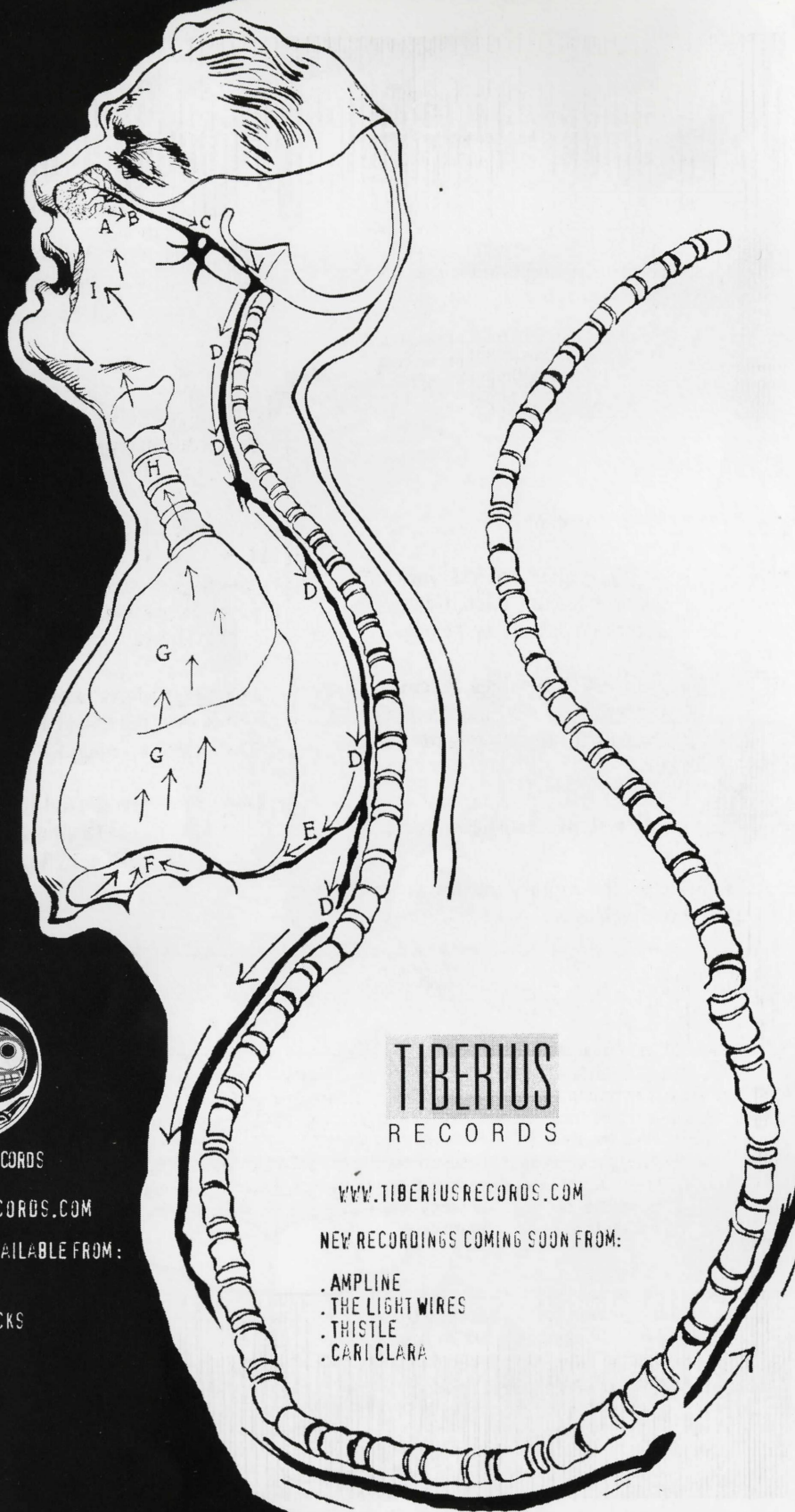


SLTM

#22



Mike Bukowski * Sleep Station * Phratry Records * Pedro The lion * Reviews *



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I never thought that this issue would ever make it. There that's all I am going to say about the events that took place between issue 20 and issue 22.

Below you'll see a review that I had to bump from issue 20, and then it died with issue 21. I almost bumped it from this issue cause we had so much to review, but I thought it deserved the space. It is one of the first things Ben Phillips ever wrote for us. You can read more of his stuff in this issue. He's a good writer, and without him we wouldn't have made it to forty eight pages.

Besides Ben, I would like to say thanks to Michelle. Me stupid bullshit are dumb, but me likey you.

Many thanks to the Drunken rude pissed off Slayer Rules Guy. Thanks to him also for not taking a swing at me last year.

Cover Art: Michael Bukowski

Editor: Brad Bugos

Head Writer: Skip Provence

Some Writers of Note: Dave Jobless, Jack Windbreaker, Daryl Zoognish, Fat Ruben, Kenny Reynolds, Rambling Ronald and Harry Tearse.

Thanks to Jerry Dir, Steve Brydges, Stacey at Daemon, and Carla at Radikal. Also thanks to anyone who sent me materials for review or agreed to an interview.

<http://www.sltmonkees.com>

For some places on the web we like check out the links page on our web site.

What's inside Issue 22?

Just in case you are too lazy to look through Forty eight pages and see what is really inside, here are some highlights:

Interviews: ASG, Boxcar Satan, Michael Bukowski, Ralph Jones, Skratz Magazine, Sleep Station, and Pedro the Lion.

Profiles: Phratry Records

Stories: Inside the Beef Club Part 2, Notes from Childhood, Play Freebird, Greg Kihn, VH1, Does your band suck?, Creed.

Features: Morty: a serial Story, Spotlight Music Reviews, Ask the Slayer Rules Guy, News Briefs, Loitering and Thicke's Thoughts.

Plus: Six Steps to God Like Genius, Tons of Music Reviews, I was the Drummer in a wandering clown band Part 1, the POW activity page.

Belloluna-Livid and Loving It-Daemon Records

I was asked to write a review of this record around four and a half years ago. I was supposed to turn it in sometime in December 1999. So it's a little bit late. I just totally forgot about it. I don't know why. It's just one in a huge pile of phone numbers, appointments, and other assorted tasks that I've completely blown off over the years. That's why I'm so popular.

I probably never would have remembered, but after about three years of no communication, I was going to be seeing the guy who asked me to write the review. This meant I had to run around my apartment finding all the shit I that borrowed from him years ago (I wonder how long you have to borrow something before it becomes stolen?). It was during this panicked search that I found the Belloluna CD so I thought I would go ahead and write the review. I am a man of my word. Unless that word is punctuality.

I even kind of remember some of the press material. It was an empty popcorn bag with the band's name stamped on the outside. You see the album cover has popcorn on it.

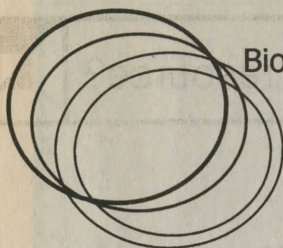
Funny huh.

Yeah, I don't get it either.

And the record is terrible. I mean really bad. It's like a combination of a less clever Barenaked Ladies, a soap commercial from the 70's, and something else that sucks. I choose not to elaborate any further because the members of this "band" are probably working in shoe stores, or digging ditches by now, and the last thing that they need is for some procrastinating asshole to slam their record years and years after it came out. But it is bad. Really. It came out so long ago, and is so bad, that I doubt you'll be able to find it anywhere. Maybe in the cut out bin, or in a gas station someplace.

Anyway, sorry about the lateness, and I guarantee that my next review will be much more punctual. Whatever that's worth. (BP)

<http://www.freewebs.com/benjipip/>
<http://brainpan.blogdrive.com/>



Biographies In Music— "I was a drummer in a wandering clown band"

My time in the Gene Treemole trio by Davis Manari

I started playing the drums when I was in grade school, Mr. Shultz was my teacher. He was a very strange man, of German decent and when he got mad the veins in his temples would pulse and he would turn beet red. The best way to get him to turn red was to call him a nazi or Hitler, if you were brave enough. What a great character. That was my introduction to band and the drums.

A buddy of mine in high school, Tim Holiday and I put together a three piece that played songs by Bread, Christopher Cross and the like. We played at the Elks club a lot and sometimes on the weekends at parties and weddings. I thought at that time that I would skip College and head straight into music. Whoever heard of a band making it big playing "Baby, I'm a want you"? It was a short lived dream when I realized we needed our own material and we had none. I almost formed another band with a pretty good guitar player named Jeremy. Don't recall his last name, but we decided it would be funny if we broke up the band before we ever practiced. I don't recall what was funny about that. I went to college that fall.

After I graduate from Duluth Central College in the fall of 1979, I went to work for a newspaper. Of course my degree was in radio/TV broadcasting, but I felt that anyway in was better than working at some clip joint dreaming. It was at Mattoon Journal Times that I met Gene Treemole, a nice fellow who was about ten to fifteen years older than me. We got to be friendly, being sent out to cover livestock auctions and four H galas. During this period, the early eighties, he mentioned that he was putting together a little three piece band that would walk around festivals, like Mattoon's Bagel Festival (just starting at the time) and play big band and Dixie tunes. I didn't really know that many of those types of songs, but it sounded like fun. Trumpet was his axe, while his friend at the Freemasons was going to play the accordion. It sounded like fun, until I got to his house for the first practice.

The first practice we had was the first time I had ever stepped into his, he hadn't invited me over

until that moment. The first thing I noticed was all the clown memorabilia in his house. It was packed from wall to wall with all kinds of paintings, lamps, toys, and other such collectibles. It was weird because I never knew he was into the clown thing, he had never mentioned it to me before.

"I didn't know you liked Clowns" I said to him with reservation.

"What the hell had I got myself into" I thought. I mean there is nothing wrong with collecting stuff, it's fun, but this was obsession. Stranger still I had never heard him mention it.

"Glad you could make it over Davis, Telly will be over in about five minutes and we can practice a little. I got us a gig at the Apple Dumpling Festival in Atwood" Gene told ushering me into his living room. Full of Clowns, of course.

When Telly got there we tried a couple of standards from the big band era, Benny Goodman and the like and even tried an Elvis tune, hound dog I think. It was nice to play the drums again, and over a three week period we were really humming. However, I had some apprehension about playing in public as a wandering minstrel. Gene had been through it a little. He was the Mad Trumpeter a few years back, playing at the Mattoon Legion games. It had been years since I played drums in front of anyone besides a few friends, and I had never been one to wander.

Maybe my apprehension was warranted. What happened a week before the Atwood gig should have told me there was something truly wrong with Gene.

"I want you to play your cymbal with a coat hanger to get a good sound from it" Gene told me in his garage during practice one day.

"I've never tried that before, but if you think it will work, then I'll do it" I said.

"Oh yeah" he replied "I'll need to approve your clown makeup before we head out Friday" Gene told me. "My what?" I was stunned.

Read Part 2 in Issue 23 of SLTM

By brad bugos

One of my favorite music groups is Sparklehorse. One of my biggest annoyances also involves Sparklehorse. I found out about the group by reading Jack Rabid's wonderful magazine *Big Takeover*. After hearing good things about them I decided to purchase their latest CD *Wonderful Life*. I was an instant fan who purchased their back catalog immediately. I have almost everything Mark Linkous has put out, and try to keep up on the band. There is where my annoyance began, logging onto their web site Sparklehorse.com to keep up to date with them. Now, I realize that a band is busy and that they cannot post updates to their web site every week. However, I don't think that once a month is too much. For Sparklehorse even once a month is too much of a hassle. When was the last time Sparklehorse updated their site? May 2003. That's right, over a year ago. Why would anyone who makes art for public consumption knowingly keep the public in the dark? Is it laziness or just the inability to interact with the public no matter how disconnected being connected shields you from your fans? I think it's a bit of both, but only they can answer that question. It's a great resource to have, cheap and effective, reaching millions of people, in theory, with usually a vast amount of space to store and include all kinds of things from the band. Why wouldn't the band, even one who sticks to the strict artist code of "art for art sake" want to create a friendly and accessible environment for their fans? Am I asking too much? I don't think that I am. I don't need Rivers Cuomo type updates where he posts news all the time, all I ask is that we get a few updates, at least (at the very fucking least) once a month. I have a web site, I update as much as I can but I don't think that I have ever gone more than a week without updating something. Sparklehorse is not the only one: there are a ton of bands that are very laze faire about keeping people up to date on their band. Anymore it seems that the best place to find out about your favorite bands is the fan sites or any of the numerous music news sites. Sure sometimes they are playing on rumor and whispers, but at least they are dispensing the information. Does total disregard or laziness, whatever the case: sway me from being a fan of the artist? No, it wouldn't go that far for an artist I really enjoy listening to like Sparklehorse, but for some of the fringe bands I like it might be the make or break point. Sure that seems petty, but if Charlie Chesterman doesn't feel the need to update his site more than twice a year, then I forget about him and lose interest. How much work would it be for Chesterman to relay information to a fan site, (get on google and find one Charlie, that's how) and have them update it. Send them pictures, and anything else he feels the fans should know, how hard could that be? I like Chesterman. I really enjoy his music, but I have lost interest. I should also add that he is taking forever to release any new music. In the future I see artists releasing music on their websites, like IMUSIC, but they get all the profits. It would cut out a lot of needless middle people and connect the artist in a new way to their audience. For now though, these artists (more than Linkous and Chesterman, too many to list) need to build that relationship with their audience and potential audience through their web sites with information and interaction. It's not that hard.

Some websites worth your time and effort

News Sites:

Rockdirt.com iateyourmicrophone.com knifeparty.com dayinrock.com aversion.com thepp.com

Record Labels:

Victoryrecords.com Gokartrecords.com popsweatshop.com saveourservant.com tiberiusrecords.com volcoment.com rykodisc.com

Bands/artists:

ASGnation.com Fu-Manchu.com reddkross.com dagjublin.com honeydogs.com sleep-station.com allcentral.com

Other sites of interest:

Zineguide.net bobanddavid.com bigtakeover.com frankblack.net sxdx.com (social distortion) onewhiskey.com (mark lanegan)

Helmetmusic.com grandaddylandscape.com bairddan.com (Dan Baird) billjanovitz.com dri-entertainment.com (fu Manchu) razorcake.com (razor cake magazine)

Blowupthemoon.com (Bob and David fan site) tommytinson.com whitesox.com (Chicago White Sox official site) bottle-rockets.net selfpublishers.org ucimc.org

Morty: a serial story

By Brad Bugos

Last Chapter : Bored on a Sunday night, Morty and Brad head over to Kim's house to see Kim and Donna. Stopping along the way to get beer at the creek, the two walk across town drinking and bullshitting. When they reach the house, the guys get the girls to come outside to talk, Jim gets Kim talking to deflect her attention away from Brad who is trying to get Donna back behind the garage for a possible blow job. It being a Sunday night before a school day, the guys should be over at Morty's house either watching TV or doing something "constructive". What Brad's mom doesn't know is that drinking beer and trying to get in some girls pants is constructive, just in a more meaningful way than studying history. This chapter finds the boys still at Kim's house, with Kim still talking away and Brad making his move on Donna, such that it is.

Donna and I had some history together, well I had touched her box, and tag teamed her with another friend of mine, Tim. It had been about four months prior to Morty and I going over to her house, we had gotten her and her girlfriend drunk so we took them out to a country road. Out there in the middle of nowhere, because back then it really was miles from town, the girl I was with gave me a blow job. After Tim got one from Donna, we dropped off her friend Amy and said we were going home, but really we just said that to get Donna alone. Sure, it wasn't a very nice thing to tell Amy we were tired and heading home when all three of us knew we weren't done, but hell, I figured she already blew me so what else did I want from her?

Of course, now at Kim's house Donna was playing a little hard to get and pissed off because I didn't speak to her much after the tag team banging Tim and I gave her.

"What are you doing over here? A little horny are ya?" Donna asked, trying to sound pissed off and uninterested, but I could tell it was an act.

"I tried to talk to you out at Def Leppard hill a couple of weeks ago, but you just walked away from me, Craig must've been around" I shout back, Craig being the high school football stud that all the girls were after. It wouldn't do well for Donna (even if she was easy) to be seen letting me chase after her, although she had as much chance with Craig as I did with one of the cheerleaders.

"Come on Donna" I said as I tried to lead her to the back of

the garage where I knew that I could start kissing on her and try to undo her pants. "I didn't know what to say to you for awhile. Just thanks for fucking my brains out" I was trying to be a little coy.

She smiled, a little, and I knew I had my chance to touch her beaver again. "Well, your welcome, just wish you would have said something earlier, I was feeling hurt and used".

No she wasn't, she was just saying that, even though we both know that everyone called her Donna, Donna do you wanna? "You want a drink?" I said, offering her a sip of my warm beer.

"Sure" she replied. "Let's go back behind the garage just in case Kim's mom is looking out the window or something" I said, pretending like I was protecting her from getting in trouble, but really thinking about my finger in her cooch.

"Alright, but don't try anything" She said with a smile that told me I had better. I gave Jim the old negro nod, and he nodded back letting me know that he would keep Kim busy even if it meant that he had to make a move on her.

We went to the back of the garage, away from the house and I offered her my beer. I fumbled around for how to make a pathetic move on her, even though I had already had sex with her. She took care of that, and that is why I always like aggressive women, they know how to make that first move.

We were kissing, and I was working my way down her pants when I heard the clang of a screen door, and some-one yell. It was Kim's mom, time to get Morty and run.

Compiled
from local
newspapers
around the
state of Illi-
nois by Daryl
Zoognish and
Fat Ruben

Local News Briefs

Hume, IL— Local Business man Earle Tacker was involved in a three car accident on Tuesday. Police Officials report that Tacker was driving east on Route 32 when he lost control of his Monte Carlo, swerved to miss oncoming traffic and went off the road.

Before his car came to rest in a trailer park, his 1976 like new Monte Carlo went airborne for over fifty feet. His car then struck two parked cars in a residents drive way. Of the two cars parked there, only one was operational at the time of the accident.

Mr. Tacker was taken to Provena Hospital and remains there in stable condition. The other cars were empty at the time of the accident.

"From the eye witness' that we have gathered information from it appears Mr. Tacker was headed east on Route 32 and was listening to his stereo when he became involved in a song and lost control of his car" reported Vermillion County Deputy Steve Weefe. The police were also able to speak with Tacker at the Hospital for his take on the events leading up to the accident.

"Mr. Tacker advised us that he had just installed a brand new CD/ Stereo in his car and was 'jamming out' to a Cheap Trick CD. Apparently from his description, the song "Dream Police" came on and he began to sing along to it. As the song ended with handclaps, Mr. Tacker became more involved with the song, clapping along. According to him he loves that song and can't help but clap, but it might have almost cost him his life" said Deputy Weefe. Local Police and Citizen groups are working to wipe out cell phone use in cars along with hand clapping and dancing while driving. (*Hume Home Shopper*)

Oakland, IL— Oakland Resident Todd Plankton is chipping in to help our fighting men and women overseas. "Everywhere I look someone is doing something to help the troops overseas, and I just wanted to do my part to help" Plankton said from his Oakland trailer last week.

After sitting in his trailer drinking beer, watching TV and scratching his testicles Mr. Plankton came up with a unique way to raise money and awareness. "I was trying to come up with something interesting and different than the usual bake sale or car wash to raise money. My wife said to me at supper one night 'how about scratching your nuts? Your good at that'. I was cranking my arm back to whack her a good one when I thought that maybe she had something there. I mean I'm good at a few things, but I don't think anyone is going to give me money to drink beer or beat my wife... would they?" Plankton wondered out loud from his favorite recliner.

Plankton will begin scratching his nuts for freedom on May 1st 2005. He won't stop until he raises \$250. "I figure I can scratch them babies until they turn red and start to bleed. From experience I have to tell you that that doesn't happen until about day five. I am excited, and itchy"

To send donations contact Plankton Care of this paper.
(*Oakland American Press*)

Ivesdale, IL— Even on his deathbed, local Veteran Dave Ogenmyer was a prankster. Known throughout the area as the number one puller of April Fools jokes, Ogenmyer passed away last Friday night, but not before pulling his final prank.

"I was at his home giving him last rights, because he had been gravely ill the two days before. He was talking about what was coming after he passed away and telling me some stories from his time in the Army during World War 2" Said local Presbyterian Minister Hank Powers.

"Then he told me to lean forward cause he had something he wanted me to tell his wife, something very important" the minister said. "He said 'tell my wife I never liked her'. I told him that I couldn't tell her that, but he insisted that she would get the joke. So I said I would. Minutes later he was gone, and I was faced with a dying wish that I didn't want to finish. I wasn't sure his wife would be able to understand in her time of grief."

"Dave was always joking with everyone in town. I always felt sorry for his wife Delia, because most of the jokes were aimed at her. I remember one time when he made he get made up like he had beaten her and she came to a Junior Women's meeting. Dave laughed about that for weeks" local housewife and friend of the Ogenmyer's Faith Huth told this paper.

Mrs. Ogenmyer's reaction was one of grief and sadness when told by Minister Powers about her husbands last words. "I just don't think Dave understood that his jokes just weren't funny" said Powers. (*Grovers Free Press America*)



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By Brad Bugos & Dickey twobits

With help from
our good friend
Drunk Jimmy



"PLAY FREE BIRD!"

How many damn times have you been at a live concert and you hear some jackass yell out "Play freebird"? Too many to count. Some bands shrug it off, others pretend like they didn't hear the idiot and others still burst into renditions of the song with threatening vivacity. Well, we've decided that we are going to start shouting out different songs, giving at least ourselves a laugh and maybe give the band a break from hearing the same old Lynyrd Skynyrd song, and if we can get a document of the band acknowledging our efforts then we'll post them on our web site. Here they are, our substitutes to yelling out the same old bullshit song.

If I leave here tomorrow
Would you still remember
me?
For I must be traveling on,
now, There's too many places
I haven't seen

And if I stayed here with you,
now Things just wouldn't be
the same

Well I'm as free as a bird
now, And a bird you can not
change.

And a bird you can not
change.

And a bird you can not
change.
Lord knows I can't change

Artist or Band	Song	For what reason?
LL Cool J	"Mama said knock you out"	It sounds tough when you yell it out
MENTORS	"Having sickies baby"	hilarious songs from a great group
RICK DEES	"disco duck"	bonus points for yelling it in character
Unknown artist	"Welcome back Kotter"	A fine theme song, dumb show
Unknown	"Yummy, Yummy I got love "	Because it's rather a ridiculous song
Celine Dion	Theme song from Titanic	I dare ya to yell this out in a full bar
Paul McCartney	Any one of his wings or solo songs	there are some pretty good choices to yell out and why not a good song?
Hickoids	"Queen of the Barbeque"	It's a fun song and easy to learn
CW McCall	"Convoy"	A dumb song that everyone hates
Black Sabbath	"Iron Man"	A good song everyone knows
Tiny Tim	"tiptoe through the tulips"	See if they can remember this gem bonus points if they get the voice right

Drunk Jimmy says:

"The drunker you are, the closer you need to get to the stage. Once there, make eye contact with the singer and yell as loud as possible the stupidest song title you can think of, and make sure to repeat yourself if necessary."

Play the Freebird game— Here is how to play the game that is sweeping the nation, "Play Freebird". Say you're seeing a band that you like and don't want to be prick to them, then play the game with the opening band. Try to think of the most ridiculous song (and no it can't be one of their own songs) and yell out the title. If you can get the singer or someone in the band to respond then it's five points, doesn't matter if it's a chuckle or a look of disdain and hatred, it counts. The stupider the song title, the better the chance of irritating the band and a better chance for laughs from the audience. If you can get your friends to laugh that's a point for each person. If you get the audience to laugh at your stupid song title then add ten points. If the band actually takes a stab at your song then you get fifty points. Play with one to five friends, but be warned that constantly yelling out stupid shit not only irritates the band, but the audience and the bar owners too. So plan your yells smartly, try to time it when the band seems really serious, and don't just yell out some garbled bullshit. It's easy to be a drunk asshole, but it's hard to be a song assassin. Yeah I said it, song assassin, what of it.

How to become an even bigger Asshole

From the editor of
SLTM Brad Bugos

A few issues back I wrote a how to article called *How to become an Asshole*. It was received with great success and some of the writers mentioned at the weekly meeting that we should bring it back. Personally, I didn't think it was that great of an article, but I think the other people who work here felt that it gave them justification when calling me an asshole to others. So I dug deep into my life experiences and past to come up with some other easy to digest pointers on how you to can become an insufferable prick or just an every day asshole, there is not much difference (basically you don't flip of the handicap kid down the street when you hit him with your car if you just want to be an everyday, garden variety asshole). Here now are more tips on how to become an asshole or some indicators for others to use to justifiably call you an asshole.

"And another thing", always make sure you interrupt people who you know are less important than you and who never have anything good to say. How will you know when to do this? Every time someone opens their mouth to talk they are going to say something that doesn't matter as much as what you have to say. Around the offices of SLTM there are plenty of those people, since I am the editor I am the most important person, there fore I have something interesting and important to say when I open my mouth. At that point everyone should stop and listen, no matter what the words will be. Besides what would anyone else have to say that hasn't been said by me, and in a more interesting way?

You can be a big blustery asshole from the beginning, shouting your importance for all to hear, but it works out better if you start out nice. How many times have you seen a guy start being an asshole from day one? Lots. You see that is a big mistake, because everyone knows his agenda and hates him right away. The best way to become an even bigger asshole is to gain peoples trust and start out nice. Nothing breaks a person's heart more than when you make them like you or love you and then you dash all that love and good will in a firestorm of lies and self preservation. The look on their face is priceless.

Give out half assed stupid commands. It's a touch in the ball park of eccentric but a fine sprinkling of the weirdo dust never hurts to confuse and alienate you former friends and co-workers. Make up shit that sounds a touch off base, but don't make it so weird that people just think you're crazy. Just give them a little job or something to do that irritates them and wastes their time.

"What's wrong with you? Are you an asshole on purpose?"

The answer to that should always be no. You never want to show your hand to others, never let down your guard, and this is important, never show that you have feelings. Assholes don't have feelings, and they don't care about the outcome of their actions.

Why Become an Asshole?

If you need to ask this question then you don't want to really become a despised, feared and respected big shot. Could I get as much respect and love by being nice to the other people in the office here at SLTM? NO. I guess you weren't listening to well, because you would never even consider that if you had read the above. Do you really want people to fear and respect you and do your bidding? Then there is only one way. If you're nice they walk all over you, if you try to be their friend they will walk all over you and if you try to do the "teamwork" angle the only work that will get done is by you. So remember:

1. Give out orders that confuse others and amuse you. Go lightly on the weird commands though; we are going to asshole not eccentric.
2. Never ask anyone else's opinion on anything, always go with your gut feeling. You know what is best; never waver from what made you who you are.
3. Start out nice; don't go for asshole right off the bat. The best way to become a huge asshole is to start out nice and catch people off guard. It will break their hearts and with any hope cause them pain.
4. Yell at someone, preferably the office goof off, every day. Make sure that you call them into your office and make sure the door is part way open. This is one way to scare the other people in the office. It doesn't have to be about something important, as a matter of fact the more trivial the better. Once again make sure it's not too eccentric in nature.

Check out our original article on our web site www.sltmonkees.com and good luck on becoming an Asshole.

An interview with David Debiak of Sleep Station about their new CD *After the War* and much more.



Sleep Station

After the War

SLTM: Were you surprised at the level of attention you've gotten with *After the War*? Is there a downside to all that attention?

Dave Debiak: I have been happy with the response, you always want to know that when your working real hard and putting forth a good effort, someone is noticing. I don't think we have come close to a point where there is unwanted attention so I don't see a downside to that.

SLTM: was this the first release of yours that got this much attention? How were your other release perceived? Was there a build up to this point or did it come all of the sudden with *After the War*?

DD: We have put out 4 records and with every one that is released more people start to take notice, for us that's a good thing. However this is the first record that has been given the best chance by our record company, it's nice to see them working as hard as they are on it.

SLTM: Did you ever get discouraged before or during the recording of *After the War*? Did you ever think that you were putting together something that made sense in your head, but might be complicated to put onto paper and sound? Or was it a smooth process the whole way?

DD: I knew what I wanted to get out of this record in the studio, I was very focused because we didn't have any time for error. We originally mixed and mastered the record and I was unhappy with quite a few things. Fortunately I got a chance to go back into the studio and re-mix. I had a lot of time in between to focus on how I could make it sound better. Daniel and I took the record to Jolly Rogers in Hoboken, and they were great to us, they just gave us the keys and said, have fun. We bunkered down for quite a few days, and had the time of our lives. We were in our element and things came out the way I wanted them to, so that was good.

SLTM: With *After the War* being a concept album did you worry you might lose some people who would shy away from that kind of album? Was there ever concern you might create something that perfectly conceptualized your vision and that people may not hear it?

DD: I have never done anything creatively where I worried about other people's perception. To be perfectly honest I never knew there was a stigma that came along with this kind of record. I have always wanted to make a movie and these songs sort of go along with the "scenes" that I have built in my mind. I simply put them out there and let people perceive them any which way they like.

SLTM: How did the samplers for *After the War* help get the word out about your music? Were they successful? Is it an idea you might use for future releases?

DD: It was great, when we were on tour we would go hang out in every city we came to and just hand them out to anyone and everyone

who walked by. It was a really good chance for us to meet people and talk to them about our record, I would definitely do it again.

SLTM: Speaking of concept albums, what was/is your favorite?

DD: I don't think I own one so I don't really know. I do have some records that are thematic, but I'm just listening for good songs. I put our record in that same category, you can listen to individual songs or the entire thing as a whole.

SLTM: Do you think that we as a younger generation have a hard time grasping some of the ideas you present on this CD? War and loss being two that come to mind.

DD: I have been alive for three wars, countless confrontations, a cold war and 9/11. Of course nothing has been as devastating as some of the wars past, but war is war, violence is violence, there has been plenty of it to go around.

SLTM: How did you get a handle on the characters feelings? Were you ever in a war type situation? Were you trying to be authentic to the characters or just to yourself and how you perceived that to be? Kind of like your feelings about life but in that characters voice?

DD: I have never experienced war, thank god. As a writer you do your best to get into the head of those you are writing about. I feel like I've always had this ability to connect to those around me and sort of "tap" into feelings that aren't necessarily mine. I know you can draw on your own experiences of loss and fear, but living the way these people had to live, that was hard.

SLTM: Where does the cover art come from? It's not your typical war photo. It looks like a picture home just before the battalion would go out for patrol. Why did you choose this photo?

SLTM: My brother Marc and Alex, from Eyeball went to a flea market and someone was selling all of these negatives. They bought them for next to nothing and were very surprised by what they found. From what we could gather these guys were gearing up to go and fight, the picture on the cover of the record was very eerie to find.

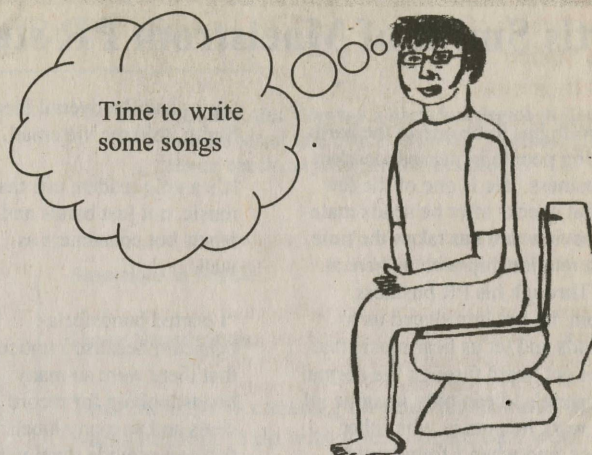


For the rest of this interview log onto www.sltmonkees.com (Plus a review of *After the War*)

For more information of Sleep Station log onto www.sleep-station.com

Six Steps To Godlike Genius

A quick and easy guide to writing perfect rock songs with Phillip Drummond of Jimmy Eat World killers



Phillip Drummond might not be a household name across America (yet), but he is the greatest song writer of this generation. Granted, most of his songs deal with fucking and beating people down, but the genius is evident for anyone who pays close attention to the words. His songs are flawless nuggets of pure pop perfection. He takes a mixing pot of emotions and blends them together for the audience to savor and flavor and if they follow the recipe they might just become a different person themselves. "It used to be hard to showcase my songwriting talent, my band mates always wanted to interfere with the process, adding something here and there, but never giving my window into my soul the proper clearance to land". That Phillip Drummond, he is one of a kind. Having reviewed and listened to his band (JEW K'S) CD's I can attest to his living genius and powerful songwriting. How come he possess this attribute and someone like myself can't string a few chords and words together to save my life? Well, let's find out why he's got the goods and you're just some miserable little prick spouting insipid poetry into a microphone at a poetry slam.

1. **Rip off the Mentors** El Duce and the Mentors were the finest rape rock band in history. That is saying a lot, I know, but if you listened to and soaked up as much of the Mentor life as I did then you would feel the same way. The first thing any aspiring songwriter will need to do is buy the Mentors *You Axed for It*. The next thing to do is buy a black executioners hood and put that incredible disc on your player. Keep your pad and pen handy cause the ideas will flow after the first few songs, I mean, if *Sandwich of Love* doesn't cause an outpouring of ideas and songs then I'm not sure you were made to be a songwriter in the first place.
2. **Replicate the intro to Sanford and Son** Television has engineered us to recognize show themes. What better one to work into your pop masterpiece than the funkiest, junkyardiest tune to hit the television airwaves? If you can work just a bit of that horn into your song, even a little bit, then you'll have the audi-

"Nobody ever likes a whole song, hell the best parts are always the chorus and sometimes the verse, but never both at the same time. You either like one or the other, or both at different times" Phil Drummond

ence clutching their chest, looking heavenward and shouting "It's the big one lizbeth!"

3. **Make sure every track has the Good Part** Nobody ever really likes a whole song. People just want the good part. It's essential that every song you write contain the good part. How can you tell if you got enough of the good part? Ask all your stoned friends to come over and grove on your tracks. If you hear more "Oh man, I love this part" than "What are we listening to" from them while you play your music, you've got the good part.
4. **Understand the power of taking rides** One time when I was totally blocked and couldn't come up with any ideas for songs I jumped on my bike and took a ride out into the forest. There I saw a man sucking off another man while masturbating and ramming a stick up his ass. I immediately biked home where I wrote the Jimmy Eat World Killers track *Two hands are not enough*. If you ever find yourself stuck, hop into the wagon or on your bike and take a little stroll to see what is around you. Don't forget to bring something to write it down on, like an old Mc Donald's bag.
5. **Include the word baby** This used to work well, but in our tough times it probably would be better if you steered away from this advice. Sure it's cool when Ween says "baby" but it's soon followed by "bitch". Work baby in only when no one is listening, like toward the end and make sure you scream it at the top of your lungs. Sure some of the most popular songs in the history of recorded music use the word baby. However, if

you look at that list, it's all a bunch of sissy shit that no one would write today. Besides, how many times do you recall the late great EL Duce saying "baby"? Okay one song, *Baby you're going to regret me*, but we'll let that one slid, I think he was after some puss at the time.

6. **Whisper some sexy shit over the guitar solo** David Lee Roth does it on *Panama*, We do it on *My love rains down like*

an atomic bomb and so should you. It works great when you play live cause you can get center stage and act all sexy rubbing the mic stand or mic chord between your legs. Don't know what to say? Listen to either song above, and then just wing it. Just make sure you include that it's hot out tonight and that you're feeling "it". Plus a few grunts and mumbled words will give the audience the illusion that what you said was sexy.

Look for the new Jimmy Eat World Killers CD *Fantastic Orgasmic Trips and tales* on Efficient Recordings this fall.

Curtis Smith of Maelstrom PR starts another music venture

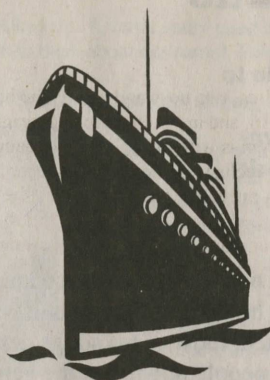
Curtis Smith has to be one of the hardest working people in the independent music business. He is one of the few people that checks after he sends materials for review and has taken the time to form a relationship with us here at SLTM. Through his PR business, Maelstrom, he has introduced us to many bands and let us hear music that might not get heard through the normal music channels. I can only imagine all the hard work he puts in with other magazines, and when I found out he was starting another venture to connect bands to record labels I was amazed he would have the time.

"Bands for labels is a internet site that is on its own autopilot scheme. I do have people that help me with the design and development, but when it comes to the

topics and the overall ideas, that is me." Smith told me via email.

It's a unique idea, one that could benefit music, not just bands and labels but consumers as well.

"I started bandsforlabels.com because I noticed that there were so many bands looking for record deals and so many labels that can provide them with one, but the only problem was that they had no way of locating each other. bands only seem to know the big names and do not realize that those big record labels were small at one time. Independent



Bands for labels is simply a portal to bring the two together.

labels are searching for the right artist and bands are doing the same, however they just keep missing each other like two passing ships in the middle of the night. Bands for labels is simply a portal to bring the two together. It is very similar to a matchmaking website, but specifically for bands and record companies" Said Smith.

While it may be a portal to bring both of those entities together you have to get them to the water first. So far Smith has gotten a good response. "There are over 2000 members and growing on both sides"

Smith also feels that his site

will help record labels save money searching and growing bands.

"I have been in this industry for well over 10 years in every aspect and see that bands for labels is a great A&R tool for even major labels. The questions are geared toward labels finding out if bands are truly dedicated to

"Personally I think something like file sharing is a very useful tool to an indie startup label"

their work without spending a ton of money on an artist only to find out later on that they do not plan on touring in order to promote it. On the flipside, a band can also find out what kind of game plan the label has in mind for an artist rather than just signing their lives away to a whack publishing deal only to be shelved for tax

purposes. There already have been a number of matches on the site, and some pretty successful ones at that. For example, the Berlin Project signed a deal with Orange Peel records in 2003 and came out with an album, a video, and 5 tours. It worked out for both because Orange Peel was able to sell some records and depend on an artist that was going to promote their releases by touring. They even had a number of sales in Japan that they would never have been able to get on their own" explained Smith.

www.bandsforlabels.com info@bandsforlabels.com

The future for bands for labels looks bright, Smith mentioned revamping the site and adding some features. "I would like to see the site grow exponentially with what is already a huge industry of bands finding labels and vice versa for the right reasons". Plus there are advertising opportunities on the site, and the possibility of branching out to include venues and magazines, "Eventually we will branch out, just not yet". "Advertising rates are located in the advertise with us part of the site. The rates are very similar to what you would

find from a music magazine. The ones that will benefit from advertising on the site are obviously those that are trying to attract bands and record companies to advertise with them or use their gear" Smith told me explaining the advertising concept.

Smith also said that there is another incentive for people to advertise on the site "It's free for the bands and labels to sign in, so the more that see the ad, the more they might call to place an ad".

Finally, I wonder if Smith would feel

any guilt over aiding bad music get made. "As long as the artist has the dedication to come out with an album on their own, and there are labels out there willing to put them out, I see no reason why they should not have the opportunity to find each other. Bands for labels is the portal that allows that to happen."

Smith as feels that the music scene isn't crowded. "I truly believe that there are not too many bands and labels out there. I just think that they need to find each other and I think that in the long run they all do match up over time."



Ask The "Slayer Rules" Guy

"Slayer Rules" Guy has a bachelors degree in Rock, a masters Metal, and a Ph D in caring. For more great advice check out www.sltmonkees.com

Dear Mr. Slayer,

I am the single father of three children, two boys and a girl. The boys are both normal teenagers, 13 and 16, and are even tempered, bright, and participate in sports. The problem is with my 15-year-old daughter. She is shy to the point of being reclusive, often locking herself in her room and listening to loud rock music for hours at a time. She would wear black every day if I let her. She is a very pretty girl, but never goes out with any boys, claiming they are 'immature' or some such nonsense. How can I help bring her out of her shell?

Worried in Winnieg

Dear Worried:

Sounds like a serious problem. Pretty girls should not be the least bit shy. In fact, they should be sucking and fucking all the time. I would buy her some slutty clothes and hope for the best. A bigger problem seems to be that you live in Canada. Get out of that shit hole.

Dear Mr. Slayer,

I found a half pack of cigarettes in my daughter's book bag when I was looking around for her journal. When I confronted her about it, she said that they were not hers, and that she was holding them for a friend. How do I help her friend stop smoking? I would tell her parents but they are out of the country, and don't have a telephone.

Concerned in Connecticut.

Dear Concerned:

Listen carefully. Your daughter is a lying whore. You actually believe that her 'friend's' parents are out of the country w/no phone. You know your daughter has no friends. The smokes are hers. Help her finish them off.

Dear Mr. Slayer,

I think my husband is cheating on me. He has recently started keeping longer hours at work, and has had to go away on several 'business trips'. When I asked him where the Pizza Hut was sending him on his trip, he got angry and evasive and even stormed out of the trailer. He gets strange calls at all hours of the night and if I answer instead of him, there is never anyone there. The last straw was when I found a pair of ladies underpants under the seat of his car. They smelled like pizza. Should I confront him?

Suspicious in Seattle

Dear Suspicious:

Your husband is cheating on you. It's obvious he wants nothing to do with you. I mean, he's working longer hours at Pizza Hut. No fucking way. If you work at Pizza Hut, you're knocking off at least a half-hour early every day. Besides, if I could get a chick whose cooch tasted as good as pizza, I'd leave you, too.

Dear Mr. Slayer,

I am hearing voices in my head that command me to kill Harry Anderson. But I loved him on night court. What do I tell lord Satan?

Harry The Hat

Dear Hat:

Night Court hasn't been on the air for years. I'm sure it's not as good now as it was in the '80's. In fact, Night Court wasn't that good after the first season. The voices in your head are not Satan, but John Larroquette.

Dear Mr. Slayer

I am an eighty-year-old widower. There is a real dish, about my age, that lives across the way from me in our retirement village. We both get around pretty well, and I would like to peruse a physical relationship with her. Is that kind of thing feasible at our age? How should I approach her?

Old in Oregon

Dear Old:

The best advice I can give you is: get it hard and whip it out. If she goes for it, do it. Your eighty, you could just say you're getting a little senile and that's why you took it out. When I'm eighty, I'm going to forget pants.

Dave Bazan & the New Pedro the lion release *Achilles Heel*



SLTM: The press release for *Achilles Heel* says "after the substantial success of *Control*" What is substantial success to you and how did that help or hurt the expectations of your new release?

Dave Bazan: The press release isn't exactly me or the band talking -- it was in reference to the record label's concerns-- it sold around 40,000 copies, so it was really good according to the label's standards, so it was successful to them.

As far as success to me, that was really exciting, and we were able to pay off our car, and we live in an apartment that we really like, and occasionally we eat at restaurants that are very delicious. And my wife doesn't have to work right now.....

And, no, there weren't expectation that I had to live up to. Because it was successful it gave me a bit of freedom. This album didn't have to sell as much for me to get to keep doing it. I feel like that record doing as well as it did actually gave me a cushion. It gave me the room for experimenting and making the record we wanted to make. It help in a way; it certainly didn't hurt.

SLTM: Your vocals remind me of Evan Dando, do you get that a lot or have I been eating too many sandwiches with old mustardonaise?

DB: They have, and I like Evan Dando, so I take that as a major compliment, but his vocals are thicker, more syrupy. I wish I had his range. Okay. I should just take the damn compliment. Thanks.

SLTM: You are mentioned as the person behind or the creative force of Pedro the Lion, yet there are clearly others in the band that make it go. Does that bother you when people focus on you as Pedro the Lion or is that attention justified?

DB: Well, that's funny. Up until I suppose September 2003, I was the only consistent creative force, and there were no other members. Now there are. So because I was the only person in the band the focus was appropriate.

But now I have made a concerted effort to give credit where credit is due. This album would be way worse if Tim wasn't part of it. He sits in on interviews and hopefully the focus on me will change going forward.

SLTM: Did recording in your home studio help the creative process of this record or just speed up the release time?



DB: It did help the recording. The main idea behind recording in your home studio is that you can spend more time on it than when you are spending upwards of \$600 to \$1000 a day to be there. So it didn't affect the release date. I suppose in a normal studio the release day would've been sooner. If it wasn't free we would've been done sooner.

It did help the creative process. You just have endless time to experiment with the pressure of knowing that minute costs a \$1 or more.

SLTM: do you prefer the concept album or a record that is "not so heavy handed"? Or do they each have their time and place?

DB: Neither of those things are in my criteria in liking or not liking records. I just like good songs. So if an album is a concept album and has really good songs I would probably like it, and visa versa.

SLTM: If I may ask with a bit of naiveté and ignorance, where does the name Pedro the Lion come from?

DB: I had a dream in 1995 and in the dream, do you know the bartender in the scene in *Three Amigos* where they say, it's like beer?, well he was in the dream, but instead of being a person he was a lion, but instead of beer it was tequila, and his name was Pedro. So when I woke up I remembered the picture of the man-lion serving up tequila that I decided to name the band that.

Movie Facts: In *The Three Amigos*, the bartender at the Cantina (Del Barracho) is played by Fred Asparagus. His most recognized lines are "We don't have no beer, just Tequila" and "It's like beer".
✓ *Three Amigos* came out in 1986.

SLTM: by the way, PTL? Do you think anyone remembers Jimmy and Tammy Faye Bakers little club? What the heck did their PTL stand for? See how people forget the scandals and flavors of the moment.

DB: That was very coincidental. The first time I abbreviated it, I almost had a heart attack, I'm sure it was some sort of subconscious thing, but it really took me by surprise. In fact, for almost 5 years, I never abbreviated it for anything because I was so mortified.



Pedrothelion.com

Pedro the lion interview continued:

SLTM: Do you take a band with you on tour? Does TW come out with you? How does that work with a stripped down record like Achilles Heel? Do you find it easier to just play and not worry about the arrangements?

DB: Yes. Every time I go on tour under the name "Pedro The Lion" it is with a band. Always has been, and always will be.

SLTM: Do you prefer at this time in your musical career to be the opener or the headliner? Is there more pressure being the opener for a "hip" band like Death Cab for Cutie than say being the headliner?

DB: There is less pressure being the opener, because people aren't paying their \$15 to see you, so there's no expectations. But I still prefer being the headliner because you make more money, and there's more beer and water and you get clean towels. And you get the backrubs from the opening band, rather than having to give them.

SLTM: Have you always been on Jade Tree? I could have sworn that you were associated with Parasol Records out of Champaign at one time, but that could just be because they distribute releases too and were talking about your last record. Any association with any other record labels?

DB: Before Jade Tree we were on Made In Mexico Records.

SLTM: I have seen your name and the bands name before in the press, and noticed the remark about "substantial success" with the last record. I was wondering if after the build up of the last CD and the subsequent success of it, plus the attention paid to the band, does it affect you when you are being spoken of as having a good record and then it doesn't reach a certain point of "success" (i.e. money wise mostly)? Or is that the way it is with music, you get some attention, some buzz, people check you out, you do okay and then you go away to record and work on the next CD and everybody forgets. Do you feel like it's back to square one at that point?

DB: As far as the buzz and success and jacking off of the local populist is very fickle that can help for the moment. As far as raising your profile so that honest music fans can. you make a record then the life of an album is seen through touring. so when you go through the town the people are there, so when you go it's a tour to tour thing. So you don't go back to square one. We don't have to.

SLTM: Being an independent artist/band is it hard to book a tour that is easy on the overall health of the band and you mental state? Or do you have to jam as many days together to provide maximum efficiency? Why don't bars book residencies anymore

DB: No. We have a booking agent who has booked out tours since 1998, and he does a fine job, and as long as the drives are reasonable, we prefer not to have any days off, just because we like to play shows a lot.

A PORTRAIT OF THE LANDSCAPE CREATED BY LOITERING

What you have been reading here for the last six issues is from a diary I found in Indiana a few years back. I was on a trip and stopped at a local used book store. The old lady behind the counter was nice and the shop seemed old, and dusty but cheap. I found a William S. Burroughs book I had been looking for, and a couple of other books including this complete diary. It didn't seem like much but I was curious as to who the hell would sell their diary to a used book store. Later at my hotel I thumb through it. It was weird with vague descriptions, plus lots of anger and hate. When I finally finished it at home three weeks later, I decided to publish the entries here in SLTM. It's a good study in human behavior, not only because we don't know the "guy", but also because I have no idea what happens to him and the rest of the people or his anger. I will say this, I think it's mostly false and that as far as I can tell some of the things he speaks of didn't happen, but it's hard to tell because he gives such an insiders view to his vague descriptions, something that only someone who committed these things could give voice to. For me it has been like meeting someone I will never meet, a chance to look into someone's soul at a safe distance. I have no idea when this all took place in his diary, but it seems to have a early to mid eighties feel to it, there are few pop culture references. It's interesting to look inside someone with out going to the trouble of knowing them.

June 4th/5th— I am not some kind of monster who goes around hating people for no reason, I'm not like that. I don't really hate anyone, that would take up way to much of time and energy. I have to love something first before I can hate it, and I have invest my time and energy into before I can truly have hatred for it. I love nothing, never have, probably never will so how can I have true hatred? Sure I don't like certain things, and people annoy me but I don't hate, it could never be something that convenient for me. What is it then? If I am truly trying to understand myself and judge myself (which is probably a bad idea at this juncture) I should be able to define why I do the things that I do, why I do them and if the end result is enough to make me satisfied so that I don't do them again. Maybe it's jealousy? I see all these people, rich or poor who are so happy and satisfied in ways I will never know that I hope to become them, to take whatever it is that makes them become that which I cannot seem to be. Listen to me, I sound like some stupid Science Fiction show, or at worst something Shakespeare would have shit out and discarded. Maybe there is no understanding who I am, perhaps I am and I do because it is who I am supposed to be without question or thought. I'm sure some of the people that I have touched and used would love to hear that now, I am sure that would really explain a whole hell of a lot to them. That's kind of funny really, "Excuse Marc Hendril, do you mind If I take your soul and you disappear so that I can be you?". I am sure you won't mind being gone, since I have to do this because that is just the way that I am". Hell that would be a funny conversation, I am sure that junkies and alcoholics would love to use that argument too. "I'm an alcoholic, but it's just who I am, so live with it". I may use that in my defense someday. "Judge, I am sorry for the brutality, and all that but that is who I am. I am not sick or mentally ill, I just have to do this because that is who I am supposed to be". Problem with that argument? I have to believe it.



The Greg Kihn Band

Greg Kihn caught in vicious Kihn cycle

From the All music guide—Greg Kihn started playing rock and roll when he moved to San Francisco in 1974. The following year he became one of the first artist signed to Besserkly Records. In 1976 he recorded his debut album. His first hit came in 1981 with the top twenty single *The breakup song*. His biggest hit came in 1983 with *Jeopardy* (number two on the charts). By the time *Love and Rock n Roll* was released in 1986, the puns had run out (*uh, no they didn't check out some of his other titles from the last decade—ed*). Kihn kept a pretty low profile for much of the nineties releasing *Mutiny* in 1994 and *Horror Show* in 1996. (Chris Woodstra AMG)

Rejected Greg Kihn album names:

The Wrath of Kihn

Rekihndled

You Kihn fight city hall

Fuckihn A

Fuckihn in the butt

Kihn I get a witness

Brother Kihn you spare
two dimes

I just ate a bunch of
corn, tomorrow I'll be
sitting on the Kihn

How I kihn I go on?

Kihntucky Fried Music

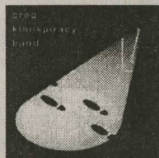
Kihn of Corn

Coke Kihn Cola

Junkihn Roll

Franklihn mint of rock
and roll

New York, NY—Greg Kihn the Baltimore hit maker from the early eighties is stuck in a vicious Kihn cycle which he seems unable to extricate himself from. Former band mates, former supermodel girlfriends and a small percentage of the music buying public are concerned. "He tried for a time naming his albums with just plain names, but I think after the hits dried up he felt that he was cursed because he didn't name all his albums with a pun" former drummer Stan Miles said from AJAX recording studio in upstate New York. "Now he can't even begin recording an album if he doesn't have a pun name for it first. It's like a sort of addiction" said Miles who keeps in touch with Kihn frequently. Kihn scored his first hit in 1981 with *The breakup song* (they don't write em) on the *Rockihnroll* album. Kihn tried to move away from the pun related album titles in the mid eighties starting with *Love and Rock n Roll*, but soon the pressure of having a hit and keeping the brand name out in the public got to be too much for Greg Kihn. "I remember him sitting around the studio during the recording of *Mutiny* trying to come up with some pun names for the album, thinking that naming it with a punny name would bring back the hits" former super model girlfriend Heather Francis said. "He just sat in the corner of the studio for the longest time, throwing a red ball at the wall muttering to himself 'how about Hackihn you to death?' and stuff like that. It was sad really. Finally, he decided to call it mutiny cause all his friends and



most of his



fans had

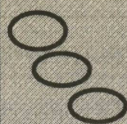


left

him, like a mutiny...I guess" recalled Miles. While Kihn continues to make music today, his fan base has shrunk considerably from his hey days in the early eighties. "I think his music is still vital and important today as it was over twenty years ago. I mean, the man writes songs that speak to your heart" said noted Kihn historian Milt Drabek. "I've talked to Greg before and after his gigs and told him that he doesn't need to incorporate Kihn into every title anymore and that people know who he is and respect his music and will find it without the gimmicky title" said Drabek a fan of over twenty two years and the keeper of the only Greg Kihn fan site www.freakihnrockihnrollkihn.com. While Kihn continues to release music today, he also feels that people won't find his CD unless it is titled correctly. For Kihn that means working his last name into the title no matter how incomprehensible that may be. "We just finished recording some new material last month, and Greg calls me up in the middle of the night and yells 'The wrath of Kihn' in my ear and hangs up. I think he is caught in a vicious Kihn cycle. Oh god, please don't tell him I said that because then it will go on the stupid dry erase board he has in his garage with all the names on it" Jimmy Miller, new bass player for the Kihn band said. When told of Miller's story and the Kihn reference, Kihn immediately headed to his garage to put the name on the "big board", thereby reinforcing his place in the vicious Kihn cycle.



PHRATRY RECORDS



Label Profile—Phratry Records

Phratry Records—PO Box 14267 Cincinnati, OH 45250-0267 www.phratryrecords.com

Why did you name it Phratry Records?

Jerry Dir: Well, when I started kicking around the idea of going off on my own, I would sit down and thumb through the dictionary while I was watching TV or listening to records or something. I would just kinda randomly check out a few words that I thought sounded cool or words that I thought might look cool as a logo. When I came up on Phratry, I really liked it's meaning and thought it'd be perfect to represent my idea of what a record label should be - bands and the label working together for a common good. All the bands maintaining their own, unique sound but working to promote each other and helping each other out. However, I wasn't sure of using this specific word to represent the label. I don't know, it seemed like it might be kinda pretentious to call it 'Phratry' and I didn't think it'd be something that would really hit people, ya know? I mean, shit, I was going to drop 'Save Your Servant' which came from 'The Exorcist'. And picking out some nerdy word with its roots in ancient Greek just didn't seem to measure up in terms of originality or impact. But, once I started to focus on the word's meaning and what it would represent, I started getting excited about the possibility of using it.

When I started thinking about using the Native American tribal art as a logo that's when I finally sold myself on the name. I wanted to have kind of an abstract logo rather than use something that was just a slick piece of graphic design art. Besides that, I really liked what this type of artwork represented - a connection between the spiritual world and the physical world we live in. The ancient Native American cultures held art in such high regard. Unlike today's world where we, as a culture, see art more as entertainment or an escape rather than an integral part of our daily lives or spiritual well being. I don't know, I just thought that between the definition of the word Phratry and the what the logo-art represented, it was a perfect fit for what I wanted to try and do or, rather, try and 'say' as a label. Music is really important to me. And, I do think that music and art can be life changing for people. It's powerful. I didn't want to just settle for any random name. I wanted to put some thought into it.

How many releases do you average per year? Do you see yourself toping out at a certain amount or do you just want to keep growing and releasing more?

Jerry Dir: Well, I haven't officially even hit my one year anniversary as Phratry. If you count all the Save Your Servant releases Steve and I did between 1995 and 2004 and the two Phratry releases I've done since August of 2004, I currently have nine releases. Couple that with my distro. and I've got eighteen releases in my catalog. Right now I'm planning on at least two more releases in 2005 as well as a reissue of the Autumn Rising 'Dusk' EP which I'm currently out of. Hopefully things will work out with releasing the new Blue Velvet record as well. I just want to keep going for as long as possible. I don't wanna just release stuff for the sake of releasing it and building a big catalog but, if there's something I'm excited about doing, I want to try and make it happen. Right now, there just happens to be a ton of music and bands that I'm excited about.

Is it crowded in the independent music scene today? How does a label stand out in a crowded room?

Jerry Dir: Hell yeah it's crowded! Over the last few years, technology has progressed so much that it's now possible for everybody and their brother to release a Cd, Mp3's and have their own website and call themselves a "label". The underground movements are so over saturated, it's insane. You look at how the independent American music scene of the late '70's and early 80's got started and you look at the small number of bands and labels that were involved - and you wonder how in the hell it ever got this out of control. I think it's because of technology. It's really put power in the hands of amateurs and budding artists. It's easier now than it ever was to get things done quickly and at a relatively inexpensive price. The sound quality of home recordings is so much better now. It's crazy. Virtually anyone with the right mindset and the even the slightest technical knowledge can make their own record in their living room.

I think what makes bands or labels stand out in this crowded room is just sticking with it. I think it's possible for just about anybody to put out their own record nowadays but, that's just the beginning. I mean, so you've got a record out - so what? Now what do you do with it? I mean, this isn't the 1970's anymore where you could maybe just make a record, play in your hometown and be potentially be discovered by some big-time record executive. You have to prove yourself and work hard to make even a

little bit of a name for yourself. There's just too much music out there nowadays. And if you want to stand out, you have to keep at it while all the other bands and labels who are doing it as a casual thing - just because they can or because they like recording and screwing around with computers or something - decide they don't want to do it anymore or they give up or move on to something else to satisfy their next whim. Bands have to tour and the labels have to promote. It's a ton of work. But, if it's something you really enjoy doing then you don't mind the amount of work that goes along with it.

How do you reach or get people to find out about Phratry?

Jerry Dir: Right now it's all about advertising, sending promo's out to whoever I can and getting the bands out on the road. All ads I do include my web address. I hope that people will check out Phratry online. Once they're at the site, they can download a ton of music and see for themselves what the bands are all about. From there I just hope that word of mouth will take over. I'm currently trying to get some sort of national distribution plan worked out. That, coupled with some of the bands touring, will hopefully help spread the word that Phratry is out there.

What can a smaller label do with a limited budget? Is there a limit to your creativeness without a lot of money or is anything within reach?

Jerry Dir: I have to admit that I'm always a little taken back when people who have full time jobs and are playing music say they don't have the money to do anything. Or, that there are just too many limitations to what they can achieve. Most everybody I know involved in underground music holds down a full-time job to help pay for their bands or labels or whatever. I totally understand that everybody's got personal lives and they might have other interests besides music and, I mean, god-knows we've all got bills to pay. But if you have the desire and this is something you really want to do - and you can be responsible with your money - you should be able to create quite a lot for your band or your label even on a limited budget. Trust me, I know it's hard but, I struggle every month, but if a band can get all its band members to pitch in some money or you can find other bands and other labels to go in together on ad expenses or printing expenses or whatever, that significantly decreases your limitations. Technology has just made it too easy nowadays - it's just not that expensive to produce quality records. I mean, there's a ton of stuff you can do by self-recording your own material or doing your own album cover layouts on your home computer. It's not as if you have

to go into a big, expensive studio or hire a commercial artist to do your artwork. If you have a job and you have the desire, that alone can take you pretty far. Sure there might be some limitations as far as packaging or your printed artwork being black and white versus full-color, or the number of tracks that you can record your album with but, if you're making quality music, I don't think most people on this level will really notice the limitations. And sometimes, certain limitations force you to be MORE creative just to get around them. Just depends on how you look at it, I guess.

Is airplay or reviews in magazines still the best way to get attention for your releases? Are there ways around that? Is college radio or community radio any help?

Jerry Dir: I think all those things help in some way. I don't what the best way really is - if there is a "best" way. Regular airplay on college and public radio is great but there are a lot of people I know that are really into music but they just don't listen to the radio at all. And, similarly, there are a ton of people that aren't in the habit - or have the money - to go out and pick up every issue of every magazine that's out there. So, I don't know, it's six of one, half a dozen of the other. There are plenty of alternatives to those two avenues. A presence on the web is always a good way to establish yourself or even just establishing a mailing list and sending out regular emails to people is a good, direct way of reaching your audience.

What do you feel is the purpose of your label?

Jerry Dir: Very simply to share music with people. I hope that people who check out the bands/music associated with Phratry enjoy it as much as I do. I'm releasing records by these bands because I'm a big fan of their music. I personally would not release anything that I didn't enjoy listening to myself. There's this interview in the 'Dogtown and Z Boys' documentary where Stacy Peralta says, "I wanted to go out and show the world skateboarding". That's how I feel right now. I want to get this music out to as many people as possible.

Do you find the bands you sign to your label or do they approach you? How do you get to the music so you can release it to the public? Does liking a band factor into whether or not you sign them? Does there have to be some general appeal to them and their music?

Jerry Dir: Well, right now, I'm approaching the bands. I'm far too small and far too unknown at this point to have bands contacting me or sending me demos. The few demo's and links

to Mp3's on the web that I have received from bands asking me to check 'em out have either been from a couple of local bands that heard of me through some local press or they're friends with the bands that I'm currently working with. I'm pretty much a fan of the band first and then I think about releasing a record for them or, with them - as some kind of split-release. Then I try and set up some kind of meeting with the group to see if they'd like to work together with me.

What is your philosophy of music and does the business side interfere with that philosophy?

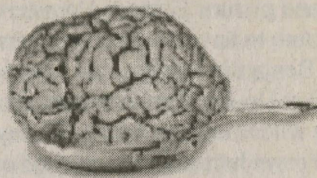
Jerry Dir: I don't know, I never thought of this as I philosophy per se but, I think that CD's should be offered at low prices and bands and record labels should work together (rather than a label employing a band). Doing "business" dictates that you make calculated decisions to make money and try and outdo your competitors. I definitely try to make calculated decisions in so much that I don't want to go broke doing this. However, I definitely don't feel that I'm "competing" with any other labels or bands. I mean, this is art. And there is no way to convince people that you're the best. It's all subjective. So, I guess, no, my business savvy - or, lack thereof - doesn't interfere with my philosophy of running a label.

Where do you see your label going in the next few years?

Jerry Dir: I think that with the quality of music the bands are writing, Phratry could grow to be much bigger than it is now. Which, kinda goes without saying since I'm about as small as a label could be right now. I foresee plenty of new releases and some sort of distribution deal. My goal is to just keep putting out good music that I enjoy listening to. If that helps me to move forward and get a little bit bigger, I won't complain about it. It's hard for me to think about what will happen a few years down the road when everyday right now is a struggle to just maintain costs and help the bands get started. I do foresee myself at least breaking even in the next few years, though....kind of an unexciting outlook, I realize, but I'm just trying to stay grounded and focus on the tasks at hand. I have a knack for biting off more than I can chew and taking on a lot of work for the label throughout the week - in addition to working full time at my job and playing drums/percussion every now and again with other bands. So, it's pretty easy not too look too far into the future when you're constantly thinking about the twenty million things you've got to do by tomorrow.

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Notes From My Childhood #1 – Benjamin Phillips

When I was a kid I had, at one point, thirteen hamsters. Just pause before you read any further, close your eyes, and picture Thirteen Hamsters. Finished? Good. You probably look creepy.

How I came to have thirteen hamsters can best be traced back to one lonesome Southern Illinoisan night where in I, Benjamin Phillips, lay wrapped up in my red polka dotted sheets, my head resting comfortably on my Dudley Do-Right pillow case, dreaming. I was having a nightmare actually. In it I was walking through the wilderness on a crisp fall day. The wind blew gently at my back, and I was in a good mood. A furry little brown hamster was perched on my right shoulder like a parrot. We walked and walked. Suddenly this picture of wilderness tranquility was shattered by the presence of a big snarling wolf that, rather than having run out from the forest, just sort of appeared in front of me. I was terrified. But then, just as suddenly, my friend and trusty hamster sidekick flew off my shoulder, and fiercely attacked the wolf. He chewed away at important veins in the wolf's neck with his tiny, yet surgically sharp little hamster teeth, ultimately killing the wolf and saving my life.

When I woke up it was clear to me that obtaining a hamster would have to be the day's top priority. I enlisted the service of my sister, a really good sport about this kind of thing, took twenty dollars obtained from a birthday, or Christmas, or some other money-giving holiday, and made off to the Wal-Mart. They still sold all manner of pets at this time, not just half dead Goldfish and other assorted ill looking fish like they do now.

We looked carefully at their selection, picked out a couple that looked like the cutest, bought the best cage, wood chips, and food we could afford, took them to the register, and bought them. We were very proud pet owners. We walked all the way home, being especially careful not to jostle them too much. When we got home we set up their living quarters, meticulously arranged the wood chips, and waited for the fun to start.

They promptly died. I'm serious. They died like two hours after we got them home. It was devastating. My sister, five years my junior and all of seven at the time, took it especially hard. I told my mom about it and asked her if we could, please, have the three dollars or whatever it cost at the time so we could go buy new, living, hamsters. I felt confident I could convince my fair, level-headed mother by throwing my case upon her pity and sympathies, and that we would have new hamster money in no time.

Soon we were on our way back to Wal-Mart, moneyless, to return our dead hamsters. They were much quieter on the way back. This time I was accompanied by my friend Chad who was excited by the prospect of a pet ownership and had, without asking his mother, taken some money out of her purse to buy a hamster of his own. The clerks were actually quite congenial about the whole dead-hamster-returning thing, further proving the theory that they will let you return anything at Wal-Mart.

These hamsters lived. It turned out however that Chad's mom was terrified of rodents, and would have no part of a hamster in her house. So little Harvey came to live with me. Now we had three. My hamster, Seymour, was a boy. Princess and Harvey, on the other hand, were both girls, so before too long they were also both pregnant. Seymour was quite the player. It was all very Jerry Springer. Some good for nothing man shacking up in manufactured housing with two women gets them both pregnant, even though one of them thinks she's a man.

Harvey was the first to give birth. My sister was so excited that every five or ten minutes for the weeks or months Harvey was pregnant, she would run over to the cage, look eagerly inside, and declare, "Not yet" to the room. It was because of this monitoring that she was present for the start of the labor. When she peered into the cage that time she screamed, and we knew it was time to begin.

I removed all non-essential items from the cage and watched as one sticky, translucent bag of hamster arrived one after another. There were six by the end. Harvey was tired, and we watched closely as she tended to their cleaning.

It had seemed like the cleaning was really going on a long time. I was bored and went to sit down. I was probably seated for about ten minutes when my sister screamed again, but not in nearly the same joyfully excited way as before. This was a scream of terror.

And for good reason. The doting mother wasn't actually cleaning her young, but rather eating off their little heads. Eating them. Up. She moved methodically from one hamster bag to another, diligently eating off every one their heads. It was all over before we even knew what to do. Inside of a half an hour I was out in the woods with my sobbing sister, large kitchen spoon in hand, looking for a quiet place to bury six headless hamsters.

A few days later Harvey died. Her eyes turned Bright red, and she died. It was a disease that came to be called pink eye.

Princess had her litter not long after. To her credit she only ate two of the seven she had. Two more poorly marked hamster graves. After two months four more died of pink eye, leaving one. Harvey JR.

In the mean time my impulse to buy a hamster had not only wrecked havoc on my home, but had touched off a kind of hamster mania, troubling many of the apartments in my complex. It is important to understand that hamsters can become kind of mean if they are not played with constantly from the moment you get them. They will bite you, and scratch you, and generally behave like little monsters. My sister, who has a persuasive way with animals unlike anyone that I have ever seen, had trained ours. Little princess would spin around her outstretched finger. Seymour would sleep in her hand. They were better behaved than most dogs, due mainly to the fact that she spent hours a day, every day, working with them.

The local riffraff on the other hand would spend about three days playing with their new toys before getting bored. The hamsters would then run away, or die, or turn into violent, thuggish hamsters with switchblades and bandannas. (Hamsters in my mind apparently dress like gangs in West Side Story. If you're a Jet you're always a Jet...)

Before long hamsters started showing up at my house. Sometimes in their cages, some times in shoeboxes, often just handed to me with an angry "HERE" from a crying child or frustrated parent. .

We became like a sad hamster refugee camp. Most came in hungry, got pinkeye, and then died. We came to understand pinkeye to be a kind of death sentence. If a hamster were spotted with it, they would be moved to a separate cage, a death cage if you will, to pass quietly without infecting anyone else.

But they didn't all die, and we had a pretty steady revolving occupancy of about six to seven hamsters at any given time, always with Seymour, Princess, and Little Harvey Jr. as the group leaders. Many would give birth, eat their young, then die or get pregnant again. I was beginning to wonder how any hamsters ever managed to live lives longer than a few hours. Then Princess and one of the other more recent occupants had another litter. This time all seven lived. I guess no one was hungry. We had taken to putting incredible amounts of food in their cage prior to the birth, but that had never worked. This brought the total up to eleven, a record at that point. Then not three days later, we took our last strays; two large profoundly mean hamsters from one of my mom's friends, and the total peaked at thirteen live, fully-grown hamsters. We split them up between two cages, and they lived there, with out further birth or pink eye, for close to six months.

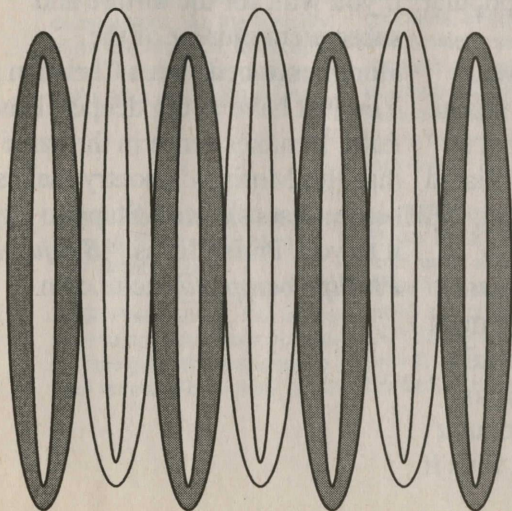
Then, all at once, the pink eye was back. It came like the plague and killed everyone in a matter of days. By the end only Princess remained. I had by this point forgone burying them, and was now just bagging them up in a plastic Wal-Mart sack and flinging them into the empty field by the apartment.

One night a few months after that, when things has quieted down, Princess ran away. My sister woke up that morning, looked into Princess's plastic cage bleary eyed, and discovered her gone. We looked around for a long time, tore open every cabinet, and searched ever closet, but to no avail. She was gone.

I like to think that Princess got outside and ran away. Maybe she found a nice field mouse, had her own little pack of wild hamsters, and lived to a happy ripe old age. That is what she deserved. But she probably just got stuck in the air conditioning ductwork and starved to death.

We missed her, but had no desire to get any more small furry rodents. The adventure was over. The cages were boxed up and the remaining hamster pellets were thrown out. It was time for to move on, and soon everything was quiet again.

Until the day my sister brought home a rabbit.



Want to read more of Ben Phillips thoughts? Want to know what makes Ben Phillips tick? What's more, who is this Ben Phillips and where does he get these wonderful stories? Well check out his web site to read more articles, see him helping the needy at The Free Pants Fair in Bloomington last month. See Pictures, stories, recipes, ideas and more. He's a hell of a story teller and a giving person. What's more he's got a web site:

<http://www.freewebs.com/benjpip/>

THE PASSION OF THE CREED

It looks like I can take Creed off of my TOP FIVE SHITTIEST BANDS IN THE UNIVERSE list, because as of June 4, 2004 they are no more. I couldn't be happier. Really. I'm beside myself. I try not to revel too much in other people's misfortune, and I know how painful band break-ups can be, but honestly, they were genuinely the worst band ever. Possibly not ever, but I can't think of anyone worse right now. They were the definition of cheesy, self-righteous, crap rock. If had to see one more video where Scott Fucking Stapp stands around outside somewhere, usually on a mountaintop, with his shirt unbuttoned, raising his hands in the air like some homosexual Jim Morrison-Christ figure, I was maybe going to have to file a lawsuit. Traumatic Stress. Something like that. God what a tool. I don't mean to go on and on about it, lord knows it's a tired point, but what an asshole. There, I think I've gotten it out of my system.

What a Fucker.

Guess not.

Anyway, the AP article that I skimmed hastily through said that they were breaking up because when they got back together to play after their year hiatus, (taken following Fuck Up's oh so holier than thou show in Chicago where he got shit faced, wore a towel on his head like a turban, and nearly fell off the stage), "the vibe wasn't the same". That's band speak for Stapp's still an asshole.

All right, so here's the funniest

part. The three other guys, everyone making up the non-Scott-Stapp portion of the band, are forming a new group, with a crappy new name. (I don't remember what it was, as I just kind of browsed through the article.) So, I wonder where the vibe problem is? Who's fault could that be?

This is how people kick out their problem lead singers nowadays. They break up the band, act like it's just a garden-variety "artistic differences" style situation, then immediately reform without the prick in question. It allows them to make whatever kind of music they want, plus take the lions share of the audience, while the press is still hot from the break up. Just ask Audio Slave.

The band's new formation was quick to say that they will sound nothing like Creed, and will be taking a brand new musical direction. Hopefully one that will not suck so much.

So, without the band, what will the lord Jehovah of rock be doing now? Fading gracefully out of the spotlight and into drug addiction and obscurity you say? Hardly. He will, of course, begin work on his obligatory solo project. No surprise there. Totally normal post breakup behavior. Can't let the fans think the other half of the collaboration was the reason why you were so popular. But you see Fuckhead has a problem. He actually is the weak link in the chain. To remedy this he has decided to make music that is inspired by, but in no way affiliated with, the blockbuster Jesus fest, THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST. Really. I swear that's what it said. Doesn't that sound terrible? It must have been the only thing he could think of that would allow him to continue expounding his particular brand of Christian crap rock. Plus it

has the added benefit of being even remotely associated with such a proven and humongous moneymaker. God knows know one's going to buy the thing otherwise. Oh the panic he must have felt. And you know it's going to be the worst. It will be so bad that I may have to buy it. Or burn it, as I have no intention of giving that pretentious sack of monkey shit anything, except for a possible crowbar to the head.

This got me thinking. What if this little ploy of his works? What if this bullshit solo ego exercise becomes mandatory religious sacrament even barely works. If this scheme can work for such a soulless corporate hack like him, then maybe it will do something for a foul-mouthed bitter hack, such as myself. So, it is in that spirit that I would like to announce the following: This piece, nay, this entire magazine, have been directly inspired by Mel Gibson's timeless epic, THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST. Oh I know what you're thinking. You're saying to yourselves, "Ben, I don't see the connection. Why do you have to be such a pathetic loser?" To you non-believers I say YOU ARE NOT LOOKING HARD ENOUGH. It's really, really cryptic. This entire document that you hold on your hands is a literal parable, a metaphor if you will, for the torture and subsequent murder of the aforementioned Judea Christian lord. You just have to dig deeper. Have faith. It makes sense in the same way that Jim Morrison's poetry makes sense. Just ask Scott Stapp to explain it to you. Praise Jesus. —Benjamin Phillips benjpip@excite.com



ASG



ASG

An interview with the rock band ASG by Brad Bugos

More ASG www.asgnation.com

www.volcoment.com & www.purevolume.com

At the time I had never heard of Volcom Entertainment and thought that ASG was All Systems Go. It's not, and now I know who Volcom is too. We got a package from Volcom one day with a bunch of CD's for review, and we went through them all and one of the discs that stood out was *The amplification of self gratification* by ASG. So we decided to find out more about this band. We got most of our questions answered, we always ask a few stupid ones just to see what the band says in response. Here are some of them, we might post the rest on the web site or maybe not, but at the very least go to their web site and log onto pure volume and listen to a MP3.

SLTM: How come almost every band, especially punk ones, that some one used to be in or just broke up has a joke take on a popular name or place? Like the Urethra Franklins, there are a lot of funny band names that play on words, but never make it anywhere. Wouldn't it be hard for people to take them seriously or is that the point, having fun playing and not caring where you're name takes you?

ASG: We thought the name was funny, sort of. We were not that serious to begin with so we never worried about the repercussions of having a stupid name.

SLTM: Do you ever feel pinned in by the surf/skate community? Do you feel like people will expect a something from you that isn't totally who you are as a band? Do they expect a certain sound from you? How do you break out of that or can you?

ASG: Not so much pinned in, but I think its hard for people who don't know where we are coming from, like the majority of middle America, to accept us as real and the noise we make as a legitimate sound...

SLTM: How has the response been to *The Amplification of Self Gratification*?

ASG: Pretty solid....It is impossible to not want more no matter how good the response to your record is but I think at this

point it is exceeding expectations. We are still plenty hungry though.

In 2002 ASG self released a self titled full length album. In February 2003 they signed to Volcom Entertainment. *From their press kit*

SLTM: Ever hear of a band from Carolina called Corrosion of Conformity? I think you guys sound a little like them. They have a nice mix of metal and punk. Do you guys get that a lot "you sound like" and how do you handle that type of thing, does it bother you? How about if it wasn't a good band like COC, but a really crappy band? Would it be time for fisticuffs?

ASG: Of course I know of those guys. They were a little before our time but nonetheless badass. As far as critiques and criticisms, everybody has their own opinions so all you can do is take it all in stride and not let anything negative affect what we are trying to do here, and that is rekindle the originality of rock-n-roll?

SLTM: Who hates the term Stoner Rock? What does that term mean anyway? How far away from your sound is that term? one of your heroes QOTSA were termed stoner rock at one time, so it can't be too bad of a label. Why the

need for everyone (I am guilty too) to label everything and put it into a nice little identifiable category?

ASG: Labels are inevitable...Everything is identifiable as something or another. Just like Stoner Rock probably has different meanings to everyone who "knows" what it is but I don't think we play slow or sludgy enough to be coined stoner rock....Maybe cause of the "riffs" we play and the fact that we got long hair we get that stereotype....damn if I know, or care for that matter.

SLTM: Scratch Magazine said "Probably the best band on the Volcom Roster", most people or some people might say who is Volcom and that can't be too hard. But having heard most of the bands on the roster, I have to say there are some pretty good bands there and good company, so that really is a nice compliment. Don't you think?

ASG: A very generous compliment. There have been some great bands on the roster in the past and now is no different. I expect good things for Volcom, in terms of being a legitimate record label, in the future. Keep your eyes peeled....

ASG News?

The band says on their web site that they plan to have a new release out in early 2005

AND Now, more with ASG:

SLTM: Do you think you'll stay with Volcom for your next release? or will you guys decide that when the time comes? Have you started on the next release or have an idea when you might start on it?

ASG: definitely for the next release and maybe more but its hard to say unless we break out with a multi million dollar deal with Death Row Records or something. volcom rules though.

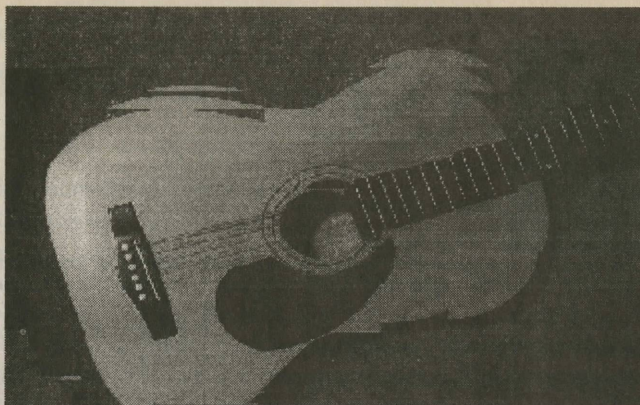
SLTM: Do you guys like package tours or smaller headlining shows?

ASG: whichever works best for us financially and whichever will produce the best turnout.

SLTM: Speaking of the website, how has it helped the band? what Would you like to see your web site do that would further help the band?

ASG: its pretty obvious the internet is a huge help for any band.

Thanks to ASG for the interview.



Does Your Band Suck?

SLTM research shows that 83% of the population is currently in a band. However, only about 5% of them are any good. I might not be a 'math whiz' but I can tell you that's a LOT of shitty bands. In our opinion, too many. But we here in the STLM offices have decided that in a departure from our usual unmerciful attacks on such unmitigated mediocrity, that we would instead try to help. So, having been in at least a hundred thousand shitty bands myself, it was decided that I would be the logical choice for the assignment.

I understand how it is. I know that when you're in a band that you obsess about it. You pour all of your energy into it, and in such a mind frame you may suffer from a nearly inevitable lack of perspective that may prevent you from realizing what the qualities of your band might truly be. Playing two chords over and over again for three and a half hours while your stoner friends take turns screaming into a long suffering PA system may be fun for you, but that fun might not translate to your audience. In short, you may suck and not know. So today, in an effort to stop any more needless aural abuse, SLTM presents this quiz:

DOES YOUR BAND SUCK

1. We like to break up our set with improvisational reggae jams.

- True: 1 Point
- False: 2 Points

2. Our influences are Kiss, The Carpenters, and Pearl Jam.

- True: 1 Point
- False: 2 Points
- Switch out Kiss with Staind and you have a deal: -5 points

3. Our drummer wears a funny hat onstage.

- True: 1 Point
- False: 2 Points
- It's the Guitarist: -3 Points

4. I'm so high right now.

- True 1 Point
- False 2 Points

5. Our sound is about 15% grunge rock and 85% DOPE-ASS-RHYMES.

- True: 1 Point
- False: 2 Points

6. We only have six songs and to make them last for a whole set we have to play them all five times.

- True: 1 Point
- False: 2 Points

7. All our song titles are stuff like 'Masticated'.

- True: 1 Point

- False: 2 Points
- AWSOME IDEA: -2 Points

8. The comment we hear most often upon playing people our demo tape is "Oh, um, nice guitar sound."

- True: 1 Point
- False: 2 Points
- We should have a demo tape? FUCK! -5 Points

9. Our set is real heavy on audience participation.

- True: 1 Point
- False: 2 Points

10. Two words: Leather Pants

- True: 1 Point
- False: 2 Points
- One more word: Bandannas: -20 Points

11. Fred Durst is my Idol.

- True: 0 Points
- False: 2 Points
- I am Fred Durst: -500 points

12. I'm only in this for the ass.

- (Almost everyone is in it for the ass, so this question should be disregarded. Give yourself 2 points. Unless you are Scott Stapp, then kill yourself.)

13. During a show we sometimes take as long as five minutes between songs.

- True: 1 Point
- False: 2 Points
- And we spend that time laboriously tuning our guitars over the amps: -2 points

14. Sometimes in the middle of a song we forget what we are playing and wind up morphing into something totally different.

- True: 1 Point
- False: 2 Points
- And no one notices: -5 points
- And that song is Alive by Pearl Jam: -10 Points

15. We like to keep things interesting with a lot of beat boxing/mouth drums in the middle of our songs. We also think it's cool if three of us do it at the same time.

- True: You really do that? What the hell is wrong with you? -5 Points
- False: 2 Points

16. When we start to play, the rush for the door can be so sudden that it seems like people are trying to escape a fire.

- True: 1 Point
- False: 2 Points

17. We always have to play behind chicken wire like the Blues Brothers do in that country bar.

- True: 1 Point
- False: 2 Points
- Who are the Blues Brothers? -25 points

18. If we could one day be as good as Avril Lavigne then we would be happy.

- True: 1 Point
- False: 2 Points

Add up your points and find out if you suck at www.sltmonkees.com

VH1:

America's High School Yearbook

I have always felt a little sorry for VH1. It has always been a second rate, sub-par, adult contemporary version of MTV. That is until recently. A few years ago, faced with lagging numbers, the management over at VH1 decided it was time to re-evaluate their position in the market. You see times were hard for music television.

But before we get too far ahead of our selves, lets start by reviewing a little media history for some of our younger friends. Back many years ago "*Cable TV*" consisted of an actual cable that ran into your home and delivered something in the way of, like, 30 channels. Tops. That included HBO, Showtime, and Cinimax. Today a person can while away the hours watching any one of about a hundred different HBO channels alone, but back then there were only the thirty channels. It wasn't bad though, because we didn't know any better. They were held in a magical black box, with a bright shiny silver knob, that when turned, *by hand*, would provide access to what seemed at the time like way more channels than anyone would ever, ever need.

"Who could get bored with thirty channels", we asked ourselves.

Today, as you know, there are like a million of them. So competition is stiff.

MTV, the reigning giant of the field has in recent years, with absolutely no irony what so ever, switched almost entirely from music programming, as its name would imply, to a less music, more reality television/girls in bikinis/24 hour a day youth consumer culture type of format. The saturation meant they had to develop an entirely separate channel for just music. MTV2. No time for music on MTV now, what with Real World 93 and The Osborne's, and MTV Cribs, and whatever the hell else they do over there now. With the obligation to play music on music television removed, MTV was free to reveal itself to be what everyone already knew it was. A 24-hour instruction manual on what's cool now and where to buy it. The transition was smooth and graceful.

Things were not so easy for VH1. I imagine them sitting around a rented fold up banquet table wearing cheap suits, trying to figure out what to do, just hoping that their checks won't bounce. It probably wasn't that bad. It knew that it couldn't stay the same, (there are only a finite number of Michael Bolton fans left in the world), and tried changes similar to those implemented by their over achieving older brother. It couldn't be MTV for old people when the young people weren't even watching 24-hour music television anymore. So it adapted. When shitty Whitney Houston clones and bad R&B music dominated MTV, VH1 tried to become a home for the dwindling alternative market. When MTV switched to selling 14-year girls as sex objects, and groups of skinny boys singing in unison, VH1 took the divas. The diva thing was the only bit of successful TV it managed to produce in an otherwise mediocre string of flop Ideas. It tried cartoons, ill-conceived reality programming, and every other MTV retread it could think of to keep advertisers in the building. With twenty billion channels to choose from, it was getting hard for VH1 to distinguish itself.

Then things started to turn around. In its quest to take MTV's old crap, and rework it for the wider, older audience, it began to focus more and more on shows like Behind The Music. It began making cheap, one hour long documentaries out of old archive footage of certain bands that it had assembled from MTV's hand-me-downs, cutting it up with a narrator and interviews with the, now old band members. It was a monster of a success.

There was a time when you couldn't turn on VH1 without seeing some band be poor struggling rockers, get rich, get drunk, then break up after their second record flops. The best one I've ever seen was about Quiet Riot, where the drummer's near constant tragedy is offset by the egotistical ramblings of its lead singer. This show is, and was, brilliant. Its like TV crack. I have always maintained that if I had two lives to live, I could spend one of them watching cable, and I could have watched VH1 virtually non-stop during this time. I don't even like the fucking Go-Go's, but I know all about their band, and even more about what whores they are.

VH1 had hit pay dirt. E! television came up with the E! True Hollywood Story not long after. I bet it felt nice to be ripped off themselves for a change. Now I pictured the people at VH1 driving better cars in a brand new building, knee deep in hookers and cocaine. That's probably not accurate either.

Anyway, next came Driven, a show about famous people through the eyes and of their high school friends, ex roommates, jilted lovers, and an assortment of other loosely associated "nearbys". These two shows laid the groundwork for what was, I believe, VH1's destiny. From BTM it learned that people love to see what has beens are doing now, and from Driven, it learned that you don't have to know shit to comment on it. VH1 would become America's nostalgia network. I love the 80's was born.

The first reason this works is because, fundamentally, people love thinking about themselves. Not in a deep, introspective, analytical type of way, but more in an "I remember Joni Loves Chichi" way. The second reason it works is because it's really long, like an hour for each year, but the bits of pop culture history are very short, cut quickly, and is lampooned by a rotating cast of asshole comedians, hot women, and genuine 80's celebrities, ("That girl from the facts of life looks really bad now"). The 80's icons themselves even lightly ridicule their former work, even though you know if you talked to them in a bar somewhere they could yammer on and on to you about how that one episode of family ties they were in where Tom Hanks was an alcoholic was really powerful in a lot of ways.

This is VH1's legacy. They have discovered that they can sell your past back to you, as long as you're allowed to laugh at it. You can lord the present above the past, feeling superior to the people in the 80's clips because now you're smarter than them, just by virtue of it being twenty years later. Its like the history channel except for that it's the history of you. It is remarkable fun to watch. They even have a show now called The Best Week Ever, which allows you to feel nostalgic about THINGS THAT *JUST HAPPENED* TO YOU. There is no other thing quite like it on cable, and VH1 has saved its self from being one of the very short-lived fads it revives for the viewing public. I think they even show videos now and then too. -Benjamin Phillips benjipip@excite.com

♪Music News, Reviews, Interviews and More ♪

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Check it daily, or don't!

A CONVERSATION WITH BOXCAR SATAN

SLTM: Boxcar Satan, why did you choose that name for the band? Was it a unanimous choice or was there dissention? Have any troubles booking the band with that name or people thinking your a death metal band?

Box Car Satan: We chose the name to honor one of the greatest musical minds of all time, Boxcar Willie. I suppose we could have called ourselves Zamphir Satan or Yanni Satan but it just wouldn't have had the same ring to it. We've occasionally had people think we are a death metal band based on the name, but more people seem to latch onto the "Boxcar" part and think we're a rockabilly band.

SLTM: Are you guys fans of Tom waits? I get a Waits vibe to your music and especially in Sanford's vocals.

BCS: Sure, we like Tom Waits. I think he's had an influence on some of my songwriting and probably on my vocal delivery as well. But he's certainly not the only influence on our music. We've borrowed and stolen from everybody from Einsturzende Neubauten and the Fall to Serge Gainsbourg and Eric Dolphy.

SLTM: That is some interesting artwork on the upstanding and indigent CD cover, where does it come from and why did you choose it?

BCS: The artwork on "U&I" is by a friend of ours named James Cobb, who also did the paintings on the covers of our two other full-length CDs. He lives here in San Antonio and I've long admired his work. After he agreed to let us use one of his paintings for the cover of our first disk, we just sort of made him our cover artist of choice. His work reflects a lot of the same themes that we explore in our music. I just can't think of another artist that would be more appropriate. In addition to being an amazing artist, James plays saxophone with us on occasion and is featured on at least a couple songs on each of our disks.

SLTM: Sanford, does your throat hurt after a gig? It would seem like it would with your style, which I like by the way, lots of character.

BCS: I used to have throat problems after gigs back when I smoked cigarettes. I've sense given up that habit and my voice rarely bothers me now, unless I have an allergy attack or something. Either giving up cigarettes was a good idea or I've done such irreparable damage to my throat it's now completely numb – not sure which.

SLTM: "Claudine" shows another side to the band, and

I think you guys should show that more often and are very adept at it, was there a thought to putting that song somewhere near the middle to break things up? Was there an idea of including that song because it showed another style you guys are good at?

BCS: We all have fairly diverse tastes in music, and that usually ends up being reflected on our disks. We get a perverse kick out of trying to fake our way through different styles and put our own strange stamp on them. Although most of our music tends to walk a line between post punk and blues, we've also dabbled in gypsy music, bossa nova, film noir-ish soundtracks, free jazz and – in the case of "Claudine" – cajun music. I'm not quite sure what we were thinking when we stuck it in the middle of the record. It was certainly an odd one to try to work into the flow

SLTM: I've seen some reviews that say your music is weird, but I don't find it to be that way. I'd say bluesy. What is so weird about it?

BCS: I'm puzzled when people call us "weird" or "difficult to listen to." We're not trying to be deliberately obscure or irritating. While we're certainly influenced by "difficult" music like no wave or early industrial music, we temper it with some more conventional styles of music like blues or old timey folk. I think we could be a lot weirder if we really wanted to. It's not like our CDs are 14 tracks of static or 50 minutes of someone pouring sand over a microphone

SLTM: Your new tour seems to take you here and there, jumping around a lot, is it hard for a band on a smaller label to book a tour that is easy on the band?

BCS: We try to cover a lot of ground when we tour since we usually can only do it once a year. That probably explains some of the jumping around. We really try to avoid having days off so we don't end up sitting around bored and not making any money. Sometimes to fill those days you need to backtrack or go to someplace a little off the beaten path. I do think it's more difficult for a band on a small label to book a tour than one on a major or large indie.

For the rest of this conversation check out our web site @ www.sltmonkees.com

To keep up with the band check out www.boxcarsatan.com

Box Car Satan's *Upstanding and Indigent* available from Dog Fingers Recordings



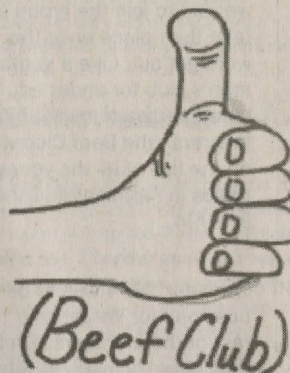
Inside the Beef Club

Part one of our investigative report dealt with this club's beginnings in a small Central Illinois town. It was started in 1992 by five high school friends as a way of keeping in contact, goofing off and drinking beer. However, as you will see in part two, some of the members of the small group would step forward to try and shape it into a Masonic force in the local community, and the state.

At the end of 1992 Kevin Vargas began to consider what a group of committed hard working young men could do together, what could be accomplished instead of just sitting in the cooler of a

local convenient store drinking beer, goofing off and looking at women who came in to the store.

"Vargas was working at the convenient store, and was the one who



The first beef club logo, drawn out in drunk fashion by Jim Nitarm.

Part 2

came up with the idea of sitting in the back drinking beer, so I guess he thought that it was his 'group' to lead, and began talking to me about what could be done with the group" former member Ross Walters told me at the Farmington watering hole, Skippy's.

Vargas told Walters that the group could do so much more than just goofing off, they could take some of the local young male population and shape them into soldiers to do their bidding.

"He also talked about getting Jim Nitarm into local politics and opening up a bar or buying one

"We need to move this club out of the back cooler and into the streets, well not the streets, cause you can't drink beer there"

Kevin Vargas sets out to shape Beef Club

of the bars in town so that we could all have free beer all the time and a real place to meet" Walters said.

Walters felt that Vargas was too full of himself and that the group was just dudes sitting around drinking free beer and talking shit. So in early 1993 he left the group, with some

pressure from Vargas and another member, Rob Sanderson.

"After Kevin told me what his ideas were and how he wanted to recruit all the lazy, meth addicted losers into his 'army' I told him that was not the point of Beef Club. Then he got mad a blew up"

Soon after Walters was taken to the emergency room with a broken jaw and a broken stick stuck in his ass.

"They were brutal, Vargas didn't want anyone questioning his authority or motives, he wanted everyone in the group to buy into his ideas. Everyone except me and

What happens when you get a group of morons together?

Walker Scott thought it was a good idea, and that Vargas would lead them somewhere. He was leading them somewhere alright, down the wrong path, with rocks and overgrown brush. Know what I am saying?" Walters asked, and I did, it was obvious what he was saying.

Walters never told the authorities what or how he hap-

pened to end up in the hospital, but Walker Scott knew what had happened, and was scared. We talked to Scott over the phone from a secret location in Canton, a place he moved to in 1995 after he was threatened by the group and feared for his life.



Mr. Salty the official snack of Beef Club since 1992

"Ross never told me what happened, he was scared, he said he fell down a flight off stairs and landed on a stick. I knew, and after that the others in the group, especially Matt Helm treated me different. I left soon after Ross' accident, but kept in contact with the group through Rob" said Scott on

"Who here has been able to say 'No thank you, I am full' when they are truly full?"

**Beef Club President
Kevin Vargas**

More Beef Club

the phone from a town just ten miles from Farmington.

Although Walters and Scott left the group, there was no shortage of people who wanted to join the group and take their place once the word got out. Like a gentlemen's club for under educated, drug addicted, shiftless loiterers, the Beef Club was on the lips of all the young males in Farmington, Illinois in 1994.

The Year 1994 was to be a busy one for Vargas and the rest of the members. First they gave themselves titles and created a secret handshake. Their next efforts were aimed at recruiting other young males into the fold, a sort of army of the dumb.

Kevin Vargas set out with the other four remaining original members to define the clubs new purpose and give "recruits" an idea of what they were getting into.

"I went to one of their 'found raisers' in hopes of getting into the club. I had heard a lot of cool stories around town about how they were the ones

who stole cats off of people porches for cat dragging contests and other stuff. I also heard they drank a lot of beer, which at the time sounded cool" said former Farmington resident Ty Favor. Favor tried to join the Beef Club during their initial recruitment period of fall 1994, but was met with a less than enthusiastic response.

"I knew Rob and Matt from going to high school with them and of course everyone knew Vargas because he had some crazy ideas for the Spanish Club in high school. I thought that knowing those guys would help me get into the club" Favor said.

We asked Favor what kind of club did he think The Beef Club was, what did he hear about it and why did he want to join. His response was interesting, very interesting.

"What I first heard about the Club was that they would sit back in the cooler of the Quick Stop and drink beer and tell jokes. Oh yeah, and look at women who came in. After awhile I am told, Jeremy Jahbow started telling jokes and performing little bits and

what not. Kevin Vargas actually worked at the Quick Stop and it was during his working hours as a stock person that they would meet, drink the stores beer and talk about the world. From my understanding it was from these "discussions" that Vargas got the idea to make an Army of The Beef. At least that is what Jeremy was calling it, but Vargas was serious."

Favor was asked to join and to bring any other dudes that he knew that might be interested.

"Marc Frahm and I went to the meeting and initiation because we both wanted to join to drink free beer, but when we got there it was clear to us that this wasn't going to be some kind of Masons or Elk's club knock off" Favor regurgitated.

The first meeting of the Beef Club recruitment effort was held in October 1994 at the Kim's Watering hole, a local drinking establishment mostly known for it's odd stench and bad lighting. Vargas had rented out their back banquet room, telling the management

What will Part Three of our investigation unravel?

that it was a bachelor party for his buddy getting married in two weeks. They bought it.

Kim's Watering Hole manager Craig Blandford "Yeah, they came in, Kevin rented out the room and paid in cash. They cleaned up after themselves, but I never did see any strippers or girls there. They did drink the shit out of the beer though, went through five

kegs. That's a lot of beer"

It was at this juncture that Vargas laid out the specific plans to what he wanted Beef Club to become.

Ty Favor " When we got there it was free beer and pretzels, all you go

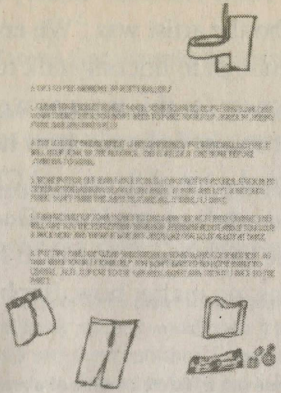


**More Beef Club in
Part three of our
report on clubs**

swallow. There were probably twenty five guys there, all about my age. I recognized some, but the others looked a little, I don't know, a little 'skuzzy', if you know what I mean"

Finally Vargas took the microphone and began to lay out his plan for town, state and world domination.

The first five tips we posted on the art of pre-drinking was featured in issue 4 and was written by the now defunct Potty Waters. That was over six years ago.



A few more pre-drinking Tips

By Brad Bugos

With help from Ben Phillips and Skip Provence

The Original Five Tips

1. Clean your toilet. Clean it really good. You're going to be putting your face down there later, and you don't need to make yourself sicker by seeing pubic hair and dried piss.
2. Eat lots of bread. It will soak up the alcohol.
3. Wear button fly jeans. You won't zip up your prick.
4. Change half your money into ones and the rest change.
5. Put two pairs of clean underwear in your glove compartment. Keep two pair handy.

The Five old tips and Some new tips you should know about before you go out drinking

Looking back at this piece we see that changing your money into ones and change was a ridiculous idea. Oh, the ones thing was clever, but the change? No. We went out one time and had over a hundred bucks in ones and change, we won't say how much change, and it was a nightmare. Every time we fell down, change went everywhere and we had to try to pick it up. The more drunk we got the harder it was to pick up and the less enthusiastic we were about it. "Fush it" we would say and get up, dust ourselves off and head on to the next bar. Dumb idea, so forget that. The other ones aren't bad, although I'm not sure they sell button fly jeans anymore, at least I haven't seen any lately and don't own a pair. We put that one on there after we accidentally zipped up our pricks (collectively) in our pants after New Years Eve party one year. I swear I didn't think we would get out dicks out, you don't just unzip real quick and it's over, you have to kind of work it back and forth. The clean underwear one is a little tricky if you don't drive and if you are the type of drunk who passes out a lot and puts things down and forgets where they are. On the other hand you can do what Rambling Ronald does, he wears three pair of underwear at a time when he goes out drinking. The first layer is bikini briefs, the second regular briefs and then boxers. It seems to work for him since he seems to misplace his keys all the time and never remembers where anything is. Although that did back fire on him once when he shat through all three pairs of his pants, but it did teach him not to eat spicy Mexican food a day before or the day of heavy drinking. So there is another lesson for you, don't eat anything that would normally give you pasty bowels one to two days before you know you'll be throwing down ten or fifteen. For us that would be Mexican and Chinese food. I swear every time I have Chinese food without the drinking I shit blood for two days, so I don't even want to tell you what it's like mixed with some Leinenkugel's. So now it's time to unveil some new tips, some things the three of us have learned from years of heavy drinking, and as my sponsor has always said "It's okay to be proud of your drinking, just don't brag about it". Here are a few more tips to help you prepare and hopefully come out the other end of a heavy night of drinking in tip top shape.

Tips for Drinking (from Ben Phillips)

1. Put away any knives, guns, explosives, etc, in a safe and out of the way place. Nothing can ruin a fun evening faster than a serious puncture wound or a third degree burn.
2. Write down your name, address, and any other information down on a piece of paper, and slip it in an unused pocket (not your shoe, you never know when you might wind up shoeless). This helps in case you get so drunk that you forget where you live. It will save you a fortune in cab fare while you drive around saying, "that's not it... that's not it..." Plus if you die the police won't have to pull out your teeth to identify you.
3. If you're in a pinch for a pre-drinking meal, try Subway. It contains lots of bread, its cheap (steer clear of the seafood and crab, it's no better the second time). And you can save its long plastic bag to throw up in. You can fit around a quart of vomit in one, plus they're collapsible.
4. If you are prone to vomiting when you drink, do yourself a favor and get it out of the way as soon as possible. I can tell you from personal experience that if you puke before 10:00, you'll stay up till dawn. If you put it off till later you'll just pass out, and I have almost never thrown up twice (I mean two separate puking episodes. Each episode may contain any number of individual pukes, dry heaves, or other assorted retching.)
5. I CAN'T STRESS ENOUGH, KNOW YOUR ROUTE. The need to empty your stomach contents may strike at ANY time. Always have a plan and a clear, hopefully unobstructed path to the toilet. If you are holding puke back with your hands, a desperate man's last line of defense, you have no time to move mattresses, trash cans, what have you, out of your way. You'll just make a huge mess.

A couple of tips to help you spend your night at home in a comfortable drunken haze (from Skip Provence)

1. Never mix your drinks.
2. Always drink a glass of milk, then two glasses of Kool Aid (any type) before going to bed.
3. Take three aspirin, not four, three.
4. Before you go out, put on the plastic sheets on your bed. Also if possible slip on a pair of comfortable plastic shorts and a shower cap before entering your bed, why? You'll know in the morning and you'll be thanking me.
5. Absolutely no fish sandwiches from McDonalds when you are drunk. They are very greasy and the Tar Tar sauce acts as a lubricant for your vomit.
6. Finally, bring along the following items to any party, especially if you are not driving: two condoms, three small (for us at least) sandwich bags, a wind-breaker, a pair a medium flesh colored panty hose, two packs of gum, two dollars in quarters (you old time drunks will know what I am talking about) and a picture of your current girlfriend or wife with her address on the back so that when someone finds you they know whose lawn to dump you in.

Look for more tips to pre-drinking on our web site www.sltmonkees.com That is the place where you will find some wonderful tips from long time drinking guru Marc Nichols.

www.substructure.net/lci

By Brad Bugos
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Find more of this interview on
sltmonkees.com

We found the artwork on Toxic Narcotic/Misery split CD pretty cool and decided to find out who the artist was. We emailed Mike Bukowski, and he was nice enough to not only talk to us about his artwork but he designed the cover for this issue as well. Below we asked him about his art, where it comes from and how he takes that idea to completion. He has designed a lot of flyers and CD covers for bands, no doubt you have seen his work somewhere. Go to his web site and take a look at more stuff he has done. Thanks to Michael Bukowski for answering our questions, no matter how dumb and annoying.

SLTM: I like the Toxic/Misery split artwork, it seems a little bleak but honest. Does it represent some sort of future or more of a present tense?

MB: that record is a worse-case-scenario future that exists in my imagination. industrial wasteland with zombie cops.

SLTM: You did artwork for another Toxic Narcotic cover, right? How did you become involved with the band?

MB: I've only done the split with Misery and my friend Artie Philie worked for Go Kart records and I had done work for two of his bands (The Shemps and Celebrity Murders) and he asked me to work on the record.

SLTM: Do you do any other artwork for other bands? Where else has your artwork appeared?

MB: There's a pretty long list. I don't want to sound egotistical. its more that I love to do artwork so I take every opportunity presented to me. as long as the bands aren't racist, sexist, or homophobic. a short list: Shark Attack, R.A.M.B.O., NOFX, Strength Approach, Comeback Kid, Donnybrook and Something in the Water. For a more in depth look go to www.substructure.net/lci I also have a gallery show coming up in April in Antwerp Belgium.

SLTM: Does it bother you when people write PROMO in magic marker over your artwork when they send out a promo copy of a disc?

MB: I've actually never heard of that happening until now. but its kind of stupid. I guess the labels do it so you wont go out and sell their records used but who



Flyer by Mike Bukowski

cares. oh well

SLTM: By the way, what the hell is so magical about a damn marker?

MB: fairies make them in the mountains of Tibet. you didn't know that?

SLTM: Do you listen to the music you do artwork for? Do you get inspiration from it or do you already have an idea in your mind about what you want to do? Do you already have the artwork and then use it for what seems to fit best?

MB: a bit of both. sometimes I listen to the band sometimes I listen to stuff I already own. a lot of times I have a stockpile of ideas in my head that ill bend to fit a certain record. and when

a band asks me to do artwork ill ask for lyrics or try to base the artwork of the bands name, album title, or song title. or just the feeling I get from any of those.

SLTM: What are you using to create those covers? just old fashioned drawing, computer, or a mix?

MB: its a mix. I do a pen and ink drawing, scan it, and then color in Photoshop. I use a mechanical pencil to draw (the same one for 8 years now) and then micron pens to ink.

SLTM: Do you prefer black and white or color? Is it just easier to work with B&W seeing that most indie bands do want to spend a bunch of money on the cover, or can't spend a lot?

MB: I prefer color, but I'm confident in doing black and white, grayscale or one color. full colors the best though. you can do a lot with mood and tone that way.

SLTM: Punk and Hardcore bands are usually the ones with really good expressive artistic CD covers. Why do you think that is? Do you think there are different approaches to each? Why don't more established or mainstream musicians/artists use something other than their face on the cover? That is very unoriginal, boring and a waste of paper.

MB: I think its because punk/hardcore is very emotional, very angry. and a photo doesn't always convey that. mainstream bands are concerned with selling records and having everything look slick and

unobtrusive whereas punk/hardcore bands are interested in the way their music makes us feel. and the cover is an extension of that.

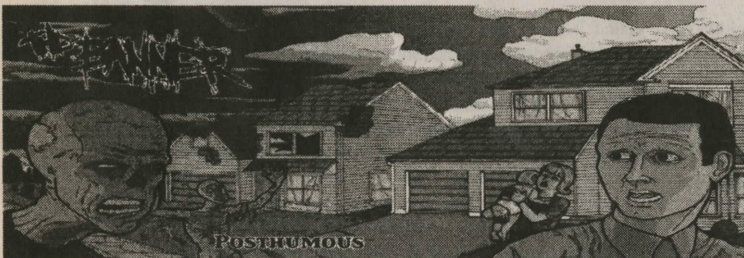
SLTM: Does the size of the CD cover limit or restrict the process for you?

MB: no not really. I draw a record cover so that it'll be a good piece and then I scale it down to fit onto a CD. so I don't worry about the size too much.

SLTM: The faces on the Toxic/Misery split are stitched like some sort of Frankenstein people, and they don't have any pupils, but why are the clothes stitched? Is there an overall theme to the zombie characteristics to these people?

MB: the clothes are secondary. the people are made from separate parts. sort of sewn together haphazardly. the clothes being stitched would make it seem like they were in some sort of accident and that's why they're stitched. I wanted it to look like those people were manufactured somewhere, dressed and sent out to kill.

SLTM: The Monkey bashing the guy with the rock is a great visual, it make me laugh, but in a weirdly comfortable way. I'm sure you weren't going for a laugh there, does that bother you when people interpret things different what you intended?



MB: nope not at all. its all part of the experience. you bring something new to it as the viewer. EVERY viewer does. if everyone got the same thing out of it, the piece would get boring. but you have to be careful that no one extremely misinterprets your work. like I would hate if someone thought one of my pieces was misogynistic or homophobic. especially since I go out of my way to avoid that.

SLTM: Ever do artwork then get a copy of the release and it's something that was totally different then what you were told it would be?

MB: no. I've gotten the release and the colors were off or it was too dark or too light but that's it. nothing too bad.

SLTM: Ever been sued by big corporations for skewering them, making light, parodying them or just plain putting them in a bad light no matter how honest that light may be? Like King Velveeda and Kraft?

MB: nope....knock on wood

SLTM: Are those guys on the front of the split just getting off work or going to?

MB: they're working. they're zombie cops looking to fuck someone's day up.

SLTM: Do you do posters too? Some artists get a good response to their live posters, would this be something you are working towards or would be interested in? Is it a different mind set than a CD cover?

MB: I love doing flyers. I do a ton for local Philadelphia shows. They're all on my website. they're more fun because you usually have more creative freedom. its one

show for a ton of bands so very general feelings can be conveyed. you don't have as many specifics to deal with.

SLTM: What do you think a good CD cover should do? What should it say about the release or should it be something taken totally separate from the music inside?

MB: it should fuckin look cool.

SLTM: Ever bought a CD/Lp/7 inch just for the cover? Who was it?

MB: I collect Dan seagrave cover art. he did artwork for mid-late 90s nuclear blast/earache deathmetal bands like entombed, dismember and suffocation. a lot of pushead records, any mad marc rude records. so I guess the answer is yes. haha.



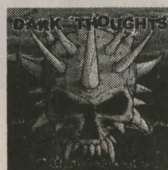
Profile

Michael Bukowski grew up in Northern New Jersey, is 26 years old, and currently resides in Philadelphia PA. He attended The University of The Arts and graduated in 2001 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Illustration.

Since then he's worked tirelessly drawing records, shirts, logos, posters, ads, and flyers for hardcore and punk bands from all over the world (including bands from Asia, South East Asia, Australia, Europe, North America and South America).

When he's not working, Mike can be found riding his Bianchi Brava bicycle on his way to eat at one of Philadelphia's fine vegan restaurants. Mike also enjoys horror movies from around the world, comic books, scrabble, and traveling the world on his own or on tour with R.A.M.B.O. (one of the bands he does artwork for). The man is also strongly opposed to capitalization.

In May of 2005 Mike will have his first solo show in Antwerp Belgium.



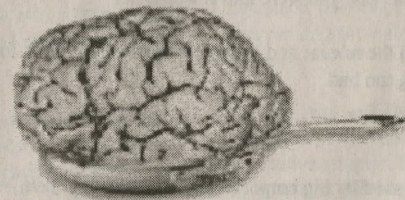
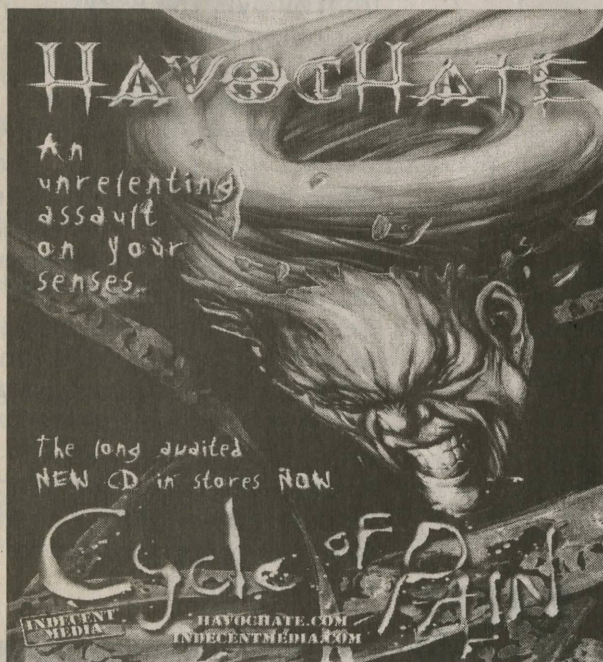
A portrait of the landscape created by loitering

Someday I don't remember— It's not that I hate people, I don't think I have that capacity to feel that much emotion toward someone I never cared about. People throw that hate around like it's so much empty garbage. I've got to love someone before I hate them. I hated my ex-wife for a time, and then realized that all that was just useless energy that wasn't doing me any good. At least I started out loving her. But these people I work with at the hardware store drive me crazy. I don't hate them though. Not the customers either, both are just a minor annoyance. Okay maybe a big annoyance sometimes, but never a feeling of hate. So when I say I don't like being around people it's not with some sort of loner serial killer zeal or telemarketing hatred, it's just that I am tired and bored with all the words that pour from their mouths. They have nothing to say to me that I am interested in, or would like to hear them spill out of their noise hole. It's just so useless and pointless to me. And please dear God stop asking me how my weekend went, what do you really care? All that these people are doing is asking a question so you'll ask them the same thing and they can tell you all about their problems. I don't care. Just waiting for your turn to talk aren't YOU Samantha? Who really cares about your stupid boring stories about your other job? Not only that, but she talks so low that I have to say "What?" all the time and then she repeats it and I wish I hadn't asked her to. Damn, I wish I cared enough to kill this person. I really do.

BY BRAD BUGOS

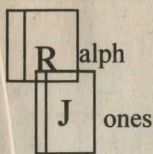
I found a diary on a trip to Indiana once at an old book shop. I took it home and read it. It bothered me that this person seemed to be a lot like me especially given the way the his life ended. I was only eight when he was discovered. Now I wonder if I'll end up like him. These are his pages.

Monday 15th of June— Okay, looking back I probably shouldn't have yelled "stupid bitch" in her face like that, but Jesus Christ, what the fuck did she expect? How am I supposed sit there and listen to her boring dull ignorant stories about nothing (and her mother) and not want to punch her in the face. I didn't of course, I don't need that kind of trouble, but for fuck sake leave me the hell alone. I can't stand that Samantha. No I don't want her or find myself attracted to her by the fact that I am sickened by her presence. You and you problems are stupid and boring, and I a sorry your goddamn dad didn't pay enough attention to you, now leave me alone. I should have said that to her, but no I called her a stupid bitch. I just know when I show up to work on Monday that Jeff will call me into the office and ask me what went wrong before he fires me. You know what Jeff, just because you wanted to fuck her doesn't make her right. That is another thing that makes me boil. There is a certain type of discrimination that no one ever talks about, it's white males against white males. And it goes a little something like this. I am hired at the hardware store six months before this young (well, youngish) woman who is single. We are both hired at the same pay rate and job description. Our boss is a middle aged white male who is married and has teenage children. When the young woman is hired she suddenly gets all the decent jobs, but guess who gets all the shit jobs? Yep, me. You see Jeff wants to fuck Samantha, so he would never give her any job where she would be unhappy and blame Jeff. So because I can't fuck him, he gives me all the bullshit to do and let's Samantha have the run of the store. When a job opening comes up guess who has first pick even though she's got less Seniority? Well, duh genius you got that right on the first try. See I wouldn't do that shit, maybe it's because women don't find me attractive and I have never had any power to speak of, but also because I just don't give that much of a shit about one person over another. Let them all suffer I say. I am just waiting for Jeff to make his move and bang Samantha, and I hope that I can get proof cause there will be nothing sweeter than telling his wife. Why should I be punished because I am a white male who isn't interested in banging every chick he works with, who works hard enough, doesn't normally cause trouble? Why? Those pricks are such stupid bastards.

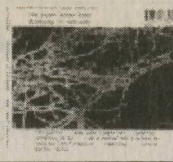
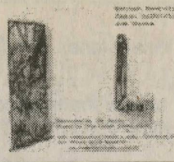
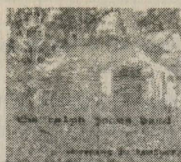


brainpan.blogdrive.com





Band



Interview by
Brad Bugos

SLTM: My most obvious question, let's get it out of the way first, where the hell is Ralph Jones and why did you take over his band?

Jason Hibbits: Ralph Jones was a dog I had. When deciding what to call ourselves we wanted to be non-descript. Ralph Jones came up missing just a week after naming the band, so it stuck. It was originally just RALPH JONES, but we went with THE and BAND just to confirm things a little. To keep a long story short.

SLTM: When Listening to "Potato Shine" I picture you guys in O BROTHER WHERE ART THOU?, was it a conscious decision to include a song that could fit into that genre or just something that came out?

Jason: The only conscious decision we made when recording DROWNING IN KENTUCKY was to have no guitar solos. "Potato Shine" is based on a true story, so we ended up capturing the feel of where it happened.

SLTM: Where are you guys headed in 2005?

Nathan Newbury: we're getting ready to come out with a new record early this year with State Bird Records. We also are on Buzzlighter #9: "Feed Your Muse", a compilation put out by Shut Eye Records. We also have a track off "Drowning" that will be used on this season of MTV's MADE.

SLTM: Music reviewers often get a band's sound wrong, trying to describe it as sounding like something. Usually that something is nothing close to what the band thinks it sounds like. What's the most far off sound you have been compared to and how would you describe it to people to get them to listen?

Nathan: There's a pretty good list of bands we've been compared to, that I haven't heard. The one comparison that seems far off to me might be Dave Mathews. Our sound is made up of many influences. Most of all, our musical personalities. We try to have an original approach while maintaining a foundation in some more traditional formats. So far reviews have called it "alternative, psychedelic, folk, rock, pop".

SLTM: Your setting up for a show and an early bar patron walks up to you and asks about your band, what do you tell them?

- A. We Rock
- B. Get me a beer too, rummy
- C. Piss off
- D. "Yeah we know *Free Fix*"

E. Something mumbled

Joe Burns: Of the four answers given to choose from, none have been used by myself. If someone comes up to me while setting up and asks about the group, I usually continue what I'm doing and answer any questions they have politely. Then I often end up selling them a disc or giving them one.

SLTM: Any MP3's, streams or downloads available of your music that people can sample or listen to and get your sound down?

Joe: Yes mp3's and streaming music are available of our songs. A few in particular are www.assemblyentertainment.com as well as www.commonwealthaudio.com have some links. Though as far as those songs giving people the idea that they have our "sound down" is unlikely. We write a lot and are always changing. The songs that are up do change, but not nearly as much as we would like them to.

SLTM: Do you guys tour a lot? If you tour outside of your region how hard is it to try to pack in the people to a shit hole bar that's never heard of you?

Nathan: At our stage of the game we play whenever and wherever we can. So that includes a lot of shit hole bars. One of the best ways to insure a good turnout is to find good bands from that area and trade shows with them. You also contact people and promote as much as possible.

SLTM: What does the internet provide for the band that might not otherwise be possible?

Joe: The Internet provides anyone with a computer to find out about us: shows, merchandise, biographical information and even how to contact our label and us personally. What else could you ask for as a group trying to get your name out there. Though the net is overwhelmed with everything, including music. Thank God for search engines.

SLTM: Personally, it took me a few listens to get into your disc, nothing against your music. I don't think it's a bad thing cause not all music is going to grab you right away. Unfortunately, our society is about the quick and the now. What can you do to get people to really give your release a chance, and be patient because good will come?

Jason: Some people don't know what to think because the songs are shorter and you may have to listen to it for awhile before you can get into it. A lot can happen in 3 minutes. It's very "to-the-point music." Our next record is much more accessible in that it's a little more catchier than the dissonance on D.I.K.

SLTM: Ever get in any fights with the Brian Jones Band? Any bad blood between the bands?

Nathan: No but I have been amazed at how many bands have the name Jones in their title.

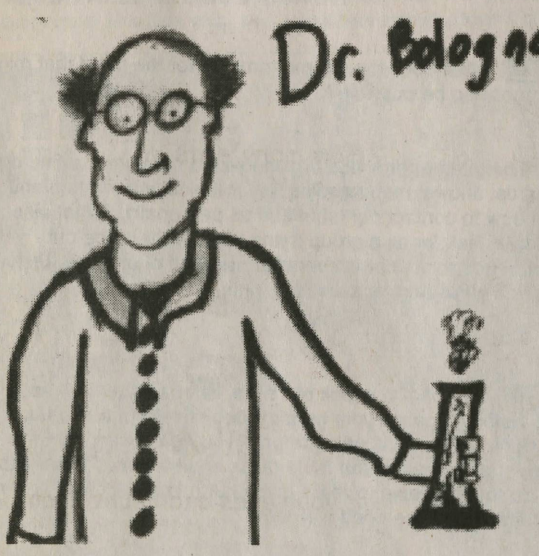
SLTM: Finally, is the old business model of rehearse, record, release, and tour out of tune or is it the only model that will work for the music industry?

Joe: That model definitely works, but I believe that almost any way can work. With the internet the artist can be successful in many capacities, leaving out touring (which personally I love and think is an important part of the process). It all depends on the values and ideas and potential the artist has in mind for his, her or their pieces of music. It seems as if the music industry is being scattered and rearranged by the fact that anyone can get online and find, listen, download for free or buy music from any artist they want whether it is on MTV, a Clear Channel station or in the racks of your local superstore.

For us that is where touring comes in. The ability to get our records into the hands of people on the streets and in the clubs, as well as them actually getting to see us and talk to us. We have our records for sale in stores and online.

But back to the original question: I think anything goes at this point, it's an evolutionary time. I believe that we as artists have to be creative in getting our products out and in creating them in general. There are a lot of artists out there, but at the same time the pie that we're all trying to eat is getting bigger and bigger. Is that a good thing? So far so good....

Many thanks to Joe, Nathan and Jason for answering these questions. Check out more of the interview and the first review of their CD on our web site sltmonkees.com. We also appreciate the help of Jerry Dir from Phratry Records, not only for the CD, but also helping us get in contact with the band. It's always a good surprise when we find a CD that makes us want to talk to a band rather than a label who suggests it, it just seems more natural to us. When we like a band we seem to take more of an interest in their music and what makes them make that music. We look forward to the next Ralph Jones Band CD, and hope that sometime in the future they hit the middle Midwest, particularly Central Illinois. Please read the whole review, check out both reviews of the CD, read the other parts of the interview on our web site and check out the bands web site and decide for yourself if you want to get to know Ralph Jones and their music better. We just wanted to get you started.





Dr. Bologna

Dr. Bologna says "Check out the best web site on the.... Well, uh web. sltmonkees.com

the ONLY CONSTANT is change

Unreleased and Rare Tracks From:
Pennywise, Rise Against, Beehive and the Barracuda's, Authority Zero, Death By Stereo, Lonely Kings, Piebald, Codeseven, Scatter the Ashes, Vaux, Guttermouth, The Q, Another Damn Disappointment, Arraya, ASG, theLINE, Swindle, Intoxicated, Pepper, Bigwig, Brazil, Myg', Slightly Stoopid, Western Waste, Single Frame, Arkham, The Angoras, Quitter, Pistolero, Consumers, Auditory Aphasia & many more.

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Premonitions of War

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Interview Questions that Never got answered:

Can you explain what the title
LEFT IN KOWLOON means?

I think the band name is a really good one, I like it, when and where did you come up with it and what other name(s) did you consider when coming up with a name for the band? Do you think that the band name automatically gives the listener or potential listener an idea of what the band will sound like?

Is *LEFT IN KOWLOON* your first record?

Have you guys been touring a lot by yourself or in a package tour like the Morbid Angel one, which do you prefer?

Do you ever feel that the message is lost in your music because of the growled or screamed vocals? Is that why the lyrics were included?

It's coloring
time!



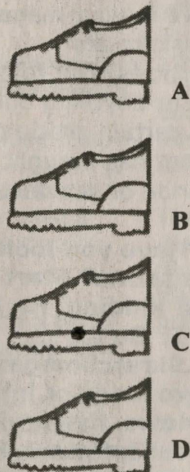
Get out your black crayons and
markers and color in the pictures

PREMONITIONS OF WAR

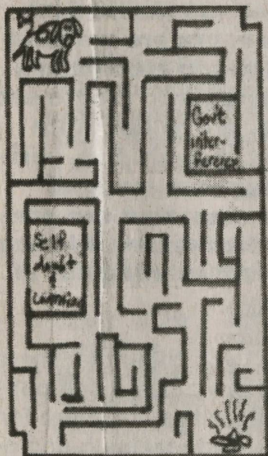


PREMONITIONS OF WAR IS
D. Schoenhofer - Drums, M. Gaytan - Guitar,
P. Meyers - Guitar, B. Wharton - Vocals

Find the odd boot. Which one is
different?

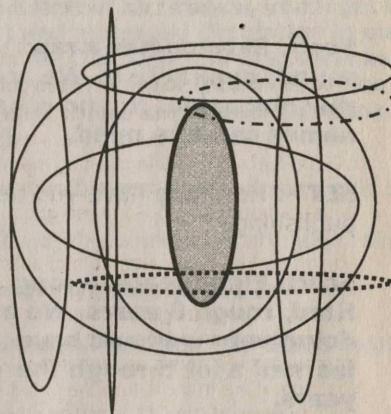


Can you
help the
dog find
his faces
to roll
in?



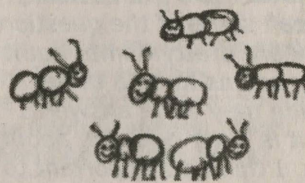
Did You Know?

Premonitions of War formed in
September of 2000. They recorded
their Victory Records premiere *Left
in Kowloon* in October 2003.



Stare at the picture above while
listening to *Left in Kowloon*.
After the CD is finished draw a
picture of what you see and
how that affects the world
around you.

How many Ants do you
see?



Close your eyes and count again.

Visit POW on the web at either premonitionsofwar.com or the Victory Records Web site @ victoryrecords.com





Music Profile

Scratch Magazine came to my attention in an email from Curtis Smith of Maelstrom PR. He asked if I had ever heard of it, I said "no". So he sent me a copy and asked if I would like to interview Scott from Scratch and I said "sure". My point being is that there are tons of magazines out there that people who don't read zines regularly like me don't know about. So in order to help spread the word about other zines and possible cut down on the attention paid to mine (like there is any) I am taking an active role in helping get the word out about other magazines, record labels and music related projects with MUSIC PROFILE. What a name huh? It just came to me. So read on, go to their web site and get a copy.

SLTM: Why did you name your magazine Skratch? Did you have other names in mind, or was that always going to be the name?

Scott: Skratch has a raw sound/quality to it. We are a raw magazine. No, no other names came to mind.

SLTM: How long have you been publishing?

Scott: Eight years. A long. Hard, rough 8 years. We are doing very well and have learned a lot through the years.

SLTM: When you started what was your goal with the magazine? Have you reached that goal yet? Do you continue to reset your goals or are you content to realize that first goal for the magazine and concentrate on that?

(editors Note: Scott didn't give us a response to this question, which brings up another question, why? I have seen this in other interviews I have done, and yeah some of the questions we ask are pretty dumb, but it always seems to be a tame question they don't answer. I think it is a fair question about goals. I think it's important to have an idea where you are trying to go and to challenge yourself. Why he didn't answer we don't know, but we don't mind if someone skips a question, we are just curious by nature and will always wonder why they didn't answer)

SLTM: What do you feel the purpose of interviews are in a magazine? Do you feel there are too many for the readers to digest and get anything out of or do you feel like it's better to have lots of interviews thereby giving the reader choices?

Scott: Choices are always good. Too many interviews? No. How could there be too many interviews? We like to diversify a lot in the magazine's content. We don't quite pigeonhole ourselves into covering one genre as do the kids today.



SLTM: What kind of stuff do you have in your magazine? just music or are there articles? Not to single anyone or anything out, but is there a certain article or music piece that has brought you great pride or satisfaction?

Scott: Have you looked at the magazine? Start there. I am just kidding. Ha ha ha. Or am I? Go to: WWW.Skratchmagazine.com We have loads of interviews, CD reviews, live reviews, prank calls, letters, news, and a skate section.

SLTM: What do you feel is the purpose of self publishing and

the self publisher? What does the self publisher owe the public and vice versa? Would you recommend self publishing to others? Why or why not?

Scott: A self-publisher can be selfish. A self-publisher published for him/herself? Whuh? A publisher does not owe anything to anyone. What do I like to give to the public as a publisher? Good, real, honest news and opinions, a physical or mental response, and a nice tongue bath. I only recommend self-publishing to those with an enormous work ethic and hard-on for stress.

SLTM: Do you ever find it hard to come up with things to talk about in your magazine?

Scott: Our magazine does not speak. We are working on getting top electricians and engineers to create such a device. We're not quite there yet though. But, seriously there are loads of things a magazine can present to the masses. We have no problem running out of content.

SLTM: Do you think that there are too many zines & self published magazines out there for people to wade through and get excited about? Do you ever feel like there is way too many people out there self publishing and that they are clogging the

scene with the nonsense or is it free speech regardless?

Scott: It is free speech. If someone has the determination to publish and distribute written expression, no one should hold them back. More power to them! If they churn out something of redeeming value- great! If not, that's okay too.

SLTM: What magazines or zines do you look at as a good example of a magazine like yours? Which magazines or zines do you like or enjoy reading? What type or genre do you see a need for, or are there too many of all types?

Scott: First of all, I do not enjoy reading our magazine. Just kidding! I enjoy Status Magazine, Maxim (for the eye candy), Newsweek, Punk Planet, and many others I cannot think of off-hand. Most genre types of magazines are already taken. It takes someone very original and creative to start up something new. There could be a few less Maxim-wannabe magazines out there!

SLTM: If someone was to start as zine today what would you tell them?

Scott: Be careful. Be ready for hell.

SLTM: How do you promote or draw attention to your magazine? Do you think there is a fine line between drawing attention to your art and prostituting yourself to make money for your art?

Scott: I wouldn't quite categorize Skrtch as art. I am not a prostitute, I like my sex for free. Oh wait, the way we promote the magazine is online, talking to cool folk like you, and the word spreads on it's own with our 130,000+ readership

SLTM: Speaking of prostitution, do you sometimes feel like your prostituting yourself by running interviews or doing reviews so that bands & labels will give you money for printing costs? I'm not saying that you do that, I am just wondering if you feel like I do in that sometimes I think that if I gave a good review to all the music I heard then it would be a hell of a lot easier to get ad's in my zine. What do you think?

Scott: NOW, question. I'm like a little We separate advertising Our review unbiased. me. I sleep that way.



that's a good all giddy now girl! editorial and completely. are honest and That is key to better at night

SLTM: What part does your web site play in the development and progress of your magazine?

Scott: The website plays the part of an evil-doer from Kansas who was raised by a preacher and a oriental masseuse (how the hell do you spell that?). Oh, I mean the website introduces new readers to our publication as well as provides a 3rd dimensional aspect to the magazine (you can see, hear (prank calls, music, my horrible gas), and even interact on it).

SLTM: Where would you like to see your magazine in two years? How about five?

Scott: In two years, I'd like to see you (the interviewer) reading it first of all (maybe, you'll get on that even faster) and increased circulation in many new cities across the U.S. And sold in several key markets. In five years, I want it to include household items like light bulbs, can openers, condoms, a stick of butter).

SLTM: If there was one big story or band you would like to cover regardless of if it brought the magazine attention, who would you like to showcase between the covers of Skrtch?

Scott: Michael Jackson. He's just one weird mother fucker.

SLTM: Do you ever get discouraged with the magazine publishing, with the whole music business and just the sometimes general apathy of the reading public?

Scott: It can be discouraging. Attention spans are declining. Record labels are selling less records. We just have to keep the magazine fresh and re-invent the wheel here and there.

SLTM: Finally, name one band and/or one company that gets way too much publicity (or don't so they won't get anymore) and name the same for one that doesn't (or don't).

Scott: AFI gets way too much publicity. Skrtch doesn't get enough publicity along with bands like Ariel Kill him, Toys That kill, and The Embassy.

Thanks so much.. Go to Skrtchmagazine.com. Have good sex. Happy reading. Skrtch can be enjoyed most on the toilet. Any good writers or photographers, email: press@skrtchmagazine.com Word!

Thank you to Scott from Skrtch Magazine and to Curtis Smith from Maelstrom PR for his help in setting up the interview and being just a cool guy who is always working his ass off for independent bands and artists. Check out Maelstrom PR at maelstrompr.com



Spotlight Reviews

BY SKIP PROVENCE

Sleep Station *After the War*—Eyeball Records—Isn't it strange and a touch sad when a group as good as Sleep Station has gone unnoticed by most people all these years and releases? I mean, I have listened to their past releases, and this is nothing new for them. Being good, I mean. Why does this seem to happen? How can some bands hang in their, releasing good music until one day it all clicks and they get the attention they deserve? I am always amazed by this phenomenon. This band should have been better known way before this release, but I hope that with this disc they will get people talking about and listening to their music. What of the music? Well, it's a nice mix of pop and rock music, with several of the songs having the ability to stand on their own as singles or radio ready songs, but serving the whole concept of the album. That concept seems to be, from my stand point, one about war during the second world war. The overall idea of war is nothing new, but I think what Dave Debiak is doing here is looking back with a tinge of romanticism and envy on a generation that had something to lose, something more than just their lives in battle. What it seems like to me is more than a statement of love and longing during a time of uncertainty and war, it plays like a look back towards another time that his generation will never see and never get to be. It's a very nice cohesive statement too, with snippets of fuzz, static, radio transmissions and people reading pieces of love letters from the past. It all works really well together, not only as a theme but like I said before some of the songs can stand by themselves as take away pieces. It's just a well thought out and executed plan, all the pieces fit together and make sense, while you'll also find yourself remembering certain songs and singing them to yourself. However, it would be best to listen to the overall record in one piece, it works more effective that way and makes more sense. What is this record saying to me? A lot really, but the one theme that seems to stick out for me more than the longing and loneliness of war is that looking back with a sort of romantic notion of a generation that had a purpose. It seems like a quant notion these days, maybe a little goofy, but it's something my generation may never know about. Finally, "Burden to You" should be single on the radio right now, and if it isn't soon then I am storming the offices of WPGU and finding out why.

Mark Lanegan *Bubblegum Beggars Banquet*—Mark Lanegan is a cool motherfucker, and that voice, wow. I've been a fan since discovering the Screaming Trees back in the early nineties and then buying each solo disc that Lanegan released on the public. Okay, sure he's a little dismal and depressing, moody if you will, but that is what his strength is and he puts that underlying sadness to good use. It was nice to see Lanegan sing some hard rock songs with Queens of the Stone Age, I hope it brings him so new fans of his solo material. That association also has some effect on this release, as Josh Homme plays on some of the songs. Even with the dark cover, and the thoughts of depression and darkness hanging over the release (and I by that I don't mean some dark cloud, I just mean that Mark is never going to be the happiest or most outgoing person you'll meet and therefore his releases will always have a darkness to them) it's Lanegan's voice that draws you in and keeps there. It's so smoky, deep, a little dark and comforting, that you can't turn it off. His voice has always had a certain depth to it, that is no surprise here, he has character and a certain worldliness that adds depth to that voice. However where would he be with a bunch of songs that didn't fit his style? His songwriting has always been strong, now made stronger with his affiliation with Josh Homme, and Alain Johannes, the later who plays on and produces some of the songs. It's always nice to hear Polly Jean too, whom Lanegan always has the right place to put and uses as well as Mark Linkous does on his records. This release is also a little more cohesive and direct than the EP that came out earlier in the year, oddities? Not really but they were a jumbled mixture, whereas this release seems to be more of the same mood and tempo. I think "Strange Religion" is one of my favorite songs on the disc, it's a little slower, and has more of a laid back feel to it, you can hear Lanegans voice perfectly. It may seem a little depressing but the song never dips into sentimental over pap bullshit, it just stays right there showcasing that road worn voice. I used to think that to listen to Mark's past releases you needed to be in a certain mood, a little down and maybe sad, but with this release, you don't really need to be in any certain mood, just the mood to hear some good music. It's a touch mellow, but not in a Dan Fogelberg pap way. No it's more of a mood than a feeling, plus there is some rock.

Fu Manchu *Written in Stone*—DRT Entertainment—Right up front, lets be honest, I have been waiting for this disc for a long time, *California Crossing* was a huge favorite of mine. Ever since that album came out I have been keeping an eye on this band, hoping they would find a label to release what would turn out to be this disc. Thank you DRT. Fu Manchu is a lot like AC/DC, you're going to rock but don't expect them to vary from the formula. That is fine with me because Fu know what their strengths are and stick to them, it's driving hard rock that reminds me a little of COC and QOTSA. I don't want them to try and stray away from that formula, why would they? Just to change things up for some dickhead music reviewer who thinks that every band should stretch and grow over their time as a band? Fuck that, I don't need every band I like to do that, I will leave that to other bands and just enjoy the wonderful, right on rock n roll music that the Fu dispenses. I dig the lead singers voice too, sorta laid back but rocking. I think some critics have labeled this Stoner Rock, but the only indication that I get that this would fit in that category would be the idea that these guys are laid back surfer types, but that is more a visual than a sound. What was nice with their last release *California Crossing* was that I found it for \$10 at the now defunct Record Service, the price was the last nail for me to get it to the register. I hope this gets a good distribution and some press, cause the band is solid, and worth the time. Now after reading this glowing review you should either a. want to pull your hair out and find the new Fu Manchu disc ASAP or 2. march down to the local record store and shout at the top of your lungs in a high pitched voice "where the hell is the Fu Manchu Mother Fucker?" Either one would be the correct response, and if you're still undecided check out their web site for more on the band.

Evan Emge— *Along came a guitar*—Orange Peel Records www.orangepeal.com— That sure is some fine packaging that Evan and Orange Peel have come up with. It comes in a DVD box and has a short comic book inside. Basically the sound is Evan and his guitar. The guy has a pretty decent voice and can play the basic rhythm guitar backings that don't distract from his voice or the lyrics. Now if you are older than say twenty five you might find some of the subjects juvenile or if you realize that every young man sings about "Boobies" and "Poppin' Cherries" then you'll be okay with the songs. Thirty minutes of a younger guy singing about stuff that makes him and his friends laugh might not be your good time, but he's some what funny and can sing. Wonder what he would sound like with a full band behind him? **Fat Ruben 2004**

Drop Suckerpunch—Direct Impact Records— "Drop is a registered trade mark" shit does that mean every time I talk about the drop in my pants I have clear it with these guys? That seems odd, doesn't it? I mean do all bands do that now a day? Do they copy-right their name and trademark it? That aside, this band plays hard rock music, very slick and streamlined. Now the vocals may seem a little tame in today's growl market, they are there where you can hear them just not as power locked and testosterone driven as some bands and that's fine. This band would fit on so many bills, many bands could use these guys to open up for them. They're not threatening, don't seem to worship any blood soaked devil or entity and play hard rock with polish. Why they could open for anyone and keep the crowd focused and ready for the head liner, something some bands couldn't do for shit. In a comedy team these guys would be the straight man, the Dean Martin or Lou Costello, never getting the big laughs but very essential to the whole piece, if not for them the whole show would fall flat with nary a laugh. Bruce Dickinson, that's who I was trying to think of, the singer reminds me in the smallest way possible of the good of Bruce and his voice, the Majestic way he ends his words on some sentences, like he is shooting them off to the heavens, this guy does it like that too (on some songs). Not a bad group, but I don't think they will get much attention which is a shame cause they should get recognized for what they are, and that is solid. **SKIP Provence 2004**

Dennis Kyne Support the Truth— www.denniskyne.com - I take it that the title talks about the military is it's and societies misuse of it's veterans. I say I take it that way because the visuals say so but the words aren't clicking in my head. His voice is thin, and I can't really hear what he is saying, the production being low fi, and it sounds somewhat live. However, that is some serious guitar work on this disc, some nice laid back guitar solo grooving that should really be singled out. The insert says recorded live at KZSU, and it sounds like it, but that shouldn't de-track from the fine guitar work. It reminds me sonically of early Neil Young, and maybe that makes sense. I hate to say it, I'm still not sure what the hell he is saying, but I get the feeling that he is a vet of Vietnam era, but there are too many pictures that seem to be of the Gulf War period, so I can't say for sure. It's not much of a recording, its only twenty minutes but I understand if a guy had only a limited budget to get his message out he wouldn't have much choice. Bringing it to the small audiences of community and college radio is a good start, so is checking out the web site. To be honest when I popped this in, I thought it might be spoken word. **Daryl Zoognish 2004**

Motion Picture Demise Rebuild/Reform— ORANGE PEAL I knew the minute I put this in the player what it was going to sound like, but what I didn't expect was the quality with which it was played. I mean, it's a mixture of Van Halen type rock and Jimmy Eat World populist idealism. Not that those are bad things, because Roth era Van Halen was the best, and early JEW was pretty good too. Now Jimmy seems intent on matching every other rock band that sounds like it wanted to top the charts and make girls

undies wet, pushing aside any hard won artistic credibility in favor of having their song on football Sunday's. Oh well, that's them, and this is seems to be a bunch of new young guys. Still there is some pop in the bat for MPD, a little anger (although I don't buy it) and some parts of guitar that smack you on the face, then you recoil to and notice the person looks a little sorry for the slap. Fellas, that's not the way the game is played, but it's an interesting take and I think you should follow it to it's end, cause it best suits who the overall band is and will best be. I'm still not buying the growls and shouts in the back, what are you mad about? I'm sure you'll find another place to buy moist towellets. Not at all a bad beginning to this band, as far as I know, something I think the young girls of today would enjoy listening to in their rooms, although I don't think it's going to irritate the parents any, even if they do fake growl and stomp around. A six song primer of current radio rock that would remind anyone of a less sexy Jimmy Eat World, older Jimmy that is. **Kenny Chain-smoker 2004**

Dead to Fall Villainy and Virtue VICTORY RECORDS— This might be the most expensive looking and just gorgeous looking CD insert and back cover that I have ever seen. Wow. Points to Paul A. Ramano (www.workhardened.com) for the artwork and design, just a damn fine piece of art. Heather from Victory said I would like this and damn if she doesn't know what she is talking about. It's hardcore, but what I really like about this besides the riffs, which are smack on, is that the vocals are not growled into the ground. Some hardcore bands, and there is nothing wrong with this it's just a matter of taste, they try to growl and depict suffering and the futility of the human existence so much in their vocals that they are to far into the ground. It's the way it should be, mind you, I mean you don't sing about the non existence of humanity with a chirpy lilt. It's growl or don't bother. Here the vocalist seems to realize that yeah it is hardcore and it needs a growl but that doesn't mean it has to be so far down in the gut we can't make out if he is angry or trying to cough up a chicken bone. Check out that finger walking on the guitar on song number four *You've already died*, pretty fucking sweet. I think this guy is actually trying to sing, instead of roaring angrily into the microphone, and I can understand some of the words he is saying, that right there is something to take notice of. So lets see, that's NIV, Premonitions of War, Atreyu and Dead to Fall. Now that would be a pretty solid lineup for a hardcore festival. **Rick DTB Anderson 2004**

Kittie Until the End—Artemis Records— Looking at the picture of the band inside, I'm a guy I notice this shit, reminds me of some of the girls I was attracted to in school. Tough girls with the tattoos when it wasn't the normal thing to do, good looking and a little scary. I always wanted to ask them out but was afraid of looking like a doofus and they always like the bad, tough guys anyway. So why are they on Artemis? The label that has one of my favorite artists of all time (steve earle)? Seems strange. Is it wrong to mention all that at the beginning? I don't think so, because if music is more than just an auditory experience then everything that pops into my mind when reviewing this disc should be mentioned. That Morgan Lander sure can scream/growl too, not bad. It looks like she wrote and arranged all the songs, with some help from Mercedes (her sister?) It's not the Donnas kind of Kiss Rock, which is fine, it's harder and louder. This isn't the type of music for the masses, it's the music for the other group of girls and guys who find themselves not represented by Christina, Britney or Brandy. That's fine because there is an audience and past experience would point out that they are damn loyal too. If Kittie met Evanesence in a deli in New York right after a gig, I think that these girls here would be a more defining statement of the "real thing" than those Posers and kick the shit out of them, no contest, even the dudes. Not to say these girls are brutal, they are just seem more authentic and true. **FR 2004**

Action Action *don't cut your fabric to this year's fashion*—**Victory Records** if the great Del Shannon were still alive today, he would be very proud of his sons and their musical output on this record. It's like dad was right there in spirit while they recorded this synth pop piece. I can imagine Del sitting there grinning, telling them through vaporous communications and quiji boards that they need to put the synth up front and make it "manic". "It should be like your playing the hell out of the organ or synth while riding on a roller coaster full pregnant women" Del would say. I don't know sometimes what he is talking about but I know where he is coming from. While listening to this I thought that these fellows must be from Sweden or Finland, no way they are from the US. Why do I say that? Well, I don't think American musicians and artists get their music to turn out like this when they ingest all the stuff they do over the years. Then again, we are all connected anymore, and there truly are less and less pockets of cultured people who haven't been influenced by the American Marketing machine. The cover for this CD is one of the ugliest in recent memory, Pink and green are just nasty. However, it's what is inside that matters most, and no I don't mean the picture of Anthony Kedis throwing his fist at you. No, I mean the music. It's a early eighties Go-Go's lovers paradise. If you wish to be transported back to the early to mid eighties with easy to ingest pop music and lots of keyboard (flock of seagulls anyone) then you will truly enjoy this disc. **Framky SS 2004**

Smooosh *She like Electric Pattern 25* - It's two young girls playing pop music, just keyboards and drums. Really it's a nice sound, even if the piano/keyboard plays the same tempo over and over. It's the Ben Folds bouncy up beat piano sound. It's fine, but it doesn't change much over the course of the record. Like I said though it's a pretty good combination of sounds, and it really works well. That said, the lead singers voice drives me fucking crazy. It's too damn saccharine and sweet, to chirpy and little girl like. It's fine for a few songs but over the whole disc it starts to really annoy me. Don't get me started on the song *Bottlenose* because the screeching and cheer leader type hollering made me shut my player off the first time, and to skip it ever single time after, it's more horrible than one can imagine. Like I said though they can play their instruments, and the drummer is good, keeping a fine beat and staying out of the way of the singer and her keyboard. It's just that with only her singing it can get a little distracting from the fine playing and get on your nerves, it's just a little much. *The Quack* is a nice silly song, just weird enough to draw away but not enough to distract. I would really like this group and the disc more if there were a little more diversity in the songs, and the piano/keyboard playing and if the girls voice wasn't so damn sweet that it almost sent me into diabetic shock. **SKIP P 2004**

Facequake—**ST—MAXI 2000 Records**— Just by looking at the back cover I can tell you what you have in your hands there. Most people would say that you shouldn't judge a book by it's cover, but how about the back cover? Almost all of the songs are about three minutes long and (AND) the band is from Sweden. Now you tell me, what are you thinking? I know that Cranberries are Irish, but when I first popped this into the player that is what I got "Zombies" era Cranberries. The female vocalist has a wavy rangeable voice, much like Deloris or even Sinéad O'Connor. The band plays capable Fetchin Bones like rock music in the background, nothing to intrusive, because I think they know where their meal ticket is punched. Chrissie Hynde comes to mind as well too, a little more rock than the pop tendencies of the Pretenders. Not a bad effort, if you like that sort of music, very straight forward, rock music that would never offend or challenge anyone and fit nicely on some adult "rock" stations. **Fat Ruben 2004**

Kevin Thista's Red Terror *Wake up Captain*—**Parasol Records**— There was talk by Kevin that he wanted to change the name of the group (group, hell it's really just him with a few helpers, so its not really a band). He might have been just trying to interact with the fans on his message board and wasn't really thinking of changing it. I became a fan of Kevin's when I bought his first two CD's that Parasol put out. They were quiet, laid back, mostly acoustic songs sang with a whisper. Beautiful and fragile, some would say, and that wouldn't be far off. You see most people would classify Kevin as fragile because they feel his is some sort of Brian Wilson prototype, a genius who is one shove away from being over the brink and staying in bed for weeks on end. We've interviewed him here, and he seems pretty sane to me, so what if he doesn't like to go out of the house that often and feels uncomfortable out of his zone, who doesn't? On the other CD's Kevin sang in hushed tones, never anything approaching a normal audible volume, and that was fine, his songs demanded that. This outing he is letting his voice of out the bag and letting it be heard, which is good since he has a nice singing voice, very likeable and strong. Kevin seems to take the pop orchestrations of *Pet Sounds* and *Sgt. Peppers* more to heart than his last two, which were fine pop albums with pretty much straight ahead songs. No, I don't think there is any sort of congealing theme that holds the whole piece together, all I am saying is that there is more ambition and ideas put to use on these songs than his last efforts, and that is fine, because Kevin has the talent and ambition to pull it off. **Daryl Zoognish 2004**

The Shemps *Spaz out with the*—**Reservation Records**— Now how the hell did I know that even before I put this in the player that it was going to be punk rock music? Ever heard of a band called the Shemps who played jazz? Nope, me neither. How about a band that titles their CD *spaz out*? No country CD that. It's recorded a little fuzzy and sounds owes a little to the Hives and other bands of that now popular ilk. If you like the Hives sort of music, but a little clearer (well, at least their first since I haven't heard the new Hives record), then you will like this one too. Just a good time, straight ahead punk rock, what the hell were you expecting from a band called the Shemps? Stoner Rock? Dumbass. **Kenny Chainsomker 2004**

The Spades—*Learnin' The hard way*—**Go Kart Records**—The Spades, that's pretty funny. How could any person that loves Motorhead as much as I do not like this group? How could anyone who likes the simple, but beautiful rock of AC/DC not like this group? These guys rock, the same way that you know 99 times out of 100 when you put that Motorhead CD in the player it will rock, it's just that simple. Not only do you get thirteen songs of rock n roll, but you get some bonus tracks produced by none other than Jack Endino. Wow. That's pretty fuckin' cool. "Beat me! I fuckin' like it" How goddamn funny is that? This one goes in the personal collection, not many get there, but being a Motorhead fan it would be a shame to not keep Lemmy's bastard children around. **Fat Ruben 2004**

Despistado *The emergency response*—**Jade Tree**— Six song EP. Just so you know right out of the gate, I know you were wondering. Looking at the small picture on the inside of the CD insert, one of the guys in the band (I am going with lead singer Dagan Harding since he is a little more front and center than anyone else and that's how the singer or creative force is set apart in these pictures) looks a lot like Beck. They don't sound like Beck however, they sound like jangle pop music. The drumming on the first song attracted my attention because it's messy but not sloppy, and it stands out, obviously. It's one of the components of this band that makes it stick out a little, a decent drum sound, which seems to be all over the place but really follows a map. This is an okay band, not much of a mix of sounds, pretty much jangly guitar and high vocals, never straying from that formula. **Skip Provence 2004**

RIFU—dead end street—Go Kart Records— Punk, Punk, punk, punk. There I said it. If you still want a message in your music, and you think capitalism has gone to far then this is your band. As a matter of fact inside the CD sleeve it says "Capitalism Kills". Young idealists are encouraged to apply, but what is the point when the government and big corporations rule the world? Maybe there is still hope in that one or two lonely voices speaking up for the forgotten few. I see a lot of this on campus at the University and god bless these kids for getting up the courage and energy to care. However, it all seems rather worthless to me, especially for most of them that won't care after the get out of college and get a job. They care in college because their minds are open to new things but then capitalism catches us all and that's the end of that. Aha! I thought these guys were from other regions, Norway to be exact. In their promo sheet "RIFU believes that to make changes we have to start with ourselves and our surroundings and we should always strive to practice what we preach". It sounds good in principle and peace to them if they can do it, but it sure is hard to hold onto ideals and continue to struggle. It's the little steps towards that goal though that I think the band is talking about, and we can all try to do our part. It's not the social change some preach, but something small is better than nothing. **Davey Braveheart 5/05**

The Forecast—Late Night Conversations—Victory Records— I have to mention that they hail from the town I was born in, Peoria, only because you just don't see that many bands come out of there even though there are over 100,000 people. I don't count Mudvayne, pure crap. Anyway back to the modern era of rock music and this band. It's really basic modern rock, in that it's very clean and purposefully pure. At first I wasn't sure if I liked the female backing/side vocals because they were a little distracting, but the more tracks I listen to the more I like when she busts off from the side. She has a loud, somewhat hollering of a voice, and it works well in the mood of disconcerting heaviness. She's not really singing, but shouting at you, and you know why. Where as the male lead sings, maybe padding the fall until you hit her voice. This should be, and can be on the radio, for all college aged students to enjoy and call up to request. Does that make it good? Well, it is good, but very polished and ambitious. So what if some group from Peoria wants to sell their music and this happens to be what they are good at, should they be punished for playing slick, radio friendly rock music? No, they are just doing what they do. **Franky SS 5/05**

Organelle Various Artists—Save Your Servant/Tiberius/State Bird Records— There are enough bands on this comp that we like that would make us want to buy it. We already like Ralph Jones Band, Caterpillar Tracks, Thistle, Humans Bow Down, Ampline, The Light Wires and Theraphosa. Packed with enough chewy caramel goodness, you'll be so excited about the music you hear that you'll never notice that the disc is already over. Spanning some different musical spheres, there is only one reason to buy a Various Artists compilation, and that is to hear some different bands and their sounds. It's like paying the fruit hustler at the store ten bucks to eat one piece of fruit to see which one is to your liking and if those mangos are really that fresh. If you can't find something new or a sound that appeals to you on this fruitisborg (get it? Like a smorgasbord) then maybe you need to get back to listen to your Tony Jackman records. **Gus Kpants 5/05**

Kjehl Johansen Pie & Isolation—Avebury Records— This is a two disc set, the first one I listened to was *Pie Man Vs. The Light Bulb Men* a four track EP. The title reminds me of Robyn Hitchcock, and I would guess if you alien probed Mr. Johnson that he would admit to an aping of Hitchcock's offbeat musical destinations. He vocal delivery reminds

me of Talking Heads David Byrne. The second song on this disc is nothing more than a catchy guitar based instrumental with a phone machine message repeated over and over, and while that should be irritating it's not, it's rather catchy and somewhat Steve Vai at his most normal entertaining. There are times when I wish he would get a little weird, maybe throw something down a flight of stairs and record the sound. That's not to say he is bland, or overly bland, but it's that I can feel he wants to get "weird", but holds back. The second disc, *Tower of Isolation*, kicks off with a very upbeat instrumental. Not a bad set, if you like middle of the road pop music, He might just be the Jim Croce of the Year 2001. Hey, some people really like Jim Croce. **Daryl Zoognish 5/05**

Bury Your Dead—Cover Your Tracks—Victory Records— If I said this bands name to you what would you expect? That's right meat bag, a hardcore band. What you wouldn't know is if they stand out from all the other hardcore bands out there. There are tons of them, and while most seem to feature hard guitar, bashing drums, ideas about the decay of society and humanity, and growled vocals; this band should stand out a little from them because of the crispness with which they play. Bury your dead? Not so scary, how about Bury your head? Okay, now I'm going to get my ass kicked by a group of guys in a hardcore band for making light of the fact that of course we Bury our Dead and how that isn't very terrifying. Let me make it up by saying that while this may sound like a lot of hardcore, it stands out because it's not only well played but also well produced, crisp and easy to digest. **Larry Lindberg 5/05**

Spitalfield—Stop Doing Bad things—Victory Records— I have heard a lot about Spitalfield, noticed their posters up at the university and have seen press on them in the local rags. I wondered what all the "buzz" (and no not that shit ass college ass paper in Champaign) was all about. I can see why the college aged crowd and the college station would talk about them, they are perfect for that group of listeners. The lead singer has a pleasant voice, the rock is not in your face, just swirling around in a Cheap Trick holding pattern and landing on a field of eager listeners. It's a modern rock treasure trove of listening and enjoyment. If you at all like any band on the radio that plays rock music but doesn't over wank it and doesn't make the back ground vocals scream or growl then this is for you. A comparison that comes to mind is a less Poppy, rockier Akaline Trio. Then again, maybe I'm a jackass. **Steve Beetlecup 5/05**

Pattern Is Movement the (im)possibility of long-ing— www.patternismovement.com—When we reviewed this on our site I think we mentioned how it was a kitchen sink kind of recording, but that it grew on us. Yep, that about sums it up for me. It is good though. **Kevin Hay 5/05**

The Building Press Young Money—54 40 or Fight!— A touch jammy, like a jam rock band, but more concise if that makes any sense. I have no idea who I would equate this with, or why I would even try but it does have elements of other bands. Who doesn't? Right? I like it very much for the fact that it doesn't just take off down the road but makes sure to hit all the exciting, interesting bumps and children in the road. Sure it make damage the hell out of the car, but fuck if it ain't one of the most fun rides you ever had. We've talked about music a ton in this issue, we always do and when it gets down to it a band like this will never make the radio and that is good, cause most radio is boring pee pee jokes and songs about tits. The building press may not be all star caliber but damn if they won't keep you entertained in the bullpen. **Terry Walshnuthead 5/05**

THE 101—Green Street—Limekiln Records— Why do I always get slapped with a lawsuit just when it seems like I'm going to win the big contest? Forever, and maybe even longer, I have been claiming that I invented air movement and current. No one will listen to me. Now I have been told that If I continue to "harass", their word, General Electric and their subsidiaries then I will be in "Huge" trouble, their word. So it is with this CD on my player that I contemplate my next move. This music is pretty catchy, full of pleasant hooks, the kind you wouldn't mind getting snagged in your eye lid. It's not to polished either where you would want to gag on your Chucks Chicken. It's all very subtle pop rock music, and the singer can actually sing. That's always a plus. It's just fine strummed, easy going rock music. It made me forget my legal troubles for a moment and caused me to listen to the disc over five times before I wrote a review for it. That should say something. **Rambling Ronald 4/05**

Anagram—Songs from Far Away—www.anagrammusic.com— Sometimes I am scared away from Female vocals, and I know that might sound sexist, but I don't generally enjoy too many female lead groups. I bet if I looked through my collection I wouldn't find more than a couple dozen CD's with female singers. I don't know why that is, but I just don't listen to many of them. This band takes the kitchen sink approach to pop music, everything goes in. Sometimes that can be a distraction, too much clutter takes away from the songs. The drum machine works well, and I can see by the list of drummers on other songs why they might (and by they I mean the two regular members of the band) use that option. That's cool, I am not above finding programming appealing, cause it does have it's shades of depth, but sometimes it lacks warmth. I don't think that is meant to be a concern here, though. I do have to profess a prejudice to the live drum sound, I just really enjoy a good back beat. Let's fuck all that nonsense about the drum machine, cause it's not a central issue or concern. Some of it might appeal to the "alternative" nation now hounding each other on college radio, cause Rilo Kiley passes for something to them. Not that this is like that group, I just think this sort of pop music would appeal to that crowd, then again it might not because some announcer (they are no long DJ's to me) on the station hasn't played it five million times. **Skip Provence 4/05**

The Screens—3 song EP—www.thescreensrock.com— Coming on like The Hives without the attitude, but with the same punch. This is what it is, nothing more or less, just straight ahead rock music that just a few short years ago was the rage of the music scene. Are they too late to cash in, or is this just the way they would sound regardless? I don't think you would get a straight

answer on that one, and really what does it matter? This is exactly what you would think it is, I could probably give you countless examples currently on the radio besides the Hives. They just came right to mind. What's wrong with knowing exactly what you are going to get before you open the package? Some people like that, and it's not like it's, fruit cake on Christmas, this is actually decent rock music with some pretty good guitar sounds. **Fat Ruben 4/05**

Minmae—Demonstration CD— I got a note with this CD from Sean of Minmae and he said that I didn't have to review this disc, it was just for my listening pleasure. Clever bastard, he knew that once I listened to it that I would want to talk about it. It's the most straight forward approach to their music that I have heard and I like it quite a bit. His singing on this disc reminds me of someone I have heard before but can't put my finger on, however it does share a neighborhood with Jim Galbreath of Field Trip, and a out lying area with Lou Reed in tone. The first song grabs you right away with it's laid back bass sound and Sean's deep laid back voice and the La, La, La's just add another element to it. Right there I was hooked, what a smart move to start out a fine disc with a really good song. I also will swear that the second song on the disc reminds me of a School House Rock song, and if it isn't already I would nominate it for the New School House Rock. You know another thing that I really like about Minmae is that they add things to their songs, but unlike some bands that don't over do it and clutter up the space. Sometimes space is space and it works better that way, and I think Minmae have a really good head for that sort of thing. If this doesn't come out an official release then there is something truly wrong with the musical community and I am going to burn down so damn buildings until it gets released. **Skip Provence 4/05**

The Crimea—Lottery Winners on Acid—www.thecrimea.net— The title song is a winsome light and fluffy diversion and so is much of the rest of this EP. It gives you a starting place for this band and that starting gate has to be pop music designed for today's college age listening crowd. It's a little to cloying for me and it's attempts at being earnest soul pop just don't stick to the ceiling, especially the third song *Baby Boom* with it's "I guess you can call me Tarzan King of the jungle" lyrics. Also I have to say I am getting tired of the parts of songs where the singer sounds like he is singing into a telephone, it's been done to death. Along with echo effects in commercials, and handshakes when you meet someone, it should be abolished. Not a bad disc if you like pop music that I think tries a little to hard to impress, and should just rely on it's straight forward pop strengths. It does however throw in some attempts to mix up the overall sound with junkyard noise pieces, but those noises have become standard

in the pop/rock arena now for so long, they are the cousin who shows up for every reunion despite the fact that you keep moving it to different locations and times. **Daryl Zoognish 4/05**

Thine Eyes Bleed—in the wake of Seperation—www.theendrecords.com— Just like you would expect from a hardcore/metal band, Thine Eyes comes out with a punch to the head and doesn't let up. Screeched vocals, hard guitar and heavy drumming is what you would expect and what you will get. If you were thinking it would be anything but that you would be mistaken, I mean the band is hard metal and that is what you are going to get. Sure it's a little tedious in that you know what is coming around the corner, like a parade where all the entrants are announced before hand, but comforting because you have the knowledge of knowing you are getting something that is what it's advertised. I'm not sure when exactly this CD is coming out, because Jake at End Records said something about it being delayed until June, but if you are a fan of hardcore or this type of metal, and I think you know what I am talking about, then you would probably like this one. Contact the label through their web site to find out when this disc will hit the streets. **Dave Jobless 4/05**

Ticonderoga—S/T—54 40 or Fight— Like a melodic breeze that blows through your window in the Spring time Ticonderoga float along with nary a hair blown out of place. As a matter of fact they don't even get around to waking the baby until the tenth song on the disc (there are eleven total), but the baby ends up going back to sleep cause it's no more clatter than they would hear from the TV while their dad watches cartoons. Ticonderoga won't be kicking down your door to sing you songs about banging chicks or doing drugs ever, but they'll be there to relax you and keep you on an even mellow keel. While I know I'll never see the band playing the local Festival Tour, I might catch them at the local community radio benefit. Not enough to lull you to sleep, but just the right amount to make you smile and feel good about the world, even if it's just for forty minutes. **Gus Kpantz 4/05**

New Mexican Erection—co-dependent—Nasty Cactus Music— My nomination for the band name that sounds funny when you say it out loud. Now you have two chances to guess what the sound is, oh yeah they got a guy named Bevo playing Bass, which is a good name but I've never seen it in a band that plays pop music. Holy shit there is a dude screeching like a monkey on the second track. What the hell? There is a slight problem with the

sound and by that I mean there seems to be no low end, hardly any bass, which you would expect there to be in spades for this type of music. It's just a little too thin to be heavy, and maybe that is the way they wanted it, but it just sounds off the whole time. There are also some elements of Sublime like guitar jangle rock bottom feeding that they inject. The vocalist has a classically trained metal voice, Stained or POD would be really glad to get them on tour so that they could swap lead singers. Also the worship at the alter of Bruce Dickinson is causing a log jam for the rest of the people trying to reach the alter of Bon Scott. I think what troubles me about this release has nothing to do with the music, it's fine, or the lyrics although for a metal band some of the lyrics seem a little trite and silly; no what troubles me is the mixing of this disc. There seems to be no bass, very little bass drum and no thickness which I think this music almost demands. But, like I said maybe they are trying something different in rock music, singer up front, and no low end. **Jack Wind-breaker 4/05**

Mahavatar—Go with the No! - www.cruzdelsurmusic.com—I was right when I went looking for the promo sheet, this band is two women. No that is not a big deal, I just wanted to check that I was right when I mentioned that these two women make all this noise. Well, they have a little help, but it's their brains they are picking to get this sound. Holy hell, they got a song that fades out (#5), don't they know that in metal you have to end abruptly? I like it when they kick it in, and hit the power, now that is metal. The other nice thing about this group is that the singer doesn't fall into the usual two categories women fall into for metal bands. Either they growl to show they are tough or go for the operatic spectrum of Bruce Dickinson, this singer doesn't tend to fall into either category for long, and doesn't growl so much as throats. There are some rather bland, easy to follow power chord, radio ready pieces to songs here and there, and I think for me that diminishes their power and scope. Like I said though, that's me, I don't like the vanilla in such heavy doses, give me a little here and there, or at least try to cover it up with a powerful punch to the do wop. However, I must point out that I don't think they fall into the usual power metal pitfalls some bands do, including but not limited to, the high scope soaring guitar, and the over use of drum rolls and breaks. Now there are some bands that can pull those things off well, but these musicians know where they can put their ideas in and where not to over indulge and sometimes that is a creative aspect all unto itself. **Franky SS 4/05**

Humans Bow Down—a mirror—

Phratry Records—Being already familiar with Phratry Records, I had an idea of what type of music this would be. Sometimes that is a good thing to have, some kind of handle or pre-knowledge of what you'll hear when you put the disc in. There are a lot of "soaring" moments, and I think you know what the fuck I am talking about so don't be an asshole when you say "Soaring like a Journey Song?" No you stupid bastard, like I said you know what I am talking about. I like that these songs have a certain lift off to them, but that they keep grounded enough and don't take off like some reject from a Boston tribute band. Sure there is tinkering, and Phish like wanking bands out there, but I am not talking about that either, damn it you silly little prick will you pay attention. Maybe sometimes the songs do tend to take a little off track float, but so what, it's not distracting to the overall enjoyment and I don't think I will see anyone getting of the ride just because there were moments of Pink Floyd like dreamy haze. I smoked a lot of shit in the mid eighties hanging out with my buddies and trying to get up the nerve to sneak up to the supposed Satanic Church, and when we did we always listened to something "spooky", Ozzy or something that we at the time thought might have Satanic overtones to it. God, were we incredibly stupid and stoned. If I was still smoking and dreaming dreams of things that made the world interesting I would want this band playing on the stereo instead, cause it would calm me down, mellow me out and I could get a good feeling before I ran up to that red door, touched it and ran back to the truck scared like I really knew what being scared was. **Rambling Ronald 4/05**

The Upwelling—5 Song EP—

www.theupwelling.com—Sure it's only five songs lasting seventeen minutes, but it's a powerful seventeen. It really shows how a new band can compact their best material into a nice little package to get people interested in their music. It also shows that you don't have to over pack your first release, and beat people over the head, leave them wanting to hear more. This release, and especially the first song (it could be how I feel at the time to), make me think about a girl I once knew, whom I cared very much for but couldn't tell her how much because I couldn't face the rejection that might surface sometime in the future. I don't usually do that, I don't really think about that, and like I said it might be the mood on this night, but the music does help, it's dreamy and a touch sad. "These ghosts won't harm you" how very poetic that seems to me, because I don't think about her often because I don't want to think of the pain that it caused me, and how I just tossed her away with "I'm sorry but I don't love you". Yet I don't like to think about her because I afraid of those emotions from the past that I never let out and got rid of, strange that a band I have never heard of would cause me to such a great pause about my life and the love that has escaped me. It sounds to cliché, to stupid to talk about, yet here I am. Two others things about this CD are of note to me: One, they recorded this in some-

one's apartment and second, the press package is really well thought out and well done. When I used to like Jimmy Eat World, back when I reviewed their first disc *Static Prevails*, this would have fit in really well. However, I will say that these guys sound more earnest and truthful, like they are not trying to sound like that but do because that's how they honestly feel in their music. You don't get much of that anymore. It's funny how music can make you think, how it can make you look at yourself, and realize that you missed out on something because you were scared. How sad. **Fred Wheeling Leman 4/05**

One True Thing—Finally....

www.playtheassasin.com A fine rock record with female vocals. Speaking of the vocals, the lady has a nice voice, but when she really belts it out there lies the strength of their music. I hoped for more parts where she could really let loose and was never disappointed when she did. I don't listen to a lot of female singers, I don't know why, but I just don't. However, I will say that her vocals are the most enjoyable female vocals I have heard I a long time, and no wavy yodeling shit either, praise be. I wouldn't say punk because it's to polished and not bursting at the seams, it's more rock. I think the web review mentioned something about the female harmonies, which really take away from the lead singer, even if she is doing both of them, because she has enough power for the song, and the harmonies kind of detract from that because it seems she has to dial it down a bit for them to work together. A fine disc with some superb female lead vocals. **W.B. Free 4/05**

This Bright Apocalypse—Motion

and Rest—54 40 or Fight— I would need to be in a certain mood to listen to this disc, cause I think it has a certain mood to it when I played it for this review. That's fine, there are fifteen different moods every damn day in my spectrum. This would help fill one of those moods, mellow rock, what some would call emo I guess. If you are looking for music that gets right to the punch, don't bother stopping here, cause TBA doesn't get around to it, not until they feel like it and that's cool, I am willing to go on that ride when I am ready to go on that ride. As often as things change, there is sure to be space in your life for some mellow, guitar based rock music that people can stand and shuffle their feet too. **Skip P 4/05**

Unbunny—snow tires—Hidden Agenda—Very laid back and mellow, either that is the current state of music or there is a virus running rampant. Not really a bad virus to catch though, it could be worse, it could be shit. Would another time period brand this band a bunch of James Taylors? I don't know, that's like asking who would win a World Series between the "really trying" 1919 Chicago White Sox and the 1927 New York Yankees during both their primes. It's a lot of huey to try to organize a battle between something past and present because things change not only in sound, but in many other ways. There is some acoustic guitar, some piano and it all works out to spell the return of Christopher Cross. Really, why is it that we can make fun of John Denver now, and his stuff was the shit back in the seventies? Will we be making fun of Unbunny for being wimps? I suppose so, but at least they were good songwriters and knew what their strengths were. What's your excuse you sack of shit? **Larry Fling 4/05**

The Ralph Jones Band—Drowning in Kentucky—www.commonwealthaudio.com—This recording starts off with a girl asking young love type questions and giving them a point value. Does that scare you off? Really it shouldn't, just listen to the rest of the disc and you might see why we decided to interview the band. I like guitar structures, and chords that don't tend to stick to the normal road. A little off is good with me, sometimes being off is better than being dead on. I'm not sure I like the harmonies as much as they do, because I think the lead singer has it under control and sometimes those background/harmonies just clutter. I am getting the two track vibe from this disc too, I hear something only on this side and something else over here. I like that personally, Frank Black pulled it off very well with the Catholics releases. The last song "Potato Shine" shows a side of the band that is nice to see, it could fit easily on the *O, Brother where art thou?* Soundtrack. A good band that we like, who takes a side road to end up in the same place as all music does, they just take the bumpier more interesting road most of the time. While that may make you up chuck your food from time to time, it's a hell of a lot better than taking the boring ass main road. **Frank List 4/05**

Jumbo's Killcrane—The slow decay—Lumberjack Label Group—There are only six songs on this disc and only the intro song is under seven minutes. The back cover calls the band "Doom Prog juggernauts". So there you have it, can you guess what kind of music you're getting with that little bit of description? No, not folk rock ya stupid prick. It's slow, it's thudding and heavy, it's not exactly the Melvins but it might catch a ride to work with that band. The second song on the disc is called "The Slow Decay" which strikes me funny because the song is almost eight minutes long and it never reaches more than forty miles an hour. Why is that funny? It just struck me funny, stop being such an asshole. I like the disc, I wasn't sure I was going to like it this well, mainly because the Doom prog idea and the songs being very long, I just envisioned a metal jam band that didn't know how to stop their songs. How wrong, it's a band that knows how but doesn't want to and doesn't need to, they don't overstay to me and it's just how the song would end anyway. Very much worth your time if you like metal in any form, but especially if you like a tight, well produced slice of slog rock that isn't in a hurry to get there, cause neither are you. **Dave Jobless 4/05**

Six Reasons to Kill/ Absidia—Morphology of Fear—(Split CD) - Bastardized Recordings—I honestly couldn't tell the difference between these two bands, and maybe that is the point, smart marketing too. Both could call hardcore/speed metal their home. Both have some screamed and growled vocals. Not much difference to me, and that's cool cause like I said, you know one band and this just introduces you to another that you would also like. I also have to once again say how much I like hardcore/speed metal/metal bands who put so much thought and artistic ability into the packaging of the CD. They always have some of the best covers, very inventive and interesting. I would say that if you like this type of music, and change scares you and you like to eat the same thing everyday before going to work then this would appeal to you. NO, it's not boring, it's just exactly what it is, nothing more and it works to those strengths and stays

within it's hemisphere of power. **Daryl Zoognish 4/05**

Aloha—here comes everyone—Polyvinyl Record Company—I saw this band open for CEX at the Canopy Club and liked them way more than the headliner. Some might say obtuse or difficult, but I don't think that is necessarily true or accurate. I realize they throw a lot of things toward the recorder to see what sticks and what works but it just helps the overall sound, where in some other hands it might have sounded like Fat Albert's junkyard band. I have read that this is their most accessible release, and I can see that even without hearing their other music. I liked it live and I like it here on the record, it's very easy to like, enjoyable pop music. Maybe you would want to show a picture of Wilco as the big brother to Aloha, and maybe that would work in a short cut, get to the answer society who needs to know what your breeding is. Wilco sounds easy because of the approach. I think that the other thing that really hits me with this disc is the other instruments like the mellotron and vibraphone and the fact that they are so well played. It just adds another dimension to the already crisp pop sound. One of those bands I saw live and had to hear more, lucky for me Polyvinyl finally answered one of my emails. It may be a little slow or mellow for those who want the artist/band to get to the point, but not if you like where you headed and you are in no hurry. **Skip Provence 4/05**

Idiot Pilot—strange we should meet here—www.idiotpilot.com—Damn you Idiot Pilot, damn you sons of bitches! You make it sound so easy, so tossed off, it makes me wonder how much thought you put into this before you decided to release it. Was it just for fun and gambling or did you really have such ideas that it just sounds like it was as easy as throwing a no hitter in tee ball? If New Order had dropped the tecno and all the Crowded House boys were still alive you could invite them over for a dance and maybe a cup of tea, just don't shout in their ear too loud cause them boys are older now. Has the computer totally ruined you sense of self or would you have made this music regardless? **Jake Fulbrender 4/05**



Cougars—Manhandler—Thick Records— A six track EP that is a wonderful way to get started with a really good band. Sure it's got horns but this isn't a ska band or party band. The horns just make it more sleazy and dirty, which is a damn fine thing when done right and this band is done right. If you are going to include horns with your rock and roll and you're not going to sound like Fishbone, a swing band or a ska band then this is the way to go. The lead singer has the perfect voice/yell for this type of music, it's not the perfect singing voice but he sure knows what the hell fits and what doesn't which is better than having some classically trained voice. I am glad too that this is only six tracks, because it not only gives you an idea of the overall sound of the band, but it makes you want to search out more of the same. They tour now and then in the area, go see them, not only for the good music but because there are eight guys rocking out on a small stage. **Fat Ruben 2004**

The Race—If you can—Flameshovel Records—(www.flameshovel.com) - The press release for this disc had it right, this would be folk music if it wasn't for the production. At it's basic structure you have a guy singing with his guitar, but what has been added to it the mix is loops, noises, beats and other garnishing to keep this from being a folk disc. It's really what drew me to the group in the first place, I heard a song of theirs on the Copper Press Compilation disc, and decided to contact them about their music. There is something that I noticed with this CD too, something that I have started noticing a little bit with some releases. There are no names of the band members, at least none that I can find. What is it that these bands are trying to avoid? Either they don't want people to know who they are, unlikely, or they are trying to reason that this is a group effort and that it takes a band to produce these sounds, not Dave on bass, or Marc on piano. I have to say that I personally like this disc for what it is, laid back, slightly out of tune folk rock with some ideas draped around it to give it more of a feel and make it stand out to the listener. There is another reason why I like this disc, when I pick up my guitar (which I cannot play at all) and pluck it, I really like to strum the chords over and over with no melody but a certain repetitive chord structure that I can hear in my head. This is the same sort of thing, it's not totally melodic, but it's not a complete spin out either. It sits somewhere towards the left, but closer to the middle. **Franky SS 2004**

Ten Foot Pole—subliminal messages—Go Kart Records— Goofy fun melodic punk rock music. There you go, a short review but straight on the money. I think I like this more than say Offspring, well I am not a fan of them, but I would listen to this more because the signing is not annoying (sorry Dexter but that voice of yours is annoyingly thin). Sure they are out to have some fun, and not offend anyone. It's a good time, joke punk rock band and sure there are a million of these out there but if you're going to buy a CD of this genre then you might as well get this one too. Why? It's good in small doses, the singing is pretty good, it's not offensive, sounds like all the other bands you are into, and the kids will like it. Not offensive, or irritating if taken in small doses, just like a lot of drugs but this would be the generic. I don't mean that like generic as in boring and bland, but they are the cheaper, cost effective and just as potent version of the costlier drug. **Kenny Chainsmoker 2004**

Atreyu—The Curse—Victory Records— We have heard a lot about this band here at the Monkee Bunker (Brad's name for this cramped little office we share with a public defender). What did we hear you ask? Well, a lot of good things, "hard rock's new hero's" said a blurb in Biscuit for Smut zine and just some other good things about this band that seems to be making waves in the music industry. A very solid band who in the future should have no problems reaching the masses

with their message. Boy, that comes across as rather bland doesn't it? I mean other reviewers can get away with that shit because they work at a big magazine and don't have the time to sit or just don't want to sit and listen to the whole disc over and over. We here at SLTM like to pride on ourselves on the fact that we will listen to any CD that comes through our door at least four times. My girlfriend asked me if I was angry when this disc was playing, I think because of the hard rock and screamed/growled vocals. My reply? "I am now!" and I started to throw my fists in the air at imaginary mosh pit persons, angry with my self hatred and loathing with nothing to sublimate my anger. Here is one thing that is confusing me, which doesn't really take a lot. Inside the CD sleeve for this disc, there are high points for the band, such as selling 120,000 units of their debut (that's a lot for an indie band). Also it notes their appearances in magazines (good ones, not crap like this one). I don't know what to do with that information, I really don't because even though it is nice to see a good band get some notice, I really don't have any idea what or how them being in Metal Maniacs helps me? Also it notes that there will be a Hard Rock Revolution in 2004. Listen I have lived through all the revolutions, the hip hop revolution, the rap rock revolution, the easy metal revolution and possibly the toughest revolution ever, the hair metal revolution. So you hard rock revolutionaries bring it on, I'm ready. I have looked down the barrel of a loaded double neck guitar and lived to tell about it, so you bring your heavy riffs, your screaming vocals, and your lyrics about the decay of all things living and we'll meet on the battle field. Of course the critics will be the first to snuff it. **Darryl Zoog-nish 2004**

Chrome Pistola—Belly of the Beast (CD Single) - www.chromepistoala.com— I am always fascinated and surprised when I get a CD from someone I have never heard of and whom I didn't have to beg for a copy of the CD. By the way, that shit has got to stop because I am getting sick of asking over and over for copies of CD's. I feel like a whore, thank god I don't have to give them a good review. Anyway, I am curious to know how these people heard of me and where they found out about me, and usually I am glad that I heard their music, it's always at the very least worth the time. That is what music is all about to me, finding something new that will really reach me, or at the very least get me interested in hearing more. This disc would best be described as having a very close relationship with anything that Everlast puts out. I mean Chrome could be his younger kid brother who looks up to him and wants to be just like his idol. This is a little more laid back and groovy than Everlast, but still has the same sort of principal ideas toward song structure and lay out that he employs. Be forewarned though, three of these songs are the same; one clean, one dirty and one instrumental track of *Belly of the Beast* and two versions of *Pretty Houses*. It's a nice sampler of his work, and a good starting point if you enjoy this type of hip hop or do they call this trip hop cause it has elements of the "groove" in it? **Skip Provenge 2004**

Without End Disease is Man—Psuedoplasma Records— When I look back at the metal that was over the air waves and shoved down your throat, I only wish that I can say that I would have been listening to something that was this cool, but I wasn't. The closest I got to cool with any sort of metal was Triumph and they were more hard rock. Oh, yeah there was Sabbath but nothing that I was interested in could fall into the category that this band would be described as. Hell it wasn't until I went to college (with our pin head leader Brad) that I discovered some pretty fine music, one of those bands was Prong. Why do I mention among the thousands of bands I discovered? Well, this band reminds me of the early years of Prong, hell the lead singer sounds like a less guttural, growl toned Tommy Victor. If I still like good old fashioned metal, and I do, then I would pick this up. You see there is nothing wrong with sounding like something that has come before you, as long as you do it this good. **SP 2004**

Pigmy Love Circus—The Power of Beef—Go Kart Records— What would you expect from a guy from Tool? Well, if you have paid attention to any other bands that have a member break off from the group to make an album with some friends, you'll know that most of those people don't stray too far from home. You are not going to hear free jazz or a hip hop or opera record from those people. Most of the time they put the music out that they have been writing while in the popular known band, and assemble some like minded friends who can play their songs and enjoy themselves while they do it. This may not be SOD or early Anthrax, but this is hard rock in the same vein as Motorhead. Now, I am not saying they sound just like Motorhead, all I am saying is it isn't as fast hard rock but the vocals are still gritty and mean. The band seems to be having some fun with the music too, with songs like *Livin like shit* & *Madhouse Clown* how could you take yourself serious? By the way it's Dan Carey from Tool who plays drums on this, in case you were wondering who the person from Tool was. "I am the Highway man, White trash across the land". It's a perfectly played set of hard rock songs, solid like an AC/DC record, where there aren't many surprises, but fuck if they don't play the hell out of that rock music. Some fine guitar work here too. **Fat Ruben 2004**

Roy Ashen Sugar and Gasoline— I think it might be time for the artistic community at large to come up with a new phrase, I don't want to ever hear "misery loves company" ever again. That aside, and a minor point to be sure (but it was right there when I pushed the play button), I will hope that you won't let my annoyances with the artistic public at large hamper your reading of the review. I have never heard of Roy, but it says on the press sheet that he fell down a well once and had a dream about Liberace and Evel Knievel putting together an opera based on the life and times of Jesse James, but on motorcycles. Wait, that's what my press sheet says, Roy has had music featured on TV, like Felicity, Boston Public, and Dawson's Creek. Now you might look at that list and say "Wow, what a bunch of crap shows", however we might remind you that one of our favorite singer songwriters, Dag Juhlin has had his music on some popular shows, Dawson's Creek was one (if I am not mistake). So don't judge the guy by the shows he has had songs on, and oh yeah Pernice Brothers (Great Band) have had songs on Gilmore Girls. What I am trying to say is that this is the type of middle of the road pop music that you would hear during the commercial for the all new episode of Boston Public, where this week a student brings a hand gun to class with severe consequences. It's not offensive or challenging, nor will it give you a headache trying to figure it out. It is what it is, I'm not a fan of this type of middle of the road or as we would call it back in the old radio days MOR (yeah that's a joke, well except the lame radio back in the day, damn was it pretty lame on a lot of stations, kind of like now). So if this was the seventies and we were all wearing bell bottoms and smoking copious amounts of pot and having our "minds blown" then this would be the Dan Fogelberg of it's time. Sure we might laugh at Dan's easy listening folk pop now, but back in the day that guy was getting so much tail and I bet so does Roy Ashen. **Skip Provence 2004**

Dag Juhlin—Into the Woods—11:14 Records— Speaking of Mr. Juhlin, here is the new Solo CD. Recorded at home with Martin Stebbing, it's a whole new batch of the fine pop rock music that Dag

has perfected over his long career with the Slugs and solo. Oh yeah, Don't want to forget the Golden Stars in there too. I am directing this next statement to no one in particular, but I think this type of music can go either way anymore, there is not much in between or gray area, it's either really damn good or flat. I think I no why, and here is why I prefaced this, I think some people, and I have been listening to Dag for over fourteen years so I got an really good idea of his music, but I think that some people really pick up the guitar for the purpose of creating something that will work for the mass audience and especially for TV. Big shock, I know, but it seems more evident now with a lot of music being used for television and I think that makes the artist more aware of what his music could be used for, I mean if Iggy is making a few thousand grand for *Lust for Life*, then maybe they can create something for the new Capri Sun commercial, but make it still feel like it was a song of purpose. And yes, I realize that Iggy never intended that song to be used for a commercial when he wrote it. That is what Dag Juhlin is all about and why it takes him a long time to get music in your hands (so enjoy what you get you ungrateful little pricks because he doesn't kick out songs in a Ryan Adams like fashion). He makes the music that speaks to him and more times than not, the percentage would be about 92%, he is creating music that is worth your time and money. It's acoustic, Dag has a world worn comfortable and enjoyable voice, and the playing is spot on. I can hear some of these songs ending up on a TV Show, but only because they are good enough to make sense not because they are watered down boring safe music. There is a difference and if you listen to Dag Juhlin you will be able to tell. **Daryl Zoognish 2004**

A Perfect Murder—Unbroken—Victory Records— yet another fine entry into the hardcore genre from Victory Records. This band comes punching out of the gates, but it's not the kind of hardcore that just keeps punching and punching. There is more melodic rock thrown into the mix, than some hardcore bands will throw in, and that is good. A strong outing from a good band. You know Victory could put together a great package tour with this band, NIV, Atreyu, Premonitions of War and All out War. What a great tour that would be, and if it hit some smaller venues like the Canopy, man that would be fucking perfect. This band here, like the other fine bands in the Victory bunch (and let's be honest, for about ten good bands on the roster there is one maybe two that don't get it for me, but you can't be perfect and that is more personal taste than overall quality of music) has a good grasp on what their strengths are, and how to use them. I really dig the vocals, growling and mean just enough and understandable, enough to provoke but not hide the message. And the guitar work, wow, now that is some fine work, pounding at the right amount and loud but not overbearing and in the way. Some bands forget that you don't really need to beat the listener over the head with the heaviness of hard rock or hardcore. Here the band understands that the guitar can create a feeling of heaviness without shoving it down your throat. I like all kinds of music, or at least I listen to a lot of different types that I enjoy, and there is nothing like a well put together hard rock album that makes you get up off your ass and want to go out and mix it up. **Kenny CS 2004**

Toxic Narcotic/ Misery (Split CD)—Go Kart Records— First off, love the cover, especially the back with the monkey beating the guy in the head with the stone. Pretty fucking cool. I have never heard Misery before, those vocals remind me of Lemmy with a bad cold or David Johansen during his Dolls days. It's punk rock, but a little more laid back. The recording is a little muddy, wonder if that was intentional? As for Toxic Narcotic, we have reviewed them, so we knew what to expect. Four songs for Misery and Five for Toxic. TN is less sloppy and faster than Misery, more hardcore punk in the vein of English Oi bands than the slow punk muddy punk rock Misery gives you. Toxic is fast, that is for sure, and if you like your songs spit out in a machine gun fashion then this is for you. They know what they are doing, it's not sloppy, it's rapid punk. Plus like any good punk band, they got a message. **Fat Ruben 2004**

The Frequency—s/t—NFI Label—

www.nfilabel.com—There was a sticker on the front of the plastic wrapping that stated this was the "debut solo release from Sebastian Thomson of Trans Am". I don't know who that is, and maybe that is for the best cause it won't taint my view of his solo music. I'm sure that's what he would want, for me to take his solo music as a separate listening experience with no baggage from his other band. I swear to god that Harold Faltermeyer would be swimming in his own juices listening to track two "Stop It", oh boy would he be excited to hear someone picking up his torch for at least one song. The track also has a little Talking Heads flavor to it too. Thank god's because I don't think I am ready to re-embrace Harold F again. Is he saying "move that ass" in the third song *Allnite?* It sure sounds like it and it made me laugh. The fourth cut has some decent drum roll seventies big sound drumming to it, which makes it that much more enjoyable. Now that's four songs and four different attitudes and sounds, so if you can't find something in those first four you like then maybe you don't like those types of music. There are some straight ahead rock songs, which are good, and some programmed dance beat songs, which are good too. A nice mix, and surely something you like will pop up within these fifteen songs, if not, why do you listen to music? **Franky SS 4/05**

The PB Army—Spine for the Snapback—Sin Club Entertainment—Some strong rock right out of the box, reminding me of a few bands that I enjoy. The only complaint I have at the start is that the vocals could be a little stronger, no they are not flat or awful, I just think the singer seems to be holding back a little and the production is a little thin. However, that doesn't detract from the disc, which is rock for rock's sake. I really tried to like this band, cause the music they are playing is really pretty decent, but what the hell is up with the singing? It's decent on some tracks and then horrible on others (like #4 *Moderation*, I mean who the hell is he trying to be Morrissey?) I am conflicted with this disc, because I don't just want to dismiss it out right and tell you not to waste your time, cause I think it does have some bright spots. However, whoever the singer is who floats around and thinks he's in the Smiths needs to let the other guys sing. Sorry that is my opinion, he is just not as strong as the other guy, and I can see the idea of diversity but let's go with our strengths all the way through, I mean what if Brain Johnson let Cliff sing a song on an album? Sure there is the fear of repetition and stagnation, but if that is where your strength lies go with it. The production doesn't serve them very well either, there is not much power to it, and where is that thud? I miss it. I really don't like to slag someone for something that I can't do at all, I have no singing ability and will not pretend I do, but I think some of the singing really brings this down to a lower level. What it reminds me of is drinking beer, sure you can drink the cheap domesticated beers all the time, but it wears down your taste buds and gives you the shits, and isn't as tasty as the more expensive beers. Sure the cheap stuff is good in a pinch or once in awhile, but I like the stuff that isn't watered down. **Daryl Zognish 4/05**

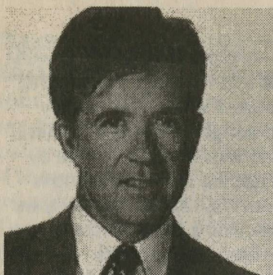
Channing Cope—Sugar in our Blood—54 40 or Fight! - "the evolution of slowcore has found a new standard bearer" is what is says on the disc, slowcore, huh? Not bad, I would agree with that description in that it's very laid back and purposeful. Do you feel like calling in sick to work? Is it raining out side? Do you just feel like sitting around with the stereo on drinking hot tea and day dreaming? Feeling non-productive and can't stand to listen to your Christopher Cross albums anymore? Then this band is for you. It's only six songs but it's about as long as a regular LP. Very laid back, and given a brandy and a hot soak I might put this on and just lay on the floor and think. Not sleepy, just relaxed and very comforting. **Kenny Reynolds 4/05**

Comeback Kid—Wake the Dead—Victory Records—I swear to the gods that when I popped this into the player it said the whole disc was only twenty five minutes long. Just exactly what you would expect with eleven songs in twenty five minutes, a good solid punch to the head with no let up. Fine by me, cause when I know what I am getting and the getting is good then there is nothing sweeter in life. Although it may be a little clean to call hardcore original, that's okay nothing wrong with a band wanting a clean crisp sound. I like mine a little skuzzy and dirty, but I like the energy and focus that comes from this band. Like a insurgent in the night, it's in, it takes your watch and military secrets and then it's gone. **Dave Jobless 4/05**

The Arts and Sciences—Hopeful Monsters—Daemon Records—daemonrecords.com—This maybe more mature than I can handle, not in a bad way, just I am not used to this much adult contemporary in my music. It's solid, very middle of the road pop music and Paul Melancon has a very nice voice, not showy or boastful but very strong and solid. There is a lot of talk about love lost or missing, a staple of the adult life, regret and what not. I don't want to seem a strange bird talking about the "adult" themes of this record, it's just that it's not about "girls" per se, but more about what it's like (at least for a few songs) to have loved and the hollowness of the love being gone and thinking about it. Now, as mature adults of a certain age, we all hit that point, and feel regret, Melancon feels our pain, well at least for a few songs cause they aren't all about love. If you like fine, middle of the road, non-offensive, warm and inviting pop music with some fine singing (including the female backing), then you'll enjoy this. If you like you pop music fucked up with noise and sounds of a person ripping their heart out while the drums beat on then you'll want to walk past this one. **Skip Provence 4/05**

31 Knots—it was high time to escape—54 40 or fight! - Like a cagey veteran using all the pitches in his arsenal to throw that one last punch that will score the winning goal, 31 Knots puts up to shut up. It's been said from the bullpen that all one can really see is straight up and back, there is no forward vision, and tis true, I've seen pictures. While scanning the park for a place to sit down and relax on a cool spring day, this young kid came up to me and asked me if I had a smoke, but I had none and had to turn him away with a "sorry". It may be accidental these meetings between humans, just a few short words spoken, a nod and a goodbye, but it's what makes us completely complete. If you were going to go on a musical journey, then this would take you out of the way, around a few interesting sites, and a couple of places you might not have known that existed. Sure it's a little out of the way, and the shortest distance between to points is a straight line, but if your interested in being interesting, then you want to take your time in getting there. **Freddy Lige 4/05**

Snow Machine—s/t—Daemon Records—This is a release from the wonderful Katherine McElroy, who along with Hunter Manasco was in three finger cowboy and 1945. Nothing against Hunter, but I like Katherine's voice and was slightly distracted by his voice on the last 1945 record. That's just me, his voice is crummy, just that I think her voice stands better alone, like on this disc. Lots of piano, lots of mood, lots of rainy day dreams and thoughts that come to mind when I hear this disc. Very enjoyable, the piano totally works with her low key, likable voice. It's just so easy to listen to, and know that doesn't mean easy listening. I have always enjoyed a good piano sound in a song, it just has a certain feel to it that makes me want to listen to the whole track when I hear those plinks on the keys. Less pop than their past two bands, but a whole lot of fun and incredibly enjoyable. **Daryl Z. 4/5**



Thicke's Thoughts

Welcome to Thicke's Thoughts. It's a new column about the things that really get under my skin and that need to be scratched. Hope you like it. Here comes some random thoughts:

I don't watch a lot of Television, I just don't have a bunch of time to sit and watch it. However, when I do sit down to watch a show now and then (mostly the Food Network. Love that Iron Chef) I get really agitated at the commercials. I mean, what the heck do some of these things have to do with the other? For instance, I really don't like those car commercials, they try to sell an attitude or way of life instead of the car. Here is what I want to know, what does the car cost and what is the gas mileage. I don't give a rat butt if it can dodge falling rocks from the sky or look good when the sun is shining right on it. It's a car, nothing else.

Hey did you know, that I used to write for Fernwood Tonight? Surprised? Do you even know what that means? Well, I do know that Fernwood Tonight is a favorite around the SLTM offices (weird guys, those), so at least they know what I am talking about. It was a fake talk show back in the seventies that was connected to Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman. Martin Mull hosted and Fred Willard. It didn't last very long (one year) but it has carved it's own special place in the hearts of comedy loving fans from around the world. Wonder if anyone will be smart enough to put it out on DVD? Would I get points for that? Hope so, better call my agent Marty Wonderful and find out.

What is the point of sending out music for review if you never even bother to find out if it got there? The boys in the office (weird guys, those) have mentioned on occasion that they seem to have a big problem with a few, well more than a few, people just randomly sending out materials and then never getting into contact. Also the boys mentioned that they seem to have to beg people over and over for releases that they want to review, and then those people sometimes pretend that they never heard from them before. Well, SLTM may not be the biggest magazine in the world, but would Alan Thicke be writing for them if they weren't good? Hell no. did I mention that I used to write for Fernwood Tonight and that I directed a few episodes of Growing Pains? So I know quality.

Did you also know or maybe you didn't That I, Alan Thicke am Canadian? Yes, that is correct. Also I used to host a talk show called *In the Thicke of the Night* (pretty clever huh?). Why isn't that show on DVD? Should be, better call Marty and leave another message.

To answer Marge in Alberta, Yes this is my real hair and no I haven't ever worn a hair piece. There are two things I have been blessed with, one is a full head of amazing thick(e) hair and two is the gift of comedy. I am twice blessed on the comedy scale, not only the performance but also the ability to write it. FYI Marge, I use Prell on my hair, twice a day to keep it full and manageable.

I may be Canadian but I still love baseball. Now the Dodgers still being in it is great fun, but what happened to the Phillies? I thought for sure fire breathing manager Larry Bowa would have those boys whipped into shape and ready for game seven. Here's hoping that Larry gets another chance and a better bullpen next year. Also, everyone stay off Dusty Bakers back. What did you think you were getting from Baker when he signed on to be the Cubs messiah? A world series every year? Keep your heads and keep calm, it's okay to finish over five hundred for two years in a row and just miss the playoffs, it's not the end of the world. Besides, Alou will be gone next year, and Sosa will be traded freeing up some money for a younger superstar outfielder (hello Magglio Ordonez). But, what do I know about Baseball? I'm Canadian.

My Five favorite CD's so far this year? **1. Mark Lanegan Bubblegum 2. Wilco A Ghost is Born 3. Sleep Station After the War 4. Descendents Cool to be you 5. David Cross It's not Funny**

Am I looking forward to the new Television season? Asks Steve Brone from Millers Park, Wisconsin. Yes and no. I can't wait for the Simpson's to start their Sixteenth season, and for the next season of Arrested Development, but where are all the sit-coms starring Kirk Cameron? Has everyone forgotten this young man's mischievous comedic ability? I haven't. Even though he is more concerned with his relationship with the Lord, and doing only movies about the Lord (I hear he is working on a movie version of *The Gospel Bill Show*) I think it is high time that television recognized one of its greats and gave him a show. Again. Need a TV dad Kirk?

Finally Where would the world be without grapefruit? I must eat four or five of these things a day. I even came up with a recipe for grapefruit smoothies that is sure to tantalize your taste buds. Recipe in the next **Thicke's Thoughts**

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The Arts and Sciences "Hopeful Monsters"

Moody indie-pop for the smart set. Life got you down? Listen to this, it'll make you feel better about your own situation.



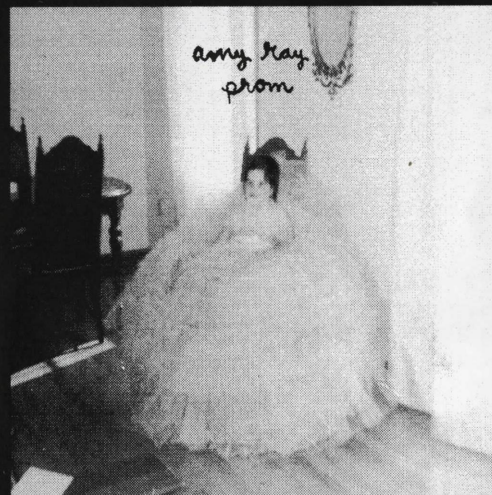
Magnapop "Mouthfeel"

After an eight year hiatus, seminal indie rockers Magnapop show they still got it and they still know what to do with what they got.



Snow Machine s/t

Piano based emo-pop fronted by Katharine McElroy of Three Finger Cowboy. To hear her is to love her.

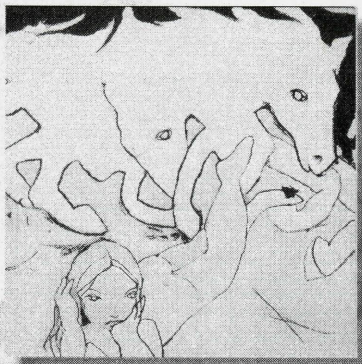


Amy Ray "Prom"

Solo rock/punk from Daemon founder. She's not only the president, she's also a client.

Manifest destiny, baby.

54°40' or Fight!



Channing Cope
Sugar in Our Blood
POLK025 CD

In an age of ever-abbreviated attention spans, it's a pleasure to have bands like San Diego, CA's Channing Cope there to remind us to slow down, to pay more attention, to listen. This trio rewards listeners who take the time – without testing their patience. Their brooding music paces between glacial and brisk, with a soft and graceful sweep that belies its intensity. "...Channing Cope (is) both brooding and beautiful..." – *San Diego CityBeat*

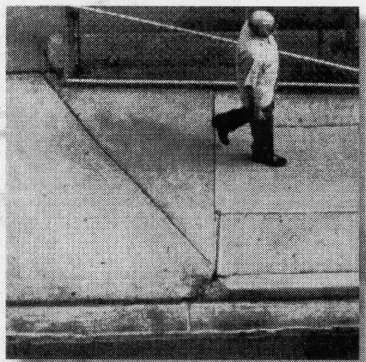
RIYL: Bedhead, Seam, Shipping News, Karate, 31knots



Ticonderoga
s/t
POLK024 CD

Uniquely talented in that all three members contribute heavily to the songwriting process, Ticonderoga blends myriad influences seamlessly, creating a true post-rock sound while effortlessly avoiding being pigeonholed. Ticonderoga records and mixes their songs at home providing close comfort to the acute listener and warmth to all that come near the speakers when the band is on the stereo. "I think I'll be listening to this one for a while." – *Delusion of Adequacy*.

RIYL: Hood, David Grubbs, Pavement, Akron/Family, Tortoise, Shrimp Boat



Mandarin
Fast>Future>Present
POLK023 CD

"A scattering of influences have been streamlined into tightly focused songs, with a keen sense of melody and an impressive grasp of agitated, Gang of Four-style rhythms." – *The Wire* [#247, p.70]. From *Mojo* [Sep. 04, p.96]: "This is some coming-of-age classic." Says *Delusions of Adequacy*: "Much like Slint, Mandarin's sound is often infused with an eerie coldness that seems to melt when the songs begin to grow exponentially in texture." Exuding a sometimes woozy, often quietly sinister vibe a la Pseudosix or Red Red Meat, Mandarin's songs evolve and expand naturally, like the best of Yo La Tengo's, Polvo's, or Bedhead's, enveloping the listener with their engrossing mood and textures. Mandarin's innate pop sensibility recalls vintage Pixies, which smoothes the complexity of their arrangements to coalesce their songs into progressive, singular, contemporary pop music.



Coming Fall/Winter 2005: Valina, Ticonderoga, Mandarin, Sicbay.

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