

SON SEALS • TOMMY JAMES

December 15, 2000 VOL 26 • NO 25 • ISSUE 532

# GOLDMINE

THE COLLECTORS RECORD AND COMPACT DISC MARKETPLACE

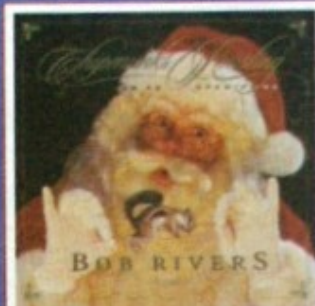
KING BISCUIT HOUR  
FLOWER POSTER



In this issue -  
**JOAN JETT**

Cosponsored with

**BAGS (Unlimited)**

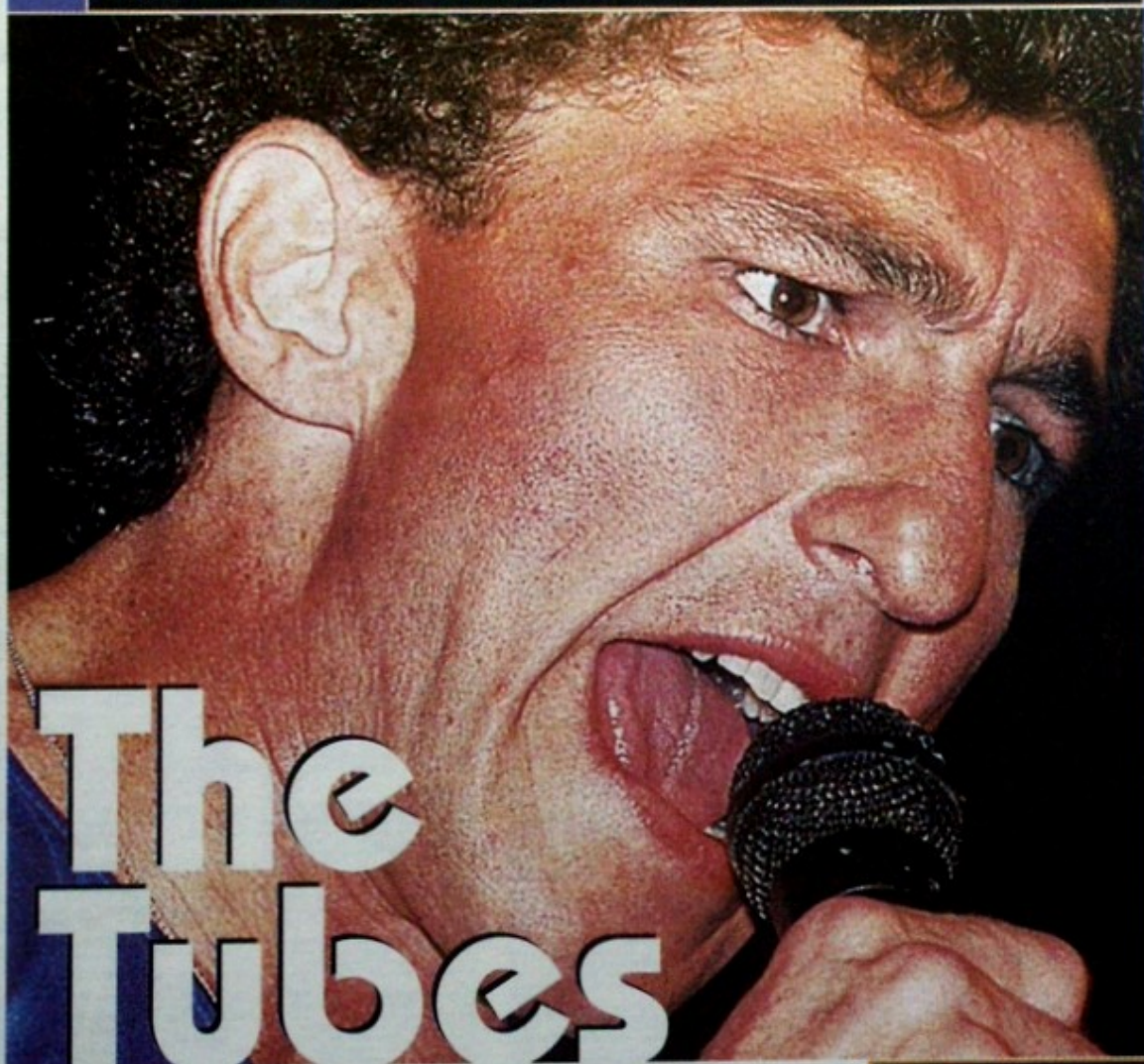


BOB RIVERS

Rockin'  
holiday hymns  
roundup



**LORETTA LYNN**  
Queen  
of country  
music



# The Tubes

Forget the free toothpaste,  
it's the music!

U.S. \$3.95 • CANADA \$4.95

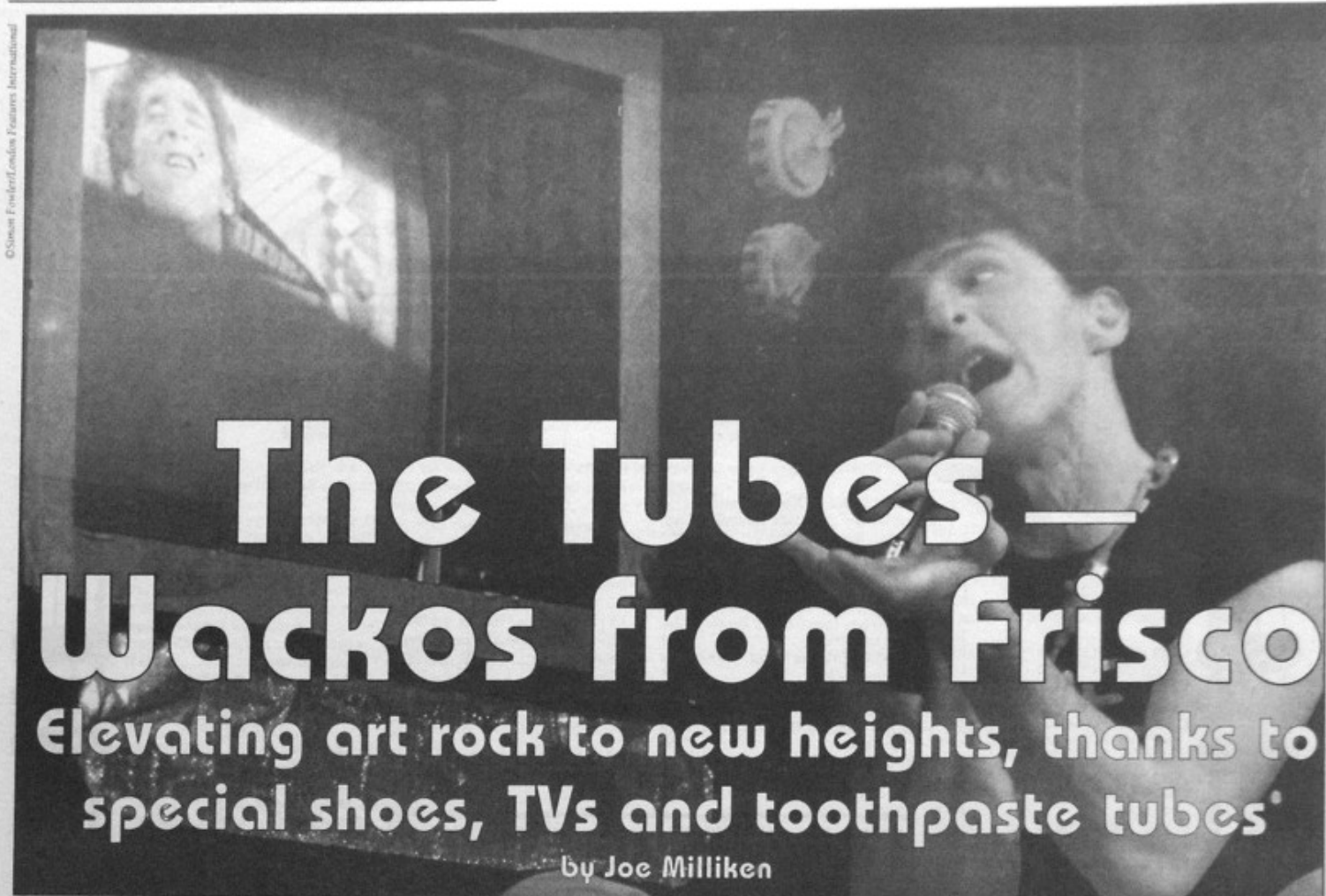


0 74470 19322 7

## Reviews .....

- ▶ The Wallflowers
- ▶ Mark Knopfler
- ▶ Dwight Yoakam
- ▶ John Lennon & Yoko Ono
- ▶ T-Bone Walker
- ▶ Herman's Hermits

**CALL TODAY** To subscribe or renew  
your subscription  
**1-800-258-0929** Dept.  
ABA2AB



# The Tubes — Wackos from Frisco

Elevating art rock to new heights, thanks to special shoes, TVs and toothpaste tubes'

by Joe Milliken

The Tubes, an eccentric theatre-noire rock band from San Francisco, are an explicit group of crazies long known for their unpredictable live shows. Yet there is another dimension to these characters. Take away the outrageous costumes, wipe away the glitter and eliminate all the dancers and stage extras — what you'll hear is a rich, stirring brew of groundbreaking rave-up rock chockful of irony, sarcasm and a whole lot of hooks. Reminiscent of the musical and satirical spirit of Frank Zappa and Captain Beefheart, The Tubes were infamous from the outset. Disguised as a theatrical three-ring circus set to music, the band strove for over-the-top shock value and down-and-dirty humor.

The Tubes' shows were a spell-binding combination of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and Zappa's *200 Motels*, colliding with a musical *Mad Magazine* of sorts. Their performances offered up one-of-a-kind props and costumes that the band created themselves — from hospital equipment, space suits, tuxedos and camouflage to platform shoes, fog machines, and a contraption that pumped out glitter rainstorms. The Tubes unfolded a production that touched upon bondage sex, mad science, dance routines, guerrilla warfare, game shows and drug-induced rock stars. One was simultaneously seized and entertained by the sociological commentary the band made.

A daring group, The Tubes blended comedy with tragedy, leaving you to wonder which was which or if there is even a difference between the two. The Tubes went for

the funny bone through your jugular using established symbols of American pop culture — a sarcastic game exposed through a musical performance with no consistent point of view, just a direct attempt at merry anarchy. However, these social comments never came at the expense of the music. These guys were and are, first and foremost a talented band, their style strategically tying together all the antics with precise arrangements and compelling tongue-in-cheek-lyrics.

Born William Edmund Spooner, (Aug. 16, 1949, in Phoenix, Ariz.) Tubes founder/guitarist/songwriter Bill Spooner rose from local book store employment and music studies at Arizona State University to achieve some regional success with his early bands. His first band, The X-1s, were a Beatle cover band. His second band called The Trips, did mostly Hollies covers and R&B.

"The Trips were probably the best vocal band I was ever in. We were the only white band to work at an all-black club called Bourbon Street West," Spooner told this writer in a recent interview. However, he was looking for more — much more. With the idea in mind of expanding his musical horizons, Spooner formed The Beans in 1969 with some high school chums who were living in Los Angeles: bassist Rick Marc Anderson (born Aug. 1, 1947 in St. Paul, Minn.) formerly of The Radicals and keyboard player Leo Vincent "Vince" Welnick (born Feb. 21, 1951, in Phoenix).

"With the money I got selling an album I recorded under the name Warren S. Richardson, Rick, Vince, and I drove back to Phoenix

hell-bent on getting this great drummer I'd seen there named Bob McIntosh. He had long blond hair and, man, could he play! We went and saw him with his band and told him we were putting this great group together and that he should join us. He agreed and never played with the other band again. That's how The Beans sprouted."

After gaining a strong local following, The Beans began experimenting with nontraditional means of rock expression as an attempt to break up the boredom of their "same old" weekly shows.

"I had gotten very serious about the music by then," Spooner told the *Los Angeles Times* in July 1975. "It was during the hippie period, and everyone was so self-righteous about their music. At that time we were sort of the reigning local stars of the Phoenix scene, but we got bored very quickly. Not with the music but with the acts and audiences in general. The whole traditional/ritual surrounding rock music is what got to me. People were just going to shows because that is what they were programmed to do.

"The audiences didn't care how well you played, only how long you played and whether you shook your head enough. I think we had sort of a placebo effect on their dull lives — 'Take two rock bands and call me in the morning.' That's the way it was... any rock band, they all looked the same on stage.

By then we knew we could pack the clubs we were playing no matter what we did, so we decided to start fooling around on stage a bit, took some chances. This also helped us to better illustrate and stimulate our satirical,

tongue-in-cheek lyrics. We became our own opening act — in different costumes — some nights. We worked up this long, space-age melodrama thing called the "Terrors From Tantrons," a musical comedy bit about a space commander on a planet filled with sex-starved women. We always figured that if we liked it, our audience would too, and they did in Phoenix. But what's Phoenix? We were sort of at a dead end there, musically speaking."

During this time The Red White And Blues, another Phoenix act, packed their bags and headed west for San Francisco, partly to pursue a new musical setting but mostly because two of its members received scholarships to enroll in the San Francisco Art Institute. The rest of the band just followed. They consisted of aspiring artist/drummer Charles L' Emprere "Prairie" Prince, (born May 7, 1950 in Charlotte, N.C.) artist and soon-to-be synthesizer whiz Michael David Cotten, (born Jan. 25, 1950, in Kansas City) guitarist Roger Steen, (born Nov. 13, 1949, in Pipestone, Minn.), and bassist David Killingsworth. Also along for the ride was a roadie/aspiring drama student John Waldo "Fee" (taken from Fiji) Waybill, born Sept. 17, 1950, in Omaha, Neb. In the beginning things were a little tough for both bands. The Red White And Blues did make an appearance representing San Francisco at the Japan Expo 1970, where they learned "Malagueña Salerosa" (a song from the 1940s that would eventually appear on The Tubes' debut album) from a mariachi band staying at the same Osaka apartment build-

ing. While The Beans were doing Tuesday night jam gigs at the infamous Fillmore West, Spooner was sweeping floors there for extra money after shows, all the while dreaming of his own band being the headliner.

It was at this point that The Red White And Blues parted ways with Killingsworth and were left with no bass player. They had already set up an upcoming gig at the San Francisco Art Institute, so they offered it to The Beans.

"I suggested the two bands merge and try a show together," Spooner said in a recent e-mail conversation. "We could dress Fee up for a few numbers, two drummers and two guitarists, totally cool."

That first gig took place at the Art Institute cafeteria with Spooner and Steen on guitars, Prince and McIntosh on drums, Anderson on bass, and Welnick on keyboards. Waybill debuted dressed as Carmen Miranda while singing "Brazil" (complete with fruit on his head and an India print dress). Cotten acted as sort of an art/stage director at this time. The show went well and the audience responded, so the band decided to try another show. Then another, then another, and some momentum began to build. Because The Beans already had four roadies working for them, Waybill was able to become more involved with the band musically, often joining Steen and Prince as The Radar Men From Uranus during a Beans show-stopping piece called "Ascensions Of The Motherlode."

It was around this time that tragedy struck — McIntosh was diagnosed with cancer of the lymph glands.

"Bob was just a great drummer," Waybill said. "He had long blond hair and was very athletic and health-conscious. He worked out all the time. Bob was quite a guy, didn't take any drugs or smoke cigarettes, very unassuming. He was a solid rock drummer, really complementing Prairie's more flashy and complex style. He got cancer and went to Germany to have surgery, and we all thought he would recover, until it reappeared and Bob passed away in early 1973. Bill wrote the song "Golden Boy" [which appears on The Tubes' third album, *Now*] in his memory. We all miss him very much."

After having seen Waybill perform in musicals back in high school (including the role of Harvey Miller in *Bye Bye Birdie*) and now sing lead on some cover songs, Spooner suggested making Waybill the permanent frontman of the band. "I thought it would be cool for someone who was free of an instrument to be able to do costume changes and whatever wild stunts we could come up with."

"I admired Waybill's work ethic," Spooner said. "He would spend hours rehearsing, then more hours on costumes, then even more hours on the dance routines."

Cotten would also eventually join the band, although he wouldn't perform on stage for a while (he would play from the mixing board area or slightly off stage).

As the theatrics became more prominent, so did the audience reaction. It seemed the band would add dancers, stage extras, costumes and props nightly. Waybill became more involved in many personalities on stage, with matching skits that served as interludes between songs and sets.

Some of his early character creations included a "pheasant-head-under-glass" (à la Danny Kaye) routine during "Lunchface" as well as the Fidel Castro-gone-mad character during "Malagueña Salerosa" and the phenom Quay Lewd. Quay Lewd (who had also been previously known as Rod Planet) was the hopeless stoned-out British rock star complete with 12-inch platform shoes made out of V-8 juice cans and a huge Q-shaped cut-out guitar.

Another key addition was made when Cotten and Prince met a beautiful, talented girl at The Palms Café on Polk Street named Re Styles. Her film credits included Alexandro Jodorowsky's production *The Holy Mountain*, the part of a cigar-smoking hooker in Sun Ra's flying saucer epic "Space Is The Place," as well as the unreleased Peter Bogdanovich feature *World Of The White Lilacs And Pink Champagne*. Styles has also appeared in magazines such as *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, *Oui*, *Gallery*, *Viva* and *Venus*. She quickly became friends with the two artists and soon began doing some backing vocals during Beans rehearsal sessions in their garage. Spooner said, "Styles sang 'I'm Gone And Completely Out Of My Mind' at one of our shows, and that was kind of her first



The Tubes, clockwise from left: Fee Waybill, Vince Welnick, Roger Steen, Prairie Prince, Bill Spooner, Michael Cotten, Rick Anderson, and Re Styles.

gig with us."

Styles would become The Tubes' resident stage dancer/dominatrix, but she would also serve as sort of a mother figure for the band. Shortly thereafter, the final "tubing" was fused into place. While painting a mural in the interior of The Palms Café to reflect its name, Cotten spotted the future Tubes dancers-to-be Leila T. And Los Frondos Fabulosos (a.k.a. Jane Dornacker, Cindi Osborn, Mary Niland, and Helene Gouaix).

"We went and saw their act at The Palms," Spooner said, "and they were just so great that we hired the whole thing right on the spot!"

Over the years there would be many other dancers and extras involved in The Tubes routines including Shelly Pang and Cindy Rhodes in the late '70s and early '80s, and Michele Gray and Cheryl Hagland in the '80s.

It was during this period at the Art Institute that the Daniel "Mort" Moriarty, who was at the school that day playing pick-up basketball, overheard the newly formed Beans playing. "Now, I want it to be understood right off that I first heard The Beans playing. That first connection had nothing to do with visuals or any stage antics. I could hear those unique, polyrhythmic arrangements from the beginning. All of those oddly complicated time changes — I mean, these guys could really play!" Moriarty, along with partner Gary Peterson, worked for the Kansas City-based Good Karma management/production company. Moriarty and Peterson already handled the recording artists Brewer & Shipley, who had success with the hits "One Tuke Over The Line," (#2 in *Billboard*). Soon after, Moriarty and Peterson would break away to form their own management/production company called Bag O Bucks.

The band started to develop a cult following in and around San Francisco. Their shows were becoming more elaborate and controversial each night, with no two shows the same.

"We started elaborating more and more on theme-type performance with a lot of abrupt scene changes," Spooner told the *Los Angeles Times*. "One show called *Mutation* had us all wearing horrible masks and lurking around the stage. When the lights came up after the first time we tried it on stage in North Beach, every person in the audience had left except for one girl. I went out to tell her that I was encouraged that even one person had stayed, and that made it worthy of further development. At which point she said that no one would get

her wheelchair so she too could leave. Needless to say we didn't try that bit again. Then, when we finally got a shot at the Fillmore West, we really bombed — they hated us. All we did was attract the reputation as being a bunch of nuts. We actually didn't get much work for a while after that."

Moriarty and Peterson became friendly with the band, and they started to videotape some of their shows.

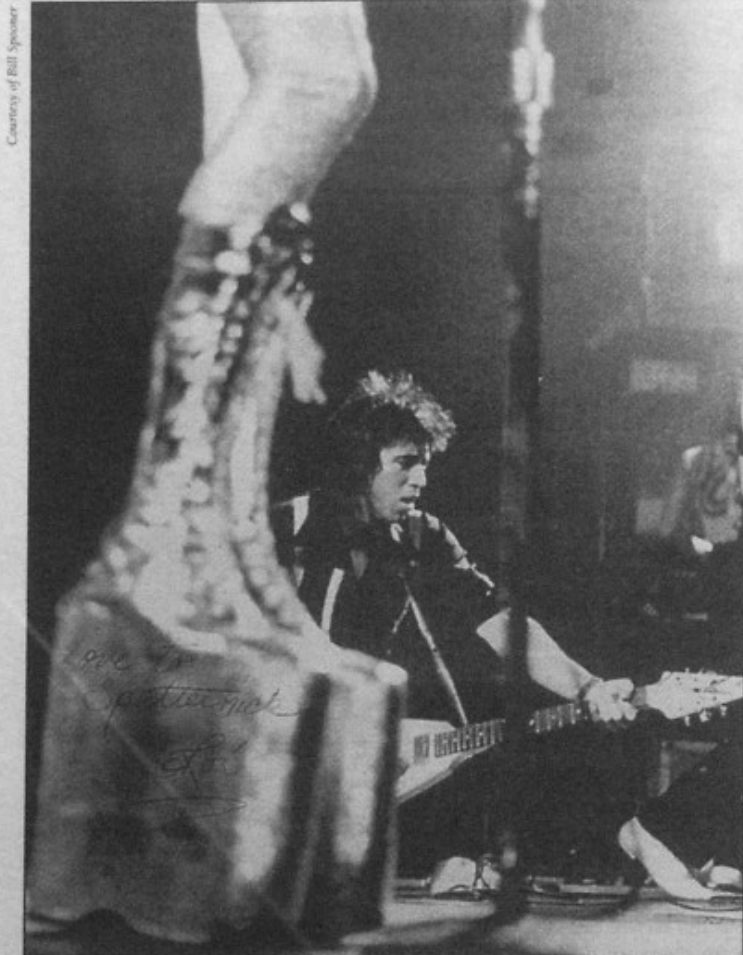
"One early show that really sticks out in my mind was when the band asked me along to videotape a 'nice' little show at Soledad Prison in Soledad, Calif. I mean this place was tough. They had guards handing the crew nails one by one to nail down the drum riser. Nail one, mark it down on the clipboard, nail two, mark it down, nail three.... There were guards walking up and down the aisles during the show with shotguns. They told us if trouble started to hit the deck as to avoid any potential harm. Pretty daring stuff!"

"I mean we had inmate kingpins sending their 'runners' up to us offering weed and stuff. We were like, 'Uh, no thanks,' in fear of our lives! At the start of the show Waybill appeared in a trench coat and handcuffs as the band kicked into "Town Without Pity." At the end of the song he snapped the handcuffs off and stripped off the trench coat to unveil his black bondage outfit as the band segued into "Mondo Bondage." The inmates all went nuts because it was just so powerful! The prison warden invited the band to dinner in his chambers, but Spooner gracefully declined. Just another day in the life of the [soon-to-be] Tubes."

Engineer Stephen Barnard was one of the first people to professionally record the band, with sessions at the rehearsal garage in October and November 1973, and also at Heider Studios in San Francisco Dec. 13, 1973. Barnard's credits, besides The Tubes, include The Grateful Dead, Van Morrison, Jefferson Airplane, The Doobie Brothers, Joe Cocker, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Steve Miller, Brewer & Shipley, and Crosby, Stills And Nash.

"I recorded some studio cuts, basement tapes, a live remote broadcast in March 1974 and a live show at the California Music Hall in June 1974, leading up to their signing with A&M Records," Barnard said.

"Some of the songs we worked on ended up on the first two records including 'White Punks On Dope,' 'Mondo Bondage,' 'Brighter Day' and 'Poland Whole,' just to name a few." These demos are now available through the Phoenix Gems label [See review on page 17 and contest on page 22 — E.L.] label.



Bill Spooner, dwarfed by Quay Lewd's boots, circa early 1970s.

"The radio broadcast I recorded for the band was aired on the Berkley Pacifica station KPFF-KPFB on March 7, 1974. The band and a few followers crammed into the Wally Heider Studio in San Francisco, where we had recorded demos the year before. It was a very exciting broadcast, a new cutting-edge band being heard on the radio for the first time. If I had been in my car hearing this for the first time I would have had a wreck!"

Barnard left one lasting legacy with the band: the Quay Lewd glasses.

"The Quay [Lewd] parody reminded me of the huge glasses Elton John wore in those days, so I went to a San Francisco sign supply shop and bought some large plastic letters used in movie marquis signs. I got some cheap lamps with leads, tied the lights to the plastic letters, and powered them with 45-volt pro-flash batteries. The batteries would die after about 10 minutes but last long enough for the show bit."

It was also around this time that the band developed their dance team, "The Lewdetes" (among other names), with the hiring of Bimbo's Cosmic Circus creator Kenny Ortega, who is now world-renowned for his choreography and directing. Ortega's résumé includes movies such as *Dirty Dancing* and *Walt Disney's Newsies*, the Academy Awards, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Hair*, videos and tours for Michael Jackson and Cher, and major historical events such as The Olympics in Atlanta (a project that also involved Prince and Cotten). He would also become an apprentice of the dance legend

Gene Kelly. Ortega was key in the development of the shows' seamless dance routines. LeRoy Jones was another dancer who started out with the band as stage extra and costume mistress. Other dancers included Michael Holman and Michael Springer, among others. Jones and Ortega eventually moved into a studio next to Cotten's where they would create costumes for the band into the wee hours of the morning.

The band continued to build a reputation around their increasingly outrageous live shows. When no one would hire them they'd book a hall themselves, print and distribute flyers and hire opening acts. However, after three years since coming to San Francisco, The Beans were getting restless. They needed a break — a publicity jumpstart, and it finally happened when the band was approached by Jerry Pampili, who worked for the legendary San Francisco promoter Bill Graham. Pampili booked The Beans to open for the mighty Led Zeppelin at the 60,000-seat Kezar Stadium in San Francisco.

This connection opened up a door for the band. At the time, Pampili was booking most of its shows. To expand the schedule beyond just weekend gigs, he began a weekday series of live shows called "New Sounds Of The City." The Beans headlined the series at Winterland on Halloween night in 1974. Halloween rivals New Year's Eve as San Francisco's most celebrated holiday, and the band took full advantage of the opportunity by staging a 70-minute set of powerful rock theatre, climaxed by Quay Lewd. This

Halloween event stirred up interest among the local press and helped bring the band's unique style to the forefront.

In the fall of 1974 while The Beans were managed by a friend named John Speer (who was the original drummer for Alice Cooper), New York producer David Ruebenson showed interest in the band. Ruebenson was living in San Francisco while working for CBS/Columbia Records and used CBS' studios to record and produce the artists he managed, who included Herbie Hancock and The Pointer Sisters. He worked up a production and publishing deal with The Beans and Speer and also helped them cut a demo. However, it was becoming evident to Speer and the band that they needed to turn their management over to someone with more industry experience. The logical choices were, of course, Moriarty and Peterson. But before they could, the band had to seek a release from Ruebenson.

"Because David wasn't really doing much with the band and was tied up in other projects and litigation with the record company, he was kind enough to release The Beans for the cost of the demo they had cut, which was \$800," Moriarty said. "We gave him a brown paper bag full of \$1 bills — a 'Bag O Bucks' — one night after a gig at the Winterland Theatre. He laughed and thought that was pretty funny and soon after signed the release."

The deal that Moriarty and Peterson made with The Beans was for management only with no publishing involved.

"We agreed that if we didn't get them signed to a label within I believe a six-month period, then there would be no further obligation between us," Moriarty recalled. "We chose Jan. 1 [as a start date] because record companies spend the fall trying to maximize the sale of Christmas product already in the stores, and after the first of the year they have budgets for new artist acquisition."

"It also made sense for accounting reasons to start the business at the beginning of the year. If we did succeed in getting them a deal, then a seven-year exclusive management deal would go into effect. It had nothing to do with showing a profit at that point, it was only for management and didn't even include any merchandising rights. When Gary and I became comanagers of The Beans, we felt that our specific job and number one priority was to organize the band, and to put together a professional team to promote them."

Around this time The Beans discovered that there was another band on the East Coast called the Boston Baked Beans.

"So everyone put some names in a hat and we let our dog Sandwich choose," Spooner said. "He pulled out the name 'Tubes, Rods, And Bulbs' [because that particular piece of paper had mayonnaise on it] so we just shortened it to The Tubes, hence the official name. Later on when we started using television monitors on stage, people would say to us, 'That's why you're named The Tubes, right, because of the TV sets?' And we'd say, 'Ah yeah, that sounds about right.'"

The Tubes continued to rework the stage show, which on any given night could include dancing girls and strippers, animal acts, marching bands, graffiti artists, roller skaters, ballerinas, play-ups on record executives and rock critics, and an array of bizarre props such as beer, soap and cereal boxes, toothpaste tubes (which they would often hand out

at the door), wailing sirens, revolving red police lights and audience participants. Anything that you wouldn't expect at a rock concert, you could expect from The Tubes.

They even staged the first "Streaker's Ball" held one night at a club called The Village on Columbus Avenue in San Francisco. The band had announced that everyone who showed up at the club nude would get in for free.

"We thought a few crazies would show up, but we never thought so many people would show up that we could lose money on the night," Waybill said on Alan Thicke's *Thicke Of The Night* TV show in the early '80s.

"Keep in mind that Columbus Avenue isn't some out of the way side street, it is a main drag where the cable cars run through right to Fisherman's Wharf," said Moriarty. "We had a block-long line of people waiting in the street to get into the show, and yes, some of them were naked! It was then that I first became aware of how big something could become just by word of mouth, because we had no record company backing us yet, only our own promotional ideas. I can remember police officers checking IDs at the door. Some of these people were holding brown paper bags full of their clothes as they pulled out their identification — it was just an unbelievable scene — they were naked for God sake!"

Because so many participants showed up, the band created an on-the-spot stipulation that in order to actually get in for free, you had to streak across the stage nude before you could go to the bathrooms to put your clothes on. Later in the show, Waybill joined in the fun by peeling off a couple layers of costumes to do a little streaking of his own, much to the delight of the crowd. They got a write up or two from the press after that show.

"The Tubes are evolving into a combination of music and theater," Spooner told *Cashbox* magazine in August 1975. "We tend to play up the theatrical nature of the set just as much as the music, because there are certain parts of America where we can get away with more as 'theater' than if we called ourselves a straight-out 'rock band.' Julian Beck's *Living Theatre* has gotten away with quite a bit because he's just that, considered theater, whereas Jim Morrison the rock singer couldn't do, or pull out, his thing without getting busted."

Another major dose of exposure came from Tom Donahue, the late program director of San Francisco's KSan-FM radio, who began broadcasting "White Punks On Dope," despite the unmistakable "fuck" in the middle of the song. The phone lines lit up and the song was added to the station's regular rotation.

"Tom Donahue and Bill Graham were both very helpful and instrumental to us in the early days," Peterson said. "They both made calls on our behalf to various record company executives in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Tom hosted a live KSan radio show that originated at The Record Plant, an excellent recording studio in nearby Sausalito, Calif. Besides the additional radio exposure, it also gave us the chance to put together a professional-sounding recording for demo purposes."

Next came probably the most significant aspect toward the signing of The Tubes.

"Because Gary and I were getting involved with video production at the time, we understood the potential impact video

could have when merged with the strong visuals The Tubes were putting forth in their live shows," said Moriarty.

Moriarty, Peterson, Cotten (the three were taking a video production class together called "Video Free America") and the rest of the band became deeply interested in the visual effects given off by video and what it could do to enhance their shows. In bigger venues, closed-circuit video projection became a major part of the theatrics.

"We felt that if we could somehow blend the visual aspects of the band in with the music it would allow the record companies to really understand the total Tubes package," said Moriarty. "Since Gary and I were already involved in video production, we knew that Shelter Records, a small company signing artists at the time, (including Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers) had Shelter Vision, a four-color camera and portable video van. We tried to get the Shelter people to come videotape one of our shows, but the schedules never meshed. We asked them if we could use the equipment to make a video shoot, giving them the first right of refusal on the video and band signing. We taped a show at the California Music Hall because it had a balcony that would allow for a wide panoramic shot to give the appearance of a larger venue.

"When Shelter Records passed on the band, we had permission to use the tape as we saw fit and bingo — we had the visual tool needed to show the record companies. We showed the tape to ABC/Columbia Records, Warner Brothers, Capitol and A&M, along with a few agencies. One great thing about showing that video back in the early '70s was the fact that no one had a VCR in their office back then, so our presentations were done in the 'international conference rooms,' which added a sense of importance and professionalism to the whole thing."

Before the video demo, the band had been turned down repeatedly, being told they had no commercial potential.

"That's a tough thing to be told when you feel you're expressing a new art form," Spooner told Ohio's Scene magazine in 1975. "Before we got our management team and the proper demos put together, we were really the most non-commercial entity there ever was." Peterson told *The Los Angeles Times*, "We ran into a lot of opposition at the record companies at first. Everyone was looking for something similar to what was already selling. There was a lot of demand for the 'country rock' sound like the Eagles and Jackson Browne. The reaction was always, 'Glitter rock is dead.' We kept telling them that we weren't glitter rock, but they kept hearing about Quay Lewd's antics and kept trying to pigeon-hole us into that category."

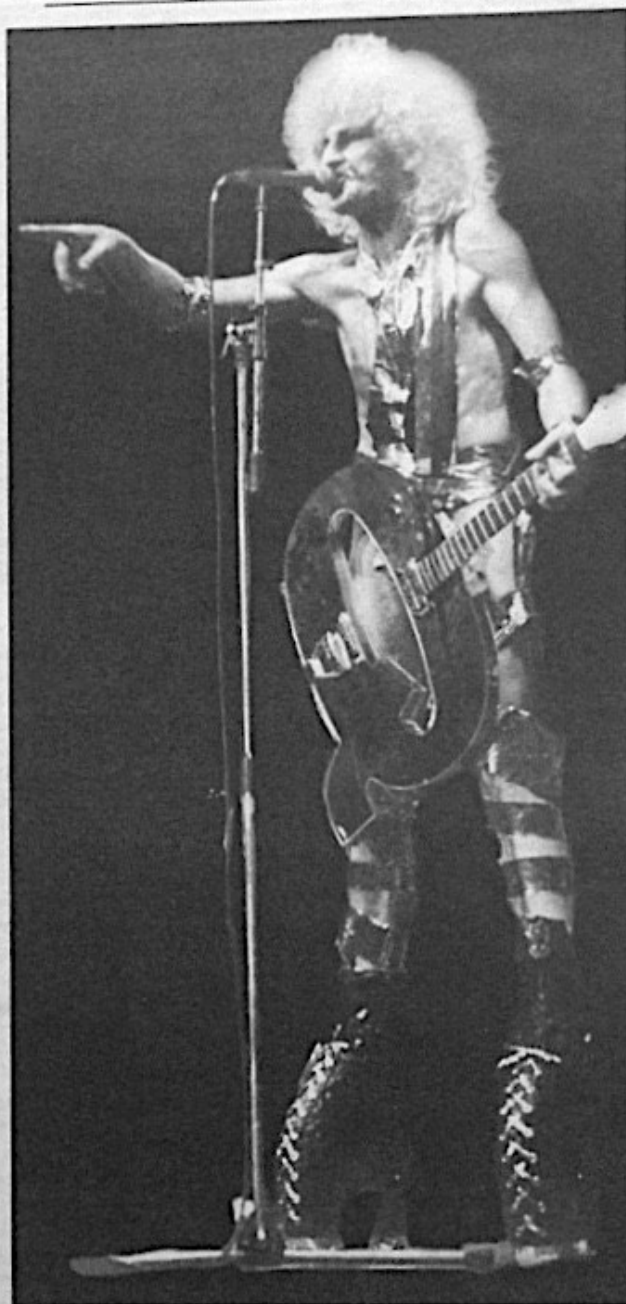
"Warner Brothers, A&M and, ironically, Capitol all showed interest in the band," Moriarty said of the video presentations. "We decided on A&M because it was a smaller label and easier to get to the powers that be. Jerry Moss [the 'M' in A&M] was the president and/or chairman of the board at the time, and I had access to talk with him regarding the band's interests at any time... Jerry Moss was very generous and helpful. We all owe him a big time thank you for his efforts."

On Feb. 21, 1975, The Tubes returned to the Winterland Theatre for a second "New Sounds Of The City" headline along with The Hoo Doo Rhythm Devils before heading into Los Angeles' Record Plant West to begin recording their debut album for A&M. At this point the stage show was

hitting full stride, with Waybill appearing in no less than seven separate roles at that performance, from spaceman and leather bondage, to Quay Lewd and the "Young Dr. Waybill" for "Rock And Roll Hospital." Waybill showed the uncanny ability to change from one character and costume to another without missing a beat. The production had never looked and sounded better, which gave the band added confidence as they entered the recording studio.

At the same time this was starting to happen for the band, their graphic arts department was also thriving, winning awards and recognition for everything from building murals to theater and environmental design work. Cotten and Prince's projects were featured in magazines such as *Gentlemen's Quarterly*, *Coast and House And Garden*. Cotten was fast becoming renowned, having designed fabrics for famous designers such as John Klaus, Stephen Burrows, and Rudi Gernich, and also, along with Prince, having designed environmental layouts for the likes of Bloomingdale's (New York), City Of Paris, and Liberty House (San Francisco). This dynamic art duo also painted wall murals all over the world, including the infamous giant record-disc building mural, titled "Blame It On The Tubes," on the walls of A&M Records' Hollywood Soundstage, formerly owned by Charlie Chaplin and now a designated historical landmark. "What amazed everyone about that building mural," Moriarty explained, "was that everyone at A&M Records went home for the weekend on Friday afternoon, and when they came back to work on Monday morning the entire building mural was done!"

Cotten was also generally responsible (along with Prince and others connected to the band) for The Tubes' *theatre noire* stage pieces, props, designs, visuals, air-brushed T-shirts (notice the band's T-shirts on the back covers of some of their releases) and costumes. Cotten and Prince also did layout and design work for most of the band's albums. Recently they have done costume design work for the Atlanta Olympic Games, commissioned huge ceiling murals for an Indian casino in Wisconsin, and Prince contributed custom-painted motorcycle parts featured in the last two *Batman* movies and for Underground Colors, a motorcycle restoration company. Cotton/Prince Studios also creates stage sets for many touring musicians including Bonnie Raitt, Robert Plant, Michael Jackson, The Beach Boys, Shania Twain, and Kitano.



The infamous Quay Lewd parody.

Prince is also well respected for his session drumming, having worked for artists such as George Harrison, Todd Rundgren, David Byrne, Nicky Hopkins, Brian Eno, Glenn Frey, John Fogerty, XTC, Jerry Harrison, Neal Schon, Tommy Bolin, and Phil Lesh And Friends, just to name a few, and has



THE TUBES  
Dawn Of The Tubes  
Phoenix Gems (4001)

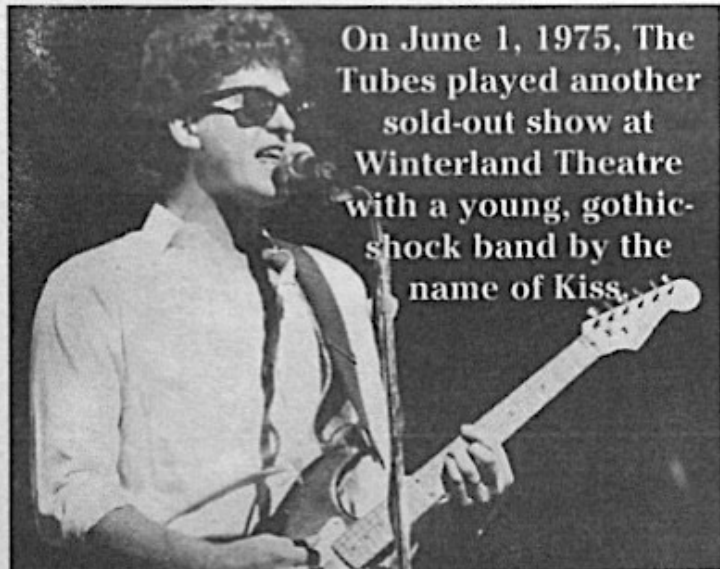
New York Indie label Phoenix Gems digs deep into the archives for this capsule of vintage demos and live performances from the original seven members of San Francisco-based visionaries The Tubes — Bill Spooner, Fee Waybill, Prairie Prince, Roger Steen, Michael Cotten, Vince Welnick, and Rick Anderson. Recorded and produced by Stephen Barnard, the music is taken from three early recordings: five tracks from a demo session at Wally Heider Studios in San Francisco on Dec. 13, 1973, four tracks from a live performance from the California Music Hall in June 1974 and one track from a live FM broadcast March 7, 1974. What you will hear are the first recordings of amazing musicians who play with a bizarre yet precise style —

## Album Review

full of intricate arrangements, infectious hooks and over-the-top humor that was all their own and ahead of its time.

*Dawn Of The Tubes* reveals a wide range of creativity. From the raw but somehow polished demo versions of "White Punks On Dope," "Mondo Bondage," and "Brighter Day" (a personal favorite) to the never-released live satires "Baby Your Face Is Mutated," "Wonderbread Bodies" and "Lunch Face," The Tubes' first try in the studio was a stunning culmination of unpredictability that their fans would come to expect over the next 25 years. So whether you are a longtime Tubes fan, just know the standards "She's A Beauty" and "Talk To Ya Later" or have never heard them at all, the result can be still be the same — you'll be scratching your head and wondering what the heck they meant by all that... and wanting to check out what they did next!

— Jon Milliken



**On June 1, 1975, The Tubes played another sold-out show at Winterland Theatre with a young, gothic-shock band by the name of Kiss.**

**Roger Steen**

done TV soundtracks for Pee Wee's Playhouse. Prairie also won the Bammy Award for Drummer Of The Year award (the Bay Area's version of the Grammys) in 1983 for his work with The Tubes. On top of all that, he splits touring time between The Tubes, Rundgren, Jefferson Starship, Lesh, and Welnick's Missing Man Foundation band.

The Tubes entered the Los Angeles Record Plant West studio in March 1975 to begin recording their debut album for A&M Records. The band had trouble early on choosing a producer.

"It's hard because we don't play one style of music cohesive to the whole project," Spooner told Cleveland's *Scene* magazine. "But when Doreen Lauer at A&M introduced us to Al Kooper, we knew it would work. He took a couple months with us and even played on some things. He was really behind our project."

While the band worked in the studio, they also continued to tour, not wanting to lose any newfound momentum.

One memorable show occurred on April 3, 1975, at The Palomino Club, a country music-type hangout in North Hollywood, Calif. It was "talent night" and the \$100 (a lot of money in 1975) top prize was ripe for the taking. The Tubes appeared as a delinquent-looking outfit called Cowboy Waybill And The Heifer's Dream, complete with "Hugh Heifer" on drums. They began their set with the *Rawhide* TV theme, rolled into some three-part harmonies with "Tumbling Tumbleweeds" and closed out with Marty Robbins' "El Paso," in which Waybill got shot after returning to the scene of his crime. He slapped his chest to burst the blood bag that was under his shirt, dropped to the floor and was tossed his microphone to finish the number while still flat on his back. The crowd loved it and the band walked away with the prize, as well as offers to play live state fairs and another full week at The Palomino. Not a bad night's work.

On June 1, The Tubes played another sold-out show at Winterland Theatre with a young, gothic-shock band by the name of Kiss. The band worked in another Waybill character called Dr. Strangekiss, an old Trutonic crippled scientist (à la Peter Sellers singing "Bali Hai") who explodes up from

his wheelchair at song's end (with a background of nuclear explosions on video) and is transformed into Las Vegas legend Tom Jones, complete with tight black slacks and white shirt opened to the naval. All this happened while the band cranked out a rock version of "It's Not Unusual." The usual "White Punks On Dope" finale featured a new twist, with no fewer than 30 performers crowding the stage, including a fireman in a yellow slicker blasting an extinguisher, a postman delivering Quay Lewd a letter and two little kids toddling about.

"It's the old show business maxim," comanager Peterson told the *San Francisco Examiner And Chronicle* after the show. "Nothing can follow kids."

"We really started utilizing that cabaret theme effectively," said Spooner. "We'd segue from something dark and scary to something sad or romantic, to something funny or silly, always quick and unexpected scene and theme changes."

While things were seemingly going well, the band still ran into occasional hostility when opening shows for more serious rock acts. One low point (before the record deal) was a night they opened for jazz-fusion guitarist John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra at Winterland Theatre.

"The gig was supposed to be with Kiss, but they had canceled," Spooner said. "We had bought 250 loaves of bread to use as props for the show. They offered us the opening slot for the Mahavishnu Orchestra, and by the time the show came, the bread had become old and stale."

As Waybill told *The Los Angeles Times*, "We did our song 'Wonderbread Bodies' at the beginning of the set in which we had all this bread set up in racks on the stage. I had on a white suit and gloves and started throwing the bread at the audience during the song. At first I was throwing individual slices and loaves of this petrified bread, but by the end of the number I was throwing whole racks around."

"Well, we got that bread pelted back at us for the rest of the show! Some people were throwing it back in fun, but others were really mad. Then people were taking off their shoes and stuff and throwing them at us. After the show we found shoes, clothes, even

grapefruits — all kinds of things strewn all over the stage. I can remember this one guy who started following us around from club to club after that show. He'd stand in front of the stage shaking his fists at us and calling us names. He used to drive me crazy. One time I looked down over the stage and he was aiming a bottle at me, so our roadies grabbed him and threw him out of the club."

But eventually, as the stage show progressed, things started to change.

"A little later on that same crazy guy was at one of our Santa Cruz gigs. I hadn't seen him in a while and I thought, 'Oh no, here we go again.' But now he wasn't heckling us anymore. All of a sudden he was cheering us on, and it just floored me. When we handed out tubes of toothpaste at the beginning of the show, he didn't throw them back at us. I thought then that maybe our time had finally come."

While still working in the studio in May 1975, the band was relentless in creating new visuals. They even developed routines that didn't require the band to play a note. One bit in particular featured Spooner having a conversation with a TV set.

"I don't see that as unusual at all," he told *Cashbox Magazine*. "I talk to my TV all the time, have been for years. 'You rotten piece of shit. I hate you!' People always talk to their TVs. They just don't always realize they're doing it. We do a couple of things now which have interplay between a television set and real people."

Another routine consisted of how to make a gold record: "First you take a pinch of talent and marinate it in cheap beer for a few years. Then you throw in a wonderful record company here, a little trumpet there and some engineering dust..."

During another show, legendary record executive Clive Davis came to see the band and was attacked by Waybill with a chainsaw (with chain removed, but who could tell for sure?) during the "Rock And Roll Hospital" number. Other over-the-top moments during stage classics such as "Mondo Bondage" were known to send the fainter of hearts steam-rolling for the exits.

"We don't shock people in cities like San Francisco or Los Angeles," Spooner told *Cashbox*. "But we might have problems in the Midwest or down South. We sure as hell don't scare kids with what we do! Kids are ready for anything."

Waybill explained The Tubes' process this way: "In the very early days more than 50 percent of what we did on stage was improvised, and it's not even a question of the shows changing from week to week — our shows changed from night to night. We had this thing going about changing lines all the time. It was sort of an ongoing contest, a game. If Bill threw me a new line, I had to come back with something different right away."

In June 1975, The Tubes played what was probably the most significant gig in their history — one at The Roxy Theatre in Los Angeles, coinciding with the release of their self-titled debut album.

"That first Roxy engagement really seemed to bust it wide open for us," Moriarty told *The Los Angeles Times* in July 1975. "All of a sudden people were calling us from places like Minneapolis and Detroit to book The Tubes."

"The event had been hyped heavily by A&M, and the industry 'A list' was invited," Moriarty said recently. "Besides the regular

extravaganza of the show, we wanted something to focus the event to on that night. I remembered that when Will Rogers was asked how he made his shows so current and topical he had replied that he just looked in the newspaper for ideas. So, with the band being The Tubes, and Gary and I being involved in videotape production, I decided to look in *TV Guide* instead for inspiration."

"We saw that the dominating news for the premiere night was going to be 'live' video from the first space docking between Russia and the United States. We had a breakfast meeting with the band and they came up with the idea of a 'mange et trois' — the U.S., Russia, and The Tubes would meet in space via video tape [for the song "Space Baby"]! The band created a space capsule set, taped Waybill talking to the people in the club from the capsule and cut it in with the 'live' footage from space along with the evening news clips. Prairie and Mike built the capsule sets, the band filmed their segments and we rehearsed it that afternoon."

Special credit also must go to video artist T.J. McHose, who worked on the space docking number and many others with the band.

Moriarty concluded, "That evening, maybe a few hours after these people had just seen the space docking on the nightly news at their homes, they were seeing it as part of The Tubes show that night! They were amazed at the immediacy, humor and hip media savvy of the band."

The debut album contained eight tracks and originally came with a 24-inch by 12-inch color insert featuring lyrics and pictures. Produced by Kooper and engineered by Lee Rhett Kiefer, the recording dismissed any question as to whether the band could effectively translate their unique brand of mania onto vinyl. The album jacket was designed by Cotten and Prince for Airmaid Designs and featured seductive photos of Styles' hands and body on the front and back covers respectively. The album was dedicated in the memory of McIntosh and to Tom Donahue.

*The Tubes* is a powerful blend of tongue-in-cheek satire and science fiction-rock, primarily focused on decadent life styles and rock 'n' roll excess. Kooper has recently said that he felt intimidated by the complex grooves and bizarre arrangements of the early Tubes material and took off for a month just to listen and study the demo tapes.

Mixed prominently throughout the album are the string and orchestral arrangements of Dominic Frontiere, who had composed the music for the television series *Outer Limits* and had never worked with a rock band before. His orchestrations helped provide demented drama to the music. Pulsating rhythms, blazing duel guitars and jumbled images, mixing with rocking beats and musical puns roam throughout the LP. *The Tubes* proved to be a diverse and well-rounded debut for the band and received acclaim from the music media.

The band sold out San Francisco's Bimbo's 365 Club and The Boarding House night after night, then immediately played the 3,500-seat Santa Monica Civic Auditorium again.

"No one had ever seen a band playing runs of shows like these guys were pulling off," said Moriarty. "I mean they were selling out Bimbo's for weeks at a time — playing two shows a night, five nights a week, for six straight weeks!"

Bimbo's was also the site for The Tubes

"talent hunt."

"We would hold an audition the day before a show [no musicians allowed], which would attract all kinds of weird people, and the winner would get to go on stage during The Tubes' show. We tried and failed to get a schedule restricted [for] Lily Tomlin to be the emcee, but did get comedian/actor Martin Mull," Moriarty said. Some "Tubes Talent Hunt" participants included Lyla T., (who would become a Tubes dancer) and one comedian who didn't make the cut, a young guy by the name of Robin Williams. Williams remained a longtime fan of the band and could often be found backstage at San Francisco gigs.

The Roxy and Santa Monica gigs were great warm-up shows to kick off the first "official" Tubes U.S. tour, as the band hit the road with only a few roadies and a truckload of their homemade props and costumes. Their first trek across the states was chaotic, because they didn't have any professional touring people. So instead of doing one night stands in a lot of different cities, the band chose to do multiple shows in each theater they played, such as The Bottom Line and The Palladium in New York City, The Orpheum and Paradise in Boston, The Fox Theatre in Atlanta, and The Palace in Detroit. The Tubes' U.S. tour continued for the next few months leading into the new year.

Overall, the band made great strides in 1975, becoming one of the most talked-about new bands around. To maintain that edge, they had to tirelessly come up with new ideas to make each and every live show different from the last.

By the end of the year A&M records released "White Punks On Dope" as a single in the United States and "Malaguena Salerosa" in Holland. "Don't Touch Me There" hit #1 in Holland, almost prompting A&M to give Styles her own record deal.

In early 1976 The Tubes went back into the studio, this time at A&M Recording Studios in Hollywood, Calif., to record their second album. In between studio sessions the band continued to tour, playing to sold out theatres and arenas all over the country. They also played another long stint at Bimbo's 365 Club, doing two shows a night for several weeks. It was there they hooked up with Mingo Lewis, a talented and outrageous local percussionist who started sitting in with the band. They couldn't afford to pay him, so for about three months he played for free. Prince loved his work so much that the band eventually hired him full time.

"Mingo was crazy, a lot of fun!" Waybill said. "He played on the second and third albums and also toured with us for a while in the late '70s. Finally though, he drove us nuts and we had to cut him loose!" Lewis would later reappear in the mid-80s to play on the *Love Bomb* album and tour.

In April 1976, Styles appeared in *Playboy* magazine. "That *Playboy* layout with her gorgeous face and body [in a 'Rock And Roll Hospital' motif with 'Dr. Waybill'] was impossibly irresistible — because of Re — not Waybill," Tubes fan club president Marilyn Wood stated.

While on tour the band ran into a problem in Cincinnati when arriving for a show at the city-owned civic auditorium. Moriarty said, "It seems the mayor and city council weren't very happy about Re's appearance in

*Playboy* magazine. There were picketers in front of the venue with signs protesting The Tubes' performance of 'nudity' in their city. Which of course there was none of in the show. The closest thing to nudity was some skimpy outfits and a body suit with genitals painted on it. So to appease the officials I told them that we had an 'A show and a B show,' so we'd do the B show without any nudity so the band could go on."

But while everyone was trying to decide if the band would go on as planned, Styles and a couple of dancers slipped into the crowd and actually joined the picketers. With everyone in their seats and the show already started, down the center isle come the "picketers" who march right up on stage and into the show, much to the delight of the stunned crowd.

In fall 1976, The Tubes released their second LP, titled *Young And Rich*, which was produced by Ken Scott and engineered by Ed Thacker. The album originally came with a 12-inch by 12-inch insert featuring album credits, and the jacket was again designed by Cotten and Prince. This was much more of a straightforward rock effort than the debut album, yet it still maintained their signature tongue-in-cheek style.

"Young And Rich" was a song Spooner wrote in 1970. "We were rehearsing in a garage with one bare 100-watt light bulb hanging at eye level. By this time we had fallen into a pretty bad crowd," Cotten told the Los Angeles *Retro Rock* radio show in 1983. "We were right there in San Francisco with the rich kids, and we couldn't believe the things we were seeing. We thought we were bad lads and delinquents coming from Arizona. Forget it — we didn't know nothing until we saw the kids that grew up with money in the Bay area! Just took the cake — bad, bad, bad kids."

Waybill added, "And they of course immediately latched on to us and our decadent shows. Oh these shows are perfect for us, man." I mean they used to show up bombed out of their minds on every kind of alcohol, drug, intoxicant, barbiturate, depressant imaginable! They'd come to the shows completely trashed, then trash their cars on the way home and come to the next gig with a new car. It became a big partying troupe who just followed us around."

The Tubes' second tour of America went much smoother than the first as they upgraded their outfit with a professional sound and lighting crew. This doubled the size of their entourage yet made the road trips more manageable. One highlight of the tour was a special Bicentennial show headlining at San Francisco's Winterland Theatre and featuring two unique opening acts — The Turtles and Blues Brothers. In order to put something special together for the show, composer Dominic Frontiere was asked to create orchestral arrangements for "White Punks On Dope" to be performed by the Stanford University Marching Band at show's end. Moriarty said, "Before the show, we squeezed the marching band into this little side room off stage. For the encore the marching band came on stage blaring the opening of "White Punks On Dope" as the band kicked in. Those arrangements by Frontiere were so impressive that to this day, Stanford University still uses them in their program."

The Tubes continued their busy touring schedule while new material was developed



The Tubes circa *The Completion Backward Principle*.

and went back into the studio at the end of the year. In 1977 The Tubes released *Now*, their third album for A&M Records. The vinyl release came with four different back cover variations, each with a different color scheme. The original packaging also came with a 12-inch by 12-inch insert featuring album credits and thoughts from the band, including the first reference to the "suffer for sound" phrase that would later be used as the title for and album ultimately rejected by A&M.

During The Tubes' U.S. tour to promote *Now*, the band was introduced to British promoter Rikki Farr (the son of Tommy Farr, a European heavyweight boxing champ who once fought Joe Louis). He saw the band open for Alice Cooper and wanted to become their manager. The Tubes had just parted ways with Moriarty and Peterson, so the timing was right. Farr was known for promoting the early '70s Isle Of Wright Festival and had also started a sound and lighting production company in Los Angeles. Farr liked the band's tight sound but loved their outrageousness even more.

Whereas in the past the band's stage antics sometimes caused problems, Farr convinced the band that the controversy surrounding their stage act would get them "banned" in England — with a lot of publicity and curiosity to go along with it. The plan worked like a charm as the band sold out shows all over the U.K.

After finishing up their jaunt through England, in 1978 The Tubes released their first live album, *What Do You Want From Live*, recorded at the Hammersmith Odeon in London. The original promo album included a promo-only booklet, and another promo of censored tracks from this album was later released in the U.S. as *The First Clean Tubes Album*. *What Do You Want From Live* was produced by Farr and Pete Henderson and mixed at Kendun Recorders in Burbank, Calif. The packaging was again put together by Cotten and Prince and contained a centerfold collage of live shots as only The Tubes could look. Two tracks from the album were released as singles in England, "Show Me A Reason" and a cover of The Beatles' "I Saw Her Standing There" — complete with a Waybill "chainsaw solo."

In 1979 The Tubes released their fifth album, *Remote Control*, a concept album about the negative influence TV has on America, which was produced and engineered by Rundgren. The album was recorded at Music Annex

Studios in Menlo Park, Calif., and mixed at Bearsville Sound Studios in New York.

"I loved working with Todd," Cotten said in a radio interview in 1983, "though some people felt *Remote Control* sounded a little too much like a Rundgren album. I came up with a lot of the keyboard stuff on the record — but that's all it was, stuff, until Todd helped us mold them into songs. He brought out in me a sense of song structure and how to tell a story on a record, which was something we were always afraid of. We had always done separate songs as their own five-minute parodies. So he got us to tell a story-line about this kid who grew up with television, and it hit quite close to home, I'd say. We were very inspired by it all."

"It was also our first brush with sincerity," Cotten continued, "It was really the first time we ever did a serious ballad. So Todd brought out a lot of new things in us."

*Remote Control* would be their last release for A&M Records, and the initial product came with a 5-inch by 5-inch card insert featuring album credits. A&M released three singles from the album — "Love's A Mystery," "Prime Time" and "TV Is King." The band thought that this would be the album that would put them over the top.

"The Tubes were the first band to consider the effect and the future of video in rock music," Waybill said in a Los Angeles radio *Retro Rock* interview in the mid-80s.

"We did it as a promotional tool at first. Bands in Europe had started making short promo films. But we weren't concentrating on that, we were using it in our live shows," Cotten said in that same interview. "We used it mostly for stage show effect. TV monitors on stage, video projections, cameras on ourselves and on the audience. Also playing with time displacement like Waybill interacting with televised images of himself or other performers, jumping in and out of screens — it was very avant-garde stuff at the time, very trendy."

"We thought the whole video revolution thing would be big around 1976 and be over by 1978 and we thought, 'Oh, we'll be right in on it.' So we got signed to A&M in 1975 on the strength of a videotape we put together from a live show, and they went, 'Ya right, we're with you!' Then we thought in 1976 or '77 video discs will come out and it will be a big deal...."

"Then right around 1979 we thought, 'Ya, it's right around the corner.' Then in 1980 we're gonna do it 'cause its coming — this

big *Remote Control* concept album, it's all about TV and it's gonna fit right into the video concept and it's gonna be great! We also had Todd Rundgren by our side... *Remote Control* was an awesome piece of work that for some reason was just not accepted as well as it should have been."

The Tubes went back to the U.K. to promote *Remote Control* with a whole new approach to the live show. The fans basically got a "split show" with the first half consisting of songs from the new album — theatrically linked by a theme of the bad influence TV has on America. The second half of the show contained some old favorites from the band's first four albums. Overall it was quite a departure from the usual Tubes. Waybill changed costumes fewer times. Styles stayed on the sidelines more, and the attention of the audience was deliberately focused on a more central event.

"We are in a transitional period, wanting to concentrate more on the music, not the visuals as much. We're really sick of our music being put second to the theatrics," Waybill told the U.K.'s *Dark Star* magazine in 1979. "We didn't want to stick the girls in the numbers just for the sake of doing it. No one would listen to the lyrics — they'd just be waiting for me to take her clothes off. So we just eliminated the possibility."

Highlights of the U.K. tour included "headlining" the 1979 Knebworth Festival on a bill including Frank Zappa and Peter Dinklage before a crowd of 100,000. The Tubes also cranked out a then-record seven-show, sold-out stint at London's Hammer-smith Odeon. In Germany they appeared on the music TV show *Musikladen*. Back in the U.S. the band appeared in the *Xanadu* movie, which featured Olivia Newton-John and Electric Light Orchestra, as well as on the Canadian comedy show *SCTV* and a Newton-John and Cher variety show.

Then in 1980 The Tubes emerged with new material titled *Suffer For Sound*, (or *The Black Album*) which were to be the final recordings for A&M. However, A&M refused the material then abruptly dropped the band with still an album due. In 1981, A&M Records released *T.R.A.S.H.* (*Tubes Rarities And Smash Hits*) as its final Tubes album. The only track from the *Suffer For Sound* sessions to appear on the album is "Drivin' All Night."

Needing a fresh start and a new label, Farr helped secure a new deal with Capitol Records and team the band up with producer David Foster. Later in 1981 the band released *The Completion Backwards Principle*, produced by Foster and engineered by Don Smith, Ernie Sheesley, and Paul Lani. The album was recorded at various California studios including Goodnight L.A. in Panorama City, Monterey Studios in Glendale and Davlen Studios and Studio 55 in Hollywood.

The album's title was inspired by an American sales training manual. The original album came with a picture inner sleeve, and once again, Cotten and Prince contributed art and design work. Although the inner sleeve photos of the band dressed in business suits suggests a concept album, the tracks are only vaguely linked.

The music on *Completion* is a departure from the odd time changes of '70s-style Tubes, with a cleaner sound and more concise, pop-oriented songs. Capitol Records released three singles from the album — "Sushi Girl," "Talk To Ya Later" and "Don't Want To Wait Anymore." Capitol also released a Tubes video collection (directed by Russell Mulcahy) of the band playing *Completion* songs, with a couple of Tubes classics thrown in for good measure.

"The project was done in England at a cost of \$50,000, a groundbreaking expense for video at the time and was the forerunner of all rock videos to follow," stated Tubes fan club president Wood. In comparison to the videos released to that point, the *Completion* video package was innovative. The band would also make appearances on *The Tom Snyder Show* in New York, a concert for MTV from Kabuki Hall in San Francisco that aired in 1982 and a "Sports Fans" halftime performance at an NFL Conference Championship game between the San Francisco 49ers and Dallas Cowboys in January of that year.

The live show for the tour, which included trips to the U.K. and Germany, resembled the old days again. Waybill moved from character to character with newfound flash and vigor, ripping through new Tubes vignettes including a mock politician, business executive, jungle king and psychopathic killer. Overall *Completion* went gold, with "Talk To Ya Later" reaching #1 in Holland and Germany. The band were also nominated for a "best video" Grammy but lost out to, of all



people, Newton-John. After completing the tour, which included the band's first visit to Japan where they had a big following and fan club (perfect timing for "Sushi Girl"), The Tubes went back to writing and into the studio to record their second Capitol release.

The Tubes recorded at Capitol Studios, The Complex and Record One in Los Angeles, The Automatt and The Tubes' own Cavum Soni (Latin for "sound hole") in San Francisco and released *Outside Inside* in May 1983. The album was again produced by Foster and engineered by Humberto Gatica. Original vinyl copies feature the titles in embossed text on the cover and have a die-cut sleeve revealing an "eye" design on the label through the sleeve. This ultimately proved too costly to produce and subsequent copies were released with only red and blue text on the sleeve. Although *Outside Inside* would produce The Tubes' only Top 10 hit in the U.S. with "She's A Beauty," Capitol Records became concerned when the album sales didn't reach the level that *Completion Backwards Principle* had, although the album once again reached gold status. The song "Tip Of My Tongue" was released as a single and reached #52 on the charts, and "The Monkey Time" reached #68.

The band hit the road to perform for die-hard fans throughout the U.S. and Europe. Routines for songs such as "Wild Women Of Wongo," "Theme Park" and "She's A Beauty" created new twists to the live shows. Waybill's duet with dancer Gray (now Rundgren's wife) for "The Monkey Time" was yet another fun number. Gray had come to the band through Ortega.

"I was auditioning for a Broadway musical [*Marilyn: An American Fable*] that Kenny Ortega was to direct," she said. "Kenny was going to cast me as the understudy but had found out I was singing in rock bands on Long Island after hours. He asked me if I'd rather become a backup singer for this San

Francisco band he choreographed called The Tubes.

"During the tour we used a bus once owned by Burt Reynolds that still had his name all over it. Everywhere we went all these Burt fans were looking for him, so in the mornings upon hotel checkout we'd put a towel over Waybill's head and race him to the bus. These people would be waiting and go nuts thinking this was Burt trying to hide from his fans. They'd all scream and get their video cameras as close to 'Burt' as possible!

"I am so lucky to have been a part of such a creative, ingenious and fun family. The Tubes gave me the opportunity to see the world, dance... sing... be adored by fans and to be paid to do what I would have done for free. Through working with The Tubes I also met the love of my life and the father of my children... sounds like my answer to 'What Do You Want From Life?'"

The Tubes' video for "She's A Beauty" (directed by Ortega) gave the band more exposure on MTV and also won a Bammy Award for Song Of The Year. Yet it just didn't seem to be enough for Capitol Records. However, the band continued writing material for the next album.

Waybill was now growing tired of the music industry in general. With the future of The Tubes now somewhat uncertain, coupled with 15 years of recording and touring as their show leader and stuntman, Waybill decided to pursue a solo project and acting career. He released *Read My Lips* in 1984, with contributions from producer Foster, Jeff and Steve Porcaro, and guitarist Steve Lukather of Toto fame, (Lukather cowrote "She's A Beauty" and "Talk To Ya Later" with Waybill), but it didn't do well without much promotion. Waybill also tried acting but grew disillusioned when his "eccentric rocker" image always seemed to get in the way.

"It seemed that there was no way to escape my past, no matter what I did," Waybill told an *Associated Press* writer in Philadelphia in January 1997. "I didn't fit the expectations of the rock star guy walking in the office I guess. In the beginning, I put The Tubes on my résumé. In the end I took it off, but it didn't matter. I thought, 'God, how could acting be worse than the music business?' But it was."

Waybill also did some writing for other artists including Canadian friend Richard Marx (they were best man at each other's weddings) and Lukather and also did voice-over projects.

Then in 1985 The Tubes released their last album for Capitol, *Love Bomb*, which would also mark the last effort to date featuring the entire original lineup. The album was produced by old friend Rundgren, who would record the album's "Feel It" for his *Nearly Human* solo release in 1989. "Piece By Piece" was released as a single, but when neither it nor *Love Bomb* managed to chart, Capitol released the band.

Spooner made a solo album for Ralph Records, label of the band The Residents. He was introduced to Tom Timony, head of the company, by Mike Evans who cowrote "White Punks On Dope" and "What Do You Want From Life." This solo effort (on vinyl only) titled *First Chud* featured fellow Tubes alumni Prince, Cotten, Welnick, Anderson, and Lewis. The album also includes a remake of the song "Satellite" from The Tubes' catalog.

The band continued to trudge on in one form or another during the late 1980s, with a few lineup changes along the way. In 1991 *The Best Of The Tubes 1981-1987* was released in Canada (where the band always did well) featuring studio tracks from their three Capitol Records releases including "Sushi Girl," "Let's Make Some Noise" and "Attack Of The Fifty Foot Woman." Then in 1992, Capitol released a *Best Of* compilation featuring popular tracks from the Capitol Tubes catalog as well as a few B-sides mixed in. Also included were some compelling liner notes penned by Waybill. The compilation did well in Europe, and along with the itch to perform live again, this spurred Waybill to rejoin the band for a short European tour. He teamed up with original members Steen, Prince, and Anderson, as well as newcomer and one-time band keyboard technician Gary Cambra. Unfortunately, not returning for the tour were original members Spooner, Cotten, and Welnick.

Waybill also released a second solo effort in 1996, *Don't Be Afraid Of These Hands*, on the indie label Intercord Records. The release was produced by Waybill, Marx, and Bruce



(The Tubes from page 20)

Gaitsch and again has Lukather contributing guitar work.

After completing the newly formed Tubes tour, the band decided to go in the studio to record a new album. The Tubes released *Genius Of America* on the small Popular Records in 1996, a mostly serious effort. The band flirts with many styles on the record including straightforward rock and funk and even throws in a ballad. Unfortunately the release didn't get much publicity or air time.

"Nobody really even knew the record was out there," Waybill told this author after a show at the Stone Coast Brew Pub in Portland, Maine. "We signed with a small label which in some ways is good and in some ways bad. It allows you to keep a low budget, but it also limits your accessibility."

Spooner also kept busy in 1996 with the release of his second solo album, *Mall To Mars*, on RDK Records.

The release includes space exploration material, two tracks written with his wife Anna, one with Prince and Steen taken from the old Beans days, a cover of Brian Hopkins' "They Kicked Me Out Of The Band," which was suggested to Spooner by friend Huey Lewis, and even the *Star Trek* theme for a closer. One track was written by folk guitarist Richard Thompson, and Prince plays drums. These days Spooner fronts a new acoustic set with old friend Alex Guinness (from an old San Francisco band, Elvis Duck) called The Folk-Ups and plays the club circuit in and around California. (Learn more by visiting Spooner's Web sites at <http://home.earthlink.net/~bbgirl/> and [www.folk-ups.com](http://www.folk-ups.com).)

The Tubes released new material in 1999 on *Black Lagoon*, featuring the lineup of Waybill, Prince, Steen, Anderson, Cambra, Dave Medd, and Trey Sabatelli. The band then played Denmark's Roskilde Festival as well as several dates in and around London. They have also been regularly touring throughout California and the Midwest, as well as hitting the Hemp Festival in Eugene, Ore., and a Classic Rock Festival Weekend and Rockfest '99 held in Canada.

Recently, there have also been three major releases for longtime Tubes fans including two live shows, and a disc of rare original demo material. The demo sessions *Dawn Of The Tubes* was just released by Phoenix Media Group and features the band's earliest professional recording sessions (studio and live) with Barnard in 1973-74. The package features some great old photos and artwork, as well as liner notes penned by Barnard and Spooner.

One of the live releases, *Infomercial: How To Become Tubular*, is a 14-track show recorded at the London Hammersmith Odeon in 1981 and was originally broadcast over England's BBC Radio One. The band's most recent release is *TWT (Tubes World Tour) 2001*, which features two new studio tracks and eight live cuts recorded at the Galaxy Theatre in Orange County, Calif. Waybill somehow also found the time to do a little theater work in a California run of the cult classic *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

Coming up, the band plans to release a remixed version of *Genius Of America* featuring two additional tracks, "I Know You" and "Hoods From Outer Space."

As for the whereabouts of other past and present Tubes family members, synthesizer whiz Cotten continues to produce his unique brand of commercial art and design work from Cotten Studios in New York City.

Keyboard player extraordinaire Welnick, after a long stint as a touring member of The Grateful Dead, formed his own band called Missing Man Formation. (Visit Welnick's Web site at [www.vincewelnick.com](http://www.vincewelnick.com) for more information.)

As for the original Tubes comanagers, Moriarty still resides in the San Francisco area and works as a media generalist, specializing in CD-ROM content development, while Peterson lives and works in Seattle as a graphic designer and animator for Boeing.

Prince does drumming session work as well as record and tour with The Tubes, Phil Lesh And Friends, and the new Jefferson Starship. Prince also stays busy with his long-standing art collaborations with Cotten, running his studio from San Francisco. Steen still "moonlights" as The Tubes' original guitarist while continuing his television direction work in Phoenix. Anderson remains the bass force behind the touring Tubes and also restores and customizes classic cars. Last, but certainly not least, Waybill is the everlasting frontman, still tying everything together with his wit and ability to do whatever it takes to make it all look and sound "Tubes."

"I think it's a travesty that when the compendiums of the great bands of the '70s were done that The Tubes were never given their proper due," Moriarty lamented about the band's void in The Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame in Cleveland, though the Hall now has a pair of Quay Lewd's boots.

"Anyone who doubts their musical ability need only look at the record of accomplishments the members of this band have put together in music, art and video. The Tubes were not just a 'mock rock' band or an ironic commentary on 'glam rock' or some kind of footnote to the '70s. They were San Francisco originals that no one has seen the likes of here since their debut on the scene over 25 years ago!"

How true. The Tubes were cranking up "White Punks On Dope" and "I Was A Punk Before You Were A Punk" years before anyone knew who the Sex Pistols were. Quay Lewd was romping the stage a decade before *Spinal Tap* hit the scene. The Tubes knew that video projection and TV visuals and monitors could be an artistic and marketing influence years before any MTV existed.

But the band has always been underappreciated and ahead of their time. But ah, those live shows. Some shows might have been longer than The Tubes, and some might have been louder, but no show was more surprising. No Tubes show was ever the same and in their hey day, no one wanted to follow them on stage because there was just nowhere else to go after The Tubes!

They mixed comedy with tragedy, love with hate, trash with art and bullshit with ballet. But the tongue-in-cheek humor, parodies, dancers and antics were never at the expense of the music. Spooner said it best. "The Tubes were more than just a rock 'n' roll band. We were visionaries — performance artists in the vein of the traditional German cabaret in that each song was a short skit, but with a bitchin' rock music score!"

## The Tubes Selected U.S. Discography

by Tim Neely

Label	Title	Year	NBM #
A&M 1733	White Punks On Dope (Part 1)(Part 2)	1975	810
A&M 1733	White Punks On Dope/What Do You Want From Life	1975	5
A&M 1733	White Punks On Dope (picture sleeve)	1975	8
A&M 1755	What Do You Want From Life/Space Baby	1975	5
A&M 1826	Don't Touch Me There/Proud To Be An American	1976	5
A&M 1956	This Town/I'm Just A Man	1977	5
A&M 2037	Show Me A Reason/I Saw Her Standing There	1978	5
A&M 2120	Prime Time/No Way Out	1979	5
A&M 2149	Love's A Mystery (I Don't Understand)/Teleside	1979	5
A&M 8591	White Punks On Dope/What Do You Want From Life ("A&M Memories" reissue) 1987	1987	3
Capitol 5007	Don't Want To Wait Anymore/Think About Me	1981	3
Capitol 5007	Don't Want To Wait Anymore/Think About Me (picture sleeve)	1981	3
Capitol 5016	Talk To Ya Later/Power Tools	1981	4
Capitol SPRO-9740	Sports Fans (same on both sides) (promo)	1982	5
Capitol 5091	Gonna Get It Next Time/Sports Fans	1982	4
Tubes 12682XS	Tubular Holiday (fun club flexidisc)	1982	50
Capitol B-5217	She's A Beauty/When You're Ready To Come (purple label)	1983	4
Capitol B-5217	She's A Beauty/When You're Ready To Come (black label)	1983	3
Capitol B-5217	She's A Beauty/When You're Ready To Come (picture sleeve)	1983	4
Capitol B-5234	The Monkey Time/Sports Fans	1983	3
Capitol B-5254	The Monkey Time/Sports Fans (picture sleeve)	1983	3
Capitol B-5258	Tip Of My Tongue/Keyboard Gals	1983	3
Tubes 833502XS	Happy Holidays (fun club flexidisc)	1983	50
Capitol B-5443	Piece By Piece/Night People	1985	3
Capitol B-5443	Piece By Piece/Night People (picture sleeve)	1985	4

### 12-Inch Singles (all promos)

A&M 17068	Prime Time/No Way Out	1979	8
Capitol SPRO 9728	Gonna Get It Next Time (same on both sides)	1982	6
Capitol SPRO 9727	She's A Beauty (LP Version) (same on both sides)	1983	12
Capitol SPRO 9332	Piece By Piece (same on both sides)	1985	6

### Albums

A&M SP-4535	The Tubes	1975	15
A&M SP-4580	Young and Rich	1976	15
A&M SP-4632	Now	1977	15
A&M SP-6003	What Do You Want From Life! (two LPs)	1978	15
A&M SP-17012	Tubes Live/Edited For Trouble-Free Airplay (promo only)	1978	25
A&M SP-4751	Remote Control	1979	15
A&M SP-4070	T.R.A.S.H. (Tubes Rarities And Smash Hits)	1981	12
Capitol 900-12151	The Completion Backward Principle	1981	12
Capitol ST-12260	Outside/Inside	1983	10
Capitol ST-12381	Love Bomb	1985	10

### Compact Discs

Capitol CCM-46454	The Completion Backward Principle	1987	10
Capitol C2-46453	Outside/Inside	1988	15
A&M CD 3161	The Tubes	1988	8
A&M CD 3222	Young and Rich	1988	12
A&M CD 3242	Remote Control	1988	8
A&M CD 3244	T.R.A.S.H. (Tubes Rarities And Smash Hits)	1988	8
Cena Spec. Mkts. CDL-57411	The Best Of The Tubes 1981-1987	1991	8
Capitol C2-98359	The Best Of The Tubes	1992	8
Popular/Critique 12007	Genius Of America	1996	10
Phoenix 4001	Dawn Of The Tubes: Demo Days And Radio Waves	2000	8
A&M 490 746-2	The Best Of The Tubes: The Millennium Collection	2000	8
C&M International 86300	T.W.T. (Tubes World Tour) 2001	2000	8

## Win autographed Tubes CDs!

Want to win the Phoenix Gems' *Dawn Of The Tubes* CD autographed by the band? Just mail us the coupon below or a photocopy (limit one entry per household please) postmarked by Jan. 31, 2001, for your chance! Cool prizes are just part of the reason you need to keep your *Goldmine* subscription going — or start your subscription. Keep on the lookout for more easy-to-enter contests in *Goldmine*.

### Goldmine's Tubes drawing

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

(Domestic U.S. addresses only; one entry per household; photocopies OK.)

Mail this form by Jan. 31, 2001, to Goldmine Tubes drawing, 700 E. State Street, Iola WI 54990.