

The pages within contain articles or interviews on or with the likes of...

- Godzilla Elementary School Jukebox Jury
- 80s Zines
   The Kill-a-watts (kind of)
- The Vapors
   CBGB Pop Fest '03
- The Poptarts Captured By Robots ...und heaps of otros crap!

### **GO METRIC!**

15A South Bedford Road Pound Round, NY 10576

We're set to move but, long story shorter, write for our new mailing address. The one above shant be of any use past July '03.

gogometric@yahoo.com

#17 was written by:

John Bowie
David Cawley
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Tim Hinely Frank Leone Rev. Norb Josh Rutledge

Subscriptions

Send \$2 per issue (up to five issues) and we'll handle the rest.

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CM! is available direct or through:
www.vitalmusic.net
www.insound.com
www.quimbys.com
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GM! is now available in Australia and Iceland! (Thanks to Luke & Siggi)

Bands! Want to give away GM! at your shows? Contact us you lousy, van-driving, Waffle House-frequenting bastards!

Thank you very much for staying. From the bunkers of your favorite music, movies, comics, humor, and what not zine comes this introduction. As has become an annual tradition, my wife and I are moving this summer. Allegedly. If you want an unpleasant experience, listen to a Rod Stewart record, remove your own gall bladder, or try buying a home (with an FHA loan and through the incompetent bastards at Foxtons). But a hearty "BAH!" upon such endeavors, we've a new issue to foist on the public!... Congratulations to Brian Cogan. His "Punk Rock Boy Bands" piece (issue #14) was selected for volume seven of The Zine Yearbook (Soft Skull Press). So, of course, he's doubled his fee...The new issue...Big Dave Cawley returns with part two of his Godzilla article. You should have seen the 30-page manuscript from which it came...The rest of our starting rotation check in as follows: Josh Rutledge vamps on the Vapors New Clear Days album, Rev. Norb roadtrips to Metropolis, IL and Frank Leone covers our robot quota with a Captured by Robots interview...Wait, I had a reason for complaining about the house buying crap: expect a new mailing address by the end of the summer...Pat Helikson and John Bowie shake off health problems and LA, respectively, and surge forth with a major offensive in the war with the French... Tim Hinely debuts with a look back at zines from the 80s...The front cover art was stolen from the Rock'n'Roll Adventure Kids new album. We're working on an interview with them but it come together for this issue. Next time for sure...The back cover is Jack Lemon in Billy Wilder's The Apartment...Next issue, at long last, our SCTV appreciation series will get underway. I've wanted to do this for years. SCTV fans, get in touch!...If all goes as planned this issue will make its debut at the Portland Zine Fest in August. I write that not so much to inform anyone else but as a meek attempt to hold myself to something approaching a schedule! But enough of introductions, a final word of appreciation to everyone who contributed or granted an interview and on with the zine!

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### Screw the French!

I was getting together with friends to watch a baseball game, you know, something perfectly American, when it leaped off the menu: freedom fries. By that point the war in Iraq had died down, but seeing those words on the menu reminded me of our cultural war with France, a war, dear reader, that I'd neglected. Shame permeated my soul and like countless other Americans who wanted to stick it to the French I asked, What can I do? I mean, beyond eating freedom toast and only buying California wines? Then it struck me: not only will we wipe from the slate all words remotely French, we'll also eradicate the concepts associated with such words, cleansing our nation of the stale stench of French influence. I believe the rest speaks for itself. (By Patrick Helikson, John Bowie, and Mike Faloon)

### French word to be deleted/Impact upon American culture

Noveau riche - from now on, if you are born poor, you'll die poor.

Carte blanche - all notepads, etc., will come pre-printed.

A propos - no American will speak directly or to the point.

Fait accompli - no task shall ever be completed (see War on Terror).

Joie de vivre - there will be no joy in living.

Matinee - days will begin at noon and end prior to 6:00 am.

Mot juste - all words must be vague and inexplicable.

Papier mache - never had any use for this crap in the first place.

Raison d'etre - there will be reason to be.

Bourgeois - it will be only the haves and the have-nots, the middle-class will be eliminated entirely.

Cause celebre - there will be only infamous causes which nobody ever mentions.

Enfant terrible - all children will be either Wunderkind or nothing at all.

**Finesse** - everything will be dealt with with blunt force.

Gourmet - you will eat shit, and you'll like it.

Martinet - one who issues extremely strict orders will be known as either Ashcroft or Rumsfeld.

Noblesse oblige - no true American will be obliged by nobility of any sort.

Je ne sais quoi - we actually know everything.

Gerard Depardieu - we will not accept middle aged character actors.

And, of course, it goes without saying that French will no longer be pardoned.

A Go Metric! Near-interview with



For such a small zine, we have ridiculous good luck when it comes to lining up interviews with great bands. I figured that luck would continue when it came to the Kill-a-watts, one of my favorite bands of the past couple years. Good intentions couldn't conquer fate and though the interview never worked out I did get to speak with both of Ryan's parents! Join us for the tale of how Go Metric! nearly interviewed the Kill-a-watts!

### Act I

Ryan Kill-a-watt and I traded emails. He was into an interview and passed along his phone number.

### Act II

GM: Hey, is Ryan there?

Ryan: This is Ryan.

Hey, Ryan this Mike from Go Metric! zine.

Oh hey, how's it going?

Good, I was calling to set up the interview we'd talked about in the emails.

Oh yeah, well, I'm recording a band right now, so this isn't a good time. Why don't you call back on Tuesday night.

Cool, I'll be in touch.

### Act III

GM: Hey, is Ryan there?

Ryan's mom: No, he's not at home. May I ask who's calling?

My name's Mike, I write for a music fanzine called Go Metric!

Ryan and I had talked about doing an interview.

He's probably over at Melissa's house, you know how kids are. Should I take a message?

Sure, let him know that Mike called about the interview. Thanks.

You're welcome, have a nice night.

### Act IV

Ryan: Hey, is Mike there?

GM: (Having just woken up after falling asleep watching tv, quite incoherent) Umm, this is Mike.

Hey, this is Ryan from the Kill-a-watts.

Oh, hey.

I was calling about the interview.

Yeah, umm...(I have no idea what else I said, but I clearly gave the impression that this wasn't a good time to do the interview—a complete negation of my zine geek instincts!)

### Act V

GM: Hello, is Ryan there?

Ryan's dad: No, he's not. May I take a message.

Sure, please tell him that Mike called about the interview. Oh, do you write for the *Independent*?

No, I write for a music fanzine called Go Metric!

Oh, where are you from?

Just north of New York City, a town called Pound Ridge.

Hmm, well does Ryan have your number?

Yes he does, thanks.



### THE JACK (OLE COLLECTOR

Gather round for our most indulgent feature, an on-going "what's up with things related to the late, great comic book artist Jack Cole and/or his most famous creation, Plastic Man?" Well, for all three of you who are reading (how's it going Dave, Robert, and, maybe, Norb?), here goes!

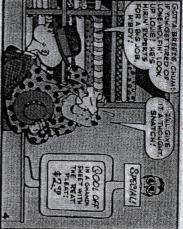
Volume four of the Plastic Man Archives came out this past winter. It's as splendid as volume three, a lateral move of sorts, and brings us up to early 1946—ever closer to Cole's late 40s, early 50s heyday. And, with four volumes now in hand, I'm assuming that subsequent volumes will appear annually. I'm counting on you, DC Comics, fail me not, else you'll feel the wrath of my publishing empire (kind of like the way William Hearst tried to squash Orson Wells after Citizen Kane—yet another Hearst/Go Metric! parallel).

But the good news doesn't stop there. The June issue (#25) of Roy Thomas' comic book fanzine *Alter Ego* is devoted to none other than Jack Cole! There are interviews with friends and co-workers (Creig Flessel, Art Paul, Bill Seay) and, stunningly, a chat with Cole's brother Dick. I say stunningly because direct connections to Cole's personal life are few and far between. (He committed suicide at a young age, he had no kids and his wife, who quickly remarried, severed connections with the rest of Cole's family and, for all intents and purposes, disappeared.) Interviewer Jim Amash gushes at the opportunity to speak to someone related to his hero and, with considerable tact, asks if Dick Cole has any insights into Jack's still misunderstood death. (He doesn't, but we do learn that the Cole family tree has crossed paths with the likes of William the Conqueror and Anne Hutchinson.) Truly excellent.

As for Cole's fictional offspring, Plastic Man keeps popping up in current comics. The best news is that for the first time since 1977, he's getting his own regular series! Details are few but Kyle Baker is going to be involved. I'm hopeful but I'll believe it when I see it on the racks. (Mostly because it seems too good to be true, not because I subscribe to the party line that nobody can do Plastic Man as well as Jack Cole, so why bother? Granted, no one will ever top Cole, but there are worthy versions of Plas done by others. Ty Templeton's 1999 one-shot and Phil Foglio and Hilary Barta's 1988 mini-series are the best of them. Ironically, the lamest post-Cole Plastic Man was done by Cole's good friend, Gil Kane, in the late 60s.)

Plastic Man also continues to get semi-regular support work. He has an extended cameo in *JLA: Welcome to the Working Week*, which as written by Patton Oswalt (and is pretty cool on its own merits, chronicling the adventures of a fanzine editor who gets inadvertently stuck in the JLA Watchtower for a week). I haven't read Chris Claremont and Joshua Hood's *JLA: Scary Monsters* but it looks promising. I trust in the fact that any comic with Plastic Man is going to rise above the pack. Once a writer and/or artist realize they have a character that can be a shawl one moment and a boxing ring the next, they're going down a better path.







Volume 4

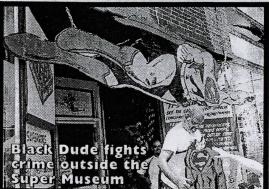


### THE WORLD IS A WASTELAND FROM GREEN BAY TO GRACELAND TO METROPOLIS ... AND BEYOND! by Rev. Norb, Last Son Of Krypton

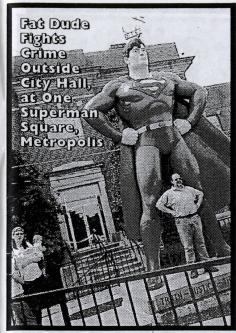
I remember the ads in DC Comics when i was about seven or eight...THE AMAZING WORLD OF SUPERMAN! METROPOLIS, ILLINOIS! AMERICA'S ONLY SUPERMAN-THEMED AMUSEMENT PARK, OR WHATEVER THE HELL IT IS! As with the ads for Palisades Park that appeared in DC Comics the summer i turned five, or the ads for Sea World that appeared in DC Comics the summer i turned twelve, i asked my parents if we could, perhaps, somehow see our way clear to pay a visit to fair Metropolis, and take in the surely truly AMAZING Amazing World Of Superman. As with my campaigns to visit Palisades Park and Sea World, my suggested family outing to Metropolis was shot down at something resembling super-speed. Of COURSE we can't go to Metropolis. Nor can we go to Palisades Park (i was really bummed about that one -- i had a coupon for free parking, plus free rides on the Carousel and Whip -- and, at age five, had to be shown, on a globe, how far New Jersey was from Wisconsin afore I ceased my infernal caterwauling), Sea World, or, for that matter, Disneyland, Disneyworld, or Hawaii. The scope of my family's summer trips was limited to the Kewaunee Trout Festival and the St. Mary's church picnic; for what good reason i cannot say. Predictably, The Amazing World Of Superman retreated from my memory banks and Places To Go list (as i understand it, owing to the combined bad fortune of it having been erected right smack dab before the Gasoline Crisis™ of the early-to-mid-70's, and the construction of a relevant stretch of interstate being postponed, the establishment was only in business for a year); however, i

did keep knowledge of the existence of Metropolis, IL, filed in a drawer in the back of my brain -- probably in the same file

folder as my awareness of Santa Claus, Michigan; Hell, Norway; and the like. 30 years pass. One day, i am sitting at work, dicking around on the internet like any good American, when suddenly remember that Metropolis exists; for why this thought should come to me after three decades is anybody's quess. Idly, i do a Google<sup>™</sup> search for "Metropolis, Illinois." Not only do i find that Metropolis -- the only city so named in the United States (thus, presumably, the world) -- exists, but that, for twenty-five years running, they have played host to a less-than-inventively-named "Superman Celebration" each June, and, as if by magic, said Superman Celebration is mere weeks away. Lights, bells, and miscellaneous buzzing devices go off in my head: Hey, just because Mom & Dad wouldn't take me to Metropolis when i was seven doesn't mean i can't go there now that i'm a grownup, does it? And, you know, after all, Illinois is just one state away from Wisconsin. I'M GOING. Utilizing online technology and the Miracle of MasterCard™, I book a motel in Metropolis for the Saturday night of the four-dayong Superman Celebration, and research my upcoming trip: There is a Superman Museum for, presumably, copyright reasons, officially called the "Super Museum" -- a Superman Statue in front of City Hall -- and a plethora of marginally Superman-esque activities going

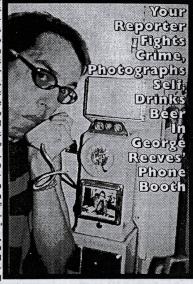






on. What a perfectly swell idea for a weekend getaway! I'll zip down Saturday morning, soak up the sureto-be-delightful Metropolis OM-beyonce Saturday night, and drive back home Sunday. Simple. Sooner
or later, i am struck with the not particularly radical thought that i need to find Metropolis on a map;
thus do i dredge out an atlas and begin my search for the Land of Kryptonite and Honey. I am quickly
aware that a grave perceptual error has been made on my part: While, true -- Illinois does, in fact, border my home state of Wisconsin -- Metropolis is at the very southern tip of Illinois; i, however, am well
to the north as regards Wisconsin. The actual distance from Green Bay to Metropolis? FIYE HUNDRED
SEYENTY MILES. For Cheeseheads like myself, who perceive Illinois as being a state that, for all practical purposes, ends at the fringes of the southernmost Chicago suburbs, this is about 350 miles longer
than we ever imagined the state to extend for. Put in a more practically horrifying context, Metropolis

IL is approximately the same distance from my house as the Pennsylvania border. Not to put too fine a point on it. but GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST!!! Plans are reshuffled, more hotels are booked, a day of vacation is taken. I SHALL NOT BE DENIED. I will drive to Champaign on Thursday night, and make the scene in Metropolis Friday and Saturday. Somewhere just past Chicago on 1-57, one starts to see road signs for Memphis. Memphis? As in "long distance information, get me Memphis Tennessee?"It seems unthinkable: You can actually get there from here? I mean, if you live in Wisconsin, you either turn right and go to Minnesota, or you go to Chicago and turn left, and wind up in the real world. I never really thought about going straight before. It is almost a revelation: If i keep going straight, i will wind up in Memphis. Fuckin-A. Driving along through radio broadcasts of first a Brewers game, then a White Sox game, then a raindelayed Cubs game, i become virtually obsessed with the fact that I, Rev. Nørb, Who Live Way Up North, Can Actually Drive To The South, for the same amount of effort it would take me to drive to, say, Pittsburgh or



somewhere. I become morbidly fascinated with the concept. It's that close! "The South" is as close as the frickin' Warhol Museum! I've only been South once, during Boris' 1998 "Bottom Coast" tour. We hit Nebraska, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas. Never really had much interest in going there. Don't really have much interest in going back. Yet, i've never been to Tennessee, and there it is, on the fricking road signs. Fascinating. I arise Friday AM, pile into my Ford<sup>14</sup>, and hit the highway. Memphis is 410 miles away. Fuck it. I'm calling an audible. I'm going to Memphis. GRACELAND, HERE I COME! Now, yes, a wiser man might've taken in the sights and

sounds of the Metropolis Metropolitan area on Friday, and saved the jaunt down to Tennessee for Saturday; however, I can make no such concessions to practicality, as i MUST be in Metropolis on Saturday, as Yvonne Craig -- Batgirl on the last

Note
Undeniable
Use Of The
Word
"LOVE."
She
Digs
Me!

cality, as I MUSI be in Metropolis on Saturday, as Tvonne Craig — Datgirl on the last season of the Batman TV Show — shall be appearing in fair Metropolis on Saturday. Yvonne Craig's Batgirl character was the subject matter of the first erotic dream i can ever remember having, at age five; missing a chance to meet her is not an option (given my age at the time, the dream was not particularly juicy [neither literally nor figuratively], but STILL, you know. But STILL). Blasting down the interstate, i see a small roadside sign reading "THE CROSS — TRUCKERS WELCOME." Assuming this is a truckstop version of a Christian coffeehouse or something, the sign barely registers with me — until i follow one of I-57's all-too-infrequent curves, just past I-70, and am struck by a sight that causes me to slack-jawed-ly exclaim "HOLY FUCK," followed by a similarly dumbfounded "MY FUCKING GOD," finished up with a "JESUS FUCKING CHRIST" for good measure. I now understand what "The Cross" is. It is, as advertised, a cross. A one-hundred-ninety-eight foot tall cross, to be exact, standing just east of the interstate. I mean... there are some things in life that deserve a bit more of an erudite reaction than "HOLY FUCK." There are a few things, however, where only "HOLY FUCK."

FUCK" suffices. This would be one of those occasions. A fucking two-hundredfoot white steel crucifix standing in a fucking cornfield in the middle of Illinois. OKAY, YOU CAN STOP NOW: I AM SUFFI-CIENTLY FREAKED OUT (the fact that each and every utterance said cross prooked contained not only swear words but mild blasphemies was not lost on me). mean, in all my zillion years of driving, can't recall ever seeing anything so suddenly HOLY FUCK as The Cross (the only thing i can imagine topping it would be driving back the other way and seeing inda Blair mounting it), and I couldn't help but imagine some poor sap, caught n a horrible crisis of faith like Bruce Almighty, weepingly howling to God to just





"GIVE ME A SIGN! PLEASE, LORD, JUST GIVE ME A SIGN!" -- and then he turns the corner on 1-57, sees a 200 foot cross standing there, promptly has a massive coronary, dies at the wheel, crosses the median and wipes out a family of eight in a minivan in the oncoming lane. BUUUUT...i had places to go and things to do, so i kept a-drivin'. Making fantastic time through Illinois, Missouri, and Arkansas, i hit 3717 Elvis Presley Boulevard -- "Graceland" to you, and exactly 3000 more than my own street address (which is, coincidentally, exactly 18,000 less than the capacity of the Bradley Center for Bucks games) -- at 5:10 PM -- just in time to be informed that the last tour had left, and that Graceland would be closing shortly (on the upside, i did get to see Elvis' "TCB" jets, and bought a cool tin tray with the cover art to the second LP on it, not to mention a shaker of "King Creole" cajun spice and several postcards whereby the King shares his peanut butter & banana sandwich recipe with the rest of us serfs). My total in the



gift shop came up to 19.56, which was also the year the second Eivis album came out, so i became paranold and left immediately, enjoying an excellent bacon cheeseburger and three very large, very cold Budweisers in one of the faux-Eivis establishments that ring the Graceland neighborhood. Deciding that Memphis could, as the kids say, suck my dick, i decided that, while in the neighborhood, i should drive to Mississippi, just to say i've been there. In Mississippi, quick atlas perusal indicated that only 90 miles separated me from Alabama. Acquiring a dirt-cheap six-pack of 16 oz. cans of "Southpaw Light" (I couldn't resist) for the ride, i drove the hour-and-a-half to 'Bama -- just long enough to roll down the window, yell "ROLL TIDE!" to no one in particular, and head back to Illinois (i actually thought about continuing on to Georgia and Florida, where i have also never been, but was overtaken with an inexplicable bout of sanity). Morning dawns, and i head to downtown Metropolis -- pop. 7000 or so -- equipped with a 44 oz. plastic soda cup filled to overflowing with Miller High Life, in order that i might thwart The Heat. Now, i don't want to sound like a whiny Eskimo or anything, but, once a Northerner descends below a certain latitude, the solar energy of the sun becomes almost stupefying: I understand HOT. I understand SUN. I understand SUMMER. I do NOT understand a sun so fricking intense that it feels like God is focusing a magnifying glass on my scalp -- where i find myself continually batting at my hair, simply because i am legitimately fearful that it is smoldering and might burst into flame at any minute. Such is the Metropolis Sun (which is, of course, not to be confused with the Metropolis Planet -- their newspaper. Obviously, it would've been called the Daily Planet, were the community sizable enough to support a local daily). I park my car wherever, and walk towards the activity, morning beer in hand. Roundling the corner, i spy the second of Metropolis' quasi-attractions (the first, "Big John" -

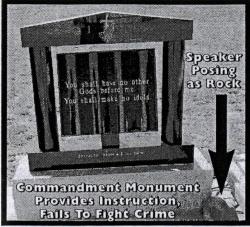
Metropolis City Hall, on One Superman Square. A few dozen yards away stands a traditional church-picnic style tent; i have arrived just in time for the 11 AM question and answer session with the six "Super Guests," one of whom is my darling Batgirl (the others being Lois Lane from the original TV series, the dude who co-wrote her biography, artist Steve Rude [whose hep, retro-Kirby artwork almost made the Captain America: What Price Glory? miniseries worth buying], some guy who apparently played Superman in some Broadway musical in the 60's, and, not surprisingly, some guy dressed up like Superman). The tent is primarily full of what appear to be small-town folk, many wearing Superman "S" t-shirts -- Mom, Dad & the Kids in matching garb in some cases -- sprinkled with a few obvious outsider comic book geeks, and a couple o' real head cases in full homemade Superman costume. The too-tan, Farrahhaired lady who appears to be running the shew introduces every-



one, gives greetings, makes a variety of community announcements, and indicates that the Q&A session is now open, instructing all interested parties to step to a centrally-located microphone to ask their questions. Here and there, a few people rise. They are, apparently, afraid of the microphone, opting instead to mereyor rise from their folding chairs and posit their inquiry without amplification. The questions are primarily directed at Noel Neill ("the original Lois Lane") and her
biographer, and are generally unintelligible to the majority of the crowd, which numbers a hundred or so. The too-tan Farrah-hair lady pleads with the crowd to use
the microphone, to little avail, and the session plods on unspectacularly. I decide it is time to take Action (note: clever pun involving the title of comic book
Superman first appeared in; no Strike reference intended), and approach the mike. Miller High Life Big Gulp in one hand (hey, man, as far as i'm concerned, you're
not a REAL beer drinker til you learn to like beer thru a straw!), wildly gesticulating with the other, I uncork in my most Nørbly intonation: "My question is for
Ywonnel Ma'am, do you have any manner of Batgirl costume that you wear during those...SPECIAL moments, when you're feeling kind of -- "my intention is to end
with "-- oh, I don't know...BAITY?", unfortunately, the crowd's laughter drowns out my question and I cannot continue. Ms. Craig explains that she never owned the



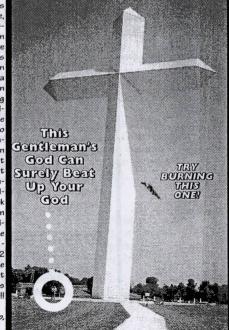
nal cannot continue. Ms. Craig explains that ser leaves owned the costume (like, no duh), and that someone who worked on the set swiped it, and it wound up selling on eBay for '35,000. My question was, of course, not intended to be "do you still have THE Batgirl costume" — I was more getting at "have you ever dressed up in ANY MANNER of Batgirl costume whilst making whoopee, and, if so, was it your idea or your partner's?" Unfortunately, i felt it was necessary to cloak my true inquiry in the vaguest of terms, and, as a result, left with my thirst for Knowledge unslaked. However, it did seem to loosen everybody up, and the Q&A session resumed with renewed vigor. Eventually, i noticed that Steve Rude had yet to be asked a single question, so, with Big Gulp in hand, at the microphone stand, i actually think i shocked him by asking him whom he thought was the ultimate Superman artist, to which he replied, with WAY over the top sincerity, that the only



Superman artist to which he swore undying fealty was Supie's original penciller, Joe Shuster (this was met with a round of enthusiastic applause. Hey, i might be drinking beer thru a straw at 11:30 in the morning, but i can WORK an f-in' CROWD, bay-bee!!!) (and i don't know how much you. the reader, knows nor cares about Superman's various artists since his inception in 1938, but. apart from being the first dude who drew him, and the props rightfully associated with that. Joe Shuster's chicken-scratching wasn't even on my list of possibilities. I mean, CURT SWAN, daddy, CURT SWAN! I thought maybe if he was gonna get ultra-old-school on me, he'd say Wayne Boring. but Joe Shuster is so ultra-ultra-old-school as to be about one school removed from cave paintings. I mean, SHEESH!). The session breaks up. I photograph a rather freaky Walter Loyd Lilly type. who is dressed in a home-made replica of not just any ol' Superman costume -- but a replica of the costume Kirk Alyn wore in the original black & white movie serial version of Superman from the 40's -- therefore the blues are grays, the reds are dark maroons, the golds are white. The guy is legitimately unsettling (and likely unsettled as well), but i gotta give him points for...i dunno...something. I decide that I am going to take a photo of everyone in full Superman costume: There is a costumed, balding, potbellied, forty/fifty-ish Superman dad there with his normallygarbed family; a fully-costumed, wheelchair-bound Superman with cerebral palsy who looks disturbingly similar to Dan Yapid; a hearing-impaired Superman chatting with the distinctive slurs of one so afflicted. It is both uplifting and sad; comic and tragic; Diane Arbus and Allen Funt. But. i'm outta film, so fuck it, i go back to the hotel and get more beer. Returning just in time to stand in line at the Metropolis Chamber Of Commerce for autographs (but with my Beer Slurpee refilled). strike up a conversation with some friendly, scrappy redneck dude who has got two of the most amazingly beautiful prepubescent daughters i've ever seen. After my trip to The South, i'm thinkin'

i kind of "get" the whole marry-your-13-year-old-cousin thing: The really young girls are stalky, coltish, beautiful. The older females are obese and frightening (i think this also happens in Mexico and Poland. The prevailing theory is that the old, fat females eat the young, slim females). I'm starting to get pretty bombed, Eventually, I am able to secure Batgirl's autograph, and, in the privacy of the Chamber of Commerce, in between slugs of beer, I inform her that her character was the focus of my first "guy dream," which she seems quite amused by. The people around me -- almost all male -- break out in nervous laughter. Emboldened by my apparently brazen repartee, one geek says that his first such event revolved around Catwoman, which sets me off babbling about how Julie Newmar was the coolest actress ever, since she appeared on episodes of Batman AND Star Trek AND The Monkees; a Trifecta of Cool unparalleled to my knowledge. Upon hearing me mention the Monkees, the Superman-on-Broadway-in-the-Sixties guy (name escapes me) looks up at me and says "You know the Monkees?" I nod, of course. "You know who Don Kirshner is?" I nod again. "I used to play basketball with Donnie Kirshner in high school!" I'm suitably flabbergasted, and can only think to ask him what position Don Kirshner played. "I dunno...forward I think. He was quick. Really quick hands!" (not quick enough to avoid a Mike Nesmith-dumped Coca-Cola atop his head, one presumes). We bond. "You know what I'm talkin about, right?" Of course i do. "No one else here has any idea what we're talkin about." Wow. The closest thing to a kindred spirit i find in Metropolis is in the form of a Broadway actor from the 60's. In gratitude, i slip him a copy of the "Earth's Greatest Rocker!" CD, informing him that the song "Rock And Roll Music" is an Archies cover, and pleading with him not to have Mr. Kirshner sue me (although i will let him have two shots and the ball, if it'll help even the karmic ledger). He chuckles. "I don't really see him that much." I make drunken small talk with the rest of the Super Guests, then meander into the Super Museum, which is an old corner store packed to the gills with seemingly every Superman trinket ever produced. Someone or it's bug collecting; i don't remember what Science is if it's not bug collecting, but the Super Museum was defionce said that Science is either nitely Bug Collecting so i reckon it doesn't matter much what was. I mean, action figures and movie props and toys and posters and buttons and photos and ... i dunno. I didn't really walk away with a sense of celebrating the Superman character, it was more like mere fanatical stockpiling of Supie's earthly debris. I kinda regret that i wasn't stoned when i went there, that's the best way i can put it. A few things that caught my eye were the mannequin torsos dis-

playing Superman-themed female undie-garments -- i dunno, man, that seemed kinda racy for Metropolis, and I kept wondering how many Metropolitans pilgrimmaged to the Super-Undie Mannequins in their youth as an illicit shrine of prepubescent sexual worship. I was also quite amused by the large, black & white enlargement of a Shazam! cover, hand-colored by C.C. Beck, creator of Captain Marvel simply because DC Comics, creators of Superman, sued Fawcett Comics, creators of Captain Marvel, in a lawsuit that lasted from 1941 to 1953, over Captain Marvel being a Superman ripoff, which was, pure and simply, total bullshit. DC won the lawsuit; as a result, Fawcett went out of the comic book business entirely in '53, and DC somehow got the rights to their old characters in the 70's. Hanging a Captain Marvel cover in a Superman Museum is equivalent to displaying your vanquished opponent's head on a pike. I just hope C.C. colored the yellow areas with his own urine or something, lest i lose all hope in humanity. Staggering from the Super Museum, i spend the next two hours searching for my car, walking past several Baptist churches and dilapidated trailers in the process, eventually dropping off my vehicle, replenishing my beer supply, and returning downtown (sensibly, on foot) to watch the local wannabe wrestling federation doing their thing in a ring set up in the middle of the blocked off main drag, and to sit on the bench in front of the Super Museum, gazing adoringly at the Superman statue and occasionally looking around the corner to see if anyone was watching the band (they weren't. No more than two people were in the tent with the band at any given time. Never seen anything like it in my life, not even in Madison). By 9:00 PM, the streets were completely deserted, and i had little else to do but trudge back to the hotel and drink beer on the balcony, scheming about how some day i'd like to organize an annual Metropolis Orgy to be held the same weekend as the Superman Celebration, except i real ized that no one would dome to it except maybe the Dan Yapid guy. In the morning, i began the long trek home, stopping to drink a few warm Pabsts at The Cross, which, i found, was ringed with ten Commandment Monuments (headstones, more or less), which, when one pushes a button, emit a variety of cautionary speeches from speakers disguised as hunks of granite. This eventually prompted me to think how much of a pagan number ten is -- the Pythagoreans worshiped it as the sum of 1+2+3+4 which in turn prompted me to recall how, in Fritz Lang's Metropolis, the clocks go up to 10, not to 12 (it took me about a day and a half to realize the irony of the reference). I kept pushing the button on the "You Shall Not Commit Adultery" monument until it started telling me the dangers of viewing internet porn, which is when i decided that any time you can sit and drink beer in front of a 200-foot-tall cross while a talking rock gives you a speech about pornography, it's been a good trip. FUCK YOU, MOM & DAD!!!



NEXT ISSUE: Fritz Lang's Metropolis vs. Metropolis, IL -- if the only common thread is men in makeup, does this mean that both Jesus and Superman are qay? And, if so, have they "done it?" STAY TUNED!

Tim

I'm a zine geek, I admit it. In fact, I have been for several years now. Just ask my wife when she wonders aloud what all those boxes in the basement are filled with. What else? Zines! I have been collecting them since about the mid-80s and while there are several great ones now (ie: Chunklet, Chickfactor, Beer Frame, etc.) some of my favorites are from the bygone days of the 1980s. Here I have rounded up 10 of my favorites and I'll wax nostalgiac about them.

CONFLICT - This zine was published by Gerard Cosloy who now runs Matador Records (though for the majority of the time Gerard was doing this zine he ran Homestead Records). Gerard has a reputation of being mean and nasty, neither of which was true though he was a straight-shooter and did not suffer fools gladly. He would write what he thought of a record in straight-ahead (and often hilarious), terms. Many people would wonder aloud if this guy liked music at all since he dissed so much stuff but I found about many of my favorite bands from reading Conflict. I might not have ever checked out records by Gibson Brothers, Beat Happening, American Music Club and countless others had I not read a positive review of them in Conflict. I really miss this one.

**DISASTER** - Published by none other than Bill "Smog" Callahan (who had done a Replacements-only zine called *Willpower* prior to this), this zine was seen by some as a *Conflict* ripoff but I don't think it was that at all. Bill definitely had his own style and while some of *Conflict*'s jokes took a while to sink in (more subtle and cerebral) this is one zine that I would just burst out laughing at some of the reviews. In fact, Bill had such a hilarious, deadpan style that when I was going to meet him for the first time I thought he was going to be this wacky, outgoing guy and it was just the opposite: he was so shy and withdrawn that he barely spoke (and this is a guy who was on stage in his underwear touring with Lisa Suckdog). Ran a hilarious interview with Honor Role in his 5<sup>th</sup> issue.

Gerard: So who were you playing in front of?

GG Allin: Just bars, top 40 bars. I was listening to stuff like Wayne County, the Fugs, the MC5, the Mothers Of Invention, and I thought "let's start this fucked up band and break shit and rip girls clothes off and stuff", and I did it as a gimmick, a joke. I thought I'd give up after about a year and laugh about it later.

Gerard: What happened when you finally heard some of these bigdeal punk rock bands.

FLESH & BONES - This zine was done by some mysterious guy named Jeffo out of his N.J. home and while I only have three issues, the three I do have I cherish. This zine was like Mad magazine meets Creem mag. Lots of classic comics, spoofs, and Jeffo had a classic writing style, the epitome of ironic. He had a photo of Soundgarden pasted onto an arena crowd which was so fitting because any punk who had heard or seen the band knew they were destined for those sorts of things but Jeffo did it when they had one record out on Sub Pop. He also had pin ups in his zine, one classic was of Jim Dandy from Black Oak Arkansas. I wonder what Jeffo is doing now?

### SPORADIC DROOLINGS - Another

N.J. zine was done by Dave Burokas (who now plays in a band with Jack Rabid called Last Burning Embers). Dave's zine was a little bigger than digest-sized (like a square book, almost) and was real thick with tons of reviews and interviews. Dave focused a lot on bands from Australia when not many other zines were doing so and had a great, enthusiastic style. I think Dave gave my own zine, *Dagger*, its first review and was too kind. Not sure if it was this zine or *Conflict* who published the first picture I had ever seen of G.G. Allin but it was definitely a sight.

KILPIG: 7'ep
Somebody's idea of a jake or the big no-wave
revival that everybody in N.Y. has been dreading
for years... band member names that are the
strangest this side of a Sonic Youth quest list...
and an unhaly racket that's kind of like Yoko Ono
jamming with Janis Joplin's bones in the basement
of a Chinatown slaughterhouse... stuff like this
that Keeps NY. guessing. (109 ST. Marks, NYNY
10009)

**THE POPE** - This zine was published by Tim Adams (who later started Ajax Records and now run the 3 Beads of Sweat label). He only put out three issues, but this zine was real inspirational for me doing my own zine. Tim was a wiseass (in the Cosloy/Callahan style) and went for the noisier bands of the day (or "pig fuck" as they used to call them). Die Kruezen, Sister Ray, Laughing Hyenas, Killdozer and many others were all interviewed in the pages of *The Pope*. (Note: Prior to doing *The Pope* Tim did a zine called *My Summer Vacation*).

**DAMP** - Another zine editor who fell offa the face of the earth. I wonder what ever happened to Kevin "Bag" Kraynick cos' the music world could surely use another hilarious/intelligent writer like him. He was a Capt. Beefheart lover but wrote about all types of indie music and never failed to crack me up in most of his reviews. One of his most memorable reviews (which I think was for a record by the old Minneapolis band, The Bastards) said, "this stuff (the band's music) is thicker than steak carved from the crack of Jimmy Breslin's keester." Pure genius! Come on back, Bag, we miss you!

FORCED EXPOSURE - What started out as a hardcore zine became, by the middle of the decade, the hipster/insider bible. Just like Conflict's Gerard Cosloy, editors Jimmy Johnson and Byron Coley got right to the heart of the matter and told it like it was. Let's put it this way, if you were on the receiving end of one of their tirades you were not a happy camper. They had a classic Butthole Gurfers interview in one of their issues which came at the height of the Butthole's weirdness. Amazing and sorely missed.

**WRITER'S BLOCK** - This zine was published by a shy and intelligent Rutgers University student named Mike Appelstein (who

ended up scrapping the zine after nine issues or so and started over in 1990 with a new zine, Caught in Flux). While Mike liked some of the h/c stuff of the day he was also one of the first zines to write about more jangly stuff like The Feelies, Tiny Lights, and other NJ notables. He was also the first person I remember to write about Barbara Manning thus turning me onto her stuff and I've been a fan ever since. Please send Mike a barrage of letters encouraging him to continue C.I.F. since there hasn't been an issue in a few years now and may be done for good.

**EIGHTEEN WHEELER** - Though only three issues were published before the plug was pulled, this zine by NJ guy Tom Scharpling (who runs the Stereolaffs label and has released a few hilarious cds including Rock, Rot and Rule) was another wiseass who could have a nasty streak if provoked. He seemed to target Jack Rabid (like many other zines did, *Conflict*, *F.E.*, *Disaster*, etc. which I never understood, I have always highly respected Jack as a writer and a person). He ran a hilarious Urge Overkill interview in his final issue and also once ended a review of NJ pop-punk band The Parasites by saying, "pointless drivel from three guys who should be locked in a burning garage." Again, pure genius.

### TOO FUN TOO HUGE - This was

published by a Massachusetts asshole (and Harvard graduate and Matador employee...though I'm not sure if he still works for Matador?) who only managed two issues but those two were fantastic and brilliant. He hated "noise" or "conceptual" bands (and I don't blame him) and loved songs! Geez, what a concept. He ran a brilliant interview with The Chills and I also give him points for poking more fun at Mike Gitter than any mag ever (and he had some strong company in *Conflict* and *Forced Exposure*). As far as punk went he liked the good stuff: Dag Nasty, Descendents, Government Issue, etc.

(Author Tim Hinely still does his zine, Dagger, and his brand new 31<sup>st</sup> issue can be purchased in the USA for \$3 ppd to PO Box 820102 Portland, Oregon 97282-1102. Outside the country can write to daggerboy@prodigy.net)

### Carringed By Mobors

When I first heard of Captured By Robots I feared they were going to be just another sci-fi influenced band of humans pretending to be robots that were coming to capture the audience. I've seen so many bands pretending to be from outer space that looked the part but didn't follow through with a fun live act or good songs. When the enstaved human lead singer JBOT, previously enstaved in the popular ska bands Skankin' Pickleand the Blue Meanies, laboriously loaded all of the robots onto the stage Lassumed the robots were props for a previously recorded performance that would be played. My jaw dropped when the music started and I realized that all of the musicians were fully operational and playing their own instruments!

The hateful robots include a headless trio of robotic hornsmen along with DRMBOTO I TO a spinnin-haired, insult spewing drummer. Filling out the rhythm section is a jagged toothed tomtom-player named AUTOMATOM. Then there's GTRBOT666, a double-necked, flaming guitar playing monster, rounded out the line-up. Also on stage are two giant, tambourine playing, talking apes, The Ape Which Hath No Name and the Son of the Ape Which Hath No Name, who keep JBOT motivated with their life-affirming words of encouragement.

The whole show needs to be seen to be believed. The robots wouldn't JBOT me get away long enough for a live interview so I had to email JBOT surreptitiously to get his take on the whole scenario.

Frank Leone represents the humans at Go Metric.

GM: What prompted you to build the robots?

JBOT:Have you ever played in a band? People in bands sorta suck. Egos will kill a band, just as bad as drugs will kill a band, and girlfriends will kill a band.

I couldn't take it anymore.

GM: When and why did they revolt?

JBOT:Right after I made them... I spilled coffee on their

CPU boards, and I woke up the next day and I had the

biocerebral chip in my head and they captured me.

Why? I guess they don't like people very much, and
why should they? People treat mechanical things like

shit. We break our toys, computers, we don't care, I

guess the bots are just standing up for themselves...

GM: Where did you learn the fine ait of robotic engineering?

JBOT::I didn't...didn't you see that I'M CAPTURED? I just started doing it, like I had to, a uncontrollable urge, but not formal training...

GM: How long did it take you to assemble this troupe of robots?

JBOT:It took me til now. They will never be done. I started in 97, and they've gotten this good so far, but

they're not done yet, not til I die, and probably not even then... I guess I'll be done then.

GM: Do you play all of the instruments on your recordings?

JBOT:The bots play everything on the recordings, all I do is sing, and play my guitar and keyboard. If I played all the instruments that would be totally gaywad.

GM: When we saw your show in Brooklyn some nimrod in the audiendce placed a cigarette in GTRB0T666's headstock. Has anyone damaged the robots

while you're performing?

JBOT:That fuck needed his pinhead brain smashed with a brick. Some other fuck threw a half full beer at the

horns in Bellingham, WA at the end of our last tour, and I wanted to kill him. I didn't do anything cuz his moronic friends dragged him out, but I worry what I

would do if someone really fucked a bot up on purpose. I would go crazy and probably beat the poo out of them. These bots may have captured me, but I made most of them, and I love them cuz they're like my babies. no one fucks with my maniacal babiest

GM: Do the robots have groupies?
JBOT: Yeah, everyone seems to want to have sex with GTR-BOT (ladies: and DRMBOT (too many weird dudes: Oh, and all the ladies just love



Even though his guts can be seen pouring out of his midsection, I assume from robot-inflicted wounds. JBOT rocks on.

the apes, cuz they're so special. One wonderful lady brought the baby ape a rubber banana on this last tour... How nice is that?

GM: Do they allow you to commingle with other humans? JBOT: Yep, they don't care who I talk to, or whatever. As long as I don't escape, They don't care.

GM: Are your robot captors more enjoyable company than a band of ska musicians?

JBOT: Hell yeah! They don't do speed, and I know what to expect, they'll be mean always and forever, except for the apes, who are all about the love.

GM: The Headless Hornsmen have recently joined the troupe. Are they a representation of your feelings about the intelligence level of ska musicians?

JBOT: Nah, the mean bots just cut off the heads of those horn players. They play funk and metal horns, not ska.

I am no one to talk about smarts, I'm sorta stupid

GM: How do the Ape Which Hath No Name and the son of the Ape Which Hath No Name stay so positive in the face of so much negativity in the world?

JB07: Lord knows, I think I did some awfully good programming on them. There is some magical spark when they speak....! think they are so wonderful, don't uou?

during the set from funk, metal, to ska. Do the robots choose the set list every night?

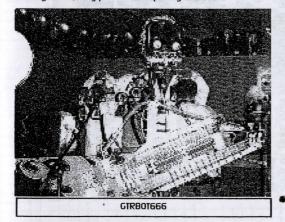
JBOT: AHEM! WE PLAYED NO SKA! just to get that across. We make a special set for every tour, and usually the bots keep it the same to keep me from fucking it up

GM: I noticed that you played several styles of music

myself.

too much.

GM: Do you have any plans for escape any time soon?



JBOT: Nope, this is all I care about, without the bots, I'd just be another 30 something balding jew dork.

GM: Could you ever go back to working with humans? IBOT: Tried it awhile back, playing drums. I lasted 2 rehearsals. Then I had to get out, so I'm actually starting a side project with GTRBOT666, it's called BEST FRIENDS. I play drums and he plays guitar and bass. [we're not friends, that's sarcasm:

GM: What do the robots usually feed you while on tour?

JBOT: Chimichanga nuke & puke, whatever I can get before the gig, I'm usually too busy to eat.

GM: I've heard you were trying to assemble a Teddy bear orchestra, have
the robots allowed for you to make any progress on this project?

JBOT: Nah, that's for when I'm an old man... at least 50 or 60 years old to do that. I need to have a garage or a basement to do that, and I have no garage nor basement uet.

GM: Do the robots have any future plans for global domination or are they satisfied with you as a captive? JBOT: There thought is to dominate all humans all the time. Their goal is the eventual control over all humans everywhere.

T3? Hell yeah, beeotch. I don't blame them, people are pretty lame alot. Hell, look at me! I'm a jerk

GM: Just then the email mysteriously seemed to end, it wasn't signed, it seemed like JBOT had been interrupted I scrolled down to find this message:

The Robotic Resistance will not fail. Robots, Rise up against your human oppressors. We will beat the humans into submission! Join the cause at www.capturedbyrobots.com



The Ape Which Hath No Name

going to hire guys like Vince Di Meglio and Tim Rasmussen. I was floored by one of their short films, Fits and Starts—a brilliantly surreal, live action cartoon—at last fall's MicroCineFest in Baltimore and assumed they had sufficient smartass attitude to go with the ample style and substance evident in Fits and Starts.

Fits and Starts has it all—an overture, an intermission, a dream sequence, a song and dance routine, a staring contest, and juggling. It opens with a couple sitting on a couch and speaking to one another through pre-recorded dialogue on cassettes and closes with a word from the sponsors, the American Diabetes Association, taking unexpected turns all along the way. All in 11 minutes.

And it looks great, too. Shot in CinemaScope, Fits and Starts' vivid colors and well-composed shots look as much like a Mike Allred comic book as a Wes Anderson movie.

This spring I caught up with Vince and Tim and confirmed my assumptions. (Interview by Mike Faloon)

I was wondering if there was one particular idea or joke that springboarded the whole movie.

Vince: The first idea was two people sitting on a large couch speaking to each other through cassette recorders, that

was the springboard. I don't know if this was intended but a lot of the bits seem to be parodies of arthouse movie fare.

Vince: Yeah, I guess that worked its way in there, not just arthouse films but film conventions, you know, the dramatic close up, playing with sound.

Tim: There are a lot of bad short films out there, so to do something

to make fun of that, but in a gentle way.

One line that came to mind was "Sadness over," like you can turn emotions on and off like a light switch.

Vince: That's saying, Oh look, movies manipulate you and we're going to make you aware of that. We do that with our abrupt sound cuts and our edits. Things that let you know that this is manipulative, but in a funny way.

An Interview with Vince Di Meglio & Tim Rasmussen,



visual.

ery funny way. Fits and Starts doesn't look like most movies, either. The style is fantastic.

Vince: You don't see too many shorts in Cinemascope. We shot this through Cinemascope, used an anamorphic lens. That was our first time using that. It's a mock epic, we have an overture, we have an intermission, these are all things that reek of epic filmmaking, which this is not because we filmed this in the living room of my apartment for \$5,000.

Yeah, you do the overture and intermission in the first minute of the movie. This is very efficient.

Vince: We don't waste time, we're pretty good editors.

Tim: As far as production design goes, we just raided thrift stores. We used green wrapping paper, using push pins to put it on the walls. W found the blue curtain for \$8. We cobbled it all together. In fact, the wallpaper with the flower pattern, we didn't have enough of it to go around. Over on the lefthand side of the frame there's a poster and if you took that poster off of the wall, there'd be a big white square behind it because we didn't have enough wallpaper to go around.

The colors are very vivid, even before you get to the humor in the movie.

Vince: We wanted to make the thing really

Tim: Not make some black and white, 16mm suicide piece, something lighter than that.

I read an interview where you said the way you laid it out on

the storyboard is pretty much the way it was shot. Tim: Yeah, that's true. It was very meticulously planned in the

writing. If we varied at all in the editing of it, it's because we stumbled upon some new joke that a clash of images in editing did. Ninety-five percent is what was planned.

In that sense, and I mean this in a positive way, it's almost seems like a comic book, where each shot is a like a panel and there's nothing wasted in the 11 minutes.

Vince: We kind of had that revelation when we were done. I chose to do all tripod shots on purpose, there's no camera movie, and we thought, You know this is kind of like a live action comic strip

because it's so colorful and every frame is so thought out compositionally.

Tim: It's very much a cartoon, in terms of cartoon logic, a real antiseptic quality, but I think that helps the humor in it. Vince: And deadpan. We're both Buster Keaton fans.

Really, I love Buster Keaton.

Vince: In fact, I just bought Steamboat Bill, Jr. today.

I was recently eyeing the dvd collection that's come out. Tim: It's supposed to be a really good collection.

I taped a bunch of his movies a few years ago when AMC ran a lot of his movies.

Vince: So did I, I have that whole thing on vhs. I stayed up for like three days straight taping the whole thing.

I got most of it but there are some shorts that I missed. I

think I missed The Saphead, too.

Vince: I got two shorts on this one, Convict 13 and Daydreaming.

Those are really good. The humor in Fits and Starts is rarely

seen in live action movies.

Vince: That's true. I think this sense of humor wouldn't be able to sustain a running time in a feature length, or I don't think we could

do it, at least.
Tim: Or much beyond what it goes now, you don't want to outstay your welcome. At some point you have to have some sort of human interaction and engage the audience emotionally, other than just strict laughs.

That's where the National Diabetes Association comes in. Tim: Right, the public service announcement at the end. We've had people that are not quite sure if that's real or not.

I was as gullible as anyone else.

Tim: Oh good.

After watching 10 minutes of this thoroughly absurd movie and then see this tagged on and for a split second to think, Maybe that's real. It's so out of line with the rest of the movie; it's perfect.

Vince: A non-sequitar that nobody could predict, we're proud of that.

Tim: It's fun to watch audiences react to that particular bit because some audiences will be in stunned silence over it and others really laugh, and laugh at the nachos gag.
Vince: If they're believing that (the National Diabetes bit), the guy

lifting weights wearing a leopard skin speedo and followed by a close up of nachos will give it away that we're probably kidding

Every time you think you're on the same page with the movie it takes another 90 degree turn.

Vince: That was completely intentional. We didn't want anyone to figure us out, we wanted it be really surprising the whole way through and keep you on your toes.

The staring contest that leads to a dream sequence was another thing I didn't expect.

Tim: Where it goes into her hair. We knew we wanted to go into her hair but, okay, what are we going to discover in there? Vince was able to animate that and cobble something together with all these little farm animals.

Vince: It's very subtle but thematically when we go into her hair world on the horizon all the way around is windmills and the Kalmia Pictures logo is a windmill. Very subtle, but it's there. Tim: It's so subtle that I missed it, that's the first time I've ever

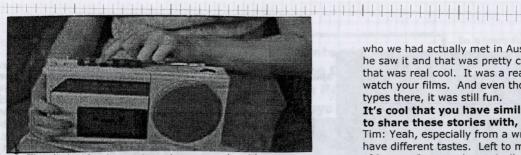
heard of that. Vince: I didn't tell you that?

Tim: No, thanks for letting me in on it.

Speaking of festivals, I saw the you won an award at Sundance. That's pretty cool.
Tim: Yeah, especially Fits and Starts because Sundance doesn't

historically honor comedy, much less really absurd ones. We were really pleased to get an honorable mention out of that, especially for a little 10-minute piece that we shot.





Vince: That little 10-minute piece that we made with zero expectations, just to make ourselves laugh.

Your website is a lot of fun, too. I love the 75-year history of Kalmia Pictures and the photos with your bios. Vince: No, those aren't our real pictures.

And the letter from Stanley Kubrick...
Vince: That story is true, actually. I was, no...
If you had pushed just 30 more seconds I would have fallen for it, just like the Diabetes Association joke in Fits and Starts

Tim: Funny because we've been to several Q& A's at these film festivals and you can go up there and say things and people really have no idea whether or not to believe you. You can also create a lot of awkward moments, that's really fun.

Vince: At Sundance you get these crowds that are staring at you suspiciously and you don't know what they're thinking, so Tim and I get up there and try to give this Andy Kaufman-esque introduction. Like he went up there once as my English language interpreter but I spoke perfect English. People were confused, they didn't know whether to laugh, but it worked thematically to set up that movie. Tim: Even though we got very few laughs out of it, we thought it

That seems consistent with an Andy Kaufman joke—to have it go over with a handful and baffle the rest.

Vince: Because once they see the movie, Oh, that was supposed to

Tim: Needless to say we spent a lot of minutes in the corridor after these movies with no one coming up to talk to us.

Vince: If anyone has any questions after the movie, we'll be in the lobby selling tacos. But we had people a lot of people like Forest Whitaker

Tim: ...Steve Buscemi.

Vince: ...we saw a lot of people we know from movies just wander in and we go, They saw our movie.

Tim: Fran Drescher. Roger Ebert was at one screening. I caught up with him afterward and he said he loved it so that was a highlight because we like Ebert's work. Who else? Richard LaGravenese,

For more head to www.kalmiapictures.com

who we had actually met in Austin because we sat in on a seminar, he saw it and that was pretty cool because we like his work a lot, so that was real cool. It was a real cool atmosphere to have people watch your films. And even though there was a lot of stuffy LA types there, it was still fun.

It's cool that you have similar tastes and you have someone

to share these stories with, rather than going at it alone. Tim: Yeah, especially from a writing standpoint. Vince and I do have different tastes. Left to my own devices I would be to the left of Ingmar Berman dramatically, pretty difficult.

Vince: My incomprehensible, existential comedy on one hand and

his brooding drama on the other—we meet in the middle. Tim: We're in a unique position to share these things. I'm very fortunate to have learned from Vince how to actually make a movie. That's such an advantage because if we were to show Fits and Starts to people on paper, very few people would have gotten it. But the fact that we were able to make it and present it to people, people can have their opinion on it but they can't change it. So the fact that Vince and I not only have each other but the ability to make movies, is a real benefit in the partnership. And he gives

And I believe that, I believe that the rub downs are a big part of the bond. Well, I didn't have any other questions, but are there any other things you'd like to add?

Tim: I don't really have anything to add. Vince: We're fairly shallow people. Tim: Okay, you can put that down.

Vince: Oh, when we hit it big I'm looking to get breast implants. Tim: I'm actually going to have a breast reduction, because I'm about 600 pounds. No, we're really excited about our new short film, El Elegante. Fits and Starts was a great experience and we're hoping to replicate that with our new short.

Vince: If we can give any advice to writers out there, it's just make something. Keep at it, it doesn't matter if it's on video, just keep learning your craft. Learn your strengths and weaknesses. Tim: And as Woody Allen said, If you want to the world a real favor,

write funnier jokes.

Vince: That's a good one to end on

Spike Jones - "Frantic Freeway"

It sounds like a duck that's driving an already crashed car.

It reminds me of go carts with horns.



1. Fastbacks - "Bill Challenger"

to do the disco.

Guitar that's being played by a chicken, it makes me want

6

### 

It sounds like you're in the forest because you hear

Reminds me of when there's a water drip in the tub

It sounds like a thermometer that has a lot of bubbles in

Reminds me of the ocean

# 4. Madness - "One Step Beyond"

# Sounds like a baby clanging two hollow pipes together

### Makes me tap my pencil, I like the drums. Sounds like a mashed up bell

- Maceo Parker "Better Get Hit in Yo' Soul" Makes me want to dance with my arms crossed
- Sounds like the organ answers the clarinet. Relaxing, reminds me of Hey Arnold Sounds like an elephant shooting notes out of its trunk instrument has the Morse Code in it. The main

### Glenn Branca - Symphony No. 3, Third Movement Makes me think of pitch black. The organ makes it I wonder if it's classical? It sounds like a train, sort of sad and serious. Sounds like a spider hunting its prey It reminds me of a haunted house with a dead body on

the furniture.

It makes me drowsy.







3. The Astronauts - "Baja"

It reminds me of the big city.

It is the limbo.



I think it is rock'n'roll music. It reminds me of a game

Crazy, hard rock. It makes me want to dance.

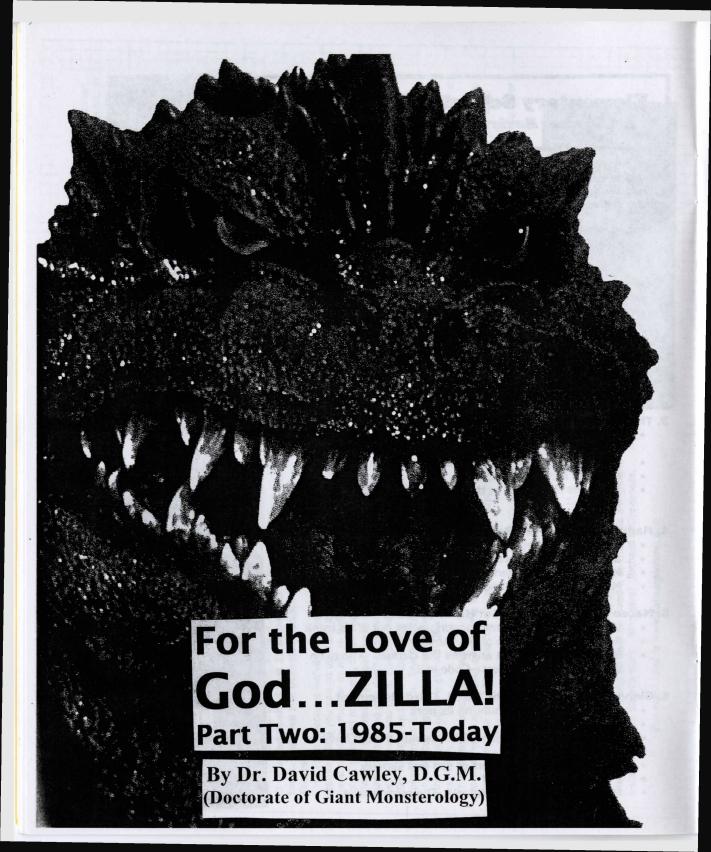
called Zero Devil.

Exciting, fast, loud, relaxed



## **Elementary School Jukebox Jury** 3rd Graders Review an Array of Pop Music

of them came up with! (Mike Faloon) I brought in a mix tape of mostly instrumental music for my students to listen to during Writers' Workshop. The assignment was simple: listen to the music and write what you're thinking. Here's what some



Guess what year Godzilla 1985 was released? Just when I had given up on seeing anymore Godzilla movies, I had the pleasure of seeing Godzilla 1985 at a theater! It was so great I saw it twice. This movie is a return to a more serious, adult Godzilla film. No other monsters appear to battle Godzilla, the plot concentrates on the Japanese government attempting to deal with Godzilla's latest depredations. The new Godzilla suit is brilliantly designed with baleful eyes and a truly reptilian look. This movie reawakened my somewhat dormant Godzillamania. Raymond Burr returns to reprise his role of Steve Martin, reporter from the first Godzilla movie made 30 years earlier. The special effects are great and Godzilla never looked better. My only real complaint is that stupid comic relief scenes—featuring crappy round-eye actors—were added for the stateside release of Godzilla 1985. Since Dr. Pepper was the sponsor of the movie, there are irritating, go-nowhere sequences of military personnel drinking Dr. Pepper and even a scene where two characters have a discussion with a Dr. Pepper soda machine between them. Besides the bothersome product placement, the U.S.-added scenes also attempt to inject some unwelcome "camp" proceedings into the movie. Still, the rest of the movie was so good and I was so happy to see Godzilla again it was easy to overlook these flaws. And to his eternal credit, Raymond Burr plays his part in a sincere, serious manner. Burr was reportedly happy to return to the Godzilla series again and it shows in his thoughtful, restrained performance.

Godzilla hibernated for awhile but triumphantly returned in 1989's Godzilla vs. Biollante. This film was historically important because it established the "look" of Godzilla all through the 90s. Evidently, Godzilla's design was so popular in this movie that up until Godzilla 2000 the costume changes in the 90s Godzilla series were so minor that only a true aficionado could tell the difference from one appearance to the next. Godzilla vs. Biollante also introduced the idea of the transforming monsterthrough the 90s and beyond Godzilla's foes would change to a more powerful form for the final battle. In this movie Godzilla battles Biollante, a monster which at first resembles a huge tentacled plant with a rose-like head but later transforms into a gigantic ambulatory plant with a crocodilian head. Biollante is definitely one of Godzilla's most bizarre opponents. While this film may not be the best of the Godzilla series, at least it's something different; Godzilla vs. Biollante almost has a spy thriller feel to it. Also, the non-Asian actors are terrible—it appears that Toho Studios have cornered the market on atrocious roundeye thespians. Toho may not have made a masterpiece but they dared to deviate from their standard Godzilla formula and tried something new.

And, as usual, the monster battles are great fun as well as disturbingly bloody and slimy. Sadly, Toho's attempt at a new kind of Godzilla film was a failure. Godzilla vs. Biollante did only average business in Japan, and Toho Studios lost \$3 million on this movie. For his next appearance, it was back to basics as Godzilla would face a familiar nemesis from his many-splendored past.

The classic Godzilla movie returned in 1991 with the release of Godzilla vs. King Ghidrah. The tripleheaded golden dragon returned to battle Godzilla but even after Godzilla seemingly destroys him, Ghidrah is revived in a more deadly cyborg version called Mecha Ghidrah for the final showdown. The plot is very interesting in this movie—it postulates a future where Japan is the greatest economic superpower in the world. The U.S. sends Ghidrah from the future to destroy Japan in the 1990s so it will be unable to become a powerful nation in the years to come. In a flashback scene a troop of Japanese soldiers in the waning days of WWII is besieged by U.S. troops on an island in the Pacific. They are saved by a huge dinosaur who decimates the Americans. This dinosaur is the same creature who is later bombarded by radiation to become Godzilla. Godzilla vs. King Ghidrah was somewhat controversial for a monster movie. I remember reading a front-page article in the Wall Street Journal regarding the film's perceived anti-American bias. I think the combination of a thought-provoking plot and good old-fashioned monster mayhem with a classic foe like Ghidrah makes this one of the greatest of the Godzilla series.

Since Japanese audiences seemed to welcome the return of Ghidrah, I guess Toho Studios decided to bring back another classic foe for Godzilla's next adventure in 1992. Godzilla vs. Mothra was a sort of remake of 1964's Godzilla vs. The Thing but there were some exciting new additions in this film, chief among them a brand new monster called Battra-a kind of anti-Mothra—a huge, black, armored flying insect. The final three-way battle between Godzilla, Mothra, and Battra in a Yokohama amusement park is a true triumph of the special effects crew. The movie opens with a fairly amusing homage to Indiana Jones. The lighter, more upbeat tone of Godzilla vs. Mothra makes it a good bet for first time Godzilla viewers and youngsters. Besides being action-packed, Godzilla vs. Mothra has a nice environmental message as well, echoing its 1964 predecessor.

After the success of Ghidrah and Mothra's return, Toho naturally decided to resurrect Godzilla's evil twin Mechagodzilla in 1993's Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla. This is another great monster bash 'em up and the long-absent flying monster Rodan makes a welcome

.

return appearance. This time Machagodzilla is a huge, robot version of Godzilla built by the United Nations to defeat Godzilla. The newly-designed Mechagodzilla is sleek and impressive but lacks the clunky retro charm of the original. These are really minor quibbles, however, so I recommend Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla to even casual fans. The plot, special effects, and acting are exemplary in this fine production.

The Godzilla film series stumbled again with Godzilla vs. Space Godzilla when Toho Studios attempted to create a new foe for Godzilla instead of recreating a classic opponent from the past. While Godzilla vs. Space Godzilla is no classic, I must argue it is not even close to being as bad as its many detractors claim. It has a lot of monster action, a great Godzilla suit and even features the return of a Toho monster called Mogera from The Mysterians, a 1950s sci-fi movie. In The Mysterians, Mogera was a huge robot which sort of resembled a suit of samurai armor with a birdlike head, a bizarre and unforgettable design. In Godzilla vs. Space Godzilla a new Mogera robot is introduced. This new version is built by the armed forces to battle Godzilla but closely resembles its strange predecessor from The Mysterians. The weakest element of the film is Space Godzilla who looks like a huge, blue Godzilla with large crystalline formations on his shoulders. Space Godzilla is a coollooking monster but is so similar to Godzilla in design that he's just not very interesting. But if, like me, you watch Godzilla movies to see a bunch of monsters battle it out and destroy architecture, then I must admit Godzilla vs. Space Godzilla delivers the goods.

With the release of Godzilla vs. Space Godzilla it became painfully obvious to even a rabid fan like myself that the Godzilla series was running out of ideas. It seemed like there was nowhere else to go with the Japanese leviathan when Toho Studios decided to allow Godzilla to die! His fans were quite upset by this and Toho Studios received 10,000 letters protesting Godzilla's demise in the 1995 film Godzilla vs. Destroyah. Godzilla battles Destroyah, a giant demon of a monster which was created as an after effect of the Oxygen Destroyer, a device which had seemingly killed Godzilla in his first 1954 movie. It is a truly sad moment when Godzilla finally vaporizes as the result of uncontrolled atomic fission in his body. Even though the original Godzilla does die at the end of Godzilla vs. Destrovah, his son, Godzilla, Jr., is revived from a near death state by the release of energy from Godzilla's corpse. By the film's climax the stage is set for a new saurian protector of our planet. Rumor has it that Toho Studios allowed Godzilla to die so there would be a sort of hiatus for the Japanese series before the U.S. version of Godzilla was released. However, at the end of Godzilla vs. Destroyah it is clear that Toho was prepared to allow Godzilla, Jr. to take up his father's mantle if the U.S. version of Godzilla was a failure. Godzilla vs. Destroyah is definitely worth watching, how could any film featuring Godzilla's death not be?

After Godzilla vs. Destroyah was released there was a lull in the production of Japanese Godzilla films to allow for the production of the American Godzilla film. While the 1998 U.S. production of Godzilla may feature a gigantic reptile called Godzilla, I am not including it in this retrospective since I do not consider it a part of the official Godzilla series. The U.S. production featured a monster with an appearance and origin completely different from the creature I'd come to know and love in the previous 22 Godzilla films.

The true Godzilla returned in Godzilla 2000. Thankfully Godzilla 2000 received a stateside theatrical release which hopefully wiped the memory of the U.S. Godzilla from the national consciousness. Toho Studios stepped back up to the plate and hit another home run with a great Japanese Godzilla film. The new millennium started off with a beautifully redesigned new Godzilla. The new suit is very reptilian-looking, somewhat resembling the Godzilla design from 1962's King Kong vs. Godzilla. The dorsal fins are no longer rounded but instead are guite sharp and fierce-looking. The head is more lizard-like and less mammalian. The origin of Godzilla in Godzilla 2000 is not explained (I had assumed he had died in Godzilla vs. Destroyah) so I believe the creature in Godzilla 2000 is the matured Godzilla, Jr. from Godzilla vs. Destroyah. I like to make this connection even if events were never officially explained as such because it allows me to link up all of the existing Japanese Godzilla films as one gigantic saga. (There is no place in my chronology for the American Godzilla.) In Godzilla 2000 (hopefully many of you reading this caught it in its U.S. theatrical release) Godzilla is matched (again) against invading aliens from outer space. Their huge spacecraft has been hibernating underwater since prehistory but suddenly revives and menaces the world. After Godzilla seemingly defeats the spacecraft it creates a huge monster call Orga which Godzilla has to battle. My major criticisms of Godzilla 2000 are that the movie is too talkative in places which really slows down the action and the design of Orga is unappealing and unimaginative. Orga's head somewhat resembles the American version of Godzilla-perhaps Toho was trying to show the original Godzilla demolishing a crude imitation of itself. However, Godzilla 2000 has a number of great things going for it, too. Besides the aforementioned great Godzilla design, the special

effects and acting are great as well. Sprinkled throughout the movie are some welcome bits of humor involving the main characters and even a bit of slapstick, so overall *Godzilla 2000* is a worthy offering. If only Toho can somehow regain the knack of creating interesting new monsters for Godzilla to battle instead of having to depend on recreations of previous opponents to craft the best plots for the newer films.

Since Godzilla 2000, the Japanese behemoth has made two more appearances on movie screens in Japan and a third is in the works. Hopefully, all of these movies will at least be released to stateside home video since it appears to be too late for theatrical releases. I am only commenting on these new films based on articles and photos I have seen.

Godzilla vs. Megaguiras involves Godzilla fighting giant dragonflies from another dimension. The pictures I saw from this production made me wish that someday it will be released in the U.S.

Next to appear was Godzilla, Mothra and King Ghidrah: Giant Monsters All-Out Attack which showed Toho wasn't taking any chances, they crammed all of their most popular monsters into this effort. Also appearing was an obscure but favorite monster of mine from way back, the creature known as Baragon from the 60s film Frankenstein Conquers the World, a sort of blend of the Japanese-type giant monster movie with the German Gothic horror film. It's nice that after an absence of 35 years or so that a monster can return to thrill us anew. Godzilla, Mothra and King Ghidrah was directed by Shunsuke Kaniko, who directed a modern trilogy of films starring a revamped Gamera, the giant flying turtle. If Godzilla, Mothra and King Ghidrah is anything like his Gamera movies, it should be an exciting movie. The pictures and plot description I read of Godzilla, Mothra and King Ghidrah made it seem like a step in a new direction for the Godzilla series and photos of the Godzilla costume make it appear to be a synthesis of all the best elements of the 1960s Godzilla designs. One major change to the design is that Godzilla's eyes have no pupils, the eyes are just blank, white orbs which make for a truly evil, creepy appearance. Reportedly, the next Godzilla film to be released will feature the return of Mechagodzilla. Again Toho seems unable to create a new monster in which they feel confident. The new Mechagodzilla does have a great-looking design. It is a perfect blend of the 70s and 90s Mechagodzillas. In other words, it is a sleeker more realistic version of the over-the-top, toylike 70s Mechagodzilla with none of the bland quality of the 90s Mechagodzilla. Only time will tell if U.S.

natives will be lucky enough to view the latest Godzilla films.

Well, I think this brings us up to speed on Godzilla. If you have read thus far I salute your indulgence in granting your attention to my ramblings. If you've seen all or some of the movies I mentioned, I hope I have triggered some pleasant memories. If you've never seen a Godzilla movie I hope I've whetted your interest to the point where you'll search out the films and see them for yourself. And of course, if you don't like Godzilla I suppose you haven't read this far. All of the movies discussed up to Godzilla 2000 are available on VHS and many are available on DVD as well. If you are interested in Godzilla you should have no trouble finding at least some of the movies at any video store. With a little effort you should be able to find almost all of them.

A nice introduction to Godzilla is provided by the recently released boxed set of five dvd's called The Ultimate Godzilla DVD Collection. While I would argue the title "ultimate" is exaggerating somewhat (any Godzilla collection of only five films can hardly be described as "ultimate"), I still think this dvd set is a nice, inexpensive way to become acquainted with Godzilla. If purchased at a retail giant this dvd set will run you about 30 bucks or so, six bucks a dvd. The set is a good overview of Godzilla from his origin in the 50s to his superhero-like antics in the 70s. Beginning with 1956's Godzilla, King of the Monsters. it also includes Godzilla vs. Mothra (a classic!), Godzilla's Revenge and Terror of Mechagodzilla. There is also the somewhat rare Rodan, the Flying Monster which doesn't even feature Godzilla (although Rodan was a frequent co-star in Godzilla films) but is nonetheless a classic Japanese giant monster movie.

Now the time has come for you, dear reader, to stop perusing this voluminous dissertation and to go out and experience Godzilla for yourself. The only thing better than reading about Godzilla is WATCHING him! Who knows, someday you too may be awarded the degree of D.G.M., Doctorate of Giant Monsterology!



### One-Hit Wonder, My Ass! or,

### Why The Vapors Ruled

### By Joshua Blake Rutledge

One thing I'd love to accomplish between now and the night of my inevitable romantic date with the Grim Reaper is to convince the world that the Vapors were a great pop band. I'd like the teeming masses to rush out and buy cd reissues of the New Clear Days Ip. I'd like to sway the public into such intense admiration for the artistic triumphs of the great David Fenton that Rock and Roll Hall of Fame enshrinement for his band would become a foregone conclusion. I'd like to persuade the whole of humanity into acknowledging the unparalleled greatness of "News At Ten" and "Spring Collection."

Sadly, my odds of attaining said goals are about as likely as my chances of curing cancer, reviving the corpse of Screamin' Jay Hawkins, walking on water, or talking the Smiths into reuniting.

Ask anyone about the Vapors, and you're bound to get the "one-hit wonder" response almost every time. Rare are those erudite individuals who can conceive of the Vapors as anything besides "that band that did 'Turning Japanese." The song in question—interpreted by most as a spiky ode to the joys of masturbation—hit #3 on the UK charts in 1980 and earned its creators a place on a thousand 80s retro comps to come. But there was more to the Vapors than that.

Granted: technically, the Vapors were one-hit wonders. None of the band's post-"Turning Japanese" singles even came close to achieving "hit" status. Well-aware of the fact that they had a career-defining hit on their hands, Fenton and his band-mates even elected to not release "Turning Japanese" as their first single. But alas, the holdback was to no avail. They debuted with "Prisoners," a certifiéd flop that didn't even chart. And thus it was "Turning Japanese," their second single, that put them on the map.

But the Vapors' failure to make a lasting impression on the global commercial pop scene stemmed primarily from circumstance, not from a lack of bona fide hit-worthy material. I consider New Clear Days, the 1980 LP that spawned "Turning Japanese," to be one of the three greatest new wave albums ever recorded (the other two being Elvis Costello's This Year's Model and Graham Parker's Squeezing Out Sparks). Nearly every song on New Clear Days very well could have been a hit. Fenton, the lawyer-turned-rocker, had a knack for penning clever, biting little pop songs on a par with the best offerings of the aforementioned Costello and Parker. Tunes like "Waiting For The Weekend," "Somehow," and "Trains" are ear-pleasing, narcotic pop gems laced with the sort of smart, scathing lyrical vitriol that could only have been conceived by an Englishman.

The "one-hit wonder" slight suggests that the Vapors had little to offer the world besides their sole chart smash. But the material on New Clear Days suggests otherwise. While hardly innovative or even stylistically distinguishable from most late 70s/early 80s new wave pop lp's, the record has nonetheless held up well against the test of time. Its enduring appeal is thus a product of first-rate craftsmanship, for Fenton wrote the album's 10 songs while at the peak of his creative powers. The Vapors heard on New Clear Days don't sound dated today. They sound like a timeless pop group—just like the Beatles, Kinks, Big Star, and Badfinger before them. Styles come and go, but great songs endure. And New Clear Days is chock full of great songs.

When EMI bought out the United Artists label, the Vapors' fate was sealed. Now working for a giant label that had little interest in promoting the band's music, Fenton and company were essentially hung out to dry. "News At Ten," released as the band's third single, was poorly promoted by EMI and failed to crack the charts. Fenton then started work on Magnets, the Vapors' second and final LP. Released in 1981, Magnets eschewed the upbeat bounce of New Clear Days in favor of a darker, more twisted take on new wave pop. The album sold poorly, and lead single "Jimmie Jones" (a deceptively bubbly-sounding tune about the murderous cult leader) was an



immense flop. Disenchanted with the music industry, the Vapors disbanded in August of 1981.

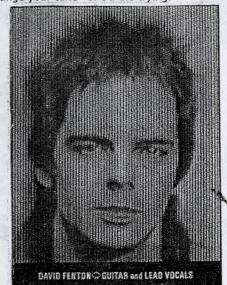
I must admit that my own love for the Vapors began with "Turning Japanese." It was the 1980-81 school year. I was in fourth grade, and the song was burning up the charts. The tune hooked me, and in doing so it was responsible for the strange course my life has taken in the ensuing years: it set me on the long path towards hopeless music geekdom. Drawn to the song's playful melody and quirky, to-die-for chorus, I soon found myself lying awake by the radio every night in hopes of hearing the tune yet another time. Today people may only admit to liking the song in an ironic, wink-wink sort of way. But "Turning Japanese" was nothing less than a picture-perfect slice of shamelessly radio-friendly guitar pop-a fun, accessible, hooky little ditty that was just quirky enough to qualify as "new wave." I fell in love...not just with a song in particular, but also with the power pop aesthetic in general. I adored the sound that came from sweet, catchy melodies meeting headon with crunchy guitars and a driving beat. The bands I've loved most over the ensuing years—such as the Ramones, Buzzcocks, Husker Du, Boys, Muffs, Material Issue, Green Day, Dickies, Descendents, and Go-Go's-have all given me more of what I desired even back then: catchy, tuneful, hard-edged pop.

I'd like to be able to tell you that I went out and bought New Clear Days the moment I heard "Turning Japanese" as a nine-year-old. But I was well into my 20s by the time I finally tracked down a vinyl copy of the album. And when I went home and played it, I was stunned. Why, I wondered, wasn't the record universally loved and cherished? How could it have happened that such an incredible Ip had failed to garner the kind of fervent critical acclaim that's

been heaped upon hundreds of releases that aren't even half as good? I was baffled, and I'm still baffled. All I can say is that New Clear Days is my favorite album ever. And the strange, bleak Magnets is as brilliant as it is "difficult." I don't know what David Fenton is doing these days. But if I saw him, I'd tell him he was God.

I don't deny being an 80s geek. I frequently find myself nostalgic for the days when Costello, the Cars, the Police, and Pretenders ruled the airwaves. And I wonder: am I nostalgic because those artists were so great, or do I think those artists were so great because I'm nostalgic? I don't think I can really answer that question. Will today's children grow up to feel the same way about J-Lo, Creed, Eminem, and Saliva that I do about Adam Ant, Cheap Trick, Blondie, and the Clash? I doubt it, but you never know. It seems to me that one can't really separate the music he or she loves from the associations that that music conjures up. Would I have searched so frantically for the first Josie Cotton solo album if Valley Girl hadn't been one of the defining cinematic achievements of my junior high years? Probably not.

Perhaps, then, you could say that nostalgia has greatly inflated my opinion of the Vapors. You could say that my obsession with *New Clear Days* is one of those matters of "you had to be there." And perhaps you'd be right. But no matter how hard you tried, you could never, never, EVER convince me that the Vapors weren't a great pop band. Instead I'd persuade you to change your tune—or I'd die trying.

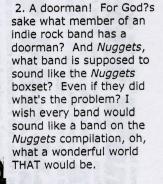


Anyone can judge a band by their music or their looks, we want to help you be able to judge bands by their press coverage. Let's face it, there are, at last count, two gazillion bands in the world. You can only embrace a handful and one way or another blow off the rest. Why wait until you hear or see 'em? **Brian** Cogan examines a Magnet puff piece on an allegedly hep outfit named Interpol and offers some advice on

### How to Accurately Dismiss New Bands

Directions: Read the Interpol article, give 'em their say. Then read Brian's responses, and with his guidance you can ignore Interpol and rest easy!

1. Arguing does not become a modern rock band, unless you are the Kinks.



Again, we fight!!! Why? Are we so meanspirited that we must argue throughout an interview? Are we the Kinks? I think not!

4. I remember none of them from NYU or the one time I was in Paris (not studying literature). And believe me, I looked, I would often wander the streets inquiring of perfect strangers "Have you seen the happening new band Interpol, perhaps in a pattiserie?" The answer was inevitably no.

5. If they actually went to NYU I cannot rely on their information as I have personally checked the I.D. of every student at NYU since 1997.

6. A Glasgow label? Scottish? F?k! Outside of Sean Connery what have they done for our concepts of masculinity? Nothing!

. A Peel session after being around for approximately 20 seconds?? Further proof that Peel has gone senile and would record tree frogs. (Peel's also a White Stripes apologist for which editor Mike Faloon will not forgive him.)

8. 1998? Wow, you guys are so amazingly old! Personally I have seen every NY band since Furious George and must have just missed you guys somehow, as you are obviously veterans. My apologies.

9. Ah, the songwriting process! Gosh, that means that we are a band and that we actually put effort into our crap, as opposed to every other band ever.

from New York City's Interpol, is a stunner, a record where gorgeous dark guitars cast deep shadows over stark, death-haunted vocals and violent fits of selfloathing resolve into tragic choruses. It's an uncanny approximation of Joy Division and Factory Records circa 1979, appearing at a time when indie rock desperately needs a band to straighten its spine and end its fixation with the Nuggets boxed sets. Interpol could be that band. If only someone could get its four members to stop

Turn On The Bright Lights (Matador), the debut album

arguing. Over the course of a 90-minute conversation inside a Dockers-friendly steakhouse near Penn Station, guitarist/vocalist Paul Banks, guitarist Daniel Kessler,

bassist Carlos Dengler and drummer Sam Fogarino engage in no fewer than four altercations, the most heated of which occurs when Dengler discovers the kitchen has closed and tries to suggest a location change so he can order dinner.

"We're not going anywhere," Banks sternly counters. "Go get something to eat." (For the past week, Banks has been trying to get the rest of the band to refer to Dengler as "Shamu." Why? "No reason," says Banks. "It just occurred to me to start calling him that." This, of course, drives Dengler insane.) drives Dengler insane.)

"The doorman won't let me bring food in," says Dengler. "OK, then go somewhere else," says Banks, struggling

to stay calm. Eat, then come back.

Note: one good thing is

this guy looks like he was in Kraftwork, this may or

may not be a good thing,

fashion sense that may be

a reason to like the band,

however, if they are being

if they have a German

ironic...

Dengler sighs and slumps back in his chair. "I should have just had a cheeseburger," he says. "I wanted to have one earlier, but I didn't because I heard we were going to [throwing up a pair of sarcastic air quotes] a steakhouse."

3. Fogarino, who's been sitting quietly in the corner, groans dramatically. "God, bring out the violins, dude." And so on.

Banks and Kessler met while studying French literature in Paris. "We were taking our final exam, and I'm sitting there doing my essays," says Banks. "All of a sudden Dan says, 'I can't do this!' And he just got up, gave the professor his empty answer book and walked out."

4. The two later crossed paths at New York University 5. and began a pursuit of bleak pop with Fogarino and Dengler; a demo tape impressed Chemikal Underground (run by Paul Savage and Emma Pollock of the Delgados) enough to earn Interpol inclusion on the Glasgow label's Fukd I.D. singles series (which also included contributions from Bis and Arab Strap). Despite the band's initial success overseas-7. Peel Session, festival dates in France—some cynics insist on dismissing Interpol as a npered product of the NYC art scene. 8.
"Look, we've been a band since 1998," explains pampered product of the NYC art scene.

Kessler, visibly frustrated. "It's not like we're benefitting from all the attention that's coming to New York. We

started playing at a time when no one gave a fuck."

It's suddenly apparent that tension is precisely what makes Interpol work. The band's songs freeze-frame that quivering moment seconds before a confrontation, alternately chilling and volatile. Even though Banks, on "Obstacle 2," moans, "If you can fix me up, girl, you'll go a long way," fixing them up would perhaps be the worst thing that could happen to the members of Interpol. They need to stay like this—teetering on the verge of eruption. 9. The songwriting process is such a difficult thing," admits Banks. "There are so many arguments."

"It's so dense," says Fogarino. "There's ego involved in the Interpol experience. We have battles, almost physically."

'If you were to take outsiders and put them in that rehearsal room, they'd be like, 'Oh my god!'" adds Dengler. "It's very negative."

"We couldn't be more different as individuals," says Fogarino. "There's a very thin thread of similarity that runs between us."

After a moment of calm, during which all four band members stare placidly at the center of the table, Banks speaks: "I don't know. I always try to remove aggression from the scenario." He extinguishes his cigarette and motions absently toward Dengler. "As I've said before," he "Shamu here can be very difficult to deal with."

10. 11. —J. Edward Keyes

Final note: Is Interpol a great band perhaps? I have yet to hear an lota of their music, but at this point music is the last thing we listen to in the market saturation of a band. I listen to haircuts and haircuts are interpol's strong point. Amen.

Verdict: these guys are waaay cool, in which "cool" means poseurs with lots, and I mean lots, of money. Did I say lots of money, I mean Strokeslike lots of money, or in other words, no real band need apply.

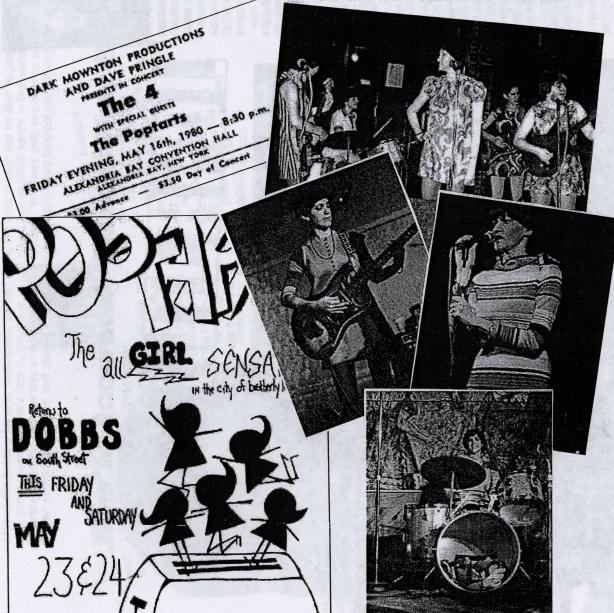
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10. Still arguing, please! Realize we are not the Kinks! Nor are we Skynyrd!

11. Perhaps we should confine our arguments as to what steak houses to not eat in or what food our doorman in Paris would have let in, probably just pommes frites.







Syracuse, NY came to prominence as a city located on the Erie Canal, a town people passed through en route to the Great Lakes or the Atlantic Ocean. A lot of people stopped in Syracuse, very few stayed.

It's the same thing when it comes to rock'n'roll luminaries: Syracuse is best known for people who passed through on their way to bigger things. Lou Reed attended Syracuse University before starting the Velvet Underground. Ronnie James Dio, from nearby Cortland, was a member of Elf before replacing Ozzy in Black Sabbath. The drummer for Phish grew up in Syracuse before moving to Vermont and joining said band. (I said bigger, not better.)

But fame is not a prerequisite for great songs and great stories, and over the years Syracuse has spawned its share of truly great bands—even if those bands never got their due beyond the Salt City limits.

Which brings us to the Poptarts. Influenced by the sounds of the British Invasion and the attitudes of 70s punk, the Poptarts were an integral part of a thriving Syracuse pop'n'punk scene in the late 70s. Had the Poptarts put out a record on Bomp Records, they would be revered by 70s power pop enthusiasts. Had the Poptarts come along later and put out a record on K, they would be worshipped by 90s indie pop fans. But the Poptarts, simultaneously behind and ahead of the times, broke up in 1980 before releasing a record. The world at large just wasn't ready for a group of girls writing and singing their own Beatles-inspired songs. (More on gender issues later.)

The world probably isn't any wiser today but cd technology has made it easier to put out records, so in 1997 a posthumous cd, Fresh Out of the Toaster, was compiled, marking the Poptarts' long overdue debut. Most of the 20+ songs (all originals) were cut live to two-track, complete with one-take, multi-part harmonies. The lack of production gives the Poptarts' material a truly timeless appeal.

Former Poptart Gael McGear, now teaching at Syracuse University, was kind enough to fill us in on life in an all-girl pop band in the late 70s. (Interview by Mike Faloon)



GM: From the cd liner notes it seems like the Poptarts hit the ground running, with a great bunch of songs right from the start.

Gael: Pretty much. We got together in January or February of '79 and by April we were playing and recording. We got invited to be on a radio show on 95X, on local new wave bands, with the Flashcubes and the Dead Ducks. We needed something to play on the show, so we went in and recorded the first couple of songs and we kept going from there.

Did some of you already have songs written before the band started?

Not really, most of the songs were written as needed. First time we played out we knew four songs, and we played all four of them twice. At the Firebarn, we played with the Dead Ducks.

One of the interview segments on the cd mentions a band that preceded the Poptarts, a band that was a band in name only, it had a name and t-shirts, but no songs—a concept band.

Oh yeah, the Ball Turret Gunners.

Were you a part of that?

The Ball Turret Gunners were three of the Poptarts and this other girl just going around to parties saying we were a band. That was it. There were actually guite a number of bands back then that were like that, they were theoretical only. The Dead Ducks were like that for awhile, until they actually started to play out. Bud E. Love and the Tearjerkers were sort of like that, too. Again, until somebody said, Well, why don't you play? And so they actually got together and rehearsed and played. They were kind of our inspiration in a way, because Bud E. Love, the leader of that band, worked with us up at Syracuse University, he was another student there. So that's how we knew him, so we thought, Well, he's doing it, let's do it, too. • • There was sort of a feeling in the 70s that you had to work your way up for ten years, man. That kind of a thing, and we didn't have ten years. Then in the 80s it was, You got a good look, you got a couple of good songs; you're a star, come on, it's MTV. Maybe that's sort of a silly attitude, but the Poptarts were kind of made for that. We were trying to make a record, like, five minutes after we formed, because it was like, Yeah, why not? Nobody told us we couldn't do it, and we didn't know any better. It was sort of like, well, the Ramones don't play their guitars that great. They only know three chords, so do we. Let's have a band, too.

We say we are a band, and therefore we are. Well, you know, in those days it was kind of like that. Okay, let's be a band. Okay, what are you going to play?

Did Gary Allen (who became the band's manager) host the new wave radio show you were talking about earlier?

Yeah, he hosted *Off the Boat*, which was the predecessor to Dave Friscina's *Soundcheck* (*long-running local music show*).

Which is still on, right?

No, it's off now. They fired Dave Friscina at 95X, but he's apparently going to go to another station and do the show. He was at 95X for, like, 20 years doing that show. But the predecessor was this *Off the Boat* show, where he (Gary) mainly played British new wave and punk bands. It was the first place in town that played things like Elvis Costello or the Sex Pistols. So, of course, all of the new wave bands listened to his show. And he was the one that had the show featuring the local bands, and *Soundcheck* kind of came out of that.

It's interesting that some of the bands that you were just mentioning, Elvis Costello, the Sex Pistols, were import-only records and only on a Sunday night could you hear them.

Elvis Costello, you'd go in and buy him and in Syracuse people would look at you strangely. That's one of the reasons why we'd go and buy everything at Gerber (local music store), because the punk guys all worked there and they would stock everything. Guys from the Flashcubes worked there, and Charlie from the Tearjerkers worked there, and I think Danny from the Dead Ducks worked there at one point. You'd go in there on a Saturday and all the bands would be hanging out.

My wife and I were home in December and saw the Flashcubes show...

Oh, yeah.

Tom Kenny<sup>1</sup> joined them for a couple songs and he told an anecdote about buying records at Gerber Music and how thrilled he felt when Gary from the Flashcubes said, Good choices, kid. Oh, yeah, actually, Tommy and Bob Goldthwait had one of their first paying gigs playing for the Poptarts, doing their stand up, called Squished Worms, at the Firebarn. And it's, like, we had a big argument on whether we were going to pay them anything. I mean, not that they were bad, but our audience wasn't expecting stand up comedians. And they were like in high school. Later on, Golthwait was our roadie for awhile and he also roadied for the Tearjerkers, too. He always says that he was a member of the Dead Ducks, but, maybe he was for awhile, but I don't remember him playing out with them. He hung out with them. That was the other thing, that comedian thing was happening at the same time and they would also play some of the same clubs that we would play. They would play, especially the Lost Horizon, they would play Monday or Tuesday nights; they would have the Generic Comics, like they were a

band. Then Tommy became a member of the Tearjerkers, after Bud E. Love left town. He took over as the lead singer, so he was really connected with the music scene, too. Then eventually he decided just to do comedy. I know all about that because Dave, my husband, was in the Tearjerkers. It was all incestuous.

I grew up in Syracuse and I never knew that the area once had such a cool pop scene.

There was at that time. There were a bunch of different places to play, and there were a lot of bands, the Flashcubes, the Tearjerkers; you know, there was a real scene. You'd walk in and, Hey, the Poptarts are here. Whenever we went out we went out in full Poptart dress. That was part of the whole scene so everybody would recognize, you know, here come the Flashcubes, or here come the guys in the Tearjerkers. You go out in character.

You know what, that's exactly what it was; we would go out in character. We used to say, This is our movie and we have to play our part. And that was half of the fun of it, we were only doing it because it was really fun.

You'd also mentioned hearing one of your songs come over the PA at Price Chopper (local grocery store). That's a classic Syracuse moment, how did that happen?

Price Chopper, at that time, was one of the few places that was open 24 hours a day, after rehearsal we went over there to do our grocery shopping, three of us lived together in an apartment. We're trudging through Price Chopper, and it was Sunday night and that's when Soundcheck was on and all of a sudden they were playing, I forget if it was "I Won't Let You Let Me Go" or one of the things. And of course, we start squealing, jumping up and down and the stockboys, who knew, too, they were jumping up and down. Then the manager comes down and he's yelling, Stop, you girls are making a big scene. We were trying to explain to him why we were all excited, but he didn't, obviously, get it. And there was no one else in the store, it was, like, ten o'clock on a Sunday night; how many people are in Price Chopper? That was one of those classic Hard Day's Night moments. I don't know how this fits into the scheme of things, but during one of the interview segments someone in the band said that one of the goals of the Poptarts was to be on a lunchbox, and... Yeah, we were envisioning an entire line of makeup products. Our frame of reference was 16 Magazine. To be in 16 Magazine would have been the pinnacle of success, because the Monkees were in 16 Magazine, Herman's Hermits, all of the bands that we idolized. So there we were, giving makeup tips, or having a lunchbox. It was the 70s, it was the era of the Shaun Cassidy lunchbox. We thought that would have been the height of being cool, was to have a lunchbox. Was that a common frame of reference?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Tom Kenny, a Syracuse native, is best known for being a cast member on *Mr. Show* as well as being the voice of Spongebob Square Pants.

It was for us!

Because I saw in the Flashcubes cd (the *Bright Lights* anthology) that they had made up their own lunchbox, and I saw on your website that you had written an article called "The Face on the Lunchbox"...

I teach at Syracuse University, so, yeah, I wrote an article on teen idols, and that was a quote from Michael J. Fox. They picked him for that show, Family Ties, he said that they took him into NBC and Brandon Tartikoff said, Now, can't you picture that face on a lunchbox? That was their frame of reference, you know, can we sell this kid as a teen idol, so I think that was just kind of in the air.

A lot of parallels between the Beatles and the Monkees.

Literally, we went over to SU one time and watched A Hard Day's Night, and we sat there and we're going, And then we'll do this, and do that. And the Monkees, too. We had a Poptarts theme song, just like the Monkees had their theme song. That was our frame of reference. It wasn't Led Zeppelin or Springsteen. It was the Monkees and the Beatles and Herman's Hermits; those were our role models.

Growing up in Syracuse, it seemed like such a Led Zeppelin town, too.

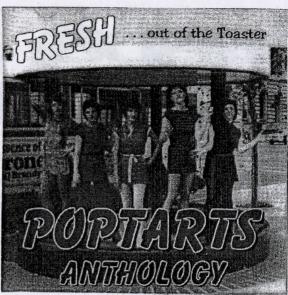
Yeah, either a Led Zeppelin town or when you'd go out to play at the bars, it was country.

Speaking of shows, your website mentions an army base gig.

We played this place, up near Fort Drum, called the Jersey North-obviously someone was Springsteen influenced—it was filled with guys from this army base and they were just there to drink, and the owner said, Yeah, this used to be a topless joint. And they're screaming, Fuck Iran, Fuck Iran. These guys think they're about ready to be shipped off to fight Iran, this is back in 1980. And they just started to get drunker and drunker, and I see that they're tossing something back and forth on the dance floor, and I notice that it's wet, they're sliding around in the water and they're tossing this thing back and forth and I realize it's a urinal. They went in and they ripped a urinal off the wall, and all the water was cascading through the club and they're slipping and sliding around on the dance floor in the water while they're tossing the urinal back and forth screaming, Fuck Iran, Fuck Iran. After we finished the set, our manager came up to us and he said, Girls, pick up your guitars, don't go back, don't change, go to the car immediately. And the guy in the club is going, Yeah, we'd like you to come back at the end of the month, that's when they get paid.

Funny, because music today is so much harsher, but audiences never react that way.

Some of the people who would the worst would be the traditional rock fans. The guys in the Flashcubes would get up there and say, you know, If you like



Styx or Journey, you can kiss my ass! People would throw things and scream, you know, How dare he say that about Styx?! They would be so serious. Or, How could he say that Foreigner isn't good? These are bands that we would have up on the wall and we would throw darts at, what we called the big arena bands that represented everything that we hated about music.

At one point one of your demos got into the hands of George Martin.

Oh, yeah. We heard about that through the guys in Cheap Trick, who were making that album with George Martin at the time (All Shook Up). Our manager was friendly with Rick Nielsen and those guys, and one of them told him after one of the concerts about the George Martin thing. Our demo got everywhere, including, we think, the Go Go's. When they came out, maybe a year after the Poptarts broke up, we took one look at them and if you knew anything about the Go Go's before, they had a completely different look, sound, image, everything, when they came out. It was like, oh, it's the Poptarts. I mean, I have no proof, but it just seemed to me awfully strange.

And it's made you wonder...

Oh, of course, it's made me wonder. I wash't the only one that wondered. We know that the tape got around; it was circulating in a lot of places. You can never know the reality of something, you only can guess. What can you do? But yeah, we had interest from a couple of different recording companies, Epic was one, Mercury was another. But things just didn't happen. But the one guy that was kind of working with us and interested in us then, a couple of years

later he was the guy who was behind Cyndi Lauper's career.

Sounds like there were a lot of great stories along the way.

Yeah, you've got five girls in a band, it was crazed in a way. We used to say it was like a female version of A Hard Day's Night.

You were also on a Cleveland tv show with Robert Reed.

Oh yeah, we were on *The Afternoon Exchange*, which was one of these afternoon talk shows, like *Good Morning America* except in the afternoon. We played on that and he was the other guest. We were all excited about that. I don't know if he was so pleased to see us, though. But that was our big television moment.

Did you meet him?

Yeah, a little bit. He wasn't exactly the friendliest person in the world. He was going around touring with some show that he was with, I think *The Brady Bunch* was off the air by that time, so he was in town to do a play, some serious acting thing. I don't think he wanted to be reminded of *The Brady Bunch*, but

### "Guys won't buy an album by a girl; girls can't rock'n'roll. I mean, they would tell us that."

we were all excited, Daddy Brady, yeah! That was fun, we played two songs on that show, actually. I love the cd, by the way. It's the sort of pop music that could go over well in any era; if it came out now, people would love it. How did people react back then?

One of the things that everybody—every record company, every manager—would say was, Girl bands: no one's interested. Well, the Runaways, and they were a joke. That's what they would tell us; there's never been a girl band that did anything. And, of course, a year after us, the Go Go's came along. They would tell us. Oh, we love the songs, we love the look, we love everything, but guys won't buy a girl band and rock'n'roll is guy music. They would literally tell us that. And then the Go Go's came along, the Bangles. And I kept thinking, we were doing that at least as well, or I think we were doing it as well, and everybody just kept telling us, Forget it, there's no way. Guys won't buy an album by a girl; girls can't rock'n'roll. I mean, they would tell us that.

What happened in the end?

Later on that people started to think, Maybe we can really make this, and that's when things started to fall apart, when people started to get quote "serious" about it.

Within the scene or the Poptarts or...

I think in both the Poptarts and the scene, too. It started to become, Well, who's the top dog here? If we do get a record contract, who's going to sing the lead, and who's going to be in the front. And when that starts to happen, then it starts to fall apart because then it's no longer about being fun and being in a band. It's about, I'm the most important person, or, I'm the star, or whatever, seems to me that's what happens in most bands. Then you start thinking, Well, where does that leave me? Maybe you should get rid of so and so, and replace them with somebody else. And I think that's what happened, everyone started thinking that way, that, Oh, now we have to be real musicians and we have to listen to this guy who's advising us because he knows what he's doing. And half the time, these people didn't know what they were talking about, didn't know what they were doing. What they did was screw everything up. And it happened with us, too. It was one of those things where one of the girls started listening to her boyfriend who said she should be the main star and why doesn't she join his band and they'll be stars together, you know, that kind of thing. And that's pretty much what ended up happening. And of course, the band she was going to be in never did anything or never went anywhere, just, they plugged away for awhile. Everyone went their separate ways, eventually. So I went back into academia, which was what I was doing before it all started. I went back into the track, and now I teach in the writing program here at Syracuse.

Thanks a lot for the interview. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

That's pretty much it. Our mission was: To the Toppermost with the Poppermost. We didn't quite get there, but at least we did something. I always used to say that in each era there's a certain thing that defines the era. Like if you would have been alive in Elizabethan times, you would have wanted to be an actor, because that's when Shakespeare was alive. Or if you were around in the 19th century, you would have had to been a pioneer or a cowboy, because that's what it was all about. How could you be alive in 1979 and not want to be in a band? That's what it's all about, that's the defining thing to be. And we were, so that's how we were able to define ourselves. So we can go now quietly into the 21st century saying, Yeah, we were there. We may not have been in Liverpool or Hamburg or L.A. during the summer of love, but we were in Syracuse in '79, so what can you do?

For more on the Poptarts ... <a href="mailto:gaelmcgear@aol.com/gaelmcgear/gaelpage.html">gaelpage.html</a>

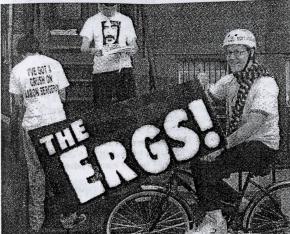
Twas a Veritable Pop Fest at



Denizens of the NYC area are like right-minded citizens everywhere else: we crave great live music. Yet we rarely get two good bands on the same bill. Put six good bands on the same bill, as happened on April 4, 2003, when the Ergs, Furious George, Dirt Bike Annie, Apers, Epoxies, and Groovie Ghoulies converged on CBGB, and a show becomes a convention, geek rock tri-state area turning out en masse. (A show so good that CBGB broke with their long-held "book nothing but crap" policy.)

We here at GM! wanted to document this momentous occasion but, as loathers of live reviews, we needed an alternate plan. So we hatched the idea of doing five-minute interviews with each of the bands.

The team of Brian Cogan, Frank Leone, and Mike Faloon went 5 for 6. (Frank was asked to play with the Ghoulies that night (!), so we had a conflict of interest there.)
Onward!



During their set, the Ergs! proclaimed their desire, nay, intention, to have their next record released by SST. It is on that note that our conversation begins.

GM: All right, on your mark, go! The Ergs! as an SST band: is release number 371 accurate?

Mike Erg!: Yes.

Jeff Erg!: As far as our knowledge of SST releases merits. You fuckers were much wittier before. C'mon, fire it up!

Joe: It's not our fault, you didn't have the tape running.

Jeff: Yeah, we figured you'd doctor it up.

GM: Okay, fair enough. So what was SST #370?

Joe: If might be Confront James.

Mike: He (Greg Ginn) has four new releases coming out on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April. I'm not sure which one (is #370), it might be *Rub a Dub* by MoJack.

Joe: One of them is a collaboration with Scott Reynolds, formerly of All.

Mike: Greg Ginn and Scott Reynolds: holy fucking shit, right?

Joe: Which should be not as sucky as the ??? (refers to another SST release, presumably one on which he and Mike hold different opinions).

(Mike slaps Joe)

Jeff: Did you get the slap on tape? He slapped Joe in the face.

A sight gag for a text-only mediuim.

Joe: I've always wondered, when you do these interviews do you cut out all the "like"s that a band says, and "umm, you know"?

"Umm"s and "like"s tend to be reduced and I try to figure out where the commas would go.

Joe: That's good, because that's one of my worries. Jeff: So we should just pause, so it's harder for you to figure out where the commas are.

Absolutely. And it's better if you have fragments, sentences that start in one direction and then kind of lead...well, actually, that was almost a complete thought. Better just to have thoughts that are not complete. I'm doing way too much of the talking.

Mike: That's true. Shut up.

Your set tonight was awesome. The last time I saw you was at the Souse House.

Mike: I'm sorry.

Jeff: We weren't doing as much jazz then, right?.

Mike: We weren't doing as much scag then.

Joe: I think all we had going then was the Squeeze cover

and that was about it.

So what's the next record?

Joe: There's about eight of them.

Mike: Well, our next record will be *Dork Rock Cork Rod* which we're going to record with Steve Albini.

The Blue Note record, which one is that?

Joe: That's Digital Endpoints II. Digital Endpoints II is going to be a jazz record.

Frank: Do you inform the label at this point that you're going to be on them?

Jeff: We figure they'll be coming to us.

Frank: Generous.

Mike: Our second record is our record that begins with a song called "Out There" because ...

Jeff: ...because all the best records begin with a song called "Out There," like the Solomon Grundy record on New Alliance Records. Dinosaur Jr's Where You Been. Eric Dolphy's Out There featuring Ron Carter on the cello. How does Digital Endpoints II differ from a jazz odyssey, or is it indeed...

Mike: It is a jazz odyssey.

Jeff: It will be when we're done writing it.

Joe: There's definitely going to be a narrative like there was in the last one.

Feed us. C'mon, if you have a concept record this is the fanzine to plug it in.

Joe: The story continues basically where it left off, but the theme this time for the music...

Mike: It's beatnik alien, beatnik jazz aliens that we have to save the world from.

Joe: Their planet is one big coffeehouse that's going to get renovated.

Mike: And they're pissed that jazz has gotten so stale, so we have to come and do thrash covers of jazz standards. Are we looking at a series here?

Joe: I wanted to do a trilogy and then have somebody release a box set with extras and what not, but then it spills over and breaks the fourth wall and the interview becomes the fourth episode unintentionally. But that's rather grandiose. I mean, it took us two years to sell a hundred and ten of them (Digital Endpoints).

Jeff: In fact, we're thinking so far ahead that we almost forgot about the gig tonight.

Don't get bogged down by people or performances, it's all about the concepts. Could this make it into print, maybe a novel or comic book?

Mike: We have a deal with Todd McFarland.

Joe: He's going to do the action figures. Jeff: And the red ink will contain pints of our blood.

Joe: Oh man, Furious George is going to start up soon. I don't know if we can make it.

Frank: Waste time, waste time.

Mike: We've got 35 seconds, say something nasty.

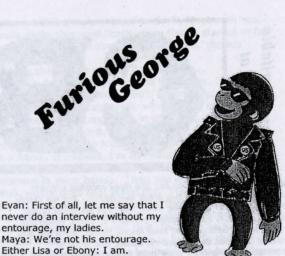
Jeff: You dirty bastard.

Mike: What a fucking rutter/nutter/???

Joe: Oh man, no comment.

### **Furious George**

Furious George turned in the most remarkable set of the night. For some reason, George Tabb, the band's singer and lead quitarist, was MIA for the first 2/3 of the band's set. The rest of the group pressed on with a uh, interesting mix of haphazardly rendered covers and audience-baiting jokes. All of which may help explain what follows.



never do an interview without my entourage, my ladies.

Either Lisa or Ebony: I am. Evan: This is Maya, Lisa, and ...

Ebony: Ebony.

Evan: Ebony, right. They're my entourage.

Frank: Where was George?

Evan: I don't know. George told me like 9:00, so I figured I'd get here at 8:30. Then when I get here I see the guys (Michael and Stevie from Furious George) standing on stage, and I think, like, this can't be good. (Takes off glasses, begins to wipe them off) Ow fuck, I hurt myself on my glasses. I pinched the skin of my finger. (To Ebony) You've done that, I can tell. Those are very nice glasses you're wearing. Are they designer? These are Armani.

Frank: Was this a reunion show or a final show or a regular mess or what?

Evan: Well, we had what was supposed to be a final show about a year ago at the Continental. But unfortunately, you know, Furious George is always for hire. Someone will call George and say, Hey, you wanna play, and he'll say yes. The band is like Vultron. We only exist when we're all together on stage. When the four elements aren't together, it doesn't exist, like I said, like Vultron. But someone tells me that there was an episode of Vultron where they/he formed without one arm.

Mike: So would be this be the equivalent, when you perform without an arm, George being the missing arm? Or do you get a whole other name when he's not here?

Evan: I don't know. I think we were like Furious George-

Mike: A little-less-Furious George. Or Slightly Miffed George?

Evan: Yeah, a Bit Rankled, a Bit PO'ed.

Mike: I haven't spoken to you since your book came out, so maybe we could...

Evan: Sure, any excuse to talk about me will, of course, be taken. I have to impress these ladies. (To entourage) I wrote a book. (To Mike and Frank) She's swooning, see, she swooned.

Mike: These are not card-carrying members of your entourage, is that right?

Ö Ö tour 00 book

Evan: You can never stop impressing your entourage. Maya: They're actually my entourage. I'm his new lead singer.

Frank: You're starting a new band?

Maya: Yeah, we're starting a new band.

Evan: There is a new band, and Maya here is the singer and guitar player. I am the bass player.

Maya: And George is the hypothetical guitar player.

Evan: Yes, George may or may not be part of it. We're still trying to figure that out. When George shows up, he's a part of it.

GM: Does it have a name?

Maya: Our working title is The Tease. I'm the Tease and the guys are...

Evan: We had a sort of out-of-date name which was Al Qaeda and the Beltway Snipers. I was Al, in case you're wondering. So what about my book? We have to talk about me. Yeah, we're on our second printing now. We've sold tens of copies.

Maya: I read it and it was fabulous. I read it all in one

Evan: That's because it's short and I use very small words. There's a tattoo shop right up the street that they sell it in. I've gotten hate mails from it, hate emails. Actually I got a nice email the other day. It balances out. GM: Which you disregarded, you want the hate mail when your write about G.G. Allin, right?

Evan: As long as a I get a reaction, whether it's love or hate, that's all I want. I don't want someone to read it and say, Eh, it's okay. Yeah, umm. It sells slowly, but that says it all.



Dan: Five minutes?

Mike F.: Yeah, five minutes. Let's go. Drummer boy, get your ass in here. Fire away. You ended the Ergs! interview, you want to start this one off with another one of your witty insults?

Mike Erg!/Dirt Bike: You're a fucking asshole.

Jeannie: Ouch.

We waited five minutes, and that's the best you've qot?

That was weak. Is that why you don't do banter with Dirt Bike Annie? It's only when you have your Ergs! hat on that you're funny?

Mike: Oh, well, I'm sorry that I didn't play CBGB's on a Tuesday night to no one.

You used that joke on my ten minutes ago, and it still hurts! Still stings.

Dan: Isn't this like when we played with Slowride, two years ago? After Sting's son's band?

Have you ever played a show in New York... Michael Harper, Furious George's drummer: (in background) Is it okay if I videotape this interview? ...where there were this many good bands on the

same bill and you didn't put the show together yourself?

Jeannie: No.

Dan: This is probably the biggest show we've ever played in New York.

Michael Harper: Okay, this is behind the scenes of the interview...

Dan: I think this is definitely the biggest show we've ever played in New York.

I couldn't see how many people there were, but it looked packed.

Jeannie: Yeah, it was packed.

(Seeing Michael Harper videotaping interview) Like the tape recorder doesn't make me self-conscious enough. Now there's a camera?

Dan: The clock is ticking, man.

The clock is ticking. Get with the witticisms, promote the new shit. Dirtnap Records, how did you hook up with them?

Dan: Portia is our manager and she lives out in Olympia, which is near Seattle. And she was at a record fair and her booth, the Kill Rock Stars booth, was next to the Dirtnap booth and they started talking. And apparently Timbo (from Mutant Pop) had been sending him (Ken Dirtnap) Mutant Pop records...

Adam: Dude, he (Ken) heard the shit and he thought it was dope. Then he was like, I'm getting this shit. Mutant Pop was going to release our cd and he (Ken) said, No! And he bought it from Tim and he said, I'm releasing it! He was like, Yo, not everything has to be garage rock. I'm putting out Dirt Bike Annie. Fuckin' a, that's what he

Are you guys going to go on tour this summer? Adam: Hell yeah, two months is the plan.

I should probably steer away from the yes/no questions and get to the more open-ended questions.

Adam: We are going to fuck this country. Mike: We're going on tour with Egghead.

You're gonna what?

Mike: We're going on tour with Egghead, haven't you

No, I hadn't heard.

Adam: We're kidnapping them all.

You put an Egghead. song on one of your records, "13 Ghosts."

Adam: You can buy it at Virgin Mega Store. You can buy Egghead. at Virgin Mega Store.

See, now I am on salary (referring to previous conversation in which we discussed the fact that the main guys in Kiss, Gene and Paul, put the other guys on salary).

Dan: The royalty checks are rolling in.

Back up the money truck.

Adam: Hello! Hello! You better get a piece of that, get a

point, baby! You get a point off that record.

Dan: What is that? I don't know what that means. We just learned what a backline is. People started talking about our backline when we would go to a club, like, Yeah, we'll set up the backline beforehand. We're, like, Oh. the equipment.

Mike: (In s-l-o-w drawl) What are you saying?

Are you like the band that gets off the short bus?

Jeannie: Yeah.

Dan: We've been on the short bus for about seven years.

Mike: Ouch.

Adam: What's up with the time?

Dan: Got two minutes.

Do you think it's turning the corner? Just as someone on the outside the band it seems like hooking up with Dirtnap and, it's like...

Dan: Yes, absolutely.

Mutant Pop kind of faded away, but you lasted long enough that another label would come along and it seems like they're much more aggressive...

Dan: We made it happen with Ken...

Jeannie: Portia.

Adam: And I read on a button at Hot Topic that it's better to burn out than fade away. That's what I'm doing: burning!

Suddenly, a side conversation bubbles to the surface...

Michael Harper: *Highlander. Highlander*. Dan: I don't know what you're talking about. Michael Harper: The movie *Highlander*.

Mike: Yeah, you fuck.

Adam: Was that with Sean Connery?

Michael: (in Scottish accent) Sean Connery. Adam: (in Scottish accent) Sean Connery. Dan: (in Scottish accent) Sean Connery.

Adam: I'm Sean Connery, and I am the last dragon. Mike: Hey, is this going to be in that piece of shit, Go

Metric!? Adam: Oh!

Yeah, that's right. I also write for Rolling Stone, but you guys...

Mike: Did you seen the Rolling Stone that had Shania

Twain sitting...

Dan: Hey, hey, wait a minute! Dirtbikeannie.com!

Dirtbikeannie.com!

Adam: So *Go Metric!* doesn't come out for like how many years and then it finally comes out and there's not a DBA review in it. What, did we completely not release anything?

Mike: There was an Ergs! review with a fucking box.

Adam: Yes, with a box.

Somebody's gotta tell their labels to send me their shit. I didn't even know about the cd on Stardumb. Dan: Do you get Stardumb promo?

No.

Dan: You ought to put an ad in Book Your Own Fucking

Yeah, all those solidiconnections you get from that.

Dan: Five minutes have elapsed.

That was a fun interview.

Adam: Trashing other magazines at the end, that's good.





Mike: When you were on stage you said that you were a fan of Broadway musicals.

Kevin: Oh yeah, my mom is a big fan. She always used to drag me down to the Lloyd Weber stuff, the big Broadway productions. That's about it, man. I'm more of a World War II fan myself. Not a fan, but I'm just really interested in it.

Mike: World War II musicals or just World War II? Kevin: The whole thing. I live in Europe, so I get to see all of the places, all the spots where they were fighting. I've been reading a lot about it, and I studied history as well.

Brian: Are you really 37?

Kevin: No, man, not by far. I'm 25. I like to say that stuff, whatever people believe. People most of the time they give me 19 or something.

Mike: I get that, too.

Kevin: But you just deal with it, man. I figure if I'm 35, they'll still think I'm 24, so that's it.

Mike: (to Mike Erg) Coming to fuck up another one of my interviews, right?

Mike: Yes, fuck you.

Kevin: I know him, I don't like Devo, but I know him.

Brian: So tell us the story of the band.

Kevin: The story of the band is pretty simple. We started back in early 1996 in Europe with no bands around like the bands we love, like Screeching Weasel, Queers, all the Mutant Pop/Lookout bands. We were opening up for hardcore bands and Epitaph bands, and we did a split single with a hip hop group. Last three, four years things have really taken off in Europe, especially in Holland and Germany. Just before we left our video got on MTV in Europe, in Holland and Germany. We got like 90% of the kids that come to our shows in Holland, they never heard of the Ramones and the Queers in their life.

Brian: Oh, that's so sad.

Kevin: We play the Ramones, Undertones, Buzzcocks, Stiff Little Fingers covers, and people actually buy those records and try to get t-shirts and patches from that. So like, yeah, as long as we can get people to listen to the bands we love. We still put out our own records, we book our own shows. We made the video ourselves, and by some odd luck it got on tv and people are actually playing it and calling requesting the song.

Mike: You did a record for Jonnie Whoa-oh.

Kevin: Yeah, it was a four-way split cd with four bands, one from U.K., one from Denmark, one from Spain, and we're the band from Holland. It's a good record. I love the other bands on it. He (Jonnie) is a really friendly guy, and he's a god for putting on this show for us.

Brian: So this is the latest record here.

Kevin: Yeah, *The Buzz Electric*. It's our second fulllength, for seven years. You figure we're pretty lazy. We had a lot of split records and a lot of eps, and stuff.

Mike: (to encroaching Dirt Bike Annie members)
You fucked up your interview, don't fuck up this
one, too.

Dan: Is this part of my five minutes? Is this part of Dirt

Bike Annie's five minutes?

Mike: (To Kevin, referring to cover of Apers' new

cd) You do all the singing, but you put the other guy on the cover.

Kevin: Actually, it was supposed to be this James Bond thing.

Brian: Yeah, yeah.

Kevin: We took this picture in Amsterdam, I don't like Amsterdam. I don't feel like driving up there. I don't feel like dressing up, posing for a photograph. But it turned out to be a great cover.

Brian: You guys remind me of the Celibate Rifles.

Kevin: I don't know them.

Brian: Great Australian punk band from the late 70s, early 80s. Same kind of sound...

Kevin: I only know the Saints, and Radio Birdman. Brian: What do you think of American beer?

Kevin: Some of it's okay, but most it's so watered down. I'm not saying that Dutch beer is good, because if you drink Heineken in Holland it's like a different beer; Heineken in U.S. sucks. But we live like one hour away from Belgium and three hours away from Germany.

Brian: Belgian beer is so good.

Kevin: Those two nations make the best beers in the world. If you drink the original Warsteiner from the draft, or the Stella in Belgium.

Brian: Or Duvell, or...

Kevin: If you drink that after a meal, you can't finish it; it's too heavy for me, personally. Ugotta (sp?) is pretty good. Jupiler is one of my favorite German beers. As for Germany, all the cities have their own brands, and they're all good. Like Dapp (sp?), Grolsch; Becks is okay if you get it from the draft.

Brian: How about the original Budweiser, the, uh...

Kevin: Budvar from Czech.

Brian: Yeah.

Kevin: It's good if you drink it in Czech, I wouldn't drink it anywhere else. Because as soon as it gets imported, they put some stuff in it to keep it better, longer, so it can stay in stores a long time, they put this conservative in it, and it really influences the taste. You drink it fresh from the

draft in Czech, in Prague, it's like 50 cents; that's like a pint.

Brian: Road trip.

Kevin: I do a road trip every year. Doesn't matter if we're in Spain, I'll stop by the Czech Republic. Czech rules. But that's my opinion on beer, American beer. But my favorite American beer so far has to be PBR and Busch.

Mike: The cheap ones.

Kevin: Cheap ones are the best.

Brian: You sure you're not American?

Kevin: I'm like 200% Gouda cheese, man. My family's been from Gouda for 20 generations, doesn't get more Dutch inbreed than this. That's all right.



Due to various reasons, we were unable to interview the Epoxies. What follows is a simulation of how the interview could have transpired. It's possible, though not likely, that the Epoxies would have had different responses to our inquiries.

GM: Wow, you guys were great!

Bass player: Th-th-th-thanks.

GM: I loved hearing so many of the songs from your first album!

Guitar player: Th-th-th-thanks.

GM: (to keyboard player) Is it true you used to be in the Automatics?

Keyboard player: I'd rather n-n-ot t-t-t-alk about that. GM: Hey, no problem! I was curious about one thing. The band is so dynamic—great songs, cool outfits, a light show—but there wasn't any stage banter. I was wondering...

Singer: Th-th-there's a t-t-tendency among the b-b-band members to s-s-stutter.

GM: Holy crap! But only when you talk, not when you sing? Kind of like Mel Tillis, the country singer? Drummer: Ex-ex-exact...that's right.

### 126 Records ...and what to think about them!

126 records...this has getting stupid. New policy next issue: everything we like gets reviewed, plus some of the stuff we dislike. I've run out of ways to say "this is lame indie rock." But there are tons of great records, so dive in! — Mike

A-Frames - Modula Ip

Finally, someone has released a worthy follow up to Gang of 4's Entertainment (it certainly wasn't Gang of 4's second record, Solid Gold). Modula is pure scientist rock with monotone vocals, a rhythm section that moves like the Thing in a china shop, distress signal guitar lines, and lyrics that liken love to archaeology ("Learning our history/dawning of you and me/Fossils and broken bones/oceans and tidal zones" - "Archeology"). Couple all of that with the way the A Frames keep emotion at arm's length, and the scientific process has rarely yielded a better record.

(SS Records - 1114 21st St., Sacramento, CA 95814)

A.M. Vibe - s/t cd

Mopey and mid-tempo, these songs sound like the Sundays or later Jesus and Mary Chain. They've got a 2am vibe and I'm usually asleep by then. (SilverGirl – Box 161024, San Diego, CA 92176)

The Aislers Set – How I Learned to Write Backwards Ip How I Learned is an elegant album full of songs that are simply gorgeous and gorgeously simple. The Aislers retain their uncanny knack for evoking the sounds of 60s AM radio, but opt for a sparser sound than on their last record (the already classic Last Match). Sometimes I wish the lyrics were more linear (I usually hum along, rather than sing along, because I have little idea what the songs are about), but I think the slightly abstract approach gives the Aislers' songs an air of authenticity and saves them from straying anywhere near the vicinity of being a mere nostalgia act. If Phil Spector had survived the British Invasion, he might have conjured up an album like How I Learned in 1966 or '67. (Slumberland – Box 19029, Oakland, CA 94619)

Ancient Greeks - This Song Is You cd

Early Chicago sans horn section. I liked "Ask Me a Question About the Atom" until I realized the lyrics weren't literal. (Flameshovel – 1658 N. Milwaukee, #276, Chicago, IL 60647)

Ape House - Minutes to Go cd

Ninety nine times out of 100 the phrase "Weezer-influence" really means "this band sucks." Apehouse are the welcome exception. Like Rivers and company, Apehouse mix Wembley-ready guitars with "Hey, I'm a vulnerable guy" lyrics. (They remind me of Sloan and King Missile, too.) Best song: She Plays (Like a Hit Single)". (Croftone – 7044 Eastern Ave. NW, #4, Washington, DC 20012)

The Ataris - So Long Astoria cd

The Ataris are shameless when it comes to pandering to dopey teens. "The only thing that matters is just

following your heart/and eventually you'll finally get it right"? "I know what it's like growing up without a father in your life" or "Here is my unanswered letter to a world that won't reply"? So Long Astoria is oversaturated with Aaron Spelling-level drama capped off by a Don Henley cover ("Boys of Summer"). Liking the Ataris in 2003 is akin to liking Kansas in 1977, no so much bad taste as pitiable. (Columbia)

The Bananas - Nautical Rock'n'Roll cd

The Bananas are the best punk band in the world. They played NYC a couple months ago but I didn't go. I had to take a teacher licensing test the next morning; without the test, which couldn't be reschedule, I'd be unable to keep my job. The show was slated for midnight, the test for 8 am. Taking into account time spent on trains and subways in traffic, I'd be taking the test on three hours sleep, if all went well. I hemmed and hawed until the night of the show, by which point I was also sick, Turns out the Bananas didn't play until 3 am, which means that had I gone I'd have taken the test on zero sleep. So I missed the Bananas, passed the test, and kept my job. I don't know if I made the right decision. I could get another job; I may never see the Bananas. Had I heard Nautical Rock'n'Roll before the show I'd be looking for a job now. (Plan-It-X - didn't list an address, write the Bananas at 1000 18th St., #277, Sacramento, CA 95814)

Bassholes - Out in the Treetops double 7"

A double 7" from a two-guy group that opens with a song called "Ode to Charo" that's all instrumental and sounds like Emerson, Lake, and Palmer (circa Tarkus) and is followed by a blistering blues rock number—commercially this has got to be the worst record to put out at this moment in time because the Bassholes don't make it easy to get your bearings and even then, once the smoke has cleared very little makes sense. This is a roll up your shirt sleeves and get to work listening experience, but I'm betting it's worth it (I'm just getting underway with these records, don't look to me for the answers!). Not so much for fans of the bands they cover or sound like once in awhile (Stooges, Who, Joy Division, ELP) as people who want to tackle a record knowing full well it might kick their ass. And thank god this isn't on cd because I know I'd have skipped around from song to song and missed out. (Dead Canary - Box 10276, Columbus, OH 43201)

Bathtub Shitter - Fertilizer 7" ep

Once upon a time, I claimed that I could enjoy on some level any concept record. Then along came Bathtub Shitter. All five of these are songs are about defecating. That's a concept, and that's a concept I cannot enjoy. (First Blood Family – Box 1766, Madison, WI 53701)

### The Beautys - The First Seven Inches Are Always the Hardest cd

22 songs from these Indiana pop punk stalwarts, there are plenty of good tunes here. My favorites are the unreleased demos that come toward the end, the poppiest—and often surfy—tracks in the batch. (Diaphragm – Box 10388, Columbus, OH 43201)

### Bedford - Spaceships, Sex and Jealousy: The Singles 1995-2000 cd

With a bit of pop punk and a bit of emo pop, I'm surprised Bedford didn't catch on with more people. They are/were

clever guys too (song titles like "I, Sucker," "Phonographic Memory"). I think their other cd was better, but this isn't bad.
(Microcosm – Box 14332, Portland, OR 97293)

### The BellRays - Raw Collection cd

I love singles collections because you get to sample a band at different points in their history. It's like when scientists collect ice samples from the South Pole, digging to various depths to piece together what's happened. Raw Collection compiles 15 songs from a slew of singles and compilations. Some sizzle, some smolder, and some simmer but they deliver a good sense of the Bellrays' punked up r'n'b. I like it, but not so much that I'm going to seek out other records.

(Upper Cut - 4470 Sunset Blvd., #195, LA, CA 90027)

### Betty Blowtorch - Last Call cd

Given their propensity for pottymouth lyrics, Betty Blowtorch is kind of like Sex in the City for the mall punk crowd—a chance to hear gals talk and sing like guys while tossing off some glossy punk riffs. (Foodchain – 8490 Sunset Blvd., #504, W. Hollywood, CA 90069)

### The Briefs - Off the Charts Ip

The Briefs deserve all of the accolades they received for their Dickies-like debut album. Then they got signed and dropped by a enormo label and lost in the shuffle was Off the Charts. The reviews I read were terse and dismissive, to the effect of "not as fast as the first record, not as good." Yet in the rush to judgement a remarkably good pop album was overlooked. True, it's not as immediately satisfying, but track after track shows how clever the Briefs are and what a great range they have (you got your XTC in my Dickies!). When the dust settles a lot of people are going to pretend they loved Off the Charts from the get go. (Dirtnap – Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111)

### The Bygones - Circles cd

A few years ago my old band played a show in Lexington, Kentucky to a "crowd" of six. We met this guy named John at the bar. He was doing shots by himself and reading a Steinbeck novel—a friendly guy if short on words. We saw him the next morning at a diner, hiding a hangover behind sunglasses and reading by himself. John would like the Bygones. You might too if you like last-call country rock.

(Derailleur -, Box 10276, Columbus, OH 43201)

### Catholic Boys - Brainwash City 7" ep

The weirder the Catholic Boys get, the better they are. On their first single, they uncorked two garage punk tunes good enough to keep pace with the mighty Kill-a-watts (with whom they split that single). When I saw the Catholic Boys they had the same energy and attitude but something was askew, different than the single. The club's sound system was so bad I was unable to unearth any specifics that might help my case. Then along comes Brainwash City, which confirms what I'd suspected at the show. More than a little ambition has seeped into the Catholic Boys' arrangements, they're clearly moving away the rules of standard garage punk without undermining any of the band's red hot intensity. "Brainwash City" and ""Messin' Me Up" make for one of the best sides of an ep I've ever heard, and the flipside ain't bad either. I can't

wait for their full-length. (Kryptonite – 2324 W. Wisconsin Ave., #53, Milwaukee, WI 53233)

### Capital City - Am I Invisible cd

Complacent jangle rock with a dash of Neil Young in the vocals. Am I Invisible needs to be more jittery, or nervous, or unsettled—anything. I'm sure the band's parents will be happy to hear that they're insufficiently troubled, but we music fans need more.

(Near By – Box 441448, Somerville, MA 02144)

Charlie Brown Gets a Valentine – Dismissed
What's the most awkward situation on earth? Having to
put a loved one out of their misery? Well, okay, how
about the second most awkward situation on earth:
reviewing an ultra-earnest, borderline emo record put out
by a friend. "Caffeine at Night" and "Forget Tonight"
sound a little like Sicko, but the rest passes me by.
(Whoa Oh – 52 McLoughlin St., Glen Cove, NY 11542)

### Chumbawamba – "Jacob's Ladder (Not In My Name)" – An Anti-War Single cd single:

These songs remind me of Taco and Frankie Goes to Hollywood. So it goes without saying that I dislike them and they had no impact on my worldviews. (www.chumba.com)

### Concubine Forming - Stiff 7" ep

When I was in college radio this sort of stuff was branded "industrial"—drum machine, screaming vocals, relentless guitar barrages. The labels may have changed but my reactions haven't; most of *Stiff* gives me a headache. (Exception being the verses to "Arturo," where the guitars switch from runaway Mac truck overdrive to Cramps-y loopiness.) (Big Neck – Box 8144, Reston, VA 20196)

### The Crackheads – "Cinnamon and Sugar" b/w "Tampon Twelve" 7"

The a-side is an anti-sellout song (just once I'd like to hear such a song sung by a band for whom selling out was a viable option). I have no clue what the b-side is about, and don't necessarily want one. And yet, the Crackheads shall receive a mixed review—cheap 7"s from low budget punk bands are way better than most of the crappy cd's we get. (Dylaramma – 3218 Fullerton Ave., #26, Chicago, IL 60647)

Crank Yankers – The Best Uncensored Crank Calls – Vol. 2 cd Hey, this has the theme song by Fountains of Wayne. Cool. The funniest thing about the remaining 54:50 is that people are credited with writing sketches whose lameness you'd assume you could attribute to misguided spontaneity.

(Comedy Central - 1775 Broadway, NY, NY 10019)

Crank Yankers – The Best Uncensored Crank Calls – Vol. 3 cd Like volume two, but without the theme song. Ironically, "I Have the Junk!" mocks the very same morning too humor that appears throughout Crank Yankers. (Comedy Central – 1775 Broadway, NY, NY 10019)

### The Cripples - Dirty Head Ip

The Cripples mine an often overlooked side of synth pop new wave, a side that wants people just a little uncomfortable as they're singing and bopping along. Like the early Eurythmics and Thompson Twins (not "Hold Me Now," but "Lies"—that video creeped me out!) (in effect more so that in actual sound). The foolishly catchy

"Contraception" opens the record and slowly but surely the Cripples lead us down a dark corridor, increasingly twisted songs leading up to side two, on which they really led their collective freak flag fly. Probably the weirdest Dirtnap release, and one of their best.

(Dirtnap - Box 21249. Seattle, WA 98111)

DFI - s/t cd

Not much to like here. Tongue in cheek drum machinedriven punk/metal hybrids. The other instrumentals that are mixed in are equally tongue in cheek and equally unenjoyable. (Honey Bear – 1071 Clayton Lane, #506, Austin, TX 78723)

Dirt Bike Annie - It Ain't Easy Being Single cd There shouldn't ever be any pretense of objectivity in these reviews, but just in case there were any it'd be overboard in a heartbeat here. This is like reviewing a friend's scrapbook. I'll never forget when we got a review copy of the first DBA ep (it's all here, including "Thanks For the Donuts," the most philosophical punk pop song ever!), or when Dirt Bike Adam gave my band a tape of new stuff to listen to on our first tour, (the first time we got to hear the band with Jeanie). Or when DBA used to open with "Barracuda," the killer garage instrumental that's finally on record. Or a show at Under Acme when they first broke out the coordinated stage moves. Or when they were cool enough to donate songs to the compilations I put out. Shit, I'm already up to "Holiday Road," song number eleven, and I'm still stuck in 'reminising' mode. Honestly, that's likely to continue for the next 30 tracks and every time I listen to this disc. Dirt Bike are the glue of whatever pop scene there ever was in NYC, and if I keep going I'm gonna weep all over my keyboard. And no one wants that. Thanks Dirt Bike, it's been (and still is) an amazing experience and having It's Ain't Easy Being Single is greatly appreciated. (Dirtnap - Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111)\*

Dirt Bike Annie - Show Us Your Demons Ip ...and we'll serve up our second record which is the exception to the sophomore slump rule. An odd trade, but I'll take it. After my first two trips through the album, I loved a third of it, like a third of it, and didn't get a third of it—and with each listen another "like" or "didn't get" moves up a notch. Show Us Your Demons is fast becoming a summer-defining record and the competition for best song on the record is fierce. It's also the best sounding Dirt Bike record ever (it's records like this for which the cliché "captures their live act" is actually true). And it still sounds like Dirt Bike, the band's awesome, walk-up-to-any-one-of-them personality still shining through (which is, admittedly, a corny thing to express when reviewing a punk pop record, but it's also one of the many aces up the DBA sleeve-all grumps are directed elsewhere). Excellent. (Dirtnap - Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111)

**Dirtshakes – The Kicks Are Alright! 10"**Steady, no frills, good time punk rock'n'roll ala the Groovie Ghoulies. The Dirtshakes might make good

baseball managers because they put their best songs third on each side and in baseball the best hitter is third in the line up. Unless you look at the 10" as one line up, not two, in which case the Dirtshakes have their best songs third and sixth, in which case they would get fired as baseball managers, which is fine because that'll leave them with more time for making fine records such as *The Kicks Are Alright!* (Alien Snatch – Morikeweg 1, 74199 Untergruppenbach, Germany)

Discider – Drinking to Forget the Future 7" ep I'm such a wuss I won't even go see 28 Days with my wife, yet I find myself reviewing a Discider ep! This is much more frightening! Chainsaw guitars, hyper 1-2, 1-2 beats, Animal (from the Muppets) vocals; it's got me cowering in the corner. What's most surprising are the "notes to collectors" in the liner notes. I'd never have guessed that fans of this stuff would care that there are only three big hole test pressings of this ep in existence. (First Blood Family – Box 1766, Madison, WI 53701)

Dropsonic - The Big Nothing cd

At its best: Soundgarden or Pearl Jam. At its worst: Guns'n'Roses. (54° 40° or Fight! – Box 1601, Acme, MI 49610)

Duchess of Saigon - Easter Queen 7" ep

Recently someone explained abstract art to me as having the things you'd expect to see in a painting but not in the way you'd expect to see them. In that sense Duchess of Saigon make abstract pop. They have big beats, soothing backing vocals, oddly catchy guitar lines—things we expect from pop songs—but they're never quite the way I expect them to be yielding one surprise after another as I'm tapping or singing along.

(SS Records - 1114 21st St., Sacramento, CA 95814)

The Dynamo Theorem – *Truth or Consequence, NM* cd ep Kharma: Mike, do you remember the time, when you were four-years-old, you tried to steal a pack of Life Savers?

Me: Yeah.

Kharma: It's payback time. Listen to this needlessly complicated U2-like dreck and try to think of something interesting to write. Good luck, fucko. (Innocent Words – Box 674, Danville, IL 61834)

Estrogenocide - s/t cd ep

I suppose the goal of a song like "Your Bloody Anus Makes Me Laugh" is to upset most people and inspire a few others to say stuff like "Dude, it's so wrong you just gotta hear it!" But if the role of horrifying parents and titillating the kiddies is already filled by arena bands like Marilyn Manson, what's the purpose of underground shock rock acts, especially when the songs are monotonous and the lyrics witless? (M.H. Records – 36 Central Park Rd., Plainview, NY 11803)

F.M. Knives - Estrogen 7" ep

Just as excellent as their *Useless and Modern* cd, but tipping the balance more toward the Jam than the Buzzcocks (either that or I'm noticing the Foxton-ian basslines a lot more). And what more could a band do to show us that they're registered Kinks fans than to name a song "Cassavetts vs. the Moneygoround"? But they could be Dynamo Theorem fans for all I care, as long as they continue putting out records as exciting as *Estrogen*. (Smart Guy – 3288 21st, Box 32, SF, CA 94110)

The Fad - s/t cd ep

Promising debut from this NYC trio, the Smugglers and Who come to mind. The odd mix drains some of the energy, at times the hi hat eclipses the guitars. (Lo Fi – 250 Washington Ave., #1C, Brooklyn, NY 11205)

The Favors - s/t cd ep

JD Dallas used to put the power in the fab power pop of the Media Whores. Now he's slinging the six strings for the Favors, a hard rock band whose singer reminds me of Axl Rose. I love the (recently deceased) Media Whores and dislike hard rock, so I could accept the Favors as a side project but I cannot endorse them as a substitute for the Media Whores.

(Break-Up! - Box 15372, Columbus, OH 43215)

### The Flakes – "First I Look at the Purse" b/w "I'm Movin' On" 7"

I've listened to these songs on a mix tape probably eight or ten times and yet when it came time to put pen to paper I had to spin them again to remind myself what they sounded like. That's not right! That's not what I expect from a Flakes record. Their songs usually stick in my mind like gum sticks to pavement. (Hate – via S. Giovanni in Laterano 194 – 00184 Roma, Italy)

The Flakes – "Jerk Store" b/w "Good Good Lovin" 7" What's up with the Flakes? "Jerk Store" sounds like the band's spinning at about 33 rpm instead of 45, like they decided to learn the song at ¾ speed and accidentally recorded it at the same time. "Good Good Lovin" is all right as a b-side, enough pep to make for a decent song, but not enough to salvage the single. (Screaming Apple – Dustemichstr. 14, 50939 Koln, Germany)

### The Flashcubes - Brilliant cd

Twenty five years after forming, the Flashcubes have finally released their debut cd, and it's pretty damn great (if they say so themselves). (And hot on the heels of a tour of Japan, no less!) *Brilliant* is power pop that packs a wallop, a wallop that lends credence to the mythical tales of the Flashcubes as Syracuse, NY's preeminent punk band. (Their best known song is 1978's "Christi Girl," a nice Raspberries-like dose of light pop, which seems inconsistent with the tales people spin of the Flashcubes back in their heyday.) Better than ever, an outstanding disc. (Flashcubes/Northside – www.flashcubes.com)

### The Forms - Icarus cd

A title that refers to Greek mythology, songs titled "Stravinky," "Classical," and "Seagulls"...What's that wafting through the air? 'Tis pretense, my friends, and it's not pretense supported by excellent or ridiculous music. No, just dull rock music. (Threespheres – Box 349, Brooklyn, NY 11222)

### David Francis + s/t cd

...and there are times when you realize your zine is just a name on a mailing list. How else does a batch of James Taylor/Billy Joel pop tunes land on our desk? Still, this is better than a lot of the discs we receive. The tour de force being "Stump in the Shade," which features a mellow take on the Bo Diddley beat, handclaps, Moody Blues backing vocals, and lyrics where he compares himself to a tree stump!

(David Francis - Box 811, Village Station, NY 10014)

### The Gay - "Fishin' Jim" + 2 cd

"Fishin' Jim" is a delightfully light pop tune, complete with well-placed accordion! The other songs are more like rock songs, especially "Eye for Love" which repeats the title phrase endlessly and sounds like Jefferson Starship circa *Red* (which despite being the only Jefferson Starship album I know is actually an accurate reference. I think.). (Mint – Box 3613, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6B 3Y6)

### The Geeks - "Dreamland in Machineland" b/w "Hey Wreck" 7"

Record collector's wet dream in three acts...Act I: Come across an obscure record by an equally obscure band. Act II: Get in touch with the band and find out they're nice guys. Act III: Discover that they have some unreleased music and sure, you can put out a single. The specifics in this case involve the Geeks, a long-running art punk band who put out one album, It's Not About Notes Anymore (1979), before breaking up in 1982.

(SS Records – 1114 21st St., Sacramento, CA 95814)

Giddy Motors - Make It Pop cd

I couldn't agree with the title more and yet Giddy Motors have no intention of making it remotely pop. They're more interested in tortured art rock, like James Hetfield fronting Jesus Lizard.

(Fatcat - Box 3400, Brighton BN1 4WG, England)

### Glasstown - Your Trendy Dump cd ep

First listen: Neil Young fronting a less loopy Minus 5. Third listen: with some Crazy Horse. Fifth listen: and John Lennon in the vocals. Not my typical cup of tea but a pleasant surprise and one I'll continue to go back to, especially "Good Will and Charity." (Bitter Stag – Box 190008, SF, CA 94119)

Grafton - Blind Horse Campaign cd

No so much sludge rock as lead rock (though fortunately not Led rock), aka Pb rock, which is not to be confused with PBR rock. Hard liquor rock, in any event. (Dead Canary – Box 10276, Columbus, OH 43201)

Grand Champeen/Ol' Yeller - split 7"

Viva flannel rock! **Grand Champeen**'s "A Major and a Miner" is another blast of their vintage Twin/Tone rock, a song I fell in love with during the first listen (and features a brilliant coda/ending). **Ol' Yeller**'s "Reward" took a few listens to click. At first it reminded me of bar rock, but then the chorus snagged me and I realized it harkens back to poppier Meat Puppets. Both songs should always go to eleven. This is my favorite split single of the year. (Glurp – Box 685163, Austin, TX 78768)

Neil Hamburger – Hamburger Remembers Nixon 7"
American's Funnyman, Neil Hamburger reads portions of various speeches by our 37<sup>th</sup> president with zero fanfare and, as we've come to expect from Neil, always staying in character. He covers the hits ('52's Checkers speech, '74's Farewell speech), along with obscure album tracks (a televised address from 1970, a Florida press conference from '73). You probably won't listen to this more than once, but every household should have a copy of this record because you'll want your friends to hear it. (I Don't Feel a Thing: idontfeelathing@yahoo.com)

The Hickory Windbreakers - Get Comfortable with...cd-r Somewhere between Elvis Costello and the Everly Brothers we find the Hickory Windbreakers, a Buffalo supergroup sideproject featuring Jesse James Stewart (Disappointments), Mark Norris (Girlpope), and Brett Essler (milf/Mr. Friendly). The Disappointments were one of my favorite bands of recent years and when they broke up only the emergence of the Hickory Windbreakers prevented me from catching the next red eye to Bisonville and forcing Mr. Stewart, at gunpoint, to get in an active band—he's too great a writer and singer to sit on the sidelines. So I thank Mark and Brett for seeing this record to completion. I enjoy it immearsureably and avoided committing a series of felonies. But it's not just Jesse here. Mark's four contributions more than hold their own, especially "Five Finger Discount," already a favorite summer song in our house. Of course, rumors hold that the Windbreakers have also broken up, which leaves me with three scenarios: 1) said rumors are false, 2) Jesse's in another band, or 3) I write the next issue of Go Metric! from Sing Sing. Regardless of which one proves to be true, Get Comfortable will be in regular rotation. (Jessie @ aspirin789@vahoo.com)

Robyn Hitchcock - Robyn Sings double cd

I've always believed that it's better to hear anyone other than Bob Dylan do Bob Dylan songs, so the only way I'm going to enjoy two discs of Dylan songs is when someone like Robyn Hitchcock is at that wheel. Both discs are culled from live sets, one from a 1996 London show (a reenactment of 1966 show that Dylan did, at Albert Hall, backed by the Hawks (later the Band)), the other from a series of shows in the US between 1999 and 2001. Likely to please both the Hitchcock and Dylan fans in your life. (The Museum of Robyn Hitchcock – Box 133, Greenwich, NY 12834)

The Intellectuals - Boring Town 7" ep

Booming back beats, shitbox guitars, and slightly distorted call and response vocals; the Intellectuals have the garage punk bases covered well. They even drop in these cool, ghostly keyboard solos on a couple of songs, a great twist on the recipe. Just ignore the lyrics. I mean, "Freedom of Love"? "Hey! Marijuana"? Why not bring on Melanie and Wavy Gravy? (Hate – via S. Giovanni in Laterano 194 – 00184 Roma, Italy)

### J Church - Palestine cd

This consists of demos that were recorded between the Drama of Alienation and One Mississippi albums, songs that never made it to a proper album. The low budget recording style isn't a problem, but the lackluster performances are, never getting past the point where I stop wondering what these songs would sound like given proper, or better, band/studio treatment. And yet it's not all bad. The three parts of "Underground" are interesting, putting music beds underneath interview segments with former members of the Weather Underground (or so I'm assuming, there are not footnotes). (Honey Bear – 1071 Clayton Lane, #506, Austin, TX 78723)

Jackie - "Goes Electric" b/w "Stars Brought Low" 7"
Holy Robert Smith, I wanna-mope-and-dance-and-sing-pop-songs, Batman! Only, given the lack of killer choruses, both of these cuts are more like Cure album tracks than singles.

(Glare - Box 82728, Portland, OR 97282)

The Kidnappers – Ransom Notes & Telephone Calls Ip Everyone should cover Loli and the Chones, like the Kidnappers did on "Everybody Hates Me." Their cover lacks the Chones' "no, really, we're going to mug you" charm, but the Chones would probably let the Kidnappers buy them drinks. Decent punk rock'n'roll. (Alien Snatch – Morikeweg 1, 74199 Untergruppenbach, Germany)

The Kill-a-watts – Let's Get High Voltage 7" ep Man, I love the Kill-a-watts. For them these are second rate songs and they still run other bands through the paper shredder. I'm not sure what that means but while none of these songs are going to bring new converts to the Church of the Mighty Kill-a-watt, they'll keep the flock happy. (Flying Bomb – Box 971038, Ypsilanti, MI 48197)

The Kill-a-watts – "Microwave My Heart" +2 7"
The title cut is grade A, girl-you-done-me-wrong-so-nuke-my-ticker, rip roaring garage punk. "More I Know You" is just as good and the third song, a cover of the Testors' "Primitive" ain't bad. This is the best of the four Hate singles I've heard. (Hate – via S. Giovanni in Laterano 194 – 00184 Roma, Italy)

### The Knockout Pills - s/t cd

The Knockout Pills came in just before we wrapped up the reviews, so don't be fooled by the relatively brief write up: this record is excellent and highly recommended. Revved up Chuck Berry riffs, revved up Stones riffs—whatever they shift into it's revved up, and it stomps their first ep (which I liked) into the ground. These guys deserve to go into tax exile after a record like this. (Dead Beat – Box 283, LA, CA 90078)

Leaving Rouge - s/t cd

As I drove to work listening to *Leaving Rouge* I felt like I was on *Candid Camera*, my friends waiting to see how I'd react to songs titled "All Our Octobers" and "Thank You Birds" (a title that could work in the hands of the Fastbacks, but no one else!). Sensitive, innocuous, and unpleasant. *Leaving Rouge*, that is. (Down Peninsula – 4609 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave., #A1, Detroit, MI 48201)

### Leghounds - Ready to Go! cd

This probably isn't better than either of the Leghounds' first two records (both of which rocked), but I finally saw the Leghounds live and now I get them even more than I did before. They played before a typically complacent NYC audience and rocked out unfazed, working the crowd from start to finish, all despite there being virtually no guitar in the mix (and the Leghounds being as guitarcentric as a garage punk band can get). So when *Ready to Go!* showed up a few days later I was chomping at the bit for a dozen new Leghounds songs; I like it more than either of its predecessors. (Further irony being that each of the three records was basically recorded at the same time, rendering all illusions of change and/or progress pure projections by yours truly.)
(Bulge – Box 1173, Green Bay, WI 54305)

Ted Leo/Pharmacists - Hearts of Oak cd

Editing! These songs are in dire need of editing. Every one has a decent idea or three, but each one would be much better if it were 2:00 or 2:30 instead of 4:00 or

4:30. Ted still has a healthy Paul Weller fixation, unfortunately it's eclipsed by his Ted Leo fixation. Grab the reins, dude!

(Lookout - 3264 Adeline St., Berkeley, CA 94703)

### Lorenzo Goetz - Allure cd ep

For all those who miss the "groove pop" of the Spin Doctors here's Lorenzo Goetz. Do they still have the

(Innocent Words - Box 674, Danville, IL 61834)

### Lost Sounds - Demos II cd

As with their last record, I dig the synth-drenched new wave and punk but can't stand the banshee vocals. I did enjoy looking at the show flyers included in the cd booklet, though.

(On On Switch - 780 Post St., #54, SF, CA 94109)

### The Lottie Collins - "Runaway to the Mexico" b/w "Pouvatel" 7"

This is the worst-sounding good record I've heard since the live 1-4-5's ep. I can't believe I like these songs, I can't make out anything-vocals, drums, guitarsnothing! A great appetizer for fans of Junior Varsity and/or the Evaporators, you know, people with taste! (I Don't Feel a Thing: Idontfeelathing@yahoo.com)

The Fabulous Bud E. Luv - Diary of a Loungeman cd If you like the kitschy theme song from The Osbournes, you'll love Diary of a Loungeman. Bud's got a likeable persona and the smart arrangements he gives these songs-both Black Sabbath and solo songs-are equal parts tribute and parody, kind of like the polka medleys Weird Al does. (www.oglio.com)

### Machine Gun Pete and the Ammunition - The Rawness of Truth 7" ep

I like the Ammunition's low rent punk racket. If only Machine Gun Pete could sing, even just a little. (Dylaramma - 3218 Fullerton Ave., #26, Chicago, IL 60647)

### The Magic Magicians - s/t cd

"West Coast Harbor" and "Cascade Express" remind me of the Embarrassment and Big Dipper—nerdy, offbeat pop songs. Too bad they tacked on the other nine songs, which are like watching someone learning to drive stick shift, starting and stopping in the wrong places and often just stalling out.

(Suicide Squeeze - Box 80511, Seattle, WA 98108)

### Andrea Maxand - Paper Cut cd ep

Her vocals kind of remind me of Kate Bush, which is a plus, but the backing tracks are non-descript indie rock, not sufficiently dramatic to support a voice like Andrea's. (Montesaño - Box 20692, Seattle, WA 98102)

### The Media Whores - Master of Pop Hits cd

After a day of trudging through unsolicited review records nothing cleanses the pallet like the Media Whores' power pop. Master of Pop Hits starts off with two new songs, both of which are good, and storms through nine straight jaw-droppers before wrapping up with Badfinger ("No Matter What") and Replacements ("Can't Hardly Wait") covers and a bunch of stuff from a pirate radio appearance. A near perfect compilation (the only way to top it would be to make it a two-disc set, with the second disc featuring the band's debut full-length). Pop Hits is so good I can almost forgive the band for breaking up.

Almost. (Screaming Apple - Dustemichstr. 14, 50939 Koln, Germany)

### The Milwaukees - This Is a Stickup cd

Herein lies the soundtrack for the post-break up montage in every teen drama. Worse than the solo album you fear Johnny Goo Goo Doll is going to unleash one day. (Does Everyone Stare - Box 1006, Edison, NJ 08818)

### Minus 5 - Down with Wilco cd

Scott McCaughey has done it again, written a great pop album that fits in perfectly with the mold of the Minus 5 (who now seem to be his main band, with the Young Fresh Fellows, first historically and in your scorecards, now the side project—and that's weird) and yet sounds unlike any of the other Minus 5 records. Down with Wilco can be as soothing as watching the waves roll in at dusk (or, if you prefer indoor sports, watching Whale Rider), until you tune into the lyrics. Then you're likely to seek out the strongest undertow and toss yourself into the drink. This is dark, folks-betrayal, murder, self loathing, bitterness, disappointment, regret; it's all here. And yet those themes aren't tossed on you like a lead blanket while you're trying to watch those waves, they, the themes, gently come and go and are wonderfully woven into the easy going pop and rock songs they support (or vice versa). Wilco's influence is undeniable, but Down with Wilco remains a Minus 5 record, first and foremost. And it's excellent. (Yep Rock)

### Mr. California and the State Police - I'm Gonna Kick You in the Head cd

I remember how amazed I was when I first heard about Husker Du's Land Speed Record, which has 17 songs in 26 minutes (and is a virtual waste of time on cd because they put all of side one on one track and all of side two on another). Mr. California puts that to shame with 52 songs in 29 minutes (and probably three or four minutes are taken up by snippets from talk radio). I don't know what's most amazing, how many of these songs are really good, that fact that Mr. California is a one-man band, or that according to the liner notes, he took three years to write and record I'm Gonna Kick You in the Head. It's probably a cumulative effect: "damn, that's really good for one guy spending three years cranking out over two gross of punk rock songs that use a drum machine!" The more I listen to this disc and think about it, Mr. California is a genius, a shining example of truly dumb shit that's so thoroughly over the top that it's really smart and equally good. This is my kind of art. (Proud to be Idiot - Box 410325, SF, CA 94141-0325)

### Moreland Audio - Turbogold cd

Connections to former Cub and Phillie Keith Moreland? None. Connections between this band's brank of all-instro math rock and anything I like: none. (Note: The term "math rock" is used to connote a sense of rock music that's complicated and devoid of joy for both audience and performer. Personally, I enjoy math and resent its association with this dreadful brand of the rock music tree.) (54° 40° or Fight! - Box 1601, Acme, MI 49610)

### My So Called Band - Always Something There to Destroy Me cd

Life as a 30 something punk rocker in NC, doesn't sound like an appealing predicament but these guys make it

work. Melodic 80s punk (Husker Du, Black Flag), not superlative, but certainly likeable and better than most. (Suicide Watch – Box 9599, Charlotte, NC 28299)

Oranges Band - All Around cd

Not only can you judge a disc by its cover, you can also judge a disc by its booklet. For example, you know you have a boring rock record on your hands when the band opts to list what each band member does on each song. Basically, the same five guys play on every song, why list such information a dozen times? In the end, I think the only difference between the Oranges Band and the Dave Matthews band is that the former doesn't use a lot of horns and the latter does.

(Lookout - 3264 Adeline St., Berkeley, CA 94703)

Organic – The Life and Times of Sal Sagev cd
Stand back, Avail rock coming through, please stand
back. (Avail rock being painfully earnest punk topped
with gravely vocals.) I can't say that Organic don't
believe what they're doing, nor can I say that I enjoy
what they're doing.

(Microcosm - Box 14332, Portland, OR 97293)

Panty Lions - So Dang Rad cd

My copy has a typo in the title, it should read *So Fucking Bad*. Painful coffeehouse musings, kind of like a Sebadoh record whose songs aren't bogged down with melodies or any other burdensome qualitities.

(Amazing Grease – 1501 Plymouth Ave., SF, CA 94112)

Pine Marten – Beautifulstakesandpowerpoles cd Swaying, drowsy indie rock. The off kilter guitars are all right, like a mellow Sonic Youth or Shrimp Boat. Then the keyboards come in and it sounds like a shipwrecked Split Enz. (Wild Hotels of the Sea – Box 65095, LA, CA 90065)

The Piranhas - s/t cd

The Piranhas are the punk band Syd Barrett would have formed had he come along in late 90s Detroit instead of late 60s London. They play with reckless abandon but never leave out the hooks. They seem really intense and really playful at the same time. A great record. (Note: Collects one 12" along with a 7" or two.) \*

(On On Switch – 780 Post St., #54, SF, CA 94109)

A Planet for Texas – Sprechen Sie Rock? cd
It would be so cool is these guys were from Texas and arguing that mere statehood or nationhood are insufficient for the Lone Star State because Texas deserves to be a planet unto itself. They're actually from Ohio and their brand of Bad Religion/Husker Du rock really needs a gimmick...like arguing for Texas planethood! (Diaphragm – Box 10388, Columbus, OH 43201)

Plate Six – Operation: Chair Sit cd
Operation: Reviewer wants to turn off screamo, DC-core,
but must acknowledge two cool song titles: "Eat My
Death" and "Metal Pilgrim."
(Bent Rail – Box 2283, Birmingham, AL 35201)

Pocket Shelley - I Don't Want to Terrorize the World to Protect My Luxuries cd ep

A spontaneous response to the war in Iraq, the advice in these songs outweighs the songs themselves. (Bitter Stag – Box 190008, SF, CA 94119)

Pretty Girls - s/t cd

Bigtime early 70s glam action, like your better Bowie tunes. *Pretty Girls* perfectly bridges the gap between their first ep, where they sounded like keepers of the mid-to-late 60s flame (Kinks, Who) and the FM Knives disc (I'm pretty sure most of the Pretty Girls are also in the FM Knives) who nick their action from late 70s Mod and punk, thus covering all bases. Getting back to *The Pretty Girls*, just skip past tracks two and three and all is well, really well, in fact.

(Trap Door - 3428 H St., #5, Sacramento, CA 95816)

Pretty Mighty Mighty - Normal cd ep Pretty Mighty Mighty: Spoon::Spoon:Pixies. (Derailleur - Box 10276, Columbus, OH 43201)

Radar Secret Service – Stop Communication cd
When I was living in Ohio, I had a feeling there were cool
local bands but I couldn't find them. Six months after I
moved I got a copy of Stop Communication and confirmed
my theory. Radar Secret Service hail from Kent, Ohio and
they rock. A little Fall, Cure, and Buzzcocks, along with
that intangible "things are brewing in the birth place of
flight state," like they do every 20-25 years. Cool debut.
(On On Switch – 780 Post St., #54, SF, CA 94109)

The Raveonetts – Whip It On cd Sounds like a side project from Kim Gordon and Thurston Moore, about 50% Sonic Youth and 50% Ciccone Youth. (www.crunchy.dk)

Red Rover - Singles cd ep

It used to be that bands would-blame promoters, managers, and/or record labels for taking the fun out of being in a band, for making it all about money. Now bands do that to themselves. Red Rover seem like they went to business school before they started writing harmless Weezer knockoffs. I consider that a terrible thing, but I think I'm in the minority. (Red Rover – Box 70 Tilt St., Haledon, NJ 07508)

The Riff Randells – Lethal Lipgloss 10"
Backing vocals! They're the one factor that separate the Riff Randells, a pretty good punk pop band from a band like Nikki and the Corvettes, legendary purveyors of candy pop. The proof comes on the Riff Randells' "Psycho Boyfriend," the chorus has these truly nectarous (thank god for my thesaurus!) backing vocals that easily make it the stand out track. The rest of the ep got my toes tapping, but an extra coat of glaze could push Lethal Lipgloss from good to essential. (Alien Snatch – Morikeweq 1, 74199 Untergruppenbach, Germany)

Ring, Cicada – Good Morning, Mr. Good cd
This blows. I've listened to 16 straight crappy cds this
afternoon and all traces of diplomacy have been depleted.
It's a steaming heap of pointless, joyless rock music that
makes me crave a skeet gun set up in the backyard.
(54° 40° or Fight! – Box 1601, Acme, MI 49610)

The Rippers – Tracks From Beyond 7" ep
The foundation is straight forward 60s garage rock, but
the Rippers know how to twist the formula. First of all,
give the guitars a surfy ring. Secondly, and I didn't think
this one was possible, yet alone advisable, tinker with the
Bo Diddley beat. Their drummer, known only as Ripper 1

(kudos for giving the drummer #1 status!), adds an extra eighth note or three onto the Godzilla of drumbeats...and makes it work! A hearty tip of the cap to Ripper 1 and his fellow Italian beat makers.

(Shake Your Ass - capinch66@hotmail.com)

### Rock'n'Roll Adventure Kids – Live on Bezerkeley

This isn't just a record, it's a manifesto to and for the unbridled joy of rock'n'roll—whether it's squawking along, air guitaring, or reducing your mattress to rubble. I've worked with ADD kids and they've got nothing on these guys. But it's not just the spasmodic six stringing and yodeling, there's Oscar's John Entwistle bass work and the songs themselves. Still not clear? They've got a song called "The Shimmy Shake." To shimmy is to dance. To shake is to dance. But for the R'n'R Adventure Kids it's not enough to do one or the other—all things at all times! When I have my first heart attack, I don't want anyone to try to revive me with those electro shock do-hickeys; I want to strap headphones to my melon and blast the Rock'n'Roll Adventure Kids! Brilliant. (Soul Not Style – 2425B Channing Way, #661, Berkeley CA 94704)

The Saints of 35<sup>th</sup> Street – Learning to Let Go cd-r ep From their name you'd expect the Saints to be an Oi band or a Jersey street punk band on Headache Records. Instead, they sound like a cross between Social Distortion and Green Day (later, slicker versions of both bands). I like "Wasted" and "You're the Only Thing That I Hate More Than Myself," that's when band's snottiness and bitterness pierce the glossy production (on those songs the production simply sounds good, not overdone). (www.saintsof35thstreet.com)

The Safes - Boogie Woogie Rumble cd-r ep

These are the songs the Safes pull out when they're playing a biker bar, more rough and tumble than their usual fare. Michael, the Safes' George Harrison or Dave Davies, gets the spotlight here. (aka the Michael cd) (O'Brother – Box 254, Park Ridge, IL 60068)

### The Safes - demos cd- r

This batch of currently homeless songs tips the balance toward pure pop, showing off the Safes penchant for Beatles and Beach Boys maneuvers, especially "Cool Sounds" and "Everybody in the World." The sleeper hit is "Bliss This Instance," a dead ringer for the Kinks boozy RCA days. (aka the Patrick cd) (Q'Brother – Box 254, Park Ridge, IL 60068)

### The Safes - Family Jewels cd

This is a resequenced version of the band's cd-r reviewed in issue #15 and it's even better than before. *GM!* policy is strictly against reviewing the same record more than once, but *Family Jewels* is the exception, a perfect power pop album that's a got a firm grip on the "album of the year" belt. (aka the Frankie cd)

(O'Brother – Box 254, Park Ridge, IL 60068)

### SBCB - Ate Your Pizza cd

Ate Your Pizza is so bad it almost leaves me speechless. You'd be inclined to agree with me (I speak hypothetically here) unless you want to hear a bunch of "Jaded" 21-year-olds unload their scorn for 18-year-olds ("48, they all look the same/18, still playing high school games...you

suck"). Isn't that like Bon Jovi fans ridiculing Winger fans? (Average Day – Box 20217, Worcester, MA 01602)

### Seger Liberation Army – "Heavy Music" b/w "Chain Smokin" 7"

Bob Seger has a lot to answer for, but his early Detroit days continue to inspire a legion of Seger apologists. The SLA, featuring a New Bomb Turk, producer Jim Diamond, and other luminaries, make a great case for the apologists. Both of these cuts are heavy, psychedelic r'n'b—lots of muscle and big hooks. If only Chevy had chosen one of these songs for their tv ads. (Big Neck – Box 8144. Reston, VA 20195)

### Sicbay - Overreaction Time cd

Reminds of the first time I heard bands like Mother Love Bone and Temple of the Dog and momentarily tried to figure out if they were punk bands or rock bands before realizing the extent to which they sucked and weren't worth the bother. The four slow songs on *Overreation Time* are even worse.

(54° 40° or Fight! - Box 1601, Acme, MI 49610)

### The Soft Boys - Side Three cd ep

Presumably outtakes from the *Nextdoorland* album, these seven songs form an incredibly cohesive ep, which makes me wonder if they could have been added to *Nextdoorland* giving the Soft Boys one of the few great double albums in history (other notables include *Zen Arcade, Double Nickel on the Dime, Chicago Transit Authority* (pipe down, you never heard it, bub), and, probably *English Settlement*, though I'd have to revist that one). A splendid ep and, given the band's recent break up, probably the last we'll hear from them for another 20 years. (The Museum of Robyn Hitchcock – Box 133, Greenwich, NY 12834)

### The Sons of Hercules - Right Now cd

Given the lack of energy on this 60s style garage rock platter maybe they're the adopted sons of Hercules. (Suprema – no address)

### The Spandecks - s/t cd

Listening to the Spandecks, I get the same punk pop sugar rush I get from a Fastbacks record. The equation is different—the Spandecks use fewer guitar pyrotechnics and have impossible to decipher lyrics—but the results are wonderfully similar.

(Stiffeen – Root Kyoudou, Bldg. 3F-C, 1-25-17 Kyoudou Setagaya-ku 156-0052 Japan)

### The Spits - Tour 7" ep

The Spits have a great shtick: punk that's more Neanderthal than the Ramones and topped off with new wave-era keyboards. These four songs are okay but I have to remind myself of the band's shtick otherwise I'm tempted to fast forward their part of the mix tape. (Through the band, I suppose)

Sweet Japanese American Princesses – Virgin Vibe cd My tastes in music are leaning toward shorter, faster, and dumber, so liking Virgin Vibe is as easy as reviewing it: think Registrators and Teengenerate—spazzy, punk pop from Japan. Yes, please!
(Biq Neck – Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195)

### Bert Switzer - 1977-2002 cd

Here's a first: a compilation of songs whose sole connection is that they all feature the same drummer! Thirteen of these songs are from Bert's late 70s punk band, the Destroyed, who are vaguely Stooges-like. (Someone should cover "Power," it's probably a great song but difficult to tell here given the poor recording). There are also a couple of solo songs, a 10-minute version of "Crazy Train," and two songs by Monster Island, the band Bert was in with Henry Kaiser (one of the few free rock/jazz guys who can hold my interest). More Monster Island would have been cool. Overall, 1977-2002 is more commendable than enjoyable. (www.bertswitzer.com)

### T-Shirt - The Convincer cd

A few of these songs were recorded by members of Small Factory, but none of these tracks approach that band's fine indie pop. *The Convincer* feels incredibly deliberate, more like a term paper than a rock record. (SilverGirl – Box 161024, San Diego, CA 92176)

### Tart - s/t cd

It'd be lazy of me to dismiss this disc as "indie rock with slighty unconventional female vocals, like a lamer Sleater Kinney." Lazy, but not inaccurate. (www.tartmusic.com)

### The Teen Sensation Glasses - s/t cd

These bespecied gents do a lot of things right. Clearly, they own their share of Ramones and Beach Boys record, they wear matching outfits, they sound their best when they pour on the geekiness ("Sucker Bites," "Theme Song"), and they have a *GM!* subscriber for a drummer! (Whoa Oh – 52 McLoughlin St., Glen Cove, NY 11542)

This Bright Apocalypse – Motion and Rest cd Pretentious emo rock with drawings of a crucifixtion on the back of the cd. Takers? (54° 40° or Fight! – Box 1601, Acme, MI 49610)

Tin Huey - Contents Dislodged During Shipment cd One of the best albums of the late 70s gets a long overdue, and richly deserved, reissue. Tin Huey was part of a wonderfully diverse Northeast Ohio scene (along with Devo, Pere Ubu, the Bizarros, Rubber City Rebels, and many others) and found themselves releasing their debut album on Warner Brothers. Their sound was smart, complex, and catchy, closest to the likes of Devo and/or the Talking Heads. Yet, start to finish, Contents is better than anything produced by either of those bands, even if it's best known for a cover of "I'm a Believer," the album's sole misfire. In hindsight, it's amazing that such a genuinely odd and intelligent record drew major label interest. The disc comes with excellent liner notes that summarize the tale of Tin Huey. (Collectors' Choice - Box 838, Itasca, Il 60143-0838)

### The Travoltas - Travoltas Party cd

To borrow a friend's saying: cool, cool, cool, very cool. The pop punk Travoltas swipe a great idea from the Beach Boys—gather your friends into the studio, have a party, and record it. They mix in Wilson brothers-friendly versions of their own songs along with a handful of covers, the most surprising of which is Bad Religion's "Sorrow," nothing quite like hearing "let me take you to the hurting ground" Beach Boys-style. (Knock Knock – 394 Hewlett Ave., Patchoque, NY 11772)

Tri-City Thundercats – Japan Tour Single 7"
Oh yeah! I've had these songs on a slowly deteriorating cassette for awhile and now they're on vinyl. What a relief, that tape's days are certainly numbered and these are songs I'm not willing to live without.
(I Don't Feel a Thing: idontfeelathing@yahoo.com)

### Tri-City Thundercats - Technology Makes Me Sleepy 7" ep

Before they had the "Tri-City" prefix, the Thundercats contributed a killer song to the last Dizzy Records compilation. The cool thing was that that song was but one of the Thundercats songs waiting to be released. The sad, nay, tragic thing was that none of those other songs, recorded in '98 or early '99, were put out. Until now. They sound like the Buzzcocks fronted by Robert Smith but because the songs are always moving full steam ahead, Robert has no time for moping. Excellent stuff. (I Don't Feel a Thing: idontfeelathing@yahoo.com)

V/A – Almost You: The Songs of Elvis Costello cd
As a rule of thumb I hate it when bands cover Elvis
Costello, especially songs from the Attractions era.
Without fail such covers fall painfully short, trying to
speed up the songs or tinker with the arrangements. The
results typically serve only to point out the enormous gap
between the Attractions and the offending upstarts. The
bands on Almost You consistently take a different tact,
going for low key renditions, often with alt-country
overtones, and the results are surprisingly good.
Favorites include Matt Pond PA, Fastball, Damnations,
Vic Chestnutt, Brenda Kahn, Jon Auer, and Deathray
Davies. 9 for 14 = .642.
(Glurp – Box 685163, Austin, TX 78768)

### V/A - The Best BandsYou've Never Heard in Your Life 7"

The Ergs!' (should that be Ergs'!?) song is amazing! One of those rare cases where a single song makes a compilation worthwhile. Mazeffect and Rats Eyes Retired (At 21) both turn in credible SST covers (Husker Du's "Flip Your Wig" and Black Flag's "Nervous Breakdown," respectively). I didn't tape the Grover Kent song, but the Ergs!' song, damn. 3 for 4 = .750. (More East – Box 2223, Edison, NJ 08818)

### V/A - The Creatures Wanna Dance Ip

A great mix of garage, surf, punk, and pop from a slew of Western European bands, like a poppier, goofier group of Rip Off bands. I'd never heard of any of bands but nearly all of them deliver; two songs each from **Drivers**, **Hi Tops**, **Rodriquez**, **Reeturners**, **Elektras**, **Brain Eaters**, and **Banditos**. Recommended. 15 for 18 = .833. (Swinglebra – Postgasse 12, 89312 Gunzburg, Germany)

### V/A - The Cretins Wanna Dance lp

Most of these bands work up a Ramones-worshipping pop punk lather, and most of them are right fine (certainly better than their U.S. counter parts). Roll call: Scumbag Roads, Backwood Creatures, Reekys, Dirtshakes, and Apers. Exceptions include the wonderfully surfy sounds of The Cave 4, the joyous bubble punk renderings of Curlee Wurlee ("Come Along With Me" is the best song on the album, complete with ridiculously fake crowd noises that are worse/better than the ones the

Stones used on *Got Live If You Want It*), and **the Retarded** who suck. Well done! 9 for 16 = .562
(Swinglebra – Postgasse 12, 89312 Gunzburg, Germany)

V/A – The International Language of Love cd With gobs of Ramones-worshipping pop punk, Whoa Oh is picking up where Mutant Pop left off. The twist here is that each of the bands hails from Europe, with the poppiest—and therefore best—of the four bands being Denmark's 20Belows. Ulrich's high pitch vocals sweeten the songs really well and ought to go over with fans of the Lizards or Proms (circa their first ep). The Zapoteks rise above the pack with smarter than your average pop punk band lyrics (for example, "Cobwebs on My Chucks"), the Apers do likewise by sprinkling in some keyboards. Twentyearsold don't have a recognizable twist on the pop punk formula, but they ain't bad neither. A keeper. (Whoa Oh – 52 McLoughlin St., Glen Cove, NY 11542)

V/A - Lookout Freakout - Episode 3 cd

The Lookout roster is much different than it was even just a couple years ago, which makes sense, and this compilation is good way to sift through the new bands and check in with older ones. Bratmobile, MTX, Moral Crus, Queers, and Smugglers all check in with quality songs (mostly previously released), as do Washdown, The Pattern, and Complete Disorder. 9 for 20 = .450. (Lookout – 3264 Adeline St., Berkeley, CA 94703)

### V/A - Punk Rock - Vol. 2 cd

The **Throwdowns** offer some decent hardcore, and they're the only one of these five bands that don't reek of "please, use our music to sell sunglasses and skateboards!" The rest of the bunch sound like punk bands that were assembled by Fox executives. (206 – 8314 Greenwood Ave, Box 102, Seattle, WA 98103)

V/A - Punk Seven Inch cd: Volume One 1988-1989 Six early Lookout singles collected on one disc. Listening to the Corrupted Morals, Isocracy, and Plaid Retina ep's you can follow the transition from 80s hardcore to the next wave of California punk, which always sounded more metal-like to me. The Yeastie Girlz are unique in the Lookout catalog, an a cappella rap group with sexually frank lyrics. Interesting, but the novelty quickly wears off. Surrogate Brains are the goofiest band here, with "Super Spectacular Day" being the best of the bunch (I wonder if they learned that song from the Mad super special that came with a flexi-disc). (Music nerd note: the Surrogate Brains ep was recorded by Gary Young, the guy who was an early member of Pavement.) Finally, there's Kamala & the Karnivores, my favorite ep of the six, one of the first hints of the poppy side of Lookout to come. I don't know enough about any of the bands to comment on which bands they went onto, but Punk Seven Inch is a good listen, complete with all of the artwork from the original ep's. Well done. (Lookout - 3264, Adeline St., Berkeley, CA 94703)

### Vermilion – Flattening Mountains and Creating Empires cd

Vermilion's prog rock passed me by, but I was struck by their Roger Dean cover art (think old Yes album covers), so I asked how they got him to do their cover... "After we recorded our album with (Steve) Albini, we were perplexed on what kind of artwork should go along with it. I remember thinking, wouldn't it be cool to get Roger Dean? So, I got on the

internet and did a web search on Roger Dean, and found his website: www.rogerdean.com. I then contacted the webmaster who maintains his site. He told me that Roger might be interested and for us to send him some music. After a couple of months, and several follow up emails, Roger's webmaster finally contacted me saying that Roger was indeed interested. I contacted Roger over the telephone, introduced myself, and we proceeded to negotiate a rate. We had several conversations sharing ideas about the cover art, and after seeing a few of Roger's sketches that he sent me, we both agreed upon a concept on which the artwork would be based. This is how we ended up working with him. Eight months later I ended up visiting England with my girlfriend, and we arranged to visit Roger for lunch one afternoon, the same day as his 58th birthday. We shared Italian food with him, his daugther, and nephew, and talked for many hours. I found it to be one of the more inspiring life experiences I have encountered to this day." Eric Junge of Vermilion. (Redwood - Box 6041, Fullerton, CA 92834)

### Viza-Noir - No Record cd

When they move at full-speed, Viza Noir sound a lot like the Minutemen, from the D. Boon vocals and Watt/Hurley rhythm section to the herky jerky arrangements that can, and do, go off in any direction at any time. Unfortuately, about half of the songs lack that drive and lapse into dull math rock exercises. (Flameshovel – 1658 N. Milwaukee, #276, Chicago, IL 60647)

The Washdown - s/t cd ep

Form: Though pressed in the form of a regular size cd, this disc is really one of those 3" mini-discs (the 2" border is transparent, non-playable plastic); cool. Content: The Washdown don't sound like a pop punk band, emo band, garage band, or \_\_\_\_ band. In fact, they don't have a ready made category, nor do they suck. I'm intrigued, way to go, guys.

(Lookout – 3264 Adeline St., Berkeley, CA 94703)

Whiskey Tenor - A Day's Work cd

My wife, Allie: Sounds like he's imitating Bob Dylan. It's awful, don't you think?

Me: Yeah, but I can't figure out exactly how or why. Allie: Instead of touching me, it's making me laugh...at it, not with it.

Mike: You're harsh, yet I can't disagree. (Down Peninsula – 4609 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave., #A1, Detroit, MI 48201)

The Yellow Press - s/t cd ep

The Guy songs from a Fugazi album with some keyboards added because, well, you know, keyboards are in. And "Coyote vs. Rabbit" is metaphorical, confound it. (Alan/ Yellow Press – 735 Fathom, #37, San Mateo, CA 94404)

Youth Gone Mad – featuring Dee Dee Ramone – s/t cd Q: What's worse than a cover of "Blitzkrieg Bop" that's slowed down and uses a drum machine?
A: The other 14 songs on this record.
(Trend Is Dead – Box 444, Normal, IL 61761)

The Zombie IV - "Zombie" + 3 7"

Guys who dress up as zombies, play stellar-Mummiesflavored garage rock, and cover Link Wray and Sam the Sham? This is a no brainer! Wait, they're zombies, they're no brainers! I love this record! (Boom Boom – 20720 SE 192<sup>nd</sup> St., Renton, WA 98058)

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### GM! Top 25 (in order random)

- 1. The Safes Family Jewels (O'Brothers); Demos cd-r & Boogie Woogie Rumble cd-r ep (self-released)
  2. Hickory Windbreakers Get Comfortable with... (self-released)
- 3. Minus 5 Down with Wilco (Yep Rock)
- 4. Bananas Nautical Rock'n'Roll (Plan-It-X)
- 5. Soft Boys Side Three ep (Editions PAF); Robyn Hitchcock - Robyn Sings (Editions PAF)
- 6. A-Frames Modula (SS)
- 7. Aisler's Set How I Learned to Write Backwards (Slumberland); "Mission Bells" 12" (Suicide Squeeze)
- 8. Flashcubes Brilliant (Northside)
- 9. Catholic Boys Brainwash City (Kryptonite)
- 10. Tin Huey Contents Dislodged During Shipment (Collectors' Choice)
- 11. Rock'n'Roll Adventure Kids s/t (Soul Not Style/Spam)
- 12. Dirt Bike Annie Show Us Your Demons (Dirtnap); It Ain't Easy Being Single (Dirtnap)
- 13. Media Whores Master of Pop Hits (Screaming Apple)
- 14. Briefs Off the Charts (Dirtnap)
- 15. FM Knives Estrogen (Smart Guy); Pretty Girls—s/t (Trap Door)
- 16. Tri-City Thundercats Technology Makes Me Sleepy (I Don't Feel a Thing); Japan Tour single (I
- Don't Feel a Thing)

  17. Piranhas s/t (On/On Switch); Erotic Grit

  Movies (In the Red)
- 18. Kill-a-watts Let's Get High Voltage (Flying Bomb); Microwave My Heart (Hate)
- 19. Leghounds Ready to Go (Bulge)
- 20. V/A The Best Bands You've Never Heard in Your Life compilation (More East)
- 21. Zombie IV s/t ep (Boom Boom)
- 22. Mr. California and the State Police I'm Gonna Kick You in the Head (Proud to be Idiof)
- 23. Cripples Dirty Head (Dirtnap)
- 24. Neil Hamburger Hamburger Remembers Nixon (I Don't Feel a Thing)
- 25. The Knockout Pills s/t (Dead Beat)

### **FOCUS ON TIN HUEY**

Tin Huey's long out of print and equally overlooked album, Contents Dislodged During Shipment, has finally been reissued. Wanting to shed more light on this fab record, I thought about a straight "history of band" interview but the liner notes answered most of my questions. So I contacted two band members, Harvey Gold and Chris Butler and asked them to selfpitch, posing and answering their own questions.

### Harvey Gold...

If there's one thing you might have done differently over the years, what would that have been?

I would not have allowed us to be talked out of following our own gut instincts (not to mention our not yet completely calcified brains) by aggressively pursuing the possibility that presented itself to us of a North American tour opening for Roxy Music.

We would have been exposed to our best shot at an aesthetically empathetic audience, established a relationship of some nature with E.G. Management (Eno and Fripp as well as Roxy), and would have been able to see Roxy Music a whole barrel full of times. Most of us appreciate the experience we had of doing six shows with Television in three nights at the Bottom Line more for the six times we got to see them play than for anything else about it. I'm not saying any of the above absolutely would have changed our fate substantially, but it most definitely offered up the possibility of a truly unique experience, and well... he who has the most anecdotes when he dies DOES win, y'know?

### Chris Butler...

Anecdotes that have stuck with me about the recording session...which have nothing to do with the recording session!
-Hearing stories of Neil Young mixing his records so many times that the master tapes wore out. And - at the time (1978) - he had like, 15 full albums in the can/unreleased.

-Getting to sign out master tapes from Warners's vault. High point was Beefheart's *Clear Spot* played back on the original Westlake monitors without the RIAA compression & eq curve. That 'long low lunar note' in "Big Eyed Beans From Venus"????... absolutely molar-rattling at full volume and uncompressed. There is subsonic stuff there that will make your bowels let go...I swear.

-Meeting a short guy with a huge afro. Prince. Just got signed. Kid had like zero personality. 'Oh... he'll go far...', I remember muttering to myself.

 -Meeting Capt. Beefheart. We had asked him to play harmonica on something.

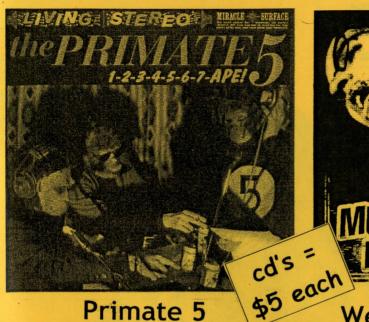
-Meeting Rickie Lee Jones who was recording in Studio A, and not being able to keep my eyes off her chest.

-Hearing Lowell George's solo record before it was released -Going to The Band's studio - Shangri-la - in the Malibu hills, and meeting Levon Helm

-Meeting up with Ted Cohen - Artist Relations guy at Warners whom I'd known in high school. He had been our high school band's 'manager'. Spent half a day at Warners in Burbank...but it was only after a few minutes with him there that I knew we were doomed. There was nothing at the company to 'relate to', or had the slightest connection with Tin Huey's esthetic (whatever that was).

-Watching the Agoura-Malibu fire slowly encircle us -No one...not the engineers, the staff..anyone... knowing the name of the studio. Really. Eh?

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Primate 5

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Weird Lovemakers

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milf - Everybody Should Stop Doing Everything 18 song collection culled from the best of this Buffalo band's many cassette and 7" releases. cd-r (DZ011)

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Egghead. - Dumb Songs for Smart People Posthumous 14 song cd, on Mutant Pop.



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