

DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME!



THIS MAN IS A PROFESSIONAL

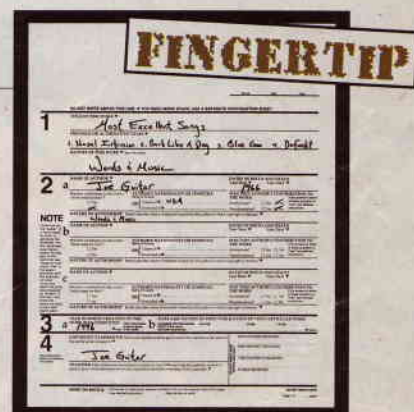
Domingo Morales, 67, was hospitalized in New York City after his penis was severed. Originally, Morales claimed that he was attacked by a crazed, knife-wielding prostitute who “Lorena Bobbitted” him. After three days of unsuccessfully trying to locate the woman, police confronted Morales, who came out with the real story. Apparently, Morales, who styles himself something of a luthier, was carving the neck of a new guitar in the privacy of his own home. While holding the neck between his knees, his knife slipped and cut into his crotch, thereby severing the aforementioned genitalia. He was too embarrassed to admit this to the police the first time around, partially because he had misplaced the amputated piece. When police helped Morales search for his missing member, it was discovered in a kitchen container hidden in his apartment. Alas, it was too late; the separated section could not be reattached. The moral of this story is to always buy your guitar parts from professional, responsible manufacturers, and don’t take guitar-making into your own hands. —HPN

make it official

Unless you play only by yourself, locked in your own bedroom, you need protection. Copyright your compositions! It’s simple. Write to the Register of Copyrights in D.C. at the address below, and ask for a few blank “Form PA” applications. Then prepare a tape with a bunch of your songs on it. Use any crappy old tape (you’re not getting it back), and don’t bother making a killer demo—you only need a bare-bones representation of chords and melody. If you like, include a lead sheet and lyrics.

For \$20, you can copyright a load of tunes in one fell swoop. Just come up with one title for the whole set, and then list the individual songs under “Previous or Alternative Titles.” And *poof*—you’re legal as of the day they receive it. What a country. —RM

Write to:
Register of Copyrights
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C. 20559-6000



Jim Thomas, guitarist for San Francisco’s Mermen, is vexed. “The whole surf-music thing, I don’t know. I really surf, and I’ve lived by the beach most of my life. Our music is more related to the reality of the ocean and my own experience rather than buying into the whole idea of surf. People say that surf is supposed to be this thing that The Astronauts and Dick Dale dictated, and they feel every-

one has to play it that way; that it’s vintage instruments, playing within very genre-specific limits. But I don’t do that, and real surf guys, the guys who surf Mavericks [a popular surf spot] here in Ocean City, really dig my stuff. This stuff comes from the beach. Isn’t that what really qualifies as surf music?”

On one hand, The Mermen, with their heavy reverb and tremolo, do have blood ties to Dick Dale (who also was a surfer). On the other hand, Thomas and company twist that conventional idiom into nasty whirlpools of

the MERMEN

contemporary noise. On the new *A Glorious Lethal Euphoria*, the band’s groove is the bastard son of The Ventures and Sonic Youth. “I’m not interested in any of that ‘roots’ kind of surf style. I want to say something very directly and I want to avoid clichéd ideas. Most new surf bands buy the retro stuff lock, stock and barrel. I want nothing to do with that stuff.”

Thomas’ perplexing rig needs a diagram and a Ph.D. to explain. Suffice to say there are three cords running from his guitar, up to 20 pedals on the floor in front of him, and strings weighted from .013 through .060. No tone knobs, no volume pots. “One of these days I’ll draw it up,” he says of his setup schematic. “But believe me, it all evolves around a really clean guitar sound.” Right. And anybody can surf. —BG