

# Further in Time Combines Multiculturalism, Music

By RUSS LANE  
Managing Editor

Just as romance gives way to reality in life, novelty gives way to quality in the realm of world music. You can only get by on ingenuity for so long — eventually you either put up or shut up.

So after three albums of mixing Celtic strings, African rhythms, electronics, modern song structures and whatever else struck their fancy, the 10 musicians comprising the Afro Celt Sound System stop being clever and start sounding like a band on Volume 3: *Further in Time*.

It's a welcome shift from earlier efforts. When the Afro Celt Sound System got together in the '90s, they sounded more like the result of a master's thesis than a band — even the band members admit *Volume 1: Sound Magic* was basically a glorified science project.

The pretensions of the band's early works, coupled with the genuine originality of their mixing various traditional genres, turned each album into a



**album reviews**  
Afro Celt Sound System  
Volume 3: Further in Time  
★★★★☆

mind-altering substance — head-inducing yet strangely fascinating. The music's energy level and sense of movement were lacking because the band always sounded painfully self-conscious and arty, as if they knew what they were doing was so new they felt compelled make it more so.

But now the effect is more mind-expanding than mind-altering. Each of *Further in Time's* 12 tracks are self-assured and unforced without sacrificing the boundless energy that made earlier albums so engaging.

With "Lagan," "North" and "When You're Falling" (featuring the equally ingenious Peter Gabriel) serving as text-

book examples, the album allows the genius of the band's style to become more clear.

These songs feature similar elements — the speed and delicacy of the Celtic violins matched with pounding, authoritative African rhythms and Iarla Ó Lionáird's haunting vocals — but each song comes as a surprise whose improbability doesn't undermine its perfection.

And considering the long histories of the music they redefine, the Afro Celts also make the album sound contemporary while redefining the world-music genre in the process.

Usually, most Americans consider world music to be a sort of audible museum, in which various styles are condemned to an existence of vague remembrance and under-appreciation.

Rather than merely documenting their eclecticism, the Afro Celts take these traditional sounds and send them reeling into the 21st century. *Further in Time* could be played at a performance theater or a club, and it would fit in either venue amazingly well.

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# Bizarre Ending Ruins 'A.I.'

By ADRIAL DALE  
Staff Writer

"A.I. Artificial Intelligence" is a new and improved, futuristic "Pinocchio," but with the boy composed of doohickeys and gadgets rather than the familiar wood and strings of the past.

This new take on an old tale works reasonably well, though forced, for most of the movie.



"A.I. Artificial Intelligence"  
★★★★☆

But then it gradually runs out of steam toward the end.

Like any good Steven Spielberg film, a heavy emphasis is placed on special effects and, in some cases, an entire world created especially for the movie.

The setting is strangely like present-day Earth, except with interesting new gizmos here and there, along with improvements to existing contraptions.

But the eye candy aside, "A.I." follows the great tradition of dystopian films.

The future presented in "A.I." has one of the same problems plaguing the present day — racism — only now targeted toward robots. Because they survive longer than humans and serve as a slave class, these robots are met with animosity.

Amidst this backdrop, scientists looking for challenge develop David (Haley Joel Osmet), a machine with the capacity to love.

Upon his creation, David is given to Monica (Frances O'Connor) and Henry (Sam Robards), a couple chosen to be his caretakers in a desperate effort to replace their own comatose child, Martin (Jake Thomas).

The subsequent events are both touching and awkward, as one might assume it's hard to get used to a mushy 10-year-old hunk o' bolts as a close family member.



Haley Joel Osmet stars in "A.I. Artificial Intelligence," an updated retelling of "Pinocchio" by Steven Spielberg and Stanley Kubrick.

Both Osmet and O'Connor pull off this portrayal skillfully, as the family tries to find the gray area between caring for the machine and being apprehensive about its inclusion.

Circumstances beyond the couple's control inevitably force David out of the family and on a quest for the Blue Fairy, the magical being who helps Pinocchio reach human status.

David meets "Gigolo Joe" (Jude Law), who becomes his sidekick on the journey to be a "real boy," in true-to-legend Pinocchio fashion.

More than the fairy-tale foundation of the plot, the most amazing element of the movie is, of course, the robots' special effects.

One scene shows robots scrounging for parts in an effort to do necessary self-repairs.

Vital pieces of these "mechas" ("mechanicals" for short) are missing while the machines astonishingly carry through with normal lifelike movements.

Despite the quality acting and Industrial Light & Magic's special-effects

wizardry, the ending was so out of this world and strange that it did not come quick enough.

Perhaps this was the influence of the late Stanley Kubrick, co-creator of "A.I." and a notorious lover of the bizarre. Don't forget, he was the director who brought us the unsettling classic "A Clockwork Orange."

There are multiple parts during the last half-hour of the movie that make you ask yourself "Wait ... there's more?"

And as the film continues, it becomes so odd that it takes on a completely different feel than the beginning.

This disjointedness eventually overwhelms the film's better qualities as it draws nearer to the end.

The ending attempts poignancy, but the emotion is filtered through the complete otherworldliness of the established mood.

It'll leave you dumbfounded and confused, but possibly with a small lump lodged in your throat as well.

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# McCain Explores Love for Jesus

By SARAH KUCHARSKI  
Staff Writer

On what Edwin McCain calls his best album to date, *Far From Over*, the typically ballad-driven singer-songwriter explores his inner folk-rock and blues influences. The result is a more upbeat, feel-good sing-a-long for those grappling with love, God and rock-star fame.

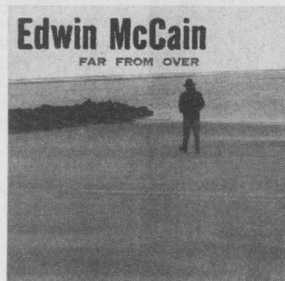
Less touchy-feely and hokey than McCain's earlier hits, "Solitude," "I'll Be" and "Could Not Ask For More," *Far From Over's* title track is still one of those let's-notlose-this-relationship kind of tunes to which McCain owes his entire musical career.

But unlike the aforementioned love songs, *Far From Over* won't make you want to cry like a teenybopper without her Justin Timberlake.

Catchy and even downright happy at times, *Far From Over* is a refreshing step away from the tormented lover/artist McCain reflects.

It's a welcome change, since the "tormented artist" routine never fit McCain well anyway.

Sticking with the love song theme, McCain teamed up with Grammy award-winning singer-songwriter



**album reviews**  
Edwin McCain  
Far From Over  
★★★★☆

Shawn Colvin for two of the album's tunes, "Hearts Fall" and "Write Me A Song."

While "Hearts Fall" is a nice little play-it-loud-with-the-windows-down ditty you'll find yourself subconsciously singing along with, "Write Me A Song" veers back toward McCain's earlier days of chick-rock mushiness.

"And now write me a song/ One that makes all the girls cry/ And the old women swoon/ At the sound of my tune/ And the hearts of the lonely will fly", he sings. Um ... yeah ... gag.

However, McCain redeems himself with the subsequent track "Get Out of This Town," in which he pumps out some pretty decent rock (slightly reminiscent of Aerosmith or a sweaty

Garth Brooks, depending on how you look at it — think 1993's "Fever" by Brooks.

McCain goes on to poke fun at the institution of rock 'n' roll and all that comes with it on "Radio Star." Though the song comes across as somewhat cheesy, McCain effectively disses Britney Spears, Fred Durst and the rumors that tend to be spread about the famous.

"I'm the radio star with the car and the clothes/ The fancy guitars and the spoon in my nose/ You know in my world now anything goes/ You all want to be me, and I'll be gone in a week," he sings.

The only real downer about *Far From Over* is its concluding song, "Jesus, He Loves Me."

Forgive my cynical attitude, but McCain's godliness seems oxymoronic at best.

The swearing, smoking, road-weary rock star hidden behind McCain's lyrical Casanova facade is probably one of the last people on Jesus' list of folks to love.

But hey, who am I to question Jesus? I guess that if you think you've got the love, roll with it — perhaps you're paying your dues in some way I haven't heard of yet.

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## THE Daily Crossword

By Norma Steinberg

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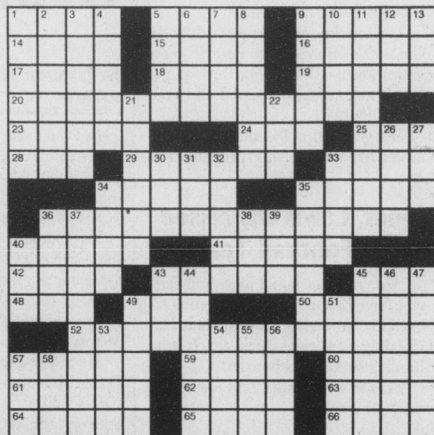
**ACROSS**  
1 Payment option  
5 Pub offerings  
9 Stratum  
14 Member of the choir  
15 Campus military grp.  
16 School for Sartre  
17 Novelist Amelia  
18 Ice-cream container  
19 Blow with a blunt object  
20 Field supervisor  
23 Drive forward  
24 Self-image  
25 "\_\_\_ Loves You"  
28 Snaky character  
29 Half of UTEP  
33 Be first  
34 AA transportation?

**DOWN**  
1 Hack  
2 Warning devices  
3 Shoulder bands

**ACROSS**  
4 Singer Lena  
5 Crafty  
6 Weaver's need  
7 Peak in Sicily  
8 Spectacles  
9 Fired  
10 Pain in the neck  
11 Reflexive pronoun  
12 Shade tree  
13 Aft.  
21 Divide or cling  
22 Earlier  
26 Fifty percent  
27 Harris and O'Neill  
30 Sweater size: abbr.  
31 Neg.'s opposite

**DOWN**  
32 Singer Baker  
33 Gaudy  
34 Stick around  
35 Sandra Bullock film  
36 Pride member  
37 Outside  
38 Fall mo.  
39 Had lunch  
40 Y. Arafat's supporters  
43 Come by  
44 Scalawag  
45 Music system  
46 Thug's rod  
47 Maintain  
49 Sheriff's followers  
51 Bookcase level  
53 Klutz's comment  
54 Stand up to

**ACROSS**  
55 Beastly character  
56 Stink and then some  
57 Keyboard key near Ctrl  
58 Anonymous John



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