



Fridmann (in his upstate New York studio) produces indie rockers from Mogwai to Mercury Rev.

TOTAPRODUCER David Fridmann

CASSADAGA, NEW YORK, A SMALL LAKE ERIE TOWN not far from Buffalo, is one of the unlikelier hot spots on the rock & roll map, but that's where producer David Fridmann has put in heavy time working on some of the most sonically ambitious rock records of recent years. He has long been the regular producer for his friends in Mercury Rev and the Flaming Lips, helping them hit the rural psychedelic heights of Rev's 1998 epic *Deserter's Songs* and the Lips' just-released *The Soft Bulletin*, as well as for fat cats like Jane's Addiction and indie upstarts from Mogwai to Elf Power. Fridmann cooks up his spacious, megaphonic sound in Tarbox Road Studios, which he built himself ten miles down the road from his house in nearby Fredo-

nia. He invites the bands he works with to move into Tarbox and make themselves at home, turning the studio into a Big Pink-style rural clubhouse in order to make the kind of adventurous records that could only come from way off the beaten path.

A self-confessed "gear junkie" who sheepishly admits that he still has every piece of equipment he's ever owned, Fridmann began producing Mercury Rev as a student in the recording program at SUNY Fredonia. After handling live sound for the Lips, he bluffed his way into producing them as well. But even though his sound is attracting ears around the world - Echo and the Bunnymen have called him about producing their next record - he has no plans to give up living the good life in Fredonia. "What bugs me about the city is that when you're in the studio, you're in your own little freak world," Fridmann says. "Here, you step out onto the front porch, there's trees. You can play some badminton, go swimming in the pond, and you can maintain that dream state the entire time you're here."