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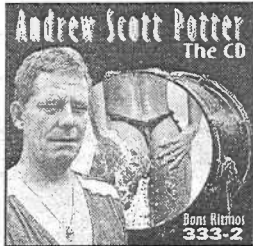
LAYING:

RDUDE



"Village Rock"
Productions
rock
Ext. 1300
Mercury Lounge

ANDREW SCOTT POTTER



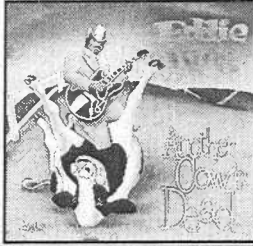
"The CD"
Bon Ritmos
new beat
Ext. 1359
w/CD Rom "Brazilian Beach Fantasy"

THE BLUE KINGS



"Live in Uptown"
J Records
swing
Ext. 1366

EDDIE KING W/ THE
BLUES BROS. HORNS



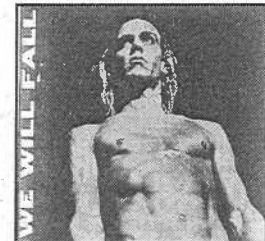
"Another Cow's Dead"
Roesch Records
blues
Ext. 1367

DEEP & PROFOUND



"Sweet Messenger"
Weekend Records
alternative
Ext. 1370
Baggot Inn (CMJ)

VARIOUS ARTISTS INCL.
JOAN JETT & THE BLACKHEARTS



"We Will Fall: The Iggy Pop Tribute"
Royalty Records
rock & roll
Ext. 1371
in stores 9/16

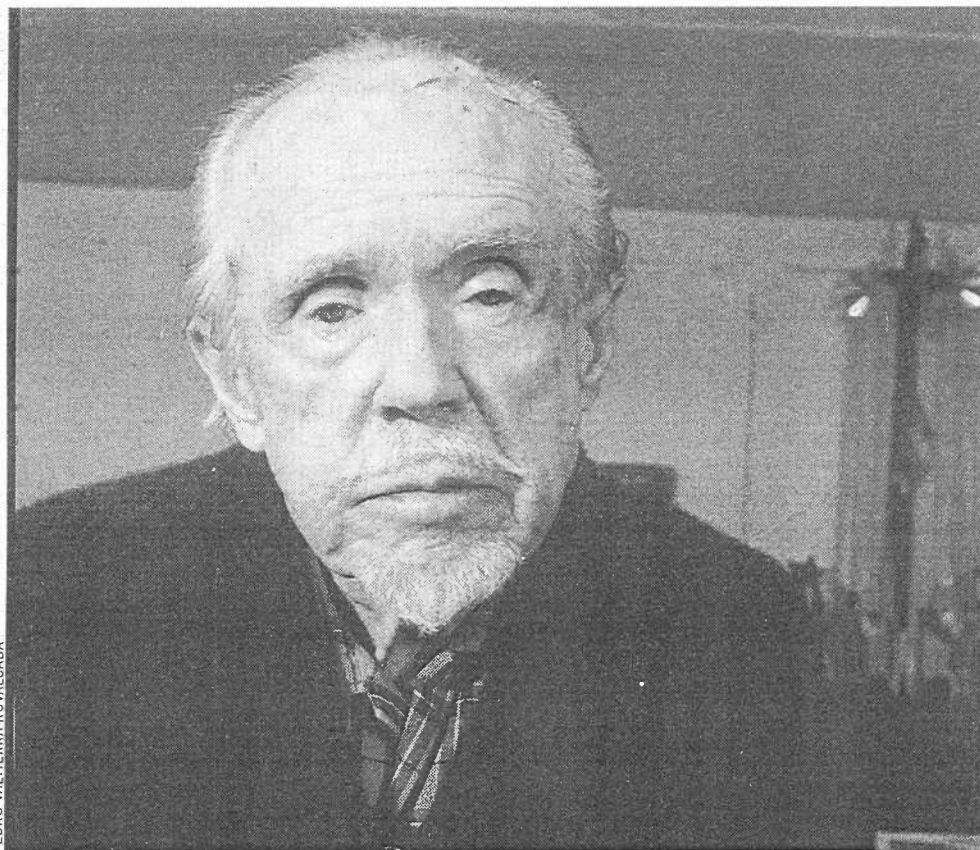
SELECTIONS:

LABEL	STYLE	EXT.
Motoons	rockabilly/ country	1346
Audiograph	hi-hop	1351
Blackbird	R&R	1355
VelVel	alternative	1356
Ripe & Ready	rock	1364

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Village Voice Service Bureau



PEDRO VALTIERRA RUVALCABA

Piano Rolls and Fresh Mangoes

Conlon Nancarrow, 1912-1997

BY KYLE GANN

Conlon Nancarrow's wife Yoko Segiura used to tell me that, in the first years of their marriage, she would ask him what to do with all his player-piano rolls after he died. He'd shrug and say, "Burn 'em." Kind of a black sense of humor, right? And yet, in the nine years I knew Nancarrow, I never found any evidence that he was kidding. He seemed immune to the charms of public recognition. He wrote music because he wanted to hear what it would sound like to have two tempos running at once, one of which was the square root of two times the other. Once he had heard it, that was that. Oh, he'd keep the player-piano roll around because he wanted to hear it again, down there in his comfortably cluttered, garage-like, Mexico City studio. But he didn't seem to crave applause for that square root of two, and he endured the travels, film crews, and interviews his growing celebrity required with patience rather than enthusiasm. If his public persona was a pose, it never cracked.

Nancarrow's death at 7:10 p.m., August 10, apparently from heart failure, caused no tremors in the music world. The difficult part was getting a sense that this underground legend really existed in the first place. Except for some brief exposure in the '60s when Merce Cunningham choreographed several of his Player Piano Studies, he waited until age 65 for real interest to be shown in his work. He didn't make public appearances to promote his music until 1981, and he only did so then—as his former manager Eva Soltes tells me—as a way of proving to his teenage son that he hadn't wasted his life. Even down in the musical backwater of Mexico City, where he lived for 57 years, he had few connections to the local, Eurocentric music scene. Until the last few years, if you wanted to know something about Nancarrow, you had to seek him out.

I did so on three trips to Mexico City (resulting in a book, *The Music of Conlon Nancarrow*, from Cambridge University Press). On the first visit, in 1988, I found him as people had told me I would: suspicious, grudgingly hospitable, taciturn, opinionated about politics, impatient with discussing musical details. The interviews I taped with him on that trip contain entire quarter-hours of silence. He'd look at a manuscript I'd asked him about and finally sigh "I don't know," but mention Reagan and he'd rail against the Democrats for not putting up a real alternative. (Driving through his home town Texarkana, I once called up his younger brother Charles, who insisted on taking me out to dinner, and told me, "Conlon's to the left of Che Guevara, and I'm to the right of Attila the Hun.") Nancarrow was no musical philosopher; I went with him to a concert and he immediately dismissed any piece that wasn't rhythmically complex.

By the time I returned a year later he had come to trust me, and became warmly hospitable. If he had a quiet lifestyle, it could be a delicious one. He had an amazing cook who prepared the best Mexican food I've ever had, and succulent, fresh mangoes and papayas (completely different fruits from what you can get under those names in America) were passed out like dime-store candies. Nancarrow didn't care for publicity, but he liked the good life.

After his first stroke, his mental abilities were never quite the same. At first he was strictly protective of the studio where his player pianos stood, and in which he had spent 40 years punching on piano rolls the most rhythmically complex body of music ever written. Later he relinquished control and let me explore there by myself. Along with waist-high piles of manuscript scores and correspondence, the place contained complete editions of *Source* magazine, *Musical Quarterly*, *Perspectives of New Music*, and other journals that showed how avidly he had kept up with the contemporary music scene that he viewed for decades from a wary distance. The walls were still lined with tempo charts made