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SURFING THE WAVES OF POPULAR CULTURE
BY MICHAEL GILTZ & FRIENDS

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Favorite Obscure Albums

I'm a sucker for this sort of thing: The Guardian asked 49 rock stars, producers, intelligentsia etc. to offer up their obscure gems -- those CDs they can toss on the stereo that invariably prompts people to say, "What IS this?" and then write down the name and head out to the record store. It's the print version of that scene from "High Fidelity" where they play The Beta Band and count the seconds before customers start buying the CD. (Hey, I wonder how they'll do that scene in the new Broadway musical version of the movie?) You'll read about everything from Shuggie Otis and The Electric Prunes and if you're like me, you'll immediately write down a few titles that intrigue you and head out to the record store. Of course, I do suffer from some sort of artistic inferiority complex: I hate it when people reference some brilliant, acclaimed novel as if everybody has read it or a classic film that everyone presumably has seen or a terrific album that of course everyone owns (if they're cool); I hate it, that is, when I haven't seen, read or listened to it and immediately run out and do so because I don't want anyone else to know about some gem when I don't.

Best of all, the Guardian has a contest urging you to submit your own obscure gem for consideration. Naturally, I couldn't resist and the first CD to spring to mind was "[It's The Talk Of The Town and Other Sad Songs](#)" by [Boulevard of Broken Dreams](#).

I don't know why or how I stumbled across this obscure gem -- was it the eye-catching album cover that used a pulp fiction cover (complete with a seen-it-all dame lugging groceries home)? Whatever the reason, I bought this collection and fell in love with these versions of standards from the Twenties to the Forties (including "I Cover The Waterfront," "In Other Words, We're Through," and "Hummin' To Myself" long before I figured out where it had come from.

The opener -- "Boulevard Of Broken Dreams" is an instrumental with

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