

WORLD TRIBUNE MAILBOX

Recording Artists Be Cautious

I read with great interest your article on Duncan Sheik (Feb. 7 *World Tribune*), and while I admire his artistic dedication, as a fellow songwriter, recording artist and Buddhist, I must bring up some important points that need to be considered by any established or aspiring recording artists.

Those familiar with the recording industry are well aware that the music business is often capricious and downright cruel to the recording artists themselves, who, more than 90 percent of the time, are the last ones to see the fruits of their labors. Artists as diverse as Prince and Frank Zappa have been courageous and outspoken about gaining control over their art.

The countless stories of “one-shot wonders,” the statistical data that 90 percent of artists signed to “record deals” never have their art released to the public and, by the major labels’ own accounts, that 90 percent of records that are released do not “make a profit” leads one to believe that something is terribly unjust about a system that as a matter of course chews up and spits out countless talented and dedicated artists.

There is a growing movement of independent recording artists who refuse to let anyone else decide who is a recording artist or not, and many have found that there is a good, honest living to be made from actually owning one’s art and directing most of the profits to the people who actually helped create the music.

It’s always a long, hard road, but as KRS-1 says, “Knowledge reigns supreme.”

— KEITH ANDERSON, Seattle

Black History Month

I wanted to express appreciation for the appearance of two wonderful articles about black Americans. The articles, written by Patricia Elam Ruff, featured the accomplishments of two courageous black women: Zora Neale Hurston (“Worldview,” Feb. 14), a nationally known writer and anthropologist of the Harlem Renaissance, and Eva Sullivan (“Perspective,” Feb. 14), a beloved pioneer member, who was recently eulogized at a memorial service by family and friends of the Washington, D.C., area.

As an American, who happens to be black, it was especially reassuring to see the articles appear during Black History Month.

I have also noticed the *World Tribune*’s recent efforts to incorporate features that allow more opportunities for our members’ diverse voices to be heard. It has proven to be very encouraging for me. Please keep up the good work!

— LAURA M. HUGGINS, Landover Hills, Md.

Title: Mailbox: 04/18/97

Subject: World Tribune 04/18/97 n.3135 p.3 WT970418p03

Author:

Keywords: 04/18/97 Arts January June Mailbox Opinion Society Tribune World