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FEBRUARY 19 - MARCH 3

Earplug is a biweekly email magazine, delivering a handpicked selection of news, sounds, videos, and original features for the international electronic music community.

Like just about everyone we know, we're getting awfully excited to get to Miami in a few weeks, where we plan to soak up beats, contacts, and sunshine. In the meantime, we've been scouring for those last copies of Danger Mouse's *The Grey Album*, gearing up for [Grey Tuesday](#), and listening to some sunny-day [Brazilian beats](#) to keep the winter mood at bay. If you're in search of distraction, there's aural action aplenty, from [Luciano's](#) Swiss-Chilean fusion to [Luomo's](#) between-the-sheets rustle, to remind you of kinder climes. So fire up the DVD, tap into a [Tokyo Dawn](#), and keep your eyes and ears on the horizon.



With its two-day industry summit, four days of poolside parties, five days of private networking, and a week of premier music events throughout South Beach, M3 Summit represents the culmination of the annual March music tradition. The single [M3 Summit Pass](#) gives you Miami 2004.

NEWS [back to top](#)

Don't Squeeze the Sharman

The international music industry's assault on illegal file sharing escalated over the last two weeks, with the Australian music industry raiding the offices of KaZaA owner [Sharman Networks](#), the [Canadian music industry initiating lawsuits](#) against Canadian file sharers, and the [RIAA](#) filing copyright infringement cases against another 531 yet-unnamed individuals. The UK may also be forced to bring the hammer down on file sharers in the face of figures showing that last year's sales of singles [dropped by 32%](#), and that there was a concurrent increase in illegal file trading. Big media was also back in the US courts last week, grappling both with the epic saga of [P2P vs. the entertainment industry](#) and the major implications of [media deregulation](#). In news of the bizarre, a British company recently announced its expansion into the fledgling [AK-47 mp3](#) player market, and the US government cited security interests when [denying requests by Cuban musicians](#), including members of the Buena Vista Social Club, for visas to attend the [Grammy Awards](#). And while the US focused national attention on Janet Jackson's Super Bowl exposure, pioneering music superstore Tower Records [quietly announced its bankruptcy](#), and the US Copyright Office issued [webcaster royalty rates](#) that will change the face and cost of Internet radio forever. (CW)

Grey Area

[DJ Danger Mouse's](#) *The Grey Album* hit the Internet like wildfire last month. Combining a cappella tracks from Jay-Z's *The Black Album* with samples from the Beatles' legendary *White Album*, Danger Mouse re-engineered the Beatles' classic beats and chords to organically meld with Jay-Z's lyrics, themes, and feel. What began as a limited copy, non-retail vinyl release became an instant classic due to file sharing and widespread [critical acclaim](#). It was so good, in fact, that it caught the attention of EMI — the label that owns the rights to the Beatles' music. Because Danger Mouse never asked permission to use the Beatles' music, EMI sent out blanket [cease and desist](#) letters and everyone from intellectual property experts to music industry gurus to artists and DJs around the world went ballistic, using *The Grey Album* as the [poster-child](#) for everything that's wrong with the copyright system, the music industry, and Internet file

MORE HEADLINES

P2P Conference Calls

Uses same technology as KaZaA [more](#) »

"Silence" for sale

Sonic Youth song now off the restricted list on iTunes [more](#) »

PureTracks Hits Its Numbers

Canadian download service has sold over a million songs [more](#) »

The Unsigned Get Online

IndieJukeBox.com to launch in March [more](#) »

Satellite Radio Soars

XM Satellite Radio adds a million subscribers [more](#) »

Bad Apple

Apple Faces Class Action Suits on iPod Battery [more](#) »

sharing in general. Music industry hater group Downhill Battle even organized next week's [Grey Tuesday](#), a "day of coordinated civil disobedience" where websites will post *The Grey Album* on their site for the day in protest of EMI's attempt to censor Danger Mouse. Despite the all the buzz, Danger Mouse told *The Washington Post* that "I'm just worried whether Jay-Z will like it, or whether Paul and Ringo will like it. If they say that they hate it, and that I messed up their music, I think I'll put my tail between my legs and go." (CW)

Melodic Unchained

Folk music is enjoying a curious renaissance in avant garde musical circles. From the improv noodlings of the movement *The Wire* dubbed "New Weird America" to the dusted sampladelia of [Four Tet](#) and [Manitoba](#), rockers, jazzbos, and programmers alike are crossing Woodstock with Stockhausen to see if there's a soul in the machine after all. For nearly five years, Manchester's [Melodic](#) label has worked in precisely this terrain, wedding breakbeats to be-bop to bell tones, distilling a century of popular music into a potent digital elixir. Although the label's rep is as low-profile as its name is low-key, that may change with the release of two new discs. *Rinse*, the second CD from Bristol-based band [Minotaur Shock](#), collects two vinyl EPs, plus assorted sketches, into an hour-long tour of gleaming keyboards, restless breakbeats (think Squarepusher on Quaaludes), and enough chimes and strummed strings to satisfy your most Medieval leanings. *Tracks for Horses* is an even better introduction to the label, running from Texas-based Notes' Raymond Scott-influenced hip hop to Pedro's melancholic, vaguely Asiatic meditations to the [Earlies'](#) psychedelic shoegaze rock. This coming year promises several notable remixes, says label head David Cooper, including label artists Baikonour and Pedro reworked by Four Tet, Prefuse 73, Danger Mouse, Amon Tobin, and others. Come summertime, expect new albums from Lucky Pierre, Pedro, and Arab Strap's Aidan Moffat. (PS)

Web Entering New World

The FCC is rewriting the rules on delivery of the Internet [more »](#)

File Sharing's New Face

BitTorrent's software has been downloaded over ten million times [more »](#)

Hide and Seek

AnonX masks addresses of file sharers [more »](#)

Making Friends

UK P2P music service Wippit signs contract with EMI [more »](#)

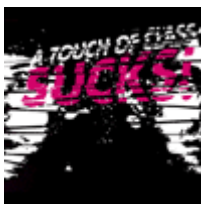
NEW RELEASES

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Artist: Lucien-N-Luciano
Album: *Blind Behaviour*
Label: [Peacefrog](#)
Release: February 23

Along with Ricardo Villalobos and Dandy Jack, Lucien Nicolet, aka Luciano, completes the triumvirate of Euro-Chilean producers currently flipping techno on its edge like a quarter balanced on the equator. The Swiss-Chilean producer has turned out a number of singles for labels like Playhouse, Perlon, and Bruchstuecke, and Thomas Brinkmann's [max.Ernst](#) label released *Live @ Weetamix* in 2002, but this is Luciano's first proper full length. While it may sound like hyperbole, Luciano's sound is unlike any other; he takes a house-tempo chug and sets it pogoing between the downbeat and offbeat before stringing it with rippling arpeggios that call to mind rows of Japanese lanterns. His peculiar melodic sensibility, fractured into a chirping Pachinko blur, give his tracks a light and a life absent in almost all other techno. (PS)



Artist: A Touch of Class
Album: *A Touch of Class Sucks!*
Label: A Touch of Class Recordings
Release: November 14, 2003

A Touch of Class Sucks! is an all-night NY club binge — without the inevitable hangover, empty wallet, and pesky supermodel entourage — on the arm of New York production duo A Touch of Class (Oliver Stumm and Dominique Clausen). Vinyl sides alternately labeled "Disco Sucks!," "Electro Sucks!," "Rock Sucks!," and "Punk Sucks!" feature the Scissor Sisters' ingenious '80s dance take on

EARPLUG FAVES

Aceyalone, *All Balls Don't Bounce Revisited* (Project Blowed)

Beta Band, *Heroes to Zeroes* (Astralwerks)

Amp Fiddler, *Waltz of a Ghetto Fly* (Genuine/PIAS)

Various artists, *Africanism Vol. 2* (Defected)

International Pony, *We Love Music* (Skint)

Strategy, *Drumsolo's Delight* (Kranky)

Glenn Branca, *Lesson #1* (Acute)

Steve Beckett & Laszlo Taylor, *Work* (Hand on the Plow)

Tortoise, *It's All Around You* (Thrill Jockey)

Funk D'Void, *Volume Freak* (Soma)

Horsepower Productions, *To the Rescue* (Tempa)

Two Lone Swordsman,

Pink Floyd's "Comfortably Numb," HiFi Serious' blessed version of the Beatles' "Because," and ATOC's own update of Klein & Mbo's 1983 electro-disco classic "Dirty Talk." Waldorf's "Fashionist" and the Ones' runway-related UK club anthem "Flawless" demonstrate why ATOC is a favorite in NY's elite fashion circles, and ATOC's own spectrum-bending electro rounds out the collection. Having learned from electroclash's mistakes, ATOC is betting that anti-hype is better than no hype at all, but buyer beware: they definitely don't suck. (CW)



Artist: Meat Beat Manifesto
Album: *In Dub*
Label: :run Recordings
Release: January 27

Widely regarded as a key influence by many electronic musicians, Jack Dangers (of Meat Beat Manifesto and Tino Corp.) has long maintained a close relationship with the underground. Though Dangers has concentrated much of his recent effort on the dub-oriented Tino Corp. project, the release of *RUOK?* in late 2002 proved that he was as formidable a producer as ever. MBM's latest work, *In Dub*, further displays Dangers' studio genius. Featuring several dub reinterpretations of *RUOK?* tracks — many graced with new toasting from DJ Collage — along with four new tracks and two alternate versions, *In Dub* feels more like a proper album than a remix collection. In fact, several of the *RUOK?* tracks improve on the originals, making manifest the power of dub — and Dangers' own formidable skills. (TP)

[Peppered with Spastic Magic](#) (Rotters Golf Club)

Various artists, [Buzzin' Fly Vol. 1](#) (Buzzin' Fly)

Various artists, [Klubbjazz 5](#) (Kickin' Music/Slip'n'Slide)

DJ Garth, [Revolutions in Sound](#) (Greyhound)

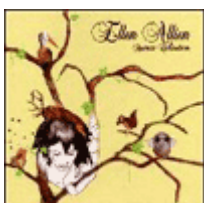
Cesaria Evoria, [Club Sodade](#) (Bluebird)

The Kat Cosm, [Knightboat](#) (Staubgold)



Artist: Nostalgia 77
Album: *Songs for My Funeral*
Label: [Tru Thoughts](#)
Release: February 16

During a seven-hour period in July, 1977, a deluge of rain in Johnstown, PA killed 77 people. That same year, David Berkowitz, also known as the "Son of Sam," terrorized New York with a string of random, violent murders. Nostalgia 77's refined and cinematic downtempo is strangely reminiscent of the saturnine events of that year. The bedroom creation of one Ben Lamdin, *Songs for My Funeral* is a moody patchwork of thick hip hop breaks, psychedelic atmospherics, and poignant jazz melodies. While much of the record is somnambulant like *Shadow* and disquieting like *RJD2*, Lamdin's compositions stand out for their heavy jazz influence, which strengthens the filmic quality of his music. Imagine a contemporary score suitable for *The Exorcist* and *The French Connection* and you may get the picture — a nicely restored 35mm copy, of course. (SM)



Artist: Ellen Allien
Album: *Remix Collection*
Label: [Bpitch Control](#)
Release: January 22

After her acclaimed *Berlinette* LP, Bpitch Control label boss Ellen Allien here assembles her latest remixes. The highlight is her mix of Sascha Funke's "Forms and Shapes" — over lagging, electro-tinged breakbeats, a resonant synthesizer line from the original mix lingers alongside Funke's vocals before a distorted bassline takes the tune up three



notches. Gold Chains' "Let's Get It On" rides an off-kilter, almost two-steppy beat, with Allien's crunchy programming battering Gold Chains' sassy, in-your-face flow. Goldenboy and Miss Kittin's "Rippin Kittin" tips the hat to the Misfits' "Mommy, Can I Go Out and Kill Tonight?" and touches it up with glimmering hi-hats. By mixing pop, minimal techno, electro, and breakbeats with her singular subtlety, Allien's made *Remix Collection* a varied, addictive listen that always engages cerebrally but remains aimed at informed dancefloors. (CJN)



Artist: Jeff Mills
Album: *Exhibitionist*
Label: [Axis](#)
Release: February 17

Jeff Mills' characteristic rapid-fire selection (45 tracks in 79 minutes) and offbeat dropouts appear on his latest release, but a greater mystique and lure make this album a personal journey, a techno *Heart of Darkness*. The disc is tribal early on, and Mills' favorite go-to cuts (Octave One's "Black Water" and his own "The Bells") interject, but Mills lures the listener upstream with disembodied voices and bird-like shrieks before arriving at a placid clearing and an eerie confrontation. *Live at the Liquid Room (Tokyo)* is still the standard for a high-energy dancefloor mix, but *Exhibitionist* — the CD accompaniment to a DVD due in late March — shows Mills' ability to present the DJ set as an epic, jarring voyage, something far beyond the club experience. (NP)



Artist: Nêgo Moçambique
Album: *Nêgo Moçambique*
Label: [Segundo Mundo](#)
Release: February 2004

São Paulo producer Duda Marote, a major figure on the Brazilian scene with ties to Renato Lopez, Marky, Patife, and even MTV Brazil, is behind Segundo Mundo, which aims to introduce Brazilian electronic music to an international market. Nêgo Moçambique is the alter ego of Marcelo Martins, originally from Brasilia, who has created an album based on his ever-mutating live PA sets — rollicking, non-stop electro-funk festas. A São Paulo dancefloor fave for some time, "Gil Para B-Boys" samples Tropicalia legend (and Brazil minister of culture) Gilberto Gil's "Palco" to bewitching and highly melodic effect. "No Ritmo de Funk" draws from '70s old school funk legends Banda Black Rio to create an appropriately funky number that bristles with groove and life. The incredibly catchy "Bianca Sabe Dançar" updates bass-heavy disco with delightful synth squiggles. A sign of things to come from Brazil's emerging electronic scene? Let's hope so. (AC)



Artist: Luomo
Album: *The Present Lover*
Label: [Kinetic](#)
Release: February 24

Luomo, the deep house project of Finnish ambient producer Vladislav Delay, comes with a new album that piles depth onto the clickish tweak we've heard on Force Tracks since the label's conception. (Released in Europe last year on Force Tracks, *The Present Lover* has finally been made available

domestically via Kinetic.) Far from the waiflike constructions of his contemporaries, Luomo brings a stirring and full-figured approach to the music with the title track, which swoons under the influence of swelling pads, breathy vocal stabs, and Luomo's trademark moon-stomping basslines. As on his debut, tracks like "Body Speaking" and "What Good" don't shy away from the vocals — they whisper temptations of liaisons and mesh beautifully with Delay's porous production, leaving us with an even deeper impression that Delay is the Pied Piper of microhouse. (NP)

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FESTIVALS [back to top](#)

Preview: Bonnaroo

June 11-13
Manchester, TN

After the Long Island failures last summer of Field Day and the Eastern edition of Bonnaroo, just about the only major music festival (with camping!) you can count on east of the Mississippi is the original Bonnaroo, touching down just outside of Manchester, TN. Now in its third year, this jam-band-centric weekender is sure to be the third sell-out in a row, with 60,000+ people expected to flock to a 600-acre farm for sets by the resurrected Dead, Bob Dylan, Dave Matthews, moe., and dozens of other guitar-pickers and rootsy psychedelia merchants. Bonnaroo's main organizers, Superfly Productions (the same people responsible for bringing Tortoise to this year's New Orleans Jazz Fest), have an expansive musical view and look to fill the lineup with a variety of like-minded groups — this year's guests include Miami's Spam All-Stars, Femi Kuti, Yo La Tengo, Cut Chemist, Beth Orton, and one-time Talking Head main man David Byrne. Tickets go on sale this Saturday, so start looking for a new tent. (DJP)

OTHER FESTIVALS

[Ultra Music Festival](#)
Miami, FL
March 6

[All Tomorrow's Parties UK, Weekend 1](#)
East Sussex, UK
March 26-28

[All Tomorrow's Parties UK, Weekend 2](#)
East Sussex, UK
April 2-4

[Jazz and Heritage Festival](#)
New Orleans, LA
April 23 - May 2

LISTEN [back to top](#)

Real Player required for these streams.

Friction, Heavy Set

DJ Friction has been a regular producer/remixer on UK drum 'n bass superlabels TOV and Renegade Hardware. Now a part

[listen »](#)

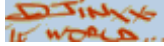
of the new guard taking over UK scene, Friction tees off on this set of rollers and classic jungle.



[listen »](#)

Yam Who?, FutureBoogie mix

Appropriately named Yam Who? is a British production group (or artist?) whose identity is still unknown, but whose unmistakable production hand has been all over this season's must-have broken beat tunes. Listen in to this mix of soulful grooves put down by the mystery DJ(s).



[listen »](#)

John Tejada & Djinxx, In Your Heart Tour (France)

A sweet tech-heavy mix of house grooves from John Tejada and Djinxx as they tour through France dropping the gospel of minimal beats and techno-inspired sounds. Consider it the French equivalent to Kompakt's microhouse sound.



[listen »](#)

Tokyo Dawn Mix

A great headphone opus of headnod-ology from the incredible Internet label Tokyo Dawn. With everything from hip hop to electro and house, this mix aims to please. It starts off on a decidedly downbeat tip but ramps up later.



[listen »](#)

Dax DJ, Red Deep Side of the Cosmic Space

A special collection of hot boogie, dubbie disco jams doled out from one of the members of the Italian family-house.net crew. All of the trendy names can be spotted on this tracklist: LFO, Chicken Lips, John Tejada, and Julien Jabre, among others.



Looking for more hot mix sets and fresh new tracks? Check out [Blentwell](#) for an ongoing document of the evolution of blended music online.

WATCH

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Sound and Vision

You may have noticed while channel surfing recently that the best in broadcast design is being brought to bear on creating corporate identity — [stations ID's](#), program openings, and interstitials. [EyeballNYC](#), a design-based company located in New York's SoHo, is partly responsible. With live-action, graphic design, editorial, and concept development capabilities, the studio works together with advertising agencies and cable channels to create products such as the bold, comic-inspired four-color work that characterizes the opening of Comedy Central's *Comic Remix* to the marquee glitz of the promos for MTV's *Made*. Their output ranges as widely as their technique, with commercial work (American Express) and music video production ([Tiga](#)) among their credits, but it's the tight-knit partnership they've formed with music production/licensing house [Expansion Team](#) that gives both companies an added edge. Expansion Team, a collective of musicians including Scott Hardkiss, Ursula Rucker, Mathematics, and Disco D, is committed to changing the way music is produced for film, television, commercials, and new media. Look no further than the tight marriage of image and sound in a recent collaboration for Nike's new [Lebron Air Zoom](#), featuring music by DJ Lux and Vinroc (of 5th Platoon), and you will see that the revolution is currently being televised. (SM) (SM)



FEATURES

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Finding a Niche

With what seems like a million channels in my newest digital cable package, it's mind-boggling

OTHER FEATURES

[Sound Displays](#)
[Music museums](#)



that I can't find one decent electronic music video show. While many pine for the good ol' days of [Amp](#) (perhaps awaiting the groundbreaking show's resurrection), there is an alternative — the follow-up to [e:motion](#)'s successful *Visual Niches* DVD contains 15 eye-catching videos. The disc opens with [Ben Stoke](#)'s brilliant collage interpretation of DJ Shadow's "Walkie Talkie" and continues effortlessly through equally appealing shorts for Roots Manuva, Anti-Pop Consortium, [Amon Tobin](#), Basement Jaxx, and others, while wrapping up with an ingenious short for T. Raumschmiere's schaffel-er "[Monstertruckdriver](#)." An accompanying booklet includes small, detailed write-ups about the creation of each video and provides links to URLs where you can learn more about the musicians, directors, and animators involved in each project. Entertaining and informative, *Visual Niches 2* provides a true alternative to mainstream music television and is just as educational as 56 channels of *Family Double Dare* reruns. (SM)

flourish

[Slippery Slope](#)
File-trading ethics

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Header Design

We have an open call to create the headers that run at the top of each issue. If you would like to submit a design, please email us at [design](#) and we'll send you the necessary specs.

About Us

Earplug is an email magazine dedicated to electronic music and its many dynamic styles and influences. Published every two weeks, it features a handpicked selection of music news, cultural spotlights, tip sheets, CD reviews, original reporting, and music festival previews and reviews. Earplug offers only pure editorial and unbiased news — no money is accepted from any artists, labels, promoters, or companies seeking mention.

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