

BEST OF ST. LOUIS 2001



# Critic's Pick



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## Gary "U.S." Bonds

BY ANDREW MARCUS

Do you trust a guy named Gary "U.S." Bonds? You do when he's selling hearty rock & soul of the highest order. The Norfolk, Va.-raised singer's "New Orleans" and "Quarter to Three" still pop up in oldies rotations. Despite having been birthed in the first pop-pap era of rock, they're snappy, booming go-nuts-at-church rave-ups indebted to '50s R&B, with Bonds' double-tracked voice jumping from the speakers and amiably slapping you stupid. But a late-'70s/early-'80s comeback period, with childhood fan Bruce Springsteen sometimes producing, proved that Bonds' scrappy, rich vocals never needed the studio trickery. Subsequently, his repertoire can't be matched -- those hopping, effervescent originals; breathless Springsteen rockers such as "Rendezvous"; traditionalists like "Jole Blon." And, like every great singer, the stage is Bonds' true habitat, as shown on his new *King Biscuit Flower Hour* live disc. You'll want to kick back and savor his performance, but you are hereby commanded to shout a request for the astounding guitar-soul ballad "Last Time." Has any artist so effortlessly navigated the boundary between what we're told to think of as black music and white music? Bonds is the real McCoy.



### this week in Music

**Music**  
**Farrar and Away**  
 With *Sebastopol*, Jay Farrar has made one of the finest and most unusual records of his storied career

**Sitar Star**  
 One of the world's pre-eminent sitar players, Imrat Khan once taught the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. Now he teaches at Washington University.

**Radar Station**  
**Bug on the Wall**  
 Ded Bug Matt Meyer puts down his guitar and picks up a camera to chronicle St. Louis' rock scene

**Critic's Pick**  
**The Drapes with the Monroes**  
 Saturday, Nov. 17; Frederick's Music Lounge

**Single Malt Band**  
 Saturday, Nov. 17; Cicero's

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