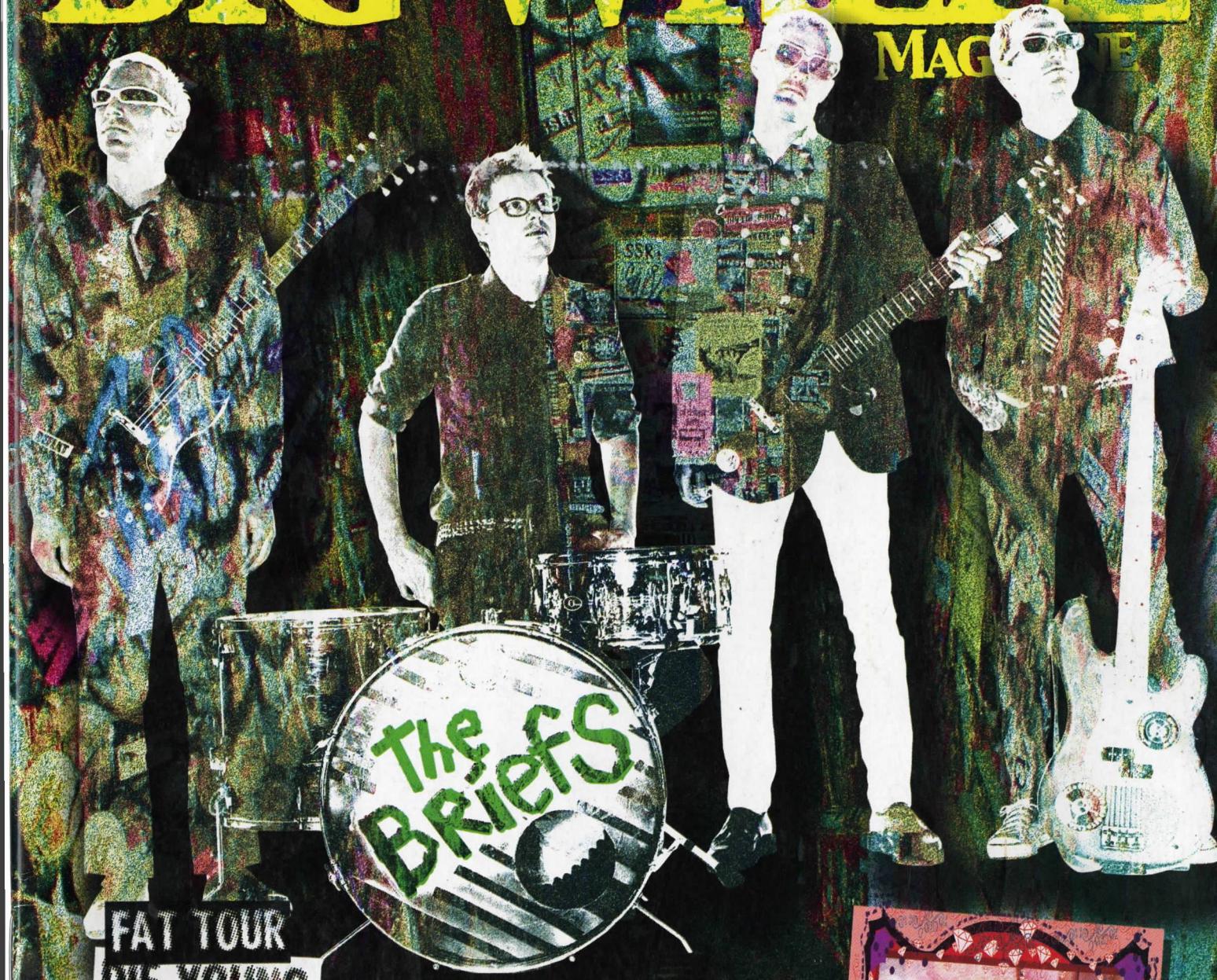
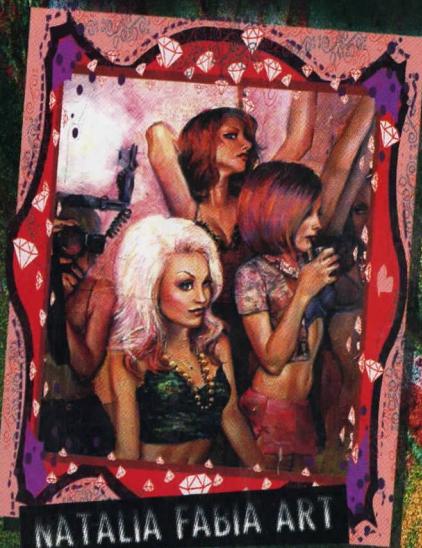


# BIG WHEEL FESTIVAL

MAGAZINE



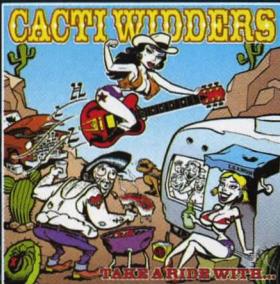
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GANG OF FOUR  
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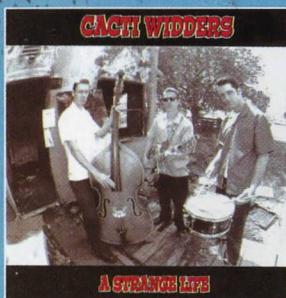
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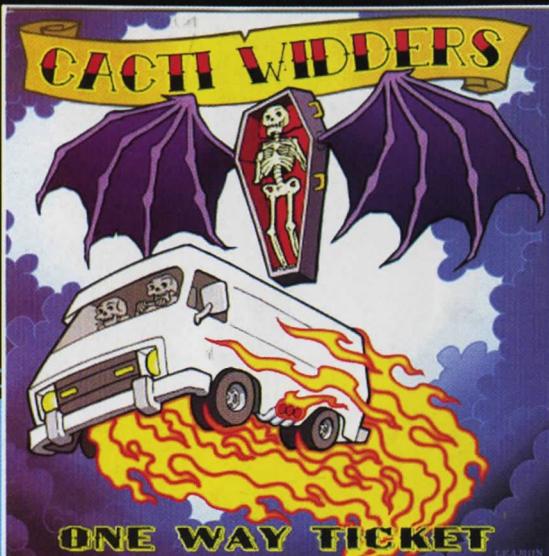
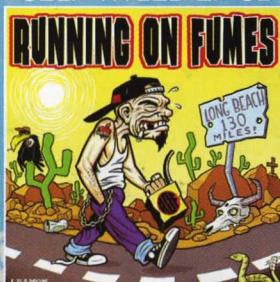
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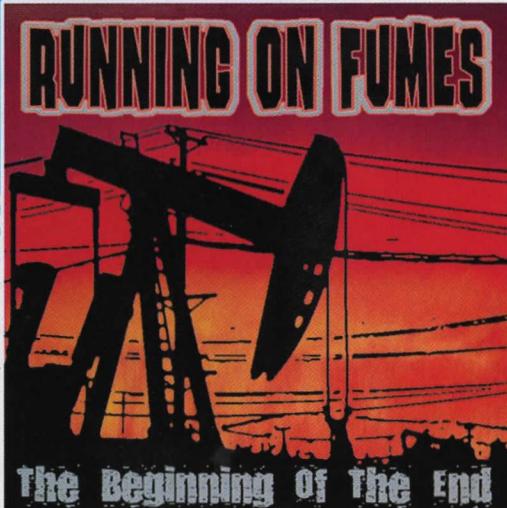
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Oct 4 - Every Tuesday in October!  
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Oct 5 - GITCH, Plastic Parachute, The Charms  
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Oct 6 - Simon Says Die, The Dizzy Riders  
Tommy and The Terrors, Rat City Riot

Oct 7 - MDC \$8, Riotgun, Life Crisis, GFI

Oct 8 - Vision Graphics Party with Flaming Aces, Sugar Daddys, Spellbound

Oct 9 - Creepy and the Dicks, Juarez Crime Scene, Tuberculosis Boys, Sledgeback, Pricktator

Oct 12 - BSS, Mass Nostalgia, Xone  
Above Three Days, Sick ThreeDays

Oct 13 - Piss Pops, Million Dollar Marxists  
Black Furies

Oct 14 - Final Conflict, Another Destructive System, Scarred For Life, Armistice, After The bomb

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Oct 20 - Sounds Of Urchin, Bargain Music, Mystery Hangup, Generic

Oct 21 - Dead End Stiffs, Autumn Dervish

Oct 22 - Sugarpuss

Oct 23 - Feedback, Tres, Screams Of Serenity, Long Beach Unified, Anal Death

Oct 26 - Moon Light Junkies, Palace, Donkey Punch  
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Oct 27 - Demonia, Valid Effort, Branded

Oct 28 - Katrina Benefit show! Proceeds to Red Cross!  
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Oct 29 - Halloween show with More Than Never, The Fiends, Elvis Wesley and the Pistol Whippers

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Nov 5 - Basement Records Night with Bullet Treatment, The Nipples, Mother Natures Revenge

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# BIG WHEEL

MAGAZINE

Issue #2 October 2005

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and photos courtesy of:

**Team Goon**

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\*\*\*\*\*The written opinions expressed in Big Wheel  
do not necessarily reflect that of the staff. \*\*\*\*\*

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## Editors Letter

How was my month, I ask myself. Pretty good I guess. My dad turned 69, which is trip. I had dinner with the folks and watched some boob tube, god I miss cable. A Circuit City ad came on with a CIV song and I recollect to the parents about how I saw them 10 years ago, and how my friend got kicked out of the show for trying to stage dive. My dad told me about going to see Gene Krupa when he was 10 and how he started screaming during the drum solo, prompting momma (his, of course) to drag him out because she thought he had gone mad. The man is 69 years old and he still practices on his little drum pad set up every morning for a few hours. I found a little vial of nitroglycerin on the kitchen counter, in case pops has a heart attack. It had gone through the laundry by mistake, does that mess it up? Hmm.

What else happened this month? The Dodgers blew it pretty big time. Hurricanes are fucking up the Gulf Coast. And somehow the Big Wheel staff missed Madness at the Troubadour. Rafe is pretty pissed about that. The only time he's ever seen them was at the Palladium over twenty years ago. Well, what are you going to do? Football is here, and for some odd reason I'm stoked. I never liked watching Football, but I do now. I guess it's not that weird. Jocks go to shows and meathead their way in the pit, it's about time I started drinking on Sunday morning just to yell at mongoloids chasing a ball and kicking each others ass. Men in tights jumping on each other, maybe my closet door is finally opening.

Congrats are in order to my sister and her man on tying the knot, to Rafe & Mychelle (it's a boy!) and to writer Steve Brown on his newborn Maverick Eliot Brown. I think I may be pregnant, too. I did puke this morning and my belly is definitely showing. I won't need the ultrasound though. I have a pretty good feeling that it's a burrito. I'm crossing my fingers.

# PROPAGANDHI

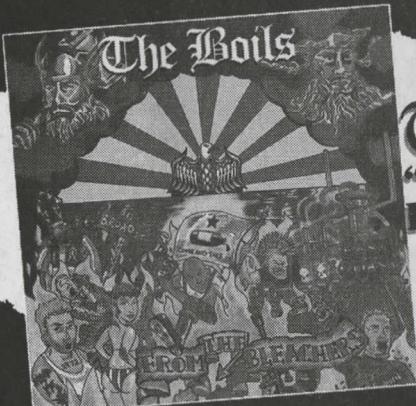
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ISSUE 2

OCTOBER, 2005

# BIG WHEEL

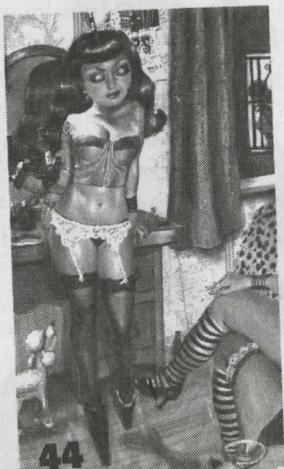
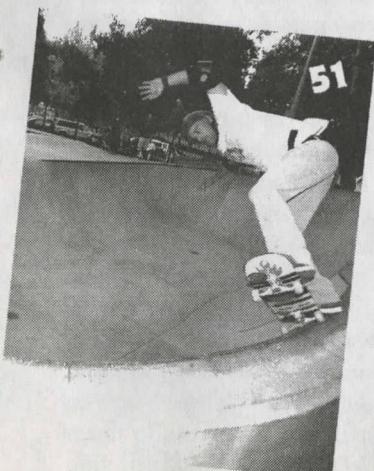
MAGAZINE

## Content

- Gang of Four**
- Bad Reaction**
- Thieves Like Us**
- Lords of Altamont**
- Die Young**
- Fat Tour**
- Inquisition**
- The Briefs**
- CBGB**
- Kyle Mitchell**
- Natalia Fabia**
- Gwennie vs. Katrina**
- Old Scars Kick Off**
- Columns**
- Reviews**

## Page#

- 6**
- 8**
- 12**
- 14**
- 18**
- 22**
- 26**
- 29**
- 34**
- 39**
- 44**
- 48**
- 51**
- 56**
- 68**



# GANG OF FOUR



When Tom the graphics dude played me Entertainment by Gang of Four I thought I was listening to a new band honing the disco funky beat fused with abstract guitar chunk and that weird sort of Brit flavor. Of course, this was not the case. Rather, this was the source of those bands' inspiration. What I was listening to was older than I was and as innovative as anything I've ever heard. When introduced to the world the accolades were quick to reverberate. Alongside contemporaries like the Sex Pistols, the Clash and the Buzzcocks, Gang of Four remain isolated concerning their musical contributions. The energy and creativity were there well before the times could catch up.

Forming in 1977 and taking their name from a Chinese renegade communist faction Gang of Four broke major ground when bassist Dave Allen, drummer Hugo Burnham, guitarist Andy Gill and singer Jon King decided to get together and make music no ones ever heard or made before. Gang of Four's sound falls somewhere between the experimental sounds of Television, the fervor of Roxy Music, the energy of the Sex Pistols and the political fury of the Clash. In a conversation with Youth Brigade's Shawn Stern, he recollected how he saw them open for the Buzzcocks in 1979. He remembers having never seen a band play with such force and have such unique sound. Gang of Four lasted roughly 7 years, in which they released 3 albums and a slew of singles, only to reform in 1991 and release another album. That was short lived and GO4 disappeared back under a rock.

Now, in 2005,

when half the bands on mainstream radio have found commercial success in a very reminiscent Gang of Four technique, the original line up has gotten back together. An album of previously written material has been re-recorded and titled "Return the Gift". On this effort, classic GO4 tunes return in a higher produced fashion, yet the original urgency remains intact. The bass is brighter, the lyrics cut through sharper, the drums slap and bounce and with the exception of an over digitized guitar that doesn't resonate like that of the original cuts, Gang of Four have recaptured their original steam for a new generation of fans to experience and an old generation of fans to argue about. Shows are being played and an album of new material is a possibility. GO4 have reunited as a result of the undeniable cosmic intensity created when only the Four are present. Creative commodities aside,

GO4 adopted obscurity in their heyday by means of ideological convictions and not changing lyrical content to assimilate to the mainstream, with the exception of a UK top 40 hit. GO4's political discretion catered to a smart ear and proved to be more ephemeral than most contemporaries. Contention, sans regurgitation, has held true through the years as GO4 stand strong in theory and in their current tangible existence.

With upcoming tour dates it's a great thing that GO4 haven't reissued their old material and instead rerecorded old songs that are no longer ahead of their time. The years have caught up to GO4's sound; the retro is no longer. I can now perform my interpretive freak dance moves to sound. You should check them out. I will no longer be looked at by others as a freak rhythm machine, rather I will appear to be witty and aesthetically inclined. Disco induced and drunk with punk, my feet will follow my mongoose like hands, my manner will be that of a loose sailor fresh off the boat. I will use words I don't understand, I will hit on girls who don't speak English. I will do this a lot. Once I squeeze into the Gang Of Four show I will celebrate the end of their cease fire and relinquish the thought that people of my generation are better off with Gang Of Four making music.



I hope they keep down the price of gas

By: Joey Balls





an interview with

# BAD REACTION

The story of Bad Reaction is much like the premise for a reality-TV show, and with Kash, the band's singer, as the main character, it would be a good one. There are very few people who are as charismatic a front man or who have such a great story. The short version is that in 2001 he moved from Brooklyn, New York to Los Angeles with the dream of starting a band.

Why Los Angeles? "Why not?" Kash explained. "I had never been here before, I had only heard about it." However there was more reason to it. He wanted to start a band with the same sound as his favorite bands from the 1980's like the Circle Jerks, the Adolescents and Black Flag. "My favorite bands came from here..." he admitted. "Well except for Bad Brains and Minor Threat, but what are you goin' to do?"

Once in Los Angeles he started advertising for band members, and after many tryouts and line-up changes his dream became reality when he finally had a band with guys who could work together. The line-up that has been rocking for the last four years includes Kash on vocals Ben on guitar, Jesse on bass, and Justin on drums. "I saw an ad at Aaron's Records where I work," recalled Ben. "It said guitar player wanted, influences Black Flag etc., like all of my favorite bands so of course I was going to respond to it." "It was weird that it worked out for him," Jesse said, "to find people who were into that sound because there isn't that big of a scene of that anywhere. It's hard to find people who are into doing the kind of [80's] hardcore were doing."

After trying out different people, the band came together with the line up they have now. The next step was coming up with a name.

**Kash:** "We had seven or nine songs but we couldn't agree on a name."

**Jesse:** "The band was ready to blow up over not having a fucking name."

**Ben:** "Jesse came up with Concentration Cramp and California Reich. Jesse has a fascination with silly neo nazi names, and he's Jewish."

**Jesse:** "Half! Half Jewish."

When asked why they chose the name Bad Reaction, they all answered simultaneously "Why not!?"

"The smallest problem we could find

with Bad Reaction," Ben said, "is that it's similar to Bad Religion." However, that is not much of a problem since the name comparison fits in well with the bands historically 80's hardcore musical style.

They have been the opening act for older bands like Channel 3, DI, and Youth Brigade, but BR definitely poses a unique sound. It is difficult to categorize them and therefore find bills on which to play with newer bands. They consequently fall victim to punk rock and music industry politics, where depending on your style, punks will decide if they like you, and labels will choose ways to market you. The band plays fast punk rock with breakdowns, which today encompasses two different genres of underground music, punk and hardcore.

**Kash:** "Were too punk for hardcore kids and too hardcore for punk kids, and that's stupid."

**Ben:** "I think your average hardcore kid is super narrow-minded when thinking about [music]. A lot of kids don't consider us a hardcore band. [They] want a certain sound, a certain type of breakdown. They're so spoon fed by this generic hardcore music that's out now that they won't know how to react because we're a little different sounding. But of course we are emulating the bands that existed before hardcore and punk were too different things."

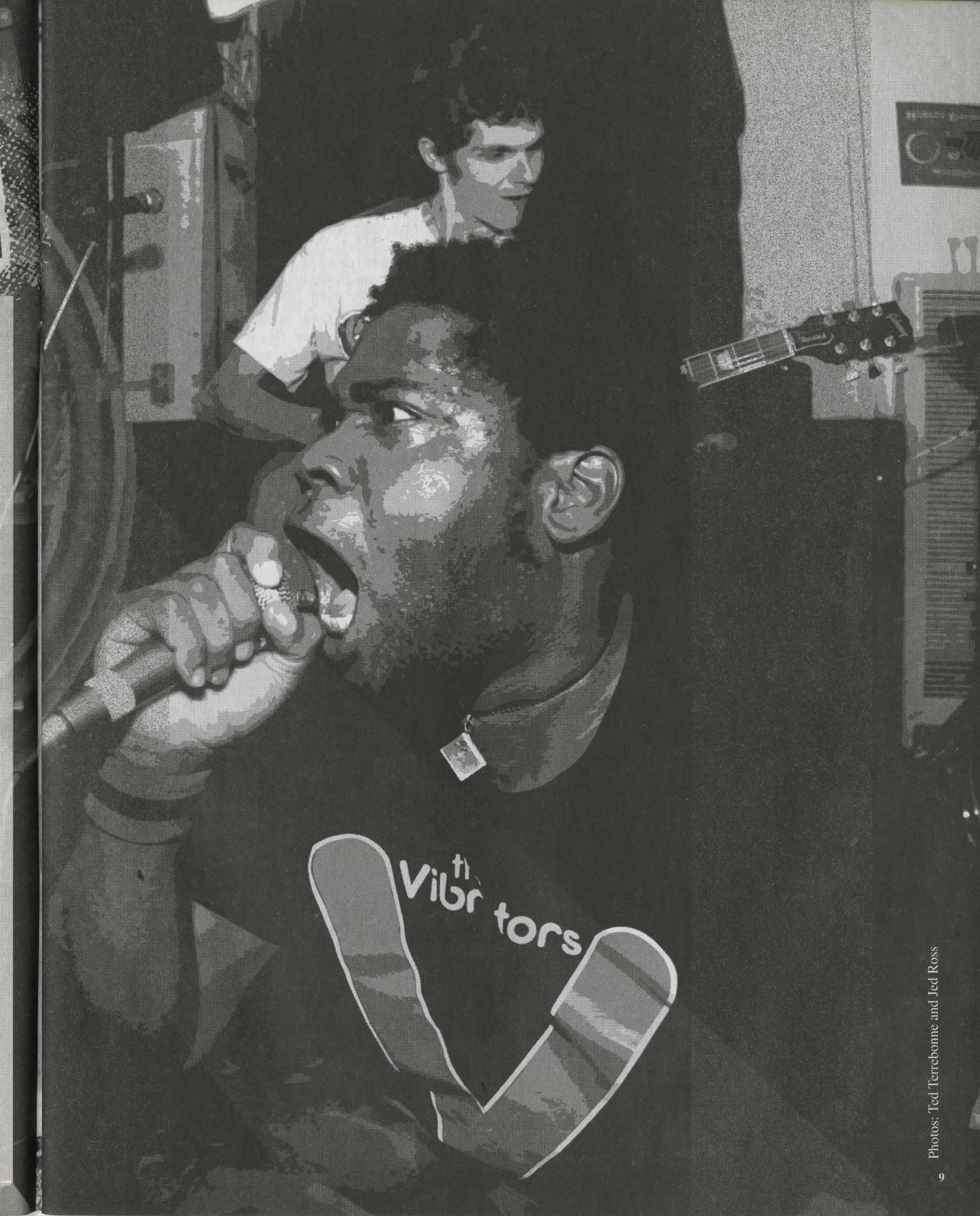
**Kash:** "We don't fall into one certain crowd, and honestly that's the way I want it to be. I don't want to be in one certain sect of a music scene, if people like us people like us."

**Jesse:** Some of the bands we play with are not necessarily of the same style but they're totally cool guys and sometimes it works out.

**Ben:** "The most important thing is to play the music that you would listen to yourself."

However, the band's musical style, which has made it difficult in finding a niche in the scene, is only part of the enigma that is Bad Reaction. Their live show is what completes the package and makes them one of the most talented and intriguing performers today.

Kash is one of the most charismatic and captivating front men around. He is either jumping around the stage or leaning over the monitors with the microphone to let the crowd sing along with



Photos: Ted Terrebonne and Ted Ross

one of their more popular songs like *Gatorade*, or their cover of Bodycount's *Cop Killer*. He also likes to jump into the pit which has resulted in many chipped teeth, flop around on the stage like a fish out of water, or scream in your face. His performance seems to entrance the audience while at the same time inviting them to become apart of the spectacle. But here's a warning for the few who are either too cool or afraid to join in. Kash *will* find you and put you in the spotlight.

**Jesse:** "My favorite thing that Kash does is when people are standing there looking too cool, he drops the mic and stands behind them and starts nodding his head like 'yeah bro what's up'. Then they usually look over their shoulder like what the fuck!?! That always cracks me up."

**Kash:** "Yeah I don't think I told you guys this [looking at Ben and Jesse]. There was this one guy when we played in San Francisco that I walked up to. He was sitting at the table all leaning back and drinking a beer, and he nodded his head to me when I walked by. So I dropped the mic and whispered in his ear jokingly, 'I'm going to kill you after the show.' It was so awesome. [Jesse and Ben start laughing]

**Jesse:** [still laughing] "Why didn't you tell us this?"

**Ben:** "Don't do that to any girls because the cops will show up."

**Jesse:** [smiling] "Kash is a good front man. Especially in L.A. where people are so much slower to get into bands and so undemonstrative about whether they like you or not. At least if the crowd is totally sedate you can watch Kash geek out on stage and still have fun."

However their personal individuality and stage presence in a scene of ironic conformity is causing some companies to shy away. "One of the record companies that was sort of checking us out complained that we act like normal guys," Kash said. "We are normal guys. We're not going to come up with a routine like some bands." Ben added, "That stupid image shit really works for some bands, but it's not us."

Kash summed it up by saying, "All my favorite bands look

like normal guys, like the Circle Jerks, and if you look at minor threat they wore shorts and t-shirts. Hell, I'm wearing shorts right now."

Despite having trouble finding a niche in the scene, B.R. does have a loyal following and these groups of kids are present at almost all of their shows. They have also recently been getting much respect from older punk icons, \*Warning: Watch out for dropped names.\* Guys like Keith Morris, Steve Soto, Derrick O'Brien, the Stern brothers and Greg Hetson, who a few months ago took the stage with the band at the Knitting Factory to cover the Bad Religion song, *Frogger*.

A few record labels have also begun expressing interest in releasing the band's first full-length record. They already have an EP out (which you can get at their shows or by visiting [badreaction.com](http://badreaction.com)), and a few demos floating around, but the new material that they are recording for the LP surpasses the old stuff and exhibits the band's growth in constructing more complex songs.

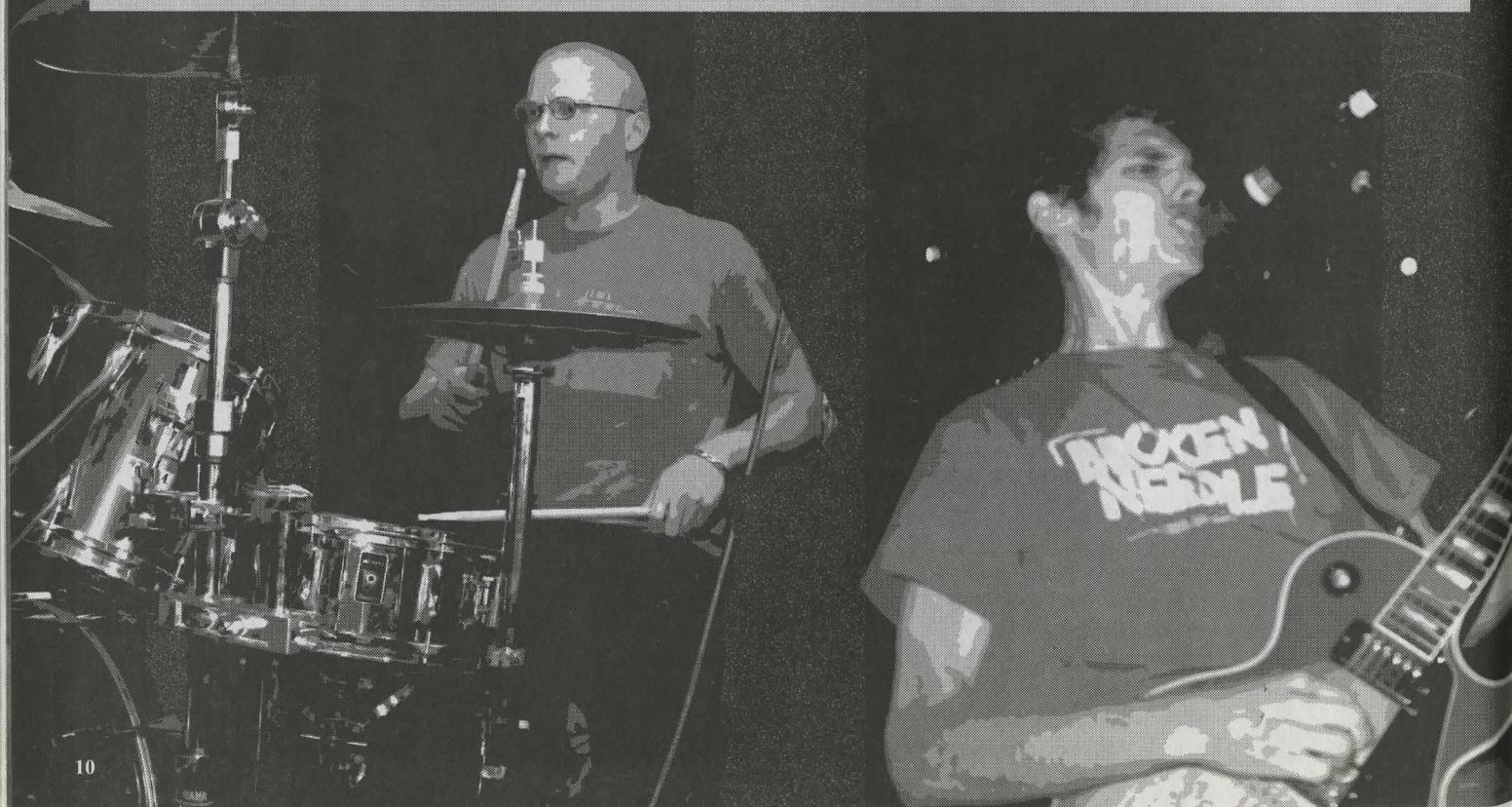
**Kash:** "I think [Jesse] said it really well when [he] said 'before songs were turning themselves out and were really easy to write.' Now we are at a point where we can probably make a song out of anything so we'll take a while .....wait, what am I saying?"

**Jesse:** "I don't know, you're kinda rambling on....I think we're trying to craft the songs a little bit more, and that might sound a little lame, but you don't think Bad Brains did that?"

The guys are hopping that the release of their first album will open more doors for them regarding the scene and the industry. In anticipation, Kash recently bought and fixed up a van so they can tour. They are excited about being a part of the Old Skars and Upstarts tour next year, and they plan on visiting Japan next spring.

"We're going to do our best, put as much as we can into it and give it our all," Jesse said. "Hopefully people can dig what we're doing and if they can't fuck 'em."

By Jason Stabile



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w/ Bang Sugar Bang and So Unloved

10/26/05 - Peabodys - Cleveland, OH

10/27/05 - Alvin's - Detroit, MI

10/28/05 - Wheaton Grand Theatre - Wheaton, IL

w/ Bang Sugar Bang, So Unloved and The Diffs

10/31/05 - The Venue - Boise, ID

11/01/05 - El Corazon (Formerly Graceland) - Seattle, WA

11/03/05 - The Pound SF - San Francisco, CA

11/04/05 - The Boardwalk - Orangevale, CA

11/05/05 - New Oasis - Sparks, NV

11/06/05 - House of Blues - Anaheim, CA

11/07/05 - The Venue of Scottsdale, Scottsdale, AZ

11/09/05 - The Grand Palace, El Cajon, CA

**TOUR DATES**

Nov 3rd @ House of Rock-n-Roll - El Paso, TX  
Nov 4th @ The Red Blood Club - Dallas, TX  
Nov 5th @ The Green Door - Oklahoma City, OK  
Nov 6th @ Vinos - Little Rock, AR  
Nov 8th @ Big Daddy's - Tallahassee, FL  
Nov 9th @ The Backbooth - Orlando, FL  
Nov 10th @ Thee Imperial - Jacksonville, FL  
Nov 11th @ Swayzes - Marietta, GA  
Nov 12th @ The Social - Myrtle Beach, SC  
Nov 13th @ The Milestone - Charlotte, NC  
Nov 14th @ Soapbox Laundrolounge - Willmington, NC  
Nov 15th @ The Sidebar Tavern - Baltimore, MD  
Nov 16th @ The Continental - New York City, NY  
Nov 17th @ The Pontiac Grille - Philadelphia, PA  
Nov 18th @ Regeneration Records, Boston, MA  
Nov 19th @ Mohawk Place - Buffalo, NY  
Nov 20th @ Ten Bells - Grand Rapids, MI  
Nov 21st @ Pirate's Cove - Cleveland, OH  
Nov 22nd @ Alvin's - Detroit, MI  
Nov 23rd @ Creepy Crawl - St. Louis, MO  
Nov 26th @ Hangouts - Wheeling, IL  
Nov 27th @ Triple Rock - Minneapolis, MN  
Nov 28th @ DJ's Pizza - Bismarck, ND  
Dec 1st @ Bluebird Theater - Denver, CO  
Dec 2nd @ LoFi Cafe - Salt Lake City, UT  
Dec 3rd @ Imparts - Boise, ID  
Dec 4th @ Hell's Kitchen - Tacoma, WA  
Dec 10th @ Showcase Theatre - Corona CA

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# THIEVES LIKE US

Story By: Crystal Lafata

Life is full of uncertainties and sometimes you have to leave things up to fate. The important thing is to always have a backup plan. Good thing Joe Steinbrick from F-minus had a plan when he felt the band wasn't evolving anymore. Along with Erica Daking, he opted out and started something new. While playing with F-minus, Joe wrote a bunch of his own songs, with the hopes of some day starting his own band. Because he was so preoccupied with other things, Joe never got a chance to do so. Then, another of life's uncertainties broke in and F-minus was in trouble. Joe explained that it was not that the band members lost interest; it's just that the drummer couldn't tour anymore and Brad Logan was involved with too many other things. The band

hadn't recorded, nor written anything new since their last album "Wake Up Screaming" was released in 2003. They haven't officially broken up, nor have Joe and Erica officially quit the band. "Brad might still continue to do it in a different form but we (Erica and I) didn't quit, we just decided we weren't going to do it anymore," Joe explained. When they still played in F-minus Joe introduced Erica to some of the songs he'd been working on for a few years and she liked them. They decided to start a new band, Thieves Like Us, but only after they finished up some F-minus tours that had been booked earlier.

With the F-minus tour over, Joe and Erica started playing the songs together and practicing them. Joe says

he really liked Erica's voice and that she wanted to do something less hardcore and more rock oriented. They got familiar with the songs while rehearsing in Adam Zuckert's practice space. He played the drums while Erica and Joe switched off instruments, practicing for about a year until their first gig. For the first gig together TLU recruited their friend Jason Black from Hot Water Music to play bass. The show was a success and TLU felt secure with their songs, band and decisions. That security was soon jolted when an old friend and former roommate, Matt Skiba of

Alkaline Trio, asked

Joe and his band to open for them on the tour for the Crimson album.

needed one more piece of the puzzle. That puzzle piece came in the form of ex-Rise Against bass player Todd Mahoney who was merely coming by L.A. just to visit. TLU took to the stage with their new lineup on the tour with Alkaline Trio and Rufio for two weeks in June and July. "It was cool of them to take us along because we had only played one show before that and then next was a sold out show in Minneapolis for over 3,000 people," Joe said. One would think that preparing for the tour would be difficult when you have all the band members split up by different time zones. Two were in Los Angeles, one in Richmond and the other in Chicago. Rehearsals had consisted of emails and downloading songs to practice all alone, pretty boring. Everyone was familiar with the songs by the time the tour started but they never actually rehearsed all together until a few days before the first show. They all came together for what you'd think would be a nerve-racking experience. Joe explained that it was an interesting time but not as hectic as one might think. "It was just kinda fun to see if we could do it, to see if we could pull it together

very quickly and it all worked out just fine." The

first show went off well, as did the rest of the tour. Joe said the tour was fun but

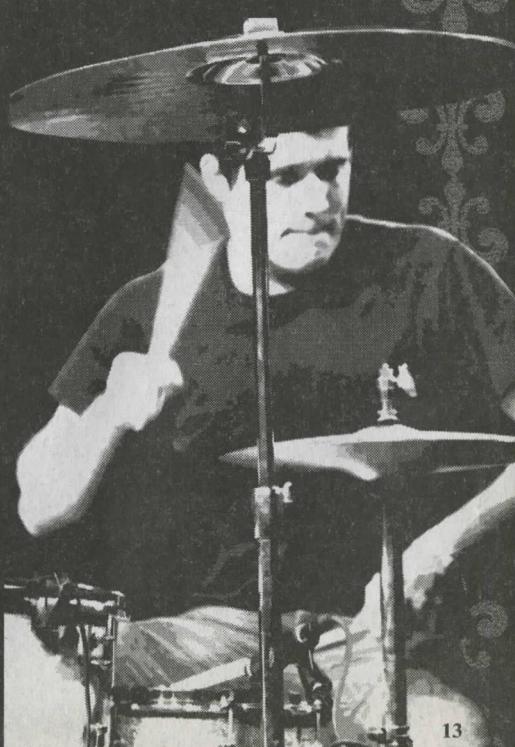
the best part was getting to

feel out the audience with some of the new songs. With a lot of the material being written nearly five years ago, some of it was not what the band was going for anymore. Joe said that playing the songs live helped them realize what they could actually accomplish together and helped find their sound. "Songs come together so much better after you play them live for awhile, even after you record a song, you're never going to play it the same live." As far as the audience response goes, Joe says people have been a "little head scratchy about it at first" but have generally been supportive, even though they sound nothing like F-minus. He said he's been told they have more energy and rawness to them live. Joe explained that when playing live they really let loose of all their inhibitions. Their set up might seem a little awkward to some at first because they avoid the whole frontman vibe, having Erica off to the side and Todd standing front and center. It's not something people are used to seeing. "It's more of a sonic thing . . . I think Erica

is more comfortable there but that could change at any given time." Don't stray away from TLU just because of the female singer. Joe assures me that her voice is as strong and cool sounding as Brody Dalle and Courtney Love, minus the sleaze factor. There won't be any shouting girly whines heard coming from Erica's mouth. The name Thieves Like Us derives from the title of a New Order song. To Joe, it sounded like such a perfect band name that he didn't care about the fact it was already taken as a song title. "The funny thing is that people often think we're gonna sound like New Order and we don't at all.

After touring for two weeks, TLU settled in to write non-stop and practice together in the same place. As of October, all four members, originally from the East coast, will rest their heads under the same roof in a house in Los Angeles.

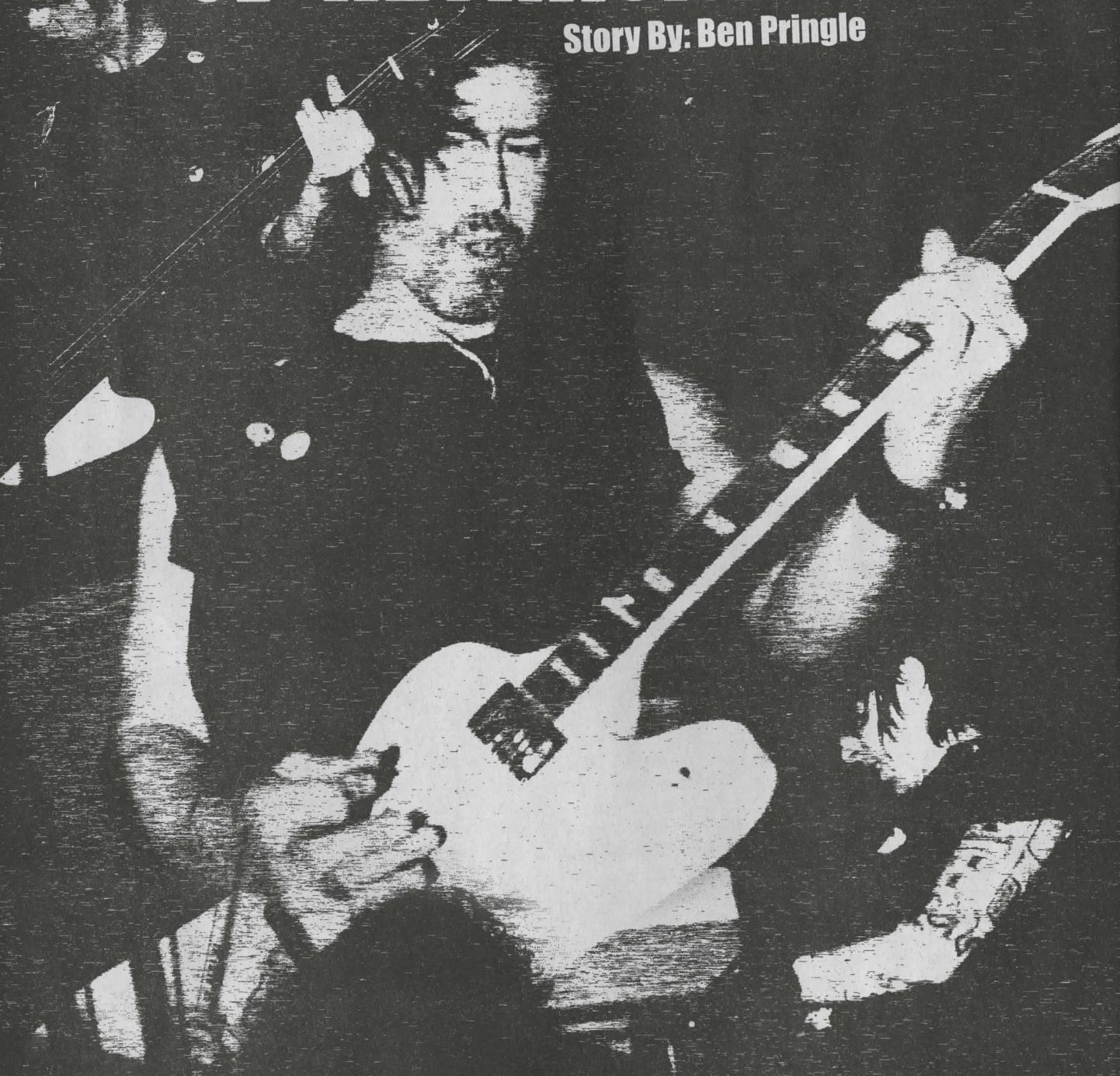
Three demo tracks have already been recorded but they plan to record seven more in October and have hopes to be in the studio by early next year with producer Ben Lovitt. The members currently all have side projects or hobbies that also take up their free time. Joe is in another band with Matt Skiba called The G.O.D., Erica and Cornbread are both into graphic design and Todd likes making video projects for the band. They all use their skilled hobbies for band use in one way or another. Erica also has a woman's clothing line based on Joe's Boston Terrier, Mighty. You can see her designs at [www.all-mighty.net](http://www.all-mighty.net). Check out TLU on [myspace.com](http://myspace.com) or at [www.theiveslikeus.net](http://www.theiveslikeus.net).



Things were turned upside-down when Joe had to scramble to find a permanent line up for the band. Jason and Adam were only helping out and having fun for the time being. "I thought it was a great opportunity," Joe said. He immediately called up his friend and "one of the best drummers", Cornbread Compton. He had been playing with Engine Down but fortunately for Joe, they just finished up their final tour. He had his permanent drummer. "Getting Cornbread added a whole new element to things...he's a maniac." With Cornbread and Joe writing most of the music for the band, they still

# LORDS OF ALTAMONT

Story By: Ben Pringle



## The Lords Show No Mercy

*"You ride a bike and you're guilty. I wear beads and I'm guilty. But what I'm talking about with you guys is something more than that. Like what about Altamont? There was a guy killed there..."*

Blistering. Bad ass. Black boots and Black jackets with custom patches on their backs. The Lords of Altamont came out on stage at The Scene Bar in Glendale, and if you couldn't tell you were about to get your ass kicked from the very beginning you must have been sleeping. Yeah, you could have easily fallen asleep from the half-assed bands that phoned it in before them. They were mildly amusing and played ok, but did they put on a kick ass show that blew the roof off this shitty little dive bar? No, no they didn't. They did not bring the rock like The Lords were about to. Converting the stage into their own sacred rock sanctuary, bathed in red light with the liquid light show flowing, suddenly it felt like *something* was going to happen. And it did. Immediately there was an attitude, there was style; there was balls-out rocking that would make your momma cry. Almost immediately singer Jake Cavaliere was standing atop his Farfisa keyboard, snarling into the microphone with his big black sunglasses on and a swagger that brought the rock. Yeah, it was on.

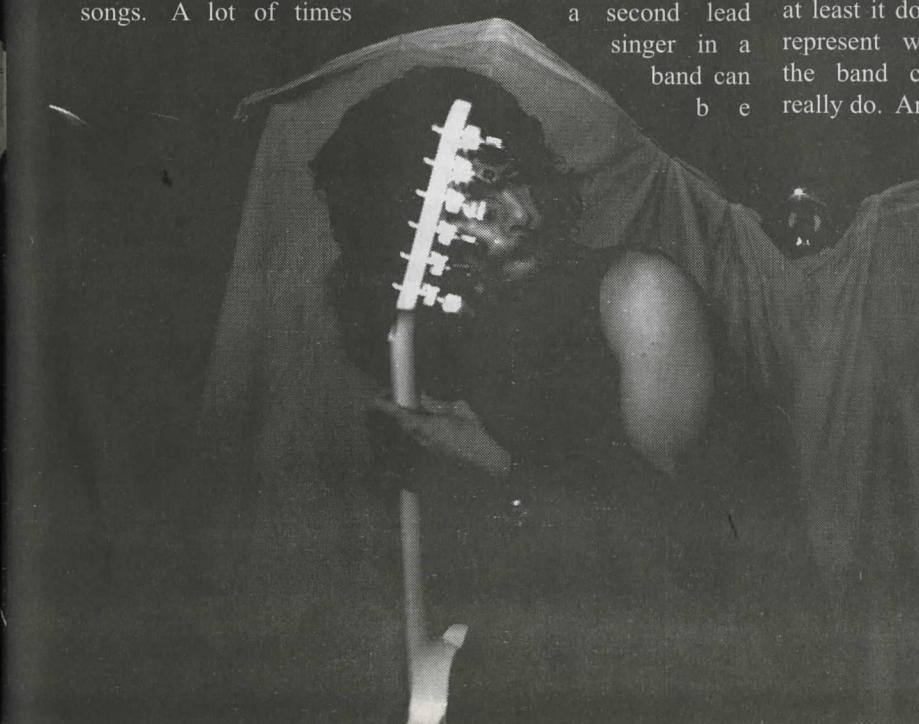
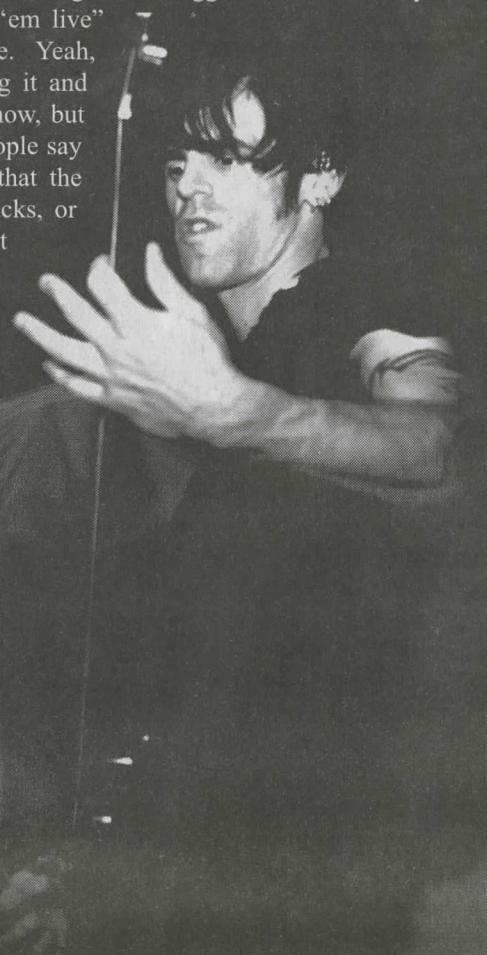
The great thing about tonight was that this was not just Jake's show at all. Sure most people watching a band will naturally gravitate to the guy in the middle of the stage with the microphone, and Jake really did command the space, but in *this* motorcycle gang everyone kicked it up from the beginning to the end and put on a show that was brilliant and commanding: the bass and drum pistons fired perfectly giving the guitars ample energy to assault you from both ends of the stage, while Jake's Farfisa screamed like fast wheels grabbing the pavement. And as soon as you got used to the roles everyone played on stage, Dave James, who had been heretofore solely part of the guitar assault, took to the mic and gave Mister Black-Sunglasses-And-Farfisa a run for his money on the lead vocals for a few songs. A lot of times

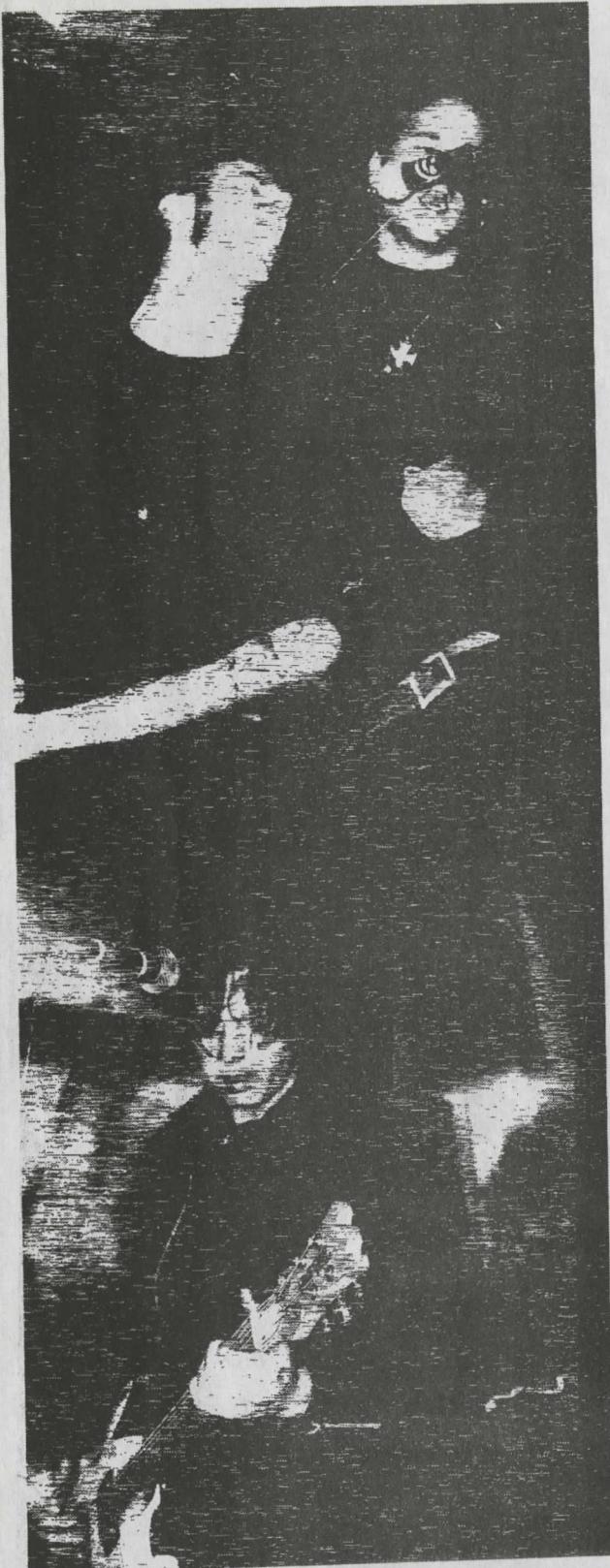
a second lead  
singer in a  
band can  
be

distracting and/or disappointing, but in this case Dave was neither. Remember that this is a gang; everyone's always got everyone else's back; everyone pulls their own weight. Dave's voice and songs kicked ass every bit as much as the rest of the set and really solidified my growing suspicion that every one of these guys meant business.

Yes, if you haven't experienced them yet, nor gotten the references I'm hitting you with, the Lords of Altamont play motorcycle rock, garage rock, retro biker rock, or whatever the kids are calling it these days. But who cares what kind of box I try to put it in. It's apocalyptic and thunderous, and tonight they showed everyone here who was boss. It was all too apparent how much better The Lords were than the other bands sharing the bill when the band that had to follow them (poor bastards!) got up and completely underwhelmed the room with their so-so whatever-the-hell-they-were-playing set (and they were the out-of-town TOURING outfit!). Yes this well-oiled version of the Lords, tonight including original founding member Johnny DeVilla filling in for Shawn Medina on guitar, sprang no leaks, changed gears seamlessly, and most importantly kept the engine revved at top speeds for the whole show. I had never seen them before with any other line-up, but with this one positioned to take the show to Europe later in the year, this version of the band suits me just fine.

But you know I'm not telling you anything new. Everyone that writes about the Lords think they're a great live band. I'm just another newly converted disciple who's gonna talk your ear off at the bar next time you inadvertently happen to sit next to me. The thing that really bugs me though is that this band often gets tagged with that "you've really gotta see 'em live" line all the time. Yeah, they totally bring it and put on a great show, but usually when people say that they mean that the band's record sucks, or at least it doesn't represent what the band can really do. And





# THE LORDS OF ALTAMONT

that's such a bummer, cause it always seems like some kind of lame apology that no one really wants to hear about a band. Probably the only comment worse than that to my mind is the "man, you guys were tight!" line, which usually means there was really nothing better to say about them. The point of this little rant is that whatever you believe of what I have to say to you today, definitely believe that this newest version of the Lords are really a great band, but also know that the new record, called "Lords Have Mercy," does not take mercy on your soul, or your ears, or your stereo system for that matter. It's just as bombastic and cut-to-the-chase as their live show, with blistering guitar tones, thunderous rhythm section bombastity, kick ass Hammond organ with that Leslie speaker screaming at different speeds just in the right spots, and all the vibe and attitude you get from being in the same room as these guys. It's clear that they know the importance of both a great live show and a great record to go home with afterwards. I know, because I was fortunate enough to get an advance copy of this here new record. Set to drop first in Europe and Australia in late October on Fargo Records, "Lords Have Mercy" will then be out domestically on Gearhead Records soon after. And since their first record called "To Hell With The Lords Of Altamont" came out way back in 2002, it's about damn time we get something new to put through our starving stereo speakers at home. First of all like any good rock n roll record does, "Lords Have Mercy" sounds best turned up loud. Why people even attempt to listen to albums at a "comfortable" volume is beyond me. Crank this one up so your neighbors can hear it too, and then you'll really hear these songs in the environment intended. So once I got my walls shaking and my floor thumping, the bombastic rave-ups like "Live Fast/Die Young," "Cyclone," and "Let's Burn" really stood out as monster tracks. And as much as the blistering guitars gave these songs the real garage attitude they needed, the coolest part for me was the use of various keyboards all over the record. Hammond organ screaming, Mellotron imitating moody strings and spooky voices, and the token Fafisa parts really gave these songs more character than the typical guitar/bass/drums set up. Ok, so sue me; I'm a sucker for real Hammond organ with a Leslie cranked all the way up, but hey, you listen to this album and then try to tell me those Hammond parts don't add any urgency to the vibe. "She Cried," the first single that Fargo will put out in Europe, is a real blazer that sounds like a hopped up Modern Lovers tune with a great distorted vocal and big Mellotron parts that actually bring some great melodic accents to the album. But hands down the best song on the album is "Action," a slow burner with tons of vibe and attitude. The opening fuzzed-out, reverby guitar is the classic opening for a garage rock anthem, and once the rest of the band comes in they swagger like the best of them. With drums bashing away, tremolo guitar, and probably one of Jake's better vocal deliveries, the song has a really cool Television vibe, minus all the incessant guitar solo noodling of Richard Lloyd and Tom Verlaine, and plus a ton of that signature Altamont organ grind. All things equal (and subjective) this song is *the* single; but if "She Cried" is already slated for first single status, then "Action" should definitely be the second.

Ladies and Gentleman, you have been warned! The album comes out in Europe at the end of this month, and it will be hitting our shores soon after, but why wait for the domestic release. If I were you I'd find this album on the internet ([www.fargostore.com](http://www.fargostore.com)) and pay the crazy import price for this one, cause it's definitely worth it. After talking to the band, I found out that they may be so busy in Europe in the next year that you may have a hard time



# D I E Y O U N G



Sometimes you get introduced to bands by way of friends and apprehension sets in because you want to like them no matter what they sound like on the basis that they are good people rather than what they sound like. I have to admit, my first introduction to Die Young was met with some apprehension. Their first cd titled "One One One One" didn't grab me initially but held interest. It was raw, hard metal driven punk that kind of scared me, reminiscent of the way that the Dark Crystal freaked me out when I was four years old. Odd comparison I admit.

Good thing I don't trust first impressions. The second effort titled "Return to Mars" not only grabbed my balls and tickled my taint, but the experience was so quick it left me blue testies. I returned to the first cd, and back to the new one. Lyrically, musically and aesthetically Die Young are a punk rock band not involved with the cooption of the term. This band is not economically viable. They don't have record labels knocking down their doors. They aren't the next big thing in L.A., but they are a very good band who work hard and play abrasive,

angry, and iconoclastically.

Die Young are from the San Fernando Valley and have been around for a few years. Christ Gultch/ vox is a Burbankian, Spider Spills/ guitar hails from Symar, John Wayne Gretzky lives in Hollywood and smashes skins, Virus Klamenza is from Maine and now lives in Hollywood, and bass master general Rubella Friendly resides in San Diego. This line up, which has been together for about a year, have cultivated their collective sound into a fierce tight ball of misanthropic sound waves. I opted

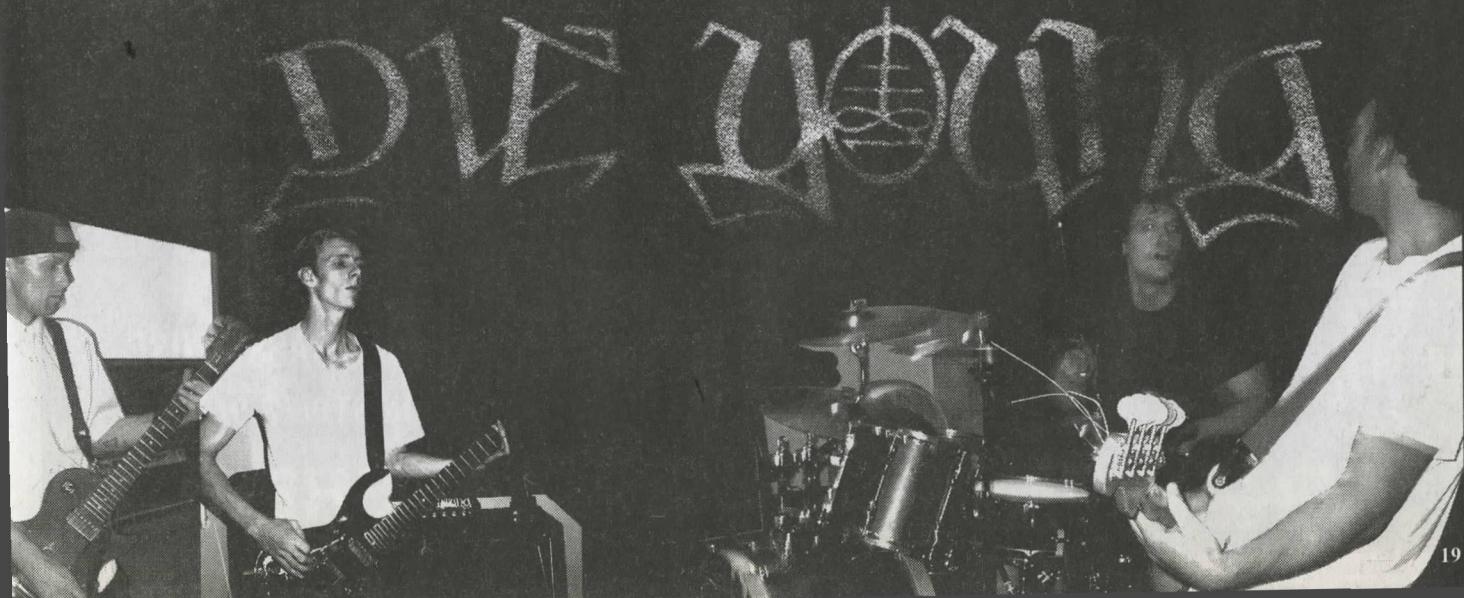
for a comparison of Rudimentary Peni meets Slayer, to which the band approved. "We fucking love Peni", agrees Christ, "Peni are fucking God!" Aside from the bands sound, Die Young have beef. Beef with religion, beef with the way life is valued by society, and beef with full beers. In songs like *Catholic Guilt*, and *Sheer Indulgence*, Die Young convey beliefs and make accusations against the Church and State. Christ (whose real name is Chris, but I promised to use their 'punk' names) admits "*Catholic Guilt* is all about the kiddie raper priest who got away with for years. It's a definite cop policy. Cops don't rat on each other, and priests aren't gonna rat each other out." The subject of *Sheer Indulgence* came up, and Christ explained "Rubella Friendly gave me the idea of that song because he's a hedonist and we were talking about the difference between hedonism and paganism and Satanism and it all runs in between the same lines. *Sheer indulgence* is about enjoying life, set your self free. Do what you want." It also goes with the name of the band, which the band adopted when a friend of Christ's band broke up. Christ told his friend he'd like to start a band with the same name. "When do you have the most fun?" Chris asked rhetorically, "when your young, not when your swaggerin around all pepto-dismal and Geritoled out. Keep it young, be true to yourself."

It was a great conversation to conduct in a back alley in the shadows of the moonlight, huddling over a car hood, talking into a microphone with the sounds of beer cans cracking and lighters flickering. Earlier, before the interview, I watched Die Young slam out the jams in the rehearsal studio that was providing refuge to our back alley powwow. I bared witness to the heaviness of Die Young's rhythmic driven punk angered

compositions. I chatted with Rubella Friendly during a brief smoke break, as he had to leave promptly when the studio rental time expired to drive back from L.A. home to San Diego. He's a scientist, degree and all, and damn good bass player. He filled me in about this thing  the Nordic symbol that means brimstone from the Nine Satanic Statements of the Satanic Bible, very pro hedonist and pro pagan shit. It also means destroy your enemies. But don't let me miss represent the members of Die Young here, though. They aren't a Satan worshiping troop. Christ and Rubella adopted many ideas from the satanic bible and other pagan traditions, which predates Christianity as well as keeps them in business. I checked out these Nine Satanic and Statements and it took me back to my Catholic grammar school day of hypocrisy, lies, and boredom. Ah, the perfect fuel for rock and roll!

Now fast forward to the interview in the alley where Die Young (minus Rubella) myself and Christ's wife (punk names, I promised!) Ginger Vitus celebrated the end of the day with beers and jibber jabber. The Beatles came up, and Spider brandished the Beatles logo tattoo on his left inner bicep. We talked about the difficulties of booking shows in L.A.; the lack of all ages venues for underground diy acts, the strain of keeping a day job while doing the band thing, why our president sucks so much, and religion. Christ ranted about how "religion is created to control people. Especially now and today, with our current president and everyone else throwing the 'christian' thing to secure votes and get in office. It just sucks." The conversation took a turn for the not so controversial; sports. When I asked John Wayne Gretzky about the Padres Ginger had to make a reference about the Dodgers

and how they're poop. Then someone mentioned Doug Flootie's name and we all laughed. Flootie. Spider made sure I wasn't going to print that he robbed bag ladies for a living.. I assured him I wouldn't and that I had a feeling he was joking. We discussed the band's latest recording "Mars Returns", that it was recorded by Yury Anisonyan at Optimum Sound where they recorded their first cd. The packaging spares all expenses but includes all the lyrics and liner notes on one side of the folded 15 x 10" sleeve and an awesome poster on the other. The ep sounds huge and bass heavy thick driving beats that adrenalize the shit out of each song. The guitars do some weird metal wailing layered well within rhythm crunched accompaniments. I highly recommend to fans of Crass, Rudimentary Peni, and all things hard heavy and atheist. You can find Die Young at chrisgulch.tripod.com, or at myspace. Or, go see them live at the Nothing Yet cd release party on October 8<sup>th</sup> at Weber's in Reseda. Wear your diapers so won't have to go to the bathroom and miss a beat.



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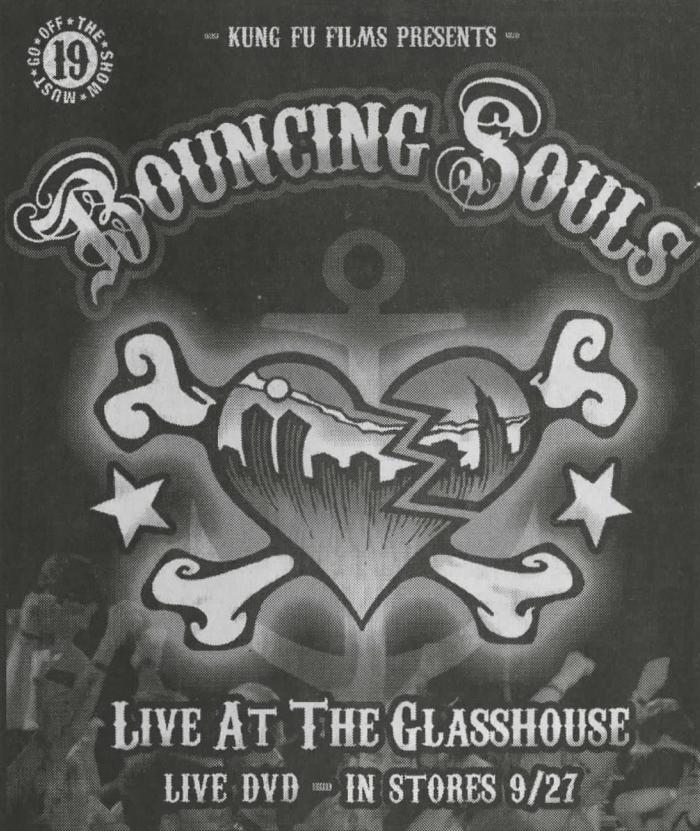
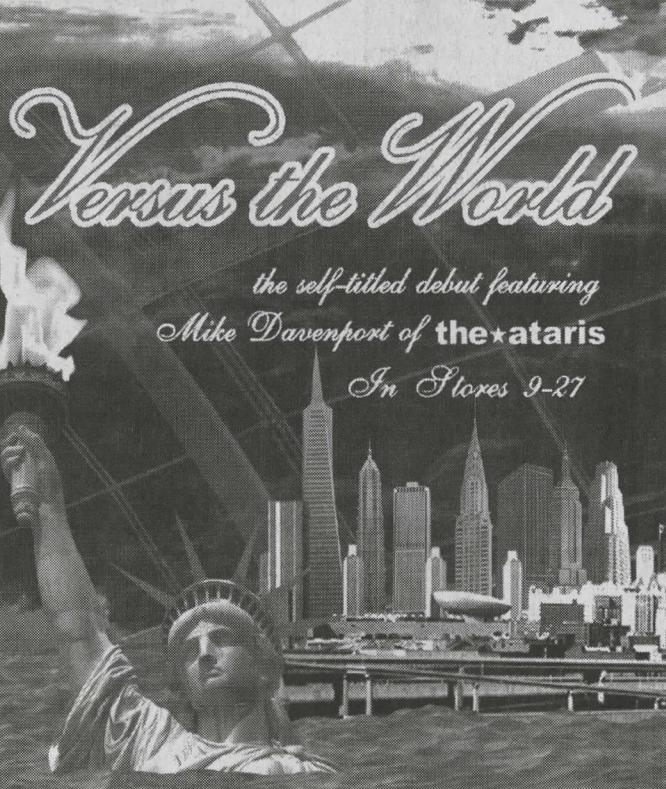
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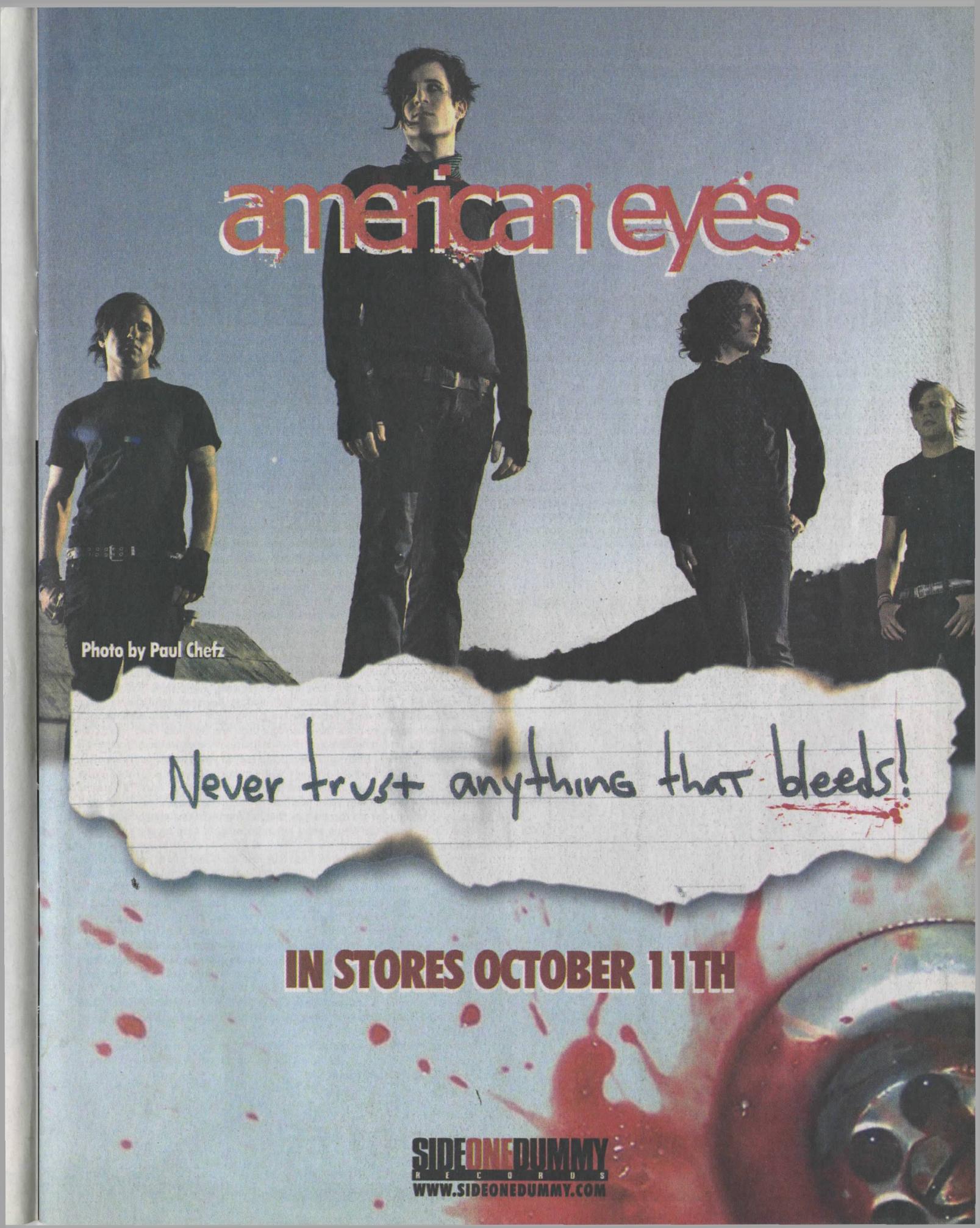
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# Fat Tour 2005

## Hitting ALL 50 States

### AGAINST ME! EPOXIES THE SOVIETTES SMOKE OR FIRE

Have you seen the commercial? Seriously, there's a commercial. On FUSE TV, an ad is being aired telling the cable-receiving populous (those of us who still live with our parents that is) to attend the upcoming Fat Tour featuring Against Me!, The Epoxies, Smoke or Fire and the Soviettes. Think about that. Good music being advertised on television. Bands that deserve to be promoted are finally being promoted. Brings a tear to my eye, and it damn well better bring one to yours too. The Fat Tour 2005 kicks off this month and promises to visit all 50 states, with new dates being added as this goes to print. They even got a few shows lined up in Canada, eh.

After talking to the three bands that aren't Against Me! (they were on the cover of last month's issue of Big Wheel), I have come to the decision that everyone needs to go. I know, they aren't punk enough because they've signed over their souls to Fat Wreck Chords. Well if you seriously believe that, then you don't deserve to attend what I can promise will be a slew of shows not soon forgotten.

Hey, I'm not done yet, read about the bands....

#### The Epoxies

So I got a copy of Teen magazine for my birthday this year, because my friends

and I are sick bastards who enjoy laughing at the idiocy of prepubescent girls, and there's a chart inside titled "Boys Decoded." Across the top are the different types of boys, and down the side are questions. There is the "supersensitive" boy, who's most embarrassed about the "time he made his little sister cry." There's the "hip-hop hottie" whose annoying habit is "calling you his boo." There's the "Bad Boy" who would make a good boyfriend because "you could use him to make your parents mad." But my favorite was- I hope you're ready- Glam Guy. His pick up line is "I love your Marc Jacobs bag!" and his favorite accessory is hair gel. In the picture he is wearing a little summer scarf. This guy is obviously not into girls. And he is obviously not going to be into the Epoxies either. They might be punk-new-wave-new-punk, or whatever the cool kids are calling it these days, but they're more like punk rock with a synth. Hailing from the barren lands of Portland, Oregon, the band is made up of five members, all with stage names better than those of porn stars. Fritz M. Static plays the synth and vocals, Shock Diode on bass and vocals, Ray Cathode on drums, Viz Spectrum plays guitar, and Roxy Epoxy is lead vocals. Their name was originally the Adhesives, but there was another band not too far away that had gotten to the name first. The suggestion to use Roxy's last name came up and it stuck. "It looks good on fliers, with the big X," Roxy said. "It looks a hell of a lot better than Adhesives." Starting out in 2000, they've already done some extensive touring, visiting the likes of Japan and Europe, as well as crossing this large land of ours several times over. Now they're setting off again on the Fat Tour 2005. If you haven't seen them yet, their live show has got a bit going on. "We put a lot into our stage show, the best we can," Roxy said. "We're pretty low budget, very DIY, but we set up lights and we'll sing all night and we make sure we put our all into it every time we go out there." She also adds that it's a little faster and more punk than the recordings are. So Glam Guy, you're not gonna like this, it isn't the Bravery. If you're like everyone else alive, you have a copy of Rock Against Bush vol.1 (and perhaps even vol. 2 to feel really special), which really put the Epoxies out there with the track "Need More Time." After that they've become a recognizable name in this community of ours. "It's insane how many people say they have heard of us from that," says Roxy. I admit it, even I was introduced to them through that Fat compil'ation, but who said that's a bad thing. That's the whole point behind comps, in case no one's told you. Even though the band's name is out there and they're about to embark on one of the best tours this fall, they aren't sell outs just yet. "Contrary to popular belief, even when you get to a certain level where you think you're raking it in, it's not the case," Roxy told me, since she knows what she's talking about. "But it's a once in a lifetime opportunity." She's even took the time to say something to you. Yeah, you. She says "thank you," to everyone, everywhere, for giving a shit about the Epoxies. Which, if you're reading this, includes you. The Epoxies first Fat Wreck full length, *Stop The Future*, is out now, as well as an older seven inch put out by Dirthap Records. You can also check out their coolness at [www.theepoxies.com](http://www.theepoxies.com). And if you're a Myspace whore (because really, these days, who isn't?) you can be their friend at [www.myspace.com/epoxies](http://www.myspace.com/epoxies). You could even leave yet another "Roxy Epoxy is HAWT" comment, letting those cyber kids know that raging hormones and below par spelling skills are all you have to offer a woman.

I don't recommend anyone missing their show, so get your ass out there when they pass through. Well, not unless you ran out of hair gel and lost your summer scarf, Glam Guy.

EPOXIES

### Smoke or Fire

On first listen, you might mistake Smoke or Fire for another band like Avail or Hot Water Music. On second listen, you'll call yourself an idiot for even thinking these guys weren't something original all their own. Straight out of Richmond, Virginia, home to bands like Avail and Strike Anywhere, Smoke or Fire started out in 1998 under the name Jericho. Turns out, some outdated Christian Australian act had the name and demand they change it. So they did, to Jericho RVA. Well the ass hats from down under weren't having that either. Thus, we have Smoke or Fire. Which is personally a much better name, since it doesn't remind me of cocky pro wrestlers on VH1. The band consists of Nick on drums, Jeremy on guitar, Ken playing bass and Joe doing vocals and guitar. They have been tour for quite some time now, and are only briefly resting before they head out again on the Fat Tour 2005. I had the pleasure of speaking with Joe before they left and he had a few things to say about their music video, having a patient wife, not being gay and love affairs with cartoon foxes in medieval dresses.

**Big Wheel:** Your first music video, eh? That's got to be rad.

**Joe:** Its kind of cool, but at the same time you feel so stupid, I mean when we talked about doing one originally I basically thought that I want as little live footage as possible because if I watched a video, I wouldn't want to sit and watch us play live for a song, I'd like to have other stuff going on. But there was so little time to plan everything, and so little time to do it. We only had about five hours to shoot the video so it's 99% live footage. So I basically got there and started drinking whiskey, and the director was like, "What are you doing, it's two in the afternoon." I couldn't think of anything more miserable than jumping around, playing to a recording of our song for six hours straight.

**Big Wheel:** Since you are bound to be swimming in it after this tour, what do you plan to do with all that money?

**Joe:** I plan on buying my wife a huge Christmas present because I just got married a month ago and I came home from my honeymoon Sunday and left the next morning for touring and haven't really been home since. I think kind of being gone for the first five, six months of my marriage, I'm probably going to have to get my wife a pretty big Christmas present.

**Big Wheel:** What's your favorite Disney movie?

**Joe:** Aww, that is easy! Robin Hood.

**Big Wheel:** Why?

**Joe:** I love that movie, I don't know. It's like one of my favorite movies ever. I'm telling you that's- have you seen it?

**Big Wheel:** Of course I've seen it, it was on the Disney channel like 3 days and I sat and watched it.

**Joe:** I did too. I love it. That's my favorite one by far. I'm telling you, like, everybody always talks about who's hotter, Ariel or the girl who was in the, uh, what's the one with the genie?

**Big Wheel:** Princess Jasmine?

**Joe:** Yeah, they'll talk about who's hotter, Ariel or Jasmine but when I was younger I had the hugest crush on the fox in *Robin Hood*. Which is kind of creepy, having a crush on a cartoon fox.

**Big Wheel:** Any gay activity on tour?

**Joe:** Between us? No, no... but I'll tell you what, on this last tour, Gared from Planes Mistaken for Stars, we were in Atlanta and we all ended up crashing in this kid's basement and me and Gared stayed up real late and so when we got down to the basement there was pretty much no room left so we were kind of stuck in this little hallway and I woke up and he was licking my arm. But not like in a sexual way, like he was like a lizard, like he was making this lizard face and licking my arm. So the next morning he didn't remember it at all it was really crazy. He calls me "Tasty" now, that's my nickname.

Their debut album, *Above the City*, is already out. Check out Tasty and the gang and see what they have to offer on their website [www.smokeorfire.com](http://www.smokeorfire.com). And, like the rest of us, they also have a Myspace page at [www.myspace.com/jerichorva](http://www.myspace.com/jerichorva).





### The Soviettes

I broke up with my boyfriend. Seriously, I did. I called him up and let him know that we were going to have to end it because I was in love with someone else. I was in love with the Soviettes. More specifically, I was in love with Annie of the Soviettes. She had the Fargo "Don'tcha know" accent I would die for. He would never be able to bestow upon my ears such a beautiful accent. And her band was better than his. In the Minneapolis winter of 2000, three ladies and one guy, who are more likely members of the political party of, err, partying, starting playing together since they all knew each other from around town. "A lot of people think that we chose to play with other females as a niche like, oh let's have a girl band kind of a thing, but it really was who was around and who wanted to play at the time and we just wanted to play with people that we liked," Annie said. Though the band mostly consists of women, the Soviettes are not by any means a chick band. It turns out the Soviettes aren't communists either. Simply friends coming together, they created a sound that might remind some people of the early 70's punk scene, and might just sound more like a power pop to someone else. Annie plays guitar and sings (and sounds like an angel who fell to earth), Suzy is on bass and vocals, Sturgeon on guitar and vocals, and Danny, with his "wang doodle" (which is exact terminology from the bio) plays drums and sings. They apparently got the band name

# THE SØVIETTES

when Annie was waiting tables. Instead of giving a cash tip, a customer gave her the tip that she should name her band the Soviettes. Danny is also in the band International Robot, and Sturgeon is married to Billy, the guitarist for Dillinger Four. The Soviettes have been around the country a few times, but haven't attempted anything as extensive as hitting every US state and some parts of Canada, which the Fat Tour 2005 plans on doing. "I'm going to try to collect patches from every state if I can find them and put them on my jean jacket, I think it'd be funny," Annie said. I laughed. They've also been seen with many of the Gainesville bands, like Against Me! and the Grabass Charlstons, and many San Pedro bands too. "Every time we go out we end up with Toys that Kill. We always have, like, five to ten shows with those guys. I don't know why, but it's great," said Annie. Even if they aren't from anywhere close to either region, the Soviettes have a Gainesville/San Pedro kind of feel to them. They don't seem like the band you just see at a show one night and forget about. They are more like the kind of band you invite to sleep at your house every time they pass through and stay distant friends with over the years. Like most other punk bands people see on the road, the Soviettes will be gainfully unemployed as they tour, but have not forgotten about their day jobs. Turns out, it isn't dealing drugs, but waitressing and teaching. I'm not lying, Sturgeon is a punk rock math teacher. That's almost an oxymoron. As Annie put it, "Right now we're like, 'Ok, listen, we just need to pay our rents and mortgages, that's all we need. And if we can eat afterwards that would be super awesome too.' I'll feed you Annie. She also made sure to have me mention "Go San Pedro!" Annie, marry me, please.

The Soviettes have three full lengths, aptly titled LP I, LP II, and LP III. They also have a few seven inches you should buy, since everyone knows the tone is better on vinyl. You can check them out at [www.thesoviettes.net](http://www.thesoviettes.net) or see a picture of them frolicking naked in large plants by added them as your friend at [www.myspace.com/thesoviettes](http://www.myspace.com/thesoviettes). I'm not lying. As for the boyfriend, we were back together about 30 seconds after I broke it off. He promised to work on his accent, though.

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# INQUISITION



## STORY: STEVE BROWN

Trying to pin down the fierce charm of a band like Inquisition in 1200 words, ten years after their demise, is like going out on a date with a Nobel Prize winner. It sounds like a good idea at the time, by at the end of the whole thing you're just going to end up standing there looking sheepish and embarrassed, feeling stupid and wondering why the hell you thought you could pull this off. I mean...shit. I sat and talked to Robbie (now of Ann Beretta, formerly the bass player for Inquisition) for nearly an hour, and he didn't have any better answers than I do. And he was fucking *there*, you know? This is a nightmare for a writer. You get an assignment to write about a band that you've only vaguely heard of. You get the album, you do the research, you ask around, and you find out that *you missed out* on something absolutely amazing because you were a dumb high school kid chasing around after Dead Kennedys bootlegs and old Operation Ivy vinyl. First off, a little history for the uninitiated: Inquisition was a band from Richmond, Virginia, that was around from roughly 1991 to 1996. In five years, they put out one self-produced EP; some miscellaneous, homegrown bootleg stuff, and one full-length album. That album, "Revolution, I Think It's Called Inspiration" has been re-mastered and is being re-released by A-F Records. The band split up in 1996, and the

members went on to River City High, Ann Beretta, and Strike Anywhere (named after an Inquisition song). All three bands are incredible, but Strike Anywhere is the only one following in the same sonic footsteps of Inquisition. Now, being in a punk rock band guarantees you absolutely nothing. There are tons of bands, there is no real money to be made, and the best you can hope for is that the band gets enough of a following to sustain itself. Anything beyond that is in the hands of the Fates, and you'd better cross your fingers and hire a slick-ass manager to auction off your souls on eBay if you want to get much further. Or, at the very least, be ready to give up pretty much everything else to chase whatever glory you are hoping for. So how does one react when a band you were in ten years ago, is suddenly being re-mastered, re-issued, and receiving praise from critics and peers alike? "I think it's very cool, I think it's...I don't want to say I'm honored...after we broke up, the first few years, there were always people asking about Inquisition and the record. We never realized...I mean, we toured a lot. It was the early 90s, it was DIY...no Internet, no cell phones. It took years to realize that we had an impact, a cult status. We were kind of amazed by the whole thing, and didn't realize it at the time. The music touching people the way it did...10 years later

when they asked to re-release it, it was kind of an honor. I don't want to sound cheesy, you know? All of us across the board were overwhelmed and very excited. We just never thought anyone would still love it this much." Hearing Robbie's reaction to this re-release, there isn't even the merest hint of entitlement when he talks about the record. I'm sure if someone wanted to re-master an old Stones album, Mick and the gang would just say "Well fuck yes you should do it. And we'll take a larger cut this time around, thank you very much, cheers mate!" There is none of that. This album is something that every one of them, to a man, is still proud of to this day. They still love it. They still listen to it. "This record, I pull it out from time to time and I've always thought it was a really great record. I think not being in the band, I was able to remove myself from it and listen and really enjoy it. On Ann Beretta tours, we would throw it in and listen to it three or four times back to back, and cruise. Not to be arrogant (Russ, the drummer, is also in Ann Beretta), but if this was released today, we feel like it would still stand. At the time it was never in our heads that this would be monumental. If you asked us then if people would be listening to this in 10 years, we would have laughed." So how I can explain this? This was these guys' first band, first tour, and first album.

There was nothing to

explain why or how they would have made something with such incredible influence and staying power. This album could have come out *yesterday*. It's not dated, it's not a time capsule, it's not like pulling out your old Sham 69 records and listening to "how punk used to be". This album still kills, it still pulls you out of your seat, it still makes you want to strap on a guitar and raise one fist in the air and fucking **rock** until you just can't breathe anymore. How did they do it? They have no fucking idea, and neither do I, for that matter. As an armchair musician / music writer, I should have a head full of jargon and nonsense about song structure and archetypes and the "innocence of youth" but that all sounds hollow and rings of bullshit. This album rings of truth. It deserves better than backseat philosophy about what makes an album great. If you are a fan of Strike Anywhere, you will understand and love this album immediately. It is SA's roots, their humble beginnings, back when Thomas and his old band mates piled their gear into a van and played VFW halls and church basements and people's houses and just did it for love of music. If you are not a fan of Strike Anywhere, you fucking well should be. Same goes for Ann Beretta and River City High. Good bands, good people, and they are doing good things for the right reasons. Find

'em, hear 'em, and love 'em. You'll be glad you did. With the re-release, and the renewed interest, maybe we'll get access to all of the band's archives eventually...old video, live bootlegs, flyers,

lyrics, pictures...maybe this re-release will sell well enough that A-F Records will have the impetus to dig into Robbie's boxes and boxes of Inquisition stuff that he just can't throw away, and maybe we'll stand a good chance of getting a better look at the big picture of what this band was, and why they still affect us so much, why they have influenced so many bands; from Hot Water Music to Dashboard Confessional (who used to do Inquisition medleys!?) to New Found Glory to Anti-Flag.

For my part, I can say that I want Robbie's Inquisition bass. I want to hear the bass line for "Pulse" every time I get near it, I want to play it and hear a hundred kids in a 1993 basement, screaming for more. I want to play that instrument, and think about Robbie, grinning ear to ear, and rocking like hell with his friends. Because I'll never get close to that myself. I'm a hack. But I've got this album, and you can have it too, and we can all love it like they do.

And we should. And we will. And some of us already do. Thanks guys.

<http://www.inquisitionrva.com>





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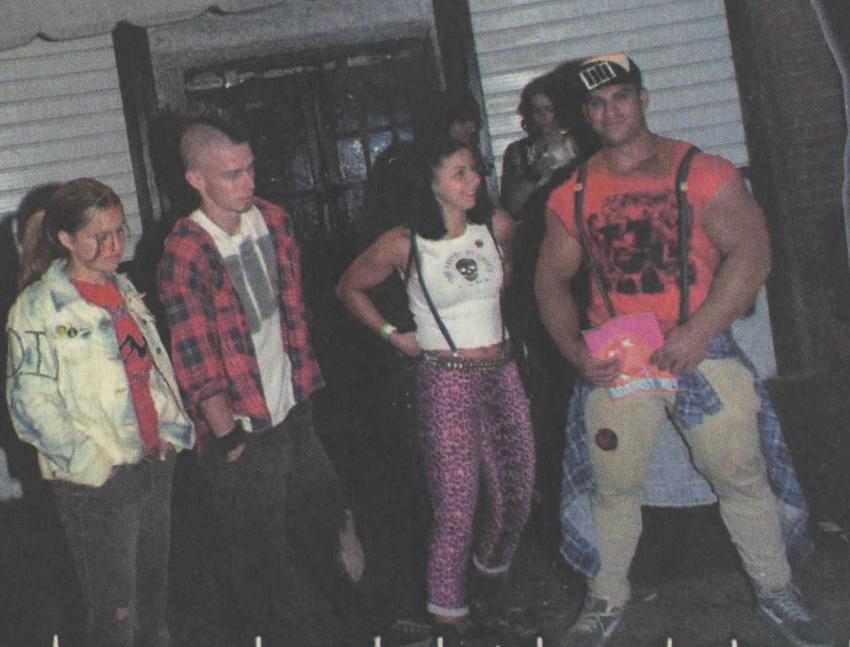
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# THE BRIEFS

BY JIM RULAND

## HOW THE BRIEFS STOLE MY HEART

The rumors are true: I have a big flaming man-crush on The Briefs.

The first time I saw them was an unforgettable experience. It was nearly four years ago in late 2001 at the 3 of Clubs on Vine just north of Melrose, back when the only marking for the bar was the old Bargain Clown Mart sign that hung outside like a beacon for weirdoes. All I knew about the band was that they'd released an album on Dirlnap Records out of Seattle called "Hit After Hit" but I hadn't heard it yet. The Briefs were touring the West Coast with The Spits, another Dirlnap band. My friend Todd at Razorcake was all over the Briefs and when I asked him what they were like he compared them to some of the more up-tempo bands in the OC scene like Le Shok. So I gassed up the truck, drove to Hollywood, and walked in right as the bands were starting.

# THE BRIEFS

I didn't really know what to make of the Spits. No one does the first time they see them. They wore bad mohawks and fake mustaches, cop shades and sawed-off denim jackets with nothing on underneath. It was like they cloned the construction worker from the Village People, shaved his head and put him in a stripped-down punk outfit. The keyboardist pounded the keyboard like it was a percussion instrument. It was kind of clownish but it worked.

When the Briefs took the stage I was pretty much prepared to hate them. As befuddling as the Spits had been, I warmed up to their style of barebones Misfits meets the Ramones style of punk pretty quickly, and was disappointed when they stopped their set after a handful of songs. Then on came the Briefs: Daniel J Travanti, Steve E. Nix, Lance Romance and Chris Briefs with their skinny ties and suede shoes, look-at-me sunglasses and matching bleach blonde hair. They reminded me of the Teenage Knockouts, the band on the second half of Smogtown's split, Beach City Butchers, and I hate the Teenage Knockouts. The Briefs looked like the second coming of New Wave, the New New Wave, and I didn't want it. I was perfectly happy with the Old Wave.

But The Briefs were a revelation. From "Silver Bullet" onward I was smitten. I'd never seen a band play with such energy and passion before.

They don't do anything that other punk rock bands do, but The Briefs seem to do it more frenetically and in control at the same time. It's like watching a horse race where the longshot not only wins, but is the first out of the gate, never gives up the pace, and wins by mile. Before their set was over I realized that the punk rock game had changed. I knew that the next time I saw my favorite LA and OC bands I would see them a little differently, comparing their energy and stamina to the Briefs, wondering why they couldn't play as hard and as fast and as loud in their own hometown as The Briefs played on the road so far away from home. For a few moments I was sad, heartbroken even, because I knew that many of my favorite bands didn't measure up to this punk rock explosion I was witnessing. It's not that I was being judgmental; on the contrary, I didn't want this flashy, bratty whirling dervish of a band to be better than my hometown heroes, but they were, and let's face it: you're only good by comparison. I was looking at the Next Great Thing in punk rock and roll and my heart would never be the same.

Their relentless string of hits has fulfilled these lofty expectations. Okay, so their second full-length "Off the Charts" was a little disappointing, but most of these songs had already appeared on various 7", and they performed them masterfully at their

shows, especially the impossibly clever "Gary Glitter's Eyes." (A collection of their singles called "Singles Only" was recently released on vinyl in Italy. You can order it on the Internerd.) "Sex Objects" heralded a return to form (production wise) with songs every bit as wonderful and strange as before but with a fury that reflected the anger of the status quo in the White House. Songs like "Orange Alert" harkened back to the Adverts, whose best songs feel like a direct address to the listener, meaning me. (For years I've dreamt of the Briefs performing a modified cover of the Adverts "Britain's Greatest Mistake" only instead they replace "Britain" with "Bush" and that weird slow section before the climax represents the fall of the Twin Towers.)

Four years have passed "Hit After Hit" and they're ready to unleash their new release on the world. "Steal Yer Heart" is their second record on BYO (but BYO is also going to re-release their first two records as well.) The new record is stridently less political than "Sex Objects" and, ironically, has a lot more sex: songs about sex with older woman ("Forty & Above"), songs about infatuation ("Stuck on You") and songs about heartbreak ("Razor Blade Heart"), which was pretty much how I felt when Lance Romance left the band, but more on that in a bit. Where the last record was more pissed off the new one reflects all the time they've spent on the road in the past year. So the songs were mainly written while they were on tour or about things that happened



photo: Lisa Johnson

while on tour. In other words, the songs are all about me.

Make no mistake about it, I love the new record. The Briefs are that rare band that can remind you of a gang of bands, yet every song on the record is different. Even though no two songs sound the same, each is unmistakable. I think that's because even though The Briefs have always been a band that wears their influences on their sleeves and their '77-style punk owes more to the bands that were at the top of the charts in the UK than those slogging their way in the pubs. The Briefs are like a lover who reminds you a little bit of this person or a little bit that person and as a result are in a class by themselves. Sound confusing? Hardly. Just spin the record and follow your heart.

In that spirit I won't talk about the Buzzcocks, Vibrators or Undertones, but one band whose influence I hear more strongly on this record (and in the previous record as well) that's worth mentioning is the Toy Dolls. I said as much in a recent conversation with Dan, shortly after the fireworks and before the

restraining order, but he doesn't see the influence. "We get the Toy Dolls thing but I don't really see it except for the dumb sunglasses. I think we definitely love the Toy Dolls, but it's not a band that we're trying to draw from. I think there are other bands that are more obvious that we all listen to. As far as the Toy Dolls thing goes I don't think it's anything intentional." Nevertheless, there are countless other times when I can recall Dan being intentionally misleading, like the time he told me get off his porch or he'd hit me with the adorable pink Briefs skateboard deck he was holding, and I think this might be one of them. It's not so much the sound of some of the songs as the content and the delivery, which tends to be kinda staccato (Choppity chop chop!). This is especially true of the more humorous songs, like "Shoplifting at Macy's" on the "Sex Objects" album or "She Wants to Be a Zombie" on the new one. Another trait The Briefs share with The Toy Dolls is the narrative element to some of their songs. In other words, the songs tell a story.

and you can usually tell which songs these are by the titles, some of which are miniature stories in and of themselves. Okay, so it's not like they're biting "Queen Alexandra Road Is Where She Said She'd Be But Was She There To Meet Me? No Chance," but you get my drift.

Still, the Briefs are impossible to pin down. (Trust me on this.) Toward the end of "Steal Yet Heart" appear a couple of songs that are unlike any other Brief song I've ever heard before. "Can't Get Through" is a slow tune with a heavy yet plucky bass line that carries the song but is also slightly cartoonish, like a really fat man on a pogo stick. It's unusual how the bass drives the song, almost like a Bauhaus song, allowing the lead guitar, laced with effects, to accentuate odd moments in the song, sometimes following the rhythm guitar, sometimes off on its own odd knocky, like how an umbrella can look like a giant bat wing in a Edward Gorey illustration. The effect is almost eerie, so much so that the first dozen or so times

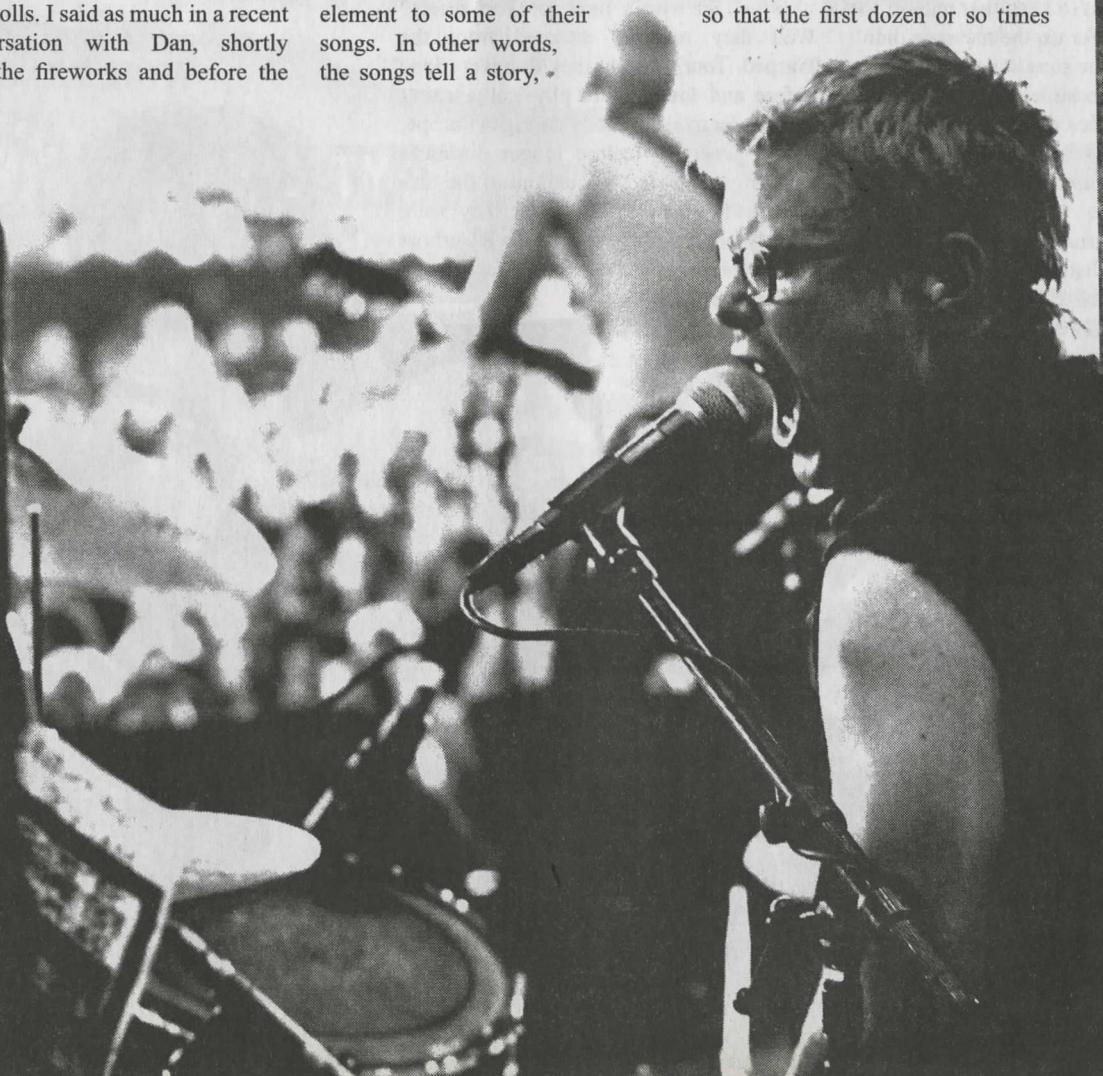


photo: Lisa Johnson

I listened to the album at low volume at work, I thought the guitars were keyboards, like in a Spits song (except the Spits use the keyboards like a bass), and was promptly bitch slapped by Dan when I brought it up on the telephone last month. "I thought it was a little bit more Misfits, but I guess Misfits for me is like the Spits. All the early Misfits stuff somehow reminds me of Spits... That was an odd one. We write a lot of odd songs. Every once in a while one of them makes it on a record... We've always kind of written really weird stuff and usually we don't use it. We have this weird side that we try to suppress."

Suppress? You're poor and you're weird, baby! I think I speak for Briefs fans all over the world when I say, "We love the weird!" "Can't Get Through" is my favorite track on the record mainly because of its strangeness, but it's just as catchy and infectious as the rest of the record. Ironically, Dan hated the song, even though he sings it: "I fucking hated that song. I fought to keep that one off the record." Luckily for us, the message didn't get through and the song stayed.

One possible explanation for these new wrinkles in their sound is the presence of Stevie Kicks, the new bass player, who has replaced Lance Romance. Why did Lance leave? It wasn't an acrimonious departure or anything like that. In fact, he's still listed as a member, albeit a cryogenically frozen one, on the band's website. Apparently the split had something to do with the demands of touring. In other words: the story of punk rock all over.

The new guy is from yet another Dirlap band called the New Town Animals out of Vancouver, British Columbia, and he's actually been touring with The Briefs

for some time now, since the spring of last year after their 2004 tour with the Real McKenzies. His entry into The Briefs was not a smooth one. He had a lousy audition in that he knew all the songs but was playing all the wrong notes. Here's what Dan had to say: "He learned the songs off a record, except his record player plays the wrong speed so he had all the wrong notes, which was pretty hilarious. But after we figured out why he was playing everything wrong, we did the tour with him and we've been touring with him ever since." Stevie also recorded with the band and sings on a number of songs, including back-up vocals and lead on the hilarious "Forty & Above," a song about sex with MILFs that reminds me of the Queers. According to Dan, Stevie's the best singer in the band in that he can "actually hit notes." Stevie also sings on a cover of an old Forgotten Rebels song called "Suck Me Dead," which will be on the b-side that will be released on a Canadian label.

So what's next for The Briefs? Well they recently returned from the Warped Tour, which they'd never done before and found more physically taxing than the festival circuit or touring in Europe, which generally feature longer distances and longer sets. But the tedium of the tour was made bearable by bands they were already pretty tight with like the Riverboat Gamblers. Now with "Steal Yer Heart" in the can they're going to focus more on touring. Lots and lots of touring. They're doing a tour of the whole US

with a band called Clit 45. A few one-off shows in the Pacific Northwest and then to Europe in the spring. Angelenos can catch The Briefs in October during a West Coast tour with the Spits. It's been a long time since they've been able to go on the road for a short tour with friends and they're pretty stoked on being able to make it happen. As for me, stoked doesn't even come close to explaining the way I feel. I'll be there in LA and San Diego and even Gainesville, Florida. I'll be the guy in the parking lot fifty yards from the premises, standing next to a shrine with pictures of me and Lance at Chain Reaction, me and Steve E. at the Doll Hut, me and Chris taking back the alley outside the Garage, and me and Dan at that epic Smogtown show down in OC. If you see them tell them I said hello, tell them they've stolen by heart.

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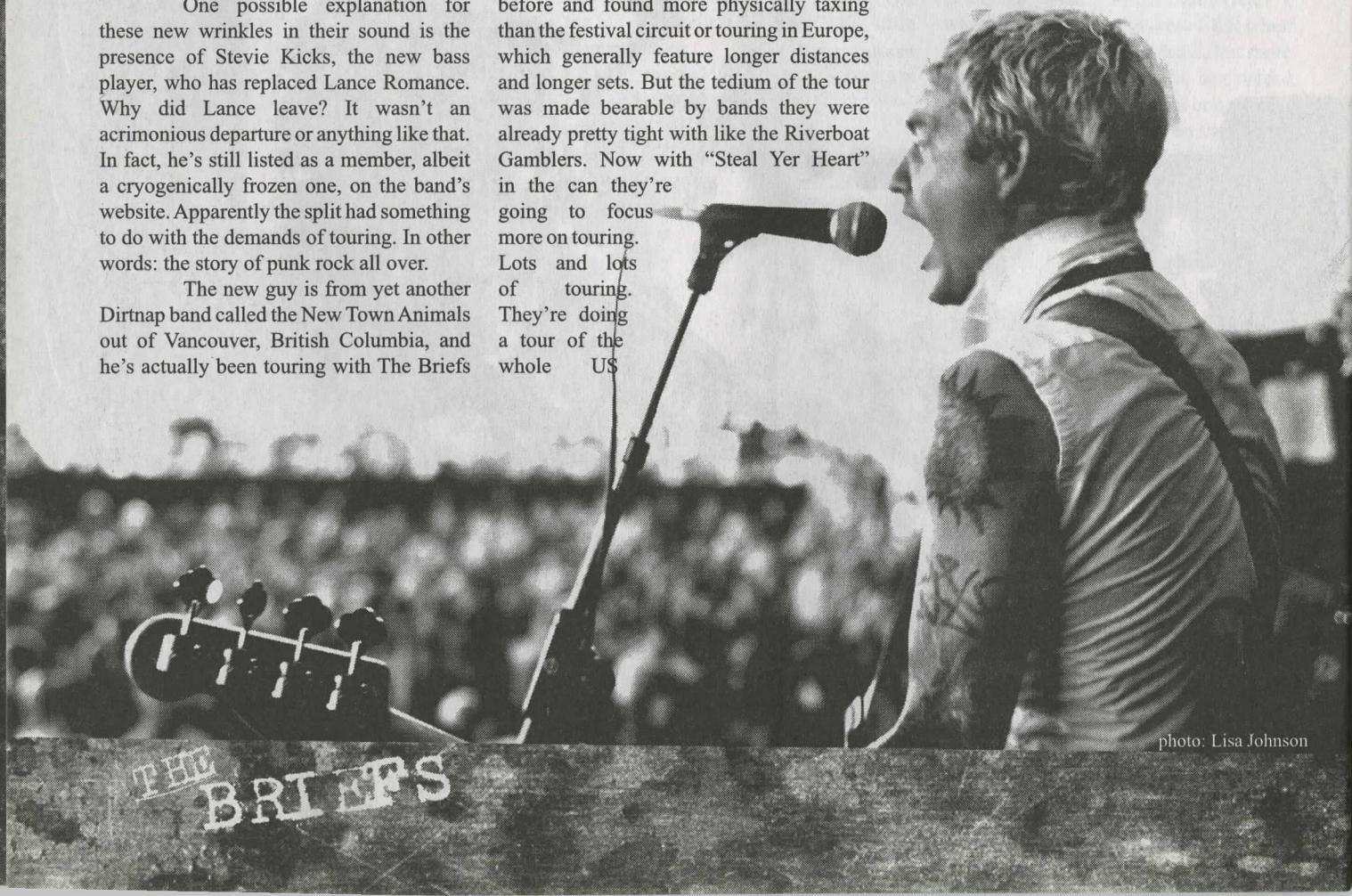


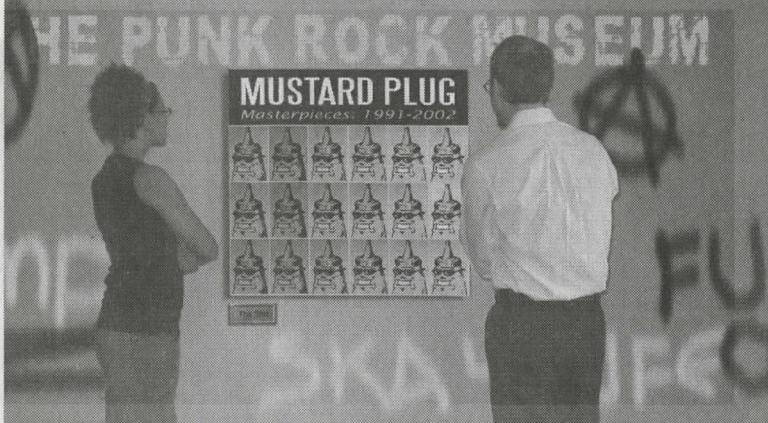
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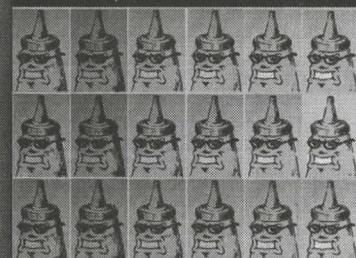
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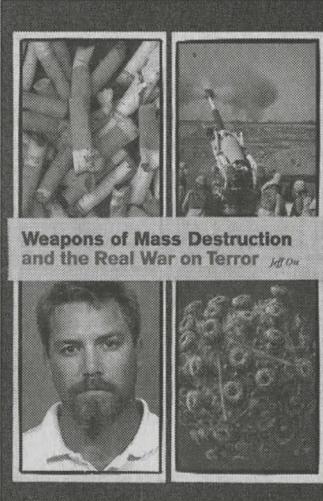
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## Photos and Story By:

## Team Goon

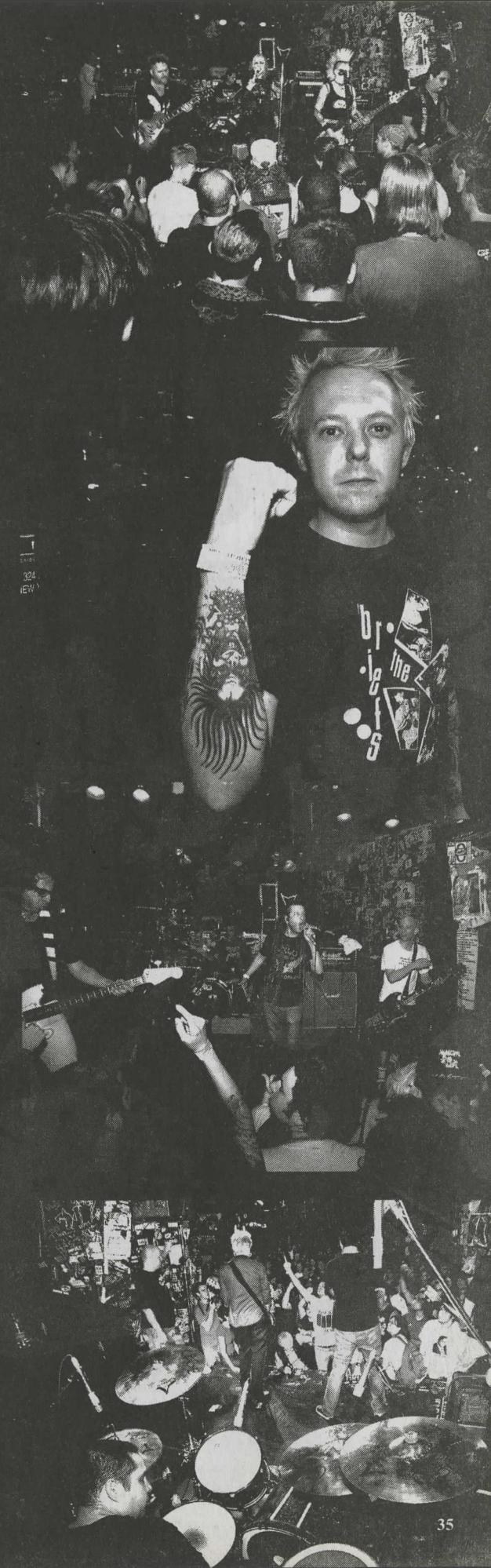
CBGB's...315 Bowery in New York has been at the same location for 30 years! It has now lost its lease and will likely close its doors forever. However, CBGB's has decided not to go down without a fight. As a last ditch effort to raise enough money for their rent, which was doubled from \$20,000, the club has rallied for help by calling on bands from all over the place to play their benefit concert series entitled simply "Save CBGB". This small hole in the wall has been home to some of the best punk bands ever to have played. That history is enough incentive for the Circle Jerks, Adolescents, D.I., Channel 3, and 45 Grave to fly out to New York to do their part to help save this landmark.

We were determined not to let this be a somber event. Sure the show was for a cause, but that doesn't mean that we couldn't have a good time too. Before we knew it doors were open and people began filing in. Electric Frankenstein was the first band up of the night. These guys were pretty awesome, and have been around for a long time. The club had already begun to fill up by the time they went on. Just about everyone had a drink in their hand and were right in front of the stage watching these guys play their set. 45 Grave took the stage and rocked their ghouly punk style with songs like "Riboflavin", "Surf Bat" and "Evil". Dinah Cancer is still a huge crowd favorite and the fans in New York let her know that, singing along to every song and arms flailing everywhere.

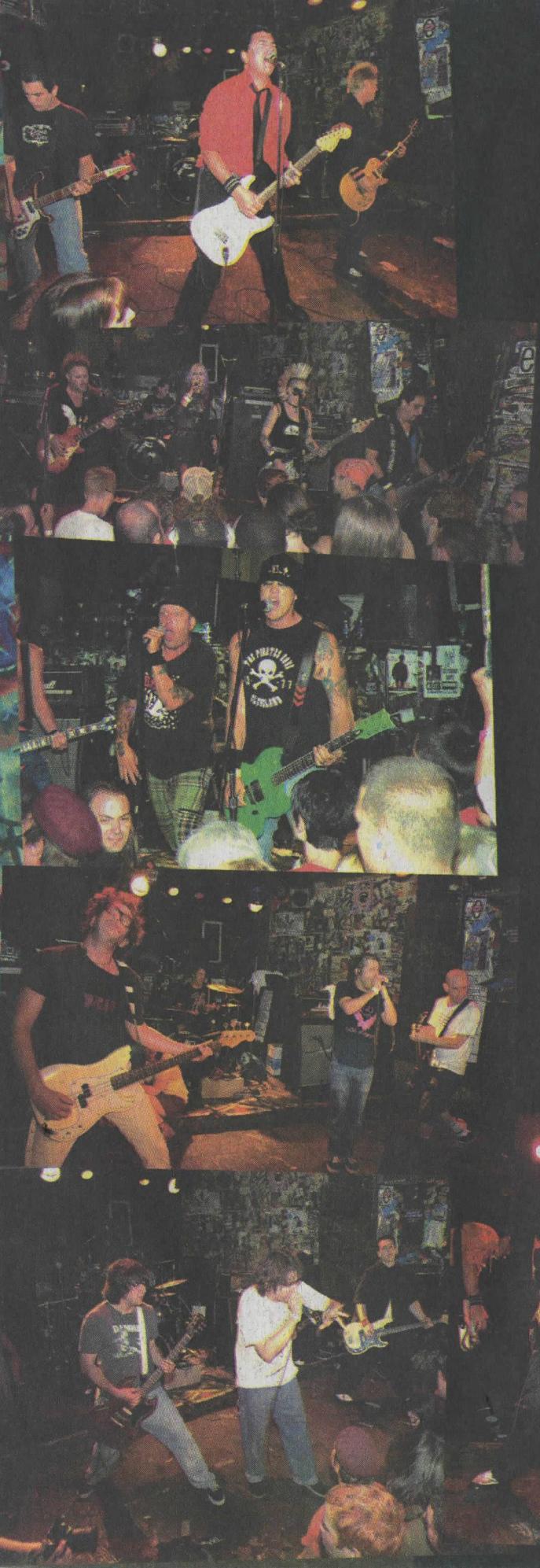
The next band that went on was Channel 3. These guys are definitely no strangers to CBGB, they said that they have probably played there more than any other club anywhere else. The guys opened their set up with "I Didn't Know", as there would be plenty of time for reminiscing after the show. All the classics were played including "Catholic Boy", "I've got a Gun", "Manzanar", "You Lie", and "I Wanna Know Why". Even the song "You Make Me Feel Cheap" was played featuring Maria Montoya; donning an official Channel 3 straight jacket, who did the original backup vocals.

Next up was D.I. who was thoroughly stoked to be at CBGB and part of this historic lineup. They jumped right into their set playing tunes such as "OC Life" and "Falling Out". The crowd really began to explode into a fury of action to the sound of these classic tunes. Throughout the set Casey had plenty to say about various things that are going on in America. Terrorism, pollution and government corruption were just some of the points that Casey touched on. The set also included some new D.I. songs that we had never heard before and of course some old favorites, "Johnny's Got A Problem",

"Imminent War", and "Richard Hung Himself". People were now thoroughly warmed up for The Adolescents. Throughout the entire night there was plenty of socializing between bands, and the crowd. Since there was no back stage the bands and the crowd were all hanging out and talking together. That in itself was a cool aspect of CBGB's, to have band members and bar patrons mixed in together makes each show very intimate. Between the two sets we decided to go outside for a little fresh air and a smoke. While out there we talked to this guy that we met earlier who had an awesome mad scientist Kevin Staab tattoo. This was perhaps one of the coolest tats that we had seen all weekend, so we just had to take a photo of it for Kevin Staab to see. After a little more socializing and another smoke we began to hear music coming from inside, so we took this as our cue to head in and enjoy some old school Orange County tunes in New York. As we walked through the doors we could hear that the first song being played was "Monsanto Hayride", which is off the Adolescents new album entitled "OC Confidential". The Adolescents played a great mix of songs off the classic blue album, Brats in Battalions, and OC Confidential. There was a great deal of slamming going on in the pit, people were getting tossed around like rag dolls, and falling straight to the floor. During the



# BIG WHEEL



song "OC Confidential" Casey from D.I. did a stage dive right into the crowd and was surfed around for a while till he was dropped to the floor landing on a beer bottle and smashing it to pieces. Among some of the other songs that were played were "I Love You", "Amoeba", and of course the classic "Kids of the Black Hole" which always drives the crowd mad with energy causing a pit that looks like a level 4 hurricane.

Minutes later the Circle Jerks were ready to take the stage. By this time the small venue was packed to the brim with people who were all crowded against the stage. Keith Morris took to the stage and the crowd began to cheer as he tore into the first song of the set, "Letter Bomb". The Circle Jerks played a full set, which included no less than 31 songs comprised mostly of Circle Jerks and Black Flag songs. Though we can't remember the whole list of 31 songs, there are a few that stood out. "Stars and Stripes", "All Wound Up", "Back Against the Wall", "Beverly Hills" and "I just want some Skank" just to name a few. The guys even threw in the Weirdos song "Solitary Confinement". Throughout the set there were people stage diving, but there was one guy in particular who caught our attention because of the tennis ball size welts on his forehead and the back of his head. The guy was enjoying life to the max, consuming drinks as fast as the was the music. During "Destroy You" Keith did a spoken word segment where he talked about politics and various other issues that he felt were important. This was a really cool idea, but some people didn't appreciate the five minute lecture and started jeering at him. Keith didn't give a shit, because he had a point to make and he was damned if he was gonna let anyone tell him otherwise. The Circle Jerks closed their set leaving the crowd hungry for more. Thirty one songs were not enough!

The show ended and I don't think there was a person who left dissatisfied with the show. The bands and crowd alike all gathered outside in front of CBGB's. There were a few photos snapped, some talking and plotting for the next day. All in all the weekend was filled with lots of fun and debauchery that only the big apple can bring out in people.



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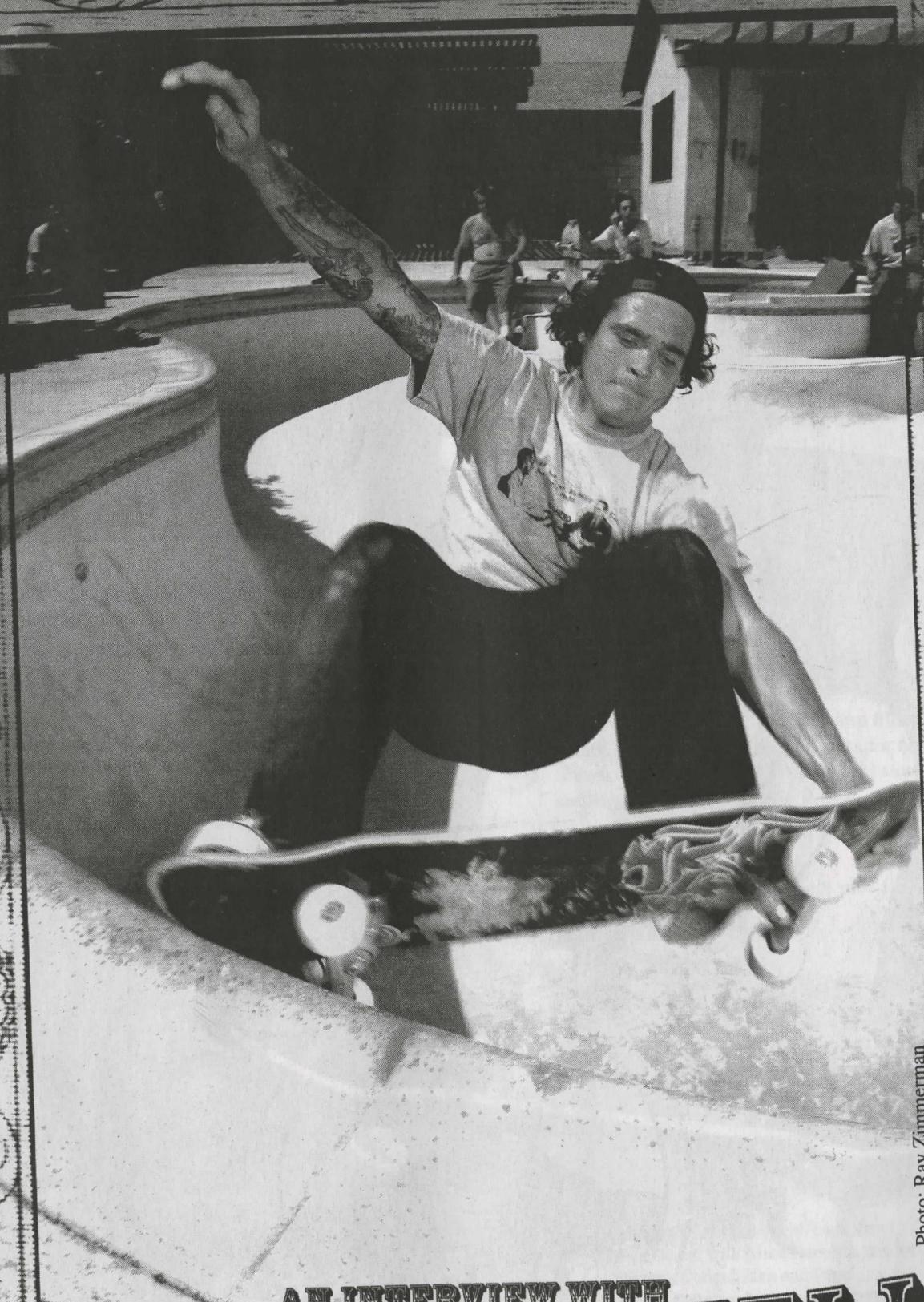
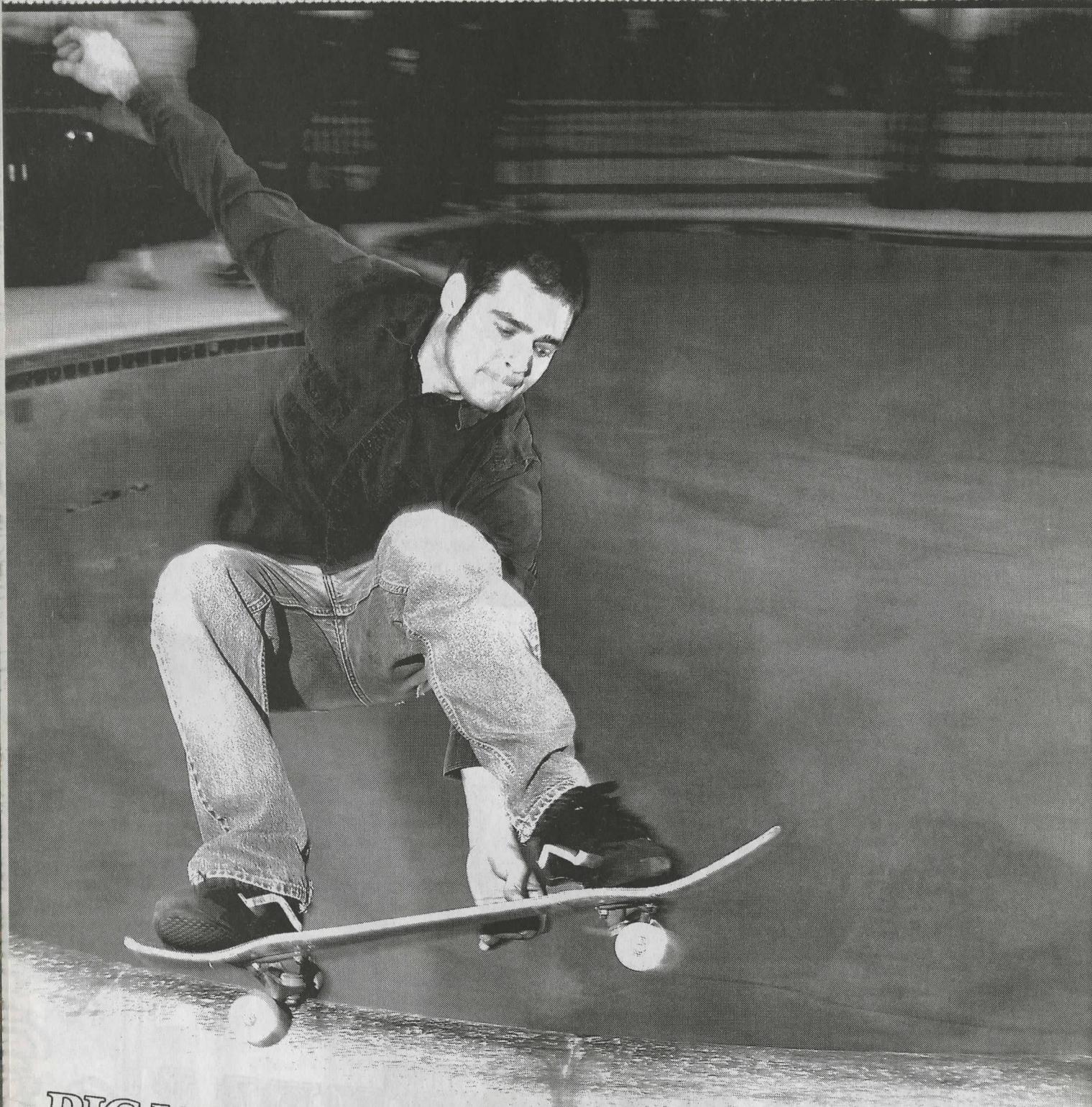
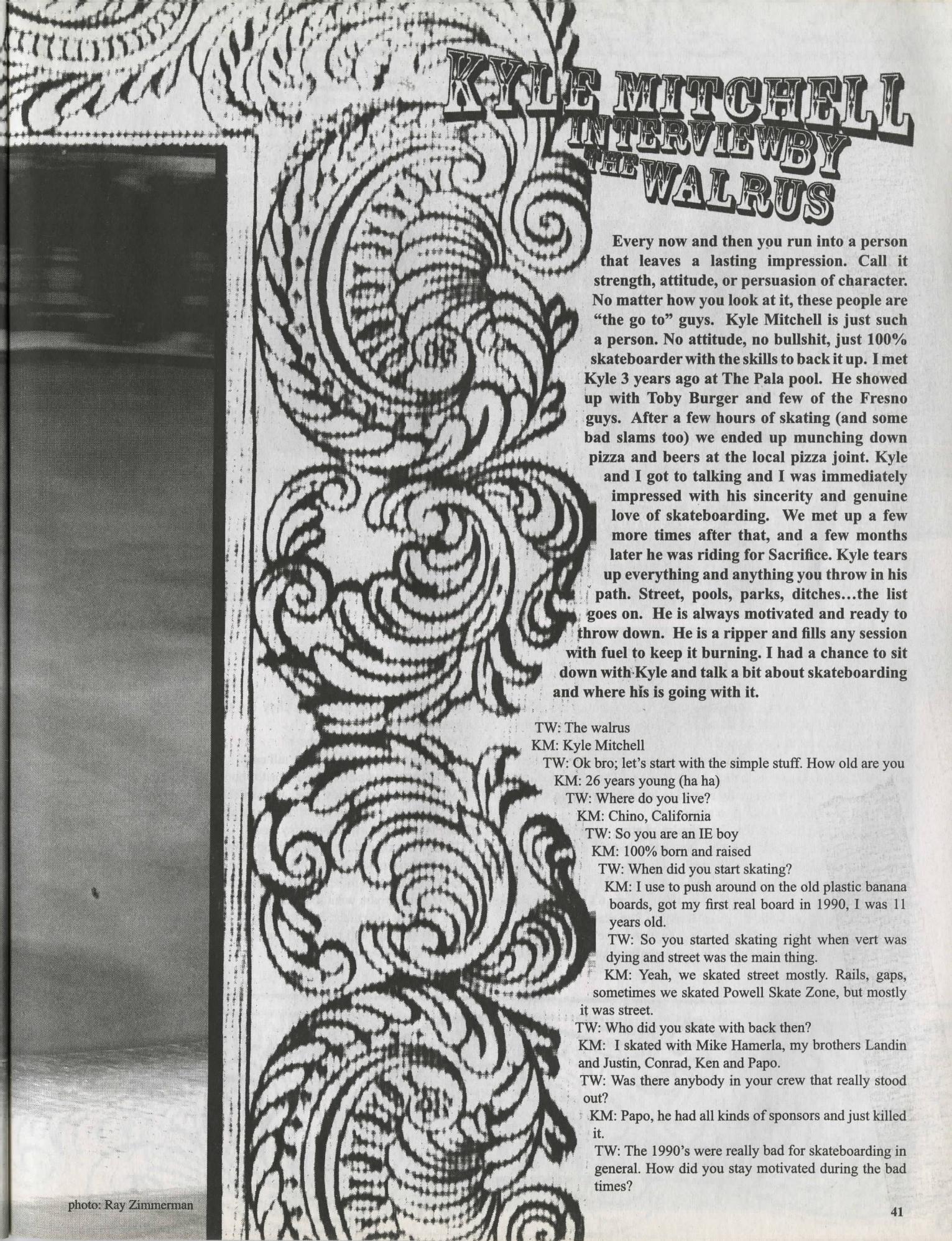


Photo: Ray Zimmerman

# AN INTERVIEW WITH **KYLE MITCHELL**



BIG WHEEL



# KYLE MITCHELL

INTERVIEW BY  
THE WALRUS

Every now and then you run into a person that leaves a lasting impression. Call it strength, attitude, or persuasion of character. No matter how you look at it, these people are "the go to" guys. Kyle Mitchell is just such a person. No attitude, no bullshit, just 100% skateboarder with the skills to back it up. I met Kyle 3 years ago at The Pala pool. He showed up with Toby Burger and few of the Fresno guys. After a few hours of skating (and some bad slams too) we ended up munching down pizza and beers at the local pizza joint. Kyle and I got to talking and I was immediately impressed with his sincerity and genuine love of skateboarding. We met up a few more times after that, and a few months later he was riding for Sacrifice. Kyle tears up everything and anything you throw in his path. Street, pools, parks, ditches...the list goes on. He is always motivated and ready to throw down. He is a ripper and fills any session with fuel to keep it burning. I had a chance to sit down with Kyle and talk a bit about skateboarding and where his is going with it.

TW: The walrus

KM: Kyle Mitchell

TW: Ok bro; let's start with the simple stuff. How old are you

KM: 26 years young (ha ha)

TW: Where do you live?

KM: Chino, California

TW: So you are an IE boy

KM: 100% born and raised

TW: When did you start skating?

KM: I use to push around on the old plastic banana boards, got my first real board in 1990, I was 11 years old.

TW: So you started skating right when vert was dying and street was the main thing.

KM: Yeah, we skated street mostly. Rails, gaps, sometimes we skated Powell Skate Zone, but mostly it was street.

TW: Who did you skate with back then?

KM: I skated with Mike Hamerla, my brothers Landin and Justin, Conrad, Ken and Papo.

TW: Was there anybody in your crew that really stood out?

KM: Papo, he had all kinds of sponsors and just killed it.

TW: The 1990's were really bad for skateboarding in general. How did you stay motivated during the bad times?



KM: We just kept going. We really didn't pay attention to what was happening. We just wanted to skate. My friends really kept me going.

TW: When did you discover pools?

KM: In the early 90's. First pool I ever skated was my friend Robert D's pool. All I could do was kick turn, but it was fun. Then I started to skate Andy's pool. That's where I really started to learn to skate pools.

TW: What makes pool skating so attractive?

KM: Pools are more challenging. You're skating something that was made to swim in, not skate. When I pull off a trick in a pool, it's like I earned it. It just feels that much better.

TW: What else do you like to do besides skating?

KM: I like drinking Budweiser and working on my 63 Biscayne Station Wagon. Hanging out with my girl, Meredith. She skates too!

TW: Is there anything in skateboarding you don't like?

KM: Yeah, people who talk shit on skateboarding, and don't skate. The

"rock-star" skaters that think they are too good. Man, we are all just skaters. No egos.

TW: What's your favorite beer?

KM: Right now it's Budweiser tall cans.

TW: What are some of your favorite spots right now?

KM: John's ramp, Baldy pipe, and any random pool.

TW: What do your mom and dad think about your skating?

KM: 100% supportive from day one.

TW: If you could skate with anybody famous, who would it be and why?

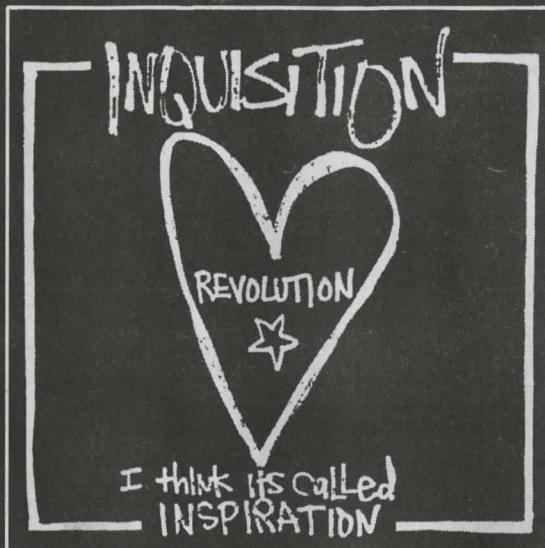
KM: I'd have to say Mark Gonzalez. The guy is the "Godfather" of street skating and seems to be a fun guy to skate with.

TW: Anybody you want to thank?

KM: Rene at Sacrifice Skates, Utility Board Shop, all my friends I grew up with skating, and my mom and dad for being my first sponsors. Oh yeah, and Budweiser.

photo: Ray Zimmerman

# KYLE MITCHELL



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## INQUISITION

"Revolution... I think its called Inspiration"  
(featuring members of Strike Anywhere, Ann Beretta, and River City High)

A band like Inquisition made a dent in the underground punk community in their heyday, when they should have been a full blown car crash. -Tim Barry (AVAIL)

Very few things will leave as lasting an impression on me as the first chord of the first song I heard by them.  
-Jason Black (HOT WATER MUSIC)

Inquisition had it all, the energy, the desperation, political lyrics, it was all there and it got me so psyched. -Tim (ENSIGN)

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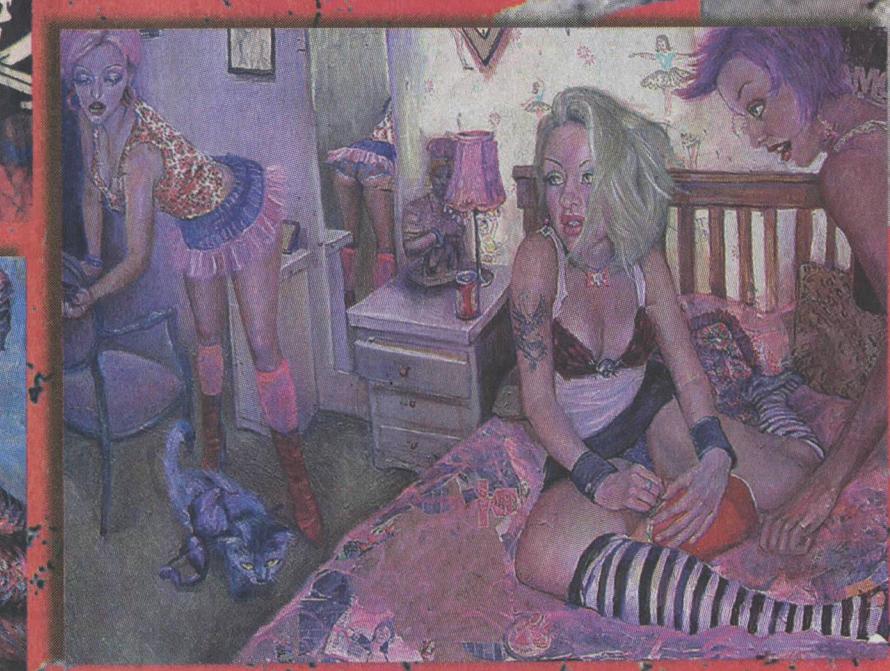
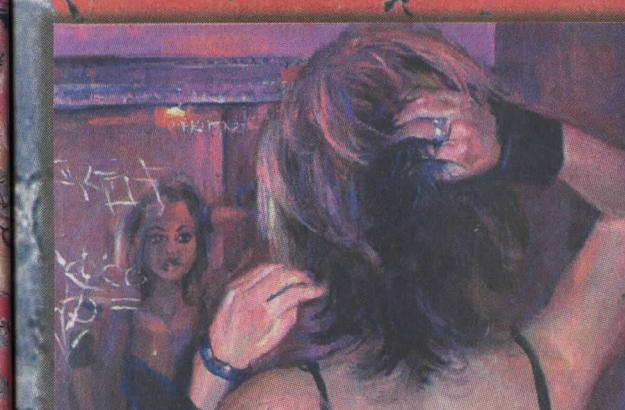
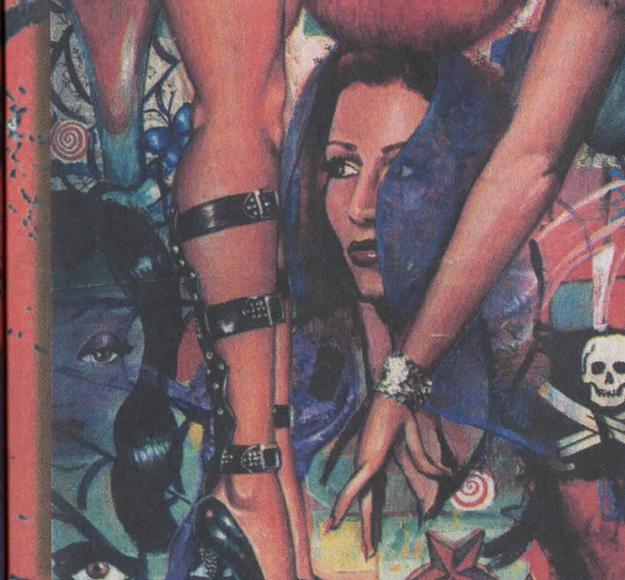
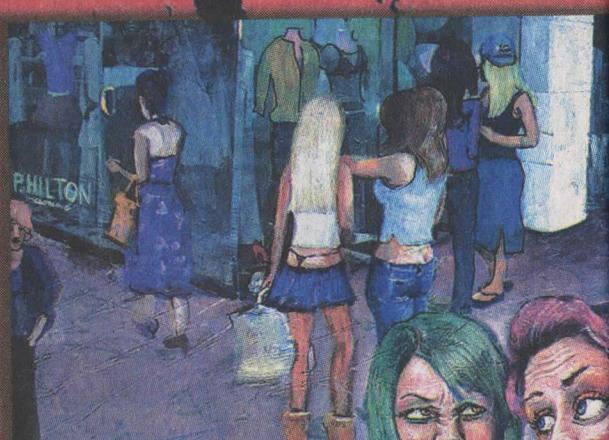
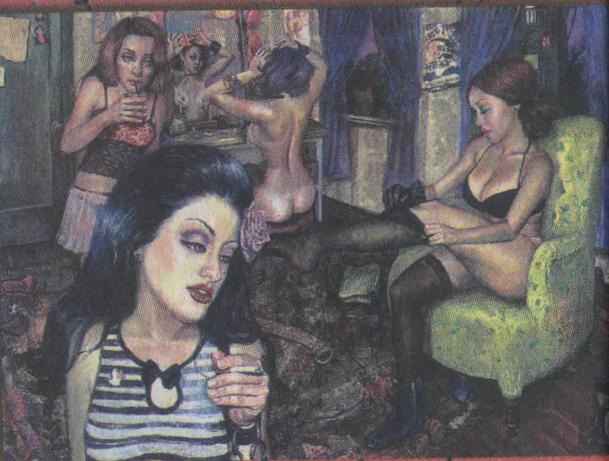
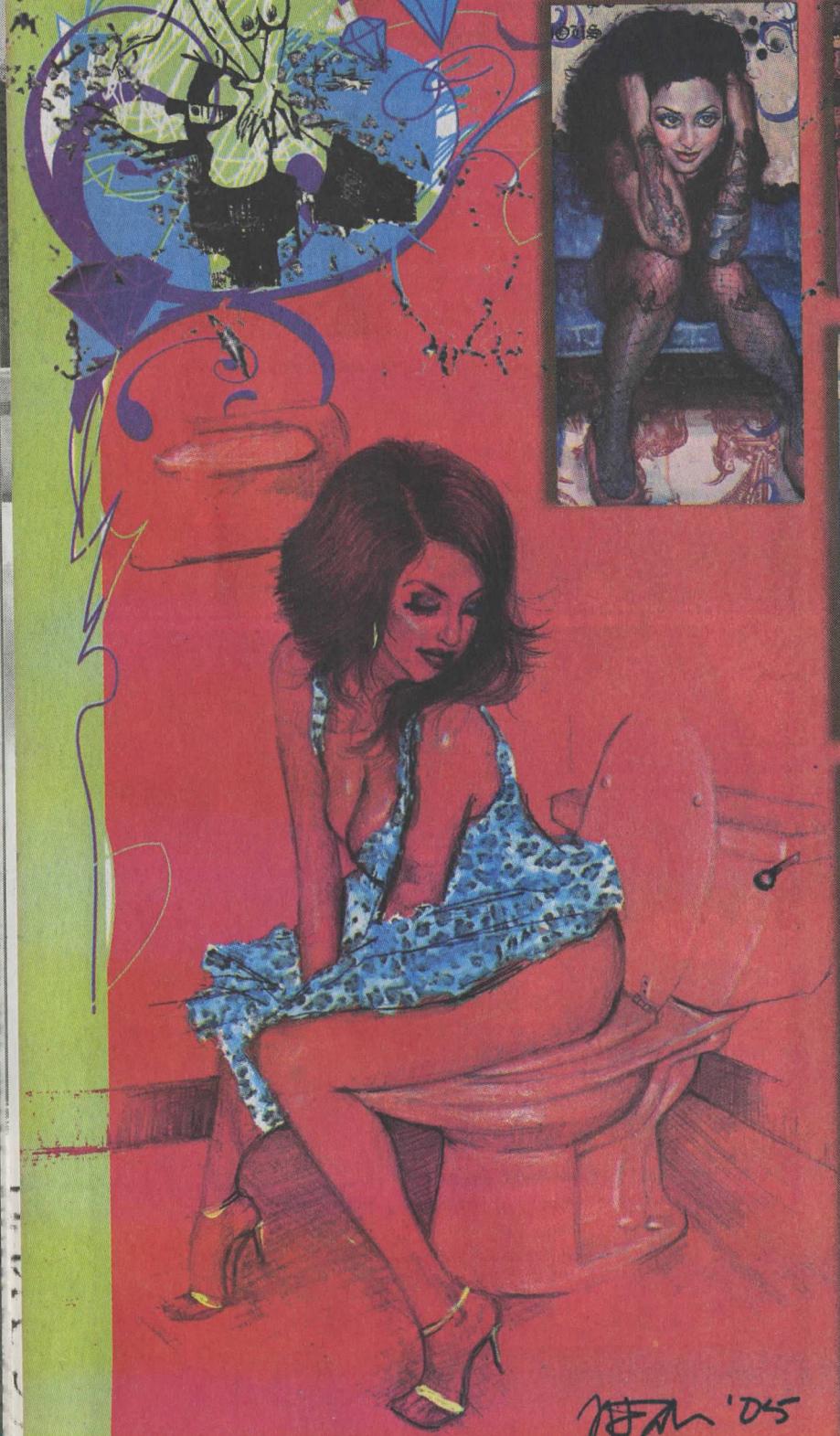
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# BIG MATE H

artist profile natalia fabia



## Welcome to Hooker Castle

I heard her before I saw her. Around the corner of the house I heard a distressed woman scream, "Someone get these fucking balloons out of my fucking car!"

I wanted to laugh hard enough to rupture a vital organ. Unfortunately, I had not met Natalia Fabia yet and wanted to be on good terms with her. Laughing at someone rarely results in friendship. The F-bombs continued to drop.

Now I had to look. "How could something so happy as a balloon make someone so angry?" I thought to myself. After peeking around the corner of the house, I was suddenly aware of how unhappy balloons can be. She was driving a single cab Tacoma, and in this single cab was a good 20 balloons. "I took me a fucking hour to drive home!" she further exclaimed. This was justified anger. But my laughter was justified as well.

Natalia Fabia has an art style unlike most seen these days. It's not "modern art" that you have to pretend to understand nor does it look like a VH1 commercial. It's simply something beautiful anyone can enjoy. As you stare at her art (believe me, you will be staring) you think it looks realistic, but it isn't. The eyes might be too big, or the neck might be too long or the face might be too goofy-looking, but as someone I heard put it, she's paints people as she sees them.

# natalia fabia \*\*\*\* artist profile

**Big Wheel:** I was really hoping I would get to stay for a while [at the aforementioned shindig] and I would get to talk to you some more, but my friend needed to go...

**Natalia Fabia:** Oh, god, I was just really upset, everything was kind of going wrong...

**Big Wheel:** I'm sorry. Did the rest of the night go well?

**Natalia:** Yeah, it was cool! People and came, we sold stuff, it's just that I didn't get a chance to lay out all my stuff or make enough stuff.

**Big Wheel:** How did you begin as an artist?

**Natalia:** My whole family is very artistic. My mom is an artist, my dad was too, they were both architects, and my dad was a painter too. I remember was I used to make my parents draw me girls. I ran to their room when I was little and say "draw me girls" or "draw me lips" and they would draw it for me. I would just draw forever. And then I remember in Jr. high always being the "nerd alert", or the person at lunch, and I would just sit there and draw my friends and it was this nerdy thing where people would come and sit for me and say "Ooooh, look what she drew." It's all I can ever remember, always wanting

to do that. I started really painting in high school, and I don't know how my whole fascination with girls and hookers started, but I think it started in high school with the whole pin-up thing and burlesque scene. I was just so in love with that. Paint, paint, paint...and I always knew I wanted to go to the [Pasadena] Art Center, and I did. I love it.

**Big Wheel:** Cheesy question, but what's your inspiration?

**Natalia:** Colors. Colors and I'm obsessed with light. That's why my house is kind of colorful and I have lots of fabric all over the place. What makes me the happiest is if when the sun is shining in a weird way and hits my green curtains, I don't know what it is. And light. I love light. Before I had this weird obsession with chandeliers. As far as painting, there's a few things I like to incorporate in a painting. I also like vintage things. I have sets of vintage labels, vintage anything. As far as artists, Toulouse Lautrec, [John] Sargent, [Elizabeth] Bouguereau, people like that. I really love spaces and people in environments, like a room and things like that. I can add in the light and colors and people, because I like painting people and figures.

**Big Wheel:** Most of your paintings are these large scenic rooms with one or more girls interacting, but you seem to be doing something completely different with your portraits.

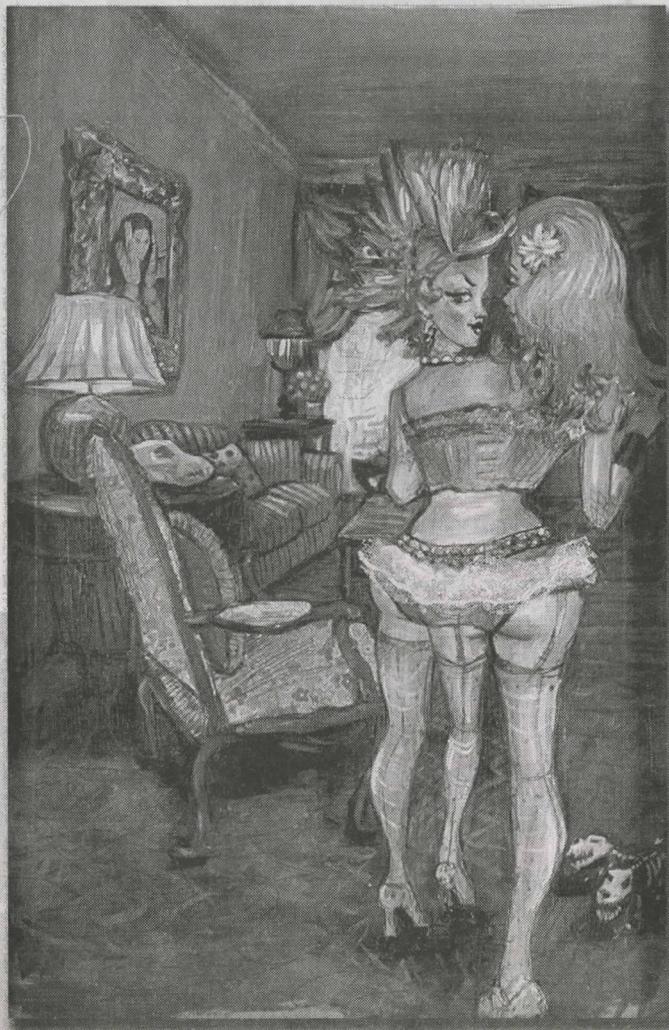
**Natalia:** The portraits started out with a series of 17 or 20 of them, it was when I started at Art Center. It's a pretty intense school where you have, like, six classes at six hours each. You can get a scholarship each semester by putting up a show and I was trying to think up paintings that I wanted to do and I really missed all of my friends so I decided to little portrait of, well, it started out as a few of them, and then I couldn't help but want to paint every single one of my friends. And it all goes together, like a story, they all line up next to each other and it all reads through. I was missing my friends and just wanted to show what I was missing out on, which was just a party scene because they were all partying. I love painting people. I love skin and eyeballs and personalities, so I love portraits. I think the bigger paintings are what I truly love but that does take a little more time and planning. I'm really impulsive, I want something now, so I'll just start a portrait out of nowhere.

**Big Wheel:** I also notice you have a lot of mannequin pieces...

**Natalia:** I built the siamese hooker mannequin...this girl and I, we kind of started a little company together. We both liked similar things and both would randomly come up with the same ideas, and people were saying how similar we were, so we were like siamese twins. So we became siamese hooker and that was our company, but we both kind of did our own thing. For one Art Center show I bought two mannequins. I don't know if you met Tim, but I went to him and said "I want to put it together," and everyone thought I was crazy. We cut them in half and bonded them together and painted on them. We used to do a lot of trade shows so I would always bring them around and they would wear our clothes and jewelry.

**Big Wheel:** Is the clothes, jewelry and art the source of your income right now?

**Natalia:** Well up until six months ago I was waitressing still. I waitressed all through school, which is freakin' insane. School taught me how to not sleep. I used to work at night and then just sleep an hour or two, but now I sleep a little bit more. Then I got a few of those graphic design jobs so for a while. I was like, "This is totally awesome!" I would have one or two graphic design jobs over six months and that was good but then that stopped so now it's just the clothes and jewelry and some random painting and stuff. I'm just recently decided to stop- I used to be in a lot of group shows and show a lot, and I just decided that I wasn't going to do that anymore and I'm only going to work with my bigger galleries or get ready for a bigger show. I love little shows, don't get me wrong, but I kind of feel like I put my time in with that. Everyone's got to do it to get their name out there, but I'm done. I'm moving to bigger and better places. I have a series planned and going right now. It's the first time I've ever planned out a series. It's whole story. It's also the first time I've gotten to pick





out the frames ahead of time. I actually invested a lot of money in the frames and that makes me want to paint the paintings even more so I'm very excited.

**Big Wheel:** I have to ask- Natalia Fabia, is that your real name?

**Natalia:** Yes. Everyone in my high school called me "Nattie" or "Natalie" but [Natalia] is my real name... on my birth certificate and everything.

**Big Wheel:** And is Fabia or middle name or last name?

**Natalia:** Fabia's my last name. My last name's Italian, I'm polish though, I'm 100% polish. For while I didn't like it and everyone called me Natalie and I never liked that either. At Art Center that would be "Natalia," and I let it stay. My whole family calls me that, that's my name, I am polish, it's my first language. I've been getting way more into it because about a year ago I got scared that I was losing the language because I don't speak with anyone except my dad and a few family members anymore, and it's something I definitely don't want to lose.

**Big Wheel:** What's in the future for your stuff?

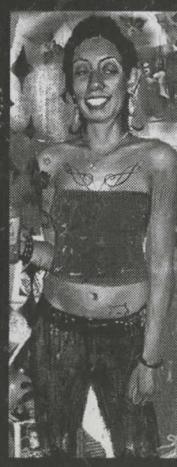
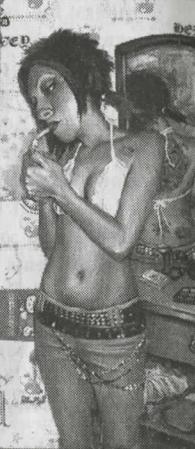
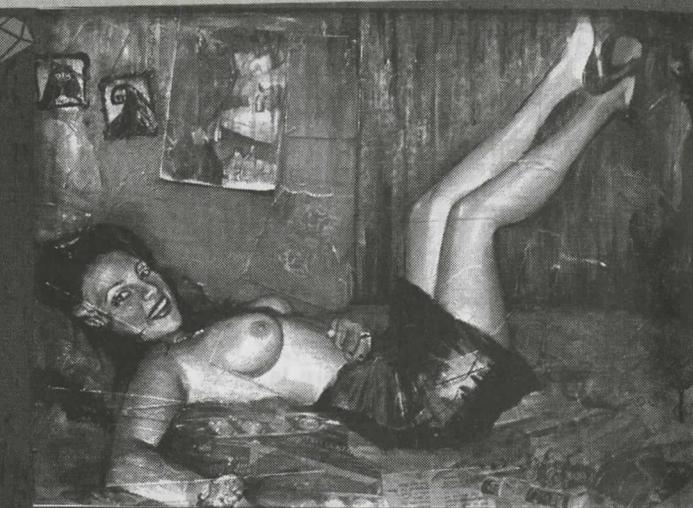
**Natalia:** This one of those instances everything just clicked about my next series. I just decided I'm going to be doing scenes from a hooker castle. It's fully planned out, there's even a murder involved, it's a whole story. I'm taking my time. I've never really planned out paintings ahead of time, I just kind of go. I'm going to clear out spaces and pick out crazy hotels. It's going to be a fancy castle, it's going to show every room, with scenes with different girls. It's all my friends and different women that I've met through out however long recently in it. There's going to be like a murder in the singing room and then there's a girl taking a bubble bath in the bathroom. I love peacocks, so peacocks are kind of going to be in it. Two of the girls have peacock tattoos on them, one has feathers, one has a peacock, everything just going together. The frames, oh my god, they're so gorgeous! I'm so excited. There's also going to be a dining room and my two girlfriends that are sisters, they're really loaded and they actually buy a lot of my work. They're really really cute and they eat like crazy so I'm going to put them in this giant dining room, like, this crazy fancy 12 -seated dining room. I'm having fun actually planning this all out and having the stories develop. It's probably going to take a year or so to finish them all, because they're going to be big, and I'm only going to show them in large galleries. There's a possibility of me having a show in New York gallery, crossing my fingers, but I not going to think about it because I don't know if it's going to happen. Or in San Francisco.

**Big Wheel:** What's your favorite color?

**Natalia:** Right now? Purple. Yes, purple's very good.

Natalia's art can be viewed or she can be contacted through her website <http://www.nataliafabia.com/> or become a hooker yourself by becoming her friend through Myspace at [www.myspace.com/nataliafabia](http://www.myspace.com/nataliafabia). The benefit show will be held at Costa Mesa's the Lab on October 1st and be sure to watch for dates for her show currently in planning. Besides, who could miss out on something like a hooker castle?

By: Donna Baluchi



# LITTLE VS. HURRICANE GWENIE KATRINA

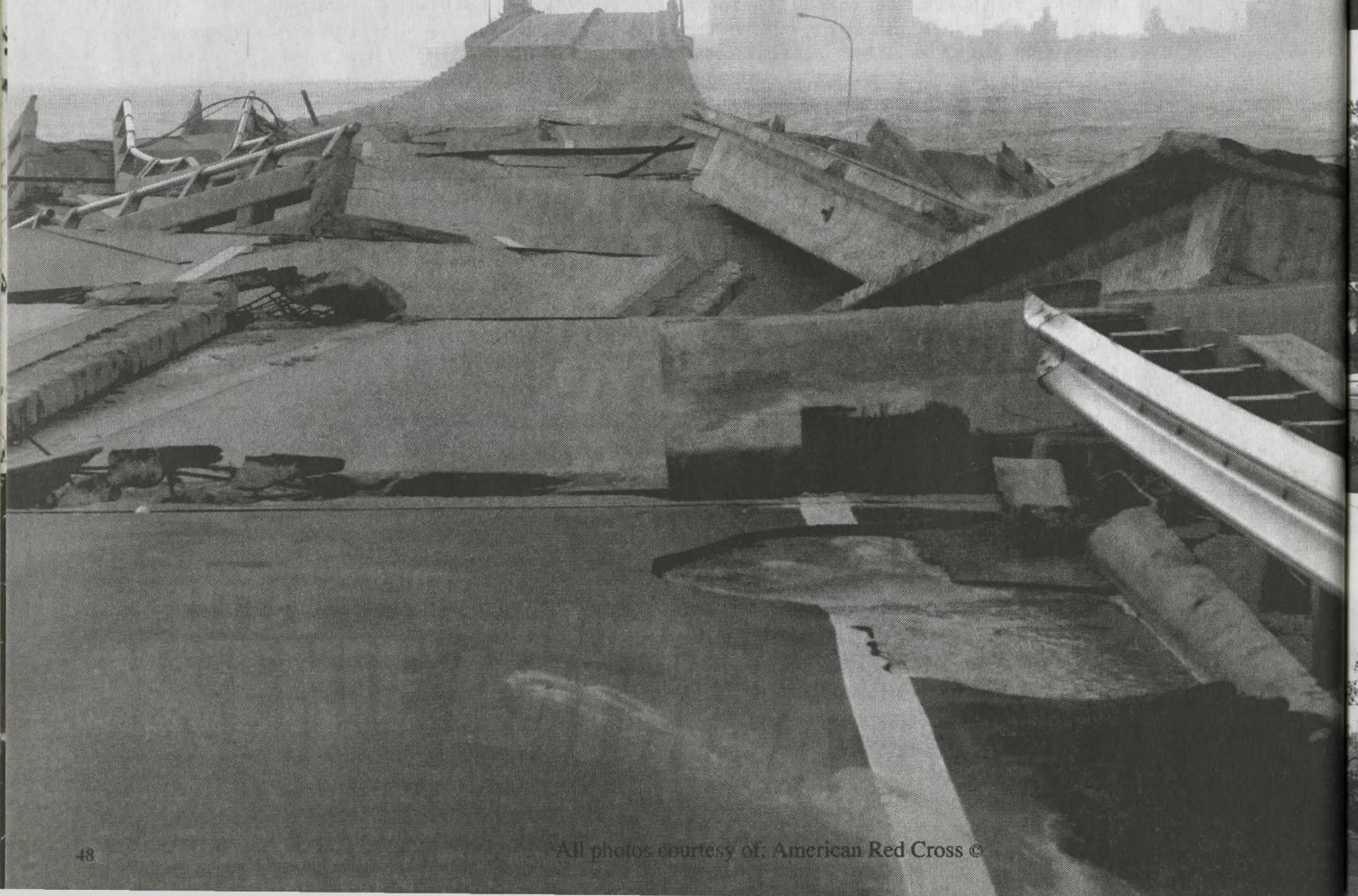
Little Gwenie Sagona is a friend of the Big Wheel family. She was born in 1952 in Shreveport Louisiana, grew up New Orleans, and owns a house in Gentilly Wood, a subdivision of New Orleans. She lived in Los Angeles for twenty six years until May of this year. She's an antique pirate who hankers for bowling balls, cowboy boots, mermaids, thimbles, and of course, awesome glitter. She's a super sweet gal and still refers to her father as daddy. Like most of the residents of New Orleans, the magnitude of hurricane Katrina hit so hard and fast that immediate evacuation wasn't an option. She told me about her experience over a phone conversation on September the 19th. At some moments she cheerfully chatted about fireflies at the shelter in Raleigh, others she broke into tears when explaining why she had to leave her pets behind. She is thankful for every bit of her disposition and knows how fortunate she is to be alive.

We knew a hurricane was coming, but nobody believed it was going to be a level five tropical storm. We all just didn't realize it would be the capacity that it was. I have two cats and a dog, and I wasn't going to leave my animals behind. Hotels were charging like \$25 dollars an animal. I did put my daddy in a hotel and got him on the second floor. I had two cousins and some friends of theirs that were stranded at a house. I put my animals in a cage, grabbed some food, picked up the cousins and tried to find gas stations to fill up. I wanted to get to my sister's house in Zachary but everything was closed. There were six people and three animals in my truck. We ended up going to a friend's place in the lower 9<sup>th</sup> ward, right where the damn busted. In the middle of the night the water came up and swallowed my 68' Volkswagen van. It was about 15-20 feet from the ground up to the second level of the apartment building we were in.

Nobody has been through a hurricane like this

one before. I've been through some tough ones, Camille and Betsy, but to have one this size is just unheard of. In the bedroom of an apartment where we were taking refuge, the windows busted and stuff started flying out. My gentleman friend and I were almost sucked out. The doors were opening and closing and the roof seemed like it could go at any moment. We held a queen sized mattress against the windows and braced ourselves up against it.

It lasted all night. The whole apartment shook with such fury; I can't begin to fully explain it. The water came right up to the balcony. I have no idea why the whole apartment didn't crumble. We could feel [the building] shifting from side to side. We had to scramble. Everyone living in the lower 5 apartments came upstairs. We had to get all the people and animals out of the incoming flood. The water was just coming up so fast; it was neck deep while we made sure no animals were left behind. It was sheer mayhem! We got up to the second level and we were basically living on the only balcony that wasn't destroyed. Some people had left and abandoned their animals. We were all just thrown together in there. The lower level of the apartment building was submerged and we were encompassed by the flood waters. There were 26 animals all together, but we all managed to hang tough. Some people started to leave on boats that were





coming around but nobody was throwing us food or water. Luckily we got into some of the upper level apartments and used whatever we could for food and supplies. We cooked on a grill outside totally surrounded by water. We fought off water moccasons with brooms and from our view point we could see the city burning. We were right next to the industrial canal, where the alligators are. I cooked coffee in a little strainer of a cloth, amongst mice living in the apartment, running around all freaked out.

For the first few days we could see life in the water. Shrimp, flounder, mullets, I even saw a school of carp! And then, about the fifth day, is when the water started turning black. That's when we started smelling death. Across the canal I kept seeing helicopters. I was wondering what they were doing. We were trying to get noticed so we could get the supplies we needed, mainly water. What I thought were helicopters dropping supplies was actually the removal of bodies from where the damn busted. It became helicopter mayhem 24/7. We finally got one of them to drop water for an elderly man who had become very sick. He was later taken to a hospital with my gentlemen friend. I have no idea where they are right now, probably northern Louisiana. When the rest of us evacuated that Monday morning, eight days after the hurricane hit, it really smelled bad. I had to leave my animals behind. It was the hardest thing I've ever had to do, and I still didn't know where my dad was. They took us to the airport and I immediately told the animal rescue people where my pets were. Some people had their dogs....and...I just felt so horrible that I couldn't take my babies. Some helicopters would let you bring your animals and some wouldn't.

They took us to Raleigh North Carolina where we were greeted with the most kindness and tenderness. We were put up in a shelter of about 400 people. They gave us identification cards and I had mine say I was from NASA (laughs). We received 3 meals a day and everyone there just treated us wonderfully. People came by and donated clothes. A lady played the harp for us, and it was so beautiful to have that after what we had been through. My sister found me online through the Red Cross website and I got my FEMA and Red Cross aide.

My daddy said that he had left the hotel to go get his prescription filled the night of the storm, the knucklehead! He's 81 years old and a sweet, sweet man, but stubborn. I had him all tucked away in a hotel with food and water and medicine, but he's got a hard head like the Rock of Gibraltar. During the beginning of the storm he drove away from the hotel a few blocks and a tree fell and knocked his truck into a ditch. The water started coming into the truck. It rose up so quickly that all he had time to do was hold on to the steering wheel and the driver's side door. My 6'2" 81 year old dad stood on the running board of his truck in water up to his chin in the middle of a hurricane for eleven and a half hours. He described it like being in a bubble; debris was flying around him but nothing hit him. Rain pelted down, and the wind blew fiercely but he kept his glasses on his head and his teeth in his mouth! They picked him up on a boat the next morning. He rode in a refrigerated truck where people were just thrown in and treated like dogs. He saw people looting, throwing cash registers through windows; it was a kind of chaos that he had never seen before.

I flew from Raleigh to Houston and then got to Baton Rouge where I met up with my sister. After five days of looking I found my dad living in a trailer. When I picked him up, he came out of the trailer looking like he'd just had the rollercoaster ride of his life. If he had had a lollipop in his mouth he would have looked like a school boy. My daddy faced death, was schlepped around to five different places and that 81 year old man walked out of that trailer like..., I can't explain it.

Now that I've found him, we're going to start looking for my animals. There's just so much to do, you know? I'm so lucky that my sister Alice Ann is available to help me, and her amazing husband



John— ooh! I got to ride on a Harley Davidson, they're bikers and I love it! They have a goat farm and I fell in love with all the goats. I've been petting cows and playing with horses. I'm in the country and I love it. I think I'll stay here for... I don't even know. I'd like to come back to L.A. to decompress. I want to see my friends, sofa hop... I know I won't leave my daddy though. I want to go back to New Orleans, but we'll probably have to sell our property and our house will most likely be demolished. The whole subdivision where it's at will have to be demolished. It's all still under water. I had 32 bowling balls, all my clothes, stuff I've been collecting for years like my mermaid collection, I don't even know if I can go back and retrieve any of it. If I can salvage five out of the twenty some odd boxes of my personal belongings, I'd be lucky... But you know it's just stuff and I'll get over it. Kind of go with the flow, right? I'm just so happy to wake up every day, and I am happy to have found my daddy. Namistai.

Gwenie and the Gulf Coast now prepare for hurricane Rita to grace its destructive presence within the next few days. The army is there and ready for this one, along with FEMA and all the other agencies provided by the government to assist regarding these matters. Gwenie hopes her animals, Chaplin a black and white cat, Andy a grey fluffy cat, and Puppy the black Border Collie mix were rescued from the apartment at 4300 N. Prieur St. in the lower 9th ward of New Orleans. Her attitude is optimistic as she waits for this record breaking disastrous hurricane season to come to an end.

By: Joey Garibaldi

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# OLD SKARS & UPSTARTS

## KICK OFF

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
**Team Goon**



Pat Ngoho over vert

September 1, 2005

The Old Skars and Upstarts Tour 2005 got kicked off in Glendale and was scheduled for over 30 stops all over the US. It began at the Glendale Skatepark with a killer skate session that would be followed up with a gig at The Scene Bar as part of the Indie 103.1 fm's Complete Control night hosted by Joe Sib. Skate punk Duane Peter's band The Hunns is the catalyst for the tour, with stops at skateparks and venues around the country. The tour includes Angel City Outcasts, the Kings of Nuthin, the Black Halos and other bands. Duane and many other skaters were not able to show up for the session. No big deal, many local rippers came to Duane's aid to get the skating kicked off. The park was full of insane shredding all over the place. Omar Hassan, Devon Lamb, Pat Ngoho, Rock N Ron and Chris Hamrock to name a few made for a great time. The skating went on till about 8pm and then the crowd moved down the street to the

# OLD SKOOLS & UPSTARTS



Omar Hassan Pivot To Fakie

## KICK OFF

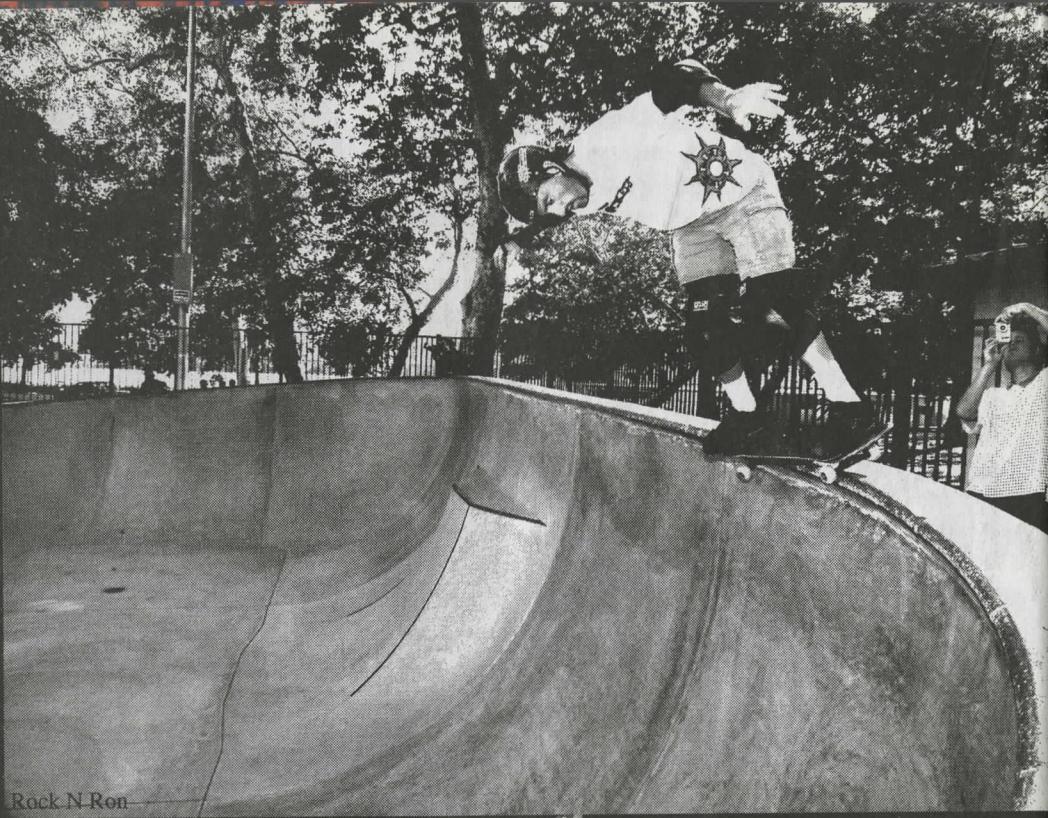
Scene Bar for drinks and a night of Punk rock madness. By the time most everyone got over there that place was already starting to pack out. Tonight's show had The Worthless opening followed by, PriMadonna. Angel City Outcasts were up next. With Alex Brugge on the lead vocals ACO delivered a strong punch of punk rock with a 50's musical influence soaked in for good measure. ACO slapped down the crowd with a performance that is very consistent and contagious, it was very hard to spot anyone in the place not getting into the performance. Of course taking the evening to a zenith was The Hunns. The Hunns put on a show that is hard to forget, especially if you are slamming yourself all over and hitting your head on the stage. They played a 40 or so minute set and never let the crowd up for air once. The show was bitchen and when the set ended the crowd was left yelling for more.



Devon Lamb frontside Air

## OLD SKOOL & UPSTARTS





Rock N Ron



## OLD SKOOL & UPSTARTS

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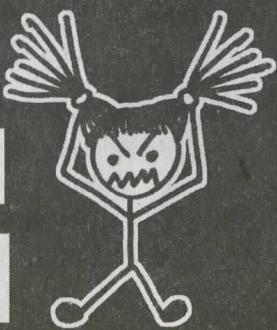
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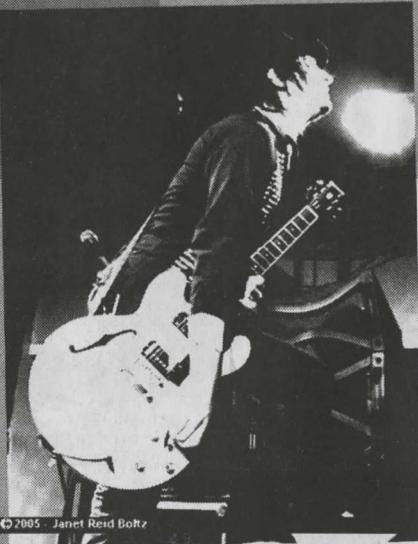
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By: Marko 72

high with the notion that our instinctual will to live, faith in humanity and dignified compassion will carry us through. Perhaps because really bad things rarely happen in front of our faces, we as a country lapse into a false sense of security, an almost feeling of immunity to tragedy; like children who take it for granted that mom and dad have all the answers and can fix anything, we as Americans place way too much faith in our government to be there for us if the proverbial levees ever break. Sometimes the lines between reality and fiction get so blurred that we convince ourselves that the "movie" on CNN or whatever is going to have a Hollywood ending in which the hero wins and the credits roll as the guy finally gets the girl; such is definitely not the case. I hope what we've learned from watching in awe and disbelief at the horrendous events in the gulf coast regions unfold in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, is at least that it really is up to "we the people" in the end. Big daddy isn't going to save your ass when the ship is going down; we've got to learn to swim, to save lives, to sustain ourselves against all odds, to kill the fog of panic with the clarity of calm, to overpower struggle and strife with plans of action and forward thinking and to never lose hope that good will always prevail over bad. Hopefully the good that will come out of this is that it will be the final nail in the current administration's coffin; no amount of politicking, fast talking and bullet-dodging is going to get anyone off the hook this time. Now cue up the appropriate Scorpions song and do/give what you can to help where you can.

#### Lip Synchin', Ass Kissin' and Cock Suckin':

I don't understand why people get their panties in such a twist over things like Ashlee Simpson lip-synching on SNL (although that was pretty fucking embarrassing right?) when the same type of shit goes down all the time in most modern music. There's so much smoke and mirrors involved in selling bands to the public now

#### Rock You Like a Hurricane:

We live on a planet. The possibilities of natural disasters are implied; so in a civilized society we try to do what we can to ensure that when/if these things hit us, we can control or subvert them, beat them to the punch, minimize their wrath, or at very least survive their aftermath, pick up the pieces and hold our heads up

that it's starting to resemble a magic show. Being that I live in a proverbial glass house myself (I play guitar in a band) I'll go ahead and cast the first stone. I'll use the example of radio festivals; bands will bend over to play these things and participate in all the promotion that goes with them, because they (or at least, their managers) know that there's that secret handshake that connects such radio-ass-kissing to "increased spins" of their single; and ultimately a (perceived to be) huge part of their careers. How many times have you seen hung over musicians sharpie-in-hand obliging to an autograph session at one of these events. These "meet & greets" are the most impersonal, assembly line versions of interacting with fans. These poor people who lower themselves to speed dialing stations to be caller number whatever so they can "win" the opportunity to "meet" a real live rock musician, only to wait in a long line and be hastily ushered through barely getting the chance to say "y'all fuckin' rock" and get their promotional material scribbled on. Okay, if you're Madonna or James Hetfield or Mick Jagger or Billie Joe, that's one thing, you'd probably cause someone to get trampled if you set foot in-front of the scenes. But most bands have no excuse to not go out and at least make themselves available to the public for a little while before or after the show as a gesture of appreciation. I'd rather meet 20 people and have it be meaningful, than participate in an organized "meet & greet"; not wanting to martyr my career opportunities for the sake of such a gripe and caving to the guilt trip my record company who has spent 100's of thousands of dollars on my band, you'll likely see me sitting at a table signing away and drinking a bottled water given to me by the radio station, which was probably given to them by some bottled water company in hopes that they'd give them to influential customers like band members and DJs who would in turn be seen drinking the water by the public, who will then hopefully choose that brand of water next time they're thirsty... Hey, if it makes your day or makes you happy, fine; I'm not judging autograph seekers, I'm just painting you a bigger picture of what it all means on a business level. Sometimes it's not so wholesome. But neither is lip-synching on a "live" TV show. And neither is claiming dyed in the wool hardcore/punk ideals and turning around and signing up for the Warped Tour every summer for that matter. It's getting harder and harder to get by in this world, let alone get through the day, these days without unwittingly sucking corporate cock in some way, shape or form.

# PAY'DAY WHISKEY

BY BRIAN STANNARD

## TENDERLOINS AND BLISTERED KIDNEYS

My friends and I joke that every profession has its G.G. Allen: *She was the G.G. Allen of librarians when she kicked over that bookshelf. Or, my buddy, Mario. That guy's crazy, he's the G.G. Allen of forklift operators.*

It may have been a stretch to call my former co-worker, Andre, The G.G. Allen of delivery drivers, but he gave it the ole' Vietnam veteran try. Andre was a hard drinking, hard cursing, Ohio Players-listening, bad-ass motherfucker who showed up to Project Open Hand freshly fired from the Post Office after he crashed one of their trucks.

Project Open Hand is a crack friendlier version of Meals on Wheels. It provides free food for sick people, but the emphasis is on the Tenderloin, San Francisco's skid row neighborhood. At the time, my job was to oversee all the meal deliveries. I wasn't the one who hired Andre, but I had to be his handler.

While likening Andre to G.G. Allen is a stretch, a completely fair comparison would be to Robert De Niro's character, Travis Bickle, in *Taxi Driver*. Both were Vietnam veterans, both commandeered vehicles for employment, both railed against inhumanity of contemporary urban society, and both were totally fucking crazy.

Travis Bickle Andre perpetually scowled, and I was convinced that he slept with a cigarette dangling from his lower lip. "How's it goin', Andre?" I'd ask after he returned from a delivery route.

"Bunch a goddamned, wig-wearin' crackheads out there, Brian," he'd reply, and then he'd hose off the van to give, "Those goddamn ants a bath, they be messin' with my motherfuckin' business!" Travis Bickle Andre was consistently inconsistent. Extreme before this became an overused word. He was the most efficient delivery driver which in and of itself would have made him the star employee, but the efficiency came with parking tickets, moving violation tickets, in the field romances that proved to be a sexual harassment-fueled nightmare

for our human resources director, and an aggravated assault charge that came about when Travis Bickle Andre kicked the ever living shit out of someone who tried to break into the van while he was making a delivery.

As a cruel joke, I'd have Travis Bickle Andre train the new people. A twenty year-old who barely seemed able to shave would show up for their first day, and within a minute, Travis Bickle Andre would break it down. He'd point to the New Guy's Chuck Taylor shoes and say, "See those shoes you're wearing? They won't work. You're gonna' step on a syringe or catch Hepatitis C. You're gonna' need steel toe boots. They also come in handy in case you see some crazy ass dog in which case you can kick it in the nuts. And another thing, don't touch shit when you're in the residential hotels. You use your elbows, and another thing..."

Four years later, my co-workers and I still joke about Travis Bickle Andre's elbow method of opening doors in the Tenderloin. The gesture looks part like a dance move, and part like a boxer shielding their face from attack. When asked why he co-opted this method, he responded, "There's a lot of sick shit that goes on around here."

By minute two of the New Guy's first day on the job, Travis Bickle Andre's oratory would just be warming up. "And another thing, if you value you're mental san-i-ty, stay away from Lisa. That bitch is crazy. And another thing, Chef Mike doesn't trip if you drink on the clock, so long as the work's done and the vans are parked. And another thing..."

Many nights Travis Bickle and I would drink out on the corner when all the work was done. Everyone else in the Tenderloin seemed to be doing it so why not us? The main thing was that the work was done. Eight hours prior we never had any idea how we were going to feed an army of sick people throughout the entirety of San Francisco, but somehow we did it so the drinking had a victorious quality to it.

Travis Bickle Andre would sip his Remy Martin between drags of his cigarette while talking about his childhood in The Fillmore, a neighborhood once referred to us Harlem West before the Burger Kings and Popeye's moved in. Travis Bickle Andre would also teasingly call me an international zipper simply because I can sort of speak Spanish. Then with our thoughts sufficiently anchored down with booze, we'd congratulate each other again on the miracle of feeding 800 people when every circumstance conspired against us, and part ways.

One day I showed up to work and Travis Bickle Andre was gone. My supervisor explained that he had a cocaine-induced heart attack and most likely wouldn't be back. From that point on, Travis Bickle Andre became a ghost in my world, never to be seen again except in the far recesses of my skull and the black ink of this page.

Late at night, though, when I'm drunk and alone, I'll wander through the Fillmore looking for him, and when this bears no fruit I'll cut over on Eddy St. toward the Tenderloin, reliving old conversations we had over Remy Martin and beer.

Last night I ducked into a Tenderloin bar on Geary St., and an old woman smoking (the cops around here have bigger fish to fry than an old woman smoking a cigarette in a bar) turned to me and asked if I went to Burning Man this year. I checked my immediate urge to laugh at the idea of paying money to be stranded in the middle of nowhere with a bunch of neo-hippies because this woman seemed sad and lonely, and she explained that if she were forty years younger that she would have left the Tenderloin to go to Burning Man.

She stared at the rows of bottles behind the bar, fanned four single bills on the counter and asked me, "What kind of beer are you drinking?" Just like Travis Bickle Andre would have asked me in so many years ago.

# PUNK LIGHT GOVERNMENT

BY MARCUS SOLOMON

All things are interconnected, and somehow, I am going to link punk rock, skateboarding, the value of education, and the presi-dunce's abysmal and deadly failing in the hurricane Katrina catastrophe; the worst natural disaster in our nation's history. First of all, your ability to participate in great things like skateboarding and punk rock exists because you live in the richest country on the planet and your rights are protected by The United States Constitution. Right now, your ability to do things like go to punk rock shows, ride your skateboard, get an education, and speak your mind is in great danger. The people in charge of running this country—the G.W. Bush administration—is completely absorbed in doing everything they can to obtain more money and power for themselves... at YOUR expense. These extremely powerful people are very adept at collecting for themselves but as this recent terrible tragedy in the south has shown us, they are hopelessly inept at dealing with national emergencies...and/or they simply do not care about poor Americans dying on live national television. If you really want to be a rebel, then I urge you to be an intelligent, well-informed, and active participant in the never-ending battle to fight the power.

Realize that freedom is not something that somebody a long time ago earned for us, and now we always have it. There are always thieves lurking somewhere waiting for the chance to take your stuff, and your rights are no exception. It is up to you to pay attention to the world around you, process that information to the best of your ability, and then make a conscious decision to accept or reject what is happening. Of course, you are also

free to be a complete and total wasteoid. You can quit school, get high all the time and piss your life away in self-absorbed self destruction—that's your right—but I very much doubt the apathetic contingent is reading this article. I am talking to YOU...the one with enough vocabulary and patience to read this far. It is up to people like you to take control of the future, and ironically, it is those who exist on the fringes of society that are in the best position to see what is really going on.

When you stand at the edge, you can see more. Most of the people in this world are creatures of habit and reflex. They do what they do because they see other people doing it, and they follow the leader no matter what...oftentimes right over a cliff, and that is what is happening with this nation under the tyranny of G.W. Bush and Co. But you, who have already made a conscious decision to be different...you know that society is full of bullshit and have already rejected a large portion of it. And yet, you still live in it. It is impossible to completely divorce yourself from society if you are a punk and/or a skateboarder, because those things exist within this shallow society. Therefore, you have a responsibility to your scene and yourself to be involved with society to the extent that you protect your own existence. In simpler terms, it is not enough to spike your mohawk, slam dance at the shows, and spray paint an anarchy symbol on your deck. You have to be smart, pay attention, and get involved.

Did you see all those people in the south dying and suffering as a result of hurricane Katrina? It is the greatest natural disaster in U.S. history and as tens of thousands of Americans were screaming for help, it took George the Lesser (our president), THREE DAYS to end his

vacation. It then took a couple of more days for him to order Federal assistance and the rescue effort only took full effect after a week had passed. Do you think that if that storm had destroyed Crawford, Texas, (where Bush has his hobby ranch) it would have taken that long to get help? Of course not. The president has the authority to federalize the National Guard simply by decree, at a moment's notice, but he did not do so. I honestly believe that the rich, white Republicans let those poor, democrat blacks die on purpose. True, there was failure at the local and state levels, but this does not excuse the presi-dunce from doing NOTHING when he has the authority to authorize immediate assistance. There are simply too many details about how the Bush Administration fucked everything up to examine in this limited space. Take the time to investigate this for yourself and be sure to ask, "Why the hell did Bush put the (fired) former head of the International Arabian Horse Association in charge of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)?" The answer is cronyism. Look it up.

What can you do? Simply stay in school and do your best. Your mind is your ultimate weapon, so use the system to gather as much power as you can. Reject the obvious bullshit, while expanding your ability to think, analyze, and act. When you drop out you're doing what the bastards in our government want you to do because a nation of uneducated, uninformed, apathetic, pleasure-seekers is the easiest to control. The future is up to you. Maybe one of you will one day be the first punk rock governor...imagine that!

# WHO ARE YOU TO ACCUSE ME?

BY PHILIPPE DUHART

## Katrina's Got a Strap-on

The Greeks spoke of *hubris* as excessive pride in the face of the gods. The gods, however, have their own way of reminding humanity of our place in the order of things. It's called *ate*, an act of overwhelming violence which humiliates man with the realization that he is but a bag of flesh and shit that can be effortlessly broken by the forces of nature.

All it took to humiliate the US before the world was a hurricane which we knew was coming and a predictable levee break. Hurricane Katrina did what the splendid little war in Iraq—with more dead, more destruction, and more incompetence—has so far failed to do: **raise questions of those in power.**

Team Bush has managed to avoid this scenario by adroitly manipulating the news cycle. As the nation awoke from its war-loving slumber over the past year, the Right—aided by the complacency of the corporate media—played a game of 3-Card Monty with the public. Questions concerning the non-existence of WMDs, the failure of the occupation, the growing sophistication of the insurgency, the systematic use of torture by the military, and the simmering civil war among Iraq's various malcontents have repeatedly been answered with the specter of domestic threats. There was that brain-dead woman in Florida being starved by the state. There was Rosie O'Donnell wanting to marry her girlfriend. And there is the invasion of Mexicans who may or may not be Al Qaeda operatives. (The guys I work with spend less time talking about jihad and 72 virgins, and more time getting paid shit and badmouthing Chivas.)

The hurricane hit in such a media-friendly way. We have been raised on ready-made visual tragedies—just watch *Lifetime* for a day. Add the media's penchant for portraying poor blacks as the undeclared scourge of society, and—voilà!—the hurricane dominated the news cycle for weeks.

During this time, we have been

bombarded with images of poor black refugees. The significance of this word should not be lost on anyone. When it comes to poor brown people suffering, we've long enjoyed a bit of *schadenfreude*. It wasn't so long ago that the Right lambasted the debt-relief movement with the assertion that the suffering of poor nations—i.e. nations full of poor brown people—is directly related to the corruption of their governments. The logic of the Right holds that if these people want a better life they must have the spunk to rid themselves of their brutal regimes. Then they too can live a pointless existence unhindered by starvation and trade barriers. [Iraqis are a different story, but I'll save that for another tirade.]

Then the hurricane struck and the nation couldn't help but feel a bit like a third-world country with mobs of displaced black people mixing us a hitherto unknown cocktail of shame and terror—shame that the entire governing structure failed to handle their shit; terror because black people scare White America.

'Honey, why did those black folks stick around? If I were them I would've loaded the fam into the Suburban and visited Aunt Flo for the weekend. It would've been like a little vacation.'

'Sweetie, maybe they don't own cars or have the money to get out of town.'

'Well, that's preposterous. This is America. Everyone has a car and an Aunt Flo.'

Could it be that our God-given capitalist system has left people mired in structural poverty for the last 400+ years?

If you're expecting honesty from the Right, you're an idiot. Theirs is the same old song and dance. On the one hand, they've castigated those who dare criticize W who strummed Mark Wills' guitar à la Nero as black folk drowned. The Bush apologists claim he pleaded with Louisiana Democrats to do something, but Democrats hate black people as much as they love flooding.

The flipside of the Right-wing

narrative in the Katrina aftermath holds that the footage of blacks 'keeping it real' is proof positive of why 'these people' are poor—they lack the gumption of white people. Bill O'Reilly hailed the aftermath as a lesson of personal responsibility and a refutation of 'racial hustlers and far-left demagogues.' Rush Limbaugh sees the Hurricane as validation of the 'utter failure of generation after generation of the entitlement mentality.'

Yet, these sermons on personal responsibility and the evils of government helping the poor are in actuality little more than the desperate rationalization of those who've hailed America as the Kingdom of God now faced with the fact that God doesn't give a shit about the USA.

In the end, the Bush *junta* has a target on their back the size of the Astrodome. The loss of revenue from their tax cuts, the drain of manpower and resources to Iraq, the idea that the federal government is bad, the belief in the private sector fixing all problems. How will these dogmas address the scourge of citizen-refugees which we'll have to deal with for years to come? Are Creoles the new Hmong? Don't expect answers from the Democrats. If you do, you're an idiot.

Ironic as it is, House Republicans were forced to scrap their planned vote on the elimination of the 'death tax' two weeks after Katrina when it became increasingly apparent that the public's sympathies were not with the wealthiest 1% at the moment. Fortunately, Bush managed not only to dole out no-bid reconstruction contracts to certain corporations—Halliburton and Bechtel—but he also signed an executive order allowing these companies to pay substandard wages for cleanup and construction work. (Wages in Louisiana are already 19% the national average; twenty-eight percent lower in Mississippi. Ergo, profits to be made.)

Even in times of tragedy, Republicans love to play the rusty trombone on the rich man. For the worker, the donkey punch.

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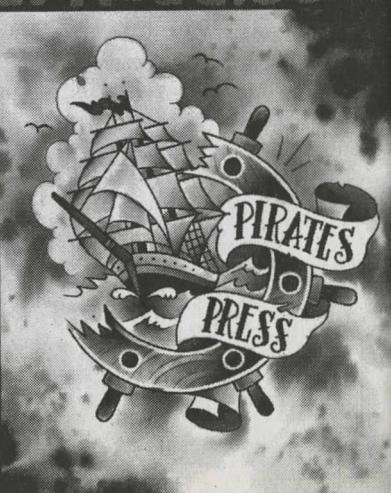
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# ...the G spot...

By:BM Franklin

Disclaimer: I can not be held responsible for what you are about to read.

Enter at your own risk. Knock twice. Ask for Larry. Don't look him in the eye, enter below.

## Gnarly

Have you ever gone south for a second? As in – your train of thought somehow left the plain of reality called life and you feel alone? Sounds fucked up. It is. Bear with me. So I go south. All of a sudden I start dwelling on death and how much it scares me and how gnarly it is. And I can't stop thinking about it. I'm trying to act normal, but I'm fidgeting in my seat like a crack whore waiting for her next hit. So I try and pull it together. But it keeps coming back to me – someday we'll all be dead. I can't take it. I start to shake with fear. My mom drives ahead...

## Trust Your Gut Tip #43

I've always known the guy who has a best friend who happens to be female is trouble. Chances are -- she likes having your guy hanging from a string or she secretly likes him herself and hasn't gotten around to telling him yet. Very rarely does a man have a best friend that's a woman and nothing ever happened in the past -- and nothing *is* ever going to happen. They're just four drinks and one night away from it.

**And On That Note – When you're the only girl in the room – you're the hottest girl in the room...** There are two kinds of women out there -- one that has many girlfriends and one that has none. Let it be a warning to you when you meet the latter, because you can't trust a woman who doesn't have any girlfriends. Those kinds of gals are more interested in *your* boyfriend.

## And We Look Up To Her?

Ask Angelina Jolie about her children and like any proud mother, she'll brag about them. "They give me so much joy, and I want to make a better world for them," Angelina said in an interview recently.

I love that Angelina is so intent on "making a better world" for her adopted children, but she thought nothing of crumbling Jennifer Aniston's world around her. Angelina is a very guilty woman, indeed. As much we see Angelina's adoption efforts as being humanitarian, they are also very self-fulfilling. How can one fault Angelina of anything when she takes care of these underprivileged kids? Any criticism you may have of her is wiped away once you ponder her do-gooder efforts.

But the truth is she's a very confused woman, from her gender hopping, to her adopting a baby Billy Bob didn't want and ruining *that* marriage, to her overly-passionate displays of affection (think blood-filled vials with Billy-Bob and passionate kisses with her own brother), to keeping up with her mysterious, alluring image, when in reality she's just a lost little girl who never got the love and compassion she needed from daddy.

*Just a thought...*

## It's Called Covering Your Ass

Everyone wants both. The first baby is free game. Doesn't matter if it's a boy or a girl – as long as it's healthy. But when you're on your second, the stakes go up. You are rooting for what you did not get before. You want what you don't have. You just don't want to say it out loud in case it doesn't happen. We all say we don't want what we might not end up getting. And you live with it anyway.

## We're Not Interested

People have said, "It's not you, it's me," in order to break up with someone, or "I just don't have time in my life right now for a relationship," to get out of going on a date. The truth is... it *is* you and they *do* have time. If someone is truly interested in someone, the fact that he's her boyfriend's brother won't even stop her. No one can fight that uncontrollable chemistry that radiates whenever you see one another. If the heat is there -- you'll find a way to be with that person -- come hell or high water, and nothing will stop it from happening. Even if it only happens once.

## Your Wedding Will Suck

I'm so sick of hearing women say their wedding day is the "*most important day of their life*." What a sad life it must be, then, indeed. Anyone who's ever gotten married knows *attending* a wedding is much better than *being in* the wedding. When you're the bride or groom, you've got hosting duties, people to meet and greet, toasts to sit through and make and cakes to cut. You can't disappear for a smoke, or have that extended chat in the restroom -- you've got to get out and mingle! People are *looking* for you! And let's not forget that you have to keep your wits about you -- you might be able to slip in a few sips of champagne, but you can't get rip-roaring drunk (or you can, but then you face living down drunken bride/groom stories until the end of time).

Weddings are simply a formality that is a fantasy of what you're life will never be like.

# SIN PALABRAS

By RAY RAY



I literally just woke up and I can't stop thinking about a movie I saw yesterday. A movie that for once actually scared me. I suppose in some sense I'm lucky I saw it in the proper context. I had not seen any trailers, print advertisements, billboards, or had heard anything about it. It was the same with the infamous "Blair Witch Project" where a long while before it hit the theaters I had heard rumors of an underground film that someone had made while researching something. Not knowing if the bootleg copy my friend had was real or not it was by far the proper context to watch the "movie" in. I remember seeing the pain, anguish and terror, especially the terror, in both movies and at various points, becoming engulfed by it all. I wonder now, what made it so real? Was it my mind or the context or a combination of factors known and unknown? This shock to the system creates a moment of tranquility that occurs before the ingestion of your world beginning anew.

I've been blessed with quite a few of those moments in life. Reading the Illuminatus Trilogy, experiencing Europe for the first time, meeting The Dudicles (don't bother googling that one), as a few examples but the most obvious was being introduced to Punk. At last, in my own mind, there was a place where I could feel a sense of peace in the entire ruckus of conventional thoughts and methods. A place, on some level, that seemed to have its own standards and conventions but was completely unconventional in comparison to the rest of society, a place whose music was birthed in a bitter and angry tirade, a place where no man had gone before. Ok, so I couldn't resist the Star Trek quote only because if any of you ladies out there want to have Captain Kirk sex (this involves

you screaming out in an alien tongue of your choosing while I may or may not quote lines from Captain Kirk's "I'm going to lay me a green skinned woman tonight" pimp lines) I'm so fucking game! Maybe if you're really feeling the "Where no man has gone before" vibe one of you might consider The Gorilla Mask too?

Regardless, the point I was trying to make, before my mind wanders off again, is a recent question that popped into my head. How the fuck is it ok for bands like (insert any TRL friendly cookie cutter spiky haired tattooed boy band) to call themselves "punk" and the music they play as "punk" when they're complete corporate whores? When I say "they're I mean the band as a unit, not the individuals. When did it become acceptable for a "punk" band to completely turn around and do what the music was birthed as a backlash to? Do using power chords predominately make someone's music "punk"? I thought it was always about the passion and soul behind it. The Minutemen, James Brown (that inter-state car chasing lead pipe welding mother fucker is another story) and Public Enemy are punk! If power chords make a band punk then I guess metal, hardcore and everything in between is punk! YES! Baby Gopal is finally considered punk! One of my missions in life is finally achieved! Thanks guys! Zzzzz...

So with that being said and off my chest I think I need to say that the reason why the movie scared me wasn't because it might or might not be real or what may or may not exist. This isn't the proper forum to do such. What I would like to know is if people go to a movie to be entertained and entertained only. Do they make the effort with Hollywood movies to analyze what might be the subtle message behind the obvious movie frame? I don't know and I can't even begin to try and guess. All I know is watching that movie, I was reminded of various times and places in my life where hope was a fallacy because I was having my ass handed to me either literally for reasons beyond any kid's comprehension or figuratively by my local Social Conditioner of Conventional Crap. So when watching the film, if you do choose to see it, perhaps focus on what that absolute torment and anguish that is being represented or take it literally and let the utter terror of it all consume you. It's a place that no man has...but I won't say it.

P.S. The opinions expressed here are mine and mine alone and in no way shape or form represent Big Wheel magazine. I say this because my mouth gets me into enough trouble and I don't want the good peeps who take the effort to bring this to you to burn with me. Oh, the movie is called "The Exorcism of Emily Rose" and having stayed up all night to finish I don't expect it to make sense.

Ray Ray

<http://churchofthe8thday.com>

I fell out of my chair again. I say 'again' because this was the third time tonight I performed this particular acrobatic feat in front of a bar packed full of drunks. Those around me were beginning to grow skeptical of my intentions to finish the journey I started just three hours ago. There were girls hovering around the bar like flies desperately seeking the stench of loneliness on an unsuspecting guy. Their goal was simple, get him to buy her a drink or lose all dignity trying. I'm predisposed to avoiding social contact as much as humanly possible but tonight I had to give in for the greater good of mankind.

No longer would I be living in sin on my weekly drunken escapades. Tonight I was legally an "adult" and that scared the shit out of me. Some of my friends turned into adults and now they were boring and scared of everything. I'll never let go of the death grip I have on my childhood. At 50 years old I'll still be skating my half-pipe, playing Nintendo, and going to punk shows. I'll still be an irresponsible, sarcastic jackass.

Getting severely intoxicated on your twenty-first birthday is as much a rite of passage in our culture as dancing naked around a raging bonfire covered in pig's blood and wearing a brightly colored ostrich feather in your hair is in some parts of the world. Or at least I think it is. That's what I saw on a Japanese game show and I think the contestant was turning twenty-one but in all fairness I don't speak Japanese. I haven't even been to Japan yet but I keep meaning to go if for just a day or two. They sell beer and sex toys in the vending machines.

Three hours ago I started my journey through twenty-one different shots of alcohol and I was determined to reach the end of the road before this night was over. Now on my 15<sup>th</sup> shot I felt closer to death than I should have this early on a Thursday night. Fortunately, I have a job that I can only handle if I show up drunk. I already had a great jump on the coming workday. Fridays were created by and for alcoholics. There is no doubt of that.

My 16<sup>th</sup> shot went straight to my head. Now I found myself hovering around a circle of college girls I had never met. They were laughing wildly at something I said but I didn't remember telling a joke. I'm a charming bastard sometimes. I really am. I asked one of the prettier ones where I might be able to find a urinal. Women can be very kind to a man who has lost his senses but poses no immediate physical threat to them. She took me by the hand and led me to my destination,

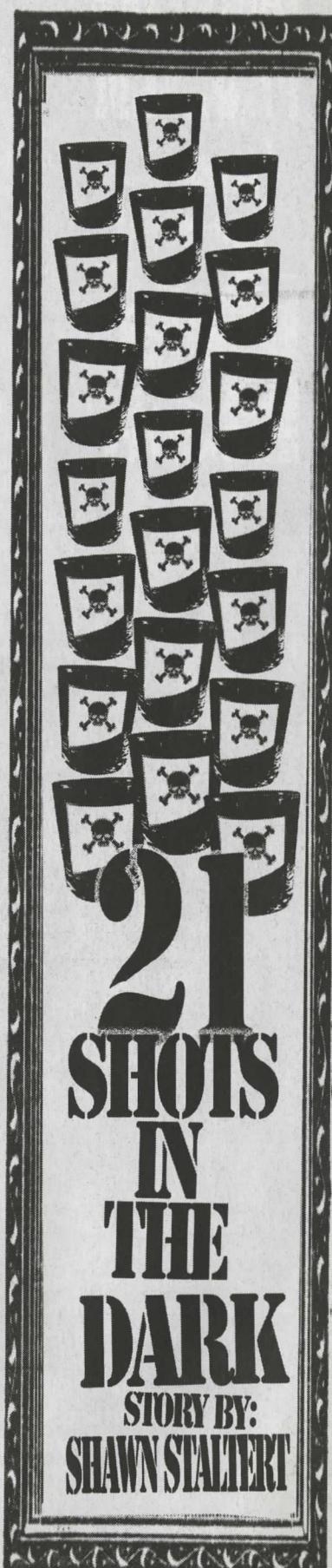
the bathroom. We said our goodbyes and I promised to buy her a drink later if I could find her.

The amount of mental power it took to fade back into this world would have made Einstein weak in the knees but I managed to summon the will from somewhere deep inside myself to regain full use of my limbs again. There's no way I was going to end my twenty-first birthday on the filthy, piss covered, floor of a bathroom.

I emerged from the bathroom feeling like a new man, lighter by nearly two pounds. My friends immediately spotted me and dragged me through the crowd to the bartender. They were, after all, the ones making me run the twenty-one shot gauntlet in honor of this, my twenty first year of life. The next shot on my list? They call it Liquid Cocaine. Don't worry. This isn't a seedy tale of illegal drug use. We'll save that one for next month. Liquid Cocaine is a vile mixture of Goldschlager, 151, and Jagermeister. Shooting this is the equivalent of giving a sociopath a chainsaw, a can of gasoline, a match, and letting him loose on a room full of blind orphans. This was a bad idea any day of the week.

A small crowd gathered around me as word began to spread that this was my twenty-first birthday celebration. The shot reached my lips as the drunks cheered me on but it refused to complete the journey through my esophagus to its final resting place. Instead it sat there in my cheeks holding on for dear life and disintegrating my tongue in the process. I knew something wasn't quite right when it slowly started to leak out from my lips onto my lime green, faded, NOFX T-shirt. A roar of laughter sprang up around me and I started laughing too thinking someone must have tripped and hurt themselves. I always laugh at people when they fall down. I'm sick like that.

The shot completely soaked my pants. As it ran down my leg and you can imagine what I was thinking. Twenty-one is way too early to start pissing your pants. My knees buckled and my vision faded as I collapsed to the floor. The last memory I have of my twenty-first birthday is the dull thud of my head smashing on the sticky floor as Motley Crue's "Girls Girls Girls" droned on endlessly in the background. Oh yea, I suppose there's a moral to this story. Don't drink evil shots. Don't let your twenty-first birthday be your last night of drunken partying. And don't grow up even if all your friends decide to. Oh, and uh...drink responsibly. Yeah.



# PART OF THE PROBLEM



First things first. I'd like to say Happy 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to my wife, the smartest, funniest, sexiest woman I've ever met and the only one interested in putting up with my fucking shit.

So, I was recently at a great show over at the Knitting Factory: Wanted Dead, Pressure Point, Whiskey Rebels

and Angel City Outcasts. I could rave about A.C.O. for days because they're snappy dressers and they've made the local scene a helluva lot more fun since they've been out and about.

But that would be a digression from the unspoken problem: a ridiculous amount of Mohawks that have never been paid for with a punch to the nose, miles of bondage belts that have never even seen a girl naked and full-sleeves on teenagers.

There's kind of a huge fashionista overload going on in punk rock that threatens to overwhelm the young punks under mountains of Hot Topic credit card debt and future tattoo-removal bills.

There's probably no real way to say this without sounding old, but fuck it, I am old. The full sleeves, the knuckle tatts, the neck tatts... some of you guys are making some very bad choices.

Back in the 80's, I ran around with a crew in Boston called Problem Hardcore. In those days tattoo shops and tattooing were illegal in Mass., so you really didn't see too many, unless they were on the arms of touring bands, kids from other states or some sloppy-ass homemade stuff.

Around '88-'89 most of the kids in the crew headed out on their own, most of us left Boston for parts unknown. Some went to college, some to jail. Some started families, some died young. The survivors of that scene and that time are spread across the country

now.

Anyhow, seeing all the upstarts all sleeved and pierced and decked to the 9's made me think about my old crew and how many of them still listen to punk and hardcore, twenty years later. Maybe not just listen to it, but advertise it and are comfortable with that.

It's not many. We spawned an interesting group, many artistic endeavors: writing, film, TV production, photography, classical guitar making, bands and music production. We had a chef, a finish carpenter, a UPS driver, a prep-school English teacher, a city council member, some military guys, a florist and a bunch of family types. We also had some junkies, dealers, Irish mobsters and a convicted murderer, but those are different stories...

When we get together, for those infrequent holidays, weddings and such, it's surprising how normal the whole group looks. You can tell by looking at the group that they're unusual, artistic, whatever. But you wouldn't take a glance and guess we're Warped Tour roadies.

Now if you could go back to Boston in the 80's and make tattoos legal and take the big fucking stick that used to live in the ass of Massachusetts out, I have little doubt that we would have gone as overboard as all the Cali kids are currently.

If you asked me if I wanted "PROBLEM HARDCORE" on my knuckles at 18, a Slapshot pit bull and a fucking plaid Bosstones skull, I'd have jumped at the chance. We all would have.

Cut to today. Out of our old crew of forty or so, about five or six still go to punk and hardcore shows. Of those five or six, half actually work in the indie music biz such that it is. Now it might sound like I'm about to challenge people's commitment to punk ideals or something but I'm not. The kids I'm talking about are hardcore, through and through. They have the scars and stories to show for it.

Looking back at it though, I think not having the tatts and idiotic facial piercings has kept doors open for our group that will be closed to the new kids I see on the block. Like I don't

know how to explain it differently, but face, neck, hand tatts and the assorted body mods are going to limit y'all's job options in an already shitty job market and college options in a tight college market.

I have a feeling why it's so prevalent here in So Cal: The new punks see all the old punks still at the shows. You're at the Knitting Factory or The Scene or The Troub and you see a bunch of sleeved-up old timers hanging out... or you check out your favorite bands like Rancid, A.F.I. or something and you see these cartoon cool rockers.

Here's the thing: those guys have sleeves because they've been getting tattooed for twenty years. They got tattoos that reminded them of places and times, bands, girls, jail terms, friends and family and shit like that.

They did not, like Good Charlotte, show up at a tattoo shop with a check from Sony and say, "We're a punk rock band. Slap some credibility on our arms so we can go on tour." (Just an example, I hear they're sweethearts)

Twenty years from now, do you want to be wearing a hairnet and a nametag, 'cause someone convinced you that you needed sailor stars on your neck or "SKINHEAD" on your knuckles?

Whatever. That's 800 words. That's my Big Wheel real estate. As you were, fucko.



# CONCENTRATION CRAMP

BY JESSIE ALK



By the time this issue comes out, everyone out there will probably be sick to death of the destruction of New Orleans. Since it is October, I was planning on writing about the most punk rock horror-movie scary thing that ever happened to me. But no one was really planning on last month beginning the way it did. I loved the city of New Orleans, even though I only made it there once. It was one of the few American cities, like New York, LA, and San Francisco, which I knew I had to visit, to try to understand. Like a lot of the country, I'm in mourning right now. Ten years ago I would have probably laughed about it. "Fuck yeah! Death and destruction, and don't forget the chaos!" But now I hate to see it. I hate to see the suffering. I can't stand seeing poor people treated this way by the government. I really don't know whether the inept response was based on racism or not. But if I was black, floating in dead bodies and shit, and I saw no evidence of anyone trying to help me to get out of there, get food and water in, or even stop the raping and killing, I know what I'd think. I might just be mad enough to take a potshot at a helicopter.

As far as I know, New Orleans never had a big punk scene. But that didn't stop the punks from coming. In the early Nineties hundreds of squatter punks would descend on the city around Mardi Gras time. Like other events around the country, New Orleans in February became part of the national circuit of the cross-country traveling squatter punk scene. Halloween on Castro, summer in the Lower East Side and the Beer Olympics in Brooklyn, and the National Rainbow Gathering around the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend. Punks could wander down Bourbon with a cup, getting wasted on a hundred different liquors for free. The police cracked down, trying to drive the squatters away. They were notorious for inventing bizarre charges they'd use to pull people off of the street. Kids were arrested for "Assault on A Hamburger," "Leaning with Intent to Fall," "Impersonating a Human Being." It was crazy, but when people talked about it they always sounded kind of proud. The kid who had gotten the most insulting, unbelievable charges won.

Year after year I missed it. There was always something stopping me from getting there for Mardi Gras. I was in school or working, didn't have enough money or had

too much. I could have dropped everything and gone out there on the streets. All my friends did it, and I traveled to other cities that way. But in New Orleans if you've got no money and you're a punk, you are probably going to jail. And OPP is no joke, from what I've heard. By the time I finally made it down there, in 2001, the traveling punk scene had for the most part faded away.

I couldn't believe what I had been missing. Typically a day late and a dollar short, I spent two weeks in New Orleans right in between Mardi Gras and Jazzfest. The hordes of tourists were at a minimum, and there were no parades or Mardi Gras Indians, but it made no difference to me. I was in love. It was really another world. I could understand why I couldn't name one punk or hardcore band from Louisiana. New Orleans didn't need punk rock. There was music everywhere, and only a tiny percentage of it was top-forty corporate crap. As you walked down the street Zydeco blended into jazz blended into the blues. Even the bands playing on the street for the tourists were incredible. Punk rock is a reaction; it is defined by what it is not. Not cheaply sentimental. Not slow, sophisticated or slick. Not trying to be perfect. Not controlled by corporate media giants. Music in New Orleans was too good; there was nothing to react against. In this city music wasn't shoved down your throat by some executive. It was everywhere, it was a part of you, and it developed organically. When we weren't sleeping in my truck, my traveling partners and I stayed on a friend's floor, in a part of the city that is currently underwater. There were musical instruments all over the house, and I woke up to hear his roommates, a normal looking white couple with a two-year old daughter, playing rockin' honky-tonk on a beaten to shit stand up piano.

I don't think that New Orleans had the right temperament for Punk Rock, either. To an extent, the stereotype of New Orleans locals celebrating life seemed true to me. It's hard not enjoy life in a place where the alcohol flows so freely, where everywhere you turn there is amazing music, beautiful houses, unbelievable food. A lot of people who live in LA, myself included, have at best a love-hate relationship with our city. New Orleans was much different. Like New York, people in New Orleans seemed to know that they'd

found their place in the world.

And like New York, at least before Rudy Giuliani sucked all of the character out of it, you knew that if you weren't careful you could get yourself into a lot of trouble. I have spent time in a lot of depressed and dangerous inner-city areas. But South-Central LA or the Tenderloin never inspired the kind of nervousness that I saw in people who had to walk alone through the Ninth Ward at night. If you're white and wandering through the "hood" in New Orleans, they tell you to walk right down the middle of the street so you can see someone coming at you. It was often a dangerous place, even without a biblical disaster. There is a long list of "should have knowns" in all this, – they should have known that the levees might break (I was there for two weeks and the possibility of the levees breaking and the city flooding came up twice), they should have known that poor people with no transportation need buses to evacuate a city, – but the probability of that city descending into extreme violence, especially when left dying and abandoned, belongs near the top.

I hope that the city can rebuild and recover. I hope that it can retain as much of its unique character as possible. It is easy when rebuilding after a disaster to rush into things and end up with another slapped together American strip mall hell. Part of what made that city amazing was its rich history and the juxtaposition of buildings from so many different periods, some lovingly restored, some falling apart. This cannot be re-created, but I hope that someone thinks long and hard about how they want the new New Orleans to be. Obviously, the human suffering created by this disaster eclipses most thoughts about the loss of a culture. People need housing. They need to grieve and start to recover. They need to re-start their economy. But if they lose the flavor of New Orleans, they'll be losing so much more than just tourists.

If you want to see some really loving portraits of pre-Katrina Louisiana, try to get a hold of some of Les Blanc's documentaries about the New Orleans area. Or maybe you shouldn't. It might be hard to watch.

Part column/Part Review/Part Partial

I'm usually a pretty civil person. Generally if there's a dispute I quietly step aside and let the hotheads duke it out. Even when things do piss me off, I usually write a polite letter or something, fearing the consequences of pissing someone else off should I cause a scene or something.

Lately, however, I've started to care less about my own reputation and say what's on my mind, whether it offends people or not. One recent incident involved a long-standing but relatively silent feud I've had with a fellow zine owner and "journalist" (fan-boy).

After several years of standing back and observing his actions while firmly biting my tongue, I decided to draw first blood in the most mature fashion possible, ridiculing the jerk-off while calling into question the extent of his manhood in a very public forum. I ended up verbally bitch-slapping him and he finally stopped responding. Victory to the poor fat white kid, I guess?

This whole brouhaha, however, was totally uncharacteristic of me. I'm trying to figure out when and where I became an angry man-bitch and shit-stirrer. Even the event that pissed me off more than anything else in the past four years (last year's election) didn't bring out my inner Hulk. In that case, I totally went Al Gore for a few days, eating an abundance of greasy fast food (not too different from the norm, actually), growing some grotesque facial hair and ultimately becoming a recluse for several days.

Perhaps it's just anxiety. I am entering my fifth year of college with graduation not being a logical New Year's resolution. Job prospects suck, my sex life has been scarce (or just expensive) and I've been introduced to a wonderful thing called debt. At the time I'm writing this, I am one day into being 23 years old, I'm slightly hung over from last night's shenanigans, and I'm feeling quite numb and emotionless. Writing usually helps take my mind off of the nagging issues that would otherwise haunt the hell out of me. But when I'm as wound up as I am now, all it takes is one dipshit to step on my toes to unleash the fury, or so to speak.

Perhaps writing a column regularly where I can bitch about anything (and Joey Big Wheel said I could bitch about anything... except pedophilia) can help transform me from the sleeping giant of an angry poor fat white kid that I've become to a more jolly poor fat white kid. Maybe then I can begin to take things in stride. But until then, watch where you step, fucker.

I [heart] Terrorhawk

Aside from national elections, the whole slavery issue and national I.Q. test results, I would never, ever claim that the north knows what the hell they're doing – until I heard *Terrorhawk*

by my home state's own Bear Vs. Shark, out now on Equal Vision Records.

The band's promo photo prominently displays an MC5 shirt adorning signer Marc Paffi, and the shirt is more than just a hometown novelty. Tapping theatrical early Detroit punk like MC5 and The Stooges with a heavy influence from Dischord Records' roster, their broad art canvas of an album is raw, fast, clever and mind-expanding. I haven't been this excited by music since At the Drive-In, honestly. My buddy in Illinois tells me that if I listen to the record stoned, it's among the best records ever made -- period. I don't smoke pot, but for those of you who do, it seems to make a worthy science experiment to test this hypothesis.

**Well, strike this off my 'Gift ideas' list...**

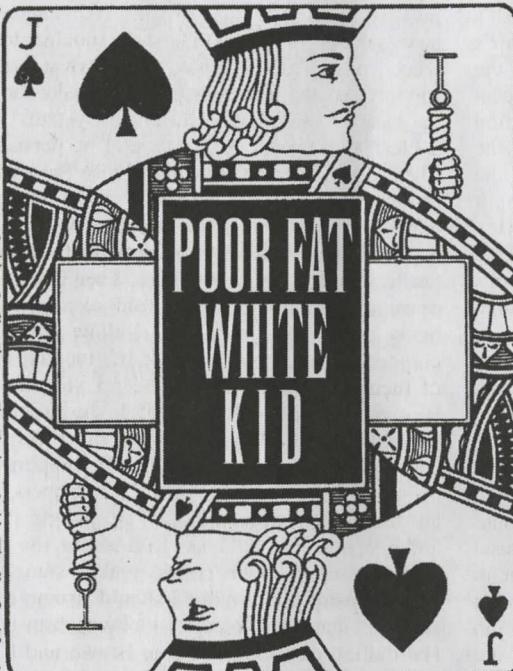
Somewhere in Idaho there's a creepy kid named Troy. Troy and his girlfriend Melissa had been dating for six months, they had a lot of good times together, and apparently they were perfect for each other – because Troy made a mix CD of him professing as much in his own clumsy words for a whopping 16 minutes. Several days later, Melissa dumped Troy and did what anybody would in this situation – posted the *entire* recording on the World Wide Web. Listening to the tape, it's hard to tell exactly where things went wrong. While some may say it's his problem with repetition, I'd be willing to bet it had something to do with when he broke into song mid-recording – covering K Ci and Jo-Jo. Listen to it yourself at [www.purevolume.com/troymixtapeoflove](http://www.purevolume.com/troymixtapeoflove). Now I don't feel quite as bad about my own sex life.

**Can someone please bitch-slap Geraldo's mustache?**

After the very terrible Hurricane Katrina disaster I decided to see what the well-educated folks at Fox

News had to say about the recovery. Predictably, the spin machine had already started, whether it was defending FEMA/President Bush or downplaying the effects of global warming.

Everyone's favorite mustached jackass Geraldo raised his credibility stock by hypothetically musing if talk about global warming possibly causing the sudden rise in natural disasters was just "junk science." Several other Fox rent-an-anchors downplayed the disaster itself, saying clean-up and rescue efforts were problem-free, before airing footage that clearly suggested otherwise. We as Americans are so lucky to have a completely fair and balanced news source like Fox guiding our daily lives – especially when our primary non-commercial and objective source for news and information, PBS, is having its funding severely short-changed by our federal government. At least Sean Hannity, Bill O'Reilly and Geraldo are there to pick up the slack.



BY JOHN MCKAY

# COUCH SOLDIER JONES

So the Federal Emergency Management Agency fucked up, plain and simple. The pathetic attempts by right-wing pundits to lay the blame on state and local officials does not excuse the fact that it took FEMA days to react to the worse tragedy in the history of our nation. And I won't bullshit around and try to tug your heartstrings with graphic descriptions of the helpless thousands who suffered as a result of their faux pas. We all saw the footage. Five days worth of it. What struck me was the lack of interest the United States gave towards offered help from other governments. Before Bush had even called his vacation short by 48 hours, Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez offered to help try to alleviate the suffering of the poor affected by the storm. This gesture of good will came just days after Bush's buddy Pat Robertson had called for Chavez's assassination. The outpouring from around the globe was nothing short of touching, reminiscent of 9-11. Did I mention Bush was still on vacation when that happened? OK, good. But despite the offers for relief help coming in from around the world, FEMA was responsible for making sure it did not find its way to those who were suffering on the Gulf Coast. News sources throughout the country reported this fact, including Portland's Register Guard, which said: "Offers of foreign aid worth tens of millions of dollars - including a Swedish water purification system, a German cellular telephone network and two Canadian rescue ships - have been delayed for days awaiting review by backlogged federal agencies, according to European diplomats and information collected by the State Department." Remember the line "Swedish water purification system". How could this be happening? Was it incompetence? Based on the Bush administrations history, I doubt it. Our current administration (henceforth referred to as the Devil) cleverly uses incompetence all too often as a cover for shady dealings, cronyism and nepotism. Who the fuck was in charge of this mess?

By now most of us are familiar with the current head of FEMA, Michael Brown. But the media did little to educate the public on how this former head of the International Arabian Horse Association was entrusted with dealing with any crisis the nation might face. Michael Brown, or "Brownie" as Bush likes to call him, was given the post after his predecessor Joe Allbaugh left the position to seek his fortune as a lobbyist. How did Allbaugh get the gig? Well, he was campaign manager for Bush/Cheney 2000. Where did Brown come from? Turns out him and Allbaugh were college roommates. The Knight Ridder news agency put it this way: "Brown's ticket to FEMA was Joe Allbaugh, President Bush's 2000 campaign manager and an old friend of Brown's in Oklahoma. When Bush ran for president in 2000, Brown was ending a rocky tenure at the horse association. Brown told several association officials that if Bush were elected, he'd be in line for a good job. When Allbaugh,

who managed Bush's campaign, took over FEMA in 2001, he took Brown with him as general counsel." All of this simply came across to me as mere cronyism, a horrible aspect of politics that plagues both parties. I assumed that Bush did his old buddy a favor by filling the FEMA vacancy with Allbaugh's buddy, only to discover that Brown was in way over his head. I should have known that it was not that simple. Thomas B. Edsall reported for the Washington Post that Allbaugh was again in the disaster business, but this time he wasn't working to get Bush elected. Instead he was in Baton Rouge representing his client's interest in hurricane ravaged Louisiana. Edsall wrote: "Allbaugh said he was there 'just trying to lend my shoulder to the wheel, trying to coordinate some private-sector support that the government always asks for.' In the case of one client, UltraStrip Systems Inc., a Florida company, Allbaugh said he persuaded 'them down here' to present the case for a water filtration system." That would seem innocent enough if it weren't for the fact that days earlier I had read that Sweden had volunteered to donate a purification system to the States. Then it all made sense to me: relief donations from overseas were being deliberately held off to allow American corporations the opportunity to rob the taxpayers of their investments in the federal government. Brown and Allbaugh were still in bed together, while Bush willfully looked the other way. Of course I have no hard evidence to support this claim, just bits and pieces from newspapers here and there. But it all seems pretty clear to me: if  $a=b$  and  $b=c$ , then  $a=c$ . And, as I said before, the Bush administration's track record makes something like this painfully feasible. I should also note that another client of Allbaugh's lobbying firm is the Halliburton division of Kellogg Brown and Root. This should set off alarms to anyone following the present war in the Gulf. Cronyism is a fact of life in politics, but when that cronyism leads to a conflict of interest so heinous that it may be responsible for the deaths of thousands then heads need to roll. One of the biggest problems in Washington currently is the ease at which government officials can slip into the private sector as lobbyists. This offers a revolving door for corruption that must be stopped if we are to pick up what's left of our democracy and move forward. There should be investigations into this sort of activity, and there will be. Unfortunately the head of these investigations is going to be Bush himself. So don't plan on him turning in his friends any time soon. Brown will most likely be given some sort of presidential medal, and Allbaugh's clients will rake in millions of taxpayer dollars, all at the cost of your average Joe. Those people left in Katrina's wake aren't the only Americans who have been stranded by their government.

# RECORD REVIEWS

## Adolescents

*"OC Confidential"*  
Orange County's Adolescents are at it again. To me this album is just mediocre. After not putting out a record for so long they may just be a little rusty. The songs have that old OC sound, but don't even compare to their first two albums. Don't get me wrong this is not terrible, it's just gotta be hard to live up to old songs like, "Amoeba" and "I hate Children". Also there is something about the production of this cd that is not sitting right with me... I am not saying it should be slicker (I really like the sound of the first album) Its just with such experienced musicians I thought this release would be a lot better. If you don't want to take my word for it judge for yourself.

-WHM

## Finger Records

## All or Nothing Hardcore

*"What Doesn't Kill You..."*

The singer of this band is pissed. Her band All or Nothing Hardcore plays music that's pissed. This is some abrasive angry shit! Song content includes rape survival stories. I guess I'd be pretty pissed too. There is a crazy hardcore song in Spanish. It made me feel like I was in a Tijuana bull/bar fight on acid for under two minutes. Timeless hardcore that's blasting. They even played a

benefit for the Red Cross to help the hurricane victims, how nice! **-CDM**

## Rodent Popsicle Records

## Allister

*"Before the Blackout"*

Allister are back after three years without a new record. *Before the Blackout* is an album that's melodic to the core with displays of perfect musicianship and are more girlfriendly than ever. Fans who've have been waiting will not be let down. Now with that said, I love punk and all things poppy. But c'mon here guys! This album is about the most annoying thing around. Beyond the thick coats of sugar and nasally wine of someone who is getting laid too much just kills me only because I hear great musicians wasting their time on a trite and uneventful sect of rock music. Grow a fucking pair.

**-AOF**

## Drive Thru

## American Eyes

*"Never Trust Anything That Bleeds"*

OK, these guys incorporate a lot of different elements – the disco beat, the punk bounce, the melodic vocals, the 80's electro thing, and even a bit of the grunge crunch. Too bad it misses every mark it aims for. Of course, I can hear this creeping its way to mainstream radio. I can see

girls liking this a lot. I can see the band members getting laid. And I can see myself never listening to this voluntarily again. **-BT**

## SideOneDummy

## Bedouin Soundclash

*"Sounding A Mosaic"*

Whoa, where did this come from? Canada, eh? Well, wherever it's from doesn't matter. The music is so simple and effortless, but they got soul, something not always pulled off with music like this. It has basic reggae sensibilities with a cool world vibe, not unlike Joe Strummer and the Mescaleros. All I wanna do is grab the bong and try to hit all the harmonies. The vocals are clean and uncontrived, the bass is percussively pervasive, and the drums lay the one drop. Three piece!

I just can't get over the musicianship, so simple. This stands apart of the acoustic reggae soul folk that you'd hear on commercial radio, but I wouldn't be surprised to see Bedouin get huge. Producing

efforts by Bad Brains bassist Daryl Jennifer captured this band perfectly. I listened through a lot and can't stop. It reminds me off the Harder They Come the Harder They Fall soundtrack. Highly recommended for fans of the Slackers and Hepcat. **-JB**

## SideOneDummy

## Black My Heart

*"Before the Devil"*

Without being a real big metal fan, I have a deep respect for those who physical debilitations of creating super heavy and super fast music. During my adventures at the Power Chord Academy (rock and roll band camp) I was bestowed the honor of being the counselor for a metal band, and at first listen to Black My Heart's "Before the Devil" I was instantly reminded of those metal headed campers. The motions are gone thru; blood curdling screams, super breakdowns, and high speeds that cause whip lash to non-practicing participating head bangers. **-JB**

## Eulogy Recordings

## The Briefs

*"Steal Yer Heart"*

The twelve new tracks from the Briefs titled *Steal Yer Heart* kick all sorts of ass. Where to begin? Spastic punk that's fun and pogo inducing. Great new tunes in the fashion they've been kicking for years now. Although sans founding member Lance Romance, the Briefs keep it coming and serving fun as fuck punk energized with attitude, panache, and a sense of humor. Without a dull moment to be found "Steal Yer Heart" just kills it. The pop driven angst of "Criminal Youth", the moxy groove laden "Getting Hit On At the

Bank", the eerie monotone of "Can't Get Through" prove versatility without going out of bounds. Alls good in the hood bitches, the Briefs are back. -JF

BYO

#### Broken Bones

#### Bone Club: The Very Best Of

If the halloweeny punk wunksters who spend all their folks' money on bondage pants saved that dough and put it towards bands that inspired the fashion they sport, chances are they'll stumble on this best of cd. This early seminal punk band boasts members of other early 80's Brittish punk outfits as noted on the in sleeve. One can hear how this was highly influential on later heavy metal of the mid to late 80's. This collection of 18 hits is uncompromisingly tough and a must have for fans of Discharge. Get this cd for a introspective look into the past. -BT

Anarchy Music

#### Cacti Widders

#### "One Way Ticket"

This is true rock n roll in its purest form. In the vein of Brian Setzer and the Reverned Horton Heat, CW promise not to let you down. Pounding stand up bass and drums accompanied by J.D.s awesome guitar slinging make this Cd enjoyable for anyone who likes booze, women and fully charged rock! On this their third release they really showcase how they have evolved as a band. Definitely worth it. -WHM

Fallen Angel Records

#### Epoxies

#### "Stop the Future"

Pure fucking New Wave Armageddon! I've been

thrown into a synthesized induced coma where visions of the Apocalypse come via a bouncy raucous of enigmatic energized orchestrations.

Roxy Epoxie displays strong vocals in a Kim Wylde-esque manor backed up with balls out driving 4/4 rolling and rocking rhythms. Add distortion guitars, keyboard ne ner ne ners, and shouting back ups rounded out with a clever moniker and hooks for days will keep me going like the energizer bunny. If you're looking for a change in the carpool monotony, put this on and go! -GV

Fat Wreck Chords

#### Cleveland Bound Death Sentence

#### "Gateway Handshake E.P." 7 inch

Thank god for vinyl...I am not a religious man but with all the crap I get I know there is a devil, so when I get a blue CBDS 7" from No Idea, I start thinking maybe there is a god. CBDS are one of the greatest bands you have probably never heard of. With members of Pinhead Gunpowder, Dillinger Four and probably more, this enigma of a band has intrigued me ever since I first heard them. This release has a mini comic book inside with the lyrics inside. As always the artwork is awesome and so are the songs. My only complaint is there are only four songs here...but there is something to be said about leaving a listener wanting more. Go get this! -WHM

No Idea

#### GoGoGo Airheart

#### "Rats! Sing! Sing!"

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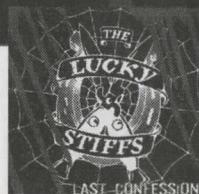
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board. His description: Very reminiscent of early-mid Kinks mixed with eclectic trippy sections. Great if you need to break the monotony. It sounds original and artsy. The vocals don't tread or stay in one particular area. Lots of cool weird guitar riffs and incessant drums beats, thick bass, especially on the first track, and an overall great album. **-WM**  
**GSL**

### **Grave For The Butterflies**

#### *"Bitten"*

This is pretty bad if you ask me. Is this what vampires listen too? I hope not. I'd like to think they listen to Slayer. Any vampire who listens to this probably gets their blood from robbing donation drives. The vocals are weak with no oomph what so ever. The music is lackluster of any redeemable quality. Is it Goth, or punk, or psychobilly? No genre would hone this band. Lame vampire music, that's what this is. Sorry Grave For The Butterflies, but you will not find a fan of me. **-WM**  
**Basement Records**

### **Hockey Night**

#### *"Keep Guessin'"*

This sounds like school house rocks. This is a very retro and indie groovy style music, the kind of band to play one of those art shows, the one's with all that free wine and cheese and cute girls who always look pissed off. I guess they are "creative" or something. There are a couple jams on this I kind of dig, but I wouldn't mention it to any of my friends. I might put on this album if I was with an art school chick whose pants I was trying to squeeze in. Do art school chicks wear pants anymore? I'm out of touch. **-JC**

#### **Lookout Records**

### **Hoods**

#### *"The King Is Dead"*

Who am I to say anything about a super tight band that accomplishes exactly what they set out for? Still, one has to wonder why the brains at Big Wheel would send this to me. I'm a twenty seven year old female journalist major at a state college that answered an ad to do album reviews for what I thought would be, uh, hmm. Maybe I should have thought about this. Ok, so I mainly listen to Jack Johnson and Sublime. I'll put 311 if I want to "get crazy". But I'll be honest, this is a little out of my reach. I think metal is gross. **-CDM**

#### **Eulogy Recordings**

### **The Ignorant**

#### *"Belly Of The Beast"* 7inch

The Ignorant are a young band that, in my opinion, have a lot of potential. They really have an old sound, which in todays market of over produced pop, is really refreshing. This three song 7 inch is on green vinyl and reminds me of bands from the early 80's so-cal scene. I would really like to see how this band evolves in the future. **-CDM**

#### **Revelation Records**

### **Jerra**

#### *"Play Like a Girl"*

I almost don't know what to say about this. I try to remember that I don't have to be nice. That's not what I'm getting paid for...wait, paid? Fuck it. This album is bad. I don't know who was in charge of making this record, or who knows who, but if this is a signed artist there's no hope for the never end stream of good starving musicians currently deserving of a record contract. The lyrics are atrocious in the Avril Lavigne vein of "boys suck, girls rule".

The vocals are mediocre at best, same with the tunes.

Very boring and not worth even a dollar if you find it in the dollar bin at a used music store. **-GV**

#### **Sugar Hooker**

### **Judge**

#### **What it Meant-The Complete Discogrpahy**

Uh, ok. I'm still wondering why Big Wheel sent me all this really crazy shit to review. I didn't know what straightedge was until reading the liner notes. Turns out this cd is collection of recordings from roughly 16 years ago. I mean, it's good? It's really fast and really angry. Maybe if they drank a little, or smoked some pot they'd calm down. Maybe Jack Johnson would sound like this if he didn't smoke weed, surf and fuck all day. Aside from all that, it's a good layout and I can see how fans should be real into this. Lots of great pictures and a band history are included on the in sleeve. I got a date tonight with a total college stoner type guy. I think I'll fuck with him hard and put this on when he gets here. **-CDM**

#### **Revelation Records**

### **The Letters Organize**

#### *"Dead Rhythm Machine"*

Once I got past the vocal stylings and 80's metal flair of this album I found myself enjoying this. I like the lyrics, but I have to use the liner notes to understand what the singer's saying. Very tight and rocking music that taps the toes. High points occur on tracks 7 (anxiety and insecurity always make for good material) and 9 (the struggle of self with individual and the shameful desire of acceptance, deep). I like what they have to say way more than the way they convey it. **-GV**

### **Nitro**

#### **Lorene Drive** *"Romantic Wealth"*

This I guess is screamo? I dunno, I don't get it. It's all hard, then it gets soft, but there is no dynamic. The lyrics are ridiculous, I mean come the fuck on. "I feel the rhythm in your body, and I know you felt it too." What the hell? A song in the key of sex? I am embarrassed to know that someone made this music. Maybe someone lost a bet or this is a dare gone too far. Ok, the music has some brief moments of worthiness, but the vocals and lyrics destroy any chance of making me ever listen to this again. **-JF**  
**Victory**

### **Madness**

#### *"The Dangermen Sessions"*

What can you say about Madness that hasn't been said before? Formed in 1976 they went on to become one of the most successful bands of the 80's. Blending ska, punk and pop they have written some of my favorite tunes. The Dangermen Sessions Vol. 1 is a collection of covers from artists including Prince Buster, Diana Ross, Desmond Dekker, The Kinks, Jose Feliciano, Bob Marley and more. The covers are tight and done with that Madness flavor that only they can produce. Stand out tracks are "Israelites", "Lola", "Girl" and "Iron Shirt. Although they are all great! The Album features all original members: Graham "Suggs" McPhearson, Cathal "Chas Smash" Smyth, Lee "Kix" Thompson, Mike "Monsieur Barso" Barson, Mark "Bedders" Bedford, Dan "Woody" Woodgate and Chris "Chrissy Boy" Foreman. If you are a fan of Madness this is a must have. **-WHM**  
**V2 Records**

## Manic Hispanic

"*Groupo Sexo*"

Manic Hispanic resume hilarity on their latest release "Grupó Sexo". For those not familiar, like our writer Alan, who pawned this album off to his friend to write the review that he was supposed to, Manic Hispanic play punk hits vato style. The band, comprised of members of legendary punk bands, are notoriously hell bent on delivering uncanny covers in a long list of classics fused with impala praising confessions and big outs to chorizo, the heinas, and that great big barrio in the sky. Album includes parodies of songs by Circle Jerks, Green Day, Ramones, Clash, Minor Threat, the list goes on. Those familiar with old punk usually get a kick from these guys and previous Manic Hispanic album carrying fans will not be let down with the brown this time around. Younger emo haired stoned out his gord writers might not get it yet.

**-JF**  
**BYO**

## New Wave Blasphemy

"*ST*" 7 inch

This is some crazy shit...these dudes play some fast as hell grindcore that make me want to drink 7 cups of coffee, snort a rail of speed and then go build a motorcycle with flames on it. Not really my thing, but if you are into the grind/hardcore shit this will be right up your alley. It's on pink vinyl and the covers are screen printed which is always a good thing. **-WHM**

**No Idea**

## Over It

"*Silverstrand*"

**Adolf IM:** Hey Joey, got the review cds. **Joey IM:** Cool. **Adolf:** This is some lame ass emo shite. **Joey:** Alright. **Adolf:** So what do I do with

it. **Joey:** Review it, talk about what you like or dislike about it. **Adolf:** I hate emo. **Joey:**

Ok, well...why? **Adolf:** Those haircuts. **Joey:** What does that have to do with the music?

**Adolf:** They spend so much time on the hair that the music suffers. **Joey:** I just checked out their photo on the website and their hair looks normal. One dude looks just like you, same hair and everything!

**Adolf:** Well, then there should be no excuse for how lame this is. **-AOF**

## Lobster Records

### The Pricks

"*Self Titled*"

When I first saw a picture of these guys I thought I was in for some straight up punk rock. The singer has tapered pants, tight shirt, tattoos and punk rock buttons everywhere. I was wrong. What I got instead blew me away. Mike Brophy, the mouthpiece of the Pricks, is a whiteboy from Orange County who spits out punk as fuck rap...that's right I said rap. I was trippin too. The thing is this dudes crazy. The beats are up tempo and have a punk rock flavor which make them have a sound all their own. Lyrically...I don't know what the hell this maniac whiteboy from O. C. is yelling about but it kept me entertained the whole way through. Pick this shit up! - **WHM**

**Nuthouse Records**

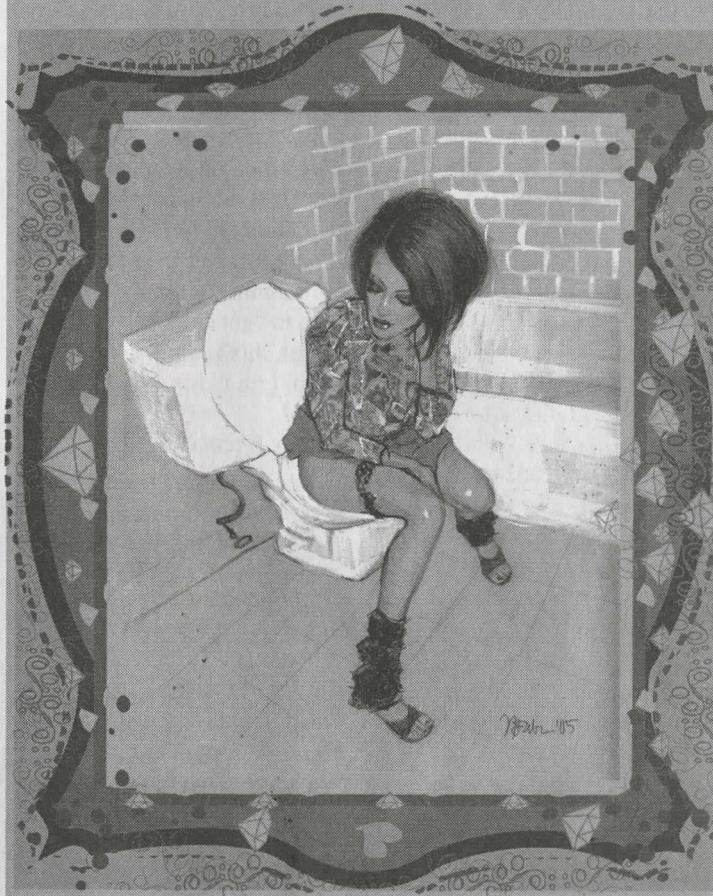
### Shark Soup

"*Fatlip Showbox*"

While I've never been a big fan of the psychobilly shtck I found this album to be a great collection of jams. Its way more rocking than that of other acts in the style realms of this genre, like the Necromantix or Tiger Army. They accomplish creating that psychobilly aura, but with half the flash and frill

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of the aforementioned but twice the rock, the singers voice is worlds better than those others. All in all, it rocks pretty hard. Lots of great elements – I hear bits of ACDC stirred amidst the rockabilly tendencies, and out of nowhere on track 10 London Calling makes a cameo appearance. The music has moments of darkness without that creepy, I mean gay, no I really mean lame layer. **-JB**

**BYO**

### **Silverstein**

*“Discovering the Waterfront”*

I wasn't too sure about this at first, the screamo shit threw me off, but it had a fungus effect on me. Very KROQ friendly, every track could easily find commercial success. I expect to see their shirts on Hot Topic junkies in the neat future. Strong vocals, driving catchy guitars, and nice production. Everything works. I like track 9 “Already Dead”. The lyrics are stalker fabulous. The whole mood of the album is a bit on the dark side of young love. And yes ladies, their hair falls in their faces. **-GV**

**Victory Records**

### **Smoke or Fire**

*“Above the City”*

A.D.D. or just a desire to explore the different musical scenery? I haven't nailed down a “they sound like...” description, but it doesn't disappoint. I like track 5 “Culture as Given”, perfect for Bush laden CNN saturated times. “South Paw is chalked full of resentment for a materialistic world that promises but doesn't deliver. I really like the lyrical approach and the band has their own sound amidst the plethora of

bands toady.

**-GV**

### **Fat Wreck Chords**

#### **Thor**

*“Thor Against the World”*

Nope. No likey. When gimmicky shit misses the mark, it's bad. Avoiding the mildest of amusements, Thor fails to rock. One should consider the Upper Crust far before investing anything on this. No like Thor. I love lamp. **-JT**

**Smogveil**

### **Troubled Hubble**

*“Making Beds In A Burning House”*

Where is John Belushi when you need him? He needed to be in the room when this dude picked up the acoustic for the intro of the first track on this album. I was expecting a little more, at first look the packaging is cool, I like the album title and it's a Lookout Records release. Overall, this music is too mellow and lacks a rocking quality that indie style bands need to get my tail moving. The musicianship isn't so bad, with drums and bass are worthy of notation. But the vocals are weak, and I'm not in to the lyrical approach, just a little too metaphoric. It comes off too deliberate. The album felt really long, and while I tried to focus on what I liked it was overshadowed by what I didn't. Not my cup of tea.

**-WM**

**Lookout Records**

### **Unknown Instructors**

*“The Way Things Work”*

I really dig this cd. I took a deep dive into this little ditty without knowing what to expect. I'm more of a relaxed lounging type guy, and this was right up my alley. The music is totally cool, and

I feel the spoken word thing. I would definitely buy this cd. Mike Watt, George Hurley and co. will always remind me of the Minutemen, Firehouse and San Pedro, where I grow up. This disc has a real Sin City vibe feel. Great for long foggy night drives through Point Fermin in Pedro. **-PW**

**Smogveil Records**

### **V/A**

#### **Generations: A hardcore compilation**

Very cool comp with 18 songs by 18 bands. Fans of all things hardcore will lick this up. Great in sleeve with tons of awesome pictures and a flyer collage of older hardcore shows. Songs move fast, hard, and quick. Notable track by Fucked Up who definitely stand out the most on this comp, other than that no big surprises. Get this comp for you your little brother after he listens to Minor Threat a hundred times and he'll thank you for the rest of his life. **-JC**

**Revelation Records**

### **V/A**

#### **Put Some Pussy In Your Punk!!! Vol. 2**

The cover says it all – 31 female dominated punk bands. One hour and twenty minutes. Don't pick this up if you're looking for the next Distillers. There is no consistency to the recordings and even less consistency in the sound of the bands. Not to say its bad thing, who doesn't want variety in a comp. But I wasn't really in to any of the songs. Don't get me wrong, I love the ladies, and there a lot of good bands on this comp who I back, I just couldn't take the whole thing.

**-JF**

**On the Rag Records**

### **V/A**

#### **This is My Bag**

#### **Lookout Records 2005 Compilation**

Over the years of countless golden gem released Lookout Records it not a surprise that the roster they support sound a distant from where they started from. Lots of mellower and more indie sounding bands grace this compilation album/dvd. A lot of this material is for more of a mature audience than what I'm used to. Without dwelling on the vast differences of these newer Lookout artists in comparison to the old ones, note this comp has hidden pleasures, buried in sarcastically pop driven ditties that get my head bobbin but some how fail short to really grab me. I found the best moments on this comp were on Hockey Night's “For Guys Eyes Only”, and the Dollyrots “Tear My Heart Out”. Bands who have been with Lookout for a while like Ted Leo And the Pharmacists and MTX contribute. The dvd is a bunch of music videos that were pretty uneventful, but I'm sure more serious fans of these acts will enjoy. **-WM**

**Lookout Records**

### **Veronica Lipgloss & The Evil Eyes**

*“The Witch Dagger”*

This is pretty cool! It's eerier and creepy and very unpredictable. Wails of creep textured vocals and dance beaty rhythms. The guitars are very abstract and there's plenty of ambient synth in the background. The whole album is very intriguing and experimental. It's hard to say organic with synthesizer, but aesthetically I found it quite natural. Pretty cool. **-JF**

**GSL**

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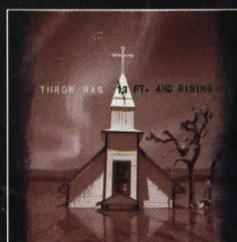


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