

# Gapplegate Guitar and Bass Blog

## Grego Applegate Edwards Blogs on Guitarists, Bassists, Musicians & Music

Classical-Modern Music Review  
 Grego's Gapplegate Site: On My Own Music (under construction)  
 Gapplegate Music Review (Jazz)  
 Grego's Yakety-Yak



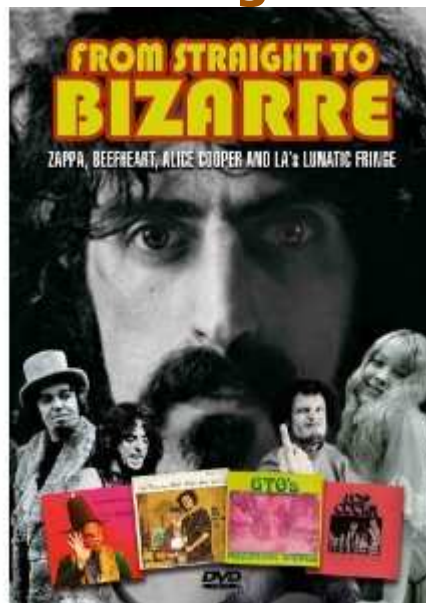
## About This Blog

Grego Applegate Edwards writes this column.

The Gapplegate Guitar and Bass Blog covers music releases of interest to guitarists, bassists, vocalists, musicians and other creative people. It is

Tuesday, January 17, 2012

## "From Straight to Bizarre: Zappa, Beefheart, Alice Cooper, and LA's Lunatic Fringe" DVD



Frank Zappa with his business partner Herb Cohen embarked on an ambitious label venture in 1968. By the mid-early '70s it was gone. *From Straight to Bizarre* (Sexy Intellectual SIDVD 568) documents on DVD the story of the Straight and Bizarre labels, and

the non-Mothers/Zappa releases that came out over the years of operation.

We get the story of the creative relations between Zappa and the artists, the music itself and its production, and the overall ethos of freakdom that the music in part represented. Essra Mohawk (Sandy Hurvitz), Wild Man Fischer, the GTOs, Alice Cooper and of course Captain Beefheart, among others, are discussed and what they did during this period.

There are talking head interviews of some of the key participants, commentary by selected critics, a cohesive narrative and selected music excerpts.

It's an important overview that is not perfect. There is less

also for the music lover who does not play but instead forms the core audience musicians most love. You are in the inner circle of the "true listeners." If you care about what you hear and want to know more about what is out there, you are the person I have in mind as I write these postings. If music isn't an important part of your life this blog is probably not for you.

Various musical genres get attention on these pages: jazz and rock with guitarists and/or bassists playing a prominent role, classical music for the guitar, world music, blues, roots, electric music, vocalists.

I cover other jazz and improvisation on the Gapplegate Music Review blog (see link on this page) and modern classical and avant garde concert music on the new blogsite Classical-Modern Music Review (see link).

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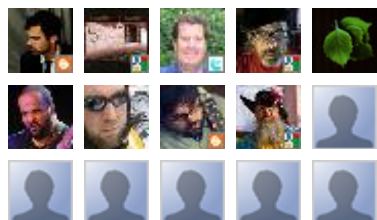
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- ▼ 2012 (12)
  - ▼ January (12)

interview footage from Zappa himself than would be ideal, no commentary from Beefheart or Cooper, and perhaps less musical examples than one might want. The coverage of Captain Beefheart is not as comprehensive as his importance demands. Of course an entire DVD could easily focus on the Captain in his Straight Records phase, arguably his most seminal. Gary Lucas, guitarist and later Beefheart band member has been giving presentations on the life and importance of the Captain. And BBC has done an interesting documentary on Beefheart's entire career. So there is alternative coverage. On the other hand band members such as Drumbo (John French) have insightful things to say on the DVD about the living-creating situation of the band and how the music was put together during this period.

All-in-all one is left with a vivid picture of the commonalities the artists shared as part of the Zappa orbit and some of the wonderful music that was made--as well as some oddities that were more important as socio-cultural documentations of the freak scene.

It's a good introduction to the subject--entertaining, informative, and fascinating. It may not be perfect but it will no doubt be well-received by the Zappa aficionado and anyone with an interest in the counter-culture and music of the era.

Posted by [Grego Applegate Edwards](#) at 6:43 AM

Labels: ["from straight to bizarre" dvd gapplegate guitar review](#), ['60s counter-culture](#), [frank zappa](#)

0 comments:

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Christopher Lapina, "Eclectic  
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Zs, "33": Brooklyn's Insistently  
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Moe, "What Happened to LA  
LAs?", 2012, Jamband Get...

Macy Chen, "After 75 Years"  
Fuses Jazz Vocals with...

Elliott Sharp-Andrea Centazzo,  
"Snowplow:" Tapestr...

Boris Savoldelli, "Insanology"  
Rereleased on Moon ...

Stephen Malkmus and the  
Jicks, "Mirror Traffic," A...

Dave Tarras and the Musiker  
Brothers, "Tanz!", A K...

Johnny Winter "Live at  
Rockpalast," 1979, Now Out

...

Hubble, "Hubble Drums:" Ben  
Greenberg's Trance-Dro...

Toranzo Cannon, "Leaving  
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Blu...

- ▶ 2011 (260)
- ▶ 2010 (353)
- ▶ 2009 (142)

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## About Me



Grego Applegate  
Edwards  
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I've spent my life making and listening to music, editing, writing and trying to put food on the table. I've gone to music schools (Berklee College of Music, School of Contemporary Music), gotten advanced degrees in various related subjects (New York University, University of Chicago), written novels and been a working stiff like you. The rest is cannon fodder for those who steal identities, isn't it? Oh yes, I also write for Cadence, a periodical covering jazz and

improv music, and All About Jazz, a website devoted to . . . guess! I ran a guitar shop for a while. That was interesting. I am working on some new cross-tempo-ed ensemble pieces. That's what I do. . . some of it anyway.

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