

THE BAY AREA

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA'S GUIDE TO ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT ♦ DECEMBER 19-25, 1999

DATEBOOK

Our critics pick the best Bay Area bands of all time — readers weigh in, too

NOV



cover boys, Satriani makes instrumental records that are as tasteful as they are showy. As a teacher, he can claim an impressive list of students including Steve Vai and Metallica's Kirk Hammett.

Definitive Song: "Surfing With the Alien" (1987)

60. Paris

Boasting intellectually and politically charged rhymes and compelling beats, Paris (Oscar Jackson Jr.) broke out of the Bay Area with 1990's "The Devil Made Me Do It." He didn't have Chuck D's clout, but he may well have been the West Coast's own minister of culture.

Definitive Song: "Bush Killa" (1990)

61. Jim Carroll Band

The "Basketball Diaries" author came to San Francisco in search of punk rock and alternative literary history, and he fused the two on his debut album, "Catholic Boy": "It's too late/ To fall in love with Sharon Tate..."

Definitive Song: "People Who Died" (1980)

62. Joan Baez

The queen of folk music danced onstage and sang with the Grateful Dead at the Fillmore in the '60s and has a sly twinkle in her eye that is 100 percent rock 'n' roll. Who else would have put a civil-rights anthem on the pop charts?

Definitive Song: "We Shall Overcome" (1963)

63. The Youngbloods

The group recorded the quintessential hippie anthem while still in New York, but moved to Marin County soon thereafter. Before the solo career of leader Jesse Colin Young descended into banality, this vigorous little band turned out some effective folk-rock inventions, although it never got past the one big hit.

Definitive Song: "Get Together" (1967)

64. Electric Flag

After his stint with the Paul Butterfield Blues Band made him America's premier star guitarist, Mike Bloomfield moved to Mill Valley and put together this landmark band, whose first appearance was the historic 1967 Monterey Pop Festival. Besides the dubious distinction of giving the world Buddy Miles, the Flag cut a killer first album, before Bloomfield retired to playing the blues in North Beach clubs and Mitchell Brothers porn movies.

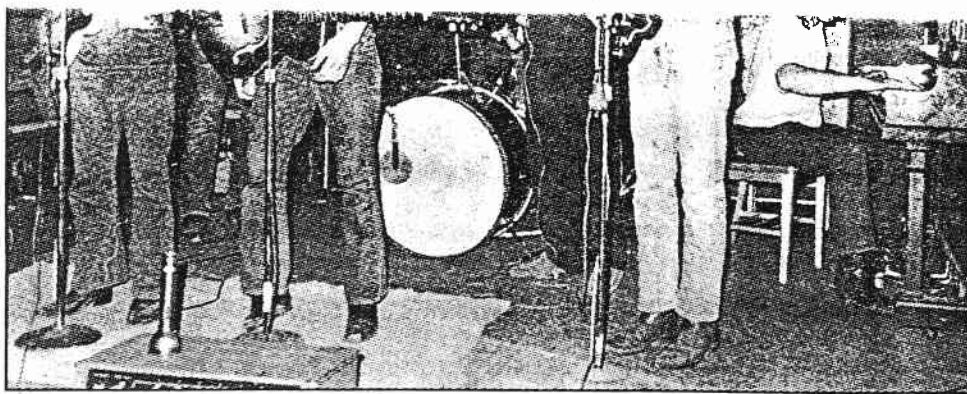
Definitive Song: "Groovin' Is Easy" (1968)

65. Elvin Bishop

With the incendiary soul belter Jo Baker by his side, the ex-Paul Butterfield Blues Band guitarist ruled the Bay Area club scene when that still mattered. His greatest hit came later ("Fooled Around and Fell in Love"), with future Starship vocalist Mickey Thomas no less. But Bishop's moment had already come and gone.

Definitive Song: "Rock Bottom" (1972)

66. Sammy Hagar



Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen: a lovable, oddball bunch.

boys.

Definitive Song: "Only One Way to Rock" (1981)

67. Sheila E.

Pedigreed Latin timbales player Sheila E. came to the fore under the tutelage of Prince (when he still called himself that), who wrote, produced, played and sang most of the vocal parts on her breakthrough hit. The sex appeal, however, was all hers.

Definitive Song: "Glamorous Life" (1984)

68. Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen

Bringing a blend of barrelhouse C&W and Southern rockabilly to the San Francisco scene, Cody and cohorts were a lovable, oddball bunch — from goofy Bill Kirchen on guitar to friendly Andy Stein on sax and violin to the cigar-chomping Commander himself. Always underrated, Cody and company opened the door for country and western in the rock underground, and were an obvious inspiration to the whole Austin, Texas, scene. Special mention for the holiday record "Daddy's Drinking Up All Our Christmas."

Definitive Song: "Beat Me Daddy, Eight to the Bar" (1971)

69. Greg Kihn

The most commercially successful of the Beserkley Records acts, Kihn scored an early MTV hit, kept out of the No. 1 slot only by



Michael Jackson's indomitable "Billie Jean," and slowly dissolved. Guitar whiz Joe Satriani played on his band's final major-label album, Weird Al made a hit Kihn spoof called "I Lost on Jeopardy" and Kihn himself got a San Jose morning DJ.

Definitive Song: "Jeopardy" (1983)

70. The Mermen

Surf music has never sounded so ambitious. Guitarist Jim Thomas — a real-life regular on the Ocean Beach breakers — is a compositional savant, creating dreamy, expansive seascapes that have more in common with prog rock and Prokofiev than "Pipeline."

Definitive Song: "The Drowning Man Knows His God" (1995)

71. The Rubinoos

At the height of the local scene's infatuation with loud guitars and paralyzing rock came these Berkeley smarty-pants musicians, barely out of their teens, playing a kind of frothy power pop that simultaneously spoofed and celebrated their bubble-gum roots. Their cover of Tommy James and the Shondells' oldie "I Think We're Alone Now" was a chart hit before Tiffany.

Definitive Song: "I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend" (1979)

72. Dan Hicks and the Hot Licks

The inimitable, wry Hicks, a drummer for San Francisco rock pioneers the Charlatans, packaged his sly cynicism in a Hot Club de France faux jazz sound (complete with two wonderful female "Lickettes") to showcase the wit and wisdom of one of the great characters of the San Francisco music scene.

Definitive Song: "Where's the Money?" (1971)

73. Invisibl Skratch Piklz

The most influential DJ crew in the world lives in San Francisco when not on tour, which is most of the time. Individually and as a crew, the members of the Piklz have won countless competitions, influenced a generation of aspiring turntablists and put San Francisco's alternative hip-hop scene on the map.

Definitive Song: "Invasion of the Octopus People" (1996)

74. Count Five