

**Perfect Sound Forever**  
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## Notes on Robert Quine



by Alan Licht

As scabrous as his solos could get, they're always enormously eloquent. What he took from "I Heard Her Call My Name" was the emphasis of the nervous system over licks, but he combined it with a sense of structure that he studied players like James Burton for. It's ironic that some obituaries called him a "punk guitarist"—besides the fact that I don't think he liked much punk, he should really be ranked with people like Ike Turner or Otis Rush—that violent take on the blues—or Pete Cosey.

Although he played with everyone from Zorn to Scritti Politti to Robert Gordon to Eno to Marianne Faithfull to Material to Tom Waits to Lloyd Cole, he never gave off the "session guy" vibe, maybe because he was such a scholar of the music. And maybe because for all the attention he paid whatever performer and song he was working on/with, Quine played Quine every time, much like Jimmy Page in his session days.

As a character on the downtown NY music scene, he was totally unique—who else was close friends with John Zorn and

## Jim "the Hound" Marshall and Brian Eno?

He gave a great interview—I never interviewed him, but I've read the published interviews with him numerous times, because they're so entertaining and informative. I've checked out a lot of music based on stuff he recommended in interviews, like "Why" by the Byrds (which he mentions in a Guitar Player piece I saw in high school, around when Basic came out) to Lester Young's The Aladdin Sessions (in the PSF interview a few years back). I bought one of my favorite pedals, the Prescription Electronics Germ, after he mentioned it in the I-94 interview. Whatever his personal circumstances, the guy still had so much accumulated knowledge to offer, it's really a shame that that's lost now.

See the rest of the [Quine tribute](#)

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