

# MUSICIAN

U2

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*THE* David.  
**Bowie**  
*interview*

BY TIMOTHY WHITE

**PSYCH-FURS  
ALBERT LEE  
KENNY LOGGINS  
SUNNYADE**



**The Psychedelic Furs** wedded neo-60s acid surreality to punk's angry ardor and consummated the marriage with a steady diet of paradox and invention. As the fire 'n' brimstone of their first records now solidifies into the brave new world of *Forever Now*, Richard Butler and his fellow furriers explore more eloquently than ever the dynamic contradictions of pure rock dreams. Page 38



**U2**, Ireland's post-punks, have maintained a consistent contemporary contentiousness in their search for musical meaning. Fred Schruers visits the canals and castles of Dublin to capture the emotion and commitment of Bono Vox, The Edge, Adam Clayton and Larry Mullen's sonic struggle. Page 44



**David Bowie**, a.k.a. Ziggy Stardust, the Thin White Duke and Aladdin Sane, has made a career of startling and shaking people's preconceptions. Timothy White's close encounter in a Manhattan diner takes the ubiquitous Bowie from the oversell of Ziggy to the dark obsessions of L.A. fame, from the musical reawakening of his Berlin years to the brand new brassy boogie of *Let's Dance*. Page 52



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Cover Photo by Greg Gorman

# MUSIC

# Jaco Pastorius

## *The Eccentric from the Everglades*

ANDY FREEBERG



"I just act weird"; Jaco Pastorius, virtuoso bass revolutionist and maestro of drama.

### SPOTTSWOOD ERVING

Musician recently received a number of phone calls from a bass playing friend of ours in Florida. Jaco Pastorius was in a Fort Lauderdale studio mixing tracks from a recent Japanese tour of his band, *Word of Mouth*, for an upcoming release in that country. Jaco—who goes by his first name in the manner of other singular, more famous musicians (Miles, Joni, Willie, Elvis, Ornette, Jimi)—offered us an unlikely Morse Code of messages: "I'm an Indian," "Tell you why I left Weather Report," "My I.Q. is 191." These cryptic verbal telegrams, provocative if not chimerical, piqued our interest, especially in light of his lack of a new domestic product to consume and the radical unevenness of his recent work.

We'd seen Jaco at the now-defunct Savoy in New York a winter ago and been, with a good share of the audience, underwhelmed. His maleable tone and

his technique, with its river of harmonics and warm fluidity, were present, but his taste had diminished. His arrangements for big band were static and long-winded—they had come off better on his hit-and-miss *Word of Mouth* album—and the band was correspondingly stiff. The heroic posturing of his inevitable soliloquy—in which Jaco plays unaccompanied, with myriad effects—was grandly hollow and his solos in general bumptious. He sang, unfortunately, a blues.

Jaco seemed a cool self-caricature that night: full of his renowned phrase-making abilities but bereft of his once-meaningful vocabulary, the new bass language he authored seven years ago had degenerated into a series of self-referential clichés. He seemed to have somehow *fallen*. The drama (and Jaco's work has been above all, dramatic) had drained out of his playing. His last Weather Report disc furthered the

uncomfortable feeling that just as Jaco was launching his leader's career, his creative powers (his powers of invention, his inviolable *style*) were in a state of diminuendo.

We know for a fact that musicians as a race are not normal people, nor should they be. Jaco had been busy reinforcing the myth of the "mad" artist: he had become a curmudgeon; he disappeared for protracted periods; he tuned his bass during band member's solos; he wasn't writing; he told the Japanese press he was legally blind; he appeared at a side-man's hotel door in the altogether, and smeared with butter; he was wasting himself royally in the fashion of Charlie Parker and other incandescent, now extinguished musicians. But Jaco had always been something of a wild man. If we care about music, we care about musicians, and here, clearly, is a great one. The revolution he sparked on an immature instrument still rings with sustain.

We called Jaco back at the Fort Lauderdale studio. He spoke in bursts, punctuating the silences with different kinds of laughter and crosstalk with others in the room. Here is some of his end of the conversation:

"Just finished another mix. Want me to play it over the phone? Got your tape recorder on? Solid.

"Well, I left Weather Report and I'm doing my own thing. There were absolutely no personnel changes, in my opinion I'm still a member of Weather Report. I'm still in Weather Report a hundred percent in spirit. It was something that had to happen. Joe and Wayne and I talk to each other at least once a week. We know what's going on. I know what time it is. It's two o'clock, no, hell, it's later than that. Joe's mother died this year and I had twin sons. There were all sorts of factors.

"All the stuff that got written and said about Joe and I pushing Wayne out of the spotlight was totally wrong. We were trying to push him in. He'd come to the

studio with twenty charts that looked like symphonies and Joe and I would come in with notes on napkins. Wayne came in for the record after *Heavy Weather* and his stuff was not together. Everybody has his private life. Wayne had all this music, but it just wasn't connected. It didn't make that much sense, and I said, 'Wayne, you're Mr. Gone,' and Joe said, 'Yeahhh...that's the name of the record.' We would have Wayne overdub a hundred times and edit all these notes together when they really weren't right. We did it out of total love for the man. Hey, there's no small trees without tall trees.

"Since then, I've been on the road with my own band. I've been on the road working every night since I was age thirteen on drums and age fifteen on bass. It's tough being on the road: I've been divorced and I've got four children that I don't see too much. But I'm just another musician, I'm not the greatest. Nobody is. You just play. People in your hometown get bored with you real quick, so you got to move around, got to poltergeist out.

"That's all my bass students back there carrying on, all my children. Slaves Of Our Wives. Write that down: Slaves Of Our Wives. I don't teach much, I just act weird and people follow my example. The number one thing I care about is having fun, having a good time. If you can't laugh, you ain't shit. That's the whole thing: telling jokes and having a ball. Every time I cross the border I just have fun with those border cats. I start screaming at 'em, I might have half a G of coke in my mouth. You know what I mean, I've never been busted in my life for bullshit. And they'll be taking tires off my bus—for nothing—what are they looking for, hot air? Jesus Christ.

"The Japanese album is alive, but I would rather put out a studio record in America, even though I hate studios. I've got something in the can called *Holiday For Pans*—it's got steel drums, marimbas, vibes, it's got Toots Thielemans. That's the next record I want out as a solo artist, as opposed to an *international* solo artist, because it'll be only my second effort for Warners. I'll do whatever they say though. I'm not gonna fight the system, I got too many scars. My I.Q. is 191, that's why I get in so much trouble. It's not important. When I play, I never think, I just play.

"I go to the Everglades whenever I get in big trouble. I just go out there and sleep under a big cypress, because nobody can bug you out there. Everybody is afraid to go out there. Nobody can take the heat. They start *snapping*. Same as New York, 125th Street or Canal Street on a hot day, people just flip out and it snaps. All them old Jewish chicks can't take the heat. Write that down. Write *all* this down. The world according to Pastorius is this: you are

not going to believe this one: what are the only three French words a black person knows? Coupe de Ville. I'm getting real silly; whenever I get to the end of a record, I get silly. You hear about the new Haitian credit card? Don't leave Krome without it. You know, the Krome detention camp for refugees. What can you do? You got to stay funny on the road. I'm happy. I just had twin sons, got to be happy, bro. I got a twelve-year-old daughter and a nine-year-old son, too. His next birthday, I'm taking him out to the Everglades and show him how to wrestle alligators. I've got no problems whatsoever with the alligators, I have problems with white policemen—in Florida and Los Angeles. Fat ones.

"Joni? I really dig Joni but she's not a jazz musician. My personal opinion: she's not a jazz musician. But she's exceptionally talented and a very good person and she can paint her butt off.

"Metheny? We call him Methuselah. Haven't seen him in a while. Pat is totally straight. He won't drink wine. He won't even drink beer. He's too straight, period. Write that down: he's too straight. Very *white*. I love him, still one of my best friends, and he's such a nice guy. I used to fly up to Boston, '73, '74, and play with Pat, make maybe thirty bucks a night just gigging. I'd be up there, in the snow, and I'd wire my first wife, Tracy, I'd wire her flowers on our son's birthday with my only money. One time by mistake we all left the head to this bass amp Pat had borrowed for me, left it out on the street outside a club. We were all straight, we just forgot it. We were driving to Pat's, doing 'three-sixties' in the snow with all the equipment in the car when we remembered it. Pat went and got cash out of the bank the next day to cover for it. But the next night before the gig, this old drunk—which is ironic because Pat is so straight—this old drunk found the top out on the street the night before and brought it back. Isn't that beautiful? This stuff about Pat is funny. We're very good friends.

"I wanted a big band because I've written for big bands all my life. Which people don't know, because I'm a bass player. I hide behind my bass playing. That's easy. Last year, December first, I turned thirty. Every year since I've been on the road I get in more and more trouble on my birthday because everyone wants to throw a party. When you're on the road, you're partying all the time. I'm very susceptible. So I says, 'Jaco, what do you really dig?' Well, I like music. So I threw my own big band party in Fort Lauderdale and I got Michael Brecker, Don Alias, Bobby Mintzer, Peter Erskine to come down, all the lightweights. I'm serious all the time, but I'm always joking. You can decipher the facts for yourself.

"I am absolutely not happy with the  
*continued on page 116*

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"We came from the garage," adds Nagle. "We came from 2-track, 4-track..."

"We try to keep that sound in any studio we go into," Mathews continues. "We try to make them all sound like garages." He slaps on a remake of Eugene Church's "Pretty Girls Everywhere" that they cut with singer/guitarist Roy Rodgers the other night and suddenly the room is full of the sound of a wild, rockin' party. Footstomps and hand-claps, a wall of acoustic guitars and rock 'n' roll piano create a feel akin to the Gary U.S. Bonds classic "Quarter To Three."

"Super garage. We think that's what rock 'n' roll is all about," concludes Nagle. "If it's not playing a gymnasium, it's doing it in your basement your own way. And that sensibility and that way of recording and so forth. The bottom line is, can it move you? Nobody's looking at Leonardo's brush work on the Mona Lisa. They're looking to be moved. I've wept, been more profoundly emotionally taken to another place by a record than from the highest visual art. I love this art form. It's for the people. It costs a buck and you can get a lot more out of it than from owning a damn Rembrandt as far as I'm concerned."

**Pastorius** from pg. 17

way my records have sold here. I do much better in Japan; I had the number one jazz record there last year. Why? I personally think that Japan and Germany were the Axis powers in World War II. I'm gonna get shot now, but that's what I think.

"My main thing is Mongolian. That's my momma's thing. She's ninety percent Finnish and Swedish. But she's a Laplander, one of the northern people, who are Mongolians. That's all I can say. I know that's my thing. It comes out in my sound. Everything is sound. When I do a gig, the whole day is the gig. The way I carry myself, whether it be walking off an airplane or out of a taxi—until I get on stage—it's all part of the show. Which includes sound. You know what I mean. If I walk on strange, I mean, if I walk on stage, and trip and hit a microphone, that's part of the show. That's sound, and it's all music. The Mongols went south to Hungary and north to the top of the continent. I'm fifty percent of my mother. Those are the people I'm one with. I've even heard a rumor that I'm related to Genghis Khan...when I'm mad."

Since that conversation, we've been informed that Mr. Pastorius fell off the edge he'd been living on, breaking his arm and ribs in Italy. It may have been a step in the right direction—towards earth. After the fall, he returned to Florida to face the music. Something about a fat, white policeman....

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