. With a white light behind her, she scratches her nails up her legs, letting the demons out. "Wash me clean, I said - wash this thing Daddy," she sighs, before wailing like a deranged banshee, exhibiting the whole spectrum of emotion in a matter of seconds. It's truly a joy to behold.

She then bangs out a tribal rhythm on the top of her harpsichord as she sings a haunting melody, a sad lament to self-mutilation; "I hurt myself today, to see if I could feel - I hurt myself before, I'm sure, I'm sure..." This is the introduction to the most incredible version of *Caught A Lite Sneeze*. Caton comes into his own here and, for those Brits who are old enough to remember, a perfect analogy for me is to say that this whole song wafts along like the smell of Bisto gravy!

Talula is the best excuse ever for anyone to don their party hats and, right on cue, the whole place comes alive. Nothing could provide more of a contrast with what is to follow. Tori is wearing her 'slinky red thing' and you get the impression that she still hasn't seen Barbados, but this performance of *Me And A Gun* is a clear indication that Tori is now able to take that part of her life out of a cupboard and put it back when she wants to, if only

when she is performing. She is truly an ideal figurehead for RAINN, encouraging those in similar circumstances to deal with what happened to them, but not to dwell on it.

Marianne is her first encore and is sung beautifully for an absent friend about whom the song is written. *Silent All These Years* follows and her performance of it is as perfect as ever. Like many people, this is the song that started it all for me. So much has changed since this song first appeared and you cannot help but smile when you realise, once and for all, that Tori is no longer waiting for "somebody else to understand."

Her second encore is *Mohammed My Friend* which she performs as a duet with Maynard Keenan of Tool. Tori confides that he sings her lullabies when she's feeling low and, indeed, he sings like an angel. Unusually, without this track, the video would be a religion-friendly zone with *Crucify* and *God* missing from the set.

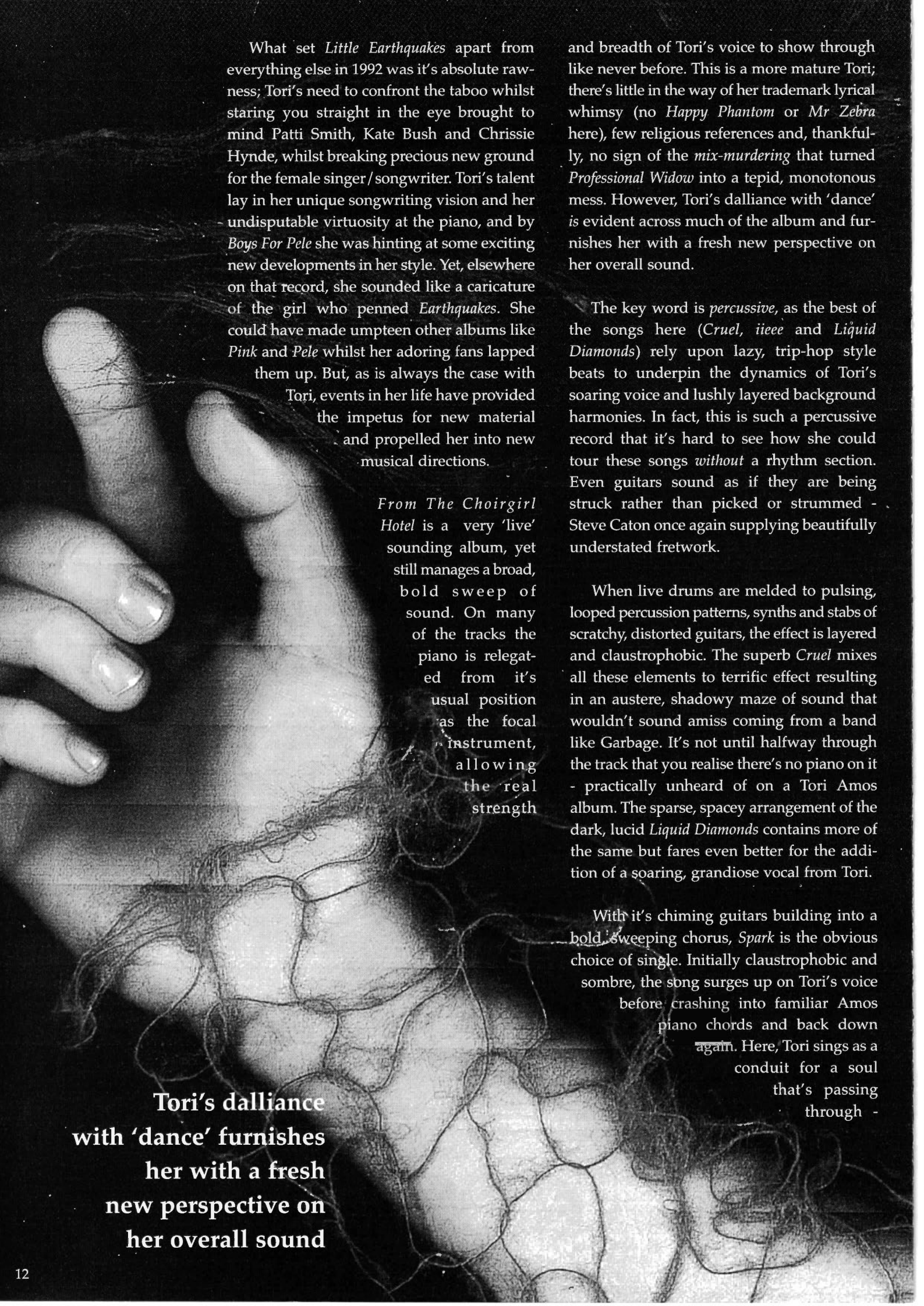
What is plain to see above all else on this video is the pleasure Tori derives from her craft. She seems so very happy when she's up there and she deserves no less when she has brought so much happiness to so many others. This performance will become a landmark in her career. No collection is complete without it.

MANDI COOK

Details of the RAINN (Rape Abuse Incest National Network) concert, what RAINN is and what it does can be found in issue 10 of Sky.

LIVE FROM NY





What set *Little Earthquakes* apart from everything else in 1992 was its absolute rawness; Tori's need to confront the taboo whilst staring you straight in the eye brought to mind Patti Smith, Kate Bush and Chrissie Hynde, whilst breaking precious new ground for the female singer/songwriter. Tori's talent lay in her unique songwriting vision and her undisputable virtuosity at the piano, and by *Boys For Pele* she was hinting at some exciting new developments in her style. Yet, elsewhere on that record, she sounded like a caricature of the girl who penned *Earthquakes*. She could have made umpteen other albums like *Pink* and *Pele* whilst her adoring fans lapped them up. But, as is always the case with Tori, events in her life have provided the impetus for new material and propelled her into new musical directions.

From *The Choirgirl Hotel* is a very 'live' sounding album, yet still manages a broad, bold sweep of sound. On many of the tracks the piano is relegated from its usual position as the focal instrument, allowing the real strength

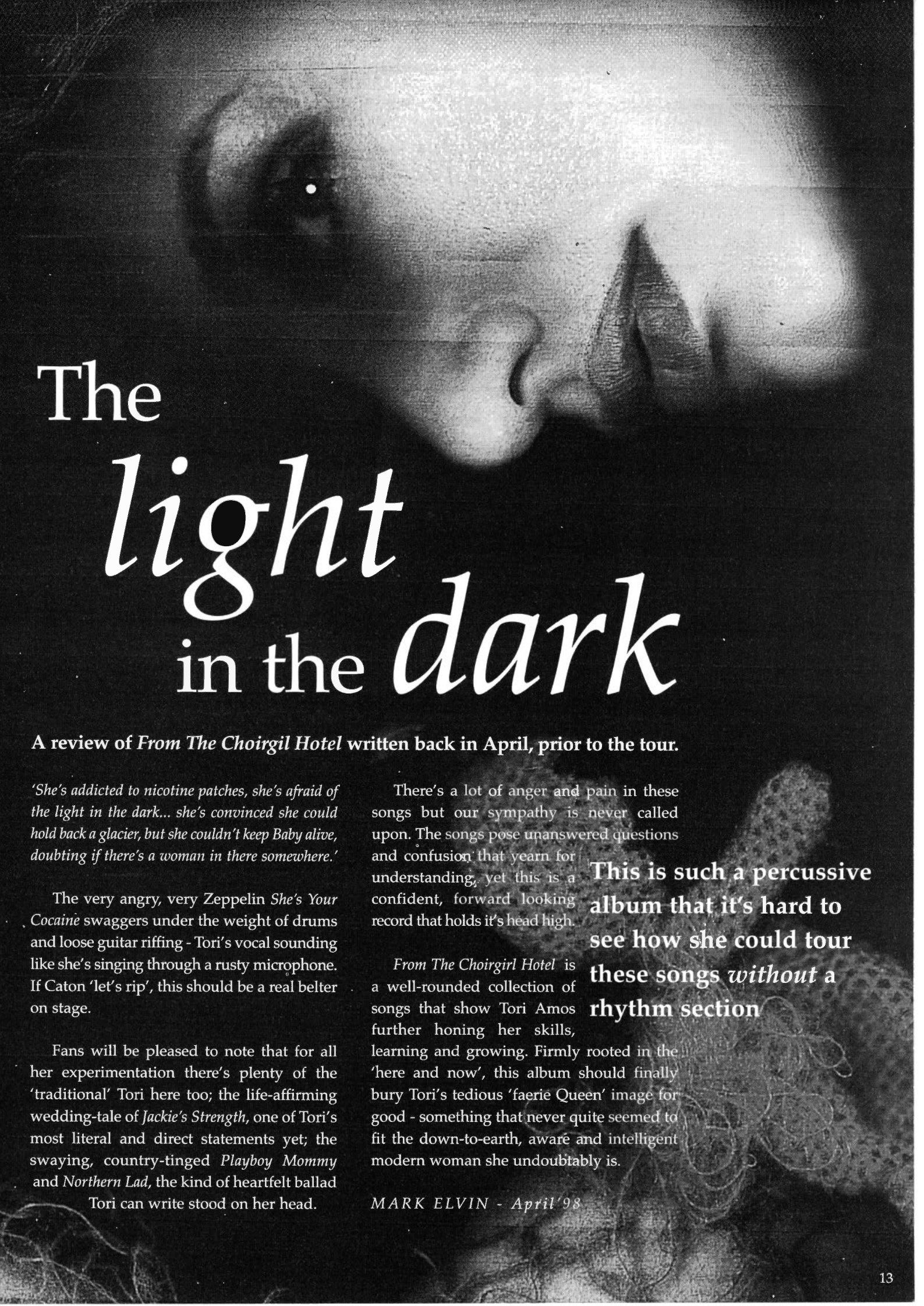
and breadth of Tori's voice to show through like never before. This is a more mature Tori; there's little in the way of her trademark lyrical whimsy (no *Happy Phantom* or *Mr Zebra* here), few religious references and, thankfully, no sign of the *mix-murdering* that turned *Professional Widow* into a tepid, monotonous mess. However, Tori's dalliance with 'dance' is evident across much of the album and furnishes her with a fresh new perspective on her overall sound.

The key word is *percussive*, as the best of the songs here (*Cruel*, *iiiii* and *Liquid Diamonds*) rely upon lazy, trip-hop style beats to underpin the dynamics of Tori's soaring voice and lushly layered background harmonies. In fact, this is such a percussive record that it's hard to see how she could tour these songs *without* a rhythm section. Even guitars sound as if they are being struck rather than picked or strummed - Steve Caton once again supplying beautifully understated fretwork.

When live drums are melded to pulsing, looped percussion patterns, synths and stabs of scratchy, distorted guitars, the effect is layered and claustrophobic. The superb *Cruel* mixes all these elements to terrific effect resulting in an austere, shadowy maze of sound that wouldn't sound amiss coming from a band like Garbage. It's not until halfway through the track that you realise there's no piano on it - practically unheard of on a Tori Amos album. The sparse, spacey arrangement of the dark, lucid *Liquid Diamonds* contains more of the same but fares even better for the addition of a soaring, grandiose vocal from Tori.

With its chiming guitars building into a bold, sweeping chorus, *Spark* is the obvious choice of single. Initially claustrophobic and sombre, the song surges up on Tori's voice before crashing into familiar Amos piano chords and back down again. Here, Tori sings as a conduit for a soul that's passing through -

**Tori's dalliance
with 'dance' furnishes
her with a fresh
new perspective on
her overall sound**



The *light* in the *dark*

A review of *From The Choirgil Hotel* written back in April, prior to the tour.

'She's addicted to nicotine patches, she's afraid of the light in the dark... she's convinced she could hold back a glacier, but she couldn't keep Baby alive, doubting if there's a woman in there somewhere.'

The very angry, very Zeppelin *She's Your Cocaine* swaggers under the weight of drums and loose guitar riffing - Tori's vocal sounding like she's singing through a rusty microphone. If Caton 'let's rip', this should be a real belter on stage.

Fans will be pleased to note that for all her experimentation there's plenty of the 'traditional' Tori here too; the life-affirming wedding-tale of *Jackie's Strength*, one of Tori's most literal and direct statements yet; the swaying, country-tinged *Playboy Mommy* and *Northern Lad*, the kind of heartfelt ballad

Tori can write stood on her head.

There's a lot of anger and pain in these songs but our sympathy is never called upon. The songs pose unanswered questions and confusion that yearn for understanding, yet this is a confident, forward looking record that holds it's head high.

From The Choirgil Hotel is a well-rounded collection of songs that show Tori Amos further honing her skills, learning and growing. Firmly rooted in the 'here and now', this album should finally bury Tori's tedious 'faerie Queen' image for good - something that never quite seemed to fit the down-to-earth, aware and intelligent modern woman she undoubtedly is.

This is such a percussive album that it's hard to see how she could tour these songs *without* a rhythm section

MARK ELVIN - April '98

thoughts

Is the new album the first not to have a Neil Gaiman reference? Have Neil and Tori fallen out? Sky reader Martin Eden points out that he appears in the 'thank you' list as 'Neil and the Velvets' and then in the track *Hotel* where Tori sings, 'where are the Velvets?' Neil also appears in the tour programme (which didn't go on sale on the UK tour until the London shows) with an extract from his forthcoming work for DC Comics *Stardust*.

Binge is the name of Steve Caton's band, which also features Matt Sorum (of Y Kant Tori Read, The Cult and Guns 'N' Roses fame) and a couple of other guys who Steve tells us we wouldn't know by name but are really good. Expect to hear their first material before too long - watch this space for further details as we get them.

Tori cancelled her Newport show after postponing the original date to June 28th. This is the first time Tori has cancelled a UK show. However, she did appear at the Glastonbury Festival at the end of June. She had two songs from her set, *Crucify* and *Precious Things* televised on BBC2.

In April, UK trade magazine *Music Week* reported that Managing Director of East West Records Max Hole and Tori's A&R man of seven years Ian Stanley have both left the company. Both were instrumental in discovering and

introducing Tori to the public. Stanley has worked with Tori since her shift from Atlantic in the US (those ill-fated Y Kant Tori Read days) to East West and the UK. "I've always played him the seeds of my ideas and there's always been a respect there," says Tori. "Ian is someone I really trust. He will always be a close friend."

Tori recently appeared on the front cover of *Rolling Stone* (issue 789 dated June 25) depicted in a stunning 'faerie Queen' scenario. The interview inside is also one of the best she has given recently - and thankfully they didn't call her 'kooky'. She also appeared on the cover of *Alternative Press* (July 98 Vol.13 No. 120) in the States, sporting some fabulous dark, artistic eye-make-up.

Tori's wedding to Mark Hawley appeared in the March 7, 1998 issue (number 499) of



Hello! magazine. Often ridiculed in the UK but boasting a huge readership, *Hello!* presents glimpses of the private lives of the rich and famous. The small piece was made up of some nice shots of the day's events including the one shown here.

TAKE TO THE SKY

For subscription details send SAE/IRC to; TAKE TO THE SKY, PO BOX 632, BEXLEYHEATH, KENT, DA7 5TE, ENGLAND.

A subscription is for four issues NOT a calendar year.

No SAE/IRC means no reply.

FOR EXPORT & WHOLESALE OF TAKE TO THE SKY CONTACT US AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE

RELEASES & APPEARANCES ROUND-UP

Trying to keep up with Tori's media appearances and collectable releases at this stage always proves to be very difficult. Such information collates over a period of time and will be updated in a future issue. However, what follows is a very brief round-up (sparing all the gory details) of what has surfaced to date.

To begin with, the most significant UK TV appearances include a pre-recorded live appearance of *Spark* on *Top Of The Pops*, a brief interview prior to the single on Channel 5's *Pepsi Chart Show*, and an interview/chat incorporating three live songs on *Later With Jools Holland*. Tori has also featured on the front cover of *Q* magazine which included a several page article (full of facts we already knew) somewhat overshadowed by some very nice photos. The pull-out feature free with *The Times* (on Saturday 11th April) for me was the pick of the bunch featuring Tori on the front cover and a very constructive well written article which surprisingly did not retread old ground... i.e. KOOKIE, ROCK-CHIC, GINGER NUT etc. etc. Additionally, *Hello* magazine covered the wedding and the current edition (June/July) of *Rolling Stone* has Tori on the front cover.

Continuing with collectable goodies. The most notable of the European releases include a two-track promo CD for *Spark* in a slim jewel-case alongside the stock CD, limited edition CD with postcards and the cassingle. There is a promo album CD in a slim jewel-case with a different cover shot (but from the same session as the standard release). For the more serious (and well-off) collector there is not one, but two CDRs. The first is an unmastered 5-track, and the second the usual full album CDR. Both items have been sited in a London record store commanding a £200.00 price tag.

On a more down to earth level other items of interest include a double vinyl US album available from most major record outlets for under a tenner, and we are reliably informed that the album CD comes with a free *Spark* video in French stores. The only official video material available to date is in the form of a promo 1-track for *Spark*. Please keep us updated with anything of interest you may come across including quirky promo items, video, audio or otherwise for mention in future issues.

Advance Sampler Cassettes

In a collector's market where the highest prices are commanded by rare CDs and precious vinyl, promotional cassettes are often unjustly ignored.

Although CD-R (directly recorded compact disc) is the fashionable item of the moment, promo cassettes still often provide the first hearing of an artist's new work for the majority of DJs or reviewers. All of the four Tori albums to be released in the UK have been preceded by sampler tapes; here is a quick run down of each. Please note that there are also promo tapes for the full albums and almost all of the singles, but these are not covered by the scope of this article.

Little Earthquakes 4 Tracks

Dated 12/7/91. No catalogue number. Plain card sleeve with East West logo and typed inlay.

Tracks: *Winter / Crucify / Silent All These Years / Leather*

Under The Pink Tori Amos - Sampler

Not dated. No catalogue number. Printed sleeve with black and white picture (which is the UK *Cornflake Girl* and US *God* photo).

Tracks: *Pretty Good Year / God / Bells For Her / Cornflake Girl / Past The Mission*

Notes: Australian copies have the same sleeve but with 'proper' printed white on clear cassette labels, dated 1993 and the catalogue number TA-1. Spanish copies share the same cover but the cassette is credited to 'Tori Amos'.

Boys For Pele

Tracks from the Forthcoming Album 'Boys For Pele'. Not dated. No catalogue number. Printed sleeve with colour picture (*Caught A Lite Sneeze* cover photo reversed).

Tracks: *Talula/Caught A Lite Sneeze/Putting The Damage On/Father Lucifer/Mr. Zebra/Hey Jupiter*

Boys For Pele Tori Amos.

Not dated. No catalogue number. Plain card sleeve with East West logo and typed inlay.

Tracks: *Talula / Caught A Lite Sneeze / Father Lucifer / Professional Widow / Mr. Zebra / Hey Jupiter / Putting The Damage On*

Notes: Also of interest is the USA *Boys For Pele* sampler cassette (Atlantic PRCS 6608) which has a printed sleeve with a black and white picture (a close-up of Tori from the 'suckling pig' photo) and features *Caught A Lite Sneeze (edit) / Hey Jupiter / Talula / Putting The Damage On*.

From The Choirgirl Hotel

Tracks from the forthcoming album Tori Amos - from the choirgirl hotel.

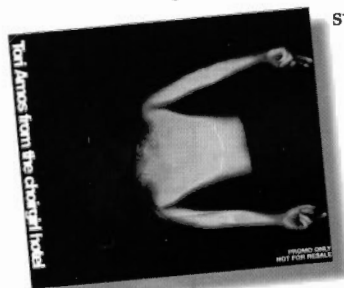
Not dated. No catalogue number. Printed sleeve with colour head and shoulders photo of Tori on blue background.

Tracks: *Spark / She's Your Cocaine / Jackie's Strength / Raspberry Swirl / Northern Lad*

None of the tapes listed will break the bank, although I suspect that the first item listed is actually rarer than the *Precious Things* promo CD or the *Y Kant Tori Read* album. Good luck for those of you planning to seek out these collectable cassettes.



Tori's first single from *Choir Girl*, *Spark*, was accompanied by a video to promote it. The video was shot at Becky Falls, a public nature reserve in Dartmoor, Devon. Becky Falls is a 50 acre private woodland estate that has been a much loved attraction since Victorian times when visitors would come to enjoy the peace and tranquillity of the beautiful secluded moorland valley with its abundance of flora and fauna. The video was directed by James Brown and depicts Tori as a victim of a kidnapping left tied and bound in the dense woodland. Trying to make her escape, she is pursued by her assailant until she manages to throw him off her trail. She finally reaches the open road, her wrists and ankles bleeding from the ties, when a car pulls up beside her. The female driver of the car and her passenger stop and stare at Tori, but soon depart the scene leaving Tori stranded, sinking to the gravel surface of the road.



Left: The sleeve for the promotional copy of *From The Choirgirl Hotel*.

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS
STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

NEW SINGLE: RASPBERRY SWIRL

A remixed version of *Raspberry Swirl* is to be released on 3rd August with a new video.

The choice of the next single was changed at the 11th hour (maybe influenced by *Sky?*), and it looks like *Jackie's Strength* will now be the third single from the album.

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS
STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS
STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

© TAKE TO THE SKY
JUNE 1998
PO BOX 632, BEXLEYHEATH,
KENT, ENGLAND, DA7 5TE.

STEVE 'SCOOP' JENKINS
OVERALL CO-ORDINATOR

MARK ELVIN
GRAPHICS & CO-EDITOR

HELEN WOLSTENCROFT
CO-EDITOR

ROBIN EVANS
TREASURER & DISCOGRAPHER
MICHAEL BROAD ILLUSTRATOR
BRYAN MULTANEY DRIVER

WITHOUT WHOM WE ARE NOTHING;
TORI (as always of course),
LEE ELLEN NEWMAN, ED AND JULES
AT EAST WEST RECORDS, STEVE CATON,
JOHN WITHERSPOON, JON EVANS,
JOEL HOPKINS, MATT CHAMBERLAIN,
JIM AT JANSET, MANDI COOK, GARRY
WHITING, CLAIRE 'ROCKY' REYNOLDS.

GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS;
REG TAIT, RAY & DEE AT ROCK-PIX,
GARY HUDSON, NIK BUCK, NORMA &
STAFF AT NORTHUMBERLANDHEATH PO,
KRYSS THOMAS, JOSEF, GARY HARVEY.

NO PART OF THIS MAGAZINE MAY BE
REPRODUCED IN ANY FORM WITHOUT PRIOR
PERMISSION TO DO SO FROM THE
MAGAZINE'S FOUNDERS (SEE ABOVE).

