• This Tuesday the Universal label issues a fantastic three-CD set of live recordings from the Velvet Underground as the debut of a planned series of rare live recordings to be sprinkled throughout the coming year. Entitled The Bootleg Series Volume One: The Quine Tapes, the title includes nearly four hours of audio serendipity made possible by Robert Quine's decision to carry his new portable Sony tape recorder and handheld microphone to the group's performances in 1969. Culled from shows at San Francisco's booming Family Dog hall, small Matrix Club, and Washington University's basketball gym in St. Louis, these recordings are primal documents of the band that has influenced every alternative-leaning group to follow. The tapes simply bristle with intimacy, with highlights including stellar 24-, 28-, and 38-minute versions of "Sister Ray" closing out each night's performance. Quine provides deeper insight into his relationship with the band in the set's liner notes, and those friendships proved critical as he went on to co-found NYC punk pioneers Television and play with Lou Reed, Brian Eno, John Zorn, and other post-punk luminaries.

• The Columbia Legacy label has just reissued the five classic studio albums from Simon & Garfunkel – Wednesday Morning 3 a.m.; Sounds of Silence; Bookends; Bridge Over Troubled Water; and Parsley, Sage, Rosemary & Thyme – all as expanded editions with new liner notes and bonus demo tracks. While available in standard jewel-case packaging, the five discs are also boxed together as Columbia Studio Recordings 1964–1970, featuring a nice booklet of new essays, rare photos, and each CD in a miniature cardboard sleeve that replicates the original cover design.

• My pick of the week is this Tuesday's soaring Hammers & Anvils solo debut from Graeme Downes, founder of seminal 1980s New Zealand band the Verlaines. It's his first work since the band's farewell Over the Moon set in 1996, but he hasn't been resting on his laurels. Downes completed his Ph.D. from Otago University and later oversaw that institution's new rock-music degree program. This highbrow musical adventure is simply a thrilling affair, basking in smart lyrics and songwriting craft that fit nicely with squealing pop delights, jazzy show-tune showmanship, and driving alt-rock senior-statesman stance. This magical trip bears the Matador imprint and is highly recommended to fans of the Magnetic Fields, The Smiths, Radiohead, and Robyn Hitchcock.

Television Alert:

The Tonight Show with Jay Leno welcomes Willa Ford on Thursday, Five for Fighting on Friday, and Buddy Guy on Monday; The Late Show with David Letterman hosts Habib Korte & Bamada tonight, Joe Henry on Thursday, and Etta James on Tuesday; Late Night with Conan O'Brien features Ron Sexsmith on Tuesday overnight; and Saturday Night Live's musical guest this weekend is Destiny's Child.

New Releases Coming Tuesday, August 28:
... and like the winds, young grasshopper, are subject to change.

14 Iced Bears – In the Beginning (Slumberland) featuring bonus BBC sessions

Airport 5 – Tower in the Fountain of Sparks (Recordhead) new collaboration of Guided by

Voices' Robert Pollard and Tobin Sprout

American Head Charge – The War of Art (Island) currently on the Streetwise stage at Ozzfest 2001

Bjork – Vespertine (Elektra) new CD and DVD Audio release featuring guests Harmony Korine and Matmos

Mary J. Blige – Mary Jane ... No More Drama (MCA)

The Butthole Surfers – Weird Revolution (Surfdog/Hollywood) all new featuring the single "The Shame of Life" co-written by Kid Rock and Gibby Haynes

A Camp – I Can Buy You (Stockholm) featuring Cardigans singer Nina Persson

Cartoons dk – Toontastic! (Edel)

Common Rider – "Am I On My Own" (Lookout) seven-inch single

Bobby Digital – Digital Bullet (Koch) also known as RZA of the Wu-Tang Clan

Bob Dylan – The Times They Are a-Changing (Sundazed) 180-gram audiophile vinyl mono reissue featuring the original "11 Outlined Epitaphs" insert

The Faint – Danse Macabre (Saddle Creek)

Federation X – American Folk Horror (Estrus)

The Fleshies – Kill the Dreamer's Dream (Alternative Tentacles) from Oakland, California, featuring vocalist Johnny Pseudonym and bassist Vonny Bob Bons

Girls Under Glass – Frozen (Van Richter)

Holly Golightly – Singles Round-Up (Damaged Goods) CD or two-LP set collecting all her singles and B sides

Heavenly – Heavenly vs. Satan (K Records) reissue of this 1990 sugar-high "crashpop" gem with six bonus tracks

Claire Holley – Claire Holley (Yep Roc)

The Ivory Coast – Clouds (Polyvinyl)

Ivy – Long Distance (Nettwerk) touring the U.S. now

Krayzie Bone – Thug on da Line (Loud)

Chris Lee – Plays & Sings Torch'd Songs, Charivari Hymns & Oriki Blue Marches (Smells Like) the second album from this North Carolina singer-songwriter featuring a cover of Neil Young's "On the Beach" and guest Smokey Hormel

The Mamas & The Papas – All the Leaves Are Brown (MCA) two-CD set compiling their four albums from 1966 to 1968

Brian McKnight – Superhero (Motown) with guest Justin Timberlake of 'N Sync

Mink Lungs – The Better Button (Arena Rock) crackling pop buzz from former four-track addicts of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, that will satisfy fans of the Flaming Lips and Guided by Voices

Muse – Origin of Symmetry (Maverick)

Odetta – Blues Everywhere I Go (MC Records) at 71 years old with her all-new tribute to Leadbelly, featuring guests Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, Kim Wilson, and Big Jack Johnson

Preston School of Industry – All This Sounds Gas (Matador) new from Pavement's Scott Kannberg, a.k.a. Spiral Stairs

Puddle of Mudd – Come Clean (Flawless/Geffen) the debut release of Fred Durst's new boutique label

Rival Schools – United by Fate (Island) featuring Walter Schreifels of Gorilla Biscuits and former members of Quicksand and CIV

Omar Santana – Hardcore for the Headstrong (Moonshine) continuous mix CD

Slumber Party – Psychedelicate (Kill Rock Stars) highly anticipated dual-guitar all-girl band harmonizing in the vein of shimmering reverb and tender pop

Sparklehorse – It's a Wonderful Life (Capitol) with guests Tom Waits, PJ Harvey, and Nina Persson of the Cardigans

Tobin Sprout – Demos & Outtakes (Recordhead) CD re-issue previously only available as a limited-edition two-LP set

Tech N9ne – AngHellic (Jcor) referred to by Quincy Jones as the Charlie Parker of rap

Glenn Tilbrook – The Incomplete (What Are Records?) new solo album from the Squeeze founder

various artists – Celluloid's Direction Africa (Fuel 2000) collection of Afro-funk from the late 1970s and early 1980s featuring Bill Laswell, Herbie Hancock, Ginger Baker, Toure Kunda, Mandingo, and more

various artists – How Many Bands Does It Take to Screw Up a Blondie Tribute? (Sympathy for the Record Industry) 26-track, two-LP set with contributions from The Chubbies, Third Grade Teacher, Yellow Scab, Candypants, The Kirby Grips, and more

X-ecutioners – Built from Scratch (Loud) with guests Everlast, Inspecta Deck, Large Professor, Linkin Park, and the Tom Tom Club