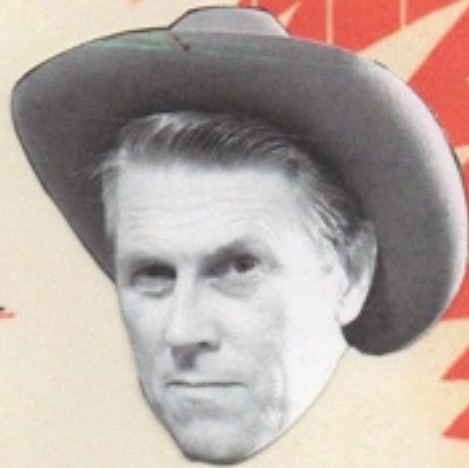


IN PERSON

Slim



**Sandy &
the Hillbilly
Boppers**

WWW.SLIMSANDY.COM

SLIM SANDY JUMPS BACK

BY DAVE O RAMA

Peter Sandmark has been shakin' it up on the Canadian rock 'n roll scene for over thirty years now and he shows no signs of slowing down.

As the drummer for Ray Condo's Hardrock Goners and guitarist and singer for their side project, The Crazy Rhythm Daddies, Sandmark has proven that he can lay it down on the back end or take centre stage behind the driving wheel.

Back in the early nineties when Ray Condo and the majority of the members of the Goners and Crazy Rhythm Daddies had transplanted themselves on the west coast, Peter Sandmark and his brother, lead guitarist Eric Sandmark, remained behind to keep on rocking it up on the Montreal scene.

Almost fifteen years after this exodus Peter Sandmark finally decided to pull up stakes and he moved his family to the Fernwood area of Victoria BC around 2005.

Once established out west Sandmark quickly got back to business, adopting the name Slim Sandy and recording several sides with a variety of "hillbilly" combos comprised of west coast rockabilly musicians from both sides of the border.

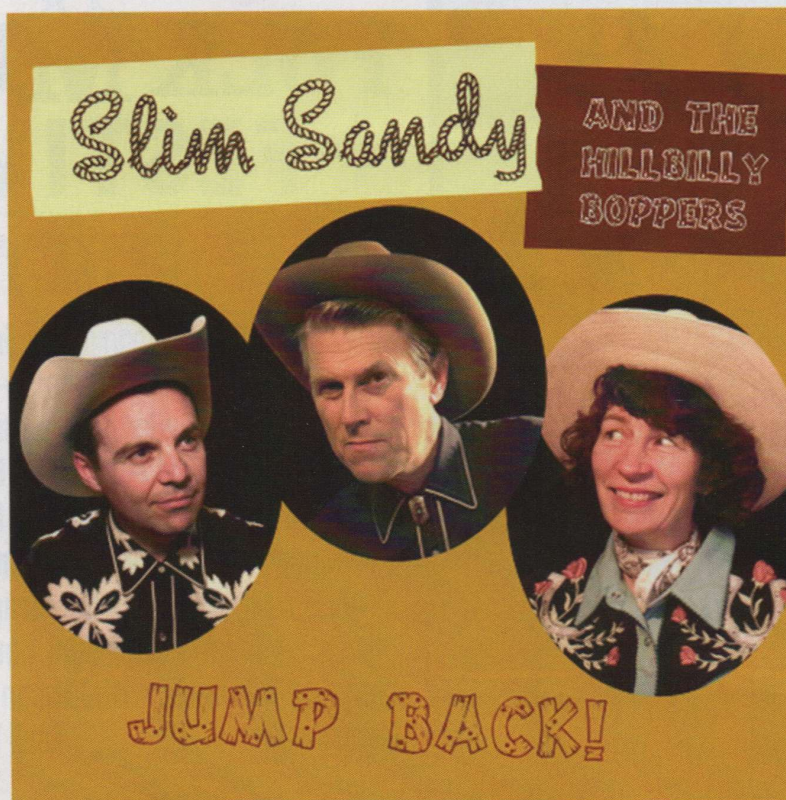
"I remember looking at a lot of Fats Waller records and Waller always had a different name for his bands, and I thought that was kind of funny."

As Slim Sandy he has released eight recordings, both on CD and vinyl, featuring a variety of combos including His Hillbilly Bebop Band, The Hillbilly Boogie Gang and The Hillbilly Boogie Band. Supporting him up on his newest release, *Jump Back*, is his current trio The Hillbilly Boppers, featuring German Ebert on drums and Willa Mae on washtub bass and harmony vocals.

"The truth is that there were different musicians on all those albums so it kind of reflects the reality of that."

A card carrying member of the global rockabilly scene, Mr. Slim Sandy's choice of material reflects a large spectrum of music that tends to be embraced by rockabilly fanatics around the world.

"Rockabilly is a very particular type of music, but what I like about the rockabilly scene as an international phenomenon is that it embraces a lot of different kinds of music."



"If you attend the Viva Las Vegas festival weekend in Nevada you'll encounter traditional rockabilly bands but you will also hear doo wop, various blues styles, honky tonk, western swing bands, boogie woogie, psychobilly and neo rockabilly, or bands like us who play hillbilly style."

"Ray Condo used to call rockabilly the biggest cult in the world. And yes I roll up my jeans, cut my hair and put grease in it, so I guess I'm part of that cult if you will."

True to his observations Slim Sandy kicks out a raw country blues sound on his guitar and harmonica that can incorporate many different musical styles from the Americana songbook.

His new CD, *Jump Back*, was recorded live in the living room of his Victoria, BC home with one microphone incorporating

everything from blues to bluegrass, jugband to boogie woogie and rockabilly to rhythm and blues all distilled down into some good old hillbilly lightning.

Slim Sandy admits that he's out to make recordings "that sound like the live show."

"I believe there is a value in the live sound. I think when you play live it's more magical. So, we're not overdubbing the vocals, we're singing the harmonies right there on the spot. There's a bit of voodoo in there for sure."

"Musicians adapt to each other sonically when it's live and you just can't capture that with overdubs. Something is lost in the overdub process in my mind."

Slim Sandy makes it clear "that what you hear on the record is what you hear live."

Sandmark's Slim Sandy persona was first realized as a solo artist, a kind of one man band where he performed on guitar, vocals, harmonica and a foot drum. Eventually he got himself an old suitcase to carry his snare drum in and soon realized all he really needed was the suitcase.

"Believe it or not I often check the suitcases I come across to see what kind of sound I get. Some of them are no good."

This jugband approach to his hillbilly flavored rock 'n roll also includes partner Willa Mae on the washtub bass and at other times her use of the washboard as a percussion instrument, ironically giving the songs a really dirty sound.

"Rockabilly is funny. I sometimes like to call it hillbilly swing."

SLIM SANDY ON THE CASE

Our current drummer German Ebert loves the old drummers from the swing era and gets that style and it really makes the music jump. They used to call Elvis a hillbilly cat. He was doing less chords but with a swinging beat."

I've always admired Sandmark's ability to dig up old unfamiliar musical gems from American recording history. He's very humble in his insistence that he not a musicologist but when he describes to me all the effort he put into tracking down the lyrics to Clayton McMichen's Pistol Boogie for the Jump Back sessions, I have to give him credit for his unwavering determination.

"I think one of the missions of our band is to recreate the live experience of rock 'n roll. And I think it's better done when there isn't a nostalgia factor. The audience doesn't have to know the songs. It's about the performance. It's about getting people dancing."

Score Slim Sandy's new record Jump Back at slimsandy.com, on iTunes, or pick it up at better record stores in the BC coastal area.

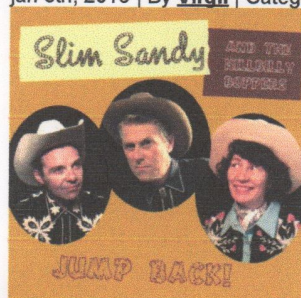
You can also catch Slim Sandy and the Hillbilly Boppers live this summer at the Chemainus Rockabilly Rumble festival, July 11 on Vancouver Island.

THE ROCKABILLY CHRONICLE

- [About the Rockabilly Chronicle](#)
- [News](#)
- [Sound of the Day](#)
- [Stories](#)
- [Interviews](#)
- [Profiles](#)
- [Reviews – reissues](#)
- [Reviews – Contemporary artists](#)
- [Discographies \(by labels\)](#)

Slim Sandy & the Hillbilly Boppers – Jump Back!

Jan 8th, 2015 | By [Virgil](#) | Category: [Albums](#), [Contemporary artists](#), [Reviews](#)



Slim Sandy and the Hillbilly Boppers – Jump Back!

Crow-Matic Records 2014

Jump Back, Love Me, Darlin' Cory, I'm A Hog For You Baby, Jump Rope Boogie, n The Road Again, Pistol Boogie, Can't Find The Doorknob, Cow Cow Boogie, Rock 'n' Roll Ruby, Rollin And Tumblin

Slim Sandy (Peter Sandmark) is a well known figure on the rocking scene. He drummed for Ray Condo, sang and played guitar in the Crazy Rhythm Daddies and released several albums as a one-man band. He now has a new band, the Hillbilly Boppers, with Willa Mae on washtub bass and harmony vocal and German Ebert on drums, Slim Sandy taking the lead vocals and playing harmonica and swingin' guitar.

If you want to have a slight idea of the joyful noise made by this hot and fine trio, imagine a mix between the Delmore brothers, Jimmy and Johnny (thanks to Mae's perfect harmony vocals) played by a jug band (think Gus Cannon/Noah Lewis) with a swingin' and a rockin' edge and some skiffle elements and the fervor of some bluegrass gospels thrown in for good measure. It features eleven tracks lifted from the catalogs of Ella Fitzgerald, Sun records, Jimmie and Johnny, Muddy Waters and everything good in between. Not only the music and the songs are solid but this record also has a communicative « joie de vivre » that is sure to make you move your feet. Strongly recommended.

Fred « Virgil » Turgis

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Tags: [Canada](#), [Crow Matic](#), [Slim Sandy](#)

Comments are closed.

About

The Rockabilly Chronicle is a website that focuses on Rockabilly music, from the 50's til today, as well as western swing, blues, neo-rockabilly, psychobilly, jump blues, honky tonk and even a bit of surf and garage. We thought that the term « Rockabilly » would mean something to the readers and give the general idea but as you can see, you'll find more than that here.

MONDAY ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

City Something

OUR **TOP PICKS** FOR APRIL 4 – 10

SLIM SANDY

Slim Sandy and His Hillbilly Bebop Band is sure to get your toes a tappin' Saturday night with a CD release dance party for its latest album *Yes Baby Yes*.

The latest compilation features harmonies, harmonica and six tracks, all covers that will have you boogieing the night away.

Doors at 8pm, show at 9pm at Martin Batchelor Gallery (712 Cormorant). *M*



City Something

OUR **TOP PICKS**
FOR JAN.26 - FEB. 1



Slim Sandy and the Hillbilly Boogie Gang are releasing their first self-titled CD this Friday at the VEC.

JUMP AND JIVE WITH SLIM SANDY

Get ready to shake, rattle and roll with Slim Sandy and the Hillbilly Boogie Gang, Friday at the Victoria Event Centre. Slim Sandy (guitar, vocals and harmonica), Sascha Gilbert (lead guitar), Big Daddy Bo (bass), and the Rockin Reverend (drums) will have the whole room jiving to their brand of rockabilly as they release their first self-titled CD (produced by

Keith Sonic and Miranda Liebel), featuring six original tracks and six covers of '50s classics. The show also features burlesque dancers River Wilde and Silk E. Gunz. Arrive at 8:30 p.m. and get a jive lesson from "Be Boppin Baby." Tickets are available at Culture Craze (Bay Centre and Mayfair Mall). \$15 at the door. Bring your dancing shoes. **M**

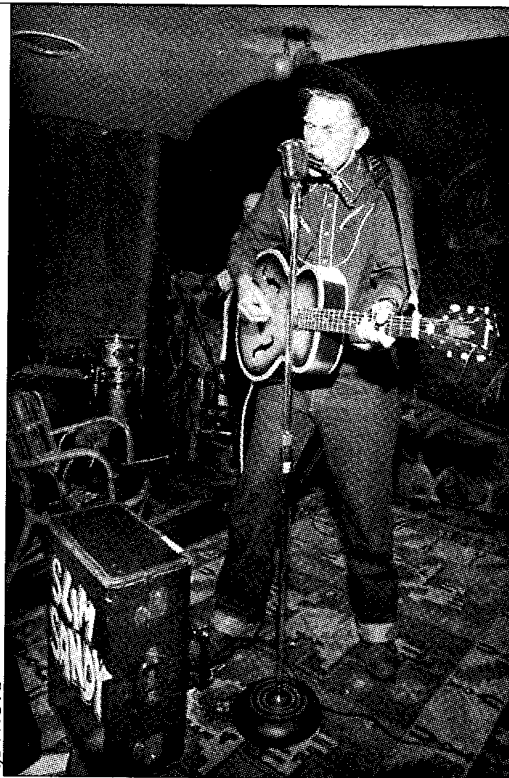
What's Up, Hep Cat?

Jumpin' and jivin' at the Rockabilly Jamboree

If you're looking to get a jive dance lesson, see a hot rod flick, check out some burlesque performances and hear live rockabilly, there's only one place you're gonna want to be on Saturday night—the Rockabilly Jamboree. An homage to '40s and '50s American roots music, the night was spearheaded by local rocker Slim Sandy and some of his rockabilly-lovin' friends (Hank Angel, DJs Cheeky Tiki and Eric Von Bop, local rockabilly gal Suzie Spitfire, writer Suko Thanh and British rockabilly fan Buddy). Sandy says similar events that encompass many aspects of rockabilly culture happen all over the world.

"In Vancouver they have a monthly event called the Rockabilly Round-Up. In Seattle they put on a weekender each year called Shakin' the Shack. There are events like this in many other cities in Canada, the States and Europe," he says. "There is a whole international subculture of rockabilly and classic rock and roll; it extends to '50s-era rhythm and blues, western swing and hillbilly boogie."

Sandy, who hopes the Jamboree becomes a regular event, says the show will be a "barrel of fun," and it sounds like he'll be right. There will be musical performances from Sandy (launching his new disc, *This Is the Night*) and Hank Angel and the Island Devils; the aforementioned burlesque comes courtesy of local Bettina May and Seattleite GoGoAmy; Tiki and Von Bop will be spinning tunes between bands; the movie (which starts at 7:30, so get there early!) will be *Hot Rod Girl* with jive



dancing lessons at nine. "Where else can you get such a good package deal?" Sandy asks with a laugh.

The idea for the Jamboree came together quick and easy—this was no meticulously planned affair, by Sandy's own admission.

"We sat down for a beer while watching the Sutcliffes at the Fernwood Inn one Wednesday night, wrote up the plan on the back of an old band flyer, and within an hour had the basic concept hammered out," he says.

But the real question is, is Sandy really a hot-roddin', jive-dancin' hep cat in his day-to-day life?

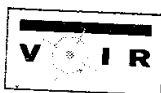
"I use grease in my hair so that it stays all day long," he says, "and I like to dance the jive when I can, but there are few places in town that feature music one can jive to, so I guess that's one reason we started the

Rockabilly Jamboree." But then the big confession: "I don't have a hot rod," he says, adding, "but there is a hot rod club in town."

Well, close enough.

—Greg Pratt

Rockabilly Jamboree
7:30pm Saturday, April 5
Logan's Pub, 1821 Cook
Tickets \$10 • 360-2711



28/02/2008 voirmontréal

SLIM SANDY
THIS IS THE NIGHT

(Crow-Matic)

★★★



Slim Sandy, aussi connu sous le nom de **Peter Sandmark**, est un vétéran de la scène roots-rock montréalaise

ayant joué autant avec Ray Condo que les Crazy Rhythm Daddies et les Howlin' Hound Dogs, entre autres. Un passionné de jump blues, western swing, hillbilly boogie, surf rock, rockab' et plein d'autres trucs. Depuis quelque temps, il fait aussi cavalier seul, tel qu'on peut l'entendre sur ce *This Is the Night*. Fidèle à ses amours, Slim s'accompagne ici d'une guitare, d'un harmonica et d'un *suitcase drum*. Le son est brut, *lo-fi*, conservant ainsi l'aspect rudimentaire d'une musique qui s'apprécie par la force des émotions de l'interprète. À L'Escogriffe le 1^{er} mars avec les Bootlegs. (P. Baillargeon)

TIMES COLONIST THURSDAY MARCH 22 2007

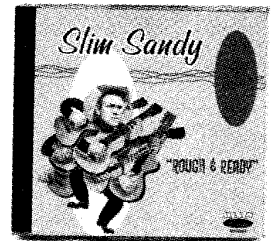
CD WHOOP-UP



Victoria country blues musician Slim Sandy plays at Logan's Pub Saturday night with the Hadacol Cowboys. The gig is a celebration of Sandy's new CD, *Rough & Ready*. For details and a sample, visit: www.slimsandy.com.

Tracey Nelson photo

reviews



Slim Sandy *Rough & Ready* (Sleazy)

Formerly of Ray Condo and his Hardrock Goners, Slim Sandy—also known locally as MediaNet's executive director Peter Sandmark—is billed as "the one-man rockin' band", an apt title for this solo hillbilly boogie guy who manages to play the guitar, blow the harp and stomp out a mean beat all at once. An intentionally low-fi effort, *Rough & Ready* has an early Sun Records feel that's sure to satisfy any fan of those formational early country/emerging rock and roll years. This is a good foot-stompin', beer-drinkin', truck-drivin' disc (although not all at once, please) that should more than satisfy any alt-country fan. Start practicing yer best yee-haw holler for the CD launch at Logan's this weekend.

—John Threlfall

VICTORIA NEWS - Wednesday, January 25, 2012

ARTS LISTINGS

IN BRIEF

Get ready to do some hillbilly boogie with Slim Sandy and band

Slim Sandy and the Hillbilly Boogie Gang will perform at the Victoria Event Centre, 1415 Broad St., for the launch of their first and self-titled CD. The Victoria band features Slim Sandy on guitar, vocals and harmonica, Sascha Gilbert on lead guitar and vocals, Big Daddy Bo on bass and vocals and the Rockin Reverend on drums.

The CD features 12 tracks and shows off the band's electric live show.

Bring your dancing shoes and arrive by 8:30 p.m. to get a jive dance lesson from Be Boppin Baby – Victoria artist Tracey Nelson.

Slim Sandy has been performing roots rock and roll with various bands since 1980.

The show is on Jan. 27. Tickets, available at Culture Craze, the Bay Centre and Mayfair shopping centre are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door.

Slim Sandy

This is the Night
Crow-Matic Records

Local rollickin' rockabilly Slim Sandy's *This is the Night* is a great collection of cover tunes and originals, all chock full of more honky-

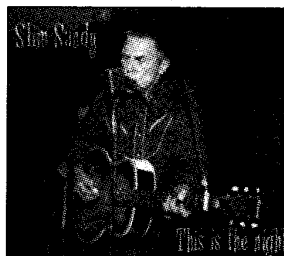
tonk harmonica and references to "baby" than you can tap a toe to. While the covers are solid (particularly the opener, Jerry McCain's "Next Door Neighbor"), it's the originals that add a nice taste of originality to this true-to-the-

genre rockabilly recording (my favourite is "Snowstorm Boogie"). The lo-fi recording technique employed definitely adds a feeling of authenticity; it sounds like you could have found this album in a pile of dusty LPs

at your folks' place—a funny thought, considering this is a digital-only release (head to slimsandy.ca to find out how you can get a copy on your hard drive and into your headphones).

—Amanda Farrell

Slim Sandy CD Release
(with Hank Angel and the Island Devils and DJs Cheeky Tiki and Eric Van Bop)
8pm Friday, December 12
Logan's, 1821 Cook
Tickets \$10 • 250-360-2711



Slim Sandy CD release
9 pm Saturday, March 24
Logan's, 1821 Cook
Tickets \$8 • 360-2711

Goner, But Not Forgotten

Local musician Slim Sandy honours Ray Condo's career



Slim Sandy (far left) with Ray Condo (centre)

Between 1986 and 1993, Ray Condo and the Hardrock Goners released five albums. Don't fret if you haven't heard them, because you'll have a chance now. Originally based in Montreal, guitarist/vocalist Condo moved to Victoria back in '91, then hopped over to Vancouver after a few years here. Condo passed away in 2004, but his legacy lives on, thanks to a new self-titled CD capturing the best of Ray Condo and the Hardrock Goners, to be launched this Thursday at Logan's.

Slim Sandy, who played drums with the band and calls Mile Zero home, has been hard at work putting the CD and launch show together. "I've wanted to put this CD out since Ray passed away, but it took some time to get it all together," says Sandy (or, to his folks, Peter Sandmark—who, by day, is the executive director of local arts organization MediaNet). "The 17 tracks on the CD were selected by the band. The Hardrock Goners put out three albums on domestic Canadian labels, but they are all out of print now. The only CDs available are as imports from a small rockabilly label

in England, although they just licensed the Condo Country CD to a label in Germany, so the music may spread a bit more."

And the anthology CD is a wildly enjoyable mix of fun swing, old-style-country, blues and energetic rockabilly. Those showing up to the launch gig can expect to see Sandy and other original members of the band playing a set in honour of Condo. Sandy, who has lived here since 2005, continues to build on what he learned with the band and still plays around town and abroad.

"I released a CD of mostly original country blues/hillbilly boogie songs on a Spanish label earlier this year—*Rough and Ready*, on Sleazy Records—and will be playing at the High Rockabilly festival in September, near Barcelona, so I have been preparing to play for that," he says. "There are always some songs that rattle around in my head that I have an itch to sing. I've been playing a few markets this summer—Moss Street and Government Street—and doing a wide range of old blues and country tunes."

But for now, Sandy wants to honour the memory

of his friend and musical partner Ray Condo. When asked how he would like people to remember Condo, Sandy doesn't hesitate with his answer.

"As a great Canadian singer and musician," he says. "He did country like Hank Williams, rock and roll like Elvis, and jazz like Billie Holiday."

—Greg Pratt

The Hardrock Goners

(with the Raygun Cowboys
and the McGillicuddys)

10 pm Thursday, August 9

Logan's, 1821 Cook

Tickets \$8 • 360-2803

April 27 - May 3, 2006

Monday

MAGAZINE



Slim Sandy revisits the roots of rock'n'roll. (See Music)

saturday

Rockabilly King - Hillbilly blues man Slim Sandy plays with his new band, the Shady Rhythm Cats. Featuring Hank Angel and the Island Devils along with Vancouver burlesque dancer, The Cat's Meow. Jive lessons with DJ Pete before show. 8:30pm at the Victoria Arts Connection, 2750 Quadra. \$7. 592-2970.

short cuts

And speaking of hidden identities, Media Net's Peter Sandmark's secret other life is as local rockabilly roustabout **Slim Sandy**. Word is Sandmark used to play with R&B legend Ray Condo in the Hardrock Goners before he started the Crazy Rhythm Daddies with his brother Eric. You can catch **Slim Sandy and the Shady Rhythm Cats** this Saturday night from 10 p.m. to midnight at the Victoria Arts Connection (with Hank Angel and the Island Devils and the Cat's Meow burlesque show), all for just \$7—and you can even get in on a free jive dance lesson if you show up at 8:30 p.m.

—John Threlfall

Rockabilly crooner plays downtown art gallery

Nanaimo's Black Rock Gallery wraps up its latest group exhibit Saturday, Feb. 4 with a concert by Peter

Sandmark (a.k.a. Slim Sandy).

Sandmark moved to B.C. last summer from Montreal where he had gained fame as a solo performer and as a drummer with Ray Condo and the Hardrock Goners.

As Slim Sandy, he is a one-man hillbilly boogie band, playing country blues and rockabilly on his guitar and harmonica – while playing drums with his feet.

“Peter Sandmark hasn't abandoned his love of old-time rock 'n' roll, country and blues – he's just streamlined it into a one-man band that makes the White Stripes seem like an exercise in gas-guzzling excess,” wrote music

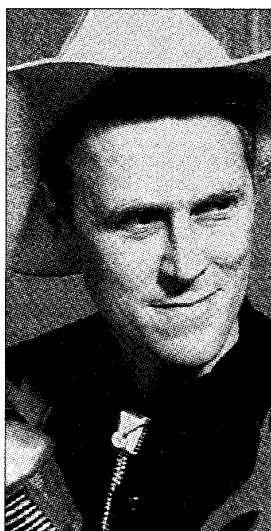


PHOTO SUBMITTED

Peter Sandmark (alias Slim Sandy) performs at the Black Rock Gallery Feb. 4.

Quickfacts

- ◆ **SLIM SANDY** sings rockabilly tunes at the Black Rock Gallery, 312 Fitzwilliam St., Saturday, Feb. 4 from 6-9 p.m.

critic Jordan Zivitz, of the Montreal Gazette. One of Sandmark's earliest recollections of being exposed to roots music involved listening to his father's .78 records of 1940s jazz musicians. He listened to artists such as Louis Jordan, Fats Waller, Slim and Slam, and Nat King Cole, all of whom would become big musical influences on his own musical career.

MUSIC

Harpin' on the hill

Slim Sandy revisits the roots of rock 'n' roll



TOOTIN' THE ROOTS: Slim Sandy

by RUPERT BOTTENBERG

Peter Sandmark of the Crazy Rhythm Daddies has a brand new bag, hillbilly boogie, and a new nom de guerre, Slim Sandy. Now, that don't mean the Daddies are down for the count.

"Obviously, we've been playing 15 years," says Sandmark, "so we've played a lot in town, and each of us is involved in other musical projects. Our drummer Robert Kraft is in Morocco right now, playing with a Moroccan band. My brother Eric's working on a project called the Missing Link, which is rock 'n' roll between the late '50s and the British Invasion, that surf-based proto-

garage stuff. I've always been into the older music, and I'd really gotten into what's called hillbilly boogie from the late '40s."

Sandmark explains that hillbilly boogie was the post-war white response to the blues, bringing a gritty groove to the twang of country music. In other words, the dawn of what would become rock 'n' roll. It's suited to Sandmark's musical CV, and to his self-described "hillbilly voice"—"It's not an accent, it's a tone, a vocal style that's a bit nasal."

"The other element is the harmonica—which I tried to do in the Daddies but it didn't fit—that amplified harmonica, really loud. It kinda replaces the lead guitar. I'd been wanting to do that since I was a kid, when one of the early records I had was by this guy Slim Harpo. He's famous for 'Hip Shake Baby,' which the Stones covered. It was electric guitar and harmonica, and he never succeeded because he was considered too pop for the blues market and too bluesy for pop. But he was copied by the British, who turned the blues into a pop sound."

For Sandmark, it's a perfect one-man-band sound (though his show on Sept. 6 features a bassist and drummer), which sees him handling harp, voice, guitar and both bass and snare drum all at once. "At the end of the night, I'm packing up and I realize why it's called a one-man band—I've got all the gear of a band, and I have to pack it all into the taxi myself!" ■

AT JUPITER ROOM ON SATURDAY,
SEPT. 6, 10PM, \$5

(MONTREAL MIRROR)
SEPT. 4, 2003



locals@large

BY JAMIE O'MEARA [omeara@hour.ca]

» VALENTINE'S DAY MASSACRE

hour

FEBRUARY 13 TO 19, 2003

The history of St. Valentine is one steeped in rancour and animus, of warm blood and cold feelings. The Catholic Church, one-time pioneers in the field of death and dismemberment (and no strangers to a hedged bet), recognizes at least three different Saint Valentines, all of whom suffered death at the hands of the Romans. Now Italians. Think about that later.

According to the History Channel (is there any higher authority?), the study young Valentinus "may have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons where they were often beaten and tortured," or as is also thought, for bonking the jailor's daughter during his own imprisonment. Was St. Valentine only romancing the bone? Does Hallmark have a line of "From _____ on the Occasion of Your Crucifixion" cards? Why do we pass around red hearts on St. Valentine's and not green livers on St. Patrick's? So many questions...

Looking for some answers to these and other queries are self-styled guitar gladiators Slim Sandy and Bloodshot Bill, who will clash in a bona fide Battle of the One-Man Bands this Valentine's Day weekend.

"Word on the street is that Slim Sandy has been goin' around sayin' he's a better one-man band than me... BULLSHIT!" says a fire-eyed Bloodshot Bill. "Who does this lightweight think he is anyway? I could beat him blindfolded [Ed's note: and Billfolded!], and I'm gonna prove it! He's not gonna have the Rhythm Cats to protect him this time. He's only gonna have one hit that night... when his ass hits the ground! Always bet on Bill, 'cause Slim 'Pansy' is goin' down in the third song."

Are you gonna take that, Sandy? Huh? Huh?

"Well, this Bloodshot 'Pill' is a bit hard to swallow!" counters the ragin' Slim slickly. "If he put as much energy into his playin' as his trash talkin', I might be worried. But for now, don't worry 'bout spilling your beer on Saturday night, folks, 'cause I'll be wiping the floor with Bloodshot Bill by the end of the evening!"

Crowd around the ring for the '50s Rockabilly Jive Dance Party, featuring Slim Sandy vs. Bloodshot Bill, at O'Hara's (1197 University), Feb. 15, starting at 10 p.m. Admission is only \$4.

(hip-hop) and Rollergirl (SK8 rock), but also \$1,500 worth of product giveaways.



Slim Sandy (left) and Bloodshot Bill

hour

DECEMBER 12 TO 18, 2002

Will the real Slim Sandy please stand up? Darwin taught that mutability could be equated with survivability.

Sandmark taught us that the benchmark of a populist musician is parody. Well, not exactly, but Montreal's Crazy Rhythm Daddies, under the steady pickmanship of guitarist Peter Sandmark, have always wielded a sense of humour, swingin' it to their advantage. Sandmark's upstart "solo" project, Slim Sandy and the Shady Rhythm Cats, is no exception.

"What's new about the act?"

Sandmark asks himself. "Well, all the songs for one thing – a more hillbilly blues approach. What's that you say? Well, I tried to do some of those songs with the Daddies, but they didn't seem to fit into our country-swing-with-surf-guitar style."

Sandmark says that his naturally hillbilly voice is the perfect fit for these early '50s, blues-based songs played on guitar and harmonica. Based on the evidence at

<http://sandmark.tripod.com>, we believe him. Slim Sandy and the Shady Rhythm Cats posse make their debut at Zeke's Gallery (3955 St-Laurent), Dec. 15 starting at 8 p.m., for a FREE show (it's being recorded for a CD).

If you haven't had a chance to visit Zeke's, this is a great opportunity: The ballsy (run by a) rogue gallery just received an impressive feature write-up in the prestigious glossy Canadian Art (and which you can read online at canadianart.ca/articles/Articles_Details.cfm?Ref_num=81, if you don't feel like dropping a handful of cash on the mag). It goes a long way toward explaining how valuable this kind of cross-disciplinary space is for artists of all stripes and sizes. Check it out, and then check Zeke's out.



SLIM SANDY *Boogie Woogie Country Girl*

(independent)
After two decades with the likes of Ray Condo and

the Crazy Rhythm Daddies, Peter Sandmark's made his mark on the roots music scene, here and across the country. Now he's struck out on his own, adopting the Slim Sandy tag and tackling drums, harmonica, vocals and the twang of his vintage guitar all at once. Over five covers and his own "Roadster Rumble," Sandy showcases his love for easygoing rockabilly and hillbilly blues. He may be a stickler for accuracy and authenticity, but not to the extent that his efforts become dry, academic exercises—unless they're now giving out degrees in toe-tappin' good times.

8/10 (Rupert Bottenberg) CD launch at Studio Metronome (4232 St-Laurent), Fri., Dec. 5, 9:30pm, \$5

MONTREAL MIRROR DECEMBER 4 - DECEMBER 10 2003

HOWLIN HOUND DOGS



Noel the Chief – lead vocals, rhythm guitar

Johnny Slim – lead guitar

Richard Nantucket – slap bass

Slim Sandy – drums

Rockabilly Party!

With the ...

HOWLIN' HOUND DOGS!! (playing at VLV)



SAMEDI. 1^{er} 12 AVRIL

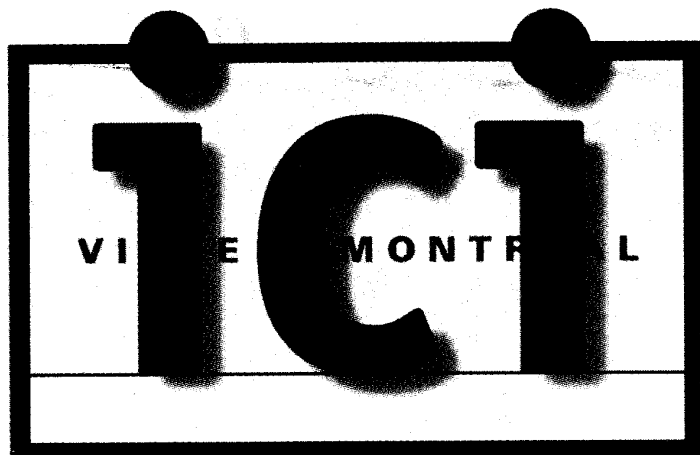
O'HARA'S PUB

1197 UNIVERSITY

DJ Slim Sandy

RETRO CLOTHING STALL by

Be Boppin Baby!!



»»» Fadas de rockab', les *Howlin' Hound Dogs* lanceront leur premier album ce vendredi au Swimming.

h(x)ur

(contents)

01.17—01.23 2002

SPINS

○○○○½

THE HOWLIN' HOUND DOGS

(*Howlin' Records*) **JITTER BOP BABY**

Boppin', rockabillyin' tunes with a sparse two guitars, acoustic bass and traps, along with vocals by Noel Thibault and Phil Brodeur. If you don't recognize any of the 15 titles, you will certainly know the feel, which lies somewhere between Johnny Cash, Buddy Holly and 1959. The takes average around two minutes, true to the days when radio airplay demanded it. Barney Beninger engineered and it sounds generally like he's taping at Sun Records instead of Studio Fast Forward. All that's missing is the vinyl. (Dean Cottrill)

MIRROR

Full of boners

Bark at the moon

>> Howlin Hound Dogs rock 'n' roll over

by RUPERT BOTTENBERG

"The guy who recorded the record didn't get it at first," chuckles Howlin Hound Dogs drummer Peter Sandmark. "I kept telling him to put more echo on the vocals, and he was looking at me like I was crazy. Only later, when he listened to it over and over while burning demo copies did he finally figure it out. He called me up to say he got it, and how much he liked it."

What Sandmark and co. were after in the recording of their debut platter *Jitter Bop Baby!* was an authentic sound to match their choice of authentic rockabilly tunes, be they obscure covers or originals of their own. The quartet has been at it for several years now, keeping Montrealers on their feet with genuine and reasonably paced rock 'n' roll jitters that never raunch out into revisionist psychobilly mayhem. That said, "I'm glad we used the modern recording equipment," notes Sandmark, "which gives it that extra punch to put it over the top."

Further accuracy comes through in the vocals of singer/twangster Noel Thibault. In person he's *pur-laine* Québécois, on plastic he's a pure-bred, high-lonesome country boy straight outta Tennessee. Queried on this, he smiles and rattles off a list of his influences: "Johnny Walker, Johnny Burnett, Johnny Cash..." Nobody's makin' a John-

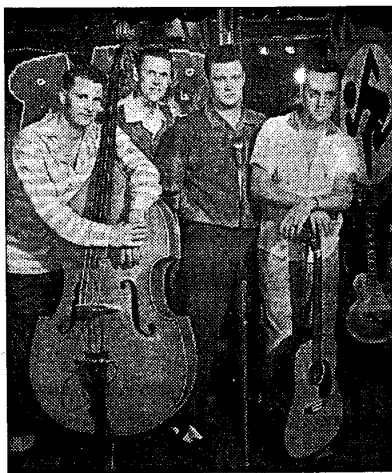
ny-on-the-spot out of this guy!

What's most important to these guys is doing their part for what they see as a vibrant, worldwide rock 'n' roll scene that's too lively to be squared away as simple nostalgia, and too inclusive to be an obnoxious insiders' club. "You hear all kinds of music at these things," says Sandmark, "Rockabilly, swing, jump blues, country, western swing—and from all over, too."

Such events are also admirable for how holistic (excuse the new-age lingo) they are. At throwdowns like the Hemsby Festival in England and Viva Las Vegas down south, live bands are just part of the fun, along with DJs, clothes, cars, décor, haircuts, tattoos and retro-style dance lessons—

Montreal's own Miss Wolff, who jumpstarted the scene here with classes, is a regular *vedette* at such events.

"We're gearing up for the Road Agents Rumble in Connecticut this July," says Sandmark, gazing fondly at images of crazy hot rods that herald the event. In the meantime, the key's in the ignition for *Jitter Bop Baby!*, and there's room on the rumble seat for everyone. ☺



MARTIN COLES

Bop to the top: Howlin Hound Dogs

CD LAUNCH AT SWIMMING ON FRIDAY,

MAY 25, 10:30PM, \$5

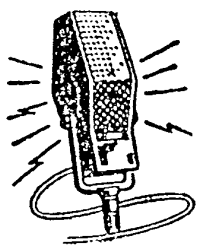
HOWLING HOUND DOGS!



LA PRESSE, MONTRÉAL.

Selon les puristes, le grand public a une mauvaise perception des adeptes du rockabilly. « Il y a une image un peu négative liée au rockabilly, dit Noël Thibault, guitariste des Jim Dandy & His Howlin' Hound Dogs. Il faut bien comprendre que le rockabilly, ce n'est pas que l'image standard véhiculée par Elvis, surtout pas le Elvis d'après les années 50. Ça n'a rien à voir ! Et puis, le fait de recréer un genre musical ne veut pas dire qu'on en fait une parodie. On veut simplement avoir du *fun*. En tout cas, ceux qui viennent à nos spectacles en ont. »

Le goût du rockabilly



CRAZY RHYTHM DADDIES!



THE CRAZY RHYTHM DADDIES were formed in Montreal, in 1988, by members of Ray Condo & The Hardrock Goners, who wanted to satisfy their craving for pre-rockabilly music. When bassist Clive Jackson left for the West Coast in 1993, the remaining Daddies - ERIC SANDMARK (vocals & lead guitar) and brother PETER (vocals & rhythm guitar) - enrolled ex-Gruesomes JOHN DAVIS on stand up bass and drummer ROB KRAFT to complete the lineup. Their debut CD is a wild'n woolly mixture of western swing, swing-era jazz, hillbilly, bluegrass and rock'n roll, combined with their own very personal style of harmony to create a new and exciting style: rockin' hillbilly swing!

"A bubbling, bouncing recording that is pure fun." ★★★★★½ - Carl Witchell, *Hour*

"Eternally good music that gets the blood pumping and sets your extremities atingle... that is exactly what the album offers. You supply the party. - Sylvain Cormier, *Le Devoir*

"No way can you resist the exuberant foot-stompin' beat." - Claude Côté, *Hour*

"Låt nummer 1 her har meg fanget!... Og denne bør du kjøpe straks!" - Tor Arne Petzold, *Rock* (Norway)

★★★★ (Excellent) - Claude Côté, *Voir*

Peter Sandmark
tel: (514) 482-7143
FAX: (514) 481-4910

CRAZY PRODUCTIONS

<http://members.tripod.com/~sandmark/index.html>
daddies@moonshinehollow.com

MUSIC

Rhythm Daddies crazy for the '50s

Local band draws on old-time rock'n'roll, R&B and country-jazz to make music for your feet

**PEACE
AND NOISE**
JORDAN ZIVITZ

Wandering into a Crazy Rhythm Daddies show can be like wandering into another age — one in which you're still free to do the jitterbug without a trace of irony. It's the kind of music that just isn't made much any more, which explains the puzzled reaction of some concert-goers.

"This guy comes up to me after one show and he goes, 'What do you call this kind of music?' singer-guitarist Peter Sandmark said. 'I go, 'Well, it's rock-'n'roll.' But rock-'n'roll doesn't mean the same thing any more — rock-'n'roll means Ozzy Osbourne now. So then I go, 'Well, it's rhythm and blues.' But even that doesn't mean the same thing any more — that means Janet Jackson."

Sandmark says this with a laugh, rather than a sigh of frustration. Crazy Rhythm Daddies make music for your feet, not your head, and aren't out to give their audience an education on early rock'n'roll.

"I just like the kind of music that has a good groove, that has a good beat, that's great for dancing and makes you feel good," Sandmark said. "I don't think it matters, really, if you know anything about where the music's from. If it's good music, people will respond to it."

That's how the Crazy Rhythm Daddies have made fans for life among unsuspecting barhoppers who have happened upon one of their many engagements around town (the band plays primarily in Montreal, not counting a brief 1997 European tour and occasional forays into Ontario). But they've also endeared themselves to ardent music-collector types with a passion for the roots of rock'n'roll.

How 'Bout It?, the band's second CD (not counting a string of independent cassette releases), centres on the sound of 1950s rock'n'roll, but even that's a fairly modern style by the standards of the Sandmark brothers (Peter and gui-



COURTESY OF CRAZY RHYTHM DADDIES

Crazy Rhythm Daddies (from left): John Davis, Robert Kraft, Peter Sandmark, Eric Sandmark. The Montreal band launches its second CD, *How 'Bout It?*, tomorrow night at La Sala Rossa on St. Laurent Blvd.

tarist-vocalist Eric), drummer Robert Kraft and bassist John Davis. Since the Sandmarks founded the group in 1988,

the Daddies have been resurrecting jump blues, the country-jazz twang of Western swing and other forms that

predate Bill Haley and the Comets.

The Sandmarks' musical taste was influenced by their father's extensive jazz collection, but, like anyone growing up in the 1960s, they were later roped in by the Beatles and their kin. "That's how I

got into '50s rock'n'roll — I just looked at who wrote the songs the Beatles and the Rolling Stones and others covered," Peter Sandmark said. "Who's this C. Berry guy who wrote this song? I'm going to find out about him."

Sandmark would be a sensational music-history teacher; he talks of Louis Jordan's bad luck in helping to set the groundwork for early rock'n'roll without reaping the commercial rewards, of how rockabilly was originally a pejorative term used by country purists, of how the neo-swing trend of a few years back was actually more of a jump-blues revival. Such enthusiasm for the history of American music is ironically present more in Europe (where "they knew every song we play") than in the land that spawned MTV, but Sandmark says the U.S. is primed to recognize its own legacy.

"America's always looking for the new thing, (but) roots rock'n'roll is very big in Europe, because in Europe ... if they come across something good, they preserve it. And that's what they're doing with American rock-'n'roll. Whereas in America, they look at that as yesteryear's music."

"But there's finally a scene growing for rock'n'roll (in the U.S.). First of all, a lot of the old rock'n'rollers are still alive ... and that means it gets passed on — people pick up the music directly from the originals. And then there are new bands doing their own stuff, and we're trying to do that — trying to write a few songs that are in those styles."

It's a credit to Crazy Rhythm Daddies that the uninitiated would be hard-pressed to identify the three originals on *How 'Bout It?* amid the covers of songs like Five Guys Named Moe (a hit for Jordan) or Slim Gaillard's finger-snapping Atomic Cocktail. Sandmark and his bandmates have revived more than the sound of their vintage record collections — they've revived the spirit. And whether you call it rock'n'roll, rhythm and blues or what have you, that's what matters most on the dance floor.

✦ **Crazy Rhythm Daddies** launch *How 'Bout It?* at La Sala Rossa, 4948 St. Laurent Blvd., tomorrow at 9 p.m. with *Notre Dame de Grass* and *Bloodshot Bill* and the *Guiloteens*. Tickets cost \$7. Call (514) 284-3804.

✦ **Jordan Zivitz's E-mail address** is jzivitz@thegazette.southam.ca.

◆ LE DEVOIR ◆

CULTURE

Les dix meilleurs disques d'ici en 2001

À elles les mélodies les plus heureuses, les arrangements les plus efficaces, les chansons les plus mémorables: cette année au Québec, Bélanger excepté, ce sont les héritières de Joni Mitchell et Francine Raymond qui ont ravivé la chanson pop de qualité.

SYLVAIN CORMIER

Precision: j'aime la chanson pop, c'est mon fonds de commerce Beatles qui veut ça. Le pli est pris. Mes meilleurs disques, chaque année, sont forcément les plus irrésistiblement pop de la journée. Ça tombe bien, 2001 a été riche en bonne pop, et ce d'emblée: février arrivé, trois des cinq premiers chouchous de ce palmarès étaient coulés dans le béton. Personne n'a pu déloger le formidable triplé Catherine Durand-Nancy Dumais-Sylvie Paquette, sinon le fortiche Daniel Bélanger, qui nous a refait le coup du chef d'œuvre. Pour les autres types de musique, consultez les listes des collègues David Cantin et Bernard Lamarche ces prochains jours. Suite jeu-di avec la dizaine glorieuse venue d'ailleurs.

■ 1. *Catherine Durand*, Catherine Durand. Depuis *Les Années-lumière* de Francine Raymond, aucun disque local n'a maîtrisé aussi finement l'art de la chanson pop, équilibre si précaire entre le pas trop compliqué et le pas trop prévisible. *Peu importe*, *Encore là*, *Depuis toi*, *Les Apparences*, ce ne sont qu'airs qui coulent de source et refrains qui montent au ciel. Si l'équité était de ce monde, les 5000 exemplaires à ce jour vendus seraient multipliés par 20 et Catherine Durand recevrait son platine en même temps que Bélanger.

■ 2. *Rêver mieux*, Daniel Bélanger. Il l'a, c'est fou comme il l'a. Si naturellement que c'en est indécent. C'est notre McCartney à nous: les mélodies lui sortent par tous les orifices, et il a chevillé au corps l'intelligence de l'arrangement, tout aussi résolument moderne dans l'emballage sonore qu'éternellement folk-pop à la base. Prosternons-nous.

■ 3. *Le nombril*, Nancy Dumais. Ça ne ment pas, un bon disque: une fois inséré dans le lecteur, le mécanisme pète et il n'en sort plus. Je me souviens encore délicieusement d'une semaine de février où je n'ai écouté que ça, en boucle. Et s'il n'y avait pas eu d'autres arrivages, je tournerais encore autour de *L'Illuminée*, Je ferai trembler le monde et tout ce qu'il a dans ce *Nombril joli*.

■ 4. *Souvenir de trois*, Sylvie Paquette. «Si Durand et Dumais offrent d'exemplaires et superbes disques de surface, écrivais-je en février, Paquette fonctionne à la

verticale: plus on écoute, plus on creuse.» Eh bien, j'ai pas encore trouvé le fond. Exigeant, intense, grattant dans la plaie vive de la vie jusqu'à la moelle, ce disque n'est pourtant absolument pas lourd à l'estomac (comme le confit). Miracle d'équilibre. Et *Garde-moi*, le duo Paquette-Bélanger, est beau à pleurer.

■ 5. *Doux sauvage*, Robert Charlebois. Nous l'avons tant aimé, nous l'avons tant haï. Et puis voilà Robert Charlebois qui s'ouvre la cage thoracique au lieu de décapsuler sa Bolduc, osant enfin écrire ce qu'il ressent, quitte à ce que ça sorte un peu maladroitement. Pari d'authenticité gagné: en plus d'être doux à l'oreille (ah! ces guitares!), ce disque fait chaud au cœur de l'Indien. Content de vous connaître enfin, monsieur Garou.

■ 6. *Papillons*, Mara Tremblay. Ballades tristes comme un violon qui chiale, rages de sons comme autant de crises de nerfs, échappées psychédéliques dans la cinquième dimension, Mara fait ce que bon lui semble et c'est très bien ainsi. Sa transparence émotionnelle fait le reste. Moins facile d'accès que *Le Chihuahua*, mais le voyage en vaut le ticket.

■ 7. *Dumas*, Steve Dumas. Un peu brouillon, tout ça. Un peu trop M dans le funk, un peu trop Marc Déry au détour des vers, ce disque n'est pas encore affranchi. Mais il y a quand même déjà chez ce Dumas sommairement dessiné une sacrée patte, du bagout dans la rime, du chien dans les refrains, du génie dans les guitares, bref, un plaisir déjà patent à jouer les rockstars, ce qu'il deviendra assurément.

■ 8. *Mirador*, Pierre Flynn. Il m'avait toujours un peu perdu entre ses noires, ses blanches et ses histoires un peu grises: façon Charlebois, en simplifiant la forme et en extirpant les choses comme elles viennent, surtout dans *Ma prière* et la très belle *Croire*, j'ai enfin découvert le cœur de Pierre et l'âme de Flynn.

■ 9. *How 'bout it?*, Crazy Rhythm Daddies. C'est bien parce qu'ils n'ont pas trente sous vaillants devant eux que les Daddies n'en sont qu'à leur deuxième admirable collection de musiques pionnières de l'Amérique en plus de dix ans de loyaux services. Capables de véritable jive sans enflure punk, de swing texan aussi pur qu'au temps de Bob Wills, rockabilly furieux comme en garrochait Johnny Carroll, ces dignes perpétuateurs de chez nous mériteraient un peu d'encouragement: et si vous achetiez ce disque fait main?

■ 10. *Mon voyage au Canada*, Mononc'Serge. Un brûlot si incandescent qu'il met le feu à toutes les vieilles poudres mouillées. Une grosse roche qui casse les vitres et les oreilles. Libre de déconner, liberté de fesser, libre d'inhaler (*Marijuana*), libre de bander (écoutez *Fourrez, ça défoule le Canadien*), libre de se contreficher de ne pas être joué à la radio, ce disque est insupportable et nécessaire.

ICI

VIE MONTRÉAL

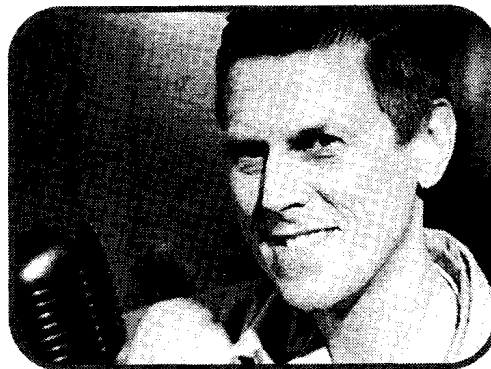
● Les papas fous

Les Crazy Rhythm Daddies sont assez fous pour sortir un deuxième album.

● Patrick Baillargeon

Les Crazy Rhythm Daddies ne portent pas ce nom pour rien. Quand on ne carbure qu'aux musiques des années 30 à 60, qu'on tripe sur les vieux amplis à lampes et les guitares d'époque et qu'on a un répertoire de chansons majoritairement empruntées à de mythiques mais obscurs musiciens, on est forcément un peu dingue. C'est pour ça, et parce qu'il est complètement à contre-courant, que l'on aime ce groupe montréalais. Il faut dire aussi que le combo, admirablement mené depuis 1988 par les frères Sandmark (deux ex-acolytes de Ray Condo), se tire d'affaire plutôt bien. Dans ce genre de musique, les Crazy Rhythm Daddies sont durs à battre. Qu'on le taxe de puriste, de révisionniste ou de simple nostalgique, le groupe s'en moque. Avec ce *How 'Bout It* tout frais sorti de l'usine, les Daddies persistent, signent et se renouvellent!

«Quand on a commencé les Crazy Rhythm Daddies, on cherchait les racines du western swing, c'était plus acoustique, notre truc, affirme le chanteur et guitariste Peter Sandmark. Depuis quelques années cependant, avec l'ajout d'une batterie (opérée par l'excellent Robert Kraft), d'une basse (John Davis des Gruesomes) et surtout depuis que mon frère et moi avons opté pour la guitare électrique, le son s'est développé. Notre nouvel album est davan-



»»» Peter Sandmark: «Cet album déterminera notre futur.»

tage rock'n'roll que le précédent.»

L'autre changement, majeur celui-là, c'est que le nouvel opus des Daddies a été concocté tranquillement dans leur nouveau studio. «On s'est acheté du matériel et on a monté notre propre petit studio chez notre batteur, lance fièrement Peter. C'est pas mal moins cher pour la réalisation et la mise en marché de l'album, et en plus on a pu prendre tout notre temps.» **ici**

Crazy Rhythm Daddies, Notre-Dame de Grass, Bloodshot Bill & The Guiloteens et DJ Sandy Petermark

La Sala Rossa

Ven. 14 déc. 21h. 7\$.

Info: 284-3804

The Gazette

Jazz fest celebrates 18th 1.5 million expected to attend Montreal block party

MARK LEPAGE
The Gazette

For its 18th birthday, the Montreal International Jazz Festival will invite an estimated 1.5 million locals and tourists to an urban block party beginning today. In that frame of mind, vice-president André Ménard measured his event against the contenders.

"There's the North Sea (festival), but those guys are coming next week. You can ask them."

So we shall. Given the prevailing fatalism over the city's fortunes, yesterday's pre-emptive launch had an added emphasis. The jazz fest is the last thing in the world Montreal is first at.

Organizers toasted this year's model with a slick video reminder of its profile. "From noon to midnight, for 11 days, over 1.5 million people soak up 300 free shows" and 106 ticketed ones, as the city basks in civic pride over the peerless organi-

zation and global clout of its summer centre-piece.

The video ran in major markets in the U.S., Europe and Brazil. Yesterday, that history and future were on display in a new Jazz Café.

Modeled on the Hard Rock memorabilia restaurant chain, the Café holds a collection of artifacts dating back to the original poster for the 1980 festival at Man and His World. The decor under the tent, on the northeast corner of the Place des Arts esplanade, is a worldbeat reflection of the musical program: a massive (fake) elephant head representing Africa, faux-snakeskin tablecloths for South America, daiquiris for this year's Cuban theme. The Cubans take over the city core July 1 for the mammoth outdoor bash.

Please see JAZZ FEST, Page A2

Preview concert photo, Page C6

Crazy Rhythm Daddies finally get mass exposure

JAZZ FEST

Continued from Page A1

The four-part harmonies of Manhattan Transfer officially open the festival tonight in Salle Wilfrid Pelletier at 8:30 (they also performed last night). The fest boasts 41 daily concert series, nine outdoor venues, 2,000 musicians from 23 countries, and one desperately needed international reputation.

Metropolis, the Ste. Catherine St. E. club purchased this year by the the Spectra group, is now a major jazzfest venue.

Workers and consultants have spent three weeks on acoustical renovations, installing sound panels in the balcony and on the plaster walls to absorb the echo and reverb. Usual capacity of 2,400 has been roped off at 2,000 for comfort's sake.

While yesterday's minor shmooze was all ma-

ior international brush strokes, one local beneficiary brought the meaning home.

Eric Sandmark and his Crazy Rhythm Daddies are booked into Metropolis to open the Brian Setzer big-band show July 3. Sandmark, brother Peter and their Western swing band gig regularly in the bars on and around the Main and tour rockabilly festivals in Europe, but have never had a shot at this kind of mass exposure.

"We've been sending them tapes for years," Sandmark said, "but I think the secretary just saw pictures of the (cowboy) hats and thought, *they're Western*. So we never got past the doors."

One night, the right person swung through theirs. Ménard wandered into the Monkeyhouse on Roy St. E., caught their act "and sat there beaming." At this moment in the conversation, Ménard wanders up to inform Sandmark that Louisiana-cum-Québécois zydeco player Zachary Richard will be at the Daddies' show.

"I think the secretary just saw (cowboy) hats and thought, they're Western."

In 1988, to satisfy their craving for pre-rockabilly music while bandmate Ray Condo took a hiatus, members of his Hardrock Goners formed their own combo, the Crazy Rhythm Daddies. Now, nearly a decade and numerous lineups later, the band has unveiled its debut CD, a self-titled wild 'n' woolly mixture of western swing, swing-era jazz, hillbilly, bluegrass and rock 'n' roll – a stomping style some have dubbed “rockin’ hillbilly swing.”

The swingin’ sound comes from the collective fondness for the music of the ‘30s shared by vocalist/lead guitarist Eric Sandmark, vocalist/rhythm guitarist Peter Sandmark (Eric’s brother), standup bassist John Davis (ex- of the Gruesomes, who replaced original bassman Clive Jackson in 1993) and drummer Rob Kraft. While the boys were playing rockabilly and country with Ray Condo, they were listening to swing jazz from the ‘30s, western swing in particular. Bob Wills & His Texas Playboys, Milton Brown & His Brownies and Spade Cooley were the Daddies’ special favorites.

Taking their name from both the song “Crazy Rhythm” and the Vancouver vocal trio the Undertaking Daddies, the Crazy Rhythm Daddies started as a five-piece, all-acoustic outfit with no drums that also featured Goners Chris Dean on banjo and Edgar Bridwell on fiddle. The group was so organic, in fact, that Eric Sandmark at first played acoustic guitar, before eventually opting for electric. The band would pull schizophrenic double duty in their early days, opening up shows as the hillbilly swing Crazy Rhythm Daddies for their own headlining selves, Ray Condo’s rockabilly Hardrock Goners.

The Daddies and their antique swing were a pretty unique item on the Montreal music scene circa 1988, which was in the midst of a cow-punk trend with a handful of bands making the club circuit doing country rock ‘n’ roll and rockabilly. But in 1991 the Daddies, joined by Condo on backing vocals, proudly released their first cassette, the western swingin’ *Flat Foot Floogie*. A second



Direct From Canada

CRAZY RHYTHM DADDIES

by Dave Drake

cassette, the more jazz-inflected *Swingcats' Ball*, followed.

Over the years, as lineup changes affected both bands, the Daddies trimmed down to a quartet, then a trio and, at one lean point, a duo of just the two Sandmarks. Bassist Davis, veteran of the Gruesomes and the Sheiks and also a member of the instrumental group the AstroNuts, soon came aboard, though, and brought along drummer Kraft, a jazz lover with a deft touch with the brushes. A third cassette, *One Is Never Too Old To Swing*, arrived in '95, around the time the band toured Europe with Condo.

These days the Daddies perform primarily in Montreal, where there now exists a large scene of inventive musicians exploring the more obscure facets of swing, bluegrass and other roots-oriented styles. For the past few years Montreal's roots-rocking climate has been anchored by a series of Rockabilly Jams, multi-act gigs featuring international talent. The Daddies have played Jams with France's Hollister and the Frantic Flattops from the US, among others.

Some of Montreal's best musicians – including fiddler Michael Brown and sax man R.D. Moyse of the R&B outfit the Steven Barry Band – lent a hand on the Daddies' fine, fun CD debut. Recorded in three studios, the disc features 17 tracks. Some songs, like “Killin’ Jive,” are revamped recordings of tunes from the first two cassettes, others appeared on the third tape, *One Is Never Too Old...*, the rest are brand new.

The Daddies' hoppin' hybrid style – encompassing rock 'n' roll, western swing, bluegrass and swing jive – holds undeniable appeal for dancers and listeners alike. And with plans for music videos and tours of Europe and the US in the works, the Daddies' crazy rhythms could soon reach 'round the globe. Stay tuned!

Crazy Rhythm Daddies is available from Igloo Records in Canada, PO Box 122, Station P, Toronto ON M5S 2S6. Hepcat in the US, PO Box 1108, Orange, CA 92668 or Rockhouse overseas, Nieuweenseweg 23, 2421 LA, Nieuwkoop, Holland.



Peter et Eric Sandmark

Crazy Rhythm Daddies: comme dans l'temps!

RICHARD LABBÉ
collaboration spéciale

Au bout du fil, la voix de Peter Sandmark, guitariste et chanteur des Crazy Rhythm Daddies, est presque inaudible. C'est que le petit bébé de Sandmark a faim, et il a choisi de le faire savoir pendant l'entrevue. Et il gueule, le kid... Après deux ou trois tentatives, Peter Sandmark recommence : « Notre trip à nous, c'est un mélange de swing, de jazz, de country... On appelle ça du western swing ! C'est de la musique western des années 30. »

Non, le quatuor montréalais Crazy Rhythm Daddies — en spectacle ce soir au centre Isart — n'a pas la bosse des affaires. En fait, ces gars-là sont légèrement dérangés. Parce qu'il faut être vaivement fêlé pour jouer une musique des années 30 dans une ville qui croule sous le poids des Backstreet Boys, Spice Girls et autres friandises pop du genre.

Les Crazy Rhythm Daddies, eux, sortent le violon, grattent le banjo et font joyeusement swinger la compagnie. Ce depuis 1988, année où ils se sont associés.

« C'est une passion pour nous, explique Peter Sandmark. Ce genre demeure pertinent en 1997. C'est sûr que c'est pas très "in", mais on joue du western swing depuis une mèche ! On a résisté à

toutes les modes que tu peux imaginer... »

Difficile de le contredire. Alors que la mode était au métal il y a dix ans, alors que les petits décolorés se faisaient aller aux Foufounes, les Daddies répliquaient avec leurs chapeaux de cow-boy et leurs chemises à la Hank Williams ! Comme dans l'temps...

Sandmark et son frère Eric, lui aussi chanteur et guitariste au sein du groupe, ne sont pas des débutants. Les deux ont jadis gratté la guitare aux côtés du chevronné Ray Condo dans les années 80. Condo ayant depuis levé les voiles en direction de Vancouver — « parce qu'il ne parle pas français même si son véritable nom de famille est Tremblay », s'esclaffe

Sandmark — les frangins ont donc décidé de faire leur petite affaire.

« On présente plusieurs shows chaque année, incluant des tournées en Europe, poursuit Peter, mais on est bien loin de vivre de notre musique. Ce qui est cool par contre, c'est que notre public est composé de toutes sortes de gens : des jeunes, des moins jeunes... On attire même des alternos ! »

Côté chansons, les Daddies adorent piger dans du vieux stock : des reprises du vénérable Bob Wills, de Grandpa Jones, des Washboard Wonders et autres classiques de l'époque western swing font partie de leur répertoire, comme en témoigne leur premier compact *Crazy Rhythm Daddies !* paru l'an dernier.

Et les gars trippent comme ça s'peut pas. Ce qui est surprenant puisque d'ordinaire, un band avec deux frères n'est pas un band très jojo. Pensons aux Kinks, à Oasis ou au trio de Johnny Burnette...

« Je m'engueule avec mon frère de temps en temps, admet Peter Sandmark, mais ce n'est rien de bien dramatique. On ne se bat plus comme avant ! »

CRAZY RHYTHM DADDIES se produira ce soir au centre Isart, 263 St-Antoine Ouest. Les portes ouvrent à 21 h.

Ray Condo, Sandmarks were longtime goners

Split six years ago spawned two bands who perform Tues

Life and work are complicated enough without the added pressures of a long-distance relationship, but Peter and Eric Sandmark – also known far and wide as “the Sandmark Brothers” and under the band name Crazy Rhythm Daddies – had two.



MARK
LEPAGE
ROCK TALK

For real laughs, their relationships were with a band-leader and a culture, both of which were fading into the middle distance. While the Sandmarks and Ray Condo

tried to keep a semi-legendary Montreal roots band running from the opposite ends of a continent, the very music that inspired them – rockabilly, Western swing, bluegrass, boogie-woogie and bootleg country – seemed to be slipping from the public imagination.

For six years, they struggled. Ray Condo had barnstormed the club stages of Montreal like an amphetamine-fueled phantom of Hank Williams until, disillusioned by North American fans he felt had abandoned their own rich musical heritage, he hightailed to Vancouver in 1990.

Rhythm guitarist Peter and lead guitarist Eric were left to run their offshoot Daddies and hope something positive would happen. And it did. They broke up.

“We survived that, and have two new bands, each on solid ground,” Peter Sandmark says. This Tuesday, Ray Condo and the Ricochets and the Crazy Rhythm Daddies come together at the Cabaret. They had divorced amicably, and both got custody of the parents.

Sandmark and Condo not only believe in the musical purity and soul of those parental roots musics, they now have evidence of their marketability. It took long enough.

“Really, 1990 was our last year touring with Ray,” Sandmark says from the offices of MainFilm, where he works with a co-op of film and video groups “kinda like the alternative film scene.”

While the club scene considered the band a going concern – they had never formally called it quits – Ray Condo and his Hardrock Goners were ghost-



Eric Sandmark, John Davis, Rob Kraft and Peter Sandmark got rhythm.

ing an existence. There was one gig in 1991, a CD launch for Come On! They played one show in 1992, at the Hemby Festival in England. Fury Records, a British label with a vintage name and similar tastes, picked the band up, and there was a European tour in 1993, “but it’s not like we were together as a band.”

By ’94, they were reduced to meeting in Amsterdam to tour the Low Countries and Britain, where the natives still drink themselves blind to the white-lightning swing and hillbilly music abandoned by North Americans with Perrier pop tastes.

“We were hanging on by the skin of our teeth. We didn’t want to say Ray Condo wasn’t a band any more. I mean, the Rolling Stones do it – they don’t see each other for a year, and then get together for an album and a tour.”

Sadly, there is the nagging fiscal issue of the quintillions of dollars and the leases on castles separating your Mick Jagger from your Ray Condo. The logistical and personal complications were bad enough, but these guys needed money to continue.

“We were worried that Ray would disappear, and he’s such a great performer,” Peter says.

Joaquin Records thought so, too. The San Francisco indie label picked

up on the hellbilly vibe of Condo and his new band the Ricochets, packaged it as a CD called *Swing Brother Swing!*, and sent them on the road.

Suddenly, Condo was opening for a fellow pelvis-ratcheter, Mexican Presley sensation El Vez and drawing attention from the New York Times. Back home, the Daddies found a home with Igloo Records. “We think we’ve finally found the label with real distribution.” Igloo is pushing them on the European mainland while Condo wows audiences from K.C. to Detroit.

Sandmark is loathe to put a name to what the two groups do, but given the urban lifestyles of the musicians and the rural sounds, Citybilly feels right. With both bands looking to a future built on the living past, these are the first two beneficent incidences of Condo conversion.

■ *Ray Condo and the Ricochets with the Crazy Rhythm Daddies in Cabaret, 2111 St. Laurent Blvd., Tuesday.*

Swinging cowboys

Ray Condo and the Crazy Rhythm Daddies: cowpoke meets bebop

by CHRIS YURKIW

The smallest cult in the world is probably Western Swing," says Ray Condo, on tour and on the (long)horn from Kansas City. "There are a lot of rockabilly bands, but there are very few Western Swing outfits. You can count 'em on one hand."

Well then, get a couple of fingers out and start snappin', 'cause this town is tied in with *two* groups who are into the pre-rock, pre-rockabilly, country-meets-jazz sound of Western Swing. And, of course, the two bands used to be tied up together.

MUSIC

Ray Condo and his Ricochets + the Crazy Rhythm Daddies in a double album launch this Tuesday, Aug. 13 at Cabaret. 9pm. \$7 + taxes & services

Brothers Peter and Eric Sandmark, now of the Crazy Rhythm Daddies, were integral members of Ray's former Montreal unit the Hard Rock Goners for almost 10 years. They started the Daddies when Ray left for his beloved Vancouver in 1988, but when Condo returned they kept going as a band within a band, a built-in opening act, but most importantly a sub-set of the cowpunk Goners, who explored the wondrous era when Stetsons and saxes were hung up beside each other.

"We'd grown up listening to my father's jazz record collection," says Peter, whose parents were jazz fiends from Sweden and emigrants to Canada in 1952. "I really loved that stuff: swing, jump jive, Louis Jordan, Louis Prima—after the big band period with these smaller combos. So even with our first [punk and rock'n'roll] band, The Paradots, we were still into that stuff. But I never thought that we could play any of those older tunes in the early '80s, because everything was all so punk-oriented. But Ray really initiated us into the



Hillbilly Swedes Peter (left) and Eric Sandmark of the Daddies

country side of rock 'n' roll."

So then, did the Brothers Sandmark give something back to Condo in turning him on to the jazzy Western Swing?

"It's just a natural progression," twangs Ray, who's now back in Vancouver again. "Most people who get into rockabilly jump in there and it's exciting because it's the underbelly of the country world and all that. But if you listen to that music it'll eventually lead you into jazz, because it's all sort of connected, and especially Western Swing. So I've been going that way for a while, wanting to play the horn and listening to all the classic jazz."

Condo does play some sax with his new, Vancouver-based group the Ricochets, who have a first album out on what Ray says might be the only Western Swing label in the world—Joaquin Records out of San Francisco. And if *Saving Brother Swing* is the first release on Joaquin by a contemporary act, the Sandmarks have the distinction of being Daddies of the first ever release (self-titled) on a new Toronto roots-rock label called Igloo. Peter Sandmark dreams of touring the Crazy Rhythm Daddies in Scandinavia—following up on the Euro success of Condo and the Goners, tapping the "cult around hillbilly music there" and returning to the jazz-loving country of his ancestors.

Condo, meanwhile, is big on America, which he says is going through a cultural reawakening: "They want to find out about their heritage now, so this roots thing is taking off. It looks like it's going to have its day."

Despite their differing itineraries, Ray Condo and his Ricochets and the Crazy Rhythm Daddies will crash into each other for a double-album launch in Montreal this Tuesday, where Ray will be swingin' western style while the Daddies do their "bluegrass boogie mixed with jive." A fine, but important distinction.

"Western Swing is a product of the jazz age," says Condo. "Bob Wills in the late '20s and '30s, jumping on his horse and riding 20 miles to go see Bessie Smith sing. But it's all jazz, it's all heavy swing—it's big band cowboy jazz. It peaked in the '40s and '50s, and then it really died out. It's a shame that such a vital music form has been lost, because it's one of the major building blocks of rock'n'roll. Before rockabilly, it was Western Swing." ✕

Swing lo' daddio

If these guys were in it for the money, their landlords would have long since been their worst enemies. Eric and Peter Sandmark, the brothers who master-minded the idea of putting together a Western-style swing band in a city where disco, hard rock, and Québécois music rule in perpetuity, have finally crossed the finish line. Payback time.

You have to admire these hillbillies for entertaining us for over eight years, putting their hearts and balls – with no compromises – into the various shows they've played in this town. You could say they're the kings of B-Movie music culture. They've been rowing against all the musical currents with only their passion and their belief for tasteful music. The good news is that Crazy Rhythm Daddies, after putting together three cassettes of roots-oriented tunes, have finally immortalized their efforts on CD.

The talk of the town

The Sandmark brothers are big chatters, and Eric Sandmark is almost a cult figure in Montreal. You may have seen him browsing in used-record stores looking for "rare, discontinued vinyl" or performing with the Astronuts, an instrumental quartet that live and die for the surf-music idiom.

"The movie *Pulp Fiction* was a big help to stimulate and promote surf music," says Eric. "What we need now is a successful movie with a Western swing soundtrack. I'm not really crazy about the country-music scene, but it helps us. Seeing band leaders in music videos with an acoustic guitar up front is a great thing."

When asked to comment on the self-titled CD, Peter puts it very bluntly: "We didn't try to refine the music – we wanted to keep it as primitive as possible. Of course, the ultimate is a live performance, but the CD is a document of what we do live." The result is a selection of 17 of their favourite recordings, and no way, can you resist the exuberant, foot-stompin' beats.

With the help of bass player John Davis and drummer Rob Kraft (both with the band since 1993), the swinging brothers wrote two originals – *Travelling Shoes* and *Crazy Rhythm Boogie* – as well as a half-dozen of their own arrangements of older tunes. Western swing legend Bob Wills and his group, The Texas Playboys, were inspirational too. The Daddies are also doing renditions of *Who Walks In* and *Red Hot Rhythm*. The opening track, *When I Went Walking*, will be the next video.

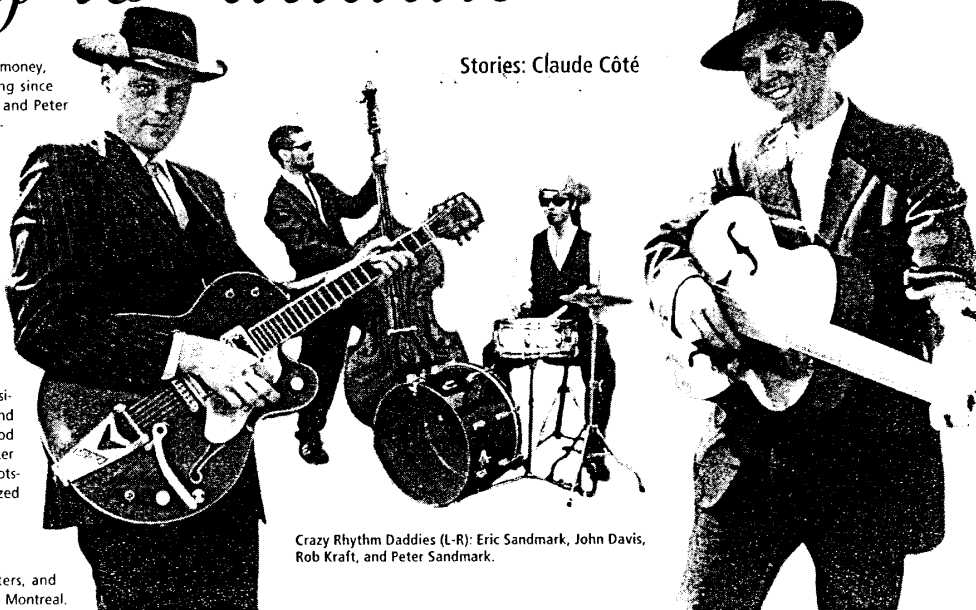
"Our upbringing was the country," explains Peter. "We were born in Noranda, Abitibi, where our father (who in Sweden led a band called the Jay Sands Trio) was offered a job as a teacher. We grew up in the Chateauguay Valley, near Huntingdon. But that doesn't really mean anything – you can live in the city and play country music."

"Now kids in the country listen to heavy metal."

Always and never goners

For a few years, Eric and Peter Sandmark were full-time members of The Hard Rock Goners, Ray Condo's band [see story this page] during his Montreal years. They were perceived as a cow-punk-psychobilly band, well integrated into the underground scene of the mid-80s alongside groups like Jerry Jerry & The Sons of Rhythm Orchestra, The Hodads, and Three O'Clock Train.

Stories: Claude Côté



Crazy Rhythm Daddies (L-R): Eric Sandmark, John Davis, Rob Kraft, and Peter Sandmark.

**Montreal's
Crazy Rhythm
Daddies are
kickin' up dust
with debut CD.**

"After Ray's departure for Vancouver in 1991," says Eric, "we were a band with no singer. We wanted to be a bit more melodic, and that's when we lost the anglo support, who definitely went grunge. The flavour of the moment was in-your-face, loud, and aggressive bands that attracted the club scene. On the Main, we were out."

"Oddly enough, the French crowd started liking us. Places like L'Barouf on St-Denis became a second home for the Crazy Rhythm Daddies."

"Some people are mystified by the name," adds Peter. "They think we're old – not true. Our music is danceable, energetic, vital, and young..."

Eric interjects: "It's true, we're not on the cutting edge. It is a tough town to try to market Western swing in. We're not complaining – it's just a fact. I think there's a future for this music, but we have no intention of moving. This is our town! In Ray's case, it's different – he's nomadic. As Marshall McLuhan said: 'You can be anywhere you want.'"

The Crazy Rhythm Daddies play about 40 shows a year. Does that mean you should pass on them this time around? "People think they can see us any time," responds Eric. "They think we're handy and comfortable like an old glove. But we haven't played for awhile just to save up for this show. Besides, Peter became a father recently. That's a regular gig."

With Ray Condo's new CD, this double-launch party will be a wonderful opportunity for both new and old fans alike.

"We'll have a special price for two, a combo price. Isn't it a 90s thing?" says Eric laughing. Meanwhile, Peter Sandmark is closing the interview in high gear: "We don't need an image, we need substance. People have met at our shows and started going out together. We bring a positive vibe."

"Look out – it's gonna be a sweat-o-thon. We'll have oxygen masks backstage!" ♦

Crazy Rhythm Daddies with Ray Condo & His Ricochet double album launch at Cabaret Aug. 13



Crazy Rhythm Daddies
Crazy Rhythm Daddies (Igloo Records)

The Sandmark brothers – Eric and Peter – are incredible guitarists who's passion for music escapes modern categorization. They do Bob Wills-style country swing tunes, jazz novelty numbers like the naughty *Killin' Jive*, early rockabilly songs, bluegrass-influenced cuts, and much more. Most songs are covers of recordings from before the 60s. Even their own compositions, like *Travelling Shoes*, are true to the period.

The brother's duets and their sardonic humour provide the vocal highlights, while their own playing is accented by bassist John Davis and percussionist Rob Kraft. They're also joined by talented guest artists on this well-recorded collection. A bubbling, bouncing recording that is pure fun, even when they're singing about cheating and heartbreak. Like their resuscitated versions of old-timey music, the Sandmarks prove *One Is Never Too Old To Swing*.

(Carl Witche) ○○○○○

Crazy Rhythm Daddies
(Igloo Records)

Without Montrealers Peter and Eric Sandmark's dogged determination, this superb combo, who cheerfully wed western swing and bluegrass, would not retain our attention as much. These knowledgeable musicologists and former Hardrock Goners (of Ray Condo fame) row the happy little boat, where banjo, acoustic guitars and standup bass rule, alone. Of the seventeen songs included here, not one is over three minutes. Long enough to set your foot tapping, short enough to avoid boredom. At Cabaret, August 13th. (Claude Côté) **** (Excellent)

Translation of review in *Voir*
August 8-14, 1996.

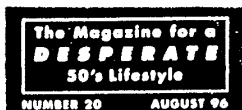


CRAZY RHYTHM DADDIES CD
(IGLOO RECORDS)

This is the debut release from a Canadian quartet which has been together for 9 years. The band is fronted by the Sandmark brothers Eric and Peter which you may remember as being members of Ray Condo's old band The Hardrock Goners.

The music is mostly authentic Hillbilly/ Western Swing, performed with talent. They cover songs like The Washboard Wonders' "It Ain't Right" (which Ray Condo also does on his new CD) or 3 numbers of Western Swing giant Bob Wills. Guest musicians (fiddle, banjo and sax) on certain tracks add to the sound. The band surprises by doing 3 (very good) Jump/ Jive tracks. They even venture in the wild Rock'n'Roll (!) department covering Pretty Boy's "Bip Bop Bip" though with horrid results. Only two of the tracks are penned by the band but they're inspired.

A good 17-tracker of Western Swing, Hillbilly and Jive



NOW DIG THIS - 96



THE CRAZY RHYTHM DADDIES
The Crazy Rhythm Daddies!
Igloo CD IR001

When I Went Walking / Killin' Jive / Deep Elem Blues / It Ain't Right / Bring It On Down To My House, Honey / Travelling Shoes / Crawdad / Who Walks In (When I Walk Out) / One Is Never Too Old To Swing / It's Rainin' Here This Morning / Satan Takes A Holiday / She's Gone, Gone, Gone / Everybody's Truckin' / Get With It / Getting That Low-down Swing / Crazy Rhythm Boogie / Bip Bop Bip (Playing time: 46:00)

The Crazy Rhythm Daddies first came to our attention when the two sibling leaders Eric and Peter Sandmark toured Europe with Ray Condo's Hardrock Goners. Back in Canada the Sandmarks were already working in parallel with the Daddies. Eric's guitar is more controlled and swinging, even jazzy on this CD though he's still a little crazy - thanx be! Peter played drums with the Goners but here switches to rhythm guitar and the two brothers combine to produce some fine vocal harmony. With John Davis on stand-up bass and Rob Kraft at the drum kit they make a formidable quartet of hillbilly swing. Their use of great fiddlers on two tracks, sax on another two and a banjo on another adds interest to the instrumentation and I detected harmonica too, which I guess is from Peter.

The main inspiration is western swing as it moved from hillbilly to rockabilly, in fact combining country, blues and jump music before rock n roll took the major credit for this exciting mixture. Surprise, surprise there's three covers of Bob Wills with 'Who Walks In (When I Walk Out)' already appearing in this style on the Ray Condo CD 'Come On' - many thought it a standout track on what was a 'patchy' album. The Cats & The Fiddle's 'Killin' Jive' has a Slim Gaillard feel and 'Bip Bop Bip' was a 1957 r&b hit for Pretty Boy who was in fact Don Covay under a pseudonym bestowed on him by Little Richard. And to complete the connection, 'Hurry On Down To My House, Honey' has been attributed to Bob Wills and Nellie Lutcher, both.

All in all a bouncy, highly danceable album which could prove a handy introduction if rumours are correct that the Daddies might be booked for a future Hemsby. It fairly bubbles along. I think this is their debut CD, it's well constructed, delightfully played and sung, all from the Bob Wills, Lefty Frizzell, Modern Mountaineers sphere of influence and a couple of originals for good measure.

Dave Driver

IGLOO RECORDS, PO BOX 122, STATION P, TORONTO ON M5S 2S7, CANADA
It's cool, it's home...

Daddies swing back to the past

Band betting its pre-World War II jazz-flavored sound catches on

BRENDAN KELLY
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

The guys in the Crazy Rhythm Daddies are not big Michael Jackson fans.

In fact, the four members of this all-acoustic outfit, which specializes in the pop sounds of the '20s and '30s, say they aren't that impressed by today's pop music in general.

These Montreal musicians just think people wrote better songs back then, and, given the choice, they'd rather listen to Louis Armstrong or Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys than Nirvana or Garth Brooks.

Not stodgy

"Just because it's old doesn't mean it's bad," says Crazy Rhythm Daddies' bassist Clive Jackson.

The Daddies may play music from the early 20th century, but they're anything but stodgy, old nostalgia buffs.

All four are founding members of popular local rockabilly band Ray Condo and his Hardrock Goners, and two of them — Peter and Eric Sandmark — even did time in a punk band at the start of their careers.

These reformed rock'n'rollers insist that they didn't set out to make their way back through the pop-music history books — they just fell in love with this pre-World War II music.

"It's not a linear thing," says guitarist Peter Sandmark, who handles drum duties with the Hardrock Goners. "It's not like we're on a trajectory back in time. But we couldn't have done this before we played in Ray Condo. I always wanted to do this kind of thing, but I thought you'd never be able to do it and get away with it because it was so completely out-of-fashion."

The Crazy Rhythm Daddies — who also include banjo player Chris Dean — aren't arguing that the jazz-flavored country music they play has suddenly come back into fashion, but they do feel that music fans are desperate for alternatives to today's rock music.

"I think there's an audience out there that's getting tired of processed pop," says lead guitarist Eric Sandmark. "Kids still like the hit-parade stuff, but some of the older folks want more organic music."

'Western swing'

Their latest album, *Swingcats' Ball*, features 16 examples of the Daddies' "organic" pop, and they deliver high-energy renditions of a wide assortment of Depression-era tunes.

They cover everything from Hoagy Carmichael's *Stardust* to *If I Had You*, a song popularized by Bing's brother Bob Crosby, and they even manage to squeeze in



GAZETTE, PETER MARTIN

Members of Crazy Rhythm Daddies (from left), Clive Jackson, Eric Sandmark, Peter Sandmark and Chris Dean.

some Duke Ellington.

They're quick to say that they're not an orthodox jazz band, but they're not quite sure what to call their music.

"I suppose we could term it western swing," says Eric Sandmark. "Swing was the rock 'n' roll of its day. It was the big dance music of the late '20s to the '40s. Just because it's old doesn't mean that people didn't have fun and dance to it back then. It was fun dance music. We could say we're a swing, string band because swing bands were largely trumpets and saxes. It's low-tech music that revels in its low-techness. It's like Ray's line: 'There are fingers sweating on those strings.'"

Condo is actually a big fan of the Crazy Rhythm Daddies, and the Daddies frequently open for Condo and his Hardrock Goners. The Daddies have blossomed in part because of Condo's desire to avoid Quebec winters: he spent the past six months in Vancouver, forcing the Hardrock Goners into hibernation. But the band is coming back to life this spring with a date May 6 at les Foufounes Electriques — along with the Crazy Rhythm Daddies — and then Condo and the Goners are flying across the Atlantic for their first-ever tour of Europe, which will include a gig at a major rockabilly festival just outside London. Condo has just released a four-song single.

For the Crazy Rhythm Daddies

— all of whom still play with the Hardrock Goners — there's no great ideological divide between the two groups.

"If you listen to these songs from the '30s, you hear the structure that became rock 'n' roll," says Eric Sandmark.

"We just think music stands on its own," adds Peter Sandmark. "It doesn't matter what time it's from."

■ *The Crazy Rhythm Daddies perform tonight at the Terminal (1635 Ste. Catherine St. W.), along with Shadowy Men on a Shadowy Planet and the Sheiks, in a concert celebrating the second anniversary of Montreal comic magazine Drawn & Quarterly.*



RAY CONDO AND HIS HARDROCK GONERS



CRAZY REKKIDS
4358 Beaconsfield, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H4A 2H6
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Condo and beyond-o

The legacy of the late Canuckabilly hero Ray Condo lives

by RUPERT BOTTENBERG

"This is my beef," says Montreal musician Peter Sandmark, and when someone so sweet-natured has a beef, one tends to listen. "Here's this guy, Ray Condo, probably Canada's rockabilly star—I mean, Ronnie Hawkins is a rockabilly cat but he's [originally] from Arkansas, not Canada, and Ray Condo is recognized internationally as a rockabilly star—and his records aren't on any domestic label."

No, but the two-song seven-inch single Sandmark's releasing this Friday is a start. Ray Condo passed away last April at age 52, but the chapter in Canadian rock 'n' roll history that he exemplified hasn't come to a close. "We had to make a statement about his role in music, and the 45 is, to me, the currency of the rock 'n' roll music of the '50s. That was the tool that launched independent music. I wanted to connect Ray Condo to that history."

Condo, with his bands the Hard Rock Goners (of which Sandmark and his brother Eric are members) and later the Ricochets in Vancouver (who supply the record's wild B-side "Big Dog Little Dog"), straddled the space between the original rockabilly scene and the recent revival. He held down the fort, so to speak, through the '80s, with indie releases that earned him both punk props and accolades from the classicists. "To be patriotic about it all," Sandmark continues, "he's a Canadian talent and I don't think a lot of people got a chance to hear it, and probably would like it. What amazes me is how he never did a bad take. He was the real deal. His voice was great every take. He never fucked up!"

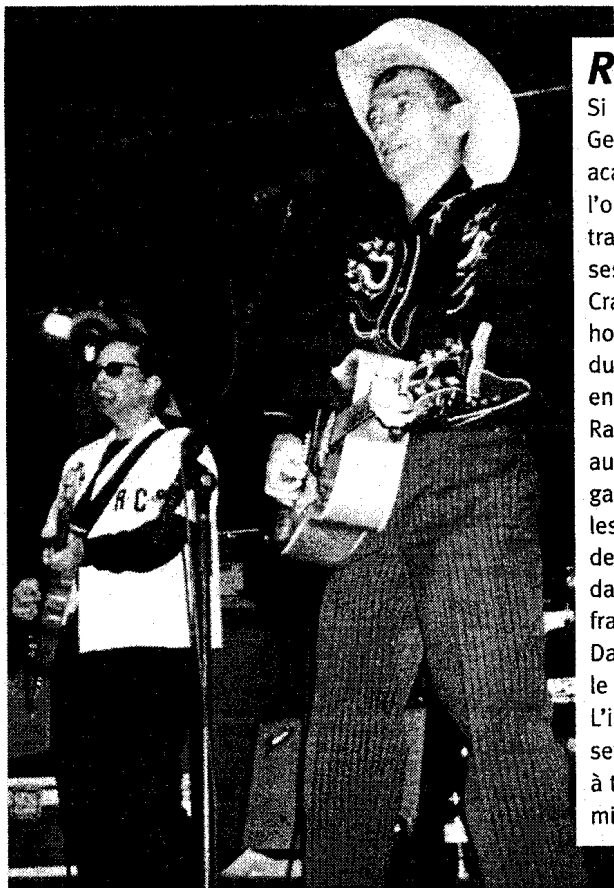
"We were planning to have Ray come out here this fall. because it



THE REAL DEAL: Ray Condo

would have been the 20th anniversary of Ray Condo & the Hard Rock Goners." Sadly, such a reunion wasn't to be. On an uplifting note, two young local talents who cite Condo as an influence will be present. Li'l Andy opens the show and Bloodshot Bill, whom Sandmark calls a spiritual heir to Condo, will assume vocal duties for the main slot. "I feel like we're passing the torch to him," says Sandmark—clearly unaware of the safety hazard that Bill plus fire might constitute. ■

RECORD LAUNCH WITH BLOODSHOT BILL, CRAZY RHYTHM DADDIES, LI'L ANDY AND PHOTOS BY GAYLE HURMUSES AT LE SWIMMING ON FRIDAY, NOV. 26, 9 P.M., \$6



ICI Montreal

RAY CONDO

Si Ray Condo est récemment parti rejoindre Eddie Cochran, Gene Vincent, Marty Robbins et autres légendes du même acabit sur une quelconque île déserte, ses amis restés ici ne l'ont pas oublié. Histoire de bien honorer sa mémoire et tout le travail qu'il a accompli en marge des tendances et des modes, ses ex-collègues des Hardrock Goners (en l'occurrence les Crazy Rhythm frères Sandmark) ont décidé de lui rendre un hommage spécial en sortant un 45 tours avec deux chansons du défunt rock'n'roller, «Sweet Love On My Mind», enregistrée en 1987 avec les Hardrock Goners, et «Big Dog, Little Dog» que Ray Condo a couchée sur bandes peu de temps avant sa mort au printemps dernier. Pour le lancement de cette bonne vieille galette vinyle, Peter et Eric Sandmark ont décidé de pousser les choses un peu plus loin en recréant sur scène la folie des concerts des Hardrock Goners, à l'époque où ils faisaient danser tout le monde dans des lofts partys endiablés. Les deux frangins seront accompagnés par le bassiste des Crazy Rhythm Daddies, Nick, et c'est nul autre que Bloodshot Bill qui aura le difficile privilège de remplacer l'irremplaçable Ray au micro. L'il Andy et les Crazy Rhythm Daddies feront chacun un court set avant la résurrection des Hardrock Goners. Attendez-vous à toute une soirée de rock'n'roll. (Patrick Baillargeon) • Swimming. Ven. 26 nov. 22h. 6\$. 282-7665

The Hour

Members of the original **Hardrock Goners** and of the late **Ray Condo's** last band in Vancouver have joined together to release a special, limited edition 45 featuring the songs, *Sweet Love On My Mind* (from a 1987 recording of Ray and the Goners) and *Big Dog Little Dog* (from Condo's last recording session in 2004). The Montreal record launch is at Le Swimming, Nov. 26.

The Montreal Gazette

Before his passing in April, there were plans to bring local rockabilly legend Ray Condo back to town from Vancouver to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the start of his celebrated Hardrock Goners band. A celebration goes on nevertheless, with tomorrow's tribute night at Le Swimming, 3643 St. Laurent Blvd.

The centrepiece will be a performance of classic Condo by Crazy Rhythm Daddies (some of whom are former Goners) and Bloodshot Bill. The concert will also serve as the launch for a new 45, featuring a song from Condo's final session and a 1987 Goners tune.

Admission costs \$6. Call (514) 282-7665.

VOIR

LANCEMENT D'UN 45 TOURS DE RAE CONDO

Figure du *revival* rockabilly, cow-boy sauvage et sensible né à Hull, contemporain de Hank Williams et d'Elvis mort d'une crise cardiaque au printemps dernier, Rae Condo lance, d'outre-tombe, son dernier 45 tours. En face A, *Sweet Love On My Mind*, enregistré avec son premier groupe formé à Montréal, les Hardrock Goners, et du côté B, *Big Dog Little Dog*, une pièce composée avant sa mort avec le band qu'il projetait de monter et pour lequel il n'avait pas encore trouvé de nom... Gravé à Nashville, le 45 tours sera lancé le 26 novembre au Swimming, en compagnie de **Bloodshot Bill** et de **Crazy Rhythm Daddies**. Le jeune **L'il Andy**, qui s'est mis à la musique après avoir vu Rae Condo en spectacle, ouvrira le bal. (M. H. Poitras)



Spins

Ray Condo and his Hardrock Goners

Come On (Fury)

Hybrid, unique, frenetic, and superb are only some of the words which apply to this excellent third CD by Condo's "independent" group, with members in both Montreal and Vancouver. Almost nothing in this collection was written after 1960. (The one exception is *Bronco Loco*, the album's surf-rock Venture-esque instrumental written by guitarist Eric Sandmark.) Yet, every number is incredibly fresh and exciting.

There's a lot of danceable music with country, country swing, rockabilly, and Cajun rhythms – all topped with fascinating vocal performances. Condo, with his slightly nasal "country" voice, sings most leads, although Eric Sandmark and brother Peter each sing several as well. The Sandmarks, the group's Montreal contingent, combine to tease and tickle on *Who Walks In*, a tune they also do with their own group, The Crazy Rhythm Daddies.

With Condo twanging on rhythm, Eric providing wicked leads, Peter pounding the skins, Edgar Bridwell making his fiddle sing, and Clive Jackson plucking acoustic bass (with great resonance on this recording), the five are joined by Vancouver guitar great Jimmy Roy, who plays electric or steel guitar on 12 of the 19 tracks.

A heterogeneous collection of everything from honky tonk to jazz and blues, *Come On* is, above all, the reflection of five excellent musicians who love music more than money and who still have fun playing together. With members thousands of miles apart, who knows when they'll do it again. Come on, before the Goners are gone. (Carl Witchel) ★★★★★



The Gazette

THE GAZETTE, MONTREAL, SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 1994

RAY CONDO AND HIS HARDROCK GONERS

Come On!

Fury Records

■ INFO-LINE: 841-8600, code 8004

England may have trouble breeding a decent rock band, but it still knows the real thing when it burns a white-lighting trail up its back.

When Ray Condo had enough of the kind of treatment the Expos get in their hometown – winners with the secret who aren't embraced as such – he relocated to Vancouver and the Hardrock Goners seemed consigned to local-legend limbo.

Instead, a plane ticket to Europe found a continent-and-a-half of revivalists who heard the true passion, roots and playing ability which separate the real players from the hep retro dilettantes.

Ray remains a train-jumper of a singer, and the Goners swing like a barn door in a hurricane. The latest release on Fury Records finds them playing harder than ever, starting with the title track, an autobahn of a song. Jerry Lee, Webb Pierce, line up at the bar and order doubles, because it's going to be a long, thirsty night.

MIRROR MAY 26 • JUNE 2, 1994



Ray Condo *Come On* (Fury-import)

Ray Condo and His Hard Rock Goners are the real thing, or at least, as close as you can get to authentic rockabilly, country swing and original honky tonk in 1994. And it's not just in

the groovy threads or the choice of material on this third album (stuff by Jerry Kennedy, Wayne Walker, Eddie Shuler and others, if those writers of chestnuts mean anything to you); you can hear it in everything from the grain of Condo's voice to the quality of the recording by England's retro Fury label. For Condo, who recently forsook Montreal for Vancouver (the band still lives here), this music is not a schtick nor a style, but something he lives, and he cannot do it wrong. (Chris Yurkiw)

Thursday 6th - Monday 10th May 1993
Pontins Holiday Centre, Beach Road, Hemsby Norfolk

TOM INGRAM AND THE ROCK'N' ROLL WEEKENDERS TEAM BRING TO YOU

The **BIG One**

HEMSBY
10

(Excerpt of review in the June,
1993 issue of NOW DIG THIS)

by **Dave Driver**

I don't know what superlatives I can heap upon RAY CONDO & THE HARDROCK GONERS that wouldn't embarrass them. Unlike some moderate talents I could name, they seem bemused by the fan worship and adulation they properly collect. Like The Dave & Deke Combo, they are the natural headliners of tomorrow - the only injustice is that they aren't already. They don't have to do anything except collect more fans - then the

half open, manic concentrated eyes staring mid-distance defying you not to love him to death. Perhaps he's just concentrating; and never mind the mixed metaphors, you should've been there. Truly most of the numbers are covers and yet not so - they are altered and changed to become uniquely Goners'-owned. So much so that this band gives me most difficulty identifying the original artists - it's from rockabilly, hillbilly, rock n roll, cajun, jazz, western swing - they are a deeply rooted group and yet of today. Again like Dave and Deke, this is no mums' and dads' sterile nostalgia trip. I'd trace them from Fats Waller to Louis Jordan to The Treniers to Louis Prima to Dan Hicks - and they don't sound like any of them. It's their attack and attention and supreme sense of humour that connects. And



RAY CONDO & THE HARDROCK GONERS (Photo: Dave Driver)

mainstream country world may grab them for themselves if it had the wit and intelligence. But there's nothing mainstream about their music and approach - they are the true 'outlaws'. I could just describe them as 'inspired' and the Hemsby audience would know, but that wouldn't be fair to everyone else.

The first bonus was the inclusion this time of Edgar Bridwell on fiddle, though I'm tempted to be pretentious and say violin. His solos flowed beautifully. But in an unorthodox sense he also combines with Clive Jackson's bass to provide the bedrock for the controlled lunacy of Ray's vocals and the fierce guitar of Eric Sandhark who lopes across the stage like a caged tiger, forward to the front, mouth half open, manic concentrated eyes staring

their musicianship.

Anybody out there who thinks Louis Jordan threw his bands together would make the same mistake about Ray Condo. These people should be taken away by the Mafia and forced to sign contracts that they'll stay together until Hell freezes - and it can't if they're playing. Absolutely brilliant and if you think I've taken something pharmaceutical, go see 'em and then tell me different. The tracks say it all - 'Barroom Crazy', 'Orange Blossom Special', 'Hot And Cold', 'Pepstepper's Stomp', 'Honky Tonk Mind', 'Blast Off' and 'Tomorrow Night'. Travel distances, cross mountains barefoot, wade rivers, cross continents to see them - trust me! (*But are they really any good, Dave?!? - Ed.*)

Artist: **RAY CONDO and His
Hard Rock Goners**
Title: **"Condo Country"**
Label: **Crazy Rekkids -CD003**
Producer: **Eric Sandmark / Clive Jackson
/ Edgar Bridwell / Peter Sandmark and
Ray Condo**

*Ice Cold Water / Honky Tonk Mind / Catty
Town / No Use Talkin' / Lover Come Back
To Me / Barroom Crazy / Pepstepper's
Stomp / Tomorrow Night / Great Shakin'
Fever / I'm Coming Home / Hold Me Baby
/ Whoa Mule / Way Out There / Mister
Who / Sinner / I Wish It Had Been A
Dream / Bitter Tears / Done Gone Crazy /
Blast Off / Crazy Mixed Up World / Hot 'n
Cold / The Sinister Urge / Skala Bop Baby /
Jolie Ti Catin / Your True Love / Pocketful
Of Rainbows*

26 songs and over one full hour of entertainment from this Montreal-based throwback to country and rockabilly of the 60's. In fact, there isn't a form of country music that Ray Condo and His Hard Rock Goners band fail to touch upon with this amazing, and thoroughly entertaining collection.

Condo Country is no assembly-line production — this is rough-around-the-edges, gutsy music; not particularly commercial in today's radio standards, and that is probably where the attraction starts.

No Kenny Rogers crooning here either, but if you want to hear shades of Hank Williams, Elvis Presley, Bob Wills, Doug Kershaw, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, Jody Reynolds, The Everly

Brothers, The Ventures...etc., etc....then this is the place! Condo and The Goners do it all...there's even a solid bluegrass entry with *"Bitter Tears"* - told you they did it all!

Track this one down...you'll become 'Condo-ized' real quick!

Country Music News

(97594 CANADA LIMITED)

'The Voice Of Country Music In Canada'

1983

RAY CONDO AND THE HARD ROCK GONERS GOOD TIME THUMPIN'

by Patrick Hutchinson

Ray Condo and his Hardrock Goners see themselves as a band with a mission, namely to reacquaint manqué rock 'n' rollers with their roots. They share the conviction that most of what passes for rock these days is stifled by electronic sophistication, and are attempting to redress the balance. Their music (which consists mostly of lovingly resurrected gems from the '40s and '50s) could be loosely described as rockabilly, but not of the big haircut revival strain that was trendy a couple of years ago. The spirits invoked are not those of Elvis and Carl Perkins so much as those of more rural Southern crazies who without knowing it invented rock'n'roll by adding some R&B to their country recipe and souping up the speed and volume.

Condo and co. treat the old songs with respect (using mostly acoustic line-ups of drums, standup bass, violin, acoustic and electric guitars, and voice), but not as if they belonged in a museum. "We're neo-traditional, but that doesn't make us conventional" is how Condo expresses it. They prefer to draw people's attention to unjustly neglected or obscure oldies than to contribute to what they see as a glut of mediocre songwriting today, firmly rejecting the notion of rock 'n' rollers-as-artists. "Our statement isn't in the lyrics, but in the style we choose to play," says Condo; "All the royalties (from the LP) are going to old hillbilly guys running T.V. repair shops".

The Goners are understandably wary of labels and pigeonholes, especially as terms such as 'country' or 'rock' have been

abused so much. They feel that mainstream country has gone down the tubes as badly as mainstream rock, pointing out that a lot of country singers who used to rock out in their younger days are now almost embarrassed about it. A rocking side that Dolly Parton cut in her teens is put on the stereo to illustrate the point. The band are avid collectors of old albums on backyard labels adorned with pictures of grinning hillbillies like Hardrock Gunter (who inspired part of their name). Their special hero at present is one Eddy Shuler, owner of one of said two-bit labels in Louisiana, who was responsible for numerous slices of swampy country/rockabilly either as producer or performer, and who also used distorted electric guitar long before the Brit-blues types usually credited with its invention.

If you look closely at the second side of the Goners' LP you will see, scratched on the runout groove next to the label, "Shuler lives!". Louisiana 'billy is the music they see themselves most as heirs to, being generally rawer and crazier than the better-known Memphis variety, and having the added influence of Cajun and even Caribbean styles. Condo sums it up as being "where Celtic music meets African".

The LP (on Pipeline Records, making two out of two excellent releases on that label, home also of Three O'Clock Train) is called *Crazy Date*, and should be in the shops by the time you read this. It opens with a rollicking take of *Greenback Dollar* and bops hard through a dozen other tunes before closing with the delightfully schlocky *Pocketful of Rainbows*. Considering that none of the band

are genuine simple country folks (with the possible exception of Condo, who comes from the Ottawa Valley where "Johnny Cash has been Pope since Day One") the sound and the feeling are really authentic. The record (and the band themselves) avoid being too academic or musicological on the one hand, or indulging in big-hair-and-pink-cadillac posing on the other.

Like many local bands they are frustrated with the lack of an audience for live music in Montreal (especially in contrast with their recent 10-date Western tour), and blame it on the disco mentality that's still prevalent here. "This is my favourite band," says Condo, who has played in various bands around the country, "I think this is the best band in North America, and I want to get this show on the road."



MONTREAL MIRROR

EVAN KATTAN

Ray Condo Crazy Date Pipeline Records

There was a time when I said I'd never buy an album from a group with a violin player. Now I've changed my mind. This album will be a proud part of my collection, sandwiched between the Cramps and the Battered Wives.

Ray Condo and his Hardrock Goners play a powerful blend of country, rockabilly and roots rock. It's the music of yesterday, being

all covers, but it's also the music of today because of the pure firepower of the Goners.

Ray growls and screams out the melodies of these numbers with an unashamed country lilt. He sounds aggressive enough to hit you over the head with his guitar if you didn't like the song (tho' of course he wouldn't). It's the type of voice that would make you a star in 1955. Today, it merely makes for a great album.

And those Goners. They rock.

Hard. No slushy sentimentalism on this LP, just straight-ahead driving rock'n'roll on 13 tracks and — okay — one slushy sentimental track to finish it off.

It's rare to find an album, especially on an Independent label, that captures a group's live energy. But *Crazy Date* does.

If you've liked the Goners live, buy the album. If you like rockin' 'toons, buy the album. If you don't, buy a Madonna album.

Paul Gott

REAR GARDE



RAY CONDO AND HIS HARD ROCK GONERS PUSH THE BOOGIE BUTTON

Everybody thinks country's mellow; it's not." Ray Condo, of Ray Condo and his Hard Rock Goners, loves real country and finds most modern music "doesn't have the old roots, dynamics, guts or sensuality." Ray was born in Quebec, raised in Ottawa and now lives in Montreal. After high school he moved out west, where most of his musical development took place. He's still aiming to move back. "Vancouver is the live music town. . . Places that aren't too sophisticated are more open to honky-tonk." Would he categorize the band as honky-tonk? "Oh, definitely."

The Hard Rock Goners are mostly from small-town Quebec: Peter and Eric Sandmark on drums and guitar, respectively; Edgar Bridwell on fiddle; Clive Jackson on bass fiddle. All have other vocations besides honky-tonk. Ray's a visual

artist, Clive's a painter. Edgar's an animation student who has worked on *Sesame Street*. Peter teaches film at Concordia University and belongs to Main Film co-op; Eric's a filmmaker and editor.

Ray & Co.'s new album, *Crazy Date*, includes "Skala Bop Baby," a "Greek rockabilly waitress song." (The Greek restaurant Skala is a favourite late-night haunt among Montreal cognoscenti.) In the album's title tune, "a guy calls up a gal for a date; the whole thing sounds sinister or a little twisted." There's also a token nuclear threat song, the comical "Push Button Boogie." "Everybody's so politically correct or gloomy; life is hard enough. I want them to take a couple of hours off before they go back to the nightmare."

Ray & Goners are touring this summer, to Vancouver (naturally!), then Philadelphia. "Bands like ours sound more American than American bands."

Hate honky-tonk? Ray Condo and his Hard Rock Goners give so much in performance, looking fit to expire later, that you're forced to join the dance. They appeal to the emotions. "We've had so much of everything, we've come full circle. The hardest thing to find is something simple."

Ray Condo and his Hardrock Goners from Montreal play a high voltage mix of 40s/50's country and rockabilly whipping third rate big-hair pretenders off the Bop map on the basis of authenticity and general gone-ness with their version of "the Rock Island Line."

It Came From Canada Various Artists

This collection of 12 Canadian bands offers an impressive cross-section of the national alternative scene. If it demonstrates anything, it's that Canadian bands have a much better sense of humor than their British and American counterparts. (Well, side one anyway: the Dr. Demento-like novelty excesses of Terminal Sunglasses and Calamity Janes just about kill it.)

But about that side one: there are a couple of good songs from Jerry Jerry and The Sons Of Rhythm, excellent traditional hillbilly boogie from Ray Condo and His Hardrock Goners, great sludgeabilly from Montreal's Deja Voodoo and, the highlight of the record, the grim, rollicking dance macabre of Chris Huston's *Surfin' On Heroin*.

The Gayette, Montreal

Ray Condo and his Hardrock Goners — *Crazy Date* (Pipeline): Fourteen — count 'em — great songs and 14 great performances add up to one outstanding long-playing vinyl debut by the nation's finest perveyors of arcane country, backwoods hillbilly and small-town rock 'n' roll.

Craft, care and love of the material contribute equally to this surprisingly polished effort. Recommended listening for country music purists, cowpunks and party animals.

— John Griffin

The Goners are a celebration of kitsch: bolo ties, an electric violin and Ray the rockabilly cat, up front in a white suit and cowboy boots. Ray and his Goners maintain a delicate balance between indulging in self parody and creating an almost reverent homage to the roots of rock 'n' roll. Ray presents himself as a kind of walking anachronism. He jerks. He twitches. He croons.

Ray does not simply mime the legends. A Condo show is an exercise in appreciation — appreciation of authentic rock music played on authentic instruments. It also happens to be a rollicking good time.

Dave Sherman

REAR GARDE

MONTREAL MIRROR

RAY CONDO AND HIS HARDROCK GONERS

RAY CONDO - Lead vocals, acoustic guitar
EDGAR BRIDWELL - Fiddle
CLIVE JACKSON - Bass fiddle
ERIC SANDMARK - Electric guitar, vocals
PETER SANDMARK - Drums, vocals

RAY CONDO
and his
HARDROCK
GONERS



Anti-Reagan fest draws a crowd

By MICHAEL MIROLLA
of The Gazette

The anarchists were there; the skins; the punks; the curious; the anybody-but-Ronnie protesters; and the let's-go-get-ourselves-some-cheap-beer crowd. And there was more than enough cheap beer to go around.

Some 750 strong, they were all there Friday night for the anti-Reagan celebration/benefit on International Wymin's day at the Paroisse St. Denis church on Laurier St.

There was thrashing to the hardcore of out-of-towners October Crisis (a great Ontario band with Husker Du reverberations) and Unwarranted Trust (an all-female Ottawa outfit that needs a more confident attitude on stage if it's to ever break down the barrier between itself and the crowd).

As well, there was the almost-hardcore of the Nils, competent as ever but, as several members of the audience pointed out, who still needed to wash the experience of opening for Joan Jett out of their hair.

Finally, we had the Asexuals, Beaconfield's answer to Redondo Beach, Calif. This group has made "white suburban punk" respectable in our fair city and their set Friday did nothing to take away from a growing reputation.

But two of the evening's acts had absolutely nothing to do with hardcore.

First, solo performer Julien Umojha brought his bongos on to the stage and mesmerized the crowd with a fusion of African/Latin American rhythms that turned thrashers into swayers.

Then, the ubiquitous Ray Condo & His Hard Rock Goners topped the whole thing off with a display of root rock (complete with stand up bass) that sent everyone smiling into the night.

The evening was a joint production of the Regroupement Autonome des Jeunes (R.A.J.) and the Musician's Promotional Assistance Society (M.P.A.S.) to raise funds for a March 17th protest in Quebec City against U.S. President Ronald Reagan's visit.

The money from the concert — \$4 for the luckily employed and \$3 for the luckily unemployed — is to go towards chartering buses for those interested in going to Quebec to "finally challenge the monster face-to-face (or close enough)."

At least, that's what the press release says. So stay tuned for more details.



The Gazette

MONTREAL, THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 1985

'60s rock is alive and well on Montreal label

So you and your band have been in a time warp since 1967, right? You just got back and it looks like nobody listens to your stuff anymore, right?

Wrong, longhair. Gilles and Jean at Aller-Retour Records, 1631 St. Denis, love your music. They love it so much they want you to go back in the studio and do it some more. They say people in slick places like Paris, London and the States pay money to hear the stuff.

• • •

Powerhouse Auction: Has it really been a year since The Powerhouse Gallery held its last annual auction? Time flies when you're having fun, etc.

Anyway, this feminist art space will be selling off some of the best new art in the country Saturday, March 16 at 7.30 p.m. All proceeds from sealed bids go to fund future gallery programs.

THE POP SCENE

JOHN
GRIFFIN



While the mountain of offers are being scientifically tabulated, anxious culture vultures can relax to the sounds of Ray Condo and his Hard Rock Goners.

Those who've heard Condo say he puts all the local rockabilly competition to flight. This is the real thing. The Powerhouse address is 3788 St. Dominique.

• • •

Jamfest: It's fun to think about it anyway. While the snow falls here in the land of the Godforsaken, folks in sunny Jamaica are planning a festival of the arts.

The GAZETTE, Montreal, Friday, December 14, 1984

The James MacDonald Band recover from their benefit last night with shows at Tatou on St. Laurent Blvd. till tomorrow. Something called Ray Condo & His Hardrock Goners take over Tatou on Sunday.

BEST BETS

The GAZETTE, Montreal, Friday, January 11, 1985

Local cowpunks The Darned play The Steppe on Park Ave. till Saturday. Lead singer Donna says any trucker with a licence for 18 wheels gets in free. Vancouver's Ray Condo, "the doctor of honky tonk," is also on the bill, and he's reputed to be the genuine item.

The GAZETTE, Montreal, Thursday, April 4, 1985

The next big things are all at Club Soda tomorrow and Saturday in one of the neatest, strongest packages ever assembled in one single place at one single time. International recording artists and psychoswamp blues exponents Deja Voodoo headline, country-rockabilly auteurs Ray Condo & The Hardrock Goners subhead, and This 'Blue Piano', a pop band with a future, sub-sub head. All of the above promise more excitement than an unexpected cheque in the mail. Be there.

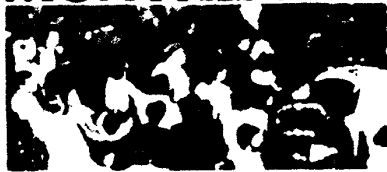
BEST BETS



A taste of the Mid-west with Ray Condo, Aug 1 & 11

august 01 - 15 1985 montreal mirror 3

MONTREAL



Montreal has four venues which regularly showcase local bands: **Le Steppe** (Park and Fairmount); **Station 10** (St. Catherine and Fort); **The SOS Club** (Drummond below St. Catherine); and **Jambo Jambo** (St. Catherine west of Bleury). Remember those names because hip money in this town has it that supporting local bands is financially

sound practice and ethically pretty cool to boot. And it may even show good taste.

Best local happening of the season recently took place at Club Soda where **Deja Voodoo** launched their new album on their own **Og Label**. The band played such standbys as 'Monsters In My Garage' and the more introspective 'How Can I Miss You When You Won't Go Away'. Back-ups were **Ray Condo** and his **Hardrock Goners**, complete with stand-up bass and some very competent country fiddle. Condo displays open contempt for 'new music', sticking with such classics as 'You're Gonna Change (Or I'm Gonna Leave)' and **Jim Reeve's** more plaintive '(You Can Tell Your Friend There With You) He'll Have To Go'. Inspired selection.

★ MONTREAL, TUESDAY, MAY 14, 1985

Lang sets club rocking with a rodeo of music

By LUCINDA CHODAN
of The Gazette

For K.D. Lang and the Reclines, it was just an ordinary night — the usual '50s cowboy shirts, the standard sawed-off cowboy boots, the regular plastic rocking horse hanging from the rafters.

For the crowd of human sardines that swelled into Les Foufounes Electriques last night, however, it was something out of the ordinary — their last chance to see a band that's going to be extraordinarily successful in anything that resembles an intimate venue.

That's because for Lang and the

Reclines, every show is like yesterday's show: the same volatile rodeo of blues, country and rock with the same manic genius — Lang — clinging to the saddle horn and waving her hat triumphantly in the air.

Lang and the Reclines have that rarest of commodities in the music business: originality. It's as if every song is processed through some bizarre matter-regenerator before it issues from the amps.

Ray Condo and his band set the tone with an opener that had its own idiosyncratic sincerity. Although Condo's voice is sometimes erratic, the group did a couple of country-billyish rave-ups.

The Gazette

The Pop Scene

JOHN
GRIFFIN



Closer to home, **Ray Condo** and his **Hardrock Goners** headline a strong bill tonight at the **Rising Sun**. Eric, the band's drummer, promises a hot set and lots of new toons, all of which will be powered through an amp **James Brown** borrowed the last time he was in town.

Special guests are **Blind Man's Holiday** and **The Electric Homework**. Admission is cheap: three bucks.

• • •

On the local front, the under-rated **Ray Condo** and the **Hard Rock Goners** bring Western bop to **Foufounes Electriques** tomorrow night.

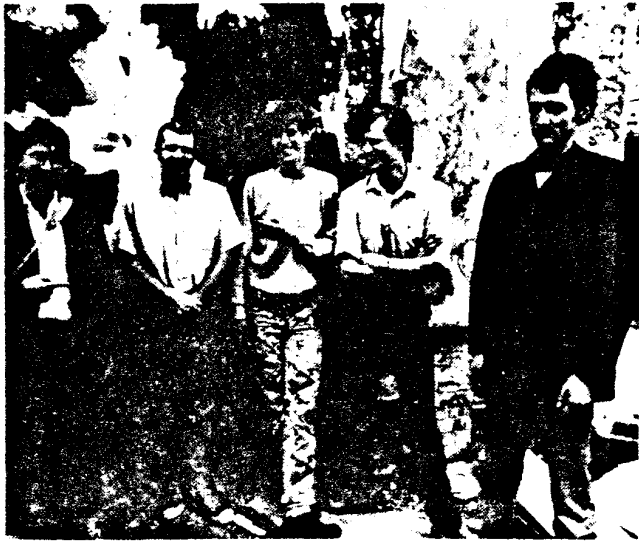
BEST BETS

Sunday the **Steppe** is taken over by **Ray Condo** and his **Hardrock Goners**, merchants in **Western Bop**.

BEST BETS

TRANS FM MAY 1985

MONTREAL, THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 1985



Ray Condo and the Hardrock Goners

by Jenny Ross

•Fun with the same old crowd at the public loft party on St. Maurice St. on Sept. 14, featuring live music. The Gruesomes seemed nervous, maybe because for the first time they didn't have their black outfits on? Ray Condo was-- Ray Condo. He and his Goners fuelled a virtual dance marathon, while in the back room, people watched TV-- B-movie sci-fi clips, Boris & Natasha, TAMI show.

October 31, 1985 montreal mirror

Jungle Bash swings again

Get ready for a swinging good time because on Saturday, October 5, Concordia University will be staging Jungle Bash VI.

As usual, the bash will present a variety of acts, and promises to satisfy all musical tastes. Groups playing this Jungle event are the Gruesomes (a raunch 60s revivalist band, complete with wailing mop-top singer), Living Proof, Dub U 5, Screaming Bamboo and Ray Condo and his Hardrock Goners (a hard country/rock 'n roll group that includes a banjo, a violin and a stand-up bass).

The show will take place in the Hall building, on the seventh floor. Doors will open at 8 p.m., and there will be an admission fee of \$3.98. Beer will be sold at 75¢ between 8 and 9 p.m.

by Mike Foster

The Gazette,
Montreal,
Thursday,
October 3, 1985

Jungle Bash VI returns with the best in local and imported bands to the Hall Building of Concordia University on de Maisonneuve Blvd. tomorrow night. Four bucks buys Montreal's **Dub U 5**, **The Gruesomes** and **Ray Condo & his Hardrock Goners** — any one of which is worth the price of admission — plus Toronto's **Living Proof** and Ottawa's **Screaming Bamboo**. Together these bands cover the gamut of current and retro musical tastes.

Finally, jazz fans please note. **Jack DeJohnette's Special Edition** and **The Dirty Dozen Brass Band** play the Spectrum next Tuesday. Both are indispensable.

— John Griffin



White Roots Week The Bamboo

When I was a kid our next-door neighbours would have these parties. A couple of their friends would arrive in diesel cabs, the kind that usually have 18-wheelers behind them. The rest would arrive in Ford pick-ups. There'd be drinkin' and a screamin', and round about three, they'd all be sprawled on the front stoop and on the lawn. And all the time there was this loping swing beat, varying in tempo but always the same lazy swing. Country and Western. Tammy Wynette and George Jones.

I had a friend a few streets down. I'd visit his house and his dad was always in the backyard. A big man, he'd sit in a t-shirt in the sun with the speakers from the basement stereo aimed out the windows. And there was that lazy beat, a bit tinny and scratchy this time. Ernest Tubb, Hank Williams and Jimmie Rodgers. Ten years later, I re-discovered C&W. It was like a needle found itself in a groove it was already used to. *Deja Vu*.

So much for White Roots. East Harlem this ain't.

Now I'm not the only one who took up that hurtin' beat again. As evidence, I present White Roots week at the Bamboo, where nearly everything under the C&W revival umbrella found shelter.

Tuesday opened with Montreal's **Ray Condo and the Hard Rock Goners**.

Condo resembles nothing less than an elongated Hugh Cornwall and possesses a pair of leathern belfry lungs that were quite capable of whooping explosively in mid-song, blowing several languid patrons quite out of their seats. The goners set up a rockabilly beat, and one ominous, mumbled number about a first date titled *dank psychobilly*. And I doubt if the Cramps ever used a fiddle. Condo's enigmatic pack could be the full tilt surprise of the week.

—Rick McGinnis

Friday, October 4, 1985

According to this here press release, Saturday's bashers include **The Gruesomes**, a Montreal acid-'60s ensemble of enormous reputation, **Dub U 5**, local roots-ska-reggae re-incarnation of the great **Dub Trio**, and **Ray Condo & His Hardrock Goners**. This last is a Montreal-based hardcore country-rockabilly band fresh from recent critical and commercial triumphs in Griffintown — where they played before over 300 at their own party and made a tiny fortune, and Toronto, where they spent that fortune wowing the very hip denizens of the Bamboo club on trendy Queen St.

October 31, 1985 montreal mirror

•Oct. 5's Jungle Bash featured 5 bands: **SCreaming Bamboo**, a slightly roughened Toronto, though the singer's quite talented, intense. **Dub U5**, a good reggae band. The Gruesomes were status quo, eliciting an encore; they now have people screaming for them. **Ray Condo & Co.** transcended any stylistic antagonisms by really coming out of themselves, they can bloody well play.

**NO COVER!!
ENTREE LIBRE!!**

RAYCONDO
and his
HARDROCK
GONERS

TATOU
3519 ST. LAURENT
SAT./SAM. NOV. 30
10 P.M./22 h.

RAYCONDO
and his
HARDROCK
GONERS **LIVE!**

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
12¢

**SATURDAY
AUG. 17, 9 P.M.**
FOUFOUNES
ELECTRIQUES
\$3.99

**THRILL
TO THE SIGHT OF
BATTLING
GONERS!!**

**GASP! THE
MISCHIEVOUS POWERS OF
RAYCONDO!!**

**SPECIAL GUESTS
THE
GRUESOMES!**

THE WORLD'S MOST MYSTERIOUS WESTERN HEROES!

**STATION
10**
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FRIDAY, OCT. 11
9:00 P.M.
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