

**the // skyway **
the replacements mailing list

issue #105
(February 14, 2025)

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photo posted by John Irwin

ROCKIN' HERE TONIGHT

On December 18, 2024, the world lost Bob "Slim" Dunlap, guitarist for the Replacements from 1987-1991. As the replacement Replacement for Bob Stinson, Slim passed away just one day after Bob's birthday and on the birthday of fellow rocker-for-life, Keith Richards.

Slim suffered from a stroke in 2012. Slim was bedridden for over a decade, while his family, particular his remarkable wife Chrissie, took care of him through every stage of his physical challenges - alongside numerous nurses, including long-time Skyway member, Danny Contreras Jr.

Slim's medical expenses became an impetus for The Replacements reunion of 2013-15 and the *Songs for Slim* EP. Also, while cleaning out Slim's closets, his family found the reel of Matt Wallace's original mixes of *Don't Tell a Soul*. With *Trouble Boys* author Bob Mehr's relentless effort, that tape led to giving the world *Dead Man's Pop* and later the other 'Mats reissues:

[Bob Mehr] ended up speaking with Chrissie Dunlap who was Slim Dunlap's wife. It was his first record with the band. When he talked to her about it, she said, "Well, I've got all these tapes in my basement." He said, "What do you mean?" He realized that they were from the Don't Tell a Soul sessions. I think they were primarily 1/4-inch tapes, and they were a lot of the stuff that I rolled when Tom Waits and the band were playing live in the middle of the night. That's where they had my original rough mixes. He transferred those and called me up and goes, "Hey, we have your original rough mixes." He said that they had a great sound or vibe to them, even though they were quite rough. He asked, "What do you think about the possibility of releasing the record the way that you and the band wanted to do it?" – [Tape Op #134 \(Nov-Dec 2019\)](#)

Slim was renown both locally and internationally, as well as a beloved songwriter. But most remarkably, he was just an incredible human being. He was the kind of person who never met a stranger, a sage full of wise advice about both music and life as well as a loving husband and a phenomenal father.

This issue of the // Skyway \\ is full of stories about Slim from his friends, bandmates, and the people he touched. 73 pages of memories, one for each year of his life.

If you want a running record of love for Slim, there are nearly daily messages at the [Slim Dunlap Fan Club](#). Many of these photos and stories were originally posted there. As many as there are here, there are undoubtedly countless stories still unwritten. As anyone who visited Slim said, even when lying in bed and his voice a whisper, he could be nothing but his wry, kind, wise self.

Bon voyage, Slim. You made the world a better place with your guitar, with your jokes, and with your new old soul. The world gave you back some incredible love and the best family you could ask for. How lucky we were all here at the same time. ° m@.

Proclamation

***WHEREAS**, Bob "Slim" Dunlap is a Minneapolis-based singer-songwriter and guitarist who is equally at ease performing folk, roots rock, post-punk, blues, country or rock; and*

***WHEREAS**, Slim has contributed to the music and cultural scene in Minneapolis for over four decades; and*

***WHEREAS**, through his songwriting, solo career, collaborations with numerous artists, and as a member of the legendary band, Minneapolis-based "The Replacements", Slim has influenced thousands of musicians, songwriters and fans alike, worldwide; and*

***WHEREAS**, Slim has achieved international acclaim through his talents, always eager to engage in humble conversations with fans to share experiences and advice - and has always considered Minneapolis his home; and*

***WHEREAS**, the City of Minneapolis has benefited from Slim's involvement in the local entertainment industry through his recordings, performances, songwriting, and through his extremely humble attitude regarding his achievements - a clear example to others that even the nicest person can achieve considerable success and still maintain their genuine modesty;*

***NOW, THEREFORE, I, R.T. RYBAK**, Mayor of the City of Minneapolis, do hereby proclaim February 14, 2013 as:*

**BOB "SLIM" DUNLAP DAY
IN THE CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS**



Mayor of Minneapolis



IN MEMORY OF SLIM DUNLAP

Terry Walsh

I'm so grateful that I got to know Slim. Chrissie's love for him has been a constant reminder that true love isn't just a punchline in a movie. He would have left us a long time ago without her, and she deserves every single good thing that happens from here to eternity.

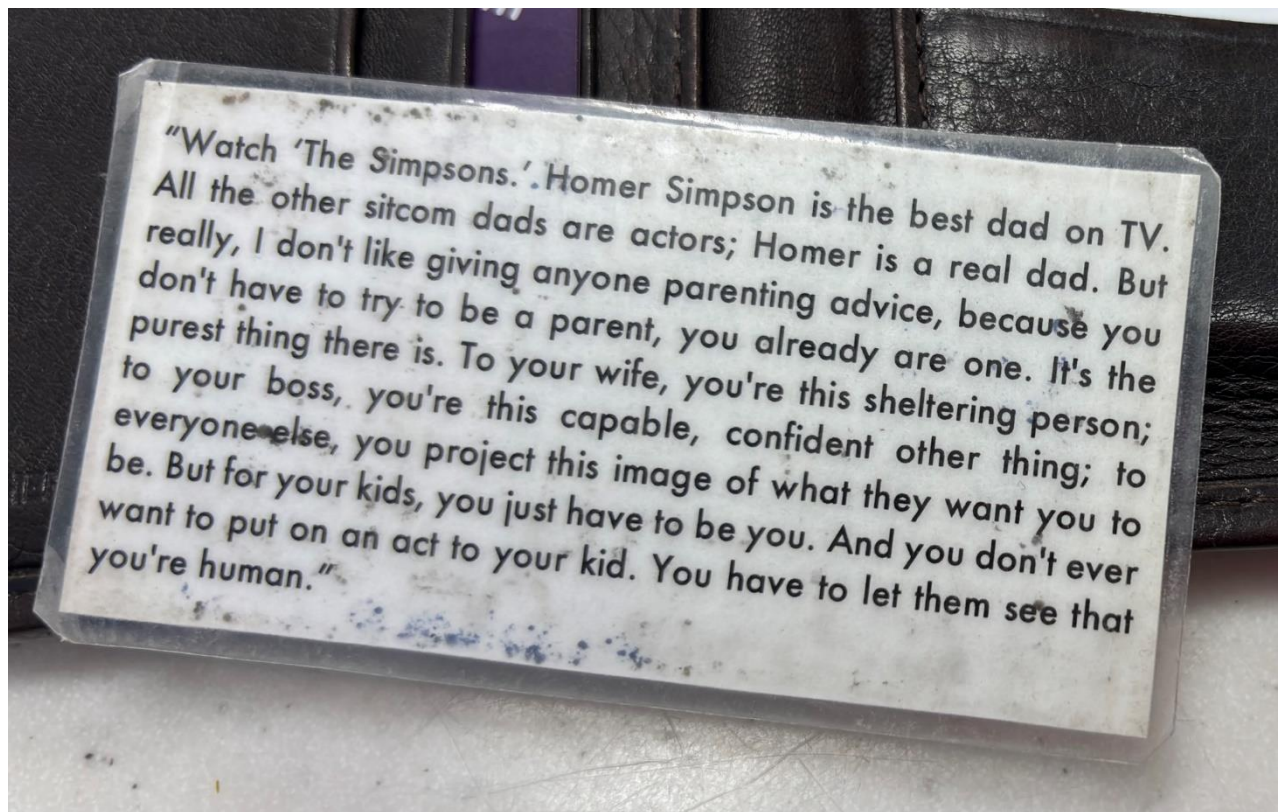
Thank you, Chrissie Dunlap!



(From Palmer's Bar, 2011)

I've always loved what Slim told me for a story I did on fatherhood, asking fellow musicians for advice for Prince, whose wife Mayte was expecting at the time. My buddy Nate Dungan has had this quote stashed in his wallet for years:

Slim Dunlap: "Watch 'The Simpsons.' Homer Simpson is the best dad on TV. All the other sitcom dads are actors; Homer is a real dad. But really, I don't like giving anyone parenting advice, because you don't have to try to be a parent, you already are one. It's the purest thing there is. To your wife, you're this sheltering person; to your boss, you're this capable, confident other thing; to everyone else, you project this image of what they want you to be. But for your kids, you just have to be you. And you don't ever want to put on an act to your kids. You have to let them see that you're human."



Scott Hudson

My Interview with Former Replacements Guitarist Slim Dunlap (February 20, 2011)

Tempest (Scott Hudson): Although you've been around for a long time, most people know you only as 'former Replacement'. Tell me about your pre-'Mats days.

Slim Dunlap: I've done this for over 20 years. I've been in 8 billion bands, mostly in bands that I never thought would get anywhere. I'm largely known prior to joining the Replacements for my work with this local singer by the name of Curtiss A, and I was in a million combinations with him. People ask me a million times for the names of the bands I was in, and I've forgotten them all. (Laughs) Best not remembered.

I'm not a particular style. I'm a lot of different styles. I've taken on a lot of styles only to realize, shit, I can't play that. The legend about me in Minneapolis is that people would see me playing bluegrass one night and in a big hard rock thing the next. Nobody around here could ever figure out exactly what I am. It's fun to change it up because I don't want to turn it into a job. A lot of guys think only in terms of career after a while. I definitely don't want a career. I've pulled the plug on myself many times.

T: What was your role during your stint in the Replacements? Do you think you added some stability to the band?

SD: Oh, I keep on getting credit for it, but I think that's the last thing that band needed. I can probably say I'm the consummate sideman. I've spent 20 years being a sideman. Going into a band, a sideman is all about being there, and I tried to do that in the Replacements. It wasn't my job to come in there and say 'here's what you're doing wrong' because at the time I loved that band.

Coming into the band, settling down and sobering up and growing up and shit like that kind of chronologically happened because they were kind of reaching that point.

I really think that my role in the Replacements was to not have a role. To not change them in any way, shape or form. I get the credit for a number of things, but for the most part they're undeserved.

You're in a position where I'm a songwriter; I know what being a songwriter's all about. There are many times when a band is a songwriter with a bunch of other people around him trying to guide his songs. I don't think that's necessary. I tried to let Paul know that he could do anything he wanted to and I'd do anything I could to help the song out. I think that's why he and I are still friends.

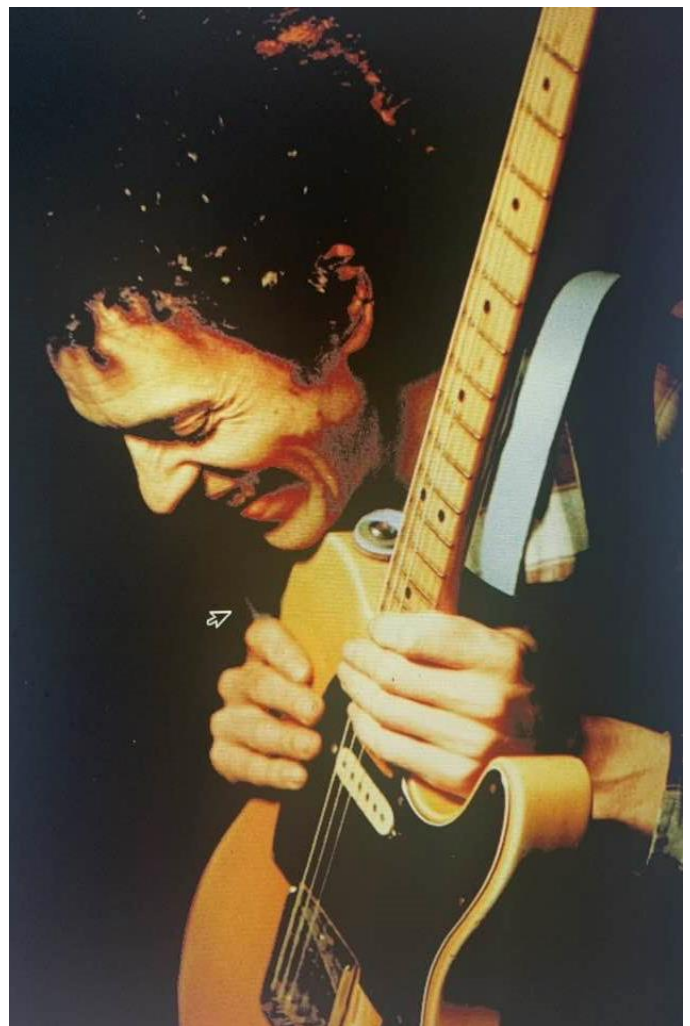
That's how it can get ugly. There are so many bands that break up that started up as the best of friends and end up hating each other. I never take bands all that seriously.

T: I'll bet you have a million stories.

SD: Anyone who has been on the road has stories. That's why I love what I do. I'm a people kind of person. I love people and as a songwriter that's where I get most of my material.

T: The song on your solo album about opening acts, "The Ballad of the Opening Band" - is that about being an opener or from years of watching warmup bands?

SD: A combination of the two. I love show business. A lot of my songs are about being a musician and they don't really mean much to people who aren't musicians. I believe you should write your life, and it's been my life. Not in a bitter sort of way. They're not sad songs.



T: With all the critical acclaim the Replacements received, why do you think they never hit it big?

SD: I get the weirdest looks from people when I tell them, but in a weird way I'm kind of glad. When you reach the point where the band sells many millions of copies of a single record, it's usually the most wide open and successful type record. The Replacements were never a wide open band.

The record company tried their damndest but I really think the Replacements were different from other bands in that they weren't writing songs specifically to be hits. They were writing songs that said something to the right person, the words meant a lot to this person in particular. You and me are still talking about the band because there will always be another group of kids becoming 17, 18 years old and the Replacements music will always mean something to that age group.

I don't think every band should be a huge Def Leppard, Bon Jovi kind of thing. If the Replacements had made that leap, I don't think we'd be discussing them in the same way we are now. There'd be a big success, a peak, and a burnout period, and it'd be done. The whole time before I joined and then afterwards, I never saw this as a possibility for the band. In a weird way that music is too literate, too intelligent to make it big. You never know, though, because occasionally good stuff does make it. A lot of it also is that the times were different. If the Replacements were where they were in 1986 were right now, it'd be a completely different story.

At the time of the Replacements, the real competition for heading toward the mainstream was R.E.M. At one time both bands were in similar positions and were poised to make that leap. R.E.M. made that leap, and the Replacements didn't. Who knows why that is, but I think a lot of it is that R.E.M. was more willing to adapt to the marketplace. They'd write the songs, record them, and then hand them to the record company and say do what you want with them. I think bands that do walk that line pay a price.

T: Certainly there's a bit of a backlash against them also.

SD: In a weird way there is. A lot of the people who loved the Replacements at the beginning stuck with them until the end, and there were some that thought they lost something at some point. You can't win with everybody.

I think to a lot of the younger musicians, the Replacements are a shining example of all you end up with in the end is your dignity. The time you are in the limelight is very important because you live with it the rest of your life. All of the Replacements are proud of what they did and they have nothing to look back on in a bad way. I know some musicians that had a huge hit and when it comes on the radio and you're sitting there next to them you can just feel them bristle. That never happened to the Replacements.

I think the saga of the Replacements is not over yet. I think in a weird way the band going under may have been the best thing for each person involved.

T: I must admit I'm surprised at the quality of the solo projects. Who thought that Chris Mars couple put out two pretty good albums, and Tommy's debut (Bash and Pop) was fantastic.

SD: It was hard for Tommy and Chris because they were writers. I remember being interviewed with them and the interviewer asked if sometimes we felt we were just the backup band for Westerberg. Tommy and Chris just looked at each other, and I said, 'actually, yes.' They got really upset, they were offended at that perception.

That's a difficult thing for a person like Paul, thinking we'll continue the band and these guys make a comfortable living. But in the end, they had music to get out. And that was kind of the impetus for folding. Everyone could go in their musical direction.

Paul, to his credit, knew he'd be alright, and also thought if they get their music out there, maybe they'll do okay. Tommy and especially Chris definitely understand a lot more about this business than they did a couple of years ago.

Chris and Tommy were both songwriters the whole time. That was an important part of the band, the competition factor. That's an important part of a lot of bands. A lot of people don't understand that the competitiveness is healthy.

Paul guided his songs in a way that they would like them, and that was part of their contribution. I don't think Paul would have done things the way he did without those guys.

You know, there are a lot of bands who make it to the point that the Replacements did where they start to make a living. They think it's not a bad way to make a little money. 'This is not a bad way to go. We'll do whatever we need to do to continue this little gravy train we got going here.' Very often, this thinking helps destroy what you've done. That was never a goal of the Replacements, to become an institution like the Rolling Stones. We were always a little on the edge.

T: My understanding is that the couple of times the 'Mats did flirt with success were disastrous, like the Tom Petty tour.

SD: It wasn't an utter failure. I think part of that is that no matter what part of show business you are, you dream of the next round. To be at the amphitheater status, I think what killed it for us was realizing that this is where we were headed. I think part of what happened to the Replacements is that concerts changed in the last 10 years. They've gotten more predictable. In the early days of the Replacements anything could happen when we walked onto the stage. The night could be a total disaster or it could be a great night. The further you get, the more protected you are and for us it just wasn't fun to play for 15,000 people. They're so far away.

Plus, it was the Tom Petty audience that had a lot to do with it. That was not our crowd. When Paul Westerberg stands behind that microphone, there's danger. And when Tom Petty stands behind the mike, you're safe. Paul is one of the greatest 'anger channellers' in the business, but in an artful way. That's not what Tom Petty does.

I really don't think it mattered who the band was we opened for. It was a matter of reaching that point in your life where you saw your future.

T: I've heard a rumor that Tommy Stinson is being kept under contract to Warners just in case of a reunion.

SD: Warner Brothers doesn't let anybody go if they can help it. They have so many artists who really aren't doing anything. A smaller label can't afford to carry someone. They had Tommy under contract; they didn't have anybody else. I think partly for them it's a salvage kind of effort. They put all of this into them and need something to show for it.

There's an up and down nature to all careers. Record companies aren't dumb. Someone might be really down right now, but if they let them go, they might go on and do something huge for someone else. They don't like that to happen. It's just like football and baseball owners. If they can keep you, they will. They're not going to take a chance.

I think in the case of Tommy, they're behind him. I think they hear people talk about the Replacements. They never really understood them, but they hear the respect that keeps the interest in their music.

T: Are you surprised at how devoted Replacements fans are?

SD: No, because I played with them. I see people all the time that are die hard Replacements fans. Everywhere I play they come see me. The band was together for over 12 years and the people that come up to me are not people that were 22, 23 years old a decade ago. They're people much younger than that that have obviously picked up on it later. That's the power of the music! It continues to draw people. There's a very wonderful intelligence to those songs, and people respond to that. I think some of those songs I'm afraid are classics.

Paul was on tour last year, and when he played here, he was talking to me about it. He didn't really want to play old Replacements songs. But whenever he'd go into one, there'd be this incredible, thundering applause from the audience. We all knew they were good songs at the time, but a lot of people don't realize some songs live longer than others. Some of Paul's aren't going anywhere; he's stuck with them. (Laughs)

I think in a weird way, a band like the Replacements going under the way they did makes the music seem more alive. If the band was still alive, this same phenomenon would still occur but not to the same degree. The band left at a time before it became ugly. I think some bands hang around way too long, not realizing that the music doesn't have to die just because the band dies. Some music sounds really, really good and a week later, it's 'oh, I don't know about that.' I think the fact that a lot of Replacements records, when they came out they got such mixed reviews, that's a real good indicator that something's happening. I've had a lot of people come up to me and say that they thought such and such record was a piece of shit when it came out, but now it's their favorite.

T: *Exile on Main Street* is a perfect example.

SD: That's a good example. I remember hearing nothing but shit about that when it came out. Right now, to me that's the zenith of the Rolling Stones.

T: One thing that shows the sustained interest in the Replacements is the various computer billboards. Are you aware of what's going on there?



SD: I've got a buddy that has that and he was showing me that one night. I really think that's a huge factor in the next few years. That's the way a lot of people are discovering new music.

The huge bootlegging network that built up when the band was alive tortured the band, because you're talking hundreds of thousands of dollars spent that they couldn't recoup. When we saw some of the sales figures of some of our records and it made us sick when you add up all the unlicensed copies out there. A lot of the really dedicated music fans are broke people. I think a lot of bands are bothered by that, but I think it's a tribute in a weird way. The bands that are getting attention on computer lines are a huge test because people don't have to contribute.

One band will wonder 'why don't people bootleg us.' You just want to go 'because you don't need to.' I really think in a lot of ways The Replacements weren't a band that didn't play the band game and you kind of took your chances if you liked their music. (Laughs) All the people that tried to shake Paul's hand and he'd snub them and shit, that's their memory of the band. I think as time fades, people tend to forget about those things. It was a hard band to love in its day. You had to really be dedicated. (Laughs) It was a hard band to be in!!

T: The reviews of your first solo album brought up Keith Richards a lot. Is he a huge influence?

SD: I've answered this question so many times. I kind of go into autopilot when I answer this. Anytime you talk about influences, it's a combination of yes, you're influenced by this person, but

it's also by being influenced by similar musicians. I'm a little bit younger than Keith; he's got a few decades on me. (Chuckles)

But I've met him several times, and we are similar musicians. The role of the rhythm guitar is a very influential thing in the music I like and the music he likes. The Rolling Stones are, to me at least, Keith Richards. That guitar signature, that's kind of rapidly becoming the mark of 60's rock and roll. The guitar isn't the dominant instrument that it once was. It doesn't serve the same purpose anymore. It has a different role in modern music, and that's where I've kind of consciously drawn the line. I try to as much as I can stick to rhythm guitar based stuff. So there will always be a connection, but that's a connection I'm proud of.

I think the strongest influence on Keith was Muddy Waters. Muddy's a huge influence on me. I think he's one of the greats of our century. I listened to Robert Johnson about the same time Keith did, and there's some different grooves that lead to what I do.

But to me, I play this thing called rock and roll, and rock and roll to someone 22, 23 is a very different thing than it is to someone 20 years older. I harken back to a different thing, especially on that first record. Maybe not as much on the one I'm working on now. I got kind of sick of that 'hey it sounds like Keith' thing. There's very little Keith on this new one, as a matter of fact.

It's a part of me live, and always will be because he's a huge influence. I think Keith Richards, not as a singer/songwriter but as a musician. The wonderful thing about Keith is his use of space and the use of silence. Short, chopped off riffs always perk my ear up more than a guy that has a blazing, smoking sound that he shoves right in your face.

John Lennon, though, is who I ultimately idolize. As a songwriter, bar none. As a singer, bar none. As a rhythm guitar player, there's never been anyone like John. John played with three rather average musicians, and he had to make the rhythm guitar do it all. He had to cover for a weak drummer and a lame guitar player. To me, a song starts with the rhythm guitar. A little riff that kind of doubles up rhythm in your ear. I'm definitely a child of the 60's. It's a huge part of what I do so I'll always live with that connection. But I wear that proudly.

T: Tell me about your new album then. Is it about to come out?

SD: It was supposed to come out soon but I'm way late on it. I'm working on it. I do a lot of recording at home. A lot of my friends thought with a recording studio at home, I ought to crank one out in three days. (Laughs) It's not that easy.

A big part of what happens is when you do a lot of home recording you don't realize that it's difficult to engineer. I planned on having it done by October 15 but I'm nowhere near that. I'll have it done by the end of November. I wish it could come out by Christmas but you're not supposed to put out records in winter. It'll probably come out in March.

T: Do you have a title for it yet?

SD: I'm not going to give it out. It's a good little play on words. I don't like to give the title way before the record comes out, because then you look so stupid when it's got a different one.

T: How does this record sound compared to the first one?

SD: My band seems to feel it's similar. It's generally the same basic forms. It's very similar in feel but it has a different approach to it. I recorded it a little bit rougher. The other one was starting to get a little too polished. I had to go on the road so I finished it in a couple of nights. Thank God I did, otherwise that record would have been too slick.



This one I'm doing myself, and I'm keeping the edge there. I do a lot of it spontaneously. What I've learned in my years of playing is that if you're thinking about what you're doing there's something wrong. It's been a fun record to do, there's a certain air to it. A lot of records that were ground out sound like it. A lot of people make a record like a movie. I've just never been able to do that. I have more fun this way.

I'm not against people taking a lot of time in the studio. A lot of bands, though, get way too careful about their music. I think a good song is a good song, whether it's recorded poorly or really well. A lot of bands are so worried about the outside veneer of something and not so worried about what's inside, which you can't fake or hide. You hear that a lot. You hear a song that sounds really good and you get three lines into the lyrics and you realize this fucker has absolutely nothing to say. He's got zero to say. It's just all dressed up. It's window dressing.

I try to avoid that as much as possible. Whenever I get something and it starts to sound good to my ears, I want to make sure that lyrically it's there. We're seeing a change now. To get top technology you have to spend a quarter of a million dollars. We're seeing a sense that many people don't want that anymore; they don't want an album that took two years and 17 hundred people to make. They'd rather buy something that was made in a couple of days by one guy.

What we're talking about here is music made by committee. These bands make tapes as they're going along, and they're guided by the record company. 'Make it a little bit more like this song. Ever heard Sting turn in anything like this?' We're getting music that has less personality in it. To me putting out a record and watching it go right down the tubes with no one giving a fuck about it is actually not that bad of a sign. To me, people liking something or hating it is the same thing.

It's a reaction. So many bands read their reviews and think it's great when there's 12 or so reviews that are all positive.

I'd much rather have some that say we're shit; old-timey bullshit! I'm trying to make music that is extreme in a weird sort of way. I don't want everyone to like me. I'm not trying to make music that everyone likes. It's boring! To do so is so common denominator that it could have no personality whatsoever. And I'm all about personality. I'm a live performer. I sell my songs live much better than on record. You don't see that much anymore. Most bands just concentrate on the records. They have records that sound really good but when they go out there live they're OK.



I like to hear records by bands that are kind of poorly produced and then when you see them live they kick your butt! A lot of bands don't realize that when you sing a song constantly live, that time you recorded it was just one time. The best time you do that song might be in front of six people in Bullhunk, OK. I don't think that snapshot of the song has to be the best you ever do. You're never going to be able to predict the best time you do it. Chances are that it's not going to happen in the studio. It's going to happen when some guy just threw a beer bottle and it just missed your head. I'll never reach that level where I'm successful enough at recording that that's all I will do. The only reason I make records is so I can play live. If a record is marginally successful, I'm happy. All I want to do is play live.

T: That's what I've like about Dylan the last few years. He doesn't do the same song the same way every time you see him.

SD: I've gone to many Dylan shows where my friends go 'that's 'Mr. Tambourine Man?' Then you go see somebody that had a huge hit in 1963 and they do it exactly the same as they did it then. That isn't what art's about. You change as a person so your perspective on the song changes.

I think Bob has been disinterested for a good long time. I think the fact that Bob is still a powerful force in music is to his credit. I've been a Dylan fan since day one. I get a lot of people that look down on him. 'You still like Bob Dylan?' He goes up and down with the currents. That's what it's all about. A real musician knows there's going to be good times, and a whole lot of bad times. It's those bad times that give you the material for the good times.

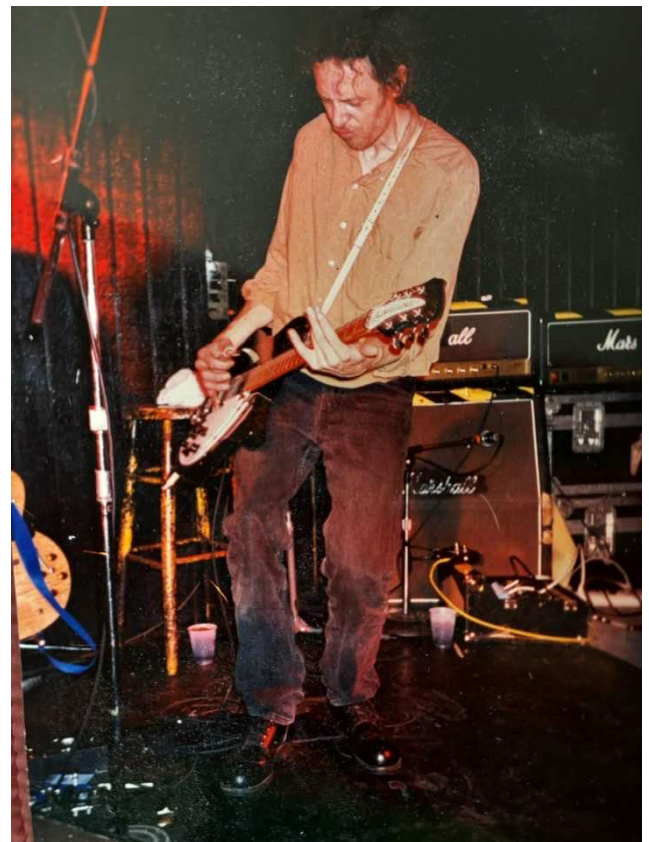
There's so many bands that you see them one night and they're good, and then you go see them a couple of nights later and it's the same thing. That's not a band! A band is something that reacts to the moment. If it's a crummy night you learn more about the band. These days there's so many tricks to cover for a bad night. A bad night is what's being a musician's all about. Show business doesn't always work. It's a different audience every night and you're same act may go like fucking dynamite tonight but the same act will bomb tomorrow. That doesn't mean change

your act or design it so it doesn't happen again. Too many people worry about what you're doing wrong, but usually you're not doing anything! (Laughs)

That's the fun of playing live. That's why I moved the recording out of the studio and tried to incorporate it more into what I do. I enjoy the process. A lot of people want to be musicians for what it can bring them. To me, you have to enjoy being a musician. That's what it's all about.

T: There's the classic Pete Townshend line about joining a band to get girls.

SD: There's some truth to that in a lot of cases, but in the long haul it won't really keep you moving. Being a musician involves very brief moments of attention and applause and interspersed between them are long moments where there's nobody around. A lot of people are musicians when there's an audience there, but to really be a musician you must be able to just hack it out. A lot of people ask me about writing songs and I tell them the only way to write a hit is to be writing all the time. One day you might be lucky. You can't set out to write a hit. You need to just start writing songs and hope one day you get it. It's a craft, an art. You have to practice it every fucking day. A lot of bands don't understand that. They hear the stories about a hit where the guy goes 'the fucker just wrote itself. I just got a pen in my hand and bang! It came out.' It just doesn't work that way. It's a long unending process and you have to enjoy it. If it's painful and excruciating, you're in the wrong business.



There's a lot of things in the music business that many musicians don't understand because they're not fun. That's part of it. To me, you know when you're in the company of a musician. It's a special person that really doesn't get excited about anything. He's been shot down so many times that nothing fazes them.

You can walk up to a young band if you're a record company and they'll do anything the company wants them to do. You walk up to a musician and he'll look at the contract and just go 'yeah.' That's what keeps me at this. I'm way too old to be playing rock and roll but I feel rock and roll has nothing to do with age. The day it stops being fun is the day I find something else to do because it's a horrible occupation, there's no doubt about it. There's no reward at the end of the road. There's so many musicians in my age group that are off the road and have nothing to show for it. In many cases they're bitter about that. I'm not bitter. I've enjoyed every performance I've ever given. I'd like to crack out a couple more! And I'm coming out to your town!!



Mike Gairinsin

We lost a great man and Minnesota music legend yesterday.

I actually worked next to him for a while in the later 90s, and since I was mostly a “metal head” back then, I didn’t even recognize him as being anything more than “some cool cat co-worker who told a lot of tall tales.” The reason I say that is, I’d bring up say some big-time musician in casual conversation and he’d always have a story about a time he played a show, jammed, or just hung out with them.

For example: one day I was like, “Yeah they keep playing that damn Goo Goo Dolls song on the radio and it’s driving me nuts!” To that Slim smiled and said, “Oh boy, I remember back when they were just starting out and they were just a bunch of excited young punk kids. Johnny Rzeznik kept asking me about my gear.” Not believing him I was like, “Yeah sure ol’ man...great story,” as I slowly backstepped to the other side of the desk. Little did I know.

After a few days of leaving me in the dark, one of my other co-workers came up and said, “Don’t you know who that is? That’s the former guitarist of The Replacements, SLIM DUNLAP!” I felt so embarrassed since his name tag said Slim the whole time and everyone in the Minnesota music scene (no matter what genre you played) knew the name.

Now that I knew he wasn't just some delusional guy telling fictional stories, I hung on his every word. He'd drop gems of wisdom left and right, seemingly without even realizing it. I kept them all in my pocket to be used over a lifetime. He heard one of my songs and gave me a masterclass in breaking it down to everything he liked as well as things to consider to make it better. Pinching myself even now to think that Slim was actually my music advisor at least for a few minutes.

I never once saw him get angry or even hear him raise his voice to anyone (though as co-workers we'd all blow off steam/frustration by joking around...a lot). His calm and comforting voice still plays in my head. Everyone there loved Slim and seemed drawn to him.

They eventually moved him to the warehouse area but I'd still go visit him whenever I could. I'd play a version of "Six Degrees of Slim," and try to stump him with random musicians. Once I just tossed out, "Slim Pickens" not even knowing if that was a real guy at the time. Without hesitating Slim said something like, "Oh yeah, he's a real guy, actor, and his son's third wife's cousin is in a band called Crocodile Tears and they opened for us once in the basement of Boondox Bar in South Dakota on a snowy night in October. I think he bought me a beer and some wings." He didn't really say that exactly but something close to it, most of his stories had that same type of pattern to them. You just could not stump the guy, he had lived a lot of life.

There's so much we'll miss about Slim, and I haven't even mentioned his music. I think his heartfelt songs speak for themselves. But missing his presence is where I'll feel the biggest void. Even while he was out of the public eye for many years, I could still take comfort in knowing that he was "still around, hopefully at home resting and healing." But now I can't think that anymore. As I write this though, I'm playing his music in the background and it's giving me watery eyes and a bit of that feeling again, that he's...still around.

"We thought we lost a lot, but now we know our fortune is in what we still got."

- Bob 'Slim' Dunlap

Mike Bozley

We used to work together at First Avenue in the early 80's. Sometimes I'd have to go in early. If Bob was there, he'd drop whatever he was doing and we'd talk about whatever for what seemed like hours. He was always interested in what was going on with me. The conversations were never about him. How was I?... what's happening with whatever, be it work, life or the inside scoop on the music scene at the time. To me, he was a sage and I took it all in eagerly.

At the time, I was knocking around in a couple of bands, trying to be a drummer. One day Bob invited me to jam with the Sentimentals. For me, this was like Lennon asking me to sit in with the Beatles. Needless to say, I was very nervous. Mainly because, let's face it, I was a shit drummer. But I said yes anyway. My talent, or lack-there-of, didn't matter to Bob. He knew I had the desire and wanted to help me out.

Those two or three days in Johnny's basement, seeing them work up close, were magical. Bob had a "black box" that he made that he plugged his guitar into. The sound that came out of his amp was other-worldly. Not to mention, I'd never seen a rock guitar player use finger picks before.

Sadly, being the next drummer for the Sentimentals was not to be.

Thank you, Bob. And thank you Chrissie for letting us have him for the time that we did.



Jon Clifford (owner of HiFi Hair and Records in Minneapolis, Minnesota)



The news broke, our local hero had suffered a massive stroke. It hit everyone pretty hard. Ain't no fair in a rock and roll love affair. Some of our local musicians organized a fundraiser show at Famous Dave's. I had just recently spent my wad opening my shop and didn't really have the means to contribute.

I thought maybe we could get a couple of signatures from our local icons and auction off a poster for 100 bucks. That day was a watershed moment in my education of who we are as a community.

Within the week after that show, I was getting calls from people who had heard about the poster and wanted to sign it.

Our entire community...Punk, funk, jazz, bluegrass, Americana, young, old...all of them. They all wanted to help Slim. EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM had a "Slim is the greatest guy in town" story.

I will forever owe a debt of gratitude as the greatest thing Bob taught me was the power of love. It's our currency.

We are the 1%

I stopped by the Dunlap home on my way home from work this evening.

While of course the family is so very sad, there is an incredible energy of love in that family and home.

The entire family is grateful for the outpouring of love for Slim all these years, and for the avalanche of love today.

Slim truly loved his fans. You gave him the ability to live his life in music, and the strength to forge on after his stroke.

Bob and Chrissie have always been traditional greeting card people.

If anyone would like to send Chrissie and family a card, I will personally deliver it to them.

Chrissie Dunlap

C/O HiFi Hair and Records

1637 Hennepin South

Minneapolis MN 55403

David Biljan

After the Replacements imploded, Slim was toying with the idea of doing a solo LP. I had recently launched Crackpot Records & we talked about me releasing his record.

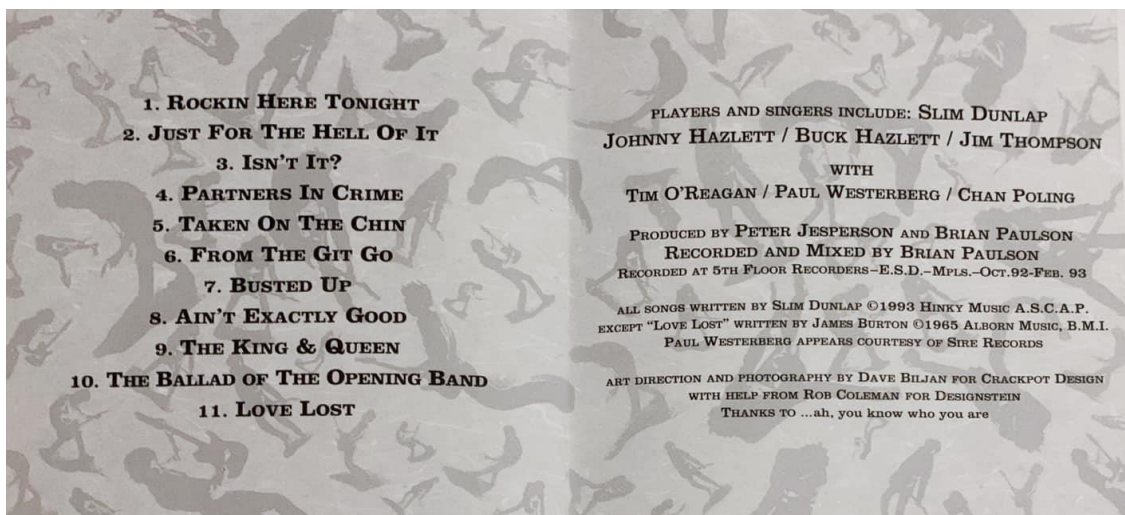
Peter had started Medium Cool at the time and approached Bob about doing a record with him. Bob told me he was going with Peter. He felt like he had let me down. But I assured him it was the best thing to do. About a month later he called and asked me to do the cover & I jumped at the chance. Bob had an idea in his head that (in typical Slim fashion) he wanted to surprise me with. We met up at the old Crackpot/Nerve Center offices late at night because he didn't want anyone else there. This turned out to be one of the greatest nights of my life! Bob had somehow gotten ahold of an old arc light with a transformer wired up to it. He wanted to hold the light and aim it different directions. We plugged it in and immediately blew a breaker. After finding an outlet that could handle it, we turned it on. Within seconds, it reached the temperature of a thousand suns & started smoking.

I came up with another idea to just lay the light on the floor and let it bleach everything out and leave his image in high contrast. Then I told him to just go nuts. Do every pose that he could imagine, and he was great. I think we had 20-30 images of different poses. Then I shot a couple of more traditional portraits for the back of the cd booklet.

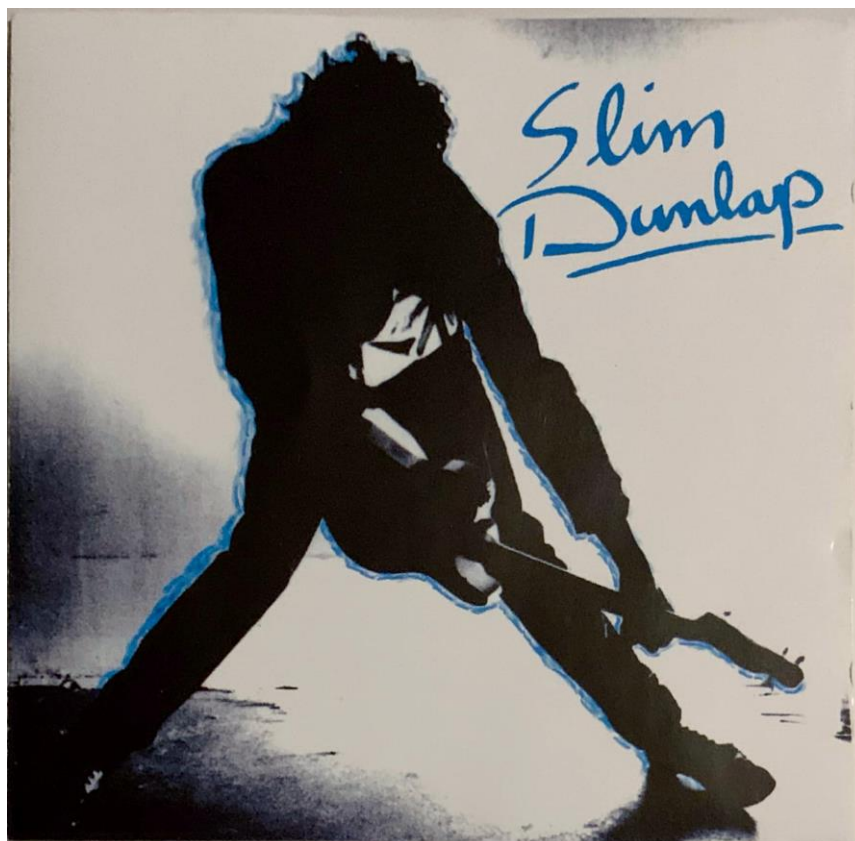
We took a break and we're having a cigarette when he looked at me with a grin and said, "should we get a shot of me putting it out on my guitar?" I laughed and we came up with the existing shot, kind of imitating it.



I spent the next few days in the darkroom, making tons of prints of the different poses. We quickly agreed that the cover should be the one with his knees bent and guitar aimed downwards, but he and Chrissie loved a lot of the other poses too. Those became the lightly printed background of the inner booklet.



Chrissie called them Slim Army Men and came up with the brilliant idea to make plastic figurines of each as a promotional item. That proved to be impossible on an independent label budget, but I truly wish it could've happened. I went to design the cover and did a mock-up with my handwriting. I showed it to Bob & Chrissie and they loved it. I told Bob we'd replace my handwriting with his signature and he laughed and said "no. Have you ever seen my signature?" Anyway. My mock-up became the actual cover.



I continued to shoot photos for Bob over the years, and when it came time to record the second record, he asked me if I'd do it. I had some rough ideas that I was really happy with, but my life was falling apart and I couldn't continue. I lost a lot of things over the following months, but Bob stayed by me. We were both big fans of Hank Williams and he asked me to sing at three of his Hank tributes.

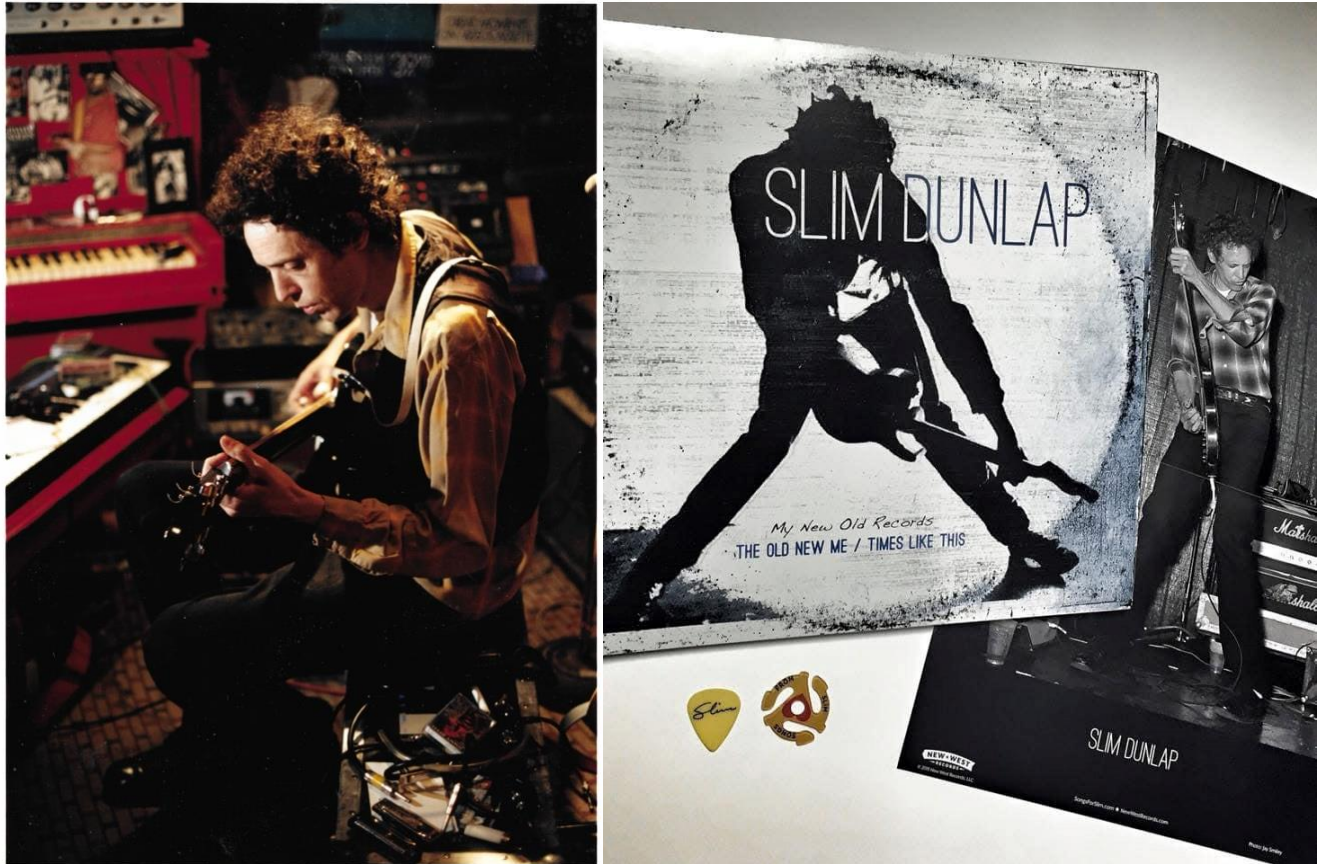
When he was going to play at the 400, he TOLD me that I was going to open for him. I laughed and said sure. About 10 days before his show, he asked me how the band was shaping up. I reminded him that I didn't have a band & didn't know he was serious! "Well, ya got 10 days to figure it out. By the way, what's the name of the band?" All I could do was turn to John Eller. We threw a band together and had one practice before the show. I don't know why, but we were called Snowshoe. Bob came up and played the last song with us.

That's the kind of ride you'd be on if you were a friend of Bob's. He loved to share in whatever little victories he had.

Bob meant the world to me. I will treasure his friendship forever.

And thanks to him, I'm known as "the guy that did that Slim cover". I couldn't be prouder.

Lovin you always Bobby. ❤️💔❤️



After spending any amount of time with Slim, you quickly understood that he loved to tell stories. He'd tell them playing poker, listening to records, even on stage. One of my favorite things was hearing him tell one to a new person, or someone that hadn't heard that particular story before. There was a 50% chance that it would be 100% real or the same as you'd heard it before. But- there was a 1000% chance that it would be 100% entertaining. He loved that. He loved being an entertainer and a storyteller. A down to earth "Everyman" that everyone would love. And they did.

I learned a lot about sobriety from Bob. I never wanted to be an ornery dry drunk. I wanted to be happy and laugh. And love. Bob showed me all of those things were possible sober.

When things fell apart for me, I kind of avoided people for a while. And I called Bob. He acted like we'd seen each other yesterday. He asked me to come over. He was in the entertainment room watching a ball game. He said, "have a seat Davy. The boys need our help". I don't remember what inning it was, but the twins were behind. Slim said "let me tell ya something I've learned..."

We talked for a long time. And I was happy to have him back in my life.

I'm pretty sure the Twins won. I know I did.

I keep thinking of Bob & Chrissie and their family. What an amazing group of people. When we would play music for Slim, I would always say "on my way to the house of love."

I can't think of a better partner to have than Chrissie. The pure love & devotion she showed over the last 12 plus years is a beautiful thing. When faced with a situation that most of us couldn't bear, she showed us how to do it. Following Bob's stroke, he could still speak loud enough so he could be understood. Over the years that changed to a whisper that most of us couldn't hear. Chrissie learned this new language and would translate for us. There was one time when we were playing for them and after one song, we noticed Slim trying to say something. Chrissie said something like "did you like that?" She leaned over close and he told her "I hate that fucking song." We all laughed for a long time, including Bob.

I have no idea what it's been like for Chrissie & the family, but I know what it was like to see and feel the love they shared. Bob would light up with a huge smile every time any of the kids or grandkids showed up. And they in turn would hug him and just plain love him. That's what family is & should be.

There were many times medical people would tell Chrissie to give up & just let him go, but Bob told her he wasn't ready & that was enough for her. On a scale of 1 to 5, he was asked to rate the quality of his life, and without hesitation, he gave it a 5. "It's the only life I have so I'm giving it a 5." How's that for being an inspiration? I'll remember that for the rest of my life.

There is a whole list of friends that helped to make Bob happy & help out when they could, but really it was Chrissie & the family that are the heroes of this story.

Love really is all that matters. And it mattered to Bob enough to fight to stay around this long. It wasn't easy, but he wasn't ready to leave them.

In this holiday season, please keep them all in your hearts.

And remember to treasure every second with the ones you love. Things can change in a heartbeat.

Slim would love that. And he'd smile that irreplaceable smile.



Bill Holdship

("Bill Holdship is a former editor of CREEM, BAM, HITS, and Daily Variety, among others, and a longtime contributor to such publications as the early SPIN, Musician, MOJO, and damn near every 'alternative' newspaper and magazine Los Angeles ever produced.")

"Slim Dunlap is the proof of the existence of God." -- Tommy Womack

"There is **always** something good." -- Slim Dunlap

"'You guys get together,' Slim said in a whisper. 'Go play a song.'" -- Slim to Paul & Tommy from his bed

I've been trying to come up with something nice and profound to say about my friend since the other night. I don't know why I've found it so difficult.

I keep thinking back to when he spent at least two weeks in Los Angeles, doing shows, each fantastic, and recording with Peter. We hung out quite a bit during that time, even more than we did when they were in town recording *Don't Tell a Soul*.



We went to one of Ronnie Mack's weekly very popular Barn Dance shows at the legendary Palomino club together and we were talking about our friend John Kordosh.

And I vividly remember him saying to me: "He's a little more cocky than you are, Bill. You're a little more shy, sometimes a little unsure, careful about what you say to people." And just to make sure I didn't interpret that as an insult, he added: "But that's what I really like about you. You're a sensitive guy."

(A lot of life has occurred since he made that assessment...but that's not important right now.)

We both adored John. I still do. In fact, when John passed away, Slim & Chrissie sent me a note of condolence, one of the few I received. I know that John would have been greatly touched by that, as was I.

So it's not like we were talking about John in a negative light. Everybody knows that was John. Perhaps even Clive Davis. It's what made him so damn funny.

So his comment above to me was just one of many examples of how Slim always went out of his way to make sure that everybody felt comfortable, felt welcome. It's why he was always such a wonderful team player.

I remember one night in the bar at the Hyatt Riot House on Sunset, Paul got mad at John because he said something he shouldn't have said about a bootleg he had. He got up and left. So Slim immediately came over to sit with us so we didn't feel unwelcome.

He even succeeded, by association, in making me sort of a Bruce Springsteen fan again this week.

I remember when L-TAG opened for them in Detroit on the *Pleased to Meet Me* tour – long after I was still a member of the band – Slim was the only one to watch their entire set, standing on the side of the stage, and then gave them compliments and even some pointers. (I vividly remember him telling the then lead guitarist to lay off of a certain device, although I can't remember exactly what it was now.) And he wasn't feigning interest. He was genuinely interested.

It eventually reached a point that when the Replacements played ANYWHERE in Southern California during the final years of their existence, John and I didn't even have to ask to be on the guest list. Slim just automatically put us on the list. And we were never NOT on the list. We only had to show up. One night, it actually saved us when there was a mix-up regarding Daily Variety tickets at the box office. Good ol' Slim.



Slim was just one of the good guys, one of the most decent men in all of rock 'n' roll – no, make that in all of humanity. The world was a better place because of his presence in it. And I can't think of a better solo Replacements album than *The Old New Me*.

And so it should go without saying that he was an excellent friend.

I remember him at one of our L.A. parties, the same week the photo of him and me with those four women was taken, saying over and over again to two of the gals pictured (who basically did the "catering"): "Ah'll help!" with that great twangy voice of his that always sounded like something out of a great classic Americana movie.

No matter what it was that needed to be done, he was there to help them. (We almost had a partial Replacements reunion in our backyard that night; Slim & Tommy were both there but when Paul, who was in town for something or other, called later that night, nobody answered the phone. We only later heard a message. A pity it was the days before the prevalence of cell phones...)

Another fond memory is the night John and I introduced my now sister-in-law (who'd just moved to LA) to the Replacements at Barney's Beanery the night before they played that noon "apology" show at the Country Club in Reseda to make up for the now infamous KROQ interview. At some point, she said that she needed to get some new shoes. And Slim, not missing a beat, pointed at his and said: "Just paint them! That's what we do!"



Maybe you had to be there. But it was just so hilarious...and so...sweet. Yes, sweet. That really is the word that keeps running through my head these last several days when I think of him.

And the stories he had to tell, be it the times he played with Bo Diddley or hilarious stories from on the road and crazy fans. And anybody who ever saw one of his live shows knows that he was a masterful storyteller.

And with so much talent to spare. It's such a shame that fate stopped him at the point it did. He had so much more to give the world. But when you have both Willie Nelson and Bruce Springsteen endorsing you and your work, what more validation does an artist need?



Even though we hadn't been able to see each other in decades, we remained friends and I would still hear from him via his wife, dear dear Chrissie, who deserves all the love and praise that can possibly be showered on her for taking such wonderful care of him throughout that entire awful decade that he suffered...but apparently never complained. It truly was one of the great rock 'n roll love stories.



I always wanted nothing but the very best for him. And, sadly, if anybody illustrates how unfair life can be, it would be him.

But based on hundreds, if not thousands of tributes and testimonials I've seen here on Facebook over these last several days, if the Fabs were right when they sang "and in the end, the love you take is equal to the love you make," his was most definitely a wonderful life.

Like so many things in my world, I will simply miss his presence.



Matt Tomich

When the first 'Mats solo albums came out, it became clear how the pieces of the band fit together. Hearing the first chords of "Rockin' Here Tonight" ringing out in a friend's dorm room in the summer of 1994, I realized the quietest Replacement carried more of the soul of the band than ever imagined.

In 2002, when a band I was in was recording with Brian Paulson, I asked what it was like working on *The New Old Me*. Brian said it was the quickest album: the band would record everything just once, Slim would say, "yeah, sounds good!" and it was done in half a week.

My friend Nate Williams saw Slim just weeks before getting married and asked him for advice. Slim said, "Marriage is like a bank account: you gotta put a lot into it before you get something out of it, but life is easier when you know it's there."

I never met Slim, one of life's regrets. I am sure I missed out on life-changing wisdom. The Replacements didn't seem like a band that would contain a bodhisattva, but like the band itself, the choice of asking Slim to join seems like a bigger stroke of genius with every passing year.

Sweet dreams, Slim. Everyone here confirms what I suspected: the world is poorer without you.



Andy Christiansen

It felt like a fantasy when a musician I loved and had been in my favorite band of all-time agreed to go back to my apartment for a photo shoot while I was a grad student at University of Illinois. In truth, I think he would have agreed to do anything to get away from Mabel's and avoid listening to headline act, Dramarama! He didn't have the most flattering things to say about them/their music. 😊 He showed the tour bus to my girlfriend and me then rode with us to our apartment. When he learned that we were from Springfield, Missouri, he expressed his love for the music of Lou Whitney and his band The Skeletons. We offered him a drink, but he wasn't drinking, just smoking cigarettes. I still have a butt that is sealed in a container that I treasure like a Madonna Pap smear (any Slacker fans out there?!). What I remember the most from the 60-90 minutes we spent with him was how cool, genuine, and kind he was. Conversation was easy and he just seemed to be completely content. I think that's captured in the photo and when I look at it, it helps me relax and go back to that magical, peaceful night.

Peace and love to Chrissie, and all who loved Slim.



Adam Gimble

“Get well soon, Slim Dunlap.”
(11 July 2012)

When I heard that Slim Dunlap had suffered a stroke last February, I looked up the hospital address, put pen to paper and mailed a postcard for the first time in as long as I could remember. When a **Facebook group** sprung up so that he could get a steady stream of well-wishes, I knew I should take a while to talk about how much he means to me. After all, his music has brought me a ton of happiness and I guess he called my girlfriend once when she was sick. I owe him. But I knew it wouldn't be an easy task, so I put it off. I felt guilty knowing how hard he was fighting. Funny enough it was the Facebook version of this blog, where I've been writing about each CD I own alphabetically, that finally drove me to it. There he was, sitting quietly between Dukes of Stratosphere and Bob Dylan. Alright, it's time.

A friend's older brother first exposed me to the Replacements in their punk days and even though I got a steady supply of the 'Mats from friends & the radio, I didn't flip for them like so many thousands of people did in the 80's. Even after seeing them play one helluva show in San Francisco on their final tour, I didn't lapse into fandom. It was many years later, when trading bootlegs with someone I'd never met, that they insisted on sending me some live recordings. One listen to the infamous *Shit, Shower & Shave* boot from their tour with Tom Petty and I was hooked. I joined this online fan mailing list and was immediately overwhelmed by story after story of how much the band had meant to these fans. How they'd literally saved their lives.

It was during this time that I was living with my girlfriend, Summer. She'd just turned 21 and was finally able to go to as many shows as me when we heard that Slim Dunlap was coming to play the Casbah in San Diego. Even though it was a weeknight, I assumed that rabid Replacements fans would be out in droves. I couldn't have been more wrong. There were maybe 20 people there, so Slim invited people to sit onstage and even join in. He was so endearing that we all hushed up and busted our mouths smiling so much. Even the buzzing PA couldn't ruin it, though I finally asked the soundman about it. "It's his amp," he said. "He won't let me fix it!" It took me awhile to get the guts, but I asked if I could throw brushes on a snare even though I'd barely ever touched the drums. Slim took pity on me and we got through Hank's "Jambalaya" just fine.

Summer had started to take a notebook to shows to draw and commemorate each night out. She was a prolific, hilarious, genius artist, who drew just for the love of it. An art teacher of hers once said "I wish I was drawing lines like that when I was your age." I haven't put any of her artwork online in over a decade.

Here's what she drew that night....



Slim Dunlap/Jude (cancelled) @ Casbah 9/27/97.

Got us selves some coffee + the doorman (Andrew) some coffee.

Me iced mocha x2. Mr. door iced cap x2.

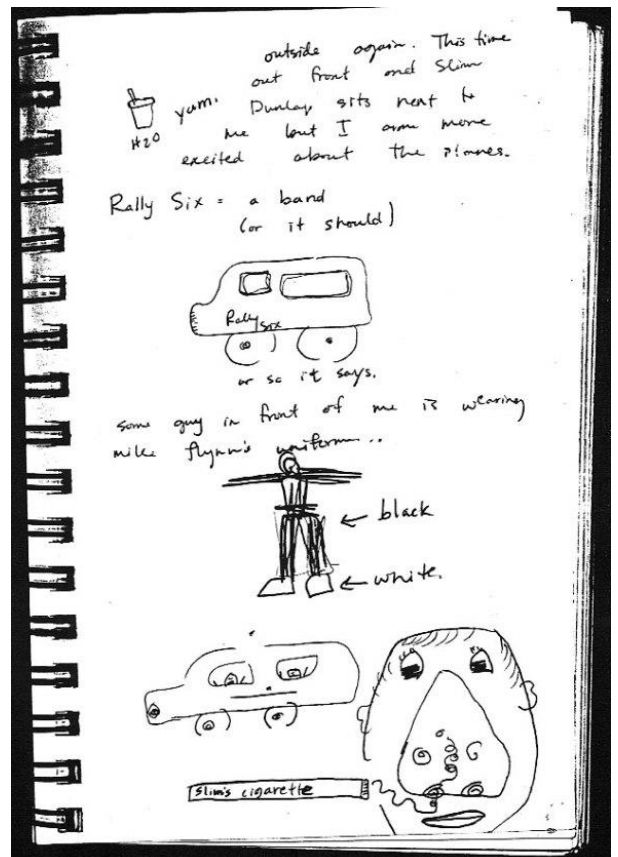
Now I'm sitting in the outdoor Casbah sitting zoo. You can hear the planes out here.

Punk zebra.

Some guy is inside just bouncing a q-ball off the bumper.

Summer sitting outside. Car becomes face (a common theme).

Sees someone dressed like our friend Mike Flynn.



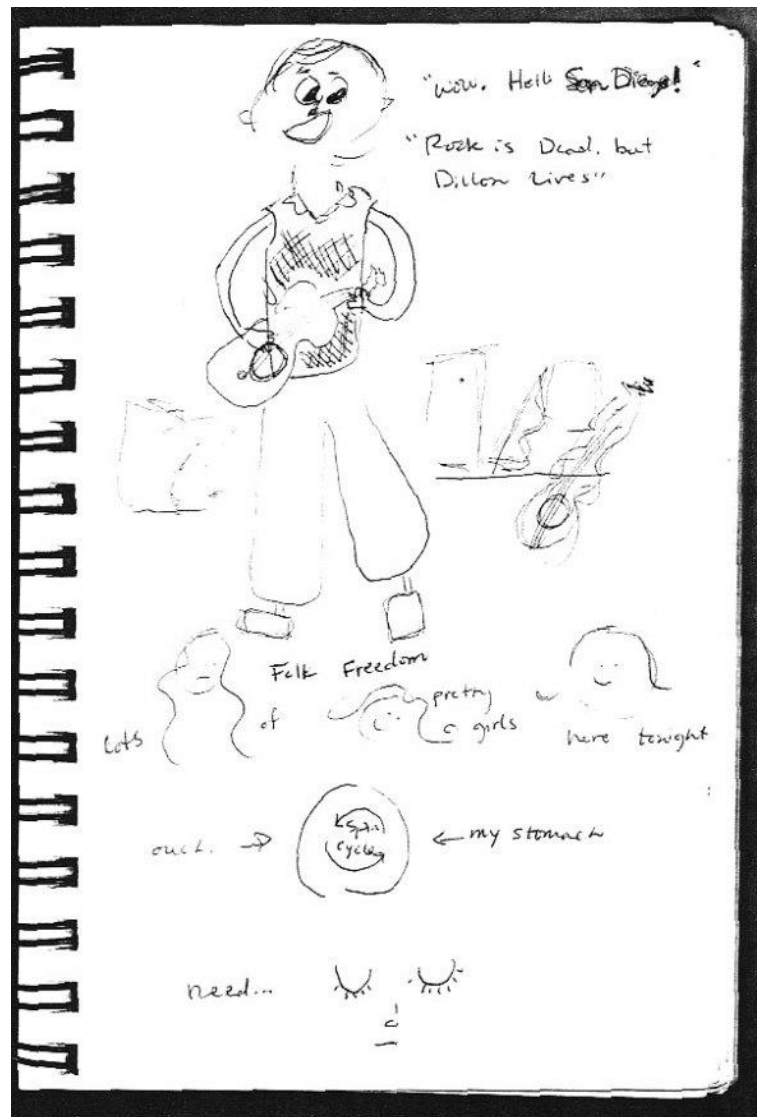


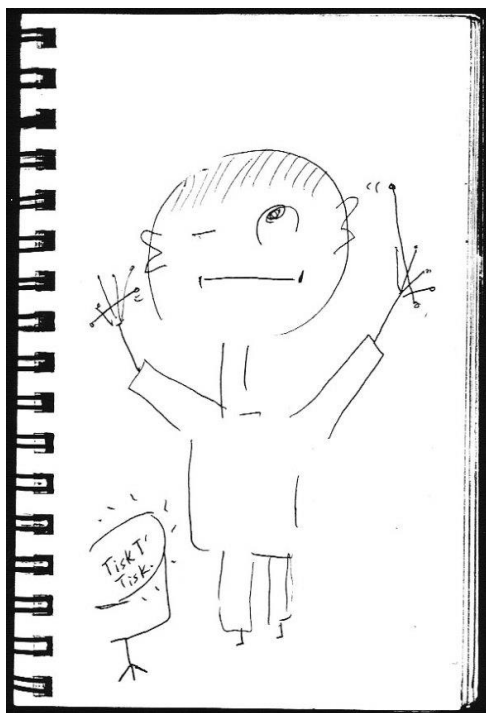
The opening act, LA singer Jude, cancelled. She draws objects on the Casbah patio.

"Rock is dead but Dillon (sic) lives!" says Slim as he starts.

Lots of pretty girls here tonight.

Her stomach is in a spin cycle. She needs some shuteye.



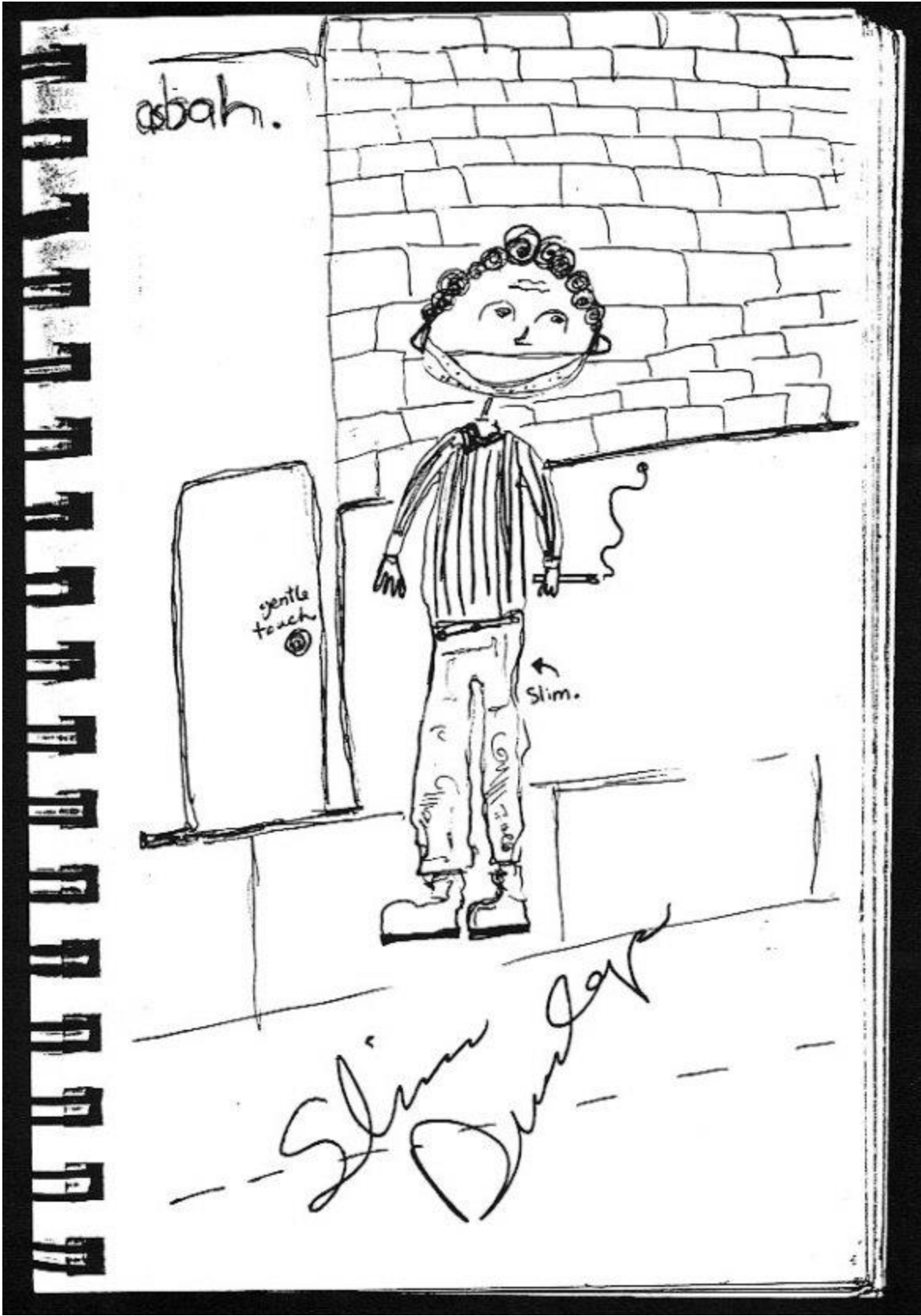


Slim had a drummer and bass player that played on a few songs. One fantastic one was called “The Breeders Cannonball” about how he was all mixed up because some people wanted to hear the Breeders song, but he thought they wanted Ernest Tubb’s “Wabash Cannonball”. Years later I tried to track it down and finally found it on a 2000 compilation of songs recorded at **Missoula, Montana’s KBGA** called Copper Wire. The station was so shocked that I wanted a copy that they refused to charge me and wanted to know how many I wanted, since they still had hundreds. Just one, thanks. God bless the internet. Finally put it up for all to hear on Soundcloud but got lax in keeping up my account. Fittingly enough “Bobstinsonsghost” [Jim Clarke, founder of the **Paul Westerberg & The Replacements** Facebook group] put it up on Youtube.

Afterwards, outside Slim kept a small group of us entertained for a long while with stories.

One must’ve been about how someone in South America told him how much he loved dancing to his album.





Immortalized and autographed.



He was so sweet that, when we were walking back to the car, one of us suggested that we give him a Cornymonica. We'd found them recently at Pic N Save and they were so amazing, we stood and stared in hysterics for a good minute or so with passersby giving us funny looks. Not only was it a barely functional musical instrument but just LOOK at the outfit you could wear while playing it and the kick-ass backing band and lightshow you would surely need. We bought every one they had and figured Slim would appreciate it more than anyone.

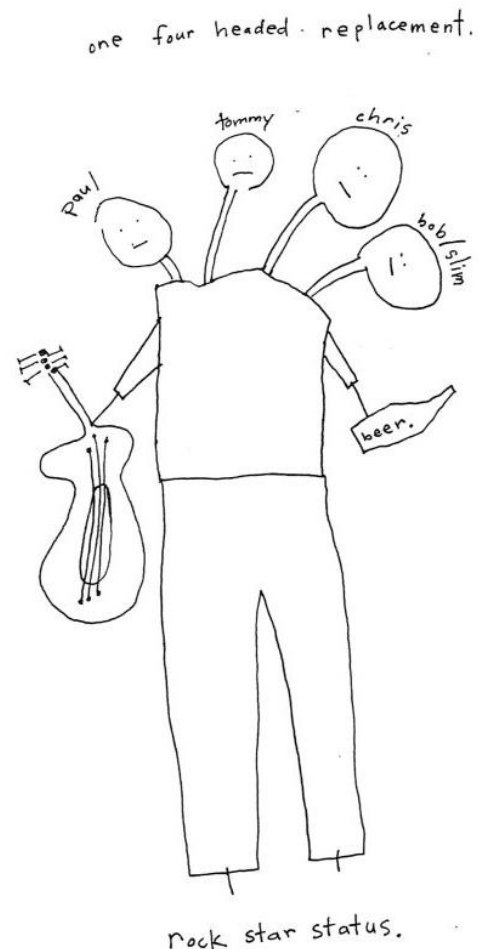
When we got back to the club, he was still outside telling stories. We waited and then presented him with it, not totally sure how he would take it. He stared at it confused for a few seconds and then his face lit up. "WOW!" he exclaimed. "I can't wait to show this to a friend of mine who's a corn farmer! Everything in his whole house is made of corn! The curtains, the furniture...." and off he went into another amazing story.

It was a few months later, in the beginning of 1998 that Summer became ill and was diagnosed with kidney cancer. Part of the plan to keep her in good spirits was to have some of her favorite musicians contact her. David J sang to her over the phone. Jonathan Richman let me film him singing a song just for her from the Casbah stage after he played. Jeff Mangum from Neutral Milk Hotel dedicated a song to her from the band's last Los Angeles show at Spaceland.

I put the word out through the Replacements mailing list, the Skyway, to see if someone would tell Slim, who was touring, to get a hold of me so he could call her in the hospital. To some mystery person's credit, they did and his call thrilled her. That's SAINT Dunlap to you.

Summer sadly passed away in April, feeling more loved than ever. Thousands of people flocked to a website set up to wish her well ([archived here](#) with lots of great drawings & pictures) and thousands more learned about her thanks to the [Songs For Summer memorial album](#) featuring some of her favorite musicians.

So Slim's got some karma comin'. He's touched many lives but he's got more smiles to produce, no doubt. I know I sent this drawing from her to him many moons ago but I hope it gives him a big ol' grin.



Keep fighting the good fight, young man. But get your rest too. Like a great woman once said...



Decades later, the Dunlaps took me in for the afternoon in Minneapolis. When I told Slim the story about the Cornymonica, he grinned. Chrissie said, "I think we still have it somewhere." Yeah, right. She went and found it and we all cheered.

Cheers, Slim. Thanks to your friends and family for keeping you kicking all of these years. Love you forever.

Carl Martin

Hey.

I wanted to say a few words here.

When I was little my Dad gave me a cassette tape simply Named, "Guitar Wizards" it was the soundtrack to my life. I cherish it to this day 35 yrs later. The tape was a collection of old blues songs from the 20's and 30's and my favorite guy on it was the great Carl Martin.

When my dad first had his stroke, I had not yet signed up for the (Facebook) and honestly had no plans to do so. After he went down, I kept hearing about all the stories and tributes to my pop and myself and Carl decided to join.

I simply can't begin to tell you all the measure of relief my family have been able to find within these pages. It has truly saved me many a time from just falling completely apart.

I always knew I had the best dad because everyone around me wanted him to be their dad.

When he passed, I knew we all had lost him together.

He would have greatly enjoyed the story about the guy taking the Mats with him on his Submarine trip to see the Titanic. I have never really heard him talk much about his fans. When he would tell me stories about them, they were always just his friends.

I hope this community stays active for awhile and the stories just keep coming.

I cherish them.

I must say Special thanks to a few people.

Danny Contreras Jr . -Brad Zellar - Joel Breme r- Jim Walsh - Jon Clifford - Abbie Kane - Jimmy Gaines - Lori B - Maggie Mc - Jonny, Jimmy and Brian - Chris, Tommy and Pau I- Peter Jesperson - Joanie and countless more (far too many to name here) for the simple act of making my Mom and Dad's life a little brighter during many dark days.

I asked him once who the 3 greatest guitar players of all time were and he said...

"Well that's an easy one. Chuck Berry, Chet Atkins and John Eller".

So extra special thanks to Mr. E for just being the Machine that you are. The old man just really loved all of you so deeply.

He told me one time...

"If Hank Williams can't fix what's wrong with you then it was probably meant to be broken" and then he said right after...

"Now quit your blubberin'"

If anyone out there is stuck in a snowbank, needs a few bucks or just someone to listen to you with no judgment, I'm your man. I learned from the master. I'm happy to help. All my dad's strength lives in me now.

I Inherited his way of talking fast and his zest for a decent story.

Reach out any time.

Myself, My Mother, Sisters, Dad's Sisters Niece's, Nephews Charles, Courtney and my entire extended family deeply appreciate all the love.

Please drive carefully and live your life in the Slim-shine.

Sincerely yours,

Louis Christian Dunlap (Proud Son)

Carl Martin (Friend to all)

Freddy Caple

Like everyone else, I am saddened by the passing of Slim. He deserves the rest, as does his wife, family, and friends. Peace to Slim as his wonderful soul goes back into the universe.

I had the pleasure of seeing him a couple of times when he visited Louisville. Once playing at the BBC in 1996 (more on that in a moment) and another opening for Son Volt at the Brewery Thunderdome in 1997. I also got to meet him. He played a few songs at a local mall record store and that's the first time I met him and he held court for a few of us (including local TV legend Dick Irby), telling tales and cluing us in on his opinion that Cher (yes, THAT Cher) was kind of an asshole, although I have lost the story from my mind after all these years.

At the BBC, I got to "sit in" for a song...and I use that term very tongue in cheek. As we all know, Slim was a humorous guy. He was fun and at one point wanted someone to get up with the band and "play" his guitar. Caveat being, the person couldn't have ever touched a guitar before. That described me at the time and with only a little coercion from my friends, (and the help of a bit of bourbon) I was THE man! It went every bit as wonderfully bad as I could have hoped. I was nervous and didn't even allow Slim to "unstrap" before I was trying to get the guitar "on". To this day, my friends with me at the show tell me I was blessed.

RIP Slim...you were one of a kind!

If I can, I want to give a special "shout out" to all of my Replacements friends that have been following Skyway (and in the newsgroups) for all these many decades. Thanks to Matt for keeping it alive. Craig 9, Rob, Wren and all the other great music fans I have met in person and through the 'web...I hope you all are having wonderful and prosperous lives!



Jim Walsh

[Jim Walsh is a Minneapolis music writer and author of two books about The Replacements: "All Over But the Shouting: An Oral History" and "Waxed Up Hair and Painted Shoes".]

I've been so sad since I got the news that Slim was no longer with us, but it's been nothing but joy reading all the friends' and fan's notes in The Slim Dunlap Fan Club and beyond. I feel lucky I knew him. I feel lucky I got to visit him and Chrissie last week in their cozy little hideaway, and to feel their love. As Chrissie and I chatted for a good couple hours in front of their beautiful-as-their-love Christmas tree, Slim was right next to us, sawing logs, and I couldn't help but hear the sound of Slim snoring and Chrissie talking, with me in between, as harmonizing. What a love story, what an inspiration.

I'll miss my friend Slim so much. I loved him, and I always told him so. First time I saw him, he was on stage and I was in front of him at Sam's (now First Avenue), where he and Curt were opening for The Pretenders in 1980. I was rocking hard to the band, making a scrunched-up rockin' face, and Bob came up to the lip of the stage and danced with me, this stupid little kid, making the same face at me and going, "Yeahhh!" I was a little embarrassed, but I also thought this guy was the coolest dude I'd ever seen play guitar, and in that moment he was like he always was—funny, generous, welcoming, supremely rockin'.

I was lucky to play cards with him, make music with him, play basketball with him, help him move, BBQ with him, watch baseball with him, and listen to him, endlessly. All his stories and songs. He was beyond down-to-earth, he was earth itself. I wrote about him every chance I got and saw him so many times at those magical Turf shows, and with the 'Mats (he let me sleep with him in his hotel room bed in Florida!), and he was always up for "a good hoot" that we'd throw with The Mad Ripple Hootenanny. He loved the hoot and told me as much often, and he always came with new songs to play, lyric sheets strewn at his feet, the whole room hushed. He loved that the hoot was about original songs, and he took that "no covers" rule as gospel and inspiration, and he always thrilled us all whenever he showed up with his new tunes at Java Jack's, the Aster, the Guthrie, wherever.

That last time I saw him last Thursday I told him how my brother Terry and the rest of us Slim-crazy fans/friends (Gini Dodds, Curtiss A, Billy Dankert, Joe Baumgart, Doug Collins, and Bee and Eloise Dunlap) were going to be playing and singing his songs at the Turf the next night. He stopped snoring and listened. I reminded him of all those shows at the Turf, captured on "*Thank You Dancers*." I like to think that he liked that we weren't doing acoustic versions of his songs, but full-band. I took him through our set list, told him we'd do him proud, and I hope we did. I kissed him on the forehead goodbye, but I had no idea it would be for good. His snores and spirit were strong and stout and I guess I thought he'd live forever. My heart sank when I heard the news, and it's still down. Tears here.

Been playing his music all week, all month. My heartfelt condolences to Chrissie, Bee, Dee-Dee and Louie and all of Slim's family and friends. I love this photo so much from Martin Zellar, of Bob and Wilson Zellar. It reminds me of Slim's status in their old Linden Hills neighborhood as the wiffle ball homerun derby king. He was the pitcher, and as was the case with everything he touched, the heart of the whole game. I loved standing in the street or their neighbor's front yard, on a perfect summer day, playing outfield, watching him pitch his sinkers, curves, Slimballs. So did the kids in the neighborhood who would regularly knock on the door in the late afternoon and ask Chrissie, "Can Bob come out to play?"

Wish he could today. Thanks for everything Slim, love you forever.



Jonny Polonsky

When I was a teenager, the Replacements were my favorite band. I loved them with the wholehearted purity and obsessiveness you have as a kid, before your world expands to include concerns that reach beyond the scope of a rock band.

I was 19 and living in Boston, going to school at Berklee College of Music, when I read that Slim Dunlap would be releasing his first solo record. So I dialed 411 and got the number to his record label, called em up and told them I was a reporter (not true) and wanted to interview Slim for my newspaper (which didn't exist). In my experience, it is always best to lie your way into showbiz, it keeps the whole enterprise honest.

Anyway, they eventually gave me his phone number and I talked to him for an hour, asked all the questions about his guitar playing and about the band I'd always wanted to ask. He was super friendly and chatty, very easy to talk to. At the end of the conversation, I told him I made music and wanted to send him a cassette of my stuff, so he gave me his home address.

We stayed in pretty frequent contact for a few years and Slim was always so encouraging to me, he always had time for me. Except when the Simpsons were on. If we were on the phone and I was in the middle of a sentence and it was creeping up to 7 PM, all the sudden I would hear "Uh oh, Simpsons on—gotta go!" Click.

I moved back to Chicago and one thing I observed about Slim when I would go see him and his band play, is that he always had time for everybody. He was just such a magnetic person—he was so sweet and kind and friendly.

And also completely honest. He had no qualms about telling someone to get lost or describing in intimate and hilarious detail the shortcomings of a club owner or a fellow musician. He had an unwavering moral code, but he was never judgmental or catty. And he never had a problem pointing the finger back at himself, dropping bits of wisdom along the way.

To me, he is one of the all-time great rock n roll guitar players. Listen to his solo on the Replacements' "Darlin' One," "Bent Out of Shape," "Back to Back" or "We'll Inherit the Earth." Or his rhythm playing on "Rockin' Here Tonight" from his brilliant first solo record. His playing is so utterly unique, dripping with feeling, imagination and pure power. He showed me you can honor tradition and be a part of it and still elaborate on it and twist it up with as much soul, wit, humor and irreverence as you like.

I am so grateful I got to know him a little bit. His presence in my life, just a couple years after my dad died, was so meaningful to me. His influence on me may have started with how to play guitar, but it ended up being how to be a good man, a good person.

Deep condolences to Chrissie and her family.

I love you, Slim.



Perfect Sound Forever: Slim Dunlap interview by John Wisniewski (February 2023)

PSF: Who are some of your favorite guitarists when you were younger?

SD: Buddy Holly, Scotty Moore, Chuck Berry, Chet Atkins and James Burton.

PSF: What made First Avenue special to you and the people in the city?

SD: My wife (Chrissie smiles) booked bands and gave a lot of encouragement to bands who made it big, like Prince and Soul Asylum. First Avenue is the best club in America and Minneapolis is the best music city. Really proud. Love Steve (McClellan, manager). Everything happened because of him. Lots of bars I've played in exist to sell beer, but at First Avenue, the music came first.

PSF: It is said that you turned Paul down to join The Replacements and then changed your mind. What happened?

SD: Chrissie said I should take the job. (Chrissie: "he was reluctant to leave me to tour since we had three small children.") Paul also made sure I was okay with it.

PSF: You have your own style of playing but the old Replacement songs were done with Bob Stinson. Did you feel like you were replacing Bob Stinson when you played the songs live?

SD: No one could replace Bob. I learned his parts but did it my way.

PSF: What was the experience like playing with The Replacements?

SD: It was both exhilarating and depressing - a roller coaster ride. It fulfilled a lot of my dreams and opened doors for me. I'm incredibly grateful to Paul and Tommy and Chris for giving me a chance.

PSF: It is said that *All Shook Down* was a Westerberg solo album. Did it feel that way? How was the recording different from the previous record?

SD: I'm on it way more than people think. It was me and Paul. Quiet, less madness and booze.

PSF: Could you tell us about recording your solo album *The Old New Me*?

SD: It was great. I had a large stash of songs and wrote a lot more on the road, with lots of time in a hotel room. Thanks to Peter [Jespersion] for believing in me.

PSF: Tell us about recording your second solo album *Times Like This*?

SD: Well, you have your whole life to write that first record. The follow up is harder but that pushed me to work harder to craft a good song.

PSF: What would you say is your favorite Replacements album?

SD: *Let it Be*.

PSF: How are you doing now and will you play again?

Chrissie Dunlap: I can answer that. He is paralyzed and can only move his head. He will never play again. He remains in good spirits despite his disability and pain. He has been hospitalized over one hundred times and as long as he is home with me, he feels pretty good.

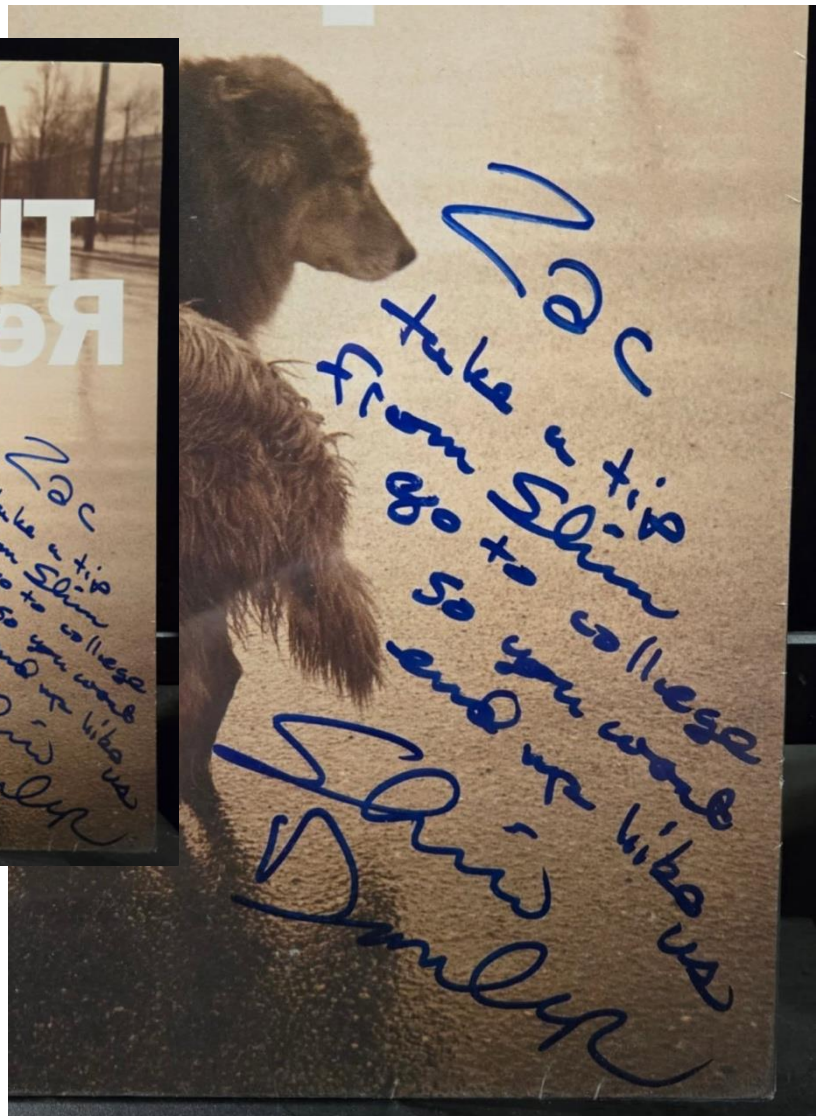
Steven Cohen

First Avenue, December 8, 2001



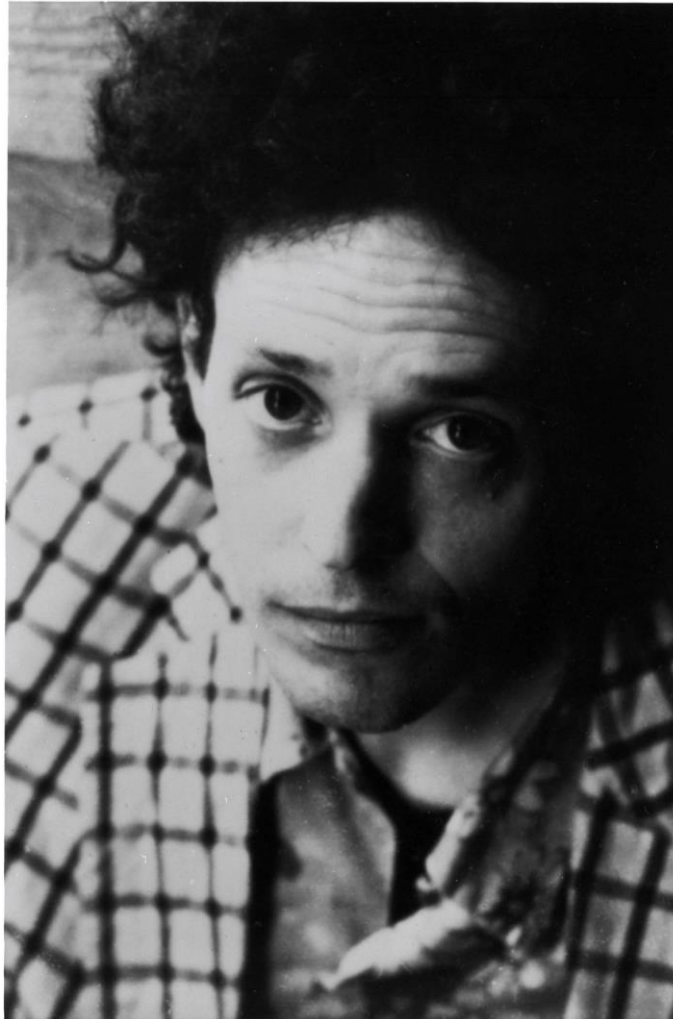
Zac Szymusiak

So weird that I came across this again just yesterday and today Slim Dunlap has passed away. When I was in high school, I was obsessed with the Replacements. Slim was on a solo tour in the spring of 1997, playing Chelsie's (a classic Columbus venue, located just south of the current Lindsay Gallery on High St.). I was only 18 and could go to the show, which was 21 plus, but only if my dad went as my guardian (which got me into a lot of shows I never would have seen over the next 3 years). The only problem was I had some big tests to take the next day rounding out senior year and my parents wisely told me I couldn't go to the show. Well, my dad still went, hunting autographs like we used to a lot of the time and met Slim. When he came home, he not only had Slim's autograph for me, but also some sage advice from the man: "Take a tip from Slim, go to college so you won't end up like us." I'm glad I took his advice but I really wish I could have seen him play that night. So sad to see what he's gone through since his stroke in 2012 but I hope he can now rest in peace. He and his music, especially those cool fingerstyle electric guitar licks, will be remembered for a very long time.



Bob Mehr

Robert Bruce “Slim” Dunlap: 1951-2024



There's a lot I could say about Slim and about his career. The fact that he came in and was human superglue for the Replacements at a moment where they could've easily come apart. That he helped keep the group going for more years and tours and albums than seemed possible. Slim's unique personality – his kindness and counsel, his bulldog tenacity and the thoughtful way he protected them – made that happen.

I could talk about Slim's own music and solo albums, but Bruce Springsteen, who's famously raved about them, can offer better testimony, as can the many esteemed artists—Jeff Tweedy, Lucinda Williams, Steve Earle – who've covered his songs.

I could tell you how Slim, along with his first and forever partner Curtiss A, were in many ways responsible for birthing, or at least helping midwife, the entire original/punk/new wave/alt rock scene in Minneapolis.

But mostly, what I want to share about Slim is his humanity – his strange, wonderful, and unique essence.

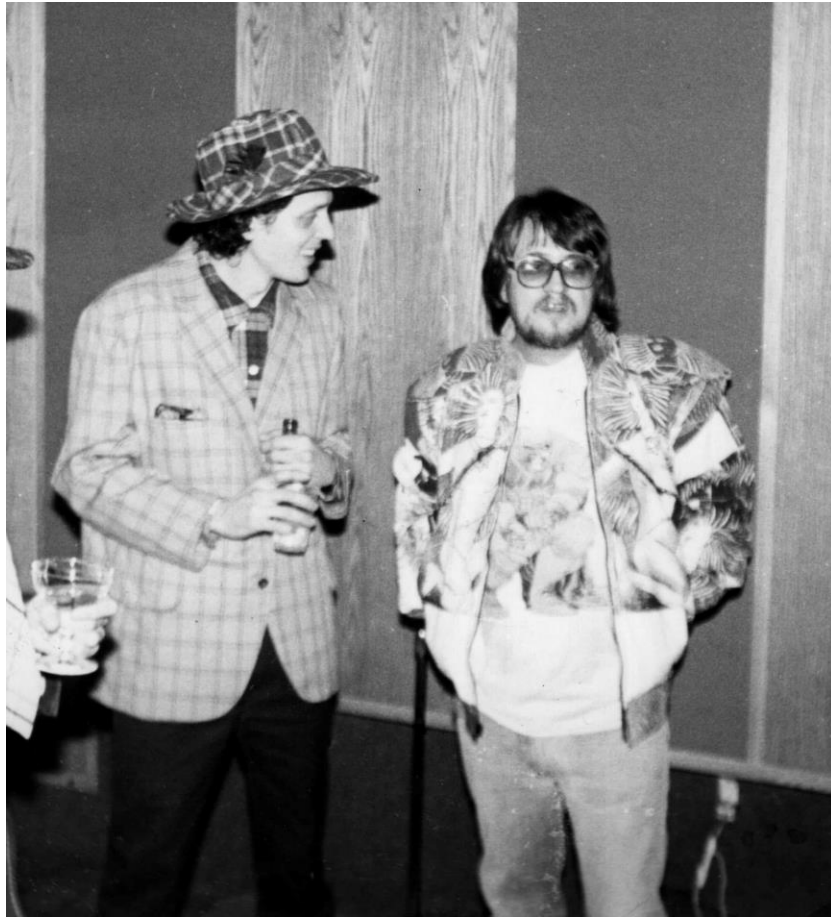


I found out a lot about Slim the first time we spoke. I was coming out to Minneapolis to interview him for my Replacements book. We'd never met, he didn't know me, and had every reason to be suspicious and guarded, but he wasn't. Instead he offered to pick me up from the airport: "Ya need any transpo, Bob?" he asked, with the neighborly impulse of someone raised in tiny Plainview, Minnesota (pop. 1500).

Slim was a character, like someone out of a Frank Capra movie – he came from time and a place and an America that I never really believed existed. And maybe it never did. But Slim was real and beautiful and made you believe. (I think Tom Waits loved Slim for the same reason).

Getting to know Slim, I quickly realized he was more than just a "nice guy," though. He was smarter and more streetwise than his reputation (or he himself) would lead you to believe. But mostly, what I came to appreciate about him was his magnificent generosity as a human being. Not just towards me, but to anyone and everyone he ever encountered. You can see that in the outpouring, the stories, the sweet recollections of him over the last 24 hours.

The interviews I did with Slim provided a spiritual roadmap for Trouble Boys. Slim understood the dynamics of music, musicians, rock 'n' roll, and the brotherhood of bands better than anyone. The only other person I've encountered with that kind of wisdom was Replacements producer Jim Dickinson. There's a great photo of the two of them, dressed wildly and talking animatedly during the playback party for *Pleased to Meet Me*. A pair of Slims: East Memphis Slim and Slim Dunlap. Man, to have been a fly on the wall hearing those two exchanging stories (some of them might've even been true!)



As I look at the calendar, I can't help but notice some cosmic poetry in the fact that Bob Stinson was born on Dec. 17 and Bob Dunlap died on Dec. 18. They were inextricably linked from the first time Slim gave a young Bob a ride in his cab -- this was long before there ever was a Replacements. And then years later Slim had the unenviable task of replacing Bob in the band. But it was Bob who pushed Slim to join the group, to take his spot. The two of them were working as janitors in the fall of 1986 at First Avenue, and Bob Stinson would pester Slim about the gig, telling him he needed to play with the Replacements, miming guitar licks on his broom, showing him his old parts.

That should tell you EVERYTHING about Slim Dunlap. He was the only man Bob Stinson believed worthy of taking *his* place in *his* band. (btw, is there another Rock & Roll Hall of Fame nominated group that can say that every guy who played guitar in the band had also been a janitor?!)

Herman Melville once said something that applies perfectly to Slim: "Our lives are connected by a thousand invisible threads, and along these sympathetic fibers, our actions run as causes and return to us as results." Because of the stroke he suffered in 2012, we saw the results of a lifetime of Slim's selfless actions. The way people rallied around him, the way that he brought the Replacements back to life (again), the way his family devoted themselves to him. It was simply beautiful. An inspiration.

No one has been more inspiring in all this than Slim's wife Chrissie. Her loyalty, sacrifice, and devotion...there aren't words to express the depth of my admiration for her and the awe and esteem I hold her in. Slim and Chrissie, that is love in its purest and highest form.

A couple years back, Slim and Chrissie were moving from their place in South Minneapolis and had an estate sale. I asked a friend of mine to pick up something for me, a door knocker with the name Dunlap engraved on it. I thought of it as something for my wife Coco and I to put in our own house as a little reminder. I figured any home that could contain as much love and light as the Dunlaps is something to aspire to.

Anyway, thinking of Chrissie and the Dunlap family, and Slim's friends in MPLS and all over the world. We were lucky to have known such a man.



"Slim Picks"

Cindy Lamb

Louisville Music News, December 1996

The last replacement in The Replacements, guitarist Slim Dunlap, blew into town November 16 and the wind is just dying down. As part of the Bluegrass Brewing Company's concerts, booked by Spotlight Productions, the rhythm 'n' roots Minneapolis band was made to feel right at home in Louisville.



Photo By Paul Moffett

As the last of the dining patrons polished off their pasta and tipped their servers, a fresh pack of nightcrawlers filled the room to the rafters and waited for their unlikely hero Slim to call them to disorder. Well, not really. Dunlap is as earthy as dirt and can kindle the same spirit of the night as whiskey or apple pie and coffee. It depends on what story's being told. On the road with bassist Johnny Hazlett, Jim Thompson on second guitar and vocals, and drummer Brien Liljad, Dunlap is as comfortable with a crowd as an old shoe. Come to think of it, he resembles one, too.

"You better be careful with your lens!" he warns a photographer with a grin while having his photo taken. "I've shattered a few in my day."

The rest of his body seems rode hard and hung up wet as well, but it serves as a road map of relentless touring, living from studio to stage, cigarette to cigarette.

When I first arrived at the BBC, I found Slim "holding up the wall" next to the hostess desk, with his loose smile wrapped around a Marlboro. My handshake hadn't even slowed down when he began spinning yarns from days passed.

"Yeah, these young guys get out there on the road to push a new record and they knock themselves out for two weeks. They come up to me and say 'Man, you've been doin' this for years, how do you take it?' I look at them and they're all exhausted. I just tell them you gotta pace yourself, roll with the punches. Save yourself."

Rolling with punches has sent Dunlap as well as former bandmate Paul Westerberg for a sober ride on the wagon. Although Westerberg guested on Dunlap's *Times Like This* by plunking down some keyboards on "Nowhere's Near," the two don't see a whole lot of each other because of scheduling. Seeing that enough bands are "borrowing" guitar sounds from The Replacements isn't really a comfortable salute, but fans aren't soon to forget each moving part of that band.



"It was plain to see that the people knew exactly who they were coming to see," stated BBC manager Sarah Ring, "he's obviously got a loyal following." That undeniable growl of the Rickenbacker was turned loose on the room after a couple tunes and folks just got closer for more.

Nostalgic, garage rock with a new front porch is how I like to see Dunlap's music. With tunes like "Hate This Town," a New 92 spinner, and the peculiar "Chrome Lipstick," he pulls up some deep roots to tell these mostly autobiographical tales.

Each tune kicks off with "C'mon boys, let's go!" or a lead guitar riff gets a "Okay, here we go!" adding kind of a honky tonk feel to the otherwise brasserie-like St. Matthews microbrewery.

"Here she goes, fellas..." cranks up "Ain't No Fair in A Rock and Roll Love Affair." Nah, more like hunter calling his bird dogs over to a duck. Except it's all electric.

Before the show, Slim waited for his sister to show while he entertained our group with more stories, about how he used to be a janitor and was nicknamed 'Tree' by one of the older men he worked with. Apparently, Dunlap, who's named for his father Robert, didn't take to the name and

complained around the workplace about it. Under duress, the old guys finally re-dubbed him Slim and it took.

"I think they thought I was involved in some underworld activities or something," he exhaled with a laugh, "One guy was rumored to have said, don't call him Tree, man, it's Slim. Don't mess wit' him!"

Back home in the land of cheese and beer, the Dunlap family is a combination of a son, a daughter and a Mrs. Slim – a notorious yard saler.

"I'm proud to have gotten my child rearing out of the way," Dunlap notes kindly of his seventeen-year-old son, Lewis. "The boy is one of those professional skateboarders," Dad continued. "But I just don't see why he comes home and says "Mom! I made it all the way to the top and – BAM!– crunched right into the wall!" Why does he do that?"

By the end of the show (and long after my bedtime I must admit), Slim "invites" someone up to the stage who's never played guitar before to sit in on a song. Sarah ("I'll be awake 'til 6 a.m.") Ring related the experience. "It was a great blues vamp number and he got somebody up there and gave them his guitar. They carried the tune through while this guy just banged on the guitar and Slim just kept singing in tune."

With manners that a Yankee usually finds hard to come by, Slim gave Sarah the autograph of "Ya'll treated me real fine!"

Michael McDermott

Whoever said "don't meet your heroes" didn't have the good fortune to have Slim Dunlap as a hero. While Watershed were sad to learn of his passing, we're thoroughly enjoying the many tributes to him. The man was a brilliant songwriter, kind, and so generous. Slim was a mensch.

"Slim took us under his wing as a young band and he was very generous with his time and wisdom. During tough times, he gave us advice and perspective that allowed us to continue our rock n roll band to this day. He even taught us how important it was to play with your kids a decade before any of us became parents. We were blessed to know him, and I rarely use the word blessed." - Colin Gawel

And here's a little passage about him, excerpted from Joe Oestreich's memoir, HITLESS WONDER.

Yes, the post-Epic year was dark. Watershed lost our record company, our management team, and, as an additional kick in the nuts, our van.

One day Colin called Slim Dunlap from The Replacements, hoping ol' Slim could give us a little perspective. We had opened for Slim's solo band a few times, and he'd seen us in Minneapolis

once or twice. The first night we met him, he crawled beneath our van to inspect the undercarriage. “Looks like you could use some new suspension leaves down there, ya know,” he said, accenting the Minnesota “O.” Then he brushed himself off and gave us a lesson on why musicians should never clean out their ears. “Wax is nature’s earplug,” he said. We’d been seeking him out for advice ever since.

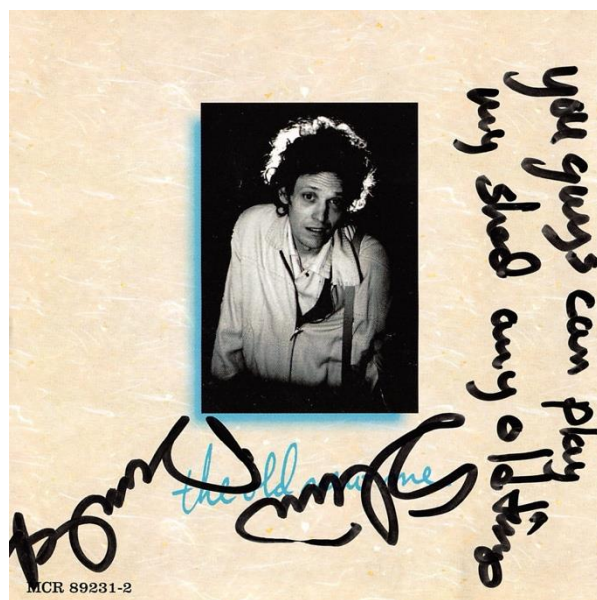
Slim told Colin the trick was to look down the ladder at all the bands below, bands who would gladly trade places with you. Take stock in how far you’ve come, in what you’ve left behind. Trouble is, Slim said, most bands only worry about who is higher on the rungs than them. “I remember when The Replacements did that tour with Tom Petty,” Slim said. “One of the biggest there is, and even he’s unhappy. ‘Cause he’s not as high up as, I don’t know, The Beatles.”

A few years after that phone call, Slim joined Watershed on stage at Comfest, an outdoor festival in Columbus. In front of a crowd of thousands we rocked though “Battleship Chains” by the Georgia Satellites and “King and Queen” from Slim’s tragically overlooked album *The Old New Me*. Between songs Slim took the mic, and announced to the audience, “These boys here once asked me what it takes to make it.” He looked across the stage at Colin and me. “Looks like they figured it out.”

And that’s the thing about rock and roll. It beats you down and beats you down, and just when you’re curled in the fetal position, bracing for a kick to the head, it offers you a hand. Pulls you to your feet. Gives you a reason to keep going.

Many thanks to Slim Dunlap for being the hand that pulled us to our feet.

P.S. In case you were wondering, according to Slim, the true home of rock and roll is not Detroit or Memphis or Minneapolis. It’s Dickinson, ND—and all the other places where folks are just uncool enough (and starved for rock and roll enough) to appreciate it.



Nick Leet

(Nick Leet is the singer and a guitarist in the Minneapolis band High on Stress)

Just found this thing I wrote after Slim's stroke years ago. Brought up some feelings. Such a singular guy. Sigh...

I grew up in North Dakota and my parents bought a satellite radio box that I would listen to in my house where I grew up. I remember a lot of songs popping up that I had never heard before due to the lousy Minot radio stations. One song kept playing almost every night. It was "I'll Be You" by the Replacements. I didn't own any of their records, but I had heard about them. I couldn't believe how great that song was. As a teenager I related immediately to it.

In the summer of 2008, we were putting the final touches on *Cop Light Parade*. We wanted to put together a great CD release show line-up. Slim was the first person we talked about asking. I had no idea how to reach him. He had a MySpace page but there was no way to reach him on there. I asked a couple of people for his number, but nobody knew how to reach him.

Finally I was able to track down his phone number. Nervous as hell I cold called Slim Dunlap. He was the guitar player of one of my all-time favorite bands. The guy who played guitar on "I'll Be You." I had never said a word to him before that point and now I was calling him on the phone. Was he going to ask me how the hell I got his number? Was he going to tell me to never call it again? I had no idea what to expect, but you don't get anywhere without trying.

He answered the phone in that recognizable voice of his and I said, "Hi Slim, you don't know me and I hope you're not upset that I'm calling you but my name is Nick Leet and I'm in the band High on Stress." I could barely get the word Stress out when Slim enthusiastically said "HI NICK! I LOVE HIGH ON STRESS!" I could not believe my ears. Here I was worried that this guy was going to scream at me. I told him my reason for calling. "Would you like to play our CD Release show for our new record?" Slim replied, "I can do that." Once again, I couldn't believe my luck.

I called him back a couple of weeks later with more details a little less nervous since he put me at ease. "Hey Slim, I've got a question and feel free to say no. Would you be interested in coming up and playing a song with us?" Slim said "Sure! What song were you thinking?" I said, "Eyeliner Blues" from "Moonlight Girls." He said "I love that song. I'll do that." And he did just that. We didn't rehearse. As I found out later Slim wasn't much into rehearsing! He walked up on stage that night in front of 350 people and the crowd went nuts. He picked up my black Les Paul and we kicked into the song and people lined the stage taking pictures of the man. We were on top of the world. I had no idea what it was going to sound like, but I swear to God it sounded like that magical guitar playing from *Don't Tell a Soul*. I couldn't have felt better at that moment. We incorporated his great part into the live version that we play today.

After that night I called him to say thank you and tell him how much I appreciated him helping us out. He was very gracious and he went right into Slim story mode. He talked about everyone

from Keith Richards to Steve Earle and how much he liked Buddy Holly and all the great ballrooms that he had the opportunity to play. We kept talking over the next couple of years. I'd check in with him typically once a month and listened to his stories and he'd ask me about the band and how that was going. I told him that I was going to become a father and he got excited and told me how great it is to be a father. When Slim introduced himself to my son, he said "I'm the oldest guy you will ever know." As time went by, Slim Dunlap the rock star became Slim Dunlap my friend. He's one of the kindest, selfless people I have the pleasure of knowing.

I've had people ask me "How did you ever get to back Slim?" I also know that Slim got asked the same thing before the shows we played with him. "How did High on Stress get you back on the stage with a band?" Slim's answer was, "Nick tricked me." That wasn't exactly the truth, but it made me laugh to hear him say that.

Later I called Slim to ask him if he wanted to join us for a show at Cause in Uptown MPLS. He said, "Sure, I'm going to bring this great Swedish fiddle player [Joel Bremer] with me. This guy is great" I also asked him if he wanted to join us for "Eyeliner Blues" again. He said "I've got a better idea. Would you guys be interested in learning some of my songs and playing a show sometime? I'll get up and play a few of your songs with you too. I need to redeem myself from last time (yeah, right!)" I said, "you got it!"

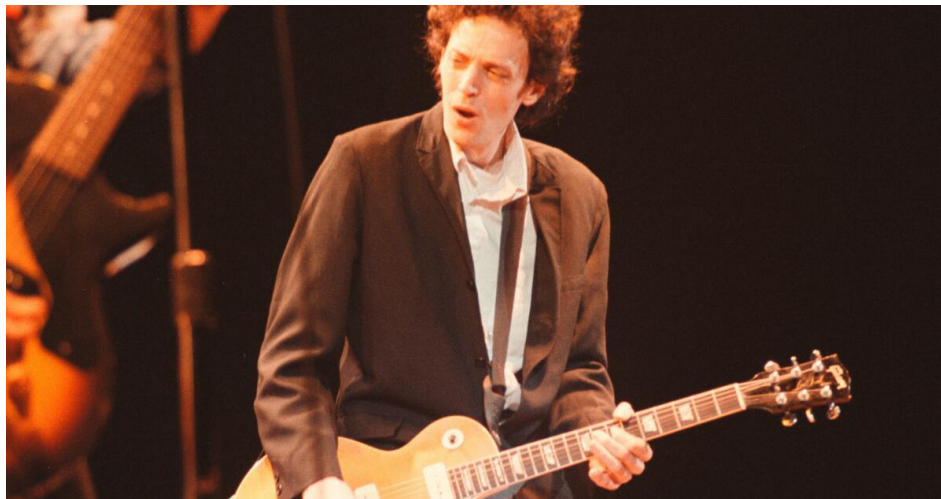


The guys and I talked about it and we had an idea. We decided we were going to make this night all about Slim. We booked his friends the Mammy Nuns and Kruddler. I called him and told him about the line-up and he was excited to be back at the Turf and especially to have Rob and Leah Rule involved. It meant a lot to him. I asked if he wanted to rehearse and he said, "maybe once...it'll sound better if you don't know the songs." He gave me live versions of his songs and I noticed that he didn't always play them the same way as the records. "Slim, which arrangements do you want to do? Do you want the live versions or do you want the studio versions." He replied "whichever." Not exactly answering my question!

We had our one rehearsal with him and played super quiet and walked through the songs. For some he'd play the first verse and we'd play along and he'd say "okay, you've got that one" before we even hit the chorus! We knew we were in for just about anything once we hit that stage.

We showed up the day of the show all excited to help Slim get back on that Turf stage. The night was going to be about him. We wanted to play before him and then he would come up and join us on his own songs. Slim wouldn't have it. He said, "I think I should go first and you guys should follow me." I couldn't figure out why he was doing that. This night was about him. He can't play second! He told me he wanted people to hear High on Stress and he said more people would hear us if we played after him. I told him that this was his night and everyone will bail after he plays. He said "not if you play well. If they leave it's your fault." Haha. No pressure, right?

Well we got up with Slim and played an amazing set. The first song was "Ain't No Fair" and it sounded pretty good. After that we played "Little Shiva" and "Girlfiend" (on YouTube!) and it sounded amazing to my ears. After "Girlfiend" he turned to me and laughed and said, "you guys are soooo good." I was never more proud in my musical life. With the help of his trademark "come on boys," and "one more time", he led us through his remarkable songs without even knowing what arrangement he was going to play. If you follow his lead, you'll be alright. His set ended with a version of "Times Like This" and the Turf Club was roaring (also on YouTube). I was so happy that I could be a part of this night and help out our friend. What a great set. He kept telling the packed crowd how wonderful his backing band was all throughout the night and he refused an encore and walked off the stage signing autographs and talking to everyone in sight. Thankfully the crowd stuck around!



We were revved up and played a high energy set of our own. Halfway through our set, Slim was supposed to return to play some songs with us. I called him to the stage and he walked over and said, "keep going, this is all about you...not me. You're doing great...keep going." Once again I was confused. Don't leave me hanging dude! Was he not going to join us as planned? We played a few more songs and I tried again. He walked up on stage and grabbed his trusty Rickenbacker and the crowd went nuts again. We played "Eyeliner Blues," "These Days are Gone" and "Cop Light Parade." When we got to the chorus, I heard this extra backing vocal. I turn back and Slim is singing our song. It sounded amazing. It was probably the greatest night I've ever had on stage. That night on the way home, I was going over the show in my head and it hit me. All this time we

were trying to make this show about Slim when he was trying to make it all about High on Stress. He did that show because he wanted to help us and he thought more people needed to hear us because we were friends and he liked our band.

Time went on and we played with him again, opening for his old buddy Tommy Keene. Once again it was a great night.

About two weeks before his stroke, I called him and we chatted for a bit and I told him that I was headed to band rehearsal and he told me he thought our new album was really great. He said he wanted to write us a song and that he would make sure to put the capo on the 4th fret so it would fit in with my other songs. (smart ass!) I got to band rehearsal and he ended the call by saying “tell the boys hi for me.”

I miss playing music with the man and our fun phone conversations about music, life, politics, baseball and movies. He has our support and always will.

Love ya Slim!



***“L.A. To Idaho in One Fell Swoop”*: Slim Dunlap is on the road and ready to leave one of the stranger towns on the face of the Earth**

by Rochelle Hagel

(from a Rapid City, SD music magazine from September-October 1996)

“Of course, being a Midwesterner, you understand,” he said. “We’re normal up in the Midwest and everybody else is odd.”

The town is Los Angeles. The next destination is Idaho.

Some big gigs, some little gigs and some weird gigs down the road. Dunlap will play the Rapid City gig and he loves them all. “I’m known as a sucker,” he said. “I’ll take any stupid gig I can get.” He loves playing and he loves being on the road. “I like riding in the van. Waiting. Driving. Sleeping. All the things everybody else hates.”

About the only thing Dunlap doesn’t like about the road is being away from his wife, he said. And when the call comes in to go back out on the road, it’s his wife who says “go ahead” even though, he said, they might not really be able to afford it. “When I’m not on the road, I miss it so bad.”

“I’ll do this until I drop,” he said. “I’m one of those people who found what he loves to do.” “You’ll be happy even if you’re a total failure if you’re doing what you love to do,” he said.

When younger musicians talk to Dunlap about the music business and how great he is, he’s quick to tell them, though, that it might not be all that they think it’s cracked up to be. “I tell them you should hang out with me for a while and see what it’s like really like.”

His new album, *Times Like This*, Dunlap takes a look at the darker side of rock and roll and life on the road but keeps his sense of humor while doing it. “All my records are made for my dining and listening pleasure,” he said. “My wife listens to them and kind of decides – ‘you should put that one out.’”

“I want my music to be listenable, to reward people for listening again and again.”

The problem is, he said, that it isn’t very commercial. He doesn’t write to the lowest common denominator. “I kind of stupidly go for something a little more arcane,” he said. “And it’s worth it when someone comes up and says, ‘That little record you made – I really enjoyed that record.’”

“I don’t care that I’ll never be successful. I’ll keep doing it this way forever. I’m sure this one will be another hopeless dud and I’ll be damned proud of it.”

Dunlap is probably best known for his five year stint with Minneapolis band The Replacements. He was himself a replacement for original member Bobby Stinson. Joining the band was a decision he never regretted, he said.

“It was a wonderful experience,” he said. “I’m not ever sorry I did it.”

But it wasn’t the easiest gig in the world. “I’m known as someone who can play anything and it was really hard. They were considered just a bunch of drunks and partiers, but they worked their asses off,” he said.

Despite whatever reputation the ‘Mats had, Dunlap said their music will stand for itself and tell the truth. “Good music, in the end, will be seen as good music,” he said. “Good music lasts and bad music just dies.”

Dunlap said that out on the road, a day never goes by when people don’t come up to him and talk about The Replacements and what the music meant to them. “I don’t think they know how many thousands of people they (The ‘Mats) touched.”

Dunlap doesn’t meet just old ‘Mats fan out on the road, though. The 45-year-old rocker’s own fans can be found all over the country and one as far away as South America.

How does he know this? Why from looking at sales information from the album, of course. One album sold in South America. “I’m planning on going to South America and hunt that guy down and say, ‘let’s go party.’”

His fans also span two generations of music lovers. “At every show, some kid will come up to me and say, ‘you know who turned me on to you?’, and I said, ‘yep, I hear that every night, your dad. Say hi to your dad.’”

“I love my fans. I’ve never met a Slim Dunlap fan that I don’t like.”

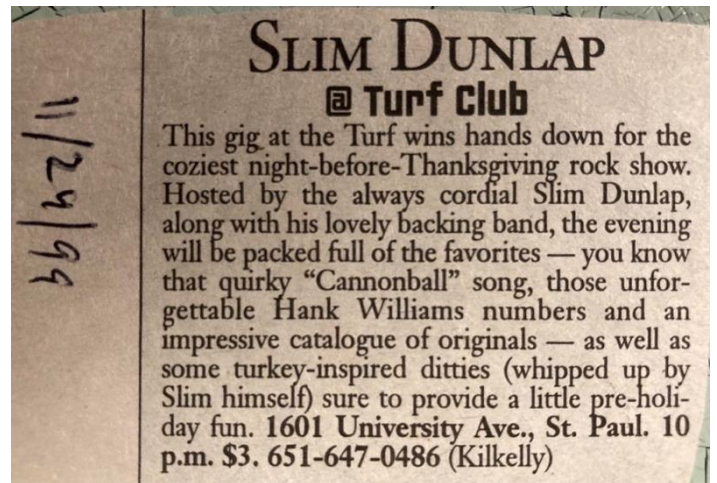
Despite it all - the ‘Mats gig, fans all over the world, an album sold in South America and the opportunity to play in the Alex Johnson Ballroom in Rapid City, SD, Dunlap, who grew up in Plainview, MN, 80 miles from the Iowa border, still considers himself a small-town kind of guy.

“I grew up on the Mississippi - Small Town Slim they call me,” he said. “I’ve never shaken that. Just somehow it’s stamped on your forehead for the rest of your life - small town dork.”

(Bob “Slim” Dunlap will play at the A.J.’s Nightclub in the Hotel Alex Johnson Oct. 9 as part of a duo.)



Brien Lilja (drummer for Slim Dunlap)



Slim Dunlap setlist

2x2 - c
taken on the chin - c
ballad of the opening band - d
honky tonk angels
when god comes to gather his jewels
hillbilly heaven
my old friend steve -a
hate this town - c
nowhere's near
nine pound hammer
can't you hear the blessed savior calling you
times like this - c
mind your own business - d
breeder's cannonball - g
jambalaya - c
i can't help it if i'm still in love with you
little ol' wine drinker me
trouble brewing home - b
rich people
own kind of the blues
tear in my beer - e to a to d
walking the floor over you
pounding nails in my coffin
i'll be your baby tonight - d
thirty days - g

Blaine Schultz

Slim was the real deal.

Back in the old century, I was in the Twin Cities for work. I found a City Pages over lunchbreak and saw Curtiss A was playing Wednesday night early at a BBQ joint. I'd always wanted to see him so I cabbled over, maybe it was St. Paul or a near suburb. I get there and I see Slim setting up in a corner as the opening act.

He played acoustic 12 string ala Spider John with a harmonica on a rack. The set was about half Hank Sr., as I recall. I could have left then. He was perfect.

Fred Uhter

I went to see Joe Ely in Chicago

Slim warmed up with a drummer, and bass player

I shouted out that I wanted to hear Radio Hook

From the stage, he said that the audience wouldn't like this version. There were not enough players to make it sound good.

I requested it again. He said, "why don't you come up here and sing it." I declined, and was pushed up on stage. He handed me his guitar and promptly left the stage. The band kicked into the song. The next 30 seconds lasted 3 hours.

The drummer and bass player wouldn't look me in the eye. I didn't know the chords. When Slim came back, he sang the chorus with me. I told him that I will never request a song again.

I went to the bathroom, and the guy next to me said that I was great. I asked him if he was facing the stage.

I still love Slim

Steve Parys

I only roadied one show in my entire life and magically it was The Replacements when they played a club called Metropol in Pittsburgh.

After we unloaded the truck, we ran into Slim who invited us back into their dressing room to eat and drink to our hearts content. He said "We'll never finish it all!" So I got some free chow and some free booze and got to shoot the shit with all of the Replacements for about 15 minutes.

Super fucking cool guy.

Bruce Springsteen

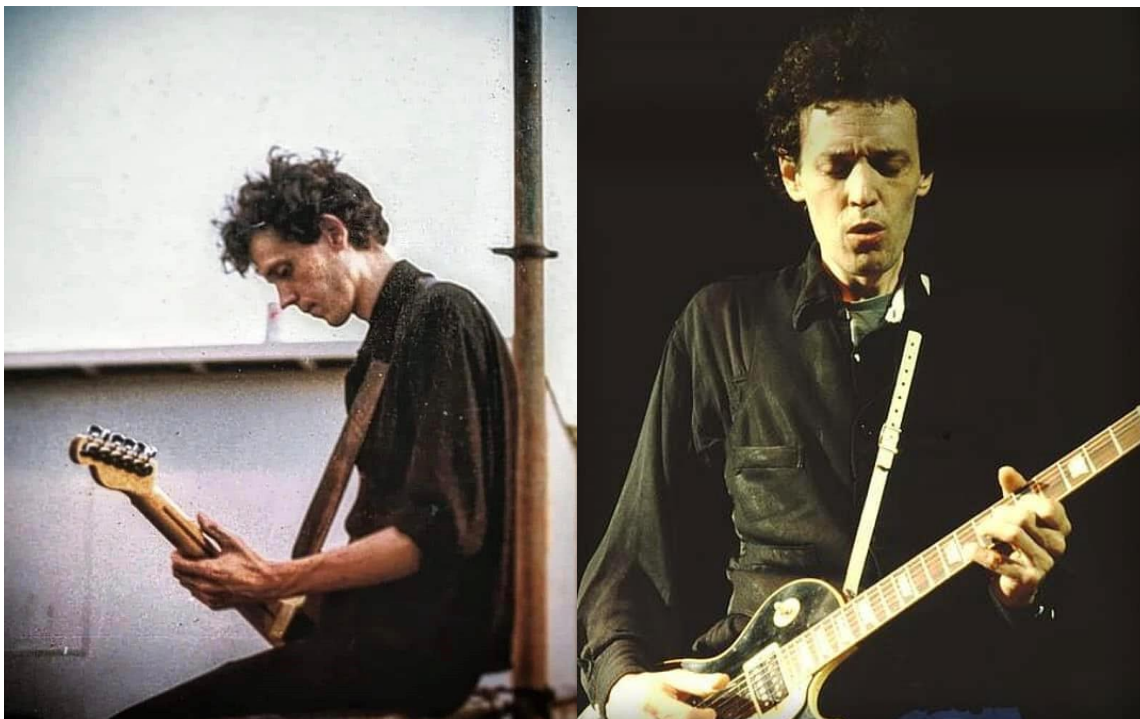
Slim Dunlap Cover: **GIRLFRIEND (Girlfiend)**
2023 Sessions



Tommy Stinson

Happy Holidays to all, it is with heavy heart that i have to report the passing of another sweet, and important Bob in our world. Our brother Slim Dunlap has passed away. Made more profoundly sad to happen the day after what would have been my natural brother Bob's birthday. I use the words sweet and brother as they apply to both Bob's! Slim was one of the sweetest humans i have known and was very much like a brother to me. Slim will be missed greatly. Much love me brother.





Bobbo Byrnes

Saw Slim a couple of times post-Replacements. Somewhere in Boston, The Paradise? With a band opening for Son Volt or Golden Smog. Slim had an old Marshall, a Telecaster, a Les Paul Jr. and a Rickenbacker.

Another time he was performing solo - might have been opening for Blue Mountain or Jayhawks - at the end of the show he asked the audience if anyone wanted to drive back to Minneapolis with him because he didn't want to drive alone and he'd buy your bus ticket back to Boston. I seriously considered it but my 9-5 wouldn't understand if I called in and said, "I'm driving to Minneapolis with a Replacement!" There would've been no way to make them understand, even though riding into MPLS with a Replacement would've been like showing up at the North Pole, well, not with Santa, but maybe Rudolph.

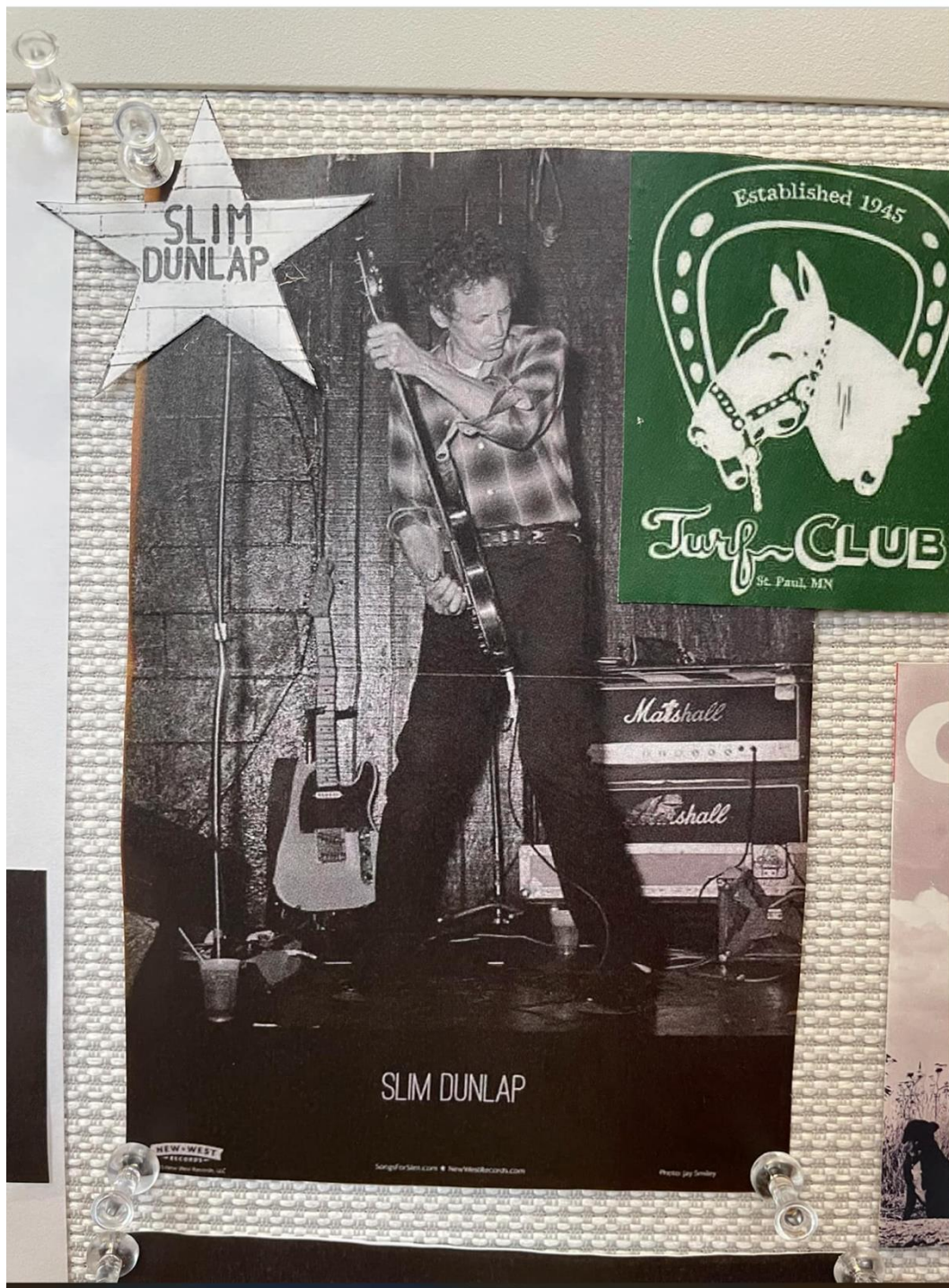
I messaged Slim's family back in 2016 when I was putting together my first solo album and asked if it'd be ok to cover "Hate This Town." I got the green light, paid my clearances and all that. "In my dreams I don't hate this town. I'm thinking I'm lucky I live here." Such an amazing sentiment said so plainly. The life he lived versus the life that he might've lived and at the end "didn't want to work in a hardware store anyway." We should all be so lucky to write a simply beautiful song.

Paul Westerberg might have been my guiding light, but Slim showed me that once a musician, always a musician and it's still a job and worth it to go and sing your songs. When I go live with my Tele, Rickenbacker and Les Paul Jr., well, I always think of Slim in that regard and how I wish I had taken that long, cold ride back to Minnesota with him.

Brian Michlitsch

Returning to the office after the holidays to this Slim tribute hits a bit different today.

Feeling blessed to have attended so many Turf Club shows back in the day. Remembering the night you played "It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels" on the lap steel. RIP Slim.



John Eller

Back in the nineties, Slim and I played at a short-lived venue...I think it was called Mississippi Live. It was on Main St, near the Hennepin Ave Bridge. I remember that Bob insisted it be promoted as a double-bill, adamant that he shouldn't headline and I shouldn't be listed as the opener.

I don't really remember anything whatsoever about the actual gig. But during soundcheck, he and I were hanging out in front of the stage. There were quite a few tables set up on the floor. At a certain point, we noticed that there were little folded bar table ad placards on each table.

Picking up one of the cards, we discovered that the ad misspelled BOTH of our names.

Tonight!

SLIM DUNLAY and JOHN EHER

...My gut reaction was basically indignant embarrassment. Bob paused a second and took it in a different direction. Tipping his head back, he guffawed. Howling with laughter, in that Hank Williams drawl, he said, "Awwww! You know you're in trouble when they can't get your name right in your own town!"

He immediately sliced through the bumminess of the situation. He continued, "I mean, Slim Dunlay is bad enough, but John Eher?" He pronounced Eher sort of like a donkey would have said it. (EEE-her) He turned the whole thing around, making it silly, keeping me from being bugged (probably a little more than I should have been.) I wish somebody would have thought to keep one of those placards!

Jay Russell

I saw Slim play in high school with the 'Mats and met him walking off the bus in St. Louis.

I skipped school to meet the band.

I asked all the members to sign my shirt.

Paul signed his name, Tommy signed "fuck off, Tommy", and Slim wrote "Tommy is a fool".

That's my story. Short and sweet, but I won't forget.



*photo by David Leibowitz
The Replacements
Green Bay, Wisconsin (1991)*



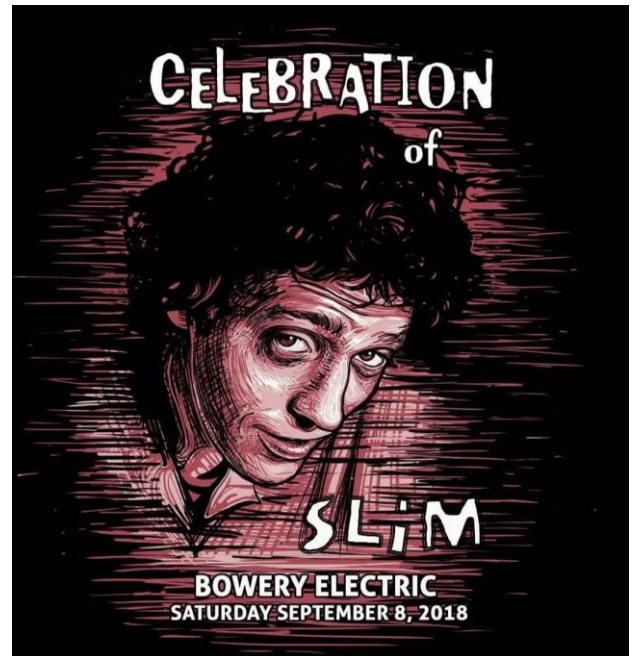
Katrina Lynn

I hosted a Celebration of Slim in NYC in 2018. It was such a great event, a low-key fundraiser. People traveled from far and wide, all to commune with other fans and pay tribute to the man.

5 bands donated their time and played and played and played (The Figgs, Split Squad, Girls On Grass, Spanking Charlene and Fruit + Flowers).

Tracy Duncan donated her time designing the shirt/poster art. It was one of the best nights of my life.

I wish peace to you and your family.





Chris Bitesize

I produced this benefit for Bob 'Slim' Dunlap in 2018. I had played a few benefits in Minneapolis and thought I could plan one in my hometown St Pete, Florida.

It was not hard to book local name bands as there was an outpouring of love for this band and their guitarist. Chris Mars donated the art for the gig poster.

We raised a few bucks for the Dunlap's mounting medical bills and the bands played simply heartfelt and amazing Mats covers all night.

My band covered Slim's "Hate This Town" and "Times Like This".

RIP Slim Dunlap  

Mark Romanowski

I used to play in a band called Violet out of Sioux Falls, SD and we played with Slim quite a bit. At home and up there in Minneapolis. On one occasion my pal, Rich, and myself filled in on guitar (me) and bass (Rich) and Slim brought the incomparable Brien Liliya with him. I nervously went about trying to get a set list together with Slim. Haha...Instead, Slim said something to the effect of "we'll wing it" and pulled out some golf clubs! No soundcheck or rehearsal. Just knocking some golf balls around in the middle of a raceway green until we played. It was a gas!

A few years later I went up to Brookings, SD to catch Slim playing an acoustic gig. We chatted a little and then he asked where my guitar was. Of course I didn't bring one, so Slim turned to the bartender and said "you gotta' find this guy a guitar." A few minutes later a beat-up Alvarez showed up and I got to play a couple acoustic sets with him. I'll never forget Slim saying "Careful, God might be listening and he'll think you're a sinner!" during my way too fast/flashy solo on a Merle Travis gospel tune...Probably some of the greatest memories of my life. No exaggeration.

I know this is long, but one more thing that says everything about Slim and Chrissie. She asked about the year their van caught fire in a post last year. I answered that I think it was 1995 on the way to a gig at The Pomp Room in my hometown. A few days later she sent a message that Slim wanted say he loved Violet and hoped we're all doing well. I read that on a smoke break at work and had to try not to get choked up. After not seeing the man in 20 years, he still spared us a thought and some kind words. The guy just had a profound effect on me. I'm 23 years sober and a part of that was seeing my hero tear it up on so many occasions without booze. He was a role model in that regard, too...I even wore vests for a while 'cuz I thought Slim looked cool!

Peace to everyone here and especially to the Dunlap family.

John Quinn

I got these magnets from my dear friend Edward Hamell four years ago today and John Eller was gracious enough to take one to the Dunlap home.

Miss you Slim Bob. All my love to this community. Peace.



Ted James: *Slim Dunlap concert review (October 25, 1993 – Austin, TX – Liberty Lunch)*

Slim was opening for Dramarama. The crowd was kind of disappointing. About 20 people showed up, and most of them were there for Dramarama. Slim didn't seem to mind. He kept making jokes about how they would be finished soon enough so we could see Dramarama. He seemed to feel at home playing to such a small crowd.

Earlier in the day, Slim did a solo acoustic performance at Tower Records. I was planning to go, but somehow I couldn't make it. I arrived at Liberty Lunch at 9:00 p.m., just as the band kicked in. I couldn't believe how thin Slim was. I'm pretty thin but he makes me look stocky. Anyway, having not heard his album yet, I was kind of surprised after a few songs. This guy can really sing. His songs are pretty good, too. His ballads kind of reminded me a little of Bruce Springsteen. His rockers had that typical Stones feel that Tommy's songs have. And of course, I heard some Replacements in there, too.

All they played in this brief (45 minutes) set were Slim originals. The quality of the songs made me want to go buy the album, so I guess I'll finally pick it up.

Slim's kind of funny and kind of hokey at times. He always tells a story before each song explaining why he wrote it. The best one was one that he said got him in trouble. He was sitting at home in Minneapolis watching TV, and his wife was gossiping (his words, not mine) on the phone like they usually do when he overheard his wife talking about how a certain local band had made it big (no names mentioned). After they came back from playing all over the world, they came back and dumped their longtime girlfriends. He overheard his wife say, "Well, I guess there ain't no fair in a rock and roll love affair." At that point, he said, "Thank you honey. I'll be back in a few minutes." That's how he wrote that song.

I left after Slim's band finished. I'm not much into Dramarama. Besides, it was Monday night, and I had been out the last four nights, so I wimped out and went home.



Joel Bremer

*(Joel Bremmer is the administrator of the **Slim Dunlap fan club** Facebook group)*

January 10: Fifteen years ago to the day!

This was the second show I played with Slim, and James Buckvold on mandolin, the first being the night before. It was another great night, this time at Sauce, a club that's not there anymore. I think we opened, and then The Hard Left, The Tisdales, and High on Stress played! What a great lineup!

Slim called me earlier that day, and he said "tonight, the guy who's doing sound is one of the very best in the world!" That was our deeply missed Monty Lee Wilkes. I remember Monty's words about Slim some years later when he was interviewed by Paul Metsa: "two words: National Treasure!"

Photos by Dan Carlsen, our, just like Monty, deeply missed Lisa Uhlig-Lulu, and Debbie Donovan.



Anonymous participant

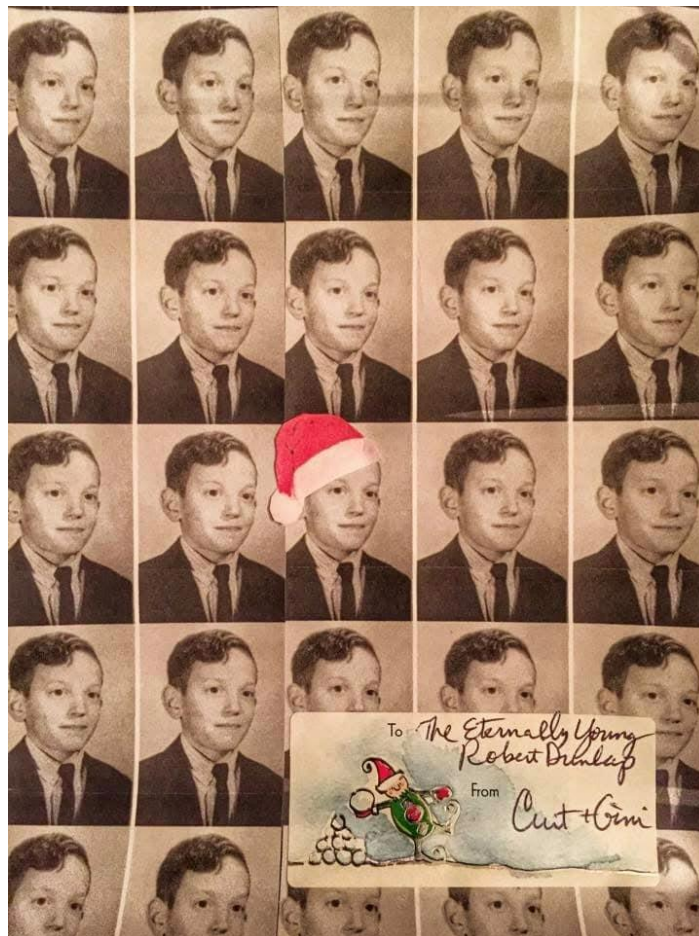
I'll never forget ya Slim helping me with money advise, letting me know hot spots to hang while I was in Hawaii. N even tho we talked music. And I usually brought up other bands. You kinda brought me down to Earth. And just said. Just Play yer drums Chris.

The story when you were in the Mats. N the edge was at the bar n left his tab open n you fuckers n guys from Tom Petty ran the bill up to 5 grand. And edge came down bitchin in his underwear And then forgave y'all

Prob best one of them all. I gotta crash some more partys! Keep on Crashing Partys. Ya got my vote!

Gini Dodds

One year, I made wrapping paper using an old school picture of Slim.
He is so adorable in his little suit and tie. ❤️



Scott Bogen

Every year as part of his annual medical evaluation, Chrissie would read a series of questions where he would answer with a number between one and ten, one being very poor and ten being best.

One of the questions was, "How do you rate your quality of life?"

Slim replied "Ten." Chrissie questioned him and he was adamant, it is a ten.

I have often thought of that, here is a man who has lost the ability to do most everything and certainly the things he loved doing the most, and yet in spite of this, he sees his life as a ten.

That was Bob. That is life lived to its fullest.





fin.

*“Never love anyone who treats you like you're ordinary.”
— Oscar Wilde*