



## CAN BE HEARD ON

The New Cars, *It's Alive*  
[Eleven Seven Music]  
Meat Loaf, *Bat Out of Hell III: The Monster Is Loose* [Virgin]

## CURRENTLY SPINNING

"I keep my iPod in shuffle mode, so I'm always surprised at what comes on next."

## GEAR

**Basses** Archer Guitars K Sulton Signature 4-string with Elixir Nanoweb strings (.045-.105), EMG pickups, and a Hipshot Bass Xtender

**Rig** Euphonic Audio

iAmp 800 amp with two NM-410 cabinets

**Effects** "On the rare occasion I use an effect, it's an Audiotech PD-1 Pro-Verdrive pedal for some grit."

"For quite a while I was using a Spector 5-string. I couldn't imagine not having that low B to rattle seats. Now I feel that if you can't do it with four strings, you have a problem."



THE NEW CARS, MEAT LOAF

## KASIM SULTON Driving Bass Home

**WHEN GUITARIST ELLIOT EASTON OF THE CARS** approached Kasim Sulton to round out a new incarnation of the late-'70s/early-'80s New Wave band, Sulton jumped at the chance—especially upon hearing that Todd Rundgren was slated to take over frontman role from Ric Ocasek. Sulton had been a member of Rundgren's group Utopia on the bulk of the rock group's recordings and tours from 1977 through the late '90s. Plus, he'd met Easton back when the Cars opened for Utopia.

"It made total sense to me," explains Sulton, who's filling the vacancy left when original Cars bassist Benjamin Orr died in 2000 of cancer. "I started my pro career with Todd; I learned about recording, performing, and songwriting from him, so there was no way I could turn down the offer." In May, the New Cars hit the road with Blondie to promote its CD *It's Alive*. (The tour was derailed briefly when a road mishap left Easton with a broken collarbone.) *It's Alive* features classic Cars tunes recorded live, plus new studio tracks. "One of the main ideas was to have new music," says Sulton. "Todd and I have an extensive history working together in the studio, so I know what he likes in terms of the bass tracks."

Before Sulton made his recording debut in '77

with Utopia, he contributed bass and vocals to an album Rundgren was producing, Meat Loaf's rock opera *Bat Out of Hell* [Epic, 1977]. The recording, which became a mega-seller, led to a long relationship with Loaf, for whom Kasim still serves as bassist, vocalist, producer, and music director.

During his three-decade career, Kasim has played and recorded with myriad artists, including Patti Smith, Cheap Trick, Joan Jett, and Celine Dion. Somewhere in the midst of it all, he released a trio of solo outings, too, but his preferred role is bandmate. "I love being the bass player because, while the spotlight might not be on me, I'm providing the foundation that allows the spotlight to shine at all. I like to think of myself as being able to morph my playing to whatever best suits the artist."

Sulton takes a conscious approach with his playing. "I think, What contribution can I make that best fits the situation? Do I really need to throw in a lick every eight bars, or is it just as effective for me to be a part of the musical glue? What is the drummer doing? If he's playing a lot of fills, I might want to be more low-key. If he's playing more meat-and-potatoes stuff, I might feel the need to stretch out, adding accents and passing notes that have a better shot of not getting in the way." —DIANE GERSHUNY