



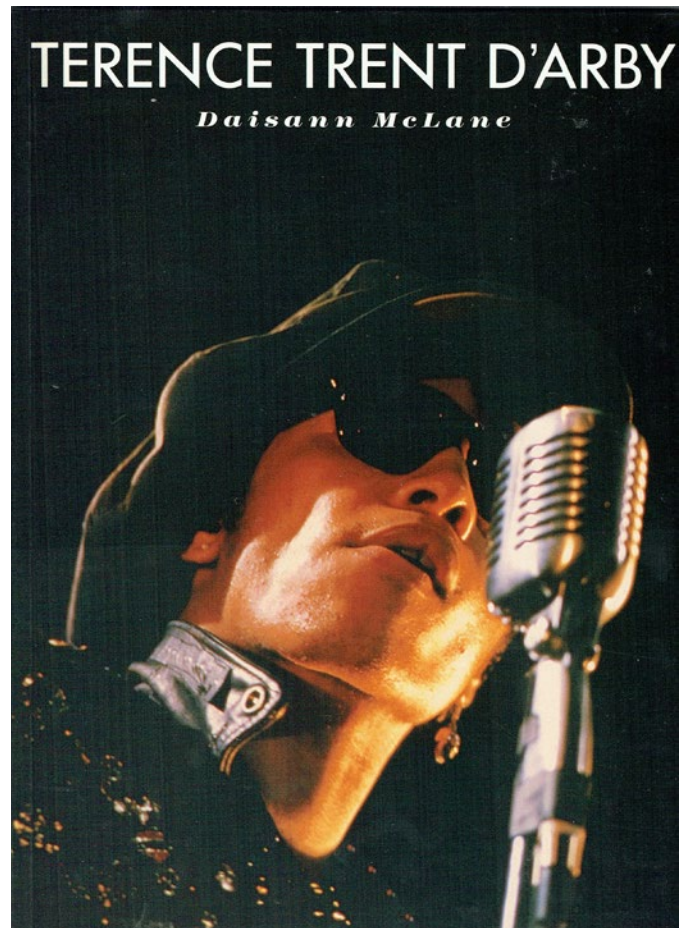
Interview With Daisann McLane

1993

"I wanted to get away from the scrutiny and put myself in a more nurturing environment." Terence Trent D'Arby, now 31, is explaining in his breathy whisper his move from London to L.A. and his three-year vacation from pop stardom. Not a bad idea. Six years ago, when D'Arby's first album, *Introducing the Hardline According to Terence Trent D'Arby*, rocketed up the charts, he became a megasensation -- with an ego reputed to match. "Everything back then happened so fast, so crazy," he says of the days when accounts of his nightly antics would regularly topple Di from her tabloid throne. When his second album, *Neither Fish Nor Flesh* (1989), a critical success, failed to do well commercially, the press and public were only too happy to cut him down to size. So D'Arby took a holiday, he says, to decide "whether I wanted to continue, or shift my focus."

Fortunately, he decided to continue. D'Arby's new *Symphony Or Damn* album works that Princely territory between rock and rhythm and blues. His voice is pure church, but his songs crank like classic '70s rockers. Jumping from black to white, sacred to profane, this son of a Florida Pentecostal preacher seems to be waging a constant battle with conflicting passions. "My father doesn't realize it," says D'Arby, "but so much of what we both do is the same thing: struggling with heaven and hell. My dad's religion is Christianity, and mine is rock and roll."

His fall from pop-star grace, he says, has served him well. "Now I know whatever happens, I can handle it." And instead of making the scene, D'Arby now spends evenings making music in his home studio, the "Monasteryo."



Still intact, though, is the pop star-league brio that once led him to inform a British journalist, "I think I'm a genius. Point fucking blank." He also retains the ability to feed his mystique: "If anybody wants to know where I'm trying to go," he says, "I ask them to read Walt Whitman's *Leaves Of Grass*." Well, why not? ■