

A Life's Work: A memorial to the young victims of a WWII massacre stands nearly finished, a testament to one artist's perseverance and the evil of war

Lidice's Children

It's like walking head-on into a scream: Eighty-two lifesized children, aged 1 to 15, stand huddled together, exuding cracked innocence and overwhelming sadness. Their expressions are haunting: Some seem confused, others angry or solemn, all quietly suffering.

STORY BY LISA HELFER

These are the lost children of Lidice, a village 18 kilometers northwest of Prague. Forty-one years ago, Lidice was razed by the Nazis, its families decimated. This monument is the lifework of Marie Uchytlová, a woman so deeply touched by the tragedy of Lidice and of the millions of children who perished in World War II that she dedicated the last 20 years of her life to creating a reminder of this painful episode.

Some 25 years ago, on All Saints' Day, she took part in a commemorative walk from Prague to Lidice. When she saw the 82 candles lit by the villagers, one for each child lost in the massacre, she decided on the spot to undertake the sculpture.

"I want this sculpture of tortured children to become the protest of children of the entire world against the war ... to preserve it in bronze for the next generation," Uchytlová said of the project that took twice as many years as she anticipated, exacting a deathly toll on her body.

The statue is essentially finished, standing in plaster casts in the Lidice studio where Uchytlová spent so many thousands of hours creating it. All that remains is for it to be bronzed and placed on the block of land reserved for it in Lidice, for which money and support is being raised.

In 1970, at the age of 46, Uchytlová gave up her teaching position at the Prague School of Creative Arts and, with husband Jiří Hampl (who still lives in Prague), devoted herself to the realization of a memorial. Her intention was not only to make a record of this terrible period of history, but also to formulate a statement against totalitarian power and the abuse of children around the world.

PRIOR TO WORLD WAR II, LIDICE WAS not unlike any other small country town in the Czech lands. In 1939, it was a village of 500 inhabitants, most of them employed in the nearby steel town of Kladno. And the town might have remained as such had it not been for the cut-and-paste logic of Nazi leaders, who wanted someone to punish for the June 1942 assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, the Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia. Czech resistance members from London had parachuted into Prague to carry out the mission, and Nazi leaders came to believe that the assassins had been concealed for a time in Lidice and that at least one of them had come from the town.

On June 9, the day of Heydrich's burial, his replacement in Berlin issued an order: All adult men in Lidice were to be shot; all women were to be conveyed to concentration camps; all "racially capable" children were to be "Germanized and re-educated"; the village was to be burnt down to the ground.

On June 12, two days after the execution of the town's 173 men, those children not considered "racially capable" (82 in all) were sent to a camp in Chelmno, Poland, and asphyxiated in a gas van. Mothers unwilling to give up their children were threatened with death. The remaining children were sent to live with German families.

The village itself was dynamited, all of its buildings destroyed. Every woman in Lidice was sent to the Ravensbrück concentration camp; most of them were later killed at Auschwitz. Seven pregnant women were taken to a women's prison in Prague to have their children. One week after birth, the babies were taken away and the mothers were sent on to Ravensbrück.

In 1945, thanks to a number of foreign and domestic donations, plans to rebuild Lidice began to develop and, by 1947, the first projects were underway.

Today, a visit to Lidice reveals a small, quiet town — although sprinkled with painful reminders. There's a mass grave, the nearby remains of a farm, numerous statues, the "Lidice Rose Garden of Friendship and Peace" and a small memorial museum.



The memorial of 82 murdered children needs only to be bronzed and put into place.

she had trouble obtaining enough clay and plaster to construct the piece. Then there were her serious joint problems resulting from all the hours of standing, and lung problems as well. These chronic ailments led to her early death in November 1989 at age 65, two days before the Nov. 17 student demonstrations sparked the downfall of communism in Czechoslovakia.

Věra Fexová, Uchytlová's longtime friend, remembers well the pain that afflicted the artist from her interminable hours of standing. By the ninth year, Fexová said, Uchytlová calculated that she had stood for 40,000 hours.

If health problems and a lack of materials weren't enough, Uchytlová also had difficulties

working within the Communist system, which she strongly opposed. She had little support from the regime in those 20 years, even though the leadership was generally eager to denounce the wartime Nazi occupation of the country.

What was less than an amiable relationship with the state began in 1956, when Uchytlová entered a competition to design a new *koruna* coin. Uchytlová's design, as Fexová tells it, was not selected by the committee. But the finance minister didn't like the winning design either, so another competition was held. This time around, however, the names of the designers were not given with their entries, and when the finance minister reviewed the designs, he

chose Uchytlová's.

"When the coin was presented," said Fexová, "the committee had two objections: First, it was too nationalist. And second, it was made by a woman. The problems she had then also carried over to when she was making the monument, as many of the committee members were artists, and many of them have remained in their positions even after the revolution."

At one point, in the mid-1980s, government officials sought to do away with the monument altogether. They offered to buy it from Uchytlová "as is" for 3 million crowns and put it in a depository, without bronzing it.

"They assumed she wanted money. But she wouldn't take money for her work, she only wanted the monument to get to Lidice," said Fexová. "A children's hospital in Germany also offered to buy the monument and place it in front of the hospital building."

ENOUGH MONEY HAS BEEN COLLECTED to pay for the bronzing of the base and 24 of the children. Another 12 million Kč (\$415,000 US), however, is still needed to complete the monument so it can be put in place, which must be done within the next few years before the plaster begins to lose its integrity. To help raise the funds, some close friends and members of Uchytlová's family started a group called the "Society for the Realization of the Monument to the Children's Casualties of War."

Each sculpture on the eight-by-three-meter monument costs from 80,000 to 180,000 Kč (\$3,000 to \$6,000 US), according to its size. The smallest child figure is 90 centimeters tall, the largest 2.1 meters. Along the memorial's front, panels from various countries will indicate how many child casualties they had in World War II. So far, the embassies of Egypt, Norway, Austria and Holland have donated panels.

The main problem with corporate donations in the Czech Republic is that donors do not receive tax deductions for the money they give. Fexová believes that "businessmen are not enchanted by the idea of giving money."

Numerous attempts have been made to gain support from the post-Communist Czech government, but only recently have officials agreed to sign the necessary statement allowing the construction of the base and 15 children to begin this fall.

And, judging from what Danielle Masalová at the Ministry of Culture had to say, it looks as though much more assistance is unlikely to be forthcoming: "The project is under the municipality of Lidice. In the Communist era, there was a plan to enlarge the Lidice monument, including a large museum. The building was already started, but the money that was planned for the project has been used in more useful ways."

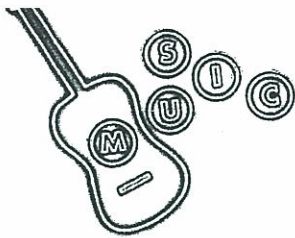
Lidice's mayor, Pavel Müller, was at first not exactly enthralled by the idea of the sizable monument being erected, and neither, he said, were the town council members. "But I went and visited the studio, and I insisted that each council member go to see it," said Müller. "I must confess that when I was sitting in front of the monument, I was very much impressed. And from that point on, the council and I have been in unanimous agreement to have the monument in Lidice."

Already the monument has received press around the world. News agencies from Japan, Germany, Holland and the United States have published articles about the monument in limbo, and documentaries have been aired in both Germany and the United States.

"It happened such a long time ago," Marie Uchytlová said, explaining her original plan to begin the monument. "Actually, it started right after the war when I learned about it. The thought was simple and clear: I will create a statue as a memorial, a large sculpture of a child. But no, not just one child, but many. Eighty-two statues as a symbol for all those who disappeared in the war, all of them. I realized that this project would test the limit of my capabilities. But I also knew I had the power and strength to accomplish it! I was convinced that this project would use up at least 10 years of my life, but I was ready."

More information concerning the monument or donations can be obtained from Věra Fexová





Heavy vibes.

REVIEWS

BY ERIC DEMBY, LISA HELFER AND MICHAEL PAOLETTA

D:REAM

D:Ream World (Sire/EEG) On their debut album, 1994's engagingly kicky *D:Ream On, Vol. 1*, the hip, Britain-based D:Ream turned the world of dance music on its head. Instead of making club music that is purely physical, D:Ream goes beyond the call of dance duty to create songs for both the feet and the mind. As with M People, it is how the lyrics relate to the heart, mind and soul that is the focal point for the band. But where D:Ream's debut dealt specifically with the trials and tribulations of unrequited love, this more upbeat follow-up delves a little deeper into the dynamics of love and sex. In a sense, *D:Ream World* details a relationship from the initial meeting, flirting and dating to foreplay, excitement, climax and resolution. "Shoot Me With Your Love," the set's first single, gets us in with its urgency and pleading, while "You've Saved My World," with its fab 70's soundscape, and "Enough Is Enough" deal with the ups and downs of love, respectively. Everything becomes one, though, on the honest and vulnerable "Hold Me Now," where, amidst a plush, laid-back setting — complete with gospel-like backing vocals — the funky Peter Dinklage, with a furlorn strength in his voice, requests something so simple as an embrace. What a guy! ★ **M.P.**

NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN AND MICHAEL BROOK

Night Song (Real World) Pakistani Quawwali singer Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan has received truckloads of praise for his amazing vocal gift from a wide range of musicians, and his performances are known to send thousands into an ecstatic trance. In addition to his more than 100 releases, he has sung on Peter Gabriel's *Passion* (the soundtrack for *The Last Temptation of Christ*), was included on the *Natural Born Killers* soundtrack and, more recently, performed with Eddie Vedder on the *Dead Man Walking* soundtrack. Experimental guitarist and producer Michael Brook and Khan first collaborated on 1990's *Mustt Mustt*, which garnered much acclaim for both musicians. While the duo split the songwriting on *Mustt Mustt*, they collaborated for this release. The result



could be coined, ethno-trance, franciscani, quawwechno — a name has yet to be discovered. The album is an instrumental gumbo, using harmonium, tabla, cello, Hammond organ, mandolin, guitar and talking drum. Trance beats, traditional and modern instruments and Khan's gymnastic vocals produce the equation for pure captivation. Choice tracks include "My Heart, My Life," "Lament" and the title track. ★ **L.H.**

MONEY MARK

Mark's Keyboard Repair (Mo' Wax/London) What Money Mark's debut album lacks in depth it more than makes up for in variety. With a total of 30 tracks ranging in flavor from groove-heavy Meters-style soul jams like "Preetty" (one of only two songs over three minutes long)

to the space-age Nintendo soundtrack of "No Fighting" to the deeper funk of "Invitation," Money Mark is quite clearly having a good ol' time in his L.A. home studio, where he wrote, performed and produced the entire record (which has been around for awhile as an import, but is now available domestically). This is not to say, however, that Mark is some crazy multi-instrumentalist; keyboards are his specialty (he tinkled the ivories on the last two Beastie Boys albums), and the homemade rhythms on *Keyboard Repair* are programmed or sampled — mostly scratchy, stripped-down beats and simple bassline loops — which creates a very chilled-out, sort of lo-fi hip-hop vibe. On "Seven, Seven, Seven" and

"Pinto's New Car," among other the uncomplicated organ and melodies have the strange effect of recalling late-60's psychedelic bands like the Zombies, with Mark's flanged vocals — he has a very distinctive singing style — songs like "Never Stop" and "My Hand in Your Head" (which chorus ends, "And I'm pulling out all of your mind") provide a trippy space-out backdrop. There's something for everyone on *Mark's Keyboard Repair*, and although they may not all blow your mind, the goods are in place to take you on a number of different journeys. ★ **E.I.**

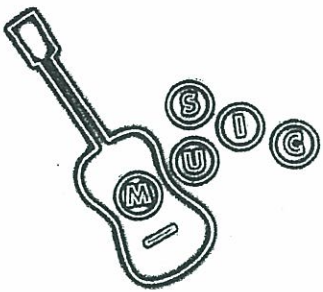
VARIOUS ARTISTS

If You Love Dance (Epic) *If You Love Dance* is quite different from your average dance-music compilation. Rather than relying on "greatest hits of the moment" philosophy, *IYLD* goes one step further to consist solely of hard-to-find club remixes. Some of the featured tracks — the Uno Clio house restructuring of Brownstone's number-one R&B hit, "If You Love Me," for example — were never released domestically and are currently out of print in Europe. While others, such as the gorgeously ambient Strings of Bliss mix of Geoff Smith's "Six Wings of Bliss" and the Sound Factory mix of Cyndi Lauper's everlasting tune, "(Hey Now) Girls Just Want to Have Fun," were available strictly as DJ-only promos. What this means is that now everyone is able to own tracks that previously only a lucky few have been privy to. And that's a good thing. Another good thing is the wise inclusion of Melanie Williams' "Not Enough." Released two years ago, "Not Enough" still gets played on a weekly (some say nightly) basis. It combines a fierce, disco-embellished rhythmic structuring (courtesy of the Brit remixing team Love to Infinity) — albeit with a trendy tribal influence — with one of the most commanding and memorable vocal performances of the past several years. Never released domestically, "Not Enough" (in its Classic Paradise mix — yes, the same version that Junior Vasquez plays) is finally receiving its long-overdue stateside release on this way-fine compilation. ★ **M.P.**

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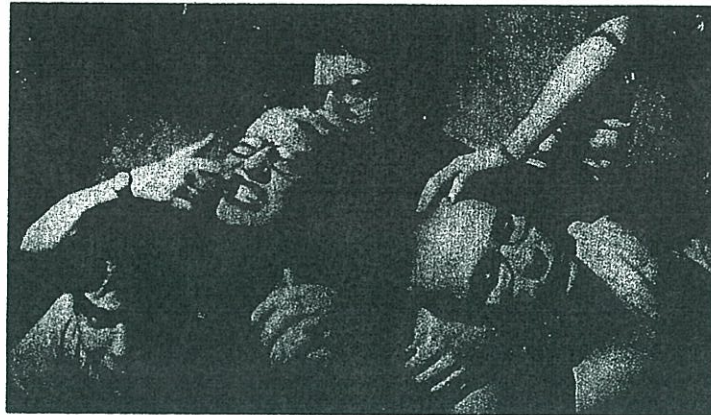


PAUL BOWLES

Baptism of Solitude (Meta) The aural arabesques of *Baptism of Solitude*, released by Paul Bowles in conjunction with Bill Laswell and Janet Rienstra's Meta label, can best be described as languid. As soon as you press play, the album gives you the sensation of being immersed in a waking dream. The sound textures behind Bowles' words are well-woven threads that seamlessly mesh with the fabric of his texts, truly accentuating his word flow; his reading allows for a deflection of meaning and an emotional quality of tone that his writings rarely convey with the same sense of immediacy. Ambient sounds are perfect for this project because they match a kind of incidental drift in Bowles' stories. Laswell submerges you in the hypnagogic nocturnal ebb and flow of the stream-of-consciousness narrative that writers like Bowles, Gertrude Stein and James Joyce championed, while never displacing Bowles' own voice. The end result of the collaboration between him, Laswell and Rienstra is a fusion of sound and word — a theatrical ambiance that both Laswell and Bowles are experts at manipulating. The trio has created an architectural blend of sound, symbol and sentiment that forms lyrical moments/events that are deeply moving in their complexity. ★ P.D.M.

CORNERSHOP

Woman's Gotta Have It (Luaka Bop/Warner Bros.) As with many British bands, the Anglo-Indian quintet Cornershop does not object to the mixing of musical ideas, no matter how contorted they may be. If anything, they thrive on it — that is, as long as the various components gel into a sweet, seductive whole. Cornershop's intersection of noisy dance rock with the serenity of the sitar — merging Western influences with those from the East — is best epitomized on songs like "Hong Kong Book of Kung Fu" and "Wog." By fusing the tamboura's classic drone, shimmering Eastern percussion and Punjabi lyrics with dense Velvet Underground guitar janglings and tripped-out Massive Attack synth effects, Cornershop has, in effect,



created one of the most idiosyncratic alterna-dance albums to hit these shores in quite some time. And because this is such a decidedly twisted project, chances are better than good that it will take more than a few listens to truly experience all the riches Cornershop has to offer. ★ M.P.

DAPHNE

Daphne (Maxi) You may remember Daphne from the late 80's, when she was the lead singer of the neo-Supremes freestyle trio Pajama Party, who scored a number-one dance and top-40 hit with the infectious ill', booty-shaker "Yo No Se." Tired of the cookie-cutter trio thang, Daphne left the group and found work on the stage (Randy Newman's *Faust*), the screen (*I Like It Like That*) and TV (Fox's *House of Buggin'*) — everywhere, it seemed, except in a recording studio. All that is changing, however. Since 1993, the wildly maned Daphne has scored three sensual worldwide dance hits — "Change," "When

You Love Someone" and, most recently, "I Found It" — all of which are included on her solo debut. As strong as these house tracks may be — and they are mighty real — it is on the set's poppier moments, like "Easy to Love," "Inside Me" and the Neneh Cherry-esque "Carajita," that Miss Daphne's rising star shines the brightest. ★ M.P.

REBECCA MOORE

Admiral Charcoal's Song (Factory Outlet) Rebecca Moore's debut album is an 11-track listening odyssey that roams somewhere between Kurt Weill and scuba diving. Raised on a diet of the New York avant-garde performance scene, Moore is an emerging talent chock-full of quirk.

Her sensual, dynamic voice is a piece of pocketed taffy candy; her mesmeric lullabies stick relentlessly to the brain. She plays electric guitar, piano and synthesizer; and voyages on "a fake boat" in "The Sisters Bernice," complete with creaking ship and the sounds of

seagulls. "The Lamp Shop" is akin to French cabaret — a duet sung by two characters, Mrs. Hazy-Faye and Admiral Charcoal, that reveals the relationship between incandescent light and spiritual illumination.

Recorded at the Knitting Factory, the album hosts a crew of local talent, including Jason Brandenburg (accordion), Jeff Buckley (electric six-string bass), Lounge Lizard Jane Scarpantoni (cello) and Steven Bernstein (trumpet). Listen closely for special guest appearances by a toy clown, a piece of crinkling paper and a swinging door. ★ L.H.

VITAPUP

an hour with vitapup (Plunk) The word "hallucination" conjures images of melting walls, giant bugs and pink fairies with your first camp counselor's face on them. But, in fact, most hallucinations are aural — voices in your head and the like. One of the symptoms of schizophrenia is hallucination. Vitapup's debut, *an hour with vitapup*, makes me think they might be a tad schizo — not to mention suffering from multiple personality disorder — and I mean that in the nicest way.

Listening to vitapup on the subway made me snap my head around on several occasions to find out who the fuck was whispering in my ear. But it was them — vitapup. One minute singer Ray Heatley is howling his guts out, the next there are layers of people rapping, whistling and whispering; it's enough to make a girl a little nutty. Identities change from track to track, but vitapup are at their best when shredding through power-punk songs like "Staple in the Sun," "I Need It" and "Sports Car."

This New York-based trio isn't shy about sharing the mic, but maybe they should be a little more stingy. Guest Jane Hohenberger does a couple of poetry raps that are powerful live and entertaining for the first two or three listens, but, like a comedy record, a tune without a beat can never attain the status of an I-must-play-this-a-million-times song (like "Dragonfly," for example). This tiny criticism aside, I'm ready for two hours with vitapup. ★ J.M.

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