

the mudhoney interview by eddie vedder

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THROWING MUSE
ROCKY PICTS
BETTER SERVER

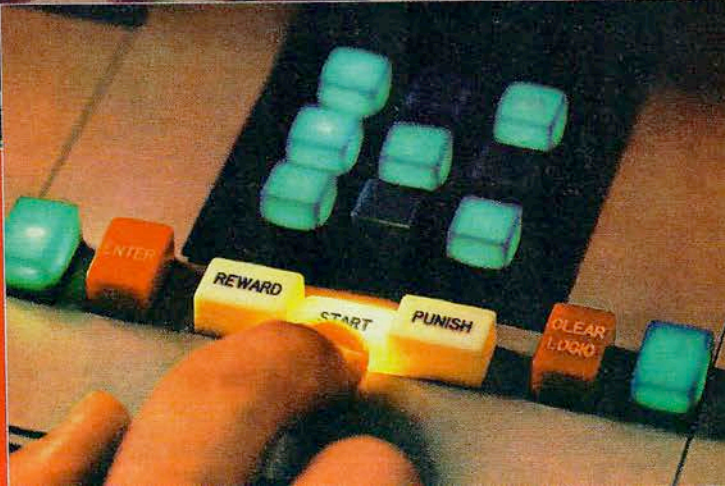
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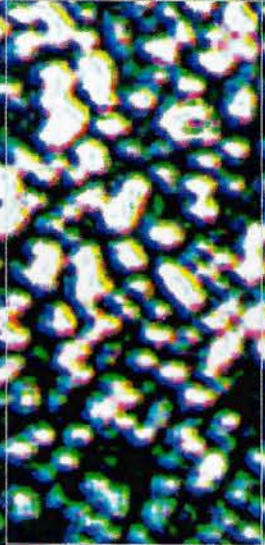




Emergency Broadcast Network

"Making TV Spectacular"
by Amy Talker



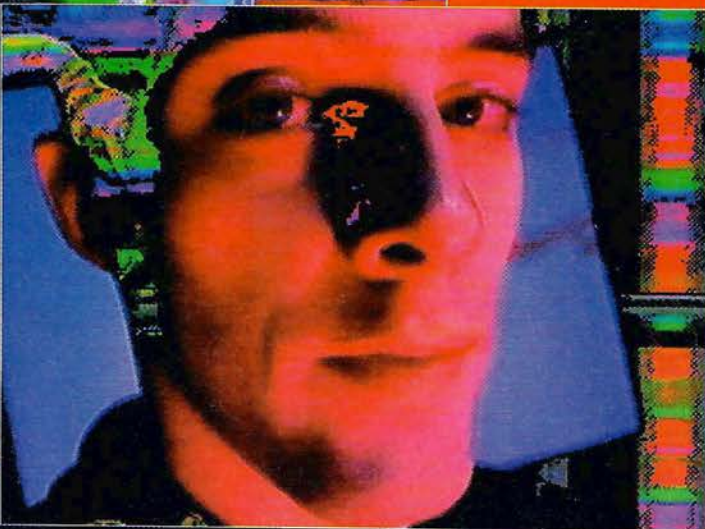


EBN is Joshua Pearson, co-founder, audio programmer and spokesman (unless otherwise noted, all EBN statements are made by Pearson); Gardner Post, co-founder, chief technician; Ronald "Ronnie" O'Donnell, disc jockey; Greg DeoCampo, interactive computer programmer.

<<< SUPER MIND STATE >>>

Emergency Broadcast Network and I sit around a long table in an otherwise deserted Thai restaurant on the west side of Providence, Rhode Island. It's 4:00 PM, and we are just getting lunch. A special glaze covers our eyes and we are strangely subdued. Slowly, we manage to order noodles, soups and dumplings.

We look innocuous enough. Our waiter may simply think we are stoned. But our affliction is much more serious. Our minds have been anesthetized by the audio-visual programming of EBN. Even the creators of the material have been effected by watching one solid hour of the band's latest "invention," the "Video Wall," a 16-screen interactive audio-visual barrage.



<<< THIS IS EBN >>>

EBN is a politically charged techno band, but not just a techno band. It is also a fluxus art group with a sense of humor, a very serious video production team and a pack of technological inventors. Equally inspired by military aviation design, Brian Eno, video artist Nam Jun Paik and made-for-TV movies, EBN has claimed a rare territory, one that encompasses art, technology and entertainment.

<<< MASTER TIME CLOCK >>>

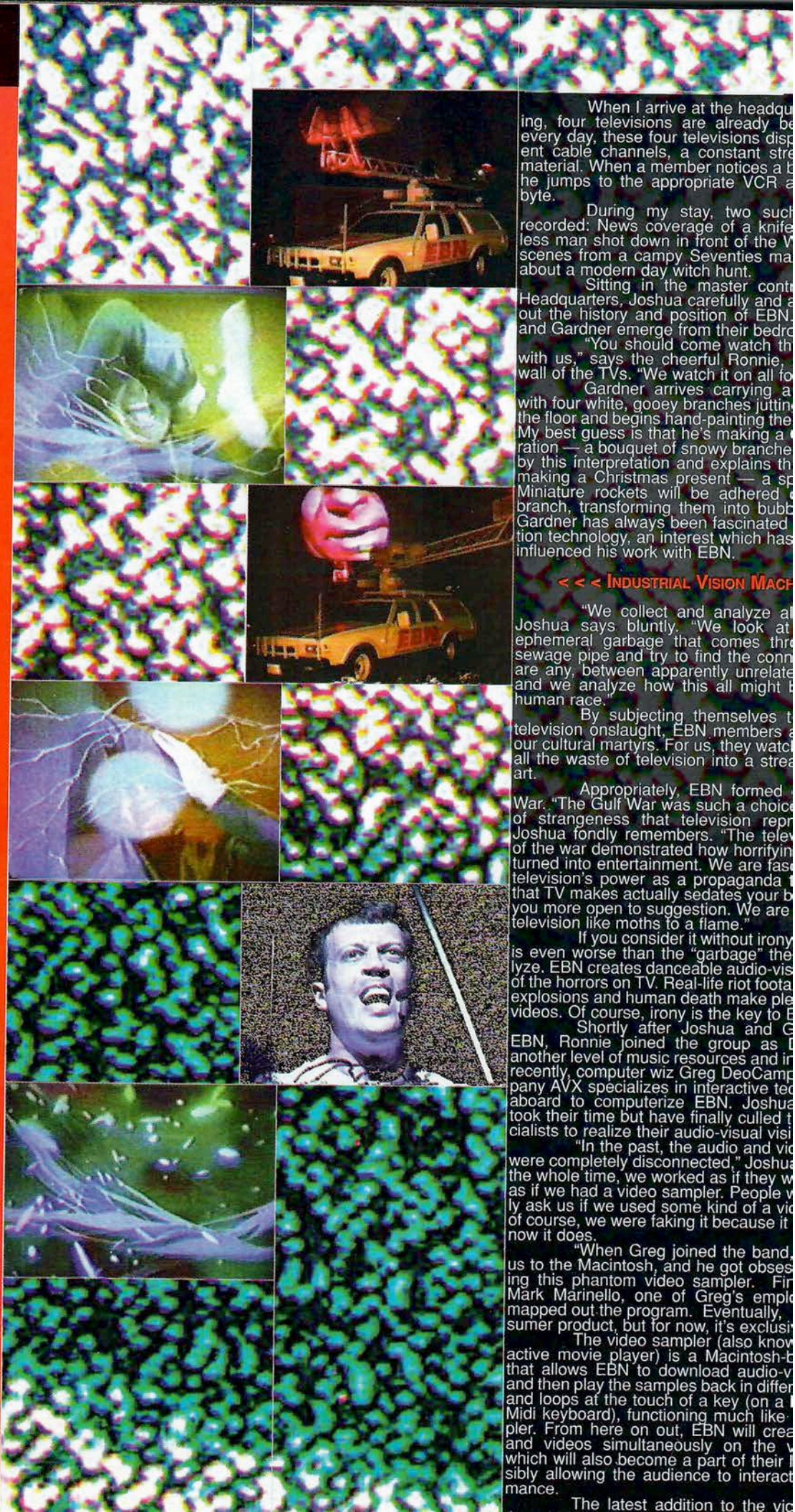
The EBN Headquarters is located in the cultural wasteland of Providence's west side, isolated even from the quaint and cultured hills of the Harbor Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design. A highway drive from any coffee house, club or sociable bar, EBN is sequestered from live human culture in exchange for a life given to the study of the television.

The Headquarters, which is also the home of Ronnie and Gardner, is well equipped for EBN endeavors. The complex includes a glassed-in DJ booth, a massive master control room (housing all technical gear and the EBN video archives), two bedrooms, three bathrooms (one with sunken Jacuzzi), living room, kitchen, warehouse (for building and storage of large equipment used for live EBN performances) and a small backyard (home of a retired EBN-mobile).



From the EBN archive
Titles that were considered for the new album

- Public Domain
- Fair Use
- Electronic Behavior Control System
- Live Feed
- Conlink
- Comsat Uplink
- Emergency Breakin
- Telecommunication Breakdown
- Televsual Audio Manipulator
- Audio Stimulator
- Audio Telesimulator
- Scrambler
- Superhigh Bandwidth Scrambler
- Sideband
- Outband
- Third Byte
- Synch Pulse Signal
- De-modulator
- Automatic Frequency Control
- Selection Fuction
- Signal To Noise
- Persistant Uision
- Phase Lock Loops
- Output Feedback
- Bootleg Decoder
- Color Burst
- All Systems Go
- Process Control
- Pixel Uision
- All New Programming
- Threshold Multiplexer
- Voice-Grade Channel
- White Balance
- Access Time
- Base Band
- Blockdown Converter
- Global Beam
- Hyperboloidal Subreflector
- Image Noise
- Industrial Uision Machine
- Ultraset
- Programmable Environment Reality
- Thruforce
- Force Feedback
- Force Reflection Operations
- Programming For Power and Profit
- Super High Band With Signal De-Scrambler
- Singal Core
- Black Burst /White Noise
- No Static
- Station Breaks
- Station Identification Breaks and Beats
- Master Time Clock
- Synch Pulse Generator
- NTSC (Never The Same Color)
- Audiomatrix
- Reprogram Your Mind
- Virtual Dream State
- Electro-Optical Audiomatrix CD
- Mind Sync
- Brain Zapper
- Primed For Suggestion
- Super Mind-State
- Duel Channel Mind Synth
- Whole Brain Synchronization Programs
- Mind State Programming
- Dream Induction Computer
- Stress Boost
- Area 51
- Mind State Programming For Power And Profit
- Calibration CD
- Dream Induction
- Test Pressing
- Psycho-Acoustic Induction Program
- Electro-Optical Induction Program
- Electro-Optical Psycho Acoustics
- Optical Acoustics
- Coming Up Next
- Up Next
- More To Come
- Coming Up Right Now
- Stay Tuned For More
- Broadcast Quality
- An EBN Special Presentation
- This Is EBN
- Made For TV Special
- Making TV Special
- Listen To It Again
- Watch This
- New From EBN



When I arrive at the headqu... ing, four televisions are already be... every day, these four televisions disp... ent cable channels, a constant stre... material. When a member notices a b... he jumps to the appropriate VCR a... byte.

During my stay, two such... recorded: News coverage of a knife... less man shot down in front of the V... scenes from a campy Seventies ma... about a modern day witch hunt.

Sitting in the master contr... Headquarters, Joshua carefully and a... out the history and position of EBN... and Gardner emerge from their bedro...

"You should come watch th... with us," says the cheerful Ronnie... wall of the TVs. "We watch it on all fo...

Gardner arrives carrying a... with four white, gooeey branches juttin... the floor and begins hand-painting the... My best guess is that he's making a c... ration — a bouquet of snowy branche... by this interpretation and explains th... making a Christmas present — a sp... Miniature rockets will be adhered o... branch, transforming them into bubb... Gardner has always been fascinated... tion technology, an interest which has... influenced his work with EBN.

<<< INDUSTRIAL VISION MACHINE

"We collect and analyze al... Joshua says bluntly. "We look at... ephemeral garbage that comes thro... sewage pipe and try to find the conn... are any, between apparently unrelate... and we analyze how this all might b... human race."

By subjecting themselves t... television onslaught, EBN members a... our cultural martyrs. For us, they watc... all the waste of television into a strea... art.

Appropriately, EBN formed... War. "The Gulf War was such a choice... of strangeness that television repr... Joshua fondly remembers. "The telev... of the war demonstrated how horrifyin... turned into entertainment. We are fast... television's power as a propaganda t... that TV makes actually sedates your b... you more open to suggestion. We are... television like moths to a flame."

If you consider it without irony... is even worse than the "garbage" the... lyze. EBN creates danceable audio-vis... of the horrors on TV. Real-life riot foota... explosions and human death make ple... videos. Of course, irony is the key to E...

Shortly after Joshua and G... EBN, Ronnie joined the group as L... another level of music resources and ir... recently, computer wiz Greg DeoCamp... pany AVX specializes in interactive tec... aboard to computerize EBN. Joshua... took their time but have finally culled t... cialists to realize their audio-visual visi...

"In the past, the audio and vid... were completely disconnected," Joshua... the whole time, we worked as if they w... as if we had a video sampler. People v... ly ask us if we used some kind of a vid... of course, we were faking it because it... now it does.

"When Greg joined the band... us to the Macintosh, and he got obses... ing this phantom video sampler. Fir... Mark Marinello, one of Greg's emplo... mapped out the program. Eventually... sumer product, but for now, it's exclusi...

The video sampler (also know... active movie player) is a Macintosh-b... that allows EBN to download audio-v... and then play the samples back in differ... and loops at the touch of a key (on a... Midi keyboard), functioning much like... plexer. From here on out, EBN will crea... and videos simultaneously on the v... which will also become a part of their l... sibly allowing the audience to interact... mance.

The latest addition to the vic

a rate that is almost impossible to the human eye. Images watery and translucent... sometimes unintelligible. An EBN show has been an audio-visual storm; now an EBN show is an assault, numbing and sedating.

<<< SIGNAL CORE >>>

Joshua and Gardner, the artistic core of EBN, met while students at Rhode Island School of Design. In 1987, the two artists founded an organization known as Pearson Post Industries (PPI), a multi-media art organization with a special interest in propaganda, politics and corporate

work. As PPI, Joshua and Gardner exhibited multi-media installations, interactive video displays and large mechanical sculptures, in art galleries. PPI also created such unusual works as "model house" (a Providence apartment transformed into a "miniature Disney-style house"), the "golf bag missile launch system" (a pseudo "personal defense system") and the "telepodium" (a mock presidential podium with TV monitors attached to either side).

The telepodium has always been a mainstay of our show. It represents the idea of television as a weapon and also represents the intersection of politics and television. The design was inspired by the telepodium, the teleprompter and a missile launcher. The original telepodium had televisions at one end and rocket launchers at the other end. Usually we cannot launch rockets in a nightclub, so we retro-fitted it with lights. Ultimately, we want the thing to spit fire and smoke — we don't yet have our own pyrotechnician.

Joshua and Gardner also made exhaustive, glaringly propagandous documentaries about their own PPI work, thus initiating the teleology. Dressed neatly in a suit and tie, a younger Joshua shows off the PPI inventions with a Vanna White-style veneer, in his most bland authoritarian voice:

"Doing EBN, we chose to go the entertainment route as opposed to the political route. We had more fun doing our performances at clubs than in art galleries. Also, we had problems performing in art galleries," Joshua says. "We blew a lot of fuses; they just aren't equipped... although it was

<<< PROGRAMMING FOR POWER AND PROFIT >>>

After touring with 1991's Lollapalooza in their EBN-mobile and gaining worldwide attention for video programming in U2's Zoo TV, EBN signed with TVT Records. Joshua explains EBN's special affiliation: "Steve Gottlieb, the owner of TVT, made the first TV Tunes album. TV show theme songs. I remember when Gardner ran out and stole a copy of the first TV Tunes album. Needless to say, the TV Tunes were wildly successful, and as a result Steve Gottlieb started TVT Records for TV Tunes. We love the concept — TV tunes is our mid-

level. However pleased they are to be signed to TVT, EBN recognizes that "band" doesn't belong in the music business. "When you look at video sales, video sales are minuscule compared to record sales. Mariah Carey, Peter Gabriel, whoever. The public doesn't want to buy music as much as they want to buy CDs. Video is demanding. You don't want it in the background, like you play background music. Some people don't watch TV that way but not video. So for these reasons, TVT is most interested in selling a CD product as opposed to a video product. We have been with this idea of making music independent of the video and for several years, we have concentrated on making music that will stand

<<< TELECOMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN >>>

After much deliberation, EBN's first full-length album has been titled *Telecommunication Breakdown*. "We went through many name and name choices," Joshua grumbles. "It's definitely been an interesting experience working with a record label. There are a lot of people put on us creatively. We have pages and pages and pages of notes. We definitely learned that you shouldn't rely on committee decisions." He pulls out a pile of official EBN spiral notebooks and shows pages and pages of titles.

Produced over a period of six weeks by like-minded artist Jack of Meat Beat Manifesto, *Telecommunication Breakdown* is a techno experience. Techno and hip-hop beats are built with layers of samples. Songs are sometimes danceable, sometimes bizarre... some clips of TV banter.

Both Brian Eno and Bill Laswell contributed remixes to the album. Eno is one of our musical heroes and inspirations. We like his attitude of being a non-musician making music. So when we met through the U2 connection, we asked him if he'd like to work on our album. He did some very cool stuff. His wild remix of 'Homicidal Tendencies' is the last track on the album."

<<< SUPER MIND STATE CONTINUED >>>

After burning the roof of his mouth on a slurp of soup, Ronnie, a pizza shop employee, defines the common occurrence known as "the chin phenomenon" — when you bite into a piece of pizza and all the toppings slide off the pizza crust and onto your chin, leaving it red from the pizza sauce. We all snicker goofily. Obviously, "video" affected our consciousness. Gardner notes that perhaps in the future, live performance, they should build up to the "video wall" rather than the audience throughout the show. All agree. After lunch and a swift drive on the highway, I return to live performance. My mind recovers several hours later.

