

## Former Talk Soup Host Adds Voice to Shredders' Paradise

Written by John M. James

Wednesday, 14 November 2007 02:15

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Almost as weird as when kids' TV star Steve from *Blue's Clues* turned up collaborating with the **Flaming Lips** back in 2003,

sweet and smarmy

### **Hal Sparks**

, former host of E's

*Talk Soup*

, winds up with an A-list lineup of guitarists on a blistering metal release. This coming Tuesday,

### **Doug Pinnick**

of

### **King's X**

takes his cosmic blaze to new landscapes of sludgy soul as

### **"Dug" Pinnick**

. An air guitarist's fantasy album of sizzling leads, the Magna Carta Records' release,

*Strum Sum Up*

, is Viagra for aging headbangers. The album features

### **Wally Farkis**

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of

**Galactic Cowboys**

,

**Alain Johannes**

of

**Eleven**

, and the ever-devastating

**Steve Stevens**

of

**Billy Idol**

fame. Sparks holds his own with the big boys, fronting his own top-notch band,

**Zero 1**

. Other players in on the fun include

**Natasha Shneider**

of

**Queens of the Stone Age**

,

**Ray Luzier**

of

**Army of Anyone**

,

**Kellii Scott**

of

**Failure**

, and

**David Henning**

of

**Big Wreck**

.

**U2**'s masterpiece from 1987, *The Joshua Tree*, is getting the 20th-anniversary red-carpet treatment next week in a variety of expanded "deluxe edition" reissues. Going back to the original analog tapes, Island Records is making the newly remastered album available four ways, including as a 180-gram two-LP gatefold vinyl set for audiophiles. A single-CD reissue features new liner notes and rare photos, a two-CD package adds a B-sides and rarities disc culled from the original sessions and a 36-page booklet, while the three-CD box bumps the book to a 56-page, embossed hardback and adds a bonus DVD of the band's Paris concert from that summer, two rare music videos, and the 40-minute *Outside It's America* documentary.

One of the most fantastic films of Czech New Wave cinema has inspired an ambitious new

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soundtrack by a collective of Philadelphia indie rockers. Drag City Records and visionary **Greg Weeks**

(of the band

**Espers**

) are the proud parents of this new interpretation of Jaromir Jires'

*Valerie & Her Week of Wonders*

from 1970, simply titled

**The Valerie Project**

, enlisting almost a dozen players. The ensemble has taken the show on the road, debuting against a 35-millimeter print of the film last month at the New York Museum of Modern Art.

The debut of a new limited-edition seven-inch-single project is due next week. The first round of Gigantic Records' Gigantic Singles Series features three thin slabs of joy with **Dragons Of**

**Zynth**

's

"Xerathyn," featuring a B side co-produced by

**Dave Sitek**

of

**TV on the Radio**

;

**My Best Fiend**

's "Acid Happy"; and

**Asobi Seksu**

's "Stay Awake" tagged with

**Crystal**

's "Then He Kissed Me" on the flip.

Also on deck is the upcoming box set of nine seven-inch singles commemorating Thrill Jockey Records' 15th anniversary. With artists from their stable covering other Thrill Jockey artists, the contributors include **Bobby Conn**, **The Sea & Cake**, **Freakwater**, **Eleventh Dream Day**, **Tortoise**,

**Howe Gelb**

,

**Archer Prewitt**

, and

**David Byrne**

.

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### Television Alert:

With the writers' strike deafening the talk-show laughter, will the music prevail? *The Late Show with David Letterman*

hosts

**Slash**

on Friday;

*Late Night with Conan O'Brien*

presents

**Galactic**

on Monday overnight;

*The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson*

offers up

**Ben Lee**

this evening and

**Spoon**

on Friday overnight;

*Jimmy Kimmel Live*

welcomes

**Alicia Keys**

on Friday and

**Duran Duran**

on Monday overnight; and

*Larry King Live*

chats up

**Donny Osmond**

this weekend.

**New Releases Coming Tuesday, November 20:**

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**Sebastian Bach** - *Angel Down* (Merovingian Music) featuring cover art by his late father, this is the Skid Row screamer's his first solo work in eight years, boasting guest vocalist Axl Rose on three songs, a cover of Aerosmith's "Back in the Saddle," and one song co-written with Desmond Child

**British Sea Power** - *Krankenhaus?* (Rough Trade) CD EP with two bonus videos

**The Dynamics** - "Seven Nation Army" (Groove Attack) 12-inch DJ-friendly single featuring three versions of the band's reggae cover of The White Stripes' hit, backed by a bonus take on Led Zeppelin's "Whole Lotta Love"

**Melissa Etheridge** - *The Awakening Light* (Island) CD and DVD set filmed two months ago at the Hard Rock Café in New York City

**Genesis** - *Genesis: 1983-1998* (Rhino) 10-disc box set packed with rarities

**Gorillaz** - *D-Sides* (Virgin) two-CD set of remixes and more, with bonus buttons, a patch, and mini art prints

**Ed Harcourt** - *Until Then: The Best of* (Astralwerks) with two new songs and selections from his five albums

**Interpol** - *Our Love to Admire* (Capitol) import-only expanded reissue with a bonus DVD

**The Kunks** - *The Kunks* (Heartpunch) doing a parody of The Kinks, song titles include "Beautiful Spring Day," "Aquaman," and "Mr. Trendy"

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**Doug Neumann** - *Doug Does Decaydance* (Decaydance) offering unique lounge-lizard covers of songs by Fall Out Boy, Gym Class Heroes, Cobra Starship, and Panic! at the Disco

**Ziggy Marley** - *Love Is My Religion* (Tuff Gong Worldwide) all new, featuring an acoustic version of the title track

**Nine Inch Nails** - *Y34RZ3R0R3MIX3D* (Interscope) track-by-track remix of the *Year Zero* album by Bill Laswell, Saul Williams, Ladytron, The Faint, Modwheelmood, and New Order's Stephen Morris

**Opeth** - *The Roundhouse Tapes* (Peaceville) two-CD live set recorded last year, recently blessed with a four-star review in *Kerrang!*

**Phish** - *Vegas 96* (JEMP Records) three CDs capturing the group's Aladdin Theatre performance, with guest Les Claypool and a cover of Elvis Presley's hit "Suspicious Minds"

**Rosewood Thieves** - *Lonesome* (Rosewood Thieves Records) snuggle-warm six-song CD EP recorded in a snowed-in basement session

**Six Organs of Admittance** - *Shelter from the Ash* (Drag City) haunting psychedelic folk from Ben Chasny, floating and winding between acoustic and electric flights with guests from The Magik Markers, Chavez, and his own band, Comets on Fire

various artists - *Live Earth: The Concerts for a Climate in Crisis* (Warner Bros.) CD and DVD package documenting this past summer's star-studded event

various artists - *The Rubble Collections: Volume 1-10 and Volume 11-20* (Fallout) twin 10-CD box sets of rare freakbeat and early psychedelic nuggets, originally compiled for the fantastic

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Bam-Caruso label in the 1980s

various artists - *Through the Wilderness: A Tribute to Madonna* (Manimal Vinyl) CD and vinyl LP salute, with cover contributions by Giant Drag, The Tyde, Ariel Pink, and Mountain Party featuring Devendra Banhart