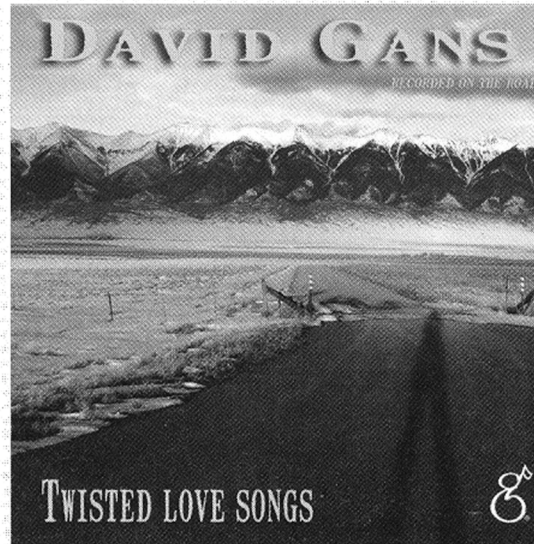


DAVID GANS

Twisted Love Songs (Perfectible Recordings)

David Gans is best known as the host of *The Grateful Dead Hour*, but he's been a guitar picker for longer, and it shows on this collection of lives tunes featuring chiefly Gans, on vocals and flanged and looped acoustic guitars. Gans' vocal inflection, sometimes blending Dylan with Kermit the Frog, really serves his surprisingly dark, sardonic wit. That's especially so on political songs like "It's Gonna Get Better," which takes the current administration to task with old-timey guitar and a chorus like a Woody Guthrie campfire singalong. His rhymes are fun, too, and adept. "Ran Into God" recounts a run-in with a supreme being



who is not only pissed, she also doubts her own existence. Gans touches Dead material on "Cassidy's Cat," playing the riffs from "Cassidy," "China Cat Sunflower," and "Bird Song" simultaneously, and "Ship of Fools." But original instrumentals like "Prophet and Loss" and "Quarter to Five" are more interesting, looping processed acoustic strumming behind almost metal-sounding psychedelia. And Railroad Earth sit in on a country swing version of Roger Miller's "King of the Road." Mighty fine folk music here, with some really nice, playfully melodic picking. Coming to a field or cafe near you.
Richard B. Simon