

## Sex, lies and compact discs Robertson breaks out again on Storyville

by Robb Frederick  
*The Collegian*

For Robbie Robertson, a solo album is anything but an individual project.

On his self-titled 1987 solo debut, Robertson, the former guitarist and principle songwriter for The Band, enlisted the talents of U2, Peter Gabriel and the BoDeans. He remains in character on *Storyville*, his latest release, punctuating his therapeutic vocals with performances by Neil Young, Bruce Hornsby and the Neville Brothers.

The guest appearances are more subtle this time around, however, as a more confident Robertson lets down his guard and emerges as a mature, albeit restrained, vocalist.

Inspired by "a section of New Orleans dedicated to fast living, hot music and moonburnt nights," *Storyville* is aptly titled. Throughout the disc's ten tracks, Robertson weaves images of smoldering, shadow-filled evenings, laced together with one unifying theme -- the elusive possibility of love.

But the final product is far from a sappy batch of chart-oriented ballads. Instead, Robertson has produced a seamless collection of songs which, through their lyrical honesty, are genuinely believable.

Robertson's obsession with New Orleans night life begins with "Night Parade," a morose

tale of separated lovers.

"From out of the past a stranger came / And carried you away / I stood on the corner, the scene of the crime / And I could hear her say / We'll go marching in the night parade," he sings.

This track, like the others on *Storyville*, is captivating in its complexity -- a heavy organ track interrupts an almost tribal drum beat, and a sporadic horn arrangement covers the weaknesses in Robertson's gritty, road-weary vocals.

This pace-setting opener is followed by the wistful "Hold Back the Dawn," and "Go Back to Your Woods," *Storyville's* most promising single.

Co-penned by Hornsby, "Go Back" is the closest Robertson will come to a mass-appeal single.

"If you come down here in a four piece suit / Pork pie hat and the alligator boots / Keep jerking rabbits outta' your hat / Now can ya pull a disappearing act," he rasps before lumbering into the track's undeniable chorus.

The disc's thematic centerpiece comes with "Day of Reckoning (Burnin' for You)," a scorching memory of a relationship that is suddenly severed when the woman moves away without an explanation.

"Well she moved from the country down to the city / Where the scene was dark / And the street was gritty / In the hustle and bustle and all the commotion / She got addicted to the

locomotion," Robertson wails.

As the song continues, Robertson recalls scenes from the past, giving the present situation an even sharper emotional edge. While his raspy voice searches for the high-end, his isolated narrator searches for understanding.

This dilemma is echoed on "Breakin' the Rules," in which Robertson issues a plea for understanding, reminding his audience that relationships, after the initial excitement wears off, often require a sizable effort from both sides.

Another theme present throughout *Storyville* concerns the immediacy of emotion and the need to live for the moment.

This is conceptualized best on "Soap Box Preacher" and the demanding "What About Now," in which Robertson proposes "Forget about Tomorrow / It's too far away / What about now / Close your eyes / Don't talk of yesterday / It's too far away, it's too far away."

The argument is hard to resist, particularly when Robertson balances it with his descriptive portrayal of love lost and dreams shattered.

If one half of *Storyville* shows us the pain and longing that follows so many relationships, the other half reminds us to take advantage of the present and enjoy the moments while we have them.

## Jones' latest is BAD ...But in a good way

by Brad Kane  
*The Collegian*

As a member of "The Only Band That Ever Mattered," The Clash, guitarist Mick Jones (now the leader of Big Audio Dynamite Two) left his mark on one of punk music's best groups through his songwriting.

Leaving most of the lyric work up to vocalist Joe Strummer, Jones staked out his territory blistering, almost primitive, music. Music that echoed Strummer's enraged persona to a tee.

When given the pen to do some lyrics of his own, Jones wrote some of rock's finest pieces dealing with loss of identity and loss of self-worth.

Most prominently is 1980's "Lost in the Supermarket," from *London Calling*, the album that signalled the end of punk and the beginning of alternative music, where styles mix and match, coming together in the strangest of ways.

Jones played the role of evolver in The Clash, bringing reggae and ska to the band in its later years. When The Clash breathed its last ferocious breath in the early '80s, Jones moved on to found Big Audio Dynamite, a group where he could not only do all the songwriting he desired, but could also mix rock and reggae even more to his delight.

Now, four albums later, Jones has got himself a new backing band (thus, a slightly altered name), a new album, *The Globe*, and a new sense of hope evident in his music.

Gone are the words of despair and the unfilled promises. Instead, Jones seems to have finally become, well, happy. Discarding reggae influences in favor of a dancier feel, songs such as "Rush" and "Can't Wait" evoke thoughts of hope for the future--definitely a 180-degree turn from the spoutings of The Clash.

"Rush" in particular is a gem. The album's lead single is a joyous, danceable affirmation that life does have a bright side. Helped along by a small bit of sampling (the keyboard line from

The Who's "Baba O'Reilly"), "Rush" is as good as any single that's been released this year.

"Can't Wait," meanwhile, is a driving, pulsating track, using a sample of marching soldiers that enhances the forward movement impression prevalent in the song.

Even in Jones' moments of despair, which he still occasionally has, some hope breaks through the darkness. This is heard on "Innocent Child" (which starts off using a sample from Phil Collins' "In the Air Tonight").

"Innocent Child" examines the desire to see individuals at a young age, when they're not yet tainted by society's shortcomings. Complete with a hip-hop epilogue, the song takes a simple approach to display powerful emotions -- pretty much a summation of the punk era.

But Jones doesn't get much more depressing than that; only using the song "I Don't Know" to express any negative thoughts. Hidden behind danceable synthesizers, a message of doubt comes through clearly, making for an interesting juxtaposition.

While Big Audio Dynamite Two is a bit more uplifting than its predecessor, at least Jones and Co. haven't lost their sense of strangeness.

"The Tea Party," which closes the album, is a fine example of this. The song is a consolidated rendition of a few selected tracks from the album done elevator music style, complete with a guest vocalist. It must be heard to be believed.

If there's a negative to *The Globe*, it may be in the editing. Unless one has a CD player keeping tabs on what track is playing, one can easily get lost following the nearly seamless procession from song to song. This becomes a bit much on the second side, but it's only a minor hassle.

Yes, Mick Jones does appear to be onto something -- danceable rock spiced up with just a bit of sampling here and there. Not only does it look like a good conglomeration on paper, it sounds good too. Very good, indeed.

## Hollywood author to speak

by Craig Campbell  
*The Collegian*

Straight from California where he is currently working on a screenplay for a CBS movie of the week, John Robert Bensink will speak to Behrend writing classes Thursday and Friday, Oct. 24 and 25, and give an open discussion on Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in the Reed Seminar Room.

Bensink began his writing career in Erie writing for *The Erie Triangle*, a mid-seventies regional magazine. After working in Erie for a few years he moved to New York to become a free-lance writer.

Bensink has also written articles for numerous newspapers and magazines including *The New York Daily News*, *Playboy* and *Money*. He also served as editor on the magazine *Twilight Zone* and worked for The New York School for Social

Research and the United Nations.

Along with his newspaper and magazine articles, Bensink has been published in the first annual *Year's Best Fantasy Stories*. He has also written scripts and screenplays for many television movies.

The first was "A Whisper Kills," and it aired on ABC in 1988. It received an Edgar Award nomination for best television feature from the Mystery Writers of America.

John Bensink's most recent work, a fact-based movie entitled "Death of Innocence," will air on CBS on Dec. 10. During his discussion, Bensink will show a clip from this film, which stars William Devane.

Aspiring writers can learn tips from this local success story, fans of his screenplays can meet the author behind the story and others can just enjoy listening to a Hollywood author.

### BEST DAMN CAMPUS REP WANTED!!

North America's Best Damn Tour Co. only H-life can offer you a free spring break trip for every 20 paid and a chance to win a Yamaha wavejammer. Join thousands of other campus reps. Call Now: 1-800-263-5604.

Free Travel, Cash, and Excellent Experience!! Openings available for students to promote Spring Break tours. Call Inter-Campus Programs. 1-800-327-6013.

Earn \$2000 + free spring break trip! Student operator seeking motivated students, organizations to promote Cancun, Bahamas and Daytona! Call 1-800-724-1555.

### Part-Time Work

\$7.50 Starting Pay. Flexible schedule to fit classes. Full training provided. May continue full-time over breaks. All majors should apply. Call Now: 870-9408

TOM SELLECK      STEVE GUTTENBERG      TED DANSON

*Three Men and a Little Lady*



Thurs    Fri    Sat    Sun    Mon  
10:30pm 8:00pm Mid 8:00pm 10:30pm

**Admission**  
Students: \$1.50 w/Activities Card: Free Public: \$2.50