

# The Coolest Director on TV?

Stephen R. Johnson builds the manic structure that is 'Pee-wee's Playhouse'

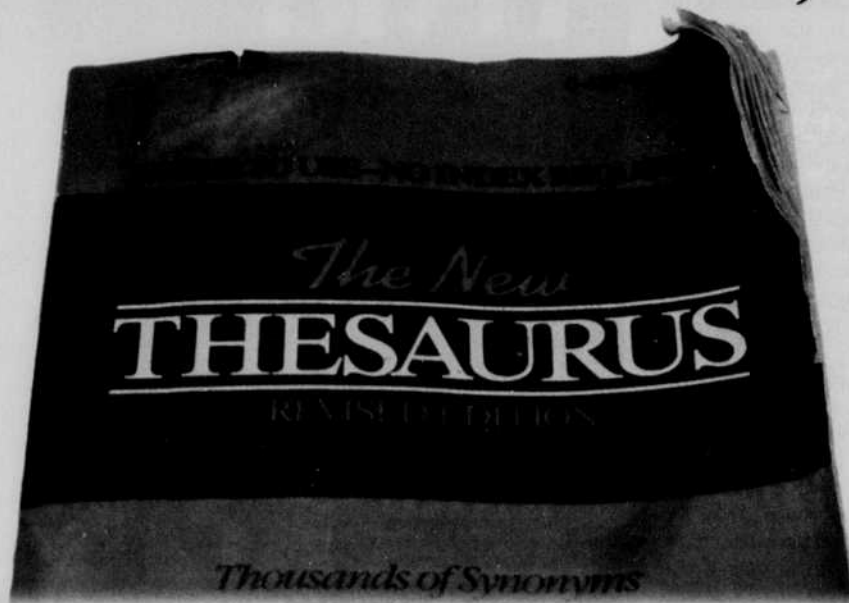
**D**o you think it's easy to be the director of the absolutely coolest thing on television? Spend a few minutes with Stephen R. Johnson and you'll see how wrong you are. Johnson is the director for "Pee-wee's Playhouse," the Saturday-morning kid's program on CBS that's far hipper than most adult shows. On this Thursday afternoon, Johnson's holding a nonstop series of conferences with the people working on as many as four separate episodes of the "Playhouse." First he tells a man where to edit one sequence—in which a woman, a robot and a talking globe plead with the star, Pee-wee Herman. Then he asks an animator to add a few more descriptive details to the figure of a baby: "How about a pacifier? Or a bonnet?" Then he swoops across the floor and flutters his hands to describe how animated snow should blow across the screen in a different show. And then he's off to pick



The eyes have it: Johnson (left) making Peter Gabriel's 'Sledgehammer' video

GOLLY

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