



Enigma Records

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## PERE UBU

In 1975, Pere Ubu was organized as a one-off recording project. Its horizons soon broadened. Four self-produced singles, released between 1975 and 1977, led to major label releases in 1978. The first album, entitled *The Modern Dance*, and the later *Dub Housing* were both considered important albums and found their way to several critics' "don't miss" lists.

Over the course of the next four years, Ubu continued to experiment with the form of rock music, pursuing the way of the avant-garde, recording three more studio LPs: 1980's controversial *The Art Of Walking*, *New Picnic Time* and *The Song Of The Bailing Man*. By 1982, Pere Ubu had exhausted itself.

"We were all so tangled up in personality quirks that our ability to create together had gotten mired," said Allen Ravenstine in a recent interview. "Before, whenever we reached a point like that we'd try different cures — bring in someone new, try to move the music somewhere new. By the end, we'd exhausted all the possibilities at hand."

There were no melodramatic scenes or apocalyptic blowouts. Ubu simply stopped working. Weeks turned into months (and then years) while members of the group busied themselves in other fields. Allen worked with Mayo Thompson's Red Crayola before dropping out of music altogether for a time. Scott Krauss and Tony Maimone founded Home & Garden. David Thomas fronted a succession of surrealistic song and poetry troupes; first The Pedestrians, then The Wooden Birds.

In 1986, however, the way was clear for a revitalization of Ubu Projex. Reconciliations had been accomplished and events began to suggest the inevitability of it. Thomas, Ravenstine and Maimone were working together as The Wooden Birds and planning a rock project with guitarist Jim Jones (an Ubu associate from the days of the Cleveland underground) and drummer Chris Cutler, Ubu friend and former member of '70s avant-rock pioneers Henry Cow. Ubu art designer John Thompson had also re-surfaced and was involved.

In September of that year, Scott Krauss sat in with The Wooden Birds for an impromptu set of Ubu songs at a concert in Cleveland. Between encores he agreed to join up. "The more we talked about the next project and sat there looking at each other," recalled David Thomas, "the more it became obvious that what we were talking about was Pere Ubu." A year later the group gathered in Cleveland to begin work on *The Tenement Year*, their first studio album in six years. This is Pere Ubu's first release for Enigma in America.

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Photography © 1988 Deborah Tinsley

SCOTT KRAUS

JIM JONES

DAVID THOMAS

CHRIS CUTLER

TONY MAIMONE

ALLEN RAVENSTINE

LEFT TO RIGHT:

# PERE UBU



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