

Rolling Stone

ROBERT PLANT

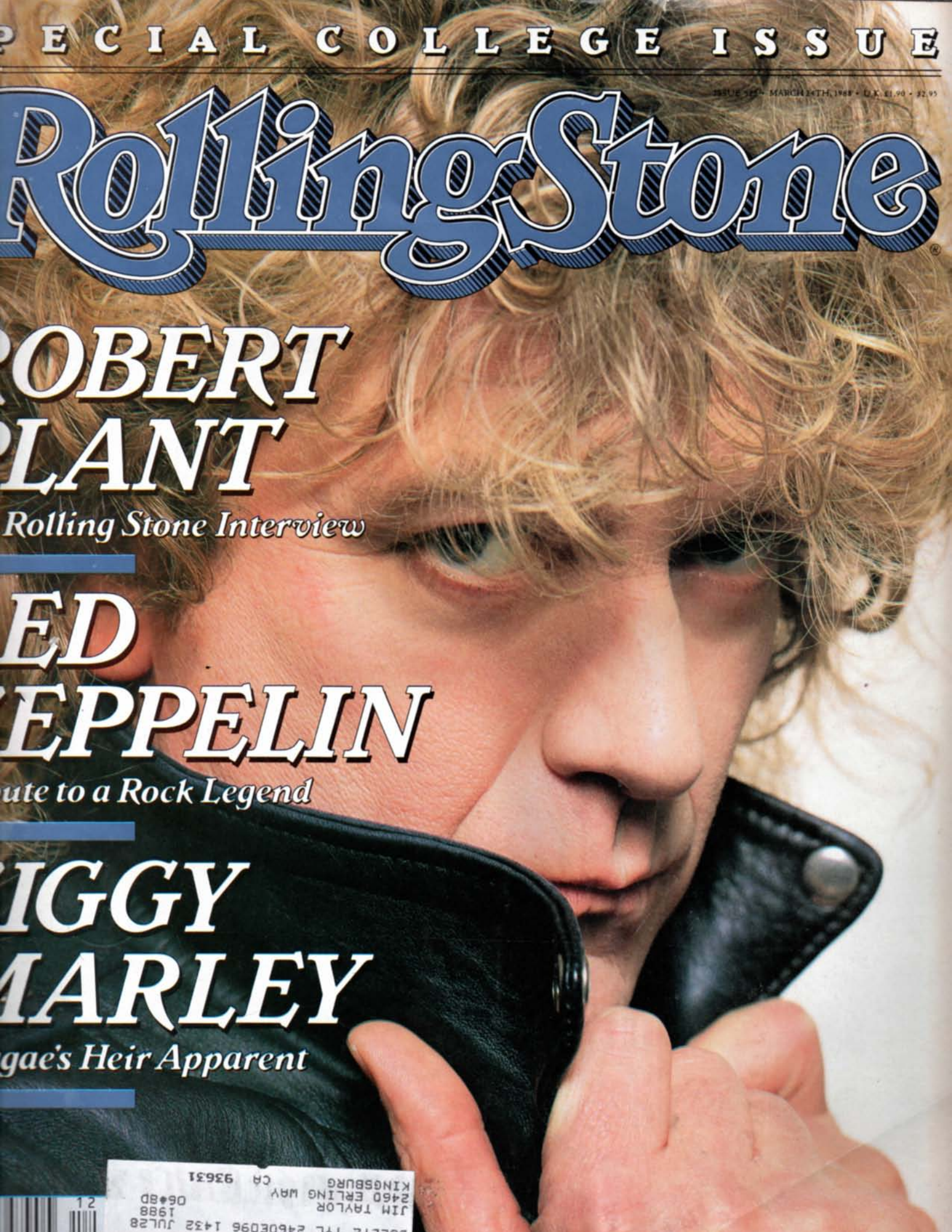
Rolling Stone Interview

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tribute to a Rock Legend

IGGY MARLEY

Jagga's Heir Apparent



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T H E N E W S

English LP due from Rubén Blades

BY FRED GOODMAN

RUBÉN BLADES IS AN UNDENIABLE leader on the salsa scene. His recordings in that Afro-Cuban genre are challenging both for their music and for their pointedly political lyrics. And now, with his first English-language album, *Nothing but the Truth*, Blades is hoping to take his message beyond the musical barrio of salsa. And he's enlisted a clutch of rock's biggest names, including Sting, Elvis Costello and Lou Reed, as collaborators.

Blades has always defied categorization. When not making music, the Panamanian-born singer, songwriter and bandleader has a successful career as an actor — he has a role in Robert Redford's new film, *The Milagro Beanfield War*. But Blades is also an attorney, with a master's degree in international law from Harvard. And if that's not enough, he is also said to aspire to the presidency of his homeland.

No matter how many goals Blades has pursued, commercial success per se has never been one of his objectives, and *Nothing but the Truth* is far from a sellout.

"I'm not going to turn into a second coming of the Miami Sound Machine," Blades says. "My effort is directed toward collaborating on material that will become part of the Anglo-American mainstream on its own terms."

The project includes three songs written by Blades and Reed, who met during the recording of the antiapartheid song "Sun City." Blades and Costello wrote two songs together, and Sting contributed one he had written by himself. Blades says he chose his collaborators for the character they could bring to the project. "I wanted to create something that survives 1988," he says.

Blades admits he also had something to prove personally with *Nothing but the Truth*. "I wanted to prove I could compete with Anglo artists," he says. "I wanted to dispel the stereo-



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