

MUSIC REVIEWS

John Mellencamp
Mr. Happy Go Lucky
 Mercury Records



When a writer of the best rock songs of the '80s gets over the hill and suffers a heart attack, listeners can expect him to slow down the music or quit.
 But John Mellencamp, 44, must have been more affected by the birth of his son last year than the heart attack that stopped his last tour. His music on *Mr. Happy Go Lucky* is full of more new life than most new albums put out by the rock world's elderly — with the possible exception of Tom Petty and his soundtrack for *She's the One*.
 With 14 albums of experience from which to draw, Mellencamp threw the rules out the window and started something new with *Mr. Happy Go Lucky*. Part of that new sound came from working with Junior Vasquez, a New York dance club mixer and producer.

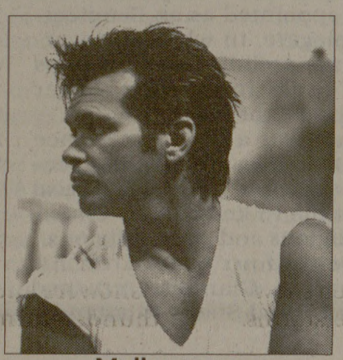
The Xtreme crowd won't be grinding to this music anytime soon, but the basic beat behind the music is different. Mellencamp's long-time drummer, Kenny Aronoff, is a master of the rock beat, but Vasquez adds a new dimension to the music that makes it stronger.
 The bouncy beat and the album's title reflect the mood of this album, a mood that makes a radical departure from Mellencamp's brooding sound on his last few albums. Even "The Full Catastrophe," which was inspired by his desire to quit music after his heart attack, does not sound gloomy.

"Catastrophe" also marks the only autobiographical song on the album, which is another departure from Mellencamp's traditional style. With songs like "Jerry" and "Mr. Bellows," he plays the role of an observer without sacrificing the storytelling quality of his writing style.

And the new beat certainly helps sell the lyrics. Verses like "Life is hard anyway you cut it" and "I woke up today / Everything's on my shoulders" deliver a message without slowing down the music.
 And of course, Mellencamp's age has had an impact on his writing. In 1982 "Jack and Diane" talked about holding on to "16 'as long as you can," but the new album is not about teenage angst or uncertain futures — it's about life from an older perspective. In "This May Not Be the End of the World," Mellencamp repeatedly sings, "Hello, all you losers / You've got nothing to fear / This may not be the end of the world / But you can see it from here."

After questioning whether he was at the end of his career, Mellencamp has come back to prove it may be possible, not just to get better with age, but to create something new and improved while sticking with what works.
 And with all that is new in *Mr. Happy Go Lucky*, the album still might remind rock fans of the classic music Mellencamp created in the '80s.

Not that every song by Mellencamp has to remind listeners "Pink Houses" or "Jack and Diane." Mellencamp would have had a memorable career without those songs simply by creating a wide array of sounds. But not since *American Fool* and *Scarecrow* has Mellencamp put together such a complete package of quality music. Maybe Mellencamp isn't over the hill yet. Maybe the "American Fool" has come of age. A
 — Michael Landauer



Mellencamp

The Communion Man



Father Fernando Giannetti, Class of '72, created the International Student's Association while he was a student at Texas A&M.

A former student takes the leadership skills he cultivated at Texas A&M and goes in-

BY LIBE GOAD
 THE BATTALION

Father Fernando Giannetti, Class of '72, has always thought of himself as a "communion man", someone who bridges gaps between people.
 Now, he works making bridges as Pastor of Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Parish in Buenos Aires. But in 1972, he helped international students of Texas A&M commune with other Aggies on campus.

This hole was filled by the International Students' Association (ISA), which Giannetti created to give a voice to the 700 international students on campus.
 "There were many international students," Giannetti said. "It was a need to be filled, and the space opened for an international students association."
 Giannetti founded the organization at a crucial time of change on the Texas A&M campus.

The military structure on campus was bombarded with civilian students, including women. The University grounds serving the Corps of Cadets had to adapt to the non-regimented student population, and civilian students pioneered the student life seen on campus today.
 The new type of students made a way for themselves by starting a Civilian Student Council and establishing hall councils in the non-regimented residence halls.

Giannetti served as hall president of Dorm 22, Schumacher Hall, where a majority of international students lived.
 It was there that Giannetti saw the need for his community skills to create a link between international students and the rest of the University, and he found the inspiration to create ISA.
 "It was going to be a [United Nations] type of thing,

where each country would choose a delegate," he said.
 Giannetti's talent as a middle man must have a lasting quality because international students continue to look to the ISA for fellowship and leadership.
 Suzanne Drolesky, an adviser for ISA, said the organization has matured into a program that offers leadership opportunities and a place to have working world experiences.

"Anyone who goes into the world to work, must work with people from multi cultural backgrounds," Drolesky said. "People (in ISA) learn about diplomacy, how to run meetings and how to work with a budget."
 Giannetti's role as the community man did not stop after he graduated from A&M.

The Argentinian native returned to his home country and found a renewed interest in the Catholic church.
 "In 1974, I found a book about a French military man who made a big step back to Catholicism," Giannetti said. "I was impressed with his life, and the turn-about of his life."
 The book was titled "Spiritual Journey of Charles Foucault 1857-1916." Foucault was a French military man who became a monk after a spiritual conversion.

Giannetti said Foucault inspired him to become a priest. "He was a man impressed by Jesus' love and mercy," he said. "And I wondered if I should do something similar."
 So he did.
 Giannetti enrolled in a seminary and, eight years later, he found himself in the administration of a controversial parish split by progressives and conservatives.
 "I tried to be a communion man," he said. "I didn't kick anyone out."

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Rubberbullet bounces its music off College Station tonight

BY APRIL TOWERY
 THE BATTALION

The smell of Grandpa's cigar, ointment on an open wound and the music of Rubberbullet have one thing in common: it hurts so good.
 "It gave me a headache, but I wanted to stay," one Dallas fan said about a Rubberbullet show.
 Beth Clardy, vocalist/songwriter of the Dallas rock quintet, said despite comparisons to Hole lead singer Courtney Love's appearance and onstage performance, her vocals are unique.
 "If people want to compare us, that's fine, but we don't have anything in common except for blond hair, and not even that anymore," Clardy said.
 Clardy said her live performances are indescribable. "I'm a theatrical person, and singing is a good way to deliver what I have inside of myself in what I hope is not a blatant manner," Clardy said. "I want to expose what I am feeling, but expose it in disguise."
 Clardy has been recognized for her ability to transform a growl into a whisper onstage.
 "A live show is a good thing for us," Clardy said. "We get into it."
 "For me, the best thing about music is indulging in it, getting your hands on good music. It's a thrill to know you helped create that; it's yours, and it's quality."
 Bassist Dan Kyrk said the shows occasionally get carried away.
 "We were playing an instrumental at this one show, and this guy kept getting up in Beth's face and got onstage and took her mic," Kyrk said. "It wouldn't bother me if he'd only been up there for a second, but he was just hanging out and acting like he was the singer of our band. I just barely touched him, and he went flying."
 Clardy said the band tries to just have fun while performing onstage.
 "We always have a good time," she said. "We might get too drunk before the show, but then we can just laugh about it the next day."
 "We had fun the last time we were in College Station. The people there seem interested in music. They always want to talk after the show. This is good because very attentive audiences make us want to



Rubberbullet

play well."
 Kyrk said the audience has an effect on the band's performance. "I'd like for it to not make a difference, but it does," he said. "If the audience is not into the music, it's hard for us to get into it, but usually our shows are pretty crazy and a lot of fun."
 Although Rubberbullet has what Clardy calls "interesting" live shows, she said the band members also enjoy recording music.
 "It's hard to say when you're in the band, but I wouldn't say we sound better live," Clardy said. "Our music is fine by itself."
 Rubberbullet recorded its debut album, *Open*, on Last Beat Records this summer.
 Rubberbullet's claim to fame is drummer Earl Harvin, one of the

most sought-after drummers in Texas, who is also of Seal, MC 900-Foot Jesus, and his jazz band, The Earl Harvin Quartet.

"Earl got us together," Clardy said. "He wanted to start a band but the material he'd been writing, and we heard about it through mutual friends and hearsay."

The other members in the band are guitarists Aaron Berlin and Richard Paul, and Kyrk, who is also Clardy's boyfriend.

Clardy said playing in a band with her boyfriend has not caused problems between them.

"I argue with him about music stuff, but I argue with the other guys, too," she said.
 Kyrk said he agrees that the relationship is not unusual.

"It's nice when we go on the road, because we treat it as a vacation," Kyrk said. "We get to travel and spend that time together."
 Kyrk and Clardy took advantage of a travel opportunity last spring when Rubberbullet toured the East Coast with another Dallas band, Baboon.

"We're good friends, and we have the same booking agent (as Baboon), so we always end up in the same areas at the same time," Clardy said.

Clardy said she dreams of touring with the Flaming Lips.
 "We're not directly influenced by them, we just dig what they do," she said.

"I'm sure I'm influenced somehow by something, but I don't want to be. I was kind of weird for a while about listening to and reading about other bands because I wanted to create my own style."

Kyrk said Rubberbullet style is something the band members plan to take as far as they can.
 "Music is Earl's career, Richard and Aaron work at a liquor store, and I work at an antique place," Kyrk said. "Do I want music to be my career? Sure I do. I want the free orange juice before the shows; I want to wake up at 3 p.m."

"Yeah, this could be my career."