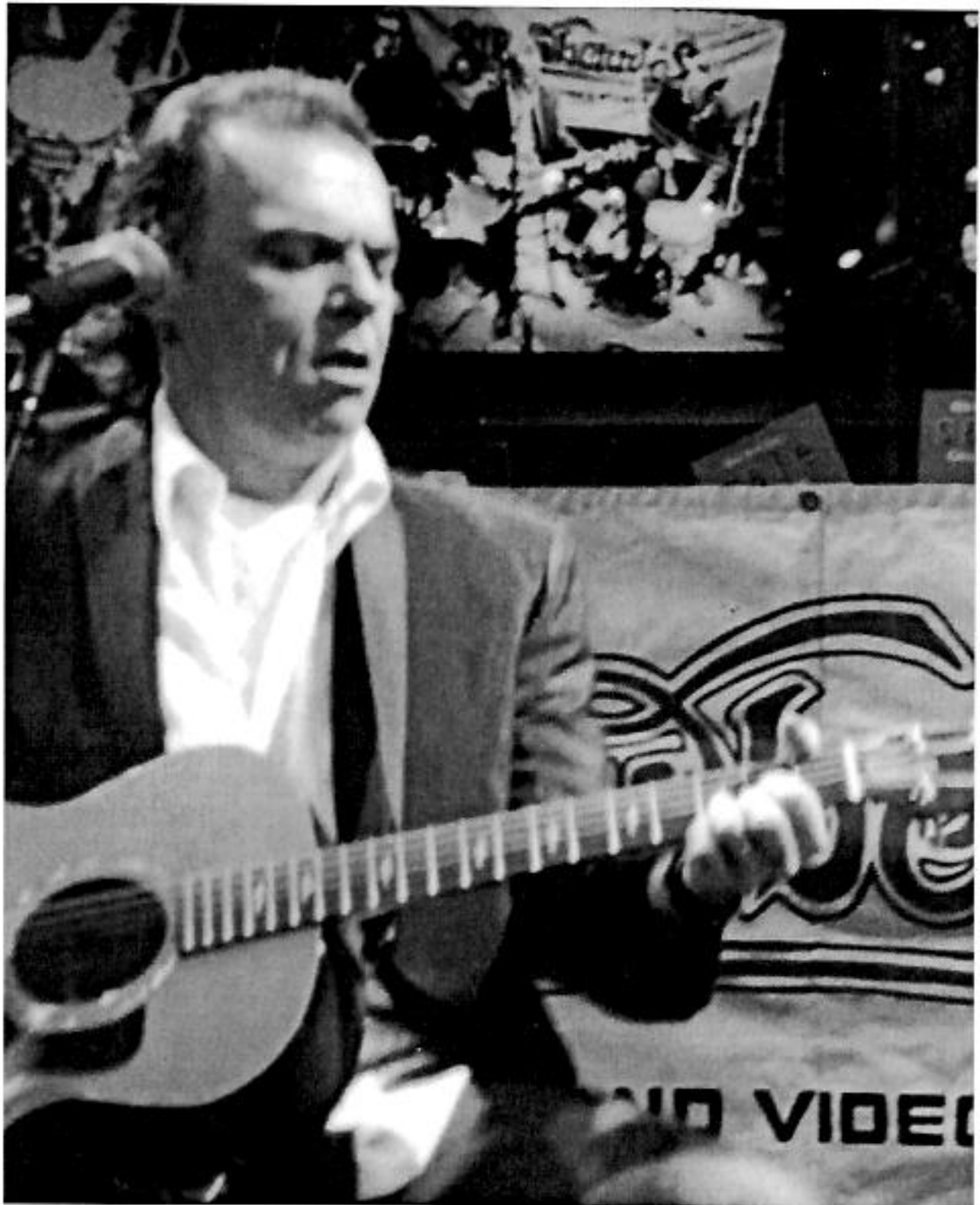


Slow Turning

John Hiatt Fanzine - Issue 5



Hi Y'all!

I know what you're thinking... Where has Slow Turning been? Well, we're still here, and that familiar feeling of excitement that only John Hiatt news can bring has completely taken over my life. So here's the scoop...

First the bad news of which many of you will already be at least partially aware: As we reported in the last issue, last year many tour dates were cancelled because John had cysts on his throat. The cysts were not life threatening, but needed to be removed which left Hiatt with recuperating today. John told the Ottawa Sun: "I've been strugglin' singing the last couple of years, but I didn't really put it together. I just thought I was getting older and my voice wasn't as strong. Like everything else on my body, it's falling apart. The hair's going, gravity's getting my waistline. But it was this damn cyst. I was actually relieved when I found out it was this thing was causing it." The surgery was a complete success; those who have seen Hiatt perform since say that his voice is as good as ever.

There have been many rumors buzzing around about Hiatt's new album. At first, it was supposed to be a reunion record with Sonny Landreth, David Ranson, and Ken Blevins. Sonny Landreth seemed quite excited about the possibilities in once interview. As he said, "John's such a great songwriter. It's always fun to work on his tunes. I missed that, actually." However, after what appears to be a fall out with Capitol Records, John decided to record an acoustic album with Davey Farragher and Dave Immergluck. Crossing Muddy Waters is due out September 26 - check out the next page for more information on the circumstances that lead to this great album's release!

But John has been busy doing more than his usual music making. Any of you who may have been channel surfing past PBS have probably caught John hosting this year's season of the acclaimed music and interview series Sessions at W54th Street. John's been doing a great job playing host and interviewer to a variety of musicians, from Ruben Blades, to Iggy Pop, to Mary Chapin Carpenter, to Cibo Matto, to George Clinton. And there's a least one person who hasn't let John go feeling unappreciated. As John told Kevin R. Convey of the Boston Herald: "My biggest trill was talking with George Clinton. It was like visiting with the Dalai Lama or something. He sent his tailor around afterward to have a suit made for me. And when I asked him if a guy like me could ever hope to see the Mothership, he said quietly, 'Oh, yes. The Mothership's for everybody.'" By the way, the suit looked great!

Most of you are also probably already aware that there's a new way to answer that somewhat exasperating question: "Who is John Hiatt?" John Hiatt's the guy that wrote the song God and the King sing together! Even John was a bit taken aback when he first heard that BB King and Eric Clapton were planning on teaming up to record an album with the title track of "Riding With the King" from his 1983 album. John told Chris Morris of Billboard: "I was pretty tickled. I got a call from Eric, I think it was late winter or early spring, asking me about the song, and could I change a couple of lines to make it a little bit more about B.B., which was a nice thing to do - he could have sung anything. He's a very conscientious guy and wants it to be right. So I rewrote the bridge. I was so thrilled they did it. I thought they did a great job, too." True, this is one of the best cover-versions of a John Hiatt song to date, but still nothing compares to The Man!!

Speaking of covers, while we are all anxiously awaiting this new acoustic album, we were treated to the second John Hiatt tribute album in August. Although the new, blues-influenced Rolling Into Memphis may be a little uneven, even in comparison to the earlier tribute album Love Gets Strange, a few of the tracks are well worth the price of the CD released from TELARC. Check out the track listing: "Falling Up" by C.J. Chenier, "It Hasn't Happened Yet" by Terrance Simien, "Old Habits are Hard to Break" by Irma Thomas, "Listening to Old Voices" by Odetta, "Love Like Blood" by Kenny Neal, "Wrote It Down and Burned It" by Kris Wiley, "The River Knows Your Name," by Colin Linden, "Feels Like Rain," by Tab Benoit, "Thirty Years of Tears" by Andrea Re, "Real Fine Love," by Chris Smither, "Back of My Mind" by Cliff Eberhardt, and "Have a Little Faith In Me" by Patty Larkin.

Now, I'd like to pay tribute to all of you who have successfully completed a cross-word puzzle from Issue 4. There's no doubt that Hiatt fans are among the smartest people around! However, even a Hiatt-addict can get tripped up every once in a while, so here are the answers for those of you who weren't able to complete the puzzle. ACROSS: 1. Seventeen 2. Telecaster 3. Mr. Charming 4. Magician 5. Digital watch 6. Five 7. Sloop John B 8. Louisiana 9. Eleven 10. Milky Way 11. Thirty-four. DOWN: 1. Basement 2. Sterilize 3. Wingtips 4. Rendezvous 5. Two 6. Hundred 7. Elephant 9. Buttons.

I'd like to also pay tribute and give a special hello to all of the nice, musically savvy and John Hiatt enlightened people on the Shot-of-Rhythm John Hiatt e-mail list. Most of the information in this magazine was gathered through tidbits I learned on this discussion list, so thanks to everyone who posted about new Hiatt information. (To those of you not yet on the list check out <http://www.egroups.com/group/shot-of-rhythm> for information on how to subscribe the the list.) Thanks also to everyone who let us know when John is coming to town for a concert... which he hopefully will be soon. Those of us in the Boston area will be treated to an in-store appearance at Borders in late September. I'm sure John will be welcomed back to Beantown and other cities with open arms, and most importantly, excitedly open ears!

With all that said, enjoy Issue 5 and Rave ON!

Crossing Muddy Waters

The usual excruciating wait for a new Hiatt album seemed particularly long to those of us who had heard the title track of *Crossing Muddy Waters* before. We knew how great this was going to be and couldn't wait to get an ear-full. However, every album has a story behind the disc. Check out John's own words about the album that will doubtless earn him the long-awaited recognition he deserves!

The album: "We did it so fast, I came home and thought 'Oh [no], this is like a tear fest—every song is about loss, relationships breaking up or having broken up. I said to my wife, 'Hey look. Nothing's wrong, babe.' But she's been at the front for 14 years now. When we first got married she used to take them a little too seriously, but she knows better now. Songwriters are kind of like Walter Mitty: We live this fantasy life through our songs. I guess that will come up, though."+

Vanguard Records: "We were about three-quarters through a new record for Capitol with the Goners. It's just a great record, and [the label] just didn't quite get it. The regime had shifted yet again... So we just decided, 'You know what, I don't think this is a good place for us to be right now.' ^ Capitol Records "just couldn't see eye to eye on the merits of the music. Finally, we attained free-agency status. And all the sudden, the music got calm. All the cool guys and gals were on Vanguard. When I was a kid, Vanguard was the s---. It will be again!"* "This is actually the first record that I own. I've never had that in 16 albums. It's our first blush of free agency, and we like it. The coolest thing is we can put this record anywhere. It's nice to have options. Since everything is up in the air, it's a wonderful time to be a free agent."+

"The Wild West" Online: "[Levitan] said, 'You know it's like the Wild West out there right now. Now that the major labels are out of the music business, there's all kinds of opportunities.' That's exactly how he put it. He said 'I know we can find somebody – you can own the master, and they'll just put it out.' What happened was, somehow Emusic came into the picture. He said 'You know, this is something brand-new. How does this sound to you?' And he started talking about Emusic doing the record, doing it online. So initially it was just going to be an online kind of thing, and I said 'Hey, that sounds great, let's do it. And then Vanguard came into the picture. So it's a deal between the two of them.' ^

Going acoustic: "Once we were officially free agents, Ken [Levitan, Hiatt's manager] said, 'Hey, you want to make an acoustic record?' And I said, 'Yeah, I've always wanted to do that.' Not only that, but people are always asking me, 'When are you gonna make an acoustic record?' ... I had an immediate list of about 30 or 40 tunes that I'd written over years that had either fallen by the wayside or through the cracks of various problems or whatever. But also, I'd been writing some new stuff since we'd put the rock record on the back burner." ^ "I wanted to do it mostly acoustic to make it sound like we were sitting around a back porch, and I wanted no drums—those were the only two directives I had in mind."+

The home base: "I've lived on this farm for about eight years. We're out in the country and you write a certain kind of song out here. I definitely started getting that [rural] vibe. And I've always written on acoustic guitar pretty much, so it's nice to have a record that kind of tries to flesh that out without a lot of mental exercise about the songs. In fact, there was none. We just went in and played it."+

The song "What Do We Do Now": "When my wife and I had been married for about five years we kind of hit a wall, as couples do. The 'D' word was actually a thought. I don't know that it was even uttered, but that scared the ... out of us. We got through that, but I was kind of drawing on that, just that utter humiliation you feel where you're standing there with your [life] in your hands thinking, 'What do we do now?' "+

The song "Everybody Went Low": "It kind of addresses a phenomenon that we have as human beings. You can get four or five people together and decide to be bummed out. The next thing you know, you're in a downward spiral. It can be catching."*

The song "Only the Song Survives": (inspired when Nancy and Georgia Rae rolled over – when was that?) "People tend to, especially with singer-songwriters, take songs as literal snippets of the writers' lives. My point in that song is that they're not, exactly—it comes out of a whole mess of images and only the song survives."+

Playing for the album: "Sitting there making music, fingerpicking in waltz time, with nothing to rehearse and no more than three chords to play around with." –

– From "Clear as Muddy" by Lloyd Sachs from *No Depression Magazine*

+ from "Blissful Hiatt Sings the Blues" by Randy Lewis of *LA Times*, 9-6-00

^ From "John Hiatt Goes Acoustic, Indie, And Online" by Chris Morris from *Billboard.com*

* From "John Hiatt's 'New' Sound" by Lynne Margolis at *wallofsound.com*

Healing Powers of a Musical Muse

There are many people who have been moved by John Hiatt's lyrics and his life story of dealing with addictions and grieving the loss of his brother and his second wife to suicide. *Crossing Muddy Waters* is just one of many songs that have doubtlessly helped John himself and many of his fans deal with tragedy. Below are the lyrics to the new title track and two rare older songs that show Hiatt's strength not only as a songwriter, but also as a human being.

Crossing Muddy Waters

My baby's gone - I don't know why
She let out this morning
Like a rusty shot in a hollow sky
Left me without warning
Sooner than the dogs could bark
and faster than the sun rose
Down to the banks in an old mule car
she took a flatboat across the shallow

CHORUS:

Left me in my tears to drown
she left a baby daughter
Now water's wide & deep and brown
She's crossing muddy waters

Tobacco standing in the fields
be rotten come November
And a bitter heart will not reveal
a spring that love remembers
When that sweet brown girl of mine
her black eyes are ravens
We broke the bread, drank the wine
from a jug that she'd been saving

CHORUS

Baby's crying and the daylight's gone
That big oak tree is groaning
In rush of wind and river of song
I can hear my sweetheart moaning
Crying for her baby child
or crying for her husband
Crying for that river's wild
to take her from her loved ones

Other Healing songs:

Seven Little Indians
Slow Turning
Friend of Mine
Listening to Old Voices
Dust Down a Country Road

Right Now

You said that the tables would turn
And sure enough, you turned away
You got out of this one baby
And we all had to pay
Don't know who had the last one coming
But you took it and it wasn't any joke
When I think of how we hurt each other
It makes me want to choke.

CHORUS:

Right now - I want to forget you.
Right now - I don't want to miss you.
Right now - I want to forget you.
Right now, right now.

I know it's a nasty habit
Spending time mulling over the past.
Might get a kick every so often
But the kick never lasts.
I'm tired of asking questions
And I'm tired of wondering why:
You hurt so much from living
You just wanted to die.

CHORUS

I could dwell on all the suffering
I caused you
And never see my way through it.
I'm not washing any hands
But I don't give a damn what they say
You didn't have the right to do it.

One cigarette missing from a package
Must have thought about it just that long
Then you walked through the back door
With your blue slippers on.
Left them neat right next to each other
On an old chair out in the garage
Underneath the rafters where you were
hanging.
As if that image weren't enough
To know you were gone.

Twenty-One

Was it the night wind that called
The little shepherd boy?
Made him leave his sheep
Or the wild dogs growling
Or the bird that flew
We never knew
What drove him to his darkest sleep.

Maybe the snow played tricks
On the little shepherd boy.
Must have drove him blind.
From the wildest wind
To the darkest night.
'Till he could not see
What had come to be
The loved ones he'd leave behind.

Twenty-one-
His eyes were glowing.
Who gave him a gun?
His guts were showing
Setting sun-
We want to know,
Where did he go?

He was going to lead us
All out of this wilderness
Was that too much to ask?
His sister and his brother
His father and his mother,
They sentenced him
To a chance so slim
He had to wear his own death mask.

By his own hand died the shepherd boy
No one was there to blame.
We carry the burden
Of the lives he left hurting
No one heard the shot
but believe it or not
Nothings ever going to be the same.

Thirty years ago it happened
And I ain't over it yet
A brother is lost, I'll never forget.
I try to imagine the sound of his voice.
Or what he must have said to himself.
When he made that choice.

WHAT SONG HAS MOVED YOU

Share your thoughts about any of John's songs, or tell us what song you have found to be particularly moving or helped you get over a hard time in your life.

With your permission, we'll print your response in an issue of

Slow Turning.

Hiatt on Hiatt Songs

Listening to Hiatt songs, it's almost always clear that you are hearing one of the smartest, wittiest songwriter's in the business. But there's more to each ditty than what you can hear on the CD. Here, in John's own words are some comments of some of your favorite songs, from where the inspiration came from, to what John thinks of some older tunes years later.

The Way We Make a Broken Heart: "Ry recorded this first, before Rose had a hit with it in 1988. She and I had done this duet, for my 'Riding With the King' album. Don't know why we didn't put it on that record. God, I love her voice. ... We cut it back in 1983 in San Francisco, and it took me right back there. I don't know why we left it off the record; it was great. Who the hell knows what we were thinking."

Buffalo River Home: "I read a little book called 'The Devil's Backbone.' It's a brief history of the Natchez Trace, an old Indian trail that ran between Natchez, Mississippi and Nashville. I packed the wife and kids in the car and drove what's now the Federal Parkway that roughly follows what's left of that old trail. We crossed the Buffalo River twice, we came home and I wrote this song. See kids, reading is a good thing."

Feels Like Rain: "Wrote this in my jammies (blue plaid) on a Sunday morning in that little stone cottage in Grandview. I was thinking of the Goners and Louisiana where they come from, and how their playing reminds me of the Spanish moss you see hangin' on the trees down there. Maybe not so coincidentally, it was later recorded by Aaron Neville, another Louisiana native, and Buddy Guy, who's probably been there at least. For my wife, as the love songs always are."

Perfectly Good Guitar: "I was working out, believe it or not, and they were showing reruns of Nirvana's performance on some awards show. The bass player, Krist Novoselic, hurled his bass skyward and it came down on his head. I too was struck with the notion that we always hurt the ones we love."

Your Dad Did: "People talk about the cynicism of that song, but I don't see where taking a straightforward look at dadhood, married life, family life is cynical. Certainly, ultimately, it was pretty tender, I thought."

Tennessee Plates: "I was down to the end of the song and I couldn't figure out where the guy was going to wind up. Mike Porter came to visit and suggested that the guy wind up in jail, making Tennessee Plates. Brilliant, though as I maintain with all my co-writes, any bits you like are mine. Any bits you don't are the other guy's."

Take Off Your Uniform: "Oh my, the angry young man... Of course back then I had no idea that old age and treachery always win out over youth and beauty. Still, I'd leave the uniform at home. This was my first MCA record, and I wanted to include something from that album. Elvis (Costello) likes that song, and maybe that's what subconsciously led to that song's inclusion."

Sometime Other Than Now: "This has that Spanish moss hangin' all over it. Now it can be told. In the song I sing, 'maybe her intentions weren't even very good.' But in the lyric booklet I wrote it as 'maybe her intentions were even very good,' cause I was worried my new mother-in-law might take it personally. Sorry, Mom. But, you know, I feel better now."

Georgia Rae: "Wasn't even born when I wrote this. Plus, we were hard up for boy names. My contribution was 'Casper Diego,' so the Mrs. was relieved when it was a girl. She's pushing eleven now and, along with her brother, Rob, and her sister, Lilly, never ceases to astound me."

Is Anybody There?: "This was the first take; one of those 'ragged by right' things. We tried to get it better by flogging it to death ten more times or so but, thank God, the sanity of the music prevailed and we realized this one was it."

Riding With The King "I hadn't heard the song in so long. It's so oily and just so right. I just love it with the big bass and Telecaster guitar there. It's Nick Lowe's guitar on there. I'd played it on the album and after those sessions he gave me that guitar, and it's the one I play today. It's a 57 white Telecaster."

The Best Of John Hiatt CD: "Brought home the fact that I've basically always written love songs. That's pretty much what I do. The album starts out with 'Have a Little Faith' about this fellow who's madly in love with this gal, to the end, where he basically says, 'You know what, I don't know a bloody thing about love.' I thought that pretty much sums 'er up. I don't know what I'm doing, but if you come along with me, I'm sure we can make it through."

Sessions at W54

Of course, the most exciting news about PBS acclaimed series is that John got to host last year, but before that, Hiatt was in the perhaps more comfortable position of answering the questions. In honor of this great series (and their great taste in choosing a Hiatt to host) below is a transcript of the interviews John had with David Byrne and Ruben Blades during the past two seasons of Sessions at W54th. Be sure to check your local listings for reruns and more great music and interviews. Also, check out www.sessionsatw54.com for more info!

David Byrne interview:

DB: You were telling somebody here you were working on your car.

John: Yeah. My race car. It's a little car called a "Legends Car" and they look like the cars that the clowns come out of in the circus. They are sort of small, but they're pretty fast. I started racing about four years ago. It's what they call a "purpose built" racecar. It's a built chassis with a tubular steel roll cage. It has a motorcycle engine and they take some parts from Toyotas for the wheels and drive tray and the axle. ... I've taken some pretty nasty hits.

DB: An awful lot of your songs have been covered by other people. Some have been hits. Do they have to ask permission? Can you deny permission? If you hear what they did and they don't-

John: Well, as you know and we'll tell the audience, once a song's been recorded anybody can record it. It's open season. If I wrote the song and it has not been recorded yet, then I have some say in the matter. If I don't want someone to record I can say, "I'm sorry, you can't do that song." But once you record it, or it's recorded for the first time, then anybody can cover it.

DB: And early on, I think before anybody had heard your stuff, you were writing in Nashville for a company hired to write for other people. I'm curious how that works, how you do it? The whole Nashville music row-I've been there and walked around and gone in some of the little restaurants and- every table is talking about songs. And they're all publishers or writers. And it's just amazing.

John: It's kind of like - the Brill Building as I imagined it. Back when Carol King and Neil Diamond and people like that were cranking them out. It's going on a lot and it's to the point where people make appointments to co-write songs. It's like going to see your dentist, but people do it. I was sort of the odd man out. I went down there when I was 18 and I walked into a publishing company that published this guy I'd met down there who was named Bob Frank, a folk singer. I was very impressed with his work and I said, "Well, how are you surviving down here?" He said, "Well, I write for this publishing company and they pay me money. Yeah. \$25 a week. Like an advance." So I just thought, "Damn it, that's what I'm going to do." So I went into the same publishing company and played some songs. They said, "What do you want?" I said, "Twenty-five dollars a week like you give Bob Frank." And they accepted so, I was a professional. I was on my way. I was artistically successful because I was doing what I want to do, which is, write and sing. And somebody was paying me dough.

DB: You have a greatest hits record out now and ... some have been re-recorded, or fleshed out. Does that mean you didn't like the original version?

John: No. Of the two we re-recorded, "Have a Little Faith In Me," originally was just a piano vocal performance for "Bring the Family" album. And we tried it with the band and we didn't get it. It was a four day session. We were going to make a whole record in four days so you didn't really have a lot of time to work on any one song too hard. And so I said, "Alright, screw it, I'll just lay down a piano vocal take, just to have it." So, it's just a song that I've always wanted to hear with a little more stuff on it.

Ruben Blades Interview:

RB: We're going to start from the beginning. Place of birth?

John: Woah! Indianapolis, Indiana. 1952. That makes me about... 47.

RB: Younger than me. When was your first job as a musician?

John: Oh, wow! I think a basement party of some kind. I think it was some eighth graders that threw a little wingding in their basement, because I remember they asked me to come over and just play my guitar and sing. I think I was in sixth grade. And I remember my mom drove me there in the snow. It was in the dead of winter. And I remember she dropped me off and it was in the basement. I plugged in and started playing and singing, and they all turned the lights down and started making out. And it tore me up 'cause they weren't listening to me, they were making out and my whole ... it was my first brush with anything sexual and I was like totally befuddled, and I remember leaving, weeping, I think. It was too much, it was too much for me.

RB: What was the first song that you wrote that became a big hit for another artist?

John: I think one of my first big success was a song called Sure as I'm sitting here which was recorded by Three Dog Night in 1974. And it was also on my first album for Epic. And it was like a top ten, I think.

RB: When you heard that song on the radio, the first time... Did you call people?

John: Did I call people? (laughs) My mother, my sister, my ... everybody I knew, yeah.

RB: "A Thing Called Love" Now, let me ask you this. How tough is it for you to do a "cover" of your own song that has been a tremendous hit for someone else, like Bonnie Raitt?

John: Well, I can still play shows where people go, "Oh, that's that Bonnie Raitt song!"

RB: You're doing a cover of your own song. How tough is that?

John: Ah, it's kind of fun.

RB: Do you have anyone that you would like particularly to consider covering one of your songs?

John: I wouldn't mind if you did one.

After All This Time

The big news in Hiatt country is Eric Clapton and BB King covering the classic Hiatt tune "Riding With The King." In honor of this occasion, I decided to set the way back machine to 1983, when the following article was printed in the Oakland Tribune to increase interest in what was Hiatt's newest album, "Riding With the King." As always, it's interesting to see how the press treated Hiatt, and how Hiatt presented himself years ago. (For the record, most other Hiatt articles note his recovery from alcoholism as later than this.)

A few years ago the last thing songwriter John Hiatt wanted to do was perform as a solo act, accompanying his singing with piano or guitar. He was writing arrangements for bands and wanted to hear his songs get the full treatment.

He got his wish during the new wave era, did several tours with a rock band, and he and his band frequently have backed Ry Cooder. So Hiatt's solo show Tuesday at 8 pm at Wolfgang's (the Old Boardinghouse recently taken over by Bill Graham) in San Francisco will have to be recorded as a lark.

Hiatt and another band-oriented rocker, T. Bone Burnett (formerly of Bob Dylan and the Alpha Band), are sharing the stage, separately and together, in one of those rare shows where fans get to hear their favorite musicians in a different context.

"We're trying to get a folk revival going," Hiatt explained with a bit of a sarcastic laugh. "No, we're really doing it for the kicks. Also, it's so people will have a chance to hear the lyrics to our songs without the band drowning 'em out."

Hiatt started his professional life as a Nashville songwriter, penning tunes for country and pop stars. Along with his song publishing deal came a record contract, so he soon found himself performing. His first two albums were released in the mid-1970s, using a mishmash of rock-country-soul-gospel-folk styles that as often as not resulted in fine music with more than a touch of humor; "I Killed an Ant with My Guitar" is funny, where the gospelly "Motorboat to Heaven" is a lovely ballad. Today, Hiatt looks back on that period with a wince, saying he wasn't ready to make records and didn't know what he was doing.

For a couple of years, he fronted a punkoid band, spitting out lyrics while the group spit out the beat. It wasn't until his association with eclectic rock stylist Ry Cooder that Hiatt seemed perfectly at home able to use his multistylistic talents to full advantage. Some of that development rubbed off on his last album, "All of a Sudden." A new album is due in August, tentatively titled "The Irony and the Ecstasy." Originally it was to be produced by the musical duo the Durocs (ceramic artist Ron Nagle and drummer Scott Matthews), and Hiatt did an album's worth of tunes with them in their San Francisco studio.

But last week Hiatt phoned from London to say he was also doing some newer tunes with English rock star Nick Lowe producing, and it would be anybody's guess how much of which sessions ends up on the record.

The London studio was a strange setting for Hiatt, who recently gave up drinking completely. Working in an English studio with a crew of pub crawlers was, in Hiatt's words, "baptism by fire. But I felt no temptation to join them in drink. I quite enjoy being the odd man. I used to not being in the swing of things, if you know my career."

He was never a heavy drinker, but as he explained, "You gotta have some discipline in your life."

As for the music, "Nick's approach is quite sympathetic to what Ron and Scott were doing. We're digging up the same old bodies."

The Durocs' lifestyle is based on pigs. Their tiny pink basement studio is called "The Pen" and Hiatt said they wanted him to call his album "Pure Pork for Pig People" (not to be confused with the Nick Lowe album, "Pure Pop for Now People"). Hiatt said, "The Durocs cut the basic tracks with Scott on drums in the small main studio and me playing guitar sitting on the bathroom toilet. It's a back-to-basics approach, but we took the tapes to a classy studio, the Automatt, to gloss the sound up."

Hiatt's music is a blen of styles he has picked up, from country to punk, with a lot of pop tossed in. His love of black pop music has given a vitality to his shows. Opening for a hard rock band at Berkeley Community Theater some years ago, Hiatt included the Isley Brothers' "Fight the Power," a song few rock fans in the audience had heard. And he's got an achingly sweet version of the Percy Sledge hit "Take Time to Know Her" (not on his album, available only as the flip side of the single "I Look for Love") which will finally be available soon on a unique album, "Killer B's" a Warner Bros. Records gimmick (a smart one) to take the B-sides of some of their artists singles that hadn't been on their albums, and put them out as a collection.

Hiatt lives with his film-sound-editor wife, Isabella, and two cats in the wild and woolly Topanga Canyon section of Los Angeles, a far cry from Nashville or the Indiana of his youth. "We've been there for a while," Hiatt said. "It's so removed that it's Rip Van Winkle territory. But I'm ready to move to something closer to civilization, where you can walk down the street to the 7-Eleven."

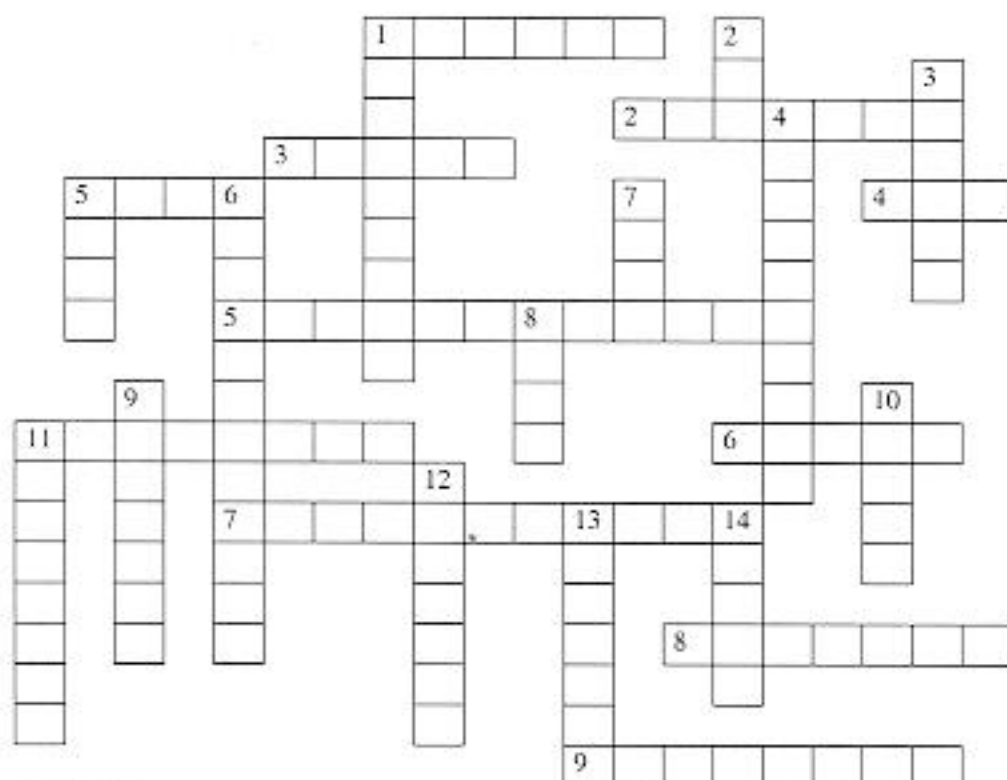
An excellent tunesmith whose songs have been recorded by a variety of people over the years (including Lou Ann Barton and Roseanne Cash this year), Hiatt is still looking for his own moment in the spotlight. His current contract with Geffen Records looked hot when his "All of a Sudden" album came out last year. Geffen was a new company with a string of chart-toppers by the likes of John Lennon and Donna Summer. Hiatt's record was the company's first flop.

He hopes the next one does better. "I'm always hopeful. It's pointless going to the trouble of making an album that nobody's going to hear. You want to make a hit, and I think the material for this album is the best I've ever done. But I'm not about to get hyped up that it'll be a monster hit, because I've done that before and been cruelly disappointed.

"I'll be happy as long as I can keep making records."

Crossword

Think you're the smartest Hiatt-Head around? Then prove it with this challenging crossword. The clues are based on Hiatt's songs, and the initials of the album each clue comes from have been included. Good luck!



ACROSS

1. What take form of inflamed love (BO)
2. Defied by beat of our hearts (RWTK)
3. _ like John with Angel Eyes = mystery (BO)
4. What stares at Country Road Dust (WO)
5. Girl who kiss you as you ride along (ST)
6. Trail-marker for made broken heart (BO)
7. Footwear pawned on Pirate radio (LH)
8. Halved-artist in John's bed (LH)
9. What was left behind by woman who Crossed Muddy Waters

ANSWERS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE
NEXT ISSUE OF SLOW TURNING!!!

DOWN

1. Memphis instrument (BTF)
2. Airline to promised land (RWTK)
3. South-driving unnecessary apparel (ST)
4. Day Runaway's heart was found (LH)
5. Guitar-smasher's bail (PGG)
6. To get filled at mansion on hill (RWTK)
7. What you'll get at the Rendezvous (BTF)
8. Head-numbing drum (LH)
9. Grammy-nominated Hiatt tune
10. Harold's place of death (RWTK)
11. Ice-Age frozen animal
12. JP of My Sweet Girl (LH)
13. State of John's childhood home (ST)
14. What love and faith will throw (BTF)

Keep In Touch!!

There's just about one thing we can never have enough of at *Slow Turning*... That's more John Hiatt fans to share thoughts, ideas and information with.

To get a FREE SUBSCRIPTION to this magazine, just send us your name and address, and we'll send you future issues.

Heard about something in previous *Slow Turning's*? We can also send you back issues the previous four installments.

Whether it be a question about John, his music, this magazine, or to pass on more Hiatt info, or point out a mistake, we always love to hear from you!!

Please send all correspondence to:

SLOW TURNING

Till next time, enjoy and
RAVE ON!!!

YES!!! Sign me up for a **FREE SUBSCRIPTION TO SLOW TURNING!!!**

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FAVORITE HIATT SONG _____