

TERRA INCOGNITA

ALBUM ISSUE

THE INTERNATIONAL HAPPY RHODES FOR LIM

#12/SUMMER '98



Happy-nings...

The new album

Many Worlds Are Born Tonight is scheduled for release on Tuesday, August 11 on Samson Records. Rejoice.

Tour dates and important stuff

As of late July, tour dates are not yet solidified, although Happy will play both NYC and Philly sometime between September 24 & 26. The tour may only hit major U.S. cities, and you will be notified of tour dates as soon as they are available. If we have your email address, you will be notified by email. If not, you will receive a postcard. As always, feel free to contact us at terra@ulster.net or call (914) 679-5795.

Happy's first show will be in the east. The first few shows will be independently produced & the tour will be a multi-media event with projection screens and computerized lighting. Happy will have a five-piece band (not including herself). There will be many surprises, including the participation of the CD-Rom Adventure Game "Timelapse."

A highly reputable, yet unnamed, publicist (who should have you all clicking your heels) has signed on to handle Happy's career. There will be local TV coverage of the tour. People in those cities should keep their eyes peeled! Filming of the tour is not out of the question, but it will depend on the avenues in which such a film can be exploited.

Happy's set list will include every song from the new album, plus four others from the back-catalog. The show will be booked in auditoriums and halls with a 500-1,200 seat capacity. Ticket prices may be higher than those for past shows due to the overhead for this type of show, but she will try to keep prices as low as she can. As always, she asks that during the tour, if anyone takes pictures, please send her copies at Aural Gratification, P.O. Box 380, Bearsville, NY 12409. Keep in mind that some venues have strict policies about photos and you may not be allowed to take cameras in. Always check ahead so your electronics don't get swiped.

When tour dates are finalized, people who live in those cities who interested in following radio airplay or helping in small ways with the promotion, should contact Happy directly at auralg@ulster.net or through *Terra Incognita*, but, **please**--not until these dates have been announced. In addition, if anyone would like to volunteer to contact local animal shelters to organize a donation box at her shows, they should contact Happy or *Terra* and we will tell you how to go about it. Happy may also need a volunteer driver at each respective city. She will need someone to transport her and her monitor engineer to radio/TV stations &/or press related appointments. For these above mentioned deeds, one can expect a free pass to the show and costs of gas/tolls. Again, volunteers should contact Happy or *Terra* once the dates have been announced, but not before.

Samson's marketing plans

These plans are tentative. That's why they are called plans. Those who don't understand "tentative" will be shot. But keep your eyes and ears peeled.

Happy will have either an upcoming feature or ad in

CMJ (with Happy on the CD sampler), *Pulse* (Sept. issue), *Billboard*, *Mix*, *EQ*, *Electronic Musician*, *Studio Sound* & possibly other magazines, & will be featured in many trade publications. There are plans to market her in the comic book genre. As for marketing with "Timelapse," it is hopeful that 10,000 newly pressed copies of the game will contain a call back card for the album. Look for the specially-marked box.

Radio airplay

College, Triple A, Modern Rock & Alternative stations have received copies of the album, & "Roy (Back From the Offworld)," "100 Years" & other tracks are receiving airplay. Happy has been added to the playlist of KCRW, an influential alternative station in Santa Monica. Please call your local radio stations and request &/or thank them for playing Happy!

Websites and the Ecto mailing list

Samson Music has updated their website at www.samsonmusic.com to include a spiffy new page for Happy with a soundbyte of "Roy." The *Terra Incognita* page is alive & well at www.geocities.com/SoHo/Studios/3450/terra.html and is updated every time Happy blinks. The Ecto homepage has moved to www.smoe.org/ecto/ & is now managed by Meredith Tarr. And don't forget Vickie Mapes' *Collective Heart* at <http://miso.wva.com/~vickie/happy/>. To subscribe to the Ecto mailing list (discussion of HR and other ectophilic artists) contact majordomo@smoe.org (for loose mail, type "subscribe ecto" in body, or for digest, type "subscribe ecto-digest").

New Samson office

Samson has a new European home office which will be located in Holland--info will be made available at a later date. The U.S. Samson office is at Gold Circle Entertainment, 13906 Gold Circle, Suite 201, Omaha, NE 68144; (402) 330-2520, fax (402) 330-2445/info@samsonmusic.com.

Happy Rhodes merchandise

There are tentative plans to produce *Many Worlds* holographic stickers that may be available through Samson. There will also be a tour book. *Many Worlds* mousepads are being produced for top level executives, but Samson may consider making these available for sale according to the amount of interest. There may also be a t-shirt. Since there will be merchandising at the shows, proceeds will help HR to stay on the road as long as possible. This is her only hope for getting out to the West Coast.

Other Samson artists

CPR was signed to Samson Music...that's David Crosby, Jeff Pevar & James Raymond. Crosby's son is in the band as well. The album is titled "CPR" & is now available. CPR can currently be seen doing TV appearances & are on tour. Other Samson artists include Douglas September, McKinley, Billie Moon, & The Day I Fell Down.

KB antics

Aural Gratification president Kevin Bartlett is hard at work on a new album. He just completed the music for a wonderful children's video for PETA/Share The World, a short film which teaches compassion for animals. The video was distributed to 75,000 grade schools.

The skinny on "Many"

Happy sits for a spell and chats about Samson & the Many Worlds album & tour

From cold-wave of Colossus to strength of Samson

In 1995, after I released *Building The Colossus*--& being somewhat unhappy with the process of making that album, the outcome of the album, & other things--I went through this period of self-doubt. I knew I would continue to do albums, but I didn't know what kind of album I wanted to do. Not to mention that I didn't know what vehicle I would have to release the album on. I figured that I should start making a demo because it was discussed that Aural Gratification would probably have a hard time releasing an album, financially speaking, & it might be time for me to seek the help of an outside label. In which case, I took on the task of creating some kind of demo.

I started compiling my material, writing songs, & I had a four-song demo which I had done primarily in my project studio. This demo was not actively shopped to anyone, but there were a few times that it was specifically requested from people in the industry who knew I was looking for whatever reason. So it got disbursed to two or three people. One was Imaginary Road & they called me based on the demo. They were very much interested, & I met with them & we discussed producing another demo that was more along the lines of the direction I wanted the album to go in. I knew that although it was going to be very, very electronic, it was going to be organic at the same time, meaning I'd be doing a lot of sample work of organic instruments. I hooked up with two producers & produced the demo for this record label. It didn't turn out the way they wanted it to, so they backed off & decided they weren't going to pursue it any further. And that was fine. So I moved on & continued working on my material.

In the meantime, I got this other connection that hooked me up with Samson Music. They came to town, & I met with them & they wanted to hear the stuff I was working on. By that time, I had started working on all the material as if I were doing a real album. I wasn't making a demo anymore...I just decided I was going to do everything I possibly could & continue working. If I wound up making an entire album myself with no money to put it out, so be it. At least I'd have the album done, & I'd find somebody to put it out. By that time I had about half of the album recorded, not counting any live tracks, & I played it for those guys. They were very interested & the deal ensued. That was the material that wound up making the album *Many Worlds Are Born Tonight*.

Quantum reap

Many Worlds Are Born Tonight was named after the title track on the album, which used to be called "Jork," as many people are aware of now. I used to play "Jork" live for a few months before I did the album, & I called it that because when I first started making it, it reminded me of Bjork, &... [laughs] I don't know! When I was typing it in & had to name the file, I didn't know if I had a shortage of characters...so I just called it "Jork." I slapped the "B" off for some reason. I don't know. So then I just started recording the album for real. I got my advance & my record deal & I started doing the album. I did the album mostly--98 percent--in the project studio. Everything was done with the computer & it was recorded to four ADATs, which equals 32 digital tracks, & I tracked all of my vocals at home using my bathroom. The bathroom, because it's the closest room to the studio & it's a small room; although it's filled with a lot of porcelain & so on, I find every piece of linen in the house--linens, pillows, blankets--& I tack them up all over the place, which leaves nifty little holes in the plaster. The vocals turn out just lovely--sound-wise, I mean.

So, I made the record & Samson seemed to be very happy with it. The next thing to do was to get the artwork together. I had to come up with a title for the record & the whole visual concept, so I decided I wanted something weird, like a hole, in the artwork. I wanted an actual die cut hole, or something to that effect. I started thinking of how I could incorporate that into the artwork & then I gave the artist in New York, Auriea Harvey, a lot of key words, like "ocean," "copper," "sun"...just words or phrases. And from that she was supposed to glean an overall concept, which she did *smashingly* well. I had the photographs taken. Two of the photographs in the artwork were preexisting--they were just some art shots that Melissa McGill had done & we licensed them to use. The cover shot was done for the album & Auriea put the whole package together. But at that point I still hadn't come up with a title for the album. In fact, I hadn't come up with titles for a few of the songs. "Looking Over Cliffs" used to be called "6 Transgroove." I had a hard time figuring out a title for that one. "Jork," which is "Many Worlds Are Born Tonight," was easy after I got the lyric all filled in. I thought that phrase said it the best for the title.

Then, as it turned out, when all the material was finished I looked at it as a whole, & I thought, "What's the overall feel of this album? What's the overall theme?" And I decided that "Many Worlds Are Born Tonight" was the overall theme, so I went with that.

The album touches on a lot of different topics, as most of my albums do. But, everything that I do, at least for this album, is coming from the same basic philosophy. And this is my philosophy: that many worlds are born tonight. The concept is that perception is the key to reality. Depending on what you believe, everything is created on a quantum level, & if you believe that thought equals mass--because thought is electricity--that's what generates action. There are books that describe this in greater depth--for instance, anything Deepak Chopra has ever written. It's all based on quantum psychology. And it just means that thought equals mass. If that were true, that means that you can create your own reality; it means that anything you believe, if you believe it strongly enough, will be your reality. It's like perception. So, if you perceive that the world is out to get you, & you're cynical, & it's an evil place, & no one means what they say, then that's going to be your reality. You'll suffer from that until your belief system changes. On the other hand, if you believe that the universe is safe, some people may say you're naive. Others might say, "your universe is safe because you believe it is safe." It's all a matter of how you perceive things. I believe that things happen exactly as we need them to, simply put. That's what I base my entire life on. When I talk about "many worlds are born tonight," I mean outer & inner worlds...they're all worlds. We explore the universe & go to the farthest--as far as we can--reaches of the universe & we explore outward, but we also explore inward. From exploring inward, scientists have found particles smaller than they ever thought possible. They always thought that such & such was the smallest particle known to mankind. When they looked closer, they found something even smaller than that. And my theory is that scientists will always find something smaller, & they'll always find something bigger & farther beyond what they know to be in existence. It's based on the fact that if you're going to look for it, if you believe it can be there & that there's something to be found, you will find it. In essence, you are creating it as you are looking for it. So, many worlds are born tonight. It's based on our needs. If you need to spend your life looking out into the universe just because you want to discover something that nobody's discovered, eventually you'll discover it. It's going to be created. If you look inside yourself, you're going to discover things. There are universes of various forms being born every millisecond...every nanosecond. Everything that we need happens for us & we don't always recognize that. That's what the album is based on. Of course, not every song falls in line with that. Some songs just mean what the songs mean. But that's the overall concept. I thought that Auriea Harvey did an incredible job in getting those concepts across. Life is an exploration & you should treat it as such. Explore!

Being projectionistic

The artwork was finished for the album, so the next thing that needed to be done was to figure out how to make a live representation of the album. I flew out to the record company in Omaha, said hi to a couple of cows & ears of corn, & sat down & had this discussion with the executives. My record company & its president are, & for many years have been, affiliated with American Gramophone, which is the record company started by Mannheim Steamroller & its founder Chip Davis. After Chip Davis earned his millions creating Steamroller & reaping the successes thereof, he built this complex in Omaha which has video editing suites, recording studios, video taping studios, a full staff & a lighting crew, as well as all of the sound reinforcement facilities. The lighting crew of this company is mainly for Chip Davis & Steamroller,



but whenever he'd go out--which was mainly once a year for a Christmas show--he'd have his own lighting company, sound crew, & everything because he owns it. While they were not in action, they would contract their work out & try to get other jobs. I took a tour of the facility, & because of Samson's prior history with American Gramophone, I had an "in." I saw what the capabilities were for live performance. They had their own projection & screens...this made it very economically feasible for me to do a show like that. And everyone was in agreement that that would be a very appropriate show to accompany this album, because so many of the songs are inspired by film. Film is an industry I can see myself getting into in one way or another in the future. I started planning this tour based on the facilities that were at my disposal. However, it turned out that the company was inappropriate for my job. They were too busy, & there were other constraints that made it difficult for this company to involve themselves with my project. So we let go of that company.

It had gotten to a point where I had already started planning the show around those criteria, so I decided I would still do the same show but that I would contract out to other people. And that's where I'm at now. What I've done is develop a show that is going to be an overall experience, not just one where you come in, see a bunch of live players & go home. You come in as if you're coming in to a movie. You come into the theatre, sit down, get comfortable, there will be things to look at & stuff to listen to at the same time. And there will be interaction, so that involves projection. I'm going to have two projection screens that won't be going at all times, & there will be computerized lighting...it's atmosphere. You go & sit for an hour & a half & have an atmosphere envelope you, & you can participate or just sit back & relax & let it take you away. That's the whole point of this show. Of course, the main focus is the music. I want it to be as high quality as possible. So it's winding up being an expensive show. What has happened in the interim is that booking agents are getting packages of Happy Rhodes, pulling it out & saying, "What the hell do I do with this?" because Samson's a new record company, & Happy Rhodes, as far as they know, is a new artist. They have very little incentive to take me on as an artist & book my shows. Now, we're talking about the big booking agents, who are basically the only people who can efficiently do this job, because it's a big job. So, we've been having problems with that & in the meantime what's going to happen is that we're going to do independently promoted shows, & we're going to make them showcase shows. People in the industry will be invited, particularly booking agents, & hopefully I can procure some booking out of that. But it's slow going.

A rock with the songitude

Now, about the songs on the album. "100 Years" was inspired from the CD-ROM game "Timelapse," which is based on a story about a non-sentient robot. Bear in mind that I've taken the concept from the game, twisted it & made it into my own idea. The robot is created out of necessity, because there's this race of people--if you want to call them people--whose world becomes unstable & uninhabitable for the humans. They have to evacuate this world in a hurry...it's a very advanced sort of civilization. So they create this robot to carry on menial tasks, maintenance, upkeep of their world, their machinery, their data, & everything else. And they leave, & years & years go by & the robot becomes sentient. He starts to question his existence. And after a while he begins to wonder if they're coming back for him. His tasks on a daily basis become so rote & mundane that he starts to go stir crazy & questions why he's doing all this work. Who is he doing it for? He keeps uploading information to his creator, who he doesn't really know, & he knows they're coming back but he doesn't know when. They don't contact him other than to get their data. So, it's the story of this poor, lonely creature who develops a conscience & questions his existence & has no hope for the future. He doesn't know what his destiny will be.

"Many Worlds Are Born Tonight" is just basically me trying to write a really positive, uplifting song for humanity. Obviously everything starts with writing it for myself, but it's all about "hey, open your eyes, live your life, there's life here so live it." That means look around you, respect life around you. Life is what you perceive it to be, so you should make every effort to perceive it to be good, positive & full of opportunity & potential. By living your life that way, opportunities will come, you will reach your potential & obstacles will be easily overcome. It's all worth it in the end, I think. It's not where you're going, it's the trip, which is an old Zen sort of philosophy, but I really believe that, you know. Pay attention as you go! Don't do everything for that one day in the future. Do everything for now. The reference to staring into the flame...that's one of a zillion different ways that people choose to meditate--by looking into a flame. I also have a line in there "turn the lights down for a while & have a rock with the solitude," which means sit in a rocking chair & sit in silence, basically. Just be quiet for ten minutes. These are just different things that you can do for yourself. You don't have to stare into a flame. But if you do stare into a

flame, you see things, you know? Open your mind up. See what comes to you. It can produce a certain clarity of thought that you don't get otherwise.

"The Chariot" is a psychological study of the feeling of desperation, a sense of hopelessness, & I took one example--a child who doesn't understand his circumstances--& used that as a vehicle to express that feeling.

"Ra Is A Busy God"... I wrote that, as many people know, as an electronic, ambient chill piece released first on the Ambient Volumes. I'm really fond of it as a piece of music by itself, & I always wanted to put lyrics to it. I always found myself singing to it. So, I had to decide what the song was about, & I listened to it over & over in its original form. What it made me feel was the sense of loss that I feel every time the sun sets on any given day. When the sun starts setting, it creates this almost mournful peace. It's not a good peace or necessarily a bad peace, but it's like a sense of loss, a mournful kind of serenity. Calm, not anxiety-ridden. But as the sun sets, it looks as if it's going away, like it's leaving you. And the colors that it leaves you with are so beautiful, especially the way it falls on leaves, or hides behind a mountain or goes behind a cloud or a tree over the horizon. It's like it's quietly whispering "goodbye...goodbye..." I remember as a child, daylight was everything. You don't get to stay up late when you're a kid or play with your friends once it gets dark, typically speaking. Daytime is the time when you're alive & jubilant, & it can be as hot as hell, or as cold as hell...doesn't matter, the sun is out. That's what that song makes me feel. I just see the sun setting & the feeling it gives me now is that sense of loss. It's like if we were in the times where we believed the sun was a god--Ra the Sun God--& we gave him a personality, we could say that he was leaving us. But we all know, scientifically, that the sun doesn't set, it doesn't go away. It's just that the earth rotates. So the sun is actually up somewhere else in the world. And I thought that was a really interesting concept to play on. It's whispering goodbye--& you're never quite sure it's going to come back. You *think* it'll come back, but you never really know, because anything could happen. But at the same time, you know that it's going to visit its other children. It has children all over the world & while I'm sad to see it go for the day & I have to go to sleep now, in dream, other children are just waking up & beginning their day full of joy & play. So he has to be shared by everybody. He's got a busy, busy life. And all life on this planet depends on the sun. That's a heavy, heavy responsibility.

"If Wishes Were Horses, How Beggars Would Ride" is something my grandmother used to say to me when I was little. I would say to her, "I wish I could have a cookie," or "I wish it wasn't raining right now," & she would say to me, "If wishes were horses, how beggars would ride." Meaning, you can't have everything you wish for. If we all got what we wished for, then every beggar in the world would never lift a finger for himself; he would just get on a horse & ride it, because he'd be riding a wish. As an adult, I look at that phrase & I think it's the most cynical, twisted thing I've ever heard in my life, & I think it's a horrible saying. It sounds so wistful when you say it, but it's crap, really. But in a way, there are some instances when it's not crap & it's really useful. I had one experience in particular that had such a detrimental effect on my psyche that I wished, & continue to wish desperately, that I could turn back the hands of time & do things differently. And I can't. That's one of the things I can't change. And this is an instance where this phrase really fits. You can't have everything you wish for. And that's a wish I really wish would come true.

"Roy (Back From The Offworld)" is inspired by *Blade Runner* as everybody well knows by now. The thing about the movie is that it's this weird little movie--not everybody likes it, some people love it & it has this little cult following. I happen to love the movie & one reason is because I love the character Roy. Roy is such a tragic figure to me because, like the robot in "100 Years," he was created with a set of memories that were not his own. He was smart enough to figure all this out, & he was given a four-year lifespan. He loved his life as much, if not more, than everybody else who was born biologically. He, of course, was created by man. He was a robot, so to speak. What I find so moving is that he is violent throughout the movie, trying to go to his creator because he wants more life, because he wants something to be changed, something to be done, & his creator tells him it can't be done. That was his last hope, & now he has no hope left. He knows that he will die, & that his consciousness will not go on. He assumed it wouldn't go on like ours will, because we have spirituality, whatever that may be. So toward the end, he spares the last character instead of killing him. One can assume he does this because he loves all life, even if it's not his own. He has a higher respect for it because he's faced with his own mortality to a greater extent than the rest of us are. It's a very moving moment when he allows himself to die, knowing fully well that his consciousness will probably end where it is.

"Tragic" is the about the way all people suffer, men & women alike, but I got to a point where I realized that I saw women's suffering differently from men's, & this is even just my own projection of what individual suffering is. But for some reason, women's suffering doesn't effect me as deeply as a man's. It's not because I don't care about women's suffering, but it may be because I identify with it. I know what it's like. I know the strengths of women & their physical pain, I know what we can endure. If I look at it that way, I will always say somebody else's suffering is worse than my own. My own suffering I can handle. But I see men as these creatures who grow up learning that they are to be responsible for all people, including themselves. They're responsible for the businesses they work for--not that women aren't--& they are also responsible for their families--not that women aren't--& they're responsible to themselves. However, the difference between men & women is that women are allowed & expected to express their pain along the way. We're expected to talk about what we're feeling, our emotions, our anxieties, etc. We tend to cry more often...it's not a shocker when you see a woman cry. It's less common to see a man crying because men are not encouraged to do that. So, something as basic as that tells you right off the bat that women process this stuff more. It's a societal thing--it's not just my perception, it's in society. Women are allowed to process all this information openly. Men, however, are encouraged not to process this openly but internally, which means that when a man does express grief, sorrow or does cry...in my perception, it's gotta hurt pretty bad if a man will allow himself to get to the point where he breaks down. That to me is tragic. They are expected to do all these things...they watch their fathers die, their sons grow up, they are doing all these things out in the world & they're expected to be strong. And they're afforded very little opportunity along the way to stop & examine what they're feeling.

"Proof" is basically about what happens when you go about your entire life believing that you could be well-suited to something--let's say, a career-oriented thing, or you're 18 years old & you say to yourself, "You know, I betcha I could make a movie. I've got a video camera, I'm really visually oriented, I bet I could do it." But then you don't do it. And then you get to a point in your life where you're afforded the opportunity to actually do it--the thing you always thought you could--& that's when reality slaps you in the face & you become unsure that you ever could do it, let alone will be able to do it. This is something that happened to me. I went through my life saying "Oh, I could do that, I could do that," & never actually did it. Then one day I was faced with the opportunity & I said, "Aw, shit!" You can't choke. You have to come through with what you always thought you could do. That's where "show the proof" come in. It's like "hey...you say you can do this, so do it." And that's a very scary proposition.

"Looking Over Cliffs" was originally "6 Transgroove," & that's because it's in 6/4 time. It was just a file name. The timing was one of the reasons why, in sequencing the album, I couldn't put "Looking Over Cliffs" next to "The Chariot." They're both in 6/4 time. That's one of the things I labor over when sequencing an album. This was the first song I mixed & it was inspired by the movie "The Last of the Mohicans." It's based on the concept of being the last one of your particular race, which I imagine is a very scary prospect, much as the last person in a family line. If there's one son in a family & he grows up never to marry or have children, one of his concerns would be how he's the last of his lineage. For some reason that seems to be important to us...to carry on the line. In the time of the American colonization, when the Native Americans



were being driven out of their lands--this is what the movie is based on--there's a tribe who is breeding outward into other races & their lineage was becoming watered down. Eventually the full-blooded Mohicans were depleted to the point where there were only a few true-bloods left. This is the story of one such family, of a man & his two sons, one was white & one was his true-blood son. The true-blood son's objective in life was to get married, procreate & carry on his lineage, although I don't think it mattered if the woman was full-blooded. He formed an attachment & the woman's life ended up being threatened & he decided that he would rather die than live without her. He risks everything to try to save her. Of course it doesn't work out--he's killed in the end. But there's this overriding love theme. He made a conscious decision that he had chosen his mate, his partner for life, & he had nothing to lose. He risked his life to save her, to get her back, because without her it was all lost anyway. I just played on that a little bit, that love beyond death thing.

The music for "Winter" was inspired by the 1997 remake of *Romeo and Juliet* with Leonardo DiCaprio & Claire Danes. While the movie was very chaotic & didn't necessarily move me, the filming of the movie & the music they used was pretty inspirational. It was a very interesting, artful film, & well-crafted. I decided to come up with this dirgeish, cloudy atmosphere. I used the sorrow of *Romeo & Juliet*, the loss both characters got to feel respectively, & played on that. But it's also a very personal song, because I pride myself on being a very happy person, generally. And when things get me down, they don't get me too awfully down. I generally have a good perspective, a good outlook on things. However, once in a while, something catches up with me & it will knock me on my ass. And that actually happened during the writing of this song & it inspired the lyrics. This is sorrow--if you personify sorrow as a being walking into your life. I'm saying, "how did you find me again? I thought I'd lost you forever. Everything is going well for me, I can't complain about a single thing...yet here you are again, showing your face to me, & I'm stricken. How did you find me so easily? Come on now...I'm a rational person, & this doesn't need to effect me. How do I get enveloped in this from time to time?"

"Serenading Genius" is a really old song, as well as Roy. "Roy" was written during the time *Building The Colossus* was being written, & "Serenading Genius" is very old as well. I always knew what that song would be about. It's in regard to my striving for genius. When I say genius, I mean my perception of what genius is. It's all subjective. When I listen to other people's music, see other people's artwork, or watch somebody else's movie, every once in a while I'm taken aback & I say to myself, "man, this is a stroke of genius"--especially concerning music, though. I hear something & I feel that that person has really touched on something. I have been striving to get that sound, mood or feeling all of my life & that person encapsulated it into one brief moment. They actually touched it, & I'm still looking for it. This is something that perplexes me & I wonder if it's it an ongoing thing. I think it's better that I don't think I'm a genius than if I do. It's better that if I've ever achieved genius that I'm unaware of it. Because one can't go through life saying, "hey, that little bit of music I created right there, that has got pure genius in it." Besides, if you feel like you've struck genius once in your life, what's the motivation to continue to try? But the whole song is about me going to sleep every night, dreaming & going off to all these other worlds, & I'm convinced that I'm looking for genius. I'm looking to extrapolate from other worlds or other states of consciousness something pure that I can encapsulate in a beautiful piece of music. It's an ongoing search & it's frustrating to me when I hear other people reach it, because I'm envious. And then there's the laugh at the end--"hee hee hee!"--which is quite pleasant.

Happy Birthday, Happy...August 9...Happy Birthday, Happy

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Many Worlds Are Born Tonight

album review by Sharon Nichols

When I received my copy of Happy Rhodes' new CD, *Many Worlds Are Born Tonight*, I was hopping in my car to take a short trek. What perfect timing, I thought. Listening to this new, long-awaited CD would be the perfect thing to take my mind off something as loathsome & boring as driving down I-87. Why, I would pop it in & all would be Zen. So, what made me think this album would sound good in my car? Ya know...the back speakers are hanging out of the holes, &, of course, the front speakers are so shot that if I heard one note through them, I'd have to throw myself under the tires. I fiddled with the knobs to make the music sound a *little* more appealing than a galloping cat's toenails on a wooden floor, hit "play" & set out for a trip into the cosmos.

My brain was booted out of my skull immediately. The more I listened, the more befuddled I became. What was this? My ears

were assaulted by a cornucopia of sounds, textures & rhythms that were completely unexpected & far too incomprehensible for my brain in that car with those speakers of death. There was stuff buried under other stuff. And then more stuff. This boggling album was stuffed with stuff, the musical depth nothing short of phenomenal. I decided that listening & driving was a stupid idea & I would have to save this one for the headphones. In the quiet of my home, with my ears enveloped in padded vinyl, *Mary Worlds* was completely ahhhhh, though hardly conceivable with the first listen. There are symphonies upon symphonies going on here. Very busy. Highly electronic. Quite extraordinary. If you think you can take this music in the first time, you are an utter fool--Bose speakers or no. Be like a Boy Scout. Be prepared. Opulence awaits you.

The first sound you hear on the CD is an electronic pseudo-growl, perhaps the simulated grumble of another of Happy's mind-creatures. "100 Years" is a Sci-Fi adventure that strangely reminded me of Portishead at first (which could only be a good thing). A slow, dragging beat, warped vocals, weird noises & creepy, robotic electronics--including some of David Torn's textures--set the stage for this story of a clone on a deserted world waiting for someone to return & claim him. And just when you've been sucked into his pathetic world by Happy's sweet, yet emotionless, girlish soprano, a crystalline operatic vocal lunges in & speaks the grief he cannot feel. And you thought you'd heard all of Happy's voices...this one is shocking. Gives me chills. It's no wonder KCRW in Santa Monica picked this one up right away. This song is the embodiment of unfulfilled expectation, of longing without resolution. Maybe in 100 years I'll get over the initial shock of it.

Happy wouldn't dare give you a clue in the popping electronic percussion that opens the title track, but as soon as those 12,000 vocal layers of "ah-ee-ah" begin, you know what's going on. Those of you who have heard Happy live in the past few years might exclaim, "Hey, wait a cotton-pickin' minute...*this is "Jork!"*" Yup. It is. Only this is the souped-up, walloping techno version. Get ready for those layers to blanket your psyche. In the liner notes, Happy says, "Rarefaction's a poke in the ear with a sharp stick...voice." She ain't kiddin'. This song is where Sybil resides. And there's that growling thingy again.

"The Chariot" features those groovin' Bartlett bongos that we love & is a bittersweet piece featuring brawny vocals for the verses & wistful soprano for the chorus. (Funny, but this masterful, mixed-up maestro begins more than half of her new songs with the chorus). She promises she'll be sweet in this song, & she certainly is darling. And as a special treat, this is the only song--to the best of my knowledge--ever recorded that features a linguini grill. You'll get a little acoustic guitar here, too, & some meditative chimes at the end. (Get ready for a special treat when you see this one live). The chimes lead into...

"Ra is a Busy God." Yes, this is the same song from Aural Gratification Volume I, but with a few musical changes & finally, vocals. A children's choir is--you guessed it--the Happy Rhodes kiddie chorus. This tune was always one of my favorite Rhodes melodies, & she once told me she would write lyrics for it. Naturally, I wondered what they would be. And now that they have emerged as innocent-child-dancing-in-nature references, to listen is levity. As a true leaf-zealot, this one is an instant winner for me. Next?

There are reverberations in "If Wishes Were Horses, How Beggars Would Ride" that mimic breathing, or the chug of a steam engine, or, perhaps, horses hooves. Nonetheless, this song radiates motion & is a textured, melancholy beauty. And remember when Peter Frampton used to sing that distorted "Do you feel like we do?" into that weird tube thingy? I think she called him up & borrowed it. The notion that she can combine all these various layers of slow, circular, pulsing electronics & unearthly noises, & still come up with a poignant song that rips your guts out suggests, to me, that there is a marvel among us.

Okay, here we go. It's the first single from the album. It's "Roy (Back From the Offworld)!" Get out your funkier dancing shoes, cause this is a clubby. I can almost feel the strobe lights & see the drunken, burly bar devils eyeing me, wondering what kind of chick/broad/hunk-o'-meat I am. Regardless, this tune will catch you & carry you away immediately, kind of like those *Wizard of Oz* monkeys. The album version is slightly more mellow than the radio single, which has a steady beat throughout. Here again, intriguing backing vocals from Happy--I have no idea what she's saying (but I'm sure I will at some point, because someone will want to know & I'll have to ask). Also, a gorgeous violin solo from classical musician Rob Taylor adds a little angst to this story of the dude from--surprise!--*Blade Runner*. She's opening doors to pop radio here. But hey, fine with me. Even people listening to Madonna need to transcend sometime.

"Tragic" begins suspensefully, & features some carnival-esque keyboards at the onset. This is a ballad of boys (see Happy's interpretation later on) & features drums & percussion by one prestigious boy, Jerry Marotta. The keyboards in the bridge of this song are what really do it for me. They're simple & clean, & lead into a majestic classical choir that stirs the blood. Nope, it isn't a Happy choir this time. Shocker.

Like a friend of mine said after hearing the opening strains of "Proof": "Wow, this sounds like the Butthole Surfers!" Not being too huge a Butthole fan, I can't say yea or nay to that, but it's pretty heavy stuff for Rhodes. And cool, cool, cool. A welcome feel to the myriad other Happy feels. Get ready to rock with Kelly Bird, Carl Adami, Kevin Bartlett & Mitch Elrod. This song slows down at one point, during which Happy empties out the contents of her brain & and melds her thoughts with some of Carl's coolest bass to date. This song is also full of samples. It's worth listening to for the sheer joy of hearing Happy's incensed snarl of "you're sure to be *fine*."

"Looking Over Cliffs" is one for fans of the song "Warpaint." A heavy Native American feel embodies this work both lyrically &

An interview with Richard Musil, Head of Marketing at Samson Music

Please give us a brief company profile of Samson. What are some of its goals & projects?

Samson Music & Gold Circle Entertainment, its parent company, were formed by Norm Waitt Jr. in late 1996 to provide a home for performers with unique & worthy artistic voices that might otherwise be overlooked by large or more traditional record labels. Norm was one of the co-founders of GATEWAY 2000 & is a lifetime music aficionado. His intention is to give something back to a business that has meant a great deal to him during his life.

The label will be focused on artist/songwriters with the music being oriented towards an adult audience. The company is being built around a management group of music business professionals including Mike Delich formerly of American Gramophone Records, myself, also of American Gramophone & George Gerrity formerly of Warner Bros Music.

The goal of the company is to successfully market our artist's music both in traditional & non-traditional ways. We believe in building our artist's careers over the long term & realize that many performers don't find their audience on the first release & that it takes, in many cases, a long sustained effort to achieve wide success.

Why did Samson choose Happy Rhodes? Why does the company feel she is marketable?

We first heard about Happy Rhodes' music in the early summer last year. We were immediately taken by Happy's extraordinary voice as well as the genius of her compositions. We scheduled a meeting with her shortly after & proceeded to talk with her the possibility of becoming a Samson Music artist. We had the opportunity to hear some basic tracks from her upcoming release & were completely blown away by the music. We are very proud to have Happy on our label & we believe that the new release is some of the finest music she has ever done.

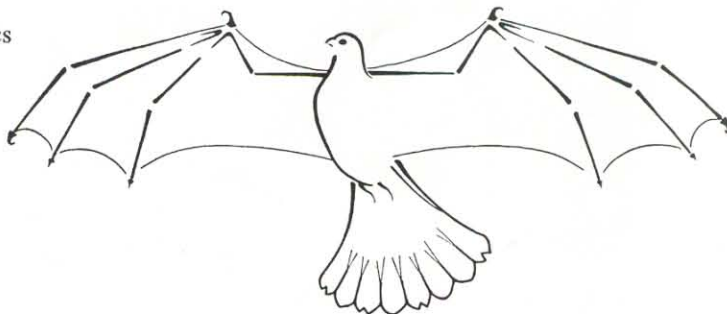
We believe that Happy Rhodes is a remarkable artist with talents & a presence that transcend the CD idiom. It is our goal to build a wider audience for Happy & we feel that her music will touch a very large group of listeners. We intend to do everything we can to support her in building her career to the highest level.

How does Samson plan to launch Happy's career?

We will utilize both traditional & non-traditional channels for distributing Happy's release & our advertising plans call for many different media to be used. Our challenge will be to expose all music buyers to Happy's music including those who do not regularly visit traditional record stores.

Did you miss an issue? Get 'em while they're still gettable...

- #1, Spring '94 (out of print) --Welcome from HR/news/HR bio w/childhood pics/info on Aural G/HR on performing and recording BTC/discography/HR on Kate Bush/fan art/3 pics
- #2, Summer '94--news/more HR on recording BTC, BTC songs/History of Colossus of Rhodes/Kevin on HR, pt 1/ game/letters/fan art/HR art/6 pics
- #3, Fall/Winter '94--news/Kevin on HR, pt 2/HR at YesFest/game/HR graphoanalysis/weird interview w/HR/letters/fan art/5 pics
- #4, Spring '95--news/survey/HR on her band/HR on her childhood/Rob Woicak review/B-Side review/letters/HR art/fan art/7 pics
- #5, Summer 1995--news/Philly review/HR's monster doll/survey results/HR on her songs/letters/HR art/fan art/5 pics
- #6, Fall '95--news/HR on "Just Like Tivoli" w/childhood pics/HR on her albums/liner notes of *The Keep*/HR on AG Volumes 1 & 2/letters/HR art/fan art/nine pics
- #7, Winter '95--news/Kevin on distribution, retail issues/HR on her songs, pt 1/HR on life-size monster/HR monster doll mutations/letters/HRs art/fan art/3 pics
- #8, Spring '96--news/Kevin on Philly gigs/HR on her songs, pt 2/game/HR musical heritage/discography/cats/letters/ HR art/7 pics
- #9, Summer '96--news/survey/PNN interview, pt 1/reviews/HR on her songs, pt 3/fan art/6 pics
- #10, Spring '97--news/HR interview pt 2/Troy reviews/survey/websites/Tin Angel reviews/Troy preview/Keep lyrics/HR art/4 pics
- #11, Winter '97/'98--news/Samson announcement from Kevin/HR on Samson/Who is Samson?/HR menu/concert review by Kevin Highnight/"Rain-keeper" tablature/websites/story by Sharon/6 pics





HAPPY RHODES