

INSIDE: MID-ATLANTIC MAYHEM EP FEATURING
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CARBON 14

#21

\$6



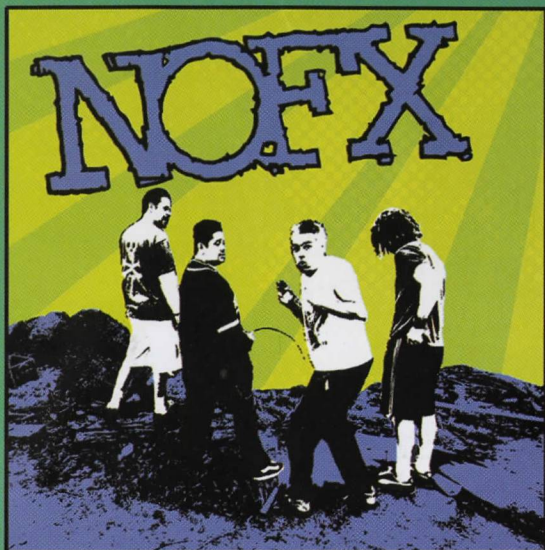
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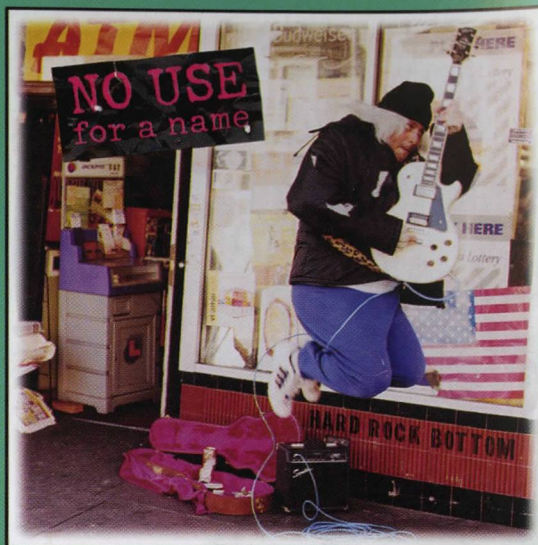
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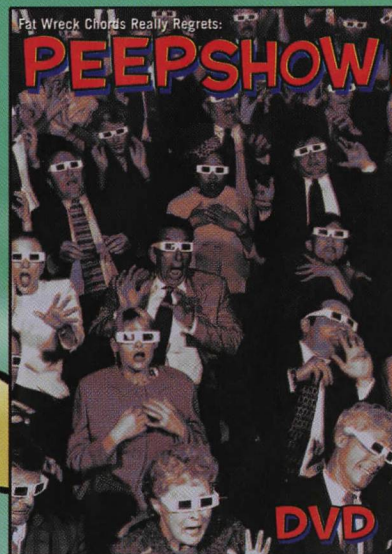
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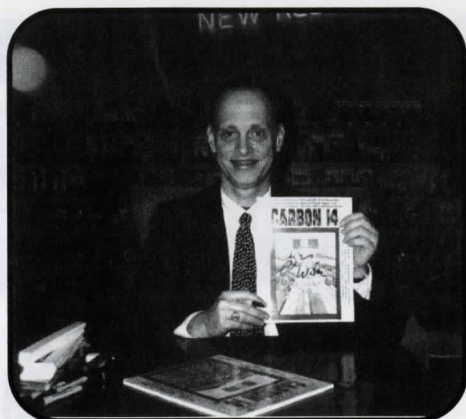
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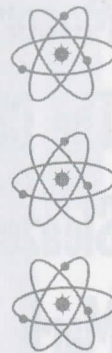
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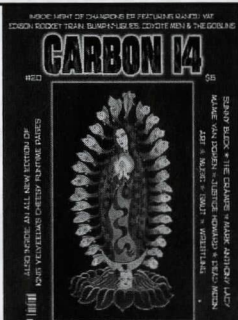


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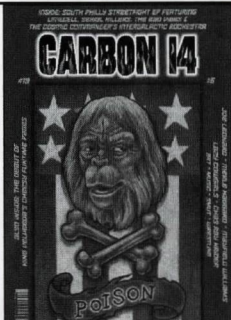


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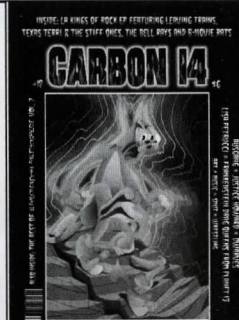
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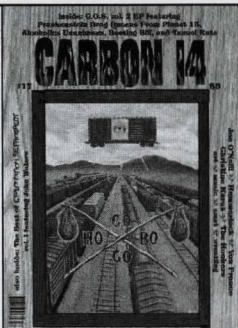
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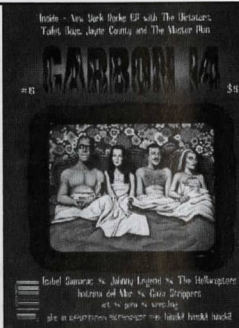
#17 - Joe O'Neill cover & color feature, Hammerlock, Von Franco, Christine Karas, the Hookers, art, music, smut, wrestling plus ER and the COS v.2 EP with Frankenstein Drag Queens From Planet 13, Alcoholics Unanimous, Tunnel Rats and Bootleg Bill... \$7 (US) \$10 (World)



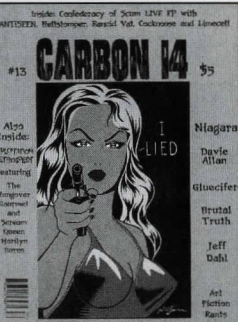
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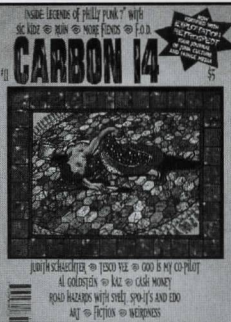
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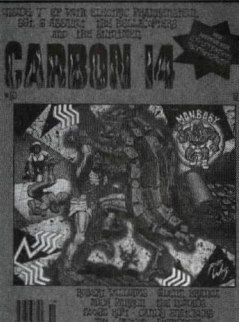
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CARBON 14

#21

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Secretary of Cheese & Adorable Smut:

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(Thee Great) Whiskey Rebel • Widowmaker

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So, here we are again in the space where I'm supposed to editorialize. I don't really have too much of that to do so I'll just start rambling and we'll see what I can come up with to fill the space. While I'm here I may as well point out that this is our 21st issue, which may or may not seem like a lot of issues to you. It sure seems like a hell of a lot to me. When we started the magazine, we had no idea if we'd even make it to double digits but here we are eight years later, still cranking out issues, albeit at a slow pace. So far the idea of publishing twice a year and making the issues bigger has worked out so we're gonna stick with it. This is our biggest issue ever, page-wise, and we had a lot of help with that from our very verbose contributors—who seem to be in some sort of secret competition for the biggest word count. So I'd like to publicly thank them for that.

Speaking of our contributors, one of them - our beloved King VelVeeda - is, at the time of this writing, embroiled in a huge gooey mess with Kraft Foods who are suing to stop him from using the term VelVeeda. It's actually a lot more complicated than that but since there's no way I can make this mention current (it'll be more than a month from now when this column is actually in print and the plot has been thickening weekly, sometimes daily) and there's a lot of details to this story, I'd like to invite you to read more about it on his site - go to www.cheesygraphics.com/castlehassle.html for a full explanation and up to the minute details. This obviously struck close to home cause VelVeeda's been a part of the magazine for a while now, and he's our buddy, but we're also both big fans of his art so I don't mind using a little space here to suggest to you that, after you read all about the case on his site, you go over to his store section and buy something cheesy. If you're a fan of his art and are wondering what you could do to help him out or show your support, that is certainly one way to do so. Another (free) way is to drop him a note of encouragement. (Don't forget, perverted artists need love too.) Let him know that you stand by his right to use his punk rock name. What's next? The makers of Jell-O suing Jello Biafra? Ooops, maybe I shouldn't have written that—I don't want to give anyone any stupid ideas. (Well, more stupid ideas.) Hopefully by the time this issue comes out, VelVeeda will have emerged victorious from his David vs. Goliath battle and it'll fall into the somethin' to tell the grandkids about category.

I'd also like to mention there was a little re-do in the review section for this issue; there seemed to be a lot of confusion with the columns - as in we kept getting e-mails saying that people heard their band or label had something reviewed in the mag. and they can't find it, and where is it, and why isn't it in alphabetical order like the other CD reviews, etc. Why people can't see those pages when they look through the magazine, I don't know. But a decision was made by "the management" to move those review column reviews into the regular review section for this issue so I'd just like to say to you all what I've already said to the three writers involved, Paul Bearer, Rick D. and Eliot Duhan—it is in no way any reflection on them that some people could not find those pages or compute the some-reviews-are-in-alphabetical-order-and-some-are-in-column-form thing. Should there be an outcry in support of the columns, we'll bring 'em back. The feeling among the three writers was mixed. Paul said he ended up kinda liking it; Rick made sure I knew he didn't (in a nice way though); Eliot... well, he never mentioned it so I really have no idea what his stance on the subject is but he's not the type to complain. They were good sports about it though & I appreciate that.

Other than that, things are pretty status quo around here magazine wise; so I guess I'm done editorializing. There has been a ton of action on the Steel Cage front, I'm happy to report. We're gearing up for our spring releases (see page one), all of which should be out by the time you're reading this, and we've got a ton of good shit planned for the rest of the year; check out the site (www.steelcagerecords.com) if you're interested in reading more about that. Almost all the bands we work with are heading out on the road this summer (and the ones who aren't will probably be playing around their respective home turfs) so keep your eyes and ears open. And if you're gonna be in New Orleans this September (the weekend of the 27th) for the C.O.S. Supershow - I'll see you there. Be sure to ask the Widowmaker to show you his Leslie Kicks Ass tattoo! In the meantime, hope you enjoy the issue.

xoxo,
leslie

I: me looking at the camera, Larry looking down my shirt.



Thanks to: our family; Danté; all the writers that contributed to this issue; Mark Dancey; the Candy Snatchers, Stevie & the Secrets, Adam West & the Twin Six, Cosmo; the Irwins; Justice Howard; Paul Bearer; Masterwork in Philly; the current and future Steel Cage roster; and anyone else we forgot who deserves thanks. Smooches to Frenchie Cologne!

Motörhead's been a part of my musical world since I was a junior in high school. That's when I first heard them courtesy of a friend of mine who was one of two other kids (besides me) in school who listened to punk rock. He brought over a copy of *Bomber*, which had just come out in England and therefore had that 'ooh, import' mystique about it; I "borrowed" it for about a year, and it joined *Leave Home* and *Hot Rocks* in permanent rotation on my turntable. I didn't know that Motörhead was what I was looking for, but they filled a void I didn't know existed. That was in 1979 and I've been a fan ever since. I read about their 25th Anniversary show being released on DVD (called *25 & Alive "Boneshaker"*), and that a new album, *Hammered*, was about to be released; with a new record and a tour pending, I figured it would be tough to get an interview with Lemmy but we managed to get everything set up fairly easily, and get the interview done the night before Motörhead was to begin its latest American tour.

—Larry

Is this the first US tour since the one with Nashville Pussy opening for you?

Yeah. We've done a few things in Europe since then.

It seems you've always had a bit more of a following outside of the US than in it.

Yeah, we've been lucky with that.

You've already toured in places like South America and Japan; is there any uncharted Motörhead territory?

India, Africa, Thailand and places like that. We've been most places where they have rock and roll.

I'm not sure if they have rock and roll in India. I think they have it in Thailand.

Yeah, but it's kinda weird.

Right now, 27 years into it with Motörhead, if you include Hawkwind I guess you've been playing music for over 30 years—

34 years, yeah.

—is it more fun now?

It's just as much fun, really. I mean it's not more fun because of the state of radio and TV, y'know.

Did you ever think Motörhead would last as long as it has?

Bands don't usually last much longer than a few years. A few bands last a long time but you never think you're gonna be one of them. Well now you're one of the longest lasting.

Yeah, almost as long as the fuckin' Who.

I don't know, they took a break for a while so that doesn't count.

That's true. That's not right, is it? To take 10 years off and then come back.

That doesn't count.

It shouldn't count.

I was looking at the liner notes on *Hammered* and I noticed your quote was, "It costs HOW much?"

Yeah, that's just one of those quotes, it wasn't pertaining to anything.

I was wondering, because Motörhead has gone, at times, from label to label, if you ever foot the bill for the recording

and then see who's interested.

No, we're signed to—well, over here we're signed with CMC, which is Sanctuary now, and in Europe it's SPV/Steamhammer; we've been with both of them for about six years now, so it's doing pretty good.

Except they don't publicize it enough when they put a record out over here. I've met a lot of people who didn't know we had a new album out.

How did you get involved with doing some music for the WWF? Did they approach you about it?

Yeah, apparently Triple H was driving from somewhere to somewhere and somebody put a Motörhead album

on and he said, "That's the band I want to do my intro tune."

Were you a wrestling fan at all?

Nah, too choreographed for me.

In noticed on the Motörhead website that in the special friends of Motörhead section there's a link to Samantha Fox; is that a joke?

That's an old friendship thing. I met her at a spaghetti eating contest, actually. How's that for street cred, boys and girls?

Were you on Ozzfest a couple years ago?

Yeah we did the Ozzfest in '99 or 2000.

I never see ads for stuff like that.

I don't even know if we were on the poster, we were on the second stage; we were top of the bum's stage.

Would you want to put together your own festival like that, with Motörhead headlining? Who would you want to play?

It would be great to do that. But all the people would not be available, probably.

They never are, y'know? I'd want to get Nashville Pussy, for sure.

Probably a reformed Skunk Anansie, if we could get 'em. Let's see... maybe the Supersuckers, maybe Speeddealer or Fu Manchu. There's a lot of good bands out there, they just don't get on the fuckin' radio anymore. I think the Foo Fighters would be good.

That's a pretty eclectic lineup.

Yeah, I just did a thing with Dave Grohl, a track for his solo project, Probot.

You have a long history of duets.

They're a lot of fun to do. It keeps you on your toes as well because it's different. If you just do what you do all the time then you get kind of boring. Look at KISS.

I don't know if it's that I haven't been paying attention, but I immediately noticed the vocal harmonies on the first track on the new record; that's something new, right?

Yeah, I've never done anything that involved. I've done harmonies before on choruses and things.

It's a bit of a departure, if that's the right word.

More of a return. I was brought up on the Beatles, you know. So, back to the fuckin' roots again, you know what I mean.

I know from following the band for a long time that you're a history buff, especially war history. Are you specifically into World War I and World War II stuff or are you more interested in just a general history of conflict?

I'm interested in the general history but it's mostly World War II. 'Cause the Nazis had the most stylish shit. It's not my fault.

motörhead



No one's saying it is. They definitely were more uniform obsessed than the US or Japan.

The SS uniform is murder. It must have been murder for the girls. They must have pawing all over each other to get at you, with those fucking riding breeches on and those boots and shit. Are you kidding? Even if you were gay, same thing applies! It's like a dual uniform. [laughter]

I've heard you have a pretty good collection of war memorabilia.

Oh yeah, I have a lot of that stuff. I can hardly get in my apartment anymore actually—what an advantage. I have to climb around things just to get to the bedroom. **That's the price you have to pay for being a collector.**

That's true. I can't stop it, it's like being addicted to something. **I know, I have collections too.** What do you collect?

Well, the past couple years it's been albums that cost a dollar or less.

[laughing] Oh yeah? I bet you've got some weird shit. You can pick vinyl up for nothing now. And there's those big compilations of Motown and Stax/Volt; you get these huge compilations on like four albums for 16 bucks or something.

I've got a couple things like that, and a lot of Nashville stuff from the mid '60s and early '70s.

Fuckin'-a right, yeah. Sonny James and all that crew.

Do you find now that it's a little harder to collect memorabilia since the further it gets away from the event the less stuff is around and available?

Well, see, the original collectors are now beginning to die. [laughs] So their collections go back on the market, obviously, because their relatives have always been kind of ashamed of their collections.

Right. They're like, 'we don't want grandpa's nazi stuff up in the attic.'

Yeah, they sell it immediately. I just bought about a third of this guy's collection, they're fire daggers, because he croaked and they all came back in the catalogs. So there's always that turnover. And also the reproductions nowadays, even the experts can't tell. Cause they're making reproductions in some cases, in the original factories with the original dies. There's no way to tell. Then they age 'em, stick 'em in a cooler of piss or something for a couple months, bring 'em out and they look exactly like the real thing. You can't tell because it's the original trademark and the original dies.

And the dies happened to have survived.

Yeah, most of them. It's kind of funny.

That's pretty remarkable.

Well you could make a die, if you were sufficiently painstaking, from the logo itself. All you have to do is try very hard for a while and bingo, you're in business. There's collectors now who collect reproductions.

Are there any pieces in your collection you suspect are reproductions?

I've got several things I'm pretty sure aren't real.

Do you have any plans to do any more film stuff? The last thing I saw you in was "Tromeo and Juliet."

I was also in "Citizen Toxie, Toxic Avenger IV". And I was in a thing called "Going Down With The Dolls" or something.

What's that?

There's this guy from Portland, Oregon who made this movie. It was

released maybe six months or a year ago, and I played this lunatic who lives in a closet in this chick's room.

Do you enjoy acting?

Yes and no. I like it when I'm actually doing it. But I hate fuckin' hanging around... it's worse than the fuckin' Navy.

So on the new tour are you playing most of the new record?

No, we always just play two songs mostly, maybe three. We're doing two off this one at the moment; might put another one in later. It's hard to take those songs out because you get to a stage where people want to hear everything.

Do you ever get tired of playing, say, "Ace Of Spades?"

We were lucky, see, we got famous for playing good songs. It could have been awful, we could have had a hit like—I'm sure Barry Manilow has a hard time getting himself up to sing "Mandy" again.

How could he sing it in the first place?

Yeah, exactly. There's that school of thought as well.

What are you listening to right now; what's in your CD player?

Well, the new album. I'm listening for mistakes at the moment. But it's too late anyway. [laughs]

Shouldn't you have done that a little earlier?

Well, we did but you don't always catch 'em all. You don't catch 'em until it comes out, you see, when it's too late. I listen to Skunk Anansie a lot, they inspire me, I think they're brilliant.

They broke up, didn't they?

Yeah, last year. Damn shame. They're the best band to come out of England in 10 years. It's one of those things, like when the Beatles albums came out you had to listen to 'em to get into 'em a bit. Which is the mark of really good music, a lot of it isn't instantly accessible. And it shouldn't be. That's the trouble with this generation, they want everything to be right now and if it's not there they haven't got the attention span to listen to it again in 18 months.

Last time you were here in Philly I heard the PA was insufficient.

Yeah, that's the trouble with not making a lot of record sales, we have to tour on budget all the time so you have to use the house thing; and it's never what you've specified, never. Only in rock and roll can people get away with this shit.

Does that happen a lot?

Almost every place we go to, yeah. It's always that the guy doesn't

want to pay for extra PA. 'I just put this in six months ago.' Yeah, but it's only 140 watts.

And you need about 14,000.

17,000 actually.

When you used to take around the Bomber rig were you carrying your own PA then?

Yeah.

Since the 25th Anniversary show, has the Bomber rig reappeared?

It came out to a German festival last year, because they said they wanted it and they paid extra for it. We have to hire a truck to carry that on it's own.

I'm sure. And it's not like you built a spare, there's only one.

Right. Actually some gypsies stole the middle of it, for the aluminum.

Are you serious?

Yeah, we had the tail, the wings and the nose and we didn't have the middle of it for about a year.

They stole it out of a warehouse?

Yeah.

It's still one of the most memorable props in rock and roll.

It's the only lighting truss that moves on all four sides. There's no



all live photos by Ace Tramp



anchor, it's on four hydraulics... there's no rigid frame; there's only one.

Was that your whole concept?

No, it was our manager. But it was my song.

Bomber was the first

Motörhead record I heard. I think I was in 11th grade in high school when that came out.

OK, so you wanted something aggressive and manly.

Well, I was ready for something more than the Ramones and the Stones. I needed to just turn it up a little bit.

Right. And a bit faster. I think the Ramones were pretty fast.

Oh yeah. I was just looking for something more than two or three minutes per. Don't get me wrong, I love the Ramones—I do too. Shame about Joey, eh? Yeah. It was so sad seeing the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction.

I know, I fuckin' hate the place.

It was like, come on, Joey had to fuckin' die for this to happen?

I know. You know they never would have gotten in there had that not happened.

Of course not. The only good thing about it was Dee Dee saying, 'I'm Dee Dee Ramone, and I'd like to give me, Dee Dee Ramone, a big fat pat on the back for being me, Dee Dee Ramone.'

[laughs] Yeah, that's him all right.

He deserves to be able to say that though, because he IS Dee Dee Ramone.

He's paid his dues like nothing on Earth. I remember him after he'd left the Ramones, it was about a year later and he was a junkie and all that, and I was in the Scrap Bar in New York, and he came in in an old army gray coat and he was really fucked up. He said, 'Could you lend me 10 bucks, Lemmy?'

He was crying, it was fucking awful. I gave him 20 bucks and he cried even harder. Then the next time I saw him, he'd turned it around and was fine again, but that was fucking awful to see him like that. And people think heroin's groovy; it wasn't fuckin' groovy that night.

It's good he's clean now.

Have you read his book?

Yeah, Poison Heart?

That's rough, isn't it?

Yeah it is. Did you ever see his zine, Takin' Dope?

No.

He did a Xeroxed, stapled little zine. The book is like Takin' Dope without spelling mistakes. It's just rambling, complete stream of consciousness Dee Dee. But at the same time it's really weird.

Well we have to get used to that, Dee Dee is weird. He's the one who hung out with Johnny Thunders by choice. [laughter] That's not easy. That's true. Well, Lemmy, I think I've run out of questions.

OK, well in that case I've probably run out of answers.

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I had been hearing about The Cherry Valence for quite some time through my friend Andy Miller, but I never had the pleasure of seeing them live until this past year. They tore the roof off 7 Black Cats here in Tucson a few months back; a dirty, sweaty, beautiful bluesy mess of sound and sight. Between the sexy, sultry Cheetie and the sensually aloof Jamie trading off licks on the guitar, the dynamic duo of Brian and Nick constantly rotating between being the frontman, playing the organ, and bashing the skins (2 drumsets, with a common crash cymbal), and God of Thunder Paul holding down the bottom end, they had every booty shakin' in the house! The set culminated with a percussive free-for-all where the opening bands' drums were brought out and whoever could find something to hit them with went for it with reckless abandon... a sound that drove those present into a glorious maddened frenzy that some have still not recovered from to this day! So I jumped at the chance to play with them, AND interview them next time around. This took place in the parking lot behind 7 Black Cats in Tucson, before the show featuring my band—The 440s—Solid Donkey, and of course, the fabulous Cherry Valence.

[Interview begins with gibber-gabber about various clubs around the country, when (my fellow 440) Gordon's guitar in the background suddenly becomes very, uh, loud! Paul, Cheetie and Nick are present in the beginning, Jamie and Brian and join in later on.]

Wendy: Okay, let's start with everyone saying their name and what they play, so I'll know who you are when I listen back to this.

Paul: Paul, bass.

Cheetie: Cheetie, guitar

Nick: Nick, uh, drums and singing and...

Wendy: Ass-shakin'!

Nick: Yeah, I do that too. Solid Gold dancin'!

Wendy: Well, I forgot my prepared list of questions...

Cheetie: You didn't memorize it?

Wendy: Not this time. So I'll start by asking how long you've been on tour? I mean, you guys tour a lot, because I've only been living here about 8 months and this is the third time you've been here.

(Laughter)

Nick: This is not a real tour, we're just going to San Francisco to record. So it's a real tour but it's not. I don't know...

Cheetie: It's not really... we're not "touring" touring.

Wendy: Just a short one?

Cheetie: Yeah, we're just basically making our way out there, and playing some shows along the way.

Wendy: How long are you taking to get out there [from Raleigh, North Carolina]?

Paul: Ten days? Something like that. Eight shows.

Cheetie: We left a week ago.

Wendy: So you have shows on the way back, too?

Cheetie: Yeah.

Nick: Yeah, but only four.

Wendy: Is Estrus putting out this new recording?

Paul: Yeah, unless Geffen comes knocking. (Much laughter).

Wendy: I'll call and let 'em know you're coming out there!

Cheetie: They called and said they couldn't make it.

All around: Awww!

Wendy: Well, I'll try and pull some strings. Is it gonna be a full-length?

Nick: Yeah.

Wendy: How did you guys get hooked up with Estrus? Because you're not, you know, a typically "Estrus" band.

Nick: We played with a couple bands on Estrus, and, yeah, we're not. But we got along with those bands...

Paul: Mainly the Fireballs [of Freedom] hooked us up... they just talked us up to Dave...

Nick: Endlessly, and we finally went up and played with them in



Bellingham...

Wendy: I don't know if we can hear you all the way over there, Nick.

Nick: (moves closer) There, how's that?

Wendy: Beautiful! So, basically you just went up and played for him, and he said, 'I'll put out your record?'

Everyone: Yeah.

Wendy: And the rest is history?

Cheetie: Well, it took a long time for somebody to actually do that. We'd already toured a bunch, and we ended up playing just by chance with other bands on the label, and people that he was friends with... I guess people who had heard a couple of good things about us.

Paul: There were a couple other labels who were into putting something out, but it would have been no better than us doing it ourselves, so we just figured we'd keep playing and wait for someone who had a little more to offer.

Wendy: So is Estrus actually helping you out with recording?

Everyone: Yeah.

Cheetie: They pay for the recording and they have distribution through Touch and Go, so that's pretty reliable.

Wendy: Do they give you tour support or anything like that?

Paul: No, no.

Cheetie: They give us good wishes.

Nick: It's kinda nice, at least you know you don't have to pay 'em back for tour support or anything like that.

Wendy: I know, it all comes out of the band's pocket anyway.

Everyone: Yeah...

Cheetie: And if you can, if you do it long enough, you can hopefully make a living touring.

Wendy: How long have you guys been together?

Paul: For like, four years, but this incarnation...

Nick: Yeah, the double drum thing...

Cheetie: Really, I mean it feels like...

Nick: It feels like two. Like we kinda restarted.

Wendy: Who were the original members?

Nick: The four of us, and two other guys who aren't in the band anymore.

Wendy: Oh, so there were six of you?

Paul: Yeah, one guy who played organ the whole time, and one guy who just sang. Then we lost a person and added a drumset!

Paul: Yeah, we lost people and added equipment.

Wendy: How many guitars did you have when you started out?

Paul: It was the same, two guitars, bass, drums, and then we had a lead singer and the organ player. Then the organ player left, and Brian, who used to be the drummer, learned how to play organ. So he started playing organ and eventually drums again, and we thought we might as well go with the two drums.

Wendy: Has your sound changed a lot since then?

Nick: We've gotten better! (laughter) We all play better... not always though.

Cheetie: We were probably, maybe a little more garagey then...

[Brian and Jamie join us and introduce themselves]

Wendy: What do you want people to know about you?

Paul: That we're poor and we need people to come to our shows.

Brian: We need people to come see us play...

Wendy: And buy your stuff and give you lots of money...

All: Yeah.

Wendy: Do you feel the constant touring you've been doing has increased your fan base?

Cheetie: Definitely, definitely.

Paul: It seems like every time we go out, we tend to go to a lot of the same places. But every so often we'll branch out and hit another new spot, and it's, you know, about a 50/50 chance of whether we'll ever go back there again. Some places we'll decide, 'Let's not ever

by Wendy Lee

the CHERRY VALENCE

do that again.'

Wendy: Have you found that often the big cities kinda suck?

All: No...

Brian: There's just so many places. I mean it could be the best place in the world, but we're playing on a Tuesday night with whoever and you're just glad to play a show or you think it's terrible. But then if you just get hooked up with the right people, it could be a great town.

Paul: I used to hate San Diego, and now, that's one of my favorite towns.

Brian: (Sarcastically) Oh, no, we never hated San Diego...ever.

All: No!

Cheetie: I mean, it seems like the first few tours we did without a record out, it was a little bit harder, but now, since we've had the record out, it definitely seems like it gets better. Maybe that will plateau, too; but hopefully it won't. Sometimes it seems that if you play the same place too many times, it might be counterproductive.

Wendy: I don't think, at least as far as Tucson goes, that's happened yet.

Brian: For the most part, it seems like it hasn't. I mean most places we went to the first time, even when we didn't have a record out, whenever we called again, they didn't mind having us come back.

Wendy: You must have not made any money on that tour.

Paul: Yeah, the first two we didn't.

Cheetie: The first one we lost money, and the second tour we broke even. It gets a little bit better every time.

Wendy: Last time you came through here, you played with the Tight Bros. Were you guys touring with them then?

All: Yeah.

Wendy: How was that?

All: It was fun... we like those guys.

Wendy: Have you guys toured with other bands?

Nick: Nebula, Federation X...

Wendy: Do you find that helps, having two bands, two rock bands to set the tone of the bill?

All: Yeah.

Brian: Especially in some strange place you've never been before.

Cheetie: At least you know you'll like the band you're playing with. (Nightmare stories about mismatched bills ensue.)

Wendy: So what's the weirdest thing you've seen on the road so far?

Cheetie: In terms of sights?

Wendy: Yeah.

Cheetie: The sea of cows that you have to go through in New Mexico on the way here.

Nick: Right after El Paso...

Cheetie: It smells terrible.

Jamie: Canada was the weirdest thing.

Wendy: Where did you guys play in Canada?

Brian: All over... we played 12 shows there.

Wendy: Did you have any problems getting across the border?

Brian: No, it was easy to get across. It was hard to get back in. Don't come back in through Detroit. Ever.

Wendy: Why?

Brian: Because it sucks.

Cheetie: They were really mean.

Nick: There were a bunch of really fat, mean, U.S. Customs guys...

Brian: They're nicer in Vancouver...

Cheetie: We did a lot of homework on getting in, because we've heard so many scary stories about this and that.

Wendy: Did you tell them that you were recording there?

Cheetie: No, we had papers, because we were playing so many shows. You can't really fake your way through 11 or 12 shows.

Jamie: We had to go in and out, and then in and out again.

Wendy: Damn!

Cheetie: Yeah, but we were with Nebula, so it wasn't like... we wouldn't have done that not knowing what was gonna happen. So we did our homework going in, and the people at the border going to Canada were super-nice, but on the way back, they were just...

Brian: In Detroit. In Vancouver, they were nice. Detroit was where they had a special burning cigar somewhere; where as soon as you got up to the window where they were you smelled some smoke, and they were like, 'Hey, as soon as you drove up, we smelled some smoke.' You know some kind of...

Nick: 'Why does it smell like marijuana in here?!'

Paul: Um, it DOESN'T, A, and B, who would ever be that stupid...

[Everyone imitates stupid stoners about to cross the border...]

Paul: Uhhh... we were trying to get rid of it all before we got here!

Jamie: They must have had a little ashtray... I just imagine one of those armchair ashtrays with a burning stogie or something.

Wendy: My friend has this welding shop down in South Tucson, and right next to it is this incinerator where the cops burn all the drugs they confiscate, so it smells like this continuous joint...

[laughter]

Cheetie: Oh my god... go outside and stand, and breathe...

Wendy: So, how does your van smell?

[laughter]

Cheetie: Well, you can find out for yourself.

Nick: I had to throw out a pair of shoes that were getting kind of offensive... had to buy some new ones a few days ago. Luckily I don't have to do that too often.

Brian: It's not too bad.

Paul: I smell great, but these guys...

[laughter]

Jamie: To us it's not bad.

Paul: Just don't open the cooler. We haven't been to the store for a couple of days, so... the smell of rotting vegetables...

Wendy: You guys don't have one of those coolers that plugs into the cigarette lighter?

All: No... that sounds nice!

Nick: A lot of bands we tour with don't even have a cooler, and they're amazed that we have this cooler to keep some food in.

Wendy: Yeah, we never brought one.

Paul: How much eggs and hash browns can you eat?

Cheetie: That would make your van smell good!

Paul: Yeah, our van's like the sixth member, for sure. From the first day we played a show it's been with us... well not the first day. It broke down the very, very first show when we were leaving town, but after that we've never missed a show. Even that one we didn't miss. We had to go home and get a car.

Wendy: How do you all get along on the road?

[laughter]

Cheetie: We just had a giant brawl.

[laughter and talk about kicking ass]

Jamie: Pretty good.

Wendy: Do you find you have really good shows after you fight?

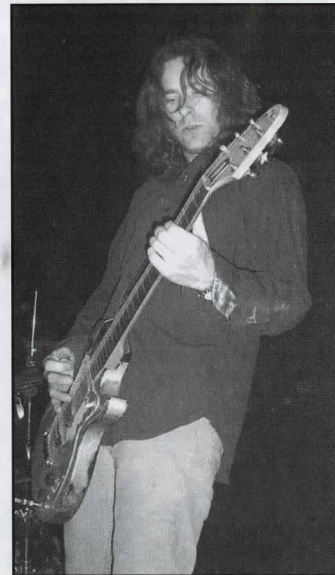
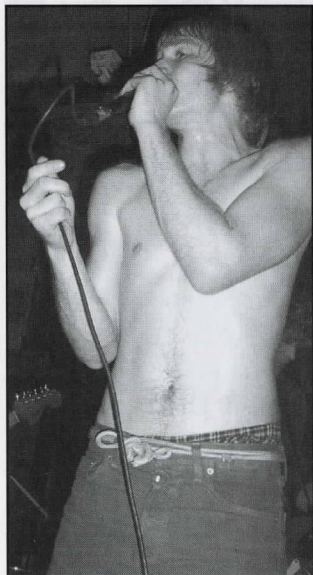
Paul: We need to fight more!

Brian: No, no, we never fight. Now we're gonna have a fight as soon as we leave here.

Wendy: And it's all my fault. Sorry.

Cheetie: We'll wait 'til we get home and then have a fight.

Paul: There's not that much to fight about. I mean, our van's roomy enough to where we don't really want to kill each other, and there's lots of good



photos provided by Wendy Lee and the Cherry Valance

tapes in there. We can read and listen to music...

Wendy: (Scanning the parking lot) Where's your van?
 Cheetie: The blue one... you can have a tour when we're done.
 Wendy: Oh, goody!
 Jamie:

Usually when we get out we try to get as far away from each other as possible.

[laughter]

Paul: At this point, in pretty much every city, we have people we look forward to seeing, so it's like, you know...

Wendy: Yeah, it makes it easy when you have places to stay, too.

Brian: There's very few places... it's getting fewer where we aren't gonna see someone we know.

Wendy: Okay, so what do you guys think about the state of rock'n roll?

Brian: There's a state?

[laughter]

Wendy: Yeah, you've never been there?

Brian: We'll have to go there!

Wendy: There's great shows there!

Paul: We'll have to go.

Nick: It's getting better.

Brian: As far as radio, who cares about that. But just, in general...

Nick: When we first started touring, I could count on half of my hand the number of rock bands that I thought were good.

Cheetie: That's not including the lines on your fingers.

Nick: Yeah, exactly, that's just the digits on my hand. Now it's at least two hands. Maybe three hands.

Wendy: I find that a lot of times I'll go to a show, and all the people there are people in bands. Do you think we're getting to other people, too?



Cheetie: It's probably been that way, I don't know, we've never lived in any other generation, so we don't really know.
 Wendy: How old are you guys... about?
 Nick: Average...
 Paul: Early 20s to early...
 Cheetie: Early

50s

[laughter]

Cheetie: Well, none of us are retired...

Wendy: How did you guys get into rock'n roll being in your early 20s?

Cheetie: I'm not in my early 20s!

[laughter from others who are not, either]

Wendy: So how did the member in his early 20s get into rock'n roll?

Nick: Well, I think it was, I'm trying to think...

Cheetie: Older siblings?

Nick: Not really.

Paul: Friends with cool dads?

Nick: Friends with cool older siblings, 'cause my older siblings did not listen to rock'n roll at all. I guess when Guns'n Roses came out, I thought it was pretty cool; the guitars and stuff. It's all right. Before that it was all (pause)... M.C. Ricky D and shit like that.

Wendy: Did you guys all grow up in North Carolina?

Nick: The boys did.

Wendy (to Cheetie): Where did you grow up?

Cheetie: I grew up some in India and some in the Bronx.

Wendy: How long were you in India?

Cheetie: 'Til about 4th grade.

Wendy: Not a lot of rock'n roll there, huh?

Cheetie: Well, I had my dad's Beatles records, ABBA and, *Fireball* by Deep Purple.

continued on page 111

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Part 1: Your Drug Tongue's Spoken

Just prior to deadline, I got the sad news that Malakas frontman and all around rock and roll motherfucker, Cranford Nix, died from that most rock of bitter ends, a heroin overdose.

Son of a bitch. Now I don't even have anybody to relapse with. Although it wasn't completely unexpected—his demise was predicted as often as Johnny Thunders—that doesn't make it any less tragic. Cranford was one of the greatest rock and roll songwriters in America. Put on any of the Malakas albums and see for yourself. After you finish choking on the bitter sarcasm of his lyrics, you'll find hooks worthy of the Replacements in their prime, or John Easdale at his best. But he liked the drinking and he liked the drugs, and he loved the notoriety that both brought him. I interviewed him last year, and it was such a blast, we agreed to do another interview later, for a chapter in my upcoming book on the perils of rock and roll decadence. We never got to do the second interview. I called him late in the year. He was in good spirits, had just gotten out of jail, in fact, after serving six months for the crime he describes in detail in our initial conversation. We agreed to talk again a week later, and I just never got around to it. Now I never will. It is a dubious honor indeed to present you with the final Cranford Nix interview, but I've got to pay some kind of tribute to him. I've kept my original introduction intact, because, well, Cranford wasn't dead when we did the interview. He was alive as a motherfucker, even sneering at the bony fingers of death pointing his way. Personally, I don't think that Cranford would've cared one way or the other about how you remember him, but I know I want to remember him as a loose-lipped, grave-cheating son of a bitch that was always five minutes ahead of everybody else. Wherever you are Cranford, I hope all the drinks are free.

I Don't Know If I'm Alright: The Ballad of Cranford Nix

The greatest living rock and roll songwriter in America is a monster. A menace to society as well as himself, a dangerous criminal with an ill-tempered disposition and a flagrant disregard for the law or anyone else. At least that's what people tell me. The only part of the equation I know for certain is true is that nobody can write a more perfect rock song than Cranford Nix. Even if he's a devil, he's a crafty one. As the swarthy leader of San Diego's criminally underrated Malakas (roughly translated from the Greek as the "Jerk-offs") he's spent a decade penning a deep well of trashy rock and roll classics. A raucous soundtrack to his life of misadventure, filled with the kind of instantly memorable hooks that only Dave Pirner on Soul Asylum's best week could keep up with, and an amazingly dark sense of humor, the agony and the ecstasy wrapped in the bleakest sarcasm possible. They are the evil Replacements, the satanic Dramarama. Albums like *Sorry About the Drinking* and *Too Good To Be True* are filled with hipster jukebox singles and wedding songs from some impossibly cool alternate universe where there are no repercussions for rampant drug abuse and violent, drunken episodes of lawless mayhem; only free drinks for the smart-ass with the guitar and an adoring audience that laughs at his jokes, even when they're bad. They are, quite simply, the best at what they do. And if you've never heard of them before now, it's all Cranford's fault. Like the equally reckless Iggy Pop before him, he's quite adept at snatching defeat from the jaws of victory. As Kris Kristofferson would say, he's a preacher, and a prophet, and a problem when he's stoned.

When I first approached Jim Rinn at I-94 records, the Malakas' label, he pretty much told me to forget it, that Cranford has a tendency to sabotage interviews with drunken sarcasm and foul mouthed ranting. What he didn't realize is that's model behavior in the circles I run in. Eventually, after a proposed Malakas US tour imploded when Cranford was busted for various offences and served a six-month probation, effectively trapping him in the Detroit area for a while, Jim relented. He set up the interview, and asked Cranford to try to take it seriously. He did his best, he really did. That is, when he finally got around to calling. As our initial interview time came and went, I listened to the Malakas, wondering what a guy that writes lyrics like, "We said the Serenity Prayer, and then we fucked/She was a teenage prostitute, and I was just a drunk" would have to say for himself. I'd been spreading the word about the band, who had quickly become one of my new favorites, to anyone who asked. The results were all over the map. Fellow C14 scribe Dimitri Monroe scoffed at the mention of Cranford, dismissing him as "Me, with a drug shtick." Local rock star Jill Kurtz told me that she couldn't get past his "idiotic lyrics" enough to enjoy the music. "I hate all that sexist bullshit," she told me. Meanwhile Stacey, Mrs. Sleazegrinder, thought he was a genius; happily singing along to

deceptively sunny sounding misanthropic anthems like "Fuck You Lorraine" and "Satan Song." Me, I just found myself relating in that ghetto-spiritual way multiple rehab veterans often do. So when he finally did call, his explanation for being two hours late came as no surprise.

At least I was an asshole on the way
"Hey man, I'm sorry I'm late, I had to go in for a fucking random drug test," Cranford tells me by way of an introduction. He speaks with the instant familiarity and casual obscenity of a man who's used to explaining his actions, the morning-after clarity of someone who's spent many nights in regrettable circumstances. I like him already. Although guilty as sin, Cranford has managed to beat the system for another day. "Oh, I beat it every time, man. I've got the whole timing thing figured out. All I've got to do is take a breathalyzer test in the morning, and then I've got to piss in a cup once a week to check me for morphine or something. So you can have a few. Actually, you can have a ton, and be sober by the next morning," Cranford sighs. "But it's a nightmare, dude. It really is." Cranford is a man caught in the grips of a situation, you see. "Dude, I am in so much fucking trouble. You have no idea the degree of fucking trouble I'm in."

Why don't you just split back to San Diego?

I'm stuck in this city. It's no way to live. I'm a ward of the state, I can't leave Oakland County. They have me in the 'alternative' to jail, which isn't much of an alternative, really. I'm on a work release program, and that's a nightmare, too. Community service ain't like it used to be. If I even light a cigarette while I'm out there, they'll throw me out, and put me in jail. It's kind of scary.

What kind of community service do they have you doing?

They've got me painting buildings and picking up trash, using a sickle to cut down weeds; it changes everyday. But the sickle thing is kind of funny, because they give you an orange suit and a sickle, it's like you're a gay grim reaper.

Damn. It sounds pretty grim.

Don't get me wrong, I don't ever want to be in this kind of shit again but, you know, I do have a killer, Devil worshipping rock record coming out, so what the Hell.

I'm surprised you found the time to write new songs, with all this going on.

Well, I have a drinking problem, man. Normally, I drink a lot, from the morning until night, and because of this breathalyzer thing, it limits me. It kind of half-sobered me up. So I have a lot more time to stare at the walls and play guitar.

Do you want to talk about what happened?

Yeah, what the fuck. What happened was, I got into this marriage that really wasn't working, and I started using dope again because I was miserable. I mean, here's a typical story. My ex-recently moved back to California, because we got separated. She was on the train, and she got off when it stopped, and went to a bar. She got so drunk that she started hallucinating, and she thought she was still in Detroit. So she gets into a cab and she tells the driver to 12th and Coolidge, which is in Detroit. So this cab driver

is driving around Chicago looking for 12th and Coolidge. Obviously, he can't find it. So this woman misses her train, loses her purse, and ends up calling me from a homeless shelter in Chicago. I mean, this was kind of a daily thing, and it starts to wear on your fucking nerves after awhile, because you just don't know what the fuck's really going on.

So what'd you do, kill her?

No, but I wouldn't have been surprised if she killed me. I am terrified of women at this point, man.

Who isn't?

Right. So anyway, I was in rehab, and I broke out. I was pretty pissed off about a cigarette incident. I've been there.

Yeah, so you know what I'm talking about. I just got out and I found out that my kid was diagnosed as schizophrenic. That was on a Thursday. Then on that Sunday, my dad had a stroke. So, things weren't going well. The next Tuesday, I'm sitting in a bar, and I'm telling my wife that we've got to get divorced. And my wife is fucking nuts, it's one of my favorite things about her. But it also makes me terrified of the chick. So, she started making fun of me, she was saying, 'You know, your kid's a fucking retard.' So at that point, I slapped her, and I just left. I went to another

PUSHING SNAKES



by
SLEAZEGRINDER

er bar. There was this asshole at this other bar, and he kept giving me shit, I don't know what was going on, it was a sports bar, I don't really hang around at those kind of places. So finally, I just stand up and I say, 'Dude, you're a fucking asshole,' and I walked out of the bar. Now, him and his bouncer, they run out into the parking lot and grab me. They hit me, and throw me against the car. And I just remember looking into their faces and thinking, 'Dude, I'm going to drive my fucking car right through your bar.' When they let me go, I got into my car, I put it in drive, and I smashed into the fucking bar. I'm glad no one got hurt. So I go home, and right as I'm pulling up to my house, there's like 14 cops. I've never seen anything like it. They took me to jail. They said, 'You're under arrest for domestic violence.' I was like, 'What?' Then they added malicious destruction of property, leaving the scene of an accident, operating under the influence of alcohol, all these charges. But I've got a feeling that they're going to let me go, although I'm not sure you should be able to drive your car through a bar and not do any jail time.

Cranford, I think that's the greatest story I've ever heard.

Yeah, well it's not. When I first got into court the next day, I was still drunk, you know. And the cop was going, 'This man is a menace to society, he's not fit to be walking around in public,' and I was like, 'Who is this guy?' 'Throw him in jail!' It was surreal. But you know, there's so many heinous crimes going on in this city, that I'm nothing compared to the rest of them. I'm lucky that I got busted in the murder capital of the country. **You should have given the judge a copy of your record.** He would've definitely locked me up then. **Well, you're one hit record away from this being acceptable behavior. Rock stars get away with shit like this all the time.**

It's not acceptable, though. I feel like a fucking idiot, because they're going to take my life away for the next year, even if I don't go to jail, and there's a pretty good chance they're going to put me away for six months. [And they did.]

I think you'd be the best songwriter in America.

Thanks man. Could you write that down and get it notarized, so I can show it to the judge? Because he doesn't seem to feel that way about me at all.

Sure. Have you always been into music?

My dad was a famous musician. He played with Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash; Patsy Cline was his best friend. He was a famous banjo player, which is a pretty unique experience. So you know, I've always loved music. It's almost better than booze. Of course, if you add booze and women to music, it's like heaven. There's nothing I like better than going to a bar and listening to the jukebox.

How did you get the Malakas together?

I've been playing with TJ and the Malakas for 12 or 13 years, ever since I was a little kid. I ran away to California and met him, and we've been playing together ever since. Listen, I know we're never going to 'make it', but we're going to be playing together until the bitter end, I'm positive of it. It's really hard to find dedicated musicians who will, at any time, move to New York or Seattle, to find people who can really play.

Were they calmer days when you first got together ten years ago?

Oh, no. I know this is going to sound horrible, but in that first period, I got four chicks pregnant in the space of a year. I have two kids out of that whole thing. That was typical of what it was like back then. I was young and drunk.

So, not much has changed.

No. I've achieved local fame in New York, I lived there for four years, and I know everybody. Same thing in Tampa, San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego and Detroit. And I've never gone anywhere. There's never going to be any way that we're ever going to have a gold record.

Well, you never know.

Sometimes you do.

It's worth it, man. The band is amazing.

I've dedicated my life to my band, but it's turned into a nightmare. I've been at the bottom for so long, that it's starting to feel like home down here. At least you have the freedom to write whatever the fuck you want when you're at the bottom.

Yeah, let's talk about some of the songs you've written. What about 'The Satan Song' on Too Good to be True? That might be your best song, but Jesus, Cranford, you sing, "I am a Nazi and I want to break your neck," in it.

I knew that one was going to cause trouble. I got all kinds of bad press for that album because of that song, because of the Nazi thing. That song's about heroin. That last thing I am is a Nazi. I say that I'm Jesus in that song too, but nobody brings that up. But fuck it. Who cares? My songs just reflect my life. It's not like I've cultivated any sort of image, although I know it may seem that way.

How about "Fuck You, Lorraine." Who's Lorraine?

Lorraine was this girl I used to go out with, and she used to go to all these survivor meetings, like survivors of incest. You know what that chick did to me? I was at a party and I grabbed her ass, you know, just goofing around. She looks at me and she says, 'Don't you ever do that to me again,' and I was like, 'Fuck, I'm sorry.' I mean, I was fucking the chick, I thought it would be OK to grab her ass. I don't like that shit, because I

was raped,' she tells me. And I'm sitting there, thinking, 'God, that's horrible.' At any rate, six months later and I'm still with this nutcase, and I'm like, 'So what happened?' And she says, 'Well, I wasn't just raped once.' So, I ask her, how many times? 32, she says. 'By the same person?' 'No, I was raped by 32 different people.' And I'm thinking to myself, how does that happen? That doesn't work with the law of averages. She told me that her dad raped her on the dinner table at Thanksgiving. That's a pretty outrageous thing to say. I ended up meeting the guy, and I was like, 'Whoa.' And later she told me, you know, that wasn't really true, 'I just dreamt that and thought it really happened.' Anyway, that's what that song was about.

Man, you don't have the best luck with women.

That's for sure. You can't save anybody, man. I've got a problem thinking I can. They never work with me anyway, women. I like to travel, I like to go to Paris at the drop of a hat. You get into a relationship, and suddenly, they want you to start working, they want you to go to the flea market. Well, I don't like going to the fucking flea market."

How come the Malakas aren't the biggest band in America?

For over a year and a half, our last record has been the number one record in San Diego. It's in every jukebox in that city. We sell out every time we play there. And I've proven that from New York to LA, so I'm just wondering, you know, what the fuck?

Maybe it's your bad reputation.

There was this guy from Elektra that TJ was talking to, and he knew all about us. He said the only problem was that he'd heard I was really difficult to work with. I don't understand it, because that's just not the case. I'll record an album for a bag of fucking White Castles, you know? What's difficult about that?

You should really have the same kind of following that the Replacements did. The Malakas are just as good, maybe even better.

A buddy of mine was drinking at some bar recently, and Tommy Stintson was sitting there. He went over to say hi, and Tommy says "Hey, I'm drinking on Axl's money!" I thought that was pretty funny. Anyway, I never really liked the Replacements to be honest with you. I mean, so many reviews of the Malakas have mentioned them, so there must be something there, but I don't see it.

Aren't you guys supposed to have a new record out?

We recorded an album last year that we never released. I think it's a great record but, at the time, we were all on drugs, you know, and I'd just gotten married. I don't know what this woman was thinking, marrying a guy that's at the bar from ten in the morning until two AM. We were in no shape to release a record.

So you just shelved it?

Yeah, we just decided to do another one. TJ, who's in our band, he's in rehab in Lake Tahoe. He got hooked on dope again. We've been talking a lot, and he and Greg are going to fly out here next month and we're going to record our third record; it's pretty fucking good. Actually, it's fucking excellent. We wrote about 37 songs for it, so it's going to be a really good one. So the band's going to be in Detroit until I can get out of this mess, then we're going back to California.

So things are looking up, then.

Not really. I'm assuming things aren't going to go smoothly for the next ten years.

I hear you've given up the drugs.

My entire 20s I wasted away on drugs, and, well, a little bit of my 30s now, too. But I've pretty much had it with drugs. I mean, I still like drinking, though. And a Valium every once in awhile. And maybe hitting a joint here and there. And maybe a Percocet once a year, on Christmas. But no, I don't foresee myself doing drugs ever again.

Assuming that you stay on the same course, people are going to start predicting your death, much like they did with Johnny Thunders.

I don't foresee me dying by my own hand. I can't predict whether some chick plunges a knife into my chest though, but I'm pretty level-headed to tell you the truth. I like to live.

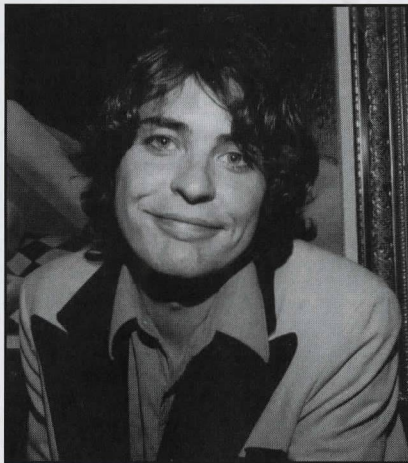
Have you had any close calls?

I've overdosed three times. One time, I was at my parents' house. I was about 20 at the time, and I went to visit them, and overdosed in the bathroom. They had to bust the door down to take me to the hospital. My sister had to help them carry me. I guess at some point my dick fell out of my pajamas. So I went to the hospital, and they revived me, and let me go. So I'm back at home, and my sister says, 'You know, your dick fell out, and it's fucking tiny.' My theory on that though, is that I was knocking on heaven's door, and I'm pretty sure that your dick shrivels up when you're dying. To this day my sister laughs about it.

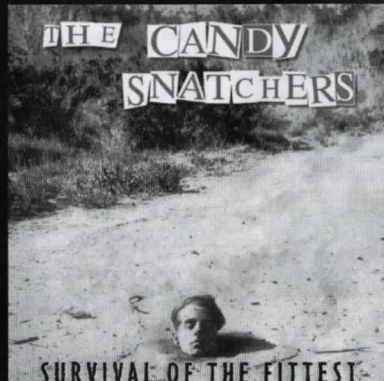
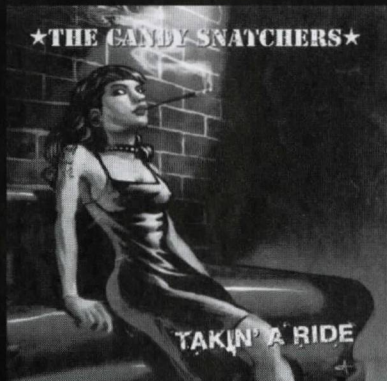
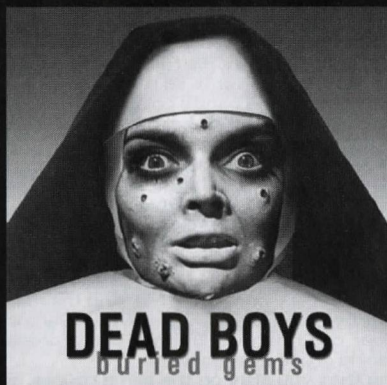
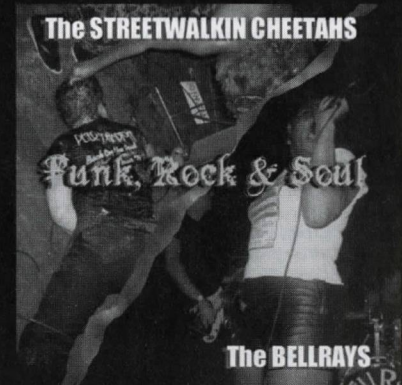
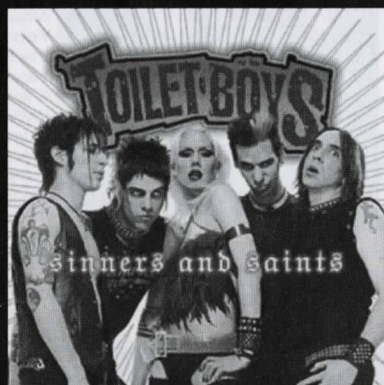
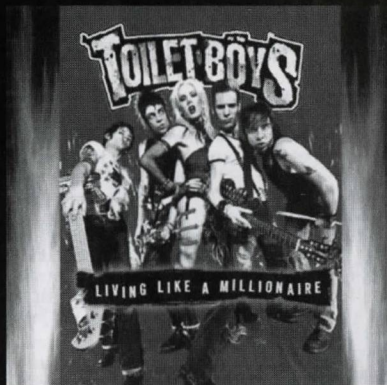
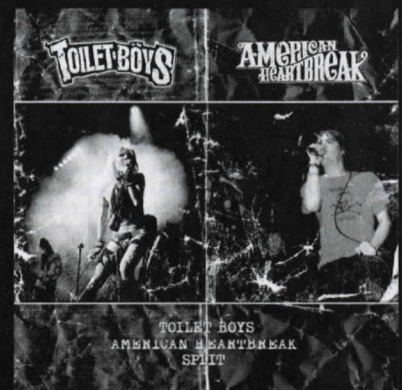
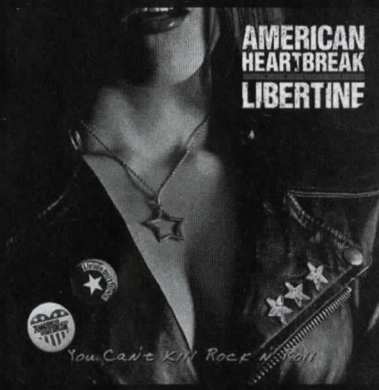
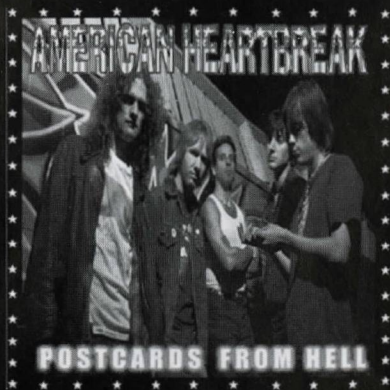
You're not worried about dying, though?

No, I'm not worried about dying. And if I did, I'd be a pretty shitty songwriter.

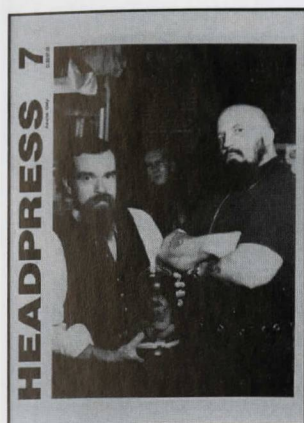
Cranford's legacy lives on in the music of the Malakas. They've got two stellar records out. Do yourself a favor and get 'em from I-94 records. (community2.webtv.net/i94rec/i94Recordings/)



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Part 2: The Page Bleeds Black

David Kerekes is the editor of Headpress magazine, as well as head honcho in the savage empire of Critical Vision publications. But to me, he's more than that. To me, he's one of the several primary reasons—besides the adoration of teenage girls, and many, many dollars—why I started writing in the first place. And while the other two never panned out, Headpress never disappointed. Subtitled "The Journal of Sex, Religion, and Death," you could just as easily and truthfully call it, "The Scariest Fucking Magazine on Earth." Now in its tenth year of existence, Headpress continues to shock, amaze, and thrive.

The magazine sprang to life in 1991, bursting out of the guts of the 'Apocalypse Culture' era of hipster elitism like a decidedly more clever mutant version of it's snarly American cousins. These were the days, remember, when buzzwords like transgression and subversion were the order of the day, and the young and the restless were on a quest to out-do one another in just how anti-social their tastes could get. The days of Joe Coleman bursting into downtown NYC bars and setting his chest on fire; the days when John Wayne Gacy was making a mint selling his ugly clown paintings to teenage creeps with too much money on their hands; when Boyd Rice flirted with Nazism and Peter Sotos with child rape, and nobody even flinched. Some even going so far as applauding them for their "brave individualism." Strange days indeed, and while most simply luxuriated in the sheer obnoxious thrill of it all, David Kerekes had a more compelling take on the cultural gestalt. Sure, Headpress had its fair share of serial killer profiles and exploitation film retrospectives, but mental patients with artistic intent, quietly obsessive weird-culture historians, random perverts, porn stars, Northern Soul freaks and power electronic misanthropes also resided in its pages, forming a sinister coalition of determined outsiders. As far as Headpress was concerned, there were two worlds—the mundane reality of paychecks and civilized behavior, and the super reality of a wild new planet full of uncaged freaks that ran amok in its pages. A few years back, David's long time partner in crime David Slater left the fold to pursue some credit in the straight world, but the affable Mr. Kerekes has continued on with the master plan. I caught up with him late last year to talk about the history of Headpress magazine, and the incredibly strange world it has so thoroughly, and compellingly, documented.

How did Headpress first come together?

Well, we generated money by putting out Jorg Buttregit's 'Der Todesking' on video, and we decided to use it towards putting together a magazine, as it was something we always had an inkling towards. We were all interested in film, but we thought, the last thing the world needed was another film magazine. So we decided to make a magazine, and just take it anywhere we wanted to, which was a difficult concept for most writers to grasp at that time, and it just sort of snowballed from there.

Was it always "The Journal of Sex, Religion, and Death"?

Well, no. That came a little later. I think the first masthead was "Deviant Desires and Strange Concepts," or something weird like that, but it was always, deep down, 'The Journal of Sex, Religion, and Death' in some way, yeah.

Those are pretty heady concepts. Was that the result of you and the other David sitting around and saying, 'OK, these are the concepts we should be addressing'?

Well, people wanted to know what we were about, and we didn't really know. We thought, 'Well, this covers all the bases.'

And there was nobody else at the time addressing those kind of issues, either.

No. Well, there was the Sleazoid Express, although I think that was finished by then. I think the last issues of that were a springboard for what we were doing, even though we hadn't even seen Sleazoid Express at that time. But looking back on it, in retrospect, it's kind of kooky the way all these things seemed to be linked together without us knowing.

One of the things I remember as being remarkable about Headpress was how the writers all took their subjects seriously. It was very different from the American way of doing things, where the tendency is to be very sarcastic and tongue in cheek about things.

That was one of the things we strived for, to be light about it, without denigrating the subject matter. Actually, that's one thing that people sometimes complain about, that we don't take

things seriously enough, but I think we do, we just try to portray it in an entertaining way without being stupid about it.

Does England still have a big censorship problem?

At the moment, it's more lax than it's been for many years. Films are coming through uncut which were virtually banned 20 years ago. Hardcore porn is more hardcore than it's ever been. It's pretty lax, but that's frightening, in a way, because it can only go downhill from here.

Has Headpress personally ever had any censorship problems?

Only indirectly. It's been taken off of shelves in a few places, because people have obviously taken objection to certain issues, so the shopkeepers have taken it down. It's been seized by the police, but that was a blanket seizure; they didn't seize it directly because of Headpress, it was just that the store kept it on the top shelf with the porn mags. We've come close, but so far nothing too mega-serious.

There's a few stories I remember that would probably have made more sense if you were from Britain, like the whole 'Northern Soul' movement, with the guy that got hit by the train...

Northern Soul was a style of music, a form of dance music. Most of it was based on American R&B, but these clubs took off in the north of England, where they would play all night, and it became notorious because people were popping pills to stay up at these clubs. They were tiny places, but they got a lot of attention from the police and local authorities. I was never a big fan of Northern Soul music, I'm not a big fan of dance music at all, really. But the guy that got hit by the train, he

was well into it, and he used to work for a company called Savoy, he was their PR man, and he was really into this hedonistic way out. He formed this coalition with a bunch of friends, they called it the Wagnerian Soul Fraternity, and he stood by his word. He decided this was the day he was going to die, and he stood in front of a train, and that was it.

Amazing. It doesn't seem like American soul music would bring people to that kind of end, it's usually black metal or something that pushes people over the edge. Another story I remember is the controversy over that comic book, Lord Horror.

That was the same company, actually, Savoy. They were kind of our mentors, in a way, because they come from Manchester and they were doing it many years before we started. They did a novel, Lord Horror. It was the first book, the first work of fiction to be taken into court in this country in, I don't know, like a hundred years, or something. And they got off on that; because it was a work of literary merit, that's how they got off. But the comic book format in this country is still regarded as a children's forum. It doesn't matter what issues or how

adult you present comics, it's always going to be regarded as a juvenile medium, and that's why the Lord Horror comic got into trouble while the Lord Horror book didn't.

What was the subject matter, sex and violence?

Yeah, sex, violence, and a lot of racial slurs; but race was presented so that the reader would understand that it was racism. You know, there was absolutely no holds barred in those comics at all. They were very well done, very well thought out, but obviously people weren't ready for them.

What about the Killing for Culture book? (Killing For Culture was Headpress's exhaustive look at death in films, from Mondo movies to the myth of snuff films.) What was it like researching that?

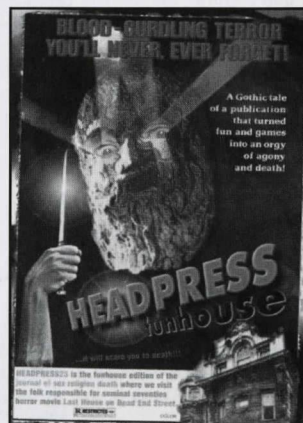
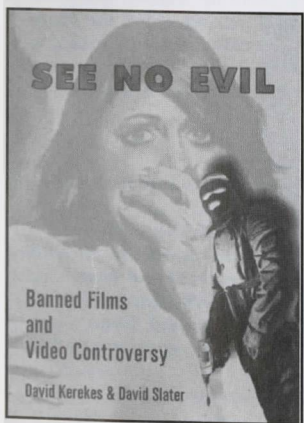
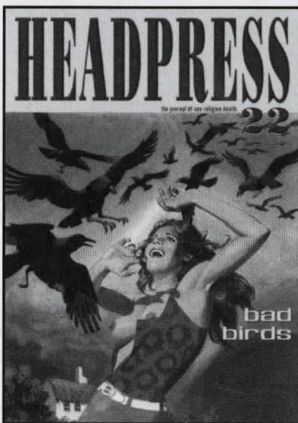
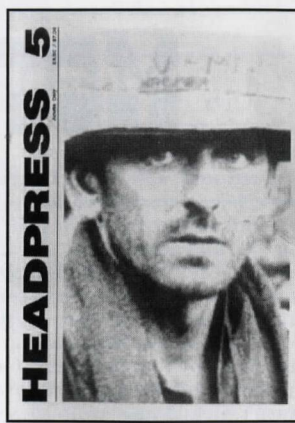
That book took about a year to write but the actual research took, probably, about ten years. Actually, we did the research without planning to write a book, it was just an interest of ours anyway. But there came a point when we said, 'Let's do a special Headpress edition, and devote it to Mondo films.' And it quickly grew to a point where we thought, well this is not going to work.

This is going to be too big for an issue of Headpress, so we decided to do a book. We've since got a follow-up, See No Evil.

It was interesting how you paced that book. It was like, are they going to find an actual snuff film by the end? Of course you didn't, but it seemed like you might the whole time.

There were so many people that initially told us that they had seen one, but it always turned out to be Faces of Death or something like that they'd seen.

Those films did fit the criteria for what we were looking for because they did have people getting killed, by accidents or whatever. But that's not what the media portrays a snuff film to be, which is a murder perpetrated for the camera.



continued on page 109

MARK DANCEY

We can now add Mark Dancey to the very short list of people who have been interviewed/featured twice in the magazine. He was the second person I interviewed, under the guise of a "band interview," for the magazine's first issue. (The first person I interviewed was his Big Chief brother Mike Danner.) I remember that interview very well because he dropped a lot of knowledge on me that day by volunteering to discuss zine stuff, (Mark was/is also the publisher of one of the best underground publications ever, *Motorbooty*), and I always think of him fondly for that. In the years since that interview, Mark has laid down the guitar—literally, he told me he hasn't picked one up to play it in years—and turned his focus full-time to his artwork. I always thought it would be cool to do a proper feature on "Mark the (graphic) artist" and have a piece of his grace one of our covers, so since this issue marks exactly 20 issues since that interview, why not now? Much like "Mark the guitarist", "Mark the (graphic) artist" isn't exactly comfortable in the spotlight; and he has this very subtle way of shifting the focus of a conversation away from himself. In fact I uttered the phrase "Who is being interviewed here?" no less than three times in the two hours we spent on the phone. Nonetheless the task of interviewing him was not so much a task as it was a pleasure. I just might have to make up another excuse to feature him again.

—Leslie

So what did I catch you doing just now? Are you taking a break from working to speak with me?

Well, I just got some annoying news. I'm gonna have a show here on the 18th [May] at a place called the Padded Cell. What we're doing is a collaboration of chess sets; we're making chess sets. It's really cool. I've seen the pieces, they carved them out of wax and now they're sending them off to get cast. It's really cool to draw something and hand it to somebody and have it come back as this solid, 3-D thing you can hold; this tangible thing. I've never done anything like that before so it's pretty exciting. It's gonna be really solid. One side is bronze and the other side's gonna be steel. They started going all-out, they made the board out of solid steel—it weighs 35 pounds—and all the individual squares are pieces of bronze and stainless steel. Then I'm painting something in the middle that's gonna be a logo, so it'll have a little bit of a stamp on it.

Explain how this came about. You did the drawing—

Well, I was at a friend's house and they were having a chess marathon. I had to sit in the sidelines cause I'm no good, and I got the idea to try and make a chess set. What I thought was, that all chess sets represent society in one way or another; the king down to the peon. And I thought, really, in chess it's just you against the other person so I wanted to make it what tool you would actually have to fight somebody else. You don't have an army, you just have yourself. So the king is a brain; the queen is the heart.

Oh, OK.

I was thinking back and forth about which should be king. If the heart didn't work, everything would be shut down; the queen can leap and go so far. It's almost like a philosophical decision.

You're revealing a lot about the inner workings of your mind in your chess set.

Yeah. I've got the brain just going one space at a time but it's the valuable thing; it's the prize.

True, the brain is going to either win or lose the game.

I don't know, maybe the brain should have been the one that can leap and fly across the board, but I made the queen the heart. Bishops are eyeballs; like the surveillance—really what that is in the church is making sure you're keeping in line. The knights are flexed arms, for muscle. The rook is a bone, cause you've got that solid column at the end. And the pawns are fingers; send your fingers out to do your bidding.

That's unbelievably clever.

This is gonna be such a difficult thing to make, but I wanna make more so it can be spread around and more people can see it.

But clearly what you're describing to me can't be mass produced.

No, it's too expensive. Especially because of the board. I was thinking we could do one that was a piece of metal with everything painted instead of having the board made of real pieces of brass and steel.

So the collaboration part is that someone else is making the molds from your drawings?

Yeah. They're jewelers so they're used to making intricate things—you should see what they did, I'm really amazed. I gave them striated muscles with all the little details in the muscles;

the brain has all the little lobes and everything. It's all realistic, the heart has all the veins; they did it. They're really doing a great job. But there's something else for the show too, that's a wheel of fortune. We took a bike tire and stretched metal over in front of it, so that's the flat surface, and the wheel itself has eight heads; each head is a different state of luck. From the king, who's got all the riches, down to someone who is sick and suicidally depressed; I think that's the bottom. There's poverty, jail and all these other things. So the wheel spins, and I have a separate torso of a running guy who runs around the outside of the wheel and sooner or later he syncs up and gets a new head. He's the same guy, but sometimes he's in luck and sometimes he's out of it. Then, as I found out more about it—that's another real big philosophical thing, the wheel of fortune—there's different ways they were looked at. Usually they're saying something like a Tarot card thing, like fate is the ruler, there's no escape and you have to just go with it. But the church got into it in the middle ages, and they said that what you're trying to do is actually take yourself off that, take yourself out of running around the mill and chasing fame and fortune and taking on a Zen-like transcendent state. So I put the same guy in the middle; he's escaped from the running, he's relaxing. It's really an interesting thing, because I think about my friends who are trying to be famous... like trying to keep up with fashion, it's such a stupid thing. It's only gonna change. If you're in that role, you can be famous for a minute, but then you've got go down and fall out of favor. Then when you look back at what their work was, it's just dated. I don't know, I kinda feel that way about my experience in the band. Cause it's dated. It has to be dated. Here's the thing, if you're in your time, let's say something that's really in your time, then you're gonna be dated because time's gonna move on.

That's true.

If you can get something that's not in your time, that's for all time, classic stuff; classic art or literature or whatever, that's still good. It's timeless, it's not stuck anywhere. You can get something out of it; someone got something out of it a hundred years ago, and in a hundred years someone will get something out of it. That would be the thing, to do that.

And your rock experience did not fulfill that.

Oh, no. And I'm disappointed that it didn't. Cause the more you learn about guys who did that, the more you learn about, y'know, John Coltrane, who was on a mission to take his thing to someplace where it had never gone before. It's this heroic quest; versus rock—which is just going through these poses. It's just too bad.

It's funny to hear you say that because Big Chief was not a posing band; I don't think.

Yeah. But to get back to what you asked me earlier, the problem is that the wheel of fortune is not done, and the show is on the 18th. Right before you called I was thinking that I don't see how there's any possible way, considering how slow I am, that I could finish it in time.

We'll see.

Are you slow?

Yeah. Everything's really slow.

I was looking at your website and it seems like you're painting so much.

Yeah, but they're slow. The way they are is that they're layers and layers—thin layers—of oil paint. They're laborious, I have to go over and over.

So are those two pieces the first things you've done that are sculpture type things? Even though it's not actually sculpture, your images are being made three-dimensional.

Yeah, it's the first foray into three dimensions.

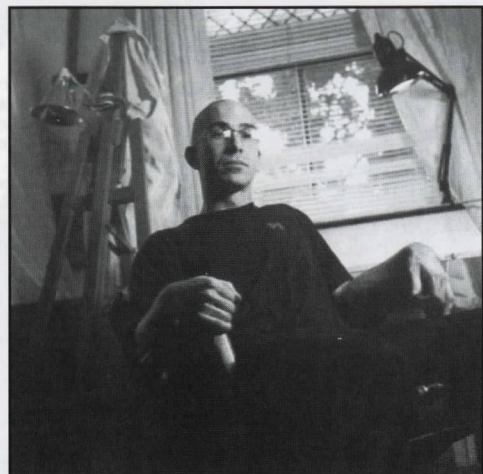
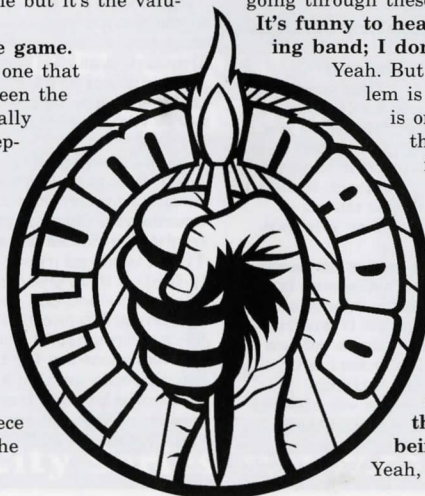


photo by Camille



Is it your first collaborative work?

No, cause you could count the band as a collaborative thing, or *Motorbooty*—that's a really collaborative thing. Actually, most of the things I do are collaborative, which is good because you get a much better result if somebody else is bringing their skill to it. I actually did a collaboration with Glenn Barr, where I drew the picture and he painted it. **That's interesting.**

Yeah. It's pretty cool. Hopefully we'll do more things like that. He wanted to do some more so hopefully we will.

That's cool. And you were comfortable letting your art be—

Yeah. It was specifically a symbolic portrait of Glenn so it was made for him, for the theme of his show. He took it and made into his thing, under his hand; it was cool. It's good, cause otherwise I've got my ideas but I'm isolated sitting here in my house soldiering away.

That's how I picture you, hunched over the drawing table—
Right.

—with your brow furrowed, possibly.

Yeah, sometimes. It's more fun that way.

I read in *Juxtapoz* that you recently started working in oils. Is that true? And how recently would that be?

'96. My friend Phil gave me a set of them. I started doing some acrylic painting and he said, 'no.' He gave me a set of oils, which I didn't use for years because I didn't really have an idea about what I was going to do with them. I got them out one night and started. I showed my friend, who's classically trained—he's from Yugoslavia and was trained in the Eastern Bloc in a classic tradition—and he's never been shy to be critical about what I do. He's never impressed with underground, sort of cool stuff, which is why I really value him. So he looks at them and goes, 'You're going to be really disappointed... you don't know what you're



opposite page top: Dancey at home; bottom: Illuminado Logo
above: El Conquistador - oil on board, 2001; below: George S. Custer and Importance of Discerning Folly from Fate - oil on board, 2001



doing.' And he wouldn't tell me why. He said, 'You just have to do this and try these and see what happens, and learn the painful way of making mistakes.' So I did a bunch of paintings, and I actually did a show, in 1997, with some of them. I look at those now and think, 'I didn't know what I was doing at all.' I learned about all this other stuff, like putting down an undercoat because it makes shadows deep. The reason you're using oil is because it's transparent and you can make depth in the thing. At first, I was just slapping it on like it was any kind of housepaint or ink because that's what I'm used to. But just from my friend explaining to me and reading about it, I learned you can have deep, deep shadows underneath and then put these thin layers of color over it; it automatically gives it this depth, and you can play and make stuff that you wouldn't intuitively or logically know. There's things about color, putting dark colors over light colors; they're transparent layers and you can see shadows. I would have never thought to put violet over ochre, but you do it and it makes everything deeper and better. You just learn these things as you go. I don't know, it's fun and I really like doing it. It surprises me. I'm surprised when I stand back and think, 'Oh, it looks like a painting.'

Why wasn't it a painting when it was in acrylic? Is that what you were painting with before you started using oil?

Yeah. I really didn't do many paintings at all, it was mostly just...

Illustration?

Yeah. Before it was like, OK, I've got my line here; that's all I need is the outline. I'm gonna work on the outline and make sure it's as perfect as possible, then it's done. Painting is this whole other thing where the outline is not enough. You've got to think about color and light and shading, and all this other stuff

which I always avoided messing with because I didn't know what I was doing. Now there's all these different factors to try, and I feel like, 'Why didn't I try to learn that in the first place?' I feel like I'm behind. Because it's only in the past few years that I've been trying to do this. **So you didn't go to art school?**

I didn't go to art school. I was such a snob about that; like, 'Oh, art school.' Cause we were always contemptuous of the people who went to University of Michigan art school.

[laughing] You? You're not contemptuous. Stop that.

You know, cause they're just dyeing their hair different colors. Their solution to every assignment was to take naked pictures of themselves. It was such an art school joke. So instead of trying to seek out anything to try and learn from that, we just sat back and laughed at them.

What did you study in college?

Psychology.

But you never planned to go into the field of psychology?

No. The only reason I took it is because I thought it would be interesting to learn about craziness, but by the time I was taking the classes I found out it was such a limited thing. You're trying to understand human personalities and human behavior, and you're trying to put it into scientific language which means you have to limit it and put it into categories because that's science. But it falls so short of how complicated people are. In the course I learned that art and music and literature are better; all those people, the artists, are better psychologists.

I was thinking that your wheel of fortune thing is kind of a psychological map in a way.

Yeah, but it's more fun than an article or me trying to tell you some pop psychology. Cause even if you think I'm full of it and I'm wrong, it's still fun to look at.

Do you ever worry that somebody's gonna spin the wheel and think, 'Oooh, pretty colors,' and they're not gonna see all these things you thought about in the planning stages. Does it concern you how people interpret your work?

No. Because if it's just pretty, they'd still like it. They're still looking at it—cause it's all symmetrical and the colors work. I can't stand there and be the narrator; I always thought that was stupid and wrong when the artists stand there tell you what it means. All the great paintings we have through time, the artists aren't around to tell us so everybody speculates and goes back and forth. If it's not just there in the thing itself, your theory is something added on, it's just nonsense; if it doesn't have it in the work itself it's ridiculous.

So you started drawing and then painting came later?

Yeah.

Do you consider yourself an illustrator—

No.

—or do you prefer "artist," the large term.

No. Well, yeah. I guess tell people graphic artist because artist is really—if you're gonna say that, you have to be a genius. You don't have to be a genius to go around saying you're an artist, people do throw that around, like, 'I'm an artist.' And they're not. Just because you're painting doesn't mean you're an artist. You're a painter. A lot of guys did that, they wouldn't say, 'I'm an artist,' they'd say, 'I'm a painter,' because it makes it seem more like a job.



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above: Tourist Poster #2 - silk screen print, 1998

below left: The Unspeakable Song - oil on board, 2000

below right: The Carnal Bouquet - oil on board, 2000

Right.

They're doing their work well; just doing their craft. Yeah, for my taxes my job description is graphic artist. I don't mind, illustrator's not a pejorative. A lot of people go, [in a voice of disaffection and disdain] 'oh, illustrator.' No. Sometimes they're illustrations; that's what they are, and when you're doing them you're an illustrator. You're doing something to accompany or to illustrate... I don't know. I just did this illustrated poem because I wanted to. Yeah, it's an illustration, it's pictures in this book—I made them into a book and that's what it is.

Do you still sketch before you paint?

Oh yeah. There's rough sketches and doodles. A lot of times, if you looked, it would look like shorthand, like a code. If you looked at the finished thing, and you looked back at what the starting sketch was, you'd go, 'What's this hieroglyphic?'

But you see it?

Kind of. It's the basic thing, the basic idea. But then a lot of times something will come along as you're doing it. I wish that I was more free or





above: Tourist Poster #3 - silk screen print, 2002

below left: Spy Versus Spy - oil on board, 2000

below right: A Feast Of The Gods - oil on board, 2000

open to those kind of accidental discoveries because I'm not. I'm really trying to be. Sometimes things you didn't expect come up and surprise you, and it's really better. That's kind of the thing when you work with somebody else, you don't have the idea of 'one thing.' Somebody else will have something, and it's better; they have an idea you didn't even think of or some other way to do it, and it comes out so much better.

I wanted to ask you about your website because you don't strike me as a guy who's into the computer. True or false: Mark Dancey dislikes the computer.

The computer. Well, I've been real slowly, suspiciously, accepting it. For the first few years, when I was doing illustrations I would do them on film by hand.

What does that mean, 'on film by hand'?

I would do the illustration and get a film made of it and then I would get the kind of paints they use for animation cels and paint them on the back, so you get real bright colors.

Wow. I never knew that.

A lot of guys do that.

Is that why you use the big, fat lines?

No, that's from before. That's cause I go over the lines so many times to make them smooth. It's also a good thing to have a big fat line when you're printing something.

Like screen printing?

Yeah, especially screen printing.

I learned that the hard way.

Yeah. You can't make it thick enough for screen printing. Especially because there's so many ways it can go wrong. From the first time you put the paper in to when you pull the squeegee. I set that up in my basement so I could do it here, so I'd be able to make more prints, and it was such a disaster. Every little thing; it was six colors...

Six colors! Are you crazy?

I know. There's so many more ways it can go wrong.

To get back to the computer thing, you would never use the computer in your artwork?

Well, yeah—I got off on this tangent about film—at first I couldn't get a good scan. When you take something to an old fashioned film output house you get a film that's exactly what you did; I labored over the lines to make them right, but then with the scanner I had, I would always think, 'Oh, there's a little jagged edge there. The computer sucks.'

[laughs] I resented having to scan it in Streamline and go over the whole thing again. But now, that's what I do because that way I have complete control over it. You still don't have perfect control of the colors when you're doing it yourself, unless you have your monitor calibrated.

Which nobody does.

Yeah. You have to get some guy to come and pay him a lot of money, it can be done. But you get better results this way. It can be shrunk or blown up and it's gonna be right on. Mostly it just took me a long time to trust it. Now it's how I do it, and it's so much easier. You can push the deadline to the last minute too, because you can e-mail it. So it actually makes it easier. Although I miss the journey of delivering the illustration to the FedEx place and the feeling of relief and triumph. When it's gone, you know it's gonna come back as a check to keep you living. Now it doesn't have that feeling anymore because you hit the button and it's gone.

And you're still sitting in front of your computer.

Yeah, you're not out of the house even.

So you've been able to work it in to your business; is that how you mainly use your website, to showcase your work?

Yeah. Now it's easier because I've got a good computer and I can do big files. I got one those giant scanners. That's one thing I really resented about scanners—if they can make computers that are so powerful, and they can keep making them better and cheaper, what's the deal with scanners?

That's a good question.

They make monitors that are giant and flat screen—they're great—but they keep making these crappy little scanners.

It's true.

It's easy with the website though. I can call people up and tell them to go to markdancey.com; you know this from publishing—the thing is distribution.





Absolutely.

You're fighting for the chance to have somebody look at the thing you've made; and they can't find it or the distributor's not sending it someplace. Or rip you off, go out of business.

All of these things are true. You've cut out the middleman that way.

Yeah, that's the good thing about that. And who doesn't have a website?

Are you in that circus show at C-Pop?

Yes.

Did you do a circus-themed piece?

Yes I did. It's pretty hilarious. I wanted to have a real model, a girl, for the thing. The idea I had was to have the viewer looking down at her like she's in a tent, a sideshow tent or something. But then I wanted to make it a peepshow, so she had to be naked. So, here's the thing about trying to recruit a naked model... [laughing] Let me hear how that worked out for you.

First, I broached the subject with women I know. You started asking your female friends, 'Can I paint you naked?'

Well, I was sneakier. I was just kinda asking about posing but I didn't say that. I'd ask about 'posing for a picture'

above right: A Young Man's Fancy Lightly Turns to Thoughts of Pimping - oil on board, 2000

above left: Ecstatic Scapegoat - oil on board, 2000

below: The Great Lever With Which the World is Moved - oil on board, 2000



and they'd go, 'Is it naked?!'—the first thing. So I figured, 'OK, I still want to be friends with them,' so I tried a different tack. I went to the photographer who was going to take the picture, and he had a model, who he said would come. So we set the whole thing up, and she didn't show. Then I went to this guy I know who works with models for fashion shows, so he gave me some numbers and I got a model. She came and she did it, and she was really good; a pro, real easy to work with. Then I

get a call from my friend the next day, 'The film didn't work.

It was over-exposed, it's completely useless.' We were ready to quit cause there was a deadline to do that show. So we get another model and set it all up for a certain day, and her car breaks down. We go for another day and I say, 'OK, I'll go pick her up,' and something else happened.

Finally, she showed up and we got it done; it was coming down to the wire. It was great, we made the girl look like a pin-head, put her in the tent, and it turned out.

[laughing] So it has a happy ending.

Yeah.

Although you didn't get to see any of your female friends naked.

No.

Maybe next time.

Yeah, maybe.



TALES FROM THE TRAILER



My eyes landed on the gleaming blade of the knife in the dish rack. Everything else around me was dull and gray and losing form, slipping away from reality into some other place. The knife was real and solid and called to me like an angel. It was the only goddam thing in the world I was sure of at that moment. Inside my throbbing head, time stood still as I assessed the situation. I could end it all here with one single motion. In one second... just ponder that folks, think about how long this dismal old world's been hurling along through space, we're talking countless millions of years... and in the smallest little fraction of that, I mean an infinitesimal sliver of this world's existence, I could do what God couldn't or wouldn't. It wouldn't take any superhuman powers or divine judgement. Hell, all I had to do was grab that knife and make one smooth motion, barely a flick of the wrist. With minimal effort, I could alter four people's lives forever. Three people would come out better or worse, emotionally scarred forever at the very least, while one person would be moved out in an ambulance and taken across town to the morgue. Then something shifted in my head and just like you'd pull a bathtub plug, the sound flooded back into my ears. Screaming, crying, grunting, gasping... the barest forms of human emotion had been turned loose into the dark winter night and were using us to put on a perverted circus for their own private amusement. I looked at the once hulking form that was down on the faded linoleum in front of me and the hand that was closest to the dish rack shot away from there without the knife and led my arm around the rough skin of his throat while my other hand yanked his arm behind his back in the roughest manner I could muster. Then I could see it across his face as he shook me loose and retreated to the other side of the house; someone had pulled the plug in his head, too. He was wondering how the hell he got here and how everything had wound up such a mess.

Disoriented and startled, like that deer in front of your truck at three in the morning as it realizes under the horrifying glow of your headlights that its collision course with destiny cannot be altered. Yessir, I saw that look and, right or wrong, I knew it was a moment of weakness and seized control of the situation, waving my fist in front of me then pushing him down the stairs and out into the snow. I watched the pickup tail lights fade into the night. In the morning he had returned and everyone acted like nothing had happened. They made me go to breakfast with them and then acted shitty and upset when I brought it up. He got pissed when I told him that he's lucky he left. Acted like a little kid that's mad 'cause he knows you caught him doing something he ought not to be doing. Shot that brief, hateful eye contact. The one that lets you know he acknowledges your existence but only as something to be tolerated as a wage of some past sin, just another cross to bear. Suddenly I was the bad guy. I felt that white, hot glow in the pit of my stomach and just tuned myself out...

There's a thread of violence and mental upset that runs through my family like a river that cuts through miles of countryside. There's points where it runs deep and wide; points where it rushes into rapids that boil over the banks like the devil's morning coffee. Then there are those points where it appears tranquil and inviting, but make no mistake about it, appearances are deceiving and that river of madness is there all the time and you can bet your sweet ass it's just laying in wait for flood season so it can show you and everyone else within its range just what it's capable of. Even in the dry season it can be a killer 'cause no matter how shallow the water looks it only takes an inch of the shit to drown you like a common rat. Even if the water doesn't get

you, the
rocks it hides
beneath it are

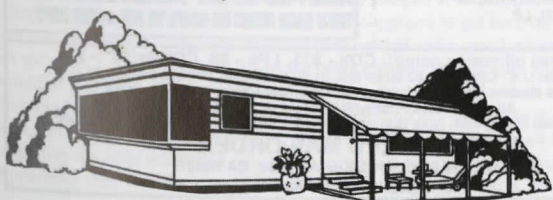
alternately slippery and sharp, and each one is a willing accomplice to the treachery of the river.

I can remember back when I was a kid and the phone would ring late in the night. Soon tired feet would scuff along the hallway to the kitchen. Conversations would be whispered in order to keep them safe from my prying ears. Maybe an uncle was in the county jail or maybe he'd been found in a ditch with three broken ribs and half his teeth missing or maybe left tied to a stump out in his backyard after being whipped to a bloody pulp with a chainsaw chain or maybe calling from a phone booth wanting to know where to go so nobody could find his sorry ass. For some of the family line, that inner plug always gets pulled too late and the results can be messy, even fatal.

East Texas jukejoint. Mid 1960s. The smoke hangs thick around the neon. Johnny Cash is on the jukebox, or maybe Johnny Horton. The heat is stifling and the beer is cold. The lady sits at the bar smoking a cigarette. Outside the day is dying and more and more people swarm into the nondescript little beer joint. Nobody pays too much attention to the man who quietly sidles up to the lady's barstool... until he taps her on the shoulder, and as she turns, jabs a .38 revolver into her face and pulls one off. Her last name was King and she was probably one of the ones who thought she'd crossed the river and made a clean break. But it seems you always run directly to exactly what you're running away from. To all you gals who want to marry a guy like dear old dad... make sure you know what makes daddy tick before you put that gold around your finger. A dark stain on the wooden floor of some pissant backwoods blood bucket is not the epitaph most young women dream of.

I don't know what it is that makes virtually all my goddam bloodline half-crazy. The ones that think they can get away from the madness just hook up with it somewhere else in some form or another. It's almost like a disease, a cancer. Even the ones that look halfway normal and together on the outside are fighting a raging battle somewhere inside themselves in that dark vestige that religious men call a soul. It's a battle that'll eventually tear most of 'em down and rot 'em away like roadkill in the summer. I myself have woken up in the middle of the night with coals in the pit of my stomach and an unbearable pressure in my head. Then go in the bathroom and throw cold water on my face and look at myself in the mirror, not recognizing the person looking back at me. I see someone wearing that slack blankness that I've seen for years in the faces of the men I call kin. Alcohol won't kill it; futile to try. A few turn to the bottle but only as a means to buy a cheap excuse to vent some of that fury that builds up minute after minute, hour after hour, day after day, and on and on and on. It's a fury with nowhere to go and inexplicable reasons for existing in the first place. Some people would have me believe it's a fury that comes from the dying of dreams. I kinda think maybe it's the other way around... maybe it's a fury that comes from your dreams staying alive and taunting your ass. Or maybe it's just a way for some of 'em, "some of us" I guess I should say, to feel something. Anything beats the numbness of a life going nowhere at a snail's pace, lurching on towards a death that might bring you face to face with the maker that never cared too much about you to begin with. Not much hope in that. The only thing that's constant and real is right there in the pit of your stomach and if you don't get the shit under control the water's gonna swell until the whole damn dam busts.

The old man had been in the hospital for weeks now. The chemo was getting to him. Cancer of the brain. Who knows what it was that finally got to Junior. Was it the prospect of losing his progenitor, the one who could always



BY ALAN "THE GODDAM" KING

be counted on to get Junior's ass out of the sling he so often got it tangled up in? Did that set the spark that ignited years of feelings of being second best in every goddam thing in the world? Did he look down at the thrift store clothes he was wearing for a self-pitying reaffirmation before he went out and fired up the 30-year-old Ford and sped off to the corner store? Did he look at the banged up trailer illuminated in his high beams as he came back up the hill, a cold beer between his legs, three empty cans already on the floorboard? Did he look at it and sense somewhere down deep in himself that he'd never get away from that fucking shit brown trailer that stood on the top of the hill like a monument to all his shortcomings? And did he think, by God, if he was gonna die in some rat trap tin box that somebody was gonna pay some dues? I don't know what was going on in his head but I know for a fact, I mean I'd stake my goddam life on it, that that slack-jawed look came over his face as he loaded the gun and stuck it in the top of his frayed, grease-stained blue jeans and walked down the hill to take the bull by the horns for once in his life. Something was gonna happen. The other kin folk had been going in and out of the old man's house for days. It was the central meeting location for crisis situations. I don't think anyone expected it, but I'm sure nobody was really too surprised when Junior yanked the gun out of his pants, pulled the hammer back and held it to his sister's temple. Trying to think his way through his confusion amidst the screams of the women and kids and his own loud mouth, he never paid attention to his brother-in-law as he picked up the baseball bat that was propped against the dormant wood stove...

I've started looking into this shit. They say chemical imbalances can be handed down from generation to generation just like the family Bible. If I catch myself acting off kilter, it scares the shit out of me. I don't want to wind up another casualty of the fucked-uppedness that permeates my family. Lord knows that's right where I was headed. I used to let that gutbucket fury lead me around like a dog on a leash. I was always super quick to throw my fists at the smallest provocation. Didn't matter who it was, how big they were, or what kinda heat they might be packing... I just didn't give a damn. A guy at the gas

station says something about my long hair—BAM! He never saw that round-house 'til it laid him on his ass. Then here comes his buddy and the shit starts getting deep. Made no matter. You win some, you lose some. The point was that it all seemed real in the heat of the moment. When you're into it hot and heavy there's a purpose, a goal, and a definite outcome. Life is simplified and focused. All I needed was a cross-eyed look. Just another way to momentarily deal with that unforgiving, unrelenting fury that runs through my blood like the life force itself. Thank God I pulled myself outta that mind frame or I might be sittin' up on top of the hill tonight with Junior, drinking cheap beer, smoking ditch weed, and looking to make something happen...

(This column is dedicated with loving memory to the one and only Waylon Jennings.)

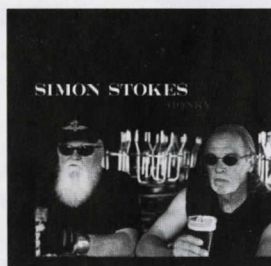
Would like to plug the band here and let ya'll know that Proud To Be Idiot Records has just released a wonderful 21 track Hellstomper compilation CD entitled Hellbent For Dixie ..And A Whole Lot More. Lots of long out of print stuff, comp tracks, unreleased tunes, etc... all in one stunningly beautiful package for your convenience.

As always, thanks to Larry and Leslie for the space to tell common strangers what most folks would rightly consider to be embarrassing secrets. King's playlist for this issue: Antiseen—Screaming Bloody Live CD * Cretin 66—Demolition Safari CD * Plum Hollow Band—'Neck CD * Black Oak Arkansas—Black Attack Is Back CD reissue * 440s—Sumthin' Sleazy CD * Joey Ramone—Don't Worry About Me CD * Johnny Cash—American Outtakes CD * Billy Joe Shaver—every damn thing he's done.

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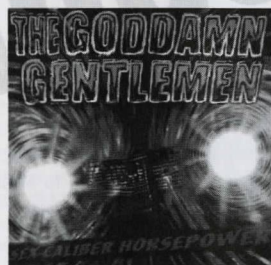
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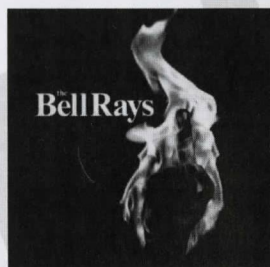


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LOUD CARS AND FAST GUITARS

BY WIDOWMAKER

Here I am, at my computer again trying to figure out what to say. It's kind of uncomfortable doing this 'cuz I just had more foot surgery a few days ago. It's only uncomfortable when I need to type stuff (hmm, maybe that means something) but it feels fine when I'm just kicking back playing bingo on-line. Thanks to Rev. Future telling be about this damn game site on the internet, I now regularly visit the cyber bingo hall. Just in the last two days I've prolly racked up a solid eight hours in there marking my cards like a regular blue-hair. Shit, I'm starting to think that I actually like it (I think that's where the percocet and vicodin come into play) and am ready to set sail to the nearest Indian reservation to test my mettle with the tour buses' finest blu-blocker clad AARP subscribers. Seems I never know what to say so I'll just do what I normally do and just bang it out and see what happens. For better or for worse, here goes...

❖ ❖ LOUD CARS ❖ ❖

Time to backtrack and weasel my way out of something I said last time. I was banging on people who own mid-'80s GM cars that think they've got something sweet. Guess what I did, Widowmaniacs? I went and bought one for myself! Yep, I guess I sound like a hypocrite but who cares. It's not like I'm gonna try to make it into some pseudo pimp-rig or nothing like the jackasses I see around my neighborhood. Here's the deal: I got a line on a 1982 Chevy Caprice Estate Wagon. Yep, a station wagon. Anyway, it was owned by an elderly Florida couple who took real good care of it until they moved to Oklahoma and sold it. It's real clean, interior in good shape, no rust, no dents, and everything works, even the clock. I am about to roll 100 grand on the odometer and the thing runs great. For the cheap price I picked it up for, it was worth driving down to a small shit-hole town in Oklahoma to get it. Way I see it, if I keep the oil changed and drive it somewhat nicely it'll go another 70,000 miles without a problem. It's worth it just to have reliable transportation and a vehicle that I can haul my big-ass Ampeg cabinet around in. The only problem with it is the engine. When the old folks who were the original owners bought it, they got most of the options (tilt steering, power windows, power locks, air conditioning, overdrive tranny, etc.) but they overlooked the engine. It was ordered with a 305 ci mill instead of the 350. A 305 is pretty tapped in that wagon, even with a 4-barrel feeding it gas. Oh well, guess they didn't feel they were gonna need any extra horsepower to get them to their shuffleboard games. Overall it's a damn good car for the price. Since it is a dependable vehicle, it will allow me to free up money to eventually get the '68 Buick where she needs to be.

This month's edition of Rock Star Rides was going to feature the Cosmic Commander's formidable stable of vehicles. Alas, things just weren't going in our favor. One of his rigs wasn't finished in time and I am totally unprepared with a back-up (although Duke from the Tunnel Rats just got himself a sweet, super-badass '67 Mustang—but more on that next time) so I will just go without any Rock Star Rides this month. If you want to bitch at anyone, bitch at Cosmo. It's not that it's completely his fault as much as he just deserves to be bitched at. Remember Widowmaniacs, if you are in a band and have a cool car (or many cool cars) be sure to get in touch and maybe you could be featured in Rock Star Rides.

❖ ❖ FAST GUITARS ❖ ❖

I feel like addressing something that's been bugging the shit outta me. From what folks are telling me, Nashville Pussy has been playing around and mentioning the Confederacy of Scum and COS bands when they are in one's hometown. From what I hear (what, you think I'd go see the rock-n-roll frauds myself?) they played in the Lawrence and Kansas City area a few times recently and mentioned Cocknoose and the COS at some point during their well rehearsed, over-hyped set. Why does that bother me? Let me take you back a few years—in 1997 the COS Supershow was in Lawrence, Kansas. I asked Nashville Pussy to play 'cuz they appeared to be cool and, at the drunken time that I asked, they seemed to rock. They jumped at the chance to play. Then the other shoe dropped. The day before they were supposed to get here they called a buddy that was helping with the show and said they needed some speed otherwise they wouldn't show up. Luckily for them it was the other guy and not me who took the call 'cuz I would of told them to keep their asses wherever they were. (He lied and told them "no problem.") Then they show up, hang out all weekend and no sooner did they get out of town did they start talking shit on me and the COS. Seems their small but ever-growing egos took it a little rough that nobody in attendance really cared if they played or not. Apparently they kept their gums a-flappin' for a few years about it, based on all of the

calls I got. Anyway, fast forward back to the present. Their star now lacks the luster it once had and they are seemingly trying to suck up to us (the COS) since they're gonna be back on our level soon. I know that I can't speak for the entire COS family (although they prolly think the same shit I'm saying) so just consider this a message from me and nobody else—Blaine, save your breath 'cuz I don't think anyone in your dwindling audience cares. I hope you had a good time rubbing elbows with all of the stars and record execs 'cuz it looks like it's about to end. Face it, your gimmicks are tired. Your biggest gimmick (you remember that lizard-skinned, fire-breathing amazon junkie, right?) left/was fired years ago. Luckily you've been able to replace her with more females that don't mind kissing your bra-clad wife on-stage, thereby ensuring your popularity (at least with frat-boy types who aren't really generally known as rock connoisseurs) for another year or two. Your music must be running out of steam, if it ever had any to begin with (I have only heard the first couple singles you guys did). Other people wrote the only songs that have garnered any attention, from what I'm told. As far as your band being "southern rock"? Please. Just because you cover a Molly Hatchet song doesn't mean you're a southern rock band. All of that shit aside, please don't bother to mention us anymore. It's bad for our reputation if people were to think we actually gave a shit about your existence. As for Ruyter, at least you rock. Hope you are getting the lion's share of the money—even if you are a Canadian.

❖ ❖ AND MORE ❖ ❖

In Cocknoose news, Lord have mercy and ladies beware. It looks like our White Trash Messiahs album will be released on Germany's Middle Class Pig Records before the end of the year with a European tour to follow. I must say that we are chompin' at the bit to get over there to make up for all of the other horrible American bands the European folks have to endure. Check the Middle Class Pig Records website (www.middleclasspig.com) in the coming months for details. Also, our first CD, Badmen, Butchers, and Bleeders is looking like it'll be reissued by TKO after being out of print for many years. I'd figure it ought to be out in time for the C.O.S. Supershow.

Also, on the Confederacy of Scum front, this year's Supershow has been announced. It will be held September 27th and 28th at the ShimSham Club in New Orleans, Louisiana. For those of you that want to get into town earlier there will be a happening involving COS folks on September 26th as an as of yet undetermined club. For all the info you need keep your eyes peeled for the debut of www.confederacyofscum.com in the coming weeks. I know it has been said before (and happened as was predicted), but this year's Supershow is shaping up to be the best one yet. To top last year's in Austin will be hard, but I swear this one will do it. Don't believe me? Show up and find out for yourself.

I warned bands not to send their music unless it was actually good. Unfortunately not many of you understood that. While it would be kinda fun to give a laundry list of the shitty bands that sent stuff to me it would only end up getting their name in print and thereby justify their actions, so I won't. For you bands that sent stuff I actually listened to, you suck ass. Better just stay in the basement and out of the recording studio in the future. I must say something to the band that sent nude photos of two of their alleged girlfriends, though. Thanks for the effort but next time keep the feedbag on 'em and don't let them out of the barn guys. While it is true that most males want to see two chicks gettin' it on, I sure don't think it would be those two.

Any clones out there going to the KC tour stop? If you are comin' over to my neck of the woods to see the pimp in the box (a.k.a. Jim Rome) live then get in touch 'cuz me and my man Jeff Skipski (bossman from Baloney Shrapnel Records) are gonna be there. I hope Jeff from Richmond will be there, fresh off of his Smack-Off win this year.

Got a reason to get in touch with me?

Email me at: widowmaker@sunflower.com or send shit to me at: PO Box 442442, Lawrence, KS 66044, USA

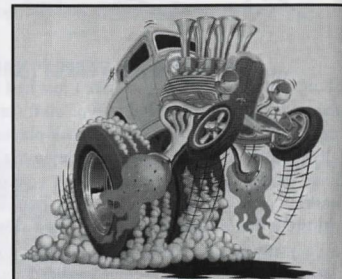
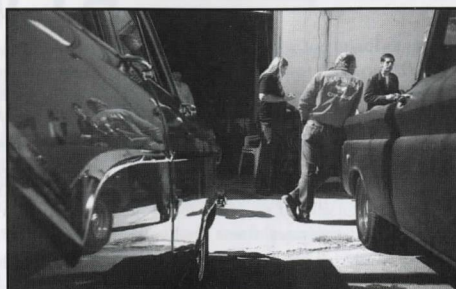
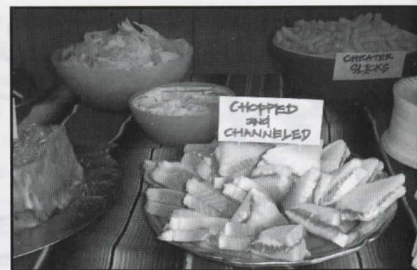
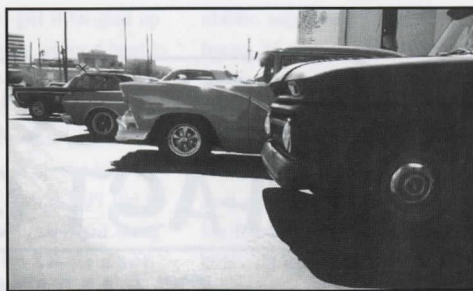
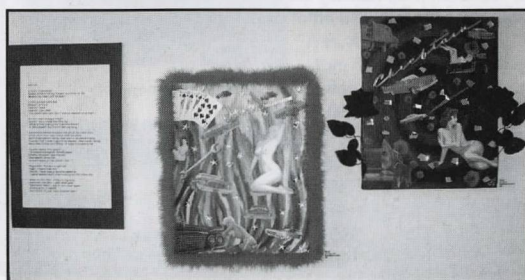
Thanks to the chicks who did send pics of themselves in all of their nekkid glory. That brings a smile to the Big Wid's face, keep 'em comin'.

Keep it between the ditches,
WIDOWMAKER



BY DOWNTOWN DAVE, WENDY LEE
(AKA WENDY "SPARKLE PLENTY" GADZUK),
KIM SIN AND ALBERT CHAMILLARD

Smoky burnouts... tattooed greasers and degenerates... pissed off neighbors... and that was just at the weekly planning meetings for the show! This unholy matrimony of gallery art and juvenile delinquency was brought up over coffee between Carbonbase Gallery founders and The Prime Ministers Car Club of Tucson over a year ago, but the date wasn't settled until Carbonbase announced that after two-and-a-half years of eclectic art shows and openings, it would be closing its doors in April. That gave everyone just six weeks to plan the event last minute all the way, baby! The Hot Rod Manifesto would be Carbonbase's final blowout show—and what a blowout it was! It's over a month later and there are still piles of scorched rubber and frazzled neighbors,



above (starting at top left) The Prime Ministers' rides line the street for the event; Hot Rod Cuisine fit for a trailer trash queen; Adam Cruz provided this illustration entitled "Five Window Fury" (Acrylic); Prime Minister Ron Carlsen Sr. sporting his original Idle Wilds car club jacket. The Idle Wilds were a carclub from Chicago in the 1950's, of which he was a member.

Unless you're from Tucson (and even if you are) you probably haven't heard of Carbonbase Gallery, an artist-run alternative space whose very first show was a collection of prison art. Carbonbase usually drew snotty artsy types to their openings, and the six members were elated that the Hot Rod Manifesto alienated nearly all of them, making the show a complete success.

It featured installations, photography, mixed-media pieces, a life-sized diorama, and performances by members' now bald car tires. The highlight of the show, however, was the food, which drew on the memories of white trash misspent youth. (See photos and recipes.)

Unlike most art shows, which take place at night, this opening blasted off on a sunny, brisk March afternoon, with plenty of shit-talking, beer

guzzling and bench racing. Too down-home in attitude to attract the high-dollar, gold-chain car club crowd, and too delinquent for a typical art opening, the Hot Rod Manifesto crowd enjoyed an easygoing atmosphere that lasted all day and into the night.

Which brings us to the after party thrown by The Prime Ministers... and throw a party they did! Tucson's newest and hottest venue, Vaudeville Cabaret, hosted this three-band bash. Lucky for them, because it was a packed house. The bill featured the hot-rock action of The 440s, the trashy girl-punk assault of The Sintillators, and the pedal steel-driven country-glam sounds of Rodeo Queen, all of whom have at least one active member in the Prime Ministers Car Club. There was much drinking and debauchery, and a good time was had by all.

ARTISTS:

BONDO BOB
ADAM CRUZ
SARA DENT
DOWNTOWN DAVE
WENDY "SPARKLE PLENTY" GADZUK
KIM "SIN" KYGAR
ALEX MACGILLAVERY
HOT ROD RON
SKID SEVERSON
G.G. TITAN

PHOTOGRAPHERS:

WENDY "SPARKLE PLENTY" GADZUK
KIM "SIN" KYGAR
JACKIE ALPER
AARON PASSMORE
DOWNTOWN DAVE



Menu:

- "Gasket Blower" - Macaroni & cheese with tuna casserole (and peas, of course)
- "Chopped and Channeled" - Fluffernutters
- "Hot Rod Casserole" - Frito Pie
- "Smoky Burnouts" - Smoked Sausages
- "Tire Tread" - Graham Cracker Pudding Cake
- "Nitro" - Ambrosia
- "Big Block" - Cheeseball, with crackers of course
- "Cheater Slicks" - Cheetos
- "Tranny Fluid" - Red Kool-Aid
- "Washer Fluid" - Blue Kool-Aid
- "Anti-Freeze" - Green Kool-Aid
- "40 Weight" - PBR
- "90 Weight" - Red Wine

Kim Sin's Hot Rod Casserole aka her Daddy's Frito Pie

- 1 - Big Bag of Fritos
- 4 - Cans Chili (Veggie or Meatie)
- 1 - Big Block o' Cheese - grated

Optional, but not at all necessary: Onions, can of green chili, salsa, green onions, mustard, cayenne, chili powder, garlic, can of corn, kitchen sink.

Preheat oven to 375.

Empty cans of chili and any optional ingredients into a pot and heat over med-high heat. Cover bottom of large casserole dish with single layer of Fritos - just enough to cover the bottom of dish - sprinkle a 1/4 - 1/3 of cheese on top of Fritos. Pour 1/4-1/3 heated chili mixture on cheese, repeat layering until ingredients are gone, saving some cheese for the top layer. Eat Fritos as you cook. Place casserole in oven and cook till done (cheese is melted, bubbly, y'know - looks done). Enjoy. Feeds a single gal for a week, makes a lunch for The 440s. Double the ingredients for a party.

Gordon's Smoky Burnouts

- 2 packages Jimmy Dean Lil' Smokies
- 1 jumbo can sugar baked brown beans
- 1 hard squeeze spicy brown mustard
- 1 16 oz can o' beer (not Lite beer)

Put all ingredients in a crockpot and cook till beer cooks off and mixture thickens, about an afternoon. Enjoy!

Kate and Lee's "Tire Tread" Graham Cracker Puddin' Cake

Decadent enough to fool even the most discriminating palates... surprisingly gourmet! Your guests will rave about this treat for weeks. Share the recipe with them if you like, or keep it as our little secret. Cooked pudding provides a more complex flavor bouquet, but instant will work in a pinch.

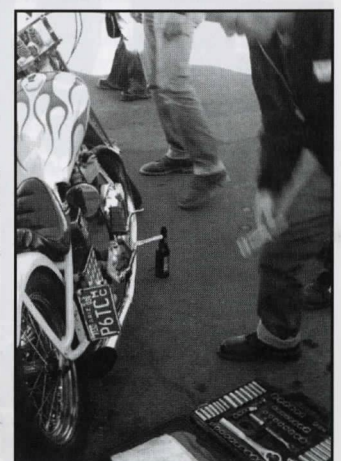
- 1 box chocolate pudding
- 1 box vanilla pudding
- 1 box graham crackers

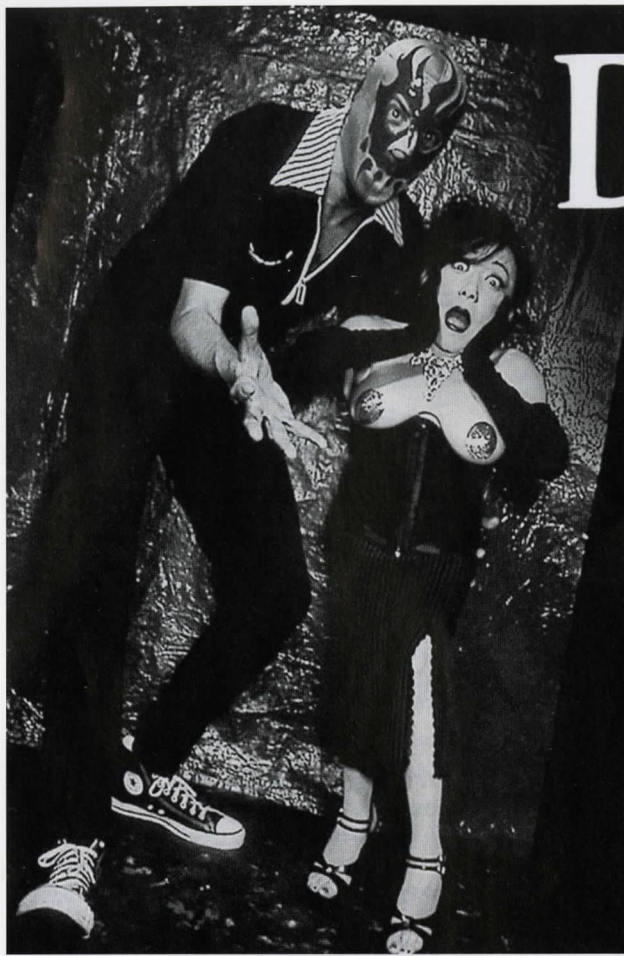
Prepare both puddings separately, according to package directions. Allow to cool enough to thicken slightly, but not completely. Begin by spreading a layer of chocolate pudding on a whole graham cracker, using a serving platter as the work area. Stack another graham cracker on top, and spread with vanilla pudding. Continue, alternating chocolate and vanilla puddings, until about 4 inches high. At this time, turn the "cake" on it's side, and continue to add on, alternating puddings and graham crackers until all the crackers are used up, reserving some pudding to cover with. Use a rubber spatula or knife to coat the top and sides with remaining pudding. You may need to prop the cake up with a spoon, cup, or whatever you have handy and works, until set. Refrigerate overnight, allowing the pudding to soak into the crackers and the flavors to meld. Um, um, good!

opposite page bottom (starting at top left) Prime Ministers and Carbonbase members give the two-finger salute on, in and around Alex's '28 Model A (Note Alex in the center giving the obscure Dutch salute.); King Fabricator Bondo Bob crashes the show with his '62 Chevy front end w/ working fan and headlights. Good thing he didn't hit that nice piece o' "Class Under Glass."; Merch Slut Kim Sin and Sparkle Plenty panderin' their wares (note the Carbon 14s on the table.); Prime Minister Kim Sin's montage of acrylics, vintage car logos, and hot chicks. Oh my!

this page top (starting at top left) Carbonbase co-founder Joel Meltzer enjoying a fistful of fluffernutter and some washer fluid (blue Kool-Aid) liquid refreshment—note the settled sugar on the bottom; Any self-respecting car show must have the token car with the rare factory optioned period-correct no-reverse gear. Nothing but the best, folks; Zane and Pontiac Mike keeping the flame alive; Prime Minister Hot Rod Ron's '30 Model A coupe, done in the Barris-Watson '60s style.

this page bottom (starting at top right) The Sintillators; Motorcycles were represented as well, wherever there's a Triumph chopper, beer and tools will be nearby!; The Rodeo Queens; GG and Sparkle of the 440s.





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OMIP TACKLES FRENCH POLITICS AND THE CROOKS THAT GO WITH IT!

BY MICHEL POLIZZI

France is having a couple of elections this spring, and by the time you read this, the presidential episode will have passed, leaving only congressional contests to be disputed in June. (Presumably, you will be reading this before June.)

Meanwhile, the world is invited to wonder how and under what guise and following what odd logic, a quasi-banana republic has managed to invite itself within the exclusive confines of the European Union.

What, France a banana republic? Verily, you jest.

Jacques Chirac, the presidential title-holder running for re-election, is one of the most corrupt and incompetent heads of state you're likely to run into at any G7/G8 meeting. Granted, Boris Yeltsin was significantly better in the graft-shakedown department, and he was a vodka-guzzling master (and you gotta love that in a head of state!), but the little gospodin is gone, and with him has departed a great deal of entertainment on the diplomatic front.

When Chirac appeared on the political scene, first as agriculture minister under Pompidou then as Prime Minister for Giscard in 1974, Richard Nixon was the criminal in charge of the White House and death squads around the world, Mao was fantasizing himself as the Divinely Anointed Emperor of the People's Republic of the Middle Kingdom, Harold Wilson was replacing Ed Heath as Prime Brit, and Leonid Brezhnev had his cronies blow into his face the cigarette smoke he could no longer directly inhale.

When Chirac became mayor of Paris a bit later, disco was a new thing, Saturday Night Fever was a cultural event of significant significance, and Fleetwood Mac's *Rumors* was the end-all and be-all of rock 'n' roll.

Yet, it goes on.

During his second stint as prime minister, Chernobyl blew up, Halley's Comet returned, the US bombed Libya, and Irangate was making headlines as Ronnie Reagan (another great intellectual power worthy of his constituency) was winding up his second, er, presidency.

Yet, Chirac rolled on! Imagine having Wilbur Mills, Spiro Agnew, or Jerry Ford running in the 2004 election, having had a full and active political career in ALL these intervening years, making speeches, appearing on TV, depositing bribe-money in the Barbados National Bank, getting elected and re-elected and re-elected! Now you can imagine Chirac!

All this to say the French got themselves a ticky-tacky sticker with staying power, a true Teflon professional with the cash register know-how.

Another parenthesis to mention a lovely little peculiarity of the French electoral system: candidates need not reside in, nor have any connections whatsoever with the city, district, state, etc. where they seek election. The French are very impressed when, and if, a major TV-star politician presents himself for election in their little neck of the wood. In other words, they can be elected for different things in different places. Case in point: for years, Chirac was Mayor of Paris AND Deputy of Corrèze, a rural area in central France. It's as if Michael Bloomberg was both Mayor of New York City and US representative for the 2nd Congressional District of Alabama. At the same time! And for more than two decades!!

Why elect Joe Blow, when you can have the world-famous senior Senator from Massachusetts, Teddy Kennedy himself, as Mayor of Tucuman?

It's been truly amazing to see the litany of revelations circling around Chirac, without the slightest effect on his poll standings. It's been essentially demonstrated, if not "proven" in a strict legal sense, that Chirac and his henchmen presided over a huge shakedown system when he was mayor of Paris.

—Construction and public-works companies had to pay out big chunks of cash to be able to get City Hall contracts after fake public bids; repairing elevators in the city's huge real estate park, maintenance and refurbishing of public schools...

—Public/private service companies were filing false expense billings and charges so as to justify the disappearance of millions (whether Francs, Euros or Dollars, it's a lot of money). And of course, the disappearance only affected taxpayers; Chirac and his boys kept a good eye on the golden ball all the time!

—A great deal of prime Parisian real estate (if you've visited Paris before, you know there's a great deal of that. Actually, most of Paris is prime, grade AAA real estate!) went to political cronies and friends and contributors and friendly journalists and judges and to whoever needed to be made a "friend" at the moment.

—Imagine yourself a politician running for office (I know it's a cruel test of imagination, but please indulge me for a moment: would you rather be elected with a 50.001% majority, beating out your hated opponent by a mere 12 votes in a ward with 100,000 registered-voters, or would you prefer a nice Stalinian 86% return for a full-house landslide-sweep the likes of which ain't been seen before? Yeah, likewise! The professional politician's choice, and the Chirac boys could and did deliver it, with the help of non-existent voters, dead voters (same thing), people voting in several wards with or (most often) without their own knowledge. The tricks are many and beyond the ken of mortal citizens.

—Mayor of Paris Chirac used City employees and equipment to set-up Christmas lights and a manger in his congressional district 300 miles away, and run and fund local political offices there. It went on for years, all at Paris taxpayers' expense!

—As you can imagine, all of these shenanigans are in fact illegal, and have been investigated for years. And they still are as I type and you read this. Yet, to top it off, it's been amply demonstrated that the main investigative magistrate ("Juge d'instruction," it's called here), one Eric Alphen, was continuously intimidated and threatened, with all possible obstacles put in the path of his investigations. A huge conspiracy involving several very official police agencies was set-up to bribe the magistrate's father-in-law with a suitcase full of cash so as to discredit him. In a famous instance, the police officers legally assigned to the case to assist him and execute his search warrants refused to do their duties and obey his legally binding orders, and consistently reported to their politically-appointed superiors each and every development in the investigation so that future targets of search-warrants could be warned in advance and "clean house."

Can you say South Philly? Can you say, "Bush in Florida?" Can you say banana republic? Knew you could! And you can now say: Chirac in Paris!

It went on and on and on; the wheels kept on turning, and the cash kept on flowing, and flowing, and flowing.

The false billing, fake charges for non-existent work (not) done by friendly contractors, the embezzling and hijacking of public monies... all that was nothing new and certainly not a monopoly of Chirac and his party, but in the case of most other politicians no personal enrichment was involved, it was all done to finance electoral campaigns and feed the party's maw.

Not so for Chirac: literally dozens of non-official personal trips to Japan and the US (via Concorde), numerous personal vacations with the family and friendly journalists at highly expensive palatial hotels in exotic locations (Mauritius Islands), personal grocery bills for him and his wife upward of a thousand dollars every day for years, with no bills or justification (and in many cases grossly manufactured fakes). All paid in cash from brimming suitcases.

This has been going on for years without a pip from the commercial media, and with police and the judiciary either unwilling to investigate or being browbeaten into submission. All this with final approval from the "Constitutional Council" (kind of a French Supreme Court) who ruled that a sitting President could only be indicted for high treason by a special court sitting only for that occasion. Nothing else. Were the President to assassinate someone in full daylight in front of witnesses and TV cameras, he would be prosecuted for murder only AFTER leaving office. And if he got re-elected, that would be another five years before getting to see a judge.

Nice job, wouldn't you say?

Now, of course, it becomes obvious that Chirac needs to remain president to avoid any form of prosecution, hence his eagerness to be re-elected at any cost and with any and all promises to the electorate: more public services, more schools and cops, a raise for everybody, and a 30% cut in income taxes whilst maintaining budgetary balance and European Union public debt requirements.

You, or any private interest or lobby, want something? Anything? Chirac promises it. "Just vote for me and I'll do it!" Hey, I could do that too and run a country that way, if that's all it takes. The amazing thing is that it's working for Chirac. Or at least, it's not ruling him out. He is either tied with or ahead of his principal opponent, "socialist" (in name only) Lionel Jospin (a French Al Gore, except duller), in public opinion polls. Now of course, opinion polls are scientific nonsense. It is impossible to gauge a country's electoral results, or opinion about anything, out of a thousand-unit sample. Ask your statistician. But the media, whose great maw gulps polls of all kind by the ton, continues to dish them out and pretend it's all credible and a "precise snapshot of public opinion at a given time." May the farce be with your Gallup!

Chirac's continued survival and actual chance at re-election has proven to be stunning and impossible to believe for members of the foreign press corp, especially those coming from Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon countries. Whether the allegations are true or not (and believe me, they are!), the mere suspicion would be enough to eliminate any given politician from running for office, or even of continuing to have a political life!

But not in France, and not with Chirac! You see, France is an ancient country, the oldest in Europe in fact, and the rot is deeply set. It's almost as if the French miss their King, and are happy to elect any regal-looking professional, if he "tawks" good with expensive words and a fine flourish. It will take a political earthquake, a social upheaval of great magnitude, a revolution and attendant bloodbath to cure those ills. Maybe.

PS: And it'll be Chirac, in all likelihood. This evening of April 21, 2002, at 9:30PM as I type this, first round results have Chirac the crook going against Jean-Marie Le Pen the neo fascist.

OMIP: <http://mpol1.free.fr/index1.htm>

Winston Smith

For over 20 years Winston Smith's been opening eyes and making people think (or re-think) via his artwork. Probably best-known for his album covers for the Dead Kennedys (as well as creating their logo and Alternative Tentacles' logo), and considered one of the foremost graphic artists of the punk/hardcore era, Smith's artwork is instantly recognizable and always thought-provoking. His creations have been exhibited in the US and Italy, and his services are in constant demand. Whether at home in San Francisco, at his remote ranch, or traveling, Smith is always on the lookout for images to collect for his unique compositions. There's almost always a number of subtexts to his work; it's all post-atomic, pop culture and the golden age of advertising thrown into a blender and carefully rearranged for maximum impact. His two books—*Act Like Nothing's Wrong*, and *Arterime: The Montage Art Of Winston Smith Vol.2*—document some of his most significant work and bring you into an occasionally apocalyptic world where cross-cultural collisions are an everyday occurrence.

—Larry

Your work is described as both montage and collage, how do you see it?

Collage is a bunch of pieces of paper stuck together, what I do mainly is fit pictures together; it's more montage art. It's kind of, I guess, my own thing. Montage being that the different elements of the pictures are woven together in a way that hopefully makes it look as if they were born that way. Sometimes people look at it and say, 'Well, big deal. What did you do? You didn't do anything.' Well, great. If they think nothing was done to it, then I've succeeded in creating the illusion that it's all seamless.

Were you always attracted to collage or were you doing other art forms before this?

I've always been an artist. I always drew. I never really learned to paint much at all, I don't have much of an eye for color (I'm slightly color blind, actually.) I never really had the patience in my youth, about 400 years ago, to learn to paint. Someday I'd like to actually learn to paint, that would be a big step up for me; it would probably give me more of an appreciation for other people's hard work. I've always been interested in art. For example, I used to copy pictures by hand, redrawing them before there were photocopy machines, (which probably sounds like I'm talking about the Paleolithic Era).

Hey, I remember mimeograph machines.

Yeah. We had mimeographs in school, and there was a photostat machine in the county library, not far from where I lived as a kid. Only thing is it always came out in reverse black and white, it was used for birth certificates and things; but it was reproduced in negative like a blueprint. That was kind of unsatisfactory for reproducing anything, so before there were photocopy machines, I would make drawings of different things and then cut out the drawings and put them together. Because I'd want to have all of them available in order to make the choice rather than draw the things the way I wanted it. Once photocopy machines became ubiquitous, I was able to take more advantage of my particular style of bullshit that I advertise as art.

Have you always felt the need, with doing collage, to fill every square inch of space?

No, not at all. Actually I think that's a mistake a lot of people make when they first start this kind of thing. I did too, and sometimes I still do when that's the style I'm really trying to aim for. But I've found that some of the most graphically arresting pieces I've done were pieces that only had two, three or four elements in them (by elements I mean the different figures that come from different sources). Sometimes there's a shotgun effect that you can get with having lots and lots of elements. I've deliberately done that to achieve a certain effect of confusion and chaos, like on one piece, I did for Biafra's third or fourth spoken word LP, *When Evolution Is Outlawed Only Outlaws Will Evolve*. He wanted to have this completely chaotic, end of the world, big bang in reverse thing. Even though I put dozens and dozens, (it seemed like hundreds) of different elements into it, he wanted more. [laughs] So I gave him a few extras to add on his own so he could feel it was complete.

When you put one of your pieces together, do you start with a preconceived notion in your head or do you find a few elements and sort of work it up from there and the piece takes on its own life?

I rarely have a preconceived idea. Sometimes, maybe if it's a political statement like some anti-Ronald Reagan thing or anti-George Bush Jr. thing. If you have a certain subject matter like anti-war or anti-nuclear or Enron, for example, or any subject that's specific, of course it's preconceived. You have to kind of stand on your head in order to achieve this, and it's not nearly as creatively satisfying. But most of the pieces I do come from just sheer subconscious. My mind is usually a blank so I don't have to go that far to get to that Zen scene of just letting the subconscious take over. A lot of it happens to be whatever my eye falls on. Most people say someone's mind is like a steel trap, well, I have a steel sieve; things go through it, and I can't remember stuff

unless it's right under my nose. In order to produce the compositions I actually have to have a table full of hundreds and hundreds of different cut-outs. It takes generally days or weeks (sometimes years, with things that accumulate over time) to cut these things out and have them all ready to be able to select from things that I see literally with my eyes instead of just thinking, 'Oh, where do I have that toaster? Where did I put that armadillo?'

Are you always looking for and grabbing images?

Yeah. I carry a razor blade in my pocket all the time so I can cut shit out. I'll take anything. I steal from anybody, I'm an equal opportunity thief. I rip off any little bit of paper magazines, newspapers, children's books, stories, encyclopedias.

Whatever catches your eye is a potential victim.

Yeah. Everything is fair game to me.

I've never seen any of your pieces in person so it's hard for me to get an idea of the scale of the finished piece.

Have you seen any of my books at all? There's a couple books out, I'm working on volume three now. I would say about half the ones in the book are just about their true size. They came out of magazines and books that are standard size (8 1/2 X 11") but some of them have been reduced from 11 X 17 down to a regular paper sized page.

Have you done anything on a really large scale?

Yeah, I have. I made a piece for Tijuana No!, they're a Mexican punk band, that was four feet long. I think at that point, that had been my biggest piece, and it folded up. Of course, by the time they'd shrunk it down for the CD I thought it wouldn't be visible but it was actually, it was quite legible. I did a piece recently for George Carlin, for a new comedy album he did, and that was about three feet long and a foot high, that folds up three ways. I did a record cover for my girlfriend, she's a musician, and the piece for her CD is twelve feet long and two feet high. There isn't even a room in any house I know of that's quite long enough to have it mounted in one continuous piece with no interruptions in the composition.

Is that on multiple pieces that are attached in the back or did you get a 12-foot roll of paper?

No, I had to work on huge pieces of posterboard that were two feet by three feet; I think there were four sections, it was sectional. It was a bit of a nightmare because I'm numerically challenged so trying to measure all this stuff out and get it right. It just happened to work by sheer dumb luck. Same thing with the Tijuana No!, I happened to situate an Uncle Sam in the middle of the thing and it was dead on. If I had tried to do it with a ruler it would never have happened.

Sometimes you've gotta trust your eyes.

Exactly. It's very surreal that way; the subconscious basically takes over. If only I could take that to the horse races, we could win big! A couple of the pieces I've made for Biafra were very big, too. They were 18 X 24, and I think it got shrunk down for the gatefold piece for Evolution. I did one for Green Day that was about 18 X 18, and then there was one for Dead Kennedys that was a drawing, for *Bedtime for Democracy*; that was two feet wide by four feet long. That got shrunk down to one foot by two feet for the gatefold record and then it got shrunk further and further for the CD; you can't even see what's happening on the cassette version, it's too small. It had like 300 different characters in it.

Do you find that sometimes makes you think twice about doing work that will be reproduced for CD, because some things will be getting so small?

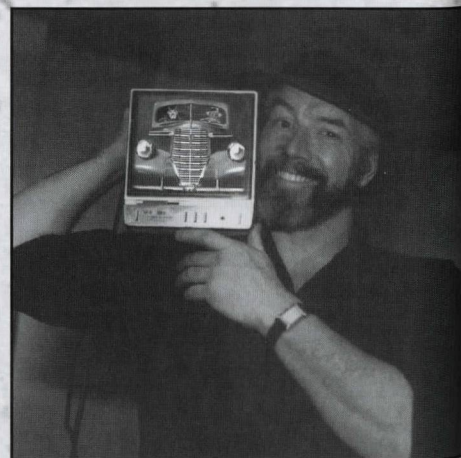
Sometimes I have to hold myself in check and remember that this is gonna wind up the size of a fly's nose. Something that makes visual sense to you when you do it on paper in front of you, when you know that's going to be shrunk down to a postage stamp it can make you kinda go, 'Wait a minute. I want this to be seen and be appreciated and no one's gonna really see it in its life-sized manner.' Sometimes it does but unfortunately when I get sucked into the creative action I rarely stop and think about how it's going to wind up, I just do it as it is. Later on I wind up regretting, you know, 'Oh, damnit! That whole thing got lost.' But hindsight's better than foresight.

It seems from most of the images you use, that you concentrate on post-atomic culture and pop culture. Are there any things you look to, things you keep going back to, certain images that get repeated in a different form in different pieces?

From time to time, yeah. Sometimes I'll recycle things just because there's a limited amount of imagery from that period. I kind of selected that period because it corresponds to the era when I grew up in the Southwest. As a kid I would sit and look at Life magazine or Look or

-Harper's Bazaar?

Yeah. I'd look at these lavish illustrations. In the '50s, and in the early to mid-'60s, they started using photography for images and publicity, and they no longer had paintings. All those artists basically wound up unemployed because the camera was cheaper, and as the



printing process got better they could print color for cheaper and cheaper. So by and by they eliminated illustrators. That era, too, the post-war era with the expanding economy of the '50s and '60s was dedicated to über consumerism and just unbridled, 'Get a big car, get a big radio, get a big TV set.'

The decade of keeping up with the Joneses.

Absolutely. It was this era of expanded economy that no one had ever seen the likes of except maybe the upper classes a hundred years ago, and suddenly the middle classes could afford this shit. All the pictures were themselves exaggerated versions of the products they were selling. Just like you turn on the TV today and you see some shiny car or some incredible house, and I don't know anybody who drives cars like that or lives in a house like that. The Joneses are on television, that's where they really live. Everything wrapped in plastic looks better, too, so there's always an exaggerated lustre to it. There's a certain lustre to the images of the '50s and early '60s; everything sparkles, everything's shiny. It was a promise of this wonderful life to be if you could just pony up the cash, and of course it was a totally ephemeral lie that people buy into and then get on the treadmill. And finally they wind up with nothing but their headstone. "Don't laugh, it's paid for" is what I'm gonna have on my gravestone because... that's all you get at the end of working for the company for 50 years.

When did you start doing the collages/montages in their present form? And was that the first thing you did as an artist in the public eye?

I would say so. I was a teenager when I left the country. I wound up living in Italy for many years and I studied art there, in Florence and Rome. I was such a bad student, I've always had a 0.00 grade average. I never graduated from high school. I'm a success at being a failure. But I wound up getting my education mainly from walking around and looking at the artwork. That's kind of how I studied it; and drawing it. So my influences are mainly classical, the classical school of academic art, Leonardo, Michaelangelo, Botticelli. I can draw, but I can't draw like Raphael or anything. I did that for a few years and came back to America in the mid-'70s, around 1976. So much had changed from the late '60s, when I left the country, to the mid-'70s; it was so shocking that my reaction to it all was to create compositions that reflected this culture shock. And the only way I could do it quick and dirty, or easy, was to resort to collage; it was basically a desperate attempt to represent what I wanted to show without having the talent to paint it myself! If I had any other marketable skills, I'd be doing that, but I don't.

When you first decided you wanted to show your pieces or you were asked to show them, was it met with rejection because it's not a traditionally accepted art form?

Absolutely. You hit the nail on the head. No one's ever asked me that question, but that's exactly what happened. Now people take it for granted. At the time, too, I was trying to make a living out of it. I tried to get work doing illustrations for advertisements. I sent things off to some magazines and shit and I would get back a response like, 'It's not a painting and it's not a photograph, what is it? If it isn't a drawing, a sketch a painting or a cartoon, we're not gonna use it.' Now, of course, collage is everywhere and it's called "appropriation"; which occurred about 10 or 15 years ago. I think it's even accelerated in the last 10 years because of the Photoshop phenomenon, anybody with Photoshop can create a Dali-esque looking collage for an ad. Now it's become kind of almost a standard, when just a very short time ago, it was regarded as non-art, like fingerpaints or something; it bordered on arts and crafts and didn't get much respect. I guess if you stick around long enough something gains respect just by virtue of its antiquity. But I had a lot of trouble trying to get things off the ground and getting people to even look at the artwork. People were like, 'How do you do that? How do you make this?' 'Oh, I cut these pictures up and then glue 'em down.' 'Oh, is that all?' I could do that. That's like asking Leonardo how he painted the Mona Lisa. 'Oh, I take the paint and I move it around with this brush and I slop it up and down on canvas.' 'Oh, I can do that.' Yeah, but it's HOW you do it. We can all do that. When I first did it, I think there was at that time a bit of a novelty to it; and that novelty worked for and against me. Against me because there wasn't anything that people could categorize and therefore didn't know how to react to; and positively, in that sense, because it was something new and different. They saw images we'd all grown up with, especially the stuff from the '50s and '60s that glorified the wonderful Americana and the happy housewife, Ozzy and Harriet style of the American dream that, by the time the mid-'60s rolled around, was just a joke. Basically my approach to it was, look, this is what the government, Madison Avenue and our schools have been telling us; that if you work hard and keep your nose to the grindstone, you'll have all this cool shit. It's a great life and we'll all be happy people. Yeah, except it was a lie because that was just to get you to go along with the program. In the meantime, a lot of what we have in America that's so beneficial to us we have at the cost of trodding upon other countries. The ugly reality is our chrome comes from South Africa; you know those nice, big Buicks from the 1950s? Apartheid helped make that possible. Gold watches came from South Africa, and other sweatshops in South Korea were for making little tin widgets we can sell in dime stores to children. It makes the kids happy but kids in other countries are toiling 14 hours a day for 11 cents a day, to make some piece of plastic crap Hello Kitty doll.

You've felt a political pull in your work, in some sense? There's an underlying political thought to a lot of it.

Yeah. I'd say my earliest stuff was done out of political outrage. Not even politi-



Another Day at the Office

©1986 Winston Smith



Enough Is Enough

©1998 Winston Smith



Welcome to the World

©1987 Winston Smith

cal so much as in Democrat or Republican, but political in the sense of who benefits from a certain system?/who suffers because of a certain system?

So it's more societal.

Yeah, much more societal. Because it's not simply that the United States of America is a big ogre here; it's Western capitalism and communism and a bunch of different systems that exploit people. I'm just a malcontent in general.

Did you begin exhibiting in the punk era or before that?

I used to be a roadie when I came to San Francisco, around '76, and I started working with bands. It was right about the period that the punk rock phenomenon was emerging, and I started doing posters for different bands. Some of them were bands I made up; I just put posters up and down the street for laughs. There was a lot of that in San

Francisco, especially, because it's a small town; it's only about seven miles across. It's a city where people walk a lot so you see lots of posters up and down the streets. I think more so than other towns, even more so than say, L.A.; more like New York, perhaps. There was a fantastic variety of stuff that people did that was totally creative. Some of it was pretty schlocky junk but some of them were masterpieces. Some had to do with different gigs for bands or performances or art shows, and some had nothing to do with anything; they were just goofy weird pictures people put up and plastered on the walls, and I thought that was pretty creative.

Art for the sake of art.

Absolutely. And I thought it was an interesting movement because, to me, it was more of an art thing in San Francisco. The punk trip was more of a music scene in L.A. A lot of people who didn't have any talent either as musicians or as artists just did what they were doing, which was great because the whole idea was that everyone should participate. The beginning of my so-called career as an artist was doing shows in punk clubs and very lowlife venues, where people would come and just appreciate it for what it was, they didn't think it was high art. None of us ever thought any of this stuff would last very long, punk rock least of all. The fact that any of it is still around amazes me.

Do you still have any of those early pieces or have they all gone by the wayside?

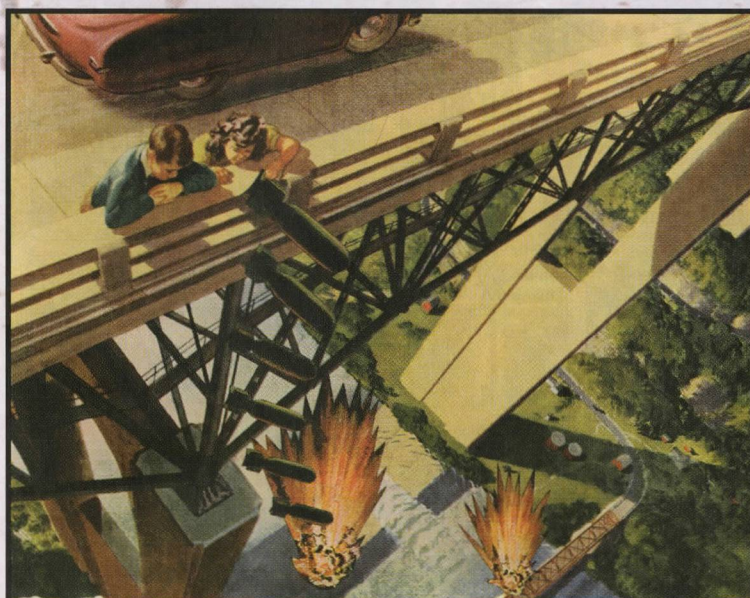
I have a good deal of them. Some of them are gone but I have a lot of pieces from the old days. I should probably sit on them and maybe in 200 years they might gain some notoriety as antiques. Actually, I just spent a couple weeks digging through my archives up on my ranch to locate some ancient gig flyers I made nearly a generation ago. (I've been invited to do a show featuring them at a gallery in Prague this June.) But to my shock and surprise I discovered that the mice and rats had gotten there first and have liberally chewed up my originals and made nests from them. (Finally my work serves some useful purpose!) Perhaps they were art critics in a former life and are just continuing their career only in rat suits. I'm thinking of calling the show "Defiled by Rats" See? It's true what they say, "Everyone's a critic." But I've got a lot of stuff from different bands; the bands are no longer around but the artwork is. How does that old Latin saying go? "Vita brevis. Aris lunga"? Life is short. Art is long. (Or, as Soupy Sales would say, 'Life is art, art is life. Beat your rug, not your wife.') I think the first piece of your art I saw was the cover for *In God We Trust, Inc.*

Was that the first album cover you did the art for or had you worked with other bands before that?

Let me think. I did a lot of posters for bands. I think that's the first cover. I worked on Dead Kennedys' first record, *Fresh Fruit*, I did the logo for them and some other stuff; some collage, like the big poster on the inside. But that piece Biafra saw, the cross of dollars, was a real three-dimensional piece that I made about two years before I knew him. He told me later on that when he saw it, he conceived a record just to go along with that as the cover. The artwork came first instead of the other way around. I was surprised to hear that later on. If I'd known that I would have asked for royalties! [laughs] I would say that was the first one. That actually got us a lot of publicity. Some of it bad publicity because the cops in parts of England raided some record stores because of that image. They had some law on the books about defamation of the deity, some 15th Century law. So I guess I could have gotten burned at the stake if I'd been in the wrong place at the wrong time. I think even back East, in Massachusetts, cops closed down stores because of the image. Since there's no such thing as bad publicity, we figured, 'Cool! We should send them a check!' [laughter] It's publicity.

How did you initially hook up with Biafra?

I was doing posters for a group in the late '70s, a group that started in England called Rock Against Racism. They'd been around for a while and we were doing some punk



The Trickle Down Theory

©1997 Winston Smith



'Til Death Do Us Part

©1991 Winston Smith

shows at this place called the Temple Beautiful. A friend of mine who I worked with kept saying, 'You think like this guy I know, you two should meet.' And I was like, 'Oh, yeah, right.' And by and by she played me a record of his that had just come out, "California Über Alles." That was the first band I'd heard, of that style, who I thought really had something to say. There were a lot of great bands to listen to because they were fun but they really didn't have any interesting message that was more than, 'bounce around and break things up.' She said, 'Send him a card or something.' So I dropped a postcard in the mail and he wrote back this long letter (saying) 'We have to meet!' It was one of those things, and we've been partners in crime ever since.

Yeah, I know that you've had a long association with AT; they're one of your main patrons.

Right, they'll go down in history like the Medici family.

Exactly. The Medicis of punk. When we spoke the other day, you mentioned you were going over to Italy for a festival; is it one you've exhibited in before? Are you exhibiting in this one?

Yeah, I have. I've had several shows there. I kind of focus on it cause it's my home away from home. I spent more than six years there, and I speak Italian so that helps a little bit. I have a lot of friends there and I have certain connections in the art and music scene there. I've had some shows in Rome, did a gig with Lydia Lunch in Florence, and then another few in different parts of Italy.

So your stuff is readily accepted in the cradle of civilization.

Yeah. Actually I'm probably better known there, just because of the concentrated population, than here. Last year, actually a few years ago, in 1999, we did a show with this group called HIU, which is "Happening Internazionale Underground"; which boils down to International Underground Happening. It's a three-day arts and music festival with different bands and all kinds of goofy art. They feature things like Robert Williams, Kozik, tattoo art, flaming Chevys; all that lowbrow stuff is very popular there. I did a show in '99, then sat out the turn of the century and did one in 2001, and did quite a big show last year with Paul Mavrides, Spain Rodriguez, and the Firehouse, which is Ron Donovan and Chuck Sperry, and their friend and associate Chris Shaw. We all did that together last year with Biafra, which was an adventure, to say the least. Biafra did his spoken word rap, and we did the three-day show in Milano. Then we went down to Torino and then did a show in Bologna and then a great big show in Rome. Then Biafra and I had a couple days so I showed him around Rome; a couple days of being tourists. I took him to the Sistine Chapel and then to the Vatican. I'm surprised we both didn't burst into flames walking around the Vatican.

Or burst out laughing.

Oh, we did that. That we did right away. I'm surprised we didn't get thrown out, actually. The Swiss Guard is pretty bad, they don't appreciate any levity. This year I'm only gonna go basically in the capacity of translator, I translated their catalog into English, and I'm going with Ron Turner, the publisher for Last Gasp. (He and I are on a couple of panel discussion things.) I'm going to be his interpreter/guide there. The featured artist this year is Gee, she was the artist for the band Crass. The woman is a genius. If I could draw one tenth as good as her, I'd think I was Raphael. She is an artistic genius, very creative, and she produced some of the most stunning agitprop art for the band Crass. I kind of persuaded the management (they would probably resent me calling them "management") the organizers of the HIU in Milano to feature Gee as their main artist this year, and they did. I'm hoping it's going to be a good show, it'll be fun to see her again. Gee is a dear friend and a comrade-in-arms, so to speak.

What are you working on right now?

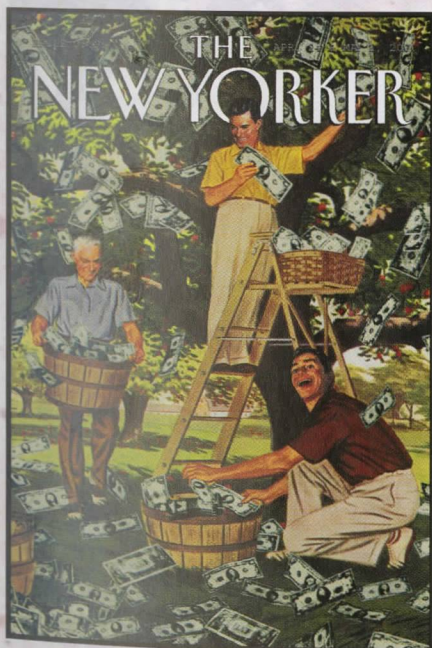
I'm working on trying to assemble new images for a third volume I'd like to put out



The Spoils of War

©1980 Winston Smith

[of Artcrime], if I can convince Ron to do another one. I have a few new pieces that are quit long. I generally make things I can photocopy (like the ones in the books are pretty close to the actual size of the original picture) but these pieces are like 30 or 40 inches long so they're impossible to photocopy and they're expensive to reproduce. I'd like to make them as cheap to reproduce and as available for people as possible, and that's what I'm trying to do now. I saw some quote by a critic who was commenting on one of Mark Twain's novels and he said, 'It's OK, but his novel is more like water compared to wine.' And Twain wrote back saying, 'Well, more people drink water than wine.' He wanted to make something that was obviously within the reach and available to more people, and I think that's kind of my bag. I guess what I'm really working on next is to have the time, (and there's precious little of it), to produce volume three. Then start on a series of shows. I've been doing shows, it seems like non-stop, for the last year or two, and I'd like more than ever not to do any more for a good long time.



The Money Tree

©1983 Winston Smith

Yeah, I was gonna ask you about the show you mentioned that Sunny Buick was putting together that you're in.

Yeah, I reckon I'm on it because I'm on the list. I'm in a show right now (April, 2002) in Detroit, with a whole bunch of different artists.

Is that at C-Pop?

Yeah, C-Pop. The theme is the circus so I've got a piece in there that's pretty wacky. I think that's going on right now. I haven't talked to Sunny but her artwork's great. I think that takes place next year, but my piece is already done; I figured I should go ahead because I hate deadlines and I hate being late so I'm trying to get the jump on it for once.

Your pieces juxtapose all these different modern elements together to create a new kind of ultra-reality or hyper-realism that doesn't really exist.

Yeah, I feel they have kind of a surrealistic look because each individual element is real and usually pretty mundane by itself. I can't think of any examples right now. Taking images out of context creates an entirely new and different context.

Like just a car, or a kid with a ball.

Right. But you juxtapose these things together and suddenly they take on either a ludicrous absurdity, which makes it funny, or it takes on some cynical statement about the original thing. Like if I had some bushman in Africa sitting in front of his hut holding a Philco radio, the absurdity of that is enough also to point out the reason he doesn't have a radio is because we have so many. Or the reason these people live in mud huts in Chile or Peru is because Anaconda Copper has gone down and strip-mined their country and rendered their land nutritionally barren for crops so that we could have copper to use copper coils in our radios. All these things tie together but if you spell them out that way they become preachy and a big message. Whereas if the visual impact is enough to make people think about the contrasts in cultures, I like the resulting effects of that. Again, some of them are total message images and other things are just wacky bullshit that's just for laughs. Sometimes I'm surprised because I'll make something that I think is completely vapid, just for laughs, and people look at it and go, 'Wow, you hit the nail on the head, that says it all.' And I'm like, 'What? What says what?' And they'll tell me some story about some very serious subject that this, in their mind, parallels. It's really a demonstration for me that art and the value of that art is in the eye of the beholder. Because the person looking at it brings meaning to it, not you, the artist.

Have there been any pieces you've looked at that have given you an epiphany in some form, where maybe your interpretation wasn't the original intent of the piece but it's made you go, 'Whoa!''

Yeah, definitely. Usually it happens sometime after I create it. It sounds crazy but it's as if I go into a trance when I'm physically producing it, which is actually just the drudgery of cutting things out, trimming the edges, gluing them down, making sure the paper's straight; that kind of thing. Sometime afterwards, it could be days, months or a year or more, it finally dawns on me that there's a whole sub-meaning behind all this. Of course what happens, too, is that these things are from ads, print ads, that were created in order to have that exact sub-meaning. You know, you think, 'Oh, that's a pretty picture of a radio,' or 'There's a pretty girl in a bikini next to that convertible, that's great.' Well yeah, but the guys on Madison Avenue who created that ad to begin with in 1949 or 1963 weren't doing it so you could be entertained by the girl in bikini or the shiny radio, they were doing it to get into your subconscious and say, 'We want to know what Americans desire, what they're afraid of.' All those studies in psychology on how the brain works, they're not interested in curing crazy people, they don't give a shit about crazy people, they want to find out what makes people tick. What motivates people to run out and buy a new car when they have a perfectly good one in their driveway. And so all those meanings that are built into these pictures from the original source are lying dormant, and emerge even faster when they're taken out of context. That's kind of what I feel I excel at, removing things from their original context and repositioning them in a more dangerous format.

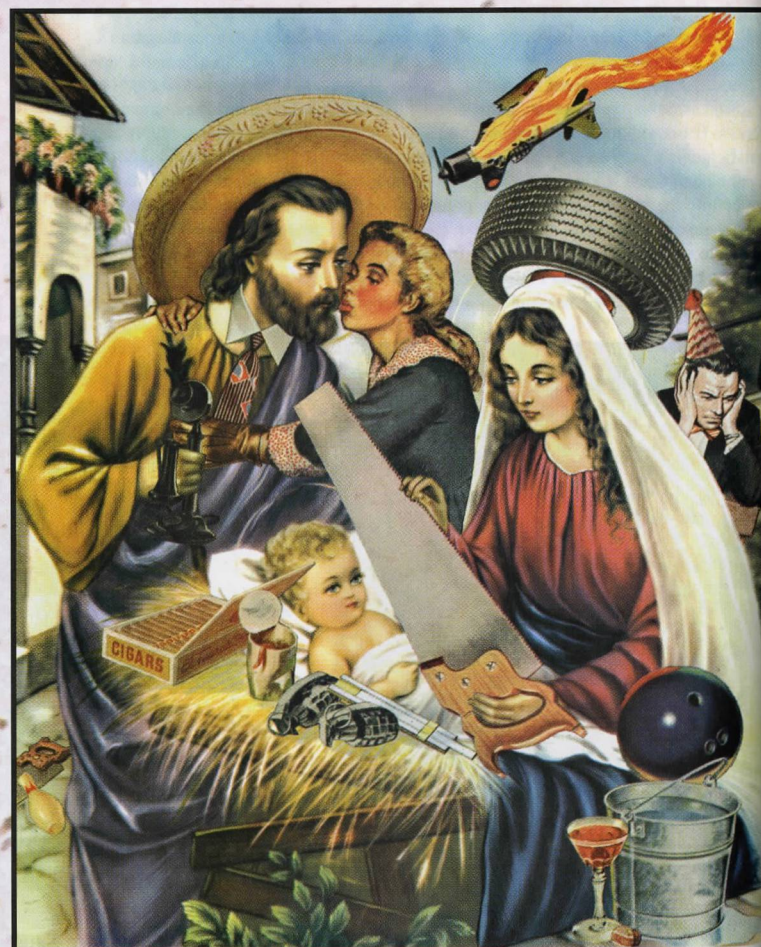
When you start working and you get into this state do you work extremely long sessions?

Yeah. I can't do things in little bits and pieces. I could never hold a nine-to-five job. I'd be living in the bushes behind the 7-11 if I depended on my work skills. I usually have to cloister myself off and just grind away for hours at a time. I'll work for 24, 36 hours, like a zombie; not sleep, barely remember to eat anything. It'll occur to me, I'll look up and it'll be like 5:30 in the morning, and I think, 'it was just ten o'clock a minute ago!' I think that's the space that most musicians and artists get into when they're doing their work. You get into this Zen space, this space of (I don't know how you'd say it in English) "Al Di La," meaning roughly; above and beyond the reality of the moment, when you're in your own space. It transcends time. You can watch a movie and two hours goes by, and you think, 'That was a nice story. Gee, it's been two hours?' Or you read a book and suddenly it's midnight, and you started the book after supper. But if you're entranced by it you get into it, and time is irrelevant. Perhaps that's the power of Art over Time. The passage of time eventually overtakes us all... But art overtakes time itself. (That is, as long as you're well supplied with mouse-traps).



Babylon Burning (I Survived the 20th Century)

©1998 Winston Smith



The Right Tool for the Right Job

©1997 Winston Smith

His head hurts, his teeth itch and his feet stink.

But that won't stop ...

the HunGOVeR GoUrmeT

By Emil Nitrate



Yo-Ho-Ho and a Bottle of Rum

No less an authority than *Playboy's* Host and *Bar Book* describes rum as follows: "Rum has a peculiarly persuasive effect. Whiskey makes a girl stop arguing. Beer soothes her. Gin disarms her. But rum cajoles."

I have not been "cajoled" by rum for some time. In fact, for much of the last decade we haven't been on the best of terms.

My first Bad Rum Encounter takes place on Long Beach Island in New Jersey, Summer 1984. It's the summer between high school and college, and a few friends and I have rented a quaint little cottage off the main drag of the island. Scratch that, it's pretty much a dive with a couple bedrooms and a screened-in porch. We, however, don't care. It's August, I've just recovered from a mean case of sun poisoning and my future is spread out before me like a long, winding road.

It's our first day at the house and we decide to invite a few dozen friends down for a feast of cheap beer, steaks on the grill, and steamed clams. Somebody has brought rum. The clear Bacardi kind. The rum is tasty, light, sweet. I have a shot and drink some beer. More shots and beers follow. My coordination falters and I spill rum on the picnic table. I lick it up. Years later I will take credit for the KISS song of the same name.

Details after this point are sketchy. To this day, witnesses swear that I was projectile vomiting whole steamed clams. I pass out in the yard of the house wearing a smile, a deathly pale complexion and a t-shirt commemorating my participation in public television's "Knowledge Bowl." A picture of that scene is taken. People who have seen it don't believe I am still alive. Housemates debate whether I should be taken to the hospital. Instead, they decide to let me sleep it off, making sure that I don't rock star and choke to death on my own sweet and clammy vomit.

During the next few months I turn green when the word "rum" is mentioned. The smell of it makes me gag. I stick to beer for a long time.

In early 1985 I visit a friend at Lehigh University. His fraternity is throwing a hotel party featuring different mixed drinks in each room. There are 18 rooms. Being a Dawn Of The Dead fan, he and his roommate have whipped up an industrial-sized batch of Zombies, a deceptively sweet mixture of white rum, dark rum, pineapple juice, sour mix and lime juice. Rather than waste my time get-

ting something to eat I spend the night eating Cool Ranch Doritos while sipping plastic cupfuls of Zombies.

The rest is a blur, though I do have a vague recollection of wedging my head into the bottom of a bunk bed so that I can remain standing during the evening's festivities. The next morning I stumble downstairs and wait for two comely lasses to exit the house's large bathroom. They stare at me, wide-eyed, which I take as a good sign. I'm feeling okay, and my hair has stayed spikey through the night. Even my Replacements shirt seems no worse for wear.

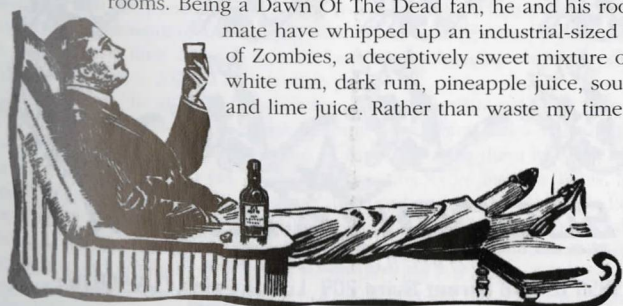
As I reach the bathroom, I discover why they're staring as well as the source of the sweet, tropical—yet cheesy—smell that's drifting down from above. I've slept in a pool of Zombie and Cool Ranch Dorito chunder, rendering my hair a matted, sticky mess.

It's at this low point that I swear off rum...

Until the fall of 1985. My encounters with the substance have reached legendary proportions and friends wonder when I'll crack under the pressure. It's another late night at Lehigh University, oddly quiet by all accounts. Friday night was the big party night, so our rag-tag bunch of revelers decide to ring in the cool, fall evening with a little Bacardi. That SEEMS like a good idea.

Details are hazy, but include a hearty rendition of Marshall Crenshaw and DEVO classics. Hey, it was 1985, cut me some slack. I recall whipping a lamp with my belt and running across campus for Greeker's, legendary hot dog-ish concoctions topped with chili, chopped onions, and God only knows what else. I fair better than one of my companions, who becomes airborne thanks to a pesky curb and bashes his knee into drunken oblivion.

The next day, I awake to an angel who asks me not to let anybody come in the bathroom. "Why does this angel need to shower?," I ask myself. The mystery is solved when I realize it's a gal from the house and I'm laying on the bathroom floor. Chalk up her angelic quality to the fact that my glasses have disappeared from my face and everything is a blur. Hell, the lady that takes my order at Taco Bell looks like a fucking angel.





It's hours before my glasses are discovered amongst the chew toy's coveted by the house's resident dog. The arms are pitted with dog bites, and the plastic lenses are not going to be covered by the Lens Crafters warranty. I entertain myself by figuring out what lame explanation I'll offer to my parents.

This ended my tempestuous love affair with rum. The occasional Rum & Coke would be allowed from time to time, but I was rarely (if ever) alone with a bottle.

Until the day a care package showed up thanks to the fine folks at Sailor Jerry's. Their clothing line—featuring the designs of legendary tattoo artist and namesake Sailor Jerry—has been featured everywhere from local mags to glossy men's rags like Maxim. They had a present for The Hungover Gourmet.

They'd come out with a rum.

It's a natural extension when you think about it. Sailor Jerry's work evokes the classic tattoo art of WWII and the men who fought for our freedom. Buxom broads and casual sayings like "Good Luck," which takes on a whole new meaning when you're staring down a platoon of Nazis or wondering when some Kamikaze pilot is gonna come screamin' down on you and punch your ticket.

I stared at the bottle of rum for some time, keeping it locked up during my move from Philly to Baltimore. The last thing I needed was a big vomit stain on the carpet to ensure the loss of my security deposit.

When I did crack the bottle, I noticed that the smell was decidedly different than the white rum odor that I can call up by way of unpleasant memory. It was spicier thanks to a hint of cherry; thicker and tougher than its Puerto Rican counterparts. I poured some into a glass and swirled it around, trying to see if this devilish concoction still held me powerless after all these years.

The first sip had a potent kick, not pleasant, not unpleasant. I set it down and came back later. The air had mellowed it. The second sip went down smoothly, as did the rest of the glass. Maybe I just wasn't worried that I'd be projectile vomiting whole steamed clams. It seemed unlikely... I hadn't had clams in months.

Check out sailorjerry.com for clothes, rum, recipes, tattoo art and a whole lot more. For toasts and recipes head on over to www.ministryofrum.com. Interested in rum label art? Peter is, and he's collected 5000+ rum labels from 89 countries at www.rum.cz. It's like rum porn. The Hungover Gourmet says check it out.

And relax, it's only cooking.

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I've said it before, and here I am at 4:30 am with a pile of crushed up empty 16-ounce Busch cans at my feet, saying it again. I fucking LOATHE local music weeklies and everything they stand for. People who write for those rags are shameless, not-alien music scene power-mongers. When I started playing music in 1980 or so I quickly became aware of this truth. At first, as new musicians, we tried to play ball with the snobbish little dandies who wrote smug little one-liner gossip columns in which they'd plug their pals, pan a few enemies and ignore anybody who hadn't approached them in a club and kissed their frigging feet. Yeah, we sent them fliers for our shows with cheerful little notes attached

trying to drop a name or two of a possible mutual acquaintance who might "open the door" for us so to speak. If we saw one of them at a club, we'd sober up and try to concoct a plan to casually get their attention. If we saw one at a party and managed to exchange pleasantries with him or her we'd go home grinning, smug and sure that our band would be rewarded with a plug in the precious weekly.

In other words, we tried to get along with those fuckfaces the same way 99.9% of bands try to. It didn't work of course. We gave up trying to please the scene kingpins in a few short weeks after we realized that in order to pass muster with them simply schmoozing with them once in a while isn't enough; you actually need to "play ball" with them. This means that as a matter of necessity you need to accept (at least publicly) their publication's band hierarchy.

This also means you are expected to open shows for other butt-licking bands who've achieved a higher spot on the totem pole as dictated by the knowledgeable critics who write for the cool weekly. (Does anyone EVER ask what their credentials are... besides me?)

Typical music weeklies coverage rarely if ever focuses on a band's creative abilities or artistic merit. Instead a band is declared a success and a "pick of the week" if they are being "scouted" by labels. Why?? Why should people considering shelling out money to see live bands give a flying fuck about the music industry courting ritual? I know it's the way music is covered in these poop sheets... but I want to know WHY and I want to know why nobody but ME seems to ask WHY? It's music... who gives a fuck what label the band is signed to? If a band achieves the ultimate (the ONLY) goal and is "signed," the weekly will respond with an orgasmic cover article predicting imminent worldwide success including a slot opening stadium shows for a bona fide huge band. In the weeks following a "signing" the weekly will ordinarily include a column or two hyping the local music scene as being the "new Seattle," "new Liverpool," "new Athens," "new Minneapolis," or whatever city they choose to acknowledge once had a "sound" identified with it.

It's an ongoing cycle that hasn't changed or wavered a bit in the 21-plus years I've been playing music. I vowed long ago that if I was ever in a position to do my bit to expose this racket I would. That's why I write about it fairly often. Not that it's done a damn bit of good... of course it hasn't. I'm just a lone voice crying in the wilderness shaking my fists at the gods, like a modern day drunk King Lear.

Once I got involved in an email group discussion on this subject. I posted a message much like what you read above and received a snotty response from a music weekly guy (by the way, no one in the discussion group ever questioned HIS credentials either) who accused me of whining over stuff that happened 20 years ago. To be accurate, when I complain about my experiences reading and dealing with music weekly scum, I'm not referring to a pinpoint in time 20 years ago; it's been an unchanging, ongoing pain in the fucking ass for 20-plus consecutive years.

Our "local" weekly music rag, The Austin Chronicle, has a fantastic club listing section. It's a huge task keeping track of ten times as many clubs as there is in a city ten times the size of Austin. I salute them for that. I just haven't had the stomach yet, in the three months we've lived in Texas, to crack open an issue and read their gossip column or band articles. You see, I'm not looking for trouble. I'd like to be able to keep picking up their mag to direct me to Dale Watson's or the Bulemics' next club date. But I'm afraid if I start reading it, I'm gonna wind up with steam blowing out of my damn ears after reading the same old familiar hype hokum. I'm afraid I'm gonna wad the damn thing up, throw it out our patio door and order Marla not to bring any more

issues home.

That's what eventually happened in Philly. I read one too many sickening stories. It finally got to the point where I forbade anyone to bring a copy into my home. The story that pushed me over the edge was a lengthy, schmoozy piece about a local group that sounded like a third rate clone of The Jam, who eventually signed to a label. BIG DEAL. The CD sucked and they haven't been heard from since. But to read the eight page hype piece about them you'd think they were the "next Beatles." If that weren't enough, the same weekly couldn't simply post the dates to the Supershow that the C.O.S. held there in 1999. Nope, they had to insult us. And when they finally ran a review of my book (a positive one) it was over a year after its publication.

I want the Austin Chronicle to be different. I don't want to have to go to war with them too. I already detect a haughty stench of snobbish asshole-ism surrounding the way that certain former country music singers have been repackaged and cleansed of their hick ways and presented as singer-songwriters down here. It's only a faint wisp that has curled thee Reb's delicate nostril hairs at this point. Considering how many great unabashed country music shows we've seen down here I'm going to try to remain open-minded for the time being.

My main subject this time around ties in with my long-term hatred of music weeklies. While packing and unpacking boxes during our move I came across a stack of vintage weekly mags from Portland, Oregon dating back to about 1980. Thumbing through them I was reminded of just how fucking arrogant and stupid (not to mention unoriginal) the New Wave bands of that era were.

Back then as one of a small handful of "Punk Rock" bands we were unavoidably pitted against the more accepted and popular New Wavers. We'd play on dead Tuesday nights to smaller and more violent and rowdy crowds at the same clubs that booked bands festooned with skinny ties and bowling shoes on more prosperous Friday and Saturday nights.

Reading the old weeklies reminded me of how the critics of the day in most places (with the exception of course of San Francisco, NYC and L.A.) lambasted Punk bands as too uncouth and unskilled to merit attention, as opposed to New Wave which was hyped as being "progressive" and "good."

The articles I read in the dated weeklies featured many, many insulting comments made by New Wave musicians themselves in regards to their punk rock counterparts. Most people I knew that were into Punk thought that New Wave was candy colored bullshit... with it's cliché quirky vocals and good natured "safe" dance songs.

Which genre stood the test of time? HMMM????

From a record collector's standpoint I can tell you that punk records from the late '70s and early '80s fetch huge amounts of money on the trading block. New Wave records don't. The "successful" bands, who had a hit or two, can be found on compilations devoted to '80s rock. Nobody seems to want the entire albums by those groups; just the hits. Since so many more copies of Wavo albums were pressed compared to D.I.Y. punk records, there's a huge difference in value speaking in general terms. For example, B-52's or Kajagoogoo albums draw a meager \$3-\$4 or even less at record shows. In contrast Punk collectors will shell out all kinds of dough for what they want. We're talking hundreds of dollars for singles even. At the Austin Record Convention a couple weeks ago many people came by our table asking about vinyl by The Clash. We were a little surprised by that... perhaps 20 years from now groups like The Clash will dominate record shows like "oldies" stuff has for a long time. I suspect that Go-Go's and Missing Persons albums will still clog the \$1 album bins along with lesser known bands such as Yipes! and Oingo Boingo.

I spent a good hour researching this column at the record show. The \$1-\$4 bins were LOADED with both mainstream and indy label New Wave LPs. It's very clear that albums by lesser known Wavo bands aren't considered "desirable" as are Punk obscurities. Obscure New Wave bands are considered failures in retrospect. File 'em alongside the stacks of scratchy disco 12" singles and Mantovani albums that are used to prop open doors at records stores across the nation.

It's funny to me... and sweet revenge, to read comments like "they can't play" and "punk rock isn't even music" in my old weekly hype sheets. In the same issue, some group of forgettable skinny tie assholes like Billy Rancher's Unreal Gods or the Immortal Confidentials put down bands like ours in a cover story... you can find our band name and that of other "crude," "talentless" (and very collectable these days) punk bands like Poison Idea, the Styphnoids or ICE 9 in tiny print in the live music listings.

The "battle of the bands" episode on TV's "C.H.I.P.S." is perhaps a bit corny and cliché... but it stands as a fairly accurate example of the animosity that existed between Punk and New Wave bands back in the day. The

punk band is depicted as being a group of trouble-making out of control assholes who want to ruin everyone's good time. I can't speak for "positive" punk types, but I think that describes pretty well most of my friends who played Punk Rock back then. The New Wave band that enters the battle of the bands (Snow Pink) is depicted as a little weird but a "positive" and bubbly act as opposed to the dreaded Punk rock band.

The original advertising slogan that inspired the New Wave genre moniker was part of a Sire records promotion. Their bands at the time included the Ramones, the Dead Boys and The Saints to name a few. Hardly a skinny tie can be found amongst that crew. Nowadays nobody with any sense thinks of those bands as "New Wave."

Even today, though, it's a bit confusing which convenient slot quite a few bands fit in. I consider, for instance, the first couple Talking Heads LPs to be on the "Punk" side of the fence based on their initial emergence at CBGB's... yet, after they became more polished and commercial they fit quite nicely into the New Wave category. I think most people lump Devo in with "New Wave" but I fucking love their early stuff... and I hate wave music as much as the next guy. The first Siouxsie and the Banshees LP is definitely Punk Rock but at some point they evolved into something else. Eddie and the Hot Rods were a rock or "pub-rock" fixture upon London's club scene long before Punk's grandpappys, the Sex Pistols, blew them off the stage at one of their first shows. Subsequently, Eddie and the boys records were packaged and promoted as Punk Rock... although the band couldn't have been too happy about the actual emergence of the crop of bona fide Punk bands forcing them to modify their act. I find it easy to visualize them and other bands who record labels later marketed as Punk bands in the U.K., kicking the crap out of Punk Rock enthusiasts. Joe Jackson admits openly in his well-written and damned entertaining autobiography that in his career pub journeyman, he was lucky to be in the right place at the right time when the "revolution" took place. He didn't resist doing what was necessary to "get behind the New Wave" shall we say... and was rewarded with some huge hits from his *I'm The Man* album.

Indeed, it became embarrassing and commercially unwise for members of the old guard of rockers in the U.K. and the U.S. to not change with the times. So many old dinosaur acts of the '70s were marched off as a group to label barber shops in the waning days of the decade that it's very easy to date their albums by their hair length. By the early '80s or so the major labels were routinely using day-glo colors, colorful stripes, polka dots, leopard skin patterns and other visual patterns identified with New Wave on album sleeves in order to give the impression the record was up to date.

Unfortunately though, most of the music depicted as new and dangerous was just the same old sappy love songs decorated with Farfisa organs and quirky/hiccup vocals. That's why such a high percentage of New Wave bands were so outright fucking bad. Give a typical mediocre bar-band hippie musician a rooster haircut and a pair of snappy Beatle-boots and a vertical striped sport jacket, and all you've got in the end is a boring act dressed up more fashionably. The ranks of New Wave bands in our town of Portland were filled with clowns who seemed to even convince themselves they suddenly were relevant and cool because they wore a pair of dimestore dayglo-sun glasses and a skinny tie.

Even though I hated a lot of the people in punk rock bands in Portland I'll say this... Punk Rock attracted the true societal outcasts, crazies and sometimes inspired geniuses. After so many years of hippies controlling the local club scene, it was like a breath of fresh air. A large percentage of the New Wave people were in it to cash in on a new fad. They had professional managers and advisers and often old ties with club owners from the hippie era. So, at the time they often prospered and drew the attention away from Punk bands.

A lot of the Punk bands made inspired records that sold very few copies at the time that happen to still sound fresh and honest today compared to the hokey clichés of New Wave.

Things haven't changed all that much. I pretty much equate the folks in today's crop of nasal, pop-oriented "punk" bands with the opportunists of the "new" wave. It's a viable career option to play in pop-punk or supposed ska bands. The underbelly of the music scene, which you'll never see on MTV, is still producing the records that will stand the test of time and sound good 20 years from now when the fashion clichés of the mainstream bands of today seem silly to future listeners.

Incidentally, if you want my personal advice on what records of today to buy to sell for big bucks in the future I'll spell it out for you in three letters: C.O.S. Be forewarned!! That Hellstomper 45 on your turntable will be worth a helluva lot of money some day when bands like No Doubt have been relegated to the budget "hits" compilations. Handle it with care and buy duplicates whenever possible.

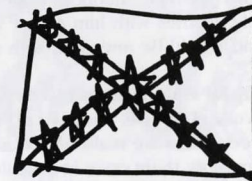
It's time to "get behind the C.O.S. bands" before they get behind you.

On to a few plugs and suggestions.

#1) A suggestion: The 2002 C.O.S. supershow will be held in New Orleans September 27th and 28th. You can see all the C.O.S. bands that weekend in a fan-friendly environment. The Supershow is much more than the typical club dates by jaded touring bands you see year 'round in your greasy ass town. It's our annual family reunion, which we have kindly made mostly open to the public.

#2) A plug: Go pick up the new Hank Williams III CD, *Lovesick, Broke and Drifting*. He's definitely one of the hottest acts in the universe right now. When we saw him play live in Austin, the country and metal sets he played (about an hour of each) were both blistering and inspiring. I repeat... DO NOT leave when it's time for the metal set (he'll announce it ahead of time). It's innovative as fuck. When he comes to your town don't miss him... and make sure and tell him, if you get the chance, that thee Whiskey Rebel sent ya'. Get behind country-metal before it gets BEHIND YOU.

#3) A self-indulgent Rancid Vat update: We've managed, in our first 90 days down here, to recruit members to fill out our Austin lineup of our now 21-year old band. We're not just doing it to crank out the same old favorites once in a while. We were banned from most clubs in Philly for horseshit reasons... we were even banned from the only practice studio around for breaking a \$5 folding chair unintentionally (Cosmo layed his now skinny ass upon it and it snapped). I'm eager to play a lot after a couple years of not having anywhere to play worth a damn. We miss all the guys from our Hostile City lineup... but we've managed to find a worthy group of bad apples down here to join up to keep the flag waving another 20 years, or until Marla and I drop dead.



so sayeth
the
"King"
the great
Whiskey Rebel

For all you Whiskey Rebel-Roo's who have been wondering how to get in touch with me down here in Texas here's our address and email info:
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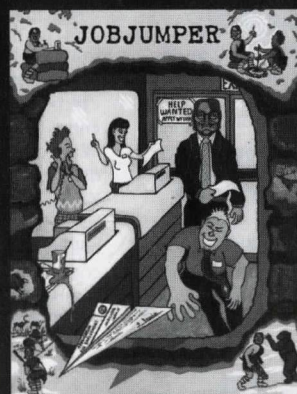
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—Alex Richmond, Philadelphia City Paper

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LOOK WHAT THEY'VE DONE TO MY WORK, MA!

by the Reverend Axl Future

Vince McMahon is not the devil. It's all about putting asses in seats. Hulk Hogan makes me sad.

There. I started off with three indisputable facts, a fine way to start a column. Everything that follows is merely my opinion, but it is all 100% true nonetheless. In this post-WrestleMania, post-"brand extension" glow, I now have several more hours a week to peruse on-line cigar bulletin boards, or perhaps re-read some old trucking magazines, or maybe take a walk and think of new gimmicks. WWFE is the only major player in town, and that's OK—survival of the fittest and all that. I can't complain, even though most of what passes for professional wrestling these days is poop. Contemplate that it's barely conceivable anyone will ever look upon the last days of WCW with fondness; it was better to have let that dog die. ECW was spiraling downward rapidly before it's demise and farther back the Gotterdammerung of the AWA ended with a coy and dusty "spurt" rather than a blazing money shot. If they could have made money, they would still be here.

That's it. In this open market, if'n you have a bundle of cash, you too can compete in the fabulous world of Professional Wrestling Promotion. My advice is: don't. We consumers have no one to blame for this state of affairs but ourselves. No evil Soundscan, no corrupt payola, no ancient Velvet/Sicilian/Japanese Mafia, no old boys network, no illuminati to hold responsible—the mob speaks, democracy in action, from many come one! We are down to a Single Federation World Order and I, a semi-acknowledged wrestling expert, feel like a man among mice. This monopoly certainly does serve to separate the wheat from the chaff, fan-wise. I point no fingers, for to quote a famous reactionary's marsupial mouthpiece, "we have met the enemy and he is us." It's time to hit the deck and go underground. Fire in the hole! No one here but us carnys...

I have often been a McMahon/WWF apologist. Many folks, out of excessive "smartness" or recalcitrant nostalgia (note the first use of this word herein), have refused to watch the recent Stamford product of the past couple of years. Their loss, I say. The in-ring work has been way way up there, more often than not, if you don't mind the short match times. I have nothing but starry-eyed loves for the recent antics of Tajiri, William Regal, the Dudleys and Kurt Angle,

to name a few. Many is the chuckle I've gotten from Steve Austin's brilliant use of the modern form of broadcasting. Wrestling is an evolving beast, and to step off the train, I thought, was to miss the ride. It ain't your grandpappy's grap-

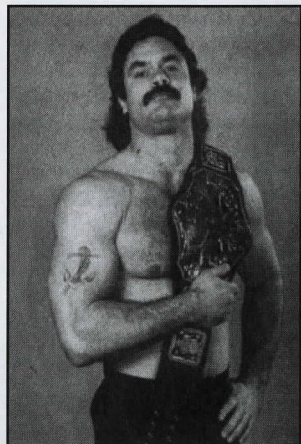
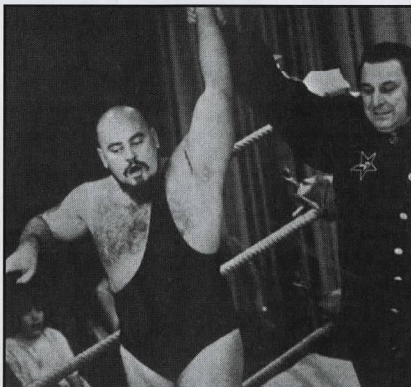
pling, and it shouldn't be.

Or is it? The recent addition and elevation of Hulk Hogan to the WWF's roster has, as stated above, made me blue. As keeping with the practice of last minute booking, the Hulkster has been the focus of the promotion, due to the immense response to him from the audience. The only non-cuss words I have to say about that are "WHAT THE—?!?!?!" This is no example to the youngsters who so desperately need pro wrestlers as role models for their imminent plunge into the big scary Ghost Existence We Call Life. By The Beard of the Prophet, 'rassling is not even supposed to be for kids, and it's certainly not for folks seeking to re-live their cartoonish short-pants days. I have never been a Hogan fan, not even a baby-face supporter, and therein has lain my strength. Bless him, I would never begrudge him a payday. However, I feel like Diogenes—yes, that is it, I am a heelish and better looking Diogenes, stumbling amongst the corrupt, seeking for Truth. What in Hades do the people want? NOSTALGIA (use #2)?!!?

My last few trips to various local indy shows have also proven fruitless. Who trained these kids? I can see: other kids, and a VCR. Without a long apprenticeship and old school veterans to guide them, I can feel no connection with their matches. I would even settle for "making sense," let alone "telling a story." However, cementing my outsider status, the crowds of hoodie-wearing fans eat it up. What's blood without a feud, what's a plancha without the danger, what's the point of mic work without an angle to back it up? Oh sure, there is much talent to be enjoyed, but I would trade a baker's dozen of these hairless gym-rat gymnasts in PVC bikeshorts with the pseudo tribal design on the side for one grizzled, beer-breathed, heavy gutted scary man with iron on letters down the sides of his long tights. Nostalgia (#3)? No, realism. The pragmatism of pro wrestling's language (used properly), the semiotics of exaggeration and iconography to teach the primal lessons of life, the spectacle of the DeBordian entertainment writ large, a garish canvas painted bloody with a hyper-real brush of Technicolor self-referential conflicts—that is what I am missing.

Our faulty memories gloss over the crap of the past. Much old wrestling was, to quote my teacher, "the drizzling shits."

Thus, I avoid the trap of nos... aw, you know. This brings me to my salvation—our salvation, wrestling fans: video tapes. I have been wading through my vast collection, much of which still remains unviewed. I am not such a purist that the fast forward button does not often get heavy use.



However, there is nothing like seeing a crowd get rabid when Ivan Koloff uses the ropes for leverage, as our former Soviet foes were wont to do. You want to talk about babyface pops, watch Magnum TA come out to wrestle Chief Wahoo McDaniel (RIP). The best tapes are the ones recorded right from TV, in markish delight, with one of those massive old top-loading VCRs, so you miss the first few seconds of each Captain Lou interview as someone's chubby little digit dove for the "record" button and the solenoids kicked in. One's early preferences (of the anonymous author of the tape and practitioner of the Gysin cut-up method) are, if not wholly agreeable to the viewer/critic, a portal into the purer demimonde of youthful enthusiasm. Commercials are good, too, for the true mind-set whilst taking it all in. Late-'80s Portland wrestling was like Memphis-lite, I've learned. It was never as bad as bad Mid-South (which could get downright painful), but it never reached the crazy heights of that fine territory either. I viewed about 12 hours of it a while ago, and I am a better man for it. Do you know the intricacies of the infamous Coal Miner's Glove Match? Well, I do, laddie, so when I walk into a room you had best stand up and give me your seat.

That's where the lessons are. Eliminate the obsessive sublimated sexuality of joshi (Japanese women's wrestling, for my less geeky readers) fanatics—too much screeching and finishers—and instead choose the tapes from a gay leatherman's collection—all Dutch Mantell, Jim Neidhart and Rick Rude. Wear your, or rather someone else's, heart on your sleeve and distill the essence of pro wrestling. The lovely excess of early TNTs—that's Tuesday Night Titans—blossoms into charming and almost innocent lucid experimentation, as McMahon and company try to discover what to do with nationwide exposure, a swollen roster and an unholy amount of cash. It's akin to the modern WWF without the stink of fopsweat from a huge merchandising bill and suits looking at ratings. The brilliant use of veterans like Kevin Sullivan and

under-appreciated locals such as D.C. Drake makes the early days of ECW something wonderful. Every indy wrestler would be better off stealing the moves from any Dick Murdoch tape. The world would truly be a better place, as the inspiration that would replicate itself in the bright souls of the future wrestlers watching, and the genius meme of Captain Redneck would live on. Bob Backlund, whom

I reviled in my salad days, is seen in a new light, his clumsy matwork reflecting off the sweaty horde of monster heels that Senior supplied him with. The pathos of the history of women's wrestling is echoed in each hair-pull by Penny Banner. It's there for all with eyes to see.

Will wrestling survive? No doubt. My lantern seeks, it's beam piercing o'er the bowed heads of humanoids everywhere. I refuse to give in to The Huckster, or the curmudgeonly negative existence of the smart mark, or the sweet necrosis of the Poppy of Nostalgia (a-ha!). Support your local indy federation, especially if they hold cards in bars. Salvation is out there, if you know where to look.

—RAF



P.S. - Don't even ask me about CLAW HOLD! #3.

It's coming, I swear. The chosen theme of The Human Orchid Extravaganza, AKA The All Gay Gimmick Issue, is a weighty one, and telling on my soul.

Doesn't Adrian Adonis deserve the best? Yes, he does, after being killed because of a moose up in Canada, if nothing else. Issues #1 (The Crimson Mask Edition) and #2 (Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About The Art Of Blowing The Deadly Mist) are still available for \$4 each, and \$2 s&h per order—that's cash only, kiddies. Shirts, stickers and videos abound. The website stagnates. 1658 N. Milwaukee Ave., #277, Chicago ILL, 60647, clawhold@ripco.com. Feel free to buoy my spirits with queries, opinions, bookings and free stuff.

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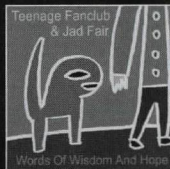


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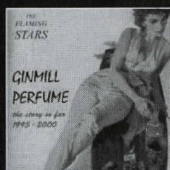
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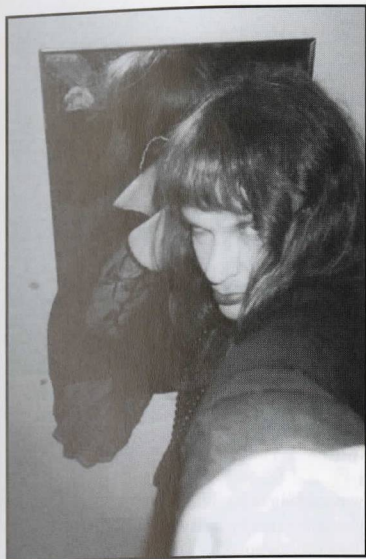


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TORNADO IN A JAR



(This is the fifth and final chapter of the Leaving Trains Get Lucky Tour diary. The story so far: The Trains went spelunking in Missouri, which somehow triggered death threats from Jesus freaks; got stuck in a tornado; received a guided tour of Fort Wayne from the Beautys; joined up for most dates of the tour with Honeyburst, a rockin' spinoff of the Cynics; had a lot of stuff stolen when the van was broken into in D.C.; and got insulted by a third-rate Black Sabbath cover band in New York City.)

Like a swimmer flipping over, turning around in her lane after she reaches the end of the pool, we pushed off the wall of the East Coast and plunged west,

heading into the sunset for the rest of the tour. Only two concerts remained, in Columbus and Detroit, and it was already possible to see beyond them. Over the plains and Rocky Mountains, beyond our mutual states of suspended, suspenseful animation and delayed adolescent wandering, all the way back to Los Angeles and jobs and responsibilities. The final two shows took on a mournful kind of pre-nostalgia, and we partied harder than ever with Honeyburst, not wanting to admit it was going to end.

I don't remember how, but we made it to Bernie's Distillery in Columbus, Ohio in time for the show after our late-afternoon start from Washington, D.C. I next recall lurking about in the shadows of the staircase backstage, chatting with Paul Bearer, taste-making C14 contributor and former leader of Three Foot Acid and Philly's answer to Fearless Leader, the Serial Killers. ("I am the king! In bed and in the ring!") I spotted Eric Davidson of the New Bomb Turks hanging around, and there was a good, lively crowd. I circle the room, eavesdropping. Everybody seemed especially animated, chatty and intelligent.

What made the night's lineup special was a set from the Cheater Slicks, who mixed moping, thorn-snarled balladry with track-rattling, jamming rave-ups. Formerly from the Boston area and now based in Columbus, the Cheater Slicks burst like a sudden summer squall. Then they were gone... Honeyburst were in especially fine form as well; singer Michael Kastelic flirting with everybody, prowling deep into the crowd with his long mike cord, and I was sorry that we no longer had a video camera to prove it all. I don't remember much about our Leaving Trains set, except rhyming my guitar in unison with Melanie's during the cliff-side breaks of "Creeping Coastline of Lights," trying to bring the ocean to Ohio.


Afterward, I felt faint, dizzy and distracted by all the beautiful women in the club. It seemed like there were more than usual. I had a crush on this one local who was always surrounded by a knot of people, laughing and hanging on her every word. She was so vivacious, with pretty black hair and these really cute arms, simmering under the veil of the sleeves of her black chiffon blouse. I wanted to hug her, and grab those sexy, curving arms and twist them like the branches of a tree around me. I wanted to cup that valentine face in my hands and drink her up. I wanted to say something to her, but I could not. I tried so hard not to be obvious that I rarely stole a glance in her direction, and she probably didn't notice me at all.

I needed a different set of trees, a brand new pair of arms. The purity of motion, of travel. I was hoping I could still find something, somebody that I couldn't find in L.A. That surprising exchange of kisses with the artist in the hotel elevator in D.C. had been exciting, but it didn't seem connected to anything like a serious relationship or True Love. Maybe it was just a moment, already gone. I still felt adrift, depending on the swings of the tour's geographic pendulum to cure everything.

We didn't even have to move anymore. The van did all the driving. The road swept under us like a rug being pulled away. Rivers and cities and fields and horizon flashed by meaninglessly. One moment I'm standing in a bar in Columbus and the next I'm rubbing my eyes at some windswept gas station hundreds of miles down the interstate, seeing after-images of that girl-in-black's face in the pavement.

I don't know where we stayed, I don't know how we got there, I don't know what happened.

When I came to, I found myself behind the wheel, driving into

 by Falling James

Detroit, negotiating a series of detours and freeways under construction. Detroit Rock City! James Jamerson. The Supremes. The Four Tops. The Stooges. The MC5. The Dogs. The Miracles. Barry Sanders. The Bad Boy Pistons. De De Troit of U.X.A. And didn't Nicole Bobek skate there for a while? Motown! Even if it seems that the area hasn't produced a lotta great music since the Dogs moved to L.A. way back in the mid-'70s, Detroit is still like a Mecca to me, to a lot of us. It's more an idea than a place sometimes, dictating my expressions from thousands of miles away. All my known life, whether I'm imitating Iggy's phrasing and laconic, slack-jaw-dumb poetry, or remembering my mom driving us kids to school, the anxiety thumping in my heart about a girl and being late and far away and from a worse neighborhood than her, always feeling like a loser, never could catch up, mixed with the desperation of "Love Child" by the Supremes on the morning-freeway radio, the glorious ache of it all. Maybe I've seen Roger And Me too many times, but I tend to romanticize Flint and Ann Arbor and good ol' Kalamazoo and Detroit, as I did in "Ice Cream Truck": "Thinking about a piece of Detroit in the pavement/thinking about thinking way too much!" And that's barely mentioning that crazy, lost night after the Trains played Motown in the '80s, when I was on such an insightful and major drunk, and weird things kept happening, like commiserating with a scared, prophetic hooker, throwing rocks at passing cars and getting in and out of some trouble that ensued. Later, I jumped from the van and got away; wandered, seriously lost, through a series of alleys before the rest of the group eventually found me and dragged me back inside the van. In my mind at the time, I wasn't going to leave Detroit until we helped solve all of its problems. Unfortunately, I passed out before that could happen and woke up the next day in Chicago.

Now I was back, though no longer as drunkenly certain that I could save the place. Or that it even needed saving! Instead of enduring some lame band in Hollywood with their boring and "authentic" Detroit tribute sound, we were finally here in the real Motor City. The blue-collar rock & roll auto-motive heart of the inner continent. A center, a fulcrum, a northern soul crossroads, black and white, black and blue, and burning like houses on Halloween.

We were also thrilled to be hearing real cool bands from Detroit again, starting with the sexy, primal, soul-scouring, sleazy garage of the Demolition Doll Rods, as well as the Come Ons, the Detroit Cobras and the White Stripes. I was worshipping Detroit again, but not so much to mull over Ron Asheton's entrails as to rejoice in the Detroit Cobras, with that powerhouse diva Rachael Nagy, and the Come Ons, with their ballpark-organ grind and '60s girl-pop grooviness (thanks to singer-bassist Deanne Iovan, the new queen of serene). And everybody knows about the White Stripes by now. Detroit is back... and for the first time in years, so were we.

We arrived at the club in late afternoon, around the time that Honeyburst's van pulled up. The Majestic Theatre has several parts, including the theater where Houdini gave his last performance, a bowling alley, a diner, and the Magic Stick, the upstairs nightclub hosting our bill. We lugged our equipment up the stairs and across the club, then relaxed and watched Honeyburst's soundcheck, which included, just for us, special run-throughs of Big Star's Alex Chilton and Chris Bell's "In the Street" (a.k.a. That '70s Show song) and Led Zep's "Good Times, Bad Times." They were hot versions, thanks especially to Mr. Michalski's rippingly elegant guitar playing and Kastelic's yowling vocals, the arrangements both faithful and Honeyburst-flavored.

After soundcheck, most of the musicians wandered around, killing time in the bowling alley. I slunk elsewhere, thinking about Houdini and death and bondage and wanting to escape and not wanting to escape, and how Houdini tried so hard when he was alive to talk to the dead, and whether Houdini ever found anything in the afterlife. Eventually, about ten people showed up to the Magic Stick, and the bands crawled out onstage like angry trained lions. We were actually pretty lucky that we only had to play two shows with such poor turnouts on the entire tour and this time, unlike in Philadelphia, we were up for the challenge. It was the last concert, and the club wasn't really empty if you included the ghosts. The audience was small, but highly concentrated with celebrities in the D-Troit aristocracy, like the Trash Brats' Toni Romeo and Ricky Rat (and their friends), and writer Norene Cashen, who plied me with Neruda and distracted and dazzled me with clever wordplay. Melanie and I were also thrilled to chat with Danny & Margaret from the Demolition Doll Rods. I was especially delighted when Margaret



top: Falling James through the looking glass; right: Melanie Vammen, Miss Koko Puff & Falling James



left: Miss Koko with Hot Damn's Allen Clark and Zebra Stripes;
right: spin the bottles - Honeyburst's Michael Kastelic with Melanie & Miss Koko in Pittsburgh



Doll Rod confided that she was going to write a song about the stockings I was wearing!

Honeyburst played furiously, like they do every night. I never got sick of watching them. I tried to linger on "Window," "Arthur Lee" and "The Tone" one last time, and I can still hear the chords clanging in my head, Michael K. waving his maracas to resurrect us. The Leaving Trains' performance was fun, energetic and loose, with more volume in the amps and variations in the set list. Bassist Miss Koko Puff even took a lead vocal turn or two. Near the end, road manager Fred Manchento jumped onstage with us and sang his Helpful Nuns original "(I'm an) Electric Eel (for Your Love)." I thought our version was properly sloppy and chaotic, just like the real Helpful Nuns!

Then it was all over. We hung out backstage in the empty club, not wanting to leave. Miss Koko Puff and Melanie V. became pretty hammered, along with almost everyone in Honeyburst. It was quite the unrepressed, sentimental end-of-tour party blowout, with much flashing of breasts and general carousing. After a good deal of time, the staff of the Magic Stick prevailed upon us to continue our leave-taking on the sidewalk. There, as the rest of Detroit slumbered, we were forever young and heroic, and we talked and reminisced and joked, then hugged goodbye and beseeched each other to stay in touch. No one really wanted to admit that the Get Lucky Tour was over so soon, but we finally climbed in our van, Honeyburst staggered into theirs, and they headed back to Pittsburgh while we turned ruefully West.

I took us from Detroit's now-empty tangle of under-repair freeways out on to the straightaway of the highway, turned a corner, and swung low our sweet chariot to Anderson, Indiana, where we dropped off drummer Allen Clark, the first to suffer tour separation anxiety. He and wife Zebra and son AC3 invited us to stay with them in their elaborate haunted mansion, but we could still hear the highway hush in our heads and feel the deliberate tugging of the road so Melanie, Miss Koko, Fred and I clambered back in the van while we still had travel momentum.

Then we drove.

We drove like a dream until we reached Kansas, which seemed like a dream anyway. The plains were invitingly green and lush, like childhood, and the flowers seemed so exuberant under the deep blue, innocent sky. Yet the mini-marts sold ominous disaster souvenirs: T-shirts and postcards with brown and black tornadoes, and small plastic jars of water that funneled into tornado-shape bubbles when stirred up. I couldn't help thinking about the pervasive destruction we'd just driven through in Oklahoma, and then being caught on the fringes of the other tornado in Indiana. I also thought of the unending parade of Midwestern tourists on Hollywood Boulevard, stocking up on Marilyn Monroe posters, Betty Boop coffee mugs and James Dean beach towels. What was the difference? Now I was the idiot tourist, buying Kansas sunflower stickers, a tornado-in-a-plastic-jar toy, and a twister t-shirt emblazoned with "We're Not in Kansas Anymore." Kansas was so luridly exotic to me, the complete opposite of where I'm from. No ocean, no mountains, no hills. Just flat and wide in every direction, omnipresently under the endless sky.

You could lose all perspective in a place like this. After many hypnotizing miles of farmland that unspooled verdantly around us, Fred suddenly got excited when he thought he saw the Oz-like silver spires and skyscrapers of a big city off in the distance. But it turned out they were only grain silos.

Trailer rigs rumbled past in convoys that shook the van with invisible waves. The worst drivers were the ones from the ubiquitous Covenant trucking company, with their anti-abortion admonishments painted on the backs of the trailers. The way many of them drove, they seemed more pro-death than pro-life.

When we reached the outskirts of Denver, I was starting to break down, and so was the van, with smoke pluming out of the hood. I was overcome by a powerful fever and aches and only vaguely remember being towed ingloriously through the streets of Denver. I recall somebody said that the tow truck driver was cute. At one point we passed a theater where the marquee accused our friends Betty Blowtorch of having to open for Vanilla Ice. (It's possible I dreamed this, but everyone else says it's true.) We ended up getting dropped off at a motel, where Fred spent the next two days repairing the van, and I languished insensate like the helpless, fever-wracked, fainting heroine of a romance novel, trying to sleep while the sadists in the band insisted on watching some hideously offensive Tom Hanks & Meg Ryan film to its perfectly obvious conclusion. Then we got back in the van and vaulted the Rocky Mountains, drifting innocently like feathers over the desert until we were home.

EPILOGUE

Miss Koko never got her clothes back... longtime prodigal son, drummer Dennis Carlin, rejoined the band after the Leaving Trains returned to L.A. and, along with new bassist Andrew Buscher, helped finish the recording sessions for *Emotional Legs* (the Trains' first new CD since 1996), recently released on Steel Cage... still living in Indiana, sometime Trains drummer Allen "Alien Rock" Clark II plays guitar in the bump-and-grind garage-trash combo Hot Damn! (which stars his wife, singer-bassist Zebra Stripes) and in AC3, a punk family affair fronted by their 7-year-old son, Allen Clark III... all the Leaving Trains except Falling James are also in a new band called Pointy Kitty, with lead vox split by Miss Koko Puff (ex-Sluts for Hire) and Dennis... Dennis also collaborates with Fred Manchento (the Helpful Nuns) in the sinister synth duo EMA 3, part of L.A.'s "newer new wave" scene that includes bands like Radio Vago and the Von Steins.

Honeyburst did indeed make it back to Pittsburgh, and recorded an album's worth of all the great originals I've been raving about. Look for it on Sympathy. Meanwhile, Honeyburst singer Michael Kastelic and bassist Smith Hutchings are also performing again with drummer Tom Hohn and guitarist/Get Hip Records honcho Gregg Kostelich in the Cynics, the legendary garage-rock band that recently reunited. The Cynics even made a rare West Coast appearance at the Scramarama festival in L.A. in November 2001... The Beautys are more beautiful than ever. Last year, they released *Thing Of Beauty*, a full-length CD on Cheetah's Records with insolent, economical punk rants about drinking ("Hello Floor"), drugs ("What Drugs?") and evolution ("Fuck Evolution"), scattered with doomy cave-surf instrumentals ("Leakerville") and some Muffs-style bursts of pop-punkiness ("Only Worse").

This tour diary never ends. The Leaving Trains go on the road again across North America in 2002.

To read earlier chapters of the Get Lucky Tour diary, go to <http://www.artnet.net/~leaving-trains>



left: two Michaels - Honeyburst at the Magic Stick, Detroit; right: back in a New York goof - Bobby Belltower (ex-Trains, Nymphs, Motorcycle Boy), Miss Koko, road manager Fred Manchento, Melanie & Allen



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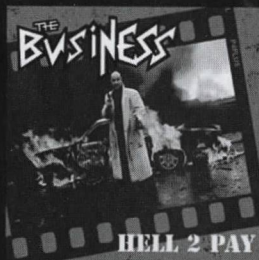
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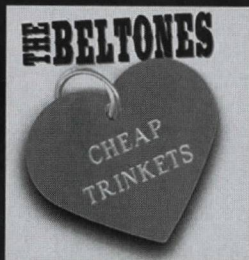
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FIFI AND THE MACH III

by Greg E. Lipman

This interview is basically a fait accompli. For example, I haven't had much to do with punk zines for quite a while and one of the last interviews I ever helped out on was with Jeff Dahl (who is connected with Fifi and the Mach III) back in the Powertrip days. The first time I ever heard Fifi and the Mach III was on a 1+2 Records compilation, *School's Out*. They stood out immediately with their cover of Social Distortion's "So Far Away" (from S.D.'s major label debut no less) in the midst of a bunch of Japanese "lo-fi 'cuz its kool" bands. Fifi's vocals were a good, tough and soaring match for Ness' original: a far cry from the high pitched (insert annoying) whine that so many female Jap. vocalists adopt. Their name stuck in my mind and a few months later I found their fourth album, *Hullabaloo*. Major label, eye-catching Kozik cover—"man," I thought, "these guys are getting big." The sound was an improvement over the comp. cut. In fact, they reminded me a lot of the Exploding White Mice—starting from a Ramones base but with all kinds of punk rock and roll sensibilities thrown in. And again, Fifi's vocals fit right in with the music, both sweet and sneering. I moved to Hiroshima about two years ago and fate kicked in. I found out that a local drummer was going to be pounding skins for Fifi and the Mach III at an upcoming gig. Turns out the band is based in Kita Kyushu, about an hour and a half from Hiroshima; I thought they were based in Tokyo or Osaka like most bands that you hear about. More about that in the interview. Anyhow, got to catch them live, opening for a "mellow-core" (think a watered-down watered-down NOFX) band with a hit commercial jingle. But the packed club reacted well to the Mach III attack— including "Sonic Reducer" and their paean to Jap. monster flicks, "Makahoy Zombie." I was able to chat with Fifi and Nolly a bit and discovered mutual musical and generational affinities. They've put out five albums and a bunch of singles on labels in the U.S. and all over Europe but since the last two albums were released on Jap. majors, they didn't get outside the country much so the band may have dropped off some people's radars. But, they carry on.

Undaunted by the loss of their original guitarist, they will embark on a two-week European tour in late May.

(F= Fifi, N = Nolly, G= Greg)

G: This is kind of a pat interview question but what were your earliest musical interests?

F: I first listened to the Carpenters, in primary school, on the radio. And next, the Bay City Rollers. They were huge in Japan.

G: I can see that. Did you see them live?

F: Yep! (laughs) I was 12 or 13 years old. Everybody liked them as idols but I was into the music. Of course I didn't know about the Nick Lowe connection until later. Then, in junior high, I got into Cheap Trick, KISS, the Ramones—I got into the Stooges and the

Ramones at the same time and then got into punk in general.

N: Around 11 or 12, I was into the Beatles. I couldn't buy records so I would set a tape player in front of the radio and make tapes that way. In junior high I got into western rock, like KISS, C.C.R., Queen. My favorites were KISS and Aerosmith. I used my otoshidama (New Year's gift money) to buy my first record, KISS Alive.

G: So under Gene Simmons' influence you picked up the bass?

N: Just hockey stick air guitar. I played guitar first in a high school cover band. We did Beatles, Pistols, Ramones—Japanese punk bands Anarchy, Carrol (Yazawa Eikichi). But we couldn't find a bass player so I switched to bass.

G: Fifi, did you have a band in high school?

F: No. I wanted to start a girl band but the problem was that there weren't any other girls into the Stooges and Ramones.

[laughs]

G: What Jap. bands were playing back then?

N: Well semi-locally there was Son House, some members went on to start Sheena and the Rockets, and the Roosters (The Roosters were a revved up roots band, kind of Heartbreakers with the '50s edge more prominent. Definitely influenced a lot of Jap. bands like Guitar Wolf and the Mad 3). The Roosters played a lot around here and they were a great live band. Really tight rhythm section. Seeing them was a real awakening for me and made start to get serious about playing.

G: When did you guys meet?

N: In high school. We were in the same class. (In Japanese schools, the kids stay in the same class all the time and the teachers move around). We mutually influenced each other musically but we had a little bit different tastes. I liked hard rock a little more, and the Ramones.

F: I was more into the Stooges (laughs).

G: So when did you start playing together?

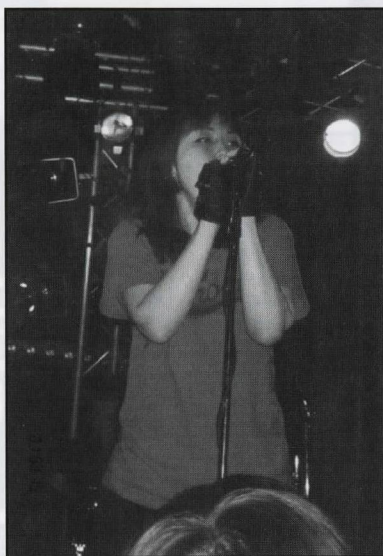
N: After I graduated, in '81, I was playing seriously in a band called Upbeat Underground and we got pretty popular so there was talk about going to Tokyo and getting on a major label. But I quit about that time. We had gotten married and had a kid in '83. So I quit college and started working. I didn't want to pick up and move to Tokyo.

G: The Tokyo vacuum effect...

N: Yeah, everybody goes running to Tokyo to try to get on a major label. Especially back then, there was no real underground scene. Only a scene revolving around the music industry. No one knew how to make or put out their own records. Local scenes were just practice

spaces before going to Tokyo. But, we didn't like that thinking, we wanted to stick around Kita Kyushu and have a cool band here.

F: We started looking for local band members. I was going to sing but I



ended up getting pregnant about the time we found a guitarist.

N: So in '83 Tsukasa and I started the Mach III with a different singer. Half originals and half Ramones covers. Then, in 1989, Fifi started singing and we officially became Fifi and the Mach III.

G: (pointing to the Kawasaki Mach III sitting in their living room) Does it still run?

N: Uh, I don't think so [laughs] it's been a while. It's a crazy bike though. The original widomaker, 500cc, 3 cylinder. It's real light in front so you can pop a wheelie pretty easily. When it came out in Japan there were no helmet laws. It was on the road when I was in kindergarten. It was loud, smoky, fast as hell. Triumph had the fastest bikes and this was their shot at beating Triumph which it did. I was never into those big Harleys. This is a real Mad Max bike.

G: I didn't know. I always think "Little Honda" when I think about '60s Jap. bikes.

N: Yeah, Beach Boys. But this bike sold well in the U.S. This one is a reverse import, miles per hour speedometer. There's almost none in Japan, you know. They toss stuff when it's outdated here, but there's lots of collectors clubs in the U.S.

G: So did you sing in chorus in school or anything before the band?

F: No, no lessons or anything. I just thought it'd be a good challenge.

G: And you have always sung in English, right?

F: Well, it'd be easy to write and sing in Japanese but it just doesn't go with rock melodies. Japanese has very flat intonations. The Japanese "sound," like you have in Noh or Kyogen theater, is very flat. It doesn't "roll."

N: If we sang in Japanese, we'd have to destroy the accent and I love Japanese so I wouldn't want to do that. There's no other way to make it fit.

F: We're Japanese and our English isn't great but we feel that we should have our songs in English.

N: Americans invented rock and roll so out of respect we feel we should sing in English. [talk ensues about how it doesn't matter, about how rock lyrics don't have to be grammatically correct and the fact that odd, unique juxtapositions of language are beneficial to rock lyricism]

G: So in '89 you started gigging as Fifi and the Mach III?

N: Yeah. The Roosters, the Mods, and Sheena and the Rockets had gotten kind of big and since they were originally from Fukuoka, about an hour from Kita Kyushu, there was this whole "Mentai Beat" (mentaiko is a famous, local, spicy cod roe) explosion. A lot of Roosters type bands but nobody really doing a Ramones type band. So we played live but didn't really fit in.

F: People who saw us weren't that, um, responsive [laughs].

N: We played then like we do now: 1-2-3-4 GAHHNN! Non-stop. And they would just stand there.

F: There were punk bands, but like hardcore fashion bands. Nothing like what we were doing.

G: You put out a demo in '90?

N: Yeah and it sold out but mostly to people in Tokyo. Word of mouth. Our second demo got to the owner of Barn Homes/1+2 Records, Kunio Yoshiwara. Who gave a copy to Jeff Dahl and Jeff recommended that 1+2 should release us. He talked to us about doing a single but we ended up recording 14 songs.

F: We told him to pick the best two but he decided not to let it go to waste and released them all as an album.

G: Thus the two Pistols covers.

F: Yeah, we thought of those as B-sides.

N: That Cherry Vanilla cover also.

N: We recorded it on 8-track but it sounded shitty so Yoshiwara sent it to Scott McCaughy (Young Fresh Fellows) to remix it.

F: 1+2 had worldwide distribution. And it sold pretty good though we weren't that happy with the recording. I think Yoshiwara was happier with it than we were. Jeff Dahl heard it and he wanted to produce our next one so we got to record some songs with him when he was in Tokyo in '94.

G: And you started playing live in Tokyo around then?

N: Yeah, the crowds were much better there. We played with the Remains (Golden Arms), American Soul Spiders, the Registrators, Phantom Rats, The Cynics—Greg, from Get Hip, put out a single of ours. A Shangri-las cover.

F: The recordings with Jeff came out as 1976 with some other singles tracks, so it wasn't a fully planned album either. But we started hearing from European labels—No Tomorrow, Rotto, Screaming Apple, Demolition Derby—so we started putting out singles in Europe but locally we were still unknown.

N: The only fan letters we got were from foreigners. But it was cool to hear from fans no matter where.

G: But you were on 1+2, so you must've started getting some Japanese fans.

N: Yeah, some. We played in Kanazawa, Ishikawa prefecture. Tokyo and Ishikawa-ken. (think the Idaho of Japan)

F: There was talk about a U.S. tour and a European tour around that time but Tsukasa got busy with his work so we had to turn down the tours. We thought about getting another guitarist since Tsukasa couldn't quit his job but there was nobody around. Even though we wanted to tour, we couldn't.

N: We went through a few drummers too. We had a hard time finding another one.

F: Around here there was some gossip that we were a strict, demanding band. [laughs]

N: Too stoic.

G: So you ended up with a drummer in Tokyo?

N: Higashikawa was a friend from high school, a few years older than me. He had moved to Tokyo and drummed for a few bands before getting into production. I had talked to him about producing us so when our drummer quit we asked to drum also. That's how *Hullabaloo* came about. He had major label connections.

G: So practice was...

F: We don't like to practice!

N: With our style, you don't need to practice much. Playing live, though, is important so we put all our energy into that.

G: The first time I heard you was on that 1+2 compilation and I thought you really stood out.

N: 1+2 is a garagey label so people always thought that we were a hardcore garage band but we're really not like that. We're not into the lo-fi sound at all. We like a big, powerful sound. But we ended up on 1+2 because there weren't any other labels that were interested.

G: So you spent more time and money on Hullabaloo?

N: Yeah, but we're not that happy with it either.

F: The studio where we recorded it, in Fukuoka, is a cool analog studio and they knew how to get a good punk guitar sound but Higashikawa mixed it and he has kind of a pop ear, doesn't really know rock that well.

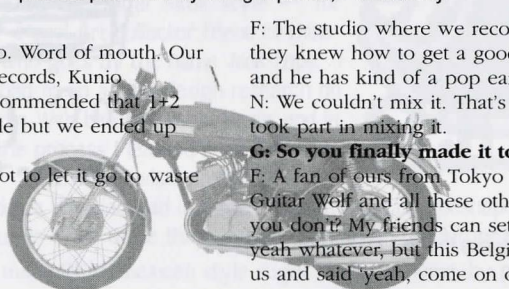
N: We couldn't mix it. That's why with the new one, *I'm Ramona*, we all took part in mixing it.

G: So you finally made it to Europe in 2000. How did that happen?

F: A fan of ours from Tokyo was living in Europe and asked us, 'How come Guitar Wolf and all these other Japanese bands tour Europe and the U.S. and you don't? My friends can set you up with some gigs over here.' We thought, yeah whatever, but this Belgian production company, Teenage Head, knew us and said 'yeah, come on over'. They work with Chixdiggit, Huntingtons,



photos provided by Greg Lipman, Fifi & Nolly



Groovie Ghoulies. So Tsukasa got one week off and we were able to go.

G: What was the best thing about the tour?

F: Well, we always played to a few, listless people locally and in Tokyo, even though we would have a lot of people, Japanese are, you know, kind of shy. So it was the first time we played for really enthusiastic fans.

N: Really. Crazy!

G: So it was surprising at first, I imagine?

N: Yeah, but the more energy the audience has, the more energy we wanted to put out.

F: Also, in Japan rock is so exclusively for kids or young adults. In Europe there were people older than us who came to see us! [laughs]

G: What about Tsukasa's quitting?

F: He told us in August of last year and did his last show with us in September. He's the only one who knows the real reason because he pretty much keeps things to himself. But he just told us that he'd accomplished all that he could with the band.

N: He just lost his energy, his will to play with the Mach III, he said.

G: After 14 years, was it a shock?

N: Yeah, a little, but we could halfway see it coming. It started to seem difficult for him over a year before. We're a very powerful band and we all started at the same level but he was dropping behind.

G: But you never thought about stopping when he quit?

N: Just the opposite really. We thought, let's keep pushing ahead. We couldn't do tours before because of Tsukasa but his playing was good and really fit the band so we kept him. We're still not satisfied. We haven't put out an album that we really feel 100% about. We want to keep getting better, be a better live band. The end may come some day but we don't see it now. Becoming like Mick Jagger would suck though.

[laughter]

F: Yeah, the point isn't to keep going on just to go on but do something

cool. The ideal is to be like Iggy!

N: But for us, the whole sex, drugs image of rock, we've never been like that. If you really do that you can't go on for very long. If I hadn't adopted a stoic approach, I couldn't have gone on for so long. Lots of self-control, being healthy but when we play live, go crazy.

G: There's the samurai connection, ascetic training and battle frenzy!

N: I told you I feel I have this contradiction in that I love traditional Japanese things like the ideo of bushido and I practice martial arts very seriously but I love American rock, too, so—I'm really stoic. Maybe Aerosmith is really stoic too. (laughs) There is some connection with that inner drive, single-minded approach to a target, I guess.

G: So you have a new guitarist?

N: Well, for now—until after the European tour we have Takashi, from a Hiroshima band, Straight Line, playing on guitar; filling in. There's another guy who moved down here just to be in the band who is busy practicing on his own and he'll take over on guitar after the tour. He's pretty young—23. Like he's our son. (laughs)

G: On the new album, I'm Ramona, you really wear your Ramones' influence on

your sleeve.

F: That came out of the European tour actually. We've always loved the Ramones, they influenced us to start a band and our music style. I have tons of friends that I call "so-and-so Ramone," you know, as a nickname. But nobody ever really used that as a name for me until we went on the European tour. Tons of people would tell me, 'Fifi is Ramona,' have me sign stuff, kiss me and constantly tell me I was Ramona. On the last day of the tour one of the Buckweeds, the band we toured with, said to me, 'We love the Ramones, they were a great band. We love the Ramones as much as you guys. That's why you're the real Ramona.' So I finally got a Ramones moniker and that became the title also.



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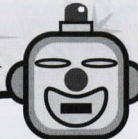
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velveeda@cheesygraphics.com



CHEESY FUNTIME

pages



Hi folks. this is King VelVeeda's Uncle Ed, here to introduce this, what is the third installment of his fun and cheesy, Cheesy Funtime Pages. King VelVeeda himself could not be here 'cause I kill't and buried him in the dry water ditch behind my house. But, don't worry folks, he'll be back next time for sure, cause I kept all his skin and hair, and I made me a nice VelVeeda-Type-Suit to wear on the full moons, so I can be him for you when the mood is on me, and once't I perfect my impersonation of him, which sounds like a cross between a hippy, and a crazy person, and some kind of zombie robot from a Hollywood movie, and it goes like this:

"I AM KING VELVEEDA, KING OF ALL YOUR WIMMIN, AND YOU ARE MY MINIONS OF DESTRUCTION!

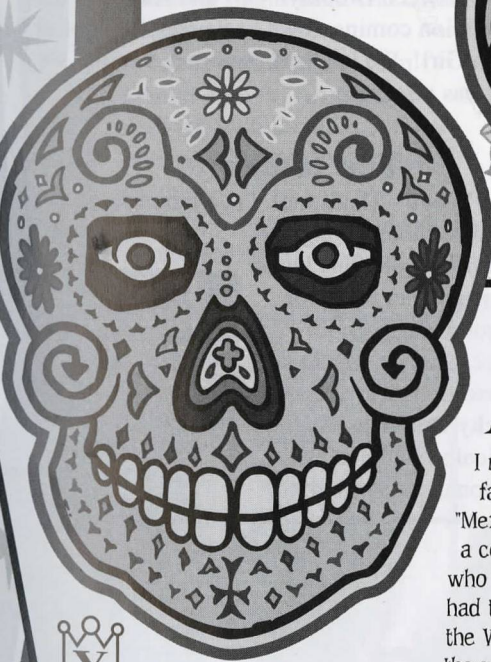
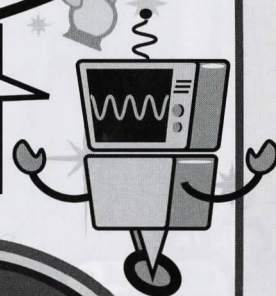
SMOKE WEED FOR SATAN, AND KILL KILL KILL ALL THE PIGS, MAN!!!!!!!"

I know I gots t'work on it a little bit, so in the meantime please enjoy yourself these here pages of crap he did for ya before I done him in fer good.



Space
Binky

Humans are instructed
to see king velveeda's
picture of the day
at:
www.cheesygraphics.com



DEAD PEOPLE ARE FUN TO EAT!!!

I recently drew this festive little family portrait -- in a sort of "Mexican Sugar Skull" style -- for a cool Art collector friend of mine who goes by the name Jack Lope. I had to do a little design research on the Web before I could begin, and in the process I learned a lot, including that, designwise, pretty much



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anything goes! If there's a tiny space, stick a tiny doo-dad in there! Can my doo dad beshaped like a heart? Sure! Can it look like a flower? Why not!?! It was a lot of fun to draw these three, and I'll do more in the future for sure. You can learn more about it yourself, including how to make REAL mexican style sugar skulls at home, by pointing your browser to:

www.mexicansugarskull.com

Who's Shoes Can't Lose?



VISIT BROOKLYN GIRL AT:
WWW.BROOKLYNGIRL.COM

Back in August of 2001, CheesyGraphics.com conceived of and hosted our best internet contest ever! Friends, fans, and foot fetish freaks the World over were invited to submit pictures of their bestest, most sexiest **shoes** to be judged by experts, and voted on by the general public in a pixelated pageant of pumps & peddle-pushers! All in an effort to determine -- by any means necessary -- who's shoes kick the **ASSES** off of every other shoe on this Earth.

The rules? *We hate rules.* Contestants were openly encouraged to lie, cheat, and bribe their way to victory, and boy did they ever! Dozens of hopefuls entered, hundreds of shoe fanatics voted, and the four celebrity judges spared no caustic remark as they dolled out their bonus points to those deserving few.

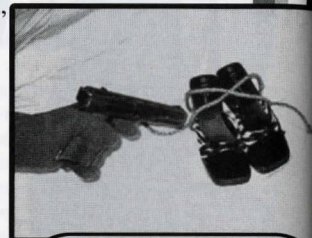
The competition was fierce, with bribery and ballot stuffing being the order of the day! In the end there was a toe-to-toe race to the top of the shoe tree between Brooklyn Girl and Kat, with the final decision coming down to **9 votes**, in favor of Brooklyn Girl! We laughed, we cried, we shit, we died. It was awesome.

The Judges:

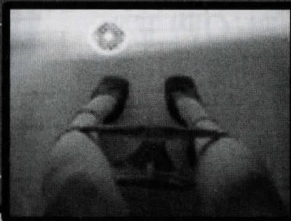
King VelVeeda - That's me! I'm a fan of feet, sans or avec shoes. A **big** fan.

Liz Dunn - If you don't know about Liz and her thing for shoes, you need to go to www.mycuteshoes.com to see for yourself.

Dr. Ducky Doolittle - As a scientific sexologist, and international sex symbol, the



above: This last minute submission garnered few votes, & little sympathy. "Go ahead and shoot them" Said Judge Liz Dunn.



What started out as a cheap ploy on my part to get women to send me pictures of their shoes, turned into a wonderful opportunity for me to also see their naked legs and underpants! The big winner of the contest, with the most votes from the general public, was Brooklyn Girl. Her "Toilet-Seat Treat" photo series (above) just couldn't be beat!

She sent more photos of herself (not pictured) for me to work from in order to produce her prize: the Original VelVeeda drawing printed above!



Conrats to all of our Lovely Entrants!

l-r: enoon mai (strappy), Mistress Abuse (shiny), Venus (fetishy), Kissy Fish (animal-printy), MPMoonmac (ugly), JPatch (under-pantsy), Interrobang Letterpress (artsy)

good Doctor really knows what's what when it comes to all things fetishistic.

Jaime Joy Gatto - This erotic author, and sex kitten is a fan of the stiletto heel, and offers balance to the "clunk" bias exhibited by the rest of the judges.

The Prizes:

2nd Runner Up - A full compliment of limited edition one inch buttons from the Cheesygraphics.com line of fashion accessories

1st Runner Up - A fashionably offensive t-shirt from Old Ghosts Clothing.

(<http://www.oldghosts.com>)

Grand Prize! - An original drawing by little old me of the winner, wearing their winning shoes!

BG sent me some choice photos of herself, washing dishes

on a steamy hot day, sweat running down her shapely calves, and those pesky panties falling prey to the mischievous forces of gravity! Once I picked my jaw up off of the floor, I produced a sketch, showed it to BG via the web, she approved, I inked it, and hand colored it, and sent it to her in Brooklyn, NY.

She loved her prize, and we love her!

Thanks to everyone who participated by entering as a contestant, and/or by voting, or being a judge, and thanks to Old Ghost for his support & sponsorship too!

Look for our next *Who's Shoes* contest, as Brooklyn Girl takes her place as a judge, and passes her crown on to one High-Heeled Hopeful, Scrappy Strappy Up-Start, or Platformed Princess who believes *These Shoes Can't Lose!!!*

Below: 2nd runner-up, Cleavage the clown sent in this blatantly bum-bum-a-licious bribe along with her super saucy submissions (opposite).

left & below: 1st runner-up Kat looking sleek & sexy in stiletto heels!

1st Runner-up Kat's Husby later commissioned this drawing of her, wearing the contest shoes, sporting an uzi, and showing off her amazing back tat.



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ANTI-

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HITLER TOTALLY SUCKS FOR
A ROOMMATE...

I'M
ANNEXING YOUR
SHELF IN THE
FRIDGE!!!



EVEN WHEN HE'S SINGING
HE SOUNDS PISSED OFF...

IST DAS
NICHT EIN HAUFEN
MIST?!?
JAH, DAS IST EIN
HAUFEN MIST!!!*



*I THINK this means something roughly like:
"Isn't this (life) a pile of shit?
Yes, this (life) is a pile of shit."

PLUS, YOU CAN'T TRUST HIM AT ALL...

"HEY, MAN.
I'm marking my stuff
with a "V" from now on,
because I'm sick of you
claiming it's yours &
eating it all, Man."

FINE!!!
I MARK MEIN
"A"
FOR "ADOLF"
BECAUSE I
HATE YOU
TOO!!!

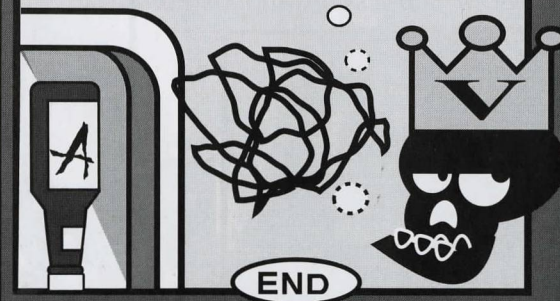


LATER ON, as the clock strikes
midnight...

I am
a
GENIUS!!!



And the Next Morning...



END

Crazy Caption Contest!

THANKS TO
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The Winner
will be
announced
in the next
installment
of my
Cheesy
Funtime
pages & at:

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I recently drew the picture above, based on some very inspiring stuff I saw on a nice website. I like this drawing, but I can't think of a name for it! So far, I'm just calling it "2 Girls." My roommate says that it's a drawing of two chicks in a punk band, one singing into the mic, and the other having just been spit on by the crowd. My other roommate says, "One's coughing, and the other one just sneezed." What do you think? Send your best TITLE & CAPTION suggestions for the above drawing to me at: twogirls@cheesygraphics.com All entrants will get a link to my infamous "P_Folder", and one lucky duck will win a coffee mug with this image printed on it in FULL GLORIOUS COLOR. Nice!

Dark Shadows

A TeeVee Tribute to Barnabas Collins

I really only started watching Dark Shadows late in life. First by renting the videos, and then by watching them on The Sci-Fi channel on TeeVee in the late 90's. (did you know that D.S. was THE first series that the Sci-Fi channel purchased?) I'm not sure if I would have appreciated this show as much as a kid as I do now, because the plot moves as slowly as a zombie corpse on Quaaludes. And there are, like, a MILLION episodes to plod through in order to see the whole story, which was aired LIVE every single day for years on end -- in color and black & white -- throughout the sixties and early seventies.

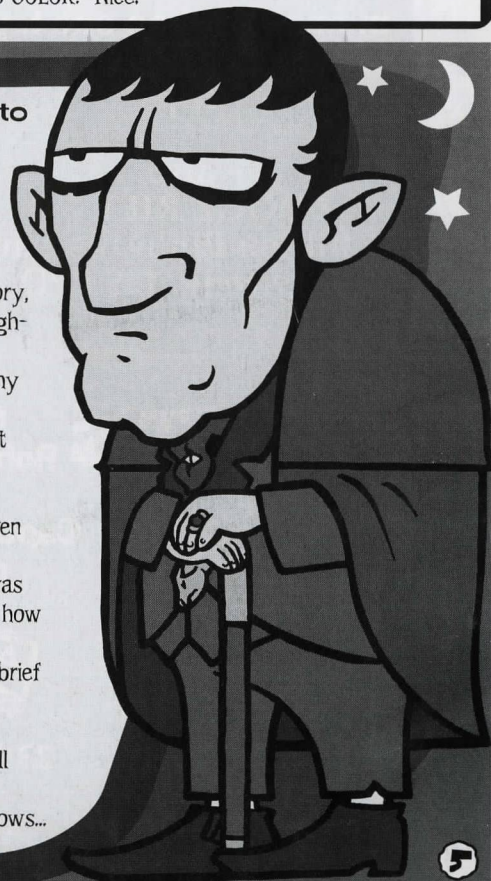
Dark Shadows is basically a Gothic Soap Opera, revolving around the filthy rich and filthy weird Collins Family of Collinsport, Maine. From the very get-go, D.S. was a spookfest! Full of ghosts, witches, curses, murder, intrigue, secret rooms, and of course, vampires, including the best Vampire on television EVER: one Barnabas Collins, as played by the incomparable Jonathan Frid.

Frid/Collins is a TeeVee great for many reasons, and here's three:

- 1) He looks a lot like a human rat, but the girls find him irresistible. Both on TV and in reality! Even my own girlie thought he had "IT!!!"
- 2) He lisps, he sweats, he twitches, he blinks. He flubs nearly every other line (remember: D.S. was taped live), and one often wonders why he decided to become an actor in the first place, let alone how he got hired for a television role, and went on to become a cultural phenom & sex symbol!!!
- 3) As far as I know Frid never played another TeeVee character in his whole career (except for a brief stint as "Bramwell" Collins in a tweaked-out alternate universe Collinsport), and so he IS Barnabas Collins.

FRID YET LIVES! At seventy-something Jonathan Frid still acts in local plays in the small town that he currently haunts. In one role, he plays a priest!!!!

If you're not a fan of Frid, I hope that you'll soon see the light, and step into Dark Shadows...



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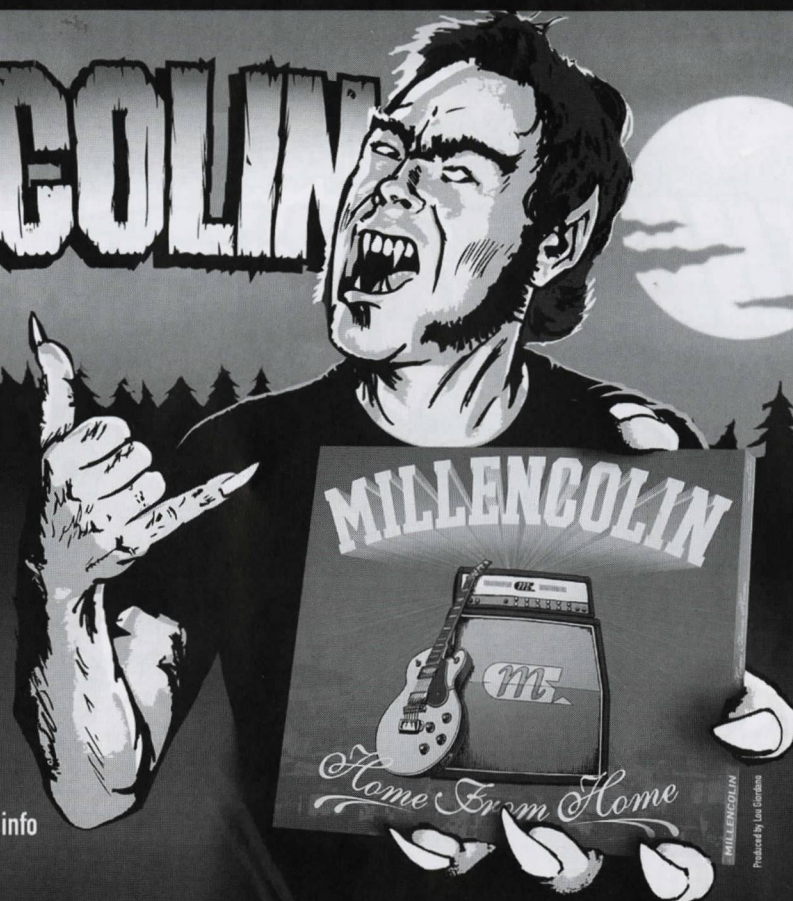
- Damn, I wanna pogo!

Wolfboy says:

- Buy it, Arrrrgh!!!

Check out Millencolin live!

go to www.epitaph.com for tour dates and info



MUSICAL CHEESE!

I usually use a little space within these pages to show the artwork that I've done for rock bands, indie labels, and other music-oriented what-not. This time around, I've done something a little different! These little drawings are two of several attempts I made at illustrating an advertising concept for a client who owns a recording studio.

They said they wanted a drawing of a little dog f'cking a big dog, to go along with the words "Who's doing your spot?" (Very high class, I know.)

My good friend Kanga (<http://www.kangainc.com>) was the other designer on the job, and together we agreed to show them various options including two that were very VelVeeda.

Left: I showed them a few sketches of just the dogs going at it, but I also decided to toss them one with a sexy rocker chick, and an embarrassed new-wavey looking dude hanging out with the horny hounds.

Right: I also produced a saccharin sweet "cutie-pie" concept for them, using nothing but Adobe Illustrator, which is a fun way to work.

I think the client picked the rocker chick version, but I'm not quite sure. Since I haven't had a chance to see the end results of this project yet, I can only guess that a client who comes up with an original concept like this one, is going to go for the big ta-tas every time.

I'm working on a couple of CD covers right now, so stay tuned for future installments of Musical Cheese!



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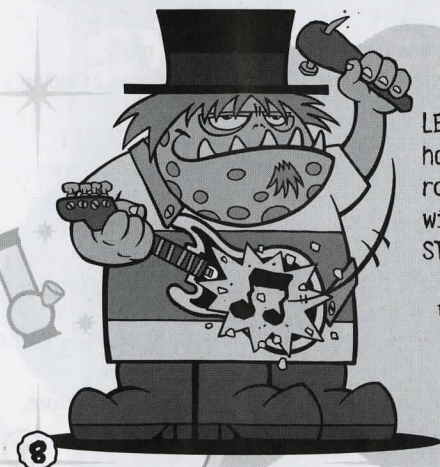
NOT NECESSARILY STONED...

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nyabinghi * youngstown, ohio

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|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
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| Stinking Lizaveta | Mastodon | Bottom |
| Red Giant | Penance | JJ Paradise Players Club |
| Men of Porn | Boulder | Milligram |
| Wooly Mammoth | Rammer | Kung Pao |
| Black Manta | Halfway to Gone | Tumbler |
| | Rebreathe | Lost Goat |
| | Dragon Green | Dixie Witch |
| | Superhighway Carfire | The Brought Low |
| | Jumbo's Killerane | Burnout |
| | Fistula | Lamont |
| | Sofa King Killer | The Rubes |
| | Brubaha | |

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REJECTED

LEFT: This three-legged rocker dude has had the honor of being rejected by TWO rock festivals. In 1998 I presented it, along with two other ideas for the massive ROCK STOCK concert here in Illinois.

RIGHT: This one, inspired by the great Jack "King" Kirby, was done especially for "Emissions from the Monolith," and takes the festival name literally.

Okay, Okay. Necessarily stoned. Very necessarily stoned. Like, really really necessarily stoned.

That's what you're going to be if you happen to breathe the air in Youngstown, Ohio during the late part of May, because that's when EMISSIONS FROM THE MONOLITH takes place

This three day "Stoner Rock" fest happens annually at the notorious Nyabinghi club, and is guaranteed to have a dark cloud of both gloom AND doom hanging over it, but that's a GOOD thing for these guys. They like it that way!

I was psyched when they asked me to provide the poster artwork for this years' High Holy Days of Hard & Heavy Harmonics, and I quickly busted out three options for them to choose from. They went for a classic old piece of cheese that I drew a few years back which features the Hindu God Ganesha "trunkin' a bong" (as the old hippy at the candle shop said when he saw it). I redesigned it into the snazzy poster that you see to the left, trying my level best to be real stoned while I did it.

I personally didn't crawl out of my basement apartment to shake my hair in Ohio this year, but I bet it ROCKED, and I bet the locals are still sleeping off the second-hand high. Nya-BING-high!

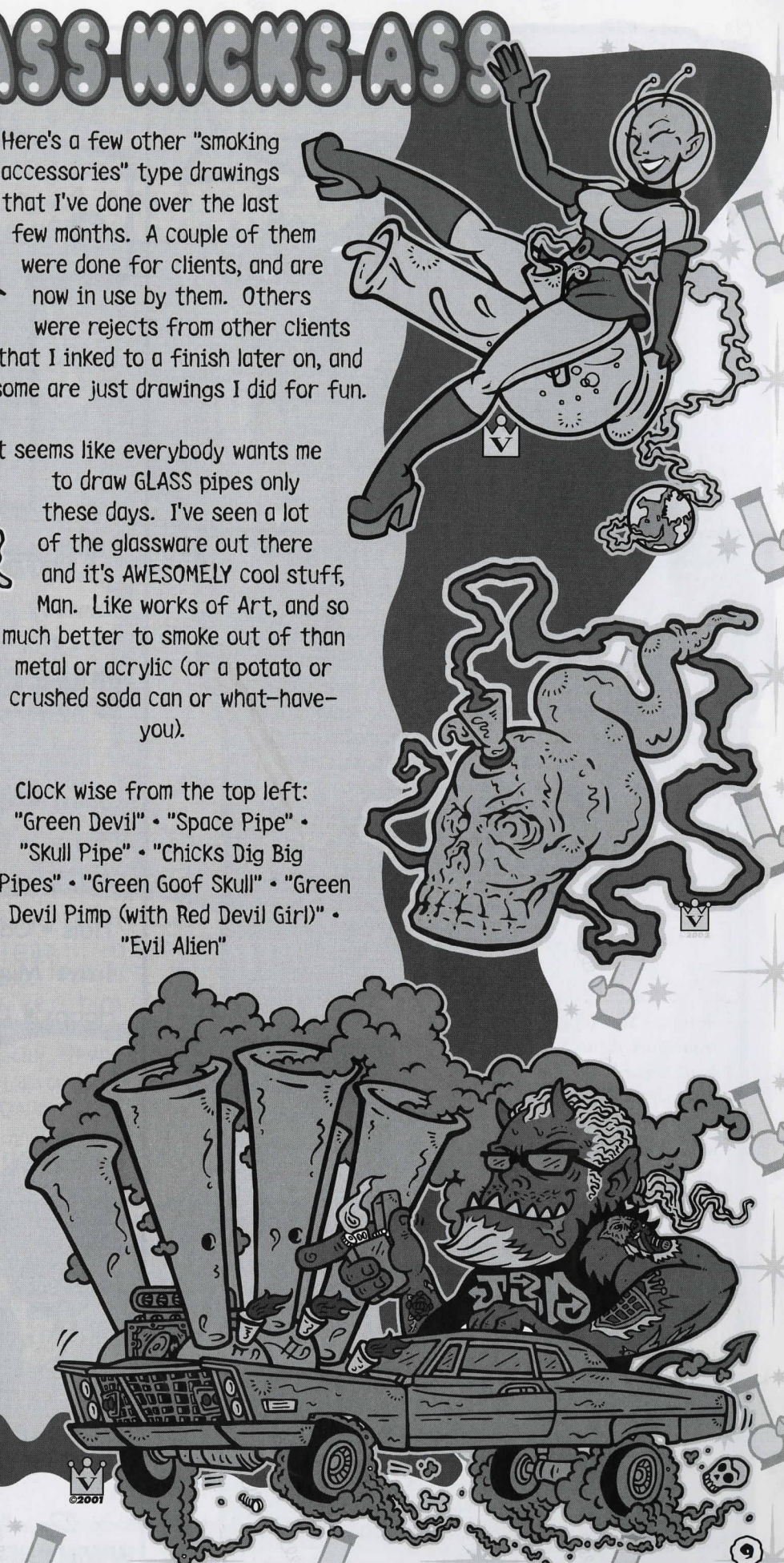


GLASS KICKS ASS

Here's a few other "smoking accessories" type drawings that I've done over the last few months. A couple of them were done for clients, and are now in use by them. Others were rejects from other clients that I inked to a finish later on, and some are just drawings I did for fun.

It seems like everybody wants me to draw GLASS pipes only these days. I've seen a lot of the glassware out there and it's AWESOMELY cool stuff, Man. Like works of Art, and so much better to smoke out of than metal or acrylic (or a potato or crushed soda can or what-have-you).

Clock wise from the top left:
 "Green Devil" • "Space Pipe" •
 "Skull Pipe" • "Chicks Dig Big Pipes" • "Green Goof Skull" • "Green Devil Pimp (with Red Devil Girl)" •
 "Evil Alien"



'tis a Hassle in von Castle

or
"Cheesy
& Goliath"



Stu Helm
©2001

Mike Diana
October '01

A while back I did the drawing above in collaboration with America's only convicted cartoonist, Mike Diana. It's more appropriate today than ever, as I myself am being dragged into court. Read the complaint against me below, as it appeared on www.litwatch.com:

Kraft claims King VelVeeda infringes trademark.

Date: 3/26/2002 2:50:00 PM

Company: Kraft Foods Inc. (KFT)

Judge: Ronald A. Guzman

Lawyers: Mandell Menkes & Surdyk (Steven P. Mandell, Catherine

Ann Van Horn, David Seth Argentar)

Docket Number: 02-cv-02171

Kraft Foods Holdings Inc. has sued graphics designer Stu Helm, alleging infringement of the trademark for its Velveeta brand processed cheese loaf. According to the Complaint, Helm operates an internet company called King VelVeeda and has a website that advertises and sells "various types of adult-oriented, offensive and unsavory merchandise and services to the public."

The suit claims the nature of the merchandise and services promoted on the website, located at www.cheesygraphics.com, unlawfully dilutes Kraft's trademark.

Kraft seeks unspecified monetary damages, trebled for willfulness, and an injunction that prohibits further infringement, including use by Helm of the term "VelVeeda" or "King VelVeeda."

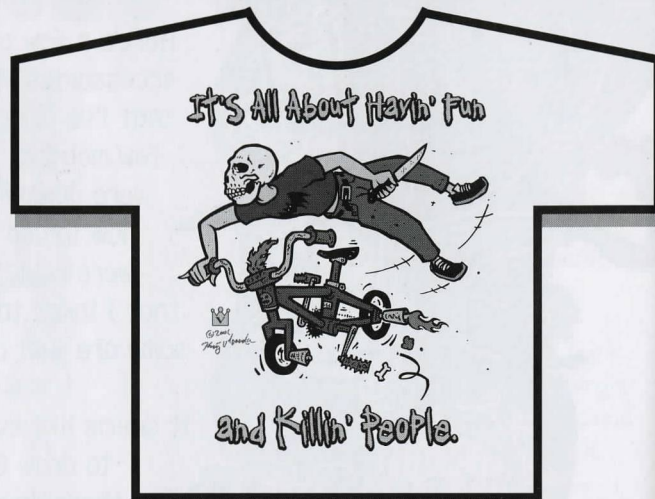
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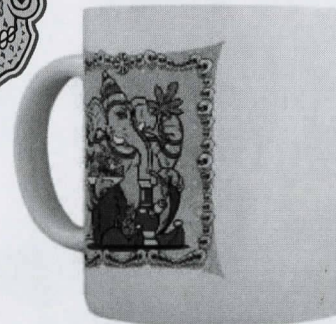
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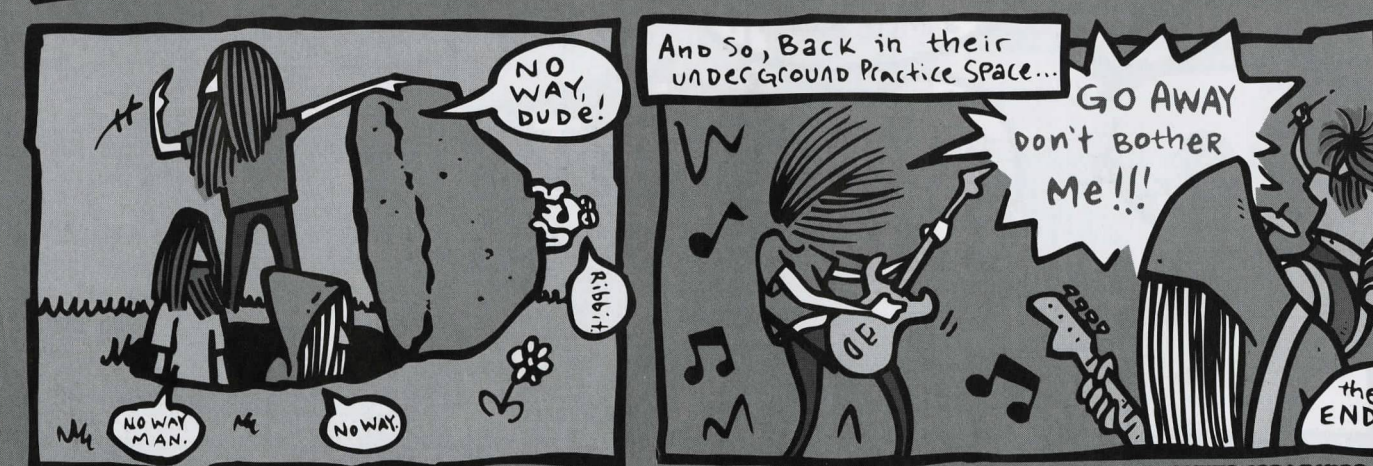
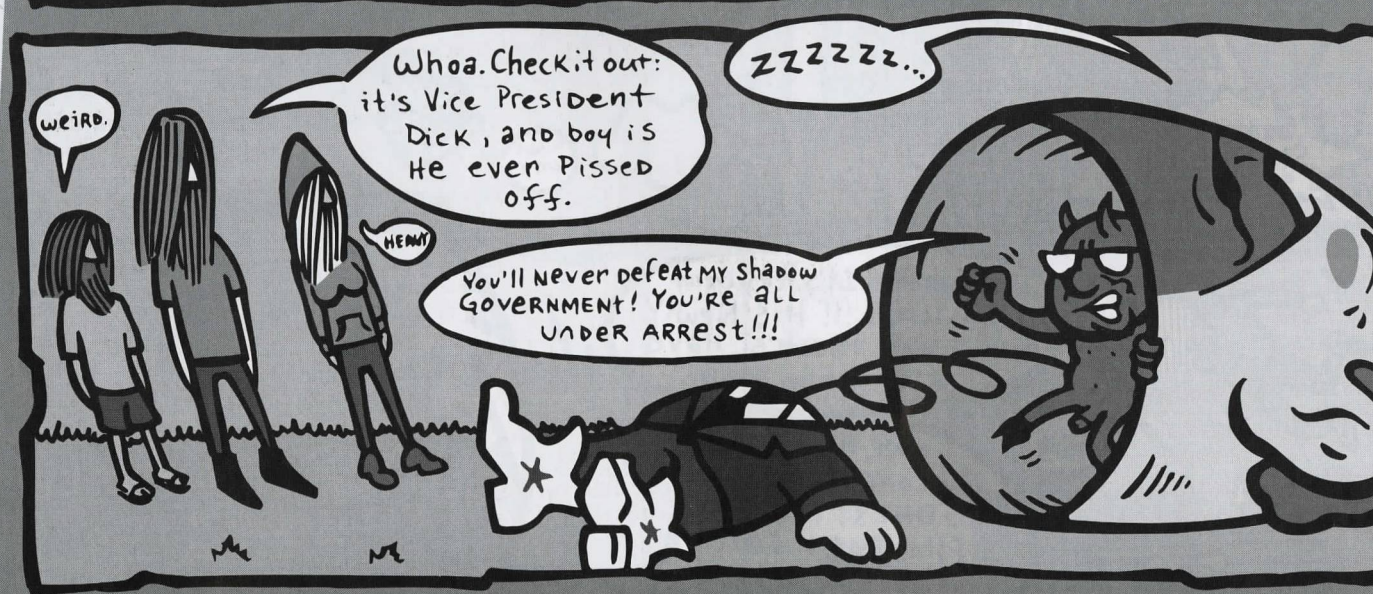
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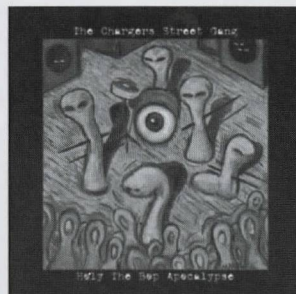
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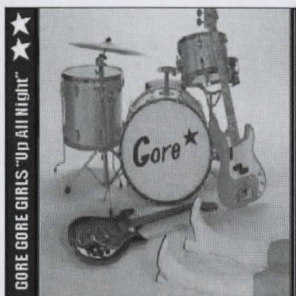


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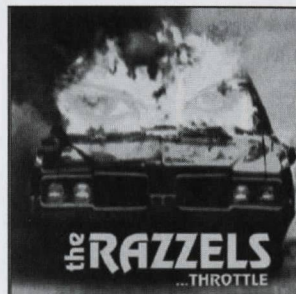
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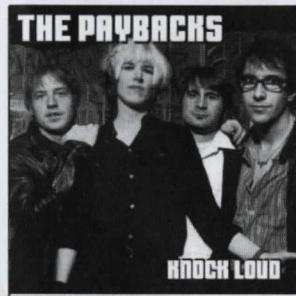
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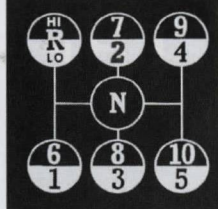


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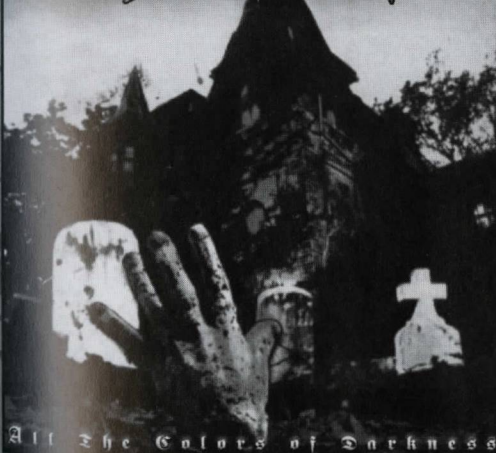


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BAND NAME: CANDY SNATCHERS

SONG TITLE: "She Sure Can Blow"

FINISHING MOVE: Bottle To The Head

YEARS AS PRO: One Decade

TOTAL COMBINED WEIGHT: 2 1/2 Kegs

PERSONNEL: Larry - vocals; Matt - guitar; Willy - bass; Sergio - drums

CONTACT: www.fandangorecs.com/candy

BAND NAME: STEVIE AND THE SECRETS

SONG TITLE: "Concrete Jungle"

FINISHING MOVE: Hooks Of Death

YEARS AS PRO: 4

TOTAL COMBINED WEIGHT: Half a Ton of Fun

PERSONNEL: Stevie - lead guitar/vocals; Kim B. - bass/vocals; Larry - guitar/vocals;
Smasha - drums/vocals

CONTACT: www.stevelandrecordingstudio.com

BAND NAME: ADAM WEST

SONG TITLE: "Live For The Day"

FINISHING MOVE: Top Rope Booty Drop

YEARS AS PRO: One Decade

TOTAL COMBINED WEIGHT: 666 lbs.

PERSONNEL: Jake Starr - throat; Steve - guitar; Kevin Hoffman - guitar; Johnny May - bass;
Tom Barrick - drums

CONTACT: www.fandangorecs.com/adamwest

BAND NAME: The TWIN SIX

SONG TITLE: "Still Fucked Up Again"

FINISHING MOVE: Belly Flop

YEARS AS PRO: 6 (give or take a year)

TOTAL COMBINED WEIGHT: Same as a Big Block .503

PERSONNEL: Jethro T. Sixxxx - grunts and clicks; Rev. Stevie St. 666 - screaming guitar leads;
Rev. Jimmy "Lucky Man" Swope, IV - soaring guitar leads; Curtass "Six" Sixx - unemployment check
cashing; Jimmy "Reign in Blood" Redmon - expensive drum bashing

(on this recording K7HD replaced Rev. Swope and the Hedgehog replaced Reign in Blood)

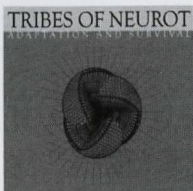
CONTACT: www.twin6.com



NEUROT RECORDINGS

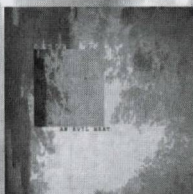
NEW RELEASES

TRIBES OF NEUROT ADAPTATION AND SURVIVAL



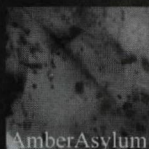
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- Scott Sterling, URB Magazine

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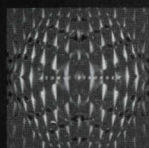
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UPCOMING

The first time I heard of the Ringling Sisters was when Chameleon records sent me a label compilation for review in one of my shitty high school fanzines, either *Anorexic Teenage Sexgods* or *Ready To Snap*; the stand-out cuts were Dramarama's cover of the NY Dolls' "Private World" and the Ringling Sisters' "56 Reasons To Go Downtown," a sultry laundry-list of perennial excuses to abuse heroin. Speaking of dangerous brown powders... my longtime correspondent and highly-esteemed colleague, Shane Williams, relentlessly followed the careers and various artistic endeavors of brilliant, scene-making queens of the underground, Iris Berry and Pleasant Gehman, of said Ringling Sisters, in his much-lamented Flipside column. He inspired me to check out Iris and Plez' books, spoken word CDs and music, and I've been a devoted fan ever since. Besides being influential El Lay Punk Scene Divas, both of these cats can really fucking write. I highly recommend Pleasant's *Ruined* or Iris' *Life On The Edge In Stillettoes*. Iris is working on a new book but I'll shut up and let her tell you about it.

What do you do for a living? Does "Poet Enchantress" pay the bills?
I was working part-time at Millie's in Silverlake with all the other unemployable musicians. Also, I was recently hired to write songs for John Goodell's solo project, that's been really cool. For the most part, I'm enjoying being a housewife to my tall, dark, and handsome husband, Tony Malone. The whole domestic thing is new to me. I guess somewhere deep down, I always wanted a house with a black picket fence.

Tell me 'bout Tony, your husband. I feel like I know the name from somewhere.

Tony and I have known each other since 1985. We met playing poker in the back room of an after-hours club I worked at called the 01. It was three in the morning and very blurry. I was bartending and on a break, thought I'd play a few quick hands of poker. In 1990, he lived across the hall from me atop the famous Shamrock bar. It was crazy. There were five apartments up there. I lived up there with Marc Rude, and Tony was our neighbor. You know, a lot of drugs, a lot of doors getting kicked in for one reason or another—or no reason at all for that matter. Anyway, Tony and I finally hooked-up in '96. I was working at Millie's and he just happened to be walking by. We hadn't seen each other in four years and had a lot of catching up to do. We got together and one thing led to another. We were married in 1999. Tony played in a lot of great bands. Detox, the Weirdoes, Thelonious Monster, God's Gift To God, Here Eat This. Currently, he's in Midget Handjob with Keith Morris. Tony's one of those people that can play any instrument, even if it's not an instrument. He can make music out of anything. He's really talented. We're in the process of putting a band together now called *Movies Til Dawn*. I feel really lucky to be working with him.

What other projects are you in the midst of?

I've been working on an oral history of the Tropicana Motel called, *Tales From The Tropicana*, with my partner, Elizabeth Greenbaum Hasson. It's been a monster project and it will be for a while. I started the project alone and Henry Rollins' company was going to put it out. Unfortunately, mid-project, Henry shut down his company. Just recently, I decided to pull in a partner. I'm so happy I did. I've also been writing songs with singer/songwriter, John Goodell. He's got some amazing musicians working with him. All the guys from Beck's band—Victor Indrizzo, Lyle Workman, Zac Rae, Justin Meldal-Johnson—and the Professor Danny Frankel, who plays with Lou Reed and Lucinda Williams. I'm also working on another book of prose and short stories currently titled, *Notes From A Hollywood Dive*, but the title could change at any time.

Do you still party? Or participate in the night life?

I still go to clubs a lot but usually to see a specific show. I don't live in clubs anymore, not like I used to. Maybe it's because I'm not drinking and drugging like I was. It's been awhile. You know how you can smoke pot and it's really a bad time. You feel really paranoid and your face feels like a Picasso painting? Well that's what happened to me with everything. It all just turned on me and wasn't fun anymore. I do a piece on it called, "When The Life Of The Party Turns Blue." I can honestly say I've had more than my fair share.

by dimitri monroe



Me too, Iris. Me too. So what do you do for fun? I keep stumbling back over that Peggy Lee song, "If That's All There

Is." I mean, I gotta leave the chemicals alone and stay out of smoky dives myself, but I don't like sports, y'know? What else is there? Country crafts? We're going to Vegas next week. We drive cause I hate planes. I love that place, all that oxygen and air conditioning and stimulation. It's pretty surreal. I like to go to the bad parts of town and see all the old motels, all that crumbling kitsch for architecture is so beautiful to me. They started out with such high hopes and now, they're just crack motels. I also love the new hotels, just walking into the casinos is such a rush, the constant clanging of the slot machines, cigarette smoke filling the air. I feel so at home there. I just took my 13-year-old nephew, Jake, on a tour of Epitaph Records. That was pretty fun! After meeting Brett Guerwitz and Andy the President, along with everyone else who runs the joint, they let him take all the CDs, posters and stickers he could put in a couple of big shopping bags. He loved it, it was like he'd won the punk rock lottery. Seeing the enthusiasm for punk rock through his eyes warms my heart. He's already singing and playing guitar in his second punk band. They're gonna do one of my songs. The first band was called *Two Jews & A Cross*. Yes, I'm a proud aunt.

Who are you currently listening to for pleasure?
Tom Waits, Dexter Gordon, X, Everclear, the Germs, Weezer, New York Dolls, and Johnny Cash—the new one.

Who are the best little-known local bands? Any undiscovered comets?
400 Blows, Midget Handjob, Sex With Lurch, the Mormons, John Goodell.

Who in your estimation are the all-time greats popular history and time forgot? Fave poets, authors, drunkards, strippers, bozos, rockers, visionaries, etc...
Top Jimmy (R.I.P.), Baudelaire, Bukowski, Dorothy Parker, Honey Bruce, Zelda Fitzgerald, S.A. Griffin, Pleasant Gehman, Mike Martt, Tom Waits, Chuck Weiss, Mark Boone Jr., Dave Alvin, the Pets.com sock puppet, Bob Forrest, Keith Morris, Patti Peck, Tony Malone, John Doe, Exene, Thomas Jefferson, Elliot Kidd, Jack Kerouac, Ferlinghetti, James Ellroy, Raymond Chandler—to name a few.

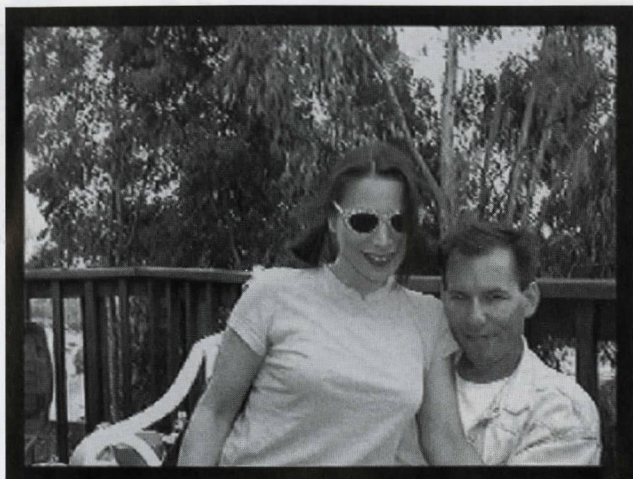
Tell me more about John Goodell.
John was a big part of the Orange County scene and played guitar in a lot of bands from there: *Naked Ape*, *Band Without Fear*, *Laws Of Gravity*, and *Rule 62* (who were on Maverick records). After *Rule 62* broke up, he decided to do his own singer/songwriter thing, which he's very good at. My good friend Chris Martin, also involved in the O.C. Scene, put John and I together to see what would happen. As a result, we've written some really cool songs together. It's the first time I've ever worked with someone else's band and I didn't have all the usual band headaches, so it was pretty cool.

Is Pleasant Gehman still your partner-in-crime? What's she doing?
Yes, Pleasant and I have been really close friends for about 20 years now. We met in '81. We bonded over a bottle of wine on a curb in front of an open reading that I was trying to get my courage up to go in and do. We sat there and lamented over our broken love lives and I never made it into that reading. That was the beginning of an amazing friendship. We lived in Disgraceland together from '86 to '89 and we formed the Ringling Sisters together. She's currently belly dancing and promoting her latest book, *Escape From Houdini Mountain*, and probably raising hell somewhere as we speak.

Can you give me abridged histories of your bands, the Ringling Sisters, Lame Flames, and Pink Sabbath?
The Lame Flames came first; three girl singers in black fishnets and red jockstraps with a gnarly backup band. It was '85 when I joined, and I stayed with the band for a year. After I quit the Lame Flames, I



iris berry



formed the Ringling Sisters with Pleasant Gehman, which included Johnette Napolitano from Concrete Blonde, Texacala Jones from Tex and the Horseheads, and Debbie Patino and Debbie Dexter from the Devil Squares. Johnette got really busy with Concrete Blonde, so we pulled in Annette Zalinkas from Blood On The Saddle to take her place. We got signed pretty quick and unexpectedly. That was the last thing on our minds. The Great Lou Adler signed us to A&M Records and took us under his wing. Lou's an incredible man with a serious history. I have a lot of respect for him. After the Ringling Sisters, Mandy and I wanted to do something, so we formed Pink Sabbath, but projects end, as they should. I still talk to all of them all of the time. I talk to Debbie Dexter constantly, Johnette pops up when she's not out of the country. Tex will be out here next month and I hope I see her a bunch. I talk to Mandy about 20 times a day. Annette and I are gonna do some singing together, and I'm sure at some point, Plez and I will unleash "White Trash Apocalypse," for another round or two. Who knows? Maybe we'll do a Ringling Sisters reunion. We all have really full lives now, it's not like when we lived at Disgraceland and we'd just roll out of bed and write songs together and rehearse. We still manage to hang out, we just have to make more of an effort.

How much of your music was released commercially and are any of your bands' records still in print?

Unfortunately, nothing ever came out with the Lame Flames when I was part of the band, which is a shame. We almost made it onto one of the Live At Raji's recordings but we were too lame to get the paperwork together. But we did do the recording. You have to be careful what band name you pick, cuz you just may live up to it. The Ringling Sisters put out a CD on A&M Records titled *60 Watt Reality*, which is a piece I wrote about Top Jimmy. We did the complete soundtrack for the movie, *Bar Girls* and we put out our single, "Cherries In The Snow," on Sympathy, which I'm sure you can still get.

What were the highlights of your "music career"?

Opening for Hillary Clinton for Rock The Vote. God, there's been so many. Recording with Lou Adler. Opening for Perry Farrell. Being introduced to Bob Dylan, Big Joe Turner, and Ella Fitzgerald. Going down the crookedest street in San Francisco in a limo with Dave Alvin, Exene Cervenka, John Doe and Dinky and DJ Bonebrake. Dancing on bars with Pleasant Gehman. Snorting coke with David Lee Roth. Having Guns N' Roses send limos to my house. Meeting Rick James, and singing with the Flesheaters and the Circle Jerks. All those are definitely at the top of my list—and let's not forget the Ringling Sisters Christmas Benefits. We did 12 of them. Our first one was at Raji's and we had people like Screamin' Jay Hawkins, TSOL, Dave Alvin, and Charlie Sexton performing. One of the last shows we did was at the Palace. That was where the Gun Club played their last show. The backstage area was always so out of control and fun, with people like Gene Simmons, Henry Rollins, Jim Carroll, Jeffrey Lee Pierce, and Angelyne all milling around. It was surreal. It was debauchery meets good will because the next morning, no matter what time we got to sleep, Pleasant and I would crawl out of bed with a wad of cash and endless, hefty bags of toys and take them down to Hollywood Orphanage, so the orphans would have a decent Christmas. It was like being in a Frank Capra movie. Somehow, it made up for the rest of the year when we'd been practicing some rather less benevolent behavior. Did I answer that right?

Perfectly, Iris. So how do you know my man, Shane Williams?

In the early '90s, when I had to leave Hollywood for a minute, Shane and I became pen pals. He was in jail and still writing for Flipside and I was doing my own kind of exile, out in the West Hills, about 30 miles away from everybody and everything. It was great. When he got out around '93, we hooked up for awhile. Shane's a great guy. I miss him. **Where was the legendary punk house Disgraceland located and what's there now?**

The building is still there, we just don't live in it anymore. It was located literally in the shadow of Fredericks Of Hollywood, sandwiched between a church and a school, which, if you think about it, is pretty scary. We could have all so easily gone to jail. And it was smack dab in the middle of Hollywood, centrally-located, and within walking distance (or crawling) to all the bars, clubs, and lingerie stores.

What was the coolest thing about living in a house full of semi-famous

punk rock crazies in the heyday of West Coast punk rock?

Disgraceland was like living backstage all the time. It was always a party, people and bands were always coming from out of town to stay with us, along with people and bands who lived in town. I literally stepped over bodies—who to this day, I don't know who they were—to get to my bedroom. At one point, we were at full-capacity, so Don Bolles, the Germs drummer, parked his van in our driveway and ran extension chords into our house for power. I used to wake him up every morning for work. His license plates read Unit 666. The police came to our house so much that we were on a first name basis, and the beauty of it, was they never did anything. It was great. One time, I was at a different party and the police came. When I opened the door, they said, 'Iris, what are you doing here?' then, asked us nicely to lower the music and left. A real highlight of Disgraceland's career was when MTV came to our house to film. They heard about Disgraceland and wanted us to be a part of this show called "Punks Not Poseurs." They brought 18 cases of plain-wrap beer and halfway through, they had to go buy more. They didn't know who they were dealing with. They ended up having to cut out a lot of it. I hear they still show it from time to time.

How did you know the famous saloon singer, Top Jimmy, immortalized in song by (original) Van Halen and what was he like?

I first became aware of Jimmy's existence in 1979 when I first moved to Hollywood. I lived down the street from the Whiskey-Au-Go-Go, it was like a cigarette walk away from my house so I spent a lot of time there. I saw a lot of amazing shows. Punk was so new at the time that the West Hollywood police were desperately trying to stop it—so every time you turned your head, there was a police riot at the Whiskey. During one of those riots, Top Jimmy, obviously wasted and angry, was standing in the middle of the Sunset Blvd. Screaming at the top of his lungs about how fucked up the police were. It was beautiful! I'll never forget it. The first time Jimmy and I actually had the pleasure of meeting, I was bartending at the famous Cathay De Grande. It was my first bartending job and I barely knew how to pour water. Jimmy came in and ordered whiskey and something and tried to pay me in postage stamps. I think he'd just ripped off the stamp machine. When I asked Michael, the owner, what to do, he just said, 'Oh yeah, it's OK, we have a deal.' I have a piece in my book called, "Top Jimmy." The piece also appears on the Ringling Sisters record. It's a phrase Jimmy coined. We were having a conversation about heroin and Jimmy was saying that heroin just slows your world down and makes it not so sharp, makes it softer, dims the lights—hence, 60 Watt Reality. I loved Jimmy. He definitely had a way with words, not to mention a big heart.

Was there a seamy underbelly to all these rock 'n' roll misadventures? A dark side? In my experiences, it seems like for every fleeting era of stars-aligned high mischief, fun and reckless hijinks we enjoyed, there was always an ensuing period of bleak despair, accidents, tragedy and hopelessness. Any all time rock 'n' roll lows?

Toward the end of the '80s, things got pretty dark. My dad died in a car wreck coming to pick me up for dinner and I just spun right off into a real dark place over it. I was consuming a lot to keep my mind off of it. It took awhile and by the end of the Lame Flames, I was ready for the rubber room, but I still kept going for a couple of years. Actually, this is funny, when I called the Lame Flame's manager to quit, who was Ricki Rachtman, (yes, the host of "Headbanger's Ball") this was our conversation: 'Ricki, I can't take it anymore, I need to quit the band, I'm so sorry, but I need a break.' 'Oh my God, Iris, are you all right?' 'No, I feel like killing myself.' 'Shit, Iris, listen, I have Taime Downe on the other line, can I call you right back?' To this day, Ricki still hasn't called back. It was perfect. All the more reason why I needed a break. Me and my friends still joke about it. The old "Taime's On The Other Line" routine.

Do you believe in magic? Karma? Afterlife? God?

I believe in electrical energy. I believe in black holes and bottomless pits vs. open currents. I believe in the fact that I know nothing about what makes us tick.

What was Millie's? Millie's is this



bohemian greasy spoon with really amazing food; breakfast all day until 4PM. It's the cornerstone of Silverlake. Patti Peck, who just recently sold Millie's (Christmas 2000), was an extraordinary woman who only hired musicians, and her policy was if you went on tour, you would still have your job when you got back. Along with myself, Bob Forrest of Thelonus Monster worked there washing dishes, Keith Morris was my busboy, Billy the cook would come and go to tour with Jimmy Vaughn—the list goes on. It was a great place.

What are you reading that I might be able to find at the Cincinnati/Midwestern, suburban, status quo, Oprah-glazed library?

I'm now reading a book called, *The Dark City: the Lost World Of Film Noir*.

Films?

Groundhog Day, Casablanca, La Strada, Singles, the original Dead Ringer with Bette Davis, All About Eve. I'm a movie person. I could go on for hours.

What about the book, *Two Blocks East Of Vine*, and the excellent spoken word CD, *Life On The Edge In Stilletoes*. Are they still available anywhere?

They're both still available in stores and also online.

So when are you going to get a band and record a proper Iris Berry solo album a la Jim Carroll?

I'm in the process right now of writing new material, recording, and then, eventually performing live, which I love.

Do you still love Hollywood?

More than ever. Let them bury old Hollywood. I'll just keep digging it up.

Lastly, I'd like to fire off a buncha random bands and topics atcha, like about Hollywood and stuff, that I'm interested in that you might know about and have you give me the quick, free- association low-down on 'em cuz I'm still sitting here, semi unemployed in Ohio. OK?

Have you heard the new Go-Go's stuff?

Unfortunately, no. But I love Kathy and Jane.

What makes you happy?

Sock puppets and A.J. Benza.

Ever hear anything about Holly Beth Vincent?

No, not really.

Who do you believe in?

My Mom and my Grandma, Celia.

Arthur Lee?

Never met him, but I love Love.

Texacala Jones & the T.J. Hookers?

Haven't had the pleasure, but I loved the Horseheads, the first incarnation. They were and still are one of my all time favorite bands. Mike Martt was living with us at Disgraceland when they recorded *Life's So Cool*. That was a wild time. Then a couple of years later, in '88, I lived with Tex in another place down the street. I hear the Horseheads are doing a reunion in a month or so. Can't wait.

Who's overrated?

Don't get me started!

Motorcycle Boy?

Francois once said to me, in all his drunken wisdom, (and I've never forgotten it), 'Iris, just remember, genius hurts.'

Do you remember the Stars From Mars?

I saw them a lot and don't remember, not their fault.

The Coma-Tones?

I lived with the guitar player, Joel Soul, for two years. One of the greatest bands ever. Gio's an amazing front man, one of the best, and a brilliant songwriter. I was really bummed out when Grant, who was their drummer, hung himself. He was a sweetheart.

The Joneses?

Great band.

The Nymphs?

Great stage presence.

Celebrity Skin?

Bratty, but good.

The Darlings?

I haven't seen or heard from Paige in a long time, too long; where the hell is she?

El Duce?

I miss him. He used to sell jokes up on Hollywood Blvd. I loved El Duce; we had a good rapport. He was an absolute doll and a perfect gentleman to me. One time, after a three-day bender and not a lot of sleep, I threw a birthday party for Marc Rude. It was his 31st birthday. Detox, which is my husband Tony's old band, Tex & the Horseheads, and Hard As Nails, Cheap As Dirt played. The last thing I remember is Detox was playing, "Seasons In The Sun" and the next thing I know, I hear people screaming my name, mostly Marc. And the voices were getting closer and closer and louder and louder.

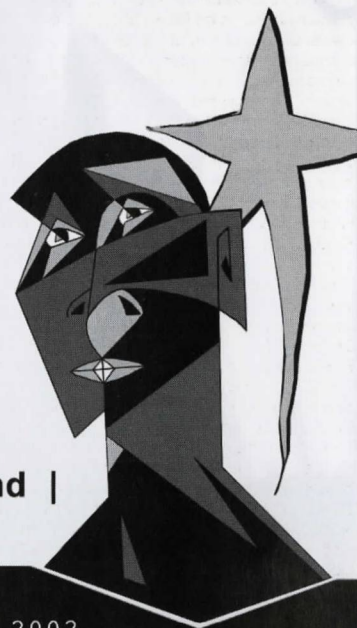


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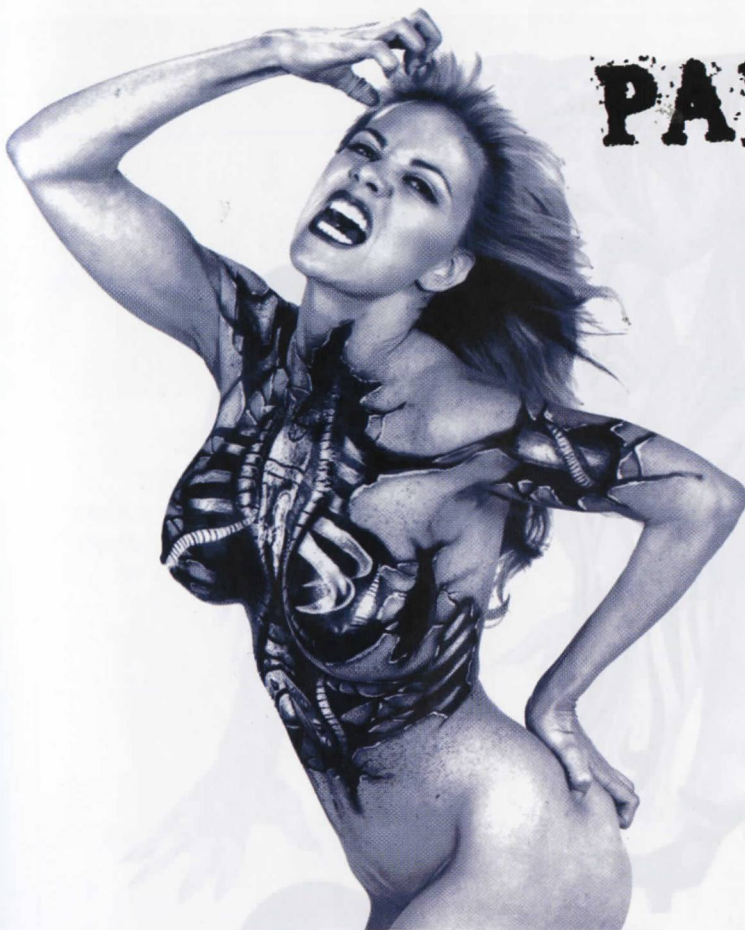
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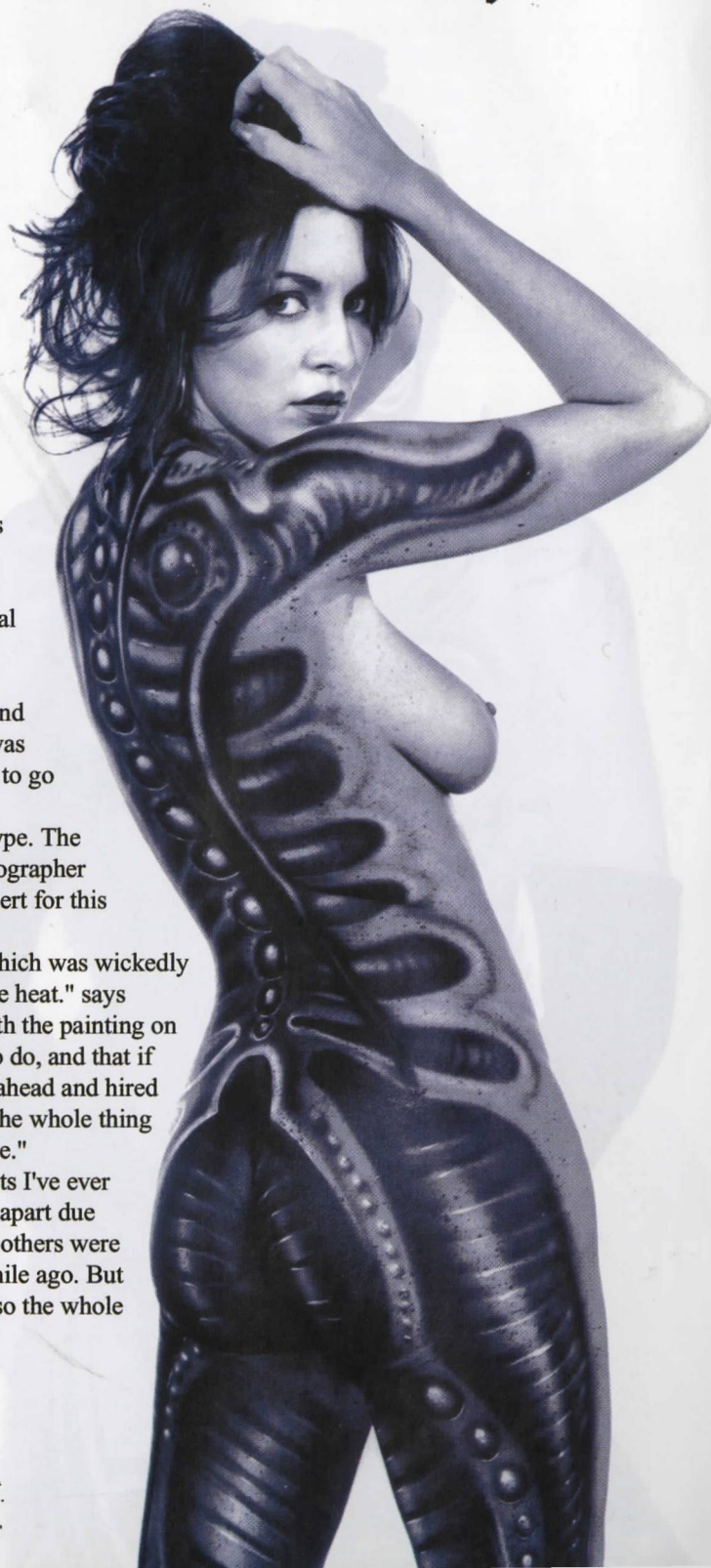
2 Penthouse Pets, 1 dominatrix, 2 strippers, 1 rock star, 1 porn star, 1 actress, a schoolgirl and the wife of the artist constituted the Painted Ladies photo series. The project was a collaborative effort by Justice Howard, who photographed the women and Robert Kalafut, who painted their bodies.

The entire project took well over 100 hours to complete. These are not real tattoos but airbrush & paint applied directly onto the body of the model. No computer manipulation was used in this project. We were highly selective in choosing who was to participate. The painting of each girl took three hours and was done by mixing airbrush & paint stroke techniques. After the painting was done the model went into makeup for another hour. Only then was she ready to go into the photoshoot.

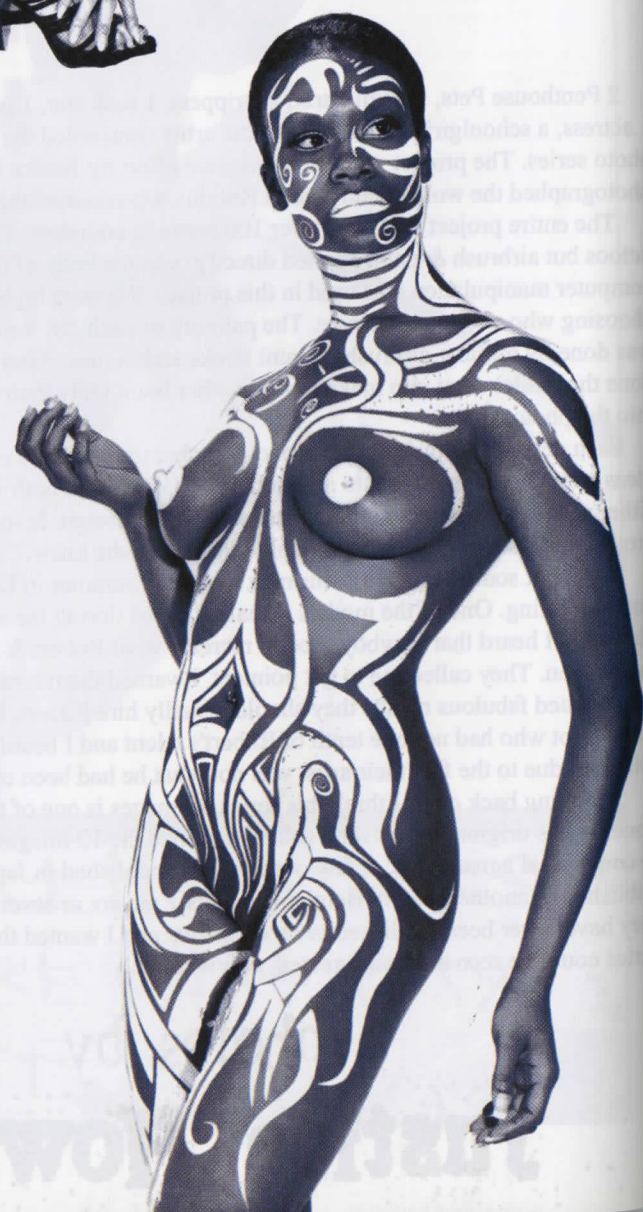
Each design was picked by the photographer to match the model's body type. The ideas were then drawn up into a sketch by Kalafut. Then both artist and photographer either agreed or disagreed on the feasibility of the design. Justice picked Robert for this project because he was the best graphic illustrator she knew.

"We shot some of the girls during a really hot summer in Los Angeles, which was wickedly hot & grueling. One of the models actually fainted during the shoot due to the heat." says Howard. "I heard that Playboy tried to recreate what Robert & I had done with the painting on the women. They called me to get pointers. I warned them how hard it was to do, and that if they wanted fabulous results they should actually hire Robert, but they went ahead and hired some idiot who had not one tenth of Robert's talent and I heard later on that the whole thing fell apart due to the fact their artist was not what he had been cracked up to be."

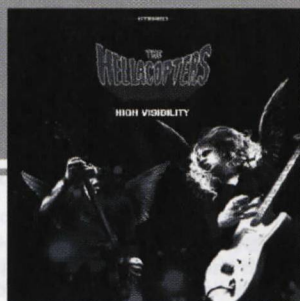
"Looking back on it, I think this series of images is one of the best projects I've ever done. It was originally shot for a calendar (hence the 12 images) but that fell apart due to contractual agreements. A few of them were published in Japan and a few others were published in another mag in Belgium. Juxtapoz ran six or seven of them a while ago. But they have never been published in *their entirety* and I wanted that to happen so the whole series could be seen as it was created, as a whole."



photos by
Justice Howard



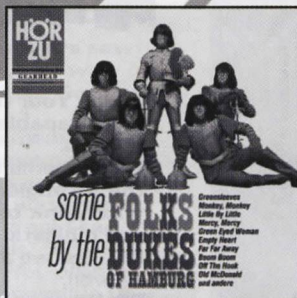




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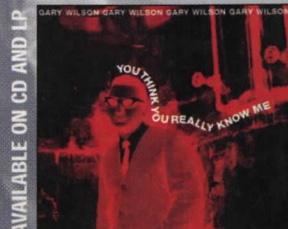
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I have been a fan of Nikki Sudden's for almost as long as Nikki has been releasing music. I was turned on to his first band, the Swell Maps, in 1979 when a friend played "Read About Seymour" for me. Their quirky fractured pop sensibilities were hugely appealing to the young Paul Bearer. In fact I often return to the Swell Maps catalogue, these 20 odd years later, and their unique brand of tunesmanship still never fails to bring a smile to the face of an older, wiser, vastly more jaded and cynical self. After the demise of the Maps, Nikki Sudden embarked on what has been a long and prolific solo career and has also enjoyed an equally healthy and successful collaboration with Dave Kusworth under the moniker The Jacobites. His solo and Jacobites material are every bit as vital and enjoyable as the best efforts of the Swell Maps, yet distinctively different; more soulful, and heavily influenced by the Stones, Faces and, to a lesser extent, Bob Dylan. Freeing himself from the narrow confines of punk allowed him to expound on a broader emotional range. On the dozens of records he's released, there are many moments of true rock bombast; songs like "Back to the Coast" and "Penicillin," even the entire Groove record, aptly display this fact. Still, I feel through repeated exposure to much of his ample catalogue, Nikki's best efforts are his songs about girls. To put it succinctly, Nikki Sudden loves the ladies. Songs like "I Belong to You," "Pin Your Heart to Me," "Broken Door," or "When I Left You" are all love songs in the truest regard. Love is Nikki's primary muse; be it falling in, being in, or falling out of it. He shamelessly wears his heart on his black velvet sleeve. Although abundantly capable of a vast array of other emotions and possessing an ability to apply his troubadouric talents to a wide range of other subjects, in my opinion, it's the girl/love songs that are his greatest gift to his appreciative fans.

PB = Paul Bearer; ED = Eva Destruction; NS = Nikki Sudden (also present for the interview was our friend Tracie)

PB: I was introduced to your music through the Swell Maps. I read that the band started in 1971 after your brother turned you on to T-Rex, years before the whole punk rock thing.

NS: Well, it wasn't really like that. It was kinda like as soon as I heard T-Rex I loved it. The very first single I bought was "Telegram Sam." I thought if I like music I should try and play it. I didn't really like it before that.

PB: So what did you like before T-Rex?

NS: I wanted to buy the Turtles', "She'd Rather Be With Me" single, but my mother talked me out of it. Then I heard something by Tyrannosaurus Rex, thought it was the worst thing I ever heard in my life and totally stopped listening to pop music.

PB: So when did the Swell Maps play their first gig?

NS: We played our first gig in 1978. Before then we were just playing at home.

PB: Where was home?

NS: In the West Midlands, six miles south of Birmingham. We just started playing and it took me a year to learn three chords. No one else we knew played and if they did, they played so well we were scared to ask them. We started writing our own songs because we couldn't play anything by anyone else. And that's it, we carried on from there.

PB: You didn't have outside influ-

Nikki Sudden

ences. Your musical development was basically what you were capable of playing.

NS: Yes.

PB: It seems that groups like the Swell Maps, the Pop Group, the Stranglers, the Fall, and the Birthday Party got lumped in with punk because they had the same aggressive overtones and nihilistic bend.

NS: Yes, we also were labeled new wave and I hate that term as well.

PB: What other bands were you pigeonholed with at the time?

NS: The Raincoats and other crap bands like Kleenex, but in fact I actually got along well with those guys.

PB: I thought they were OK. They were kinda cute and quirky. Like those other bands they had a few good singles. I liked that early Fall stuff. But it kinda outlived its usefulness. But I loved the Birthday Party. The "Release the Bats" single was like an explosion in my head. It reminded me of the perfect hybrid of Captain Beefheart and the Stooges. I have to admit when they broke up and Nick Cave started releasing solo material, I was not open to it and dismissed it. I was in my early 20s and his solo stuff was way more refined and didn't fit into my narrow confines. This is hard for me to admit, but I was also guilty of doing the same thing with your early solo releases. It wasn't the Swell Maps. Although The Bible Belt and Waiting on Egypt did have a very Swell Maps feel.

NS: Yeah, those two were very transitional—especially the original versions. I've re-done half the vocals. And re-mixed the three worst tracks, they were totally out of tune.

ED: Which ones were those?

NS: I don't even remember. The worst singing was on "All the Gold," "Johnny Smiled Slowly," and "I'd Much Rather Be With the Boys." There was this record shop in Birmingham called Rockers where Kusworth and I used to hang out. And they used to play our version of "I'd Much Rather be with the Boys" just to embarrass me basically.

PB: I wanted to ask you what the deal is with all the funny names of the band members and song titles. The one that stands out in my head is "Don't Throw Ashtrays at Me."

NS: It's a Can song.

PB: Oh, 'cause I've had ashtrays thrown at me. Are any of the Swell Maps still doing anything?

NS: Epic's dead, obviously. Richard is re-building antique cars made between the dawn of driving and the 1920's that sell for like a million pounds each, and he's got a nice farmhouse in the country side.

PB: Which one was he?

NS: Biggles.

PB: What about Jowe?

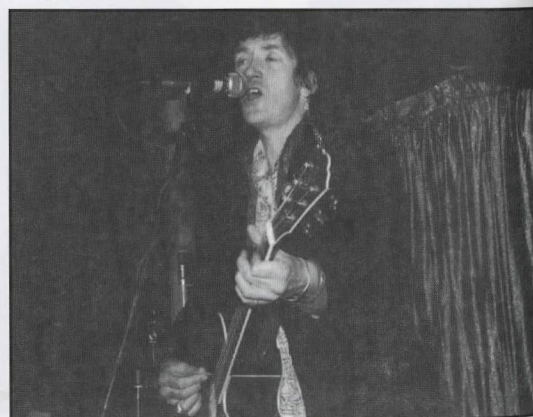
NS: Jowe still does music. We only let Jowe do one song on every album.

PB: Like "Cake Shop Girl."

NS: Epic hated that song. He played as badly as he could on that track. He later said to me that he wished he hadn't played so bad

because it kinda sounds really nice, but he played bad because he hated the song. Jowe had this one song called "Come Upstairs and See My Chemistry Set," he kept trying to get us to play it every rehearsal. We just laughed at him. We let him do one

by Paul Bearer



token song on every album.

PB: What did he play?

NS: Bass.

PB: Having birthed and weaned the band in a time of pop and glam, at what point in the development did you go to the more experimental, sparse instrumental excursion?

NS: It just came about kinda naturally. Epic and I always saw the Swell Maps as a cross between T-Rex and Can. Can was always really cool, but we didn't like any of the other German bands like Faust or Amon Duul.

PB: Did you think of the minimalist approach as a means of railing against the limited confines of the punk movement?

NS: We didn't even think of anything, we thought we could do whatever we wanted. Our engineer John Rivers always said to me, 'Oh you can't do that, it won't work,' and I would say, 'Just try it.' 'No, it won't work.' 'Try it.' 'Won't work.' 'Try it.' 'OK.' And afterwards it would be, 'Oh, it worked.' You always have to give engineers things that they say are impossible to do; if they say they're impossible, you know they can do them.

ED: What kinds of things would be impossible.

NS: On this one track I wanted sound of the Lancaster Bomber going backwards through a Nissan Hut which is like a kinda hut. He knew exactly what I meant, and he managed to get that.

PB: Were Trip to Marineville and Jane from Occupied Europe the only records released while the band was still in existence?

NS: That and the four singles.

PB: On Rough Trade? Which were?

NS: "Read About Seymour," "Dresden Style," "Let's Build A Car", and "Real Shocks." Everything else was posthumous. We still keep on dredging the vaults. There are other tracks I think should be released and the others don't think should be released. There is a great track called "Marshmallows," that I wanted to put on the *Sweeping the Desert* album that came out last year, but the other two vetoed it so its gonna be on my box set.

PB: Isn't that on the Nikki and Friends CD? Is that just a demo?

NS: No, I just really liked it and I thought it should be released. John Rivers and Richard vetoed it and took out like two thirds of the track.

PB: Before Epic's death were there ever any talks of reuniting.

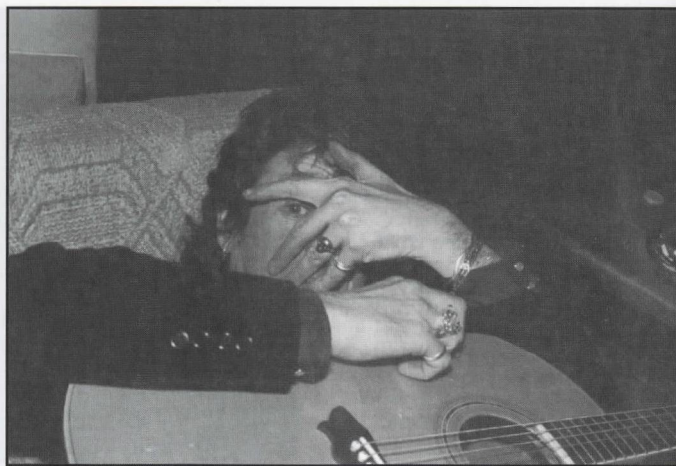
NS: One time when I was in New York these two guys came up to me and said, 'Nikki we want the Swell Maps to get back together to do one gig in LA and one gig in New York. We'll pay you \$10,000 a gig.' I didn't even bother to tell Epic because I thought he would just laugh at the idea. I told him about 3 years later and he said, 'Why didn't you say yes? I would've done it.' I thought we couldn't have played with Jowe. But when Epic died we played a reunion gig with Jowe which was really good. We did two shows. But Richard... I hadn't even seen Richard since '82. I couldn't even find him until Epic died. Then I managed to track him down to come to the funeral. So I hadn't seen Richard for 18 years, and when and I saw him at the funeral and it was like one day went by. It's like real friends stay forever even if you haven't seen them in 18 years, they're still your friends.

PB: Tell me how the deal with Secretly Canadian came about. Your music seems distinctly different from the other artists on their roster.

NS: This guy, Chris Swanson, who runs the label, left me a message on my answering machine in Berlin. I never got back to him. He kept e-mailing me, but I thought okay, I don't need

another record label. He said, 'Nikki what we want to do is re-issue all your early albums.' So I said, 'Okay, but I want there to be some changes. I want to go back into the studio to re-master and I want to do the booklets.' I don't like the back cov-

photos by Eva Destruction



ers of the re-issues. I think they're crap, but aside from that I think they're really good.

PB: I think the booklets are really nice, with all your personal recollection and all the great photos. Was your first trip to the states when you came to New York in 1980?

NS: Right. My first night there, Johnny Thunders was playing at the Ritz with the Coasters supporting him. Johnny didn't even come on stage the first few songs. He was that out of it, but he did a brilliant show. I was at Max's two days later and he was at the bar drinking a white Russian. I thought I'd like to talk to him, and he was right there, so I went up and started talking to him.

PB: Was he warm with you?

NS: Yeah, but he told the bartender, 'I'm not paying for this guy's meal.' I asked him if he'd like to do an interview for Zig Zag, and he said yeah. God bless him.

PB: I saw him a lot of times. And if he bothered to show up at all, the first half of the show he'd be brilliant, and then he'd take a break and when he came back you couldn't believe it was the same guy. I never met anyone who "cut their hand" so much. A lot of times we'd drive from Philly to New York to see him and you'd get to the club and they'd tell you he cut his hand and he's not playing. You'd see him a week later and you'd be right up front looking for cuts on his hand. With the exception of "Midget Submarines," which seems to be a staple of your live sets to this day, are there any other Swell Maps songs that get plundered from the vaults and played live.

NS: I have done on occasion, "Secret Island," "BLAM!" and "Full Moon," as well as "Spies." I did an acoustic version of "Read About Seymour" for the first time in my life in Washington the other night.

PB: How'd that go?

NS: I started playing it, and about midway through I'm thinking, 'You can't do that acoustic,' so I started playing "Back to the Coast." I did that and "Spies" last night, and that worked.

ED: Do you prefer playing with a band or going solo?

NS: I don't mind playing solo. As long as the sound is good, you can play all the songs you want to. I prefer having a band to play off of, but it depends on how much of my material the band knows. A lot of it's in B-minor and E-minor and anyone can play that. I was playing with this bass player once and I said, 'We're going to do this song in D, C, and E,' and he says, 'We don't know it.' So I say 'D, C, & E' and he still says, 'We don't know it.' So I just started playing it anyway and it was fine, luckily. When I play solo, I don't have to make a set list, I just play. When I'm playing I try to think of what I'm going to play next and if I can't decide I just have a cigarette 'til one comes to me.

ED: You certainly have enough of them!

NS: I know, but sometimes I can't think of any.

PB: Do you have any idea how many albums you've played on or how many songs you've actually written?

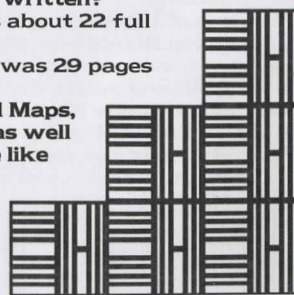
NS: I'll send you my discography. It's about 22 full albums.

(He later forwarded it to me, and it was 29 pages long!)

PB: I assume that includes the Swell Maps, The Jacobites, and your solo stuff, as well as records you guest on with people like Jeremy Gluck?

NS: Yeah.

PB: Do you know how many songs you've actually written? I remember reading that for one of your



records you planned on writing 100 songs and choosing the 10 best ones.

NS: I wrote them all. I suppose I've written hundreds that never got used and all totaled a couple of thousand. I was hanging out with this girl at a bar the other night, and I fancied her so I wrote a song about her.

ED: I read somewhere that every woman you meet is someone you could potentially fall in love with. That's how you get inspired. Is that true?

NS: I suppose so. I've already fallen in love two times tonight (referring to Eva and Tracie, who giggle like schoolgirls). I mean why not, but I think the thing is you've got to stay naive.

The best thing about naiveté is you're always gonna be searching for new things. If you lose that you've lost everything.

PB: Okay, let's get on to the next question.

NS: I don't mind talking about girls. I like talking about girls y'know.

PB: Girls are definitely a fancy of mine as well. I've gotten several tattoos over girls. You write songs, I get tattoos. They're like a road map of my past romances.

ED: Do these romances end, or just fade away?

NS: I fell in love with this girl the other night and I didn't even speak to her. I just saw her and said to myself, I could marry her.

ED: Ahhhh...

PB: Have you ever been married or do you have any kids?

NS: Not that I'm aware of.

PB: It seems like your collaborations with Dave Kusworth in the Jacobites, as well as your solo stuff is heavily rooted in the Stones and the Faces.

NS: I think Dave once said, and I agree with him, that all the Jacobites songs are about drugs and girls or a combination of both. We always wanted to sound like the Stones but we never managed to because we're not the Stones. The same with The Faces.

PB: The only Faces record I'm really familiar with is Snakes and Ladders.

NS: You should check out *Ooh La La*, it's brilliant.

PB: When Steel Wheels came out you said at that point that you felt that the Stones were still as valid as ever. Have you felt that way about the records they've released for the last 20 years?

NS: Absolutely, I think they're all great. I love the Stones.

PB: Let's talk about Ronnie Wood. You're currently penning a biography of him and in one of your e-mails you referred to a Ronnie Wood drink.

NS: Port and brandy, it's actually The Faces' drink. After a couple of them it's like you're on drugs.

PB: Have you drank much absinthe in Europe?

NS: I drink it in the Czech Republic. That's the only place you get real absinthe. One time I drank a bit too much of it and ended up with a 14 year-old girl.

PB: I drank Chartreuse in New Orleans. It's another worm-wood-based drink, it's luminous green and after a few shots I was luminous green too.

NS: I like vodka, pernod, whiskey and bourbon, and I really love champagne.

PB: Let's talk a bit about the Jacobites. It's basically on again, off again kind of band, right?

NS: It's going to be on again soon. Dave's been drinking a bottle of Jack Daniels everyday for the past 20 years.

PB: Is that why he's never come to the states?

NS: Basically.

PB: I thought the last Jacobites record, God Saves Up Poor Sinners, (on Bomp) was the best thing you two did. The photos of you two on all your records resemble Keith and Ronnie. Is he Keith and you're Ronnie?

NS: He's definitely Keith, but I'm more like Mick, because I organize everything and put everything together.

PB: I really like the way the Jacobites records have songs written and sung by you and other songs written and sung by



Dave. Even though your song-writing styles and voices are very different and distinct, all the records still have a unified cohesive feel and sound to them.

NS: Thanks.

PB: I really like the Liquor, Guns and Ammo record a lot. How did you hook up with the guys from R.E.M.?

NS: I met Peter Dinklage when they were in Frankfurt on the Green Tour. I went backstage because I was told Peter wanted to meet me. So I was like, 'all right.' We got on really well and ended up back in their hotel 'til like six in the morning drinking and having a good time. I was in New York like six months later and met up with him again and ended up

going to Georgia for a few weeks and writing and recording that record.

PB: You've been on a few tribute records, notably the Brian Wilson one, and you also do a version of "Captain Kennedy on The Bridge," which is vastly different from Neil Young's. I would think that someone who's written so many great songs would have been approached about doing more and having his own tribute record cut, have you?

NS: I've been on a few others as well. A couple of T-Rex ones, a Nick Drake one, a Mick Ronson one, and also a Johnny one where I cover "Have Faith," but I find on most of them you've got a bunch of bands who haven't got a clue about the artists they're paying tribute to.

PB: I feel you're truly an artist worthy of paying tribute to, has anyone asked you yet?

NS: No, but you can do one if you'd like.

PB: Who would you like to see included.

NS: Rod Stewart

PB: What song would you like him to do?

NS: "Only Boy in Heaven," or "Broken Door."

PB: Who else?

NS: Al Green and Bobby Womack.

PB: Where does your fascination with old airplanes come from?

NS: I've always thought I would like to have a Sopwith Camel or Sopwith Pup in a big room in a Manor House in Oxfordshire.

PB: So you prefer WWI planes? I prefer WWII fighters myself.

NS: I like anything with a propeller. I don't care for jets, except for the ME-262.

PB: Historians say the Germans would've won the war if they developed the jet technology earlier.

NS: And they say Napoleon would've been victorious at Waterloo if he didn't have piles.

PB: You mean hemorrhoids?

NS: Yeah.

PB: A lot of your songs have very European overtones, for instance a few mention castles. In America we don't really have castles, we have barns. Do you like America?

NS: You also have drug stores, which sounds good in theory but don't quite live up to the name. But really I love it here. I'd like to live in LA for awhile or New Orleans; make a few records here but not really live here permanently. Although I do love coming here.

PB: You live in Berlin now, right?

NS: Yeah, I've been there about 5 years.

PB: You've said you felt, that as a songwriter, Nick Cave was kissed by God. Do you think that because your muse is always so evident to you and you've managed to write so many beautiful songs, that you might share that same distinction?

NS: As Jerry Lee once said, 'There's god-given talent.' People like Jerry Lee and Keith Richards can take all the drugs they want and they can't destroy their talent. Their talent is greater than that. I was born lucky. I know that.

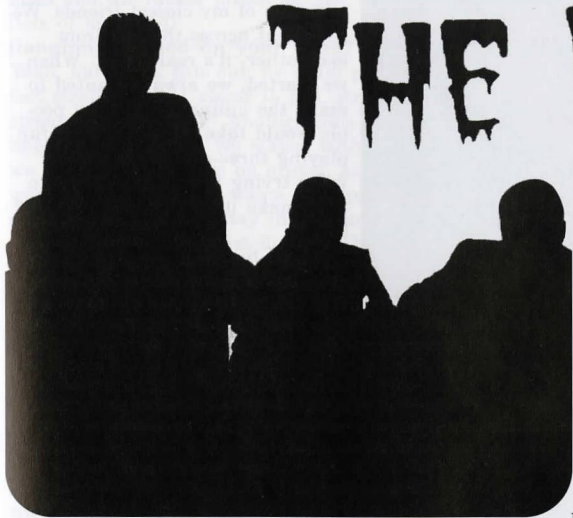
PB: I'm a big believer in luck and fate, but in your case it seems more like God's grace.

NS: Once in New Orleans I bought two juju bags for charisma, but I lost both of them.

PB: Well you definitely didn't lose your charisma.

NS: Apparently I can be quite charming.





THE HELLBENDERS

I first heard about The Hellbenders from the B-Movie Rats sometime around fall of 1997, and I was lucky enough to review their full-length, *Pop*

Rock Suicide (see issue #18.) I loved the record and got to see the band live when our band, The 440s, played with them and B-Movie Rats at Club Mesa in November, 2000. I conducted this interview with Bimal Bender at his house in LA in January of 2002. Bimal, Matt and Andy from the B-Movie Rats all share the place and were kind enough to put us up for two nights. Thanks guys!

The Hellbenders are Bimal: Guitar, vocals, Hans: Guitar, vocals, Heath: drums and Dave: Bass

How long have you guys been around?

A little over four years. Me and Hans formed the band, and found Heath pretty early on. We've been through six bass players... Dave quit the band and joined back again, and for the most part, this is our permanent lineup—for the past two years anyway.

I know Bill from B-Movie Rats filled in, too.

Yeah, actually Billy and Derek (B-Movie Rats singer) played bass for us too...

Derek?!

Yeah, Derek and Billy both played, you know, filling in for shows and stuff. We met Dave at our rehearsal spot, he was in a Ramones cover band—Designated Dale's (from Flipside) band. He joined us then quit, and Billy filled in again recording with us. I ran into Dave at one of our shows, actually it was a Humpers reunion show, and I asked Dave how he was doing, and he said he kinda missed it. I'd say roughly six months he was gone, but he's back and this is definitely the most solid lineup we've had.

You want to tell everyone about the van crash?

(laughs) Basically it was our second tour, we played in Ft. Worth with The Riverboat Gamblers. It was April 15th, 2000, I'll never forget the date, and we had to be in New Orleans the next day. We were gonna release our second single on Gumshoe Records (who are based in New Orleans), and we figured we'd get there early and hang out. The guy had this cool pad right down in the Garden District, lots of booze, and of course, food, which you know all about...

Of course!

We decided to drive all night to get there from Ft. Worth, Texas. So we drive all night, we're about three hours from New Orleans and we stopped to eat. It was about 8AM at this point. I'm in the back, Hans is in the back, we're sleeping, and Heath is driving. He basically fell asleep, and we hear, 'Oh Shit!' and we look up and we're going down this embankment, you know? Off the highway completely, and heading towards the bayou. Heath grabbed the wheel and over-corrected, then the van flipped and was almost on the roof, but we hit a semi.

JEEZUS!

Yeah, but we actually got lucky because we ended up on our side instead of flipped on the roof. Me and Hans were in the back, no seat belts on, and we would've been... fuckin' dust, basically. Heath, we find out, has a warrant for his arrest—which he didn't tell us about—so Heath got sent to jail. The van was wrecked completely, so

they took the van for the cost of the tow and Heath got arrested on the spot.

How long did they keep him?

A few hours, it was a Sunday morning, Alexandria, Louisiana. Nothing's open. We get to the jail and they ask us how much money we've got. We had like, 300 bucks, and this is our band fund ya know? We fill out some paperwork, and they tell us we owe \$500! We don't have it, not even our cash in our pockets, so the guy comes back and says "I just talked to the judge, you can have him back for \$326." So I go to get Heath and pick him up, they have nothing, no paperwork, no processing papers. So they just took our money and got us out of town. We ended up getting a U-Haul, but at that point, Heath was kinda shaken up by it. He was like, 'Cool, you got me out, lets go.' But the spirit of the band was broken. It was costing us \$200 a day for the truck, the van was getting eight miles to the gallon, and we knew we couldn't cover that kind of money. We tried to do as many dates as we could, but we had to cancel a lot of shows. People were really cool about it and gave us a chance to come back.

So they kept your van?

Yeah, it was wrecked bad. We've got some cool pictures on the website. Billy from The Rats does it for us.

When all this happened is when Dave quit the band?

Yeah, there was a lot of shit that happened, and we were feeling pretty bad about it. We did call our record *Too Dumb to Quit*, because of all that.

Did you guys make it to New Orleans after the wreck?

Yeah, we called him and told him what happened, but it was a record release, and we felt like we owed him that much, so we drove out and played it.

Awsome.

Yeah, we stayed a few days, drank a lot, but we got home safely. It was a rough time.

OK. Answer this question: Are there too many bands?

(Long pause, then laughs) Ahhh... how bout this? There aren't a lot of clubs, and the bands that I personally think are at the top get pushed into that whole scene, and if you're good, you're just one in a number, and wouldn't get the exposure you'd get if there were less bands. I think in the rock and roll scene there aren't a lot of clubs to play, and the kind of punk rock and roll we're into, most of us got into it when we were younger. Now we're in our 30s. First off, I can't drink as much as I used to, so when I go out once, I'm not going out for a week! And it seems like its a dying breed of fan, the audience is sort of fading for that kind of music. I mean, when I was young, I'd take a thrashy Discharge record over the Dolls, but I really don't like the shit that's punk today. And all that Korn shit sucks. [laughs] Does that answer the question?

Good answer... how do you guys feel about bands battling over MP3s, Napster, and all that?

First off all, at our level, and I'm talking about the rock and roll community, everyone knows each other's band, the cool clubs, the dick-



by Downtown Dave

head soundguy, it's this small community and none of us have money. So why not have the stuff up so I can hear this band from Sweden that rocks, but I don't want to pay the \$18 for their CD to hear 'em? And the second part is some kid might get turned on by a band's name and say, 'Hey they have a cool name. I want to hear these guys...' it makes it all accessible. With us, our distribution is sort of small, so if you want to take a Hellbenders recording and make tapes for your friends and all that, you know what? That's cool. Because a band doesn't see a penny out of it anyway. I'd rather have people hear it and get the music out. A

band like Metallica, well sure, maybe they're losing money. But if I had 50 million dollars in my back pocket, who cares if some kid in Dubuque, Iowa is downloading my shit?! Hey man, go for it. Tell your friends about it while you're tipping cows or whatever. Sometimes, especially with kids, they never leave the house anyway—so if it's keeping rock and roll circulating, tape our shit! [laughs]

You've got an extensive record collection here... lots of old stuff, punk, '70s rock and roll. Do you think the talent level of bands has degenerated over the years?

Oh yeah, bands like AC/DC, The Kinks in the '60s, even before that, it was basic rock and roll riffs, but the singers really sang, ya know? They didn't have ProTools to fix everything in the mix. Bands would punch holes in their speakers to get the right kind of distortion, mic placement in recording was used to get the sounds just the way they wanted. It seemed like they worked harder to make good records and sound good. So I think you can be less talented these days and sound good on a record. Especially in loops, samples, electronic Marilyn Manson wannabes... I don't see a lot of talent in drop tuning my guitar and chunking it up while someone else hits the high notes [does a good imitation of that guitar sound]. Rock and roll bands, even older punk bands, Danzig, The Misfits, Bad Brains, those bands were really talented and created this whole new style of music. So, yeah, I think the talent level has slipped in some ways.

Even as recently as 15 years ago, all that music was just called "alternative"—as long as it was non-mainstream, people would support it. Goth, punk, oi, psychobilly... why is music so segregated now?

These days you can't just "be into punk." Are you into hardcore? Rock and roll punk? Oi? Pop punk? It's all so categorized now. It's been turned into something a lot more narrowminded. Here in LA, back in the '80s even, people would make up their own hairstyles, clothes, ripped stuff, wear button down shirts with Converse sneakers... it was all cool and everyone was into doing their own thing. I think people used to be a lot more individual back then, there's not as much expression, and less comradery these days.

When did you graduate?

Back in 1989. Me and Hans went to school together. Really?

Yeah, we met when we were 15. We were playing in bands back then, mainly jamming and playing oi; we could smoke pot in his room after school and play. His mom was really cool about it. We played our first show was at Madam Wong's, which was cool, but I'd had dental surgery that day and was bleeding a lot. Real punk rock! [laughs] We were just kids, and they tried to throw us out... they didn't believe we were in the band because we were just these kids, but it was a real blast. So yeah, me and Hans go way back.

Well, that comes off live. You guys seem really used to playing together. That was something I was going to mention because you guys pull that off on record, too... it seems like you put a lot of energy into making the guitars blend but still sound like two separate guitars.

Thanks. I think that's one of the best things about this band. We've grown up together, and respect each other a lot and have known each other for over 15 years. I mean, Hans is such a fucking awesome player, his playing has a really cool style... I'm a little more basic, kind of dumb things down, but no matter what, I know he's there holding things together. And it's fun, man, I'm having a good time playing



produced shitty?

Take a band like Green Day, who'd been doing it for a while and finally made some money and then could spend a lot to make a record the way they always wanted to and then get called a sellout.

Why, because they suddenly made money? You know, that whole idea about getting money makes you a sellout, try going out on tour and eating shit, getting ripped off, not having any money to promote. If someone says here's some money to do that stuff... what am I, fucking retarded? Fuck, we'd take it. I mean if someone would pay the money, I'd take it. All of us, we could do that. Imagine it, what would it be like to wake up and say, 'I'm going to record today,' or 'We're gonna go on tour and someone else is gonna drive, and we get fed, and get to stay at a hotel.' Come on, who doesn't want that? I mean, you gotta dream sometimes! But the deal is you don't play this kind of music because you want to get rich, because this is the wrong kind of music for that! [laughs]

Agreed! Do you feel like you play this music because you have to? Like if someone took all your shit, you'd find a way to get another guitar and start over?

Yeah, music is what I do. We all want to play all the time, I love living with Matt (B-Movie Rats guitarist) because he's always into playing all kinds of stuff, not just in the rock format either. We always play around at the house. I'm getting older, and I don't want to stop playing music, but I wonder sometimes if I'm gonna "make it" playing music, that's why it's important that we have a good time what we're doing.

You get burned out trying to break a band... it's a huge sacrifice that most people don't realize or understand.

I love being up there playing, but all the other stuff that goes with it, man, sometimes it's hard. I wait tables and I don't want to make a career out of it, but it allows me the flexibility to tour. I can't see my family as much... my pal Cow here, (Bimal's lovely, sweet tempered pitbull) she's the love of my life. I have to make sure I've got someone I can trust to take care of her, plus you've gotta have a van... I mean, our van, it's not exactly the Cadillac of vans—like most bands—but we've done about three tours with it. We picked a white van because it's inconspicuous.

That always helps!

Yeah, we've got a loft and keep the gear underneath, you can't see it. **You guys ever notice when you stay with people on the road it's like the same house but different town? Like it seems that in every town we end up staying with the four bike messengers who share a pad; the bong on the coffee table, porn in the bathroom, same posters but different venues...**

Yeah, well that goes back to that whole rock and roll community thing where everyone knows each other. I'd say about 75% of where we stay everyone has the same action figures, the Johnny Thunders posters, all that stuff... even when we stay with someone that's new, guys or girls. And porn is great, especially on the road. We always stay with some cool people. We stayed with this guy that was a biologist and he had all kinds of snakes and animals, all kinds of stuff. There was this girl we met in Missoula and she was gonna put us up but she got arrested and a DUI that night. The next time we were there, she showed up and we got to stay with her and her sister. They had a ferret, a dog, a cat, a turtle, plus a frog and something else I forgot. It was like a wildlife sanctuary. So they put the frog on my

head and the fucker pissed on me!

[lots of laughing]

[laughing] Pissed on your head?

Yeah, but check this out, he could piss like 7-10 feet straight out, I swear to god, straight out stream! That's power! Another time was in Sheridan, Wyoming. We stayed with this kid... we played in a garage on gravel, all these kids were underage. There was a full apartment downstairs we got to stay in, his mom cooked breakfast for us the next day, and he left for school.

You want to tell any fucked up stories?

Well, what's fucked up?

That van story, for starters!

[laughs] OK. we played New Orleans with The Riverboat Gamblers, who'd never been there, so we end up drinking tons and get offered some coke at a place that turns out to be a gay bar. It's all cool, and everyone is fucked up, and we meet these two girls shooting pool. They told us we could stay with them, and everything seems OK until we get outside. One of our friends passes out, it's about five in the morning and there was all kinds of shit going on and these two girls start brawling over which house we can stay at. We all get it broken up and follow these chicks to their house, which it turns out has no water, no fridge, a piss-stained mattress...

The works.

The works, so I go out to tell everyone, because we're not into it, the sun's coming up, and the two girls start brawling again... I mean punching, hitting each other's heads on the cars, arms in doors; it was a Jerry Springer white-trash fistfight! It's daylight by this time, and the fucking cops come, but we all just faked like we were sleeping in the van.

Did you get a shower?

Fuck no! That's one of those things on tour that you love, you notice

that? You get a shower and a good place to sleep, touring becomes awesome. Think about those bands that get a hotel every night, tour buses; people call them sellouts? They're fucking lucky! God bless

cleanliness... we brushed our teeth in the van while we were in Philly—man, that town took care of us! People were looking at us like we were nuts, but just because we smell doesn't mean we can't have dental hygiene. We've had lots of good times, and that's what really makes it fun, because it can be hard out there. You want to end up remembering the good times, and pretty much we've been really lucky. We just got back from tour with the Candy Snatchers, and there was all kinds of shit we could talk about, but probably shouldn't.

Do you have anything new out?

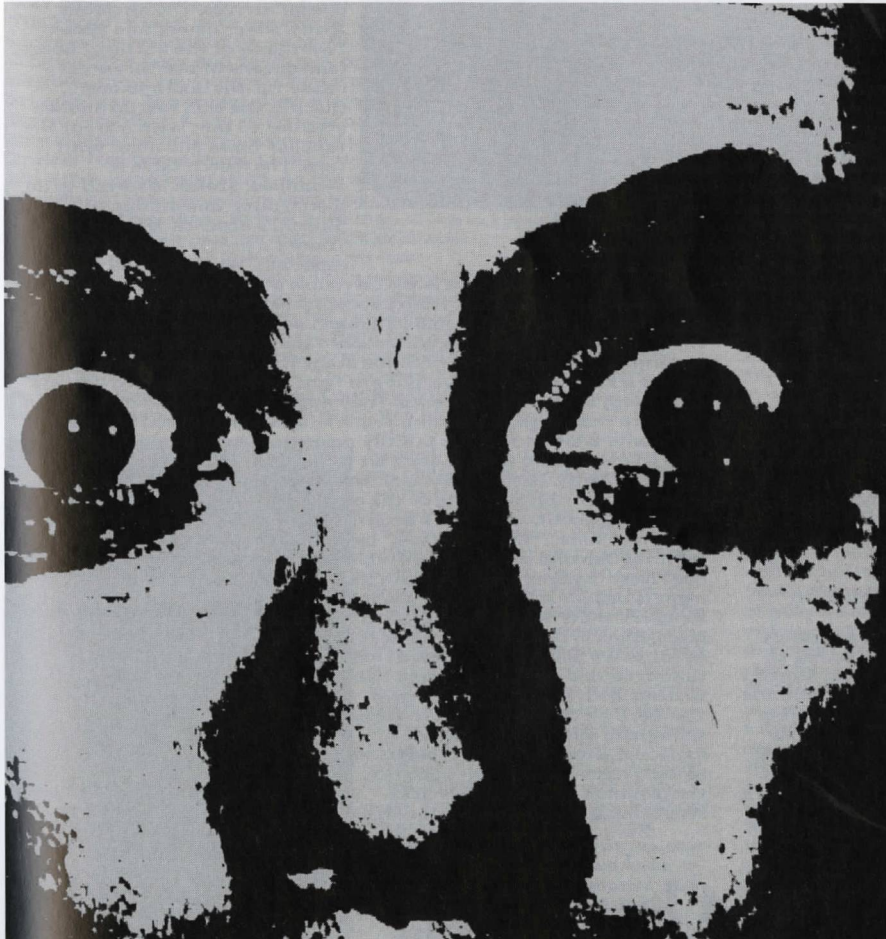
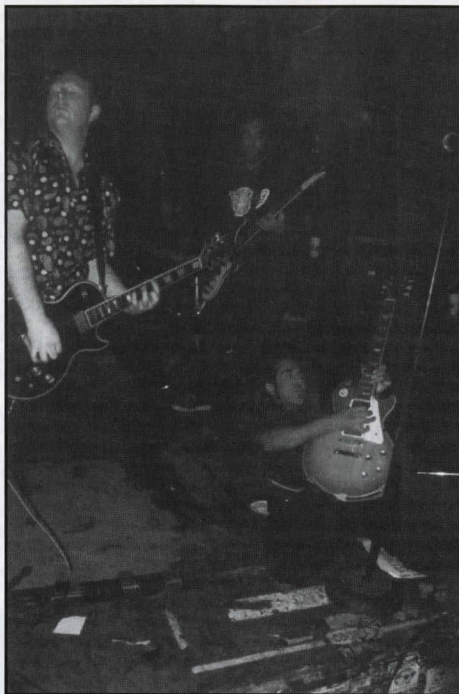
We've got a new release in the works that should be out soon... we haven't recorded it yet, I think it'll be on a subsidiary of GoKart Records.

Has the style changed from the first records?


The biggest thing to us now is the pacing of our songs. When we play live we tend to speed things up, but right now we're trying to watch that. I think we've got a strong live show, but our records haven't quite caught it. But I think we're writing songs that come together a lot quicker than before, and we're not a band that plans what we're gonna do with a song, we just write it and play. We like to take chances with stuff and not worry too much about what our fans would want us to write.

Any last sentence to tell the world about the band?

I'd want to tell everyone to support independent rock and roll. That, and I guess, thanks for the support. People have been cool as hell, we've been lucky. We get letters from all over the world. A guy wrote from Belarus; it's amazing that someone halfway around the world heard us and liked it enough to write.



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ANTiSEEN Tour Diary: Europe 2002

CAST: Jeffrey K. Clayton - Vocals, Whiskey, Blood
Mighty Joe Young - Guitar, Pot, Carrier of the Constitution
Sir Barry Hannibal - Drums, Drinker of Tea, English Nobleman
Big Doug Canipe - Bass, Drunkard, First Time Visitor to Europe
Stefan Walz - Road Manager, Driver, Superior German
Jeff Skipski - Smiling Merch Seller, Photographer, Negative Force

MARCH 5th - RALEIGH, NC

We travel from different parts of the Carolinas to meet at my brother, Greg Clayton's house in Raleigh. We will take our Delta flight out of the Raleigh-Durham airport at 4:30 PM to Cincinnati, Ohio. Sir Barry, Doug and myself arrive right at nightfall and immediately begin the process of rearranging our luggage and merchandise. We got burned for \$150.00 going to the West Coast last year by having a bag full of merchandise that weighed over 70 pounds, so we didn't wanna go through that bullshit again. After about two hours of figuring, refiguring, and trying to read a scale with a flashlight, we finally get things together. Unfortunately, we have to leave about \$600 worth of merch behind. Later, Joe and Jeff Young arrive. After about two minutes of socializing and explaining the packing procedure, Joe looks for a dark room to sleep in. It's about 9:30 PM. Tom Okeefe, former bassist and current big-time music biz road manager, drops by to wish us well and share stories of rubbing elbows with celebrities. At this point we have had two different line ups of ANTiSEEN in one room, a very rare accomplishment indeed... and we all got along!!

MARCH 6th - RALEIGH/DURHAM AIRPORT

We get to the airport early enough to go through all the new and improved security procedures. We are very proud of our packing job and can't wait to see the scales balance right on that 70 pound mark. For the first time in our history of air travel, our bags are simply waved through WITHOUT being weighed at all! Of course I am pulled aside and made to show the contents of our biggest and most attention grabbing trunk, but still, it is not weighed. Oh well... what are you gonna do? Going to the terminal, we encounter these new safety checks. After a long wait, Joe and I are pulled aside and made to take off our shoes, unpack our carry-ons, and are triple-searched with the wands. The armed national guardsmen are looking at us weird... Joe gets caught with a miniature screwdriver set and has to go back to point A to have it put into his original unweighed bag. No real trouble. The flight is packed. It's a hot and uncomfortable ride to O-hi. Once we land, we are to meet up with Jeff Skipski to fly on to Frankfurt. The time finally comes to board the flight—we have yet to see Skipski. I waited as long as possible, expecting to see a neon orange sweat shirt and an oversized back pack tearing through the crowd, but it never happened. We had to board without him. On the flight to Germany, I was hating our booking agent, not trusting our German label and dreading the tour actually. These three things would all change drastically later in the story.

After Joe, Doug and myself order tiny shot bottles of Jack Daniels I settle back to read a book about the Stones '69 tour.

MARCH 7 - FRANKFURT, GERMANY

As we're about to land, a member of the Delta flight crew comes to give me message that a Mr. Skipski would be catching a later flight and will be in Frankfurt the following day. This means Jeff would miss the first show. Lucky for him (and us) we had to drive back through Frankfurt the next day. As always, I'm starting to get paranoid about

going through customs. I don't know why, I'm not carrying anything illegal. I just dread the prospect of being searched and eventually taxed for all our merchandise. As we near the customs gate, the bored-as-hell looking Pakistani chick working the gate lazily waves us through without even looking twice at us! What luck!!!! Stefan Walz, our old friend from the very first tour in '92 is waiting for us with his seven-foot tall, authoritarian looking ass! After the expected pleasantries, we make our way to our rented tour bus. What a beautiful tour bus it is. I salute Tour Vans Inc. for providing such a luxurious carriage for us. The thing is huge. It has a TV and VCR, a bed and about 15 drink holders!!! We are no enroute to pick up our rented equipment. About two hours later we arrive in some small town whose name I can't remember and load it all up. The German merchandise we ordered is in the bus already. Everything is good.

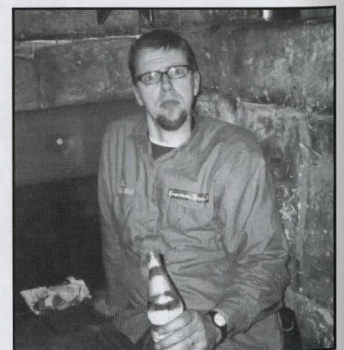
MARCH 7 - WEINHEIM, GERMANY

First show. Of course, the club has three sets of very steep stairs. Right then we realize just how unprepared for a three-week tour we actually are. Like 98% of the German clubs, this place (Cafe Central) has a great stage and an even better sound system. We re-arrange all the merchandise and our personal shit to begin the operation of what some have called "the well oiled machine." Our good friends Born Bavarian arrive; they'll be playing five shows with us on the tour. (Five of the original twelve they were supposed to play with us. More on that later). Our rider calls for quite a few items. One item we look for immediately is the bottle of whiskey we are looking forward to every night. Like the spoiled rock stars we think we are, if we don't see it at first glance, the next move is to summon Stefan (who is German, therefore speaks the language) to have him hustle up the promoter to ask "the important question" of "where the hell is the whiskey?" The Born Bavarian boys show up. Then our second opener arrives, The Skeleton Army. After dinner and about two-thirds of the bottle of booze (and dozens of beers), we get ready for the doors to open. Quickly, the club fills up and we step out to talk with a lot of the familiar faces and meet with fans. The merch table is swamped. Stefan is forced to do merch duty tonight due to Skipski's absence. He is not happy. There's a pretty decent crowd, especially for a Thursday night.

What I immediately notice is that a couple of faces are not there. One is our label man, Schilling, from Loudspeaker; and another longtime friend, and one-time label man, Tillman Leder from Tear It Up Records. We wrap up conversations with super-fans Coni and Marcus and it's showtime. Born Bavarian take the stage first. They sound great, maybe a little apprehensive, but are tight as hell. The crowd accepts them with a bit of indifference. They applaud politely. Andi Bavarian is quite a frontman; ripped like Triple H, and ready to roll with anybody who wants to tangle. Luckily no one wanted to tangle tonight. I figured you'd have to do quite a bit to rile this crowd. Next up was Skeleton Army. Before they took the stage, in my drunken state, I talked guitar talk with one of the axemen (like I know what the fuck I'm talking about) who had a beautiful Gibson SG. Into their set I hear a familiar tune... "Crazy Horses," by the Osmonds. One of my all-time favorite Osmond songs! (Guess which song we stole that riff for!! Hee hee.) Now it's time for us to take the stage and walk the boards. First night is usually a disaster for us, but tonight's show went off without a hitch. Even in our slightly intoxicated state we played pretty much mistake-free, and didn't have to go head to head with anyone in the crowd. The German crowd is quick to notice something missing from their expected entertainment though... no blood. That's right. I didn't pull out the gimmick to end all gimmicks. Was it because of my fear of catch-

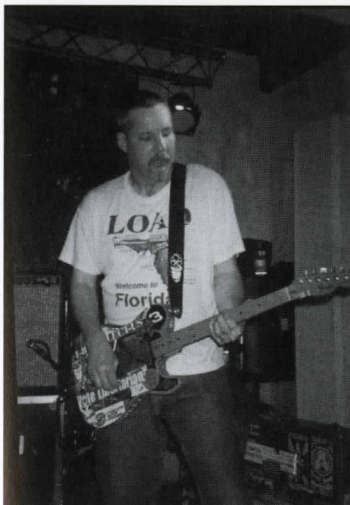


above: ANTiSEEN conquer Chemnitz (l-r: Jeff Clayton, Sir Barry Hannibal, Doug Canipe, Joe Young); below left: Clayton live at Wild At Heart, Berlin; below right: the superior German Stefan Walz, road manager



by Jeff Clayton





ing some type of strange disease? Was to be taken seriously as an "artist" for once? Was I afraid of the Aryan frenzy that the gimmick would surely incite? Nope, none of the above. I just had to pace myself this tour, so as not to wind up sick as a fucking dog in a hotel room praying for death!!! That's all, so don't read nothing deep into it.

MARCH 8th - FRANKFURT, GERMANY

We go back to the Frankfurt Airport to pick up Skipski. He tells us the tale of watching us take off from the runway in Cincinnati. Delta put him up in a fancy hotel that night and he caught the flight the next day. Now the touring party is whole!

MARCH 8th - MUNSTER, GERMANY

We pull into the parking space in front of the Triptychon club, me lacking sleep, as I cannot fall asleep until about 4 AM, after I unpack and repack my bag several times. (OCD.) Luckily, I get a room to myself in a lot of these cities. I have to sleep with the TV on; this is a habit that drives most of my bandmates insane. In this relaxed atmosphere, we start to catch up on things. Skipski wastes no time in announcing how much weight he thinks I've gained since he saw me last. (He does this even if I've lost 20 lbs or gained 30... it don't matter.) In walks our old pal Marc from Nothing But Puke. After a little more gabbing, the club lowers a huge lift to the parking lot and all the gear is hoisted up by that... except for Doug's Ampeg SVT cabinet. Too heavy. Doug gets to lug it up all the stairs. Tonight we will play with Born Bavarian, The Faggot Kings and Discipline. The backstage area is incredible. Lots of chairs and couches; tons of food and drink. The important question is asked, but no results as of yet. The club fills up fast. We understand that a big part of the crowd is coming to see Discipline tonight. We were told of how they draw about 700 people and if we hadn't insisted on having Born Bavarian on these shows with us we would have way bigger crowds. Well boo-fuckin'-hoo!! The Faggot Kings, with a guitarist who amazes the hell out of us, go on first. After a little back and forth miscommunication about equipment use, the show is underway. The crowd gives them a warm reception. A fan from Oberhausen comes into the dressing room and passes around free porno mags. Lots of fisting, old ladies, gang bang stuff. At the merchandise stand a few fans send back word that they want to talk with me and the boys. Seems a German NASCAR fan has a portrait of Dale Earnhardt tattooed on his forearm. It looks like a damned photo. Amazing work. Looking into the crowd I see a large number of skinheads. About 300-something people are here so far. I'm still not seeing the 700 that Discipline are supposed to draw. Born Bavarian goes on next. I guess in frustration of last night's luke warm reception BB are in full swing tonight. On fire is more like it. This is good, I like to have to work harder. Charlie Daniels' "Longhaired Country Boy" has become our intro song for this tour. We take the stage and blast through our 20-song set in a big blur. The crowd is all hepped up and damned crazy. We get called back for an encore and we do the forbidden song... Skrewdriver's "I Don't Like You." That ends the show with the same affect that Jerry Lee after burning his piano, had on Chuck Berry who had to follow him. As we walk in the dressing room, the Discipline boys are telling anyone who would listen as to why THEY no longer play "I Don't Like You." Because it caused too many riots... yeah, with the 700 people they draw and all. Discipline take the stage. All I can say is I'm glad we insisted on taking Born Bavarian with us for the first part of the tour. There is no way I could have stood that mediocre Oi! night after night. After a highly successful merchandise night we head to the hotel when the promoter dis-

covers a huge mistake. He gave us all the room keys earlier, so that made a big mess getting hotel rooms straight between our traveling party and Discipline's. Apparently they didn't think too much of us either so there was no love lost. Next morning we get up for another of many hard roll and cheese breakfasts to come.

MARCH 9th - BERLIN, GERMANY

Home of the superior German, Stefan Walz. We go to Stefan's house for a change of pace. He's got a great collection of trash culture. We meet his wife April, who saved our ass on the plane tickets. (When MAD—the booking agency—informed us that Stefan's ticket alone would cost \$1500, she got on the horn and got his ticket switched to much more reasonable rate. Thanks April!!) We arrive at Wild At Heart. This place is tiny, but has some of the coolest decor you will ever see. The people that run the place are very cool as well. The promoter, a very attractive middle-aged lady, informs us that the phone has been hot all week about this show. She predicts a sell out. At 10 PM her prediction comes true. First we go to eat dinner at some Turkish joint across the street where some insane bitch is talking to herself and yelling about something. She's getting very annoying... to the point that Joe wants to pour a drink over her fuckin' head! The staff from the place escorted her to the street before that happened though... DAMN! The MAD folks (Mark & Ute) will be here tonight. At showtime it is so fuckin' crowded in this place you can barely move. Fortunately we had a dressing room to sit in. I wanted to go see BB's



top left: Joe Young at Wild At Heart, Berlin; top right: putting THEE prop to good use in Copenhagen; middle: Sir Barry at Wild At Heart; bottom left: Doug Canipe at Wild At Heart; bottom right: Jeff Skipski, prop maker

set but after 10 minutes of trying to get up front and not getting any further than about 20 feet from the dressing room door, I gave up. I assume they did well, cuz the crowd was loud as hell! By the time we got to the stage (via behind the bar) the walls were dripping with water. It's was so damned hot we thought we'd pass out. About four songs into it we were already drenched. We played our new cover of the Kinks' "Destroyer." This crowd seemed to know and appreciate it well. This would be the last crowd on the tour that reacted to the song at all. After the show we did a radio interview and got to talk with Mark and Ute. That seemed to put me at ease with MAD quite a bit. Mark's a pretty cool fella, and talked about bringing us over next summer to play some of the big festivals. Skipski was grabbing chicks asses left and right, even the promoter woman! After the show, and a small exchange of words about Skipper's ass-grabbing exploits, we head to an all night pizza joint. Stefan stays at home, we go back

down town to the hotel. Still no blood. The next morning we show back up at Wild At Heart to pick up the gear. Everybody is feeling the affects of whatever vice they partook in the night before. Except for Sir Barry. If your band is coming over to Germany to play, make sure you get booked into this club; I can't say enough good things about it. We hit the road for Hamburg.

MARCH 10th - HAMBURG, GERMANY

Here we are at the Marquee Club in beautiful Hamburg. It's a Sunday night. In typical German fashion, the bartender, the doorman, and the promoter make their dismal predictions for tonight's show. "I don't think many people will come." Like it's our fuckin' fault. We noticed an extreme lack of posters around town, unlike previous shows in this town. The promoter is a slimy little bastard. I remember scaring the shit out of him five years ago when we stayed at the club after the show. I celebrated a good night performance by drinking almost an entire fifth of Jack Daniels by myself and breaking every piece of glass I could find in the downstairs area. See... we are punk. Anyway, he sits in the dressing room with us and gives us some bullshit story about how MAD didn't send him any



photos by Clayton, Hannibal, Skipski & Andi Sturm





left: ANTISEEN & the Accidents in Copenhagen;
right: Skipski's tattoo says it all; bottom left: Born
Bavarian's Andi Nuarez & Clayton; bottom right:
Ugly Americans on the safe streets of Germany

posters until a few days before the show. And when they DID arrive they only sent 12. Well, after a little bit of snooping, Doug and I found a stack of about 60 posters in the guys office. We sold those the rest of the tour. All twelve... I mean SIXTY of them. Lying little shit. For some reason, the

club sent some chick who claimed to be a death metal vocalist into the dressing room to sit there all night. For what? I don't know. All she did was chain smoke and fill the dressing room up with smoke as if we had the fog machine on... another thing you gotta get used to over here is EVERYBODY smoking, and clubs with no ventilation. This would be our last show with Born Bavarian. The one smart thing the "promoter" did was not book four more bands on the bill for a Sunday night. Back in the dressing room, Skipski would start what would be a tour trend from now on. Every time someone would drop, smash or destroy something, or fall on their ass, we would all gather around and as loud as possible start an ECW, ECW, ECW (or as it has become over time ECDUB, ECDUB, ECDUB!!) chant while pointing at them. Well, Skipper starts smooth talking Miss Smokestack downstairs and elegantly leans against the deli tray table. Just then the leg comes out from under the table and shit starts sliding all over the place. His scam is ruined and to top it all off, we're all yelling ECW, ECW, ECW at him. When all gets quiet Sir Barry yells, "AND IN FRONT OF THE LADY!!!" which has Skipski ready to climb under a rock at this point. So he does the next best thing, he goes to the merchandise stand. BB take the stage and, as expected with the 75 to 80 in attendance, it's a laid back show. Our turn to rock the masses come next. With the exception of some middle-aged guys dressed like GBH in the front, the crowd is pretty laid back. Them all of a sudden this short stocky skin-head walks on stage. He's drunk as hell. He puts his arm around me and explains that these cunts in the crowd don't understand us but he does. They are commie bastards and don't understand things like GG Allin and Skrewdriver. He actually saved the show with his crazy dances and near-death stage diving with no one to catch him. Afterwards we talked to a lot of fans who claimed to not even know about the show 'til a few days before. Thank you Mr. Promoter asshole. We saw homemade ANTISEEN shirts and buttons and some girl was all but challenging us to come to some squat to play that night. Boy, if she only knew how much that was NOT gonna happen. We said good-bye to the BB boys and some old pals from Hamburg, and were on to our Rafferbond hotel.

MARCH 11th - HAMBURG, GERMANY (DAY OFF)

I slept 'til four PM today. My voice is getting a little weak. I'm glad we are not playing tonight. I ate at a place called Tex's BBQ. Real American food... yeah, right. Some of the guys went to Hamburg Dungeon. I took a small tour of Hamburg's finest porn shops. That night we all went out together and took Doug to Whore Row. He didn't rent any local talent. We passed a place called the London Pub and some guy came running out the door asking if we are indeed ANTISEEN. When he is convinced we are, he tells us he is the drummer of Orange Goblin. Seems he and his other band from London are big fans. We go inside to have a few beers with them. It turns out they have a touring party of about 17 people with three or four bands from The USA and Sweden. We listen to classic rock all night like Led Zep, Deep Purple, Sabbath... nice jukebox. The Orange Goblin guy gives us a CD of his other band that he claims STOLE much from us... we are flattered. They are called The Dukes Of Nothing. More about them later. I retire to the room to rest my beautiful voice. The rest of the guys stayed out. Skipski DID rent some local talent that night. He asked for a photo so we could bring it to you wonderful readers but the working girls don't go for that. Oh well.

MARCH 12th - BREMEN, GERMANY

OK. This has always been one of OUR towns. Sell out shows. Wild audiences. Not tonight. The venue was changed at some point. So I'm sure this led to much confusion to some fans. They prepared a really nice backstage area upstairs for us. Born Bavarian was advertised as being the opener.

This is a show they were told they could not be done by MAD for some reason. A young lady with a mixed race child came in looking for Doug, who went down the street in search of trinkets. We start wondering what the hell this could be about, and of course use it for ammo to rib him for the rest of the

tour. Turns out she was a friend of his that talks to him on line quite a bit. (Well, our preconceived notions were a lot cooler.) Around 150 people did actually show up tonight. Very low compared to past visits to Bremen. Seems like every technical

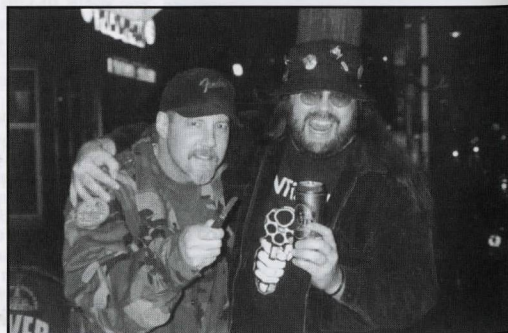
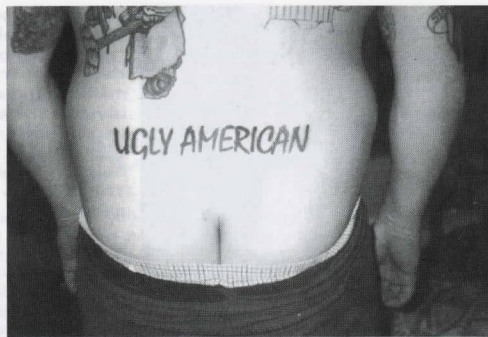
thing that could go wrong with the set did. You figure with no opening band that we could take our time and play as long as the crowd wanted to hear us right? WRONG! We were subject many nights on this tour to a new trend that you will hear plenty about as this diary continues. The club people wanted everything packed up and out by 11:30 to make way for the DISCO that would start up at midnight. This is such a fuckin' insult. We gotta hurry the fuck up so some goof ball can spin records all night. Thanks. Fuck you and your goddamned disco! Skipski posed for a photo with a Beck's beer rep. woman. Lots of autographs and talking to fans after the show. Laid back night... still... no blood. What is my problem? Do I think I can do a whole tour without the gimmick that made me famous? The next morning I feel that all-too-familiar feeling coming on of that ol' pal of mine—the sinus infection. I have Stefan call around to get me a doctor's appointment ASAP. I'm gonna nip this one in the bud. Past tours have had me fighting one of these the entire trip. I ain't going for it this time. After spending most of my morning passing snot out of my nose and throat I get to the doctor's office and she hooks me up immediately with a couple of antibiotic prescriptions. All for under \$50 US. I love socialized medicine. Then we make a stop in the BAUHAUS store. No, it's not a place where you can buy Peter Murphy merchandise, it's the German version of Home Depot! We go in to buy all the things we could not bring on the airplane that are necessary for putting on an entertaining rock 'n' roll show. An axe handle, a spool of barbed wire and a ten foot long link of chain. The cashier is looking at me and Skipski like she may wanna call the authorities. Lucky for us she don't. We go on our merry way to...

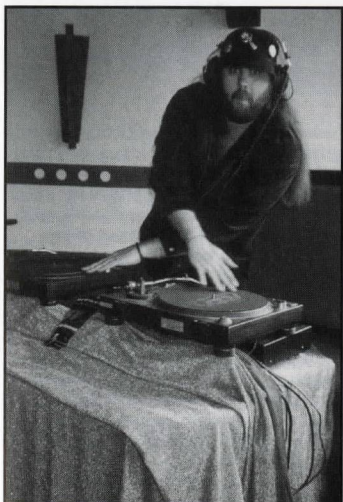
MARCH 13th - BRAUNSCHWEIG, GERMANY

We arrive at the club many hours too early. Another government funded youth hall. The promoter of the show is the same guy who promoted our show in this town nine years ago. That show turned into a small riot with us versus the whole club. We've never been booked there again 'til now. We went over to the promoter's house and were treated to some good Fatherland hospitality by him and his wife. Due to my medicine taking, the important question was not as important to me and wouldn't be for a few days until I would be able to drink again... even though I think I did take a few shots to make sure they didn't change the taste of whiskey on me. We go back to the club and eat a meal prepared by a guy on work release from the state. He was busted for dope possession or something like that. He sure could cook though. A band called the Sloppy Dog Nose played first. They were as good as their name. Schilling, from Loudspeaker finally shows up. He has no copies of *The Boys from Brutalsville* CD for us to sell on the road. Good move. He swears he'll get a parcel of them to us by Oberhausen. OK... Doug, Skipski and myself set out to create the stage prop from hell... a barbed wire wrapped axe handle! Seems you can't just walk in off the street and buy a baseball bat in Germany, as it is considered a weapon. Hmmm. I whip it out at the show and it gets quite the reaction. I still don't rake it across my head though. This show was loud as fuckin' hell!! The Stadium sized PA was in a narrow room that must have been murder on the audience members. It was killing me!! After the show we get to experience the best Braunschweig has to offer as far as dumb asses go. One guy claims he is disappointed in the show because a contract of evil between the band and audience was not written up and signed. Either literally or theatrically. There should always be an agreement of pure evil between the band and audience, this guy informs us. Then he ends it with "GG is not dead." I hope he went home and killed himself. Then Joe and I had to listen to some 17 year old kid tell us how patriotism is bullshit. We started getting loud with him and he quickly shut up. These twats want to talk politics until they hear our side... then they shut the fuck up. So onward to the Great White North.

MARCH 14th - COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

Past tours have always placed us in crusty punk commie squats in Copenhagen—until today. The club still had a commie theme, but it was far from the squats we've played before. The club promoter keeps calling





left: Doug training for a DJ job since discos are so damned popular;
right: Creating THEE stage prop in Braunschweig; bottom left: the "smart" car;
bottom left: After the show in Berlin

Stefan on his cell phone to make sure we are indeed on the way. I don't know what these folks hear about us, but for some reason when we do show up they always act so surprised. I mean, we ain't Motorhead OR George Jones, right? We pull up to the club and a man and woman apparently in their late 40s or early 50s are standing there with little pads of paper. We get out and start heading up the stairs to the front door and they both run toward us handing us a pen and their pads. They even get Skipski and Stefan to sign. Then they whisk off down the street as fast as they pounced on us. Strange. Once inside the club we are introduced to the woman in charge of us this evening, Mia. She's a very attractive young lady and by the looks of it, a few of the

traveling party are falling in love with her immediately!! We go inside to the very nice dressing room with a built-in shower, towels, and a washer and dryer. Mia asks what we'd like for dinner. We say hamburgers, thinking that'd be the easiest thing to get, but we forget we are in Denmark. She comes back a bit later with some of the biggest burgers I've ever seen... not McDonald's for sure. During soundcheck, Sir Barry is talking to Otto the soundman and brought up the old folks outside grabbing autographs. The conversation went something like this:

Sir Barry: Man, what was the deal with those old people out there wanting autographs?

Otto: Maybe you are famous.

Sir Barry: But man, these people were OLD!

Otto: Well, you guys HAVE been around for a long time.

Point well taken. Mia tells us that they have only done that for us, Girlschool and Napalm Death. During soundcheck the opening band for the evening walks in, The Accidents. They are one half of the extremely excellent band from Sweden Genocide SS. They play a super revved up rockabilly sounding type thing and all wear white button up shirts and black pants with suspenders. They are fuckin' great. Other than BB, they're the best group we've played with so far. We hang out all night talking with them. Rickard is a great guy, so are the other boys. There is a third band on the bill whose name I forgot, but they are only there to be filmed for MTV Europe. They used our drum set, so our logo will be on Euro MTV I reckon. Our audience was pretty unresponsive to them. We go up to see the Accidents; MTV is filming the crowd, who is dancing and cheering like mad for them. I guess they will splice the two bits of film together to make it look like the MTV band was knocking them dead! As we start to make our way up front, we experience the biggest fan admiration yet! We are posing for pictures, autographing anything that'll take permanent marker. Lots of folks ask about the other COS bands and such. We also get to meet for the first time in person Jimmy Swedishscum, who does the GG Allin Nation website. He is also putting out a Jabbers tribute that should be out by the time you read this. Really great guy. Actually, with the level of drinking going on, we have yet to run into an asshole here! Seems more than two-thirds of the crowd came over from Sweden. Some folks flew, one guy drove 16 hours, others took insanely long train rides. Time for us to go on. We had to work to follow the energy put out by the Accidents, but I like it like that. We gave this crowd the whole fuckin' show to quote Rob Van Dam. Fire, destruction, hell and yes... BLOOD! See I didn't sell out. The crowd was full blown into it. Mia expressed concern to Stefan about the fire, but it was put out without any hassles. We played several encores.

Afterwards, we got to spend a lot of time talking with people and drinking with them (even though I'd had to slow down due to my prescribed dope). Doug plays in another band back in the States called Cronic Disorder, and the guys from the label in Denmark that put out his band's CD there, Mighty Music, showed up and dumped 100 copies of their CD on him for promo. Doug handed 'em out like business cards! We went in front of the club to pose for photos with the Accidents while a huge spotlight with our name was beamed on the building across the street. We said good-bye to all our new and old friends and

headed to the band apartment down the street. It is exactly what it sounds like, a fully furnished apartment with about 12 beds in it. We woke the next morning to a huge breakfast and after hash shots and liquor shits we hit the road once again.

MARCH 15th - COTTBUS, EAST GERMANY
This fuckin place is HUGE. The light rig alone



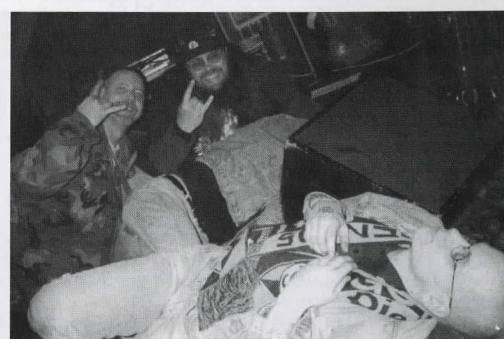
looks like something Iron Maiden would use. We are playing with another US band called Comin' Correct and a hardcore band from Russia called Four Corners. This show is geared toward the straightedge crowd. We will not fit in here, you can believe that. The bass player for Comin' Correct turns out to be someone who has come to see us for years in the Carolinas (he's from Greensboro, NC). Lots of small talk and tour story swapping. Skipski goes out to set up the merchandise. It's one of CC's last shows on their tour and they have what looks like a NY Hardcore Walmart set up in the hallway. We predict Skipski will not be too busy tonight. He tells us that after a few kids see the rebel flags on some of our stuff they drop it like a hot potato. The crowd is about 300 but it don't look like shit in this place. April, Stefan's wife, meets up with us here. Four Corners go on, and it's about what you would expect from Russian hardcore. Comin' Correct, as nice a group of guys as they are, have got that whole NYC vibe going that just rubs me the wrong way. They do some good covers but I'm not into that "yo-yo-yo" crap at all. I didn't even go out to see what the crowd thought of them. Our turn. Doug draws anti-straight edge signs on his hands and to get into the spirit of tonight's sermon, Joe Young is boozed and smoked up to the gills! We do a quick, no nonsense set that included... YES, blood... you see, not just for the good crowds. This crowd stayed so far back from the stage we felt alone in this huge hall. A small fight broke out between some goofy looking, Gilligan hat wearing, straightedge types and a couple of guys who were obviously there just to see us. The lines were drawn pretty clear at this show. Afterwards, there is a lot of talk about Sir Barry's superior snare drum among the other drummers. CC and us pose for photos outside; the bass player, who was a coherent, bright guy a few hours ago, is now blind-ass drunk and stumbles face first into huge mud puddle at everyone's feet. He gets a huge ECW chant and pics get snapped. I wish one had been with Skipski's camera.

MARCH 16th - CHEMNITZ, EAST GERMANY

Right when we pull into the parking lot of Zoom, we spy a huge painting that we assume is supposed to be the Notorious BIG. We can't pass up this photo opportunity. The painting is hilarious. I love the photo of us beside it. Tonight's openers are The Negatives from Sweden, and a local band whose name I never did catch. We get along good with the Negatives. Most of them are about our age. They have the '77 sound. The singer has lost his voice completely. I'm able to give him some advice about getting through the show at least. I've coached some great bellowers through these types of situations before... Alan King, Kevin McCarthy of Limecell... I may not be the text book example of the "trained" vocalist but I know how to get through situations like this. The opening band have a lot of friends in town. We figured this out because about 20 of them cram into the dressing room and drink up all the beer before the Negatives or us get a buzz. We complain to the promoter who sends in another round. It, of course, is gone within minutes. We then tell Mr. Promoter that he had better remedy this situation or the local boys ain't playing tonight. Stefan then ask "the important question" and Doug grabs the bottle and goes through the dressing room to find a soft drink chaser. The local boys look as if Doug is carrying a block of solid gold and make gestures to him to please share his precious find with them. Doug just gives 'em the international gesture of "Fuck You" and we keep all the whiskey for ourselves. Keep the East German beer... PUNKS! Local band takes the stage. They are bad. Not just because I'm pissed at 'em; they are BAD. They got the fashion down right. Everybody sure is punk. They think the audience wants to see them play for about an hour. This will be a problem that will continue 'til the end of the tour. Opening bands who are under the impression the crowd is there to see them. How quickly they will learn. While I'm standing with Skipski at the merch stand having to endure this band, a fan comes up and wants to talk... about one inch from my face. He can't speak English very well but that don't

stop him. He (like most Germans) gets around to politics. He says George W. Bush is an asshole because he wants to start WW3. I explain to the fan that I too wish for WW3. How I wish the entire Middle East would be laid to waste. How happy I am that at that very moment our bombs are

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THE CONFEDERATE MACK REVEALS HIS TRUE NATURE



I spray chemicals on polycarbonate plastics at my job, in this tiny little room with all these oddball vinyl letters all over the place that the steady stream of disgruntled grunts over the years have put up on the walls. There's a shitty air vent that doesn't really work, and a low-grade gas mask; still, whenever I spray, my throat swells up and it feels like I'm gonna gag.

Right outside the spray room, which is big enough for two people at once, is a big window that looks out on the back of the warehouse style building on one of those indistinguishable four-lane, strip mall heavens that every mid- to major city has. Off in the distance through that window, behind the fast food restaurants, car dealerships, all the banks that are combining into one and the record store I sell old CDs for beer money, way back in the distance, are the mountains. I can see them; they are there. And the clouds roll over top of them and the sky will get blue, and I won't notice all the strip malls and cars and motherfuckers running around pretending this shit is important all the time, just for a few minutes. Then I'll remember there's 17 things to do and only enough time to do 5, and I'll hustle back to work like the fuckin' idiot chasing a red, white, and blue carrot that I am.

One day last week, those mountains were kicking it with fat cumulonimbus clouds and powder blue sky, the same color as the Ford Escort I wrecked back in high school. It was right after a cold spell towards the middle of spring, and that particular day the sun was beaming down heavy. You could tell it was almost summertime. I got that feeling that all guys get on a day like that; some weird, indescribable horniness because it was warm, time to take off your t-shirt when not at work, and you knew the girls would be wearing a whole lot less clothing for the next couple of months.

So when lunch hour rolled around, as usual, I clocked out, jumped in my ride, and rode over behind one of the strip malls to eat my lunch. I carry one of those small coolers that doubles as a 6-pack holder on weekends when you roll over to somebody's house. I haven't put a racing sticker on it yet, though, like most guys do. Anyways, I was driving into the strip mall parking lot, to cut around back where there's nothing but a graffiti-covered wall on one side and trees, trees, trees on the other side. Widow down, arm hanging out, pretty chick walking over there, big cloud up in the sky, sunshine on my face, and I figured, "Fuck all this. I ain't going back to work today." So I stopped at the Food Lion and got me a box of wine, with the silver lining that your grandma always used to tell you was around all the gray clouds of your youth. I rode across town to the river, parked, grabbed my box of wine and an empty plastic cup from a fast food lunch gone by, and walked along the river. Situations like that, which I seem to invariably find myself in from time to time in life, always make me think of that lyric about the river from the Allman Brothers' "Blue Sky": "It just keeps on flowing, it don't worry about where it's going." No shit, no shit.

Singing that song in my head, sucking down my second Lara Croft Tomb Raider cup full of cheap white zinfandel out the box, it hit me like a train wreck. I was a fuckin' hippie. A no-good, shitty, lazy, goofiest bastards on earth hippie.

At first, I was pretty upset. In most trendy social circles since the late '70s, hippies are one of the lower rungs. Hippies are goofballs in \$25 tie-dyes, rolling three deep in SUVs to the mall for a new lava lamp. Hippies are the old ponytailed bastard always harassing you sign a petition about the Libertarian Party. Hippies are the dumbasses who try to explain to you, even though you don't care, that hackysack was originally played by "the Natives" with a buffalo testicle or some crap. Hippies suck.

But then I got to thinking about it; growing up with all the older folks smoking weed and playing horseshoes and shit, while somebody was whipping together some potato salad in the kitchen of whoever's house we were all at. Us kids would be running around, knocking each other upside the head with sticks and getting yelled at that we were gonna get hit with a horseshoe if we kept running in the way like that. And I got confused. Were those hippies? I had been trained by trendy urban malcontents that hippies were suburban kids. Trustafarians, living off their dad's credit card to follow Trey Anastasio across the country, and smoke kind bud out of a glass bong their buddy blew in his basement in Colorado. These crazy rural fuckers of my childhood memories, with beards, pick-ups, ponytails and shotguns; they couldn't be hippies, could they? Hippies were dipshits who sold out and shop at Whole Foods nowadays, using their ATM card to pay for organic vegan bacon slices.

At this point, I was deep into my third Lara

Croft cup of wine, fresh out the box, and as I usually do when I get to drinking, I got my "fuck you" attitude. The way I see it, I am a hippie. The Motherfucker of all Hippies. I am a 29-year-old white guy with dreadlocks and a weird name (Raven, no shit, it's on my birth certificate) and I eat tofu (not that slimy crap at the store though, some block shit they make at some commune a few counties over). However, I temper this with steady alcoholism, painkiller abuse, general recklessness in late model cars, and a tendency to break things when the night gets longer than my tolerance to deal with it. The way I see it, I'm more hippie than a thousand of those bullshit pussies with fresh faces and fresher tie-dyes riding around in new vehicles that mommy and daddy bought, all those kids who actually consider themselves "hippie," because I'm fuckin' shit up. I don't need to smoke weed sold in \$200 quarter ounces or hawk homemade pants at a Widespread Panic show to be a hippie. It's my outlook, not my style.

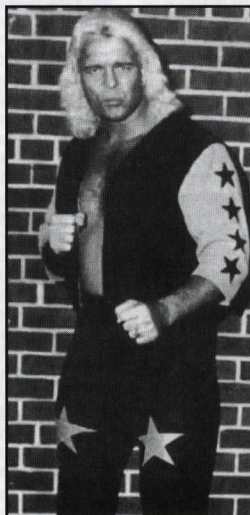
You see, I'm a pretty positive guy. I've gotten in more than my fair share of fights, but never for no reason whatsoever. I don't go out looking for trouble. If I meet somebody, they're good by me from the get-go. From that point on, they can make it worse or keep it good, up to them. I don't try and force my beliefs on anybody else, because I'm hippie enough to realize that my beliefs are just as much bullshit as your beliefs are. I just feel better believing the bullshit I believe than the bullshit you think is the real deal.

Fuck any hippies who don't think I'm positive enough for their little PC circle jerk of weed smoke and Dead bootlegs. But on the other hand, fuck any anti-hippie, cooler-than-thou pseudo-red-neck punk rock fuckwads who're always looking for some group of people to hate so that they feel better about their own bullshit cul-de-sac roots.

So I figured I'd hip you to a few folks I look to for guidance in my anti-rich-hippie-kid hippie mode; the type of people who give me spiritual confidence and make me try to better the world one positive action at a time, brother. They are all alive to lead you as well, and they all are making the world better.

#1: My crazy uncle. I've always felt that the crazy uncle is an important influence on most lower class subversives in American history. Just like rich folks get their teenage sons to volunteer to be big brothers for poor fucks in the city, to make things better or "help save a life" or some crap, I think all the crazy white trash/thug blacks/cholo chicano segments of society should export family members to corrupt rich kids while they're still young. The Crazy Uncle Program. More than a few of you out there have one. The uncle who's not quite right and probably an alcoholic; he can influence you without fear of actually having to live with you, except for those once in a while stays on your folks' couch while some form of trouble blows over. My crazy uncle, he's great. He used to be a biker and had this bar trick he did where he'd go into a bar with a cinderblock and set it on the bar and yell that he could punch it in two and did anybody wanna bet. Of course, loads of folks would, then my uncle would rev back with his swastika-inked forearm and knock a fuckin' side out of the cinderblock. Most folks would be impressed enough to not try and haggle over technicalities like not actually punching the cinderblock in two pieces. That was usually enough. He's given up all the drinking and meth and heroin over the years, one by one, at least as far as any of us in the family who still talk to him know. But he's still crazy as fuck. He had part of his hand blown off by some dude who got kicked out of the house he was staying at. My uncle was running out of the room when the guy blasted a shotgun at him. The other guy in the house at the time died, but all my uncle got was three lost fingers on his one hand, and nice buckshot scars all over his hip. The hospital people took one of his big toes off and put it on that hand to give my uncle a thumb, so he can be better than all the other animals of Earth without opposable thumbs. When he meets new people, he'll stick out that hand with nothing but a pinkie and ring finger and fat big toe sticking out the side, and laugh and say, "Nice to meet you." Guys like that are an American treasure.

#2: "The Boogie Woogie Man" Jimmy Valiant. Nothing has brainwashed me more than professional wrestling. It has been a part of my life longer than most anything else except maybe alcohol, which back in the beginning was only around in the form of every adult in the room. And during my young, formative years, no one wrestler spoke to me louder and clearer than Jimmy Valiant. The guy had a biker's beard, t-shirts galore with oddball iron-on messages, and he was always babbling about his "street people". These street people were not the whitebread cookie cutter clean-cut babyfaces that wrestling pushed down everyone's throats back then. No, Boogie Woogie was kicking it with black dudes with jheri curls and Mexicans with blonde rattails and white guys who wore the type of hats you'd see on a biker gang in a late '60s bikesploita-





tion flick. It was the real deal, down home type shit. If Boogie won a title, it was for his "street people." If he bodyslammed the One Man Gang, it was because of his "street people." It all pointed back to the community—not the community at large but, more specifically, the American underclasses in all their glorious flavors. The great thing about Jimmy Valiant is his old ass, all skinny and half-crippled, is still insane. He lives a few hours away from the Confederate Mack Compound, in Shawsville, Virginia, where he runs a goat farm and a cinderblock building wrestling school. He's got a body full of kooky tattoos, my two favorites being the lavender lightning bolt across his forehead and the large COME TO PAPA across his belly. If you see him at an indy wrestling show, go buy a fuckin' Polaroid of yourself with the man, he deserves the money. And if he's selling one of his "Best Of Jimmy Valiant" tapes that he's made himself, I'll tell you right now, you'd be a fuckin' idiot to not give that guy \$20 for it. I have the first one, and there's not a better videotape in that dresser across the room that I've stuffed all the drawers full of videotapes and started stacking them on top. It's not a wrestling thing so much, as kind of like watching some weird documentary taken completely from wrestling promos. The guy combines a satin Kiss Army jacket with a pair of those giant sunglasses you used to be able to get at the fair. Of course, the two were properly color coordinated, yellow and black, because the man is all style.

#3: David Allan Coe. I tell you what, dollar for dollar, there's not a more entertaining show being put on by a guy over the age of 60, than a David Allan Coe show. Of course, fratboy red-necks, well assimilated into the status quo society yet well-versed in DAC's *For The Record* greatest hits CD, will be crowding the floor and acting like they run the fuckin' place. DAC and crew will blow through a whore's allotment of those songs, so that these guys can hold their shitty little girlfriend's close, raise their beers, and mouth all the words right along with David Allan himself. But DAC and the boys will also toss in a good amount of stuff those greatest hits fans, the worst kind of fans of any band, have no idea about. Last time I saw him, he busted out "Laid Back and Wasted," which made me shotgun two beers and smack my ol' lady on her ass with a wild-eyed grin on my face. Anyways, David Allan Coe has long been a kook. Back before Nashville's establishment, which it seems has always sucked, was ready to accept him, he used to wear a mask and roll up to the Grand Ole Opry in a Caddy and just sit there while all the normal country musicians and fans were strolling up to the big show. He became the Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy. He made those infamous underground tapes, chock full of sex and racism and that good ol' biker "Fuck You" attitude. I've got this copy of some interview with David Allan Coe back on Al Goldstein's (of *Screw* magazine fame) public access NYC show in the late '70s, and DAC explains that when he was in prison, there were times he would've given up all he had for five minutes of a sissy sitting on the bed next to him, just to share human companionship. But he knew if he did that, he'd be a sissy, and prison life would get rough. But, DAC continued, the fact he never held back his feminine side was the reason he could write such beautiful songs like "Jody Like a Melody." That's the type of badass the world needs more of. Then it wouldn't be so gay to be gay. Anyways, nowadays, David Allan is getting old. His long hair is dreadlocked, but still doesn't cover up his redneck, and he preaches acceptance and open-mindedness, probably more than a little due to that hippie-looking forty-something that's always leading him from the back of his tour bus. The power of pussy is hard to overcome. Too bad he doesn't bust out "Pussy Whipped Again" at his live shows anymore.

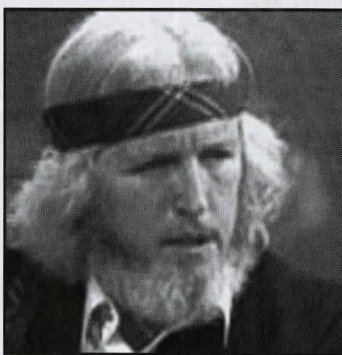
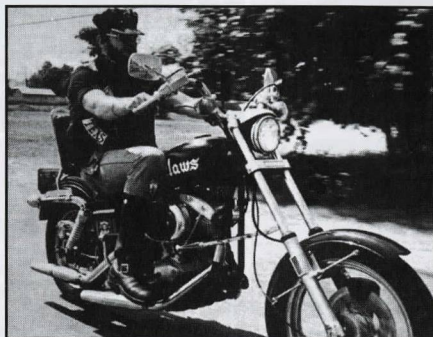
#4: the Reverend Gene Scott. To be honest, I haven't seen any of Rev. Scott's telecasts in a good ten years, but in high school, this older dude I used to buy weed from had a satellite, long before that was a regular thing. Back then, satellites were the giant black or white contraptions that people would make fun of West Virginians for, or the type of shit you'd see in sci-fi movies. Well, this guy and me would get all high, and he'd put it on Gene Scott telecasts out of Southern California. I didn't know televangelism could be so beautiful. He'd talk about God, complain about not

giving a shit about Jesus getting crucified anymore than they would if you crucified a flea to a tree, then he'd show off his horses and play the guitar. This was God? This was Christianity? My biggest problem with Christianity has always been it doesn't like anything that I like. And it wants me to get up early on the weekend and wear uncomfortable clothes. So I've never been down with the Christ version of God. But with Gene Scott rambling about how the sinners were holding me down, pretending they knew what God was, they wanted to draw me to the Devil, sharp eyes and wild hair blazing through the screen into my smoked out consciousness—it rocked. God's Angry Man, as Scott came to be known after some documentary tried to expose him, did not give a shit. And the odd thing is, he has survived all the televangelist breakdowns of the '80s. When Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart and Jerry Falwell and Oral Roberts were out there making fools of themselves, Gene Scott was plugging along like he always had. Those guys were trying to keep up with the God that Gene Scott was giving the public over the airwaves. They couldn't handle it, though. Gene Scott is still out there, with a big church out in Southern California to this day. If anybody out there can send me tapes full of his sermons, I'll send you a bunch of bathtub acid in return.

#5: Oscar Zeta Acosta. This guy has been dead since the late '70s, supposedly, but I ain't buying that nonsense. For those who are unaware of who exactly Oscar Zeta Acosta is, he was Hunter S. Thompson's lawyer in *Fear & Loathing in Las Vegas*, both the book and film version. And the real life Brown Buffalo, as his friends lovingly called him, was just as crazy as the book and film would suggest. Acosta was a certified lawyer, though his style of lawyering was hardly normal. One night, after a judge had given Acosta and his client an unfavorable ruling, ol' Oscar got all drunk up, rode over to the judge's house, and set his front lawn on fire. Acosta was standing there, on the other side of the fire, laughing his ass off with a bottle of wine in hand, as the judge opened the door. He got involved in the Chicano militant movement in Southern California back in the day, a brown counterpart to the Bay Area's Black Panther Party. They bombed some shit, protested some shit, popped a bunch of pills, and generally wreaked havoc on the White Establishment. Just as Acosta's outrageous behavior was about to put him behind bars, because there's only so long you can get away with drug-fueled anarchy, lawyer or not, he "disappeared" in Mexico. A good friend of mine, however, spent a few years wandering Mexico in his Ford Bronco. He told me—and this is a

guy I'd never doubt; the type of guy that would have a picture to prove the big fish he said he caught was for real—told me that he drank vodka and went fishing and shot a couple M-10s with Acosta and a couple other guys down in Chiapas. Acosta is supposedly down there, and has some sort of alliance with Subcomandante Marcos, that kooky dude who's always wearing the mask and scaring the shit out of the Mexican government. My buddy down there even sent me an EZLN doll, complete with that same mask get-up that Marcos wears and a wooden machine gun, that was supposedly made by one of Oscar Zeta Acosta's ol' ladies, most of which are in their mid- to late teens. *Revolt of the Cockroach People* is a book that Acosta wrote in between binges, and is one of my three Bibles, along with the Tao Te Ching (I told you I was a hippie) and the Cold Mountain Poems by Han Shan. I've gone through about seven copies of *Revolt of the Cockroach People*, as I always end up giving it away to somebody I think needs it more than I do.

#6: El Satánico. My Spanish is functional only on a construction site. If I was to roll up to an upstanding Mexican woman and speak what I know in Spanish, she'd get all wide-mouthed and say, "Well, I never!" in Mexican probably. But I do know a little. And being brainwashed by professional wrestling, it only makes sense that every Tuesday night, I plop down on the couch and watch *lucha libre* on the satellite. *Lucha libre* is culture shock for anyone who grew up on American wrestling. Everybody wears masks, the women don't have fake tits and are actually attractive, if you hit somebody in the nuts you automatically lose, and almost every match is three on three. The one guy I've been drawn to more than any other is El Satánico, and for more



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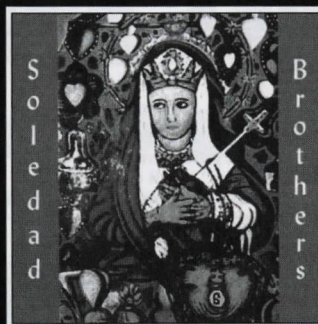
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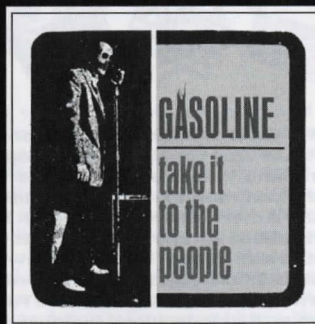
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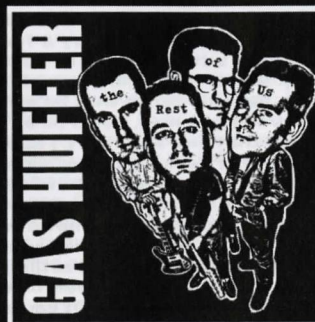
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than the obvious reasons. My construction site Spanish translates El Satanico as Satanic, which right away makes him great, but the guy is an old fucker, probably in his mid-50s. For American wrestling fans, I'm sure this conjures up images of a Hulk Hogan or Ric Flair plodding through the WWF's rings of today, or maybe some washed up superstar gone dim like Jimmy Snuka working five minutes for a \$500 payday at some flea market wrestling show in Pennsylvania. But El Satanico is not half-stepping like that. The old guy motherfuckin' brings it, doing all the flippy, twisty nonsense that the young luchadors do. He's got two understudies, or disciples if you will, who are part of his three-man team, both decked out the same swank gear of long-legged trunks with flames up the side, and both wearing nice masks. They feed off of each other. The old guy gets the energy of the young, and the young get the wisdom of their elder evil leader. It's the concept of community put to perfection. If being satanic and stealing the energy of the young were not enough, El Satanico has supernatural powers. You see, on lucha libre, they don't have 10 minute long promos on the microphone center ring like American wrestling does. They have the occasional skit before a match, showing exactly what is motivating the combatants in that match. In the last year, I have witnessed El Satanico do some amazing things. He shot lasers from his eyeballs to combine a guy called Avierno into the two personalities of El Satanico's former students, Rey Bucanero Jr. & Ultimo Guerrero. (Avierno has been a star ever since.) But that hardly compares to the time Ultimo Guerrero was playing chess with some other guy. He was contemplating his next move when, out of nowhere, El Satanico's face appeared on the black King, laughing and mocking Ultimo Guerrero. Of course, the guy was shocked. El Satanico explained, as best as I could figure, that Ultimo Guerrero was gonna get his ass kicked and taken to Hell. The only mental image I have more ominous than that chesspiece skit is that story King Diamond used to tell of how Satan appeared in a jack-o-lantern and that's why he quit being a successful soccer player to join Mercyful Fate.


#7: Phil Lesh. Yes, I actually enjoy the music made by a former member of the Grateful Dead. I went to a few Dead shows in my day, mostly because back then, I was all about taking as much acid as I could and seeing what happened. Sometimes you

feel like a hobbit swimming in the river and it's all good, and other times you're holding some guy's pit bull by the collar while your friend stabs the guy with a screwdriver. It's a gamble, but what isn't. Anyways, back in those days of the Dead actually existing, I was always drawn to the Phil Zone, where the basslines were supposed to reverberate deeper than anywhere else in the stadium. Looking back, I think it probably developed as crazier hermitic hippies didn't wanna fight the cult-like madness of the floor area in front of the stage, so they just drifted towards the upper tier and to the left. They didn't wanna feel like losers, so they made it the Phil Zone, a special place for special people. And I'd often sit there listening to that monotonous noodling on the guitar and wonder what the Dead would've been like if, back in the '60s, Pig Pen and his wino blues piano-tinged madness had survived, and Jerry Garcia's self-important, heroin-nod, going-nowhere musical meanderings had died. The mystique of the Dead live pulled me in more than once, what with all the drugs and half-naked chicks, but usually while Mr. Garcia was playing second fiddle to someone else. My ol' lady, however, used to be a big Deadhead. Since the Dead splintered apart after Garcia's death, former members have put on many a shitty show trying to recapture part of that old magic and all of that old profit. Early last year, she dragged me and the kid off to another show, this time Phil Lesh & Friends. We got there early, as usual, and as the ol' lady and the kid meandered through the lot meeting up with old road dog friends and trying to sell homemade dresses, I sat there sucking down Newcastles I was lifting out of the cooler to my right when the guy selling them was looking for his lighter or his bottle opener at the bottom of his backpack. I dreaded what was to come, after having experienced the pain of some of the other Dead offshoots, as well as the Dead themselves. Once the show started, I took a place up in the high part of the theater, blending into the scenery like the shadow dweller I am, not only not expecting to enjoy myself but not wanting to enjoy myself. I was blown away, though. It was hippie jam fare, one song morphing into another, and it had the standard whiteboy blues and Dead cover songs (which in turn were covers of someone else). But one thing was different; it had fluidity. And soul. I could feel it, and I wasn't on hallucinogens that night. Lesh and his bluesy young guitarist and some guy on a Hammond organ

continued on page 109




THE INVASION BEGINS




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Only A Suggestion

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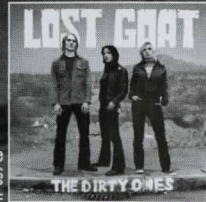
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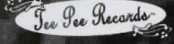
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THE Linda Lovelace STORY

There is No Such Thing As Rape Between A Man and His Wife

Linda Boreman was a post-war baby. She grew up in the depressed, lower middle class existence of American repression. Her toddler life was spent in the Bronx on the wrong side of the tracks in suburban Westchester. Linda never talked too much about her parents except to mention that fact that her father was a cop. Her family largely ignored her.

Linda moved to Florida at an early age. Florida, in the late '60s-early '70s was a paeon to undeveloped swampland, endless roads, 20-mile drives to grocery stores. The heat and humidity is unbearable. All there was for a girl to do was sit on a lounge chair, and God help you if weren't cute. An environment and era that bred females to be cocktail waitresses and nurses. Or maybe be a housewife.

Linda's parents quickly soured and moved back to Westchester County, but Linda stayed. She found work as a topless dancer. That gave her the window of opportunity. At this time there were no such things as gentlemen's bars. They were low-down strip bars in bad parts of town, sporting clientele the likes of mechanics. Little money for the amount of abuse you're going to put up with. Red lights in a dark room with a tiny stage, cheap drinks, the owner nothing more than a rug joint dupe. The police get their graft. Otherwise the place would have been closed down in a heartbeat. Florida regulates its pornography; it's very obvious who it lets operate, mundanely so.

Linda met Chuck Traynor at work. She admired his brutish charms. He was a doer, not a bullshit talker. Chuck ran the club. He flew cropdusters. He was a proud sadist, an ex-Marine who studied Oriental fellatio trickery while in the service. He was a risk taker. He knew how to size up a sexual situation and squeeze it for all it was worth financially. Chuck positioned Linda on the local vice scene. Quickly, she appeared in Bunny Yeager photos, where she's cute but nothing special with long straight dark hair, Florida sunburn, looking healthy, young and groovin'. Her game was about to begin. You only live once.

Chuck had Linda auditioning and available for pornographers, like Joe Sarno, a pornographer on the make. Sarno was buddies with Chuck in the Marines during World War II. Today, Sarno gleefully recounts his early days with Chuck and Linda to impress male porn groupies who like to sniff sheets. "They'd come over and party," he'd boast out of his twisted mouth, damaged from a war injury. "Linda would put on all these demonstrations for me."

Florida law had an ordinance that there was to be no pubic hair shown at dance clubs. But if Chuck could have a bottomless club, he'd make more money. Linda's pubes were shaved. It was a loophole that didn't last. Fleeing obscenity charges, they headed to Jersey City, New Jersey. Chuck became more hostile on the ride to Jersey. He was gambling to make a name for himself through the sexual skills he'd taught his prime bitch. Psychological terrorization, things Linda would have time to meditate on as she rode along. There was a threat of a donkey show, but nothing came of that. Mostly these scenes consisted of flashing gas station attendants, getting free goods from stores in exchange for some head, or sometimes driving along and apropos to nothing, having Chuck stuff Red Hots candies up her pussy. He turned her out in Holiday Inns to businessmen, easy marks with money to spend on cheap sex.

At any point she could have called her father the cop. She didn't. She chose up and she chose Chuck. In symbiotic relationships like this, it is all about how much you will do for the other person: murder, prostitution, dealing... how well you can hold your nerves is paramount. The least drugs used are a lower expenditure and to keep the earner from getting too sloppy to work. Chuck was accused later of brainwashing. Actually, he got her into hypnosis to naturally cool her out and dictate to her. Her trained her like a slave. She didn't complain. Leather faggots train like this every day; to the leather set this isn't a criminal act. To echo a

thought many Manson followers noted, Chuck wasn't a cunt constantly. There were fun times too. Otherwise there would be no functioning reward system and Linda's training wouldn't take. But, one rule. No getting friendly. No talk, no chitchat, just take the money and go, assuring Linda's isolation by not letting her fraternize. Hell, then someone else more savvy than him could snap her up.

Chuck settled Linda in bombed out Jersey City. Jersey City was a known quantity for its ghastly, greedy, mob owned officials as well as its long history of quietly manufacturing high frequency porn. Jersey City itself was just minutes from Manhattan and had a bunch of porno nests, like apartments rented exclusively to shoot hardcore loops and, most infamously, the anonymous printer's building that housed Irving Klaw (Sven-gali to Bettie Page) and his Nutrix booklets of severe fetish bondage. This was around the Journal Square area, a location not known for its tight knit community feeling. It's a grim city. Once he got Linda settled in Jersey, they'd drive into Manhattan to break into the loop circuit there.

Chuck and Linda met Bob Wolfe, who was New York's major director of loops at the time. Actor Jamie Gillis, who was there starting out at this same time, describes Wolfe as "Ponytail, heavy, overalls. But not a hippy. He was easy to work with." While Bob's bread and butter was straight fuck filming, Bob's willingness to explore the taboo side of the sexual psyche made him a profitable sideline. He'd film midgets in orgies, girls doing stretched labia lip tricks, male bisexuality, hard S/M heterosexual fisting and bestiality. Bob shot a huge amount of films with regular sex involving Linda but he also used her in the notorious loops that would haunt her, with the cryptic titles D-1 and D-2, loops of Linda being fucked by a German Shephard. This film was a huge success on the Times Square 8mm scene in Manhattan, so more were ordered up quickly: Piss Orgy, The Foot.

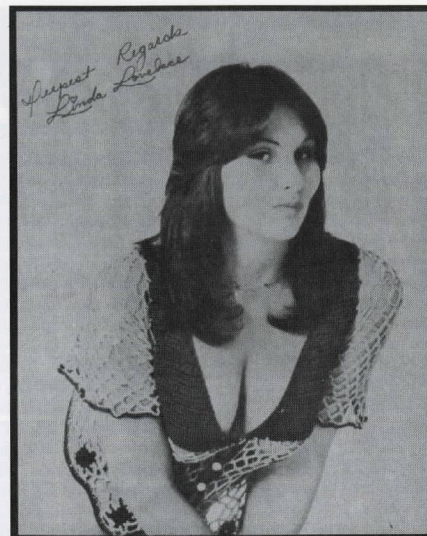
Linda's bizarre loop work attracted the notice of Gerry Damiano, always on the lookout for new talent. Chuck brought Linda to Damiano and had her give a deep throat demonstration at a swing party. In an epiphany, Damiano had a vision of the plot Deep Throat on his way home to Queens over the 59th Street Bridge. He hired sometime crew member and stunt cock Herbert Streicher for this film, renaming his creation Harry Reems.

Gerry transported the crew to Ft. Lauderdale, where he made the most pimpy and velour American film ever. In a bout of jealousy, Chuck beat Linda unmercifully in the hotel room during the making of the film. He kicked and beat her while the cast was partying in the next room. The party came to a halt, but nobody came to break it up. Chuck was psychotic and violent. Nobody was in a position there to call the police. They were all in the midst of committing a crime. Linda needed extra make up the next day to cover the bruises but it didn't work; it's visible in the film. Damiano had Traynor steered away from the set, in case of any further problems, to the relief of Harry who, sweet guy he is, tried his best to cheer Linda up. Harry was a hardcore junkie. He knew Linda was stuck in a bad scene. He felt terrible she was hit for being merely genial to him on set. That infuriated Chuck. Seeing Linda smile and laugh with Harry. To let her enjoy anything not dictated by him, not set up to humiliate her. It was a shitty experience for all with Chuck there. Ruining an otherwise good natured, easy, three-day shoot and turning it into an abuse issue not invited by the cast or crew.

When Deep Throat opened in theaters, it was an immediate smash sensation. It's phenomenon created the phrase "porno chic." There was mainstream audience interest mixed with critical and audience popularity on the adult circuit. Everyone wanted to say they were hip enough to have seen it. Blowing up pop culturally to the level where the term Deep Throat was used in the Watergate proceedings as an aka for a participant informant against then President Nixon. The film Deep Throat has earned millions worldwide. Chuck was paid about \$1,200 for his woman's performance.

Suddenly Linda became sought out for response to her work. Interviews with her ran in everything from Screw to Ms. to Playboy. Hugh Hefner is a complete sexual collector. When Hefner learned Linda existed, he wanted to collect her. Chuck delivered her to him. Now Hefner could have more than the 8mm loop. Now he'd make his own video loop involving her. He planned an evening to see the dog act, but the dog didn't perform. Hefner lives in a fortress of his own design. It was an achievement for Chuck and his thoroughbred they had made it to the top of the porno pyramid. They were both unattractive white trash. They had the blessing of mainstream naughtiness. It pulled them from the gutter to the Mansion, but strictly as a party favor.

Sammy Davis liked to party hearty with Chuck and Linda after his Vegas concerts. Sammy was good to Linda, someone allowed



BY MICHELLE CLIFFORD AND BILL LANDIS

within his inner circle. Linda put on some Vegas plays that went nowhere. People weren't too interested in her with her clothes on. She made two R rated drive-in films, *Linda Lovelace For President* and Joe Sarno's *Deep Throat 2*. The audience in both cases felt cheated. Both films are incoherent messes. She became used up, unmarketable and a walking national joke. Linda found a nervy fag to help her escape from the overbearing Chuck. Stuffing herself with coke and nerve, she ran off, hiding out from Chuck who wanted his meal ticket back.

Before, during and after the successes and subsequent troubles with Chuck she sold half a dozen dirty paperback bestsellers. One had the dedication "To Chuck Traynor, the Creator." She'd write books indicting Chuck yet retelling salacious stories of her debasement. Other times she'd say Chuck wrote the books. The stories she told were always conflicting.

By the mid-'70s, the starring Deep Throat performers were sucked into a vortex of local obscenity trials given national attention. Harry Reems and Linda Lovelace merely took their clothes off and they were treated worse than the Manson gang. If they were truly judged by "jury of their peers" they'd be found innocent with prejudice against the prosecution. On each end, police and Mob threatened Linda, who had literally nowhere to turn. She divorced Chuck. Incredibly, the court allowed the pimp to keep all the money. The only reason Chuck married her was there was no such thing as rape between man and wife.

Linda next married a construction worker who wound up on Lithium. He could not stand hearing about her neurosis and post traumatic outbursts any more. People at his job would find out. There was a string of lost jobs, stalkers, badmouthing neighbors out to persecute. Linda ended up on welfare with two newborns. She took the only hand offered to her as she was drowning in the form of female sadism: the feminists. The hard-cover books she did with them, like *Ordeal*, are nothing more than an "I Was a White Slave" piece of exploitation. The feminists molded Linda like a gummy doll into their most worthy totem of victimization. The ceaselessly pounded the poor pitiful bitch angle and how these vicious men had gotten over on her.

By making her renounce everything about her past, they only inspired an irate Al Goldstein to print the ugliest loop photos. He made available the dog loops of Linda and made sure all media outlets were provided with picture proof that Linda was a pig who enjoyed bestiality. Proof that nobody had forced her into anything. Proof she was a masochist, and if a gun was used as a threat, it only turned crazy Linda on and made her hotter. The worse the better. Linda was a severe bottom. She could take it all. She could out-fuck anyone on the planet. Goldstein was insulted she would call the sex industry sick; if so, she was the sickest of all. The feminists didn't empower her; they made her suicidal.

Linda eventually saw the damage the feminists did to her, only making her more of a public target, using her as a *raison d'être* for right wing censorship laws during the Reagan years. A thankless job that got her nothing but further public debasement.

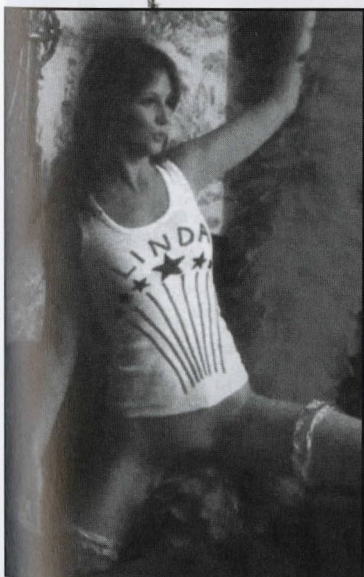
If America in general, and feminists bouncing her around like a puppet left her alone, she would have blended in enough. It wouldn't have followed her so relentlessly. But Linda couldn't leave it alone. She was mad. What the public at large did was mean and Scarlet Letter-ish to her. She felt owed something like reparations due a slave. The feminists played her to that disempowered end. Broken in body with a double mastectomy and countless internal damage from a life dipped in prostitution, she wound up on dialysis machines and a diabetic. Her children were her life force.

With the passage of time Linda divorced, though remained friendly with, her second husband. She moved to Utah, managed to find a job as a clerical worker at a law firm—the best she could do. She reveled in her children and grandchildren, whom she loved. Then the film *Boogie Nights* reared its ugly head reducing people to puppets in a comic strip with little relation to reality. During the passage of years, Linda had mel-
lowed. There was talk of Ron "Opie" Howard bringing her book of suffering, *Ordeal*, to the big screen. Why not? It's like any other exploitation story packed with sex. She was brought back out and interviewed to drum up interest in the film project. At this time, anyone who'd spent any considerable time in porn all thought they deserved to tell their own unique story. Marilyn Chambers, Ron Jeremy—they all had books or documentaries in the works. Even the dead John Holmes. Linda thought she could make some money off the name she had made so famous. She was ill and needed the money. She posed nude again as a mature woman. She was practically tarred and feathered just for showing up after all those long ago anti-porn statements she made.

Then she died in a car crash. Grateful for not calling her mother a full out whore—which shows you what she's used to—Linda's daughter Lindsay wrote a polite note to Howard Stern mentioning her mother died penniless.

Linda was a broken cultural icon. In the beginning she was a slave from Florida via NY lookin' for a strong Daddy, and got her ass busted for it. Linda Lovelace changed film and film changed Linda Boreman.

Michelle Clifford and Bill Landis are the publishers of *Sleazoid Express* and *Metasex* magazines. Their second book, *SLEAZOID EXPRESS*, will be available from Simon & Schuster at the end of the year.



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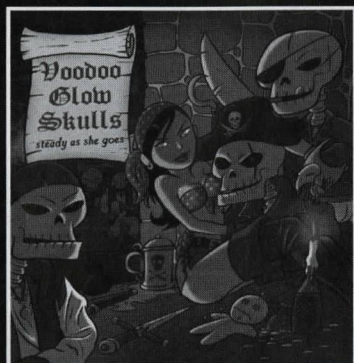


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Steady As She Goes



Steady As She Goes - CD - VR128

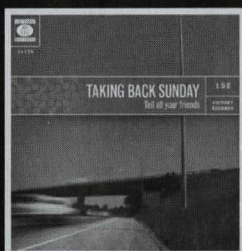
"...a joy to hear...a rush of formidable riffs and hooks topped with vocal-swagger." -Pop Matters

"With a dash of trash, a merciless hardcore beat and a ska sensibility grounded in the salsa horns, the VGS have forged a signature style seemingly designed to conjure images of a circus fun-house turned in to a piñata-stomping riot" -High Times

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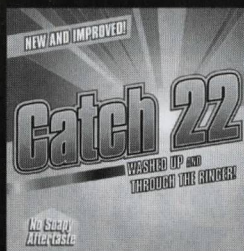


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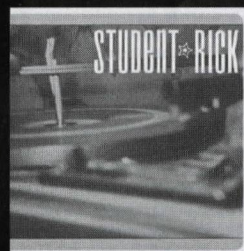
TAKING BACK SUNDAY
Tell All Your Friends - VR176

Taking Back Sunday represents the perfect marriage of emo, rock and pop. The songs feature passionate, heartfelt lyrics that any listener can easily identify with. Their debut album, "Tell All Your Friends" represents step forward in enlightening underground rock.



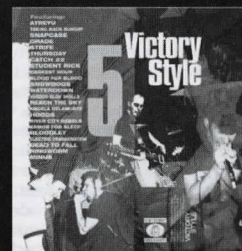
CATCH 22
Washed Up And Through The Ringer! - VR172

Featuring the out of print "Washed Up" EP along with previously unreleased, live material and two brand new songs, Catch 22 have proven themselves to be one of the top ska influenced punk rock bands in the world. "Washed Out" showcases Catch 22's ability to fuse various musical genres into their own exciting and original style.



STUDENT RICK
Soundtrack For A Generation - VR158

"Soundtrack For a Generation" is a story of songs that are undeniably powerful, moving and interwoven with brilliant melodic idio-syncracies. Flawless vocal harmonies intermingle with each song's staid rhythm, pulling you into the heart of each song.

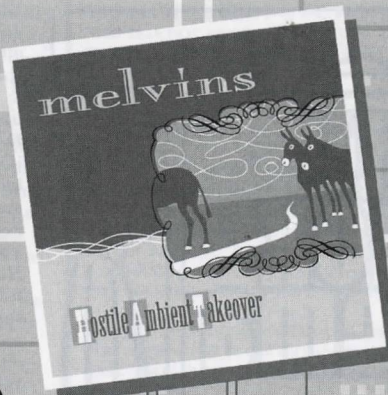


VARIOUS ARTISTS
Victory Style 5 - VR166

Featuring new and unreleased tracks from TAKING BACK SUNDAY • BLOODLET • GRADE • STUDENT RICK • ATREYU • WATERDOWN • VODOO GLOW SKULLS • ANGELA DELAMORTE • HOODS • RIVER CITY REBELS • DEAD TO FALL • THURSDAY • SNAPCASE • MINUS • SNOWDOGS • CATCH 22 •

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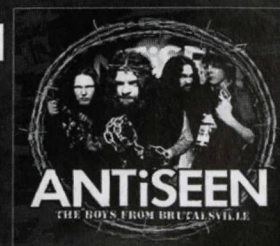
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LONG TAILS AND EARS FOR

HATS! I started writing about movies because I was passionate about them. Week after week after week, area film critics slugged the genre I loved best—z-grade drive-in fodder—by comparing it to the latest from Coppola, Scorsese and Spielberg. Sick and tired of their mindless blather, I spent the next 15 years championing the likes of *Re-Animator* (only the greatest horror flick ever made), *Blue Monkey* (“for fans of big ol’ bug flicks, it’s an homage that hits more than it misses”), *Howling 3: The Marsupials* (“an inspired, frenzied mix of conspiracy theories and sci-fi masquerading as horror”), *The Alien Dead* (“zombie attack after zombie attack after zombie attack”) and *Wolfen Ninja* (“every bit as good as the title suggests”).

Championing overlooked and unappreciated flicks made going to the movies worthwhile. I expected little or nothing and often got rewarded for my surprising lack of faith. Funny how these things work.

The same lack of faith was in operation when I first saw 2001’s live-action *Josie And The Pussycats* flick. Remember gang, this is a movie based on a cartoon show that grew out of side characters in the Archie comics! That’s like making a movie based on Lenny and Squiggy.

Granted, the cartoon provided some of my earliest encounters with that “special feeling,” but other than that and their wicked theme song (“long tails and ears for hats”) I wasn’t exactly pining away for a big-screen comeback.

Casting my doubts aside—and with nothing to do until playoff hockey came on—I answered none with duty called and plunked down \$5.50 to catch *Josie & The Pussycats*.

Director/writer duo Deborah Kaplan and Harry Elfont could’ve taken the easy road (a la Spice World) and run the characters of hard-rockin’ guitar chick Josie (redheaded cutie Rachael Leigh Cook), aggressive bass player Val (the Pam Grier-in-waiting Rosario Dawson), and dopey-but-sweet drummer Melody (husky-voiced Tara Reid) through some mindless, boring affair aimed at who knows what audience. Instead, they realized that by mixing a skewed look at pop culture trends and product placement with a Larry Cohenesque, over-the-top, world domination scheme they’d attract a bigger audience. In theory, that is.

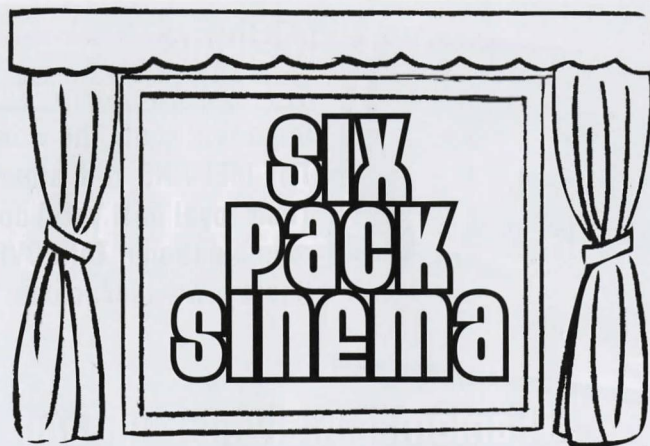
Oh yeah, and if they put the three leads in a succession of belly shirts, high-heels and leg-exposing skirts they’d corner the market on single males with disposable income. Woo-hoo!

With #1 boy band DuJour (featuring Seth Green, of Austin Powers fame, and original Streetwalkin’ Cheetahs drummer Breckin Meyer) MIA after stumbling upon subliminal messages in their songs, evil record company flunky Wyatt (Alan Cummings looking like the bastard offspring of Pee-wee Herman and Robert Downey, Jr.) is charged with the task of finding another band to carry said messages to the youth of today. Or he’ll be at the mercy of Fiona, the evil record company exec played with sinister glee by indie-gal Parker Posey. Chewing the scenery with wanton disregard, the two remind me of Richard Grant and Sandra Bernhard in *Hudson Hawk*, another unappreciated, ahead-of-its-time gem.

Stumbling across Josie and pals at an intersection, Wyatt puts his plan into action and the girls find themselves whisked away. In a matter of days they shoot to the top of charts, battle dissension within their ranks, make hot videos, and wear a seemingly inexhaustible supply of cute outfits. Hell, there’s even a sweetly romantic subplot between Josie and Alan M (played by some guy who looks JUST like a young James Spader!), inside jokes about the Archie comics, and more product-placement than you can swing a dead cat at... believe me, I tried.

Of course, it all comes to a head on the night of “the big concert” where good side and bad side play tug-of-war the likes of which hasn’t been seen in a rock ‘n’ roll flick since the equally-brilliant *Kiss Meets The Phantom*!

Admit it, you missed Josie in the theatre. You were busy that weekend. Then Joey Ramone died and that bummed you out. Then 9-11 happened and, well, we all know the whole world changed after that.



However, you now have no excuse. Josie is out on video. Josie is even out on DVD with bonus footage of the gals looking fabulous. The Josie & The Pussycats dolls, er, action figures are on clearance at your local K-Mart. Do yourself a favor and give it a whirl. If you’d told me that I’d be championing this flick as a damn sexy and hilarious blend of *Austin Powers*, Russ Meyer’s *Beyond The Valley Of The Dolls*, and *Hudson Hawk*, I’d say you were too busy huffing aerosol. Yet, here I am, saying just that.

Josie and the Pussycats. Breakin’ records, breakin’ hearts... indeed.

SOUNDTRACK-A-GO-GO: Nothing gets you in touch with your record collection like having to move it.

Thanks to my recent relocation I stumbled upon a forgotten treasure trove of ‘80s teen flick soundtracks hidden between my Heino records and K-Tel compilations.

Soundtracks, like people, come in all shapes and sizes: the sequel that tried to score like the original; the blatant rip-off of a better, and better-known, flick; and the misguided atrocity that only a handful of the faithful managed to catch at the drive-in through a haze of Chinese food and cheapo beer. These are the soundtracks celebrated below... those slabs of vinyl snatched up at flea markets, thrift stores, and garage sales. The soundtracks that scream, “I have a hit from your adolescence!” Admittedly, the screams are starting to scare me.

Fast Times At Ridgemont High (1982)

We might as well start off with the grandpappy of all teen-comedies, celebrating its twentieth anniversary. *Fast Times* is an exception among its contemporaries—it’s actually funny. Sexy, too. What red-blooded American male will ever forget the sight of Jennifer Jason Leigh fellating a carrot. Unfortunately, the double-LP soundtrack is more duds than dude, with less than a handful of A-list tracks to justify its liberation from the cut-out bin.

The Wild Life (1984)

If at first it succeeds, try, try again. The popularity of *Fast Times* spawned this unfunny sequel starring Eric Stoltz, Lea Thompson, and Chris Penn desperately grappling with the talents of his more talented older brother. As expected, the soundtrack fares about as well, schizophrenically sandwiching respectable underground acts (Peter Case and The Three O’Clock) between cheesy bar rock (Charlie Sexton with Ron Wood), solo acts (Edward Van Halen, Andy Summers), and laughable hair metal (Hanover Fist). What, no Cinderella?

Private Lessons (1981)

This surprise hit was a key player in the inventive shy-younger-man-balls-lonely-older-woman T&A genre that fueled the front-end of ‘80s drive-in double-bills and nighttime cable lineups. Sylvia (Emmanuelle) Kristel stars as the sexy maid with ulterior motives to bedding the teen son of a millionaire. Putting this soundtrack on was like being transported to my eighth grade graduation dance—Rod Stewart, Air Supply, John Cougar and oh so many more. I kept waiting for a nun to say, “Make room for the Holy Spirit, Mr. Taylor.”

Weird Science (1985)

Nerd fantasy meets low-brow cable TV as Anthony Michael Hall and another three-named geek create Kelly LeBrock (the former Mrs. Steven Seagal) from magazine ads and media images. Me, I would’ve just created Nina Hartley or Seka. The soundtrack is remarkable for its ability to cobble together a group of acts whose best years were behind them (Oingo Boingo, Kim Wilde, Wall of Voodoo, and Lords of the New Church) with a collection of bands who aspired to the status of “one-hit wonder”!

Zapped! (1982)

What’s funnier than a girl’s clothes popping off to reveal lacy pink underwear? How about a girl’s clothes popping off while Scott Baio and Willie Ames watch! Then again, I found season after season of “Charles in Charge” irresistible, so I may not be the best judge. For those of you that found this tale of psychokinetic T&A unwatchable, you’ll be happy to know that the soundtrack is unlistenable. I know, how can a film starring Baio, Ames, and Scatman Crothers have a down side? Two sides and ten songs of the most dreadful ‘80s schmalz I’ve had the pleasure to force on unsuspecting guests.

Up The Academy (1980)

What’s most amazing about this teen-sex classic? a) That

by Danté

iconoclastic '70s director Robert Downey stooped low enough to direct 88 minutes of tit jokes and fart gags? b) That Ron Lieberman had his name taken off the credits and advertising of this film, but NOT Sylvester Stallone's *Rhinestone*? c) That Ralph Macchio's big-screen debut was not his big-screen swan song?, or d) That the film is actually funny and the soundtrack stands on its own as a great collection of '80s power-pop? They're all pretty amazing in their own right, and the flick's main theme "Kicking Up a Fuss" by Blow-Up (?) is one I'd immediately cover if I had any talent!

Party Party (1982)

Unlike the other films on this list, I've never seen *Party Party*. In fact, I only picked up the soundtrack because it had such an odd mix of alternative acts performing bizarre covers. Imagine Sting essaying "Tutti Frutti" or Bad Manners working over "Yakety Yak"? But the most inspired moment of aural assault has to be Bananarama butchering the Pistols' "No Feelings." I either love the soundtrack or I hate it, so god only knows what I'd think of the film.

Porky's Revenge (1985)

Four years later and that lovable gang from *Porky's* and *Porky's II: The Next Day* is at it again. The "plot" has something to do with throwing a big basketball game, but this flick couldn't inspire a single belly laugh, let alone an Atari 2600 game. What's more inexplicable than a third *Porky's* is that this *Return Of The Jedi* of the peephole genre was able to attract Dave Edmunds, Clarence Clemons, George Harrison, and even one of them there supergroups featuring Edmunds with Robert Plant and Phil Collins.

Get Crazy (1983)

Allan Arkush directed the brilliant *Rock And Roll High School*, one of the great anti-authority comedies of all-time. We're not reviewing that. Instead, we're looking at *Get Crazy*, a cinematic memoir of Arkush's days working at the Fillmore East. There are some spot-on parodies in the flick (Malcolm McDowell as a Jagger type, Lou Reed doing his best Dylan, but the movie falls flat with its scattershot gags. The soundtrack suffers a similar fate with a standout A-side featuring tracks from Sparks, Marshall Crenshaw, Reed, and an otherwise unavailable Ramones rave-up ("Chop Suey"). The flip suffers from "live" performances from the concert section of the flick.

Bachelor Party (1984)

Not too many flicks can boast a multiple Oscar winner (Tom Hanks), cheeseball tv star (Adrian Zmed), exploitation action icon (Michael Dudikoff), and a score featuring some of the finest alternative acts of the moment. Then again, "alternative" was scarcely used in the mid-1980s 'cause "college radio" was a much more insulting way to describe bands like The Fleshtones, Oingo Boingo, REM, and Alarm. A swell soundtrack to a swell flick. Also has the dubious distinction of being the only soundtrack mentioned that includes a song from Adrian Zmed.

Send stuff for review or news of note to: PO Box 5531, Lutherville, MD 21094-5531 or dante@dantenet.com.

Several years ago, my PC was set up to receive e-mail but not venture onto the 20th century's most overrated product—which is, of course, the Internet. At the time, a now-VERY-former Manor Maiden e-sent me a batch of clever "Things We Learn From Watching Movies" items she had stumbled across at a film fan site.

Though I have Net access these days, I've never gotten around to finding said site. Nonetheless, the theme was inspirational in the composition of the list of Golden Rules of scarepix appearing in an earlier M-O-M. As it turns out, I have also compiled a collection relevant to the other genres; and if you fervently beg, I just might publish them here.

Okay, okay, enough with the genuflecting already. You're getting drool all over my shoes! Instead, cast your eyes on these truisms from Tinseltown.

*The standard commercial jet passenger area is about 60 feet wide and features a huge movie screen.

*If you tell him, a bartender will "leave the bottle" of potent liquor in front of you and not even ask you to pay for it.

*No one has ever run through a crowded area without plowing into a bystander.

*A guy used by a woman to make another man jealous will be a great sport about it when she eventually dumps him cold.

*An impassioned speech to a massive crowd can be heard clearly in the 400th row without any means of amplification.

*All white people can expertly handle chopsticks... and buy about eight quarts of Chinese food at a time.

*There's this big store where villains can go to obtain perfect replicas of local utility company uniforms and vehicles.

*The worst kids from the worst neighborhoods can become thoroughly engrossed in schoolwork if a new, single, devoted teacher takes over their class.

*Many bikers are fun-loving jokers.

*As of the mid-'90s, automatic pistols were designed to be held horizontally.

*Talking animals won't speak when it would most benefit a human pal.

*He who prays aloud while in mortal danger dies an ultraviolet death seconds later... especially if reciting that "walk through the valley of death" psalm.

*Older, poorly painted cars are 100 times more likely to get rammed than late-model ones.

*Don't panic if you fall from a great height. You can always grab a two-inch protuberance on the way down.

*No matter what one's level of fighting expertise, it's best to stand stationary and exchange full-power blows rather than present any sort of defense.

*If in such a fight, punch as hard as you desire; fists are unbreakable.

*The prettiest female inmates are also the nicest.

*Directly outside a window in every cheap hotel room is a flashing neon sign, excellent for illuminating the too-wound-up-to-sleep occupant.

*All public libraries have a microfilm filing of every single newspaper page published locally over the last 60 years.

*Nineteenth-century cowboy bars had special whiskey that could be drunk straight all day without inducing nausea.

*Any youth worth his leather jacket knows how to effortlessly hot-wire an ignition.

*Bachelors have no concept of food shopping—which explains why they only have five items in their refrigerator, max, one being a severely outdated, near-empty milk container.

*The people most prone to getting KO'd are stake-

out cops parked outside the home of someone they're supposed to be protecting.

*Baseball teams are composed entirely of "characters."

*It's no sweat for a jobless high school student to afford a nice set of wheels and the four-figure insurance tab that comes with it.

*Ninety percent of all rock stars have Cockney accents, can't go a full sentence without throwing in a UK colloquialism, and appear to take sartorial clues from a 1975 Mott The Hoople album. Bloody wankers!

*Male professional dancers really enjoy being with women.

*Seven-figure ransoms in used bills easily fit in a standard-size briefcase.

*You can leave auto headlights on indefinitely and it'll never run the battery down.

*Hospitals have an unlocked closet on each floor, containing full doctor and nurse outfittings, including stethoscopes.

*The best marksmen are extremely nervous people who have never before handled a pistol—their first shot always scores a clean kill on a baddie.

*Weirdest girl in town? Don't worry: on a dare, a guy from the school "in" clique will hit on you, you'll bloom into a real looker, and he will genuinely love you, as proven in a climactic confrontation with the clique's leader.

*It's always dry and sunny the day a public hanging is scheduled.

*Multi-racial gangs are not the least bit uncommon.

*No matter how remote the road, rest assured there will be a car coming in the opposite direction when in-a-hurry you attempt to pass a slow-moving vehicle.

*If you want to win a basketball championship, be on the team that is losing "the big game" with mere seconds left on the clock.

*Law enforcement agents never go into the Evidence Room without stealing something—and nearly getting caught by the guard.

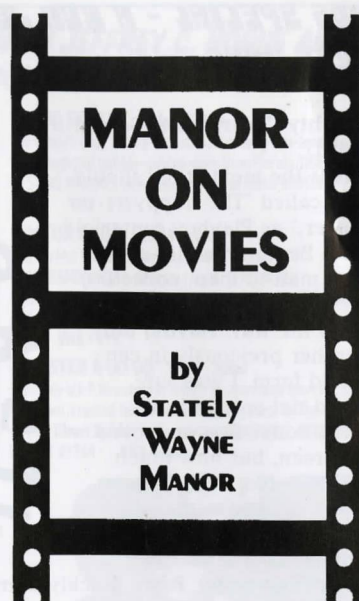
*Mid-20th-century women wore magical bobby pins capable of unlocking any door in the universe with a simple twist of the wrist.

*Prior to the Kennedy administration, national highway regulations required a front-seat passenger to sit no more than two inches to the right of the driver, regardless of gender. To compensate for any discomfort this caused in those pre-air-conditioning days, added ventilation was provided by the removal of windshield glass.

*Med students aren't in it for the money.

*When battling a heavily armed troop of thugs, there's no sense in the empty-handed protagonist grabbing the weapon and ammo from the body of the first enemy he knocked off.

*During a high-speed chase on a flat surface, it is imperative to work that gearshift hard and often—even with an automatic transmission.



'70S SPECIAL - A RON JEREMY FREE ZONE

Naughty Cheerleader (Something Weird)

This is the movie they should have called "The Happy Hooker," as Playboy centerfold Barbi Benton merrily goes from man to man, collecting a few bucks for her troubles along the way. Having only seen her previously in centerfold form, I was surprised not only at how much hotter Benton looked on screen, but how much she looks like Betty Page at points in time in the movie. Starting out as a teenage cheerleader (for about 15 seconds), Barbi quickly dumps the boy next door for a local thug on a motorcycle. She goes for a ride on his bike and he manages to spin her around so she's on the handlebars facing him, and then he fucks her while driving! I've seen sex scenes on, around or involving a motorcycle before but I've never—EVER—seen a sex scene on a moving bike (granted it's softcore, so the pants remain curiously on from the side view). After she runs away with, gets pregnant—and dumped—by motorcycle boy (of course), she sets out on her own. Fueled by a love for sex and a need for money, she eventually realizes she can make the good cash just for fucking. She starts with an "admiral" (played by the guy who was the butler in the TV show "Hart to Hart") on a bus ride to Boston (I don't think she has sex in a bed until about the fourth or fifth guy she's with) and eventually ends up hooking up with... Klaus Kinski! That's right, ol' Klaus does his turn in the softcore biz here—thankfully in a mostly clothed role—as a Cuban scam artist/would-be pimp. His wacky schemes end up being whoring out Barbi to rich businessmen for big-time \$\$\$. Eventually the scam is busted and they flee to Europe. Next, Kinski starts having Barbi fuck all these guys he claims are film producers so they can get her started in a movie career. She thinks it's legit and only later realizes she's being pimped out. By the time that happens she's actually on the set of a movie, but slips away with one of her fellow cast members when everything starts to fall apart. This guy, Gino, her new Italian stud, becomes the one love of her life and they soon both end up out of the film business and back to doing what they apparently both do best. When this movie was made, Barbi Benton was the girlfriend of Hugh Hefner (who does get a brief cameo). The only major drawback to this—and I don't know if it's because Hef laid down the law or what—is that Benton does not appear naked in the flick—not even topless! Come on now!

token female perspective - You know me, I love bad cinema; bad, of course, meaning good in a bad way or bad in a good way. Klaus Kinski and Barbi Benton in the same movie? Count me in! Apparently Ed Begley Jr. is in it too but I forget who he was. Anywho, I don't know how much Miss Benton looks like Betty Page but she sure is cute and she looks very foxy, and is clad in a fabulous succession of outfits, throughout the movie. It should also be noted that although there's lots of sex in the movie, and actually the entire plot revolves around sex, this is not a porno; it's strictly softcore all the way. I didn't even notice Barbi Benton wasn't naked but I'll take Larry's word on it, as he was obviously paying a lot of attention to that detail. (Again, who can blame him? She's hot.) There's quite a bit of plot to this movie, which is not to say the plot makes sense just that there's lots of it. I guess there were a lot of movies like this made in the early '70s - naughty, but



not overtly pornographic, sexy-sinema romps; they sure don't make 'em like this anymore. (Or at least if they do I never see or hear of them.) As far as adult films go there's very little that falls in between an NC-17 rating and anal gang bang videos so, in that sense, this is kind of a classic piece of cinema. Of course not everyone would see it that way but I think our readership has a different movie value scale than what is normally considered "good." Also of note, Barbi Benton's character is from Scranton, PA (she manages to mention that several times) and they have a couple clips of her traipsing around Market Street during her brief stay in Philly. (I think Larry forgot to mention she lives in like six different cities over the course of the flick.) Ah, the life of a carefree prostitute... or a naughty cheerleader.

Hollywood Babylon (Something Weird)

This is a film rendering of Kenneth Anger's classic book of the same name, which recounts some of the greatest scandals in the history of early Hollywood (about the first 50 years). From Hollywood's first OD through the infamy of the Fatty Arbuckle saga (A young starlet, Virginia Rapp, died in Arbuckle's bedroom during a wild party—supposedly from internal bleeding from a champagne bottle being used as a dildo. Decades later, this story was proven to be a complete work of fiction, and it was confirmed that Rapp actually died from an overdose.) to the numerous indiscretions of Charlie Chaplin (who is unnamed in the movie, yet clearly implicated in the book). With so much stuff to draw on from the book, it's surprisingly a pretty boring movie. There's a lot of pointless set-up footage of Hollywood's golden age between some of the vignettes, but none of it really ties in to the movie. Plenty of sex, but lots of really unattractive people—ugh. Perhaps the best moments in the movie are about the peccadilloes of director Otto Von Stroheim—he had to personally test all of his starlets... and then some, and the marriage of Charlie Chaplin to a 16-year old in Mexico. The Chaplin stuff is actually the best part of the movie because he was involved in so much bad voodoo with so many ladies—he's even indirectly a party to someone else being shot because the shooter thought Chaplin was fucking his wife (at a party on his yacht) when it was actually just some rich blue-blood. The book is far more salacious and entertaining. Even for 1972, when this was made, it's pretty tame fare.

token female perspective - I have to agree, I thought this movie was pretty boring. Although it did make me want to read the book; so if that was the point of the movie, it succeeded. There is no doubt that the standards of '70s porn are nothing like today. I actually don't know which is worse though, having to see Ron Jeremy or the really fat guy they have playing Fatty Arbuckle naked. Either way, it's just unfair and I hate to say it, but the women in the movie weren't much more attractive. Sigh. I guess there is something to be said for contract girls; they all look like blow up dolls but at least they're pretty. Not that the un-pretty don't have the right to get their freak on, I'm just saying I shouldn't have to look at it. I was disappointed in this one, 'cause the way Larry described it to me it seemed like a good idea but they didn't do much with it.

My Tongue is Quick (Vidco)

An early John Holmes vehicle from around 1971 or '72. Holmes is a

XXX

adult video reviews by Mr. & Mrs. carbon 14

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self-described "private dick" in this feature, but he's no detective. This dick runs an in-call stud service for horny socialites, starlets and other rich broads. His houseboat (so he can always pull up anchor and sail out to sea to avoid the long arm of the law) is a floating bordello where rich chicks come to get serviced by any of the three or four dudes Holmes has set up in different cabins of the boat. Being the star, Holmes is of course screwing just about every girl that boards—instead of a girl in every port, he's got every girl in one port! There's practically no plot, which kinda makes this a precursor to the gonzo flicks that are strictly wall-to-wall sex. As far as the girls go, a couple of them are OK looking but the chick who plays his secretary has one of those weird early boob jobs that just looks, well, weird. One thing that stands out in my mind about this waste of time is the amount of "improvised" dialogue. There are obvious times when Holmes is ad-libbing because the girls have forgotten their lines—I know dialogue isn't a main concern here but one girl doesn't even speak, she just kinda stumbles into the room, says, "uh-huh" as Holmes tries to coax a line of dialogue from her, and then jumps on Holmes' dick; it's pretty funny watching Holmes trying to avoid laughing.

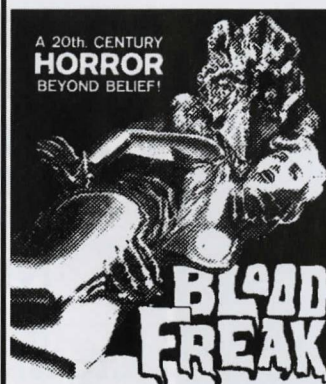
token female perspective - This was kind of a weird porno because there is a ton of dialogue, yet there's very little plot. A more appropriate title might have been "This Movie Was Put Together Quick" but, you know, it was the '70s - what do you expect? Basically the only redeeming factor about the movie at all is that Holmes is in it; he's not exactly my type per se but for a male porn star he's not too shabby. He's nice and thin at least, in addition to having, as we all already know, a really giant penis. Other than that the movie was pretty lame.

Pizza Girls (VCX)

Another John Holmes flick, this time from around 1977 or '78. Hot & Saucy Pizza Girls is the film's full title on screen, and you can pretty much guess most of what's gonna happen. Holmes is the co-owner of Country Girl Pizzeria, a pizzeria that specializes in "special deliveries." There's some sort of regular clientele who use a code when ordering pizza to actually order a girl to come with said pizza and have sex. Holmes is so much more used to the camera in this movie he actually acts. Then again, there's more than a threadbare semblance of plot so they must have really been trying in this one. It turns out the pizza service is also a front for Holmes and his Chinese "half-brother" (Don't ask!), who are on a mission to track down the "Night Chicken," a guy in a chicken suit who assaults hookers. In addition to that, there's three guys who are conspiring to grab the pizza delivery hookers and take them back home and start up a "delivery service" themselves. This movie actually has two legitimate porn superstars of the '70s, Candida Royale (who looks pretty good) and Desiree Cousteau (who's kinda the star). Did I mention all four girls (didn't catch the names of the other two) wear identical torn t-shirts tied just below their boobs, pink satin hot pants, and they all skateboard to and from their deliveries? Anyway, in the end Desiree Cousteau, the new girl at the pizza joint, (her name is Ann Chovie... get it?), ends up falling in love with her across-the-hall neighbor, the private detective... who in turn may or may not be the Night Chicken, thus leaving room for a sequel.

token female perspective - OK, so we already covered the John Holmes is fairly good looking and has a huge cock thing in the previous review, and actually the majority of the people who I saw naked in this film were also fairly attractive. Hooray! (Actually I think Candida Royale looks much hotter these days, but that's neither here nor there.) Only the guy in the raincoat (the detective or whatever the fuck he was supposed to be) was gross. Another point of interest is that not only was there a plot in this porn movie, there was an attempt at a subplot; I can't really explain to you what it is cause the three guys Larry mentioned mumbled a lot and I couldn't really follow it but I know it was there. Overall I am gonna have to say this was a pretty good example of '70s adult cinema. You've got the wacky plotline; you've got John Holmes; you've got the skateboarding, hot pants wearing, flipped hair having chicks; you've got a six foot tall chicken named after Richard Ramirez (you never get to see the Night Chicken unfortunately); I mean, what the hell more could you ask for?

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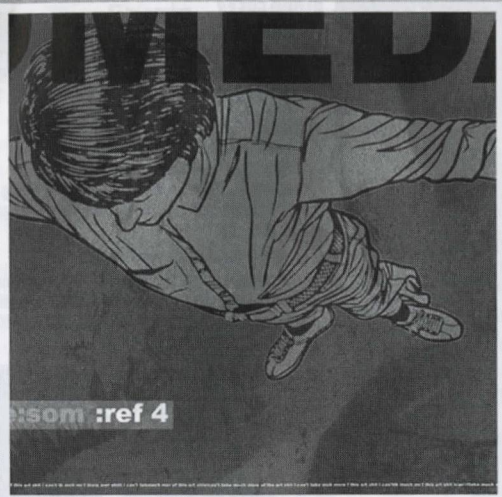
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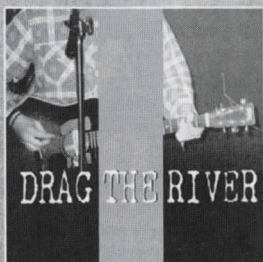


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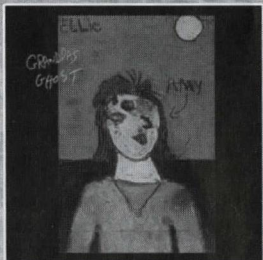
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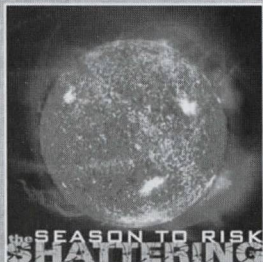
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I Like Em' Big and Stupid

As you're reading this, Andrew WK's 15 minutes are probably drawing to an official close. That's if they haven't already been tagged DOA by David Caruso in a last ditch attempt to solidify a spot on the fall schedule for his "CSI: Crime Scene Investigations" spin-off. Which from what I hear, is essentially "CSI: Miami Beach." Which makes it better—on paper, at least—than the Untitled Chevy Chase Project or the FOX pilot starring James Cann (yes, THAT James Cann) as a crusty, conservative but lovable, dad dealing with his liberal stepson. Sigh. And I get up and go to work each morning?

Ah, what the heck. Let's cut Caruso some much-needed slack. He was great in the mid-era Abel Ferrara flicks and old "Hill Street Blues" episodes back before he was, well, a washed-up TV star. But then he had to go and think that he—not naked butts on broadcast TV and swear words in prime-time, hehehe—was the reason for the inexplicable success of "NYPD Blue." I won't waste my breath lambasting the show as a lame "Hill Street" wannabe. Hell, it's bulletproof. How else do you explain the fact that it survived "The Curse of Jimmy Smits"? (For further evidence, see *Old Gringo* and *Bless the Child*.)

Let's get back to Andrew WK before the CD stores are overflowing with scratched, beer-soaked, pot-singed copies of his brilliant, self-titled major label debut. But step to the side... we need to make room for all the hipsters and trend-followers that have moved past his charming brand of '80s-hair-metal-nostalgia and on to the revival of electronica or a musical based on the music of The Smiths or whatever the hell is hip, cool, "with it," and Now.

Yes, I'm willing—and virtually unashamed—to admit that I found AWK's hook-heavy, loud-as-sin disc to be as refreshing as a breeze on a warm summer night and as intoxicating as this Yuengling Black & Tan I just can't put down. As satisfying as any number of other wonderful slabs of check-your-brain-at-the-door vinyl that dot my record collection.

Sure, they're there. Lurking. Peeking their head out every now and then to make you forget your woes, ignore your troubles, and spend an hour or so thanking the creator that somebody figured out how to capture these moments on vinyl.

Not too long ago I moved from bucolic Doylestown, PA to charming Baltimore, MD. Which brought me back in touch with every grimy inch of my record collection. Andrew WK brought me back in touch with the power of a big, dumb album to soothe my aching brain. For that I will always be thankful. He now joins the following in my Big Dumb Hall of Fame...

Zodiac Mindwarp and the Love Reaction: *High Priest of Love* and *Tattooed Beat Messiah*. For a brief, shining moment, ZMATLR was the greatest band in the world. They wore leather and ripped denim before Rob Zombie, and their record sleeves were slathered with the most ego-serving bombast ever committed to paper: "Delinquent Genius Zodiac Wrote All the Songs. Rearranged the Atmosphere with His Steel Lungs and Crushed the Magnetic Tape with His Venus Groovepusher." How do you follow up liner notes like that? With crazoid blasts of sonic fury like "High Priest of Love" and "High Heeled Heaven," that's how. By the time they committed "Prime Mover" to vinyl, it shocked me that they weren't bigger than Guns 'n Roses. Zodiac—aka Mark Manning—wrote an autobiography of those ribald days entitled *Fucked By Rock*. It's on its way from amazon.com.

Tuff Darts: Sire Records, 1978. There probably isn't much more to be said. Anything that came out on Sire between 1976 and 1986 was worth at least one spin. This got pulled into the studio one day during one of my radio shifts and we slapped on "(Your Love is Like) A Nuclear Waste," the last track on side one. It contains the classic lines, "I'd rather stick my tongue into a fan, drink Ex-Lax all day long/Have to chew on razor

Dante's Inferno: A Heaping Helping of Picks, Pans, and Shameless Self-Promotion by Dan "Danté" Taylor

blades or give head to King Kong/Than have to be between the sheets with you for any time/Or have to feel your scaly body movin' onto mine." But beyond that, it ends with a nuclear explosion that goes on and on and on and on. Great for those days when you were too hungover to cue up the next record, had to piss real bad, or just didn't give a shit. Brilliant as that track is, the rest of the LP contains equally deranged mindrot. As far as I know, there was never a follow-up.

The solo albums of Ace Frehley and Paul Stanley. The Beatles didn't have the collective balls to try it. Neither did the Stones, Floyd, Yes or any other band potentially capable of releasing simultaneous solo LPs by each and every one of its members. Then again, maybe they just weren't as whorishly money-hungry as our fine friends from KISS. You can toss every copy of the Gene and Peter solo slabs onto the trash heap as far as I'm concerned. Only Ace and Paul were able to rise above the hype and deliver tracks worthy of, say, *Dressed to Kill* or *Rock and Roll Over*. Paul, always the sensitive Star Child, gets caught up in craptastic garbage like "Hold Me, Touch Me (Think of Me When We're Apart)." No thanks, buddy, I've seen how much Brillo-esque chest hair you've got. Treat me better and just rock out with Grade-A junk like "Tonight You Belong To Me," "It's Alright," and the masterstroke "Wouldn't You Like to Know Me." But, leave it to good ol' Ace—probably so stoned that he didn't even know what he was playing—to deliver the goods on nine tracks that add up to one desperate cry for help. Forget the over-played "New York Groove" and drop the needle on the searing "Rip it Out."

Manitoba's Wild Kingdom—And You?: There is only one album that I own on CD, cassette and vinyl. This is it. As much as I love each and every release from the mighty Dictators, Wild Kingdom majestically fused hair metal riffs and wise-ass lyrics into a formula that has never been matched by anybody, anywhere.

Buckner & Garcia—"Pac-Man Fever": Mention Buckner & Garcia to anybody that grew up in the '70s and early '80s and they'll likely remember this novelty smash single. But instead of having the dignity and good sense to slink away with whatever cash they made, the duo somehow milked an entire LPs worth of video-game-related pop ditties. OK, so its 8-song length barely allows it to call itself long-playing, but when I'm feelin' blue I can't resist the southern fried "Froggy's Lament" or the repetitious command to "Do the Donkey Kong." If you stumble across a copy at the thrift store, though, skip 'em all and head right for the album's coda, "Goin' Berzerk." In 4:23, Buckner and Garcia distill pure '80s pop, video game sound effects, and the words "Evil Otto" into a demented love song about being "berzerk over you." A girl? An arcade? A favorite video game? You decide.

Only time will tell if Andrew WK has the moronic charm to hold up through the years. I'll let you know in 2012.

Shameless Self-Promotion Alert! The long-awaited new installment of *The Hungover Gourmet* has finally arrived! Check out *Tales of PA Dutch Country*, readers answer the question *What's the Oldest Thing in Your Fridge?*, and Low Hug editor Anita j Michel dishes up *Bars She Loves/Loved*. Get yours for \$3 (ppd) from Dan Taylor, PO Box 5531, Lutherville, MD 21094-5531 or visit www.hungovergourmet.com.

CD Reviews

The 440s and The Chickenhawks

- Sumthin' Sleazy (Steel Cage)
The 440s. The Chickenhawks. Two great rock 'n' roll bands. Both bands have a fiery, sultry, bad ass woman on vocals. Both bands have aggressive axemen playin' liquid licks and crunchin' chords. Both bands put on one helluva live show. This is indeed one cool record. Could it get any better? Yes, it could. This whole rock 'n' roll raunch fest was recorded by Jeff Dahl. The 440s start things off, ready to prove they haven't gone soft since movin' from Philadelphia to the more laid back climate of Tucson, Arizona. Don't worry, as soon as you hear the first downstroked chords out of your speakers, you'll know they haven't. Newest 440s rock 'n' roll recruit G.G. Titan's debut here is flawless, just like the flamethrower guitar leads he trades off with Sparkle Plenty. As for the music, instead of all the songs being frantic, fast-paced punk, the 440s slow it down a bit on straight-ahead hard rockers "Keep It Alive," "Remember My Name," and the sleazy strut of "Slut Girl Blues." The results are some of the best material the band has ever written. And once again they've chosen another cool cover to bash out, a little-known gem from the past, "Easy Livin'," by Fast Eddie Clarke's post-Motorhead supergroup, Fastway. The Chickenhawks don't even give you a chance to take a breather from the 440s tracks, as Sioux City Pete and Betsy Badly leap off this CD with licked lips and crazed looks in their eyes. The bent neck slide guitar noise riff of "Pearl" is some of the coolest guitar playin' I've heard this side of Kid Congo Powers. When I first got this CD, I kept hittin' the back button just so I could listen to that fucked-up, chaotic rawk riff over and over and OVER again! Now the guitar line from "Pearl" is bouncin' around the cracked cranium walls of my skull and it feels allllll-right. "Lime Rickey" and "Grease It Up" are two more prime cuts of rawk 'n' raunch as only The Chickenhawks could spew. Sound-wise, these are the best recorded 440s AND Chickenhawks tracks I've heard to date. But then again, when Jeff Dahl is on the job, you are gonna get rock 'n' roll perfection. The only thing that could be better than this CD is seeing both of these bands live 'n' loud 'n' lewd on the same bill. May I suggest a split live album to continue this Sumthin' Sleazy saga?
-Peter Santa Maria

Adam West - Right On!
(The Telegraph Company)
Holy shit, this record rocks! Just when I was afraid that Adam West would get swallowed up in all that "Guitar-God Rock" obscurity, they put out this piece o' wax [plastic?-ed.] and proved me dead

wrong. Yeah, they've got that Thin Lizzy/Gluecifer dueling lead guitar thing going on, but unlike so many other bands who seem to think that's all it takes to rock, they went and did something utterly ingenious... drum roll please... they wrote good songs. From the skull-crushing fury of "C'mon and Bludgeon Me" and "Blueblood" to the down and dirty swing of "Swagger," these songs make me wanna move! Adam West has managed to hit that elusive sweet spot between "punk" and "rock," with enough polish to their performance to drive their point straight home, yet enough gaping rawness to make it hurt. Cool '60s biker chick booklet layout, too. Right On!
-Wendy Lee

American Heartbreak/Libertine

- You Can't Kill Rock n' Roll (Coldfront Records)
You can't kill rock and roll, but you sure can call Kervorkian on this split. Although it's not AS bad the second and third time around, it's still your standard "hard rock" formula. American Heartbreak has that mid-tempo metallic infusion, 'yo-ho-ho, we're 19 and drunk and singing along to the lyrics sitting on the hood of your Camaro' feel; which is OK, I guess. It just comes off sounding like a heavy version of The Outfield--yeah, I mean that '80s band. Libertine glams it up a bit, but is still just a pack of Luckys away from a Psychedelic Furs cop off that might fit into any teen movie these days. It's no "President Gas" though, more like the later years slumping in "Pretty in Pink." The coolest things about them (and the CD for that matter) is the Cheap Trick cover. Despite all my harsh vibes (I should give them more credit), it's listenable, but why buy the imitation when you could get the original bands they're nodding to in the super-saver bin?
-Phil Ford

American Nightmare - s/t (s/r)

A power trio from the Philly area consisting of Rob Sellers on vox/guitar, Tony B. on bass and Brian DeWald on drums; I'm not sure about their past, but their future does not hold inclusion in my CD collection. I like lots of things that this has leanings towards, but for the most part the AN hybrid just does not suit me. The amalgamated parts fit like a suit off the rack; I prefer custom tailoring. Imagine if you will Glenn Danzig replacing Mike Ness in Social D. It's an ill fitting. The Danzig influence in Sellers' vocals is more than apparent, it's blatant, contrived, and downright derivative. The twang factor also seems a little too 'flavor of the month' for me, and the songs are all way too long and sound the same. The first cut, "Tonight We Ride," started out promising but

went on three minutes too long. After that this critter was like a bobsled--it went downhill fast. If you want to hear genuine, soulful rock with authentic cowpunk overtones check out anything by the Gun Club or Naked Prey.
-Paul Bearer

ANTISEEN - Screamin' Bloody Live (TKO)

I think it's funny that on the press sheet it says, "Now you too can experience the power and fury of an ANTISEEN live show without risking life and limb." I've seen them; more than once. I didn't realize I was risking life and limb in the process. Except for the ringing in my ears when they're done, I've always come away physically unscathed and very happy. If it is a risk to go see them, it would be worth it though. They're easily one of the best live bands on the planet. This disc was recorded on their most recent West Coast jaunt; the first 17 tracks are from the Portland show (at the Ash Street Pub) & 18-24 are from their show at the Covered Wagon in SF. In reality, the CD does not quite live up to the power and fury of one of their live performances--for one thing, even if you turn your stereo up really loud, it's still not going to be as loud or as powerful as they are in person--but it's pretty damn close. Regular readers will notice that there has yet to be an ANTISEEN record I didn't like so I won't gush over this too much, but I will say this is a fucking amazing CD that has hardly left our player since we got it a couple months ago. A few other points of interest, if I may; I designed the tour poster that Doug is holding in the one picture in the booklet. (Sorry, I had to add that. I love that poster.) Limecell was on that tour too and Kevin and Perfect each add a very funny, very Philadelphia touch to the disc. Also making an appearance is the Cosmic Commander of Wrestling, who jetted in for the SF show to introduce the band; I heard he seriously took the piss out of some heckling crusty punks but they didn't put that part on here. He's actually kind of subdued (for him) in his portion. This CD also has a couple videos on it, one for "Commando" and one for "Guns Ablazin'." I never expect those things to work so I feel like I always have to point out when they do--this one does. Nice job, Mark. Anyway, another stellar disc from the Boys From Brutalsville, but who expects anything otherwise?
-Leslie

Arkham - s/t (Cuneiform)

For the nostalgic lover of Soft Machine's organ/bass/drum sound. The keyboard sounds aren't as many and varied as Mike Ratledge's, but close, and the melodic inventions are in the ballpark. This was recorded at various live concerts and radio broadcasts in Belgium between 1970 and 1972, and the sound quality oscillates between good and "historic," but that shouldn't stop you from getting this if it's your cup

o' tea! Keyboardist Jean-Luc Manderlier and drummer Daniel Denis both went on to Magma in 1972, Manderlier staying long enough in Kobaia to play on Mekanik Destructiw Kommandoh, Denis moving on later to form Univers Zero, one of the most original bands to come out of Europe in the '70s. I'll assume you're familiar with all this, in which case you'll understand this is a must-have for the historians of early Euro-prog. Obviously it has a "free-jazzy" flavor, with a good deal of improvisation, minimalist ostinato phrases (but they did mutate quickly before getting too Philip Glassy tedious), and wanderings into space. All three musicians are way beyond competent, but you'd be expecting that. There is a nice trumpet (electric flugelhorn) appearance on two tracks, courtesy of a later member of the band, before the final dissolution. This was a band that played and played and played, never recording in view of releasing something official; so this is it, blemishes and all. An essential document showing quite impressively the musical workings of a key member in the arcane Euro-prog scene.
-Michel Polizzi

Behemoth (Ohio) - Buford EP (Diaphragm)

First off, this is not the Polish death metal band Behemoth, from the '90s. I guess that's why this band decided to put their homestate of Ohio in parentheses. I mean, I don't even like death metal and could care less about the death metal Behemoth, but I've got a pet peeve about duplicate band names. It's just so damn confusing and downright Spinal Tap-y. Not to get off to a bad start (looks like I already have), but why the hell didn't you change the name of the band before releasing this CD, doods (and one doodette)?! I mean, it's not like it's some great and ultimate rock band name or anything. Yes, I understand you guys are a riff-driven, fuzzbox stompin', hard rock band that sing about cars ("Full Throttle"), drivin' cars out on the open road ("Swinger 340") and have pictures of cars that you probably don't own on the back cover of your CD. What's that you say? You have THREE guitar players?! Well, DAMN, if that ain't rock with a capital "R" then I don't know what is! And of course, any band that BLATANTLY lifts lyrics from Molly Hatchet and Kiss and passes them off as their own needs a great band name to showcase their ultimate rockitude. So I can see why you want an imposing, grandiose name... but you couldn't come up with ANYTHING better than Behemoth?! Criminy! What's that you say? Picking a band name is hard? Yes, I understand that Fu Manchu, The Hellcopters, Grand Funk Railroad, Blue Oyster Cult, Motorhead and Black Sabbath were already taken as band names. Geez, playin' rock 'n' roll is so damn hard nowadays! Hmmm, here's a couple ideas: change the name of the band to something that isn't already

taken, get rid of your lead singer, and write some more songs that aren't exact lyrical and musical copies of your "influences." Then get back to me.

—Peter Santa Maria

Tim Berne - *The Shell Game* (Thirsty Ear)

The other week I was wondering to myself where the new giants of underground music were going to appear, who would be the new Coltrane, Zappa, Fripp, Czucay, etc... This record was my first answer. I won't be able to do the disc justice with this review, but I hope I can put across the sense of awe and excitement I feel listening to this recording. Moments remind me of many past artists, late-'60s early-'70s Miles, later Coltrane, '73 King Crimson, early krautrock; but I don't wish to imply that the record actually sounds like any of these things. They are more like small whispers, hints of some past greats, and when someone is moving things to a next level, it's natural to hear ghosts of great movers and shakers past. Tim Berne (alto sax) is aided by two stunning sidemen, Tom Rainey (who has put out some amazing albums under his own name) on drums, and Craig Taborn, who I haven't heard from before but is one of the most interesting electronics manipulators going today. Brutally chaotic, earth shakingly heavy (with no bass, mind you) and entrancingly beautiful, I feel as privileged to hear this as when I heard my first Can or Magma album. Not for the closed minded or faint of heart. If you've been wasting your time with any of that Tortoise/Sea And Cake/Thrill Jockey crap I especially recommend you to mend your ways and open your ears to the real thing.

—Rick D.

Brant Bjork & the Operators - *s/t* (TMC)

For those of you who are not knowledgeable about the rock that is plodding and good to smoke weed to, Brant Bjork used to be the drummer for two of the best and most influential bands of the "desert rock" genre, Kyuss and F^u Machu. (I heard he recently left the Fu, although I think he was on their most recent CD, so forgive me if that turns out to be rumor not fact.) Not surprisingly, this record has a whole '70s vibe to it but I'd say comparisons to either of his previous bands end there. The material on this disc is a hell of a lot more experimental than either band ever dared to get and some songs even venture into what I would consider pop music territory (a la Beck). I can't quite put my finger on whether or not I like the damn thing though. I didn't turn it off; in fact, I've listened to the whole CD in it's entirety more than once. But after I'm done listening to it, I never remember what any of the songs sound like. I know this is not much by way of description but if they made *Fast Times At Ridgemont High* now, set in today but still keeping the characters & plotline generally the same, this music would be the

perfect soundtrack. Whether or not that's a good thing? Um, I'll have to get back to you on that.

—Leslie

The Brian Wilson Shock Treatment - *Shockmania* (Washroom/Slutfish)

This is probably the best sounding thing yet from the maniacs at Slutfish. Whatever you can say about their records, one thing you can't say is that they go quietly into the night. They go kicking and screaming and sometimes that's lively but horrible. In this case, it kicks and screams and is pretty great. It rocks! It rolls! It shouts! It moans! BWST must have had a great time making this record. It sounds happy—deliriously happy! It's making a joyful noise to the lord of rock and roll! It's sort of like what the Fugs might be doing if they only just now had crawled out of their various degenerate hovels and began to rock in a post punk high voltage idiom. There's even one truly and sincerely beautiful song thrown in ("Golden Isis") for good measure or maybe just to mess with our heads. Good going Slutfish! And *Shockmania*. If you like it loud and insanely and inanely raucously happy, this is for you. If you don't, my opinion is that you should.

—Eliot Duhan

Boxcar Satan - *Crooked Mile March* (DogFingers)

Be afraid. So far, the freaky doublespeak evil preacher that kicks the CD off has freaked out everyone I've played this for. Hell yeah! Any of you nasty, dirty, blues hounds that miss The Cows should already be onto this trio from San Antonio, Texas. Sounds like these boys have been on the giving end of a hit for the devil since the beginning of the way-down, desolate, Southern blues. Toss in some of that freakshow side of jazz, hobo train rides and punk noise and it's the moving engine of this band. A hearty album that bares Boxcar's tentacles of styles: one minute a tuned down bass tub thumper, guitar-fiddle finger doodle, the next a grumbling storytelling rattlesnake on the floorboard of your car that snuck in somehow and yer tooling at 80 on the desert road. No wonder these guys have their city behind them. Hell never sounded so pretty.

—Phil Ford

Brother JT - *Maybe We Should Take Some More?* (Birdman)

Egad. I feel like I should be sniffing some ether. At least 'til the mescaline starts kicking in. Picture the fucked up backward delay from Sgt. Pepper's—for like an hour—and add a mushroom tossed salad of Sonic Youth side-stepping modernism and you've got this record. It's kind of like listening to that gibbering insane man you see on the median at your favorite downtown intersection, you have no idea what's racing through his mind but you are humored by it and can pick SOME of it up. When John Terlesky wasn't playing guitar in

the Original Sins, he must have been channeling a shaman on crack. Overall, kind of interesting for your psychedelic appeal but drags on too long... unless you're supposed to be passed out by the end of the record.

—Phil Ford

Clocked In - *Tied To The Mast* (Radical)

Damn, this is some cool shit. I believe this is Radical's first H/C band signing and they did a good job. Atlanta-based Clocked In play a catchy style with good vocals. Unfortunately I've always found it hard to be creative when describing H/C bands with this sound but I'm gonna try—if you like Snapcase, I'm willing to bet you'll like Clocked In. Wow, that was totally ingenious, comparing a band to another one. I'd better stop this great journalism before Leslie gets jealous. It's also hard to single out specific tracks on this one 'cause I liked the whole disc. If you're into hardcore bands with an "emo" slant, Clocked In are for you. For a plain vanilla review, I liked this disc and would've felt okay with my selection had I purchased it with my own \$\$\$\$. In fact, I'm gonna keep this CD. With that said, pick up a copy for yourself.

—Todd Sciore

Clone Defects - *Blood On Jupiter* (Tom Perkins Entertainment/Superior Sounds)

From the looks of the front cover, and most of the art in general on this package, you could easily mistake this for a Chrome offshoot record from 1977 or '78. Sonically, there are times when this Detroit foursome sounds like they're still in 1978, if not 1974—like a self-destructing Stooges (especially the vocals and the hammered riffs), only through a bit of a Six Finger Satellite filter (among other things). It's old and new all at once! Despite the propulsive rock overdrive that permeates most of *Blood On Jupiter's* tracks, this is still one fucked up record—and I mean that in a good way.

—Larry

The Consumers - *All My Friends Are Dead* (In The Red)

Punk rock the way I like it. Fast, loud and snotty. Early punk band I've never heard of but wish I had. Razor blade vocals, buzzsaw guitar, and loud production. Attitude: fuck you. Catchy riffs; guitar leads not over-played. One of the best punk albums I've heard in a long time. If you like real punk rock buy this, play loud and kick your neighbors ass.

—Marla Vee

Cretin 66 - *Demolition Safari* (Steel Cage)

I am under no pressure to like this record. Yes, I am a CPFOTFMLG (Close Personal Friend Of The Fabulous Miss Leslie G) and yes, this is a release from Steel Cage, and I know the people that release the records and do the magazine are one and the same. Having pointed out the obvious, I say fuck nepotism, and long live rock. Cretin 66 are great. Really!

They rock. Their music is at once melodic and aggressive, self-deprecating and full of itself, funny and mean. They have it all. Songs about girls that don't understand them, and songs about getting your rocks off. Posers and wimps need not get this record. Everyone else, look them up. You know where to find them.

—Alex Richmond

Dead City Psychos - *Babylon* (s/r)

One of my favorite Philly bands, hitting the big time with a self-released full length. This is punk rock with the bigger emphasis on ROCK! (These guys always reminded me way more of KISS than Crass, in spite of the punk image.) They didn't put my personal fave, "Are You Sick?", on this release but there were way more surprises to make up for it. Plus all the new stuff I hadn't heard them play, and its only been a year since I saw them last! Check these guys out if they come to your town, but be ready for the broken glass, spilled beer, fire and explosions.

—Downtown Dave

Deadbolt - *Hobo Babylon* (Cargo/Headhunter)

Here's the thing with Deadbolt—musically they've been making pretty much the same record over and over for as long as I can remember. They claim to be the world's scariest band but in fact they're the world's slowest surf band and they're spooky—maybe—but not actually scary. Another thing you should know about them is they like to do "theme" records; the theme part lying mostly within the lyrics and CD booklet art. This is their "hobo" record, thus the title and the whole F.T.R.A. (Freight Train Riders Of America) schtick. The last CD was their "trucker" record, the one before that was their "Heart Of Darkness" record, the one before that was their "mafia" record, etc. (You gotta give em credit for beating the trend on that one, the Sopranos weren't around when Deadbolt was working their mob obsession.) They are so damn good at what they do though that it makes all that OK. Truth be told, Larry & I listen to the Deadbolt CDs we have a lot, and in fact a number of their made up words have made it into our daily usage, so I can't say anything bad about a band that's brought me so much laughter. This disc is sure to make it into heavy rotation in the c14 compound.

—Leslie

Dwarves - *How To Make Friends And Influence People* (Reptilian)

The first thing one may notice about the songs on this CD is that they are not new Dwarves songs. In fact, they are mostly songs from older Dwarves CDs or, as they may have been called at the time, records. I don't know if these songs have been re-recorded or what. It doesn't say they have, but in a typical Blag-esque fashion, it doesn't say they haven't either. It just says "all versions previously unreleased," a

statement that's open to interpretation. Why? Who knows. 'Cause he's ambiguous like that. 'Cause he's Blag; he just does weird shit. Anyway, this CD is still pretty cool; it's like a Dwarves mix tape featuring various high points in their recorded history ranging from the real old school classics "Speed Demon" and "Fuck You Up And Get High" to the not-new-but-newer, slightly friendlier "hits" like "Saturday Night" and "Anybody Out There," and even a couple of my personal favorites "Fuck 'Em All" and "Satan." If you like the band, and I do, you will probably like this CD. And I do. —Leslie

Entombed - Morning Star (Koch)

If you've followed Entombed's musical output over the past decade, chances are you fall into one of two distinct "classic Entombed" camps. You are either a *Left Hand Path* purist or a *Wolverine Blues* convert. Well, the bad news is for fans of the group's earlier sound. *Morning Star* shows the crazed Swedes pulling their patented truckload of death/groove even further out of your zipcode. Yes, this new one expands on the *Wolverine Blues* high water mark that launched a thousand lesser aggro-metal knockoffs. But while Entombed's spawn have busied themselves fitting pseudo-goth keyboards, clumsy blastbeats and silly cookie monster vocals into unimaginative songs in the name of progress, Entombed take it all forward by looking slightly back. How? A good portion of *Morning Star* sounds as if they've been digging through their mid-'80s thrash collections. You remember thrash bands, right? Forbidden, Whiplash, Violence? Seemed stupid at the time. But now, hearing Entombed reach for that old potion and mix it with their own landslide of destruction makes perfect sense. Production is nicely hands-off, for the most part just presenting the band in a punchy, guitar heavy, unfettered mix. Taken as a whole, *Morning Star* is another megadose of Entombed heaviness akin to a bulldozer being dropped from a skyscraper. In smaller doses, maybe more like an anvil off of a back porch. Sound like something you'd like? Then you are sick and wrong, and your CD collection is one album short. —Ben Brower

F**Bomb - El Diablo Dinner Theatre (Groundswell)

For a second I almost felt bad for this band, because I was gonna give this a negative review no matter what, but then I listened to it... now I don't feel so bad. I'm actually doing them a favor by not commenting on the music. The main beef I have with this band is their name. There's only one band worthy of using this particular name and their name is Fuck Bomb. They live in Philly. They drink beer and play Ramones covers. They know how to rock. And they actually had the balls to call themselves

Fuck Bomb; this band goes by F**Bomb and claim the "F" is ambiguous. What are you, Herman fucking Hesse or a rock band? The real Fuck Bomb would never, ever call themselves F-Bomb. Uck Bomb maybe; but only for newspaper show listings. And so you see how I could never endorse such an abomination. —Honey West

The Fantomas Melvins Big Band - Millennium Monsterwork (Ipecac)

I'm not 100% sure of the concept here (and who would expect the Melvins or Mike Patton to get involved in anything difficult to grasp), but I think it's the Melvins and Fantomas performing together as a giant, even noisier than normal, amalgam of noise. It was a one time only thing and this disc—recorded live, December 31st, 2001, AKA New Years Eve, at someplace called "Slim's" in San Francisco—is the proof. Um, wow. That must have been a crazy night. If you wanted to literally make yourself insane, like right before the dawn of the new millennium, it would have been a good idea to drop some acid and go to this show. (Show's over, so it's too late now). You could try re-creating the scenario in your living room but it probably wouldn't have the same effect. Not exactly easy listening music but not everything in life should be easy. —Leslie

Gas Huffer - The Rest of Us (Estrus)

Gas Huffer's been around for awhile now. I was surprised to discover that this is their sixth album. Stylistically, it's a departure from what I normally think of as the "Estrus sound." If there is such a thing. When I think Estrus I think Mono Men, Woggles, Inhalants, Insomniacs and other straight-ahead garage that makes me nostalgic for a beer and booze-clouded past three cities and a lifetime ago. Slap this disc in without forewarning and you could easily mistake it for a compilation. We've got a rockin' title track, an ill-advised stab at surf ("Ghost in the Lighthouse"), snotty R&B ("Lexington Nightlife"), and chicken-fried country twang ("Goodbye Crescent") rubbing incongruously up against the punked-out "Third Party Man." And that's just a random sampling of the CD's 14 tracks. Obviously, I don't recommend that you sound like everybody else or that every track sound alike. Hell no. I just didn't know what frickin' direction Gas Huffer was comin' from. Enjoyable? Sure, I guess. Disorienting? Definitely. —Danté

Gasoline - Take It To The People (Estrus)

Japanese howler cross between Laughing Hyenas and Jon Spencer Blues Explosion. High energy, with some crazed pseudo-'60s guitar freakout, but much like the bands already cited, fairly un compelling. No real songs to speak of. Fans of High Rise should dig it. A good contrast to highlight the greatness of Thee Michelle

Gun Elephant or King Bros. —Rick D.

The Generators - State Of The Nation (TKO)

I know that I generally disapprove of punk "nostalgia" type acts but for these guys I make an exception and give an apology for applying that term to 'em. I swear to god, when I first put this on I thought it was an unearthed artifact from LA circa 1978-80. They remind me a lot of some of the bands featured on the old *Tooth And Nails* comp. (put out by Chris D. in the late-'70s) like the Controllers and The Skulls. Basically they have a hint of a Brit influence but all in all it's mostly USA balls-to-the-wall underground rock. I think part of what makes this band stand head and shoulders above their many lame-ass contemporaries is that while they wear influences on their sleeve, they don't roll around in them like a pig in shit. Great tunes, great production. Stop reading and go buy this. I was not surprised to see that this was yet another top quality TKO release. —Rick D.

John Gilmore/Skip Heller - Laid Bare (Amok Audio)

I'm no expert when it comes to reviewing jazz. There's so much jazz I can't stand like "smooth" or "fusion." I gained an appreciation for "Cool Jazz" (the term the musicians used, as way of separating themselves from the likes of Kenny G. and Grover Washington) when I spent a year helping produce a weekly jam session for a radio show in the early '90s. Many legendary jazz musicians that made their home in Portland, OR and those that were traveling through, played there. I've always liked the jazz that was played in cocktail lounges in the '50s and early '60s. Laid Bare is a book written by John Gilmore. The songs are him reading bits from the book with "noir jazz" in the background. Skip Heller put the music together with notables like Big Jay McNeely and Ray Campi. The amazing thing about this CD is that it has a way of taking the listener into the decadent nightlife of Hollywood in the '50s and '60s. I actually pictured a dark, rain soaked Hollywood night while listening to this. His tales include inside info on James Dean, Ed Wood, The Black Dahlia, and Charlie Manson to name a few. Listen to this by yourself. Fill a glass with ice cubes, add your favorite booze, and turn down the lights. —Marla Vee

The Goblins - Missing Fits (My Pal God)

I was more than ready for the new Goblins album from the moment I saw the cover visage of Alfred E. Neuman grafted onto The Misfits' familiar Crimson Ghost, and I was not let down one bit. This 11-song, 13-minute parody of The Misfits is rockingly hilarious. Some songs combine various riffs into new songs, others just

mutate the originals only a bit. As expected, there's direct parody, like "Who Killed Agnes Moorehead?" one-ups "Who Killed Marilyn?" and "Getting Ripped" turns "Green Hell" into a song about helping Glen bench some iron; but there's also more adventurous interpretations, like "Pellet," which turns "Bullet," a song about the JFK assassination, into a song about the assassination of William McKinley with a pellet gun. The back cover is a send-up of *Walk Among Us*, with the band in modified Misfits gear, including a bodybuilder foam muscle costume and a Goblinized skull shirt for lead singer the Phantom Creeper. There's even three videos, including a live performance of "Necklace of Brains" with the band in full "Missing Fits" regalia, and "Ponglin," a version of Pong with the heads of the Goblins as the "ball." If you like your punk with healthy dose of parody or are a Misfits fan with sense of humor, this is for you. If you are Glen Danzig, hahahahaha! —Larry

The Hanson Brothers - My Game (Mint)

It's so hard to be third. Remember *Return Of The Jedi*? I'd rather not. How 'bout *Friday The 13th 3-D*? Well, it did have some nifty comin' at ya effects, like the spear gun Jason shot from the dock. Even Romero's *Zombie Trilogy* felt watered down by the time *Day* arrived. On the flip side, *Goldfinger* was the third 007 flick and I have a soft spot in my heart for the bizzarro *Halloween 3: Season Of The Witch* ("Two more days till Halloween, Halloween, Halloween. Two more days till Halloween, Silver Shamrock.") That said, it's safe to add this third full-length release from punk's Hansons to the A-list. The formula's pretty safely established by now—the Ramones meet the AHL with a sprinkle of pop-culture thrown in—so they're not going to win any new converts. But fans of old tyme hockey will dig this just for the righteous cover of "Get It Right Back," the bus scene song from the classic *Slap Shot*, and old school punk purists will appreciate the nod to the late, great Joey Ramone on "Joey Had to Go." —Danté

The Hard Feelings - You Won't Like It... 'Cuz It's Rock n' Roll (Beerland/Dropkick)
Rocketing outta Austin with an appropriately Texas-sized swager, the Hard Feelings barrel through 10 tunes of alcohol-fueled havoc on their second album. For a trio, they make a lot of noise; whether it's out and out rock and roll, Texas blues, amped up surf/rockabilly or any point between. There's nothing earth-shattering on *You Won't Like It...*, but that doesn't stop it from being a really good rock and roll record. The Hard Feelings use the advantage of being a three-piece to strip everything down to a more raw and raucous sound. It's kinda like an old party record, only one you don't want as background music. And talk about hometown loyalty, Beerland is

the band's favorite bar in Austin and this is the bar's label's first release.
—Larry

Heart Attack - The Last War
1980-1984

(Broken Rekids)

They say hardcore is now primed to re-emerge, nearly two decades later. I hope they're wrong.

Hardcore was a music movement borne out of the political and social changes after Carter left office. Forcing the kids of America to make music that could not rise above the limited confines of the hard fast rules without alienating it's small but devoted tribal following. I personally came of age in the vibrant Philly hardcore scene. Socially disaffected and terminally unemployed, I was a perfect fit. The skills I honed in my halcyon days included sneaking into Love Hall, executing Olympic caliber stage dives, and lest we forget, mastering the art of mainlining some of the finest crank the bathtubs of Kensington had to offer.

(Thanks, Drunk Tom!) The nihilism I weaned back in the day would become my *raison d'être* for the next 20 years. All right, enough personal history, let's talk about Heart Attack. This group was fronted by a pre-teen Jesse Malin. Jesse went on to front D-Generation and is currently the singer for Bellevue, but he cut his musical teeth with Heart Attack. *Last War* is a historical retrospective of the group. The 26 cuts are a wholly bland mass of juvenile, politically dated (non) anthems. Like many of their counterparts from that era, HA's recordings were thin and cheap sounding and did not capture the live vitriol the songs offered. Even though it spans a four-year period it shows little growth from young Jesse and the other lads. This is why hardcore died a whimpering death and why the putrid 'crossover' movement rose from it's ashes. There are certain iconoclasts of the hardcore movement whose best efforts still shine these many years later: Bands like the Circle Jerks, DOA, Bad Brains, pre-Henry era Black Flag, and Negative Approach spring immediately to mind.

Although historically significant and hardly unlistenable this is one alleged treasure that would have been better served if left buried. Hardcore history belongs in books not plundered from the vinyl vaults, pressed on disc and forced on the masses. Read Steve Blush's comprehensive tome, *American Hardcore*, if you want to relive your past hardcore glory to understand what once was, shouldn't and couldn't ever be again. Unless Reagan sheds his Depends and gets appointed King of America.
—Paul Bearer

The Hellacopters - High Visibility
(Gearhead)

The Hellacopters have made a huge impact on "underground" music in the past five or so years, and I base that statement on the fact that everybody has an opinion of them, whether it be positive or negative. Basically the

two major modes of thought about the band are as follows: they are one of the best bands going and the champions of real rock and roll past and present, or they are pretty boys who just copy other bands tried and true musical styles and haven't made a good record since *Supershitty To The Max*. I, of course, have my own opinion; which really falls into neither category. I'm still listening to *Supershitty*, and I have to honestly say I love that record the most and have liked each of their successive records less. But that's not to say I don't like the band anymore. I do. And they are pretty. Is that a crime?

Regardless of whether or not they're the most original band ever, I believe that they are 100% sincere in their love of all they espouse. They might also be THE nicest band I've ever met, and I have to admit that I hesitate to say anything bad about them because of how sweet and friendly they've been to me whenever we're in the same place at the same time. When I've seen them play they've been nothing short of amazing—and the one negative thing I will say about them is that I think they've failed when it comes to capturing the raw energy they are so full of live on record. *High Visibility* is a good example of this; there's nothing wrong with the songs themselves but there's something about the CD that's kind of sterile. And (no penis jokes, please), in a live setting they're anything but sterile. On the other hand, you've gotta put these last few records in perspective—this is a major label record in their homeland of Sweden (Gearhead licensed it from Universal) and so, in that sense, it's light years ahead of the bullshit we've got as far as major label music here in the States. I doubt the American arm of Universal has a single band I'd bother to go see; however, you can be damn sure I'll be there when the 'Copters play the Khyber a month or so from this writing. But when I go to grab one of their records it's still gonna be *Supershitty* or *Payin' The Dues*. (Sorry guys.) But who knows? Maybe their next CD will be their opus and blow all past efforts out of the water. I'll still always give 'em a chance, which is a lot more than some other people are willing to do.
—Leslie

The Insiders - The Mission That Follows The First One
(s/r)

When you get a note with a CD that reads "Hello, we are ex-FBI agent who actually try to make some rock n roll," you smirk and think, "OK, what kind of gimmick are they working?" Then, when you see the band is from Saint-Etienne, France, you think to yourself "What the fuck is this all about?" Well, it's kind of like Man or Astroman? (with vocals) stripped down to a bare-bones guitar/bass/drums trio and injected with late-'70s/early '80s angular punk rhythms. With the exception of some strange samples and random radio scanning, the FBI angle doesn't seem to

make a lot of sense but, then again, maybe the small dialogue bits in French tie it all in—I don't speak French so I wouldn't know. Overall, a confusing but fun release.
—Larry

Jucifer - I Name You Destroyer
(Velocette)

I've been hearing a lot about this band but this is the first proper CD I've heard by them. I must admit I'm impressed. Unlike a number of other bands that have ventured into the more uncharted areas of musical experimentation in the name of punk and art, Sonic Youth and Royal Trux would be the first that come to mind, this is actually quite listenable. Also much like aforementioned bands, Jucifer contains a couple; but unlike SY or RT or even Boss Hog, Amber Valentine and Ed Livengood need no one but each other to make their musical vision a reality. The fact that this much noise comes from one petite lady with a guitar and mic, and a skinny guy on the drums is a feat in itself but this CD is quite a rarity—a really good record that does not maintain the typical "rawk" stylings yet is completely mesmerizing and enjoyable; not overtly trying to be "weird" just to be different; beautiful and ugly at the same time; and just as valid of a rock record as any guitar-bass-drums-three-chords-verse-chorus-verse type band. Maybe even moreso than some of the things I've seen pass my desk recently that

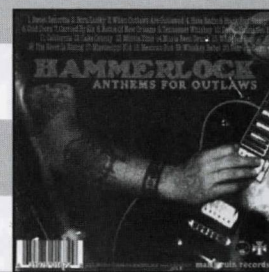
attempt to disguise themselves as rock records. I would like to have gotten through the review without mentioning how good looking these two are, but in the name of journalistic integrity I must, so as to not ignore what is so obvious. Jon & Christina, once punk rock's ultimate sexy couple, have nothing on Ed & Amber. He looks like a handsome serial killer, which we all know I personally like, and she is just too hot AND is a fascinating guitar player in addition to being a captivating singer. Plus Amber dresses better than Christina and has big hair. Or maybe sometimes it's a big hair wig, I'm not sure. But I'm becoming obsessed with big hair & hers is amazing! And in this press kit they sent me, in every article she is dressed in one fabulous outfit after the next. What a woman. I've heard they're great live too. Definitely a band I'll be keeping an eye on to see where they take it next.
—Leslie

Kevin K - 13th St.
(Vicious Kitten)

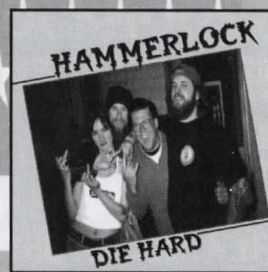
Kevin K: sideman to the stars. Check out this who's who: Iggy Pop, Joan Jett, Sylvain Sylvain, Cheetah Chrome and perhaps the man who had the biggest impact on his career, Johnny Thunders. But when does influence degenerate into imitation? Simple, when the artist can't break away from the stylistic mold of his or her idol to find their own voice. Enraptured with the savage and musically vital New York of the



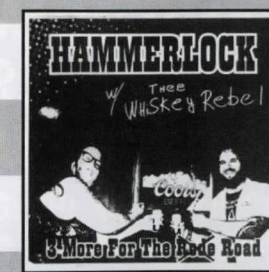
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early '70s, Kevin K's music reverberates with echoes of that time and place—Max's Kansas City, the Heartbreakers, the scene that would define punk rock before it even went by any name. But Max's and Johnny are long gone, and Disney runs Times Square. Does that make Kevin a hapless nostalgia act? A sort of leopard skinned, misty eyed, LAMF museum curator? In lesser hands, most definitely. But with his sheer songwriting skill, Kevin K has sidestepped this trap. The familiar is taken and molded into the new on songs like "New York City (Can't Look Back)" and "Days Move So Fast." The Thunders guitar growl in the hands of one of the living. Here's someone who WAS there in the NYC rock n' roll heyday of the '70s but now looks around to find his heroes all dead. His club closed, SUV gridlock on 13th street, and his rent raised through the roof. That ain't '77 talking, that's 9AM this morning. In the face of all this despair Kevin K plows forward the only way he knows how, making solid, time-tested rock'n'roll and telling his story. An album with reverence to, but not bound by, NYC's glorious punk past. Really deserving of a MUCH classier album cover than the unfortunate 5th grade art class monstrosity it's saddled with. It's the only thing I would dream of changing.

—Ben Brower

The Kent 3 - Spells (Burn Burn Burn)

When you pop the pimple of garage bands and get all that nasty gooey pus out, your pore is nice and clean of the infection, but you have a red welt to remind you of the roots. This band is that red sore, but for shit's sake don't get the strydx pads out yet! You want to savor this exhumed bit of satisfaction. They crank, they strum, and it won't take those metal loop influences to kick ass. Reminds in bits like Leaving Trains circa *Smoke Follows Beauty* but minus the pot talk. Upbeat, with a self-conscious art style of storytelling in a Fairlane 500 and cowboy hat. Furiously involving, like this band has all your best friends in it. Some of the funniest songs I've heard in a while, but they also spin some creepier tales too ("The Pines") that'll get your Blair Witch ass on the right track. Fuck that VH1 Storytellers show, this band has 'em beat in spades. Okay, so you want to check them out already, or just leave those big nasty whiteheads all over your face, pus-head?

—Phil Ford

King Louie One Man Band - Jesus Love My One Man Band (Multibal)

This feller is at the very least a spiritual heir to the great Hasil Adkins; could it be that Louie's dear ol' Mama's head is perhaps nailed over the Haze's Boone County fireplace? I'm just joshing, Louie! Hey folks, if you dig the one-man-band genre you're "progressive" in my book. The 14 songs here are the exact opposite AND the antidote to stuffy ambient electronica and "new

age" idiocy. Louie bashes away on guitar, harmonica, bass drum, cowbell, shaker and coffee can. He's his OWN MAN and I must say I envy him. No band members to deal with, for starters. Plus, he doesn't need to stoop to stealing samples or wearing Beatle boots or having an arm covered with psychobilly tattoos. He's not just a one-man-band, he's a one-man GENRE for all practical purposes! Makin' his OWN rules... and he's doin' the porkchop, baby, don'tcha know.

—three Whiskey Rebel

The Leaving Trains - Emotional Legs (Steel Cage)

The Leaving Trains have been chugging along for more than a dozen years now, churning out consistently great records their entire career. (To my knowledge this is their first release on a label other than SST since their first LP in '88.) The only constant member in the Trains has been lead singer/songwriter/guitarist Falling James Moreland; sadly, he is probably more well known for being Courtney Love's first husband rather than getting the props he deserves for penning scads of rockin', thought provoking, anthemic punk rock classics. More often than not James' songs are politically charged but without being overbearing, self-righteous, or sycophantic in nature. *Emotional Legs* is as good as any of the Leaving Trains previous best efforts like *Kill Tunes*, *The Lump in My Forehead*, or the classic *Loser Illusion Pt. 0*. It starts off with the raucous "Big Baby" and although James and Co. switch gears with a variety of tempos and styles, the Trains never lose momentum or seem in danger of derailing. "Dumb as a Crayon" borders on balladeering, yet seems in fine company with more rocking cuts like "Use Your Own Weapons Against You" or "Judy Don't Mind." Also worth noting is that this disc contains seven bonus tracks and three of the 12 listed cuts are covers. Classic old school punk bands the Urinals and Eddie and the Subtitles get the dupe, but the real gem is their cover of Black Sabbath's "Never Say Die"—Moreland and cohorts Melanie Vammen (ex-Muffs) and Miss KoKo Puff make their version sound wholly fresh and original. For the uninitiated, *Emotional Legs* is a great intro to an often overlooked punk band. Check it out, then go in search for copies of their back catalog. You'll be glad you did.

—Paul Bearer

Les Savy Fav - Go Forth (French Kiss)

The third installment in the LSF saga! The art rock guys from Brooklyn put another solid notch on the headboard of cool sound. One guitarist has bowed out of the band and you can tell his style of playing is missing in the music, but it is not a distraction to how great this band is. They've shed a lot of studio tricks from the last record but retained the progressive weirdness of their sound. And the words just keep getting

better and better with each release. Who else could write, "When I was a swear word, the hours were shotgunned," with the tapestry of odd imageries flung together to somehow make obscure sense? They remind me of the great way Alice Donut used to do their records, kind of thematic, or at least connected in some metaphysical way. Les Savy Fav is a band where you buy the record and take their ride to whatever destination they have planned for you—it's always with good people and you know you will have a good time getting there. By the third listen you've be singing "Crawling Can Be Beautiful" too.

—Phil Ford

Herschell Gordon Lewis - The Eye-Popping Sounds Of... (Birdman)

Herschell Gordon Lewis can be considered one of the founding fathers of gore movies, earning the well-deserved nickname "The Wizard of Gore" in the process. For those of you unfamiliar with Mr. Lewis' work—actually, if you're reading C14, odds are you own or have seen at least one HGL movie—I suggest you rent any of the following: *Blood Feast*, *Two Thousand Maniacs*, *She Devils on Wheels* or *The Gore Gore Girls*. On to this compilation, which highlights music from nine of Lewis' movies. The first 13 tracks comprise the entire soundtrack to *Blood Feast*; all composed/scored by Lewis in a cost-cutting move he'd repeat throughout his filmmaking career. For a non-musician, his composition skills are pretty damn adept, as Lewis' creepy usage of organ and cello add an almost paranoid pall to these "melodies." The 11 tracks from the redneck classic *Two Thousand Maniacs* follow, and deliver down home bluegrass, albeit with an evil undercurrent. Then we get a smattering of more rock and roll and psychedelic selections from seven other HGL productions, the most notable of which are "Get Off The Road," from the movie *She Devils On Wheels* (a song popularized by The Cramps yet written and performed in 1968 by Lewis' then-15-year-old son's unnamed band) and the title song from *Suburban Roulette*, which could be one of the all-time great punk rock cover songs if someone would step up to the mic and do it.

—Larry

Live Not on Evil - Lucky Stiff (Simply Fiendish)

Live Not on Evil is not just a clever palindrome, it is also the latest rock outing from well pedigreed, long-time Philly homeboy, Rob Winfield. When I dwelled in the hostile confines of Cheesesteak City I enjoyed seeing Rob ply his talents in amazing bands like the Mick Cancer (ex Sic Kidz and Pink Slip Daddy) fronted Das Yahoos and Dr. Bombay which also included Palmyra Delran and Barb Dwyer. In these bands Winfield played a supporting role, in LNOE he is front and center as lead singer in addi-

tion to playing guitar and being the band's principal songwriter. After playing *Lucky Stiff* a few times, I can honestly say I don't hate it, but I definitely don't love it either. If you need a label affixation, let's call it horror metal. Just the song titles alone tell you what vein this slab is going in: "Lullaby for a Lost Soul," "Flycatcher," "Porcelain Face." Get my drift? The problem I have isn't with the theme. Nor does the singing and playing seem rudimentary. It's the musical style that just doesn't hit home with moi. I'm just not a metal guy, dig? The songs, although containing melody and grit, are hook-free. There just isn't much that snags or catches. People who enjoy Rob Zombie, Danzig, or Son of Sam will likely love this to pieces. It just isn't my cup of tea. Rob Winfield has talent, his past glories lend credence to that fact. To my ears it's just not going in a direction I can relate to. My horror rock tastes go more in the realm of pop/punk purveyors like the seminal Groovie Ghoulies or the Cramps-y surf infused Cult of the Psychic Fetus.

—Paul Bearer

Lost Goat - The Dirty Ones (TeePee)

This is the third album from San Francisco power trio Lost Goat, who've been around since 1994, but it's the first time I've heard them—where have I been? (Oh yeah, in my basement.) Anyway... with vocals that fall somewhere between the throatiness of Lori Crover and Selene Vigil, and music that walks the heavy metal/hard rock line in a Black Sabbath/Monster Magnet/Blue Cheer way, Lost Goat covers a lot of territory. Although I could do without the fifth track, which features a violin and a cello that create a bleak mood and break the pace of the album, the rest is good stuff. Despite doing a lot of jamming, this is not "stoner" rock. There's an undercurrent of darkness in their sound that keeps your attention.

—Larry

The Maggots - This Condition is Incurable (Bad Afro)

Say it ain't so! Say this condition ain't really incurable! Tell me I'm not going to spend the next five issues of C14 reviewing Swedish garage bands that all sound like fourth-rate Nomads clones! Much like the surf-instrumental wave (pardon the pun) that plagued my mailbox for a few years, I sense a spirit-crushing, ear-boring trend towards European garage schlock chock full of devil references and car effects—sometimes both in the same song! Like "Chicken Race with Satan" from this disc. Funny, but the press notes for this actually read, "And yet they sound like no one else..." Mmmmm, OK. If that's what you want to tell yourself. But don't tell me that. I'm sure The Maggots are nice people and rock with the best of them. There's just nothing on this disc that distinguishes them from the 237 other bands mining the same shop-worn territory. Is it me, or does music suck

right now?
—Dante

Eleni Mandell - Snakebite
(Space Baby)

Here is another one I discovered by getting their CD to review; I wish I hadn't missed out on this fine artist for this long. A dark-pop song-stylist more than a "chanteuse" is Ms. Mandell. She can shriek and scare the baby when needed by the song, but only then. The rest of the time, she seduces and coos, gives a class on the art of sultry emotions with the husky-smoky texture of that charmer-with-a-sting voice, yet makes you share the ache that her *Snakebite* life seems to dish out. It's a very subtle darkness, understated, even graceful and airy: "it's dark and dreary where you want to go, but I believe in Spring/You promised me, you promised me, you kissed me with a snakebite." On "Dutch Harbor," we're indeed on a foggy waterfront, watching the singer tell her sailor boy "if you make it back, who will you be," where the evocative atmosphere has you lurk near Eleni and her troubles, wanting to help, but what can you do? Not much, only listen to Kurt Weill-ish spooky jazzy accents, the return of PJ Harvey's secret sister, and the twisted psyche of her mentor/admirer Tom Waits himself? A dollop of country twang in LA-LA land, soft and slow bluesy laments, a fiddle just escaped from some High Plains saloon. The voice spirals around a gently strummed guitar, an harmonium, maybe, or some odd lap-steel guitar, I couldn't tell. Too much smoke in the room of my mind, I could barely see the stage; yet on "Madhouse" I kept expecting the TV Eye Live Iggy to grab Eleni's hand, moaning "we're night-clubbing, we're crawling through town." Yep, a pretty girl writing songs of heartbreak and menace who could hold her own with the Ig on a decadent night of debauchery.
—Michel Polizzi

The Melvins - Hostile Ambient Takeover
(Ipecac)

Last week I got e-mail from the publicist that's handling this CD asking me if I was gonna assign it out for review, and I'm gonna tell you the same thing I told her: "No, I've never had the heart to assign out a Melvins record. I don't pay our writers, and that's just beyond the call of duty. If anyone reviews it, it'll have to be me." I still feel bad about the time I gave Reb that Flying Lutenbachers CD. Anyway, I think it's fair to say that over the years the Melvins have more than tested the musical boundaries of "punk rock" and really, some of their records have tested the boundaries of what is music and what is some sort of conceptual art that I don't think I'll ever get, masked in some noise. But this is actually more of a "record" record. The songs on this disc are recognizable as such and contain wacky stuff like melody and structure. Kooky! That's so them though, to zig when we expect them to zag. Of course,

the last track is 15 minutes and 51 seconds long; of which about 10 minutes is some weird electronic shit that morphs into some kinda Pink-Floyd-meets-Hawkwind-esque jam, so don't get too worried. At least they didn't resort to the Leif Garret gimmick again. That guy is fucked up.
—Leslie

The Mooney Suzuki - Electric Sweat
(Gammon)

One good friend of mine took a look at the cover of *Electric Sweat* and was all, "Pff! They're just ripping off FOGHAT." Then I put it on and he's all, "Can I borrow this?" Big, fat, late-'60s/early-'70s rock? Hello. Nice to hear from you again. The Mooney Suzuki know how to bust it out. If they have a flaw, it's that they worship an aesthetic too wholly, without trying to add anything original to their music. I can dig their sound (man), but you have to wonder: If rock really was perfected in 1975, why the fuck would you do anything different than what they did then? Conversely, if rock was perfected in 1975, why the fuck wouldn't you try to break the frontiers and make something even better? The Mooney Suzuki are stuck asking the first question. They pose it well. I only hope they progress to the second without chucking it all and hanging up their pomade and leather jackets to become an alt-country or something else equally as trendy as the mod thing is now.
—Alex Richmond

Scott Morgan - Medium Rare
(1970-2000)
(Real O Mind)

Thirteen tracks from an important, yet often overlooked member of the Detroit/Ann Arbor music scene of the '60s and '70s, Scott Morgan. Morgan was lead singer and guitarist for the seminal Michigan rock band the Rationals and lead singer (for Fred Smith's post-MC5 group) Sonic's Rendezvous Band, plus led his own bands like Scott's Pirates and the Scott Morgan Band. This scrapbook of tracks from 1970-2000 is an ideal introductory sampler for those not familiar with his work. The three Rationals tracks from 1991 sound like they could have been plucked right from 1968, keeping perfectly in line with their original Top 40 radio-friendly sound. There's a broad range of tracks from the late '70s, mid-'80s and late '90s, with the two most powerful songs on the disc, "Free Rock" (from 1999) and "Satisfier," (from 2000) pointing directly to the sound of Morgan's new band, Powertrane.
—Larry

Mystery Addicts - Unluck and Shame
(s/r)

These addicts are mining a rich vein, at least as far as I'm concerned. They're doing that trash/glam/punk thang that was invented by the Dolls in the '70s, honed by Hanoi Rocks in the '80s, then nurtured by D-Gen in the '90s. Today the torch has been passed to bands like American

Heartbreak, Black Halos, and Motor City bad boys the Trash Brats. Equal parts spit and polish, the Mystery Addicts start fast with "Flash N' Bruise" and never take their foot off the gas throughout all 12 cuts on this finely crafted effort. The Addicts hail from Dayton, Ohio and consist of Jamy Holliday on guitar and vocals, Steven Gullet also on guitar and vocals, Bryan Labonte on drums and Tod Weidner on bass. These four buckeyes perform their respective duties capably and in a no-bullshit manner from the get-go. I dug *Unluck and Shame* more with each play, so I guess it's a logical conclusion that these Addicts are also highly addictive. Songs like "Faster Disaster," "Dead Glamorous" and "Never Gonna Live Forever" have more hooks than a prosthetic limb factory. The guitars churn, the vocals snarl, and the bass and drums provide beat that keeps these tattooed glam boys in gear throughout the festivities. Tight trousers, mascara, and Aquanet are the du rigeur uniform for acts like this and it fits these lads like a glove. I don't feel unlucky owning this killer slab nor do I know any shame in recommending it to anyone who enjoys this kind of music. I know I do and if you've got any thing between the ears or in your pants you will too. **PLAY IT LOUD AND OFTEN.**
—Paul Bearer

Mz. Pakman - Oh Shit, It's Mz. Pakman!
(Skankville Records)

"Oh Shit!" is an understatement! More like "Holy fuckin' hell, this rawks!" I mean, what can I say, Mz. Pakman is like a smorgasbord of what I dig: hot rockin' girls, B-movies, underground comix, trash culture, video games. (I'll take on all challengers to beat my high score on Ms. Pac-Man on my still functioning Atari 7800) and remedial rock 'n' roll. You won't hear any frilly Lilith Fair acoustic ditties or any faux riot grrl noisey nonsense from these four go-go garage girls. What you will hear is an album's worth of relentless, raucous raunch rawk influenced by the Ramones, The Raunchettes, Butthole Surfers and The Cramps. Songs like "Rock and Roll Rat," "New Boy," "XxXy" and "Gimme Something Good" are minimalistic masterpieces of high energy, sultry sleaze recorded in a room with the acoustics of a garbage can. Or take a song like "Psycho Kitty," where it sounds like the singer is gonna hack up a furball while delivering her snotty feline vocals. And then there's the surly surf stomp of "Skankville." And even though I took three years of Spanish in high school, I can't figure out what the hell these girls are screaming about on the sung-in-Spanish, "Oh! No!" They even cover "Man-eaters" from the Herschell Gordon Lewis drive-in B-movie biker flick *She Devils On Wheels!* This record is everything that is RIGHT about rock 'n' roll: it's fun, loud, crude and spilling over with attitude.
—Peter Santa Maria

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NEBI - Revo EP
(Growly Girls)

UGH! Rack this CD up to the 'ol group-of-college-kids-with-too-much-time-and-money-on-their-hands-who-decide-to-start-a-band syndrome. This is more of that post-hardcore sound Fugazi made famous and a gazillion bands have tried to copy... er, excuse me, have been "influenced" by. This is boring, bland, dissonant, angst-ridden music where the drums bleed into all the other tracks and the vocals sound like they were recorded on a Mr. Microphone through one of those cheesy DOD Grunge effects pedals, so you can't distinguish a damn word the singer is yelling/screaming/shouting/"singing." The only interesting thing about this band is that they have a violin player, but much like a Ska band with a horn section, they use it all wrong and in all the wrong places. Not that it would matter, because you wouldn't be able to actually hear the soothing sounds of the violin over the singer's tortured soul lyrical stylings. I dunno, maybe I'm just not cultured enough to get into this. I consider myself a pretty open-minded guy, but NEBI doesn't offer me anything new and they entirely miss the mark for the "sound" they are trying to cop. But what the hell do I know?!
—Peter Santa Maria

Nebelnest - Nova Express
(Cuneiform)

There is a generic name for this kind of music, and it's a pejorative one in most circles: prog-rock. Too bad for anal-retentive types who need things labeled (by others, usually), then believe what they're told. Nebelnest is a fairly new band (1997, sez the bio), out of France of all places, adding new chapters to the progressive instrumental music book, with virtuosity, great imagination, a keen sense of instrumentation (a mellotron as a quasi-solo instrument, where in Fripp's name have you heard this recently?), and all the fear, anguish, and sense of awe implied in deep space travel. Sure, forefathers and ancestors can be seen, heard and waved at through the space-ship porthole: Crimson, Camel, Gong, Sensation's Fix, Djam Karet, Ozric Tentacles... yet, a strong sense of individuality pervades the whole thing. The mellotron/guitar interplay are just too juicy, too blissful, too sharp and intensely strange to be merely dismissed as "yet another prog band." Sure, things are borrowed, influences are felt and heard, but the mutant dissonance are truly their own. Head music it is, with a stupendous rhythm section sharing in the lead stuff, too. Round, fluid, warm bass tones, drums and percussives on a constant attack, both outstanding. It's so very oppressive and doombaden throughout, what with the eerie atmospherics and symphonic gloom, psychedelic improvisations, a bit of Zuehl and constant intensity. Superb production from Bob Drake (SUUs, A Thinking Plague). Mellotron and wah-wah guitar! In this day and age?? I still can't get over it! Thanks, boys!
—Michel Polizzi

Nobodys - Less Hits More Tits
(Hopeless)

I remember these guys from a split with The Beautys a couple years back. This CD has 20 (twenty!) short pop-punky songs. My fave is "You Is Ain't Into Rock & Roll." These guys have a great sense of humor, and appreciate the women of porn (who they thank for making life easier). I'd probably flip for them live at a bar, but I get bored listening to this style of music at home. That said, the CD got better for me as it played on.
—Downtown Dave

NOFX - 45 or 46 Songs That Weren't Good Enough To Go On Our Other Records
(Fat)

A possible winner in the "longest album title of the year" category, this double-disc set is kind of like a housecleaning for Fat Mike & Co. Spanning NOFX's entire career, from a leftover from 2002 ("Pimps & Hookers") all the way back to an unlisted track from their first demo in 1984, this album is simultaneously intriguing and annoying. Disc one's 22 tracks include covers of the Germs' "Forming," (featuring one of the best Darby Crash impressions ever) and the jazz standard "All Of Me," (which is stripped of its class here) along with tons of out of print songs, obscurities and collector scum rarities. There's a reason why a number of these songs were left off records, trust me. Disc two, on the other hand, might be—for my money—my favorite NOFX record since White Trash, Disc Heebies and a Bean. At least the first half. The first 13 songs were written, mixed and recorded in two days; no practice, no nothin'. The first time the band saw these songs was in the studio when Mike presented them, and the rawness shines through. The remaining 12 tracks maintain the irreverence every NOFX song has, but they don't have as much of the unbridled who-gives-a-fuck attitude as the first 13. NOFX wants to annoy—it says so in the liner notes—and they succeed in spades.
—Larry

Oblivion Seekers - High Noon
(Reptilicus)

Is there a section in your local record store entitled Imaginary Film Scores? Where to put the musical embodiment of the lonely drifter archetype with a shadowy past and a score to settle? It's songwriting from a completely fictitious cinematic perspective. I mean, the Oblivion Seekers aren't REALLY coming to you from some hiply run-down desert '50s motel, with the buzzing neon sign out front, drinking bourbon, chain smoking and trying to stay one step ahead of "John Law" or some such retro stylee hogwash. But sometimes you've just gotta play along. Try out your suspension of disbelief. The same way you did for X, (C'mon, were they THAT desperate? Or just good storytellers?), the Birthday Party, Botanica, or even that froggy voiced fraud Tom Waits (I still laugh when people refer to

him as "authentic"). All of which would be good compass points to see if the Oblivion Seekers would be your cup of tea. Uh, I meant rotgut. Just try listening to cuts like "Unwanted Love," "American Steel" or "Bring Me The Dead" on your morning drive to work without imagining yourself as a grizzled desperado, vengeful and spurned with a hip flask and an Eastwood squint. Even if all you've got handy is a travel mug and windshield glare. Go ahead, nobody's watching the movie in your head but you... and the Oblivion Seekers.
—Ben Brower

Oblivion Seekers - High Noon
(Reptilicus)

The actual review will begin after I make a point or two... words to live by... or, words to piss you off, or call your bluff perhaps—especially if you are a critic or reviewer. I'm supposed to blast this CD because the main song writer and singer (we both lived in Portland back in the day) thought my band was a joke 20 or so years ago when HE was in the position of influencing opinions. According to the rules as written in the rock n' roll ethics encyclopedia I'm supposed to rake 'em over the coals, right? Well, I'm gonna rise above that sort of thinking because I've criticized that sort of shit for years. Besides, they sent me a small jug of booze—cane liquor. I enjoy a good grudge more than probably most people but after 20 years I'd have to say Mark Sten of the Oblivion Seekers is probably cut of similar cloth to me, if for no other reason we've both been persistently cranking out music for over 20 years. If there's still a dispute, we can settle it with fists or busted off beer bottle necks some day; if I tried to deal with it here it would breach my integrity as a square shooter alkies record reviewer. On with the review. This CD sounds like a cross between Deadbolt and low-key Nick Cave material to me, although it's damned original and apes neither. If they ever film Jim Thompson's life story I'd nominate quite a few of the tracks here for the soundtrack. Sten is quite proficient at writing melancholy songs, a lost art for sure. This is the sort of music I'd hope a lot of generic psychobilly bands pounding away at the same old clichés would graduate to someday. But a damn lot of those folks are in the music game for short term tattoo and pussy hookups. By all indications Sten and company are making music for the "long haul" and definitely deserve the attention of discriminating, sophisticated music listeners.
—thee Whiskey Rebel

Original Sinners - s/t
(Nitro)

It happens every issue—I get down to one CD left in my pile, it's a good one and I can't come up with much to say about it. So... this issue's undeservingly lame review goes to Exene's new (ish?) I remember reading a review of one of their shows a while ago band, Original Sinners.

Overall, I'm sticking with my earlier assessment that this disc is really good. In a way they kind of remind me of X; but her incredibly distinctive voice reminds me of X, so that's a hard comparison to get away from. Like her previous recordings with that band, and most of her other recordings I've heard, there are a lot of different styles represented here (straight-up rock and roll, country, rockabilly, etc.) and the tempo of the record varies, which is nice. Her voice sounds amazing and the band is tight. What else is there to say really?
—Leslie

Pan-American - The River Made no Sound
(Kranky)

The title suggests a river at night and that is the lonely, detached tranquility suggested by the ambient electronica displayed on this, Mark Nelson's sparsest yet pulse-beat atmospheric music. Nelson is also a guitarist for Labradford but puts that instrument aside for a hyper-minimalist dub sound here. Just the bare essentials for an audio chill-out are all Pan-American needs on his palette to create the canvas that can serve as a backdrop to dreams.
—Tom "Tearaway" Schulte

Asie Payton - Just Do Me Right
(Fat Possum)

I knew when I saw this in my pile of review goodies that it was probably gonna be the best of the bunch. Why? When it comes to modern blues releases, Fat Possum rules the damn roost. When I used to work at Tower Records we literally wore out promo storeplay copies of releases by R.L. Burnside, Junior Kimbrough, T. Model Ford and several others. This Asie Payton disc is right up there with the rest. Nothing bores me more than blues-by-the-numbers. My wife would go on the warpath if I tried to play Eric Clapton or B.B. King in our home. Both of those guys have their talents I guess, but they sound to me like over-processed fast food tastes. The late Mr. Payton (he passed away in 1997) serves up a platter of musical home cookin' here. These tracks which were recorded in the '80s and '90s have been discovered since his death I'm told. This stuff is just too damned raw too funky and too honest for the kind of commercial blues festivals where you can take your kiddies to have their faces painted. It's perfect though for gatherings where you invite people that crave and appreciate a big hunk of BAR-B-Q wolfed down with ice cold beer from a cooler on a back porch, as opposed to gourmet wine and beef medallions at some snotty upper crust eatery. As far as I'm concerned the best country music, punk rock, roots rock, blues or what have you is sung by plain everyday people who don't wear tuxedos or drive new BMWs. They bellow out their music as opposed to having it mixed by technicians who smooth out every wrinkle or rough spot. I'm sad to say it's too late to see Asie Payton play in

this lifetime. Get this CD and then get your ass down to your local ribjoint, music hall or honkytonk the next time one of the Fat Possum artists we still have with us comes to your town.
—thee Whiskey Rebel

Pro-Pain - Shreds Of Dignity (Spitfire)

Has it really been a decade since the classic *Foul Taste Of Freedom* came out? Damn, I'm getting old. In 2002 we see the boys still pissed, cranking out aggressive tunes and thankfully not succumbing to any trends in today's music environment. Like all of their albums, there are always a couple of stand-out tracks, with the rest of the disc running together. The best tracks here include "Down For The Cause," "Walk Away," "No Way Out" (which has a cool pit riff) and the title track. There's also a goofy little ditty hidden at the very end of the disc that kicks in at about the seven-minute mark after "Kill Or Be Killed." Sound-wise, the production is kind of flat, the vocals could be more up front in the mix and, with several tracks clocking in at under 2:30, they could've been a little more generous; maybe give us a Crumbsuckers cover or something. Overall, *Shreds Of Dignity* is an aural attack full of short blasts that rip shit up like a nail bomb in a crowded playground.
—Todd Sciore

Polyplush Cats - The Amazing Polyplush Cats (s/r)

Polyplush Cats are a female-fronted trio that play very tame and tired metallic hard rock. This is the kind of band that tool of a music clerk working at the Guitar Center near you thinks "rocks hard, dude!" The music on this CD is very paint-by-numbers and the singer's voice is very annoying in that modern rock radio "YEEEEEEEEEEEEAAAAAH" sorta way, where the vocals comin' outta my stereo sound like the retarded bastard child of Jim Morrison and Marilyn Manson crooning and moaning with a big steamin' piece of shit stuck in their throat. Now, this was only a promo copy, but the sound on this CD is absolutely atrocious! The guitars are very buried in the mix and have that Peavey practice amp sound to them, the drummer is very daintily hittin' one of those high-pitched snare drums, and the bass has no growl or bite to it. Sorry, but these cats are more Meow Mix than claws and fangs.
—Peter Santa Maria

The Put-Downs - Wrong Side Of Texas (Mortville)

This Beaumont, TX trio led by ex-Motards guitarist/singer Paul J. delivers Texas-style garage punk. There's a subtle twang undercurrent running through most of the songs, kind of like a Supersuckers-on-steroids vibe or a trashier, stripped-down Nine Pound Hammer. Fifteen songs, all with tongue (and possibly chew) planted firmly in cheek; these guys are pretty funny at some

points but that doesn't detract from the rockin' one bit. *Hard* to pick out any faves here, as there are no real weak tracks on this disc, but the title track, "Black Heart," and "MSVR" are the ones I find myself coming back to. Definitely a keeper.
—Larry

The Ramonetures - Johnny Walk Don't Run Pauline (Blood Red)

I like an instrumental band with a gimmick and these guys have a really brilliant one. This disc is a follow-up to their wonderful self-titled debut from a few years ago. To sum up the concept in a sentence fragment: it was all Ramones covers played in the style of the Ventures. That was a really good record both in concept and form. I didn't know if they would ever make another record and whether or not it would be another record of Ramones covers or what but here they are. From the title I knew it couldn't be another batch of Ramones songs, since it's an obvious nod to another influential punk band from "the other" coast. Could it be? Yes it is—an album of X songs played a la the Ventures. With Billy Zoom and DJ Bonebreak, natch. And it's really, really good! Really. I think the key to this project/band on the whole is the fact that these guys are stellar musicians and clearly music lovers with a good sense of humor. My two favorite tracks are "Johnny Hit and Run Pauline" and "Los Angeles" but the whole CD is a rock & roll romp worthy of your attention. I can't wait to see what they come up with for the third record.
—Leslie

The Real Pills - Nine Long Years (Mortville)

Well, one look at the paisley pattern and the picture of the band decked out in Beatle boots on the cover and you know it ain't gonna be a political hardcore punk band or alternative country. After years of thought and study, I have a formula I use to judge retro '60s bands. I simply go by the "ballad" factor; hey... it applies in this case. This ain't no Peter and Gordon love song hogwash. These guys could be just the right band to back Jerry Roslie of the Sonics if he ever felt like coming out of retirement to reclaim the N.W. heavyweight rock and roll singer belt. The almost entirely original batch of songs blaze and rip in a manner that captures the spirit of early '60s Northwest frat-rock without rehashing all the classic songs like so many retro '60s bands of the past. On the negative side, even though I know this may sound picky, the cliché Kingsmen-inspired photo collage bit is getting awfully stale. If they shucked the Beatle boots and the "look," reviewers like me wouldn't have to classify them as a "retro" act. I offer this as good natured advice. I'll toss out the insert and keep the disc, it stands on it's own.
—Thee Whiskey Rebel

Rickshaw/Hateball - split CD (Beluga/Daredevil)

I'm gonna assume this CD is available to the public; it has a normal package and two label names/catalog numbers on the back but the disc is a CDr that someone obviously burned on their computer. Still plays fine; I have no problem with that, it's just kinda weird. I think I've heard Rickshaw before on a split with like-minded DC-based rockers Adam West. (Rickshaw are from the undisputed capitol of rock that sounds like this, Sweden.) They do actually sound a little like Adam West but the singer for Rickshaw sounds kinda like Udo at times (you know, the short dude from Accept) whereas Jake Starr sounds like Danzig. These seven tracks are really good though; catchy and melodic, yet ballsy and hard at the same time. The Hateball tracks didn't appeal to me quite as much. They weren't bad necessarily, they were just missing something in comparison to Rickshaw. Maybe I would have liked them better if they'd been first, I don't know.
—Honey West

The Rippers - No Mort (s/t)

My review copy is a CD but I'm told the LP is a pressing of 150 with each cover being painted with cow's blood. Meat eaters or animal rights nuts? I don't know, I don't speak Spanish. The music is Marshall-driven kickass punk rock that damn sure deserves to be heard on a more widespread level

than a gourmet vinyl pressing. Foreign language punk rock and hardcore recordings have a strategic advantage when it comes to getting a thumbs up review from me; if the lyrics are P.C. drivel it doesn't count against the band since I can't comprehend them anyway! They cover "I Wanna Be Your Dog" so I suspect this band is on the right side of the fence.
—thee Whiskey Rebel

Roadsaw - Rawk n' Roll (Lunasound)

These four self-proclaimed "American Longhairs" from Boston lay down 12 tracks of fuzzed-out, heavy, groove-laden Sabbath riffs on Rawk n' Roll. While the opening track, "Right on Through," has enough hooks to keep me humming for days, overall this CD didn't do a whole hell of a lot for me. It might for you, if you dig this kind of thing.
—Wendy Lee

Rocket From The Tombs - The Day The Earth Met The... (Smog Veil)

I will readily admit to being a mark for almost all things related to the Cleveland underground music scene from about 1974-79, in particular Rocket From The Tombs, along with its two most prominent spawns The Dead Boys and Pere Ubu (two of my all-time favorite bands). David Thomas, Peter Laughner, Craig Bell and Gene O' Connor (AKA Cheetah Chrome) came together in the right place at the right time

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and penned destined-to-be-classics like "Sonic Reducer," "Down In Flames," "Ain't It Fun," "Life Stinks," "30 Seconds Over Tokyo," "What Love Is," and "Final Solution" along with a handful of other songs, some of which are represented here. This CD collects tracks from a rehearsal in Feb. 1975, most of a live set from July '75 and three songs from a May '75 show. I don't know why I'm so bowled over by this stuff but I just fucking am. Songs I've never heard before, like "Seventeen" and "Frustration" leave me wanting to search for RFTT tapes floating around the internet. I cannot emphasize enough how important of a band RFTT was in relation to the history of punk, but this CD does a pretty damn good job of backing up my argument. —Larry

RonRuins - Big Shoes (MGC-Magaibutsu/Japan)
And another 'tour de force' from Ron Anderson! This time, he goes the trio route in a live recording done in one day, at the Penguin House in Tokyo, rather than recording different combos and 20 musicians on three continents over several years (as on *Anything Is Possible*). Of course, who needs a full orchestra when the mind-boggling Ruins duo is there for the rhythmic kabonk. Don't say 'drum & bass' lest you want to mislead your readers, instead speak of a 'bass & percussive avalanche', or 'hyperactive virtuoso rhythms'. That's what Tatsuya Yoshida (perc, keys and voice) and Hisashi Sasaki (bass and voice) provide. Anderson and his guitar and pocket trumpet (mostly guitar) to get all the sounds in the world sliced and cut and blurted and bled. Awe-inspiring speed and millimeter time changes, ferocious onward movement, guitar crunch and wails, keyboard slices and oozes, drum attacks drum attacks drum attacks... alternating with quasi-dreamy moments of trumpets and gibberish vocals, a churning blend of humor and improvisation, brutally and endlessly challenging, yet very appealing and managing a good deal of listener-friendly musicality. All this for over an hour of brilliance and ultra-inspired mayhem, putting chaos into form, channeling nonsense into revelation. Oh, and it rocks too! PS: Why "Big Shoes," you ask? It appears that Japanese girls (whom I love, adore, and worship) had a thing for said big shoes whilst it was fashionable in the year 2000 when Ron Anderson was in Japan. He must have liked what he saw, and who could blame him? Not I, that's for sure! Go here to have a look-see: http://www.ronanderson-molecules.com/girls_with_big_shoes.htm —Michel Polizzi

Vinnie Santino - That's Him Officer! (Pacific Force)
Larry interviewed Vinnie Santino, AKA Vinnie Spit, and his lovely partner Mistress Jacqueline a couple years ago and since then, he's sent us all of his musical out-

put. Just for the record that's been a lot of CDs and we've listened to every single one; he's a prolific fella and always has ideas cookin' for what's next. This project is a particularly interesting one to me because I love music like this. Namely, jazzy instro music; perfect for sipping cocktails to or dancing around the house in hot pants pretending you're in a Matt Helm movie. (Or if you really wanna get crazy, both at the same time.) Much like the Ramonettes, the key to this is the fact that these guys are damn serious about this music; they're not just playing around hoping to cash in on the retro revival trend. I don't really know anything about swing music but I think Royal Crown Revue has been playing music like this since before it was cool and Mr. Santino has had many a well-documented foray in this genre as well. The songs are expertly crafted and really could be themes from TV cop shows or movies. This disc will be the theme music to my next vacation. —Leslie

Selby Tigers - The Curse Of The... (Hopeless)
If I had to guess whether or not I would like this CD before I played it, I would guess I wouldn't. They look mod, and the problem with mod bands is they usually look a lot better than they sound. But this band actually looks cool and unusual AND boasts a cool, unusual sound to go with it. Swanky. You could actually dance to this record; herky-jerky dancing like the pony or something but I think that still counts. I don't really know how to best describe their sound. I like this quote on the press sheet (they attribute it to one of the guys in the Dillinger Four but who knows if he said it, press sheets lie): "You could say that it's like the most spastic garagey punk rock from beyond mixed with the sexy panache of new wave." You really could say that. I wish I had said it, it's so colorful, but I didn't. I know, that was pretty low—quoting from the press kit and all—but it's a lot better than the description I came up with; which is that they sound like an aggressive version of the B52's. I'm surprised that I like this disc, but I do. I guess I'm a little more open-minded than I thought. Good to know. —Honey West

Sex Sex Sex - Like Crows On The Slaughterhouse Fence (NDN)
Apparently this is the first US release for these Swedes, who've been together (and making records) in one form or another since 1986. That's a helluva long time to go with nothing out in the home of rock and roll, but by the same token it's better than par for the course considering most foreign rock—regardless of whether or not it's in English, which this is—never gets a fair shake in the States. Sex Sex Sex delivers straight up punkrocknroll with the always reliable two-guitar attack for that extra power. What really seems to separate these guys from so many

other Scandinavian bands making inroads here in the US is that they don't look back beyond 1977 for inspiration. They're probably all Stooges and MC5 fans (I think that may be a requirement if you're in a Swedish punk band) but for once those influences are not visible; it's more of a Dead Boys/Pleasure Fuckers vibe. Aside from this new album, there are bonus tracks a-plenty here taken from various Sex Sex Sex releases over the years, including covers of "Born To Lose," "Bermuda," and "(I Ain't Nothin' But A) Gorehound." So when do they get those visas cleared for a tour? —Larry

Shell - Shell Is Swell (Abaton)
Irritating, affected vocals, clumsy pretentious songs, and poor recording quality. Two kids with some recording gear and not much to say. It's all over the place in an aimlessly eclectic way, droning minor dirges, dripping with syrupy synth noise. Ugh. Ugh, ugh, ugh. The press materials supplied with the disc have the nerve to compare it to the "teen chick rock of the Donnas." I can't imagine anything more anti-Donna than this. This album does not rock. This is not to say a record is not good because it lacks rock but this record lacks spirit. Spirit is about something motivating the music beyond Shell is not swell. Shell is hell. —Eliot Duhan

The Sign Offs - s/t (Disaster)
A word of advice for any young upstart combos whose first baby step of a record graces my review pile: Take this self-satisfied, part-time hack music writer who thinks he's heard it all and wipe the smug dismissive grimace right offa my puss with the first song. The Sign Offs did it, why can't your shitty band? Okay, so the guitars owe a bit more to Kirk Hammett than Steve Jones. (What? So the kid took some guitar lessons, I wish more "punk" guitarists would!) And they've obviously incurred a wee bit o' mid-'90s Lookout pop punk damage before discovering the harsher, hard livin' tones of the Dead Boys/Candy Snatchers/Glucifer axis and revising their game plan accordingly. But revise they did, just in time to turn in a 75% scorcher of a debut album. Hey, it usually takes three or four albums to even get HALF the formula down. The Sign Offs are way ahead of the game. At the tender can't-drink-where-they-play age of 18 (if I am to believe the enclosed Disaster poop sheet) they are well on their way to owning that prime piece of real estate in the oft-spun short stack by the stereo. The entire album, even the lesser cuts, buzzes with youthful, bottled lightning energy that rarely manifests itself in ways those of us on this side of the generation gap can identify with. Proof positive that the young-'uns aren't all brain dead Bizkit buffoons. Which leads me to another piece of

advice for the loyal, greying C14 demographic: Lend the Sign Offs an ear. Just because you've probably got underwear older than these kids doesn't mean they can't sit at the grown-up's table. Hell, put out the good silverware! —Ben Brower

Sixsouth - A Hole Where The Heart Once Beat (Scooch Pooch)
Real happy title huh? Wow, this stuff is so Avail you can peep it right down to the guy that jumps around and fills in the extra vocals here and there. Songs about the neighborhood and the world and the pissed, angst, straight-up-side-yer-head bitch slap. The guitars are catchy and the vocals sound like they could break at anytime. This album has a very "join us, our scene" appeal, so your choice on liking or hating this band will depend on that. It's got some decent tunes on here, "Worksong Sabotage" and "20x20," make it feel good to play loud in the car to counter all the bass thumps these days. Big, intense tracks will fit in nice for your troubled life. Still, you've heard this before and despite all it's complaint and woe of falling down, nothing really unique stands out here. —Phil Ford

Skin Yard - Start At The Top (C/Z)
This is a collection of unreleased cuts, b-sides, and singles from '84 to '90. Note: this is before the Seattle bands took over the airwaves. There's traits of the Seattle sound; I would have rather seen this band get popular than have Pearl Jam saturate the airwaves. Jack Endino (in case you didn't know, he produced the huge Seattle grunge bands) plays a cool heavy sounding guitar. A lot of the reason this band's stuff stands the test of time is that the production is top notch. The singer (Daniel House, president of C/Z Records) is more of a crooner than most of the bands of that era. The press release, possibly written by Daniel, states they would have achieved more popularity if they hadn't been before their time. I would have to agree with that. In fact the previously unreleased cut, "Start at the Top," (from '89) should be played now on the rock stations that play regurgitated Pearl Jam. I recommend this for any Skin Yard fan or fan of Seattle grunge. —Maria Vee

Slaughter And The Dogs - Beware Of... (TKO)
My first reaction when I saw this disc was, 'Is this a joke?' Who'd a thunk it? I mean, the band had put out one really good record—which, although lumped in with punk, was really more of a last gasp of British Glam (as evidenced by their getting Mick Ronson to helm production)—split into fragments, put out a really shitty record (as Slaughter) and disappeared, presumably forever. I guess since some of the shittiest punk bands of all time have been resurrected in one lame form or another, Rossi and Barret

figured it was time to get their due, and low and behold, it's a pretty damn good record. Much like "Do It Doggy Style" what ya got here is just a solid rock album, though now sounding a little more late-'80s (a la Godfathers, or latter day Forgotten Rebels) than early '70s, the band is in fine form. Mick Rossi was always a great guitar player and Wayne Barrets voice has actually improved with age. Lyrics were never the band's strong point, and there is a little too much about whores/drugs/sex, but rock 'n' roll don't gotta be Shakespeare and there is a genuine sort of beautiful melancholy about most of the tunes. A duff Beatles cover, and redoing "I Wanna Be Your Dog" as "Hell In New York" detract from the album as a whole, but I now regret not catching them live. It's nice to see a band transform gracefully into older but still vital rockers, as opposed to lamely pretending they still have their youth. (Rolling Stones anyone?)
-Rick D.

Stepsister - Autopilot Stuck On Get Down!
(Smog Veil)
Stepsister is the best band I've heard from Cleveland in years. This 11-song CD hits hard and heavy on every track. Obviously schooled on all the right stuff, Stepsister draws on some of the best aspects of punk/metal from the past few decades, as well as the influence their hometown's underground musical heritage has no doubt had, and extracts a potent brew that does not let up from note one. On the CD only one guitar player is credited but two guitarists are in a number of the photos in the booklet, so I'm assuming there's either been some lineup changes or their lead singer is doing uncredited double duty on the fretboard. The point I'm getting at is that some of these tracks seem as if they're about to implode from their own weight (not in a stoner rock way, either); the band sounds much bigger than a four-piece. Prototypically Cleveland at its heart yet broad-minded enough that anyone who's down with the rock and roll should be able to get with this release.
-Larry

Simon Stokes - Honky
(Uppercut Records)
Several years ago, Jeff Clayton, Barry Hannibal, Mike Schuppe and I recorded, as a loving tribute, an entire CD of versions of Simon's songs from long ago. At first we only hoped we'd eventually be able to get a copy to Simon... if he was even still alive. For all we knew, he lived in the gutter or had changed his ways and was a preacher. We were happy to learn he was alive and well in Hollywood and had been enjoying a productive behind the scenes career since his flashy days in the early '70s performing with the Black Whip Thrill Band. We somehow managed to get Simon to meet us at the 1997 C.O.S. Supershow held at an ancient roadhouse in a cornfield outside of Lawrence, Kansas. We all

instantly loved Simon as a person. Imagine how goddamned happy we were to hear that Simon had this new CD coming out? He's hooked up with a good crew of musicians and singers including Wayne Kramer and Bruce Duff. The most amazing thing about this release is what has made Simon's work dating back to the '60s so special: his voice puts across the mood of the songs so well. Unlike a lot of artists from his generation, this ain't no batch of typical peace/love/tie dye bullshit songs here. Simon's songs often revolve about the dark and scary side of life. He's equally comfortable crooning in a spooky way or screaming when necessary. Even his love songs on this CD such as "Pissin' In The Wind," "No Confidence" and "From This Outlaw To You" are bittersweet. They seem to convey the same gut wrenching honesty you find in Bukowski's "Love Is A Dog From Hell" poems as opposed to run of the mill romance songs. Simon has penned some twisted numbers for this release that Shel Silverstein fans would really dig: "Johnny Gillette" and "Mystery," for instance. Sometimes I think he just likes to tinker with what's left of my mind with some of the cosmic questions he touches upon with songs like "Amazons and Coyotes," which is the amazing leadoff song. I think Simon's been to the top of the mountain and knows some dark realities that most of us just aren't ready to digest in one gulp. So, he feeds us truths one song at a time. Even though almost all of the songs are rock and roll oriented musically here, this disc is definitely also for folks who are into outlaw realist song writers on the country side of the fence such as Merle Haggard and David Allan Coe.
-Thee Whiskey Rebel

Thee STP - Supersinner
(Devil Doll)
I thought these guys broke up; but considering the newest material here is three live songs from March 2001, maybe they just took a break. Anyhow, Milan, Italy's hardest rocking glam/trash punkrocknrollers get their long-overdue American debut with this 28-song compilation that stretches all the way back to 1996. The first 11 tracks (and track 15) were released in 1998 as *The Super Sounds of Thee STP* on the Italian label Hung Over, but only a handful of copies made it Stateside, so they can be considered new to American ears. The second half of the record is an album's worth of tracks recorded in 1999 and produced by Sal Canzonieri (Electric Frankenstein). These 13 songs mark a departure for the band, from their earlier heavily Thunders influenced style to a more powerful, punkrocknroll sound—of course there are EF comparisons to be made now, but they'd be to the Scott Wilkins era EF of 1996. I always enjoy non-English speaking bands who choose to sing in English (because they know rock and roll works best in English), they don't mangle the language but they do have an

interesting take on it at times.
-Larry

Strapping Fieldhands - The Third Kingdom
(Omphalos)

The Strapping Fieldhands emerged from the musical black hole known as Philadelphia some time in the late '80s or early '90s (no one's really sure, there was a lot of drinking at the time) as a musical anomaly in a city of cover bands, glam metal clones and hardcore knuckleheads. They were perhaps one of the most inaccessible pop band ever, and they might not have even known it. Taking elements of British psychedelia, skiffle, imaginary folklore and lots of alcohol, the Fieldhands quickly gained national acclaim with their first CD, *Discus*, in 1994. By '97 they'd burned themselves out and threw in the towel, only to re-emerge two years later re-invigorated with new songs and new band members (one adding elements like bazouki and violin—don't scowl, it works). *The Third Kingdom* is more steeped in Brit psych than their previous efforts; so much so, in fact, that at points in time some of these songs could easily be mistaken for outtakes from either of the first two Pink Floyd albums. Some of it still retains the sea shanty quality some of their later material (in their first incarnation) had—which I never cared for. There's definitely a few "Nuggets"-like tracks that Cavestompers will like, but I'm still not sure if I'd recommend this

album to anyone but old Fieldhand fans or curious Pink Floyd fans looking for something new.
-Larry

The Streetwalkin' Cheetahs - Guitars, Guns & Gold
(Triple X)
The Cheetahs ooze old school rock 'n roll. From the Stooges-inspired name to the Thin Lizzy and MC5-influenced tunes, the band has released a handful of albums that've cemented their rep as one of the best in this fine nation. This baker's dozen of rarities, obscurities, and never-released tracks will only further that widely-held belief. Recorded anywhere and everywhere over the last six years, GG&G digs up such gems as "Generator" (a Wayne Kramer-produced track previously available on-line), covers of X ("Los Angeles") and Iron Maiden ("Sanctuary") classics, plus the title track, which takes its name from an Arizona pawn shop and would make a fine B-movie theme. But hang out long enough for "Carnival," the closing track written back when the band was just getting started and featured Breckin Meyer (brother of guitarist/singer Frank) on drums. One listen and you'll change your mind about Meyer's work as an actor in such vehicles as "Inside Schwartz" and *Josie and the Pussycats*. I think you'll agree that as drummer's go, he's a fine actor.
-Danté



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Sunn - Flight Of The Behemoth (Southern Lord)
This kind of "music," and I use the term loosely, is pure shit. Maybe I'm the douche bag but I like a verse and a chorus here and there. Imagine the slowest guitar parts off of Type-O-Negative's classic "Slow, Deep and Hard," downtuned and stretched out for 10 minutes sans the drumming, catchy riffs and Pete's tortured vocals and you get an idea of what this disc sounds like—especially track five which has some power. That was a long sentence and is probably grammatically incorrect but who cares? Overall, the disc just drones on and on and is the ultimate cure for insomnia. If you like Merzbow, Namanax and bands of that ilk, this may- 1) be up your alley and 2) be a sign you need some level of therapy. After listening to as much as I could stand of each track (precious time I'll never get back) I am left pondering... why would someone release this crap, who would buy it, would anyone want to see it live and how hard did our evil editor laugh when they assigned this to me for review? [Not that hard; but after reading the review, I laughed pretty damn hard.—ed.]
—Todd Sciore

Supersuckers - The Songs All Sound the Same (Hall of Records)
If you're a real Supersuckers fan, you either have this from way back in the day, or you never got it and are doing a pee-pee dance because finally, FINALLY, the Supersuckers first record has been re-released! Oh, joy. Now will RFTC only re-release *Hot Charity*? What's that? Oh right, the Supersuckers. Yeah, so it's songs recorded in 1990 as the roughest kind of demo after parting ways with their original singer, remastered and repackaged. Added only are some sweet bonus tracks, and a thoughtful intro penned by Eddie Spaghetti himself. Eddie's so modest, he didn't even think he "could" be the lead singer. And now look, he's such a huge fucking rock star, every time they play out there's like five guys that look exactly like him walking around like they own the place, enjoying getting mistaken for the man they paid to see. Even if you already own the original *The Songs All Sound the Same*, satisfy your inner record collector geek and get this version. The bonus tracks should justify the bucks. The very rare Madonna cover of "Burning Up"? Never stops being funny. The joy of hearing the oh-so-very-rough and noisy unpolished gems of songs you know and love? Priceless.
—Alex Richmond

Supersuckers & Electric Frankenstein - Splitsville vol. 1 (TMC)
No surprises here; I'd imagine both these bands are familiar names to our readers so I won't go into any band histories or anything. The four Supersuckers originals are good; not their best songs, but definitely not throw away tracks and they do rock. Can't

say the same for their cover of Frankenstein's "Teenage Shutdown." Personally, I think it's a major cop out. They are certainly capable of rocking, I've seen it with my own eyes, and they probably could have pulled out a good cover if they'd bothered but they took the kitsch highway instead and did it "country." Yawn. Every time I play the disc, I skip it—I think that pretty much says it all. The Electric Frankenstein originals are really good; I'm a mark for them though, I've liked pretty much everything I've heard by them. And of course they didn't pussy out when it came time to record their (assigned or chosen, I'm not sure) cover of the Supersuckers classic "She's My Bitch" because they don't fuck around like that. EF has two modes too: only with them it's fast and faster—not rock and country. Still, a disc with only one weak track is a good disc nonetheless so we'll be keeping this. But we will have to file it under Electric Frankenstein.
—Leslie

Teenage Fanclub & Jad Fair - Words Of Wisdom And Hope (Alternative Tentacles)
This record, this wonderful, wonderful record, contains—as the title promises—words of wisdom and hope. All is well! Love will conquer all! I wanted to hate this record, before I heard it. I wanted to write nasty things about this record. I wanted to be the critical salmon running upstream against the inevitable written love letters to Jad Fair and TFC but I fell short of the mark because this record is so very fine. Imagine the Velvet Underground rising from the grave, imagine Lou Reed's reeking corpse rising up from the ground [um, just for the record, Lou Reed isn't dead—ed.], writing 12 songs as good as the very best the VU ever cranked out, putting them down on tape lovingly and then letting Jonathan Richman sing them and then deciding he was either too sarcastic or too sappy, kicking his New England ass out of the studio and getting the dude from the best band in the world to sing the same words. That's what we've got here. Try and resist a line like "early in the morning, no chance of robot uprising." Try and resist "the writing's on the wall, not some kind of trash like your cousin wrote, good writing, good words." Maybe you think you can but when push comes to shove, you won't be able to. I dare you.
—Eliot Duhan

To Live And Shave In L.A. - The Wigmaker in Eighteenth Century Williamsburg (Menlo Park)
This album has been five years in the making, possibly more. TLASILA, or more specifically Tom Smith/OM Myth emerges from virtual seclusion (from the music biz) with his quasi-homebrewed masterpiece of unsettling proportions. Smith (vocals, treatments, etc...), along with Rat Bastard (bass) and Ben Wolcott (oscillators) comprise the root trio around which all this musical chaos revolves, with special

guests from Cock ESP, Scissor Girls, Lake of Dracula and The Flying Luttenbachers (to name but a few) aiding and abetting throughout. While most of the C14 readership will probably dismiss this as "that noise bullshit," anyone actually willing to take the time to listen to (and wrap your head around) the entire 115-minute, 27 song, 2CD set will more than likely to emerge from the experience with a very different opinion than they started with going in—or they'll be hating this stuff more than ever. A number of parallels can be drawn between Smith's recording techniques, composition structures and overall outlook on his music to those of Sun Ra. Essentially, it comes down to this: take everything you know about music and throw it into the nearest trash compactor, smelter or shredder, pick up what comes out and throw it back in again. Then take those remains and toss them into the musical equivalent of a food processor, strain, salt (liberally) and listen to the results. This is truly outsider music, destined for rejection from its inception but also destined for rediscovery 20 years down the line by a new generation of experimentalists looking to stretch the limits of music.
—Larry

Total Sound Group Action Committee - Party Platform...Our Schedule is Change (Estrus)
This is a dynamic, energetic garage rock combo featuring ace skronk engineer and guitarist Tim Kerr and rawk vocalist Mike Carroll. They form a smashing, effective core to this group, as they did in Poison 13. In their unrestrained aural assault they blast through a number of explosive originals and a fiery but still joyfully rollicking version of Small Faces' "Happy Boys Happy." Key on this track is the vigorous, pumping Hammond organ and as on many other tracks the group backing vocals and shrill whistle. This is sonic excitement.
—Tom "Tearaway" Schulte

v/a - Carolyn Mark And Her Room-Mates Present A Tribute To The Soundtrack Of Robert Altman's Nashville (Mint)
First of all, if you haven't seen or aren't familiar with Robert Altman's 1974/75 film, *Nashville*, a vicious/hilarious take on a fictional presidential candidacy, rent it and/or read about it. Then all of this will make a hell of a lot more sense. I never realized the apparent cult-like obsession that surrounds this film—at least in Vancouver, where all of this originated from a live show version of the movie (staged at a bar). As a concept this is great but in reality it's loving renditions of mediocre material by well-meaning musicians who can probably write better stuff. Mostly country-inspired—ain't it called *Nashville* for arbitrary reasons—sometimes a bit hokey/folky, all this really makes me want to do is watch the original flick again.
—Larry

v/a - Live from the Masque (Bacchus Archives)
A little bit of background first. The Masque was probably the first proper punk rock venue/rehearsal space in LA; at least it's the first one that ever gained any notoriety or had a "scene" develop around it/emerge from it. Some of the most influential and important bands to come out of LA were regulars at the Masque like The Germs, The Weirdos, The Zeros and The Bags (all of whom are represented here). There were also a slew of other bands like X, The Dils and The Controllers who, although they're not on this comp, played important roles in the emergence of the LA punk scene. What's kind of funny is that *Live from the Masque* really isn't from the Masque at all. All the tracks are live but they're from a two-night benefit to save the Masque held in February, 1978. Aside from the above-mentioned bands, we also get tracks from The Skulls, F-Word, The Alleycats, The Randoms and Black Randy. If you're a fan of this period of music or these bands, this CD is essential listening. If you're a casual fan it's still worth seeking out as a document of a brief but influential period of punk rock.
—Larry

v/a - Ramones Forever: An International Tribute (Radical)
Compilations are usually hit or miss and this one is no different—although I can appreciate the purpose behind it. The Ramones are certainly worthy of tribute and a portion of the proceeds from this release go to a fund set up in Joey's name (well, his real name, Jeff Hyman) at New York Hospital Cornell Medical Center. One thing is for sure, there is a diverse group of bands on this comp. from all over the world (another testament to their long-reaching influence) and one Ramones classic after another gets re-worked in almost every style imaginable here, and some that perhaps were better left in the imagining stage. Whether or not a Peruvian pop/techno version of "Beat On The Brat" is really the best way to pay tribute to such a great band is anyone's guess.
—Leslie

v/a - Rock-n-Roll Au Go-Go Vol.6 (Devil Doll)
Spanning the globe to bring you some of the finer punkrockandroll, Devil Doll's latest installment of their Rock-n-Roll Au Go-Go series plows ahead with four more bands unknown to most people but nonetheless deserving of some attention. 69 Charger, the Peepshows, Hellride and Musclicar get only two tracks each so there's no time for fuckin' around. The Peepshows go right for the Turbonegro jugular and pull it off with class and conviction; Hellride sound like first album era Hellacopters, and that's a very good thing; Musclicar hits the hot rod rock button dead-on and rides it all the way to the border, and 69 Charger take the slightly lower-fi

overdrive heavy "southern punk" route. Both Musclicar and 69 Charger stray a bit too much into Nashville Pussy-esque cloning but there's still good bang for the buck with this comp.
—Larry

Wipers - Box Set: Is This Real?/Youth Of America/Over The Edge (Zeno)

This triple-disc set represents the earliest work by one of the most influential Pacific Northwest bands since the Sonics, the Wipers. Greg Sage's powerful (not power) trio, despite lineup changes over the years, recorded some of the best punk/underground rock on the planet. Comprising their first three albums, plus 23 bonus tracks (spread out over the three discs), 6 of which were previously unreleased, this is the motherlode for Wipers fans. *Is This Real?*, the Wipers first LP (1980), has that great snarl so many bands had back then (and so few have now). It's the real deal, Brit-punk inspired but wired for US sensibilities. We get not only the 11-song album, restored to its originally intended tracking order, but 11 bonus tracks that include the first Wipers song ever recorded, "Born With A Curse," (from 1979) the 4-song "Alien Boy" EP (their second 7") and more. Disc two contains the six-song *Youth Of America* LP, which pissed people off because of its four-, six- and ten-minute songs in 1981, when under two minutes for a song was the norm. *YOA* has some of Sage's best early songs, with a Pere Ubu-like vibe running through the whole thing. Bonus tracks on this one include "Scared Stiff," which has a four-piece horn section (though they're processed to sound synthetic) and some alternate versions and outtakes. *Over The Edge*, originally released in 1983, contains "Romeo," the song that first brought the Wipers national attention through lots of college radio airplay. This album is perhaps the most accessible of the three (although *YOA* is my fave in the bunch), and with bonus tracks that include live material, outtakes, an alternate mix of "Romeo" with horns way up front, and an unreleased instrumental, it's another winner to round out the set. It's no real surprise all three of these discs still hold up well today—actually, I can appreciate and get a lot more out of all three of these albums now than when they first came out 20-plus years ago.
—Larry

The Woggles - Live At The Star Bar (Blood Red)

Professor Manfred Jones has long been acknowledged as THE "Mr. Showbusiness," always rocking the house and working the crowd 'til he's wrung the last drop of sweat out of them that he could. This can be a hard quality to put across on a studio recording, so now the discerning rock 'n' roll public can bring that magic Woggles touch to any party or drunken tear down the highway. Easily their best release since "The Zontar Sessions," this record is a smoker. The next time someone suckers you into attending some lame house party, throw this disc on the stereo and get things lit up proper.
—Rick D.

World of Tomorrow - III (Sweet Stuff Media)

World Of Tomorrow deals in group jazz improvisation by all members on drums, bass, trombone, sax, trumpet and a few more surprises. The group tends to present a gently cascading array of shifting rhythms and themes rather than any one member charging forward with a melody for the others to follow or

expand on. This gives a somewhat exotic feel to the music, suggesting distance and expanse, like desert nights. This is a live album featuring the group performing their extemporaneous compositions. These tracks became over modulated at times during the recording, but the point gets across that this a decent, shape shifting psychedelic space-jazz band.
—Tom "Tearaway" Schulte

X - Live at the Civic '79 (Dropkick)

Not to be confused with the similarly appellation Los Angeles quartet fronted by John Doe and Exene, this live disc is by the Aussie band that actually predated their U.S. counterparts, X; formed by ex-Rose Tattoo bassist Ian Rilen, who departed after penning their first hit, "Bad Boy For Love." Even though he saw chart success and notoriety looming, Rilen quit because he wanted to play music of a more stark and visceral nature. In its original incarnation, X literally deconstructed the traditional rock format to its barest and most brutal form. The original line-up consisted of Rilen, Steve Cafiero on drums, Ian Krahe on guitar, and vocalist Steve Lucas who possessed a set of pipes that sounded like he gargled with Drain-O and razorblades. Shortly before recording their over-looked classic first LP, *X-aspirations*, Krahe would die of a heroin OD forcing Lucas to take on guitar duties as well. *Live at the Civic '79* includes many songs from *Aspirations*, most notably "All over Now," "Lipstick," "I Don't Wanna Go Out," and the classic "Degenerate Boy." These cuts, as well as stripped down covers of "Not Fade Away" and Del Shannon's "Runaway," are all delivered in a style that can best be described as bludgeoning. The real treat on this album is the inclusion of never before released tracks like "Infamy," "I Didn't Wanna Do It," "That's Not Nice," and "Slash Ya Wrists." This live set was originally broadcast on Australian radio, so in addition to the bombastic performance of X at their primal prime, the sound quality is quite good to boot. In the past 24 years X has broken up and reformed several times. In 1983 they released a second studio LP, *At Home With You*, slightly more refined but no less intense. It remains 20 years later, a fine document of a truly awesome, tragically unheralded and under appreciated group. Since I believe all their other recorded output is out of print or impossible to find, *Live at the Civic '79* is a good way to acquaint yourself with this quasi-legendary rock juggernaut. Great music to down a pint or have a "root" to. Cheers!
—Paul Bearer

Zolof The Rock and Roll Destroyer - s/t (Wonka Vision/Break Even)

Nine well written, well played, well recorded fuzzy and jingly pop songs, each of which could be one of those songs from the summer of whenever that was. The song that defined that summer for you—the year you thought about getting a tattoo but got too drunk that night in Wildwood; the summer you spent all that time hanging around with that girl from Narberth and ended up moving in with her cousin in that rat hole in West Philly. Man, wasn't that a time! A great guitar riff graces the duet "Mr. Song." "The Ode to Madonna" makes it all make sense to me, and the album's last song's angular melody helps the story of the person each of us will never forget, come home sadly and sweetly and with brevity and wit. These songs have a strange dignity, presence and sincerity that much of the stuff which dribbles my way so sorely lacks. Rock on Zolof, rock on!
—Eliot Duhan

Bunny's Book Corner

by Bunny Fontaine

American Hardcore by Steven Blush (Feral House)

Let me get this part out of the way—I'm not a huge fan of hardcore. (According to author Steven Blush that would make sense, cause I'm a chick and there weren't a lot of women in the hardcore scene.) Actually, let me take that back—I do like some hardcore; I love Black Flag and Bad Brains. The first show I ever went to was the Dead Kennedys at Philly's Blue Horizon Ballroom; but at the time, I wasn't aware that any of them were hardcore bands. When I was introduced to what I will call punk music, when I was about 14, it was through a guy I was dating who was a college radio DJ (I know, in hindsight it's kinda icky to think about me in ninth grade dating a college junior but, hey, it happens) and I found out about everything at once—it was all interesting to me and it wasn't until much later that I learned about all the categorization. But what is seen as "stereotypical hardcore"—like the whole Minor Threat/straightedge thing—was/is just not my bag at all. So I wasn't sure that this book would hold my interest for very long, but after reading a couple very caustic but hilarious reviews (one in Hit List and the other I believe in Razorcake) I had to check it out. And I was fortunate that a freebie practically dropped right into my lap. How punk rock. Anyway, I must admit that not only did it hold my interest, I practically read the whole book in one sitting. It's actually a great, very entertaining read despite the fact that most of the complaints I read in the aforementioned reviews turned out to be accurate. The book is rife with mistakes both spelling-wise, grammar-wise and in at least one case, geographically (the relocation of Kensington, which is North of Center City Philadelphia, to South Philly) and filled with rumors/opinions that are portrayed as fact. On the other hand, that's pretty indicative of the scene in question so what's the problem? The format of the book lends itself to either being read as a whole or being the kind of thing you can pick up, open to any page and not feel like you're reading something out of context; which you're actually not, the text is culled from a series of interviews conducted by the author with band members and other people involved in the hardcore scene interspersed with his own commentary so the continuity is in the way the author chose to group things. Much like Get In The Van, this book taught me that men can be catty too. Among the meow moments: Mr. Blush refers to ex-Necros/Big Chief frontman Barry Hennsler as "chubby" (Awww, that's not nice! Husky would be more appropriate—and I always thought he was kinda cute.), and in another part of the book says the following about one of the most well-known men in "underground" music: "Photos of Henry in a gay porn mag launched one of the most frequently asked questions of the era: is Henry Rollins gay? The truth is, he just does a lot of 'gay' things like poetry and bodybuilding." Ouch! Anyway, I think the book is great. I'm sure some who were more closely involved with the hardcore scene than me might think otherwise but there's nothing stopping them from writing their own book. In fact, I think they should and if they wanna clear up one of Blush's biggest boo-boos, they should try using spell check; it's not that hard.

Tales of a Miscellaneous Man by J. Berk (Craphouse Press)

My initial thought when I looked at this was, "Should anyone have to pay \$10.95 for a cheaply reproduced book with plastic spiral binding and a really shitty cover?" But that's not really the writer's fault, the poor guy doesn't even have a nose in his author's photo (not a genetic defect just a bad reproduction job) so I'm making an effort not to hold that against him. Plus, it's not like I paid for it. After I read a good chunk of the book I decided maybe the format is fitting—and I don't mean that as an insult to the author, I mean that the writing contained here is very accessible and very zine-like. *Tales of a Miscellaneous Man* reminded me of a personal zine—perzine in hipster terminology—particularly the first and third chapters, which were also my two favorite pieces in the book. (The first is a story in a story that was half about a road trip and half about telling the story of the road trip in a bar, and the third is a semi-fictional tour diary type thing—the band here is called the Cock Foxes; author J. Berk, according to the back cover, was the singer for a band called the Penis Wolves.) So in the punk rock sense, the package kinda fits. To get back to my initial thought, I still don't think anyone should have to pay that much but since I'm going to pass this along to a friend, and in turn that person will probably do the same, a bunch of people will get to side-step that issue and still get to read the book.

Craphouse Press, PO Box 2691, Lancaster, PA 17608;

www.craphousepress.com

Feral House, PO Box 13067, Los Angeles, CA 90013;

www.feralhouse.com

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Vinyl Reviews

A Feast Of Snakes - 4 song 7"

(Dropkick)
Ah-ha - a band that may or may not be named after a book by one of my favorite authors, Harry Crews. There is pretty much zero info to be gleaned from the sleeve so it's anybody's guess. The cover depicts a snake wrapped around a bottle of hooch and that's fairly fitting with the swampy, almost lo-fi, garage blues contained on the record. There is some seriously fucked up guitar shit going on on their Samhain cover, a song called "In My Grip". Can't say I'm familiar with the original but I'm sure this version is far more interesting. Dropkick has always been a reliably butt kickin' label & this release does nothing to discredit that legacy.
-Leslie

American Suicide - "Goin' Out"/"Killer Stare" (Cruisin' High)

At first blush I thought these guys were kinda like the Fu Manchu of Pensacola (early Fu, before *Action Is Go*). Some people might call this stoner rock, but in Florida it might still be called by its original name: hard rock. And hard it is. The a-side is a lead guitar fest that goes heavy on the wah-wah, while the flip reminds me of a Radio Birdman extended jam—which brings the whole old school Detroit/Ann Arbor (read: MC5/Stooges) school of hard rock into play. Apparently American Suicide's been around for a while and this is their first record; it's long overdue.
-Larry

Columbian Neckties - Rejected #7 (High School Reject)

This is another in a series of releases on the High School Reject label where the bands offer up an original on the a-side and a cover of what I'm guessing is the owner of the label's favorite song, "Rejected At The High School Dance," on the flip. I wish I could remember the name of the band that did it originally but it totally escapes me at the moment. Anywho, the Columbian Neckties are one fine bunch of Danish rockers who have managed to impress me more with each release. Their original ("Tommy") is smokin' and the b-side is good too. A keeper.
-Leslie

Crimson Sweet - "So Electric"/"No Hot On Cold" (Slow Gold Zebra)

Bands from New York always seem to look so cool, don't you think? This trio is no exception. Of course the photo is on their press sheet (the sleeve is of the, shall we say, minimalist variety) so you'll have to take my word for it until they blow through your town with tight pants, black eyeliner and equipment in tow. Musically, I'd say they're a little naughty and a little nice, and not really easily describable, which is almost always a successful combo.
-Honey West

The Dickel Brothers - "Bill Mason"/"I'm Thinking Tonight Of My Blue Eyes" 7" (Extra Ball)

What's with all the review material from Portland this issue? Somebody's trying to mess with my head. Portland is so crammed full of hip scenesters I'm automatically suspicious of anything I get from there. The Dickel Brothers however serve a noble cause. It appears they are trying to rejuvenate interest in depression era country music in the trendy Rose City. Good luck guys! When you get frustrated c'mon down here to Austin where it was never forgotten in the first place. As for the record... it's solid. I'd like to see them live to make sure they don't talk in goofy "hey YEWALL!" mocking accents like certain other alleged country bands whose records are released by punk rock labels.
-Thee Whiskey Rebel

El Guapo Stuntteam - Year Of The Panther 12" LP (Sounds of Subterranea)

Wow, an actual full length vinyl record, cool. For a second I thought they might be an all instrumental combo but then I realized just that first song had no vocals. These guys are foreigners, Belgium to be more exact. Imagine that, a two guitar

punkrockandroll band from outside the US. A rarity. OK, sarcasm button off - there is nothing wrong with this record. Is it incredibly original? No. Does it sound like an amalgamation of a lot of other already well known bands? (Say Nashville Pussy, Turbonegro and Puffball, who are fairly similar as is, all mashed together?) Yes. Yes it sure as hell does. Even has a little requisite Southern twang on one track, which I'm thinking is totally fucking wrong for a band from Belgium to be attempting to pull off—but what do I know? Not the best thing I've ever heard, but certainly not the worst either.
-Leslie

Estee Louder - 4 song 7" (s/r)

Primitive garage punk from Columbus Ohio that is not completely without it's charms. The name is cute for starters, especially for a 3/4ths female band (female guitarist, bassist, drummer; male singer) I thought the fact that they chose the Dwarves to cover ("Drugstore") was interesting. And they don't do a bad job of it either, which was surprising cause the a-side was kinda mellow. I wasn't nuts about those songs I have to say. The Dwarves cover and the other song on the b-side, "Bob City," was more to my liking. The 7" didn't totally bowl me over but I'd give 'em another chance.
-Honey West

Fat Ass - Another Great Day In Shithole 7" EP (Diaphragm)

Four-song ass burner from these Fort Wayne, IN boys. Hard rock, punk rock, drunk rock... it's all the same if you know how to do it right, and Fat Ass does. It's a little predictable, but that's rock and roll; you probably like at least 10 songs that may all sound different to you but are based on the same chord progression. I hear bits of old Aerosmith here and there in this but the cheese factor remains relatively low.
-Larry

Gasolheads - Red Wine & White Russians 10" EP (Dead Beat)

Eight songs of punk-fuckin'-rawk from these four Frenchmen. High speed stuff, even when they slow it down it's to a Dead Boys pace, and that ain't slow. With song titles like "Hate's Better Than Rock 'n Roll" and "What's This Shit Called Home?" how are you gonna go wrong?
-Larry

Grafton - "Sumbitch"/"Fine, Good, Go" (Deadlleur)

Sumbitch shivers me all up and down like Mule around the *Wrung* album. Vocals aren't as gruff and there is a lot more of the stop, pause and sometimes change the direction, other times keep the rock going. The flip is more of the same. Tight and shiny shit man, gimme more.
-Phil Ford

The Hard Feelings - Anytime I Want 7" (Dropkick)

Big fat garage rock with a dirty sound. Yay! Very nice. Not too minimal, and just in-your-face enough. They bring it down and bring it up and it's pretty much flawless, yet rough. This is what vinyl was made for: to capture one song like a spider in a net and pin it down and present it to you in a pretty package. The b-side is a Flamin' Groovies cover, which sounds a little like Foghat crossed with ZZ Top, but more messed up. If this is what they sound like when they don't try very hard, maybe they should just lay right down in the studio next time, and roll around and get really sloppy.
-Alex Richmond

Hot Rod Honeys - Kill Me Now! LP (Demolition Derby)

This is the third full length from Croatia's loudest punks, the Hot Rod Honeys. They've been around since 1996 but I can't say I remember hearing them. Nevertheless, I dig 'em in a kitsch sort of way. Maybe kitsch is the wrong word. Nostalgia might be more appropriate. Punk rock seems to have retained much of its original vinegar and piss in continental Europe, while becoming increasingly watered down in the UK and the States, and the Hot Rod Honeys bring those glory days of '77 and '78 roaring back. Granted they crack me up as well, with their cover of "Attitude" (The Misfits), but for the most part it's pretty good.
-Larry

The Jewws - I Need Your Lovin' But I Don't Need You 7" EP

(Alien Snatch)

This Houston-based trio does the wham-bam, high energy '60s garage thing with more conviction than most. All three songs are hard driving, take no prisoners, stomp fests. The title song is the a-side, and it's just the thing for your next dance party, baby! But the real gem is the b-side pairing of the evil and sleazy "We Come Out At Night" and the high speed rave up of "Come On." I like this a lot, and I'd like to hear more of their stuff.
-Larry

Kung Fu Killers - "Burning Bush"/"Werewolves in Our Youth" (TKO)

I've been watching a lot of kung-fu movies lately so this fits in perfect for my Carl Douglas imitations. Government Issue sounding '80s punk with that Golden Harvest touch. If they would have only added more of their martial arts name to their sound I would get a bigger kick out of this, but it's still decent enough. Snide, rude, loud and pissed. Hikeeba!
-Phil Ford

Les Sexareenos - 3 song 7" EP (Corduroy)

Garage/frat rock sonic mayhem from Quebec. Ranks high on the ol' "are you sure this isn't a reissue from the '60s?" meter. The band looks like they're a bunch of Molson slurpin' old school wrestling fans, that's my best guess. No frigging wonder this was released in Australia where they appreciate REAL beer soaked rock and roll.
-Thee Whiskey Rebel

The Mighty Gordinis - Kiss My Wheels 12" LP (Demolition Derby)

Looking for a schizophrenic slab of vinyl? Pick up this oddball mix of Nomads-inspired Euro garage with a kickass lead track (the brilliantly titled and executed "My Baby Wants to Brainwash My Mind") that then darts all over the place. How 'bout some pseudo-instrumentals for imaginary B-movies ("Soul Samurai" or perhaps, "Theme from 'Cream Pie'")? A lil' Ramonesy mindrot ("Let's Party All Night") and swamp creep ("Huntsville")? Forget 'em all, 'cause you'll be dazed and amused when "Power Jet" rolls around and you get to hear the phrase "pussy juice" tossed out in broken Euro-English so creepy that you'll want to take a shower.
-Dante

The Monkey Power Trio - Future Past Present 7" (Pocahontas Swamp Machine)

Very raw. Hell, you can't get any more raw than a band that claims to meet once a year and improv everything right there when recording. Yup, it sure sounds like it. It turns out to be pretty good '60s/'70s garage stuff once you get through the fact that this is as off the cuff as you can get.
-Phil Ford

The Moo-Rat Fingers - Actung Duschbag 7" EP (Big Neck)

Four deranged Germans, hellbent on rocking your measly, puny world—and they mean it! This four song EP actually has the same two songs on both sides; only they sing 'em in German one side and in English on the flip. These guys are good, probably one of the better punk bands in Germany right now, but I would rather have four different songs.
-Larry

The Mystaken - "Don't Fuck Wiv Me"/"Hey Little Girl" (Corduroy)

Whats that, Leslie? You say "rather than review another instantly forgettable garage trio that went into the studio before they were ready..." What? The Mystaken... yes, they're cute girls... yes, can't play very well... Huh? No, it's NOT on Sympathy if you can believe that! Yeah, I was surprised too! But getting back to your original point: you'd like me to say a few words about albums I didn't get for review but bought this month and feel they deserve a mention? Well, it's highly unorthodox, but... Sinergy - *Suicide By My Side* CD: Blistering female fronted power metal that destroys all in it's path; The Hydromatics - *Powerglide* CD: Scott Morgan and Tony Slug back with another high energy classic; 60ft Dolls - *Joya Magica* CD (import): Follow up to awesome Geffen flop that got em' dropped stateside. As good as the Jam's *Sound Effects* album; TSAR - s/t CD: Stunner of a high gloss powerpop debut. On a

major, completely ignored. Rescue from the cut out bin now! What? Knock it off? Fine, but this was YOUR idea!

—Ben Brower

The Nads - Saigon hooker 7" EP
(Gearhead)

The Nads are kinda like a dirty Hanoi Rocks, or maybe the *Billion Dollar Babies*-era Alice Cooper band on punk rock steroids and a three-day bender. There's a poppy thing going on with the vocals that I'm not crazy about, but the band motors through these three songs like a well-oiled machine. Cheesy, yes. But it works for me.

—Larry

The Pinkz - "Something About You"/"Be Mine"
(Gearhead)

Looking at the cover it's not a huge leap to imagine this band would be a little like another certain four girl band you may have heard of. Considering Mike Lavella's apparent Donnas obsession - it makes sense. And after listening to it, I feel secure in my earlier assessment; The Pinkz could be compared to them or any of the bands they channel. Not really my kind of thing. I like it hard and heavy. But girl band geeks will just wet themselves over this.

—Honey West

Porch Ghouls - s/t 10"
(Orange)

Where to start? Well, it was recorded by Monsieur Jeffery Evans of 68 Comeback & Gibson Brothers fame so you kinda know where this is going. Distorted, fucked up, bluesy meanderings; mostly covers with one original. Not really a foot stompin' assortment but I bet this band can kick up some dust live. I also have the feeling my enjoyment of this 10" would increase exponentially with my level of alcohol intake. Based on your feelings about Mssr. Evans past projects, you know whether or not this kinda stuff is for you. I'll need a couple more spins, and maybe a shot, to make up my mind.

—Leslie

The Rat Hole Sheikh - Jag Mar Sa Illa 7" EP
(Subway Star)

Mike McCann's latest four song EP finds him singing in Swedish for the first time on record (and last, according to the note he wrote). Normally the Sheikh sticks to English, and it suits him and his music a lot better. From weird prog-folk to punk rock to old school Delta blues, McCann makes it all kinda sound like Captain Beefheart on an incredibly low budget and without the Magic Band.

—Larry

The Regrettes - Four Lovely Lasses from Austin 7" EP
(Tear It Up)

Garage rock 'n' pop served up with a healthy dose of Austin twang from these four Amazonian, curvaceous cuties. But don't think for a second that these women are just dress-up dolls for some male masturbation fantasy. NO WAY. The Regrettes can play their sweet asses off and got the rock 'n' roll chops to prove it. The only evidence you need of that is to listen to the four short blasts of pop perfect rock 'n' roll on this EP. Songs like "I'm Gonna Go" and "You Got What I Want" have more I-am-woman-hear-me-rock attitude than some misguided rant against men by Bikini Kill. Throw into the mix the cool girl pop of the Ronettes and the rhythm and blues and rockabilly backbeat equivalent of fellow Texans Buddy Holly and The Crickets' Jerry Allison and Joe B. Mauldin, and you'll know you are listening to some women who aren't just willing to stand there, look pretty and smile. Now my only question is, why aren't there any reel-in' and a rockin' chicks like The Regrettes here in Philly?!

—Peter Santa Maria

Sex Sex Sex - Rock The Deceased 7" EP
(Reanimator Records)

Swedish hardcore horror punk circa early to mid '80s?! INDEED! See, this is why I am so fortunate to get to write for a cool magazine. I get to hear bands I may never have been exposed to before. I'd never heard of Sex Sex Sex until I got this EP, and now I need everything by this band! Turns out they've been in the horror business since 1986, churning out loud and aggressive music fueled by satanic imagery, horror movies and comic books, alcohol, and of course, sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. There are four songs on this putrid pumpkin-col-

ored vinyl record, "Gateway To Hell," "Damn, I Need A Sixpack," "Maintain The Rage" and "Assface." all speed, gloom and doom, with just the slightest hint of a sinister smile lying underneath all the rock 'n' roll death and destruction schtick. So until the Shiftfits get one Mr. Glen Danzig back at the vocal mic, I'll be turning to Sex Sex Sex for my ghoulish rock fix.

—Peter Santa Maria

Shutdown 66 - Stateside Shutdown 7"
(Corduroy)

Contemporary '60s punk from Australia. Shutdown has a cleanly recorded very early Stones-ish sound. Singer Nicky just oozes personality with his vocals, which helps make these guys stand out from other bands of their ilk. This was recorded in San Diego with their "ultimate mentor" Mike Stax in the studio. I like that; I think every band should look up their mentors and take 'em to the studio for guidance. These are good boys I think. I'm hoisting a shot of Ezra Brooks to 'em right now...

—Thee Whiskey Rebel

Sick Dogs - Real End Of The Century Punk Rock 7" EP
(Ace of Spades)

Surfy, swampy garage punk rock from Milan, Italy. All three songs are in Italian so I have no idea what they're saying—but I like it. At least they're not butchering English. You don't need a translator to know the Sick Dogs rock. The first two songs sound like a Cramps demos bootleg and the third is an all-out, feedback blasting sonic assault that's more MC5-ish than anything else.

—Larry

Stepister & The Streetwalkin' Cheetahs - Keepin' It In The Family EP
(Smog Veil)

Two bands, two songs each. What's the connection? Um, I'm not really sure. Doesn't really matter I suppose. First up is Stepister, who are from Cleveland - also known as the land where they make rock and roll that Larry likes, and actually I like this band too. They rock and I like the way the band repeatedly uses the phrase "get down" as part of their oeuvre. Both of their songs are good and I noted many an invitation to get down so I was happy with that side. Next up, the Streetwalking Cheetahs, who are from LA. I have said it before so why not say it again, love 'em or hate 'em, they are well schooled in the rock; they know what they're doing and they do what they know. Their side is decidedly more west coast in the sense that there's a lot of peacocking going on both their songs. To put it another way—the Cheetahs have a lot of flash, Stepister are a little more visceral, and therefore a little more my style, but overall a fine slab o' wax.

—Leslie

The Sternsnake - Ray of Light 7" EP
(Dull City Records)

I've said it once and I'll say it again - what the FUCK is in the water over there in Norway?! GAWD DAMN, this is one helluva cool record! Funky punk meets Motor City mad garage rock and blues via Norway with a singer that sounds like that Saturday Night Live character Dieter, and a less teeth-impaired Shane MacGowan doing a very odd talk/sing vocal style. The lyrics are in phonetic English, and I just fuckin' LOVE when foreign bands do that! There is a lot of different stuff happenin' on this 5 song EP: you got funk guitar licks mixed with straight-ahead punk power chord crunch, a slightly out of tune harmonica and a VERY original and distinct singer, all adding up to some ragin' rock 'n' roll. And to take it on home, they do an excellent amped-up version of Willie Dixon's "Hidden Charms" to end this fine EP.

—Peter Santa Maria

Teenage Rejects - Teen Trash Series Vol.2 7" EP
(Alien Snatch)

Wisconsin. Land of all things dairy, particularly cheese and Rev. Norb, who designed the sleeve for this six-song 7". Fans of Angry Samoans—particularly their older, faster stuff—will like this; fans of Boris the Sprinkler and the Meatmen will probably like this but not as much. The Teenage Rejects do more as a trio than most four-piece units can, and they do it at about 100 mph.

—Larry

v/a - Surprise Package Volume 4 7"
(Flying Bomb Records)

Ah, Christmas. A time when everyone is spending quality time with their happy families and breakin' their banks at the mall... uh, I mean, celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. Well, Bah Humbug to all that jazz! The older I get, the more annoying and unbearable the holiday get. The only good thing about them for me is goin' to my parent's Italian household for the Dinner of the Seven Fishes. Now that's some good eats, Jack! But oddly enough, even with my distaste for Christmas, here I am listening to a Christmas-themed 7-inch EP in the middle of summertime. But what an EP this is! This ain't no Bing Crosby Christmas, that's for sure! Three bands - Von Bondies, Mistreaters and Soledad Brothers - spilling out from some dirty and dingy Detroit garage, each with their own twisted take on Christmas cheer. Von Bondies "Ain't No Chimney In the Big House" is a totally trashy treat, with Three Headcoates-like vocals during the verses and then a loud group chorus of "I'M IN JAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAIIII! And they threw away the key!". Mistreaters kick out a two minute sonic screamer, "Santa Stole My Baby", and Soledad Brothers finish off this plate 'o wax with their white-boy duo delta blues, "Hang My Star". So next year when the holiday come around, the rest of you grinchers out there would be advised to throw something like this onto your turntable to drown out those tone deaf Christmas carolers outside your door.

—Peter Santa Maria

Victim's Family/Fleshies - split 7"
(Alternative Tentacles)

VF, the Van Halen of punk rock (Ralph Spite has probably heard that before) kicks off the kicking split. Sounds way different than they did, say back in '95, but shit, these guys are always reinventing their sound. This goes along the Saturn's Flea Collar route and is, of course, great. You know 'em, you love 'em, you're glad their back together again, well, have assumed their original moniker anyway. Fleshies have that Balls Ass Directional (B.A.D.—ha ha) approach, punk rock biker boom with the yell from hell. One of the cooler bands to come out in the last year, their full length rocks. Good thing about this single is these songs aren't on either album from either band, so all your pals poo-pooing vinyl will miss out till they comp. it on a various artists CD in a year.

—Phil Ford

Wildbunch - Danger! High Voltage 7"
(Flying Bomb)

The funky, raunchy groove of the title track sounds very similar to one of Rocky Horror Picture Show's best songs, "Sweet Transvestite." It's hot. This similarity in sound, along with the fat, booming production work of Jim "Bantam Rooster GOOD" Diamond, prompts me to hold this 7-inch in very high esteem. And then you flip it over, and it just gets better. "Neurocameraman" sounds a lot like the Stooges, except for the groove-busting farts of the keyboards, which are kind of funny and only used for light effect. The third song, "She's Guatemala," has the thick, fuzzed out riffs I love in my rock, stoner or otherwise. Yeow! Come on! Get up! Et cetera. I'd love to see this band live, so I could see the singer enunciate and gyrate like I know he can.

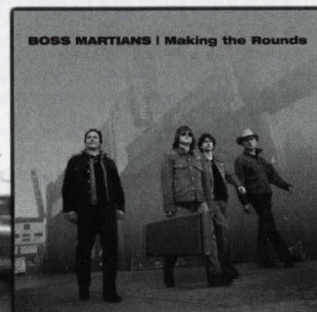
—Alex Richmond

The Wildebeasts - 3 song 7"
(Smart Guy)

By this point, you are either on the Billy Childish/Headcoats tip or you just think it's music BNFN (By Nerds For Nerds). They could make a line of those stupid Sherlock Holmes hats Billy's so fond of wearing. Oh man, do I even have to tell you what this sounds like? Okay, Chuck Berry cover. As unnecessary as it sounds. The man has a burger named after him at the Hard Rock Cafe, I think it's time to give up the ghost. Hamburg era Beatles cover band. Bobbysoxers n' Be-Bop-A Lula. Don't make me flip it. How creepy and cultish are garage and rock-a-billy bands/fans? At least the guys who reenact civil war battles take their "period garb" off at the end of the day. Hey, badly recorded 12-bar blues! You fuckers are MY AGE! Hey Fonzie, I know you listened to metal in high school! I think we're done here. Do not collect \$200.00 and go directly to Cavestomp.

—Ben Brower

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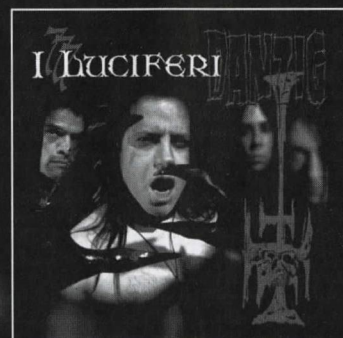
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Sleazegrinder, cont'd. from page 15

In *Faces of Death* the camera just happened to be there.

Did you read that book by that Israeli journalist, Yaron Svoray, *Gods of Death*? What did you think of it?

I did, yeah. I thought, this is complete fabrication. It got to the point where he brought Robert DeNiro into it! I thought, if it is fabrication, he's treading a fine line. Because what's stopping DeNiro from suing? So I think there's a thread of truth in it, but I think he completely distorted it. It was an interesting book, but in the end, I didn't swallow it. The beginning of the book looks like it was written as a thriller, and he just decided to monopolize the snuff aspect.

Has Headpress always been financially successful?

It's always been financially successful to the point where it's generated enough money to print the next one. In the early years, that was basically it, we were holding on by the skin of our teeth. Now, it's doing much better, and we can afford to do books as well. We've just struck a deal with Consortium over in the States, so you'll be able to find Headpress in Barnes and Noble, and stuff like that.

What's your criteria for releasing books?

What do you have on the horizon?

The next book we've got coming out is a collection of rock journalism by Andy Darlington called *I Was Elvis's Bastard Love Child*. He's interviewed everyone over the years, from Robert Plant to Can; Kraftwerk, Siouxsie and the Banshees. It's a great collection of interviews. After that, we've got a book by a German guy, who went traveling around the world with a bunch of films like GG Allin's *Hated*, and he went to Moscow with these subversive films. It's a book about his travels, across the US, North Korea, all over. It's a lively schedule we've got coming up.

Things have changed a lot in this country since the late '80s, early '90s, when people like Nick Zedd and Joe Coleman were being celebrated for works of transgression and subversion. Today, those kinds of ideas are merely flash, another advertising conceit. I wonder if you've seen this on your side of the world, and has it changed how you approach the magazine?

You know, I've always thought that Headpress sort of operated outside of that sphere. I mean, we get labeled a transgressive publication, but that label is just there because people like to apply labels on things. We've certainly never gone out of our way to interview Nick Zedd and Richard Kern over and over again, which seems to be one of the failures of so-called transgressive publications. You know, I find more mundane things interesting.

Everyday things, little twists of life. That's what interests me. I mean, I do touch on those other subjects, but those are the things that keep me going.

Like that guy you featured, the Super-8 filmmaker from Germany who only shot himself in his films, and they were all based on Beatles songs.

Oh yes, what was that guy's name? Heino? I forget, but I know who you mean. He's still active, you know.

Really? It was such a strange story.

Yeah, he goes on tour now, he's got a manager and everything.

Why didn't he ever have anyone else in his movies? Did he not have any friends?

I just think that he's seriously ill. But I'm not saying that to belittle him, I just think he has mental problems. He's actually got a band now to back him, because before he was just singing over Beatles records.

Yeah, seemingly ordinary things would seem more sinister by appearing in the magazine. Like the guy that did the public toilet reports—it just seems really creepy and weird, this guy hanging around public restrooms and reporting on whether they had enough toilet paper.

The weird coda to that story is that that guy disappeared. The last public bathroom piece he did I haven't actually gotten around to printing yet. But this guy, he actually started to bring a

camera with him, photographing these bathrooms, getting chased out and going back in again, so then he disappears. I haven't spoken to him in God knows how many years.

Well, that's one of the things about hanging around in public bathrooms, it becomes a dangerous hobby. Have there been any subjects that you thought were just too distasteful or extreme, that you didn't want to publish? Nothing springs to mind. I mean, I've turned things down for obvious reasons, like they weren't suitable for the magazine. But the good thing is that I'm willing to work with people. A lot of people will write to me and say, 'I've got this great story to tell, but I'm not a writer,' and that's great, I'll help them out with that. They seem to be OK with that, and the story is there. At the end of the day, that's what I'm interested in anyway. I'd rather see somebody writing about something which was novel, then some fantastic writer writing about the same old crap.

Looking back, what are some of your favorite things that have appeared in the magazine?

Well, I'll take the easy way out on that one, and say that the best things for me were tracking people down after years of being fans of their work. Like the guy that made *Last House on Dead End Street*, Roger Watkins. I got to interview him. That film was a big influence on me when I was younger, and it was great to get to talk to him about it. That's going to be in the issue after next. So, I'm achieving my personal goals, and that's what appeals to me most personally.

How was it talking to Roger?

He was very literate, very cool.

Did he have any idea that his film had become so notorious over the years?

He had no idea. For 30 years, he had no idea, until his partner decided to type *Last House on Dead End Street* into a search engine, and came up with all these people talking about it, in chat rooms and web pages. And from then on, he said 'I'm the guy that directed it,' and of course, nobody believed him. But it really was him.

It was such a mean spirited film.

It was, especially for the time. The film was actually made in 1972, which is much earlier than everyone believes anyway, and he said that the most recent stuff was cut out by the distributor. It started out with 20 minutes of slaughterhouse footage, because he just wanted to make a film where nobody would come away with a good feeling.

Well, I think he achieved that. You know, they don't really make exploitation films anymore, certainly not on that level. It's more relegated to zero budget, amateur productions.

What's interesting at the moment are these custom videos, like the Alternative Cinema crew, who make films to order and then release them. I recently interviewed the Factory 2000 guys—they make these kinds of fetish, erotica things, and of course, because of the people that are having them made, their fantasies are so acute. They don't find their fantasies in mainstream cinema, so they've got to be pretty weird anyway. But because they're so low budget, they're even weirder.

They want to see women getting strangled in the bathtub.

Exactly. And the line from the Factory 2000 guys is that they release these films to the public, so people can see just how bad it's gotten out there.

Is there anybody that you'd really like to interview that you haven't gotten to yet?

Like the ultimate interview? I don't really think in those terms. I'm sure there's lots of people, but these are people that interested me when I was growing up, and in a way I'm paying them back by hunting them down and interviewing them.

You can go to the Headpress website (www.headpress.com) for back issues and future projects. In one of their very few dips into the gutters of rock journalism, they'll be publishing Sleazegrinder's oft-threatened *Gigs From Hell* book sometime next year. Visit the Sleazegrinder on the web @ www.sleazegrinder.com

Confederate Mack, cont'd. from page 83

who looked like the bald guy from Mr. Show in a tie-dye, they put it together. It's sort of like the El Satánico thing, as Lesh drew off the energy of these younger guys, and they learned how to put it together in front of a shitload of people under one kind of influence or another. It's easy to be entertaining to a crowd full of substance abuse, but when you draw them in and toss them around, that's the special part. Phil Lesh & Friends did it in ways that only few have done in my life. There was Ric Flair vs. Dusty Rhodes in a No-DQ match when I was 12; there was my uncle drag racing his Vega station wagon into the finals in Roxboro, North Carolina one weekend with a pit crew of me; there was Metallica on the *And Justice For All* tour; and there was Phil & Friends. Those rare magical moments where you walk away going, goddamn, that was crazy.

#8: This hippie girl I met at an RFK Dead show in 1992. How random is that? I go to a show with a buddy of mine, we were gonna have to hitchhike up I-95 to DC. Along comes a friend of ours who had two open seats in the back of his Suzuki Samurai. We smoke the shit out of a one-hitter on the way up there, even taking the top off of the Samurai while driving 85 mph on the interstate. We get there and nobody has tickets. One guy in our group gets punched and buys a counterfeit ticket. Nobody else gets shit. We're all standing there, when somebody rolls up and hands me a ticket. Grateful Dead subculture calls that a Miracle. I called it not having to sit around in the parking lot for four hours. I go in, and immediately stake a spot in the upper tier, as usual. Two beautiful hippie chicks, probably 15 or 16, plop down beside me and we dance and we get high and we have fun. One of them I got personal with, you know, and we decided it might be cool to keep in touch after the show. I roll out, am wandering around all fucked-up looking for anybody who came up in the same vehicle as me, fully expecting to have to bum a ride back home with strangers. I look ahead and the guy who drove the Samurai is walking 20 feet in front of me, and he's got a quarter bag of mushrooms somebody just gave him. We split it, before we find anybody else in our party who might want some, and the day was good. I've kept in touch with that chick over the years, through weird postcards culled from junk stores and actual letters and everything. She's 24 now, engaged to some guy who does pottery for a living or some crap up in Pennsylvania. All this time, as I've gotten more screwed-up, more bad tattoos, more scars, and more horror stories from actual experience, she's sent me letters and cards. They all end with "let your light shine through your eyes." It's corny and simple, but it keeps me grounded for some reason. Maybe I just reminisce on feeling on her underage titties at RFK Stadium a decade ago. It keeps my head straight, at least a little straighter than it was before I get something with her handwriting on it at the post office. Let your light shine through your eyes. I don't always have to be a jaded, drunken asshole.

And that's the thing—shining eyes. Whether you call yourself a hippie or a punk or whatever or nothing at all, you know the situation. You can look somebody new right in their eyes and see where they're coming from. Most of the kids who call themselves hippies don't have any shine to their eyes, all they've got is blank expressions and a face with no scars.

So take it from a fuckin' hippie, let your light shine through your eyes. If you have a light. If you don't, then die. You're fucking up a good time for the rest of us.

contact the Confederate Mack c/o ravenl@confederatemack.com and visit www.confederatemack.com for more wit and witticism.

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Cherry Valence, cont'd. from page 11

Wendy: That's pretty good.

[laughter]

Cheetie: Not bad.

Wendy: For eight years old. I mean, I was listening to *Saturday Night Fever* then.

Cheetie: There's just certain records that make it there for some reason that nobody knows... that's about it.

Wendy: What do you guys listen to now in the van?

Nick: Uh, we listen to Motley Crue...

Brian: What else... Burning Spear...

Cheetie: Lots of stuff...

Brian: Sun Ra.

Wendy: Do any of you guys have that one certain tape that just annoys everyone else?

Brian: I don't bring 'em.

[laughter]

Nick: I probably do, but nobody's really said anything about it.

Brian: I have these things, they're called earplugs. I use them... a lot. Not just at the shows. You can sleep better with them...

Nick: Yeah, exactly. You sleep in a strange place, man, wear earplugs.

Wendy: You just gotta make sure that everyone doesn't get up and leave you.

Nick: We wouldn't do that.

Wendy: Have any of you guys ever puked on-stage?

Nick: I threw up after a show... once.

Brian: What show was that?

Nick: That time we played in Greensboro... that party. I was singing the songs and the last song we were doing, I couldn't really finish it because mid-line I'd be like (makes loud gagging noise, then swallows), no, (does it again), and finally I just went. We were playing, and there was a doorway right behind us that went into the kitchen, and I just went in there and threw up in this garbage can and fell on the ground, and they were still going, and then the song was over, and my saxophone was sittin' over there so I grabbed that, played that for a little while. Probably wasn't a good idea. Actually, I guess it was Paul's saxophone. But, uh, that was it.

Paul: Yeah, you got some throw-up on the saxophone.

Brian: We saw this band play, they were a country band. The bass player was this guy Carl Alvarez from All. They were playing country or whatever, and I guess because they were country they were gonna drink some whiskey, and the drummer, well they all took their shot, and they were like, 'We take this whiskey shot every show.' So the drummer took his one whiskey shot and threw up on-stage.

[laughter all around]

Jamie: Made a fool out of himself.

Wendy: That's the worst, when you have to play after them.

Cheetie: Oh God, yeah. You gotta avoid that spot.

Wendy: Yeah, do not stand here.

Nick: Yeah, we're not a very puke-friendly band.

All: No.

Nick: I'm not a very puke-friendly person. I don't really enjoy it very much.

Wendy: I remember reading this interview a long time ago with Sebastian Bach talking about how much he loved to puke.

[laughter]

Wendy: So how did you guys come up with the two-drum thing?

Brian: Well, first we had to figure out how to fit them all in the van. When we did that, then we were ready to go.

Wendy: After the other original members left the band, did you decide that you wanted to do that, or did it just kind of evolve?

Brian: No. There was this band called King Dick, in Raleigh...

Wendy: Not the Grateful Dead...

[laughter]

Nick: It had nothing to do with the Dead...

Brian: But, yeah, they had this drummer, and two people playing drums beside him, and we just kinda... took that lead.

Cheetie: Followed that idea.

Nick: Took it to the next level.

Wendy: Well, it totally works.

Cheetie: It started out just being an extra tom...

Nick: It was like, the hell with it, we've got two drummers in the band. Might as well.

Jamie: We like the way it sounds...

Paul: And, we figured out how to fit them all in the van!

Cheetie: Yeah, that's pretty amazing.

Wendy: And you guys don't even have a super-extended van or anything.

Nick: It's extended, but it's no longer than lots of people's. It's an Econoline 350.

Wendy: And then there's the two Marshall cabinets.

Cheetie: Well, mine's not a Marshall. But it's a 4x12. It's the same size.

Paul: Yeah, and the SVT. And the organ.

Wendy: And five people. Do you ever have a merch person with you?

Cheetie: Yeah, we do.

Paul: We used to always have somebody.

Jamie: We kinda got spoiled having only five people in the van now.

Cheetie: Last tour we did was just five of us. It was so roomy and comfortable.

Wendy: How many releases do you guys have out now?

Paul: Not many. A single and a record. We used to always make cassettes. We would have put together a cassette for this tour, we just didn't have time.

Brian: We had a couple CDs a long time ago.

Paul: You know, just like CDRs.

Wendy: That you did yourself?

Paul: Yeah, just because we had to have something to sell. Cassettes were more fun. I don't know why. Nobody has 'em any more, I guess. CDRs just seem so dumb.

Cheetie: You know, you make like 15 copies of one and you take it home and listen to it and it skips. That doesn't happen to a cassette.

Wendy: More trouble than it's worth.

All: Yeah.

Wendy: But you guys have something coming out on Estrus?

Nick: Yeah, we have a couple things.

Wendy: Do you guys have some kind of a deal with them, or is it just kind of one at a time?

Nick: Yeah...

Paul: He's great about that.

Cheetie: I don't think he ever does anything like that, it's always the good old-fashioned way. So we'll probably do an EP with somebody, and a single with somebody.

Jamie: This guy in North Dakota's putting out this record with us, Drunk Horse, Fireballs of Freedom, and Federation X, where we're each gonna like write the other bands' songs.

Wendy: That's cool! That should be interesting.

Paul: That should be fun.

Nick: Yeah, it's gonna take a while, I think.

Wendy: Who are you guys writing a song for?

Paul: We have to write three songs, one for each. So I guess it will be a full-length, like 12 songs.

Paul: Four times three, yeah. So we'll see how that goes. It's a great idea, we'll see if it happens.

Cheetie: Taking it one step further than people covering other people's songs.

Paul: His label's called Wantage.

Brian: He's a real nice guy, so we'll give him props!

For more info., tour dates, etc check out
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Iris Berry, cont'd. from page 63

Well, I woke up from the sleep of the dead and who's laying next to me but El Duce. I didn't know that we were in a horseshoe booth and that there was a pole between us. I thought I had ended up in Duce's bed. Well I saw his face so close to mine and started screaming! My screaming woke him up and he started screaming and from our screams everyone was able to find us in the dark club. When I realized there was a pole between us, and I wasn't in his bed, I stopped screaming.

Leaving Trains?

I love, love, love Falling James!

Gun Club?

Fire Of Love!!!

Amanda Jones?

Mandy and Jeff Drake were an amazing songwriting team.

Circus Of Power?

Great band.

Texas Terri?

I worship her!

Are you wise to whatever happened to Andy Priebay's script, White Trash Wins Lotto?

I know it went to Broadway. I hope it comes out as a film. I still haven't seen it.

Tell me more about David Lee Roth and Axl Rose.

Well, David was always around, he loved coming down to the Cathay De Grande and hanging out. He was part owner of most of the "Ol" clubs with Jimmy Pochna. He was really good friends with Top Jimmy. Dave was always around. As for Axl, he wasn't as available. I knew all the guys from Guns N Roses except for Axl. When I was in the Lame Flames, Duff married Mandy, so we were pretty inundated with the Guns N Roses experience.

Coping with the phoney corporate rock monopoly?

Stay free.

Any solutions?

I like what Courtney Love is doing, I'm behind her all the way. It's great to see her use her power well. Keep up the good fight, Courtney.

Ray Sharkey?

I had a crush on him, glad we never hooked up.

Border Radio?

We filmed my scenes in my bedroom at Disgraceland, I loved that room, a lot of things happened in that room! Watching it is such a time capsule for me. I loved being in that movie. Great soundtrack, amazing soundtrack!

Pleasant Gehman?

Like a sister.

White Trash Apocalypse?

Just how it sounds.

Ed "Big Daddy" Roth?

Great and important artist.

Brian Wilson?

Brilliant songwriter.

Papa John?

"All the leaves are brown and the sky is grey" is all it said on the Marquee at the Roxy the day after he died. I agree.

Dave Alvin?

Dave and I dated for almost a year around the time he left the Blasters to play in X. That was 1985. That was an incredible time. It was a crazy year I'll never forget. A lot of incredible and wonderful and tragic things happened that year. It didn't work out for us romantically—the odds were against us, but we're still really good friends. I have a lot of respect for Dave.

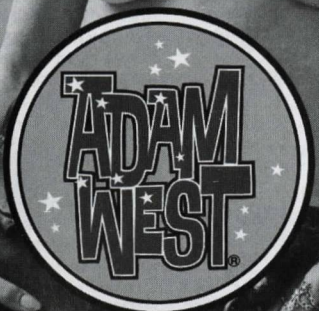
What about Peter Buck?

After Dave and I split up, I started seeing Peter. That was fun. He was a great guy. But I wasn't up for a long distance relationship. My father died in a horrible car crash while I was with Dave and the shock was too much. I really wanted someone who was gonna be around.

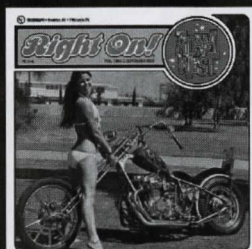
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raining down on them. How I stand behind the decisions of our president and how I don't appreciate him calling George W. an asshole. He then says maybe it's not a good idea that we discuss politics. I just smile at him. The Negatives are on next, and the crowd livens up. Our buddies the Ulm boys are here tonight again, and I get the first chance so far to really sit and talk to them uninterrupted. Skipski and I are looking at the stage during the change over... there is SO much damned smoke in this place that you can barely make out anything from where we are standing. Amazing. We go on. The crowd is really awake now. The set was a lot of fun... a fight broke out in the front of the stage, then some idiot tried to take the scrub board away from me... WHILE IT WAS ON FIRE... so he got a good elbow to the ribs for his trouble. After the show I'm standing in the back room near an open window, hacking up second-hand smoke for about 20 minutes. When I finally think I can walk across the room without puking up my schnitzel, I make my way back to the merch stand. Marcus and Coni are here tonight as well. It was a pretty damned good crowd... I'm not sure about the exact count but it was way better than we thought it was gonna be. Skipski is getting his picture taken with the football player sized security team in front of the club. Then he notices a cigarette machine that has a picture of the Twin Towers on it with two X's drawn in magic marker on each one. Jeff makes some kind of comment about how fucked that is and then some drunk punk acts like he's an airplane and runs head first into the machine laughing. He wouldn't have been laughing had we all been there. Jeff takes off after the little bitch but he's out the door and down the street in a flash. I wish he had opened up his own skull. As we go outside, I notice more black people than I have ever seen in Germany at one time... about five. The guys in the Negatives told me about the hotel we were staying at. Apparently this was a five star type joint. We get there and sho nuff it is! There's even pay porn channels on the tube! The government's paying for it, so what the hell! You can easily tell which room Joe and Doug are staying in; it's like a damned Cheech & Chong movie. Next morning, the other guests get a good look at the type of folks this hotel takes in—like us. The Negatives are all downstairs and look literally like death warmed over. I go into the dining room with a big patch over my forehead and my "Longhaired Weirdo" pants on. A lot of puzzled looks indeed. I can't say much about the Negative boys looking like corpses because I got a total of about one hour's sleep. I roomed with Stefan and Skipski last night and there was a symphony of snores going on all night.

MARCH 17th - MUNICH, GERMANY

We arrive at the Backstage in Munich. I'm looking forward to playing this huge stage, with the even more huge PA system. Then I find out we are playing the small room next door due to the club moving soon or something like that. Anyway, we are reunited with Born Bavarian

in their hometown. Lots of familiar faces at this one. Andy Bavarian's wife, Claudia, is here tonight and very pregnant! The Nerds (from Italy) are here to begin their tour in a few days (they'll meet up with us again in Holland). People are here from France; another group of about 5 or 6 people came from Italy. The club fills up pretty fast. BB take the stage and put on one of the best shows I've ever seen them do, period. The hometown crowd is eating them up. We go on after a very energetic BB set and have to turn the throttle up a few notches. The show is crazy. People diving off a stage that is barely high enough to do so. The low light rig is constantly catching people in the top of the head. I figure about 10 or 15 of 'em will be knocked unconscious before the set is over. After the show it's conversation and picture takin' like crazy. This extremely drunk couple keep insisting they want to come back into the dressing room to drink with us... Translation: they want to get back in the dressing room to the free beer and drink THAT with us. We get out of that invite somehow. Just then our eagle-eyed superior German road manager Stefan sees the couple steal the barbed wire axe handle and put it under their coat and head for the door. Stefan reaches out and before they even know what hit 'em, rips it out of their hands—ripping the skin off of the aforementioned hands in the process. They are not happy... so then they go visit Skipski. They are of course looking for the items that fall into the FREE price range. Skipski gets the girl to show her tits for a used sticker. I've had about all I can take of this freak show. Just then I'm stopped by my old pal at OX Magazine. He's explaining to me that attendance was down tonight due to our lyrics on the new album. I'm not in the mood to argue this tired shit again so I pretty much unload on the poor guy. I told him (not in so many words)—and I will tell you, dear reader (in exactly that many words)—that I, and we as a band, do NOT apologize for anything we have written, said or sang on the *Brutalsville* album. If you are one of these "fans" who got upset and decided we are not for you any longer... kiss our fuckin' fat, white, hairy asses. Klaus, the guitarist from Born Bavarian was in a very sad mood tonight due to the fact that the tour was officially over for them and it seems this was also their drummer's last show. Cheer up my friend, the future looks bright. I can't tell ya what the hotel was like in this town. I stayed at the home of Andy and Claudia. We sat in the kitchen listening to David Allan Coe and Hank Williams, Sr. while Claudia fixed us a traditional Bavarian feast of kraut, sausage, and pretzels. I'm getting homesick listening to the *Longhaired Redneck* album. Me and Andy brainstorm and swap ideas 'til the wee hours of the morning. When I finally wake, the boys are outside to pick me up. Seems I JUST missed a Stefan temper tantrum. You see our superior German road manager does not like getting lost. I guess no one really does, but Stefan—who is normally a very laid back individual—REALLY hates getting lost. This won't be the last time this happens... oh hell no.

To be continued...

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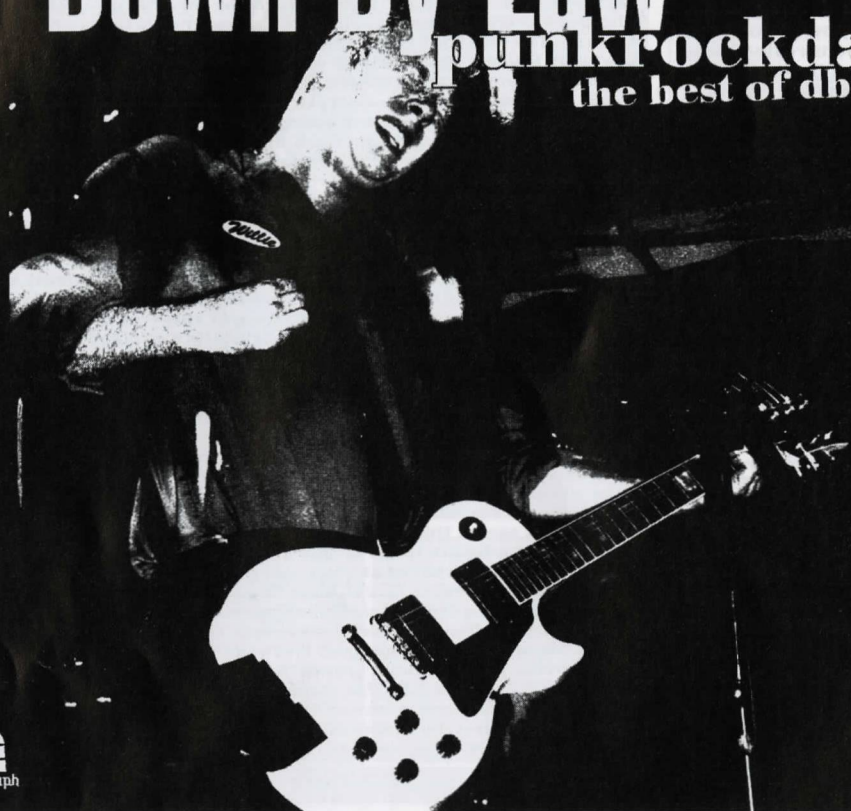
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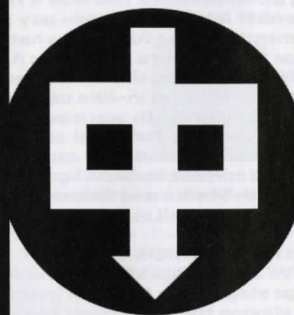
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We probably missed a few of you out there but in some cases there are no addresses provided with the materials we receive.

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PROFILES IN CONFUSION

Steven Blush was a New York City punk rock kid who moved to DC to attend George Washington University in 1981.

Expecting to find an equally large and vibrant punk scene in DC, Blush was quickly surprised to see the punk/hardcore scene was very small—yet intensely devoted. Soon after getting a slot on his college radio station, where he gave many of the DC bands of the day their first airplay, Blush began promoting hardcore shows in the DC area. He eventually began managing the legendary/infamous DC band No Trend, and released their first four records. By 1985 Blush was back in New York and began publishing *Seconds Magazine*. *Seconds* immediately set itself apart from the other zines of the day by its sheer diversity of coverage. It was a big deal to find interviews with category-defying cultural figures like Boyd Rice or Anton LaVey right alongside interviews with the likes of Slayer, KMFDM, Public Enemy, Robert Williams or Jim Jarmusch. By the time the magazine went to an all-interview format (around issue 12 or 13, in about 1989) *Seconds'* interviews had become the underground equivalent of the "Playboy Interview"; they were in-depth, personal, and extensive. In the mid-'90s Blush began to notice that hardcore, as a musical and cultural movement, was coming to be regarded as a forgotten footnote to the history of punk rock. Since no document of the history of hardcore had ever been assembled, Blush set out to do it. From 1997 to 2000 he interviewed as many people as he could who were involved back in their towns' original hardcore scenes in the mid-'80s (with many of his old contacts garnered from his days of touring with No Trend), and in 2001, *American Hardcore - A Tribal History* was released on Feral House. Blush has been touring the country for the past few months in support of the book and will continue to do so into the early fall, as well as working on the *American Hardcore* documentary film.

—Larry

When and why did you stop publishing *Seconds*?

Well, to me, *Seconds* always serviced an underground. I basically saw the rise of the subculture we were all part of and helped nurture, and I didn't really see that any more. I had so much love for the magazine, and rather than drive it into the ground and try to change with the times I just wanted to give it a decent burial. I hate to use that '90s therapy word, "closure," but I've been able to give real closure to the magazine. We did 52 issues. I watched so many people who ran magazines have their phones disconnected, blow off all their people and do one too many issues; I didn't want to make any of those same mistakes. But like I said, we were an underground publication and the underground that I saw, that was there in the mid-'80s, by the year 2000 it was basically eaten up. I realized I always did really well with music and music people but I did terrible with the corporate people. I'd show them a magazine with all the incredible diversity and stuff we did, and to them it was just weird; they didn't get it. I loved what we did, but part of being smart is knowing when to stop. So I think we did that in the right way. We basically had a party, invited everybody down and said goodbye.

How many years did it run?

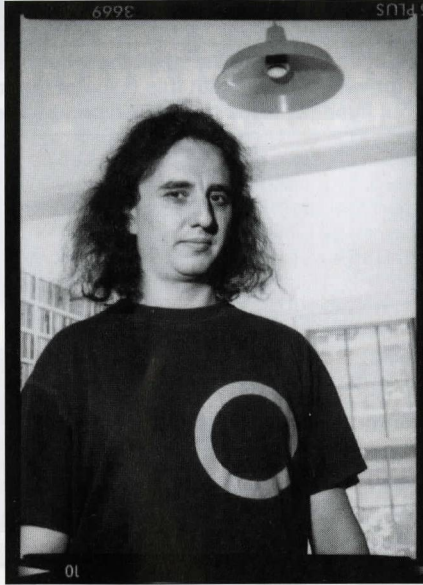
My first issue was in 1985, it was the first-ever Beastie Boys cover story. *Seconds* was a product of my coming out of the hardcore years; someone coming out of hardcore to start a magazine who had never written or run a magazine before. I had written some articles before but I had no clue as to what to do. I just had that impulse to do it. When everybody was kind of formalized into hardcore (by the mid-'80s), I was seeing the same elements of underground in hip hop and heavy metal; that was very taboo at the time, and now it's so commonplace. That was such a weird magazine to do. If you talk to anybody about marketing, it's about your niche. We were an anti-niche... it's a very tough game to play, and another key of my naiveté and also my vision—that driving hardcore vision—was that I started this magazine and got it on newsstands nationwide, and I never had any capital. I had zero. Even to the end. I think it hurt us and propelled us in the same way. We were so 'fuck you, we're not gonna answer to anybody,' that's what allowed our vision to be so strong. But on the other hand it was like, can you imagine telling someone in an MBA class to start a business like that? Then again, I did survive for 15 years, and I do think we made an impact. I used to wonder if we were making an impact at the time, but when I was off on the *American Hardcore* tour there was not a town where kids did not stop dead in their tracks to tell me how much they were moved by a certain article or a certain issue of *Seconds*. That, to me, gave it validation. In terms of closing it, we have this best of *Seconds* book, which is going to be called *The Art Of The Interview: Best Of Seconds Magazine*, coming out through Feral House as well.

Cool. When will that be out?

We're finishing it now, so it looks like Spring 2003. It'll be 50 interviews, our best stuff.

Anything from the tabloid years?

Yeah. I would say those tabloid issues were the first dozen or so, and there's probably three or four interviews from those issues. As much as you want to do your earliest stuff, they really weren't our best interviews. But we do have some classic stuff... then again, I think history proves out everything, and luckily we were able to survive long enough that that validation holds true. A lot of bands grew up reading *Seconds*. I'm really proud of that. But I also didn't want to become a caricature of myself. For instance, I come from hardcore and I think hardcore—it's an ethic of mine. But I don't really act hardcore. I still have friends who are dressing and acting the same way, and I don't want to take it away from them but you become a



STEVEN BLUSH

So you went out and tracked everyone down?

Yeah, it really took a long time.

How did you go about doing the fact-checking?

Well, fact-checking is a funny thing for hardcore because everybody has their own truth. I would say a lot of this is gray. There's some people who've attacked my book, saying this fact is wrong or that fact is wrong. But you know what? I got those facts from members of the bands or guys in the scene. If the guy in so-and-so band says something was in '84, it's in '84. If somebody comes up to me later and says, "No that really was '85." You know what? The second person's probably right. Having said that, a lot of this stuff is from memory, and this is really how I do remember it. My memory, the interviewees memory, the people who run the fanzines who are historians memories—everyone's a little off. The big problem is that a lot of this stuff wasn't being documented really. Like certain records. If you look at a record and it says it came out in 1982, the people might have run out of money and it might not have come out until the end of '83 or even '84; there's a lot of that. But I felt I got it pretty right. I don't claim to be the god-given expert on everything, as you'll see in the second edition of the book, which will be out in the next few weeks, I've corrected a lot of those things... there will also be an expanded version that I'm working on as well. That should be out in a year, year and a half, and should include a lot of the things I've picked up since the book came out and/or things I picked up on my tour, contacts I made during this time.

You've still obviously held on to a huge collection of flyers and paper memorabilia; did you get all the logos from your own collection?

Yeah, everything from the book is reprints. In fact, if you look at any of the logos, I didn't clean them up, that's exactly how they looked. Somebody came up to me and said, "Oh you should have cleaned up these things," and I said, "You're missing the whole idea of hardcore. you're missing the whole idea of what this was about. This was a primal subculture." So everything comes off of a flyer or a record or something given to me by a character. It really is that direct.

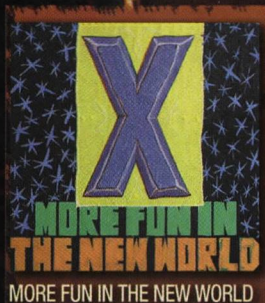
Is that what stands out to you about the art from that period?

Yeah. I do a chapter in the book called "How Much Art Can You Take," and it's kind of the idea that art was an anti-art statement. It was the idea that you were against being arty and all that stuff. Because I think that fed into the new wave thing that hardcore was largely a reaction to. So I think there was this idea that you didn't want anything to do with art school or being arty. Arty is a funny word to use now but back then it was a very strong word... regardless, it was arty in that people were doing anti-art. Like Winston Smith, he is one of the great punk artists. It's the true punk aesthetic; highly visual, sardonic, intellectual and revolutionary—politically revolutionary. It was kind of very nasty. A lot of kids learned a lot from that stuff. Raymond Pettibon was not a political thing but I think that kind of nasty edge to his art really spoke to the kids. I think a lot of the art of the time was very reflective of the angst, the anger and the alienation of the hardcore generation. Hardcore is something that—I want to get the history straight on hardcore, that's what *American Hardcore* is about; and I also wanted to show that we were part of a tribal underground, that's why it's subtitled a tribal history. One thing I've been told; I've been doing a lot of work with Virgin Megastore—appearances and those kinds of things—and these people are calling me up because not only is the book selling, but the catalog is selling; old Zero Boys records, old Government Issue records, old Marginal Man records. That says to me the incredible impact of hardcore. People today don't talk about the bands that sold ten zillion records in 1983, that would be Journey, Loverboy and Night Ranger. They talk about the bands that sold two or three thousand copies in 1983, that shows you the incredible power of the movement.

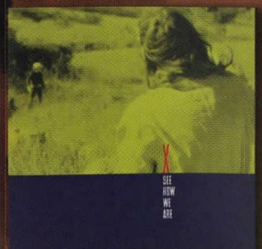
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