



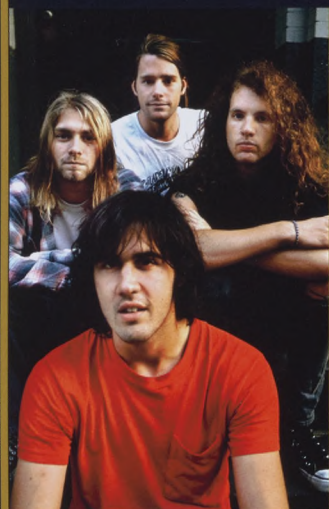
Krist Novoselic,
Dave Grohl,
and Kurt Cobain
(from top)

Nirvana

BY DAVID FRICKE

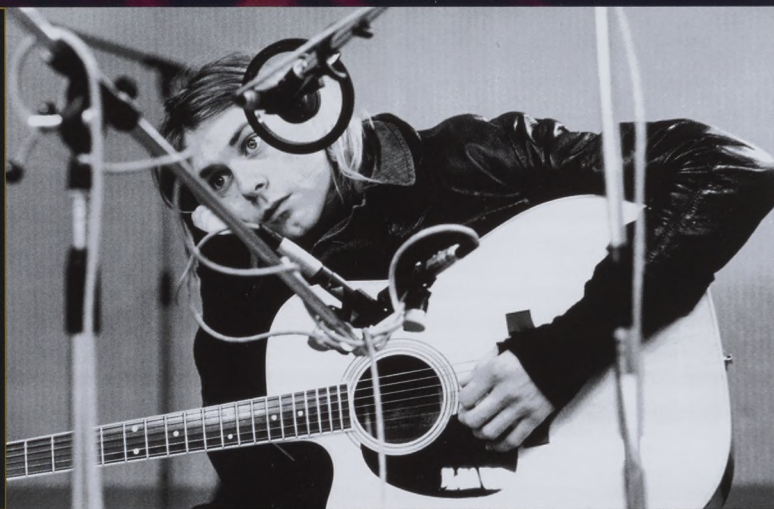
The Seattle band led and defined the early-nineties alternative-rock uprising, unleashing a generation's pent-up energy and changing the sound and future of rock.

THIS IS WHAT NIRVANA SINGER-GUITARIST KURT Cobain thought of institutional honors in rock & roll: When his band was photographed for the cover of *Rolling Stone* for the first time, in early 1992, he arrived wearing a white T-shirt on which he'd written, CORPORATE MAGAZINES STILL SUCK in black marker. The slogan was his twist on one coined by the punk-rock label SST: "Corporate Rock Still Sucks." The hastily arranged photo session, held by the side of a road during a manic tour of Australia, was later recalled by photographer Mark Seliger: "I said to Kurt, 'I think that's a great shirt . . . but let's shoot a couple with and without it.' Kurt said, 'No, I'm not going to take my shirt off.'" *Rolling Stone* ran his Fuck You un-retouched. ✨ Cobain was also mocking his own success. At that moment, Nirvana – Cobain, bassist Krist Novoselic, and drummer Dave Grohl – was rock's biggest new rock band, propelled out of a long-simmering postpunk scene in Seattle by its incendiary second album, *Nevermind*, and an improbable Top Ten single, "Smells Like Teen Spirit." Right after New Year's Day 1992, *Nevermind* – Nirvana's first major-label release and a perfect monster of feral-punk challenge and classic-rock magnetism, issued to underground ecstasy just months before – had shoved Michael Jackson's *Dangerous* out of the Number One spot in *Billboard*. ✨ For the next two years, Nirvana – and particularly Cobain, its grainy, searing voice and enigmatic songwriter – led and defined the early-nineties alternative-rock uprising. Like "I Want to Hold Your Hand" and "Like a Rolling Stone," "Smells Like Teen Spirit" was a Year Zero hit. A titanic blast of dry jest and anthemic anxiety promoted with



**CLOCKWISE
FROM TOP**

Kurt Cobain, Dave Grohl, and Krist Novoselic performing on MTV's 'Live and Loud,' 1993; Cobain in the studio in Hilversum, Holland, 1991; Novoselic in the U.K., 1992; Grohl takes a break in Holland, 1991; the band's brief 1989 lineup, which featured Chad Channing (top) on drums and Jason Everman (right) as second guitarist.



a kinetic, mosh-pit-party video, the song changed the sound and future of rock in an instant, unleashing a generation's pent-up energy and severing the extended, conservative grip of hair metal, synth-pop, and the Reagan-Bush eighties. Nirvana came fully armed for their moment, too, with the compelling despair and fighting bliss of the *Nevermind* grenades "Come as You Are" and "In Bloom." Later, in 1993, there was the raw, emotional crisis of *In Utero*, while eerily gorgeous ballads like "Dumb" and "All Apologies" revealed the great pop drive in Cobain's savaging introspection.

But that T-shirt summed up a powerful resentment. Cobain hated the crush of celebrity and mistrusted the sudden, rapt attention of his mainstream audience.

"There was always punk-rock guilt," Grohl said years later. "Kurt, in some way, felt guilty - that he had done something that so many people latched on to. The bigger the shows got, the farther we got from our dream, our ideal." That, Grohl claimed, was "remaining comfortable and confident in the underground, where we had always expected to be."

We can't know what Cobain would have thought of Nirvana's induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Struggling with heroin addiction and profoundly unhappy in his stardom, Cobain was found dead in his Seattle home, a suicide, on April 8, 1994. He left a wife, singer Courtney Love of Hole; a young daughter, Frances; two shattered bandmates; and a stunned world. Like Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison, Janis Joplin, and the Rolling Stones' Brian Jones, Cobain was 27 when he died.

"There's the icon, and then there's the person," Novoselic said of his friend in 2001. "I don't think I ever knew the icon." The bassist, originally from California, met Cobain in high school, in the hard-up logging town of Aberdeen, Washington. They started Nirvana in 1987, going through five drummers - making their debut album, *Bleach* (1989) with Chad Channing - before enlisting Grohl, a veteran of Washington, D.C.'s hardcore community, in 1990.

Cobain "was deified because of people's connection to the music," Novoselic contended. But songwriting was "an exorcising thing for him. And he had really high standards. If he wanted people to hear it, you knew it was in good condition."

"I never wanted to sing," Cobain said of his initial ambitions when we spoke in October 1993, during Nirvana's *In Utero* tour. "I just wanted to play rhythm guitar - hide in the back and just play. But during those high school years when I was playing guitar in my bedroom, I at least had the intuition that I had to write my own songs."

And Cobain knew when he was good. "If I was smart, I would have saved most of the songs off *Nevermind* and spread them over a fifteen-year career," he cracked. "But I can't do that. All the albums I ever liked were albums that delivered a great song, one after another: Aerosmith's *Rocks*, the Sex Pistols' *Never Mind the Bollocks . . .*, *Led Zeppelin II*, *Back in Black* by AC/DC."

Cobain and Nirvana now follow all of those bands into the Hall of Fame. "The whole fame thing - yeah, he didn't know what to do," Novoselic

admitted. But, he added, "artistically, he knew exactly what he was doing."

KURT DONALD COBAIN WAS BORN ON FEBRUARY 20, 1967, in Hoquiam, Washington, and grew up in nearby Aberdeen, the older of two children. His father, Donald, an auto mechanic, and mother, Wendy, divorced when Kurt was 8, a split that still haunted him on *In Utero*. "I tried hard to have a father/ But instead I had a dad," he sang in "Serve the Servants."

Cobain found solace and purpose in music, learning guitar by playing along to AC/DC's "Back in Black" and listening intently to the Beatles. *Nevermind* coproducer Butch Vig recalled watching Cobain play John Lennon's "Julia" on guitar one day during the sessions. "He had that innate melodic sensitivity," Vig said, noting that Cobain also "tried sometimes to squash that. That's not a very punk-y thing to do, to sing gorgeous melodies. . . . He would say, 'Is this too much?' - even on "Teen Spirit."

Cobain discovered punk in his late teens, through a thundering Monsanto, Washington, band called the Melvins. He was such a fan he became their roadie for a time. In turn, their drummer, Dale Crover, played in Cobain's early stab at a band, Fecal Matter, then in an embryonic Nirvana with Cobain and Novoselic. Crover, who replaced original drummer Aaron Burkhard, was on Nirvana's first studio session: demos of ten songs all written or cowritten by Cobain, taped in Seattle in January 1988.

Novoselic, who was born May 16, 1965, to Croatian parents in Compton, California, described Cobain's composing: "He never liked literal things." Cobain typically wrote in soft-loud seesaws - dark, often creeping riffs in the verse, followed by big-chorus fireworks.

"Kurt, in some way, felt guilty. . . . The bigger the shows got, the farther we got from our dream, our ideal."

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY



BLEACH
Sub Pop 1989



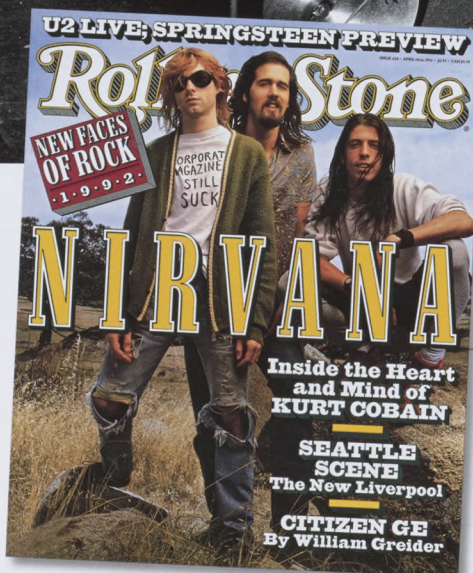
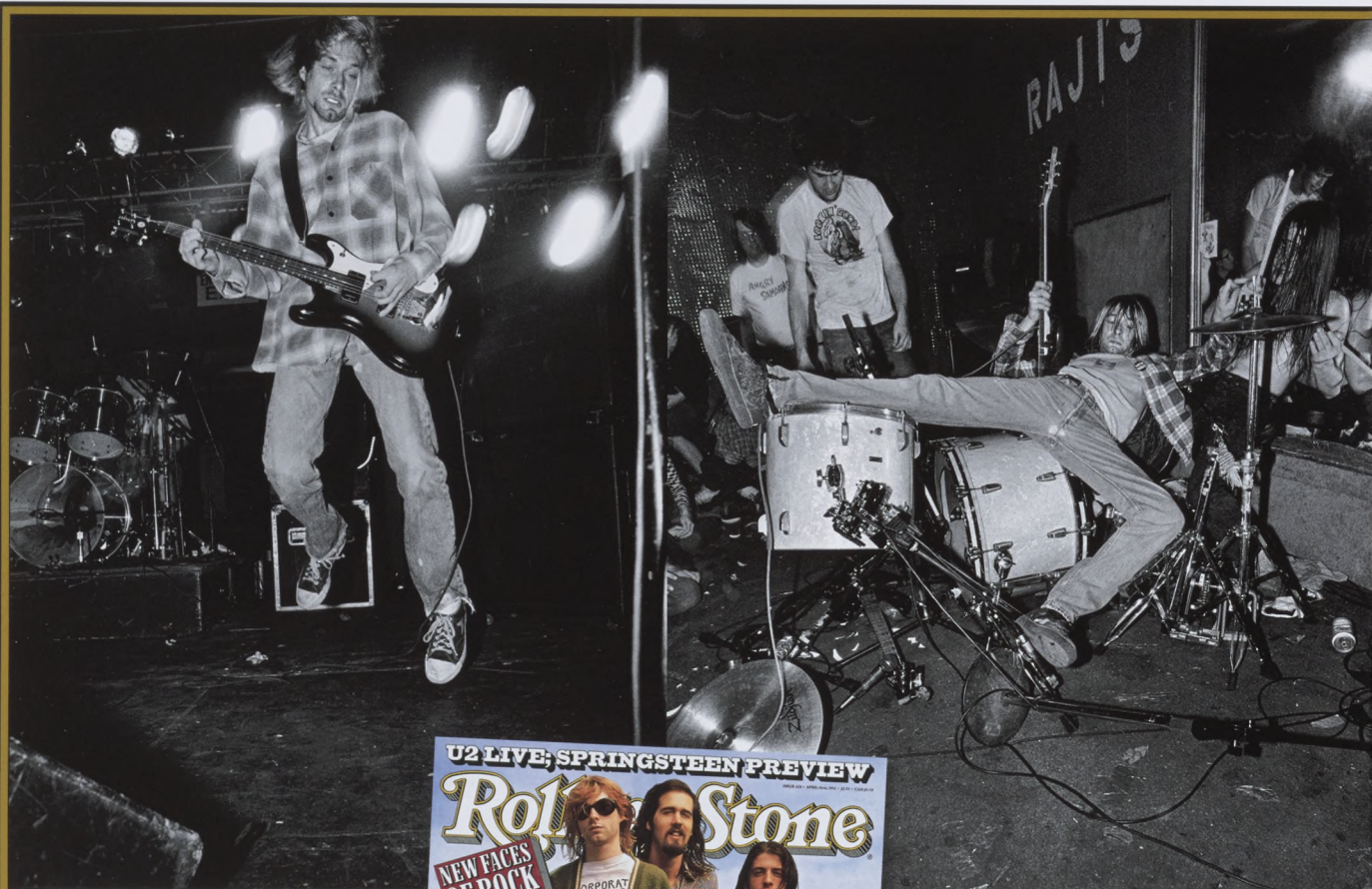
NEVERMIND
DGC 1991



IN UTERO
DGC 1993



UNPLUGGED IN NEW YORK
DGC 1994



(He derided his own formula with a song he titled, “Verse Chorus Verse.”) But the lyrics had a slippery candor – unfiltered confessions and jarring confrontation, expressed in sly entendres and jump-cut language – that came out in his other art: homemade collages and bizarre videotape montages in which he reordered images and debris from popular culture. Cobain’s driving impulse in everything, Novoselic said, was “build your own world.”

The Pacific Northwest was a punk-rock nation unto itself long before the major-label gold rush triggered by *Nevermind*. In the early and mid-sixties, the biggest stars in the region, aside from the Beatles, were homegrown *Nuggets* heroes like the Sonics, Paul Revere and the Raiders, the Wailers (who cut a seminal rock version of Richard Berry’s “Louie, Louie”), and the Kingsmen (who had the hit in 1963). What became known as “grunge” – a local brand of thunder, speed, and bawl rooted in both Black Sabbath and Black Flag – was officially on record by 1986, on the compilation LP *Deep Six*.

In November 1988, Sub Pop Records, the scene’s nerve-center label, released Nirvana’s first single, “Love Buzz,” a scouring fuzz cover of a 1969 oldie by Dutch pop-psych group Shocking Blue. “For a few years in Seattle, it was the Summer of Love,” Cobain said in 1993. “To be able to just jump on top of the crowd with my guitar and be held up and pushed to the back of the room and then brought back with no harm done to me – it was a celebration of something

ABOVE
Nirvana, in 1989. The band was known for its chaotic live performances.

that no one could put their finger on.”

Bleach was made during that utopia – in thirty hours with producer Jack Endino for \$606.17 – and issued by Sub Pop in June 1989. (Guitarist Jason Everman, briefly in the band that year, was shown in the cover photo and listed in the album credits but did not play on the record.) Still, in his fuzz bullet, “School,” Cobain was seething about the cracks and cliques surfacing among the Seattle bands. He also turned from grunge orthodoxy in “About a Girl,” written about a failing relationship, and recorded in stark folk-rock tones that evoked the Beatles’ *Rubber Soul* and recent R.E.M.

“There was this total rock-godhead thing going on,” Sonic Youth guitarist Thurston Moore said in a 1994 *Rolling Stone* interview, remembering the first time he saw Nirvana live in 1989. Moore also recognized the pop logic in Cobain’s songs and Nirvana’s visceral execution, “something Kurt really picked up from the Pixies and R.E.M.” Cobain openly acknowledged his inspirations. “I was trying to write the ultimate pop song,” he said in 1993 of “Smells Like Teen Spirit” – and, he added, smiling, “trying to rip off the Pixies.”

Grohl – born in Warren, Ohio, on January 14, 1969, and raised in Virginia – was originally a guitarist and turned to drums in high school. He toured and made albums with the Washington, D.C., hardcore band



Scream until Melvins guitarist Buzz Osborne put him in touch with Cobain and Novoselic. The *Nevermind* sessions, in Van Nuys, California, were the first time Grohl had worked in a professional studio.

"We had been rehearsing those songs for months," Grohl said in 2001. "We weren't so concerned with making sure all of us were playing perfectly. It was more about really coming together as a unit, to make a noise that grooved." Cobain, he pointed out, "was kind of a drummer himself. When he would play guitar or write songs, if you looked at his jaw, he would be moving [it] back and forth. It was like he was playing drums with his teeth. He heard in his head what he wanted from a rhythm."

Nothing was the same for rock or Nirvana after *Nevermind*. "It was so fast and explosive," Cobain said of that whirlwind. "I didn't know how to deal with it. If there was a Rock Star 101 course, I would have liked to take it. It might have helped me." Grohl later described that period of extremes – the hit singles and TV appearances; Cobain's drug use and rehab; the birth of Frances and the harsh tabloid focus on Cobain's marriage to Love – as "walking through a minefield."

In Utero was Nirvana's rude, deliberate overreaction to pop glory and the studio-manicured force of *Nevermind*. The band made *In Utero* with producer Steve Albini, a punk legend for his work with the Pixies and his own cult bands Big Black and Rapeman. The basic tracks were cut live – as many as four a day – and Cobain sang most of his vocals in a single seven-hour session. That immediacy suited the contempt and irony loaded into songs like "Frances Farmer Will Have Her Revenge on Seattle" – Cobain's shot at grunge mania – and "Radio Friendly Unit Shifter," an obvious joke at his own expense.

But *In Utero* was also the result of obsessive, patient craft: "Dumb," "All Apologies," and the magnificent tension of "Pennyroyal Tea" were all written by Cobain

back in 1990. And when he had second thoughts about the mixes on *In Utero*, Nirvana went into the studio again, this time with Scott Litt, to do additional work on, among other things, the suspense and fury of the album's first single, "Heart-Shaped Box."

Novoselic has called *In Utero* "my favorite Nirvana album. You can hear the band in there. And it was a diverse record. We weren't beating one idea to death. That album is a testimony to Kurt – his artistic vision and how strong it was."

There would be one more: Nirvana's extraordinary acoustic performance on November 18, 1993, in New York, for *MTV Unplugged*. With an expanded touring lineup that included guitarist Pat Smear of the Germs, Nirvana revisited hard, distortion-laden songs like "Come as You Are" with a bold quiet, while treating the soft distress of "Polly" and "Something in the Way" with an enriched buoyance. Cobain also sang a new, definitive treatment of Lead Belly's chilling lament, "Where Did You Sleep Last Night."

Everything was done in one take. MTV aired the show on December 16, 1993; four months later, Cobain was dead. The album of that concert, issued in November 1994, was Nirvana's first posthumous release.

It is hard to ignore the coincidence: Nirvana is being inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame on the twentieth anniversary of Cobain's passing. "It's easy to remember him being sad," Grohl said in 2001. "But the things I like to think about are his happiness and how much he loved music, whether he was sitting in a living room, playing an acoustic guitar, or playing at the Off Ramp in Seattle."

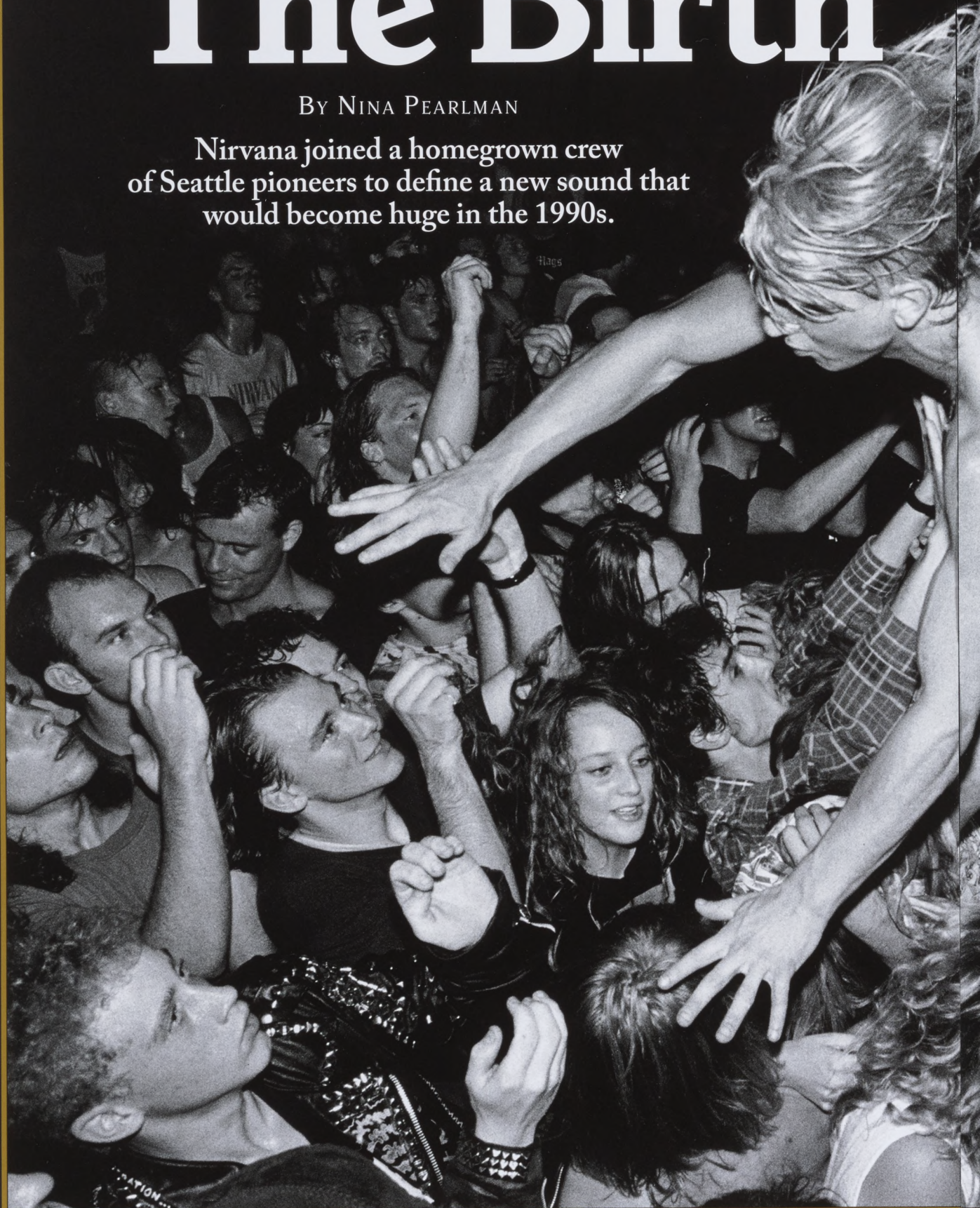
"It was real," Novoselic insisted. "[Cobain] would say to himself, 'What is good music? What is good art? Does it have passion?' No pretense, no grandiose concepts – that's what moved him."

Then Kurt Cobain – and Nirvana – moved the world. 🍌

The Birth

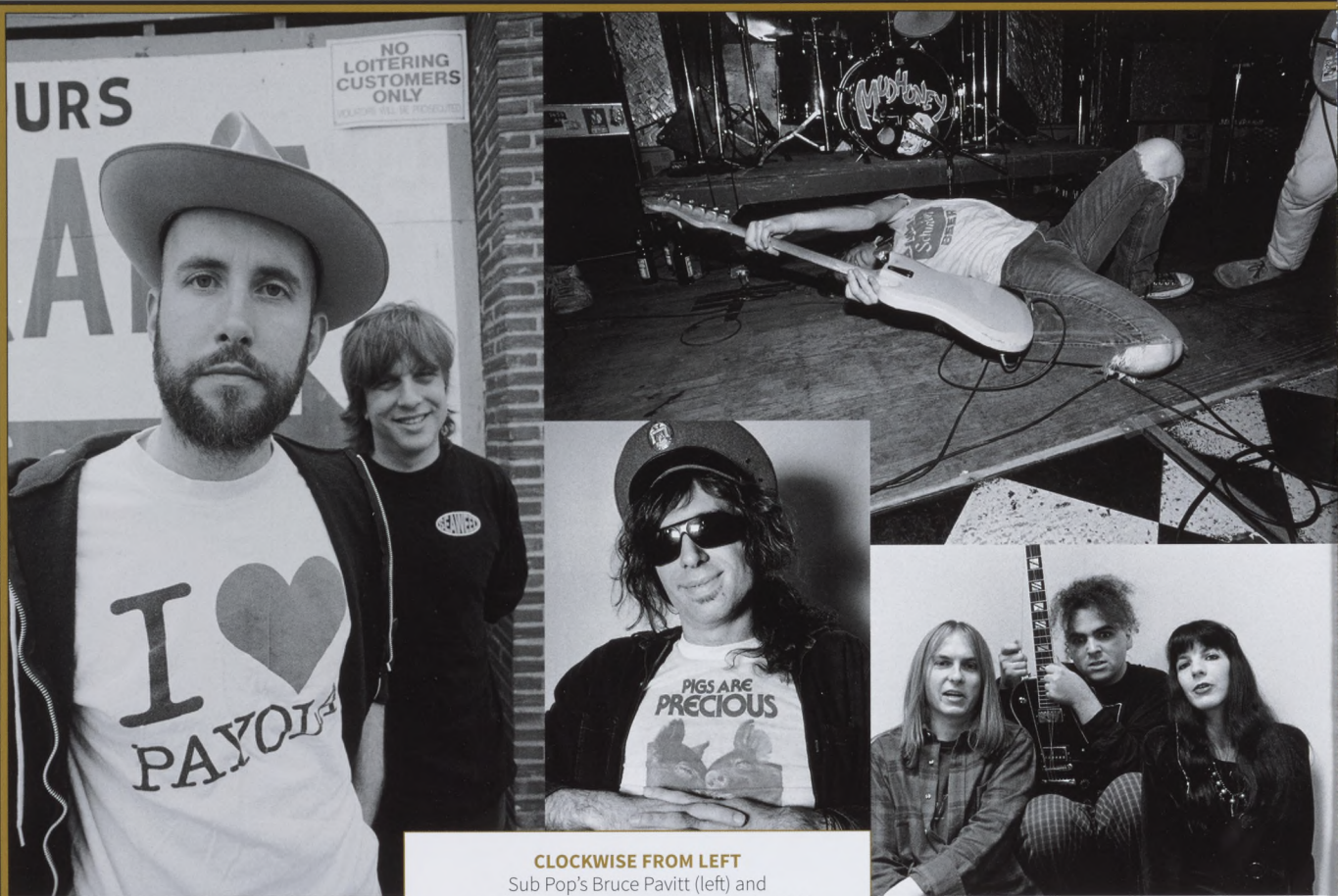
BY NINA PEARLMAN

Nirvana joined a homegrown crew of Seattle pioneers to define a new sound that would become huge in the 1990s.



of Grunge





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT
 Sub Pop's Bruce Pavitt (left) and
 Jonathan Poneman; Mudhoney, live in 1988;
 the Melvins; Jack Endino.

THINK OF GRUNGE AND, CHANCES ARE, THE music is not what you'll think of first. It's the look: pale, skinny teens; faces obscured by long, stringy hair; feet swallowed by oversize boots; feet clad in ripped jeans and – how could we forget? – plaid flannel shirts. But before it became a fashion statement, grunge was a sound. It was birthed in the rainy confines of Seattle and its surroundings, half a decade before it exploded on the airwaves and the charts. Its originators were a tight community of twentysomethings – roommates, coworkers, drinking buddies – who challenged the conventional notions of what music could be. In time, they would change the face of music forever.

Tonight's inductee, Nirvana, was one of the most famous and successful of grunge's purveyors, but it was not the first. Soundgarden, Malfunkshun, Skin Yard, Green River, the Melvins: These were grunge's original innovators. Starting in 1984, they began blending genres – punk, hard rock, metal, garage rock – that bands had previously kept separate. The resulting hybrid played itself out in any number of ways, from Soundgarden's heavy, Sabbath-y hard rock; to Green River's blues-infused, Stooges-inflected metal; to the Melvins' sinister and ponderous sludge.

Early experimentations were first captured on *Deep Six*, a 1986 compilation featuring nascent grunge bands produced by Chris Hanzsek, who released it on his own Seattle-based C/Z Records. After losing money on the LP, Hanzsek terminated the label and decided to open a recording studio instead. Skin Yard guitarist Jack Endino, who had been cutting bands in his basement for five dollars an hour, found a recently closed studio, and in July 1986, Reciprocal Record-

ing was founded, with Hanzsek as owner and Endino as freelance producer and engineer. Endino had already recorded Green River and Soundgarden (and Skin Yard had shared bills with both), and these were the first two groups through Reciprocal's doors. In the eight-track studio, the sound Endino drew from bands – a raw, dirty assault of live energy – would define grunge as much as the songs themselves.

"I have my own aesthetic, which you could call 'Creedence Clearwater Revival meets Led Zeppelin,'" said Endino. "My approach in the studio and the limitations of the budgets and the gear sort of forced people to concentrate on playing really well, basically attacking the songs and not trying to get too pretty about it."

"Jack had a good ear and an understanding for what we and tons of other people were trying to do," said Mark Arm, singer of Green River and, later, Mudhoney. "He didn't have any empathy with the big production of the eighties, and he didn't try and make bands into what they weren't." Once their songs were recorded, the bands needed a way to get them heard. Green River had already released an EP, *Come On Down* (1985), on the indie Homestead Records – a fraught experience Arm described as "a pain in the ass." So the band turned to a friend, Bruce Pavitt, who had put out some recordings himself and would become one of the primary figures in the history of grunge.

IN 1979, WHILE A STUDENT AT OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON'S Evergreen College, Pavitt had started an indie-rock fanzine called *Subterranean Pop*. He later shortened the name to *Sub Pop* and started



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

Green River in 1987, before the Mudhoney–Mother Love Bone split; Mark Arm with Green River in 1986; Tad singer Tad Doyle (center), crowdsurfing in 1980.

distributing compilation tapes of the bands he covered along with the 'zine. When he moved to Seattle in 1983, he brought the franchise with him, releasing a compilation LP in 1986, *Sub Pop 100*. But when it came time to release full-lengths by one band – say, Green River – Pavitt didn't have enough cash. Enter Jonathan Poneman, a radio DJ, booking agent, and man with capital. Soundgarden guitarist Kim Thayil brought the two together. "I was friends with Bruce Pavitt – we grew up in the same hometown, Park Forest, Illinois," said Thayil. "I worked at [University of Washington radio station] KCMU, and so did Jonathan Poneman, and Bruce was there for a bit. Bruce was turning the *Sub Pop* fanzine into a record label, and Jonathan was interested in starting a record label. Jonathan had some financial resources, and Bruce certainly had the cultural resources. So we thought, we can benefit from these two working together."

In the summer of 1987, *Sub Pop* came out with its initial single-artist releases. They were Endino's first Reciprocal recordings: Green River's *Dry as a Bone* and Soundgarden's *Screaming Life* EP. More albums from local bands followed. By then, *Sub Pop* had acquired a somewhat consistent sound, thanks both to the bands on its roster and to Endino, who recorded most of them; and a consistent look, courtesy of

Charles Peterson. A gifted photographer who was friends with many Sub Pop bands, Peterson captured grunge's gritty, primal essence with his photos as skillfully as Endino did with his production work. His black and white shots – some posed, some live, many blurred – grace the covers of most of *Sub Pop*'s early releases.

Recognizing the edge American bands received from getting noticed in the U.K. press, Poneman and Pavitt flew in British music journalist Everett True to cover their bands in early 1989. In March, *Melody Maker* ran True's glowing write-up of *Sub Pop*'s roster. The previous week, the magazine had devoted an entire spread by True to one Sub Pop band: Mudhoney, which Mark Arm had formed after Green River broke up.

Green River's melding of metal and hard rock had always been a direct reflection of its members' musical leanings, and with the band's

third and final recording, 1988's *Rehab Doll*, hard rock was starting to win out. By October 1987, the band had split; by January 1988, Green River's punk lovers – Arm and original Green River guitarist Steve Turner – had formed Mudhoney and were holed up in the studio with Endino, recording their first single, "Touch Me I'm Sick."

Before the word *grunge* became synonymous with Nirvana, Pearl Jam, and pretty much any band that called Seattle home, it equaled Mudhoney – first with

**“We were
more about
just making
badass fucking
rock & roll.”**



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

Alice in Chains bassist Mike Starr, rocking the flannel in 1991; Pearl Jam in 1992, a year after releasing its first album, 'Ten'; singer Eddie Vedder during a Pearl Jam show, early 1990s; Soundgarden in 1989, the year it put out 'Louder Than Love.'

"Touch Me I'm Sick," a track that's as much fuzzed-out sixties garage rock as it is punk, and then with the debut full-length, released in October 1988, *Superfuzz Bigmuff*. Thanks to the *Melody Maker* spread, airplay from Britain's influential DJ John Peel, and a tour opening for Sonic Youth – who were "like tastemakers in the British underground," noted Arm – *Superfuzz* found its way to the top of the U.K. indie charts. Other Sub Pop bands, like Tad (formed in 1988) and Soundgarden – who had moved to the indie label SST for its second album, *Ultramega OK* (also released in October 1988) – started getting attention in Britain as well.

Before Mudhoney left for Europe, it was playing two-hundred- to three-hundred-capacity clubs. When the band returned home, it filled the city's two-thousand-person Moore Theatre. "I was just like, 'You're crazy – there's no way we're going to get enough people to fill up the Moore,'" remembered Arm. "And it worked. Tons of people came. It was like going away to England and being talked about overseas gave certain Seattle bands weight."

As Poneman and Pavitt's plans were coming to fruition, another camp in Seattle was working toward success for its own bands. In 1989, their efforts would pay off as well.

BEFORE GREEN RIVER HAD OFFICIALLY called it quits, three of its members – metal-leaning bassist Jeff Ament and similarly inclined guitarists Stone Gossard and Bruce Fairweather – had already started jamming with Malfunkshun singer Andrew Wood. Wood was a flamboyant frontman, unafraid of seventies rock trappings. His stagewear often included white face paint, feather boas, and platform shoes. In early 1988, this new group (plus drummer Greg Gilmore) also entered Reciprocal with Endino, to record a demo under the name Mother Love Bone. By November 1989, the band had scored a recording contract with PolyGram.

Mother Love Bone was the second band from this community to ink a deal with a major; Soundgarden had been the first, signing to A&M in late



1988. The third was Alice in Chains. Formed in 1987, Alice was more of a straight-ahead metal group than many of its Seattle peers, but its stripped-down look and dark sound still separated it from the other metal bands of the day. "At that time," said guitarist Jerry Cantrell, "things were a lot about image and hair and hairspray. So we nixed out the hairspray and the look thing, and we were more about just making badass fucking rock & roll." By 1989, the band had signed to Columbia, before it had even released an EP.

The swiftness with which Alice was picked up by a major was due to something else the three bands had in common: Mother Love Bone was managed by Kelly Curtis and Soundgarden by Susan Silver; Alice in Chains was managed by both. "Kelly and Susan were pretty influential in getting the whole thing happening," said Cantrell. "Those two are very powerful forces, reasons why [label] people said, 'Hey, we need to get people to come up to Seattle.' They worked their asses off at that." In 1989, Curtis and Silver reaped the rewards of their efforts when Soundgarden released its

first effort for a major label, *Louder Than Love*. The following year, Alice in Chains debuted with *Facelift*, and Mother Love Bone completed its glammy full-length, *Apple*. And then, on March 19, 1990, a month before *Apple* was scheduled for release, Andrew Wood died of an accidental heroin overdose.

When the grunge groups came together to mourn Wood's death, it was the first time many of them had been together in the same place for months. The once small and cohesive scene had started to splinter: The bands, continually on tour, were rarely in town at the same time and were influencing one another's sound less and less. By now most had achieved some level of recognition, but even the most successful were finding the payoff to be slow. *Facelift*, for instance, did go gold, but it took it a year to get there; its second single, "Man in the Box," did not hit the Top Twenty until the summer of 1991.

"Around 1990, I thought it was about as big as it was going to get," said Arm of the grunge scene. "It was like, okay, the Seattle grunge bands have been signed to major labels and, well, nothing's really happening," Endino concurred. "The peak of grunge, as far as anyone was concerned here, was about '89, when Mudhoney's second or third record came out on Sub Pop and bailed [the label] out of the red."

Grunge, however, was just getting started.

In January 1988, around the time he was recording "Touch Me I'm Sick" and Mother Love Bone's demo, Endino received a call from a singer in Aberdeen, Washington. His name was Kurt Cobain, and he wanted to book time at Reciprocal. Endino recorded a demo for Cobain's band, Nirvana, and, liking what he heard, passed the demo on to Poneman. Sensing potential in the group, Poneman sent Nirvana back into Reciprocal with Endino, where they recorded their punk-inflected debut, *Bleach*.

Nirvana remained with Sub Pop through the end of 1990. By then disillusioned with Sub Pop's constant financial duress, the band, like its counterparts, was negotiating with major labels. In April 1991, it finalized a deal with DGC and started to record its second album in Los Angeles, with producer Butch Vig.

Another band was also finishing its debut in early 1991. While still recovering from the loss of Wood, Ament and Gossard had been playing together again, this time with guitarist Mike McCready and San Diego-based singer Eddie Vedder. With Curtis still on board as manager, and with drummer Dave Krusen, the band landed a deal on Epic and put eleven new songs on vinyl under the name Pearl Jam. (Along the way, Ament, Gossard, and McCready also teamed with Wood's former roommate Chris Cornell and Soundgarden drummer Matt Cameron to record 1991's tribute to Wood, *Temple of the Dog*.) In August 1991, Pearl Jam released its debut, *Ten*. Four weeks later, Nirvana released its first effort for DGC, *Nevermind*.

Guns n' Roses were then the biggest band in the country, and Michael Jackson still ruled the charts. But on January 11, 1992, the unthinkable happened: Driven by little more than its single, the anthem to teenage discontent, "Smells Like Teen Spirit," *Nevermind* hit Number One. The album dethroned *Dangerous* by the King of Pop himself. By the summer of 1992, Pearl Jam's *Ten* had gone gold and hit Number Two on the charts. Soundgarden's *Badmotorfinger*, released the year before, went to Number 39. Alice in Chains' second record, *Dirt* (1992), sold platinum, peaking at Number Six.

Grunge had finally and truly arrived. And rock & roll, invigorated once more, has never been the same since. 🍌