

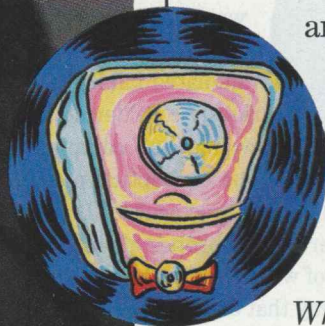
DEAF, DUMB, AND BLIND KING

WITH THE **TOMMY** CD-ROM, PETE TOWNSHEND IS TAKING HIS ROCK OPERA TO THE NEXT STAGE

CD-ROM MAY BE a new venue for Pete Townshend, but it's not as if the British rock legend hadn't anticipated the technology more than 20 years ago, when Bill Gates was barely out of adolescence and five-inch silver discs were meant for holding scones and crumpets for afternoon tea. ♦ Back in the '70s, the

Who songwriter-guitarist says he—along with fellow visionary musicians Brian Eno and Todd Rundgren—thought about merging rock with some as-yet-undefined interactive medium. What's more, he says, while agonizing over *Lifhouse*—an abortive early '70s experiment in audience participation, songs from which eventually appeared on the classic album

Who's Next—he devised “four or five specific compositional systems requiring computers. The only thing missing was the computers.” ♦ Well, Townshend finally has his computers, and the result is *Pete Townshend Presents Tommy: The Interactive Adventure*, an encyclopedic CD-ROM on his renowned rock opera about a “deaf, dumb, and blind kid” who becomes a pinball-playing cult figure (due in April from Inter-



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