

Oklahoma's No. 1 Entertainment Magazine™



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IP INTERVIEWS

Widespread Panic
Arlo Guthrie

FEATURING

Politics, Politics, Politics...
Environmental Racism
Jacob Fred On The Road
Deftones
CD Reviews
And Ohhhh...So Much More!

IP Interviews

Meg Lee Chin



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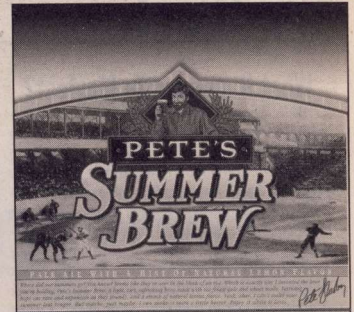
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This Land Is Woody's Land Arlo Guthrie reflects on his father, Oklahoma's greatest musical contribution, just prior to the Woody Guthrie Folk Fest in Okemah. **Page 6**



Freddy's Not Dead! Missing the sounds of OK's favorite neo-jazz ensemble? This expose should help hold you over until Jacob Fred returns. **Page 28**



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bow'er-y (bou'er-I) a. A street of cheap theaters, dance halls, drinking gardens, and low saloons. Characteristic of the bowery; meretricious; flashy; tawdrily improper."

Webster's Dictionary, 1913

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ElectroNlc MuSe: MeG Lee ChiN

by Wilhelm Murg

Meg Lee Chin possesses one of the most distinctive sounds in dance music today. She has achieved what many have tried, but few have actually pulled off; effortlessly combining Pop and Industrial music into intelligent, heavy, avant-garde, hook riddled tunes that you could skate into the apocalypse to. Her debut solo album *PIECE AND LOVE* (Invisible Records) is a masterpiece. Heavy dance tracks throb as siren vocals explode like H-bombs dropped on the liquid dance floor. Low tuned waves of ministerial-strength guitars lay groundwork while Meg sings her celebrations of the joys and disappointments of our technological society.

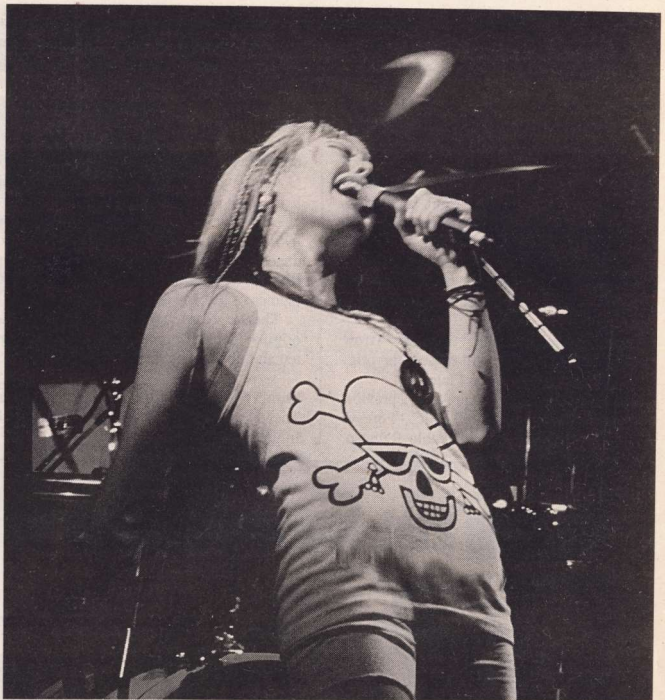
She first came to attention as a singer for Martin Atkins' post-punk supergroup Pigface, which includes a constantly changing line up from such major bands as Public Image Limited, Killing Joke, and Psychic TV. She scheduled a tour with Atkins' other project, *Damage Manual*, for this summer. Unfortunately that tour had to be cancelled due to a problem with the American Immigration Department. "The office was closed for eight days and they got behind in processing the applications," Meg said. "It's just never happened before. Apparently The Eurythmics had to cancel some dates. It's kind of like an earthquake, like a shock wave that goes all the way through. Everybody was effected."

However, Meg was able to join the My Life

With The Thrill Kill Kult tour. She will be opening for them on the 18th at The Diamond Ballroom in Oklahoma City, and the 19th at the Cain's in Tulsa.

The daughter of an American Air Force electronic engineer and his Taiwanese wife, Meg has always had to walk a balance in her life. "Being half oriental and half-Irish, I think Balance is sort of as theme in my life. When people ask about my nationality I usually say I'm American, but I'm actually not quite sure. On one hand I think I'm a member of the human race, I'm a member of everybody. But sometimes I really don't feel like I'm a member at all. I'm not sure where my loyalties lie and I'm not sure if they lie anywhere. I think maybe that's my roll in life, this person hanging out on the outskirts."

Meg had a cultured childhood, but she was as equally inspired by the pop world. She studied ballet, "little girls in tutus stuff," but her mother got tired of taking her to the lessons. "I only had one classical album and it was SWAN LAKE by Tchaikovsky, but it was a two-album set. I listened to that same album a lot. I was just a little kid and I didn't have an allowance or anything; that's the only album that was just hanging around. I listened to some of my mom's music and some of my sister's music; sixties music, and my mom listened to sort of fifties rock music." Once she got her allowance she listened to heavy



After the nerve-racking cancellation of her planned summer tour with Martin Atkins' and Chris Connelly's *The Damage Manual*, the breathtaking Meg Lee Chin teams up with *My Life With The Thrill Kill Kult* for a tour that includes two Oklahoma dates: Tuesday, July 18th at the Diamond Ballroom in OKC, and Wednesday, July 19th at Cain's.

metal music. "Not so much the eighties stuff, I prefer seventies heavy metal, the heavy metal that's more rock, I like Zeppelin and stuff like that."

Meg plays most of the instruments, programs, engineers, and co-produces her recordings. Being the daughter of an electronics engineer, she hung around her father's workshop. But her first experience that got her heavily into electronics happened when she was a teenager. "There was this one lady in the neighborhood who completely went off the rail. She divorced her husband. She had had a really great life. She divorced him and started hanging out with this hippie guy and she started smoking pot, and this and that. She used to let us baby-sit for her and she always had pot lying around her house. And I got stoned one day and listened to her stereo and I had never seen a big stereo before, because in the suburbs everything was just like little plastic and stuff like that. And I remember she had a Pioneer tuner and Advent speakers. I just, like, turned it on, and just could not believe it. It sounded soooo good; I was hooked."

Meg had some formal musical training in music in college. "I did do a course in school called 'Comprehensive musicianship.' That was terrible because all the classical musicians were really really stuck-up. I accidentally sign up for this course and it was too advanced. You were supposed to be able to read music. But the instructor told me to stick with the course and then he proceeded to use me as a kind of a scapegoat for everyone to laugh at all during the class because I didn't understand. At the end of the year of this humiliation we were all suppose to compose something. I got my revenge in the end. It was quit clear at the end of the year that all these snobs who were belittling me, humiliating me, for a year, that I was the only one who could write! They were writing terrible, formulaic stuff; they just did not have a clue. The whole class was really really embarrassed. I had failed in all the rules, but the piece I wrote, it was a classical piece and it actually sounded good."

One of her first bands was called Crunch, and all girl group whose manager wanted them to never perform live. "I'm fairly cooperative, I'm fairly willing to go along with other people's visions, but I don't think it was very practical

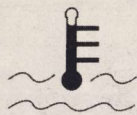
because the band broke up eventually because everybody just got very sick of being in the studio and not playing out live." Through a fluke, Danielle Dax was suppose to perform in Russia, but canceled. Crush was asked to fill in and became one of the first bands to play behind the Iron Curtain after it fell. "Playing in Russia made everything that I had put up with in the music business worthwhile, and everything after that as well."

It was also by filling in that Meg began working with the industrial producer Martin Atkins. "Right toward the end, before Crunch broke up we had these two women who were jumping up and down about the band. They wanted to manage us. The band broke up. I stayed in touch with them and they knew Martin. When Ruby from Tubafish, couldn't do the Pigface tour, Martin was looking for somebody to replace her. And these two women just kept saying 'Meg, Meg, Meg' to the point where Martin had to phone me up in London. "He said to me 'Can you send me a demo and a picture or something?' I said sure, and we got talking on the phone for about twenty minutes. I got halfway through in the conversation and he just stopped me and said, 'Look, I'm getting a really good vibe here. Forget the demo, I'll send you a ticket.' He sent me a ticket without even seeing me, without even hearing me, which was pretty brave of him."

Since that time she has been working on her album when she wasn't touring with Pigface. "For the past four or five years I haven't really had any kind of a life outside of music. I'm just pretty much on it all the time. I've just, for some reason, just got very very obsessed with it. I think it's the nature of computers. I don't know if it's a good thing. It's kind of bad in a way because I've noticed that when I work on my computers my social skills get really bad, I'm rude to people, I frown and stuff. I don't really realize that I'm doing it. I think I should probably change that."

The fact that Meg is extremely attractive has been both a help and a hindrance in getting her career started. "In my whole career everyone's just kind of wanted me to be the cute girl and really not been at all interested in whether I wanted to do that. I am quite petit. I'm small, people

continued on page 27



High Engine Temperature



High Risk of Death

A lot of people like to play a little game with their "high temperature" light. You know, trying to get home before the engine overheats. Even more people like to play a game with the glowing seat belt guy. You lose this game, you could die.

A Message From The Oklahoma Highway Safety Office



what's holding you back?

OKLAHOMA

Meg Lee Chin
continued from page 16

can readily see 'Oh, well we can market this.'" Butch Vig wanted her to front Garbage, before he found Shirley Manson, but insisted in so much control of her voice that she turned him down. "I am quite petit. I'm small. People can readily see 'Oh, well we can market this.'"

"As long as the more technical people take me seriously, it's okay by me if the public sees me as a singer, rather than an engineer. I think most people are more interested in girls than guys, as far as to look at. I just know that like in studios it's a handicap, but I think, in as far as being a girl singer, I think I'd probably get more attention actually."

However, she did go into electronic music out of necessity. "I was getting really, really sick of racking up all this experience, being in studios and stuff, and nobody taking me serious AT ALL. It was getting really really frustrating. It just got to the point where I said 'The only way I'm ever gonna show people that I'm capable is if I just do the whole thing myself.'"

"It's not anything that I would blame anyone for, people do judge a book by its cover. It's kind of worked very well for me. I don't think I would do it if I didn't like the challenge. I do kind of go by the idea that that which doesn't kill you makes you stronger. I don't know, maybe I'm a bit of a sicko. I'm not a nihilist, but I do like that one idea. It's the one idea that does tend to help me through a very very male dominated music business. A very very very male dominated music business."

"Statistically, I think most people get jobs or get ahead by a nose. You very rarely meet people who win by a long shot. If you are handicapped a little bit, those little bits add up, cumulatively, over a long period of time to end up being a very very big setback in your life. But the good thing is that it makes you work harder. I had to build my own computer and do it all myself in the end because I struggled and struggled for years working with people. It would take people years before they realized, 'Hey, Meg knows what she's talking about.' But inevitably, I'd come across somebody new who didn't know me and I would have to get right back down to the bottom of the totem pole again and take another body of years to gain their respect. And it was like always starting, starting, starting back at the bottom of the totem pole. Even though I'd been doing this for years already anytime I walk into a new studio with new people they automatically treat me like, well, like a bimbo, you know."

"I refuse to take the stance that some people in my situation might take, to like act overly serious all of the time, because, by nature, I'm quite whimsical. I don't take things too seriously and I'm not going to walk around with an air of authority all of the time just to be taken seriously."

I asked her about her partnership with Martin Atkins who produced her album. "Me and Martin started this album after I had known him for, like, five or six years. Pretty much everybody that I work with tend to be people that, like, I've known for a long time because those are the only people who really give me the respect that I need. I know the album wouldn't have turned out as good without Martin, because I was in a real real real kind of a...well, getting really anal. I needed Martin as the real overall person to like over-all say 'Right. Now it's finished.' I needed



another person to help separate me from it

"I want to work with loads of other people because I'm a little bit like a sponge. I like working with people who don't even play music. Like on some of the tracks on the album, the woman who's talking on 'Sweat Thing,' she's not a singer not a poet, or anything. She was my flat mate. I was singing, and my flat-mate came home drunk and she was lonely and she said 'Oh, can I hug out while you work?' And I said 'Yeah, you know, but I'm working, so if I ignore you don't take it personally.' Well she just sat down on the bed and she just started talking and she wouldn't shut up, you know. So her voice just became a part of the song. So finally, I didn't say anything to her, I sat up a microphone. I got a level, tested it, plucked it down in front of her and I handed her the headphones. She said 'What? You don't want me to sing do you?' I said 'No, no, no. Just Talk into the microphone.' She said 'What do you want me to say?' And I said 'Well, whatever you were sitting there yacking about, I wasn't listening to you. Whatever you were saying; just say that.' She just started rattling off for about ten or twenty minutes into the microphone. And then afterwards I just took it and chopped it up and made it into a story and set it into the song. What's really funny is that she's a journalist and

when she heard me editing it she walked in and said 'Meg! You're taking my story out of context.' And I went 'Hummm.'"

"Most of the songs come out of a...it's kind of an urge there, and then it manifest itself. There's a Japanese book call THE THREE RINGS, or something like that, and it says 'Never rely on your tools.' In other words keep coming from a different angle. I just start with anything; I never start them the same way. 'Thing,' started with just that guitar sound that went 'par-par, par-par, par-par.' 'Sunrise' ('Sweat Thing') started off with a drumbeat, which has since changed. 'Ntopia' started off with a lyric. It's just completely different every time. I work like a brainstormer, completely uninhibited every time. I spew out absolutely any rubbish. I could take anybody in this world, you know, musician, non-musician, have them come over and do something, and I could stick it in my computer and do something with it. I'm quite flexible in that respect."

"During the initial stages I don't engage any logic, or any left brain activity whatsoever. I feel out material and when I find something that really inspires me, through the rubbish that I spew out, I start the technical aspect of using logic and the crafting it; the work part. The first part is a lot more fun. I'd love to spend my life doing the first bit."

However, she recently realized that when she works with Pigface it's a different matter. "Pigface is really improve. Pigface is a core group of people. We have a set which we do a bit of work on...actually Pigface comes from the exact opposite of the way I work and that we have a set and this is kind of how it is. But from there we can spring off and change it. We have the songs down roughly, but they have to remain completely open. I never thought about it before, that the Pigface working is completely the opposite of how I work."

I asked her what kind of audience she likes. "I like the Pigface crowds; all out ruckus. I haven't really seen a bad crowd yet in America. The audience deserves far more credit than they get credit for. They really do make it."

This should be one of the best shows of the summer.

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ON THE WEB: contemporarygroup.com



July • Infinity Press

"What we're doing is such a collaborative thing, that any weird energy up in the mix throws off the whole thing. It holds it back, it holds it down and keeps it from expanding," says Mathis.

They've become wrapped up in orgasmic disbelief, hunkering down and making simply amazing sounds and intensely open music. The music has become, in Reed's words "less pre-meditated and more present-meditated."

Look for an October or November release for a new album, possibly working with a label other than Accurate Records. The band is weighing its options between a number of labels, large and small, who have offered to release their next record, and the band feels the one they choose will have offered the most comprehensive and hands-on attitude.

Reed says, "The kind of stuff we've been playing and the songs that have been written over the last few months are going to translate really well to tape...head and shoulders above anything else we've done before on record."

Jacob Fred Jazz Warriors

"Playing improvisational music brings you face to face with every psychological demon that you can imagine. And if you've been playing full sets of improvisational music for audiences, then you've gotten to know all of your psychological demons," Mathis confesses in an almost whispered breath, drawing me closer,



we pause, reflect, and then he reveals that "when your playing improvised music you're naked."

"Whoa!" I say, "There's no place for that kind of stuff here!" And I move a couple of seats down from Mr. Nudity.

"I don't mean naked in front of other people. I mean naked in front of yourself. Most people can't look at themselves naked," he clarifies. I can.

I'm naked right now. Metaphorically speaking...

B. Haas gets psychoactive with me and lets me know that "We are very close (as a band), lots of hugging, lots of telling each other that 'we love you'."

All five people are very spiritually focused, and the rest just falls into place. Says Brian, "we feel the band is a part of a preordained way of spiritual living that we've all created with our mind."

They are on the path of their life's work and it helps keep them in tune on how to relate to themselves, their creator, the audiences, everything.

Sadhana...Reed calls it.

Jacob Fred Is The New Bohemian Of Anti-Jazz

Music is such a fickle affair. One man's trash is another's treasure they say. Certainly the Fred's music is mostly treasure to those who hear it...but there are critics...not just critical of

Fred alone, but of this 'new jazz' stuff...there are those who are scared to death of the new breed of 'jazz' musicians and the melting pot of attitudes and ideas that they bring to the stage...there are those who consider 50's be-bop to be the only true jazz...they are mistaken.

Let us allow Mr. Haas to put it into perspective for us, "What's so innovative about what we're doing is, it's actual real jazz for a change. That's what's new about ours, is that it's actually jazz in the real tradition...basically improvising on current popular music and that's what jazz has always been. Jazz is based on current music."

Mr. Mathis has a few thoughts on this as well, "what the old jazz greats were doing then was related to what was going on at the time, the way our music relates to what's going on now. The other jazz musicians didn't like it, the critics didn't like it...Charlie Parker and John Coltrane were told they were playing anti-jazz...Miles Davis and Colburn were told they were destroying jazz...and all these guys are now the fathers of this music. The example that those men set is an anti-example...all the old greats like Hendrix and Monk, and all the greats from the past...their legacy is, 'don't do it like me'. That's what's so backwards about most musicians, is that they take these geniuses and then try and imitate them. But the real way to imitate a genius, is to be a genius yourself. Not to play like anybody else and not to sound like anybody else or compare your music to anybody else's."

He adds that "I've always thought that the job of a musician is to learn their instruments, study the craft and the history, and then forget everything they know and get out of the way and let the music take care of itself."

The Three Stooges Do Improv

The Jacob Fred Trio (Haas on the Rhodes/bassist Mathis/drummer & percussionist Edwards) has allowed the three to open up tremendously and explore the outer realms of their musical roots. The Trio is the perfect vehicle for the boys to chart new territory in original improvisation and it has allowed for a much more spiritual eruption to emerge from the tools of their trade.

Reed tries to assess the cohesive camaraderie that's developed between the Odyssey's combustible rhythm section that started back in the day when the Odyssey was touring far away venues and grew considerably when they started performing and writing songs as a trio, "Brian and Matt and I have always stuck together on the road...at parks or in the van between sets...just everywhere."

"There's really something that the three of us share," he adds, "we are really on the same page."

Live At Your Momma's House by The Jacob Fred Trio was recorded sporadically at The Bowery in Tulsa and is the trio's debut on

continued on page 32

MY LIFE WITH THE
THE RIBBON
KILLER
KILLER

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