

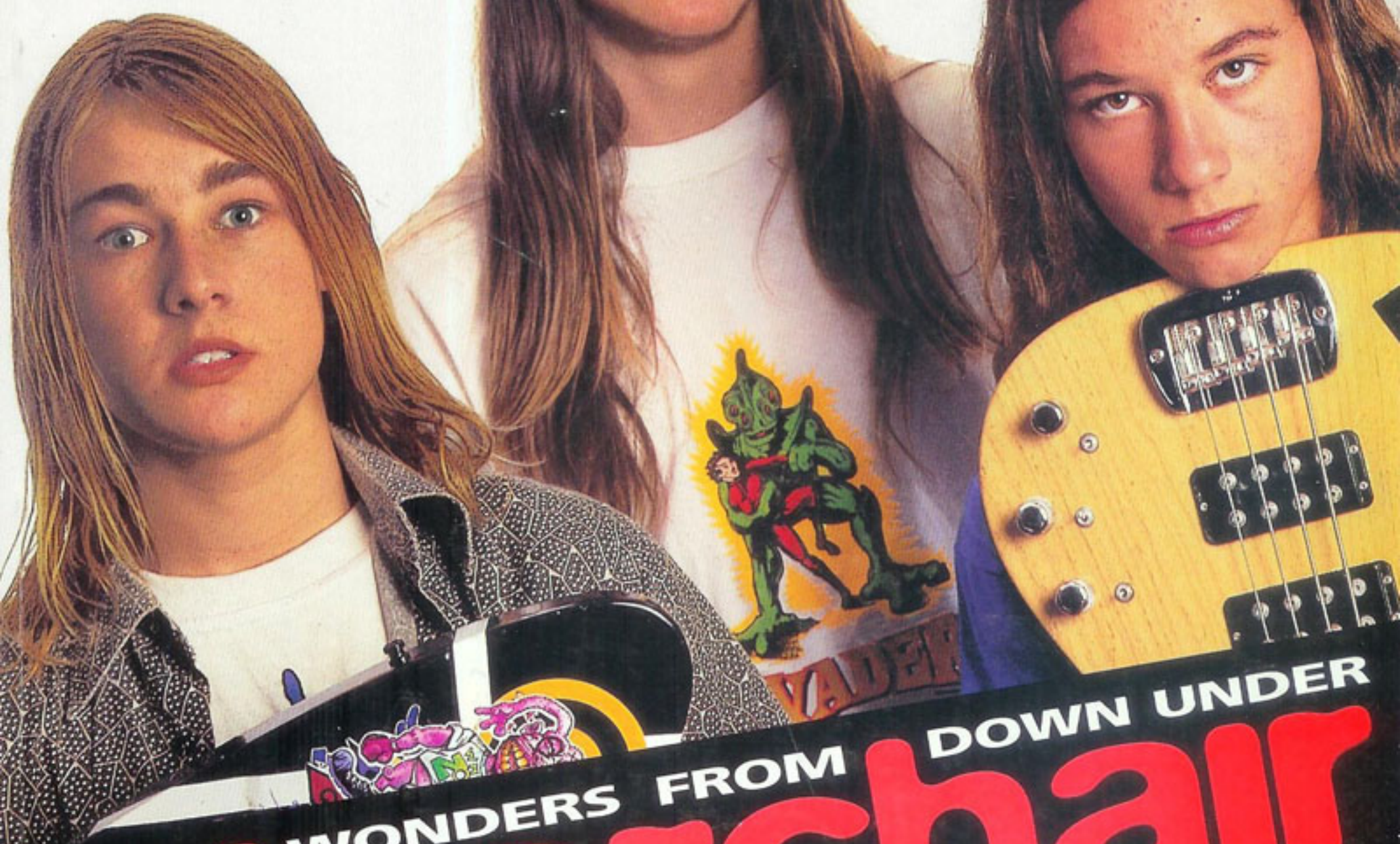
TRANSCRIPTIONS SILVERCHAIR PURE MASSACRE CANDLEBOX SIMPLE LESSONS
KORN BLIND ALANIS MORISSETTE HAND IN MY POCKET
STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN TAXMAN PRETENDERS MIDDLE OF THE ROAD

The Guitar Alternative

FEBRUARY 1996

guitar

SCHOOL



BOY WONDERS FROM DOWN UNDER

Silverchair

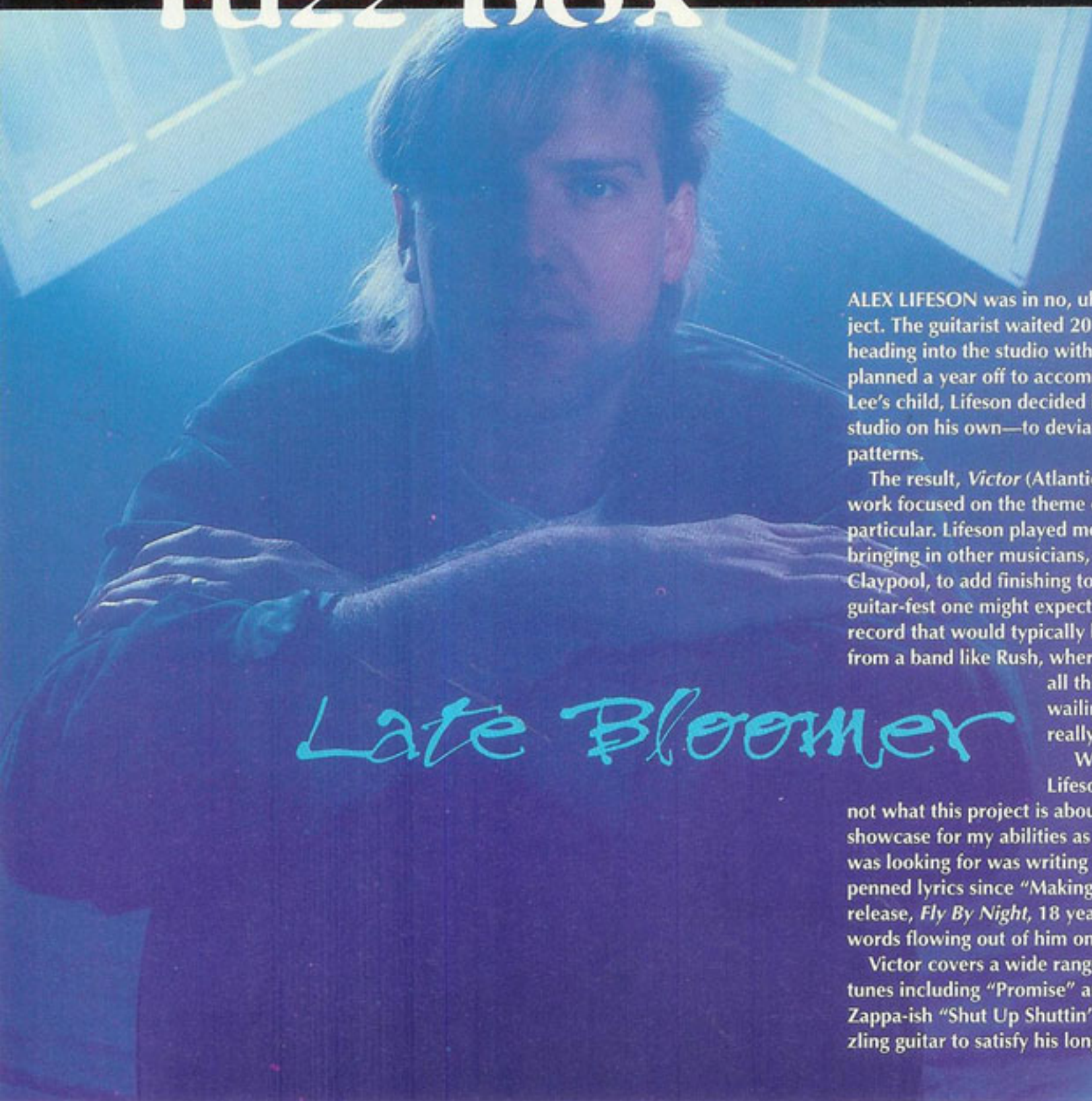
RANCID KORN CANDLEBOX MICK JONES
ALEX LIFESON NAPALM DEATH
SEVEN MARY THREE In Deep: STEELY DAN

\$4.50 \$4.95 Can



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FUZZ BOX



Late Bloomer

ALEX LIFESON was in no, uh, rush to put out a solo project. The guitarist waited 20 years and 19 albums before heading into the studio without Rush. When the band planned a year off to accommodate the birth of Geddy Lee's child, Lifeson decided it was time to head into the studio on his own—to deviate from Rush's established patterns.

The result, *Victor* (Atlantic), is a strikingly brooding work focused on the theme of love, its darker facets in particular. Lifeson played most of the parts himself, later bringing in other musicians, notably Primus' Les Claypool, to add finishing touches. But *Victor* isn't the guitar-fest one might expect. "I didn't want to make a record that would typically be made by someone like me from a band like Rush, where you'd expect 50 minutes of all this textural guitar stuff and wailing away," Lifeson says. "I really wanted to downplay that."

While the recording shows that Lifeson's got chops to burn, that's not what this project is about. "This wasn't meant to be a showcase for my abilities as a guitarist. The challenge I was looking for was writing songs." Though he hadn't penned lyrics since "Making Memories" on Rush's second release, *Fly By Night*, 18 years ago, Lifeson found the words flowing out of him once he began.

Victor covers a wide range stylistically, from Rush-like tunes including "Promise" and "Start Today," to the Zappa-ish "Shut Up Shuttin' Up," with just enough dazzling guitar to satisfy his longtime fans.

—Chris Rubin

SOUL SURVIVORS

IN THE WAKE OF THE DISAPPOINTING sales of *Low*, Testament's 1994 metal masterpiece and arguably their finest effort to date, Atlantic Records has severed its ties with the veteran Bay Area thrashers. Not surprisingly, the termination of life on a major label has given the band a sense of relief.

"You can make the best album of your career, but if the big-wigs at a major label don't see you as the flavor of the year, they couldn't care less about you," says lead guitarist James Murphy.

To avoid running into a similar situation by signing with another label, Testament have instead opted to take matters into their own hands and form their own label. The new company, Burnt Offerings, was created by rhythm guitarist Eric Peterson and vocalist Chuck Billy. "We did it because we have enough fans and resourceful people behind us," says Murphy. "We're much better off this way."

The first Burnt Offerings release, *Live At The Fillmore*, shows Testament returning to their earlier material and practicing what they preach best: high-energy metal with technique to spare. But the album also features three acoustic numbers, "Return To Serenity," "Trail Of Tears" and "The Legacy," that show Testament at their most sensitive.

"We recorded those songs in recognition of an American Indian benefit group (AAIA), to help save sacred sites in Arizona for the Apache nation," says Peterson. "Some members of the AAIA's elderly council weren't too excited about us performing our heavy material, so we decided to record them acoustically."

—Sam Retzer

