

THE WEEK

SINGLES

CAKE "The Distance" (Capricorn) This Sacramento quintet uses trumpet, grunge guitar, and eerie background vocals over a standard hip-hop beat to keep things moving. There's tension in the eclectic mix, and humor, too, once you figure out it's all for a shaggy-dog story about a race-car driver who circles the track long after he's lost. Inventive but slight. **B** —Rob O'Connor

AMANDA MARSHALL "Birmingham" (Epic) The first single from her eponymous album is a well-crafted pop throwback to the story song (remember "The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia"?) about a battered woman who ditches her husband. Employing a husky voice that builds in intensity, the 23-year-old Marshall delivers the empowering lyrics with an impassioned edge. **B+** —William Stevenson

POP/ROCK

CURTIS MAYFIELD *New World Order* (Warner Bros.) On his first record since a freak accident left him paralyzed six years ago, R&B genius Mayfield sounds spirited and firmly in command of one of the most elegantly intimate vocal styles in pop-music history. The mellow



TEENAGE WAISTBAND: Cassidy, circa 1970, shows a flair for funk

groove, complete with wah-wah guitar fills and purring backup vocals, may speak of decades past, but the effect is that of a needed catch-me-up with a long-absent friend. Mayfield's own exquisite guitar playing is missed, but his social consciousness and unaffected delivery remain intact. Welcome back. **B+** —Steve Futterman

TOOL *Aenima* (Zoo) Many bands start out by playing subversive, unconventional music, then gradually move into the mainstream. Tool do it backwards: Their platinum-selling *Undertow* was unad-

venturous and commercial, while *Aenima* is a jagged, brooding nightmare filled with roaring guitars, abrupt rhythm shifts, and jarring sound effects. One of 1996's strangest and strongest alt-metal records. **A-** —Jon Wiederhorn

JOHN CALE *Walking On Locusts* (Hannibal/Rykodisc) On his first nonorchestral, nonconceptual solo effort in more than a decade, Velvet Underground cofounder Cale nicely merges his baroque melodic consciousness with his still-sharp pop instincts. And, while melin-

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SIDEMAN OF THE WEEK

Paul McCartney

The ex-Beatle, along with composer Phillip Glass, provides music for poet Allen Ginsberg's new single, "The Ballad of the Skeletons."

CAMPER OF THE WEEK

Ringo Starr

A planned weeklong "Rock 'N Roll Fantasy Camp" will offer aspiring rockers (with \$4,500 to burn) classes and jam sessions with the erstwhile Beatle, as well luminaries like Mick Jones and John Entwistle. The final lesson? How to become a has-been gracefully.



song, "Great Pumpkin Waltz," for instance, could make a grown person cry. **C+** —Josef Woodard

WRECKX-N-EFFECT *Rap's New Generation* (MCA) There's not enough rump-shaking on this bizarre concept album, which features songs inspired by—yet sounding nothing like—the rap classics of such hip-hop innovators as Run-D.M.C. Despite some bumpin' beats and great lines ("I'm hoochin' Susan for her Lucci"), unfunny skits and repetitive grooves make these new jacks come off more Generation Ex than Generation Next. **C** —Matt Diehl

REISSUES

DAVID CASSIDY *When I'm a Rockin' Roll Star: The David Cassidy Collection* (Razor & Tie) Its mere existence is the epitome of pointless '70s-kitsch revisionism, but this disc does prove that teen-dream Cassidy evolved into a fairly funky dude after retiring his Keith Partridge shoes. At least his hackwork sounds lively: fiddle-filled rural pop, post-Elton glam, boogie-woogyng sub-Bee Gee disco, and even blues. Only sappy songwriting keeps him from being as fun as his little brother Shaun. **B-** —Chuck Eddy

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Cleveland...So Much to Answer For* (Cle) Released with an obsessive 92-page fanzine, this pair of discs documents the two-decade evolution of achingly guitared northern Ohio noise—from the 1975 drone punk of future Pere Ubu founders in Rocket From the Tombs to current Cle classics by Cobra Verde (whose ode to underwear really kicks) and Ugly Beauty (who do an oddly engaging collage opera about summer on Lake Erie). Nowhere have so many loud bands (Pagans, X-Blank-X) found so much art hidden in their garages for such a long time. (P.O. Box 16613, Cleveland, Ohio, 44116) **A-** —CE

COUNTRY

K.T. OSLIN *My Roots Are Showing...* (BNA) It's a shame this album isn't better, since Oslin is such an endearingly whacked-out character. "The songs and the players are the real stars here," she told an interviewer recently; unfortunately, she's right. With the stripped-down production on this sheaf of offbeat oldies, Oslin's vocal limitations—camouflaged in the past by electronic means—stand naked. On the other hand, the band—assembled by coproducer Rick Will—rock out. **B-** —Tony Scherman

JAZZ

JOHN SCOFIELD *Quiet* (Verve) As atypical a project as the eclectic Scofield has ever delivered, *Quiet* features him on acoustic guitar, surrounded by a darkly timbred brass section steeped in textures that brilliantly recall the late arranger Gil Evans. Scofield's concise improvisations share the same concern for finely etched melody as his memorable compositions. Exceptional contributions by saxophonist Wayne Shorter and bassist Steve Swallow help cement this as a late-season entry for jazz record of the year. **A** —SF

THE CHARTS

'FALLING' INTO FIRST

AND IN the closely watched race between New Edition and R.E.M. for the album chart's finish line, it's another neck-and-neck race, with... wait! Who's that church mouse charging up from the rear? It's sweet Celine Dion, whose *Falling Into You* never got above No. 2 in its previous 27 weeks on the chart but now, almost inexplicably, tops it in the midst of some seriously heated competition. Chalk it up to her fast-rising single, "It's All Coming Back to Me Now," and its melodramatic, VH1-saturating video. More predictably, and morbidly, news of Tupac Shakur's death—along with that spooky pre-mortem of a video—pushed *All Eyez on Me* into the pop top 10 and nudged two older 2Pac albums into the catalog top 10, too.



LAST WEEK	POP ALBUMS	WEEKS ON CHART
1	4 CELINE DION <i>Falling Into You</i> , 550 Music/Epic	28
2	1 NEW EDITION <i>Home Again</i> , MCA	2
3	2 R.E.M. <i>New Adventures in Hi-Fi</i> , Warner Bros.	2
4	6 ALANIS MORISSETTE <i>Jagged Little Pill</i> , Maverick/Reprise	67
5	3 BLACKSTREET <i>Another Level</i> , Interscope	2
6	18 2PAC <i>All Eyez on Me</i> , Death Row/Interscope	32
7	7 PEARL JAM <i>No Code</i> , Epic	4
8	11 KEITH SWEAT <i>Keith Sweat</i> , Elektra	13
9	8 OUTKAST <i>ATLiens</i> , LaFace/Arista	4
10	15 VARIOUS ARTISTS <i>Jock Jams Vol. 2</i> , Tommy Boy	5

R&B ALBUMS
1 2 BLACKSTREET <i>Another Level</i> , Interscope
2 1 NEW EDITION <i>Home Again</i> , MCA
3 6 2PAC <i>All Eyez on Me</i> , Death Row/Interscope
4 3 OUTKAST <i>ATLiens</i> , LaFace/Arista
5 5 KEITH SWEAT <i>Keith Sweat</i> , Elektra
6 4 SOUNDTRACK <i>High School High</i> , Big Beat
7 7 DO OR DIE <i>Picture This</i> , Rap-A-Lot/Noo Trybe/Virgin
8 9 TONI BRAXTON <i>Secrets</i> , LaFace/Arista
9 12 MAXWELL <i>Maxwell's Urban Hang Suite</i> , Columbia
10 8 NAS <i>It Was Written</i> , Columbia

POP CATALOG ALBUMS
1 1 BOB MARLEY AND THE WAILERS <i>Legend</i> , Tuff Gong/Island
2 13 2PAC <i>Strictly 4 My N.I.G.G.A.Z...</i> , Death Row/Interscope
3 3 RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE <i>Rage Against the Machine</i> , Epic
4 14 2PAC <i>2Pacalypse Now</i> , Death Row/Interscope
5 2 SOUNDTRACK <i>Grease</i> , Polydor
6 4 BEASTIE BOYS <i>Licensed to Ill</i> , Def Jam/Mercury
7 5 JIMMY BUFFETT <i>Songs You Know by Heart</i> , MCA
8 8 JAMES TAYLOR <i>Greatest Hits</i> , Warner Bros.
9 11 JOURNEY <i>Journey's Greatest Hits</i> , Columbia
10 6 PINK FLOYD <i>The Wall</i> , Columbia

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