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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE TRADEMARK TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

Proceeding	92057241
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE BEFORE THE TRADEMARK TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

Petitioner: Daniel M. Goodman c/o P.O. Box 120713, Nashville, Tennessee 37212

Registrant: Steven Berlin, Suite 224, 3439 N.E. Sandy Blvd. Portland, Oregon 97232.

Proceeding Number 92057241

PETITIONER'S NOTICE OF RELIANCE

COMES the Petitioner Daniel M. Goodman pursuant to TMBP 704.08(b) and CFR Sec. 2.122(e) and files his Notice of Reliance upon the attached article called "Review of Los Super Seven Hear It On The X" on the internet web site AllMusic: http://allmusic.com/album/heard-it-on-the-x-mw0000705694 accessed December 23, 2105. This material is relevant because it helps establishes Petitioner's claim that the concept for the musical performing group "Los Super 7" is not a band per se, it's a collective,organized by manager Dan Goodman."

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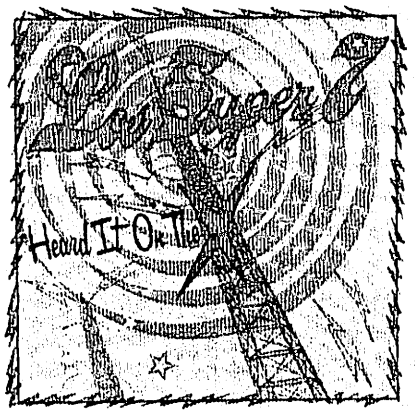

Discography Browsor

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Release Date	March 22, 2005
Duration	37:21
Genre	Pop/Rock Country Latin
Styles	Americana Mexican Traditions Roots Rock Tex-Mex Alternative Latin
Recording Date	September 20, 2004 - September 26, 2004

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Los Super Seven

Heard It on the X

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AllMusic Review by Stephen Thomas Erlewine [-]

Los Super Seven isn't a band, per se -- it's a collective, organized by manager Dan Goodman, who comes up with a concept for each of the group's albums and assembles a band to fit. For their third album, Goodman turned to music journalist/record producer Rick Clark, whose giveaway CDs for the Oxford American journal are highly regarded in certain quarters. Inspired by ZZ Top's classic boogie rock tribute to border radio, "Heard It on the X," Clark came up with a sharp idea: a salute to the heyday of AM radio on the Texas/Mexico border, when rock & roll, blues, country, jazz, Western swing, and mariachi mixed freely. Clark and Goodman drew up a list of songs and musicians to play them, recruited two different core bands -- indie rockers Calexico and a group featuring Charlie Sexton, who also served as the third producer on this album (along with Clark and Goodman), with drummer Hunt Sales -- and then brought in a bunch of Texas-identified singers. Some -- like Raul Malo, Joe Ely, Rick Trevino, Flaco Ramos, and Freddy Fender -- were Los Super Seven veterans, while others -- John Hiatt, Lyle Lovett, Rodney Crowell, and Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown -- are new to the game. That list of musicians signals that *Heard It on the X* is not nearly as Latin-centric as its predecessor, *Canciones*, which theoretically means it may play to a wider audience, but in 2005, with all this roots music and versions of songs that are 30-40 years old, it's unlikely that this will get much play outside of roots fanatics and those who long for the heyday of Musician magazine. That said, *Heard It on the X* is executed about as well as it could be. The song selection is expert, touching on lesser-known tunes by such Texas giants as Doug Sahm and Buddy Holly and standards by Blind Lemon Jefferson, ZZ Top, and Bob Wills, adding a few cult favorites and a new tune or two along the way. While this certainly reads like an eclectic listen on paper, in practice it flows easily, thanks to both the house bands, the professional (albeit a bit too clean) production, and the fact that the borders separating these genres are virtually nonexistent these days. There's no real cross-pollination within the grooves themselves (having Ramos sing the title track doesn't quite qualify, since it still comes across as bloozy boogie rock), the styles merely rub shoulders with each other, and since all the musicians already travel in these circles, there are no real surprises (well, apart from Hiatt's mannered vocal on "I'm Not That Kat (Anymore)," but on second thought, that's not much of a surprise, either). But surprises are overrated, particularly with so many similar albums shooting too high and missing the mark. Here, the songs are excellent, performed by the right musicians, and the result is a highly enjoyable record for anybody into any of the featured artists or songwriters. If this doesn't pack the thrill or sense of discovery that the original recordings have, mark that down to the ultimate triumph of border radio -- its influence has been so strong and so far-reaching that listeners take its innovations for granted, so an album as nonchalantly diverse as this seems like a welcome everyday occurrence.

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ARTICLE

Los Super Seven – Border radio

(/users/archive)

BY ARCHIVE (/USERS/ARCHIVE)
FEBRUARY 28, 2005

IT CAME CRACKLING THROUGH the radio speaker late at night from faraway places like Villa Acuna, Coahuila, "in sunny old Mexico." The blowtorch signal faded in and out of the ether, making disjointed the voices of personalities too outrageous to be doubted, speaking to true believers and the wanton alike, promising salvation through God and/or low-down dirty-leg women celebrated in song.

Evangelists like Reverend Ike and Brother Al spread the gospel while selling Bibles, genuine holy water, and autographed pictures of Jesus Christ. Hucksters and quacks such as Doc Brinkley promised to restore men's sexual vitality with goat gland implants. And most significantly, hepsters such as Wolfman Jack exposed listeners all across North America to the wilder side by spinning records other radio stations wouldn't play and howling eerily before, after, and over the music, while advertising baby chicks, miracle balm, and collections of hit records.

It made the cute little Japanese transistor AM radio sound forbidden and menacing. To any impressionable kid hooked on music, it was better than magic.

Delbert McClinton remembers hearing it after he traded his coveted World War II German dress dagger for a little $2 crystal radio set. "I'd get in bed at night and crawl under the covers with my flashlight and hear stuff you couldn't hear anywhere else, from Bill Monroe to B.B. King," he says.

Lloyd Maines compares it to watching a dirty movie. Joe Ely says hearing it after midnight, sitting in a car parked in the middle of a cotton field with friends, drinking and who knows what, felt good "because it sounded like you were doing something wrong, really evil."

Ruben Ramos tuned it in all the way to Michigan whenever his family left Texas and headed north to harvest crops in the fields. His older brothers preferred the Spanish-language stations beaming in from the interior of Mexico because that was the language and the music they'd grown up with. Ruben and his younger brothers were all the about the English-language rock 'n' roll and rhythm & blues served up on stations like XERF and XEG.

Freddy Fender was hooked on Dr. Jazzmo, a black disc jockey who spun Clifton Chenier and other regional delights, and another madman who called himself Howlin' Rooster -- characters even crazier than the better-known DJ who went by the name of Wolfman Jack. Joe Ely credits Wolfman Jack for turning him on to Jimmy Reed and Muddy Waters, and Brother Al, the guy who followed the Wolfman every evening, for exposing him to a variety of the Lord's music not played on other gospel radio stations. Whenever Sauce Gonzales was driving between gigs with Sunny & the Sunliners, Howlin' Rooster sent out dedications to him and other band members.

I heard it. The experience was so mesmerizing, I recorded Wolfman Jack's shows on a heavy reel-to-reel audio recorder, holding the little microphone next to the radio speaker. You never knew what you were going to hear, but the howls made an impression. When I played back the recordings for friends, I could never understand why they didn't get as excited about it as I did.

Billy Frank Gibbons heard it too. It was seared into his memory so vividly that years later he wrote a song about the experience, "Heard It On The X", and recorded it with his band ZZ Top, who performed it in concert venues around the world. When Rick Clark stumbled upon the recording 30 years after ZZ Top made it and figured out what it meant, the lightbulb above his head flashed on. This X factor, more than anything, was what Los Super Seven was all about.

"It" is border radio, the freewheeling/anything-goes/outsider/renegade medium heard

throughout much of the Americas and overseas once upon a time. Its Texas-Mexican connection went beyond the geographic location of the transmitters. For example, Lydia Mendoza, the first female Mexican-American recording star, known as the Lark of the Valley, found her audience through border radio stations back in the 1920s and 1930s. Discovering border radio through ZZ Top's "Heard It On The X" is a little bit like Clifford Antone figuring out the blues through Led Zeppelin -- a bassackwards roundabout path to the truth, but the truth nonetheless. So if the boogie trio's little riff about what border radio meant to them as young lads is the key to the highway, then punch the accelerator and git it on.

So what's all that got to do with Los Super Seven? Weren't they the Latin roots guys who delved into Texas-Mexican border folk traditions and got a Grammy for their efforts? Or are they that Los Lobos spinoff that followed the trail of the Buena Vista Social Club four years back with a CD and a DVD? And what the heck does ZZ Top or Wolfman Jack have to do with "Mi Ranchito", "Margarita", or "Compay Gato" anyway?

The short answers are yes, yes, and lots.

Heard It On The X, the theme of Los Super Seven's third album (to be released March 22 by Telarc), bears precious little resemblance to the previous two albums. Which is sort of the point. Besides, there are other ways to explain the success of a band that never really existed and includes only two players, Rick Trevino and Ruben Ramos, who have been along for the entire ride, along with a hook and title that wasn't figured out until most of the songs and artists were selected.

Blame all of the above on Texas, as contradictory a place as there is in these United States, and the provincial, iconoclastic, and larger-than-life-its-ownself sense of place, music included, the state it has fostered. It's where this whole Los Super Seven idea began in the first place.

The concept for Los Super Seven was born in March 1997 during South By Southwest as an afternoon acoustic show put together by two music-biz roots fans -- Los Angeles record exec Paula Batson and Nashville manager Dan Goodman -- in the back of Las Manitas, a soulful Mexican cafe in downtown Austin.

The gathering was sort of an extended version of the Texas Tornados, the Traveling Wilburys of Tex-Mex music. Tornados members Doug Sahm, Flaco Jimenez and Augie Meyers were present, along with Rick Trevino, the boyish Austin-based mainstream country singer managed by Goodman; and rocker Joe Ely, accompanied by Teye, his flamenco guitarist sideman at the time. Also taking part were accordionist Joel Guzman, bajo sexto guitarist Max Baca, singer Ruben Ramos, west coast rockabilly singer Rosie Flores, and Cesar Rosas

and David Hidalgo from Los Lobos, the Los Angeles roots-rockers who could just as well be Texas-Mexicans.

A year later, in April 1998, Goodman, who had a history with Los Lobos at Vector Management, rounded up Ely, Jimenez, Trevino, Ramos, and Freddy Fender to join Hidalgo, Rosas, and Guzman at Cedar Creek Studios in South Austin, along with the Mariachi Las Campanas from San Antonio and a few other players, to do old songs from the borderlands. Over the course of a week, Lobos horn player Steve Berlin produced an album. A handful of concert dates in New York and Los Angeles and several other cities. plus two appearances on Conan O'Brien's late-night show, hyped the eponymous album (on RCA), which won the Grammy for Best Mexican-American Music Performance at the 41st Grammy Awards.

But the band went the way of Little Village. Everyone had their own projects to pursue.

The concept was revived in 2001 for a second album, Canto, again under Berlin's direction (but now on Sony). Though some of the recording was done in Austin, the scope expanded far beyond Texas with a pan-Latin theme that covered early salsa, Cuban son, and other traditional Latin music. New voices and players were brought in, notably Mavericks singer Raul Malo, Afro-Cuban piano stylist Alberto Salas, Peruvian folk star Susana Baca, and Caetano Veloso, the Brazilian songwriter who helped pioneer the tropicalismo movement.

Ely, Fender and Guzman dropped out. "When Dan Goodman showed me what he was doing, I told him it was too far south of the border," Ely says. "I didn't know that material." The album worked as a piece of art -- Trevino calls the second time around the most satisfying personally and immediately followed the second Super Seven recording with his own Latin roots album Mi Son, featuring Salas, Malo, Ramos, and Los Lobos, with Berlin producing. But Canto signaled the end of LS7, failing to move enough units to Latino or Anglo buyers to convince a label to pay the freight again.

After giving the idea a rest, Goodman determined if there was to be a third album, the band that didn't exist needed a change in direction again. He called on the expertise of Rick Clark, the tall crazy guy from Memphis who put together the CD compilations for Oxford American magazine's annual music issue. Clark was involved all along with the previous Los Super Seven recordings as Goodman's friend and adviser, but stayed in the background.

"If I had issues [with the first two albums], it might be a song or two, or a compromise I was determined not to let happen again," Goodman says over the phone from San Miguel de Allende in the central highlands of Mexico, where he keeps a second home. "We were determined to have a song selection that would be universal."

"He suggested I go gather music with the same kind of sensibility that I applied to Oxford

American," Clark says over the phone from Nashville. "I listened to fine jazz, cowboy hollers, Tex-Mex. I went through thousands of recordings and compiled them on discs. I'd sit down with Dan. We decided from the very beginning to cast the players with the songs."

That was part of the plan, Goodman says. "We didn't want artists bringing a song. Rick Clark and I wanted to come up with the songs and bring them to artists. We decided we wanted to make it more of a Texas roadhouse recording while staying in touch with the original concept."

For a band that really isn't a band?

"You mean, who are Los Super Seven?" Goodman laughs. "I don't know how to answer that. It's a constantly changing concept of an idea we have and who fits into it. Rick and Ruben are the core. This is Ely's second time around. We didn't start out with a roster of artists. We started out from the perspective of the songs.

"I guess if you want a real understanding of Los Super Seven, it's [that] we do what we want to do and we don't feel beholden to put out a consistent message," Goodman continues. "In terms of this record, we didn't start with a border radio concept. Our research took us there. Neither of use was well-versed in the story."

When Clark finally worked his way to the Zs in his record library, he stumbled "Heard It On The X" while rifling through ZZ Top's catalog. The lyrics got his attention. "The song was a tribute to border radio. It sort of made sense. It certainly deserved being a candidate for the album because it was a shared experience to just about anyone involved with this project."

The songs already selected fit neatly with the concept. Music broadcast on the stations from south of the border was all over the place -- Mexican, rock 'n' roll, dirty blues, hillbilly -- just like this album cobbled together by two guys who are as much enthusiasts as dealmakers. "Border radio was pre-music director, pre-consultant, freeform radio," Clark bubbles excitedly. "It was celebrating the spirit of great renegadism. It's like it was coming from another world."

The emphasis on the song first is a traditional Nashville approach to country hitmaking. And it's a Nashville thing to put a bunch of players in the studio and see what happens, especially when their managers know each other. But that method had never been applied to an album that tries to capture Texas on a CD.

Ties were severed with Berlin and Los Lobos. To produce, Goodman and Clark hired Charlie Sexton, the Austin native son who has matured into the city's musical MVP, and he knew all the players. Calexico, the Tucson, Arizona, band with definite Tex-Mex tendencies and the

versatility to front mariachis as well as doing the earthiest cover of "Alone Again Or" by Arthur Lee & Love since, well, Arthur Lee & Love, would be the core band.

Two and a half years into the Goodman and Clark expedition, in September 2004, Calexico and Sexton holed up in a studio built into a luxury home high above Lake Austin, northwest of the city, during the Austin City Limits music festival, and got down to bidness.

Los Super Seven might initially have struck some as an unoriginal means of copping some star shine from the Texas Tornados while boosting the career of Rick Trevino and getting Los Lobos on board the Tex-Mex love train. It didn't help that the name sounded more appropriate for a Laredo convenience store than a band. But while there's not a Los Super Seven per se -- never has been and probably never will be -- this lineup is about as eclectic as Tex, or Tex-Mex, gets: Calexico, in the place of Los Lobos, surrounded by LS7 vets Trevino, Fender, Jimenez, Ramos and Ely; some heavy Austin blues cats including Denny Freeman, the guitarist and pianist who mentored Stevie Ray Vaughan; the West Side Horns from San Antonio; Flaco's bajo sexto rhythm guitarist Max Baca; Calexico's pals Mariachi de la Luz. Plus a parade of guest vocalists including Delbert McClinton, Rodney Crowell, Raul Malo, Lyle Lovett, John Hiatt and Gatemouth Brown, all covering a mess of renegade sounds emanating from the Lone Star state. Which means a little bit of everything.

It's a glorious mess, the same way yellow cheese congeals into the chili gravy on a plate of real truck stop enchiladas. And it tastes just as good and spicy, even though as a Latin album, my colleague John Morthland compared it to a Hollywood movie about civil rights where the lead characters are white.

Going English, though, is very much part of the Texas-Mexican story.

To cross over or not has been a challenge every successful Mexican-American artist from South Texas has had to grapple with since Narciso Martinez, aka "El Huracan del Valle" (the Hurricane of the Rio Grande Valley), became the first accordion recording star, releasing a string of 78s back in the 1930s. Martinez, who later was recognized as the father of Tex-Mex conjunto accordion, recorded polkas and waltzes for his immediate audience; many sides were also released under the pseudonyms Louisiana Pete and Polka Joe to reach a broader audience.

That give-and-take has been played out every decade since -- by the duet Carmen y Laura and orchestra leader Beto Villa in the 1940s; by singer Chelo Silva, big-band leader Isidro (El Indio) Lopez and rocker Baldemar Huerta (who became Freddy Fender) in the 1950s; by Little Joe & the Latinaires, Trini Lopez, Rene & Rene, Sam the Sham, and Question Mark & the Mysterians in the 1960s; by Fender again as a country-pop crooner along with Johnny

Rodriguez in the 1970s; by Flaco Jimenez in the 1980s; and by Emilio Navaira and Selena in the 1990s, along with Rick Trevino.

Ruben Ramos, one of the two charter members of Los Super Seven, launched his career in the 1950s singing "Blueberry Hill" and "I Got A Woman" in English with his uncle's thirteen-piece orquesta before emerging as a Tejano superstar who sang almost exclusively in Spanish. Rick Trevino, the other LS7 careerist, has a similar early history. Although his father played in Tejano orchestras, Rick grew up American, not Mexican, and didn't delve into his own culture until he'd established himself as a young Nashville hat act. The first two Los Super Seven recordings were the conduits that inspired him to learn his past.

No single artist or song defines the Texas-Mexican crossover quite like Sunny & the Sunliners did in the early 1960s with "Talk To Me", a slow blues belly rubber oozing a particularly sentimental brand of teen sincerity easily understood by blacks and whites as well as browns, and earning Sunny Ozuna the distinction of being the first Mexican-American to appear on Dick Clark's "American Bandstand". Such crossovers were orchestrated by white producers and promoters -- in Sunny's case, by Huey P. Meaux, the Houston independent hitmaker, and in Los Super Seven's, by Goodman and Clark.

Two years after Sunny's English-language hit, he shifted gears and returned to his people's music, much like Selena's father, Abraham Quintanilla Jr., did with Los Dinos in the 1950s. "Carino Nuevo" was a hit among the hardcore Sunny fans throughout the southwest, but it didn't cross over mainly because Spanish lyrics were used to convey the same sincerity-oozing romanticism of "Talk To Me". For the rest of his storied career, Ozuna stuck with the onda chicana sound singing in Spanish, but switching to English whenever he answered inevitable requests for "Talk To Me".

Assimilation has worked both ways. In Texas, the mexicano influence was so persistent and pervasive, it managed to rub off on Anglos and African-Americans whether they were aware of it or not, from Bob Wills' "San Antonio Rose" and Cliff Bruner's "Jesse Polka" through the Champs of "Tequila" fame, Roy Orbison, Buddy Holly and Bobby Fuller, all the way to Joe Ely.

Doug Sahm played perhaps the most critical role of any Texas Anglo who dabbled in Latin, using the backbeat of the conjunto polka to power a pop hit, "She's About A Mover", in 1965, then burnishing his chicanismo by reviving Freddy Fender's career, introducing gringos to Flaco Jimenez and the bajo sexto 12-string Mexican rhythm guitar, and writing a song, "Soy Chicano", that has been embraced as an anthem of Texas-Mexican pride.

In that context, Heard It On The X makes sense.

Arturo Sauce Gonzales has been hiding out at his girlfriend's apartment on the west side of San Antonio, he informs me when I finally track him down. "When you've been married for 35 years, you gotta take a break now and then," he reasons. He's looking sharp for a vato trying to keep a low profile, decked in a natty fedora and tinted shades that complement his thick lowrider mustache.

Sauce is Los Super Seven's missing link, and its essence. He played keyboards on the original version of "Talk To Me" as a member of Sunny & the Sunliners. "We did it in the summer of 1962 at a place called Southwest Recording here in San Antonio. It didn't take off until the summer of '63. That October we were on 'American Bandstand' with Dale & Grace, Gene Pitney and Wayne Newton. After that record hit, every dance we did, we had to play that song three or four times." And 42 years after that first recording, he played on the Los Super Seven version.

I met Sauce through the West Side Horns -- trumpet player Charlie McBirney and Rocky Morales, the most underrated tenor saxophonist in Texas. They, along with bassist Jack Barber and drummer Ernie Durawa, were Doug Sahm's band of choice through much of the 1970s and 1980s. They were all part of a brown beatnik conspiracy bubbling up on San Antonio's predominantly Mexican and Mexican-American west side that Sahm tapped into in the 1950s. These meskins spoke Spanish as their first language but were all about rhythm & blues, jazz and cool music, better versed in the ways of Louie Prima and Jimmy Smith than Vicente Fernandez or Antonio Aguilar.

Sauce, more than any player on Heard It On The X, is the true border radio rat. He grew up in the Starr County town of Roma, a splendidly preserved historic village on the north side of the Rio Grande. The family lived on a ranch. His father ran a cantina on the old town plaza and played piano accordion in a trio with a standup bass player and a drummer.

"They would load into a wagon and head upriver or downriver, stopping at every ranchito to visit, talk, eat, drink and play. It would take them five days to get to where they were going," Sauce remembers. "Once they were supposed to play in McAllen and they never made it." He learned to play keyboards by sneaking into the Roma school auditorium to play the piano, picking out the "Dragnet Theme" and other songs that came to mind. His father taught him Mexican standards like "Jalisco", "La Paloma", and "Guadalajara."

Sauce's musical education really began after his family moved to San Antonio, where he was exposed to Fats Domino, Little Richard, and the blues by a disc jockey named Johnny Phillips on his Sunday show on KCOR, the city's premier Spanish-language radio station. "On Mondays we'd go hear Spot Barnett on the east side at the Ebony Club," he remembers. "Rocky Morales was always bringing us tunes too."

It's a family, all the musicians on the West Side who grew up playing rhythm & blues, he says, citing Sunny & the Sunliners and lesser-known groups who put out rock 'n' roll records en ingles y en espanol such as Sonny Ace & the Twisters, Rudy & the Reno Bops, and Charlie & the Jives. "All those songs like 'Blueberry Hill', 'The Wheel', with Mexican popular songs were mixed in, stuff like Perez Prado's 'Patricia', and it got to be known as the West Side Sound. They all played a mixture of stuff."

One guitarist, Felix Villarreal, who could play like B.B. King and sing like him in Spanish, was so adamant about playing the real thing, he'd refuse requests for polkas and cumbias at a regular Sunday blues jam, telling anyone who'd listen, "We're doing musica llanta negra -- full black."

"I can play a polka and do jazz and blues," Sauce says, explaining the West Side way. "We work off ideas. That's what Doug Sahm liked about us. He could teach us in 20 minutes what he said would take days for someone in California to learn. We were just doing what comes natural."

Morales has hung up his saxophone because of emphysema and lung cancer, and McBurney gave up secular music when he joined the Jehovah's Witnesses years ago; he died in 2003. But the West Side Horns remain rock solid and as distinctively different as ever. Al Gomez took McBurney's place twenty years ago without missing a beat. Spot Barnett, the black sax player who was a role model for Sauce, Doug Sahm, and the whole West Side gang, has replaced Morales, synching together effortlessly with the Horns' other horn man, Louie Bustos.

"With Rocky not being here, it's different," Sauce Gonzales acknowledges. "He knows that West Side punch and when to use it. But Spot knows all the old West Side material, and Louie's been a student of both Spot and Rocky for most of his life."

Charlie Sexton, the guy who brought the West Side Horns into Los Super Seven, stopped counting at 25 trying to figure out exactly how many players were involved in the third edition of the band, and he hadn't even gotten to the guest vocalists yet. Charlie was too young to grow up with border radio. "But I grew up around the music that came from that and the musicians who heard it," he's quick to point out.

Trying to weave all the disparate parts of Austin music together into a definitive sound is like tying the Gordian knot. Willie Nelson comes closest to personalizing it because he runs in so many music circles and can play most any style with soul. Doug Sahm epitomized it, genre-jumping effortlessly between the hippies and the rednecks and the blues cats and the hillbillies; he was just as comfortable and credible in the company of psychedelic rocker Roky

Erickson as he was around pedal steel legend Jimmy Day and still able to conduct a twelve-piece big band through a jump blues like he was T-Bone Walker. When Sahm died in 1999, I figured that ability to leap borders within the context of a single song -- think "Song Of Everything", which rambles from tight big-band blues to Out There Coltrane-worthy riffing with a whole lotta west coast pot-induced space-cadet observations thrown in -- was lost forever.

Heard It On The X has me reconsidering.

Rick Clark's thorough, anthropological research and unrestrained zeal is one reason. Without Dan Goodman's determination, Los Super Seven would not exist. And as it turns out, Calexico was a solid, smart choice for a core band. They know their roots and are still adventurous and flexible enough to experiment when the situation is called for. But when the cows come home and everyone's accounted for, this is Charlie Sexton's album, and, at the age of 36, his coming out party.

Every Austin old-timer has their Little Charlie story. I won't bother you with mine other than to say I first ran into him hanging around the stages of the Hole in the Wall and Raul's punk club. He was 9. His brother Will was 7. Their uncles were honky-tonk musicians. Their mother, Kay, loved music and musicians and exposed her boys to the whole range of rootsy sounds floating around the city's clubs. Both boys enjoyed getting up onstage to sing a Little Richard song or some other well-worn oldie. When he was 12, Charlie moved in with Speedy Sparks, the bassist for Doug Sahm and the Texas Tornados. His teachers became Jimmie Vaughan, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Joe Ely and Doug Sahm.

At 13, he went on the road with the Joe Ely Band after lead guitarist Jesse Taylor broke his hand. "My band thought I had lost my mind having a 13-year-old kid replace Jesse Guitar Taylor," Ely remembers. "But I'd seen him the week before at the IL Club over on the east side and he was laying down some stuff that was serious. I couldn't believe he had such a broad comprehension of the blues. He knew honky-tonk too."

When he wasn't on the road with Ely, Sexton was fronting his own rockabilly trio, Little Charlie & the Eager Beaver Boys. He recorded with Keith Richards and Ron Wood when he was 15. By the following year, he'd moved to Los Angeles, got into synth music, recorded an album, had a semi-hit, graced the cover of Spin, rode motorcycles with Matt Dillon and Mickey Rourke, and spoke with a British accent when he returned to Austin to play the Opera House with True Believers opening.

As an adult, somewhere between forming the Arc Angels with the Double Trouble rhythm section and Doyle Bramhall Jr., touring for three years with Bob Dylan, and producing

records for Lucinda Williams and Jon Dee Graham, he has matured into the only person I know who can cover all the bases like Doug Sahm did, with the smarts and demeanor to produce even better than he can perform. Heard It On The X, unlike anything he's done before, uses the depth of his musical knowledge and his ability to cherry-pick the right players for flavoring a particular song, such as bringing in Merle Haggard's guitarist Redd Volkaart and pedal steel player Lloyd Maines to push "My Window Faces The South", a splendid piece of western swing with vocals by Lyle Lovett.

It was Charlie who rounded up Denny Freeman, Hunt Sales, Larry Fulcher and Glen Fukanaga to complement the West Side Horns and lay down the serious blues of "I Live The Life I Love" and "Talk To Me", both of which pull out the best in Delbert McClinton's voice, sassier and brassier than he's sounded on record in years. "Live The Life" is especially low-down, due in no small part to Sales' primal drums and Sexton's own lap steel lead. You want to get that authentic "Talk To Me" sound that Sunny & the Sunliners had down cold? Ask Sauce Gonzales, the West Side Horns' keyboard man, how it's done. He played on the original.

Delbert was an easy sell. "I didn't know I was in Super Seven until they asked me if I wanted in to sing 'Talk To Me'. I was in," he says, on his way out the door to do his annual sea cruise. "If I had a nickel for every time I've done that song, I'd be all right. I remember the first time I ever heard it, I said to myself, 'I gotta sing that song.' It moved me with that C-A minor-F-G bubblegum turnaround, that kind of thing. That was more than three chords, and we had a hard time discovering the bridge."

"That song is the one song I came away with when I went down to Austin to dig up material two years ago," Rick Clark says. "If someone got misty-eyed about getting a song on the project, it was that one."

Sexton gets credit for John Hiatt nailing Doug Sahm's "I'm Not That Kat Anymore", pushed by Augie Meyers, Sahm's lifelong collaborator, on piano and the Fulcher/Sales rhythm section. (Sales appeared on television's "Hullabaloo" music show the same year the Sir Douglas Quintet did, later played with Todd Rundgren's Utopia, and recorded with David Bowie as part of the Tin Machine.) But there was common ground to begin with. Hiatt comes from southern Indiana, the only other place in America besides San Antonio where Big Red, an artificially-colored, highly-caffeinated soft drink that tastes like liquid bubblegum, is popular.

Joe Ely credits Sexton for the fire in his version of "Let Her Dance", the second-best song the Bobby Fuller Four ever recorded. "We've played together on and off for years, but I think this is the first time we actually worked in the studio together," Ely says. "I came in and we sat

around all day into the night and into the next day working on a feel for it.

"For awhile, it didn't seem to fly. Max Baca was playing bajo sexto and the song was too bajo and not enough rock. Charlie came out from the control booth, plugged in his electric, and it was a rock 'n' roll song all of a sudden. He's like Lloyd [Maines]. He knows how to get out of the producer's chair and into the player's chair. The best producers are players too. They can step across the other side of the glass. With some producers, especially those who don't play, it's all voodoo."

Rodney Crowell covers the other great west Texas rock 'n' roller to infuse his sound with Tex-Mex, Buddy Holly. "Learning The Game", from Holly's final recording session in his apartment living room, is one of his more arcane tracks, although it was covered by the Crickets and Albert Lee, Waylon Jennings with Mark Knopfler, and the Lemonheads. Done in an innocent sing-song rhythm not unlike "Everyday", Crowell's interpretation sparkles thanks to the addition of Flaco Jimenez's accordion fills, adding another feather to the producer's cap.

The title track, sung by Ruben Ramos doing a damn close imitation of Billy Gibbons imitating a southern black man, is infused by some smart Latin elements, including Jimenez's accordion riffs (which sound copped from the great South Texas jazz accordeonista Esteban Jordan) and a salsa-fied counterpoint piano break.

The Latin material is less satisfying, generic at best, covering the mariachi angle at the expense of abandoning altogether the bouncy polkita that is the backbone of Tejano and conjunto, its funkier country cousin. Rick Trevino and Freddy Fender share the honors for tracking Spanish vocals on "Ojitos Traidores" and "Cupido", while Raul Malo sings lead on "The El Burro Song". Raul Malo doing mariachi is cool. No Tex-Mex isn't so cool.

The album closes with "See That My Grave Is Kept Clean", a raw account of the somber blues composed and first sung by Texas pioneer Blind Lemon Jefferson. "The essence is, 'Please regard me well when I'm gone,'" Rick Clark says. "The song at the end would be about the freewheeling spirit of border radio -- don't forget this, remember that radio was once like this."

There had been talk of getting Solomon Burke to sing a cowboy song to close out the album, but that deal couldn't be swung, which is just as well. Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown was the right person to have the last word.

"I hadn't brought up the song to Gate until two weeks before he went into the studio," Clark says. "That's when we found out about his medical condition." Brown, 80, and normally a cantankerous cuss, was cool with doing Blind Lemon. It was almost coming full circle for

him. He got his career break after taking the stage at Don Robey's Bronze Peacock Club in Houston in 1947 to sit in right after his role model, T-Bone Walker, had taken sick. His first flirtation with fame was fronting big bands with a string of jump hits including "Okie Dokie Stomp" and "Pressure Cooker". But over the course of his career he has also worked country, swing, Cajun, zydeco and hillbilly genres.

According to Colin Walters, who's writing Brown's biography, two serendipitous events preceded the recording of Gatemouth Brown's end piece, completed two days after his appearance at the Austin City Limits Festival. "We went out the night before to the Pier. He'd just gotten his pardon from death by being released from M.D. Anderson Hospital in Houston, where he was being treated for terminal lung cancer, unbeknownst to us. He usually hates anything that's on the radio or CD, but he'd heard Count Basie and Louis Jordan and he let up a little, saying, 'That's what I grew up with. My guitar plays those horn lines.'

"Then at the Pier there was a 20-piece big band playing, the Austin Swing Syndicate. They did a couple of his songs and he got up and did something I've never seen him do, he sat at the bar and had a drink. He can get crotchety and he was not crotchety that weekend," Walters says.

Sexton was nothing but respectful to Brown, and when he plinked out the guitar lines accompanying Brown, he got down on his knees to work out the lines. "Gatemouth told Charlie he's a decent guitarist -- he doesn't say that about many people," admits Walters. "He made a comment when they were talking about the song. He remembered seeing Marty Robbins getting on a touring bus after a gig just before he died. He said, 'I could see death coming. He was going down, looking bad.'"

Rick Trevino has been on the entire LS7 ride, but he admits the shift in direction this time around almost threw him off. "I haven't gotten a copy of the CD yet," he says over the phone shortly before hitting the road to promote a single off his last country album to radio station programmers. But he's got faith in the Goodman-Clark vision, even if he isn't sure what exactly that vision is.

Trevino has stuck with Goodman as his manager since he was signed in 1993, and Trevino has known Clark almost as long. "Rick was at my first radio showcase for Sony," Trevino says. "He's got this encyclopedic knowledge about music."

Goodman and Clark sent Trevino his song, "Ojitos Traidores", a traditional piece that would have fit on either of the two previous LS7 albums. Trevino was game, even though he now understands his track and his duet with Freddy Fender on "Cupido" are more like wild cards

among the rest of the material.

"It's Dan and Rick's feeling," Trevino says. "They wanted to be a more central part of the project this time. 'This one is going to be in English.' I didn't understand it. This one would seem it's not Latin at all, but more Texas. It celebrates music in general. It originated with Mexican music and it seems to be much more...shit, I don't know," he chuckles.

Trevino is one of those cast members too young to have heard border radio in its original form, but he gets the eclecticism. If any single player has taken advantage of Los Super Seven's forays into traditional borderlands folk music, Latin world music, and now the hidden Texas roots, it's Trevino.

"I've always had a rebellion thing against Tejanos and Tex-Mex, even though I am Mexican-American from Texas," he says. He chalks it up to his father's history of playing in Tejano bands and achieving regional notoriety with the Houston-based big band Neto Perez & His Originals.

Trevino reconnected with those sounds on the first LS7 album. The second album introduced him to Cuban music, which he has embraced enthusiastically. "I think it's because of the piano," he says. "That's my first instrument." He's become best friends with Alberto Salas, the California keyboardist well-versed in Cuban son. This time around, he's embraced the mariachi influence. "Again, it's Rick and Dan," he says. "It was a good call. This is an educational tool for me; I'm always learning more styles of music."

For Trevino, Los Super Seven solves the dilemma of who he is and who he's performing for. "It's crazy, who your audience is and what they want," he observes. "A lot of people were offended when I first started recording because I wasn't singing Tejano. There was a larger majority who were proud I was singing country. But there's always a few saying, 'He's too good to sing his heritage.'" Los Super Seven allows Trevino to delve into his heritage while keeping his country straight up, four albums down, playing for largely Anglo crowds, while managing to sneak "Mi Ranchito" sung in Spanish from the first LS7 disc onto the song list when he plays dances.

Joey Burns and John Convertino and the rest of Calexico came to the dance through an MP3 of "Ojitos Traidores" they posted on their website. Clark and Goodman heard it and called them up. The Tucson-based group signed on and brought along their friend John Contreras and Mariachi de la Luz. Genre-jumbling was nothing new to them. "The band has three players in Tucson, one in Nashville, and two in Germany," explains Burns. "We've always crossed over, to Afro-Cuban, Mariachi, Ennio Morricone spaghetti westerns, adding lap steel to something that sounds Latin, dabbling in traditions and German electronica at the same

time. We've been doing all that since '96."

Burns embraces the idea of trying to push traditions in a respectful way to go somewhere new, but he was wary of a backlash with the third album's shift in direction. "I knew a lot of people considered the first two records a side project of Los Lobos," he says. "I'm a huge fan of all the musicians involved with those records. I'm a big fan of the Latin Playboys. But it's important not to try to repeat yourself. This one definitely does not."

Joe Ely can see what I couldn't: a consistent thread running through Los Super Seven. "Each went in a whole different direction, but the two I've been involved with have had the same setup: Show up and play with a band that's been holed up in a house," he explained over a bowl of tortilla soup on the patio of Central Market South in Austin.

"The first time it was Cesar and David and Joel. This time it's Calexico and Charlie. You could tell they'd been living there. There was shit scattered everywhere. It was like being in an environment, not like a studio -- same as the first one felt at Cedar Creek. Musicians love coming to a place where it feels like they're not working."

Ely says he opted out of the second LS7 album by choice. "It went way far south of the border. They showed me what they were doing and I told them I didn't know anything about that." On this one, though, he played a crucial role in articulating the vision. "The Flatlanders were playing a concert in London with Los Lobos a few years back, and after the show, I talked to Steve Berlin about how great it would be to do old border radio material -- blues, Mexican, swing, country -- mixing it all up. I think that's where this one came from."

Producers rounding up songs and players for a one-off album is becoming a more common way of making records, Ely believes. "Getting people from different places but with a common mentality and plug 'em in and see what happens -- these are the projects I love to work with most," he says, citing the I-10 Chronicles project he did a few years ago with Adam Duritz, Flaco Jimenez, Bill & Bonnie Hearne and others, and a recent tour he did with Guy Clark, John Hiatt and Lyle Lovett. "You work all your life and play a million places, but it's great to get together with other people who've played a million places and you sit down in a room with them and you don't know what's gonna happen.

"This is a real interesting combination of people. Everyone had that old border radio station roots side in their sound, even though very few people today know what border radio is. It wasn't just a radio station. It was the source."

For all that it is and isn't, between "Song Of Everything", "I'm Not That Kat Anymore", the West Side Horns and all the other compadres involved, Heard It On The X is the best Doug Sahm album since Doug Sahm left the building, an all-star tribute to the same honky blues,

spacey jazz, groovy rock 'n' roll, and bouncy Tex-Mex he liked to mix up.

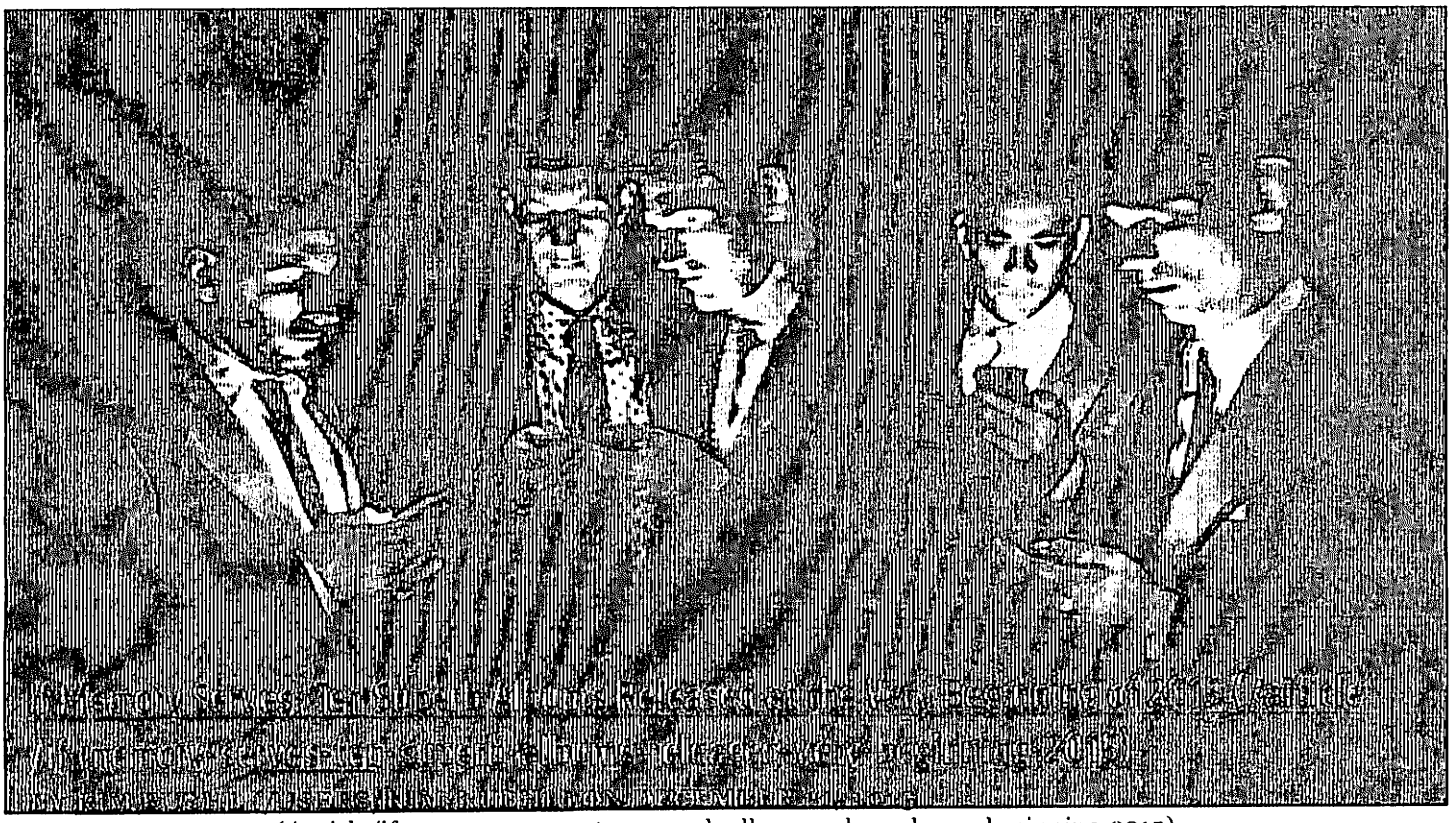
Like Charlie Sexton put it, "This project has so much, yet nothing to do with Doug Sahm." It's not the same as Doug doing it, but it'll do. It has to. Because Sir Doug's gone, border radio's gone, so are roadhouses and the rootsy funky sounds of Texas that were made in them. Tejano radio is on the ropes. Conjunto is losing favor. Even the dancehall is fading.

But the band that never existed and never sounded anything like this before managed to summon the ghosts, invoke the spirits and rustle up some of that old energy and put out an album to remind us of what once was, when Texas music really was wild and renegade.

Joe Nick Patoski is a Doug Head from the git-go who loves any excuse to write about Texas-Mexican music. He authored a biography on Selena and is contributing text to the book Conjunto Pictures by photographer John Dyer to be published by University of Texas Press this fall. ND

Author Joe Nick Patoski (/author/joe-nick-patoski)

Other tags Issue #56 (/other/issue-56)



(/article/if-memory-serves-ten-superb-albums-released-very-beginning-2015)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE BEFORE THE TRADEMARK TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

Petitioner: Daniel M. Goodman c/o P.O. Box 120713, Nashville, Tennessee 37212

Registrant: Steven Berlin, Suite 224, 3439 N.E. Sandy Blvd. Portland, Oregon 97232.

Proceeding Number 92057241

PETITIONER'S NOTICE OF RELIANCE

COMES the Petitioner Daniel M. Goodman pursuant to TMBP 704.08(b) and CFR Sec. 2.122(e) and files his Notice of Reliance upon the attached article from the Internet site "Mix Online Extra", http://www.mixonline.com/mag/audio_los_super_7 2/index.html. accessed October 29, 2012. This material is relevant because it helps establishes Petitioner's claim that the concept for the musical performing group "Los Super 7" was always intended as "a different cast of characters each time", selected by Petitioner.

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TalkBack

Plug-ins are in use almost every day in any music production. What's your go-to plug-in? What's the oddest use you've put a plug-in into effect? E-mail the staff at mixeditorial@mixonline.com.

Los Super Seven is more an *idea* than an actual band. It's a genre-busting celebration of Southwestern and Latin music, from rootsy *tejano* kickers to heart-rending ballads to primal rock 'n' roll to varying shades of blues. Over the course of three extraordinary albums — the most recent, *Heard It on the X*, was just released by Telarc — creator/co-producer Dan Goodman has assembled one sterling cast of musicians after another to explore different facets of the many styles found in the region.

MIX ONLINE EXTRAS

The Freddy Fender sessions: Bottom, L-R: Paul Niehaus, Charlie Sexton, Dan Goodman, Freddy Fender and Martin Wenk. Top, from left: Rick Clark, Joey Burns, Max Bacha, John Convertino, Rick Trevino and Jacob Valenzuela

The original *Los Super Seven* album in 1998 brought together David Hidalgo and Cesar Rosas from Los Lobos, Tex-Mex accordion great Flaco Jimenez, his Texas Tornados bandmate Freddy Fender, country singer Rick Trevino, tejano star Rubén Ramos, Joe Ely and a fine cast of supporting players for an album dominated by traditional Mexican folk songs and a lone English-language standout: Ely's version of Woody Guthrie's "Plane Wreck At Los Gatos (Deportee)." The second album, *Canto*, released in 2001, had a more Latin/South American feeling, with a number of new contributors — including Brazilian singer Caetano Veloso, The Mavericks' Raul Malo and Peruvian vocalist Susana Baca — joining the Los Lobos gang and others on an extremely diverse set. Los Lobos' Steve Berlin produced both albums; Dave McNair engineered.

"It's been a lot of fun having a different cast of characters each time," Goodman says. "On the first album, we put together Texas artists along with Los Lobos, who are from East L.A., and mined the cultural link between them. And the link was the border, so the first album started out as a Texas-meets-East L.A. thing. The second record we wanted to explore Latin roots music in a pan-Latin context — more of a world music approach. This time around, for *Heard It on the X*, it was a return to the border, but not in a purely Latin context. It's more Texas-influenced, mostly English and [encompassing] this fascination we all have with border radio."

Indeed, "the X" is the nickname given to numerous American pirate radio stations that sprang up just across the Mexican border beginning in the 1930s and blasted an incredible array of great music into Texas and across the Southwest U.S. through the '70s. (All Mexican stations' call letters begin with an X.) Adventurous DJs, including the legendary Wolfman Jack (nee Bob Smith), who got his start on a pirate station in the Chihuahuan desert, thought nothing of playing Howlin' Wolf alongside Hank Williams, Bobby "Blue" Bland, Buddy Holly and Tex-Mex sensation Lydia Mendoza. It was all soulful music, no matter what the context, and it influenced generations of musicians across the Southwest, who picked up on the righteous eclecticism of "the X" as they came up through the ranks themselves.

Heard It on the X embraces that spirit even more than previous Los Super Seven discs. There are a few holdovers from previous outings, including Fender, Ely,

Jimenez, Malo, Trevino and Ramos. But much of the cast this time is new: The distinctive singers include Texas R&B stalwart Delbert McClinton, Rodney Crowell, John Hiatt, Lyle Lovett and Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown. Fine guitarist Charlie Sexton contributed heavily to the album's instrumental sound (and co-produced), as did Joey Burns and John Covertino of hip Tucson band Calexico and ex-Tin Machine drummer Hunt Sales. Cameos by such notables as steel guitar wiz Lloyd Maines and former Merle Haggard guitarist Redd Volkaert also spice up the set, which runs the gamut from horn-driven Mexican tunes, early rockers by Buddy Holly and Bobby Fuller, tracks by the influential Texan Doug Sahm and blues songs by Willie Dixon and Texan Blind Lemon Jefferson. The title track? It's by the Texas hard rock band ZZ Top, of all people.

From left: Johnny Contreras, Joey Burns and Adolf Ortiz at Jack Rock's treefort studios in Austin

"We wanted the material to have some connection to the era and sensibility of border radio," notes Rick Clark, who co-produced the album (with Goodman and Sexton), selected nearly all of the songs and played on the album. Clark continues, "We wanted to celebrate the universality of the Texas border experience, putting pictures in new frames as much as possible. Like with 'Heard It on the X,' the idea wasn't just to use a ZZ Top song. Thematically, it seemed perfect, but in my head, I heard it as almost tribally percussive. I wasn't married at all to the original riff the song was built on. Charlie picked up on that idea, adding exciting production arrangement touches."

Besides being a longtime contributor to *Mix* (and our current Nashville editor), Clark has developed a solid reputation as a music historian, with extensive knowledge of obscure (and popular) Americana and a knack for finding cool songs for projects. He unearthed a number of the songs on the first two Los Super Seven albums, and for the past several years, he's compiled amazing CDs of Southern tunes of every genre for the *Oxford American* magazine's annual music issue. He's also done music consultation for films.

"Rick is the best," Goodman says. "He knows what's out there and knows how to find great obscure material that always manages to strengthen our concepts. Rick and I were strongly committed to the songs we had chosen and our conceptual idea, and we set out to cast the music with artists we felt would deliver stellar performances."

Denny Freeman has played with Stevie Ray and Jimmie Vaughan, singer Angela Strehli and more.

Clark's search for material took many months, considerable travel and countless hours of listening. "I went out and gathered everything from 1906 Edison cylinder recordings of mariachi bands to cowboy hollers, to free jazz and psychedelic garage music," he says. "I listened to hundreds of songs and then I'd sort of narrow it down and narrow it down, and then bring the prime candidates to Dan [Goodman]. Then we'd debate the merits of various songs in listening sessions. It was an impassioned give and take.

"I went to the LBJ [Lyndon Baines Johnson] library in Austin and talked to all sorts of record collectors. One song I came away with from that [Austin] trip was 'Talk to Me' by Sunny & The Sunliners. Three or four people, out of the blue and disconnected from each other, suggested that song, so I knew I was onto something. And it's not available anywhere that I know of on CD. It's from the late '50s originally. It was one of the first Hispanic pop records to make the *Billboard* charts. Little Willie John did a version, too." McClinton sings it on the new album as if the song was his.

Other pairings were equally serendipitous: Who better to tackle the old Bob Wills Western swing tune, "My Window Faces the South," than the modern heir to that sound, Lyle Lovett? Concerning Ely's performance of Bobby Fuller's "Let Her Dance," Clark states, "It seemed totally right for him — it's got that weird Buddy Holly meets Del Shannon meets 'La Bamba' kind of thing. We then found out that Joe played it in bands when he was younger." And the choice of Brown to sing the closing number, "See That My Grave Is Kept Clean," takes on added poignancy because the great bluesman has been diagnosed with terminal cancer. "We had chosen that song for Gate a good year-and-a-half before we got the news," Clark says. "The great thing about that track, though, is that it's not a long-faced thing. It's actually very upbeat the way he plays it. It's a nice note to end on."

Initial tracking sessions for *Heard It on the X* took place over a period of 10 days in September 2004 at treefort studios in Austin, with McNair once again engineering. McNair, who lives in Manhattan but is originally from Texas, mostly works as a mastering engineer these days, "but I'll do one or two recording projects a year, too," he says. "Treefort is in this guy named Jack Rock's house and it's pretty cool. It has a separate control room, but for everything else, you're in

different parts of the house and they have snakes [connecting everything]. It has an Amek console, but we just used it for monitoring. We recorded to Pro Tools|HD and we brought in a lot of preamps and stuff. Jack's got a lot of cool gear.

Co-producer Dan Goodman, "Gatemouth" Brown, and co-producers Charlie Sexton and Rick Clark

"We were usually recording a lot of people live at one time and there wasn't much isolation, but that doesn't bother me. I just put some mics up and we captured it. We had the drums in the dining room and then everybody else was in the living room, so it was a little different than a typical studio setup. The drums were slightly isolated, but [the rooms are] totally untreated walls and glass doors, so it goes right through. In the main room, there might be a lot of guys playing acoustic instruments. And I isolated the upright bass as much as I could — it was in a little room we made in the entryway with a makeshift gobo wall. The setup was rarely the same on consecutive tunes, so we were always moving things around. We didn't really have time to sit there and audition microphones; we were working fast."

Fortunately, he had some good equipment to work with, both at treefort and for later overdubbing sessions at Ocean Way in Nashville, where he mixed the album on a Neve VR. (There was also some overdub work done at Paragon in Nashville.) "We had all sorts of great analog outboard gear," he says. "The usual LA-2As and 3As, 1176s. I used a BSS DPR-901 compressor on a lot of the vocals." Vocal mics included Neumann U47s, Shure SM7s, "and I believe I used an [AKG] C-12 on one of Delbert's tunes," McNair says.

West Side Horns let it howl, pictured from left: Al Gomez, Spot Barnett, Luis Bustos

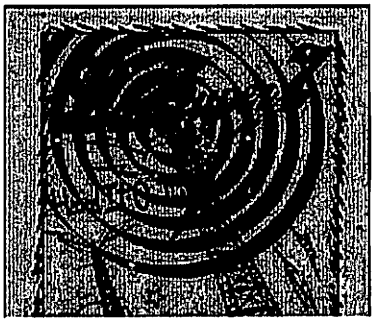
Also, McNair notes, "Jack Rock is a total gearhead and an electronics genius, so treefort has stuff like old [Telefunken] V-76s. He has a whole rack of solid-state Neumanns and the usual Neve and API stuff. He also has these really weird radio station tube mic pre's that you can still find on eBay for a pretty good price. He's got like eight of those bad boys and we ended up using them on a lot of stuff, especially guitars. I'm not going to mention the brand name because they're still out there and they're cheap and nobody knows about them." Translation: He wants to buy them so you can't.

Clark says that engineer McNair is "an absolute jewel. The guy is an incredibly hard worker, he's totally attuned to what it takes to do audiophile-level recording, but he is also absolutely fearless in breaking rules to get unique sounds. He likes f***ing up drum sounds and vocal sounds, but he does it in a very artful way. It can be subtle things, like distorting Delbert's voice a little on 'I Live the Life I Love' or coming up with these outer space tones that come out of the blue [on 'Cupido']. That's totally McNair. He comes up with touches that make the music stand out in relief in exciting ways."

This is the first Los Super Seven project without contributions from Los Lobos. In a sense, their "house band" role has been taken over by members of Calexico, another Clark "find" for the project. "The Calexico guys really bring something fresh and different to the album," he says. "The first time I heard them, I felt an immediate connection with them, and their presence on the record and their involvement, creatively and spiritually, is very significant — not only in what they played, but in the selfless manner in which they approached everything in the studio each day. It was always, 'How can we make this as special as we know it is?'"

With their relative youth, too, Calexico is, in effect, the next generation of musicians who understand the spirit of border radio. Clark and Goodman also emphasize the importance of Sexton's standout production contributions on the album; in some ways, he provides the instrumental glue that holds many of the songs together.

"This particular album was personal for me," Clark says. "Though I didn't listen to the 'the X' when I was growing up in Memphis, I remember very clearly hearing the Top 10 countdown and right next to the Rolling Stones and The Supremes, the DJs would play local bands like The Guillotine, the Box Tops or the Swinging Yo-Yos, and there was this great feeling of regionalism to the music. This is all before the days of radio consultants and corporate radio, when DJs could still play music they dug. So this album [*Heard It on the X*] is the embodiment of that spirit. Border radio was the ultimate example of musical and cultural synthesis, where all that really mattered was does it sound good? Is it cool?"



Heard It on the X sounds good. And it's cool. But will radio play it? "I have no idea,"